

Social media is still a hub for news and politics

Article

Despite the platforms' efforts to distance themselves from news and political content, social media remains a major source of information about politics and current events. It's also a focal point for discussions on hot-button topics like the election, and an important political marketing channel.

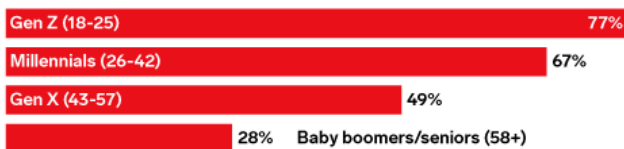
- **Over half of US consumers get news from social platforms.** While most people aren't necessarily going to social media for news, 50% of users got news at least sometimes from social, per an October 2023 Pew Research Center survey. And according to a March 2023

Kagan survey, no age group does this more than adult Gen Zers. Not all news on social media is inherently political, but the line between news, politics, and entertainment is now blurred.

- **Some creators are behaving like journalists.** Gen Zers, in particular, are drawn to news content that is more informal, entertaining, and available on platforms where they spend a lot of time (i.e., TikTok). That's led to the rise of creator-led short-video news content, which can lack context compared with longer-form news. And many of these creators are commentators instead of trained journalists, offering partisan viewpoints or political satire rather than objective reporting.
- **Social platforms have become more skittish toward political ads.** That includes Snap and Meta. The latter has already said it will prohibit new political ads in the week before the general election, and it also bans political advertisers from using its genAI tools. But there's still nine months until Election Day, and Meta remains an important venue for political advertisers. It will account for 16.0% of US digital political ad spending in 2024, compared with 16.0% for Google, the parent company of YouTube.
- **But ads are a small slice of political content on social.** Political ads will make up just 0.9% of Meta's ad revenues in 2024. X is actively courting political advertisers, but its role as a hotbed of misinformation has made campaigns wary. Meanwhile, many campaigns are increasing their organic marketing output, especially as primarily left-wing campaign social strategies shift toward TikTok, which forbids political ads.

US Internet Users Who Obtain Most of Their Information About News and Breaking Events Through Social Media, by Generation, March 2023

% of respondents in each group



Note: n=1,737 (Gen Z n=297; millennials n=671; Gen X n=336; baby boomers/seniors n=433)

Source: Kagan, "U.S. Q1 2023 Consumer Insights," July 13, 2023

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Political Content and Social Media 2024

