



reddit | PULSE

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# The Power of Community

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September 2019



# Introduction

The social media landscape is changing. In an era of distrust and perfectly-polished online personas, tools that are supposed to bring us together are often making us feel more isolated and distant from one another.

At Reddit however, we've noticed something different. From page views to time spent on our site and apps, over the past year we've seen significant growth in user engagement and conversations—demonstrating that users are deepening their relationships with each other and with Reddit communities. Our users are finding more reasons to visit Reddit, more reasons to become active members of our communities, and more reasons to share the ideas they glean with others.

Earlier this year, we partnered with YPulse to understand why Reddit is thriving among Gen Z and Millennials. They interviewed over 1,300 active social media users between the ages of 13-39 to better understand the role community plays in their lives, and the factors that have fueled more than a decade of community growth on Reddit.

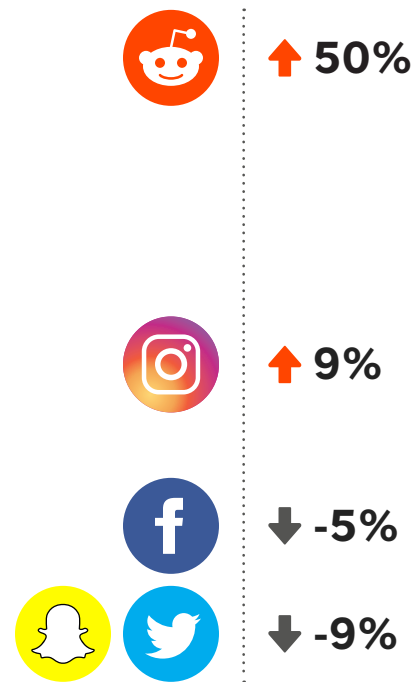
What we discovered was that community plays a unique and valuable role in the lives of our users. The power of community on Reddit is rooted in trust, the human desire to learn, and the need to feel belonging and work together to advance the collective. This is what drives the personal involvement and depth of sharing and response that we see across our user-propelled communities every day.

In this study, we explore user feelings and behaviors on Reddit, how they lead to more authentic communication, what that means for our users' openness to new ideas and cultural trends, and how that impacts real-world decisions. We learned that the best parts of humanity come alive with community, which gives us many reasons to feel optimistic about the future of the Internet.

**Jen Wong**  
COO, Reddit

## Which of the following social media platforms do you use?

Year Over Year Change in Social Media Use  
% Change (Dec 2017- Dec 2018)



Source: Ypulse Syndicated Data

### Research Methodology

- Online quantitative survey fielded January 2019
- n=1369 active social media users who use Reddit and other platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter
- Ages 13-39, 50/50, male/female split

Reddit growth in views

2017-18

+30%

“I like that Reddit is a big group of people all being honest and curious together about their thoughts and experiences. It helps me get a better idea of other people's stories and perspectives.”

Female 18-24

Source: Reddit Internal Data, 2019

r/cooking

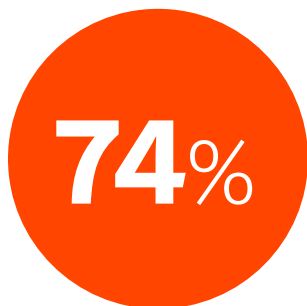


# What Community Means Online

**R**eddit is synonymous with community. When we ask Millennials and Gen Z to describe other social media platforms in their own words, features and fleeting attributes like funny, quick, and photos emerge. But when they describe Reddit, users reveal the diverse, amazing community that thrives on the platform. For them, Reddit is more authentic, interesting, and informative than other platforms.

Online communities are driven by shared interests: 74% of users say Reddit is where they learn about the topics they love the most. And when people are interested, informed, and engaged with the things they love, they better understand themselves and the world around them.

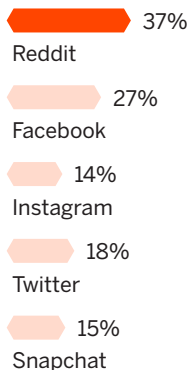
Reddit is a place where Millennials and Gen Z can be themselves, explore new interests, fuel their passions, and have authentic conversations about things they're really into—providing a refuge of genuine community online.



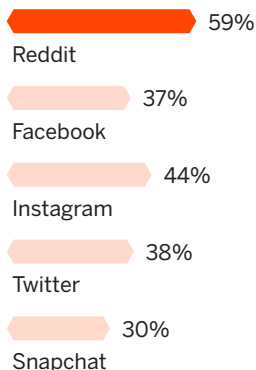
**say Reddit is where they learn about the topics they love most**

## Which word describes each platform?

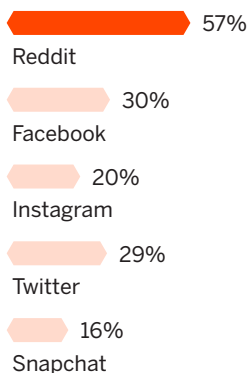
### Authentic



### Interesting

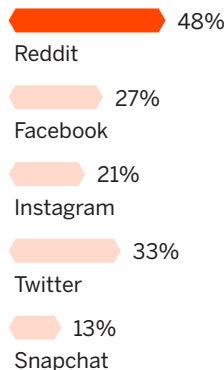


### Informative

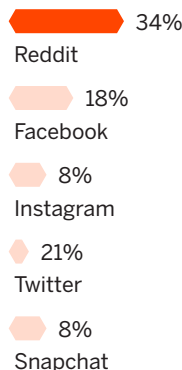


## How does using each platform make you feel?

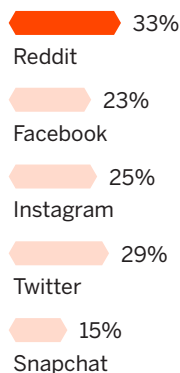
### Informed



### Educated



### In-The-Know



If you could describe this platform in one word, what would it be?

Reddit



Facebook



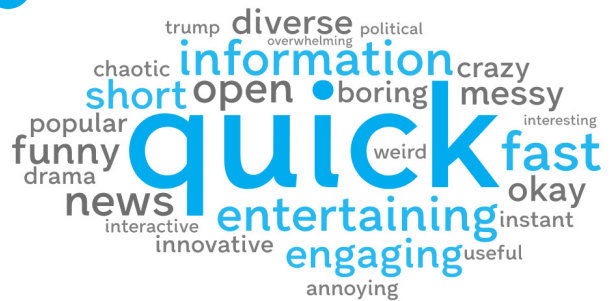
Instagram



Snapchat



Twitter



**“Reddit makes the world feel much smaller than it typically tends to feel.”**

Female 25-30

**“Aside from jokes and memes, there are many communities where people are able to learn and help each other. It feels like one of the only places on the Internet where you can find genuine community.”**

Male 25-30

**r/skateboarding**



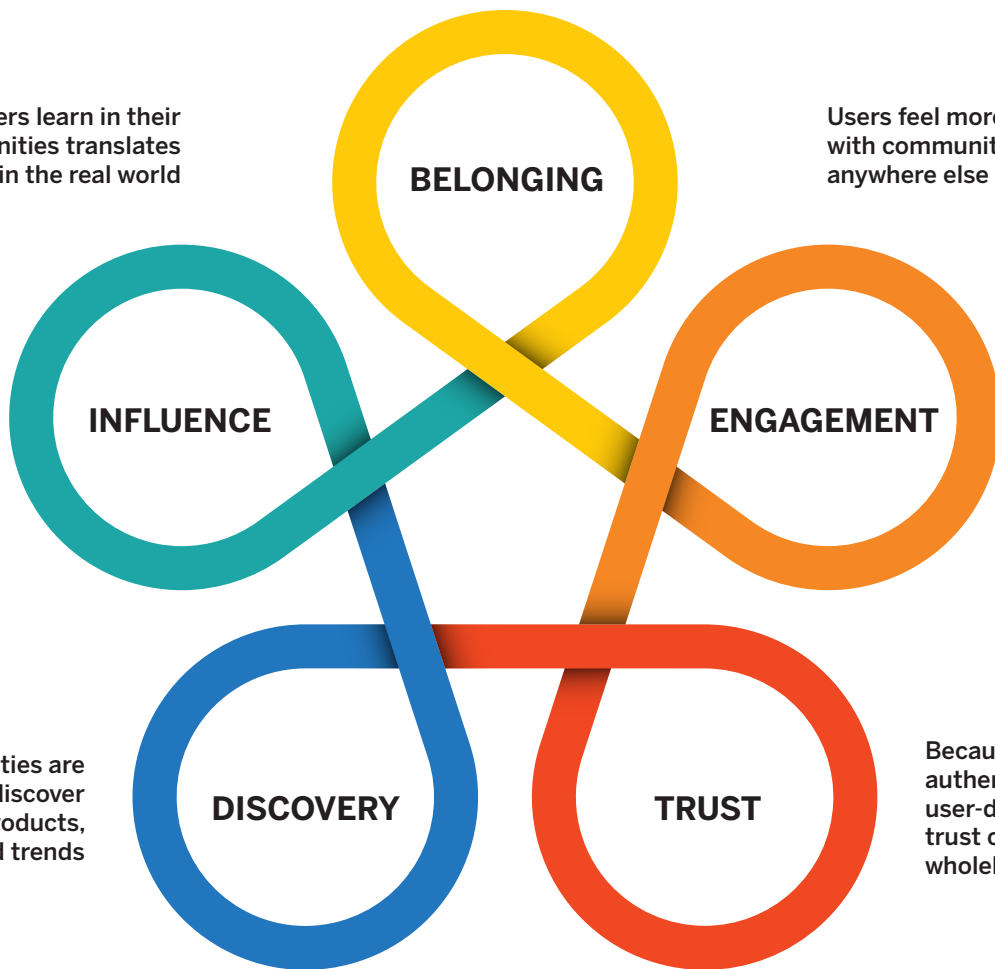
# The Core Tenets of Community on Reddit

**B**ased on this research, we've discovered five core tenets that drive a successful online community on Reddit. These tenets are interdependent building blocks: they interlock and reinforce each other. And when they're all working together, they create a space where users can be themselves, interact openly and authentically with others, and explore new ideas.

Communities are the rare part of the Internet where everyone belongs

What users learn in their communities translates into action in the real world

Users feel more engaged with communities than anywhere else online



**INFLUENCE**

**BELONGING**

**ENGAGEMENT**

**DISCOVERY**

**TRUST**

Communities are where users discover new ideas, products, and trends

Because they're authentically user-driven, users trust communities wholeheartedly

# 1 Belonging

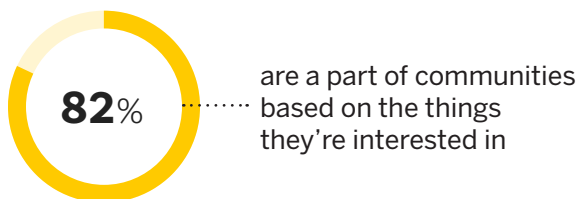


## Communities are the rare part of the internet where everyone belongs.

The breadth and depth of communities on Reddit fosters a space where everyone can find their passions and their people. There's not just one thing for everyone on Reddit—there are many things for everyone on Reddit. Because users engage with the topics they're genuinely interested in on Reddit, they find real value in the platform and feel like it's a place where they actually belong.

And while other platforms encourage Millennials and Gen Z to only share their "best" self—a polished persona—Reddit is as anonymous as users want it to be. Users can share as much or as little about their real-world identities as they'd like, which means they're actually freer to be themselves. Detached from the illusion of social media popularity and reputation, conversations on Reddit can focus on real, personal experience.

As a result, users find Reddit to be a more open-minded and diverse place than other social media platforms, allowing them to share more freely and explore their interests in a more authentic way.



### Compared to other platforms, Reddit is ...





**“r/teenagers is where I feel like I can truly express myself. I love engaging with people my age who are going through similar problems as I am. It’s helped me feel more self-confidence.”**

Male 13-17

**“There are a ton of different topics being talked about on Reddit. Everyone can find something or someone they are interested in or relate to.”**

Male 18-24

**r/teenagers**

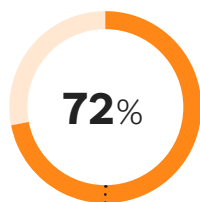
# 2 Engagement



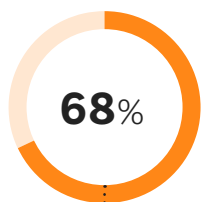
**Users feel more engaged with communities on Reddit than anywhere else online.**

Unlike other social platforms, Reddit users can control the content they interact with, and how they interact with it. Users have a choice of mixed feeds that show content from their self-selected communities, and a variety of ways to sort the content—leading to a frictionless ever-interesting user experience, full of on-topic conversations and deep engagement.

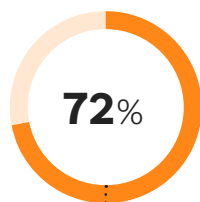
Because they're able to connect directly with the things and people they actually care about, Reddit users are more engaged and attentive on Reddit than anywhere else online. Only seeing what they want to see, they're actually able to pay attention to the content they're consuming.



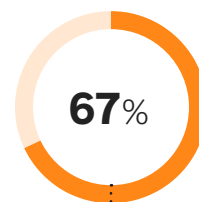
say conversations on Reddit are more **on topic** than anywhere else on social media



say conversations on Reddit are more **relevant** to them than anywhere else on social media



say conversations are more **engaging** on Reddit than anywhere else online



pay more attention to things they see on Reddit than on other places online

**“I like that I can subscribe to specific subs so that my feed always has something that I like to see. With Facebook, people post a lot of random stuff that I don't care about, but Reddit has all my interests covered, from baking to traveling to fitness.”**

Female 18-24

**“I like the vast options of customizable content. You can literally choose what to see and it's also laid out very neatly and the UI is user-friendly. It's such a diverse platform.”**

Female 18-24

**r/gaming**



# 3 Trust

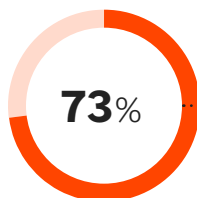
**Because communities are authentically user-driven, their members trust them wholeheartedly.**

**T**rust flows naturally in user-driven communities. Reddit users' trust in communities supersedes their trust in other social platforms—and even news and shopping sites. In fact, our research found that Reddit users are almost as likely to trust communities on Reddit for advice and recommendations about brands and products as they are to trust reviews on Google or Amazon. In short, the honesty of a crowd of like-minded people is worth more than a single influencer's endorsement on other platforms.

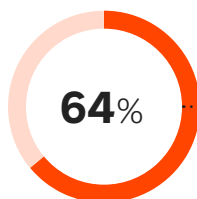
Reddit is considered ...

**1.8x**

**more trustworthy than other social media platforms**

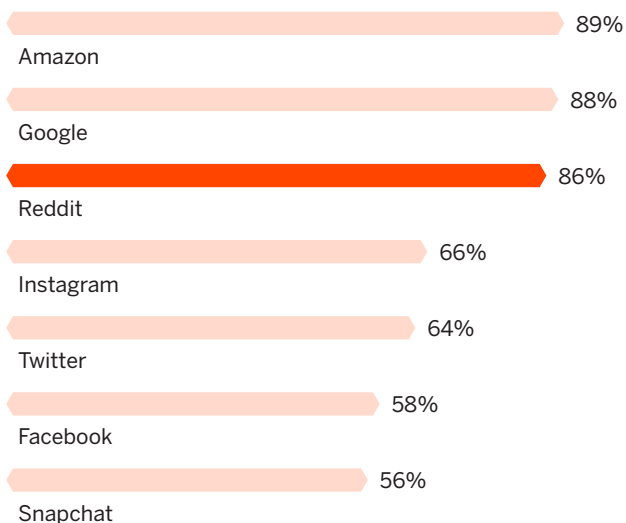


say Reddit users are people like them, so they trust their recommendations



say Reddit has the most trustworthy opinions about products and brands

**I trust this platform when it comes to learning about new products and brands**



**“I trust Reddit because it is run by real people. There are no big influencers on Reddit and therefore I know when someone is talking about something it’s because they are truly passionate about it.”**

Female 18-24

**“I trust Reddit for the community being genuine, and real normal people actively engaging in discussions. It doesn’t feel like you’re talking to someone far different from you.”**

Male 18-24

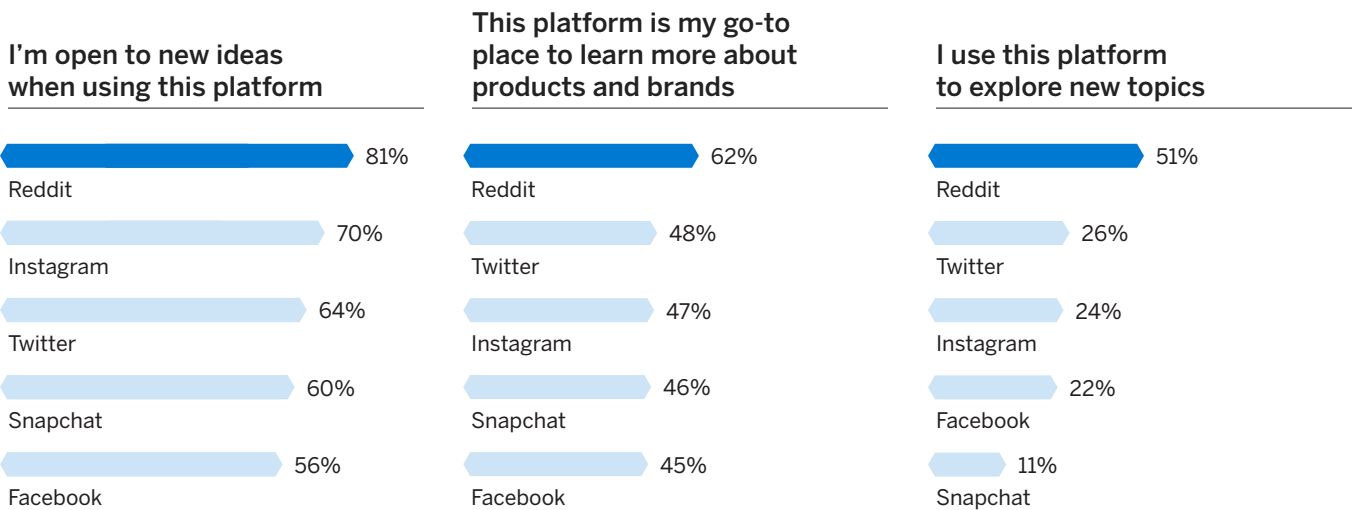
**r/parenting**

# 4 Discovery



**Communities are where users discover new ideas, products, and trends.**

**F**ueled by users' trust in communities and their willingness to share, Reddit is a place for new ideas. Users turn to communities for near-constant inspiration, and the variety of opinions they encounter helps them break through their personal bubble and explore all perspectives. Communities are where users discover new products, define trends, and make important decisions—e.g. the right sunscreen for their skin type, what show to stream depending on their mood, which credit card to apply for based on their spending habits, or the best baby stroller for their budget and activity level.



**“When I'm feeling particularly uninspired I can come to Reddit and always find something that's pretty cool or neat. It's great for generating new ideas or trains of thought.”**

Female 18-24

**“Reddit is my favorite because I use it to discover new and interesting TV series and new movies.”**

Male 18-24

**“I get to discover something new just about every time I open the app.”**

Female 25-30

**r/television**

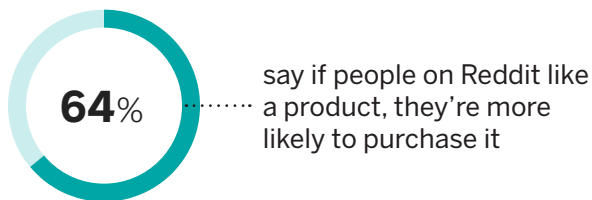
# 5 Influence



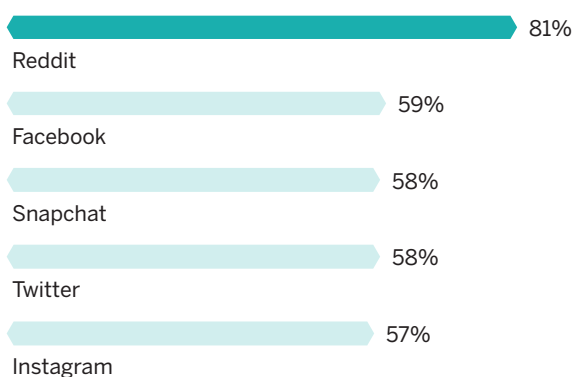
## What users learn in communities translates into action in the real world.

Users are hyper-informed and on the cutting edge of cultural trends and news thanks to communities on Reddit. But communities don't just provide information in a vacuum. Users make real-world decisions and purchases based on the things they discover on Reddit—and that influence extends to the broader internet

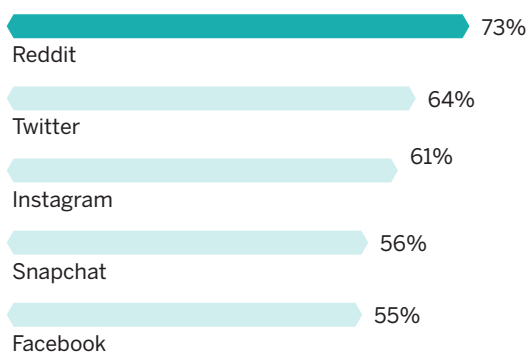
Simply put: if members of their communities like a product, Reddit users are more likely to purchase it and spread the word. Communities on Reddit have a distinct ability to turn their members into advocates in the real world. Our research found that users are significantly more likely to tell others about things they've learned on Reddit compared to other social media platforms. Reddit sits at the center of the internet, and our users amplify the world through their community networks.



### I've told people in real life about things I've learned on this platform



### I've learned about a story, product, brand, or idea on this platform before it's gone mainstream





**“Reddit has so much interesting information that I can also share with others.”**

Female 13-17

**“The best part about using Reddit is that I see new internet content before it trickles its way to the other social media apps I use frequently.”**

Female 25-30

**r/femalefashionadvice**

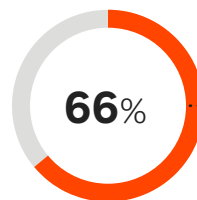
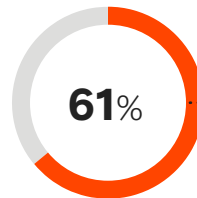
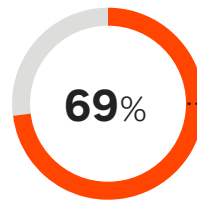


# The Opportunity for Brands

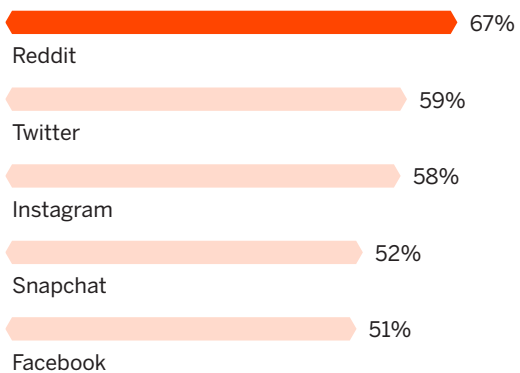
## Brands can harness the power of community to make their message known.

**R**eddit is full of vibrant communities where users come to be informed about the topics they care about most. Marketers should be just as excited about communities on Reddit as users are, because communities are a direct source for authentic conversations—and potential brand advocates—with more than 330 million impassioned consumers.

Communities might seem intimidating from the outside, but users welcome attention from brands and respect when brands make the effort to join them. In fact, our study found that Reddit users say brands are not only welcome to join the conversation on Reddit, but that it's the best place to reach them. Being on Reddit helps brands become not just abstract entities, but peers who are just as invested in the conversation as they are.



### Which platform should more brands participate on?



**“People swear by this brand for preparing quick, easy, and tasty meals. All the photos and recipes showed me the value of the product, and made me want to engage with the product myself.”**

Male 25-30

**“People in the r/skincare section always talk about this brand as affordable but effective, and that makes me more likely to purchase it.”**

Female 25-30

**r/skincareaddiction**



# The Power of Community

User-driven communities like Reddit are the future of the internet. It's only natural: humans want to find places where they authentically belong and can express themselves without fear of judgment or restrictions. And once they've found those places, they're more engaged with and trusting of them than anywhere else online.

Based on our research, users think of Reddit as a hub for belonging, engagement, and discovery—a place where trends and ideas take shape, and where the next wave of culture emanates. Reddit prioritizes the user-driven nature of their platform, and in doing so, creates spaces for authentic interactions and compelling conversations.

When users come to Reddit, they're looking to feel informed, engaged, and inspired by trustworthy information. And when they leave Reddit, they take this information and translate it into real-world action, purchases, and the proliferation of ideas and perspectives on-and-off the internet.

Users tell us that Reddit is the social platform that most often influences their real world behavior. That's what makes Reddit such a critical part of the marketer's toolkit: it's where genuine engagement meets discovery, and where discovery yields real-world action. Engaging with Reddit is a prime opportunity for brands and marketers to tap into an impassioned, action-oriented audience. Joining in the conversation will spark authentic loyalty among Reddit's highly-influential user base—which translates to shifting attitudes and behaviors across the internet and into real life. That's the power of community, and the power of Reddit.





reddit

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