

Holiday Content Trends

Create a holiday content strategy founded in data.

Presented by Similarweb and Chartbeat





Agenda

Introduction

COVID/Delta Impact

Trending Shopping Categories

Content Discovery & Engagement Trends

Data-Informed Content Strategies

Introduction

This year will be our second holiday season in a global pandemic. Over the summer, global vaccine rollouts provided a brief glimpse into what a return to normal could look like.

Travel was up, masks were off, and grandmas were hugged.

But this was juxtaposed against the background of a new variant, a blocked shipping canal, and continued global disruption of the supply chain.

With so much uncertainty, it's more important than ever for brands and publishers to equip themselves with the most accurate, updated market insights in order to make the smartest content decisions.

2021 Holiday trends

COVID and Delta: Wreaking havoc on the holidays



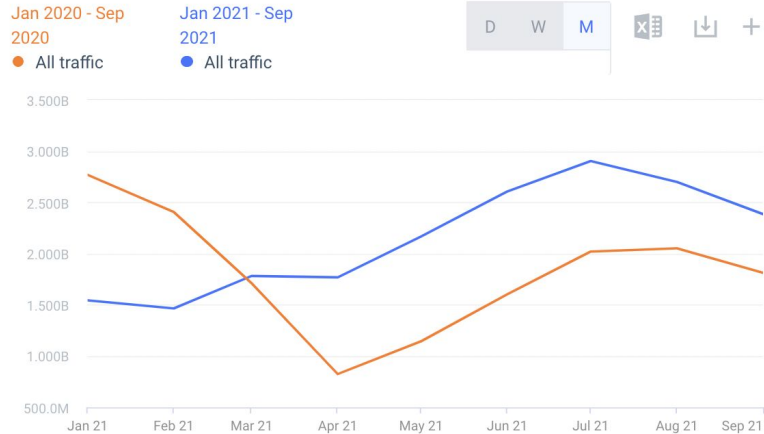
COVID and the Delta variant are continuing their carnage on supply chains around the world.

As a result, retailers like Amazon are already publishing “Black Friday” deals in October in an attempt to stretch out the buying season and ease the pressure to ship before Christmas.

Travel and in-person gatherings

Travel industry site traffic:





Up from 2020 but dipping relative to the summer bump



There is high likelihood that in-person holiday gatherings will again be down this year. As a result, gift buying and giving will likely add more pressure to the shipping and supply chain.

Retailer visitation: last 12 months

There's substantial cross-browsing behavior between these brands, which provides ample opportunity to diversify your affiliate partnerships this year.

		Also visited			
		 amazon.com	 ebay.com	 walmart.com	 target.com
Visitors to	 amazon.com		10.05%	5.60%	3.00%
	 ebay.com	42.82%		8.47%	3.38%
	 walmart.com	61.39%	21.14%		14.90%
	 target.com	61.93%	15.63%	27.80%	

All eyes on watches, retro, and music products

September 2021 Categories to Watch

Top Smartwatch Brands: September 2021

- **Apple** makes up 44% of revenue for the category (vs. 74% Q4 2020)
- **Samsung** unit sales **+160%** YoY
- **Amazon Renewed** Refurbished products are rising in popularity

"Gaming laptop" #2 Search Term

Top 3 brands: Acer, Asus, and Lenovo

Security Cameras

Category revenue **+87%** YoY, led by ZOSI, Eufy, and Arlo branded cameras

Retro Products



"Polaroid," "Film Camera," "Instax"
Sept 2021 search volume: **+53%** YoY



"Portable cd player"
Sept 2021 search volume **+40%** YoY

Top 5 Headphones Search Terms

1. **"Wireless earbuds"**
Avg. price: \$56.36
2. **"Headphones"**
Avg. price: **\$107.73**
3. **"Earbuds"**
Avg. price: \$46.44
4. **"Airpods"**
Avg. price: **\$133.17**
5. **"Bluetooth earbuds"**
Avg. price: \$39.43

Keyword winners – Lego, funko, fidget....

“Fidget toys”

Together with “Pop it” – a related term – Amazon search clicks increased 10x year-over-year.



Q3 21 Top brands



An oldie by a goodie – Lego owns 6.5% share of the toys and games category’s revenue.

Q3 21 Top brands



The pop culture brand is close behind Lego in unit sales, though its share of revenue is smaller.

'Tis the season to be comfy

Comfort is key

Women's sleep & lounge

- Dec 2020 sales: **+14%** YoY
- Sept 2021 sales: **+33%** YoY

Men's sleep & lounge

- Dec 2020 sales: **+20%** YoY
- Sept 2021 sales: **+5%** YoY

Top brands

GILDAN®



FRUIT OF THE LOOM.



Ekouaer

amazon essentials

Making moves in comfy clothes

Women's activewear

- Dec 2020 sales: **+41%** YoY
- Sept 2021 sales: **+27%** YoY

Men's activewear

- Dec 2020 sales: **+21%** YoY
- Sept 2021 sales: **+13%** YoY

Top brands

GILDAN®



Jeans are making comeback

Sept 2021 unit sales are **+27%** YoY for women and **+14%** for men vs. flat to slightly down YoY December 2020 sales

Top brands



Wrangler



SmartyKat, ZippyPaws, dog food all the way



Pet Supplies Category: September 2021

Search volume

- **'Dog harness'** was the most searched term across the pet supplies category
- **Blue Buffalo** was the highest ranked brand name in the category and it's a pet food brand



Gifts for pets

- **Multipet**, with 10.4% share, displaced **Zippypaws** (6.9%) as the top dog toy brand
- **Potarama** (7.9%) and **SmartyKat** (7.6%) reigned supreme for cats



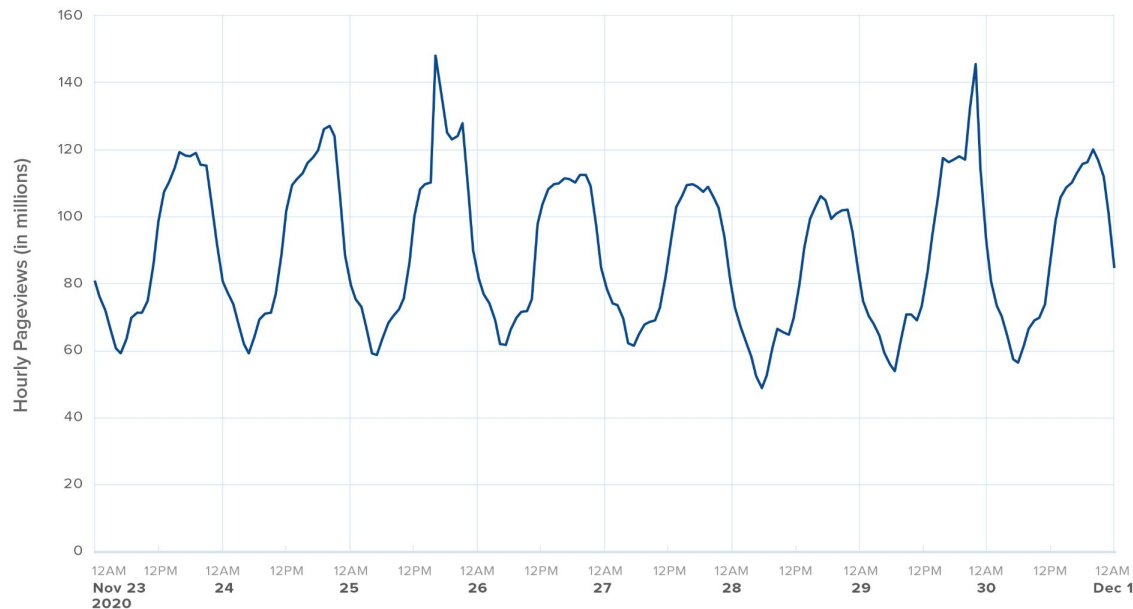
Content discovery and engagement trends

Peaking traffic around holiday shopping events

On Thanksgiving, traffic is generally lower than a typical Thursday. Black Friday, despite being a “holiday” for most workers, generated a normal amount of traffic for a Friday.

On Sunday, the day before Cyber Monday, sites saw much higher traffic than they normally do, trending 7% above the average for the previous three Sundays.

Hourly Pageviews Across the Chartbeat Network



Search is the strongest channel for content discovery

During the 2020 holiday shopping season, search traffic peaked the day before Thanksgiving and the day before Cyber Monday.

Search peak traffic:

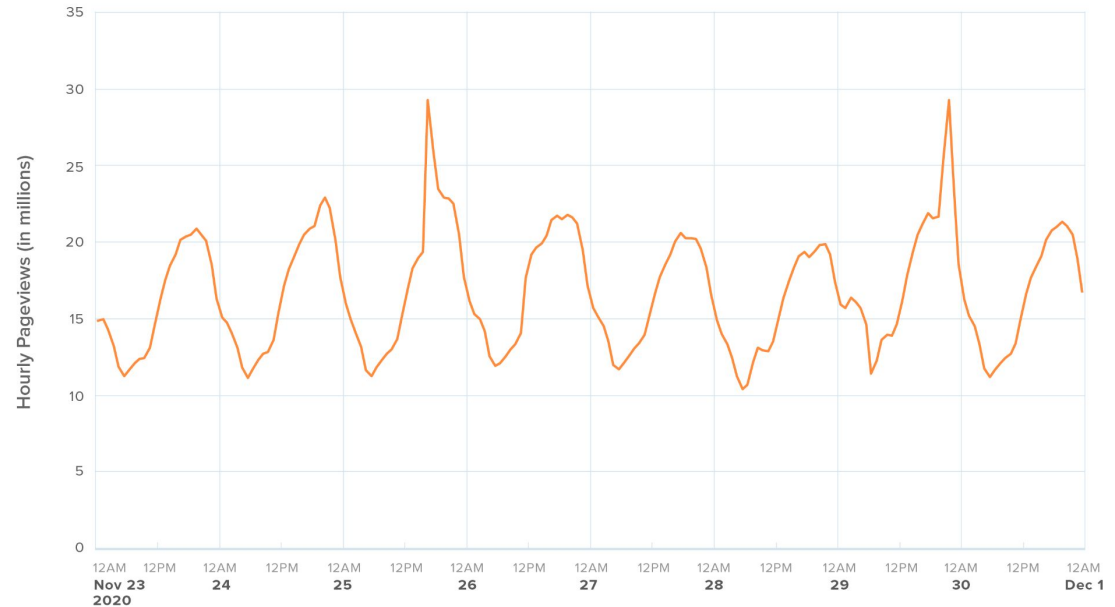
Nov. 25 at 4 pm

Traffic increased 51% in just one hour, and stayed elevated until 10 pm

Nov. 29 at 7 pm

Traffic jumped 35% between 7 and 9 pm, but had dropped significantly by 11 pm

Hourly Pageviews from Search



Social sharing is split between platforms, private channels

As we looked at social traffic, we broke the data down into two categories:

Named Social

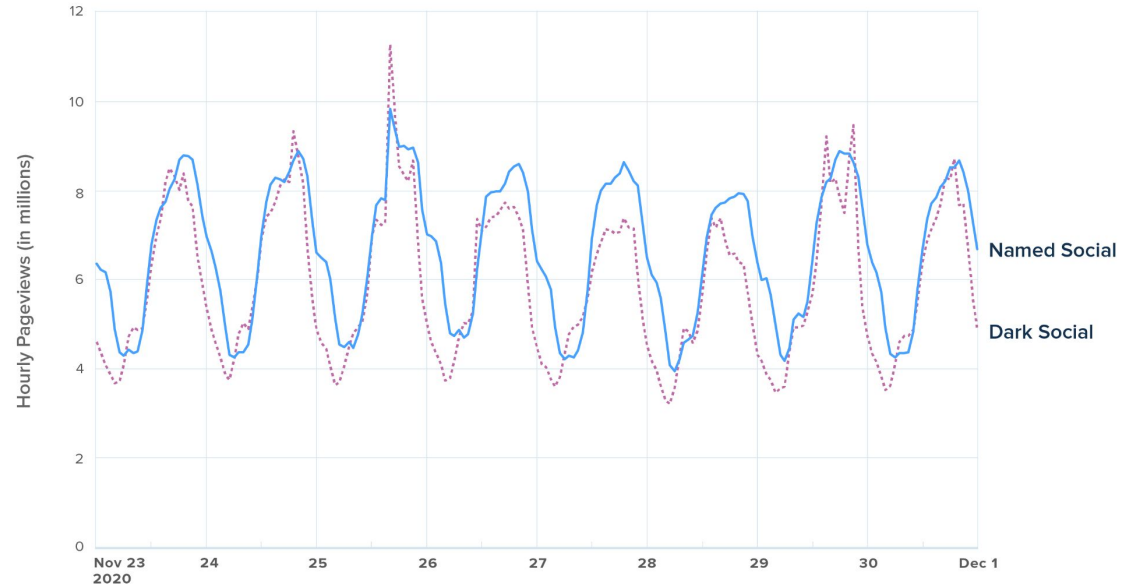
Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.

Dark Social

No referral info, shares that happen on private channels like personal email or messaging apps

On most days, social traffic is split evenly between Named and Dark Social.

Hourly Pageviews from Social



Chartbeat

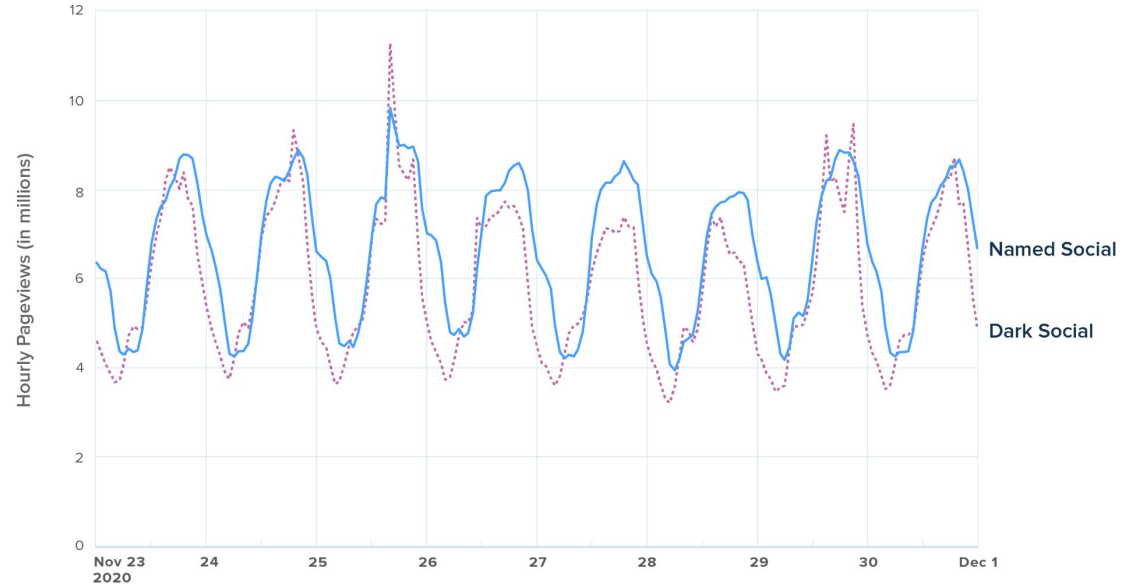
Social platform traffic rises head of private sharing

Overall, we say a similar spike in social traffic the day before Thanksgiving.

However, from Thanksgiving Day to Saturday, Dark Social underperformed compared to Named platforms and lagged by about two hours.

This suggests that readers were discovering content on Named platforms, before sharing that content on personal channels.

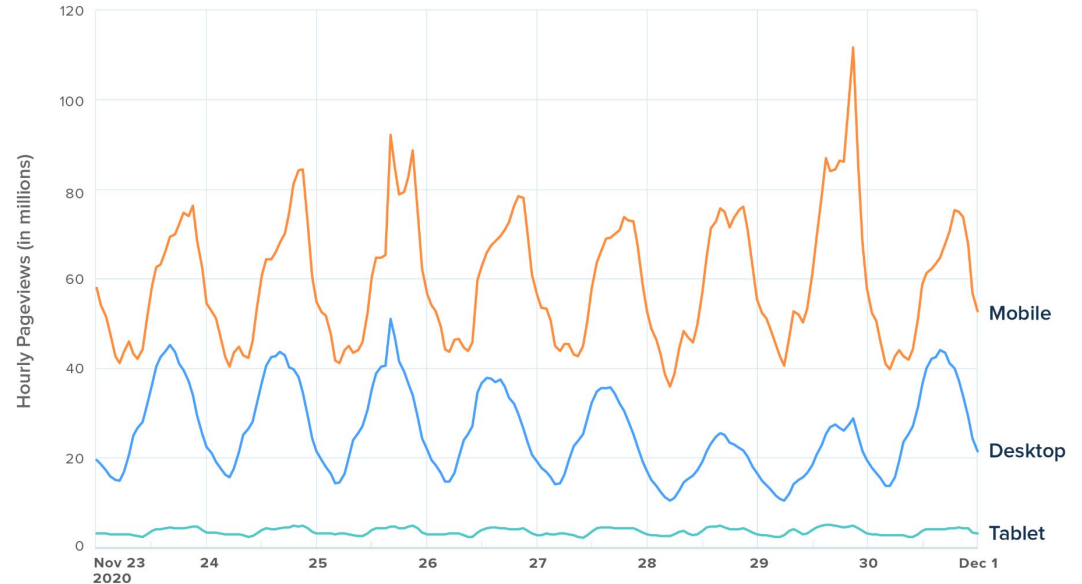
Hourly Pageviews from Social



Search and social readers disproportionately access content on mobile

Channel patterns are also tied to device usage. During the search and social traffic spikes, a higher proportion of readers were accessing content on mobile devices.

Hourly Pageviews by Device Type

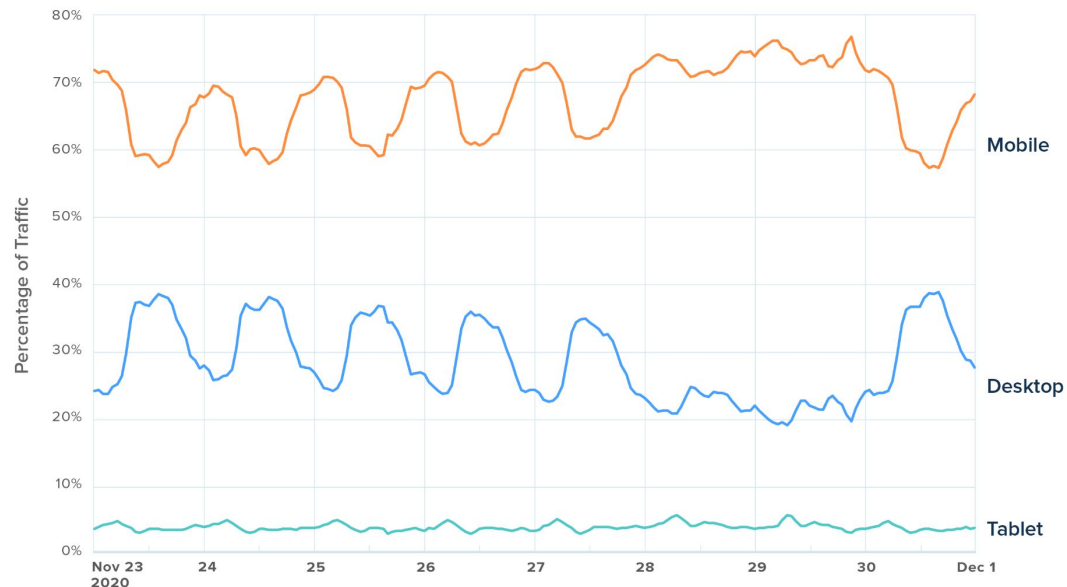


Chartbeat

When it comes to holiday content, mobile is key

In fact, the proportion of mobile traffic rose above 70% at 8 pm on Black Friday, and stayed above 70% until 6 am Monday.

Device Type as a Percentage of Overall Traffic



Audiences click on other topics, but engage more with shopping

Of the top 1,000 articles:

4%

of articles were
Black Friday
focused

5%

of engagement
went to Black
Friday content

+40%

Avg. engagement
was higher on Black
Friday content

We also analyzed the top 1,000 articles, ranked by total engaged time, to understand how readers interact with content.

On Black Friday, average engagement with shopping content was higher than all other content topics

Fun fact

Content about what to watch on streaming services was unusually popular

Cyber Monday – Engagement

Cyber Monday content was less popular on the day itself, but did trend during the weekend leading up to it.

Of the top 1,000 articles:

6%

of articles were
Cyber Monday
focused

7%

of engagement
went to Cyber
Monday content

32%

Avg. engagement
was higher on Cyber
Monday content

Different content trends on Black Friday vs. Cyber Monday

Certain content topics and formats were more popular, depending on the event

Black Friday

STORE-SPECIFIC CONTENT

LIVE BLOGS

RESTOCK INFORMATION

Cyber Monday

AMAZON

DEALS UNDER \$50

TECH CONTENT

Data-informed content strategies

Use data trends to inform promotion and optimization strategy

1. Extra staffing may be needed the day before Thanksgiving and over the weekend, to update, promote, and optimize content.
2. The Sunday before Cyber Monday is a high traffic day, especially for a weekend. This creates a lot more opportunity to capture attention
3. Focus on mobile. Clean content, quick load times, and easy recirculation are the key to retaining fly-by visitors.
 - Link to closely-related articles on pages that are popular on search.
 - Social readers are less picky. Links can be most loosely related.
4. Create and update search-friendly content early (as in NOW), to maximize ranking. Even if you're just starting with a basic shell of the content.

Segment your strategy by channel to maximise attention

Readers tend to choose different types of content, depending on the channel from which they were referred

Search

The influence of search climbs in the days leading up to shopping events, but begins to fall during the event itself

Simple, straightforward formats work best at engaging search readers

Make sure to link to other, closely-related shopping content

Consider live blogging updated or new deals and restock information

Social

Create pathways for private sharing. After discovering content on Named platforms, readers will want to message or email their connections.

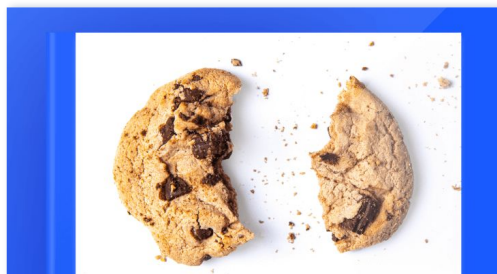
Readers share content about their local area. Create content that makes it easier for them to shop in a physical store.

Social traffic outperforms overall traffic during evenings and nights (notably 6 p.m. to midnight).

Helpful resources to get started



[Webinar: Content Planning Over The Holidays](#)



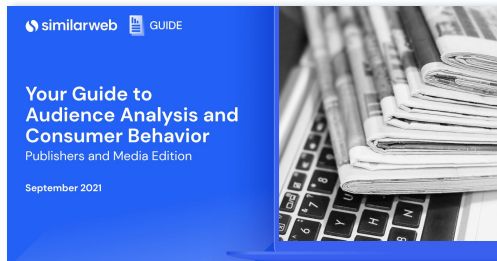
[Webinar: Preparing for a Cookieless Future](#)



[White Paper: Ad Research for Sales](#)



[Converting Customers Without Cookies](#)



[The Publisher's Guide to Audience Analysis and Consumer Behavior](#)



[Competitive Benchmarks for Publishers and Media](#)

About the authors



Jill Nicholson

Chief Marketing Officer
Chartbeat

Chartbeat is an editorial analytics platform for publishers. Jill works with content sites around the world to arm their teams with the insights they need to turn data into action.

Before that, she was a long-time Chartbeat user -- working in digital strategy for a local news site in Westchester, NY. In her seven years at Chartbeat, Jill has supplemented her newsroom experiences with best practices learned from the diverse organizations that Chartbeat serves.



Jackie Lee

Head of Publishers and Media
Similarweb

Jackie works with companies in the publisher and media space to meet engagement, ad sales, and consumer acquisition goals using Similarweb's insights.

Jackie was previously the Director of Audience and Data Strategy for The New York Times, and she comes with a background in programmatic media.

 similarweb |  Chartbeat

Unwrap custom insights

[Book your demo](#)