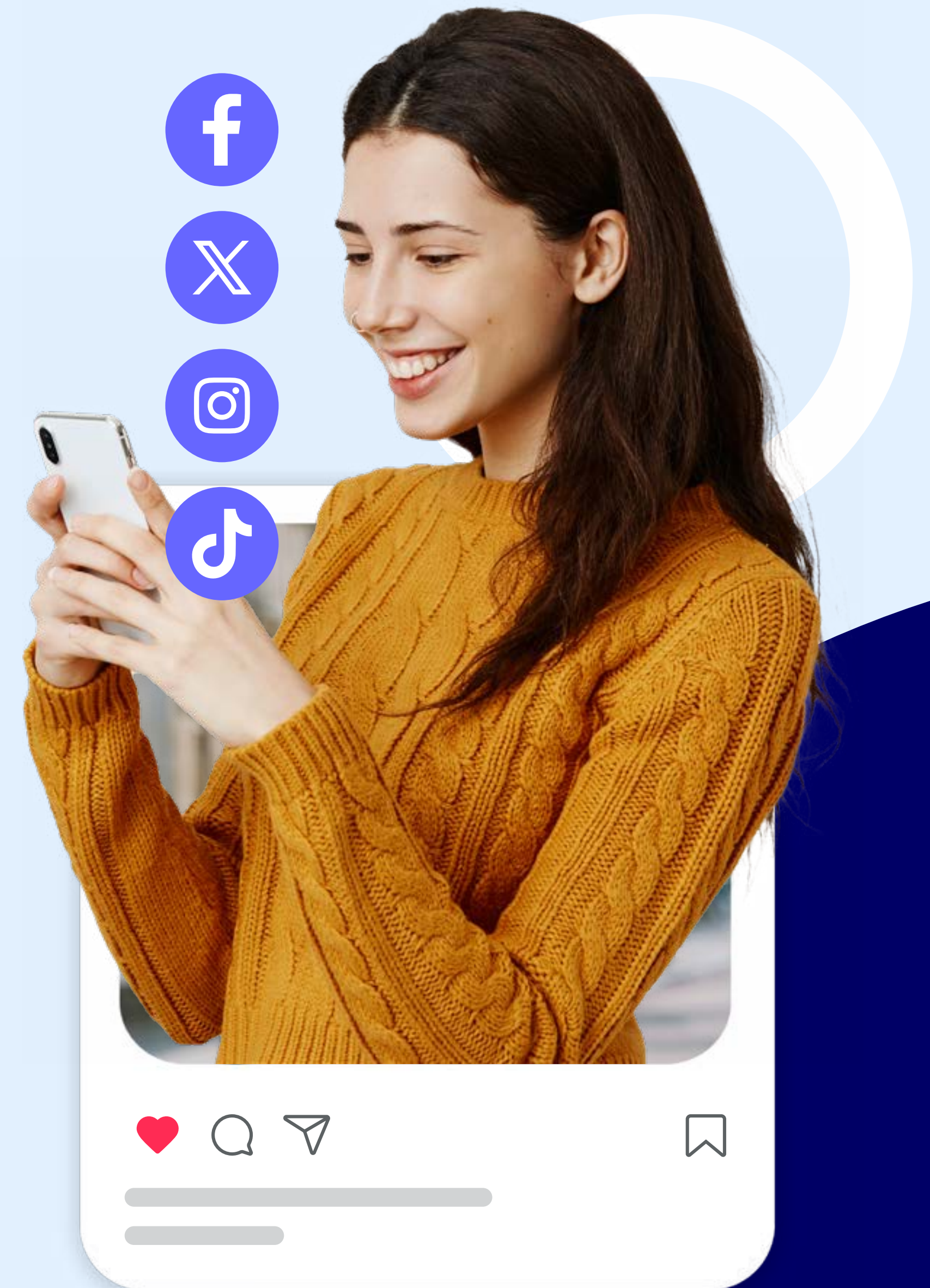




2025 REPORT

Social media benchmarks

The definitive overview of how brands are using social media today, based on Emplifi's exclusive data





INTRODUCTION

Social media benchmarks 2025: Key insights and strategies for your brand

Social media continues to be one of the most dynamic and influential spaces for brands, evolving rapidly with shifting audience behaviors, platform updates, and new content formats. Keeping up with these changes is critical, but knowing where to focus can be a challenge. That's why data-driven insights are more valuable than ever—helping brands cut through the noise, identify trends that matter, and make smarter strategic decisions.

This report is designed to do exactly that. Using internal data from brands across industries, we highlight the key social media trends that shaped 2024 and offer guidance for how to apply these insights in 2025. Whether it's organic content performance, the impact of short-form video, the effectiveness of paid advertising, or the shifting relevance of certain platforms, this report breaks down what's working, what's changing, and what brands should prioritize moving forward.

One of the biggest advantages of leveraging this data is the ability to anticipate trends rather than react to them. Instead of following social media shifts after they

happen, brands that use insights like these can proactively adjust their strategies to stay ahead. By understanding where audience growth is happening, which content formats drive the most engagement, and how advertising investments are shifting, brands can confidently allocate resources in ways that maximize impact.

Throughout this report, you'll find analysis on platform performance, emerging content trends, and strategic recommendations based on real brand activity. The goal isn't just to provide statistics – it's to help marketers make informed decisions that lead to tangible results.

Whether you're refining your organic content strategy, rethinking your paid social investments, or determining which platforms deserve the most attention, this report will serve as a roadmap for navigating the ever-changing social media landscape in 2025. By using these insights, brands can position themselves for stronger engagement, better returns, and greater long-term success in the digital space.





TABLE OF CONTENTS

What you will find in this report

This report highlights some of the most interesting and impactful findings from our examination of exclusive internal data from Emplifi’s thousands of clients, and offers actionable strategic guidance for brands based upon this information.

Methodology

This report’s data is based on an extensive review of the activity on 200,000+ brand social media accounts in 2023 and 2024.



(CLICK SECTIONS TO JUMP TO PAGE)

Platform growth and decline	04
Instagram Reels dominance	05
The power of collaboration	06
Instagram Story mentions	08
Facebook Reels vs. Instagram Reels	09
Brand account changes on X	11
Key takeaways	12
Appendix	13



PLATFORMS

Platform growth and decline: TikTok for growth, Instagram for reach

Social media platforms experienced major shifts in 2024, with some thriving while others declined. TikTok led the way, with a median monthly follower growth of 21%, making it the fastest-growing platform. Small and medium-sized brands saw the most traction, growing at 27% and 29%, while larger brands grew at a slower but steady pace. This highlights TikTok’s appeal, particularly among younger audiences.

Instagram maintained steady growth at 6% per month across all brand sizes. Its continued relevance is driven by the rise of Reels and collaborative content, making it essential for engagement. Meanwhile, Facebook’s organic growth stagnated, reinforcing its shift toward a more ad-driven platform. An Emplifi survey found that among frequent social media users, only 70% of Gen Z reported using Facebook, compared to 86% of Millennials and nearly 90% of Gen X and Boomers. While Facebook remains valuable for older audiences, brands targeting younger consumers should prioritize other platforms.

Twitter/X continued to decline, with the median brand profile shrinking by -0.8%. Many major brands reduced or abandoned their presence as engagement and ad spending dropped. With diminishing returns, brands must decide if Twitter/X still fits within their strategy or if resources would be better used elsewhere.

Strategic guidance for brands

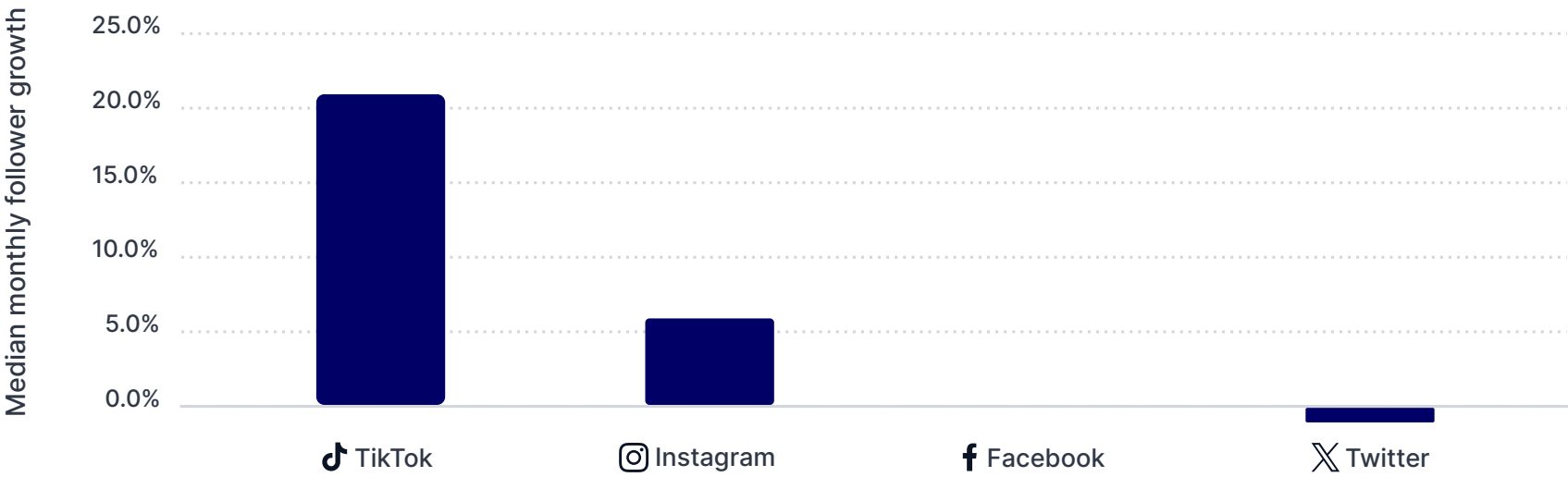
- 1. **Prioritize TikTok for rapid growth:** Leverage its rapid growth and strong Gen Z presence by creating content that aligns with the platform’s interactive, trend-driven nature.
- 2. **Capitalize on Instagram’s strengths:** Focus on Reels and collaborative posts to maintain visibility and engagement while benefiting from Instagram’s strong algorithm support for original content.
- 3. **Re-evaluate Facebook and X:** Facebook remains strong for older demographics, but brands targeting Gen Z should invest in TikTok and Instagram. Meanwhile, Twitter/X’s decline suggests a need for cautious investment.

Brand size definitions (by number of followers)

Extra Small: <10,000	Large: 100,000-1 million
Small: 10,000-50,000	Extra Large: 1 million to 10 million
Medium: 50,000-100,000	

Median monthly follower growth across platforms (2023–2024)

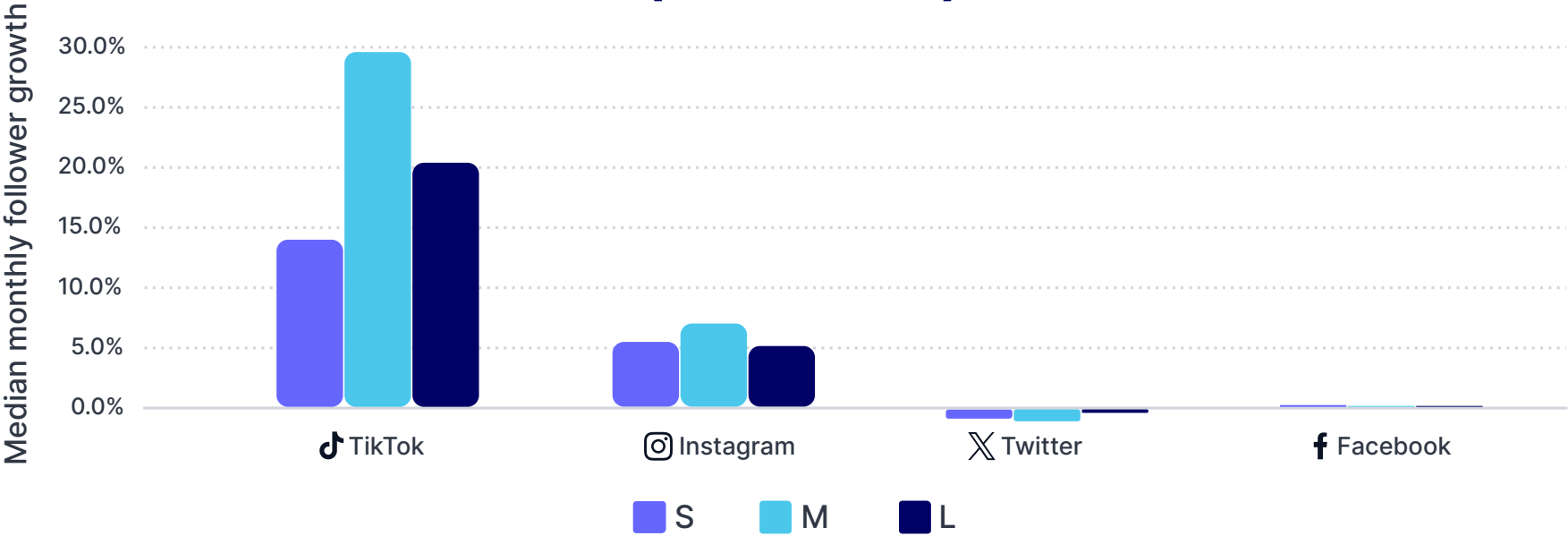
The median X profile loses followers



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: TikTok: 5,728 Brand pages; Instagram: 83,905 Brand pages; Twitter: 25,624 Brand pages; Facebook: 169,762 Brand pages;



Median monthly follower growth across platforms (2023–2024)



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2024
Sample: TikTok: 5,728 Brand pages; Instagram: 83,905 Brand pages; Twitter: 25,624 Brand pages; Facebook: 186,830 Brand pages;





INSTAGRAM REELS

Instagram Reels dominance: Reels edges TikTok for social media user engagement

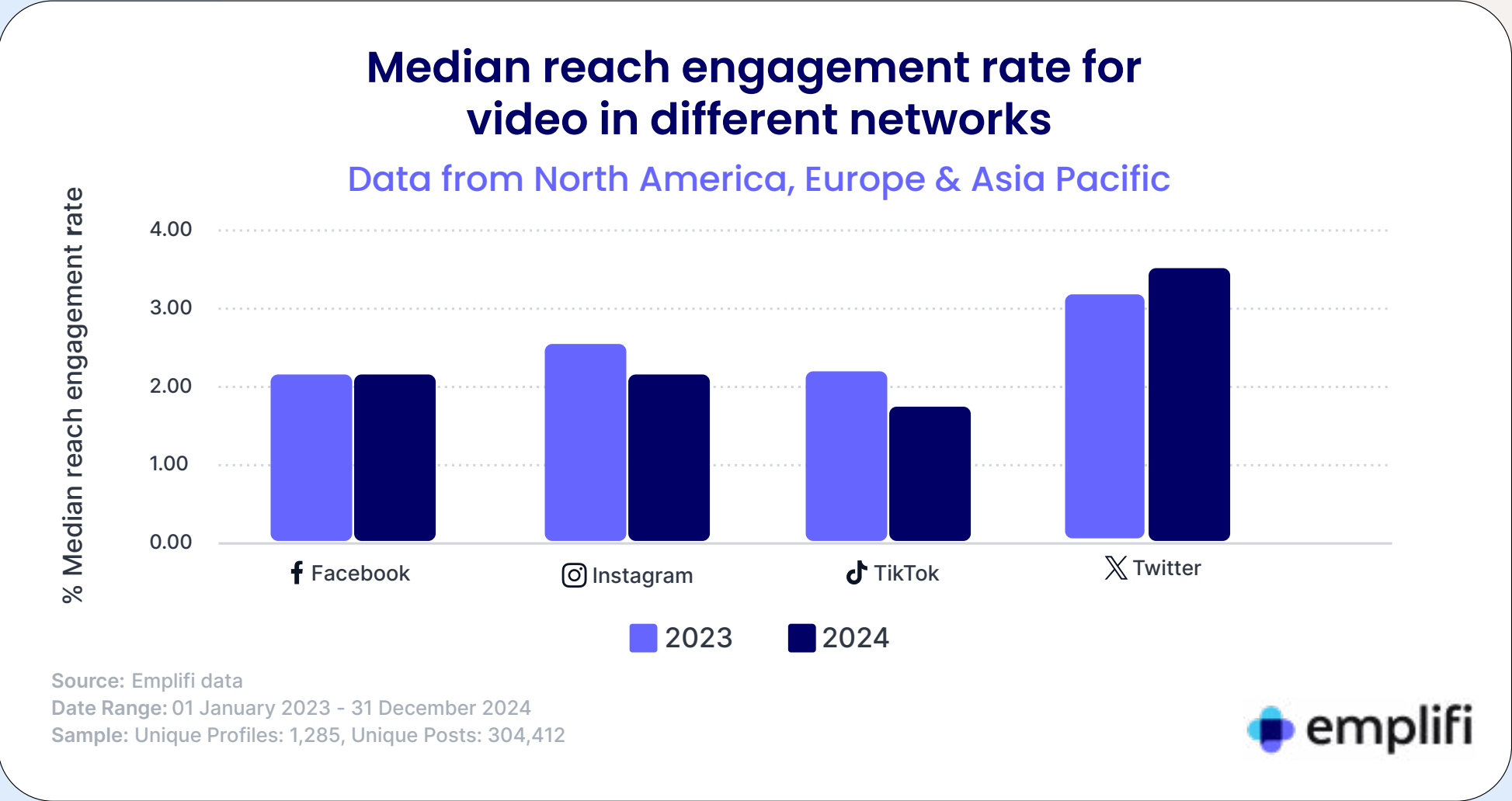
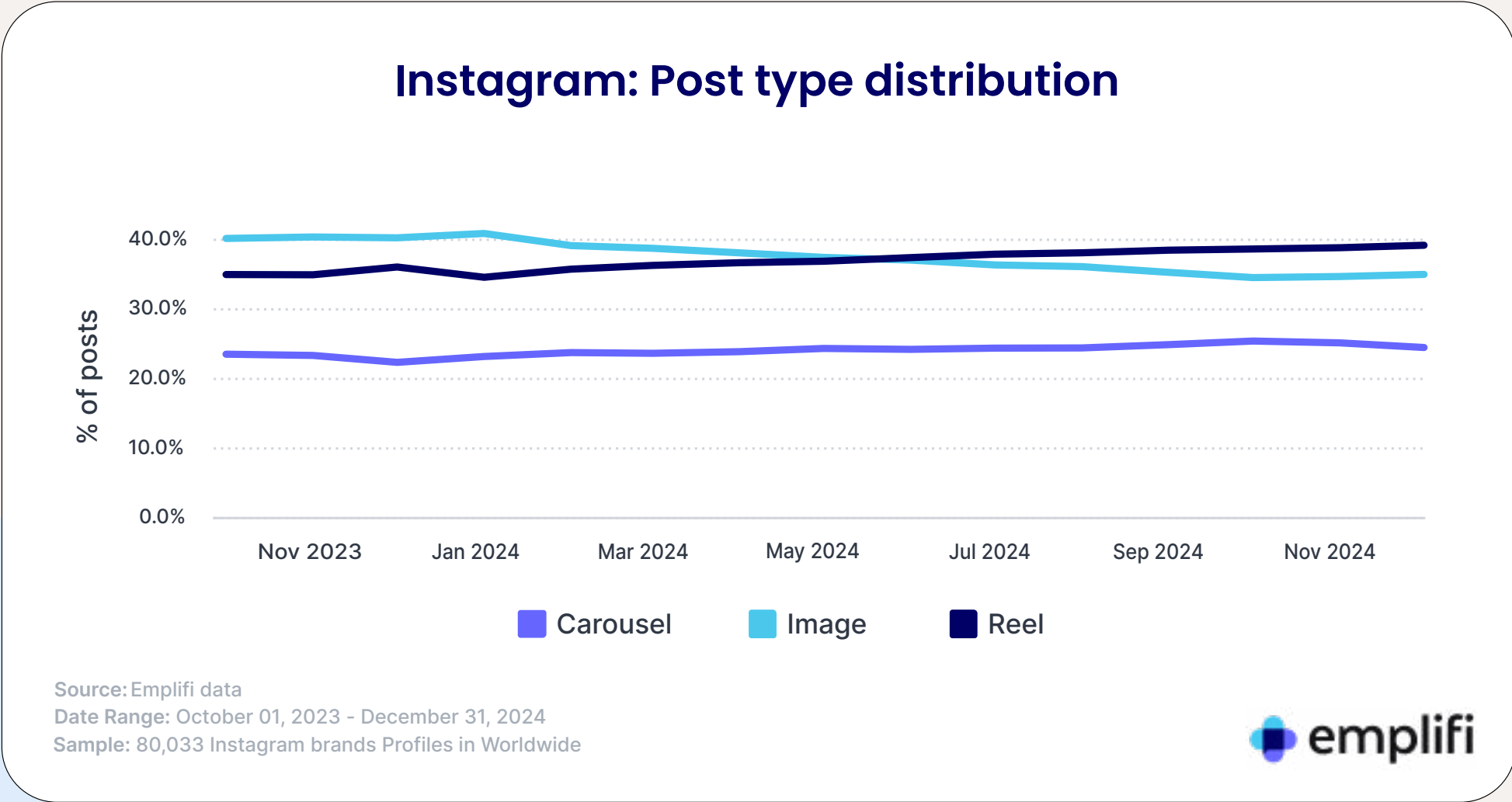
In 2024, Instagram Reels cemented their position as a dominant content format, reshaping how brands engage with audiences. For the first time, Reels surpassed images in frequency of use, accounting for 38% of brand posts by year's end, compared to 37% for image posts. This shift reflects the growing demand for short-form, visually engaging content that captures attention quickly.

Despite a slight dip in video reach engagement rates, from 2.6% in 2023 to 2.2% in 2024, Reels continue to outpace TikTok's average reach engagement rate of 1.7%, showcasing their effectiveness at connecting with a broad spectrum of social media users.

This impressive level of interaction makes Reels a valuable tool for both audience engagement and brand discovery. Also, the format's compatibility with collaborative posts has amplified its utility, allowing brands to extend their reach through partnerships with influencers or complementary businesses.

Strategic guidance for brands

- 1. Prioritize short-form video content:** Reels have become a critical component of any Instagram strategy. Brands should focus on producing visually engaging, high-quality Reels that capture attention within the first few seconds.
- 2. Leverage collaboration opportunities:** Collaborative Reels are a powerful way to increase reach and engagement. Partner with influencers, creators, or other brands whose audiences align with your own to maximize result.
- 3. Define clear objectives:** For engagement-focused campaigns, use Reels to deepen relationships with your current audience. For reach-focused efforts, design Reels to appeal to new users and take advantage of Instagram's algorithm, which favors original and interactive content.
- 4. Integrate Reels with broader strategies:** While Reels are effective, they should be part of a comprehensive strategy that includes images, carousels, and stories. This balance ensures a diversified approach that caters to different audience preferences, including using UGC on TikTok, where follower engagement (4.6%) is very strong.



If you'd like to get a personalized look at how Emplifi's comprehensive platform can help you execute your strategy on Instagram Reels and TikTok, let's talk.

Let's talk today

[Back to contents](#)



COLLABORATIONS

The power of collaboration: Post partnerships drive engagement for brands

Collaboration emerged as a major impact channel for brands on Instagram in 2024, driving engagement and extending reach. The percentage of brands posting collaborative content steadily increased, rising from 1.7% in Q1 2023 to 4.1% by Q4 2024.

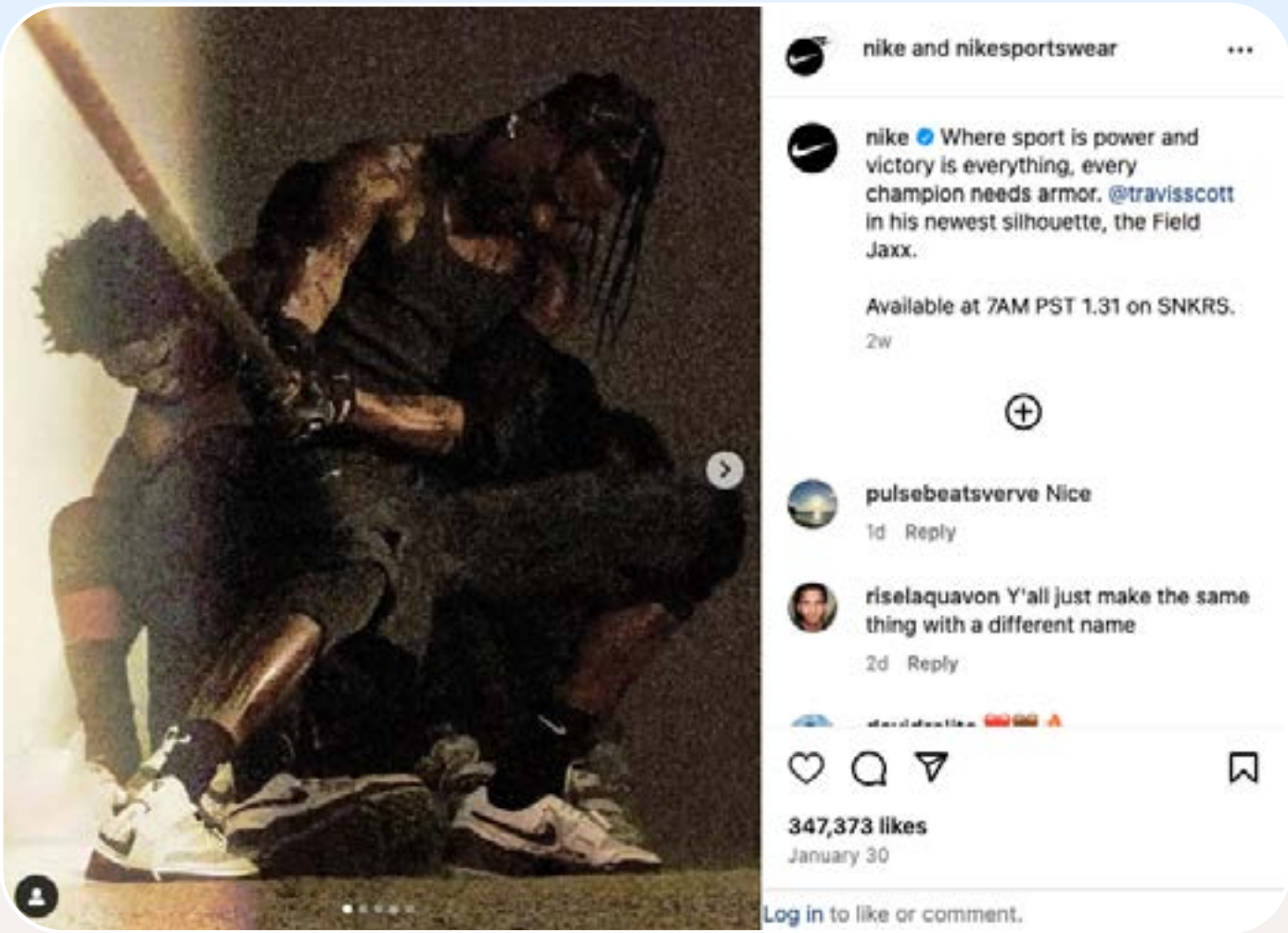
Collaborative posts – social posts where a brand tags another account – consistently delivered higher interaction rates, particularly for smaller brands. Extra Small (XS) brands saw a remarkable 3.4x boost in engagement from collaborative posts, while Small (S) brands experienced a 2.7x increase. Medium, Large, and Extra Large brands also benefited, with interaction lifts ranging from 1.3x to 2x.

This trend underscores the value of partnerships in social media strategy. Collaborative posts not only leverage the combined audiences of the participating brands or influencers but also align with Instagram’s algorithm, which prioritizes original and interactive content.

For smaller brands, collaboration provides a cost-effective way to achieve results typically associated with larger advertising budgets. Larger brands, while seeing less dramatic percentage increases, still gain meaningful engagement and an opportunity to showcase innovation and partnership.

Strategic guidance for brands

- 1. Make collaboration a priority:** Extra Small and Small brands, in particular, should focus on partnerships with influencers or complementary businesses to maximize engagement.
- 2. Choose the right partners:** Collaboration partners should align with your brand values and audience demographics. The best partnerships are mutually beneficial and resonate with both parties’ audiences.
- 3. Emphasize content quality:** Collaborative posts should be visually appealing and include authentic messaging to ensure credibility. Tailor these posts to Instagram’s style to maximize reach and engagement.
- 4. Track performance:** Use analytics tools to monitor the success of collaborative posts. Track metrics such as impressions, reach, and engagement to refine your collaboration strategy.
- 5. Integrate with broader content efforts:** Collaborative posts are highly effective but should complement a diverse content strategy that includes Reels, carousels, and other formats.





Collaborative content by the numbers

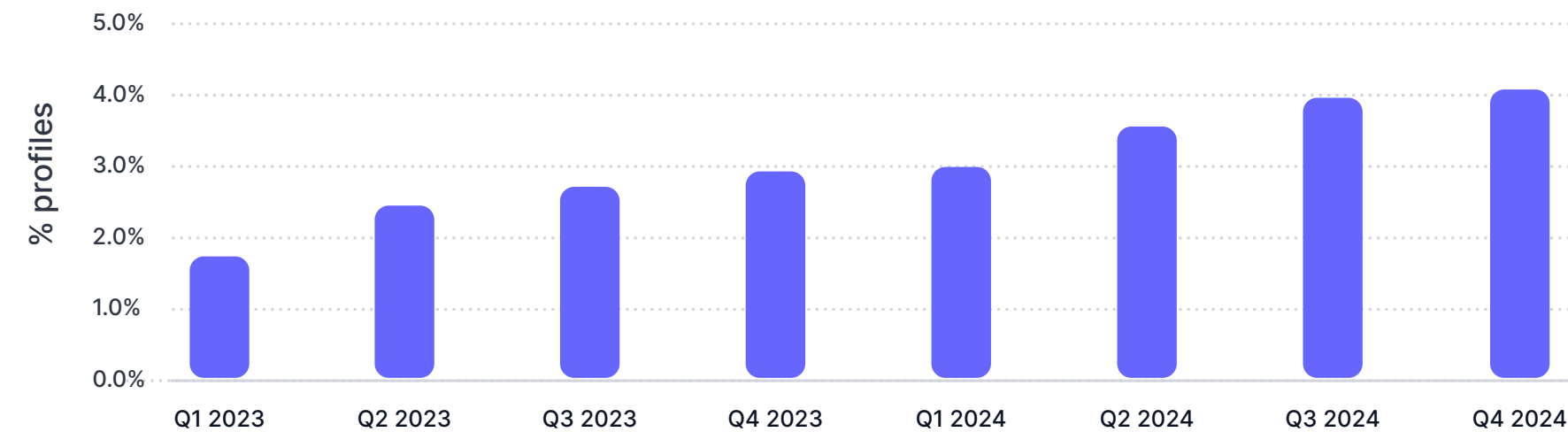
3.4x boost: Engagement lift for extra small brands in Q4 2024

2.7x boost: Engagement lift for Small brands

4.1%: Share of brands using collaborative posts by Q4 2024, more than double since Q1 2023

Algorithm advantage: Collaborative posts benefit from Instagram’s emphasis on original content

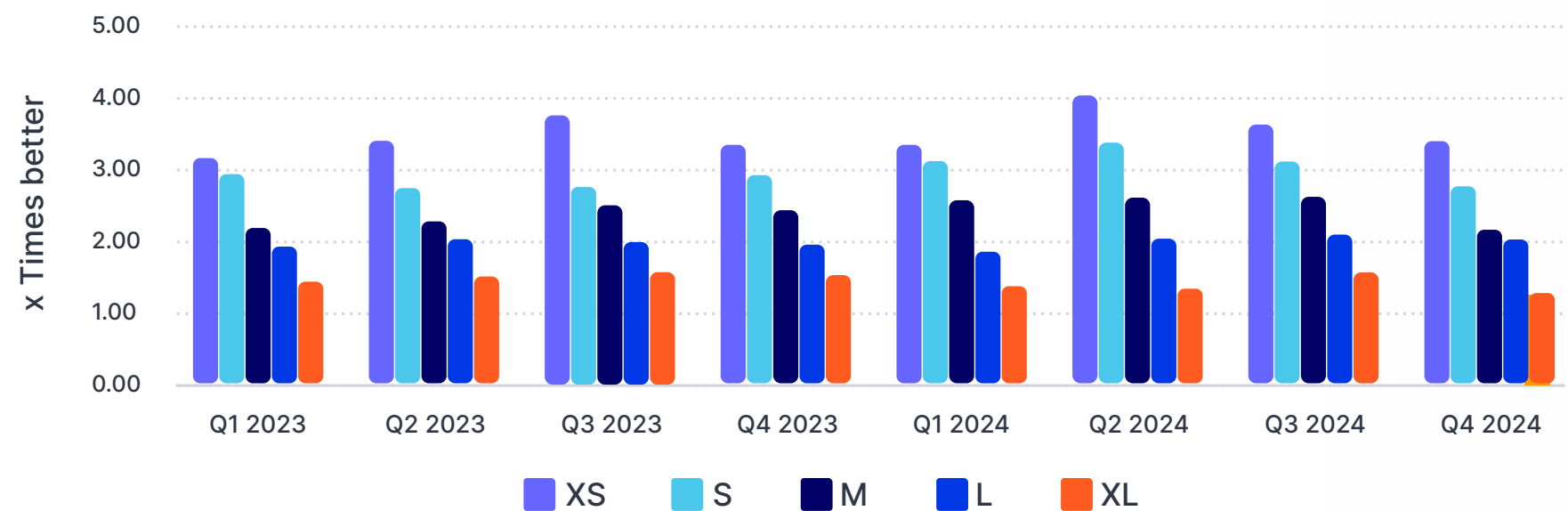
% of brands publishing collaborative posts
Collaborative posts are an efficient strategy to boost performance



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2024
Sample: 83965 Instagram Brands active during the time period.



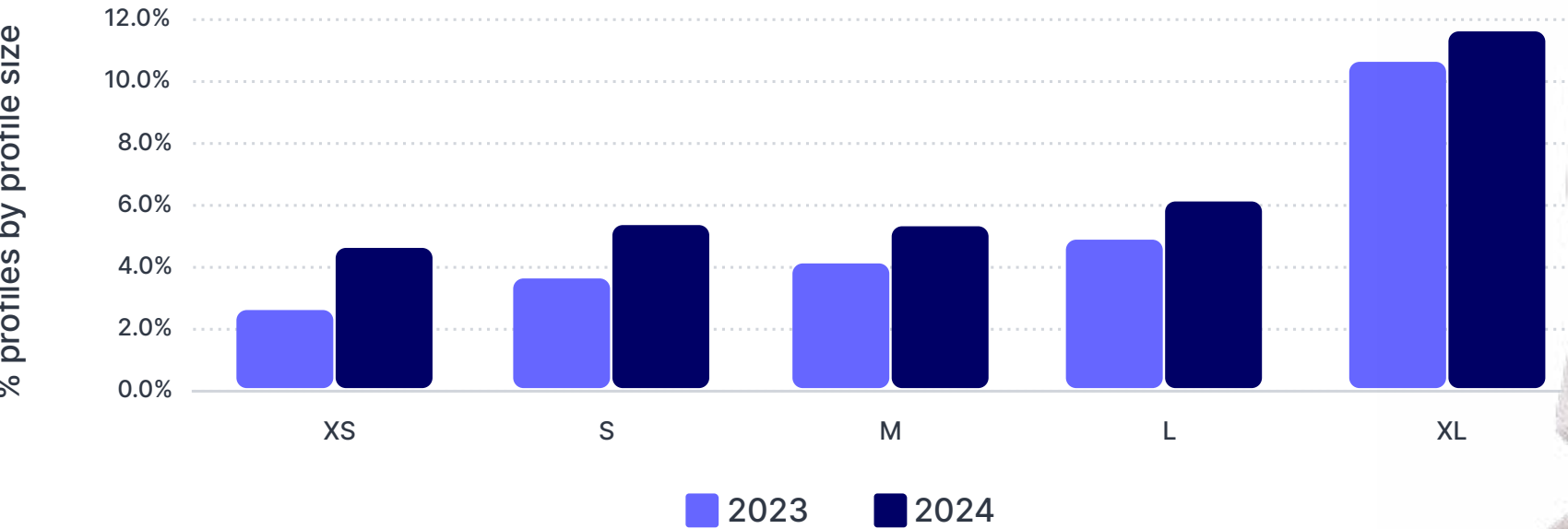
Interactions boost compared to regular posts
Smaller brands benefit the most



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: 4823 Instagram Brands that published collaborative posts.



% of brands publishing collaborative posts
Collaborative posts of small brands are gaining momentum



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2024
Sample: 83965 Instagram Brands active during the time period.





INSTAGRAM STORIES

Instagram Story mentions: UGC through Stories enhances reach, engagement

Instagram Story mentions have become a cornerstone for brands seeking to boost visibility, foster authentic engagement, and connect with broader audiences. Whether through organic interactions or paid partnerships, story mentions provide a powerful way to amplify a brand's presence without substantial investment.

When a user mentions a brand in their story, their audience is introduced to the brand, often leading to profile visits and new followers. This type of exposure is particularly impactful when driven by influencers or prominent profiles, enhancing a brand's credibility and trustworthiness. In 2024, 93% of profiles were mentioned in at least one story each quarter, with the median profile receiving mentions in approximately 70 stories – outpacing the number of stories they publish themselves.

The data highlights the significance of UGC through story mentions. Among the top 10% of profiles receiving the most mentions, incoming stories outnumbered published stories by up to 10 times. These brands, often in industries like fashion, beauty, and sports travel, benefit from a cumulative reach far exceeding their own posting activity.

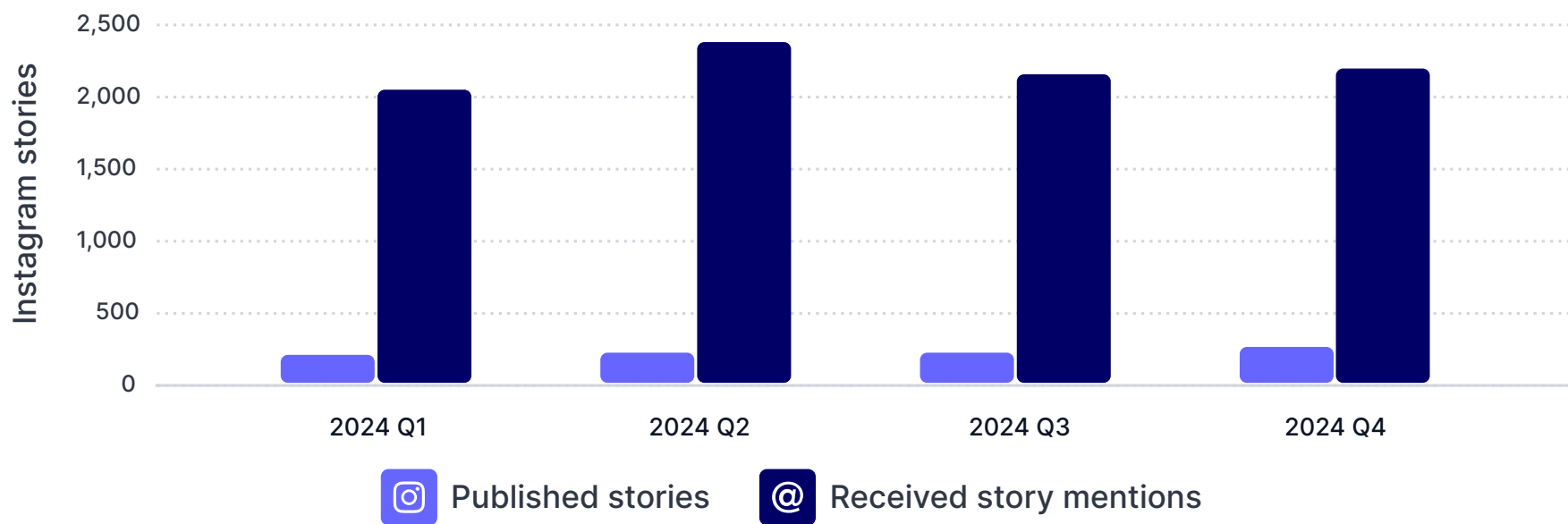
The correlation between story mentions and a profile's follower count (0.74) further underscores the importance of building an engaged audience. Additionally, profiles that actively publish stories tend to see more mentions, indicating that consistent engagement through stories encourages users to tag and interact with the brand.

Strategic guidance for brands

- 1. Encourage story mentions:** Actively invite your audience to tag your profile in their stories. Simple prompts, contests, or engaging content can motivate users to share their experiences.
- 2. Engage with mentions:** Resharing mentions on your own story fosters two-way interaction, strengthens connections, and encourages further tagging.
- 3. Leverage UGC:** Use story mentions as an authentic, low-cost source of content. Highlight mentions from influencers or satisfied customers to enhance credibility and build trust.
- 4. Be active on stories:** Regularly publishing stories signals to users that you engage with mentions, motivating them to tag you more frequently.
- 5. Find users who will create UGC:** Identify engaged customers who already tag your brand and build relationships with them. Consider incentivizing UGC creation through giveaways, repost opportunities, or exclusive perks.
- 6. Source UGC creatively:** Encourage customers to share their experiences through branded hashtags, in-store signage, product packaging, or email campaigns that prompt them to post and tag your brand.

Top 10% of profiles with the most story mentions

Top profiles receive 10x more story mentions than the number of stories they publish

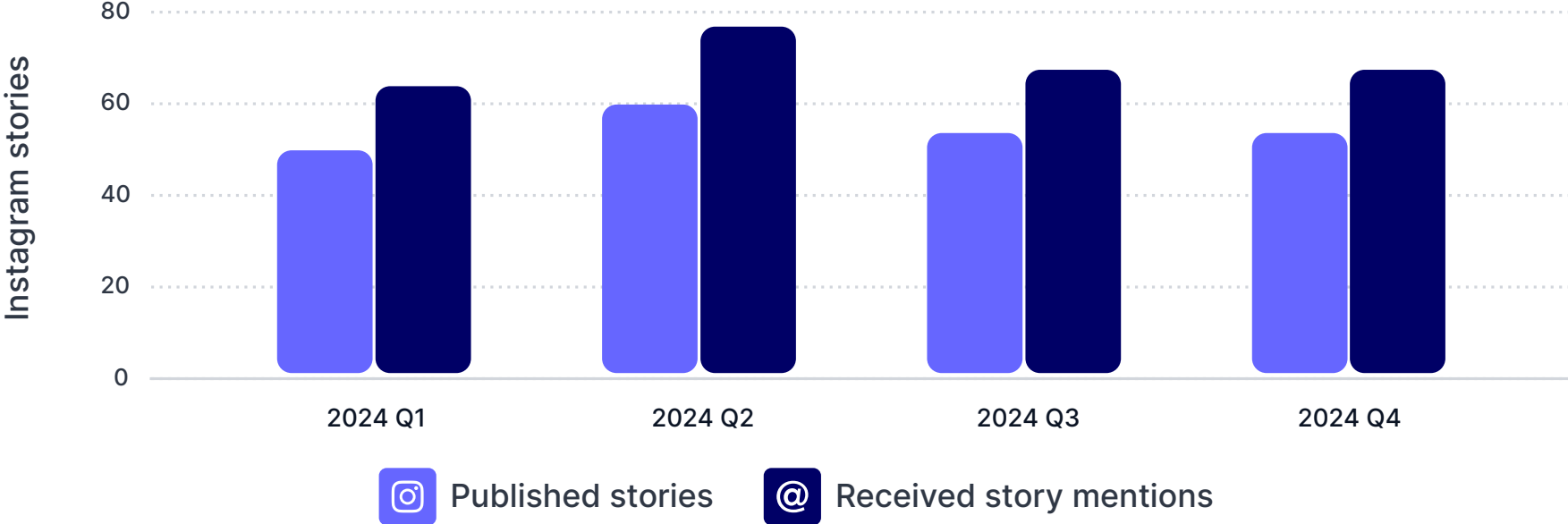


Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2024 - 31 December 2024
Sample: Data gathered from 5,165 Instagram profiles



More instagram stories about profiles are being created by others

Story mentions contribute to visibility and credibility



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2024 - 31 December 2024
Sample: Data gathered from 5,165 Instagram profiles





REELS ADS

Facebook Reels vs. Instagram Reels: Choose wisely

Reels content dominated ad strategies in 2024, with both Facebook and Instagram offering distinct strengths for marketers. Facebook Reels emerged as a budget-friendly option for brands seeking to maximize reach, thanks to its low CPM rates and broad audience base. Median ad spend per account on Facebook Reels more than doubled in 2024, reaching \$763 by Q4, while Instagram Reels' median ad spend was \$317.

On the other hand, Instagram Reels excel in engagement, making them the preferred choice for brands focused on deeper connections with their audiences. With lower CPM and CPC than Feed ads, Instagram Reels remain a cost-effective tool for building awareness while delivering strong interaction rates.

Brands are increasingly using both platforms in complementary ways, leveraging Facebook for large-scale awareness campaigns and Instagram for engagement-driven strategies. This balance enables marketers to maximize their return on investment while tailoring content to each platform's unique strengths.



Strategic guidance for brands

- 1. Choose based on your goals:**
 - > For reach and cost efficiency, prioritize Facebook Reels, where lower CPM allows broader audience targeting.
 - > For engagement and relationship building, focus on Instagram Reels, which deliver higher interaction rates.
- 2. Create platform-specific content:**

Facebook Reels benefit from relatable, wide-appeal content, while Instagram Reels demand visually polished, creative posts with strong hooks.
- 3. Combine Reels with other formats:**


Balance Reels ads with Feed and Stories placements to diversify your approach and meet varied audience preferences.
- 4. Monitor and refine:**

Use analytics to track CPM, CTR, impressions, and engagement across platforms. Shift budgets dynamically to the platform delivering the best performance.
- 5. Experiment with new strategies:**


Test collaborations and UGC within Reels to boost visibility and credibility on both platforms.

The Emplifi platform is the perfect launching pad for all your Reels marketing activities. Let's set up a time to talk about your brand's specific needs and how we can help you succeed.


Facebook Reels vs. Instagram Reels: key metrics




Facebook Reels median spend (Q4 2024): \$763 per account



Instagram Reels median spend (Q4 2024): \$317 per account



Facebook advantage: Lower CPM, broader audience reach



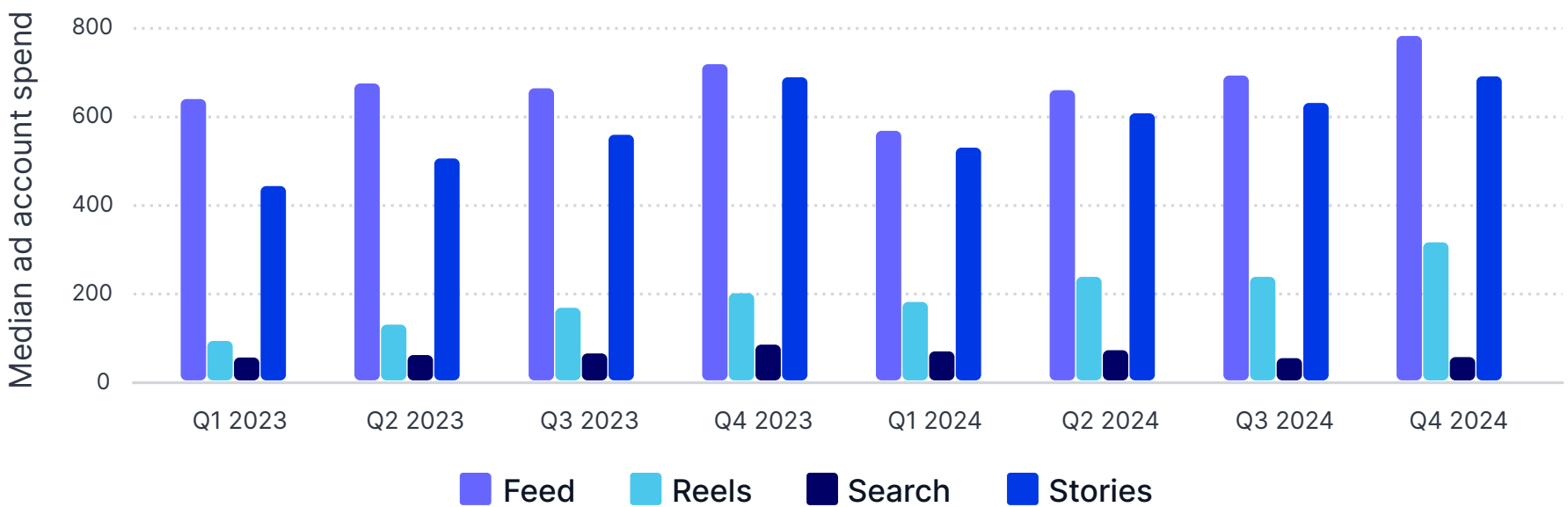
Instagram strength: Higher engagement, prioritization of original content

Let's talk today



Quarterly comparison of ad account spend (USD) on Instagram

Worldwide brands

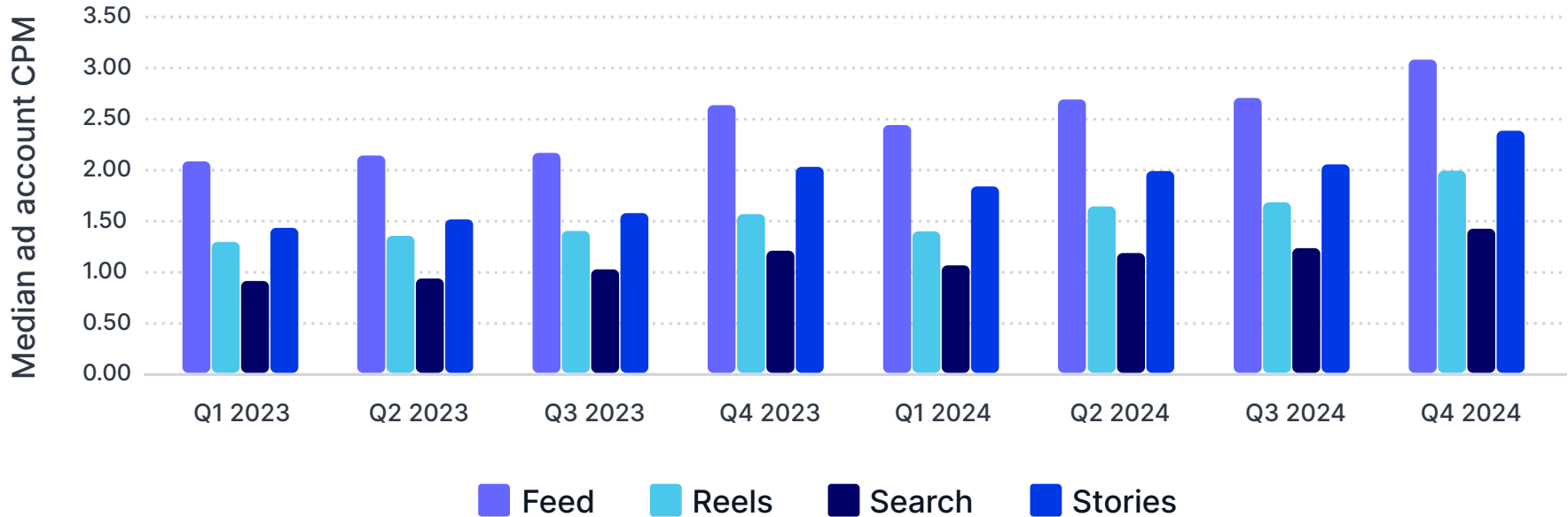


Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: 7,997 Instagram Ad Accounts



Quarterly comparison of ads CPM (USD) on Instagram

Worldwide brands

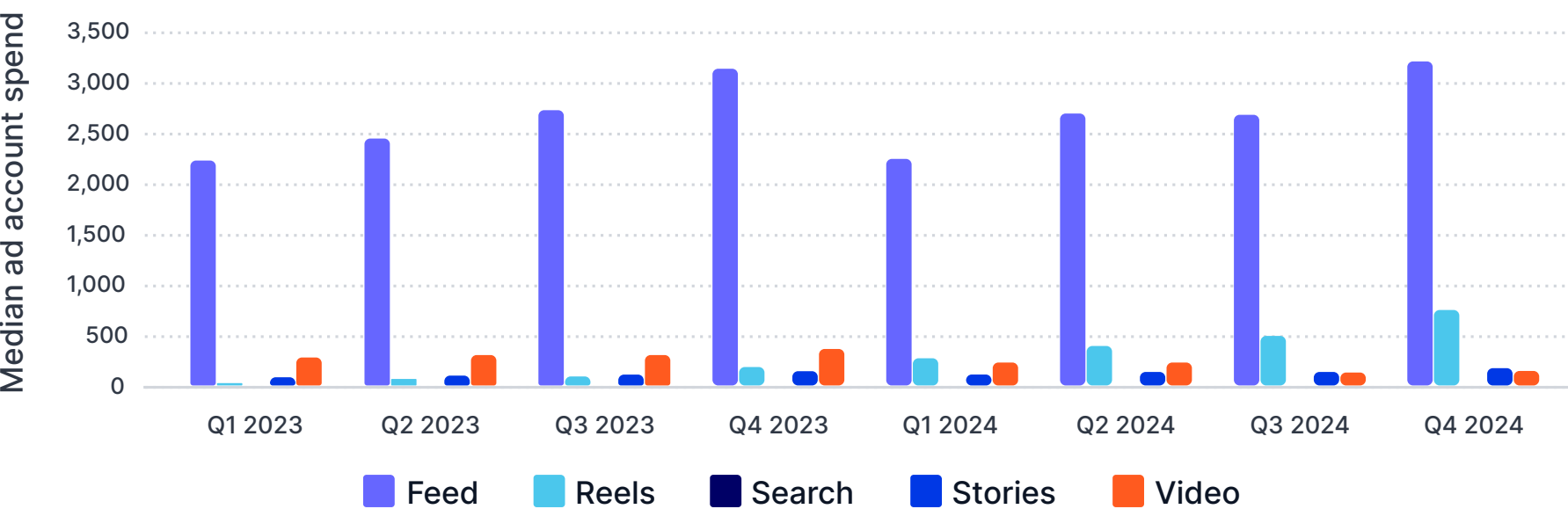


Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: 7,997 Instagram Ad Accounts



Quarterly comparison of ad account spend (USD) on Facebook

Worldwide brands

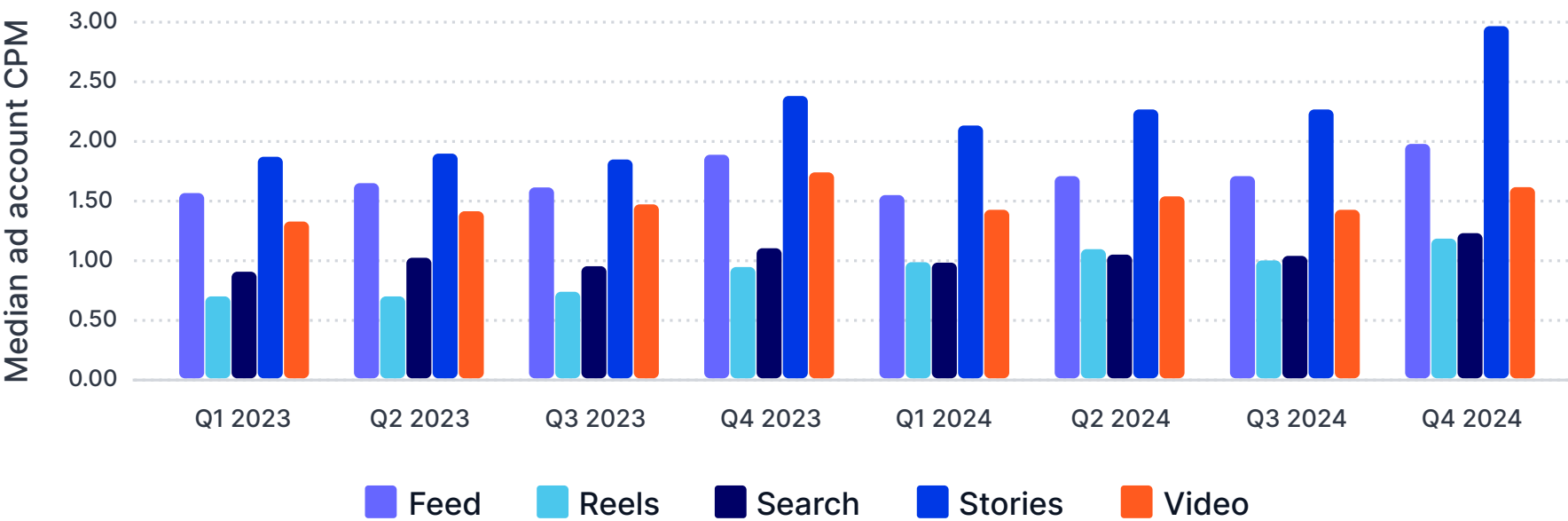


Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: 7,838 Facebook Ad Accounts



Quarterly comparison of ads CPM (USD) on Facebook

Worldwide brands



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: 7,838 Facebook Ad Accounts





UPDATES FOR X

Brand account changes on X: Data shows some brands reducing ad investment

In 2024, there was a decline in brand activity on X, as the platform saw decreases in active profiles, ad spending, and overall engagement. The number of active brand profiles shrank across all regions, with the steepest declines in North America and Europe. Many major brands significantly reduced activity, suggesting lack of return on investment.

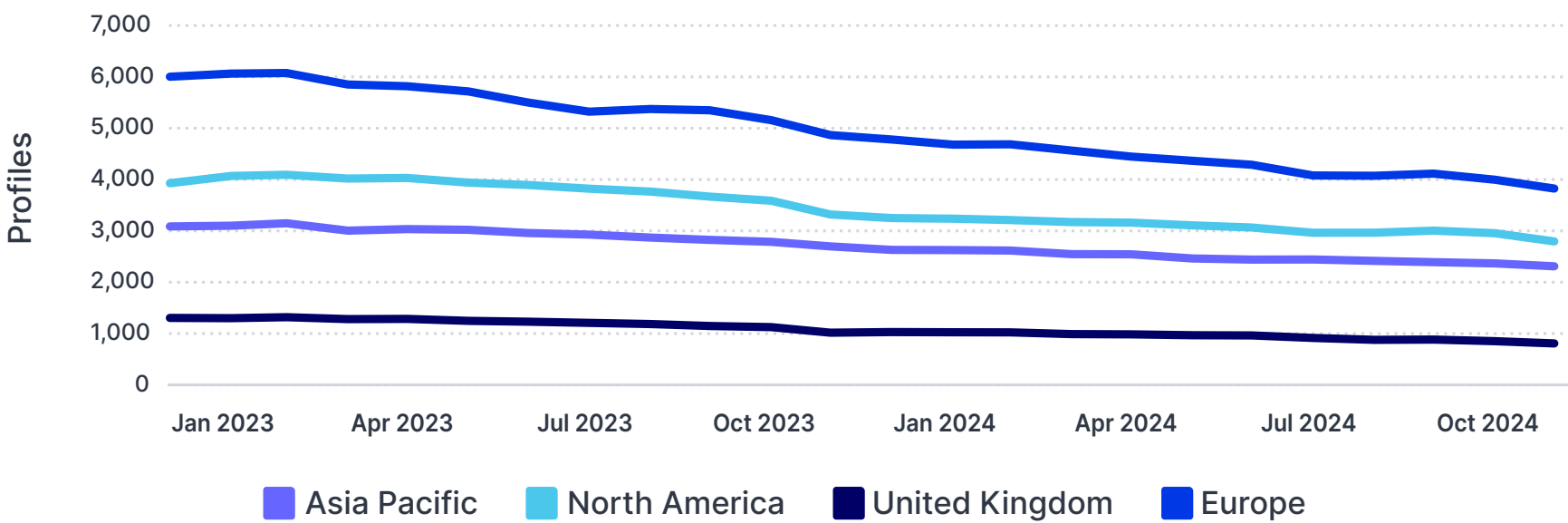
Ad spending on X also dropped, with a number of large accounts opting not to run any ads during 2023 and beyond. The platform's median profile growth was negative at -0.8%, reflecting diminishing returns for brand presence. Despite its low CPM and CTR, they haven't recaptured advertiser interest fully – though there was a bit of a bounceback in Q4 – especially when platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook are delivering somewhat stronger results.

While X's declining activity may concern some marketing teams, the platform's biggest value lies in niche opportunities, such as targeting highly specific audiences or leveraging its trending content format. The data suggests here that brands should evaluate if X aligns with their broader marketing goals and make adjustments accordingly.

Strategic guidance for brands

- 1. **Evaluate X's impact:** Consider whether the platform's declining activity aligns with your goals. This is a good time to evaluate all ad channels and make adjustments that reflect your brand goals and values.
- 2. **Incorporate other platforms:** Platforms like TikTok and Instagram offer strong audience growth and engagement, making them reliable investments for both organic and paid efforts.
- 3. **Balance video content spend:** X's venture into short-form video isn't yet competitive with Instagram Reels and TikTok, where engagement is consistently higher.
- 4. **Invest in platforms with growth:** Allocate at least some resources to platforms like TikTok, which saw a 44% median growth rate in 2024, or Instagram, which continues to innovate with features like collaborative posts and Reels.
- 5. **Monitor platform-specific trends:** While brands overall have negative follower growth on X, some content types (e.g., entertainment) may still perform well. Brands targeting niche audiences should track performance closely and take advantage of low CPM/CTR where they can.

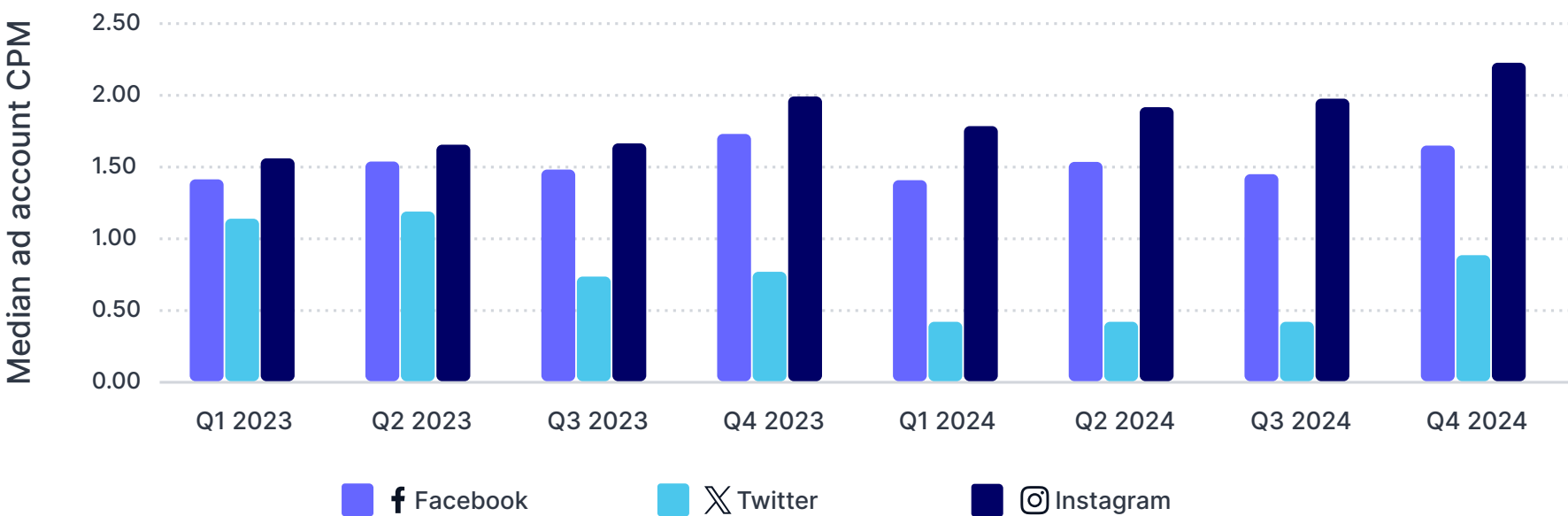
Number of brand profiles in dataset with organic posting activity per month
Activity defined as at least one post that month, without worldwide



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: 16,771 twitter/x profiles where we had snapshots for all 24 months



Quarterly comparison of ads CPM (USD)
Worldwide brands



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: 7,838 Facebook Ad Accounts, 7,997 Instagram Ad Accounts, 854 Twitter Ad Accounts





TAKEAWAYS

Wrapping up: TikTok keeps growing, Instagram Reels hits its stride

As brands navigate the evolving social media landscape in 2025, the data from 2024 reveals a clear roadmap for maximizing growth and engagement. Platforms are shifting rapidly, with some presenting unprecedented opportunities while others face declining relevance. To succeed, brands must stay agile, data-driven, and focused on creating meaningful connections with their audiences.

Tactically, that means brands need to diversify their strategy to avoid the trap of being too dependent on any one area. Some key points for brands here:

- 1

Ensure you recalibrate based on your audience's behavior and understand where they spend their time
- 2

Keep an eye on spending on social platforms like X and Facebook, and adjust down as necessary
- 3

If you haven't done it yet, double down on Tiktok and Instagram (assuming this makes sense for your audience)
- 4

Find more UGC and partner with more brands to increase your voice impact
- 5

Measure, adjust, repeat

As 2025 unfolds, the most successful brands will be those that remain adaptable, embrace platform-specific strategies, and leverage data to inform their decisions. Whether it's creating short-form video content, investing in collaborations, or testing innovative advertising formats, the key is to focus on what resonates most with audiences while staying ahead of emerging trends.

The road ahead may be challenging, but it's also filled with opportunity. Social media's dynamic nature is a powerful tool for growth, connection, and creativity. By prioritizing platforms and strategies that align with their goals, brands can maximize their impact and drive meaningful results in 2025 and beyond.

We'd love to be part of empowering your team to succeed on social in 2025. Let's set up a quick talk to see how we can help you achieve your goals this year.

Let's talk today

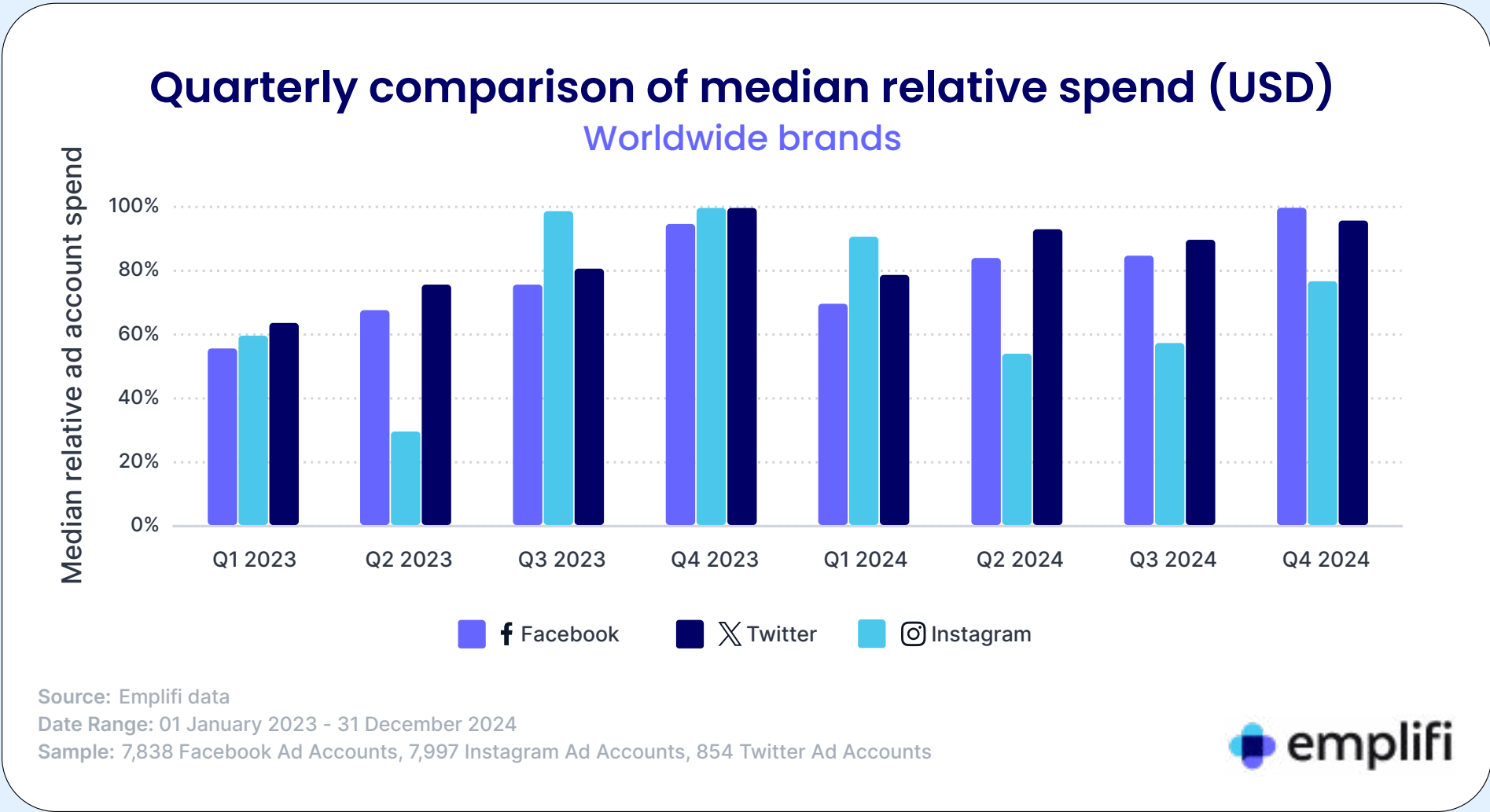
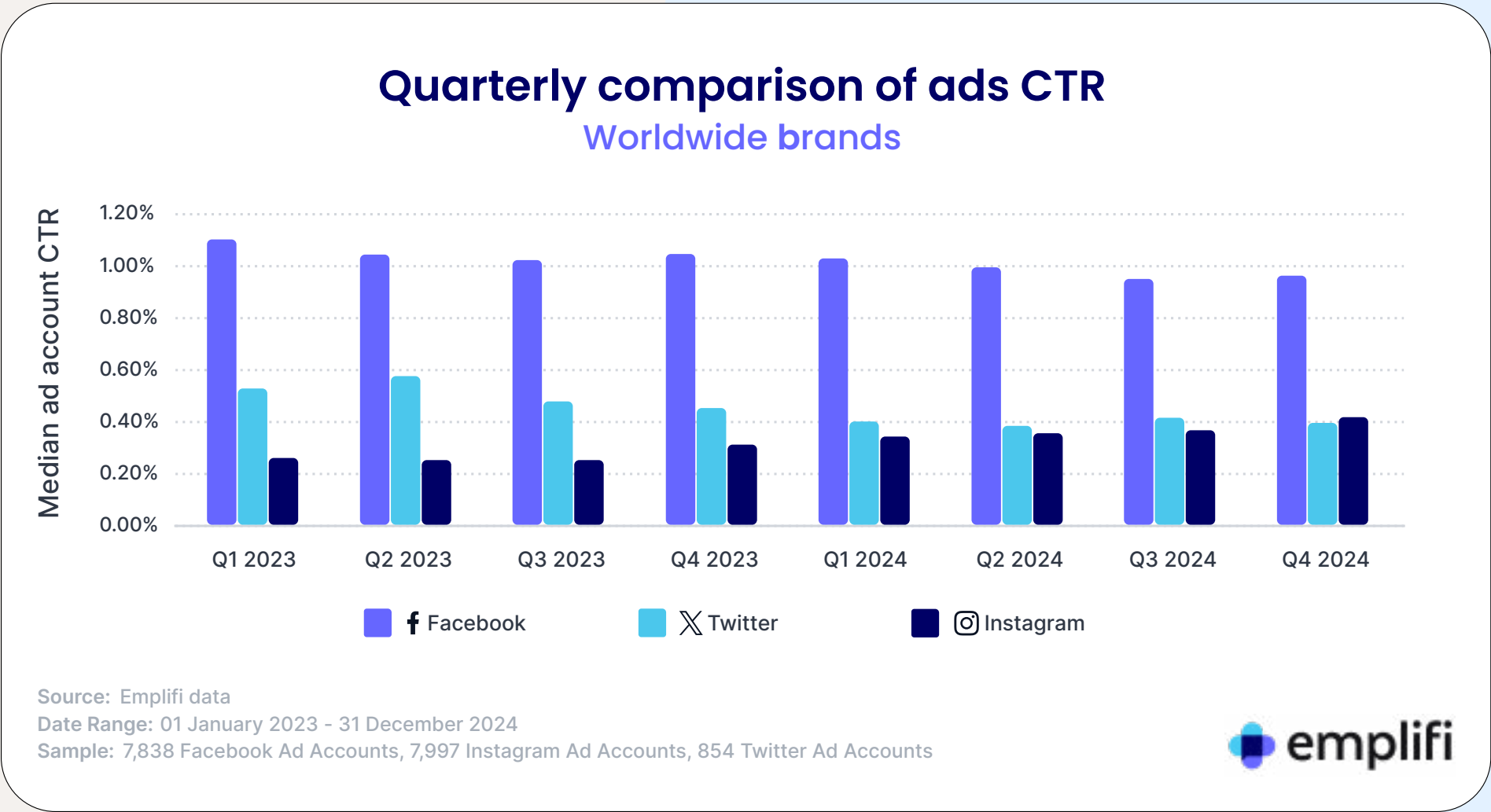
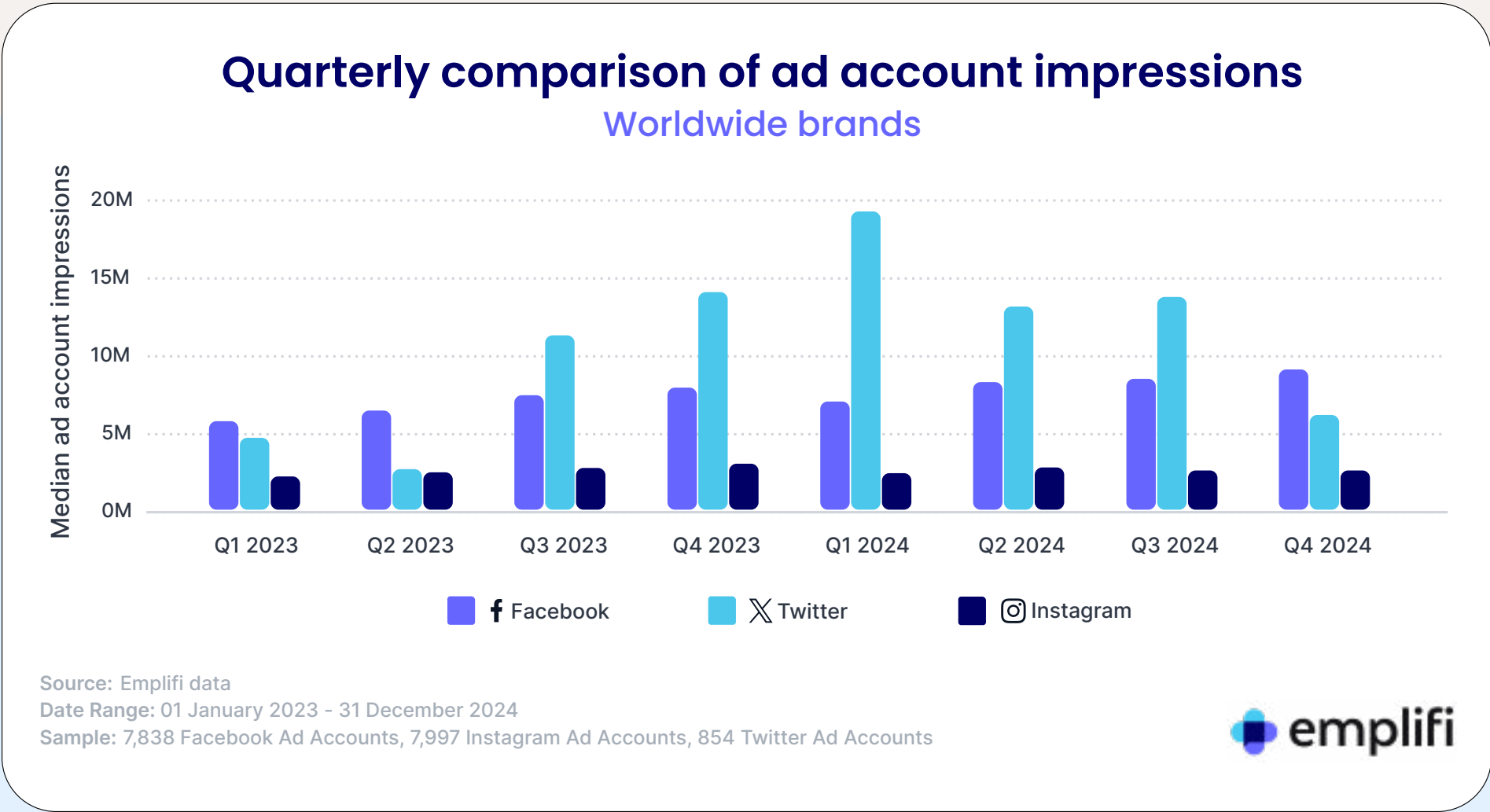
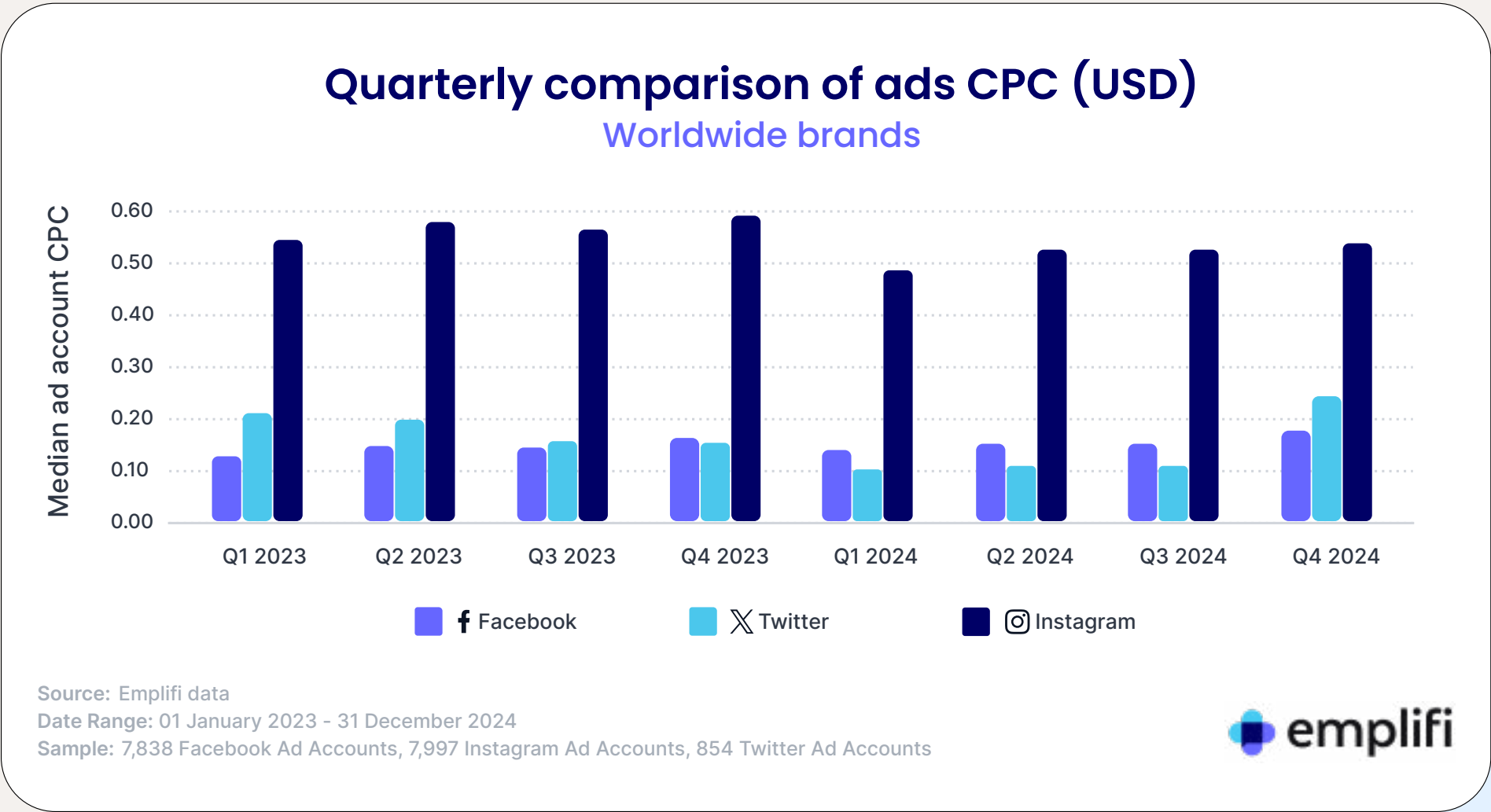
Back to contents





Appendix

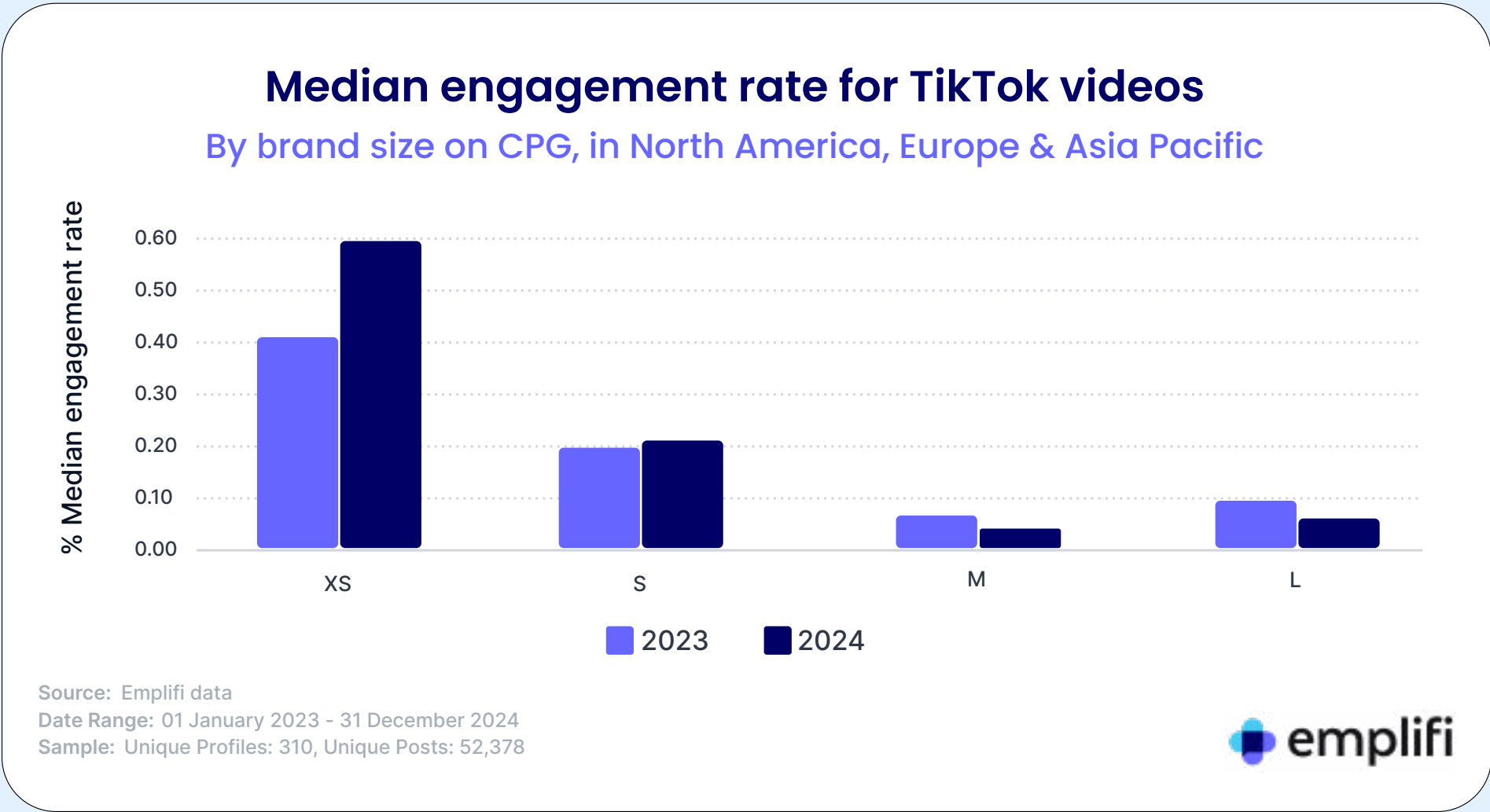
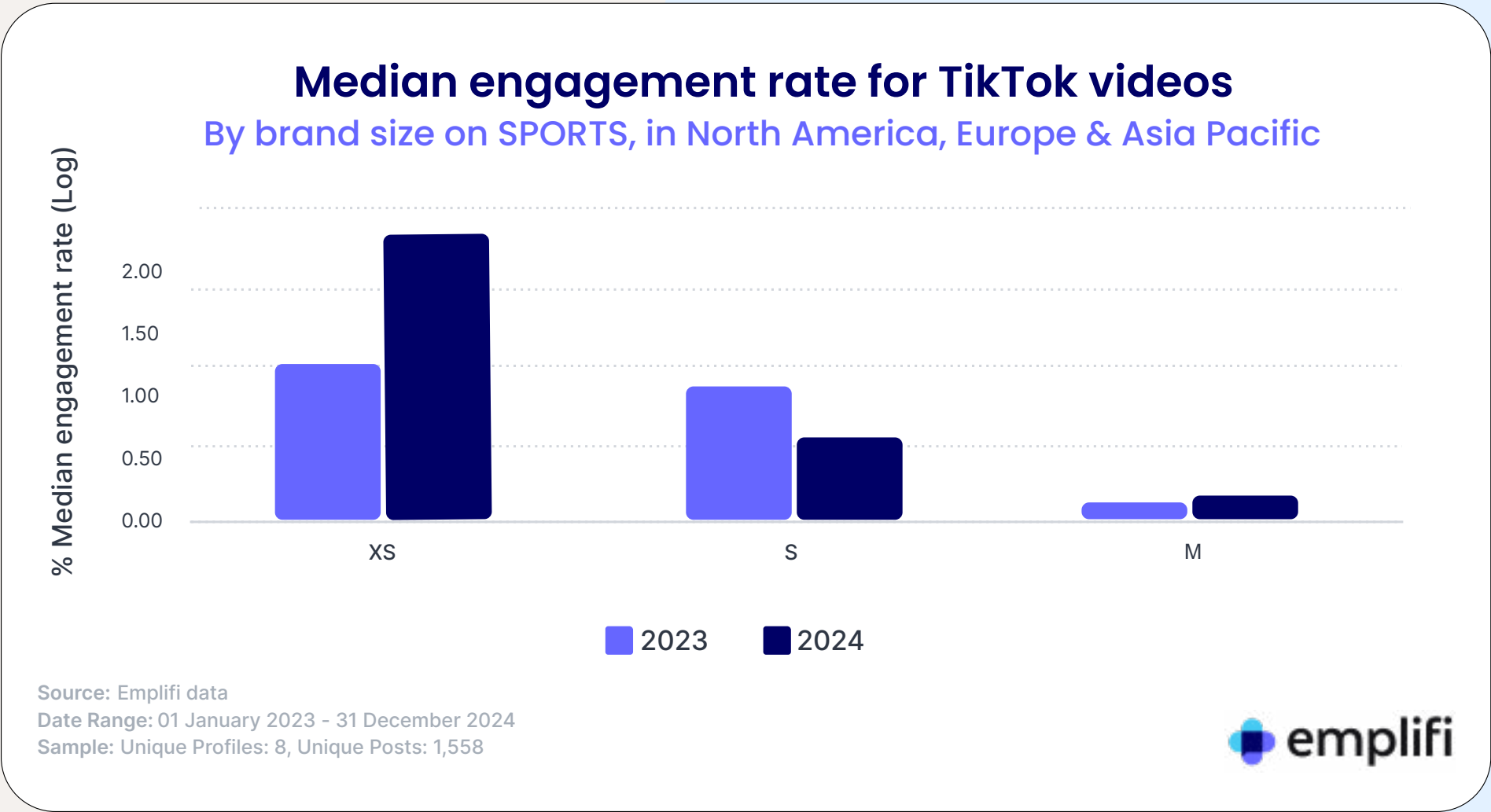
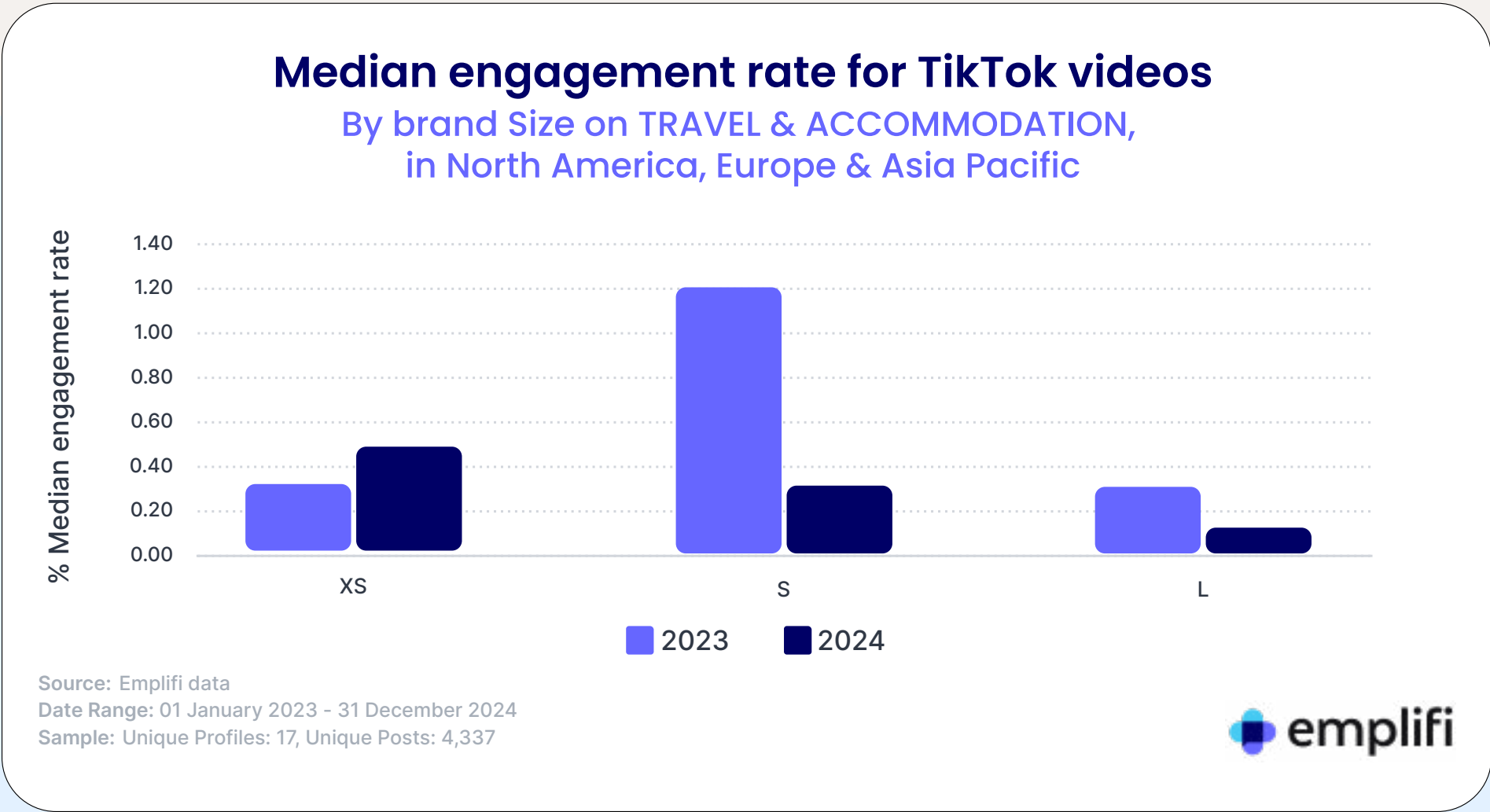
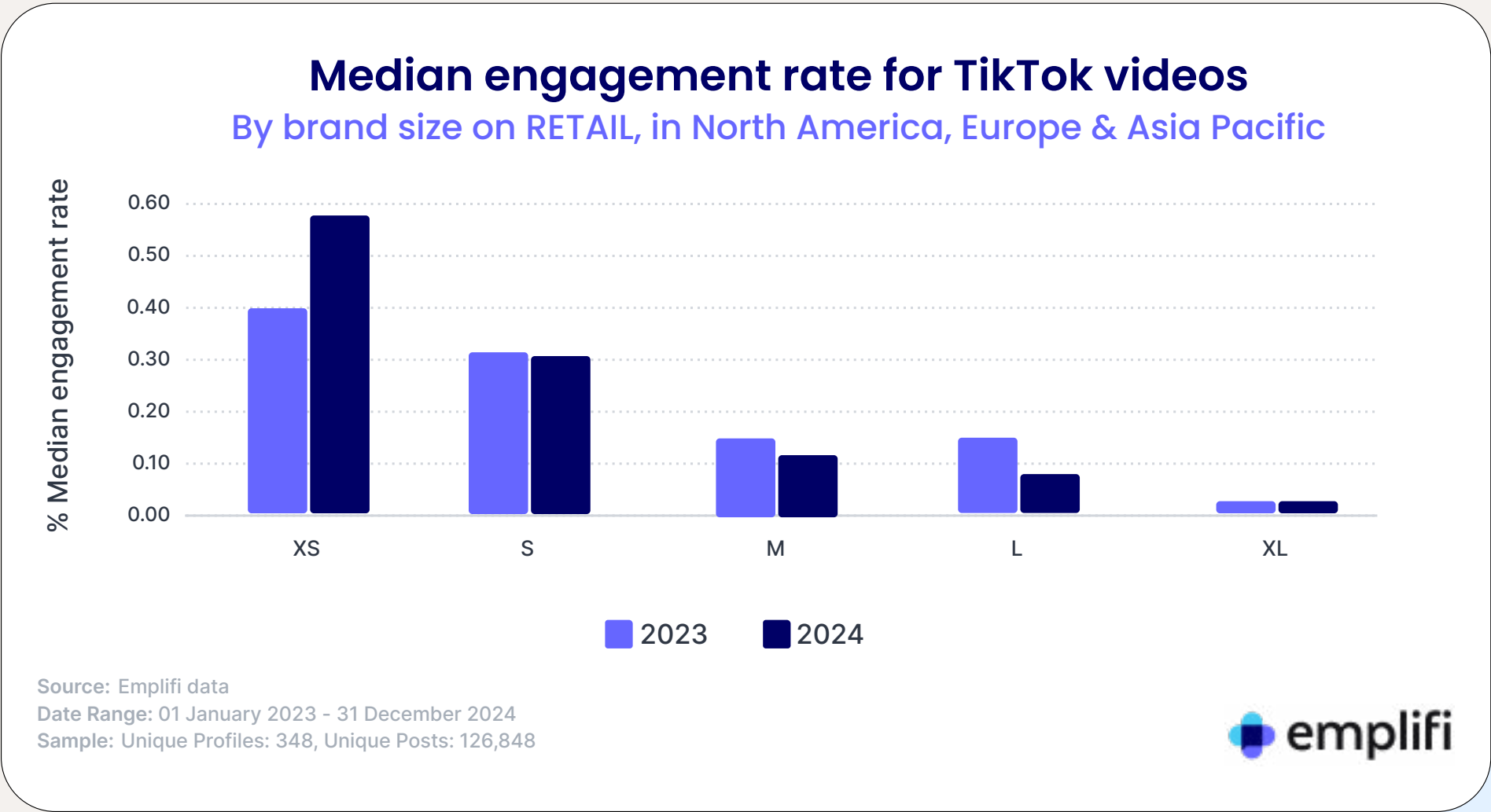
Facebook saw the lowest CPC and the strongest numbers in CTR, impressions, and – perhaps unsurprisingly – ad account impressions in Q4 2024. Meanwhile, Instagram’s high CPC and low CTR/impressions didn’t depress its ad spend.





Appendix

TikTok engagement rates grew for Extra Small (<10,000 followers) accounts across all industries we looked at in 2024. Results were more mixed for larger brand accounts, with some large drops but most holding steady.

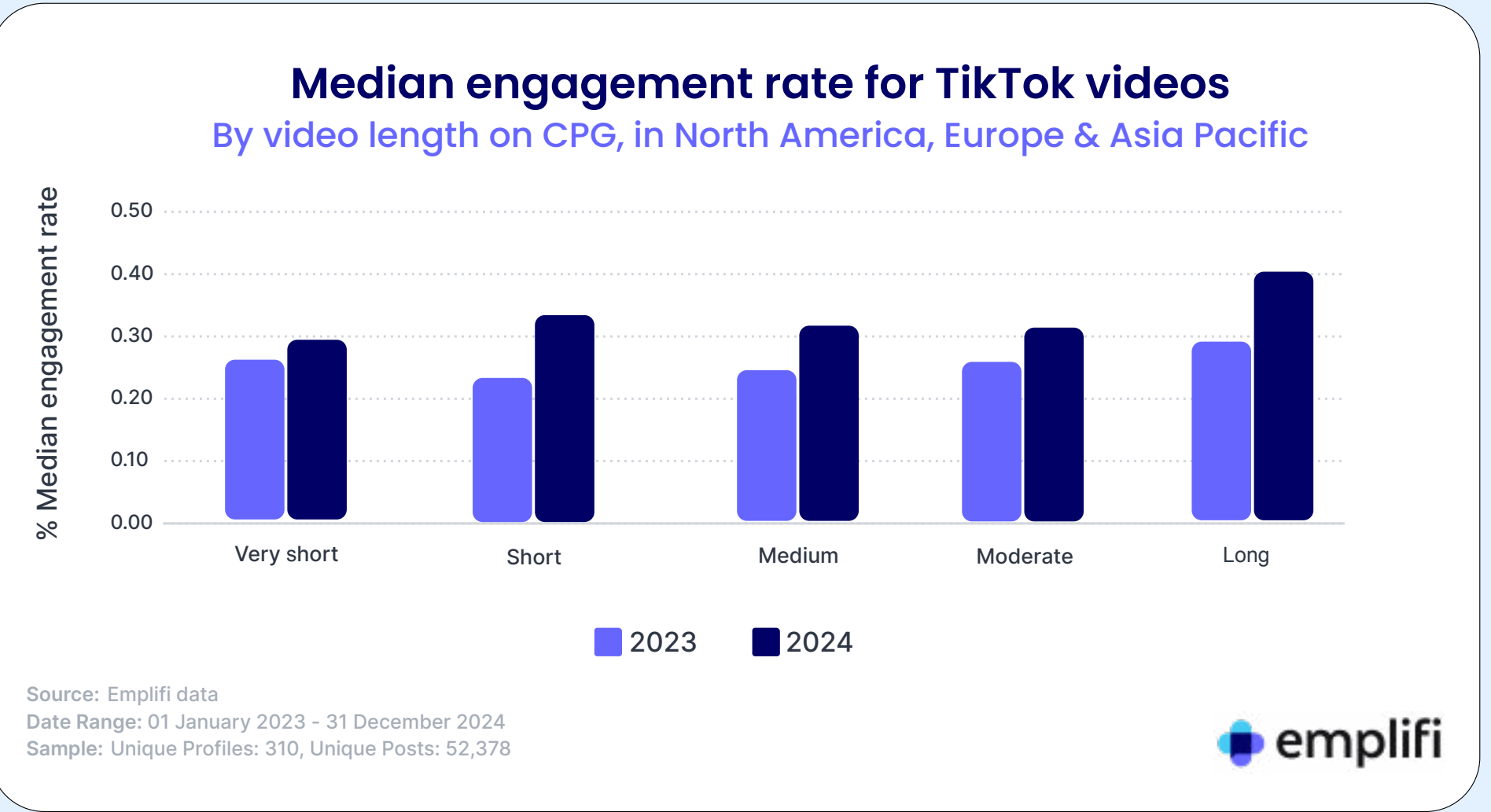
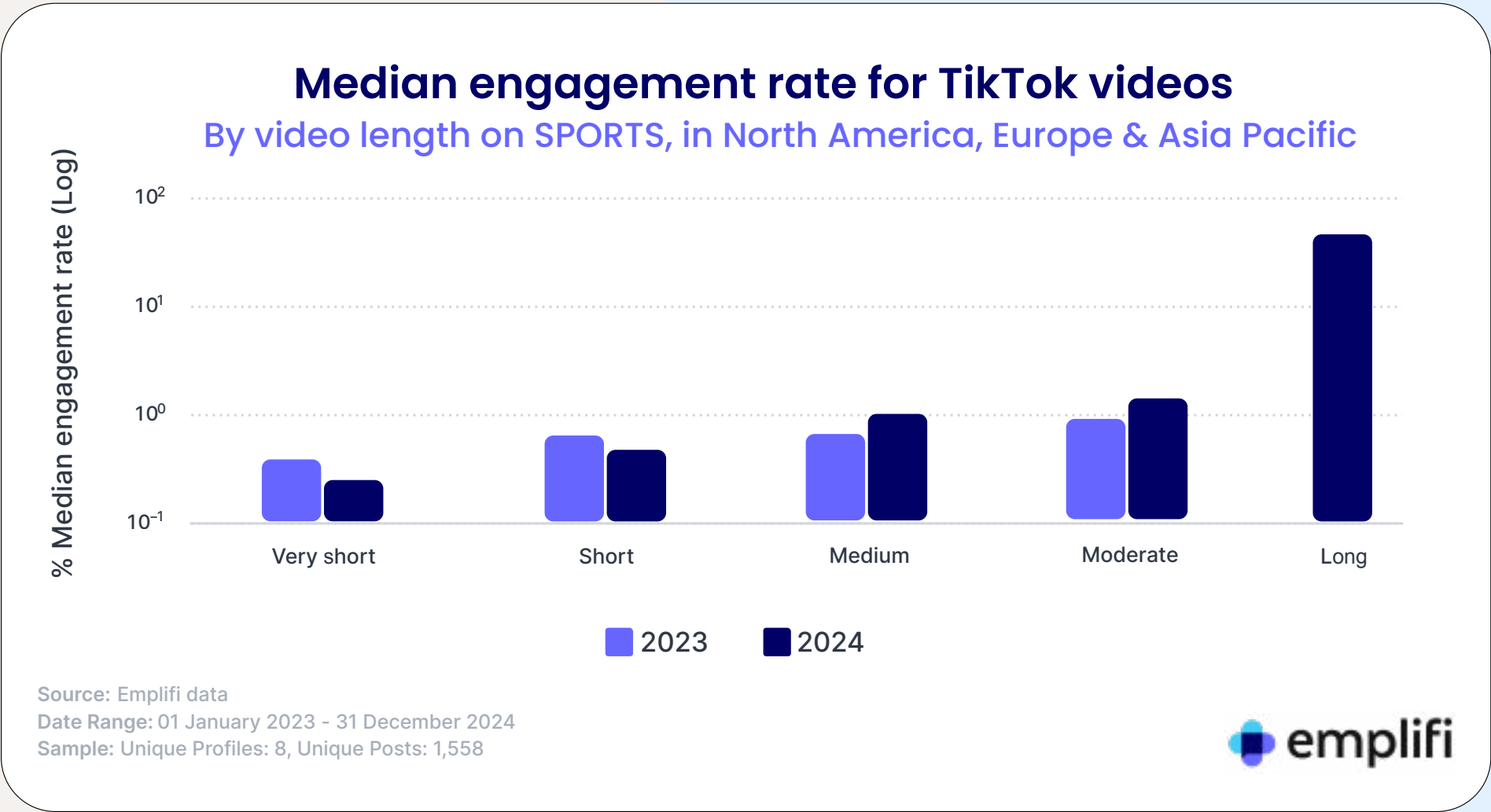
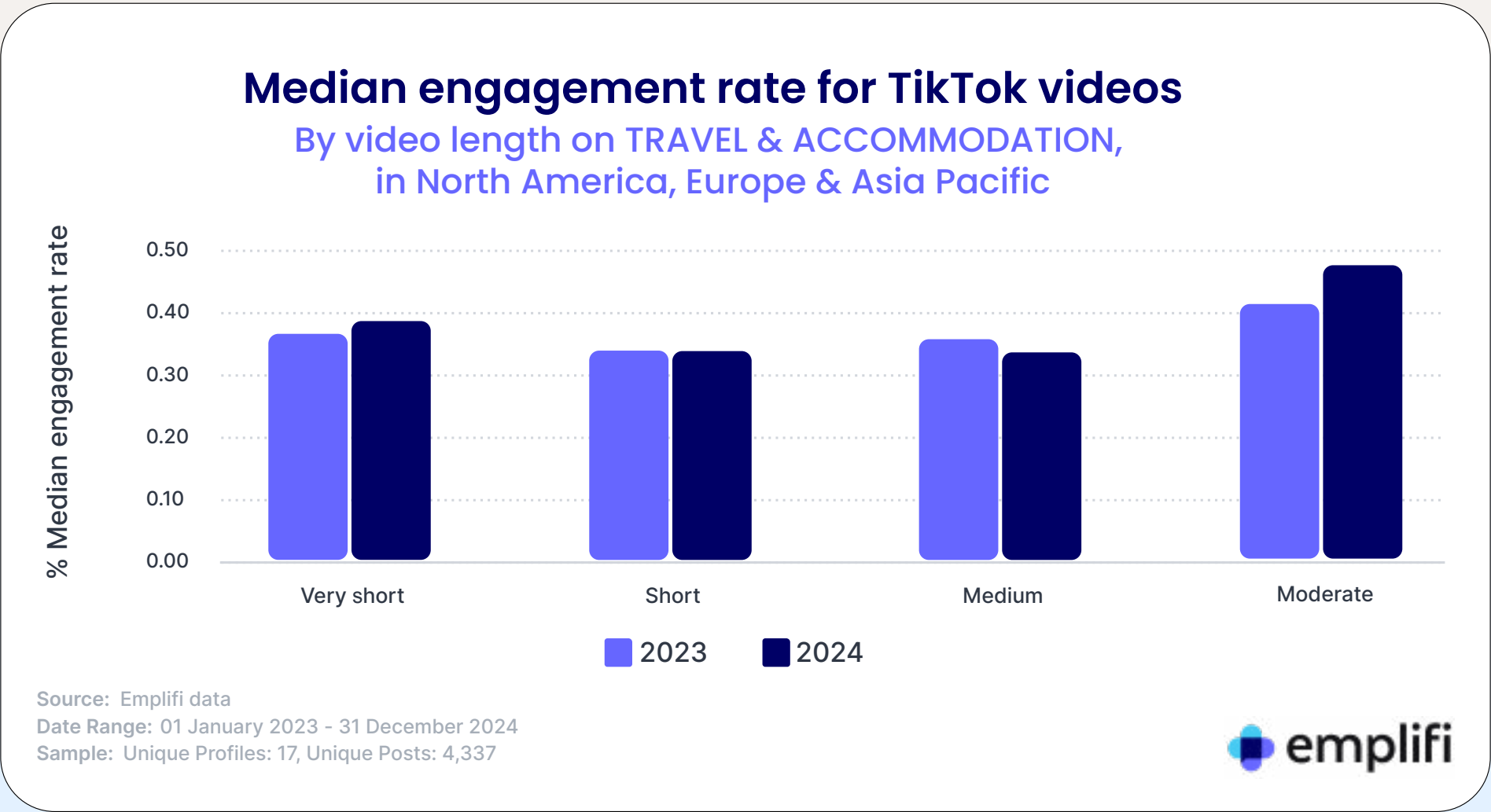
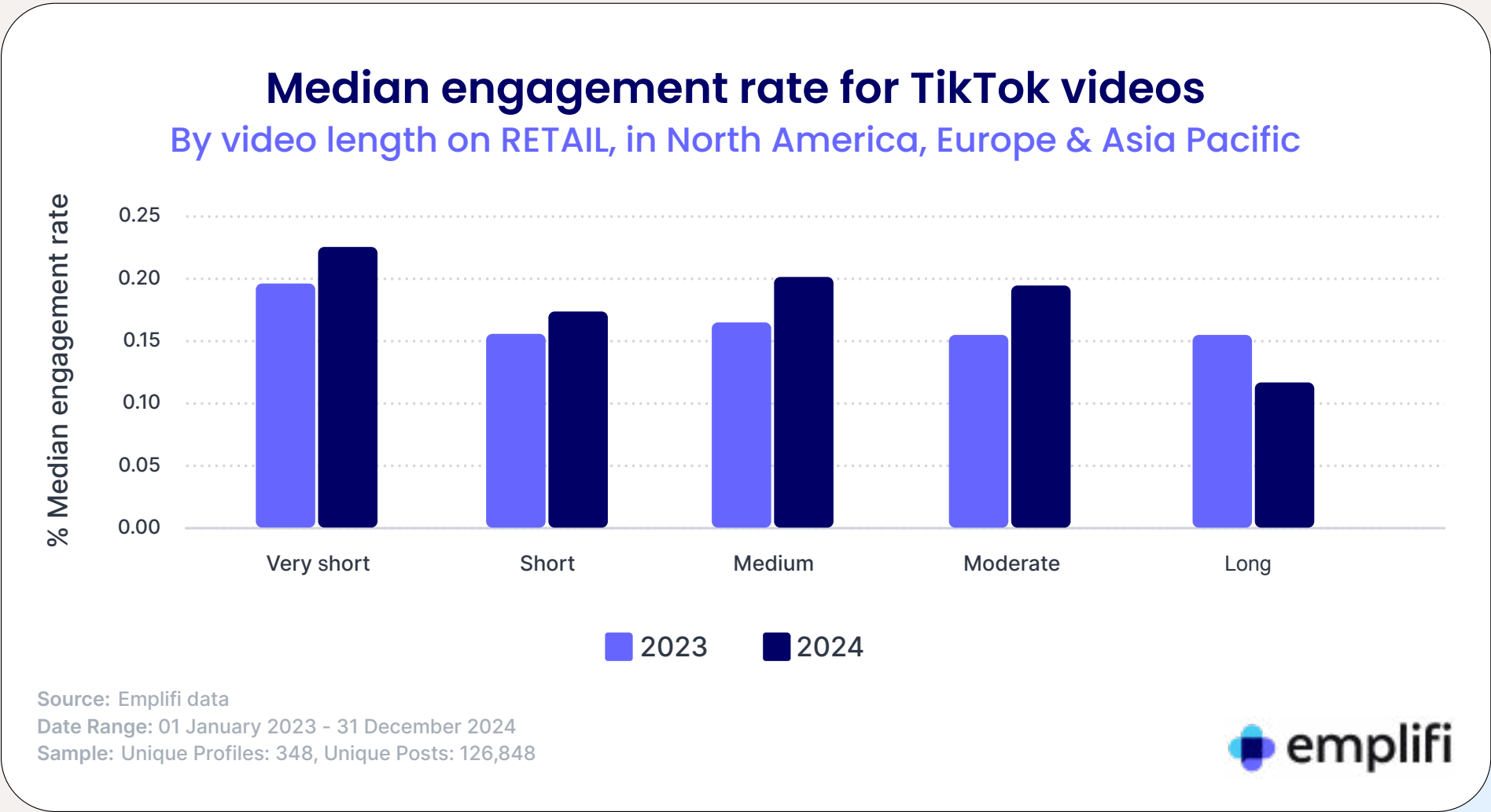




Appendix

Video length definitions:

Very Short: <12 seconds **Short:** 12-20 seconds **Medium:** 20-38 seconds **Moderate:** 38-71 seconds **Long:** > 71 seconds

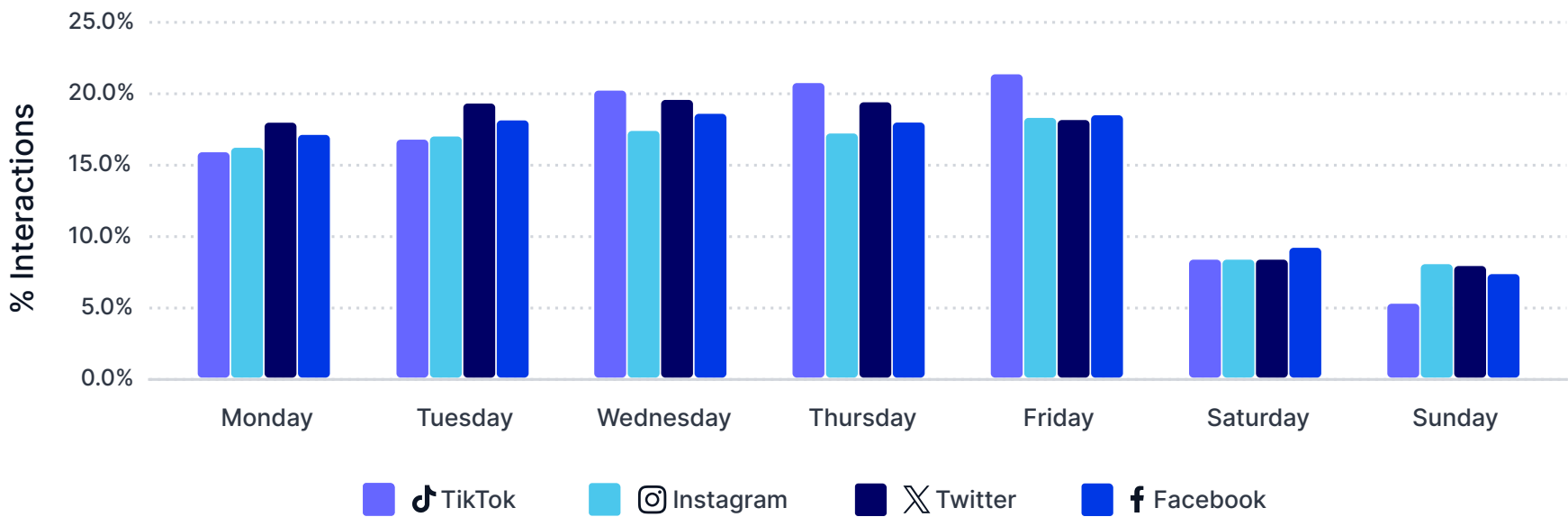




Appendix

In North America and Europe, the afternoon was clearly the best time to post across all channels. Weekdays were also the winners, and TikTok grows more engaging as the week goes on.

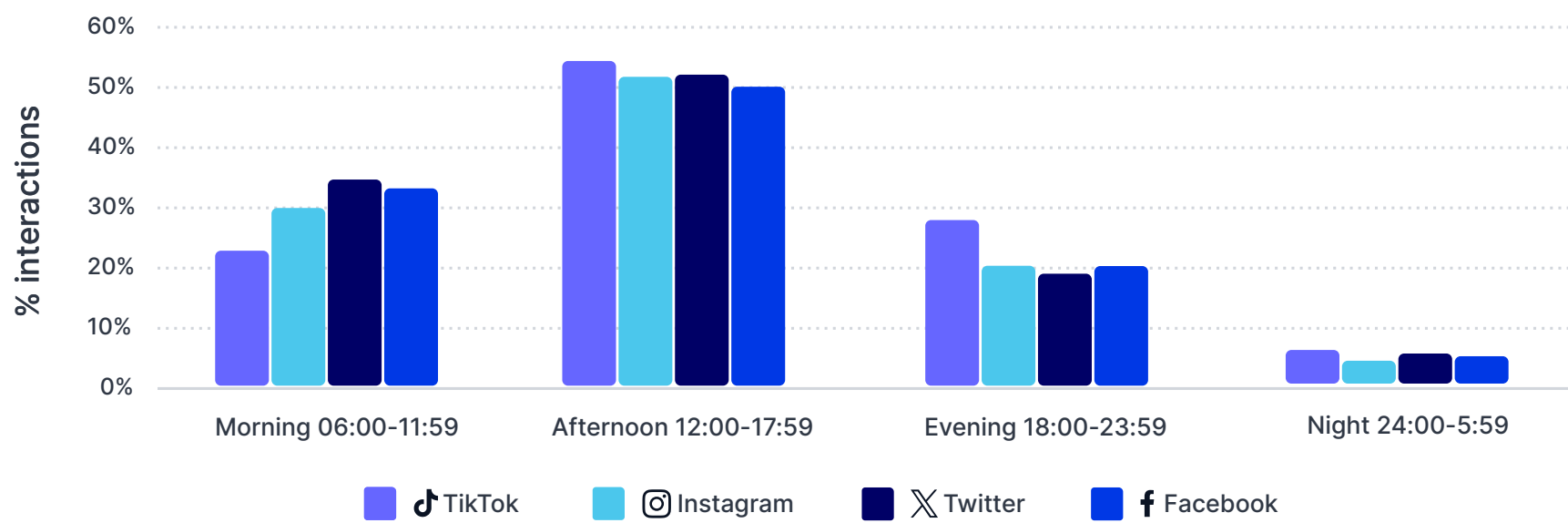
Best day of the week to post (Adjusted for UTC timezones)
Average interactions by day of the week: North America content



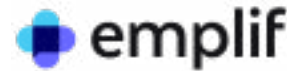
Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: TikTok: 1,285 brands pages & 304,412 posts, Instagram: 54,625 brands pages & 27,227,776 posts, Twitter: 16,984 brands pages & 10,634,865 posts, Facebook: 153,644 brands pages & 56,357,086 posts



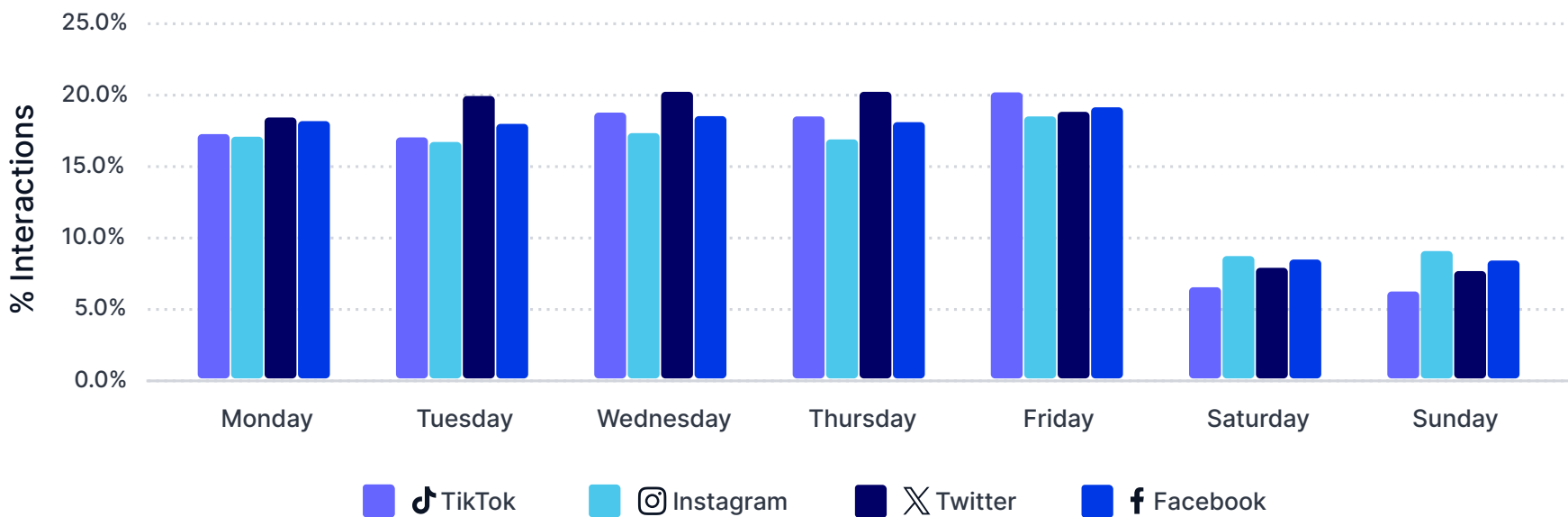
Best time of the day to post (adjusted for UTC timezones)
Average interactions by time of day: North America content



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: TikTok: 1,285 brands pages & 304,412 posts, Instagram: 54,625 brands pages & 27,227,776 posts, Twitter: 16,984 brands pages & 10,634,865 posts, Facebook: 153,644 brands pages & 56,357,086 posts



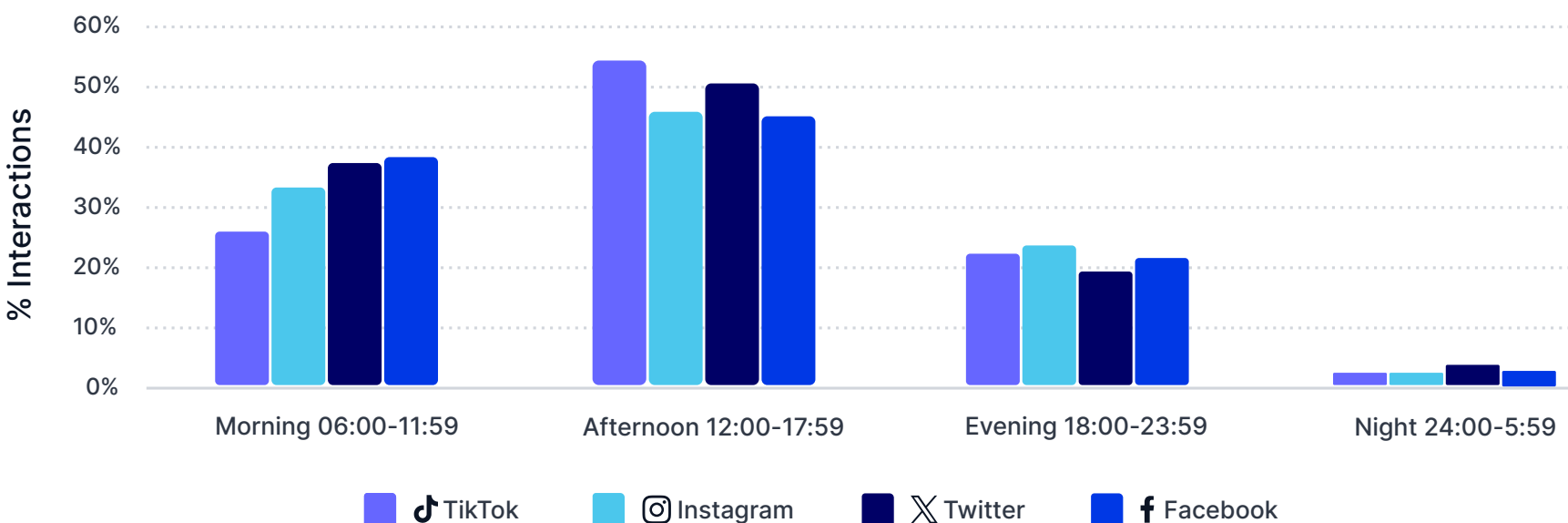
Best day of the week to post (adjusted for UTC timezones)
Average interactions by day of the week: Europe content



Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: TikTok: 1,285 brands pages & 304,412 posts, Instagram: 54,625 brands pages & 27,227,776 posts, Twitter: 16,984 brands pages & 10,634,865 posts, Facebook: 153,644 brands pages & 56,357,086 posts



Best time of the day to post (Adjusted for UTC timezones)
Average interactions by time of the day: Europe content



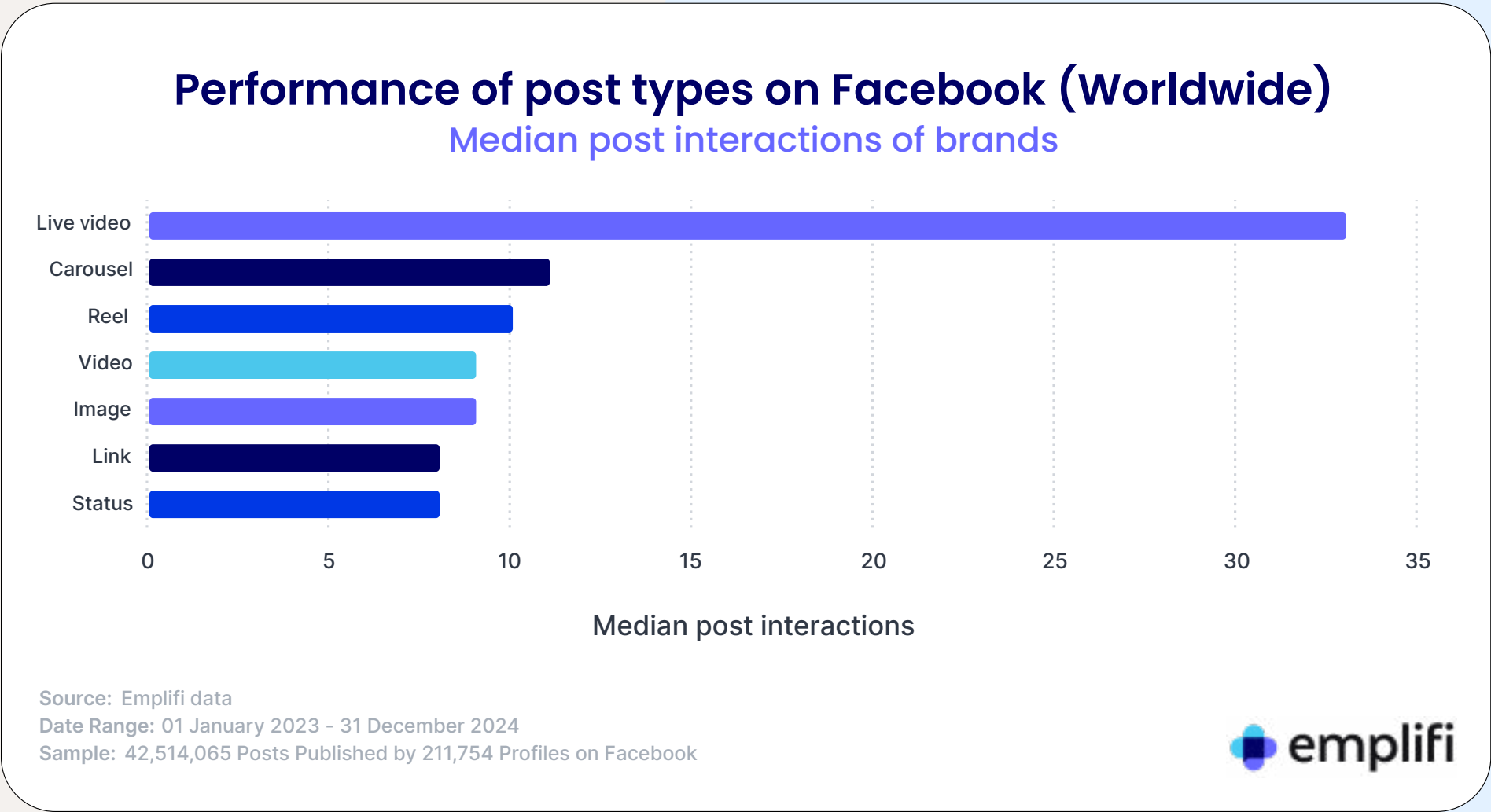
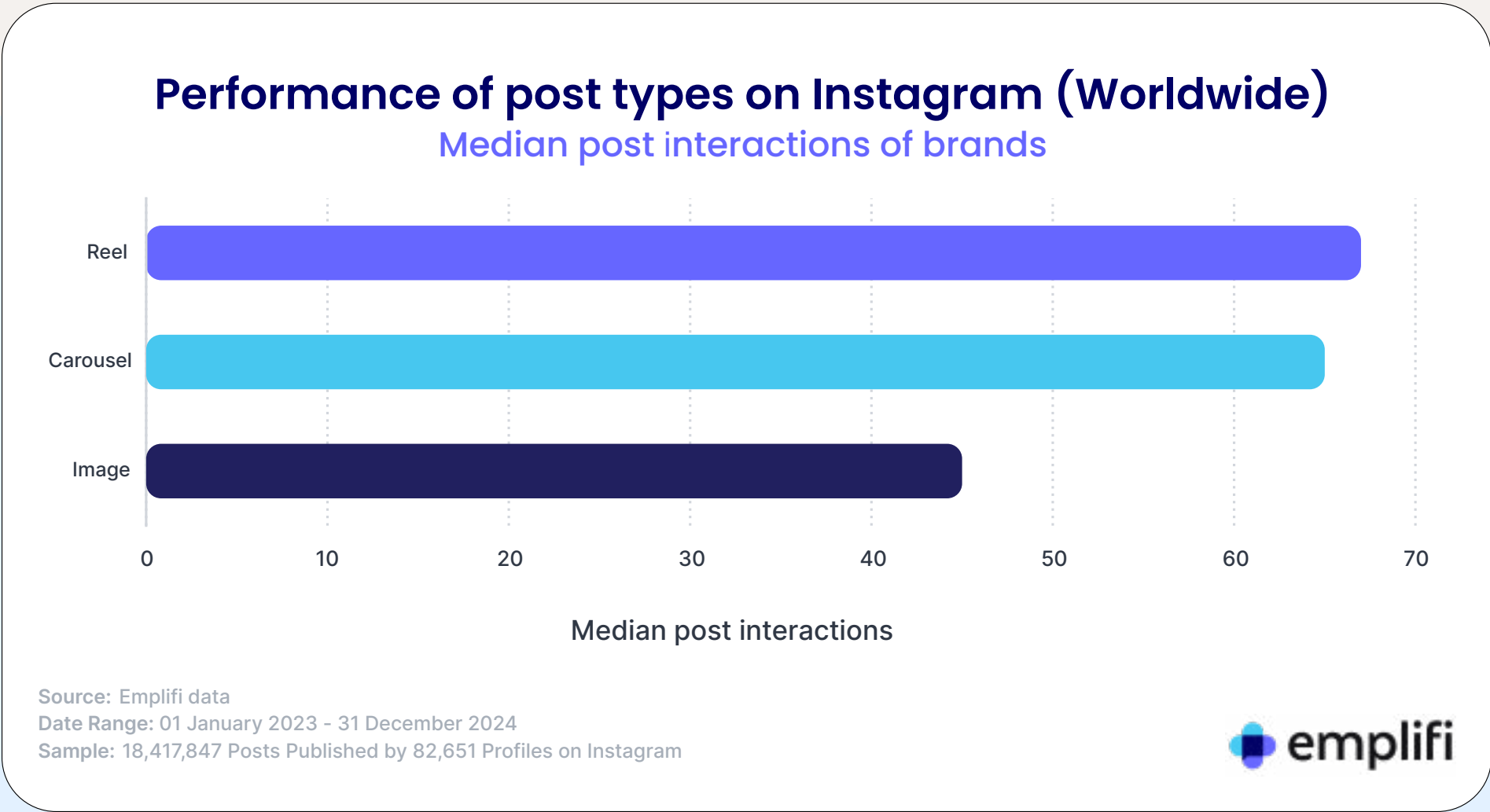
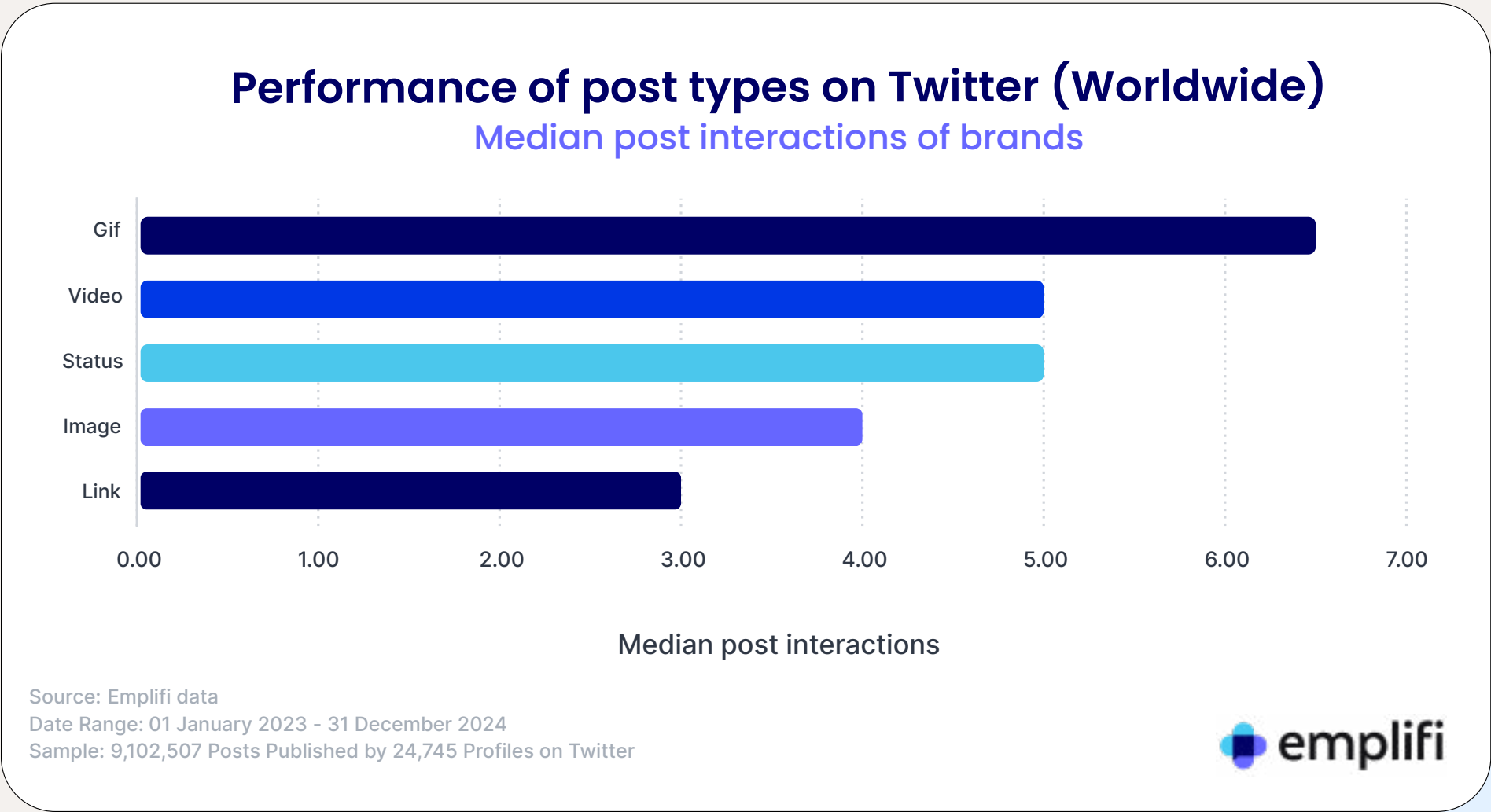
Source: Emplifi data
Date Range: 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2024
Sample: TikTok: 1,285 brands pages & 304,412 posts, Instagram: 54,625 brands pages & 27,227,776 posts, Twitter: 16,984 brands pages & 10,634,865 posts, Facebook: 153,644 brands pages & 56,357,086 posts





Appendix

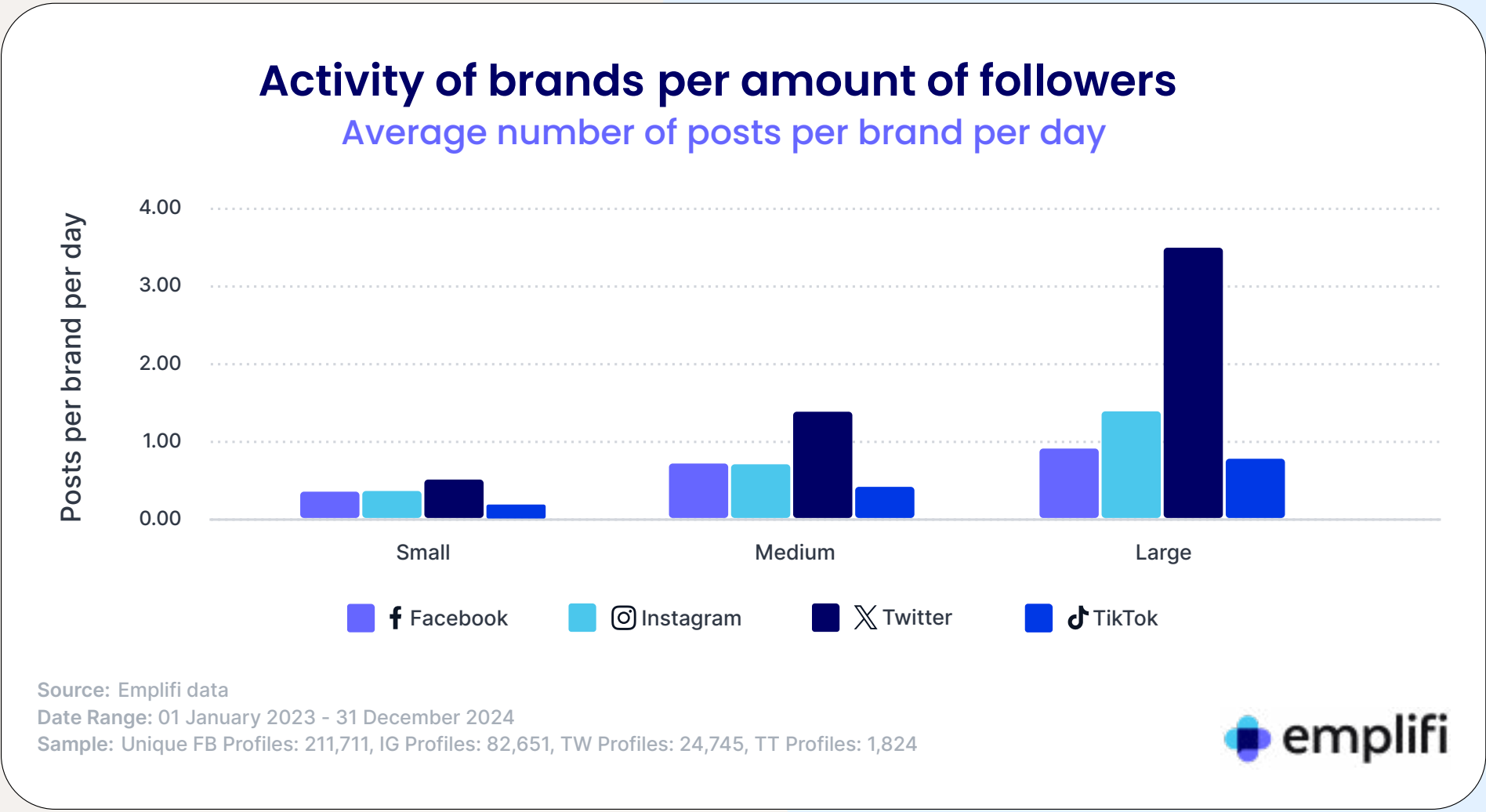
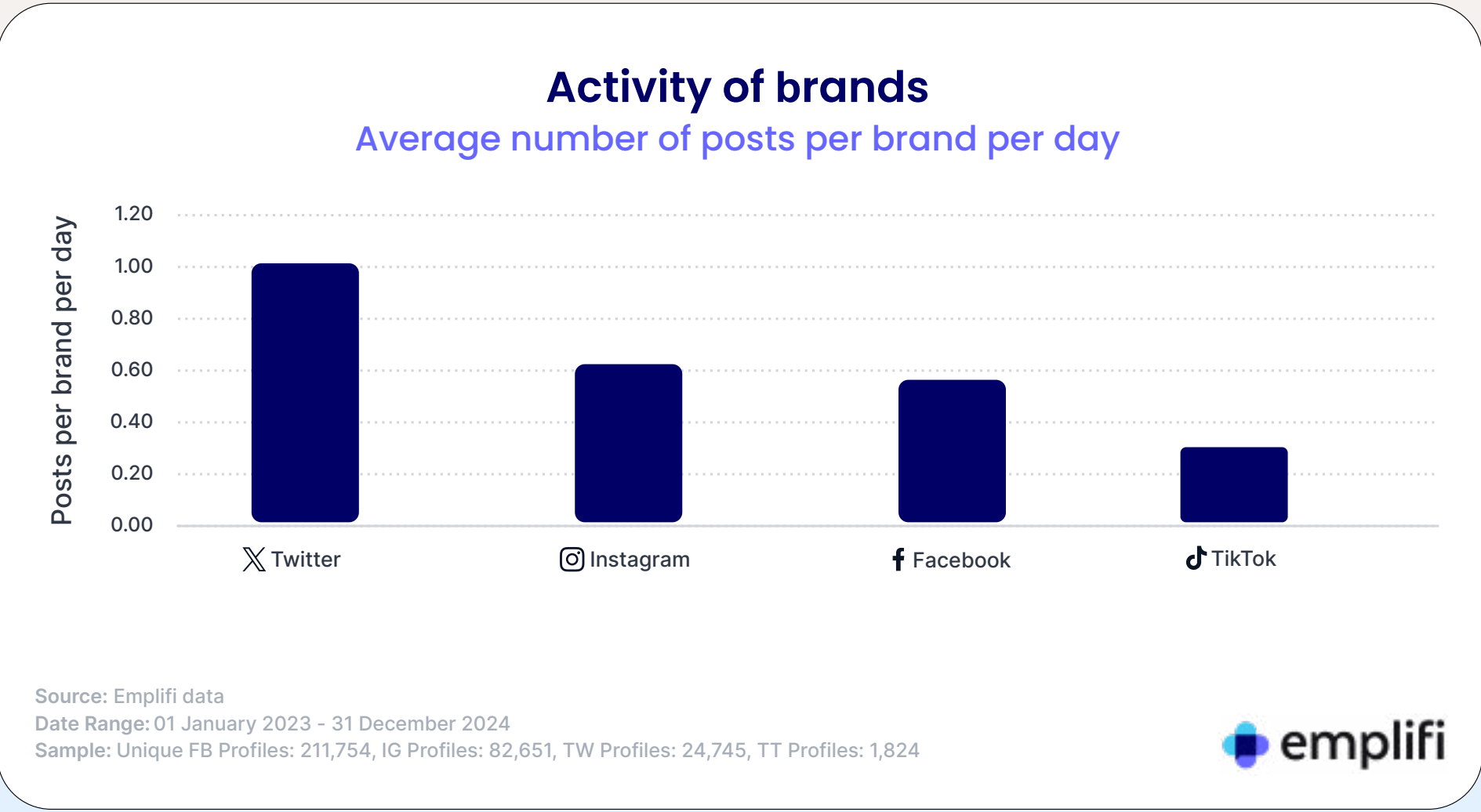
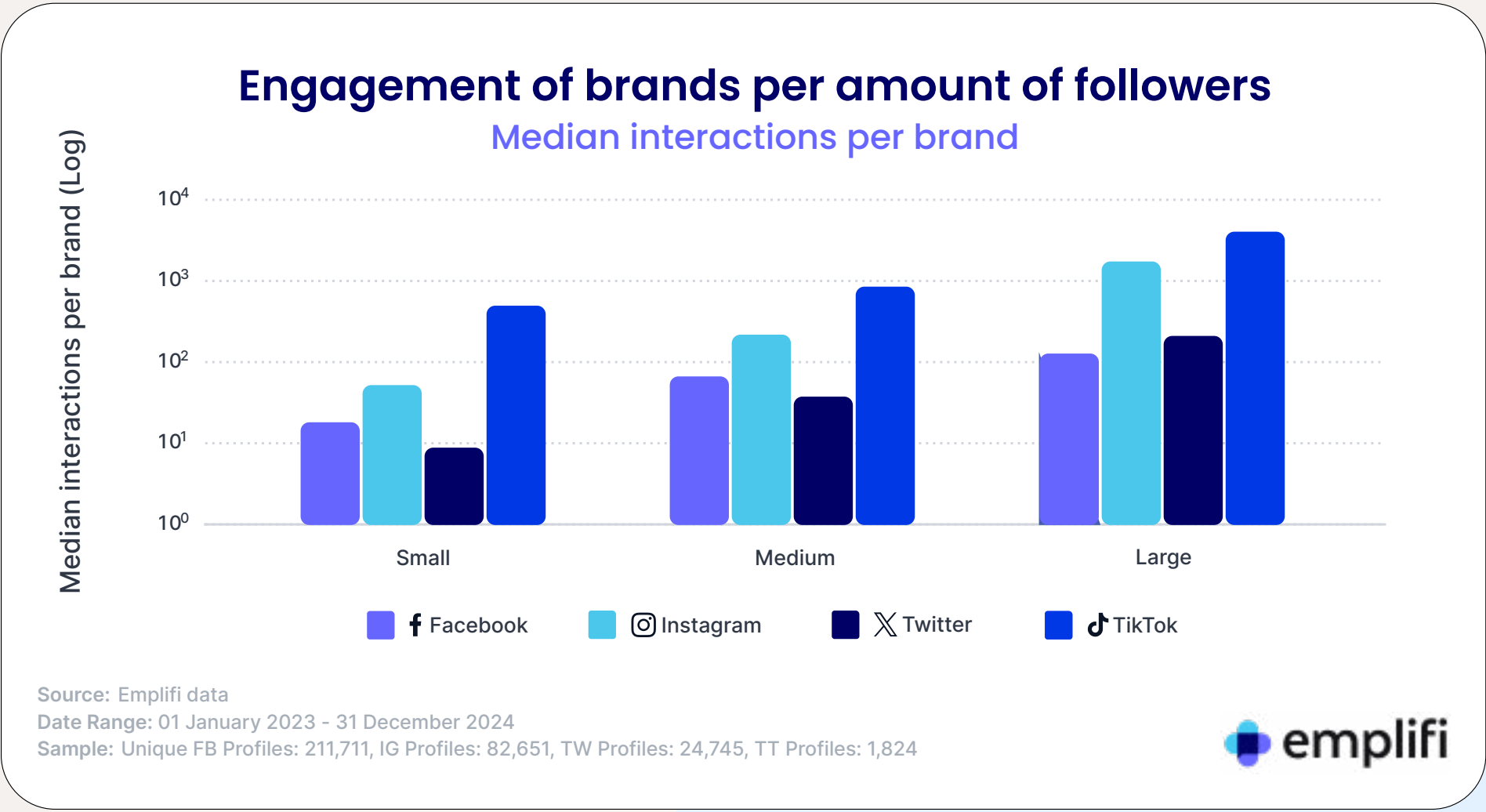
Live video is the runaway winner on Facebook, while Reels edge out Carousels on Instagram. Meanwhile, on X/Twitter, GIFs surged out in front of other post types, with video and status posts next.





Appendix

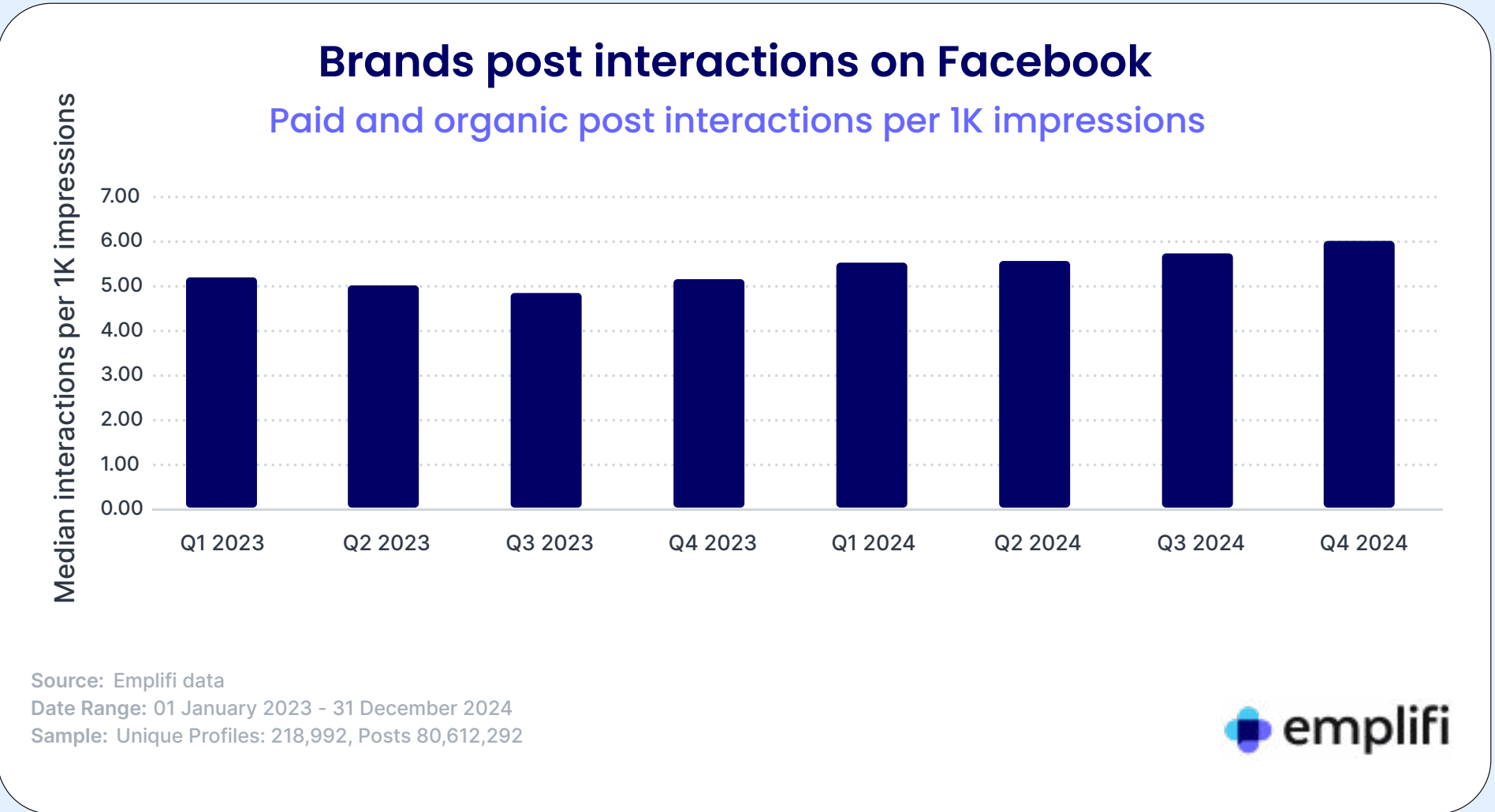
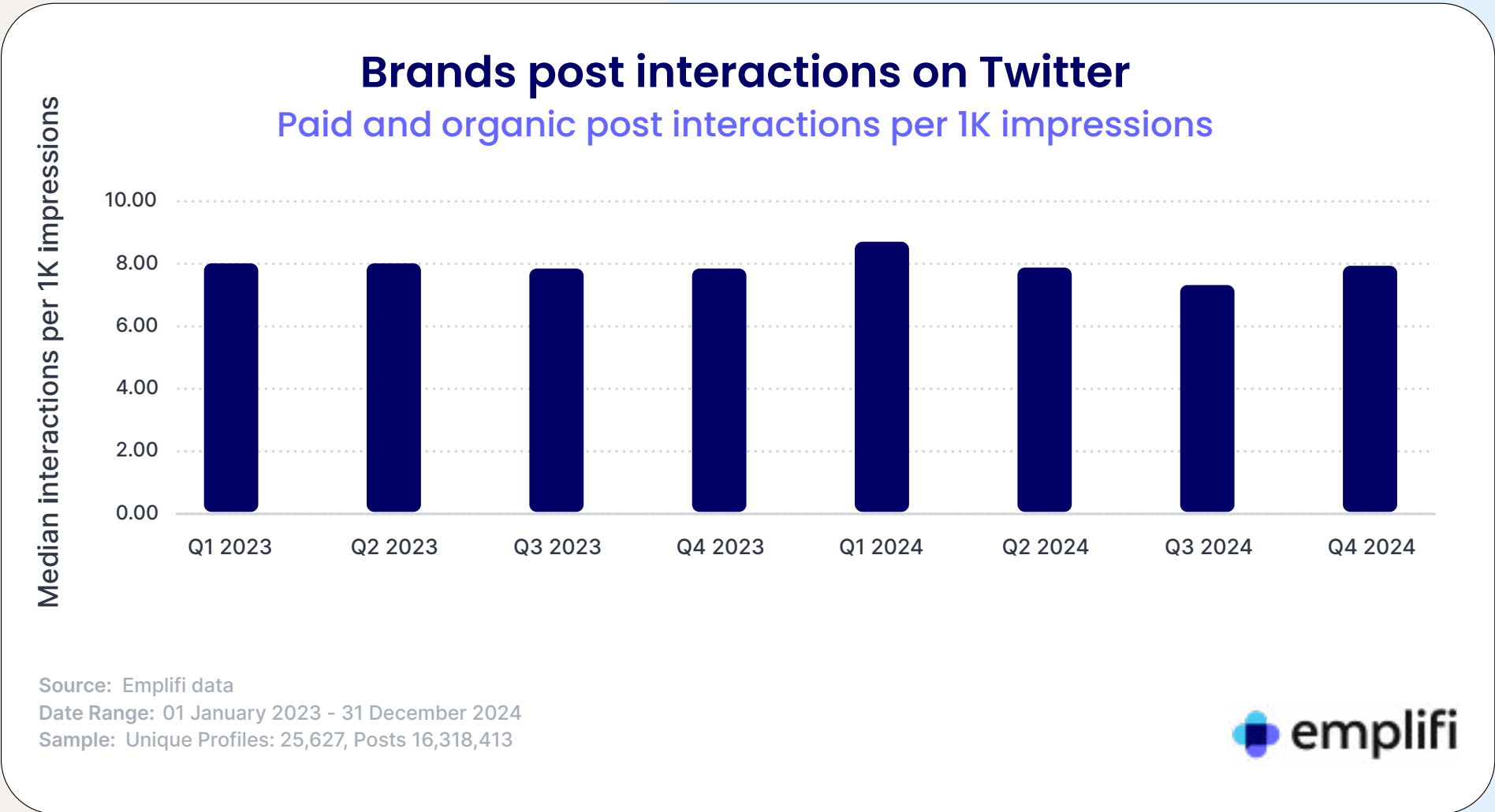
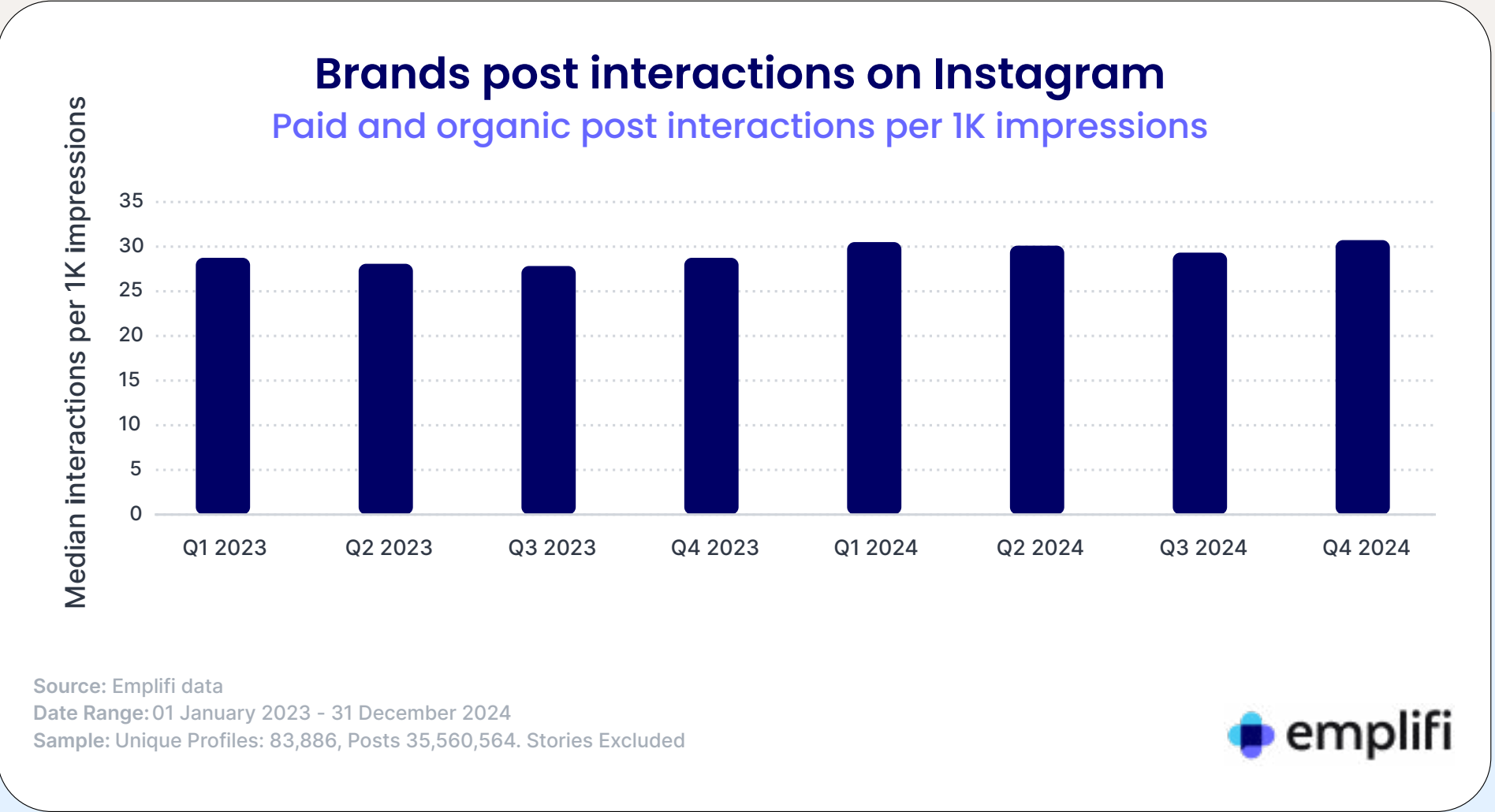
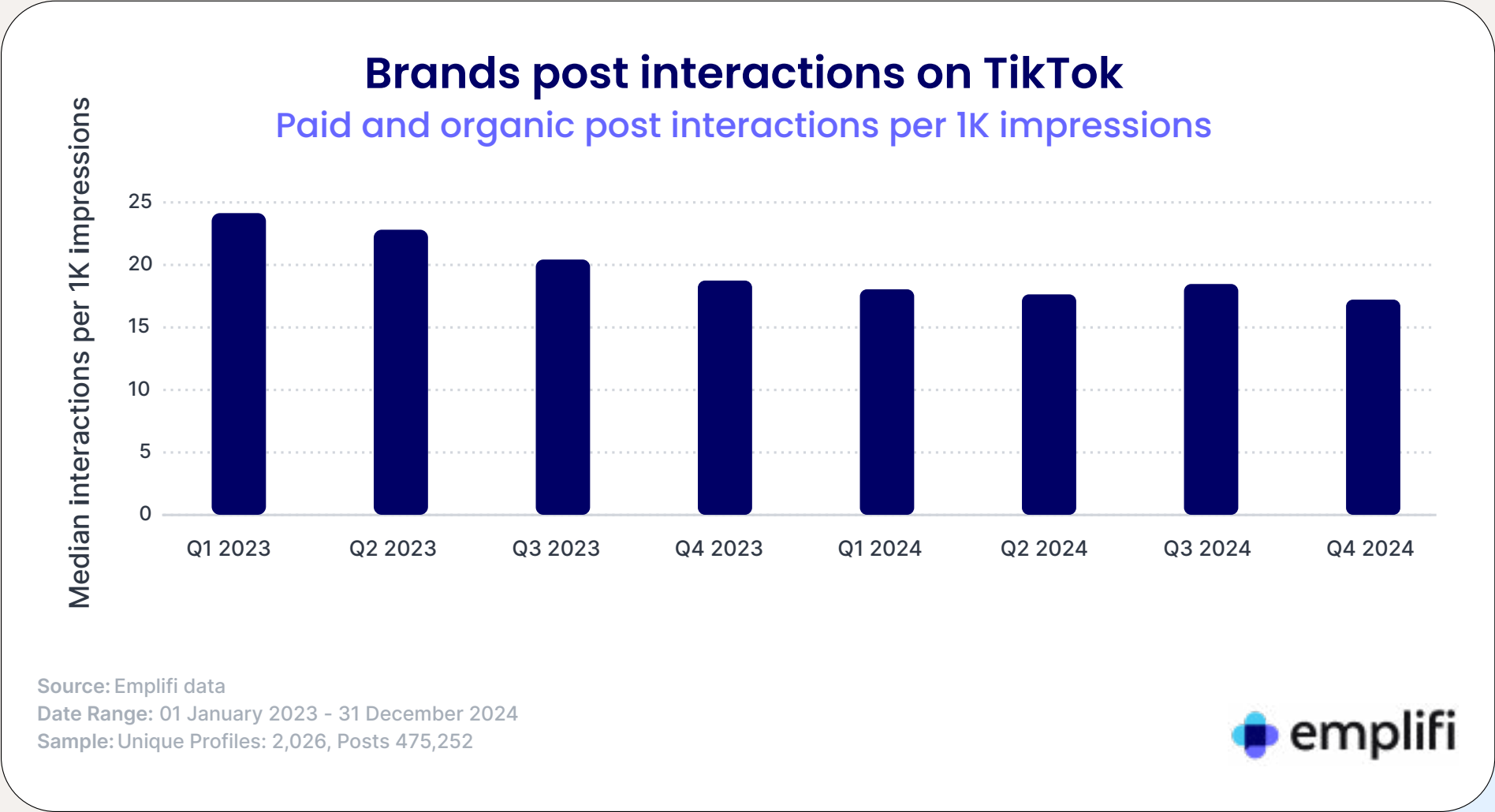
Brands post quite a bit more often on X/Twitter, especially among large brands. But engagement doesn't necessarily follow. Despite low activity on TikTok, the channel consistently delivers engagement.





Appendix

Over the past two years, Instagram has maintained the top spot with respect to brand interactions, peaking at over 30/1K impressions in Q4 2024. TikTok’s numbers dipped a bit, but it was easily second-best.





Emplifi provides exceptional digital customer experiences via a platform trusted by more than 20,000 of the world's leading brands. With comprehensive and integrated social media marketing, social commerce, and care, combined with unified analytics and AI, Emplifi fuels growth, resulting in happy customers, increased product sales, and improved brand loyalty.

Want to learn more?

For more information, please visit us online:

emplifi.io

