

# Cracking open the social media playbook: How does your utility stack up against its peers?

Jessica Bailis, solution director  
Cory Coggins, analyst  
Miriam Stein, associate analyst

Fall 2021 E Source Marketing and Communications  
Leadership Council



# Your hosts for today



**Jessica Bailis**

Solution Director, Marketing and Communications  
E Source



**Cory Coggins**

Analyst, Market Research  
E Source



**Miriam Stein**


Associate Analyst, Customer  
Engagement Solutions  
E Source

# This is a discussion-based session

- Participation is essential—there will be opportunities throughout to share with and learn from your peers
- Unmute your line when you're ready to speak (\*6)
- Turn your video on

# Session topics

- Overview of goals, budgets, and team logistics
- Creating content that resonates
- Channels discussion—where to go next?
- Executives on social media
- Open Q&A




On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is low and 10 is high, please rate how successful your utility's use of social media has been in accomplishing your goals.

# About the E Source Social Media Survey

- Aim to examine the current social media trends and practices that utilities are using
- Fielding took place in May and June of 2021
- Twenty-seven utilities from US and Canada participated





# Goals, budgets, and team logistics



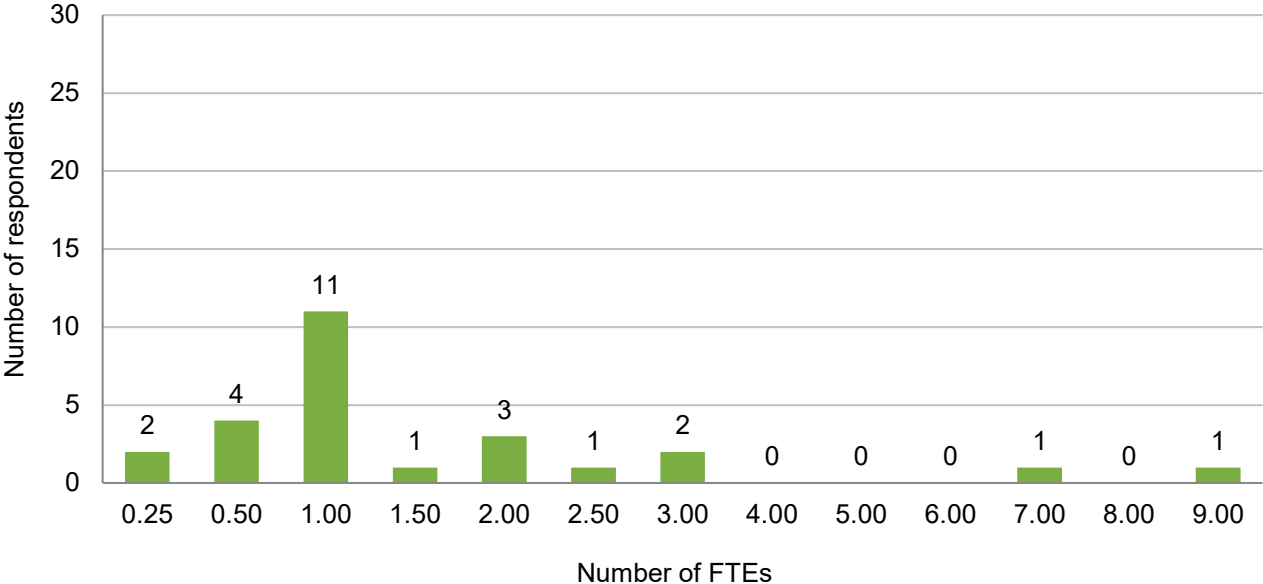
# Budgets for social media remain small for most utilities

Budget amount	Have dedicated budget (%)	Receive funding from other departments (%)
Less than \$10,000	26	30
\$10,000—\$24,999	7	0
\$25,000—\$49,999	0	4
\$50,000—\$74,999	7	0
\$100,000—\$149,999	4	0
\$150,000 or more	4	4
No budget, but we request funding as needed	22	NA
No budget for social media	7	NA
We don't receive funding for social media from other departments	NA	37
Don't know	22	26

**Base:** n = 27 utilities. **Question S2\_12a:** What's your utility's annual social media budget (excluding employee salaries)? **S2\_12b:** How much funding do you receive from other departments to support social media activities (for example, funding from Marketing for promoted posts)? **Notes:** NA = not applicable. Use caution when the base falls below 30. © E Source (2021 Social Media Survey)

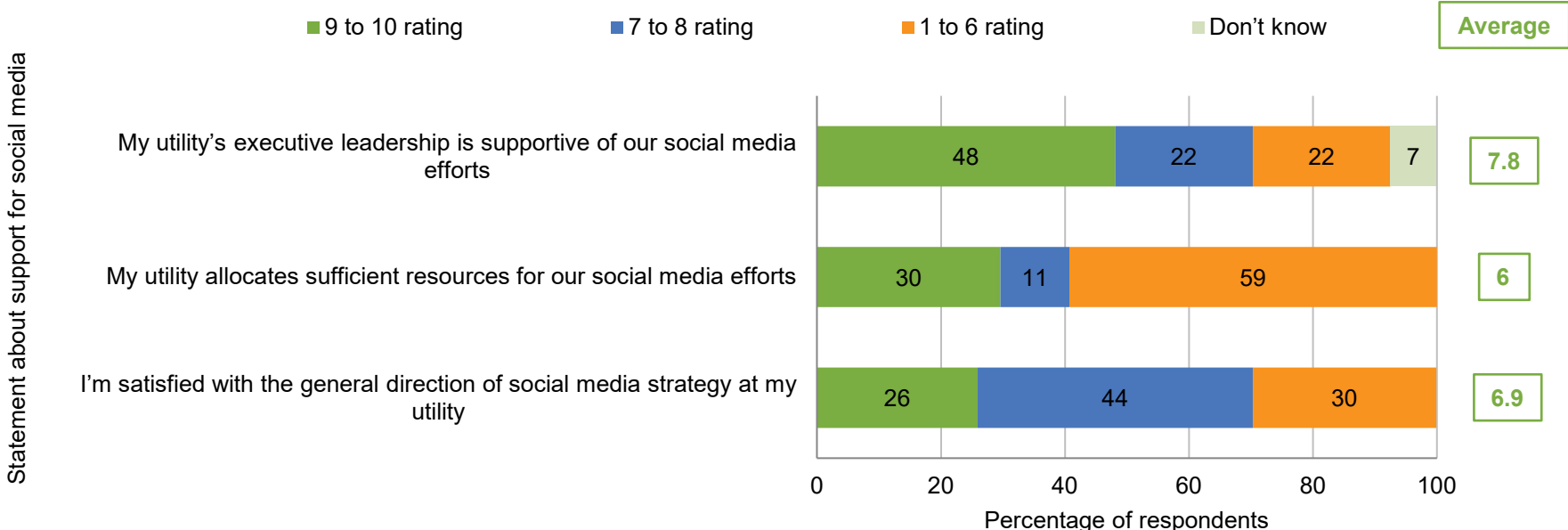


# Two-thirds of utility respondents have one or less full-time equivalent (FTE) for social media



**Base:** n = 27 utilities. **Question S2\_3:** Approximately how many full-time equivalents (FTEs) are dedicated to social media at your organization (that is, how many have access to post on the organization’s social media channels)? **Note:** Use caution when the base falls below 30. © E Source (2021 Social Media Survey)

# The amount of support from leadership was similar to 2018 results, but more respondents feel they aren't given enough resources



**Base:** n = 27 utilities. **Question S2\_14:** Using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means strongly disagree and 10 means strongly agree, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you have no opinion, check the box at the far right. © E Source (2021 Social Media Survey)

# If you could wave a magic wand and change three things about social media at your utility, what would they be?



## **Budget**

“Increased budget”  
“Higher budget”  
“Bigger ad budget [for program marketing]”



## **Buy in from leadership**

“Continue to build on executive leadership buy-in”



## **Strategy**

“Utilize a social media calendar/plan”  
Better tools for monitoring sentiment or measuring success



## **Staffing**

“Increased staff”  
“Staffing matched workload”  
“More staff dedicated to just social”



## **Involve other departments**

“Better customer service integration”  
“Full time customer care on all channels”  
“More engagement from other departments”



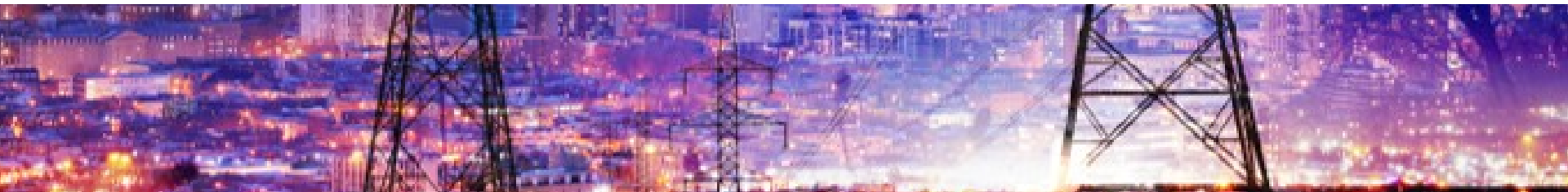
“I can’t believe I’m saying this in 2021, but I still feel like there’s a lingering sense that social is something you ‘just give to the intern(s);’ Social is the most direct, two-way, real-time (often high-risk) channel we have for communicating with our customers AND for listening to them and understanding what they are feeling and thinking.”



Is your social media team integrated with customer service?

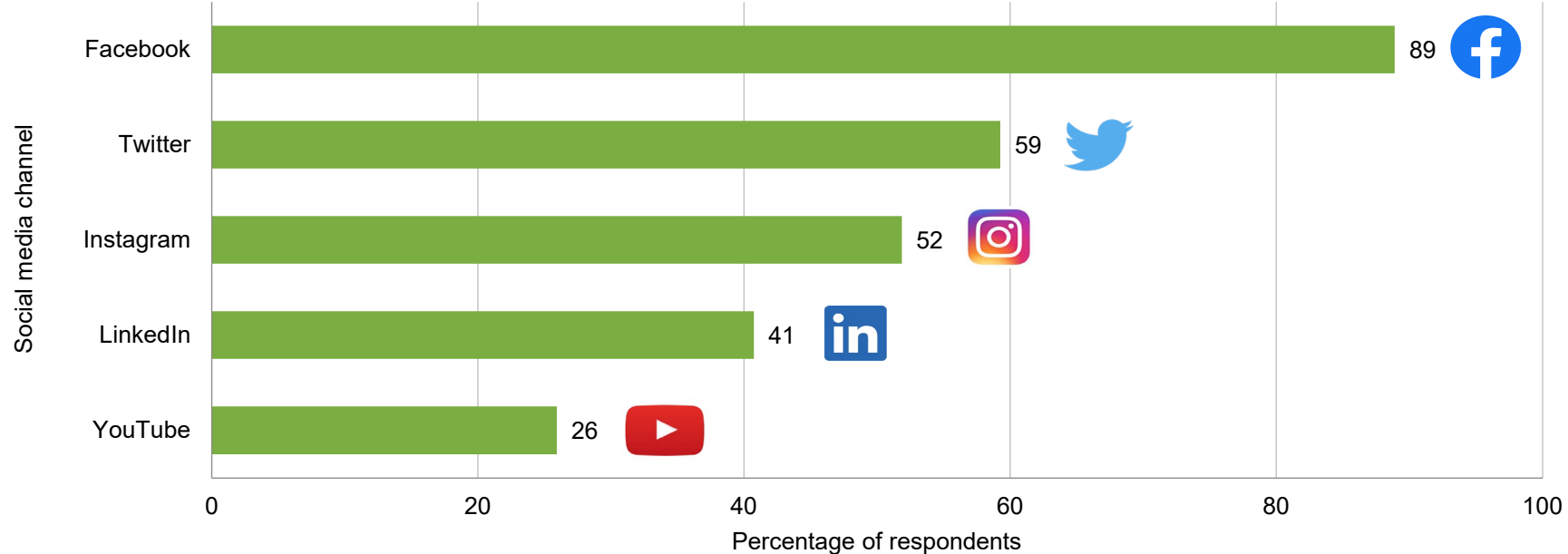


# Creating content that resonates



# Eighty-nine percent of respondents pay for social media advertising

## Facebook is the most common channel



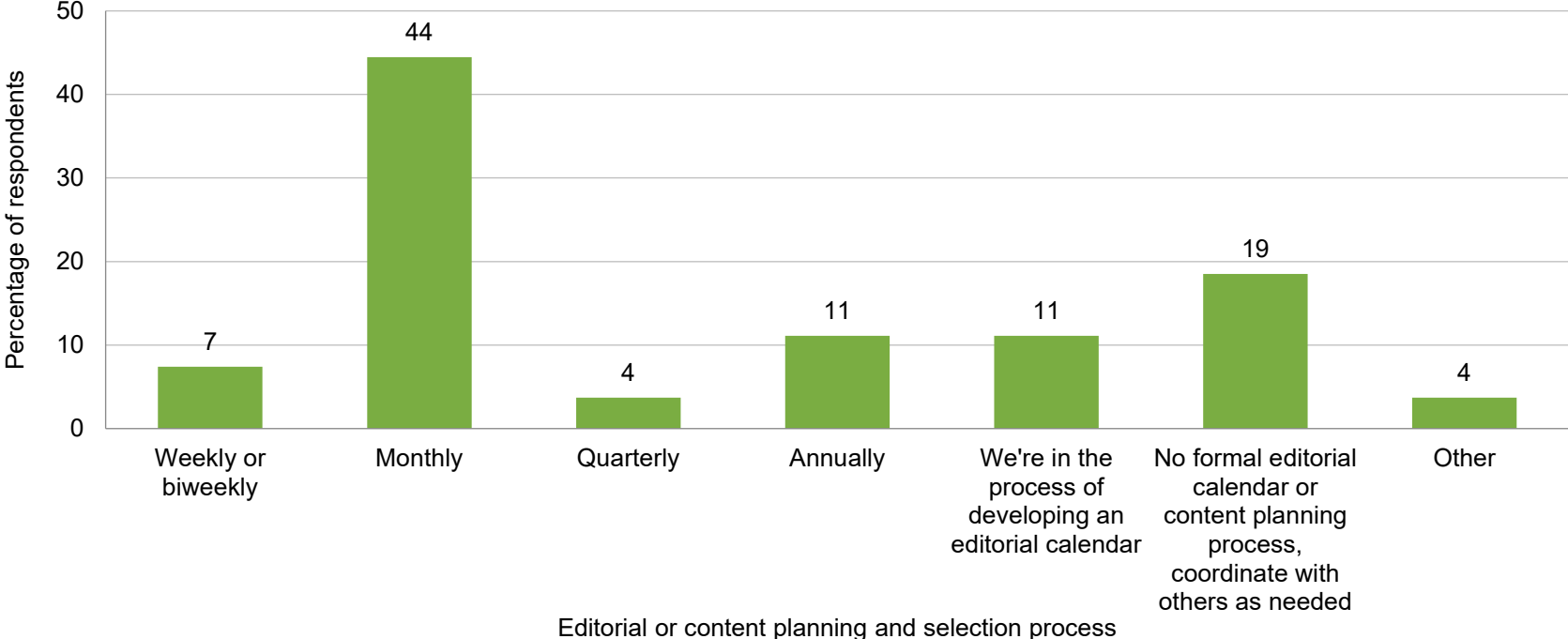
**Base:** n = 27 utilities. **Question S5\_1a:** On which social media channels do you pay for advertising? Select all that apply. **Note:** Use caution when the base falls below 30. © E Source (2021 Social Media Survey)



What's your paid  
advertising strategy?



# Almost half of respondents plan their content on a monthly basis



**Base:** n = 27 utilities. **Question S4\_2:** Which statement best describes your utility's editorial or content planning and selection process for social media? **Note:** Use caution when the base falls below 30. © E Source (2021 Social Media Survey)



Do you have a social  
media content calendar  
or plan?

# Engagement success with organic posts

## Contests or giveaways

**SMUD** · September 20 at 10:02 PM ·

We ❤️ supporting the youth in our community! And these kiddos are looking so dapper with their 'Join the Charge' shirts. Want to be a Clean Power Champion too? Visit [CleanPowerCity.org](https://CleanPowerCity.org) to learn how you can get a free t-shirt.

Thank you to our friends at [Sacramento Republic FC](#) for being such a great community partner.



## Feature employees

**Georgia Power** · September 22 at 9:06 AM ·

Hello! My name is Aixa del Valle. I am a Plant Engineer at Plant McDonough Combined Cycle in Atlanta and have been with Georgia Power for approximately 8 years. I was born and raised in Puerto Rico and I'm proud of bringing my heritage and the positive energy that distinguishes us well wherever I go - whether at work or in the community. I'm excited to share more about the traditions I grew up with and how I stay connected to my culture in the Georgia area! 'Saludos to all L... See More

See Translation



#ENERGÍAPOSITIVA  
Aixa Del Valle  
GPC Plant Engineer

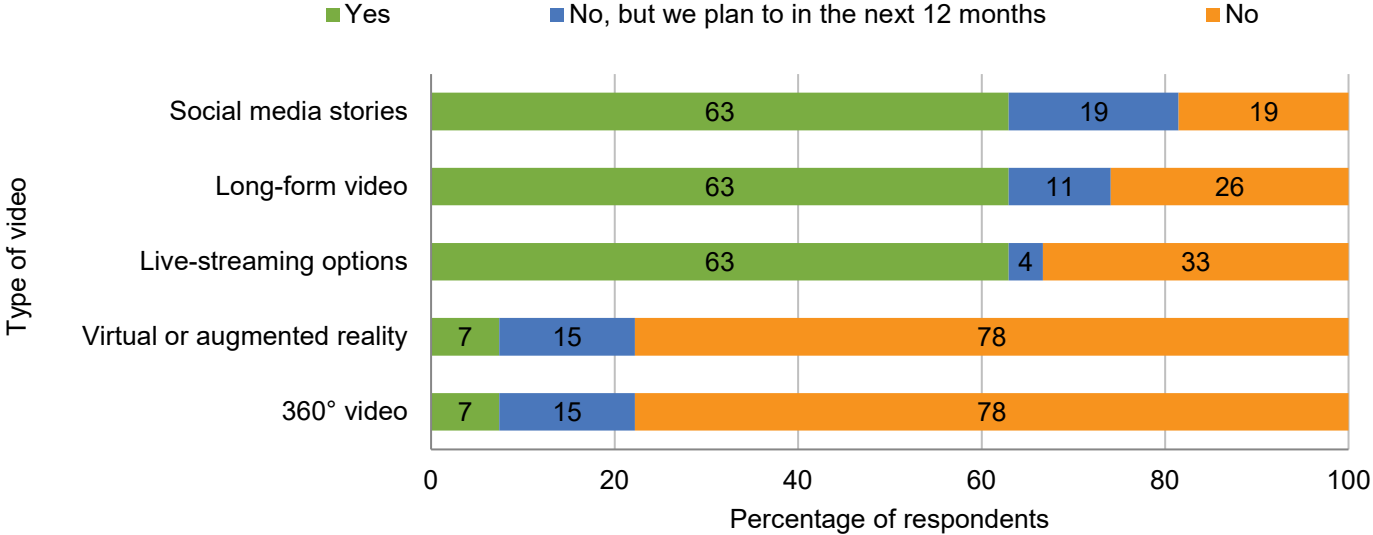
## Outage communication

**AEP Ohio** · September 21 at 2:41 PM ·

Southwest Columbus Outage - AEP Ohio crews are making repairs right now. Power is expected to be back on by 3:15 p.m. Thank you for your patience. Please download the AEP Ohio app to stay informed of outages and restoration times in your neighborhood.



# Most utilities are already incorporating a variety of video styles into their social media efforts



Base: n = 27 utilities. Question S5\_1: Has your utility used the following as part of its social media efforts? © E Source (2021 Social Media Survey)

# Huntsville Utilities hosts a weekly show



# Alliant Energy has a monthly “Powerhouse Challenge”



# AEP shared stories from helping with Hurricane Ida

 AEP Ohio  
September 17 at 8:56 AM · 🌐

We're happy to have our crews safely back home from Louisiana. 🌱 Watch this short video to hear the stories they shared about the restoration effort and the outpouring of kindness and public support. ❤️

**More than 400 of our line and contractor crews spent two weeks in Louisiana helping to get the power back on following Hurricane Ida.**

# SMUD went live from the farmer's market

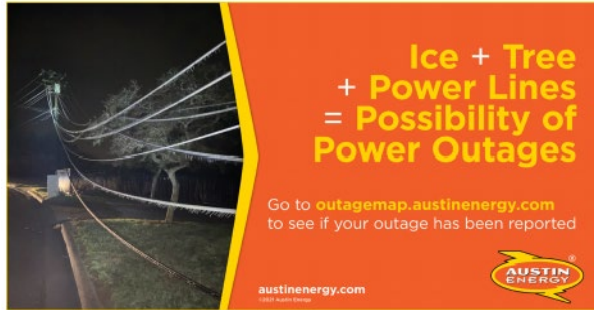
 SMUD is  attending 2021 Farm-to-Fork Festival. ...  
September 18 at 3:31 PM · 

We're excited to be at the Farm-to-Fork Festival, as is everyone else as you can tell by all the noise happening in the video! Stop by our booth, we'd love to chat and get you a free t-shirt!





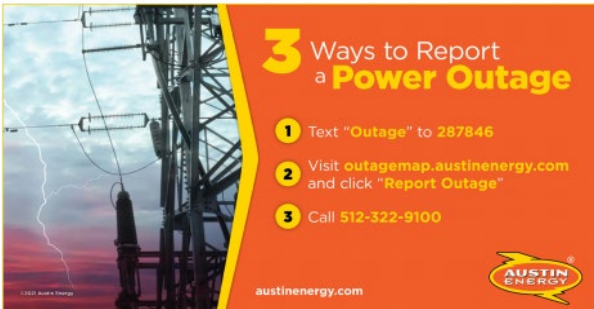

# Austin Energy winter storm campaign



**Ice + Tree  
+ Power Lines  
= Possibility of  
Power Outages**

Go to [outagemap.austinenergy.com](http://outagemap.austinenergy.com)  
to see if your outage has been reported


[austinenergy.com](http://austinenergy.com)



**3 Ways to Report  
a Power Outage**

- 1 Text "Outage" to 287846
- 2 Visit [outagemap.austinenergy.com](http://outagemap.austinenergy.com)  
and click "Report Outage"
- 3 Call 512-322-9100

[austinenergy.com](http://austinenergy.com)



**URGENT:  
CONSERVE  
ENERGY  
NOW!**


Outage Updates at:  
[outagemap.austinenergy.com](http://outagemap.austinenergy.com)



Source: [Austin Energy, Energy AdVision](#)



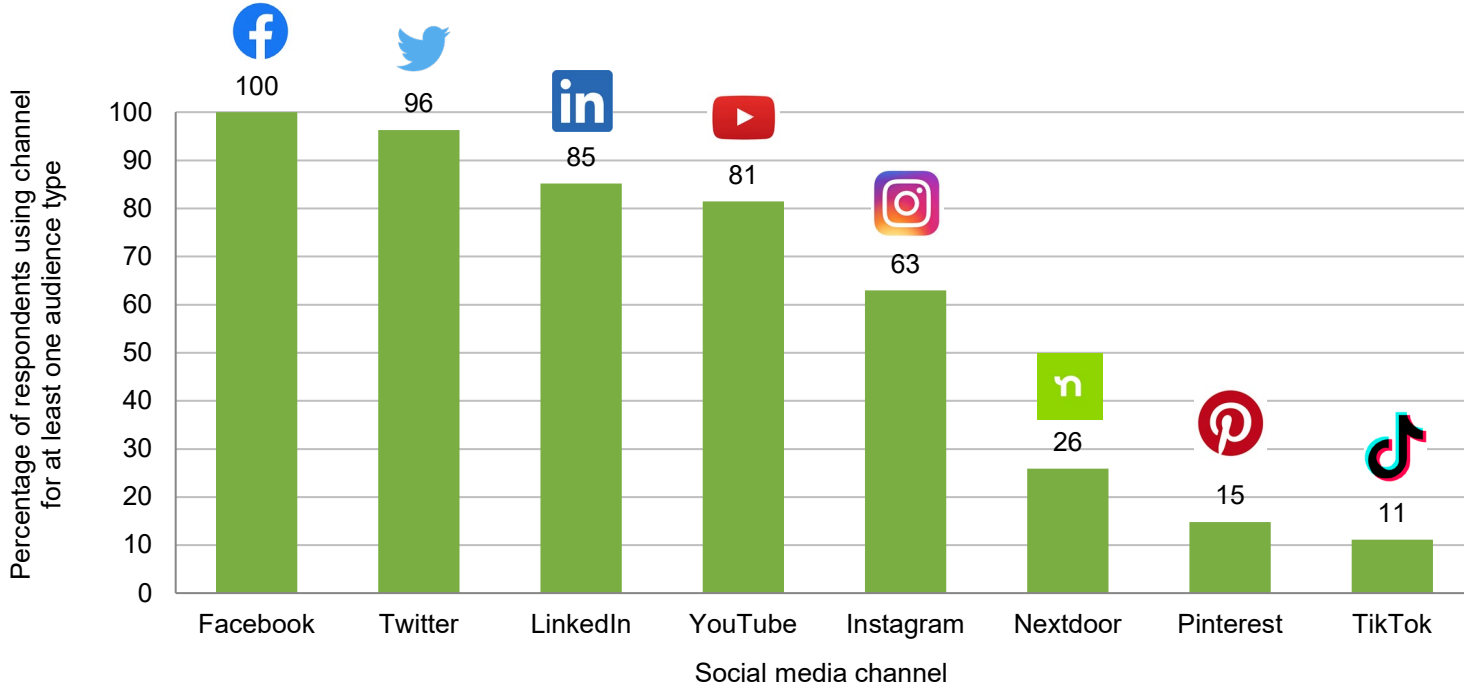
What was your most  
successful piece of  
content this year?



# Channels discussion— where to go next?



# Use of Twitter and Facebook remains consistent; Nextdoor and TikTok are new



**Base:** n = 27 utilities. **Question S1\_1:** Please indicate which of the following social media channels your organization currently uses for communicating with the following audiences. Select all that apply for each channel. **Note:** Use caution when the base falls below 30.  
© E Source (2021 Social Media Survey)

# ComEd uses Nextdoor for storm communications



ComEd Taking Steps to Restore Power After Severe Storms. A severe thunderstorm with 80+ MPH wind gusts and hail has severely damaged many communities in our service area. Over 635,000+ customers have been impacted. This storm caused significant damage across the service territory, including downed poles, broken lines and tree-related damage. We expect that it will take multiple days to restore service to all of the customers affected by the storm and recommend that customers take whatever steps they feel necessary to keep themselves and their families safe.

We have more than 800 employees working around the clock to restore energy to affected customers as quickly and safely as possible. Additionally, more than 1,100 mutual assistance workers are coming in from out of state to assist in restoration efforts. Due to the increase of outage reports, we are experiencing technical difficulties with ComEd.com, our mobile app, and our outage text alerts.

We recommend customers report outages by using our interactive voice response telephone system by contacting us at 1-800-334-7661 and dialing "1". Our crews are working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power. Stay safe and thank you for your patience.



ComEd Continues to Restore Power to 500,000+ customers. A derecho with wind gusts in excess of 90 mph, lightning and, in some cases, hail moved across our region Monday afternoon and caused significant damage throughout our service area, with downed power lines and poles and broken limbs and tree-related damage.

We have restored power to 478,000+ customers, but we're expecting it will take multiple days to restore service to all customers affected by the storm. Our current estimate is that all customers will be restored by 3PM on Saturday, August 15. We recommend customers take whatever steps they feel necessary to keep themselves and their families safe during this time.

Our employees are working around the clock and mutual assistance crews are coming in from other states to help restore power. We will share information with our customers, such as outage causes and estimated times of restoration, as soon as they are available.

Please continue to report your power outages at [ComEd.com/Report](https://www.comed.com/Report) or by calling 1800-334-7661 and dialing "1."

We thank you for your patience as we continue to work as safely and quickly as possible 24/7 until all of our customers' power has been restored.



ComEd Prepares Customers for Winter Storms and Outages. Your safety is our top priority and as winter storms continue to approach our service area, we're preparing and want you to, too! Stay in the know by updating your preferences and phone number now at [ComEd.com/MyAccount](https://www.comed.com/MyAccount). The more information we have, the better we can keep you informed. Here are a few ways you can prepare you and your loved ones before and during extreme weather:

- In the event of an outage, contact us:
  - Report at [ComEd.com/Report](https://www.comed.com/Report)
  - Text OUT to 26633 and STAT to receive restoration information
  - Download the mobile app at [ComEd.com/App](https://www.comed.com/App)
  - Visit [ComEd.com/Map](https://www.comed.com/Map)
  - Call 1-800-334-7661
  - Spanish-speaking customers should call 1-800-955-8237
- Be safe
  - If you see or come into contact with a downed power line, immediately call ComEd at 1-800-334-7661
  - Never approach a downed power line, always assume a power line is extremely dangerous and energized
  - Do not approach ComEd crews — they may be working on live electrical equipment, and the perimeter of the work zone may be hazardous
  - Turn off or unplug electronic equipment and appliances
  - Always clear ice and snow from ventilation pipes for direct-vent furnaces and water heaters
  - Do not connect a generator directly to your home's wiring and never use a generator indoors or in any enclosed area

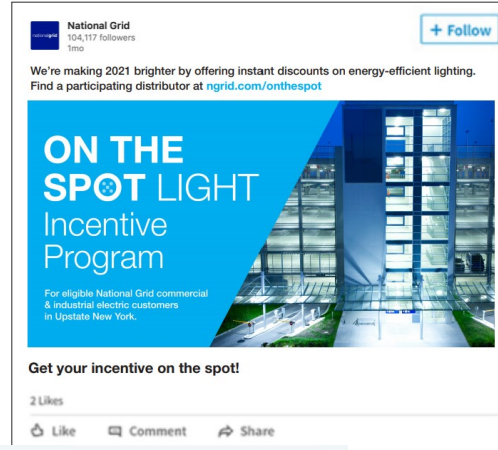
# National Grid uses LinkedIn to reach business customers



**National Grid**  
104,117 followers  
1mo

Happy **#EEDay2020**. Today, we celebrate energy efficiency, but every day we're here to help businesses take advantage of energy solutions. And, it goes beyond lower energy use and sustainability – it can reduce carbon emissions. Imagine what we could do together. Visit [ngrid.com/eeday](https://ngrid.com/eeday).

Our passion for saving energy isn't limited to just one day



**National Grid**  
104,117 followers  
1mo

We're making 2021 brighter by offering instant discounts on energy-efficient lighting. Find a participating distributor at [ngrid.com/onthespot](https://ngrid.com/onthespot)

## ON THE SPOT LIGHT Incentive Program

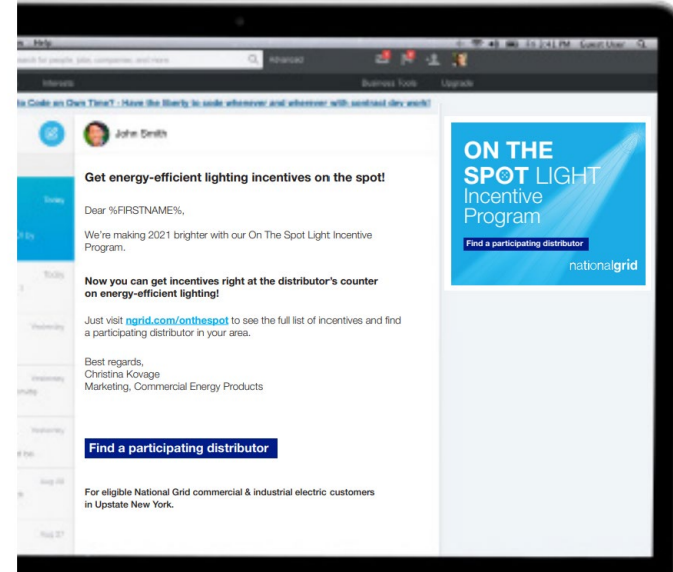
For eligible National Grid commercial & industrial electric customers in Upstate New York.

**Get your incentive on the spot!**

2 Likes

Like Comment Share

LINKEDIN MAIL / ON THE SPOT - Subject Line: We've got a bright idea to save energy.



**ON THE SPOT LIGHT Incentive Program**  
Find a participating distributor  
nationalgrid

**Get energy-efficient lighting incentives on the spot!**

Dear %FIRSTNAME%,

We're making 2021 brighter with our On The Spot Light Incentive Program.

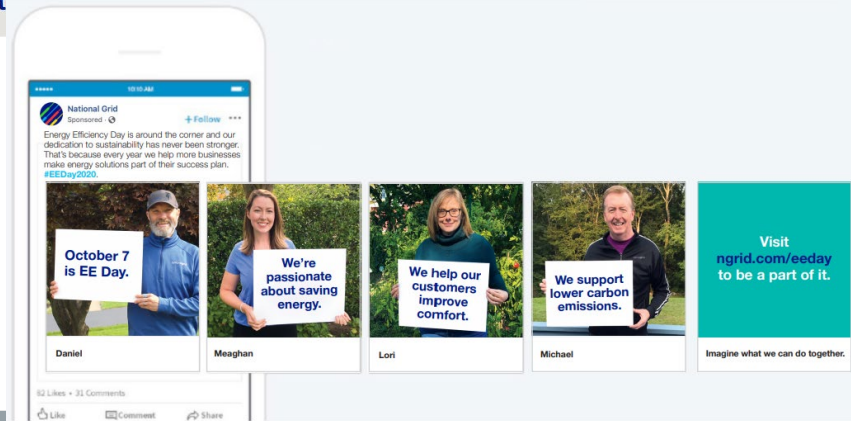
**Now you can get incentives right at the distributor's counter on energy-efficient lighting!**

Just visit [ngrid.com/onthespot](https://ngrid.com/onthespot) to see the full list of incentives and find a participating distributor in your area.

Best regards,  
Christina Kovage  
Marketing, Commercial Energy Products

**Find a participating distributor**

For eligible National Grid commercial & industrial electric customers in Upstate New York.



**National Grid**  
Sponsored  
+ Follow

Energy Efficiency Day is around the corner and our dedication to sustainability has never been stronger. That's because every year we help more businesses make energy solutions part of their success plan. **#EEDay2020**

October 7 is EE Day.

Daniel

We're passionate about saving energy.

Meaghan

We help our customers improve comfort.

Lori

We support lower carbon emissions.

Michael

Visit [ngrid.com/eeday](https://ngrid.com/eeday) to be a part of it.

Imagine what we can do together.

82 Likes • 31 Comments

Like Comment Share

Source: [National Grid, Energy AdVision](https://www.nationalgrid.com)

# Xcel Energy uses Pinterest for safety and energy-efficiency content



Today Explore

Search for easy dinners, fashion, etc.

Log in

Sign up



## Xcel Energy

@responsiblebynature.com · @xcelenergy · We want to help you be more energy-efficient in your home - it's easier than you think! Disclaimer spr.ly/disclaimer.

382 followers · 7 following



Follow



Summer Lovin'

181 Pins  
15w



#DIY Energy Efficiency

42 Pins  
23w



Xcel Energy Minnesota

2 Pins  
1y



Day of Service

1 Pin  
2y



Light up your world

76 Pins  
2y



LED Holiday Lights

14 Pins  
7y



It's easy to be green

42 Pins  
8y



Energy Efficient Recipes

63 Pins  
8y



Baby, it's cold outside

24 Pins  
8y



What channels are you using: What's working and not?





What are the best  
channels for engaging  
business customers?



# Contact us



## Cory Coggins

Analyst, Market Research

E Source

303-345-9121

[cory\\_coggins@esource.com](mailto:cory_coggins@esource.com)



## Jessica Bailis

Solution Director, Marketing and

Communications

E Source

303-345-9159

[jessica\\_bailis@esource.com](mailto:jessica_bailis@esource.com)



## Miriam Stein

Associate Analyst, Customer Engagement Solutions

E Source

303-345-9194

[miriam\\_stein@esource.com](mailto:miriam_stein@esource.com)

You're free to share this document inside your company. If you'd like to quote or use our material outside of your business, please contact us at [esource@esource.com](mailto:esource@esource.com) or 1-800-ESOURCE (1-800-376-8723).