How social media gets us down—and how community 
powered entertainment will pick us back up

People want platforms to be more real and content-driven. They want to choose what they see on social media, rather than have an algorithm dictate it. 82% want to see mostly real, user-created content on social media. 78% want to see content recommended by other users, rather than by the platform.

When users feel happy, they are much more receptive to everything—including advertising. A good mood makes social media users 83% more likely to enjoy an ad. 52% agree that seeing an ad online makes a bad mood even worse.

Researchers conducted a survey of 1,000 nationally representative social media users ages 13-35, and 1,138 Imgur users. The survey was fielded February 26, 2018 to March 5, 2018.

In fact… the more social media platforms we use, the less happy we are. Research conducted by Ypulse in a survey of n=1,000 nationally representative social media users wish social media was a more positive place. 70% think spending too much time on social media is bad for their mental health. 61% say the negative side of social media isn’t talked about enough.

It’s true: social media is a breeding ground for negativity. We talked to 2,100 13-35 year old social media users about the internet and the way it makes them feel. Here’s what we uncovered.

Different platforms have different effects on us. And anonymous sharing is an increasingly attractive alternative to traditional social media.

More than half want to anonymously share their opinions on social media. 56% say it helps them feel free to post what they want, and 55% say it helps them feel free to be themselves. 48% say they’re not as worried about what other people think of them.

Platforms that focus on entertainment, discovery, and helping us unwind offer the perfect antidote to social media toxicity.

Netflix Imgur YouTube Reddit Instagram Twitter Facebook Snapchat

Feel more relaxed

Entertain myself

Discover new things

People want platforms to be more real and content-driven.

But certain platforms make their users feel better after using them.

Percentage of users who feel better after using the platform

37%
53%
PINTEREST/
YOUTUBE
IMGUR
62%
69%
NETFLIX
SNAPCHAT/
INSTAGRAM
44%
SPOTIFY
80%
TUMBLR
33%
29%
FACEBOOK

Anonymity makes them feel more authentic.

Top platforms for representing the “Real Me” and the “Ideal Me”

“Real Me”

“Ideal Me”

When users feel happy, they are much more receptive to everything—including advertising.

A good mood makes social media users 83% more likely to enjoy an ad. 56% agree that spending too much time on social media is bad for their mental health. 35% say they’re not as worried about what other people think of them.

In fact… the more social media platforms we use, the less happy we are.