



University of St.Gallen

Institute for Media
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Social Media for the Awareness of Sustainability Data

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From insight to impact.

Agenda

- Two perspectives
- **How do companies communicate their CSR, ESG efforts?**
- Which sustainability data can be communicated in agricultural ecosystems?

Motivation

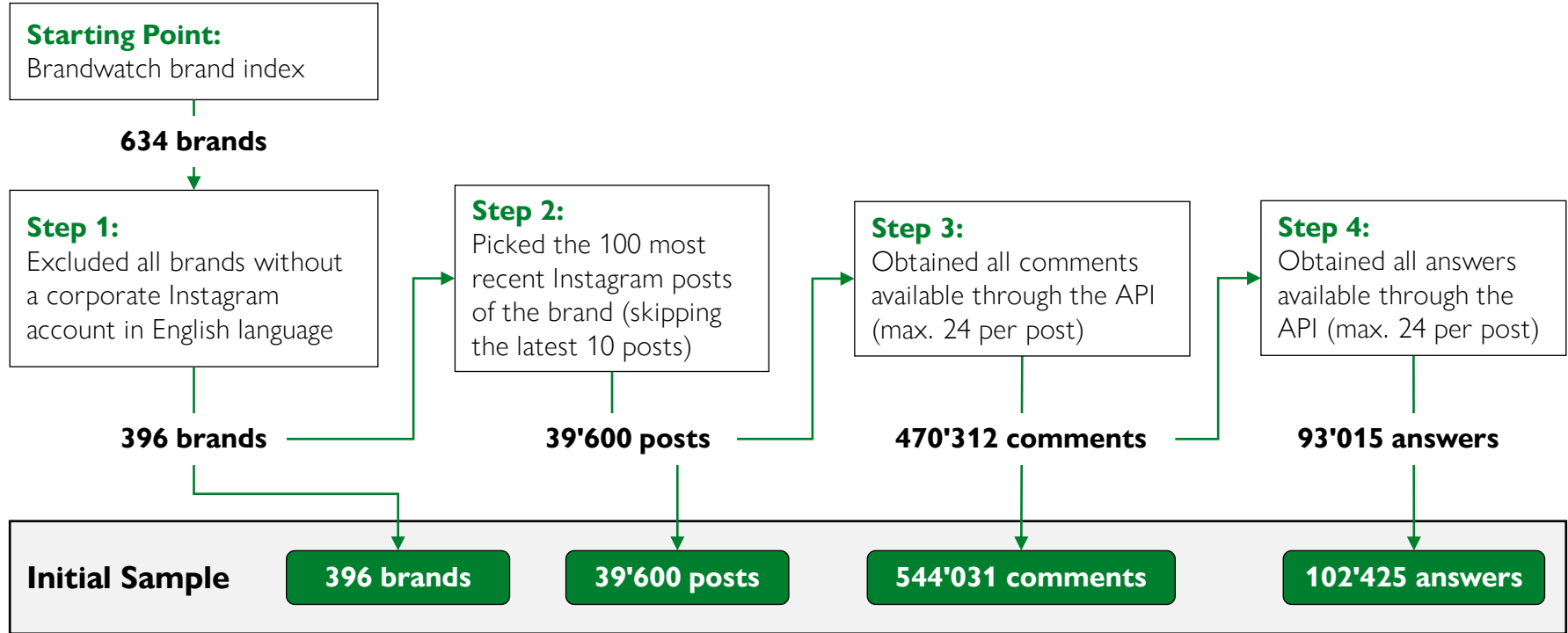


- **Most of this research considers Twitter and Facebook, while visual social media (SM) such as Instagram (IG) are yet underexplored** (Cho et al., 2017; Fernández et al., 2021; Ju et al., 2021; Rim and Tao, 2022).
- IG: One of the largest social network platforms: massive reach with over 2 billion MAU.
- Limited understanding of the processes involved in creating effective and successful SM CSR communication (Fernández et al., 2021; Rim and Tao, 2022).
- **What communication strategies are more effective for CSR communication via IG?** (Zerbini, 2017)
- **What are the consequences for companies signaling their CSR efforts via IG?** (Zerbini, 2017)

Methods

	CSR Text	Non-CSR Text	Total
CSR Image	<i>Congruent CSR Post</i> 1,232 (3.1%)  On #EarthDay and every day, we're transforming our business for the future. We're working to halve our greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050. 🌱	<i>CSR Image-Only Post</i> 1,838 (4.7%)  #ThrowbackThursday! Who can guess the names of this loveable pair of polar bear cubs?	3,070 (7.8%)
Non-CSR Image	<i>CSR Text-Only Post</i> 2,157 (5.5%)  We're committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 in line with the Paris climate agreement and the Science Based Targets initiative. Our first milestone is to achieve carbon-neutral operations by 2025.	<i>Congruent Non-CSR Post</i> 34,173 (86.7%)  Choose your table. You can only pick ONE! Are you Team 🍷 or 🍷?	36,330 (92.2%)
Total	3,389 (8.6%)	36,011 (91.4%)	39,400 (100%)

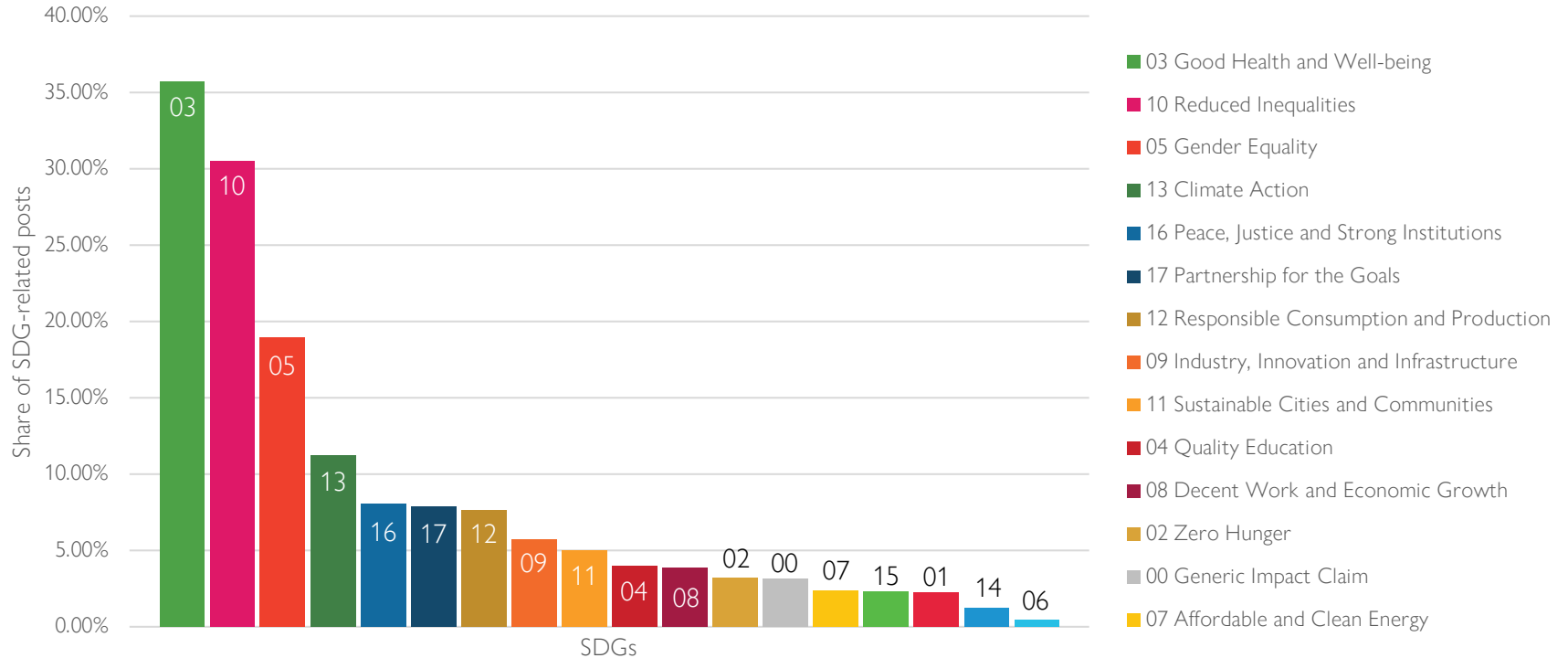
Sample Selection: We selected 100 posts for each brand in the Brandwatch brand index with an English-speaking Instagram Account.



CSR Share: 7,7% of all posts that we analyzed were categorized as CSR-related



SDG Distribution: SDGs 3 (Good health and Well-being) and 10 (Reduced inequalities) were the most frequently mentioned in our sample of posts.



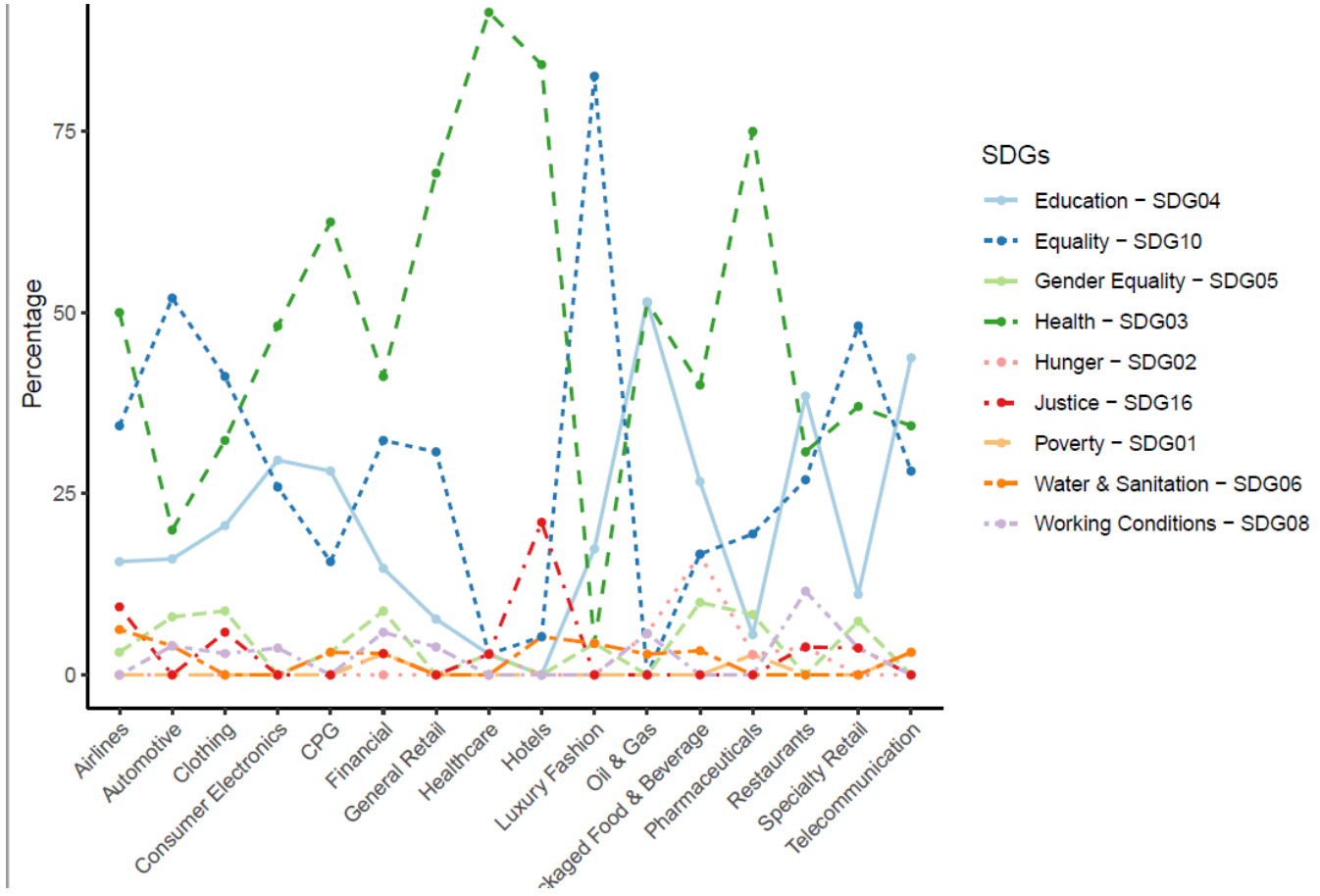
Deep Dive – Sustainability SDGs

Table 1. Sustainability Posts Total Count and Proportions Across SDGs by Industries

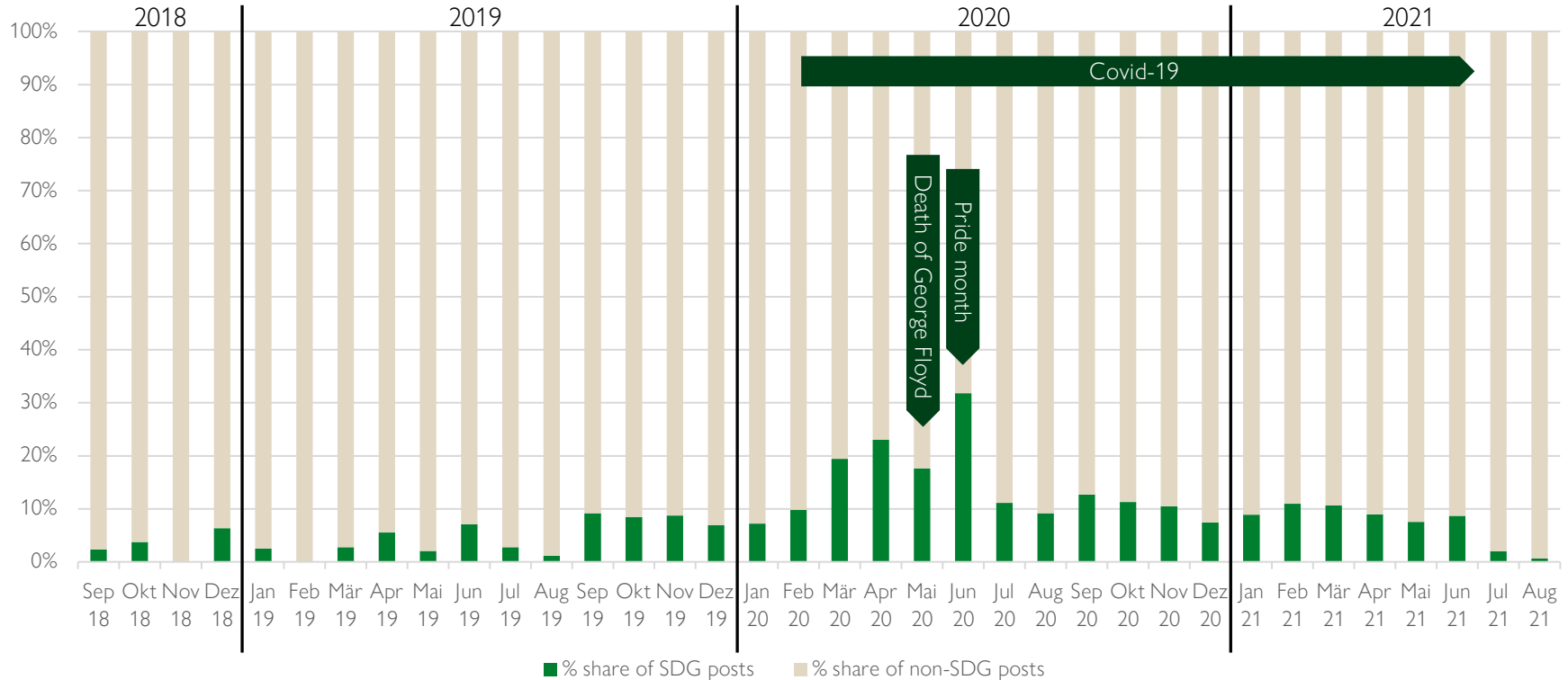
Industry	Total Posts	Sust. Posts	SDG07	SDG09	SDG11	SDG12	SDG13	SDG14	SDG15	SDG17
Airlines	3,300	20	–	5.00	10.00	40.00	50.00 ^a	10.00 ^a	5.00	20.00
Automotive	4,200	117 ^a	15.38 ^a	2.56	74.36 ^a	7.69	88.03 ^a	0.85	0.85	5.13
CPG	2,700	70	–	1.43	4.29	57.14 ^a	28.57	10.00 ^a	18.57 ^a	35.71 ^a
Clothing	600	8	–	–	–	100.00 ^a	62.50 ^a	25.00 ^a	25.00 ^a	25.00
Consumer Electronics	4,500	41	14.63 ^a	7.32	7.32	56.10 ^a	46.34	7.32 ^a	7.32 ^a	26.83
Financial	2,700	168 ^a	4.17	36.90 ^a	9.52	11.31	24.40	3.57	5.95	29.17 ^a
General Retail	2,600	26	–	19.23	11.54	30.77	19.23	–	–	50.00 ^a
Healthcare	900	35	–	37.14 ^a	11.43	11.43	22.86	2.86	5.71	37.14 ^a
Hotels	3,600	29	–	3.45	6.90	27.59	17.24	6.90 ^a	10.34 ^a	62.07 ^a
Luxury Fashion	3,000	8	–	12.50	25.00	37.50	37.50	–	–	50.00 ^a
Oil & Gas	1,099	107	28.97 ^a	4.67	18.69	19.63	46.73	1.87	16.82 ^a	31.78 ^a
Packaged Food & Beverage	800	94	3.19	7.45	3.19	57.45 ^a	43.62	8.51 ^a	13.83 ^a	17.02
Pharmaceuticals	1,600	111 ^a	2.70	50.45 ^a	5.41	16.22	20.72	0.90	2.70	23.42
Restaurants	2,700	10	–	–	20.00	20.00	30.00	10.00 ^a	–	50.00 ^a
Specialty Retail	3,000	15	6.67	13.33	–	33.33	20.00	–	–	53.33 ^a
Telecom	2,100	29	10.34 ^a	55.17 ^a	3.45	13.79	20.69	6.90 ^a	3.45	27.59
Totals	3,4900	888	72	176	154	234	345	38	70	242
Chi-Square (<i>df</i> = 15)		1255.81, <i>p</i> < .001	475.65, <i>p</i> < .001	676.29, <i>p</i> < .001	443.03, <i>p</i> < .001	665.45, <i>p</i> < .001	604.70, <i>p</i> < .001	97.25, <i>p</i> < .001	283.94, <i>p</i> < .001	308.76, <i>p</i> < .001
Gwet's AC1		.995	.999	.999	.999	.996	.998	.999	.999	.997
Krippendorff's α		.892	.708	.818	.816	.624	.87	.745	.541	.70
% agreement		[99.9]	[99.9]	[99.9]	[99.9]	[99.6]	[99.8]	[100]	[99.9]	[99.7]



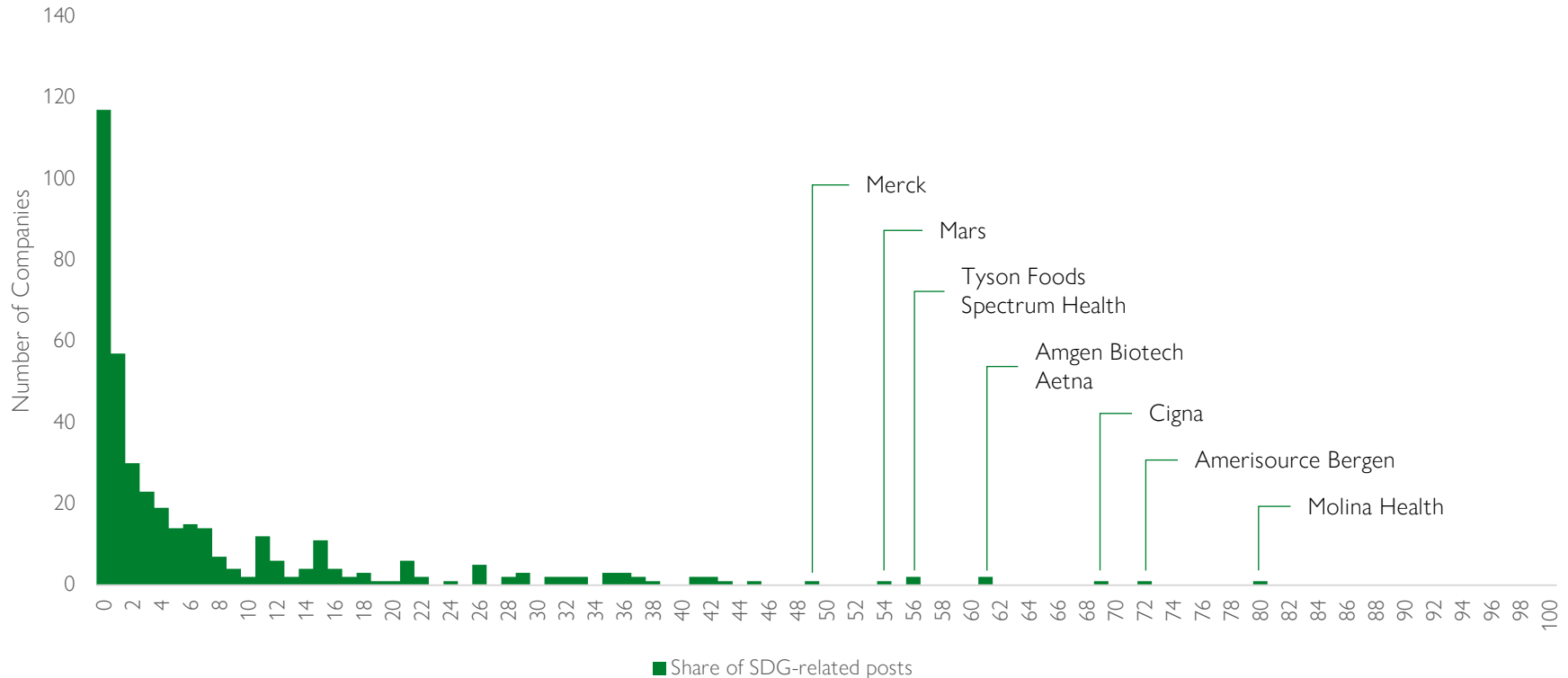
Deep Dive Human Rights Topics



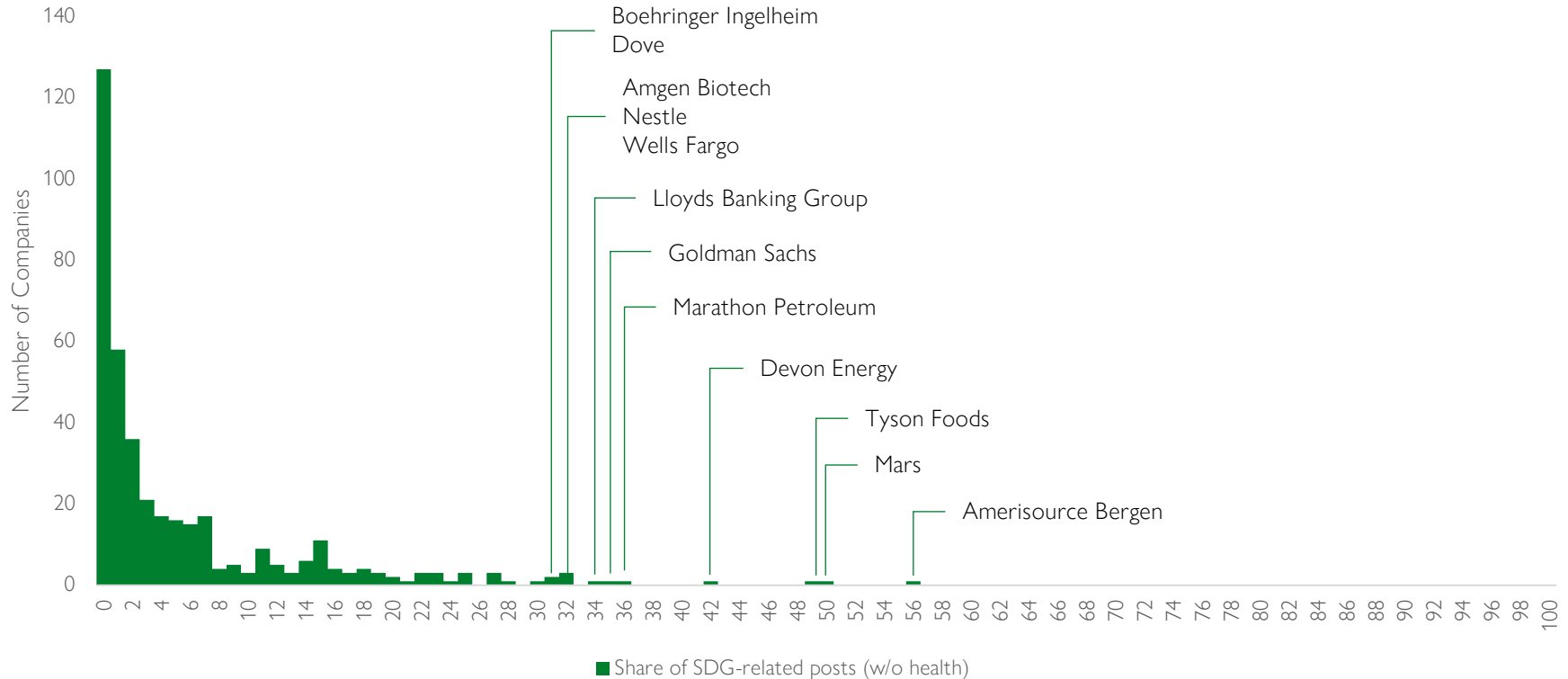
Share of CSR-related posts over time: The amount of CSR communication is strongly driven by events with global resonance.



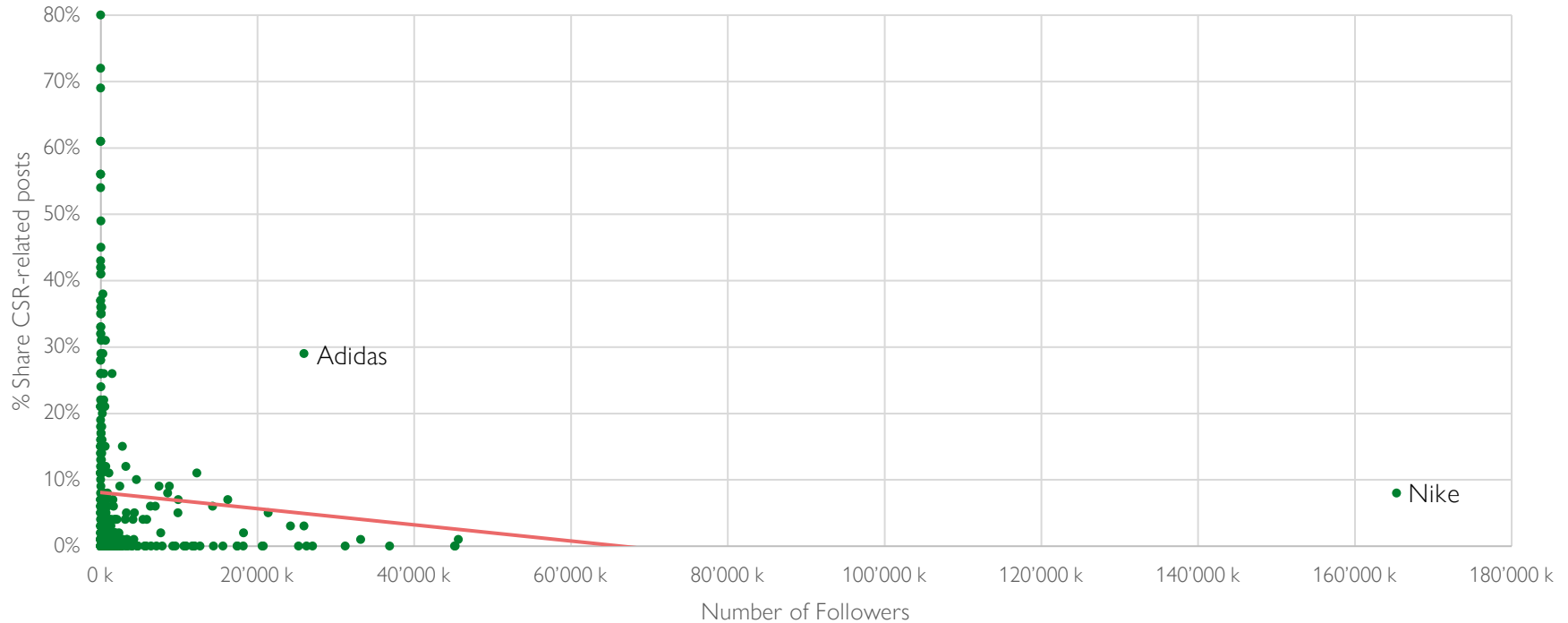
Most companies have no or few CSR-related posts – but some companies have a clear CSR focus (up to 80% CSR posts).



Excluding all health-related posts, the previous graphic looks as follows



Followers vs. CSR-Share: Companies with many followers tend to communicate less about CSR. Nike and Adidas are extreme outliers.



Most active CSR communicators per Industry

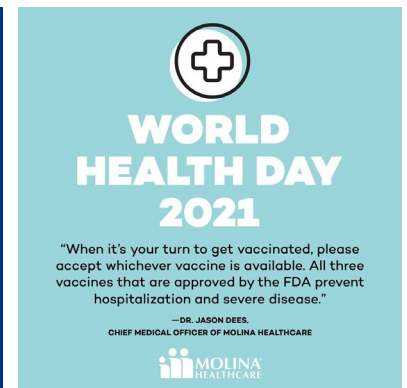
Healthcare 	Pharma 	Packaged Food & Beverages 	Financials 
Oil & Gas 	Clothing 	Non-perishabled CPG 	Telecommunication 
General Retail 	Automotive 	Hotels 	Specialty Retail 
Consumer Electronics 	Restaurants 	Airlines 	Luxury Fashion 

Most frequent themes

us, get, like, learn, see, **help**, **world**, take, every, **love**, **people**, work, summer, **home**, find, know, best, way, collection, back, **team**, life, shop, check, need, visit, next, **support**, go, **family**, look, share, let, **together**, travel, happy, want, discover, ready, available, experience, celebrate, good, around, also, made, **women**, story, years, **black**, photo, **community**, **health**, free, keep, better, right, watch, full, great, favorite, many, enjoy, proud, perfect, 2021, always, week, even, design, via, stay, join, head, stories, part, combined, **covid19**, future, use, live, may, **thank**, season, city, got, month, care, last, click, show, technology, start, tag, friends, feel, chance, little, big, win, come, working, would, across, business, weekend, using, top, tap, never, making, place, meet, everyone, create, **thanks**, **pride**, online, could, give, much, days, change, skin, **communities**, important, things, style, special, set, latest, bring, **local**, ever, explore, holiday, power, **food**, drive, plus, add, **employees**, moment, looking, something, long, step, un, members

Covid-19: A third of CSR-related posts concern the Covid-19 pandemic

Industry	#	# Covid posts	% Covid posts
Pharmaceuticals	16	320	20.00%
Healthcare	9	171	19.00%
Financial	27	147	5.44%
Airlines	32	171	5.34%
Oil & Gas	12	56	4.67%
General Retail	26	75	2.88%
Packaged Food & Beverages	8	22	2.75%
Telecommunication	22	43	1.95%
Non-perishable CPG	28	51	1.82%
Consumer Electronics	45	42	0.93%
Clothing	6	5	0.83%
Hotels	36	28	0.78%
Restaurants	27	15	0.56%
Specialty Retail	30	13	0.43%
Automotive	41	6	0.15%
Luxury Fashion	30	1	0.03%
Total	395	1166	2.95%



Climate Change: Less than 1% of posts explicitly address climate change

Industry	#	# Climate posts	% Climate posts
Packaged Food & Beverages	8	41	5.13%
Oil & Gas	12	50	4.55%
Automotive	41	103	2.51%
Financial	27	41	1.52%
Pharmaceuticals	16	23	1.44%
Healthcare	9	8	0.89%
Clothing	6	5	0.83%
Non-perishable CPG	28	20	0.74%
Consumer Electronics	45	19	0.42%
Airlines	32	10	0.31%
Telecommunication	22	6	0.29%
General Retail	26	5	0.19%
Hotels	36	5	0.14%
Restaurants	27	3	0.11%
Luxury Fashion	30	3	0.10%
Specialty Retail	30	3	0.10%
Total	395	345	0.87%



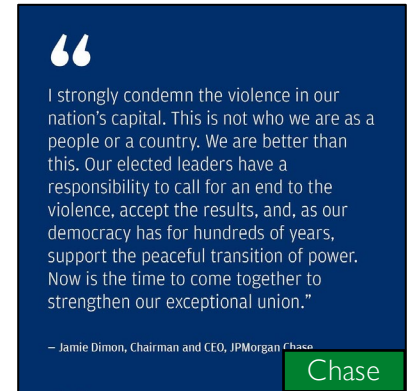
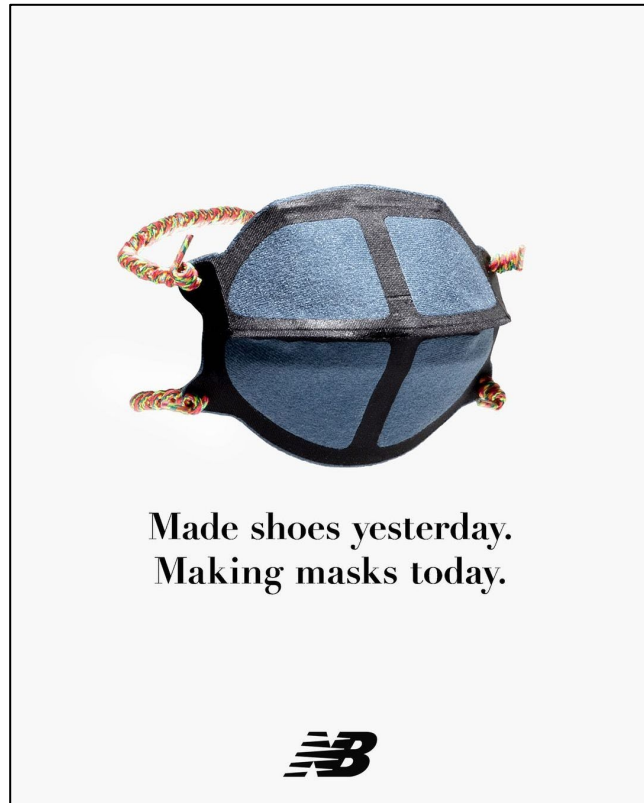
Engagement on CSR and non-CSR posts

On average, **CSR posts have a lower engagement than non-CSR posts**. However, correcting for the average engagement of the posting company (relative scores*), **CSR posts evoke more comments**. In other words, companies with high average engagement make relatively few CSR posts.

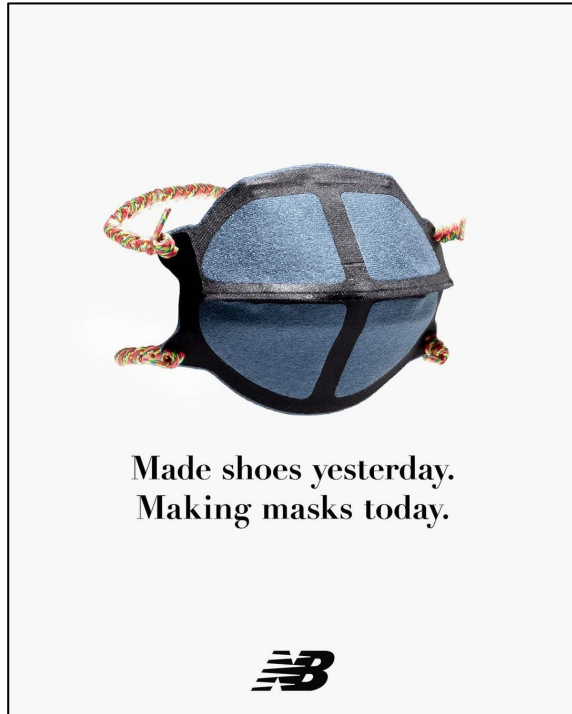
	# likes	# comments	Relative likes	Relative comments
Non-CSR	14097	147	0.6%	-1.4%
CSR	6934	116	-6.6%	16.5%

* Relative scores are calculated by comparing the respective KPI of a post (e.g. likes or comments) against the average of all posts of the same company. This allows us to avoid biases caused by different posting behaviors of companies with different average follower, like and comment KPIs.

Most liked CSR posts



Most commented CSR posts

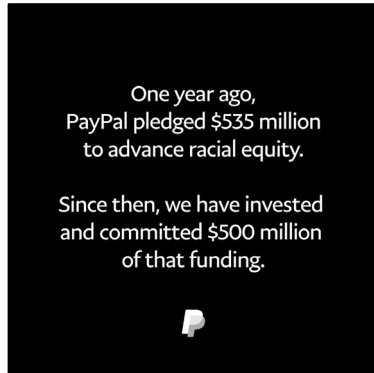


Sentiment on CSR and non-CSR posts

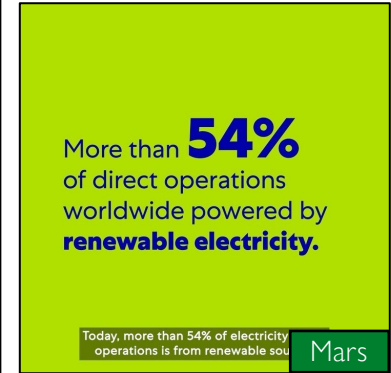
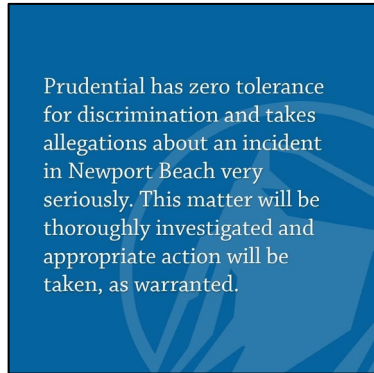
On average, **comments on CSR posts are less positive than on non-CSR posts**, both in relative and in absolute terms.

	Positive Ratio	Sentiment Score	Relative Positive Ratio	Relative Sentiment Score
Non-CSR	67.1%	34.4%	0.3%	0.2%
CSR	61.2%	22.5%	-1.3%	-4.7%

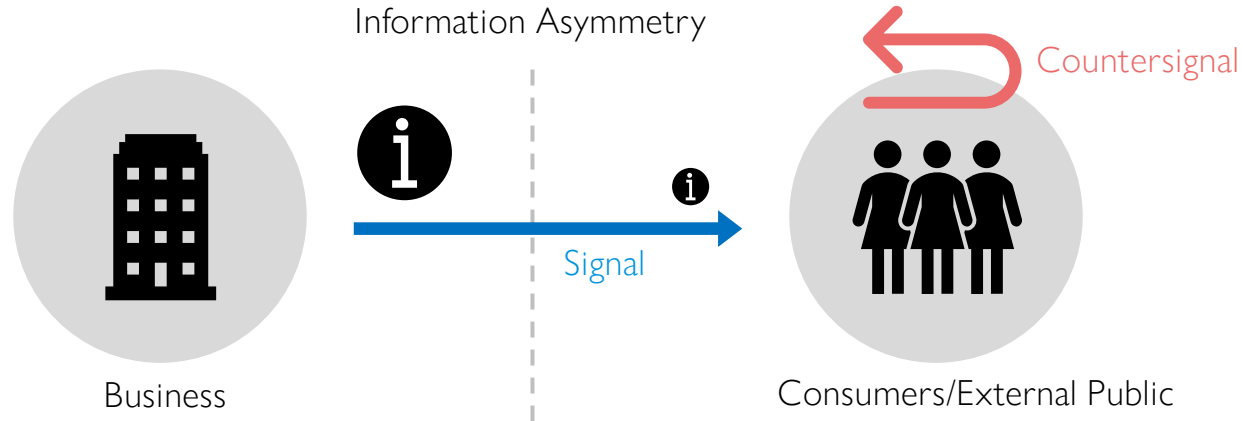
Most positively perceived CSR posts



Most negatively perceived CSR posts

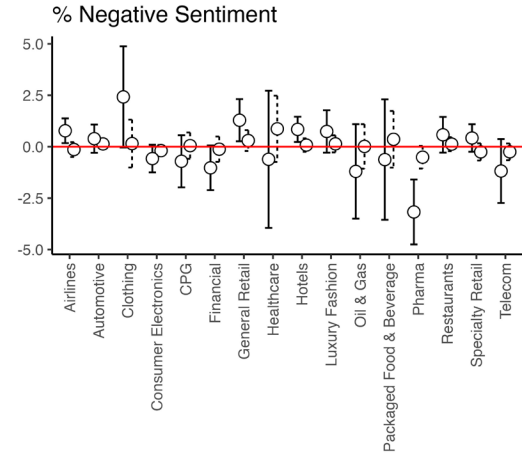
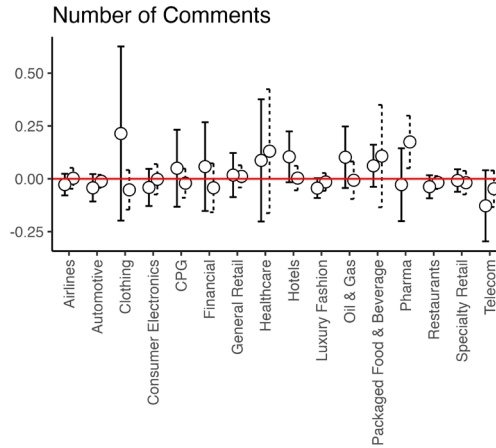
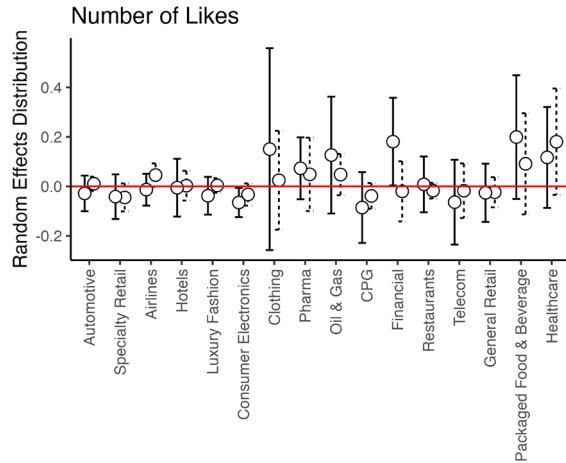


Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973)



- Stakeholders cannot really observe the true sustainability level of organizations (Sardanelli et al., 2021). They often rely on CSR signals to assess the companies' sustainability quality (Morsing, 2006).
- CSR signals: The means to reduce information asymmetries between companies and their various stakeholders, thereby influencing the perceived quality of a company's CSR practices (Connelly et al., 2011).

Results – Random Effects



Signal Element

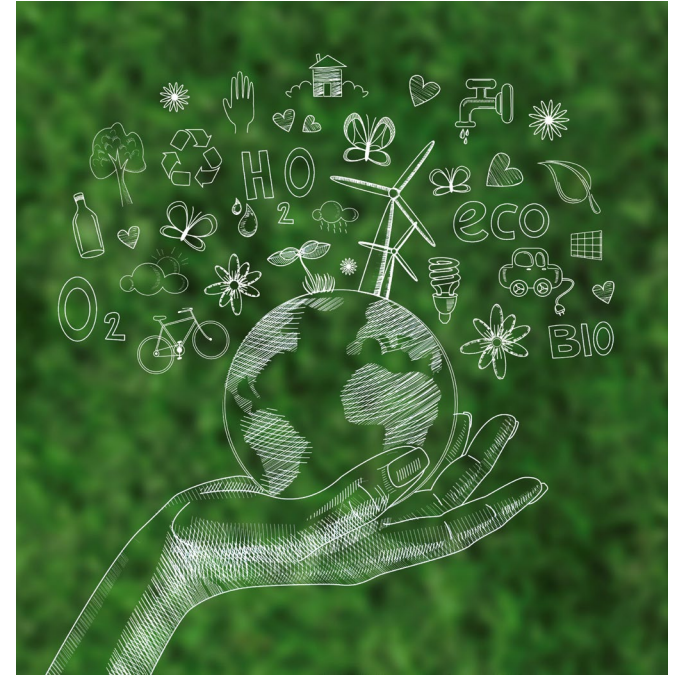
— CSR Image

- - - CSR Text

Summary & Implications

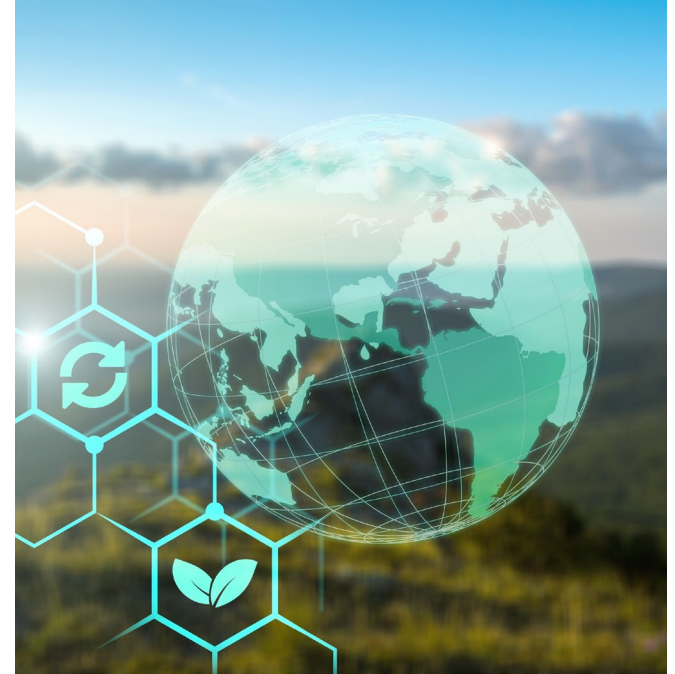
Summary Descriptive Analysis: CSR communication makes up a relevant share of posts on corporate brand Instagram accounts

- About **7,7%** of all posts on corporate brand accounts are CSR-related
- **Health-related** posts make up a large proportion of CSR-related posts in our sample (36%). About one third of these posts are related to the **Covid-19 pandemic**.
- Healthcare and Pharmaceutical companies communicate most actively about CSR-related issues. Excluding all health-related communication, packaged food and beverage companies and financial players take the lead.
- CSR communication is to a significant extent **driven by current events and debates**.
- Companies may have **different motives and strategies** for communicating about CSR.



Dos and Don'ts

- ✓ Communicate about topics that are currently relevant to people, but only if you have something to say about them.
- ✓ Be prepared for critical comments and start a discussion.
- ✓ Talk about actual achievements and not only promises.
- ✓ Be transparent and also admit mistakes.
- ✗ Jump on the bandwagon of hot CSR topics if you can't walk the talk.
- ✗ Expect quick short-term wins through CSR communication – it's a marathon not a sprint.



Thanks.

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