Social Media Analytics

Social media analytics is the ability to gather and find meaning in data gathered from social channels to support business decisions — and measure the performance of actions based on those decisions through social media.

Social media analytics is broader than metrics such as likes, follows, retweets, previews, clicks, and impressions gathered from individual channels. It also differs from reporting offered by services that support marketing campaigns such as LinkedIn or Google Analytics.

Social media analytics uses specifically designed software platforms that work similarly to web search tools. Data about keywords or topics is retrieved through search queries or web 'crawlers' that span channels. Fragments of text are returned, loaded into a database, categorized and analyzed to derive meaningful insights.

Importance of social media analytics

Social media analytics helps companies address these experiences and use them to:

- Spot trends related to offerings and brands
- Understand conversations — what is being said and how it is being received
- Derive customer sentiment towards products and services
- Gauge response to social media and other communications
- Identify high-value features for a product or service
- Uncover what competitors are saying and its effectiveness
- Map how third-party partners and channels may affect performance

The strategies based on social media analytics affect a range of business activity:

- **Product development** - Analyzing an aggregate of Facebook posts, tweets and Amazon product reviews can deliver a clearer picture of customer pain points, shifting needs and desired features. Trends can be identified and tracked to shape the management of existing product lines as well as guide new product development.
- **Customer experience** - An IBM study discovered "organizations are evolving from product-led to experience-led businesses." Behavioral analysis can be applied across social channels to capitalize on micro-moments to delight customers and increase loyalty and lifetime value. Branding - Social media may be the world's largest focus group. Natural language processing and sentiment analysis can continually monitor positive or negative

expectations to maintain brand health, refine positioning and develop new brand attributes.

- **Competitive Analysis** - Understanding what competitors are doing and how customers are responding is always critical. For example, a competitor may indicate that they are foregoing a niche market, creating an opportunity. Or a spike in positive mentions for a new product can alert organizations to market disruptors.
- **Operational efficiency** – Deep analysis of social media can help organizations improve how they gauge demand. Retailers and others can use that information to manage inventory and suppliers, reduce costs and optimize resources.

Key capabilities of effective social media analytics

- **Natural language processing and machine learning technologies** identify entities and relationships in unstructured data — information not pre-formatted to work with data analytics. Virtually all social media content is unstructured. These technologies are critical to deriving meaningful insights.
- **Segmentation** is a fundamental need in social media analytics. It categorizes social media participants by geography, age, gender, marital status, parental status and other demographics. It can help identify influencers in those categories. Messages, initiatives and responses can be better tuned and targeted by understanding who is interacting on key topics.
- **Behavior analysis** is used to understand the concerns of social media participants by assigning behavioral types such as user, recommender, prospective user and detractor. Understanding these roles helps develop targeted messages and responses to meet, change or deflect their perceptions.
- **Sentiment analysis** measures the tone and intent of social media comments. It typically involves natural language processing technologies to help understand entities and relationships to reveal positive, negative, neutral or ambivalent attributes.
- **Share of voice** analyzes prevalence and intensity in conversations regarding brand, products, services, reputation and more. It helps determine key issues and important topics. It also helps classify discussions as positive, negative, neutral or ambivalent.

- **Clustering analysis** can uncover hidden conversations and unexpected insights. It makes associations between keywords or phrases that appear together frequently and derives new topics, issues and opportunities. The people that make baking soda, for example, discovered new uses and opportunities using clustering analysis.
- **Dashboards and visualization** charts, graphs, tables and other presentation tools summarize and share social media analytics findings — a critical capability for communicating and acting on what has been learned. They also enable users to grasp meaning and insights more quickly and look deeper into specific findings without advanced technical skills.

Why you need social media analytics tools

Social media analytics tools help you create performance reports to share with your team, stakeholders, and boss — to figure out what's working and what's *not*. They should also provide the historical data you need to assess your social media marketing strategy on both macro and micro levels.

Watch this video to see how the Hootsuite team uses social media analytics every day:

Social media analytics tools can help you answer questions like:

- Is it worth it for my business to keep posting on Pinterest?
- What were our top posts on LinkedIn this year?
- Should we post more on Instagram next month?
- Which network drove the most brand awareness for our product launch?
- What kind of posts do my followers like to comment on?
- And many more.

10 of the best social media analytics tools for 2023

#1: **Hootsuite Analytics**

Key benefits: Performance data from every social network in one place with easy-to-understand reports

Paid or free? Paid tool

Skill level: Beginner to intermediate

Best for: Business owners who run their own social media, social media managers at small-to-medium sized businesses, marketing teams

Most social media management platforms have built-in analytics tools. I hope you'll forgive me for saying Hootsuite's reporting capabilities are my favorite. But it's the tool I know and love best.

Imagine Twitter analytics, Instagram analytics, Facebook analytics, TikTok analytics, Pinterest analytics, and LinkedIn analytics all in one place. Hootsuite Analytics offers a complete picture of all your social media efforts, so you don't have to check each platform individually.

It saves time by making it easy to compare results across networks.

Social media post metrics:

- Clicks
- Comments
- Reach
- Engagement rate
- Impressions
- Shares
- Saves
- Video views
- Video reach
- [And more](#)

Profile metrics:

- Follower growth over time
- Negative feedback rate
- Profile visits
- Reactions
- Overall engagement rate
- [And more](#)

Best time to post recommendations

Ever spend a bunch of time writing and designing a social post only to have it fall completely flat? There could be a lot of reasons for that. But one of the most common reasons this happens is *posting at the wrong time*. A.k.a. Posting when your target audiences are not online or not interested in engaging with you.

This is why our **Best Time to Publish tool** is one of the most popular features of Hootsuite Analytics. It looks at your unique historical social media data and recommends the most optimal times to post based on three different goals:

1. Engagement
2. Impressions
3. Link clicks
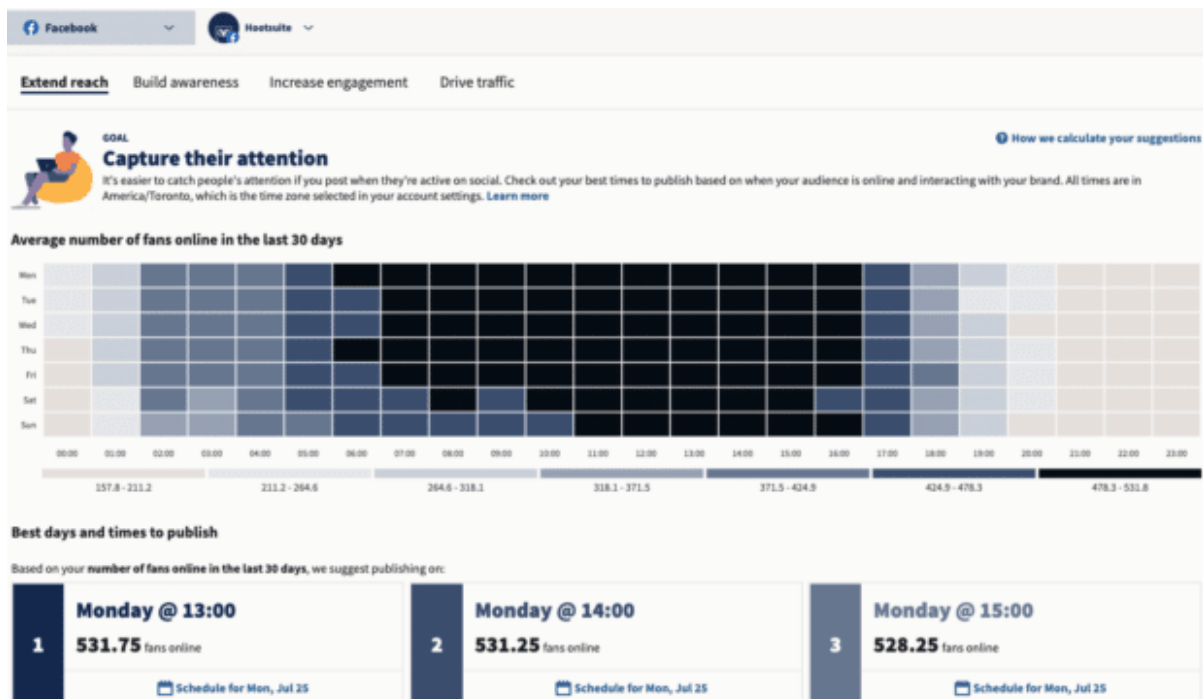
[Start free trial](#)

Most social media analytics tools will only recommend posting times based on engagement. Or they'll use data from universal benchmarks, instead of your unique performance history.

Other cool things you can do with Hootsuite Analytics:

- Customize report templates for only the metrics you care about
- Get reports on your competitors
- Track the productivity of your social team (response times, and resolution time for assigned posts, mentions, and comments)
- Monitor mentions, comments, and tags related to your business to avoid PR disasters before they happen.

#2: Google Analytics

Key benefit: See how much traffic and leads flow to your website from your social media channels
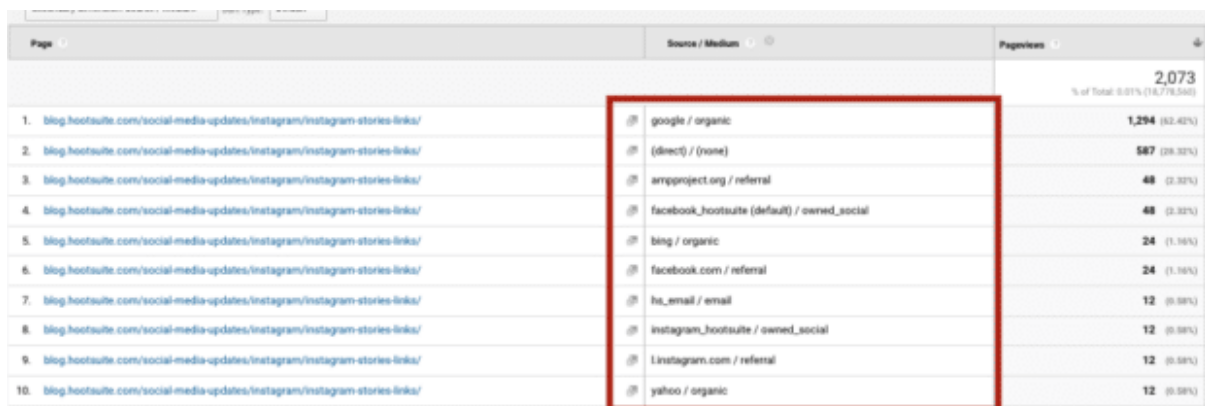
Paid or free: Free tool

Skill level: all skill levels

Best for: all social media professionals should be familiar with Google Analytics, but especially those who work for a web-based business

You've probably heard of Google Analytics already. That's because it's one of the best free tools to use to learn about your website visitors. And if you're a social marketer who likes to drive traffic to your website, then it's an invaluable resource to have in your back pocket.

While it's not a social media reporting tool per se, you can use it to set up reports that will help you:

- See which social media platforms give you the most traffic
- See what content drives the most leads and traffic on which social networks
- Get to know your audience with demographic data
- Calculate the ROI of your social media campaigns

With these data points, you'll be able to get the most out of your social media campaigns *and* effectively strategize for the future. No social media strategy is complete without Google

#3: RivalIQ

Key benefit: Fully customizable reporting that can draw data from all major social media networks.

Paid or free: Paid tool

Skill level: intermediate

Best for: social media managers

RivalIQ was designed to let social media managers be data scientists, without the pesky certification. RivalIQ delivers on-demand analytical data, alerts, and custom reports from major social media platforms.

Easily conduct a competitive analysis or a complete social media audit with RivalIQ's in-depth reporting. Better still, you can actually present your findings directly to your director, stakeholders, and marketing team with fully-customizable charts, graphics, and dashboards.

But RivalIQ isn't just for finding the big picture! Comprehensive social post analytics lets you see exactly which posts work for each platform and identify why they work. Know exactly whether it was the hashtags, time of day, post type, or which network's audience led to success. Then take that knowledge and double down for more success!

Pro tip: Getting owned by the competition? With RivalIQ you can find all the same info above, but from their social media accounts. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em (then beat 'em at their own game)!

Learn more: [Try a demo or start your free trial with RivalIQ](#)

#4: [Hootsuite Insights powered by Brandwatch](#)

Key benefits: Analyze brand sentiment and customer demographics in real time, alongside all your other social media performance data

Free or paid: Paid tool

Skill level: Intermediate to advanced

Best for: Social media professionals, PR and communications teams, small to large social media teams

Hootsuite Insights is a powerful enterprise-level [social listening tool](#) that doubles as an analytics tool.

It goes beyond Hootsuite Analytics, tracking your earned social mentions so you can measure [social sentiment](#) and improve customer experience.
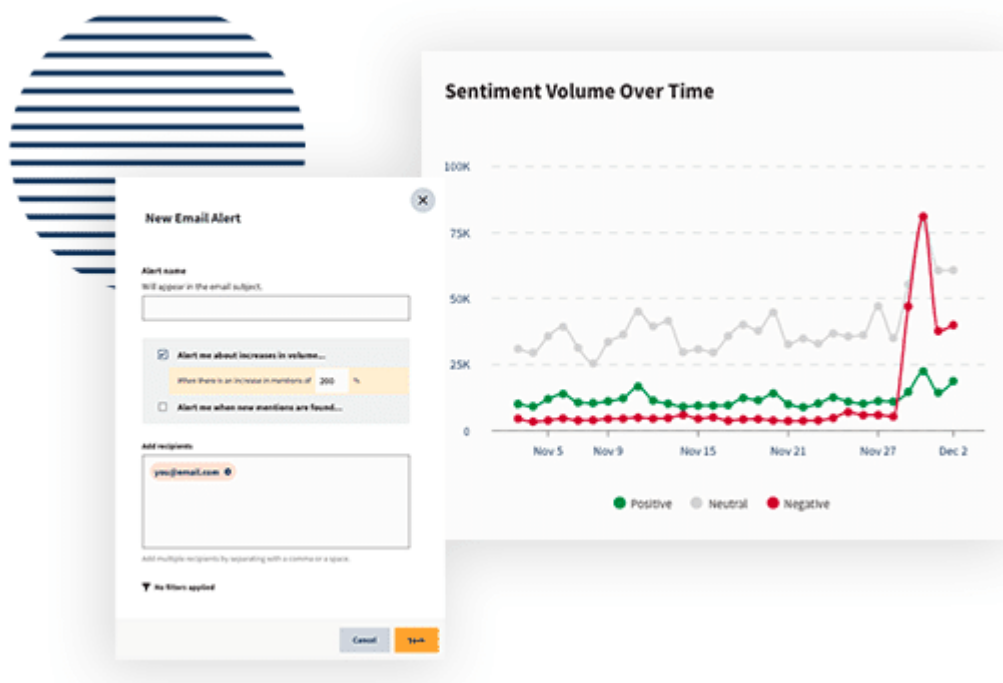
It also analyzes data about your audience demographics like gender, location, and language. You can compare demographics across networks, or look at the aggregate picture of your audience for all networks combined.

This is a tool that really tells you a lot about your audience — and how they feel about you. It can tell you whether a spike in mentions is a victory or a disaster. And it can help you capitalize or avoid either one, respectively.

#5: Brandwatch

Key benefits: Track and analyze data from more than 95 million sources, including blogs, forums, and review sites, as well as social networks

Free or paid: Paid tool

Skill level: Beginner to intermediate

Best for: PR and communications teams, social media marketers who focus on engagement and brand monitoring

Brandwatch is a powerful tool with five easy-to-use social media analytics report templates:

- **Summary:** A high-level view of social conversations about your brand, competitors, or keywords.
- **Trends:** A report on the conversations and accounts influencing a specific topic or hashtag, including mentions per hour or minute.
- **Reputation:** A checkup on sentiment trends you might need to monitor or address.
- **Influencers:** A report to help you identify influencer marketing opportunities relevant to your brand and analyze their activity.
- **Competitor comparison:** Benchmarking social media data for conversation volume, sentiment, and share of voice.

#6: Talkwalker

Key benefits: Monitor conversations from more than 150 million sources to analyze engagement, potential reach, comments, sentiment, and emotions

Free or paid: Paid tool

Skill level: intermediate to advanced

Best for: social media managers, PR and communications teams, brand monitors, product marketers, researchers

Talkwalker offers analytics related to social conversations beyond your owned social properties, including:

- Mentions
- Brand sentiment
- Important influencers
- Author lists

You can filter by region, demographics, device, type of content, and more.

Talkwalker is especially useful to spot activity peaks in conversations about your brand. This can help you determine the [best times for your brand to post on social media](#).

#7: [Keyhole](#)

Key benefits: In-depth automated social media reports and dashboards for all platforms

Free or paid: Paid tool

Skill level: intermediate to advanced

Best for: Enterprise-level businesses and organizations

Keyhole lets you report on everything: social media campaigns, brand mentions and interactions, hashtag impact, and even influencer campaign results. But that's not all!

You can drill down into your impressions, reach, share of voice, and even analyze your competitor's social media strategies.

If you're utilizing influencer marketing as part of your strategy, Keyhole has reporting capabilities that will let you identify the ideal influencers to work with.

#8: [Channelview Insights](#)

Key benefits: Analyze the YouTube performance of multiple channels

Free or paid: Paid tool (free for Hootsuite Enterprise users)

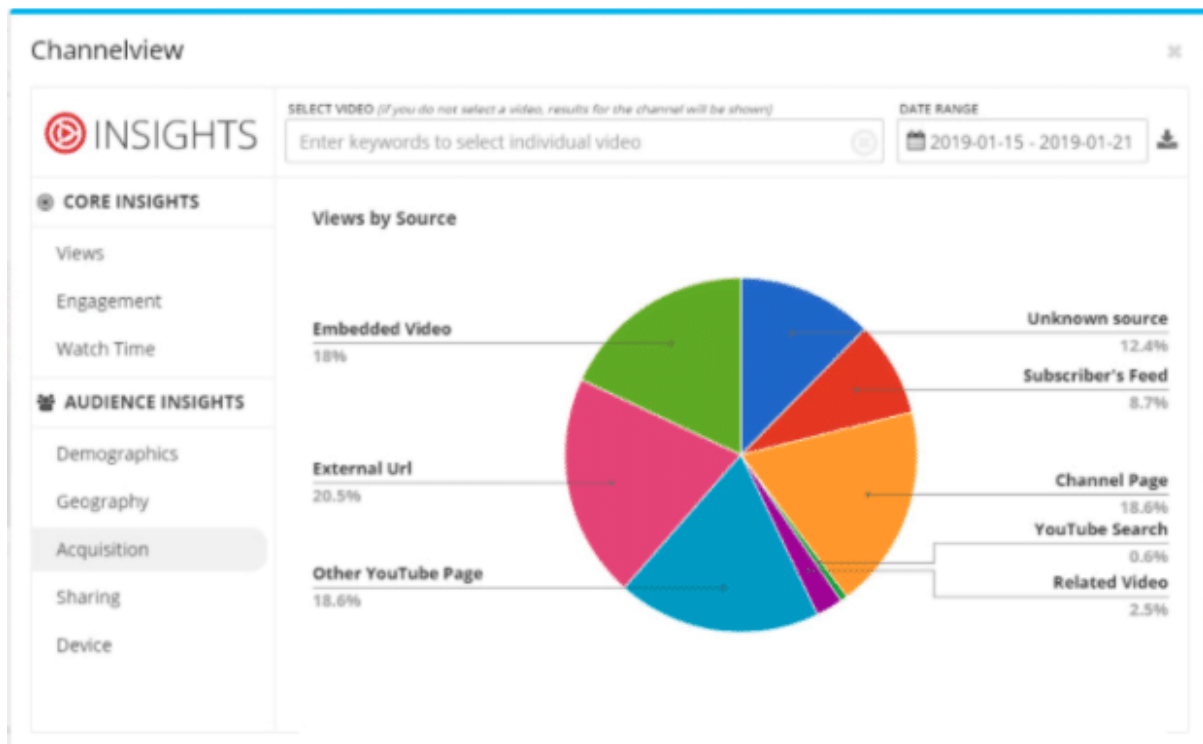**Skill level:** all skill levels

Best for: YouTube marketers and creators, social media managers who run a YouTube channel alongside other social channels

The Channelview Insights App adds YouTube analytics to the Hootsuite dashboard.

With this integration, you can analyze your YouTube video and channel performance alongside all your other social media channels. You can also schedule automatic, regular reports.

Easily see the following metrics in one place:

- Views, engagement, subscription activity
- Video traffic sources
- Audience insights for demographics, geography, acquisition and more
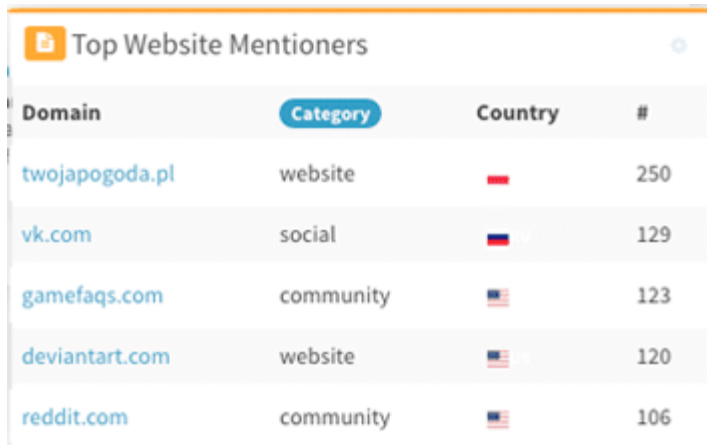

#9: Mentionlytics

Key benefit: Track mentions, keywords, and sentiment across multiple languages on social channels and elsewhere on the web.

Free or paid: Paid tool

Skill level: Beginner to intermediate

Best for: PR and communications teams, brand monitoring teams, product marketers, researchers at small to medium-sized businesses.

Want to get a big picture view of what's being said about your brand on the internet? Mentionlytics is a great entry into the world of social media monitoring — especially if you run a global business in more than one language.

Other things you can do with Mentionlytics:

- Sentiment analysis
- Find top influencers that follow you
- Filter results by keywords
- Reply to mentions directly

#10: **Panoramiq Insights**

Key benefit: tracks Instagram analytics, including Instagram *Story* analytics

Free or paid: Paid (or free for Hootsuite Enterprise users)

Skill level: All skill levels

Best for: Instagram marketers

Alert all the Instagram marketers. Panoramiq Insights is perfect for Hootsuite free users or pro users who want to get deeper insights on their Stories in particular. (Just download the app from our App Library).
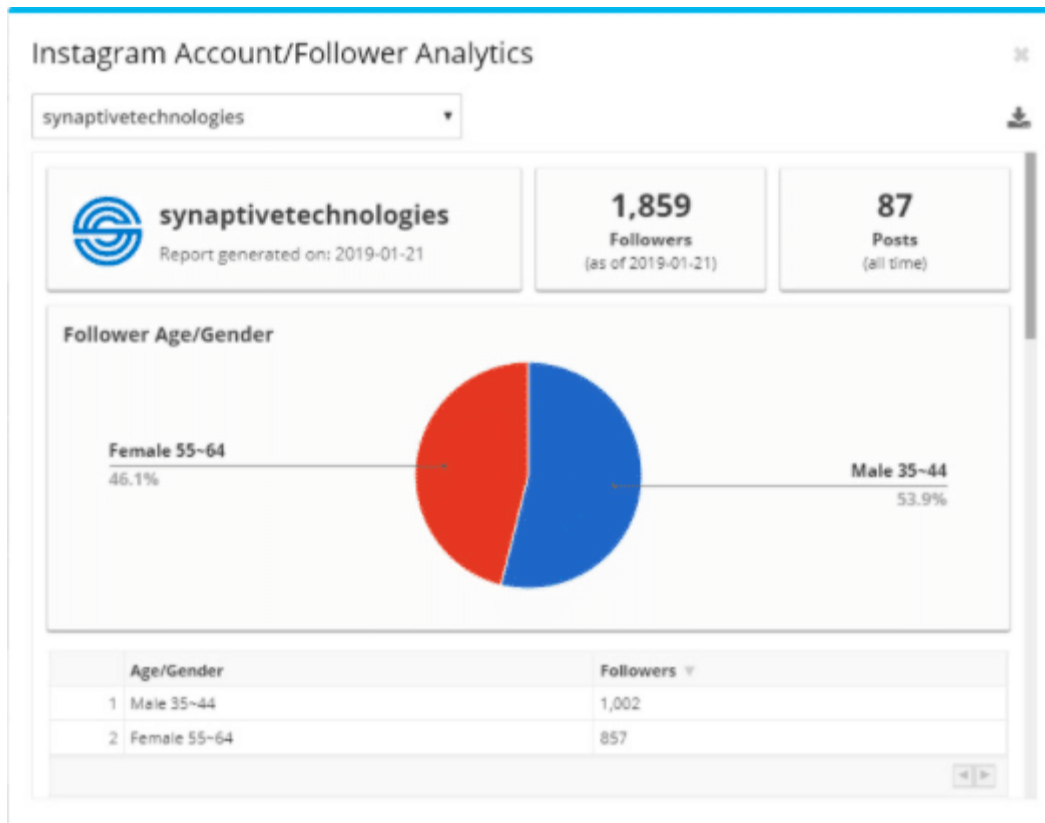
Among other things, Panoramiq Insights lets you:

- Analyze follower demographics, including age, gender, country, city and language
- Monitor Instagram account activity (for up to two accounts), including views and new followers
- Find your best posts with view and engagement analytics
- Measure Story views and interactions

References:

- https://www.ibm.com/topics/social-media-analytics
- https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-analytics/