

Threads, A Year On:

Where the Platform Is Now and
What's Coming Next

Social Factor Point of View

Meta last summer launched its latest platform, Threads, as its presumed answer to the social vacuum left by disaffected users of X (formerly Twitter). Threads is one of a myriad of microblogging sites to launch after [Elon Musk's forced ingress](#) into the world of social media ownership. And while many of the microblogging platforms received initial interest, none experienced the literal overnight success of Threads.

In the microblogging sphere, three names are often linked as the most primed to take down X: Mastodon, Bluesky, and Threads. Mastodon was founded in 2016 but received [a surge of new users](#) as X's numbers began to fall. Bluesky held the promise of genuine competition in that it and Twitter (now X) had the same founder/cofounder, Jack Dorsey. When Bluesky went public in February 2024, it gained between 800,000 to 850,000 new users on [the first day](#).

Neither site could compare to Threads' unprecedented numbers, though. In a post on Threads the day after its launch, [Mark Zuckerberg](#) said the platform had already attracted 30 million new users. That strong start benefitted from a lot of help: Meta promoted the platform heavily through Instagram, and users needed an account there to open a corresponding handle on Threads.



Before we examine what's next for the platform, here's an explainer about creating and managing a Threads account, some recent developments, and what brands should know about the site.

What Is Threads?

Threads is the latest social network from Meta – home to WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. It's a close replica of X, with a user experience focused primarily on short text posts. Users can like, repost/quote, or reply to posts, with some visibility settings for each post available to the author. Threads posts can be easily shared on Instagram as a Story or in the Feed.

First Followers on Threads

Once the app has been downloaded, you'll be prompted to log in with Instagram. Then, you can automatically import your bio, link, and profile photo. For users who have a personal account and a brand account, Threads offers an option to [switch between them](#).

Users also have the option to set their Threads account as Public or Private and can choose to follow some or all of the same accounts they follow on Instagram. **This part of the experience offers an incredible benefit for brands:** Users on Threads can follow anyone with an Instagram account, whether that person has created a Threads account or not. Instagram handles that haven't yet created a Threads account are marked as "pending" and will be followed automatically once they join Threads. With the "follow all" button so accessible during sign-up, brands have an audience of followers from Instagram already waiting on Threads.

Creating Content on Threads

New social platforms that launch with 30M+ followers don't come around often, so it's understandable to feel invested in the first impression your brand leaves on the site. Here are some suggestions for posting:

Text-based posts

Threads offers a generous 500 characters for text-based posts. Ask open-ended questions, offer commentary about your brand, share a call-to-action, or shine a spotlight on influencers who have worked with your brand.

Image posts

Threads is a great place to share UGC, images of upcoming attractions, or candid shots of your team. Create carousels to share a variety of content at once. Be creative, test captions not used on other platforms, and take some time to see what works best on Threads.

Video posts

Videos on Threads can be up to five minutes long, and the app supports a variety of sizes, including 16:9, square, and 9:16. The site [Videvo](#) suggests 9:16 as the best format because users can rotate their phones for a clear, full-screen image.

Your Team on Threads



Good news for (some) teams: Threads recently launched a live test of its API and expects it to be broadly available by the end of June. Jesse Chen, an engineer working on [Threads](#), wrote:

“We started by making it possible for people to authenticate, publish posts, and fetch their own content via the API.

We recently added reply management capabilities, so that people can retrieve replies to their posts, set reply controls and hide or unhide specific replies. Insights are one of our top requested features for the API, so we are making it possible for people to fetch key metrics for their posts, including the number of likes or views. We are also working on webhooks, which will allow developers to receive real-time notifications when certain events occur on the platform, such as a reply to a given post.”

Community Management on Threads

First engagements on a new platform are exciting, interesting, and sometimes daunting – for everyone. Community management on Threads is similar to community management across any other platform. Each brand should exercise the level of engagement that best fits its community. That means staying true to the brand tone and voice, using approved brand emojis, and responding to users who add value to the conversation or have a need the brand must respond to.

Not every brand has a social media team equipped to manage community engagement. Social Factor can be an incredible partner to brands, offering the people, processes, and platform necessary for managing mobile-first communities while maintaining brand security and building new connections across Threads.

So, What’s Next for Threads?

A lot, it seems. Nine months in, [the app now has](#) over 150 million monthly active users and 33 million daily active users, and it has generated over 265 million downloads across Google Play and the App Store. From its public debut until now, Threads has quickly innovated new features that set it apart from other microblogs.

Direct messages (DMs)

While [Mastodon](#) has an option to DM by creating posts that have “direct” visibility selected, Bluesky doesn’t yet have DM options available. Neither does Threads, but there is a workaround. Because Threads is connected to Instagram, users can click

on the profile name of any other user on Threads and be redirected to their Instagram account, where they can send DMs. It's not as convenient as an in-app DM option, but it is an option.

Threads is testing real-time search results

While Threads isn't yet a great source for finding news in a timely manner, the app is testing a search option to filter for the most recent posts. According to [Engaget.com](#), this won't be the same as a chronological search, but it will help surface trending topics and breaking news.

Filtering offensive words

As with Instagram, Threads now filters out [potentially offensive words, phrases, and emojis by default](#). Additional words can be added within the app settings, and brands have the freedom to turn Hidden Words on or off at will.



Bonus program for some creators

In March, Threads began testing an [invitation-only creator bonus program](#) that rewards creators who reach individualized goals. This limited-time program is currently only available in

the U.S., but if successful, it may expand into other regions.

Fediverse access

At the beginning of this section, we mentioned that Threads is (mostly) centralized. That's because Threads recently launched a toggle that [allows users to post across the wider fediverse](#). Flipboard CEO Mike McCue said in a recent ["Flipboard Dot Social" podcast](#) that he has some reservations and concerns about Meta's interest in the fediverse. Still, according to Threads director of product management Rachel Lambert, Meta has other open-source projects in the works, so the investment into

the fediverse through Threads is not likely to be short-term or a threat to decentralized social media.

Recommendation

At nine months in, the Threads community is still growing and, it seems, thriving. With the addition of new competitive features and the promise of more to come, we believe brands that have left or reduced posting on X should consider Threads as a viable secondary option. The ability to toggle seamlessly between brand and user accounts makes posting live updates easier for brand managers, and the promise of a robust API in late June will also allow for easier platform management for enterprise-level brands. The beta-testing that allows users to crosspost between Threads and the broader fediverse may (if widely launched) signal a level of connectivity not currently seen in other centralized platforms.

Not every brand needs to microblog, but for brands that utilize that space, Threads has enough unique features to make it attractive to brand communities and, at least for now, is showing staying power.

Need more information about Threads or other microblogging alternatives? Let's connect: sales@socialfactor.com or via socialfactor.com/contact.