



#sport on social

Vuelta a España 2022

credit: @lavuelta

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credit: @lavuelta



welcome to #SportOnSocial Vuelta a España 2022

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Welcome back to the third in our series of #SportOnSocial reports about Grand Tour cycling.

This is the last report of 2022 – here are some of its key takeaways.

Creativity can trump team performance

The #SportOnSocial winner was Jumbo–Visma. While the team may not have performed so well on the road, creatively they nailed their social media channels. Another team to perform far better on social than on the road was Intermarché–Wanty–Gobert Matériaux, which just goes to show that you don't have to be the best-performing team to be successful on social media.

The Vuelta punches above its weight on social media

Vuelta a España generated significantly more proportionate fan engagement across social – 211% more video views and 37% greater engagements – than the Tour de France (TDF), despite having a 5.5x smaller fan base. If the Vuelta can now scale this audience, there is an opportunity to generate significantly increased engagement and commercial value.

Search interest is static

Interest remains the same as it was for the 2021 edition of the Vuelta a España. However, while Europe, Central America and Oceania saw a slight increase in search interest, there was a significant drop in South and North America. This was partly the result of USA's Sepp Kuss and Canada's Michael Woods dropping out of the race early on, leaving only two North American riders in the peloton. Teams must feature more riders from these underserved continents if the Vuelta is to grow globally.

“

While Jumbo–Visma may not have performed so well on the road, creatively they nailed their social media channels.

”

our key insights from Vuelta a España 2022



Jumbo–Visma takes top spot on social media

Jumbo–Visma managed a great performance on social media to top the league table. All the more impressive when you consider they are only the 5th largest World Tour team on social media, ranked 15th in terms of race performance, and lost their star rider Primož Roglič when he crashed at the end of stage 16.



Facebook & Instagram drive audience growth

Facebook and Instagram delivered 57% (102k) total audience growth for the teams and the Vuelta a España. Interestingly, the most significant change came on TikTok and Twitter with a combined increase to 36% of total audience growth compared with 29% for the TDF.



Team engagement levels are down

The teams generated an average of 620 engagements per post, 43% less than the TDF and 11% less than the Giro d'Italia. These results highlight a need for the teams to be more creative on social media.



Covid strikes again

25% of the peloton did not finish the race because of Covid or other issues. This represented a significant loss: these riders' social media footprint consisted of over 2.7m fans.



Europe accounts for 73% of search interest

80% of the peloton were from Europe, so it's no surprise that most of the interest was generated here. However, South America bucked the trend: with only 5% of the peloton, they generated 21% of overall search interest.

#SportOnSocial Vuelta a España league table 2022

* UCI ProTeam

team	#SportOnSocial rank	race performance rank	#SportOnSocial differential
Jumbo-Visma	1	15	14
Movistar	2	3	1
Quick-Step Alpha Vinyl	3	2	-1
INEOS Grenadiers	4	4	0
UAE Team Emirates	5	1	-4
EF Education-EasyPost	6	8	2
Trek-Segafredo	7	12	5
Intermarché-Wanty-Gobert Matériaux	8	18	10
Alpecin-Deceuninck*	9	11	2
Groupama-FDJ	10	16	6
Bora-Hansgrohe	11	5	-6
Astana Pro	12	6	-6

team	#SportOnSocial rank	race performance rank	#SportOnSocial differential
Cofidis	13	13	0
Team BikeExchange	14	14	0
Arkéa-Samsic*	15	22	7
AG2R Citroën Team	16	9	-7
Lotto-Soudal	17	23	6
Equipo Kern Pharma*	18	17	-1
Team DSM	19	7	-12
Bahrain Victorious	20	10	-10
Burgos BH*	21	19	-2
Israel-Premier Tech	22	21	-1
Euskaltel-Euskadi*	23	20	-3

#SportOnSocial Rank = a scoring system to calculate social media performance based on total growth, engagements and video views on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and TikTok

race performance rank = a scoring system to calculate team performance, combining final team classification, final individual standings, final sprint standings, and final mountain standings

#SportOnSocial differential = the gap between where a team finished on #SportOnSocial vs team performance position - if we assume social media performance is dictated by team performance, then a score of +8 would suggest a team performed 8 places higher on social media than expected

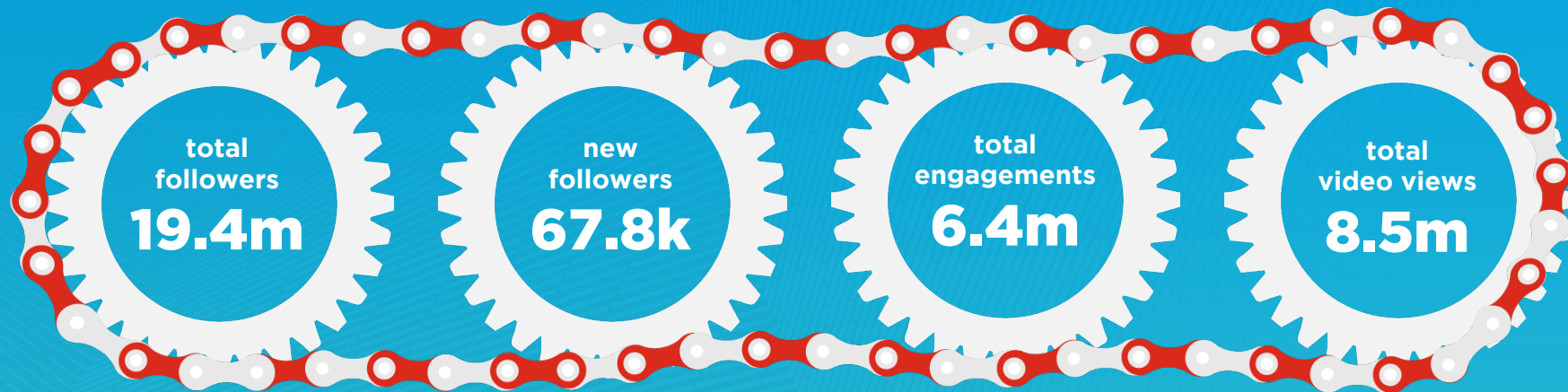


social media performance of cycling teams

this section analyses the performance of the 23 competing teams

credit: @lavuelta

topline social media performance (all teams)



17%
from INEOS Grenadiers

17%
from EF Education-EasyPost

18%
from Jumbo-Visma

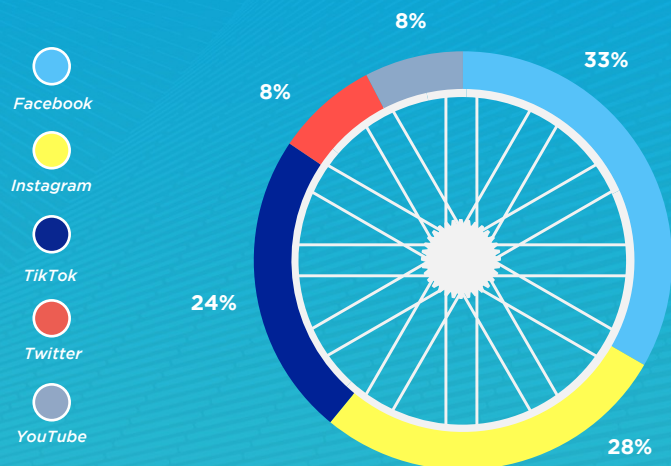
31%
from Movistar

excludes Instagram Reels

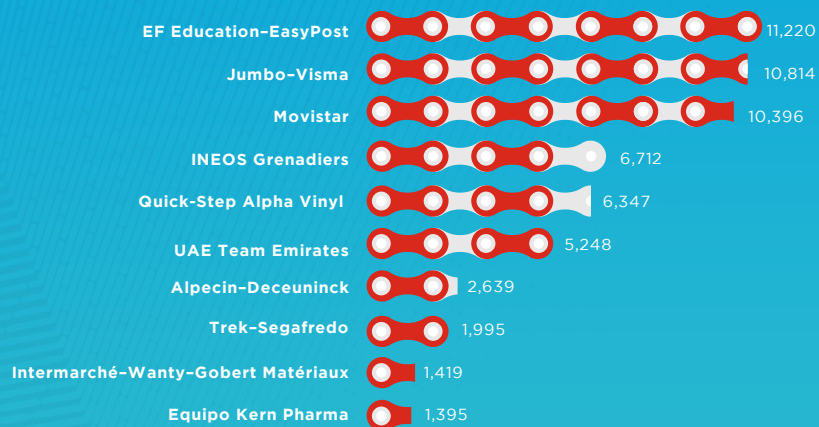
EF Education–EasyPost gained most new followers (+11.2k) across all platforms

42% of EF Education–EasyPost growth came on Facebook (+4.7k), followed by Twitter (+3.6k). The highest growth occurred on day 1 (+3.9k) after the announcement that Richard Carapaz would be joining the team in 2023.

total team follower growth by platform



top 10 teams by follower growth

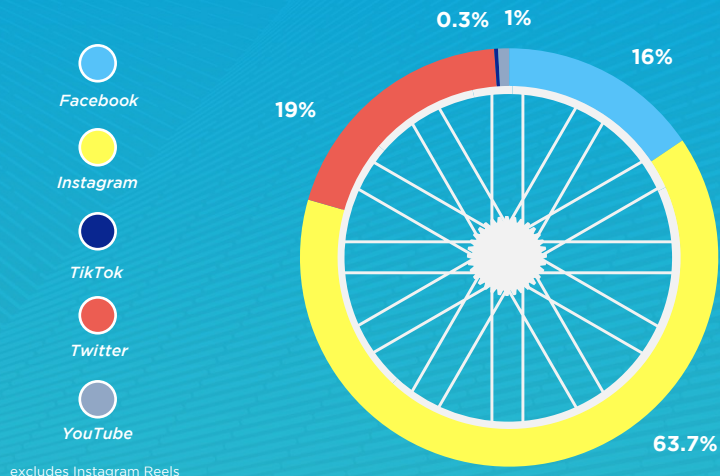


top-performing content came from key race moments

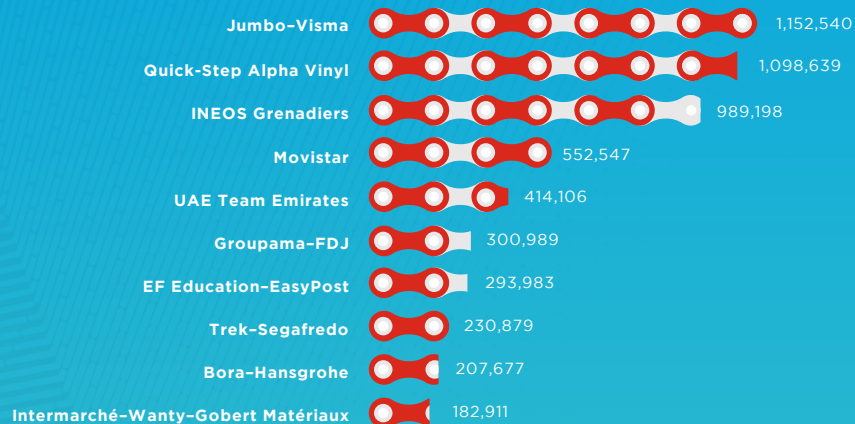
Jumbo-Visma featured highly, following [Primož Roglič's withdrawal](#) from the race after his stage 16 crash.

Other key moments included [Remco Evenepoel ending Belgium's Grand Tour drought](#) and [Richard Carapaz's wins](#) in stages 12, 14 and 20.

total team engagements by platform



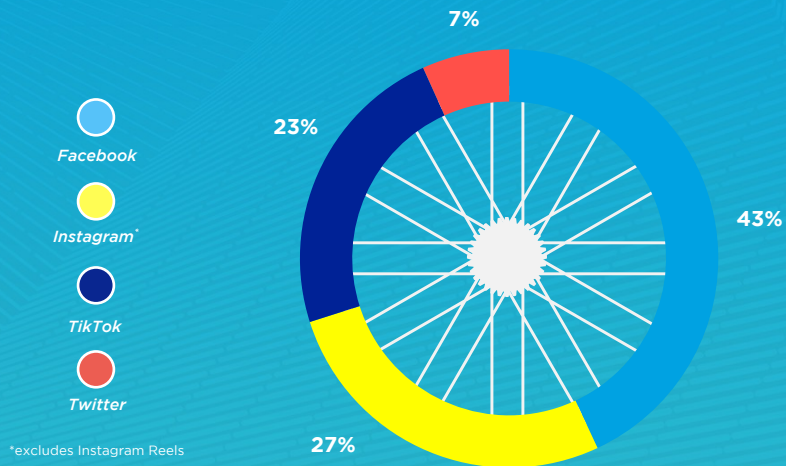
top 10 teams by engagement



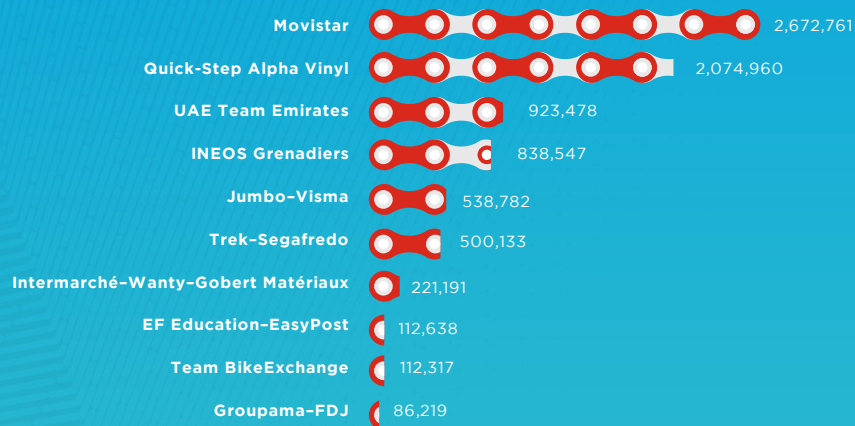
video views were driven by finish line content that allowed fans to re-experience the final moments of each stage

Movistar generated most video views on YouTube (1.4m) and TikTok (110.9k) using promotional and montage videos.

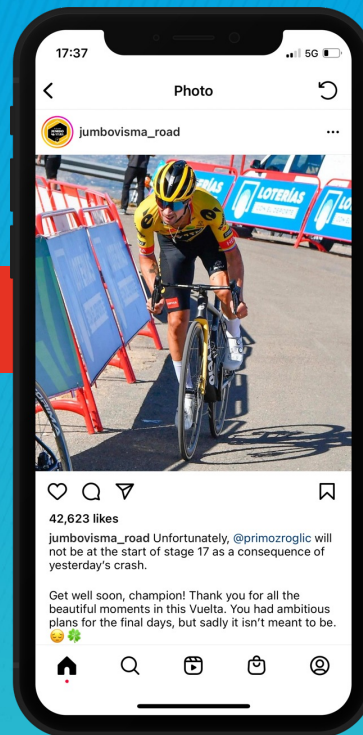
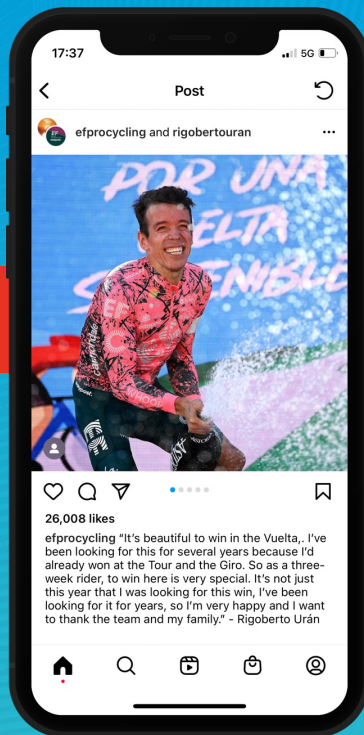
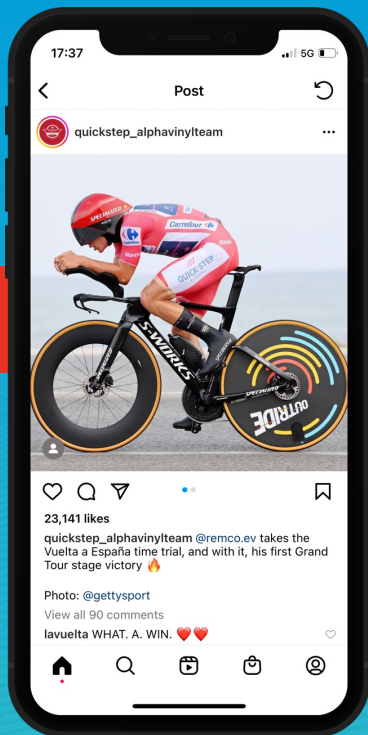
total team video views by platform



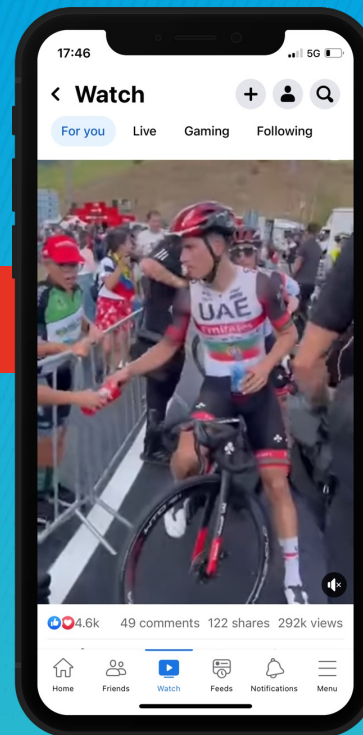
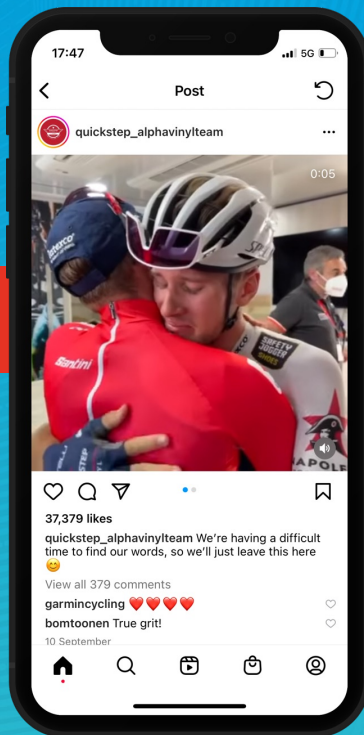
top 10 teams by video views



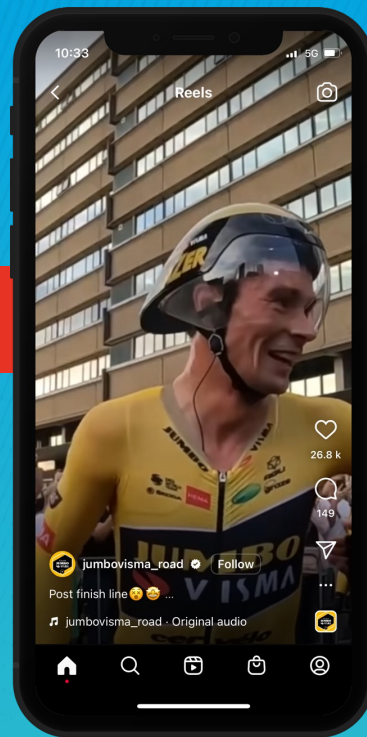
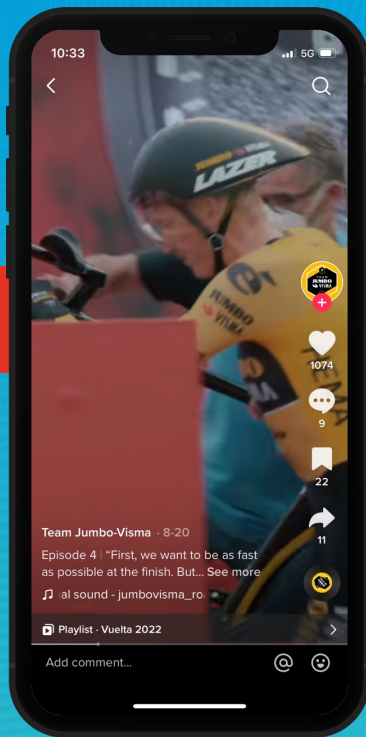
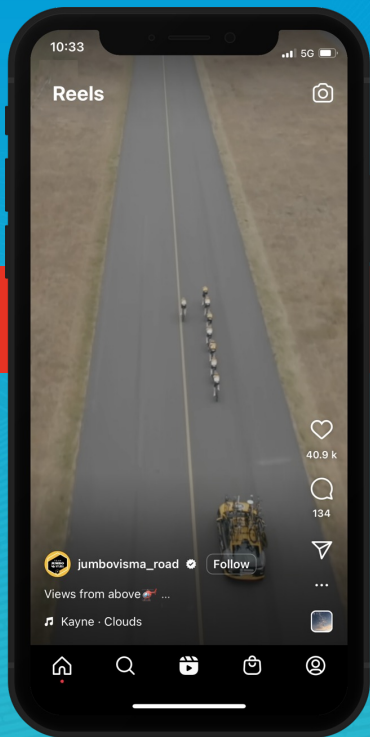
best-performing content featured top riders



behind-the-scenes video content boosted views



Jumbo-Visma's creative approach to content delivered results



A cyclist wearing a white UAE Emirates jersey and a white cap with 'UAE Emirates' on it is celebrating. He is surrounded by a shower of colorful confetti (red, green, blue, white) that is falling all around him. The background is dark and out of focus. The text 'social media performance of Vuelta a España' is overlaid on the image, with 'Vuelta a España' in red and the rest in white. Two horizontal red lines are positioned above and below the text.

social media performance of **Vuelta a España**

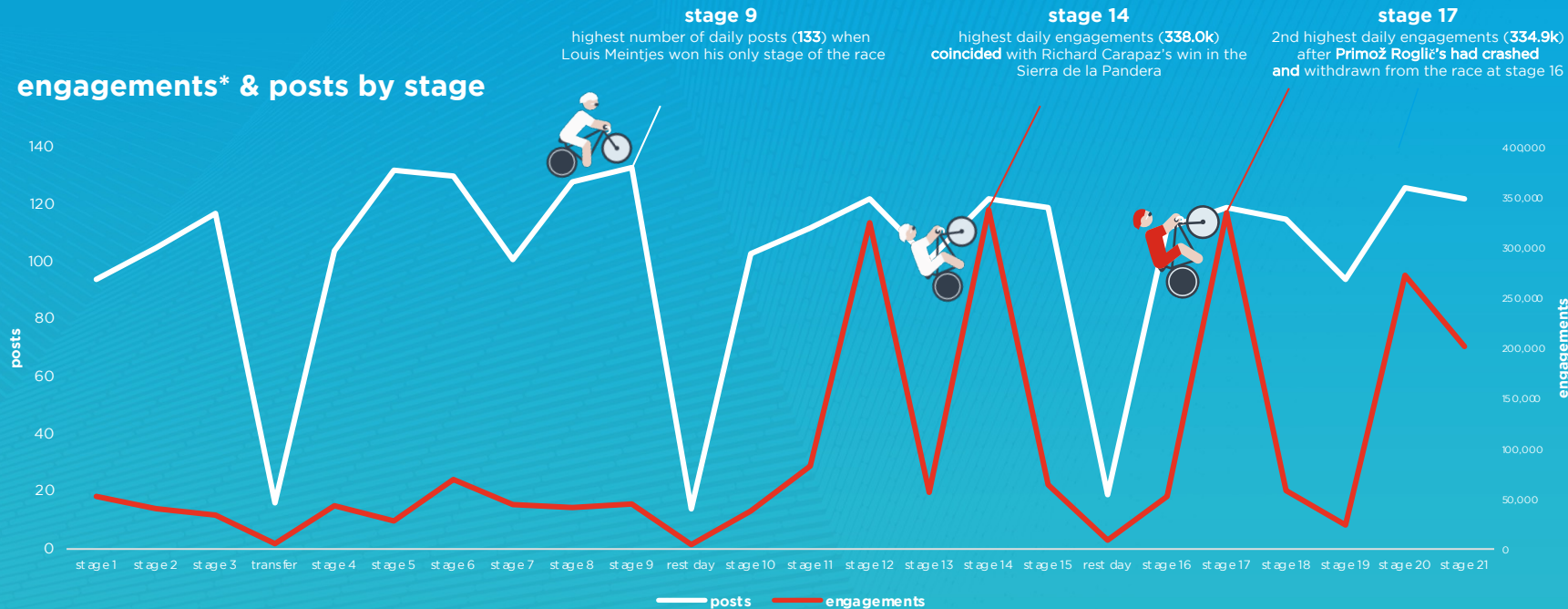
this section analyses the performance of Vuelta a España social media channels only

credit: @lavuelta

Facebook was the fans' favourite platform generating more engagements (889.7k) and video views (17.3m) than any other channel

62% of content was produced on Twitter, but this represented only 13% of total engagements.

engagements* & posts by stage



four key stages accounted for 49% of new follower growth on the Vuelta

The Vuelta gained 111.7k total new followers across the Tour – 37.5k on Facebook, followed by 30.1k on Instagram and 23.2k on TikTok.

total growth by stage

stages 1–3

saw a spike in new followers (+16.1k), largely on Twitter and Instagram, due to the general excitement for the Vuelta – the first day of the race amassed 70% more followers than the daily average

stages 7–9

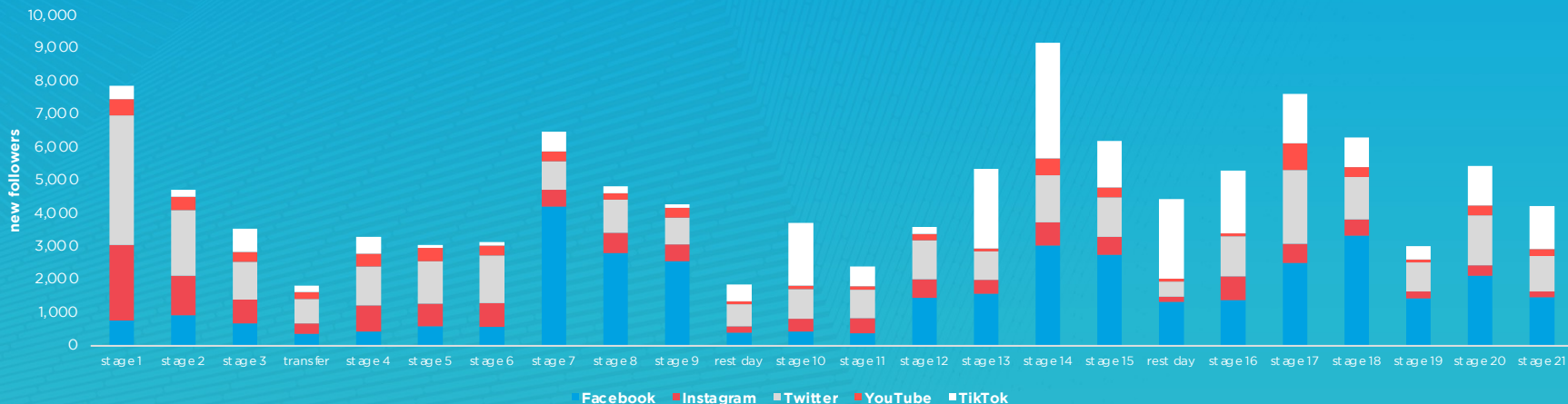
accounted for 25% of growth on Facebook (+9.6k), coinciding with Spaniard Jesús Herrada winning Stage 7

stage 14

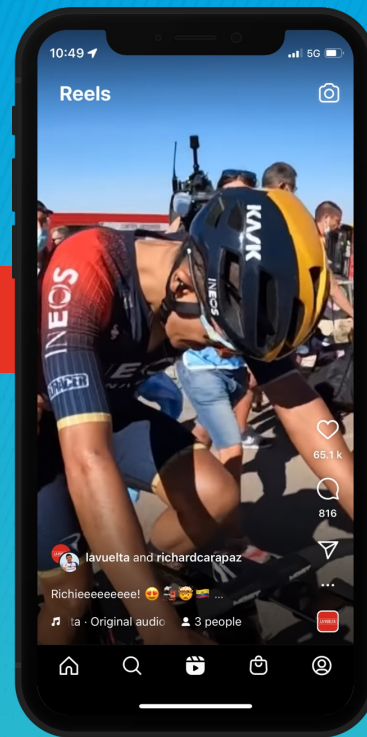
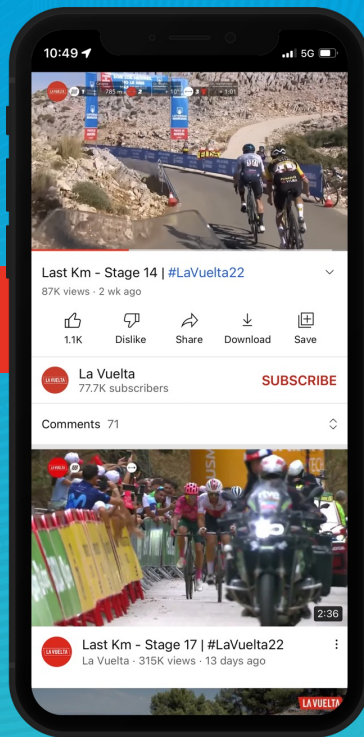
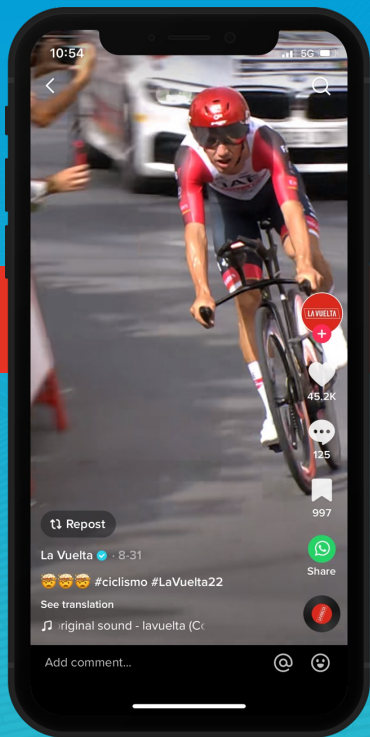
generated 9.2k new followers – 38% of which came on TikTok; this came after a Richard Carapaz post which generated 608k video views and 32k engagements

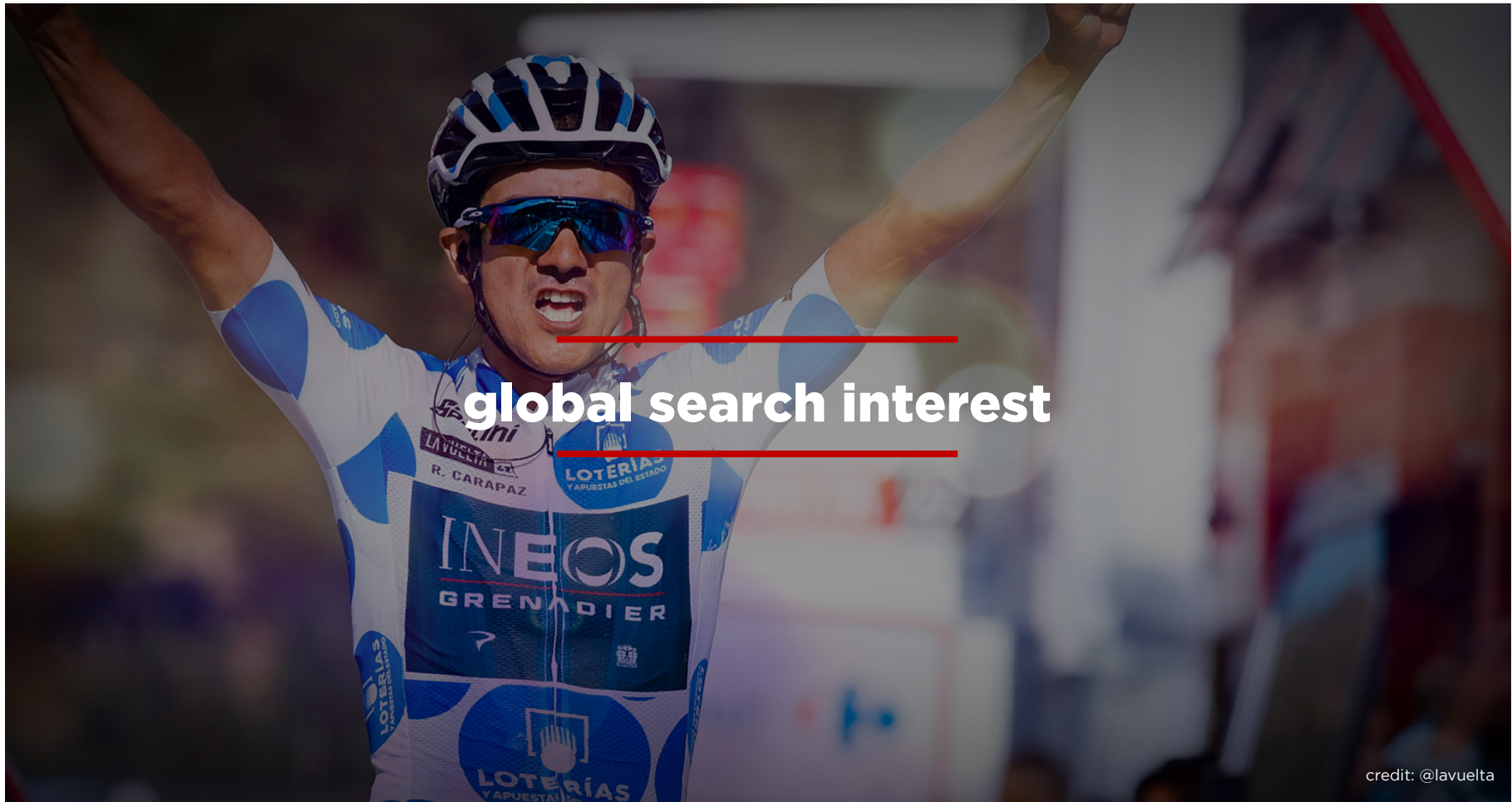
stages 17–18

13.9k new followers, mostly on Facebook and Twitter – this coincided with Primož Roglič's crash and withdrawal from the race at stage 16



capturing raw emotional moments increased fan engagement





South American search interest slipped away

A lack of Latin American interest contributed to result in no overall growth for Vuelta a España 2022.

Oceania saw uplift

A 45% increase in the number of riders compared to 2021 helped push figures up by 2%. However, half of the riders from this area didn't finish the race – either because of Covid or other issues – and this impacted search interest.

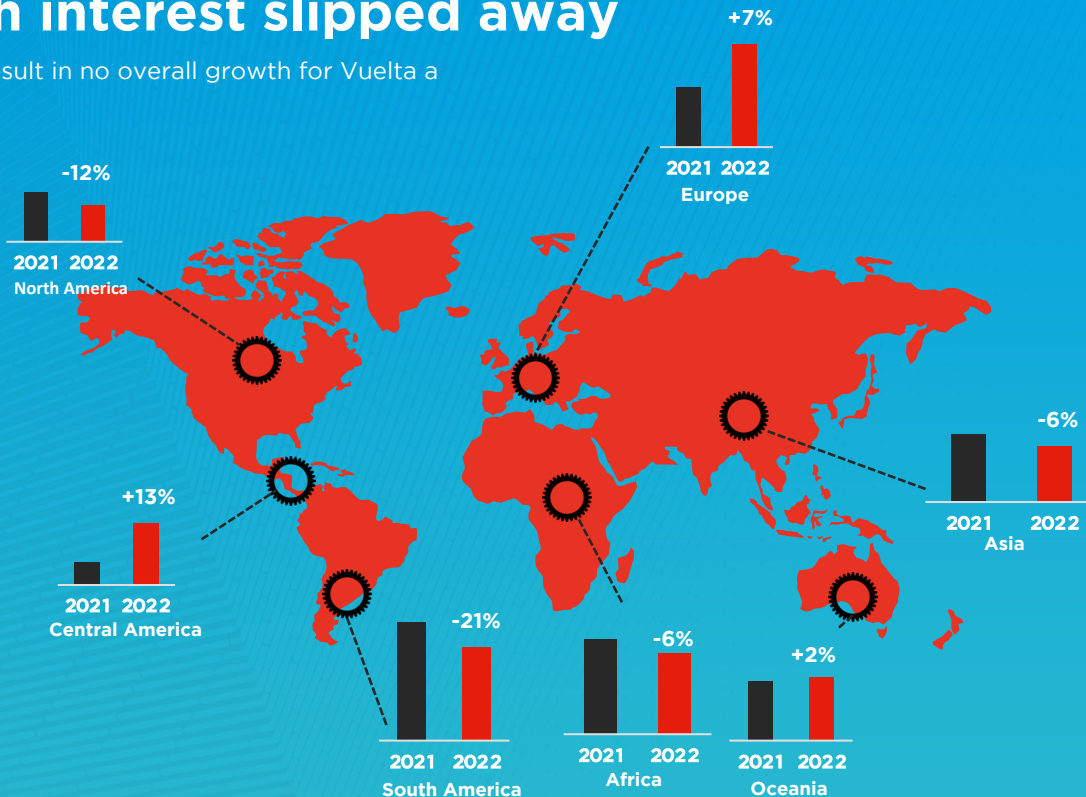
North American riders absent from the peloton

The big North American riders – USA's Sepp Kuss and Canada's Michael Woods – dropped out early in the race, leaving only two North American riders in the peloton. This had a significant impact on search interest from the region.

a very European affair

As 80% of the peloton were European, interest was bound to be higher (+7%). A significant factor was the success of young European riders taking the podium in overall standings: 1st place to Belgium, 2nd and 3rd places to Spain.

Google worldwide search data around the topic 'Vuelta a España' dates: 19 August-11 September 2022 vs 14 August-5 September 2021



young riders drove interest in home countries

Belgium went mad for Remco

The popular young Belgian Remco Evenepoel took Belgium's first win of a Grand Tour since 1978. His popularity was demonstrated through a vast 215% uplift in searches in Belgium.

interest from Portugal & the Netherlands jumped up

Portugal's search interest was up 109%. This came as something of a surprise as there were only three Portuguese competitors; the increase was most likely driven by the popular rider João Almeida finishing 4th in the overall standings. At the same time, the Netherlands had 13 riders in the peloton which led to a 148% increase in search interest.

Colombian interest dropped

Search interest declined in the cycling heartland of South America by a whopping 46% despite two Colombian riders finishing in the general classification top 10 and there being a larger Colombian field in the peloton. There has been a downward trend across all three Tours which suggests further research into Colombian fan attitudes to cycling is required to understand the reasons for the decline.

search interest* from the top 30 countries interested in the Vuelta

country	difference
Spain	-11%
Belgium	+215%
Netherlands	+148%
Slovenia	-40%
Colombia	-46%
Ecuador	+4%
Portugal	+109%
Luxembourg	+95%
Uruguay	-32%
Denmark	+5%
France	+6%
Costa Rica	+5%
Italy	-21%
Switzerland	-13%
Japan	-5%

country	difference
Czech Republic	-8%
Ireland	+54%
Argentina	+27%
Norway	-34%
Austria	-26%
Hungary	-3%
United Kingdom	-7%
Slovakia	-6%
Chile	-22%
Australia	+28%
Bulgaria	+16%
Germany	-5%
Romania	+15%
United States	-4%
Canada	+4%

*Google worldwide search data around the topic 'Vuelta a España'
dates: 19 August-11 September 2022 vs 14 August-5 September 2021

methodology

social media performance

Our proprietary #SportOnSocial Tracker analysed the social media pages of the Vuelta a España and its 23 competing teams on the following platforms:

- **Facebook**
- **Instagram**
- **Twitter**
- **YouTube**
- **TikTok**

The monitoring period covered the entire Tour: 19 August–11 September 2022.

Engagements included reactions, comments, shares, and retweets.

Video views were collected on every platform except Twitter.

Instagram Reels were not included.

Redtorch cannot guarantee the accuracy of analysis of #SportOnSocial and disclaims all warranties — either express or implied — including warranties for merchantability and fitness for any particular purpose

global search interest

Google has over 90% of the search engine market and 5 billion users worldwide. As it is the most representative method of measuring global interests, Google Trends data was used to reflect the searches users made throughout the Vuelta a España.

- Each country was individually measured by the ‘Vuelta a España’ search topic for the entirety of the race in both 2021 and 2022
- An index score was calculated by averaging each weekly index score over the event period in 2021 and 2022
- The percentage given illustrates the direction of change

countries included

Europe: Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Hungary, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, France, Switzerland, Denmark, Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Norway, United Kingdom, Sweden, Ireland, Poland, Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia

Africa: South Africa, Eritrea, Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, Nigeria, Kenya

South America: Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina

Central America: El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras

Oceania: Australia, New Zealand

Asia: Japan, Malaysia, Philippines

North America: Canada, United States, Mexico



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