

Influencer Trend

February 2026

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Report

 ovativegroup

Creator-Led, Culture-Fueled

From 2016 nostalgia to the Year of the Horse to Dr. Pepper jingles, creators are setting the tone for what performs on social.

Scroll into What's Coming

Black History Month calls for meaningful creator partnerships, while tentpole moments like Mardi Gras, the NFL Draft, and Harry Styles' return are primed to spark high-engagement.

How Platforms are Staying Buzzy

Pinterest releases colors of the year for 2026 & Spotify partners with Gov Ball for festival season anticipation.

Breaking Feed Fatigue

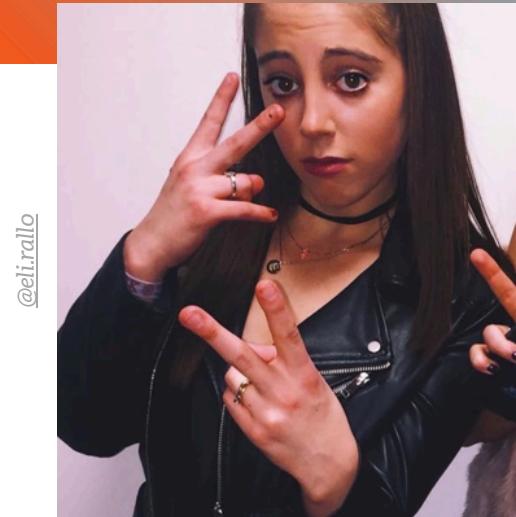
X's Articles are cutting through by rewarding depth over volume, giving creators and brands a premium, algorithm-resistant space for meaningful storytelling.

Creator-Led, Culture-Fueled

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2026 is the New 2016

The internet is throwing it back to an era of VSCO filters, chokers, and water bottle flips. With over 1.7M posts under #2016 on TikTok, creators are reliving the glory days of early content sharing the low-effort posts that defined mid-2010s internet culture. At a high level, it's more than nostalgia...it's commentary on how social media has evolved. OG TBTs are taking over feeds, signaling a craving for the pre-algorithm days. Brands can join in with throwback content & products!



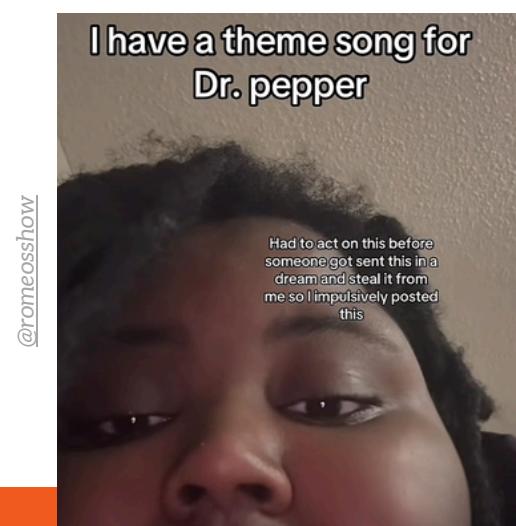
Year of the Horse

Chinese recipes, hacks, and habits are flooding FYPs as we enter the Year of the Horse. Rooted in the notion that Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) paves the way to a balanced lifestyle, users are “resetting their energy” to welcome in the new year on a high note. Whether it’s drinking hot water or jumping 50 times in the morning, [@sherryxiiruii](#) gives the best advice to unlock your inner “Chinese baddie” this winter. Her TikTok has skyrocketed over the past month, with a 14.34% ER that proves her content is truly landing.



Dr. Pepper Baby

Romeo, a rising TikTok creator known for turning brands into bangers, went viral after sharing an original jingle idea for Dr Pepper. The video pulled in over 125M views and caught Dr Pepper’s attention. The brand licensed her track, launched a campaign around it, and paid her \$2M (*Watch the commercial [HERE!](#)*). Romeo’s not stopping there. She’s also behind a jingle for VitaCoco that’s gaining traction. These aren’t one-offs. They signal a shift: brands are handing the mic to creators earlier in the process, not just for promotion, but for creation.



Scroll into What's Coming

February 2026

Black History Month

Black History Month is an opportunity for brands to move beyond surface-level acknowledgment to meaningfully celebrate Black creativity, influence, and storytelling. **When done with intention, it becomes a moment to amplify voices and invest in culture year-round.** Last year, Gap partnered with six Black creatives through a collaboration with Harlem's Fashion Row to curate a collection rooted in culture, craftsmanship, and personal perspective. Each designer brought a distinct point of view, keeping the storytelling layered and human. Gap extended the launch through an IRL event and influencer partnerships that brought the collection to socials, generating authentic, real-time content.

When brands commit to meaningful partnerships and creative respect, the impact resonates well beyond a single month on the calendar.



Cultural Moments & Celebrations

Harry Styles

Harry is back with a new album *Kiss All the Time, Disco*. Occasionally dropping in March alongside a 30-night MSG residency. Fans are already planning outfits, captions, and concert photo dumps, with *Love on Tour* recreations, track-by-track reactions, and then vs. now throwbacks expected to flood feeds. Will this be another T-swift album drop moment?

NFL Draft

As the NFL Draft nears, brands are lining up NIL deals with top prospects to secure early loyalty and relevance. Expect to see creators and athletes like Fernando Mendoza at the center of brand collabs, content drops, and day-one endorsements. Moments like these are not just about football, it's about creating partnerships from the start.

Mardi Gras

February brings beads, bold fits, and full-blown celebration as Mardi Gras season kicks off. Creators will share outfit hauls, glitter-heavy GRWMs, and colorful carousel dumps from the streets of New Orleans. For brands, it's the perfect time to lean into maximalist style and creator content that captures the energy of the season.

How Platforms are Staying Buzzy

February 2026

From curated colors to customized playlists, platforms are turning cultural signals into shareable assets, giving creators new ways to show up online.

Pinterest

Pinterest just revealed its Colors of the Year: **Cool Blue, Jade, Plum Noir, Wasabi, and Persimmon**. The palette is bold and designed to make waves across fashion, beauty, and home content. These shades are bound to influence creators the way Butter Yellow took over last summer. **For brands, aligning influencer briefs with the colors consumers are already pinning helps brands meet demand before it peaks.** This isn't just color forecasting. It's scroll & social search psychology.

Spotify

Spotify and Governors Ball are teaming up on a first-of-its-kind app experience built around the 2026 festival lineup. Instead of a static playlist, **users get a custom "Festival Persona"** based on **their listening habits**, matched with this year's Gov Ball lineup. Whether you are *The Seeker*, *The Crowd Favorite*, or *The Wristband Veteran*, playlists tap into this year's diverse lineup including Lorde, A\$AP Rocky, and Stray Kids. It's a festival preview built for the algorithm era.

Much like Spotify Wrapped, **this activation has the potential to spark shareable moments across creator feeds**. Music is one of the most authentic forms of connection, and this gives creators a new way to **show up, express themselves, and connect with their audience** through what they listen to.



2026 Pinterest Palette™



Spotify x Gov Ball

Breaking Feed Fatigue

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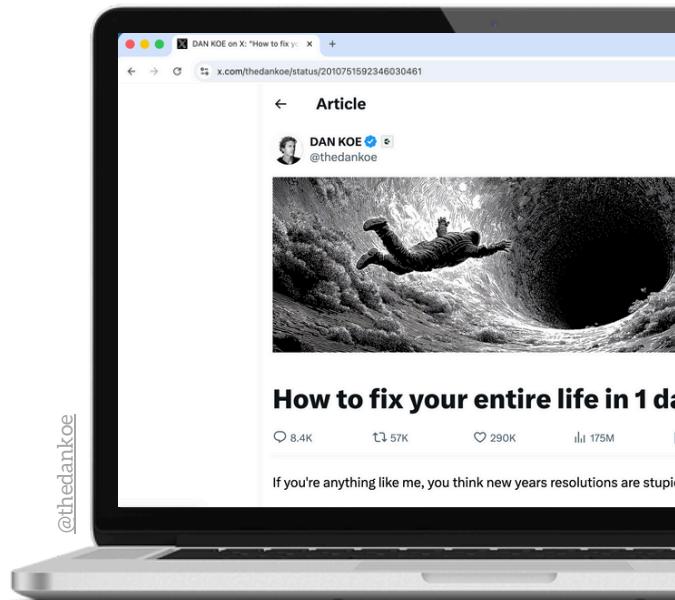
X's Articles are Giving Creators and Brands a New Way to Win Attention

In our December Influencer Trend Report, we called it early: **fatigue is real, and creators and brands would need to beat the algorithm in 2026**. Feeds are oversaturated, attention is fragmented, and rapid-fire content *alone* isn't cutting through the way it used to.

That prediction is playing out now. As creators search for new ways to break through the noise, **X's Articles feature has emerged as an unexpected unlock**. While the tool has existed since 2024, it wasn't until a recent long-form Article went viral that creators recognized its true potential.

Recently Dan Koe's X Article *How to Fix Your Entire Life in 1 Day* went massively viral, **pulling 170M+ views and 771k bookmarks**. In a platform dominated by hot takes and one-liners, **depth became the differentiator**.

Articles open a new lane for creators who haven't cracked the algorithm through traditional posting. Thought leaders, founders, educators, and niche experts can go deeper into their expertise, to establish a stronger platform presence without chasing trends or volume.



Brands Listen Up

This creates a premium storytelling environment that most social placements can't deliver. Think founder POVs, influencer-written thought pieces, ambassador spotlights, and educational narratives that **build trust before conversion**. Articles allow brands to partner with creators on content that feels intentional, credible, and algorithm-resistant.



We are Change Makers

A woman with curly hair, wearing a dark blazer and a patterned skirt, stands in profile facing right. She is positioned in front of a large, curved digital screen that displays a series of vertical red bars of varying heights, creating a visual effect similar to a bar chart or a stylized city skyline. The background of the entire image has a warm, orange-to-yellow gradient.

If you're seeking creator support, reach out!

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NYC | CHI | MPLS