affinity
Intersect

capture viewers,
anywhere, everywhere

An entertainment marketer's guide
to activating the right insights within an avalanche of new content.

affinity answers | social insights,
activated anywhere

who is this for, and what is it about?

We wrote this for entertainment analysts, consumer insights researchers, and marketers. Of course, everyone is encouraged to read it, but we wrote it specifically for the entertainment industry since that is our focus. We specialize in understanding and targeting fan passions. You could say that passions are our passion.

the attention economy

The biggest problem entertainment marketers and producers face is getting the audience to pay attention. With so many options, it's difficult to make sure the right eyes are on you. This isn't a particularly new problem; this has always been the task of entertainment marketing. However, the recent surge in content has certainly made it more complex, and in most cases, more difficult than ever.

TV and streaming services are creating more diverse and robust content with distribution ebbing and flowing between ad-supported and paywalled. Video gaming has become an ad-supported sport, now appearing regularly on ESPN. Radio shows have evolved into podcasts which are now simulcast as video on cable, social media, and YouTube. Social media is creating short, scheduled, serialized content above and beyond the barrage of celebrity and influencer "look-at-me" trappings drizzled like breadcrumbs for everyone with a pulse to find.

And yet, beyond belief, new platforms are still able to take hold. Tik Tok took off like a rocket and captured the curiosities of multiple generations, surging to 800 million monthly users within the first 24 months of operation.

The battle for attention is raging, and there doesn't seem to be a specific recipe for success other than more content. But in many cases, this is only half the story.

the covid effect: the entertainment industry reshaped

COVID-19 lockdowns ravaged the entertainment world, devastating theater and public venue audiences while significantly accelerating online traffic. As the previously flourishing box office industry struggled to survive, audiences transitioned to streaming, with viewership stats increasing across major streaming platforms. Popular providers expanded their reach, with Netflix doubling their subscribers in the first month[1] and Twitch seeing viewership hours increase over 60% from quarter to quarter.[2]

covid impact on streaming

100%	**60%**	**43%**
increase in subscribers	increase in viewership hours	increase in time spent on social media
NETFLIX	twitch	♥

This sudden, drastic alteration of the industry has created additional challenges for entertainment marketers seeking a spotlight for their product. Concurrent with the pandemic, a variety of publishers launched their own streaming services, with Disney+ accelerating its user base to 74 million over a six-month period.[3]   And within the volatile fluctuations and uncertainty of the industry, consumers and movie watchers are now more spread out across devices, platforms, streaming services, and social media channels. Fragmentation has made it difficult for marketers to bridge the growing gaps between their consumers and their brand, online and offline. As data disconnects grow, silos inevitably form, making proper data attribution and consolidation difficult.

2020 fueled and fostered a considerable increase in internet usage, with more people streaming, watching, gaming, and engaging social media than ever before. COVID is attributed with stimulating a 10.5% increase in social media users, accompanying a massive 43% increase in the average time spent on social media[4]. With more users now acclimated and actively engaging with their favorite topics on social media, even greater opportunities arise for marketers looking to accurately understand fans.

The need for insights-driven data strategy has increased within today's fluctuating, fragmented, and ultimately evolving entertainment industry. As viewers have shifted from physical venues to streaming, entertainment marketers face a variety of challenges in achieving efficient reach while combating a surge in competition.

1. Jeremy C. Owens, "Netflix pulled off a showstopper early in the pandemic, but will the sequel deserve the price?" MarketWatch.com, July 16, 2020 https://www.marketwatch.com/story/netflix-in-the-age-of-covid-19-streaming-pioneer-may-have-new-edge-on-competition-2020-04-07

2. Ethan May, "Streamlabs & Stream Hatchet Q2 2020 Live Streaming Industry Report" blog.streamlabs.com, July 1, 2020 https://blog.streamlabs.com/streamlabs-stream-hatchet-q2-2020-live-streaming-industry-report-44298e0d15bc

3. Ryan Faughnder, "Disney+ subscribers hit nearly 74 million as COVID-19 brings big losses" latimes.com, Nov. 12, 2020 https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/business/story/2020-11-12/disney-streaming-covid-pandemic-losses-iger

4. Dave Chaffey, "Global social media research summary August 2020" smartinsights.com, Aug 03, 2020 https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/

the vertical vacuum

As content distribution has reshaped the way consumers watch and engage with entertainment, so too has it changed the way marketers are able to reach consumers. TV (including CTV and OTT), podcasts, social media, video games, newspapers, websites, and magazines have all become their own verticals to be marketed, as well as vertical vacuums to be marketed within. Each vertical can keep a very tight handle on its own data, often forcing marketers to use dozens of different data sets to reach their target audience across the myriad silos. Obviously, this doesn't scream efficient and effective marketing, but as verticals become more niche and specialized, so too become their audiences.

Reaching "everyone" is becoming a thing of the past. Barring a couple mega events like the Super Bowl, entertainment producers seem to be settling into their own nook, carving off specialized streaming ventures, while at the same time, manically scrambling to create enough content to compete as a leader in the future. The Great Expansion is in the middle of its heyday, pushing viewers to choose whether to follow them into their nooks, pay a little trifle of a monthly cost, or forgo their content for something that is free or more readily available.

And it isn't stopping at video content. Publishers across the internet are creating more paywalls for the opportunity to read their articles. Though online magazines and some top newspapers have always had paywalls, smaller publishers are demanding more than just ad dollars to continue to crank out their stories, as they battle an endless tidal wave of unsubstantiated reporting, 280-character trolls, and bots.
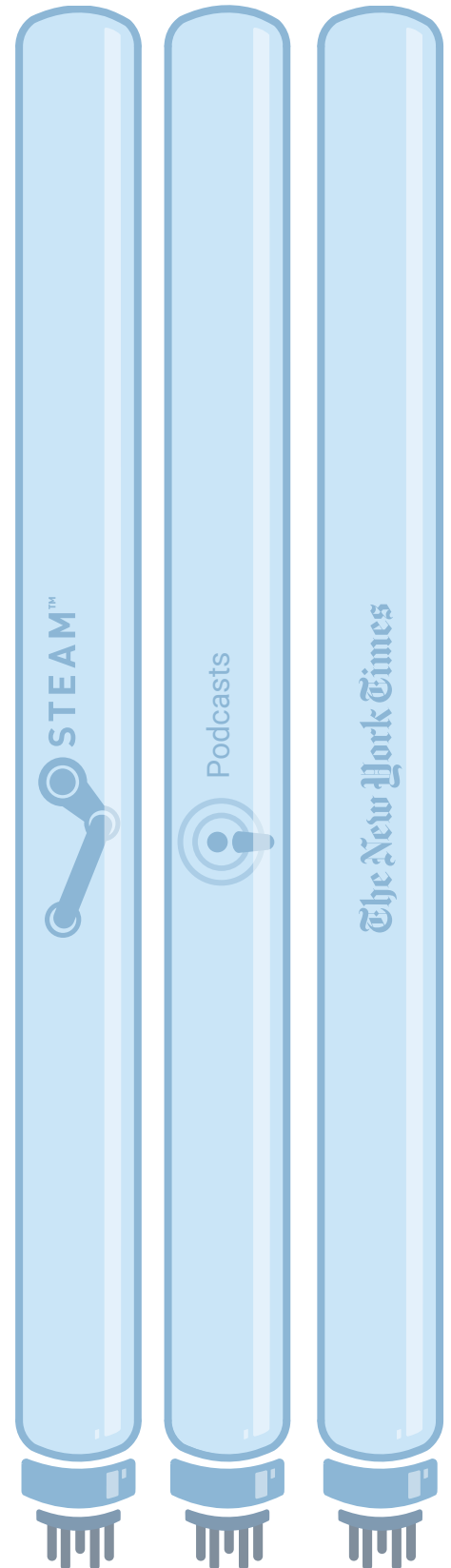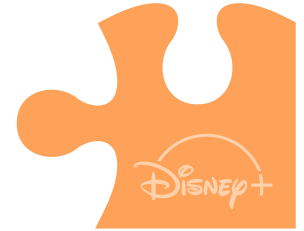
shortcomings in reporting

So, with all of this upheaval, how are we measuring success? Viewership ratings, individual platform reporting, and Nielsen data cannot provide a detailed enough view of consumer engagement to bridge the growing **gaps and disconnects** between entertainment marketers and media fans. This basic level of data lacks the specifics necessary to create a 360º view of entertainment fans, making it difficult to accurately monitor changing viewer behavior and habits. Thus, the burden of marketers is attaining a deeper level of insight in order to achieve a more accurate and realistic perspective of media fans. What kinds of data do entertainment marketers need to access in order to assemble a more accurate picture of their buyers?

Monitoring changing trends

A deeper level of data can assist marketers in identifying and monitoring changing trends in viewer behavior. Season to season, interests change, and with each new release, fan passions and actions can consistently vary. Through the continued study of social media engagements, marketers are able to keep their hand on the irregular pulse of the entertainment world, maintaining relevance by aligning campaigns with changing fan interests.

Identifying relevant placements

By studying fan insights, marketers can discover the sites and channels where specific audiences spend the most time, providing a significant targeting advantage. Advertisers can access the websites, YouTube channels, and Reddit boards where fans discuss media, providing campaigns with the most relevant placements. Without this level of data, campaign impressions are often wasted on inefficient blanket targeting, ultimately inhibiting overall performance.

shortcomings in reporting *(continued)*

Finding the right partners/sponsors

It's important for marketers to choose partnerships based on a variety of factors, including audience crossover and fan affinities. Fan engagement data provides a deep level of authenticity, as marketers are able to see the brands and entities that are genuinely getting the most fan reactions. The right relationship can leverage fan bases, relevantly increase reach, and drive sales, but basic viewership data makes it difficult to pinpoint the most well-suited prospects.

Learn more on how to leverage the right relationship for partnerships in our article, **"Fan Data Measures Authenticity in Sponsorships."**
learn more ➲

Combating increased competition

With the significant increase in online traffic during the pandemic, ad spend increased, particularly with streaming services. The inflated number of streaming providers all looked to capitalize on sequestered audiences, with Amazon Prime Video spending the highest at $169.8MM, followed closely by Hulu and Disney+'s respective $144.6MM and $135.3MM[5].   And the competition is only going to increase within this rapidly-changing sector, making it all the more necessary for marketers to tap into the wants and needs of their fans, as well as those of their rivals.

Dealing with uncertainty

The COVID pandemic and its concurrent lockdowns accelerated a growing uncertainty regarding consumer buying behavior, and thus how to budget ad campaigns properly. Knowing how and where customers are spending their time and money can guide strategy during uncertain times, but without access to accurate customer data, marketers face a lot of guesswork and greater potential for inefficiency in campaign guidance.

5. Ross Benes, "Streaming Services Spend Heavily on Marketing amid Pandemic" Insider Intelligence, Oct 21, 2020.
https://www.emarketer.com/content/streaming-services-spend-heavily-on-marketing-amid-pandemic

the social media paradox

The very thing stealing mindshare away from entertainment marketers might, in the end, also be their savior. As we mentioned above, one of the biggest issues for entertainment marketers is walled verticals making it hard to understand their viewers from a holistic perspective. And that makes sense. **Netflix understands what their customers are most likely to watch next...on Netflix. They wouldn't have very reliable data to tell you where they are most likely to eat out, or which YouTube channel they are most likely to watch.** The same goes for most vertical platforms.

But social media is different. Even though it is a single channel, everything that people eat, watch, buy, binge, visit, sip, play, follow, and stream are also active participants within this channel. So, as people engage with their favorite brands, restaurants, shows, movies, games, and more, social media data is able to reveal a view of customer behavior previously shielded by modern-day verticals.

affinity Intersect

actionable insights for everything entertainment

We built Affinity Intersect (Intersect) to give entertainment marketers a clear view of everything their fans are engaging in, to help them better activate, anywhere, anytime. By analyzing billions of social media engagements from over 250MM people worldwide and 45,000 brand entities, Intersect captures and compiles the thoughts, passions, and actions of media fans, giving marketers a deeper level into viewer behavior. Intersect provides data on the fans of any show, movie, game, musician, or celebrity. When searching for an entity, marketers and analysts are able to uncover the most popular aligned fan interests, ranked by traffic volume or relevance.
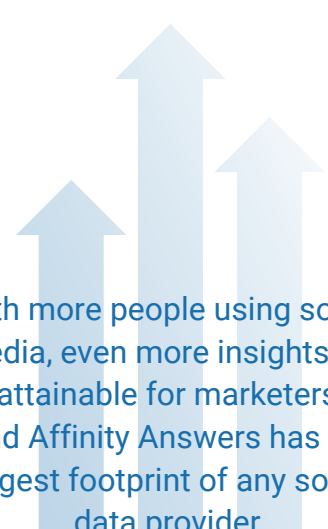
This consolidation of fan affinities provides marketers with the knowledge necessary to improve strategy and outreach efficiency while monitoring changes or viewing trends in audiences. With Intersect, marketers can locate ideal placements and keywords to optimize targeting or discover potential fans. Influencer, partnership, and sponsorship opportunities can be identified and ranked by mutual affinity or traffic volume. Audience trends can be observed through historical reporting, providing insight into the ever-changing world of media consumption.

Intersect's data can be ranked by traffic volume or TrueAffinity®, our measurement of overall relevance. TrueAffinity analyzes fan behavior and social engagements, taking data beyond a categorical level and into a more revealing brand level. Intersect provides both a TrueAffinity ranking per entity as well as a TrueAffinity Change to display the increase or decrease in interest over a set period. Let's take a closer look at how these measurements of fan affinities can be directly applicable to campaign planning.
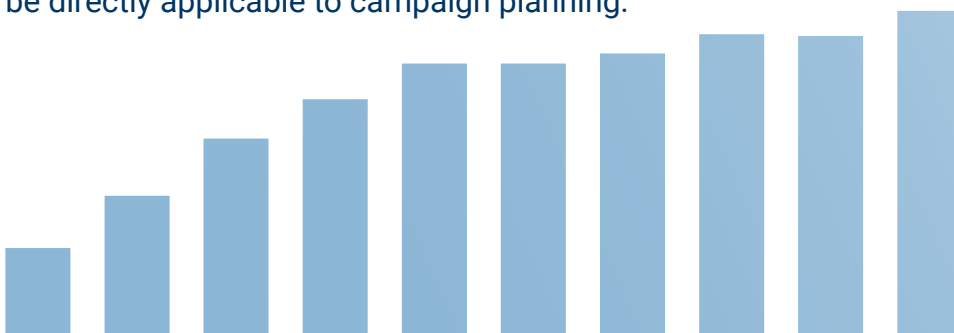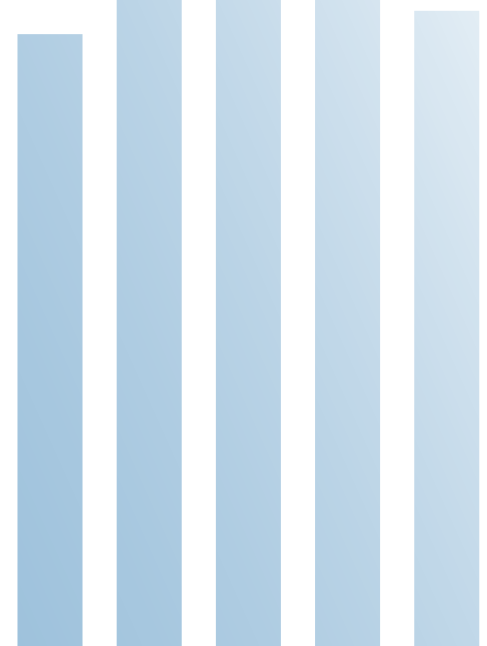
250MM
peoples' engagements tracked

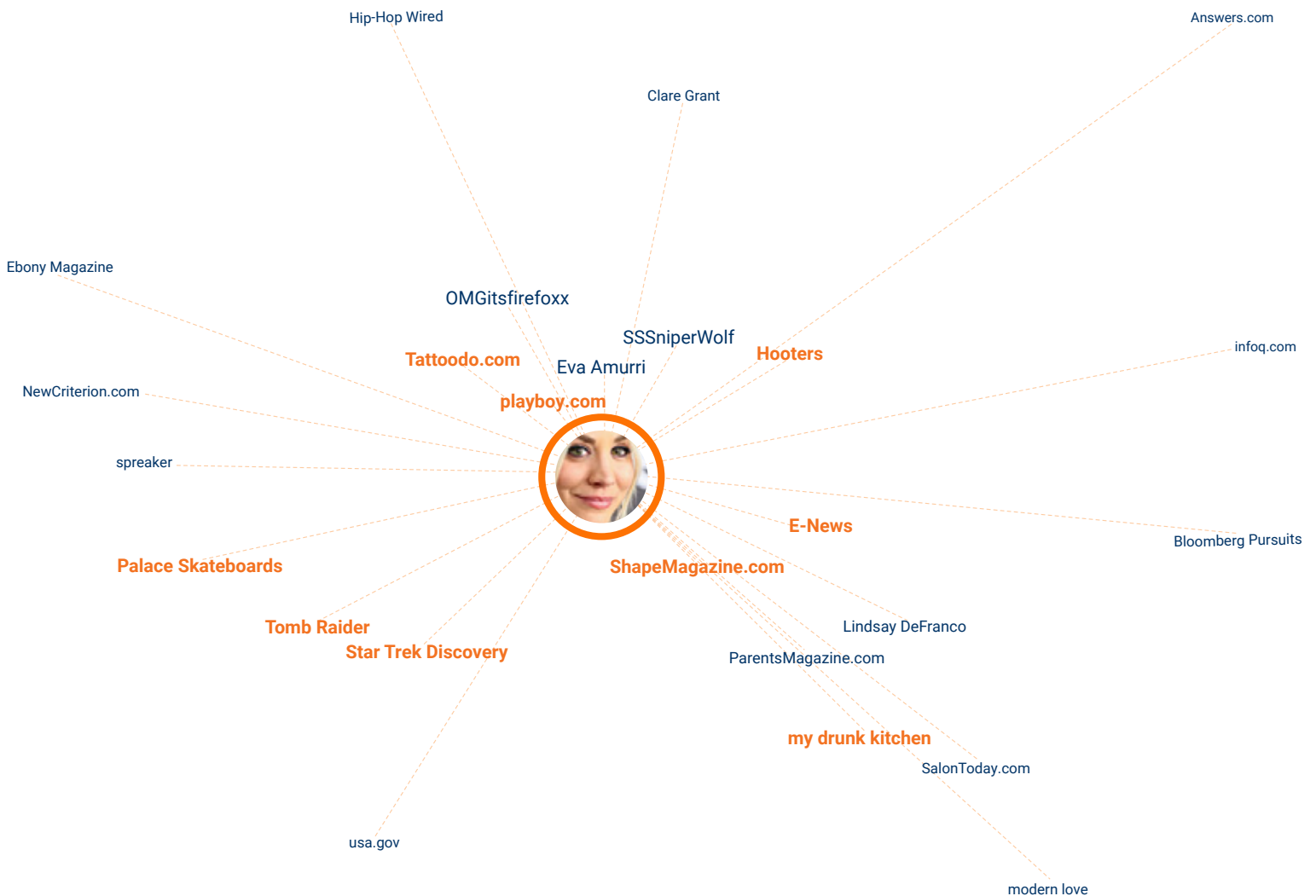# 45K
entity engagements tracked

With more people using social media, even more insights are attainable for marketers, and Affinity Answers has the largest footprint of any social data provider.

case study 1: fans have many forms

While standard viewership data provides a brief introduction to media fans, getting to know them on an interest level requires accessing advanced insights. Age, location, and basic demographic data help construct a partial picture of a viewer, but going undetected are the varied nuances pivotal in distinguishing and segmenting viewers. Without the ability to properly segment and appeal to viewers on an interest level, marketers cannot truly target efficiently, with impressions often wasted on ineffective audiences. Where fans go, what they watch and do online—this information provides greater opportunity to reach current fans while appealing to new ones.

identifying the different fan groups of kaley cuoco

Hip-Hop Wired

Answers.com

Clare Grant

Ebony Magazine

OMGitsfirefoxx

SSSniperWolf

infoq.com

Tattoodo.com

Hooters

Eva Amurri

NewCriterion.com

playboy.com

spreaker

E-News

Bloomberg Pursuits

Palace Skateboards

ShapeMagazine.com

Tomb Raider

Lindsay DeFranco

Star Trek Discovery

ParentsMagazine.com

my drunk kitchen

SalonToday.com

usa.gov

modern love

case study 1: fans have many forms *(continued)*

Kaley Cuoco's breakthrough role in the hit series Big Bang Theory propelled the actor and producer into stardom, significantly broadening her name and fan base over the years. With roles in dozens of varied films and TV shows, Kaley Cuoco has achieved wide audience appeal, making appearances ranging from Lifetime television to crass sex comedies. In order to better understand and segment the fans of Kaley Cuoco, we ran a search in Intersect and made some interesting discoveries.

By looking at the data, we were able to determine three major groups of Kaley Cuoco fans with very different interests that would require varied targeting approaches. Our first group had a high correlation with fitness magazines and talk show TV. An avid fitness buff, Kaley Cuoco has often discussed her workout routines and diet regimens, encouraging body positivity, particularly to females, and this group reflects this aspect of her celebrity appeal.

Our second group would probably come as little surprise to those familiar with her most recognized work on the science fiction-themed comedy, Big Bang Theory. This fan group engaged heavily with video games and sci-fi programming. Kaley Cuoco has been consistent in engaging this core base over the years, through various game magazine interviews and Comic Con appearances.

The third main segment of fans we uncovered had a high affinity with adult entertainment and tattoo magazines. This group, most likely inspired by Kaley Cuoco's more revealing modeling shoots and foray into edgier roles, comprises a subsection of fans that advertisers may not immediately consider, but their large number makes them an influential force in fan outreach.

3
key fan groups

fun, fitness females
My Drunk Kitchen, E-News, Shape Magazine
This group of women loves entertainment TV, fitness magazines, and daily comedy.

big bang boys
Star Trek Discovery, Palace Skateboards, Tomb Raider
This group of men loves sci-fi, Skateboarding, and gaming.

the guy's guy
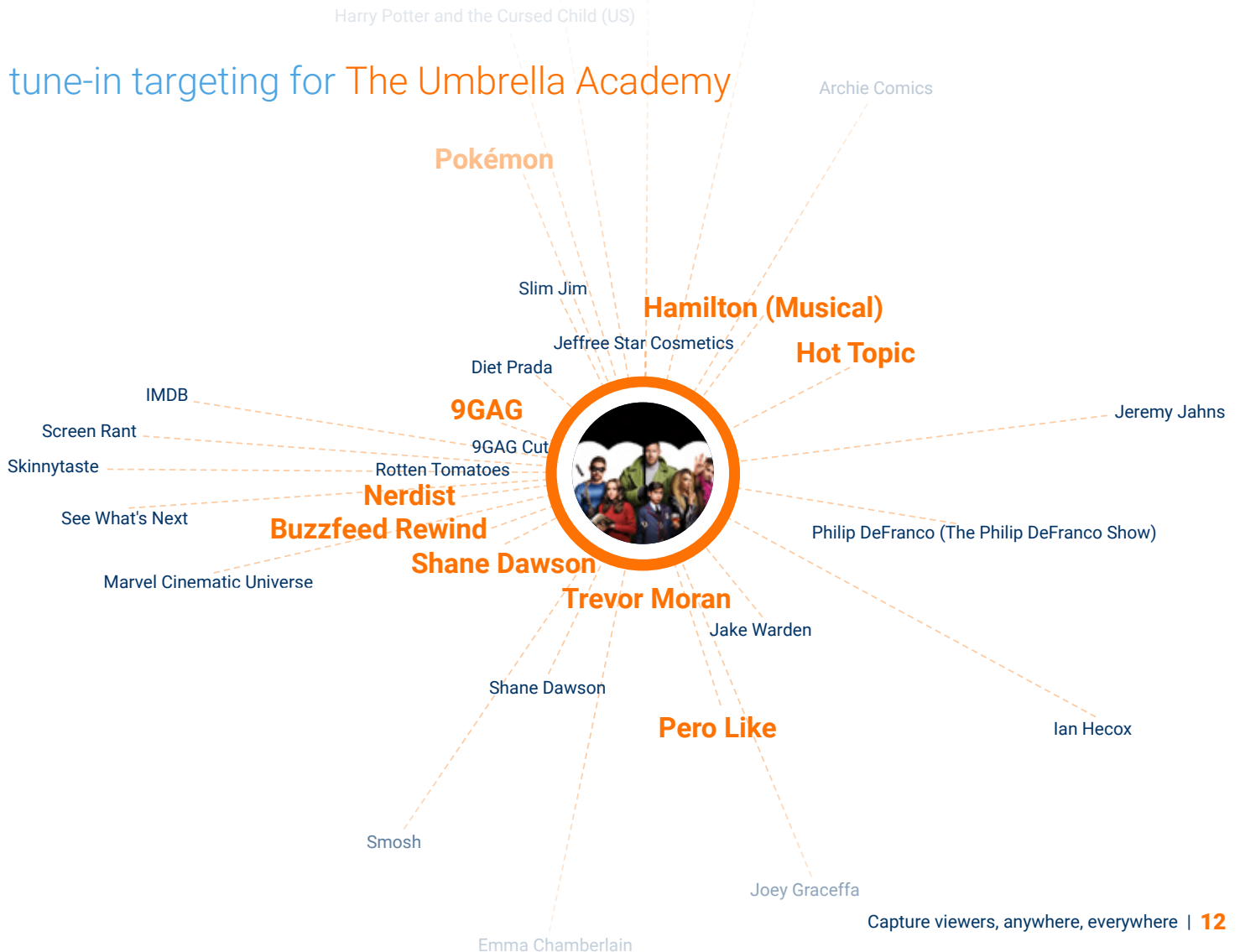Playboy, Tattoodo, Hooters
This group of men loves men's magazines, tattoos, and of course, Hooters.

case study 2: finding and narrowing ideal placements

Increased fragmentation within the streaming space can make it difficult to accurately target current and prospective viewers, but Intersect bridges gaps online and offline, aiding advertisers in precisely targeting the most relevant audiences. Effective placements can significantly boost outreach efficiency by appealing to those more likely to care. Choosing the right placements requires knowing where an entity's fans are spending the majority of their time. By accessing the areas where fans are frequenting, publishers and marketers can not only reach current fans but also find like-minded viewers who carry the same interests.

In this case study, we compiled the most highly trafficked placements for Netflix's original series, The Umbrella Academy. The black comedy/sci-fi/superhero series features an ensemble cast and cross-genre appeal, but without a specific genre or prominent celebrity to fall behind, marketing research can be difficult when locating ideal placements for promotion. Let's take a look at which websites and YouTube channels had the most resonance with the series' fans.
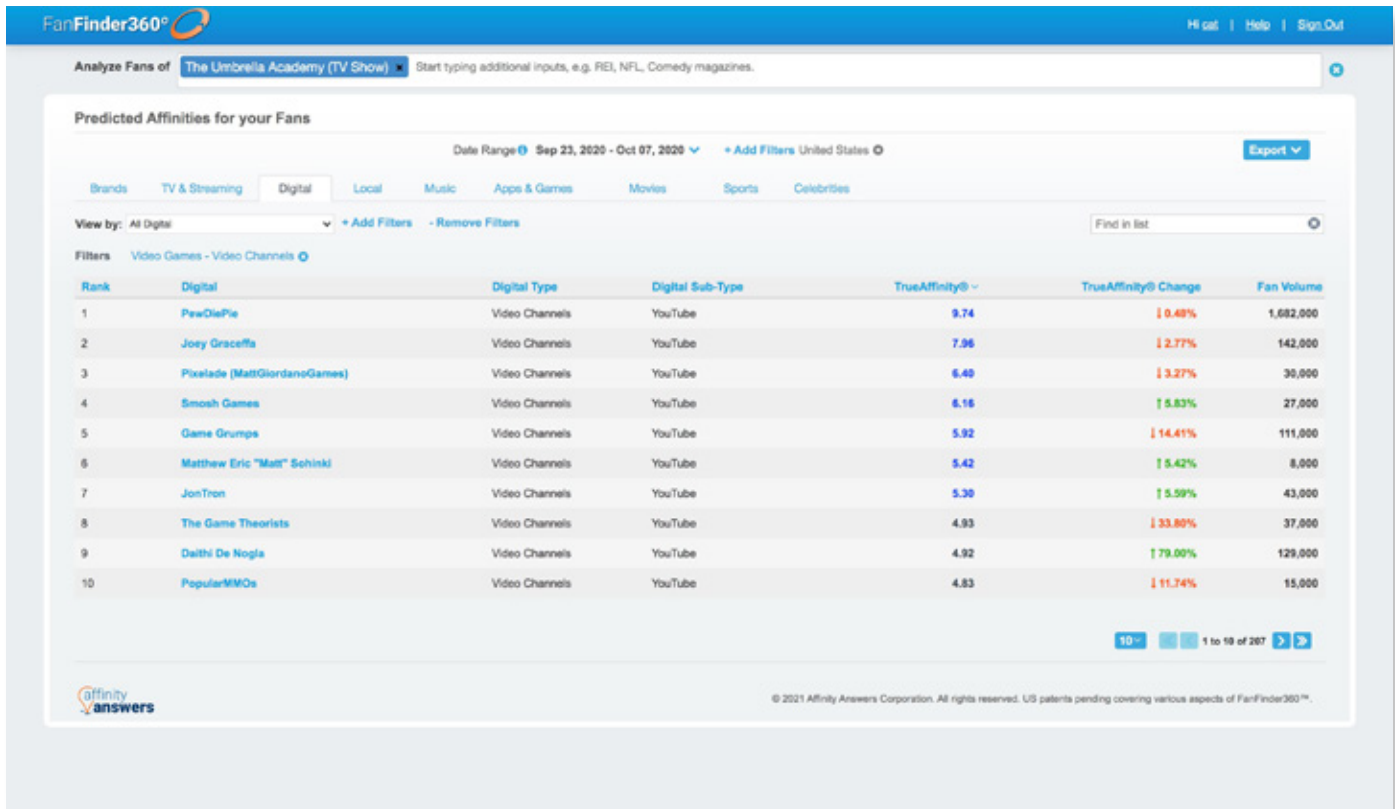
tune-in targeting for The Umbrella Academy

New York Comic Con

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child (US)

Archie Comics

Pokémon

Slim Jim

Hamilton (Musical)

Jeffree Star Cosmetics

Hot Topic

Diet Prada

IMDB

9GAG

Jeremy Jahns

Screen Rant

9GAG Cut

Skinnytaste

Rotten Tomatoes

Nerdist

See What's Next

Buzzfeed Rewind

Philip DeFranco (The Philip DeFranco Show)

Marvel Cinematic Universe

Shane Dawson

Trevor Moran

Jake Warden

Shane Dawson

Ian Hecox

Pero Like

Smosh

Joey Graceffa

Emma Chamberlain

case study 2: finding and narrowing ideal placements *(continued)*

In our search, Intersect uncovered several meme and pop culture/humor sites with high appeal in the 18- 24-year-old group. While meme and humor sites can provide solid outlets for general targeting, we wanted to narrow our results down to exclusively view which video game channels on YouTube had the highest mutual affinity with The Umbrella Academy fans. In order to achieve these results, we added the digital sub-type filter "Video Channels" and ranked our results by TrueAffinity scores.

When viewing the top-ranked TrueAffinity placements, we notice streaming leader PewDiePie topping the list with his immense gaming audience and potentially heftier ad competition. However, we can also see high TrueAffinity scores attributed to lesser-known channels, such as Smosh Games, Game Grumps, and JonTron, giving advertisers smaller opportunities that could also provide big value. By studying fluctuations in placements, advertisers are able to better detect and interpret trends in viewer behavior while predicting which locations offer the most promise. This level of data depth provides superior intelligence in optimizing outreach strategies and campaign planning.

case study 3:
discovering the most authentic partnerships & sponsorships

For entertainment marketers, predicting the most suitable partnerships can be difficult. Successful sponsorships are propelled by authentic fan momentum, and Intersect allows marketers to stay in sync with which brands, celebrities, or influencers fans are predominantly engaging with. TrueAffinity allows marketers to gauge and measure the changing trends in fan bases in order to more accurately identify the most genuine fan alignment.

We wanted to uncover the best brands and celebrities aligning with the hard rock band, Deftones. Intersect allowed us to see which brands' fans had the highest mutual affinities with Deftones fans, along with which celebrities were most commonly associated.

case study 3:

discovering the most authentic partnerships & sponsorships *(continued)*

With a large fan following of musicians, Deftones' most closely-associated brands were unsurprisingly instrument manufacturers, with only minor changes in TrueAffinity scores, insinuating consistency in fan affinities. A similar picture was displayed among the list of celebrity affinities, with only small fluctuations in TrueAffinity changes displayed within the top three results. Is this data enough to provide reassurance in partnership possibilities? Were Deftones fans interested in the same brands and celebrities six months ago?
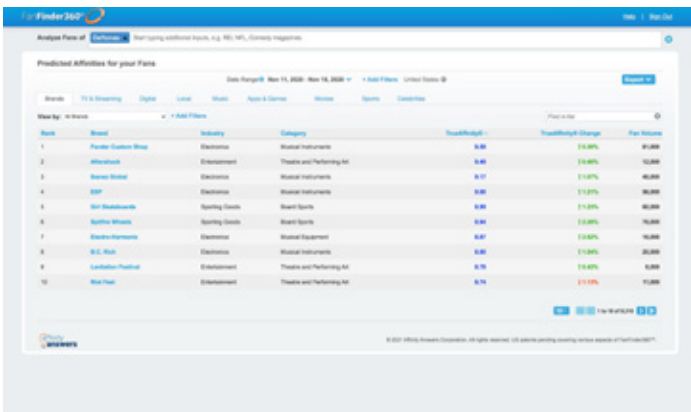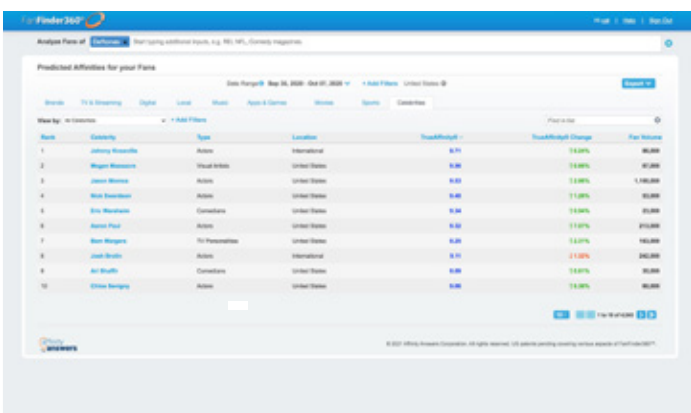

Deftones Brand Query
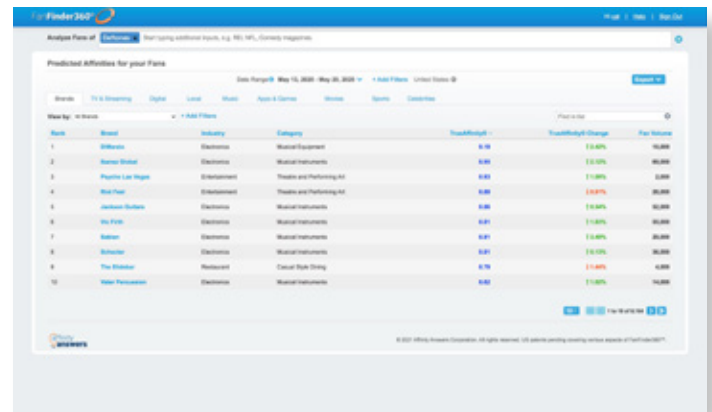
6 Months Prior

Accessing Intersect's historical data gives marketers the ability to draw their own comparisons and correlations in fan behavior. If we change our Deftones search query dates to six months prior, we notice the top three results changing, but Johnny Knoxville and Ibanez remain consistent engagement targets for Deftones fans, making them positive choices for potential fan crossover.

Deftones Celebrity Query
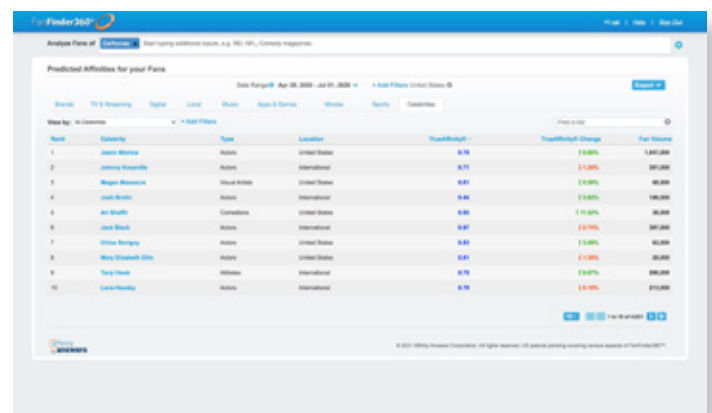
6 Months Prior

Getting Started with affinity **Intersect**

Understanding fan behavior is crucial for enhanced targeting accuracy, and Intersect provides entertainment publishers, brands, and marketers with an easily accessible repository of fan passions. By tapping into the interests and alignments of fan bases, marketers can make correlations to determine the most reasonable approaches to targeting, increasing overall outreach relevance and effectiveness. Without access to fan insights, marketers are left to making unnecessary guesswork and potentially wasting impressions.

Intersect uses brand-level data to provide entertainment publishers and marketing experts with accurate, actionable insights. As partners with some of the largest worldwide media brands, we understand the power of fan data and how it can revolutionize outreach. Whether targeting new or lapsed viewers, Intersect gives a convenient and effective method of attaining the necessary intelligence to navigate campaigns to success.

schedule a demo

experience affinity **Intersect's** deep level of data and ease of use, or get in touch with us to learn more about how our data can help increase your messaging effectiveness.

get in touch with us today

anton@affinityanswers.com