THE FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING BENCHMARK REPORT 2017

WOWZA™ media systems

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INTRODUCTION

Facebook Live has taken the streaming-media world by storm. Nearly 80 percent of online-video audiences are already watching on the platform, despite it being a newer entrant to the market. Facebook Live is even surpassing industry titan YouTube in live-stream viewership: 17 percent of all U.S. internet users watch videos on Facebook Live, to YouTube's 16 percent.

Most importantly, Facebook Live audiences are highly engaged: They watch live videos three times longer than pre-recorded ones, and comment on them at 10 times the rate. And among consumers who view live-streams on a weekly basis, more watch on Facebook Live than any other channel.

Why are these viewers so dialed-in? Not only is Facebook the most popular social media platform, Facebook Live videos are "StreamingPLUS" experiences: offering video augmented by interactive elements that allow viewers to engage with broadcasters and with each other. For example, real-time "likes," emojis and live chat or comments can be added to the post or sent within the live stream.

Facebook Live is even driving whole new forms of engagement, with some broadcasters producing "choose your own adventure"-style videos where viewers vote to determine the on-screen action they'll see next. This platform not only offers unique marketing value, it's changing the way online content is developed and consumed.

At Wowza Media Systems™, we wanted to know how and why organizations are using Facebook Live—including what equipment they have in place, and the biggest benefits and challenges they experience. To learn more, we surveyed over 700 video-streaming professionals across various industries. This report details our findings.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FACEBOOK LIVE IS DOMINATING THE MARKET

Live-streaming video is booming, and Facebook is at the forefront of this growing trend. Facebook Live viewership has quadrupled over the past year, even overtaking YouTube in popularity among U.S. internet users. Sixty-three percent of respondents to our survey are already streaming to Facebook Live—and a majority of those who aren't plan to start in the next year.

BROADCASTERS SEE BENEFITS FROM LIVE-STREAMING

Facebook Live broadcasters want to reach new audiences and boost engagement with existing ones. The top benefits they realize align with these goals, as respondents report increased awareness and deeper customer loyalty as a result of Facebook Live streaming. Many respondents say these benefits have had a significant positive impact on their organization.

USERS STREAM MORE THAN JUST EVENTS

The majority use Facebook Live to stream coverage of live events. However, respondents are finding a variety of ways to engage viewers through their live-streams—from broadcasts of demos and instructional content to behind-the-scenes exclusives and breaking news.

MOST STRUGGLE WITH SETUP AND INTEGRATION

The largest proportion of respondents use professional equipment with advanced hardware and software workflows. However, setting up and integrating equipment and systems with the Facebook Live platform is a major challenge.

CONNECTION AND PLAYBACK ERRORS WIDESPREAD

Three-quarters of our respondents report some type of problem connecting and/or maintaining high-quality streams through Facebook Live. Even those who are able to connect have widespread difficulties with dropped streams and playback quality.

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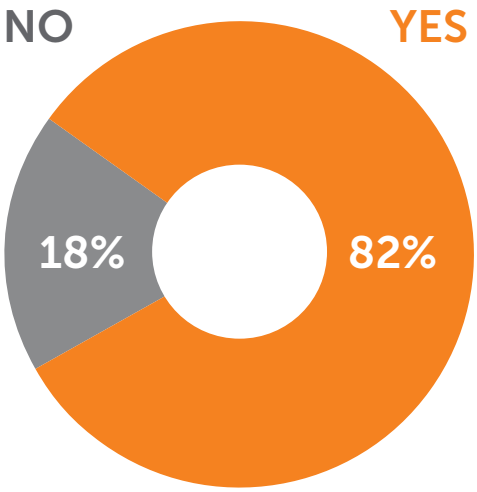
82% SAY FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING IS A STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

IS STREAMING TO FACEBOOK LIVE AN IMPORTANT STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AT YOUR ORGANIZATION?



BROADCASTERS SEE FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING AS MISSION-CRITICAL

For the vast majority of respondents, Facebook Live is more than just a cool new tool or trend; they stream to this platform because it's an important strategic initiative for their organization. When current and potential followers can watch and interact with broadcasters in real time, it establishes trust and authenticity for the organization—building relationships that pave the way for conversions or donations.

Given that 40 percent of consumers visit a brand's website after watching a sponsored video, it's no wonder Facebook Live has become an essential component of marketing and/or sales strategies.

"[Facebook Live streaming] impacts audiences where they are, creating a strong option for brands to increase ROI."

– Diego Yamaguti da Silva,
chief financial officer at ClapMe

"Facebook Live has taken people's want for live video and packaged it in a way that works—it's more than just video on a page. You have all the interactions; you can tie in other companies and sponsors and ... other [Facebook] pages. This makes it actually useful as a tool, rather than just as a video that sits on the internet that no one is going to see."

– James O'Farrell
director at Echo Eight Ltd.

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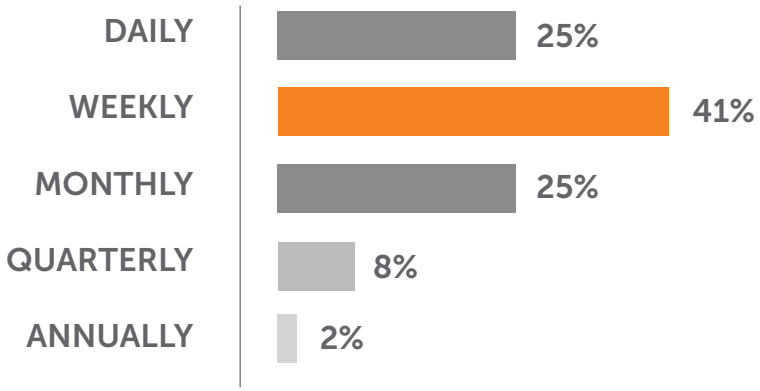
66% STREAM TO FACEBOOK LIVE AT LEAST WEEKLY

HOW OFTEN DO YOU STREAM TO FACEBOOK LIVE?



ORGANIZATIONS SEE VALUE IN REGULAR FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING

A vast majority of respondents live-stream at least weekly, with one-quarter broadcasting daily. Posting regularly is an important part of social media strategy—in fact, experts recommend those with 10,000 followers or fewer post to Facebook one to five times per month. This helps organizations build and maintain a regular following, and stay near the top of current and potential customers' feeds.

In turn, more viewers are watching live-streams on a regular basis: Nearly half of U.S. consumers report watching live video every week, while 12 percent watch every day.

"It's a good way to connect with our existing viewers and grow our audience."

—John Schroeder, director of program production at WisconsinEye Public Affairs Network

FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING SPOTLIGHT

"By broadcasting interviews live, we've been able to generate more excitement not just from viewers, but from participants who are more engaged than when we do pre-recorded interviews. ... It really helps in building our community.

"Our channel is focused on documenting live music. ... But since our numbers are small, we're not yet attractive for advertisers, and don't make much revenue. So our challenge is to get people to help produce videos with us, and to help share and to build relationships.

"Streaming live has created an event where talented people come together for a few hours and have a lot of fun. ... Our annual Music Video Festival was our biggest one yet, both in terms of submissions and in terms of turnout. While I can't draw a straight line from our live broadcasts to our audience attendance, it's the only thing that's different, and it's given us a hyper-local, engaged audience to talk to."

—Loren Risker, CEO of OutOfFocus.TV

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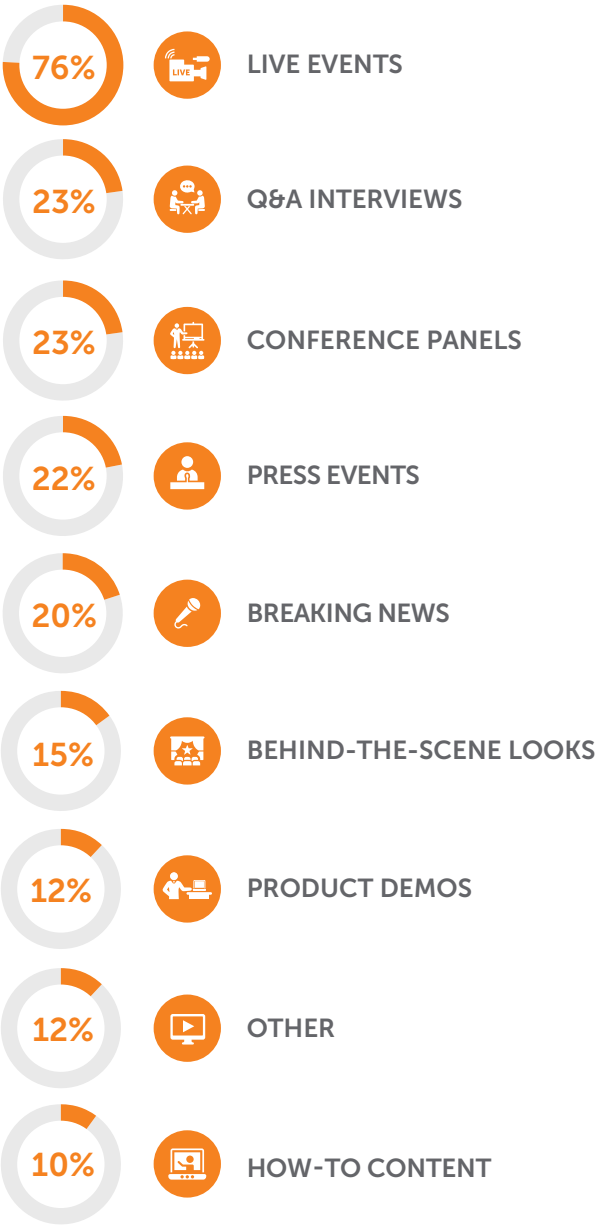
FACEBOOK LIVE IS MULTI-PURPOSE, BUT LEADS IN EVENT STREAMING

WHAT TYPE OF CONTENT ARE YOU STREAMING TO FACEBOOK LIVE?



ORGANIZATIONS BROADCAST MORE THAN JUST EVENTS ON FACEBOOK LIVE

While the vast majority of respondents live-stream events, Facebook Live is used to broadcast a wide variety of other types of content, as well (respondents were allowed to select all that applied). One-on-one interviews, conference panels and press events are popular use cases, along with breaking news.

Indeed, social media platforms are now a major news source for 62 percent of Americans, with 66 percent of Facebook users getting their news from the site. However, it's equally valuable for smaller organizations that want to share everything from demos and how-to content to lectures and sermons with their follower base.

Some of Facebook Live's Top Live-Streams Include:

- Holiday celebrations from around the world, such as Good Morning America's Independence Day stream and CNN's Bastille Day coverage.
- Q&As with film and TV stars, including cast members from Game of Thrones, The Bachelorette and War of the Planet of the Apes.
- Live sports coverage from the Golf Channel and the World Surf League.
- Breaking news coverage from BBC News and Fox News.
- Announcements of the 69th Emmy Awards nominations and highlights from The Tonight Show With Jimmy Fallon.

> "Facebook Live is a relatively easy way to communicate our message to our followers, who then share with their network and thereby build the audience."
>
> —Ken Wimer, pastor at Shreveport Grace Church

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BROADCASTERS REACH NEW AUDIENCES THROUGH FACEBOOK LIVE

70%

SAY THE GOAL OF FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING IS TO REACH A NEW AUDIENCE

FACEBOOK LIVE IS KEY FOR INCREASED BRAND EXPOSURE

The number-one goal respondents state for streaming to Facebook Live is to reach a new audience. There are now a staggering 2 billion monthly active Facebook users, and Facebook videos (both live and prerecorded) are projected to soon pass 64 million daily views—so the potential viewer base on this channel is massive.

When viewers share with their own followers, or discuss content they've seen with friends, family and colleagues, awareness can spread quickly on a huge scale. Indeed, consumers in the U.S. and Canada are nearly twice as likely to watch mobile video on Facebook and Instagram because it gives them something to talk about with others, as compared with broadcast TV content.

For most organizations in our survey, this approach seems to be working. The largest proportion of respondents (58 percent) say greater brand awareness and exposure is the top benefit they've realized as a result of Facebook Live streaming. This is a likely reason company Facebook pages streamed six times more live videos than prerecorded ones in June 2017.

FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING SPOTLIGHT

"[Facebook Live] is both a cheap CDN solution, and an effective way to build up our audience. We don't charge for our content, it's freely available—so we need to put it on platforms that attract the most social use, and that is Facebook. We have 1.9 million followers on our Facebook page directly, and we also use Wowza to syndicate content across ... as many pages as we can.

"I think the largest syndication case we ever did was when we did a panel discussion about the closure of a famous nightclub in London called Fabric. We put than on about 17 different Facebook pages using Wowza, which was great, because it allowed us to reach more people, and get that message out about not closing that club. And I feel like we did help contribute to ... saving the nightclub from closure."

—Larry Gale,
head of live broadcast at Boiler Room

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FACEBOOK LIVE BROADCASTS DEEPEN CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

64%

STATE A GOAL OF STAYING CONNECTED WITH EXISTING FOLLOWERS

FACEBOOK LIVE OFFERS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE AUDIENCES

The second-most common goal respondents state for streaming to Facebook Live is to stay connected with their existing follower base. Many also appear to be successful, since deepened customer engagement is the second-most reported benefit (cited by 41 percent).

As mentioned, Facebook Live offers unique opportunities not only to distribute content to more viewers, but also to involve them through direct participation. Viewers can react to and comment on live-streams, as well as send emojis across the screen; ask questions that broadcasters immediately answer; vote in live polls and see instant results; and more, all in real time.

This type of content taps into viewers' emotions and their desire for authentic connections, inspiring loyalty for the organizations behind it. Respondents to a survey by research consultancy Magid say their top reasons for watching live-streams are to stay informed and updated; to feel like part of the event; and because live videos feel more authentic. And a Facebook study finds mobile video on Facebook and Instagram is linked to feelings of happiness, excitement and inspiration among viewers.

FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING SPOTLIGHT

"When we stream to Facebook Live, awareness of our events goes through the roof. Everyone gets more excited. We're a policy school with a mission to involve communities locally, globally and nationally, and Facebook Live allows us to reach alumni around the world who ... may not stay updated through email, but will check the Facebook page now and then. That global outreach is why Facebook Live is becoming a key part for us.

"It's all about brand awareness and engagement. ... For the events we've done to Facebook Live, awareness has gone up by 700 to 800 percent, or more ... [and] engagement has increased by 300 or 400 percent."

—Jonathan Schwartz,
director of video productions and operations,
University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy

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BENEFITS OF FACEBOOK LIVE INCLUDE FLEXIBILITY AND COST-SAVINGS

47%

SAY AFFORDABLE STREAMING DELIVERY IS A KEY BENEFIT

BROADCASTERS BENEFIT FROM FREE, FLEXIBLE LIVE-STREAMING

Implementing new software and systems typically involves a significant financial investment for organizations—but Facebook Live is a free platform. For this reason, many respondents cite affordability as a top benefit of Facebook Live streaming.

By simply opening the Facebook app and tapping a button to go live, broadcasters can easily capture unique moments, report on breaking news and capture spontaneous thoughts and ideas. Since broadcasters can stream anytime, from wherever they want, they have unique flexibility to test out exciting new creative concepts.

While many streaming platforms charge fees for bandwidth usage, Facebook Live offers unlimited distribution to highly engaged viewers around the world at no additional cost. There's also no need to buy airtime or schedule studio hours. From a cost-per viewer standpoint, Facebook Live offers the most affordable method to reach audiences—allowing dollars to be reallocated to higher-quality production techniques and professional-grade hardware and software.

FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING SPOTLIGHT

"As a live-streaming platform provider, we like to offer all the options as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each to our church customers, so they can provide their members a quality and consistent broadcast ... within their budget."

—Joe Garcia, president of Your Church Live

"It basically gives anyone the power to do what only a few people/organizations with a lot of equipment could do a few years ago."

—Jean Pierre Cardoso, Radio Alternativa.NET

"Because it's free, it's an affordable way [to stream.] Facebook is a default for everything we do."

—Jonathan Schwartz, director of video productions and operations, USC Sol Price School of Public Policy

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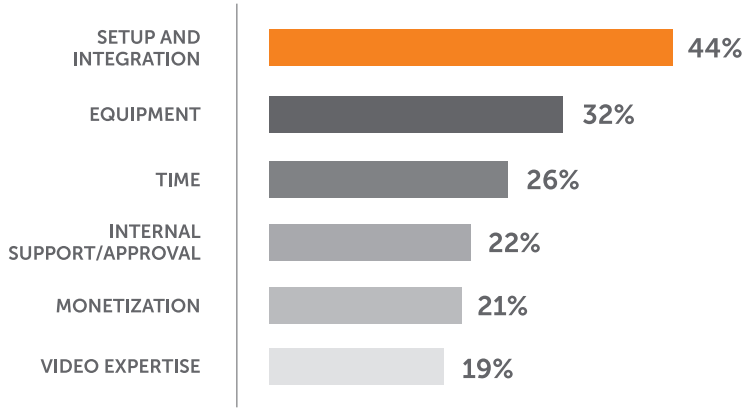
EQUIPMENT, SETUP AND INTEGRATION ARE TOP CHALLENGES

WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES WHEN STREAMING TO FACEBOOK LIVE?



BROADCASTERS STRUGGLE TO INTEGRATE FACEBOOK LIVE WITH EXISTING WORKFLOWS

Many respondents describe using professional equipment with advanced hardware and software workflows. They state a desire to produce high-quality video, with many using graphics and multi-camera switching—but when it comes to Facebook Live streaming, simplicity is the name of the game.

To be widely adopted, it must be easy and seamless for broadcasters to integrate high-quality, reliable Facebook Live streaming into the workflows they already have in place. However, that's not the experience many are having.

Facebook Live has specific requirements in terms of bitrate, resolution and other settings that must be properly configured in order for streams to perform properly, which can be a challenge for those who are unfamiliar with the platform. A combined 38 percent of respondents note that these production challenges are preventing them from live-streaming to the platform at all.

IN USERS' OWN WORDS:

THEIR BIGGEST STREAMING CHALLENGES

"Facebook support and quality of service."

"Facebook's API policy restriction."

"Different broadcast keys for every broadcast."

"Having to reconfigure every new stream."

"Full integration with Facebook is missing."

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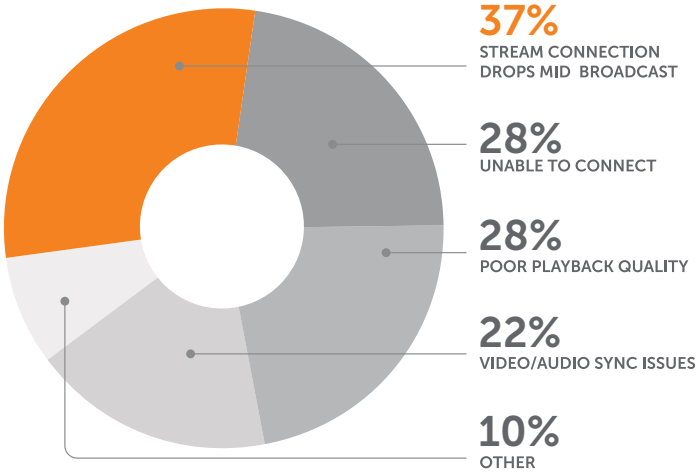
76% OF BROADCASTERS REPORT CONNECTION AND/OR STREAMING ERRORS

WHAT TYPES OF ERRORS HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED WHILE STREAMING TO FACEBOOK LIVE?



MANY CAN'T CONNECT TO FACEBOOK LIVE—AND THOSE WHO CAN HAVE TROUBLE STREAMING

When we asked respondents if they experienced errors streaming to Facebook Live, 76 percent said yes. More than one-quarter of them struggle to connect, and even those who can experience widespread problems with their broadcasts, such as dropped streams, poor playback quality and/or video and audio sync issues (respondents were able to select all that applied).

This is a serious issue: One of the largest and most popular live-streaming platforms in the world is problematic in some way for the vast majority of users. Since one of the biggest benefits of Facebook Live is its widespread accessibility, streams must be able to be viewed in high quality on a broad range of devices and in diverse network conditions. It must also be easy to integrate into a variety of broadcaster workflows for use cases across industries. So far, this is a challenge that remains to be solved.

IN USERS' OWN WORDS:

WHY THEY AREN'T STREAMING TO FACEBOOK LIVE

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MOST BROADCASTERS WHO DON'T STREAM TO FACEBOOK LIVE WILL START SOON

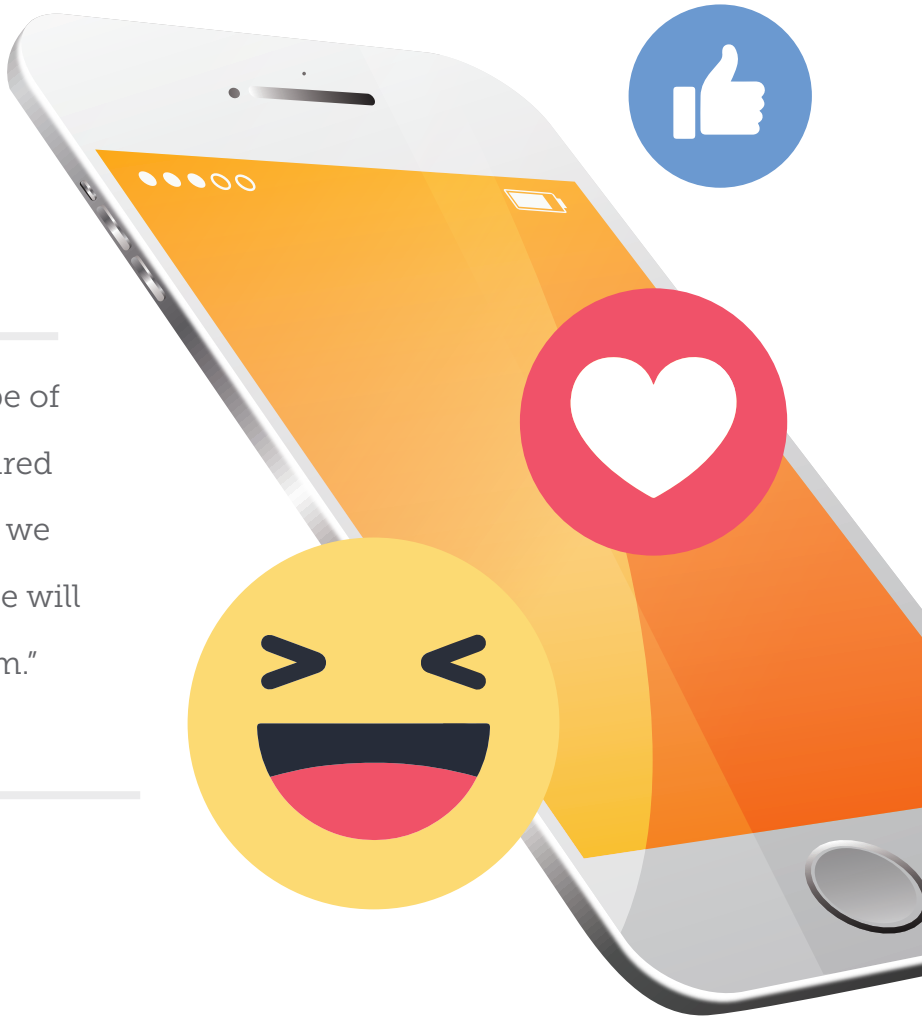
55%

OF RESPONDENTS NOT CURRENTLY STREAMING TO FACEBOOK LIVE PLAN TO START IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING WILL CONTINUE TO GROW IN POPULARITY

Despite the reported issues, interest in Facebook Live on the part of both viewers and broadcasters is only increasing. Between January and May 2016 alone, the proportion of media companies hosting Facebook Live videos grew by 300 percent. And audiences are responding: Facebook videos (Live included) will soon surpass 64 billion views per day.

What's more, nearly half of people in the U.S. and Canada plan to watch more smartphone video in the future. Our results reflect these trends, with a majority of respondents who aren't currently streaming to the platform planning to start within the next year.



"Facebook Live has created a new type of streaming product for us. It has required some work and process creation, but we think it is here to stay, and the volume will only increase in the near to short term."

—James O'Farrell, director at Echo Eight Ltd.

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WOWZA TECHNOLOGY INCREASES SUCCESS OF FACEBOOK LIVE BROADCASTING

Though a majority of respondents have trouble streaming to Facebook Live, Wowza technology can help. Using media server software, such as Wowza Streaming Engine™, or a managed service, such as Wowza Streaming Cloud™, solves many of respondents' top challenges. Users simply connect their source to the Wowza media server and set up the Stream Targets functionality. Multiple streams in the correct formats and resolutions are then delivered to multiple destinations, including the user's own website and Facebook Live.

Indeed, survey respondents who use Wowza report fewer problems with setup and integration.

WOWZA STREAMING ENGINE™

WOWZA STREAMING CLOUD™

IN USERS' OWN WORDS:

WHY THEY LOVE WOWZA FOR FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING

"Wowza has enabled even small businesses to stream like the major streaming providers!"

"Wowza makes it so easy to stream."

"We use our system with Wowza Streaming Engine, and we have complete control on our video streaming and VOD."

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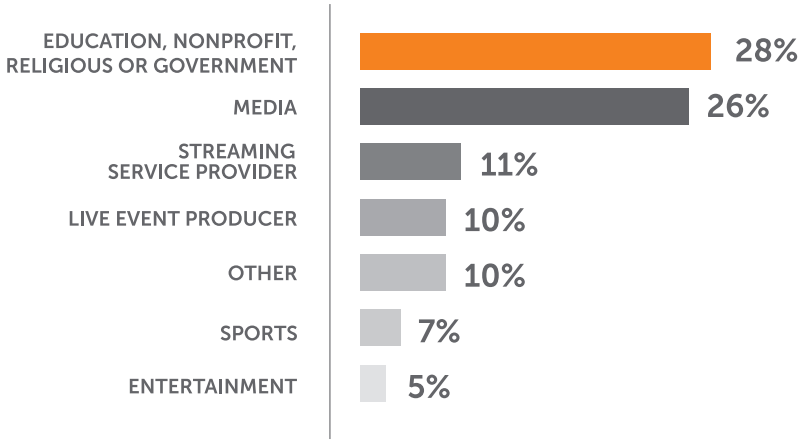
ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Benchmark Survey on Streaming to Facebook Live was conducted by Wowza Media Systems in June 2017, with more than 700 survey respondents from various industries and organizations, including media, entertainment, nonprofit and religious organizations, government, streaming service providers, live event producers and sports.

All participants responded to an email invitation from Wowza Media Systems. Other than access to survey results, no consideration was offered or provided to survey participants.

WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR ORGANIZATION'S AFFILIATION?



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WOWZA™ media systems

ABOUT WOWZA MEDIA SYSTEMS

Wowza Media Systems™ is the recognized gold standard of streaming, with 20,000 customers in 170+ countries. By reducing the complexities of video and audio delivery to any device, Wowza™ enables organizations to expand their reach and more deeply engage their audiences, in industries ranging from education to broadcasting. Service providers, direct customers and partners worldwide trust Wowza products to provide robust, customizable and scalable streaming solutions—with powerful APIs and SDKs to meet organizations' evolving streaming needs. Wowza was founded in 2005, is privately held, and is headquartered in Colorado.

For more information, please visit **www.wowza.com**

For more information about the survey, please contact marketing@wowza.com.

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