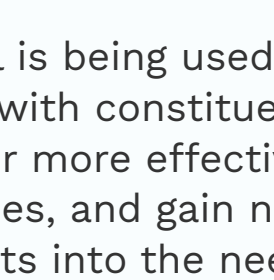
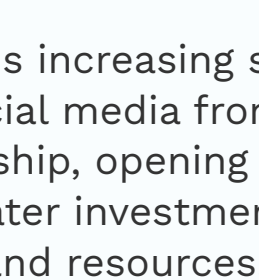


Understanding The Evolution of Social Media in Government

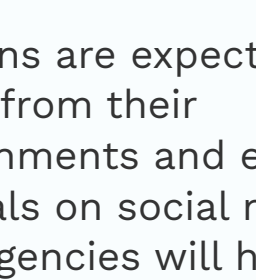
Social media, once seen as one of many communications channels available, has emerged as an essential tool for government agencies. A recent GovLoop survey of 289 federal, state and local employees found broad support for social across key government use cases—with indications that its importance will grow in the year ahead:



Social is being used to build trust with constituents, deliver more effective services, and gain new insights into the needs of their communities.



There is increasing support for social media from agency leadership, opening the door to greater investments in tools and resources.



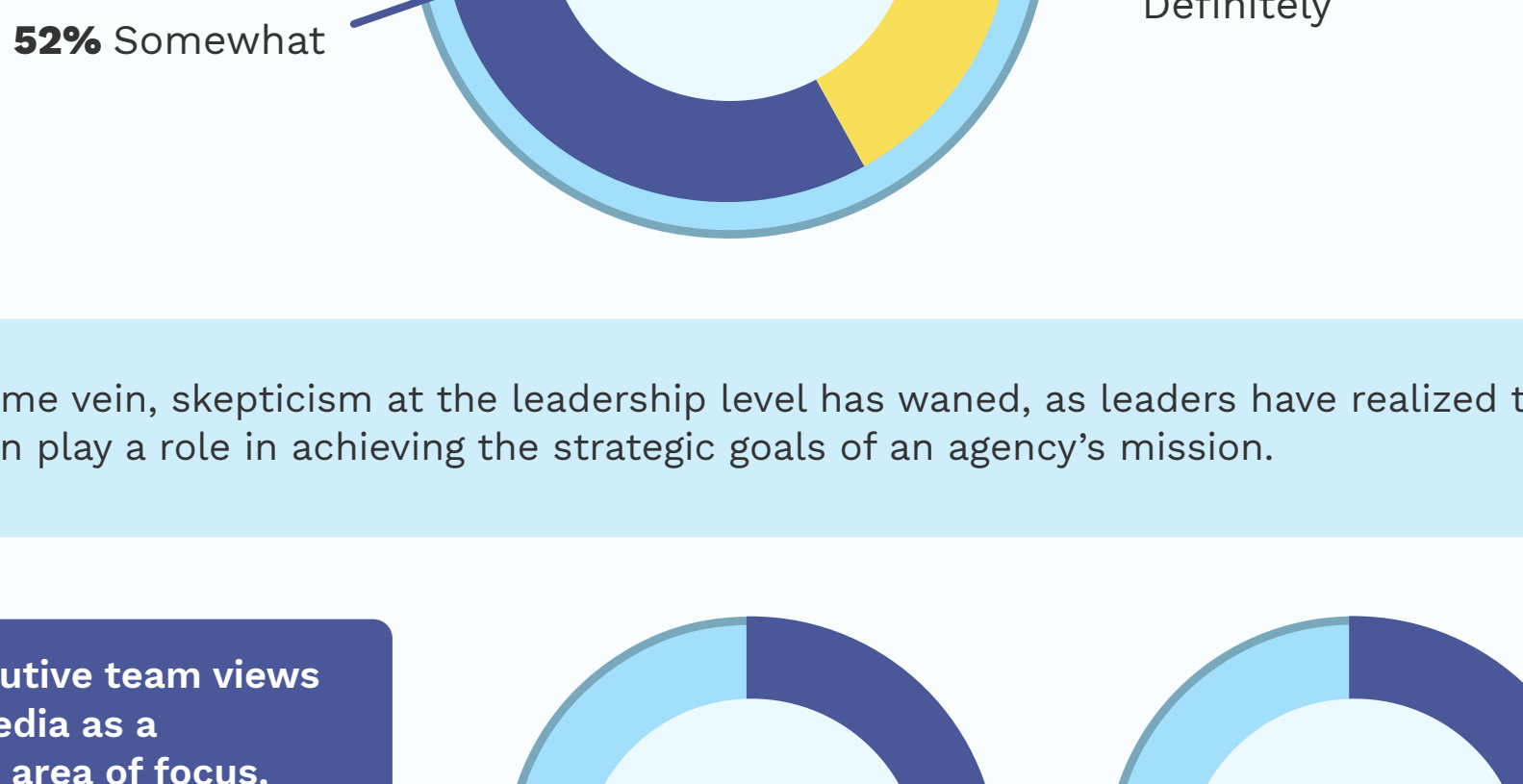
Citizens are expecting more from their governments and elected officials on social media, and agencies will have to adapt to keep pace.

Here are key highlights from the survey, conducted in conjunction with Hootsuite, with comparisons to a similar survey from 2018.

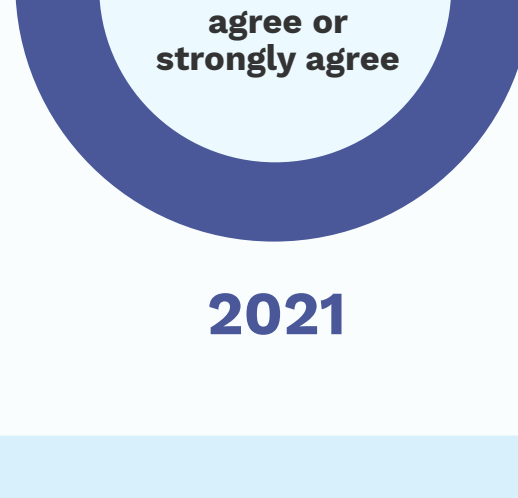
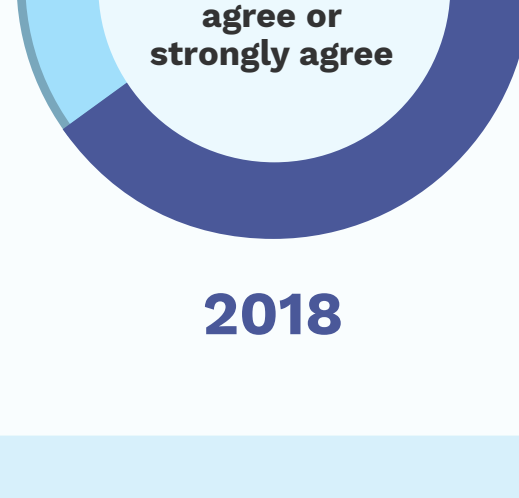
Agency Leaders Find Value in Social Media

Here's the bottom line. Social initiatives can't go far if leaders don't see their value. In many ways, the pandemic might prove to be an ideal use case, demonstrating social's value both to agencies and constituents. So, it's not surprising that the vast majority of respondents said their leaders are now willing to invest in social media tools.

Do your organization's leaders see the value of investing in social media tools?

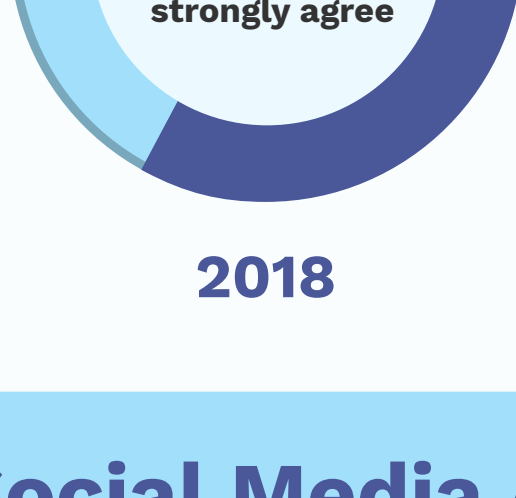


Our executive team views social media as a strategic area of focus.



In the same vein, skepticism at the leadership level has waned, as leaders have realized that social can play a role in achieving the strategic goals of an agency's mission.

Our agency leaders are active on social media.

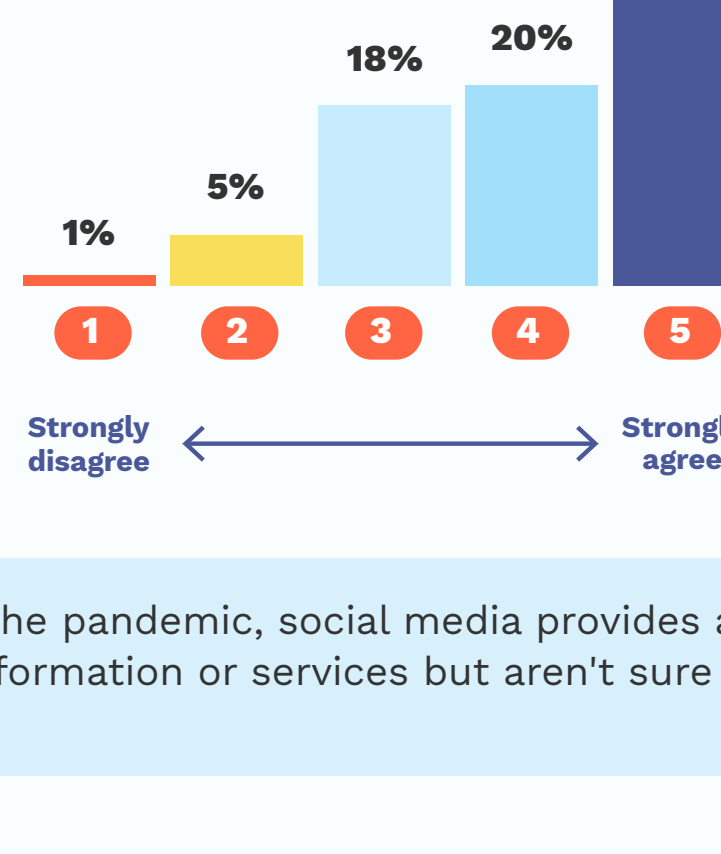
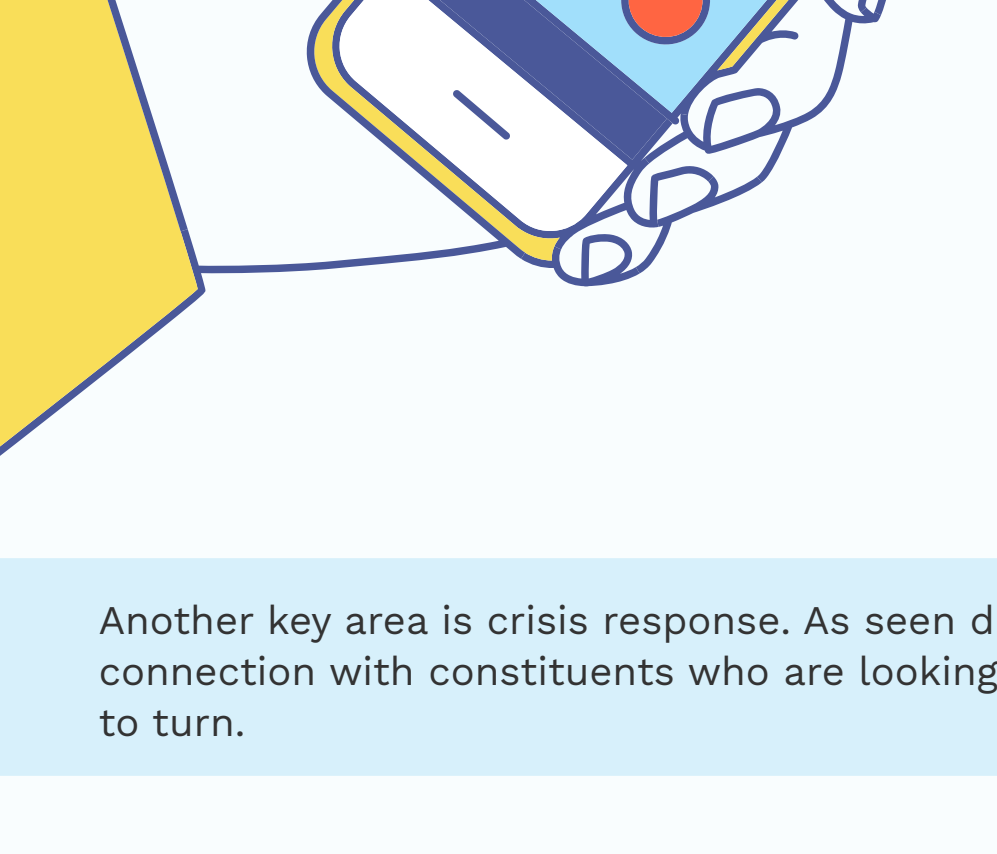


Social Media Aligns with Agency Priorities

For agencies, social media is not about gaining followers or getting likes. It's about supporting the mission. The survey found that agencies see a strong role for social in engaging constituents and delivering services, making it possible to reduce the burden on government call centers and providing faster service to constituents.

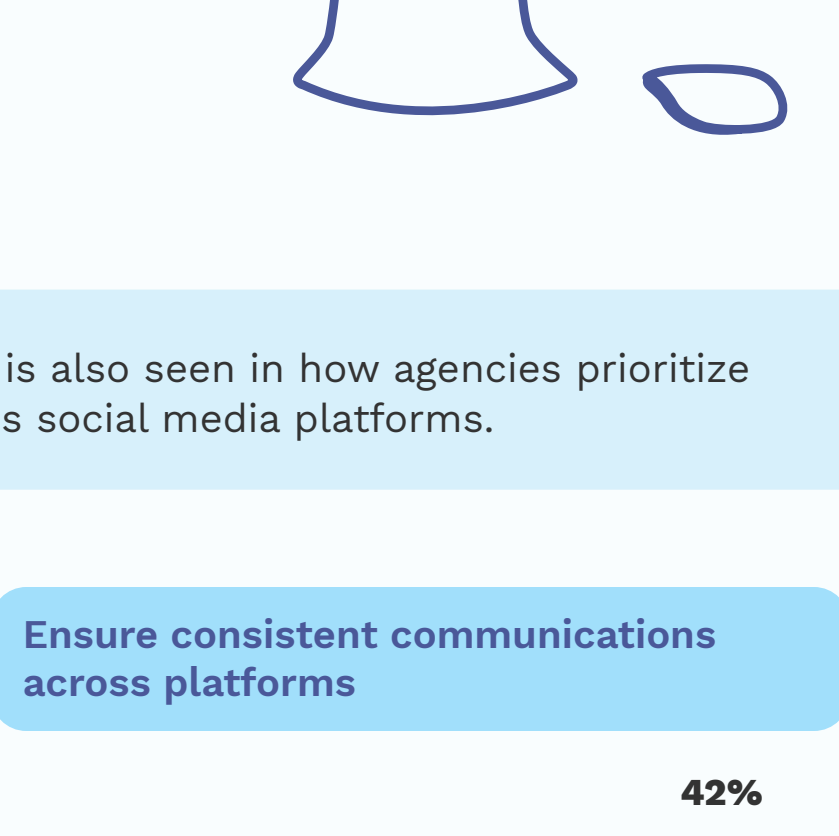
Please rate the importance of the following goals to your organization's social media activity? (Scale of 1-5, 5 being very important, 1 being not at all)

Engage citizens and deliver services



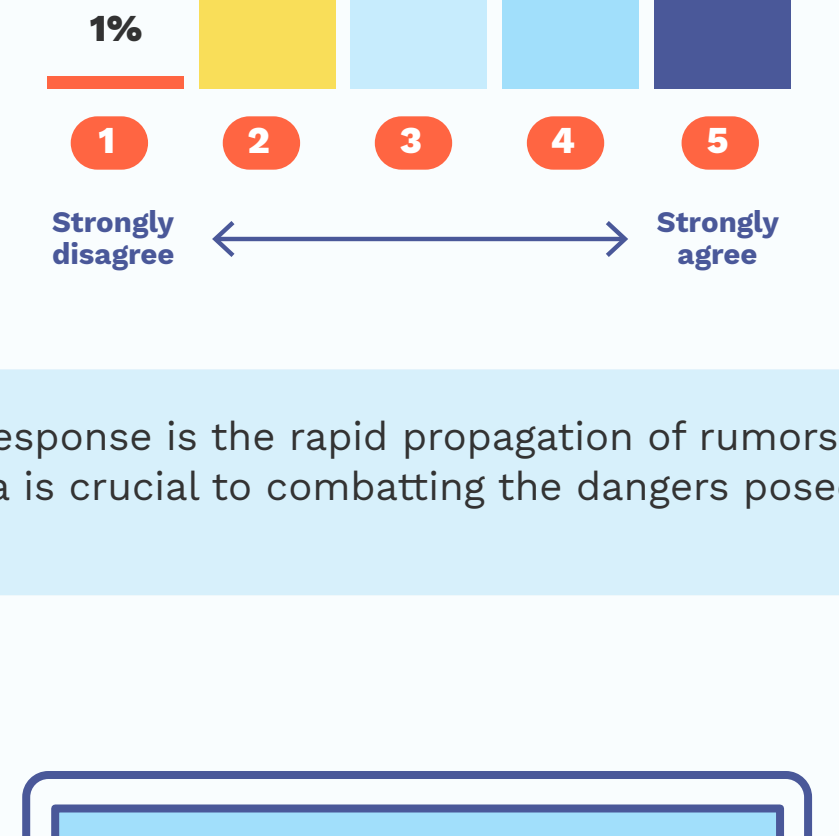
Another key area is crisis response. As seen during the pandemic, social media provides a critical connection with constituents who are looking for information or services but aren't sure where to turn.

Manage critical response communications



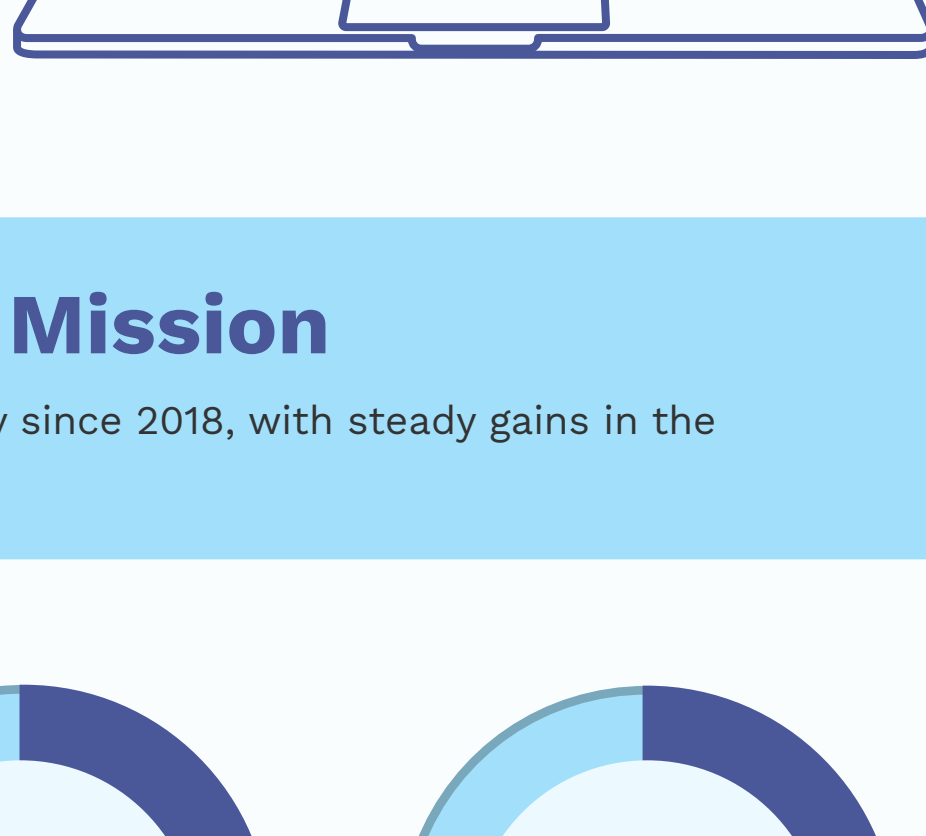
The growing maturity of government social initiatives is also seen in how agencies prioritize consistent language, messaging, and responses across social media platforms.

Ensure consistent communications across platforms



Now more than ever, one of the challenges of crisis response is the rapid propagation of rumors and "fake news." Agencies recognize that social media is crucial to combatting the dangers posed by this pandemic of misinformation.

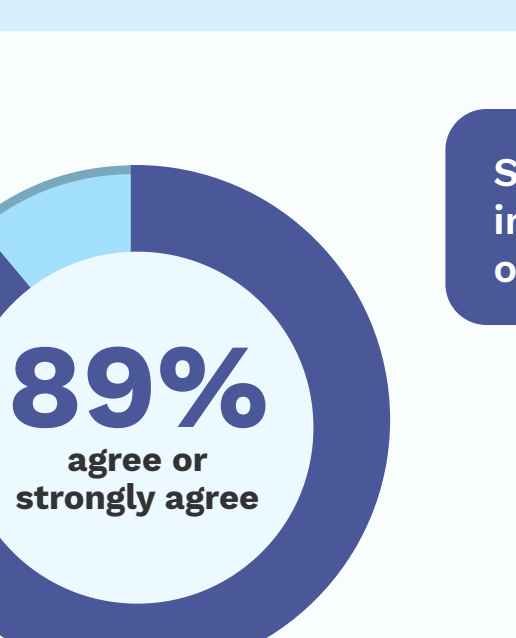
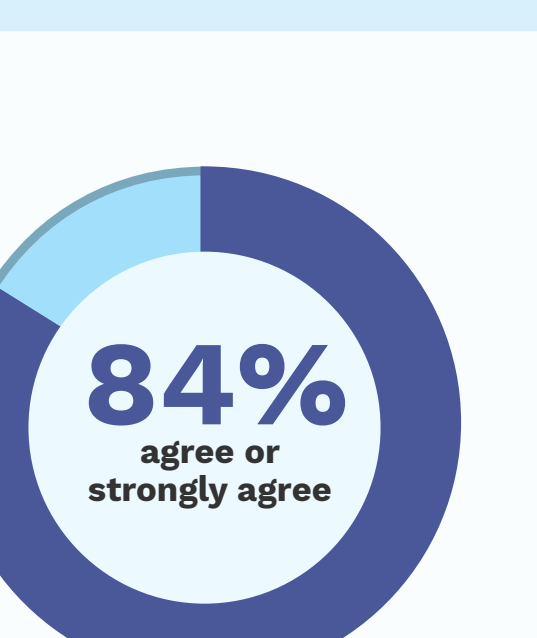
Mitigate misinformation and rumors



Social in Service of the Mission

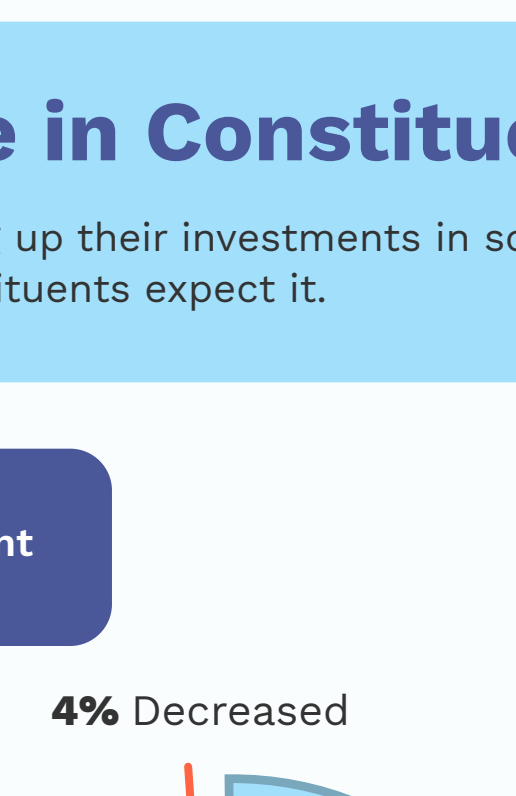
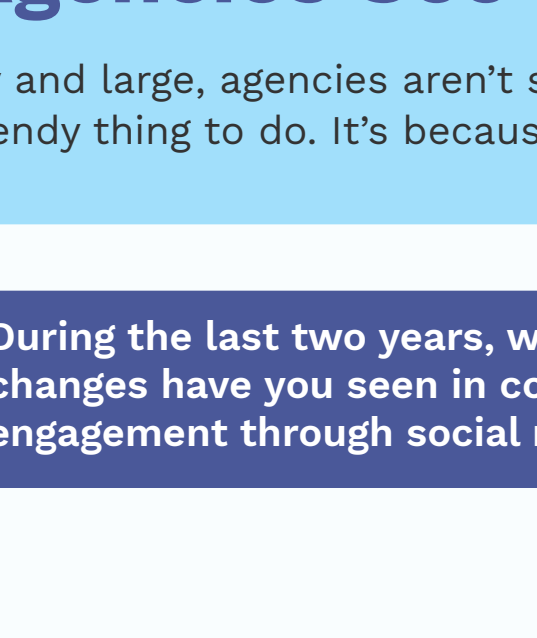
Social media has accelerated as an agency priority since 2018, with steady gains in the percentage of respondents who said...

My agency has a clear plan on how to use social media to advance our mission.

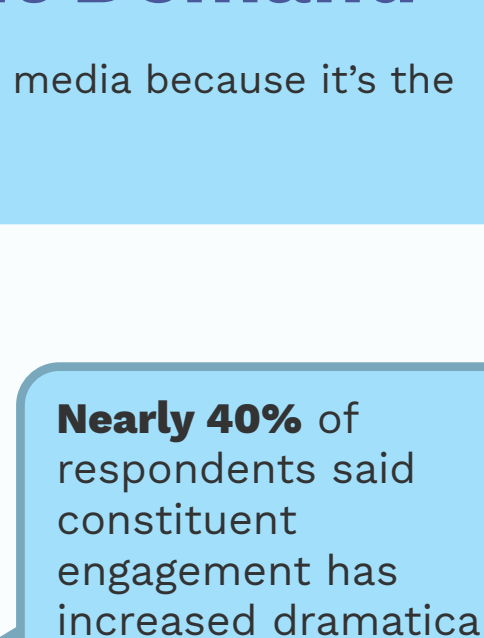


...And...

84% agree or strongly agree



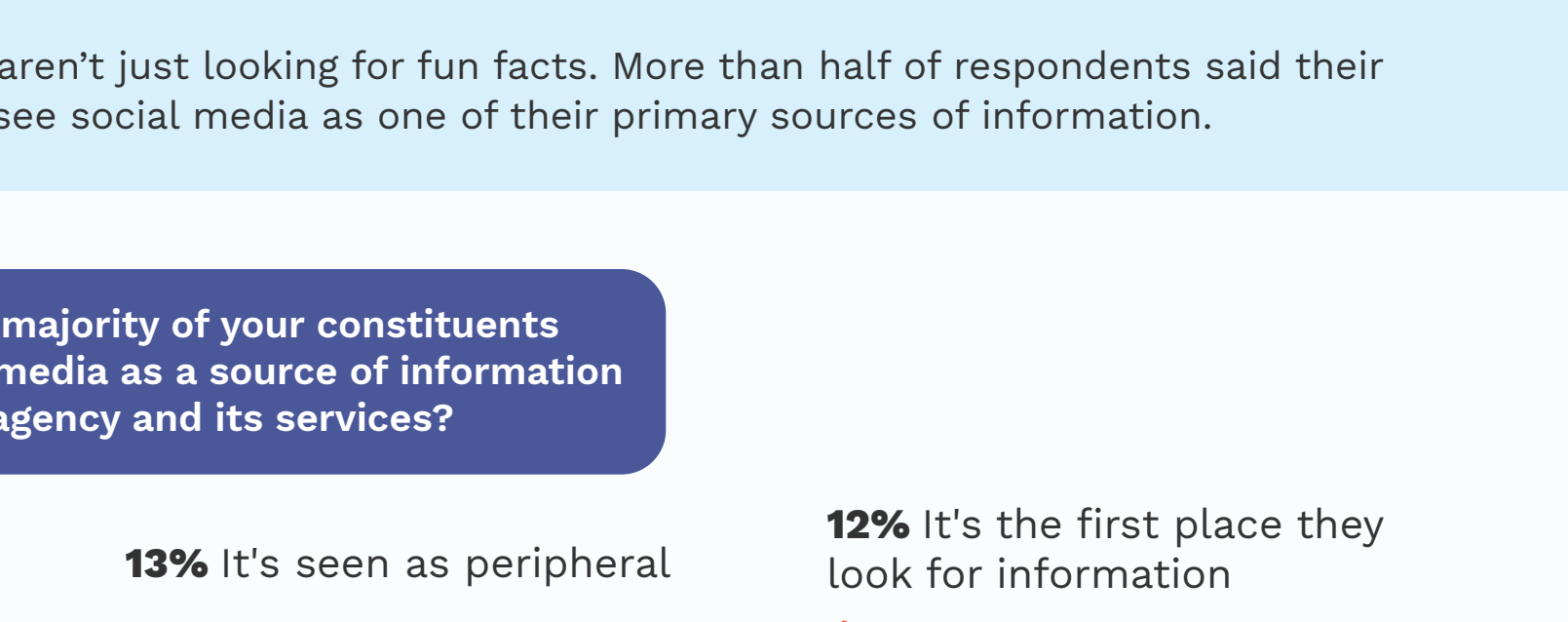
Social media has become more important to our organization over the past year.



Agencies See Rise in Constituent Demand

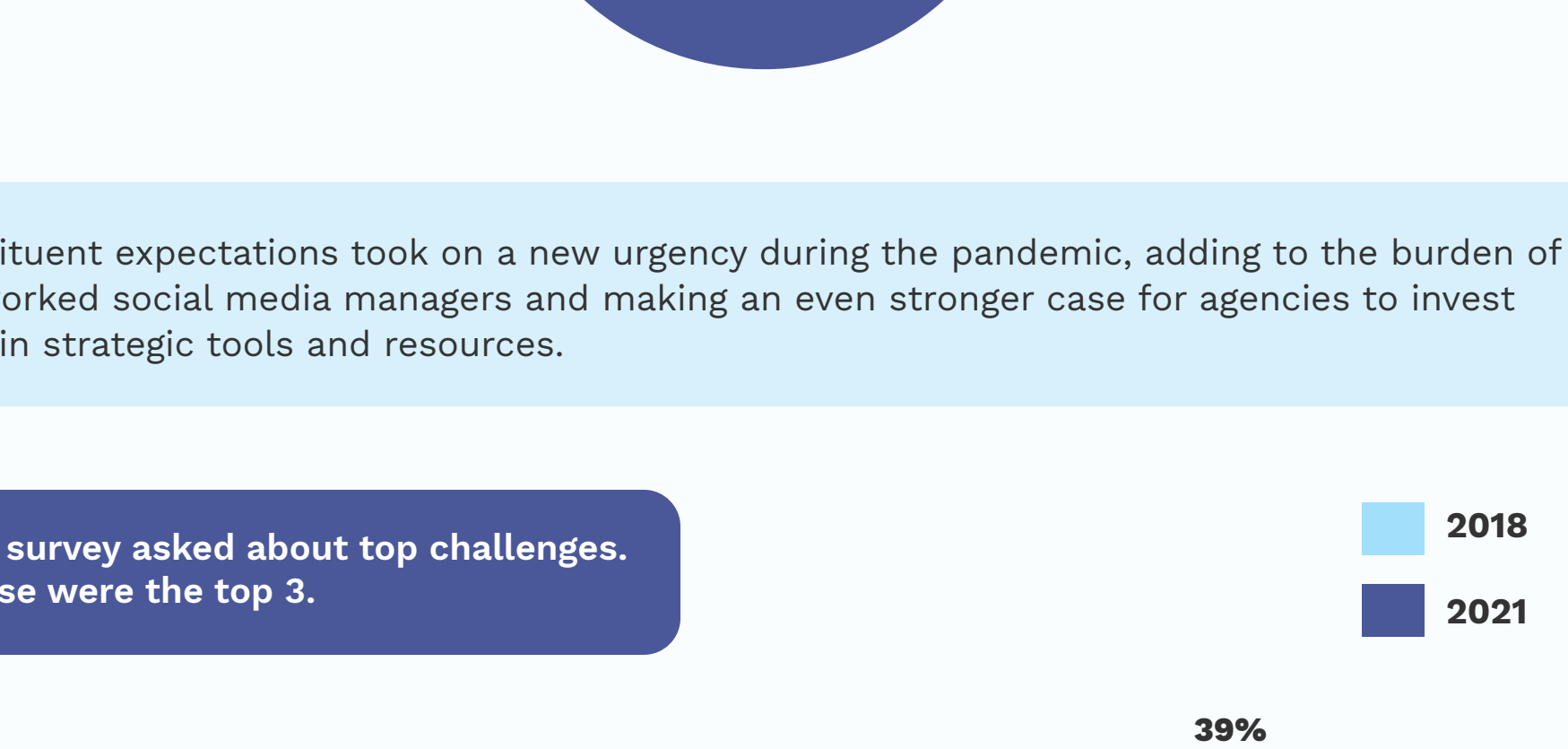
By and large, agencies aren't stepping up their investments in social media because it's the trendy thing to do. It's because constituents expect it.

During the last two years, what changes have you seen in constituent engagement through social media?



Constituents aren't just looking for fun facts. More than half of respondents said their constituents see social media as one of their primary sources of information.

How do the majority of your constituents view social media as a source of information about your agency and its services?



Constituent expectations took on a new urgency during the pandemic, adding to the burden of overworked social media managers and making an even stronger case for agencies to invest more in strategic tools and resources.

Our survey asked about top challenges. These were the top 3.



This demand creates an opportunity. Agencies can use social media to strengthen their "brand" in the communities they serve. It's not just about broadcasting updates, it's about building trust.



Build and manage your brand with constituents is an important agency goal.



Constituents have made it clear that they expect government services through social media. Social media managers have risen to this challenge, but many struggle with a lack of resources and visibility across departments.

Leaders need to ensure that their agencies can respond to the digital needs of the community – supporting their teams in mitigating online misinformation, unlocking access to constituent services, and ensuring smooth communications, both in the midst of a crisis and in daily life.

To learn more about how to leverage social media to engage with your constituents, deliver more effective services and manage conversations across different channels seamlessly, visit www.hootsuite.com/industries/government.