

@VADOTNOVA'S MEEMAW: WHEN A DOT DOESN'T HAVE TO STAY IN ITS LANE

2022 Virginia Highway Safety Summit

 Ellen Kamilakis, Assistant District Administrator for Communications

May 5, 2022

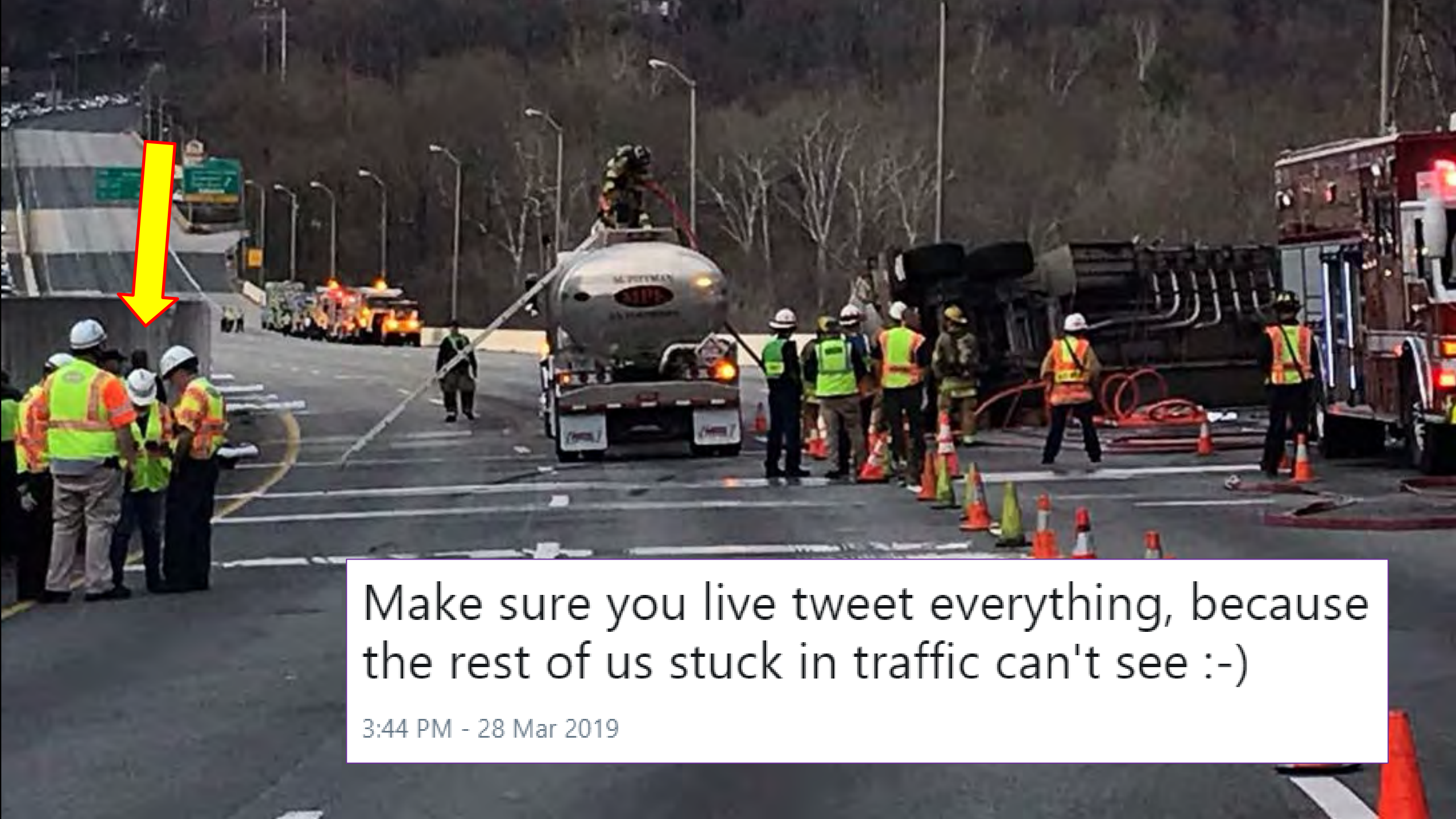


SOUTH
495
Capital Beltway
Alexandria
Richmond

EXITS 43-44
Geo Wash Mem Pkwy
Washington
193
Georgetown Pike
EXIT ONLY

SPEED REDUCED BY
WIND AND OTHER
ELECTRICAL SERVICES

dar



Make sure you live tweet everything, because the rest of us stuck in traffic can't see :-)

3:44 PM - 28 Mar 2019

VDOT Northern Virginia on Twitter

- Reputation for being kind, inclusive, helpful, funny, empathetic, original content, gifs
- Daily two-way dialogue, frequent live-tweeting of weather emergencies, interstate incidents, impactful events
- Increased credibility and agency perception



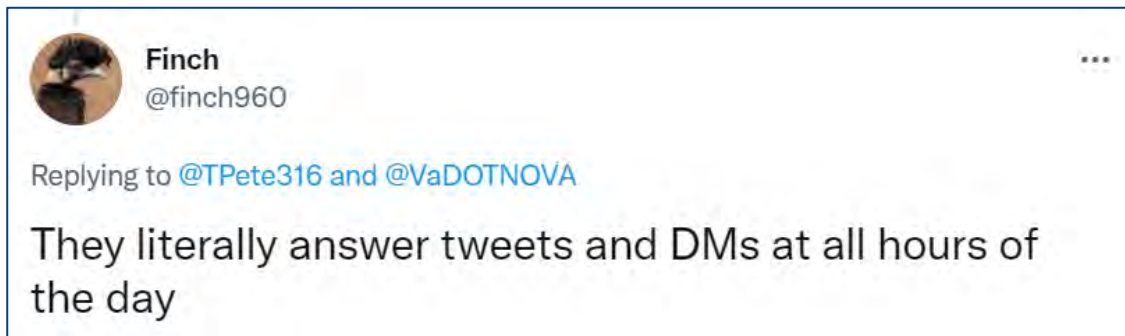
Why Do People Use Social Media


- **High-frequency social media users are more inclined to have poorer mental health.**
- **Conversely, people with better mental health seek and find more joy, distraction, recreation, and relaxation with their use of social media.**



Why Do People Use Social Media

- Research has shown that the closer the relationship, the more different types of exchanges are maintained and the more important these exchanges are for the individuals.
- Leaders and core participants can seed a network by altruistic or proactive use that, initially, provides more benefit to others than they receive in return.



 **Finch**
@finch960

Replying to @TPete316 and @VaDOTNOVA

They literally answer tweets and DMs at all hours of the day



 **244 SRtwofourfour**
@SRtwofourfour

Replying to @HelmersCaroline and @VaDOTNOVA

She remembered and referenced a random tweet I did 2 years ago once

What's With the Old Lady?

- Clearly older than the stereotype of the “zoomer social media intern”
- Pre-emptive tongue-in-cheek acknowledgement of “for your own good” content that was not directly about transportation
- MeeMaw Nag was born



VDOT Northern VA 🤔🔵
@VaDOTNOVA

Not sure how to answer this... ummm Gen X.



 Lyn Harris @lyn_va · Jan 28

Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

How old are you? 🤔

So How Do You Do It?

- **Be yourself– people gravitate to what they can relate to. Don't hesitate to be vulnerable.**
- **Use imagery– tweets do better with accompanying videos, gifs, or memes. Action and emotion within the image can be used as subtext.**
- **Community building can happen around the clock.**
- **Be prepared for the meanies.**



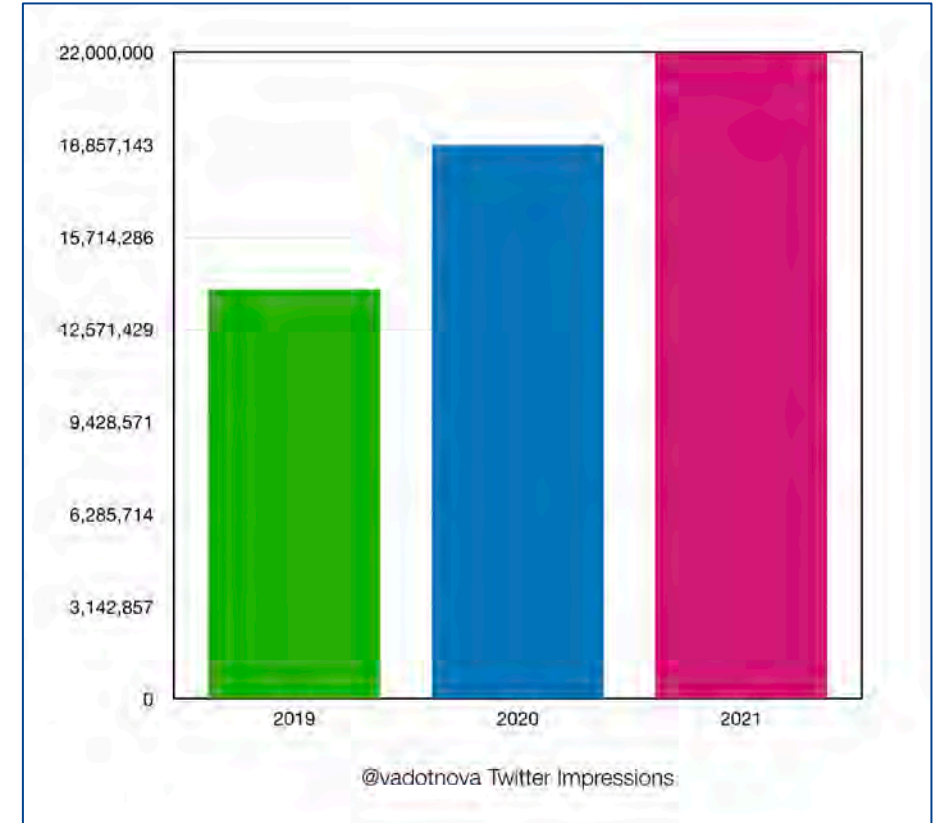
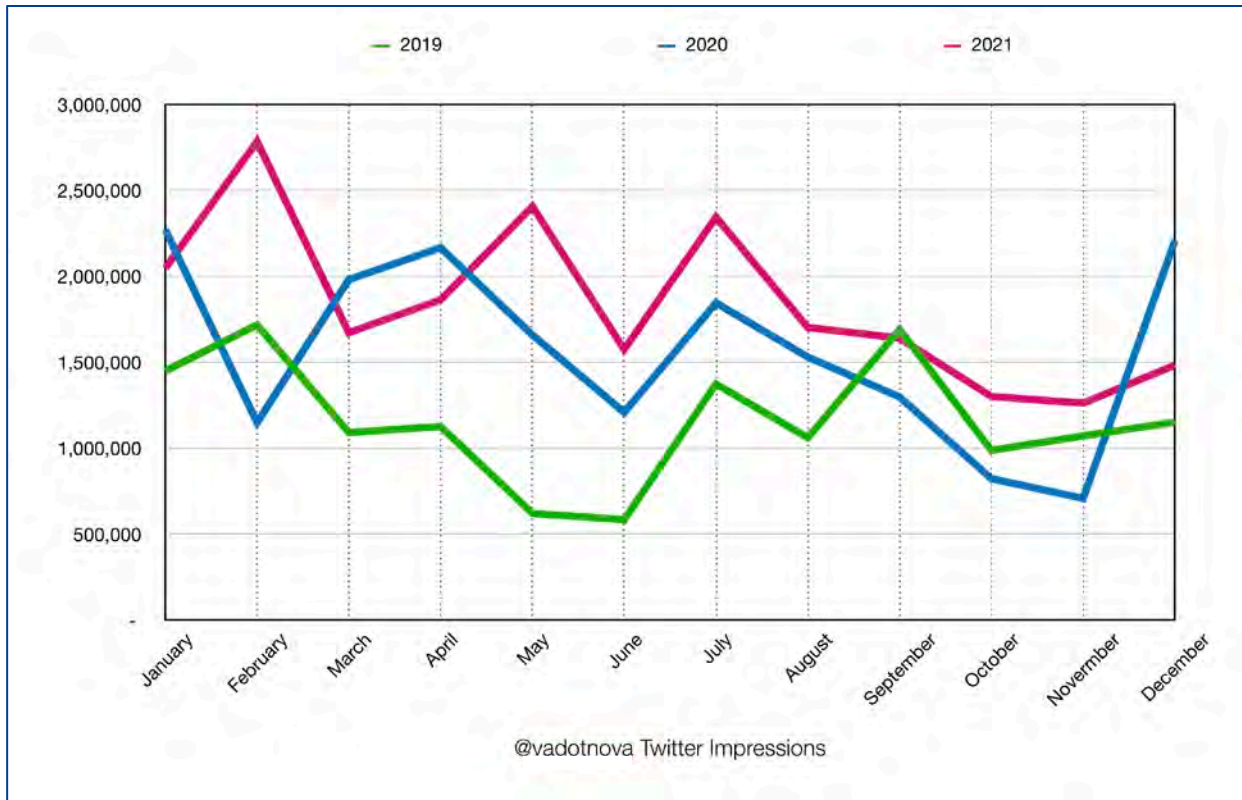
What Matters on Social Media

- **People first**
- **Be transparent**
- **Cut people slack – baseline stress**
- **Validate all community members**
- **Be a relatable human**
- **Build trust**
- **Make MeeMaw proud**
- **Laughter**



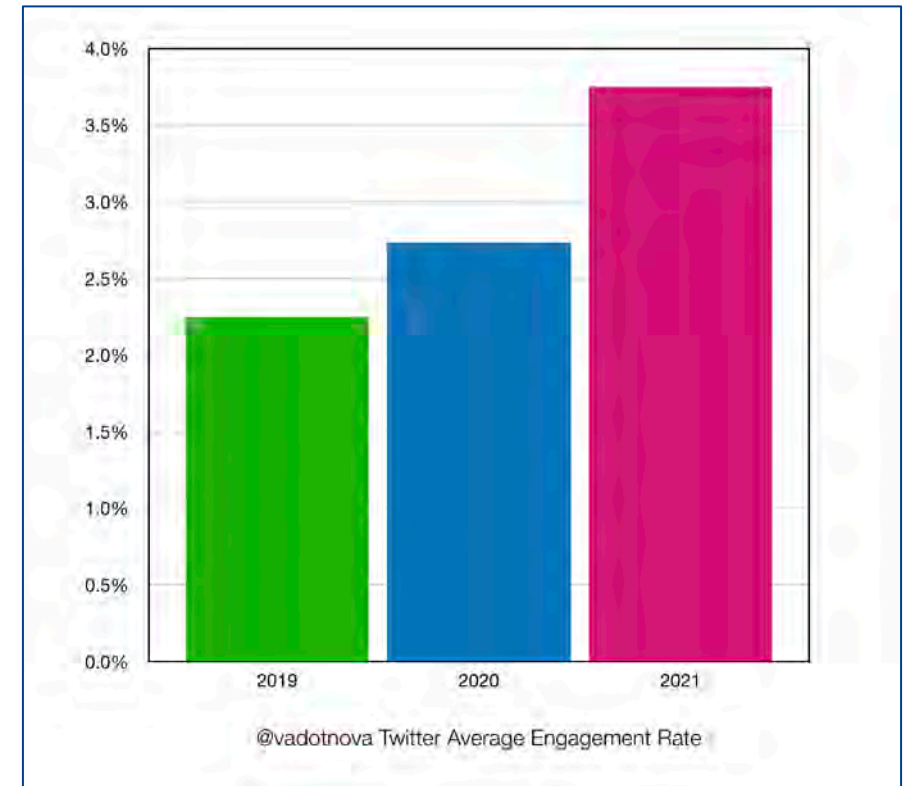
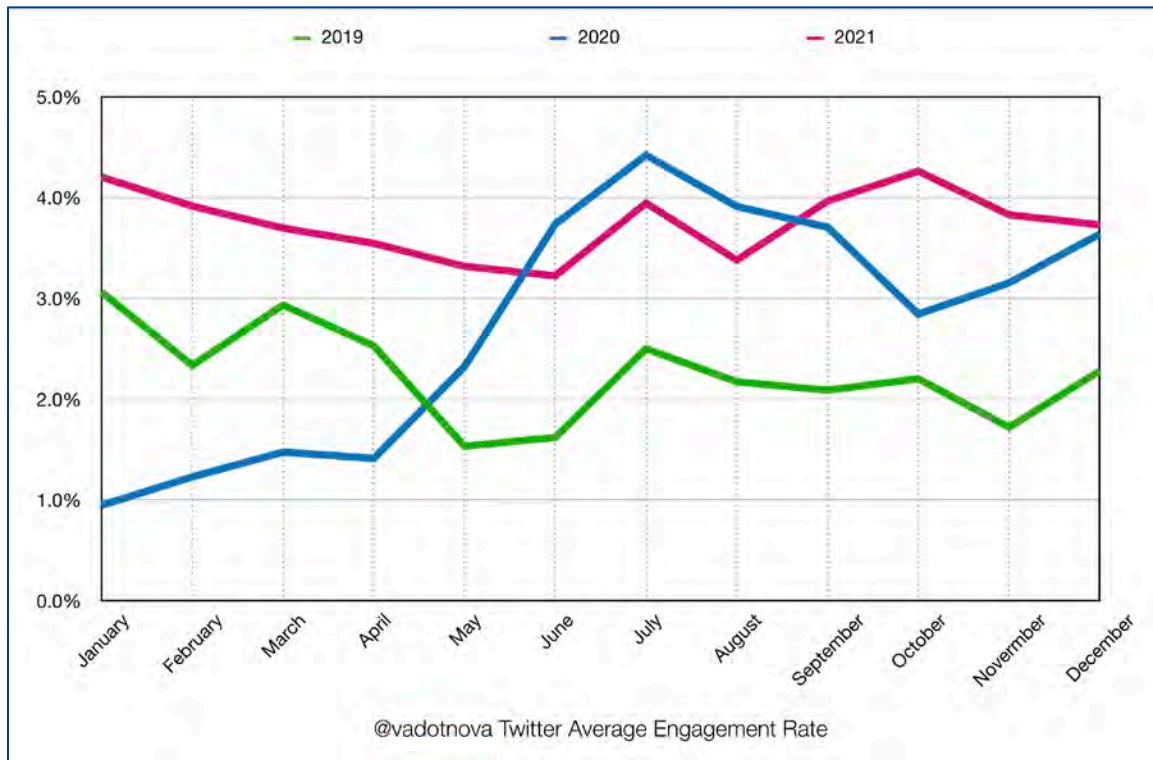
Results: Impressions

Impressions = total number of times a tweet is seen



Results: Engagement rate

Engagement rate = total engagements / impressions



Remember,
community
building can take
a while. Don't
give up— you'll
get there!

GeeCee @geekchick · Jul 12, 2021
I am very happy for you and not jealous at all.

VDOT Northern VA @VaDOTNOVA · Jul 12, 2021
To all the government social media managers out there, I've finally reached the pinnacle. 🙌

US Consumer Product Safety Commission and 13 others followed you

VDOT Northern VA @VaDOTNOVA · Jul 12, 2021
Don't worry, you'll get there. I am still holding out hope that someday @steak_umm will notice me.

Steak-umm @steak_umm · Jul 12, 2021
the day has come

