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Social Media Survey Experiment

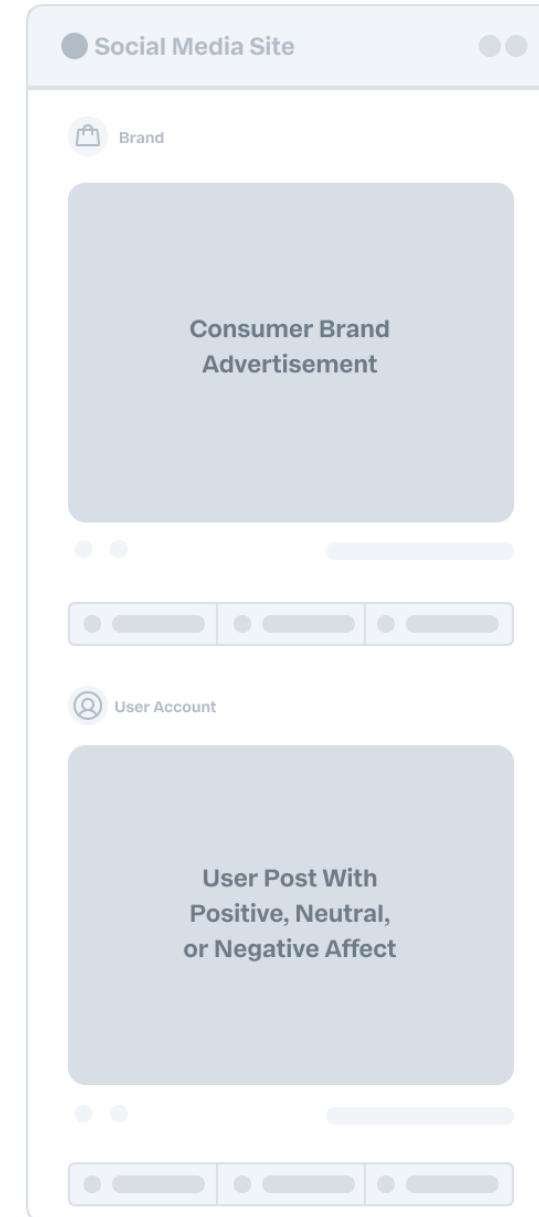MARCH 2023

Survey Experiment Design & Methodology

Experiment Design

Survey respondents were randomly shown a negative, positive, or neutral social media post accompanied by the same brand advertisement across each treatment - the social media platform that the random post and advertisement was displayed on was also randomized for each respondent. Respondents were then asked the following questions:

1. Favorability of brand(s) – Pre (Before any treatments)

2. Association of the type of post with branded ad

3. Impact of the type of post on likeness of branded ad

4. Association of the type of post with platform

5. Impact of the type of post on likeness of platform

6. Action taken toward the type of post

7. Favorability of brand - Post

8. Favorability of platform

9. Purchasing consideration toward branded ad

Methodology

This poll was conducted between March 10-March 14, 2023 among a sample of 2,235 Adults. The interviews were conducted online and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of Adults based on age, gender, race, educational attainment, region, gender by age, and race by educational attainment. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points. Margin of error will be higher in each individual (9) treatment group.

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Social Media Site

Brand

Consumer Brand
Advertisement

User Account

User Post With
Positive, Neutral,
or Negative Affect

Key Takeaways

1 Any "must carry" policy requiring a digital intermediary to carry third-party content considered objectionable by many users would associate the intermediary and advertisers on the intermediary with such objectionable content. This risks damaging the intermediary's brand, damaging advertisers' brands, and reducing the value of advertisements on the intermediary to potential advertisers.

- The tone of content displayed on intermediaries has a direct impact on the likelihood of users buying products from the branded ad shown; objectionable content makes users say they are less likely to buy a product from the branded ad.

2 Digital intermediaries have rational incentives to moderate content on their platforms. Not all content adds value, and not all engagement adds value.

- Users are more likely to report a branded ad adjacent to objectionable content; while users are more likely to comment / react to or click a branded ad adjacent to positive or neutral toned content.

- Users are more likely to say that after seeing objectionable content, they like the intermediary that the content was displayed on less.

Impact on Branded Ad

Positive, and even neutral posts, are more likely to be associated with the branded ad than negative posts; across all platforms tested.

Thinking about the above post – the one below the ad – do you associate this type of post with [ADVERTISER BRAND]?

■ Yes, I associate this type of post with [ADVERTISER BRAND]   ■ No, I do not associate this type of post with [ADVERTISER BRAND]   ■ Don't know/no opinion

Saw a Negative Post	24%	67%	9%
Saw a Positive Post	37%	50%	13%
Saw a Neutral Post	38%	46%	16%

Negative posts have a negative effect on likeability for branded ads; across all platforms tested.

Which of the following best describes how this type of post – the one below the ad – makes you feel about [ADVERTISER BRAND]?

- It makes me like [ADVERTISER BRAND] more
- It makes me like [ADVERTISER BRAND] less
- It does not affect how I feel about [ADVERTISER BRAND]
- Don't know/no opinion

	It makes me like more	It does not affect	It makes me like less	Don't know/no opinion
Saw a Negative Post	12%	56%	20%	11%
Saw a Positive Post	20%	68%	4%	8%
Saw a Neutral Post	22%	62%	3%	12%

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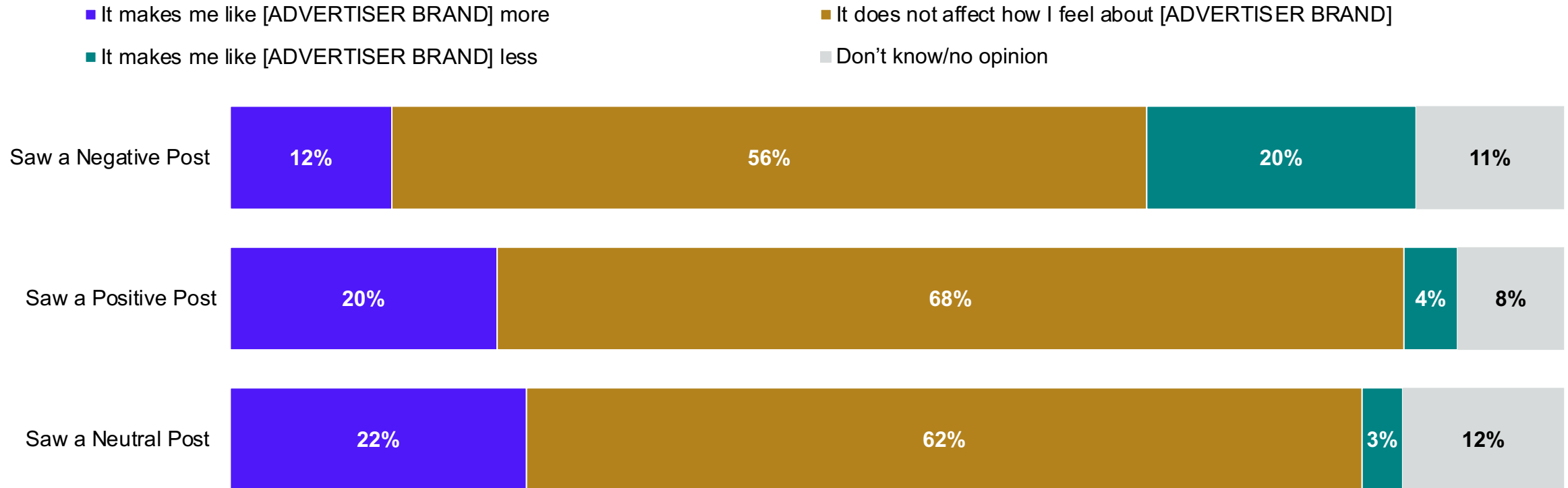
The tone of social media posts have an impact on how respondents will respond to branded ads; regardless of platform.

Which of the following comes closest to what you would do in response to seeing this ad above this type of social media post? Please select just one option.

■ Keep scrolling ■ React or comment on the ad ■ Hide the ad ■ Report the ad ■ Click the ad ■ None of these ■ Don't know/no opinion

Saw a Negative post
38% | 7% | 8% | 20% | 9% | 11% | 7%

Saw a Positive Post
56% | 10% | | 14% | 11% | 6%

Saw a Neutral Post
53% | 9% | 4% | | 12% | 12% | 10%

MORNING CONSULT®   *Value for "Report the ad" in aggregated treatment group "Saw a Positive Post" is 0%*   7
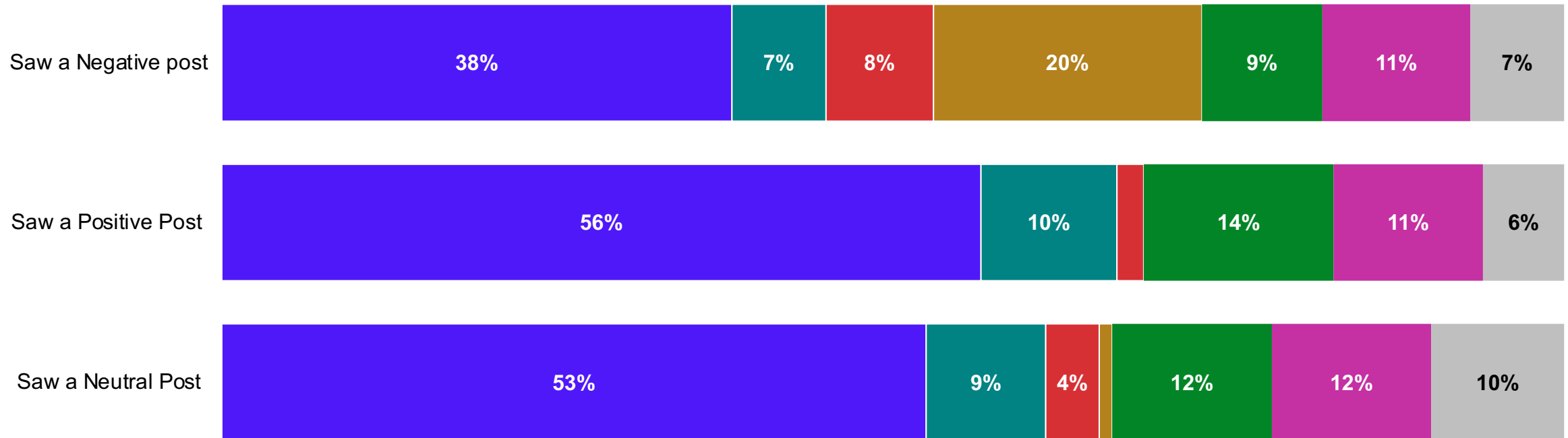
The tone of social media posts have an impact on the purchasing considerations toward the branded ads shown; regardless of platform.

When thinking about this type of social media post – the one below the ad – does this type of post make you more or less likely to purchase a product from [ADVERTISER BRAND]? Or does this type of post have no effect on your likelihood to buy a product from [ADVERTISER BRAND]?
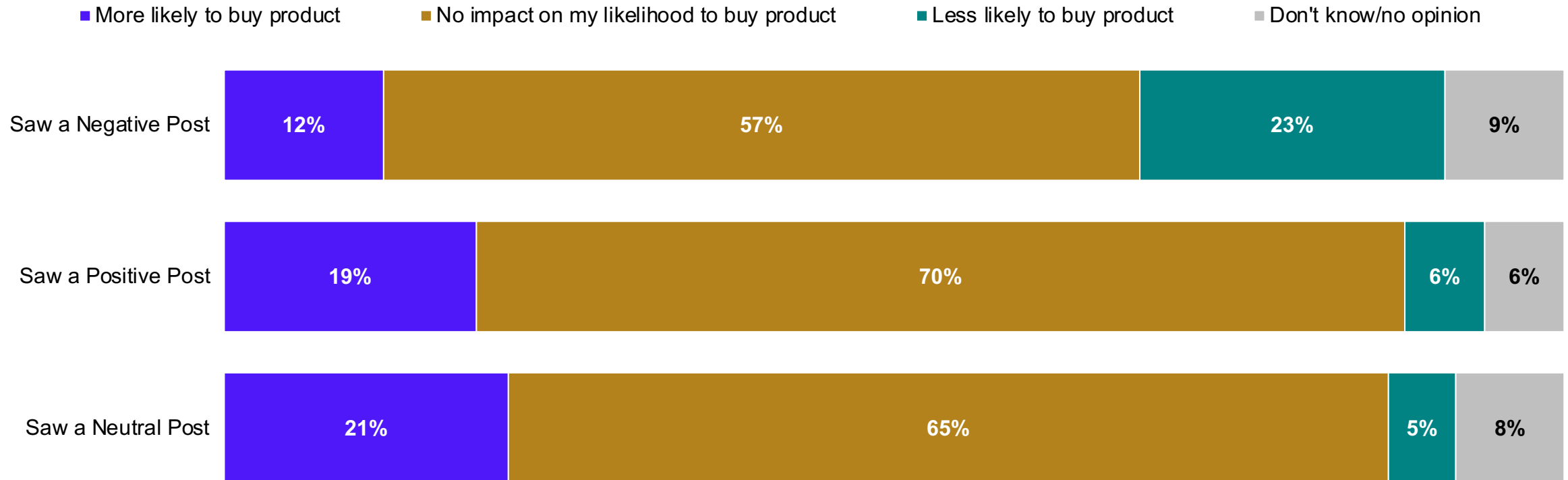
■ More likely to buy product   ■ No impact on my likelihood to buy product   ■ Less likely to buy product   ■ Don't know/no opinion

Saw a Negative Post	12%	57%	23%	9%
Saw a Positive Post	19%	70%	6%	6%
Saw a Neutral Post	21%	65%	5%	8%

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Negative posts have a negative effect on net favorability of the brand shown; regardless of platform.

Which of the following best describes your opinion of [ADVERTISER BRAND]?*

— Total Favorable (Very + Somewhat)

— Total Unfavorable (Very + Somewhat)

Saw a Negative Post

78% → 59%

4% → 13%

Pre | Post

Net Pre: +74 | Net Post: +46 | Net Change: -28

Saw a Positive Post

76% → 68%

4% → 5%

Pre | Post

Net Pre: +72 | Net Post: +63 | Net Change: -9

Saw a Neutral Post

77% → 71%

4% → 3%

Pre | Post

Net Pre: +73 | Net Post: +68 | Net Change: -5

MORNING CONSULT®   *Question text reflects post favorability wording   9
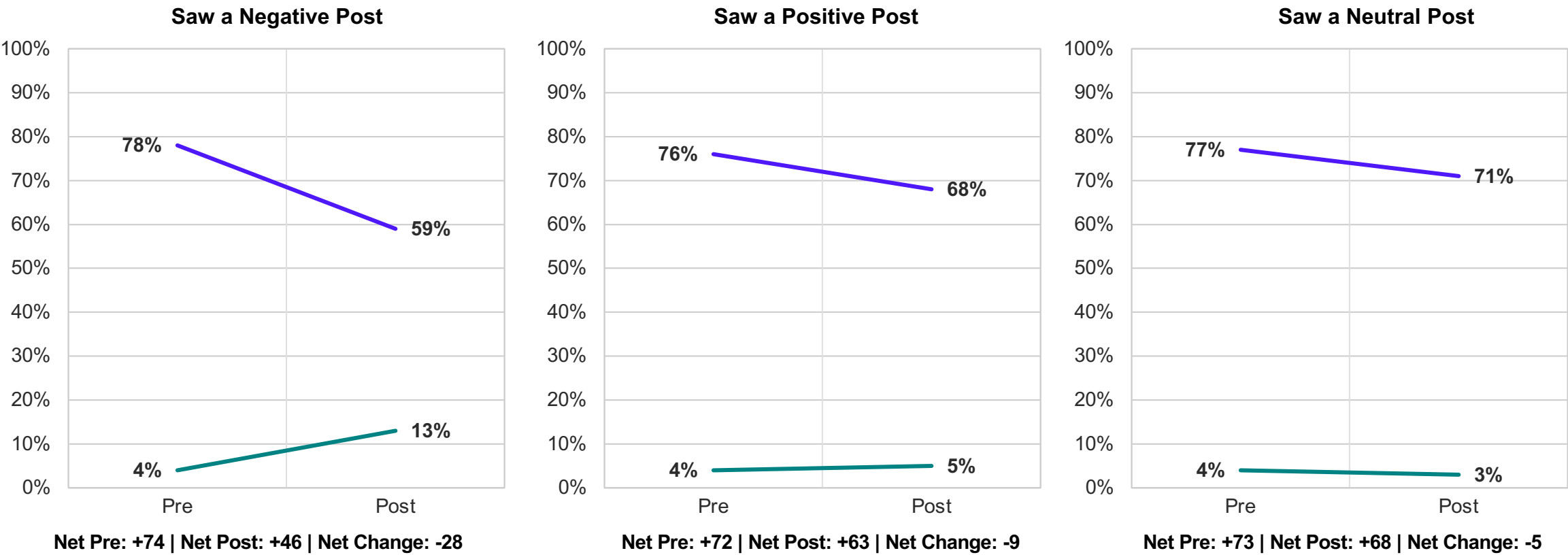
Negative posts have a negative effect on favorability of the brand shown; regardless of platform.

Which of the following best describes your opinion of [ADVERTISER BRAND]?**

- ■ Very favorable
- ■ Somewhat favorable
- ■ Neither favorable nor unfavorable
- ■ Somewhat unfavorable
- ■ Very unfavorable
- ■ Never heard of company or brand
- ■ Don't know/no opinion

	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Neither favorable nor unfavorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable	Don't know/no opinion
Saw a Negative post	30%	29%	22%	7%	6%	5%
Saw a Positive Post	38%	30%	23%	3%		5%
Saw a Neutral Post	37%	34%	19%			5%
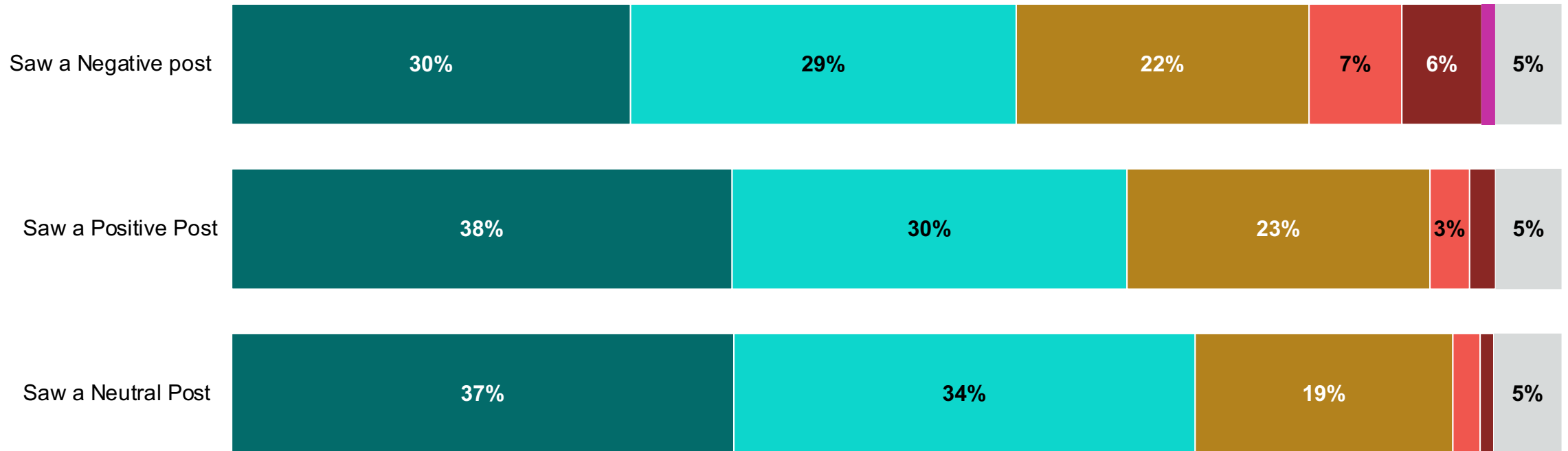
Impact on Platform

Negative posts have a negative effect on likeability for social media platforms; across all platforms tested.

Thinking again about this type of post – the one below the ad – which of the following best describes how this type of post makes you feel about [PLATFORM]?

- It makes me like [PLATFORM] more
- It does not affect how I feel about [PLATFORM]
- It makes me like [PLATFORM] less
- Don't know/no opinion

	More	Does not affect	Less	Don't know
Saw a Negative Post on Facebook	12%	39%	35%	15%
Saw a Positive Post on Facebook	16%	66%	4%	14%
Saw a Neutral Post on Facebook	15%	60%	9%	16%
Saw a Negative Post on Twitter	10%	39%	35%	16%
Saw a Positive Post on Twitter	11%	61%	10%	19%
Saw a Neutral Post on Twitter	14%	57%	6%	23%
Saw a Negative Post on Instagram	9%	40%	40%	11%
Saw a Positive Post on Instagram	19%	61%	5%	14%
Saw a Neutral Post on Instagram	14%	63%	6%	17%

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Positive posts are more likely to be associated with most tested social media platforms than negative posts.

Thinking about this type of post - the one below the ad – do you associate this type of post with [PLATFORM]?

■ Yes, I do associate this type of post with [PLATFORM]   ■ No, I do not associate this type of post with [PLATFORM]   ■ Don't know/no opinion

	Yes	No	Don't know
Saw a Negative Post on Facebook	35%	51%	14%
Saw a Positive Post on Facebook	60%	17%	23%
Saw a Neutral Post on Facebook	57%	23%	20%
Saw a Negative Post on Twitter	34%	39%	26%
Saw a Positive Post on Twitter	33%	36%	30%
Saw a Neutral Post on Twitter	37%	30%	33%
Saw a Negative Post on Instagram	30%	49%	21%
Saw a Positive Post on Instagram	43%	33%	24%
Saw a Neutral Post on Instagram	33%	30%	37%

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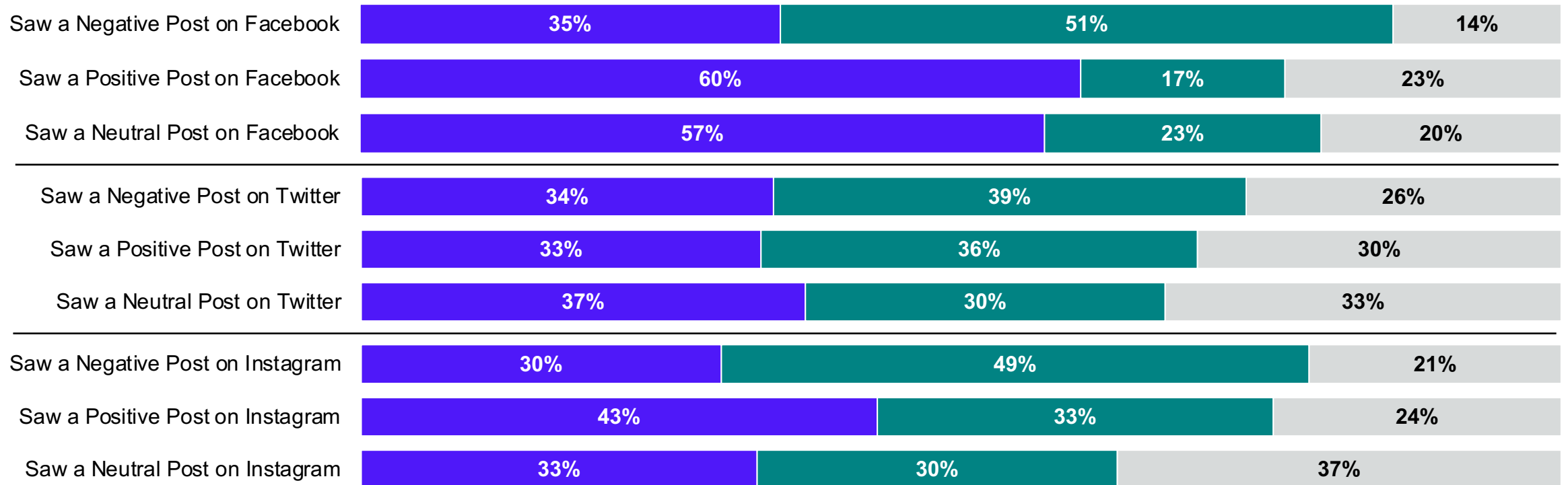
Negative posts have a negative effect on favorability of most tested social media platforms.

Which of the following best describes your opinion of [PLATFORM]?

- ■ Very favorable
- ■ Somewhat favorable
- ■ Neither favorable nor unfavorable
- ■ Somewhat unfavorable
- ■ Very unfavorable
- ■ Never heard of company or brand
- ■ Don't know/no opinion

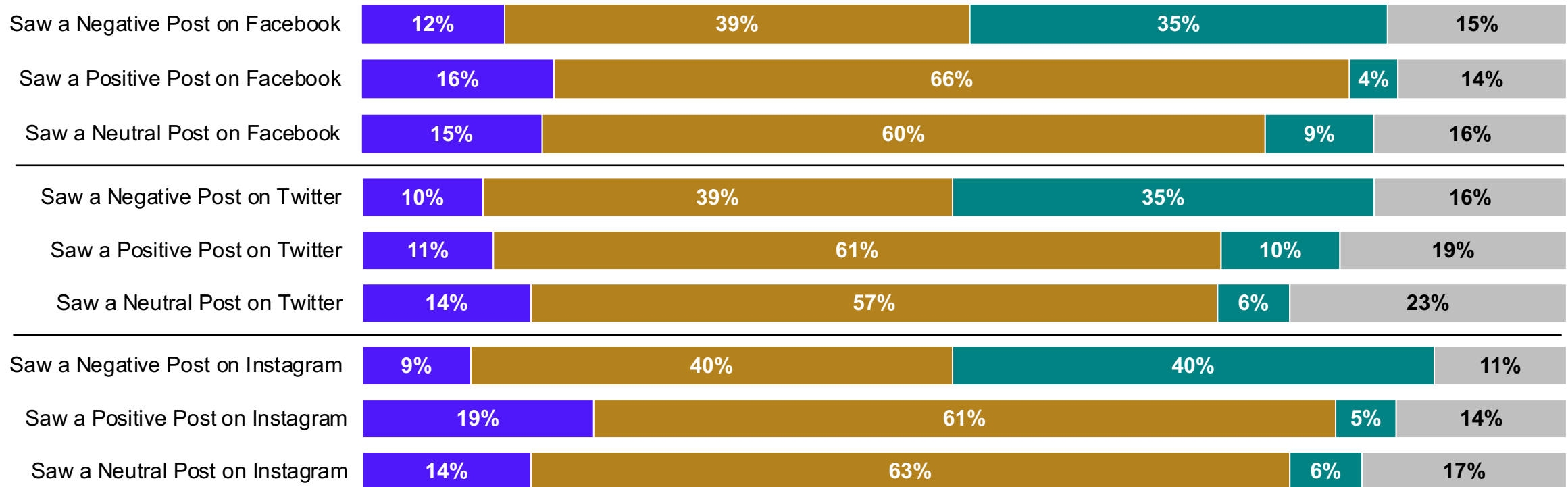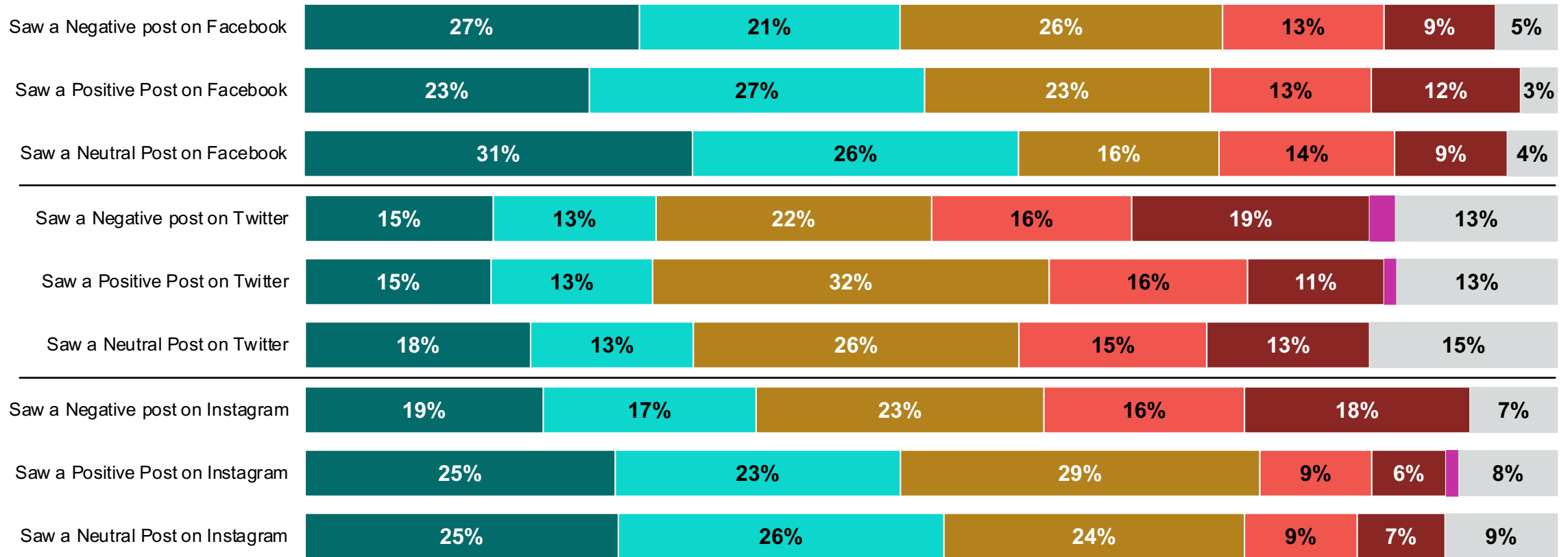|	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Neither favorable nor unfavorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable	Never heard	Don't know/no opinion
Saw a Negative post on Facebook	27%	21%	26%	13%	9%		5%
Saw a Positive Post on Facebook	23%	27%	23%	13%	12%		3%
Saw a Neutral Post on Facebook	31%	26%	16%	14%	9%		4%
Saw a Negative post on Twitter	15%	13%	22%	16%	19%	■	13%
Saw a Positive Post on Twitter	15%	13%	32%	16%	11%	■	13%
Saw a Neutral Post on Twitter	18%	13%	26%	15%	13%		15%
Saw a Negative post on Instagram	19%	17%	23%	16%	18%		7%
Saw a Positive Post on Instagram	25%	23%	29%	9%	6%	■	8%
Saw a Neutral Post on Instagram	25%	26%	24%	9%	7%		9%

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Value for "Never heard of company or brand" in select treatment groups is 0%
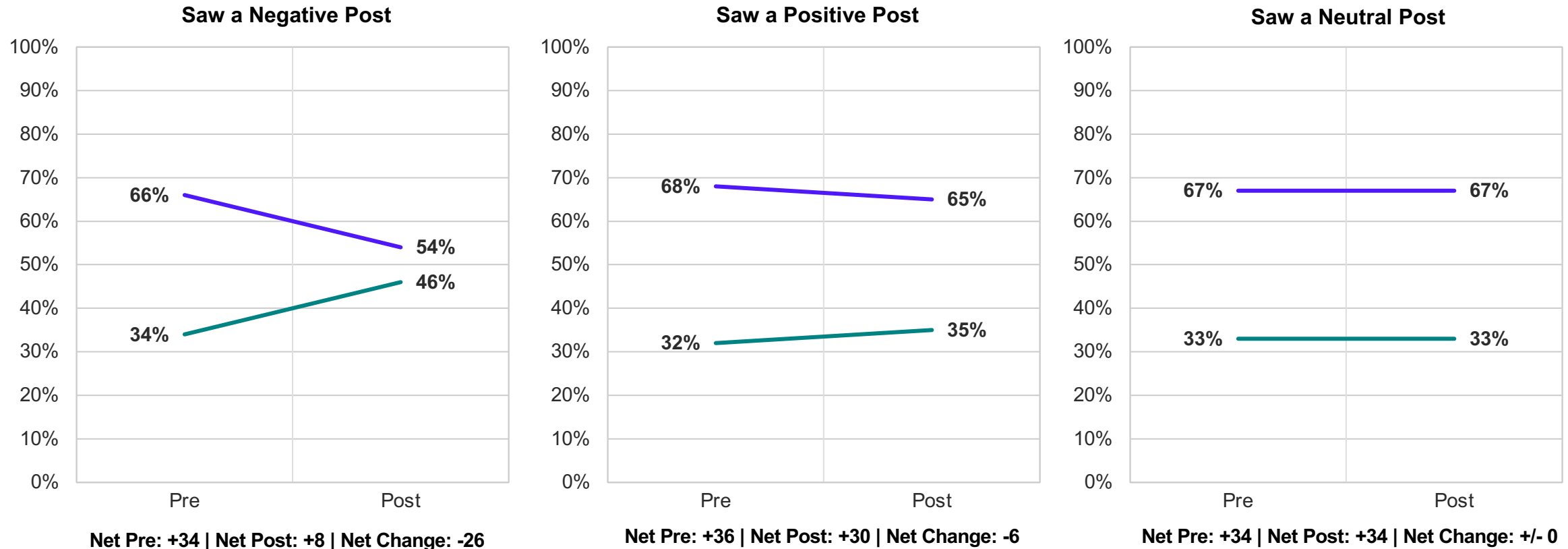
Negative posts have a negative effect on net favorability of the platform that they are displayed on.

Which of the following best describes your opinion of [PLATFORM]?*

— Total Favorable (Very + Somewhat)

— Total Unfavorable (Very + Somewhat)

Saw a Negative Post

66% → 54%
34% → 46%

Pre — Post

Net Pre: +34 | Net Post: +8 | Net Change: -26

Saw a Positive Post

68% → 65%
32% → 35%

Pre — Post

Net Pre: +36 | Net Post: +30 | Net Change: -6

Saw a Neutral Post

67% → 67%
33% → 33%

Pre — Post

Net Pre: +34 | Net Post: +34 | Net Change: +/- 0

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*Question text reflects post favorability wording **Aggregated social media platform favorability calculated by coalescing and binarizing individual social media brand favorability*

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