

CountryLiving

Balancing Data and Aesthetics to Engage New Audiences on Instagram

As the number of publications investing in creative resources on Instagram rises, it's increasingly paramount for publishers to carve out a unique voice to build an engaged community. Hearst UK's Country Living provides escapism for those whose hearts reside in the country. There's no better way to transport readers from their current reality to country bliss than with captivating images and video—and there's no better visual channel to do so than Instagram, but Country Living UK needed to better understand the types of photos and videos that would stop its online audience mid-scroll.

The Results

+45% New followers MoM

+242% Organic reach MoM

42% Lift in profile Views

2.38% Average post engagement



Visuals That Resonate

Country Living UK's feed is a vision of rustic farmhouses, quaint cottages, and the adorable creatures that roam picturesque rural landscapes. The publisher's top priority on Instagram is to share authentic content that lives and breathes the country and resonates with its online community. To strategically engage its followers, Country Living UK turned to Dash Social to uncover the visual styles that truly resonate with its audience.

Dash Social equips Country Living UK with actionable insights on each and every owned and earned photo—whether from its content library, a post on its feed, or community created imagery. Previously, the publisher solely relied on branding cues to fuel its image and video selection, but with Dash Social, Country Living UK uses data to optimize its content curation on Instagram, resulting in much higher engagement. The publisher uses Dash Social to dive deep into each of its content pillars to understand which types of visuals resonate with its unique audience, to outperform on the Instagram KPIs that matter most.

Data-Driven Campaign Creation

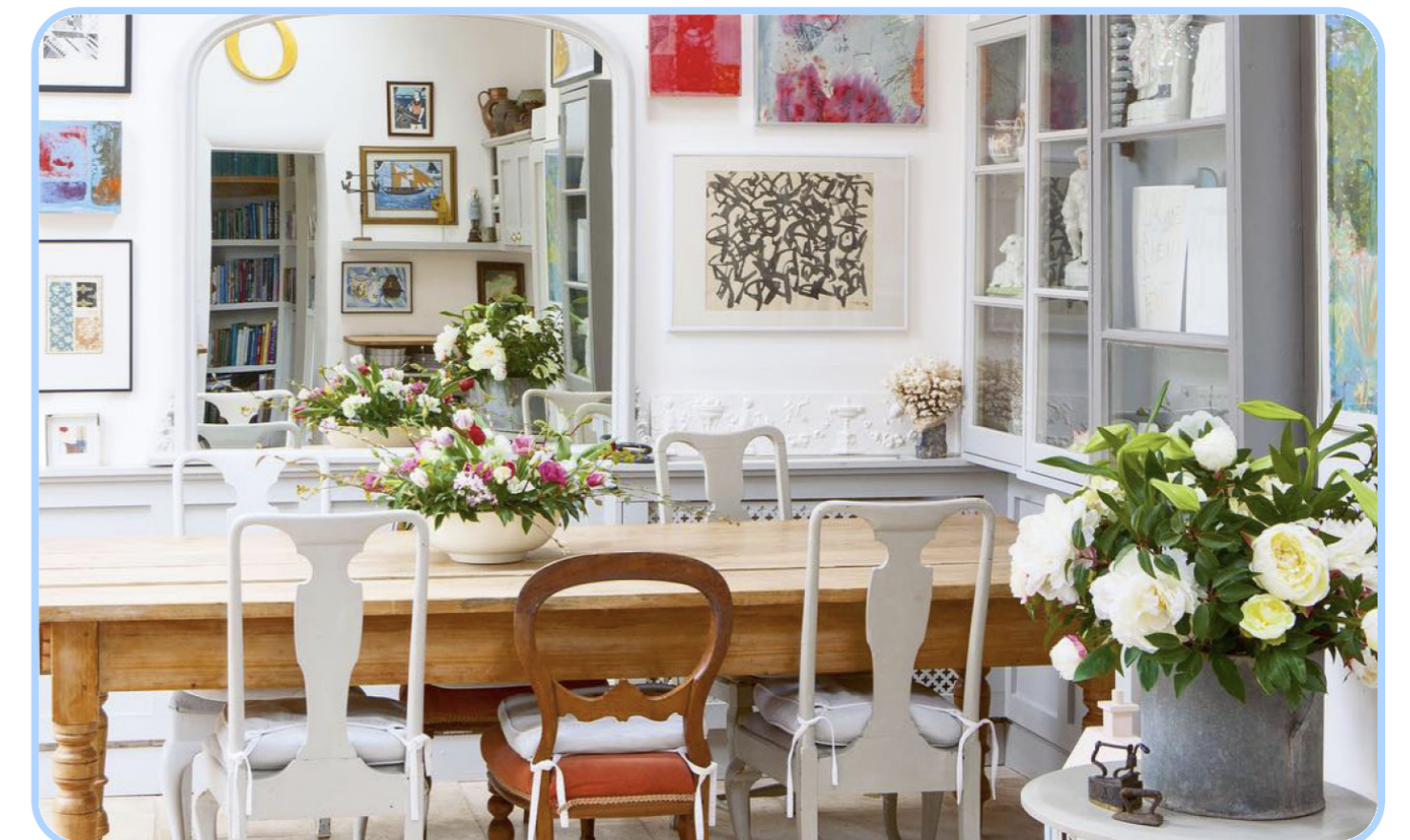
The Country Living UK team turned to Dash Social's content segmentation tool, Boards to compare performance across different styles of images. Boards empowers the social team to quickly identify trends and understand what type of visuals are making the most impact with their followers in real-time.

Boards automatically surfaces metrics for each of the magazine's unique content pillars, saving the team valuable time with reporting and decision-making, enabling optimization for engagement. It eliminates relying on gut instincts, tireless calculations, and spreadsheets, when choosing between coastal images and cozy brick bungalows, or British garden birds and foraging hedgehogs. Boards guarantees a feed full of visuals curated to Country Living UK's audience's unique tastes and preferences.

With Boards, Country Living UK discovered that one of its top performing categories was cottage content. This intel inspired the publisher to launch an entire social campaign called #CottageWeek. The team featured a beautiful cottage on their feed every day for a week, kicking its audience's getaway goals into high gear. The campaign outperformed all of the publisher's Instagram KPIs, including follower growth and engagement.

"Our posting cadence has remained consistent, so a lot of our growth can be attributed to being more strategic about the content we are posting. We use Boards to identify which content our user is really engaging with, and experimenting with new initiatives like Cottage Week and Castle Week."

*Emma-Louise Pritchard,
Digital Editor at Country Living UK*



Strategic Community Growth

Striking a balance between growing engagement and accelerating audience growth is no easy feat. With Dash Social, Country Living UK outperformed the industry standard—thanks to a data-driven approach to growth on Instagram.

With Dash Social's Instagram Insights, Country Living UK can measure follower growth at a granular level to identify which specific images and videos are generating the most audience growth from organic reach each day. The team is able to attribute performance to specific images and videos, and use this knowledge to fuel its follower growth. These insights are crucial to inform the publisher's Instagram strategy, and a key lever to unlocking audience development at Country Living UK.

"I love DH! It has revolutionised the way I look at and use Instagram. We previously had little to no analytics, but now I have a much stronger understanding of our followers. As a small team, it allows me to optimise my time to get the best results."

*Emma-Louise Pritchard,
Digital Editor at Country Living UK*

A Breath of Fresh Country Content

Country Living UK gives its audience a breath of fresh country air, regardless of their locale. Instagram serves as a medium to feed the publisher's readers the rustic living inspired content they know and love from the publication. While staying true to its niche brand voice, Country Living UK aimed to increase engagement and follower growth on the visual channel. With the help of Dash Social's insights, the social team strategically grew its audience, and inspired even more country escapists—all while delivering its audience the photos and videos that they care about most.



+36%

Follower growth in 6 months