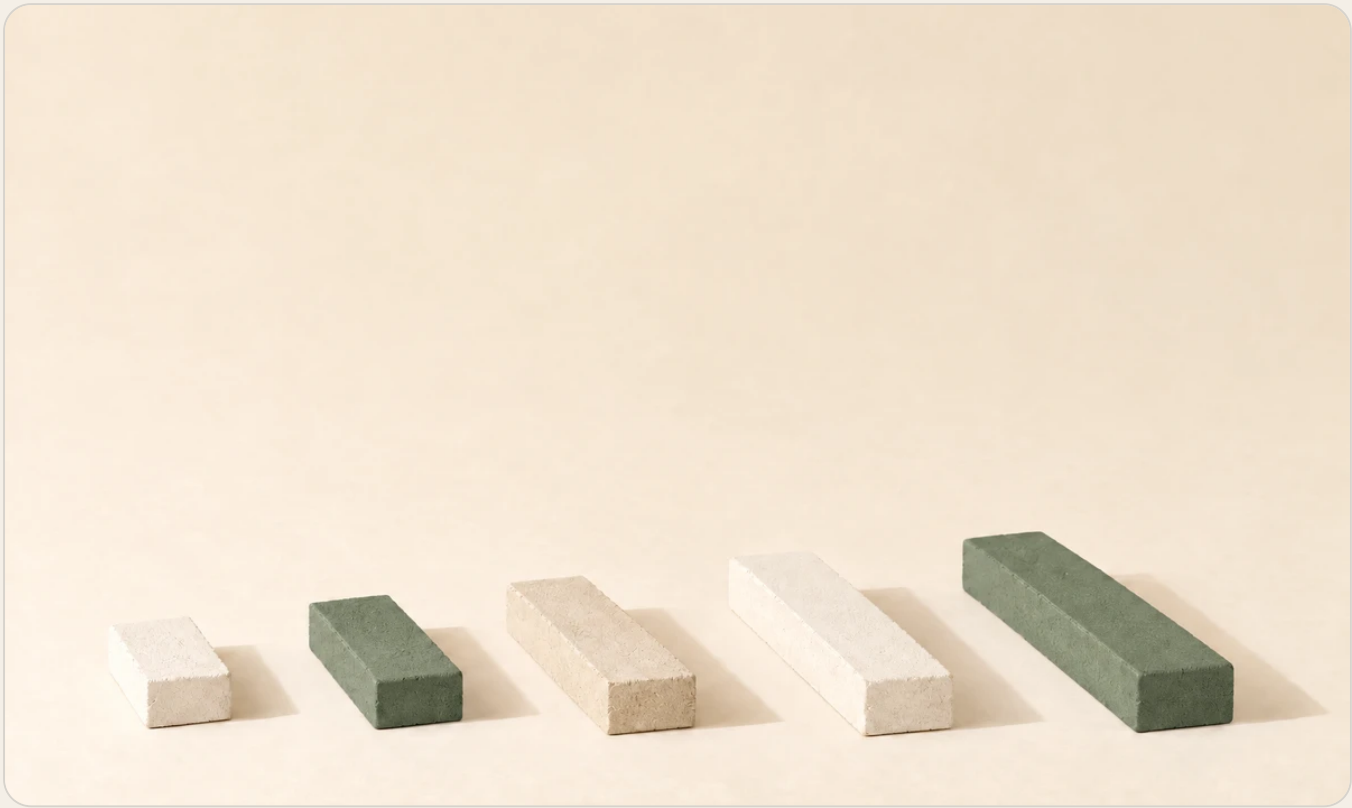


What analysing 51,696 LinkedIn posts taught us about caption length.

We analysed two years of LinkedIn company-page posts to find the right caption length. *It depends on what you attach.*



THE SWEET SPOT, BY ATTACHMENT

76–100 words PHOTO	101–125 words TEXT-ONLY	126–175 words PDF CAROUSEL	176–200 words VIDEO	176–200 words ARTICLE / LINK
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We split two years of posts into two clean populations.

We pulled every post published through Willow's platform between September 2024 and September 2026 — 158,602 posts across four platforms — and scoped this report to LinkedIn: 71,297 posts. For each one, we counted the caption's length in words (not characters — LinkedIn's own 3,000-character cap works out to a little over 500 words, and that's exactly where our longest posts top out) and matched it to how the post performed.

COMPANY PAGES

51,696

posts · 765 channels

LinkedIn exposes full analytics for these — impressions, shares, likes, comments. This is the population our consistency and followers research already used.

PERSONAL PROFILES

19,379

posts · 614 channels

LinkedIn's API only exposes likes and comments here, not impressions or shares. We verified the split is clean: no channel mixes both states.

WHAT WE LOOKED AT

- 01 Is there one caption length that wins, overall?
- 02 Does the answer change by attachment — photo, text, PDF, video, article?
- 03 On link posts specifically, do longer captions cost clicks or help them?
- 04 Do personal profiles follow the same pattern as company pages?
- 05 How close is what people actually write to what performs best?

Engagement plateaus for a hundred words. It doesn't peak once.

On company pages, median engagement holds flat at 9 across the entire 76–175 word range: a wide plateau, not a knife-edge peak. Below 50 words it falls off quickly. Past 200 words it steps down to a lower plateau around 6, and stays there, bumpy but essentially flat, all the way out to 400 words before the sample gets too thin to trust. Impressions (next page) tell a different story: one early, sharp peak instead of a wide one.

FIGURE 1 — MEDIAN ENGAGEMENT BY CAPTION LENGTH, COMPANY PAGES



Median engagement (likes + comments + shares) per 25-word band, company pages only, n = 51,696.

HOLDS ACROSS BOTH YEARS

Same shape in both 12-month halves: short and long posts underperform, the middle holds up. Engagement is the steadier of the two metrics year over year; impressions moved more (see next page).

THE LARGEST TIER ANCHORS IT

Pages posting 2x/week on average (144 channels, 21,963 posts, over 40% of this dataset) show the same 76–175 plateau on their own.

HOLDS UNDER THE MEAN TOO

The median peak (76–175, flat at 9) shifts one band later under the mean, to 101–125. Same wide plateau either way, not a median-only artifact.

Impressions peak once, sharply.

Engagement (previous page) is a wide plateau. Impressions aren't — median impressions peak at 76–100 words (352) and decline on both sides from there. But that peak isn't fixed over time: split by year, Y1 peaks sharply right at 76–100 (343) and falls off quickly after it, while Y2's curve is much flatter across the same range and its actual high point has moved out to 151–175 words (384) — the audience is rewarding longer captions than it did a year ago. There's a second pattern worth reading twice, not just glancing at: the very shortest captions (1–25 words, 221 median impressions) pull in almost exactly the same impressions as captions two to three times longer (201–250 words, ~218) — brief and genuinely long land you in the same place. It's the 76–175 word middle that actually wins.

FIGURE 2 — MEDIAN IMPRESSIONS BY CAPTION LENGTH, COMPANY PAGES



Median impressions per 25-word band, company pages only, n = 51,696.

THE LARGEST TIER AGREES

The same 144 channels posting 2x/week on average (21,963 posts) show the identical 76–100 peak on their own, just as they do for engagement.

HOLDS UNDER THE MEAN TOO

The median peak (76–100) shifts one band later under the mean, to 101–125 (1,071). Same early, sharp peak, just one band wide of it.

The right length depends on what you post with it.

Split the same posts by what's attached, and the ideal caption length changes with the format, from around 90 words for photo posts up to around 190 words for video and article posts, more than double. But "ideal" depends on what you're optimizing for. The figure below plots each format's best-performing band for engagement against its best-performing band for impressions, and the two don't always point to the same place.

FIGURE 3 — ENGAGEMENT PEAK VS. IMPRESSIONS PEAK, BY ATTACHMENT, 0–250 WORDS

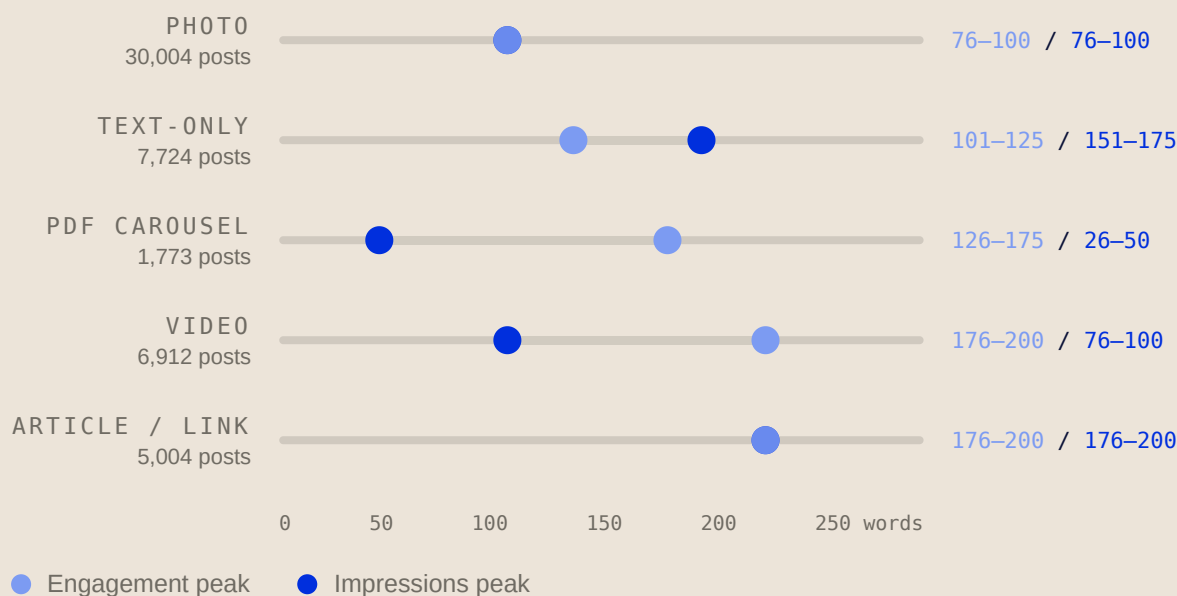
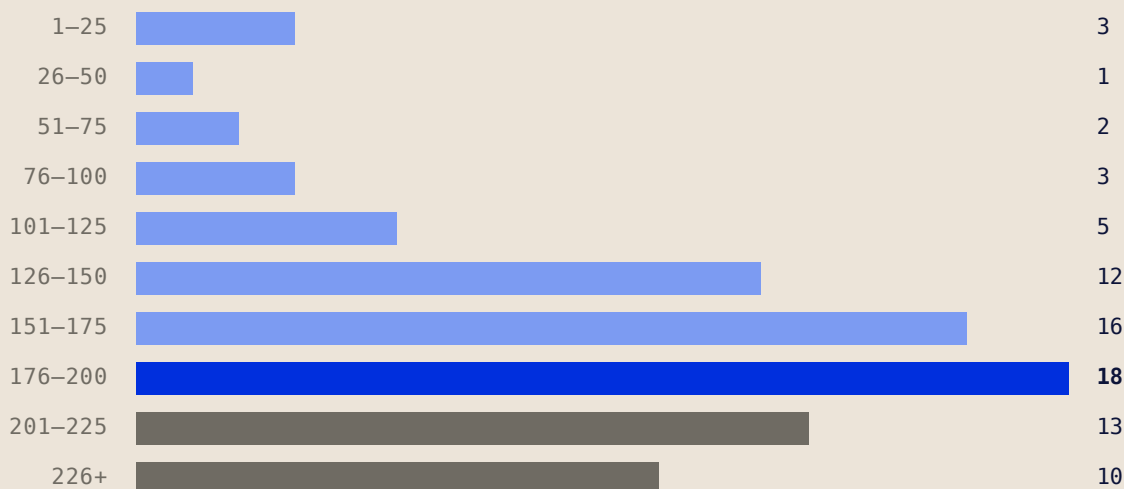


Photo and article/link are the only two formats where the dots overlap, engagement and impressions agree on the same band. PDF is the sharpest split: its best engagement comes from a long caption (126–175 words), but its best reach comes from a very short one (26–50 words, $n=244$, thin enough to treat as directional).

Sharing a link? A longer caption drives more clicks.

There's a long-running argument about whether a caption in front of an outbound link should be short or should build context first. Looking at clicks specifically, not just engagement: the very shortest captions, under 25 words, pull a small bump on their own. Clicks then dip through the 26–125 word range, before climbing steadily to a clear peak at 176–200 words. Past 225 words the data thins out fast, some 25-word bands there have fewer than 15 posts, so everything from 226 words on is bundled into one band rather than shown as noise; even pooled, it sits well below the peak. A short caption on a link post isn't being efficient. It's leaving clicks on the table, all the way out to 200 words.

FIGURE 4 — MEDIAN CLICKS BY CAPTION LENGTH, ARTICLE & LINK POSTS



Median clicks per 25-word band, article & link posts only, n = 5,004.

WILLOW

This entire page only exists because clicks are measurable in the first place. Willow tracks every link click automatically on posts you publish through it, no manual UTM tagging, so you can see directly in your own analytics whether a longer caption is actually paying off. [See how link tracking works.](#)

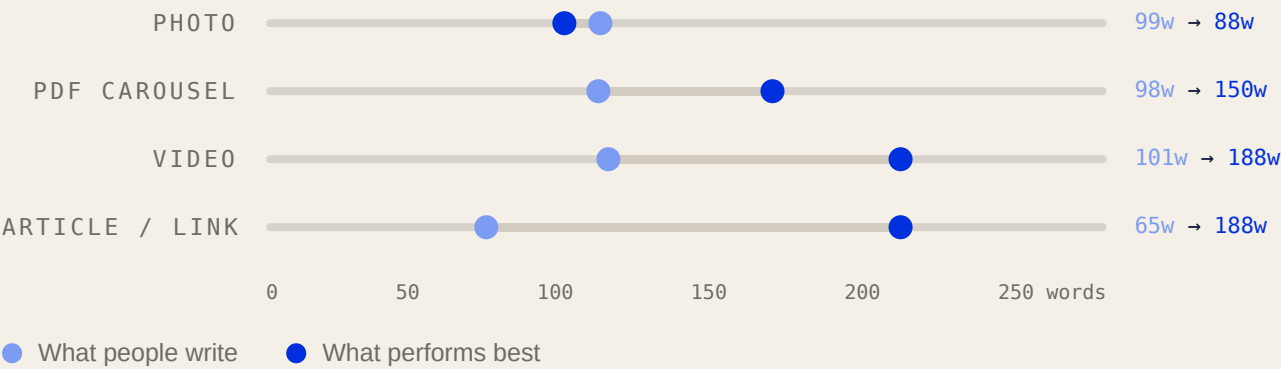
What people write doesn't always match what performs best.

We compared what people actually write against the length that performs best, using each format's own median caption length as the "actual" baseline. Photo is the one format already dialed in — people write photo captions almost exactly as long as the best-performing band. Everywhere else there's a real gap. The chart below plots both numbers on the same 0–250 word scale, so the size of each gap is easy to see at a glance; the table gives the exact figures behind it.

ATTACHMENT	ACTUAL MEDIAN	BEST BAND	GAP
Photo	92–106 words	76–100	Already well-calibrated
PDF / carousel	96–100 words	126–175	Moderate undershoot
Text-only	50 / 140 words	101–125	Company short, personal long
Video	94–108 words	176–200	Roughly half the optimal length
Article / link	58–72 words	176–200	Roughly a third of the optimal length

"Actual median" is each format's own median caption length, company and personal profiles combined; "Best band" is that format's highest-scoring 25-word band for engagement, first shown in Figure 3 on the previous page.

FIGURE 5 — WHAT PEOPLE WRITE VS. WHAT PERFORMS BEST, 0–250 WORDS



Personal profiles want more room than company pages.

LinkedIn's API only exposes likes and comments for personal profiles, not impressions or shares, so we compared both populations on that shared measure. Company pages land in the same place either way — a useful cross-check. Personal profiles don't. The biggest outlier is video: personal-profile video posts peak at a median engagement of 54 around 176–200 words, far above what any other length or format in this population manages.

COMPANY PAGES

76–100

words · peak median engagement 8

Same peak as Figure 1 — consistent regardless of which engagement measure is used.

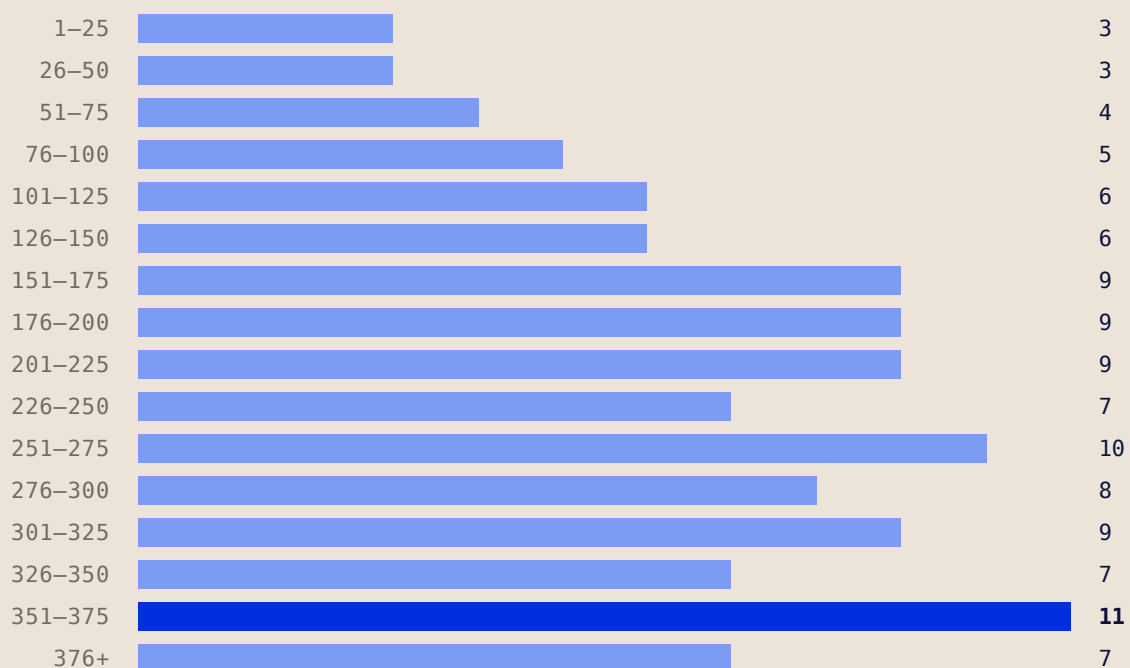
PERSONAL PROFILES

150–300

words · broad plateau, engagement 8–9

Holds up at a similar level all the way out past 375 words — bumpy, but with none of the collapse company pages show.

FIGURE 6 — MEDIAN ENGAGEMENT BY CAPTION LENGTH, PERSONAL PROFILES



Median engagement (likes + comments) per 25-word band, personal profiles only, n = 19,379.

IN SHORT

The right length depends on the post. What holds up doesn't depend on how you measure it.

There's no one right caption length on LinkedIn — the length that works depends entirely on what the post is attached to. Photo wants the least, at 76–100 words. Article and video want nearly double that, at 176–200. PDF and text-only sit in between, and personal profiles want more room across the board, especially on video. That range holds up whether you're looking at engagement or impressions, across both years of data, under the mean as well as the median, and inside the largest, most consistent posting tier on its own — this isn't a fragile pattern that happens to show up once.

The fastest fix for most pages isn't a new posting habit. It's writing a longer caption exactly when the post needs one: sharing a link, posting video, or writing from a personal profile. Photo posts are already close to right — leave those alone.

WILLOW

Willow drafts every post in your voice, already sized to the format it's going out with, a short line under a photo, a fuller caption behind a link. [Book a free demo](#) to see it on your own page.

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