



# CEO SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

BRANDFOG SURVEY 2020

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# The COVID-19 pandemic has presented many challenges for enterprise organizations across the globe.

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Supply chain disruption, shifting consumer demand, and managing remote teams have all presented their own unique challenges to senior executives worldwide. Business leaders have had to act quickly to protect the health and safety of their employees and customers. Where possible, business activities have been shifted online, and companies have found new ways to make the workplace safe for essential workers.

The current moment demands more of business leaders than at any time in recent memory. Perhaps the greatest challenge for leaders is learning how to manage in a constant state of uncertainty. Senior executives must communicate in a way that fosters hope, instills trust, and inspires resiliency. They need to reassure employees, customers, and community stakeholders that all will be well despite the fraught and fast-changing circumstances.

We launched our 2020 BRANDfog CEO Social Media Communications in the Age of COVID-19 survey to understand how leaders are navigating these turbulent times. We found that stakeholders expect leaders to clearly and effectively communicate how they are addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, 98% of survey respondents state that during this COVID-19 pandemic, it is important for company leaders to communicate what they are doing to support employees, customers, and the community in which they operate. Consistent, proactive, and compassionate communication is always essential for leaders, but even more so in times of great stress and uncertainty.

Social media remains a critical tool for leaders as they communicate their vision for handling business operations throughout this pandemic. Nearly three quarters of survey respondents (74%) stated that they look to CEOs on social channels to find information about how companies are addressing the COVID-19 crisis. What's more, CEOs must communicate how they are helping those most in need during this crisis. A whopping 96% of survey respondents said that they expect CEOs to actively communicate what their organizations are doing to support COVID-19 relief and recovery efforts.

Leaders that best leverage social media to communicate during this crisis will earn and build brand trust. Social media is among the most important leadership tools of the 21st century and living through turbulent times only brings that fact into greater relief.

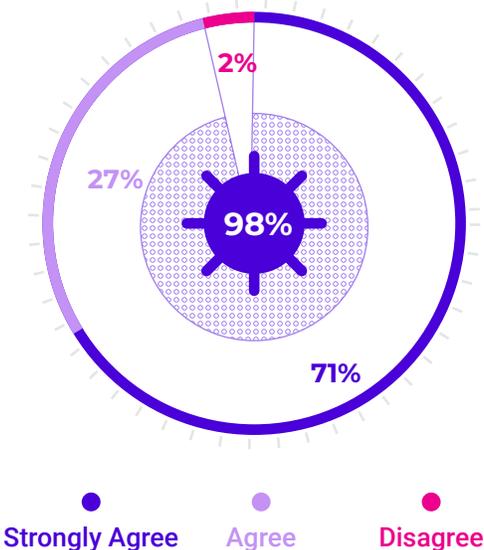
## Methodology

The 2020 BRANDfog CEO Social Media Communications in the Age of COVID-19 surveyed 500 US employees in diverse companies. The companies ranged in size from startups to Fortune 1000 companies and spanned various industries.

**Q1**

During this COVID-19 pandemic, it is important for company leaders to communicate what they are doing to support employees, customers, and the community in which they operate.

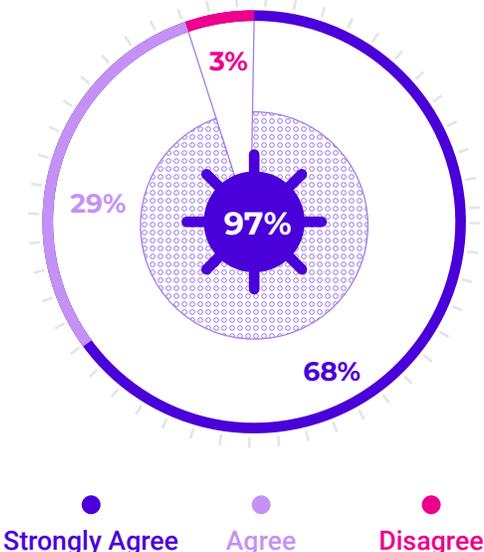
The overwhelming majority of respondents – **98%** - agree that during this COVID-19 pandemic, it is important for company leaders to communicate what they are doing to support employees, customers, and the community in which they operate. Indeed, nearly three quarters (**71%**) strongly agree that such communication is important.



**Q2**

It is important for CEOs and business leaders to show compassion for the health, well-being and economic security of employees during the COVID-19 crisis.

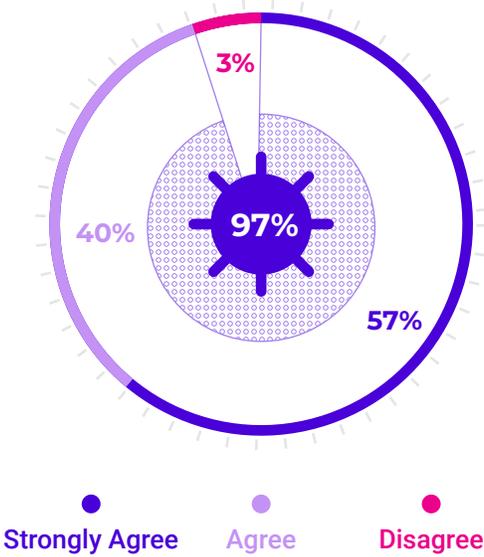
Nearly all survey respondents (**97%**) agree that it is important for CEOs and business leaders to show compassion for the health, well-being and economic security of employees during the COVID-19 crisis. More than two thirds (**68%**) strongly agreed that it is important for leaders to demonstrate compassion.



**Q3**

**Companies that have created budgets specifically for COVID-19 efforts are demonstrating good leadership.**

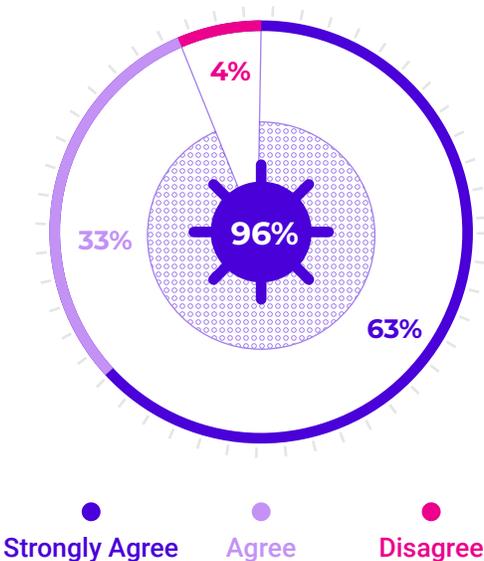
Nearly all of our survey respondents (**97%**) agree that companies that have created budgets specifically for COVID-19 efforts are demonstrating good leadership. Moreover, nearly two thirds strongly agree that those companies are demonstrating good leadership.



**Q4**

**I expect CEOs to actively communicate what their organizations are doing to support COVID-19 relief and recovery efforts.**

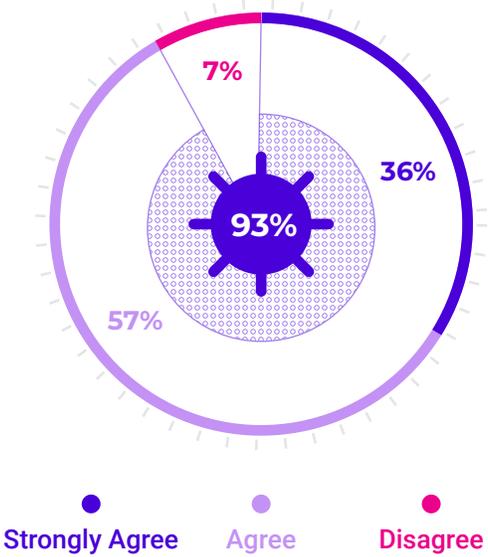
**96%** of survey respondents expect CEOs to actively communicate what their organizations are doing to support COVID-19 relief and recovery efforts.



**Q5**

**During this global pandemic, CEOs can use social media to take an active leadership role to reassure employees, shareholders and customers.**

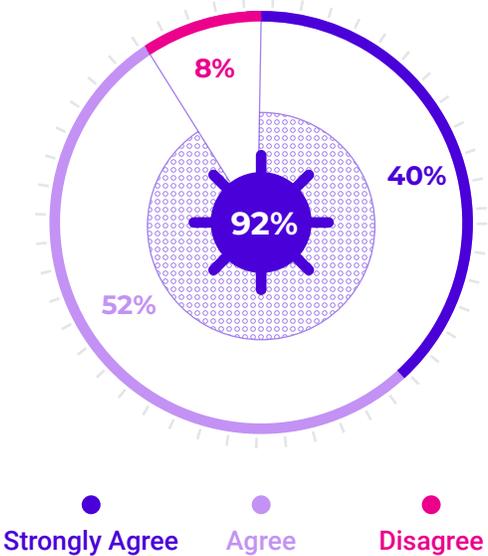
More than nine in ten respondents (**93%**) agree that during this global pandemic, CEOs can use social media to take an active leadership role to reassure employees, shareholders and customers.



**Q6**

**CEOs who actively participate in social media can build better connections with customers, employees, and investors.**

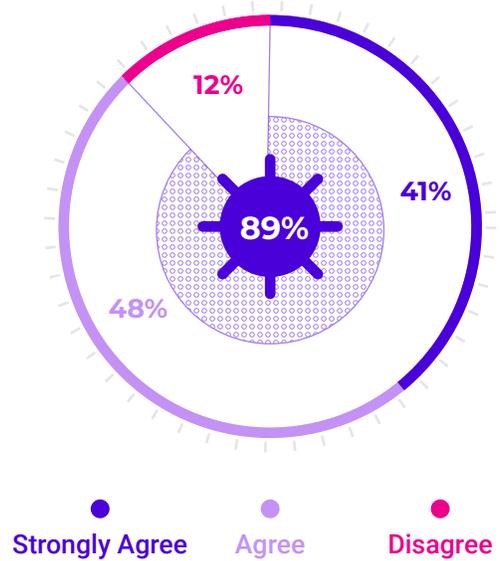
The vast majority of survey respondents (**92%**) agree that CEOs who actively participate in social media can build better connections with customers, employees, and investors.



**Q7**

**During this public health crisis, my CEO has demonstrated concern for employees' health and safety.**

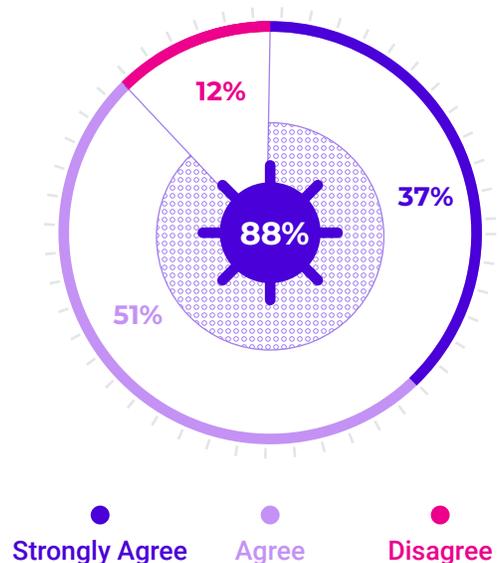
Nearly nine in ten survey respondents (**89%**) agree that during this public health crisis, their CEOs have demonstrated concern for employees' health and safety.



**Q8**

**CEOs on social media who take a stand on the key social issues of our time can act as role models for the next generation of leaders.**

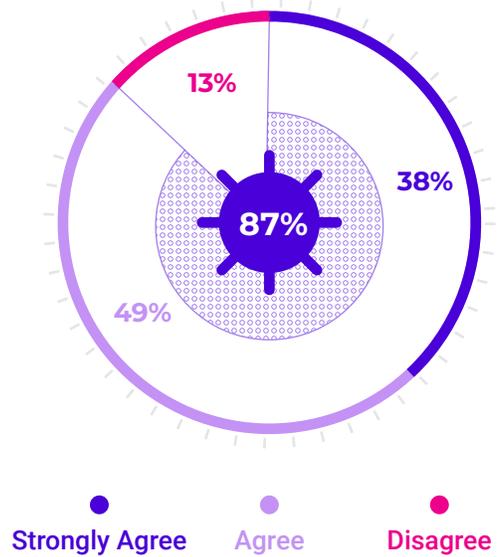
Nearly nine in ten respondents (**88%**) agree that CEOs on social media who take a stand on the key social issues of our time can act as role models for the next generation of leaders.



Q9

**My company's leadership team has demonstrated open communications and shown compassion during this COVID-19 public health emergency.**

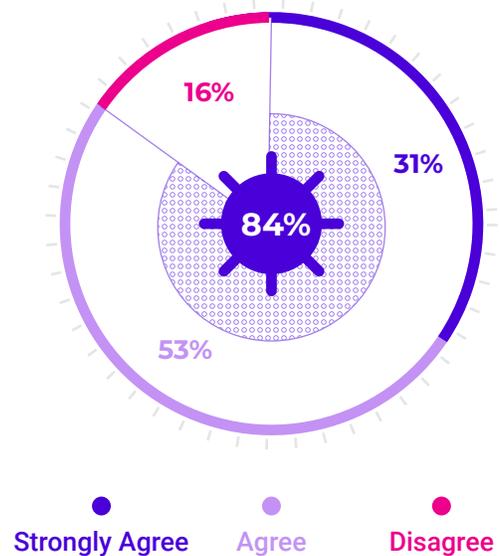
87% of survey respondents say that their company's leadership team has demonstrated open communications and shown compassion during the COVID-19 public health emergency.



Q10

**When a CEO speaks out about the social issues I care about on social media, it helps to build brand trust.**

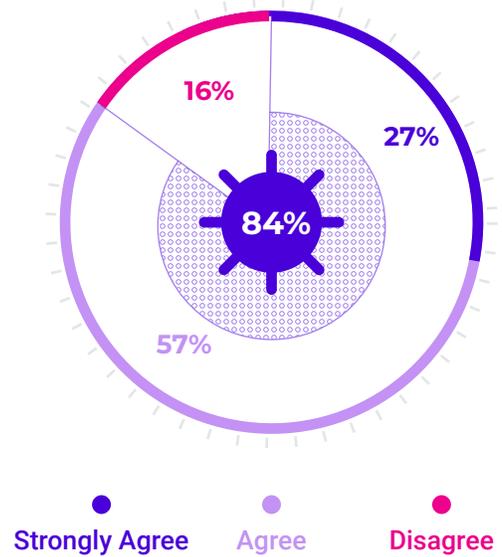
More than eight in ten respondents (84%) agree that when a CEO speaks out about the social issues they care about on social media, it helps to build brand trust.



**Q11**

**Having a socially active C-Suite leadership team can mitigate risk before a brand reputation crisis occurs.**

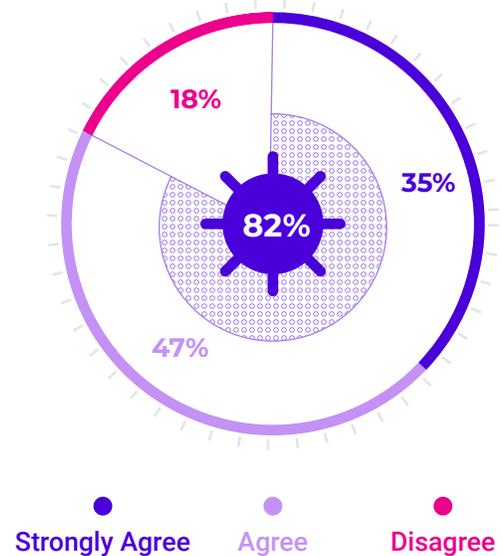
**84%** of survey respondents agree that having a socially active C-Suite leadership team can mitigate risk before a brand reputation crisis occurs.



**Q12**

**I am more likely to purchase from a company whose leadership communicates openly on social media channels regarding their efforts during the COVID-19 crisis.**

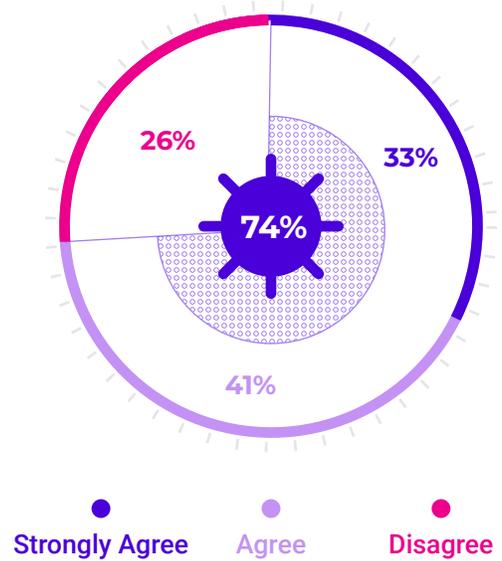
More than four in five survey respondents (**82%**) say that they are more likely to purchase from a company whose leadership communicates openly on social media channels regarding their efforts during the COVID-19 crisis.



**Q13**

In times of crisis like the current COVID-19 pandemic, I look to CEOs on social channels for information on how their companies are addressing the crisis.

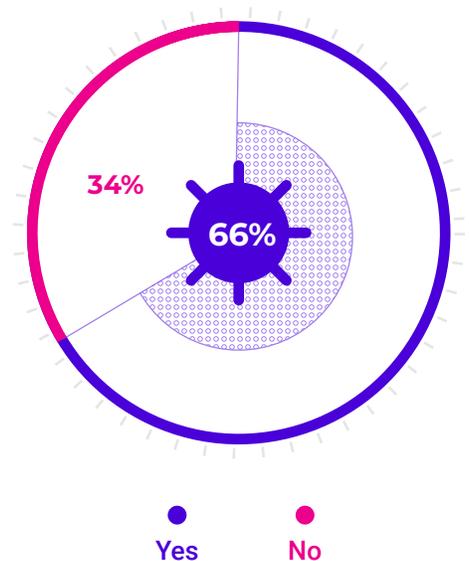
In times of crisis like the current COVID-19 pandemic, nearly three quarters of survey respondents (**74%**) look to CEOs on social channels for information on how their companies are addressing the crisis.

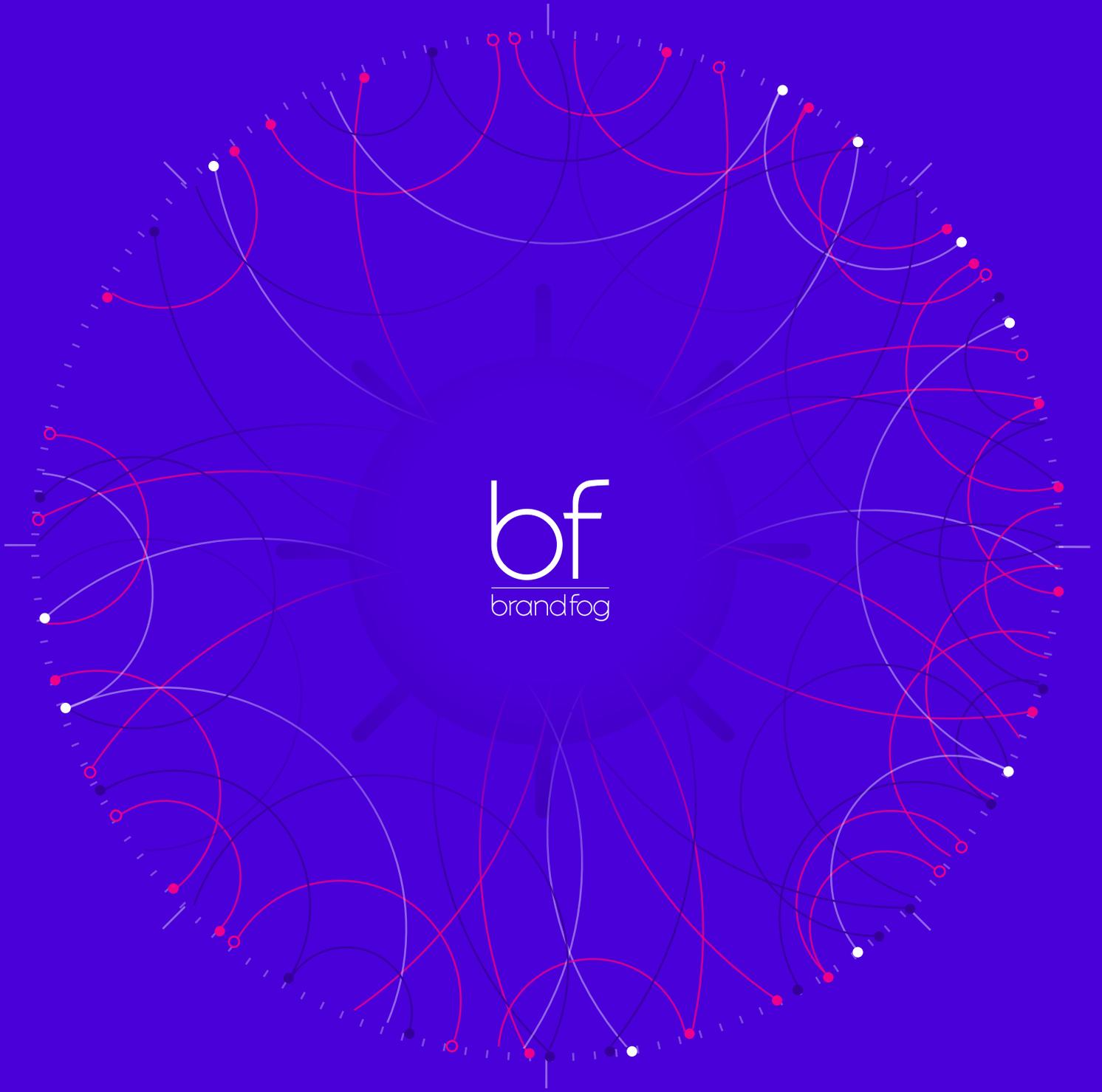


**Q14**

Do you believe social media engagement makes CEOs more effective leaders?

Two thirds (**66%**) of survey respondents say that social media engagement makes CEOs more effective leaders.





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