INBOUND

Beyond Acquisition: Turning Users Into Lifelong Customers

Enrique Hoyos

September 3, 2025

HBR

25% - 95%

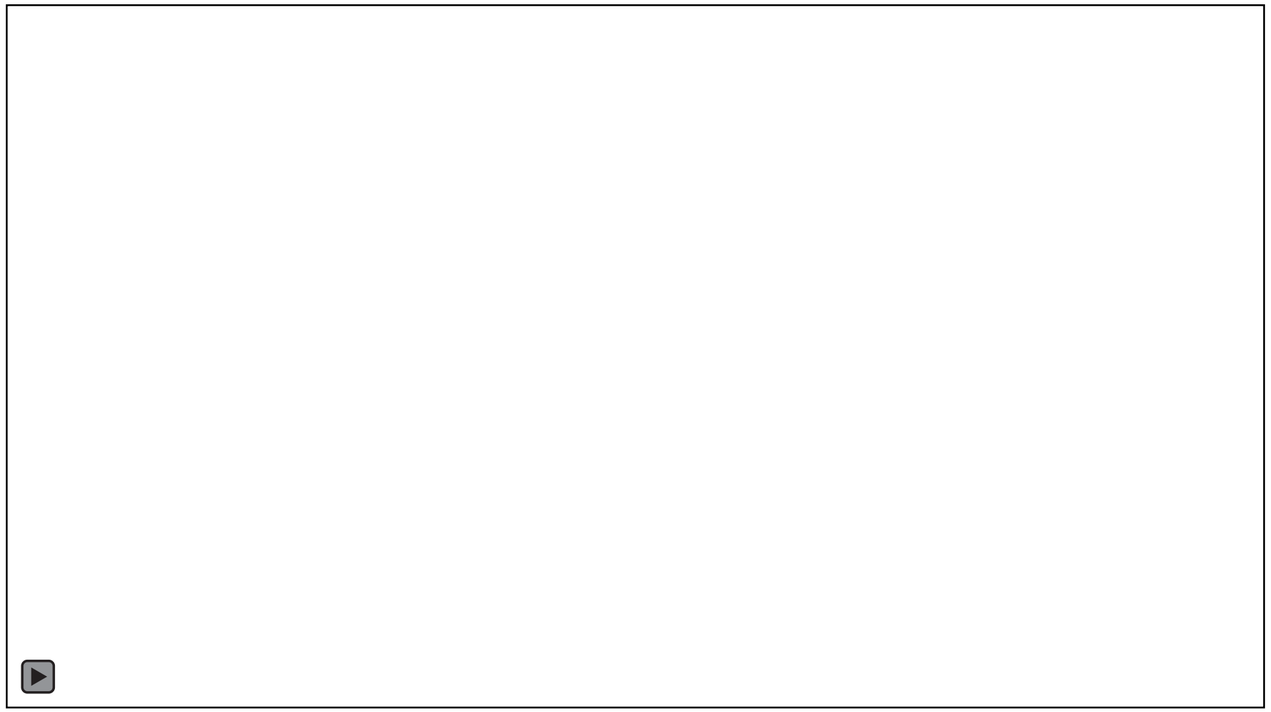
INCREASE IN PROFITS

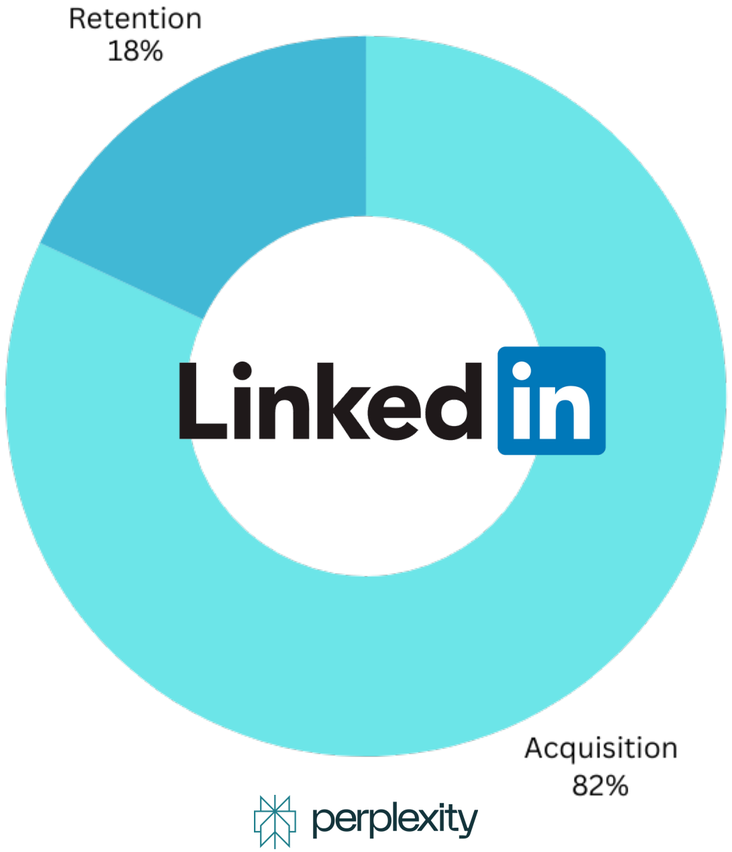
5%

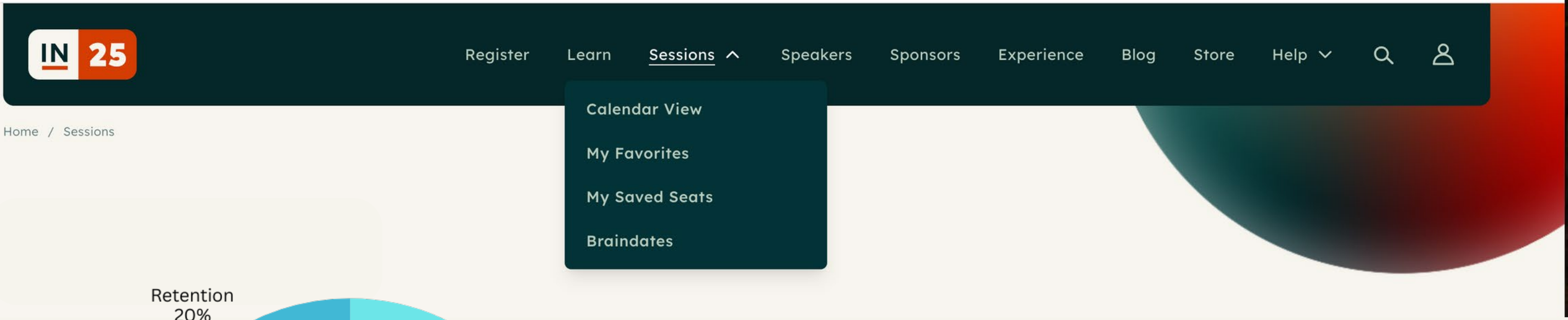
INCREASE IN CUSTOMER RETENTION RATES

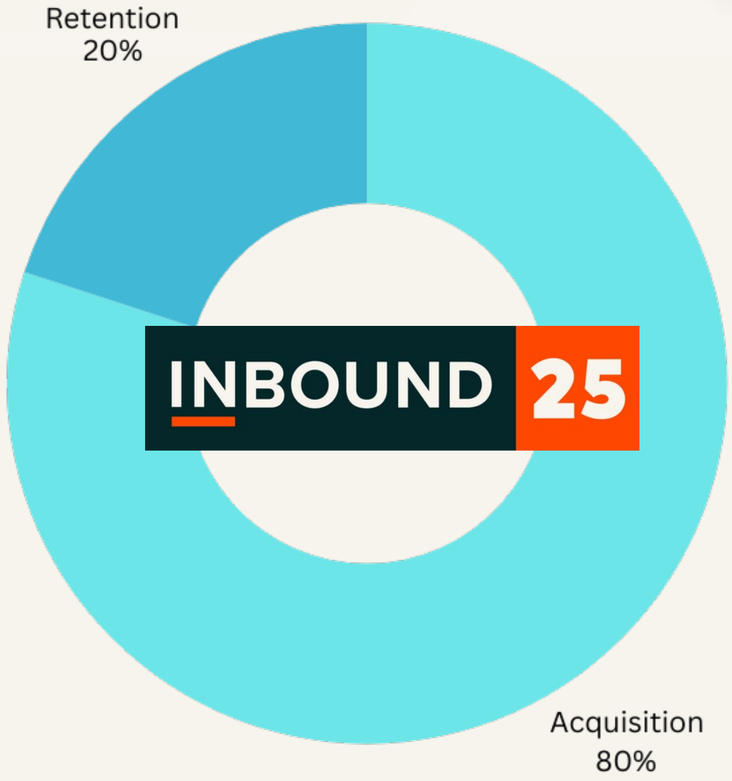
HBR

ACQUIRING A NEW CUSTOMER COSTS 5 TO 25 TIMES MORE




Retention
18%
Linked in
Acquisition
82%
perplexity

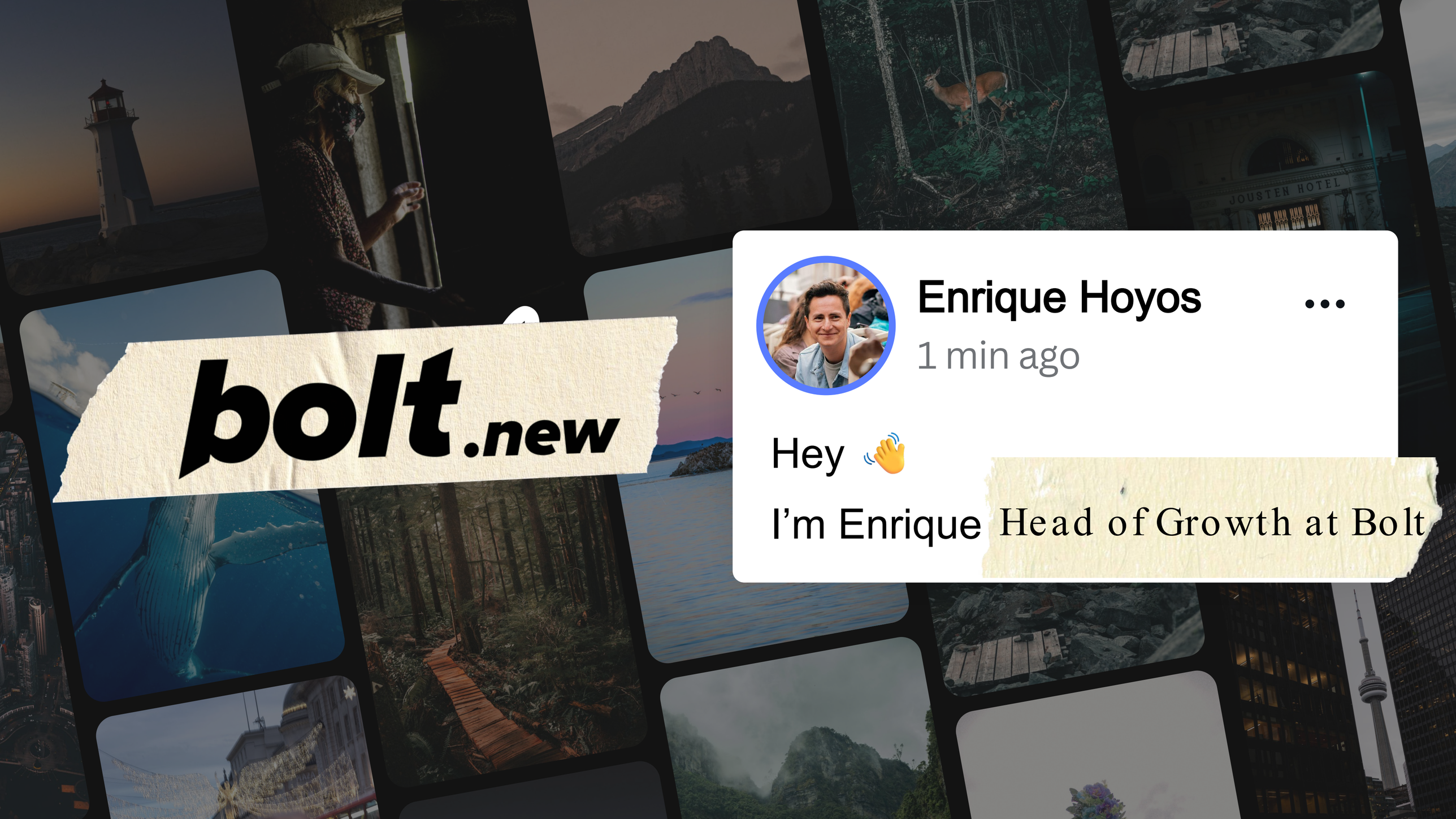




79.4% OF SESSIONS ARE ACQUISITION, WHILE ONLY 20.6% FOCUS ON RETENTION

perplexity

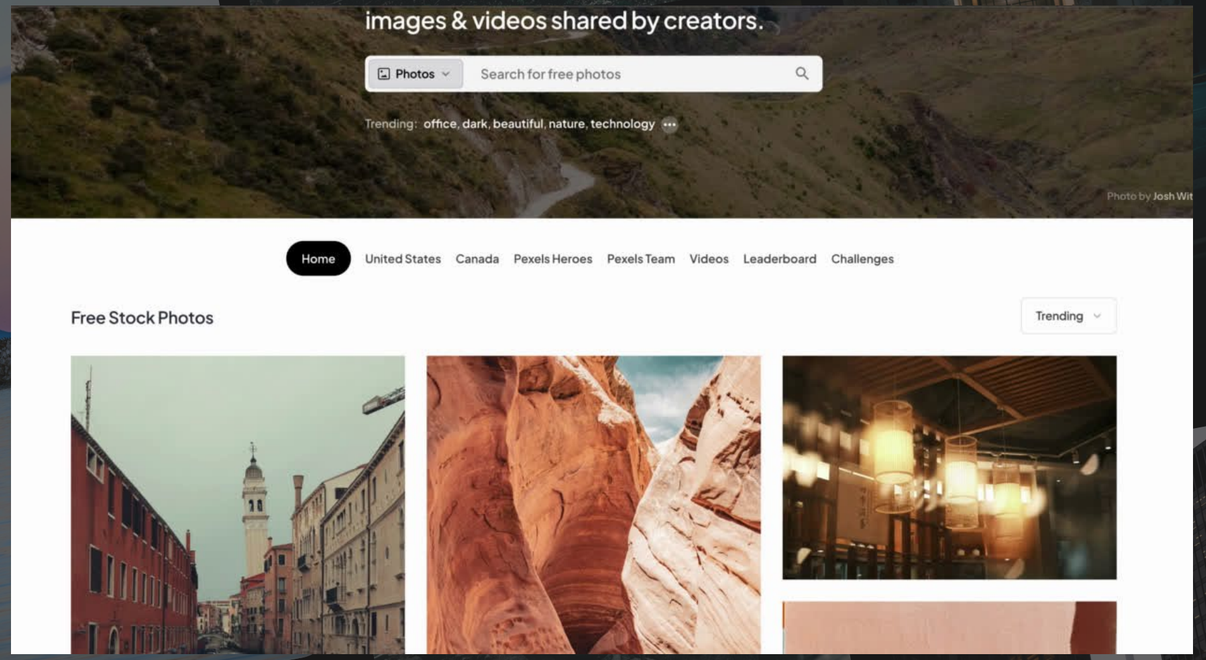
pexels
Enrique Hoyos
1 min ago
Hey 👋
I’m Enrique the CMO at Pexels


bolt.new
Enrique Hoyos
1 min ago
Hey 👋
I’m Enrique Head of Growth at Bolt

Case Study

pexels

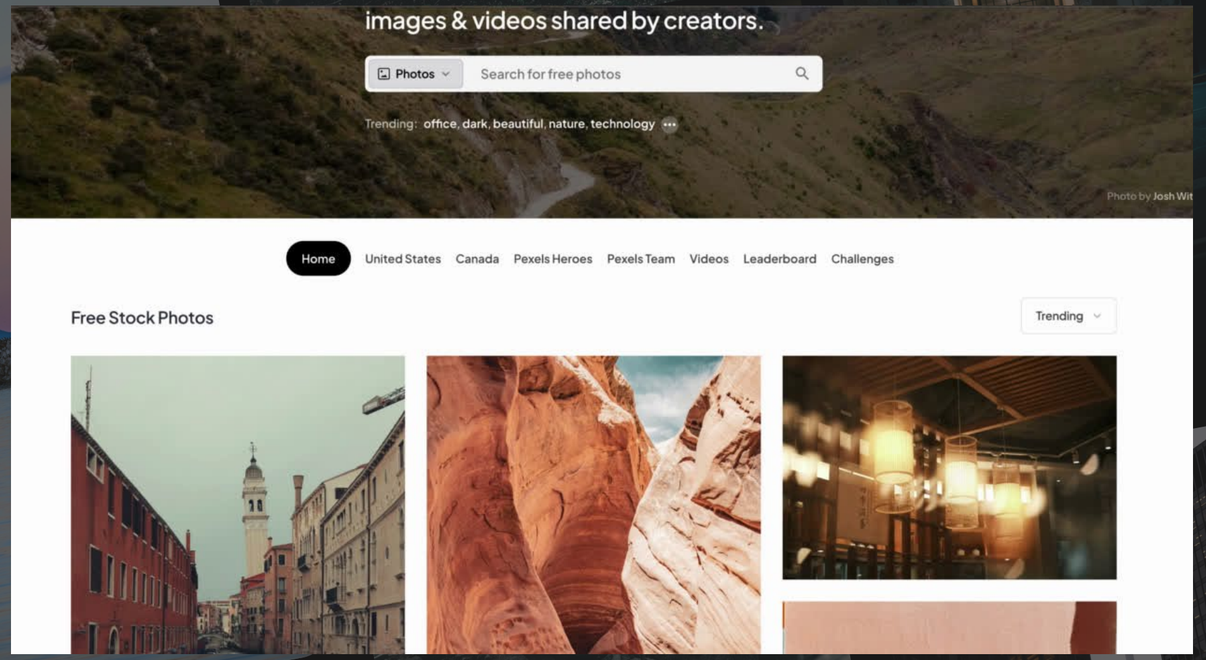
We are a free stock photo and video site.



pexels

marketplace

We are a free stock photo and video site.



The Roadmap

Identify Problem

Strategy

Execution

Step 1: Identify Problem

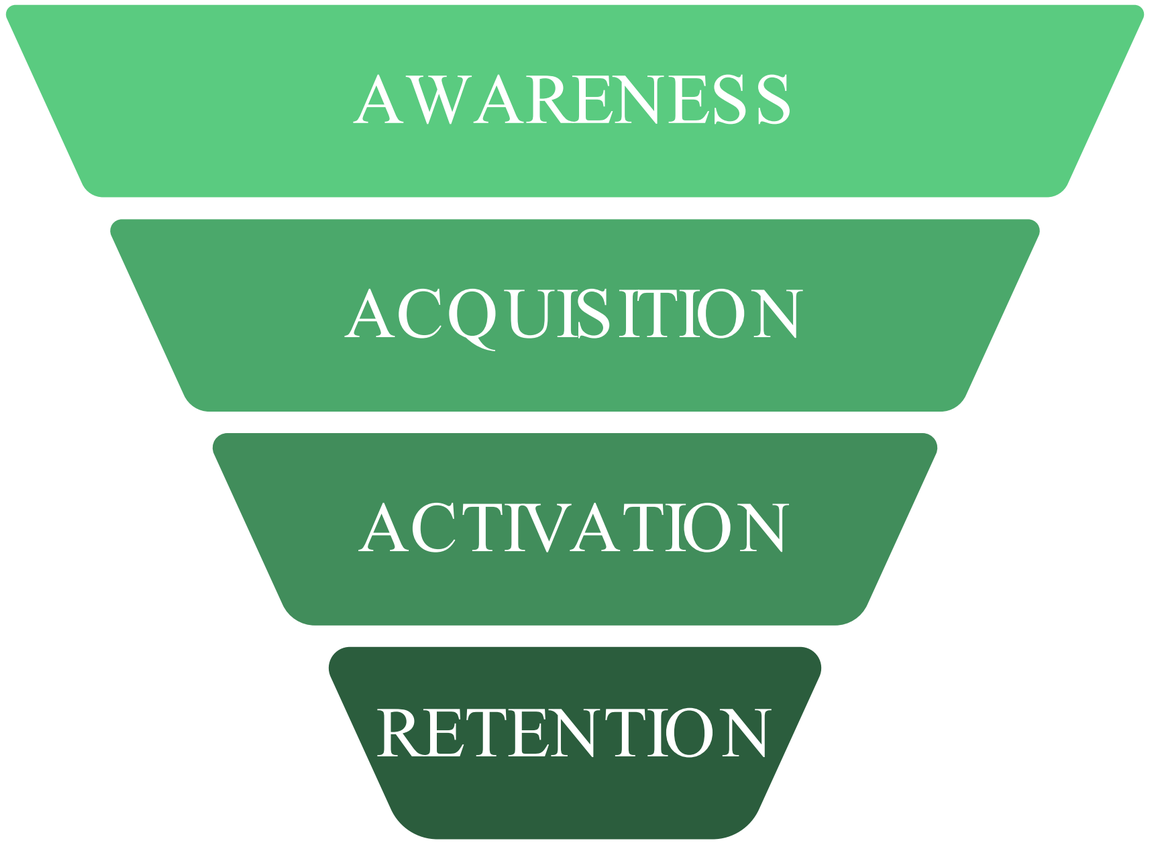
Identify Problem

Strategy

Execution

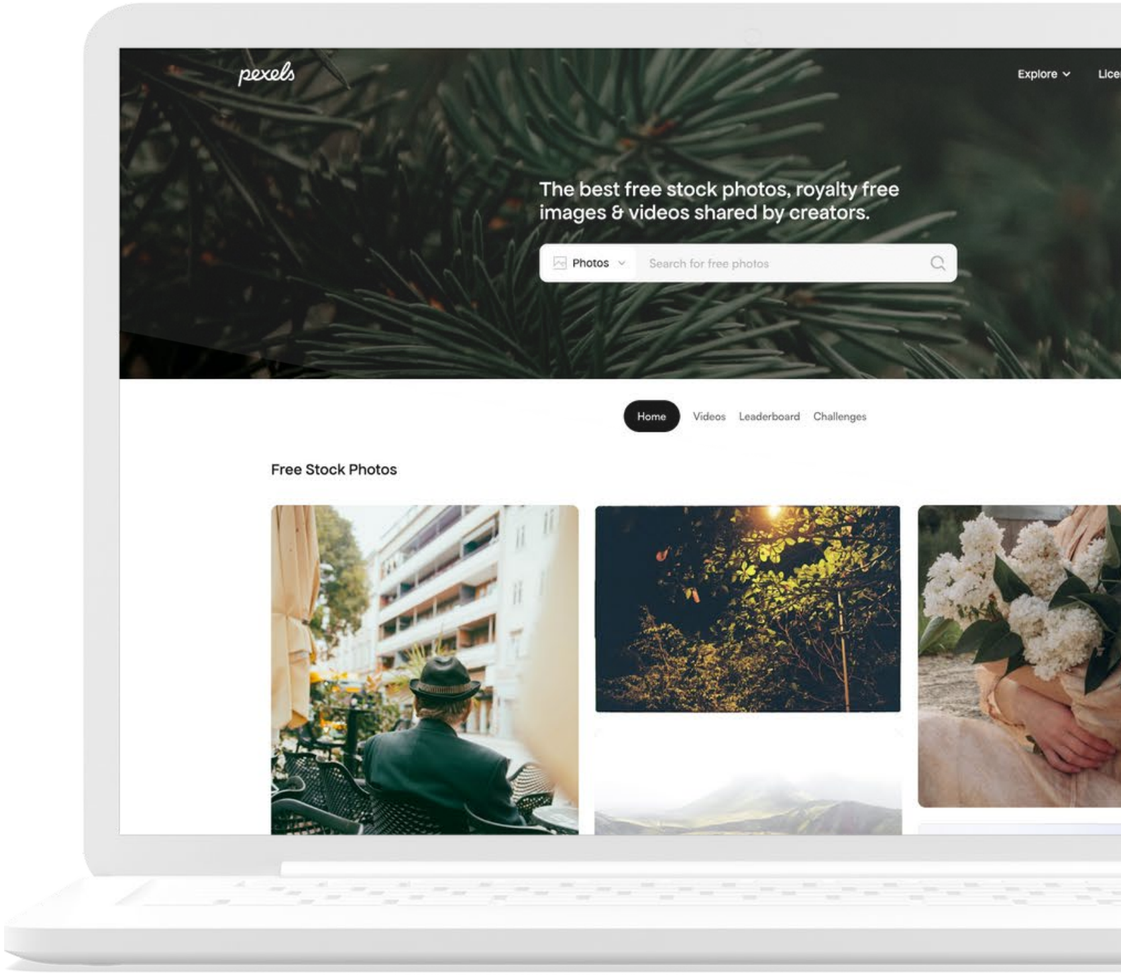
Diving into quantitative data

Diving into quantitative data



Diving into quantitative data

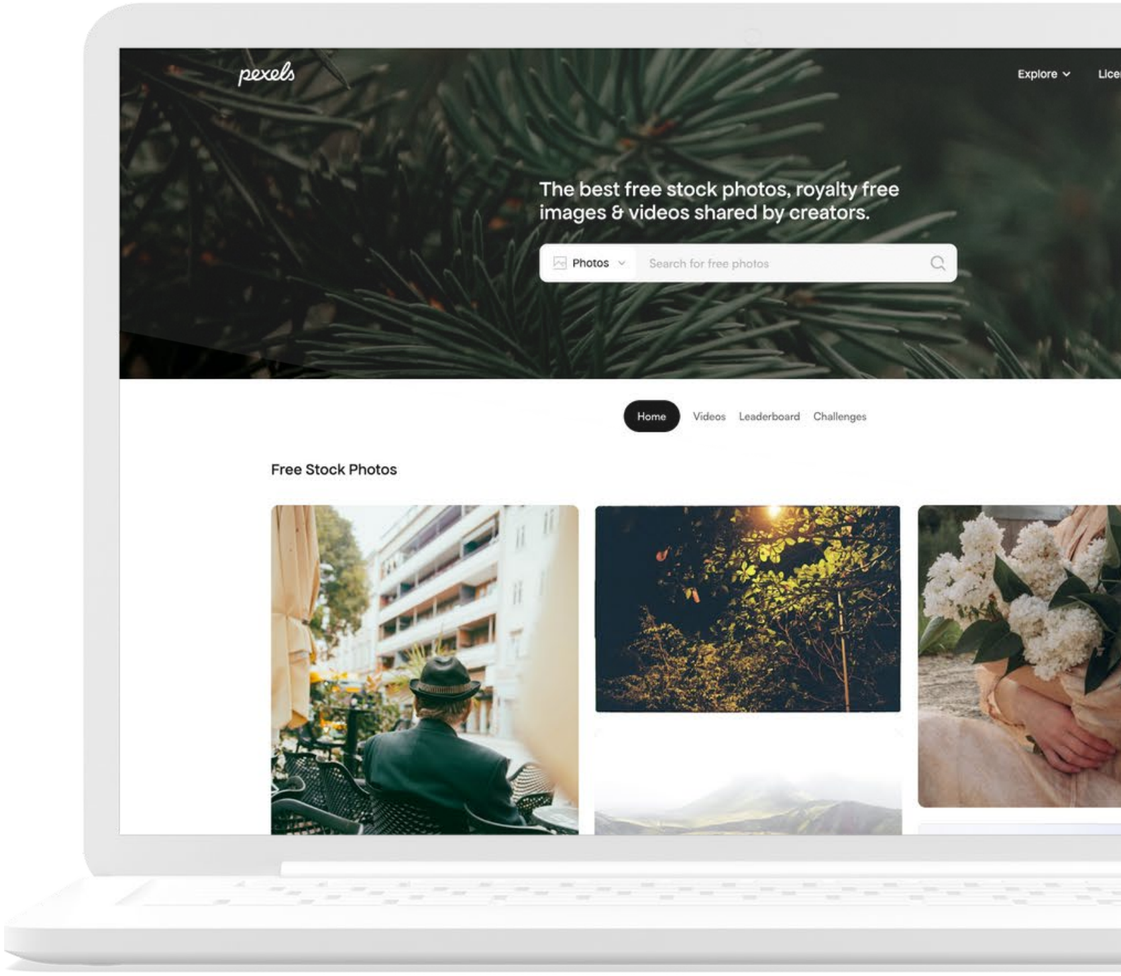
AWARENESS



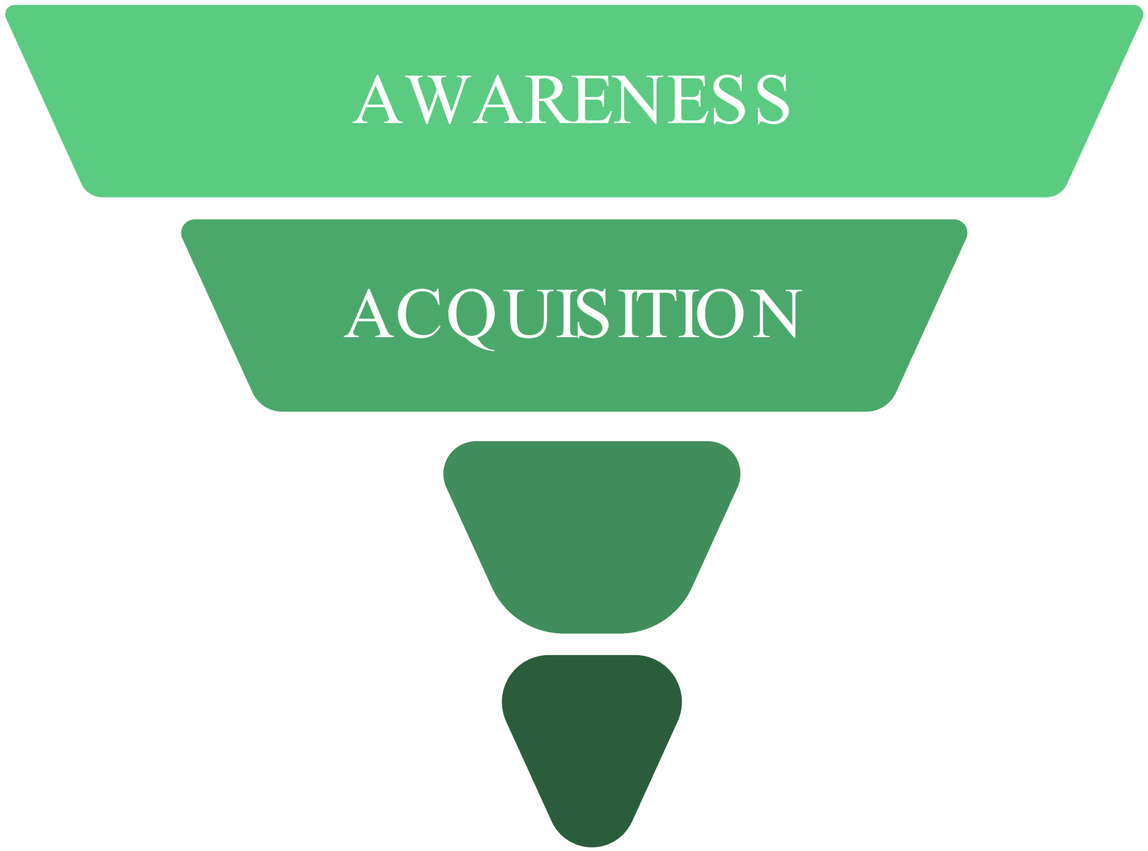
Diving into quantitative data

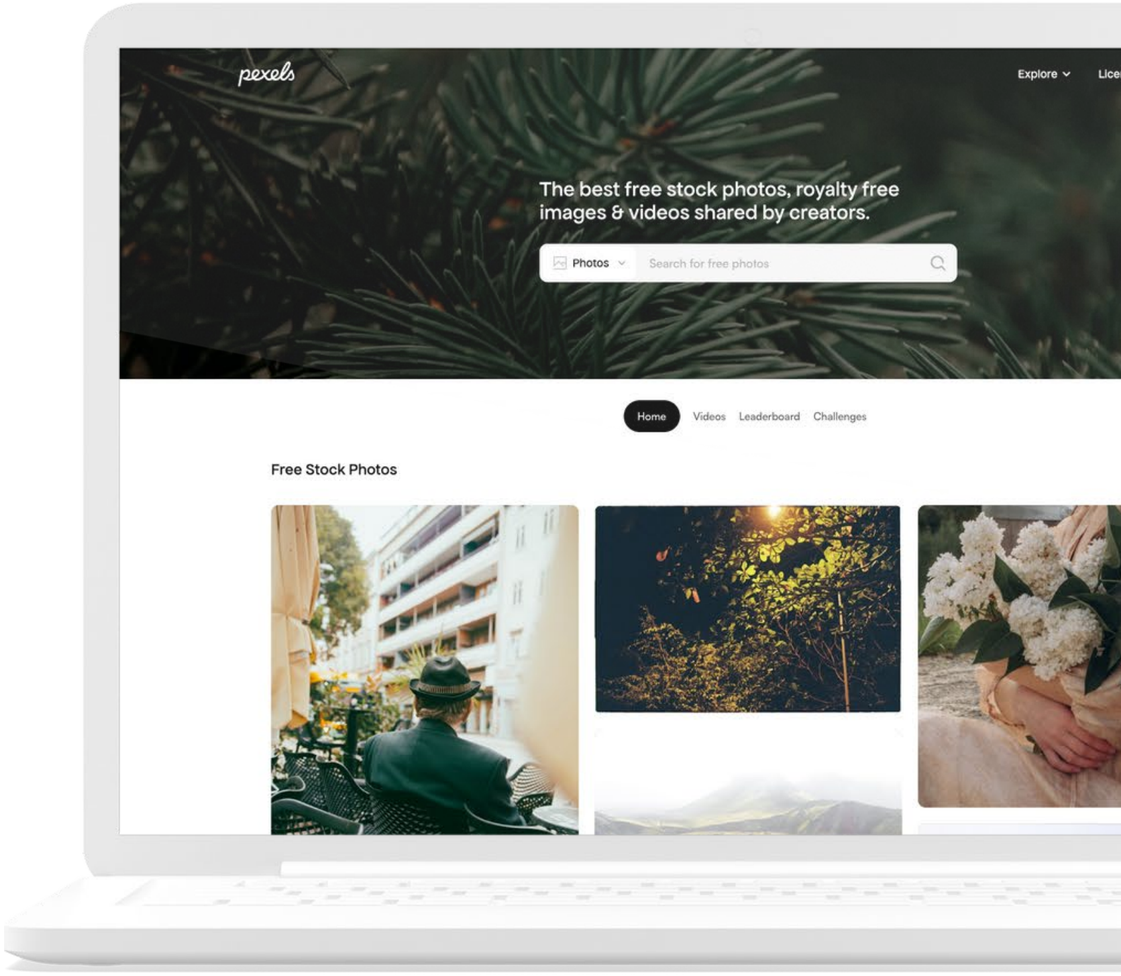
AWARENESS

ACQUISITION

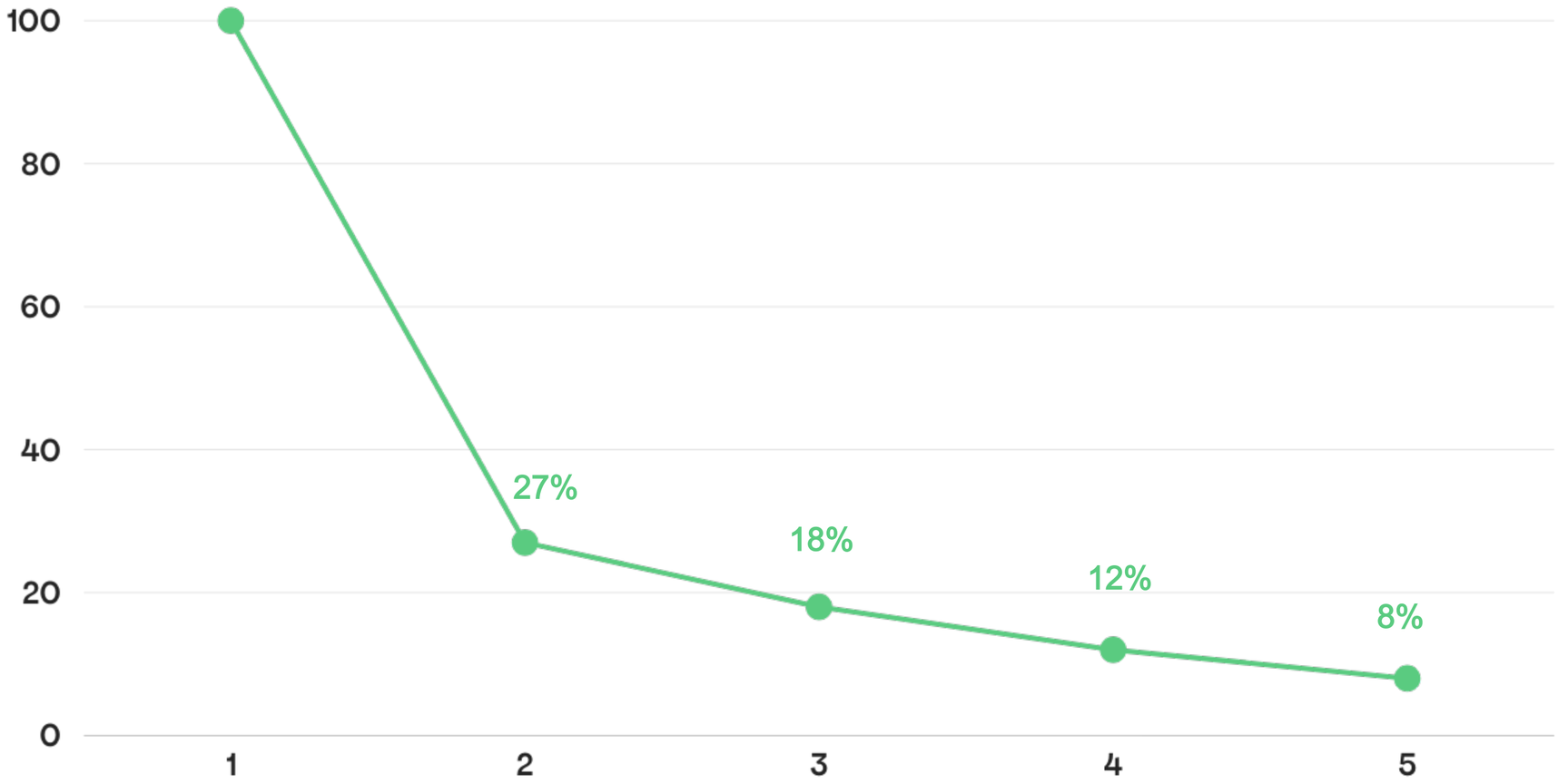


Diving into quantitative data





Contributor Activation



We've got half the problem defined

We know WHAT is happening.
We need to find out WHY.

Finding out the

why.

Diana, I loved your photos on Pexels and wanted your opinion!

Contributor Discovery ×

Enrique at Pexels 📸 <enrique@pexels.com> Tue, Aug 16, .

Hey Diana!

I'm reaching out to a couple of new contributors, like you, to get a stronger sense of what made you join Pexels — so we can make your experience as good as possible!

Any chance you'd be up for sharing your thoughts and opinions? It's an easy 3 min survey. No trick questions :)

If you are game, here is a link:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdqcf0mjKXiMhNpFUfSiNjteMuNamV6sgPcZ5nLR56JRwjeRw/viewform?usp=sf_link

When you complete the survey, it will automatically add you to a raffle to get a $100 USD donation.

Thanks!

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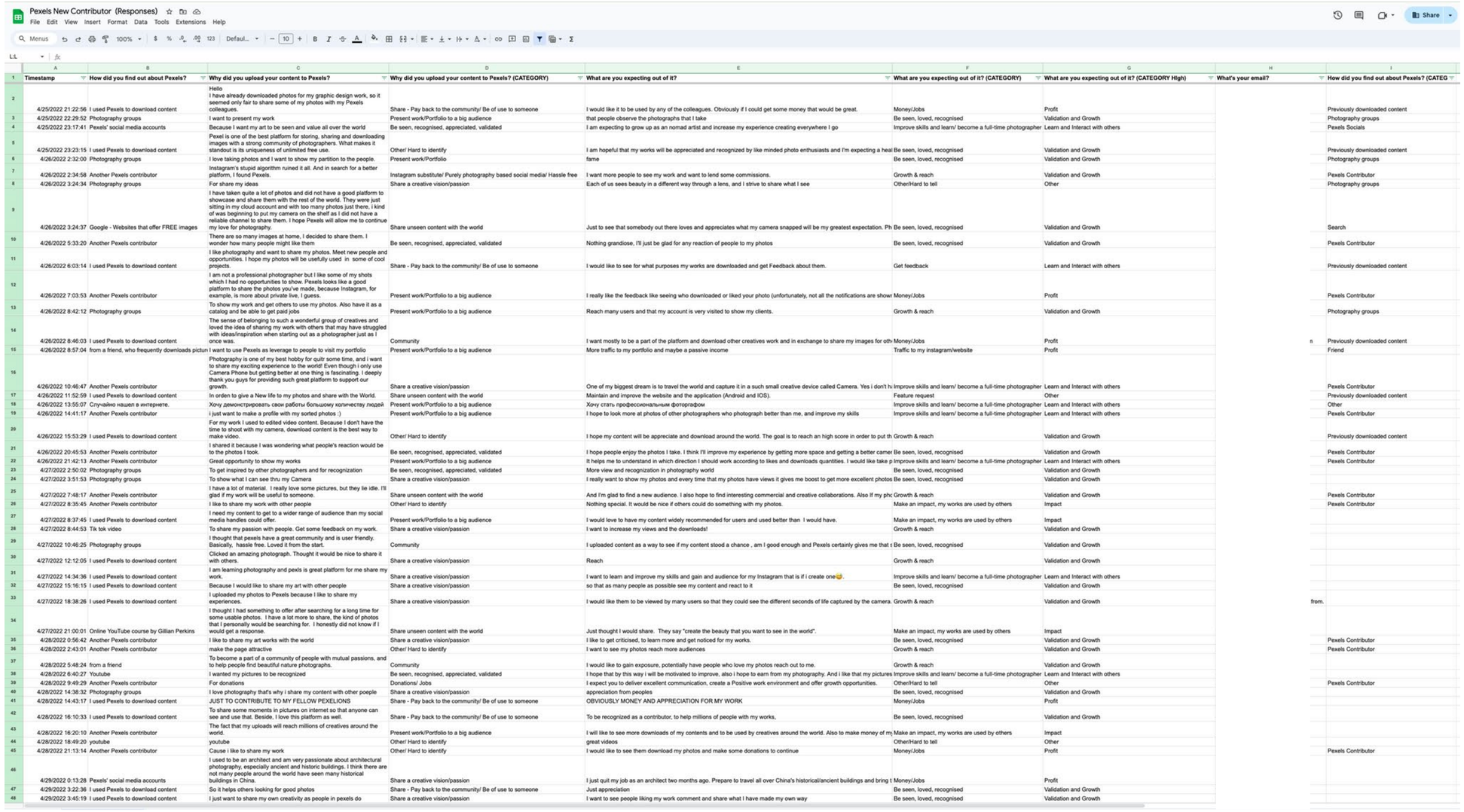
Pexels

Enrique Hoyos
Chief Marketing Officer
enrique@pexels.com



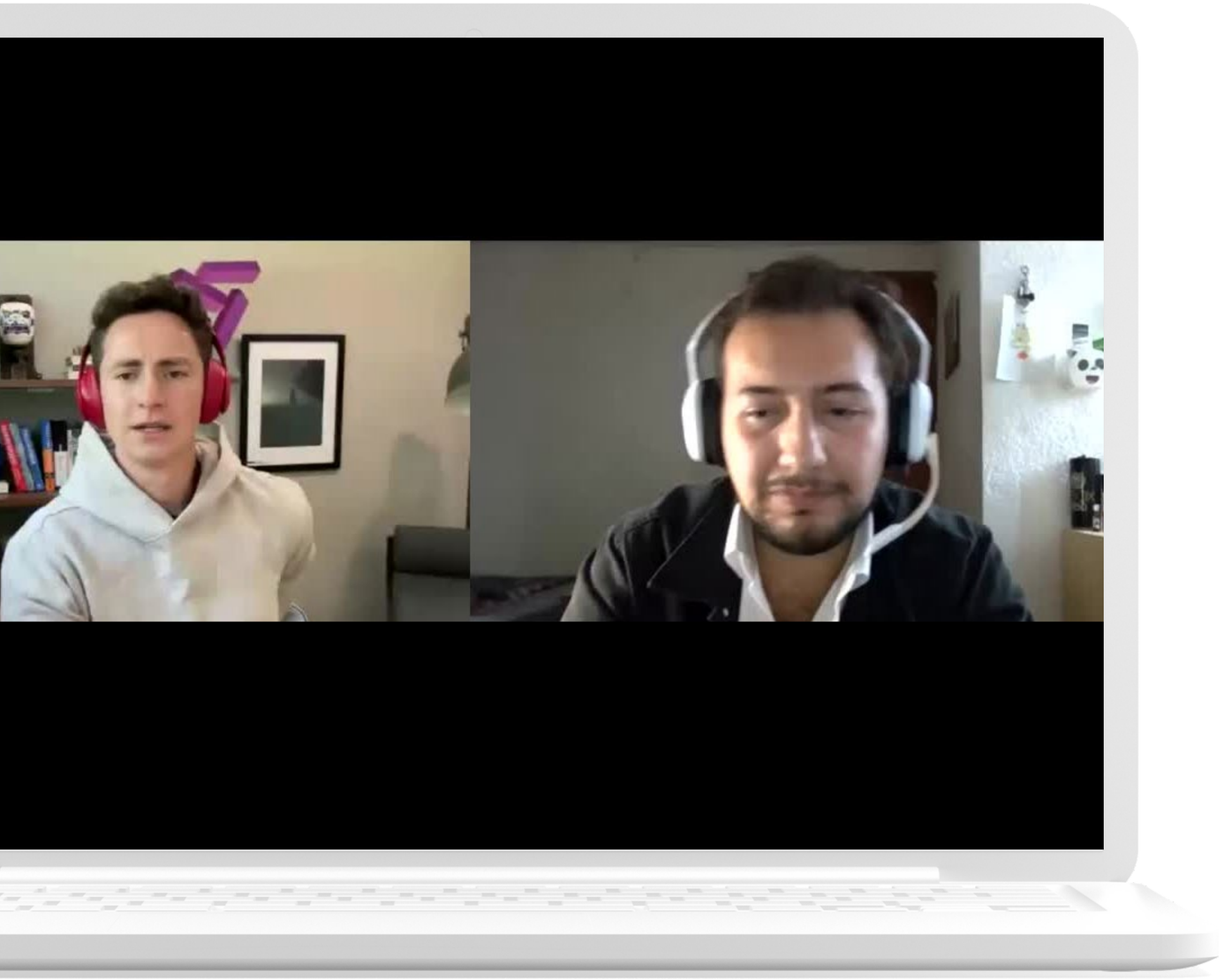
Pexels New Contributor (Responses)

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help

	Timestamp	How did you find out about Pexels?	Why did you upload your content to Pexels?	Why did you upload your content to Pexels? (CATEGORY)	What are you expecting out of it?	What are you expecting out of it? (CATEGORY)	What are you expecting out of it? (CATEGORY High)	What's your email?	How did you find out about Pexels? (CATEG
2	4/25/2022 21:22:56	I used Pexels to download content	Hello I have already downloaded photos for my graphic design work, so it seemed only fair to share some of my photos with my Pexels colleagues.	Share - Pay back to the community/ Be of use to someone	I would like it to be used by any of the colleagues. Obviously if I could get some money that would be great.	Money/Jobs	Profit		Previously downloaded content
3	4/25/2022 22:29:52	Photography groups	I want to present my work	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	that people observe the photographs that I take	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		Photography groups
4	4/25/2022 23:17:41	Pexels' social media accounts	Because I want my art to be seen and value all over the world	Be seen, recognised, appreciated, validated	I am expecting to grow up as an nomad artist and increase my experience creating everywhere I go	Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer	Learn and Interact with others		Pexels Socials
5	4/25/2022 23:23:15	I used Pexels to download content	Pexel is one of the best platform for storing, sharing and downloading images with a strong community of photographers. What makes it standout is its uniqueness of unlimited free use.	Other/ Hard to identify	I am hopeful that my works will be appreciated and recognized by like minded photo enthusiasts and I'm expecting a heal	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		Previously downloaded content
6	4/26/2022 2:32:00	Photography groups	I love taking photos and I want to show my partition to the people.	Present work/Portfolio	fame	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		Photography groups
7	4/26/2022 2:34:58	Another Pexels contributor	Instagram's stupid algorithm ruined it all. And in search for a better platform, I found Pexels.	Instagram substitute/ Purely photography based social media/ Hassle free	I want more people to see my work and want to lend some commissions.	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth		Pexels Contributor
8	4/26/2022 3:24:34	Photography groups	For share my ideas	Share a creative vision/passion	Each of us sees beauty in a different way through a lens, and I strive to share what I see	Other/Hard to tell	Other		Photography groups
9	4/26/2022 3:24:37	Google - Websites that offer FREE images	I have taken quite a lot of photos and did not have a good platform to showcase and share them with the rest of the world. They were just sitting in my cloud account and with too many photos just there, i kind of was beginning to put my camera on the shelf as I did not have a reliable channel to share them. I hope Pexels will allow me to continue my love for photography.	Share unseen content with the world	Just to see that somebody out there loves and appreciates what my camera snapped will be my greatest expectation. Ph	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		Search
10	4/26/2022 5:33:20	Another Pexels contributor	There are so many images at home, I decided to share them. I wonder how many people might like them	Be seen, recognised, appreciated, validated	Nothing grandiose, I'll just be glad for any reaction of people to my photos	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		Pexels Contributor
11	4/26/2022 6:03:14	I used Pexels to download content	I like photography and want to share my photos. Meet new people and opportunities. I hope my photos will be usefully used in some of cool projects.	Share - Pay back to the community/ Be of use to someone	I would like to see for what purposes my works are downloaded and get Feedback about them.	Get feedback	Learn and Interact with others		Previously downloaded content
12	4/26/2022 7:03:53	Another Pexels contributor	I am not a professional photographer but I like some of my shots which I had no opportunities to show. Pexels looks like a good platform to share the photos you've made, because Instagram, for example, is more about private live, I guess.	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	I really like the feedback like seeing who downloaded or liked your photo (unfortunately, not all the notifications are showr	Money/Jobs	Profit		Pexels Contributor
13	4/26/2022 8:42:12	Photography groups	To show my work and get others to use my photos. Also have it as a catalog and be able to get paid jobs	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	Reach many users and that my account is very visited to show my clients.	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth		Photography groups
14	4/26/2022 8:46:03	I used Pexels to download content	The sense of belonging to such a wonderful group of creatives and loved the idea of sharing my work with others that may have struggled with ideas/inspiration when starting out as a photographer just as I once was.	Community	I want mostly to be a part of the platform and download other creatives work and in exchange to share my images for oth	Money/Jobs	Profit	n	Previously downloaded content
15	4/26/2022 8:57:04	from a friend, who frequently downloads pictur	I want to use Pexels as leverage to people to visit my portfolio	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	More traffic to my portfolio and maybe a passive income	Traffic to my instagram/website	Profit		Friend
16	4/26/2022 10:46:47	Another Pexels contributor	Photography is one of my best hobby for quite some time, and i want to share my exciting experience to the world! Even though i only use Camera Phone but getting better at one thing is fascinating. I deeply thank you guys for providing such great platform to support our growth.	Share a creative vision/passion	One of my biggest dream is to travel the world and capture it in a such small creative device called Camera. Yes i don't h	Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer	Learn and Interact with others		Pexels Contributor
17	4/26/2022 11:52:59	I used Pexels to download content	In orden to give a New life to my photos and share with the World.	Share unseen content with the world	Maintain and improve the website and the application (Android and IOS).	Feature request	Other		Previously downloaded content
18	4/26/2022 13:55:07	Случайно нашел в интернете.	Хочу демонстрировать свои работы большому количеству людей	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	Хочу стать профессиональным фотографом	Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer	Learn and Interact with others		Other
19	4/26/2022 14:41:17	Another Pexels contributor	i just want to make a profile with my sorted photos :)	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	I hope to look more at photos of other photographers who photograph better than me, and improve my skills	Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer	Learn and Interact with others		Pexels Contributor
20	4/26/2022 15:53:29	I used Pexels to download content	For my work I used to edited video content. Because I don't have the time to shoot with my camera, download content is the best way to make video.	Other/ Hard to identify	I hope my content will be appreciate and download around the world. The goal is to reach an high score in order to put th	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth		Previously downloaded content
21	4/26/2022 20:45:53	Another Pexels contributor	I shared it because I was wondering what people's reaction would be to the photos I took.	Be seen, recognised, appreciated, validated	I hope people enjoy the photos I take. I think I'll improve my experience by getting more space and getting a better camer	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		Pexels Contributor
22	4/26/2022 21:42:13	Another Pexels contributor	Great opportunity to show my works	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	It helps me to understand in which direction I should work according to likes and downloads quantities. I would like take p	Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer	Learn and Interact with others		Pexels Contributor
23	4/27/2022 2:50:02	Photography groups	To get inspired by other photographers and for recognization	Be seen, recognised, appreciated, validated	More view and recognization in photography world	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		
24	4/27/2022 3:51:53	Photography groups	To show what I can see thru my Camera	Share a creative vision/passion	I really want to show my photos and every time that my photos have views it gives me boost to get more excellent photos	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		
25	4/27/2022 7:48:17	Another Pexels contributor	I have a lot of material. I really love some pictures, but they lie idle. I'll glad if my work will be useful to someone.	Share unseen content with the world	And I'm glad to find a new audience. I also hope to find interesting commercial and creative collaborations. Also If my phc	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth		Pexels Contributor
26	4/27/2022 8:35:45	Another Pexels contributor	I like to share my work with other people	Other/ Hard to identify	Nothing special. It would be nice if others could do something with my photos.	Make an impact, my works are used by others	Impact		Pexels Contributor
27	4/27/2022 8:37:45	I used Pexels to download content	I need my content to get to a wider range of audience than my social media handles could offer.	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	I would love to have my content widely recommended for users and used better than I would have.	Make an impact, my works are used by others	Impact		
28	4/27/2022 8:44:53	Tik tok video	To share my passion with people. Get some feedback on my work.	Share a creative vision/passion	I want to increase my views and the downloads!	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth		
29	4/27/2022 10:46:25	Photography groups	I thought that pexels have a great community and is user friendly. Basically, hassle free. Loved it from the start.	Community	I uploaded content as a way to see if my content stood a chance , am I good enough and Pexels certainly gives me that c	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		
30	4/27/2022 12:12:05	I used Pexels to download content	Clicked an amazing photograph. Thought it would be nice to share it with others.	Share a creative vision/passion	Reach	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth		
31	4/27/2022 14:34:36	I used Pexels to download content	I am learning photography and pexis is great platform for me share my work.	Share a creative vision/passion	I want to learn and improve my skills and gain and audience for my Instagram that is if i create one😅.	Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer	Learn and Interact with others		
32	4/27/2022 15:16:15	I used Pexels to download content	Because I would like to share my art with other people	Share a creative vision/passion	so that as many people as possible see my content and react to it	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		
33	4/27/2022 18:38:26	I used Pexels to download content	I uploaded my photos to Pexels because I like to share my experiences.	Share a creative vision/passion	I would like them to be viewed by many users so that they could see the different seconds of life captured by the camera.	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth	from.	
34	4/27/2022 21:00:01	Online YouTube course by Gillian Perkins	I thought I had something to offer after searching for a long time for some usable photos. I have a lot more to share, the kind of photos that I personally would be searching for. I honestly did not know if I would get a response.	Share unseen content with the world	Just thought I would share. They say "create the beauty that you want to see in the world".	Make an impact, my works are used by others	Impact		
35	4/28/2022 0:56:42	Another Pexels contributor	I like to share my art works with the world	Share a creative vision/passion	I like to get criticised, to learn more and get noticed for my works.	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		Pexels Contributor
36	4/28/2022 2:43:01	Another Pexels contributor	make the page attractive	Other/ Hard to identify	I want to see my photos reach more audiences	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth		Pexels Contributor
37	4/28/2022 5:48:24	from a friend	To become a part of a community of people with mutual passions, and to help people find beautiful nature photographs.	Community	I would like to gain exposure, potentially have people who love my photos reach out to me.	Growth & reach	Validation and Growth		
38	4/28/2022 6:40:27	Youtube	I wanted my pictures to be recognized	Be seen, recognised, appreciated, validated	I hope that by this way i will be motivated to improve, also i hope to earn from my photography. And i like that my pictures	Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer	Learn and Interact with others		
39	4/28/2022 9:49:29	Another Pexels contributor	For donations	Donations/ Jobs	I expect you to deliver excellent communication, create a Positive work environment and offer growth opportunities.	Other/Hard to tell	Other		Pexels Contributor
40	4/28/2022 14:38:32	Photography groups	I love photography that's why i share my content with other poeple	Share a creative vision/passion	appreciation from peoples	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		
41	4/28/2022 14:43:17	I used Pexels to download content	JUST TO CONTRIBUTE TO MY FELLOW PEXELIONS	Share - Pay back to the community/ Be of use to someone	OBVIOUSLY MONEY AND APPRECIATION FOR MY WORK	Money/Jobs	Profit		
42	4/28/2022 16:10:33	I used Pexels to download content	To share some moments in pictures on internet so that anyone can see and use that. Beside, I love this platform as well.	Share - Pay back to the community/ Be of use to someone	To be recognized as a contributor, to help millions of people with my works,	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		
43	4/28/2022 16:20:10	Another Pexels contributor	The fact that my uploads will reach millions of creatives around the world.	Present work/Portfolio to a big audience	I will like to see more downloads of my contents and to be used by creatives around the world. Also to make money of my	Make an impact, my works are used by others	Impact		
44	4/28/2022 18:49:20	youtube	youtube	Other/ Hard to identify	great videos	Other/Hard to tell	Other		
45	4/28/2022 21:13:14	Another Pexels contributor	Cause i like to share my work	Other/ Hard to identify	I would like to see them download my photos and make some donations to continue	Money/Jobs	Profit		Pexels Contributor
46	4/29/2022 0:13:28	Pexels' social media accounts	I used to be an architect and am very passionate about architectural photography, especially ancient and historic buildings. I think there are not many people around the world have seen many historical buildings in China.	Share a creative vision/passion	I just quit my job as an architect two months ago. Prepare to travel all over China's historical/ancient buildings and bring t	Money/Jobs	Profit		
47	4/29/2022 3:22:36	I used Pexels to download content	So it helps others looking for good photos	Share - Pay back to the community/ Be of use to someone	Just appreciation	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		
48	4/29/2022 3:45:19	I used Pexels to download content	I just want to share my own creativity as people in pexels do	Share a creative vision/passion	I want to see people liking my work comment and share what I have made my own way	Be seen, loved, recognised	Validation and Growth		

All

PROFIT
Money/Jobs
Traffi...
VALIDATION AND GROWTH
Be seen, loved, recognised
Growth & reach
Win ...
OTHER
Unsure
Feature request
Blank/...
LEARN AND INTERACT WITH OTHERS
In...
Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer
Get feedback
Interact with fellow creators
IMPACT
Make an impact, my works are used by others



User interviews

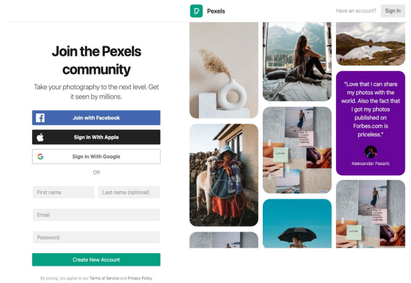
- Have a conversation
- You are not there to sell
- You are here to listen and understand them
- The most important questions are WHY and HOW

Onboarding experience audit

“From **perceiving, experiencing**, and **adopting product’s** value to improve their lives”

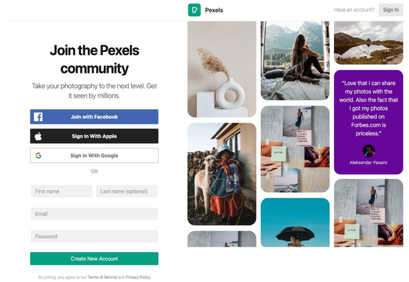
Ramli John, Product-led onboarding

Signup

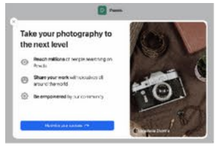

Join the Pexels community
Take your photography to the next level. Get it seen by millions.
Join with Facebook
Sign In With Apple
Sign In With Google
OR
First name
Last name (optional)
Email
Password
Create New Account
By joining, you agree to our Terms of Service and Privacy Policy

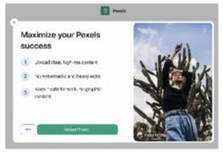
Pexels
Have an account?
Sign In
"Love that I can share my photos with the world. Also the fact that I get my photos published on Forbes.com is priceless."
Aleksandar Pasaric

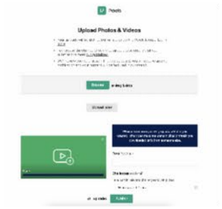
Signup

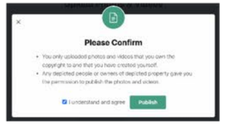


Upload









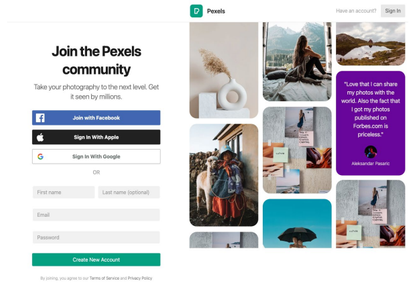
Enrique Hoyos ...

1 min ago

11 steps?

8 too many

Signup



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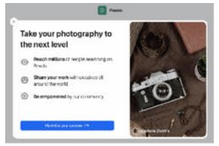

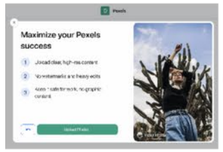

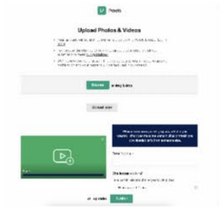

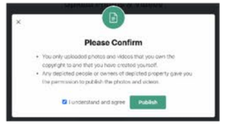

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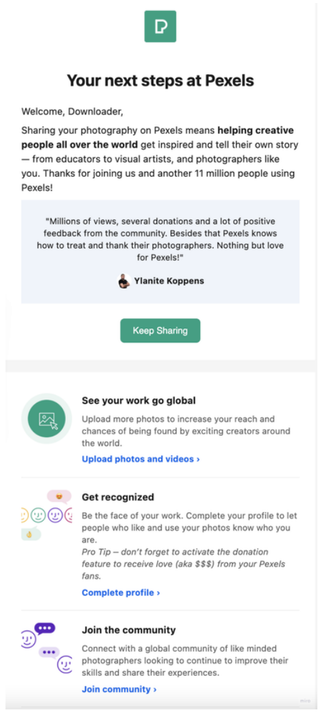
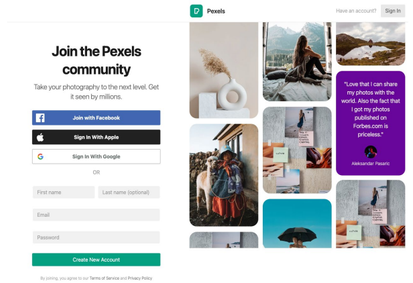


Enrique Hoyos ...

1 min ago

Generic 💩 email that is sent immediately after account creation

Signup



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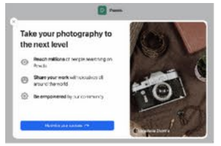

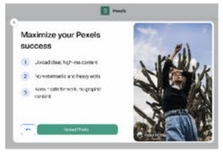

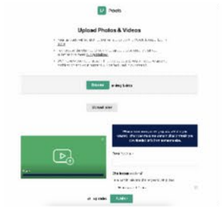

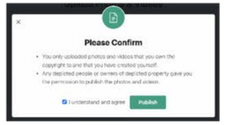

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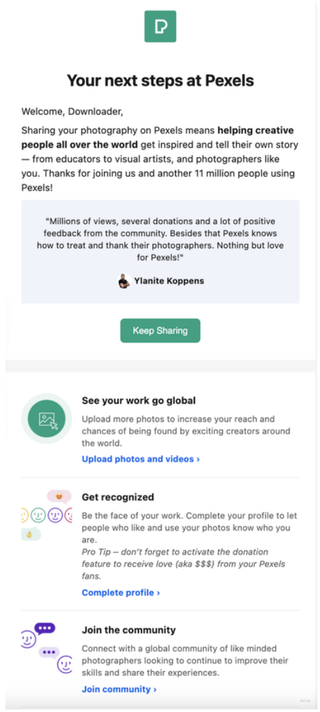
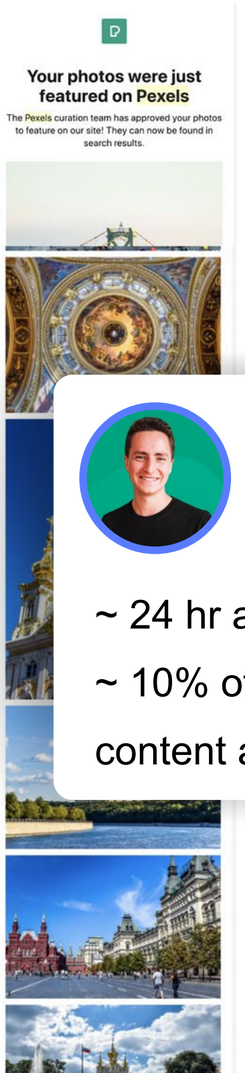
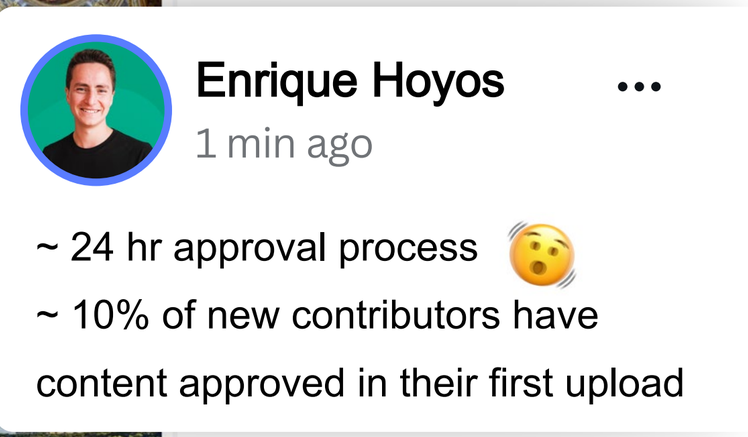


Approval email





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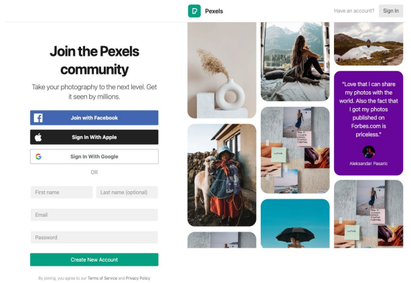

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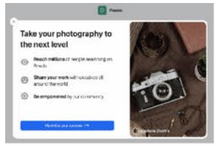
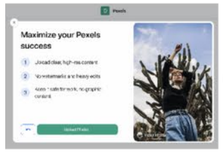
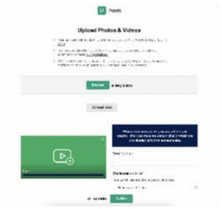
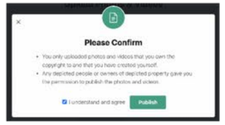
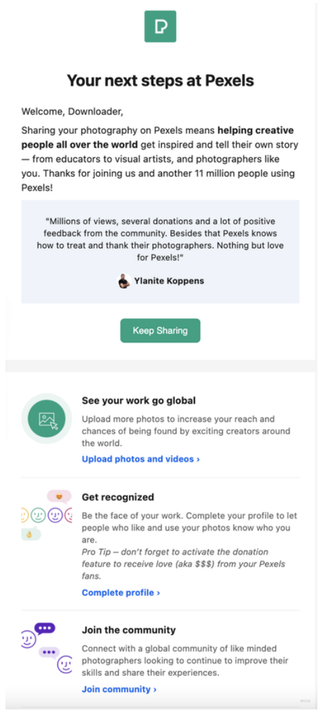






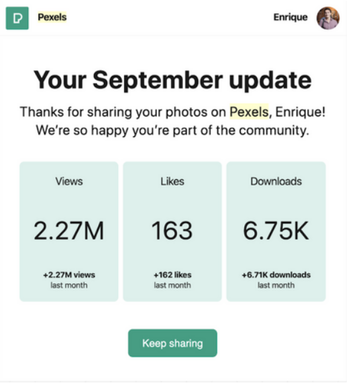


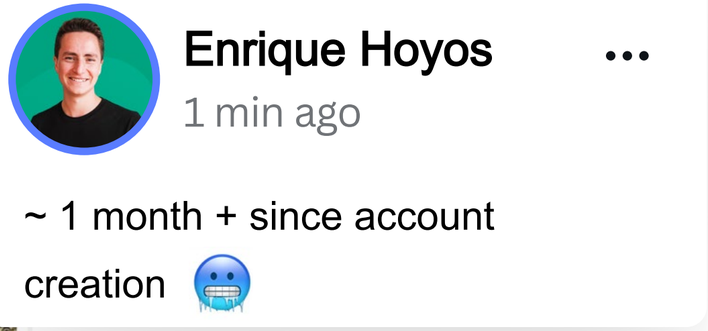
Welcome email

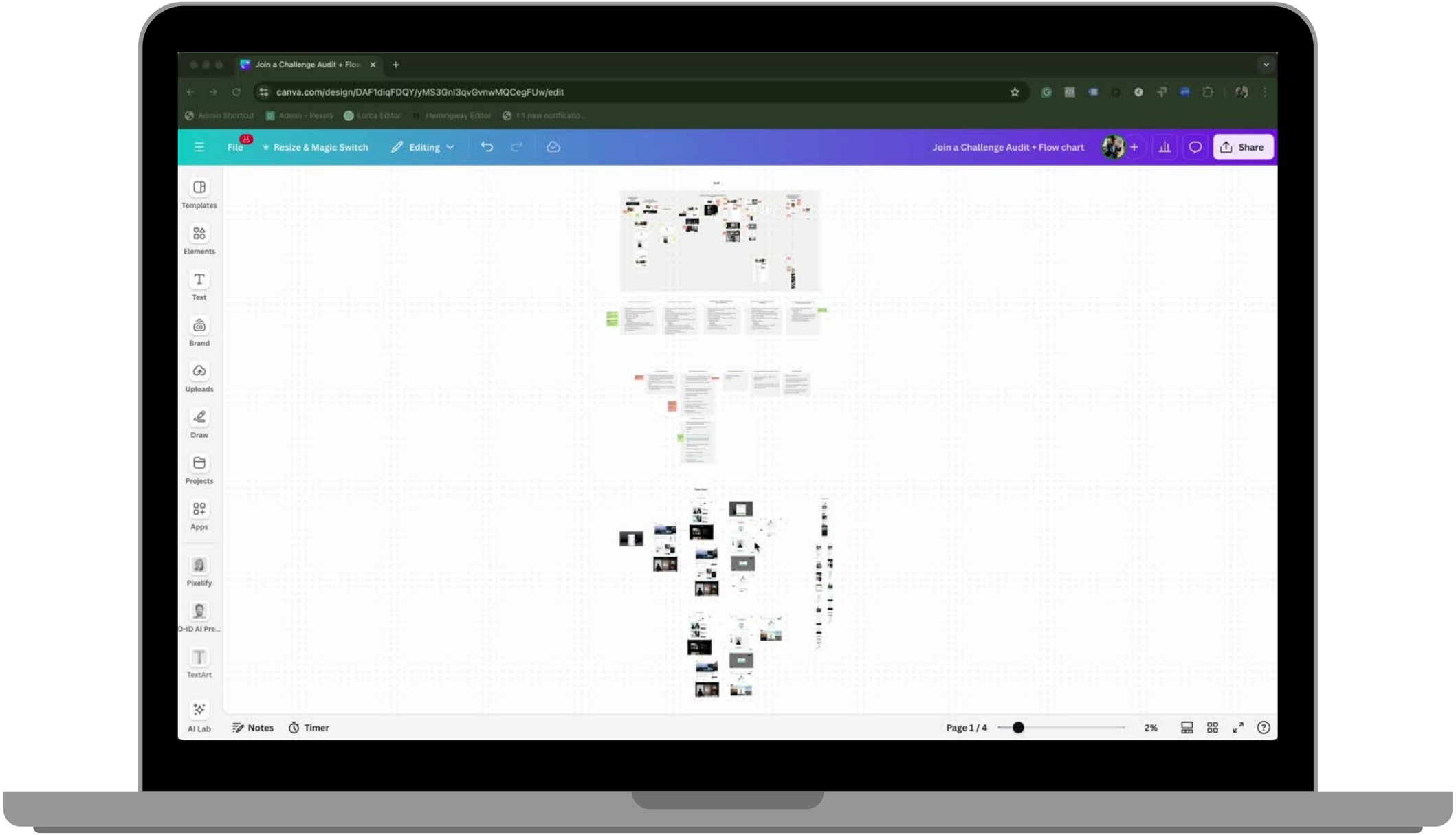


Approval email

Stats email






Join a Challenge Audit + Flow
canva.com/design/DAF1diqFDQY/yMS3Gnl3qvGvnwMQCegFUw/edit
File
Resize & Magic Switch
Editing
Join a Challenge Audit + Flow chart
Share
Templates
Elements
Text
Brand
Uploads
Draw
Projects
Apps
Pixelify
D-ID AI Pre...
TextArt
AI Lab
Notes
Timer
Page 1 / 4
2%

Conversion Requirement	Checklist Item
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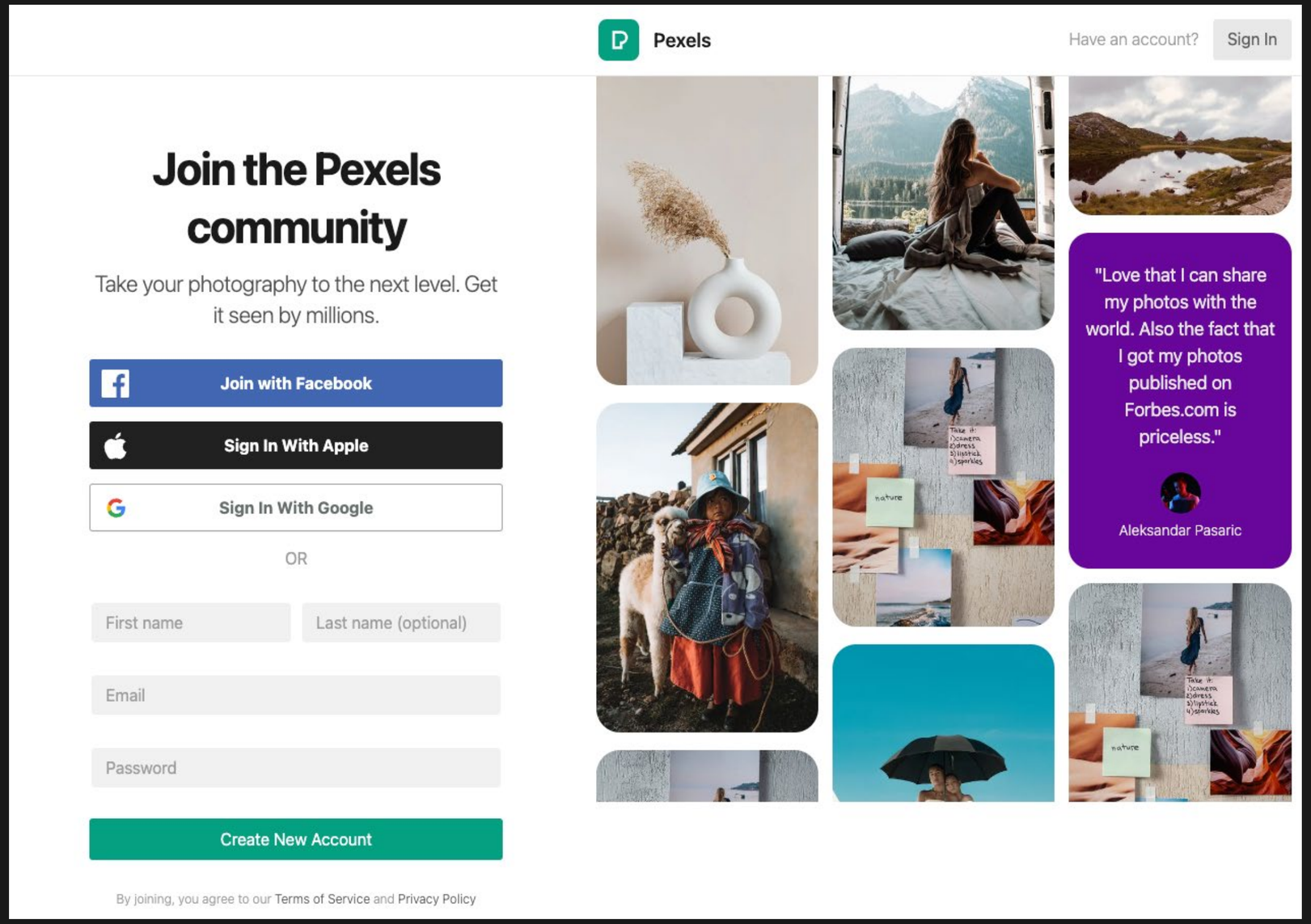


MOMOKO PRICE

There is no clarity on Pexels' value proposition — it makes it extremely hard to deliver timely *value* when they all interpret it as being different.

Step 2: Strategy

Identify Problem

Strategy

Execution

Strategy is a how to accomplish a what.

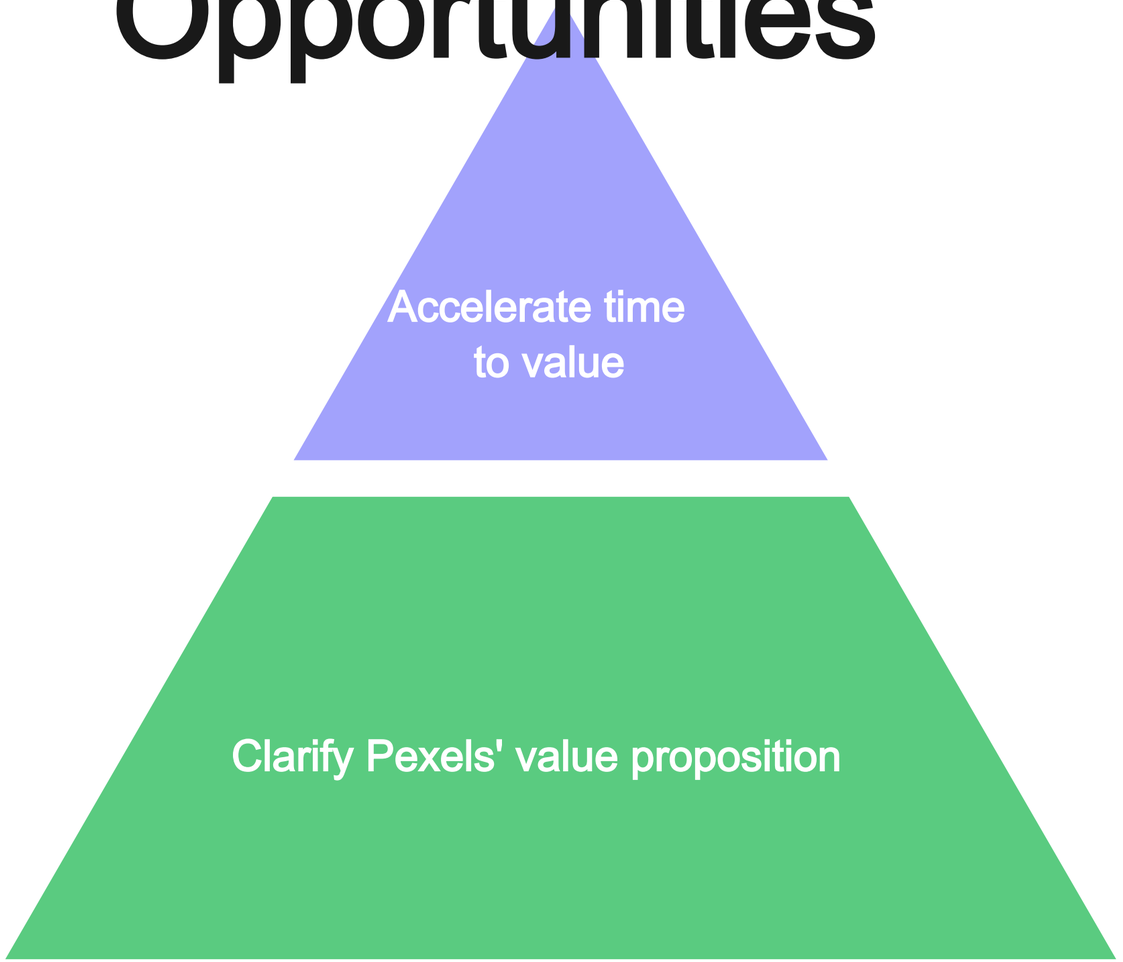
Strategy is a how to accomplish a what.

Strategy is a how to accomplish a what.

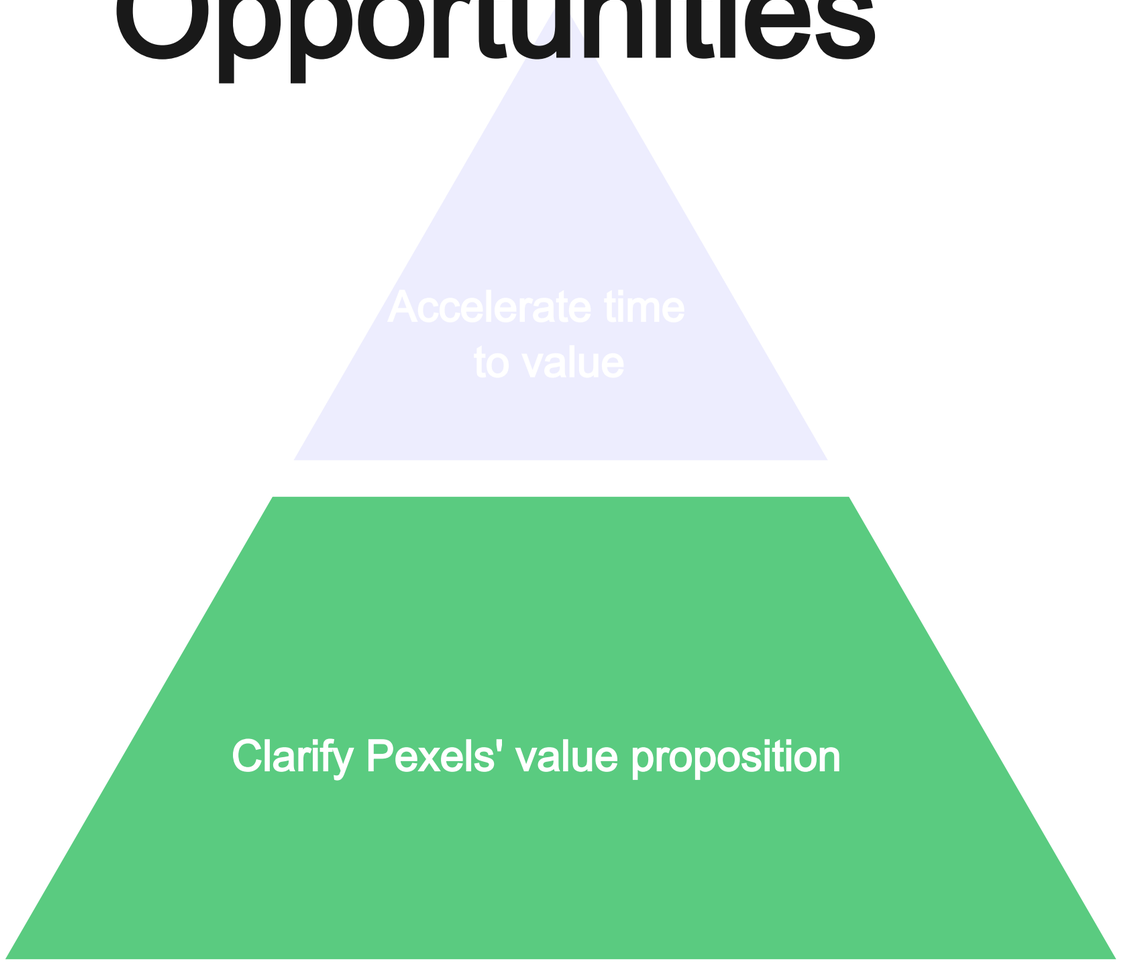
Strategy is a how to accomplish a what.

Retain more contributors in the first 4 weeks, having them upload more often, increasing the approved content.

Key Opportunities

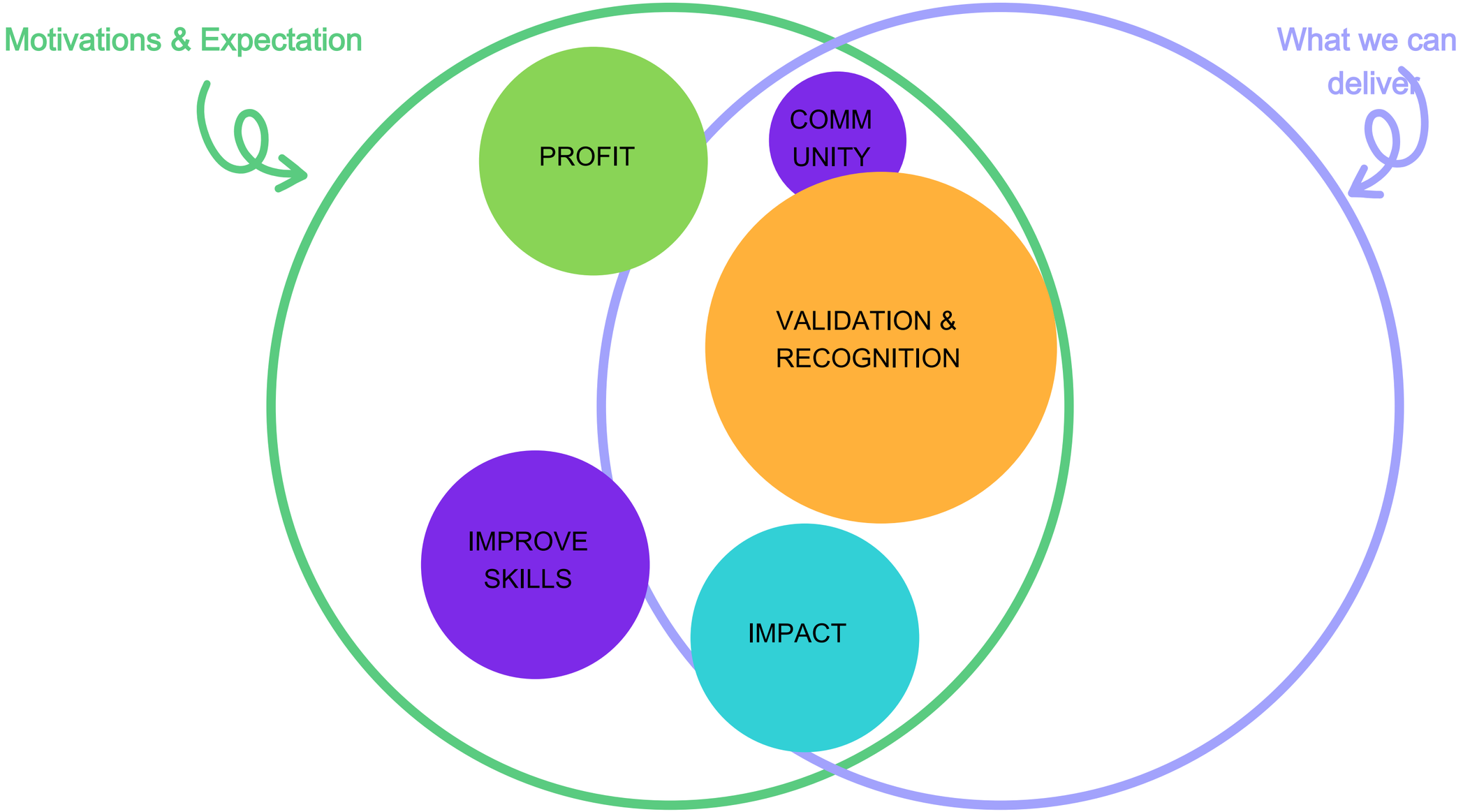


Key Opportunities

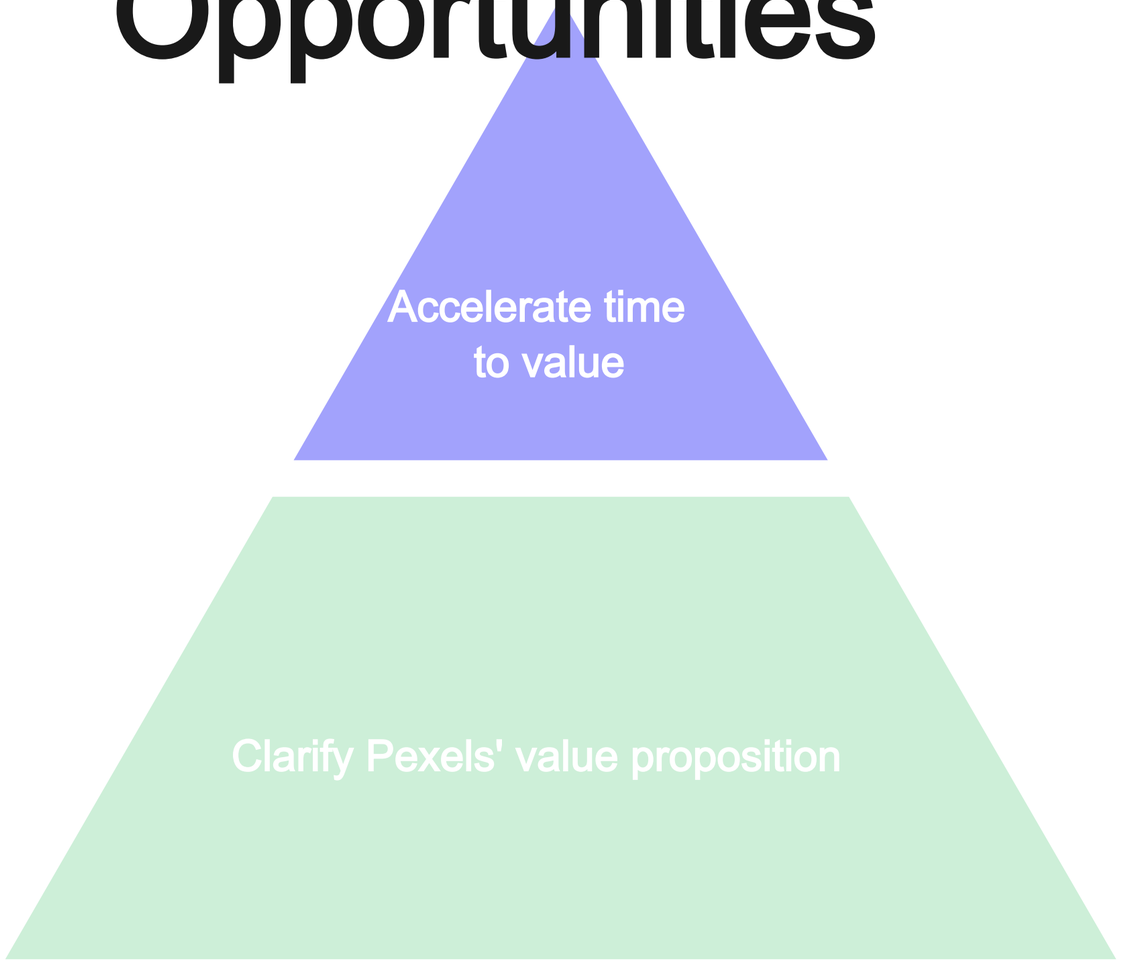


All

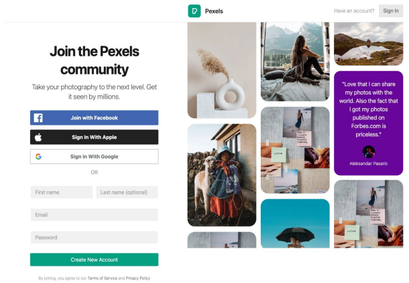
PROFIT
Money/Jobs
Traffi...
VALIDATION AND GROWTH
Be seen, loved, recognised
Growth & reach
Win ...
OTHER
Unsure
Feature request
Blank/...
LEARN AND INTERACT WITH OTHERS
In...
Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer
Get feedback
Interact with fellow creators
IMPACT
Make an impact, my works are used by others


Motivations & Expectation
What we can deliver
PROFIT
COMM UNITY
VALIDATION & RECOGNITION
IMPROVE SKILLS
IMPACT

Key Opportunities



Signup



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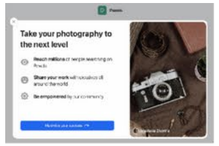
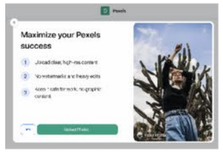
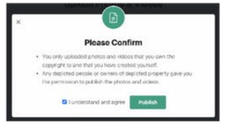
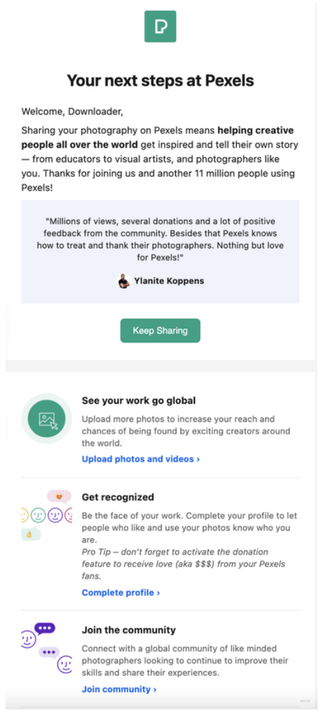




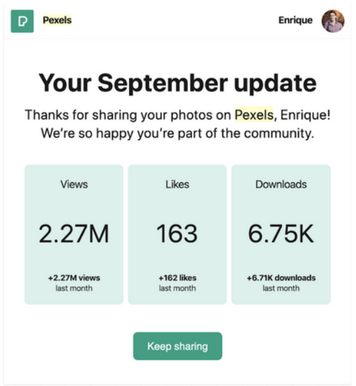


Welcome email



Approval email

Stats email



Rebuild onboarding experience, focusing on providing contributors validation and recognition —in ~50% less time.

Strategy is a how to accomplish a what.

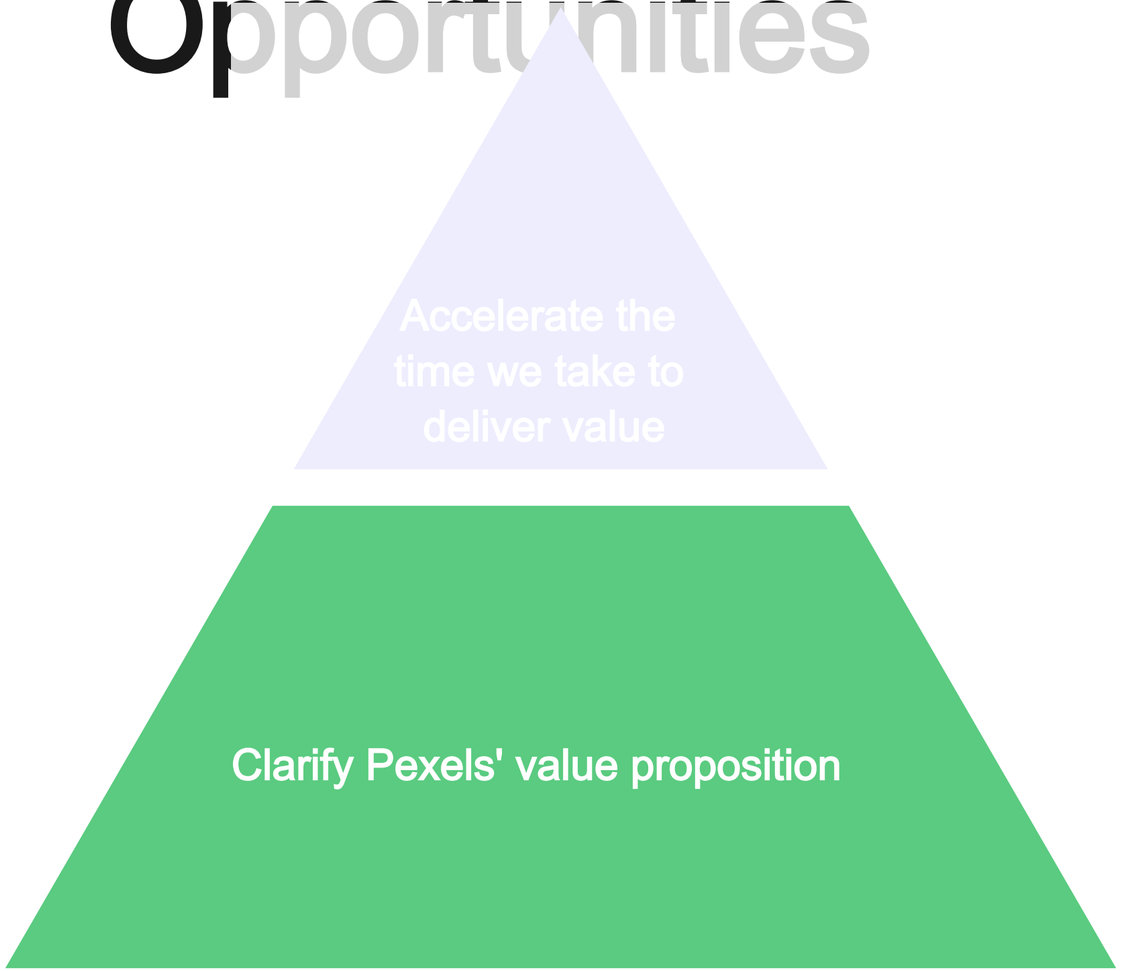
Step 3: Execute

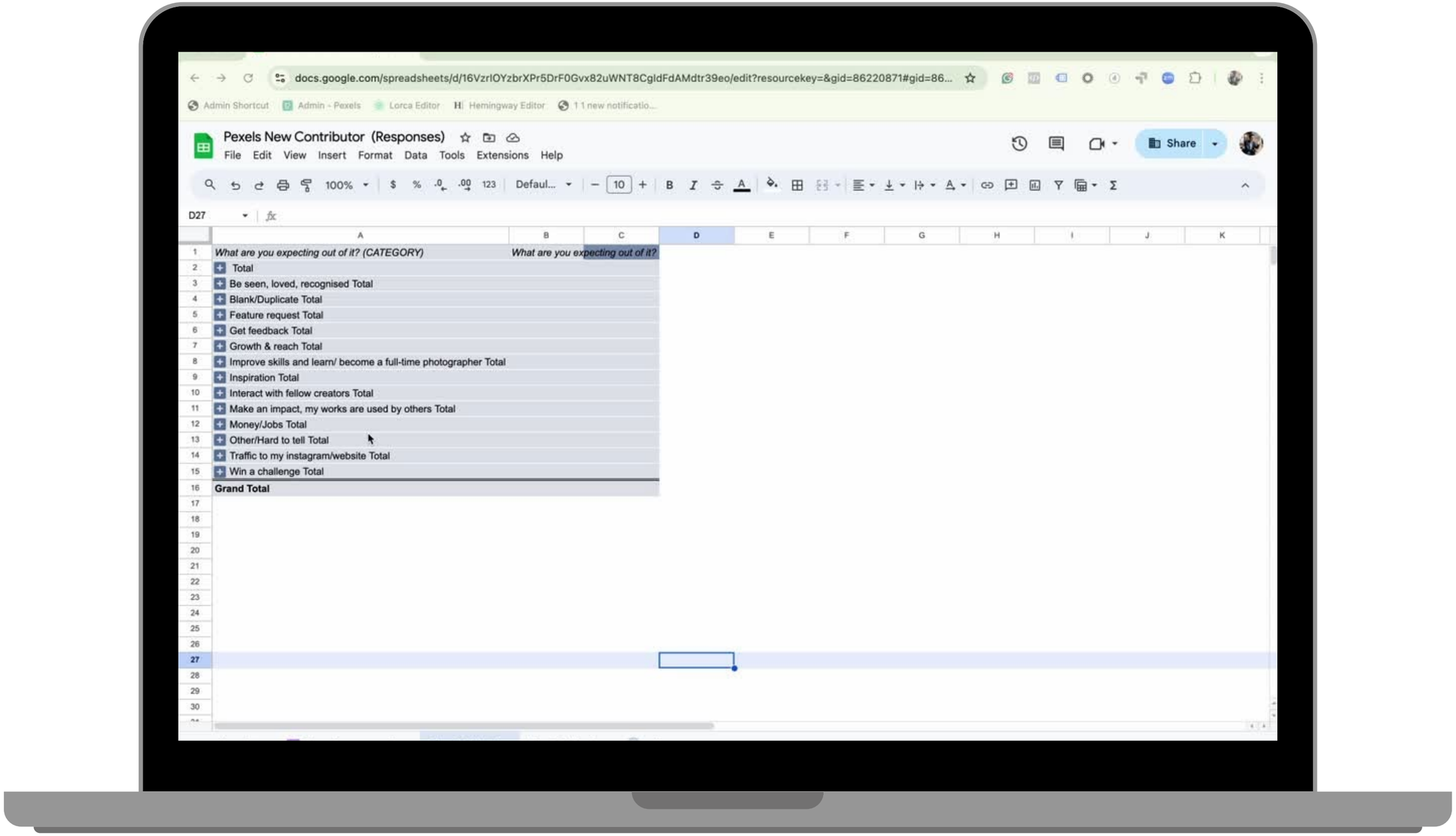
Identify Problem

Strategy

Execution

Key Opportunities

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Admin Shortcut
Admin - Pexels
Lorca Editor
Hemingway Editor
1 1 new notificatio...
Pexels New Contributor (Responses)
File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help
Share
D27
What are you expecting out of it? (CATEGORY)
What are you expecting out of it?
Total
Be seen, loved, recognised Total
Blank/Duplicate Total
Feature request Total
Get feedback Total
Growth & reach Total
Improve skills and learn/ become a full-time photographer Total
Inspiration Total
Interact with fellow creators Total
Make an impact, my works are used by others Total
Money/Jobs Total
Other/Hard to tell Total
Traffic to my instagram/website Total
Win a challenge Total
Grand Total

Where your photography is seen, used, and loved by the world.

Speaks to people who identify themselves as photographers

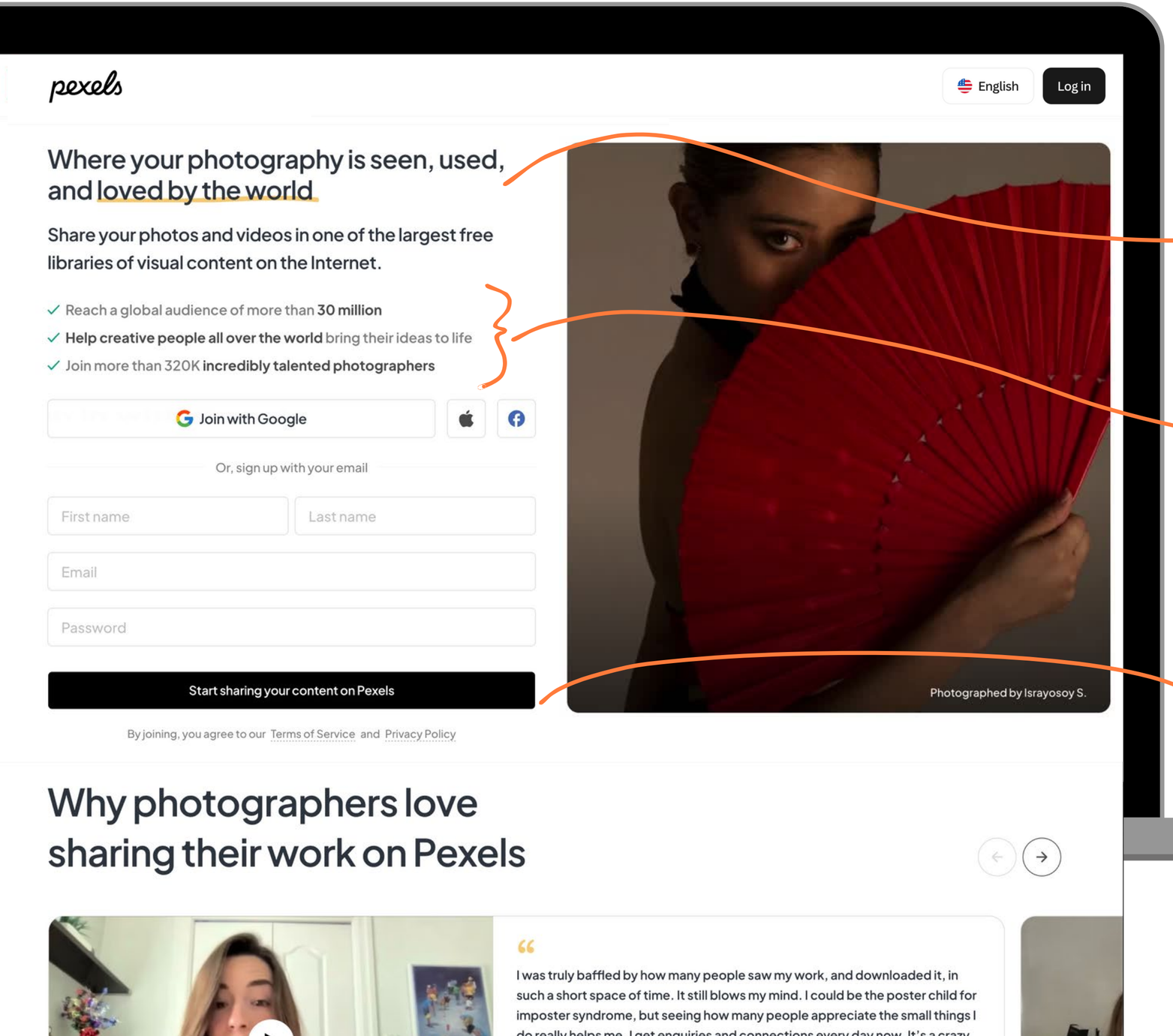
Where your photography is seen, used, and loved by the world.

Where your photography is seen, used, and loved by the world.

What actually happens to your content on Pexels. We don’t want to hide that content is used and not just admired.

Where your photography is seen, used, and loved by the world.

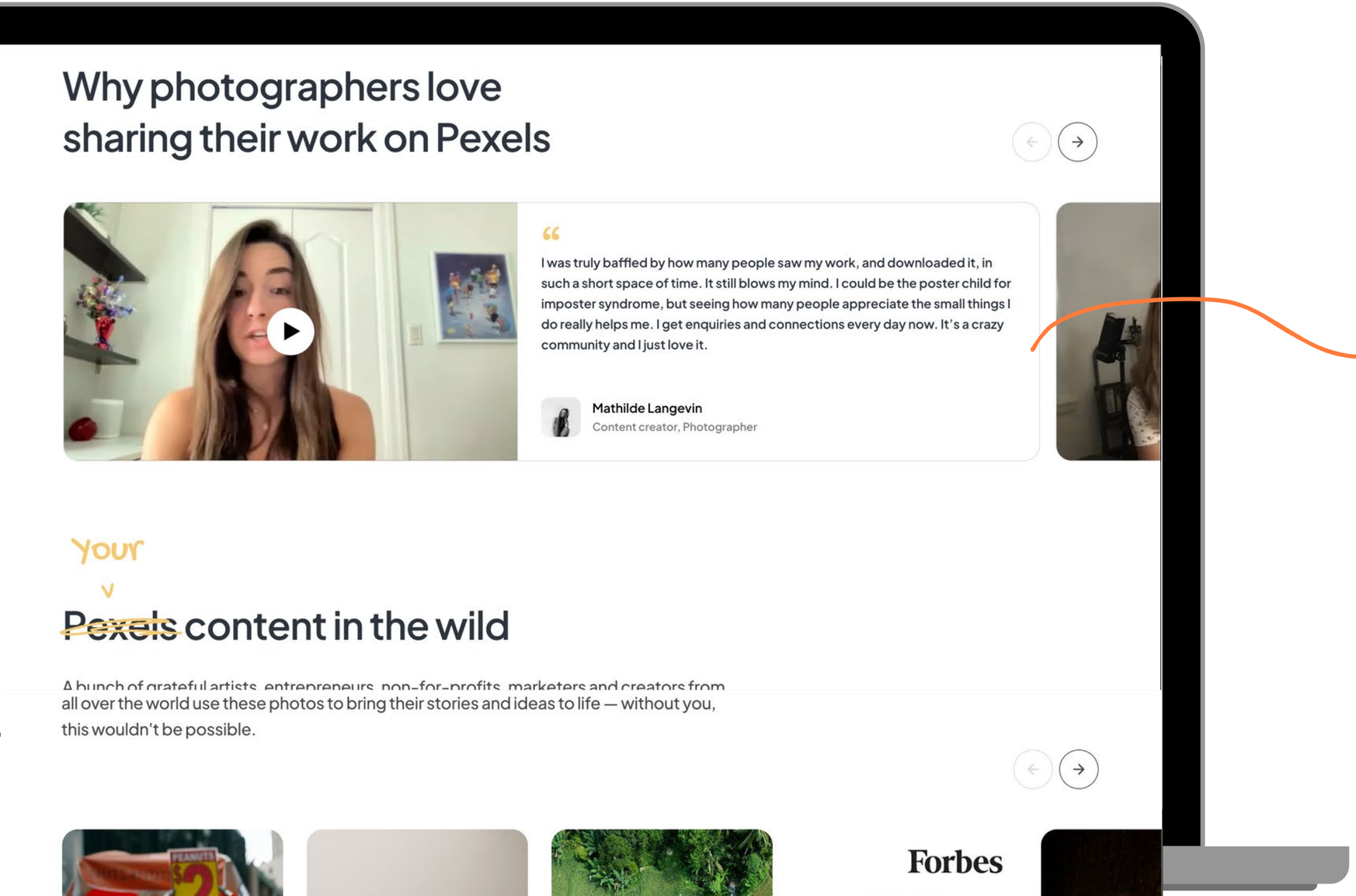
It tells the photographer that if they are looking for recognition and validation, Pexels is the place where it happens.



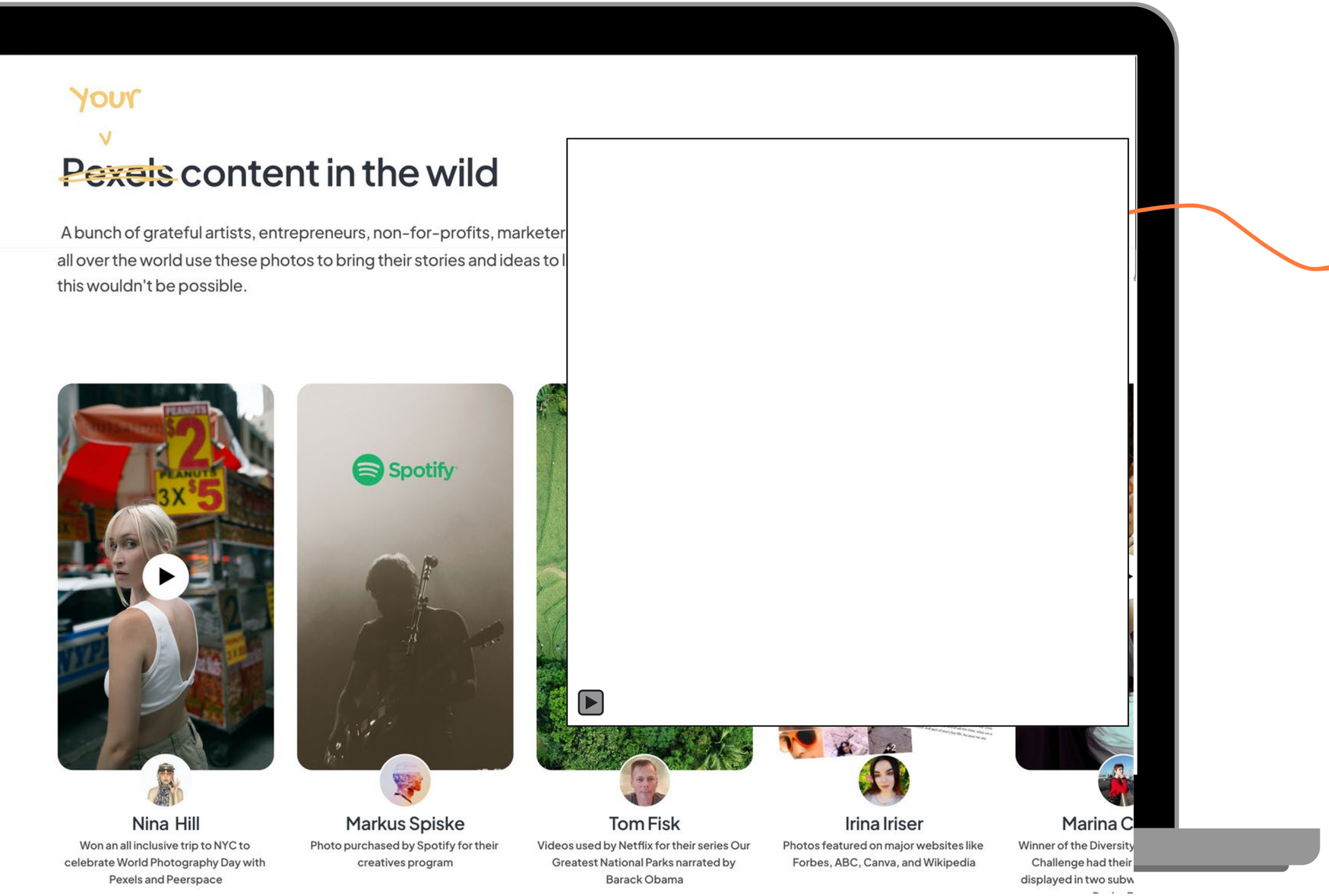
Headline that hits the motivations and hopes

High-level proof that backs up the big headline

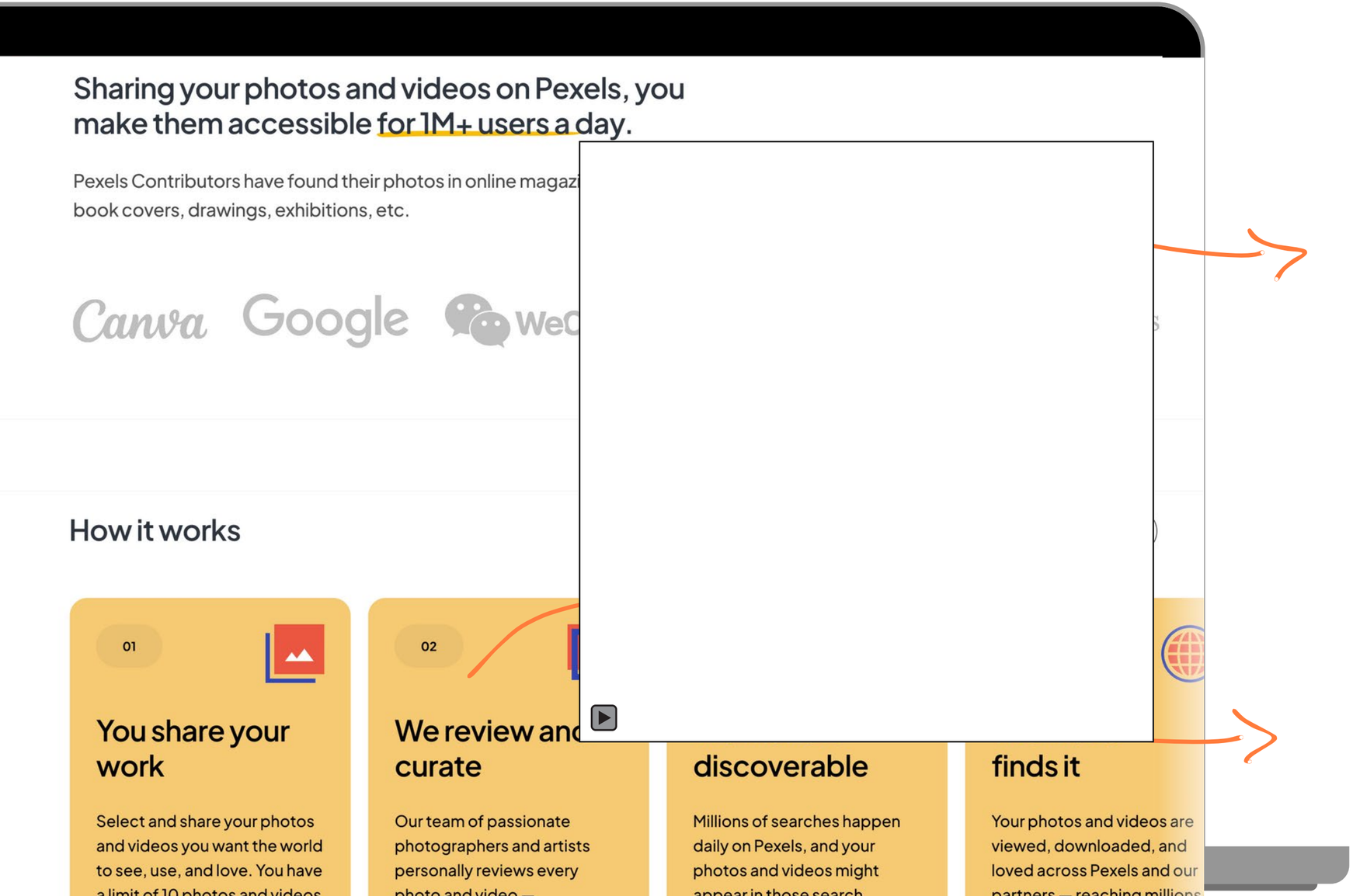
CTA to share (not just create account)



Social proof in video and written form of photographers explaining their experiences with Pexels.

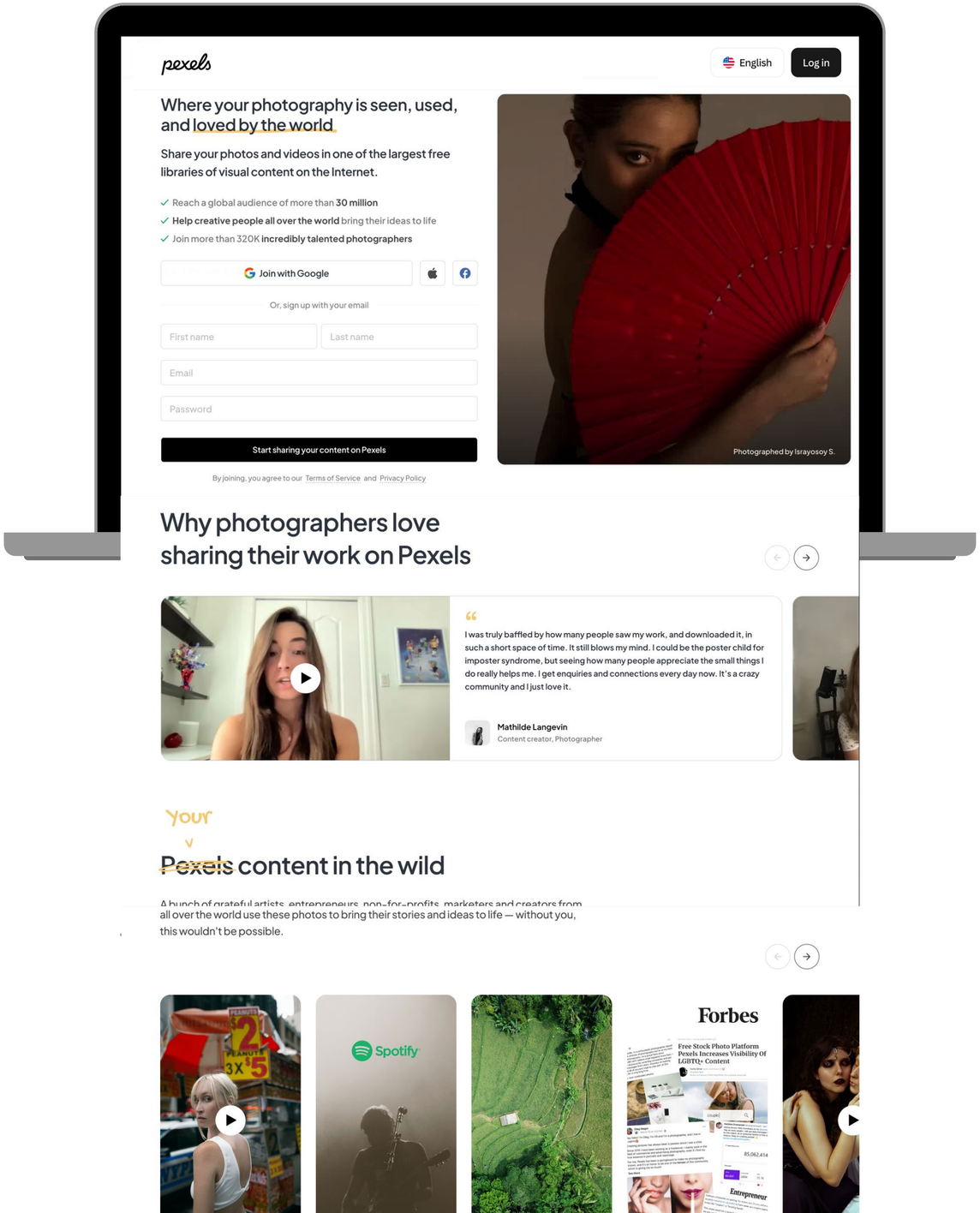


Story telling of exciting and unique things that have happened to Pexels contributors and their content.



More proof and social backing from large and recognizable brands that use our content.

Fully explaining the process after an upload —setting better expectations on time.



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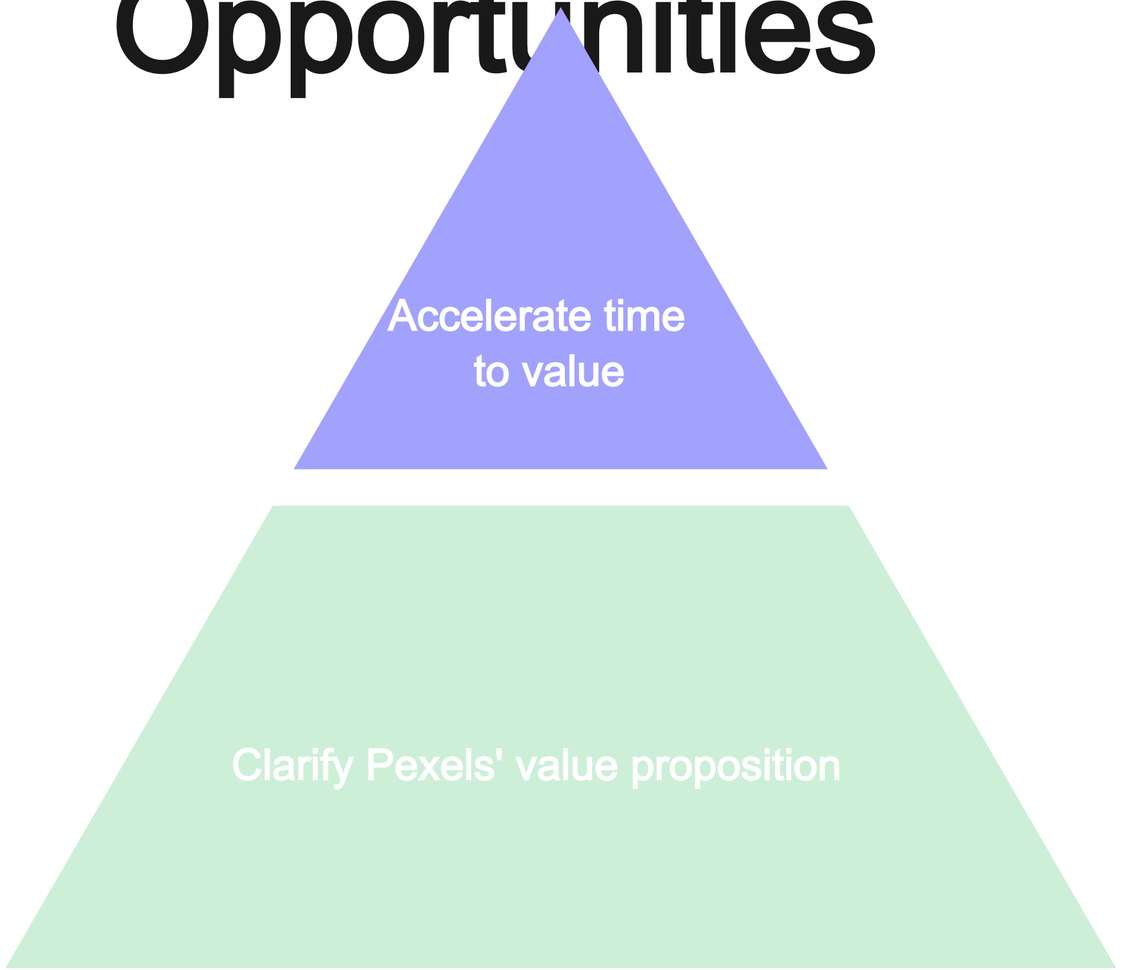
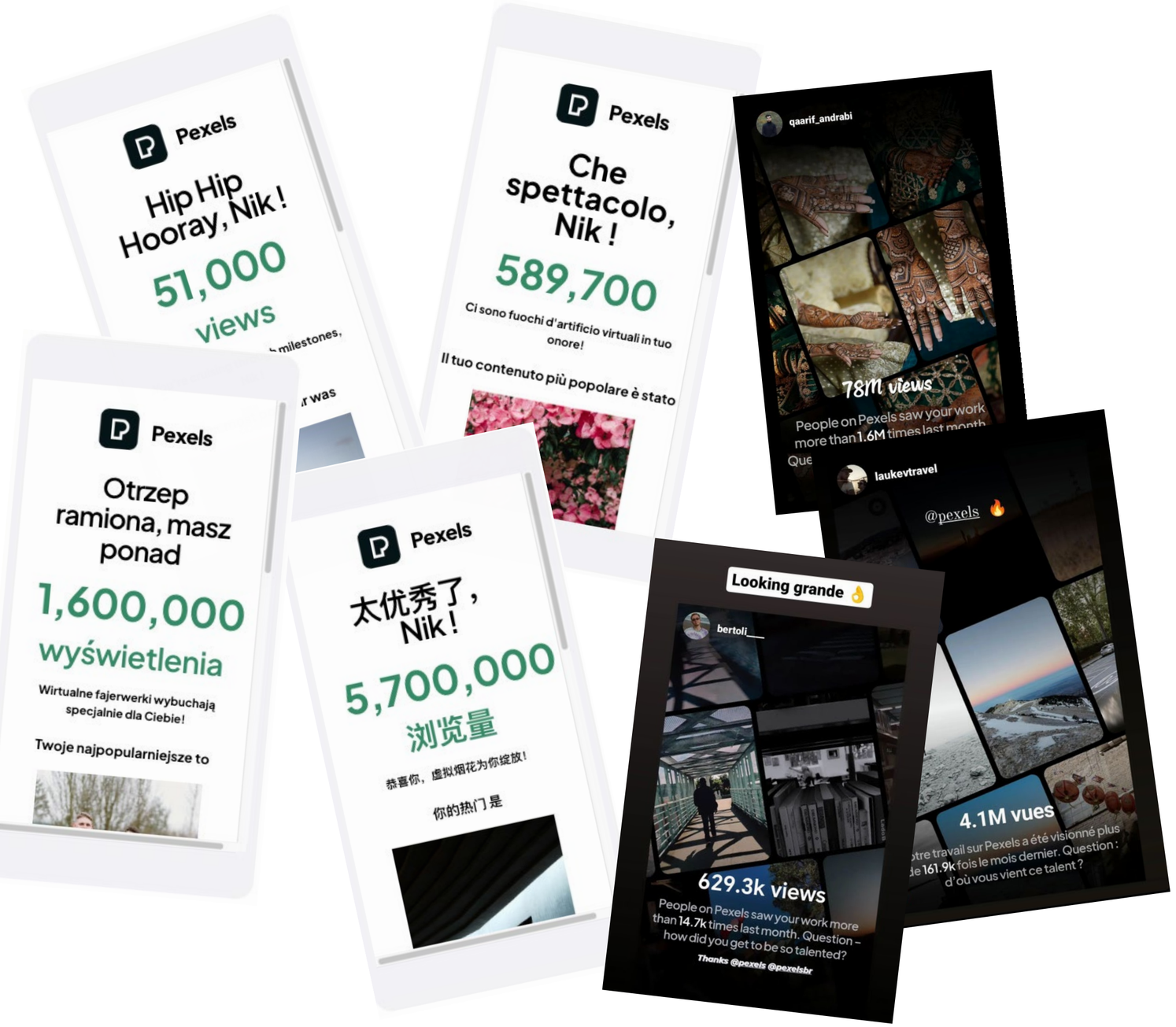
Key Opportunities



New mechanics for recognition and validation



Dynamic Milestones

Home page feature

You're front and center on Pexels!

Only a select few creators are curated to the Pexels homepage each day — your photo is stunning, and it deserved to be there today👏

View your work on the homepage

Fun Fact: The Pexels homepage is visited more times each week than Rio de Janeiro, Brazil is visited each year💵 That's in the millions!

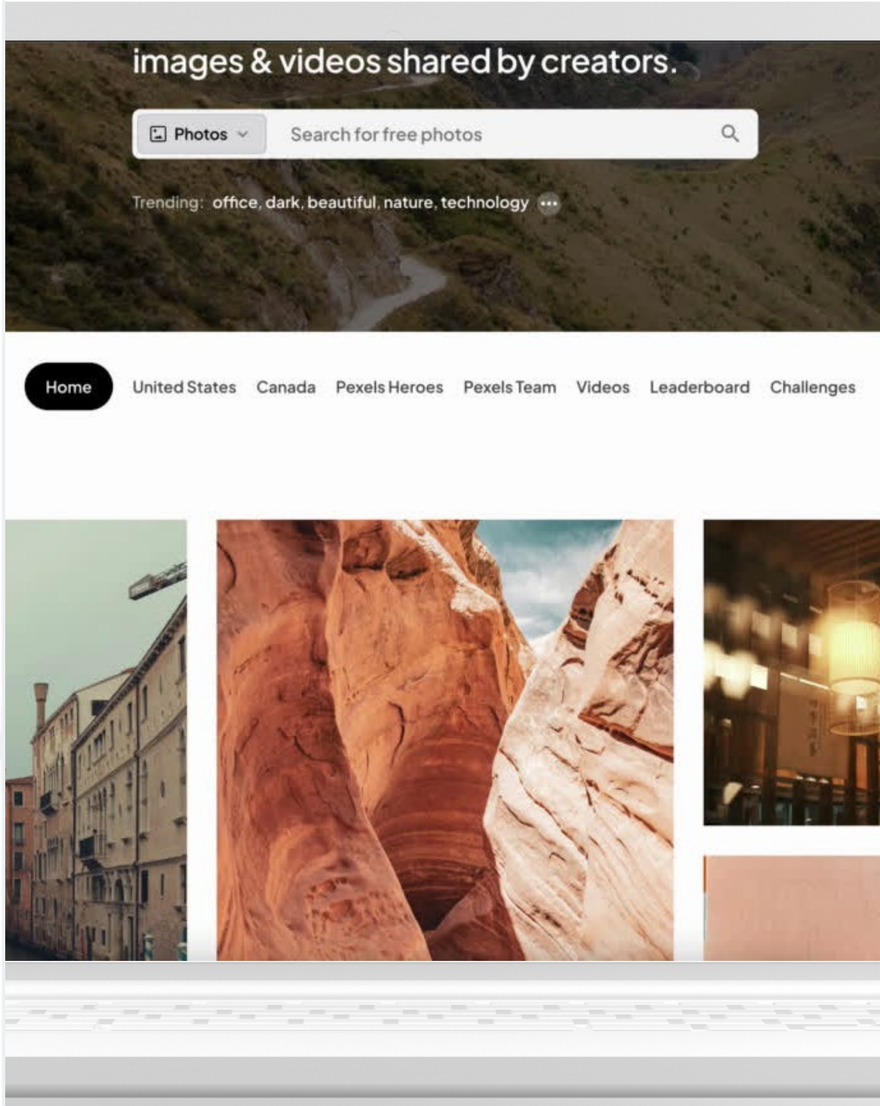
You're making a difference, Nik 💜

Your work is inspiring creators, helping small businesses, and making a positive difference for people around the world. You're part of a creative movement that's building a free and open content library that's accessible to us all, and it wouldn't be possible without you.

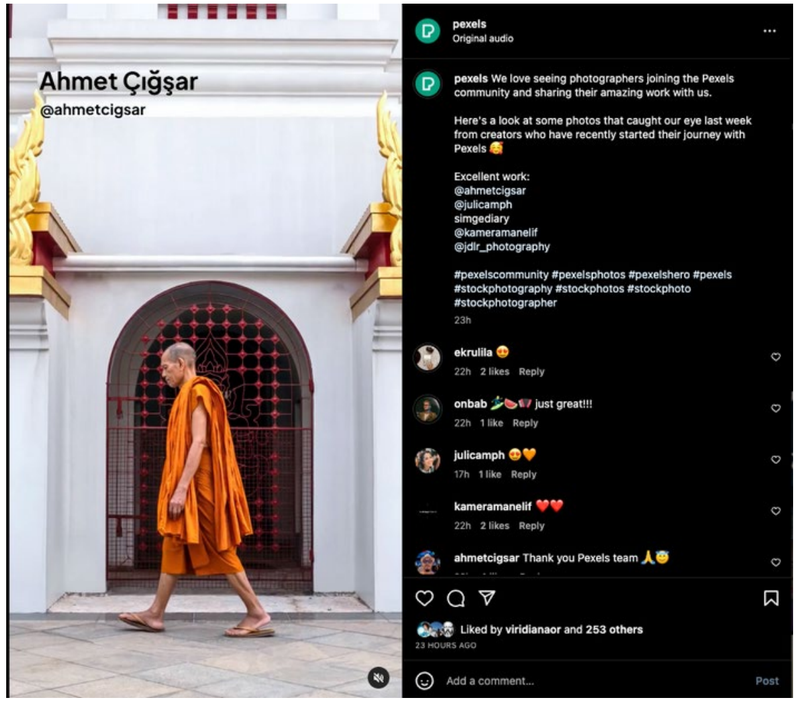
Looking forward to seeing more of your incredible work on Pexels!

Andrew Neel
Head of Content

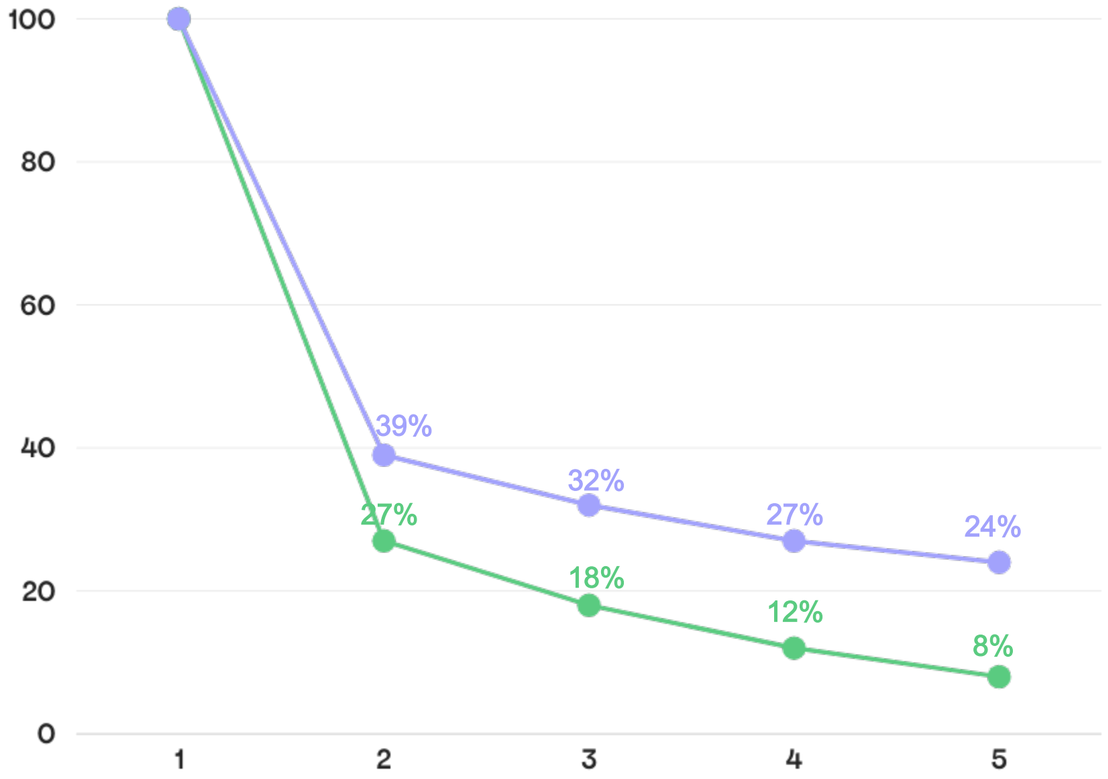
Share more of your amazing work

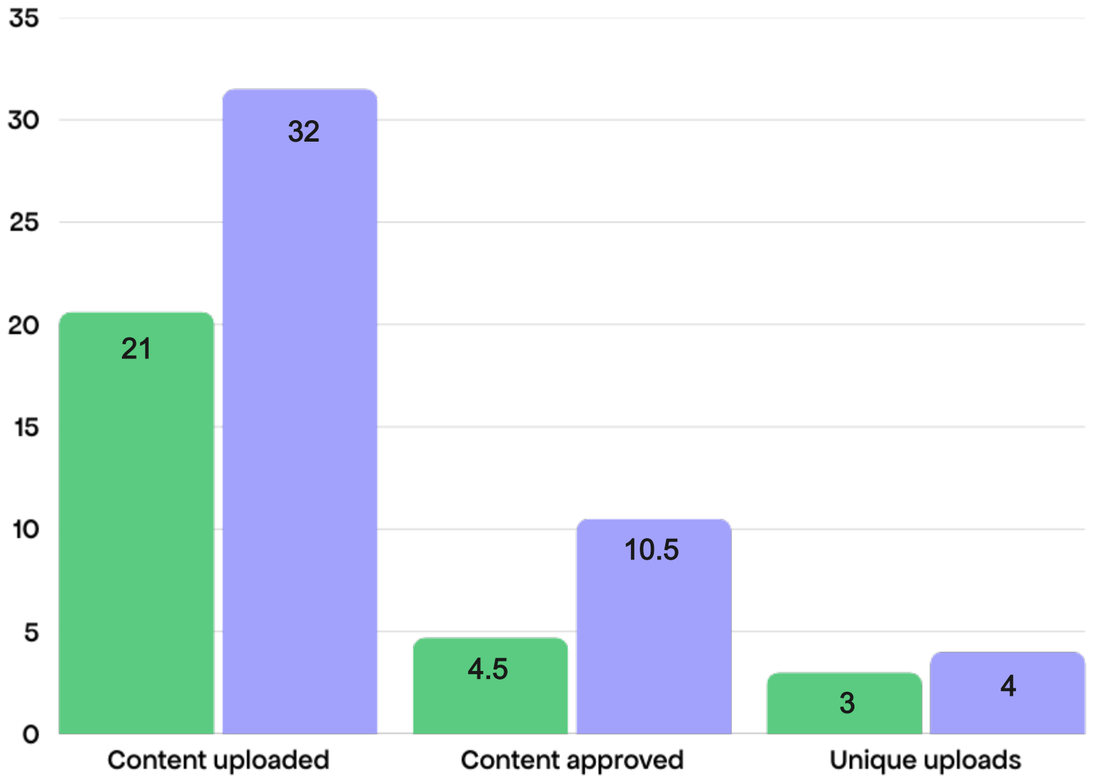


Social media features



Faster and more meaningful value





The Roadmap

Identify Problem

Strategy

Execution

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