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VANTAGE

Fast digital intelligence
AI speed + human smarts

Bastion Vantage goes beyond traditional social listening tools and helps you quickly understand what people are saying, feeling and talking about online - in days not weeks or months



November 2026

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With Bastion Vantage, you get more than data - you get actionable real time intelligence tailored to your unique challenges

Giving you a knowledge advantage & strength to act

Bastion Vantage combines cutting-edge AI technology with the deep expertise of our Insights team to turn millions of digital conversations into strategic, decision-ready insights.

AI powers the analysis to give us speed, breadth and efficiencies, but it's our people who ask the right questions, interpret the data and deliver meaning – helping you move beyond a sea of data to real business impact.

Bastion Vantage gives you fast access to a critical additional data point: what people online are saying about your brand, your product, your industry, etc.

Aggregates public digital conversations from social media, search engines, news sites, blogs and forums to capture what people are saying about brands, topics, or issues.

Uses AI to organise and cluster these conversations into themes, identifying patterns, sentiment and emerging trends at scale.

Provides quantified outputs – such as the size and relevance of each theme – so users can see which topics are gaining traction or driving sentiment.

Delivers synthesised, actionable insights that can be used for strategy, messaging, product development, or campaign planning, with expert interpretation from the Bastion Insights team.

Use case	Traditional social listening tools 'signal detection'	Bastion Vantage 'sense-making & interpretation'
Cultural trend discovery	Limited	Core strength
Brand positioning & innovation	Partial	Core strength
Insight generation without analysts	X	Core strength
Crisis monitoring	Core strength	Secondary strength
PR & comms reporting	Yes	X

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Bastion Vantage: fast digital intelligence.

Bastion Vantage is Bastion Insights' digital intelligence offering, designed to understand how topics, brands, issues and behaviours are being discussed in public online spaces.

We analyse large volumes of publicly available digital data to identify patterns, themes and shifts in conversation, providing a real time view of the cultural and consumer landscape.

Bastion Vantage captures what people choose to talk about, search for and share organically – offering a complementary perspective to traditional research methodologies.

Data Sources

Analysis draws on public digital environments, including:

- Social media platforms (public posts and content)
- Google search behaviour
- Online news media
- Blogs and other long form digital content

Only publicly accessible data is included. No private accounts, paywalled content or personal data is collected or stored, and all analysis is conducted in line with privacy and ethical standards.

Analytical Approach

Bastion Vantage uses advanced AI enabled analysis combined with expert human interpretation to move beyond surface level metrics (such as mentions or volume alone) and focus on meaning, context and patterns of discourse.

Key elements of the approach include:

- Thematic analysis to identify recurring narratives, topics and ideas within conversations
- Contextual interpretation, assessing how and why topics are discussed, not just how often
- Trend and time-based analysis to understand how conversations evolve
- Comparative analysis across channels or audiences where relevant

Importantly, Bastion Insights researchers frame the questions, interpret outputs and apply strategic judgement – ensuring insights are relevant, nuanced and decision ready, rather than purely algorithmic.

How to Interpret the Outputs

Bastion Vantage findings should be understood as qualitative directional intelligence:

- They reflect what is visible and being expressed online, not necessarily what all people think or feel
- They capture the voices of those motivated to post, search or publish content, which may over represent some perspectives and under represent others
- They indicate patterns, signals and emerging themes, rather than statistically representative results

Outputs are best used as:

- A lens on cultural context and momentum
- An early indicator of emerging risks or opportunities
- A complementary data point alongside surveys, qualitative research and business data

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How clients typically use Bastion Vantage (and when it adds the most value).

Background understanding & fast immersion

"I need to get smart on this topic quickly."

- Early stages of a project or pitch
- New category / issue / policy area
- Client teams with limited existing insight or fragmented knowledge

What Bastion Vantage does

- Scans millions of unprompted public conversations across social, search, news and blogs.
- Identifies the dominant narratives, tensions, emotions and language people are already using.
- Surfaces what people care enough to talk about, not what they say when asked in a survey.

What you get

- A clear, structured view of "what's going on out there right now"
- Shared context across stakeholders
- Confidence they're not starting from assumptions or outdated thinking

Hypothesis generation & sharpening the brief

"What should we actually be testing?"

- Before designing a survey or qual discussion guide
- When a brief is broad, vague or internally contested
- When stakeholders have competing theories

What Bastion Vantage does

- Reveals natural clusters of conversation rather than pre-defined categories
- Highlights emerging themes, contradictions and unmet needs
- Shows what is salient versus what is niche or declining

What you get

- Strong, evidence-based hypotheses to test in primary research
- More focused questionnaires and discussion guides
- Fewer "nice to know" questions, more "decision-driving" ones

Rich category understanding for branding & positioning

"What does this category mean to people?"

- Brand strategy and positioning
- Repositioning or portfolio architecture
- Entering new or fast-evolving categories

Bastion Vantage moves beyond functional attributes to cultural meaning and identifies:

- Emotional drivers
- Symbolism and rituals
- Values, tensions and trade-offs

What you get

- A deeper understanding of how the category is framed in people's lives
- Clear white space vs overcrowded territory
- Language and metaphors that feel authentic rather than "brand-y"

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How clients typically use Bastion Vantage (and when it adds the most value).

Communications & creative development

"How should we talk about this so it actually lands?"

- Campaign development
- Messaging frameworks
- Narrative and tone-of-voice decisions

What Bastion Vantage does

- Surfaces real consumer language and framing
- Shows how people emotionally respond to different ideas
- Highlights scepticism, backlash or fatigue early

What you get

- Messaging grounded in how people already talk and think
- Fewer tone-deaf or overly commercial executions
- Clear guidance on what to lean into – and what to avoid

Early signal detection & trend sensing

"What's coming next – before it's obvious?"

- Innovation and pipeline planning
- Trend monitoring
- Risk and reputation management

What Bastion Vantage does

- Identifies emerging topics before they peak
- Tracks shifts in sentiment and discourse over time
- Flags weak signals that may not yet show up in surveys

What you get

- A forward-looking view of risk and opportunity
- Time to act, not react
- A real-time lens to complement slower, more robust research

Context layer alongside traditional research

"How does this fit with what our survey is telling us?"

- Tracking studies
- Campaign evaluation
- CX and reputation programs

What Bastion Vantage does

- Provides qualitative directional intelligence at scale
- Helps explain *why* certain survey results might be moving
- Acts as a sense-check on representativeness vs salience

What you get

- Richer interpretation of quant and qual results
- Greater confidence in recommendations
- A more rounded evidence base for decision-making

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How does Bastion Vantage help my organisation?

Bastion Vantage is an advanced AI-driven insights platform designed to help organisations truly understand their audiences. By scanning millions of digital conversations across social media, forums, blogs and news sites, Bastion Vantage uncovers what people genuinely think, feel and value.

This means your organisation can discover hidden trends and unmet needs, gain a deeper understanding of authentic customer sentiment and make faster, smarter decisions. Ultimately, Bastion Vantage enables you to build stronger relationships by responding to what matters most to your audience.

What expertise does Bastion Insights bring to interpreting digital conversations?

Our researchers are skilled in framing the questions that matter most and translating vast amounts of online data into meaningful, context-rich insights.

We go beyond the numbers to uncover the real stories, trends and sentiment that drive your audience, providing recommendations grounded in social context and real-world relevance.

Why is Bastion Vantage the ideal starting point for understanding your audience?

Bastion Vantage gives you a real-time, comprehensive view of what and how people are talking about your topic, product, or organisation today.

By analysing conversations across social media, Google, news and blogs, we help you understand the current landscape and identify emerging opportunities or risks – making it the perfect foundation for any research program.

How does Bastion Insights deliver results using Bastion Vantage?

Bastion Insights operates the Bastion Vantage platform for you, managing every step of the process.

Our team of expert researchers asks the right questions, prepares the insights and delivers clear, actionable results tailored to your needs.

We translate complex digital conversations into strategic recommendations, ensuring you receive intelligence that's relevant and easy to act on.

How is Bastion Vantage different from traditional research?

Traditional research methods, such as surveys and focus groups, can be slow, expensive and limited in scope. Bastion Vantage takes a different approach by listening to real conversations as they happen online, capturing the genuine voice of your audience at scale.

Instead of waiting weeks or months for results, you receive insights in days. You can see what people say when they're not prompted by a researcher, spot emerging risks and opportunities before your competitors and go beyond the numbers to understand the stories, emotions and context behind the data.

Can Bastion Vantage track changes and trends over time?

Yes. Bastion Vantage continuously monitors digital conversations, providing ongoing insights into how public sentiment and discussions evolve.

This enables you to spot trends, shifts and emerging topics as they happen, so you can stay ahead of the curve and respond proactively.

How quickly can I get insights with Bastion Vantage?

With Bastion Vantage, you'll see results in days rather than months.

The platform provides real-time monitoring, so you're always up to date with the latest trends and sentiment shifts. There's a fast turnaround for custom queries and deep dives, ensuring you can respond rapidly to changes in your market.

What about privacy and data security?

Privacy and data security are top priorities for Bastion.

The Bastion Vantage platform only analyses publicly available data and is fully compliant with privacy regulations. No personal data is collected or stored and your organisation's insights are kept confidential and secure.

This technology is trusted by leading brands and governments worldwide, so you can be confident that your data is handled ethically and responsibly.

Example outputs & Case studies



Australian Army

Understanding public perceptions of Army in a changing security environment

This project showcases how Bastion Vantage can complement traditional research by capturing the broader public conversation surrounding a complex and evolving organisation.

By analysing the unprompted conversations Australians were having online, Vantage provided an additional lens on how Army's role, capability and reputation were being understood and discussed beyond the research room.

The Brief

The Australian Army engaged Bastion Insights to build a deeper understanding of public sentiment, awareness and perceptions of Army, supporting its ongoing strategic communications and brand development.

Against an increasingly complex global security environment, the research needed to understand not only how Australians felt about Army, but what shaped those perceptions and where gaps in understanding remained.

Our Approach

Bastion Insights delivered a mixed method research program, with Bastion Vantage providing an additional layer of contextual intelligence alongside qualitative and quantitative research.

Bastion Vantage analysed public online conversations across a series of questions exploring how Australians talked about the Army overall, its capability and readiness, changing role and history, public understanding of its role, and perceptions of Army as an employer.

This allowed us to examine the narratives already circulating around Army and identify where public conversation aligned with, added context to, or differed from prompted research findings.

The Outcome

Bastion Vantage revealed the unprompted conversations Australians were having about Army, providing a real-time view of the narratives and issues shaping perceptions outside the research environment.

Bringing Vantage together with qualitative and quantitative evidence provided Army with a richer understanding of the environment in which its communications operate, helping identify the narratives, knowledge gaps and opportunities most important to building greater public understanding.

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ACCC

Uncovering how Australians think about product safety

This project demonstrates how Bastion Vantage can uncover the assumptions, information sources and behaviours sitting behind an issue that consumers may not consciously think about day to day.

By analysing organic online conversation and search behaviour, Bastion Vantage provided an early view of how Australians navigate product safety and consumer confidence

The Brief

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission commissioned Bastion Insights to undertake research into consumer product safety. As part of the broader research program, Bastion Vantage was used to explore the existing digital conversation around product safety and understand the issues and behaviours emerging organically online.

The challenge was to understand an issue that is often implicit rather than top of mind: what gives Australians confidence that the products they buy are safe, when they investigate safety themselves, and what prompts greater concern.

Our Approach

Bastion Vantage analysed public digital conversations across social media and other online sources, alongside Google Search behaviour, providing two complementary views of product safety.

The analysis explored the themes shaping consumer confidence, including the role of government regulation, recalls and enforcement, safety standards and pre-purchase research. Google Search data provided an additional behavioural lens, highlighting the specific safety information consumers actively seek out.

Rather than simply measuring the volume of conversation, the analysis focused on what these behaviours revealed about consumers' underlying expectations of the product safety system.

The Outcome

Vantage revealed the important role of Australia's regulatory framework in creating a baseline assumption of safety. Analysis of online conversations showed consumers often relied on government regulation and standards as an implicit signal that products available for sale had met an acceptable safety threshold.

At the same time, search behaviour showed where consumers became more active, seeking information about particular products, recalls, warnings and safety risks.

Together, these insights provided the ACCC with additional context for the broader research program, identifying the assumptions and behaviours surrounding product safety that could be explored and tested more deeply through subsequent research.

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Brand Gold Coast

Mapping sentiment & strategic opportunities ahead of the 2032 Olympics



This project showcases the use of Bastion Vantage's unique features to map perceptions and strategic opportunities for Brand Gold Coast.

Starting with a city-wide sentiment baseline, we then leveraged Bastion Vantage's AI-powered social listening tools for detailed, pillar-by-pillar analysis.

By continuously scanning and analysing consumer discourse on social media, Google searches, news and blogs, Bastion Vantage delivered real-time, context-rich insights into the key themes and narratives shaping the city's reputation.

The Brief

Brand Gold Coast engaged Bastion Insights to uncover how Australians perceive the Gold Coast across tourism, trade, events, liveability, investment and study.

The goal was to identify key audience segments, sentiment gaps and opportunities to strengthen the city's positioning – especially as it prepares for the 2032 Olympics.

Our Approach

Bastion Insights began by mapping sentiment and perceptions of the Gold Coast at a city-wide level through a nationally representative survey and targeted qualitative research.

Building on these foundational insights, we then leveraged Bastion Vantage's specialist AI-powered social listening tools to conduct a more detailed analysis of socials.

By examining consumer discourse on social media, Google searches, news and blogs, we uncovered the key themes, narratives and sentiment drivers shaping the Gold Coast's reputation in each area.

The Outcome

The platform's community and market mapping pinpointed influential voices and emerging topics, while its contextual intelligence uncovered sentiment drivers that would have been missed by traditional research.

Insights were delivered with speed and precision, enabling Brand Gold Coast to identify actionable opportunities, inform campaigns and activate its story ahead of the Olympics.

The repeatable framework for tracking sentiment and spotting early signals of opportunity or risk further demonstrated Bastion Vantage's strategic advantage and value for long-term brand positioning.

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Example outputs

High level view of the landscape...

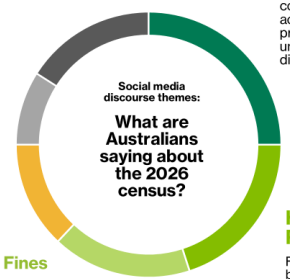
Social media discourse

Fractured Trust: Privacy, Misinformation, and the limits of Government Assurance (9%)

Across every community represented in the dataset, trust in the census process is neither automatic nor robust – it must be actively constructed, and it fractures along very different fault lines depending on who is being asked to trust. For some, the threat is digital surveillance; for others, it is household exposure; for others still, it is the projection of authoritarian data misuse transplanted from a previous homeland.

Gender, Religion, and the Politics of Being Counted (13%)

The 2026 census has become a cultural and political battleground on two major fronts – the new questions on gender identity and sexual orientation, and the long-contested religion question. Both debates reveal a deeper struggle over whose version of Australia gets officially recorded, and whose identity is rendered legible or illegible by the state's counting mechanisms.



Compliance Anxiety and Discourse About Fines (17%)

Across Australian social media, the threat of significant financial penalties has become the dominant, and deeply contest, mechanism for driving census participation. The figure of a $364-per-day fine (as cited in social media posts) has achieved near-meme status, circulating far beyond its legal context and generating as much confusion and anxiety as it does compliance.

Data as Power: The Census as a Lever for Policy, Funding, and National Priorities (25%)

A strong and pragmatic current runs through Australian census discourse: participation is not framed as a passive civic duty but as a strategic act with direct, tangible consequences for communities, services, and national priorities. From housing crisis accountability to school staffing, hospital funding, and retail product decisions, Australians across multiple communities understand the census as a high-stakes input into a system that distributes real power.

Humour, Identity, and Generational Reframing of Census (20%)

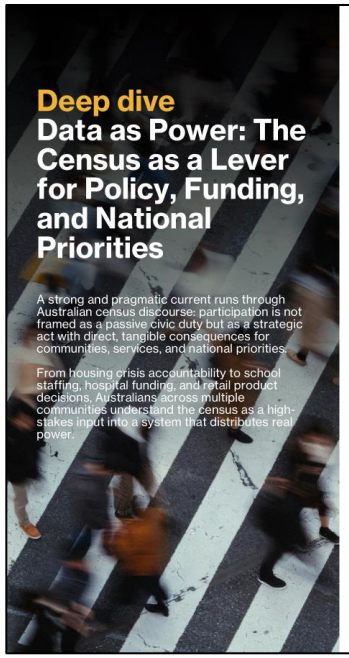
For younger Australians and recent migrants, the 2026 census has been collectively reimagined as a rite of passage and a marker of belonging, rather than a bureaucratic imposition. This cultural reframing represents both a coping mechanism and a sophisticated form of civic engagement, revealing that obligation and identity can coexist in unexpected and generationally specific ways.

Note: Commentary focuses on themes accounting for 5% or more of online discourse. Smaller themes have been grouped under **'Other'** (light grey), which represents 16% of the conversation.

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...and depth of understanding.



Deep dive
Data as Power: The Census as a Lever for Policy, Funding, and National Priorities

A strong and pragmatic current runs through Australian census discourse: participation is not framed as a passive civic duty but as a strategic act with direct, tangible consequences for communities, services, and national priorities.

From housing crisis accountability to school staffing, hospital funding, and retail product decisions, Australians across multiple communities understand the census as a high-stakes input into a system that distributes real power.

The most prominent theme across the dataset was a transactional view of census participation, with participants in every community weighing what they give against what they receive in return.

- South Asian community leaders are explicit and concrete: accurately reporting Punjabi and Hindi language use leads to 'required teachers in schools' and 'specific products in grocery stores like Woolworths and Coles.'
- Latin American advocates connect low census representation – cited in social media posts as under 2% of Australia's population – to tangible deficits in community resources, political recognition, and service allocation.
- LGBTQIA+ advocates argue that newly included gender and sexuality questions will 'better inform public services and support' for their communities,
- Homelessness organisations like Cos We Care and St. Vincent de Paul anticipate that the 2026 census will 'make the full scale' of the housing crisis undeniable to policymakers.

In each case, the census is positioned not as a state imposition but as a community instrument – one that converts individual answers into collective leverage.

The housing crisis narrative is particularly potent, with multiple posts framing the census as an anticipated 'expose' of homelessness rates, vacant properties, and rental stress. One post notes that the census 'won't solve the crisis but will make its full scale undeniable, pressuring governments to act' – a statement that explicitly positions data as a political force multiplier.

The ABS's own communication reinforces the service-planning frame: 'Census data helps to estimate population and distribute government funds' for 'schools, hospitals, roads, and aged care.' Even the $726 million census investment (cited in social media posts) is framed by some commentators as justifiable given its downstream policy utility.

The market implication for brands and policymakers is two-directional: the high public salience of post-census data creates both opportunity (targeted service design, resource advocacy) and accountability risk (communities will scrutinise whether census promises translate into policy action).

Illustrative quotes/ posts:

"I tell everyone in my community: if you don't put Hindi on the census, there won't be Hindi classes at the local school. That's the direct connection. It is not abstract."

"The census is going to show exactly how many people are sleeping rough or couch surfing. Then there is no excuse for the government to ignore it. The numbers will be right there."

"The 2026 Census won't solve Australia's housing crisis, but it could reveal just how much pressure households are really under. I'll be watching overcrowding, housing costs, falling home ownership and the gap between population growth and infrastructure. Once the numbers are released, it will be much harder to ignore the scale of the problem. What result do you think will be the most shocking?"

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Victorians see community safety as a shared responsibility, with police expected to work alongside communities rather than act solely as enforcers

Public conversation points to a broader, more relational role for police, encompassing prevention, neighbourhood presence and partnership, while individuals and communities also take responsibility for everyday safety.

At the same time, trust remains conditional on accountability and fairness, with Victorians willing to question and challenge policing and justice outcomes rather than offering unconditional support.



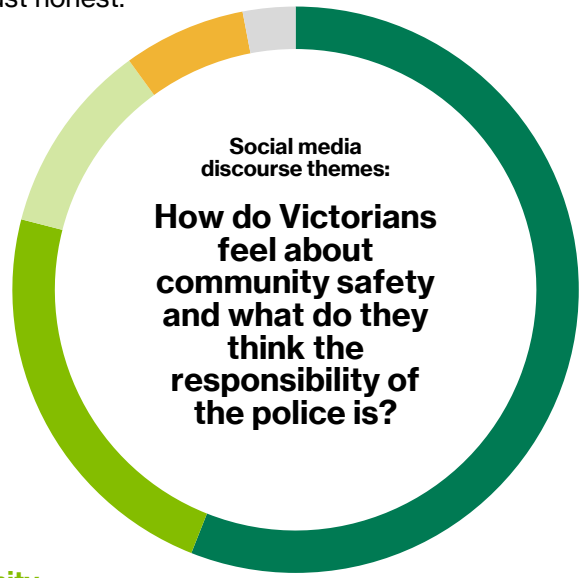
Social media discourse

Conditional Trust: Accountability, Satire, and the Punishment-Rehabilitation Fault Line (7%)

Victorian public sentiment toward police and the justice system is not immovable admiration – it is conditional, critical, and increasingly sophisticated, with communities willing to ridicule, challenge, and debate the underpinnings of policing and corrections. This critical dimension is the productive pressure that keeps institutional trust honest.

The Dual Safety Framework: Self-Reliance for Everyday Risk, Police for Criminal Threats (11%)

Victorians have developed a sophisticated, layered approach to safety that assigns personal responsibility to routine, foreseeable hazards while reserving an expectation of institutional intervention for deliberate or criminal harm. This branched framework reflects a mature civic culture that values both individual agency and the backstop of law enforcement.



Safety as a Shared Social Contract: Community Ownership Beyond Crime (23%)

The broadest and most culturally significant theme in Victorian safety discourse is the recognition that safety is not the exclusive role of police but a social contract carried out by residents, institutions, businesses, and community organisations. This expansive definition of safety encompasses social inclusion, neighbourhood vibrancy, and mutual civic obligation.

From Enforcer to Embedded Partner: The Expanding Relational Role of Police (56%)

Victorians increasingly expect police to operate as proactive community partners – mentors, problem-solvers, and have neighbourhood presence – rather than reactive enforcement agents who appear only after harm has occurred.

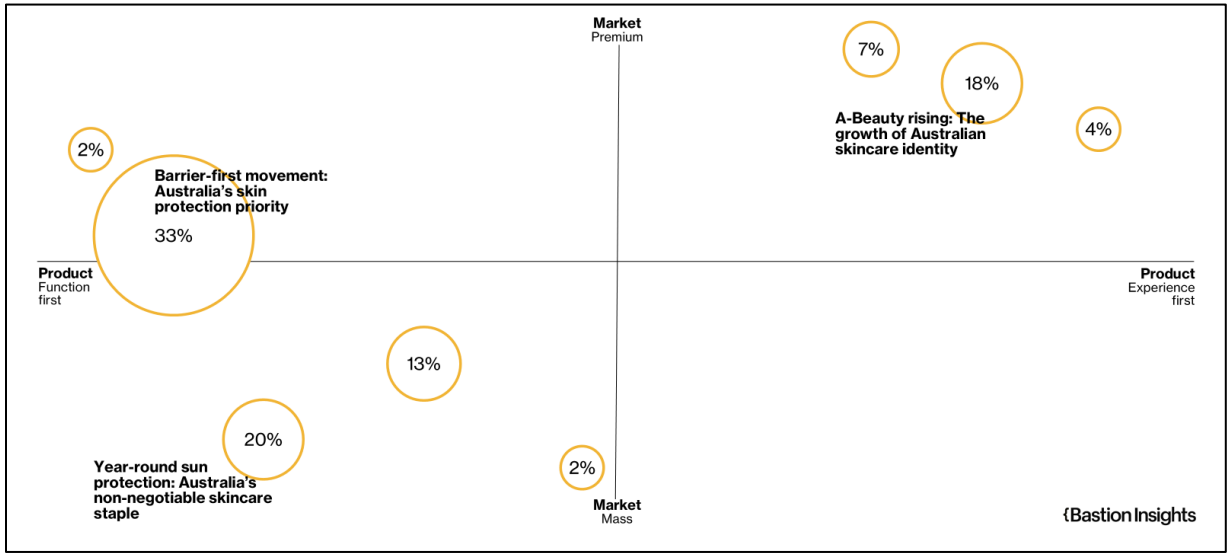
This relational model is reshaping the public's definition of what 'good policing' looks like.

Note: Commentary focuses on themes accounting for 5% or more of online discourse. Smaller themes have been grouped under 'Other' (light grey), which represents 3% of the conversation.

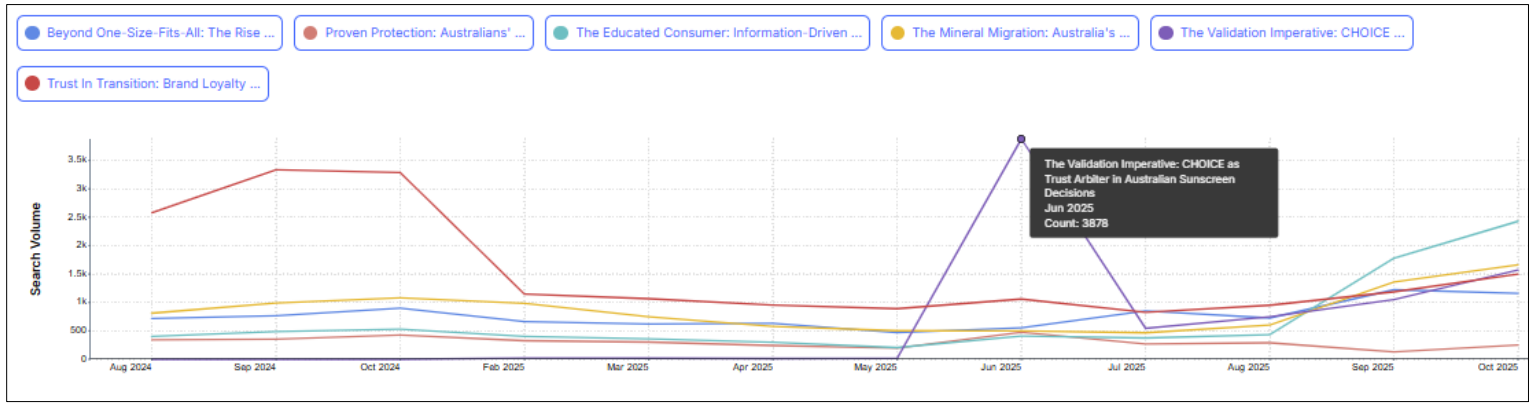
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Thematic mapping & Search trends over time

Social media themes matrix



Search volume over time



In today's digital world, perception is reality.

Are you shaping the conversation, or just reacting to it?

*"Your brand isn't what you say it is. It's what **they** say it is."*

Marty Neumeier, brand strategist

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Investment

How high do you want to climb?

Want to know if it's worth climbing higher?

Get a sneak 'peak' on us...

- **1 topic**
- **Short summary by email**

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	Basecamp	Summit Trail	Peak Experience
Who is it for?	Perfect for those just beginning their climb. Essential tools, light load and a clear path forward.	For those ready to go higher. More support, more gear and a stronger guide to help you navigate the terrain.	The full expedition. Expert guidance, premium gear and panoramic results.
Topics explored	1	3	5
Theme channels included	Social media News & blogs Google searches	Social media News & blogs Google searches	Social media News & blogs Google searches
Deliverables	Summary report of key findings, ~7 pages.	Detailed report, ~20 pages. Including 1 page summary of key findings & recommendations.	Detailed report, ~30 pages. Including 3-5 page summary of key findings & recommendations. 1 hour presentation via Teams.
Timing	2 days	5 days	10 days
Investment (excl. GST)	$6,500	$9,210	$12,300

Many clients are also using this as a tracking tool either quarterly or twice yearly – speak to us for a quote to suit your specific needs.

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