



Discovery Week 2026

What we learned, and what we're doing next

A note from Imani

I joined Mastodon in the summer of 2025 as the first full-time design hire. I have an extensive background in improving software usability, diversity and belonging for online communities, but I was new to Mastodon and the fediverse.

Immediately, I was impressed with the richness of this decentralised space, the passion of the open-source community, and the near-endless capabilities of the software itself. Moreover, I was inspired by the engineering team's ability to build and maintain such complex and important software – and to do so in a way that supports other softwares (through FEPs and FASPs). The shared commitment to a thriving fediverse was clear.

What I also saw, though, is that our team was overwhelmed with the volume of user feedback we receive – through Discord conversations, Github issues, third-party audits and studies, thinkpieces in personal blogs, and of course, Mastodon posts. As I write this, our Github repository has 4.3K open issues and 1,000 open discussions, many of which include ideas and complaints related to the user experience. This is more than any team of our size could reasonably manage. And this overwhelm often manifests in a lack of clarity on how to move forward.



What should we prioritise? As we moved from [project](#) to [project](#), these four words kept emerging in the least-expected moments. We were beginning to find our way in terms of creating a [development roadmap](#), but beyond major projects and obvious requirements (based in security, compliance, and grant-based deliverables) it was often unclear which feedback to take action on first.

This challenge isn't unique to Mastodon, by the way – but it *is* made more complex due to the nature of the software and its surrounding culture. Currently, our most vocal community members tend to be the most technically-minded ones, and are often Github contributors themselves. However, if we only listen to Github feedback, how will we learn the needs of non-technical users? If we respond immediately to every feature request, what might we be missing about the underlying needs, values, and goals of our community? In short, *what actually matters, to whom, and why?*

This is how the idea for Discovery Week emerged. As we gazed ahead at Mastodon's 10th anniversary and prepared for our next major release, I saw an opportunity to cut through the clutter and invite the community to talk with us.

Discovery Week was informal and tightly scoped. It was pulled together in weeks, without funding earmarked for research. It was also massively insightful. The stories and feedback shared by our community helped us understand many perspectives more deeply. I particularly enjoyed witnessing community members with different perspectives engaging



collaboratively in the live roundtables – to me, these moments highlighted Mastodon’s potential to bring out the best of online discourse.

My deep gratitude goes out to everyone who completed a survey, volunteered for a roundtable, or shared the Discovery Week post so others could participate. Additional thanks to those of you who shared existing publications and Github issues that were particularly relevant to the themes explored. And it’s worth acknowledging that Discovery Week wasn’t the beginning. Thanks to the community who has contributed feedback and ideas over several years, many of which are simply confirmed in this document to help our team make sense of what matters.

Discovery Week has already proven to be tremendously helpful in guiding our direction for Mastodon v5.0 and beyond. Some changes will take weeks, and others, years. Overall, we hope that the upcoming improvements to the Mastodon experience reflect what the community wants to see. Here’s to this being the first of many Discovery Weeks for Mastodon!

Onward and upward,
Imani Joy
Head of Design, Mastodon



About Discovery Week

Discovery Week was a 5-day informal research event that took place on 11-15 May, 2026. Through surveys and online roundtable discussions, it explored people's experiences on Mastodon and their sentiments about the fediverse.

102

Survey
Respondents

27

Roundtable
Participants

48+

Servers
Represented

700+

Unique
Data Points



The Surveys

Participants were invited to complete an introductory demographic survey, followed by four topic-based surveys. Respondents who indicated they are not Mastodon users were sent a tailored version of each day's survey. Rather than collecting email in the topic-based surveys, respondents entered their unique ticket code from the Discovery Week event. This allowed for cross-survey analyses per respondent without each survey requiring personally identifiable information.

The Roundtables

We held five two-hour roundtable discussions via OpenTalk. Each roundtable followed a similar structure: Silent pain-point mapping, participatory consolidation & theming, dot voting on themes to explore further, and facilitated brainstorming around chosen themes.



Limitations & Considerations

- Short time frame for outreach → participant pool that's more plugged into the fediverse than the general public
- Outreach and research was conducted in English only; roundtable times were optimal for a Western audience
- Relatively low sample size; many findings lack statistical significance.¹
- Lack of global ethnic and cultural diversity; especially for South Asian, Southeast Asian, Black/Afro-Diasporic, and Pacific Islander identities which were each represented less than 2% in the data set.²
- Focus was on end users, not on admins or moderators.

¹ This report focuses predominantly on Mastodon users because the sample size for non-users was too low to draw meaningful conclusions.

² Intro Survey Q8



Findings



Random but interesting facts about survey respondents' use of Mastodon

- Respondents said they still commonly use other platforms often seen as antithetical to the fediverse – including YouTube (61%), Instagram (34%), WhatsApp (30%), and Facebook (15%).³
- 1 in 5 respondents post both personally and on behalf of an organization or brand.⁴
- 38.6% of respondents reported posting to Mastodon a few times a month or less (excluding replies).⁵
- 60.9% percent of respondents would like all AI-generated content hidden by default, if filters allowed for it.⁶

³ Intro Survey Q2

⁴ Survey 3 Q5

⁵ Survey 3 Q4

⁶ Survey 4 Q13



The insights that follow are distilled into a simplified user journey:

1. Discovery (finding people and content),
2. Reading (or interacting with other forms of content, mainly on one's feed), and
3. Engagement (posting, replying, messaging).

Key goals of Mastodon users

DISCOVERY

Find and sustain meaningful communities

People want to identify and stay connected with people whose posts they genuinely want to read, organised around specific interests or identities.



READING

Control the feed, rather than being controlled by it

People want to select options to curate their feeds, and to see content from people they chose to follow. They want to feel in control of their own attention, not like they're being sold to or optimised against.

ENGAGEMENT

Post freely, without pressure to perform

People want to share things without negative consequences or expectations to maintain a certain presence. They want the convenience of sharing privately with closed groups of specific people, in the same platform they use to post more publicly, without the friction of switching apps or accounts.



DISCOVERY

“I feel like I’m in a desert.”

– Roundtable 2 Participant

Key challenges with discovery

On a five-point ease-of-use scale, survey respondents rated discovery lower than any other experience in the user journey.⁷

1. Search is stunted by federation limitations
2. Insufficient options for exploratory discovery
3. Lack of onboarding for decisions that impact discovery

⁷ Survey 1 Q3



DISCOVERY: CHALLENGE #1

Search is stunted by federation limitations

Sentiments about Mastodon's search experience ranged from confusion to resignation, underscoring the importance of the work our team has already started with Fediscovery.

- | "Servers aren't all connected, so search only goes as far as my server connections go."⁸
- | "Search seems to find less things from other servers? Which is a bummer."⁹
- | "Hashtag search does only search posts that my instance already knows about."¹⁰
- | "Sometimes, search doesn't seem to be really cross-instances, like we're not getting the full results."¹¹

⁸ Survey 1 Q4, Response 6; a mas.to user

⁹ Survey 2 Q16, Response 13; a different user of mas.to

¹⁰ Survey 1 Q4, Response 44; user from an unknown server

¹¹ Survey 1 Q4, Response 24; a user of a small server in France



DISCOVERY: CHALLENGE #2

Insufficient options for exploratory discovery

Exploratory discovery refers to moments when people vaguely know what they might like, but not how to articulate it well enough to search.¹²

People in the fediverse might not want the same type of suggestions that feel invasive on other social platforms, but they do still desire more ways to be guided through discovery.

¹² Donna Spencer, "Four Modes of Seeking Information and How to Design for Them," Boxes and Arrows, March 14, 2006, <https://boxesandarrows.com/four-modes-of-seeking-information-and-how-to-design-for-them/>.

- | "Sometimes I would love to get kind of an overview: Not necessarily what are the top hottest posts on Masto right now etc, but more like, what are other "bubbles"/communities?"¹³
- | "It's hard to find people who post things about specific topics and interests. Searching hashtags just provides a firehose of random posts. The Trending tab doesn't show things that are trending among smaller/niche topics and interests."¹⁴
- | "As much as not having an algorithm is nice, it would be cool to have an optional "For You" page to make discovery easier."¹⁵

¹³ Roundtable 1 Participant

¹⁴ Survey 1 Q4, Response 17

¹⁵ Survey 1 Q11, Response 45



DISCOVERY: CHALLENGE #3

Lack of onboarding for decisions that impact discovery

Both server selection and configuration of privacy settings are introduced early on, when users have the least understanding of Mastodon. These touchpoints have major influence on how people discover, and are discovered, within the fediverse.

People reported desiring more guidance from Mastodon when getting started.

- | "I don't want to think about which instance is the most popular or consider if I'm penalized by joining a 'less popular' server."¹⁶
- | Using simpler terms for those who came from other platforms. Like 'server' instead of 'instance'. Discoverability may = Learnability for new users."¹⁷
- | "I'd be happy to be as discoverable as possible by default ... it would be a real bummer to realize later on that I should've toggled on a few settings."¹⁸

¹⁶ Roundtable 2 Participant

¹⁷ Roundtable 2 Participant

¹⁸ Survey 3 Q3, Response 4



READING

“I'm in a vortex that cannot be stopped.”

– Roundtable 1 Participant

Key challenges with reading & the feed

Discovery Week participants frequently described their Mastodon feeds as a “firehose”, “overwhelming,” and full of “noise”.¹⁹

1. Unintuitive threading
2. Boosted posts repeat too frequently
3. Hashtags add value, but also noise
4. Muting is so unintuitive, it's invisible
5. Chronology has limitations

¹⁹ Survey 1 Q10



READING: CHALLENGE #1

Unintuitive threading

Survey respondents reported confusion around the way replies are displayed within Mastodon's main feed.

Opinions on how to remedy this varied: Some respondents desire more context and clearer ordering, while others prefer to have replies entirely hidden from the feed. 1 in 2 survey respondents wished to see post grouping improved.²⁰

- | 'Even if I turn 'don't show replies to posts', I feel like posts aren't grouped nicely. I go through a lot of replies that seem out of context."²¹
- | "I don't want to see replies, and my own posts, in my timeline."²²
- | "I think replies should not be displayed out of context on my main timeline, there is little value in seeing "@foo @bar Agreed!" without also seeing what they replied to."²³
- | "On the home feed, replies should be grouped with the post they are replying to."²⁴

²⁰ Survey 1 Q10

²¹ Survey 1 Q11, Response 1

²² Survey 1 Q11, Response 44

²³ Survey 2 Q8, Response 6

²⁴ Survey 2 Q8, Response 25



What's particularly noteworthy, though, is that the lack of a proper UI solution for replies is so severe that it has actually influenced creators' behaviour.

Survey respondents were asked about the circumstances in which they typically limit their posts' visibility. The #1 reason reported was to avoid spamming others when replying.²⁵

- | "If I'm replying to someone, I try to always use "quiet public" to be considerate of others, since they may not be interested in the conversation."²⁶
- | "Not wanting to flood timelines with replies to my own posts"²⁷
- | "Limited interest for others. I find it boring (best case) or confusing (worst case) to discover bits and pieces of discussions in the public timeline and want to avoid posting like this."²⁸
- | "To stop replies to threads ending up randomly spawning / spamming on my instance's timeline, ending up being interspersed with other people's posts but now appearing out of context"²⁹

²⁵ Survey 2 Q3

²⁶ Survey 2 Q3, Response 7

²⁷ Survey 2 Q3, Response 12

²⁸ Survey 2 Q3, Response 20

²⁹ Survey 2 Q3, Response 21



READING: CHALLENGE #2

Boosted posts repeat too frequently

Users appreciate discovering new content through boosts but don't want to see the same post boosted multiple times.

Mastodon already has a timed threshold to prevent boosts from repeating too often, so this feedback suggests that it's worth expanding the time window or exploring other ways to calculate frequency.

- | "Often see the same post being boosted over and over."³⁰
- | "Showing multiple copies of the same post when multiple people have boosted it."³¹
- | "A popular post easily appears a lot of times on my timeline when boosted by multiple people I follow."³²
- | "I get the feeling I'm missing a lot of people with interesting things to say who are not boosted as much."³³

³⁰ Survey 1 Q11, Response 21

³¹ Survey 1 Q11, Response 23

³² Survey 1 Q11, Response 34

³³ Survey 3 Q8, Response 2



READING: CHALLENGE #3

Hashtags add value, but they also add noise

Hashtag search ranked as the third most popular discovery method.³⁴ Users clearly find value in hashtags, but they also want options for separating hashtags from the main feed.

- | "Following hashtags leads to a lot of spam from automated accounts to filter through, and I'm unable to add them to lists to parse through over time."³⁵
- | "Hashtags can't be put in a list, to separate them."³⁶
- | "I want to keep up with hashtags, but I can't make a list of them. If I try to follow them they just show up in my timeline and that's useless. I love hashtags, but I need to be able to make a list with several of them and keep them out of my timeline."³⁷

³⁴ Survey 1 Q1

³⁵ Survey 1 Q4, Response 54

³⁶ Survey 1 Q11, Response 19

³⁷ Survey 1 Q11, Response 42



READING: CHALLENGE #4

Muting is so unintuitive, it's invisible

Several respondents expressed that they'd like easier and more powerful ways to mute specific posts, keywords and accounts.

This functionality already exists on Mastodon, mostly through the creation of filters. This suggests that the real problem lies in poor usability of the muting and filtering flows. Clearer labelling, consistent entry points, and a single place to manage all muting-adjacent behaviour, would help to bring visibility to Mastodon's robust muting options.

- | "Filters should be easier to add directly from the toot."³⁸
- | "Sometimes I'm in moods for not-politics. If I could have a toggle to temporarily mute some keywords, that'd be really nice."³⁹
- | "Maybe, have the ability to mute boosts from particular folks - like you can with completely muting accounts"⁴⁰
- | "Being able to choose quick muting/muffling/hide boosts directly from the timeline so you can quickly manage things in context."⁴¹

³⁸ Survey 1 Q11, Response 16

³⁹ Survey 1 Q11, Response 22

⁴⁰ Survey 1 Q11, Response 20

⁴¹ Roundtable 1 Participant



READING: CHALLENGE #5

Chronology has limitations

Mastodon's simple, reverse-chronological feed is one of its strengths – there's no hidden algorithm that's selling your attention to someone else.

At the same time, chronology as the *only* means of sorting leads to interesting posts going unread. Discovery Week participants mentioned feeling inhibited by the chronological feed, especially when trying to catch up on posts from 'quiet posters' and people in other time zones.

- | "No easy way to catch up if I haven't been logged on for a day or so. Phanpy's 'catch up; mode, Bluesky's For You / Popular With Friends / Quiet Posters feeds are all helpful here."⁴²
- | "I would like the timeline to "understand" (sorry no concrete suggestion how, yet...) who are those who I am interacting a lot - if they say / recommend something, I think I'd love to see that prominently."⁴³
- | "I'm getting real tired of chronological being the only option for the Home timeline. It causes me to only see posts from the same few people who tend to post just before I look at Mastodon, and miss posts from people in different time zones."⁴⁴

⁴² Survey 1 Q11, Response 23

⁴³ Roundtable 1 Participant

⁴⁴ Survey 1 Q11, Response 39



These requests make sense, as a purely reverse-chronological sort only magnifies the imbalances in frequency of posting. Among respondents who reported using the Lists feature, many mentioned using lists to restore balance between 'quiet posters' and louder voices.

Reasons for using lists on Mastodon:

- | "To ensure I don't miss posts from people who post less frequently"⁴⁵
- | "to create a feed of people i like and whose new content i definitely don't want to miss so they're all in one list i can navigate through reading all posts in it since the last check when i have time"⁴⁶
- | "To group people that post a lot of threads into a separate feed"⁴⁷
- | "To separate out people who post too much, into their own Verbose list."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Survey 1 Q6

⁴⁶ Survey 1 Q6

⁴⁷ Survey 1 Q6

⁴⁸ Survey 1 Q6



ENGAGEMENT

“To engage is to be exposed.”

– Roundtable 5 Participant

Key challenges with engagement

Participants were overall more satisfied with the composing experience than with other aspects of Mastodon.⁴⁹ The bigger issues impacting engagement exist at a higher level: harassment, self-censorship, and a lack of felt privacy and belonging.

1. Lack of reply controls
2. No infrastructure for smaller, private communities
3. General confusion about visibility options & consequences
4. Lack of consensus on posting etiquette

⁴⁹ Survey 3 Q12, Q14



ENGAGEMENT: CHALLENGE #1

Lack of reply controls

There was one issue that was mentioned on all five days of Discovery Week, and that was Mastodon's current lack of reply controls.

Specific complaints included an inability to fully detach replies from blocked users and a fear of followers-only replies leading to harassment.

Additionally, respondents expressed expectations of a different reply architecture, one in which the top-level post controls the visibility of all replies to that post. What's important to note is the architecture isn't specific to Mastodon – it's a current default *across the fediverse*.

"When a post breaches containment and a bad actor posts on my thread, my blocks don't remove their post from my thread. Which means their harm, and their followers' harms are perpetuated. I've had to delete posts to isolate their replies."⁵⁰

"Making a reply visible only to the replier's followers... breaks the obvious expectation AND allows bad actors to limit the visibility of their attacks to only people they're already friends with."⁵¹

"On Facebook, you have the option. But on Twitter and also Blue Sky, you also have the option to prevent non-followers to respond. So that is part one. If that was already possible then it will be huge win."⁵²

⁵⁰ Roundtable 3 Participant

⁵¹ Survey 2 Q7, Response 26

⁵² Roundtable 4 Participant



ENGAGEMENT: CHALLENGE #2

No infrastructure for smaller, private communities

There's strong evidence of a desire for tighter-knit communities. In fact, half of respondents use lists to keep up with communities⁵³ – but this isn't a full solution, as lists only serve as filters for the timeline, not as containers for more private conversations.

Notably, very few respondents requested a multi-feature community interface in Mastodon. An expansion of post visibility controls would be enough for many.

| "sometimes feels overly public. i spend more of my online time now in smaller, private communities, like discord and slack."⁵⁴

| "Many of my users are frustrated/discouraged by the difficulty and lack of options for how to control who can see/interact with their post. Often wishing for more options (local server only, or "circles")"⁵⁵

| "I would like the option of having "friends-only" posts, visible only to people I have added to a list (or followed). This would open Mastodon up to more personal connection, facilitating for people to engage in the kinds of conversations they might not want to be visible to strangers."⁵⁶

⁵³ Survey 1 Q6

⁵⁴ Roundtable 1 Participant

⁵⁵ Roundtable 2 Participant

⁵⁶ Survey 3 Q3, Response 12



ENGAGEMENT: CHALLENGE #3

General confusion about visibility options & consequences

Mastodon has more post visibility configurations than many other platforms, and this flexibility is part of what many enjoy about the fediverse.

However, Mastodon's current UI makes it difficult for many to understand (and trust) the available visibility settings.

Confusion about 'quiet public'

- | "I'm not sure I understand it well, but I don't want my replies in a conversation to appear to people who follow me but not the other person, and I believe "quiet public" is the way to do that"⁵⁷
- | "It feels like it's encouraged behavior to mark replies to public posts as "quiet public" ... truth be told, I can't explain exactly what that even does, but it seems to be the right thing to do."⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Survey 2 Q3, Response 27

⁵⁸ Survey 2 Q3, Response 63



UI-induced panic about private messages appearing alongside regular posts

- | "DMs as posts seem risky to me personally, especially with brand accounts for example."⁵⁹
- | "Private mentions should be totally separated in the UI conceptually. It's still too prone to mix it up in the "normal" timeline and between different replies."⁶⁰
- | "I also don't feel confident about how private/direct mentions/messages work and whether they're truly private, so I avoid using them"⁶¹
- | "I really want direct messages to work as a separate use case, e.g. I don't get a heart attack because it's in the feed"⁶²

⁵⁹ Roundtable 2 Participant

⁶⁰ Survey 2 Q8, Response 1

⁶¹ Survey 2 Q8, Response 2

⁶² Survey 2 Q8, Response 3

Misunderstanding of 'followers-only' visibility option on replies

- 1 in 3 survey respondents did not understand what would happen if they selected 'Followers' visibility when replying to someone's post (even with a typo in the survey question that made the answer glaringly obvious).⁶³
- | "I expected it to be visible to followers of both, and I feel like the replies are probably more relevant to followers of the original tooter than to my followers."⁶⁴

⁶³ Survey 2 Q5

⁶⁴ Survey 2 Q7, Response 4



ENGAGEMENT: CHALLENGE #4

Lack of consensus on posting etiquette

Decentralisation brings freedom of choice: Pick a server, and you're also picking a code of conduct that matches your own ethos. But with over 7 thousand active Mastodon servers,⁶⁵ vast differences inevitably exist and create tension.

Differing expectations, paired with a strong callout culture on Mastodon, leads some people to self-censorship.

- | "There are some strong opinions about how to "do it right" and I don't agree with some of them. You can get quite harsh push-back."⁶⁶
- | "friends I had convinced to try [Mastodon] were scared away by the HOA"⁶⁷
- | "I feel like people have strong opinions about what they believe appropriate behaviour is on Mastodon. Sometimes the culture could be a bit more welcoming."⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Mastodon metrics pulled on Jul 29, 2026
(<https://joinmastodon.org/about>)

⁶⁶ Survey 4 Q12, Response 2

⁶⁷ Survey 4 Q12, Response 9

⁶⁸ Survey 4 Q12, Response 16



The answer doesn't lie in forcing the fediverse to act like a centralized platform.

It's not a matter of how to enforce homogeneous rules across servers, but rather, how the software might support readers' various preferences without placing excessive restrictions on creators.

| "Mastodon has a very robust filtering system. It's rare to see a social media service give you the ability to write what keywords you don't want to see and hide them entirely, but I feel like it's underutilized. Every day I see people requesting others to be more specific with their usage of content warnings because some posts show content they don't want to see, however I think those folks should just add a filter... that's functionally the same as a content warning without putting the burden on to others... It's surprising how many users didn't seem to know that such a feature existed when I describe it as one of the best features of Mastodon."⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Roundtable 4 Participant



Additional, in-depth insights can be found in the survey results and roundtable findings.

Discussion



“I feel like I’m in a
desert.”

“I’m in a **vortex** that
cannot be stopped.”

“To engage is to be
exposed.”

Mastodon is a powerful ecosystem. But to many, it currently feels like a *wilderness*. What would it take to turn Mastodon into an *oasis*? What changes would make users feel more guided, protected, and in control?



Immediate wins

In Discovery Week, you reminded us that although the fediverse has unavoidable complexity, there are plenty of opportunities to make things *feel* simpler through Mastodon's UI. In the next few releases, we'll introduce more clarity through clearer labels, entry points and visual affordances.

In late 2026, keep an eye out for upgrades to navigation and the composer. If time permits, we'll also make it easier to access existing filters and actions to control your feed.

In early 2027, we plan to build a better experience for new user onboarding, the display of threaded conversations, and user settings.



Exploring next

There's much to improve about search and discovery on Mastodon, and we finally have the technical foundation to build a better solution. Expect an upgrade in the first half of 2027.

Search and discovery are deeply impacted by user privacy settings – and the entire settings experience is running on legacy code. In 2027, we also plan to ship a redesign of the settings experience that will benefit end users as well as system admins and moderators.

Some of the most-requested features during Discovery Week already exist on Mastodon: Namely, advanced filters and pinned (no, not followed, *pinned*) hashtags. If resourced, we'll be able to bring these power features to the forefront in new and simpler ways.

Meanwhile, additional aspects throughout the interface (e.g. notifications) may get a UI makeover, aiming once again for increased usability and clarity.



Bigger bets

Unsurprisingly, many of the problems most worth solving are also the most complex to address. Some of these initiatives will require fediverse-wide collaboration, and we might actually need to break a few things in order to reconstruct them in a way that matches what people actually need. Fortunately, in Discovery Week, you helped us build a compelling case for prioritising the complex backend work necessary to make progress on these initiatives over the next few years.

Sizeable undertakings include changes to the post-reply architecture, reply controls, better content filters/warnings, posts scoped to closed groups/communities, and end-to-end encrypted messages.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, nor is it a set-in-stone roadmap. As future discovery reveals important community needs we haven't identified, we'll revisit and reprioritise accordingly.



Beyond the tech

Try as we may, we won't solve all of Mastodon's problems through design and code alone. Several challenges hinted at during Discovery Week are not technical, but cultural: Safety scored several points lower for LGBTQIA+ survey respondents, and Black users were notably absent from the participant pool.⁷⁰

Techno-elitism and norms policing make it harder for non-technical newcomers to thrive in the fediverse.⁷¹ Meanwhile, a longstanding overreliance on server governance as a solution for protecting users of color, LGBTQIA+ folks, sex workers, and other marginalised users facing harassment, ignores the fact that these very communities often lack the resources necessary to sustainably host and govern their own instances.⁷²

These issues won't be solved overnight. What's worth keeping in mind now is that the choices we make when engaging with each other online can either contribute to a thriving, diverse fediverse or a dwindling, homogeneous one.

We're in it for the thriving version, and glad to be building it alongside you.

⁷⁰ Intro Survey Q8

⁷¹ Thomas Struett, Aram Sinnreich, Patricia Aufderheide, and Robert W. Gehl, "Can This Platform Survive? Governance Challenges for the Fediverse," *International Journal of Communication* 18 (2024): 5614.

⁷² Justin Hendrix and Johnathan Flowers, "The Whiteness of Mastodon," Tech Policy Press, November 23, 2022, <https://techpolicy.press/the-whiteness-of-mastodon/>.



Appendix



Intro Survey: Social App Use and Demographics

Mastodon Use

Q1. Do you currently use Mastodon?
[Single-select, 105 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	102	97.1%
No, but I used Mastodon in the past	2	2%
No, I've never used Mastodon	1	<1%



Use of Other Social Apps

Q2. Which other social platforms do you use regularly?
[Multi-select, 100 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
YouTube	61	61%
Signal	55	55%
Discord	45	45%
Instagram	34	34%
Bluesky	31	31%
Reddit	31	31%
WhatsApp	30	30%
Pixelfed	17	17%
PeerTube	16	16%
Facebook	15	15%
Telegram	12	12%
Lemmy	10	10%
TikTok	9	9%



Discourse	8	8%
Pinterest	7	7%
Threads	6	6%
X/Twitter	6	6%
None of the above	4	4%
Other ¹	21	21%

¹ 'Other' values: Tumblr (x5), Matrix (x4), Iceshrimp.NET (x2), LinkedIn (x2), Akkoma, Bookwurm, Flickr, Mobilizon, Perfectly Imperfect, PieFed, SNAC, Substack, Threema, PatternReview, Quilt board



Preferred Clients for Accessing Mastodon

Q3. Which client(s) do you use to access Mastodon?
[Multi-select, 104 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Mastodon's official web app	64	63.4%
Mastodon's official Android app	28	27.7%
Ivory	20	19.8%
Mastodon's official iOS app	16	15.8%
Tusky	13	12.9%
Ice Cubes	12	11.9%
Phanpy	12	11.9%
Moshidon	9	8.9%
Mona	6	5.9%
Other ²		

² 'Other' values: Tuba (x3), Fedilab (x2), Openvibe (x2), Pachli (x2), Toot! (x2), amaroq (discontinued), Glitch web app, Mastonaut, onne, Pipilo, Safari browser, smolfedi, SoraSns, Tangerine UI for Mastodon 2.5.2, Toot Wales official Android app, treed, Vivaldi browser



Server Distribution

Q4. What's your home server?

[Single-select, 99 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
mastodon.social	24	24.5%
mas.to	5	5.1%
mastodon.online	4	4.1%
indieweb.social	3	3.1%
aus.social	3	3.1%
plialle.fr	3	3.1%
mastodon.gamedev.place	2	2%
mastodon.nl	2	2%
blorbo.social	2	2%
toot.wales	2	2%
Other	48	49.0%



Questions 5-12 relate to demographic questions of identity, place and culture. Survey respondents were asked for consent to proceed. All demographic questions were optional, and respondents could skip by selecting "prefer not to say."

Gender

Q5. What is your gender?

[Multi-select, 101 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Man	68	67.3%
Woman	22	21.8%
Nonbinary	8	7.9%
Genderqueer	7	6.9%
Genderfluid	5	5%
Prefer not to say	3	3%
Prefer to self-describe ³	2	2%

³ Self-descriptions of gender: "Agender", "🌈🌈🌈"



Q6. Do you identify as transgender?

[Single-select, 101 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
No	90	89.1%
Yes	7	6.9%
Prefer not to say	4	4%



Sexual Orientation

Q7. What is your sexual orientation or identity?
[Multi-select, 101 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Heterosexual/Straight	66	65.4%
Bisexual	14	13.9%
Queer	13	12.9%
Prefer not to say	7	6.9%
Gay	5	5%
Asexual	3	3%
Lesbian	2	2%
Prefer to self-describe ⁴	5	5%

⁴ Additional sexual orientations represented: pansexual, panromantic asexual



Ethnicity, Culture, and Region

Q8. How would you describe your ethnic or cultural background?
[Multi-select, 100 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
European	80	80%
Mixed Heritage	5	5%
Prefer not to say	4	4%
Middle Eastern / North African (MENA)	3	3%
Latin American / Hispanic	3	3%
Central Asian	2	2%
East Asian	2	2%
Indigenous / Aboriginal Peoples	2	2%
South Asian	1	1%
Southeast Asian	1	1%
Sub-Saharan African (West, East, Central, or Southern Africa)	1	1%
Afro-Caribbean	1	1%



African Diaspora / Black (diaspora identity not tied to a specific region)	1	1%
Pacific Islander / Oceanian	1	1%
Prefer to self-describe ⁵	3	3%

Q9. If you'd like to share your specific ethnic, national, or ancestral background, please do so below
[Free text, 15 responses]

Response
American
Dutch
Dutch heritage
Ecuadorian
English
Filipino and Bahamian

⁵ Self-descriptions of ethnic/cultural background: "White Ashkenazi Jewish", "Jew", "White/Caucasian"



French
German
German
German/French/Irish
i'm half-Russian (from my mother's side) half-Bashqort (from my father's side) but I prefer to identify as Bashqort
Migrant from the UK to Germany.
Scandinavian-Slavic
Welsh
Welsh/Celtic (Cymro/Celtaidd)

Q10. Which country are you currently living in? [Free text, 85 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
United States	28	32.9%
Germany	16	18.8%
France	12	14.1%
United Kingdom	3	3.5%
Australia	3	3.5%
Canada	3	3.5%
Netherlands	3	3.5%
Poland	2	2.4%
Portugal	2	2.4%
Romania	2	2.4%
Austria	1	1.2%
Costa Rica	1	1.2%
Denmark	1	1.2%
India	1	1.2%
Italy	1	1.2%



Disability

Q11. How do you describe your ability status?

[Multi-select, 100 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
I do not identify with a disability or impairment	57	57%
A long-term mental health condition (e.g., depression, anxiety)	21	21%
A learning disability or other diagnosis that interferes with your learning or ability to concentrate (e.g., dyslexia, auditory processing disorder)	11	11%
A sensory impairment (vision or hearing)	10	10%
A sensory processing or integration disorder	10	10%
A long-term medical illness (e.g., epilepsy, cystic fibrosis)	9	9%
A mobility impairment	5	5%
Prefer not to say	4	4%
An intellectual disability	1	1%
Prefer to self describe ⁶	7	7%

⁶ Self-descriptions of disability status: "does ADHD count?", "Autism/ADHD", "Living with multiple disabilities""Disabled within norms allowing and perpetrating eco(+socio+you name it)cides depriving us of our most fundamental human rights (and long story short, may be autistic).", "AuDHD", "autistic", "my brain is functioning slower than before (aging issue), especially when it comes to reading long texts online"



Age

Q12. What is your age?

[Single-select, 100 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
35-44	38	38%
45-54	26	26%
25-34	16	16%
55-64	9	9%
18-24	4	4%
65-74	4	4%
75 or older	2	2%
Prefer not to say	1	1%



Survey 1: Discovery and Feeds

Discovery Methods

Q1. How do you typically come across new accounts to follow on Mastodon?
[Multi-select, 77 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Replies and conversations on posts I've seen	70	90.9%
Boosts from accounts I already follow	66	85.7%
Hashtag searches	32	41.6%
Viewing who the people I follow are following	21	27.3%
My server's local timeline	19	24.7%
The 'Trending' tab (formerly called 'Explore')	15	19.5%
Recommendations from people I know outside Mastodon	10	13%
Third-party tools or directories (e.g., Fedi.Directory)	6	7.8%
I don't really look for new accounts to follow	1	1.3%



Other⁷

⁷ 'Other' values:

"fediway algo"

"word of mouth outside of the site (not common)"

"Interactions on my posts (favs, boosts, replies) and subsequent profile check"

"going from people's personal sites or other social media"

"They start following me (I rarely follow back)"

"Looking at accounts of people who send follow requests, and following back if their posts look interesting/agreeable"

"New followers that I recognize"

"People who engage on my posts. Mostly follow backs."

"Newsmast channels"

"May search for a particular person/entity after reading their works (books/articles) elsewhere"

"I used to like browsing the local timeline but mastodon.social took away that option from me."

"Hashtags I follow"

"Browsing other accounts' follows/followers, the server Directory, the federated feed, and Live Feeds for other servers."



Frequency of Following Behavior

Q2. How often do you end up following a new account after browsing Mastodon? `

[Single-select, 77 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
A few times a month	41	53.3%
Rarely	23	29.9%
A few times a week	10	13%
Daily	3	3.9%



Ease of Discovery

Q3. How easy is it for you to find accounts or content to follow on Mastodon?

[5-Point rating, 77 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very easy)	5	6.5%
4	25	32.5%
3	28	36.4%
2	14	18.2%
1 (Very difficult)	5	6.5%

Overall score: 3.14



Challenges with Discovery

Q4. What's the biggest challenge you face when trying to discover new content or accounts on Mastodon?

[Free text, 57 responses]

Top challenges, by frequency of mention:

1. Federation challenges; search not working across servers (15 respondents)
2. Lack of topic or category browsing (8 respondents)

Response	
1	Surfacing different accounts from other servers. Recommendations seem to be within a circle of people I originally followed and I feel like I'm missing out on unknown corners and people. Caveat: I don't use hashtags as much as I could, which might help me.
2	I don't know how to search for interesting topics. The "explore" page on my server shows very little posts, currently 4.
3	following hashtags give you all the posts from the hashtags polluting your screen when just some posts are interesting. Every time I'm searching for something interesting it's 80% trash 20% interesting



-
- 4 these questions have a wildly different mindset from mine. if i find stuff i want to view, i view it and if it's a user who often posts that, i follow it. i don't have any sort of internal metric or other drive to find! find! find!!!!
-
- 5 Not knowing a "main" hashtag used by a certain community
-
- 6 Servers aren't all connected, so search only goes as far as my server connections go. Replies don't all appear (for the same reason?) so I never feel like I'm getting the whole story. Account clicks open inconsistently: sometimes in app (I use ice cubes on iOS), sometimes in the browser.
-
- 7 Search is usually not really fast
-
- 8 If I'm looking for content on niche topics and random facts, like something you'd see in Atlas Obscura, I wouldn't know what hashtags or search terms to find that information
-
- 9 Maybe not what you're after, but trying to convince people who are on other social networks to make accounts or be more active here
-
- 10 Finding high quality accounts. Sometimes when I search a name of someone who I know has a presence on Mastodon, it takes a few tries to actually find the person. In addition, people sometimes have multiple accounts on Mastodon on different servers and I am not sure which one to follow.
-
- 11 Sometimes when I click on a profile of a boost I land on their server page but still cannot see their posts or follow/followers. So I have no sense of if I would like to follow or not based on the lone boost that got me there. I am not tech savvy enough to understand why sometimes I can see all their posts and sometimes I cannot.
-



-
- 12 The Trending timeline has been truncated recently, and seems to be the same people getting reboosted, often with trivial posts (i.e., "I'm feeling _", "I had _ for lunch"). At times, it does seem like a closed community, in which a few village elders get heard.
-
- 13 Determining if an account posts interesting stuff or is mostly boosting
-
- 14 hard to search for relevant info, i very rarely search for things to find stuff out new stuff/accounts
-
- 15 While I understand why the search feature is the way it is, I find it frustrating at times (typically: I remember reading something interesting, forgot to bookmark it or didn't think at the time I would want to dig deeper into it, and it's lost forever because the person doesn't want their posts indexed).
-
- 16 The spotty reach of Fedi links.
-
- 17 It's hard to find people who post things about specific topics and interests. Searching hashtags just provides a firehose of random posts. The Trending tab doesn't show things that are trending among smaller/niche topics and interests.
-
- 18 There aren't really categories, like "movies" or "games"
-
- 19 People seem to have forgotten to use hashtags. Accounts are no longer active. In Ivory, if they fixed too many posts I can't read anything new unless I go to posts & replies, which is likely all replies. Having to search for the same hashtag in multiple languages (Spanish, English and Portuguese) and dialectal differences (Spanish from LATAM & Spanish from Spain) (Brazilian Portuguese). Because I'm in a small server, my explore tab just shows a handful of approved posts. I made most of my discovery in a previous account at mastodon's main server.
-
- 20 Lack of a filter for the main language of accounts
-



-
- 21 I discover content and accounts constantly, that hasn't been an issue, but I already follow thousands of people so I'm really not starting from scratch.
However, from regularly I get across an account that is very relevant to me (for instance, someone I'm aware of outside of Mastodon and already love the work of, or an account focusing on a topic that is very interesting to me) and when I discover their account, I see I'm not following them and realise the account is several months or years old. In these cases, I'm glad I found it but also wonder: how come I haven't come across it before??
Maybe I kinda miss an easy way to see accounts in "my network": something like people that are [followed by/following] people that [I follow/follow me]. Maybe people still don't always link their Mastodon from their websites or other socials.
I also miss an easy way to see content that is popular only in my circle: posts that have recently been liked/boosted among people I follow, whether it's their posts (catching up with my follows) or posts from others (discovering new content/people). I see this as one or two extra timelines (in addition to the default chronological which I like a lot), could be other solutions.
-
- 22 Largely it's that some kinds of amounts are completely absent. I have no trouble finding accounts that mirror my technical and political interests, but accounts about sports teams I support are hard to find.
-
- 23 Searching for accounts with federation is messy. Hard to know who are experts. Not everything shows up in the trending tab or search results because of federation
-
- 24 Sometimes, search doesn't seem to be really cross-instances, like we're not getting the full results.
-
- 25 I can't see other's follows on different servers, the search results are very limited
-



-
- 26 I learned from (bad)sueprises to look a bit deeper into the new account's history of posts before following. That makes engaging with new accounts more time consuming (but really does help a lot in preventing said later surprises).
-
- 27 Search is often spotty, especially on a new server that I have setup.
-
- 28 I run my own server, so the "familiar followers" doesn't work for me when viewing remote accounts. Also, having to open remote accounts in the browser rather than my server autofill their info is a bit of a nuisance.
-
- 29 Sometimes, I don't realize that I'm not following half the people I interact with.
-
- 30 Limited numbers of people with interesting things to say on topics I'm interested in -- I've been around long enough that it often feels like I' already following most of them!
-
- 31 Sometimes I see a reply or something from a person on a different instance that sounds interesting (a specific topic-focused instance like typo.social) and I want to see who else is on there and I can never work out an easy way to do that.
-
- 32 On the app I use on mobile, when I search, the text box never collapses. So I have half the screen for browsing results and the results are somewhat large. So it can be hard to scroll through results.
-
- 33 Sometimes, there are stale accounts or multiple accounts and it's hard to determine which one is official.
-
- 34 Search in the web client is not completely reliable at finding interesting people if those people have not already crossed through my own instance in some way. With the right amount of persistence I can often find what I am looking for, but it takes time.
-



-
- 35 I guess because it's primarily through the timelines that I find content and people, that if people aren't posting I'm never going to find them.
-
- 36 Not seeing all replies and followers if not on same server
-
- 37 Find publications or people via normal search; those I find seldomly present other accounts; brid.gy not widely used
-
- 38 The response times for hops between servers, unsupported follow/profile lookup features within the apps I use, general speed of exploring the service
-
- 39 Not clear which hashtags to look out for.
I might look at a time when these accounts didn't post anything.
-
- 40 Content usually doesn't exist
-
- 41 In general people don't tag things, so searching on tags is limited in usefulness. I sometimes search on full text content instead.
-
- 42 For new accounts : mastodon.social having deactivated the local and federated timelines has really put a stop to it.
For content : a lot of people simply don't put relevant hashtags in their posts, which makes their discoverability nearly impossible. It's complicated enough that some people have chosen not to be found through search (though I respect it), but those who opted in are still not easy to find.
Incentivizing adding an optional hashtag (or more !) in the UI, the same way Mastodon incentivizes adding ALT text or setting relevant language for translation, would help a lot.
-
- 43 Search
-



-
- 44 Hashtag search does only search posts that my instance already knows about. External tools like Fediwall are necessary to mitigate that.
-
- 45 Visibility, especially links to Mastodon from other websites is scarce at best, at times I randomly learn someone I've followed on Threads for months has had a Mastodon account since forever
-
- 46 The fact that federation inherently limits the reach of a post to servers where a following relationship has been established. This disincentivizes membership on servers that aren't in the top 10-20 by membership because posts outside that circle are less likely to be seen by the majority of the Fediverse. As a consequence, I'm also less likely to see posts I'd be interested in because they cannot reach me despite their use of tags.
-
- 47 Hard time finding accounts that align with what I want to see.
-
- 48 Search doesn't work well for finding accounts. Sometimes I'll hear about someone who's on Mastodon through IRL conversations and try to search for them in Mastodon, but either nothing comes up, or more commonly, the only results will be like a defunct mirror of their Twitter account or an older account they've migrated away from, and their current Mastodon account just doesn't show up in the results.
-
- 49 The things I don't know, e.g. what other instances are out there, that haven't yet surfaced on my home instance.
-
- 50 The stupid "log in with your server" thing popping up all the time. I don't actually think I have problems finding people to follow, it's just the act of doing it.
-
- 51 it's a bit like "how do I find people and topics". It's a mix of "I don't know what's reasonable to expect here" and "how do I find people who have interesting content" and separate of that - do I
-



want to follow a person that happens to have one very interesting topic but posts about other stuff that I do not care about, and hence I don't want to follow them completely

52 I'm on a smaller instance, so certain hashtags don't contain as much information as I would expect, and information in user profiles often takes a moment to get refreshed. Not a huge issue in day to day usage, but when looking for specific topics I often switch to my mastodon.social alt to get the full picture.

53 I don't know how to actively, directly find new peeps (as opposed to stumbling onto them through boosts, mentions, etc). Searching for hashtags or text often doesn't feel like it gives me the sort of stuff I'm looking for.

54 Following hashtags leads to a lot of spam from automated accounts to filter through, and I'm unable to add them to lists to parse through over time. Also, there are many interest areas of mine that have little to no representation on mastodon like MMA, Boxing, and Motorcycling are some notable examples. I think communities or the ability to add hashtags to lists would be great.

55 when checking out new person's profile and trying to read their posts (to understand whether they are not against my entire existence), scrolling through dozens of boosts gets very tedious. would be great to have a feed/view on the profile page that filters out boosted posts

56 I'm on a single-user instance, which means that I can only discover people that have been boosted from the people I follow or via adding relays from FediBuzz

57 This may be a mean one, because it's not something you control directly, but my main challenge is just the size of the network ... not all the people I want to hear from are on Mastodon.



Awareness of Lists Feature

Q5. Before this survey, were you aware that Mastodon lets you create lists — custom timelines that show only specific accounts?

[Single-select, 77 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes, I knew about this and have used lists	37	48.1%
Yes, I knew about this but haven't used lists	31	40.3%
No, I wasn't aware of this feature / didn't know what it was	9	11.7%



Use of Lists

Q6. How do you use lists on Mastodon?

[Multi-select, 37 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
To manage content from accounts I follow but don't want in my main feed	23	62.2%
To separate content by topic or interest	22	59.5%
To keep up with specific communities or groups	19	51.4%
To create a quieter, more focused reading experience	19	51.4%
Other ⁸	7	19.9%

⁸ 'Other' values:

"i don't; i have tried them in the past and find them a bit silly"

"to check out the few accounts local to my country and make sure they get some engagement"

"Was trying to keep up with irl people I know, but then it got annoying to add people to lists so I stopped caring. I add post alerts to irl friends."

"To ensure I don't miss posts from people who post less frequently"

"to create a feed of people i like and whose new content i definitely don't want to miss so they're all in one list i can navigate through reading all posts in it since the last check when i have time"

"To group people that post a lot of threads into a separate feed"

"1) To separate out people who post too much, into their own Verbose list. I read that one rarely 2) To follow people without actually reading their posts (sometimes it feels like I have too follow certain people)"



Awareness of Filters Feature

Q7. Before this survey, were you aware that Mastodon has filters that let you hide or warn on content matching keywords or phrases?

[Single-select, 77 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes, I knew about this and have used filters	55	71.4%
Yes, I knew about this but haven't used filters	19	24.7%
No, I wasn't aware of this feature / didn't know what it was	3	3.9%



Methods of Controlling the Feed

Q8. Which of the following do you currently use to control what appears in your Mastodon timeline?

[Multi-select, 77 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Muting accounts	58	75.3%
Blocking accounts	52	67.5%
Keyword filters	50	64.9%
Muting hashtags	38	49.4%
Lists	28	36.4%
None of the above – I don't customise my timeline	6	7.8%



Other ⁹	13	16.9%
--------------------	----	-------

⁹ 'Other' values:

"Muting boosts from accounts that boost a lot"

"Soft-blocking accounts"

"Following the right accounts :) (of course)"

"I only look at my followers, not the local or global timeline, and I mute boosts from most accounts"

"Unfollow accounts or hashtags"

"Being selective about who I follow -- I typically don't just 'follow back'"

"Pinned hashtags with additional similar hashtags shown. Also hashtag-based timelines in Moshidon"

"I also hide boosts when I can. Ivory lets me make a timeline filter that hides different post types, so I can hide boosts. I would prefer to see boosts in a separate spot where I can choose to go look sometimes but not have them in my main timeline"

"Following hashtags, one of my favorite ways to customize my timeline."

"following hashtags"

"Hide boosts for specific users"

"Blocking (Muting) whole instances / choosing my home instance based on their extensive blocklist"

"I love the option to *include* hashtags in my timeline, always brings something fresh from topics I care about."



Satisfaction With Control of the Feed

Q9. Overall, how satisfied are you with your ability to control what appears in your Mastodon timeline?
[5-Point rating, 77 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very satisfied)	14	18.2%
4	40	52%
3	17	22.1%
2	5	6.49%
1 (Very dissatisfied)	1	1.3%

Overall score: 3.79



Top Areas of Improvement: Controlling the Feed

Q10. Which of the following aspects of timeline control would you most like to see improved?

[Multi-select, 76 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Grouping related posts together	38	50%
Filtering out unwanted content	28	36.8%
Making lists easier to create or manage	21	27.6%
Applying different settings to different parts of the interface	21	27.6%
Sorting or ordering of posts	20	26.3%
Discovering what customisation options exist	17	22.3%
None – I'm satisfied with my current options	10	13.16%



Challenges with Reading the Feed

Q11. Is there anything about the way your timeline works today that consistently frustrates you or gets in your way?

[Free text, 46 responses]

Top challenges, by frequency of mention:

1. Thread/reply display and grouping is broken (10 respondents)
2. Duplicated posts from boosts (7 respondents)
3. Lack of granular muting controls (7 respondents)

Response	
1	Posts frequently double up. I see the same post twice in a row, frequently. Even if I turn "don't show replies to posts", I feel like posts aren't grouped nicely. I go through a lot of replies that seem out of context. Setting don't seem to change much (both official Mastodon app and Ice Cubes. I generally use Ice Cubes because I find the experience and UI better.)
2	when new user come it's empty and 80% of it is content that i don't want to see but i don't want to spend days tweaking it just to get it working, when X just works (fuck elon musk)
3	When following hashtags my language settings are not applied and I see posts in languages I don't have selected.
4	There's often a "load missing posts" break in the android app which doesn't happen on the Web



-
- 5 Boosted content that repeats. I think my server is updated to address this on the web, but Ice Cubes doesn't recognize this functionality. Not sure if timeline syncing works on the web, but that's one of the bigger selling points of using Ice Cubes for me: I move from my tablet to my phone and am in the same place.
-
- 6 Toots often appear multiple times in my timeline when they are boosted by multiple people, but maybe that varies per client?
-
- 7 Generally things are pretty good! I'd like to be able to make lists of people who don't appear in my regular home timeline though, ideally lists of people who I may not actually be following.
-
- 8 I want to be able to control foreign language better whether it's blocking, landing in a list so I can translate or something. Also, I'm up to ~18 hashtags in trying to block baseball conversations from my "Don't Miss" list. I don't mind these in my Home feed, but it'd be great to be able to block all tags known to be related somehow. I know that this is probably hard and am thankful for the muting tools available to me per list.
-
- 9 Most of all: that my current reading position in the timeline (reading chronologically) isn't synched across devices and apps
I miss the grouping of threaded posts in most clients.
Also apps that do not respect the setting that I like to see the fav/boost stats of a post in the timeline itself (e.g. Pachli)
-
- 10 annoying trying to see threads
-
- 11 I really want conditional filtering. IF X account filter on Y
or
If X account don't filter on Y
-



-
- 12 I'd like the ability to have custom feeds or lists without following the accounts in those feeds or lists. I'd also like to switch between a chronological view and what's trending within those feeds and lists.
-
- 13 I love the chronological timeline as a default and a homepage (thought I wouldn't be against extra, optional "algorithmic" timelines or similar). Two things which are maybe related:
- There's one aspect where the timeline could break a tiny bit of the strict chronology, it's for threads. Basically, several posts by the same person in a row replying to one another: group them in some way, have some graphical way to show it's a thread and compress it so that it's not sprinkled all over. Same for replies to recent posts, probably.
 - When opening a post to see its replies, or a thread to see the entire thing, I find it not optimal how that replaces the timeline entirely, and you need to go back and forth between individual post pages and timeline, losing the flow and sometimes your position. If opening a post would like, pop it up temporarily over the timeline with all its replies (or any other design with the same effect to think of), it would feel more natural.
-
- 14 When a thread I'm participating in or that I have started has new replies, or to see how the replies are organized, it's a bit complicated.
-
- 15 I enjoy the multi column setup in the web apps interface greatly. The iOS app is convenient, but the notifications timeline doesn't always update correctly. It might be nice to get notifications for any update on certain filters.
-
- 16 Filters should be easier to add (directly from the toot). I should be able to use lists to mute or block people, and this should be customizable by a certain amount of time. It should be easier to swap between non-blocking/muting lists
-
- 17 Using multiple accounts, I'd love to hide on account B's timeline posts that I've already come across on account A's timeline.
-



18 I see the last part of a thread first, and then the before-last is 5 posts later, etc - I either scroll through all of them, or click through and scroll up to read them.

19 Hashtags can't not be put in a list, to separate them.
Languages filter doesn't pply to hashtags.

20 1) "Explore" / "Trending" / etc. tabs are relatively useless to me, as they end up being a wild-west firehose of stuff from all over, that moves way too fast (and covers lots of stuff I don't care about). Yet, they keep getting promoted more and more. Maybe for established accounts, these could be de-emphasized / or even hidden?

2) If you end up following a few popular hashtags (e.g. "Caturday", "BloomScrolling", "BirdPhotography" (?)), you quickly end up with so many posts flooding your "Home" tab that you can't see anything from the folks you follow anymore.
Instead of the "Explore" or "Federated" timelines, what I really need is a toplevel one timeline that just gives me my followed hashtags in one place, while excluding from Home, and with the option of filtering out specific ones from there (without having to completely unfollow them - i.e. maybe even a "mute for x period" would be a good thing to try)

3) And so, with the Home tab, you end up missing most of the stuff from friends in other timezones... (And as a result, I end up just only on my instance's Local tab, but trying to get there requires a few clicks to do so).
Heck, perhaps the only time when I do wish we had more sorting options was for the Home tab, as a way to resurface stuff from another timezone that you might miss otherwise

4) I wish there was a way of selectively filtering out boosts:
a) When looking at my own posts, I want to often find some post / reply I made, but cannot find it easily due to all the interleaved boosts, so end up having to resort to an external viewer working on an exported archive



b) With some folks I follow, they boost a lot, and I want to be able to maybe not see their boosts sometimes. (Or maybe, have the ability to mute boosts from particular folks - like you can with completely muting accounts)

5) It would be good to have a few more muting durations - Specifically, something like the "1 month, 3 month, 6 months, 1 year" type range - Like, if you know someone is likely to be posting about undesirable political stuff until the end of a certain election cycle, then maybe only mute them until that event is likely to have passed, then show them again to give them a second chance before having to put them on indefinite / perma ban.

6)

21 Often see the same post being boosted over and over. I would like to be able to create lists of hashtags to follow

22 It's fine. Sometimes I'm in moods for not-politics. If I could have a toggle to temporarily mute some keywords, that'd be really nice. Or a way to view just my Toronto friends.

23 Showing multiple copies of the same post when multiple people have boosted it. No easy way to catch up if I haven't been logged on for a day or so. Phanpy's "catch up" mode, Bluesky's For You / Popular With Friends / Quiet Posters feeds are all helpful here.

24 Scrolling horizontally on the advanced web interface seems a bit clunky sometimes.

25 As I mentioned before, I want to filter out boosts and see them somewhere else, because I end up with a majority of my timeline being boosts, which I don't like. I like to look at them sometimes, but I want the majority of my timeline to be toots from the people I choose to follow. I also don't like seeing all the toots of a thread separated in my timeline, I wish they were grouped together so I could either read the whole thread or ignore it once, rather than coming across each separate toot at different points in my timeline when they're all by the same person related to the same thing. Also



sometimes I want to mute a thread/conversation, because my timeline gets filled up with some people replying to each other about a particular thing that I'm not interested in, but I haven't found a way to say mute/filter this thread/conversation.

26 Filters have limited usefulness if people work around the hashtag. I wish I could follow someone but mute one single hashtag for the person only because they post about it in a way I don't like, but normally I like that hashtag and follow it. I wish I could just immediately hide a post I don't want to see ever again with a swipe or long tap or something.

27 IIRC, there are some limitations. For example, I use multiple columns for a professional account and have different filters there (basically "our community" and "what people are saying about the competition" :D).
But it seems I can only add four hashtags? Maybe it's a bug. I can type and get suggestions for hashtags, but when I try to accept it, it's gone again.
Would be useful to have more control over the filters there (or maybe an error message being clearer about the limitation at least).

28 In the deck view, having more than a few columns set up (e.g. to focus on some lists or hashtags) becomes unwieldy to navigate. Switching between the main view and specific lists takes a few clicks/taps in the single-view web app or in the Mastodon mobile applications.

29 I can't follow people from a post. If I see a toot that I like and then go to the options for that toot, the list of options includes Blocking the user, but not following them. To follow them, I have to click on their user name and go to their profile and click Follow there. (Using a browser on iphone)

30 Unsure but I know we're sharing lots of common struggles as well as unique poetries and I'd just get much less frustrated in life if there was an easy enough, ethically appropriate and technical way



to share and overcome them to our best possible extent especially while collectively facing unprecedented planetary life threatening type(s) of crisis, Mastodon's cool though thank you for it !

31 Cant say, still looking for accounts and servers to fill my timeline.

32 Threading on individual posts is pretty bad. Once the supported number of indentation levels is hit, you can't tell who's replying to what.

33 The introduction of quotes has recently added a new layer to this issue. If someone quotes an account, hashtag or domain I have filtered, I should see the quote itself as filtered too (even if I follow the person). Especially when I'm on mobile with my big fingers and it's quite easy to unhide things by accident.

Sometimes it is also not readable at all why I'm seeing a post in my timeline. This has been reported years ago and there is still no change on that. I wish that when a post appears in my timeline not because I follow the person, but because I follow the hashtag, some kind of mention appeared somewhere. The same way I can immediately tell that a post has appeared in my timeline because someone I follow boosted it. It's a matter of discoverability and not just curation, too : it has happened that I think I follow someone, because I see their posts often, but it turns out they were just using a hashtag I follow a lot. This should be someone I start following ! But it's impossible to tell that I'm not already following them. Please consider help this matter with a simple UI tweak similar to boosts, applied to followed hashtags.

Another thing that bothers me is my inability to block not domains, but types of Fedi apps. Lemmy is fundamentally anti-conversation (it's just a post title and a link, trying to push to use Lemmy on its own terms rather than interact with Mastodon), but there are so many Lemmy domain names (and they use hashtags so often) that it becomes a huge game of whack-a-mole. I want to block all Lemmy content, past present and future, at the end of the day. I'm not sure how doable it is but it is one of my biggest frustrations lately.



-
- 34 A popular post easily appears a lot of times on my timeline when boosted by multiple people I follow.
-
- 35 A single "thread" (or what would be a thread on other platforms) is displayed as several and at times dozens of individual messages, sorted in reverse chronological order, which makes it impossible to read. What's worse, it's sometimes not obvious that a cryptic post is a reply (to themselves).
-
- 36 Mastodon's collapsing of posts that it deems "too long" regardless of my own settings or preferences is a pretty big frustration with the default interface timeline. I generally use other interfaces for most of my timeline perusal.
-
- 37 I don't understand how the explore page works and what it takes for content to show up there.
-
- 38 The official Android app regularly loses my place and if you scroll down enough starts to repeat posts, but I assume those are bugs in the app
-
- 39 I'm getting real tired of chronological being the only option for the Home timeline. It causes me to only see posts from the same few people who tend to post just before I look at Mastodon, and miss posts from people in different time zones else unless I painstakingly scroll through every single post every day.
-
- 40 I'd like to be able to apply filters based on server- and account-specific criteria — for example, mute posts with the #foo keyword if the account is labelled as "automated" or originates from the bar.social instance. I'd also like to be able to apply the "mute account" setting to entire servers, e.g. mute bar.social for 7 days, or mute bar.social but allow notifications.
-
- 41 Even with lists it's overwhelming. I'm following all these accounts because I do want to hear from them but simultaneously there're way too many posts to read. I'd love to see more experimentation
-



in both algorithms and UI to help surface the “most relevant” posts and present them in ways other than an infinite scroll.

42 Hashtags. I want to keep up with hashtags, but I can't make a list of them. If I try to follow them they just show up in my timeline and that's useless. I love hashtags, but I need to be able to make a list with several of them and keep them out of my timeline.

43 My main client (Pachli) has the ability to sort the timeline in chronological order, which feels much more natural for reading feeds with a lot of replies.
So I'm constantly frustrated whenever I have to use the regular web interface (PC), or the official Android client.
I also can't stand the fact that my own boosts show up in my home timeline, and the only way to stop that is disabling boosts for that timeline completely. I often hide boosts for specific people to control the noise on my feed, and my own boosts in my home timeline are noise as far as I'm concerned, I can check my boosts in my profile.

44 (using Ivory, maybe that's different elsewhere) I don't want to see replies, and my own posts, in my timeline. I read replies in the notifications tab, and I already know about my own posts!
Also: I really would like to be able to send a public message to people, that does NOT appear in my followers' timeline (unless they follow both me and the person I'm messaging. basically like on Twitter! or like *replies* on Mastodon)

45 on mastodon.social in the ivory app I'm unable to view the local or federated views. It doesn't display a timeline at all. Maybe this is an app issue or instance-based I'm not sure.
And as much as not having an algorithm is nice, it would be cool to have an optional "For You" page to make discovery easier



-
- 46 I often can't manage to read all the new posts since I last checked my timeline, there are simply too many at times ... a "catch me up" filter for my timeline would be neat, filtering out some noise. Not sure off the top of my head what would be on it and what not, but maybe posts with lots of favorites, lots of boosts, containing links, by people I follow or have interacted with. No algorithm based on the content of posts, just some easy to understand rules what goes in and what's hidden.
-

(Related question in survey for non-Mastodon users) Is there anything about the way your timeline works today that consistently frustrates you or gets in your way?

[Free text, 2 responses]

Response

- 1 I see comments without seeing the original post, sometimes I even have to open the thread in my browser -not showing the full thread in the app I mean. But I actually don't know if the issue where the issue comes from -my instance, the client I use, the instance on which the post has been made (pixelfed.social for example)...?
-
- 2 Sometimes there is a lot of boosted posts from people I follow that I am not in the mood for
-



Survey 2: Interactions

Use of Visibility Setting

Q1. In the past 3 months, which of the following settings have you used to limit the visibility of your posts?

[Multi-select, 80 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Private mentions	51	63.8%
Quiet public	43	53.8%
Followers	30	37.5%
None – I only create public posts	16	20%



Q2. Which of the limited visibility settings do you use most often?

[Single-select, 64 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Private mentions	27	42.2%
Quiet public	25	39.1%
Followers	12	18.8%



Reasons for Limiting Visibility

Q3. What's your biggest reason for limiting the visibility of your posts?

[Free text, 63 responses]

Top reasons, by frequency of mention:

1. Avoiding cluttering/spamming others' feeds (16 respondents)
2. Private one-to-one communication / DMs (13 respondents)
3. Protecting sensitive personal information (9 respondents)
4. Avoiding "reply guys" and other unwanted attention (8 respondents)

Response	
1	I'm trying to have real conversations.
2	Most of my posts are public but when I've used private mentions occasionally it's to message someone I know IRL to privately respond to something
3	Sharing stuff that I only want my friends to know.
4	To avoid flooding public timelines mostly
5	I want to hide some posts with more personal details and opinions from being publicly visible to anyone and especially not visible for crawlers/bot.
6	I couldn't explain why but I'm more comfortable this way



-
- 7 If I'm replying to someone, I try to always use "quiet public" to be considerate of others, since they may not be interested in the conversation.
-
- 8 I want to privately message someone.
-
- 9 I almost always post publicly with no limitations, but I do occasionally DM (private message) people.
-
- 10 the internet became miserable when we collectively got viral-brain. i have no desire to 'do numbers' and i dread the direction masto seems to be taking in this regard. also 'quiet public' still makes me nauseated to read
-
- 11 I want to send a private message to someone
-
- 12 Not wanting to flood timelines with replies to my own posts
-
- 13 When it's a "DM" meant only for the recipient.
-
- 14 People sharing private information that I feel should not get any further
-
- 15 Some of my posts are not intended for the public sphere, but rather for my followers. I carefully curate my followers list to avoid bots and, as much as possible, emphasize interactions with actual people. I review their bios and posts before allowing them to follow me formally. Sometimes, I want to just share with that audience.
-
- 16 To not clutter the timeline of others.
-
- 17 Not to pollute others' timelines with discussion only relevant to a particular friend
-



18	Don't want to appear in search results
19	Only very occasionally. >99% of posts are public.
20	Limited interest for others. I find it boring (best case) or confusing (worst case) to discover bits and pieces of discussions in the public timeline and want to avoid posting like this.
21	To stop replies to threads ending up randomly spawning / spamming on my instance's timeline, ending up being interspersed with other people's posts but now appearing out of context
22	My conversations aren't necessarily private, but I don't want to shout them in everyone's face. I don't want them to show up for uninterested followers
23	I primarily use private mentions in replies to someone. I rarely get into a public discussion of any topic. The replies are usually relevant to the folks who get mentioned.
24	Sharing deeply personal stories that I don't want to be searchable via the internet, or be too widespread.
25	I'm not really sure what "quiet followers" is. I limit who can follow me and who can quote me because i don't want to lose my job for my opinions
26	I don't know what "quiet followers" means. I limit who can follow me and who can quote me because i don't want to lose my job.
27	I'm not sure I understand it well, but I don't want my replies in a conversation to appear to people who follow me but not the other person, and I believe "quiet public" is the way to do that



-
- 28 Sometimes I don't need all the randos to chime in.
-
- 29 It's been work related conversations specific to projects that no one else need to chime in on. Also in asking for tech support from some apps where I did not feel it appropriate to air my questions/issue with the community at large.
-
- 30 Not to clutter my timeline with things people may not want to see. Many times I am responding to someone's post and what I say will only interest them.
-
- 31 To send a private message.
-
- 32 not wanting to share with everyone
-
- 33 To not spam followers' timelines with irrelevancies.
-
- 34 It's the default. I find it frustrating that I reply and sometimes it seems that others won't be able to see my posts. Quiet public is confusing. Ice cubes doesn't let me change this once a post or reply is out.
-
- 35 Sometimes, I don't want my posts to clutter too much of the timelines. Especially for replies to my own that just add information to posts. E.g.
* I do an announcement (should have good visibility)
* I add more information to it (should only be visible when people open the original post)
-
- 36 I want to say something privately to someone. Sharing a secret, for example
-
- 37 I want to speak to someone in particular. It's the equivalent of DMs even though I know they're not encrypted.
-



38	Sometimes I ask followers to help test a new project before releasing it publicly. I also use Mastodon for private conversations regularly.
39	Want to avoid the post "breaking containment"/context collapse and starting too many debates with strangers
40	I assume everything in Mastodon is public, I just want to restrict who do I get replies from or if I can be reposted. Honestly, I think I'm pretty safe from becoming viral (I only went viral once on Twitter, I wasn't proud of what I posted and I got told to kill myself). If a take is too spicy for the masses, I will keep it to Signal with a select few that will call me on my bullshit. But I am part of an ongoing conversation in private messages, which is fascinating.
41	Sending private mentions. Otherwise I often try to remember to set *replies* to public posts as "Quiet public" because I don't really want them to resurface outside of the conversation.
42	There's stuff I don't want to share with the whole world!
43	Varies from having 1-to-1 conversations to feeling weird, unprepared, shy...
44	Quiet public to limit the scope of a minor reply or discussion. Followers-only to keep a more private corner.
45	Interpersonal plans (Dates, Times, Locations) being shared in private.
46	Group conversations in "Private Mentions".
47	DM someone



-
- 48 I don't necessarily want replies to things to also show up on followers' timelines because they won't make sense out of context.
-
- 49 i use quiet public to avoid bugging strangers in the local timeline with posts about my mental health and [redacted sensitive info] and similar stuff
i use followers only very rarely with posts i dont want anyone to see, like the last time i used it i posted about the feeling that i should not sleep for a few days to punish myself
i only use private mentions to contact people who don't read the chats we have in common for a while if i have something urgent for them
-
- 50 To cut down on Reply Guys or avoid my post showing up in a tag I need to mention in it
-
- 51 Quiet public when adding to a post a reply that makes sense only in the original context.
-
- 52 Not clogging up Main
-
- 53 Writing threads and not wanting to spam the hashtag feeds with all individual posts of that thread. Or if I am writing an opinion where I fear that a stranger browsing the hashtag feed might hackle/troll me if they read it
-
- 54 I want to communicate something to someone but not risk embarrassing them, or myself, in public.
-
- 55 I use Mastodon a lot for water cooler/small talk type conversation, I don't want to sort of engage with the whole world. Also, some people can be really judgemental towards random strangers on this social network and love to pick on anything, I'm trying to avoid these kinds of interactions.
-
- 56 I think I set it as my default when I first created my account and didn't really think much about it. I wasn't sure what to pick or why.
-



57	I don't feel comfortable sharing info/anecdotes about my personal life, health, or work with a larger audience.
58	Keeping certain topics out of the local timeline in accord with community standards. Limiting the virality of posts on sensitive topics (e.g. politics).
59	When I write a thread, I usually only want the first post to appear on public timelines, because that can get overwhelming otherwise. So I set replies to to my own threads (and replies in general) to quiet public. Often I want to add additional, less public, information to my threads that goes beyond the stuff in the initial post, that's usually followers only.
60	question that feels rude to ask everyone
61	DM
62	i don't want to attract unwanted attention
63	It feels like it's encouraged behavior to mark replies to public posts as "quiet public" ... truth be told, I can't explain exactly what that even does, but it seems to be the right thing to do. I always thought Twitter's way of hiding replies from people you didn't follow, but showing those of people you do follow, was quite smart. I sometimes use private mentions when replying to something, but generally I don't see Mastodon as a "messenger" app and prefer to take conversations elsewhere. Still handy, of course.



Setting Visibility on Replies

Q4. How do you typically reply to posts on Mastodon?
[Single-select, 79 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
I usually reply publicly	57	72.2%
I usually limit who can see my replies	14	17.7%
I don't usually reply to posts	8	10.1%



Understanding of Followers-Only Reply Setting

Q5. If you limit a reply's visibility to your followers, who do you think can see it?

[Single-select, 78 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
My followers	49	62.8%
The followers of the person I'm replying to	1	1.3%
Both	8	10.3%
I'm not sure	20	25.6%



Q6. On Mastodon, if you limit a reply's visibility to your followers, the reply is visible to your followers – not to the followers of the person you're replying to. Is it what you'd expect or want?
[Single-select, 78 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	53	68%
No	14	18%
I don't know	11	14.1%



Q7. Optional: Explain your answer.

[Free text, 31 responses]

Notable sentiments, by frequency of mention:

1. Seen as a genuine abuse/harassment vector (9 respondents)
2. Confusion about how it works (9 respondents)
3. Desire for an intersection, different from how it works today (8 respondents)

Response	
1	N~o, I thought their followers would see too. I'm ambivalent either way.
2	It would be useful if I could include the followers of the person I'm replying to, but that would have to be a separate option and explained thoroughly and transparently.
3	To be honest, if I reply to someone, I follow their rules. If they post publicly, I reply publicly, if they post privately, I reply as well. The main problem in that case is that some people won't see the whole thread.
4	I expected it to be visible to followers of both, and I feel like the replies are probably more relevant to followers of the original tooter than to my followers.
5	It feels like if I'm replying to someone else I'm trying to join a conversation and it may be more relevant for others who wish to participate in that conversation to see it, not just people who happen to be following me.
6	the alternative makes no sense???



-
- 7 I don't usually reply with limited visibility except if it's a private message, so I don't end up in this scenario. But I know this would be a great way to pile on someone invisibly. I don't see how this use case leads to anything benevolent.
-
- 8 I curate my followers list, so I really only want to share with them. If an ADDITIONAL option to share with "followers and their followers" were there, I ****might**** select it occasionally to boost engagement from people in that curated community. But I do prefer words mean what they say, and in this case I appreciate the limited scope.
-
- 9 It would also make sense for people following the conversation to see my reply. But my intuitive understanding of the setting is that only my followers can see the post.
-
- 10 I'm not sure that's helpful and could be used for brigading
-
- 11 Tricky. But on balance, this is a possible abuse vector, and bad behaviour should be exposed.
-
- 12 It's hard to gauge + vet the potentially large numbers of followers that everyone else tagged on that thread may have. So, really, I only want those that I know can / should have access (i.e. those explicitly tagged in the reply, along with those I know who follow me)
-
- 13 it would feel right for the other person's followers to see it too. it feels like I'm replying in "their" world
-
- 14 I feel like this opens the window to abuse, if only my followers and the person I tag see the post.
-
- 15 That's the behaviour I'd expect, but I have no idea how it would all wash out with different/competing settings on a toot.
-



-
- 16 I feel like a reply should always be visible to the person who is tagged. Then if I limit it to my followers, only my followers plus that person should see it. Is that how it works? I don't know. I don't use it because it's confusing.
-
- 17 It creates a patchy thread where no one can see the full conversation. Since I am replying to something the posters followers have seen, they are in on the conversation, not my followers.
-
- 18 The control should be on the person that created the thread imo.
-
- 19 This means that the people who follow the other person can't see what I'm saying, despite it being a reply to someone they follow and almost certainly care what they have to say. If the person I'm replying to doesn't change their visibility settings when replying to me (which afaik is the case by default), it means the entire conversation goes unnoticed. That's fine in my case because I don't harass anyone, but that gives harassment such a bigger chance to go unnoticed by the people who would care the most (aka followers of the person being harassed). It also puts the onus on the person being harassed to pay attention to post visibility to make something public that wasn't when they reply, and only then, I still have the power to hide my side of the conversation.
-
- 20 Followers-only replies with a non-follower tagged are a popular abuse vector and is at best mislabeled. There should at least be an option to opt out of it, but a "just you and my buddies here" visibility level is inherently very threatening and should not be an option. People who want to reply privately can use private mentions. If they want to share their thoughts with their followers, they can already do that. "Followers + this one person who doesn't know me" should not be an option.
-
- 21 I don't understand why anybody would want to do that except to dunk on someone where only their followers can see it.
-



-
- 22 How did I get to control another person's followers list? I just reply privately if I'm sharing personal stuff and/or the poster is asking people to. I don't mind my followers seeing me reply to other people (I follow a lot more accounts than the ones following me - and a lot of those are not active anymore.) Also, in the Fediverse time of posting counts so changes are my followers will miss most of my replies to others anyway
-
- 23 I never used that option for replies so don't have an opinion besides that I do expect it to work like that. I'm not sure why that would be an option for replies really. I do see the point of having a way to show it to the mentioned's followers too? Or maybe the overlap and only the overlap between all sets of followers?? This quickly gets tricky to think about!
-
- 24 From a privacy perspective, it lets people who aren't the followers of the original poster see a discussion that wasn't intended for them.
From a usability perspective, it means I see disembodied replies in situations where I'm following the replier but not the original poster -- and the UI doesn't handle this well, which makes the situation even worse (although I don't think it's only a UI problem)
-
- 25 I assume it's also visible to the person I'm replying to?
-
- 26 Replies should keep the original context of the post they are replying to. Making a reply visible only to the replier's followers when using that setting breaks the obvious expectation AND allows bad actors to limit the visibility of their attacks to only people they're already friends with.
-
- 27 "Followers" mean "my followers", I think that is easily understandable. I never use that setting though.
-
- 28 I would assume that if I'm replying to a post, the original visibility of that post applies to my response. Even if I limit it to my followers, that seems more like a quote than a reply?
-



29 It is what I'd expect, since that's what it says, but I think a "my followers + OP's followers" visibility setting could be useful too.

30 If I change the visibility of a reply, it's almost always to Private Mention, so it's difficult to say what I would expect or want in the case of changing it to Followers.

31 I think there's a case to have the option to "only followers of me or them"

(Identical question in survey for non-Mastodon users) Optional: Explain your answer

[Free text, 1 response]

Response

1 This is EXTREMELY confusing. I /understand/ it, but no one likes this. However, I think the big problem is actually on the end of the person being replied to. If I make my post followers only, and you reply to it without changing the publicity settings... I don't want your followers to be the ones who can see it! This leaks information about my post you may not have wanted to leak and I probably didn't want you to leak either! This is especially visible to me as someone who uses other activitypub software still. This is not an uncommon way for this feature to work on activitypub software, but the way Akkoma currently works, I see these replies on my timeline. This makes me feel uncomfortable and like I'm invading everyone's privacy, but if I disable them I lose self-reply threads. While this is a flaw with Akkoma... why are these visible to me to begin with? Neither person involved in the conversation wanted me to be able to see this, and yet nearly all if not all software in the ecosystem agrees that it thinks I should be able to see it regardless. IMHO the expected behavior is likely that the post is visible to the intersection between both users' followers. Allowing a couple options between the possible interpretations (yours, theirs, either,



shared) is probably fine too, but the default selection when matching privacy should be either the thread starter's followers or the intersection between theirs and yours.



General Feedback on the Reply Experience

Q8. Is there anything about how replies work on Mastodon that you'd like to change?

[Free text, 31 responses]

Response	
1	Private mentions should be totally separated in the UI conceptually. It's still too prone to mix it up in the "normal" timeline and between different replies. I'd like to see it as a inter-user-messaging system on the separate screen/tab and not intertwined in public conversations at all.
2	I'd like to set a default visibility for replies separate to normal toots, so I don't have to remember to change it every time, because I set "public" for toots, but "quiet public" for replies. I also don't feel confident about how private/direct mentions/messages work and whether they're truly private, so I avoid using them.
3	I really want direct messages to work as a separate use case, e.g. I don't get a heart attack because it's in the feed, or if I mention another account, they shouldn't get invited immediately into the conversation.
4	I'm accustomed to mutual followers being able to see Followers only posts, but I'm confused when I see replies from Followed accounts to those I don't follow.
5	Having a UI that better allows selection of intended audience would be nice. I don't like that when I reply to someone, and their post has other at-tags in it, the reply goes to all of them as well. The UI seems to assume "Reply All" and not just "Reply" ... which has consequences.



-
- 6 I think replies should not be displayed out of context on my main timeline, there is little value in seeing "@foo @bar Agreed!" without also seeing what they replied to
-
- 7 Make the visibility of *initial* replies like on Twitter. (sending a reply without a parent post. so a first message)
That is, make them visible only to people who follow both me and my recipient.
-
- 8 Detach unwanted replies! Blocking is insufficient since the reply stays, but is simply hidden from you.
-
- 9 If quiet public works how I think, I think this should be the default for all replies.
-
- 10 When you click Reply on a toot, the box comes up for your reply. If you don't decide to reply, you can click the "X" button in the top right corner. I would expect that to dismiss the reply and take me back to previous screen I was on (whether that's the toot, or my timeline). Instead it switches from "reply" to "create new" and that's never a workflow I would follow.
-
- 11 Can I untag myself? I want to do that sometimes. Not just mute, but untag entirely.
-
- 12 The illogical follower rules.
-
- 13 It's just plain confusing. I do believe Bluesky does this better, allows to change the audience once it's out to limit interactions.
-
- 14 I think it should be possible to set visibility and replies separately. I don't mind a post being visible to a lot of people, but I do mind it if complete strangers feel ok to give their opinion in some cases (for instance discussing sensitive topics). Maybe I want to keep my post public, but only really want to hear from followers about certain things.
-



Also UI wise, the pop-up to set visibility has to go. Giving us the option of using icons instead of that annoying pop-up with full-text drop-down menu would be more intuitive, for example ; it could be enabled in the settings so that people would pick what is more comfortable to them.

15 I pretty much addressed this in my previous response. But also, I think if someone "disables private mentions" (by hiding notifications for this category), maybe this should be disclosed? Or at least a warning that the person might have them "disabled" to avoid confusion about undelivered/ignored messages.

16 The poster should be able to decide who can reply to a post and change that at any time. E.g. I should be able to make a post with open replies, but then if people are still debating each other in the replies days later and I don't want to hear about it, I should be able to change the reply setting on that post to restrict new replies from coming in.
Also it would be nice to be able to "detach" unwanted replies and not have them appear in the thread. This is especially important with the only sorting for replies being chronological: as it is now, if the first person to reply is rude, that's the first thing everyone will see when they look at the thread forever.

17 If we can't fetch all the other replies (I know that's an area of work) could I get a reminder that I'm not seeing all the replies? I would hate to pile on inadvertently.

18 I like that you can still browse Mastodon while replying, but I don't like that you only see a tiny cropped preview of the post you're replying to. I'd love to have access to the full post (and thread?) while replying. Possibly have the entire thing be a pop-out that I can open and close at will with progress saved? (or a design of similar effect)



-
- 19 Limiting who can reply is key functionality, and so is removing replies from the thread. [Yes I know these are tricky to do in a federated way, and the approach of building on the infrastructure for quote posts makes sense, but this functionality really is long overdue!]
Additional visibility: scoped to mutuals (people I follow and who follow me).
I'd like to see a different notification for "replied to me" as opposed to "mentioned me"
-
- 20 I dislike the loss-of-context that happens when people have automatic periodic post deletion. Some of the conversations have great value to me long after the fact and I'd love for a way for that context to remain, in a respectful way to those that want auto-delete
-
- 21 I wish the threading was better. Thread-based filtering would be good too — if I block someone I generally don't want to see anyone else arguing with them either.
-
- 22 If people are confused with the previous question, perhaps a different icon type could be used. I'd imagine like the reply , reply all, and forward you could find in some email apps.
-
- 23 The most owner of the thread should be the context through the life of the thread. They and their server's admins and mods should be able to decide which replies are allowed and remove any replies they determine violate the rules or the culture of the server that the thread originated on.
-
- 24 I'd love to have indentation/threads/hierarchy in the replies instead of a flat list, to know who is responding to the original post or to an existing reply.
-
- 25 on the home feed, replies should be grouped with the post they are replying to
-
- 26 No, I really like this granulated approach!
-
- 27 It defaults to reply all which can be a nuisance to remove all the extra people
-



-
- 28 Being able to limit who can reply might be helpful in preventing harassment, mansplaining etc.
-
- 29 I would like more fine grained reply controls, like GoToSocial, or well, Bluesky offers. Some posts might be public, but that doesn't necessarily mean everyone should be able to reply to them, and I think people should be able to decide who can interact with their posts, like people can already decide who can quote them, follow them, etc.
-
- 30 i'd like it to be more obvious a reply is private or follower only
-
- 31 I think it generally works for my needs
-



Thoughts on Current Icon for Liking/Favoriting

Q9. How intuitive do you find the star icon for favouriting a post on Mastodon?

[5-Point rating, 78 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very intuitive)	49	62.8%
4	17	21.8%
3	9	11.5%
2	3	3.9%
1 (Very unintuitive)	0	0%

Overall score: 4.44



Interest in Additional Reactions

Q10. Are there other ways you'd like to be able to react to a post on Mastodon – for example, different reaction types or emotions?

[Free text, 46 responses]

Response	
1	A system based on using any emojis like on discord would be nice & varied, I feel like each instance could have its set of allowed reactions for their posts, which would probably end up just being a favourite with a different display
2	Support (like a thumbs up, or "agree") and laugh.
3	downvotes
4	I would like to be able to click "like" to a post, not necessarily "favourite" as not all of them are, if fact, favourites.
5	I think it's best to keep it easy and not over engineer the UI with dozens of features and actions.
6	No, and I'd rather not have other people use more reactions, either. I find it weird/confusing that people use the star to "react" to a toot, because favouriting a toot seems like something you'd do for yourself, or to show appreciation/agreement, but people seem to also use it as a way to acknowledge a reply when they don't want to actually say something back.



-
- 7 I'd like to signal solidarity, kind of like I'm appreciating their contribution, feeling the same things they are, feeling for them in their perspective. I might use the star this way at times but something more specific could help spread encouragement on the platform.
-
- 8 Using emojis to react to posts would be nice. But I fear that it might encourage people to reply even less to posts because they can express what they feel about a post with just an emoji. I feel more connection to other people if they reply to me instead of just reacting with a star or an emoji.
-
- 9 I like the idea of supporting more reactions. I think it can be good to know when someone thinks something is funny or they don't like it or it makes them sad. That said, I also like the idea of providing the option to disable that for certain posts or for all posts.
-
- 10 no, good god we do not need more fluff weighing this thing down
-
- 11 Nooooo, it gives LinkedIn/Meta data collection vibes!
-
- 12 Nah, keep it simple.
-
- 13 I prefer the power of positive reinforcement and not negative reinforcement in public. The star as an approval is good. Not having an icon for "downvoting" something is good in a public sphere, and in a sense of reinforcement learning. I downvote with mutes and blocks ... I don't need anything else.
-
- 14 It would be great if there were more personal reactions possible, like a heart or a laughter but I understand that allowing any Unicode symbol could lead to people replying with poop or vomit which is definitely not the type of community we want to curate
-
- 15 Emoji reactions, like in the announcements, are great!
-



-
- 16 Sometimes I think I would like a symbol for expressing "I feel you"/"so right, more's the pity" that might be more appropriate than a star e.g. in case of depressing political developments or smallish personal disasters.
-
- 17 On one hand, I would sometimes like to use other emoticons when replying to things. However, then I often find that there aren't enough of the ones I want - i.e. The typical set of "Like/Star/Fav, Heart, Care/Hugs, Laugh, Angry, Surprise, Sadness" works for most cases, though I often find myself wanting also "Rolling Eyes" and "Puke". (In that sense, MsTeams is neat in that you can choose to select something from the wider set, though that gets annoying to hunt down sometimes0
On the other hand, what Mastodon has currently actually feels ok, and I'm not sure we really need/want to have to add extra complexity like that, as the platform feels fine as-is. So, I'm a bit conflicted on it.
-
- 18 Not sure what but that might be nice. Something more nuance than a like (which means everything from "awesome" to "I acknowledge having read your post")
-
- 19 The 'star' action (favoriting) has become a catch-all action for my different responses. Sometimes, I want to acknowledge someone's message, rather than saying 'I hear you' it's a 'star'. At time I love someones post, again 'star'.
Using my familiarity with Slack, LinkedIn here. Those reactions are not worth words. But, they do worth little more than the a 'star'.
-
- 20 It would be nice, but not necessary.
-
- 21 NO!
-
- 22 Oh god no, please no "reactions", a terrible idea we don't need to import
-



-
- 23 I'm sure other emoticons would allow for a greater emotional range (e.g. a comfort/hug reaction when someone posts bad news), but I like the simplicity of the star.
-
- 24 Maybe a "seen" react for the things that aren't good but we want the person to know they're seen. I think most of us understand liking a post with bad news is acknowledging it, not really enjoying it, though. But I definitely don't want a dislike or other emoji available. The Facebook reacts were so awful when they started.
-
- 25 Different reaction types like a heart or crying face or something might be nice.
-
- 26 Maybe. Only if this allows me to e.g. save posts to different "collections" that I can revisit later, e.g. read later vs like vs memes I'd like to save
-
- 27 I think there's value in registering dislike for a post, but this introduces issues too
-
- 28 Not really. To be honest I don't use the star a lot. I don't like that everyone can see what I've liked or not (by clicking on the list of people who did like a post). Sometimes I wish my likes could be seen only by the author of a post, without it being public. The current way things work is the cause for my low use of the star (instead using bookmarks for posts I like even though I have no intentions on coming back to them later) because it sends the signal that I'm online browsing Mastodon, and gives the illusion of an availability I don't always have in the moment.
-
- 29 Yes, emoji reactions would be awesome! It would encourage people who otherwise don't interact (they may not like to reply publicly, a "like/favorite" may not be an appropriate response) to engage more often.
Consider how some polls get a lot of votes, but not as many boosts/favorites.
-



-
- 30 Since favorites on Mastodon are generally only visible to the recipient, I would love if there was (optionally!) a way to react that was more public, but not as public/noisy as boosting, similar to how likes work on Twitter or upvotes work on Reddit. I want to be able to tell the world "I like/support this" without necessarily blasting it to all my followers, which is what boosting does.
-
- 31 Coming from Twitter and Instagram, I've always been ok with fav/boost, but I'm also curious about upvotes/downvotes. I guess favs count as upvotes. On second thought I like the simplicity of it. You can always to a poll for more.
-
- 32 I like the star. I wouldn't want it to be replaced with a heart like Twitter did many years ago. I don't use it only for stuff I love, but to mark any kind of interest in the post. It can mean "thanks for posting" or "I read that". It would be inappropriate to "heart" certain posts. I wouldn't mind some other curated reactions (Facebook or LinkedIn like), even if it's a little gadgety. Not sure how I would feel about full emoji reaction (chat-apps like), it would likely be distracting and too colourful on the timeline.
-
- 33 yes, arbitrary emoji for reactions
-
- 34 Yes, it feels wrong to star a post where someone is telling the world bad news that happened to them, a hug/sad icon would be better
-
- 35 Dislike
-
- 36 Thumbs up might be better than star, most people seem to use star as a kind of thumbs up, whereas I thought originally it was intended to be more of a bookmarking mechanism.
-
- 37 YES. i want reacts with custom emojis a lot (like it's been already implemented in Chuckya, a Mastodon fork)
-



38	It's a nice functionality that I enjoy when on Sharkey, other Misskey forks, Discord, Slack, and Teams. It's not a high priority for me.
39	Different emotion types could be interesting, but I feel like it's a low-priority as a simple reply with an emoji/reaction is essentially the same thing
40	When I star something it normally means "acknowledged, nothing to add, over and out". I feel that's already universally acknowledged, but perhaps there's a better solution.
41	Would be nice to have emoji reactions. But I could see that getting spammy.
42	Yes, it would be nice to react to a sad post with a sad emoji etc.
43	I actually think favoriting works mainly as a kludge. People use it because it's the simplest form of acknowledgement afforded, not because it provides any legible semantic content. The mechanism is a carry-over from corporate social media where having a binary means of expressing favor encouraged and facilitated data harvesting and sentiment analysis for commercial purposes. My preference would be to dispense with it altogether. If people want a single-click, relatively unobtrusive way to react to posts, my preference would be for a distinct post type with a single emoji as the content, that's displayed in collapsed form relatively to the Note type.
44	Custom emojis are a big part of what makes using Mastodon fun, so yeah, I'd really enjoy being able to react with an emoji, it's something I use constantly in apps like Signal
45	in a way why not?
46	Not really, this is not LinkedIn



Awareness of Notification Filters

Q11. Before this survey, were you aware that you can configure filters on your notifications?
[Single-select, 78 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes, and I use filters on notifications	30	38.5%
Yes, but I don't have any filters on notifications	25	32.1%
No, I was unaware of this feature	23	29.5%



Use of Notification Filters

Q12. Which of the following ways do you filter your notifications?

[Mutli-select, 30 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Hiding notifications based on specific interaction types (e.g. boosts, favourites)	22	73.3%
Filtering by account type (e.g. only people you follow)	8	26.7%
Filtering out notifications based on keywords	5	16.7%
Something else ¹⁰	6	20%

¹⁰ Additional responses:

"I typically do not use notifications, I prefer to read social media stuff at my own convenience"

"I'm not sure"

"I sometimes mute notifications for a conversation I'm tired of."

"I think I pretty much just use the default Mastodon settings? Filtering out moderated and newly created accounts. Everything else is set to Accept, none are ignored."

"I actually only use one custom filter, and I only use it because there's no way to hide/remove individual notifications. So it's a filter without keywords that applies to "Notifications" only with "Hide completely". And when there is a notification I want to hide (for instance being repeatedly mentioned in some reply threads I have no more interest about), I click Filter this post on the notification and select the filter. So just a little hack, not very representative."

"Finding things like mentions or follows"



Top Areas of Improvement: Notifications

Q13. What single change would most improve your notifications experience on Mastodon?
[Free text, 25 responses]

Response	
1	open customizable algo
2	If I am involved in a loooong thread, I would like the ability to silence (not mute) notifications on it. I don't want to turn off sounds or computer notifications for all messages but only this thread
3	I don't get any indication of notifications in the iOS app, so I need to check manually, and then they again look unread when I open the web app.
4	I often get notifications from different automated aggregation/boosting bots that I don't really consider an interesting interaction. I imagine I can filter these already, but I'm not sure
5	Not sure why, but I only get notifications on one device and not the other. Likely user error or an app limitation (Ice Cubes).
6	In the Mastodon web UI, the default notifications pane mixes up all kinds of things. For example, follow requests are considered an on-par notification (in terms of value or importance) with a like, a boost, etc. I feel like there needs to be a better way to gather those in the interface. I find myself missing follow requests, only to stumble on them a month later when I see the "Follow Request" menu item WAY over on the right of the deck view has numbers next to it, indicating requests.



-
- 7 My notifications are separate on the web and on iOS, viewing notifications on one device does not clear them on the other and they are still marked as new. Also, iOS notifications are often out of sync with the "new notifications" indicator, so the indicator shows there are unread notifications but you have to forcefully pull to refresh a couple times on the notification list until the new notifications show up.
-
- 8 Fix the technical bug that means you can't open multiple tabs open (and then forget about some of them) without accidentally starting to DDOS your home server, resulting in annoying "Rate Limited" popups that start spawning multiple times all over each other. The notifications counter / checker stuff should just stop polling when you leave the tab, and then should even just give up trying to update once it gets past that 42-ish number where it starts displaying the "+" (at least until you reset that tab to be up to date with your latest notifications)
-
- 9 (I use Ivory) Automatically dismissing message notifications on other devices, when I read the message on one device. Right now I need to open the app, for it to notice.
Also: A dedicated view of my messages, viewed as threads, like in an IM app like Signal. (but this is already the case on Mastodon Web, isn't it?)
-
- 10 Automatically marking everything as read if I'm on the page and can see all of the notifications. The extra step to click the "Mark all as read" button is kinda annoying.
-
- 11 Ability to mute or filter notifications for older posts. Also the "...and X others liked this post" be able to expand so I can get a list of who those others are. If I'm on mobile I will never find out because I can't mouse over the icons.
-
- 12 I would like a setting as an administrator that would let me see only people who have joined the server.
-



-
- 13 some form of aggregates. E.g. if I post something and get one star or boost, I would be happy to know. But if something takes off, the permanent clicking noise that I didn't want to have in the first place is not what I want. Also, I miss mentions in the noise of boosts/stars.
-
- 14 I don't always understand how notifications work. For instance the other day I posted a question in public, all replies allowed, using a hashtag. Some strangers (accounts I had never interacted with nor them with me prior to this) answered and I saw their reply immediately. But one stranger (account I had never interacted with nor them with me prior to this) replied and I got a notification that their message were hidden. There was no filtered word involved in any of these cases. Why are some people hidden and not others ? Those were not even private mentions. I don't understand it. And I also don't understand what exactly I allow once I have clicked on that notification. Am I giving them access to me forever, or just this conversation ? Does that allow them to reply to me publicly, or does that now include private mentions ? I wish I had more control over what happens when and after I receive these notifications.
-
- 15 Having read/unread status for notifications be pushed to all clients and devices instead of having to mark the same notification as read separately on every client and device I use.
-
- 16 Since I'm on an ongoing convo, that clouds my other replies. How could I disentangle public replies from the group of friends chatting?
-
- 17 Regularly I choose a specific type tab in notifications, like Polls or something, just to see something, and then forget about it. After days, I'm like "I don't get any notifications, is no one replying or liking anything?". Then I realise that all this time, it was stuck on that tab. So a solution that for example: shows a little thing on the bell icon or something to tell you you have a tab on / or adds an option to notify of notifications even on other tabs, or anything to avoid this situation, would be nice!
-



18	Consistent grouping in all apps (as web client does nowadays e.g.)
19	When I have a post go “viral,” my notifications become completely useless unless I mute notifications for that post ... regardless of the other notification filters. I seriously have no idea how anyone on mastodon copes with having 1K or more followers.
20	give me a setting to filter out notifications from bot accounts please! bot services like tagpush.app, FediProfile and others boost my posts and it is annoying to see these boosts in my notifications. It also falsifies statistics for boosts in services that analyse post statistics.
21	Syncing whether I've viewed notifications across devices and apps
22	There is a swipe feature when someone wants to follow me. I don't like the dating app feel of swiping. It could just be the Toot! App I use. I prefer to just approve or deny, with those words. Not swipe right or left.
23	Extending notification grouping more aggressively, so if a post starts getting a like every few seconds I don't get a notification every few seconds
24	An option for more aggressive grouping. Ideally, the notifications timeline should have only one entry per post, showing both boosts and replies, that gets bumped to the top as new interactions occur. Mouse-hovering over the icon of the boosting or faving account can show details of the interaction, like date and time, with a link to their profile, rather than prioritizing the profile.
25	I rarely get any - which is super fine with me



Exposure to Cross-Server Challenges

Q14. Have you ever had trouble interacting with a post from someone on a different server – for example, replies not appearing, having to search for a post manually to interact with it, or a link leading to an unfamiliar server?

[Single-select, 78 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes, several times	36	46.2%
Yes, once or twice	23	29.5%
No, I haven't run into this	15	19.2%
I didn't know this could happen	4	5.1%



Q15. Optional: Describe your experience.

[Free text, 38 responses]

Response
1 Losing posts I've replied to — don't show in my history — and double posts showing in feeds.
2 It already happened with a person, she hasn't blocked me (I can see her posts on her timeline), but each time she is mentionned in a thread appearing in my timeline, when I check the thread, her replies never appear (and the thread is not on private mode). She is not on a weird instance, so I really don't know this is happening.
3 i have experienced these things, of course, i just don't consider them problems. it's expected behavior.
4 Too many, like every time I want to reply to someone whose post was quoted in my feed. It open in a new tab, where I'm not logged in, but the servers are connected.
5 Reply sometimes takes me to my browser rather than remaining in-app. Or having to search for the user even though they appear in my timeline—confusing!
6 Translations often do not work for an unknown reasons
7 I curate my followers. It's frustrating to have to use several clicks to get to their feed on their instance so I can see their post history. I wish this would sync to a local instance better.
8 I have friends who follow me from other instances and say they are not getting all the posts syndicated from mastodon.online accounts, including mine. I also encounter people who link to



mastodon posts using their web UI's link (so it links to their instance's web UI showing a foreign post instead of the actual post, the link then opens a web browser instead of showing a post inside Mastodon), I think it would be useful if the instance could catch its own UI being posted and unfurl the URL automatically.

9 Even though I clicked several times on the icon, it didn't boost. No response.

10 The other server was experiencing difficulties, disruption was intermittent.

11 It rarely happens now as I've just stopped trying to find new accounts on other servers to interact with.
But mainly, if I ever come across something via a link on some other server that I then do want to interact with, then it is always a bunch of mental gymnastics to figure out what's the best way to access that post from my own server to somehow interact with it
The other big problem is searching for some account / coming across some account that has interacted with your posts, but then seeing a blank profile telling you to look on the other server.

12 IIRC: Clicked a link in a post, Ivory struggled to load it, and booted me to the Web browser, where the page opened. It was a Mastodon server maybe, maybe a weird variant.

13 A case I find it hard is where I was taken to someone's Mastodon post from a website or chat. I use a Mastodon server with a small community. So every time I need to do something on the post I saw, I need to do a bit of copy pasting. What worked for me is copying the URL to the post and pasting it in my Mastodon instance's search box.

14 Turns out they were blocked, or I was blocked. Either way, doesn't matter.

15 Sometimes replies don't appear from other servers, but I'm aware of the reason



-
- 16 Happens way less often now that the fetch-all replies and quote toots are in place. Before people would link to a post and it would be on some random server and I'd have to go through a song & dance to interact with it.
-
- 17 I am pretty sure the issue was that it was bridged from Bluesky and while the replied/commented on my post, I could find no way to reply to them nor could I find their reply on their Bluesky timeline. So something wasn't being shared correctly is my guess.
-
- 18 1. Quote boost force me to click through to the original server and there too much hoop jumping to reply and like.
2. There are some posts that just don't show up directly even if I am following the account and I am forced to click through, see 1 above.
-
- 19 Yes, though it has improved. Sometimes not all replies to a post load, still. Often I don't see the correct amount of favourites/boosts for a post. This makes Mastodon seem much emptier than it is, which I imagine discourages new users.
Sometimes when I want to favourite a post on another server, I have to type in my own instance. Not a huge hassle, of course, but it would be nice if that could one day be a bit more streamlined, too.
-
- 20 It happens from time to time, especially that things load slowly - more responses showing up after I already started scrolling the page.
-
- 21 Well it's hard to tell when I've had trouble interacting with someone whose posts I couldn't see, by definition !
Something that does annoy me is that quite often when I open the link to a post into a new window, I can read it but not interact with it (because it turns out it's on a different instance and it asks me to log into that instance instead of recognizing that I'm on Mastodon). So I have to put it into the
-

search engine and THEN interact with it. Maybe it's because I'm in advanced interface mode, with the three columns ? No idea. But very confusing. Hasn't happened in a while though... mostly because I've stopped trying to open posts in a different window entirely.

22 Not since fetching of replies from remote servers has been introduced, I don't think.

23 The most common thing I experience is not being able to see images or watch videos in posts in my Home timeline that come from people on other servers. It seems like the posts appear right away but my server (mastodon.online) takes a lot longer to load/deliver the media, so the images appear blank and videos either don't play or take a long time to load.

24 Copy pasting links from other servers to search on my server is a daily Mastodon experience. Frustrating but I don't know how it could be solved :(

25 I click on a link and instead of bringing it up in the UI, it takes me to the original page (on another server)
And, while the new "Fetch all replies" functionality is a big improvement, there are still sometimes replies that don't get fetched

26 Only with bluesky bridged posts

27 Recently there has been quite a lot of further posts appearing and clicking and having them appear, at which point I have to look back through the thread again. This isn't great.

28 Not a big deal for me

29 Primarily having to search by URL to load a post.



-
- 30 The feed of posts from people followed from an account on actu.blois.fr works, but replies to those posts (or the stats numbers) aren't always appearing or complete. If I view the same post from an account on another server, they're there.
-
- 31 kind of, but mostly when attempting to interact with mirrored content from X.com or other non-federated platforms. When viewing lemmys posts I can't see comments (Ivory app) and the same is true with Pixelfed. Also, Pixelfed stories don't appear on mastodon but that may be intentional.
-
- 32 Not since Fetch All Replies was released. Great feature.
-
- 33 Yes, two things:
- Whenever a mutual from another instance copies-pastes a link to one of their private posts in a new post, I usually can't open it (although we're mutuals and I know I did read the original post when it was first published, for instance), I get an error message.
- My main account is on [server name redacted], but I have a secondary account on @mastodon.social (different username, different timeline, etc.). If I click on a post by someone who is on mastodon.social to open it, I will automatically interact with them with my mastodon.social account, and not with my main [server name redacted] account, which can lead to errors and misunderstandings.
These are problems I don't have when using a smartphone app (Ice Cubes currently), only on the website interface.
-
- 34 Sometimes I click on a toot which is reply and the toot it's replying to isn't there, but if I do "Open in browser" then I can see it. I've also had media not show up unless I did "Open in browser"
-
- 35 I've been on the network since about 2017, so I've run into most of the difficulties federation sometimes presents, from inaccessible accounts to missing replies. They honestly don't bother me
-



that much, but in part that's because I have a fairly detailed understanding of how instances interact with one another, so my expectations are different from those of a person who comes here expecting a 1:1 replacement for Twitter or Bluesky. There may be genuine problems that need addressing, but I think many of the complaints that arise around this topic are the result of people expecting or, less reparably, wanting something that ActivityPub and the fediverse were not designed to deliver.

36 I think the clunkiest bit so far is if somebody shares a post to an obscure server and then on the web I cannot easily "login" to this - I have to know my instance. If instead people would always remember the whole username the same way they remember their email address and this could be entered, this would be cool

37 Often wondered why I couldn't see replies that clearly existed

38 We self-host our own small instance for our team and the experience of having an account on there versus being on mastodon.social is vastly different, regarding visibility of replies. It's much harder to find interesting people to follow when being on a small instance. I'm sure there are sound technical reasons, but this seems extremely unintuitive, that you wouldn't be able to see all replies to a post, regardless of your own location in the network.



Top Areas of Improvement: Cross-Server Interaction

Q16. Is there anything Mastodon could do to make interacting across servers easier to understand or navigate?

[Free text, 38 responses]

Response	
1	Offer` a browser addon in the spirit of FediAct.
2	some kind of note/icon with info on conversations where some parts may be expected to be missing due to my server not being able to show all parts (maybe due to blocking).
3	A way to answer to a post from another server.
4	Search, finding profiles, etc. that span servers is slow at times.
5	maybe educate people about how the web works, how distributed systems work, etc. instead of trying to dumb down the experience.
6	It'd be great if I could see that I can't interact with an account because my server blocked theirs. I can see their profile publicly, but the search starting from my server won't find anything.
7	Maybe more handholding to explain and instruct whenever a server barrier exists?
8	Fewer clicks to see other feeds on other servers, etc.



9	Indicate when there are most likely still posts or replies missing so I know I should wait a moment for them to load.
10	Not for me personally, but I've seen people being confused by the community instances allowing custom emojis in display names, including things that look like Twitter and Facebook verification seals
11	Technical terms like server or instance are opaque to most people. I'd explore more human-centred terms, such as community, neighbourhood ...
12	1) When showing profiles / etc. from another server that your server hasn't currently got cached, instead of displaying that cop-out thing about you needing to follow a link to go there and see for yourself on that other server, it should really just offer to fetch the missing stuff right then and there - maybe in a paginated way (so you have to keep pressing the button to fetch more), but at least it should try to get 5-10 to give you a taste, then keep asking if you want to grab more 2) Several years ago, I did have a bunch of thoughts on how all those cross-server interactions could be smoother, but having not really have had to do it for years now, I don't care that much anymore / can't remember now. One idea though is that we could: a) Just ask the user for their handle - and if they only provide a username, the UI will then start searching commonly known servers that that server already knows about. And if no match is found, only then does the user really have to type out their full ID manually b) Once you have the handle, Mastodon servers should just be able to send "interaction" intent requests back to your home server for you, which will redirect (maybe in a new tab) to said server, with a popup asking you to confirm the interaction, so you can now continue interacting further with that foreign server's post but now on your home server. And all of this bypasses all that annoying dance around not being able to do cross-site embedding stuff due to web security policies

-
- 13 I mean staying logged in across servers, on the Web, but that sounds hard or impossible. Also search seems to find less things from other servers? Which is a bummer.
-
- 14 In an ideal world, navigating between instances should be seamless. But I know it is not that easy. To be honest, I don't know.
I'll say this, using browser extensions like 'Homecoming for Mastodon' didn't really take away that pain.
-
- 15 No, i guess it's fine
-
- 16 I think it kinda needs to blend into the background for most people. The server you're on is just another bit of identifying information for me, we're all operating in the big, federated universe.
-
- 17 I don't get why it takes me to different servers? If it could understand what server I am on and show me it through that (without having to go through entering my server name etc) automatically it would be so much easier.
-
- 18 Yes. It would be great for some help/alt text explaining "You're unable to view this person's posts because they auto delete" or "You're unable to view this person's posts because your instance doesn't know about this instance" or "You're unable to view this person's posts because it's a bridgey thing" Anything to fill the void of why when I go to someone Mastodon profile page on their server that shows 2,000 followers & I click I see 0 followers or see only the 3 out of that 2,000 that happen to follow me.
-
- 19 There was the example of when LibreOffice quit X a couple of months ago, where users looking at their Mastodon page couldn't find where to sign up. Apparently reading that they could still join another server was too hard, so that should probably be simplified for those who refuse to read.
-



See this issue on it: <https://github.com/mastodon/mastodon/issues/21556>

- | | |
|----|--|
| 20 | It would be nice if it were easier to browse the public local timelines of other servers. I have one app which adds this functionality, and have found accounts of interest on a few servers' timelines. (The local timeline on my home server, mastodon.social , is too much of a firehose to be useful in this way.) |
| 21 | I don't know what you need to do, but incomplete threads are the most annoying. It turns out some odd server doesn't federate? With mine so I see only people replying to some account but not the posts by that account. Sometimes it's a troll or a problematic instance but it often happens to smaller instances too |
| 22 | A lot of the issues need to addressed by browsers. Maybe Mastodon could create its own browser plugin that could help handle some of the awkward user experience. Also, I still see people getting confused about needing to create a new account on each server, the messaging needs to be improved/simplified. |
| 23 | When I click a link in my server's web interface that links to a post on another server, it should open in my server's web interface instead of the other server's web interface. Pretty much all the apps (Ivory, Ice Cubes, etc) already handle this properly. |
| 24 | I want to view other servers' timelines! that would be sooo helpful for discoverability from a tiny server |
| 25 | ActivityPub becoming some standard browser feature or something?
Definitely fetching anything that can be fetched is nice, and never linking to outside servers except for the "see original post" features. |
-



26	I tend to go back to my server and look people up, rather than using their server and having to tell it what my server is and having it redirect me. Maybe that's improved these days, but it was pretty useless back when I last tried it.
27	Perhaps an estimated time for the external server and internal server to communicate and follow each other.
28	The way the handle dialogue works on a profile has improved but still has unnecessary friction.
29	Yes, and the biggest win would be abstracting away the "server" layer from everyday interactions. Right now, remote follows and replies expose too much federation plumbing to the user. Copying a profile URL and pasting it into your instance's search bar to follow someone is a dealbreaker for most people coming from centralized platforms. A few things that would help: A universal "follow" or "interact" button that handles cross-server redirects seamlessly, no copy-paste required. Better thread federation so replies from unfamiliar servers actually show up. Incomplete conversations are one of the most disorienting parts of the experience. Opt-in full-text search across the fediverse. Discovery feels siloed without it. Reframing server choice during onboarding as low-stakes ("pick a neighborhood, you can still talk to everyone") instead of something that feels permanent and confusing. The less users have to think about which server someone is on, the better. Federation should be infrastructure, not a user experience hurdle.
30	Backfill profiles when loading them



31	Apart from the two issues I mentioned in my last answer, I'd love to have greater clarity or transparency sometimes. Maybe a short message saying "3 answers to this post are hidden from you because their instances are blocked by your instance", something like that.
32	I'm not sure if bridged accounts see my replies so I just don't bother interacting with them, even if I follow them.
33	It would be better if it was more seamless - if you could follow someone on any server from any server, and also I don't think you should ever have to go to someone's home server, you should be able to do everything from your own server
34	I think many people would find some form of visualization helpful. A kind of graph, automatically generated by each server, showing known instances distinguished by their federation status (federated, moderated, blocked), with the user's home instance at the center. Even if they don't drill down into the details presented, being able to see a graphical representation of the fediverse as a network of connections will help people cognize the sort of higher-level relationships that condition their experience of that network.
35	like how/what is the fastest way to get a specific directly shared post (I'm on that other posts server) show up in my instance's account view?
36	Probably but not sure how to describe other than to say show everything for posts I am trying to interact with
37	it would be a great improvement if i could easily check whether my server has limits/rules for the other servers, without trawling through the entire list posted elsewhere by admins of my server



38 It seems like being able to request all replies from the server of the toot's origin would be handy, or ideally the software would do that under the hood automatically. But also very possible I'm not getting the full picture of the complexity here.



Additional Feedback on Replies and Interactions

Q17. Lastly, is there anything else that relates to conversations, replies, or interacting with others on Mastodon that you'd like to share?

[Free text, 31 responses]

Response	
1	it's a confusing and strange experience when I stumble over an unknown profile, look it up in Tusky and I don't see nearly or no posts of this person, but when I open it up in the webbrowser (without being logged in) I can see more posts of this person.
2	It'd be beneficial for individual profiles to allow "retweet with quote" style responses on their posts. I know some of the reasons Mastodon doesn't support it, but it might raise engagement with profiles like news sources, etc.
3	It would be nice if the actual current number of replies, boosts and stars would be shown directly in my timeline without opening the post and reloading the page because I want to see from my timeline where discussions are happening and I can't to that when I'm on a relatively small instance and almost every post is shown as having almost no interactions when first seeing it.
4	"Quiet public" always stops me. I eventually get it but I have to take time to work out what it means, every time.
5	The way conversations are shown as a tree of replies is not easy to read, but that may vary per client
6	A better interface for private messages, and with actual privacy better guaranteed.



-
- 7 Bluesky has the interesting feature of notifications when someone interacts with a post that I reposted (and I guess that was shown to them because of my repost).
I'm not sure if that is still a good idea when thought through or how complicated implementation would be.
I just wanted to leave that as an idea to show the impact of reposts a bit more.
-
- 8 Please have the timelines collapse self-replies into threads automatically, the Meta Threads app does this really well, each threaded post there also automatically displays a counter so people are not forced to add a "3/5" manually.
In the single post view, it's also sometimes unclear, which replies are responding to which post, this is also something I think Threads does well, with their Reddit-inspired tree-like threading.
-
- 9 Separate Private mentions from the feed would be great.
-
- 10 My experience (and I am aware it is not everyone's) is that the Fediverse is generally much more courteous than other social media. People can disagree without descending into shouting matches or abuse.
I like that.
-
- 11 1) I'd be nice to be able to mark certain threads / polls as things you're interested in following the results of, and have these then show up in your notifications. Otherwise, right now, if I see a thread or poll I'm interested in following up on, right now, unless I explicitly remember to go back and check, I never do, as I have long forgotten about them.
2) It would be good to be able to more easily mute certain threads from generating notifications
-
- 12 As previously mentioned, I'd like the option to Follow a person in the context menu of their reply. I currently have options for: Mention, Mute, Block, Filter, Report, but not Follow.
-



-
- 13 A threaded display might be nice.
-
- 14 It would be great to have more "widgets" to display feeds, streams, posts, convos, on our blogs. Anything that would self update within a sidebar or something.
-
- 15 Just that if the favourite and boost counts could be federated better, it would help a lot with making the Fediverse seem more alive, I think! Love your work on this!
-
- 16 I would very much like it if, as well as (or instead of) followers-only, there was a way of making things visible only to a list of people you follow, or mutuals, or LiveJournal/Flickr-style friend lists. Unless you lock your account down, "followers" can include anyone, which makes the default expectation of privacy that posts are public. Friends-only posts would encourage more personal conversations that one might not want seen by potentially unsympathetic people. I understand that doing this in a federated fashion is tricky, though have also heard that there are efforts to add end-to-end encryption to ActivityPub applications for DMs, and this could hopefully be used for such privacy options.
-
- 17 Labelling accounts of trolls etc. and/or adding community notes. I have personally not experienced this as my account is small enough but I've seen several accounts leave because of reply guys, mastodon's hoa, trolls and/or harassment. It sucks that federation makes this invisible and therefore more difficult for other people in the community to catch it and report it.
-
- 18 As said earlier, I use the advanced interface when using Mastodon in my web browser (which is most of the time, I use Tusky much less than the browser version). I like it for everyday browsing, but find very grating that I can't just double click a post/thread in order to read it in full screen. Instead am limited to reading it in its tiny column. For just browsing my timeline, keeping an eye on notifications while catching up with what others have been saying, and more, the advanced interface is efficient and great. But whenever I'm reading someone's long post/thread, or combing
-



through replies, not being able to be more comfortable is really a problem, and makes me want to get it over with as fast as possible, rather than read the whole conversation or take part in it. This is particularly an issue I have because of my eyes ; the older I get the more I want to make fonts bigger when I'm trying to focus on long reads ; but the advanced interface is absolutely not playing nice with Firefox' zoom (CTRL+mouse wheel) function, which visually gets tiring for long reads.

19 Sometimes it can be uncomfortable to have a super popular account boost my posts, especially with older posts that I still want to keep and not delete, but don't necessarily want them to become a public conversation again on someone else's terms. I wish it was possible to change the boost-ability of a post after the fact like we can with quotability. Reply controls would also help with this as long as we can limit replies after the fact.

20 The ongoing chat, we call ourselves [name redacted] and this gentleman chats with us the entire day. It feels it's a support system for people. It's so wholesome and also not used the way Mastodon is set up for. We've been chatting for years and even have had video calls. We're in [3 countries, locations redacted]. We've explored other alternatives but someone never find a place. It should be like a close friends timeline.

21 When there is a post with a lot of replies or a thread with replies to different posts, it's very hard to follow and understand what is a reply to what in the view. It just becomes a long list of posts and you have to click on individual posts to understand what they were replying to. I wish there was some indentation and visual layout to make this clear (while not super complex like Reddit or other). Basically the whole thread/replies view could be rethought.

22 Local-only posts are great, and especially with Mastodon's new-found focus on communities really really should be accepted into the mainline release



-
- 23 The interactions have intrinsic value, I want them to be fully searchable and first-class citizens in archives. I also would like solutions for when moving instances, a searchable easy-to-reach archive is the main reason why I don't migrate.
-
- 24 No, just better thread display and thread-based killfiles please. (Like Usenet trn. I'm old.)
-
- 25 I would love to see the numbers of replies, favorites, boosts, and bookmarks a post has.
-
- 26 The way mastodon displays threaded posts is difficult to parse, leading to misunderstandings about conversational context. Phanpy improves on your threading model but is still not 100% on this.
-
- 27 It would be great to be able to make a thread of posts directly from the web interface, to posts multiple messages at once.
-
- 28 There's room for more features, similar to CWs, that function as a courtesy provided by the poster to other users, rather than a means of controlling one's own experience — an example I've argued for in the past is hushtags, a variation on hashtag functionality that would hide a post from Home timelines unless the potential recipient is following the corresponding hashtag. Likewise, if Mastodon is serious about providing value to communities and interest groups, something like local-only posting would be a strong step in the right direction. Finally, bridging to other protocols and services complicates interactions in ways that I think most Mastodon users are ill-equipped to assess, precisely because the features and infrastructure that differentiate the fediverse are not always rendered legibly to them.
-
- 29 I'm still sad that tumblr style quotes, where the reply is below the quote, didn't win out in the end. I was really exited for a different / well thought out approach from Mastodon, but then it was just implemented like everywhere else, and it feels like it could have been more...
-



-
- 30 End to end Encrypted Messaging should be a VERY high STRATEGIC priority for Mastodon (even before full fediverse support). It can and should be a key differentiator for attracting more users to Mastodon and hence the fediverse. Being a good fediverse citizen is not as important as making this happen ASAP because end users want and need it and dragging this out only gives centralized social media more time to prevent a move to open social media and maybe prevent it from happening ever.
-
- 31 It's great! Possibly the last public space on the internet with kind and respectful conversations.
-



Survey 3: Creating

Awareness of Discoverability Settings

Q1. Mastodon offers several settings that affect how discoverable your account is — for example, whether your profile is indexed by search engines, whether your follower and following lists are visible to others, or whether people need your approval before following you. Before reading this: how aware were you that these settings exist?

[Single-select, 70 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
I've explored these settings in detail	55	78.6%
I knew some of these existed but haven't looked into them	12	17.1%
I wasn't aware of these settings	3	4.3%



Use of Discoverability Settings

Q2. Which of the following have you configured for your account?
[Multi-select, 68 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Opted in or out of appearing in account suggestions	32	47.1%
Opted in or out of having my posts indexed in Mastodon search	31	45.6%
Opted out of search engine indexing of my profile	27	39.7%
Set a default visibility for my posts (e.g. Followers only)	22	32.4%
Required approval before someone can follow me	17	25%
Hidden my follower and following lists from others	17	25%
None of the above	12	17.7%
Something else ¹¹	2	2.9%

¹¹ Additional responses:
"disabled quoting of my posts"
"I have auto deletion set for my posts"



Top Areas of Improvement: Discoverability Settings

Q3. Is there anything you'd like to be able to control about how discoverable your account or posts are that you currently can't?

[Free text, 24 responses]

Response	
1	Turn off display of Quite public posts for not logged in visitors to my profile.
2	'- Hide unlisted posts from my profile. They're not intended to be public! - Make the bulk of my profile private (everything other than my name and avatar), visible only to followers, and/or local-only, visible only to people on my instance
3	I wanted to err on the side of caution when I post things. I don't want this to impact my professional profile too much if it comes up in search.
4	I'd be happy to be as discoverable as possible by default ... it would be a real bummer to realize later on that I should've toggled on a few settings. Of course loads of users will disagree with that statement, so I'm sure you have sensible defaults.
5	A default reply privacy? Being able to be included in collections but on a per collection basis? Just some ideas, not things I strongly need.
6	Less discoverable is still findable. Posting on Mastodon is great, I don't post things I wouldn't say publicly. But that's a privilege that I could lose.
7	Being part of collections or recommended accounts due to type of content posted - i.e. privacy.



8	Reject the extraction of posts or profile information from scrapers associated with AI training.
9	AI scraping
10	Way to limit some posts to home instance "Live Feeds" timeline (when logged in), but not generally showing up outside of that server (except to followers / when boosted)
11	I'd like to be able to opt in to my public posts being searched by real people using Mastodon (or other legitimate Fediverse clients) while opting out of scrapers who abuse Fediverse infrastructure to provide information (or A.I. training) outside of the Fediverse.
12	I would like the option of having "friends-only" posts, visible only to people I have added to a list (or followed). This would open Mastodon up to more personal connection, facilitating for people to engage in the kinds of conversations they might not want to be visible to strangers. (For example, conflicts at work, relationship/social drama, health issues or similar.) Note, that "Visible to followers" is not a viable alternative unless you lock down your account to make it useless for talking to people who aren't in your group.
13	It'd be easier if I had a separate field to add hashtags. I don't always remember to put them at the end of a post (which is preferable in terms of accessibility as well as them looking better in the UI if you don't put them in the middle of a post), so having a way to add tags after I've typed/quoted/linked everything I wanted in my post, in a separate field, would be ideal. Way too often I use all the characters in my posts and then delete part of the text to make room for tags, too.
14	I wish it was easier to find to change and had more explanation about each.
15	Maybe not technically feasible, but the ability to opt out of bridges.



-
- 16 A bit off, but: I'd like to be able to make posts silently (no-one sees them on their timeline) to then pin them.
-
- 17 Official "No Bot" and "No AI" settings
-
- 18 I used to be on a small instance that ran the Mastodon glitch-fork, and I really miss the local-only posting.
Especially on a smaller instance that creates the possibility for some interesting community get togethers. We had our little pizza parties, in-jokes, and generally a space that still felt open (the instance had a few hundred users) but kind of a time-out from the whole fediverse for a bit.
I still spend a lot of time on the local timeline on my new instance, but that magic of stuff just sometimes happening only there, that campfire feeling, that's missing.
-
- 19 I'd love for my posts to be available in a global feed/stream available to all Mastodon servers. Likewise, I'd love to add that service/resource to my single-user instance so I can discover more people.
-
- 20 Opt in to be a suggested account for when someone follows another account I interact with
-
- 21 I think the discoverability options are great, very clearly explained and easy to use. I just don't like that these pretty much replace other safety features, such as being able to disable replies. Security by obscurity, you could say.
-
- 22 I wish it was possible to toggle the details. If I post something new, I want it to have a different setting than when I'm responding to something.
-
- 23 I don't care how discoverable I am but ideally would love to access straightforward-enough ways to be mobilizing together more and more and better and better for our planet, people, etc... if only
-



there were smart ways to collectively demonstrate (and/or at least experiment on) what we can still do as a network facing same and similar challenges !

24 Would like to have encrypted messaging between users

Frequency of Posting

Q4. NOT including replies, how often do you post on Mastodon?
[Single-select, 70 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Daily or more	20	28.6%
A few times a week	23	32.9%
A few times a month	16	22.9%
Rarely / never (I mostly read or interact with other people's posts)	11	15.7%



Professional Posting on Mastodon

Q5. When you post on Mastodon, do you post as yourself or on behalf of an organisation?

[Single-select, 59 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
As myself	46	78%
Both as myself and on behalf of an organisation or brand	12	20.3%
On behalf of an organisation or brand	1	1.7%



Reasons for Posting

Q6. What are your top motivations for posting?
[Multi-select, 59 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
To share something I find interesting or useful	45	76.3%
To participate in a community or conversation	36	61%
To connect with people who share my interests	32	54.2%
To express myself creatively	18	30.5%
To document my life or work	18	30.5%
To support or amplify others	17	28.8%
To build an audience or following	8	13.6%
Something else ¹²	3	5.1%

¹² Additional response:

"Activism"

"To show to my friends that I'm still alive. It's part of the things we have implemented around my mental health."

"To shitpost"



Creator Satisfaction with Engagement Options

Q7. How satisfied are you with the ways people can react and respond to your posts on Mastodon?
[5-Point rating, 59 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very satisfied)	21	35.6%
4	28	47.5%
3	9	15.3%
2	0	0%
1 (Very dissatisfied)	1	1.7%

Overall score: 4.15



Q8. Optional: Explain your answer.

[Free text, 23 responses]

Response	
1	I honestly love the way interactions work and the options for controlling audience on a per message basis.
2	I feel you sometimes get lost in the noise with the way boosts work. It amplifies the bigger voices and I get the feeling I'm missing a lot of people with interesting things to say who are not boosted as much.
3	Anything beyond the current setup would overly complicated and heavy. Though I will say that trying to reply to someone who engaged with my bridged post on Bluesky feels impossible. No good way yet.
4	If I look at my own posts, I don't know if someone has reacted or responded unless I click on the post or I look at my notifications.
5	Would be cool if people had the option to scope their replies' visibility to include my followers in followers-only replies.
6	- Lack of emoji reactions - No ability to limit who can reply - No ability to detach posts I don't want associated with my thread (blocking helps some but leaves the posts visible on federated versions) The first two are especially frustrating because several other fediverse platforms have this functionality -- GoToSocial, Misskey and its forks, etc.



7	Sometimes it gets quiet and lonely when people don't respond. Not so much a problem with my current following, but I can see this being a struggle.
8	Please, no likes, hearts, etc!
9	The UI can be a bit confusing when multiple people reply to a single comment
10	Stars and replies and boosts and quotes, it's quite good already! They work and not sure what else there could be.
11	Like, boost or reply is enough. I'm not looking to get large number, which is also not realistic for a small instance. I love knowing someone is reading me and find their replies witty. I don't need more validation than that.
12	Same answer as my previous survey: limitations in servers being able to see each other, search not being universal, replies not all showing up.
13	I still think quote toots were a mistake. Tbf, I haven't really seen them misused for piling on, but I'm still not in favour.
14	I suspect that creative people in the community, if they made their ideas aware, could influence me to understand there are other new things that could improve the experience. So I am happy, but I bet I could be happier! :-)
15	It is what I expect from social media
16	Most likely f the interactions and replies I receive are normal, friendly, and fun. A small minority of replies come from a bunch of people who are acerbic and rude. Every time I post, I'm doing a



complex bit of math in my head to determine what thing is most likely to provoke a hostile response from, say, Linux evangelists or some other kind of know-it-all who wants me to upend my entire life to behave the way they'd prefer. A lot of times, I just don't post. When I do, I often include a disclaimer about specific types of unwanted behavior that I won't tolerate. Mastodon has a huge problem here.

17 I mean it's fine ?

18 i'd like emoji reacts

19 I sometimes miss replies from others

20 Being able to respond with an emoji like Discord does would be nice, but it's not essential

21 I'm still not entirely convinced that quote posts add as much value for communities as they do for clout-chasers and would-be influencers.

22 It's rarely an issue for me personally (I don't post enough for that), but I'd really like better reply controls, who can reply, removing replies, etc.

23 As I alluded in one of the previous replies, I don't like the lack of reply controls. And emoji reactions would also be neat!



Creator Satisfaction with Activity Metrics

Q9. How satisfied are you with the engagement information currently available to you as a poster on Mastodon?

[5-Point rating, 59 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very satisfied)	22	37.3%
4	20	34%
3	12	20.3%
2	4	6.8%
1 (Very dissatisfied)	1	1.7%

Overall score: 3.98



Q10. Optional: Explain your answer.

[Free text, 23 responses]

Response	
1	I'm not really tracking engagement levels, if I were trying to market things via Mastodon that'd be different, but I really don't feel like that's something Mastodon users would readily engage with.
2	It's really hard to understand what's happening to my posts when they bridge to Bluesky.
3	It's nice to know how many people interacted with my post, I dont need detailed information
4	While I appreciate that there isn't any additional tracking that people haven't opted in to, from an activism perspective it would be useful to know how many people have seen a post -- and I've heard journalists say similar things. Of course it would need to be an opt-in approach to avoid privacy issues, so it's not straightforward (and I don't know any examples of other platforms that have done this), so I'm not sure how to prioritize this, but I really do feel the lack as compared to other platforms. Also losing all poll responses WITHOUT ANY WARNING if any of the options are edited -- even to fix a typo -- is one incredibly frustrating place where critical engagement information is lost. https://github.com/mastodon/mastodon/issues/33606
5	I really don't care about things like follower counts, "clout", how many people a post reaches, and so on. I view all those potential features as toxic to community.
6	The interaction counters, especially the favorites one, seem wildly unreliable at times
7	Honestly, I don't understand the question



8	I have notifications which is fine for my use, and can check individually each post if I need. I can see how some posters might want analytics, and I think it would be good to have if done in the spirit of a non-profit social network. For instance, it shouldn't feel like it's gamifying getting more engagement or something, numbers are not as important as the quality of it.
9	I don't really look at it. I'm just 1 human, I'm not trying to make my Mastodon account nothing beyond random thoughts.
10	I don't know what this means. Is it about stats about posts? I don't look at those at all.
11	* I'd like the option to turn on the numbers in more places. While it doesn't have to be the default, I would still like to see them in more places where I can't turn them on * Also, in particular when sharing videos / links, there are times when I would like to have a bit more insight into if people were not clicking as they were not interested, or whether they had things configured to not show the links at all (such that it would be a pain to try and view it), or whether they just scrolled right past...
12	Again, I am happy with things, but I bet there are ideas out there for how this could all be more rewarding.
13	I prefer less info if it means increased privacy for everyone
14	I feel like my answer would be different if FediTips wasn't around. Y'all's information discoverability leaves something to be desired.
15	I really don't care about getting information about "engagement". I'm sure it's useful for people who try to monetize exposure however.



16	Apart from knowing that my posts aren't disappearing into the void, I don't have much need for engagement information, and think that "engagement" tends toward a corporate-influenced understanding of the value of social media. On the whole, I find I'm happier when I don't pay too much attention to the analytics-type data surfaced by the service.
17	There's engagement information currently available to me as a poster?
18	I'd love more of a history maybe. A graph over the years?
19	I don't actually want to see engagement numbers on posts, because I don't think people should be defined by how many likes/boosts something gets, whenever I have the option I turn all the metrics off.
20	It is hard to have an overview of which posts really struck a nerve. I recently started using Fedisuite and like the visualisations of post success and follower changes.
21	I'm unsure how accurate it is across the fediverse, based on how inaccurate it is for public engagement metrics for other people's posts.
22	Don't need details stats
23	I'd like a direct way to know when someone boosts something they saw from my boosts I'd appreciate anonymized stats on link clicks or image views on my posts

Frequency of Composer Attachments by Type

Q11. How often do you add the following to your posts?

[Matrix, 59 responses]

Response	Weighted Score (0-4)	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Links	2.9	0%	1.69%	13.6%	81.4%	3.4%
Images or Photos	2.6	0%	5.1%	27.1%	67.8%	0
Hashtags	2.6	3.4%	10.2%	20.3%	52.5%	13.6%
Content Warnings	1.6	12.1%	32.8%	41.4%	13.8%	0%
Polls	1	28.1%	52.6%	15.8%	3.5%	0%
Video	0.8	30.5%	59.3%	6.8%	3.4%	0%
Audio	0.4	69%	24.1%	6.9%	0%	0%

Creator Satisfaction with Composer Options

Q12. Overall, how satisfied are you with the options and limits you have when composing a post?
[5-Point rating, 59 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very satisfied)	18	30.5%
4	27	45.8%
3	11	18.6%
2	2	3.4%
1 (Very dissatisfied)	1	1.7%

Overall score: 4.00



Q13. Optional: Explain your answer.

[Free text, 28 responses]

Notable topics, by frequency of mention:

1. Character limit is too restrictive (10 respondents)
2. Lack of rich text formatting / Markdown support (9 respondents)
3. Can't combine media types within a single post (8 respondents)

Response	
1	I'd love if my instance allowed longer posts. Also clearer formatting options, links on words (without blowing the letter count!)
2	For a micro-blogging platform it seems pretty well equipped. I don't know what I would need right now that is possibly missing.
3	If I post a link to content outside of Mastodon, it will include a preview of the content. But if I want to post about someone else's post, it includes a link to their post, not a preview. It would be nice to include a preview to provide visual context to the post.
4	The lack of even basic formatting is ridiculous -- and inexcusable since it's been available in forks like Glitch for years. Ditto the way Mastodon intentionally makes it difficult for admins to change the default post length. The lack of reply controls is a huge problem as well.
5	More CommonMark support would be nice. GitHub flavored would be even better.



-
- 6 The character limit to 500 chars is slightly annoying ... it's not short enough to create a creativity-inducing constraint and make all posts easily scannable, but it's also not long enough to post a more complicated thought process or an entire blog post (like e.g. LinkedIn allows). It sits somewhere in an awkward middle.
-
- 7 It would be nice to set a content warning for just the attachments (e.g., photos, video, audio) while leaving the text readable, I don't think that's currently possible; the UI for content warnings is not ideal, it makes the fact some content is hidden more prominent than the surrounding posts
-
- 8 More images would definitely be good. Maybe turn it into a carousel or something if there is more than 4?
More space to write, the composer is tiny!
500 characters always feel short. Maybe not counting links or usernames for as many characters would be good.
-
- 9 usually a 500 - 1000 character limit is sufficient for my posts. But sometimes I'd wish there would be an option to mark a post as "long" with no or a very high character limit.
-
- 10 I guess my brain still keeps the old twitter format, so what I have through Ivory is enough. It's nice my server allows for longer posts, but I seldom go larger that was used to be a tweet.
-
- 11 Well... very satisfied when our instance admin bumped our limit from 500 to 1000, then very soon after, up to 2000. (That said, maybe a warning when going past 1500 or so would be good to hint that maybe your post is getting a bit long and would be better (auto) split into a thread OR put behind a content warning to not become a giant wall on the timeline
-
- 12 I think it would be nice to be able to post a still image and a video, together, in the same post. It would be nice if the UI could handle this.
-



-
- 13 500 characters and no markdown is pretty shoddy at this point. Not being able to include a poll in a post with images or other media is a perpetual problem for artists.
-
- 14 I don't fully understand what I can and cannot upload when it comes to audio/video. The few times I've tried, it didn't work (and one time the video didn't have any sound) so I've given up on it and just link a Youtube video if there is one. The error message was not giving me enough information to work with : was it the format ? Was it the size ? Was the problem on my end (internet speed) or Mastodon's (server shenanigans) ? Should I try again later or do I need to make changes ?
The limitations in terms of character count, I'm used to them even though I do admit some other instances appear to have found a better balance than mine. I'd love it if hashtags didn't count in the total, though. But again, I've already made a suggestion about that.
I also don't understand why it's so hard to have an image in a post where I'm quoting another post. In 2026 it seems like an outdated limitation.
-
- 15 Very little formatting
-
- 16 I'm not sure whether this is the right place to bring this up but I'd really like to be able to add formatting to posts - bold, italics, underline, strikethrough, maybe bullet points, code blocks
-
- 17 I want to be able to add a photo and a poll to the same post! Otherwise I am happy.
-
- 18 Sometimes the default post character limit is an issue
-
- 19 Local-only posting would be a benefit for building community around home instances. More courtesy features — i.e. options that let me reduce the noisiness of my own posts in other people's timelines — would be appreciated. I also think it would be beneficial in some cases to have the effects of the different visibility options available as a la carte option, rather than bundles together
-



in pull-down menu headings, e.g. making a post searchable but not including it in public timelines by default.

20 I wish it was possible to see and control how/whether link previews will appear to the people who see my posts before posting them. I wish we were allowed to post an image along with a poll or in a quote post. I wish it was possible to post videos or screen recordings from modern devices without having to compress or resize them manually first to avoid processing errors from Mastodon.

21 I'd love ① italics/bold and ② the ability to have multiple videos, or a video and images

22

1. Surveys should have an analog setting or at least a setting for 48 hours.
2. Markdown should be universally supported.
3. A. The scheduled post API should be surfaced so it doesn't require a special client.
B. Support for scheduling a reply to a scheduled post should be supported - allowing using reply chains for ongoing posts.
4. Quote boosts are currently crap.
5. Quote and post should not be in the same option but separate allowing for fewer clicks.

23 I'm used to writing markdown, so I'd love more options to style my posts. Other than that, the 4 picture limit is annoying at times, especially since other fedi software supports more, which then don't get displayed...
I sometimes wish I could set a time limit per post, my posts are set to auto-delete after a while (with some exceptions), but some posts don't even need to exist that long.

24 It fits my needs I guess. I sometimes struggle to find the best hashtags.



-
- | | |
|----|--|
| 25 | As an admin, I would like to have a setting to extend characters limit for the whole server via the web admin UI |
|----|--|
-
- | | |
|----|--|
| 26 | I miss the option to compose partial or complete threads and post in one go
I absolutely love the post editing feature! |
|----|--|
-
- | | |
|----|---|
| 27 | Mostly satisfied, but again, lack of reply controls is a big issue -- less so on a personal level, but I know some marginalized group would greatly benefit from these. |
|----|---|
-
- | | |
|----|---|
| 28 | i would like a higher default character limit |
|----|---|
-



Ease of Use of the Composer

Q14. Overall, how easy do you find the post composing experience?
[5-Point rating, 59 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very satisfied)	20	33.9%
4	23	39%
3	12	20.3%
2	4	6.8%
1 (Very dissatisfied)	0	0%

Overall score: 4.00



Top Areas of Improvement: Composer

Q15. Optional: What would make the composer easier to use?

[Free text, 31 responses]

Notable topics, by frequency of mention:

1. Composer box is too small/cramped (8 respondents)
2. Visibility/audience selector popup is confusing and adds friction (5 respondents)
3. No native way to compose multi-part threads (5 respondents)

Response	
1	Very easy, in general. The physical constraints on my phone screen are annoying, but that's not a problem unique to mastodon.
2	I use Ice Cubes and the web interface. I find both very easy and intuitive.
3	The privacy option "only people listed" is confusing, change it to private message or direct message
4	I deliberately set the visibility on the majority of my posts. The recent change where this was combined into a modal with the quotability setting (which I almost never want to change) has made this action which I do dozens of times a day tremendously more involved. Instead of two clicks close by it's now four clicks, moving the mouse way more, and needs more attention to select the right option.
5	More screen space! phanpy -- or for that matter Bluesky -- provide much more area, and even for short posts it's very useful.



-
- 6 I'd like to be able to precompose and post entire threads. Ideally, in a way that makes them all succeed or all fail -- given how unreliable Mastodon instances can get at times, you can end up stuck with 3 out of 7 messages posted
-
- 7 I find the small post composing field on the right hand side panel a bit restrictive. Usually I write long sentences, but the small text field makes me feel uneasy. I feel like I'm typing in a chat field, where it expects me to type only small thoughts.
-
- 8 I don't like the new popup when I want to change the audience. Before that, it was just a drop-down menu. Not it includes the quote feature. For my part, I configured it as "no" and don't intend to change. So why not 2 settings instead of one?
-
- 9 It's probably too small, not very welcoming or pleasant to write with.
When replying, you only have a small portion of what you are replying to, and no context of the thread and other replies to what you are replying to.
When drafting a post and then replying to another that you suddenly come across, you have to lose what you were writing before.
-
- 10 I post from Ivory and the experience meets my expectations.
-
- 11 I mostly use third-party clients, but last time I composed a toot on the web I found the compose UI was tiny and over in the sidebar, which was awkward while working on a toot because that's what I was focused on, but it was small and off to the side.
-
- 12 1) Be able to view the complete thing you're replying to, instead of being limited to a summary of the start
2) Ensuring the controls at the bottom of the compose box are always accessible even when long posts can be made
-



3) Be able to drag the thing around anywhere in the window, to put it alongside something you're referencing

4) Emoji Picker - Split the custom per-instance ones into a separate category alongside the other ones, so that if your instance defines a lot, it won't be hard to navigate around them

5) When it looks like you're writing a long thread OR simply when you start exceeding the post limits, it would be better if there was an auto-tool available for helping you segment that post out into a thread for you (instead of having to stash all the stuff you wrote into a separate notepad app, then copy and paste chunks back across, one post at a time)

13 I wish there was a buffer in the Mastodon apps so that, when it inevitable crashes (e.g. the iOS or Android app fail and exit), the content was there in a backup buffer when I restarted the app. Same with the web UI. I hate retyping a post that, as I was finalizing it, got lost by an app crash or mis-click in the UI.

14 Can be hard to add image alt text on mobile

15 Shrinking the composer area to make space for more buttons rather than giving a bigger composer space when it's activated is kind of a problem at this point.

16 The pop-up to set the visibility option (which I've discussed in a previous survey this week) is an annoyance. I don't understand why I need a pop-up where some icons with a nice tooltip could do the job more efficiently.

17 Composing threads could maybe be made easier.

18 WE WANT MARKDOWN

19 If I could see the previous post when I'm writing a thread



20	Sometimes hard to know if a hashtag will be parsed correctly if for example it includes or is directly followed by punctuation without a space
21	I'm a long-time user, so I'm accustomed to the experience, but the current visibility options are not very intuitive, and I suspect that people who aren't familiar with previous incarnations have a difficult time understanding exactly what each setting entails.
22	Fix bug #35705 where the hashtag suggestions get stuck on the screen and can't be dismissed without picking one (https://github.com/mastodon/mastodon/issues/35705) and reduce the number of nested boxes with individual "X" buttons when working with quote posts or editing a post.
23	On the Web, the composer feels cramped, in the small sidebar on the left. I think I can't reorder images? Which is frustrating. Being able to compose threads (multiple posts at once) would be nice (but maybe it's there now and I haven't used the Web composer recently enough to notice)
24	Universal support of Markdown
25	I'm using ivory - that works quite well (only drafts are a mess but somehow drafts were always a mess in any app)
26	It's too small on desktop web. I wish it was a larger form and more focused. For example, displaying a modal window would be nice.
27	Some copy pasting formatting issues sometimes, like line breaks that shouldn't be here.
28	Automatic drafts to avoid losing elaborate posts midway or requiring copy/paste on mobile devices to ensure safe handling



Better treatment and char limit avoidance on links
CamelCase hashtag suggestions by default!!

29 The compose box would benefit with a few quality of life updates, like more real estate space on the screen, and being able to easily see the full message you're replying to, especially in the Android mobile app.

30 It would be useful to have some basic image editing tools (thinking of cropping / rotation only, no need for "filters", drawing or the like)

31 The ability to post multiple messages at once (threads).



Additional Feedback on Creation Experience

Q16. Is there anything else you want to share that would improve your experience of creating and posting on Mastodon?

[Free text, 20 responses]

Notable topic, by frequency of mention:

1. Native post scheduling (4 respondents)

Response	
1	Suggested hashtags for communities? I'm not sure how to find them, except for searching around the inter-webs.
2	I've long wanted post templates. So if I am posting about dogs or travel or books - I would have the ability to choose from 3 different post templates that I had pre-populated with the hashtags I use every time. It would be a huge timesaver for folks that post regularly about certain topics they're passionate about and help eliminate errors.
3	Nothing leaps to mind but I do want to highlight one thing that Mastodon does very well on this front that I haven't seen elsewhere: the ability to automatically extract alt text from screenshots of text. Extremely useful!
4	Having some sort of built-in image downscaling and optimization would be good. Currently I go elsewhere to do that.



-
- 5 I'd like to be able to claim an identity in a domain I own and delegate it to a Mastodon server of my choice. And then move it to another server without changing my identity, with the protocol taking care of doing the right thing. I'd be happy to pay a small monthly for this feature.
-
- 6 When I want to do a thread, (this is the behavior in Ivory) after the first post I have to go to my profile and refresh until it's there to reply and continue the thread. It's hard to add second or third thoughts on the same topic threaded.
-
- 7 All the necessary functionality is there.
-
- 8 I don't think posting is a problem, really, I think it's pretty well solved.
-
- 9 * Ability to schedule posts for later natively
* Ability to import all your current posts (as exported from an archive) to any new instance, should you suddenly find yourself needing to move on short notice. Even if not available on a big public instance, this should always be an option for if/when spawning up your own dedicated one (and be a well documented workflow)
-
- 10 Not sure this is just a me problem or something else, but in some of the mobile applications I notice that emojis are empty when I click on the emoji icon to insert one. Emojis work in other apps on the same device, but not in the Mastodon app. Never mattered enough to me to make it a priority, but I might as well mention it here!
-
- 11 Enable the GUI for post scheduling! I shouldn't have to use a third party tool for a function that is so basic for artists and creatives!
-
- 12 There seems to be a schism in what content warnings mean, with some people using it to describe any post (i.e., "cw: food") while others using them for things that are likely to upset others. The
-



default app behaviour adds friction to opening CWed posts, and I have skipped over posts from the first group which didn't look compelling enough to warrant an extra click but which I would have at least skimmed were they shown inline. Perhaps there is scope for expanding the CW system into a spectrum, and having the option for non-sensitive ones to open inline unless the user specifically mutes them, whilst still having the option to have an extra layer of indirection added for sensitive subjects.

13 I use Mastodon on desktop/browser in the advanced interface configuration, and sometimes I wish I could expand the typing area to make it bigger, and proofread my post more comfortably. Again, the advanced interface is fine for some uses of Mastodon, but not for others, so being able to switch between column view and "fullscreen" (not real fullscreen but, you know, comfortably using all of the space) when needed would be much better.

14 WE WANT MARKDOWN

15 Saved drafts

16 Drafts and scheduled posting would be a welcome addition.

17 Allow posting HDR photos! (Technical info: currently Mastodon either strips the HDR metadata or converts them to a different format that doesn't support HDR. Instead it should allow it, but use the `dynamic-range-limit` CSS property to keep the thumbnails from being displayed too bright in the timeline when not expanded.)

18 Native thread feature with posts counter would be interesting maybe.

19 More forgiving handling of comm or temp errors while composing and posting, even of involuntary refreshes.



Anonymized stats on post outreach (mainly link clicks and image views)

- 20 I was recently looking for a way to schedule posts. I think that posting at the right time is ideal on Mastodon and while it was in the middle of the night, I wanted to make sure a post goes out only when people can actually see it.
Since timelines are currently "realtime", your post easily gets buried if you post it at the wrong time.
-



Survey 4: Belonging, Safety and Moderation

Sense of Belonging on Mastodon

Q1. I feel like I've found a community I belong to on Mastodon.
[5-Point rating, 72 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Strongly agree)	16	22.2%
4	28	38.9%
3	18	25%
2	6	8.3%
1 (Strongly disagree)	4	5.6%

Overall score: 3.64



Q2. Mastodon's culture feels welcoming to people with my background or identity.

[5-Point rating, 72 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Strongly agree)	30	41.7%
4	26	36.1%
3	10	13.9%
2	5	6.9%
1 (Strongly disagree)	1	0.4%

Overall score: 4.1



Sense of Safety on Mastodon

Q3. Generally speaking, I feel safe on Mastodon.
[5-Point rating, 72 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Strongly agree)	31	43.1%
4	27	37.5%
3	11	15.3%
2	2	2.8%
1 (Strongly disagree)	1	0.4%

Overall score: 4.18



Experiences of Harassment on Mastodon

Q4. Have you ever experienced harassment on Mastodon?

[Single-select, 72 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
No	55	76.4%
Yes, and I reported it	14	19.4%
Yes, but I did not report it	3	4.2%



Safety and belonging by demographic group

Scores for Q1-Q4, broken down by key demographics

Group	n	Belonging	Welcome	Safety	Harassment
All respondents	64	3.67	4.11	4.16	23%
Women	15	3.4	3.8	3.87	20%
Men (cis)	39	3.82	4.28	4.44	21%
Nonbinary / genderqueer	6	3.5	4	3.33	50%
LGBTQ+	19	3.47	3.74	3.68	47%
Heterosexual / straight, cis	43	3.72	4.23	4.35	16%
Disabled / with impairment	25	3.68	4.24	3.96	20%
No disability	36	3.64	4.06	4.31	25%
European only	43	3.84	4.23	4.23	23%
Non-European (combined)	11 ¹³	3	3.91	4.09	27%

¹³ Very low n across a heterogeneous group; treat as directional only



Satisfaction with Moderators' Response to Reported Harassment

Q5. If comfortable sharing, how satisfied were you with how your report was handled?
[5-Point rating, 12 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very satisfied)	5	41.7%
4	3	25%
3	2	16.7%
2	2	16.7%
1 (Very dissatisfied)	0	0%

Overall score: 3.92



Top Areas for Improvement with Moderators' Response to Reported Harassment

Q6. What's one thing that would've improved your reporting experience?

[Free text, 10 responses]

Response	
1	It is always unclear to me if reporting is anonymized in some way. As a site admin, I know that the site moderator and the harasser can be the same person. I never know, when I wrestle with reporting someone, if that report will simply be used to increase harassment or not, by outing me as the complainant.
2	a small thing: in the reporting panel, you are allowed to pick the offending comment(s) with a check mark. the problem is, sometimes the reply guy/ troll will block you, so that screen isn't populated with their comments to report. i say it's a small thing because you can just copy the link to the offending comment in the "tell us more" text field. i am not sure it's a safety issue because you can view their comments logged out anyways i frequently report vatnik accounts (trolls who push kremlin disinfo). i've done it so much they've taken to preemptively blocking me in their new troll accounts as they pop up. but i'm already hunting them down logged out, so again, not a big deal
3	Many instances don't prioritize safety nearly enough to protect marginalized users.
4	With spam coming from very right-wing instances, I do not want to report to the original author. But I know that the moderation team from my instance is small.



I once reported something to the original instance, which then called for targeted attacks on my account as a response.

It would be nice if moderation allowed to quickly block offending accounts or bad instances without either relying on the original instance or all instances individually to handle it. Like, a trusted moderation network or something :)

- 5 Feedback on what action was taken.
(note that the 3 is really a mix of many different examples. well-moderated instances, like [server name redacted] respond quickly and well. other instances, like mastodon.social ... not so much.)
-

- 6 lirc I never received feedback on my report
-

- 7 I run my own server, and I think forwarding reports to remote moderators is "anonymous" (as a single-user server user you can tell who sent it, since the domain is shared), and I never receive feedback.
-

- 8 The reporting system seems configured only to deal with spam. Other violations get bundled into a nebulous bucket. Spam is annoying but it's a low priority violation compared to harassment, hate speech, etc. the reporter has to build a complex case off of a limited amount of information rather than selecting one of the server rules that has been violated and supplementing it with additional information as needed.
-

- 9 First I want to say that I'm not in a marginalized group and what I received was not targeted specifically at me, and was mild in comparison to what I've heard about people receiving who are members of marginalized groups.
But I have been on a smaller Mastodon server where the moderators would DM people to let them know that reports had been handled and thank them, and I am currently on a larger server (mastodon.online) where there is no feedback whatsoever. Some sort of feedback would be very
-



helpful to me! Especially if, say, I report something I see in a public timeline as spam, I want to know if the moderators agree or if I was overzealous in reporting it.

10 You don't usually get a response.



Reasons for Not Reporting Harassment

Q7. If comfortable sharing, what prevented you from reporting?
[Multi-select, 3 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
I didn't think my concern would be taken seriously	2	66.7%
I didn't know how	1	33.3%
I feared retaliation	0	0%
Something else ¹⁴	2	66.7%

¹⁴ Additional responses:

"I blocked the account hoping it wouldn't escalate, and it didn't."

"Wasn't worth it, easier to block and move on, and came from a different server, where do I report?"



Use of Content Warnings when Posting

Q8. Have you ever added a content warning to your Mastodon post?

[Single-select, 72 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	51	70.8%
No	21	29.2%
I don't know what that is	0	0%



Ease of Use of Adding Content Warnings

Q9. How would you rate the ease or difficulty of adding content warnings?
[5-Point rating, 50 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
5 (Very easy)	23	46%
4	23	46%
3	4	8%
2	0	0%
1 (Very difficult)	0	0%

Overall score: 4.38



Q10. Optional: Explain your answer.

[Free text, 16 responses]

Notable topics, by frequency of mention:

1. Guidance on when/what to add content warnings (6 respondents)
2. Structured data instead of free text (4 respondents)

Response	
1	Ice Cubes: a simple icon to click and add the CW. Very easy.
2	content warning usage is pretty straightforward
3	It's easy to add. I'm not sure the UI in the composer is the clearest for someone who doesn't know the feature.
4	As a feature it's easy but it's not to know when CW is more than welcome. It's certainly a thing newcomers will need to be told of as many people don't know it's there and when it's recommended to use it.
5	It's slightly more annoying in the case of threads (because a new post, by default, keeps using the CW settings of the previous post), but that's a minor issue.
6	It's easy to add one, it's not easy to know what to add
7	I usually do not know when to add content warnings. It is purely social and it is hard to find guidance about when and how to handle them.



Also, I feel like it would be useful to select from a list of content warnings, allowing people to filter. For example, I know that some put content warnings for things like "eye contact" etc. I feel like basically everything I post would benefit from at least one kind of content warning. But I also want my media feed to be visible, not all hidden.

At the same time, I do not care about many content warnings (like eye contact), but I do not want to disable content warnings globally and inadvertently get nsfw content on my screen.

F-Droid has a list of anti-features that I can select to care or not care about. So it would be nice if Mastodon had a concept for content warnings where I can choose which ones I need and people can choose which ones actually trigger a warning for them and which are simply ignored.

8 I wrote this in one of the earlier forms, but I feel it would be beneficial to have the option of limiting the content warning to just attached media (while also keeping the option to hide the text). It's also not obvious that when replying, you are by default posting with the same content warning.

9 The actual mechanism is fine. Knowing that it's there, and when one should use it, is the hard part.

10 Between the UI making it easy, our instance's strong guidelines on what must be content warned, and also seeing a few other handy uses for it, it is generally easy. The hardest thing is figuring out what to call them in some instances

11 until i post i'm never sure if i did everything correctly

12 The interface I use for Mastodon (e.g. Ivory and Phanpy) make it incredibly easy to add a content warning.

13 While the flexibility to specify your own content warning is useful, it might also be useful to have some autofill options for common warnings. That could also be useful for encouraging people to use warnings that are of known concern to vulnerable groups.

-
- 14 It mostly works well, but specifically in the official Android Mastodon app, replying to a CW-ed doesn't carry over the CW, so I either have to manually copy it, or reply from the desktop web app.
-
- 15 Adding one is fine but the iconography is less than clear. The fact that CW'd posts can't trend is one of several ways that Mastodon disincentivizes CW use.
-
- 16 It's very easy to add in the UI, but not always easy to understand the community expectations around them. For example, some people expect specific abbreviations (like "uspol") to be used in content warnings but there's no way everyone posting about politics would spontaneously come up with that abbreviation on their own, and some of the abbreviations the community has come up with aren't obvious what they mean to outsiders who see the content warning either.
-



Experiences of Censorship

Q11. Have you ever felt restricted or censored by others' strong opinions about 'appropriate' content on Mastodon?

[Single-select, 71 responses]

Response	Count	Percentage
No, this hasn't really been an issue for me	43	60.6%
Yes, once or twice	13	18.3%
No, but the possibility of it significantly impacts how I use Mastodon	11	15.5%
Yes, often	4	5.6%



Q12. Is there anything else you'd like to share about this?

[Free text, 18 responses]

Notable topics, by frequency of mention:

1. "HOA"-style culture of policing in Mastodon community (7 respondents)
2. Lack of consensus on what deserves a content warning (6 respondents)

Response	
1	Alt tags are a fantastic thing, and absolutely should be encouraged. But people on Mastodon often take to being the "alt-tag police". "I like your post, but I won't reshare it without a media alt tag," is the most common refrain. Sometimes, I just forget to type an alt tag. For a long time, trying to type an alt tag at posting time in the Mastodon Android app resulted in a lockup of the UI, and I would lose my entire post. I don't then also need somebody alt-tag-policing me when I get the post done and just choose to move on with my life. So, I think what I am asking for is community guidance on behaviours like this. I don't need to be policed for forgetting to do basic functions in a post. Share it or don't, but don't harass me about my alt tags (or lack thereof).
2	There are some strong opinions about how to "do it right" and I don't agree with some of them. You can get quite harsh push-back. Some of these voices are rather loud and amplified. I have found that blocking does not always work, or maybe it's just some kind of lag. For example, someone was quite abusive towards me and I blocked, but then saw posts and replies from that account for a couple weeks later.
3	i once got castigated to content warn by someone for linking to an article about how russia had treated the dead body of a ukrainian reporter they had killed. there was no visual graphical content at all, just a brief clinical text description



the person did *not* seem to be pushing an agenda (that is, using the desire for a content warning as a lying conceit to suppress valid news), they seemed genuinely upset, but who knows i also often frequently post usa politics, and some want anything political content warned my feelings are: sex or gore should be content warned, and some niche topics like strobe effects because of people who experience seizures, and that's it spiders? a meal containing meat?

strong feelings here from some but not universally agreed on so hard to form consensus. i think you'll always have people grumbling for more CWs, but it does not matter. it's just going to be an endless reply guy meta-trolling thing always on a slow simmer. forever i think i think from a mod/ admin point of view sex or gore not content warned is actionable (and the niche topics like strobe effects), and that's it

it's a balance between safety and suppressing valid discourse. that someone, somewhere, might be sensitive to some sort of content is not enough reason to suppress people discussing topics not intended to titillate or offend

otherwise, you have an attack vector by trolls to fake offense at content they want suppressed, or to harass the poster

- 4 Just the general scoldiness that's part of the Mastodon culture, white guilt, or minefield that is social media these days: platform-agnostic prove your worth/cite your sources/what-about, etc.
 - 5 I am someone who does a lot of self-censorship anyway, regardless of platform, so I'm not sure I'm the right person to ask.
 - 6 I haven't felt censored. Occasionally though, I have upset people without intending to. That's mostly about tone and humour not coming across in text (I.e. typical online miscommunication, nothing mastodon or topic dependent).
-



-
- 7 There have been times when I've held back on commenting about certain things when I only saw certain viewpoints being espoused quite loudly. That was eased a while later when some folks started commenting about those other ones having been a bit extreme (IIRC the word "vile" may have cropped up).
-
- 8 If anything, I appreciate that my instance has explicit rules about what is appropriate and what isn't, even if they're not always enforced
-
- 9 Not just me, but friends I had convinced to try it were scared away by the HOA
-
- 10 i appreciate that it appears that a lot of people are strongly anti-Ilm. i don't appreciate amount of so called sealions
-
- 11 The most I see for this is content warning for selfies, which I usually do not do, but I do tag eye contact so people can mute that if they want.
-
- 12 The choices above don't quite capture my experience. There have been multiple times where I've gotten attacked for what I've posted -- so it **has** been an issue for me -- but oh well, I just take the abuse, so I don't feel restricted or censored. I basically just feel like I frequently don't particularly enjoy spending time on Mastodon.
-
- 13 My home instance has rules about certain types of content that are not commonly verboten, but that reflect the administrators' and general community's values. Occasionally, that's constraining, but I wouldn't characterize it as a problem. To the extent that I choose to remain at that instance, it's a self-imposed constraint. And while some people on the network are stringent about shouting down topics they don't like, I generally don't stress too much over that friction, maybe adopting CWs for that topic if their concerns seem reasonable.
-



-
- 14 Significantly is a bit strong. I certainly have this on my mind before I share something, but don't feel particularly strongly impacted.
-
- 15 I don't typically post anything controversial but I'm kind of glad to see the occasional community policing - reminding people about alt text and the like
-
- 16 I feel like people have strong opinions about what they believe appropriate behaviour is on Mastodon. Sometimes the culture could be a bit more welcoming.
-
- 17 The HOA is strong on Mastodon
-
- 18 In my case I wouldn't consider it a bad thing necessarily. It's more that I see people discussing what kind of content deserves a CW, and self-censor or add the CW when making public posts so that I don't violate the norms. But I also see how some of those norms can alienate and drive away other (especially marginalized) people which ends up making the community as a whole feel restrictive and isolating for me to be a part of even though I personally am not restricted.
-



Content Warning Preferences, by Category

Q13. In a previous survey, we asked about filters. Now, in the context of this survey, we'd like to know about specific kinds of filters you might have added to filter out unwanted content. Which of the following types of content would you NOT want to see without warning on Mastodon?

[Single select, 69 responses]

Response	Hide it always	Warn me	No filter needed	It depends
Nudity (non-sexual)	10.1%	50.7%	30.4%	8.7%
Sexual content	24.6%	60.9%	7.3%	7.2%
Images or videos of violence or gore	47.8%	50.7%	1.5%	0%
Mentions of harm (to self or others)	13%	60.9%	15.9%	10.1%
Explicit language or swearing	1.5%	13.1%	79.7%	5.8%
Bigoted speech or hate speech	40.6%	42%	8.7%	8.7%
AI-generated content	60.9%	30.4%	4.4%	4.4%
False or misleading content	44.9%	43.5%	7.3%	4.4%



Q14. Is there any other type of content that you'd be likely to want to hide?

[Free text, 23 responses]

Notable topics, by frequency of mention:

1. Political content (6 respondents)
2. Insects and other phobia-triggering content (3 respondents)
3. Advertisements & promotional content (3 respondents)

Response	
1	Multi-post threads
2	Sales pitches. It's tricky, because some of the art I really enjoy and I know artists also need to eat. I like to support some artists and their stores. However, some accounts are quite pushy on selling something irrelevant to me. So maybe just a "store" or "sales" CW and I can choose, for example if I know the account.
3	Even if I selected "always want to hide it", I want this to be a manual choice by me at the profile level. Meaning I do not want an algo or server ruling out accounts or hashtags because I said "no baseball". I would like the option to mute #baseball and while doing that be presented with a list of relevant hashtags or closely associated accounts that I could add to my Mute request. I always want to know who I am ignoring/silencing. No one should do this for me.
4	about bigoted/ hate speech and false/ misleading content: i don't think this is a CW topic. such posts need to be deleted and the poster possibly banned. i think this is the ethos of mastodon
5	Current news cycle tragedy if it's getting discussed to death or the takes are bad or they affect my communities...



6	My personal filters already take care of this anyway.
7	NSFW content in case my screen is visible to others
8	I personally don't mind graphic content but I often view social media in a public space and I don't want to blast random folks with bleeding wounds or naked people
9	Stressful, anxiety-inducing stuff. That's mostly news, and stuff about how AI is taking things over, etc. I don't want to feel stressed just because I'm reading through Mastodon!
10	Politics, particular posts from parties, politicians or affiliated groups. Obviously these things could be blocked at an individual account level.
11	Bots (not necessarily AI) but accounts that post lots of the same content
12	Pictures of insects / creepy crawlies with too many legs / slimy stuff.
13	US politics - extremely hard to get away from even when you don't live there
14	Phobias! I use filters for hiding (hopefully) images of spiders, but this unfortunately relies on people using alt text or the word in the post itself. And honestly, sometimes US politics takes over the trending feed, so I have extensive filters to add content warnings for this so I can ignore them easily or look at them if I have the spoons
15	Requiring people to put a content warning for misleading content seems somewhat impossible. And preemptively hiding/filtering it out would require draconian moderation.
16	Mansplaining and reply-guy-ism. But good luck getting people to label that!



-
- | | |
|----|---|
| 17 | I'd like more fine-grained tools for filtering political (and other) content by geographical relevance — e.g. people in Europe don't necessarily need to see more US political discussion unless it has some special relevance outside of that context. |
|----|---|
-
- | | |
|----|--|
| 18 | Advertising and content posted directly from Meta or Bluesky. Either you're in or you're out, IMHO |
|----|--|
-
- | | |
|----|--|
| 19 | Mastodon's implementation of OpenGraph not only hammers small servers in ways that can bring them down, it also pulls in unwanted images from news posts without a real mechanism for posters or viewers to control this |
|----|--|
-
- | | |
|----|--|
| 20 | I wish I had the ability to fully pause politics easily and turn it on again when I'm able. I also use filters for certain types of bugs, trypophobia triggers, specific public figures I'm sick and tired of hearing about. |
|----|--|
-
- | | |
|----|--------------------|
| 21 | People complaining |
|----|--------------------|
-
- | | |
|----|---|
| 22 | Companies (not individuals) that I don't follow posting excessive advertisements into my home timeline via hashtags that I follow |
|----|---|
-
- | | |
|----|---|
| 23 | I hide most political posts. I wish there was more care to hide alcohol, drinking, and drugs. |
|----|---|
-



Thoughts on Mastodon's Handling of Safety vs. Free Expression

Q15. Where do you think Mastodon's design gets the balance right – or wrong – between protecting users from harm and giving them freedom to express themselves?

[Free text, 35 responses]

Notable topics, by frequency of mention:

1. Lack of reply controls (5 respondents)
2. Harassment protections disproportionately fail marginalized users (4 respondents)

Response	
1	The very existence of content warning, combined with restrictions on visibility and quoting is just right
2	I don't know if this belongs here, but I often find myself thinking about references for sources of information. Maybe it's a crazy dream, but I've always thought it good to encourage people to cite sources. In a social platform, that means links. But even with reduced penalties on word count for links, long or short, they still count AGAINST the post. I would like to see a field for entering references/sources for claims in posts. These should not count against the body of a message, but should be enforced to be valid links to a source. This helps people separate the claims (the writing) from the references (the links). Plus, it provides a quick paper trail for a reader to check the origin of the claim.
3	It would be nice to be able to content warn for part of a post, not just all or nothing.



-
- 4 Bad actors can use Followers-only visibility on comments to harass others
-
- 5 Right: Blocking and muting, though more technical people can probably speak to the details around blocking more effectively.
Wrong: I think there is scope for some "controversial" type label, like Reddit has, that shows people are agreeing and disagreeing. Call it a "Drama" label, for the lolz ;) Using the example of people gatekeeping how to use mastodon, particularly around CWs, it would be useful to filter that drama out.
-
- 6 Nothing is being forced into my feed. It's great. Even when I am scrolling through news of the dumpster fire that is US politics, I do not spiral. It feels manageable and actionable. There are so many cool people on Mastodon. The only thing I can think of would be a more structured Primer on ALT TEXT or maybe some fun slides on "these are the things to think about when posting here because it's not just about you". I've learned a lot about others since joining Mastodon (that I should have learned a long time ago) and it is better when we slow down and think how things will be perceived.
-
- 7 there is a strong ethos, from the user base, and with strong support from the admins and mods, in how bigotry and disinfo are simply unacceptable. it's why i'm here on mastodon at all, and if this ever changes, i'd probably leave
i think that meta-discussions about sensitivities on other issues are valid, and i concede there may be more avenues for refinement. i always alt text for example, but many don't. i don't know how to enforce this, but some sort of new understanding can evolve
but some issues like... swearing? i swear up a storm, constantly. that someone would be sensitive to swearing, or think this is actionable, is completely alien to me as a valid concern. mastodon isn't on mars, it's on earth. people swear. it's normal. this enters "i'd like to speak to the manager" level of busy body controlling types of people rather than people with any sort of serious concern, to me
-



and that's the danger here: mastodon can be killed if we move from valid concerns to contrived concerns, or if enforcement of valid concerns are abandoned. people are people, and lying trolls are lying trolls. someone calling ukrainians nazis, or saying vaccines kill, is a road to the madness we see in the world today. but someone saying "fuckity fuck fuck" is not even remotely an issue

8 Functionality for filtering and warning + culture of using them. Allowing servers to set their own rules for people to self-select, or appeal/report to their admin.

9 I feel the options are good, but being in a very safe and privileged group, I haven't thought much about it. It misses a "Disable replies" feature probably. Then it's up to the moderators (and the tools they have), more than the client side of the software, to ensure the safety? Maybe a way to easily recheck the rules of your own server in the composer could be a good thing. Especially when replying to someone (there could also be a way to check the rules of their server?).

10 The ability to block, mute a person or an instance is the most useful feature to protection users who want that and to give freedom to others

11 I'm a white European, Mastodon is designed for people like me. My opinion is irrelevant as I'm not the one confronted to the most issues?

12 I have no idea how some people find my profile when I'm on a pretty secluded server, then they have strong opinions with zero empathy and fewer facts. With Twitter I could figure out what attracted them (specific post, shared followers, etc), but here I have no clue, especially if it's about a shared follower

13 I think a warning with an explanatory link (how to get help, that vaccines don't in fact cause autism, that immigrants are not taking all our jobs while also sitting at home on welfare, etc.) is often more successful than attempting to remove all infringing content because the line of infringement is



often blurry; but at the same time, racism, xenophobia, etc. have no place and should be removed, offering no platform for hate speech in the syndicated spaces, alt-right can host their own instances if they really want to

14 The combination of filters and voluntarily tagging content to be filtered out for those who want to see it

15 Ultimately, having instances with their own rules allowed people a lot of choice in that specific way. The downsides are less about this balance and more about the complexity of the fediverse which makes it somewhat less accessible and appealing. Even so, I don't think that could or should be changed.

16 Between cultural norms + tools for self-filtering stuff, there are quite a lot of options for filtering stuff out.
The only time these fall short is when the authors don't tag stuff, or your existing filters were not broad enough to capture that specific case

17 CWs are great and I really appreciated the early culture of using them liberally. That's largely fallen by the wayside, which annoys me, so I'm glad I can filter keywords and hashtags. I think what we have does a decent job.

18 I think Mastodon still lacks the reply controls other platforms have, that let the poster decide what level of interaction they want on their own posts.

19 I have no idea. So much happens in the invisible federated place, so I have only reported trolls or abuse when I've spotted it, occasionally. But I have seen the effects of it, and it's sad.



-
- 20 i don't know firsthand but i heard from several server admins that moderation tools could use some improvement
-
- 21 Generally, yes. Though the community is small and self-selectingly mostly thoughtful nerds with a commitment to making the world better (or perhaps "kind old trekkies who garden"). If/when Mastodon gets mainstream adoption beyond this milieu, new challenges will arise, and Mastodon will need measures that don't depend on the majority of people being decent or caring.
-
- 22 I wish the filters were available to apps to use, but otherwise I guess things are fine. But I am not someone who has a lot of problems with these things, so I am not the person to ask.
-
- 23 Historically I don't think Mastodon has really prioritized protecting users from harm. I wrote about this in 2022 in [source redacted] and while there's been some changes since then (for example the work that went into trying to limit the abuse possibilities of quote posts, really great to see) the overall trends haven't changed.
-
- 24 No singular voice or topic is amplified artificially on Mastodon. I think that is huge! There is a lack of emphasis on promotion or popularity through inflammatory content. This allows people to invest within communities they want to be engaged in.
-
- 25 I actually don't think Mastodon as a service has much of a role in protecting users, so much as it does in providing tools that allow instances to protect themselves and giving users tools to help one another.
-
- 26 Limiting who can see your posts helps a lot. It's also fairly easy to report harassment, as long as the amount of it is manageable.
You can also block individual users and their servers easily -- although, in the case of blocking servers, that's still a bit too easy.
-



-
- 27 Muting and blocking users, and blocking servers is pretty great. Reporting, whether it be the report I send or get as an admin of an instance, can sometimes be confusing, and could be made to be more straightforward.
-
- 28 I guess it depends on your instance. 🙋
-
- 29 It's not the interface that makes Mastodon a hub for harassment. It's choices made about who has control over what replies, etc. are allowed. I'll grant that's a part of design but it's not covered in these questions.
-
- 30 It helps to be able to choose a server where the rules match what you want the experience to be. Freedom of expression does not mean that the content must also be seen by everyone.
-
- 31 Filters are really helpful, but there is no temporary pause option, and unfortunately filters are easy to circumvent. I still occasionally find new ways of saying something I have a filter for and it is very jarring when something gets through. Like for certain types of bugs there could be 5 different words I have to filter. For public figures people specifically go out of there way to spell it weird or turn the name into a derisive pun and so I have to put all variations into my filters. It's not the world's job to protect me, I just wish it was easier to control my feed myself. There's no realistic way to get everyone to content warning everything that might disturb anyone.
-
- 32 Some marginalized groups want to protect themselves in ways that may unintentionally alienate or harm other marginalized groups. So I think more control over where your posts go and what you see (e.g. optional local-only posts, groups, or even Oliphant's Fediverse Islands concept) versus the current approach of "try to federate everything to everyone everywhere within reason" might give people more space to express themselves and regulate their communities without stepping on others' toes. But again, I'm not a member of a marginalized group so take my opinions with a grain of salt.
-



33 Detach unwanted replies from my post, especially when I block someone.

34 I think something needs to be done about the types of harassment that chased most black people off of Mastodon. There are big holes in the harassment prevention features of Mastodon that should be fixed, for example if someone sends you a harassing message and then deletes it, you still get it but you can't report it. If someone replies to one of your posts with something harassing and you block them, you no longer see the post but everyone else does. I'm sure there are a lot more that I'm not aware of.

35 I really like the combination of filters and content warnings, which makes for a safe experience. The fact that instances can block other instances is also a good thing in my experience, although this might be more debatable depending on the instance.



Top Areas for Improvement: Safety & Belonging

Q16. What single change would most improve your sense of safety and belonging on Mastodon?
[Free text, 30 responses]

Notable topics, by frequency of mention:

1. Reply controls (5 respondents)
2. Moderation capacity and quality(4 respondents)
3. Blocking/blocklist tooling improvements (3 respondents)
Dedicated focus on improving safety and belonging for marginalized communities (3 respondents)

Response	
1	Having an easier way to identify the reliability of a claim, especially in a time when information is changing quickly.
2	Some sort of ability to share blocklist subscriptions
3	Tough one, can't think of one right now. Perhaps a way to see just new posts. I'm not sure why it's limited to 40 at a time either. Pros and cons there. Doesn't keep me locked in, but then if I give myself 5 minutes to check socials and I'm done in a minute, I want to keep looking for something funny to give myself that break (and dopamine hit).
4	If more people were on Mastodon. I truly believe that if Mastodon were the planet's preferred social media then the US would not be in the political dumpster fire it currently is in. I would be safer if folks out in the real world were not being influenced by their social media platforms.



-
- | | |
|----|--|
| 5 | for myself? not much. what i worry about is communities like black mastodon and trans mastodon. how welcome black people and trans people feel on mastodon is the gold standard for how well mastodon is doing on the topic of safety and belonging. and the discourse on that topic has a long and sordid history. if i, a white, cis, hetero guy says "here i am talking about a topic" i get engagement on that topic. not engagement about *me*. and i am aware of a differential with other people's experiences here (and elsewhere on social media of course): if a black or trans person posts "here i am talking about a topic" and their topical issue is ignored while they get nasty engagement on their racial or gender identity, this is a failure. that's the biggest metric to me. and unfortunately that's simply a game of endless moderation, to hold that standard. there's no easy fix here, just holding that moderation line |
| 6 | More people joining |
| 7 | Better moderation of the biggest instances. |
| 8 | More moderators on mastodon.social , honestly. |
| 9 | Seeing followers and following for anyone who follows/interacts with me, so I can check their network |
| 10 | More wide-spread use of content warnings and/or hashtags, particularly for political posts. |
| 11 | I don't ever feel unsafe, a position of privilege. To that end you can't change things to make me feel safer. |
| 12 | Banning AI generated content |
| 13 | Better/actual reply controls |
-



14	I don't know that this is something you can fix, but the sense of superiority some users and the HOA get about *their way of using Mastodon*. There is very little awareness of different people having different needs, minimizing people's struggles with the platform and belittling people that still use other social media for whatever reason. I may not agree with using those platforms either but it doesn't help adoption if the first thing you see is users bashing people like "you" for using some other platform. And then get shouted out for not using Mastodo "THE right way"
15	Always-vetted account creation at all instances, big or small
16	Robust friends-only posts/access control lists à la LiveJournal/Flickr with a finer granularity and more user control than "followers only".
17	Bring back "follows you" on profiles! If someone is acting odd I need to know if they are just a drive-by or need a block.
18	The Mastodon project prioritizing funding work by people from marginalized communities to improve safety for *everybody* -- in term of the software, on Mastodon-run and Mastodon-hosted instances, and in the broader fediverse
19	end-to-end encryption
20	Continuing to not have monetization be a priority or have it dictate everything
21	End-to-end encryption for some level of post visibility.
22	Reply controls.



23	I don't know. I don't have any issues that come to mind. I quickly block anyone or any server that I find offensive, and seems to be working well for me.
24	The ability to control who can reply to posts and to allow my admins to / mods to remove violating responses to my threads from users on other instances.
25	Better IA agent, fake accounts and spam detection on new users sign up. Better moderations tools (shared community blocklist like IFTAS did)
26	I do find it a little concerning that I might not be seeing every response to something, and it makes me nervous about engaging in conversation. I think the reply visibility thing is a big issue for people's safety.
27	Widen the communities that Mastodon serves so it is less dominated by technologically adept, FOSS enthusiast, gen X and older, white, Europeans. By all means keep them around, but I don't want my main social media to be a shrinking monoculture. On the other hand *definitely* don't alienate the other marginalized groups that already feel safe in the fediverse. Again, I'm not in any marginalized group but want to be in a place where others are safe, and one that I would feel comfortable recommending to anyone IRL.
28	Blocks not being detectable. Sort of a super mute where content goes into a sink so bad actors can't use blocks to target harassment.
29	Detach replies from my post.
30	Banning IA slop.



Roundtable 1: Reading & the Feed

Key challenges with controlling the feed

sometimes i've followed someone who turns out to boost a lot and i get tired of their boosts... but if i only see them as the booster it's not immediately easy to get to their profile to be able to change my settings for them or unfollow

Having someone I like and want to keep following, take over my timeline when they post too many things in a row on a subject not particularly relevant to me. I always wish I could temporarily collapse them, or only see the first post in a long running list of follow on posts.

← YES, long threads. One account i follow ONLY posts VERY long threads. Even with them using the content warning feature to reduce the size of each post, it's still annoying. It would be cool (but i would only use it for this one specific account) to be able to just remove all but the first post in their threads from my timeline

Having the convenience of "automated" optional lists, e.g. for "quiet posters"

I wish more of my friends from real life and online life were on mastodon. Most are on instagram and bluesky, or have given up on social media entirely

sometimes feels overly public. i spend more of my online time now in smaller, private communities, like discord and slack. (I think this is off topic though!)



I created several columns to make things cleaner, but it's sometimes making things more difficult as I feel a bit like overwhelmed (to much interesting toots at the same time !)

interoperability between two accounts. By default, I don't see much other authors

Sometimes I get long threads and seeing all these posts one after another makes me skip them instead of taking the time for them. So I feel I'm missing something but don't feel like taking the time for it in this interface (mastodon app)

Realize I've never really used lists. Only recently in the context of a specific project. I feel I could be overwhelmed if I have different lists to check, one feed is already something. So I prefer to do some grooming and unfollow sometimes some accounts to keep my main timeline not too busy. But the decision to unfollow isn't always an easy one to do.

Also, I'd love to have a "low volume" extra timeline, where I get to see just postings by folks I am following who rarely post at all.

Last thing, I love my RSS feed reader on my phone, and it would be even better if it would be easier to merge the RSS scrolling with the Mastodon scrolling + interactions...

I'd love to read/write longform text on Masto, that is, more than 500 characters... (related to 3. maybe)

Sometimes I would love to get kind of an overview: Not necessarily what are the top hottest posts on Masto right now etc, but more like, what are other "bubbles"/communities?

I wish I found more artists to follow, who are at the moment stucked on Insta. Maybe some are here, but don't know where to go to find them.



Not being at the same point I left off. I often go between apps and it's painful trying to find where I left off in one when opening another. And not knowing what I've already seen.

Not many pictures, not many people. Yes! indeed

Seeing related posts scattered randomly. I follow people that often post about related things, or even reply to each other, but they are scattered with lots of unrelated things in between.

I use my personal account on my smartphone, my page account on my laptop, I never disconnect. I am afraid of losing direct view and that it will be difficult to get back to mastodon... strange thought

I often have to scroll down a lot because of the chronological feed —which I like btw— looking for something (I scroll a lot on mastodon, more than on other social media)

Difficult discovery also means difficult recognition: people there don't react much, they like social networks, but not "support" signs, so very few likes (except of course for the most active)

On my current instance, [server name redacted], the search function feels broken, therefore I'm using the one on mastodon.social - not very convenient

How to use "Lists"

frustrated if I have : bulk contributions from the same contributor (so I have to mask)



Together, roundtable participants organized these pain points into 4 themes: (1) Difficult discovery, (2) Managing the energy, (3) Losing my place, (4) Disorganisation. Some sticky notes were left uncategorized. Participants then voted to explore ideas for **better discovery**, **easier organization**, and **managing the energy**.

Theme: Difficult discovery

I wish more of my friends from real life and online life were on mastodon. Most are on Instagram and bluesky, or have given up on social media entirely	I wish I found more artists to follow, who are at the moment stuck on Insta. Maybe some are here, but don't know where to go to find them.
- frustrated if I have : - blank pages	Not many pictures, not many people. Yes! Indeed

Theme: Managing the energy

sometimes I've followed someone who turns out to boost a lot and I get tired of their boosts... but if I only see them as the booster it's not immediately easy to get to their profile to be able to change my settings for them or unfollow	← YES, long threads. One account I follow ONLY posts VERY long threads. Even with them using the content warning feature to reduce the size of each post, it's still annoying. It would be cool (but I would only use it for this one specific account) to be able to just remove all but the first post in their threads from my timeline Realize I've never really used lists. Only recently in the context of a specific project. I feel I could be overwhelmed if I have different lists to check, one feed is already something. So I prefer to do some grooming and unfollow sometimes some accounts to keep my main timeline not too busy. But the decision to unfollow isn't always an easy one to do.
Having someone I like and want to keep following, take over my timeline when they post too many things in a row on a subject not particularly relevant to me. I always wish I could temporarily collapse them, or only see the first post in a long running list of follow on posts.	• Sometimes I get long threads and seeing all these posts one after another makes me skip them instead of taking the time for them. So I feel I'm missing something but don't feel like taking the time for it in this interface (mastodon app) • frustrated if I have : bulk contributions from the same contributor (so I have to mask)

Theme: 'Losing my place'

I use my personal account on my smartphone, my page account on my laptop, I never disconnect. I am afraid of losing direct view and that it will be difficult to get back to mastodon... strange thought	Not being at the same point I left off. I often go between apps and it's painful trying to find where I left off in one when opening another. And not knowing what I've already seen.
--	---

Theme: Disorganisation

Seeing related posts scattered randomly. I follow people that often post about related things, or even reply to each other, but they are scattered with lots of unrelated things in between.	Also, I'd love to have a "low volume" extra timeline, where I get to see just postings by folks I am following who rarely post at all.	Having the convenience of "automated" optional lists, e.g. for "quiet posters"	• How to use "Lists"
Sometimes I would love to get kind of an overview: Not necessarily what are the top hottest posts on Masto right now etc. but more like, what are other "bubbles"/communities?	I created several columns to make things cleaner, but it's sometimes making things more difficult as I feel a bit like overwhelmed (to much interesting toots at the same time I)	On my current instance [server name redacted], the search function feels broken, therefore I'm using the one on mastodon.social - not very convenient	

No category

sometimes feels overly public. I spend more of my online time now in smaller, private communities, like discord and slack. (I think this is off topic though!)	Interoperability between two accounts By default, I don't see much other authors	I often have to scroll down a lot because of the chronological feed — which I like btw— looking for something (I scroll a lot on mastodon, more than on other social media)
Difficult discovery also means difficult recognition: people there don't react much, they like social networks, but not "support" signs, so very few likes (except of course for the most active)	Last thing, I love my RSS feed reader on my phone, and it would be even better if it would be easier to merge the RSS scrolling with the Mastodon scrolling + interactions... 4. I'd love to read/write longform text on Masto, that is, more than 500 characters... (related to 3. maybe)	I'd love to read/write longform text on Masto, that is, more than 500 characters... (related to 3. maybe)



Ideas for better discovery

When you are a new user, you need more assistance, otherwise there is a risk of non-adoption : blank pages, feeling of being lost, simplified menus (4.6 addresses this topic)...

I'd love to have a search functions that feels more complete, maybe even more intelligent - e.g. helping me automatically spotting users often posting about a specific topic of interest

Allow following people from other sources (via RSS feeds, or if other services have APIs, etc.). Think of apps like Tapestry.

Interaction with Bluesky & Threads platforms not clear to me? May be a good way to discover more but risk of being overloaded?

I'd love to have RSS feeds of high quality journalism content suggested to me. Maybe a feature for instances curating favourite news sources.

Mastodon has a trending news feature, but it doesn't show the posts that people are posting about the topic. I'd love to see ways to have posts grouped together by topic (attached to news articles they are posting about, whatever) in order to join a conversation about that thing that I care about.



Ideas for better organization of the feed

Better sort posts?

Bundling posts from the same contributor?

Optional timeline for “quiet posters”, in order to see just the most recent postings from folks I follow who on average post less than 1 posting per day (or similar)

Seeing that a post has additional replies from others I follow, or follow up posts from the OP on the original post. Being able to see them all together, in context. And then not having to see those same replies/follow ups out of context later on (if I’ve already seen them)

Show me ten (?) most boosted and/or discussed posts from the people I’m following

Way to distinguish visually between ‘unread’ and ‘read’



Ideas for ‘managing the energy’ of the feed

Being able to temporarily mute people (and hashtags) for “just this session” or certain periods of time.

Possible to follow “topics” as well as people? (e.g I like political topics, is there a way I can follow this topic globally? Instead of individual accounts...)?

(Clarified live that it would be nice to see hashtags to follow during onboarding.)

Being able to choose quick muting/muffling/hide boosts/etc. directly from the timeline so you can quickly manage things in context. I know this could create a giant menu, so sub-menus or something would be useful for this type of thing.

I would like the timeline to “understand” (sorry no concrete suggestion how, yet...) who are those who I am interacting a lot - if they say / recommend something, I think I'd love to see that prominently. (But then on the other hand I love the strict order of postings Mastodon has...)

Being able to know how/when people are muting/muffling/unfollowing you by showing you information like “12 people muted you starting at this post...” etc. Anonymized (or not if people opt in)

Or the opposite, helping you discover that you never ever engage with this person that you follow, and that you tend to mute them a lot. Finding ways to show you your own behaviors that you may not notice could lead to better mental health (“maybe I should just stop following this person, they stress me out a lot”)

Be able to let know how I this post makes me feel.
Then based on this, helping navigate between different energies



Having suggestions on account I don't interact with much and that I might want to unfollow to keep a "healthy" (would be set in user settings for example) quantity of content in my timeline

more generally, see how these interaction could translate into informations for content creators so they get a feedback. so the ui helps nourishing the relation between creator and followers.



Additional quotes from the transcript

"I'm in a vortex that cannot be stopped."

"Sometimes you have four or five articles from the same contributor, sometimes more because they post at the same time, so you have to scroll scroll scroll – particularly for the newspaper [accounts]."

"Lists, to me, this is really complex. I know I am stupid, but I cannot use the list. It's too complex for me."

"Mastodon gives me the impression always that there are many tools, but I don't use them because it's just complicated, not convenient enough. So for instance, lists, that's one. And I appreciate that, like, for instance, in Blue Sky, there are like automated convenient things where you can say, okay, I want to list with the quiet posters and so on."

"it's difficult to figure out how you would actually do this, but some way, like each time my timeline is loaded, it collapses those all into like a single post that somehow tells me there are like, you know, 10 replies from different people I follow and there's three more replies from the original poster or something instead of having those scattered throughout my timeline as I'm scrolling... So not only do [replies] show unrelated, but also they take up additional space and I have to like context switch as I come across them because, you know, it says the name of who they're replying to, but you may not immediately know what it's about, et cetera, et cetera. So having to context switch, even though they're really all related, and having them take up additional space in my timeline when really, like, I could have just clicked once and seen all of it at once."

"maybe to see things that I have already seen grayed out or so, so that i still see the full tree of replies and in discussions but i have an easy way to discover what parts of it i have already seen."



"a timeline for quite posters i i would really love this to to have this extra optional timeline where it says okay just look at recent posts from people who on average post less than once per day or so from those from those people who i follow i i would love this i i would use this on a daily basis"

"being able to temporarily mute people rather than unfollow or something and being able to manage that directly from the timeline without having to change to another UI."

"I would actually love to just say mute for this session, for example, like just next time I reload the page, they can show again."

"I know there are hashtags but when you create an account if i remember well you you are requested to choose individual accounts but you don't choose topics you want to follow or hashtags you want to follow. Okay? That's my proposal."

"We start a new server and we try to onboard the new people to mastodon on it and uh frankly uh sometimes people told me tell me text me okay i don't know where to start I don't and then they give up actually... we can propose to the user, OK, try to connect to people. And this is not the case. So pages is blank. So you go in the trend, you know, the trend menu, you know, the menu. And for us, since we are a new server, then our trend menu is blank as well."



Roundtable 2: Interactions

Key challenges with interacting with others on Mastodon

Many of my users are frustrated/discouraged by the difficulty and lack of options for how to control who can see/interact with their post. Often wishing for more options (local server only, or "circles")

Following across servers

I'd love 0 barriers to discoverability across instances when privacy permits

when opening a random post, I want to engage with it, and see all it's interactions without signing in again or understanding how a post's engagement look across different instances. "Is it empty or not" i ask myself

Nothing that works like (closed/moderated) group chats

Getting mixed up between public and private posts

Finding people I know, even when I know they are on Mastodon, because I don't know their correct name/tag.

friends don't know about the star to like a post



I want to see the 'front page of mastodon', or know that when I post, the majority of its userbase can see my message

hashtag search

Trying to find previous conversations I have had with someone

And....once I know someone, figuring out how to interact with them.....which may have more to do with the people themselves than Mastodon.



Together, roundtable participants organized these pain points into 5 themes: (1) Limited options for visibility controls, (2) User experience & learnability, (3) Discovery of posts/servers, (4) Discovery of people, and (5) Server interoperability. They then voted to explore ideas for **easier discovery** and **visibility controls**.

Limited options Visibility controls

Nothing that works like (closed/moderated) group chats

Many of my users are frustrated/discouraged by the difficulty and lack of options for how to control who can see/interact with their post. Often wishing for more options (local server only, or "circles")

Getting mixed up between public and private posts

User Experience + Learnability

friends don't know about the StAr to like a post

And...once I know someone, figuring out how to interact with them.....which may have more to do with the people themselves than Mastodon.

Discover posts/servers

I want to see the 'front page of mastodon', or know that when I post, the majority of its userbase can see my message

hashtag search

Trying to find previous conversations I have had with someone

Discover people

I'd love 0 barriers to discoverability across instances when privacy permits

Following across servers

Finding people I know, even when I know they are on Mastodon, because I don't know their correct name/tag.

Server Interoperability

- when opening a random post, I want to engage with it, and see all its interactions without signing in **again** or understanding how a post's engagement look across different instances. "Is it empty or not" I ask myself



Ideas for easier discovery

Discover by location either by itself or as added search term

Using simpler terms for those who came from other platforms. Like "server" instead of "instance"

Discoverability may = Learnability for new users.

Eg: Search tools mirroring previous popular tools/platforms

How is discovery different on the Fediverse because of architectural differences? The fediverse is good and empowering, but different. Highlight and explain the differences in search and discovery rather than try to replicate expectations from e.g. Twitter. so more of a education approach than features

Compare & contrast – a cheat sheet for people not familiar with Mastodon but who know other platforms (FB, Instagram, etc.) well.

Make it easier to view profile's information as it appears on home server.

How can I "find my people" , those who are interested in the same things I am?

I want to see the top of the top of news as a journalist simply

Profile visibility settings: delayed onboarding to talk people through it after they have been using Mastodon for a little bit

I dont want to think about which instance is the most popular or consider if I'm penalized by joining a 'less popular' server



Bigger View: an obvious growth path for new users from newbie to advanced: from <scary> pick a server, to DMs, to collections, to using dense mastodon clients.

DMs as posts seem risky to me personally, especially with brand accounts for example.

Maybe a button on profiles to show their posts that have previously tagged me or replied to me



Ideas for visibility controls

short term: upstream local-only/server-only posting from Hometown (a fork of Mastodon with this feature). It can be optional per-server. Gives users an additional "circle" of visibility, especially on small servers.

As a new user, I don't want to think about how my posts are limited across Mastodon

user-configurable "circles", or private groups which span across servers

Posts that are publicly visible, but not publicly interactable (like FB Groups)

If I had an Instance, I'd want all my community to be seen across other Instances by default. Posts, Instance itself, and all the people who joined.

is the quiet public useful? is it used much? I'm not sure. maybe it could be removed to streamline the options.

short term: add a confirmation on every new post "which visibility options for this post"? users can choose to "make default for new posts" and "don't ask me again". helps new users remember their choices, and actively choose, if they want.

I'd like to see a future where mastodon is a place where journalists can post news without censorship and get seen widely. (maybe a news feed front page?) Journalists and professionals need a global town square



Additional quotes from the transcript

"[L]et's say I want to find out about a guy named Johnson who's speaker of the so speaker Johnson as a hashtag it'll search and it'll give me a list in the hashtag tab but I'll will not know how many hits I got on that tag it just comes up and maybe the top three and I'll just click on it knowing that somebody talked about a guy named Johnson who speaks. So it's a little frustrating because I'm just kind of stabbing in the dark here a little bit about finding people who are experts in a topic."

"[F]rom some of my experiences with other users, which are kind of from a different background, but also non-technical, is less about trying to reproduce the discoverability of other sites that people are familiar with, like Twitter that they're coming from, and more about educating them about how the Fediverse works and what's powerful and good about it, and then what's different in terms of discoverability."

"[U]sing terms, using things that are terms or examples or functionalities from what people already came from or already know is just going to decrease that barrier to accepting Mastodon and getting to learn it and then helping their friends get on it."

"Mastodon currently has some pretty fine-grained settings around profile privacy. I can decide whether I want to appear in search engines. I can decide whether I want to be recommended. And we've noticed, I think we've already talked about this, that many people never find these settings. And because we don't want to overload the registration process, or make that even more complicated, maybe it would work better to wait until people have been using the site for a little bit. Maybe they've made three posts, been active for a week. And then add some sort of wizard where they asked, hey, currently no one can find you. Is that intentional? Should we go over your visibility settings?"

"[M]ake it easier to view a profile as it appears on its home server. So like common experience, you look up a new account that your server doesn't know about, and it'll just show a blank profile because none



of that information is cached locally. I'm sorry for using the technical terms, but your server doesn't know about that account, so it doesn't show you any information. It seems like it's blank. And to actually view it, you have to open a little pop-up menu and the three buttons, and then you have to find open profile original page it's very unclear language and that could be made easier it could be smoother could be a big button it could be uh the server can fetch that information for you and just show it to you um i think that would be a really easy win small change and it would help discovering new users on other servers like a lot easier for for new folks."

"[M]aybe it makes sense to have it pulled out of the UI into a different inbox of messages or whatever, rather than showing up in the timeline as everyone has experienced panicking when you see your DM. Thinking you accidentally posted universal experience that could be fixed for sure."

"[M]y personal situation on Mastodon I feel like I'm in a desert and none of these ideas of allowing access or or allowing viewing comes up because all there's just sand around me and the one thing that I've been using as a gauge is just followers following. You know, it takes, it might take like a couple hundred following to actually get to people following you. And so to me, like a desert, you know, you rare, you'll run into, you know, a group of camels, and maybe there's somebody there too, that you can talk to. So I feel like I'm not really at a visibility question, you know, people don't really troll me. I, you know, I'm not often shocked by what people say. So I don't, the visibility thing is just, it's not hitting me per se."



Roundtable 3: Creating on Mastodon

Key challenges with posting on Mastodon

Threading a post is not clear - I wish there was a more understandable way to make longer threads - for example when I'm live posting from an event.

When a post breaches containment and a bad actor posts on my thread, my blocks don't remove their post from my thread. Which means their harm, and their followers' harms are perpetuated. I've had to delete posts to isolate their replies.

Making a sequence of related posts -- Threads calls this a "thread". Once I send post 1 of N, people start responding to it, instead of waiting for me to finish the whole idea. I'd like to be able to post them all at once.

I miss colors and sounds - too much reading and typing

It's weird what gets really popular on Mastodon. I've turned off discoverability because I post private things, but sometimes I think about turning it on? Not sure how to balance privacy with visibility.

Although this IS available on third party apps, I am sad that I cannot add animated gifs directly from the composer. :)



Running out of options in a poll!

Reply guys controls - it's getting better! I'd like to be able to control who can reply, not just who can see the post.

creator tool like video editing software or music library is missing

It feels hard to share real experiences with people who matter to me -- say, pictures of my family on a day trip to the country. I have to maintain a separate private account and approve followers, then post followers-only.

using Mastodon on my phone and keeping an overview
(Native Android)
Different and complex designs. Too much text on a small screen.

Self-promos get stuck in limbo. People who follow me for a while will help boost it, but you can see how it doesn't really go anywhere, even after you keep boosting it.
It's my community work and none of it is asking for much. Just feels kinda lonely and forces me to go back to the dreaded linkedin.



Together, roundtable participants organized these pain points into 7 themes: (1) Threading, (2) Reply management, (3) Privacy & visibility, (4) Multimedia, (5) Composer limits, (6) Visual design, and (7) Reach. They then voted to explore ideas for **reply controls, multimedia, and privacy & visibility**.

Threading

Threading a post is not clear - I wish there was a more understandable way to make longer threads - for example when I'm live posting from an event.

Making a sequence of related posts -- Threads calls this a "thread". Once I send post 1 of N, people start responding to it, instead of waiting for me to finish the whole idea. I'd like to be able to post them all at once.

Reply Management

When a post breaches containment and a bad actor posts on my thread, my blocks don't remove their post from my thread. Which means their harm, and their followers' harms are perpetuated.

I've had to delete posts to isolate their replies.

Reply guys controls - it's getting better! I'd like to be able to control who can reply, not just who can see the post.

Privacy, visibility

It's weird what gets really popular on Mastodon. I've turned off discoverability because I post private things, but sometimes I think about turning it on? Not sure how to balance privacy with visibility.

It feels hard to share real experiences with people who matter to me -- say, pictures of my family on a day trip to the country. I have to maintain a separate private account and approve followers, then post followers-only.

Multimedia

I miss colors and sounds - too much reading and typing

Although this IS available on third party apps, I am sad that I cannot add animated gifs directly from the composer. :)

creator tool like video editing software or music libery is missing

Composer Limits

Running out of options in a poll!

Visual Design

using Mastodon on my phone and keeping an overview

(Native Android)

Different and complex designs. Too much text on a small screen.

Reach

Self-promos get stuck in limbo. People who follow me for a while will help boost it, but you can see how it doesn't really go anywhere, even after you keep boosting it.

It's my community work and none of it is asking for much. Just feels kinda lonely and forces me to go back to the dreaded linkedin.



Ideas for reply controls

content creation in mastodon first (including video content) and then crossposting or easily uploading to other platforms like TikTok META, EuroSky or BlueSky or even Farcaster

Detach unwanted replies from my original post so they can die in the aether.

Ability to add more reactions, other than boost and favourite.

Quick Version: Reply Controls

Give me the option of hiding replies from non-followers on a post, but keep it public. They are there, and I can choose to view them if desired, but by default they aren't shown.

Replies to my followers-only post are visible to my followers.

Reply settings to followers or mutuals only on a public post. (perhaps quotes inherit this? I don't care, really.)

A "hide this reply" button so I can make unwelcome replies on my posts invisible to me and others.

Set a CW on any reply, so people can choose to engage.

Fully Built Version: Reply Controls

Add an additional setting in the post composer next to the quote and general visibility to manage the reply controls - followers only, a specific set of people, no replies, etc.



This requires some UI design work to not make this feel overwhelming - defaults, etc.

quick channel creation for group talks - like neighborhoods or activist groups (instead of signal groups for example) - would need moderation function

ability to create a list to quickly collect posts or accounts related to a certain topic



Ideas for multimedia

I am hilariously non-visual, so I loooove text. I do find that the video loader takes forever to load on the Mastodon web app. Not sure if that's a beige.party thing.

Near Term, Compose updates: Hmm...maybe bubble up the options to add different types of media - audio, video or images. Right now, you just "attach" something but it's not clear you CAN add audio or video directly. (I think?!)

Editing features for images -- cropping, stickers, zooming, etc.

Videos and music clips, short stories but other than in Loops still being able to add links and longer text

Automatically add alt-text to my images so I don't have to.

Add more than 4 images to a post.

Long Term: Compose Updates: Completely separate UIs for adding images, audio or video. Images - cropping, filters, alt text. Video - add summary, set thumbnail,, Audio - set thumbnail, choose visual display, link to purchase? Not compose related but gallery views or different post views based on attached media.

Default setting to force alt text reminders when posting an image.

I don't know what the limitations are on mastodon, or why you'd use Pixelfed instead for whatever it is that people are preferring to experience

Vlogs and live multi person streams



something that gets mor younger folks (like the gaming community) into the fediverse

Add music to images or video.

Connect my XBox account to my Mastodon account, so screenshots and screencaps are shared automatically.



Ideas for privacy & visibility

like said above already: easy community building by creating groups (called “channels” on other platforms) would be nice - like for activist groups to connect but still have a safe space to talk and organize

Make a post visible to a contact list. That way, I don’t have to keep a separate account with curated followers.

Near Term: Have a guide pop up showing how to use and perhaps set defaults for composer privacy options at that time. Available from the composer, perhaps pop up or bounce when new features are added.

Mutuals only as a privacy setting 🔥

Can you make lists easier to curate?

I’m still not sure how “unlisted” works as a privacy setting.

Long Term: Composer Preferences administration page or modal, perhaps with a preview playground to show how things would look / work when set?

This is a setting that I don’t have an analogy for in my experience with other social networks.

I learn & relearn this over and over again.



Additional quotes from the transcript

"I live on my smartphone i do everything there and um and i just find like the app not, yeah, it's too complicated... like if there's a longer thread, I don't really know anymore like what belongs to what... I'm not a tech person."

"A lot of people have been experiencing the same thing in terms of they're trying to, you know, they post art, but also at the same time they're trying to survive off it. So their self-promo stuff doesn't really go anywhere because people are like, 'how dare you try to make a living'... and like, this isn't even, this is stuff I don't get paid for."

"I post a picture of my family having dinner and my mom replies, 'what are you guys having?', and i'd like the rest of my friends and family to be able to see that reply, right? ... Or even reply to it, right? 'What are you guys having? Looks like chicken,' you know... I would like to be able to have a discussion with people who matter to me about a post that I make."

"If I've made a post and someone replies to it with a slur, right? Something horrible. If I block that person, I'm not going to see it anymore, but it's literally still there when someone comes to my page on [redacted], which is my home server. They're going to see this conversation where there's this horrible slur in the middle that no one has done anything about, right? And it looks like I tolerate that kind of talk in my threads instead of doing something about it. I've hidden it from myself. I can't see it anymore. But for others, they're seeing this really terrible behavior and it looks like I'm tolerating it. And it can be harmful to them directly. So that's why for me, I feel some responsibility for that curation or keeping, you know, my replies are something of a safer space where that kind of behavior isn't allowed."

"It's really annoying because you think the intuitive nature of a block is that once it's gone, it's gone. But then you see the replies that keep going. The thread looks weird after. And especially for someone who doesn't know that this is the default behavior, it gets confusing. And then it starts feeling unsafe."

"I think that there is the type of person who should be blocked, right? So they're abusive, harassing, etc. spammy. That's one thing. Another one is, you know, [someone] and I are acquaintances online and I post something kind of serious for me. I've had a death in the family, right? And [someone] makes an inappropriate joke about it... And I don't necessarily want to block them. But I do want to have a little control to say like, hey, this isn't right for this conversation, right?"

"I've only used that if I think something is going to be controversial. And I don't want that spreading in a certain way. But I have to be honest, most of the time I'm posting about a dog or, you know, something done in my homeland i'm not that concerned about it so I will skip that piece just leave it as default whatever i've set that to be."

"I think if you're replying to someone, it's understood that you're agreeing to... it's like federation right you know you we mutually agree to the terms of conduct, and if you're replying to my posts you know I could ask you to set a content warning or you know if you start writing about self-harm or something it's probably good that someone else did that for you it's generally speaking most people don't intend to cause harm so it's, I don't know, it's like it's complicated, but also at the same time, it exists for a reason, right?" *(on why it feels reasonable to let original posters have control over what appears in the thread of replies beneath their posts)*

"I feel like Mastodon replies, like Twitter replies, have like two different contacts. They appear in the thread as replies to that topic, but they also appear in my feed, right? They appear on my profile and I think I would be like, 'Oh, someone removed it from their replies or I can't reply to this, but I still can say something about it and link or it appears in my timeline still.' So there's that kind of like, 'Do I have a right



to [the other person's] replies area?' Maybe not, but I always have a right to say something in my own timeline."

"I don't know why, but I don't feel like my replies should be the same level of public as my main posts. So like I may be having a conversation with somebody and just say, hey, hope you're having a great day. I don't care if that's public, but I don't feel like it should be at the level [of a public post]. So I always put those as unlisted when I'm replying back. And I make that choice specifically, like most of them are going to be unlisted. And I've actually wanted to be able to set a preference of a reply should be unlisted."

"I have to admit, like, If I'm doing photos and like sometimes I'll be like, I don't really have, maybe I'm on my phone or something where we're adding alt text is a little bit of a hassle. And sometimes I just won't post because I know that if I do it without the alt text, people are going to get mad at me. So there's some headwind with adding alt text."

"I love the idea of like group sourced alt text. Because sometimes you see an alt text and you're like it's definitely missing like the key element of what it is that you just posted, and so people can like contribute alt text that'd be so cool."

"Let's say I'm doing a post that's about, I keep giving my day trip, dinner with friends, right? But telling that kind of story visually, it usually takes more than four posts, right? Getting different people, the different things we saw, etc. And so usually I'll have to do it as multiple posts with four at a time."



Roundtable 4: Belonging & Inclusion

Key barriers to feeling empowered on Mastodon

My teams could really use a group account or present as a group identity publicly, as moderators, while being able to post as ourselves at other times, or have our own names internally on moderation decisions.

Moderation and administration workflows are not intuitive and are overly complex, buried in the profiles of individual accounts with privileges. There is more friction than there needs to be in switching and navigating mod/admin tasks.

it's little things, as a screen reader user. For instance, when the UI loads, I'm instantly dropped into the search area and must actively navigate around it to get to the timeline, every time, but the UI almost forces me to explain myself to others. For example explaining why alt text is important and how one should use community invented hashtags to encourage alt text, rather than encouraging ways to sharing and fostering a sharing and giving culture around alt text by suggesting alt text by others.

Not being able to use simple markdown like bold, italic, strikethrough and links. This is something other fediverse software has and it would be great to have it on Mastodon as well. It prevents me from being creative.

From a UI perspective, the lack of richness in Mastodon (as compared to say Glitch) is a huge barrier to working together more effectively -- long posts and formatting are both important for sharing detailed understanding. (Of course it's not an absolute barrier, I can feel empowered on Twitter and Blacksky, but



the conditions of those networks are different enough on Mastodon that the lack of richness makes a huge difference.)

The current issue reporting + addressing system is difficult to participate in for those not technically knowledgeable

Having not the option to remove or prevent replies from problematic/toxic people. I can suspend them, but that doesn't remove their replies from their server. There is a pull request on Github I have heard, but that hasn't been merged for some reason. In other words; having not much control over what's below my own posts is something that prevents me for being in full control. See also <https://socialhub.activitypub.rocks/t/fep-5624-per-object-reply-control-policies/2723>

It feels like the onus of hiding speech (behind content warnings like "politics" and such) from those who might not want to see it is on the poster/person speaking, instead of the person who doesn't want to see such speech

The lack of any functionality for group discussions is a huge barrier - the equivalent of FB groups.

Governance guidance for those setting up an instance is helpful - I feel like the Mastodon Covenant needs to evolve, possibly with community governance support in mind - eg, policy frameworks, templates for deployers.

Size both in terms of population, and the caching of data, can get problematic. Mastodon as a platform is prone to collecting larger crowds than are effective communities.

Historically the challenges for new people of using the UI mean (combined with the cultural aspects) mean that people I've invited to Mastodon didn't stick around. (This was a couple of years ago so I'm not



sure how relevant the UI aspects are, but the cultural issues are still significant enough that literally nobody I know is interested in giving it a second chance.)

I feel I'm not empowered when the UI discourages behavior to subtly make discouraging option choices, such as the reduce animation checkbox being unchecked for new users. I'd like more messages and explanations rather than decisions without explanations.



Together, roundtable participants organized these pain points into 8 themes: (1) Communities, (2) Reply controls, (3) Admin/Moderator controls, (4) Community feedback loops, (5) Creation limitations, (6) Accessibility & Inclusion, (7) Governance support, and (8) Ease of use. Time was limited to ideate on these opportunities, so rather than voting, the group provided ideas for whichever themes they resonated with the most.

Communities

The lack of any functionality for group discussions is a huge barrier - the equivalent of FB groups.

Size both in terms of population, and the caching of data, can get problematic. Mastodon as a platform is prone to collecting larger crowds than are effective communities.

Reply controls

Having not the option to remove or prevent replies from problematic/toxic people. I can suspend them, but that doesn't remove their replies from their server. There is a pull request on Github I have heard, but that hasn't been merged for some reason. In other words; having not much control over what's below my own posts is something that prevents me for being in full control.

See also <https://socialhub.activitypub.rocks/t/fep-5624-per-object-reply-control-policies/2723>

Admin / Moderator Controls

Moderation and administration workflows are not intuitive and are overly complex, buried in the privies of individual accounts with privileges. There is more friction than there needs to be in switching and navigating mod/admin tasks.

My teams could really use a group account or present as a group identity publicly, as moderators, while being able to post as ourselves at other times, or have our own names internally on moderation decisions.

Community Feedback Loops

The current issue reporting + addressing system is difficult to participate in for those not technically knowledgeable

Creation Limitations

Not being able to use simple markdown like **bold**, *italic*, ~~strikethrough~~ and [links](#). This is something other fediverse software has and it would be great to have it on Mastodon as well. It prevents me from being creative.

From a UI perspective, the lack of richness in Mastodon (as compared to say Glitch) is a huge barrier to working together more effectively -- long posts and formatting are both important for sharing detailed understanding. (Of course it's not an absolute barrier, I can feel empowered on Twitter and Blacksky, but the conditions of those networks are different enough on Mastodon that the lack of richness makes a huge difference.)

Accessibility & Inclusion

It's little things, as a screen reader user. For instance, when the UI loads, I'm instantly dropped into the search area and must actively navigate around it to get to the timeline, every time, but the UI almost forces me to explain myself to others. For example explaining why alt text is important and how one should use community invented hashtags to encourage alt text, rather than encouraging ways to sharing and fostering a sharing and giving culture around alt text by suggesting alt text by others.

Governance Support

Size both in terms of population, and the caching of data, can get problematic. Mastodon as a platform is prone to collecting larger crowds than are effective communities.

Governance guidance for those setting up an instance is helpful - I feel like the Mastodon Covenant needs to evolve, possibly with community governance support in mind - eg, policy frameworks, templates for deployers.

Ease of use (Esp. affecting new user)

It feels like the onus of hiding speech (behind content warnings like "politics" and such) from those who might not want to see it is on the poster/ person speaking, instead of the person who doesn't want to see such speech

Historically the challenges for enw people of using the UI mean (combined with the cultural aspects) mean that people I've invited to Mastodon didn't stick around. (This was a couple of years ago so I'm not sure how relevant the UI aspects are, but the cultural issues are still significant enough that literally nobody I know is interested in giving it a second chance.)

I feel I'm not empowered when the UI discourages behavior to subtly make discouraging option choices, such as the reduce animation checkbox being unchecked for new users. I'd like more messages and explanations rather than decisions without explanations.



Ideas (uncategorized)

Near-term: local-only posts make a huge difference for “instance as community”, and since they already exist in forks it’s clearly implementable.

More documentation geared towards letting everyone know that this is a process (vs. “this is a finished product with no more enhancements or upgrades”)

Near-term: per-instance onboarding customization.

Longer-term: groupings of instances, in bubbles / neighborhoods / island networks. “Communities of communities”

Allow accounts to auto-boost or even auto-quote from whitelisted accounts

Interface change: Having a truly “local” local scope for users’ posts, and one that is easy to access post-by-post. Local posts do not federate; Group DMs that inherit limited scope or a “named users only” scope.

Fundamental change: an ability to function in both a smaller niche, and participate in larger gatherings/scopes, as a person with one identity on one instance.

Short term: Make sure people are offered collections on sign-up and that they can follow this with one click.

Longer term: Make a super simple/beginner UI switch. So one with only a compose area and a timeline. When someone signs up they are asked if they want the simple/beginner mode, the normal mode or the advanced (column) mode.





Additional quotes from the transcript

"I run my own server but i'm not very tech savvy and i really understand how GitHub works. I touch Git once or twice during a mastodon update cycle and the idea of filing an issue on GitHub is a huge mental obstacle for me. It's not a casual thing, it's something I need to sit down and spend a few hours on as I re-familiarize myself how to use the website again."

"Every niche demographic has numbers in the thousands if not millions on twitter um if you make some noise you will be seen basically but on Mastodon that's not the case um based completely on vibes. It's older, Western, tech-savvy males who are using this and if there is a problem that affects me but it doesn't affect them then the problem isn't going to get attention no matter how much I complain about it."

"On Facebook, you have the option. But on Twitter and also Blue Sky, you also have the option to prevent non-followers to respond. So that is part one. If that was already possible then it will be huge win."

"I feel like Mastodon has a very robust filtering system. It's rare to see a social media service give you the ability to write what keywords you don't want to see and hide them entirely, but I feel like it's underutilized. Every day I see people requesting others to be more specific with their usage of content warnings because some posts show content they don't want to see, however I think those folks should just add a filter... that's functionally the same as a content warning without putting the burden on to others... It's surprising how many users didn't seem to know that such a feature existed when I describe it as one of the best features of Mastodon."

"I would like actually to see more of what if this existed. I would love to see more documentation that's geared towards letting everyone know that this is a process. Because I feel like a lot of the documentation is more like, this is a finished product with no more enhancements or upgrades. So I'd



like to see documentation move to a more like, this is how we're going to advance kind of thing." *(on how developer relations / comms can be positioned for a greater sense of inclusion)*

"I mean, for me, I think of two separate kinds of communities. There's really the instance as community. And that's kind of analogous to, in the physical world, co-located communities, neighborhoods, villages, etc. there if i move well i can maintain ties back to the old community but i'm not still in the old community but then there's also the more general community interest based like cat lovers etc and for the for those yeah if i move i still want to be part of this community" *(in response to being asked how important it would be for account portability to preserve one's belonging to 'communities')*



Roundtable 5: Safety & Moderation

Key challenges to feeling safe on Mastodon

I think most about how it feels like it wasn't built by people like me for me. Something about it feels 'othered' and i weirdly feel more comfy on tumblr (even with the content bans :() (and discord communities)

Choosing a server is often presented as "Choose a server that matches your interests". Or language. Or geographic region.

What users don't realise is that they're really choosing their moderators, and they have no visibility into whether those moderators are good at the job / engaged / moderate in a way the user agrees with.

Having a vague idea about the instance moderator and Admin hosting our account.
Knowing the person who is hosting your data on they server

Knowing that the moderator is still engaged and too tired to keep moderating or patching the instance

I'm worried about other people seeing or finding out the 'degenerate' (/pos) things i might like or favourite when i'm on an account and feel the need for alt accounts which doesn't feel good to fragment my identity too much

Easily navigating between a serious/professional account and a less formal one (shitpost account :)



It feels very 'to engage is to be exposed' I don't know who will come to bat for me if i need help so i don't post often about what i want to post about. In that sense i'm not 'free to express myself' there and it's now another tool i view like linkedIn or another 'professional' tool

most often heard is need to constrain who can interact, reply, or ability to remove content from thread.. generally folks want to curate their group/audience/context more than they currently can.

The way that filters are hidden so deeply in user settings puts the responsibility for hiding content from those who might not want to see it on posters instead of those who don't want to see such content

Client dev: Mastodon API is (understandably) focused on the immediate requirements of official web and client apps.

This makes it more difficult than it needs to be for other clients to innovate on safety features.

Client dev: Feedback on API surface/risks/features to Mastodon GmbH often feels like a black hole. Anecdotally, I've heard from some other client developers they've stopped trying.

No technical ways to provide users with a feedback on their own reports (I believe GDPR mandates it), or no "moderation log" publicly available on an instance.

The most difficult thing is to help people understanding that the point is not going to platform with a huge number of users, but to find platforms without algorithms hiding your content to your contacts. Sharing some ethical and practical awareness is the biggest obstacle to help people trapped in the rabbit hole of commercial platforms.

Having a platform with some filtering/automatised moderation without monitoring/gathering too much infos from users



Biggest challenge: to enforce policy in a fair, smart and responsible way, because the damages coming from misuses of the power of moderation, silencing and defederation should not be underestimated.

No or highly limited trust signals for federating domains means I can only mainly reactively block content/behaviour sources. I'd like trust/reputation factored in to accommodate something between denylisting and allowlisting

inability to delete or label specific content, can only action accounts

Appeals don't give me any way to converse with the account, and is limited to one appeal with limited context/metadata.

Not all admins are equally technically-minded and the existing system for reporting issues and getting them addressed is difficult to participate in for non-technical users

As a Mastoadmin, in my struggle of transparency i always share publicly the reasons for the defederation of other communities, but I feel uncomfortable in having such reasons truncated by the platform, as reported on Github as bug #28531.

Keeping spambots away is a time-consuming, wearing and endless effort, that pushed out to adopt an invite-only registration policy because spam accounts become impossible to manage

very challenging to engage in threat sharing/signals intelligence with other admins esp wrt spam, cybersecurity, network threats, APTs etc

bulk import and/or sync with best practice/industry standard IP/MX/Email denylist data (I have to add them one by one, I have thousands to enter)



Moderated messages get deleted and aren't archived for moderation purposes, which makes it very hard to check an account's background.

inability to connect to content labellers (CSAM, TVEC, Hate, Malware etc



*Together, roundtable participants organized these pain points into 10 themes: (1) Content labelling (warnings vs. filters), (2) Cultural representation, (3) Identity management, (4) Controlling engagement & minimizing harassment, (5) Lack of signals & collaboration re: security, (6) Advocacy, (7) Lack of nuanced options for admins/moderators, (8) Lack of support for non-technical admins, (9) Server API/developer challenges, and (10) Moderator/admin transparency for end users. They then voted to explore one idea each that would impact end users and admins respectively: For end users: **content labelling (warnings vs. filters)**, and for admins: **lack of signals & collaboration re: security**.*



Content Labeling: Warnings vs Filters

The way that filters are hidden so deeply in user settings puts the responsibility for hiding content from those who might not want to see it on posters instead of those who don't want to see such content

Cultural Representation

I think most about how it feels like it wasn't built by people like me for me. Something about it feels 'othered' and I weirdly feel more comfy on tumblr (even with the content bans :() (and discord communities)

Controlling Engagement, Minimising Harassment

It feels very 'to engage is to be exposed' I don't know who will come to bat for me if I need help so I don't post often about what I want to post about. In that sense I'm not 'free to express myself' there and it's now another tool I view like linkedin or another 'professional' tool

most often heard is need to constrain who can interact, reply, or ability to remove content from thread... generally folks want to curate their group/audience/context more than they currently can.

Identity management

Easily navigating between a serious/professional account and a less formal one (shitpost account :)

I'm worried about other people seeing or finding out the 'degenerate' (/pos) things I might like or favourite when I'm on an account and feel the need for all accounts which doesn't feel good to fragment my identity too much

Lack of Signals & Collaboration Re: Security

bulk import and/or sync with best practice/ industry standard IP/MX/ Email denylist data (I have to add them one by one, I have thousands to enter)

Keeping spambots away is a time-consuming, wearing and endless effort, that pushed out to adopt an invite-only registration policy because spam accounts become impossible to manage

very challenging to engage in threat sharing/ signals intelligence with other admins esp wrt spam, cybersecurity, network threats, APTs etc

inability to connect to content labellers (CSAM, TVEC, Hate, Malware etc)

Moderated messages get deleted and aren't archived for moderation purposes, which makes it very hard to check an account's background.

As a Mastoadmin, in my struggle of transparency I always share publicly the reasons for the defederation of other communities, but I feel uncomfortable in having such reasons truncated by the platform, as reported on GitHub as bug #28531.

Advocacy

The most difficult thing is to help people understanding that the point is not going to platform with a huge number of users, but to find platforms without algorithms hiding your content to your contacts. Sharing some ethical and practical awareness is the biggest obstacle to help people trapped in the rabbit hole of commercial platforms.

Having a platform with some filtering/ automatised moderation without monitoring/ gathering too much info from users

Biggest challenge: to enforce policy in a fair, smart and responsible way, because the damages coming from misuses of the power of moderation, silencing and defederation should not be underestimated.

Lack of nuanced options for admins/mods

No or highly limited trust signals for federating domains means I can only mainly reactively block content/behaviour sources. I'd like trust/ reputation factored in to accommodate something between denylisting and allowlisting

inability to delete or label specific content, can only action accounts

Appeals don't give me any way to converse with the account, and is limited to one appeal with limited context/metadata.

Lack of support for non-technical admins

Not all admins are equally technically-minded and the existing system for reporting issues and getting them addressed is difficult to participate in for non-technical users

Server API / Developer Challenges

Client dev: Mastodon API is (understandably) focused on the immediate requirements of official web and client apps. This makes it more difficult than it needs to be for other clients to innovate on safety features.

Client dev: Feedback on API surface/risks/features to Mastodon GmbH often feels like a black hole. Anecdotally, I've heard from some other client developers they've stopped trying.

Moderator/Admin transparency for end users

Choosing a server is often presented as "Choose a server that matches your interests". Or language. Or geographic region.

What users don't realise is that they're really choosing their moderators, and they have no visibility into whether those moderators are good at the job / engaged / moderate in a way the user agrees with.

Having a vague idea about the instance moderator and Admin hosting our account. Knowing the person who is hosting your data on their server

Knowing that the moderator is still engaged and too tired to keep moderating or patching the instance

Biggest challenge: to enforce policy in a fair, smart and responsible way, because the damages coming from misuses of the power of moderation, silencing and defederation should not be underestimated.

No technical ways to provide users with a feedback on their own reports (I believe GDPR mandates it), or no "moderation log" publicly available on an instance.



Ideas for content labelling (warnings vs. filters)

Ability to choose the profile(s) under which a post will be posted. OR, having lists for followers per audience (if doesn't exist already)

Having (opt-in) default filters for users to refer to during the onboarding process or even in user settings, so they can more easily customize them or create their own

Something I like that ground news does is it indicates when something is less like your preferred content but still important/critical. How can labels/warnings/filters help people get access to info that combats mis and dis information

Red, orange and green lights for content so you can choose when you'd like to see more challenging content that you usually DNI with

Inline spoiler for text

API to use when writing a post -- send it the text as currently written, and it returns information to allow the client to prompt the user with something like "The words 'x', and 'y', and hashtag 'z' are commonly used on posts with content warnings. Do you want to add a content warning to your post?"

Check the feasibility of "filter warnings": content warnings that are not set up by the user generating the content, but activated for specific users if certain conditions are met or certain words are used. The content doesn't become invisible like in filters, only tagged with a CW.

Community labeling: allow third parties to attach labels / content to posts, allow users to decide whether to use that third party service.



Ideas for admin signals & collaboration re: security

implement ability to “subscribe” to either a trusted server(s) denylist or a third party CSV/data source for federating domains, MX/Email, and IP data

Upon decision moderation, save explicit and various “metadata” : capture infos on the reported post (content/attachments), the account (profile pic/informations/IP...) that won't be lost afterwards

Federated resources to counteract spambot waves trying to infiltrate mastodon instance with open registration policy, using such instances as trojan horses for their disinformation.

“Bigger version” is making the platform more plug-into-able so third party plugins/apps can take on the heavy lifting (no need for Mastodon to take on all first party T&S effort)

During the onboarding, inviting user to say “Hi” to the instance admin and moderators.
In order to create a closer contact and make the user co-responsible for the instance.

I use service accounts across a number of servers, I would like to have rate limits changed for service accounts that are performing tasks. moderators tend to use their own personal accounts for moderation (terrible idea IMO), and often get rate limited in their own community. Service accounts/staff should have different rate limits (based on role or scoped permissions)

Allow third-party clients for moderation actions that would bring more features (tracking of actions within an instance team, discussions, more data/stats...)



participate in a nodeinfo discussion to (a) ascertain what self-managed metadata would be beneficial to ingest and then (b) implement in platform so we can add (eg number of staff, year founded, financial status etc TBD) - relatedly, use nodeinfo to ascertain outlier signals like very high MAU rates or very high posts-per-user avgs

bigger picture, something something FASP/FIRES :o)

very quick win: investigation/signals sharing work in the backend means cutting and pasting a lot of things like email address, IP address, MX record etc... give me a handy "Copy" function that puts this in clipboard and trims all whitespace

one more super quick win, make it bleedingly obvious if the remote server has suspended an account



Additional quotes from the transcript

"I always thought, what if admins from a really large instance made it impossible for users to export their accounts to another server, besides from the limitations of the mastermind software for now that prevents from also migrating the post. But I really think it's the real strength of the Mastodon server to be able to migrate easily. And that must be protected and made even stronger."

"Mastodon allows you to export your data, which I really like. It's something most companies needed to be strong-armed into allowing. And I think that really sets this software apart."

"When I think about my experience of using Tumblr and I think about my experience of using Mastodon, I just immediately think well those are my people, those are absolutely not my people... That's the kind of emotional response feeling... It's safety... but it's like, um, affinity, or maybe it's something to do with representation, like can I see parts of myself in what is already there?"

"Managing your identity is a whole thing now for everyone on if you're online, right? Like it's, there's a book called The Private is the Political which has got a lot of research into queer communities that and like how they fragment their identities of where they're out and where they're not out both online and in person... It made me think, that book and a lot of my work, have made me think a lot about like what pieces of me do I like cut?"

"I think that there is a shared fear of personal attacks, heard of trolls and being exposed to hate speech and verbal violence without any sort of protection and shield and support from the community, the moderators or the software."

"I've seen people try to police ideas and just write like, 'hey you didn't write a content warning for politics' on this post which is talking about the shooting of an activist, or 'you should really write content warning for trump when you post a photo of him', so I feel like these are all valid things that I've seen



people get upset by, um, however I disagree that these are equally upsetting to everyone, so I think writing content warnings for everything that might be upsetting ultimately degrades the Mastodon experience for those who might only find one subset of these subjects objectionable."

"And it's a pity because I saw some patterns in those spam bots, like truncated messages, repeated posts, the same post tagging five or six people, different people every time. So maybe there should be a way to federate not just the content, but also the moderation to get to share a warning if I identify one account or one pattern or one content that is repeating through different accounts, as part of a spam bot way, this information maybe could find its way to other communities and be socialized and leveraged for a better protection for these spambot ways."

