SKYLIFT MARKETING

PERFORMANCE REPORT & CASE STUDY

Michelle “MACE” Curran

August 12, 2025 — March 24, 2026

200K **Instagram Followers**	**5,000+** **Books Sold (Pre-Launch)**	**USA Today Bestseller** **The Flipside**
488K LinkedIn Impressions (90 Days)	**37.43%** Email Open Rate (Avg)	**12K** Newsletter Subscribers

From a 3-week book launch runway to a USA Today Bestseller.

From 153K to 200K Instagram followers. A full-service marketing success story.

Prepared by: Skylift Marketing | Account Lead: Afaq (Faisal) | March 24, 2026

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The Brief

A Bestseller Waiting to Happen.

In August 2025, Michelle “MACE” Curran — former F-16 fighter pilot, second woman ever to fly Lead Solo for the Thunderbirds, and combat veteran — came to Skylift Marketing with a problem most people would love to have.

She had a book launching in 3 weeks. A publisher deal with Hachette. And a story the world genuinely needed to hear. What she needed was a team who could turn that story into something that moved copies, built an audience, and opened doors.

What she didn’t know yet: her story was also a masterclass in the kind of leadership the corporate world is starving for.

> ***“Less fighter pilot and more subject matter expert. I want to be known as the person who can move teams from hesitation due to fear to bold action.”***
>
> **— Michelle “MACE” Curran**

CLIENT

Michelle “MACE” Curran

SERVICE

Social Media, Content & Email Marketing

PERIOD

Aug 12, 2025 – Mar 24, 2026

PLATFORMS

Instagram • LinkedIn Email Newsletter TikTok • Facebook

GOAL

Book Bestseller Launch + Keynote Speaker Positioning

Phase 1 | Aug – Nov 2025

The Book Launch: From Runway to Bestseller.

MACE came to us with 3 weeks until her book, The Flipside, hit shelves. The window was tight. The strategy had to be airtight. We built and executed a three-part launch campaign: pre-launch hype, launch week activation, and post-launch sustainability — all running simultaneously across organic content, paid ads, and email.

Phase 1A Aug 2025

Pre-Launch Setup

Content strategy, audience building, paid ad creative, pre-order campaigns across IG + LinkedIn + email

Phase 1B Sep 2025

Launch Week

Full-force content push, paid ads activation, press amplification (CBS, Fast Company, USA Today coverage)

Phase 1C Oct 2025

Post-Launch Push

Sustained momentum content, podcast appearances, speaking reel distribution, bestseller milestone amplification

Phase 1D Nov 2025

Transition Phase

Shifted from book-first to speaker-positioning strategy. New brand direction locked.

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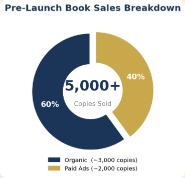
Phase 1 Results

5,000+	~3,000	~2,000	Bestseller
Total Copies Sold (Pre-Launch Phase)	Organic Sales (social + email)	Paid Ad Conversions	USA Today & Hudson News

The Flipside sold over 5,000 copies in the pre-launch phase — approximately 3,000 through organic content and email marketing, and around 2,000 through paid advertising campaigns managed by Skylift. The result: The Flipside debuted as a USA Today Bestseller and a Hudson News Bestseller — two of the most recognised bestseller lists in the country. A landmark achievement that opened every speaking door that followed.

- Organic reach driven by Instagram carousels, reels, LinkedIn posts, and email newsletter pre-order campaigns
- Paid ads: targeted book purchase campaigns managed across Meta platforms
- Content supported media appearances: CBS Mornings, Fast Company, USA Today, The Next Big Idea Club
- USA Today + Hudson News Bestseller status achieved simultaneously



Pre-launch sales: organic vs. paid

Proof of Impact

4:11
USA TODAY

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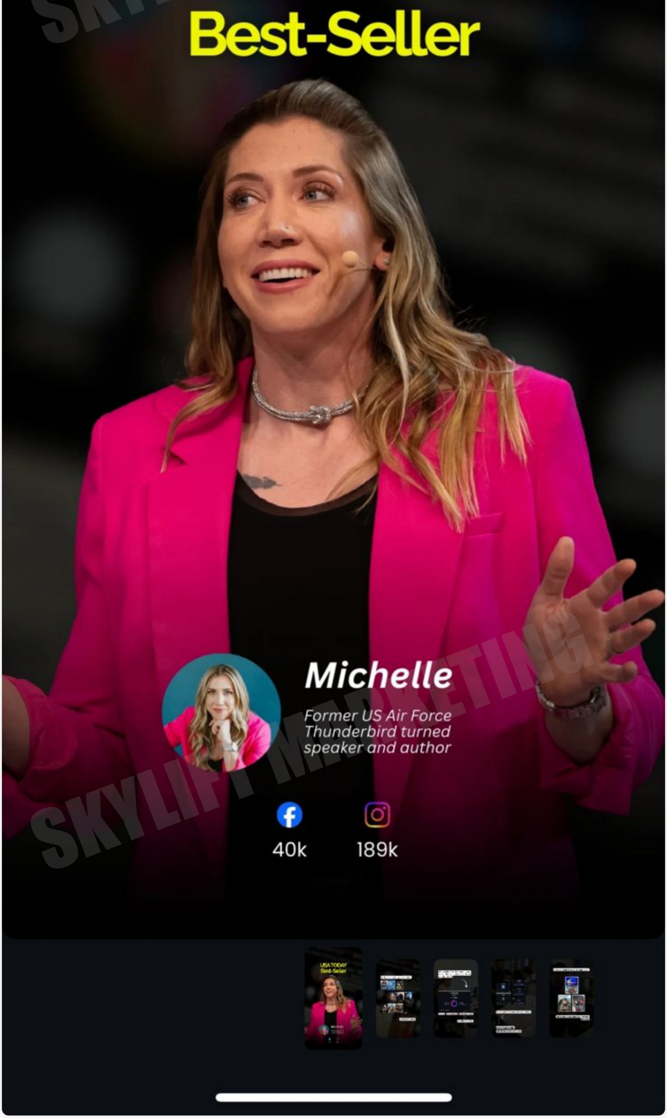

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The Flipside — USA Today Bestseller announcement reel

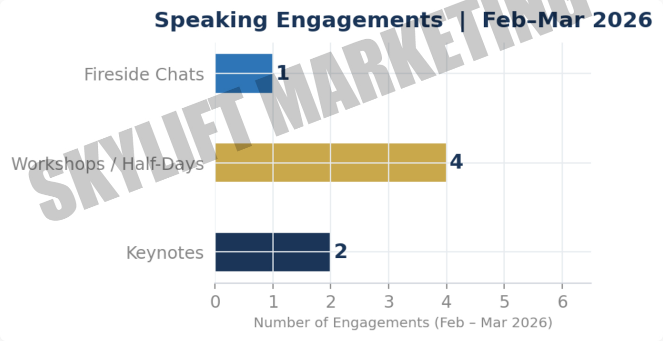
Phase 2 | Nov 2025 – Present

The Speaker Play: Building the Next Chapter.

With the book launch behind her and a bestseller badge on the shelf, Phase 2 was about establishing MACE as the go-to keynote speaker for leaders and teams who need to move from hesitation to bold action. Skylift engineered a full brand pivot toward principle-driven thought leadership that drives speaking inquiries.

The speaking pipeline has already started filling. In just February and March 2026, MACE delivered keynotes, workshops, and fireside chats to corporate audiences.

2	3–4	1
Full Keynotes (Feb–Mar 2026)	Workshops & Half-Day Sessions	Fireside Chat / MACE Minute



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Speaking engagements delivered: Feb–Mar 2026

Speaking Programmes Formalised

The Flipside of Fear	Fear to Bold Action	MACE Minute
Core keynote. Turns fear from paralysis into a decision-making tool. Target: corporate conferences, leadership summits, association events.	Half-day workshop. Deep-dive with structured exercises. Target: L&D teams, executive offsite programs.	Intimate fireside chat / Q&A format. Target: smaller leadership events, VIP executive settings.

Testimonials from: Microsoft • Deloitte • SpaceX • John Deere • PwC. Bureau representation: Chartwell Speakers and WWSG.

Platform Performance | Instagram

Instagram: 153K → 200K in 7 Months.

200K	+47K	1.83%	64,160

Total Followers (Mar 2026)	Followers Gained (Aug 2025–Mar 2026)	Engagement Rate (Above Industry Avg)	Profile Visits (Last 90 Days, +60.4%)

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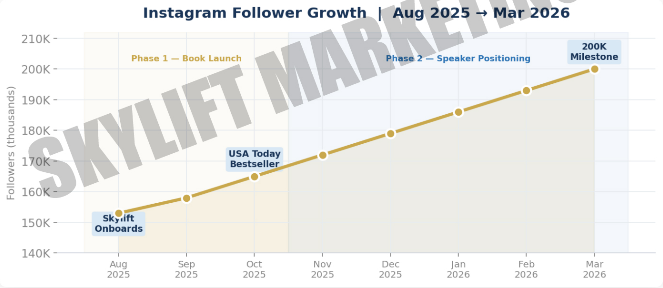
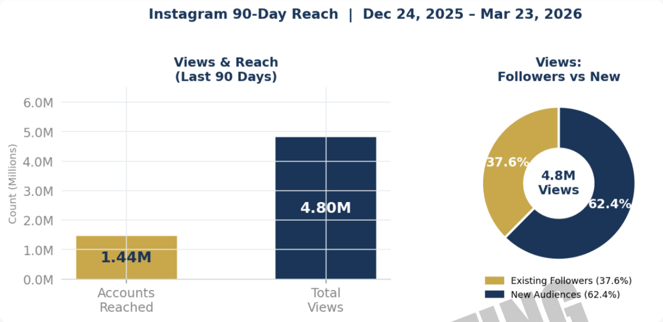


Instagram follower trajectory across both engagement phases (Aug 2025 → Mar 2026)

90-Day Reach Overview | Dec 2025 – Mar 2026

4.8M Total Views (Last 90 Days)	**1.44M** Accounts Reached (+155.7%)	**62.4%** Non-Follower View Share



Views, accounts reached, and audience breakdown (last 90 days)

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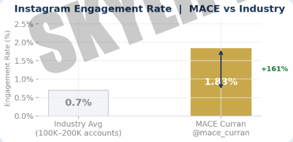
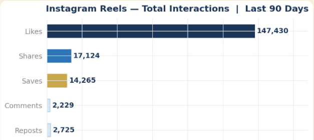
Engagement Rate Benchmark

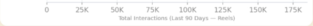


Reels Interactions (90 Days)



MACE 1.83% vs industry avg 0.70%

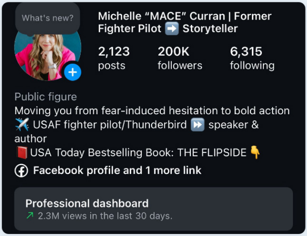
MACE's engagement rate is nearly 3× the industry average for accounts in the 100K–200K range. This isn't vanity growth — it's an audience that responds.



Total interactions by type: 147K likes, 17K shares, 14K saves

What Drives the Results

- Carousels with 5–6 slides, one strong insight per slide, calm confidence aesthetic
- Talking head reels that pass MACE's 5-filter quality system — behavioral shift, not motivation
- Newsletter-quality storytelling brought to Instagram captions
- Aviation content used as a proof point (15% of content), not the lead identity
- Book launch content in Sep–Oct 2025 drove the biggest organic follower surge



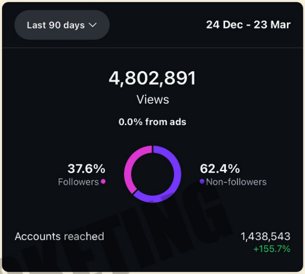
Michelle "MACE" Curran | Former Fighter Pilot ➡️ Storyteller

2,123 posts | 200K followers | 6,315 following

Public figure
Moving you from fear-induced hesitation to bold action
✈️ USAF fighter pilot/Thunderbird ⏩ speaker & author
📕 USA Today Bestselling Book: THE FLIPSIDE 👇
Facebook profile and 1 more link

Professional dashboard
↗ 2.3M views in the last 30 days.

IG Profile — 200K followers, 2.3M views / 30 days



4,802,891
Views
0.0% from ads

37.6% Followers
62.4% Non-followers

Accounts reached	1,438,543 +155.7%

Reach overview — 4.8M views, 1.44M accounts reached, +155.7%

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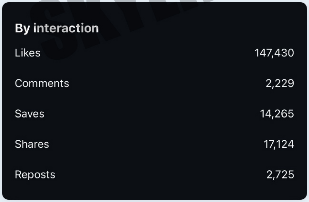
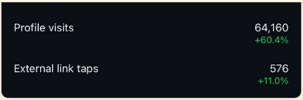


By interaction

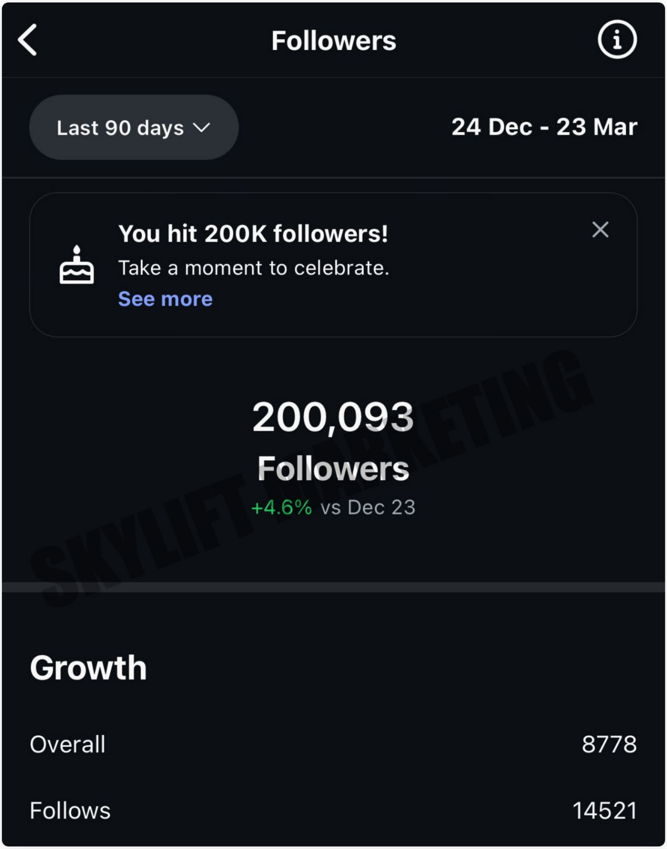
Likes	147,430
Comments	2,229
Saves	14,265
Shares	17,124
Reposts	2,725

Reels interactions — 147K likes, 17K shares, 14K saves, 2.7K reposts



Profile visits	64,160 +60.4%
External link taps	576 +11.0%

Profile activity — 64,736 total (+59.8%), 64,160 profile visits (+60.4%)



Last 90 days

24 Dec - 23 Mar

You hit 200K followers!

Take a moment to celebrate.

See more

200,093

Followers

+4.6% vs Dec 23

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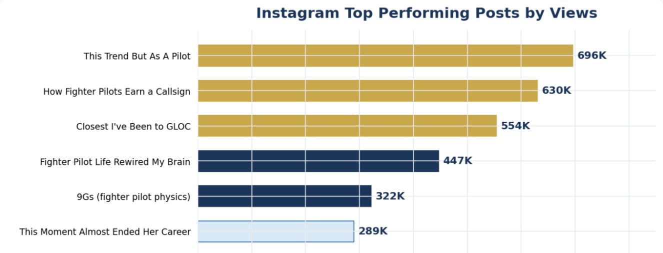
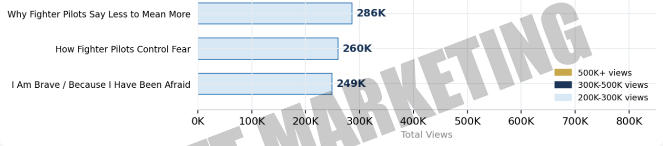
Growth

Overall	8778
Follows	14521

Instagram milestone — 200,093 followers (+4.6% vs Dec 23) • 8,778 new followers in 90 days

Top Performing Posts by Views





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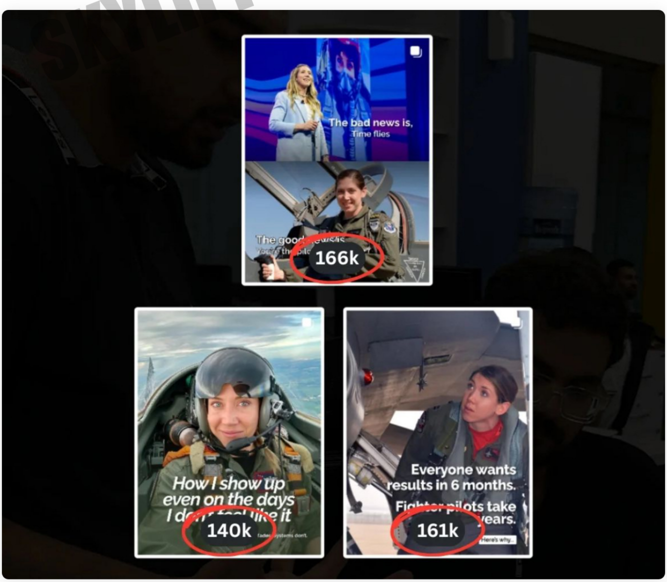
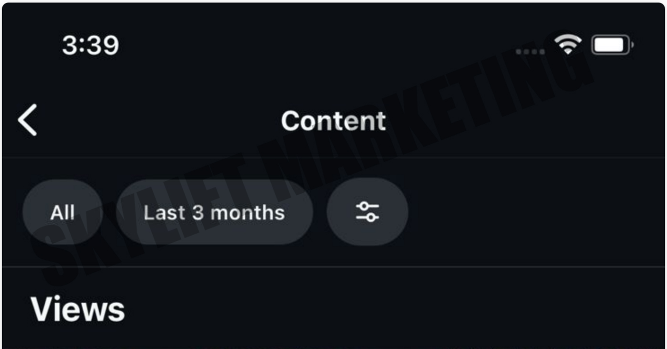
Top 9 posts by total views — 3 posts crossed 500K views organically


The bad news is,
Time flies
The good news is, you're the pilot
166k
How I show up even on the days I don't feel like it
140k
Everyone wants results in 6 months.
Fighter pilots take years.
Here's why...
161k

Viral post highlights — 166K, 161K, 140K views per post



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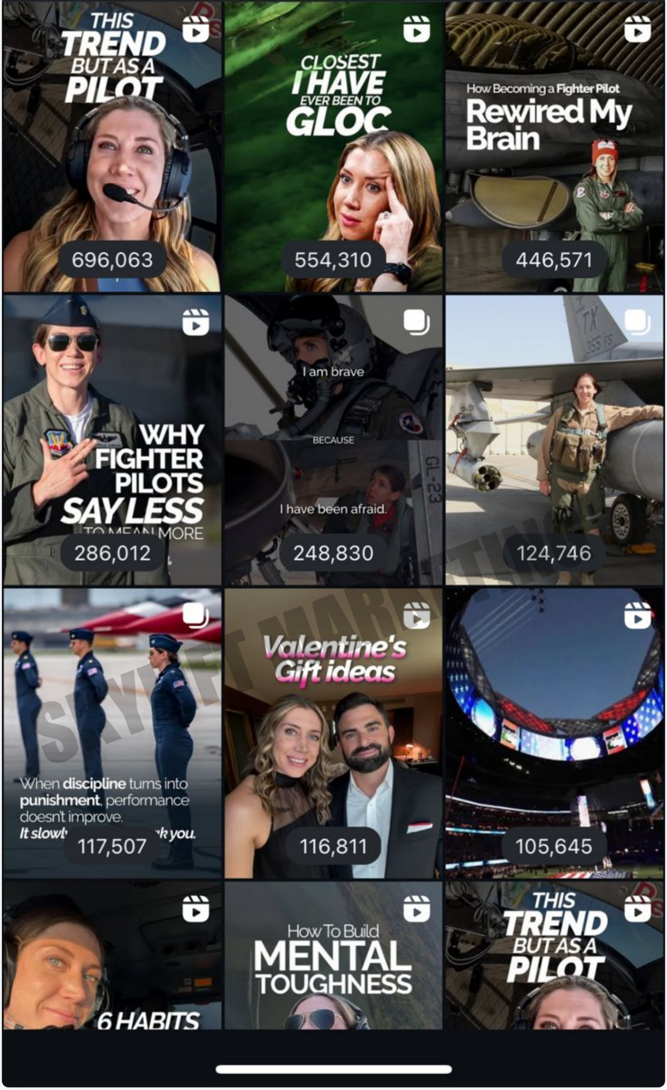

THIS TREND BUT AS A PILOT
696,063
CLOSEST I HAVE EVER BEEN TO GLOC
554,310
How Becoming a Fighter Pilot Rewired My Brain
446,571
WHY FIGHTER PILOTS SAY LESS TO MEAN MORE
286,012
I am brave
BECAUSE
I have been afraid.
248,830
124,746
When discipline turns into punishment, performance doesn't improve.
It slowl… …k you.
117,507
Valentine's Gift ideas
116,811
105,645
6 HABITS
How To Build MENTAL TOUGHNESS
THIS TREND BUT AS A PILOT

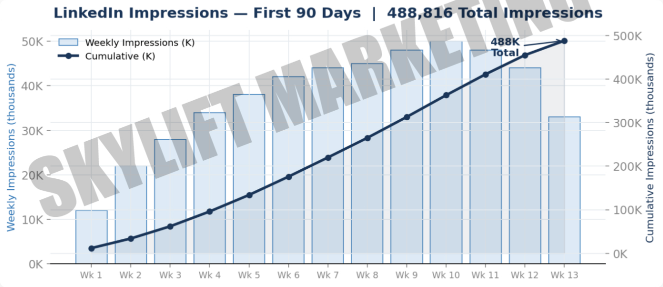
Content grid — last 3 months sorted by views (696K, 554K, 446K top posts)

Platform Performance | LinkedIn

LinkedIn: 488K Impressions in 90 Days.

Skylift took over LinkedIn management approximately 90 days ago. Starting from an established profile, the team built and deployed a full structured content programme — and the results came immediately.

42,655 LinkedIn Followers	**488,816** Total Impressions (Last 90 Days)	**+1.3%** Follower Growth Rate (Active)



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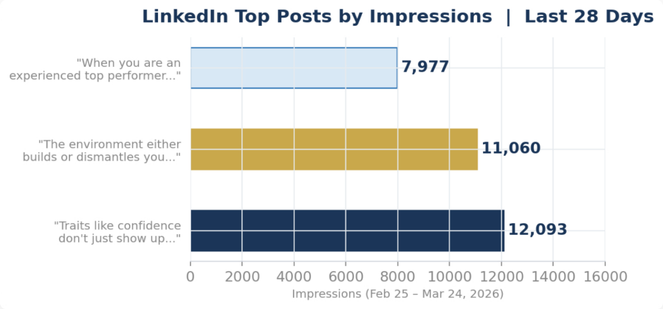
LinkedIn weekly impressions + cumulative total across first 90 days of management

Top Posts by Impressions | Last 28 Days



Top 3 posts by impressions: 12,093 • 11,060 • 7,977 (Feb 25 – Mar 24, 2026)

The LinkedIn

Strategy

- **Single Image (SI) format confirmed as top performer on the platform.**
- Corporate decision-maker audience prioritised: founders, CEOs, event planners, L&D leads.
- Keynote-positioning content: 60% of all LinkedIn posts show MACE on stage or teaching.
- Content specs locked for brand consistency across all posts.

Why LinkedIn Matters

- LinkedIn is the highest-ROI platform for speaking bookings — event planners and corporate buyers live here.
- 488,816 impressions in 90 days puts MACE in front of decision-makers consistently.
- 42,655 followers in 90 days is significantly above the expected ramp rate for a professional personal brand account.

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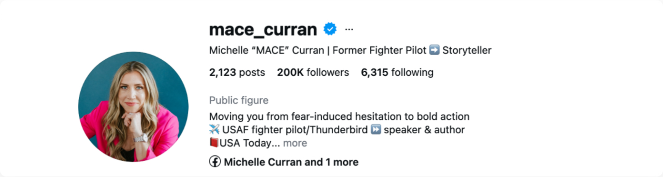
Platform Profile



mace_curran ✓ ···

Michelle "MACE" Curran | Former Fighter Pilot ➡️ Storyteller

2,123 posts **200K** followers **6,315** following

Public figure

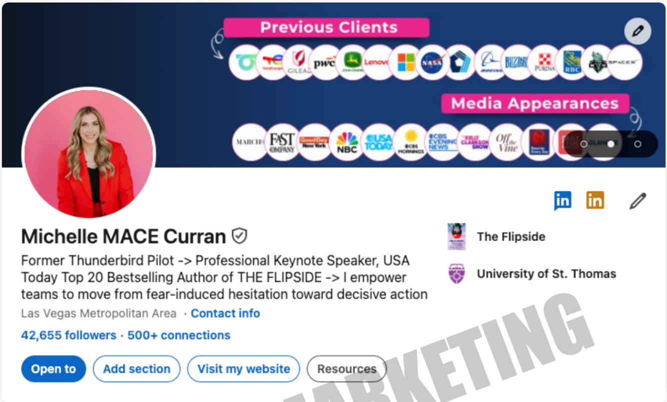
Moving you from fear-induced hesitation to bold action

✈️ USAF fighter pilot/Thunderbird ➡️ speaker & author

📕USA Today... more

Michelle Curran and 1 more

Instagram cross-platform profile • 200K followers • 2,123 posts



Michelle MACE Curran

Former Thunderbird Pilot -> Professional Keynote Speaker, USA Today Top 20 Bestselling Author of THE FLIPSIDE -> I empower teams to move from fear-induced hesitation toward decisive action

Las Vegas Metropolitan Area · Contact info

42,655 followers · 500+ connections

The Flipside

University of St. Thomas

LinkedIn profile • 42,655 followers • Previous clients & media appearances

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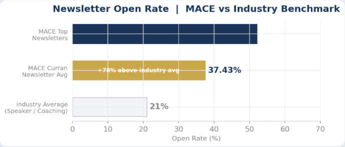
Platform Performance | Email Newsletter

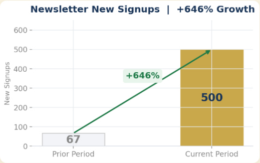
Newsletter: An Open Rate That Turns Heads.

The newsletter is MACE's most intimate channel — and consistently her strongest performer. With an average open rate of 37.43% against an industry benchmark of around 21%, MACE's audience doesn't just subscribe. They show up every time.

12,000 Newsletter Subscribers	**37.43%** Avg Open Rate (Industry: ~21%)	**500** New Signups (+646% vs prior period)



MACE open rate vs industry benchmark



New signups: +646% growth

What Makes the Newsletter Work

- Every issue opens with a real, specific scene from MACE’s life — not a concept introduction.
- The insight is always introduced through her direct experience, never through abstraction.
- Third-party frameworks are credited by name, then filtered through MACE’s lived experience.
- Every issue ends with a reader reflection question and one single soft CTA — never stacked.
- Tone: intimate and intelligent. Reads like a letter from a trusted friend who keynotes for Fortune 500 companies.

Results by the Numbers

- 12,000 active subscribers and growing.
- Average open rate 37.43% — 78% above the industry average for the speaker/coaching category.
- Multiple newsletters recording open rates above 50%.
- 500 new signups in the last period, +646% above the prior period.
- 100% client approval rate: zero negative feedback across every newsletter produced in this engagement.

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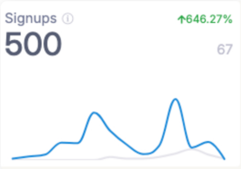
Kit Analytics | Signup Growth



Kit dashboard • 500 new signups • +646.27% vs prior period

The Full Picture

What Seven Months of Full-Service Marketing Looks Like.

MACE came to us with 3 weeks to launch a book. Today she’s a USA Today Bestselling author with 200,000 Instagram followers, 42,000 LinkedIn connections, 12,000 newsletter subscribers who actually open their emails — and a speaking calendar that’s filling up.

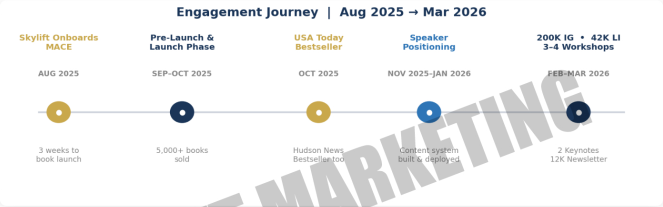
+47K **Instagram Followers Gained (7 Months)**	**+161%** **IG Engagement vs Industry Average**

2 Bestseller Lists

USA Today + Hudson News

7 Months, 2 Phases

Complete Marketing Transformation


Engagement Journey | Aug 2025 → Mar 2026
Skylift Onboards MACE
AUG 2025
3 weeks to book launch
Pre-Launch & Launch Phase
SEP–OCT 2025
5,000+ books sold
USA Today Bestseller
OCT 2025
Hudson News Bestseller too
Speaker Positioning
NOV 2025–JAN 2026
Content system built & deployed
200K IG • 42K LI 3-4 Workshops
FEB–MAR 2026
2 Keynotes 12K Newsletter

Engagement journey overview: Aug 2025 → Mar 2026

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> ***"The content systems and brand strategy we built together have set up a repeatable engine: content that sounds like her, an audience that responds, and a funnel that converts to speaking inquiries."***
>
> — Skylift Marketing Team