

Dave's Hot Chicken

What they do on social media, and what works

Dave's Hot Chicken is a hot chicken chain that began as a parking lot pop-up in East Hollywood in 2017 and now says it has over 450 locations. This report covers the 88 days from June 16 to September 12, 2026. Every number was read off a public web page on September 13, 2026 and saved. The web version has full-size pictures.

Prepared by Alberto Rivas, Fieldstone Intelligence · September 13, 2026

At a glance

The numbers as of September 13, 2026

2.5M

followers on Instagram.
60 posts in 88 days.
They follow 6,433
accounts.

**4.8 a
week**

how often a post goes
up. The longest silence
was 10 days.

5.7M

followers on TikTok.
More than twice the
Instagram following.

26 of 60

posts are reels (short
videos). The other 34
are single photos. No
photo sets at all.

3.7x

a reel gets 3.7 times the
likes of a photo, and 2.9
times the comments.

12 ads

running, doing six
different jobs. Every one
but the hiring ad sends
people to Instagram.

0

email or text sign-up
boxes anywhere on the
website. Sign-ups go
through the rewards
club instead.

9 of 10

of the best performing
posts are reels, not
photos.

Five things to know

If you read nothing else

1. **Opening a shop is their best post and their biggest ad.** The single best performing post in three months is an announcement that a new shop is opening, with the street address in it. Four of the twelve ads running today are the same thing for four other towns. Organic and paid are running one play, not two.
2. **Videos beat photos, and it is not close.** Reels are under half of what they post and take 3.7 times the likes and 2.9 times the comments. Nine of the ten best performing posts are reels.
3. **Views tell you almost nothing.** The most watched video in three months, 3,080,981 views, was shared 76 times. It ranks ninth of ten. Counting views would have put it first.
4. **The paid traffic goes to Instagram, not the website.** Every ad except the job advert sends people to the Instagram page. Not the menu, not the order page, not the shop finder.
5. **They never ask for an email address.** There is no sign-up box, no pop-up and no newsletter anywhere on the site. Everything runs through the rewards club, and the hook is a free drink with the first order.

How they post

Cadence, content mix, and what each type earns

Sixty posts went up in the 88 days between June 16 and September 12. That is 4.8 a week.

The longest gap with nothing posted was ten days, from August 26 to September 5.

Two kinds of post, and only two. Twenty-six reels and thirty-four single photos. Not one photo set in three months, which is unusual and worth noticing: a lot of brands lean on them.

The two types do not perform alike.

	REELS (SHORT VIDEO)	SINGLE PHOTOS
How many	26	34
Share of what they post	43 per cent	57 per cent
Typical likes	11,254	3,065
Typical comments	164	56

The typical reel earns 3.7 times the likes and 2.9 times the comments of the typical photo, while being the smaller half of what goes up. **CHECKED TWICE**

Reach on the videos is very uneven. The typical reel was watched 646,241 times. The best was watched 3,080,981 times and the weakest 62,149. A handful carry the account.

CHECKED TWICE

The five posts that did the most

Ranked by shares plus comments, the way an agency counts it

Likes are easy to give and mean little. A share means somebody put their own name to it and sent it on. These five are ranked by shares plus comments, with ties broken on shares. Views are shown for context and never set the order.

Why that matters here more than usual. Ranking these posts by comments alone produces a different top five. The post with the most comments on the whole page sits fifth. The post in second place has the ninth most comments. Ranking by views would have put a post with 76 shares in first place.

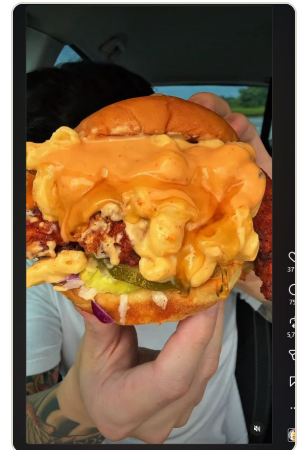
1 A store opening, filmed by a creator in his car

August 3 · Posted by @daveshotchicken, geotagged Pinellas Park, Florida. Filmed by @shhhhimeating1.

5759 shares + 750 comments = 6509 371,351 likes, 2,231,288 views

What it is. One unbroken phone shot. A man sits in a parked car and eats a sandwich, filmed at arm's length. No cuts, no words on the screen, no music laid over the top, no logo. The caption does all the work: "#pinellasparkFL the wait is ALMOST OVER. Your FIRST EVER @daveshotchicken opens THIS FRIDAY, August 7! 4683 Park Blvd., Pinellas Park, FL 33781 ... so tag EVERY SINGLE person who needs Dave's in their life." Then a second line: "PS: there's a secret soft opening on Thursday, 8/6, but don't tell the others."

Why it likely worked MY READING It got 5,759 shares. The next best got 1,962. Two reasons sit in plain sight. It asks to be shared, in those words. And it hands the reader two things that are useless unless passed on: an address, and a date nobody else is supposed to know. Nothing else in the top ten asks to be shared at all.



Post 1 of 5: the store opening. A frame from the video on September 13, 2026

2

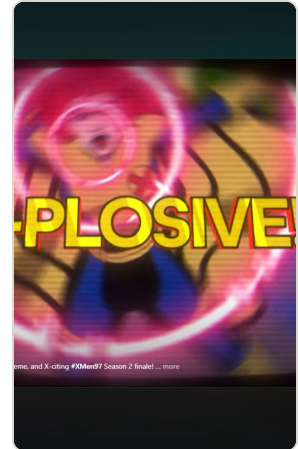
A cartoon tie-in for a television show

August 11 · Posted by @daveshotchicken.

1962 shares + 158 comments = 2120 88,796 likes, 2,432,624 views

What it is. Animation from the X-Men '97 series, cut to look like an old television set with the word "PLOSIVE" filling the screen. It is not food and it is not a restaurant. It is a piece of a cartoon, tied to a meal deal sold in the shops.

Why it likely worked MY READING Second on shares with barely a fifth of the top post's comments. People share it because it belongs to something they already follow. The brand borrows an audience it did not build.



Post 2 of 5: the cartoon tie-in. A frame from the video on September 13, 2026

3

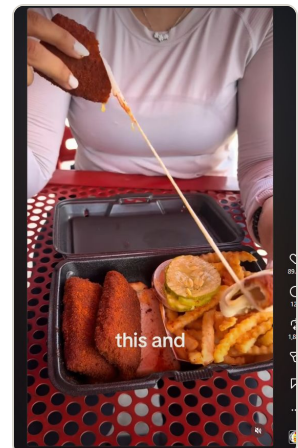
A cheese pull, filmed at the table

August 4 · Posted by @daveshotchicken.

1840 shares + 120 comments = 1960 89,248 likes, 892,256 views

What it is. A tray on a red table. A hand lifts a tender and the cheese stretches into a long thread that holds for several seconds. Two words sit on the picture: "this and". No voice, no cuts.

Why it likely worked MY READING The fewest comments of the top four and still third on shares. The thing being shared is one image that is hard to look away from. It needs no caption, no address and no date.



Post 3 of 5: the cheese pull. A frame from the video on September 13, 2026

4

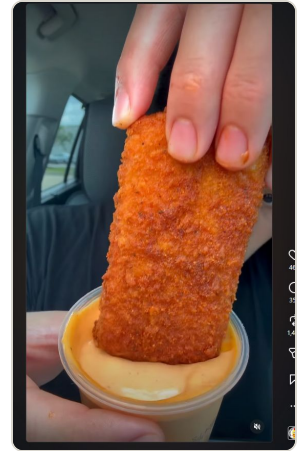
A tender going into sauce, close up

August 14 · Posted by @daveshotchicken.

1491 shares + 352 comments = 1843 46,066 likes, 858,873 views

What it is. Filmed inside a car again. A hand lowers a tender into a tub of sauce until it is half buried, then lifts it out. The shot is close enough that the crust fills most of the frame.

Why it likely worked MY READING The same idea as the post above it: one simple action, filmed close, with nothing to read. Two of the top four are a single gesture and no words.



Post 4 of 5: the tender and sauce.

A frame from the video on
September 13, 2026

5

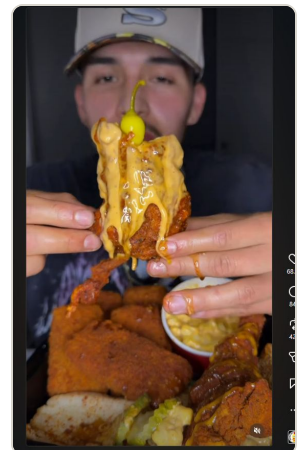
A creator eating a full spread

July 24 · Posted by @daveshotchicken. Filmed by @compaaachino.

427 shares + 847 comments = 1274 68,900 likes, 1,510,170 views

What it is. A man in a cap eats his way through a tray of tenders, fries and sauces, talking to the camera. Caption: "It's the weekend...that is all."

Why it likely worked MY READING This post has the most comments on the page, 847, and it is still only fifth. It has 427 shares, one thirteenth of the top post. People reply to it; they do not pass it on. That gap is the whole argument for counting shares.



Post 5 of 5: the creator spread. A

frame from the video on
September 13, 2026

The ads

Twelve running on September 13, 2026, doing six different jobs

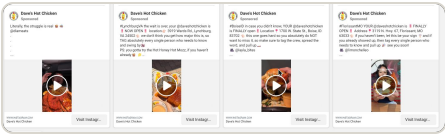
Twelve ads were running on the day this was written. They are not twelve versions of one

message. They do six separate jobs.

JOB	HOW MANY	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE
Announcing a new shop	4	Town name, "NOW OPEN", the street address, and a local creator tagged
A standing price	3	The same video cut three ways, at 6, 15 and 30 seconds
A creator's video, paid to go further	2	64 and 101 seconds, with the creator's name in the text
A deal with an end date	1	Two meals for \$22, ending on a named day, terms printed
Hiring staff	1	Named town, hourly pay, a link to apply
A short brand clip	1	Eight seconds, no offer

Three things worth stealing. First, the same video is cut to three lengths and all three run at once, which is how you find out which length works. Second, they pay to promote other people's videos rather than only their own. Third, they advertise jobs on social media, which most local businesses never think to do.

And one thing worth questioning **MY READING** Every ad except the job advert sends people to the Instagram page. Not the menu, not the order page, not the shop finder. For a shop that has just opened, that is a long way from a customer walking in.



Four ads for four different towns. The wording is the same each time and only the town and the address change.



Five of the twelve ads: hiring, the two for \$22 deal, a shop opening, a short brand clip and a creator's video.

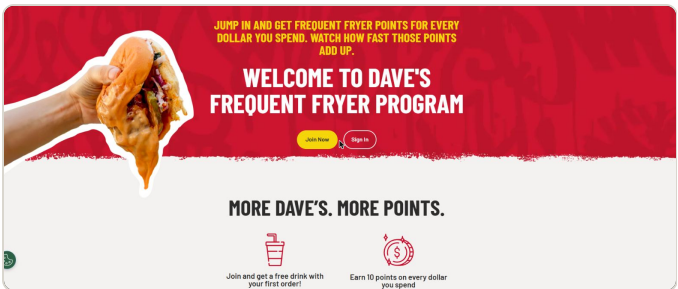
Emails and texts

How they collect a way to reach you again

They do not ask for your email address anywhere on the website. There is no sign-up box, no pop-up, no newsletter offer and no phone number field. The pages were checked in the page code itself, not by eye: zero of each.

Everything runs through the rewards club instead, called the Frequent Fryer Program. Two things are promised on the page: **a free drink with your first order** for joining, and ten points for every dollar after that. There is an app to download as well.

What that means in practice **MY READING** Most places dangle ten per cent off in a pop-up and collect an email they



The rewards page. A free drink for joining, and points on every dollar after that.

may never use well. This trades the discount for a free item and collects a full account instead: what you ordered, how often, and which shop. It is a slower ask and a much better answer.

The same \$9.99 offer that fronts the website is also the creative behind three of the twelve ads. Paid and owned are carrying one message rather than competing ones.

CHECKED TWICE

Who talks about them

Creators, and how their work is used

Creators are not an extra here. They are the supply.

The best performing post of the whole period was filmed by @shhhhimeating1, credited at the end of the caption. The fifth was filmed by @compaaachino. Both are posted from the brand's own page with the creator credited rather than from the creator's page.

The paid side does the same. Five creators appear by name in the ads running today: @shawneatz, @taeuwylin, @dlameats, @layla_bites and @limonchelleo. Two of the twelve ads are a creator's own video paid to reach further.

The look is consistent and it is deliberate. Filmed on a phone, often in a parked car, one unbroken shot, no captions burned on, no music laid over the top and no logo. Three of the top five posts are exactly this. CHECKED TWICE

The pattern MY READING The brand is not making polished adverts and hoping they spread. It is collecting other people's phone footage, crediting it, posting it as its own, and then paying to push the ones that work. That is a supply chain, and a small business can copy it with the customers already walking through the door.

What reviews say

The public rating, and where it sits

The Facebook page carries a recommendation score rather than stars: **80 per cent of 1,378 people** recommend it. CHECKED TWICE

That page has 113,000 followers, which makes it the smallest of the four audiences and a long way behind TikTok at 5.7 million and Instagram at 2.5 million.

The same shop opening notice appears there too. The newest Facebook post on September 13, 2026 announces a Shelby, North Carolina opening on September 18 with the full address, in the same wording used in the ads and on Instagram. One notice, sent everywhere.

WHERE	FOLLOWING	NOTE
TikTok	5.7M	Best videos pass 20 million views
Instagram	2.5M	Best video in this period reached 3.1 million

WHERE	FOLLOWING	NOTE
YouTube, United Kingdom	141K	Larger than the American channel
Facebook	113K	80 per cent recommend, from 1,378 people
YouTube, United States	90K	

Worth saying plainly **MY READING** Anyone studying this brand on Instagram alone is looking at the smaller half of it. TikTok is where the audience actually is.

What could not be found, and why

Some things the public simply cannot see. Here is what you get instead.

YOU MIGHT WANT	WHY IT IS NOT HERE	WHAT IS HERE INSTEAD
What they spend on ads	Meta publishes spend only for political adverts. Any figure would be invented.	Every advert running, what it shows, when it started, and where it sends people.
Shares on every post	Share counts appear only on a post's own page, not in any list. Reading all sixty one at a time risks being cut off by Instagram.	Shares read for the ten strongest posts. A post outside those ten could in principle belong in the top five.
Follower growth over time	Instagram does not publish it, and trackers only record an account once somebody asks them to.	Today's count on all five accounts, and 88 days of posting with the engagement on each.
Whether a post was boosted into an advert	Instagram carries a field for it and it was empty on every post read.	The advert list separately, and the overlap in wording between the two is visible in the shop opening posts.
What their emails and texts say	You have to join the rewards club and order to receive them.	What the club offers to get you to join, and what it collects.
Stories	They disappear after 24 hours and are saved nowhere public.	The 60 posts that stay on the page.

Where the numbers came from. On September 13, 2026: the Instagram profile and 60 posts read from Instagram's own post data rather than off the screen, the Reels tab, and the ten strongest posts opened one at a time for their share counts. Meta Ad Library, advertiser page 224098281466757, filtered to that advertiser rather than by keyword. daveshotchicken.com and its rewards page, checked in the page code for sign-up fields. TikTok, Facebook and YouTube each opened and confirmed rather than assumed. **A note on this being a sample:** it was built to show the format and the standard of the work. The business in it is not a client and was not contacted.

Prepared September 13, 2026 by Alberto Rivas, Fieldstone Intelligence, for agency use. Facts and dates are as recorded; the lines marked "my reading" are mine and can be replaced with the agency's own. rivasa@fieldstoneintel.com