Brand–building trends

5 insights from Frontify's global brand data

Frontify

Table of contents

Introduction

The more you know, the better you brand

Have you ever wanted to sneak a peek behind the scenes of great brands? To get a glimpse of how they actually do what they do? Well, we have some good news for you.

Frontify is one of the world's leading brand-building platforms, with a client roster that includes 25 of Interbrand's 100 top global brands and helps service more than 10,000 brands in over 200 countries.

This puts Frontify close to the forefront of international brand building and gives us a unique dataset on how brands are being built. And we'll be sharing more of it with you.

In this recurring report on brand-building trends, we aim to map how new systematic approaches are evolving. Right now, we focus on the wealth of anonymized user data from our own platform but may also include external surveys and data in the future.

Our aim is to track how brands create greater experiences for their customers, employees, and partners. By sharing more of Frontify's data, we hope to provide new insights and inspiration for improving and scaling your brand-building journey.

Welcome to a more transparent approach to brand data — for a world of more open and collaborative brands. And to a world where we create better brand-building systems together!

Executive summary

Open. — Global.
Bigger.
Unlocked.
Templated.

We analyzed Frontify's user data from Q1 2022 to Q1 2024 and discovered five major brand structure and systematization trends. Evaluating global data from over 200 countries allowed us to gather insights that indicate bigger shifts in how brands organize and work.

1. The growth of open brand systems

The increase in monthly active users of collaborative brand systems continues at a high and stable rate, with an 91% growth for Frontify over the last two years. But while the data points toward more brands embracing more open and collaborative platforms like Frontify, each individual brand also shows signs of stabilizing around a smaller core group of users.

2. Global by default

Frontify has a large user base in over 61 countries and covers 200 countries in total. The most "international" brand on Frontify is accessed from 148 countries! But with the average brand being accessed from 10.7 countries, the trend toward more global and glocal brands seems clear. Almost no brand is "just" local anymore.

3. The asset avalanche

The increase in the number of assets is notable — a 458% growth in total brand assets over three years, with the rate of assets added also increasing. The asset avalanche is creating new challenges and behaviors among brand builders, including more frequent and sophisticated use of search to locate files — with search volume increasing by 125%.

4. The cost of anonymity

The total number of users has increased by 63% in the last year, and so has the number of anonymous visitors who aren't logged in — by 10%. By not tracking who uses their assets, brands miss out on critical knowledge and improvement opportunities.

5. The power of templates

Brands on Frontify save more time and money — through a 42% increased use of templates from 2023 to 2024. The average template is used at least 30 times, representing a theoretical 30-time increase in efficiency. But there's room for more growth: The brand with the most successful Frontify template use case has created over 180,000 publications with all of their templates.

1 The growth of open brand systems

A great increase in total users, but a steady number of users for each brand

2022

2023

2024

7% increase

91% growth

Monthly active users

Monthly active users
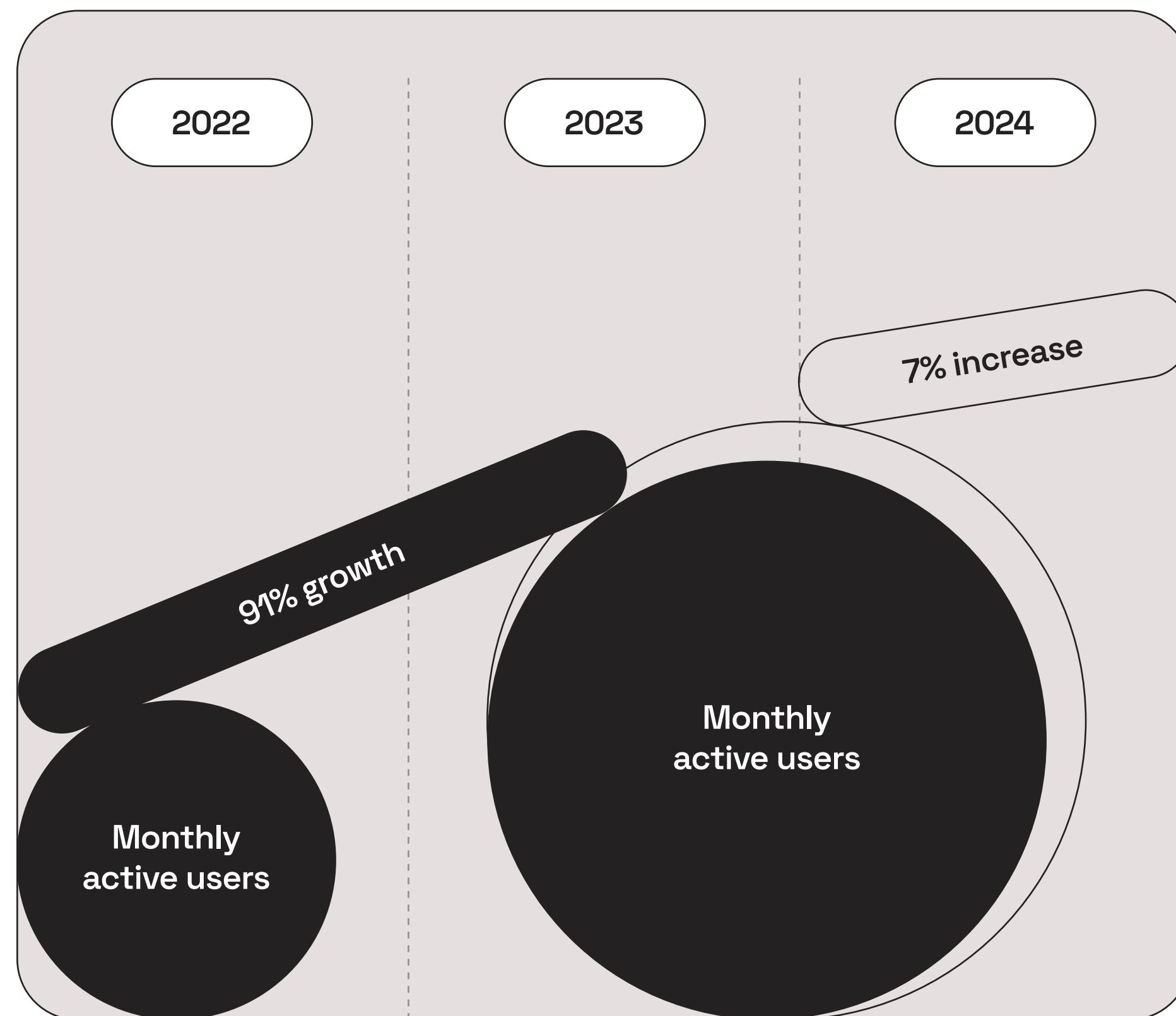
A massive spike in the number of users

A clear trend in the Frontify data is the rapid growth of monthly active users — the number of people accessing the brands hosted on Frontify. The number of users nearly doubled between 2022 and 2024, with an 91% growth in total active users per month.

And the trend continues steadily, with a 7% increase in users in the first quarter of 2024. The stability of this development is also indicated by its steadiness over two years, with a 41% growth from 2022 to 2023.

If we assume that Frontify isn't disproportionately outpacing the market, this data shows that more brands create organized and open brand-building systems and embrace more collaborative ways of working.

But a smaller group of core users

An interesting note on this trend is that while the total number of Frontify users is increasing, the median number of users for each brand account is quite stable.

The average number of monthly users can be quite high, but this average is driven up by a smaller set of very large companies. The median value is stabler and more reflective of the majority of brands.

This could suggest that many brands gravitate toward a stable core group of brand builders. Or maybe that large, successful brands are better at engaging a broader set of people internally.

**Key outtakes for
your brand**

→ # Build your open system

Don't get left behind — create a shared branding environment that can grow in
the long term and allow a larger brand community greater access.
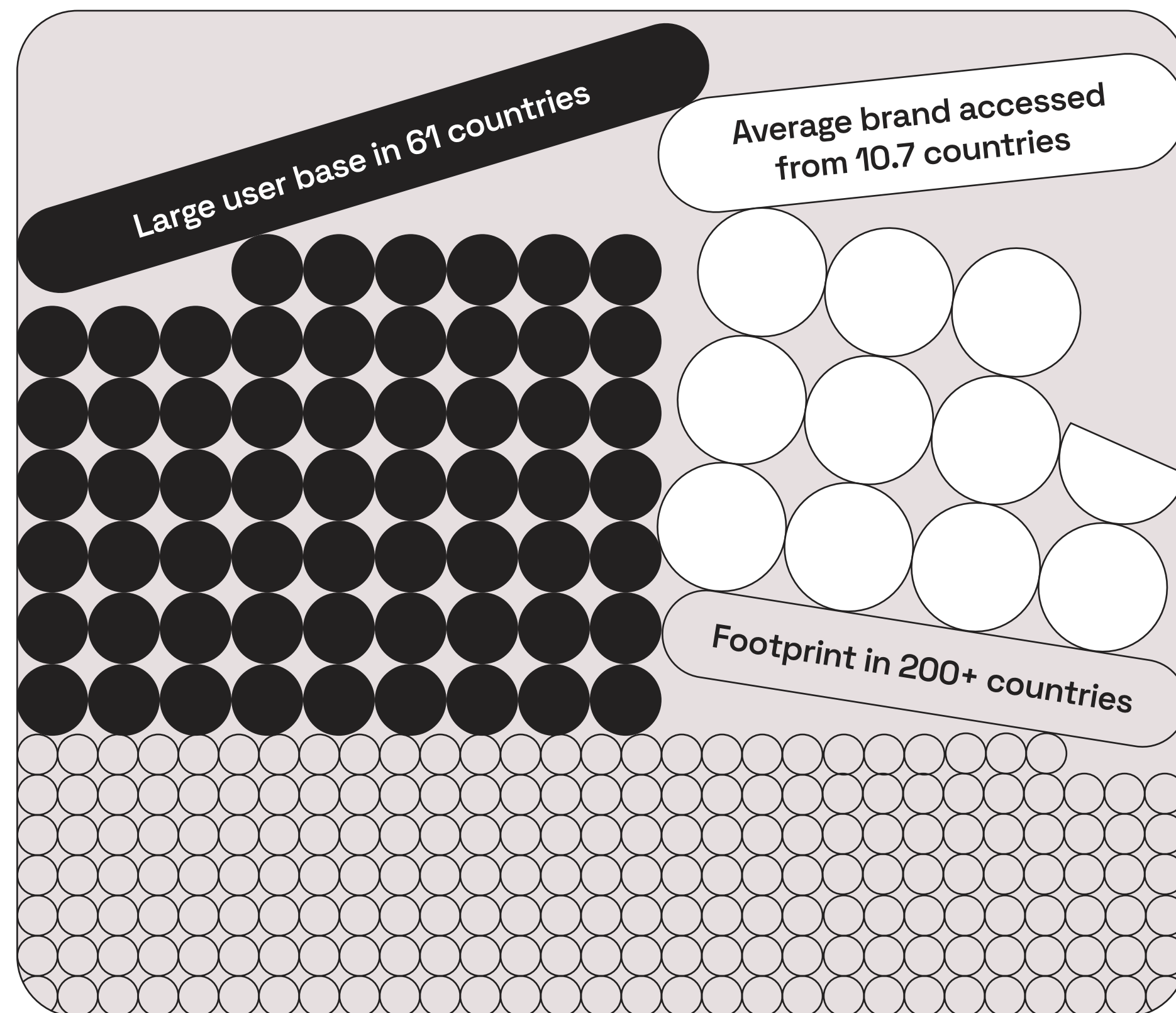
→ # Track your brand engagement

How many users engage regularly? What would it take to engage more people within
your company and community?

→ # Remember that consistency starts with comparison

What's the average number of users for your brand? And do you have set goals for
expanding or maintaining usage as a proxy metric for keeping your assets consistent
and on brand?

② Global by default

Active systems in over 200 countries, with more glocal brands in play

Large user base in 61 countries

Average brand accessed from 10.7 countries

Footprint in 200+ countries

Brands active in more markets

The trend toward brand systemization is clearly international, with Frontify now having a large user base in 61 countries and a footprint in more than 200 countries. The average brand on Frontify is being accessed from 10.7 countries. However, the most "international" brand on Frontify is leading the way with being accessed from 148 countries! This implies that as your brand acts on more markets, you need a mechanism for staying consistent and united across borders while staying flexible enough to drive local relevance — what's sometimes referred to as "glocal."

Big in the US and Europe, but present on islands worldwide

The largest user bases for Frontify are found in the regions of the US, DACH (Germany, Austria, and Switzerland), and Western Europe (i.e., UK, Spain, and France), with the US now accounting for the most significant user share.
And while no brand is an island, Frontify is very much present on islands (hot or cold) around the world: The smallest active user base for Frontify is found on various island countries around the world, including multiple islands in the Caribbean, Grenada, Brunei, the Faroe Islands and, appropriately, Micronesia.

**Key outtakes for
your brand**

→ # Global is not a choice

Any brand today is worldwide by default. Even if your commercial focus is limited to a few local markets, your brand will travel across borders and cultures, sometimes generating unexpected opportunities. When the world comes knocking, are you ready for it? Have you prepared your brand to travel and scale?

→ # Brands are built from everywhere

The pattern that consistently emerges is that brand teams are spread out across more countries and time zones than before, which increases the importance of a single source of truth. How does your brand monitor international compliance? Are your global team members regularly accessing your shared guidelines and assets?

→ # Keep up with your market

If your company operates in the US, the UK, Germany, Western Europe, and the Nordic countries, chances are high that your competitors use a brand platform. Make sure that you have a brand infrastructure that helps you stay agile and competitive.
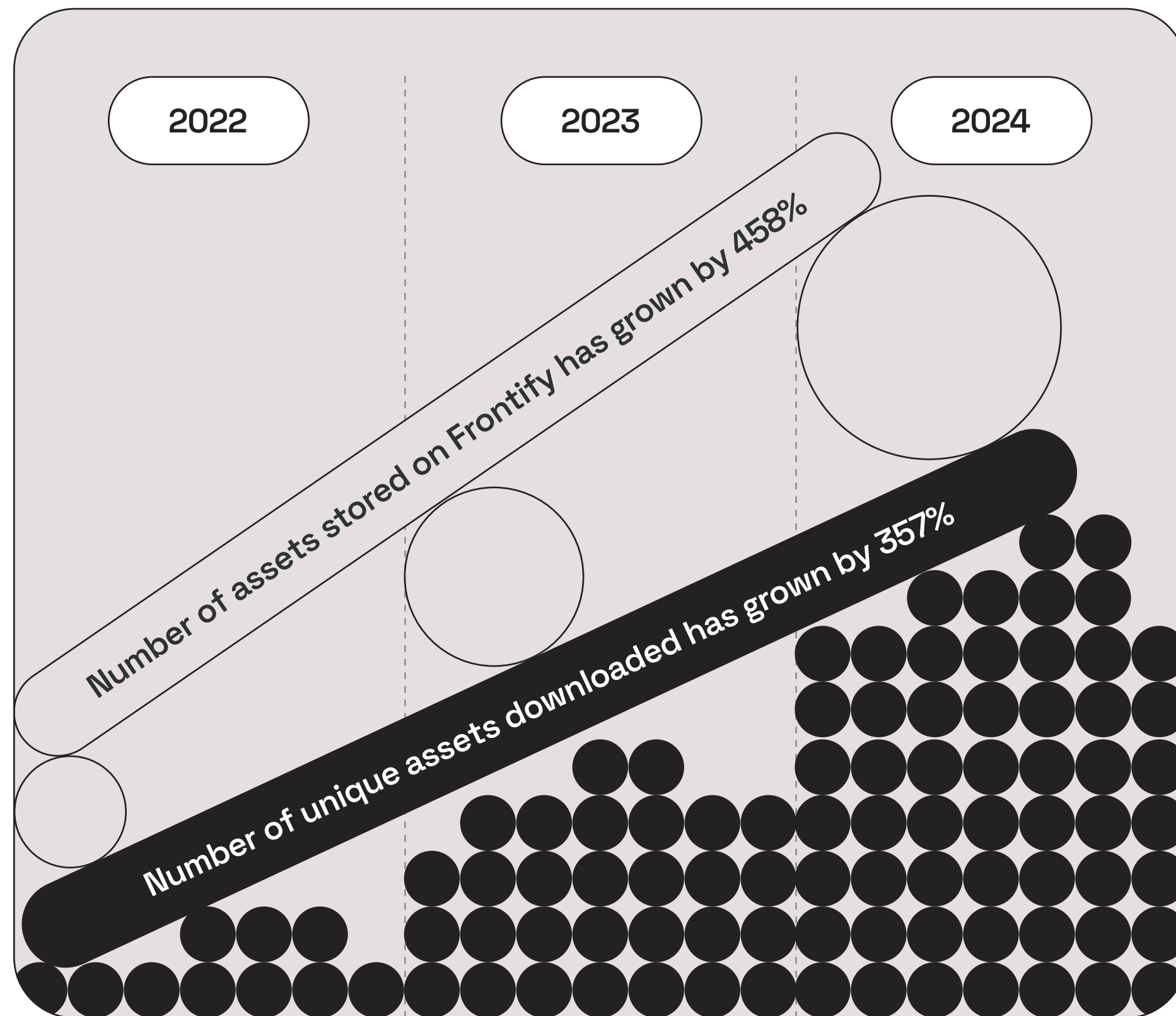
3 The asset avalanche

More brand assets than ever — fueling the need for better search

A staggering growth of total assets

Over the last three years, the number of brand assets stored on Frontify has grown by 458%! And the rate at which files are added each month has also increased — with a 165% growth in the average number of assets added between Q1 2022 and Q1 2024. Finally, the number of unique assets downloaded has grown sharply in the same period — by a whopping 357%.

Brand builders today face an asset avalanche. The continued growth of digital media and modern brand demands lead to a significant increase in the scale of asset management. The need to manage and efficiently deploy more files across many touchpoints has clear implications for asset management (via DAM systems) and the easy accessibility and use of assets (via brand portals).

More assets lead to more (and better) searches

As the number of files grows, there's consequently been a rise in the number of searches per asset library on Frontify. There's an increase in search volume for all types of assets, including documents (+44%), icons (+32%), logos (+142%) and media libraries (+175%).

This increase in search is consistent with the growth in users and files — people need more help navigating, and the number of assets to manage is much larger. Consequently, the rate of searches returning no results on Frontify has decreased from 125% in 2023 to 20% in 2024.

**Key outtakes for
your brand**

→ Prepare for the flood

The exponential growth in the number of assets requires good routines for tagging and structuring files. Set up your DAM for the long term, and stay ahead of the asset avalanche.

→ The importance of analytics

By using tools like Frontify Analytics to monitor which assets are being used where, you can measure brand compliance and gain a sense of the asset investments that pay off.

→ Support the searchers

20% of searches on Frontify return no results. To help users search more effectively, add prompts or information about the asset structure.

4 The costs of anonymity

More visitors than ever — but who are they?
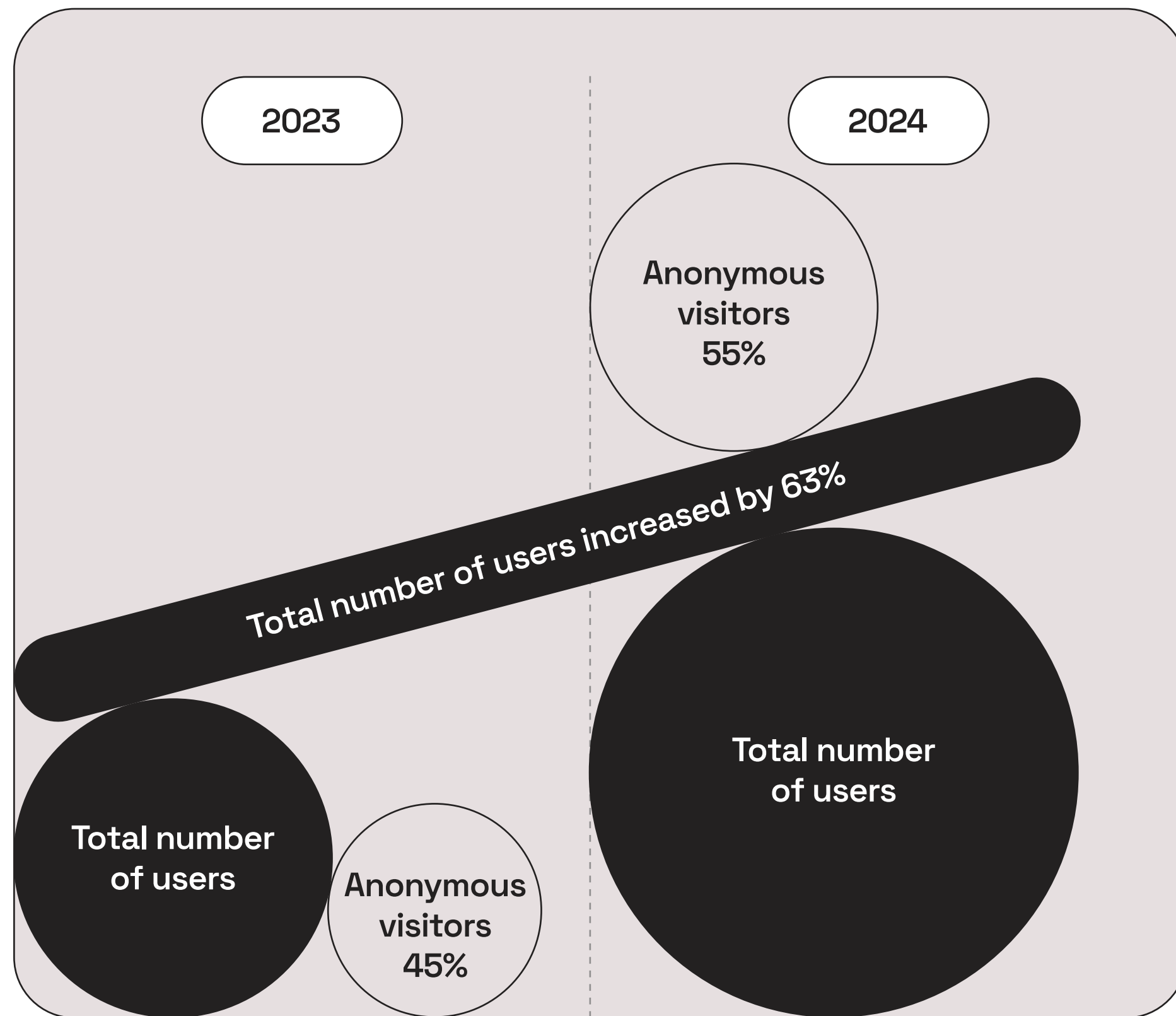
More (anonymous) Frontify users

While the total number of Frontify users has increased by 63% in the last year, there has also been a growth in "visitors" (i.e., users who aren't logged in).

The percentage of visitors increased by 10 percentage points, from 45% in Q1 2023 to 55% in Q1 2024. There are now more users whose identities, locations, and actions are harder to determine and analyze.

More "visitors," less knowledge

In fact, multiple Frontify accounts have a disproportionate number of visitors. Over 10 Frontify accounts have around 1% logged-in users and 99% unidentified visitors. The top one, however, had 371 logged-in users, compared to 119,003 visits registered to the account — for that specific account, fewer than 0.31% of users log in!

This is, of course, a choice that brand owners can make based on what makes sense for their business and community. But many brands clearly miss out on important data insights. Improving the user experience is so much easier when you can tell who your users are, how they're working with your assets and guidelines, and how often they return to the platform.

**Key outtakes for
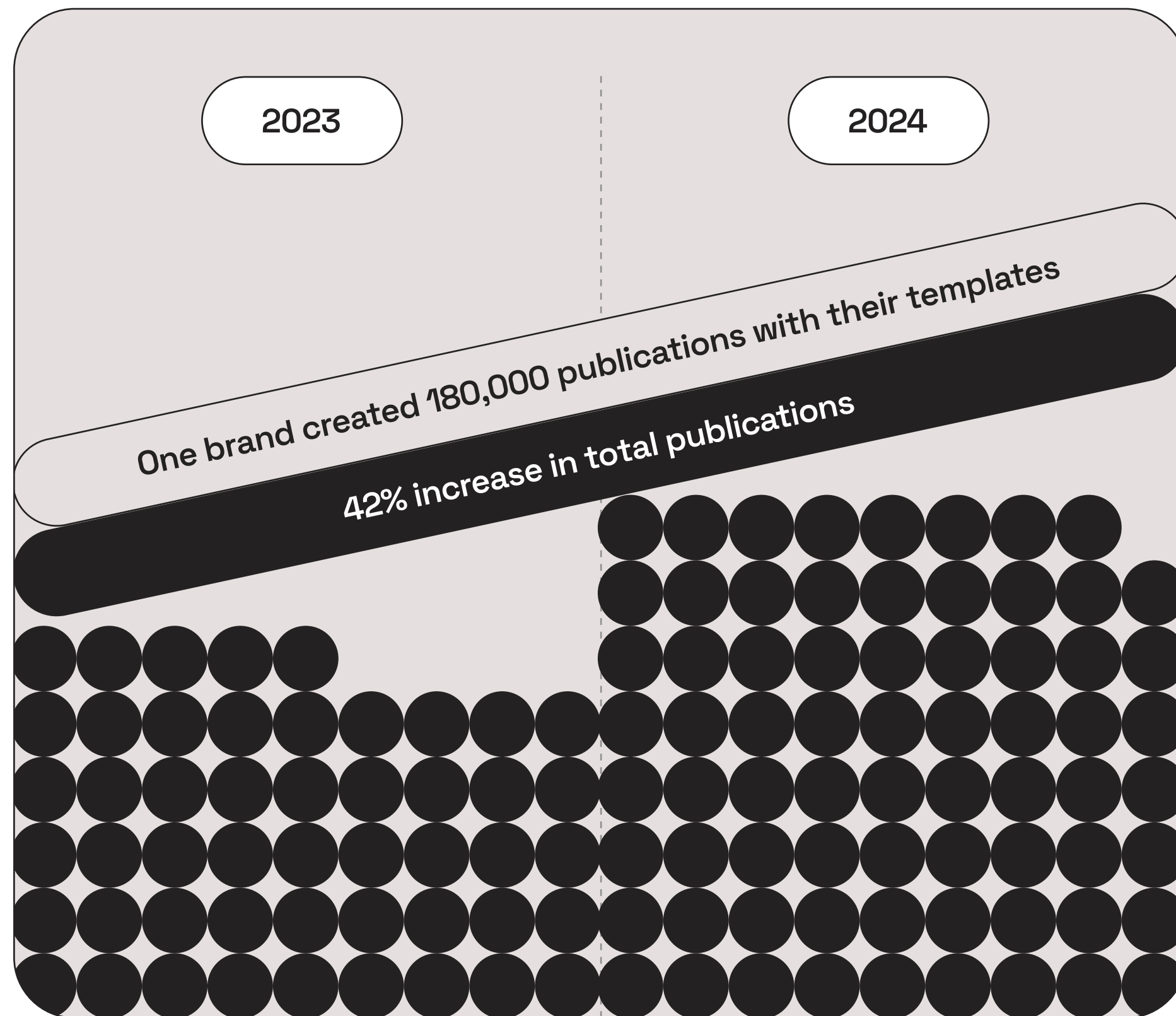your brand**

→ # Show some ID, please

Are you encouraging logging in to your brand hub? If you want more powerful and accurate data, incentivize or force more log-ins to track how your community uses the platform.

→ # Create the relevant layers

Depending on your brand's needs, gating certain assets can reward frequent users for logging in and provide more data on their navigation. What should be available to casual visitors, and what requires a log-in?

5 The power of templates

More brands use templates to save time and money

2023   2024

One brand created 180,000 publications with their templates

42% increase in total publications

Templates are booming

There's a continued rise in the use of templates, with a 42% increase in total publications from Q1 2023 to Q1 2024 on Frontify. And from the available data, it's easy to piece together what a major impact templates can have for brands.

The brand with the most template publications on Frontify — the brand that has used templates the most times to create new content — has enabled the amazing number of over 180,000 publications using all its templates combined.

The most used template on Frontify has been published over 13,000 times, followed by a top 10-list of templates ranging from 9,000 to 5,000 publications.

Templates supercharge efficiency

The average number of publications per template on Frontify is 32.5. This can be broadly interpreted to mean that the average template saves you at least 30 times the effort and energy while helping you retain a consistent, great-looking impression. Replacing multiple one-off design processes with a template allows brands to allocate resources more efficiently.

**Key outtakes for
your brand**

→ # Don't rest on templates

The data shows how powerful templates can be — not only in saving time and energy for designers but in empowering users to build your brand in harmony with its vision and principles. A tool that gets used over 13,000 times is not something to sneeze at in terms of productivity.

→ # Track the power

Frontify Analytics can track which templates are being used and how much. This can help identify new opportunities for brand enablement or determine which templates can be most impactful for improving and polishing.

Epilogue — Investing in the infrastructure of your brand

We all know that a brand is not just a logo. Then again, brands are so multifaceted that we can seldom find one clear, short definition that covers all the complexities and nuances.

But one aspect of branding that is often neglected is viewing your brand as a system for producing results — a unique, interconnected network of people, tools, and resources that help you create the impact you want on the world. An environment that you can design, shape, and endlessly improve.

This first analysis of Frontify's global data reveals a powerful shift in how brands work: More brands use software like Frontify to structure collaboration, and the volume and intensity of assets continue to increase sharply.

Perhaps the increase in asset volume has forced more brands to invest in a system for handling everything on a company level.

Nevertheless, the data demonstrates that examining how people interact with brands can uncover numerous insights that can decrease workloads and uncover performance-enhancing opportunities.

So, if there's an overall lesson from these five trends, it's this: Invest in your brand's infrastructure. Look at your brand as a system to determine how it can be optimized and designed to deal with the "stress" of more files and touchpoints than ever before.

Your future success starts with a more systematic approach to your brand, where everyone in your network has the right tools and knowledge to help build your brand in line with your business strategy and vision.