

16.17: Snapchat



Figure 16.17.1: The Snapchat logo *Adapted From Seek Logo, 2017*

Introduction and stats

Snapchat was launched in 2011. It is a mobile messaging service that sends photos, videos, texts and drawings, but the message only lasts for ten seconds and then disappears. Snapchat is free to download and free to send messages.

Snapchat has proven extremely popular with teenage audiences, who seem to enjoy the ephemeral nature of the app. 71% of Snapchat users are under 25, though this is changing rapidly, and 28% of US teens consider it the most important social network. Around 35% of users admitted to using the app because the content disappears.

In 2017, there were 166 million daily active users, with 60% contributing content daily. Over 9 000 snaps are shared per second, averaging out to 400 million a day, and the platform receives 10 billion daily video views. The average user spends 30 minutes a day on the app.

Snapchat has seen exponential revenue growth. In 2014 its revenue was US \$3 million; this grew to US \$50 million in 2015, US \$404 million in 2016 and a whopping projected US \$1 billion for 2017 (Techcrunch, 2017).

Features

Users have a profile and use the app to share Snaps. A Snap is an image that the user can modify with filters or the drawing tool. A filter can denote the outside temperature, your speed, time, location and more. The Draw tool allows users to draw over the photo or video, with a full colour spectrum, and Type allows them to annotate and add personalized text. Users can also add Geofilters and sponsored lenses to the photos, both of which have proven strong marketing tactics for brands.



Figure 16.17.2: Cadbury Sponsored Lenses on Snapchat *Adapted From Shane O'leary, 2016*

Another popular Snapchat feature is Snapchat stories. These stories are groups of images or videos, put together as a kind of mini-movie, that is available for a user's followers to view for 24 hours (Webwise, 2016).

Marketing and advertising on Snapchat

Snapchat can be used for sharing various content with your audience. This can either be value added content, in the form of how to's, latest industry material, and relevant tips; or it can be storytelling content, taking your audience behind the scenes of your business or showcasing aspects of your company culture and values and providing a glimpse into the brand. Geofilters and sponsored lenses are also great ways to get your audience to engage with the brand on the platform. Brands pay a daily rate, sometimes as much as US \$750 000 a day, to provide branded filters and lenses for users to play with and share.

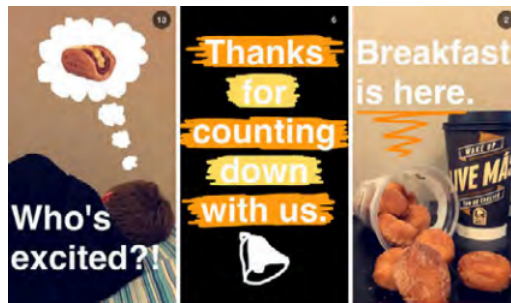


Figure 16.17.3: Taco Bell using Snapchat for the launch for its new breakfast offering *Adapted From Usabilla, 2016*

Snapchat Analytics

Just like any other platform, it is necessary to monitor your performance on Snapchat and to continuously improve and optimise your content to drive a larger audience. Snapchat analytics provides information on the number of total story completions, unique views and screenshots. Seeing which type of content your users prefer means you can really optimise your efforts.

Snapchat Summary

Snapchat is proving to be a powerful marketing tool, albeit an expensive one. Paid marketing efforts on the platform are mostly limited to big brands that can afford the high rates and the development costs to create engaging and interactive filters. However, smaller independent brands can still make good use of the platform to share behind the scenes information, build up to events, and build a loyal following, especially if your target market is more youth orientated.

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