

An Emerging Powerhouse In Social Media Communication

Snapchat has close to **150 million** daily active users who collectively view more than **10 billion videos** per day. Snapchat is a mobile social media app that allows users to send short-lived photos and brief videos, called “Snaps,” to followers. It is an extremely visual and highly customizable platform that can turn small moments into a shareable story.



Why Use It?

Snapchat’s unique nature means it’s not for everyone.

Snapchat could be a good fit for your organization if your target audience frequently uses mobile apps. Or if you host a lot of special events, Snapchat is a great way to make audiences who aren’t physically there feel connected to your cause. For example, you can post a collection of videos or photos of volunteers, bring your issue to life by showcasing on-the-ground activities or even make special announcements of upcoming events.



Unlike Periscope, which is designed for live-streaming events in their entirety, Snapchat allows you to bring your audience in for a snapshot by sharing photos and small snippets of events as they’re happening. Snapchat does not allow for video editing beyond adding a caption or filter. However, this means you do not need advanced photography or video editing capabilities to make good use of Snapchat. Since content automatically disappears, memorability takes precedence over production value on Snapchat.

Who Uses Snapchat?

Snapchat is ideal for organizations looking to target younger audiences. Snapchat reaches **41 percent of all 18- to 34-year-olds** in the U.S.

At the same time, Snapchat is growing among other demographics. In 2016, the number of users aged 25 and older grew two times faster than users under 25 and, notably, **50 percent** of the app’s users are over the age of 25. Individuals aren’t the only ones using the app – more brands, businesses and public figures are on it than ever before.

Nonprofits are already making great use of Snapchat. **WWF** used the hashtag **#LastSelfie** to bring attention to endangered species populations around the world. Snapchat’s temporary posts were the perfect medium for the campaign, which shared a series of photos of endangered species that then disappeared, underscoring their risk of extinction.



How Does It Work?

Snapchat offers two options for distribution. First, you can send Snaps directly to your followers through direct messages, which go to individuals or a selected group of people. Alternatively, you can broadcast messages to all of your followers through the “My Story” feature. Note: Snaps posted to the “My Story” feature are available for audiences to view for 24 hours, while direct Snaps last for up to 10 seconds after they are opened before disappearing automatically.



There are countless options for designing memorable, creative content. You can enhance your organization's Snaps by adding captions and customizing the colors and sizes of your photos and videos. You can also insert emojis anywhere in your Snaps or "draw" on your Snaps using your touch screen.

The strongest Stories on Snapchat use a combination of photos and video to get a message across.

Build

Once you decide Snapchat is a good fit for your organization's digital strategy and create an account, you can start following other users and begin to develop an audience of your own.



Promote your organization's new account on other social media platforms you're already using. Posting exclusive content on Snapchat about contests or giveaways is a good way to incentivize people to follow you and view your Snaps and Stories.



Snapchat has its own form of QR codes that make adding accounts simple. Many organizations change their profile pictures on existing social media accounts to this icon so that followers can add them on Snapchat using their smartphone cameras.

Snapchat also integrates geolocation through designated filters known as "geofilters," which are used to bring attention to a location or event by allowing a user to layer a graphic on top of a Snap. You can even **create your own** if one doesn't already exist for your area. For instance, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation used a **(RED) geofilter** to generate awareness and raise funds for World AIDS Day.

Credit: 9to5Mac/Ben Lovejoy

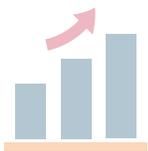
Listen

Snapchat is still relatively new and lacks many of the third-party analytics tools that are available for sites such as Twitter and Facebook. However, you can still measure your strategy's success with a few simple metrics.



Snapchat shows you how many people open direct Snaps and will send you a notification if someone screenshots your Snap. You can also see the number of people who viewed your Stories from start to finish. Organizations should track this information to determine audience engagement and evaluate what time of day and type of content is most compelling to your audience.

Metrics for Snapchat have shown a huge engagement rate compared to other social media platforms. Brands report that **61 percent** of Snapchat followers view their Stories, a much higher penetration rate than Instagram, which has an average engagement rate of 27 percent for videos. You may also wish to consult one of the following paid tools.



Snaplytics automatically tracks open and tap-thru rates and provides a feature to automatically post content to other social media platforms.

Delmond tracks performance metrics including number of views, time watched and account growth, and offers connections to Snapchat influencers.

Naritiv allows you to track views and engagement levels, distribute Snapchat content to other channels, and connect with users who can market your brand and organization.

Snapchat's **non-viral nature** continues to change the social media game and nonprofits should look out for when its **fundraising tools** become available (hopefully soon!).