The Snapchat Marketing Guide for Brands

TrackMaven

Introduction

The premise behind Snapchat is simple: share customizable, short-lived photo and video content with friends from your phone. But when it comes to using the platform for brands, things get complicated.

We created this guide to help marketing teams understand the allure of Snapchat, evaluate its relevancy and impact, and create amazing content on the network. In this guide, you'll learn:

- How to navigate, build, and distribute content in the Snapchat interface;
- Best practices for "snap" creation, distribution, and audience engagement;
- How to promote and report on the ROI of your brand's Snapchat account.

Read on, and you'll be a Snap Maven in no time!

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01

Should My Brand Be on Snapchat?

Snapchat has plenty of buzz. Here are a few reasons why it's such an enticing network for brands:

- Snapchat has 100 million daily active users, 60 percent of whom create content daily;
- It's a key social platform to reach millennials; 71 percent of Snapchat users are under the age of 34;
- It's a fun way to expand brand awareness and establish a competitive advantage on a new network;
- Because stories disappear after 24 hours, it's a low-cost platform for experimentation with new content ideas.

That said, not every new digital channel is right for your brand. First and foremost, evaluate your buyer persona demographics and competitive landscape.

Here are a few questions to ask when determining whether or not Snapchat is a worthwhile investment for your marketing team:

- Are competitors and influencers in your industry on Snapchat?
- Do competitors have a dominant brand presence on the platform?
- Does the Snapchat audience make sense for your brand? (Remember, Snapchat has a majority millennial audience.)
- Can your brand provide a unique point of view on the network?

If you're ready to take the plunge, here's how to get started.

02

How to Set Up a Snapchat Account for a Brand

Think Snapchat is right for your brand? Let's get started with setting up your Snapchat account. On Snapchat, brands function in the same way as individual users. Follow these steps to create an account:

1. Download the Snapchat app to your phone.
2. Open the app and create a username and password for your brand. You cannot change your username once it's set, so choose wisely! Record these credentials for your social team.
3. The app opens onto the camera or "home" panel. Now let's learn how to navigate the Snapchat interface.

03

How to Use Snapchat: A Guided Tour

Now that your brand account is activated, it's time to learn your way around. Don't worry if you feel lost in the Snapchat interface; the network is often confusing for new users. We have provided a simplified map of the app's navigation on the next page.

Let's walk through each of the main Snapchat screens and the steps you can take in each to improve your brand profile.

IN THIS SECTION

Profile Stories Discover Chat Inbox Chat Home and Camera

How to Navigate Snapchat's Interface

PROFILE

CHAT

INBOX

HOME

STORIES

DISCOVER

Profile

1. From the camera screen, swipe down to your profile screen. Here you will see your “snapcode” — the QR code that looks like a yellow square with black dots around the shape of the Snapchat ghost. Below this you’ll see your username and Snapchat score (which we’ll explain later), along with options for “Added Me,” “Add Friends,” and “My Friends.”

2. Click on your ghost and add a “selfie” of your brand logo. When you take the selfie, Snapchat will take five photos in quick succession. You can move the phone around to get different angles and make it seem like your logo is moving, or you can just keep the same angle for all five shots for a static image.

3. Tap on the gear in the upper right hand corner to go to "Settings."

4. Scroll down and under “Who can...” tap on “Contact Me,” and set it to “Everyone.” Do the same for “View My Story.” Because this is for your brand, the more people who can see what you’re putting on Snapchat, the better!

5. Under “Manage,” make sure your filters are turned on.

6. Also under “Manage,” turn on “Travel Mode” to reduce Snapchat’s mobile data usage.

Trophies

Tap on the back arrow in the upper left hand corner to get back to the profile pane.

1. In the center of the top of the page you will see a trophy symbol. Tap on the trophy.
2. Now you should be on a screen entitled, "Trophy Case." This is where you can see which trophies you have earned on Snapchat (which is probably none yet, given that you just created your account). You can earn trophies for sending a certain number of snaps, completing different activities, and more.

Added Me

1. On the profile screen, the “Added Me” section will eventually house a list of Snapchat accounts who have added you, but who you have not added back. You will know that someone new has added you when the white ghost on the home screen is highlighted in yellow. New friends will be highlighted in light purple at the top of your “Added Me” list, but only the people who are not also your “friends” will remain there.

2. People who you have already added as a friend will appear in the “Added Me” list along with all of your other new friends. They will have a purple check next to them and will disappear after that first notification.

My Friends

1. In the profile pane, the “My Friends” section will list the accounts you have added as friends.

2. You can add people as friends in a few different ways. Tap on “Add Friends” to see the choices. You can search, use your address book, add by scanning someone’s snapcode, or use “Add Nearby” to find people who are located close to you. (This feature is particularly useful for conferences.)

PRO TIP
To find brands and influencers to add, check out the Snapchat discovery app Ghostcodes. You can also look at who you follow on Twitter to see if anyone relevant has a snapcode as their profile picture. **Only add people once you’re ready to start snapping.**

Friend Emojis

Friend emojis are found by a friend's username. Each emoji represents different aspects of your relationship with that friend. Friend emojis are private, and can only be seen by you. Use the guide to the right to see how Snapchat explains friend emojis.

PRO TIP
You can also customize your friend emojis by choosing a different emoji to symbolize each of the statuses listed to the right. Go to Settings, then "Manage," and then "Friend Emojis." Tap the friend emoji you would like to change and then select the emoji you would like to change it to.

💛 **Gold Heart:** You are Best Friends You send the most snaps to this Snapchatter, and they send the most snaps to you too.

❤️ **Red Heart:** You have been each other's #1 Best Friend for at least two weeks.

💕 **Pink Hearts:** You have been each other's #1 Best Friend for at least two months.

😬 **Grimace:** You share a Best Friend. Your Best Friend is also this Snapchatter's Best Friend.

😊 **Smile:** One of your Best Friends. This is a Snapchatter you send a lot of snaps to (but isn't your Best Friend).

😎 **Sunglasses:** You share a Close Friend. One of your Best Friends is also one of this Snapchatter's Best Friends.

😏 **Smirk:** You're their Best Friend, but they aren't your Best Friend. You're someone they send the most snaps to, but they aren't someone you send snaps to the most.

🔥 **Fire:** You're on a Snapstreak! Appears next to the numbers of days that you and a friend have snapped each other. If you AND your friend don't both send a snap within 24 hours, you will lose your Snapstreaks.

⏳ **Hourglass:** Appears next to someone's name if your Snapstreak is going to end soon. Send each other a snap (not a chat) to keep your streak alive.

👶 **Baby:** You just became friends.

🎂 **Birthday Cake:** It's your friend's birthday. Appears next to your friend's name on the date they entered as their birthday on Snapchat.

Stories

1. From the home screen, swipe to the left to get to the stories screen. Here you can see your story, along with the names of the Snapchatters who have viewed each snap, the number of views each story update received, and the number of screenshots taken of that story update. You can also see stories that Snapchat is covering under “Live,” and stories your friends have posted under “Recent Updates.”

2. To view a story, tap on that person’s name in the list and their story will start playing. If you want to skip an update, tap on the screen. If you want to skip that account’s story, swipe to the left and the next story will play. If you do nothing, all of the stories in your list will play in a row.

3. If you want to replay a friend’s story, you can do so for an unlimited number of times in the 24 hours after it was posted. Scroll down to the “All Stories” section after viewing the story once.

   You may also have the option to swipe up in the middle of playing a story in order to chat with that person. This chat availability is based on the other person’s “Who can...” settings.

PRO TIP
Try to only use Snapchat when you have a WiFi connection, especially for watching stories and sending snaps. Snapchat uses a lot of data, so unless you have a significant amount left to burn on your mobile plan, be selective with using Snapchat outside of WiFi range.

Discover

Swipe left twice from the homescreen to get to your Snapchat Discover screen, where select brands publish featured content directly to Snapchat audiences. Discover is different than the rest of Snapchat. On Discover, a select group of publishers, chosen by Snapchat, feature articles, videos, and other content for a limited amount of time to anyone who is on Snapchat.

Chat Inbox

Swipe back to the home pane, then swipe to the left. This screen is your "chat" inbox, which shows: your friending activity; snaps and chats you have sent (with arrow icons) or received (with square icons); and snaps that have been replayed (with an icon of an arrow creating a circle).

Each activity is color-coded:

- **Received a photo snap**
- **Received a chat**
- **Received a video snap**
- **Sent items**
- **Sent items that have been opened**
- **Sent items that have been been viewed**
- **Sent items that have been replayed**
- **A screenshot has been taken of a sent item**

Chat

To chat with a specific Snapchat account, select a username in your inbox and swipe to the left. Chat availability is based on the other account's "Who can..." settings. You can chat with Snapchatters, send them photos, GIFs, video, and audio messages. Or, if you are both friends with each other, you can have a live video chat. Sent chat messages can be saved in the chat history log. Once you are in a chat conversation with someone, you can swipe to the right and a left-side bar will appear with their profile in it. It's also important to note that once you start typing in chat, the other person will be notified.

Home and Camera

Swipe back to the home or camera pane. You'll see several icons which represent different Snapchat functions.

1. **Flash:** In the upper left hand corner you can turn the flash on and off by tapping on the lightning icon.
2. **Night Mode:** The moon symbol represents Snapchat's "night mode," when the camera adjusts for low light.
3. **Camera View:** In the upper right hand corner, tap on the camera icon to switch the view from selfie to an external shot and back again. You can also do this during a video.
4. **Story Notifications:** In the lower right hand corner, tap on the three dots to go to the stories screen. If the three dots are highlighted in purple, that means your friends have posted new stories.
5. **Chat Inbox Notifications:** In the lower left hand corner, tap on the speech bubble symbol to go to the chat inbox. If it's highlighted in blue, that means you have received something new.
6. **Point-and-Shoot:** Tap on the circle in the bottom-center of the screen to take a photo, and hold down to take a video up to 10 seconds long.

04

Get Snapping! Photo Snaps, Video Snaps, and Stories

Now that you know your way around Snapchat, you're ready to send your very first snap!

IN THIS SECTION

Taking a Photo or Video
Editing a Snap Photo or Video
Lenses
Filters

Taking a Photo or Video

In the home frame, tap on the white circle at the bottom of the screen to take a photo snap. To take a video snap, hold down on the cirlce and release when you want the video to end. Remember that you can only take videos that are up to 10 seconds long.

Editing a Snap Photo or Video

Once you have taken a snap photo or video, a few new icons will pop up on the screen. These are your snap editing tools. On the following pages, we'll explain how to use these tools to refine your snaps before you send them to your audience.

BEFORE SNAP

AFTER SNAP

Adding Text to a Snap

In the upper right hand corner, there will be three icons: a square with a folded corner (a sticker), a “T,” and a symbol of a pen.

1. Using the “T” symbol, you can add text that is up to 90 characters long, then move it up or down on the snap to the desired location. If you want to add paragraph spaces in between words, copy some blank paragraph spaces from your phone’s email or notes app.
2. You can also tap on the “T” again while adding text to make the text appear larger and aligned to the left.
3. Tap the "T" again to center the text.
4. You can select words or letters and make them different colors using the color scale on the right.
5. While editing the text, use your fingers to zoom on the screen to make the text appear larger or smaller.
6. You can also resize and rotate the textbox after you have finished editing the text.

PRO TIP
You might be wondering, “Why can’t I turn my text black?” The answer is: you can! To turn the text black, swipe from the top of the color scale all the way to the bottom of your phone. To turn the text back to white, swipe from the top of the color scale all the way to the bottom of your phone, and then to the middle of the left side of your phone, all in one swipe. (This may take a couple of attempts.)

Adding Emojis to a Snap

1. The sticker icon allows you to add emojis to your snap.
2. Tap on an emoji you'd like to add to your snap, then use your fingers to move it to a different spot or change its orientation. You can also make these emojis bigger or smaller by using your fingers to expand or contract them.

How to pin an emoji to an object in a video: If you are editing a video, you can pin an emoji to an object in the frame by adding the emoji, moving it to the desired location, and then pressing down on the emoji over the object you want to attach it to.

Drawing on a Snap

Snapchat also allows you to draw over your photo or video snaps. To use the drawing tool, click on the pen icon and adjust the color using the scale on the right. (See Page 21 for instructions on turning text black or white.) Using a stylus can be a huge help when writing, drawing, or shading in areas with color.

Changing the Length of a Snap

Snapchat allows you to change the amount of time viewers can see a snap image before it disappears. In the bottom of the screen, you'll see a few different icons.

1. **Number inside a circle (for snap photos):** To change the amount of time your snap photo is shown, click on the number with a circle around it. The number shows how many seconds a photo will be seen, up to 10 seconds. Change the number of seconds a photo is shown by tapping on the number.

2. **Volume symbol (for snap videos):** If the snap is a video, you will not see this number—you will see a volume symbol in its place. This icon allows you to control the video's volume.

Other icons

3. **Arrow pointing into a box:** This icon lets you download that snap, which you can also do after you've posted it to your story.

4. **Square with a plus sign:** This icon lets you add the snap directly to your story.

5. **Blinking arrow:** This icon brings you to a screen that lets you choose where to send your snap, including to your story and all of your friends.

PHOTO BAR

VIDEO BAR

Lenses

Snapchat lenses use facial detection to adapt interactive filters to your face, or other human faces you select. The available lenses change from day to day. However, face swap (exchanging faces with someone) or photo face swap (exchanging faces with a photo) are here to stay (for now). Check out some examples of lenses to the right.

How to Use a Snapchat Lens

To use lenses, frame your face in the camera then press and hold on your face in the screen until your face is outlined in white lines. You can then explore the lenses and choose your favorite!

Filters

Snapchat offers filters for photos and videos, plus four filters specifically for videos. Snapchat also offers a selection of geofilters, which are exclusively available depending on your location.

To add a filter to your snap, swipe to the left on your photo or video until you find the one you want.

How to add multiple filters

Good news! You can add up to three total filters to your snap. Press and hold a finger on the screen while swiping left with another finger until you find the second filter you want to add, then repeat that process to add a third filter.

The filters include four photo filters (light, dark, saturated, and black and white), as well as a filter that records how fast you are going in miles per hour, a filter with the temperature, and a filter that shows the time.

Video Filters

For a video, you'll have four more filter options: slow speed (symbolized by a snail), fast speed (symbolized by a rabbit), super fast speed (symbolized by a rabbit with streaks behind it), and reverse (symbolized by three arrows pointing to the left), which makes your video play backwards.

PRO TIP
Use multiple video filters to create different effects, such as speeding up a video and playing it backwards.

Geofilters

Geofilters come after photo and video filters when you swipe right after taking a snap, and may be available based on where you are located. Snapchat makes new geofilters available on special occasions, particularly for holidays. Be on the lookout for new geofilters based on where you go and what day it is! Here are a few examples from the TrackMaven office in Washington, D.C.

On-Demand Geofilters

You can create an original geofilter for your brand! On-demand geofilters are a great way to brand snaps at your headquarters or a special event. For example, we created a geofilter for our annual marketing conference, Spark.

Here's how to create your own:

- Create an image that is a web-optimized PNG file, 1080 pixels by 1920 pixels, and under 300KB. (Check out Snapchat's guidelines for more information.)
- Select the area (under 5 million square feet) and the time range in which the geofilter will be available and submit it for approval on Snapchat's website.

The price of an on-demand geofilter depends on the location, the time range, and the size of the area selected. It can take a couple of business days for Snapchat to approve geofilters, so plan ahead. After the geofilter has run its course, you can go back and review the number of times it was used and viewed.

Community Geofilters

You can also submit free community geofilters (not brand-oriented) for potential use by Snapchat. Community geofilters are often created for cities, states, local landmarks, or universities. Take a look at some examples from Snapchat's website to the right.

05

Snapchat Best Practices

Now that you know how to use Snapchat, it's time to start creating amazing content for your brand! But where do you start? The art of Snapchat lies in linking individual snaps together to create a "story." The following pages will walk you through the 10 best practices for creating snaps and stories on Snapchat, ideas for content, and Snapchat pro tips.

IN THIS SECTION

Snapchat Best Practices for Brands
Ideas for Snapchat Content
Snapchat Pro Tips for Brands
Snapchat Tools and Equipment

Snapchat Best Practices for Brands

Keep your snaps brief and digestible. There's nothing that deters people more than an unnecessarily long snap. If you're uncertain about the length, run the snap by a couple of other people first, or post it on a dummy account while ideating your story.

Keep stories to about 1-2 minutes. Unless you are covering a special event, this is the right length to keep your audience engaged.

When posting a new story, send one of the updates as a snap to all of your friends. This is a way of letting them know something new has been posted.

Talk to the camera. Snapchat provides a personal perspective. Make sure to use this perspective for your brand.

Embrace vertical content. Snapchat is a mobile app. Because people look at their phones vertically 98 percent of the time, vertical snap content is the easiest to view.

Contrast text over image. Try using white text and shading in a darker color behind it. Or use black text and shade in a light color behind it.

Keep composition in mind. When taking photos and videos, use natural light coming in from the side so it doesn't create a silhouette. Always make sure your shot takes up the whole frame.

Plan your Snapchat content. Planning improves content quality. Create stories, use an editorial calendar, and experiment with different weekly segments or serialized content.

Be responsive. Send direct snaps to influencers and respond to snaps as appropriate.

Experimentation is key. It can take some time to discover what works for your brand on Snapchat. A little competitive intelligence on other brands can help you ideate your snap content.

Ideas for Snapchat Content

Feature **research findings**.

Create a series of **fun facts, or a weekly quiz** related to your brand. Business Insider has a regular quiz on its Snapchat account, for example.

Use **inspiring quotes**.

Use **fun visuals**, like stop motion and interactive “tap” games. Jolly Rancher often has great examples of this.

Provide **expert tips** from people in your field.

Create a weekly segment about **industry news**. Check out TrackMaven's weekly marketing news updates on Thursdays!

Feature **social responsibility** efforts.

Do **employee and student takeovers**. The TrackMaven account does bi-weekly employee takeovers, and many university accounts host student takeovers for a unique, behind-the-scenes perspective.

Showcase your **company culture**.

Provide **entertainment**. Taco Bell has featured short mysteries and dramas about missing tacos.

Create **interactive content**, by asking followers to send responses. For example, Cinnabon will send a snap of their baked goods, and ask viewers to take a screenshot, circle their favorite, and snap it back to Cinnabon.

Provide **behind-the-scenes coverage** of events. SXSW, for example, is a regular cornucopia of Snapchat users. When you’re covering events, don’t forget to check for event-specific geofilters!

Create content around **holidays**.

Snapchat Pro Tips for Brands

Feeling snap-confident? Here are some recommendations for advanced content creation, and the tools that can help you create snap magic.

Create a First-Person Perspective

Let people hold the camera themselves instead of you taking the snap of them. Snapchat is made for selfies.

Try The Vertigo Effect

Create a dramatic push-pull effect around an object or person in a video by zooming in while you move away. This tactic keeps the subject the same size while everything else seems to expand around them.

Reverse Actions to Reveal a Conclusion

This can be done in many different ways: crumpling a quote on a piece of paper in a video snap so that it “un-crumples” in reverse; erasing a key point on a white board; knocking down words created with wooden block letters; etc. Whatever you do, make sure it can happen in 10 seconds or fewer.

Get Moving

Spin with the phone either facing out or toward you for a fun video. If you are traveling between snaps in your story, take a video of your feet walking, the plane taking off, or the side of the road zooming by, and use a filter to make it faster or slower.

Snapchat Tools and Equipment

There are some tools that make managing your brand's Snapchat account easier, and allow you to create more interesting content. Here are a few to consider.

Styluses (Recommended): Styluses are incredibly useful for writing and drawing. They are pretty cheap and are likely to get lost, so it doesn't hurt to get a few extra. However, they do not magically make your handwriting better. That's okay though, because a lot of people don't have great handwriting on Snapchat. Keep it authentic — just make sure it's legible!

Octopus tripod, with phone mount (Recommended): Great for creating steady shots from different angles. Also compact and affordable. Make sure to get one with an appropriate phone mount.

Portable power source for phone (Recommended for covering events): Snapchat takes a lot of juice. If you're covering an event, bring a portable power source to recharge your phone on the go.

Regular tripod, with phone mount (Optional): If you get a regular tripod, make sure it's light and has a phone mount. This is useful for taking steady videos.

Remote control (Optional): Useful for taking snaps or recording videos remotely. Make sure you read the reviews to confirm that the remote works on Snapchat for taking photos and videos. You can also record a hand gesture on your phone for hands-free video snapping (meaning you can take a video without holding down the record button).

Three-axis handheld gimbal for phone (Optional): This is not essential, but it creates incredibly smooth video shots.

06

How to Measure the ROI of Snapchat

Measuring ROI for Snapchat is tricky. It's difficult to prove how the channel helps your brand, because Snapchat doesn't let you use links. This means you can't send people directly from the Snapchat platform to your website. There is almost no way to show that your presence on Snapchat is contributing to customer conversion, unless you include a URL with a tracking code in a snap that they can remember, write down, or screenshot, then enter into their browser.

However, there are ways to measure audience engagement, and, in some cases, to figure out who is following you on Snapchat.

IN THIS SECTION

Engagement Followers Snapchat Score

Engagement

Keep track of views and screenshots of your stories. Under the "My Story" section, you will be able to see how many views and screenshots each of your snaps has received, cumulatively.

Record the date, time, description of the snap, number of views received, and number of screenshots taken. Set alarms and reminders to go off about 30 minutes before a story expires to get the most up-to-date numbers.

Followers

If you have more than 176 “Added Me” friends on your account, there doesn’t seem to be a way to find out exactly how many people are following your brand on Snapchat (yet).

If you have fewer than 176 “Added Me” friends, here’s how to accurately count the number of people who have added your brand on Snapchat:

1. Tap on “Added Me.” Count the total number of accounts in this section, unless they have a purple check. Save this number for later — you’ll need it! (Only 176 of your “Added Me” friends will show up on this list — after 176, they disappear, which is why this method only works for accounts with fewer than 176 “Added Me” friends.)
2. Tap on the back arrow, then tap on “My Friends.”
3. Tap on the first name under “A.” A small profile for that person will pop up. If you can see the Snapchat score of that person, then they are following you.

4 If you cannot see the Snapchat score for that person, then they are not following you. We know this, because Snapchat has confirmed that two friends must both follow each other in order for either to see the other's Snapchat score. That's how you tell which of the people you followed are following you back.

5 This is the time-consuming part — the more people you have in this section, the more time it will take. Check each person on this list to see if you can see their Snapchat score, and keep track of the number of people.

Once you have completed these steps, add together the number of people from Step 2 and the number of people from Step 5 — this is the total number of people who have added you as a friend:

Number of People Under "Added Me" (if fewer than 176)

+

Number of People Under "My Friends" Whose Snapchat Scores You Can See

=

Total Number of People Who Have Added You as a Friend

Snapchat Score

According to Snapchat, your score is, “a special equation combining the number of Snaps you've sent and received, Stories you've posted, and other factors.”

1. You can see your main Snapchat score on your profile screen.

2. You can also see your “hidden” score by going to your inbox and tapping on "Chat" in the header. The number on the left is the number of snaps you’ve sent, and the number on the right is the number of snaps you’ve received.

07

Snapchat Marketing: How to Cross-Promote Your Account

Cross-promotion of your Snapchat account is essential for getting new friends. It improves the visibility of your brand's presence on the platform and attracts an audience that enjoys consuming Snapchat content. Here are a few key ways to build your Snapchat audience.

IN THIS SECTION

Snapcode Promoting and Repurposing Content Cross-Promotion Recommendations Snapchat Webpage

Snapcode

You can download your account's snapcode on the Snapchat website. When someone scans your snapcode in Snapchat (by either taking a snap of it or by focusing the camera over it and then tapping on the snapcode image on your phone's screen) they can add your account as a friend. The snapcode you download is transparent. You can add your logo in the ghost outline using a photo editor, but don't change any of the lines in your snapcode or it might not work.

Add your snapcode as your profile photo on other social accounts, create snapcode stickers to hand out at events, and include it in cross-channel promotion posts about your new Snapchat stories, along with directions for how to scan it.

Follow TrackMaven on Snapchat by scanning the snapcode above.

Promoting and Repurposing Content

Snapchat content is designed to disappear. But the good news is that there are ways to save and repurpose the Snapchat content you've invested time and resources in.

1. The simplest step is to download each of your stories and individual snaps. You can download your story by going to the Stories panel and tapping on the three dots next to "My Story" at the top of the page. An arrow pointing down with a circle around it will appear next to the three dots — tap on this symbol to download your whole story.

2. Tapping on the three dots will also reveal a list of each snap you added to your story. Tap on a snap to view it, and then tap on the arrow pointing down in the bottom of the screen to download that snap alone.

PRO TIP
You can only download stories directly to your phone. To more efficiently save and access your Snapchat content, backup the files on Dropbox or a similar data storage service. This will allow you to more easily republish the content across other social networks or upload and embed the snaps to your company blog when applicable.

Cross-Promotion Recommendations

On Twitter: Tweet about new stories and snaps as they are posted. Make sure to include at least one of these, if not all three: your username, your snapcode (with instructions for scanning), or your Snapchat webpage. You can also include a video clip or image from your story. Make sure to tag as many relevant Twitter users as possible in the images of these tweets so that they reach more people.

On Facebook and Instagram: Follow the same practices as you would with tweets, but use more videos. Keep in mind that Facebook posts tend to have a longer half-life than tweets.

On Vine: When you're on the move, you can use Vine to quickly edit Snapchat videos so they are square-shaped rather than portrait-shaped. (If you're planning on trimming a Snapchat video, remember this while filming. Make sure all of the important information and action will still be in the frame after you crop it.) You can then share that video on Vine, and download it to share on Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter.

Snapchat Influencer Takeovers

A Snapchat influencer takeover is when a brand (or individual) partners with an influencer, and arranges for them to do a takeover of their account. Find influencers in your industry who are active on Snapchat. Pursue a partnership with these influencers and ask if they'll do an influencer takeover of your Snapchat account (and hopefully promote that takeover on their account). Make sure you are confident in their professionalism and outline expectations beforehand. Monitor the takeover and record its impact.

Snapchat Webpage

You have a Snapchat webpage — every Snapchat account does! You can find your Snapchat webpage by using the following formula: www.snapchat.com/add/USERNAME. The page includes your username and snapcode, as well as an option to download the Snapchat app. Include your page in social posts about your Snapchat account, in appropriate social account descriptions, and on your website.

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Ads, Algorithms, and More: What Comes Next for Snapchat?

Snapchat is rapidly improving its offerings for brands, while being careful not to alienate its user-base. Here are the most recent developments.

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Snapchat Ads

Although Snapchat does not yet have an ad platform, you can contact them about these opportunities on their website. Brands that have seen success using Snapchat paid promotion include Gatorade, Vans, ShockTop, Trolli, Empire, Kraft, and bareMinerals.

Snap Ads

Snap Ads are typically 10 second videos that can appear in between stories, Discover articles, and during Snapchat Live features. Brands can include a "swipe up" option to reveal extended content such as a mobile website, article, longer video, or app install ad. Snapchat claims that the swipe up rate for Snap Ads is **five times higher than the average click-through rate on comparable platforms**. Snapchat ads can be targeted by location, age, gender, mobile network carrier, device or operating system, and type of content users engage with.

Sponsored Lenses

Brands can now pay for a Sponsored Lens to appear in the selection of Snapchat lenses when users create a snap. Snapchat says that users experiment with a lens for about 20 seconds, on average.

Sponsored Geofilters

If you're looking to create a geofilter for an area larger than 5 million square feet, you'll have to request to sponsor a geofilter outside of the normal On-Demand Geofilter request process. "In the U.S., a single National Sponsored Geofilter typically reaches 40 percent to 60 percent of daily Snapchatters," states Snapchat on their website.

Is There a Snapchat Algorithm?

Not yet. Currently, stories in Snapchat are listed in reverse chronological order, based on when the last update was made. However, it's rumored that Snapchat may be creating an algorithm to push certain stories to the top, based on relevancy to that individual user.

Snapchat is known to be reluctant to accommodate brands' use of their platform, so this algorithm could increase competition for brands on Snapchat. More likely, this change would signify that Snapchat is following the pattern set by other leading social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, to monetize the platform.

What's Next for Snapchat, and How Will It Affect Me?

As Snapchat continues to evolve, marketers should be on the lookout for new app developments, features, and capabilities. Its popularity shows no signs of stopping. Bloomberg reports that Snapchat has even surpassed Twitter in its number of daily active users. If you're going to invest in Snapchat, start sooner rather than later.

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