

SNAPCHAT VS. INSTAGRAM



Social media has transformed the way people interact, consume information and stay entertained. It has also transformed the way businesses interact with their customers, by allowing direct communication and targeted marketing.

I know at times it can be frustrating to keep up with the latest trends and hot new mobile apps, but what I have found most helpful is to pay attention to the platforms that have consistent user growth years after they are launched.

For example, Facebook is still growing and has remained the number one social media platform for the past 13 years. Some other great apps experiencing continued growth that are always in the news are Snapchat and Instagram. With Facebook acquiring Instagram in 2012 and Snapchat recently going through its IPO, you can count on these apps to stick.

But what is the difference between Instagram and Snapchat, and how should you be spending your marketing dollars on these platforms?

What is Instagram?

Instagram is a simple mobile photo and video sharing app that completely changed the way we look at social media, by underscoring the importance of capturing moments as they happen.

Instagram is much less about the opinion-based back and forth conversation platforms that many complain Facebook & Twitter have become.

Instagram is currently the third most popular social media site with over 500 million monthly users, behind Facebook and YouTube.

What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is also a mobile photo and video sharing app that took the concept of capturing moments but integrated fun new twists. Although the app originated to send disappearing messages to friends, it has evolved into a great storytelling platform.

Snapchat "Stories" are a combination of 10-second photos and videos you take throughout the day. Stories are only available on the app for 24 hours and then they disappear forever.

The fun doesn't stop here with Snapchat: the app also allows you to disguise your face with entertaining face filters. Some filters offer voice changing capabilities as well. These filters not only distinguished Snapchat from other social media apps but it also led to their wild success, especially among a younger audience.

Which One is Better?

Now that you have a brief understanding of the two apps, let's gauge which app will work better for you.

As I mentioned, Facebook acquired Instagram back in August of 2012. At that time, Facebook also attempted to purchase Snapchat for \$3 billion. With no success, Facebook moved on to multiple failed attempts to vanquish Snapchat by purchasing little-known Snapchat competitors Poke, Slingshot, Bold, and Flash.

Facebook, in a final attempt to beat out its competitor, has started to implement various Snapchat-like features into the Facebook and Instagram platforms by creating Instagram Stories, Facebook Stories, and even face filters in the Facebook Messenger app.

The advantage of Instagram and Facebook Stories is that you do not need to acquire new followers like with Snapchat – you have instant reach because of your existing followers.

By sheer numbers, Instagram users outnumber Snapchat users five to one. And it has the convenience of posting on only one platform, since you can automatically push their Instagram posts to Facebook. Not surprisingly, there has been a significant decline in Snapchat Story usage since the launch of Instagram Stories. The functionality is just too similar.

From a marketing stand point, I don't want you to jump ship on Snapchat. Just try to use the app(s) you feel the audience you're trying to reach is using. You can even export and syndicate your Snapchat stories to Instagram for extra reach.

Snapchat does offer several paid marketing options, like eye-catching Snap Ads or the option to build a custom branded geofilter. A geofilter allows mobile users to add a location with personalized graphics placed over their image or video. For a limited-time and space event, this can be a cost-effective option. (Check Fiverr.com to get a geofilter created.)

Snapchat also offers the marketing opportunity to create a sponsored lens. The sky's the limit with a sponsored lens, allowing marketers to create just about anything, like turning one's office in to a basketball celebration!

With all these fun options across both Instagram and Snapchat your next digital campaign is sure to be a slam dunk!

Kendra Wright started her career managing non-profit fundraising events. Then in an "about face," she took a job managing global Internet strategies at a Fortune 1000 company in 1995, just as the Internet came to being. She left that company in 1998 to found Wright Strategies, working with clients like KEEN Footwear, Nike, Jeep, Chrysler, Intel and Panasonic. Then in 2009, Kendra launched Saffire to do integrated online marketing and ticketing for hundreds of events, venues and destinations. It's been a wild ride! Kendra can be reached at kendra@saffire.com, and more information about Saffire can be found at www.saffire.com.