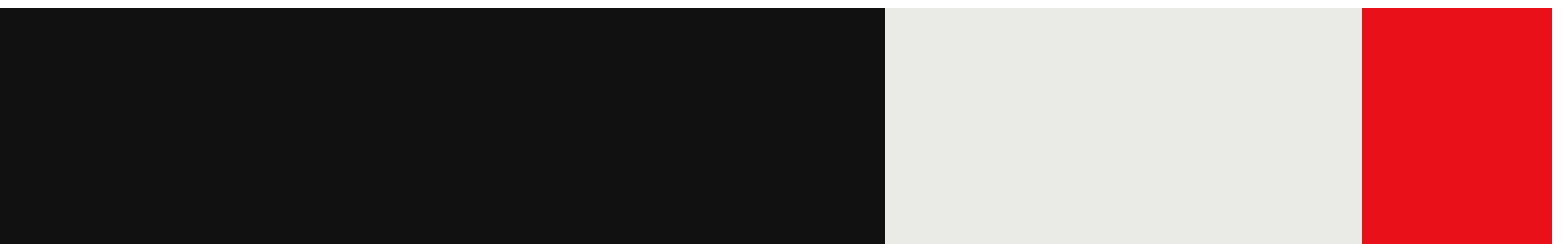


How to Create Successful Ad Campaigns for Social Stories

Article



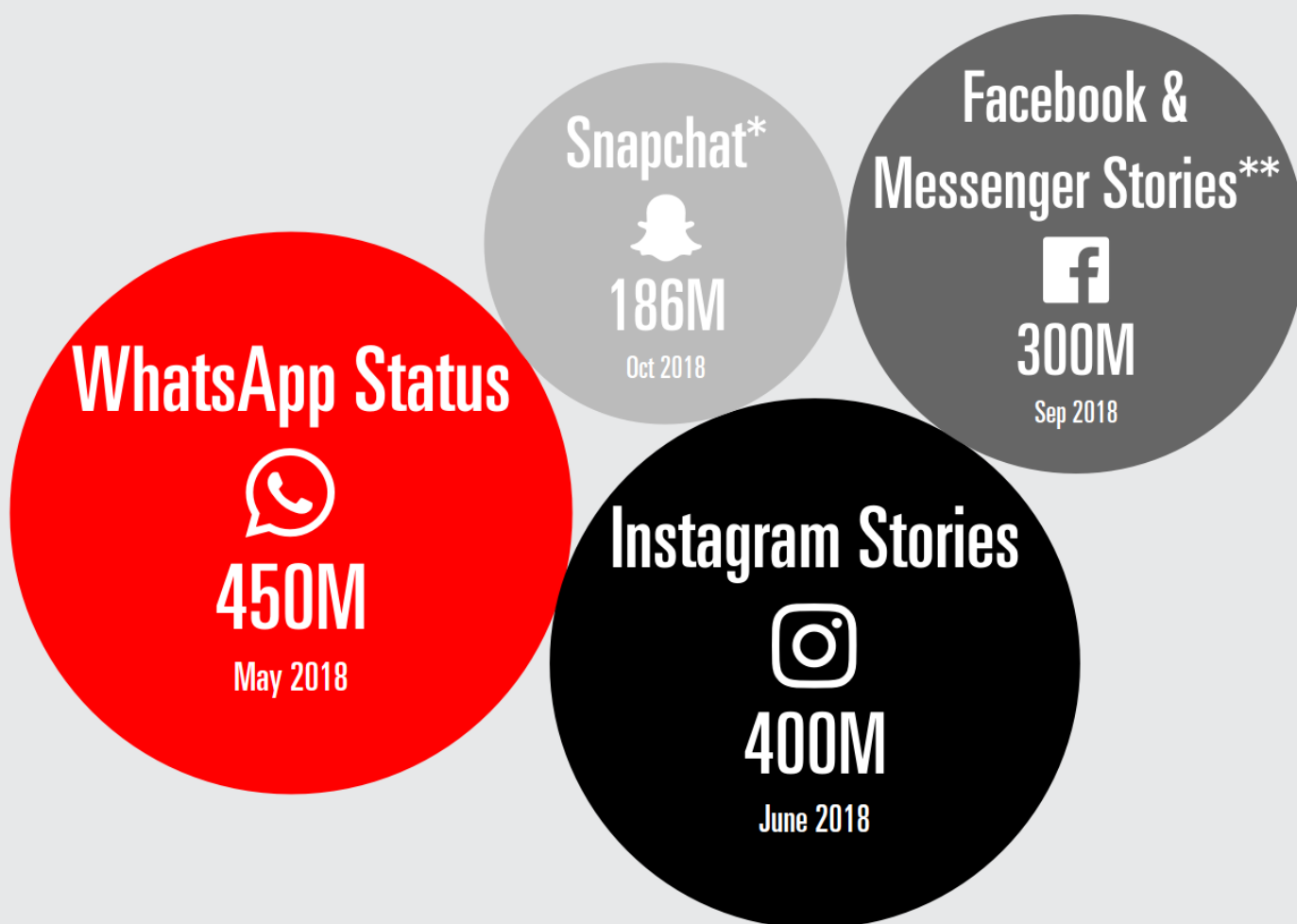
Social behaviors are **shifting to stories**—a combination of images, videos, graphics and text that last 24 hours and then disappear.

If you think of the feed as social media v1.0, stories represent the next generation. And because stories are full-screen, mobile and easy to watch, they have the **potential to make social media fun again**.

"We see a clear shift to stories as a communication format and how people engage and interact on our platform," said Maria Smith, product director at Facebook. "It's about the day-to-day sharing, more so than other important moments."

Social Media Story Users Worldwide

daily active users (millions)



Note: Facebook daily active story users within its family of applications are social media users of each platform ages 13+, except in markets where the age minimum is higher, who view or interact with stories. * Includes data from Snapchat's parent company, Snap Inc. ** Includes data from Facebook's parent company, Meta Platforms Inc.

produce stories daily; *daily active users are registered Snapchat users ages 13+ who open the application at least once during a defined 24-hour period; **figure does not double-count users of both services

Source: Facebook, "Introducing Facebook Stories Ads," Sep 2018; Instagram, "Introducing Music in Stories," June 2018; Snap Inc., "Q3 2018 Earnings Slides," Oct 2018; TechCrunch, "WhatsApp's Stories Hit 450M Users, Stealing the Globe from Snapchat," May 2018



As more consumers gravitate toward stories, marketers are catching up. eMarketer's Debra Aho Williamson spoke with executives from Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram about why stories are so popular right now, and how advertisers should be incorporating them into their marketing efforts.

How can stories help marketers achieve their objectives?

Jim Squires, head of business and media at Instagram: There's this view that stories are more of a branding medium vs. a direct-response vehicle. We see strong results across all the different objectives. These ads are full-screen, immersive and very involved. Even though people are moving fast [through the ads], they really draw you in.

Maria Smith, product director at Facebook: Our hypothesis was that stories would be much more natural for broad objectives or top of funnel. But what we're finding out is that for direct-response objectives—for advertisers who want to showcase or demo their products and drive traffic to those products or app installs—it works really well. We've seen that we can drive results across the board.

What are best practices for advertising in stories on each platform?

Jeff Miller, global head of creative strategy at Snapchat: Snap Ads are a single impression, so your goal is to be focused on a singular message and very clear from the first frame. You should also make sure your value proposition is evident, so the consumer viewing that impression clearly understands what's being advertised.

In addition, be conscious of sound design. On average more than 60% of Snap Ads are watched with audio on, so marketers should build for sound on, not for sound off.

Squires: Once you're using Instagram Stories, make sure they're used holistically across the Instagram experience and probably across the larger Facebook experience as well. The

marketers that I see doing it the best are using Stories, Feed, their profile, the shopping features and Direct across the Instagram experience. They have a consistent aesthetic, but they know that people are using them slightly differently. So they are gearing their messaging and creative accordingly.

How should advertisers think about using the feed and stories together?

Squires: I would not advocate that you turn off feed and start doing stories. They're complementary canvases, and you don't have to use completely different creative. You can take your feed creative and start moving it into stories and see the results. You can also take your vertical creative in stories and move that back into the feed.

Smith: A full-screen, immersive ad feels totally native in stories, whereas in the feed, you need to customize your ad and make it feel native. In stories, you can immerse a user without the person thinking, "you've just taken over my space," in the same way they might if you were doing that in feed.

Stories are vertical, and that's new for some advertisers. How can marketers create story ads if they don't have vertical creative?

Smith: Our team worked hard to make it easy. The best thing would be for advertisers to optimize their ad for each placement, but we have a lot of small businesses on our platform, and even top advertisers don't always do that. So we invested a lot in technology. We take [feed] ad assets and automatically make them full screen. Our technology picks the best colors from the ad and adds a background from those colors. It picks the ad copy and automatically puts it under the creative and adjusts it dynamically to perform better. All the advertiser has to do is to select the placements they want, and our system optimizes delivery for the best outcome.

Miller: In the past year, we've done everything to simplify the process for advertisers. We changed augmented reality from something we had to build ourselves into a democratized tool through our lens studio. And about a year ago, we introduced our Snap publisher tool, where people can create their own ads for free in minutes.

Miller, Smith and Squires were interviewed as part of eMarketer's November 2018 report, "Marketing with Stories on Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat: How Consumers and Marketers Are Using This Creative Format."

eMarketer PRO subscribers can read the full report for more on story advertising. Not sure if your company subscribes? [Check here](#).