

Instagram's newest copycat target is BeReal

Article

The news: Meta is testing yet another feature on **Instagram** that copies directly from a competitor. This week's target? **BeReal**, the impromptu social media app that's [exploded in popularity](#) and shoved **Facebook** off the Top 10 apps on the App Store.

What's being copied? BeReal is a photo app that prompts all users to simultaneously take a front- and forward-facing photo once per day at a random time.

- Instagram's new feature, called "Candid Challenges," copies this almost exactly. Rather than be featured in their own feed, Candid Challenge photos will be posted on a user's Instagram

story.

- BeReal skyrocketed in popularity thanks to its focus on authenticity. Photos are unfiltered, unedited, and given an asterisk if they were retaken. In a way, BeReal is what **Snapchat** and **Instagram** stories were supposed to be before they eventually morphed into the often highly staged and curated pages they are today.
- While it doesn't yet have any ads, BeReal's popularity has caught the attention of brands like **Chipotle** and **PacSun**, which have started experimenting with the platform. Meta, which is hungry for advertiser dollars and trying hard to keep brands on board with Instagram, wants some of that attention for itself.

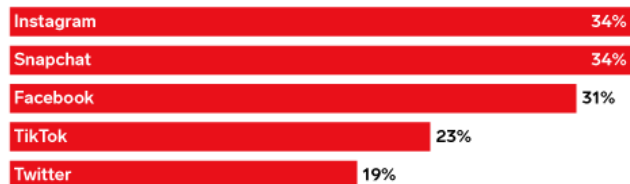
Opportunities and challenges: Instagram was able to copy Snapchat Stories almost wholesale and push them further than Snapchat could. And while there's an opportunity for Meta to do the same with BeReal, it's unlikely to take off.

- BeReal's biggest problem is functionality. Users complain about the app's frequent crashes and glitches that Meta may be able to circumvent with its more sophisticated infrastructure.
- But the biggest obstacle in the way of Candid Challenges claiming the throne is Instagram itself. Its reputation is battered and [the app's UI is an utter mess](#)—compare that to BeReal, which is designed from the bottom up to support its central concept, and it's easy to see Candid Challenges getting lost in the shuffle.
- BeReal's single, dedicated feed means it's incredibly easy for users to scroll through and see posts from friends—something that's not so easy to do on Instagram anymore. Candid Challenges will likely also get obscured by being relegated to the stories function, where their distinction will suffer for being mixed in with ads and other posts.

The big takeaway: Meta's relentless copycatting isn't guaranteed to succeed. While it may have the infrastructure to work around BeReal's many technical issues, Instagram's new direction stands in direct opposition to the concept that BeReal rode to success.

US Users of Select Social Media Apps Who Open the App Every Day, Q2 2022

% of respondents



Note: Android only; read as 34% of active Snapchat installs opened the app every day during Q2 2022

Source: Sensor Tower as cited in company blog, July 25, 2022

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