

Facebook Is Tops with Everyone but Teens

Snapchat expands lead among 12- to 17-year-olds

ARTICLE |

eMarketer Editors

The number of Facebook users in the US will inch up 0.9% this year to 169.5 million. While growth has plateaued, Facebook is still the most used social network among all age groups, except for teens.

Here's how the top social networks rank among the following age groups:

TEENS

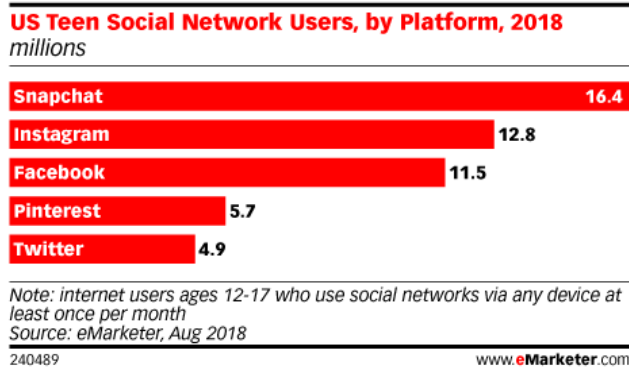
In 2016, Snapchat surpassed Facebook as the most popular social network among US teens. Snapchat will continue to add users ages 12 to 17, while Facebook will continue to lose users in that cohort. In fact, we estimate Snapchat will add 1.2 million new users in that age group by 2022, while Facebook will lose 2.2 million.

Snapchat has been more popular than Instagram among US teens for years. In 2018, 16.4 million 12- to 17-year-olds will use Snapchat, compared with 12.8 million for Instagram. Snapchat will remain dominant among teen users through 2022.

As eMarketer first reported in February, teen usage of Facebook is declining. This year, 11.5 million people in the US ages 12 to 17 will be

on the platform, down from 12.1 million in 2017. By 2022, the number of Facebook users in that age bracket will drop to 9.3 million.

“Snapchat and Instagram are the top social apps for teens, and this year they’ll add nearly the same number of new teen users,” eMarketer senior forecasting analyst Christopher Bendtsen said. “Stories is a growth driver for both platforms, yet it’s not helping Facebook retain younger users. Teens continue to abandon or never even sign up for Facebook, and Instagram’s gains don’t completely make up for Facebook’s losses for this age group.”



MILLENNIALS

Facebook is the most used social network among US millennials, with 58.5 million of them expected to use the platform this year. That figure is still growing, albeit slowly. Instagram ranks second with 43.3 million.

GEN X

Generation X uses Facebook most heavily, with 45.1 million users this year. That number will fluctuate slightly throughout the forecast period, but it will ultimately fall to 43.8 million by 2022.

Instagram, the second most used social platform among Gen X, will have about half as many users this year (23.5 million). That figure will grow slightly in 2019, but we expect that number will level off over the following years.

BABY BOOMERS

Baby boomers continue to favor Facebook over other social apps, mainly to stay in touch with friends and family. This year, 31.9 million people in that cohort will be on the platform, with that number holding fairly steady through the forecast.

Their second social network of choice is Pinterest, with 12.9 million users this year.

“Pinterest is appealing to baby boomers because it’s easy to use when looking for products or ideas for home projects, which are frequent activities for a generation with high spending power and home ownership rates,” Bendtsen said. “And since boomers are already comfortable using Facebook for checking the News Feed or sharing with family, they’re less likely to try platforms like Twitter or Snapchat for similar activities.”

Snapchat comes in last for baby boomers; only 3.8 million will use the platform in 2018.