

Instagram targets real-time events in Twitter challenge

June 23 2015



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Instagram on Tuesday began letting users easily tune into hot topics of the moment as the Facebook-owned image sharing service stepped squarely into Twitter's domain.

Updated versions of Instagram applications released in the United States

for mobile devices powered by Apple or Android software boasted Explore pages complete with trending topics and places.

"The new Explore now surfaces trends as they emerge in real-time, connecting you to events and conversations both near you and around the globe," the Instagram team said in a blog post.

"We'll work to bring it to the rest of the world after we fine-tune the experience and set it up to work well in other countries."

More than 70 million photos and videos are posted daily at Instagram, making it likely there will be imagery related to attention-grabbing events, according to the service.

Twitter rose to prominence on its service that lets people share pictures, video snippets, and comments about happenings or hot topics in real time.

Instagram said that Explore pages will feature curated collections from "interesting accounts" such as those of musicians or extreme athletes or focused on potentially compelling places.

Search has undergone a "dramatic" upgrade in the latest version of the application, according to Instagram.

The challenge to Twitter came as the one-to-many messaging service based in San Francisco searched for a new chief executive capable of spurring both growth and revenue.

Twitter said Monday it would only consider chief executive candidates who can commit full-time to the company, signaling that co-founder and interim head Jack Dorsey likely will not be picked.

Dorsey, in addition to stepping in for outgoing Twitter CEO Dick Costolo, leads Square, a growing mobile payments company.

"The search is proceeding with a sense of urgency but the committee will take the time necessary to find the right CEO to lead the next phase of Twitter's growth," Twitter said in a released statement.

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Citation: Instagram targets real-time events in Twitter challenge (2015, June 23) retrieved 13 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-06-instagram-real-time-events-twitter.html>

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