Instagram copies another Snapchat feature: Face filters

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Instagram continued to play copycat to Snapchat, launching on Tuesday its own version of face filters - a feature popularized on Snap Inc.'s app.

The new Instagram tool superimposes adornments such as animal ears, hats, makeup and masks over a person's face on the app. The decorations include a gold crown and a pair of bunny ears reminiscent of Snapchat's offerings, as well as thick-rimmed glasses.

The company also added features such as the ability to play videos in reverse, hashtag stickers that link to a hashtag page, and an eraser brush when using drawing tools.

Instagram originally launched in 2010 as a photo-sharing platform with stylish filters. Facebook bought the company in 2012 for $1 billion. Over the last year, the company has launched features that bear striking resemblance to Snapchat, including Instagram Stories, which lets users share videos that disappear after 24 hours; drawing tools, which allow users to doodle over their photos and videos; and geo-filters, which create a range of location-specific stickers that can be placed on photos and videos.

When asked during Snap Inc.'s first earnings call about copycat competitors, Chief Executive Evan Spiegel said: "At the end of the day, just because Yahoo has a search box doesn't mean they're Google."

Which would be a sick burn, were it not for the fact that Instagram

Stories has already surpassed Snapchat usage. Snapchat has 166 million people who use the app every day. Instagram Stories alone has more than 200 million.

The Los Angeles-based Snap Inc. has said its best strategy to stay ahead of imitators is to continue launching new features for users and advertisers. Its latest offerings, announced Monday, include geo-filters that add information such as ZIP Codes, cities, colleges and airports. The company also said it will give advertisers the ability to sponsor "world lenses," an augmented reality feature that superimposes three-dimensional digital objects onto phone screens.

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