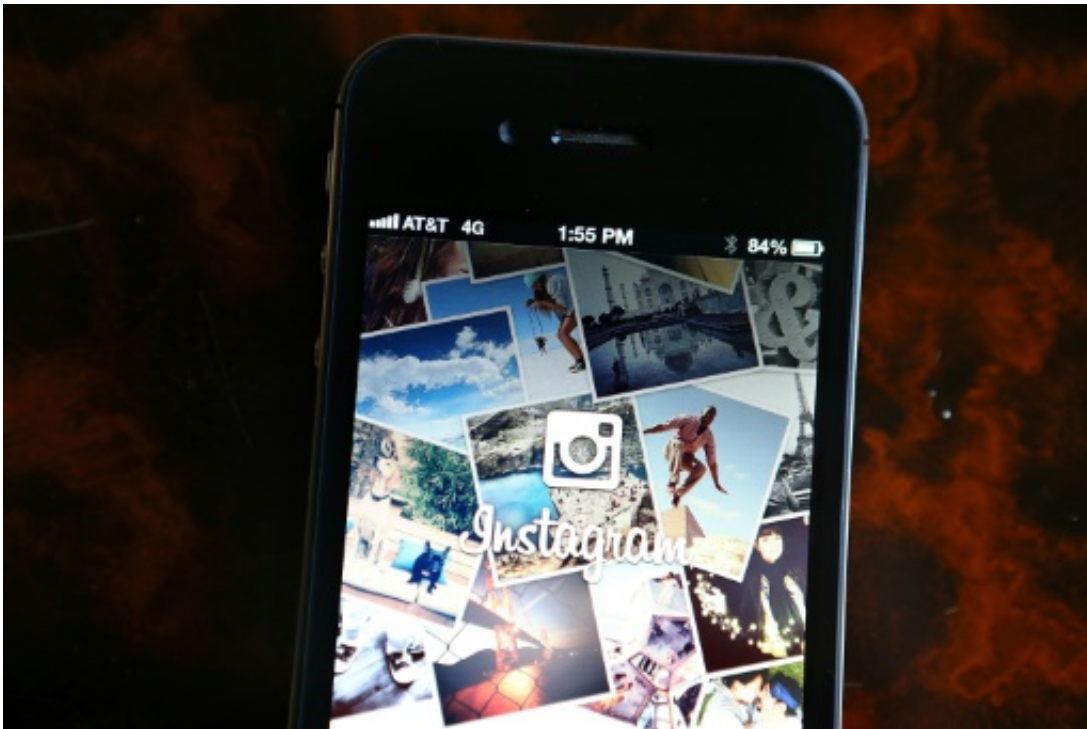


Facebook losing teens to Instagram-Snapchat: forecast

August 22 2017, by Glenn Chapman



"We see teens and tweens migrating to Snapchat and Instagram," said eMarketer senior forecasting analyst Oscar Orozco

Facebook use in the US will slow as teens and young adults opt for smartphone image-sharing services Instagram and Snapchat, according to an eMarketer forecast released on Tuesday.

The market tracker expected Facebook's online community to grow,

saying it would be due mainly to increased adoption by older folks while use by those 24 years of age or younger sags.

"We see teens and tweens migrating to Snapchat and Instagram," said eMarketer senior forecasting analyst Oscar Orozco.

"Both platforms have found success with this demographic since they are more aligned with how they communicate—that is, using visual content."

And while there are 'Facebook-nevers'—children entering their teenage years without engaging on the leading social network—the Silicon Valley company owns Instagram so is still making connections with the demographic, according to the analyst.

Meanwhile, eMarketer increased its projection for the number of people using Snapchat on a monthly basis in the US this year, forecasting it will grow 25.8 percent to 79.2 million. The biggest jump in Snapchat use was expected to be among young adults.

Instagram use will likely grow 23.8 percent this year to 85.5 million people monthly, according to eMarketer.

"Facebook is fortunate that it owns Instagram, which remains a strong platform for teens," said eMarketer principal analyst Debra Aho Williamson.

"Although usage of the main Facebook app is declining among teens, marketers will still be able to reach them on Instagram."

The market tracker predicted that this year Snapchat will overtake Instagram and Facebook for the first time when it comes to the number of users ages 24 or younger.

Snapchat was first released five years ago and became popular among young smartphone users for its disappearing messages, often photos or video.

Growth pressure

Analysts say it needs to show strong growth to keep pace in the rapidly evolving social media sector dominated by Facebook.

Although Snapchat is best known for its smartphone messaging, it has also developed partnerships with numerous media outlets eager to reach its audience with news, video and other content.

Shares of Snapchat parent company Snap fell to new lows this month after the company reported that its revenue more than doubled but its loss soared in the quarter that ended June 30.

The average number of people using the vanishing message service daily rose 21 percent to 173 million when compared to the same period a year earlier, according to the earnings release.

Market watchers had expected the ranks of users to grow to 175 million, with Snap missing the mark.

Analysts have been concerned about the ability of Snap to effectively serve up ads given the ephemeral nature of the messaging service.

Snap was the largest IPO of 2017 and rose more than 40 percent from initial trades to give it a market value of some \$34 billion, but the recent slide has cut its valuation by more than half.

Meanwhile, Instagram has unabashedly put its spins on popular Snapchat features and Facebook has been devoting engineering resources to

enhance Instagram with artificial intelligence and advertising tools.

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