Strategies for the Next Normal
The events of 2020 changed the way we work, shop and stay in touch, creating what became known as the “new normal”. Now, as we build hopes of recovery in 2021 and beyond, it’s time to focus on the next normal.

Which of the changes we’ve seen this year are here to stay, and which will prove to be a passing fad? The best way to find out is by tuning in to younger generations, watching their behaviours and hearing their concerns.

Millennials and Gen Z use Snapchat to connect with their friends every day, giving us a unique vantage point. Here, we present some insights and strategies that can help brands to get ahead, whatever the future holds.

❤️ TEAM SNAPCHAT
Snapchat is hugely popular with Millennials and Gen Z, reaching over 75% of 13 to 34-year-olds and over 90% of 13 to 24-year-olds in the UK.¹ Snapchat doesn’t just let them express their creativity, it also lets them stay in touch with their real friends. As a result, 95% of Snapchatters say the app makes them happy, more than any other app tested.²

But what makes these influential groups tick? »

Millennials and Gen Z are the largest generations in history, and as they rewrite the rules of engagement for brands, we reveal what matters most to them.

¹ Snap Inc. internal data, Q3 2020. Percentages calculated by dividing addressable reach by relevant census figures. ² 2018 US Murphy Research Study commissioned by Snap Inc.
Connection
With 249 million daily active users on Snapchat in Q3 2020, an increase of 18% year over year, it’s clear that these generations love to stay in constant contact. A typical Snapchatter opens the app 30 times a day and says their friends are five times more influential on purchasing decisions than celebrities or influencers.

Responsibility
“Be the change you want to see” is the mantra of more than half of Snapchatters in the UK, who believe they have a personal responsibility to stand up for issues they care about. That extends to shopping, with 60% of Gen Zers open to paying more for sustainable clothes.

Community
Digital natives do know there is more to life than swiping screens. More than half of Snapchatters in the UK say they’re more likely to buy from brands that support their local community.

Diversity
These generations celebrate difference, with 70% saying that they prefer to be surrounded by people from different backgrounds, cultures, and identities from their own.

Innovation
Millennials and Gen Zers are constantly finding new ways to communicate. Vertical video is a big differentiator for Snapchat, with 74% of UK users saying it is more personal and immersive. And more than 180 million engage with augmented reality each day, creating clear opportunities for brands.

Sources

Purchasing Power
Millennials are the largest generation in history. In 2020, they made one in three purchases, and the generation is expected to drive half the increase in expenditure growth over the next decade. Gen Zers, who are set to outnumber Millennials worldwide, are becoming the most important generation for marketers to reach. With $323 billion in direct buying power, they also influence purchases in their households, with $1.2 trillion indirect spending power.

Together, these two powerful groups are driving the shift towards e-commerce. According to eMarketer, consumers aged under 34 accounted for more than a third of digital purchases in the UK. Post Covid-19, older generations are following their lead, with 88% of all adults expecting their non-grocery digital spend to stay the same or increase after the pandemic.

Sources
Snap was once rare for being mobile-first – now the world is moving on to mobile.

IT’S HARD TO REMEMBER THAT when Snapchat launched in 2011, it was considered an outlier for being mobile-only. Now, the smartphone has become the most personal device in our lives, with over four hours a day spent on mobile by the average user. And the numbers are increasing all the time, making it a huge focus for any business that wants to stay relevant.

That’s especially true since the pandemic hit. App downloads spiked 23% in the year to Q3 2020 as consumers found new ways to stay connected and shop during lockdown. Shopping was a particular focus, with app revenue hitting £21 billion – an all-time global high – and average order values steadily increasing.

It’s expected these numbers will continue to rise, because the trend has been driven by younger generations – Snapchatters are 63% more likely than non-Snapchatters to have purchased a product online in the last month via a mobile.

So what can e-commerce businesses that want to build growth on mobile learn from the Snapchat model?

According to Savvy Brahami, International Marketing Manager at Snap, the key is to follow consumer behaviour. “From making messaging more visual and fun to creating the vertical video format to deepening connections between friends and the brands they love, we always look first to how our community is using their phone — and then ask ourselves how we can enhance it,” she explains.

Given that 54% of total e-commerce sales are expected to be made via mobile by 2021, it’s no wonder other businesses are starting to follow Snap’s lead.

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23% year-over-year spike in app downloads seen in Q3 2020.

60% of Snapchat users in the UK make in-app purchases.

5x higher ad awareness from Snapchat commercials than other mobile video ads.

84% of Snapchatters have visited an online retail site on a mobile in the past month, compared with 60% of non-Snapchatters.

4.3 hours per day spent on mobile by the average user in April 2020.

54% of e-commerce sales are expected to be made via mobile by 2021.

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Sources:
2. Global App Revenue Growth, Sensor Tower, Store Intelligence Data Digest, 2020
3. GlobalWebIndex, Q4 2019-Q3 2020
4. Retail mCommerce Sales in the UK, 2019-2024, eMarketer, May 2020
5. Millward Brown Snapchat Commercials norm Analysis, Q3 2019
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At long last, the year 2020 saw QR codes go mainstream. Snapcodes prove why they deserve a lasting place in our tech-driven lives.

HAVING SPENT YEARS IN THE VIRTUAL wilderness since their launch in 1994, QR (Quick Response) codes finally got their big moment in 2020. Not only have they helped support contact tracing during COVID-19, they’ve also been used to replace menus and physical payments, request donations for charities and drive digital event attendance.

Now, businesses have spotted the potential for QR codes to increase their social followings and customer engagement. In August, Burberry opened a flagship “social retail” store in China, where items are labelled with QR codes that unlock additional content and information about the product. Chief Creative Officer, Riccardo Tisci, describes it as “an interactive journey of discovery.”

Early adopters had already begun to use QR’s potential to enhance physical and digital experiences. Snapcodes are unique, scannable codes that anyone can use to add new friends, unlock Lenses and Filters and connect to websites and exclusive content. “Snapcodes are based around the Snap ghost logo, which means they’re more visually impactful and customisable than a regular QR code,” says Grégoire Gimaret, Product Marketing Lead at Snap.

Jordan Brand made the most of this capability when it celebrated the 30th anniversary of Michael Jordan’s All-Star Slam Dunk Contest — a dunk contest from the free-throw line. Fans at a live NBA game were able to scan a Snapcode to relive that magical moment, moving around the arena to experience it from different angles. Plus, a lucky few got early access to Jordan Brand’s latest sneaker release using Shopify.

The big advantage of Snapcodes is a great user experience, explains Gimaret. “You don’t have to download a special app to use them, and Snapchatters know that they’re getting trusted content through a platform they already know and love.”

Brands that have a pre-existing relationship with their consumers can use Snapcodes to drive engagement with them on a new platform. Arsenal Football Club has successfully used them in the UK, building their following and allowing fans to try on the latest jersey with an AR Lens, created by adidas.

Snapcodes can also drive engagement with new user groups. For heritage brand, Ralph Lauren, creating a collection of Bitmoji designs was an inspired effort to engage a younger audience. Snapchatters could dress their
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Tip 1: It’s All About Content
Snapcodes allow brands to promote content across platforms. Use them to redirect Snapchatters to your website, play a video, unlock a filter that is locally relevant to where they are, or completely immerse them into a new world through augmented reality. Whatever the Snapcode unlocks, they should be glad they scanned it.

Tip 2: Think Big
Bus shelters, cinemas, posters, billboards... you can use Snapcodes to make the most of all of those in-between moments, capturing a longer attention time. For the best engagement, get ambitious with AR. Think 3D characters coming out of a movie billboard, or a fashion collection floating around a Tube stop.

Tip 3: Get Creative
We’ve seen many brands using Snapcodes in store to link to their seasonal campaigns, adding magic to the store experience. If you don’t have a physical store, you can share Snapcodes in print media like magazines, bringing your product into Snapchatters’ homes. Or place them directly on your product – food wrappers, beverage cans – or even receipts and delivery notes.

How to Use Snapcodes

A Guide from Grégoire Gimaret, Product Marketing Lead at Snap.

“MAKE THE MOST OF ALL THOSE IN-BETWEEN MOMENTS.”

TUTORIAL: 3 Steps to Activate

1. Spot a Snapcode and open Snapchat on your phone.
2. Point your phone at the Snapcode, then press and hold.
3. See what you have just unlocked and have fun!

< Bitmojis in Ralph Lauren looks and shop the ones they liked. “With Snap’s creative prowess and reach to a younger consumer, we feel inspired to explore disruptive ways to tell our brand’s story, drive social commerce and engage with a new generation in an authentic and empowering way,” said Alice Delahunt, Chief Digital & Content Officer at Ralph Lauren.

As collaborations like these continue to add value, Snap expects to see further rapid growth in Snapcodes in 2021 and beyond. “What we’ve seen this year is how scannable codes can really build on experiences, bringing physical and digital closer together,” says Gimaret. “We’re looking forward to working with creative partners on Snapcodes that really add value in the years to come.”

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A Guide from Grégoire Gimaret, Product Marketing Lead at Snap.
From offering virtual try-ons to placing their products in selfies, brands are seeing how augmented reality takes customer engagement to the next level.

"With the majority of bricks-and-mortar retail being forced to remain closed for large parts of 2020, augmented reality has proven itself to be a genuine alternative to shoppers visiting a store," says Simon Jenkins, International Creative Strategy Lead. "Our advertising partners have offered the Snapchat community the opportunity to try on a pair of the latest sneakers, a new shade of lipstick, or luxury slippers to make lockdown more glamorous."

Virtual try-on, in particular, added value to shoppers during the COVID-19 shutdown. While previous generations were told that they “should have gone to Specsavers,” in 2020, consumers in the UK found they didn’t have to, instead trying on glasses with an AR Lens until they found a pair to suit.

Meanwhile, FabFitFun used a similar Lens to give Snapchatters the experience of opening one of its beauty subscription boxes, making playful videos of themselves trying first a pair of sunglasses, then a hair product, and then a moisturising mask.

Snapchat has learnt that when an AR experience is genuinely useful and fun, there’s no need to fish for engagement or responses. "People are so used to saying, ..."
Tweet us back, use this hashtag, post this, repost that, do this challenge, send it to us,” says Will Scougal, Global Director of Creative Strategy at Snap. “But when you’re using AR on our platform, you won’t need to ‘challenge’ people to collaborate or share your content. People will share it because you’ve given them an experience they want to share.”

In a survey, UK Snapchatters revealed that they were most interested in virtually trying on clothes (63%), shoes (58%), sunglasses (61%), jewellery (56%) and hats (49%). The experience that most appealed at home was trying out furniture or homeware (60%).

AR also gives users an opportunity to play around with products that they may not be able to afford right now, helping to build early brand relationships. One example was a colour-changing, fibre-optic bag from Louis Vuitton and Virgil Abloh, which Snapchatters could use a Lens to preview in their homes before it had even dropped in stores.

With nine out of ten Snapchat AR campaigns driving a lift in ad awareness and users who have experienced a shoppable Lens 2.4 times more likely to purchase, the results keep both brand and performance advertisers happy, Simon remarks. “Brand teams love to see the amount of time Snapchatters spend trying on their products and how many times they’ve shared it with their closest friends, while performance advertisers love seeing the volume of purchases coming directly from the Lens”.

Small wonder over 120,000 stores are expected to be using AR to improve the customer experience by 2022.

1 2020 Alter Agents study commissioned by Snap Inc.; QA4: What types of products would you be interested in using AR Experiences to help you make purchase decisions? 2 2020 Alter Agents study commissioned by Snap Inc.; QA2: How appealing are the following AR Experiences? 3 Snap Inc. internal data, Q2-Q3 2020. 31 Resonance Studies. 4 ABI Research, Augmented Reality in Retail, 2020.
A key indicator of the hold AR now has on our imagination is the rise in playtimes: the average daily total is now above 500 million minutes. And as 75% of Snapchatters engage with AR Lenses daily, Simon notes, “We are at the forefront of this technology in understanding the connection it can drive for consumers and brands”.

To succeed, an AR campaign should start with essentials: who the audience is, what their behaviours are and what the desired response is. Success is finding an authentic, engaging way to show up in their lives.

“AR can be fun but also useful and informative,” says Will Scougal. “It’s a format that’s really matured, that’s just as targetable as video advertising and that’s neither complex nor expensive for brands to use.”

And the area is only set to grow. Online sellers are expected to spend £7.3 billion on AI by 2022, and AR is now seen as an essential for their media mix. For its part, with 900,000 Lenses created through Lens Studio to date, Snap expects to see its millionth AR Lens arrive within a year. Whether it’s a try-on, gaming or in-home experience, Snapchatters will find it and make it their own.

“A R IS NEITHER COMPLEX OR EXPENSIVE FOR BRANDS TO USE.”

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1 Snap Inc. internal data Q1 2020. See Snap Inc. public filings with the SEC. 2 Juniper Research: Retailer Spending on AI to Grow Nearly Fourfold, Reaching $7.3 Billion by 2022, January 2018
Bringing Gucci to the Globe

As a brand that likes to do things differently, Gucci was never going to launch its newest sneaker collection with a simple billboard. Instead, Gucci used Snap’s AR capabilities to launch the first global, augmented reality shoe try-on campaign on Snapchat.

Snapchatters were given the chance to try on four different designs, bringing the Gucci brand to a potential audience of 180 million. The goal was to create awareness and excitement around the shoes, democratising the look so that even those who might not have a luxury budget could still experience wearing them.

The SnapML kit made it simple for Gucci’s team to create a realistic AR trial. They used two Face + World combinations, with male and female gender Lenses, and put two different pairs of sneakers inside each one.

The Lens was made available in the Snapchat Camera and promoted using the Snap Ads to AR format, which showed users how the Lens worked and encouraged users to give the shoes a try.

The result grabbed people’s attention and kept them engaged, showing very strong play times, with an average of 24.9 seconds spent playing with the Lens in the camera and 47.3 seconds after unlocking it in Snap Ads to AR.

Once they tried on the sneakers, Snapchatters could use the dedicated ‘Shop Now’ button within the Lens to visit the product page. Many users went straight through and made a purchase after playing with the Lens. The campaign had a total reach of 18.9 million people, with a significant return on ad spend.

Case Study

Back to the Future

While some may fear that AR signals the end for traditional advertising, the best activations bring great campaigns to life.

When Dior collaborated with the luggage brand Rimowa on a capsule collection, they commissioned the legendary photographer, Steven Meisel, to shoot the creative. Images from the campaign, inspired by Back to the Future, were used in an AR Lens that let Snapchatters discover a Dior x Rimowa suitcase on the seat of a DeLorean and search the car for a personal clutch.

For the launch at Dior’s Champs-Elysees store in Paris, Marker Tech cards were laid out to give partygoers an exclusive viewing of the Dior x Rimowa products, by scanning a Snapcode and seeing it appear on their phone. Clients also had fun with a Face Lens that projected the Dior Oblique theme on to selfies. The results were not only popular on Snapchat, but generated global media coverage.

“Snapchat is a great playground for Gen Y and Z, generations that are avid for new technologies and a new trend to embrace,” Pietro Beccari, Chairman and CEO of Christian Dior Couture told Womenswear Daily.
Snapchatters spend about 32 minutes a day viewing mobile videos, including when they’re in a physical store. This fast-growing format should be the backbone for digital marketers in 2021.

At the start of COVID-19, a meme went around: “My mother told me I wasn’t going to accomplish anything laying around all day... Now look at me, saving the world.”

With time to kill in 2020, it’s true that The Snapchat Generation has been spending a lot more time on social platforms in general, and video in particular. Research commissioned by Snap showed that 82% of Millennials and Gen Zers were watching more mobile video content on smartphones after the pandemic hit the UK.

Average daily viewing time more than doubled in Q1 2020.

And while these numbers represent an unprecedented time, the shift is forecast to continue, with the media agency Zenith predicting that the average person will spend 100 minutes a day watching online videos in 2021.

Visual commerce is increasingly supporting the shopping experience, as brands create video and 360-degree imagery to showcase their products in store and online.

The most engaged audience are Snapchat users, 74% of whom agree that the app’s vertical video content, which fills their whole screen, is more personal and immersive.

“Snapchat’s video experience delivers a sense of connection better than any other social video platform,” says Grégoire Gimaret, Product Marketing Lead. “Our users love creating their own content and watching Friends’ videos, and they also love viewing curated video content in our Discover feed.”

Older generations are beginning to follow the Snapchat Generation’s lead, with views of Discover content doubling year over year among those over 35.

Those views are starting to show up in unlikely places, with 55% of consumers now reporting they view video content while shopping.

The most common reasons a shopper might do this? They’re trying to recreate something they saw online, like a recipe or beauty look; they’re looking for recommendations from sources they trust (such as food or beauty vloggers); or, finally, they want to build confidence in an area they’re unsure about.

1. eMarketer, UK Time Spent with Mobile, 2020, April 2020. 2. NRG UK Study commissioned by Snap Inc., 2020. 3. Zenith’s Online Video Forecasts, 2019. 4. Snap Inc. internal data, Q1 2019 vs. Q1 2020. See Snap Inc. public filings with the SEC. Discover Content is defined as Publisher content and Shows. 5. Google, 3 unexpected ways shoppers turn to video in the store aisle, 2019.
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(i.e., checking a video about how to fix something before getting help from an in-store employee). There is also an appetite for content to answer questions and help people along their path to a more practical purchase, like an internet provider or an electric toothbrush.

Seeing the future potential, Snap itself is investing heavily in video, working with partners and developing our own premium content. To date, over 5,000 episodes of Snap Original Shows have been produced in more than 20 countries worldwide. This includes drama and celebrity-led titles, as well as more serious content like Mind Yourself, an unscripted series that paints an honest picture of what it’s like to grow up with a mental health condition.

“Made-for-mobile, hand-curated and high quality, this is content our users can’t stop watching,” says Grégoire Gimaret. And with more than 60 Shows now regularly seen by 10 million or more monthly viewers, there are clear opportunities for advertisers. Snapchat Commercials are brand safe, always appearing in the context of curated content.

There is just one limit to the Snapchat Generation’s love of video: it must be snappy. Short-form content fits best in the day-to-day lives of 83% of Snapchatters, with seven in ten users saying they would rather engage with a lot of shorter videos than get completely immersed in one longer one.

Getting branded messaging into short, attention-grabbing short is a challenge, but as social shopping becomes more popular, with 30% of consumers saying they would shop directly through a platform like Snapchat, this effort will be rewarded.

No matter the message, if you say it with video, Snapchatters will be watching — whether from their sofa or the store aisle.

100 minutes average daily video viewing predicted in 2021.
55% of consumers’ view video in store.

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Snapchat TV Shows with 10 million+ monthly viewers.

32 minutes Snapchatters’ average daily video viewing on mobile.

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Be Authentic
With the old playbook ripped up, we’re entering a new golden age of creativity as brands experiment with new formats. There’s even a chance to make consumers your creative collaborators, as long as you stay true to your identity. Millennials and Gen Zers are digital natives, and they can sniff out anything that tries too hard from a mile away!

Invest in Video
Thanks to immersive, vertical video on Snapchat, viewing figures are through the roof, with 100 minutes a day predicted as the average in 2021. But not all videos are created equal. Choose short, mobile-first content to engage the Snapchat Generation.

Interact With AR
Augmented reality is the future of marketing, with more than 120,000 stores expected to use it to improve the customer experience by 2022, and brands of all sizes using it to drive DR.

Get Coding
The use of Snapcodes and QR codes is only going to keep growing in 2021 and beyond. They’re popular at events, restaurants and outdoors — essentially, anywhere your customer is going to be, you can put a Snapcode.

Stay Connected
Snapchatters open the app an average of 30 times a day, and Snap content is ephemeral by default. So communication with the Snapchat Generation is never “one and done”. We advise building your ongoing brand relationship with Gen Zers now. They’re set to be the biggest generation in history, so watching them is the best way to ensure you’re ready when the next “next normal” arrives.

Truth is, the next normal is already here. Stay ahead of the pack with these five points to remember when marketing your brand.

1 Zenith’s Online Video Forecasts 2019. 2 ABI Research. Augmented Reality in Retail, 2020. 3 Snap Inc. internal data Q1 2020. See Snap Inc. public filings with the SEC. 4 Snap Inc. internal data, Q3 2020. See Snap Inc. public filings with the SEC.