

How brands are capitalizing on Snapchat "micro-moments"

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Snapchat: The King of Millennial Micro-Moments

In 2015, **Snapchat** put the world on notice that the app is an **advertising** force to be reckoned with — maybe *the advertising* force to be reckoned with. Named *Adweek's* [hottest digital brand](#), **Snapchat** commanded a reported \$750,000 for **brands** to place ads, and the millennial darling reported more than 6 billion videos daily. **Snapchat** will become even bigger in 2016 as **brands** learn how to apply the app to create [micro-moments](#) for the surging millennial population.

Snapchat has accomplished something nearly impossible: opening its door to **brands** while retaining its essential coolness among a loyal user base composed largely of millennials. In fact, big **brands** climbing onto the **Snapchat** bandwagon may have helped the app transcend a reputation as the go-to platform for sharing racy photos. Here are some of my favorite examples of **brands** that relied on **Snapchat** to increase their own coolness quotient:

- McDonald's became the [first brand to sign up for a sponsored geofilter, or a special content overlay](#) (akin to a **digital** sticker placed on **Snapchat** photos and videos) that can be accessed only at certain locations. Customers across the **brand's** 14,000 U.S. restaurants could decorate their **Snapchat** images with playful illustrations of fries and double cheeseburgers, creating tremendous engagement for a **brand** that needs it.
- [Dunkin' Donuts took the geofilter ad concept a step further](#) to generate demand by offering free cups of coffee on National Coffee Day (September 29). **Snapchat** users who clicked on a geofilter of raining coffee beans could get a free medium cup of coffee, but they had to unlock the image either at or near a **Dunkin' Donuts** store to get their coffee. **Dunkin' Donuts** also used **Snapchat** to run video ads on the ESPN Discovery Story on **Snapchat** as part of its sponsorship of ESPN's Monday Night Countdown.
- In November, **Sony** Pictures Entertainment made innovative use of **Snapchat Discover** channels, which consist of dedicated content for publishers such as **CNN** and **Mashable**. Sony launched a temporary channel devoted exclusively to the movie *Spectre* as part of a worldwide **marketing** blitz to promote the 24th official James Bond movie. The channel consisted of behind-the-scenes content (such as photos from different shoot sites) shared across 17 countries. The exclusive nature of the information shared made *Spectre* exist comfortably alongside all the publishing-oriented channels.

These three **brands** are all using **Snapchat** to capitalize on “micro-moments,” which **Google** defines as real-time moments of consumer discovery that occur on mobile devices. Micro-moments are little touch points that can add up to big moments for **brands** who are present with compelling content when consumers are on their mobile phones to find places to go and things to do.

Google characterizes micro-moments as “the new battleground for **brands**.” In a seminal report, [Micro-Moments: Your Guide to Winning the Shift to Mobile](#), **Google** notes that we check our phones 150 times a day. **Brands** have an opportunity to create contextually relevant content that will engage consumers when we’re checking our phones to perform tasks. Writes **Google**:

Thanks go mobile, micro-moments can happen anytime, anywhere. In those moments, consumers expect **brands** to address their need with real-time relevance.

What **Dunkin’ Donuts**, **McDonald’s**, and **Sony** realize is that millennials are creating more and more of those micro-moments. In 2015, [millennials surpassed baby boomers](#) as the largest share of the U.S. voting population. As **Google** notes, 87 percent of millennials always have their smartphones at their side.

In recent weeks, **Snapchat** has made it easier for **brands** to create micro-moments through micro targeting. [Snapchat has been offering](#) “audience bundles,” or users grouped by different themes such as “world news and culture-themed package.” The themes correspond to readers of different media such as **Mashable** and **CNN** that have **Snapchat** sections. According to *Adweek*, [Snapchat can already target content](#) by gender and for users over the ages of 18 and 21.

Given the size and influence of the millennial population, **Snapchat** becomes an increasingly important option for **brands**. Businesses that want to capitalize on **Snapchat** would do well to:

- Be contextually relevant. Content that strikes the wrong tone and fails to engage in a playful way will fail. Many other **brands** besides the ones I’ve cited have learned how to create contextual content on **Snapchat**, including [Taco Bell](#), which does an excellent job gamifying **Snapchat** on special occasions such as Valentine’s Day.
- Create “next moments,” or actions that occur after a **brand** and a consumer find each other. **Dunkin’ Donuts** created a next moment by encouraging **Snapchat** users to walk into its stores and receive a free cup of coffee.

As **Snapchat** builds out its targeting capabilities to justify its **advertising** rates, I believe next moments represent a huge opportunity for **brands** on **Snapchat** in 2016. Enterprise **brands** with multiple locations can and should tap into the **Snapchat** geo-filtering feature to create customers at the local level. So long as businesses stay focused on creating the right kind of contextual content, **brands** will win and so will **Snapchat**.

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