

MOBILE

## Snapchat's unpolished content establishes closeness between brand and consumer

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*Burberry Snapchat campaign in progress*

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By SARAH JONES

As content consumption continues to shift toward mobile devices, Snapchat is benefiting due to its quick bursts of immediate entertainment.

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**Luxury Daily**

According to Fashionbi's "[Snapchat For Live Storytelling](#)" report, the fastest growing social platform has the highest penetration among millennials, with 71 percent of its users under the age of 34. With high engagement rates and a growing user base, brands that are not already leveraging Snapchat's intimate storytelling capabilities should embrace the platform.

"With 200 million plus active users, most of them millennials and women, Snapchat is the next big thing in fashion PR," said Ambika Zutshi, CEO of [Fashionbi](#), Milan. "It is an entirely new and more intimate way to tell a story, where the brand has the opportunity to feed to the consumers exclusive never-seen-before scoops, making them feel special and closer to the brand, and at the same time get their real and genuine responses on the content."

"A brand needs to go where its audience is, and Snapchat, being such a private platform, is getting a lot of interest from the people who are already bored of seeing the same content from their favorite brands repeated across the mainstream social channels," she said. "Moreover, the brands, including luxury ones, have already been sharing 'behind-the-scenes' and such 'real' moments from their fashion shows and events on Facebook and Instagram channels, so why not take it to the next level and make such content more personal and exclusive?"

### Sharing stories

Snapchat users are prolific posters, with more than 400 million stories created per day. Snapchat's 90,599 snaps per 10 seconds beats its nearest competitor WhatsApp by more than 7,000.

Increasingly, fashion labels are becoming part of the conversation as they turn to the platform to disrupt traditional marketing.

Burberry, for instance, used Snapchat's story feature to create a temporary ad campaign. For 24 hours, consumers could tune in to view the behind-the-scenes process of its spring/summer 2015 campaign photo shoot as captured by Mario Testino ([see story](#)).

Similarly Gucci gave a first view of its ad campaign starring Jared Leto by handing over its Snapchat account to the actor. Mr. Leto documented his time on set over three days, snapping selfies and giving viewers a feel for the experience of being a spokesmodel ([see story](#)).



*Snap from Gucci's Jared Leto takeover*

Continuing his role of Snapchat curator for the house, Mr. Leto again posted for the brand as he took creative director Alessandro Michele with him to the Academy Awards.

Snapchat has also become a means for brands to take consumers into charity initiatives.

Louis Vuitton enabled its followers to virtually attend the UNICEF Ball in Los Angeles as part of its work with the United Nation's Children's Fund.

Runway show footage was one of the first uses of Snapchat by luxury labels, and the platform is now an integral part of the social media mix surrounding fashion shows.

As early as the fall/winter 2015 season, brands such as Michael Kors and Stella McCartney were using snaps to give an unfiltered look at fashion week ([see story](#)).



*Michael Kors snaps from New York Fashion Week fall/winter 2015*

With these, timing is everything. Brands should consider spreading out content to multiple snaps shared throughout the course of at least a few hours.

Valentino frequently takes consumers inside its atelier prior to its shows, while Dior chose to have models document the backstage atmosphere before its cruise 2016 runway presentation, taking followers through to the after party.

Other live events also lend themselves to the platform. During the Superbowl in 2014, Audi teamed with satirical news outlet The Onion to share a series of humorous snaps. Meant as an alternative to the football-centric discussions of the day, the snaps covered topics such as pop culture or weather.

For instance, one of Audi's snaps showed a groundhog, with a caption reading he had seen his shadow and a mower.

Fashionbi suggests that a brand's Snapchat account earn placement alongside other social media icons on its Web site, with the account name spelled out. By mentioning the Snapchat account on other platforms, brands can organically grow their following from those who have already proven interest.

Rewarding those who follow with exclusive content can help them feel a part of an inner circle.



### *Fendi's Fendirumi Snapchat takeover*

With the relatively young age of most Snapchat users, whose audience is between 13 and 25 years old, it may be beneficial to connect with these fans through a contest or promotion.

Contrary to the typically controlled image of luxury brands with highly produced imagery and carefully constructed text, Snapchat often represents a more realistic side of fashion. The sometimes blurry imagery captured on a mobile phone can actually prove beneficial to a label, as consumers say it makes them feel closer to a brand, leaving them wanting more.

"Since it is a more real-time human platform, the audience tend to forgive the not-so-perfect quality content being shared with them," Ms. Zutshi said. "In our experience with

luxury brands' analyzes during special events and campaigns, we saw that if the same happens on say Facebook on Instagram, the engagement is next to none.

"There, people expect the brands to take time and present the best curated content possible," she said. "But if the same low-quality content is shared on Snapchat, due to its in-the-moment nature, people understand and assume the content to be un-photoshopped. It is amazing how this channel can make the brands get away with anything, given that they manage to simulate audience's senses with unexpected stories."

Personality profiles

Influencer campaigns can help a brand reach an audience that is largely inaccessible by traditional media.

Japanese skincare brand SK-II leveraged the buzz surrounding red carpet beauty with a Snapchat takeover.

SK-II invited top beauty influencers Jenn Im and That's Heart to take over its newly established Snapchat account, SKIIOfficial. During the week-long takeover, the beauty influencers gave followers insider access to actress Cate Blanchett as she prepared for the red carpet during the 88th annual Academy Awards Feb. 28 ([see story](#)).

Apart from flashy events, Snapchat offers an opportunity to include consumers in corporate occasions.

Swiss watchmaker Hublot took consumers inside the inauguration of its second manufacturing facility in Nyon, Switzerland, with a Snapchat story.

More than doubling its current production space, the #Hublot2 project was a \$20.6 million investment meant to keep up with the growing demand for the brand's timepieces, enabling it to expand its workforce. As 300 guests, including VIP clients, brand friends, ambassadors and journalists joined together at the facility to officially open its doors, Hublot let consumers be part of the select crowd through Snapchat ([see story](#)).

"A lot is being done by the brands already that the other players can take inspiration from," Ms. Zutshi said. "For instance, Gucci bagged Jared Leto as the face of its men's Guilty fragrance where the actor also took over the brand's Snapchat showing 'the making of' its ad campaign in Venice. Burberry gave its fans an unprecedented unfiltered view into the creation of its spring/summer 2016 advertising campaign.

"H&M gamified its content, creating a contest in Poland where the brand hid clues in several of its store locations, sending the viewers hints of where they could find the next clues to win two tickets to a big music gig," she said. "At the same time, World Wildlife Fund used it for animal welfare purposes, where the organization did a campaign called #LastSelfie where they showed short clips of endangered animals with the slogan 'Don't let it be my #LastSelfie.' This created a big buzz, higher awareness and positive perception toward the project.

"In addition, just recently Snapchat announced the release of analytics behind a

campaign for the brand to evaluate better the ROI," she said. "The opportunities are immense, brands just need to find their own way to create an appeal, a way never used before in none of the their mainstream channels."

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