

SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

Instagram introduces live video, with massive audience for marketers

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Instagram Live is a feature of its Stories page

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By [Danny Parisi for Mobile Marketer](#)

Instagram is following in the footsteps of its parent company, Facebook, with the introduction of Instagram Live, providing an opportunity for brands to connect with millions of Instagram users in a more organic, unstructured way.

The update comes along with the addition of other features inspired by other popular social networks, such as disappearing video shared between friends similar to Snapchat. The new feature comes on the heels of the popularity of other platforms' live streaming capabilities, such as the ones provided by Facebook and Twitter.

"Instagram Live is a natural extension for the platform, which gives it an amazing toolkit to harness the more than 100 million consumers that are already using Instagram Stories," Greg Lieber, head of global partnerships at [VaynerMedia](#). "The platform continues to intelligently engage users by rolling out great features and giving brands the tools to market to their followers."

Instagram Live

As live streaming platforms such as Periscope along with live streaming capabilities of mainstream social media platforms continue to grow in popularity, Instagram is getting in on the action with its own form of live streaming in the form of Instagram Live.

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Instagram Live

Unlike some other live streaming platforms such as Twitch, users cannot save a live broadcast for later. Instead, every stream is gone the moment it finishes, meaning that both regular users and brands that are taking advantage of the new feature need to make every minute count.

Instagram Live presents a unique opportunity for brands both in its scope and the diversity of its userbase.

"The Live opportunity is massive for marketers," Mr. Lieber said. "For example, a retailer can broadcast live from a

store opening; a TV network can show interviews or bonus footage to time with a show's premiere; a snack or food company can broadcast a live cooking demonstration to promote a product, and so forth.

"What will make this truly unique for brands on Instagram is its scale. Brands have courted followers on the platform for the past two years and can now address them in this unique format."

Live video

Live video presents an interesting opportunity for marketers in that the campaigns launched throughout can be a little looser, a little less strict than a standard campaign, due to the ephemeral nature of the format.

A brand that has made excellent use of live streaming video in the past is Fox, who premiered the first episode of its hit new show *Outcast* a few weeks before the TV premiere through Facebook Live ([see story](#)).

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Some of the many uses for Instagram Live

In addition to seeing huge numbers of engagement with their social media channel during the course of the premiere, the brand also saw a boost in retention of social media interactions, with more users following the account and sticking with it.

That kind of retention is key to keeping customers engaged with a brand's social media presence.

"Unlike traditional digital video, live video offers brands the ability to deliver and tailor content on-the-fly to a live audience while its ephemeral nature encourages immediate engagement," said Sean Cullen, executive vice president of product and technology at [Fluent](#). "Obviously, promotions, product demos, testimonials, and Q&As become a lot more relevant when you're able to speak to and listen to your consumers in real-time."

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