

SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

## Live video wars continue as Twitter introduces 360-degree live video

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*Image courtesy of Twitter*

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Twitter is offering the ability to record live video in an immersive 360-degree format to "select partners" of its streaming application, Periscope.

The feature, which debuted this week, allows all users to view the 360-degree videos, and works similarly to analog products at YouTube and Facebook. It is also the company's highest profile investment in its Periscope property this year, a year which it began as the subject acquisition talks and ended with a bloodletting of talent, including the departures of chief technology officer Adam Messenger and vice president of product Josh McFarland.

"Video, especially 360 video, provides the ability to add complete context to the shared experience; not only can you see the initial frame being shared, but you can also see all that is happening around the person sharing the experience," said Michael Becker, managing partner of The Connected Marketer Institute. "I think there are many factors contributing to Twitter's release of this feature, and following the competition is merely one of them.

"I'm sure Twitter, like everyone else, is looking to experiment with this new medium, explore what is possible with it and how it can delight its users, re-frame the nature of content creation and distribution and create monetization models for its platform and partners."

### Select partners

The new feature was announced in a post on Twitter's blog on Wednesday, along with a [link](#) to the first such 360-degree video.

Users will be able to differentiate between the two kinds of live video through a badge marked LIVE 360. They will be able to interact with the video through moving their phones or swiping on the screen.

Periscope is only offering the ability to stream in 360-degree video to a select few partners, which have not been outlined.

Users lucky enough to have the ability to stream on the platform will have to plug a special camera to the bottom of

their phones to fully leverage the technology.

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"There is still so much to learn and explore about the 360-degree video," Mr. Becker said. "We don't yet know where it will be most optimally used, when there will be a critical mass of 360-degree cameras in use by individuals or professionals throughout the market, if people will have access to the needed software to edit the video and if they'll understand the best way to interact with it.

"Moreover, there are a wealth of questions around customer services and experience models as well as with various advertising and commerce models for 360-degree video. With all this in mind, I think it is prudent that Twitter start its trials with a select group of partners."

### **Live 360 video**

Twitter's rough patch this year has constituted one of the more compelling storylines in tech. Following monetization problems, the shutdown of mobile video property Vine, and the departure of the aforementioned executives, the company finally seems to be getting its bearings back especially if they are able to communicate the platform's conduciveness to 360-degree video ([see story](#)).

One possible application for the 360-degree feature could be an immersive look at award shows, augmenting existing promotions such as its partnership to live stream the Golden Globes this year ([see story](#)).

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"Starting with a few select partners is a great way to start," Mr. Becker said. "It will afford Twitter the time and resources to experiment with various product and editing models, begin to test and enhance its infrastructure, including the integration of necessary monitoring and analytics features, and give it time to obtain feedback from viewers before releasing the capability out into the wild to all its users.

"Also, there is much to consider on the privacy front, as so much more can be captured and recorded with 360-degree video, especially in 4D."

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