

WHITE PAPER ON
**Leveraging the Stories
format on Instagram,
Facebook & Snapchat
with Swipe Up Games.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stories is the new feed. Brands are creating more stories than ever and users are consuming more vertical story content than ever, this is evident in the numbers and charts you'll see in the introduction. Who thought ephemeral content will make such a dent in digital marketing and advertising? In this white paper, we explore the emergence of stories, their growth and why marketers should care about stories.

We then move onto how stories are made more fun by introducing gaming in stories. With Swipe Up Games, users are able to play byte sized hyper casual games natively. Stories are here to stay and brands need to innovate on how they can engage and interact with their audiences on stories.

SUMMARY

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The Emergence of Stories

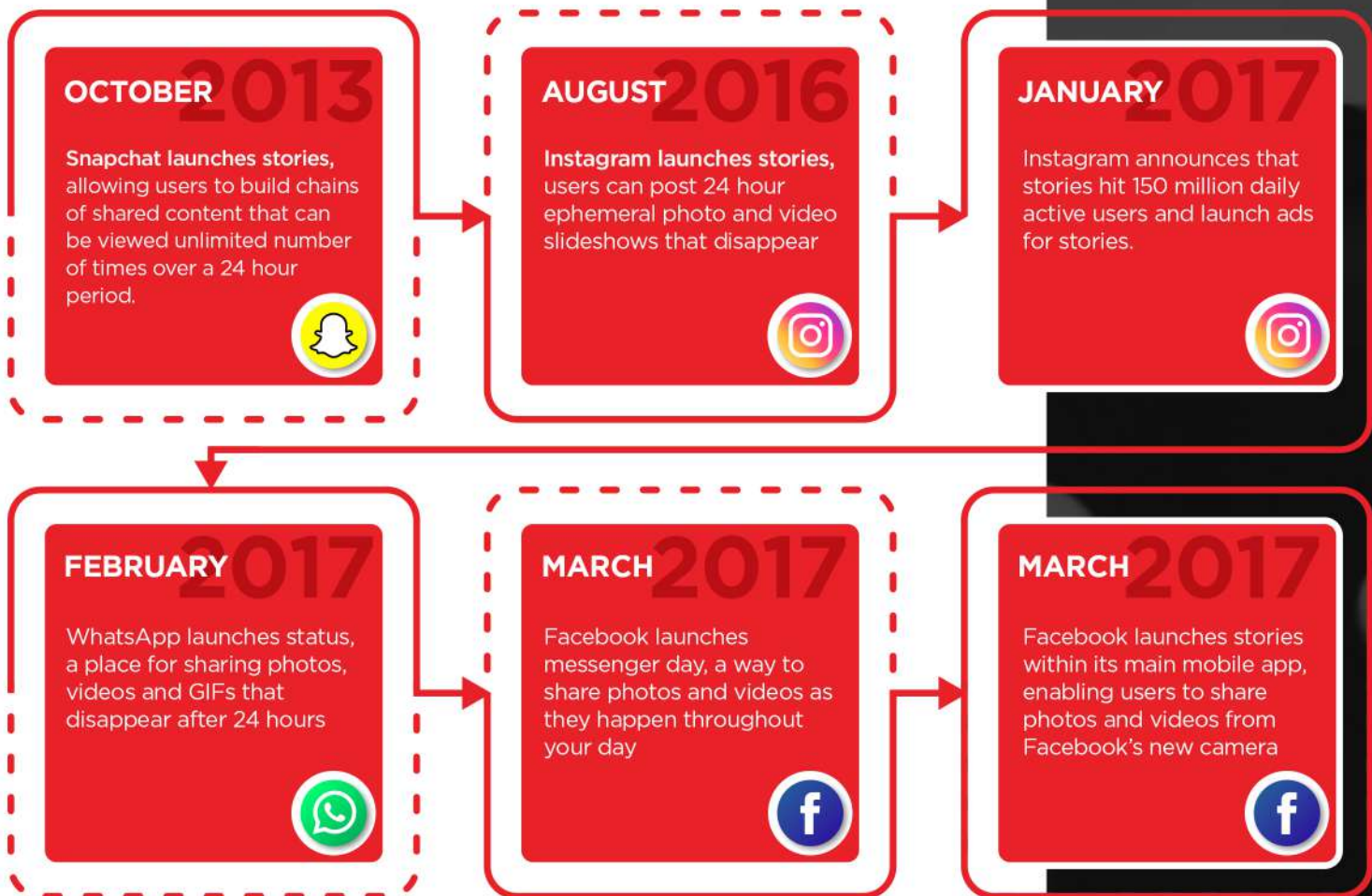


Image 1: The evolution of Stories (Source: Buffer)

While Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat appear to be incredibly different platforms, there's a thriving feature that all these platforms have in common: Stories.

Stories first came into existence in the year 2013. In October 2013, Snapchat had launched Stories. Since then, this feature has become a part of Instagram, WhatsApp and Facebook.

This is how the story format originated and grew over the years (Image 2)

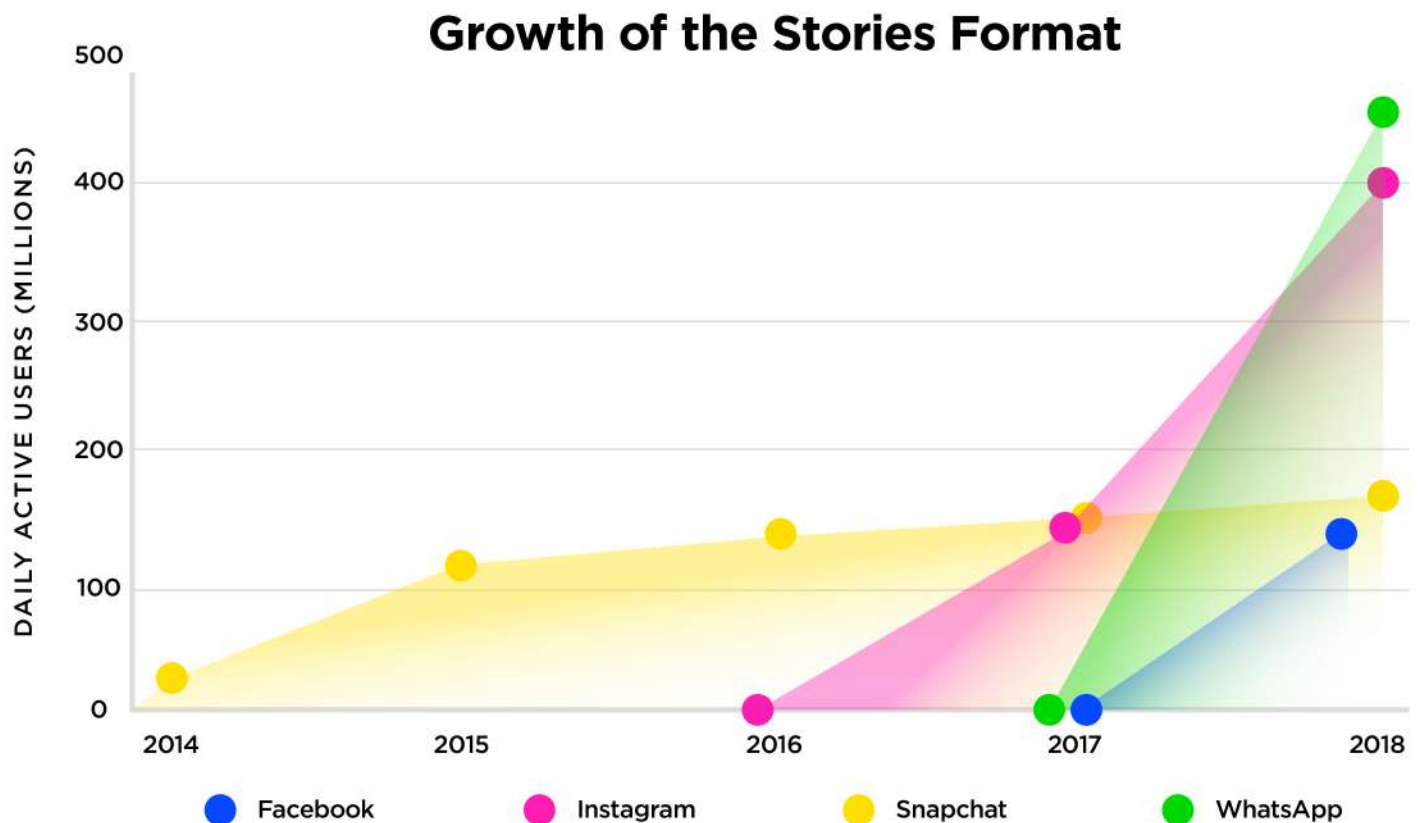
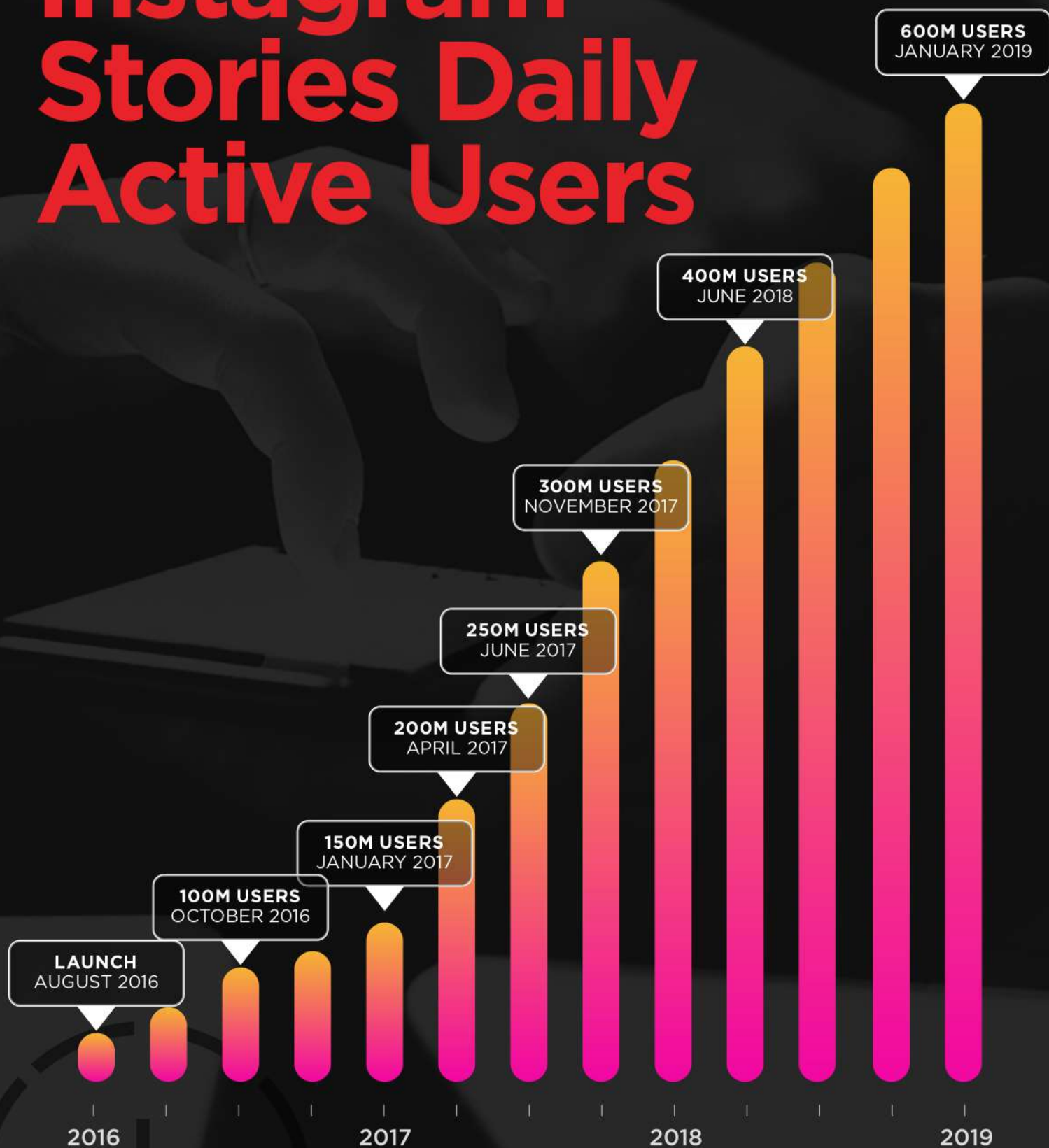


Image 2: Growth of the Stories format (Source: Buffer)

By the end of 2019, 600 million users were actively using Instagram stories everyday. And that number is growing very consistently. Here is a closer look at the growth of Instagram Stories. The graph shown in the image 3 represents how the number of active users grew year on year.



Instagram Stories Daily Active Users



Naturally, both Facebook and Instagram Stories have become an invaluable resource for influencer marketing campaigns. Not only do influencers love it, but audiences do, too. Compared to the glossy, polished images in the regular Instagram feed, Stories open up opportunities to publish more authentic, off-the-cuff content. Thanks to Stories, Instagram and Facebook have emerged as the most important social media channel for influencer marketing as per a survey conducted by MediaKix (Image 4)

Which Social Media Channels are most important for Influencer Marketing?

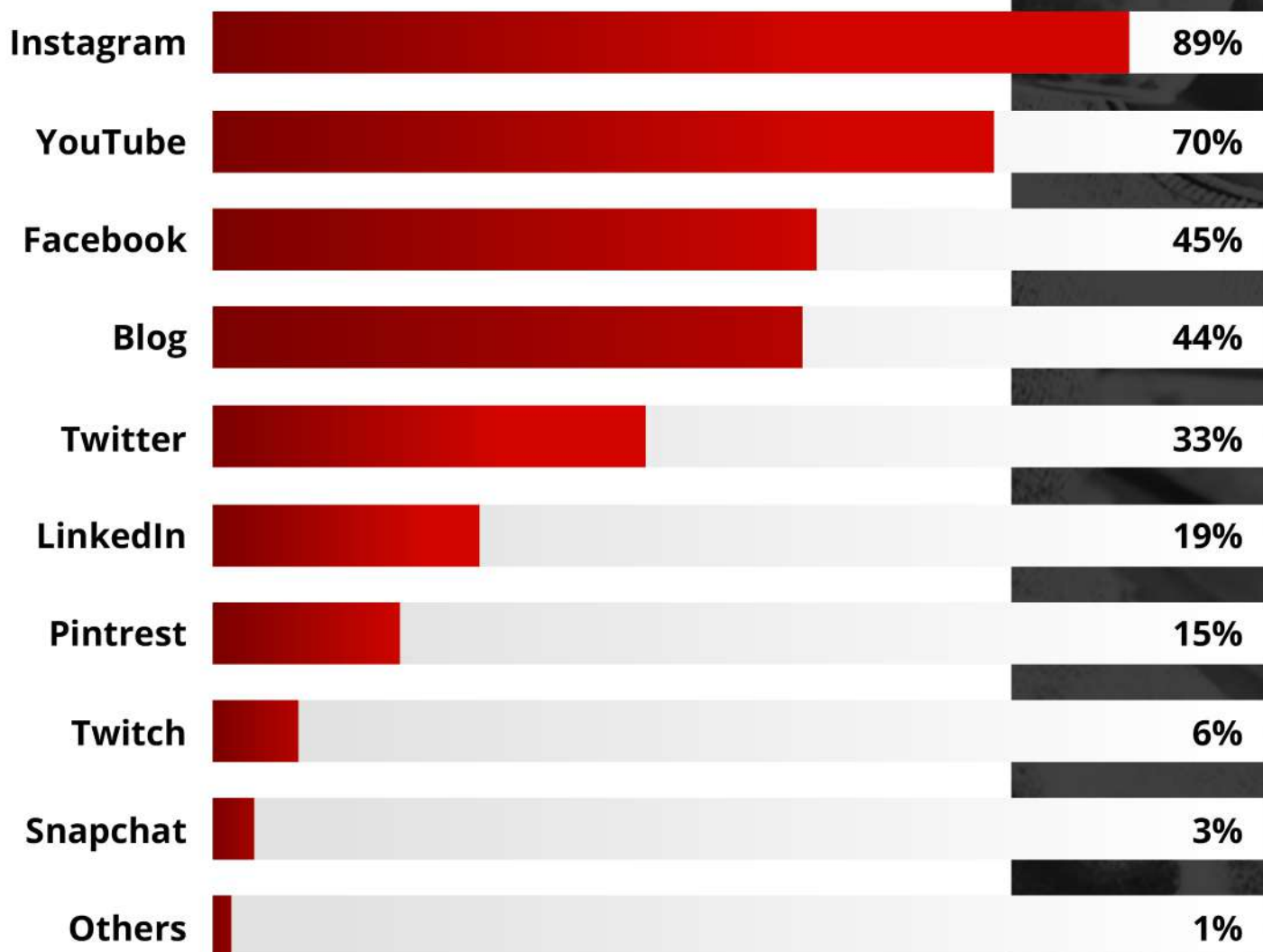


Image 4: Most important social media channels for influencer marketing (source: MediaKix)

The maximum length of an Instagram Story video is 15 seconds, compared to just 7 seconds for a photo. Instagram Story videos are shorter than the “story” format of Facebook and Snapchat. The maximum length of a facebook story is up to to 20 seconds. Whereas Snapchat stories can be up to 60-second long.

And unlike regular posts on Facebook or Instagram, stories are not there forever. 24 hours after posting, the stories automatically delete themselves. This is what makes stories a little more unique than other posts that remain for good in the news feed section. Stories allow us to effectively and creatively showcase our highly visual side. And as video platforms and the video format of content continue to expand, this feature won't be losing steam any time soon.

Why Do People Love Stories (Excerpts from Facebook For Business Survey)

01 They're immersive

73% of people agree that stories enable them to experience new things outside their everyday lives.

02 They're authentic

65% of people say that stories help them feel closer and more up to date with friends.

03 They're inclusive

57% of people say that stories make them feel part of a larger community

04 They're hard to get enough of

62% of people say that they plan to use stories even more in the future than they do today

Source: Facebook

Why Marketers Should Care About Stories

Marketers across the globe have become quite Story-savvy. On any given platform (Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram in particular) with Story feature, we can find a number of brands using Stories to publish content related to their industry, how-tos related to their products, or simply their customer testimonials. With over 500 million active users each, Instagram and Facebook **Stories offer a great platform for businesses to connect with new audiences, boost engagement — and even drive more sales!**

According to Instagram, **one-third of the platform's most-viewed Stories are from businesses.** As individuals are increasingly referring to social media platforms to research their prospective purchases, Stories serve as a medium for brands to creatively and powerfully showcase their products, services, or happy customers in action. **As brands are linking Stories to relevant and engaging content on their website and other digital properties, they're finding that the strategy can generate significant qualified traffic as well.**

Let's take a look at more discrete figures about Instagram and Facebook stories that would encourage every marketer to think about story ads as a must-to-consider element of their marketing mix:

INSTAGRAM



Nearly 1.7 billion accounts use the Stories format daily.



500 million users now use Instagram Stories every day.



1 in 4 Millennials and Gen Z-ers look for Stories of the products and services they want to buy.



15%-25% of people swipe up on a link in branded Stories.



One-third of the most-viewed Instagram Stories are from businesses.



36% of businesses use Instagram Stories for product promotion.



59% of brands link Instagram Stories to a shoppable page.



The average posting frequency for IG Stories is 2.3 posts per week.



Instagram Stories accounts for 34% of Instagram's sponsored content



FACEBOOK



Facebook isn't just using Stories to keep people engaged, but to squeeze more cash out of them.



In April 2019, Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg had announced that 3 million advertisers have bought Stories ads across Facebook's family of apps. By April 2020, this figure must have grown significantly. As of now, we do not have a new official update on this.



Each of Facebook's Stories experiences – Facebook and Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp – have more than half a billion people using them every day



There are four million advertisers using Stories ads every month



There are one billion stories shared every day across the Facebook family of apps

Source: Facebook

And here's how Facebook sums it all - the time to harness the power of stories is now! 500 Mil daily users, 4 Mil advertisers using stories ads every month and a whopping 1 Billion stories shared every day.

THE TIME TO HARNESS THE POWER OF STORIES IS NOW.

500M+

Each of our Stories experiences - Facebook and Messenger, Instagram and Whatsapp - have more than half a billion people using them every day.

4M

There are four million advertisers using Stories ads every month.

1B

There are one billion stories shared everyday across the Facebook family of apps.

Facebook for Business conducted an in-house survey to learn what makes stories ads work for businesses. They shared some interesting insights.

- When Facebook asked people what actions they have taken after seeing a product/service in a story, 58% said they have browsed the brand's website to get more information, one in two have visited websites where they could buy it and 31% have gone to a shop to have a look.
- When asked what they're most interested in seeing from brands in Stories, 52% of people said they wanted Stories that are quick and easy to understand, 50% wanted to be introduced to new products, and 46% wanted Stories from brands to offer tips or advice.



Why Add Swipe Up Feature to a Story?

Stories are used as an audience acquisition tool

According to Swipe.io, “swipe-through rates average between 15 and 25 percent -- which is a killer conversion rate”. This means that on an average, 15 to 20 percent of impressions on linked Story posts lead to swipe-ups. Often, these swipe-ups lead to sign-ups. This phenomenon has encouraged more publishers and influencers to use **Stories as an audience acquisition tool**.

15 - 25%

Source: Swipe.io

Of Story Views **Swipe UP** to the call to action link and engage directly with a brand's website.



Sign Up from a Swipe Up on Story is worth more in lifetime value

For some reason it has been seen that someone signing up from a swipe-up on a Story is worth more in lifetime value than sign-ups from people who came across a post.

Swipe Up is an important feature for measuring engagement, and hence ROI, as well. For measuring ROI of stories, the most important Instagram Story feature is the **swipe-up call to action**. When users swipe up on a Story, they're taken straight to a brand's website, a landing page or an engaging game. More insights about the audience can be fetched through another set of analytics tools used on these platforms.

How Swipe Up Games Make Stories More Powerful

Although Stories show continued upward trends, there has been a decline in engagement in the past some time. And this is a part of every product/feature lifecycle. A lot of it has to do with overdoing Story solicitations. Statistics show a decline in swipe-through rate on Story links in the recent past as more businesses have adopted Swipe Up for solicitations. As more and more advertisers started taking advantage of the Swipe Up call-to-action feature, the users started skipping stories that ask for them to swipe up.

But at the same time, innovative companies have used the Swipe Up feature in their favor to increase engagement. A majority of these great companies offer innovative games, quizzes, and surprises through Swipe Up rather than trying to send the users to the brand's website in anticipation of selling products or services.

Considering a steep growth in stories on various platforms, a bit of decline in swipe through rate does not really matter. But to the forward thinking marketers, this early warning signal has given an opportunity to use Swipe Up feature to drive quality engagement by coming up with engaging content. **Gamified content such as Swipe Up games have done wonders in not just increasing swipe-through rates but engagement as well at the same time.** Over a period of time these engaged players turn into advocates, attract more players and ultimately create a pool of engaged and loyal online buyers.



Game Analytics further boost the power of Story

There is no value for Marketers in just pointing and shooting. The best brands on Facebook and Instagram track performance, perform A/B tests and replicate their successes. Story analytics primarily offer three types of insights -

Interactions, Discovery, and Navigation. On the other hand, game analytics offer a ton of engagement data. As the Swipe Up games are mostly custom designed, they can be customized for literally any kind of data a marketer needs. Stories analytics by the platform such as Facebook and Instagram, coupled with the game analytics can offer literally every insight that would ever be required by the marketers to achieve the best results.

STORY ANALYTICS



Interaction data

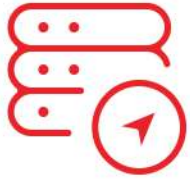
The interaction metric represents the total actions people take when they see a Story. These include metrics such as the number of times people reply to a Story, the number of times people visit a profile from a Story; and the number of times people have tapped on a geotag, hashtag, mention, or product sticker on a Story (also called sticker taps).





Discovery Data

Discovery metric measures the number of accounts that view a Story (also called the number of impressions).



Navigation Data

Navigation stats track the overall completion rate of an Instagram or Facebook Story. Under Navigation, one can see the total number of navigational actions (such as back, forward, next story and exit) people take from a story.

Discovery and impression metrics are key to helping the scope of the audience. These metrics can be used to calculate the rate of engagement with the Stories content. More importantly, they track how many people are discovering a brand's content. New followers gained through Stories show how Stories are contributing to brand awareness.



Game Analytics

Although these are great statistics, story analytics is just the tip of an iceberg. The real engagement insights come from Gaming Analytics. Following are some of the most widely used metrics to understand player engagement and the desired actions required to be taken.

METRICS

How much potential do games have?

KPI

Day 1 retention

DESIRED ACTION

Low day 1 retention for a game means that the game needs a massive overhaul.

METRICS

Are players still coming back after a week?

KPI

7 Day Retention

DESIRED ACTION

When the same game is played repeatedly, players lose interest. This is why retention goes down by day 7. If this is the kind of trend with a game, new content needs to be unlocked for the gamers immediately. These can be in the form of new levels or some other challenge.

METRICS

Players that come back after 28 days are truly engaged

KPI

Day 28 retention

DESIRED ACTION

If players are still playing after 28 days, there is a clear indication that they really love that game. But then we need to think of the next steps? Maybe something like introducing Most Valuable Player recognition or a new expert mode for the game; or entry to the leaderboards. These are all great ways to keep players excited.

METRICS

How long do people play on average?

KPI

Average session length (ASL)

DESIRED ACTION

There may be players who do not play for long. And there can be players who complete all the levels in very less time. There must be strategies for both the categories. For example, the players who finish the game quickly need to be rewarded.

METRICS

How engaged are players in a game?

KPI

Degree of engagement of Stickiness is the DAU-to-MAU ratio, which essentially means how many monthly users play each day

DESIRED ACTION

These are the players who can be the real advocates. They are the ones who receive daily communications from the brands. They must be encouraged to share good things about the brand as an advocate.



METRICS

Which genre gets the most players converting?

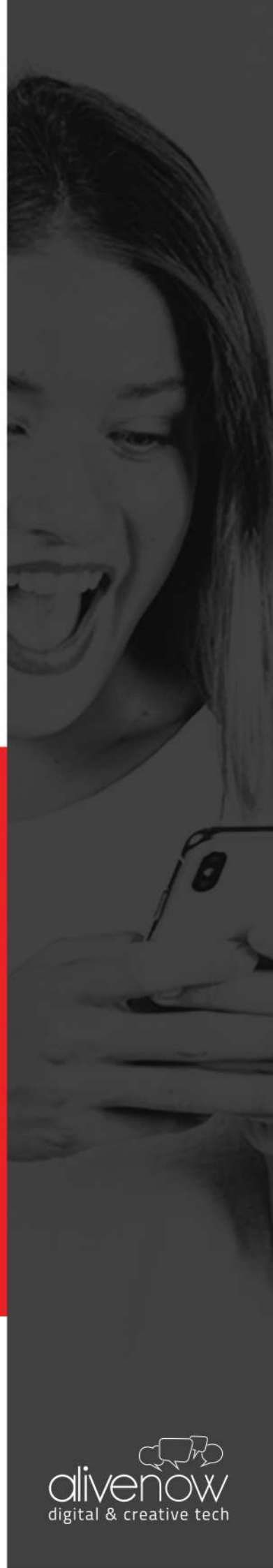
KPI

Conversion data

DESIRED ACTION

Conversion data shows the increase or decrease in the conversion rate. Further drill down tells us more about potential reasons for increase or decrease. Timely strategies can be deployed to ensure that conversion is always increasing or at least remains constant.

As mentioned earlier, the above table shows some of the most widely used metrics to understand player engagement. In a real life scenario, thousands of actionable insights can be generated through the swipe-up game analytics. Story analytics coupled with the game analytics can literally help marketers take timely actions and increase conversions. For publishers, it can be a great way to increase impressions and clicks to monetize content.



Developing Swipe Up Games for your brand

Bringing in expertise in Swipe Up game development is crucial

As “stories” is a mobile-only feature, Swipe Up games are built for mobile-first, optimized for vertical in-app browser experience.

Swipe Up Games have to be custom designed and custom built for brands. Brand can work with specialized game developers that specialize in creating Swipe Up games. There are a number of mobile games development companies out there. However, the objective of Swipe Up games is different from other generic mobile games. Swipe Up games developers must understand the brand's end goal such as audience engagement, brand recall or revenue generation to be able to create an engaging game that creates value for the marketer or the brand. A generic game developer may not understand Marketer's needs because the games that they develop are usually made for the end users not for brands.

Then, the games developed should be optimized for various devices and should integrate perfectly with stories on prominent social media platforms.



Additionally, generic mobile games developers may not be capable of offering robust analytics in the backend. While social media platforms give us engagement analytics for the posted stories, Swipe Up games give additional sets of analytics related to how users engaged with the Swipe Up game. These analytics help brands measure overall effectiveness of the game. The data can be sliced and diced in multiple ways to extract required insights.

Also, brands should have the ability to keep generating new gamified content for various occasions. While gamers gain proficiency in one game, it's a great idea to introduce something new time and again. Considering the need for a specialized game developer and the frequency of new gamified content, it would be a good idea for brands to work with professional game developers.

Following the standard process for conceptualizing, developing and deploying a Swipe Up game



Most professional game developers follow a set of best practices to create games for you. The standard process to deploy a Swipe Up game experience is as follows:

STEP 01 **Brief**

The process begins with the brief. You need to share your brief and the game developer would come back with ideas. If you are very sure about the game that you want to build, simply share what Swipe Up Game you want the developer to build. Do not forget to document everything throughout the entire process.

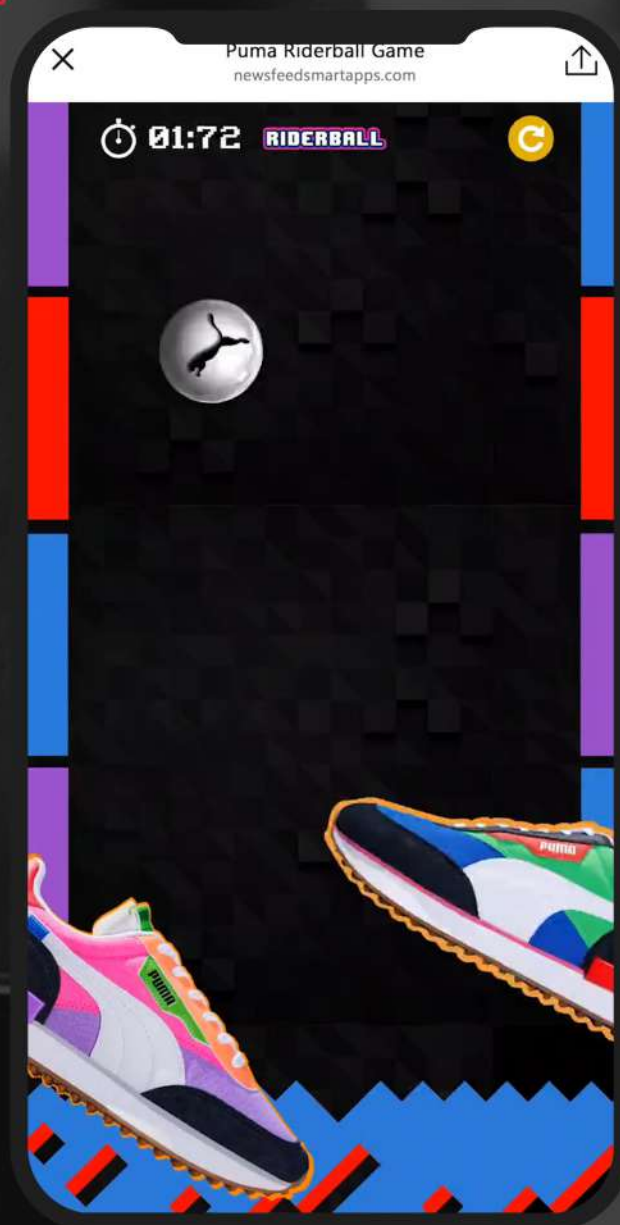
STEP 02 **Design**

You may have seen in the above example that all the Swipe Up games have at least three layers. These are game screens, Swipe Up story video that appears in the story section or the news feed, and the game. Let's take the example of Puma's Swipe Up game once again.



Here is the first component that users see. This is the Swipe Up story video. This appears in the story section and encourages users to Swipe Up.

And as soon as the user clicks on the PLAY tab on the game screen, the game gets launched.



In this step, you would need to work with the developer to design and create the game screen and the swipe up story video that will promote the game.

STEP 03

Develop & Test

In the third step, the gaming company develops the entire game using the latest technologies and tests it across devices. It is very important to thoroughly test the game on all devices, platforms and conditions to ensure zero bugs before the launch. Games with bugs would not only reduce engagement but dilute your brand equity.

STEP 04

Go Live

Once the development and testing process is over, the game developer would assist you with going live with the Swipe Up game.

STEP 05

Analyse

When the game is live and your audience starts engaging with your gamified content, you can access your game's analytics dashboard where you can track the Swipe Up game performance. Based on the analytics, you can add or remove some features and do A/B testing. If you see an overall positive trend, work on ways to engage more and more audiences with the game. Very soon, you would see the impact of games on your end goal.



Five examples of how some of the leading brands are using swipe up games

Now that we know how to create Swipe Up games and stories to promote on social media, let's look at five examples of how brands such as Puma, Pepsi, Hitachi, Domino's and Britania use Swipe Up ads to engage their audience.

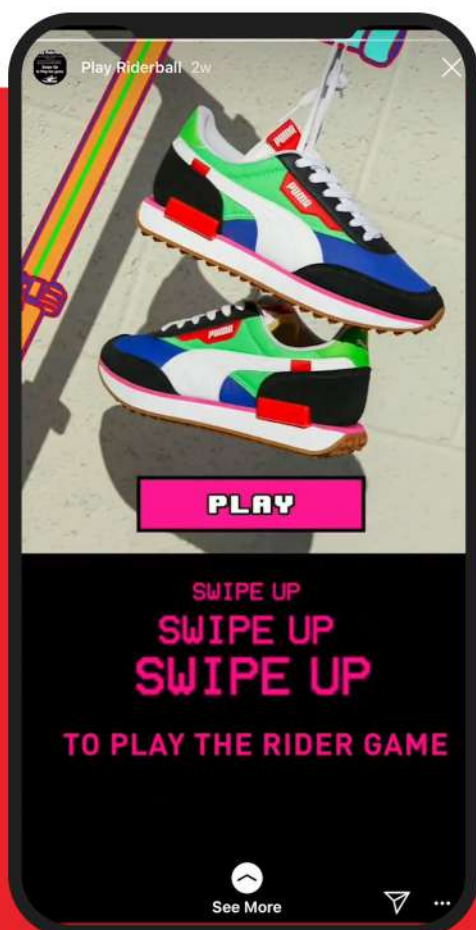


DIDI MAX CABBY GAME

This game has a very clean interface. All you have to do is become a cab driver. Drive your cab and keep accepting or declining the ride requests. As soon as your cab gets full, you collect a voucher. In no time, you unlock 5 to 10% off discount coupons for your next ride. Copy the code and use it when you book your next ride in the DiDi Max cab. It's super fun!

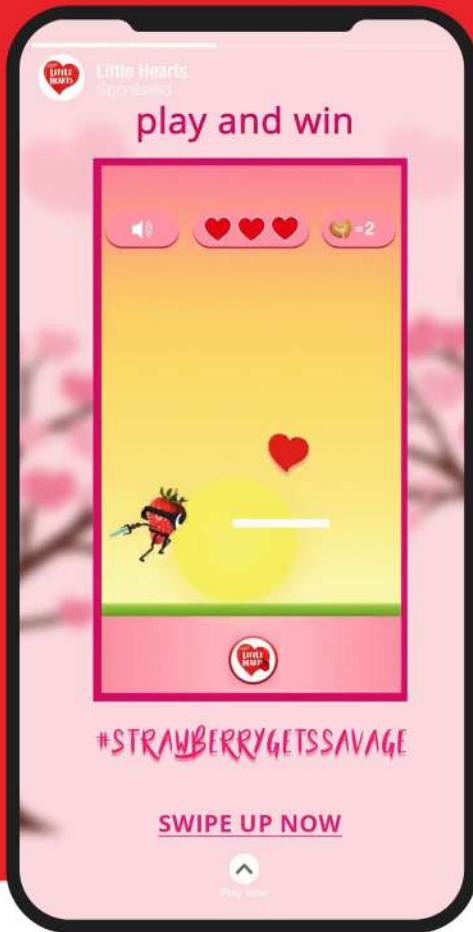
BEN & JERRY'S SPACE ADVENTURE

When you purchase any Ben & Jerry's ice cream and play the Ben & Jerry's Space Adventure mobile game, you stand a chance to win a pair of return air tickets every week. Simply play the game and score as many pints (points) as you can, and upload the receipt with your purchase to validate the game! Top moo-niacs can view their progress on Ben & Jerry's weekly leaderboard on Ben & Jerry's Facebook page.



PUMA RIDERBALL GAME

This is a very simple and engaging game that targets a young population that would certainly try out a game like this to win a pair of Puma shoes. The game is super simple with easy instructions and a cool interface. All you have to do is to clear the coloured bars in the quickest possible time to unlock the hidden shoes.



LITTLE HEARTS STRAWBERRY NINJA

This game offers a very soothing pink interface. The player needs to click on Britania's little heart at the bottom of the screen to pop a strawberry and kill a bunch of "mush" sitting on trees. After you kill a certain number of "mush", a screen pops up and says "Congratulations, You're the strawberry Ninja. An absolute fun game. It's addictive. As soon as you submit the score, you get an option to buy little hearts strawberries from Big Basket.

DOMINO'S PIZZA CATCHER

What can be a better motivation for a pizza-lover to win a pizza just by playing a super interesting game on their smartphone! All you have to do is move your plate left and right and catch as many pizzas as you can in 30 seconds. 10 points for every pizza caught and 5 points for the elements of the topping! One can play this game 50 times a day to win more and more points without getting bored. Just like the games in the above examples, this game, too, is super engaging. When you have sufficient points, you can redeem it very easily.



CONCLUSION

Stories have become a crucial social media feature. This feature started with Snapchat and soon became an instant success on Instagram and Facebook. Stories are viewed roughly by 500 Million users each on Facebook and Instagram per day. Approximately, one-third of the platform's most-viewed Stories are from businesses. And about on an average, 15 to 20 percent of impressions on linked Story posts lead to swipe-ups. As advertisers have taken advantage of the Swipe Up call-to-action feature, a small number of users began to skip past anything that asks for them to swipe up. But to the forward thinking marketers, this early warning signal has presented an opportunity to use Swipe Up feature to drive quality engagement by coming up with engaging content. Gamified content such as Swipe Up games have done wonders in not just increasing swipe-through rates but engagement as well.

If you're interested to learn more about Swipe Up games and convert passive story viewers into an engaged audience using Swipe Up games, you may visit **Swipe Up Games official website.**



CONVERT PASSIVE STORY VIEWERS INTO AN ENGAGED AUDIENCE USING SWIPE UP GAMES!

Built for Instagram & Facebook stories, swipe up games enables users to "Swipe Up" on stories to open an interactive gaming experience in the in-app browser!

WHY SWIPE UP GAMES?



Stories is the new feed. More brands are creating stories than ever before!



Stories with Swipe Up games result in higher engagement.



Measure influencer performance as they launch the same game



Built for mobile-first, optimized for vertical in-app browser experience



Media rich promotion capabilities.



Analytics dashboard to assess Swipe Up game performance



Ability to capture data and generate leads



Deploy in Instagram stories swipe up, Facebook stories and Snapchat as well

ABOUT ALIVENOW

AliveNow is a global creative tech studio building incredible experiences at the intersection of marketing and technology. With active operations in India, Middle East and South East Asia we've worked with over 400 brands and 150 agencies globally. Deployed 400+ Newsfeed SmartApp games, Swipe Up Games and Facebook Playable ads for brands across geographies and sectors. As official Facebook and Instagram partners for Augmented Reality, we've created over 200 AR experiences

ABOUT OUR INTERACTIVE GAMING SOLUTIONS FOR BRANDS

Our branded gaming solutions fall under 5 categories. Read about them below and know more by visiting the respective section on our website.



Newsfeed SmartApps (www.newsfeedsmartapps.com):

With Newsfeed SmartApps brands can launch rich, immersive and interactive experiences that work in mobile ad-networks and natively inside social apps like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok & Twitter.



Swipe Up Games (www.swipeupgames.com):

Built for Instagram & Facebook stories, swipe up games enables users to "Swipe Up" on stories to open an interactive gaming experience in the in-app browser!



AR Games:

Augmented Reality gaming experiences in Facebook AR, Instagram AR, Snapchat AR and WebAR.



Facebook Playable Ads:

Building fun hyper-casual byte sized games in Facebook Playable ad format for brands.



In-app Games:

Building gaming sections for existing apps to improve in-app performance and retention time or deploying one-time games in existing brand apps.

THANK YOU!

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