

Snapchat Rallies After a Disastrous 2018, Reveals Original TV Content

By Clara Knapp, J.D. Candidate 2021 | November 6, 2018

When the [Snapchat \(SNAP\)](#) app launched in 2011, it quickly became known amongst teenagers and young adults for its revolutionary new way of instantly sharing photos, videos, and disappearing messages. Now, the company is scrambling to keep users engaged with its social media platform following a disastrous application redesign in February. Analysts say that the redesign [contributed](#) to an “exodus” of [3 million](#) daily users in the second quarter of 2018. Further, the redesign was so disliked it even led to a [petition](#) with hundreds of thousands of signatures to bring back the previous design. In addition, influencer Kylie Jenner [tweeted](#) her disappointment in the app redesign. This tweet has been widely linked to a \$1.3 billion drop in Snapchat’s stock. Although Snapchat quickly modified some aspects of the app, it has yet to completely reboot the design to the previous levels of user satisfaction. Moreover, Snapchat’s struggles continue. In October, Snapchat’s stock was being traded at [all-time lows](#).

To compound Snapchat’s recent troubles, the company faces increasing competition from Instagram, a social media platform owned by Facebook, which in the past two years has begun offering [similar features](#). Some argue that “Instagram Stories” are a “[clone](#)” of “Snapchat Stories,” and that other Snapchat features are also being copied. In fact, Instagram Stories have not only successfully [captured](#) the company’s consumers who are [frustrated with Snapchat’s redesign](#), but also appear to be more than [twice as popular](#) as Snapchat Stories. As such, daily users of Instagram Stories have risen to over [400 million](#) after only two years with the feature.

In an attempt to combat these obstacles and regain users, Snapchat is continuing to implement new updates for the app. One of these updates, which was introduced in October, includes a [television lineup](#) available in the app. These “[Snap Originals](#)” include five-minute episodes of shows and docuseries in genres including drama, horror, and comedy. In the hopes of gaining traction with its target audience, mostly people [25 and under](#), the company is partnering with social media “[stars](#)” and television [writers](#) from shows such as Riverdale and Friday Night Lights. Another update that will distinguish Snap Originals is the integration of Snapchat’s [augmented reality technology](#) into the shows themselves. This means that Snapchat viewers can virtually “interact” with the content in a variety of ways, such as going to the beach with a reality TV star or even walking around a crime scene in a show.

Snapchat’s recent move to provide users with innovative and interactive television content is likely aimed at addressing its biggest obstacle: “[capturing](#) consumers’ attention.” This is especially true for users that currently use Instagram’s features that are similar to Snapchat’s features. Despite events of the past year, Snapchat CEO Evan Spiegel is [optimistic](#) about the company’s future, with the goal of “achieving full-year profitability in 2019.” In all, the outcome



of Snapchat's recent efforts to regain users will foreshadow whether Snapchat will be able to reach its goals.