Snapchat launches new tools for developers, making AR filter creation easier for beginners

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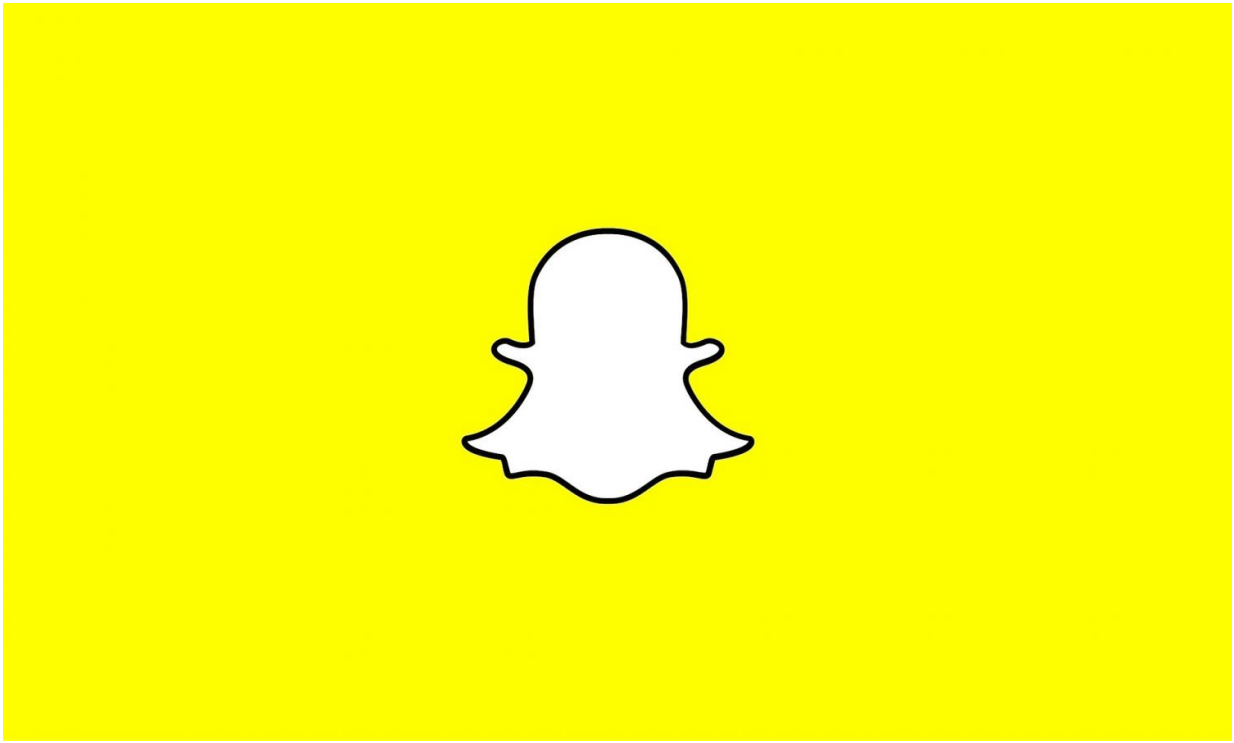

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Snapchat is launching a new tool for developers that will enable them to create filters so you can change your hair color and try on curated makeup in augmented reality.

Starting on Tuesday, creators will find a wide range of new templates and features on Snapchat's desktop app Lens Studio. Using the free app, creators can build everything from 2-D images to interactive environments.

The social networking app that's popular among teens and young adults will include a new template that lets you add customized particles behind a user's head, a Countdown features that lets you create 3-D-hat filters that mark specific dates, and a Hair Color tool that lets you make fresh style choices "from root to tip," according to the press release.

There's also a Make-Up template that will let you create Lenses with built-in AR lipgloss and eyeshadow along with other cosmetics.

As part of the rollout, Snap is adding new "Landmarkers," which are specific lenses that alter some of the world's most famous destinations. They transform locations like the Eiffel Tower and the Flatiron Building in New York City into whimsical animated characters.

Fourteen new Landmarkers are to be available Tuesday for creators to experiment with, and Snapchat users visiting the following destinations will be able to experience them immediately:

1. Arc de Triomphe—Paris, France

2. Astronomical Clock—Prague, Czech Republic

3. Brandenburg Gate—Berlin, Germany

4. El Castillo—Chichen Itza, Mexico

5. Galata Tower—Istanbul, Turkey

6. Gateway of India—Mumbai, India

7. Leaning Tower of Pisa—Pisa, Italy

8. Natural History Museum—London, UK

9. Neues Rathaus—Munich, Germany

10. Qasr Al-Farid—Mada'in Saleh, Saudi Arabia

11. Great Sphinx of Giza—Giza, Egypt

12. Statue of Liberty—New York, US

13. Taj Mahal—Agra, India

14. Tower Bridge—London, UK

Snapchat says it's making the developer app more user-friendly, adding a new interactive tour that guides users through each step to make a Lens. So far, over 500,000 Lenses have been created by its wider community of developers, and the filters have been "played with" over 15 billion times.

Lens Studio invites "artists, students, developers, animators, and more to unleash their creativity—and share it with the millions of people who play with Lenses on Snapchat every single day," according to the website.

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