'Your roots are showing': Photo editing apps surge after salons shut down amid coronavirus

April 2 2020, by Dalvin Brown

Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Faith Zellman used the photo editing app Facetune to spruce up her hair since all the salons in town are closed due to the coronavirus.

The 24-year-old bartender recently lost her job, and she's passing the time by beauty blogging and posting makeup tutorials online.

"Someone called me out during a Facebook Live saying "Your roots are showing,'" Zellman said. "I didn't want anyone else to see that my roots have gotten this bad so I used the app to tint them espresso brown."

In the age of coronavirus, Americans are editing and posting more content on [social media](#) than ever before.

As social distancing drives people to avoid trips to the beautician, forgo events with friends and skip workouts at the gym, many are using apps to soften their appearance and create engaging videos in the midst of stay-at-home orders.

After all, if there isn't a hairstylist around to smooth out your tresses, there are apps that can.

Content editing apps have reported a broadening user base, while apps like Facebook have seen the number of people using [live video](#) streaming features double.

Lightricks, an AI app developer with millions of users across Facetune, Pixaloop, Quickshott and Photofox saw a rise in everyday usage that corresponds directly with the coronavirus outbreak in recent weeks.

"As people need to physically distance themselves in these difficult times, one positive is that humans are finding outlets to fuel their creativity," said Zeev Farbman, CEO of Lightricks.

The series of content creating apps saw a 20% increase in time spent across its lineup of apps worldwide. Its user base tripled and people are spending 25% more time editing videos, according to metrics provided

to U.S. TODAY.

"We're humbled to see so many people keep entertained with our creativity tools," Farbman said.

Cody Wanner, a content creator based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, started using a video editing app called VideoLeap three times as much since the coronavirus began shutting down events in the U.S.

"I normally use it twice a week, but I've literally used it every day since we started physical distancing and staying at home," Wanner said. "I'm craving that human connection."

Wanner's most recent content includes push-up challenges and home baking videos posted as Instagram Stories.

"It can be really fun to make videos a bit more engaging for the people who are going to watch it. It's almost like a one-on-one social connection that way."

A study by the influencer agency Obviously found engagement levels spiking in the wake of the pandemic. The company noted a 76% increase in daily accumulated likes on Instagram and a 27% rise in engagement levels on TikTok.

Some people are using photo editing apps to touch up their skin and hair since getting face-to-face appointments with dermatologists and hairstylists are hard to come by and likely don't comply with stay-at-home social distancing orders.

"This is the first time I've ever had to edit my hair," Faith said. "I've considered dying it, but I don't want to ruin it."

There are reports that hair dye is flying off the shelves during the outbreak, as people desperate for touch-ups try the do-it-yourself method. NPR cited Neilsen data that found hair coloring products spiked 19.4% last week.

Cosmetics products surged 57.7%, facial cleansers spiked 11% and nail polish remover jumped 56.7%, Neilsen found.

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