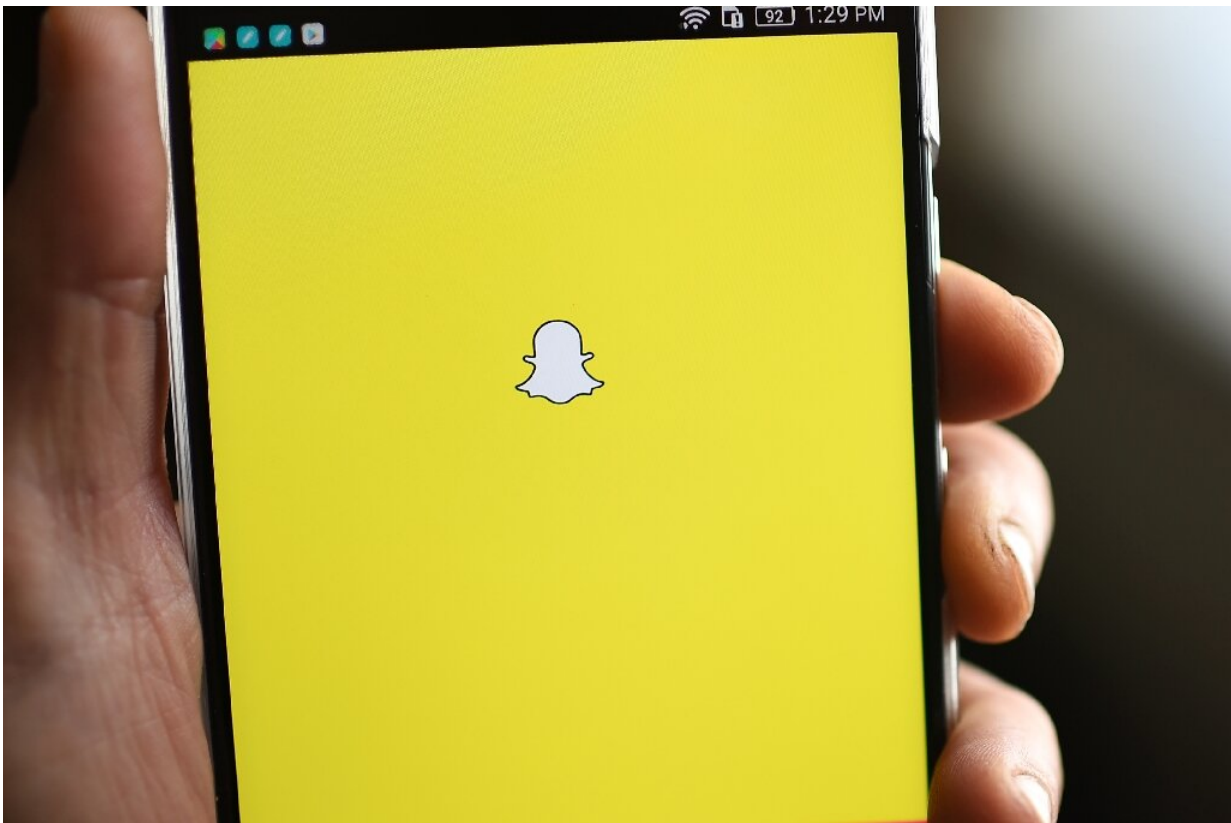


Snapchat claims 500 mn users amid pandemic-fueled surge

May 20 2021, by Julie Jammot



Snapchat said it now has 500 million monthly active users worldwide after surging growth over the past year.

Snapchat, the social network popular with young smartphone users, said Thursday it has 500 million monthly active users amid surging growth in

many parts of the world.

The platform, which has expanded its offerings beyond its original disappearing messages, had not previously announced a figure for monthly active users, but said last month it had 280 million daily active users.

The announcement came at parent firm Snap's partner summit where the company unveiled new partnerships for content and shopping, and revealed new "spectacles" for developers to create augmented reality content.

The new figure, higher than any prior estimates, reflects the surge in social media use during the coronavirus pandemic and also highlights how Snapchat is keeping pace with youth-focused rival platforms such as TikTok and Facebook-owned Instagram.

"We now reach over 500 million monthly active users, and nearly one of every two smartphone users in the United States is on Snapchat," chief executive Evan Spiegel said in opening the summit.

"In the US, France, UK, Australia, and the Netherlands, Snapchat is becoming an indispensable part of people's lives, reaching 90 percent of 13- to 24-year-olds, and 75 percent of 13- to 34-year-olds."

Spiegel said Snapchat has seen sizzling growth over the past year with many consumers locked down due to the coronavirus pandemic, with a doubling of daily active users in India over the past five quarters.

"Our community outside of North America and Europe is growing rapidly," he said.

"In fact, roughly 40 percent of our community is now located outside of

North America and Europe."

Known for its disappearing messages, Snapchat has expanded partnerships with a range of media companies including games, news, entertainment and sports snippets.

Snap said it now has more than 500 content partners on the Discover platform, a social feed which features news publishers, brands and more.

It is also known for its augmented reality features allowing users to share their own content and shop while virtually trying on items.

The company on Thursday unveiled a number of new partnerships including with the dating app Bumble, allowing users to share their content with Snapchat augmented reality technology.

It also introduced what it called "the next generation of Spectacles," allowing developers to build new content with augmented reality overlays.

Much of Snapchat's appeal comes from its "camera" feature which enables users to add augmented reality to their own content and use the technology for interactions, including shopping.

But Snap has struggled to become profitable despite its strong growth. In the first quarter, it reported revenue increased by 66 percent from a year ago to \$770 million while posting a net loss of \$286 million.

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