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The Role of the UX Designer



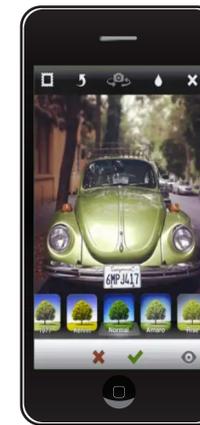
Social media. We all use different social media platforms every day. We see them come, go, changes and adapt with the trends to survive and generate revenue. One of these social media platforms that has had its identity absolutely changed for the better due to variety of reasons since its creation is my favorite one: **Instagram**.

Instagram has had a lot impact their user experience through their 12 years of existence. Mostly, their **competitors**. Everything from getting bought out by their competitors, occasionally stealing from their competitors to changing focus and the general layout and user experience based on their competitors. All to satisfy what people are looking for in an one stop for all social media features.

THE ORIGINAL VS NEW INSTAGRAM

Picture this: Instagram before it was bought out by Facebook. A time before the platform was ruled influencers. Back in that time, the users were only able to upload images with the aspect ratio of 4:3 and shortly after videos, but only at the length of 15 seconds. I had iPhone 3gs in 2011 and I remember that time. I remember the experience as being focused mostly on images. That's something that has changed a lot over the years.

I also remember the the polaroid camera logo. I'm aware that the current Instagram logo is a generalized logo but can't help the fact that polaroid cameras remind you of pictures before anything else; certainly more than reels or stories.



2011

2012



2010

2010-11

2011-16

2016-22



ADDING STORIES

There are about 500 million people using the “stories” features on Instagram daily. That number has been growing every year since adding it to the application back in 2016.

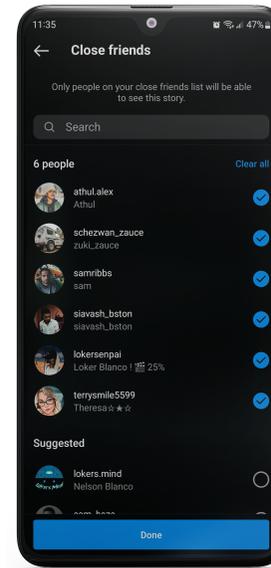
Since then, they’ve faced a lot of backlash for stealing this feature from their competitors, Snapchat.

But Instagram co-creator has a good reason: “For a long time, people’s profiles were filled with Snapchat links,” Systrom said. “It was clear people were trying to bridge the two products. So we gave them what they wanted.”

Besides from it making a lot of sense from a business point of view where more interaction means more revenue and more places to add “sponsored content” and a larger audience to watch them.

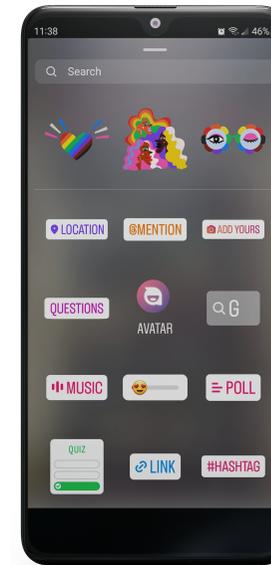
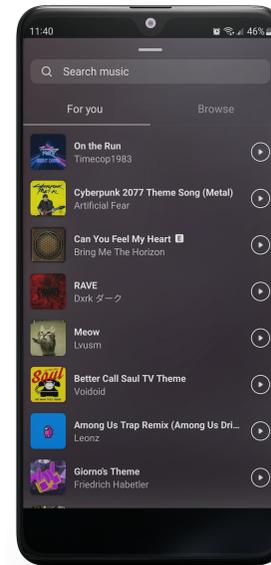
Instagram has since added their own twist to stories like “close friend” or adding music to stories, stickers and a lot more... but alas they’re not the ones who came up with the concept.

I personally consider this a positive since most of my friends have Instagram and I mostly post stories. Certainly way more than posts.



Relevant Sponsored Content In Stories

Close Friends Stories



Adding Music, Stickers, Polls & More To Your Stories!



INSTAGRAM REELS

Just like with the last entry, this one is also about looking over the fence at your competitors to survive and adapt with the current trends. What hot in a pandemic ridden 2020 world? Tiktok.

From there on answers to what does Instagram do compete and stay relevant was very clear. Not only they took the idea of reels but did their most to create the same immersive experience with navigation and overall design of the reels.

The similarities don't end there as most of the content circulating on the reels algorithm are reuploaded from Tiktok with watermarks.

Good or bad, this gave the users millions of Instagram user a new toy to play with. Besides that, why would they download and sign up for a new app, if they have the same content on their current platform?

Its important to note these two apps have a different reach and a very different demographic (it's called tiktok dances after all) and what necessarily worked for one will not for the other; but "reels" is a highly addictive feature of Instagram with Meta's algorithm behind it which guarantees to show you something you will want to see (or buy) next. That's a perfect recipe for success.



**Instagram Reels Vs Tiktok
Same Creator, Same Videos
%99.9 The Same Look!**



INSTAGRAM'S LONGEVITY & ADAPTIVENESS

I remember my daily activity would easily reach over an hour daily on Instagram just a few years ago. It was definitely interesting to look into what causes their longevity over the years and what keeps bringing me back.

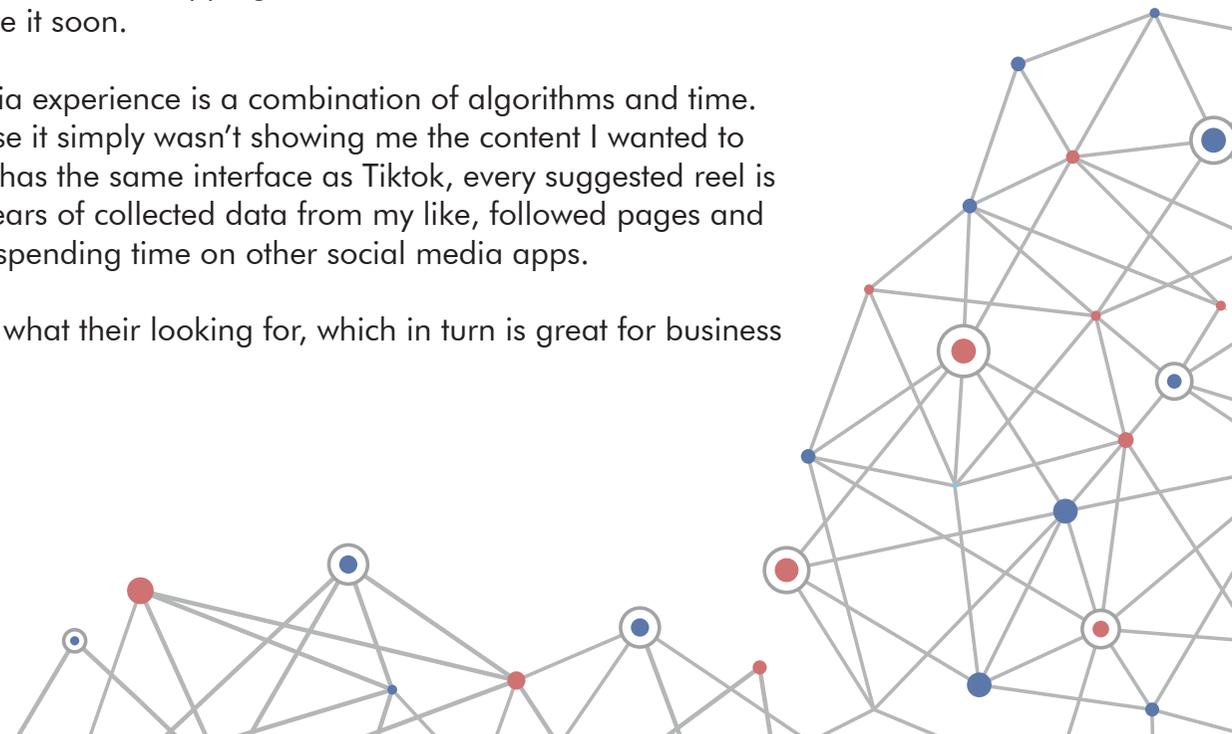
From personal experience: I've stopped checking Facebook over five years ago, I don't like LinkedIn to brows on in my free time and got tired of tiktok very quickly as their algorithm isn't based on my behaviour and actions (like Instagram has in over a decade).

I like how they've managed to stay not only relevant but one of the top names in today's social media realm landscape.

They have it all: from stories only meant for close friends to livestream or shopping...and if there is a cool new social media features they don't have yet, you can bet they will include it soon.

Another factor that I realized how much impacts my social media experience is a combination of algorithms and time. For example, I was turned away from Tiktok very quickly because it simply wasn't showing me the content I wanted to spend time looking at. While over at the Instagram which even has the same interface as Tiktok, every suggested reel is something within my interests. Of course, that's thanks to the years of collected data from my like, followed pages and behaviors collected over time, but its also what keeps me from spending time on other social media apps.

They define catching up with trends and giving their users base what their looking for, which in turn is great for business as more views and users equals more ads and money.





PlayStation Controllers

Throughout my life I've always been a PlayStation Kid. I've spent hours of my life on their 5 gaming consoles (and their slim variations), their handheld portable versions or VR headset.

I've gotten to witness PlayStation's evolution firsthand and a major part of that experience which was constantly updated evolving was their controllers. It went from being a simple and light generic gaming remote to navigate and interact with the inserted game to a cutting-edge piece of technology, used for things far more complicated than just gaming.

THE FIRST ITERATION

The PlayStation Controller, inspired by a vintage SNES controllers with updated features, this was the first ever PS controller launch with the console in 1994.

This was a very light and small remote that while it looked very simple compared to its next stages of evolution, it would set the general direction and experience with a PS remote from then on.

ANALOG JOYSTICKS

The first major addition to the PlayStation controller came in 1997 with introduction of The Dual Shock for PS1 and in the form of two analog sticks and a button to activate them. Shortly after Sony introduce the next version.

The Dual Shock introduced in 1998 had all the features of its predecessor but with the added two vibration motors to create a more immersive experience.

These joysticks are an important addition as every generation of PS controllers moving forward will feature them for controlling and navigation purposes.



WIRELESS FOR THE FIRST TIME!

One of the major changes to PS experience came with introduction of wireless gaming controllers. This feature was first launched with The Sixaxis Controller and PlayStation 3 in 2006 and a year later with its updated version with The DualShock 3 Controllers.

This was a massive leap for PlayStation controllers as from now on the only reason for having to plug a controller in was having a low or dead battery. Battery life would also keep improving with each generation and the charging times would become shorter.



CREATING A TRULY IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

Like mentioned before, the classic PlayStation remote has gone through a lot of changes over the years. A lot of addition made to create a fully immersive gaming experience over time.

Starting with the addition of dual vibrating motors in PS1's second generation controllers, adding pressure sensitivity to joysticks and motion sensors to the more modern updates like adding a loudspeaker and microphones, audio jacks, status indicating LED lights and adaptive triggers! Here are some examples of how more modern PS controllers such as The DualShock 4 Controller contribute to making a more immersive experience:

- If your in-game phone rings in **Grand Theft Auto 5**, you remote will ring and vibrate
- If you're being chased by the police in **Grand Theft Auto 5** the LED light will flash red and blue.
- If you're playing online the LED light will turn purple.
- If you're charging your remote, it would turn flashing yellow.
- Flashing blue lights meant wireless pairing



RESOURCES

Instagram Layout & Focus Change:

<https://graziadaily.co.uk/life/in-the-news/why-has-new-instagram-layout-update-2022-changed/>

Instagram History with Original Attributes:

<http://tiffanyjmarketing.blogspot.com/2014/09/instagram-history-and-mission-statement.html>

Timeline:

<https://blog.logomyway.com/instagram-logo/#:~:text=The%20In-stagram%20logo%20design%20has,camera%20with%20a%20rainbow%20stripe.>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Instagram

Instagram Stories Numbers:

<https://99firms.com/blog/instagram-stories-statistics/#gref>

Instagram Copied Tiktok:

<https://www.businessinsider.com/tiktok-videos-on-instagram-reels-facebook-copycat-2021-9>

<https://mashable.com/article/instagram-reels-tiktok-replace-fail-succeed>

The Evolution of PlayStation Controllers From PS1 to PS5:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNGy_t3hJBw

PS Controller Timeline:

<https://www.makeuseof.com/how-playstation-controller-evolved-ps1-to-ps5/>

Sony VS Nintendo

https://www.nintendolife.com/news/2018/09/feature_5_-times_sony_shamelessly_copied_nintendo

Sony vs Immersion Corporation

<https://www.cnn.com/id/17390509>

Can you use a PS4 controller on PS5?

<https://www.dexerto.com/gaming/can-you-use-a-ps4-controller-on-ps5-1790744/>

PS Share

<https://www.playstation.com/en-us/editorial/this-month-on-playstation/the-playstation-guide-to-sharing/>

<https://www.playstation.com/en-ca/accessories/dualsense-wireless-controller/>

