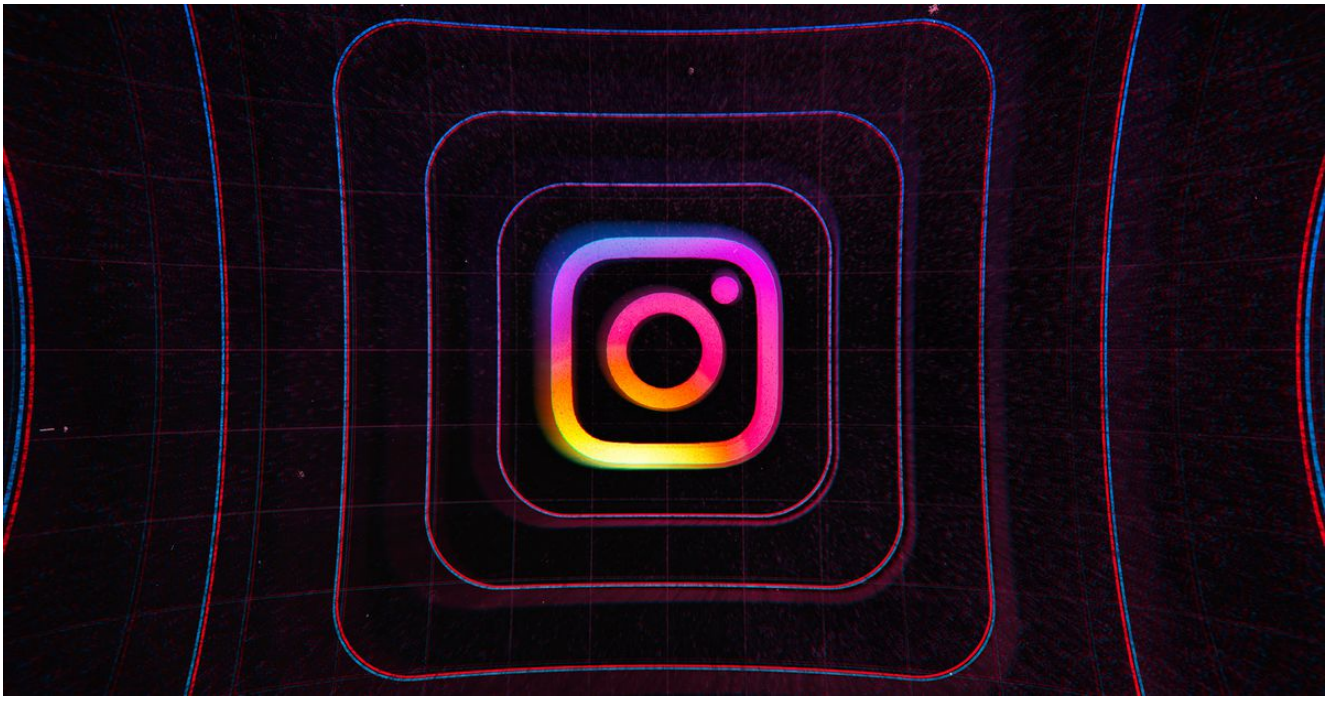
Instagram is prototyping a BeReal murder clone



Meta has confirmed that it's internally prototyping a new Instagram feature that's suspiciously similar to BeReal, the social media app that's recently exploded in popularity. The so-called "IG Candid" feature discovered by leaker Alessandro Paluzzi mirrors BeReal by prompting the user to share an authentic photo at a random time each day.

My colleague Casey Newton has taken to calling these imitators "murder clones," because of how they appear designed to neutralize upstarts by imitating their killer features.

Paluzzi posted a screenshot with Instagram's description of how the feature could work. "Add other's IG Candid to your story tray. And everyday at a different time, get a notification to capture and share a Photo in 2 Minutes," the screenshot reads.

For the uninitiated, that's almost exactly how the BeReal experience is meant to work. The service, which rose to prominence last month and is currently the No. 1 free app in

the iOS App Store, sends a notification to its users at a random time of day, giving them two minutes to take both a rear-facing photo and a selfie simultaneously. It's a format that's supposed to encourage the sharing of authentic images from people's days, rather than the kinds of carefully curated content that Instagram is known for.

Meta confirmed that it's testing the IG Candid feature in a statement given to *The Verge*. "This feature is an internal prototype, and not testing externally," said Meta spokesperson Christine Pai. That suggests there's no definite timeline for when the feature might become available publicly, if it even releases at all.

But given how Meta and other social media giants have responded to other popular apps over the years, it seems safe to assume that Instagram will eventually roll out a response to BeReal if its popularity continues. After all, when Snapchat's Stories feature became popular, Instagram rolled out a Stories feature of its own, and Reels is an obvious response to the popularity of TikTok.

Meta is far from the only tech giant to have rolled out a murder clone or two. YouTube Shorts is another transparent attempt to cash-in on the popularity of vertically shot short-form video, and Twitter was quick to roll-out Spaces in response to the popularity of Clubhouse.

This isn't even the first time Meta has been accused of copying BeReal. Last month, around the time BeReal was rocketing in popularity, it widely rolled out a new feature called Dual which allows you to take a photo or video from both your phone's front and rear camera simultaneously. People were quick to point out the BeReal similarities, although Dual differs by allowing you to capture content whenever you want, rather than having to wait for a daily notification. But according to one former Instagram product designer, the Dual feature had actually been in development for several years,

and it’s release around the time of BeReal’s explosion in popularity was simply “convenient.”

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