

# Snap CEO Evan Spiegel Says TikTok Could Be Bigger Than Instagram

He says it's because TikTok focuses on talent, not likes.

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CEO and founder of Snapchat Evan Spiegel thinks short-form video app TikTok has the potential to dethrone Instagram in terms of popularity.

Speaking during a fireside chat at the Digital Life Design (DLD) Conference in Munich on Sunday, Spiegel responded to a question from an audience member about his opinion on TikTok.

"I should say I love TikTok, I'm a big fan," replied Spiegel. He elaborated that traditional social media revolves around status. "Social media in its original construct is really about status, representing who you are, showing people that you're cool, getting likes and comments, those sorts of things," he said.

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By contrast, Spiegel said users show off talent rather than social status on TikTok. "People who have spent a couple hours learning a new dance or think about a funny new creative way to tell a story, and they're really making media to entertain other people," he said.

Spiegel was specifically asked whether TikTok could grow faster and bigger than Instagram. “I think it’s certainly possible because this talent-based content is often more interesting than status-based content,” Spiegel responded.

[embedded content]

Facebook-owned Instagram has been making a public effort to make its platform less conducive to social posturing, with CEO Adam Mosseri deciding to remove public-facing like-counts.

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TikTok’s download count is closing the gap on Instagram, overtaking Instagram on the list of most-downloaded social media apps for 2019. Meanwhile Instagram’s growth slowed to single-digits for the first time in 2019.

Instagram and TikTok still appear to be neck and neck in terms of monthly active users, with both boasting around 1 billion. Snap doesn’t release monthly active users for Snapchat, but boasted 210 million daily active users towards the end of 2019.

Facebook has also made a conscious effort to mimic some of TikTok’s success. In November last year it started testing an in-app feature for Instagram called “Reels” that bore an extremely close resemblance to TikTok, and in 2018 launched a standalone app called “Lasso.”

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Spiegel is no stranger to having his own app’s features aped by Facebook. Snapchat’s “Stories” feature was widely adopted by Facebook into its main app, Instagram, and WhatsApp, where the feature garnered twice as many users as on Snapchat.

Spiegel addressed the issue of Facebook copying Snapchat at DLD, but brushed it off as an inevitability. "We don't see copying as a limitation on the growth of our business," he said.

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