



PULSE

SPECIAL REPORT:
SOCIAL MEDIA BEHAVIOR

LOOKING INSIDE THEIR PHONES

Millennials are looking at their phones more than 100 times a day, according to Ypulse research. So what are they doing on them? During the month of April, we asked a group of 18-25-year-olds to give us access to their smartphones, allowing us to track the apps they're using and get a real look at their mobile social behavior. This report uses the data we collected from this in-depth behavioral tracking study and the data from our May monthly social media tracker survey to get a full picture of Millennials' social media behaviors—what they're really using, when, for how long, and more.

MILLENNIAL AND GEN Z SOCIAL NETWORK USE

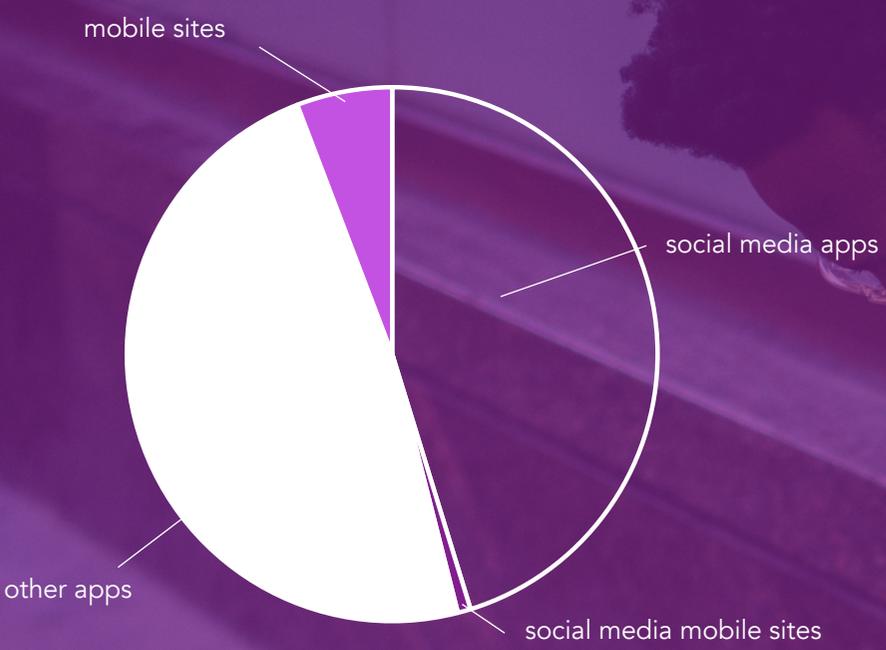


Source: Ypulse Monthly Surveys n=1000 | Dec 2014 – Jun 2015: Millennials ages 13-32 | Sep 2015 – Sep 2016: Millennials ages 13-33 | Dec 2016-May 2017: Millennials ages 13-34

It is impossible to have a conversation about Millennials and Gen Z without talking about social media. It shapes everything from the news they read to their interactions with friends and family—and, of course, brands. For these generations, what is happening online and on social media *is* what is happening IRL. To provide an ongoing look at the platforms they're spending their time on, we conduct a quarterly social media tracker survey—showing which social brands are rising and falling among 13-34-year-olds across the nation. Our monthly surveys also gather attitudes and self-reported behaviors about how social media fits into their lives. Over time, we've observed the plateauing of some platforms' growth, and the increasing popularity of visual platforms—including the meteoric rise of Snapchat.

While our surveys give us perspective on the social media lives of Millennials and teens, behavioral tracking data allow us to approach this question from a different angle. By going inside the phones of 18-25-year-olds to track the social apps and sites they're using as they're using them, we were able to see true snapshot of their digital lives—and a wealth of data about how much time they're really spending on social platforms. We've parsed this data to pull out insights on where they can really be reached.

TIME SPENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA



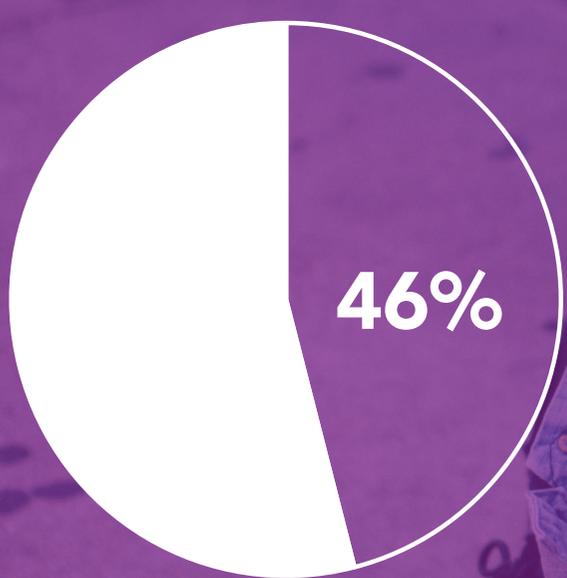
75% of 18-25-year-olds report opening social media apps every week

70% of 18-25-year-olds report opening messaging apps every week

When we look at what 18-25-year-olds doing on their phones overall, the message is clear: apps dominate their attention. Their time is split between social media apps and other apps, with just 6% of their time on mobile spent on mobile sites accessed through their browsers.

Mobile sites are necessary, but to truly reach young consumers on the device 64% say they can't live without, apps are the only way.

In our mobile tracking study, 18-25-year-old participants spent 46% of time logged on their phones in social media platforms....



Top 5 Most Used Platforms

Share of Social Media Use

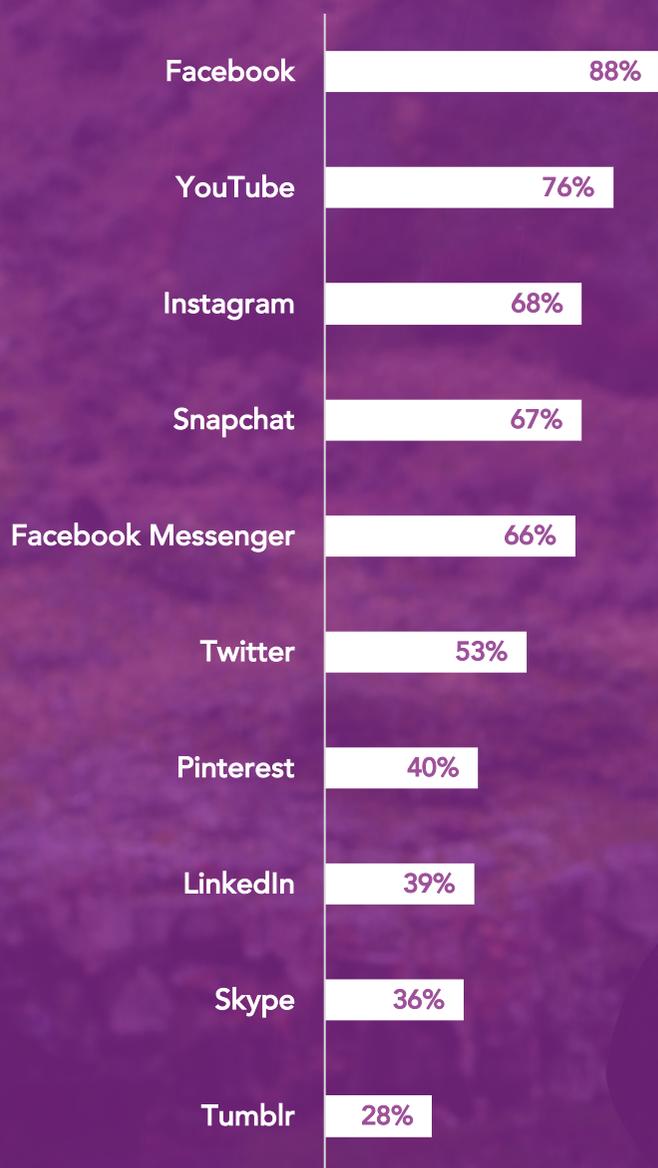
- 24% Facebook**
- 20% Snapchat**
- 15% Instagram**
- 9% Facebook Messenger**
- 8% YouTube**

Almost half of their time on their phones is being spent on social media in some capacity, largely on social media apps. The top social platform they're spending their time on is Facebook—but the site is winning their attention via Instagram and Messenger as well. Combined, half of their mobile social media time is being spent on a Facebook property.

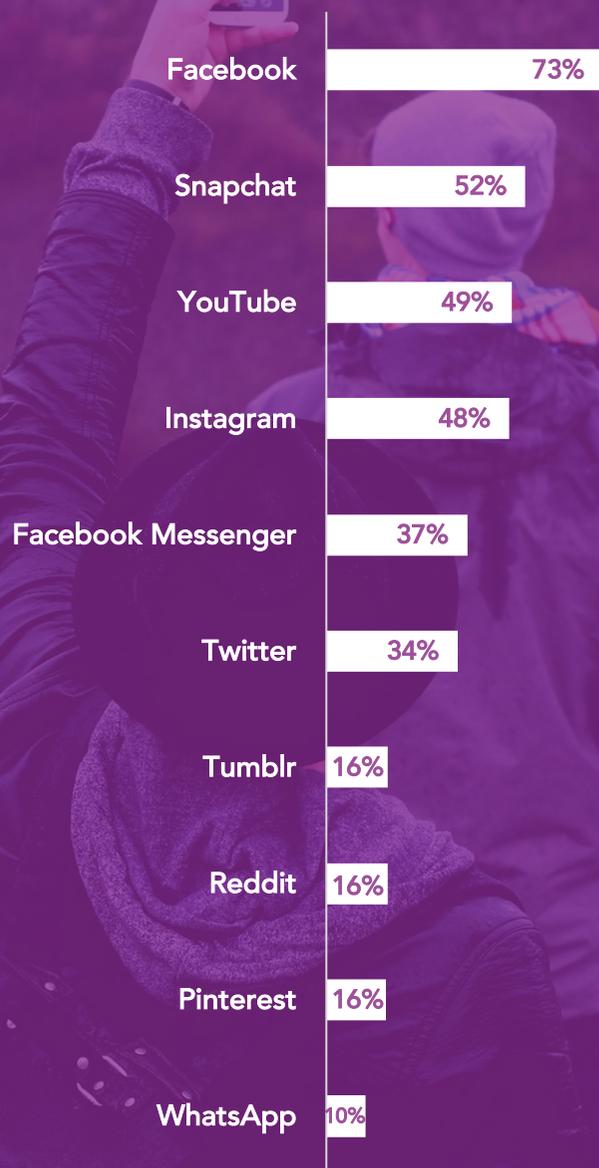
- social media apps / mobile sites
- all other apps and mobile sites

MAY 2017 SOCIAL MEDIA TRACKER

Top 10 Social Media Platforms Used



Top 10 Social Media Platforms Used Daily



Base: 18-25-year-olds

82%  of 18-25-year-old YouTube users say they would find the platform difficult to give up

61%  of Instagram users would find it difficult to give up

60%  of Snapchat users would find it difficult to give up

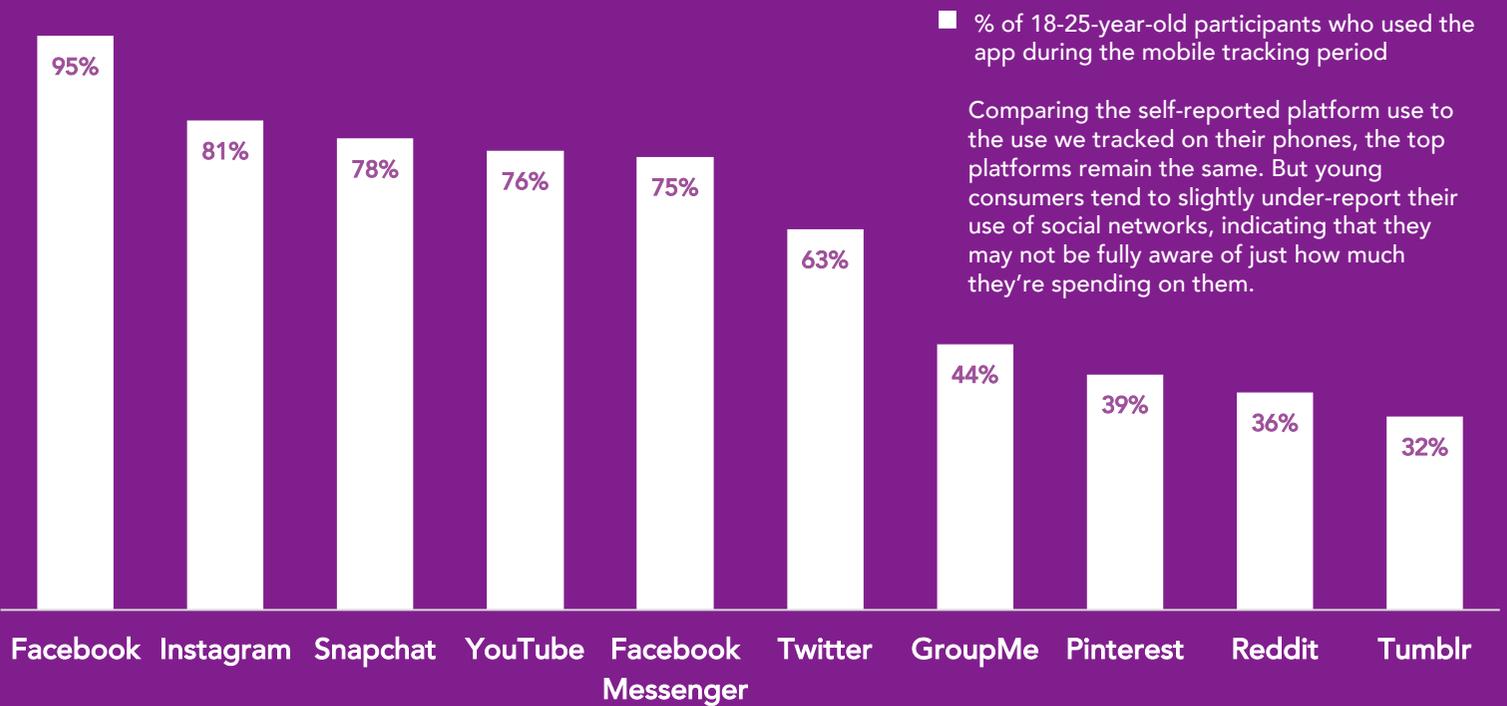
53%  of Facebook users would find it difficult to give up

According to our most recent [social media tracker survey](#), Facebook is still the top platform among 18-25-year-olds, with eight in ten reporting they use it. YouTube is the next on the self-reported use ranking, followed by Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook Messenger. When looking at daily use, Facebook remains on top at 73%, surpassing the second daily used platform, Snapchat, by over 20%. While Snapchat is not as popular as Instagram in overall users, those who use it are devoted, with over half of 18-25-year-olds reporting opening it daily.

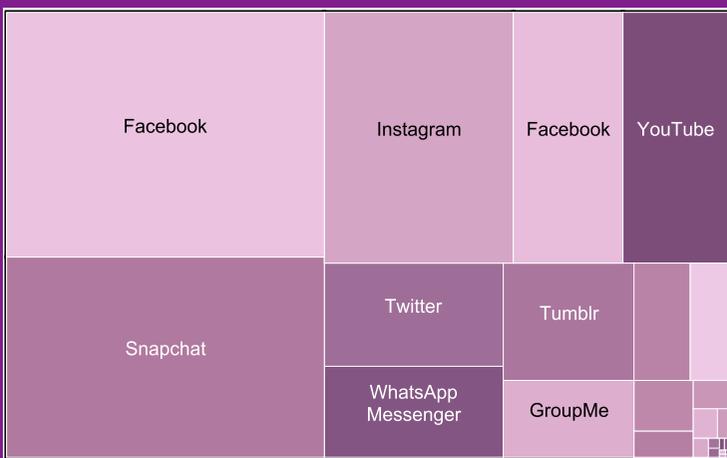
Our [social media behavior survey](#) looked at the platforms they would have a hard time giving up, getting a sense of their investment in each and painting a different picture of their use. Though Facebook is the top platform used, fewer users report they would have a hard time giving it up than users of Instagram and Snapchat. YouTube is the platform with the most faithful users, with over four in five saying they would have a hard time giving up the video site.

SOCIAL MEDIA MOBILE APP USAGE

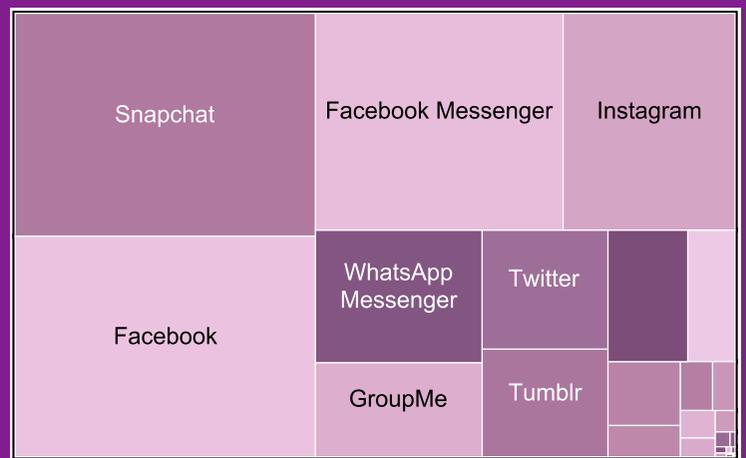
Mobile Tracking Data: Social App Usage Overall



WHERE THEY SPEND TIME



WHAT THEY'RE OPENING



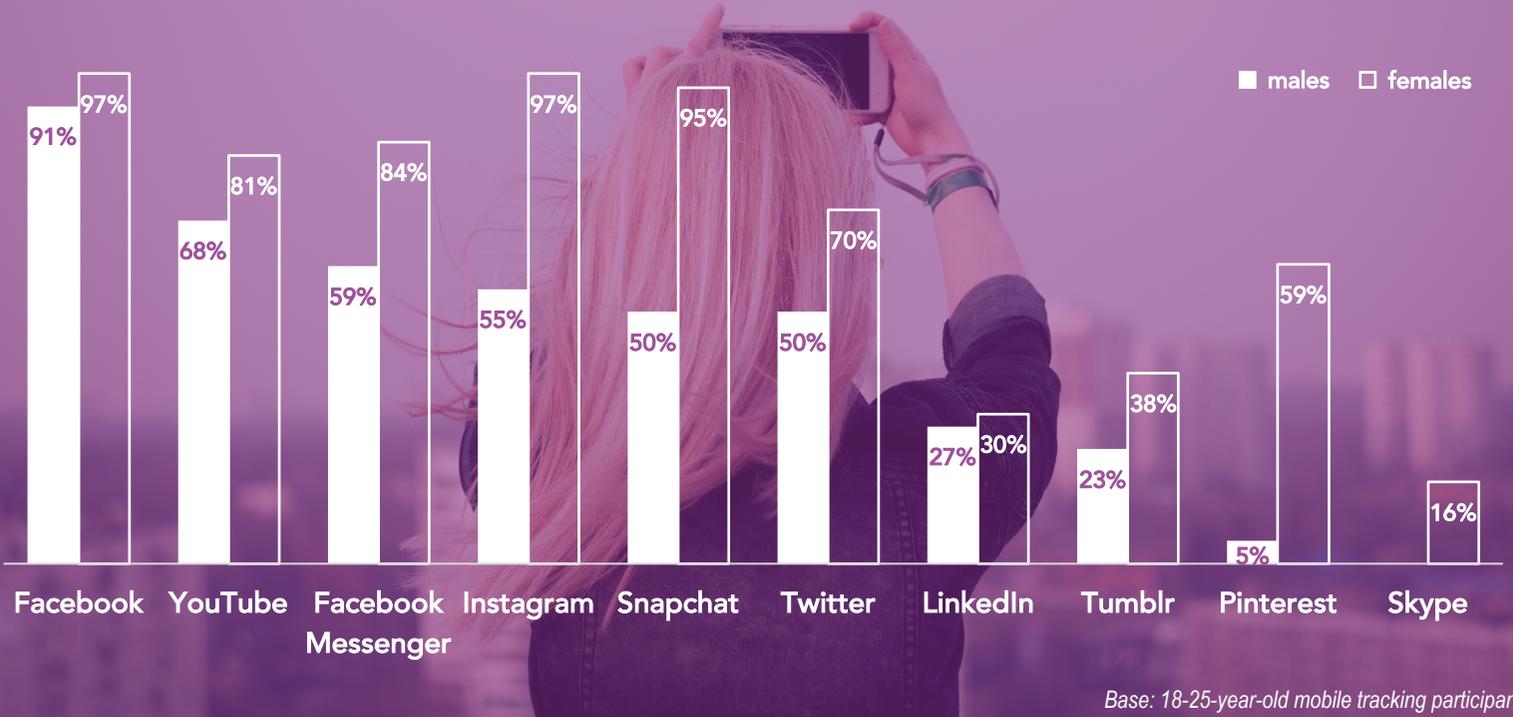
Base: 18-25-year-old mobile tracking participants

When we look at the data from our mobile tracking of 18-25-year-olds, Facebook is again the top platform used, aligning with our social media tracker. Over the course of the behavioral study, Facebook was opened by 95% of participants. Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube followed closely behind in mobile use. In terms of where they're spending their time, Facebook accounted for about a quarter of all time on social media, followed by Snapchat.

Snapchat's devoted users also made it the most opened app among participants, indicating that users are opening the app for quick checks in addition to spending prolonged time on it. YouTube was opened by 76% of participants, but came in fourth among social media apps for active amount of minutes and ninth among opens—so while those who use it may have a hard time giving it up, it's not taking up as much of their time on phones as purely social channels.

FEMALE VS MALE SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

Mobile Tracking Data: Social App Usage by Gender
 % who opened the app at least once



WHERE THEY SPEND TIME

Males

- 10% Facebook
- 8% Snapchat
- 5% Instagram
- 4% Pokémon Go
- 3% Messaging

Females

- 12% Facebook
- 10% Snapchat
- 8% Instagram
- 5% Facebook Messenger
- 4% YouTube

Social use by gender differs fairly significantly, and during the mobile tracking study, a higher percent of females opened virtually every app. Females are more active mobile users in general, but they're also more active on the most popular social platforms. Reddit, WhatsApp, Google+, and Twitch were the only social platforms that were male dominated. Visual platforms like Instagram and Snapchat are especially favored by females, with nearly twice as many opening these apps as male participants during the study.

Looking at the top apps that male and females are spending their time on, Facebook leads for both groups, followed closely by Snapchat and Instagram. But females are spending more time via mobile on Facebook Messenger and YouTube, while males are keeping Pokémon Go going.

TAKEAWAYS

+ While mobile-friendly brand sites are a necessity, the reality is that apps dominate young consumers' mobile time. If you're not on an app of some sort, they're not likely to see your messaging.

+ Social media accounts for almost half of the time spent young consumers are spending on their phones—when looking to reach them, this is where their attention is most concentrated.

+ Facebook has been counted out time and again among young consumers, yet it remains the top platform used on mobile, and the top platform they report using overall. Thanks to its other properties (Instagram and Messenger) it still takes up an enormous amount of Millennials' attention.

+ While Facebook dominates the social space in terms of ownership and time use, Snapchat usurps Facebook in terms of opens. Facebook may be a necessity, however Snapchat is engrained in their daily behaviors.

+ Females are more active mobile users, and users of social media overall. Utilitarian platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn are almost even in terms of gender, but females are far more likely to have apps that encourage self-expression like Instagram, Snapchat, and Pinterest.

Interested in diving in deeper?

Download Tableau Reader to explore the behavioral tracking data through interactive charts.



[Tableau Reader](#)



[Behavioral Tracking Data](#)

Download the data from our social media tracker and monthly survey.



[May 2017 Social Media Tracker](#)



[August 2016 Mobile Survey](#)

METHODOLOGY:

Over the course of 28 days, we asked 59 participants 18-25-years-old to download a passive metering app that allowed us step into their digital lives. With this tool, we tracked what apps they opened, when they were opened, and for how long.

Data from this report was also sourced from Ypulse's ongoing nationally representative monthly Gold surveys of 1000 13-34-year-olds in the U.S., looking specifically at roughly 370 18-25-year-olds.