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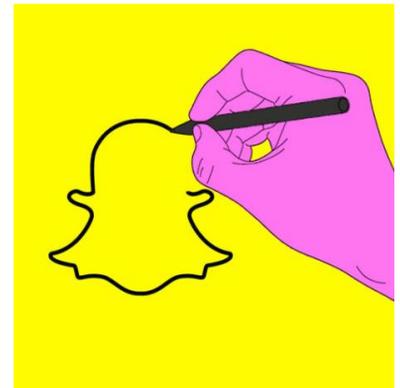
A MONTH IN MEDIA

FEBRUARY 2017

VIEW FROM THE TOP

GETTING THE FULL STORY

First it was Snapchat, then came Facebook, followed by Instagram and now, [WhatsApp](#)—the introduction of live Stories (photos or videos that are available for 24 hours) is what many platforms are investing in. The reason is, consumers are successfully engaging with this new form of content. A new report from [Snaplytics](#) shows that Story viewers, specifically those on Snapchat, watch a fellow user's entire Story 55% of the time, but watch a *brand's* entire Story 88% of the time. Moreover, Snaplytics found that video makes up 61% of all content posted, while photos represent the other 39%. **The completion rates of brand Stories illustrate that Story viewers are**



interested in hearing what brands have to say, particularly in this short-form format. Whether it is developing a new voice or providing unique content, as more platforms continue to introduce Story-like features, it is important to consider the potential opportunities for your brand to connect with consumers in this highly engaging manner. ►

INNOVATION OF THE MONTH

WATCH OUT—HERE COMES GITA!

From the makers of Vespa comes Gita, a cargo robot designed to carry your groceries. Gita syncs to a wearable device, can follow you along crowded sidewalks, and can even return to the store on its own. Unlike many other on-demand solutions being developed, like drones, Gita is not designed as a solution to eliminate the need for someone to leave the house, but rather makes walking a more



appealing option. For Vespa, developing Gita was about creating a modern-day robot that is not fully autonomous, but rather is useful in our mobile-obsessed world, particularly due to its hands-free functionality. **Robots might seem like a thing of the future, however we are living in an era where companies are experimenting ways to take the notion of 'on-demand' to a whole new level. Retailers are catching on with serious investments in technologies like [Amazon's Prime Air drones](#) and the [UPS's new drone concept](#). So even if building a robot is not at the top of your priority list, it is crucial to think about how consumers are growing to expect instant services at the touch of a button. ►**

TOP HEADLINES & WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

AUTOPLAY IS BECOMING NOISY

Facebook videos in your newsfeed will no longer autoplay without sound, rather audio will fade in and out as you scroll through your feed. This move probably came from the need to compete with Snapchat and its higher completion rates of video. **Although, muted ads on Facebook have paved the way for popular new social-first video styles, especially the usage of text overlays (made famous by publishers like, NowThis), autoplay with sound is allowing advertisers to use standard video assets, without content edits for social. However, this does not mean that marketers should simply cut and paste their television assets for social. As the definition of social-first content evolves with new platforms and features, it will continue to outperform recycled content on social, so be sure to keep in mind the nuances of each platform when making media buys.** ►

SNAPCHAT DIVES DEEPER INTO AUGMENTED REALITY

As Snapchat (Snap Inc.) inches closer to its IPO, it also becoming a leader in augmented reality (AR). Reports show that Snap is working on an updated version of Lenses that will further integrate AR, enabling interactions with real world objects and the feature to identify environmental elements. With Snap's recent acquisition of [Cimagine](#), a startup that is leading the AR space for retailers, it is no doubt that Snap is planning to more seamlessly allow consumers to connect with brands. **It is still unclear whether AR will bring features like the opportunity to scan an item and click-to-buy or an option to learn more information via image overlays. For marketers, understanding new ways to interact with consumers and getting educated on the thousands of tech offerings entering the space ensures unique first-to-market opportunities and integrations.** ►

THE HOME ASSISTANT WARS: GOOGLE ADDS SHOPPING

In a move to stay competitive with Amazon Alexa-enabled devices, Google Home has now included functionality that enables its users to shop directly from the Google Home device. Consumers will be able to buy products from Google Express retailers, which include Costco, Whole Foods Market, Walgreens, PetSmart, Bed Bath & Beyond and others. Google's move is the first Home capability allowing users to buy things directly from stores. **This is an exciting move for marketers assuming Google allows them to capitalize the data collected from voice command orders. If you are a CPG brand, you could possibly gain insight into the amount of orders and specific products that are ordered via voice. It will be interesting to see the consumer adoption, because if voice ordering takes off then marketers will have another powerful tool at their disposal.** ►

PINTEREST TAKES VISUAL DISCOVERY TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Pinterest is launching three new products designed to help people discover ideas based on images. Pinterest Lenses uses the phone camera as a tool to initiate searches on Pinterest. A new Shop The Look button uses object recognition to automatically detect and search for items in a photo. Finally, Instant Ideas, represented by a tiny blue circle in the corner of the pin, will provide a list of ideas related to the pin. **By bolstering idea discovery tools, Pinterest is expanding their ability to engage consumers in the awareness stage of the consumer journey. They are also positioning the platform to support the lifetime value of the consumer, with solutions that bridge ideas into products and purchases. These rollouts also continue to change the future of search, by challenging the notion that keywords are the ultimate tool in discovery.** ►

IS 'FACEBOOK AND CHILL' THE NEXT BIG THING?

Facebook does not only want to exist on mobile and desktop – it wants to run on every major digital device. To do that, they are taking another step by unveiling new features designed to bring their video content to TVs. Their plan is a new app on Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV and Samsung Smart TV that lets users watch essentially any video on Facebook, whether it is shared by a friend, recommended in their newsfeed, streamed live, previously saved or shared. **Facebook's move signals that they are serious about competing directly with YouTube and other OTT services in the space. Additionally, these new tools will allow for larger distribution of branded content and an increase in overall reach and engagement. Marketers should consider how Facebook video plays into their media plan and seek opportunities on the platform as they become available.** ▶

THE AD BLOCKING EPIDEMIC

Usage of ad blocking has surged 30% in 2016, with the majority occurring on mobile browsers, according to PageFair. While the widespread ad blocking epidemic tends to be in the Asia-Pacific region compared to North America, this trend could be accelerated if and when smart devices illustrate more ad blocking capabilities. The study also found that consumers are mainly driven to activate ad blocking for two reasons: security and to avoid interruption in their browsing experience. **Publishers and brands must take into account the reasons for ad blocking and confront these challenges head on, whether it is offering solutions to alleviate the concerns of security or introducing less intrusive ad placements.** ▶

SOCIAL SAYS I <3 U

Google, Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter made it very easy for their users to share the love this past Valentine's Day with themed native experiences. Users were able to send a Google [Doodle](#), send a message via a [Snapchat Lens](#), [send a card](#) on Facebook and even hashtag to unlock love-related [emojis](#) on Twitter. **Although these efforts were not sponsored, it is easy to see how a brand can capitalize these native efforts and integrate within each site specific initiative—like a charitable brand integrating within Google's interactive game, making donations based on a user's score or a brand creating a themed emoji within Facebook. While Valentine's Day is a holiday for lovers, it can also be a day for brands to send some love to their consumers.** ▶

MORE INDUSTRY BUZZ

PANDORA TO DEBUT PERSONALIZED ADS & SEQUENTIAL MESSAGING ▶

AMAZON LAUNCHED CHIME, A VIDEO CONFERENCING SERVICE SIMILAR TO SKYPE ▶

MESSAGING APP, VIBER WILL SHOW ITEMS FOR SALE BASED ON USERS' CHATS ▶

FACEBOOK TO SIGN DEAL WITH MLB TO LIVE STREAM BASEBALL GAMES ▶

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