# Snapchat early 2018 update

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Snapchat is a camera app[[1]](#endnote-1), where users share with their friends their daily moments within 10 seconds called Snaps. They appear one after the other in something called Stories. Snapchat has 300+ million monthly active users and 187+ million daily active users that are 45% of them are young adults (age 18-24) and 71% are under 34[[2]](#endnote-2).

In Snapchat’s original design you would open the app to the camera swipe left to get to the chats that you made with your friends and the people you follow including private snaps our comments you made on their Snaps in chorological order. If you swipe right you will get all the stories in chorological order from all your friends or people that you follow. You would also get a little section where you get some selected stories from Snapchat and stories from Snap partners such as sports and media outlets and magazines, if you swipe an additional right you will get to the discover section where it is full of stories from different Snapchat partners.

However, in late December Snapchat announced a new design[[3]](#endnote-3) that is completely different and started rolling it out on customers by the beginning of 2018 from the cloud without the user updating its app from the app store. In this design, the user opens the app to the camera then swipe left to the Friends section where he gets all his chats with his friends and their stories in the same section, and that is not in chronological order but by some algorithms that ranks your friends based on how much you chat with them and watch their stories. Also, by friends here we mean only people whom you follow and they follow you. Therefore, it would not include celebrities and influencers that you usually found among your friends’ stories. If you swipe to the right you will get to the Discover section where you will see content from influencers and celebrities that you follow or don’t follow and content from media outlets that you subscribe or don’t subscribe to[[4]](#endnote-4).

We can see now the mess it had generated were the user feels that one third of the app is not for his friends any more, but for random content that is being shoved into his face; until the algorithm figures out what he really likes and starts showing it to him more often. Also, all his friend’s stories and chats are clamped up into one section and he is missing on chats and stories from friends that he is not in close relationship with. Also, the celebrities and influencers that he used to feel like they are his friends when their stories were mixed up with his friends’ stories now feel like people they don’t relate to in the discover section and they can’t always find their content. This exactly what was Snapchat are claiming that they are aiming for, separating content based on you real circles of relationships and not mixing celebrities and influencers with your real friends. That being said, after reading how Snapchat makes its profits[[5]](#endnote-5) from different media outlets I’m a bit skeptical that this design is to increase their profits by having one third of their app fully monetized.

The concept that Snapchat are calming which they are trying to enforce in their new design I think is a noble idea and if it works out then I believe it would reduce the stress on the users to imitate these celebs when they feel that they are like their friends. It would make life a bit more realistic. However, in the process of implementing this noble idea, if we gave in that this was their sole purpose, it is obvious that they violated at least 3 of the Golden Rules of design : Strive for consistency since almost everything has changed in this new design, Keep users in control because it was rolled out without users updating the app by them self, Permit easy reversal of actions (also in this point it is not the user’s action, it is their action) and the user doesn’t have the option to get back to the old design in a safe manner.

As a result of that many if not most of the users are not happy. Many petitions on the famous petition website change.org are asking Snapchat to remove the new update some of them are threatening boycott and participants in the petitions are high one of them reached 1.24 million unhappy snapchat user[[6]](#endnote-6) and it includes many celebrities and influencers. Moreover, one of the most famous response was the response from reality TV star Kelly Jenner who tweeted “sooo does anyone else not open Snapchat anymore? Or is it just me... ugh this is so sad.”[[7]](#endnote-7) which caused Snapchat stock $1.3 billion[[8]](#endnote-8), which I feel that it is so unfair that a 19 years old TV reality star has all of this influence but at the end from users like her is were Snapchat are profiting.

So, what was Snapchat response to that? The complains validates our change! This was from the CEO of Snapchat Evan Spiegel as he talks about the new design at the Goldman Sachs Technology and Internet Conference he said: "One of the complaints we got is, 'Wow, I used to feel this celebrity was my friend and now I don't feel like they're my friend anymore " Spiegel said on stage. "Exactly. They're not your friend."[[9]](#endnote-9)

Although from the response above it feels that the redesign is here to stay, Snapchat have been listening to users and are trying to improve. Snapchat wrote a response to the 1.24 million petition that starts with “We hear you, and appreciate that you took the time to let us know how you feel. We completely understand the new Snapchat has felt uncomfortable for many.”[[10]](#endnote-10) Then they continued to say that the sections will feel more personalized as you continue to use the app. Moreover, they will introduce a new update that will include tabs that separates in the Discover section celebrities and influencers that you follow from other content from creators, Snap Map and Snapchat’s Our Story and different media outlets that you don’t follow. Moreover, the new update (to the redesign) will separate the friends section into three tabs chats, stories and groups. This update started to rollout to some customers yesterday (As in Saturday, 24th of February) [[11]](#endnote-11). People are having mixed feeling about it, it does organize some stuff but some say it made it more complicated. Personally, I think 6 tabs in total (including the camera) for a Camera Social Media app is too much.

Only time will tell if Snapchat will be able to retain its users base by providing an experience that will satisfy them soon, or it would be too late and Snapchat loses its main assets, its users.

1. **References:**

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