

# Zoom Out

How cameras became the focal point of today's mobile lifestyle

# The camera today is a powerful tool which allows us see the world around us in a completely new way.

The camera has been iterated on for over a hundred years. With the proliferation of smartphones (and the cameras that come with them), there's been a fundamental change in our relationship with camera technology.

Before cameras became the easy-to-use devices they are today, they took shape in the form of expensive, bulky, professional-use only devices that required extensive time, money, expertise, and effort to operate. Even if one wasn't *behind* the camera, it took nearly 15 minutes to pose for a single photo.

Cameras started requiring less and less expertise to use, and it became even easier to pose for photos. What was once a 15-minute process now takes less than one second.

Mid-1800s  
*Daguerreotype*



Early 1900s  
*Early mass-produced cameras*



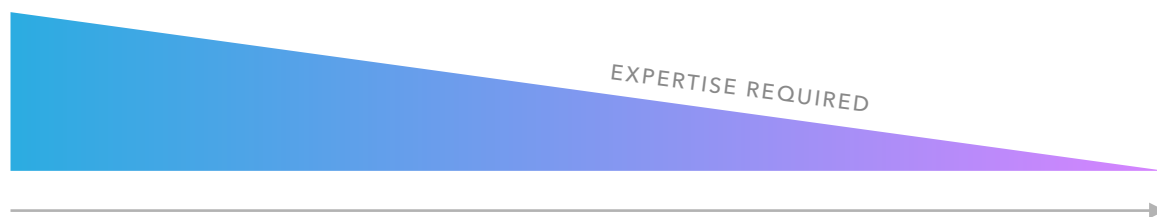
Late 1970s  
*Point and shoot cameras*



1990s-2000s  
*Digital cameras*



2007-Present  
*Smartphones*



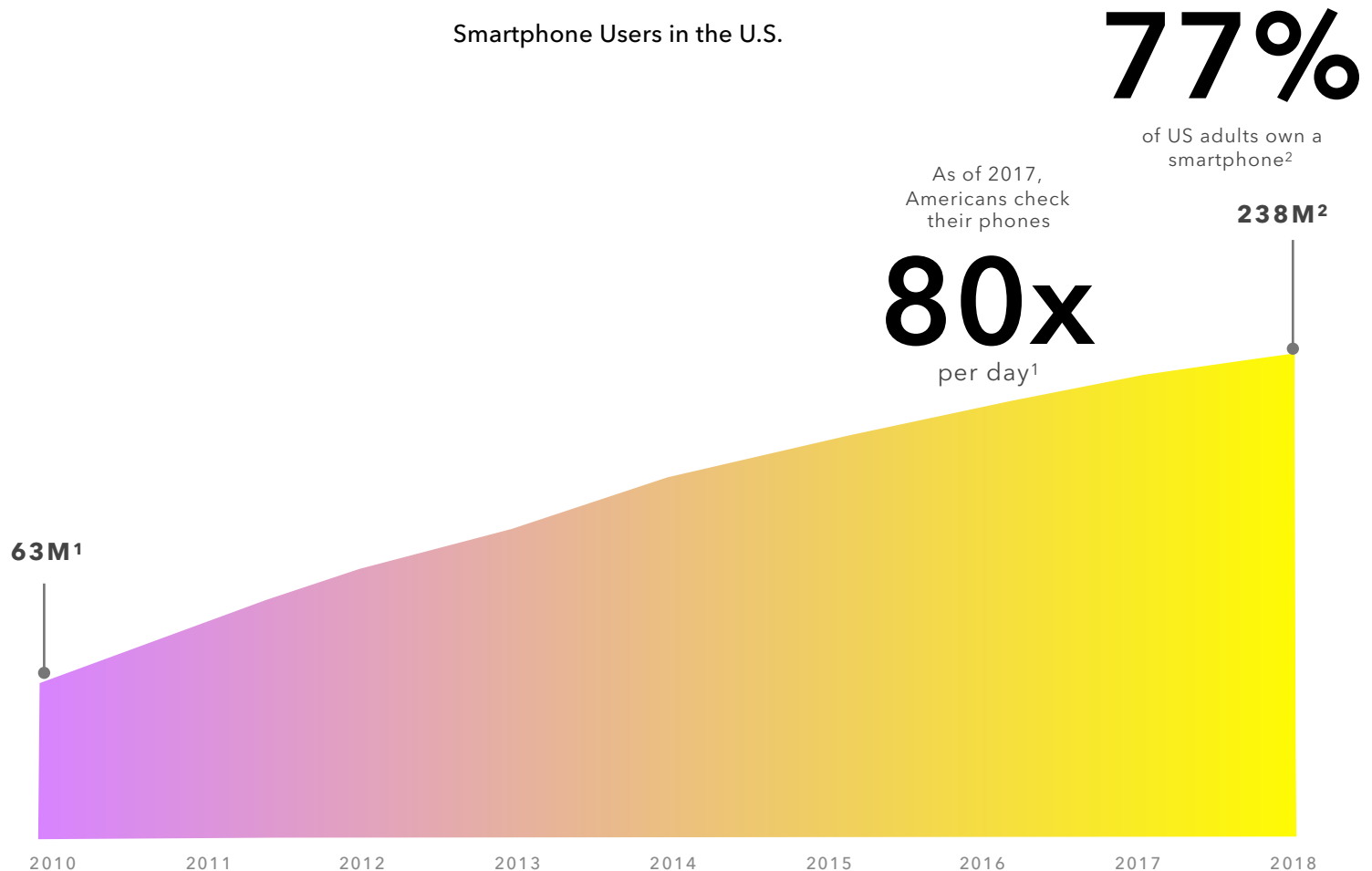
The latest in the camera's progression – the introduction of the smartphone – marks a remarkable milestone in its history. Not only did the introduction of the smartphone put the internet in our pockets, it transformed the way we communicate with one another. Mobile created a multi-trillion dollar industry, a whole new set of user behaviors, and forever changed our relationship with technology.

As camera technology continued to develop, three major advances took place:

1. Cameras became a lot **smaller**
2. Cameras became a lot **cheaper**
3. Cameras became a lot **easier to operate**.

# On average, Americans check their phones every 10 minutes<sup>1</sup>

Smartphone Users in the U.S.



As of 2018, 77% of US adults own a smartphone.<sup>2</sup> And for a younger-skewing audience (like adults 18-29), it's 94%.<sup>3</sup> The average American checks their phone over 80 times a day.<sup>1</sup>

Millennials check their phones  
150+ times each day.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Source: Survey conducted by OnePoll for Asurion Study September 2017; N=2,000 US adult smartphone owners

<sup>2</sup>Source: United States; Pew Research Center; 2011 to 2018; Adults 18+ via Statista

<sup>3</sup>Source: United States; Pew Research Center; Jan 3 - 10, 2018; Adults 18+ via Statista

# Cameras on hand drive camera usage

This means that 77% of US adults have a *camera* in their pocket as well<sup>1</sup>. A survey conducted by Audience Theory found that 100% of smartphone users use their smartphone camera.<sup>2</sup> That number may seem obvious, but the implications of over *three quarters* of the American population using a camera is powerful.

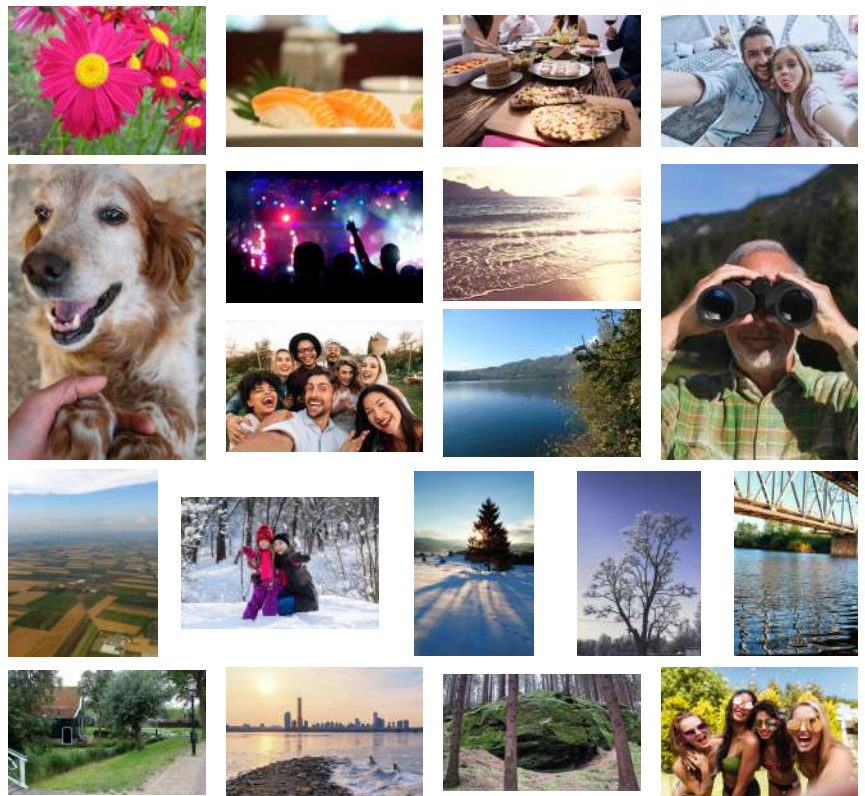
The study also found that the average smartphone user takes 20 photos a week, which wasn't the case ten years ago, before the smartphone boom.

~20

the average smartphone user takes 20 photos a week<sup>1</sup>

100%

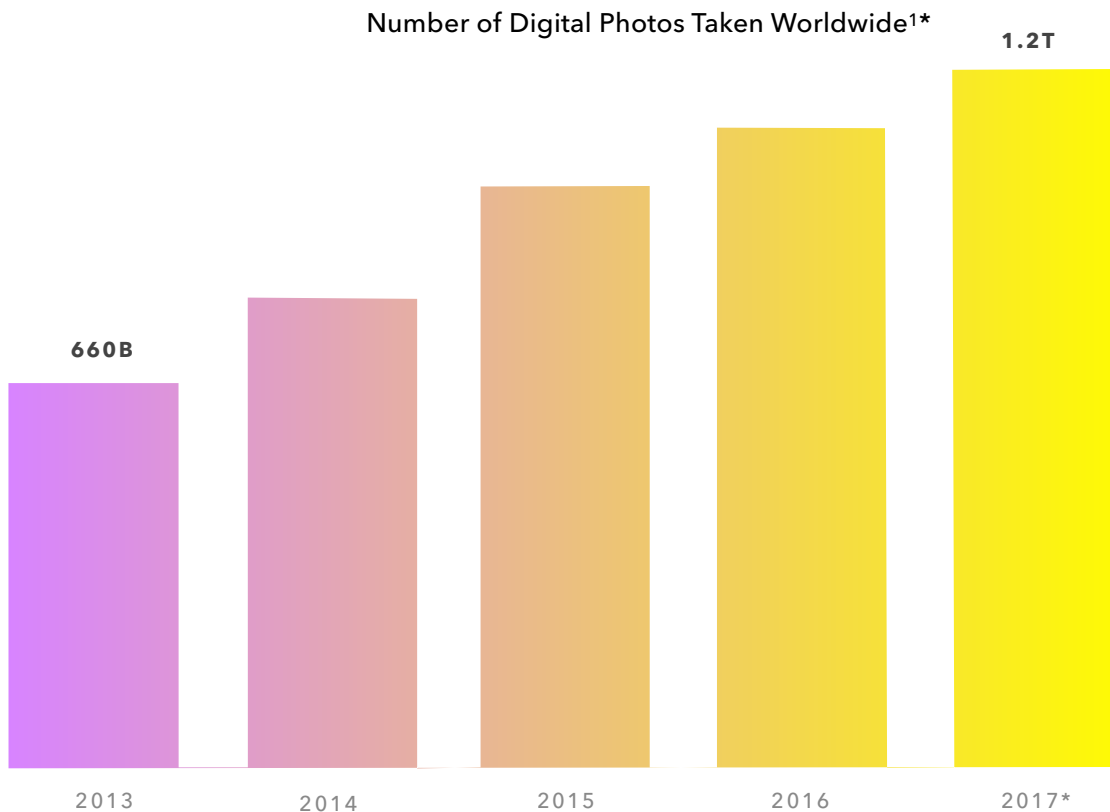
of smartphone users use a smartphone camera<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Source: United Stats; Pew Research Center; 2011 to 2018; Adults 18+ via Statista

<sup>2</sup>Source: 2018 Audience Theory Study commissioned by Snap Inc.; Sample Size N=1003 US smartphone users A13-34 with social media engagement

# Smartphones created a photography boom



In 2017, 1.2 trillion photos were taken – an 81% jump in photos taken, over the course of only five years.<sup>1</sup> The majority of these images were taken by smartphones. In fact, 87% of smartphone users either don't own or rarely/never use a digital camera.<sup>2</sup>

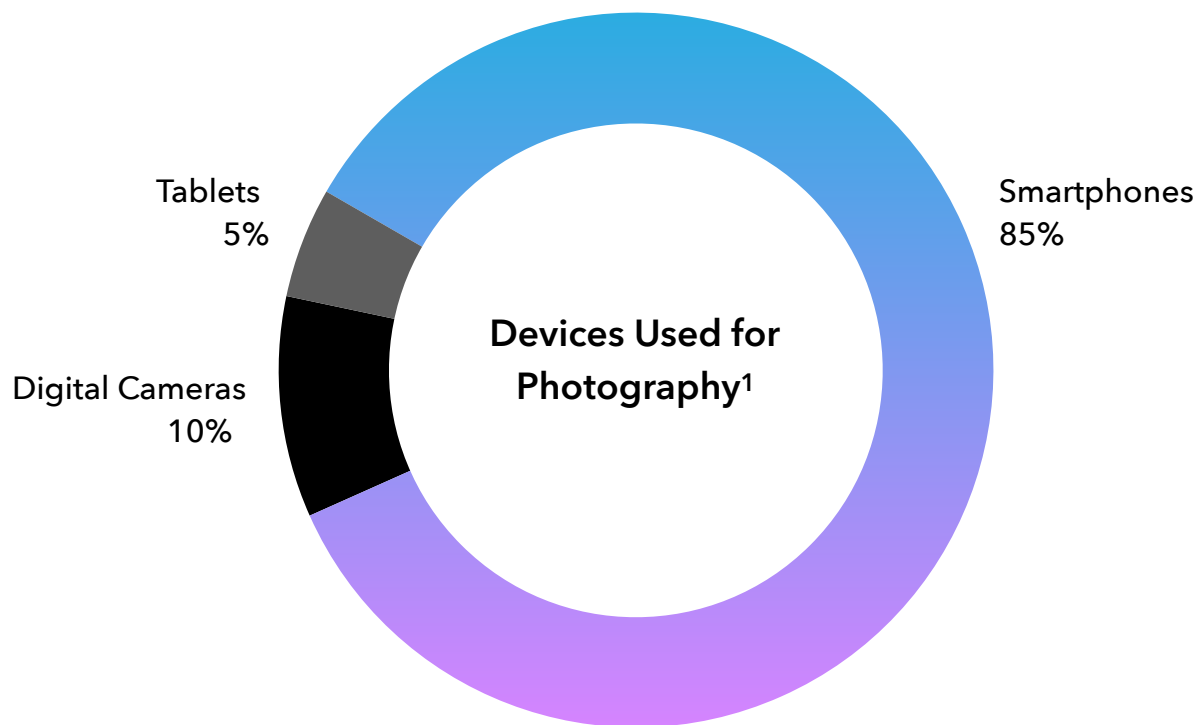
More than **1 Trillion photos** were taken in 2017.<sup>1</sup>

\*Estimates

<sup>1</sup>Source: InfoTrends via Bitcom; Aug 2017

<sup>2</sup>Source: 2018 Audience Theory Study commissioned by Snap Inc.

# Smartphones are the primary device for photography



From the technology itself to how we use it, much about the camera has changed. But on the whole, the way we think about photography is the same. The photos people capture and share generally follow the same motivations and aesthetics for the kinds of photos people took since photography became mainstream.

Today, over **85%** of smartphone users don't own or rarely / never use a digital camera.<sup>1</sup>

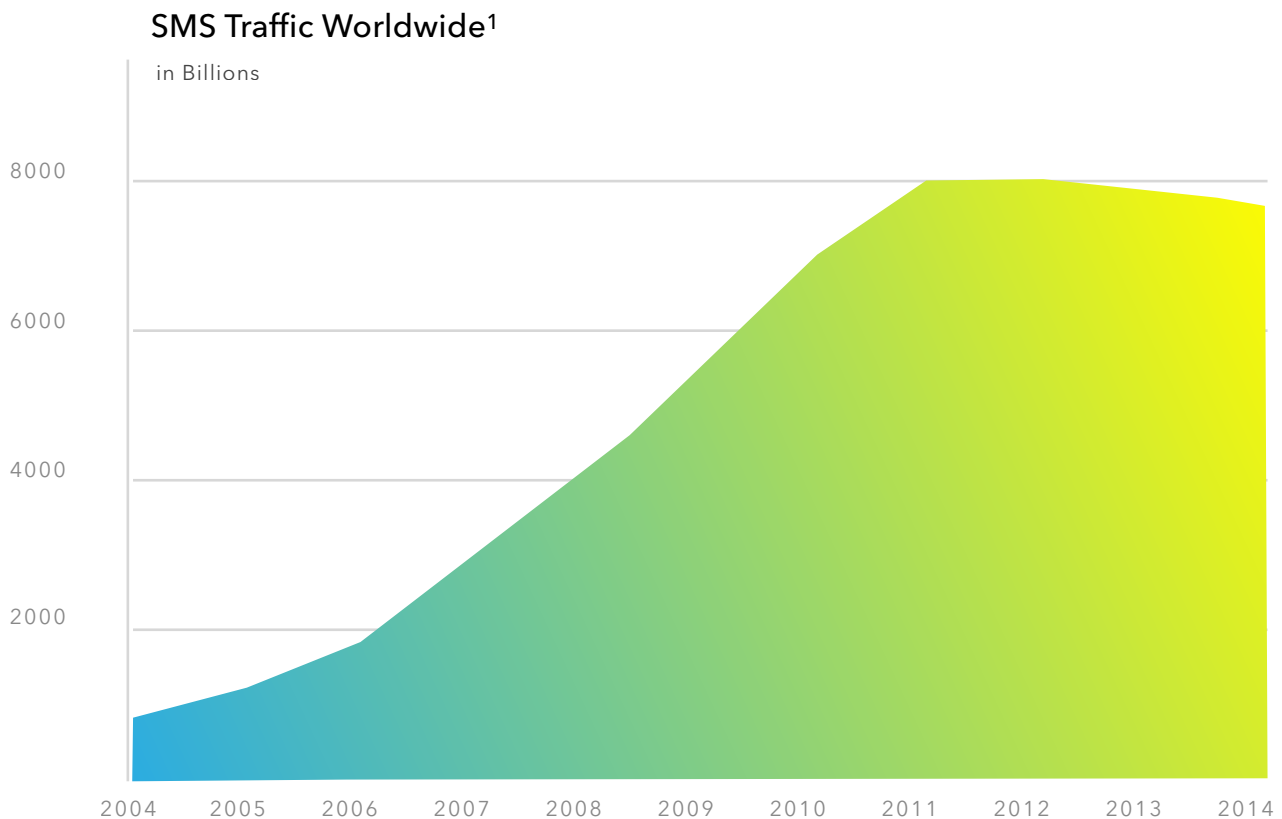
Whether it's to capture portraits or highlight moments in time, people think about their camera as a device primarily used for capturing or documenting things they want to save for later.

Just shortly after mobile texting became a primary source of communication, mobile internet connectivity was finally fast enough ("10xx faster on MMS!") to send photos at text-like speeds. This introduced the idea that cameras and photos could be used for more than capturing memories. And in the case of Snapchat, on average, there are over 186 million people<sup>2</sup> active on the app each day.

<sup>1</sup>Source: *The Rise of Mobile Phones for Photos*, Mylio, Dec 2016  
<sup>2</sup>Source: Snap Inc. Internal Data as of October 2018

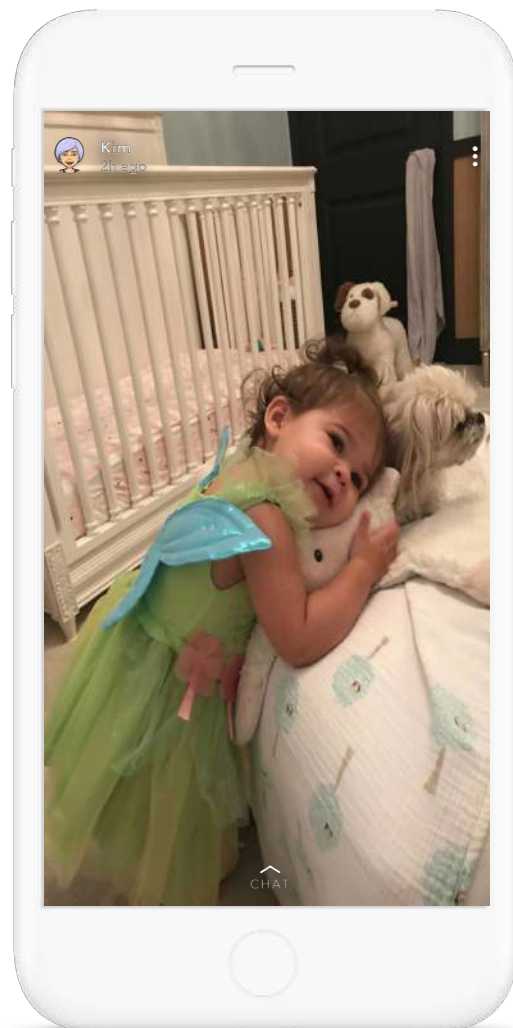
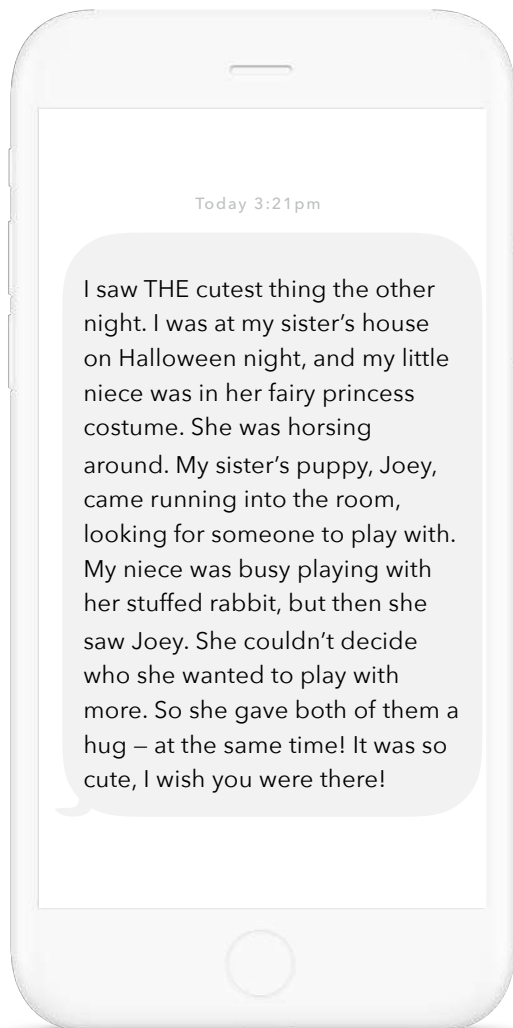
# SMS usage stagnates, visual communication is on the rise

SMS texting reached its peak in 2011. But shortly after that, SMS usage began stagnating – and even declining. The phone's primary utility is communication. Now that cameras are intrinsically tied to our phones, we're starting to use them for the main utility our phones provide: communication. In some cases, the camera is replacing older ways of communication outright.



<sup>1</sup>Source: Portio Research, "Mobile Messaging Futures 2014-2018," September 2014 as cited in eMarketer blog, December 4, 2014

# Visuals convey ideas that words cannot

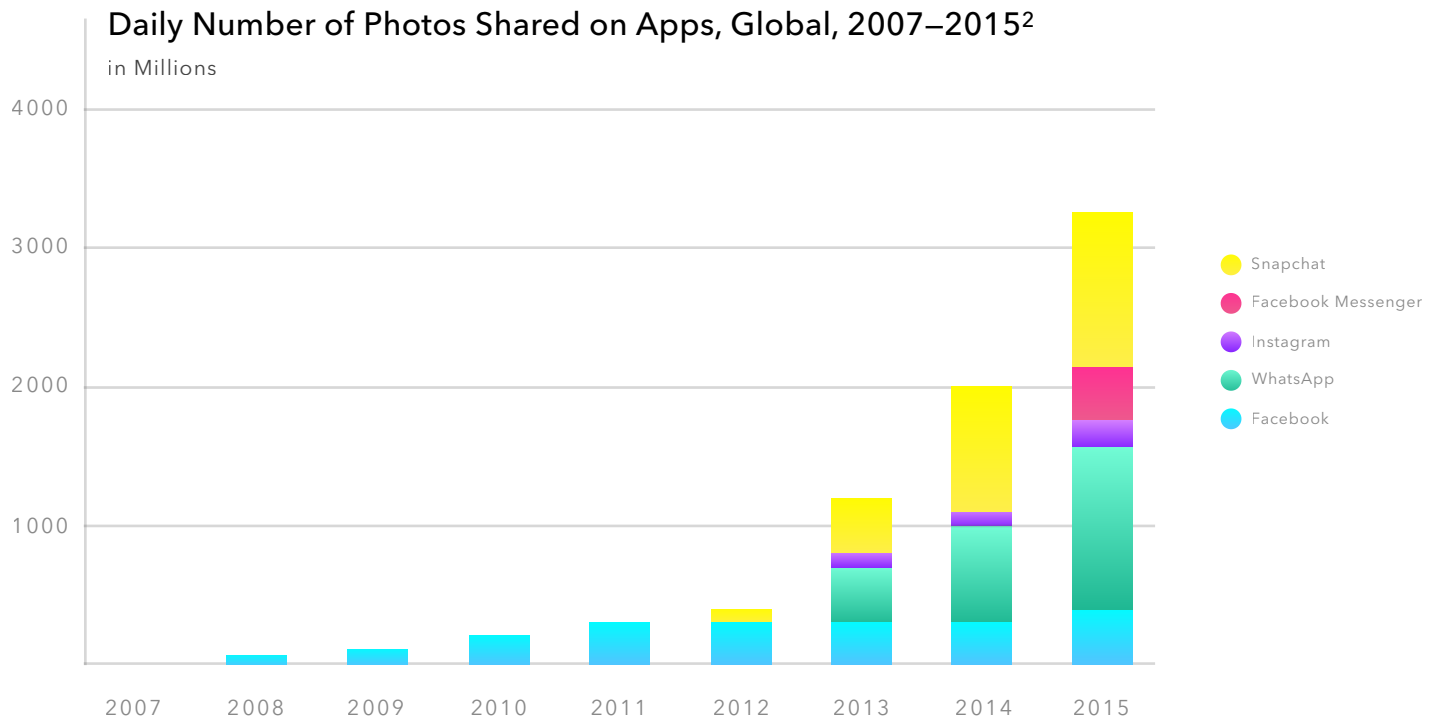


The brain can process  
an image in as little as  
**13 milliseconds.**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Source: Study by team of MIT neuroscientists (Potter, M.C., Wyble, B., Hagmann, C.E. et al. *Atten Percept Psychophys* (2014) 76:270), MIT News, January 2014



# Photos as communication increase exponentially through apps



Much of the early rise in photo sharing can be attributed to the increasing popularity of social networks and photo-sharing apps. But because of how easy messaging apps made sending photos to specific recipients, these messaging apps began to overtake social media in terms of photos shared per platform.

While the number of photos shared on social networks like Facebook began to stagnate in 2011, we observe a dramatic rise in photos shared from communication apps like Snapchat, WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger,<sup>2</sup> which correlates with the decline in SMS texting.

Over **1 Trillion** Snaps were taken in 2017<sup>1</sup>

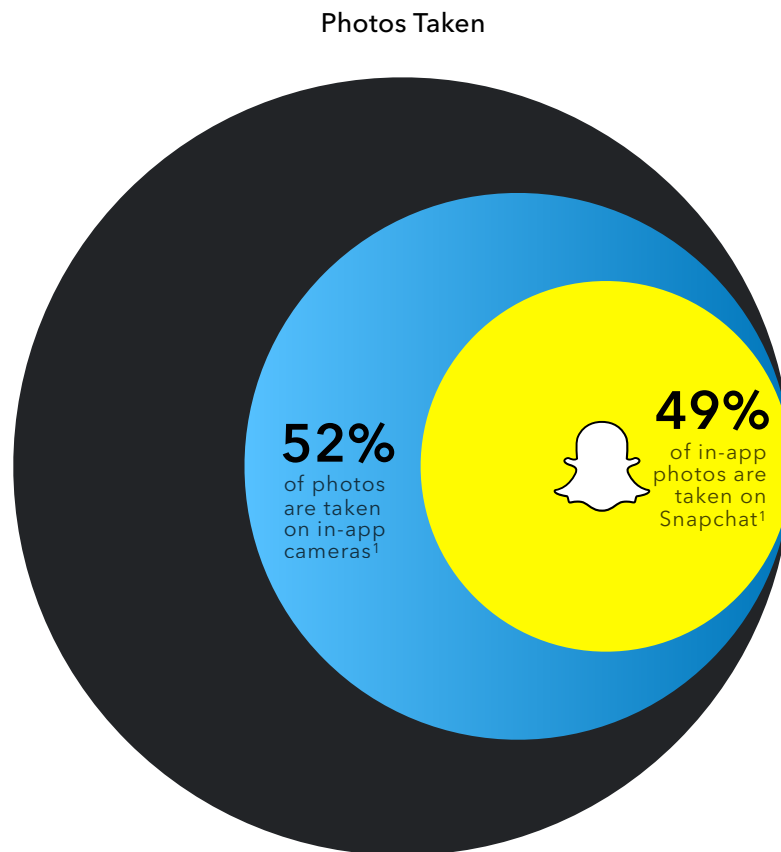
On average, Snapchatters create over 3 billion snaps per day.<sup>3</sup> And all aren't videos or photos meant for preserving in a photo album. They're not photos for documenting – they're photos for communicating.

<sup>1</sup>Source: Snap Inc. Internal Data, 2017

<sup>2</sup>Source: KPCB Internet Trends 2016 Code Conference

<sup>3</sup>Source: Snapchat, Inc. Internal Data October 2018

# Snapchat dominates in-app photos



Snapchat is an app for **sharing spontaneous experiences** with friends.<sup>2</sup>

When you give people a way to communicate visually, it sticks. 100% of smartphone users use their smartphones to take pictures, and 52% of those people use their in-app cameras that make communicating visually easy to do – every single day.<sup>1</sup> Half of all photos taken are captured through in-app cameras.

Communication is just the first of many places where we'll see the camera used as more than just a device for "capturing moments." In the same way the camera transformed communication, it won't be long before the camera starts to take part in pretty much every aspect of our lives.

This isn't a completely new revelation. We see these patterns developing every day. With the freedom to take as many photos as we want, cameras today are being used for functional needs (Google Translate), educational purposes (Photomath), and to create new experiences through the power of augmented reality (Snapchat, Apple AR Kit, etc.).

<sup>1</sup>Source: 2018 Audience Theory Study commissioned by Snap Inc.

<sup>2</sup>Source: Sharing the Small Moments: Ephemeral Social Interaction on Snapchat, Bayer, J.B., Ellison, N., Schoenebeck, S.Y., & Falk, E.B.; University of Michigan; 2015

# After SMS, Snapchat is preferred way to communicate<sup>1</sup>



SMS

1



SNAPCHAT

2



PHOTOS

3



PHONE CALLS

4



EMOJIS

5

Snapchat interactions  
are **more enjoyable** than  
other communication  
technologies.<sup>2</sup>

Photos used to be precious when it took a lot more effort to actually take and process them. But today, it can be as easy as snapping your fingers. Being limited to 24 photos because of a roll of film lends itself to a completely different behavior than having 128 GB of data storage.

As the camera continues to advance, it's important that we recognize its changing role in society. Cameras are no longer just a device for capturing that perfect moment – that's only a piece of it.

<sup>1</sup>Source: 2018 Audience Theory Study commissioned by Snap Inc.; Responses aggregated from all users of each platform; When it comes to your personal communication, which of the following best describes how you feel about the different ways you can communicate with your smartphone? Snapchat preference asked only among Snap Users N=688

<sup>2</sup>Source: Sharing the Small Moments: Ephemeral Social Interaction on Snapchat, Bayer, J.B., Ellison, N., Schoenebeck, S.Y., & Falk, E.B.; University of Michigan; 2015

