

How to Laugh (And Win) with Next Gen

A Global Study by Snap x Omnicom Advertising
August 2026

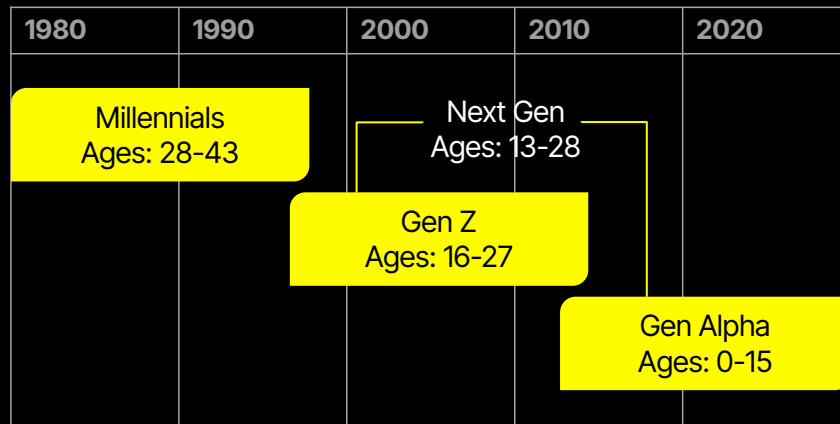


Meet the cohort raised
in the social media era

Next Gen

Aged 13-28, spanning younger
Gen Z and older Gen Alpha.

They are the first generation of young people
raised entirely in a social media world, where
memes, creators, algorithms, and digital
communication are a native part of everyday life.



Kim Kardashian (1980)
Meghan Markle (1981)
Ivanka Trump (1981)
Mark Zuckerberg (1984)
Colin Kaepernick (1987)
Emma Stone (1988)
Miley Cyrus (1992)
Justin Bieber (1994)

Camila Cabello (1997)
Simone Biles (1997)
Addison Rae (2000)
Greta Thunberg (2003)
JoJo Siwa (2003)

Ryan Kaji (2011)
Blue Ivy Carter (2012)
Prince George (2013)
North West (2013)

Next Gen **have their own humor** and from the outside, **none of us understand it**

Internet Driven



"I'd say our humour is quite sarcastic, a bit self-deprecating, and often pretty absurd.

We lean heavily on **irony, inside jokes, and making light of awkward everyday situations. A lot of it comes through online**, where memes get recycled and twisted into more and more surreal forms until they're funny just because they make no sense at all."

14, Female, UK, West Midlands

Irony



"There's quite a lot of **absurdism** and self-deprecating humor, and **post irony** seems to be a big thing. Memes play the biggest role in this, as well as the internet in general."

15, Female, Canada, British Columbia

Inside Jokes

"My generation's sense of humor is often **absurd, offbeat, and sometimes a little incomprehensible to adults**. We laugh a lot at very simple or very bizarre things, often taken out of context. What we find funny isn't necessarily the joke itself, but **the incongruity, the irony, or the fact that it's "so stupid it's funny."**

17, Female, France, Parisienne

Source: 2026 Alter Agents Study 'The Next Gen,' Commissioned by Snap The Next Gen (N=2,007)

To understand Next Gen, we need to start with where they connect.

 Snapchat reaches
90%
of 13-24 YO in 25+
countries



Snap Inc. internal data Q1 2026 Investor Relations Report

Snap and Omnicom Advertising partnered to help all generations better understand (and laugh with) Next Gen



15-minute online quantitative survey of Next Gen (aged 13-28):



6,028 daily social platform users



Approximately 1,000 per country



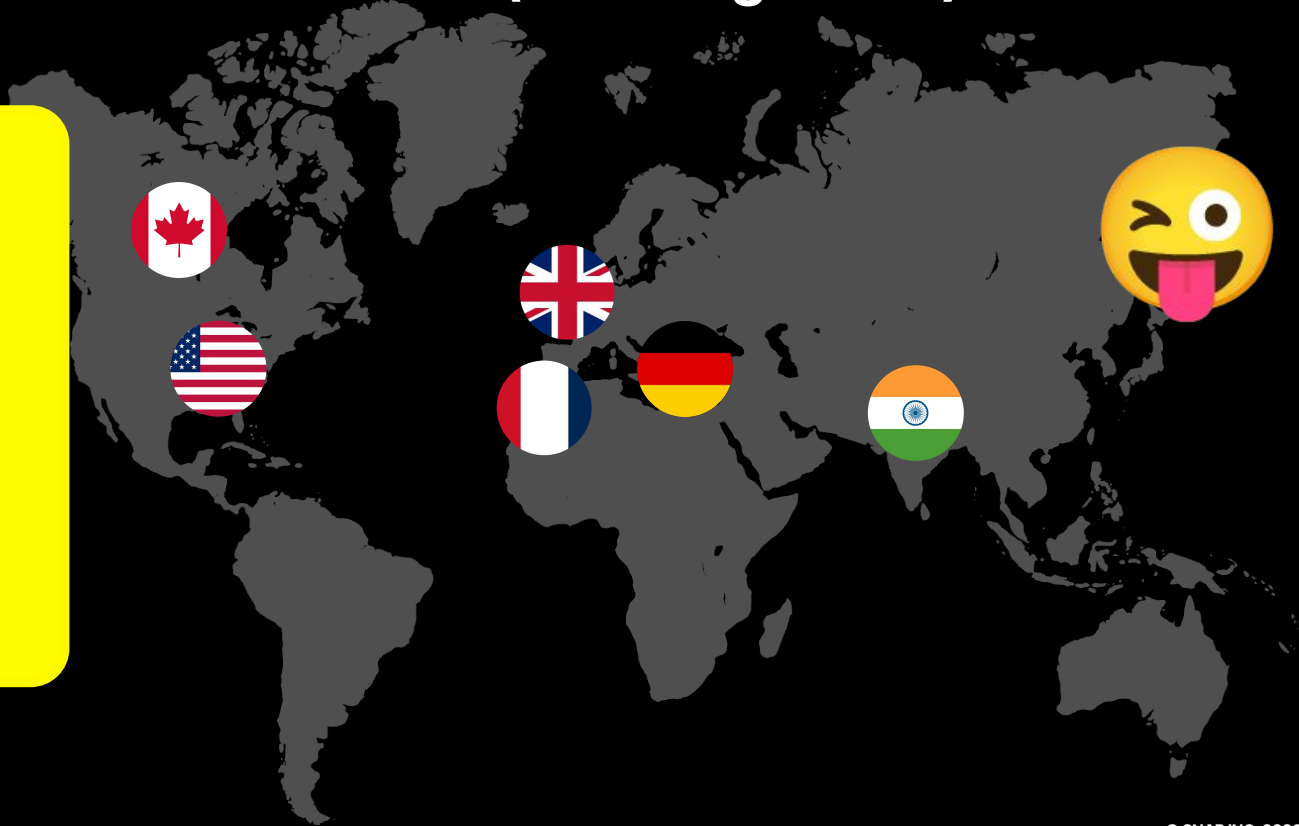
Including **3,593 daily**

Snapchatters (daily+ users of the app)

- Min. 500 per country



Mix of ages and genders,
representative of social app users
within each country



In a world so complex, **humor has become emotional infrastructure**

"Humor and memes are the gateway to everything for us."

- 19, Male, UK

82%

"Humor is how my generation talks about serious things"



85%

"Humor helps me say things I wouldn't normally say directly"



For brands, humor drives *more* than laughs

86%

Like it when brands try to be **humorous** or **make fun of themselves**

83%

Pay more **attention** to funny brands

 85%

74%

Are more likely to **consider buying** from a brand if they are funny

 85%

81%

Tell others about funny brands

 74%

The challenge for brands is... 🧓



 81%



The Zoomer Humor Playbook

1. What's So Funny?

Read The Room

2. The New Mechanics of Funny

Build Your Joke

3. Getting In On The Joke

Find Your Moment

4. Turning Laughs Into Snaps

Win On Snapchat

CHAPTER 1

What's So Funny?

*Learning to
Read The Room*



"Gen Z humor is niche and specific, not just slapstick, deadpan or observational. It's a lot more complex."

17, Male, US



We looked at over 6,000 jokes, memes and submissions from our Next Gen panel, here's what we found:



Next Gen share many types of humor with each other

Personal Jokes & Observational Humor

When you chose an academically challenging degree and you get academically challenged



Text Based Jokes & Riddles

"Why don't scientists trust atoms?
Because they make up everything" 🤪

"I told my doctor i broke my arms in
two places and he told me to stop
going to those places 🤪🤪🤪"

"Knock knock jokes, who is it?
Lettuce. Lettuce who? Let us in"

Pop Culture References



Anthropomorphic & Cute Animals



Image Macros & Reaction Images

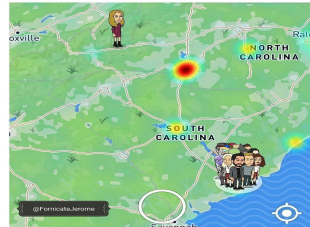


Short-form Videos & GIFs



Screenshot Formats

The one friend that burns every bridge
and doesn't get the beach invite



Absurd & Surreal Images



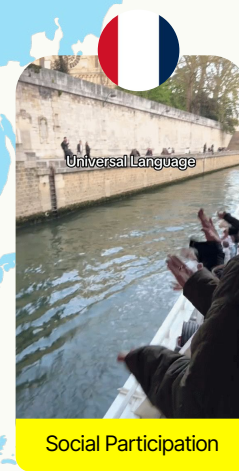
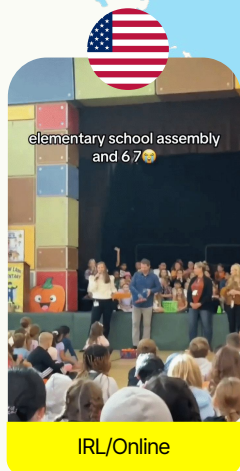
Anti-Humour & Non-Sequiturs



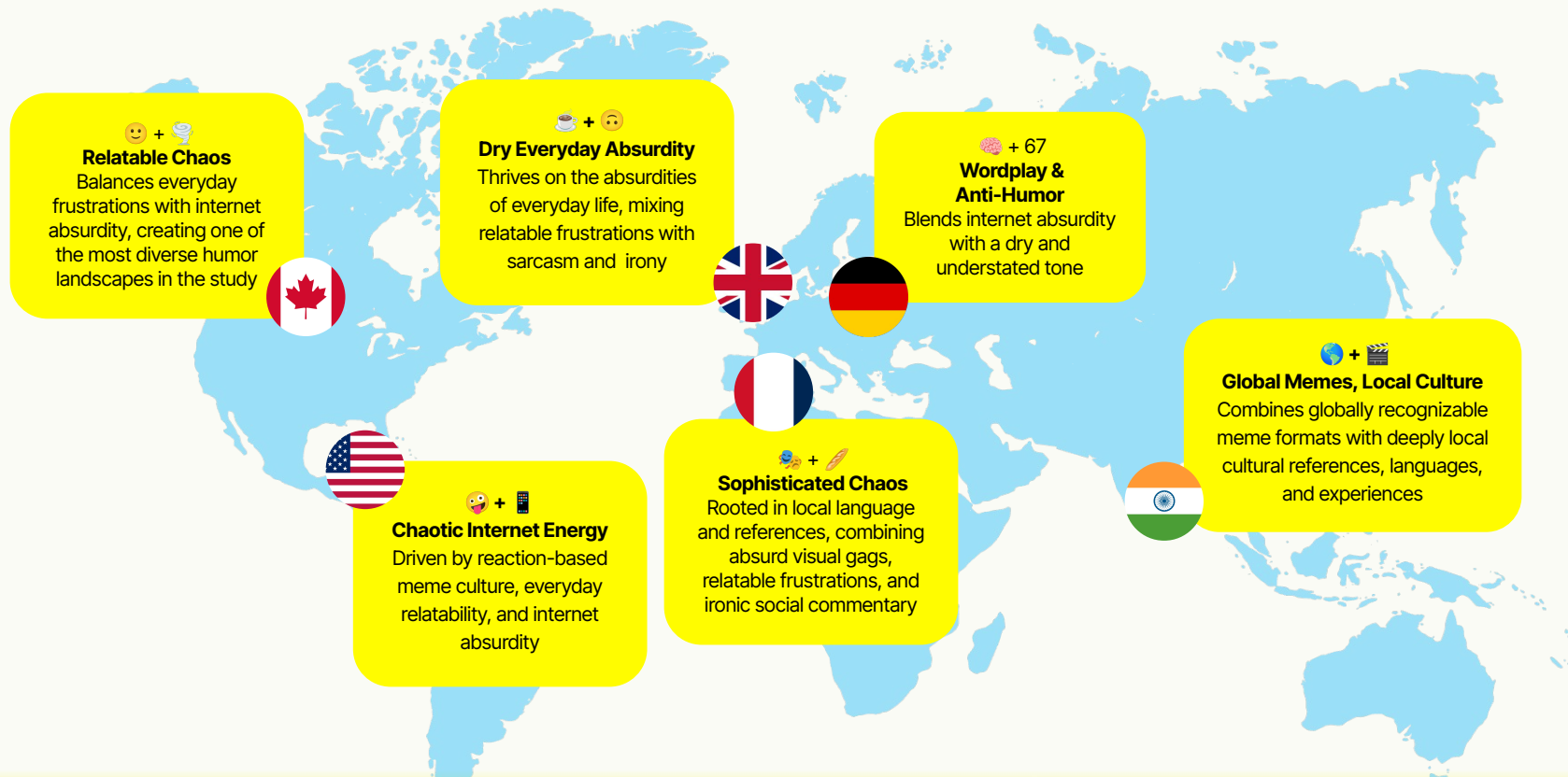
The same joke travels globally, picking up local flavors along the way.

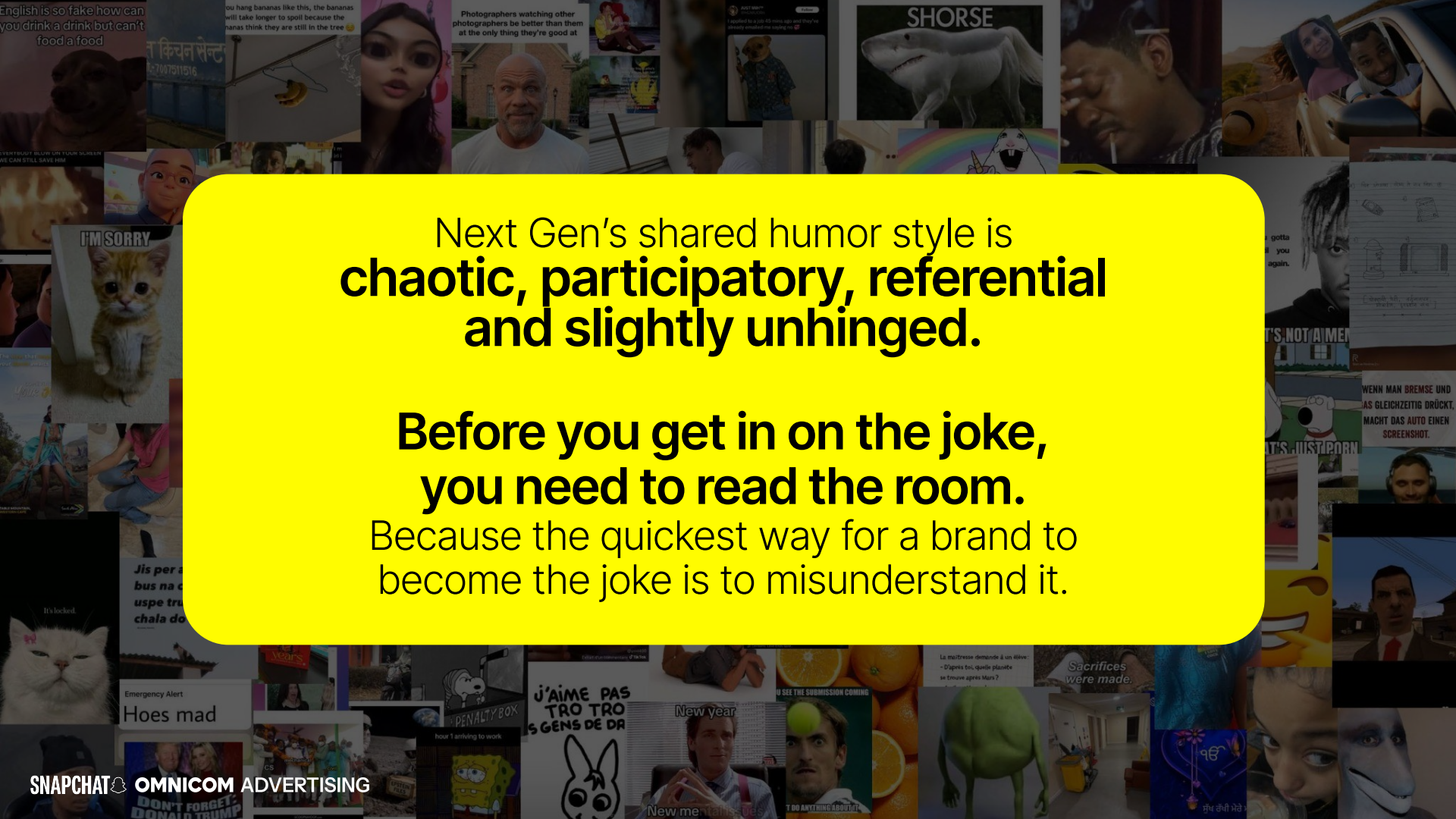
6-7 Meme Origins:

The 6-7 meme started as a lyric in rapper Skrilka's song Doot Doot before being adopted in basketball edits of NBA player LaMelo Ball. Over time, the numbers took on a life of their own, evolving from a niche reference into a participatory internet joke that spread through remixes, gestures, and shared cultural recognition.



The internet may create the joke, but local culture shapes the laugh.





Next Gen's shared humor style is
chaotic, participatory, referential
and slightly unhinged.

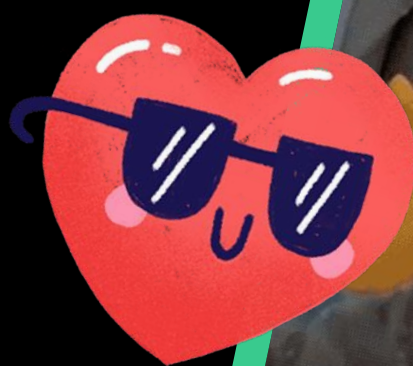
Before you get in on the joke,
you need to read the room.

Because the quickest way for a brand to
become the joke is to misunderstand it.

CHAPTER 2

The New Mechanics of Funny

Building Your Joke





What are the ingredients of a Next Gen joke today?



INTRODUCING

The New Mechanics of Funny



1. Context Is The Punchline
2. Random Has Rules
3. Irony Is Infrastructure
4. Escalate Or Die



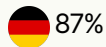
Context Is The Punchline



For Next Gen, the same joke changes meaning quickly. Where and how it shows up matters just as much as the punchline - equally, when information is withheld, it's a test to see who gets the reference. **If you get it, it's for you - and if you don't then move on.**

93%

"Something becomes funny because of how it is presented, not just what it is"



87%

87%

"You have to "get the reference" for some jokes to make sense"

85%

"It is funnier when not everything is explained"



88%

79%

"Explaining a joke usually ruins it"



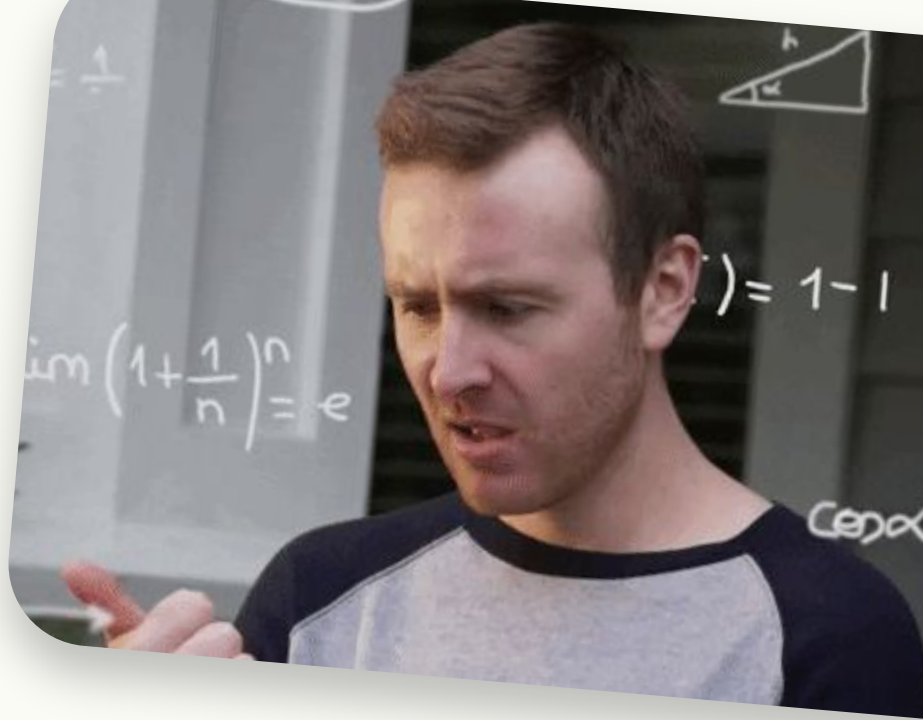
82%

Random Has Rules

The #1 type of humor Next Gen enjoys

**Humor that feels
"completely random"**

*"We laugh a lot at very simple or very bizarre things, **often taken out of context**. What we find funny isn't necessarily the joke itself, but **the incongruity, the irony, or the fact that it's 'so stupid it's funny.'**" (17, Female, France)*



92%

**"The best jokes seem random
but have logic behind them"**



Irony Is Infrastructure

84%

"A joke doesn't need a clear punchline to be funny"

🇨🇦 88%

"There's quite a lot of **absurdism** and **self-deprecating humor**, and **irony seems to be a big thing**. Memes play the biggest role in this, as well as the internet in general." (15, Female, Canada)

Escalate Or Die

Create, remix, evolve it, don't just duplicate

88%

"Humor gets funnier the more it builds or continues"



91%

47% vs. 17%

Want brands to make **original** jokes



53%

Want brands to copy trends directly





The four mechanics in action: **Fruit Love Island**

1. CONTEXT IS THE PUNCHLINE

Without the AI fruit lore, this makes no sense.
With it, the joke starts before the video does.

2. RANDOM HAS RULES

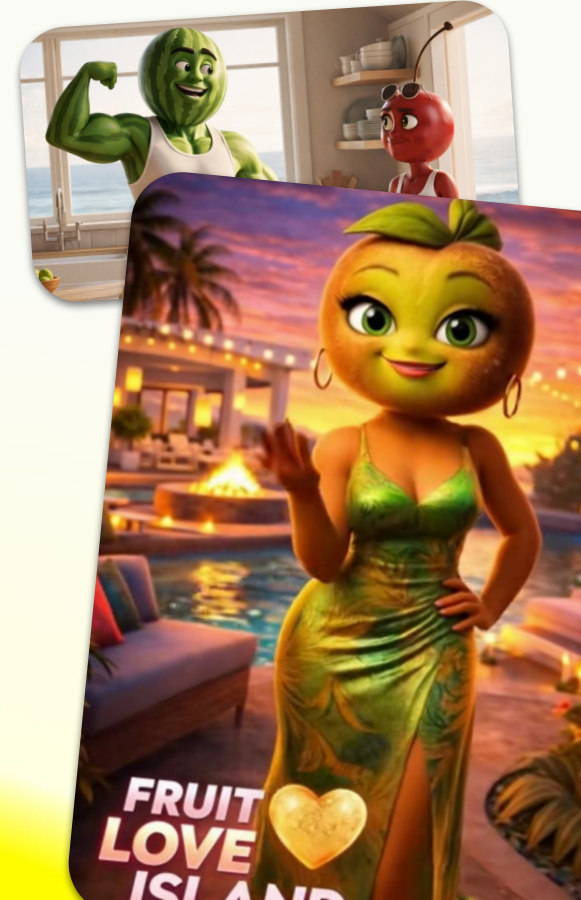
On the surface, this is absurd: someone staying up late emotionally invested in cheating AI fruit.

3. IRONY IS INFRASTRUCTURE

The creator knows it's absurd but still deeply cares who the fruit ends up with.

4. ESCALATE OR DIE

A reaction post is a form of escalation, it keeps the bit alive in a new format.



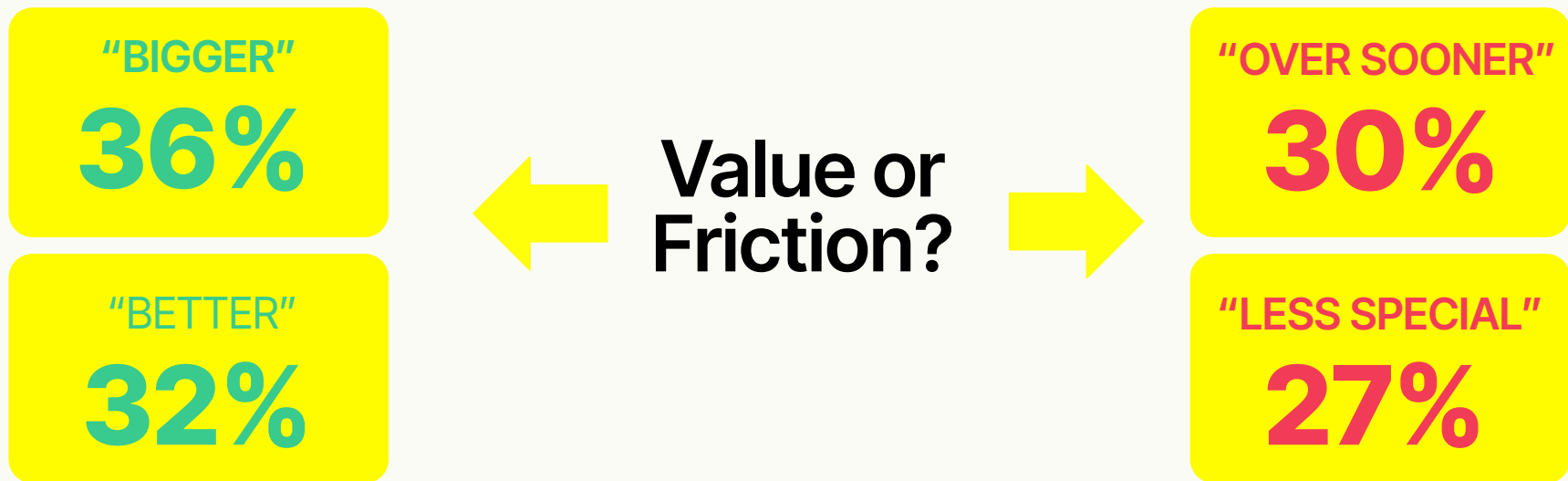
CHAPTER 3

Getting In On the Joke

Finding Your Moment



Your participation could make or break a joke. Is your brand adding...



Q. When a brand joins in on a trend, it makes the trend...

Timing is everything

91%

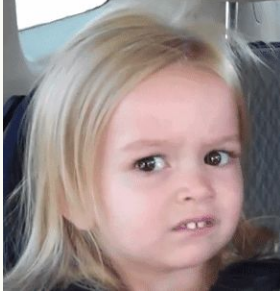
The same joke can feel funny in one
place and awkward in another

 95%

For brands, find your goldilocks moment

TOO EARLY

"Who invited the parent?" "...."



*Observe and read the room.
The context and community
are still forming.*

JUST RIGHT

"Lowkey the brand gets it."
"Okay they kinda ate."



*Move fast to build the
joke, participate.
Escalation is happening.*

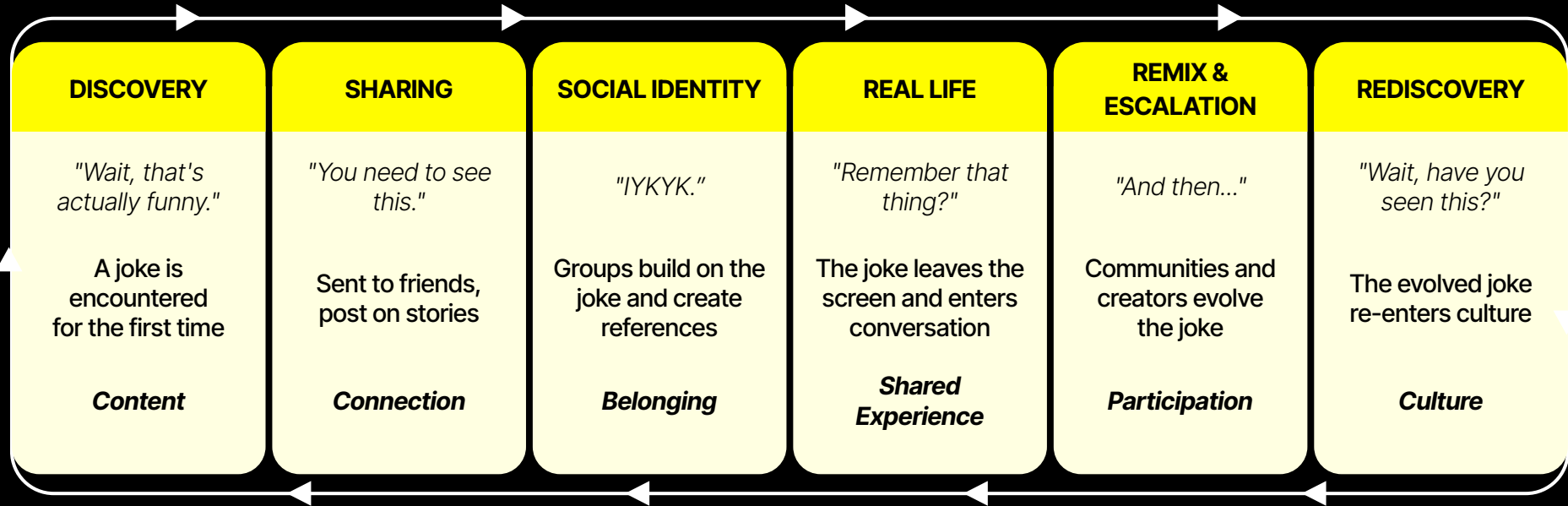
TOO LATE

"Pack it up." "Unc found the meme."

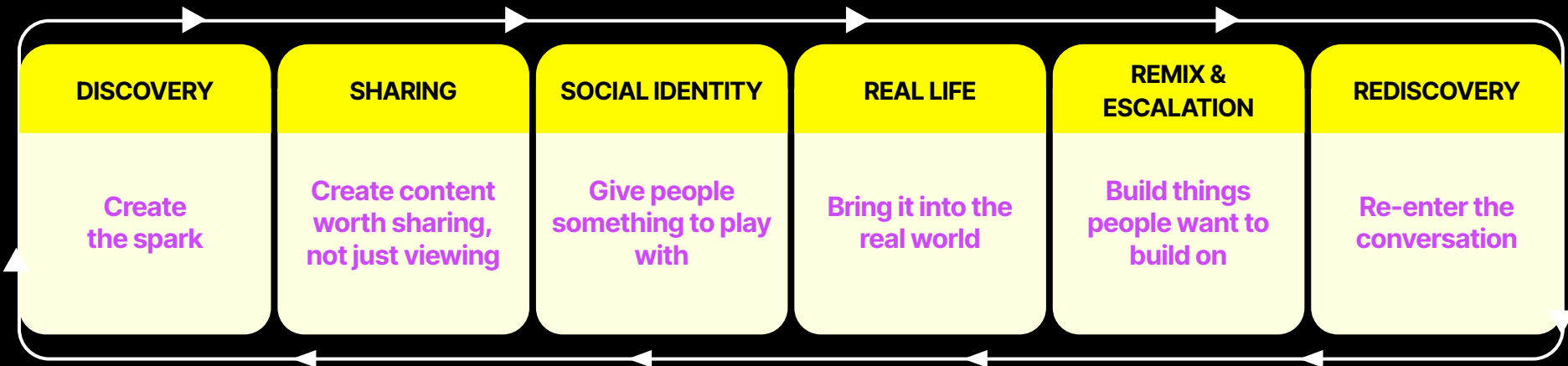


*Media and brands are explaining
the joke, the joke has become
the joke. Own being late.*

Every joke has a social life cycle



Every stage creates a different opportunity for brands

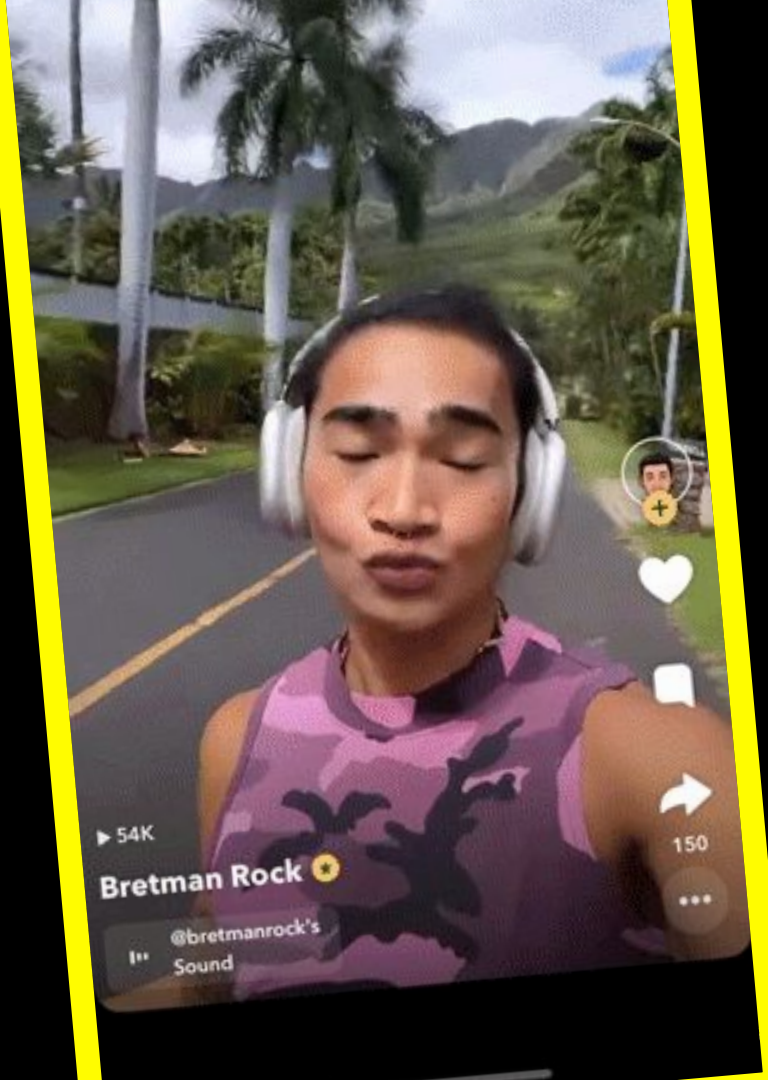


BRAND TIP
Brands don't have to own the joke, instead you can **help it grow** through sharing and remixing.

CHAPTER 4

Turning Laughs into Snaps

Win On Snapchat



Snapchat is the home of the authentic, unfiltered and real
where audiences come to laugh and not take life too seriously by expressing themselves in a judgement free and safe space.

79%

of Next Gen Snapchatters share memes, jokes, funny videos with their best friends on Snapchat*

*Source: 2026 Alter Agents Study 'The Next Gen' Commissioned by Snap Inc and Omnicom Snapchatters (N=6808).



On Snapchat, humor lives across tabs

Among Snapchat daily users, funny content means all of:



1 in 2

Sending funny things in **Chat**



1 in 3

Watching funny things friends post to **Stories**



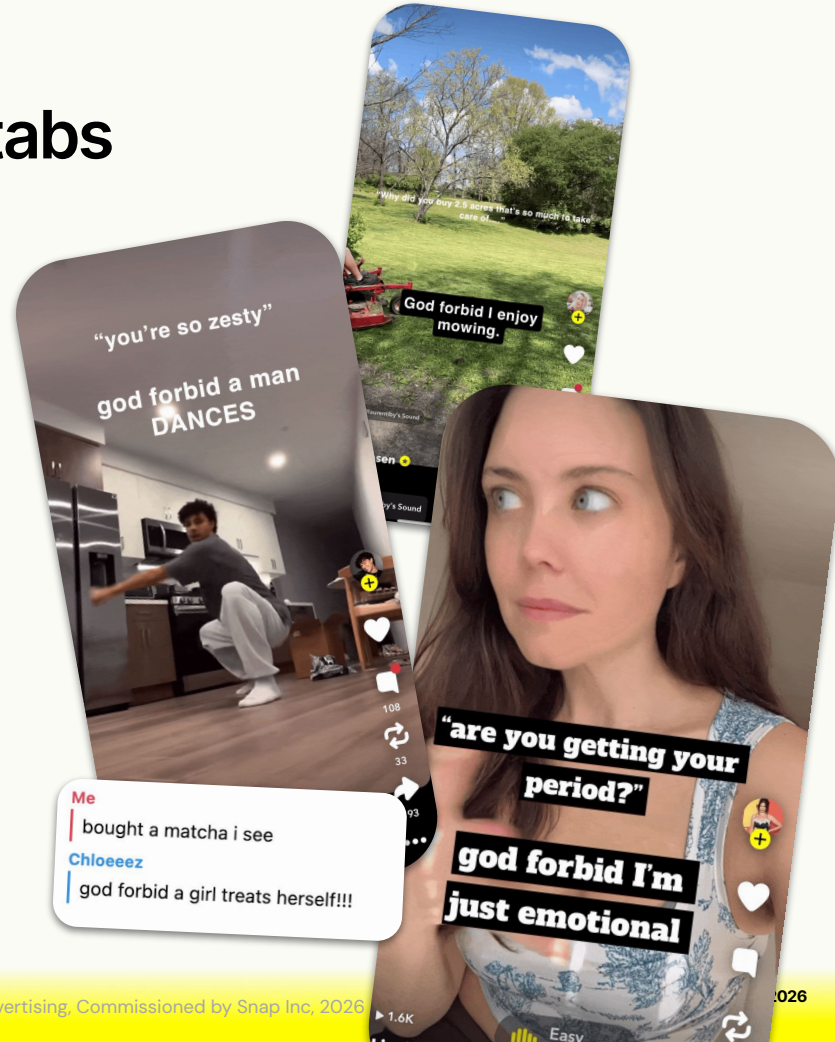
1 in 4

Sharing funny things on **Stories**



1 in 4

Finding funny content on **Spotlight**



Snapchat moves content from passive consumption into *active* social connection

64%

Of Next Gen say the funniest memories happen in private or group chats

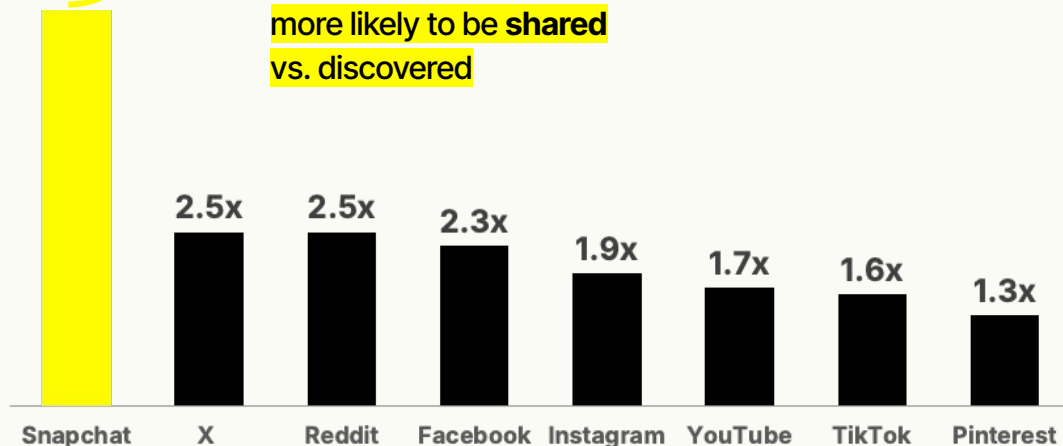
BRAND TIP

Brands can create humorous content that **accelerates sharing** between friends and family on Snapchat to build **WOM** about a product, message, or brand.

Snapchat is where jokes are

5.7X

more likely to be shared
vs. discovered



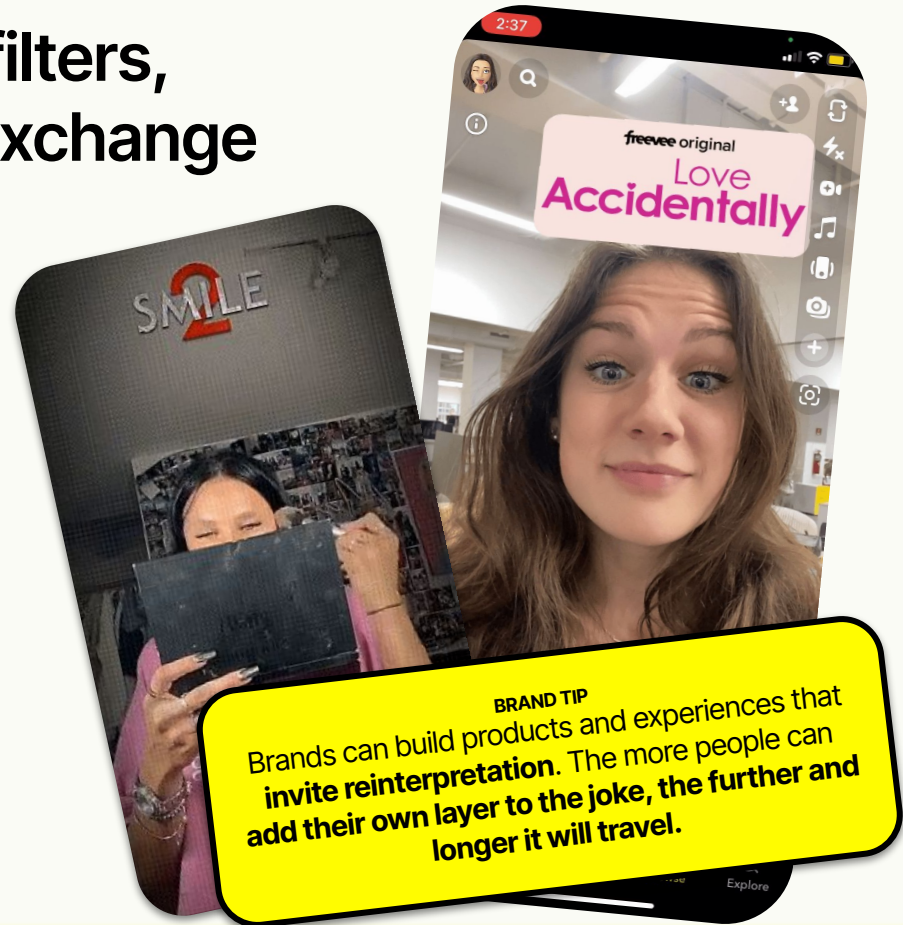
Snapchat's humor equity is filters, lenses, and friend to friend exchange

Snap is #1

platform associated with videos using **filters, effects or lenses**

1 in 2

Like to create their own funny content using **AR tools**



BRAND TIP
Brands can build products and experiences that **invite reinterpretation**. The more people can **add their own layer to the joke**, the further and longer it will travel.

Creators transform brand humor into community humor

82%

Like it when brands collaborate with their favorite funny creators

BRAND TIP

Brands should **build the joke together with creators** rather than simply ask them to tell the joke. **Partner with them early** so your idea is **shaped for the community from the outset**, rather than adapted after it's finished.



Humor is how brands win with Next Gen Snapchatters

76%

Are more likely to **consider buying from a brand** if they are funny

84%

Pay more **attention** to funny brands



84%

Tell others about funny brands

The Zoomer Humor Playbook

STEP 1

What's So Funny? Learn to Read The Room

Humor is how Next Gen signals belonging and cultural fluency. Before trying to be funny, understand the culture you're stepping into.

Observe:

- Learn their language before joining the conversation
- Design for relevance, not reach
- Every market adds its own flavor

STEP 2

Build Your Joke with the New Mechanics of Funny

The strongest jokes follow recognizable patterns. Context, randomness, irony, and escalation matter more than copying a particular trend.

Remember:

- Context is the punchline
- Random has rules
- Irony is infrastructure
- Escalate or die

STEP 3

Get in on the Joke by Finding Your Moment

Brands change a joke the moment they join it. Success comes from adding value at the right moment and in the right place.

Think:

- Find your Goldilocks Moment
- Contribute something new
- Help the joke grow

STEP 4

Win with Next Gen by Turning Laughs into Snaps

Snapchat turns humor into social connection. Through Chat, Stories, creators, AR, and Lenses, jokes become more personal, participatory, and shareable.

Aim:

- Design for sharing, not just viewing
- Build with creators, not just through them
- Think ecosystem, not channel