

New social media platforms you should know about

 By [Ashleigh Burton](#)

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In 2016, a little-known app started transforming the social media landscape through its short videos and spontaneous aesthetic; it's now the most-downloaded app in the world.



Source: www.unsplash.com

Social media is constantly evolving, as are the ways people use it. While many know the big social networks, many lesser-known platforms are thriving – let's look at the rising social media platforms you should know about.

Discord

Discord, while launching in 2015, became more popular in 2018 as interest in streaming and online gaming began to rapidly grow. However, in 2020, it saw another peak in popularity because more people spent time at home.

Once you have an invitation, users enter a forum-like space where they can communicate with each other by voice or video calls, messaging and sending media either among communities – known as 'servers' – or in private chats.

While Discord is still considered a platform primarily for gamers, its less intrusive approach and ad-free format makes it an attractive option for any brand looking to build a community. Starting as a platform dominated by gaming, much like Twitch,

Discord has now spread to a broader audience.

The invite-only social media platform has also become a way to create hype and find audiences for NFT projects. It's the latest gateway for brands including Adidas and Gucci to enter the metaverse - with *Vogue Business* dubbing it the Soho House of the Web 3.0.

“*Discord was intentionally designed for fast-paced, collaborative communication, making it a natural forum for NFT and metaverse projects, which operate collaboratively and with community feedback.*” - Rick Ling, group product manager at Discord ”

BeReal

“Time to BeReal: Two min left to capture a BeReal and see what your friends are up to!”

Take the picture. Post. Scroll.

BeReal is a photo-sharing application that allows users to post one photo per day to show their followers what they are doing in real time. The BeReal app focuses on authenticity and asks users to be real. Because the app allows everyone to post only once a day, users can avoid being on the application for multiple hours throughout the day, making the app stand out from the social media platforms currently dominant in the space.



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Users receive a notification at a random time once a day saying 'Time to BeReal'. This opens up a two-minute window for the user to post a picture of what they are currently doing. The purpose of this is to capture an authentic, unfiltered snapshot of a user's life. If users post outside of the two-minute window, they will be considered late and will not be able to see others' photos until after they've posted.

After posting, users will also gain access to the app's Discover section. Users can retake their photos, however, the app will show the number of times a user retakes an image. The app also reveals the number of times the user tried to capture their BeReal moment.

This week, TikTok became the latest big platform to respond to the rise of BeReal, announcing a new feature called TikTok Now that will give users daily prompts to share impromptu photos or short videos, using the phone's front and rear cameras. The move comes as Instagram has confirmed it is working on a similar feature, called IG Candid Challenges, and weeks after Snapchat debuted its own dual-camera mode.



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It's giving me Snapchat vibes combined with Gen Z's approach to life, really – raw and unfiltered. BeReal champions the mundane and steers away from the oversaturated influencer culture. The app doesn't offer pay-to-play advertising options, but brands are finding interesting ways to promote themselves and capture user attention. Its popularity is fast-growing, with a 315% increase in downloads since the beginning of the year.

Polywork

Meet LinkedIn's challenger – Polywork. Launched in April 2021, this new social media platform focuses on professional networking, where users can create profiles, curate a personal feed, and reach out to other users to collaborate and work together.

Unlike LinkedIn, where users have a single headline describing their current role or speciality, Polywork is designed for the hustle-culture generation, allowing users to highlight multiple roles, side gigs, passion projects, and specialities.



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In addition to profiles, Polywork aims to connect individuals with professional opportunities. For that, they've created their Space Station, where users indicate what kinds of projects or roles they're open to being contacted about.

Polywork is still technically in test mode and is invitation-only. But it's exciting to see a platform that aims to shake up the professional networking space, with a more Gen Z-friendly platform. It'll take a lot to unseat LinkedIn, which has 722 million members. But Polywork is worth keeping an eye on, as it represents an exciting evolution in professional social networking.

Supernova

More than the previous generation, millennials and Gen Z alike are known to be led by a greater desire to support good causes. Over the last decade, both social entrepreneurship and environmentally conscious entrepreneurship have emerged as the leading way to connect. At the same time, millennials are utilising social media and crowd-funding sites to support causes they believe in, in ways unseen in prior generations.

Meet Supernova – the social network that gives back. They've pledged to donate 60% of their advertising revenue to global charities, with the money distributed according to the user's preferences.



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The online experience is very similar to that of Instagram, where users share images and videos along with comments and messaging. Users can nominate in their profile which charitable cause they want to support (like climate action, homelessness, mental health etc) with the cash that Supernova gains from its ad partners. When a user's post is liked, their choice of charity will earn a bigger portion of the "Supernova Action Fund" as a donation. With 24/7 human moderation, they also promise a kinder and more inclusive community.

Popparazzi

Say no to selfies! Meet the photo-sharing app that encourages users to take and share photos of their friends. There's no front-facing camera, so selfies aren't a thing. Instead, users snap photos of their friends and tag them, mimicking a paparazzi shot.

A user's profile is made up of photos taken by their friends. Users also have the ability to restrict who can take photos of them and which photos show up on their profile.

“We built Poparazzi to take away the pressure to be perfect. We did this by not allowing you to post photos of yourself, putting the emphasis where it should've been all along: on the people you're with. On Poparazzi, you are your friend's paparazzi, and they are yours.” - cofounder and CEO, Alex Ma ”

New social media platforms emerge to serve specific audiences or to offer something different. It's clear that the pandemic changed the way we looked at our lives and how we interacted with them.

Many social media users are pushing back against the overly curated content, the constant barrage of irrelevant advertising and the toxicity of online bullying as they seek more community and authenticity – from themselves and the platforms they frequent.

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