

# PEOPLE ARE EXPERIENCING POLITICS LIKE NEVER BEFORE\*



## **The immediate and bidirectional world of politics.**



During the 2016 United States presidential campaign, two intriguing characteristics of the Trump campaign were Donald Trump's ability to raise funds and the success in reaching his supporters using various communication platforms via technology.

These two factors became prominent talking points throughout his campaign, especially during the last quarter of 2016; but what will be undeniably relevant in the next few years is the power of live streaming. It is not by chance that the new POTUS utilized this powerful strategy.

For some time now, this form of communication has been used by many in the political arena.



Venezuelan Henrique Capriles Radonsky and Honduran Manuel Zelaya, opposition leaders in Latin America, use this outlet as part of their strategies (2). The Obamas, Argentina's Mauricio Macri, France's Nicolas Sarkozy and over twenty more government offices have Snapchat accounts and most of them broadcast regularly. Mexico's Enrique Peña Nieto and some country's governors are loyal followers of Periscope. During the last American presidential election, Sanders, Clinton and Trump invested significantly in these platforms.

**Let's talk about why:**

## Millennials are more:

They represent 25% of the U.S. population and an estimated of 30% of the Latin American region (3). The progressive drive of this group is, without a doubt, the reason for the use of new and innovative technological platforms to communicate any subject. They re-defined the American political communication simply because they could. According to the Pew Research Center, by November 2016 for the first time in the American elections, 1 out of 3 voters would be less than 35 years old (4).

This new group has a special predilection for video content. In fact, a study by Nielsen claims that Snapchat reaches 41% of the population within this age group, while TV only reaches 6%. The force of Snapchat, Instagram Stories and Facebook Live is impossible to miss; in 2016, Snapchat alone reached 10 million videos watched per day.



## The crowd demands conversations:

Society's hypermediation has managed to veer communication to its most essential principles and to reward the most basic ways to convey a message: direct communication. Video streaming allows others to watch in spontaneous, immediate and bidirectional ways that can generate instant reactions. During the past U.S. Presidential campaign, it is estimated that 150,000 people donated to Donald Trump's campaign when requested by his staff through a Facebook Live event covering the last Presidential debate (5).

Also during the debate, the audience was able to leave comments - while watching them on the screen - on that same broadcast. Social Media and streaming platforms contribute to media democratization because they allow to establish a conversation between a candidate and any given citizen.

## Stories captivate and are shared:

In July 2016 Michelle Obama opened her Snapchat account to show a trip to Liberia, Morocco and Spain. Among the videos she sent, there was one in particular that caught the audience's attention, where she appeared as the copilot for James Corden, humorist and host of the Late Night Show. During "Carpool Karaoke" - Michelle Obama has been the only invitee on the show that is not a professional singer, not to mention the only First Lady to ever attend the show(6). Snapchat, Instagram Stories, and Facebook Live are also successful methods to share stories: videos that produce empathy, move emotions and entertain the followers of the storyteller, becoming highly appreciated and efficient.



## Casual videos generate closeness:

The wave of video streaming has been ridden by candidates, brands, organizations and media outlets. However, we cannot forget that the primary audience for most of this content is young.

### **Videos should be funny, original, fresh and simple.**

The hypermediation concept mentioned before, tired people of traditional advertising: the “Buy Now!” approach is obsolete for this generation. It is another reason why relevant content, with the added values of uniqueness and entertainment, is received with joy. Recorded videos from a cell phone, without editing (or with minimum editing) provide the freshness that appeals to the audiences. Also, the possibility of personalizing content with stickers, phrases and localization, provides a punch of personality to each story told.



## We see everything on our phones:

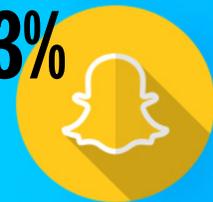
a trend intensifying year after year is the prevalence of the cell phone over computer. In fact, investment estimates this year provide clear evidence that mobile phones will be the platform for advertising (7) and, as indicated by Pablo Romero Sullá, this has changed the way we get content:

“Television and computers are horizontal while mobile phone is vertical. This 90 degree turn marks a generational leap equivalent to the time when silent movies turned to sound or from black and white to color TV. **The vertical narrative is linked to the personal conversation, not the professional one. The vertical code is associated with my colleagues, my pictures and my intimacy.** We went from the scroll of a computer mouse to the swipe of the thumb, more gestural and agile. Besides, according to the experts, performance is much better since a video in vertical is seen 9 times more than in horizontal.”



Taking all of this into consideration, it is clear that part of the visual content that is generated and regarded through these platforms is political; thus, based on this a large number of political leaders and candidates are opening accounts on these outlets and their estimates are accurate.

63%



A joint study by Global Strategy Group and Public Opinion Strategies showed that 63% of its users followed the American Presidential race via Snapchat (9). This indicates that a significant portion of the political information is being consumed on these platforms.

However, in spite of all the possibilities and the obvious potential these platforms offer, it must be said that these new codes are not always understood since there are leaders with boring accounts, not appealing at all, that cover news the old way through these platforms and can't engage with the audience. And I ask: "What the \*&%/!! are you doing?" Come on, it's not about the platform, it's about knowing how to be there, otherwise it isn't worth the money or the time.



**BEFORE YOU CLICK THE LIVE OPTION ON FACEBOOK, YOU MUST KNOW THE FEATURES THAT MAKE THIS KIND OF CONTENT SUCCESSFUL,**

so consider this:

**The young target is the one you must pay attention to.**

By this, I don't mean talking about their first jobs or other issues; I am talking about understanding their concerns, their codes and channels of communication. It is about listening and understanding them in order to speak to them later.

**Content must be spontaneous, fun, fresh and original.**

If you use Periscope, Facebook Live or any of these platforms to broadcast something similar to what is seen on TV, please, don't do it! Being on those social networks translates in turning a personal and relaxed look to who you follow, get out of your comfort zone and have fun by taking a "snap", for example.

**What is interesting about these platforms is the "live" effect.**

Currently, Instagram Stories and Snapchat lets you upload previously recorded videos, allowing just a small set up. But please don't forget the essence of these outlets, which is closeness. Get the most out of this opportunity and show more of your human side when sending your messages.

**Establish bidirectional communication.**

Through these platforms, the audience waits for an answer. The majority of these apps allow users to establish a conversation and as in any other case, answers are required.

**Most of your audience watches you from their mobile phones.**

Keep that in mind when you shoot your video. Make it short, with written sentences that are visible, that are quick to read. Find a schedule in which most of your target is connected or free to do it.

In conclusion, if the content is king, video is its queen. I am talking in present tense because it is not something that will come, it is something that is already upon us. In fact, 78% of today's content is being shared using this format, and it's important that you understand that they are efficient because stimulate nearness, improvisation and generate a difference. Therefore, if I have spurred you to open a Snapchat account, great! I will ask you something else: show your informal side, have fun for a while, talk to your followers and then let me know about your success.

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- [1] <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/trump-raises-9-million-off-debate-night-facebook-live-events-230126>
  - [2] <https://revistaitnow.com/facebook-live-mention-revolucion-a-con-su-incorporacion-la-politica-en-honduras/>
  - [3] <http://es.slideshare.net/carlosjimeneznet/conecta-tu-marca-con-los-millennials-31998237> [4] RDLB Millenials & Politics [5] <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/trump-raises-9-million-off-debate-night-facebook-live-events-230126> [6] [http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/06/22/estilo/1466592856\\_161131.html](http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/06/22/estilo/1466592856_161131.html)
  - [7] <https://www.marketingdirecto.com/marketing-general/publicidad/2017-sera-ano-publicidad-movil-internet-supere-pc-zenith> [8] [http://www.huffingtonpost.es/pablo-romero-sulla/snapchat-toma-el-testigo-\\_b\\_9696154.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.es/pablo-romero-sulla/snapchat-toma-el-testigo-_b_9696154.html) [9] [http://www.gutierrez-rubi.es/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/snapchat\\_y\\_politica.pdf](http://www.gutierrez-rubi.es/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/snapchat_y_politica.pdf) [10] <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/techbit/2016/01/12/obama-estrena-cuenta-en-snapchat> [11] <http://apconsultoriapolitica.blogspot.pe/2015/08/informacion-e-interaccion-en-tiempo.html>

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**RDL\*B**  
 848 Brickell Avenue  
 Suite 1015  
 Miami, FL 33131  
 (305) 373 5757  
 r@rdlb.agency