



# 20/20 Vision for Mobile Video

Outlook for a new era of mobile-first experiences



National  
Research  
Group

A STAGWELL COMPANY

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# 2020 Changed the Way We Video.

Mobile video is at an inflection point characterised by a surge in premium video content, driving both meaningful connection and self-expression among Gen Zs and Millennials.

## The Budding Premium Mobile Video Category Is About Social Currency

With so many people accessing video through mobile phones, global mobile video viewership is growing 6% annually, outpacing growth on other video platforms.<sup>1</sup> The rise of mobile video is fuelled not only by the 8 in 10 Gen Zs and Millennials who watch user-generated content every day,<sup>2</sup> but also by a growing contingent of Gen Zs and Millennials who watch premium mobile content daily. They are drawn to premium, immersive and made-for-mobile experiences: content that communicates compelling stories in less time, and is shot in vertical display.

Premium mobile video is about social currency, with more than 8 in 10 Gen Z and Millennial consumers turning to premium mobile video to stay up-to-date with what people are talking about, to feel informed, learn something new, and to participate in the conversation.<sup>3</sup> Mobile video inspires individuals to talk about what they watch when it reflects their values and identity. The most effective mobile experiences not only help Gen Z and Millennial consumers connect to each other, but also allow them to express themselves, and elevate them to be contributors to the cultural conversation.

**2010**

Smartphones  
are ubiquitous



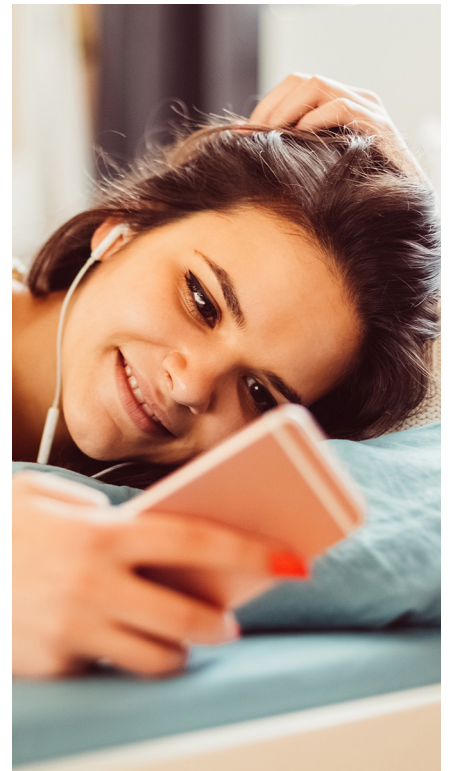
**Early 2010s**

User-generated  
content explodes



**2020+**

Rise of Premium  
Mobile Video





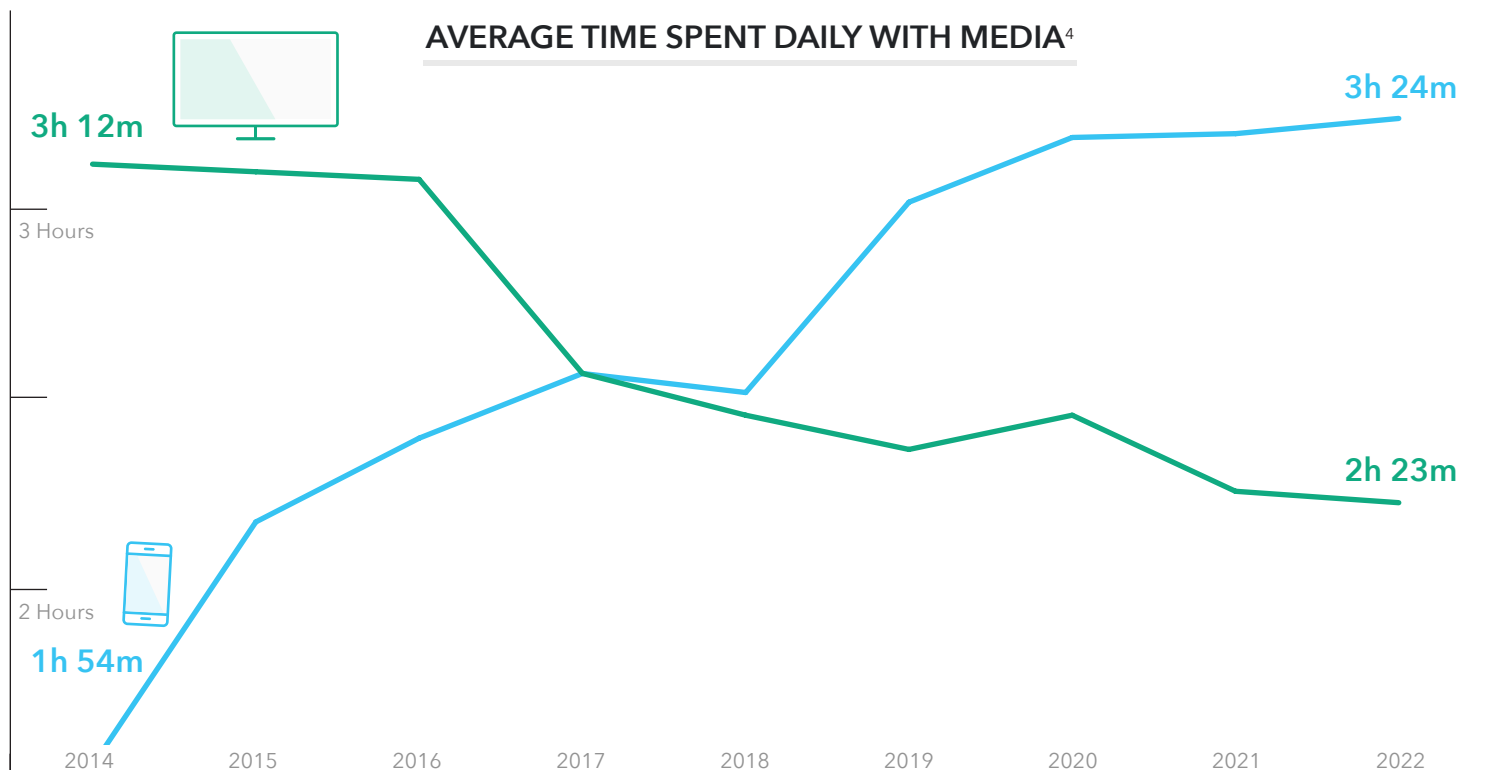
# Mobile phones now lead for share of time.

Mobile is the main event, surpassing all other devices consumers devote their attention to.

Over the past six years, smartphone screen time has multiplied by more than 1.5x, steadily rising from just under 2 hours per day in 2014, to a new high of 3 hours and 19 minutes per day in 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic has boosted media consumption across every screen, increasing time spent with TV, mobile and mobile video. COVID-19 is accelerating existing trends for mobile, which will continue to experience positive momentum post-pandemic. However, despite a surge in TV consumption during COVID-19, downward trends for TV look likely to return as consumers are no longer sheltering in place.

- In just three short years, time spent with mobile went from equal time spent with TV in 2017, to surging ahead of TV by 33 minutes in 2020. Gains for mobile are projected to continuously grow in the coming years.
- Time spent with TV has declined by 14%, from an average of 3 hours and 12 minutes per day in 2014, to 2 hours and 46 minutes per day in 2020. TV's COVID-19 gains also lag mobile screen time, with TV seeing a gain of only 9 minutes in 2020 since 2019 (vs. mobile's 17 minutes), with a projected return to a decline in consumption in 2021.

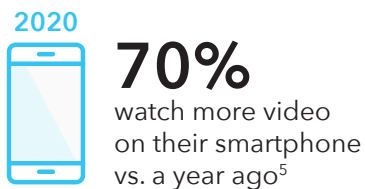


<sup>4</sup><https://www.emarketer.com/Article/Daily-Media-Time-Still-Increasing-UK/1014000>, eMarketer, UK Time Spent with Media 2019, eMarketer, UK Time Spent with Media 2020

# Mobile video focus is exponentially higher among Gen Zs and Millennials.

## TIME SPENT IS UP IN 2020

Young consumers are spending more time with mobile video every year. In 2020, 7 in 10 Gen Zs and Millennials report that they watch more video on their smartphones than they did a year ago.



## MOBILE VIDEO OUTPACES DESKTOP VIEWERSHIP<sup>6</sup>

When it comes to share of time across devices, consumers are spending nearly as much time with mobile video as they do with digital video on OTT, connected devices or gaming consoles.

**38 minutes**



spent with digital video  
on OTT, connected devices  
or gaming consoles

**32 minutes**



spent with  
video  
on mobile

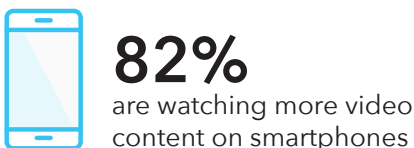
**19 minutes**



spent with video  
on desktop/laptop

## MOBILE VIDEO > TV DURING COVID<sup>7</sup>

The impact of COVID-19 on video consumption is significant: 30% of consumers have started watching or are watching more online video during the pandemic.<sup>8</sup> Despite added TV time for Gen Z and Millennial consumers while isolating at home, younger generations are still prioritizing mobile video.



**81%**  
are watching more streaming  
/ OnDemand shows



**63%**  
are watching  
more live TV



# Mobile video is more than entertainment: it gives Gen Zs and Millennials tools to thrive.

In 2020, mobile video has become a viable way for many consumers to cope with newfound anxieties and stay connected to one another.

Smartphones are consumers' most intimate devices: they're a portal for connecting with loved ones and the outside world, and where consumers keep many of their most important photos, memories and reminders.

The social currency mobile video provides is further reinforced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Short-form mobile video is an accessible lifeline for consumers to connect and stay informed in a moment of need.



**84%**

of Gen Zs and Millennials say mobile video has helped them cope during the current crisis.<sup>9</sup>

## USING MOBILE VIDEO TO COPE DURING THE PANDEMIC<sup>10</sup>



**87%**

**Entertainment**

For escape, laughter and distraction



**73%**

**Personal Growth & Wellness**

Keeping the mind or body healthy with fitness, skill building, and emotional wellness



**70%**

**Connection**

To loved ones, the world around you, and people who are being real and authentic



**56%**

**Information**

To stay informed about news and pop culture



***Provide the tools for people to succeed and thrive. Let them find it and shape it."***

- Galit Ariel, Futurist, Ted Speaker & Author



Galit suggests that "amid COVID-19 and the global economic and social unrest, Maslow's pyramid has crumbled. People are shifting away from a 'me'-centric culture as they begin to evaluate their needs, ambitions and behaviours through more critical cultural and societal perspectives. Our mindsets don't adhere with the hierarchical model Maslow's pyramid suggests anymore. We got to a point where we realise that the relationship between individual, social, psychological and basic needs are organic and intertwined—the layers are melded. We started to comprehend that we need to actualise ALL the layers (at least on some level) to thrive."

# Storytelling matters more than ever.

A rising quality standard is paving the way for short-form premium mobile video's ascent.

## Short-Form Does Not Mean Cutting Corners on Quality

Despite a trend towards shorter video content among elusive young consumers, there is still strong demand for immersion and escape at a click.

Aside from simply spending more time with their phones, there are three key reasons viewers are tuning into more short-form premium mobile video: accessibility, quality and storytelling.



### Accessibility

*Mobile provides always-on, always available access*

**71%**

say it is very important to have easy access to the most popular videos and an always growing collection of videos<sup>11</sup>



### Quality

*Amount of quality video is growing*

**88%**

say it is important for mobile video to feel professionally created, i.e., tell a story in less time and professionally shot in vertical display<sup>12</sup>



### Storytelling

*Stories are becoming more interesting*

**81%**

say short-form premium video is pulling them into characters, personalities and storylines<sup>13</sup>

# Attention spans aren't shrinking; the standard for storytelling is evolving across screens.

Premium content is making an impact on the mobile video category.

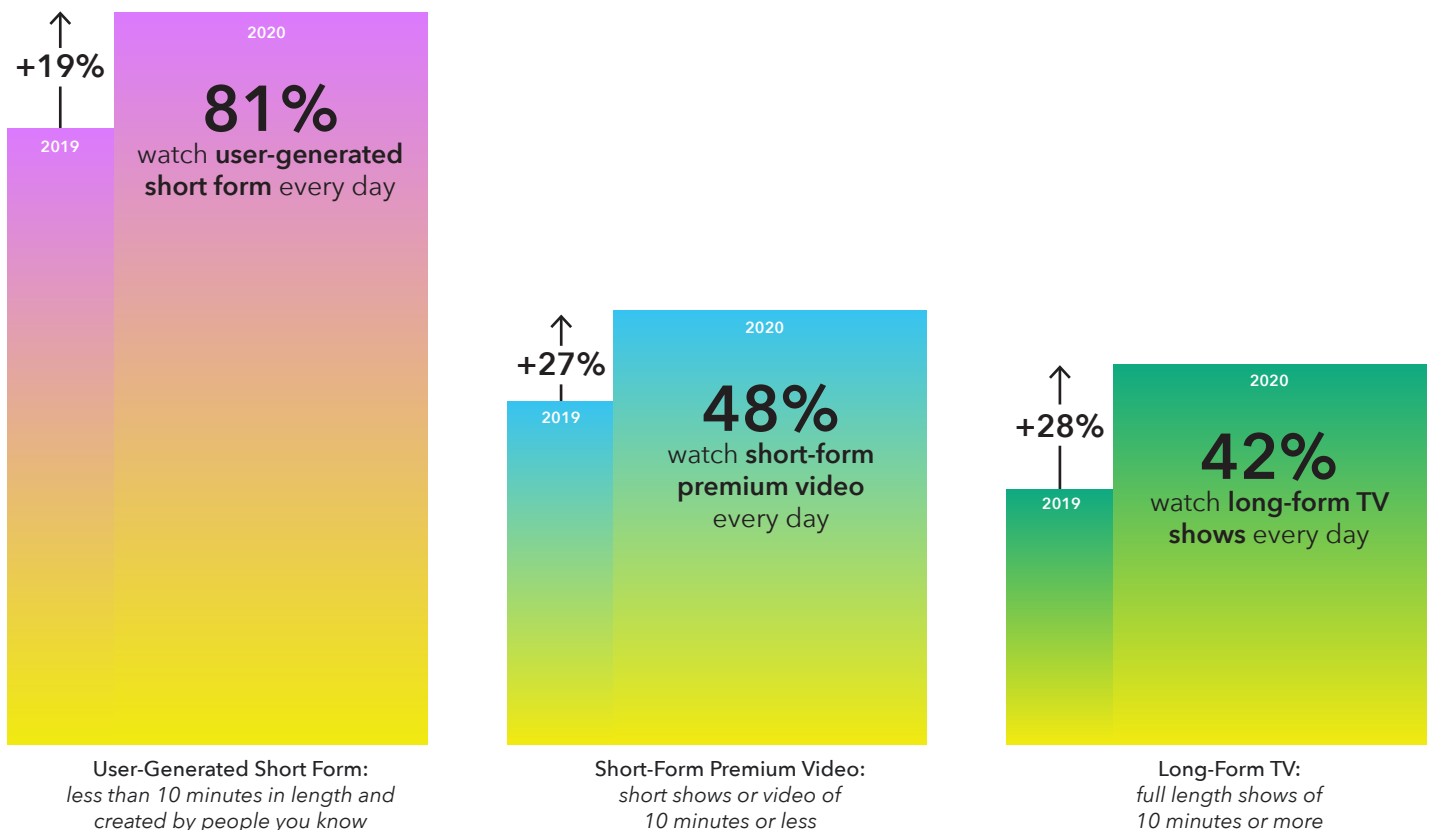
While 8 in 10 Gen Zs and Millennials watch user-generated content every day, premium video or entertainment content, is a faster growing space for mobile.

Premium mobile video daily engagement growth is unmistakable—for short-form, it's up 27% in 2020, for long-form, it's up 28%. Comparing this growth to user-generated content's 19% signals a desire for more quality video content on smaller screens. Today, 1 in 2 Gen Z and Millennial consumers enjoy short-form premium content

on their phones every day—and this format continues to be more popular for mobile video viewers than even full-length TV shows.

While Gen Zs are currently more focused on short-form premium mobile video compared to Millennial consumers (51% of Gen Zs watch short-form premium mobile video daily vs. 44% of Millennials), 1 in 2 Millennials is turning to the format more often than they were a year ago (vs. 43% of Gen Zs), illustrating the broad swaths of consumers ready to engage.<sup>14</sup>

## PERCENT OF GEN Zs AND MILLENNIALS WHO WATCH MOBILE VIDEO DAILY<sup>15</sup>



<sup>14</sup>2020 NRG UK Study commissioned by Snap Inc.

<sup>15</sup>2020 NRG UK Study commissioned by Snap Inc. versus 2019 NRG UK Study commissioned by Snap Inc.





# Three pillars characterise the magic of mobile: Personal; Shareworthy; Relatable.

The mobile video content Gen Zs and Millennials crave gives them connection to real life and each other.

The most effective mobile experiences not only help consumers connect with each other, but also allow them to express themselves, and elevate them to be contributors to the cultural conversation.

When mobile video is personal, shareworthy and relatable it creates the perfect intersection of connection and self-expression that solidifies mobile video's role in Gen Z and Millennial consumers' lives.

## THREE PILLARS OF AN ENGAGING PREMIUM MOBILE VIDEO EXPERIENCE

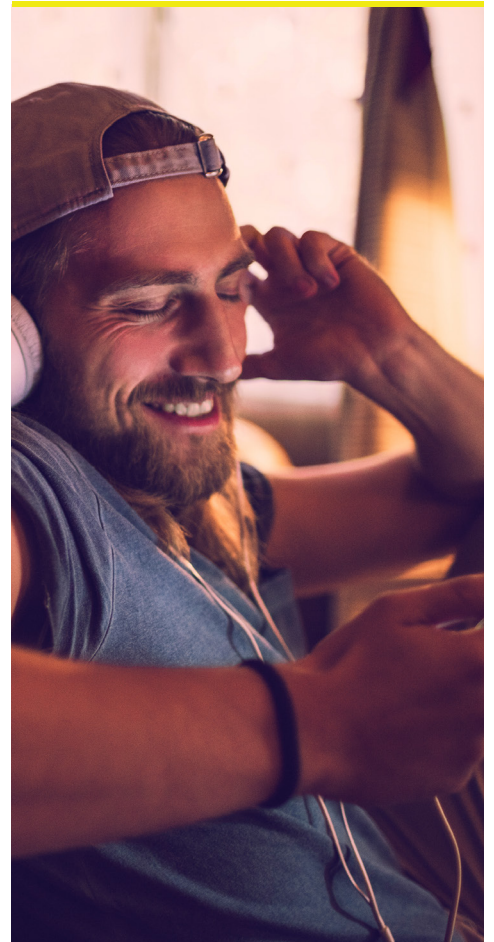
### Personal



### Shareworthy



### Relatable





# Personal

Premium mobile video creates a just-for-me storytelling experience, in a convenient format that offers flexibility.



*Vertical Video Creates  
an Intimate Experience*

## 3 in 4

Gen Zs and Millennials say that when video fills the screen vertically it feels so much more personal (74%) and immersive (73%).<sup>16</sup>

**80%** of Snapchatters say it's more *personal*  
vs. 65% among non-Snapchatters<sup>17</sup>

**78%** of Snapchatters say it's more *immersive*  
vs. 66% among non-Snapchatters<sup>18</sup>

**Vanessa Guthrie**, Director, Snap Originals, Snap Inc., explains how made for mobile storytelling enhances the personal user experience:

***"The stories that you tell must lean into the intimacy factor of the phone. Beyond the fact that it's a totally different medium, it's so much more personal—and so the types of stories, and the way you tell them, have to be truly made for mobile."***



# Discerning digital natives crave compelling narratives, in a convenient format.

Mobile short-form video is about watching on consumers' own terms, fitting their schedule and time commitments.

## Gen Zs and Millennials Crave Immersion *and* Convenience

Consumers still want an immersive experience, but in a format that is convenient for their moment-to-moment lives.



**83%**

Gen Zs and Millennials say short-form premium content fits well into their day or schedule.<sup>19</sup>

## Gen Zs and Millennials value the flexibility mobile provides<sup>20</sup>



**7 in 10**

say they would rather engage with a lot of short videos than get completely immersed in a longer video.



**54%**

say full-length TV or video series are too much of a time commitment.

While Millennials find long-form content to be more addicting than short-form, the two formats go head-to-head among the youngest Gen Zs (teens):<sup>21</sup>



**36%** of teens say **short-form** keeps them watching  
*vs. 25% of Millennials*



**41%** of teens say **long-form** keeps them watching  
*vs. 57% of Millennials*

# Short-form is delivering the experience once reserved for long-form.

When short-form premium mobile video works best, it engages viewers in a stimulating story that both provides a way to connect with the world around them and a break from the stressors of daily life. Viewers are getting a sense of escape and emotional pay-off.

## TOP DRIVERS OF ENGAGEMENT FOR PREMIUM MOBILE SHORT-FORM<sup>22</sup>

Allows me to reward myself

Allows me to live vicariously through others

Puts me on the edge of my seat

Gives me something to talk about with others online

Gives me a chance to participate in a conversation with people like me around the world

Makes me feel like I'm a part of a community of people like me

Helps me cope with stress

Makes me feel like I'm not alone

Gives me something to talk about with my family and friends in person

Allows me to be a trendsetter/introduce family and friends to new content



## 3 in 4

Gen Z and Millennial consumers associate short-form premium video with being the **well-deserved, exciting escape that was once only associated with bigger screens**<sup>23</sup>



# Shareworthy

Uniquely enriching Gen Zs and Millennials with social cred and relevance, short-form premium mobile video puts consumers at the center of the conversation.



## Content Leans Into Self-Expression

**80%**  
of Gen Zs and Millennials say  
technology allows them to  
express themselves.<sup>24</sup>

**83%** among Snapchatters  
vs. 75% among non-Snapchatters<sup>25</sup>



**Galit Ariel**, Futurist,  
Ted Speaker & Author

The video content Gen Zs and Millennials engage with is a reflection of who they are. We're still in the early stages of how we can share content and we may see more advanced ways to use emerging technologies like augmented reality (AR) to achieve interactions beyond lenses, such as opportunities to step inside a specific show and engage with your favorite characters. Looking to the future, **Galit Ariel** remarks,

***"The transformation between what's fantasy and what's real—the bridge between real connection and shared imagination—is going to be very powerful."***

# Premium short-form's strength is in its power to provide social currency, connection and an escape.

Conversations, connections, and stress relief set short-form apart.

Short-form premium mobile content plays a unique role in Gen Z and Millennial consumers' lives. More than 8 in 10 consumers turn to short-form premium mobile content to stay up-to-date with what people are talking about and feel informed.<sup>26</sup> Four in five watch short-form premium mobile content to participate in and connect via conversations, and as an escape from trying realities.<sup>27</sup>

## TOP ATTRIBUTES OF SHORT-FORM PREMIUM VIDEO<sup>28</sup>

Gives me a chance to take a break from my daily life

Gives me something to talk about with my family and friends in person

Keeps me up to date on what everyone is talking about

Fits into my day/schedule well

Makes me feel informed (e.g., keeping up with the news, learning a new skill)

Allows me to discover new and unique content

Gives me something to talk about with others online

Helps me to escape reality

Gives me a chance to participate in a conversation with people like me around the world

Helps me cope with stress



### At least 4 in 5

Gen Zs and Millennials agree these are the top descriptors of short-form premium mobile video





## Relatable

Short-form premium mobile video is the conduit to relevant real-life content and experiences—just what they need, right when they need it.



*Relatable Interactions  
Deepen Trust & Connection*

**74%**  
of Gen Zs and Millennials say short-form premium mobile video makes them feel like they are a part of a community of people like them.<sup>29</sup>

**76%** among Snapchatters  
vs. 71% among non-Snapchatters<sup>30</sup>



**Fattori Fraser,**  
Design Strategy Lead, Quantum

*“We’ve been witnessing the re-appropriation of digital platforms and technologies by Gen Z throughout the recent crisis. Gen Z are actively seeking community connection through digital spaces—in contrast to the earlier proliferation of individualist content creation in this realm. To do this in a significant way, Gen Z have harnessed existing platforms and their innate and intuitive usability, to showcase and support a broader range of content and communities than their developers initially imagined.”*





# Hyper-relevance creates hyper-connection.

Mobile video content preferences are a personal reflection of Gen Zs and Millennials' individual needs and tastes, in any given moment. Unlike more communal, lean-back entertainment experiences like TV, mobile video content choices are more purposeful.

Mobile is portable, so the top genres Gen Zs and Millennials engage with on mobile video deliver on a wide variety of needs that evolve as they navigate every aspect of their day-to-day. Whether watching a tutorial to address an in-the-moment challenge or laughing at a quirky video when they need a pick-up, each mobile video choice serves a specific need at that very moment.

## TOP 10 MOBILE GENRES FOR GEN Zs AND MILLENNIALS<sup>31</sup>

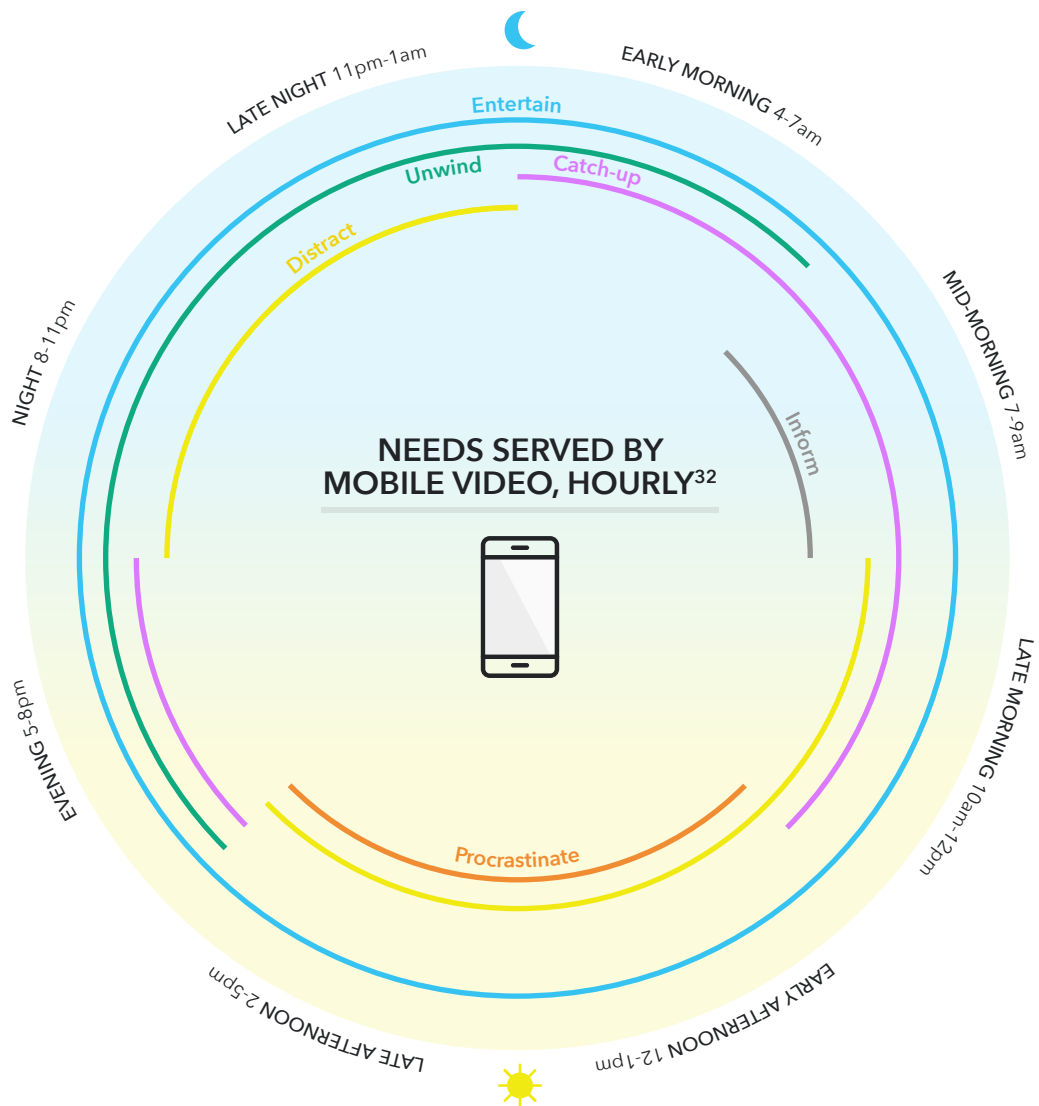
serving everyday needs of entertainment, information and connection



# Relevance matters in every moment, with mobile video serving a range of needs across each day.

Mobile video: often the last thing they go to sleep with, and the first thing they wake up to.

Gen Zs and Millennials are very purposeful in their mobile video consumption, and it's important to understand how need states shift throughout the day to determine how best to engage them. While their entertainment needs are top-of-mind all day, the type of informational needs and emotional pay-off change from morning to night.



# Next-generation experiences will build even more meaningful connections.

Interactivity will make social currency even stronger for mobile video.

## The Future of Premium Mobile Short-Form Is Interactive

When we look to Gen Zs, interactive features that allow social participation and relatability are increasing in importance. The connection and self-expression they seek in mobile video experiences will become even more central in the future.

### Social Participation

#### 60% of Gen Zs

Very Important, vs. 54% Millennials<sup>33</sup>

*Sharing your thoughts with interactive polling or questions within a video or show; lenses that bring to life your favorite video characters or themes*



**Will Saunders,**  
Chief Creative Officer,  
StoryFutures and StoryFutures Academy

*"What's most exciting is the promise of what has not yet been fully realised, but rather, what is coming and what new experiences will result."*

### AR Content

#### 45% of Gen Zs

Very Important, vs. 39% Millennials<sup>34</sup>

*Augmented Reality (AR) experiences that let you step inside scenes of your favorite shows or videos; AR experiences that let you experience video from all angles and get up close and personal with your favorite personalities or characters*



# Snapchat is the go-to destination for meaningful connection.

Video on Snapchat connects Gen Zs and Millennials to each other and to culture.

## Snapchat’s Superpower Is Authentic Connection

Users recognise Snapchat’s ability to create meaningful community and deliver on the unique social currency mobile video offers.

### TOP RATED ATTRIBUTES OF SNAPCHAT’S VIDEO EXPERIENCE<sup>35</sup>

- 1

Shows me videos from friends and people I like
- 2

Makes me feel connected to others
- 3

Keeps me in the know

## Connection Is Snapchat’s Key Point of Differentiation Among Gen Zs and Millennials<sup>36</sup>

Snapchat’s video experience delivers a sense of connection better than any other social video platform. Snapchat has a unique ability to make users feel connected to others, outperforming all other social video platforms.

### Shows me videos from friends and people I like



Competitive Average Indexed to Snapchat

### Makes me feel connected to others



Competitive Average Indexed to Snapchat



<sup>35-36</sup>2020 NRG UK Study commissioned by Snap Inc.

A shift in preferences among Gen Zs and Millennials towards high-quality and immersive bite-sized experiences will continue to propel premium mobile video consumption to new heights. Mobile video is becoming a fundamental part of how young consumers connect, and stay in the know about what's culturally relevant. With mobile video increasingly taking center stage in their media diets, the 1.83 billion worldwide mobile video viewers will become even mightier, growing to 2.72 billion people in 2023.<sup>37</sup>

***“Young people today have inherited a very complicated, fast-paced world. At Snap, we are always thinking about how we can elevate these voices for change.”***

**Jim Shepherd**, Head of Talent Partnerships, Snap Inc.,  
on a more collaborative and more connected future.





## ABOUT THIS REPORT

National Research Group conducted a second annual online quantitative study on behalf of Snap Inc., collecting responses among UK smartphone owners ages 13-35 who had watched video on their mobile phones in the past week. Gen Zs are defined as 13-23 year olds and Millennials are defined as 24-35 year olds. N=869 responses were collected between May 7-May 11, 2020.

## ABOUT SNAP

Snap Inc. is a camera company.

We believe that reinventing the camera represents our greatest opportunity to improve the way people live and communicate.

We contribute to human progress by empowering people to express themselves, live in the moment, learn about the world, and have fun together.

## ABOUT NRG

National Research Group is a leading global insights and strategy firm at the intersection of entertainment and technology. The world's biggest marketers turn to us for insights into growth and strategy for any content, anywhere, on any device.