



Brands Slowly Dip Into Instagram's IGTV

12.05.2018

Nike turned to Instagram's long-form video platform IGTV to post a documentary-style series following Chicago's Maynor De Leon in his month-long journey to lose 500 pounds.

In another series, the sports company features athlete Sarah Reinertsen as she competes with one leg as part of an initiative, with its longtime content agency Conscious Minds, to reset its broader strategy and creative vision.

"We spent a few months really diving deep to crack the future vision for the channel," Conscious Minds Head of Brand Bryant Kohler told Adweek. "Ultimately, it was all about adding value to the lives of our audience. To do that, we needed to stop acting like a company and start acting like a human."

The company wanted to show how Nike products are integrated into the athletes' daily lives, and its rollout of this documentary storytelling approach on IGTV makes it one of the early brands to experiment with the platform that Instagram expected to take off, but which has been more or less lumbering along since its launch in June 2018.

A competitor with YouTube, the IGTV is designed to upload long-form video-up to an hour for some influencers-onto a channel. It essentially extend's

Instagram's successful Stories feature, supports a vertically oriented format, and has the potential to become a new video advertising platform as dollars for traditional TV spots continue to fade, according to Fast Company.

Indeed, that last part seems to appeal to executives at Nike.

While Kohler wouldn't get into specific numbers, he told Adweek "there is quite a delta" between the costs of posting videos on IGTV compared to a TV ad.

"To be able to produce the amount of content we are aiming for, at the level of quality we strive for, we helped Nike build a new production model," he said.

As it experiments with the new platform, Conscious Minds also chose videos that were around three to five minutes long—a far cry from IGTV's intended "lean back" experience where users tune in for long stretches of time.

Yet Kohler did call it "the single best place to tell an in-depth story on the platform," says Adweek, saying users are more likely to watch for longer on IGTV than on other social media channels.

Steven Strand, director of global brand communication for Nike's brand voice, also recognizes there's a lot of room for trial and error.

"The exciting aspect of IGTV is that there isn't really a playbook, which provides an opportunity to craft stories, test and learn what our audience is responding to specifically in that space," he told Adweek.

Although brands have been slow to embrace the platform, Nike is certainly not the first to try it out.

Soon after its launch, MTV used IGTV to announce its Video Music Awards nominations, and Warner Bros. incorporated the platform in an in-house marketing campaign for film *Crazy Rich Asians*. Former Vice President Joe Biden also hosts the IGTV show *Here's the Deal*, an original series from activism-oriented digital media brand Attn.

For brands interested in playing around with the platform, there's no time like the present.

In a move that seems somewhat removed from Instagram's carefully crafted approach, the company itself is promoting a free-for-all approach as it looks toward the future.

"Everyone's trying to figure it out," Ashley Yuki, IGTV product manager, told Fast Company. "That's why we're encouraging everything, because who's to say?"

READ MORE: Adweek, Fast Company