ARTILLERY DATA BRIEFS

## FOUR OF THE TOP FIVE APPS FEATURE AR

05/27/19

It's no secret that mobile AR is where the scale is today, given 2.6 billion global smartphones, 1.1 billion of which are compatible with ARCore and ARkit. That last part is where everyone gets hung up, but apps likely won't be the predominant vessel for AR, for lots of reasons.

That leads to the discussion of Web AR, which is important for several reasons we've examined, but that's the topic of a different post. Somewhere between AR apps and web AR is AR-as-a-feature. And this will be a robust modality because it can offer the best of both worlds.

If its name isn't obvious, this is when apps include AR functionality as an added benefit to whatever the primary function is. Benefits include meeting users halfway by letting AR piggyback on existing apps… especially when the given app is already a popular one, a la Snapchat.
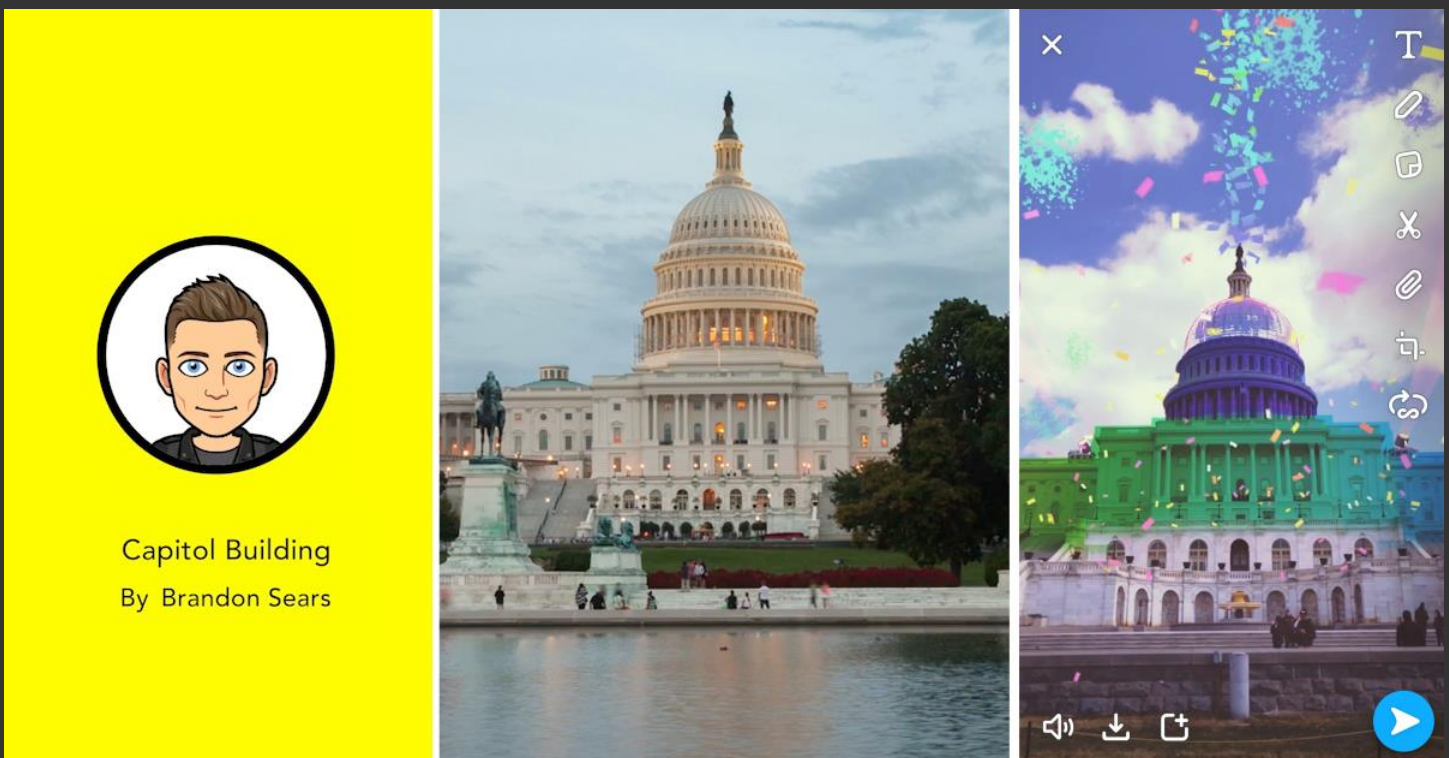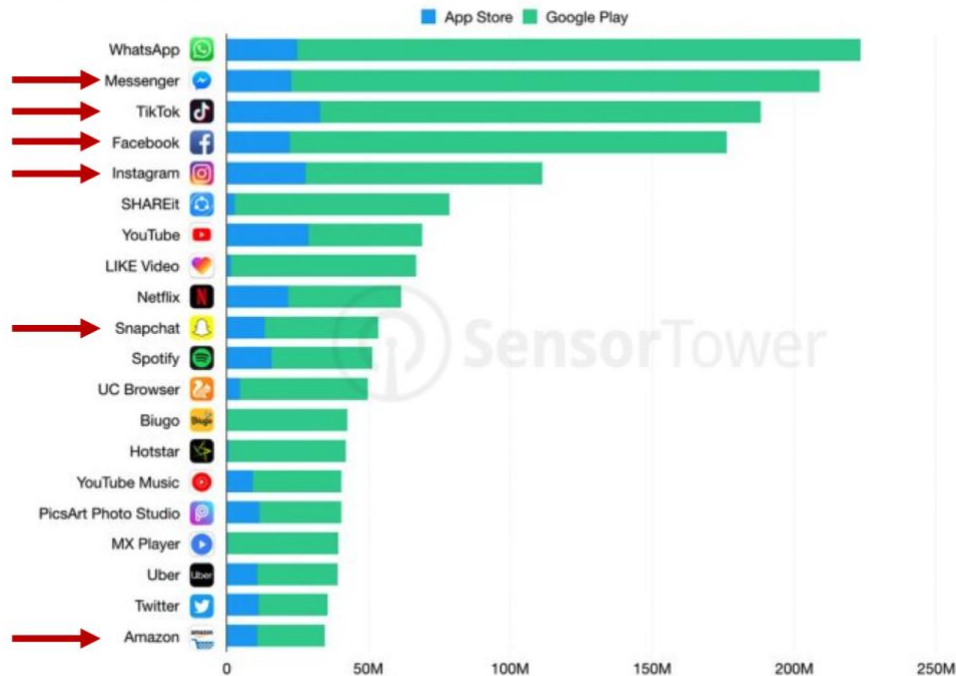

And it's already working. Snapchat AR Lenses — the poster child of AR-as-a-feature — have 130 million daily active users. Competing AR lenses from Facebook have been activated a billion times to date, and Pokemon Go brings various shades of AR to 65 million monthly users.

We already knew many of these stats individually but it helps to bring them all together in this light. Supporting them is new data from Sensor Tower that shows the top mobile app downloads in Q1. What struck us when looking at the list is that four of the top five feature AR.

As shown below (emphasis ours) they include Messenger, Tik Tok, Facebook and Instagram. Each feature AR lenses in social contexts, including the newest converts and AR sleeping giants, Instagram and TikTok. And nine of the top ten include AR, considering Snapchat.

Overall ▶ Q1 Apps by Worldwide Downloads

■ App Store ■ Google Play

WhatsApp
Messenger
TikTok
Facebook
Instagram
SHAREit
YouTube
LIKE Video
Netflix
Snapchat
Spotify
UC Browser
Biugo
Hotstar
YouTube Music
PicsArt Photo Studio
MX Player
Uber
Twitter
Amazon

0   50M   100M   150M   200M   250M

SensorTower Data That Drives App Growth   sensortower.com

Image credit: Sensor Tower (emphasis by AR Insider)

This is a strong confidence signal for AR. Though the go-to stat is the "over one billion AR compatible devices," these AR-as-a-feature indications are more impactful. If AR is to reach the penetration levels we've projected, this is the type of delivery system that's required.

Of course, the business models behind these AR integrations are still being developed, but several are already bearing fruit. As we examined last week, that includes a quickly growing revenue opportunity in mobile advertising, as well as in-app purchases in AR gaming.

Meanwhile, usage is the first step and is well on the way per the aforementioned figures from Facebook, Snap and Niantic. And AR should continue growing if delivered alongside 80 percent of the top mobile apps on the planet. We'll keep watching to see what the real impact will be.

Video Companion

Click to Play

ARtillery Briefs, Episode 25: Mobile AR Consumer Behavior

ARtillery Briefs, Episode 25
Mobile AR Usage & Consumer Attitudes

About ARtillery Intelligence

ARtillery Intelligence chronicles the evolution of spatial computing. Through writings and multimedia, it provides deep and analytical views into the industry's biggest players, opportunities and strategies.

Run by analysts and former journalists, coverage is grounded in a disciplined and journalistic approach. It also maintains a business angle: Though there are lots of fun and games in spatial computing such as AR & VR, cultural, technological and financial implications are the primary focus.

Products include the *AR Insider* publication and the *ARtillery PRO* research subscription, which together engender a circular flow of knowledge. Research includes monthly narrative reports, market-sizing forecasts, consumer survey data and multi-media, all housed in a robust intelligence vault.

Learn more **here**.

About the Author

Mike Boland was one of Silicon Valley's first tech reporters of the Internet age, as a staff reporter for *Forbes* (print) starting in 2000. He has been an industry analyst covering mobile and social media since 2005, and is now Chief Analyst of *ARtillery Intelligence* and Editor-in-Chief of *AR Insider.*

Mike is a frequent speaker at industry conferences such as AWE, VRLA and LeadsCon. He has authored more than 120 reports and market-sizing forecasts on the tech & media landscape. He contributes regularly to news sources such as *TechCrunch*, *Business Insider* and the *Huffington Post*.

A trusted source for tech journalists, his comments have appeared in A-list publications, including *The New Yorker*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*.

Further background, history and credentials can be read **here.**

Contact

Questions and requests for deeper analysis can be submitted **here.**

Disclosure and Ethics Policy

ARtillery Intelligence operates under the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics. All material and commentary are published with the professional standards and tactics of journalistic reporting. Adherence to such standards is grounded in and reinforced by our foundations in journalism.

All ARtillery Intelligence published material is meant to educate and inform: It does not result from paid placement, nor influence from subjects. In rare cases of sponsored posts, vested interest or anything that results from money changing hands, financial relationship is disclosed clearly.

Similarly with market sizing, ARtillery Intelligence remains independent of players and practitioners in the sectors it covers, thus mitigating bias in industry revenue calculations and projections. ARtillery Intelligence disclosure and ethics policy can be seen in full **here.**