

Application Analysis of Instagram
Max Khamphavong
COMM 372T, Old Dominion University
October 5, 2025

Instagram An Application Analysis

When I think about an application that has been prevalent about me throughout my life, I can say it is Instagram. In middle and high school, it was a way to just have a creative way to funny photo or memes with people. A lot has changed since then, and as I grew with the platform the application itself began to take shape into our digital world. Today I believe the app feels more curated, and targeted.

People today use this application to showcase themselves in the best possible manner. From personal experience when I first came to college Instagram was one of the best ways to connect with someone new because to you to shows the best parts of yourself you want to project with photos with friends, or trips, and maybe even family. This application provides an outlet for me to freely express the best moments of my life all captured into one singular platform that I can use to network.

Instagram is an app that is well designed for the modern age integrating well with mobile operating systems and this includes using quick and easy access to the camera and pre-integrated software that allows quick sharing and reposts. This platform allows anyone to partake in both creative and productive aspects of the digital world.

Operations and Interface

Ever since the introduction of Instagram Reels, which is like the concept of TikTok, Instagram has becoming addicting to many that do have a solid grasp of self-control. Although,

this isn't at the fault of the user but Meta, the parent company of Instagram using targeting ads, algorithms, and data collection to curate content that keeps you hooked. Instagram scrolling based interfaces gives a natural dopamine boost to brain because it is rewarding and engaging to consume content. The layout itself is quite simple and uniform to showcase photos, advertisements, and even separate tabs for reels which are short video content clips.

The Stories and Reels feature allow people to rethink how they can share content. For example, stories are temporary so this can be a place you're currently at, or something fun you're doing. Reels a lot of content like TikTok with a short video of whatever you want. Using editing features and sounds allow you grab the attention of other users when you post thus keeping people engaged in the application. While I was in Greece during my first solo trip, I posted all the cool and fun things I did to show my friends back home. This app also let me connect with new peers I met overseas.

The Form, Function, and Code

Instagram's form would be visual storytelling, and the function of the app is to make the story project you. From the ground up the app is designed you keep engaged through comments, likes, stories, tags, and shares. Comparing to other platforms like Facebook and Snapchat, I'd say Instagram is a better all-around app that has multiple functions of those other social media platforms but to a degree that isn't too childish or too professional either. This also reflects the time where following the current design trends everything is flat design. Back in the early 2000s everything was a design called skeuomorphism, and this design made applications feel real and interactive. The flat design we know today is designed to prioritize the actual content provided.

Adding in my personal experiences again I would say I use this app to form my online identity. Posting photos of my journey as a learn and grow and sharing videos of moments I want others to see the application allows me to be creative but also mindful enough to keep a degree of professionalism. Another function is if I post something about a trip, I will most likely see a targeted ads for hotel or an activity the place I visited or a suggested new place. This demonstrates how creatively and commerce fall together and showcases how digital media operates. Instagram is exploitative and expressive at the same time.

Platform

Instagram is designed to run on mobile hardware. This means it has access to your devices, cameras, sensors, and mobile data which makes capturing and uploading every effective. The application itself also ties to the software notifications and that helps create the cycle of create, post, review, and repeat. The data that Instagram collects helps with product placement or targeted ad content. This system is benefitable in terms of sharing and ease of access to the internet, but it does come with some major drawbacks. Meta the company that also owns Facebook does not have best reputation when it comes to people's private information and privacy. The tradeoff is between control and connection to others.

Creativity and Production

Instagram is an application that operates on both creativity and production. People use this platform to network and connect with out, but also allowing people to view their personal side about themselves. People post and create content but life updates, new adventures, and career stuff. Even some businesses use Instagram as a way for others to connect with the business and market to the global masses.

For me this application is a mix of both simply based on my needs. If I go to an event or need to contact a business Instagram can be used as a communication platform. My creative side lets be post content about anything I want. As a tool especially for digital age this application is quite effective in doing so.

Conclusion

Instagram has been a part of life for as long as I can remember. The application has changed a lot from fun freefall platform to a mixed hybrid use application. Understanding Bogost and Montfort's frameworks helps understand how identity, creative, and behavior are key components to an applications logics and design. Instagram at best is a connection, and at its' worse a platform that creates an addictive mirror.