# Snapchat, a popular app, could be the future of online content

**Group Pink**



Snapchat CEO Evan Spiegel in Los Angeles, California, Oct. 24, 2013. Photo: AP Photo/Jae C. Hong

*Notes on my thoughts, reactions and questions as*

*I read:*

Sometimes, great ideas pop up when you least expect them. That was the case for Snapchat. The company started as an idea for a class project at Stanford University. The idea was a cellphone app that would allow users to send their friends photos that would quickly disappear.

That was four years ago. And now, the idea that used to seem impossible has turned into a famous company known around the world. Snapchat is very successful. On Wednesday, the company received a $200 million investment from a major Chinese company called Alibaba. With Alibaba's investment, Snapchat is now worth $15 billion.

The money from Alibaba is a big thumbs-up for Snapchat. The company produces a phone app with a unique mix of social media features. It has turned into a major force in media, advertising and cellphones. The story of Snapchat is also a reminder of how quickly a company can rise from small beginnings to a major power in today’s fast-paced app world.

**"Some Growing Pains"**

Snapchat has dealt with a number of challenges along the way. According to one expert, the company has "had some growing pains in their short journey."

The company has faced many troubles over the last few years. There was a court fight with a co-founder who left Snapchat. Then there were the inappropriate emails from another founder that leaked online for the public to read. Snapchat has had to deal with concerns about how people's private information got accidentally released too.

The company was also criticized after it rejected an offer from Facebook. It tried to buy Snapchat in 2013 for $3 billion. At the time, that much money seemed very high.

Even with these challenges, Snapchat continues to be popular. It is among the top 10 most downloaded apps in dozens of countries.

Snapchat was first released in July 2011.

**Accent On Fast**

Snapchat quickly became popular among college students. It was the perfect app for sending images that users wanted to be seen fast and only for a few seconds. Now, users are finding more ways to engage with the platform.

When he was sitting in class at Stanford University, Spiegel would monitor how many people were using the app. During one class, he saw one photo sent every five minutes, but by the end of the same class, it was one per second. Snapchat was growing fast so Spiegel dropped out of college just as investors became interested in funding the startup company.

By late 2012, more than 200 snaps, or pictures, were being sent per second, and by summer 2013 about 4,000 snaps were sent every second. Snapchat has raised at least $500 million more since then.

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New Snapchat features have kept users coming back. Now, users can organize their picture posts into “stories” that disappear after 24 hours, instead of after a few seconds. Users can also share content publicly. Snapchat employees sort the public content based on major events, like the Grammys, or around locations, like a college campus.

**Ads In Their Snapchats**

The new features have given people who use Snapchat a unique experience. It combines the feel of Instagram and YouTube videos with a more social vibe.

CNN even pays employees to create content for Snapchat, according to an official of the cable network.

Some media organizations, including CNN, have started putting ads in their Snapchats.

Cute or funny videos are also popular and can draw millions of views. The makers of these short videos get paid tens of thousands of dollars from advertisers for mentioning or showing certain products in the clips.

Right now, most people using Snapchat are teenagers and young adults. Some business experts say that the company needs to find a larger audience if it wants to be the next Facebook or YouTube.

***Short Answer Responses:***

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper. Restate the question in each response. Your response must be at least 2 sentences long.

1. What would you do to improve the SnapChat app?
2. Do you believe a 7th grader should be able to have a SnapChat account? Why or why not?
3. Create your own app. Include the name, description, intended audience and purpose of the app.