Be Real.
Product Teardown

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Be Real Overview:

BeReal is a French social media app launched in late 2019 by Alexis Barreyat and Kévin Perreau that encourages users to post authentic, unedited photos in real-time Every day at a random time, the app sends a notification to all users, giving them a two-minute window to take and share a photo simultaneously using the front and back cameras, capturing a genuine snapshot of their current moment without filters or edits. This approach aims to foster authenticity and reduce the curated, polished content common on other platforms like Instagram.

Target Audience:

BeReal primarily targets Gen Z users, who make up about 85% of its user base, especially college students and young adults seeking a more genuine social media experience without the pressure of constant posting or heavy editing

Problems addressed:

 The app addresses problems such as social media fatigue, inauthentic content, and the negative effects of algorithm-driven platforms by limiting posts to once per day and removing follower counts, likes, and filters to encourage real-life sharing and reduce social comparison. It offers a more intimate and less time-consuming social media alternative.

Market Size and Share:

-While exact TAM figures for BeReal are not explicitly stated, the global social media market is vast, with billions of users worldwide. BeReal's focus on Gen Z and younger demographics positions it within the large and growing social networking and photo-sharing market segments.

-User Base and Market Share: As of early 2025, BeReal has around 40 million monthly active users globally, including 5 million in the U.S., with over 115 million downloads worldwide since launch. However, user engagement has fluctuated, with a peak in 2022 followed by a decline in active users to around 16 million monthly active users by 2024. BeReal ranked as the 16th most downloaded social app in 2024, indicating a moderate but significant presence in the social app market
-BeReal was acquired by the French mobile app and game developer Voodoo on June 11, 2024.

Unique Value Proposition:

BeReal's core differentiator is its emphasis on authenticity-users post unfiltered, unedited photos once daily within a strict two-minute window, reducing the performative nature of social media

Competitors:

Instagram   Threads   Popparazi   Dispo   X   Snapchat   Lapse

Competitor analysis:

Platform	Monthly Active Users (MAUs)	Core Features	Monetization Strategy	Target Demographic
Instagram	2+ billion	Photos, Stories, Reels, filters, shopping, algorithmic feed	Ads, shopping, influencer tools	Gen Z & Early Millenials
Threads	150+ million	Text-based posts, replies, Instagram-linked identity	Ads (developing), Meta ecosystem	Gen Z, creators, professionals
Snapchat	750 million	Disappearing messages, Stories, AR filters, Snap Map	Ads, Discover content	Gen Z & Early Millenials
Poparazzi	5 million	Tagging friends in photos only, no selfies, no follower counts	Limited monetization (venture-funded)	Gen Z
Dispo	3 million	Disposable camera" concept, delayed photo reveals	Subscription model, brand partnerships	Gen Z & creative users
Lapse	1 million	Retro photo rolls, delayed photo delivery, photo journal style	Subscription-based premium features	Gen Z & photography lovers
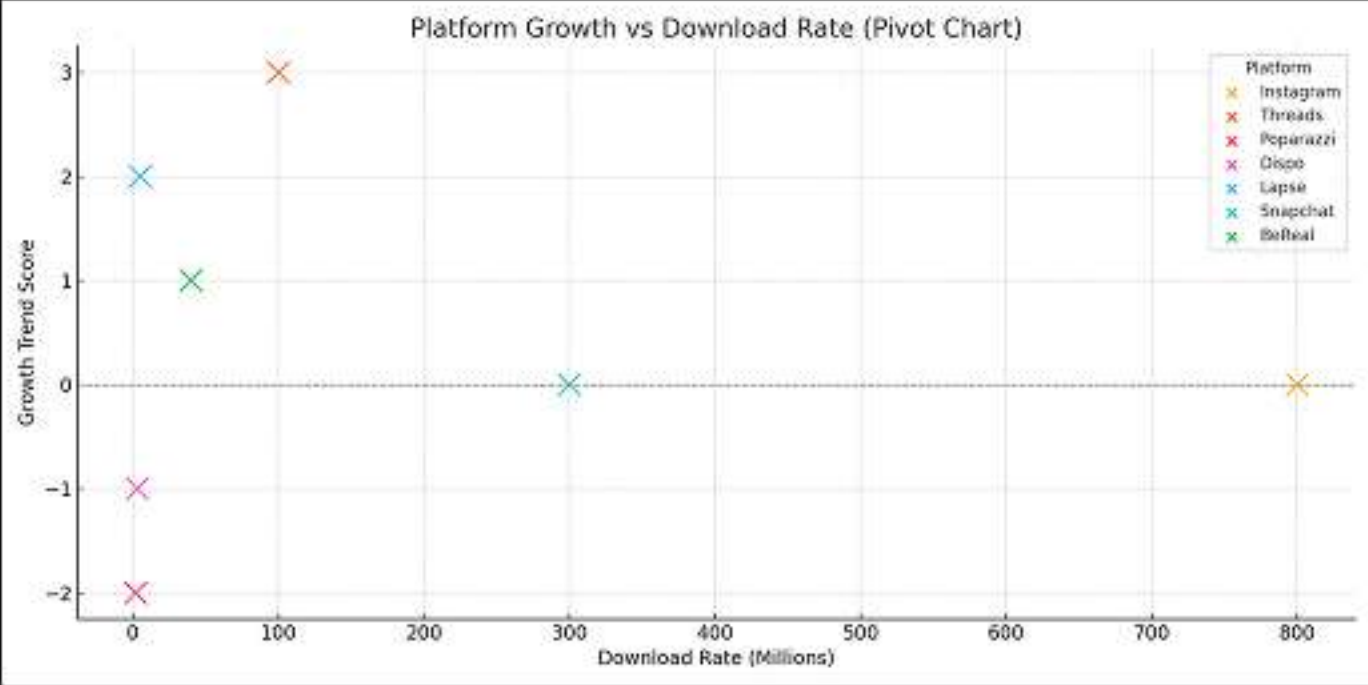
X-axis: Download rate in millions.

Y-axis: Growth trend scored from -2 (declining) to +3 (fast).

High-growth ,small platforms = Threads and Lapse .

Large but stable platforms =Instagram and Snapchat.

Declining user base = Poparazzi.
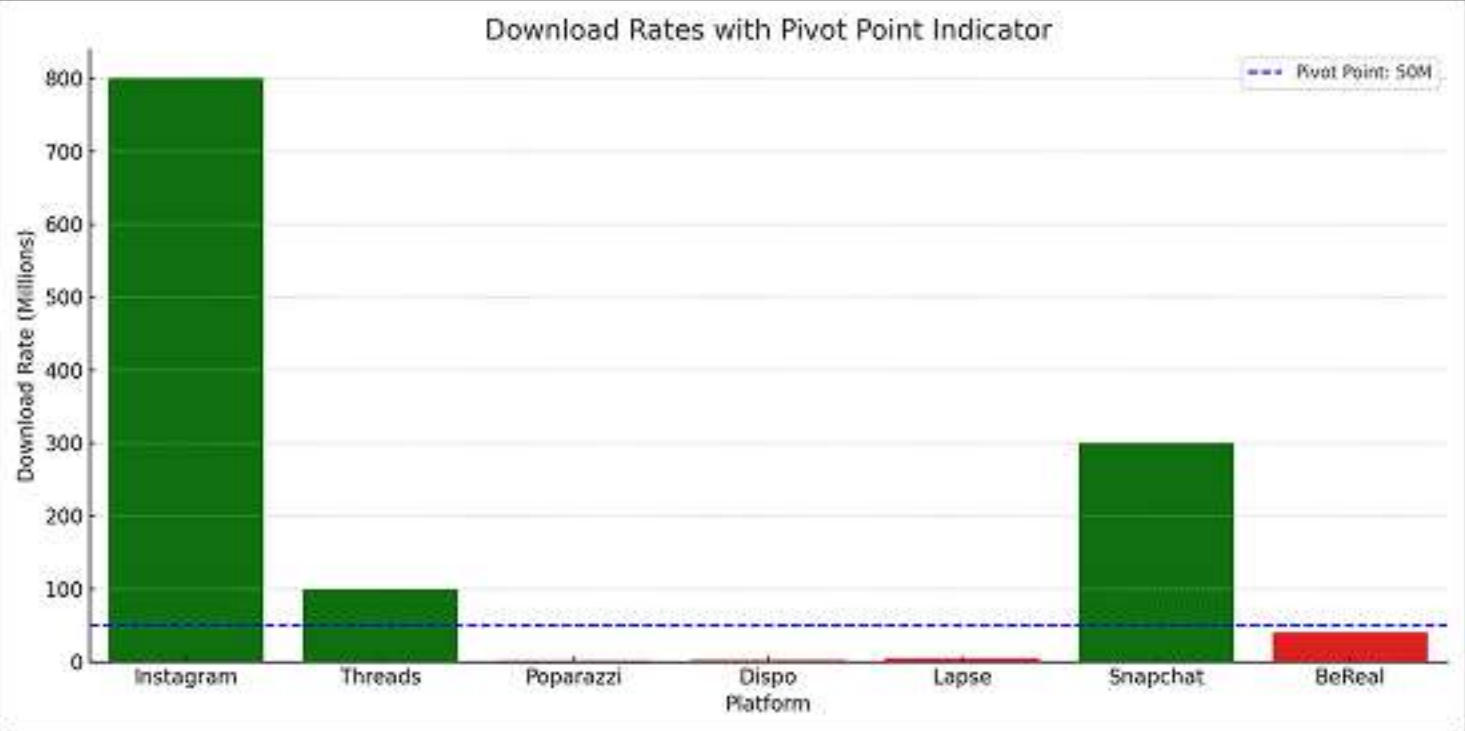
Green= High Downloads

Red= Lower Downloads

blue dashed line indicates 50M threshold.

FTUE And User Onbaording:

BeReal's First-Time User Experience (FTUE) is notably straightforward and smooth, reflecting its core philosophy of simplicity and authenticity. From the moment users open the app, they're quickly introduced to the key concept: taking a spontaneous dual-camera photo once a day within a short window. The onboarding avoids overwhelming users with too many features or options, focusing instead on getting them to post immediately and connect with friends. This minimalistic approach helps new users understand the app's purpose fast and start engaging right away, which is why BeReal's onboarding feels so direct and uncluttered.

BeReal's onboarding is tailored to Gen Z by aligning with their preferences for speed, authenticity, and low-effort engagement. Gen Z typically values genuine experiences over polished appearances, and BeReal taps into this by skipping long tutorials, flashy intros, or heavy customization. Instead, the app gets straight to the point: a quick setup and immediate participation through the first BeReal post.

Stages of be real Onboarding :
- Launch, Phone Number Entry & Verification
- Profile Setup
- Contacts &Notification Permission
- Camera Access
- First BeReal Prompt
- Friend Discovery
- Feed Access
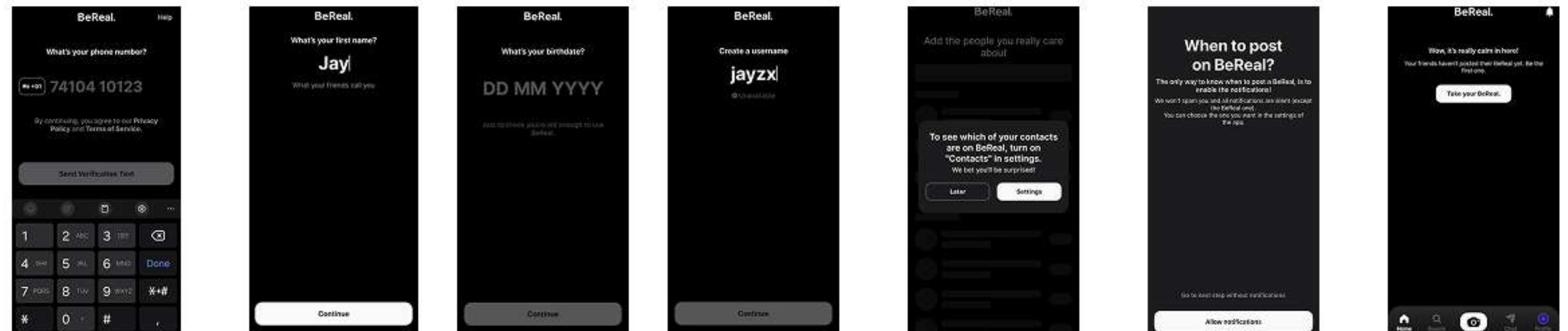
Scope of Improvement:

-This simplicity also means some users might miss deeper explanations of certain features or the social dynamics at play. For improvement, BeReal could introduce brief, contextual tips or interactive walkthroughs that explain the timing, RealMojis, and why likes/followers aren't shown or gamifying the entire user onboarding so it engages the customer base.

-Enhancing friend discovery and connection options during onboarding could also help users build their network faster. Additionally, allowing customizable notification settings might improve engagement by making reminders feel less abrupt or intrusive.

-Onboarding incentives or challenges, like encouraging users to complete their first week of posts to unlock badges or perks, boosting retention.

-Adding a FAQ or quick help section accessible during onboarding for any questions without leaving the app.
-Introducing privacy and content control education early on, so users feel safe sharing their moments.

These improvements would keep BeReal's onboarding simple but more informative and engaging, helping new users feel confident, connected, and motivated to stay active on the platform.

@2025

Designed to Be Real: How BeReal Breaks UI Norms

-BeReal has redefined what social media can look and feel like by intentionally breaking away from the polished, performance-driven design patterns of platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat. Its interface, interaction model, and engagement strategy are all carefully crafted to prioritize authenticity over attention.

-BeReal prompts users once per day at a random time to capture a photo using both the front and rear cameras simultaneously, within a 2-minute window. This design decision forces spontaneity and limits overthinking, in sharp contrast to platforms like Instagram and TikTok, where users curate content over hours or days to maximize engagement

-BeReal offers a clean, minimalistic user interface with no infinite scroll, filters, or visible like counts—just one photo per day, keeping the experience simple and distraction-free. In contrast, platforms like Instagram and TikTok have complex UIs packed with features like Stories, Reels, DMs, constant notifications, and monetization tools like ads and shopping, which can overwhelm users and shift focus away from genuine interaction.

Camera Interaction

BeReal pioneered the dual-camera interaction, capturing both the user and their surroundings in real-time. This feature makes posts more context-rich and less staged, giving friends a fuller view of someone's actual environment — a concept that most other platforms are only starting to copy.

BeReal stands out from its competitors by solving key problems created by traditional social media—curated content, performance pressure, and addictive scrolling. By prompting users to share unfiltered photos once a day at a random time, it encourages authenticity over perfection. With no filters, like counts, or algorithm-driven feeds, BeReal offers a refreshing alternative that prioritizes real moments and genuine connection, setting it apart in a landscape dominated by polished, attention-driven content

BeReal uses a FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) strategy to drive engagement and reinforce its focus on authenticity. By sending a random daily notification with only a 2-minute window to post, it creates a sense of urgency and spontaneity.

BeReal eliminates the seeking-validation factor by removing visible likes, follower counts, and public engagement metrics. Without these common social rewards, users aren't encouraged to post for approval or popularity. This design helps reduce anxiety and competition, making the experience feel more honest and less performative compared to traditional social media.

BeReal's micro-interactions (no seen receipts, no public ranking, no "suggested users") reduce social comparison and paranoia — design choices that make users feel safe instead of watched.

BeReal: What Data Does It Collect?

1.Personal Information
- *Account Details: Name, phone number, and date of birth are required during sign-up.*
- *Chat Content: Messages, photos, and videos shared through the app's chat feature are collected.*

2.Content Data
- *Photos and Videos: Images captured using both front and back cameras during the daily BeReal prompt.*
- *Reactions and Comments: User interactions such as RealMojis, captions, and comments on friends' posts.*

3. Location Data
- *GPS Information: If enabled, BeReal collects your location when you post. By default, precise location is shared, but users can opt to share only their approximate location.*

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5.Device and Technical Data
- *Device Information: Includes IP address, device type, operating system version, and language preferences.*
- *Identifiers: Unique identifiers like user ID, device ID, and mobile advertising IDs (e.g., Apple IDFA or Google AAID).*
- *Usage Data: Information about app usage patterns, such as login times and interaction frequency.*

Conclusion :

BeReal has carved out a unique space in the social media landscape by prioritizing authenticity, simplicity, and minimal data collection. Its once-a-day photo prompt, simultaneous front-and-back camera feature, and lack of algorithmic feeds offer a refreshing alternative to the polished, engagement-driven content seen on platforms like Instagram and Snapchat. This approach resonates strongly with Gen Z users who are increasingly seeking more genuine and less performative online interactions. However, BeReal is not without its challenges. While its minimalism is a strength, it can also limit user engagement and long-term retention. The lack of features such as content discovery, messaging depth, or creative tools may make the app feel too restrictive for broader audiences. Additionally, despite its privacy-forward image, BeReal has faced concerns over facial data collection, consent transparency, and cookie tracking on its website, indicating a need for clearer communication and stricter compliance with global privacy standards.
To grow sustainably, BeReal should focus on enhancing the user experience without compromising its core values—this could include optional creative tools, improved privacy settings, and stronger data transparency practices. Balancing authenticity with functionality will be key to its continued relevance in a competitive market.

Thank you