How to Develop Creative Ideas for Snapchat and Instagram Stories

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166 MILLION YOUNG PEOPLE

'Millennials' less apathetic, according to experts

By Grant Fuller
Reporter

Yesterday morning, students gathered to commemorate Sept. 11, a day which none will ever forget; a day that may have been the defining moment of their lives as "Millennials."

The relatively new word, coined by co-authors William Strauss and Neil Howe in *Generations*, refers to people born between 1982 and 2002. By definition, this generation is well-behaved and highly motivated, prompting Strauss and Howe to predict that the Millennials will become the next exalted generation like the GIs who became heroes in World War II. Including the grandchildren of some from that "greatest" generation, the Millennials, previously called "Generation Y," now constitute the vast majority of Trinity students.

According to Professor of Sociology Michael Kearl, this group of supposedly team-oriented and confident young people was predicted to experience one secular crisis that would shape their outlook into adulthood.

Like the GIs before them, who overcame world power struggles, many say the Millennials will rise out of the terrorism crisis launched on Sept. 11, 2001 to perhaps achieve more than their immediate predecessors of "Generation X."

Although he does not find complete accuracy in the suggestions of Strauss and Howe, Kearl said colleges around the country are in the midst of important changes regarding student attitudes and involvement. While Trinity may be an exception to the general rule because of its growing, politically active, liberal student population, Kearl said he does find it true that students are dependent on their parents, which was another of the authors' predictions.

"In terms of their accuracy, I don't think it holds true for all students," Kearl said. "It's a very crude generalization that's tough to make when you look at the great differences in race, ethnicity and religion on campus."

Strauss and Howe claim the Millennials do not like to see themselves as being especially political, but activism on the Trinity campus has been vibrant in recent years, including protests, rallies and other events from both ends of the political spectrum.

As Sophomore Scott Andes, president of the College Democrats, attempts to revive the organization that has been inactive on campus for nearly five years, he also sees a changing tide among his peers.

"There seems to be a large emphasis on making real connections between things learned in academic classes and your values or what you're going to do with your life to be a productive member of society," Andes said. "I definitely agree that colleges are going to change radically, and I think part of that is the fact that college is seen as a normal step in life now."

Since 1958, Professor of English Coleen Grissom has watched the generations come and go at Trinity. Grissom is a former dean of students who teaches mostly first-year classes. She said the comparison to the "greatest" generation is an accurate one, aside from the perception that most Millennials are considered more conservative than their Baby Boomer parents.

"They're really quite focused. They want to make good grades, and they want to say what they mean and mean what they say," Grissom said. "They love to disagree with me and argue their points of view, and they're really interested in improving themselves, so I can see what [Strauss and Howe] are talking about."

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By James Rodgers

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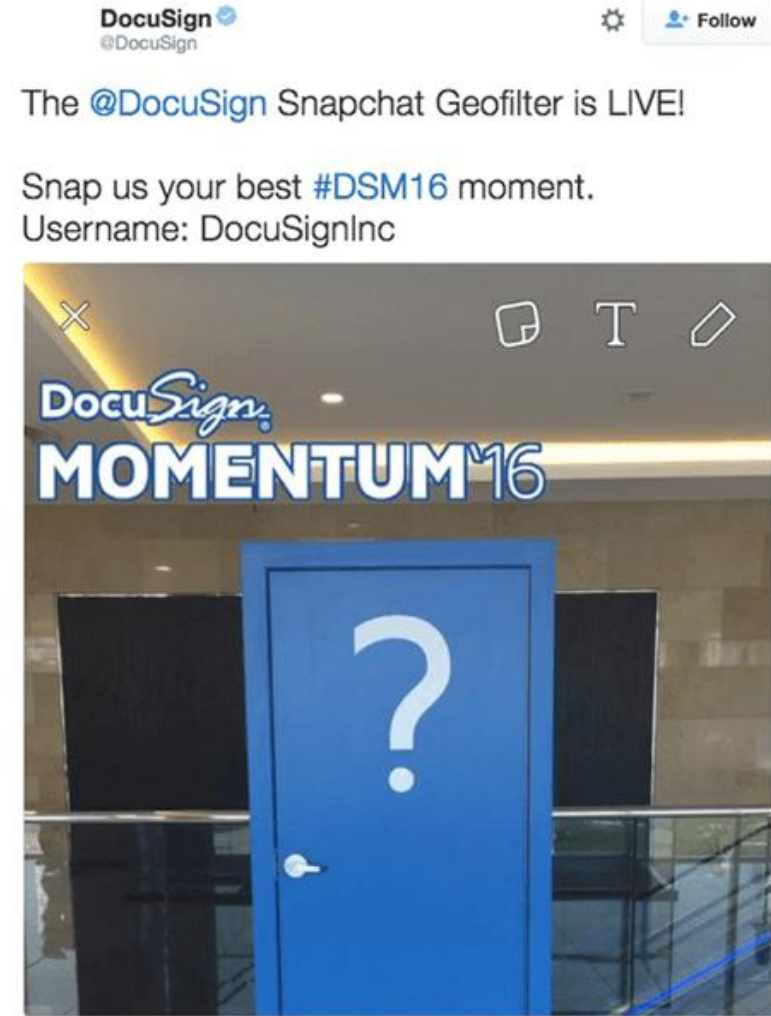
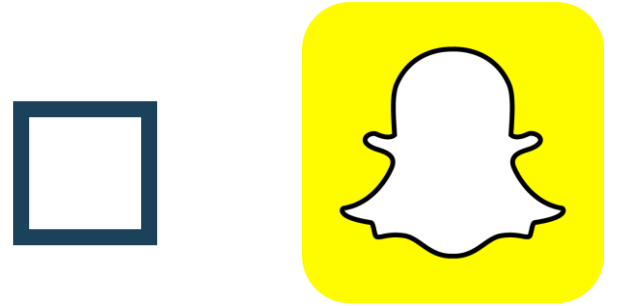Follow James' day and watch him get hands-on, from arrivals to business management.

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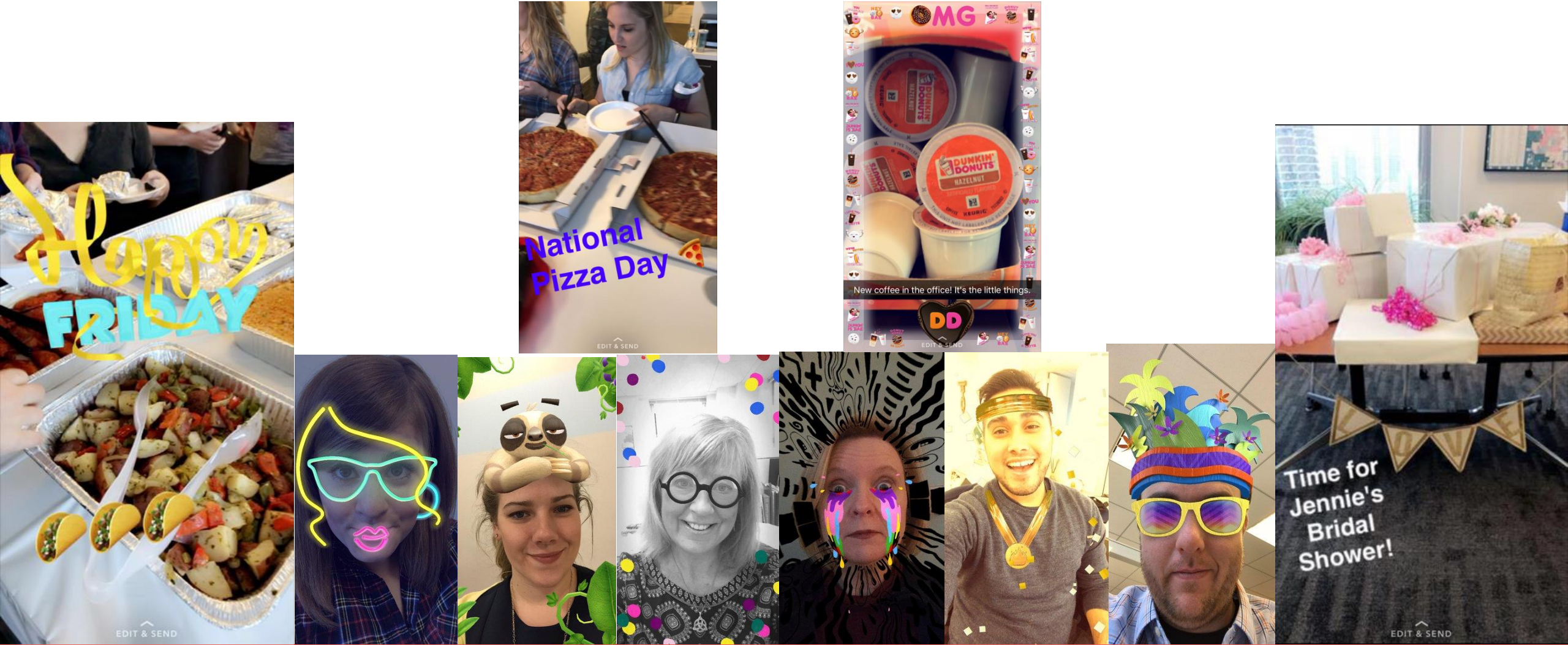1. *archaic*

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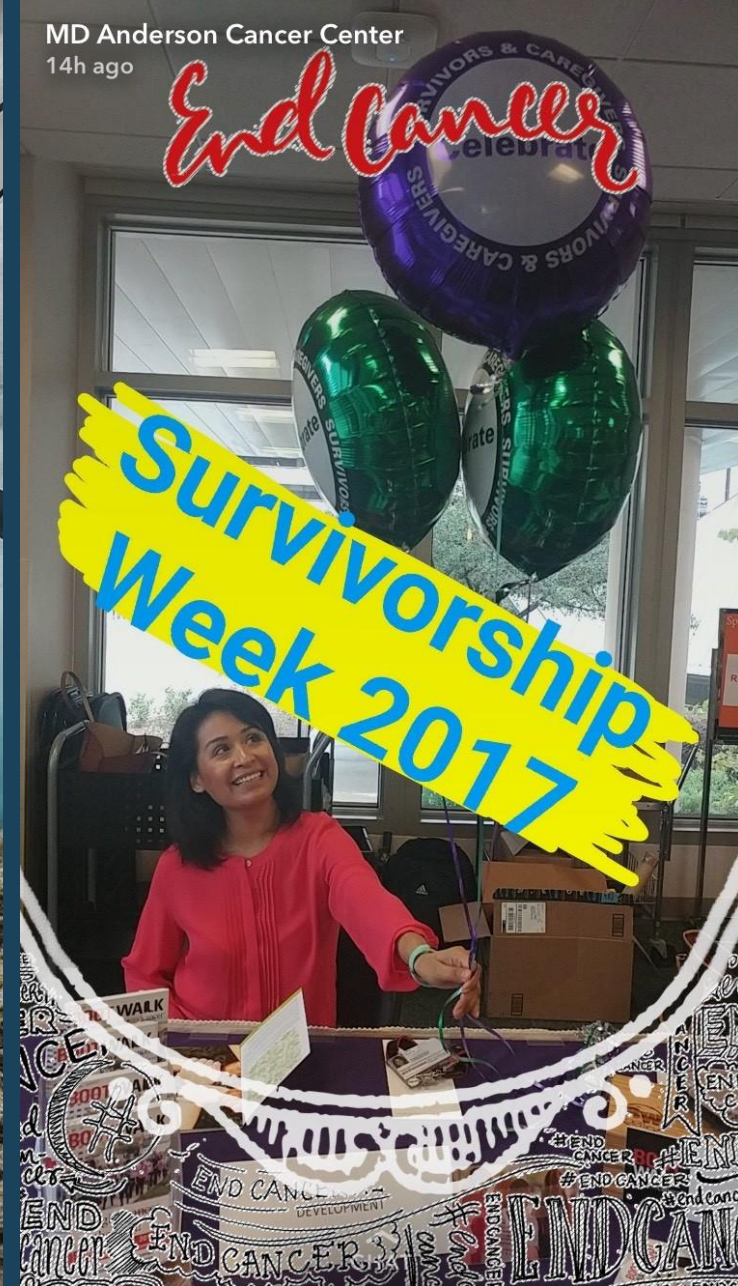
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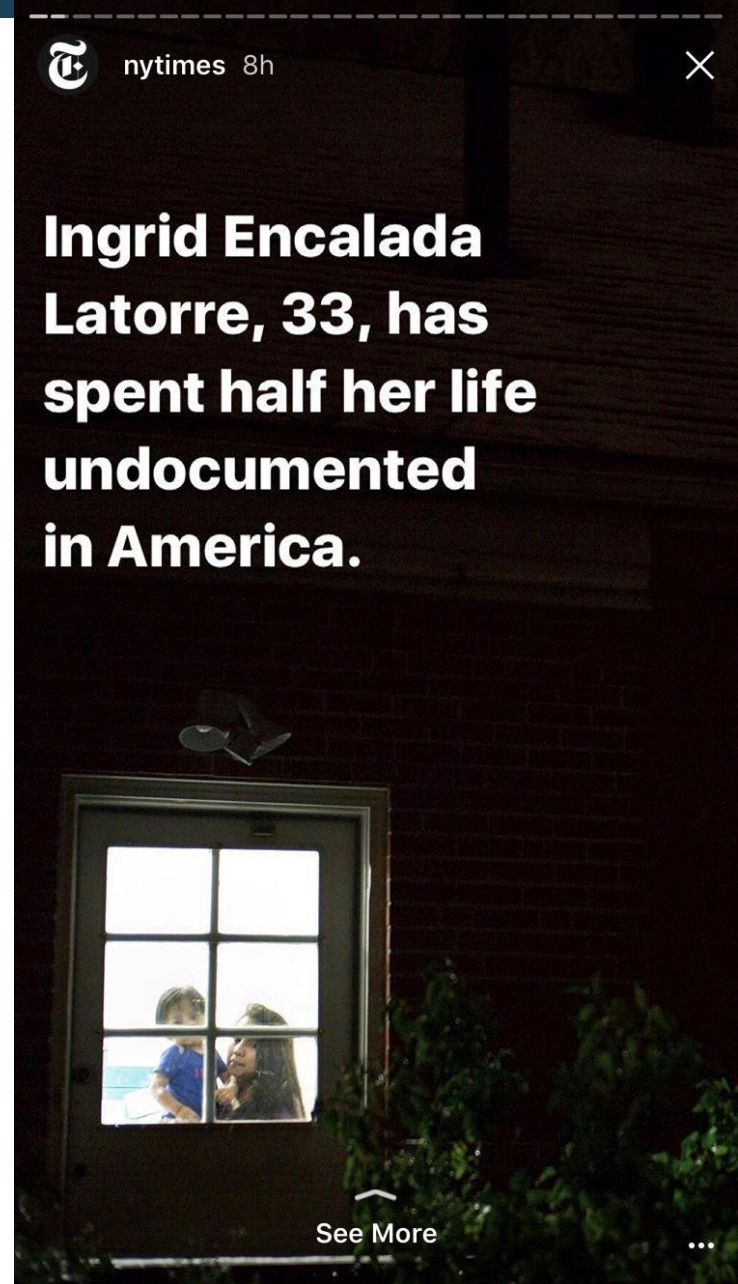
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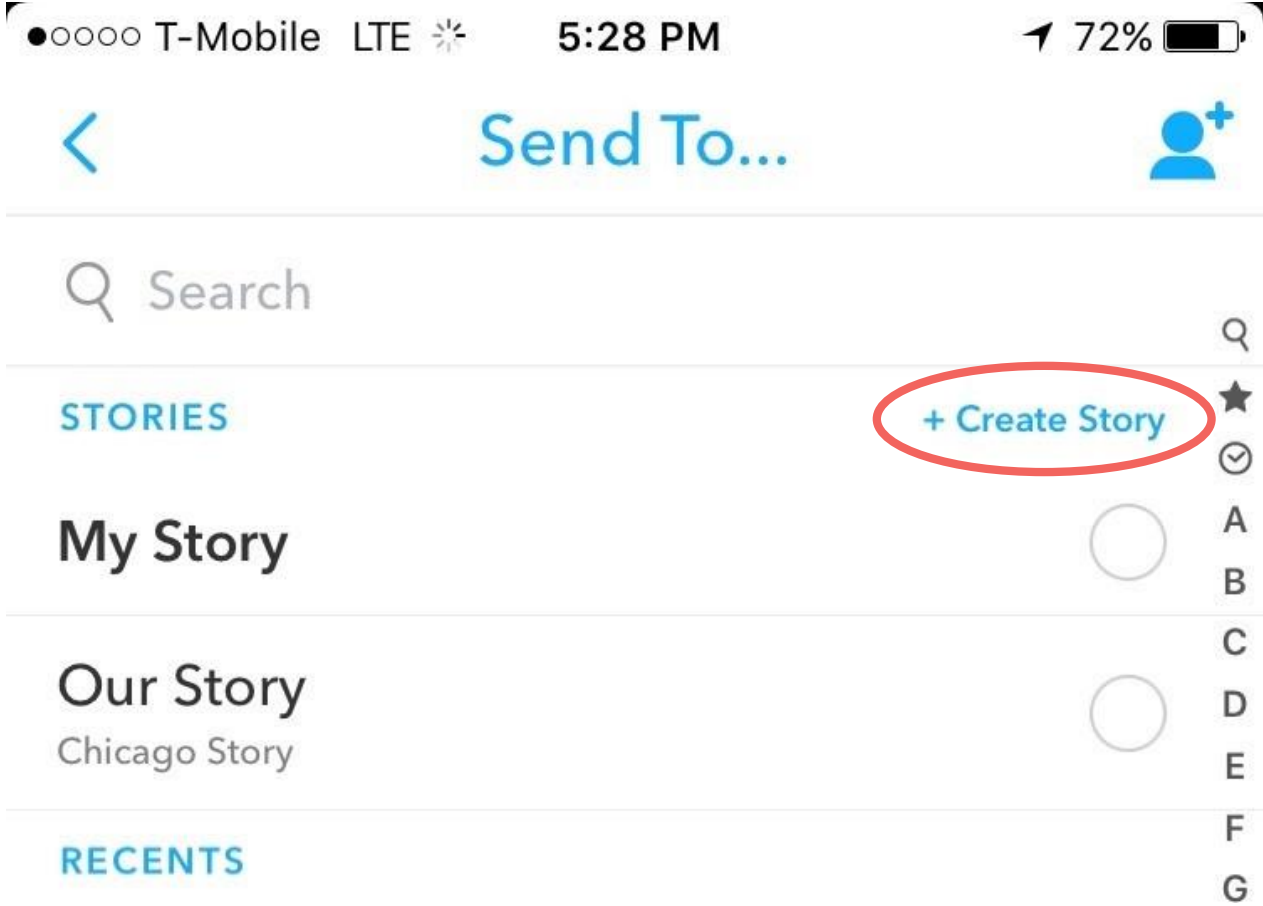
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