



A LIKE-LY STORY

'Like' it or not, we'll never know thanks to a new update being rolled out by Instagram that will prevent you from seeing how many likes the accounts you follow are receiving on their content.

For months, Instagram has been testing hiding likes in a few countries, including Australia, Brazil, Canada and Ireland. The move comes on the heels of a study that ranked Instagram, which is owned by Facebook, as the most negative social networking app for young people's mental health and well-being.

Instagram CEO Adam Mosseri tweeted out in early November that some U.S. users would begin to also experience disappearing like counts as they continue testing. No news yet on if this will become a permanent change to the platform.

Why cut the likes?



Ever had "like envy"? That's what we're calling it, at least—that feeling of inadequacy from not getting a ton of likes on a pic you posted, or feeling jealous at the amount someone else got. Instagram wants users to focus on the content instead of the attention or "success" certain posts receive.



To clarify, users will still be able to like photos just the same as they did before. They'll also be able to see their own likes.

The change is that your followers will be in the dark about how many likes are on your photos, (unless you screenshot and post your private analytics to them).



What does it mean for brands and influencers?



Only time will tell whether or not the fact that likes are not public-facing will discourage users from still hitting the like button. Here are a few things for brands to keep in mind when it comes to their Instagram campaigns:

Likes have always been just one way of measuring a post's success, and they don't necessarily always tell the full story. There are other metrics to measure engagement, including comments, shares/direct messages, click-throughs and saves.

Influencers will still be able to self-report their like counts to the brands they work with. They may be lower than the influencer is used to, but the entire industry will also be impacted.

You'll get a true sense of what your audience thinks of your content knowing that they aren't pressured to like or not like based on other people's engagement.