Live streaming apps
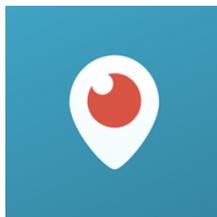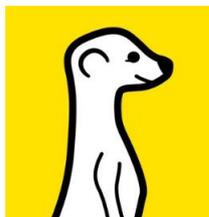
It was towards the end of March that Twitter announced it was launching Periscope, while earlier in the year Meerkat appeared. Both apps allow users to share live video from a phone or tablet to the world via Twitter.

Meerkat launched (initially just for iOS) on 27 February 2015, whereas Periscope (owned by Twitter) appeared on 27 March 2015. Both apps require users to be aged 13 or over.

The apps request access to camera, microphone and location, and users will be notified when someone they are following begins a live broadcast. Both apps contain a leader board showing the most popular users.

Periscope

https://www.periscope.tv

Key Information

- It is not possible to watch a Periscope broadcast anonymously: all viewers are listed.
- When a user starts broadcasting a tweet will automatically be sent from their Twitter account alerting followers to the stream.
- The default setting for Periscope is public, i.e. anyone can watch your livestream. However it is possible to make a broadcast private once it has started.
- Comments made during a live feed stay within the app, they are **not** posted to Twitter.
- Periscope videos can be viewed for 24 hours after the initial broadcast. It is possible to delete a broadcast immediately after a stream has ended: scroll to the bottom of the information panel and tap "delete replay".
- Viewers can send messages while viewing a broadcast or can tap their screen to send hearts.

Safety and security

The community guidelines can be viewed here: https://www.periscope.tv/content#privateinfo.

It is possible to block users so that they cannot follow you or view any of your broadcasts: https://help.periscope.tv/hc/en-us/articles/205213987-How-do-I-block-users.

Contact the support team at https://help.periscope.tv/hc/en-us/articles/204532638-How-do-I-contact-Periscope-Support.

Abusive comments or inappropriate content can be reported by emailing safety@periscope.tv, preferably with a screenshot of the offending content.

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Meerkat

https://meerkatapp.co

- The video stream can only be watched live: it is not possible to replay although streams can be saved to a user's own device.
- Any comments made during the stream also appear in the user's Twitter feed.
- Content is automatically broadcast to the user's Twitter followers.

Safety and security

The community guidelines can be viewed here: https://meerkatapp.co/community_guidelines.

It is possible to deactivate an account at any time. To do so contact hello@meerkatapp.co.

Challenges

- As with other live streaming apps (such as Chatroulette, Omegle and YouNow) there is a concern that **adult content** can be found very easily. Although both apps prohibit this type of content in their terms of use, the live nature of the apps mean that this is difficult to manage and prevent.
- **Location sharing** is available with Periscope and although this can be disabled the usual concerns about location-based services exist.
- Both apps have been in the news recently due to concerns regarding **copyright**. Live streaming at sporting events, concerts and other occasions mean that users could be able to view content that others are needing to pay for:
    - http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/may/04/twitter-periscope-winner-mayweather-pacquiao
    - http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/game-thrones-hbo-issues-periscope-take-down-notice-users-violating-copyright-1496703

Other similar apps

YouNow - www.younow.com - http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2015/05/14/teens-flock-to-younow/27321135

Angl - http://angl.tv - http://www.ibtimes.com/live-streaming-app-europe-crushing-periscope-meerkat-features-1935344