



Yubo aims to make social media more like a real-life social occasion, and less like a platform for influencers | Photo source [Steve Gale on Unsplash](#)

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FRENCH SOCIAL MEDIA APP WITH GAMING MODEL TARGETS TEEN MARKET

 COMPUTING & TECH

Rather than post content for mindless clicking, Yubo allows users to share chat rooms and have video, audio or text exchanges

Spotted: French social media app Yubo has recently raised €40 million in funding to add functionality and help further global expansion. The app is tailored for teens and young adults and focuses on mimicking real-life social interactions. Rather than post content for mindless clicking, the app allows users to share chat rooms and have video, audio or text exchanges.

The app does not offer likes or followers and has no influencers. Instead, the app focuses on just spending time with peers, chatting or playing a group game like Pictionary or “would you rather”. Most of the people who interact on the app don’t know each other in real life, and 80 per cent are aged 16 to 21. It also offers safety features such as age verification and real-time intervention, which help make it a safe social space for Gen Zers to hang out.

Rather than selling advertising and user data, Yubo makes money with a gaming model. This allows users to access the basic app for free, and pay extra for premium features such as the ability to temporarily move their chat group to the top of Yubo’s home page. A monthly subscription to premium features costs are \$10 (€8.44), with individual features priced at around \$2 (€1.6). This model also keeps influencers off the app and encourages genuine interactions.

Yubo’s creator, 27-year-old Sacha Lazimi has said that the company’s “vision hasn’t changed: we want to create a place where young people can relax, have a nice time, discover the world, but also discover themselves.” Investor Jerry Murdock, the co-founder of Insight Partners, explains that Yubo, “manages the difficult task of connecting with Gen Z all around the globe. ... I strongly believe its innovative approach to socializing online will make it the must-have social space of tomorrow.”

Insight and other investors recently participated in a Series C funding round that raised €40 million to help Yubo add functionality and expand into Asia and elsewhere. Yubo joins a growing number of platforms that aim to focus more on the social aspect of social media. These include a platform that organises younger [climate activists](#) and an [employee engagement](#) platform that encourages workplace diversity.

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Takeaway:

There is some evidence that people are beginning to tire of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, which rely so much on building up influencers and followers in order to sell more ads. These sites are receiving increasing criticism for the way that they create a culture of controversy, cancellation and bullying. Yubo is betting that young people, in particular, are ready for an experience that is more about chatting and less about passively scrolling through other peoples' experiences. They may well be right: the five-year-old app currently has around 40 million users in 40 countries and around one in 10 Gen Zers around the world has used the app.