

Proposal for YAWNING FACE Emoji

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1. Identification.

A. CLDR short name: yawning face

B. CLDR keywords: face | yawn | sleep | tired

2. Images.



Images by [Izzy Kramer](https://www.instagram.com/izzykramer/) (<https://www.instagram.com/izzykramer/>)

3. Selection Factors — Inclusion.

A. Compatibility

I do not know of any emoji in Unicode or any other system that is a YAWNING FACE. There are the similar SLEEPY FACE, TIRED FACE and SLEEPING FACE, but there is a unique opportunity to create a YAWNING FACE that shows the in-between feeling of being alert and being tired. YAWNING FACE could also have other purposes that I detail below.

B. Expected usage level

1. Frequency

The expected usage of YAWNING FACE is high, as yawning is something everyone does every day.

According to QualityHealth.com¹, the average adult yawns about 20 times per day. Anecdotally, this happens at all times of the day: first thing in the morning, in the first hours of the day while waking up, after eating lunch in the early afternoon, and when getting sleepy in the evening.

Yawning is also a proven response to boredom. because people often find boring moments in their day, they may want to express this boredom through the YAWNING FACE emoji. A study published in the Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society found that “the folk belief that people yawn more during boring than interesting events was confirmed.”² Psychology Today also reported that “when researchers showed students ages 17-19 music videos and color bar test patterns, those who saw the test patterns yawned nearly twice as often as those who watched videos, and their yawns lasted longer.”³ People may use the emoji during the many small moments in their day when they are bored or are lacking stimulation to communicate how they feel.

In addition, a study cited in the New Yorker from Vrije University Amsterdam⁴ found that yawning is one of the first things humans do. The study discovered that the “the human fetus yawns during its first trimester in the womb.”⁵ So, the YAWNING FACE emoji could be used by anyone of any age at any time to represent many different feelings.

2. Multiple usages

The YAWNING FACE emoji has many uses beyond its literal representation.

As noted above, it could indicate boredom during, for example, an uninteresting sports game or a tedious lecture.

Another use is to indicate sarcasm or being unimpressed, for example, hearing an unsurprising news report or unimpressive music.

In fact, Robert Provine, a neuroscientist and the author of “Curious Behavior: Yawning, Laughing, Hiccupping, and Beyond,” found yawning doesn’t just indicate sleepiness or boredom, but instead may be “a mechanism of social signalling. When we yawn, we are communicating with one another. We are sending an external sign of something internal, be it our boredom or our anxiety, our fatigue or our hunger—all moments when we may need a helping hand.”⁶ So, the YAWNING FACE emoji could have a number of uses depending on the psychological signal that the user wants to communicate.

¹ <https://www.qualityhealth.com/sleep-articles/science-yawning>

² <https://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/BF03330574>

³ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/brain-sense/201111/why-do-you-yawn-when-youre-not-sleepy>

⁴ <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378378282900330>

⁵ <http://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/the-surprising-science-of-yawning>

⁶ <https://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/the-surprising-science-of-yawning>

3. Use in sequences

YAWNING FACE could be used in many sequences. For example:

- Sleep/tiredness:
 - Sequencing with SLEEPY FACE or SLEEPING FACE would communicate an expression of tiredness.
 - Sequencing with animal emoji would communicate cute animals getting sleepy. Recent Instagram posts show that #yawn is often paired with cat or dog photos so sequencing DOG FACE or CAT FACE with YAWNING FACE would likely be a popular sequencing.
- Boredom:
 - Sequencing with OPEN BOOK would communicate boring reading or homework.
 - Sequencing with MAN TEACHER or WOMAN TEACHER would communicate a boring class or lecture.
- Sarcasm/Unimpressed:
 - Sequencing with MAN SINGER or WOMAN SINGER would communicate an unimpressive performance or concert.
 - Sequencing with the MAN SURFING or WOMAN SURFING would communicate an unimpressive day on the water.

C. Image distinctiveness

YAWNING FACE as visualized in this proposal with the hand over the mouth would be distinct from most current emoji and recognizable as a yawn. Though there are many face emojis with open mouths, there are none with open mouths that also include hands as part of the image. YAWNING FACE as proposed would somewhat resemble FACE WITH HAND OVER MOUTH, but an open mouth behind the hand as well as eyes partially shut would create a distinct visual that would be easy to recognize even on mobile devices.

D. Completeness

YAWNING FACE would add to the number of current emojis indicating sleepiness. It could also be sequenced with many other emojis to communicate many messages and emotions.

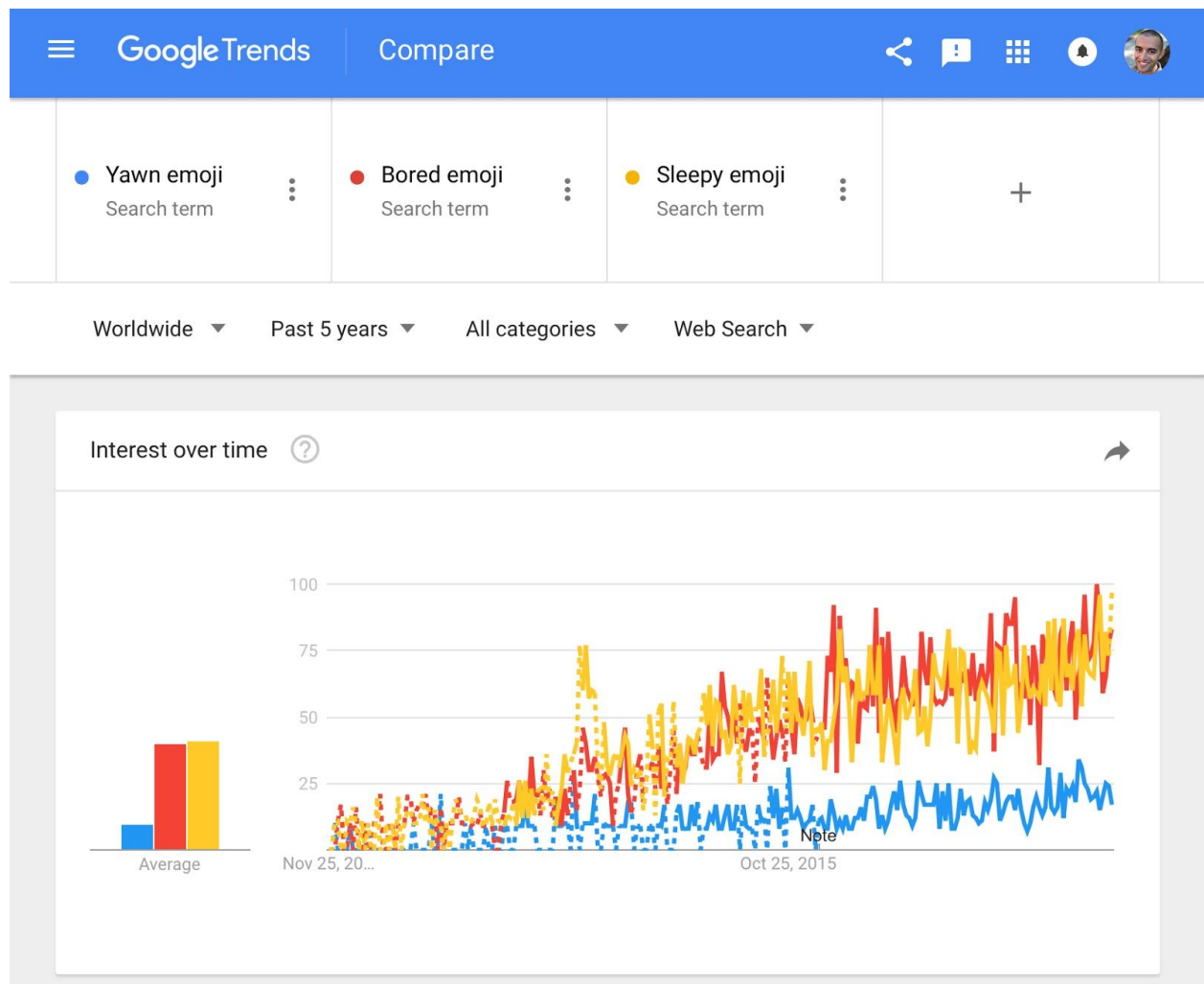
E. Frequently requested

Please see the following pages for more detail.

Google Trends shows an increasing interest in emoji representing sleepiness, despite emoji indicating sleepiness already existing. The YAWNING FACE emoji could help people express these emotions in addition to emoji already available.

Google Trends also shows an increasing interest in an emoji to indicate boredom.

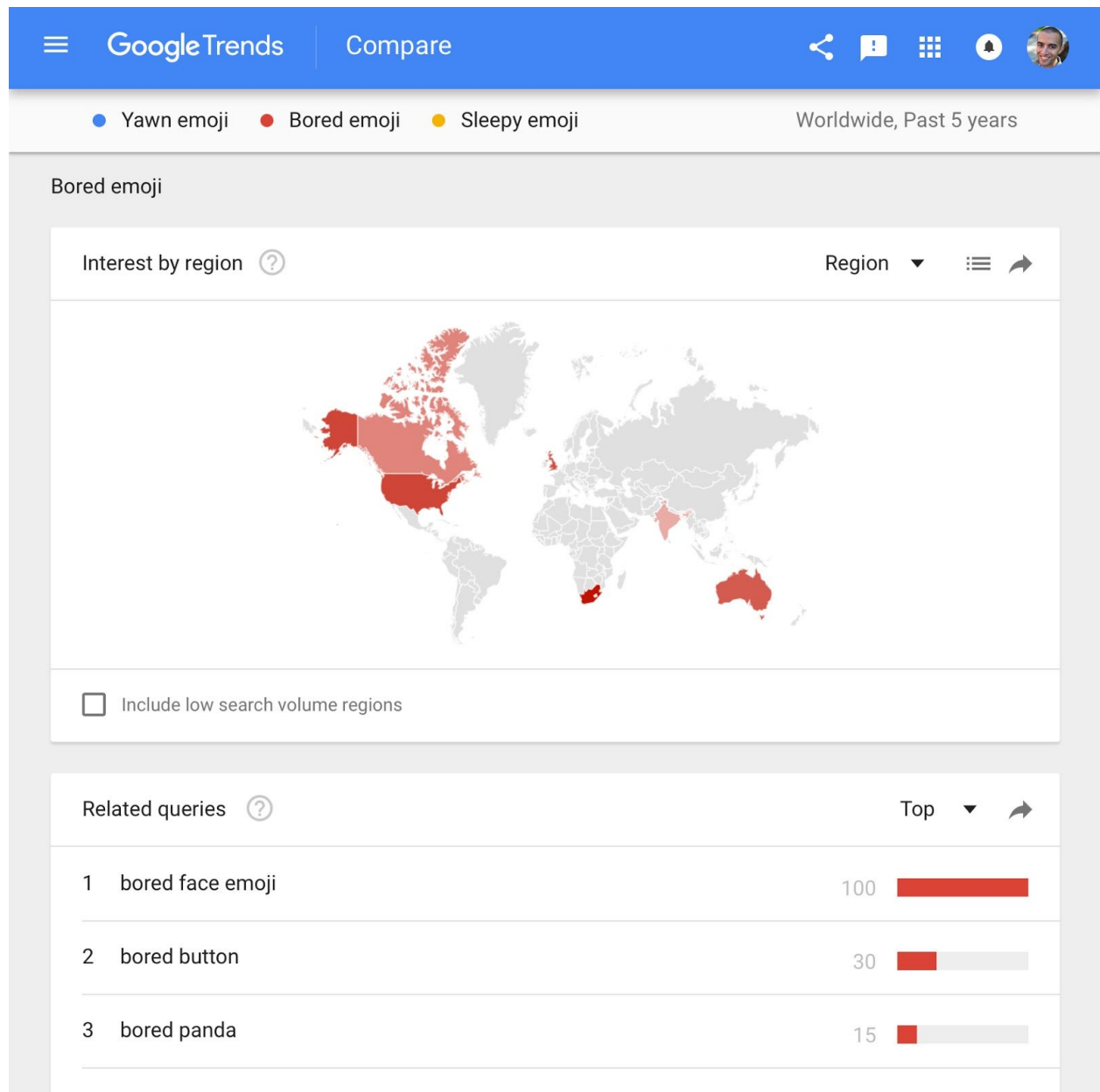
Searches specifically for a yawn emoji are lower but follow the same upward trend.



(Data captured on November 19, 2017.)

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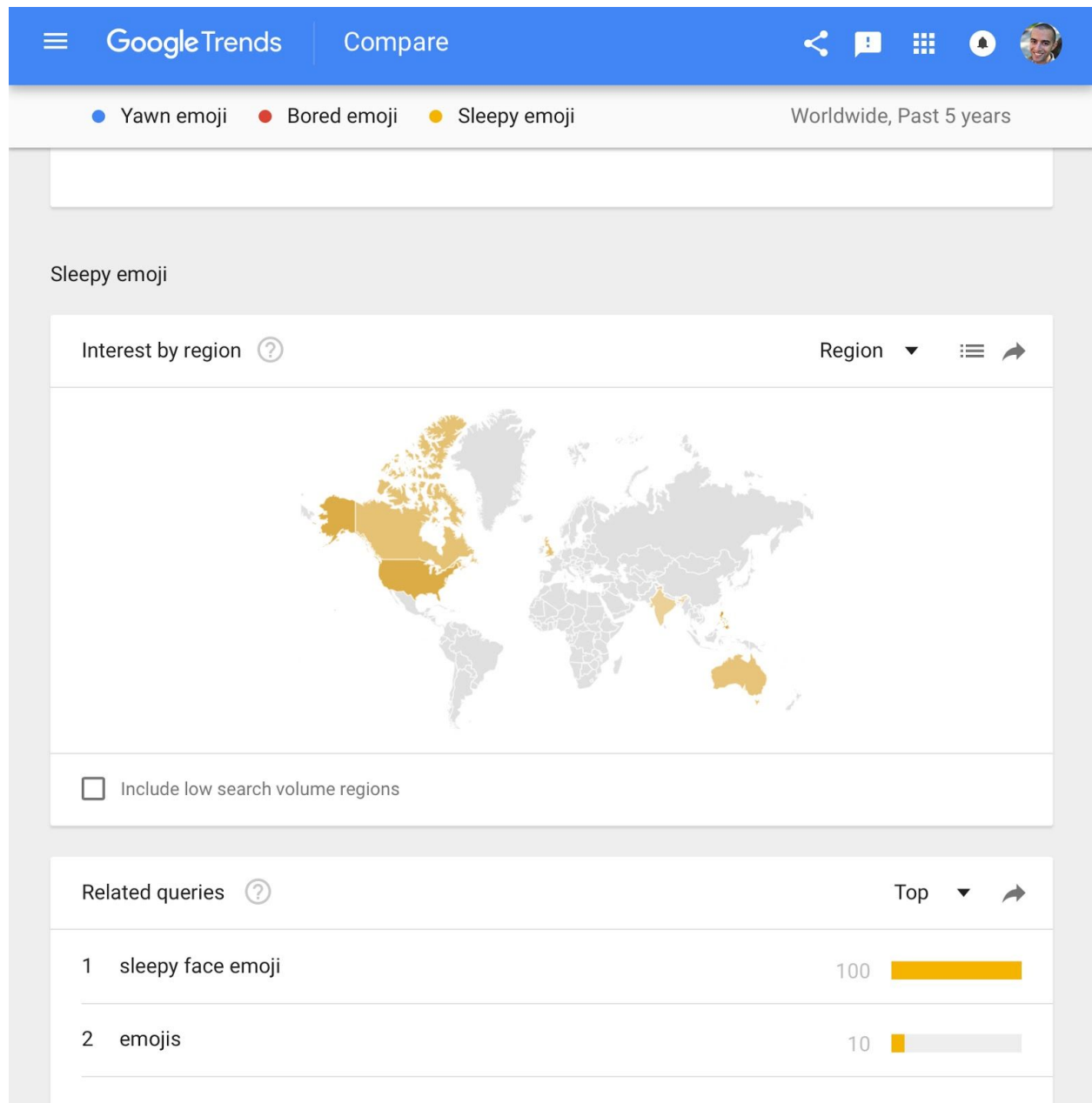
Google Trends also indicates that people are specifically searching for an emoji that is a “bored face emoji,” indicating that people are trying to determine an emoji that can best communicate that feeling.



(Data captured on November 19, 2017.)

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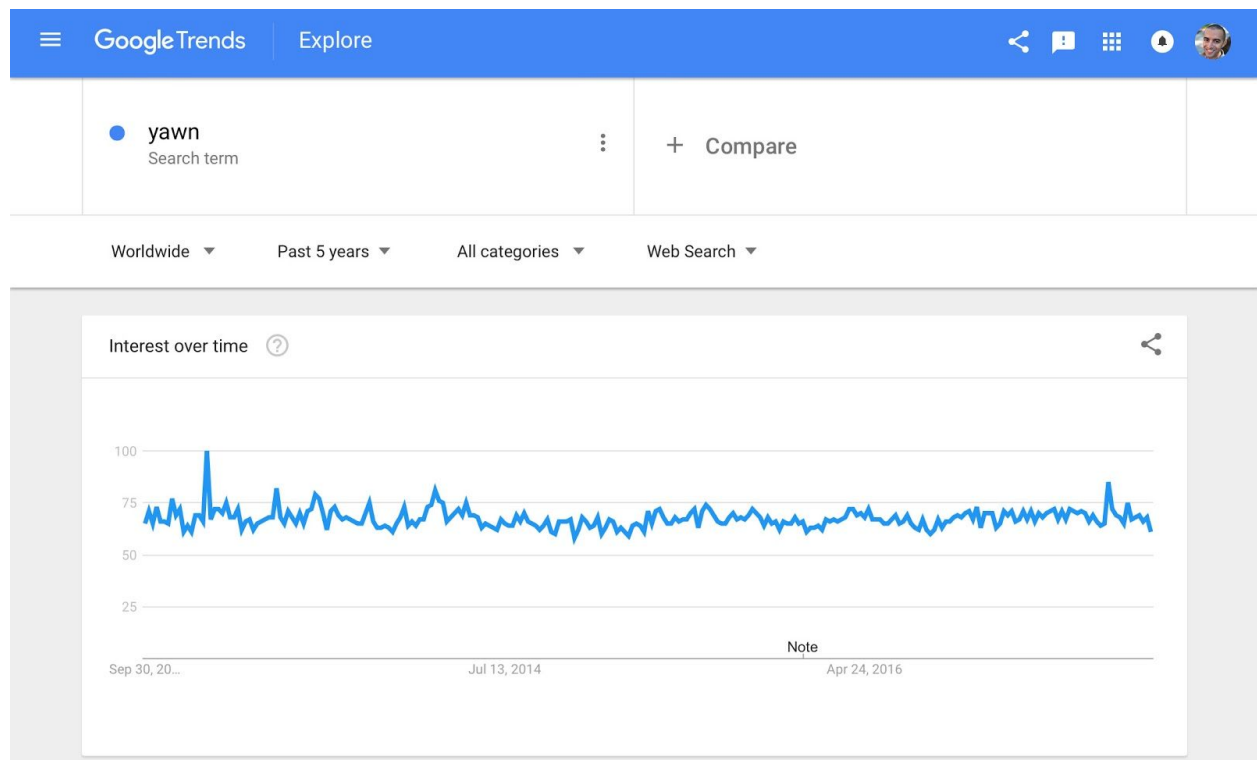
Google Trends also indicates that people are specifically searching for an emoji that is a “sleepy face,” indicating a desire to determine an emoji that can best communicate that feeling.



(Data captured on November 19, 2017.)

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Searches for yawn remain consistent globally over time, demonstrating continued interest in yawns in general. A YAWNING FACE emoji would likely have similar global understanding and longevity.

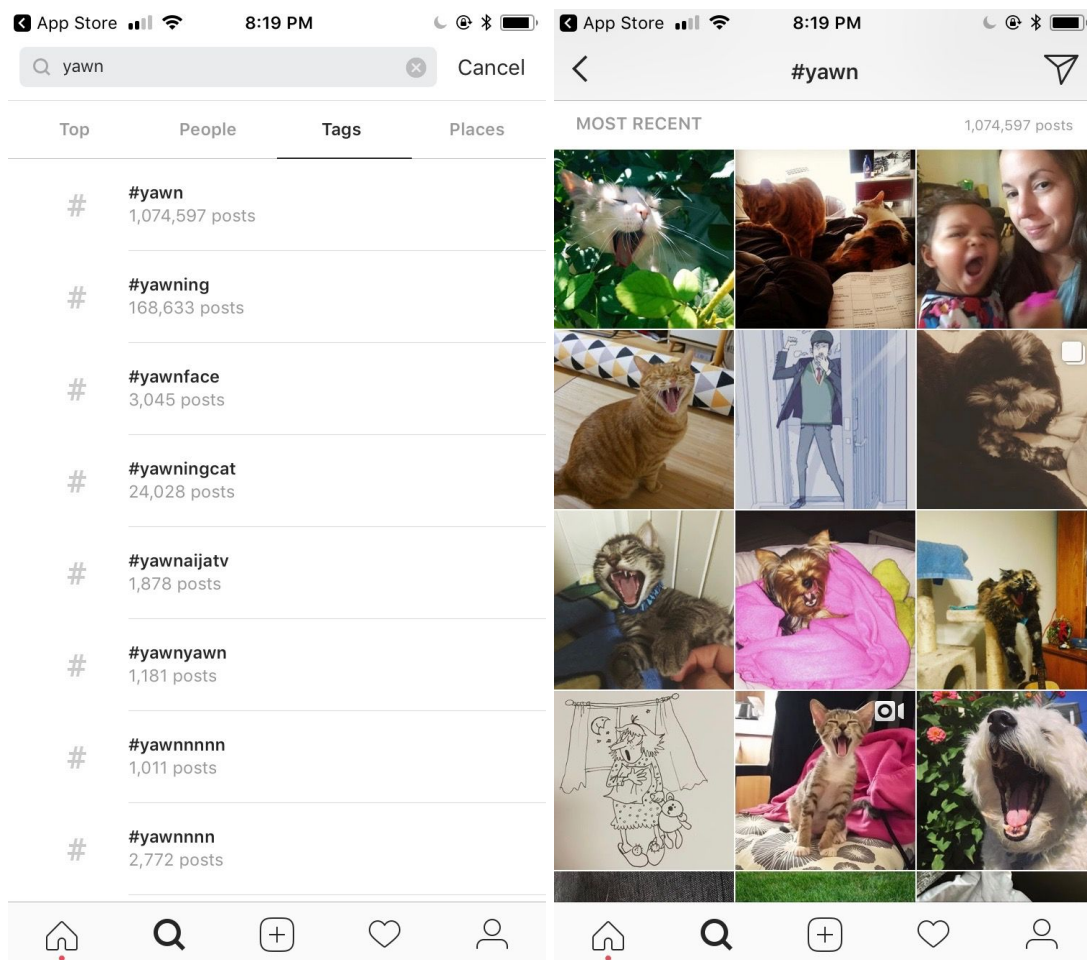


(Data captured on September 27, 2017.)

Instagram and Twitter reveal many people posting #yawn, which could be replaced or supplemented by YAWNING FACE. People are also asking for a yawn emoji. More detail on the following pages.

Instagram

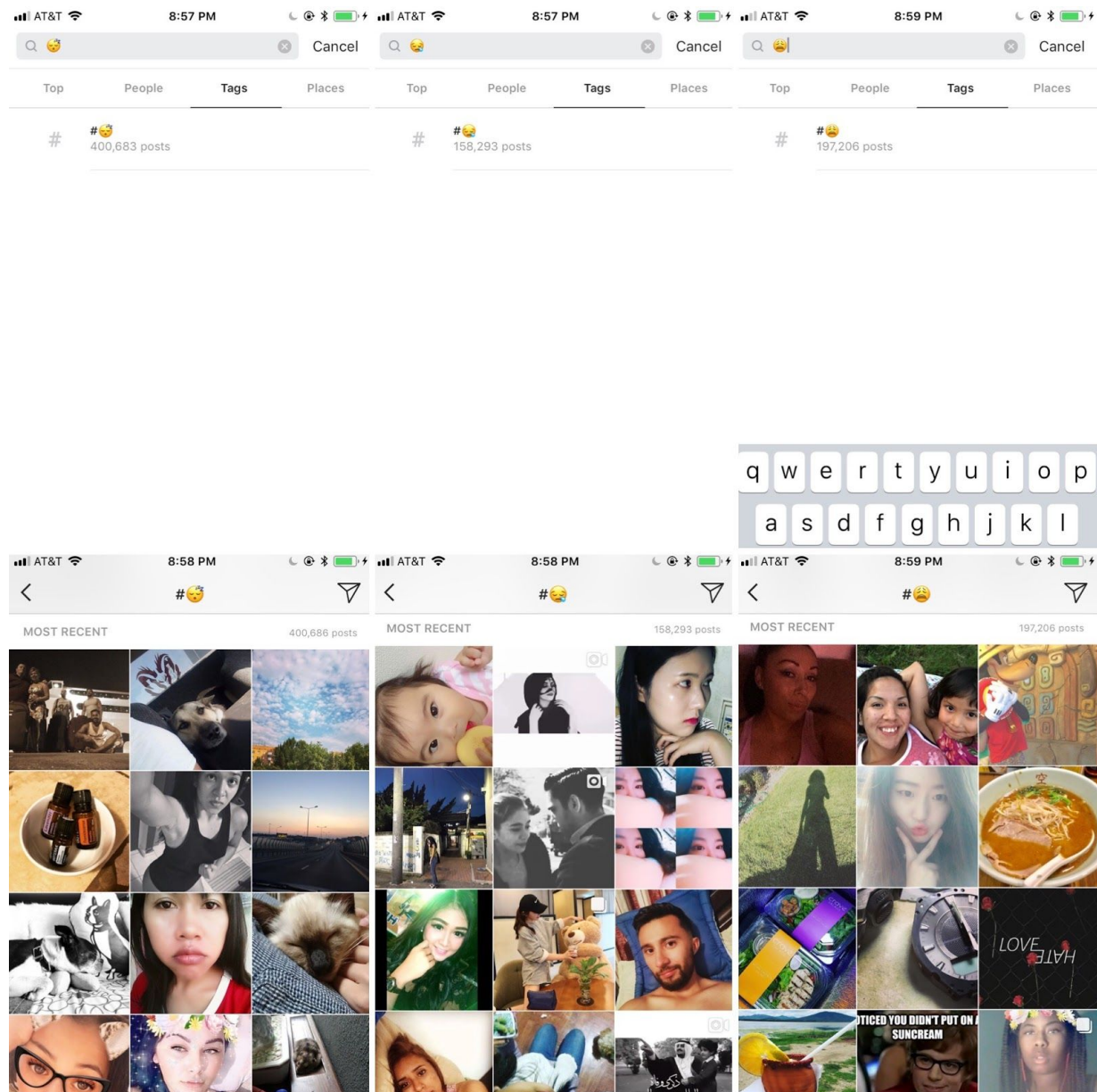
On Instagram, there are more than 1,251,000 posts featuring a combination of #yawn (this count excludes the #yawningcat and #yawnnaijatv hashtags shown below).



(Photos captured on August 28, 2017.)

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On Instagram, the emoji currently associated with sleepiness aren't being used as often with photos demonstrating sleepiness or tiredness, and in lower volume than #yawn.

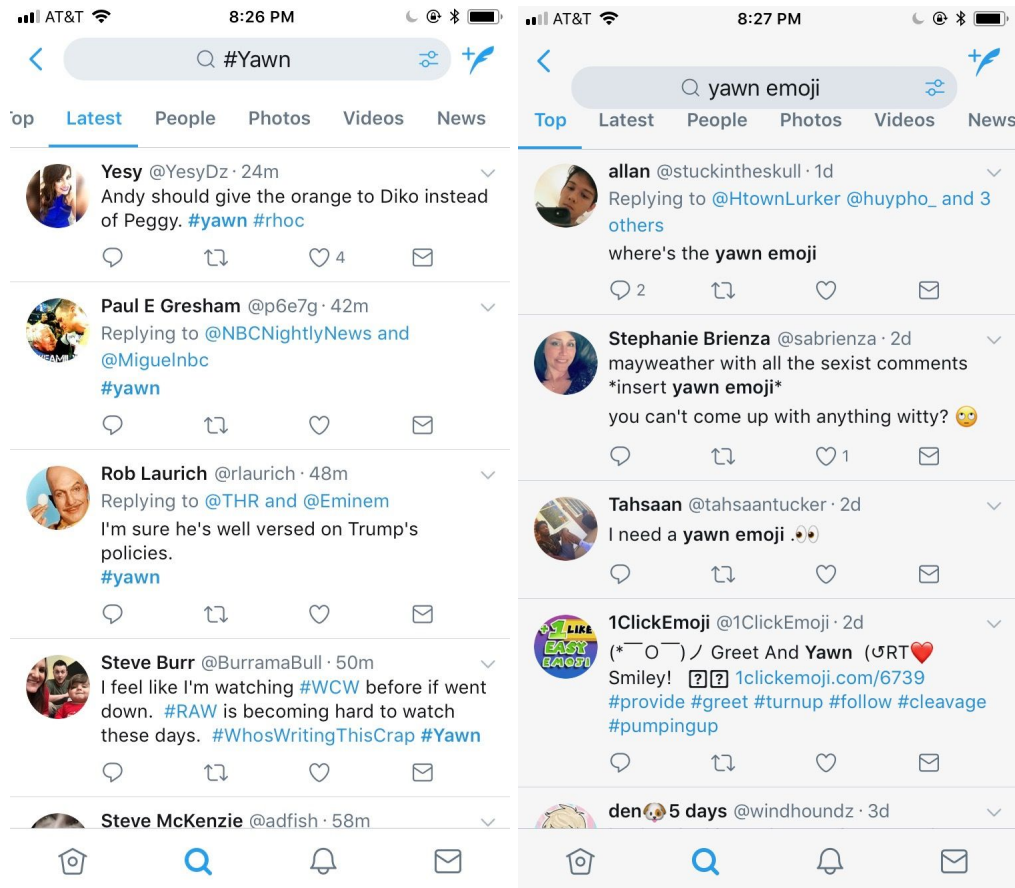


(Photos captured on August 28, 2017.)

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Twitter

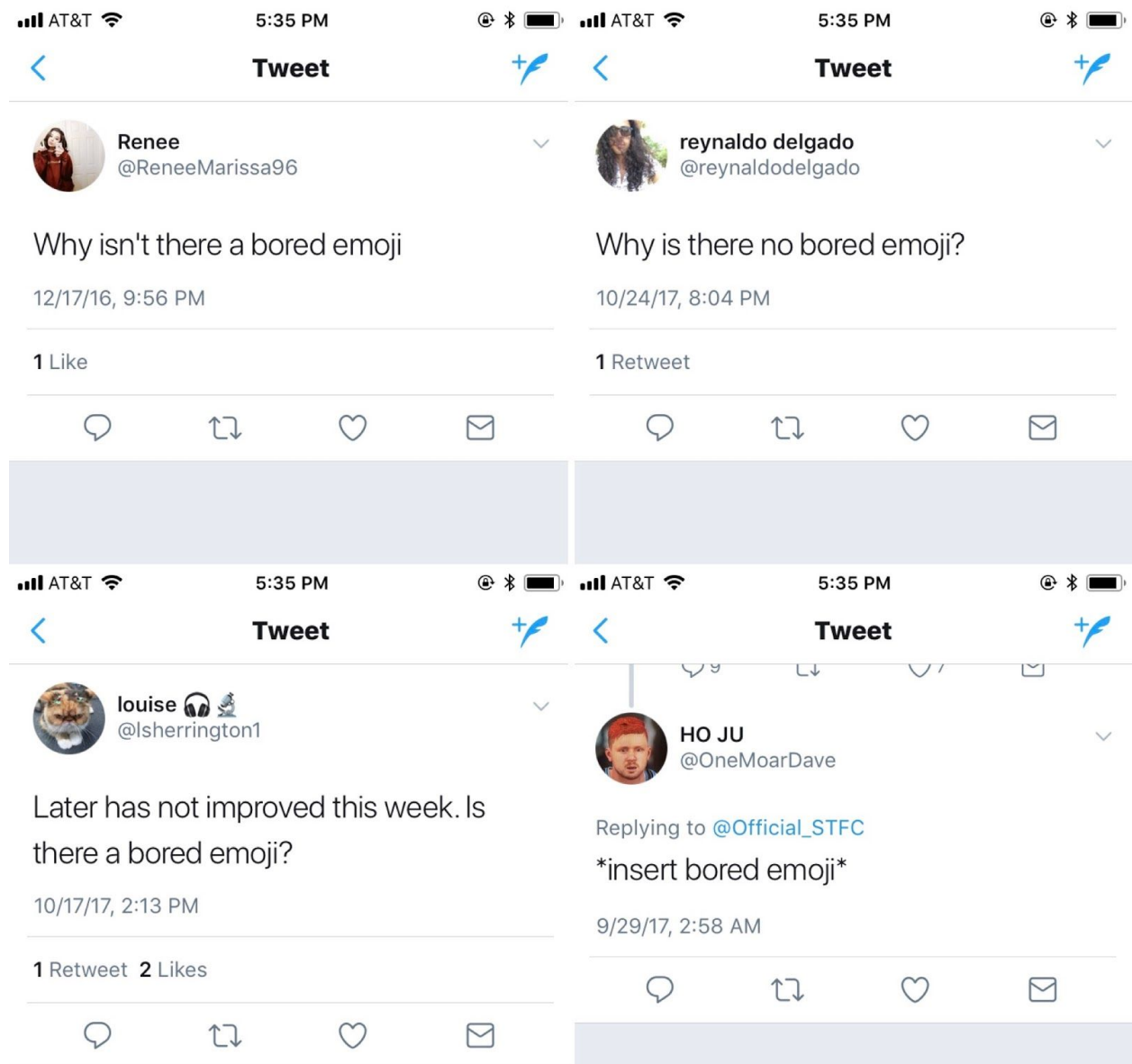
On Twitter, usage of #yawn is often sarcastic. There are also many posts asking for an emoji demonstrating a yawn.



(Photos captured on August 28, 2017.)

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In addition, some Twitter users have sent messages wondering if there is a bored emoji. In these messages, they could have included YAWNING FACE emoji.



(Photos captured on November 19, 2017.)

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4. Selection factors — Exclusion.

F. Overly specific

YAWNING FACE is specific to the act of yawning. However, nothing about the specific image as proposed would limit usage for the multiple meanings described earlier in this proposal.

G. Open-ended

There are no previous YAWNING FACE emojis that are similar to the image in this proposal.

H. Already representable

The YAWNING FACE would be adding to a group of three other emoji indicating sleepiness: SLEEPY FACE, TIRED FACE and SLEEPING FACE emoji. However, the YAWNING FACE as proposed would show the transitional state from alert to sleepy. This could be represented by, for example, the GRINNING FACE + RIGHT ARROW + SLEEPING FACE, but this representation would be cumbersome as these emoji aren't usually grouped together in vendor emoji lists.

Usage of YAWNING FACE to indicate sarcasm could be similarly expressed with UNAMUSED FACE. However, YAWNING FACE would indicate a tone closer to boredom than the angrier image of UNAMUSED FACE. Sarcasm can also be expressed with FACE WITH ROLLING EYES, but the sentiment of YAWNING FACE indicates sarcasm mixed with boredom that differs from the sentiment of FACE WITH ROLLING EYES.

I. Logos, brands, UI icons, signage, specific people, deities

A yawn is not confined by logos, branding, UI icons, signage, specific people or deities.

J. Transient

Humans have likely been yawning for their entire existence and will presumably continue to do so. It is expected that people will use the YAWNING FACE for as long into the future as they are able to use devices that support emoji.

K. Faulty comparison

Though there are similar emoji to YAWNING FACE, its visual differentiation as proposed and the numerous possible uses of YAWNING FACE justify its existence.

5. Sort location.

A. Category: [face-neutral](#)

B. Emoji it should come after in that category: TIRED FACE

6. Other information.

This proposal recommends incorporating the hand covering the mouth into the design for visual distinction.