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Clubhouse's Fadia Kader on Opening Doors and Empowering Others in Social Media

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It's pretty hard to imagine the world now without social media. Companies like Meta and Twitter allow people to share information, report breaking news stories, and connect with friends and family. For Fadia Kader, the global head of strategic and media partnerships at social audio app Clubhouse, it's about pushing culture forward and connecting people with the biggest and brightest stars in music and entertainment.

Kader got her start in the music industry managing campaigns for artists and then transitioned to producing full shows and festivals. With a special knack for marketing and a successful track record of promoting on social media, Kader positioned herself as one of the behind-the-scenes movers-and-shakers in social media.

In 2016, Kader joined Twitter as senior music partnership lead, where she continued managing campaigns for major artists. As social media began taking a more prominent role in business, particularly in marketing and audience cultivation, Kader was able to implement her social media savvy to help brands and talent reach wider audiences.

"For years, [social media] was known as 'new media,' and many didn't know how to use it for marketing purposes. As someone who has always embraced change and looking at things from a different point of view, I quickly understood the value of digital and helped show it to others within my industry. It just took time for people to embrace it," she told Cheddar.

One of Kader's most impactful career moments came during her stint at Instagram, where she worked in a music partnership. During the height of the COVID-19 lockdowns, Kader played an integral role in creating buzz for the webcast series Verzuz, which was started by producers Swizz Beatz and Timbaland.

Now, in a leadership role at Clubhouse, Kader looks to continue building relationships with talent and helping them connect with fans worldwide. The drop-in audio app took the world by storm during the pandemic as it placed the focus on voice chat. In fact, it became so popular that other platforms like Instagram and Twitter modified their platforms to incorporate their own versions of audio chat.

"The authenticity of voice has been missing in social media. Clubhouse removes barriers to connection — allowing people to hear empathy, passion, and excitement all through voice," she told Variety. "As a lover of music, I'm excited about new auditory ways for humans to connect in a true and authentic way. Post-lockdown, people will still seek out this connection."

At its best, social media can be the ideal place to freely express yourself, connect with people around the globe, and be an outlet for important information. On the other hand, it can have detrimental effects on mental health. In recent years, social media has become a focal point of the discussion on the mental health of young people — teen girls, in particular. Kader has some advice for young people who can be unaware of the potential dangers: stay alert.

"But you also need to be conscious of your surroundings online and remember that the internet never forgets. Your actions can stick with you years down the road. So while there's an amazing opportunity to make potentially life-changing connections online, that comes with a level of responsibility to be smart about your actions," she told Cheddar.

Kader has certainly carved out a lane for herself and has become a leader in the social media space. She noted that with her success, it is important to leave the door open for the next person so they also have a chance to thrive.

"Empowerment means empowering others. Great leaders help open up doors for others. Just because you're first in the building doesn't mean you should be the last. You should always pull people up with you," she said.

This story was updated on March 8 at 7:30pm to clarify that Fadia Kader only worked with music artists at Twitter.

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