

# TikTok hits 1 billion monthly users, unveils new customizable marketing tools to brand partners

Article

**The news:** TikTok had a big day yesterday: Ahead of **TikTok World**, the company announced that it had surpassed more than **1 billion monthly users** and unveiled three major marketing customization and commerce tools.

- **Creative Solutions:** a series of tools aimed at increasing collaboration between creators and brands.
- **Branding Solutions:** features which allow marketers to track the impact and control the placement of their ads.
- **TikTok Shopping:** First tested in August, this service allows brands to set up first- or third-party commerce operations and directly sell products to users.

**More on this:** These tools offer a high degree of customization to brands and quietly address concerns that advertisers have about other social media platforms.

- While platforms like **Facebook** have struggled to provide reliable alternatives to legacy trackers, TikTok highlighted its “**Brand Lift Studies**” partnership with Kantar and Nielsen as one that ensures brands the metrics they receive “match industry standards.”
- The partnership will allow advertisers to track how users feel about their ads.
- Other features, such as the “**Inventory Filter**,” let advertisers have greater control over the content their ads play beside, so issues like an advertisement playing before a platformwide **boycott of hate speech** can be avoided.

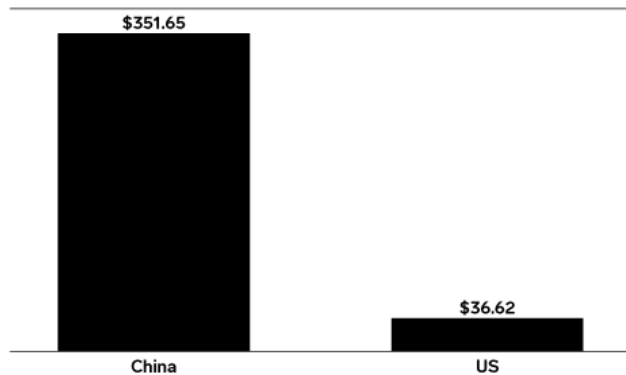
**The social commerce opportunity:** The new tools also put a heavy focus on creator partnerships and shopping options, bringing features to the US that have contributed to a social commerce boom in **ByteDance’s** home country, China.

- The new “**TikTok Creator Marketplace**” is a portal that will allow brands to more easily identify potential influencer partners, for example. Merchants are also being given tools to bring their storefront to TikTok more easily and directly reach consumers through live shopping channels, in-video product cards, and targeted ads based on users’ interests.
- The success of the retail social commerce market in China shows the size of the opportunity in the US. In 2021, total retail social commerce sales will reach **\$351.65 billion**. In the US, that figure will only be **\$36.62 billion** and will reach **\$79.64 billion** by **2025**.
- We attribute much of China’s success with social commerce to features like storefronts native to social media platforms, a heavy focus on influencer marketing, and live video monetization.

These three features were highlighted in TikTok World's announcement.

### Retail Social Commerce Sales in China vs. the US, 2021

billions



Note: includes products or services ordered via social networks (such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, WeChat, Line, VK, and others) regardless of the method of payment or fulfillment; excludes travel and event tickets, tips, subscriptions, payments, such as bill pay, taxes or money transfers, food services and drinking place sales, gambling and other vice goods sales

Source: eMarketer, May 2021

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**Why it's worth watching:** TikTok's approach to the changing needs of advertisers is customization.

- By partnering with firms like Nielsen, which advertisers are familiar with despite its recent issues, and allowing them greater control over the various channels through which their products reach customers, they are taking steps to make advertisers feel more comfortable with the platform and usher in a social commerce boom.