

Clubhouse adds tipping feature in a bid for creators

Article

On Monday, social audio app Clubhouse **launched** Payments, allowing users to tip their favorite hosts with 100% of the tips going to the creator. It's the second move in the past month focused on courting creators—three weeks ago, Clubhouse **debuted** a creator accelerator program to directly pay certain creators and provide equipment and aid in securing brand sponsorships.

As Clubhouse's social audio dominance is threatened, focusing on creators could help it keep its crown. It doesn't seem like Clubhouse's intention was ever to become an influencer-centric app—it **bills** itself primarily as a way to engage in two-sided dialogue, rather than unilaterally consuming content from a creator. But it's quickly learning that creators are vital to its success. Some of its most highly-trafficked moments were when big names like **Mark Zuckerberg** and **Elon Musk** joined Rooms, the latter of which even broke its 5,000-person Room limit. Those massive events helped Clubhouse explode in popularity earlier in the year, **peaking** at No. 21 on Sensor Tower's "US Top Free iPhone Apps" chart in early February. Since then, however, it's seen downloads drop off as the novelty faded and competitors like Twitter, LinkedIn, and Spotify launch or announce their own social audio features. And Clubhouse isn't only in danger of losing users and creators to audio livestreaming apps—it's also competing against Twitch and Instagram, for example, which offer video livestreaming and multiple forms of creator monetization.

It'll need to roll out more options for creators soon if it wants to catch up. Notably, Clubhouse referred to Payments as its "first" monetization feature, so those options are clearly in the works. There are two ways it's likely to expand:

1. **Subscriptions** are the most logical next step. It's a model that's been successful on platforms like Patreon, Twitch, Substack, and Twitter. They're necessary to compete within the growing creator economy because they give creators some semblance of a steady income—plus, they'll provide a steady income for Clubhouse, which doesn't generate revenues yet.
2. **Sponsored events** are another likely route, as they've also been successful on Facebook and LinkedIn. They could work especially well with Clubhouse's business-minded audience, but LinkedIn has the **upper hand**, since it's been hosting sponsored events for years.

For more on this, read our report, "[Clubhouse and Social Audio 2021: Straight Talk About When and How Marketers Should Get Involved.](#)"