

Where will influencers go if TikTok gets banned in US?

Article

The news: With a **TikTok** ban in the US fully on the table, influencers are vocally preparing to migrate to other short-form video platforms in case a deal can't be reached between **ByteDance**, TikTok, and the US government.

- Last week, the US government ordered ByteDance to divest TikTok in the US or face an outright ban despite a series of concessions from the app. China has been reluctant to allow a sell-off of the app's US business, suggesting the possibility of a stalemate.

Toeing the line: TikTok's rapid user growth, discoverability, and strong brand activity made it a go-to platform for influencers looking to reach wider audiences, though they're typically active on several platforms.

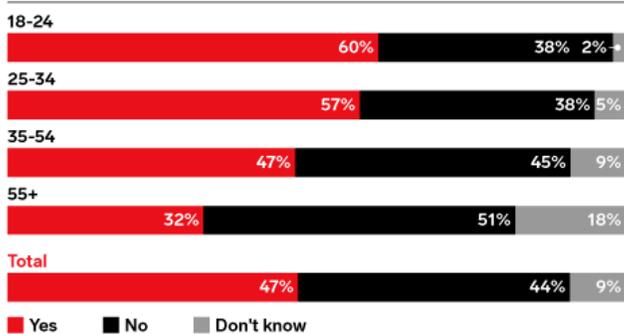
- Even so, advertisers haven't stopped spending on the platform. Evan Horowitz, CEO of **Movers+Shakers**, told [AdAge](#) that clients haven't slowed spending and generally feel that things will be resolved.
- Advertisers' resistance to redirect spending in anticipation of major industry changes is unsurprising—the same is happening with [third-party cookies](#) which will disappear in 2024, but are seeing increased year-over-year spending.

The winners: TikTok's large and growing share of advertising spending won't disappear if the app goes kaput. Instead, it will be directed to one of the other two leading short-form video platforms: **YouTube Shorts** and **Instagram Reels**.

- If the two platforms began as uninspired copycats that were full of videos with TikTok watermarks, they've now started to grow into [formidable platforms](#) of their own. YouTube Shorts hit 50 billion daily views in Google's most recent quarter, and **Meta** says Instagram Reels will be revenue-neutral by 2024.
- So which of the two will creators flock to? YouTube may be the dominant video platform on the internet, but Instagram remains one of the most-used social platforms, especially among a similar demographic to TikTok's. **Forty-four percent** of US [teens and adults](#) said they use Instagram, per Edison Research. Excluding minors, YouTube's [largest demographic](#) in the US is ages 25 to 34.

US YouTube Viewers Who Have Watched YouTube Shorts, by Age, Nov 2022

% of respondents in each group



Note: n=2,500 monthly active users; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding
Source: Cowen, "Cowen Survey: Assessing Beneficiaries If TikTok Is Shut Down in the US," Dec 7, 2022

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- The competitive demographics make it a tough choice, but creator payment may give YouTube Shorts an edge. YouTube recently began an [ad revenue-sharing program](#) with eligible creators that is quickly becoming an industry standard and promises greater transparency over pay. Instagram, on the other hand, is roughing it: Earlier this month, Meta paused its **Reels Play** payment program and has been reluctant to share revenues.

Our take: Clarity and quantity of payouts will have a huge impact on what platforms influencers could bounce to, but so will demographics and viewer growth. Shorts and Reels have competitive demographics and are growing rapidly, but Shorts has stronger, clearer payment policies.

Go further: Worried about how a potential TikTok ban might affect your business? Keep an eye out for our new report, "**How to Prepare for a TikTok Ban: 5 Things Marketers Should Do Now**," which will be published at noon ET.