

TikTok won't dial back on TikTok Shop content, but it may not matter for time spent

Article

The news: Time spent on **TikTok** is slowing but not necessarily because of **TikTok Shop**, according to our March 2024 "US Social Commerce Survey."

Why it matters: Reports that the increase in TikTok Shop content was causing a decline in usage or [decrease in new sign-ups](#) have run rampant since TikTok Shop's US launch in September 2023.

Overheard: "We're trying to establish ourselves as an ecommerce juggernaut," **Marni Levine**, head of TikTok Shop US Operations, SMB, said at **The Information's** Creator Economy Summit on Tuesday. She added that TikTok is "not considering dialing back on Shop content."

- User frustrations over new features have occasionally caused other social platforms to backtrack. In 2022, **Instagram** temporarily rolled back full-screen Reels and decreased recommended content after users complained.

By the numbers: Many users say they have increased—rather than decreased—their TikTok usage since TikTok Shop rolled out.

- Nearly two-thirds (62.5%) of US TikTok users **noticed a change in shopping-related content** in the six months preceding our survey.
- Almost all (91.7%) respondents who noticed a change said their TikTok usage **either rose or remained unchanged** in that time period, with 70% reporting an increase.

Be smart: Respondents in our survey didn't specify whether the change they noted in shopping-related content was an increase or a decrease. But since the survey timeframe coincided with TikTok's aggressive commerce push, it's hard to imagine that it would have been the latter.

Zoom out: Time spent on TikTok is plateauing and new user growth is slowing anyway. The downward trend is natural, given that [107.8 million US consumers](#) already use the app monthly, and those users spend an enormous amount of time there.

- We expect US adult users will [spend 54 minutes](#) on the app daily on average in 2024. That's significantly more time than users spend on any other social app.
- Our forecast excludes [teens](#). In October 2023, 17% of US consumers ages 13 to 17 said they used TikTok "almost constantly," which was up 1 percentage point from May 2022, per Pew Research Center.

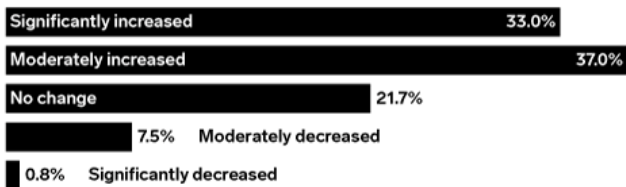
The takeaway: There are too many variables at play to tell what the long-term impact of TikTok Shop will be on user engagement, and usage trends can fluctuate significantly over

short periods of time.

- Marketers should take user concerns seriously, but also remember that early user angst over new features tends to die down. Some users who were turned off by heavy TikTok Shop ad loads in Q4 2023 have said they have resumed using the app normally.
- There are plenty of reasons that users keep spending time on TikTok despite how they feel about TikTok Shop, including [longer, more episodic videos](#). On the flip side, there are plenty of other reasons to limit usage, such as privacy concerns and overall social media fatigue.
- Even so, TikTok must find a balance between pursuing its ecommerce ambitions and retaining the core user experience as it enters a period of much more modest time spent growth.

Change in TikTok Usage* by US TikTok Users Who Have Noticed Shopping-Related Content Changes on the Platform, March 2024

% of respondents



Note: n=373 who have noticed changes in shopping-related content on TikTok; *in the past 6 months
Source: EMARKETER Survey, "US Social Commerce," April 2024

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