

YouTube Shorts introduces gated content feature, as battle for creators intensifies

Article

The news: YouTube is escalating its efforts to woo content creators with fresh monetization features, including Members Only Shorts, which enables creators to offer exclusive content to

their paying subscribers.

- This new functionality is akin to **TikTok's** Series feature, which allows creators to monetize their videos through a paywall, with pricing options ranging from \$1 to \$190.
- Last week, YouTube disclosed that over 750,000 of its 3 million Partner Program members are now making money from their YouTube Shorts.
- While YouTube hasn't disclosed the exact figures paid to Shorts creators, it has distributed a total of \$70 billion to its creators over the last three years, most of which has gone to producers of longer content.

Why it matters: Major social platforms are courting influential creators; however, they can have an outsized impact on how much attention their apps attract.

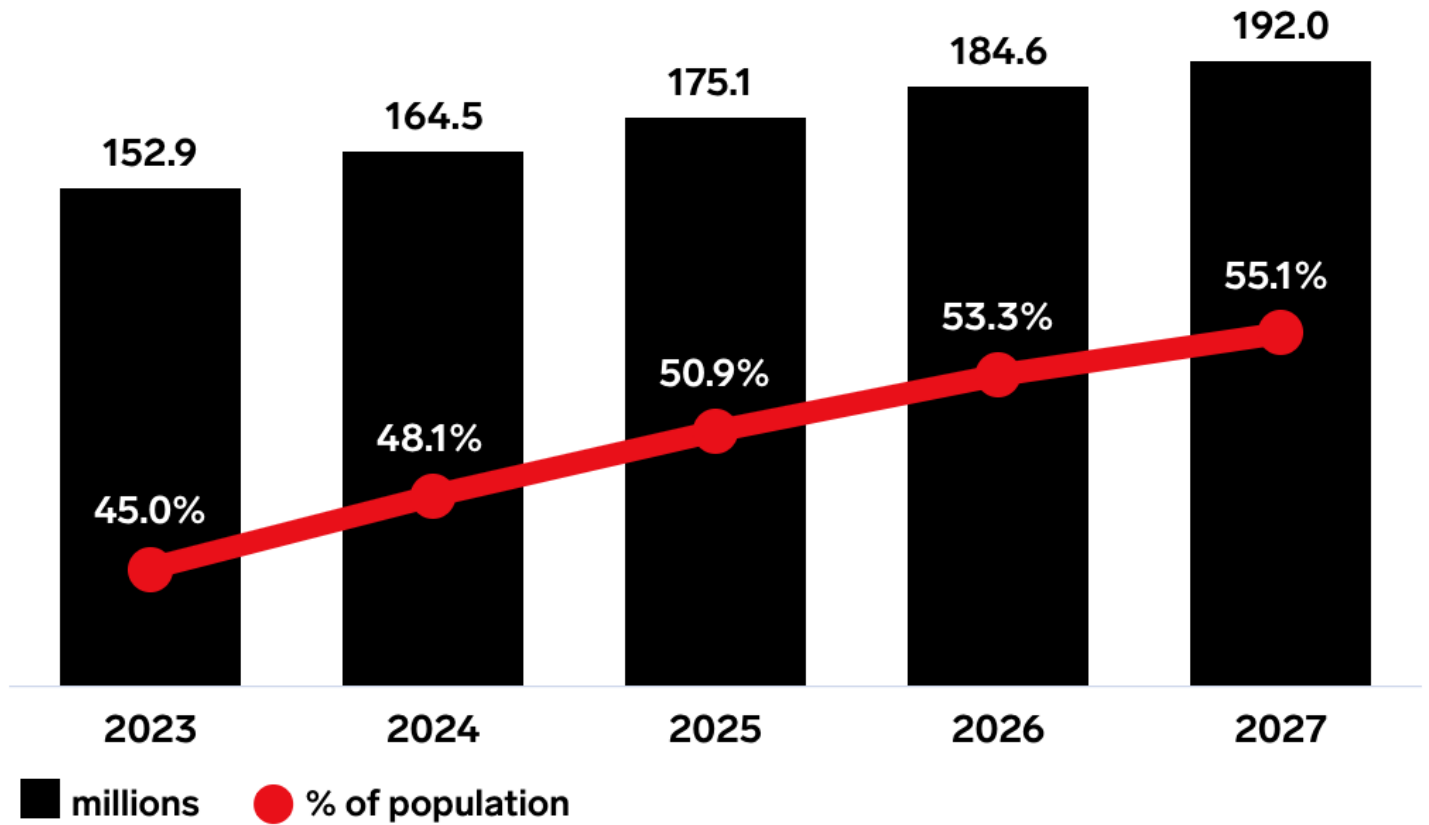
- Major creators increasingly rely on these platforms for a living. More than 4 in 10 (42% of) creators worldwide making \$100,000 or more per year would lose at least \$50,000 without access to YouTube—higher than **Instagram**, **TikTok**, and **Facebook**.
- US creators increasingly expect to get paid for content—so they value features like the ability to gate their content.
- The rollout of Members Only Shorts is necessary to compete with TikTok's offerings, highlighting the intensifying battle for creator loyalty and subscriber engagement.
- These initiatives reflect a broader industry trend as digital platforms innovate to provide creators with diverse and lucrative revenue streams, aiming to deepen the bond between creators and their audience.

Our take: The challenge lies in the sheer volume of free content available, which makes it difficult for creators to justify a paywall unless their content is strongly sought after.

- As the competition for creative talent intensifies, such innovative features are likely to set new standards for content monetization and creator-audience interaction.

YouTube Shorts Viewers

US, 2023-2027



Note: individuals of any age who watch YouTube Shorts via app or website at least once per month

Source: EMARKETER Forecast, September 2023

