

People are watching longer TikToks. What does that mean for competition with YouTube?

Article

TikTok users are spending half of their time watching videos that are 1 minute in length or longer, according to The Information.

That longer attention span is good news for creators, who benefit from **diversifying their audiences** across platforms so they're not beholden to a single company or algorithm. Creators may be open to cross-posting on both YouTube and TikTok.

History lesson: TikTok has allowed 60-second videos since 2017. The social network upped its maximum video length to 3 minutes in 2021 and then to 10 minutes in 2022. In October 2023, the platform began allowing 15-minute videos for certain creators.

Increasing video length has paid off.

- TikTok surpassed YouTube for time spent by adult users in 2022, per our forecasts.
- In 2024, adult TikTok users will average 55 minutes per day on the platform, 5 minutes more than YouTube's average.
- That said, YouTube will have more than twice as many US users (237.4 million) as TikTok (102.3 million) in 2023, according to our forecast.

Discovery channel: Because of TikTok's shorter content, the platform risks users discovering clipped content and leaving the platform to watch the full version on YouTube. Increasing video length could prevent a user from watching half of a video essay on TikTok and finishing the content on YouTube.

TikTok is wise to find ways to keep those users from leaving the platform. It may have a smaller user base, but those users are engaged.

Ads up: Despite having fewer users, TikTok will surpass YouTube in US ad revenues in 2024, according to our forecast.

- TikTok will have \$8.66 billion to YouTube's \$8.17 billion.
- Each US TikTok user will net the platform \$80.35 in 2024 ad revenues, more than twice as much as YouTube's \$33.78 per user.

TikTok has a flywheel of entertainment, advertising, and commerce propelling its success. With a smaller US user base, it has more room to grow than YouTube, meaning TikTok's ad business will only get bigger.

What's next? TikTok has seen success from longer videos. That means the platform may follow YouTube's lead and venture into connected TV (CTV). **YouTube TV has been a success**, and **CTV has huge ad potential** (specifically with shoppable ads), so it wouldn't be a surprising step for TikTok. But TikTok is still a vertical video platform, so getting users to think about it as a CTV platform could be difficult.

Advertisers should expect TikTok to keep innovating with content length and format, which will mean new ad formats along the way.

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