

# TikTok's US saga: Ban paused, apps removed, and political maneuvering

Article



**The news:** President **Donald Trump** paused the [TikTok ban](#) for 75 days and provided a liability shield for the video app's business partners.

Trump also proposed a US-China joint venture requiring **ByteDance** to sell half of TikTok to the US, per [Bloomberg](#).



**TikTok plays hide and seek:** The app went dark for existing users on Saturday, saying, “A law banning TikTok has been enacted in the US. ... We are fortunate that President Trump has indicated that he will work with us on a solution to reinstate TikTok.”

The app restored service on Sunday, telling users that "as a result of President Trump's efforts, TikTok is back in the US." TikTok also told advertisers that its ad service will soon reach most US users, per [AdWeek](#). **TikTok previously told advertisers US ad campaigns will auto-pause starting January 19 due to the ban.**

**TikTok’s political outreach hit a fever pitch:** The company’s CEO **Shou Chew** was among the Big Tech billionaires in attendance at Trump’s inauguration. TikTok also contributed \$50,000 to a party for Gen Z Trump supporters and allies, per [Politico](#).

**Apple and Google remove ByteDance apps from stores:** While TikTok restored service for existing users, **Apple** and **Google** have yet to reinstate it to their app stores, which means the app can't be downloaded or updated. Apple also [summarily removed ByteDance’s other apps](#), including **Lemon8** and **CapCut**.

Apple, Google, and internet service providers are on the hook for non-compliance with the TikTok ban. They could face hefty fines of up to \$5,000 per user for continuing to host the app, and it remains to be seen whether Trump’s assurances are enough to convince app stores to restore the app.

**Our take:** “Voluntarily shutting down and restoring service was a brilliant marketing play for both TikTok and Trump,” said EMARKETER VP and Principal Analyst **Jasmine Enberg**. **“But Trump has yet to offer a viable, permanent solution for TikTok, and it’s unclear what the long-term impact of TikTok’s cozying up to the president will be, especially given that many users and creators are already expressing concerns over Trump’s potential influence on the app.”**

If consumers can’t download or update the app, it will stunt TikTok’s growth and gradually make the app unusable. And TikTok’s political maneuvering, including contributions to Trump-aligned events, raises questions about its long-term stability and influence. Advertisers may hesitate to invest heavily until clearer resolutions emerge.

## Most Used Apps on Mobile Phones Among US Internet Users, by Generation, April 2024

% of respondents in each group

### Gen Z (1997-2006)

Instagram	77%
YouTube	77%
TikTok	73%
Google	65%
Snapchat	59%

### Millennials (1981-1996)

YouTube	84%
Facebook	76%
Google	73%
Instagram	62%
TikTok	55%

### Gen X (1965-1980)

Pinterest	82%
YouTube	77%
Google	75%
Instagram	49%
TikTok	45%

### Baby boomers (1946-1964)

Google	76%
Facebook	71%
YouTube	66%
Instagram	29%
Pinterest	21%

Source: Forbes Advisor survey conducted by OnePoll as cited in company blog, May 20, 2024

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