

# TikTok updates roundup: Ecommerce ambitions, search news, AI innovations, and more

Article

This year, TikTok aims to quadruple the size of its global ecommerce business, and is expected to launch its own US ecommerce store soon. The platform is also leveraging new search

features to become a hub for retail ecommerce, pushing new AI ad tools, and getting involved in a host of new media ventures. Here's what the platform has been up to over the past month.

## Ecommerce ambitions

TikTok plans to generate **\$20 billion in sales** via TikTok Shop this year. In addition to pushing live ecommerce and incentivizing retailers **via free listings and shipping**, the platform is expected to launch an **entirely separate online retail store** in the US. The store, which is separate from TikTok Shop, will exist within the app, likely putting it in competition with Amazon, Shein, and Temu.

The shop could present logistical and customer experience challenges, our analyst Suzy Davidkhanian said on our **"Behind the Numbers: Reimagining Retail"** podcast. "I actually am a little bit surprised that TikTok is moving away from being a social platform that enables sales with their shop to an actual retailer because the biggest difference here is that they're going to own the logistics and also the inventory."

## Search news

**TikTok is testing a visual search feature**, which allows users to shop for products by uploading images. The feature could offer TikTok Shop a needed boost considering the platform hasn't become the product search engine some expected.

Just 3% of US adults **start their product searches on TikTok**, which is down from 5% last year, according to CivicScience. In contrast, 49% begin their searches on Amazon and 34% start on Google. Even Gen Zers' use of the platform to search products fell to 11% from 18% last year.

## AI innovations

**TikTok launched an AI ad script generator** last month, which could boost efficiency in ad creation on the platform. AI-generated content means the potential for misinformation or an unwanted departure from brand voice. Plus, the tech could result in a glut of similar AI-generated ads. Still, any AI marketing tools integrated within platforms pose an opportunity for marketers, and a look at what AI in advertising may look like in the next few years.

## Creator updates

**TikTok launched its Creative Challenge** last month, through which brands can submit challenges and crowdsource ad submissions from creators. It's a smart move for advertisers, reducing legwork for creator-driven ads. But the performance-based payment model could hurt creators in the long run. That said, fostering creator-sponsor relationships will ultimately keep creators using TikTok.

## Other ventures

**TikTok announced a partnership with Gas Station TV** to serve TikTok content to the network's out-of-home (OOH) audience. Instead of scrolling through TikToks on mobile at the pump, consumers will see TikTok content on screens, alongside Gas Station TV's creators and ads. The partnership allows TikTok to step into OOH advertising and attract more potential users.

**TikTok parent ByteDance is getting into book publishing**, capitalizing on the popularity of #BookTok. Since so many users find their next reads through TikTok, the platform has found a way to capitalize on the books themselves.

**TikTok surpassed \$1 billion in consumer app spend**, something no app has ever done before. The spend came largely from one-time in-app purchases of TikTok coins, which can be given to creators as gifts.

**TikTok entered the music streaming game in Brazil and Indonesia**, providing yet another type of media TikTok aims to take over. Music could present an opportunity for TikTok in the US, where digital audio services ad spending will total \$6.79 billion this year, according to our forecast.

**TikTok killed its BeReal clone.** TikTok wants a foot in everything, but even it couldn't keep its BeReal copycat afloat.

*This was originally featured in the eMarketer Daily newsletter. For more retail insights, statistics, and trends, [subscribe here](#).*