

TikTok outperforms YouTube Shorts and Reels viewership

Article

The news: TikTok vastly outperforms rival video platforms Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts in average video views across a variety of topics, per our [Industry KPI](#) data provided by Dash Hudson.

- TikTok’s “overall” average viewcount across all industries and account sizes was 143,912 in Q4 2023, compared to 120,917 and 54,428 for Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts, respectively.
- TikTok and Instagram’s advantage is particularly notable among accounts with “large” followings of 110,000 or more. Average views across industries among large accounts were 202,828 for TikTok and 239,548 for Instagram Reels, highlighting both platforms’ power as a discovery tool for consumers seeking product recommendations.
- YouTube Shorts, by comparison, came in at 91,973.

Why this matters: The potential for a ban or forced sale of TikTok has increased now that **the US Senate has approved the initiative**, which is included in a military aid bill for Ukraine and Israel. TikTok’s uncertain political status is a stark reminder of its powerful advertising potential, which advertisers could lose access to.

- If advertisers can’t work with TikTok—which would represent a significant blow since the company is expected to gain \$10.42 billion in advertising revenues this year, per our forecast—attention will turn to Instagram and YouTube Shorts to make up for the spending gap.
- Based on Dash Hudson’s data, Instagram may be the biggest beneficiary of diverted spending due to its strong position as a discovery platform, much like TikTok. Large brands will likely choose the platform with the largest reach, giving Meta’s long-standing platform a leg up.
- But bigger isn’t always better. While large accounts may get more attention for a product or brand, advertisers have found that working with smaller, targeted influencers tends to drive much higher engagement and ad retention. That means Shorts, with its smaller audience, could still eke out an advantage over the other leading platforms.

Our take: If TikTok gets banned from the US, it will leave a massive crater of ad spend and viewership in its wake that YouTube and Instagram are sure to scramble over. While it may be too early to divert spending now, advertisers should wait to see which platforms are most attractive to influencers and follow high-value audiences to their destinations.

- But regardless of how long it takes for the ban dilemma to play out, advertisers should think now about where to distribute their eggs if they find themselves without a basket.

Go deeper: Interested in seeing more TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube engagement benchmarks? Industry KPI subscribers can get right to benchmarking performance against

over 400+ industry benchmarks, [see more here](#).

Industry KPIs: US Social Video Views per Video Post on Select Social Media Platforms, Q4 2023

TikTok	143,912
Instagram Reels	120,917
YouTube long-form	96,454
YouTube Shorts	54,428

Note: YouTube Shorts average views per video post are the total number of views on a YouTube Shorts video; TikTok average video views per post are the total number of plays for a TikTok video post during the month, averaged across three quarters
Source: Dash Hudson, Q4 2023

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