

As pandemic measures are lifted, social media use has declined with the exception of TikTok

September 26 2022, by Philip Mai and Anatoliy Gruzd



Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

In September, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Instagram is [faltering in its bid to keep up with TikTok](#), the wildly popular Chinese-owned video-sharing app.

But it is not just Instagram fretting over TikTok's meteoric rise—a Google exec raised similar [concerns](#) about how [TikTok was drawing younger users away](#) from Google's core services such as Search and Maps.

TikTok's rise is confirmed by data from our new nation-wide, census-balanced online survey, [The State of Social Media in Canada 2022](#), which surveyed 1,500 Canadian adults over the age of 18 between May 12 and 31, 2022.

The rise of TikTok

Our report findings show that [Canadians' use of social media has declined from its early pandemic peak](#); however, Canada continues to be one of the most connected countries in the world—94% of online adults use at least one social media platform.

We found that TikTok had the largest gain (an increase of 11%) in the number of Canadian adults who reported having an account on the platform in 2022, compared to data we collected in 2020.

While the number of Canadians on TikTok is still relatively small (26%), those who do use the platform visit it regularly (65% daily). Like in the [United States](#), TikTok adoption in Canada largely skews towards younger age groups, as 76% of those aged 18–24 reported having an account on the platform, while the fastest growing demographic on the platform are those who are between 25 and 34 years old (54%).

These findings suggest that TikTok's appeal has grown [since 2020](#), when we last conducted this survey, and that TikTok is no longer just an app for short videos.

Other studies have shown that [young people](#) are now using TikTok as

one of the primary ways [to get news](#) and that some have even [replaced Google Search with TikTok](#).

[Our findings](#) from earlier in the summer support this: 51% of Canadian TikTok users reported using the app to follow news on Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

After the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has ushered in some changes in where and how often Canadians are spending their time on social media. After living through two years of COVID-19 restrictions, more Canadians are re-evaluating the role of social media in their lives.

In particular, Canadians are spending less time on social media now that most pandemic restrictions have been lifted. In Canada, Facebook has the highest percentage of daily users at 70%, but this dropped from a previous high of 77% daily users in 2020.

TikTok is the only platform showing a slight 2% increase in the percentage of daily users. In contrast, Reddit has the largest drop—14%—of daily users.

Fewer Canadians reported having an account on popular social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Pinterest. Platforms such as Facebook, messaging apps and YouTube still dominate in terms of the number of users, but newer platforms—like TikTok—and more niche platforms—like the livestreaming service Twitch—are gaining ground.

The percentage of Canadians who reported using LinkedIn has dropped by 7% since 2020. The rate of new users joining Facebook and Pinterest has also declined, each dropping by 3% and 4% since 2020 respectively.

An unfolding story

There's little doubt that TikTok has been a disrupting force on the social media landscape. It has forced [social media](#) stalwarts like [Facebook](#) and [Google](#) to make radical changes to their [platform](#) in order to keep up.

But for TikTok to continue to grow, it will need to convince skeptics that it is not part of the Chinese state apparatus; however, in the current geopolitical climate, that could be a very tall order.

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