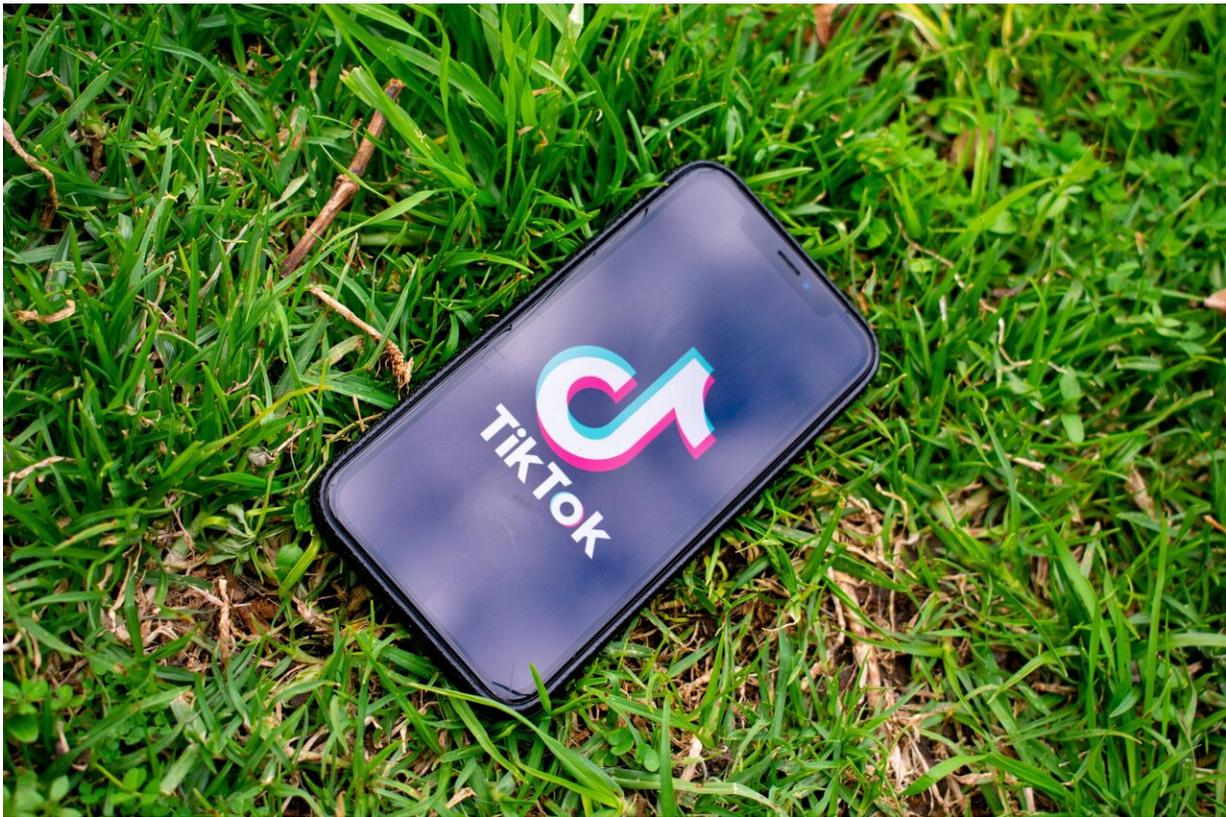


Trump team eyes giving TikTok's owners more time to line up sale

September 11 2020, by Saleha Mohsin



Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

The Trump administration is considering whether to give more time to TikTok's Chinese owners to arrange a sale of the popular video-sharing app's U.S. operations to an American buyer, according to people familiar

with the matter.

TikTok's owner ByteDance Ltd. is likely to miss President Donald Trump's publicly stated deadline of Sept. 15 for the company to strike a deal to divest its U.S. operations after new Chinese regulations complicated negotiations with bidders Microsoft Corp. and Oracle Corp., Bloomberg News reported Thursday.

In preliminary talks with Chinese officials, ByteDance has been told that any proposal must be submitted for approval with detailed information about technical and [financial issues](#), and the review will be substantial and take time, according to the Bloomberg report.

Advisers haven't presented Trump with the decision yet on whether to extend the deadline, the people said. For now, the deal isn't a top priority for the president, according to another person familiar with the matter. All of the people spoke on condition of anonymity because of the ongoing nature of the discussions.

The White House referred questions to the Commerce Department, which didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. Microsoft declined to comment. Representatives for TikTok and Oracle didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

TikTok is caught in a clash between the world's two preeminent powers. Trump has ramped up his pressure campaign on China ahead of what promises to be a hotly contested presidential election in November. U.S. officials have criticized the app's security and privacy practices, suggesting that user data collected through the app might be shared with the Chinese government.

The real deadline for ByteDance to act remains an open question in the U.S. due to a confusing series of Trump statements and orders. While

Trump has said he wants a deal by Sept. 15, the ban on TikTok's U.S. operations that he signed last month in a bid to force a sale requires the company to act by Sept. 20.

Documentation implementing that ban, possibly under the authority of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, which allows the president to regulate international commerce in response to any unusual threat to the country, is expected to be made public in the Federal Register around Sept. 20, Bloomberg reported Sept. 2.

A subsequent order issued by Trump on Aug. 14 on the recommendation of an interagency national security panel requires ByteDance to sell TikTok's U.S. business within 90 days—giving it until after the Nov. 3 election—further clouding the timeline for a TikTok sale.

The parties are still racing to present a preliminary deal to the White House before this month's deadline, though no agreement could be finalized before Beijing's signoff. It's also possible that ByteDance pulls out of a sale altogether if it determines it can't satisfy both governments, the bidders and its own shareholders.

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