

# Time is running out for TikTok

Supreme Court looks poised to allow the 1/19 ban

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## 1 WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The Supreme Court seems inclined to uphold Congress's 1/19 deadline for ByteDance to sell TikTok or face a U.S. ban. The key question now is: who will buy it... and what exactly will they get for their money?

## 2 WHAT'S IT MEAN?

While TikTok frames this as a free-speech case, SCOTUS appears to view it as a national security matter. Concerns about ties between ByteDance and the Chinese government have raised fears of content manipulation, journalist surveillance, even blackmail. How much control is an authoritarian government exercising over a platform with more than 170 million U.S. users?

## 3 HOW WILL THIS AFFECT ADVERTISERS?

A TikTok ban would severely impact creators and brands, risking \$7.6 billion in revenue, with \$76.4 billion in ad spending left on the table. The EU and other nations may follow suit. This will benefit rivals like Meta Reels, YouTube, and other short-form video players, in which case adjust your ad dollars accordingly.

Would TikTok disappear? Not right away. Apple and Google stores would have to remove it from their stores, but current users would likely be allowed to keep using the platform—meaning a slower degradation of their user base.

Given President-elect Trump's determination to broker a deal, a sale seems more likely. Current suitors include Meta, Amazon, Verizon, AT&T, and a dark-horse bid by Frank McCourt and Kevin O'Leary (aka Shark Tank's Mr. Wonderful).

## 4 WHAT'S THE BIGGER PICTURE?

The question isn't *if* anyone will buy TikTok, but rather what they'd be buying. ByteDance might retain ownership of TikTok's algorithm—theoretically its most valuable asset. But even if ByteDance keeps the data, TikTok will still be a desirable acquisition for one simple reason: its massive audience. Keeping the loyalty of that audience will be a major challenge for whoever winds up owning the platform.

## 5 WHAT'S OUR READ?

Sources:

[WIRED](#)

[CBS News](#)

[MSN](#)

This marks a major shift in the balance between free speech, security, and censorship—one with lasting consequences for future apps and the entire social media landscape.

We advise a varied media diet. The days of placing all your bets on one platform—even if it is the most popular platform—are over. Advertisers have to consider not only who's on the platform, but who's quietly watching from behind the scenes.



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On a scale from 1 (just wait) to 10 (too late), how fast should you move on this?