



Discover. Create. Grow.

How TikTok turns online
opportunity into real world
growth for business, creators and
communities.





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ABOUT THE RESEARCH

To better understand TikTok’s impact across the UK’s economy, businesses, creators, and wider community, TikTok commissioned Public First to conduct new independent research, which included detailed economic modelling using both third-party data and data provided by TikTok, plus an independent, anonymous survey of:

- 4,158 UK adults
- 1,034 UK businesses
- 336 creators from TikTok’s UK Creator Community
- 7 case study interviews with UK small businesses and UK TikTok creators
- 2 pieces of immersive research — over Burns Night in Glasgow (100+ interviews) and during London Fashion Week (150+ interviews)

ABOUT THE EY ANALYSIS

Using an Input–Output economic modelling approach, EY combined TikTok’s internal financial and employment data with UK macroeconomic data to estimate its direct, indirect and induced impacts on GVA, employment and wider agglomeration effects.

ABOUT PUBLIC FIRST

Public First is a policy, research, opinion and strategy consultancy, bringing in-house opinion polling, focus groups, immersive research, data analysis and a deep understanding of policy under one roof. We work with global companies, governments, start-ups, institutions and foundations to tackle major public policy and strategic challenges.

Executive Summary

FOREWORD



Cynthia Sanfilippo

President of TikTok, Europe

30 million people across the UK come to TikTok every month, to create, discover and enjoy content on every topic imaginable.

But TikTok is not just about what people see on their screen. As President of Europe, what has struck me most is what then happens away from it too. A video about a neighbourhood café is tomorrow's lunch plan. A #BookTok recommendation becomes next week's bedtime read. A clip from a coastal town or music festival can turn into a weekend away. A running route, a craft tutorial or a guitar demonstration can help someone find a new hobby, learn new skills and connect them with a community around it.

That is what makes TikTok different. It is not just a place where people watch content. It is a window into the real world: a place where culture moves, businesses grow, people connect and ideas become reality.

This report puts a number on that. Activity supported by TikTok now adds over £10 billion to the UK economy and supports more than 150 thousand jobs. Behind each of those jobs is a story: a creator who has turned a hobby into a business, a small business hiring to keep up with a surge in TikTok-driven sales, an advertising brand taking on new creatives, or a local restaurant that has never posted a video but whose bookings surged because their customers did.

For small businesses in particular, the ease of engaging on TikTok is helping break down traditional barriers and allowing them to compete with established brands. On TikTok a good idea can turn into a viable business proposition without necessarily needing a big advertising budget or a prime high street location.

That effect is being felt across the economy. In music, TikTok helps artists find audiences and fans find new songs. In fashion and beauty, it helps trends travel and brands break through. In tourism and hospitality, it helps people discover places they might never otherwise have visited.

I am proud of the partnerships we have built across these sectors and proud of the creators who bring British culture to life every day. And we are proud of the businesses that use TikTok not just to market themselves, but to grow, hire and invest.

All of this can only happen by keeping our platform a safe and enjoyable space for our entire community, and we continuously invest in measures to ensure this, including our £10 billion investment in Project Clover, one of the most advanced data protection systems to be found anywhere in the world.

We are proud of our contribution to the British economy and culture, and are committed to growing that contribution even further, supporting British creators and helping businesses of every size reach the people who matter most.

TikTok in the UK

TikTok launched in the UK in 2018 as a platform for discovery. In less than a decade, it has become a significant part of British life, reaching more than **30 million monthly active users**.

TikTok is shaped by the everyday lives of these users. Through content shared by people like them, users discover local businesses, new hobbies, communities and cultural moments. This makes recommendations feel more authentic, personal and trustworthy — and more likely to inspire action. Whether visiting a local business, booking an experience or making a purchase, TikTok turns discovery into demand across the British economy.

Alongside its growing role in everyday life, TikTok has become an important contributor to the UK economy. Since establishing operations in the UK, the company has invested in jobs, infrastructure and talent, while helping British creators, businesses and culture reach audiences at home and around the world. Its contribution comes both through its direct investments into the UK and the role that the TikTok platform plays in the wider economy.



Investing in Britain: for every £1 of GVA from TikTok's own UK operations, around £16 of additional GVA is supported through UK creators and businesses using the platform.

Based on EY estimates.

Public First estimates that the use of the TikTok platform by users, creators and businesses added over £9 billion to the economy in 2025. However, this estimate does not include TikTok's direct investments such as offices and headcount. Additional research by EY, based on TikTok's direct investments in 2024 suggests that, when all activity is taken together, TikTok added at least £10 billion in GVA to the UK economy in 2025, supporting 153,000 jobs.

153,000 British Jobs

TikTok's economic contribution supports 153,000 British jobs, more than two times the size of the entire UK video games industry, while Public First polling finds that businesses report making the **equivalent of 31,000 marketing hires across the country due to platforms like TikTok**.

A £10 Billion Boost to Britain's Economy: Economic activity underpinned by the TikTok platform and TikTok's direct investments added at least £10 billion to the UK economy in 2025, equivalent to 0.3% of GDP.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From Discovery to Enterprise

People come to TikTok to explore everything from food, music and travel to fashion, beauty and gaming. Discovery on TikTok is active, not passive: people do not just watch content about their interests, they act on it.

1.2mn

have joined a club, hobby group, or a class after discovering it on TikTok.

2mn

have signed up for an online course after discovering it on TikTok.

1.5mn

have enrolled in in-person learning after discovering it on TikTok.

TikTok also helps turn interests into livelihoods. Over 1 in 4 (27%) of British TikTok users post content more than once a week, approximately 8 million people. This is a group we call Casual Creators. Casual Creators generate a constant flow of organic content that helps products, brands and ideas gain visibility and momentum. These users also show an entrepreneurial spirit. They are more than twice as likely as the UK average to want to start a business in the next five years, and they are using TikTok to develop, test and plan their business ideas.

18mn

casual creators active across the UK.

2x

casual creators are twice as likely than the UK average to want to start a business.

1 in 5

Casual creators have undertaken concrete planning to start a new business. Almost three times more than the wider population.

This makes TikTok part of the UK's start-up pipeline, a place where people discover new opportunities, test ideas, build audiences and turn side hustles into careers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why Businesses Thrive on TikTok

Both new and established businesses benefit from people using TikTok to discover what to buy, where to go and what experiences they want. Over 1 in 3 (39%) of all UK businesses use TikTok as part of their marketing strategy, and they see clear commercial returns.

More than 8 out of 10

UK businesses using TikTok (84%) say the platform has helped increase their sales and revenue.

While 28% say they have hired additional staff whose role includes working with the platform. Across the UK, this could amount to as many as

31,000

additional hires

reported by businesses using the TikTok platform.

The Rise of TikTok Shop

Since 2021, TikTok Shop has helped turn discovery directly into commerce. For businesses, it has opened up new ways to launch products, reach customers and generate sales.

91% of businesses using TikTok Shop say that it has allowed them to grow their sales and revenue.



94%

say TikTok Shop has enabled them to launch new products.

This is increasingly happening in real time, as products are showcased through TikTok LIVE shopping sessions, creator videos and demonstrations that allow users to engage and purchase seamlessly.

Over 1 in 4 have Sold Out

28% of businesses using TikTok say they have sold out of a product because of the effects of TikTok and TikTok Shop.

This shows how demand generated on TikTok can turn into real sales, fuller order books, and stronger business growth for UK companies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Creator-led Growth

On TikTok, creators range from everyday users and casual creators sharing what they love, to full-time creators building careers. The authenticity of creator content creates a powerful growth opportunity for businesses.

85%

of UK businesses using TikTok say they have worked with creators.

Organic content as well as professional creator marketing can trigger viral moments, where demand accelerates rapidly. Businesses who have experienced these moments overwhelmingly say it had a positive effect.

82%

of businesses who experienced a viral moment on TikTok said had the same positive effect on their businesses as they would expect from a celebrity endorsement or being featured on TV.

Growth can be driven both by deliberate marketing strategies, including partnerships with full-time creators, and organically, when a business idea captures the attention of local TikTok users and gains momentum on the platform.

Businesses are feeling the benefits of the platform.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Learning New Skills & Rediscovering Reading

TikTok is a major source of learning and self-development. British TikTok users watch over **18 million hours of learning and educational content a week** on the platform, and for many, that learning has practical value too.

British TikTok users spend over **18 million hours** a week watching educational or learning content.



3.9mn

users say TikTok has helped them learn a skill that saved them money.

#BookTok and the community of readers on TikTok is turning a new generation back onto reading. This is a global phenomenon, but in the UK specifically this has seen TikTok drive an additional **£175 million** in spending on books.

£175mn

additional spending on books driven by TikTok in the UK through #BookTok and book discovery

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A New Kind of Growth Platform

Eight years after launch, TikTok has become part of the UK's economic infrastructure — shaping how people discover products and services, how businesses reach customers, and how creators turn attention into income.

For businesses, the growth TikTok provides becomes real in stronger customer demand, higher sales and new opportunities to grow.

For TikTok users and creators, it can mean new business ideas, new income streams and new career paths.

Looking ahead, the opportunity could grow further.

Public First estimates that casual creators on platforms like TikTok could help drive an additional **£27 billion** in UK e-commerce growth by 2030.



This puts TikTok at the heart of the UK's drive for growth.

TikTok's Impact in the UK



£1 : £16
Investing in Britain

For every £1 of GVA generated by TikTok's operations in the UK, around £16 of additional GVA is supported through UK creators and businesses using the platform. Based on EY estimates.



£10bn
A £10 Billion Boost to Britain's Economy

Economic activity underpinned by the TikTok platform and TikTok's direct investments added at least £10 billion to the UK economy in 2025, equivalent to 0.3% of GDP.



£910mn
Addition to Britain's creative industries

From content creators, to influencers and production services - supported £910 million of value-add in 2025, to the UK creative industries. This is equivalent to 21 additional feature films, including major Hollywood movies being produced in the UK.



153k
Jobs supported

TikTok's economic contribution in 2025 supported 153,000 British jobs. In addition, polling from Public First polling finds that businesses using TikTok hired 31,000 people as a result of being on the platform.



£27bn
Driving New Economic Growth

Casual creators on platforms like TikTok (a group we define as posting more than once a week) are already helping businesses turn everyday recommendations into sales. Public First estimates that these users could drive an additional £27bn in e-commerce growth by 2030.



1 in 4
Businesses have sold out on TikTok

More than 1 in 4 businesses on TikTok say they have sold out of a product because of the platform. 84% of businesses using TikTok say it has boosted their sales and revenue.



£3.4bn
A Vital Tool for Small Businesses

TikTok helped UK SMEs generate £3.4bn in additional output in 2025 — worth £598 per business if divided across all of the UK's SMEs.



2x
More likely to want to start a business

Casual creators are more than twice as likely as the UK average to want to start a business, and 74% say their idea is linked to what they watch or post on TikTok.



6mn
Visits to local cafés or restaurants influenced by TikTok

million people have visited a café or restaurant after seeing it on TikTok while 1 in 6 have taken up a sport, hobby, club or class as a result of being on the platform.



18mn
Hours of learning content watched each week

UK users watched over 18 million hours a week learning on TikTok, 4 in 10 TikTok users have used skills they have gained from the platform at work, while 3.9 million people have learnt a skill that has saved them money.

How TikTok Drives Growth in the UK

TikTok supports economic growth by turning discovery of new products and experiences into demand. People use the platform to decide what to buy, where to go, and how to spend their time.

Businesses use that same discovery environment to reach new audiences, build trust and convert exposure into sales.

£10bn

in economic growth generated across the UK economy in 2025.

153k

jobs supported across the UK economy.

Discovery Builds Visibility and Trust

For many businesses, TikTok starts as a way to get noticed. They can showcase products, explain their story and test what resonates without needing a large upfront marketing budget.

Paid advertising builds on this. Businesses can amplify content that is already resonating with audiences, reaching users as they engage with trends, recommendations and communities on the platform. Creators then help turn visibility into trust. In the UK, 85% of businesses using TikTok say they have worked with creators, often using voices that feel more relatable than traditional advertising alone.

TikTok Shop Turns Discovery into Seamless Commerce

TikTok Shop adds a direct commercial layer to the discovery model. Shoppable videos and LIVE sessions let users see products in context, ask questions and buy without leaving the platform.

For businesses, this turns interest-led discovery into a more direct route for customers.

Over 90%

of businesses using TikTok Shop say it has helped them launch new products, better understand customers and reach people they could not access through physical retail.

Over 1 in 4

businesses using TikTok (28%) say they have sold out of a product because of the effects of TikTok and TikTok Shop.

“I’d pick TikTok Shop over running my own website. We tried that before, but there was always something that needed sorting - payments, marketing and updating it and as the one doing all the baking, I just didn’t have the time for all of that.”

Female, 20s, Bakery Stall Owner

Word-of-Mouth at Scale

Beyond marketing, a large part of TikTok’s economic value comes from organic discovery driven by authentic content posted by everyday users.

This means a business does not always need a formal TikTok strategy to benefit. A café, shop, market stall, attraction or local event can get spontaneous attention because someone visits, enjoys it and shares it. In that sense, TikTok can amplify personal recommendations, helping real people share places they enjoy with communities that trust their views.

6mn

We estimate that this has driven 6 million people to visit a local café or restaurant as a result of seeing it on TikTok. This is an effect that reaches well beyond younger users: **around one in five people aged 45-64 say they have done so.**

“TikTok is great for business. I’m not even on it myself, but we get loads of people coming in saying they heard about Spitalfields on TikTok, it’s how young people discover places these days.”

Male, 50s, Market Trader

This is what makes TikTok’s model different. The platform does not only reward businesses with the biggest budgets. It rewards products, places and experiences that people genuinely want to share.

“TikTok helps people find communities they’re not already in touch with and discover things they’re actually interested in ... It’s a very genuine audience reach - people who are buzzing to find out about it.”

Female, 30s, Independent Shop-Owner

Why TikTok's Growth Model is Different

TikTok's economic impact comes from the way the features of the platform work together.

Advertising creates visibility. Creators make that visibility more trusted. TikTok Shop turns interest into sales. Organic content spreads demand beyond the businesses already active on the platform.

Together, this creates a growth model that supports businesses of different sizes and in different sectors — from established brands to independent shops, cafés, creators and local destinations.

£10bn

A £10 billion value add to the UK economy from TikTok's platform and investments in 2025.

£27bn

In the future, the continued growth of content led by regular TikTok posters across different channels could deliver **an additional £27 billion by 2030.**



TikTok's Users in the UK

TikTok's economic importance in the UK starts with its users.

30mn+ monthly active users in the UK.

A National User Base

TikTok is a genuinely national platform. Our survey of British adults found that its audience skews younger than the British population as a whole, but it is not simply a youth platform.

28%

of TikTok users are aged 18–24.

29%

of TikTok users are aged 25–35.

Over 1 in 3

UK TikTok users are aged 35+.

TikTok's audience is national in geography as well as age. Users are spread across every nation and region of the UK, broadly tracking the country's regional shape.

London accounts for 17% of users, but **TikTok also reaches large audiences across the North West, West Midlands, Scotland, Yorkshire and the Humber, Wales and Northern Ireland.**

This is much closer in audience footprint to a national broadcaster than other parts of the media and creative industries which can often skew towards London and the South East.

The platform also reaches a more diverse audience than the UK average. **Black, Asian and Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups are all represented at higher levels among TikTok users than in the population overall.**

Taken together, this means TikTok has a broad and representative national footprint. It reaches younger audiences particularly well, but with a large number of active users across age, region and community. This gives businesses, creators and public institutions a way to speak to people across the UK.

A Platform People Use to Discover and Act

TikTok's users are not just watching content. Millions of people in the UK are using the platform to discover products, places and experiences, and then acting on what they see. This is one of the clearest ways in which TikTok generates economic value.

Almost 1 in 3

TikTok users (31%) have visited a local café or restaurant after seeing it on TikTok.

More than 1 in 4

TikTok users (28%) have visited another UK town or city after seeing it on TikTok.

"It's an incredible discovery tool. TikTok is unmatched for people finding out about what you do, and that's so valuable - beyond valuable for small business owners."

Female, 30s, Independent Shop-Owner

In this way, TikTok acts as a convenor. A place where people come together online, to discover and find opportunities to share their interests with others offline. From classes, venues and community-led activities, TikTok helps turn discovery into shared real-world experiences — supporting local economies and strengthening social connection.

Casual Creators Extend TikTok's Economic Impact

TikTok's influence is also shaped by the large number of users who post content without being full-time creators or businesses. These casual creators help drive discovery by sharing recommendations, participating in trends and surfacing local businesses, products and experiences.

That has an important economic effect. It means growth on TikTok is not driven only by paid campaigns or formal brand partnerships.

Businesses can benefit because they are organically discovered by users, even if they are not active on the platform themselves. In that sense, TikTok can reward not just strong marketing, but strong products, good ideas and distinctive experiences.

Who are TikTok's Casual Creators?

8 million casual creators are active across the UK.

Casual creators are everyday TikTok users who post more than once a week. They are not full-time creators, or necessarily people trying to build a career in content. They are most often real people sharing their lives, the places they go, the products they like, the hobbies they care about and the communities they are part of. They account for 27% of UK TikTok users. We estimate that means roughly 8 million casual creators are active across the UK.

Their importance is not just their number, but their authenticity. Because their content is rooted in real experiences, it carries the trust and credibility of word-of-mouth, but at scale.

These users are a core part of TikTok's economic value. Compared with viewers or less frequent posters, they are more likely to visit local businesses, engage in events and share their experiences. They are also among TikTok's most entrepreneurial users.

Casual creators are more than twice as likely as the UK average to say they want to start a business in the next five years (54% vs 21%). 84% say their business idea is related to what they see or post about on TikTok, and 70% want that idea to become their full-time job.

2x more likely than the UK average to want to start a business.

Casual creators sit at the heart of how TikTok's spillover effect works. Businesses do not always need to be active on the platform to benefit. When everyday users share what they genuinely love, that authenticity can turn exposure into footfall, demand and new opportunities for growth.

£27bn in potential economic growth by 2030.

These users also have a central role to play in future growth. If they continue to post, share their ideas and connect people to businesses and experiences, casual creators across social media platforms could help drive an additional £27bn in economic growth by 2030.

Part of Britain’s Start-Up Pipeline

TikTok is a place where users can flex their entrepreneurial muscles — testing their interests, ideas and audiences in ways that can turn creativity into economic value.

35%

of TikTok users say they would like to start their own business in the next five years, higher than the British average.



CASE STUDY

HeyHoney

Hannah Norman · Founder

Hannah Norman founded HeyHoney in 2022 after discovering TikTok LIVE during the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite having no direct experience in social media, marketing or content creation, she began creating her own content and quickly built a loyal audience through regular LIVE streaming. As her following and revenue grew, Hannah realised the scale of opportunity emerging around creator communities and live entertainment.

“I’m very good at talking and I couldn’t wait to jump on LIVE. But I had no idea about the gifting and rewards element. It was then that I realised this could be more than just a bit of fun. I could create a career out of this.”

After successfully growing her own presence on the platform, Hannah launched HeyHoney, a Creator Network designed to help other creators succeed through content advice, technical support and training.

“That level of opportunity is what attracted me to TikTok LIVE in the first place, you can build something from scratch, create your own community and turn it into a real business.”

Today, HeyHoney supports over 2000 creators and has become the most successful and fastest-growing TikTok Creator Network in Europe.

Backing British Business

Despite being a relatively new platform, TikTok has already been readily adopted by British businesses, with our survey showing high levels of use, rising planned investment and strong satisfaction with its role in driving business growth.

39%

of UK businesses use TikTok as part of their marketing strategy.

84%

of UK businesses using TikTok say it has helped them increase their sales and revenue.

British businesses see the benefits when they use TikTok. When we asked about their future plans, just under three quarters of businesses using TikTok (72%) said they planned to increase their use of the platform — more than for any other major social media platform.

This growth is underpinned by effective business tools built into the platform with most businesses using TikTok's functions, from TikTok's ads manager and TikTok Shop's seller tools to TikTok One that connects businesses with content creators.

"A lot of what we sell has a story behind it - if we get hold of a rare football shirt, we can post a quick video about a match or classic away kit explaining why it's special and get it in front of thousands of fans who care a lot about that club or era. We've had shirts that might have sat on a shelf for weeks sell within days after being featured on TikTok. It's become one of our most effective ways of driving sales."

Male, 30s, Shop-owner

Paid Advertising & Creator Partnerships

Many UK businesses use paid advertising on TikTok to promote their products to targeted audiences through formats such as in-feed ads, branded content and promoted videos. This helps businesses amplify their reach to an interested audience. Our analysis estimates that:



Businesses also increasingly collaborate with TikTok creators through sponsored content, reviews and brand partnerships further growing their reach and engagement:



These partnerships allow companies to market their products through trusted voices who already have engaged audiences or are part of wider communities.

Appearing in their own content is the most common way UK businesses engage creators

How have you engaged creators?



PUBLIC FIRST SURVEY OF UK BUSINESSES, 2026

Selling Directly Through TikTok Shop

UK businesses also sell products directly through TikTok Shop, allowing users to purchase items that they discover within the app. For the vast majority of businesses, this seamless integration between discovery and shopping translates into growth

More than 1 in 4

UK businesses on TikTok (29%) have launched new products on TikTok in the last year.

9 in 10

businesses using TikTok (90%) say that it gave them access to customers they could not reach through physical retail.

91%

of businesses using TikTok Shop reported that TikTok Shop has increased their sales and revenue.

90%

of businesses using TikTok Shop agreed that it has given them better information about consumer spending habits and trends, allowing them to plan their business strategy better.

TikTok LIVE also plays a role here, with businesses using live shopping sessions to launch products, demonstrate them in real time and gauge demand instantly, helping them refine what they sell and scale successful products more quickly.

Over a third of UK businesses on TikTok are using TikTok Shop's seller tools or TikTok Shop Academy training modules to improve their marketing, with many reporting positive returns from the platform:

Creating Content That Drives Sales, at Home and Abroad

72%

of UK businesses state that the platform helps them reach new customers.

39% of UK businesses use TikTok to showcase their products and services through short-form videos, including demonstrations, tutorials and behind-the-scenes content. This enables businesses to authentically express their brand and build stronger, more trusted connections with customers.

TikTok's discovery channel then surfaces content to consumers based on their interests and location, helping businesses to build brand awareness and generate demand beyond their existing customer base, with significant effect:

£1.1bn

TikTok-driven exposure to British brands helped to drive awareness overseas, ultimately supporting export growth, contributing to an estimated £1.1 billion in exports in 2025.

This impact extends beyond the UK. TikTok exposes British businesses to a global audience, while TikTok shops reduce barriers to exporting, meaning many more businesses can become international exporters. 94% of businesses who use TikTok said that TikTok Shop had made it easier to sell their products overseas, with even more positive results for the smallest UK businesses. This ability to convert interest into international sales, we estimate, has driven significant economic returns:

Indirect Exposure

Even businesses that don't directly use TikTok benefit from exposure. Content shared on TikTok often features products, services or locations, inadvertently increasing exposure for these businesses. This then translates into store visits and purchases, enabling businesses to increase sales without having to actively engage on the platform.

82%

of businesses who experienced a viral moment on TikTok said it had as positive of an effect than what they would expect from being featured on TV or receiving a celebrity endorsement.

Viral videos on TikTok, including those created by everyday users, particularly drive visibility and demand for featured businesses, which has real impact on their business and the wider economy.

This effect is especially pronounced for independent retailers: **we estimate that 4.3 million people have visited a local independent shop after discovering it on TikTok.**

This points to the growth opportunity that TikTok is enabling. As businesses see tangible results, they are investing more to scale their activity:

28%

of businesses using TikTok have hired someone to support the use of TikTok or as a result of additional business driven by TikTok.

72%

of businesses using TikTok expect their usage of TikTok to increase in the next few years.

CASE STUDY

Henry Healy's Café

Adam Gill · Owner

Adam Gill took over running Henry Healy's café in Glasgow in April 2025. By July, the café had become a TikTok phenomenon and has since grown into a thriving business.

Before Adam took over, the café had struggled following the pandemic. It was a small, traditional café that he described as **"just your daily breakfasts and lunches, no fanciness,"** catering mainly to workmen and local regulars. The café has been running in one form or another for over 100 years.

Adam was keen to revive the business by improving its social media presence. Though he found it difficult, commenting that posting on social media did not feel natural to him.

The turning point came when a TikTok creator visited his café and featured it in a "day in the life" video. The content captured a natural and light-hearted interaction with Adam and gained hundreds of thousands of views. As Adam explained, **"it kind of spiralled from there... it was really lucky by chance. It was all through her."**

Shortly afterwards, the café saw a surge in customers. Adam had to urgently purchase two additional fryers to keep up with orders, despite not even having the funds at the time! Customers began travelling from across the UK especially to visit. TikTok also helped draw in international visitors, with Adam and the team serving Australian tourists who had discovered the café online.

In the following months, the business continued to see sustained growth in both customer numbers and repeat visits. Alongside the initial viral moment there have been other repeat moments of viral interest allowing Adam to build savings for the business. As Adam noted, **"we've got a lot more regulars now."**

While Adam still posts only occasionally, he highlights the impact of organic TikTok content: authentic, everyday videos on TikTok can translate directly into additional customers and revenue.



TikTok's Impact Across the British Economy

TikTok generates economic impact across a wide range of sectors in the UK economy. While businesses and creators from many industries use the platform, its influence is particularly visible in sectors where discovery, cultural trends and consumer engagement are central, including the creative industries, fashion & beauty, travel, and consumer goods.

These sectors are already major contributors to the UK economy, supporting millions of jobs and significant consumer spending across the UK.

Platforms like TikTok which shape how consumers discover products, brands and experiences can therefore play an important role in driving activity across these industries.

Culture & Creative Industries

The creative industries are a central pillar of the UK's economy and cultural identity, contributing over £120 billion in GVA in 2023 and supporting more than 2.4 million jobs. By bringing creators, businesses and audiences together on a single platform, TikTok helps drive growth across the UK's creative industries while also supporting the expansion of the country's creator economy. Public First estimates that:

£910mn

TikTok's creative economy - from content creators, to influencers and production services - supported £890 million of value-add in 2025, to the UK creative industries. This is equivalent to 21 additional feature films, including major Hollywood movies being produced in the UK.

TikTok and the UK's Creator Economy

Public First surveyed **336** UK TikTok creators from TikTok's Creator Community. The results show how TikTok is helping creators build livelihoods, professionalise their skills and access opportunities that may not have been available through traditional routes.

Three quarters of the creators we surveyed said TikTok has had a positive impact on their life and prospects.

One in five (20%) had achieved enough success to hire or commission someone else to help with their content, creating new employment opportunities. Video editors, videographers or personal assistants were the most common roles sought by TikTok's creators.

TikTok is also helping creators build creative skills. **95% said creating content had helped them develop or improve skills such as editing, videography and collaboration with other creators.**

The platform is also widening access to careers in the creative industries. **77% of creators agreed that TikTok gives people who might not have had opportunities through traditional pathways — such as TV, journalism or politics — a way to speak out and share their ideas.**

TikTok operates differently from traditional media channels. Cultural and creative content is surfaced through a wider pool of creators and shared across networks. For TikTok users, this means that the platform makes it easier to find content that aligns with their own specific interests. We find that:

42%

of TikTok users say they have discovered a new book, film or artist through the platform.

35%

of young readers cite TikTok as their main source for book recommendations.

Almost a third of UK TikTok users have added a song to a playlist after hearing it on TikTok

Actions UK TikTok users have taken after discovering cultural media — music, film, books, sport and hobbies — on the platform.



PUBLIC FIRST SURVEY OF UK ADULTS, 2026

From Audience to Participant

TikTok provides a platform for aspiring creatives by enabling them to share their work, reach new audiences and build a profile. Over 1 in 10 (11%) of TikTok users say they post about their art, photography, or other creative projects.

For many, TikTok lowers the barriers to getting started. Users can experiment with ideas, create content and find an audience using tools built directly into the platform, without needing expensive equipment or professional expertise.

This accessibility is particularly important for early-stage creatives, who can test ideas, build an audience and refine their work without needing formal backing.

CASE STUDY

Adam Thom

Musician · Aberdeen

Adam Thom is an emerging country folk artist from Aberdeen who blends traditional influences with a modern edge, and is steadily building a following through TikTok.

For Adam, having a social media presence is a central part of being a creative. He shares a mix of content, from informal videos filmed on his phone in his room to more polished clips produced with collaborators, cutting these into short videos that act as “tasters” for his music. He explained that TikTok allows him to show people who he is and what he is doing, on his own terms.

“What I really like is that you get to choose how you present yourself to the world. No one is telling you how you have to do it, you can just take out your phone and film.”

TikTok has also expanded his reach beyond the UK:

“I’m reaching audiences in places like Sweden and Denmark, where I’ve never really played solo before.”

“It’s amazing being able to connect with people all over the world. I’ll also get other users tagging me or using my audio, so I’m not only reaching new audiences myself, but they’re able to share my work with their own audiences too.”

For Adam, this demonstrates TikTok’s significance for the wider music industry. He has seen how a single video can transform a career, with friends gaining record deals and international tours after going viral. In this way, he reflects that TikTok is helping to open up new, accessible pathways into the music industry.

Creative businesses also benefit from TikTok. By providing a space to showcase and commercialise their work, media companies, musicians, publishers and small brands can promote content through their own posts, paid advertising and creator collaborations. Many are also able to convert this engagement into revenue, using features such as TikTok LIVE to busk virtually and TikTok Shop to sell products directly within the platform.

Moreover, TikTok acts as a pipeline for talent discovery. Creative businesses can identify and connect with emerging creators who have already built engaged audiences, creating new opportunities for partnerships, recruitment and collaboration across the creative industries. TikTok LIVE strengthens this further by giving creators a space to showcase their personality, skills and ability to engage audiences in real time, making it easier for businesses to spot and work with talent that resonates.

CASE STUDY

Michael McGovern

Musician · Glasgow

Michael McGovern is a folk singer who recently gained widespread popularity after Paul Mescal mentioned that he was listening to Michael's song, Evelyn. The video was widely shared on TikTok, and Michael has seen his popularity grow ever since.

Growing up, Michael spent much of his time making music with friends, playing guitar and singing, before becoming part of the live music scene. It was during lockdown that he decided to take music more seriously, marking a turning point in his career.

Today, TikTok plays an important role in his creative process. He uses the platform regularly and describes making TikTok content as a creative exercise in itself. For Michael, TikTok has been most helpful in overcoming a key challenge for folk artists: reaching younger audiences. While the genre is open to everyone, he notes that younger listeners can be harder to engage. However, after one of his videos went viral on TikTok, his audience demographic has shifted considerably. He explained:

"My listener age group went from being like 50+ to firmly 24-35 since March last year when I had a video that went semi viral on TikTok. I'd only used it a little bit before, and from there, it was young people who found me."

This has translated into rapid growth, with Michael stating that he is now playing multiple nights of sold-out shows.

"I'm definitely going to keep posting and using TikTok... I just know that kind of engagement really helps."

TikTok and the UK's Media & Entertainment Industry

Media and entertainment are some of the UK's strongest cultural exports, with British music, television and sport reaching audiences around the world – helping drive tourism and the nation's global cultural influence. TikTok is playing an increasingly important role in this ecosystem, changing not just what people watch, but how they discover, experience and engage with entertainment.

For users, big moments don't begin and end with a broadcast. In the run-up, people share predictions and speculation. As things happen, reactions surface almost instantly and afterwards, clips and highlights keep circulating, with people revisiting and reinterpreting what they've just seen.

TikTok and the UK's Music Industry

TikTok is reshaping the UK's music industry by driving music discovery, amplifying awareness, building audiences and creating new revenue opportunities. Our analysis estimates that:

TikTok-driven streams and exposure could generate £430 million in additional royalties from streaming, ticket sales and merchandise purchases for British artists in 2025, with particularly strong benefits for emerging artists discovered through viral content.

This impact is underpinned by the platform's integration with the wider music ecosystem. TikTok operates under licensing agreements with major record labels, publishers and distributors, allowing copyrighted music to be used within its sound library. When songs are used in videos, this contributes to royalty payments for rights holders through established licensing systems.

For users, TikTok is a key destination for finding new music, spotlighting relevant artists and tracks based on the user's tastes. Our research finds that **nearly half (46%) of young adults on TikTok state that TikTok is their main source of music discovery**. As users create and share videos using the same audio, tagging artists and other creators, tracks can gain widespread traction. Crucially, this exposure translates into streams and purchases. As TikTok is integrated with streaming platforms such as Spotify, **30% of TikTok users reported adding a track they discovered on TikTok to their personal playlists**, helping boost long-term streams for artists.

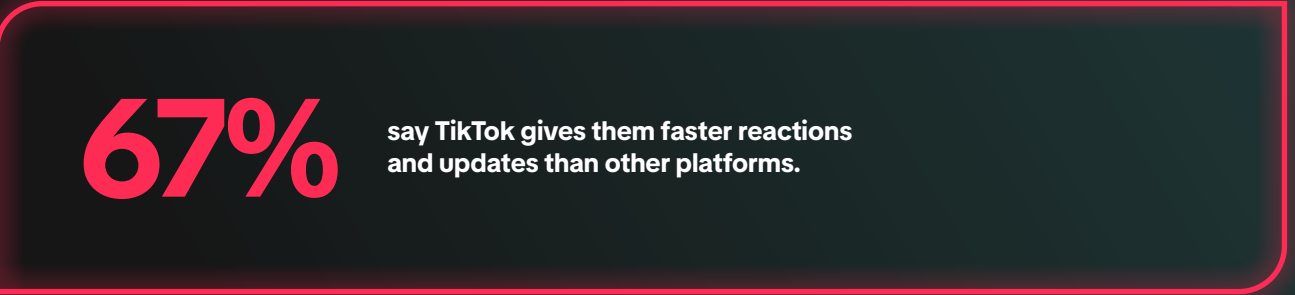


Live Events, Sport and Television

Instead of just tuning into a fixed schedule, TikTok users increasingly experience live events alongside reactions and commentary shared by fans, creators and communities as moments unfold. Among those who follow live events on TikTok:



What stands out is a sense of shared participation. Whether it is a goal, a plot twist or a standout performance, users follow not just what happened, but how people respond to it.



This is particularly clear in sport. Clips and fan reactions continue long after the final whistle, while creators bring audiences into the atmosphere around matches through TikTok LIVE and matchday content.

69%

of football fans say TikTok helps them follow and react to the game in real time.

Conversations that begin online often continue offline between friends, supporters and local communities gathering around shared interests. TikTok amplifies the impact of sports clubs and live events as social spaces where people can connect with others and feel part of something bigger.

This is also broadening who participates in sports culture. **Among women, 71% say TikTok makes major events more engaging, while 66% say it helps them feel part of the conversation.** In practice, this is helping create space for audiences and creators who have historically been less visible in sports media, bringing a wider range of voices into the conversation. Greater visibility of female creators and supporters can, in turn, encourage more women and girls to engage with sport itself — whether by attending matches, joining communities or taking part directly.

CASE STUDY

Yegi

Football creator · Footy Corner on TikTok LIVE

Yegi began posting football content on TikTok around four years ago, initially sharing clips from Chelsea matchdays and conversations around the sport as a hobby. As her audience grew, she became more consistent with her content and now hosts Footy Corner on TikTok LIVE, a weekly discussion show featured on TikTok's main LIVE page.

Having attended almost 100 matches since 2021, Yegi uses TikTok LIVE and matchday content to bring audiences into the atmosphere of the stadium in real time. What began as small streams shared with a handful of viewers has grown into a wider community of fans following games together, even when they cannot attend in person.

“I go to matches by myself quite a lot, but because of TikTok I never really feel alone there anymore. People I first met through football TikToks have become real-life friends, and now we’ll meet up before games or see each other in the stadium.”

Through TikTok, Yegi has built an audience of more than 100,000 followers and her content has led to opportunities linked to Sky Sports fan programming and football media. For Yegi, however, the most important part of creating content is encouraging more women to feel comfortable participating in football culture.

“There are probably loads of girls who love football but feel nervous about talking about it or going to games because they’re worried about being judged. If my content helps even one girl feel more confident getting involved, then that means everything to me.”

The effect is not limited to younger users. 59% of those aged 55–64 said TikTok helps them feel part of the conversation. TikTok users are not only watching, but contributing with 58% saying TikTok makes them more likely to share their own reactions.

2.2mn

We estimate that 2.2 million people have taken up a sport or exercise after seeing or hearing about it on TikTok — roughly equivalent to the population of the Liverpool city region.

The benefits extend beyond participation itself. Sport not only supports physical health, but also helps people build social connections and a stronger sense of community.

Gaming and Interactive Entertainment

Gaming and interactive entertainment is one of the UK's fastest-growing creative success stories. The sector generates an estimated £12 billion annually for the UK economy and supports more than 73,000 jobs across the country. As the industry continues to grow, TikTok is playing an increasingly important role in how people discover, engage with and build communities around games.

For many young adults, TikTok is now a key gateway into gaming culture and discovery. We find that:

Over 1 in 4

of 18–24 year olds (27%) say TikTok is their main source for discovering new games, and 25% say they rely on TikTok for gaming and esports information.

Rather than actively searching, users come across titles through creator content and short gameplay clips. This brings in a wider audience, including those who would not typically see themselves as gamers, and has helped resurface niche and retro titles alongside new releases.

TikTok also strengthens the link between players and content developers, with users sharing tips, reacting to updates and building conversations as games evolve.

As a result, TikTok functions less as a traditional marketing channel and more as a launchpad where games gain traction through the communities engaging with them.

Second-Screen Behaviour

TikTok is also becoming part of how people experience live entertainment together. It acts like a new kind of watercooler. A place where users can see reactions, share their own views and feel part of a wider conversation around the moments they are watching.

Large majorities of users say they have used TikTok while following live content, including:

31%

during a football match.

19%

during the launch of a new streaming show.

34%

during a music event.

21%

during an awards ceremony.

This creates a more connected experience. Users are not just checking what others think, they are finding more information, discovering creators, following communities and acting on the products, places or experiences linked to the moment.

Fashion & Beauty

TikTok is now one of the leading platforms for discovering fashion and beauty, shaping what people buy and how trends emerge. This is reflected not just in user behaviour, but in TikTok Shop's 60% year-on-year growth to become the UK's fourth largest beauty retailer.

For many of its users, TikTok is the go-to source for discovering fashion and beauty trends.

30%

of young adults in the UK say TikTok is their main source for beauty and fashion recommendations — equivalent to 1.8 million young adults.



A Symbiotic Relationship With Fashion

This matters particularly for the UK, where fashion and beauty are an important part of the country's economy, contributing more than £60 billion annually and giving the UK global recognition for its emerging creative talent.

TikTok provides a space for this talent to create, share and promote their ideas in real time. Creators use TikTok to showcase outfits, styles and ideas, while users encounter new brands and trends through their feed — helping drive demand and sales across the sector.

“When I see someone wearing something I like on TikTok, I usually favourite the post, check the comments, and then open Vinted.”

Female, 20s

TikTok not only reflects trends but actively shapes them. The platform was described by a fashion trends forecaster as having a “symbiotic relationship with fashion”. Trends now emerge and spread through TikTok, while designers increasingly think about how their work will appear on the platform and connect with its audiences — even when they are not directly active on it.

Creators are core to this ecosystem, sharing content such as styling videos, “get ready with me” routines, “outfits of the day”, make-up tutorials, and product reviews that shape consumer preferences and influence purchasing decisions: 21% of TikTok creators post about fashion, beauty and skincare.

At the same time, fashion and beauty brands use TikTok to showcase products and reach new audiences through their own content, paid advertising and creator collaborations. This allows businesses to present products in engaging, real-world contexts and respond quickly to emerging trends. Our research finds that:

80%

of fashion and beauty businesses say that being featured on TikTok would help them improve sales and revenue.



CASE STUDY

London Fashion Week

Immersive research · 150+ interviews

During London Fashion Week, we spoke to over 150 people across London, including retailers, aspiring designers, creators and the general public. We found that TikTok has made London Fashion Week and the wider fashion industry more accessible. Where fashion was once experienced mainly through magazines and traditional media, people can now follow creators who bring trends, events and behind-the-scenes moments to audiences in real time.

“TikTok makes fashion feel accessible in a way that older platforms didn’t ... it also makes Fashion Week feel more human, models and influencers feel real and not so untouchable.”

“The only way you used to have access to London Fashion Week was to pick up a magazine. But now, with creators attending shows, it’s opening the doors.”

A big part of that is how people come across fashion in the first place. Fashion discovery is becoming less about searching and more about being introduced to new brands, styles and ideas through content in your feed.

“TikTok is, especially on the For You Page, the place where you get exposed to new things ... you find inspiration and styles you weren’t looking for or where you can go shopping — here’s what this brand is doing etc.”

Creators sit at the centre of this.

“I follow a couple of creators who will pick out brands and review the garments that they’re sending down the runway. I feel like high fashion is a world unto itself, but now I’m able to tap in and learn about the trends.”

“I like seeing all the behind-the-scenes stuff. Usually it’s all so formal and curated, I like seeing what really happens, you get that on TikTok.”

On the Strand in Central London, we came across an 18-year-old creator who was filming her outfit on her phone.

“I’m actually on my way to Fashion Week... it’s just my dream to go. I would have never been invited if I didn’t have my following on TikTok.”

Travel & Tourism

TikTok is fuelling travel across the UK. By spotlighting destinations through engaging content and the discovery channel, TikTok is inspiring people to explore new places and attractions.

2.3mn

additional visits to towns, cities, and attractions across the UK in 2025 influenced by TikTok, fuelling domestic tourism.

24%

of TikTok creators post travel related content — often referred to as “TravelTok”.



Putting Places on the Map

‘TravelTok’ content allows users to explore places through a visual and personal lens, making destinations more accessible and appealing. As creators highlight hidden gems, local businesses and lesser-known locations, they help to diversify tourism demand — bringing exposure and footfall to places that may previously have been overlooked.

In some cases, this is helping to revitalise local areas, as increased visibility translates into more visitors, spending and activity for independent businesses and communities outside traditional tourist hotspots.



CASE STUDY

Live the Dash

Jade & Ryan · Travel creators

Live the Dash are travel and sports content creators who share budget-friendly travel experiences and content from destinations and sporting events around the world. They began creating TikTok videos alongside corporate jobs in London before eventually growing their audience enough to become full-time creators.

“TikTok is such a fast-moving platform — we can have an idea for a video, create it and quickly get it in front of people. Travel being so visual helps too, and if somewhere catches your eye on your For You Page, you can end up discovering places you’d never have actively searched for otherwise.”

TikTok can generate real commercial impact for tourism businesses of all sizes — from major travel brands to small independent operators.

“Last year we stayed at a small pop-up campsite for Silverstone, and the TikTok videos performed really well. A few months later they messaged us to say they’d doubled the capacity of the site this year and still sold out, which was really cool — helping put a place on the map like that.”

Jade and Ryan also highlighted how travel content on TikTok often reaches audiences far beyond the platform itself, increasing visibility for destinations and local businesses even further.

“We’ve found that our content often gets picked up by traditional press. Viral TikTok videos can end up being featured by local or even national newspapers, so TikTok becomes the original source of content that then gets distributed much more widely.”

As a result, users increasingly rely on the platform to find recommendations, plan trips and explore new destinations. Our research found that:

6mn

people have visited a local café or restaurant as a result of seeing it on TikTok.

Around 1 in 5

TikTok users (17%) explored a new area in their own city after seeing it featured on TikTok.

The platform also helps people discover and evaluate destinations through reviews and recommendations shared by other users. Content creators share first-hand experiences through video, allowing others to see venues, food and experiences in context, driving additional spending and visits.

In some cases, the creator themselves becomes part of the attraction. Businesses and individuals who build a following on TikTok can draw visitors in their own right, with people travelling to visit a specific shop, venue or creator they have seen online.

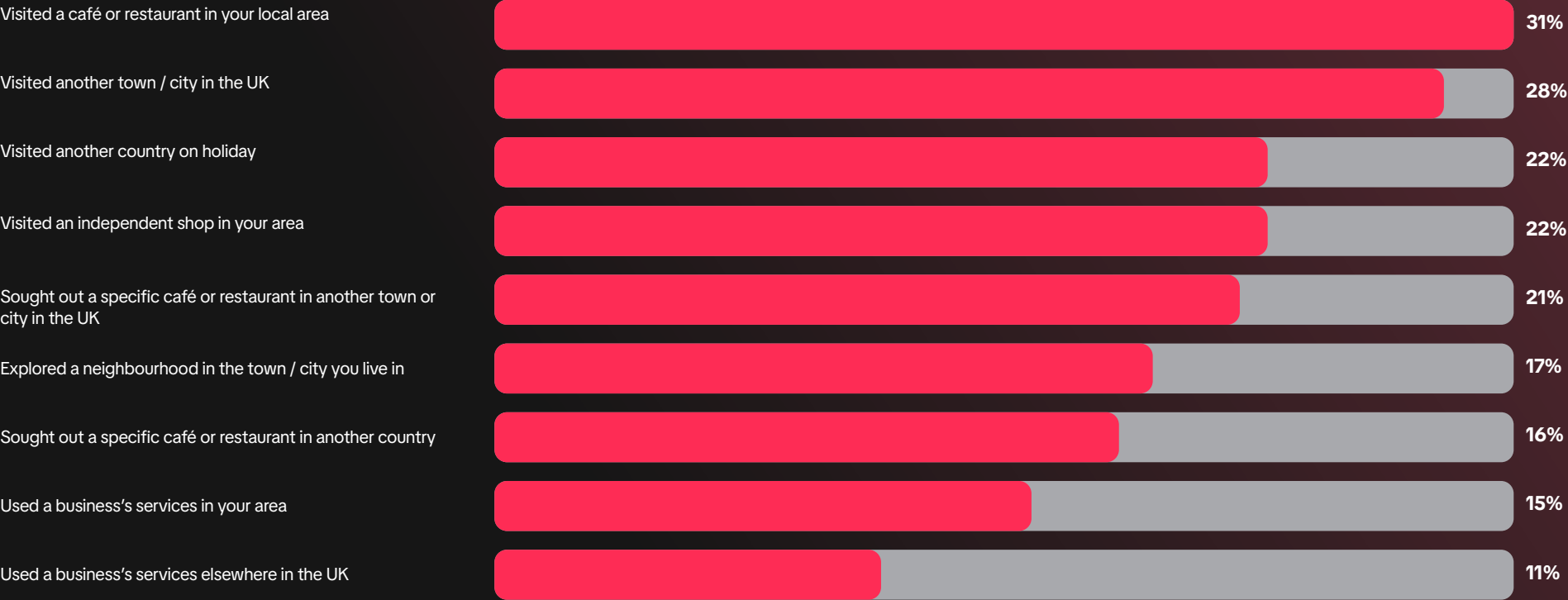
For many, particularly younger audiences, the platform is becoming a primary tool for discovering where to go, often complementing traditional search engines.

“If I want to go out for something to eat, I’ll always go on TikTok. You can actually see what people are eating, and I trust the visuals more than other types of reviews.”

Female, 20s

1 in 3 UK TikTok users have visited a local café or restaurant after seeing it on TikTok

Actions Taken by TikTok Users After Engagement.



PUBLIC FIRST SURVEY OF UK ADULTS, 2026



CASE STUDY

Burns Night, Glasgow

Immersive research · 100+ interviews

Over Burns Night weekend in Glasgow, we spoke to more than 100 people about how they were navigating the city, from ceilidhs to bars, restaurants and late-night venues. For many, TikTok was part of how they worked out what to do, surfacing experiences that felt most relevant to them.

People described coming into the weekend with a personalised shortlist, built from content they had saved or seen repeatedly on TikTok, and then using that to guide them around the city.

"I was looking for somewhere to eat on the train up and kept seeing the same place come up on TikTok, so we just went for it — and it was packed with people heading to the same gig as us. It felt like it got us spot on."

"We've just moved over from Northern Ireland, so everything is still pretty new. TikTok's sped up the process of getting a feel for the city and finding our kind of places ... Burns Night is something you hear of, but this is our first one living in Scotland and seeing content about that got us excited to be in a new place."

This is particularly valuable during a cultural moment like Burns Night, where the number of events and venues can make it difficult to know where to go. Seeing places in video — the atmosphere, the crowd, the music — helped people decide more quickly and with greater confidence.

"Seeing friends having a good time at events becomes so much more real when you see it on clips rather than photos, so I know I've gone to stuff because I've seen people having a blast [on TikTok]."

For businesses, this translated into demand that was hard to ignore. From the Barras to the West End, content from customers and local creators could quickly bring in new audiences — often without any formal marketing.

"We did an event with 400 people and it sold out purely through TikTok. A lot of customers come in and say they've seen us on TikTok or follow us there."

"Some people come in and just say 'can I get it the exact way that we've seen on TikTok, just the way the girl has it?' It's brilliant ... it's all new faces."

Consumer Goods

TikTok is becoming a core platform for consumer goods discovery and retail — spanning food and drink, homeware, electronics and everyday items. It allows businesses to promote and sell products through content, paid advertising and creator partnerships, as well as directly through TikTok Shop.



From Feed to Purchase

For consumers, this has changed how products are found, compared and bought which has added significant new competition to the UK's e-commerce market. Rather than relying on traditional advertising alone, people increasingly discover products through reviews, unboxings, "TikTok made me try it" videos and everyday demonstrations that show how products perform in real life.

Nearly 3 in 5

UK consumers (58%) report that they have bought something after seeing it on TikTok.

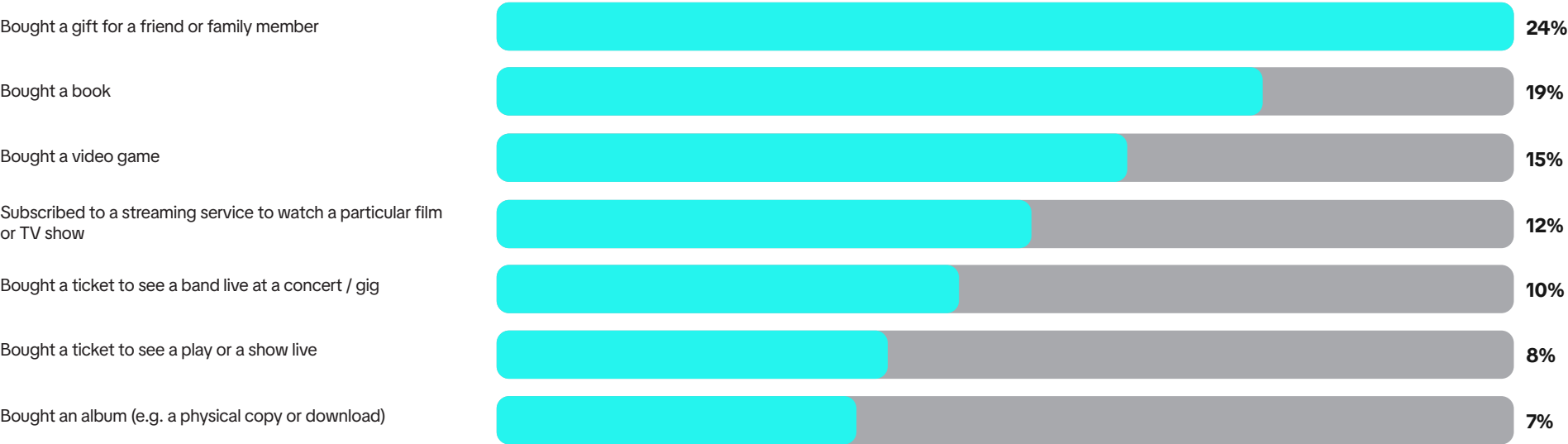
Almost 1 in 4

UK consumers (24%) state that seeing product reviews on TikTok makes them feel more confident about buying a product.

TikTok LIVE enables a further level of interaction, helping users understand products in more depth and control how they are demonstrated through comments. Such interactivity often increases average spend per user, and drives interest in complementary items. These patterns are reflected in the actions users take after engaging with content on TikTok:

Almost 1 in 4 UK users have bought a gift after seeing it on TikTok

Purchases UK TikTok users have made after seeing something on the platform.



PUBLIC FIRST SURVEY OF UK ADULTS, 2026

TikTok is also helping businesses reach new markets. TikTok Shop allows businesses to sell products directly at the point of discovery, shortening the path from awareness to purchase. This enables businesses, particularly SMEs and emerging brands, to access customers at scale without relying on traditional retail channels. We find that:

74%

of UK consumer goods businesses that use TikTok reported increased sales and revenue.

Creating New Ways to Learn

TikTok is playing a growing role in how people learn, build skills and develop new interests. In an economy that depends on adaptability and lifelong learning, this matters. The platform is creating new opportunities for people to access information, develop capabilities and explore subjects that complement formal education and professional development.

18mn

hours of learning-based content watched each week — equivalent to reading the Encyclopaedia Britannica cover-to-cover nearly 5,850 times over.

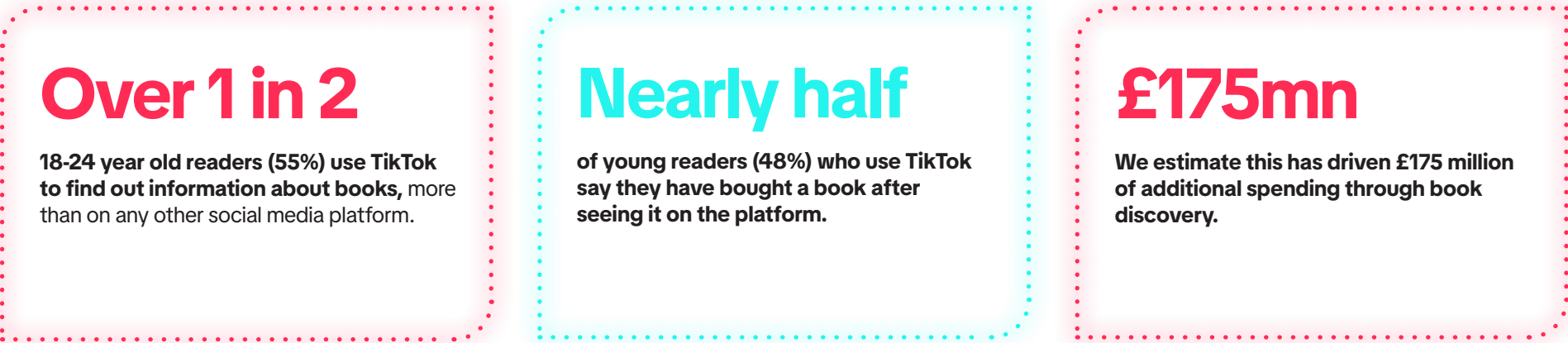
Importantly, people are inspired to take this learning offline.

1.2mn

Across the UK, an estimated 1.2 million people have taken up a hobby or joined a club after seeing TikTok content.

Rediscovering Reading

Globally, #BookTok has become a major community, with nearly 53 million posts across the platform. That matters because TikTok is not just giving people somewhere to talk about books. It helps make reading more visible, more social and easier to discover. The same dynamic is visible in the UK, where communities such as BookTok are helping renew interest in reading, especially among younger audiences.



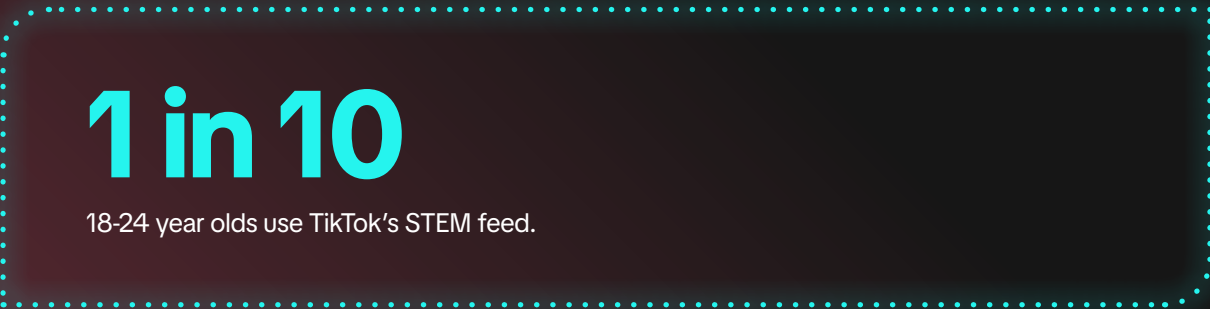
STEM & Studying

TikTok is also becoming an important resource for study support and learning in the UK. From chemistry experiments set to viral sounds to bite-sized revision videos, the platform presents educational content in accessible formats that make it easier to discover, understand and revisit.



TikTok’s impact is also reflected in the growth of the dedicated STEM feed, helping make science, technology, engineering and mathematics part of everyday digital experiences. The platform further supports this through partnerships and creators focused on exam preparation, science communication and educational outreach.

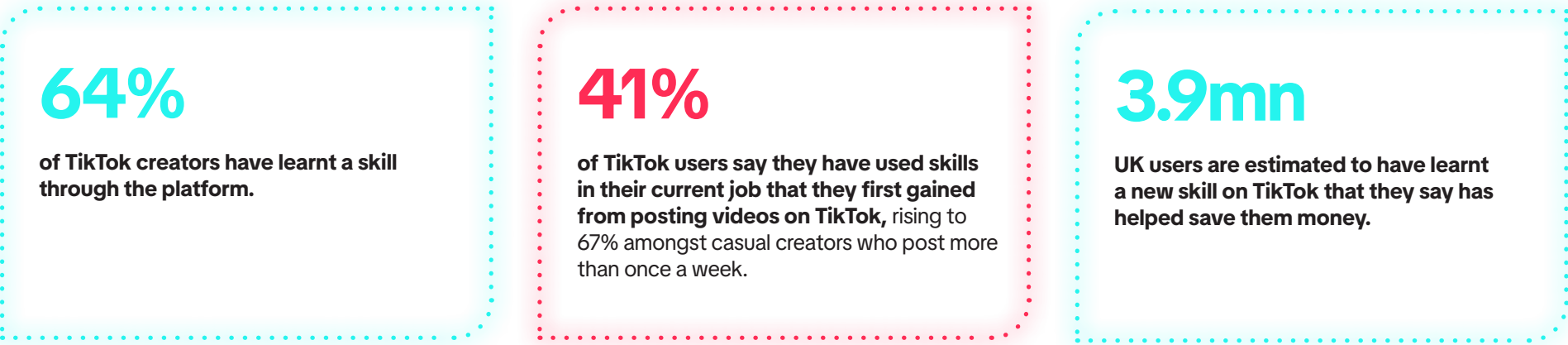
This includes TikTok’s partnership with UK skills charity Enginuity on the Girls Gone STEM channel, an initiative designed to widen the STEM talent pipeline and strengthen support networks for young people entering and progressing in STEM careers.



Learning New Practical Skills

Beyond education and study support, TikTok is enabling people to acquire practical knowledge with direct economic value. Users report applying what they learn to their careers, finances and everyday lives. From supporting career development to helping people save money, the platform is creating opportunities for learning that translate beyond the screen.

This impact is enabled by TikTok’s short-form video format, which makes practical knowledge easy to share and access, allowing learning to fit naturally into daily routines. For more in-depth skills development, TikTok LIVE enables creators to teach through real-time interaction, providing users with direct support, demonstrations and Q&A. Our research finds that:.



CASE STUDY

Phil Gamblin

Mortgage broker · Cardiff

Phil Gamblin is a self-employed mortgage broker based in Cardiff who began posting educational content on TikTok in 2022. Through short videos and TikTok LIVE sessions, he shares practical advice on mortgages, home buying and personal finance — topics he believes many people are not properly taught through formal education.

“People aren’t taught about mortgages at school. They’re taught the very basics of finance, but not the things that are actually useful in the real world.”

For Phil, TikTok offered a low-cost way to grow his business while making financial information more accessible. Instead of relying on expensive advertising, he used the platform to build an audience by answering questions and explaining complex topics in a simple, approachable way.

Traditionally, he says, mortgage advice could feel formal and intimidating.

“People used to think of mortgage advice as sitting in a stuffy office with someone in a suit using lots of jargon. TikTok completely changes that dynamic. People can learn in their own time, ask questions directly and get clear explanations in a much more relaxed environment.”

Phil found TikTok’s short-form format especially effective for educational content.

“I can explain something in a minute — people get the basics quickly, without having to watch a 20-minute video.”

“Usually you’d have to book an appointment to speak to a mortgage broker, but through LIVE people could ask questions instantly and get answers straight away.”

As his audience grew, so did his business. Today, Phil says around 80% of his business comes directly through TikTok, with customers reaching out from across the UK. The growth of the business has also allowed him to employ additional support, helping him manage rising demand generated through the platform.



The benefits of learning on TikTok are especially strong for creators. By actively producing content and growing an audience, creators develop a broad set of practical and professional capabilities that extend well beyond the platform itself.

95%

Among creators surveyed from TikTok's Creator Community, 95% said they had improved or developed a skill through using TikTok.

These capabilities are not confined to content creation. As creators build audiences and engage with communities, they develop expertise in areas such as video production, storytelling, branding, marketing and business management — transferable skills that are increasingly valuable across the creative industries and wider economy.

For many, these skills have direct professional relevance.

More than half

of TikTok's Creator Community (52%) said they use skills they first developed through creating content on TikTok in their current jobs.

By providing a space to experiment, learn from peers and respond to audience feedback in real time, TikTok helps creators build the practical experience, commercial awareness and confidence needed to turn creative interests into career opportunities.



Methodology

Economic Impact of TikTok

We derive TikTok's revenue from its filed turnover at Companies House, adjusting for the advertising share of turnover from its last disclosed revenue breakdown, and allocate this to the UK based on the UK's share of the digital advertising market across the entity's covered regions using IAB and eMarketer market-size data. We validate this against two independent methods: first, applying an estimate of TikTok's share of total social media ad spend in the UK; and second, benchmarking UK per-user ad revenue (ARPU) against observed US and global levels and applying it to the UK user base.

We apply a Return on Advertising Spend (ROAS) multiplier sourced from NielsenIQ to estimate the total business revenue generated from advertising on TikTok. We convert this business revenue into direct GVA using a revenue-to-GVA ratio weighted across advertiser-facing industries, and capture spillover (indirect and induced) effects using Type I and Type II GVA multipliers derived from the ONS input-output and supply-use tables, with the advertiser basket weighted by Eurostat data on social media marketing adoption by industry.

We then estimate the equivalent jobs supported using productivity denominators: direct jobs apply ONS output per job for advertiser-facing industries, weighted by each industry's ad-usage-adjusted turnover using Eurostat data, while indirect and induced jobs apply an economy-wide output-per-job denominator.

Economic Impact of TikTok on Exports

We use Public First business survey data to estimate the share of TikTok-attributed business revenue that is attributable to firms that agreed TikTok helped them sell abroad. We apply an adjustment for the share of revenue at these firms that is exports, using ONS business turnover and trade in goods data.



Economic impact of TikTok for SMEs

We use Public First business survey data to estimate the share of TikTok-attributed revenue accruing to small and medium enterprises in the UK, split by size of SME. To adjust for SME revenue being lower than larger firms, we use ONS turnover statistics by industry and business size, weighting using Eurostat sourced social media advertising adoption by industry. We convert SME business revenue into direct GVA using economy-wide revenue-to-GVA ratios, applying Type I estimate indirect GVA effects. Multipliers are drawn from ONS supply-use tables for, also using Eurostat sourced social media advertising adoption by industry.

Economic Impact of #BookTok

TikTok drives a measurable share of book buying decisions through influencer content and discovery channels. This is proxied using Nielsen / Circana Bookscan data on US print copy volumes tied to TikTok content, cross-validated against Public First's survey evidence showing a consistent proportion of readers citing TikTok as their primary discovery source. We take the total market size using NielsenIQ (NIQ) consumer data, and include revenue from digital streams by applying the Publishers Association digital-to-print revenue ratio to the NIQ print revenue estimate. The TikTok share is applied to the total consumer book market in the UK to estimate the value of book spending attributable to TikTok discovery.

Consumer Surplus from TikTok

Following the methodology of Brynjolfsson et al (2019), we use a "willingness to accept" framing to model the current default hypothetical consumers face. As part of our consumer poll, we asked participants a single discrete binary choice question of "Would you prefer to keep access to [product] or go without access to [product] for one month and get paid [price]" with the price offered randomised between set levels.

We regressed the results of the consumer poll to derive a demand curve and used this to calculate total consumer surplus per user. Finally, we scale by third-party estimates of Internet prevalence, self-reported usage levels from our polling, and world bank population estimates to calculate the benefits per online adult.

■ Economic Impact of TikTok’s Creative Ecosystem

We estimate TikTok’s contribution to two creative sectors – production & broadcasting and advertising – in the UK. For each sector, we estimate its total contribution to the economy using ONS data measuring sector level GVA. We then apply proxies for TikTok’s share of each sector’s GVA value. For the production & broadcasting sector, we use TikTok’s creator revenues as a share of total sector revenues, derived through TikTok’s total market revenue from the advertising model above, and apply a creator payout rate benchmarked to industry standards.

For advertising, we use TikTok’s share of the video-related digital advertising market using output from the advertising model above and estimates on market size from IAB. We apply the shares calculated to the GVA of each sector. We use IMF data to forecast the base-year direct GVA estimates to 2025.

■ TikTok and Marketing Jobs

Using Public First business survey data, we calculate the share of businesses that report employing a staff member whose primary role is managing the company’s TikTok account, split by employee size. We then scale by the official count of businesses of each size from ONS statistics to obtain figures for the UK.

■ Economic Impact of TikTok on the UK Music Industry

We baseline sizes for each revenue stream using IFPI data, cross-checked against national industry benchmarks. TikTok’s incremental impact is then estimated by comparing observed music spending with a counterfactual in which TikTok users spend at the same rate as non-users, using survey evidence from Luminate to increase the spending propensity of TikTok users on music-related purchases. We then use music chart data to estimate the share of total revenue that is attributable to domestic artists.

■ Economic Impact of TikTok on Tourism

Using Public First survey data, we derive the share of the population in the UK who report having visited another town or city after seeing it on TikTok. We apply the ratio of net-to-gross conversion rates of tourist visits from literature estimates of the effectiveness of marketing campaigns on tourism activity to estimate the share of reported visits that are truly incremental to TikTok content.

■ Potential Impact of Casual Creators

We use survey data from Klarna and research on influencer marketing to estimate the share of UK consumers that made a purchase due to casual creators, proxied by user-generated content. We combine this with ONS population data, average ecommerce transaction estimates, and conservatively assume only one purchase per person impacted. This is scaled by eMarketer’s forecast for eCommerce growth to 2030.

■ Economic Impact of Learning on TikTok

We use Public First survey data to obtain the share of adults in the UK who use TikTok for learning and their typical weekly viewing time. We apply these estimates to the adult population using ONS national statistics.

■ TikTok and Hobbies

We use Public First survey data to obtain the share of adults in the UK who have learned a new skill or joined a new club or hobby group as a result of TikTok. We apply these estimates to the official adult population to obtain a weekly total figure.

■ TikTok and Fashion

We use Public First survey data to obtain the share of 18-24 year olds in the UK who cite TikTok as a source for fashion trends. We apply these estimates to official population figures from ONS.

■ TikTok and Consumer Spending

We use Public First survey data on the number of purchases made by adults in the UK that they attribute to TikTok. We apply these estimates to the official adult population to obtain a weekly total figure.

■ TikTok and Organic Reach

We use Public First survey data to obtain the share of businesses by size that both report being positively featured in a viral TikTok video and that do not pay to advertise on TikTok. The latter restricts the estimate to organic, unpaid word-of-mouth exposure rather than paid promotional activity. We apply the share in each size band by the official count of employer businesses, using ONS business count data. We translate the affected business count in each size band into a workforce-equivalent figure using official average employees per business, split by size, from ONS data.

