

Having struggled in many countries, why is TikTok still popular in Vietnam?

After US President Donald Trump's 75-day executive order to delay the ban on TikTok, the social network's long-term future remains in question.

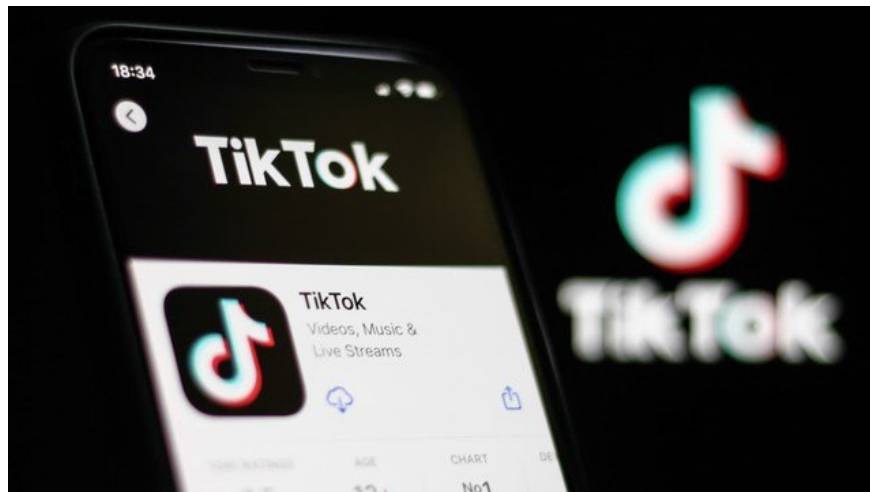
The order was signed by Trump shortly after his inauguration to delay the Foreign Adversary Controlled Apps Act, which was passed by the US Congress and signed into law by former President Joe Biden in April 2024. According to the law, TikTok must be banned in the US from January 19.

Restricted in many markets

The reason the US banned TikTok is related to user information security and the risk of manipulating content in a way that favors the views of the Chinese government through this platform.

However, President Donald Trump "rescued" the app in a post on the social network Truth Social on January 19, the same day TikTok received a "death sentence" in the US. "I want the US to own 50% of the shares in a joint venture. This way we save TikTok, keep it in good hands, and allow it to speak," Mr. Trump wrote.

Following Mr. Trump's announcement, TikTok restored service in the US.



TikTok application shows its attraction to young people in many countries

India - the world's most populous country, once TikTok's largest market with nearly 200 million TikTokers in 2020 - also suddenly issued a ban on TikTok and dozens of other apps, including messaging app WeChat. The reason is to protect national security and user privacy.

Similarly, several other markets such as Canada, Denmark, Belgium, New Zealand, France, the Netherlands, the UK and the European Parliament have banned the use of TikTok on official government-issued devices.

The Taliban in Afghanistan and Jordan have banned TikTok, saying the platform, which has more than 1 billion users, is incompatible with Islamic law. Indonesia and Pakistan have banned the app, citing inappropriate content, but the bans were lifted after the platform agreed to censor some content.

So the common reason why markets decide to block or restrict TikTok is national security concerns. Most ban its use on government employees' work devices, but it is still allowed on personal devices.

Quickly gain market share in Vietnam

TikTok first launched its international version in September 2016. In Vietnam, TikTok launched in April 2019. Although it was "born late", the platform quickly attracted a large number of users, especially young people, surpassing previously launched social networking platforms.

According to Q&Me's report, TikTok is currently the second most used social network after Facebook by Vietnamese people. The popularity of this platform will increase in 2024 due to the increasing demand for the TikTok Shop shopping feature from users. A report by the Ministry of Information and Communications shows that as of June 30, 2024, TikTok had 67 million monthly active users, surpassing YouTube with 63 million.

In a study conducted by Electronics Hub, Vietnam topped the list in Asia with an average of 128 TikTok videos viewed per day, followed by the Philippines with 127 TikTok videos. Vietnamese people spend an average of 2 hours and 24 minutes per day viewing content on this social network.

According to experts, TikTok has increasingly penetrated people's lives by providing short videos of 15-60 seconds, suitable for young people's habit of consuming fast content. At the same time, artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms are capable of "reading" users' preferences, thereby retaining and increasing market share quickly.

The director of a company specializing in digital advertising in Ho Chi Minh City said that if banned in a country with a huge number of users like the US, TikTok will move to other markets, such as Vietnam, by promoting the development of market share, features, content. This will make it impossible for domestic social networking platforms to compete.

Along with that, the risks related to cybersecurity, user data security. that other countries have pointed out for TikTok are also an early warning for Vietnam. According to experts, authorities need to require TikTok to strengthen the censorship of harmful content, ensure absolute information security, and make algorithms transparent for effective management.

"If TikTok does not control content better in the near future, it is likely that other markets will also have to ban it to ensure information security," the company's director predicted.

Retail expert Nguyen Quang Thai said that when TikTok was banned in the US, hundreds of KOLs, KOCs and online businesses in Vietnam were quite worried about the fate of TikTok in Vietnam, because this greatly affected their income. Partly because many sellers depend too much on this platform, instead of using multiple

platforms or developing their own websites to proactively approach customers.

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