



APP ANNIE

# Similar Apps Usage Trends

— 2021 —

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# Similar Apps Usage Report Overview

Similar apps usage, as defined in this report, refers to the practice of consumers using multiple apps for similar purposes. This practice is common in the mobile app ecosystem because it is easy for consumers to download and use many apps, which have comparable features, at little to no cost.

In this report, produced by App Annie and commissioned by Facebook, we examine mobile app usage behavior over the last two years to help understand the extent of similar apps usage among consumers and to understand how this has changed over time. The first half of the report focuses on global usage trends, while the second half dives deeper into similar apps usage (or cross-app usage) trends for specific app pairings<sup>(1)</sup> in the U.S. over the last two years.

## **We set out to answer the following key questions:**

- I. Is there evidence of similar apps usage in the mobile app ecosystem?
  - Does the average user install multiple apps on their phone and do they use many of these apps in a typical day or month?
  - In looking at apps with comparable features, do users of one app also use other similar apps?
- II. How have usage and engagement trends for mobile apps changed over the last two years, overall and for select cross-app pairings?
  - Do we see increased usage and engagement across the board for all mobile apps?
  - Is there evidence of increased similar apps usage?

<sup>(1)</sup> Apps included in this report do not define a particular market or category and do not signify a complete list of participants in any market or category.



# Key Takeaways

**Globally, mobile consumers are installing and actively using more apps now than they did two years ago.**

- In H2 2020, the average consumer had 110 apps installed on their phone, up from 87 apps in that same time period two years ago.
- The average consumer spent just under 4 hours per day (about ¼ of their waking hours) in apps in H2 2020, a 42% increase from the 2.6 hours spent in H2 2018.
- Consumers, on average, had 10 Communications apps installed on their phones in H2 2020 and spent 58 minutes per day in these apps.

**Users regularly switch between apps with similar features, and this trend is increasing over time in many cases.**

- 9 out of 10 Facebook app users also use YouTube, up from 8.5 users in Dec. 2019.
- 99% of TikTok users also use YouTube.
- Half of TikTok users also use Snapchat.
- With its rapid growth, TikTok has seen the highest growth in cross-app usage and engagement by other app users.
- Facebook app users who also use TikTok more than doubled from Dec. 2019 to Dec. 2020, and time spent by these users in TikTok increased 3x from 5 to 15 hours/month in the same time period.

**Many consumers switch between mobile apps daily in order to meet their sharing and entertainment needs.**

- 9 out of 10 Facebook Family of App (FoA)<sup>(1)</sup> users also use YouTube in a month and 7 of them use YouTube every day.
- 80% of people that use both FoA and Google Messages in a month also use them daily; the same is true for Snapchat as well.

<sup>(1)</sup> The Facebook Family of Apps are Facebook, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, and WhatsApp.

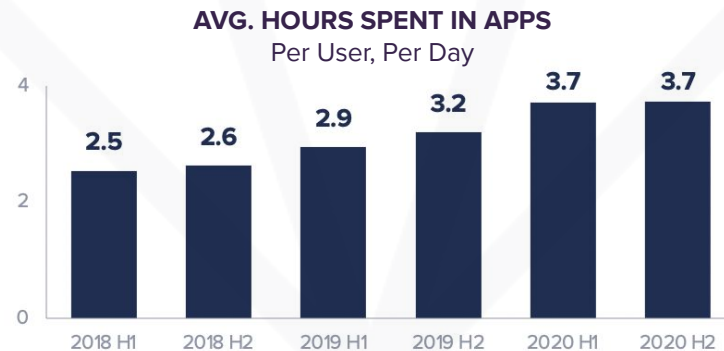
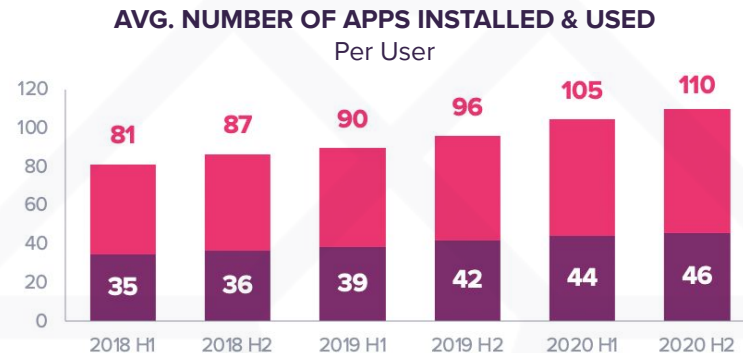
# Aggregate App Usage



## 2020 Mobile App Installs & Time Spent in Mobile Apps Reached New Highs

In the second half of 2020, the average consumer had 110 apps installed on their phone and used 46 apps per month. This is a significant rise from the same period two years ago, when users, on average, had 87 apps installed and used 36 of those apps.

In addition to using more apps, consumers are also spending more time in apps every year. In the second half of 2020, consumers spent a quarter of their waking hours in apps each day, a 42% growth from the second half of 2018.



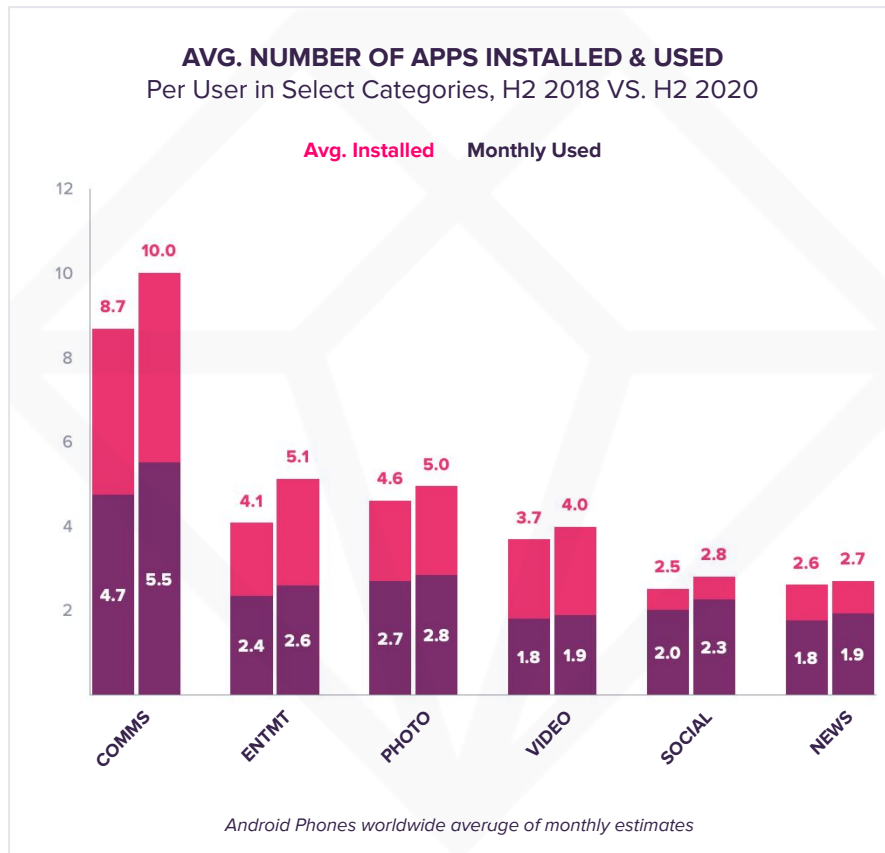
*Worldwide average, Android phones*



## Installs and Usage of Entertainment & Communications Apps Grew Considerably

Compared to two years ago, consumers now install and actively use more apps in multiple categories.

The number of apps used as well as the number of apps installed for each of the categories considered here have increased over the last two years, with Entertainment apps showing the highest growth in installs (24%) and Communications apps showing the highest growth in usage (17%).



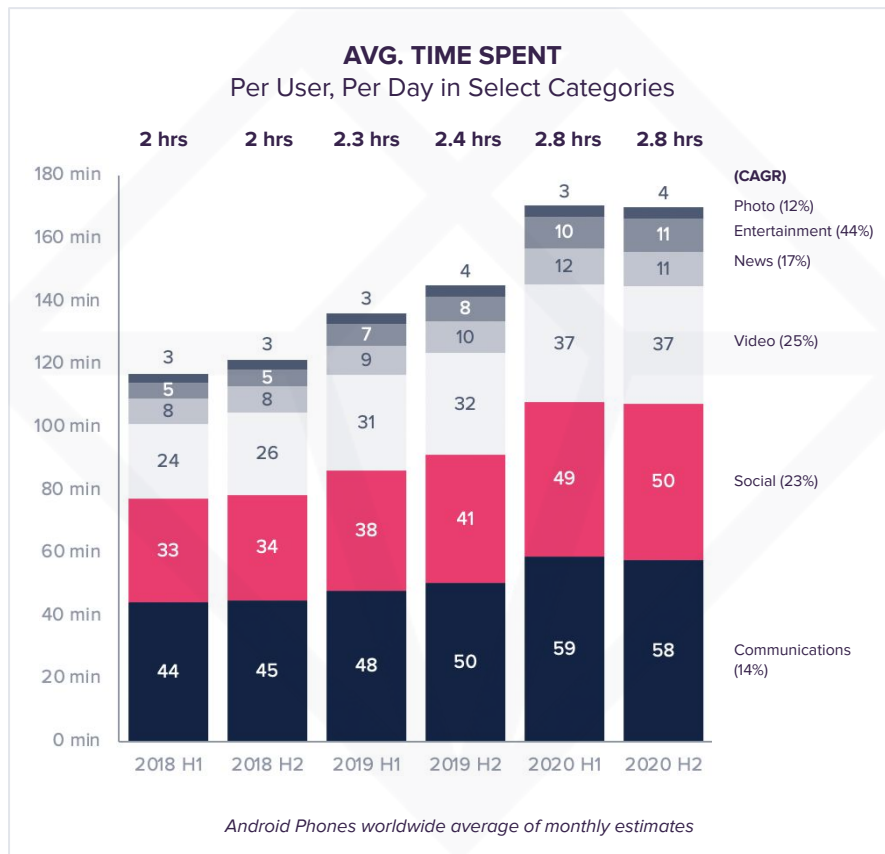


## Time Spent Across Categories Considered Increased 17% YoY

In 2020, users spent more time in apps across all categories considered than they did in previous years. Average daily time spent across these categories increased 40%, from 2 hours in H2 2018 to almost 3 hours in H2 2020.

Categories with the highest recent growth from H2 2019 to H2 2020 were Entertainment (+38%), Social (+22%), and Communications (+16%).

While the COVID-19 pandemic and associated stay-at-home restrictions contributed to the 22% year-over-year growth from H1 2019 to H1 2020, time spent in apps remained high even as restrictions eased in H2 2020.





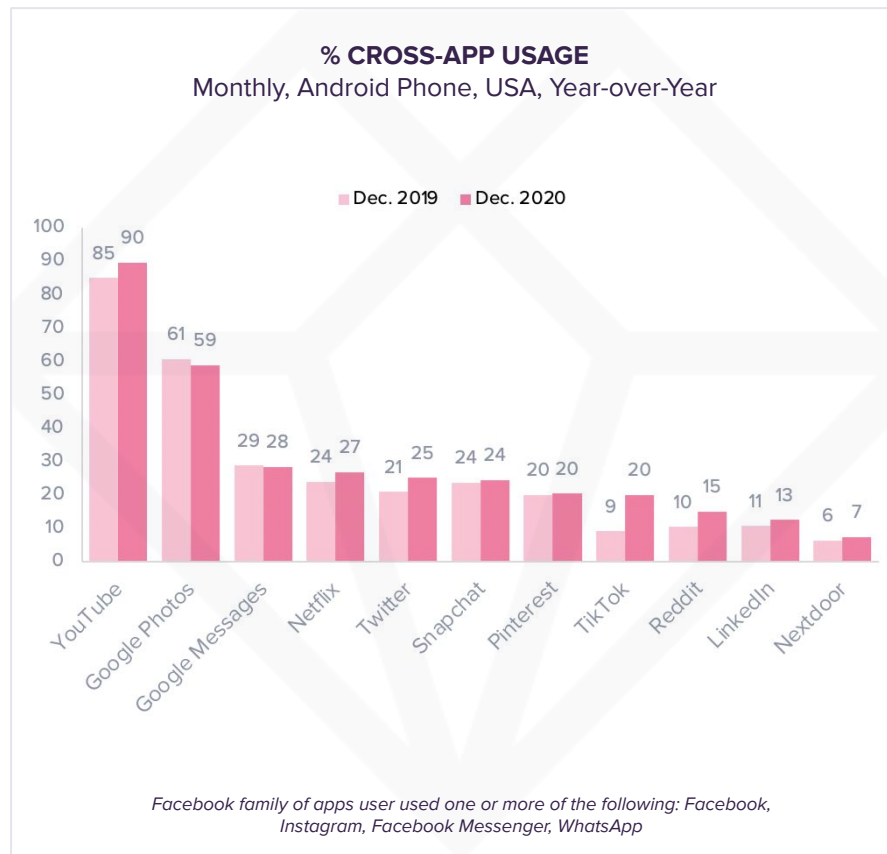


## Facebook Family of App Users Increasingly Use Other Similar Apps

The Facebook Family of Apps (FoA), consisting of Facebook, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, and WhatsApp was used to explore similar apps usage.

As consumers use multiple apps to fulfill similar mobile needs, we continue to see a significant share of FoA users also using other similar apps.

In December 2020, 9 out of 10 FoA users also used YouTube and 6 out of 10 also used Google Photos.



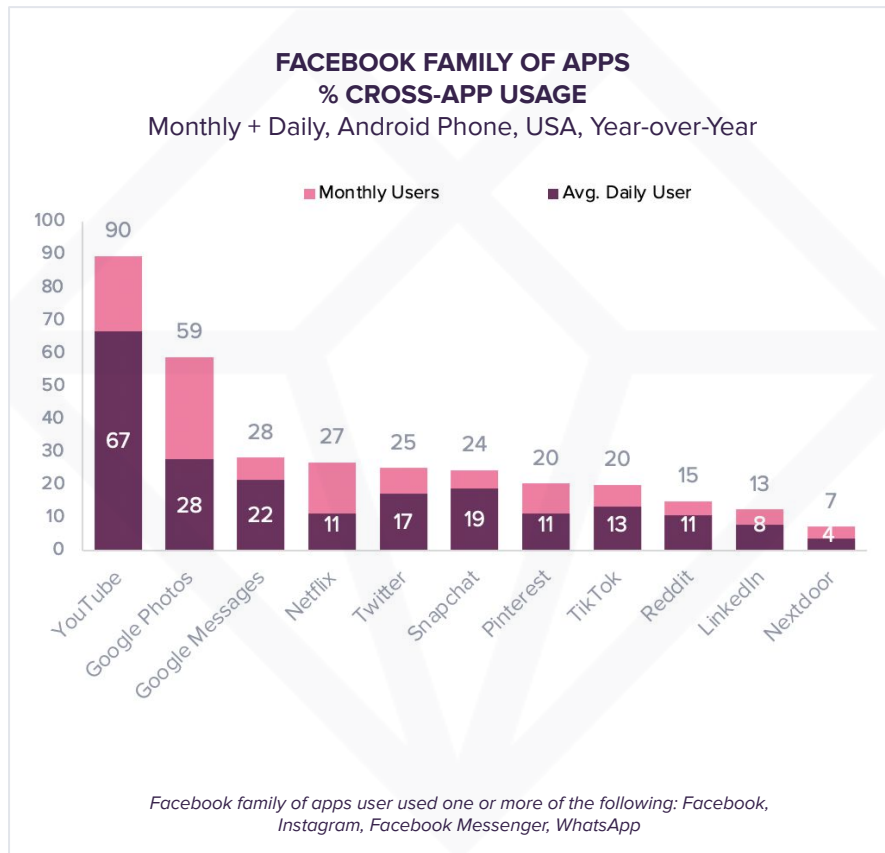


## Many Consumers Use Similar Apps Every Day

Consumers switch between similar apps every day to suit their mobile needs.

9 out of 10 Facebook Family of App users use YouTube in a month and 7 of them also use YouTube every day.

For almost all of the remaining apps considered, over 50% of the monthly cross-app users used both that app and a Facebook family app in the same day. For Snapchat and Google Messages, this number was close to 80%.



# App-Specific Insights



**89%**

of Facebook Android users use  
YouTube in the same month



**66%**

of YouTube Android users use  
Facebook in the same month

Users of both apps in the same month, spent on average

**36** mins / day 2020

**31** mins / day 2019

**37** mins / day 2020

**36** mins / day 2019

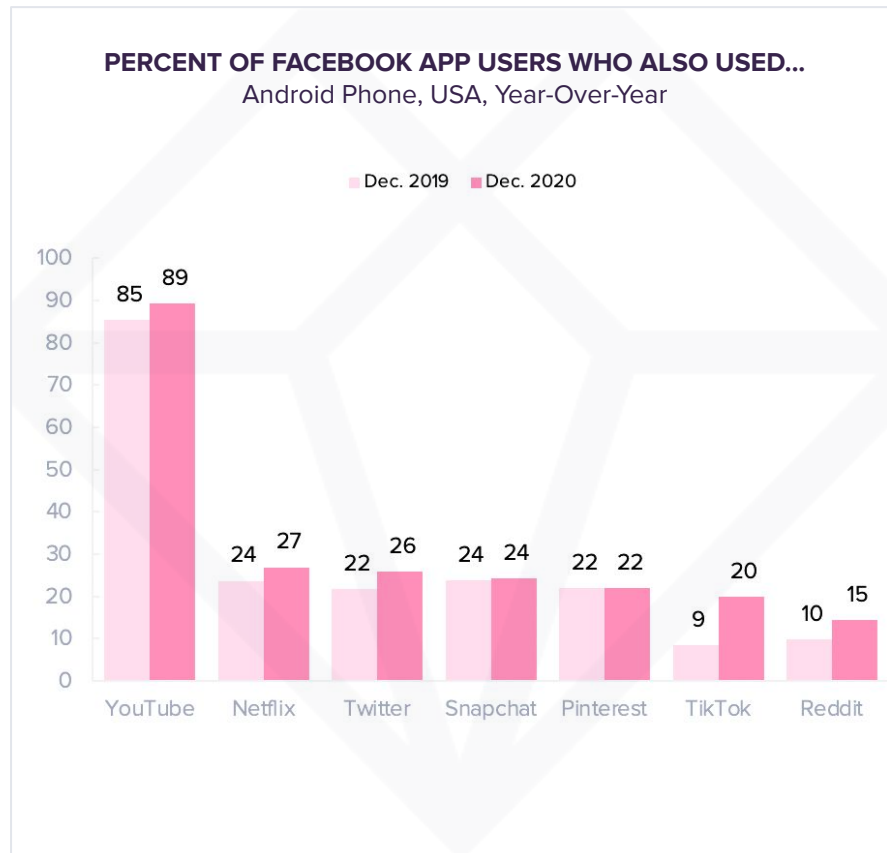
Combined time spent by users of both apps  
**increased by 6 mins / day**



## A Significant Portion of Facebook App Users Use Other Apps in the Same Month

9 out of 10 Facebook app users also use YouTube in a typical month. A quarter of Facebook app users also use Netflix, Twitter, and Snapchat.

TikTok's popularity and growth in 2020 contributed to a more than 100% increase in Facebook app users that also use TikTok.



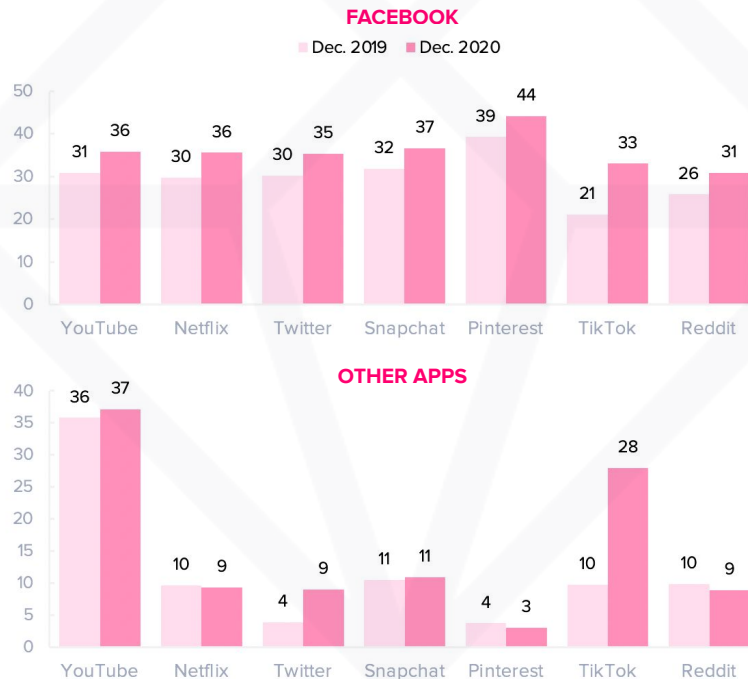


## Facebook Users Increased Time Spent in Facebook & in Other Similar Apps

Over the last year, Facebook app users who also use other apps have increased their time spent in both Facebook and in those other apps.

With TikTok's rapid rise in popularity, Facebook app users who also use other apps showed the fastest increase in time spent in the TikTok app. 2020 Time spent in TikTok by Facebook users increased to 3x of what it was in 2019.

**TIME SPENT BY CROSS APP USERS  
OF FACEBOOK + OTHER APPS**  
Avg. Min / Day / User, Android Phone, USA, Year-over-Year





**94%**

of Instagram Android users  
use YouTube in the same month



**42%**

of YouTube Android users use  
Instagram in the same month

Users of both apps in the same month, spent on average

**14** mins / day 2020

**12** mins / day 2019

**43** mins / day 2020

**43** mins / day 2019

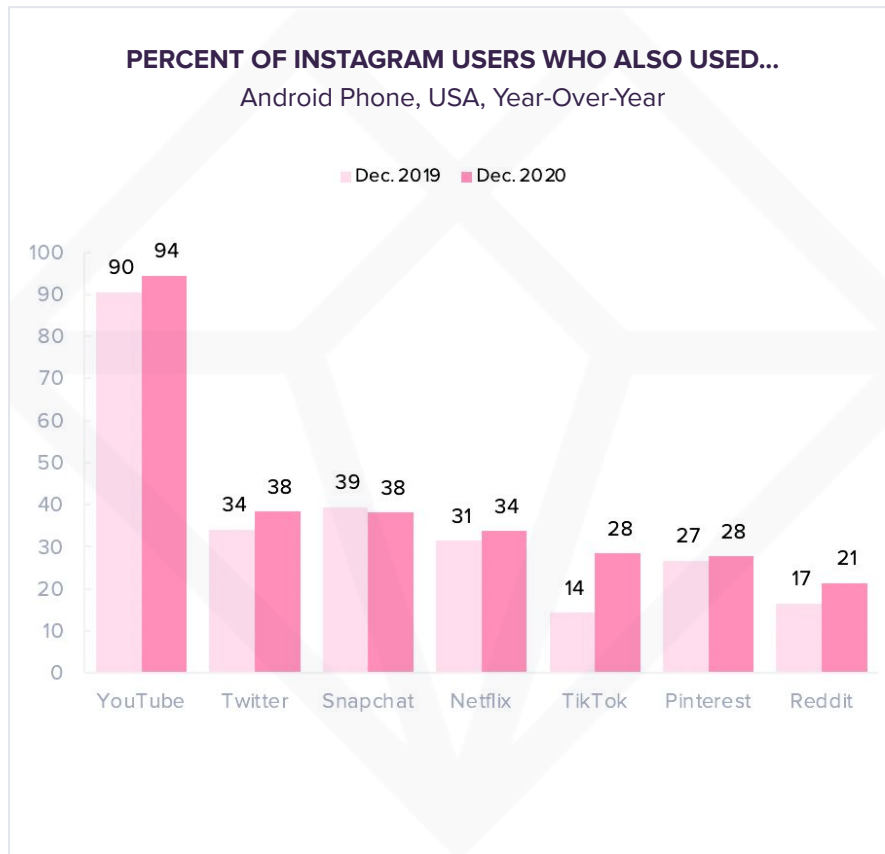
Combined time spent by users of both apps  
**increased by 2 mins / day**



## An Even Larger Share of Instagram Users Use Other Similar Apps

A large share of Instagram users also use other top apps in the same month for similar purposes. TikTok's popularity and growth in 2020 contributed to a 100% increase in Instagram app users that also use TikTok.

Over 9 out of 10 Instagram users also use YouTube, and over 30% of Instagram users also separately use Twitter, Snapchat, and Netflix.



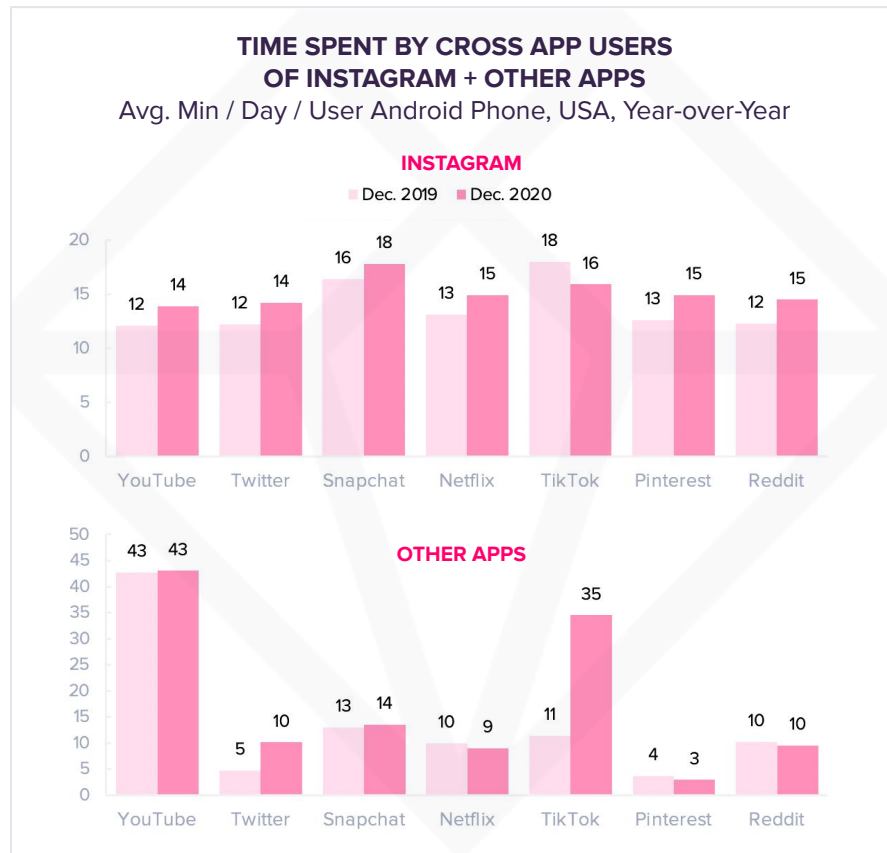


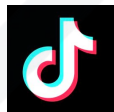


## Instagram Cross App Users Increased Time Spent in Instagram & in Other Similar Apps

Over the past year, Instagram users who also use other apps have increased their time spent in Instagram as well as their time spent in the other apps.

Similar to Facebook cross app users, Instagram users who also use other apps showed the fastest increase in time spent in the TikTok app, with time spent in 2020 reaching 3x of what it was in 2019.





**50%**

of TikTok Android users use  
Snapchat in the same month



**40%**

of Snapchat Android users use  
TikTok in the same month

Users of both apps in the same month, spent on average

**41** mins / day 2020

**13** mins / day 2019

**17** mins / day 2020

**21** mins / day 2019

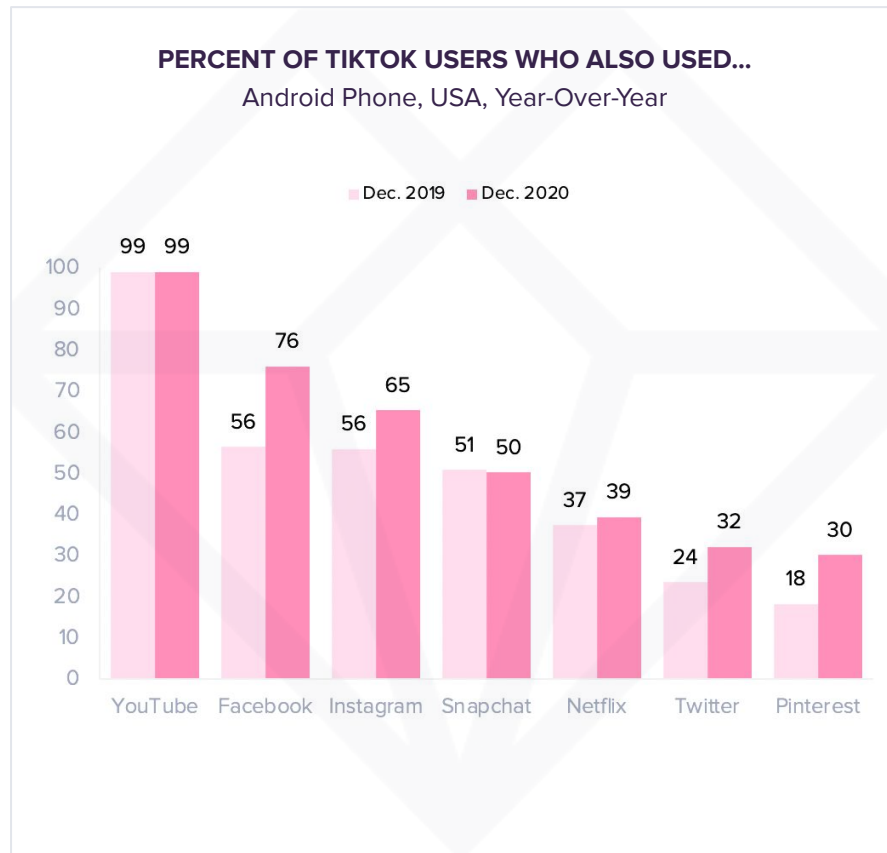
Combined time spent by users of both apps  
**increased by 24 mins / day**



## As TikTok Grew, Many of Its Users Increasingly Used Other Apps

A large share of TikTok users also use other top apps in the same month for similar purposes. As TikTok has increased in popularity in recent years, the overlap between TikTok users and users of other apps has also grown, as seen in the increase in cross-app usage between 2019 and 2020.

Almost all TikTok users also use YouTube. Over 7 out of 10 TikTok users also used Facebook in December 2020 and over half of TikTok users separately used Snapchat and Instagram in Dec. 2020 as well.

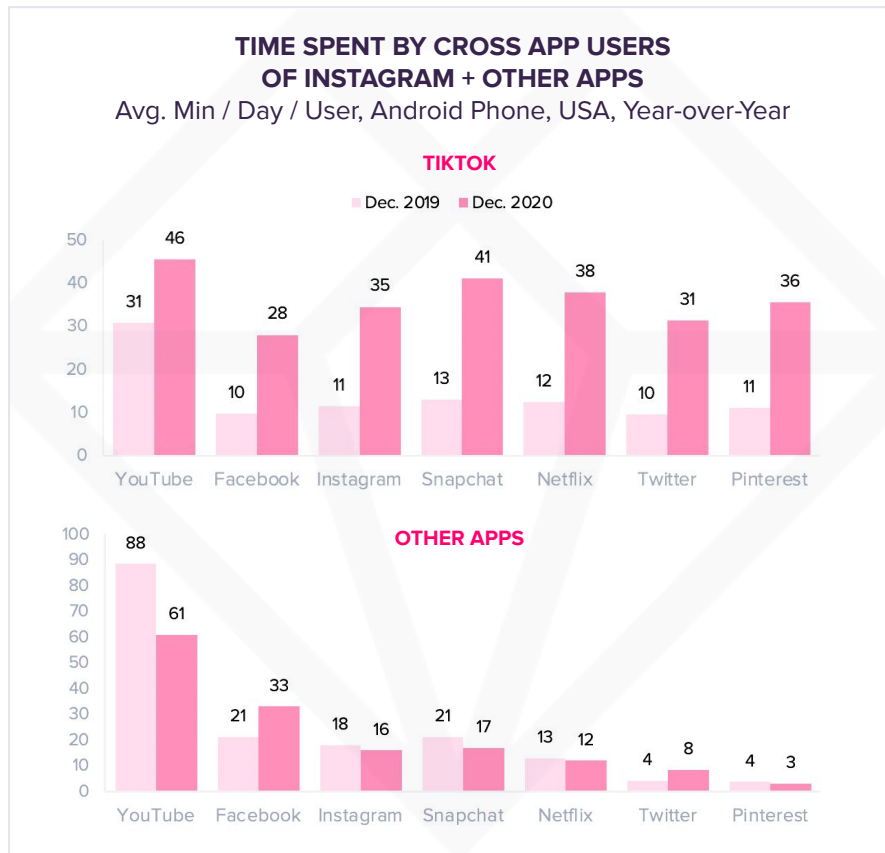




## TikTok Cross App Users Significantly Increased Time Spent in TikTok

With TikTok's meteoric success over the last few years, many TikTok users (including cross app users) significantly increased their time spent in the TikTok app.

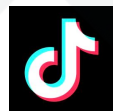
TikTok's rapid rise in popularity is an example of the vibrant mobile app ecosystem and how a new entrant can quickly find success.





**19%**

of YouTube Android users use  
TikTok in the same month



**99%**

of TikTok Android users use  
YouTube in the same month

Users of both apps in the same month, spent on average

**61** mins / day 2020

**88** mins / day 2019

**46** mins / day 2020

**31** mins / day 2019

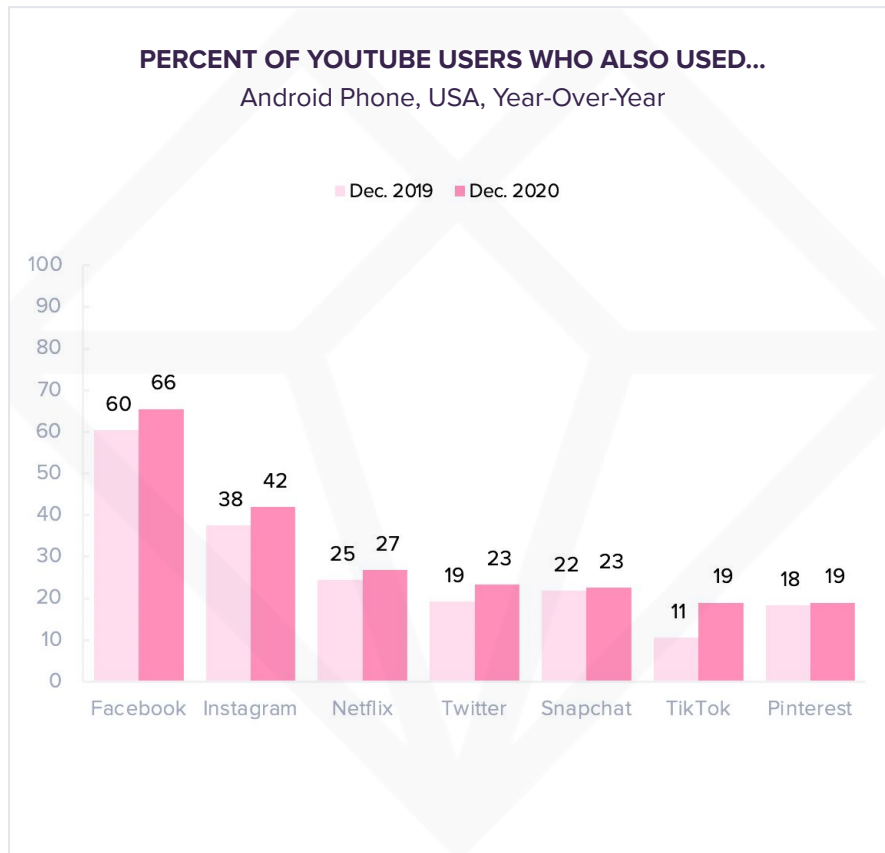
Combined time spent by users of both apps  
**decreased by 12 mins / day**



## A Significant Share of YouTube Users Also Use Similar Apps

A large share of YouTube users also use other top apps in the same month for similar purposes and, for all the apps considered, the share of YouTube cross app users has grown in the last year.

Over 6 out of 10 YouTube users also use Facebook. About 2 out of 10 YouTube users also use TikTok, a 73% increase from the previous year.



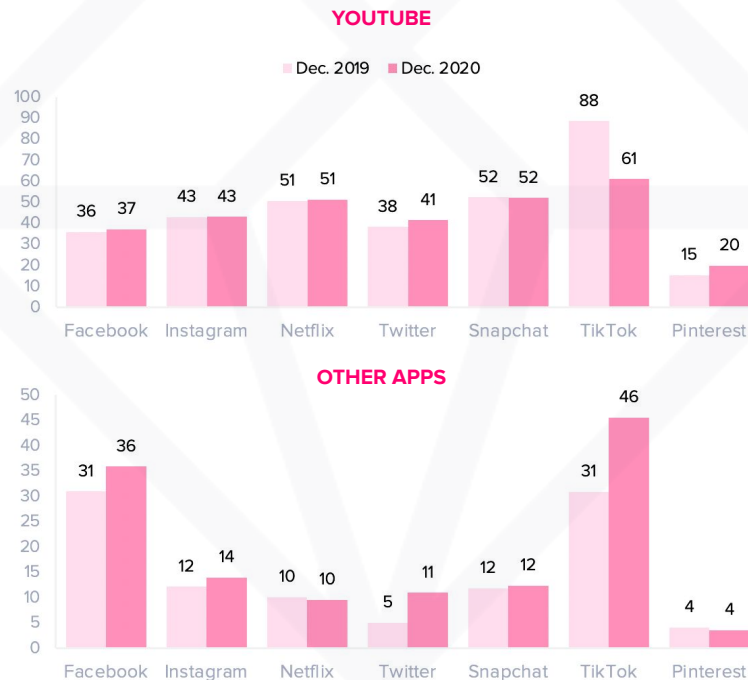


## YouTube Users Using Other Apps Increased Time Spent in YouTube & Other Apps

in the past year, YouTube users who also use other apps have increased their time spent in YouTube. For the most part, these YouTube cross app users have also increased their time spent in the other apps.

YouTube users who also use TikTok, increased their time spent in TikTok by 50% YoY.

**TIME SPENT BY CROSS APP USERS  
OF INSTAGRAM + OTHER APPS**  
Avg. Min / Day / User, Android Phone, USA, Year-over-Year





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# Thank You

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# Appendix

# Methodology

The analyses in this report are based on customized cross-app usage estimates. The data is derived from the usage data collected from a large sample of real-world consumers, combined with additional proprietary data sets and machine learned algorithms. Apps selected in this report do not define a particular market or category and do not signify a complete list of participants in any market or category.

## For the purposes of this report:

- All data in this report is based on App Annie Android usage estimates and do not include any first-party data from apps covered.
- Customized estimates may differ from other App Annie data sources due to the customized granularity; however overall numbers and trends are similar.
- Apps for comparison were selected from the most used apps in categories of interest; but some apps (such as system apps) may not be included.
- An active user is defined as having one or more sessions in the time period.
- A single person may be active on multiple devices in any time period, and therefore be counted as one user per device in the total active users.
- A cross-app user is a person who used both source (first) app and cross (second) app within the time period; cross-app users from one time period to another may be a different group of users.
- Time spent data is defined as time when the app is on the foreground with the screen on. Background data usage does not contribute to session length.

Usage metrics used in this report are based on unified apps made possible by App Annie's methodology. In unified apps, similar versions of the same app with different names and on different platforms are unified. For example, the old musical.ly version of TikTok and APAC versions of TikTok on Google Play are all aggregated and ranked as a single TikTok unified app.

- Categories are self-selected by publishers. Some companies publish different versions of the same unified app under multiple categories across app stores or countries. To avoid duplication of a unified app across categories in these cases, this report uses the category of the predominant Google Play app based on worldwide downloads. TikTok, for example, has Google Play versions on Social and Video Players and Editors in different countries; in this report all versions of the TikTok app are classified as Social.
- Data is based on the current and historical App Annie DNA relationships as of the time of writing. App Annie DNA relationships are subject to change over time.
- Occasionally, a company may decide to shift an existing app from one category to another category. In these cases, the report is based on the most recent store category as of the time of publication.































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# Top Apps (by Average MAU)



# Top Android Apps | Communications

USA 2020































 Brave Browser	 Firefox Browser	 GroupMe	 Microsoft Edge	 Telegram	 Verizon Messages
 Chrome Browser	 Gmail	 Hangouts	 Ring - Always Home	 TextNow	 Verizon Visual Voice Mail
 Contacts by Google	 Google Duo	 Kik Messenger	 Samsung Internet Browser	 TextraSMS	 Viber
 Discord	 Google Messages	 Marco Polo Video Walkie Talkie	 Signal Private Messenger	 TracFone My Account	 WhatsApp Messenger
 Facebook Messenger	 Google Voice	 Messenger Kids	 Skype	 Verizon Caller Filter	 Yahoo Mail

Based on apps used by Android users available on the Google Play Store, sorted alphabetically.



# Top Android Apps | Entertainment

USA 2020































 Amazon Prime Video	 Disney+	 IMDb	 Plex	 Steam	 Vudu
 Bitmoji	 Google Play Games	 MetroZone	 Pluto.tv	 Tubi TV	 Xbox
 CBS	 HBO Max	 Netflix	 Redbox	 TV Guide Mobile	 XFINITY TV
 Crunchyroll	 Hulu	 Peacock TV	 Roku	 Spectrum TV	 YouTube Kids
 DIRECTV	 iFunny :)	 Playstation App	 Scanner Radio	 Twitch	 YouTube TV

Based on apps used by Android users available on the Google Play Store, sorted alphabetically.



# Top Android Apps | Video Players & Editors

USA 2020































 AZ Screen Recorder	 GoPro	 Likee	 Roku Remote control	 Video Player All Format - XPlayer	 YI Home
 Cartoon Network	 Google TV	 Magisto	 Samsung Video Library	 Vine	 YouCut
 Dubsmash	 Imgur: Awesome Images & GIFs	 Motorola Gallery	 Screen Recorder & Video Recorder	 Vinkle	 YouTube
 GIF Keyboard by Tenor	 KineMaster	 MX Player	 Screen Recorder V Recorder	 VivaVideo	 YouTube Studio
 GIPHY for Messenger	 Kodi	 PowerDirector	 Video Downloader by InShot Inc	 VLC Media Player	 µTorrent

Based on apps used by Android users available on the Google Play Store, sorted alphabetically.



# Top Android Apps | Photography

USA 2020































 Adobe Lightroom	 FreePrints	 Layout from Instagram	 Photo Editor by Aviary	 PicsArt Photo Editor	 Shutterfly mobile
 Adobe Photoshop Express	 Google Camera	 Motorola Camera	 Photo Editor by Zentertain	 Pixlr	 Snapseed
 Boomerang from Instagram	 Google Photos	 OnePlus Gallery	 Photo Grid - Collage Maker	 Amazon Photos	 InShot
 FaceApp	 InstaSize	 Open Camera	 PhotoScan by Google	 QuickPic	 YouCam Makeup
 Facebook Moments	 KeepSave Vault	 Photo Editor - Fotolr	 Pic Collage	 Samsung Gallery	 Z Camera

Based on apps used by Android users available on the Google Play Store, sorted alphabetically.



# Top Android Apps | Social

USA 2020

 Amino: Communities and Chats	 Facebook	 Live.me	 Parler	 Tagged	 TikTok
 Badoo	 Currents	 MagicApp	 POF Online Dating	 Tango Messenger	 Tumblr
 BAND	 Grindr	 MeetMe	 Reddit	 Text Me	 Twitter
 BIGO LIVE	 Houseparty	 Meetup	 Skout	 Text Free	 Vigo Video
 Dingtone	 Instagram	 MeWe	 Snapchat	 text+	 YOLO































Based on apps used by Android users available on the Google Play Store, sorted alphabetically.





# Top Android Apps | News

USA 2020

 AOL - News, Mail & Video	 CNN News	 Google News	 Newsroom	 Pocket Casts	 SmartNews
 AP News	 Feedly	 NBC News	 Nextdoor	 Podcast Addict	 The Wall Street Journal
 BBC News	 Flipboard	 Neighbors by Ring	 NPR News	 Quora	 The Washington Post
 Briefing	 Fox News	 News Break	 NYTimes	 Reddit is fun	 TopBuzz
 Citizen: Safety & Awareness	 Free TV Shows	 Newsmax	 Pocket	 Sense Home Launcher	 USA Today

Based on apps used by Android users available on the Google Play Store, sorted alphabetically.