

# The Major Social Media Platforms



# How has social media changed advertising?

Social media altered global communications in the early 2000s, on a scale similar to how the printing press changed Europe in 1450. As of 2020, an estimated [3.6 billion people](#) were active on combined social platforms. And changing the way we communicate has changed the way we advertise, too.

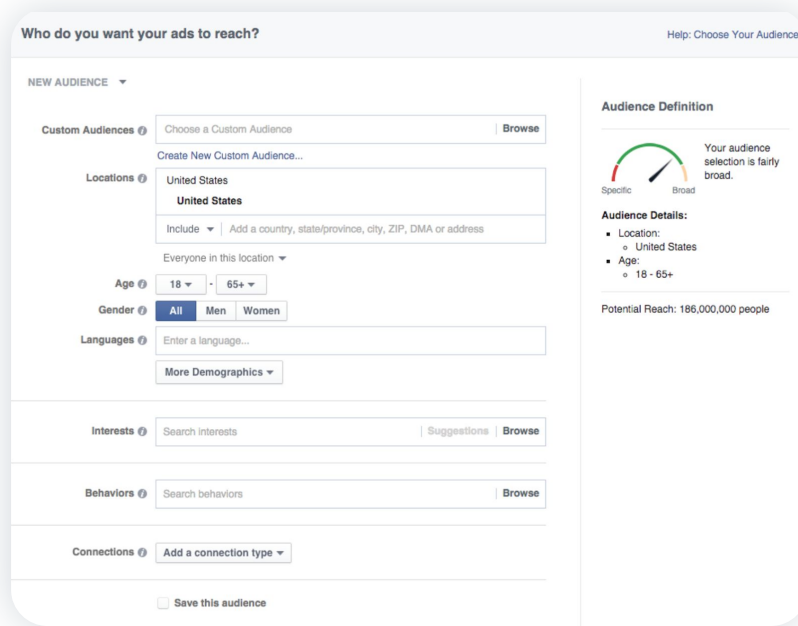
Prior to social media, companies had to flood airwaves, buy out magazine pages and billboards, drop flyers from planes, and pay television networks to advertise to target audiences. Social media cuts through the noise. Now, you can target your audience by age, gender, location, demographic, online purchasing history, behavioral models, and more.

Where once reaching customers was like trying to throw a rock across a football field, now you can create your preferred audiences with scalpel-like precision. In this section, we'll provide cursory overviews of the world's largest social media platforms for advertising.

# Facebook

Facebook is the world's largest social media platform. It has an estimated [1.79 billion people](#) logging on daily as of 2020.

Facebook also pioneered modern digital advertising by turning user data into an audience-creation service so precise that it can tell you the exact dates people plan on taking vacations, so as to better market vacation packages to them.

The image is a screenshot of the Facebook Ads targeting interface, titled "Who do you want your ads to reach?". It features a "NEW AUDIENCE" dropdown and a "Custom Audiences" section with a "Choose a Custom Audience" button and a "Browse" link. Below this is a "Create New Custom Audience..." section. The "Locations" section is set to "United States" with an "Include" dropdown and a text input for "Add a country, state/province, city, ZIP, DMA or address". The "Age" section is set to "Everyone in this location" with a range of "18" to "65+". The "Gender" section has buttons for "All", "Men", and "Women", with "All" selected. The "Languages" section has a text input for "Enter a language..." and a "More Demographics" dropdown. The "Interests" section has a "Search interests" input, "Suggestions", and a "Browse" link. The "Behaviors" section has a "Search behaviors" input and a "Browse" link. The "Connections" section has an "Add a connection type" dropdown. At the bottom is a "Save this audience" checkbox. On the right, the "Audience Definition" section shows a gauge from "Specific" to "Broad" with the needle in the middle, and text stating "Your audience selection is fairly broad." Below this, "Audience Details" lists "Location: United States" and "Age: 18 - 65+", with a "Potential Reach: 186,000,000 people" at the bottom.

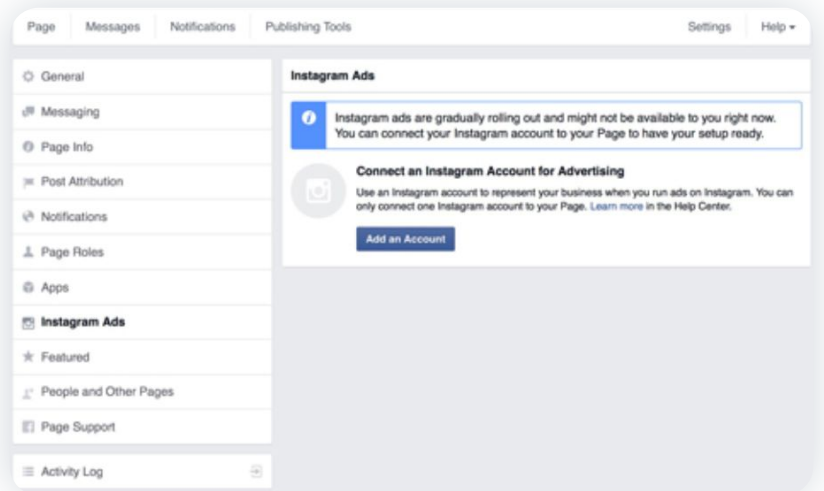
Source: [Neil Patel](#)

Above is an example of Facebook's audience creation service. It lets you target by age, location, behavior, interest, and more. Given Facebook's size and the precision of its marketing tools, it'll be the first platform you want to set your business up on.

# Instagram

Instagram topped over a billion users in 2018. According to recent company data, [500 million people](#) use its Stories feature every day. It's also the second-most logged-into daily app in the world, topped only by Facebook (which owns Instagram.) Instagram also has the highest ratio of users-to-ad-dollars earned of any company, generating [\\$20 billion](#) in ad revenue in 2019 and comprising a quarter of Facebook's total advertising earnings that same year.

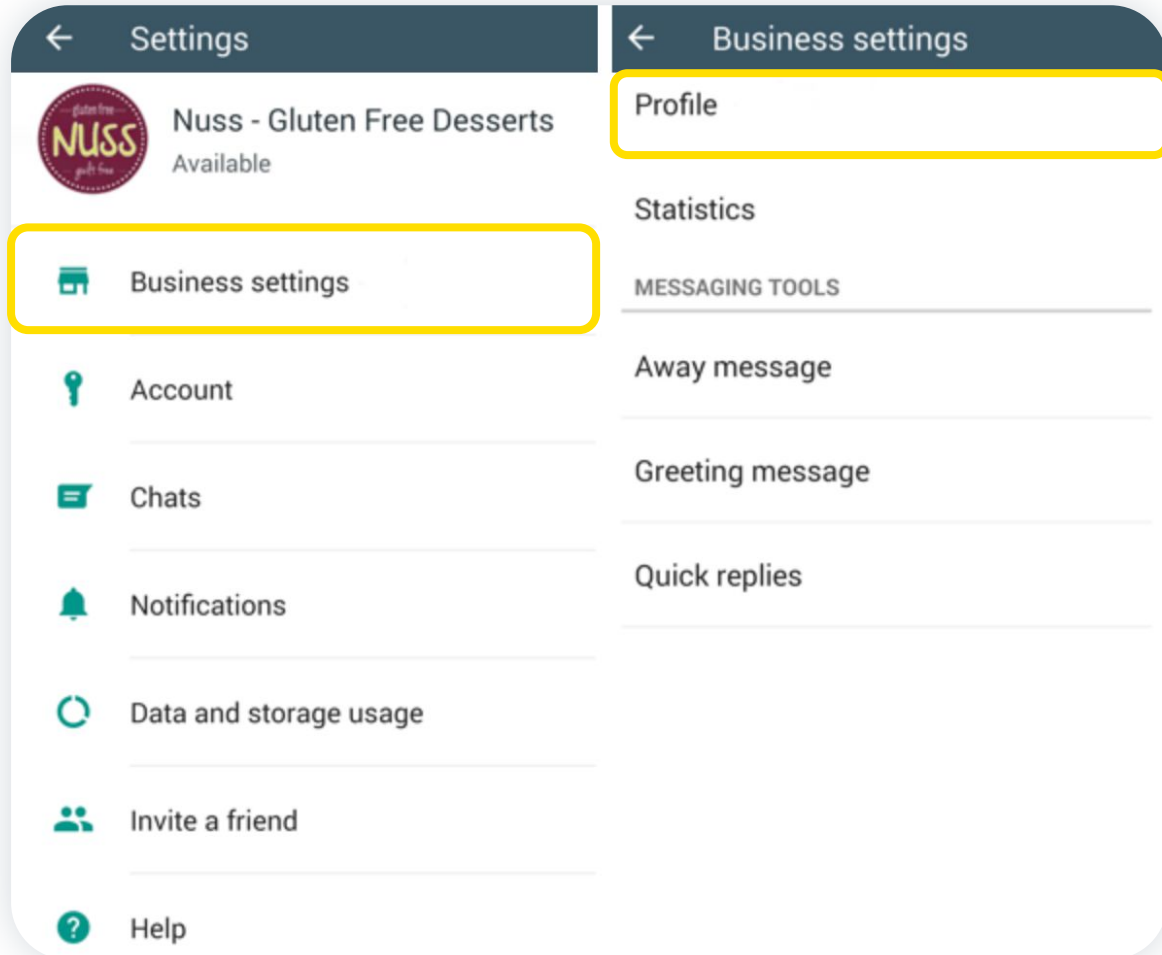
Facebook bought Instagram for \$1 billion in 2012. This means Instagram has access to the Facebook data corpus, making the two platforms' shared targeted advertising service that much more precise.



Source: [Social Media Examiner](#)

Facebook and Instagram use the same advertising tools and layout, and both apps are likely to be your biggest online point-of-contact for customers.

# WhatsApp



Source: [Social Media Examiner](#)

There are approximately [2 billion Whatsapp users](#) in the world, with 1.6 billion logging in monthly to use the app. Whatsapp is the most popular app in India, with an estimated 240–300 million active daily users. It's most often used outside the continental United States—namely in Brazil, Southeast Asia, northern Africa, and Europe.

Facebook bought Whatsapp for [\\$19 billion](#) in 2014 to expand its global reach. Whatsapp shares its advertising tools and data corpus with Facebook and Instagram.

Whatsapp is a particularly good platform for marketing to customers outside of China or the U.S., or to international immigrants living in the U.S.

# Twitter

## Select your audience STEP 2 OF 4

### AUDIENCE PROFILE

#### ▼ Select locations (required)

Target users by country, states, regions, metro areas, or postal codes. [Learn more.](#)

or

[Import multiple locations](#)

Target users located in...

Country

✕ United States

#### ▼ Select gender

We infer gender from information our users share as they use Twitter, including their profile names and follow graphs. [Learn more.](#)

☒ Any gender ☐ Male ☐ Female

Source: [Neil Patel](#)

As per 2020 data, there are approximately [48.35 million](#) active Twitter users in the U.S. Roughly 42% of those users are on Twitter daily, and the platform generated [\\$885 million](#) in ad revenue in 2019.

Twitter is the fastest-moving social media platform—a feed for rapid-fire synaptic discourse. It has the shortest [post lifetime](#), as the algorithm buries tweets in 20–30 minutes, and Twitter users post more than any other platforms’.

Twitter users are also more well-informed than the average social media user. They’re young, regularly read the news, and like to “discover” new topics and products. Twitter is a particularly excellent platform for marketing to college-educated professionals aged 18–40.

# LinkedIn

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn Campaign Manager interface for creating a testing campaign. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Page', 'Account', and 'Campaign' tabs. Below this, a breadcrumb trail shows 'Page: Kristi Hines Media LLC', 'Account: Kristi Hines Media LLC\_1', and 'Campaign: Create campaign'. The main heading is 'Create Testing campaign'. A progress bar indicates the current step. The main content area is titled 'OK, now let's target your audience' with a subtext 'Reach the right people by selecting specific targeting criteria like job title, location and more.' Below this, there's a section for location targeting with a dropdown menu and a text input field. To the right, it shows 'Your estimated target audience' as '400,000,000+ LinkedIn members'. Below this, there are two settings: 'Audience expansion: Enabled' and 'Deliver beyond the LinkedIn feed: Enabled'. A section titled 'Select specific targeting criteria to zero in on your ideal audience:' lists various criteria like Company name, Company industry, Company size, Job title, Job function, Job seniority, Member schools, Fields of study, Degrees, Member skills, Member groups, Member gender, and Member age. At the bottom, there are two checkboxes: 'Help my campaign reach new audiences similar to my targeting criteria with Audience Expansion' and '(BETA) Deliver my campaign to my target audience beyond the LinkedIn feed'. Navigation buttons at the bottom include 'Cancel campaign', 'Save for Later', '< Previous', and 'Next >'.

Source: [Social Media Examiner](#)

LinkedIn is a professional networking site with more than [310 million](#) active users, as of 2020. The platform constitutes more than 50 percent of all business-to-business interaction on the web, and it generated \$6.8 billion in 2019.

LinkedIn's user base is predominantly non-American, with 70 percent of clients coming from outside the U.S. India and the United Kingdom are the fastest growing regions on LinkedIn. It's owned by Microsoft, and has access to the company's data corpus for its targeted advertising services.

LinkedIn is the best app to post job listings (95 percent of polled recruiters use it regularly) and market to other businesses.

# WeChat

China has a much more heavily-restricted internet than the U.S. and European countries and their government doesn't allow Facebook on their network. As such, Chinese entrepreneurs have since developed their own social media networks. The most popular one, WeChat—is considered to be "[China's answer to Facebook](#)."



- 1 **A friend's update:** WeChat advertising appear on the social timeline, in-between updates from friends
- 2 **WeChat ads:** WeChat advertising are displayed as a combination of text, pictures, videos and links (see next section) that the user can interact with
- 3 **WeChat ad comments:** If the same ad is displayed to several friends, they can see each-other's comments on the ad (unlike Facebook, comments from people you aren't friend with are hidden)

Source: [Walk the Chat](#)

As of 2019, WeChat is the fifth most-used social app in the world. The network reached one billion active users in January 2019, and drives up to 30 percent of Chinese web traffic. WeChat's parent company, tech behemoth Tencent Holdings, doesn't post WeChat value explicitly but the company is reportedly worth over \$500 billion, according to [Yahoo analysis](#).

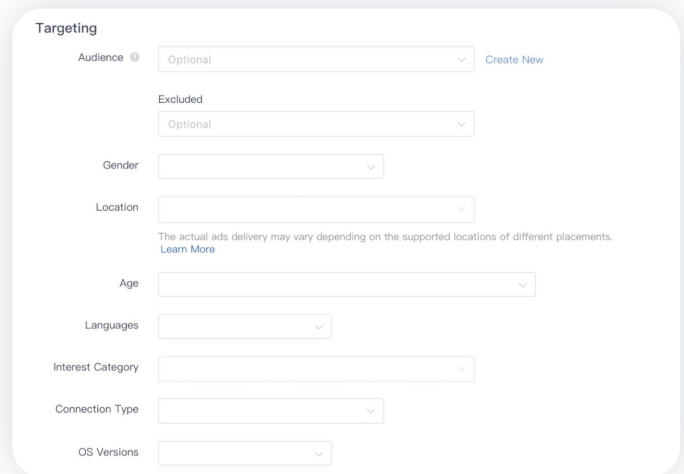
Marketers looking to reach Chinese audiences should set up a WeChat page.



# TikTok

TikTok, a musical lip-sync app—is the fastest-growing social media platform on the planet with an estimated [800 million](#) monthly users. Its users are extremely young: 49% of TikTok's U.S. user base is teenagers. Its audience is split most heavily between China, India, and the U.S., with more than 50 percent of the app's users being in China.

TikTok generated [\\$176.9 million](#) in 2019, followed by a rapid increase in downloads in 2020. Anyone looking to market to teens should have a TikTok business account.

A screenshot of the TikTok targeting interface. It features a 'Targeting' header with a 'Create New' link. Below this are several filter categories, each with a dropdown menu: 'Audience' (set to 'Optional'), 'Excluded' (set to 'Optional'), 'Gender', 'Location', 'Age', 'Languages', 'Interest Category', 'Connection Type', and 'OS Versions'. A small note below the 'Location' dropdown states: 'The actual ads delivery may vary depending on the supported locations of different placements. Learn More'.

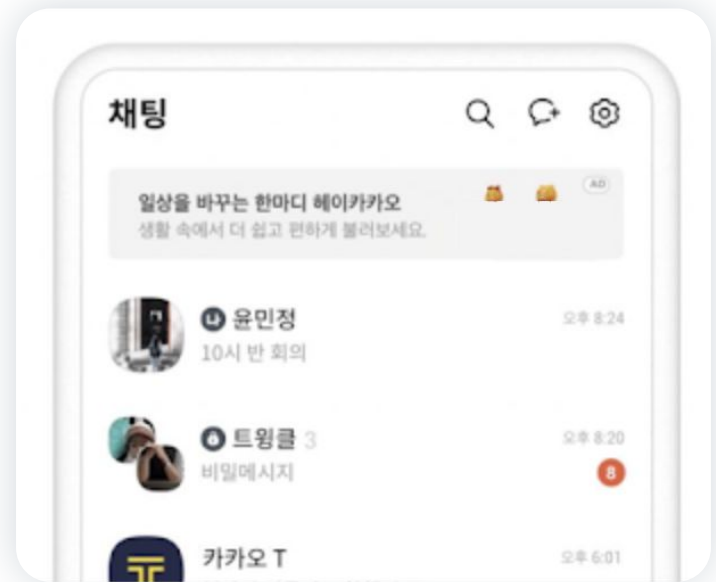
Source: [Social Media Examiner](#)

TikTok's future in the U.S. is uncertain, however, amidst recent [revelations](#) that the Chinese government is requisitioning its front-facing camera data (the largest repository in the world) to train the country's Artificial Intelligence services in facial recognition. U.S. lawmakers have since threatened to [ban the platform](#) in America.

# KakaoTalk

KakaoTalk is the most popular social media app and the number one messaging app in South Korea. As of 2019, there were 50 million global KakaoTalk users—and more than 44 million were based in South Korea. The other six million are spread largely around southeast Asia.

Marketers looking to reach South Korean audiences should set up a KakaoTalk business page. They offer a similar suite of targeted advertising services to other major platforms.



Source: [10원 Tips](#)

