

TikTok introduces text-only posts as Elon Musk rebrands Twitter as X

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TikTok has announced the introduction of text-only posts, as it becomes the latest tech company seeking to capitalise on people who may be looking for an alternative to Twitter. Video sharing platform TikTok announced on Monday that it will now allow users to create “text-based content”, in a move it characterised as “expanding the boundaries of content creation for everyone on TikTok” and “giving the written creativity we’ve seen in comments, captions, and videos a dedicated space to shine.” Users will also be able to add coloured backgrounds and stickers to the posts, which have a limit of 1,000 words. Variety compared the feature to Instagram, where rather than facilitating a conversation, the posts can simply be commented on. Website TechCrunch reported that the introduction of the feature was “likely to take on Twitter (now X) and Meta’s Threads.” In his latest change since buying Twitter in October, Elon Musk rebranded the company X this week, in a move labelled “extremely risky” by commentators. Twitter is suffering financially, announcing in July that its ad revenue had dropped by 50% as advertisers withheld spending on the site. Rival tech companies have used the perceived chaos and upheaval of Musk’s purchase of Twitter as an opportunity to attract some of its user base and launch rival platforms. Threads is Instagram’s text-based app, which makes use of the existing base of Instagram users and was launched to much fanfare earlier this month. While Threads saw 100 million people sign up in fewer than five days after its launch, the number of active daily users has since fallen by 70%, Forbes reports. TikTok has just over a billion users, according to the company website, whereas Instagram has 2.3 billion users, according to industry website, Business of Apps. TikTok’s audience is younger than Instagram’s, with the UK Communications watchdog finding this week that it is the number one news source for 12 to 15-year-olds, followed by YouTube and Instagram. TikTok has however faced criticism over its links to the China, with the Canadian, US, UK and Australian governments restricting the app on government-owned devices. This week, the company revealed that its China-based employees can access some Australian user data.