

Threads users decline significantly despite initial surge in sign-ups

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Despite a dizzying number of initial sign-ups, usage of Threads, Mark Zuckerberg's answer to Twitter, has declined significantly in recent weeks, according to a new report of by Similarweb, a digital intelligence platform. Within the first few hours of its launch on 5 July, Threads garnered 5m user registrations and within less than a week at least 100 million people had signed up for the app. But, three weeks later, active daily use or the number of users who engage with the site on a daily basis has dropped, from a peak of 49 million on 7 July to 12 million on 22 July, according to Similarweb. Even on its busiest day, usership of Threads was less than half of Twitter's, according to the data. Twitter averages more than 100 million active daily users. "Most of those who still use Twitter regularly will continue doing so at about the same rate," said David Carr, senior insights manager at Similarweb. Threads, launched by Instagram-owner Meta, was meant to capitalize on the chaos at Twitter since its takeover by the billionaire Elon Musk, and unseat the app as a go-to text-based social media platform. Since taking over Twitter, Musk has laid off the majority of the app's staff and pushed through a series of controversial policy changes that have led to a decline in advertising revenue. Earlier this month, the platform limited how many posts a non-subscribing user can see. And longtime users have complained about frequent glitches and increased hateful and vitriolic speech on the platform. Zuckerberg and Meta hope to seize on the feelings of dismay among some of Twitter's user base and promised that Threads would be a digital town square filled with positivity and connection. "We are definitely focusing on kindness and making this a friendly place" the Meta CEO wrote on his Threads account. But even with the promise that Threads offered disenchanted tweeters, it has so far failed to keep them posting on the platform with the same regularity that Twitter has. That may be in part because the Threads lacks some of Twitter's functionalities, including a desktop option and place to search hashtags, phrases and names. It's unclear yet what impact Musk's latest change at Twitter – its rebranding to X – may have on the platform's usage. "Although we're seeing a steady erosion by several metrics, the rebranding is likely to pale in comparison with other things people do or don't like about Elon's management," Carr said. Meta and Threads did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Dan Milmo contributed reporting