

Zuckerberg's 'Twitter killer' Threads hits 70m sign-ups in two days

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Mark Zuckerberg's "Twitter-killer" Threads has reached 70m sign-ups in less than 48 hours, as it more than doubled its growth from its first day on app stores. The new microblogging platform was launched in 100 countries this week. It immediately accumulated significant numbers of users, hitting more than 30 million within its first 24 hours, apparently making it the fastest downloaded app ever. On Friday, however, Zuckerberg announced on his Threads account that the user total had more than doubled that figure. "70 million sign ups on Threads as of this morning. Way beyond our expectations," he wrote. Threads launched around the world at 7pm EST in the US on Wednesday. Elon Musk's Twitter has reacted to the new rival with a formal threat to sue the "copycat" app over alleged violation of its "intellectual property rights". Threads is freely available and is linked to Instagram, with new sign-ups needing an Instagram account to log in. They are then able to transfer over the accounts they follow on Instagram to their Threads account, in a move that has helped boost the size of the new social network. Zuckerberg, chief executive of Threads and Instagram owner Meta, has said he wants to make "kindness" a focus of the app's appeal, in a reference to concerns that the rival platform, which has more than 250 million users, has become too hostile for some. "The goal is to keep it friendly as it expands. I think it's possible and will ultimately be the key to its success," he wrote on his Threads account. "That's one reason why Twitter never succeeded as much as I think it should have, and we want to do it differently." In a further thread, he added: "We are definitely focusing on kindness and making this a friendly place." The Stanford Internet Observatory (SIO), which monitors content on social media platforms, said Threads could succeed as an alternative to Twitter's "vitriolic arena". "Instagram has its own track record of issues, but it is a place where people follow their friends, influencers and famous people for an inside look at their daily lives," said SIO's research manager Renée DiResta on Thursday. "If Threads keeps up a positive tone, it will be a big draw for advertisers – particularly because Twitter has developed a reputation for being a vitriolic arena where factions gather to dunk on their enemies."