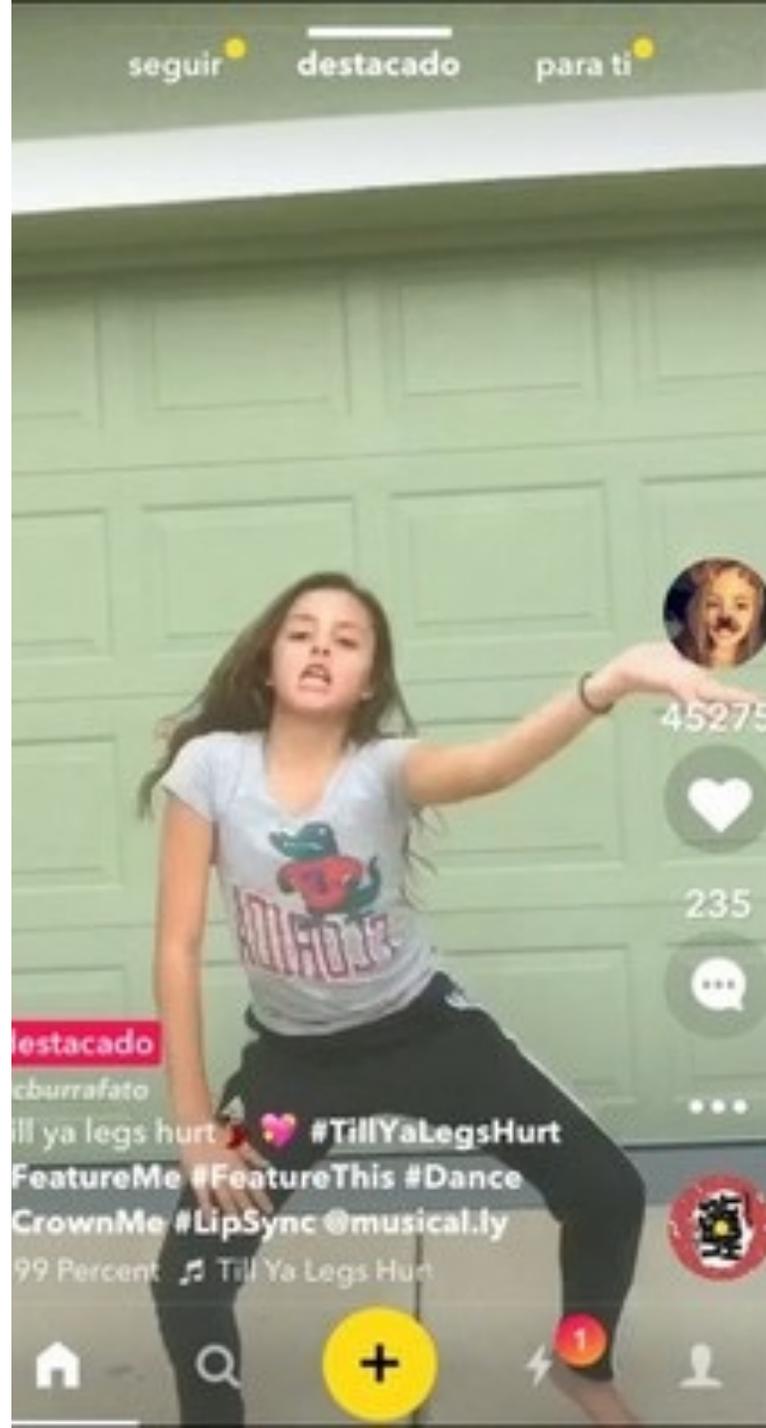


# TikTok

Tackling the Risk of a Ban

# Musical.ly

- A social video app made jointly by a Chinese-American team
- Launched in 2014
- Headquartered in the U.S.
- Popular amongst teenagers globally, especially in the U.S. and China





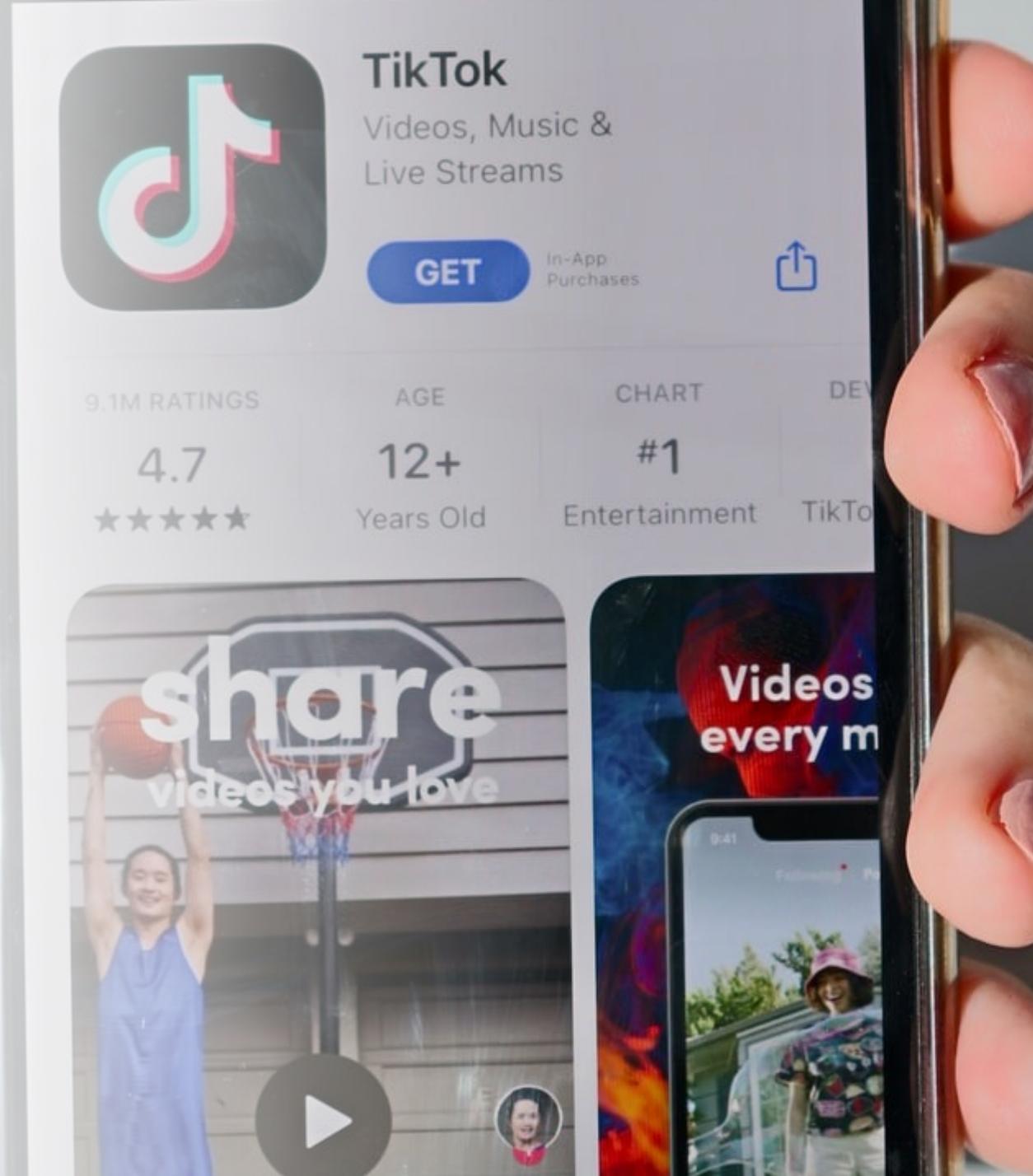
# TikTok

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- Created by ByteDance in 2016
- Chinese social media service focused on short videos
- Similar to Musical.ly
- Chinese Communist Party (CCP) members hold several leadership roles

# Growth of TikTok

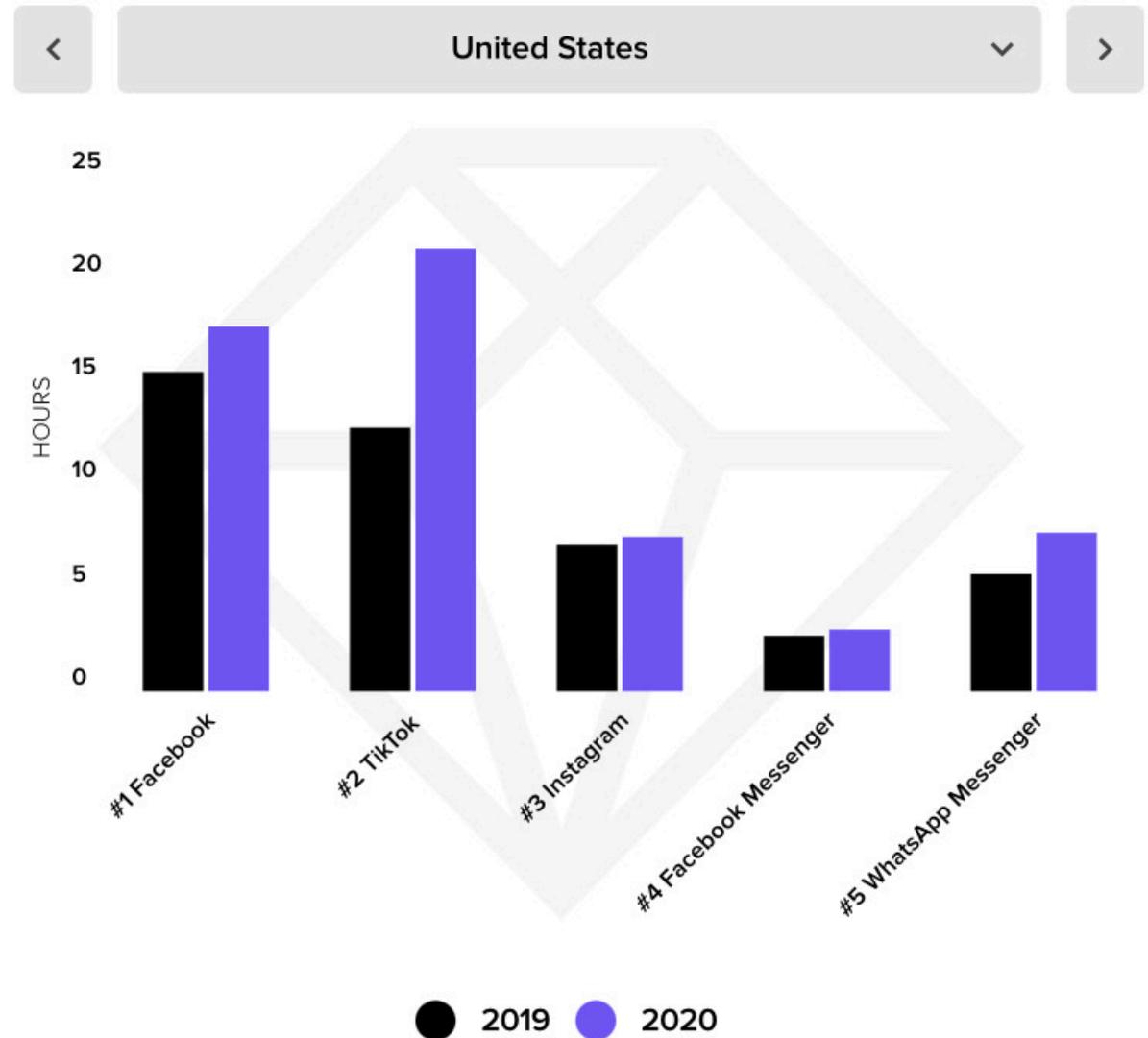
- ByteDance purchased Musical.ly in 2018 and the app grew exponentially from there
- Success came from users creating remixes, challenges, and dances for popular songs
- By 2019, ByteDance was valued at 78 Billion USD with 60,000 employees globally across 30 countries



# Growing U.S. User Base

By 2019, more teenagers were on TikTok than Facebook...

Average Monthly Time Spent Per User Among Top Social Networking Apps by Hours Spent in 2020



Source: App Annie Intelligence

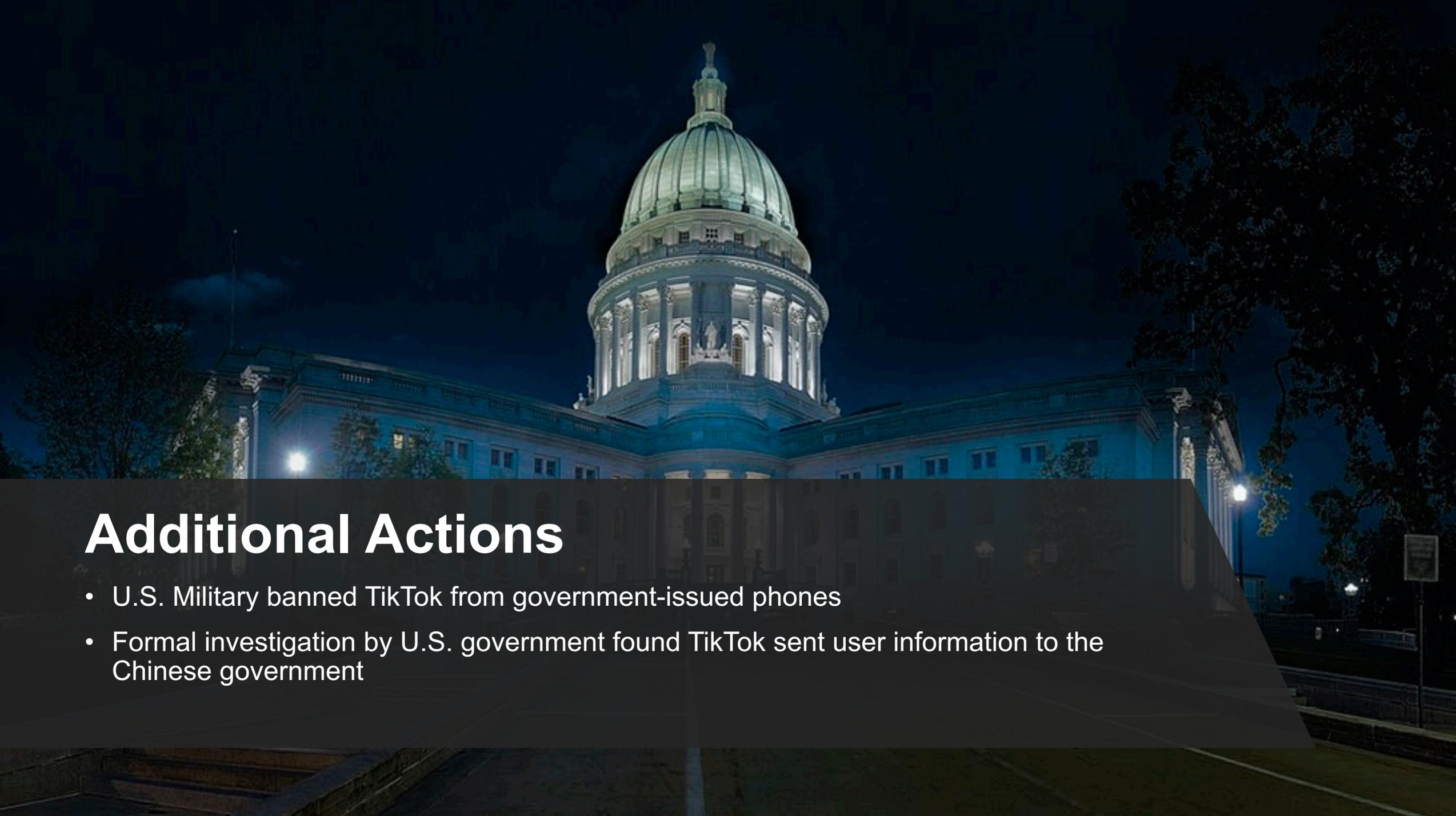
Note: Android phones; Top apps ranked by overall Time Spent



# Issues Arise

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- In September 2019, a British newspaper showed that TikTok was censoring videos that were sensitive to the CCP
  - Tiananmen Square
  - Hong Kong Protests
- In October 2019, a Republican senator called for a formal investigation as it could pose a risk to U.S. national security
- Tensions already high between the U.S. and China following several trade issues and bans of U.S. tech companies in China



# Additional Actions

- U.S. Military banned TikTok from government-issued phones
- Formal investigation by U.S. government found TikTok sent user information to the Chinese government

# TikTok's Response

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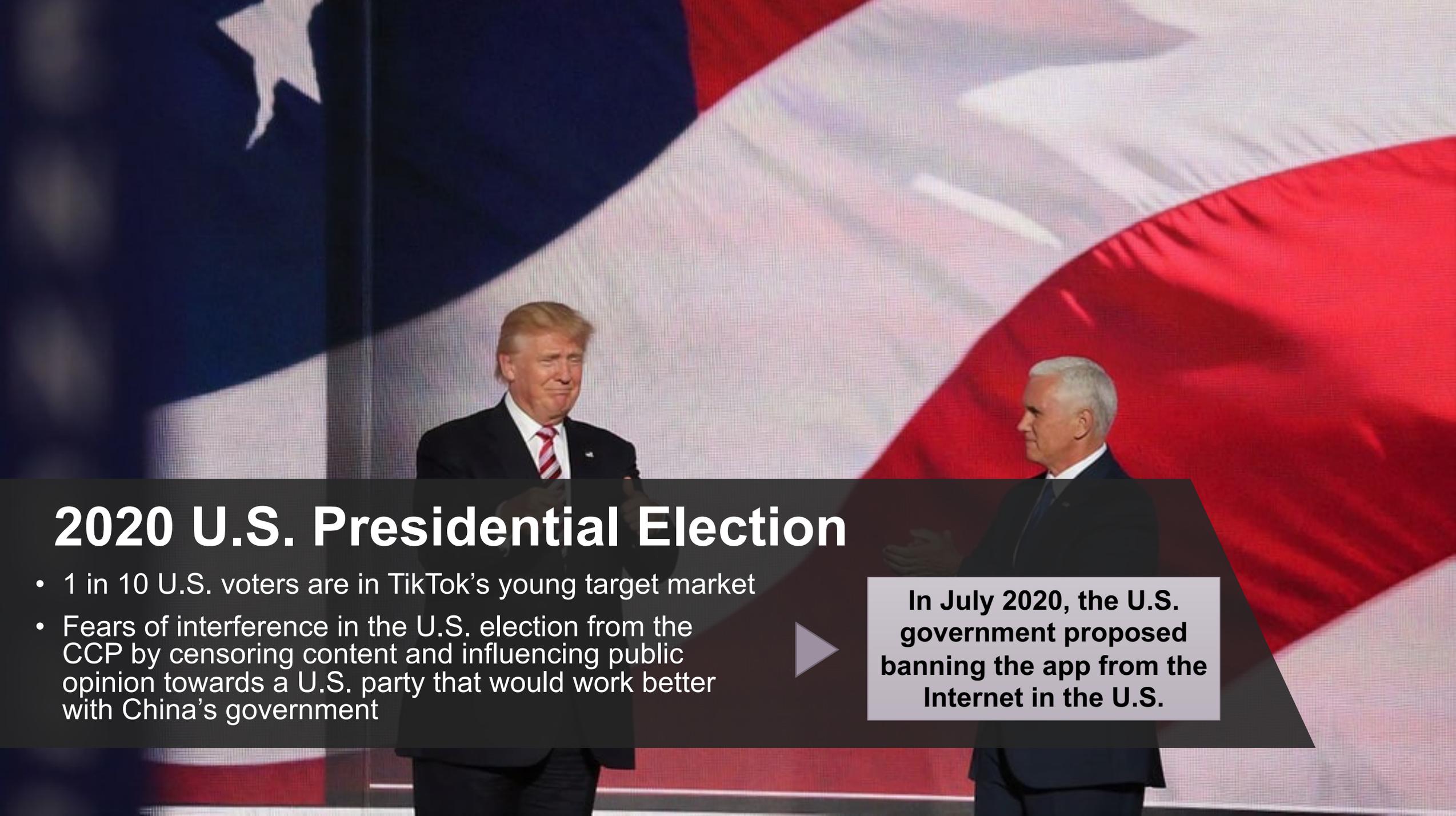
- According to TikTok, users' data remained in the U.S. with backup data in Singapore
- Attempted to remove Chinese content to stop reminding American users of the company's Chinese roots
- Moved moderation of U.S. content to U.S. offices exclusive
- Appointed an American CEO
- Lobbied the U.S. government



# Chinese Government & Tech Companies

- Standard for Chinese tech companies to share data with the CCP upon request
- Legal experts agreed that there is nothing they could do but comply if the CCP asked for American user data, despite what TikTok had said



A photograph of Donald Trump and Mike Pence standing in front of a large American flag. Trump is on the left, wearing a dark suit and a red and white striped tie. Pence is on the right, wearing a dark suit and a blue tie. They are both looking towards the right. The flag is draped behind them, showing the stars and stripes.

## 2020 U.S. Presidential Election

- 1 in 10 U.S. voters are in TikTok's young target market
- Fears of interference in the U.S. election from the CCP by censoring content and influencing public opinion towards a U.S. party that would work better with China's government

**In July 2020, the U.S. government proposed banning the app from the Internet in the U.S.**

# Reactions



Teenage users disappointed – some made money from the platform while others used it extensively. Online reactions: “TikTok is literally my life”

Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat all tried to copy the short video features of TikTok, but failed to move users over

Indian government banned TikTok, also proposed by Australian government

Microsoft offered to purchase TikTok’s U.S. operations to prevent the ban

# The Debate

## **FOR** the ban

1. U.S. Government

2. Microsoft

3. Americans 65+

## **AGAINST** the ban

4. Teenage American Users

5. Chinese Government

6. TikTok

# Debate Rounds

Qualify

## Debate A

1. U.S Government  
vs.  
4. Teenage American Users

## Debate B

2. Microsoft  
vs.  
5. Chinese Government

## Debate C

3. Americans 65+  
vs.  
6. TikTok

Finals

## 3-Way Debate

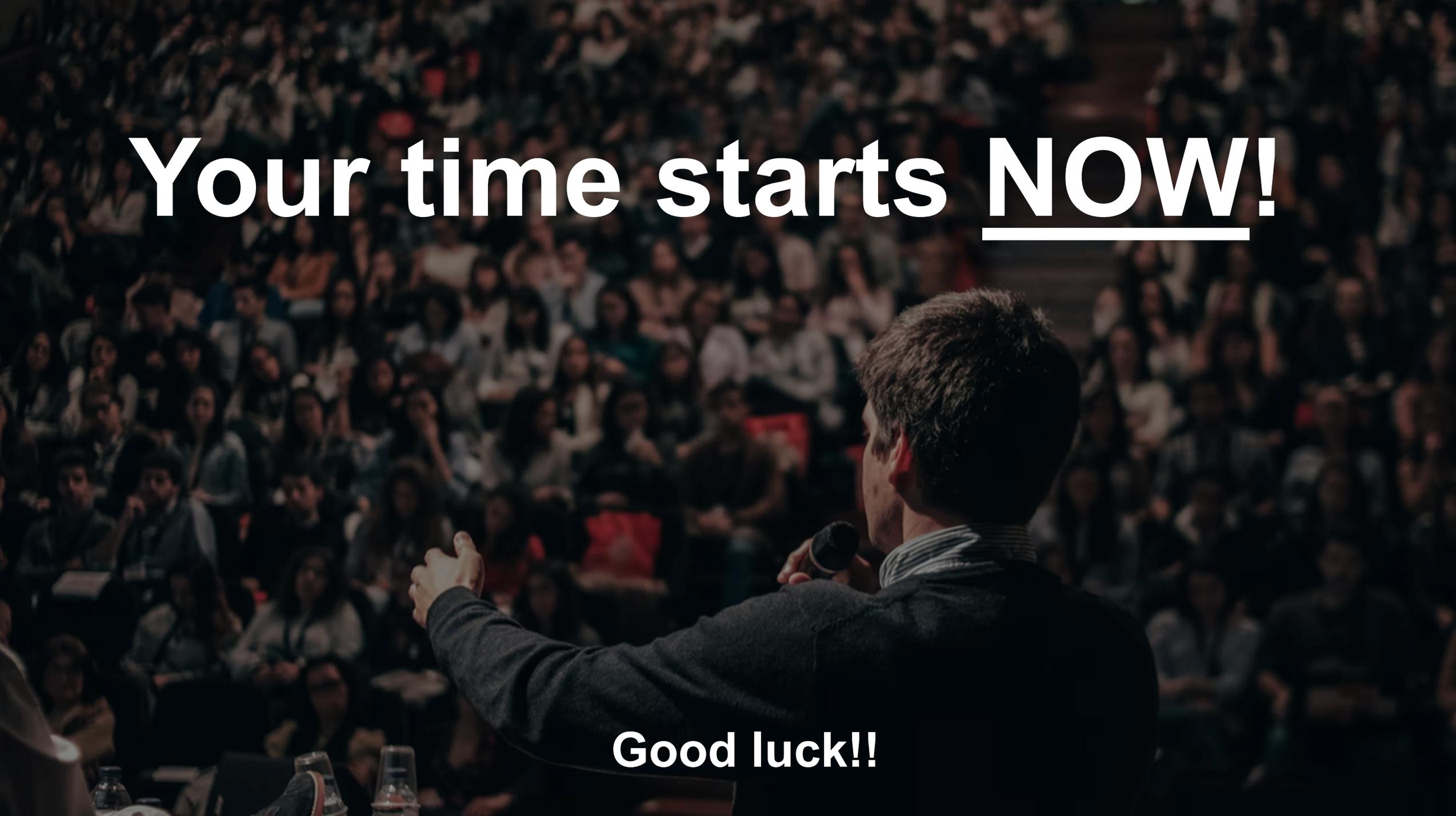
Debate A Winner

vs.

Debate B Winner

vs.

Debate C Winner

A man in a dark sweater and light shirt is seen from behind, speaking into a microphone and gesturing towards a large, dimly lit audience. The audience members are seated and looking towards the speaker. The overall atmosphere is that of a formal presentation or conference.

**Your time starts NOW!**

**Good luck!!**