

# CredoiQ

Real-time Social Intelligence for Politics

## Analyzing the Conservative TikTok Machine

November 8th, 2024

---

[ben@credoiq.com](mailto:ben@credoiq.com)

[credoiq.com](https://credoiq.com)

---

# SUMMARY

Over the last 5 months, **we have analyzed over 80,000 viral political TikTok posts** amassing **over 40 billion views**.

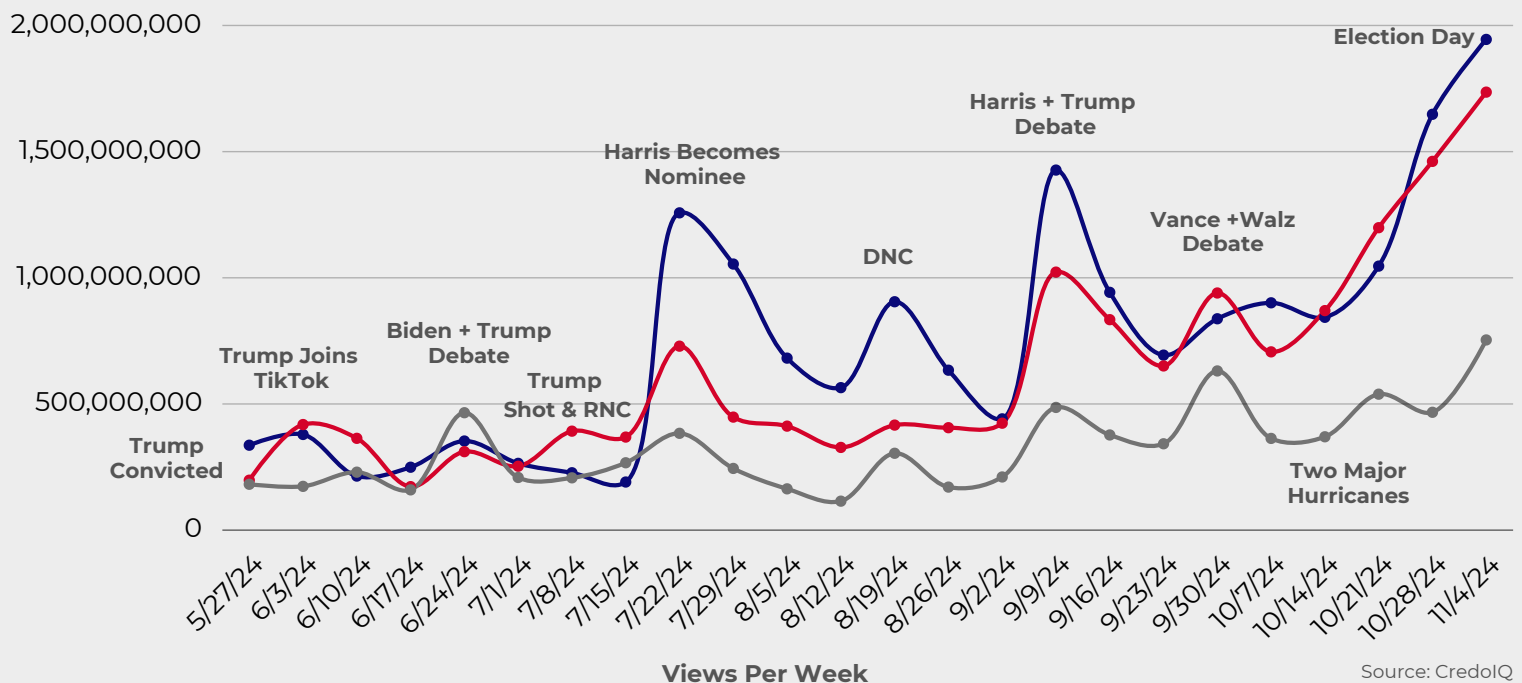
In an era of inflation, disorderly immigration and escalating global conflicts, the Conservative TikTok ecosystem **excelled at meeting a majority of Americans where they are**.

The chart below shows it was a hard fought battle on both sides. The Progressive ecosystem had a tall order of **defending their record, dealing with a candidate swap and setting a vision for the future** while the Conservative ecosystem had the opportunity to **primarily wage an offensive**.

The goal of this report is to analyze how the Conservative TikTok ecosystem's strategy differed from the Progressive strategy. **This is not a commentary on political beliefs or who used more honest tactics to achieve their goals.**

Viral Views on TikTok by Account Partisanship

■ Progressive views ■ Conservative Views ■ Independent views



# CredolQ

Real-time Social Intelligence for Politics

## Part 1: Meeting People Where They Are

For this section, we did a deep dive into the **1,000 most viewed political TikTok posts** from July 21st (when Harris entered the race) through November 5th.

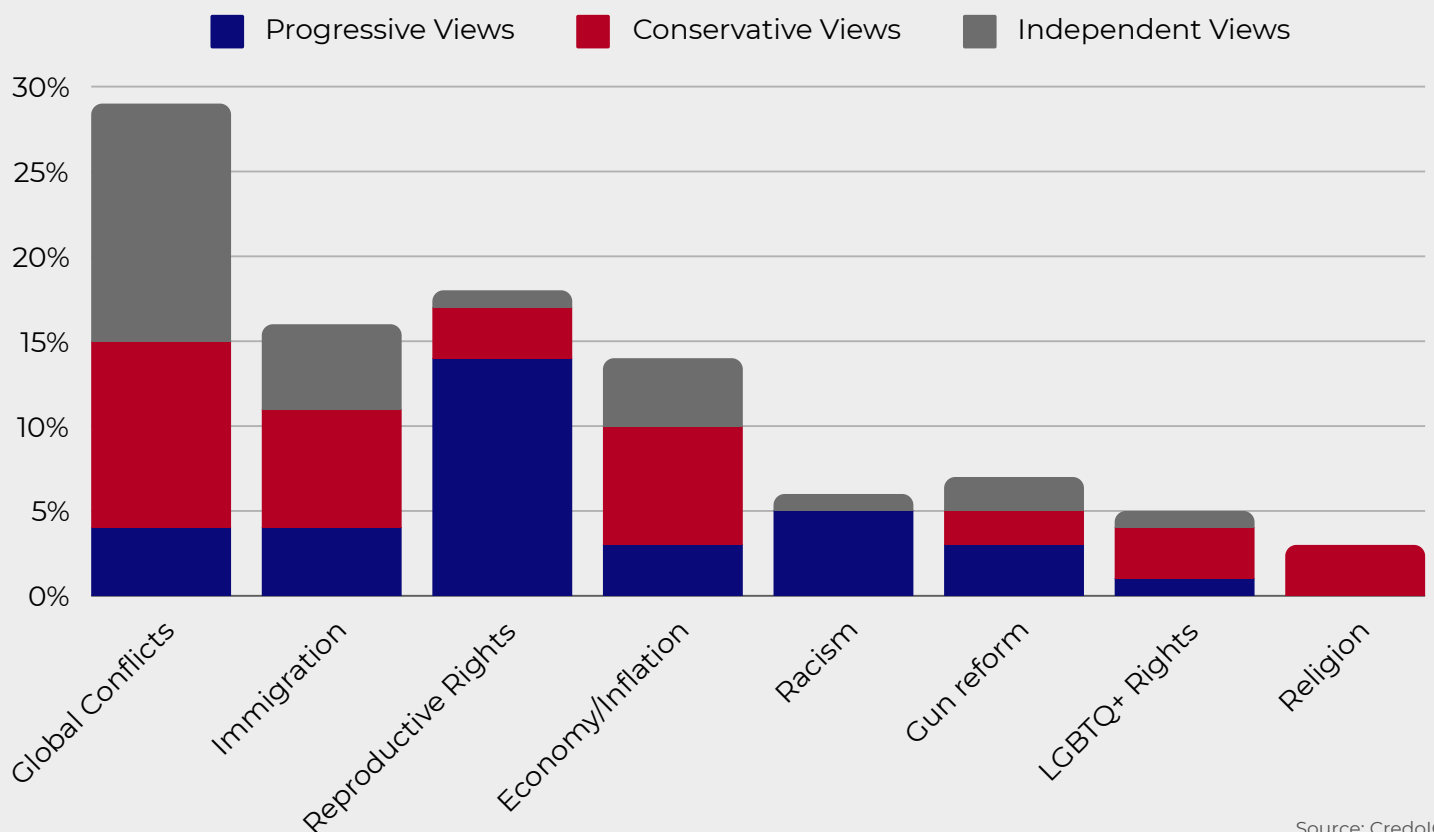
These **1,000 TikTok posts amassed over 10 billion views** on the platform, each breaking through political bubbles to the mainstream.

# PRIMAL > INTELLECTUAL

Conservative accounts primarily leveraged TikTok to wage an emotional policy appeal to Americans around **primal, tangible needs like national and financial security** (global conflicts, immigration & the economy).

Progressive accounts primarily used TikTok to wage an intellectual policy appeal to Americans around **highly personal issues like reproductive rights, systemic racism and gun reform.**

Share of Viral Views by Account Partisanship & Content Theme



Source: CredolQ

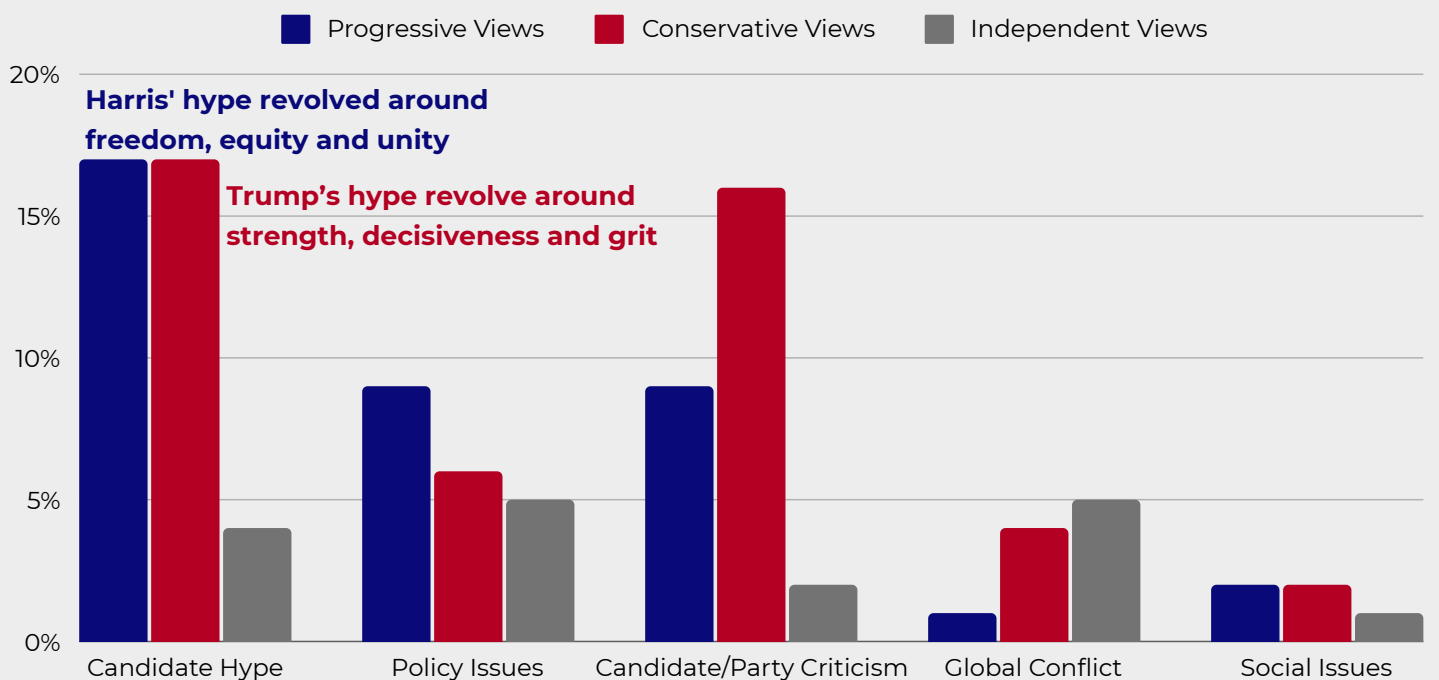
While Progressive accounts dominated the conversation around **reproductive rights & social issues**, their overarching message of freedom may not have been **tangible enough** to fight-off Conservative command of the conversation around **global conflict, immigration and the economy.**

# NOT ALL VIEWS ARE EQUAL

The Conservative TikTok ecosystem:

- Excelled at delivering an **authentic message** depicting Donald Trump as an unconventional, masculine savior that would **solve America's most pressing issues**.
- Relentlessly pursued a case **against the Biden/Harris Administration's policies and outcomes**.
- Understood that cerebral policy posts about their plans were **less likely to go viral and breakthrough to the masses**.

Share of Viral Views by Account Partisanship & Messaging Type



Source: CredolQ

One could see how Trump's hype tied **directly to a populist style of fixing key issues** while Harris' hype tied more to **abstract personal freedoms and social norms**.

# CredolQ

Real-time Social Intelligence for Politics

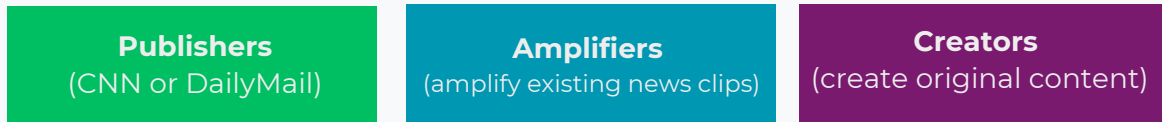
## Part 2: The Amplifier Effect

In this section we attempted to dig deeper into the **platform mechanics driving Conservative success on TikTok.**

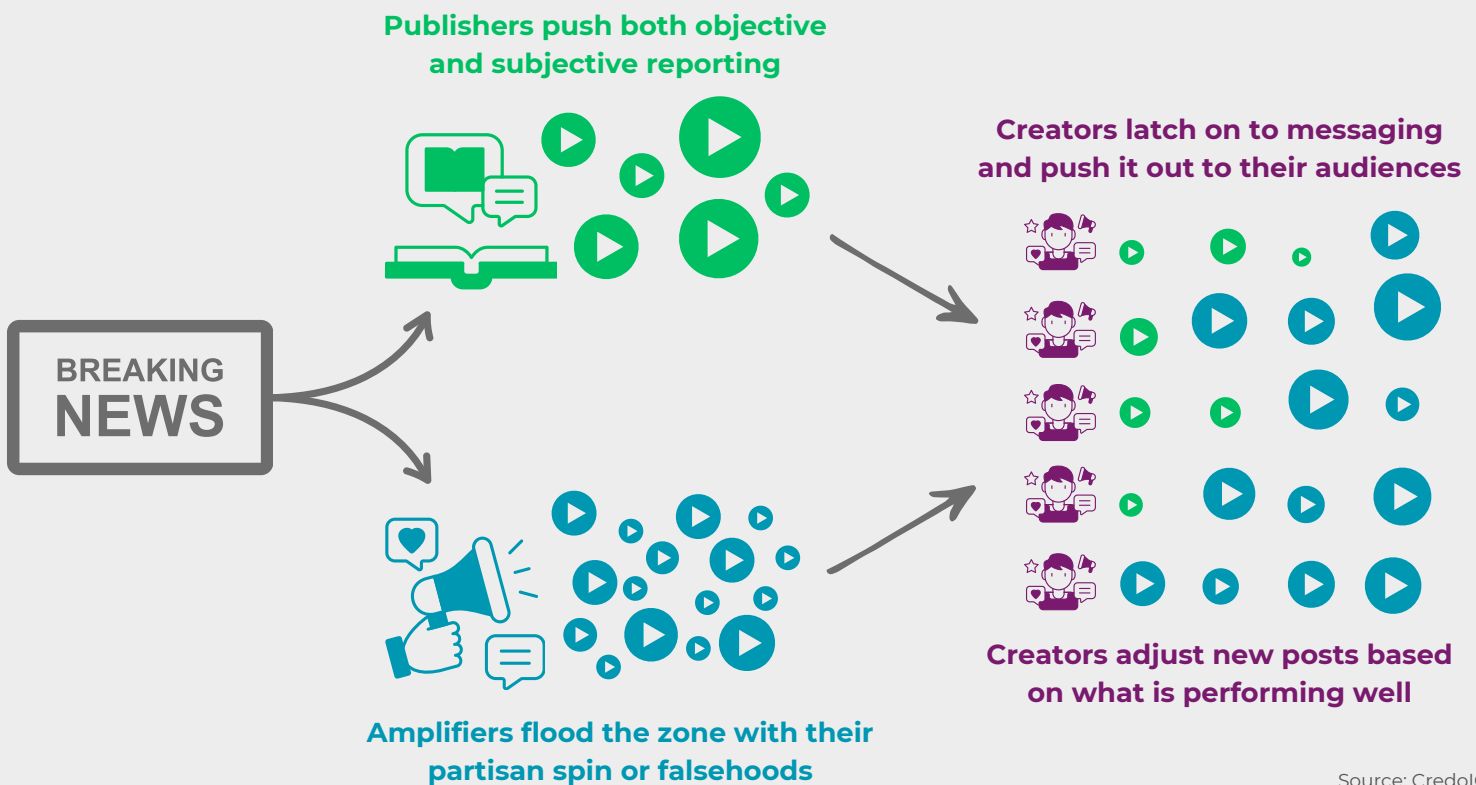
We analyzed the highest performing 25% of political posts from the top 300 political TikTok accounts over the last 5 months **looking for where viral videos originated and where they ended up.**

# SETTING THE NARRATIVE

There are 3 broad types of accounts that play key roles in setting the political narrative on TikTok .



## The Fight to Command the News Narrative



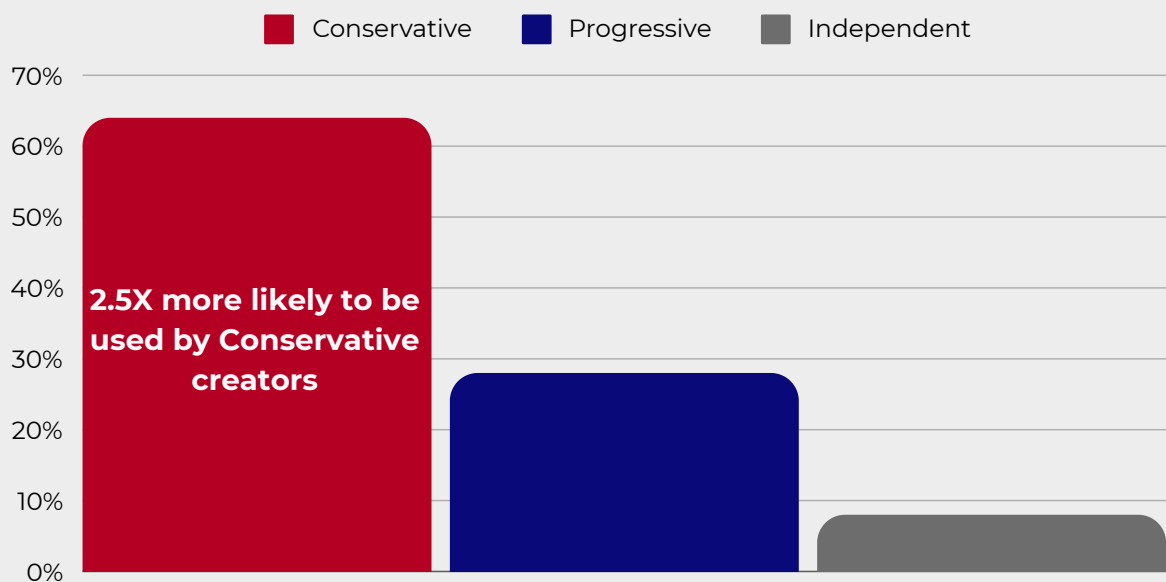
Amplifiers quickly push out rally, news and interview footage with text overlays to set their preferred narrative. These amplifier posts **act as an incubator for political creators to latch on to specific themes** that they then share with their audiences. This ecosystem creates a **flywheel for a partisan messages to quickly take over the news narrative.**

# POWER OF CONSENSUS

Our analysis found that Conservative amplifier accounts **played an outsized role** in setting the political narrative on TikTok.

- Conservative amplifier accounts **outnumbered Progressive amplifier accounts more than 2 to 1** in both views and post volume.
- Conservative amplifier posts were **2.5X more likely to be used by** Conservative creators compared to Progressive amplifier posts.

Share of Viral Views by Amplifier Partisanship



Source: CredoIQ

## Why Conservative amplifiers may have performed better

- Rank and file Conservative accounts **consistently “fell into formation”** sharing out the messaging being pushed to them by Conservative amplifiers and publishers.
- The Progressives ecosystem **experienced less consensus and more infighting** on TikTok related to Biden stepping down and how to handle the Middle East conflict and immigration.



# TAKEAWAYS

---

- **Meet People Where They Are** - the Conservative ecosystem skillfully avoided discussing future policy by owning the narrative around the issues that are affecting the largest number of Americans today.
- **Build a Persona that Addresses Tangible Issues** - the conservative ecosystem made a big bet that building a **populist persona of power, decisiveness and grit** would appeal to a large number of American's fears about national and financial security.
- **Ecosystem Consensus is a Powerful Accelerant** - whether it is a good or bad trait to have complete party consensus, there is no doubt that complete consensus acts as a **powerful accelerant** to distribute a narrative.
- **Leverage Platform Mechanics to Win News Cycles** - perfecting the interplay between **effective messaging and leveraging platform mechanics** is how you swiftly win an issue.
- **Americans Crave Authentic & Informal Politics on TikTok** - the TikTok algorithm is built around **authenticity, spontaneity and feeding online cultures**. It should be no surprise that Trump's unconventional and often inflammatory persona thrives in this environment.

## Other Reports by CredolQ

- [Analyzing Harris' Ascension on TikTok](#)
- [TikTok's Response to the June Presidential Debate](#)
- [Analyzing the Progressive Anti-Biden Movement](#)
- [Analyzing TikTok's Rapid Response to Trump's Guilty Verdict](#)
- [Analyzing RFK Jr's Rise on TikTok](#)

# NOTES & DEFINITIONS

---

- **Highest Performing 1000 Posts** - political post showing up in U.S. feeds with the most views between July 21st and November 5th, 2024.
- **Content Analysis** - all content analysis was manually conducted by the CredolQ team due to the nuances of many TikTok posts and the importance of the topic. Much of the content analysis was done in the weeks leading up to the election.
- **Progressive Accounts** - TikTok accounts that clearly show a preference for left-leaning policy and candidates.
- **Conservative Accounts** - TikTok accounts that clearly show a preference for right-leaning policy and candidates.
- **Independent Accounts** - TikTok accounts that clearly try to deliver unbiased news or do not show a preference for either side via their TikTok posts.
- **Viral Views:** We only pull in videos that go “viral” and have over 25,000 views. There are many other videos related to these topics that have less views.
- **Publishers** - a traditional news outlet like CNN or DailyMail
- **Creators** - accounts that create original content
- **Amplifiers** - accounts that just amplify news clips or existing content (like @hygonews)

# CredolQ

Real-time Social Intelligence for Politics

---

ben@credolq.com

[credolq.com](https://credolq.com)

---