

AMENDED Exhibit 622

PLAINTIFFS' OMNIBUS OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANTS' MOTIONS FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT

Case No.: 4:22-md-03047-YGR

MDL No. 3047

In Re: Social Media Adolescent Addiction/Personal Injury Products Liability Litigation

[T&S] Digital Wellbeing Bimonth Update

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Related Documents [HYPERLINK [REDACTED]

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Goals

1. Review research developments and analysis to identify opportunities outside of our current way of thinking
2. Update Key Stakeholders on changes to our product strategy based on new research
3. Integrate feedback into the product-making process and new features

1. What We Have Learned

Research

pushpin

TLDR

Research in this bi-month was broken up into 2 key areas:

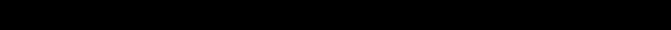
1. **Agency** - the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices
2. **Belonging** - facilitate meaningful interactions and relationships between TikTok users

Based on the research from academic and industry sources, we have identified 4 opportunities at varying levels of lift that will continue to build on the ongoing Wellbeing work and address key issues on TikTok.

Opportunities:

1. Designing for belonging and providing tools to build resiliency
 2. Addressing issues on self-esteem, colorism, and beauty trends with industry leading guidelines on user-generated filters
 3. Products updates that support "effortful control" skills in young users and excessive users
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Agency

1. [HYPERLINK 

A more detailed report is being written by our research partner and will be shared with the group soon. For now...

- * Awareness of current TikTok screen time management tools is low for parents and teens, and there are opportunities for us to enhance discoverability and ease of access.
- * When asked to consider TikTok's existing screen time management tool, teens recognised that it could have a positive impact in helping them manage their usage, but the majority could not see themselves using it.
- * Teens and parents were asked to consider a range of ideas to enhance TikTok's screen time management offering. Overall, the ideas were well received by teens and parents - they found a direct link to better control over usage, leading to more positive digital wellbeing.
- * When asked to rank and provide feedback on a range of screen time management ideas, the dashboard received the highest praise. This was liked by teens as it provided access to data about their usage, and by parents as it provided a succinct overview on how their children are using the app.
- * When comparing screen time management ideas, teens had a clear preference for the 'Session Duration Limit' over 'Pre-set daily limit', however, this was more mixed amongst parents.
- * When asked to provide feedback on how to improve on the range of ideas, teens and parents noted that 'Holiday mode' and 'in app warnings' were welcome add ons.

2. **TikTok Tics**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, tic-related and Tourette syndrome-related videos have been gaining popularity on this site among these young users. Within a 3-week period in March of 2021, views of videos with the keywords #tourette and #tic increased by 7% to a total of 5.8 billion views.

TikTok tics are distinct from what is typically seen in patients with Tourette syndrome, although they share many characteristics with functional tics. Medical professionals are seeing examples of tics in their patients - especially young girls. Further research is needed to understand if TikTok Tics can be fully attributed to a neurological issue triggered on TikTok or if it's mimicked behavior.

3. **Screen Time**

A study from [[HYPERLINK "https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/social-media-positive-mental-health/" \h](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/social-media-positive-mental-health/)] defined two dimensions of social media use...

1. how much it's routinely used
2. how emotionally connected users are to the platforms

...and three health-related outcomes

1. social well-being
2. positive mental health
3. self-rated health.

The conclusion of this [[HYPERLINK](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1090198119863768)

"<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1090198119863768>" \h] found that routine social media use is positively associated with all three health outcomes while emotional connection to social media is negatively associated with all three outcomes. These findings suggest that routine (quantity of time spent on social media) is not inherently bad as long as users are mindful and in some cases, social media use could be beneficial. Routine social media use may compensate for diminishing face-to-face social interactions in the case of the pandemic with additional studies suggesting that connections on social media can strengthen our in person networks.

An area of concern in screen time management is in edge cases of extreme use. Younger social media users do not have the "effortful control" skills developed yet that give them the ability to self-regulate behavior online. Creating accessible and highly visible features that help users manage screen time will be a key to reducing harm caused by excessive use.

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Ongoing Work

Work is already underway to develop a Screen Time Dashboard to give users more information on their app use and support building healthier habits. Additional details below in the Feature Development Updates and Plan section of this doc.

Belonging

1. **Belonging and Resiliency**

Brené Brown defines belonging as “**being part of something bigger but also having the courage to stand alone**, and to belong to yourself above all else.” Building communities with authentic connections allows people to feel a sense of belonging. However, when a sense of shame impedes these connections, it creates more separation in groups. The primary users of our app are teenagers and young adults that are still shaping their sense of self and are more susceptible to sense of shame, especially in response to others' reactions to them. Prioritizing our users' ability to build authentic connections on TikTok will ultimately lead to a stronger sense of belonging and improved in app experience.

Research shows that belonging and resilience are tied together and that strengthening one will improve the other. When thinking about how we design for belonging on TikTok we should also consider developing tools and resources that allow our users to build resiliency. There is the paradox of fragility in online social systems where an individual perceives only a single source of belonging (i.e. Social Media presence). By developing resiliency in their sense of belonging, our users will improve their digital wellbeing. Social connections play an important role in boosting resiliency by creating a buffer against negative physical and mental health outcomes, particularly in difficult times - which many of our users are facing by coming of age during a pandemic and other major world events.

Note: We would like to note that TikTok should be careful not to replace the concept of diversity on the app with belonging. They are two different concepts and should be addressed separately.

2. Negative Social Comparison

An ongoing issue on all social media platforms is the ability of strangers, friends, family, and others to “like” and comment on all aspects of users' lives. This can have implications for self-esteem with studies citing that users view how they are perceived by others as inextricably linked to how they feel about themselves. Tied to the concept of belonging, this social acceptance and approval by peers is essential for the wellbeing of children and young people.

Because rules for online interactions are not universally defined and change constantly, this creates unstable foundations for self perception and prop up “imagined communities”. In 2021 Instagram rolled out a [HYPERLINK

“<https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/giving-people-more-control>” \h] that allows users to hide like counts on posts. Statements by Instagram confirm that while some users liked this feature, it did not have an overall [HYPERLINK

“<https://www.theverge.com/2021/5/27/22456206/instagram-hiding-likes-experiment-results-platformer>” \h] as predicted. This can be attributed to the fact that [HYPERLINK

“https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/likes-facebook-instagram-mental-health/2021/05/27/132073d0-be55-11eb-9c90-731aff7d9a0d_story.html” \h] issues of social comparison around body image, wealth, perceived desirability, and more.

Note: There are unspoken social implications when a creator hides likes, comments, downvotes, etc. There is usually an association with something negative and other users assume that the creator has something to hide and is trying to hide a “scandal”

3. The Ugly Side of Beauty Filters

Social media-induced dissatisfaction with appearance, termed "snapchat dysmorphia" and "selfie dysmorphia" continues to be a major issue, spreading beyond social media to tools like Zoom that now offers a "touch up" feature (now called Studio Effects) for video calls. Facebook and Instagram alone claim that [HYPERLINK

"https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/04/02/1021635/beauty-filters-young-girls-augmented-reality-social-media/" \h] have used at least one of the AR effects associated with the company's products and a spokesperson for Snapchat said that "200 million daily active users play with or view Lenses every day to transform the way they look..."

A[HYPERLINK "https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2056305120965155" \h] showed that children, particularly girls, were very aware of the importance of their appearance. In a study focused on Snapchat filters, the majority of the boys saw Snapchat filters as a source of entertainment and fun, whereas the majority of girls viewed them as enhancement tools to make people look prettier. Face filters not only drive users to make changes in real life, they shape the *kinds* of alterations they desire too, with a survey conducted by the Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS) in 2017 highlighting that 55% of plastic surgeons [HYPERLINK "https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2019/08/14/selfie-addiction-social-media-driving-increase-cosmetic-surgery-column/1893368001/" \h] their patients' surgeries were motivated by a desire to look better in selfies. This bleed through from online to real life is particularly concerning as it's driving younger people to seek permanent and possibly dangerous cosmetic surgery.

Additionally, filters directly contribute to digital colorism. The majority of beauty filters include effects that lighten skin, slim noses, slim jaw lines, and generally lean towards more euro-centric beauty standards. The lack of guidance across platforms on user generated filters has allowed the creation of filters that continue to narrow and perpetuate beauty standards that are now being reflected off-line.

There are also concerns around biometric data that is being collected by companies. Though both Facebook and Snapchat say they do not use filter technology to collect personally identifiable data, a review of their privacy policies shows that they do indeed have the right to store data from the photographs and videos on the platforms.

Currently, work has been done to rename these filters from "beautify" to "enhancement" and TikTok has different default beauty values according to different age gates. In the US TikTok provides only one beauty switch to users (called "Enhance") in accordance with PR/GR requirements.

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Recommendations

Designing for belonging using the Dimensions of Belonging from Stanford's

D.School will give users a higher quality experience on TikTok. Designing for belonging on the app should be set in three stages:

1. The initial experience and "active hospitality"
2. Developing a relationship with our users
3. Supporting our users' growth (separate from creator growth)

Through communication, defining the role and importance of users, and developing spaces for authentic communities to grow we can support our users in building their sense of self and belonging.

In addition to designing for belonging, developing toolkits on grit and resiliency will support users' journey to finding a sense of belonging. Partnering with experts like Angela Duckworth will give these tools the detail and credibility needed to make them effective.

To further execute on the general guidelines at TikTok about filter creation that protect against colorism, gender performance, strict beauty standards, etc. partnering with non-profits like Beautywell to develop a set of criteria and a panel of approvers for any new filters that get created by users.

Additionally, TikTok should continue to work with clinicians to do further research into the impacts of distortion filters (regardless if they are "beautifying" or not) and their effects on body image and rising body dysmorphia.

Partnerships

1. [[HYPERLINK "https://digitalwellnesslab.org/" \h](https://digitalwellnesslab.org/)] is an offshoot of Boston Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School providing us with feedback and guidance around our product strategy, measurement, roadmap, and feature design. Meeting notes example: [[HYPERLINK \[REDACTED\]](#)]
2. "[[HYPERLINK "https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/aspendigital/" \h](https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/aspendigital/)] empowers policy-makers, civic organizations, companies, and the public to be responsible stewards of technology and media in the service of an informed, just, and equitable world." We are participating in a panel with 20 other academics and industry professionals to find common ground in wellbeing issues and brainstorm solutions as an industry. [[HYPERLINK "https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Meeting-Summaries_Empathic-Research-Innovation.pdf" \h](https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Meeting-Summaries_Empathic-Research-Innovation.pdf)]
3. We have continued to partner with [[HYPERLINK "https://www.stanfordbrainstorm.com/" \h](https://www.stanfordbrainstorm.com/)], working with them on our product strategy, integrating scientifically-grounded methods to create a cohesive approach to care for user wellbeing and improve and expand on our educational and safety-related product offerings. They outlined 3 key areas of focus:
 - ⌘. **User Agency** - Both users and parents have identified excessive use as a problem. The Stanford SMEs are aligned with the screen time management feature updates and