



# Short Drama Apps: Key Trends for 2026

Exploring mobile's most dynamic  
streaming video segment

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Appfigures Explorer

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# Hi, we're Appfigures

We estimate what apps get downloaded and what people spend in the U.S. App Store and Google Play. This report is that data for Short Drama apps, through July 2026.

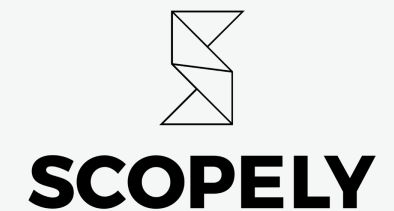


SQUARE ENIX



MINICLIP

SYBO





**Randy Nelson**  
Head of Insights

### Questions about this report?

Send them to [insights@appfigures.com](mailto:insights@appfigures.com).  
They shape what we publish next.

# Why Traditional Streamers Should Pay Attention

**The swift demise of Quibi almost six years ago**, after trying—and rapidly failing—to build an audience with **episodic shorts** ("quick bites") across a variety of genres, seemed to signal that consumers weren't interested in this format for their streaming content. The rapid growth of apps offering micro-sized

episodes of soapy dramas, known as Short Drama apps, has proven that just because Quibi flopped, the concept itself isn't an issue. Appfigures estimates reveal that Short Drama apps are a \$2.2B segment in the U.S. alone through July 2026, with consumer spending nearly doubling in 2025,

up from \$580M in 2024. That's joined by 58% YoY growth in first-time downloads over the period, with 84M estimated installs from Apple and Google's stores combined. In this analysis, we delve into the drivers of that growth, present our latest findings, and reveal why SVOD apps should be worried.



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# Category Overview



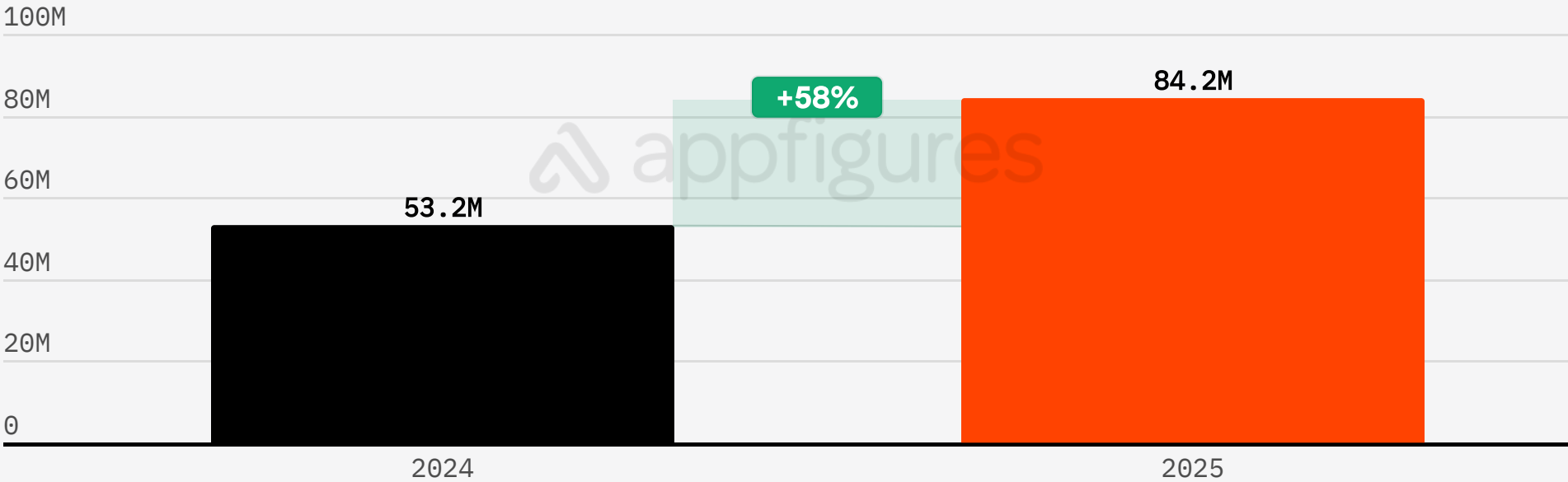
# Consumer Spending Doubled in 2025, and Downloads Weren't Far Behind

Looking at the big picture, Short Drama apps generated an estimated \$580M in U.S. consumer spending in 2024. In 2025, that figure nearly doubled to \$1.15B.

Downloads grew from 53M in 2024 to 84M in 2025, a 58% increase.

### Short Drama App Downloads by Year

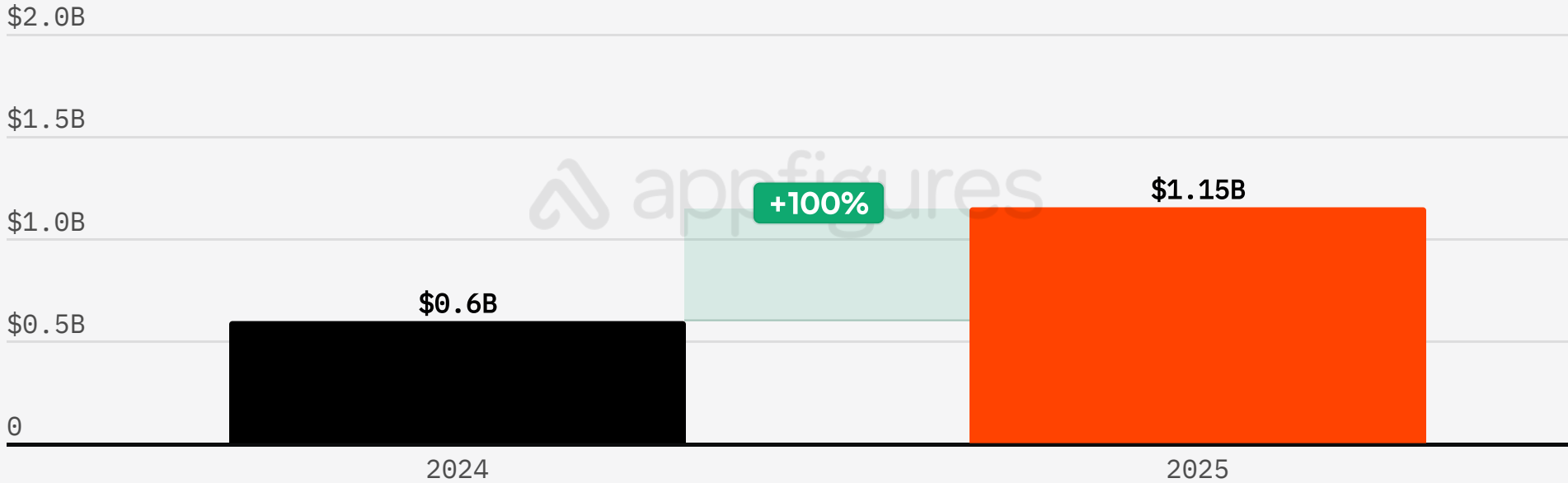
Estimated Unified Downloads • United States • iOS & Google Play



Source: Appfigures Intelligence

### Short Drama App Consumer Spending by Year

Estimated Unified Spending • United States • iOS & Google Play



Source: Appfigures Intelligence



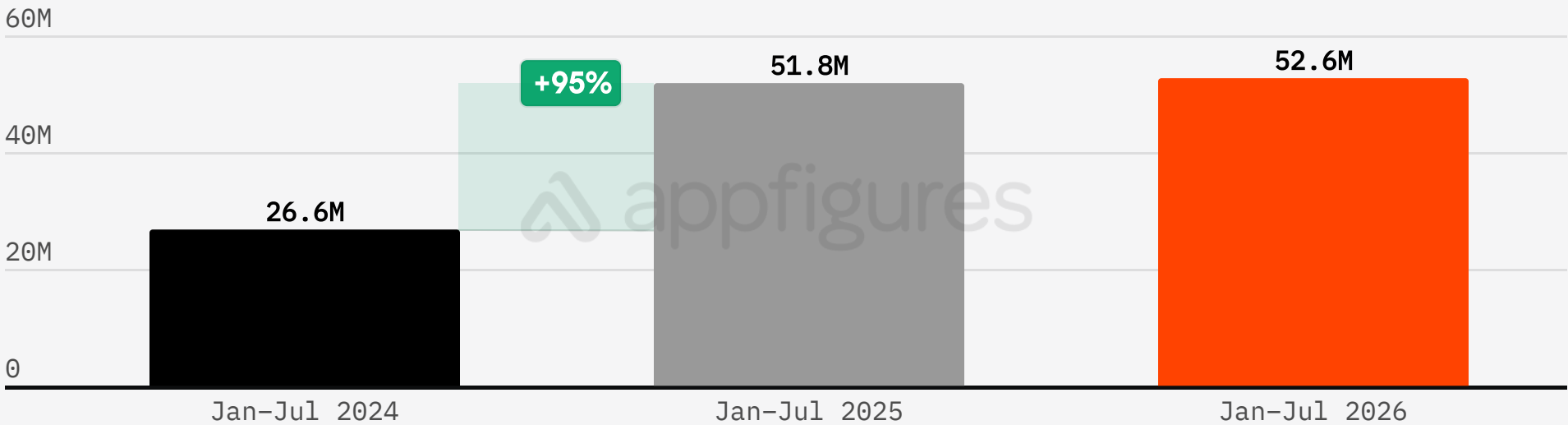
# Top Apps by Downloads & Consumer Spending

January through July downloads rose from 27M in 2024 to 52M in 2025 (+95%), then held near 53M in 2026. Consumer spending over the same months went from \$0.3B in 2024 to \$0.6B in 2025, then \$0.5B in 2026.

This page is a same-window year comparison, not lifetime totals. Lifetime rankings are on the following top-10 slides.

## Short Drama App Downloads

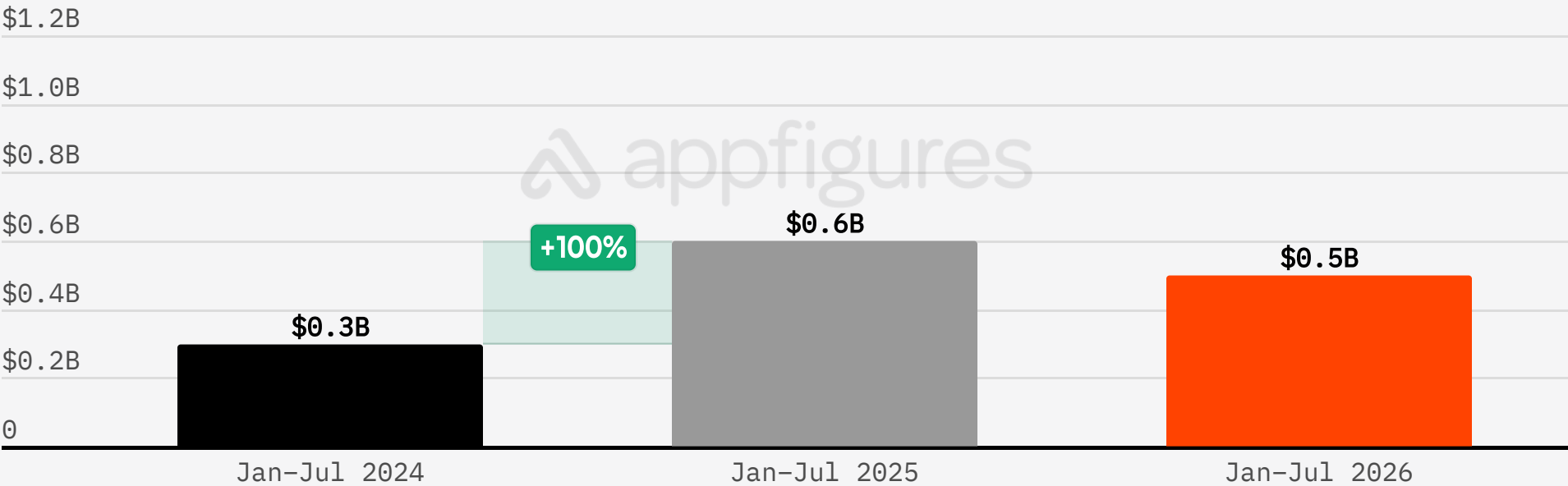
Estimated Unified Downloads • United States • iOS & Google Play



Source: Appfigures Intelligence

## Short Drama App Consumer Spending

Estimated Unified Spending • United States • iOS & Google Play



Source: Appfigures Intelligence



02

# Top Apps



Top Apps

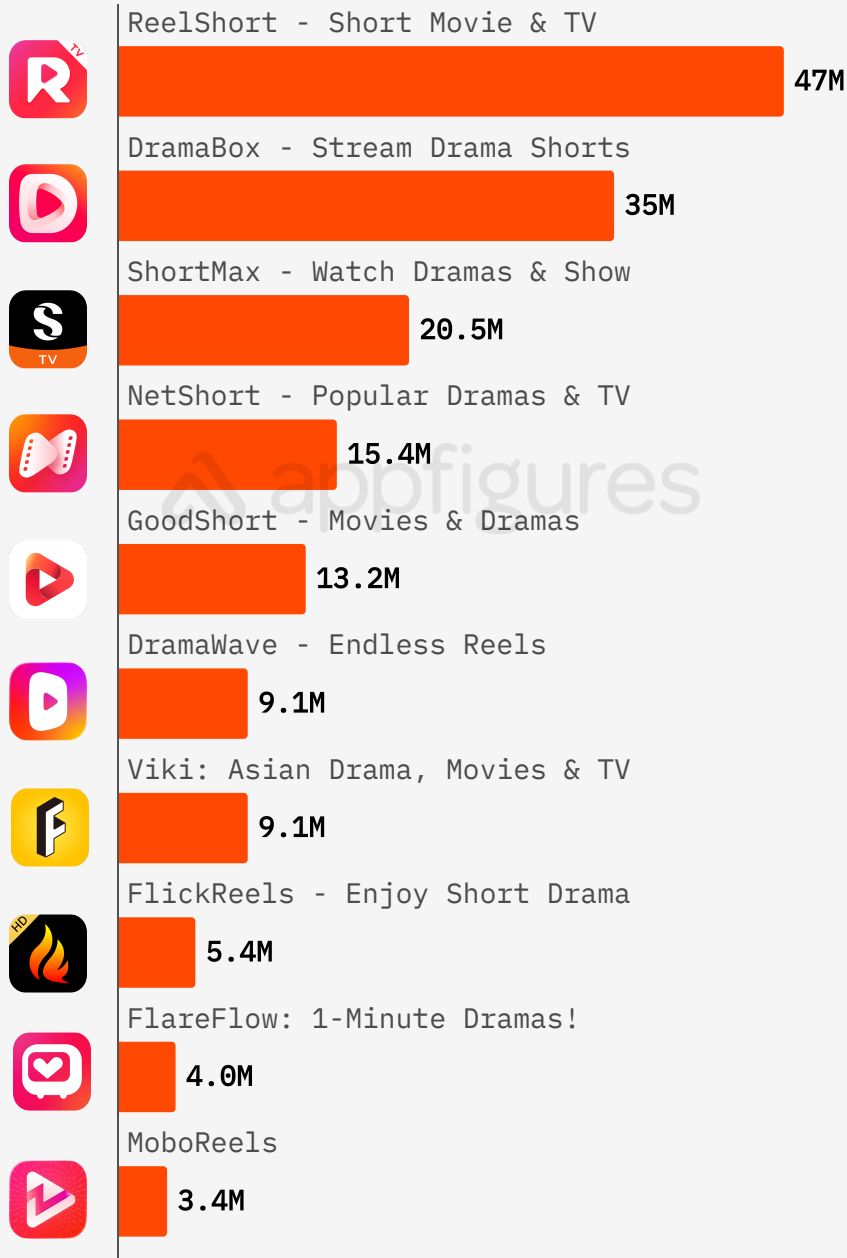
# Top Apps by All-Time Downloads & Consumer Spending

When it comes to lifetime downloads and consumer spending, ReelShort is the clear leader with 48M downloads and \$606M in consumer spending from the U.S. alone. DramaBox follows with 36M downloads and \$410M in consumer spending through July 2026.

Across the validated cohort, the 10 most-downloaded apps combined represent about 162M lifetime installs, while the 10 highest-earning apps have generated approximately \$1.9B in lifetime consumer spending.

## Top 10 Short Drama Apps by Total Downloads

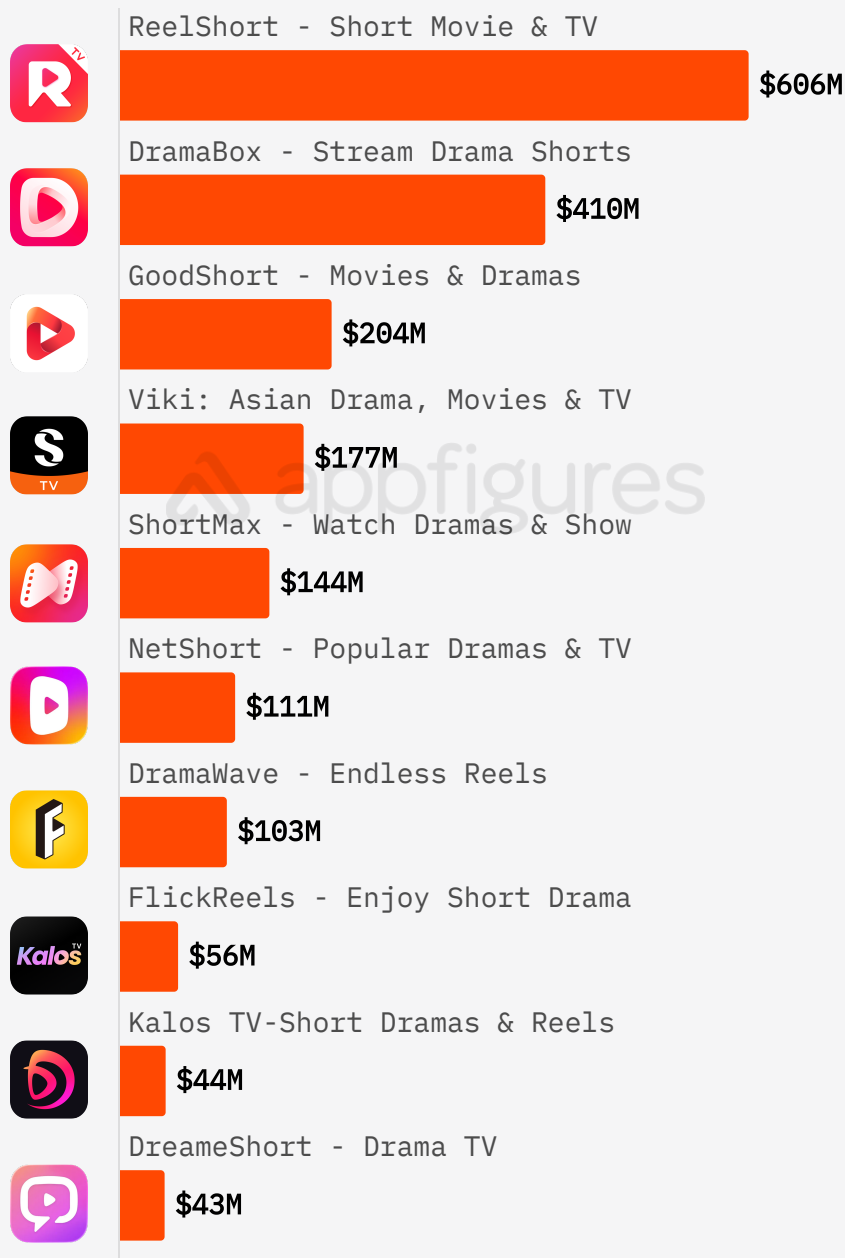
Estimated Figures • U.S. App Store & Google Play App Lifetime



Source: Appfigures Intelligence

## Top 10 Short Drama Apps by Total Consumer Spending

Estimated Figures • U.S. App Store & Google Play App Lifetime



Source: Appfigures Intelligence



Top Apps

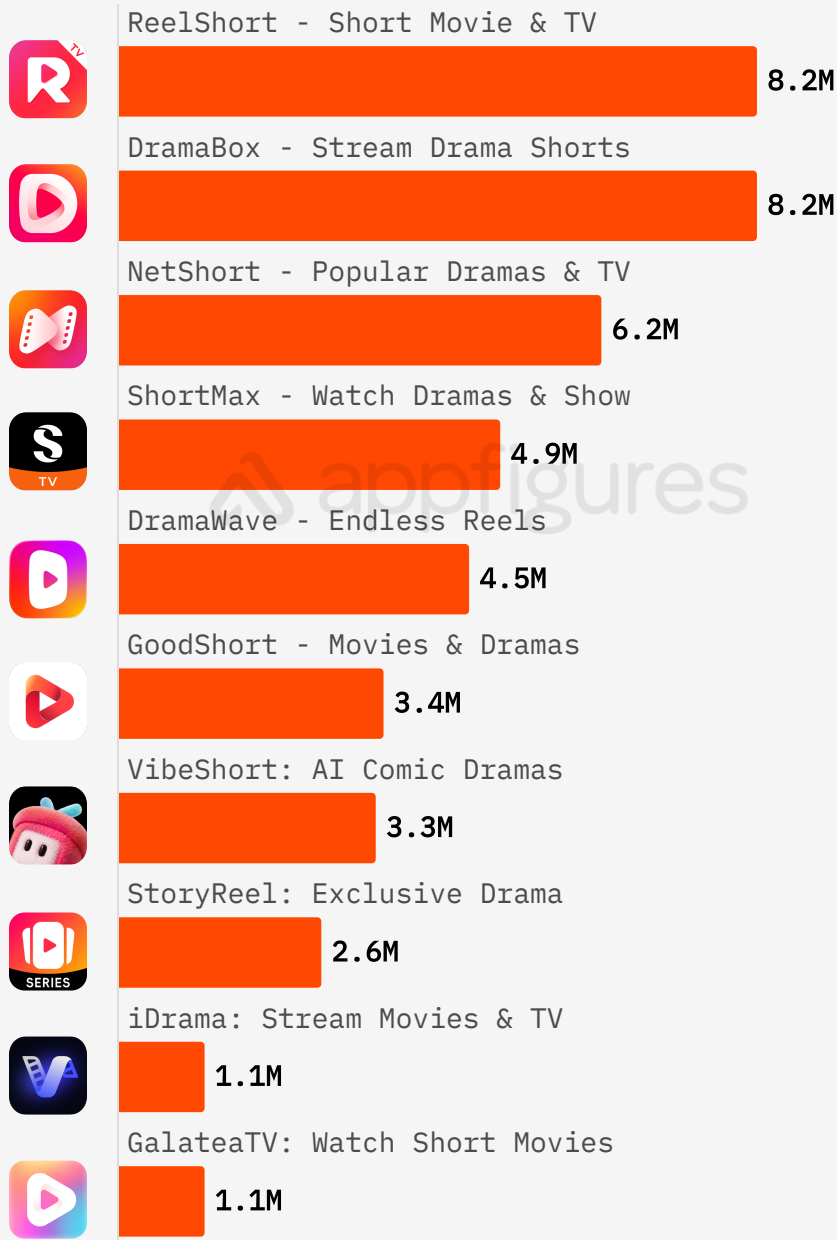
# Top Apps by Jan—Jul 2026 Downloads & Consumer Spending

Looking at estimated U.S. downloads from January through July 2026, ReelShort led with 8.2M installs, equal with DramaBox. NetShort ranked third with 6.2M.

The top 10 downloaded apps combined represented 44M installs, or 83% of the 52.6M Short Drama app total. ReelShort led in consumer spending with an estimated \$101M; the top 10 apps accounted for \$369M, or 78% of the \$470M Short Drama app total.

## Top 10 Short Drama Apps by Jan-Jul 2026 Downloads

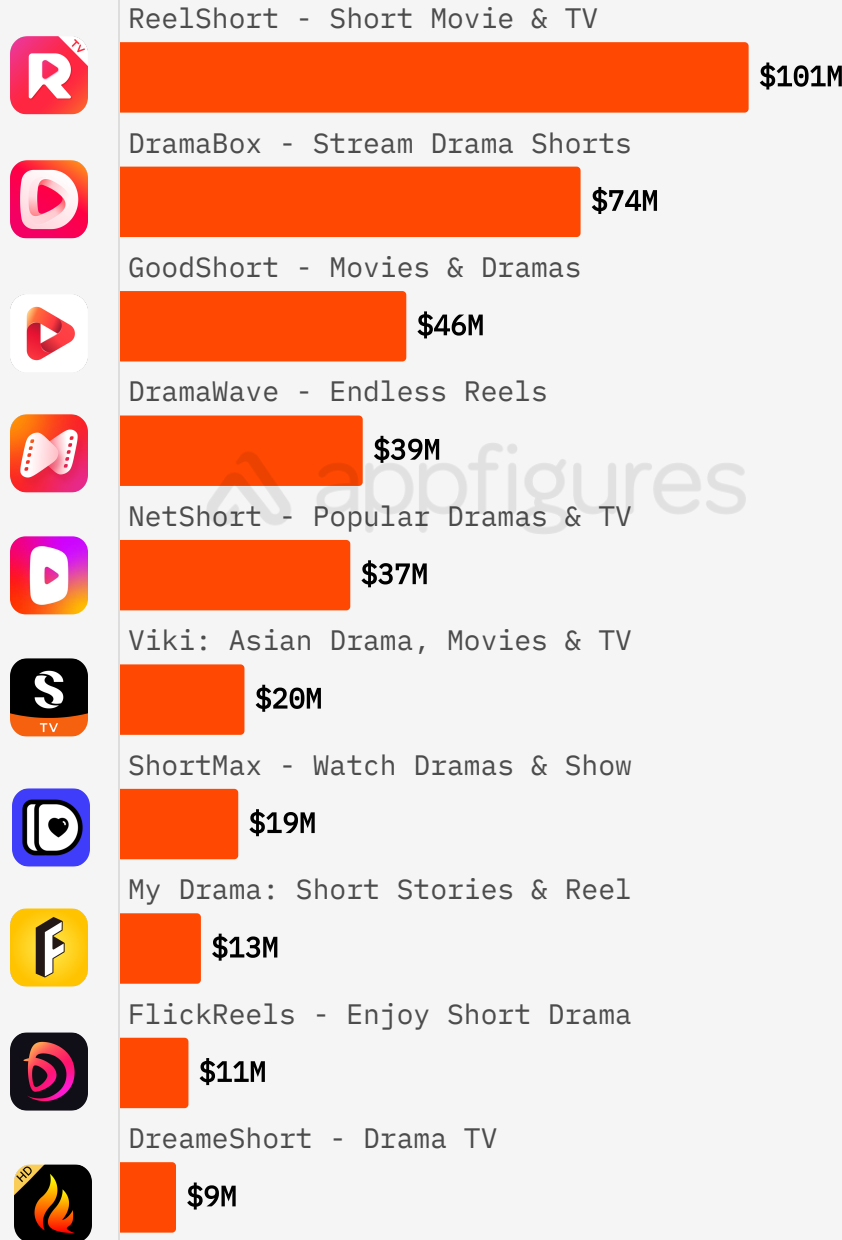
Estimated Figures • U.S. App Store & Google Play  
Jan '26 - Jul '26



Source: Appfigures Intelligence

## Top 10 Short Drama Apps by Jan-Jul 2026 Spending

Estimated Figures • U.S. App Store & Google Play  
Jan '26 - Jul '26



Source: Appfigures Intelligence



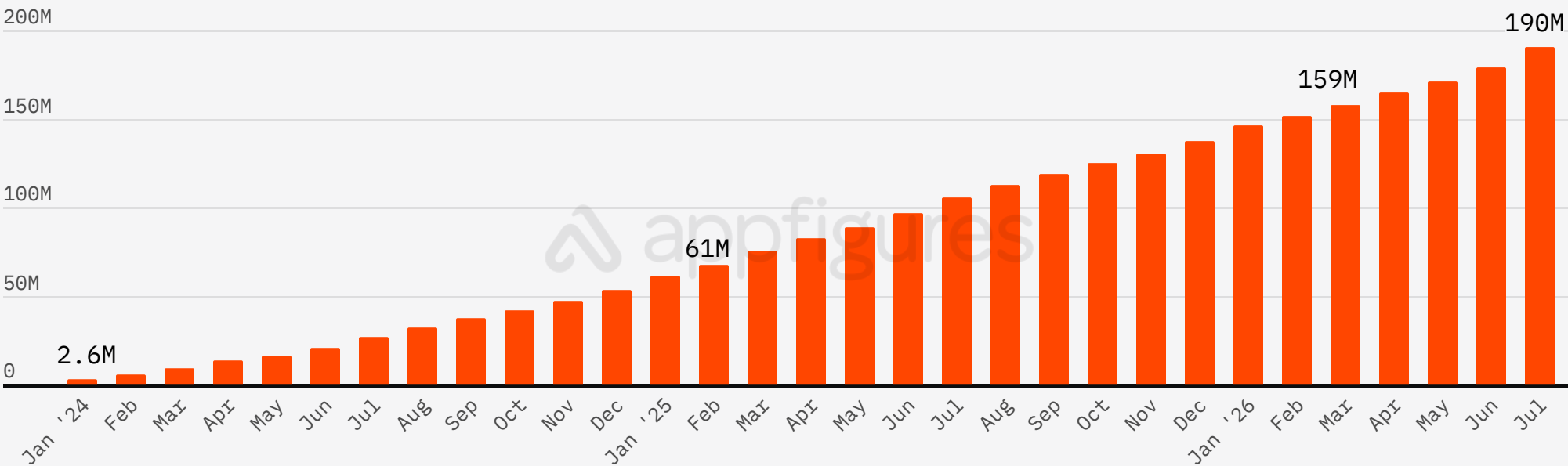
# Short Drama Apps Hit Major Download and Consumer Spending Milestones Mid 2026

Tremendous growth in downloads helped Short Drama apps build an extremely large user base. The validated cohort accumulated 190M U.S. downloads through July 2026, including 52.6M from January through July this year.

Consumer spending from the cohort reached \$2.2B through July 2026. The monthly trend cooled from its 2025 peak, but the segment still generated \$470M in consumer spending from January through July 2026.

## Short Drama Apps - Cumulative Downloads by Month

Estimated Downloads • United States • App Store & Google Play • Jan '24 - Jul '26

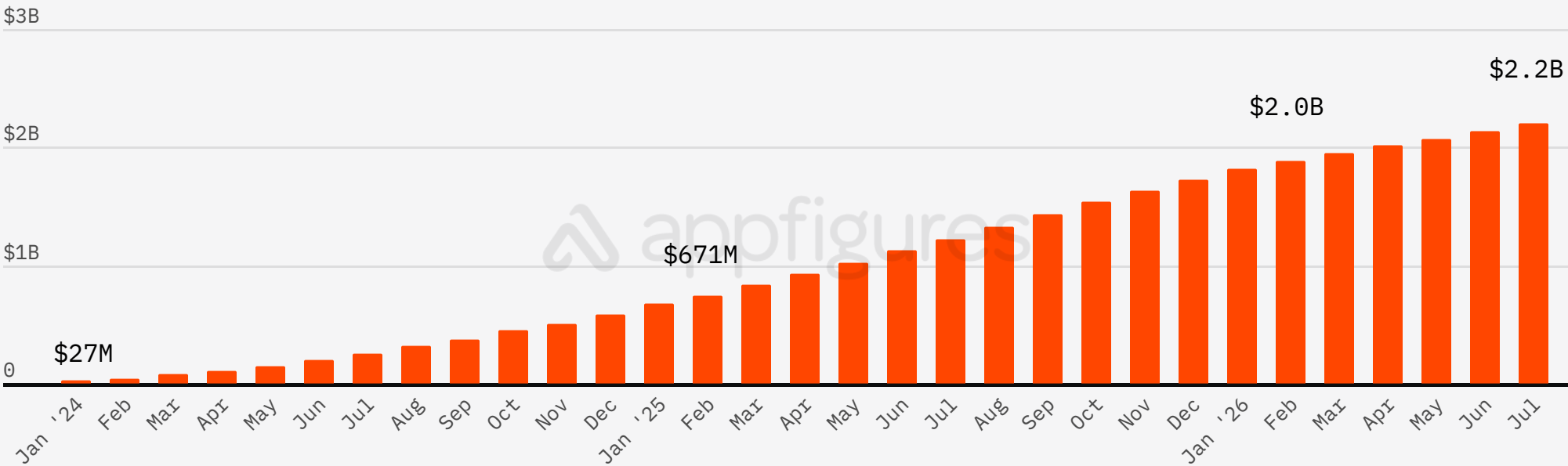


\*Record downloads

Source: Appfigures Intelligence

## Short Drama Apps - Cumulative Consumer Spending by Month

Estimated Consumer Spending • United States • App Store & Google Play • Jan '24 - Jul '26



\*Record consumer spending

Source: Appfigures Intelligence



03

# Streaming Shakeup



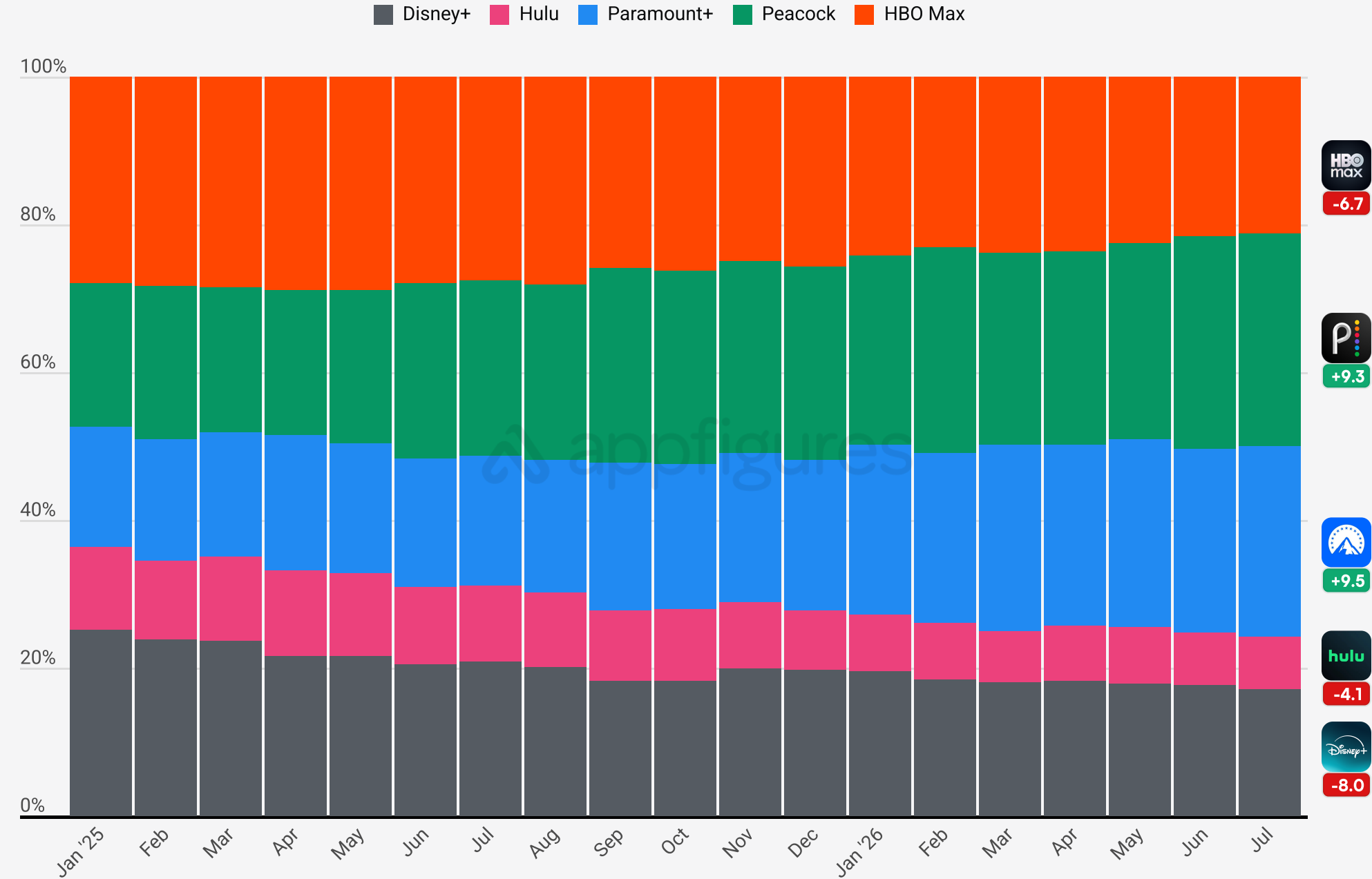
# Traditional Streamers are Facing a Major Shakeup

Data on major mobile streaming platforms shows the spending mix shifting over time. Peacock and Paramount+ gained share between January 2025 and July 2026, while Disney+, Hulu, and HBO Max lost share.

In July 2026, Peacock generated the largest share of consumer spending among the named traditional streaming apps in this comparison.

## Top Five Subscription Video On Demand (SVOD) Apps: Share of Spending by Month

United States • App Store & Google Play • Jan '25 - Jul '26



Source: Appfigures Intelligence



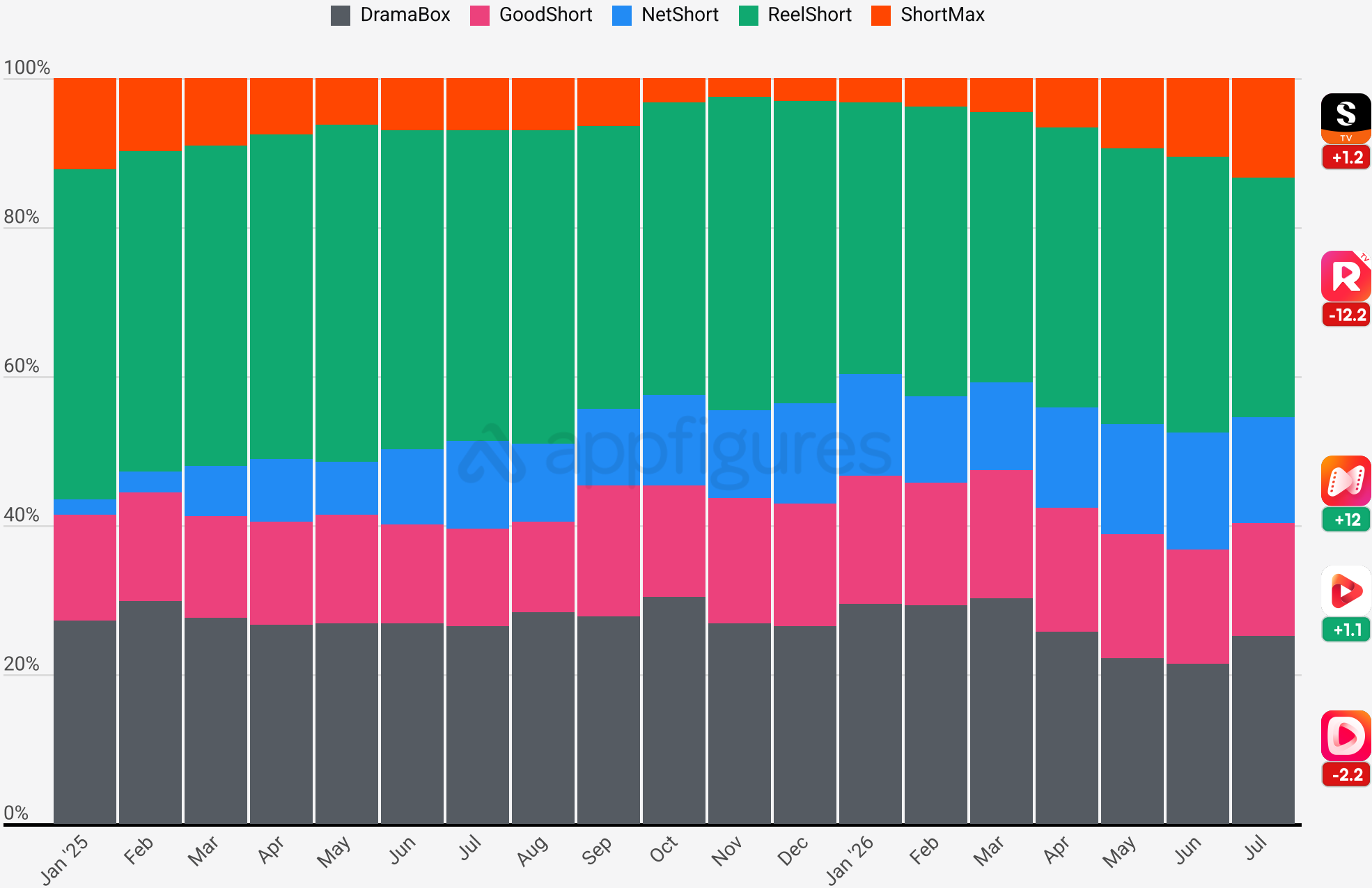
# Short Drama's Top Apps Continue to Battle for Dominance

Short Drama apps are becoming more competitive at the top. Between January 2025 and July 2026, ReelShort's share of spending among the five named leading short-drama apps fell from 44.4% to 32.2%, while DramaBox's slipped from 27.4% to 25.2%.

NetShort grew from 1.9% to 14.1% over the same period, showing how quickly the segment's spending mix can change.

## Top Five Short Drama Apps: Share of Spending by Month

United States • App Store & Google Play • Jan '25 - Jul '26



Source: Appfigures Intelligence



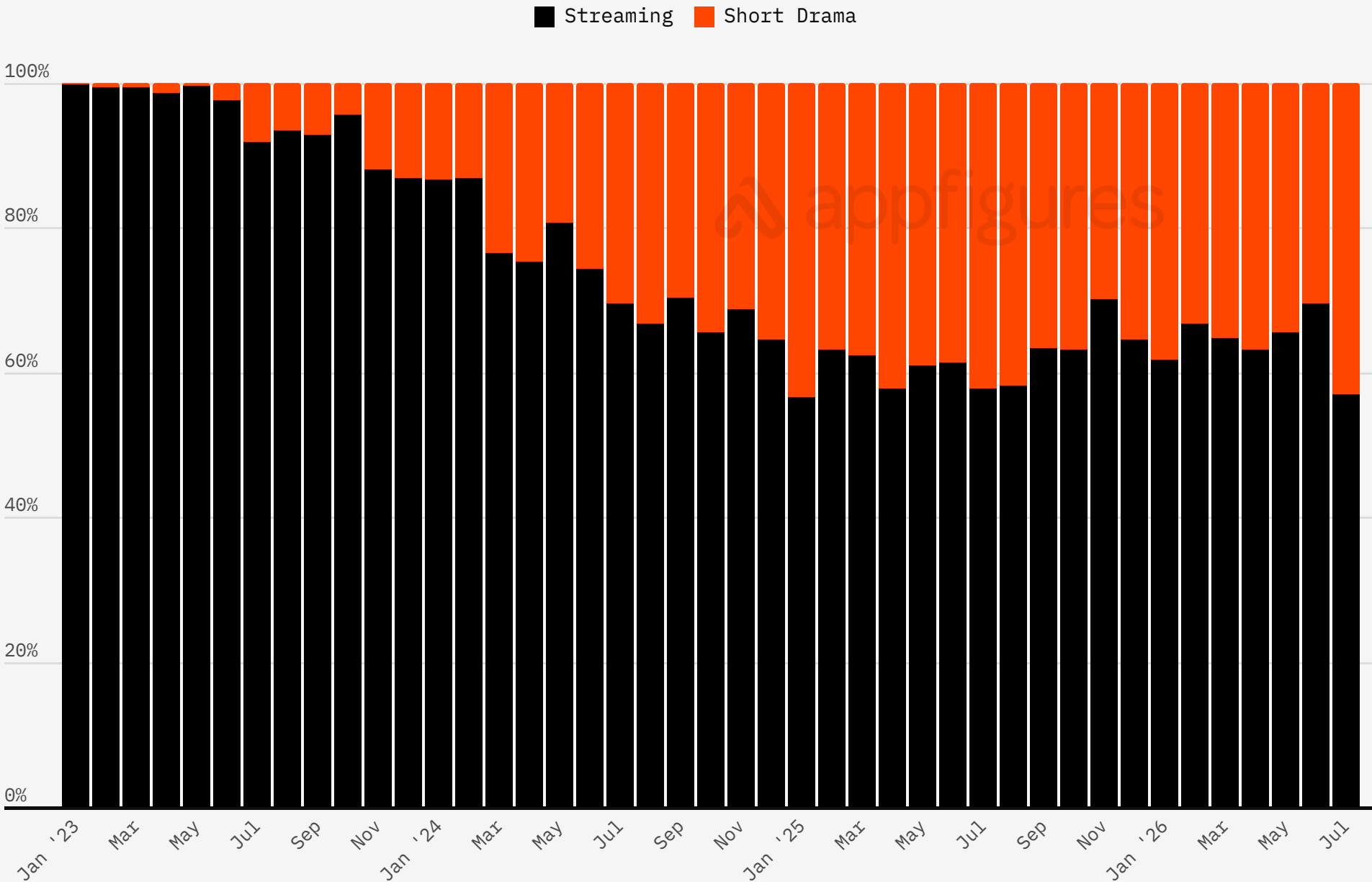
# Short Drama Apps Are Taking Traditional Streamers' Downloads

Appfigures estimates show that Short Drama apps are taking downloads from the leading traditional streamers. In 2025, Short Drama apps accounted for 39% of combined downloads for the two groups, up from 26% in 2024.

From January through July 2026, Short Drama apps accounted for 36% of their combined downloads with the leading streaming apps.

## Popular Streaming vs. Popular Short Drama Apps Downloads by Month

Estimated Downloads • United States • App Store & Google Play • Jan '23 - Jul '26



**Streaming:** Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, HBO Max, Hulu, Paramount+, Peacock  
**Short Drama:** DramaBox, GoodShort, NetShort, ReelShort, ShortMax

Source: Appfigures Intelligence

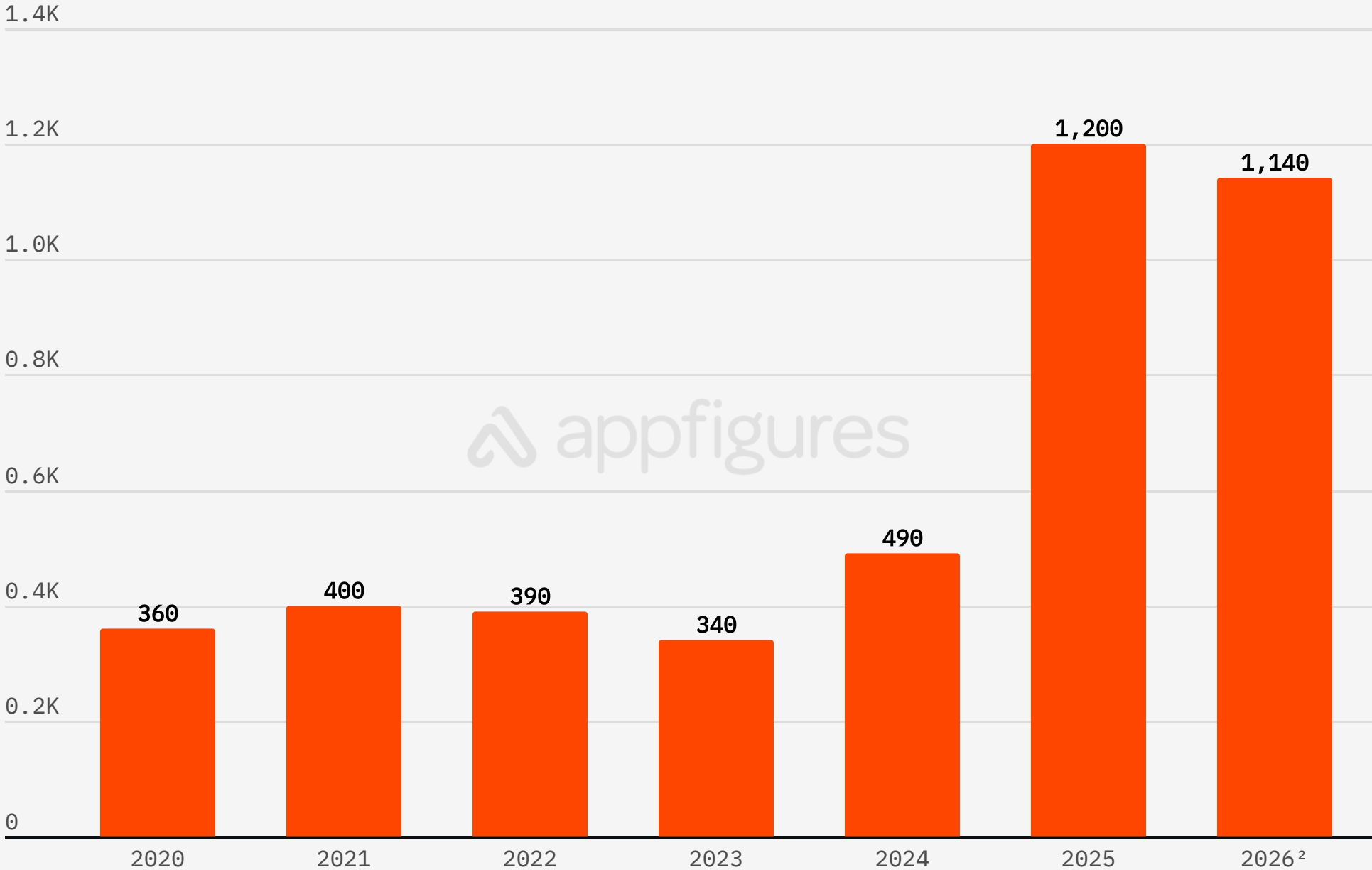


# Short Drama App Releases Are Skyrocketing in 2026

Using Appfigures Explorer, we identified releases of Short Drama apps dating back to 2020. After several years of between 300 and 500 apps debuting annually from 2020 to 2024, the most recent trend has taken that relative trickle and turned it into a veritable Niagara Falls of app launches.

2025 saw the launch of 1.2K new apps in the segment, 2.4x as many as 2024. Last year may look small in comparison by the time 2026 comes to a close. So far between January and July of this year, 1.14K new Short Drama apps have launched worldwide, a number that is 95% of 2025's full-year total and could surpass 2K for 2026 as a whole.

Short Drama App Releases<sup>1</sup> by Year  
App Store & Google Play • Jan '20 - Jul '26



<sup>1</sup> Count of all apps released, including removed apps

<sup>2</sup> January 1 through July 31, 2026



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# By the Numbers

**4.1K**

U.S. consumer  
spending

2025

**\$521M**

U.S. consumer spending  
through Jul

2026

**341M**

U.S. downloads  
through Jul

2026

# Short Drama Is Too Big to Ignore

ReelShort still leads, but the mix underneath it keeps moving. NetShort rose from 1.9% to 14.1% of spending among the five named apps in 18 months. Scale built this category. Retention and monetization will decide who stays.

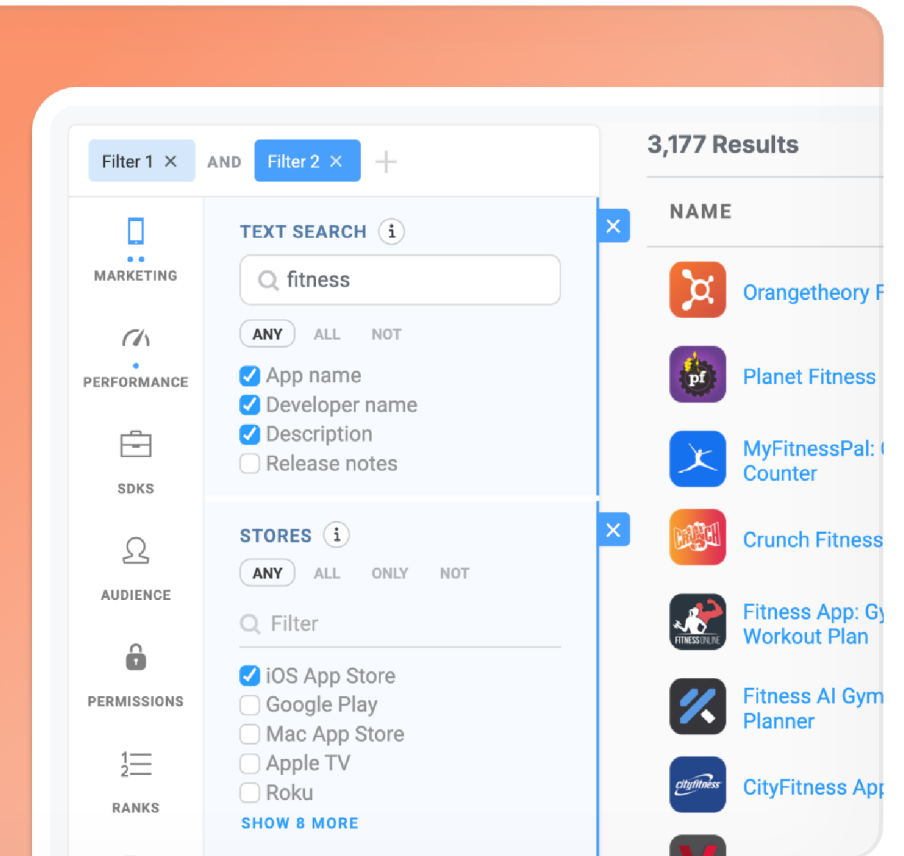
Short Drama is no longer a curiosity. U.S. consumer spending reached \$1.15B in 2025 and \$2.2B through July 2026. Its share of combined downloads with the big streamers rose from 26% in 2024 to 39% in 2025. If you run a traditional streaming app, the next section shows why this matters.

Powered by Appfigures Explorer

**Find the next breakout category before everyone else.**

Build custom app cohorts, compare download and revenue trends, and uncover the competitors reshaping your market.

[See it in Explorer →](#)





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# Methodology

# Methodology & Technology: How We Built This Report

## How We Defined Short Drama Apps

We started from a frozen source list, then audited identities. 140 Short Drama apps made the cut. One taxonomy outlier was dropped. Four unresolved entries were omitted, not zeroed.

Coverage is the United States, App Store and Google Play. Downloads and revenue are Appfigures estimates, rolled up by audited app. Consumer spending here is estimated in-app purchase spend. It is not grossed up for store fees.

### Estimated Downloads & Consumer Spending

Estimates are first-time downloads and in-app purchase revenue at the country and day level. iOS and Google Play identities were unified, then summed for this cohort.

Window: January 1, 2020 through July 31, 2026, where a page does not say otherwise.

### Estimated Consumer Spending

Figures are Appfigures estimates. Consumer spending refers to Appfigures' estimated in-app purchase spending in the U.S. App Store and Google Play; it is not grossed up for platform fees. Advertising, web purchases, and other off-store revenue are excluded.

### Legal Information

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### Market Included

United States



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# See the trend in your apps

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