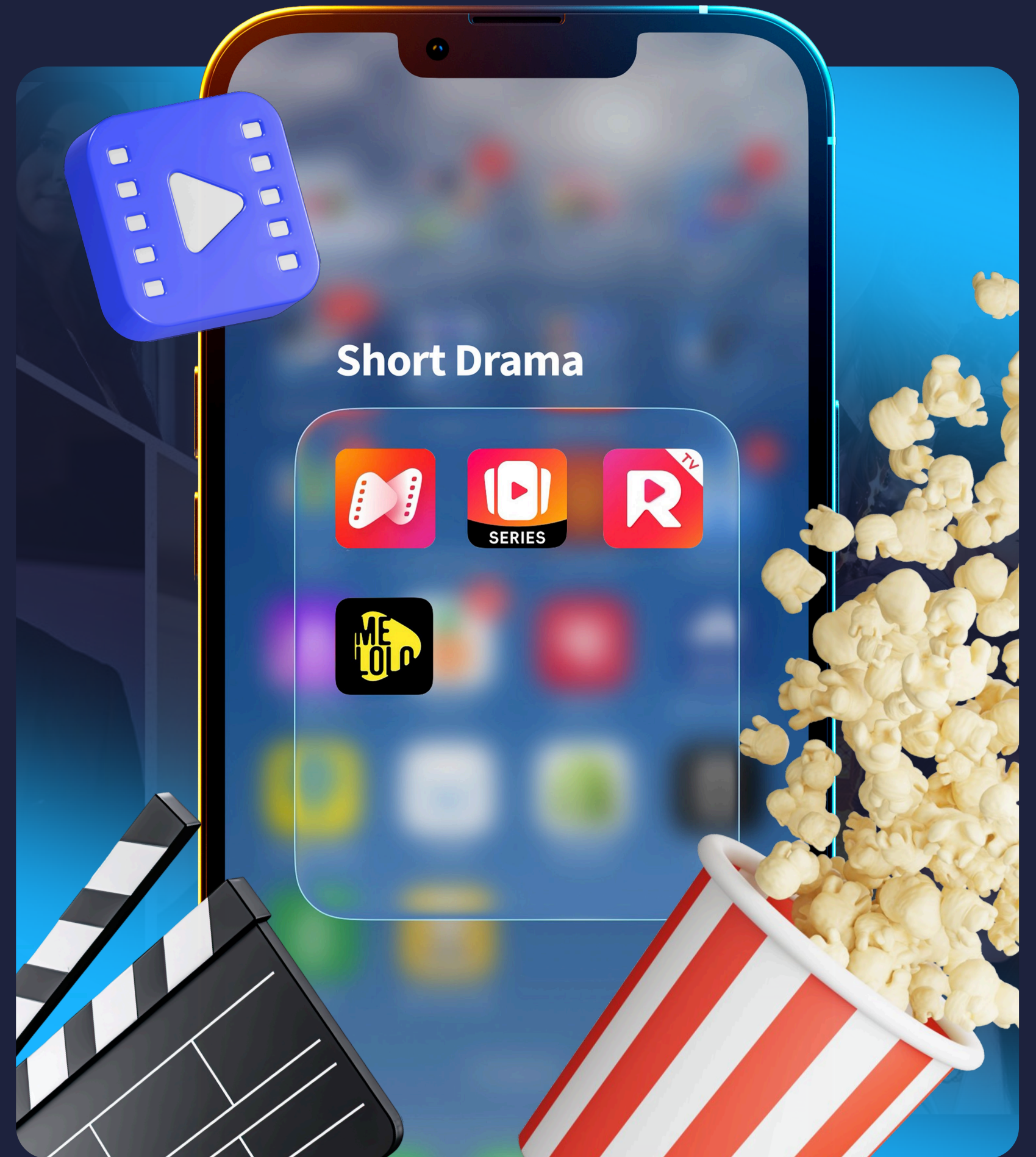


State of Short Drama Apps 2026



Sensor Tower

Introduction/Overview

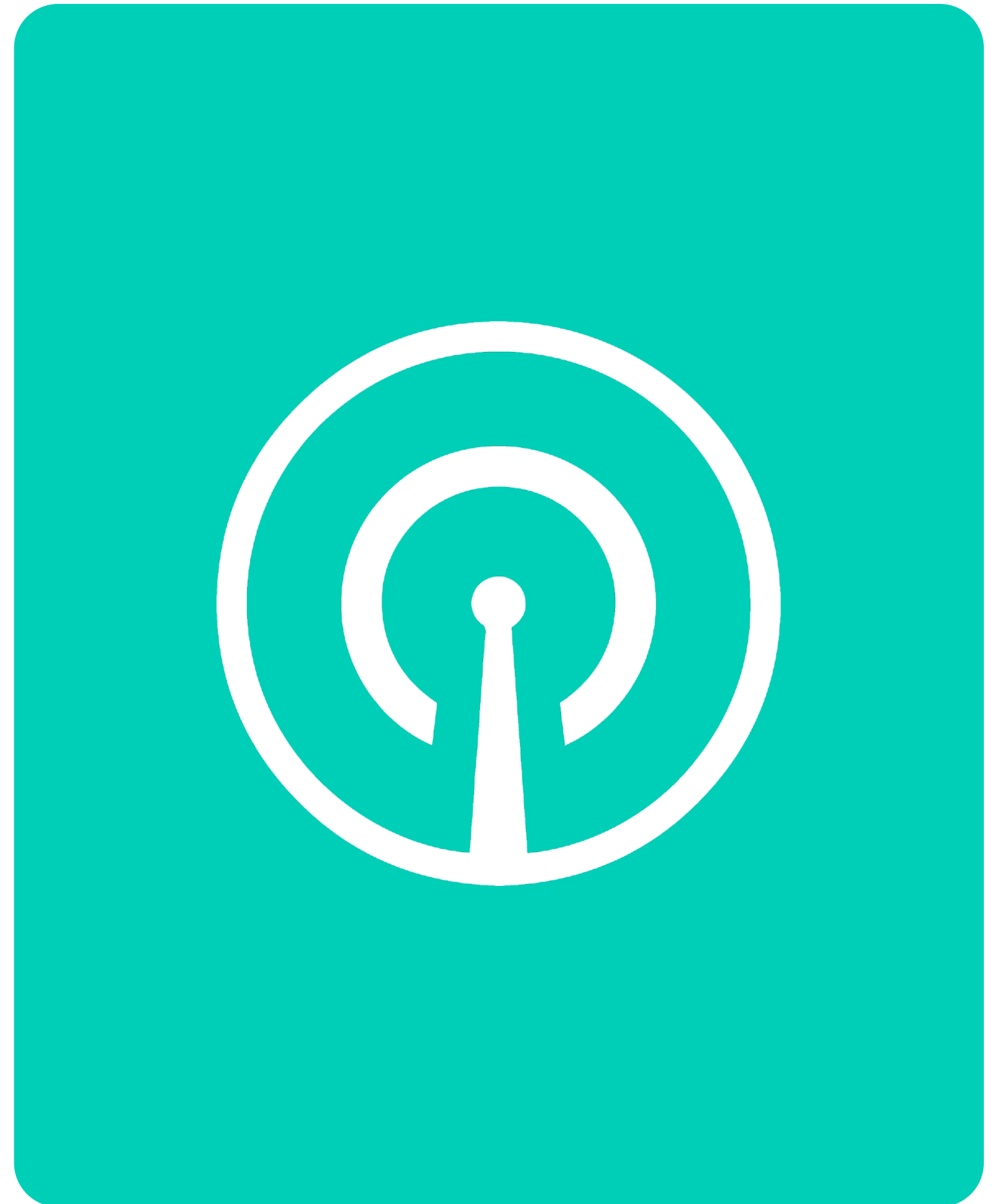
Sensor Tower is the leading source of mobile app, digital advertising, retail media, and audience insights for the largest brands and app publishers across the globe.

With a mission to measure the world's digital economy, Sensor Tower's award-winning platform delivers unmatched visibility into the mobile app and digital ecosystem, empowering organizations to stay ahead of changing market dynamics and make informed, strategic decisions.

Founded in 2013, Sensor Tower's mobile app insights have helped marketers, app, and game developers demystify the mobile app landscape with visibility into usage, engagement, and paid acquisition strategies. Today, Sensor Tower's digital market insights platform has expanded to include Audience, Retail Media, and Pathmatics Digital Advertising Insights, helping brands and advertisers understand their competitor's advertising strategies and audiences across web, social, and mobile.

Press Inquiries: press-apac@sensortower.com

Business Inquiries: sales@sensortower.com



Sensor Tower | Our Customers

Top publishers trust Sensor Tower insights to grow their business.

L'ORÉAL		Google			Disney
petco	HERSHEY	amazon	ROVIO	DOORDASH	depop
Walmart		Microsoft	SEGA	dyson	SONY
		Meta	OUTFIT7	Gett.	ByteDance
Alibaba	POPeYeS	Tencent 腾讯		P&G	NBA
		Johnson & Johnson		Welch's	Revolut

Note: Top publishers by app store revenue | Source: Sensor Tower

Sensor Tower Solutions



Sensor Tower **App Performance Insights**

**For those who need visibility
into the mobile app ecosystem.**

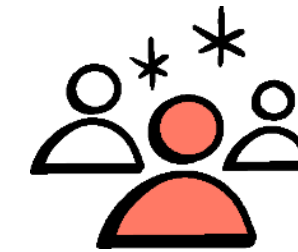
Enjoy insight into: app rankings, downloads, and revenue; active users, demographics, retention, sessions, and time spent; app ratings and reviews, keywords, search ads, and more.



Sensor Tower **App Advertising Insights**

**For those who need visibility
into paid user acquisition
strategies.**

Enjoy insight into: global and regional share of voice (SOV) across apps and the biggest mobile app ad networks, top advertisers, publishers, creatives, and more.



Sensor Tower **Audience Insights**

**For those who need visibility
into your existing, competitor,
and potential new audiences.**

Enjoy insight into: which apps consumers are actually interacting with (app engagement) AND which ads they're seeing (ad exposure).



Sensor Tower **Pathmatics Digital Advertising Insights**

**For those who need visibility
into the digital ad ecosystem.**

Gain insight into: ads served, spend and impression estimates, SOV, and more across key channels, like: Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), OTT, YouTube, display, video, and others.

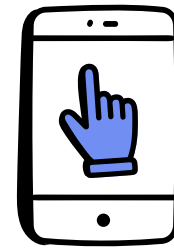
Sensor Tower Solutions



Sensor Tower **Gaming Insights**

For those who need the deepest look into the mobile gaming ecosystem.

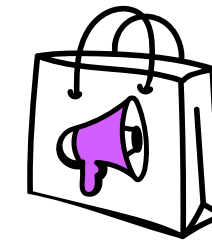
Enjoy insight into: downloads, revenue, RPD, and ARPDAU beyond the top-level category (Lifestyle & Puzzle) and can drill deeper into genres (Puzzle, Arcade, etc.) and sub-genres (Swap, Word, etc.).



Sensor Tower **Advanced Usage Insights**

For those who need the deepest look into app user engagement.

Enjoy insight into: sessions per user; time spent; time of day; days used per time period; new, retained, resurrected, and churned user trends; and cohort usage overlap.



Sensor Tower **Pathmatics Retail Media Insights**

For those who need industry-first insight into on- and off-site retail media network investments

Enjoy insight into: ad spend, media mix, share of wallet, impressions, and SOV for brands and products across retailers – gaining a coveted view into the co-branded digital ad ecosystem and retail media networks.



Sensor Tower **Video Game Insights**

Discover top game trends on PC and Console platforms

Get deep insights into key metrics like sales, revenue, DAU, and MAU for over 140,000 PC and Console games across 100+ global markets. Analyze shifts in player behavior to uncover critical intelligence on player acquisition and retention.

Sensor Tower

Data & Methodology

Sensor Tower’s **Pathmatics** empowers you to uncover insights into the digital advertising ecosystem, minimize ineffective ad spend, and enhance the precision of your advertising campaigns. With Pathmatics, you gain visibility into the digital advertising landscapes across markets including the United States, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Spain, South Korea, and the United Kingdom.

Pathmatics provides comprehensive estimates on ad placements, spending, impressions, and share of voice (SOV), as well as in-depth analysis of brands' advertising strategies on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and TikTok, across formats such as display banners, videos, mobile, and OTT.

Pathmatics collects digital ad samples from the web and utilizes statistical sampling methods to estimate the impressions, cost-per-thousand impressions (CPM), and expenditure associated with each creative.

Digital Advertising Channels Supported by Pathmatics Across Markets

	Desktop Display and	Facebook Instagram	LINE	Linkedin	Mobile App Ad	Mobile Display	OTT	Pinterest	Reddit	Snapchat	TikTok	X	YouTube
United States	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Australia	•	•				•		•	•	•	•		•
Brazil		•		•				•	•		•	•	
Canada	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•
France		•		•				•	•	•	•		•
Germany	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•
India		•						•	•	•		•	
Indonesia		•		•				•	•		•	•	•
Italy		•						•	•	•	•		•
Japan		•	•		•						•	•	•
Malaysia		•							•		•	•	•
Mexico		•									•		•
New Zealand	•	•				•							•
Philippines		•			•			•	•		•	•	
Singapore		•							•		•		•
South Korea		•			•						•		•
Spain		•						•	•	•	•	•	•
Thailand		•	•								•		•
United Kingdom	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Vietnam		•									•	•	•

Sensor Tower

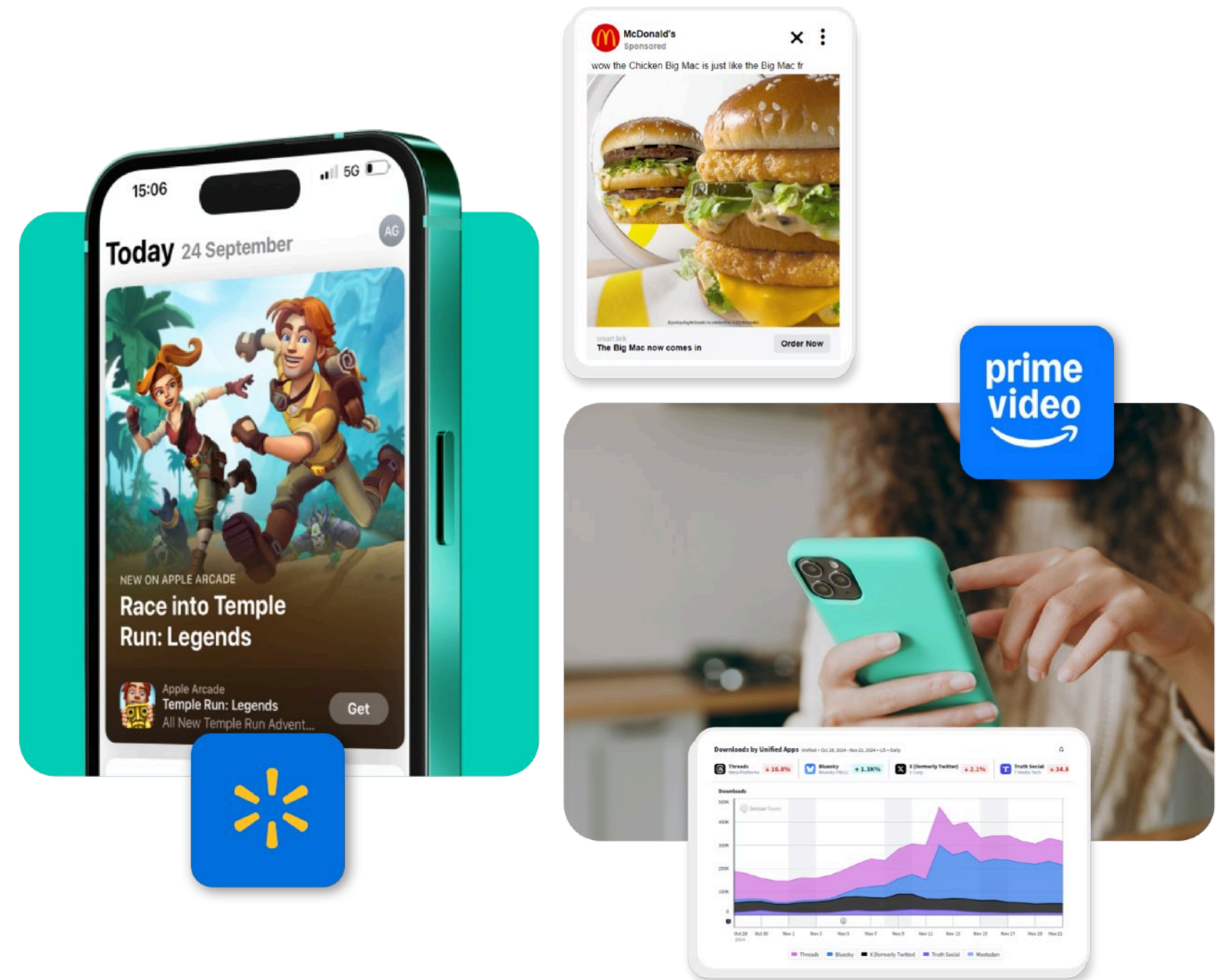
Executive Summary

This report provides an in-depth analysis of the short drama app market across the App Store and Google Play in 2026. It explores recent and emerging trends in global user spending and downloads, offering market-level insights into monetisation, user growth, and competitive positioning across key regions.

The report highlights top-performing and fastest-growing apps by revenue, downloads, and engagement across the U.S., Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia, India, and Latin America. It also examines how key apps such as ReelShort, FreeReels, NetShort, and Melolo are scaling through paid acquisition, localized creatives, frequent content drops, multi-channel discovery, and emerging ad monetization models.

Notes on Revenue and Download Estimates

Sensor Tower's revenue data is based on in-app purchase (IAP) estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding ad monetisation, revenue from third-party Android stores or direct payments made via official brand websites or other alternative payment channels. Unless otherwise specified as net revenue, all revenue figures refer to gross revenue (i.e. before platform fees are deducted). Sensor Tower's download data is based on estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding pre-installs, re-downloads, and downloads from third-party Android stores. Google Play is not available in Mainland China.



Agenda

Global Overview of the Short Drama App Market	09
User Engagement & Audience Insights Short Drama App Market	16
Growth Strategy From Breakout Short Drama Apps	20
Rankings: Top Short Drama Apps In Global Markets	27
Key Takeaways / Highlights	31



Global Overview of the Short Drama App Market

Short Drama Apps Break Into the Global Download Mainstream

Short drama apps deliver serialized, mobile-first video stories built for quick consumption and repeat engagement. The format typically centers on high-emotion genres such as romance, revenge, fantasy, family conflict, and status reversal, using short episodes and cliffhanger-led storytelling to encourage continued viewing.

In Q1 2026, six short drama apps ranked among the worldwide Top 40 apps by downloads, led by *FreeReels* at No. 8. Their presence alongside major social, AI, gaming, shopping, and OTT platforms highlights how short drama has evolved from a niche entertainment format into a mainstream global app category.

For publishers, advertisers, and media companies, short drama represents an increasingly important category to watch. It combines mobile app scale, serialized entertainment engagement, and expanding monetization opportunities across both in-app purchases and advertising.

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.
Notes: Sensor Tower’s data is based on estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding pre-installs, re-downloads, and third-party Android stores. iOS Only for China.

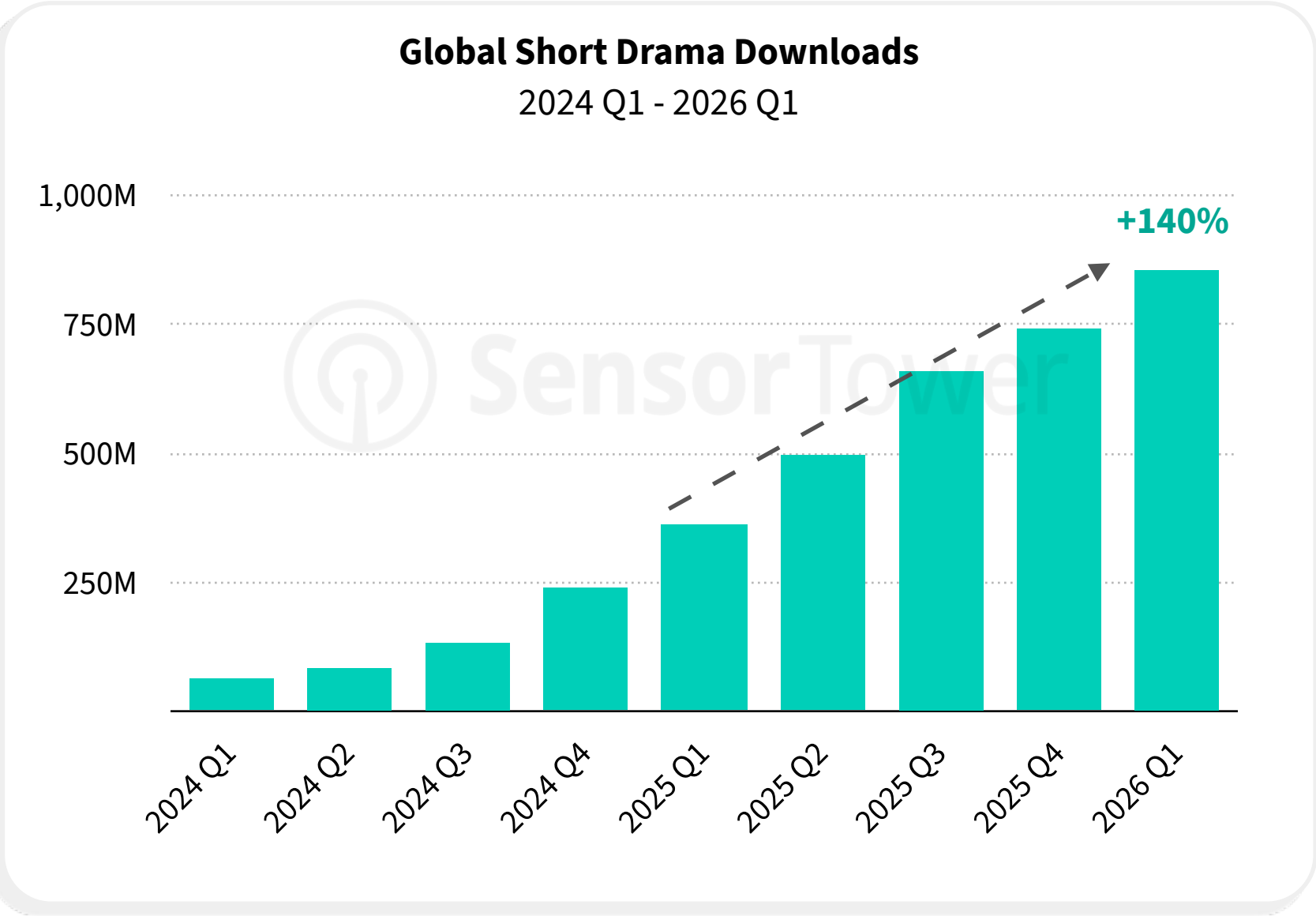
2026 Q1 Worldwide Top Apps By Downloads (Overall)

App (Publisher)				App (Publisher)			
		Taxonomy				Taxonomy	
1	 ChatGPT OpenAI	AI Assistant	=	21	 Messenger Meta Platforms	Social Messaging	▼
2	 TikTok ByteDance	Social Media	=	22	 Canva: AI Video & Photo Editor Canva	Poster & Card Design	▼
3	 Instagram Instagram	Social Media	▲	23	 Duolingo: Language Lessons Duolingo	Language Education	▲
4	 Facebook Meta Platforms	Social Media	▲	24	 NetShort - Popular Dramas & TV NETSTORY	Short Drama	▲
5	 CapCut ByteDance	Video Editing	▲	25	 Subway Surfers Miniclip	Platformer / Runner	▲
6	 WhatsApp Messenger WhatsApp	Social Messaging	▲	26	 DramaBox - Stream Drama Shorts Storymatrix	Short Drama	▼
7	 Google Gemini Google	AI Assistant	▼	27	 SHEIN Shein Group	Apparel	▼
8	 FreeReels: Dramas and Series SKYWORK AI	Short Drama	▲	28	 Grok - AI Chat & Video X Corp.	AI Assistant	▲
9	 Block Blast! Hungry Studio	Block	=	29	 Pizza Ready! Supercent	Idler	▼
10	 Telegram Telegram	Social Messaging	▼	30	 Netflix Netflix	OTT Streaming	▼
11	 Temu PDD Holdings	Shopping	▼	31	 Vita Mahjong Vita Studio	Match Pair	▲
12	 Snapchat Snap Inc	Social Media	=	32	 Melolo ByteDance	Short Drama	▲
13	 WhatsApp Business WhatsApp	Business & Productivity	▼	33	 X X Corp.	Social Media	▲
14	 Garena Free Fire Garena	Battle Royale	▲	34	 Ludo King Gametion	Board	▲
15	 Roblox Roblox	Sandbox	▼	35	 Story TV - Watch Short Dramas Story TV	Short Drama	▼
16	 Spotify: Music and Podcasts Spotify	Music & Podcasts	▼	36	 JioHotstar JioStar	OTT Streaming	▲
17	 Dola SPRING (SG)	AI Assistant	▲	37	 Amazon Shopping Amazon	Shopping	▼
18	 Pinterest Pinterest	Social Media	=	38	 Shopee Shopee	Shopping	▲
19	 Threads Instagram	Social Media	▼	39	 Uber - Request a ride Uber	Carpooling & Ridesharing	▼
20	 ReelShort - Stream Drama & TV Crazy Maple Studio	Short Drama	=	40	 Hypic - Photo Editor & AI Art ByteDance	Photo Editing	▲

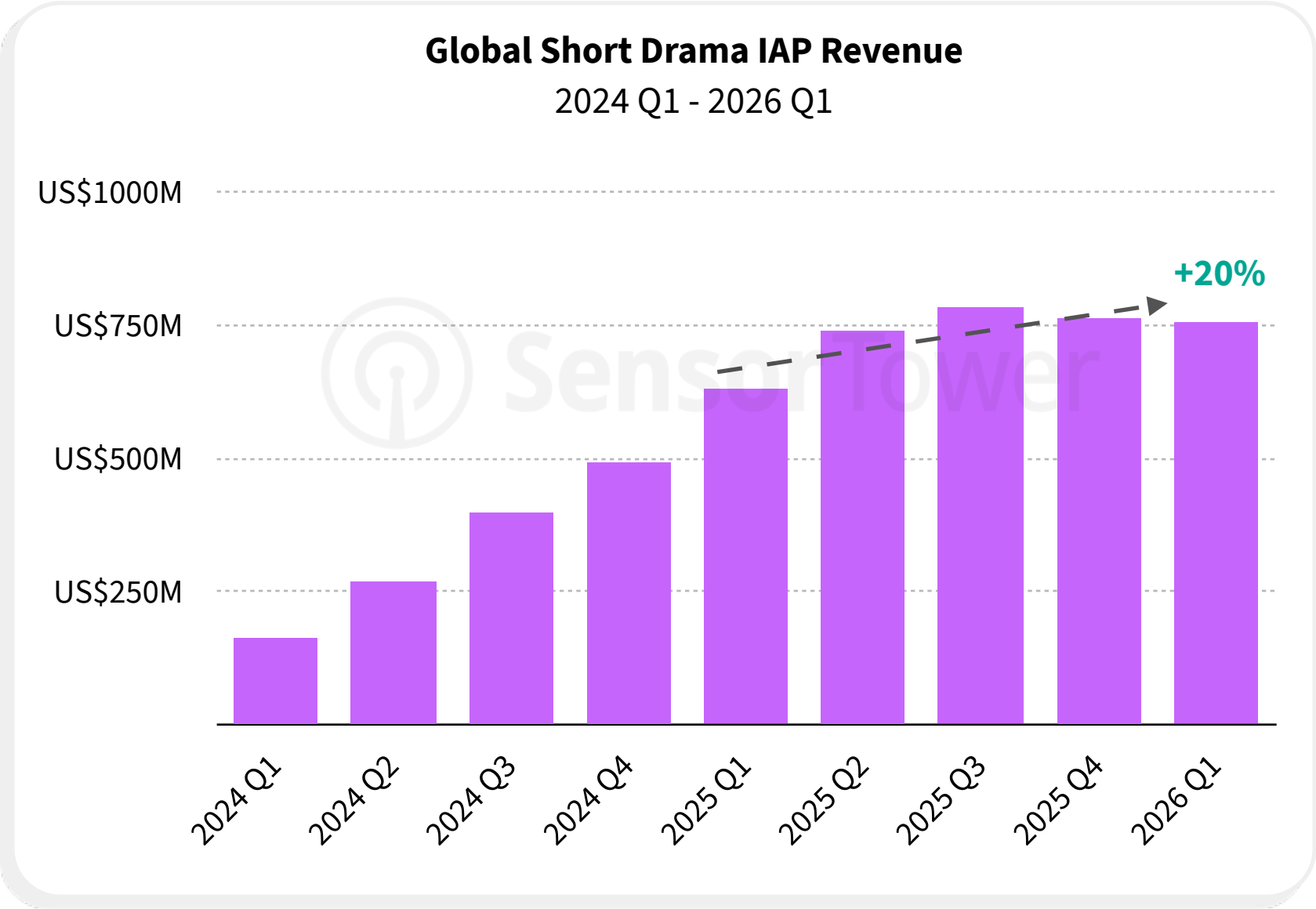
Global Short Drama Apps Downloads Continue to Surge, Creating Room for Revenue Growth

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.

Note: Sensor Tower's revenue data is based on in-app purchase (IAP) estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding ad monetisation, revenue from third-party Android stores or direct payments made via official brand websites or other alternative payment channels. Unless otherwise specified as net revenue, all revenue figures refer to gross revenue (i.e. before platform fees are deducted). Sensor Tower's download data is based on estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding pre-installs, re-downloads, and downloads from third-party Android stores. Google Play is not available in Mainland China.



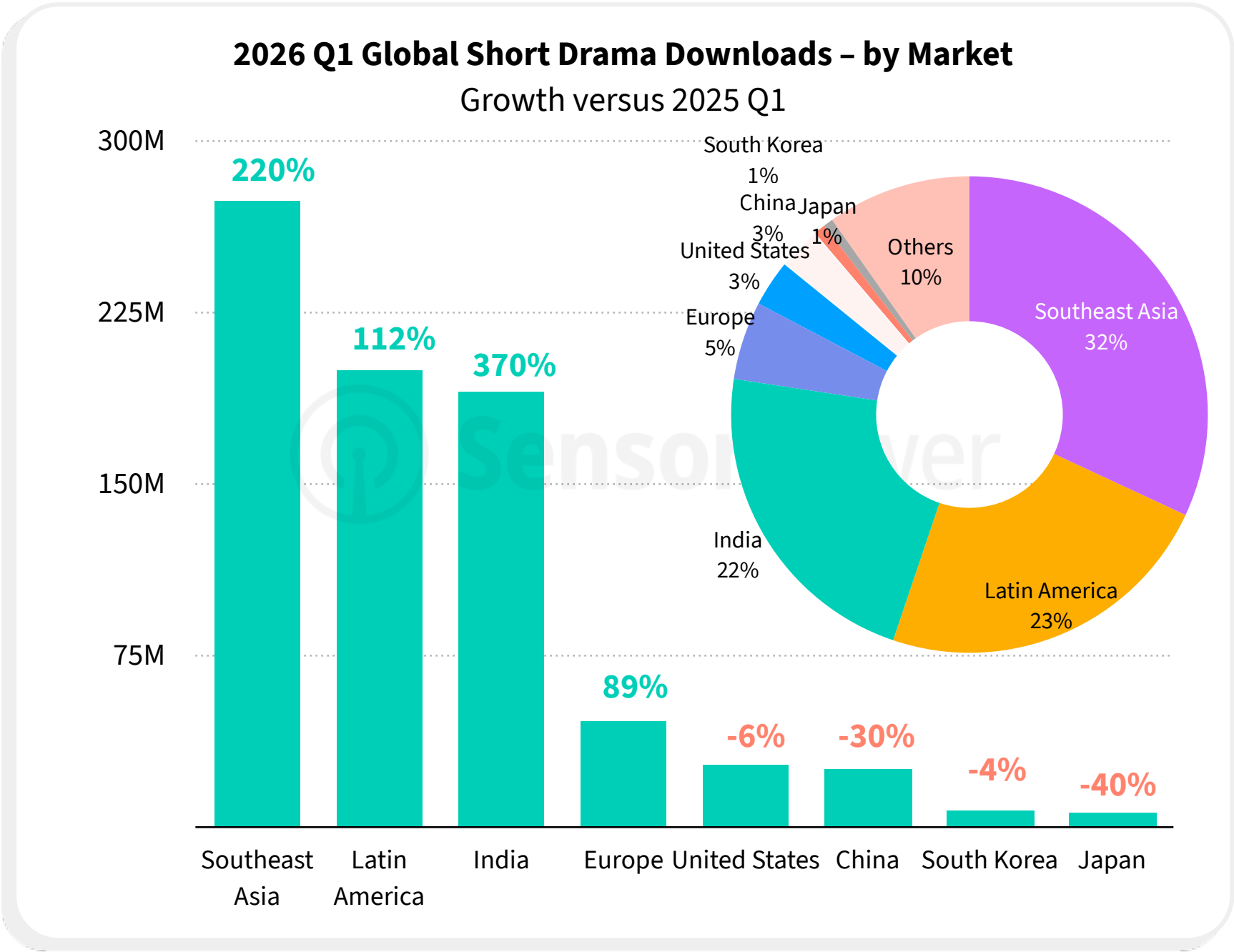
Global short drama downloads continued to rise rapidly, surpassing **850M downloads in Q1 2026**, up **140% year-on-year**. This sustained growth highlights the category’s expanding global reach, as short drama apps continue to attract users across mature markets and mobile-first growth regions.



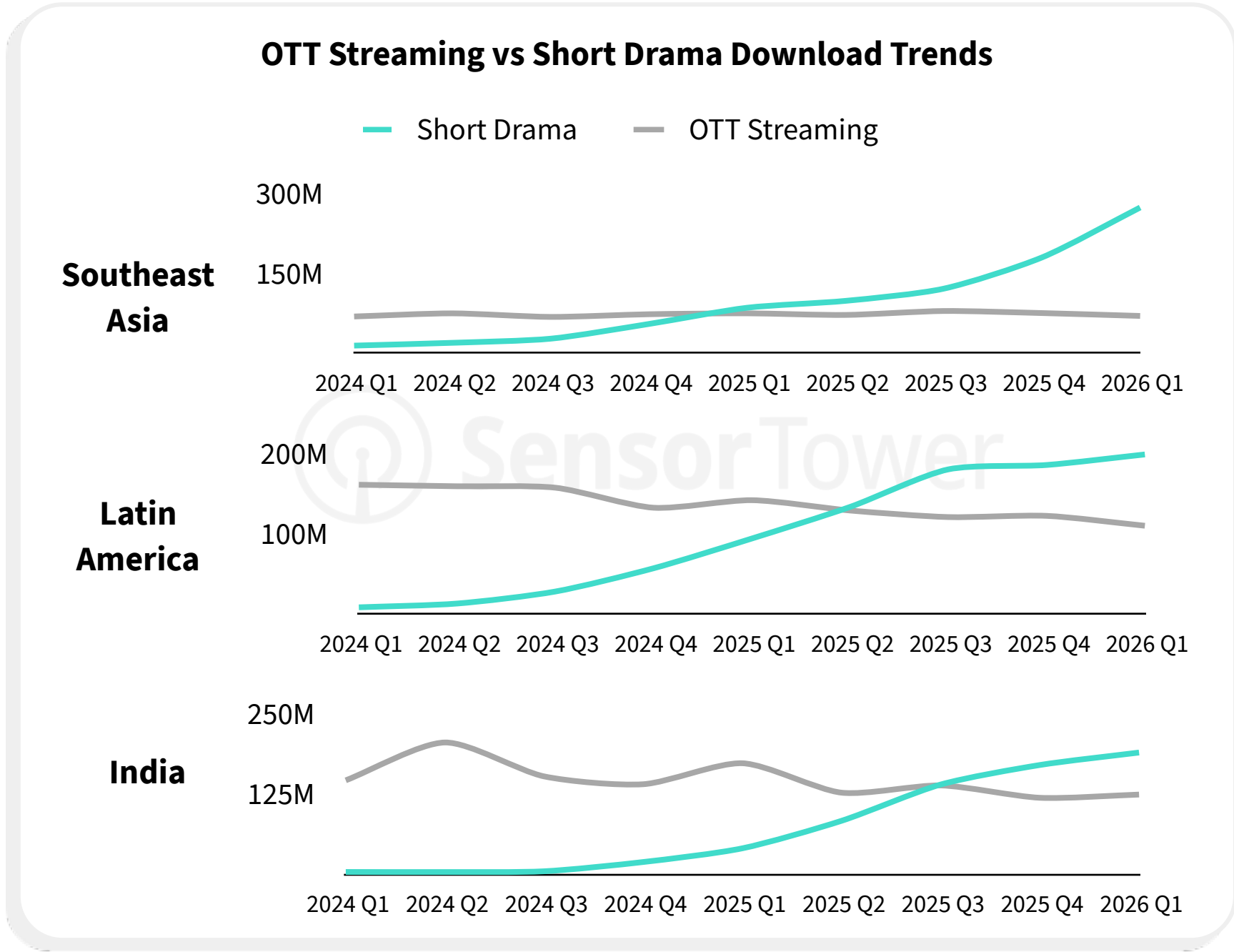
IAP revenue also continued to grow, reaching roughly **US\$750M in Q1 2026**, up **20% year-on-year**. While monetization remains strong, growth has begun to moderate as more advanced markets mature. This shifts the next opportunity toward large, fast-growing markets such as Southeast Asia, Latin America, and India, where expanding user bases can support deeper engagement and higher-value spending over time.

Emerging Mobile-First Markets Drive Short Drama Downloads Beyond OTT Streaming

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.
Note: Sensor Tower's download data is based on estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding pre-installs, re-downloads, and downloads from third-party Android stores. Google Play is not available in Mainland China.



Short drama download growth in Q1 2026 was concentrated in **Southeast Asia, Latin America, and India**, which together accounted for more than **three-quarters of global downloads**. Southeast Asia led with 32% share, followed by Latin America at 23% and India at 22%, with all three markets posting triple-digit year-on-year growth.



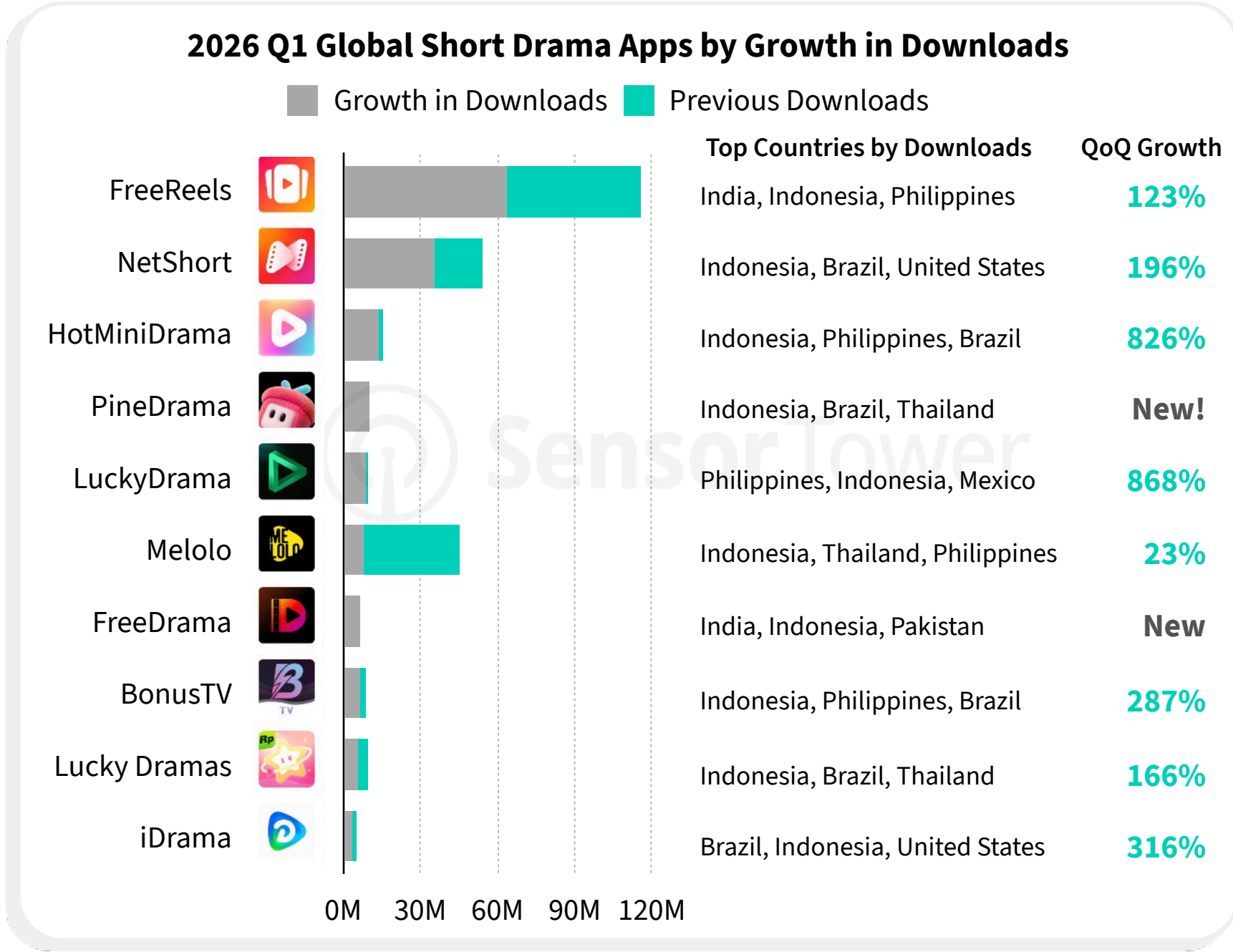
These markets are also where short drama apps are most clearly **outpacing traditional OTT streaming** in user acquisition. Downloads climbed sharply through 2025 and into Q1 2026 across Southeast Asia, Latin America, and India, highlighting how mobile-native, bite-sized storytelling is becoming a major driver of entertainment app adoption.

FreeReels Leads Global Downloads as New Challengers Accelerate User Acquisition

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.
Note: Sensor Tower's download data is based on estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding pre-installs, re-downloads, and downloads from third-party Android stores. Google Play is not available in Mainland China.



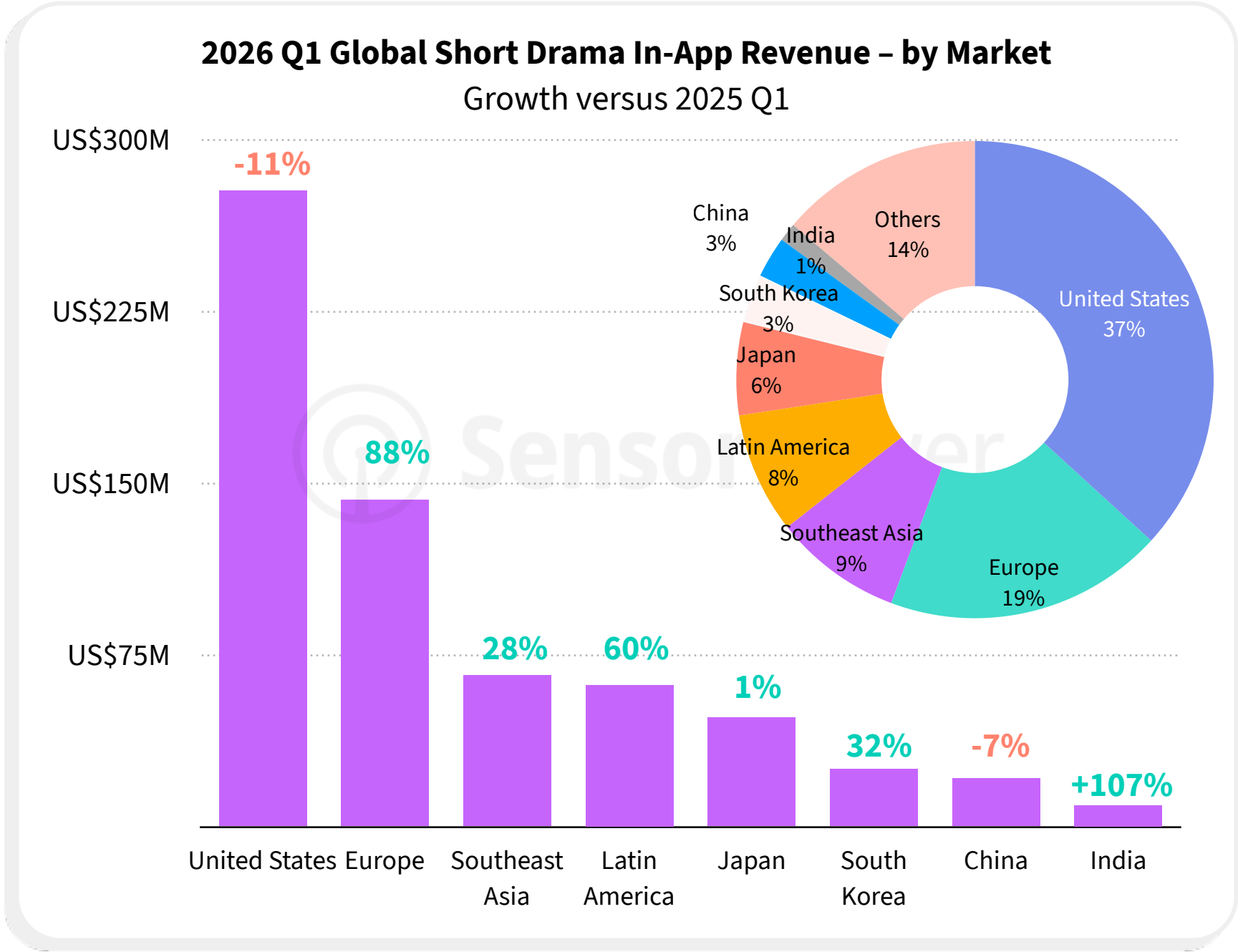
FreeReels became the most downloaded short drama app globally in Q1 2026, surpassing 100M installs and growing 123% quarter-on-quarter. *NetShort* also gained strong momentum, rising 196% QoQ to rank No. 3 by downloads, while *Melolo* continued to scale across Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.



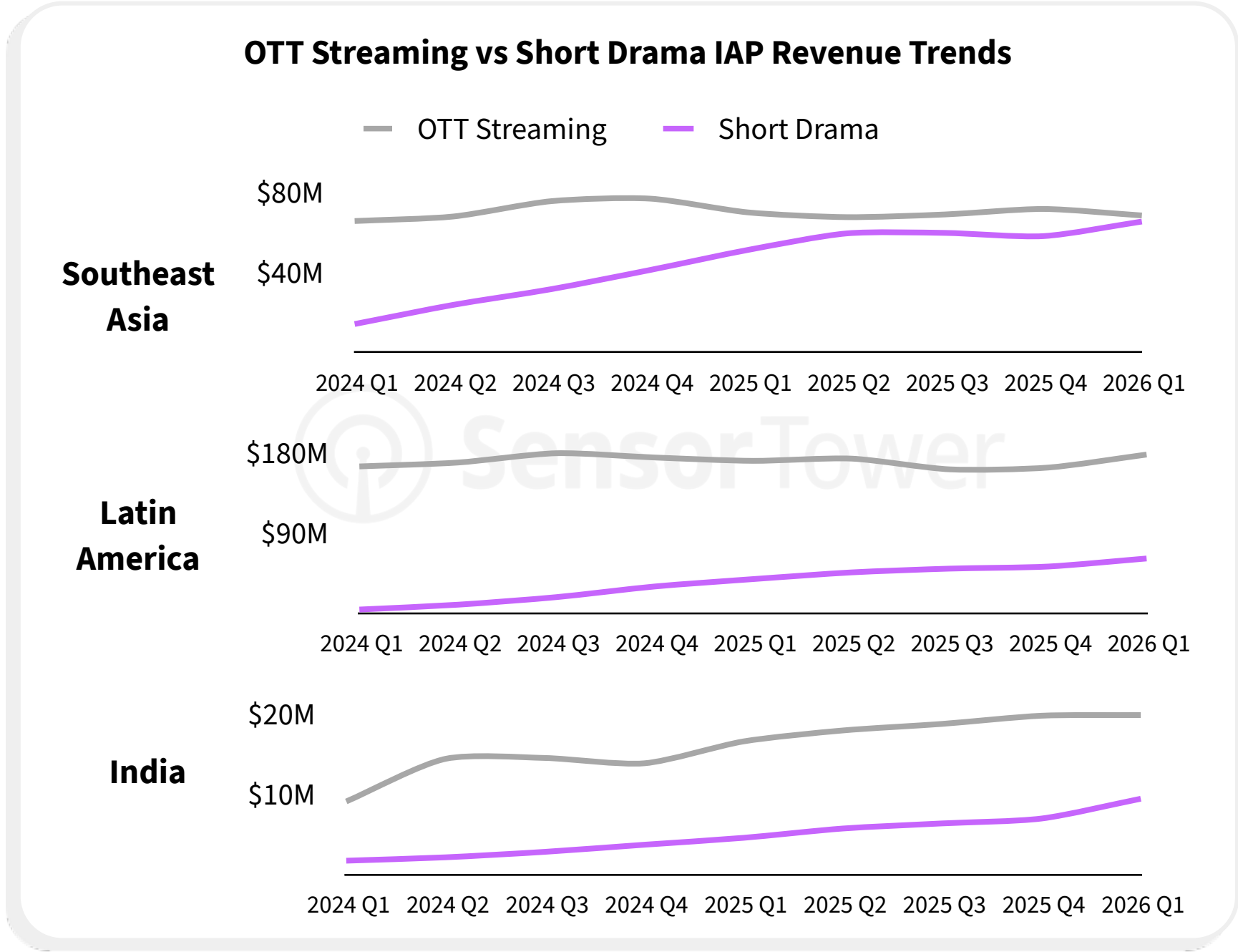
The growth ranking highlights how download momentum is shifting toward newer, fast-scaling apps. *FreeReels* and *NetShort* are now competing directly with established players such as *DramaBox*, while breakout apps including *HotMiniDrama*, *LuckyDrama*, *BonusTV*, and *iDrama* point to a more fluid and competitive user acquisition landscape.

The U.S. Remains the Revenue Anchor, While Emerging Markets Build the Next Monetization Wave

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.
Note: Sensor Tower's revenue data is based on in-app purchase (IAP) estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding ad monetisation, revenue from third-party Android stores or direct payments made via official brand websites or other alternative payment channels. Unless otherwise specified as net revenue, all revenue figures refer to gross revenue (i.e. before platform fees are deducted).



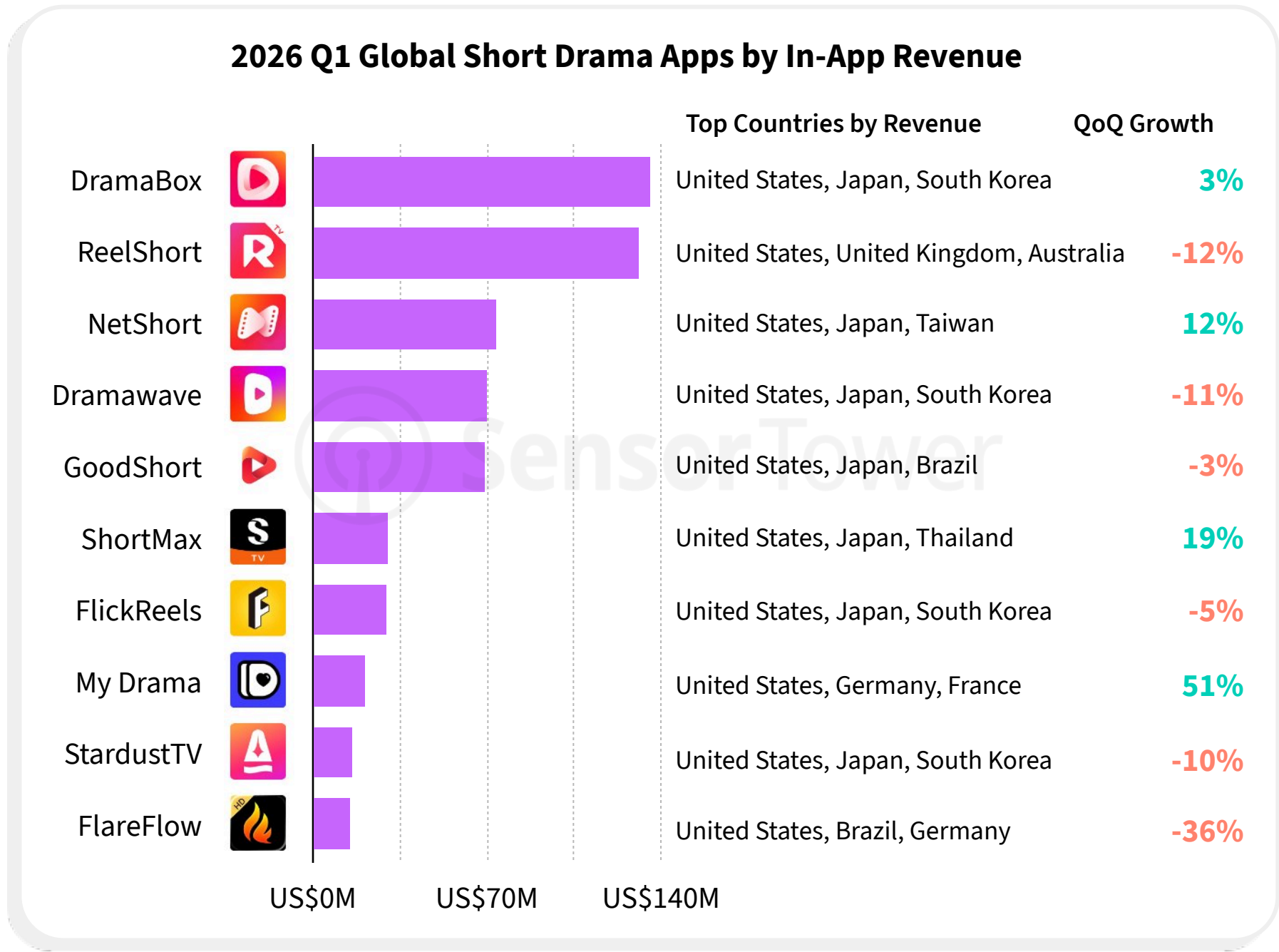
The **U.S.** remained the largest short drama market by IAP revenue in Q1 2026, contributing **37% of global revenue** despite an 11% year-on-year decline. **Europe** also stood out as a strong revenue market, **growing 88% year-on-year**, while Southeast Asia, Latin America, and India continued to build monetization momentum from smaller but fast-expanding bases.



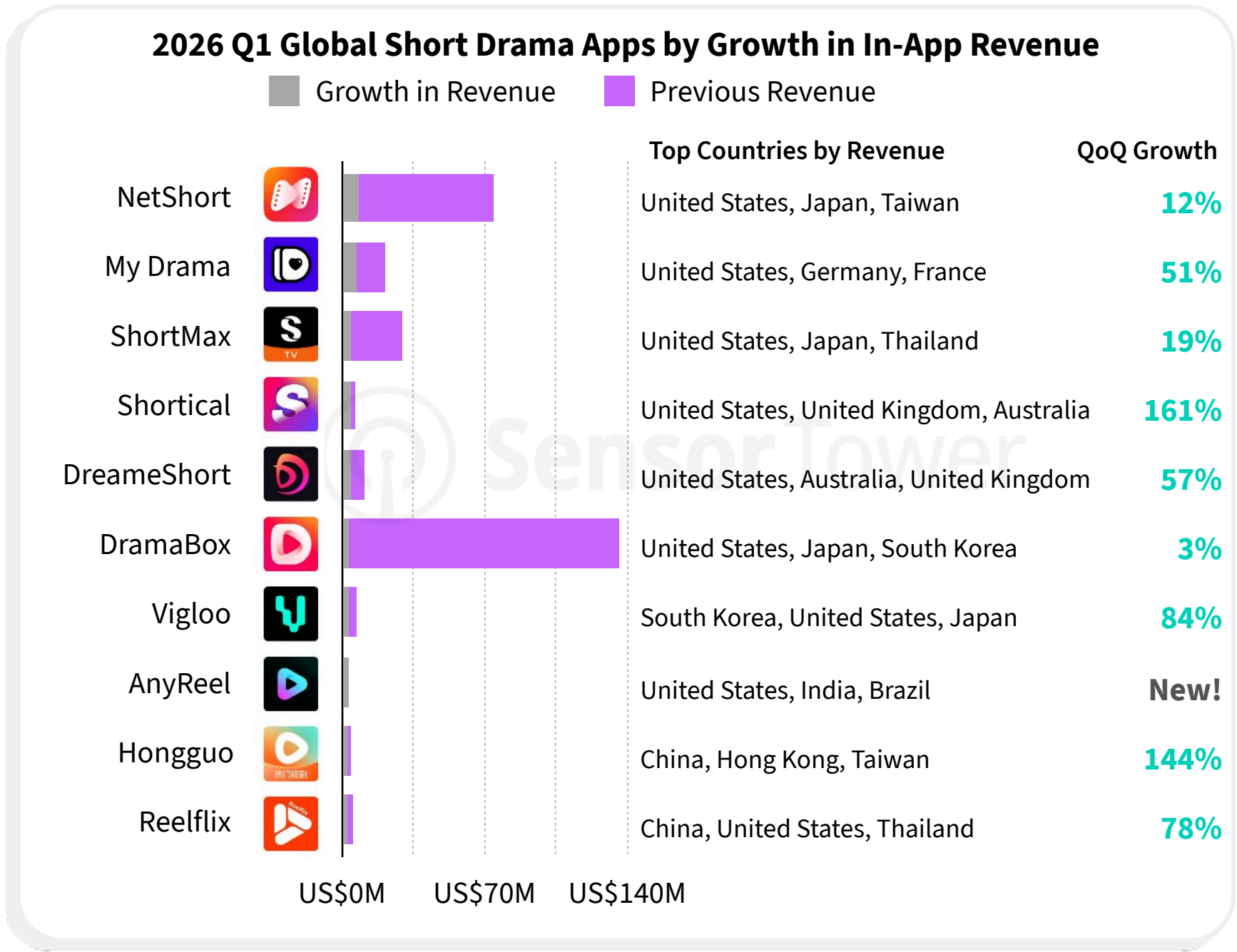
Although OTT streaming still leads in overall revenue, short drama revenue is steadily rising across key growth markets. Southeast Asia, Latin America, and India posted continued gains through Q1 2026, reinforcing short drama’s position as a fast-scaling, mobile-first entertainment format with meaningful long-term revenue upside beyond mature markets.

DramaBox and ReelShort Led Global Revenue, While Fast-Growing Challengers Like NetShort Expanded the Competitive Field

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.
Note: Sensor Tower's revenue data is based on in-app purchase (IAP) estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding ad monetisation, revenue from third-party Android stores or direct payments made via official brand websites or other alternative payment channels. Unless otherwise specified as net revenue, all revenue figures refer to gross revenue (i.e. before platform fees are deducted).



DramaBox and *ReelShort* remained the top-grossing short drama apps in Q1 2026, each generating close to US\$140M in in-app revenue. *NetShort* also strengthened its position among the leading players, growing 12% year-on-year and narrowing the gap with established apps such as *DramaWave* and *GoodShort*.



Beyond the top revenue leaders, growth momentum was increasingly distributed across emerging and mid-tier apps. My *Drama*, *Shortical*, *Vigloo*, *AnyReel*, and *Hongguo* posted strong revenue gains, suggesting that the short drama market is becoming more competitive as newer platforms scale monetization from smaller but fast-expanding revenue bases.



User Engagement & Audience Insights

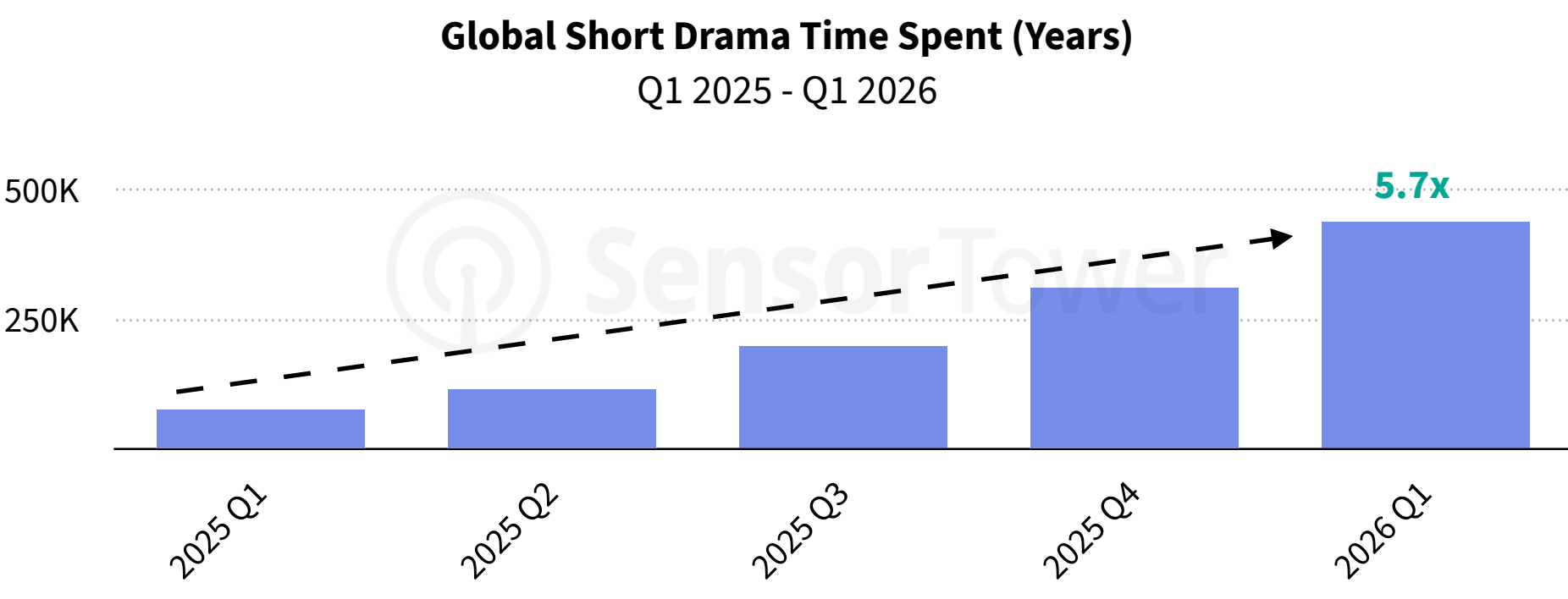
Short Drama App Market

Short Drama Is Becoming a Daily Viewing Habit, Narrowing the Gap with OTT Streaming

Short drama engagement accelerated sharply over the past year, with **users spending nearly 6x more time in short drama apps than a year ago**. This shows that the category’s growth is no longer only about downloads, but also about building repeat viewing behavior at scale.

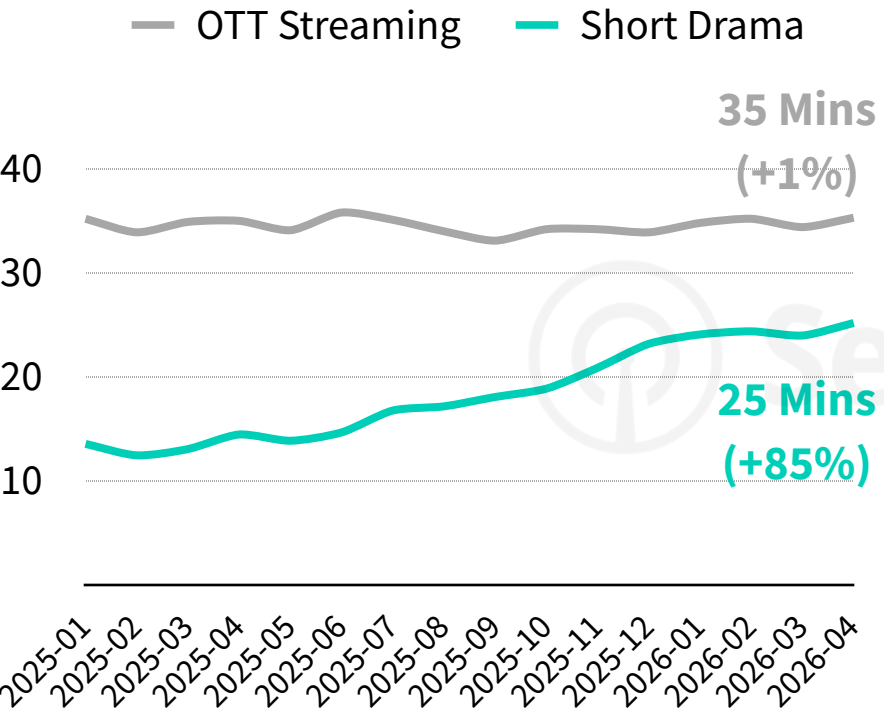
Average daily time spent reached **25 minutes** globally by April 2026, **up 85%** from January 2025, while OTT streaming remained broadly flat at around 35 minutes. Southeast Asia is leading the shift, with short drama daily engagement approaching **40 minutes per day**, already reaching OTT-like levels, while India continues to show strong upward momentum.

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 6, 2026.



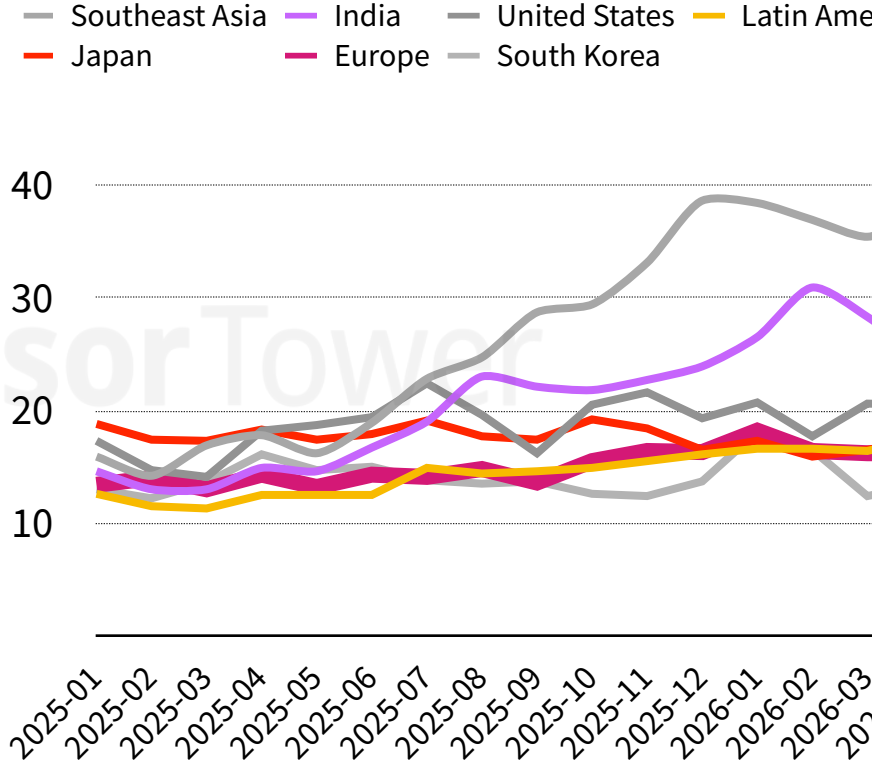
Worldwide Daily Minutes on Video Platforms

Jan 2025 - Apr 2026



Daily Minutes in Short Drama by Region

Jan 2025 - Apr 2026

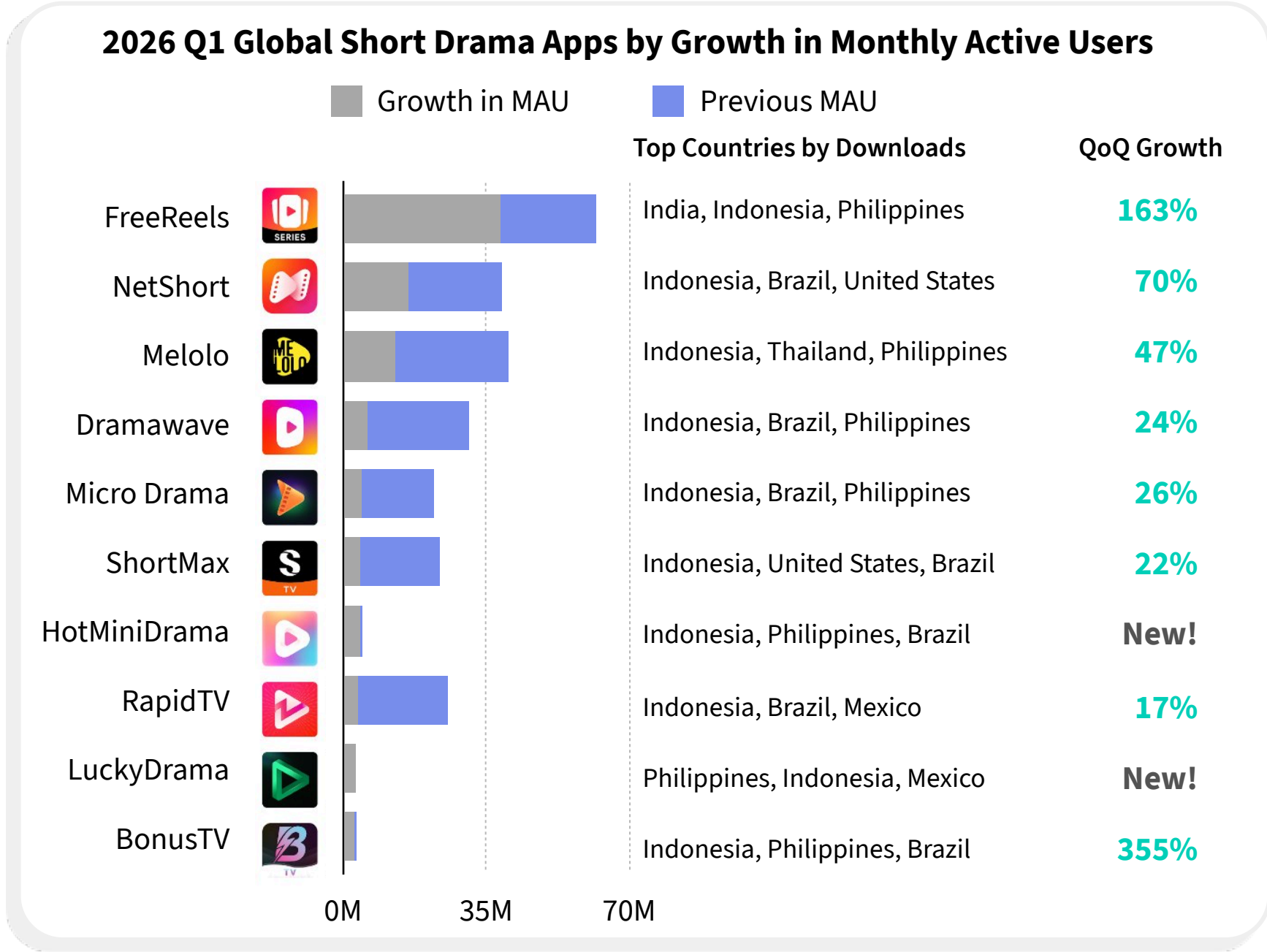


DramaBox Led Global MAU, While FreeReels, NetShort, and Melolo Drove the Next Wave of Engagement Growth

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 6, 2026.



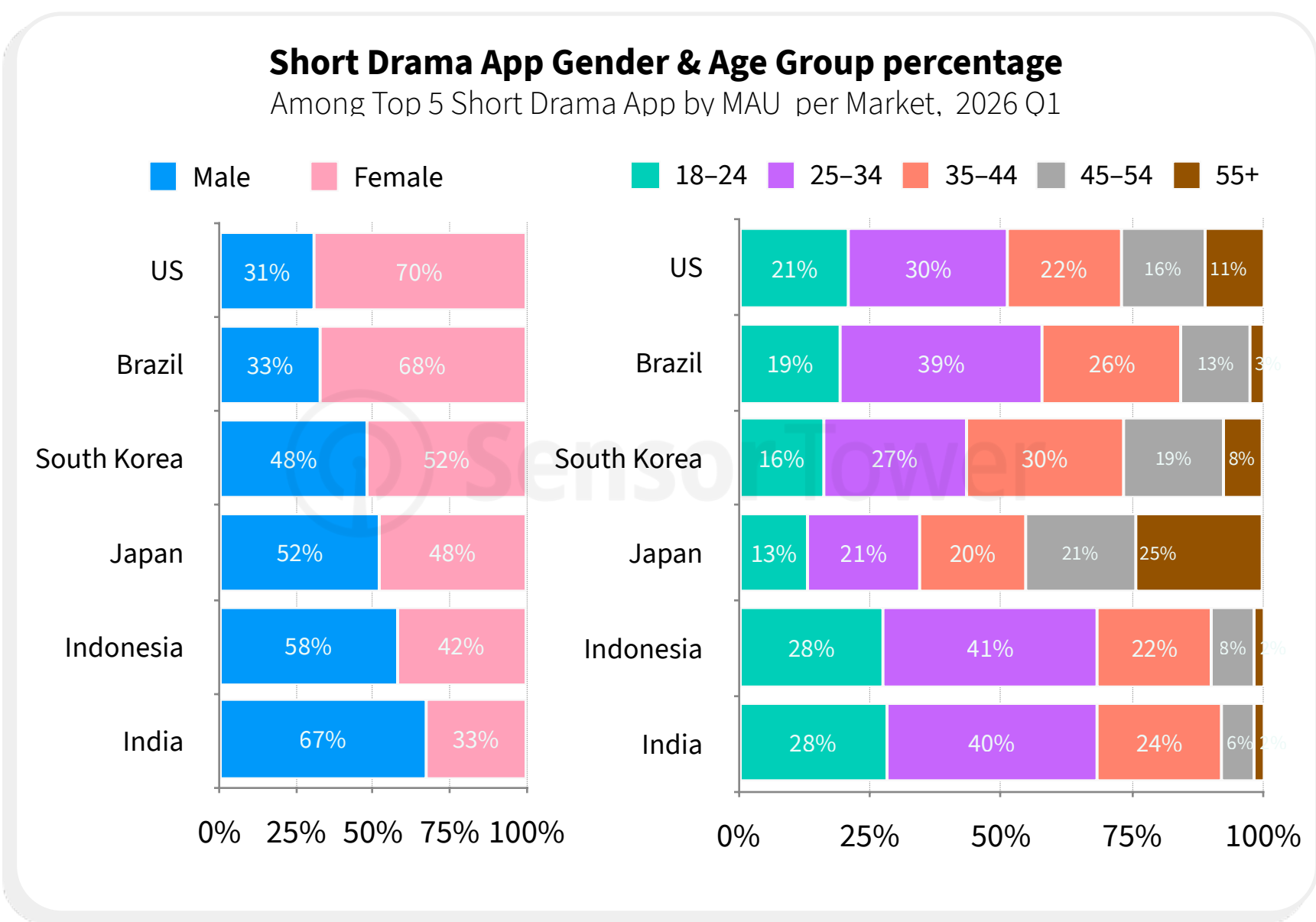
DramaBox remained the leading short drama app by monthly active users in Q1 2026, supported by a broad audience base across Indonesia, Brazil, and the United States. *FreeReels* and *ReelShort* followed closely, while *NetShort*, *Melolo*, and ***DramaWave*** also ranked among the top global apps, highlighting a competitive engagement landscape beyond the top incumbents.



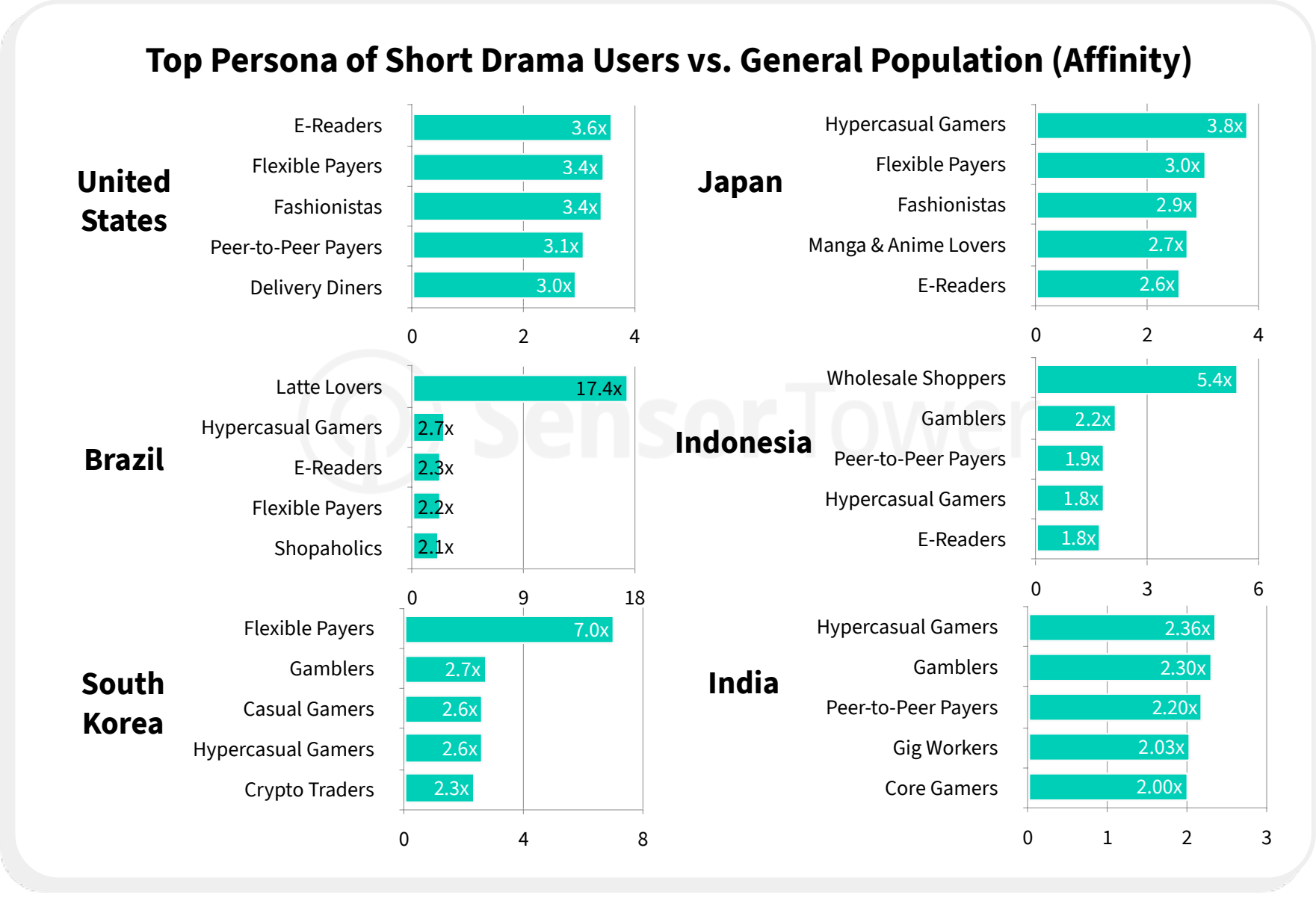
FreeReels led engagement growth, with MAU rising **163% quarter-on-quarter**, followed by strong gains from *NetShort* and *Melolo*. The top markets for these fast-growing apps were concentrated in Indonesia, Brazil, India, and the Philippines, reinforcing how emerging mobile-first markets are driving not only downloads, but also repeat short drama viewing behavior.

Short Drama Audiences Are Highly Localized, Requiring Market-Specific Content and Monetization Strategies

Source: Sensor Tower Audience Insights. Gender represented as Male and Female only and is not representative of all gender identities.

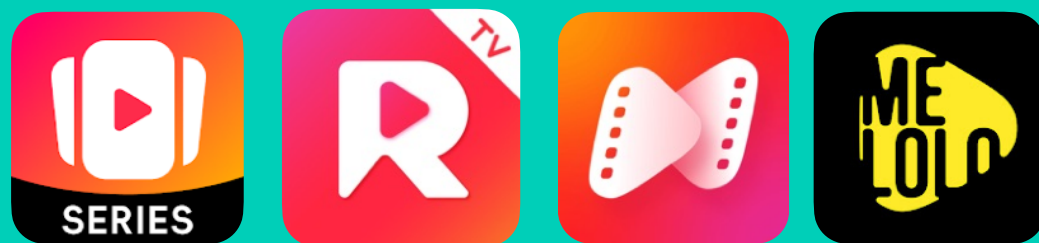


Short drama audiences vary meaningfully across key markets. **The U.S. and Brazil skew strongly female**, accounting for nearly **70% of users**, while **India and Indonesia lean more male and younger**, with users aged 18-34 making up the majority of audiences. Japan and South Korea show more balanced gender profiles and a larger share of older users, suggesting that short drama appeal is broadening across different demographic groups.



Audience affinities further show why localization matters. While short drama users often over-index on **gaming, payments, e-reading, and shopping**, each market has a distinct leading persona, from Latte Lovers in Brazil to Hypercasual Gamers in Japan and India. Content, creatives, pricing, and monetization should therefore be tailored locally.

Growth Strategy From Breakout Short Drama Apps



Short Drama Competition Intensifies as Leading Apps Scale Across Core Markets

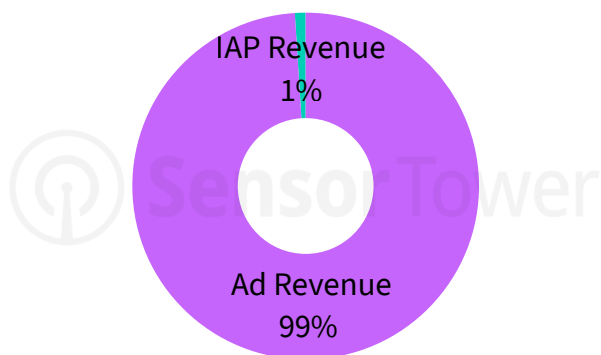
Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.



FreeReels
Kunlun Games

Publisher	Kunlun Games
Release Date	December 2024
All-Time Downloads	254 million
Top Market (DL)	India, Indonesia, Philippines
Top Markets (Ad Revenue)	Indonesia, India, Thailand

Monetization Sources



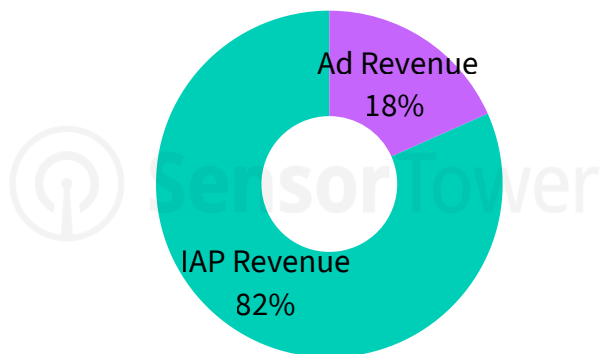
#1 by Downloads in Southeast Asia and India in Q1 2026



ReelShort
Crazy Maple Studio

Publisher	Crazy Maple Studio
Release Date	August 2022
All-Time Downloads	382 million
Top Market (DL)	Brazil, United States, Indonesia
Top Markets (IAP Revenue)	United States, United Kingdom, Canada

Monetization Sources



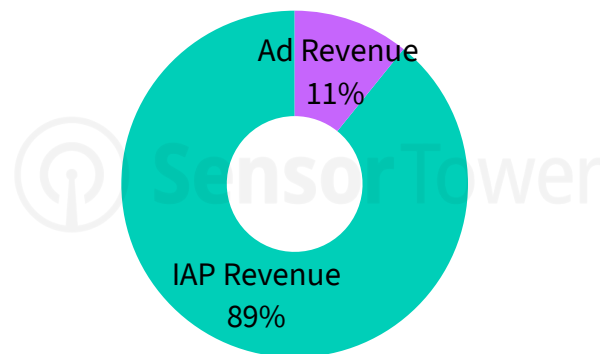
#1 by Downloads, Revenue and MAU in the US in Q1 2026



NetShort
NETSTORY

Publisher	NETSTORY
Release Date	July 2024
All-Time Downloads	197 million
Top Market (DL)	Indonesia, Brazil, United States
Top Markets (IAP Revenue)	United States, Japan, Taiwan

Monetization Sources



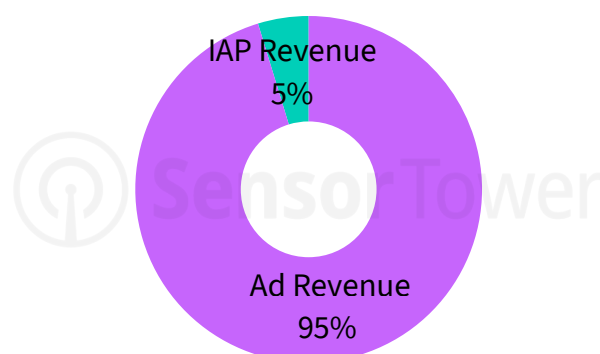
Top 3 by IAP Revenue in Japan, South Korea, and Southeast Asia in Q1 2026



Melolo
Bytedance

Publisher	ByteDance
Release Date	December 2024
All-Time Downloads	141 million
Top Market (DL)	Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines
Top Markets (Ad Revenue)	Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia

Monetization Sources



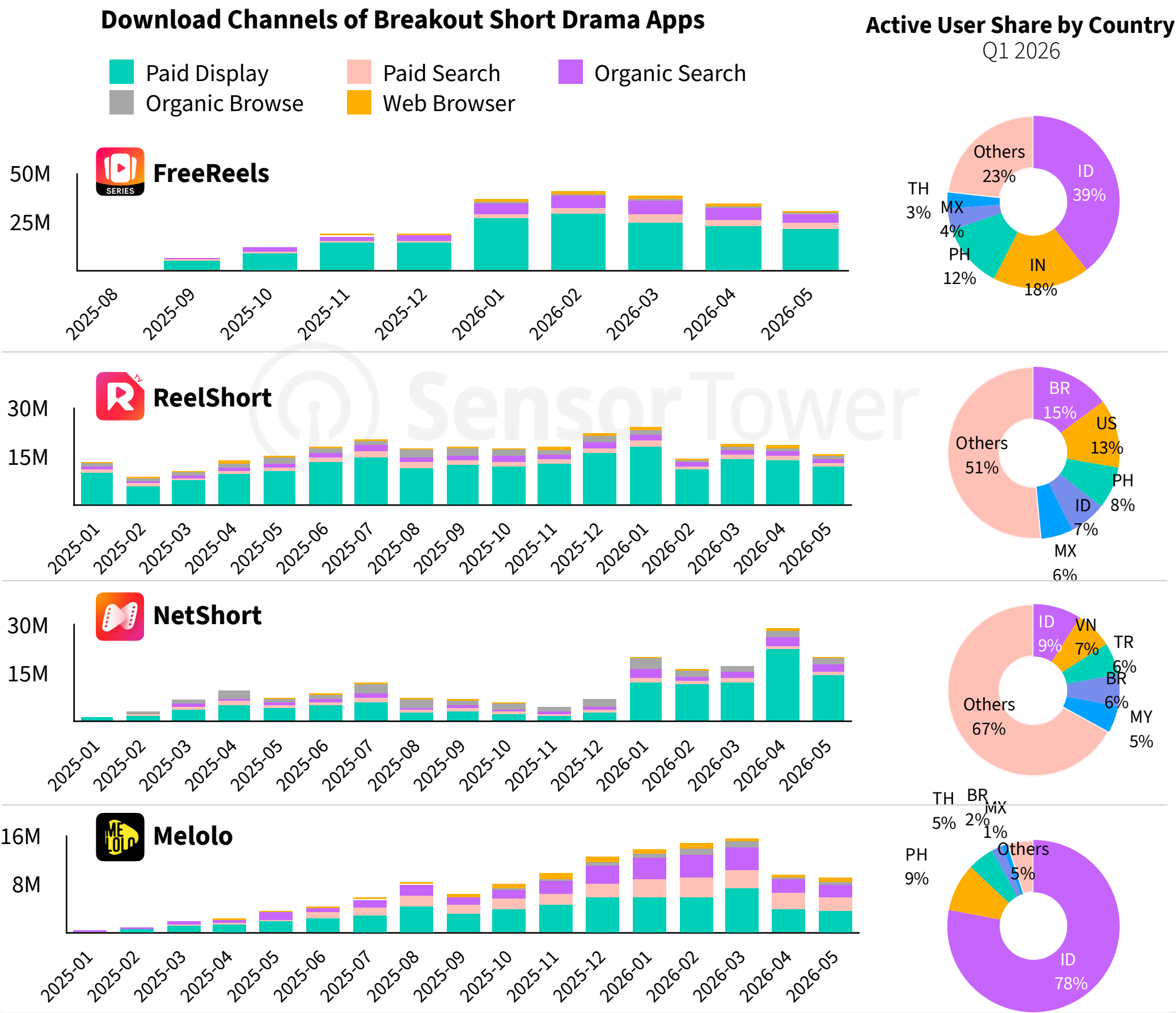
#1 by MAU in Southeast Asia in Q1 2026

Paid Acquisition Drives Rapid Scale, While Market Focus Shapes Growth Paths

Paid channels remain the core engine behind short drama user acquisition, helping leading apps scale quickly across key markets. *FreeReels* and *ReelShort* show the clearest paid-driven growth patterns, with paid display contributing a large share of downloads and supporting rapid visibility gains across India, Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the U.S.

At the same time, each app is building scale through a different market focus. *FreeReels* is concentrated in India and Indonesia, *ReelShort* has a broader footprint across Brazil and the U.S., *NetShort* is expanding across Indonesia, Vietnam, and Brazil, while *Melolo* remains heavily anchored in Indonesia. This suggests paid acquisition is the fastest route to growth, but market selection and localized execution determine where that scale becomes sustainable.

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.
Note: Sensor Tower's download data is based on estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding pre-installs, re-downloads, and downloads from third-party Android stores. Google Play is not available in Mainland China.



Localized Drama Hooks: How Short Drama Apps Turn Emotion, Language, and Format into Ad Creative Strategy

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights & Digital Advertising Insights



DramaBox
DramaBox uses bold romantic conflict and “exclusive series” positioning to make the story instantly readable. Character-led poster design and clear app store CTAs quickly communicate genre, tension, and where to watch.

ReelShort
ReelShort combines localized subtitles with historical and fantasy drama visuals to reach international audiences. Its longer video format lets the story unfold like a mini episode, helping build emotional investment before click-through.

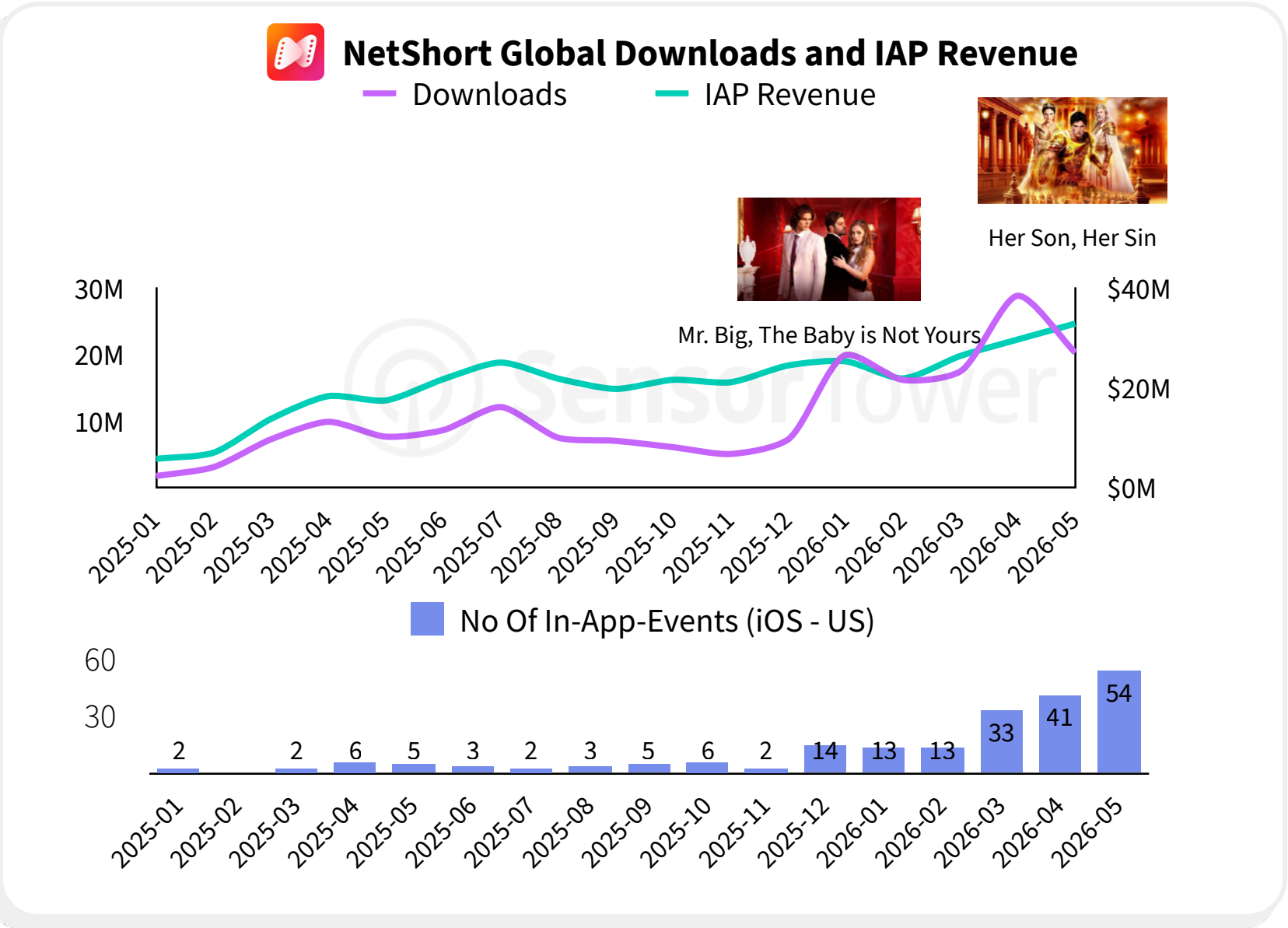
FreeReels
FreeReels leads with value and accessibility, using localized Hindi text, “100% Free” messaging, and an INR payment prompt. This approach fits price-sensitive, high-growth markets such as India.

Melolo
Melolo highlights the in-app discovery experience through genre tabs, popular titles, and Indonesian interface text. Instead of selling one story, the creative promotes catalog depth and repeat viewing.

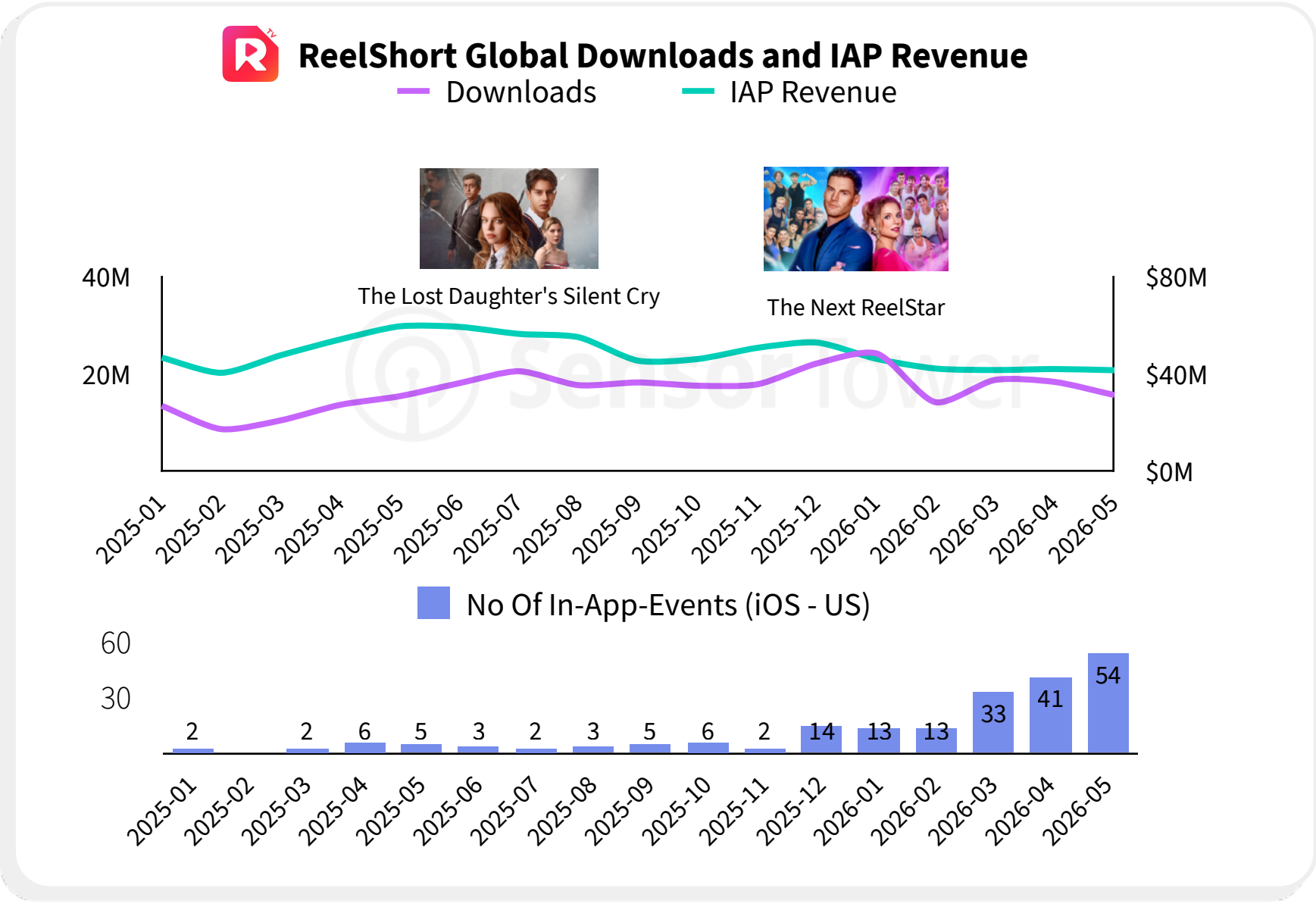
NetShort
NetShort uses anime-style visuals and Japanese subtitles to localize for Japan’s entertainment audience. The illustrated format stands out from live-action ads while tapping into manga, romance, and serialized storytelling habits.

Frequent Content Drops Help Short Drama Apps Sustain Download and Revenue Momentum

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.
Note: Sensor Tower's revenue data is based on in-app purchase (IAP) estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding ad monetisation, revenue from third-party Android stores or direct payments made via official brand websites or other alternative payment channels. Unless otherwise specified as net revenue, all revenue figures refer to gross revenue (i.e. before platform fees are deducted). Sensor Tower's download data is based on estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding pre-installs, re-downloads, and downloads from third-party Android stores. Google Play is not available in Mainland China.



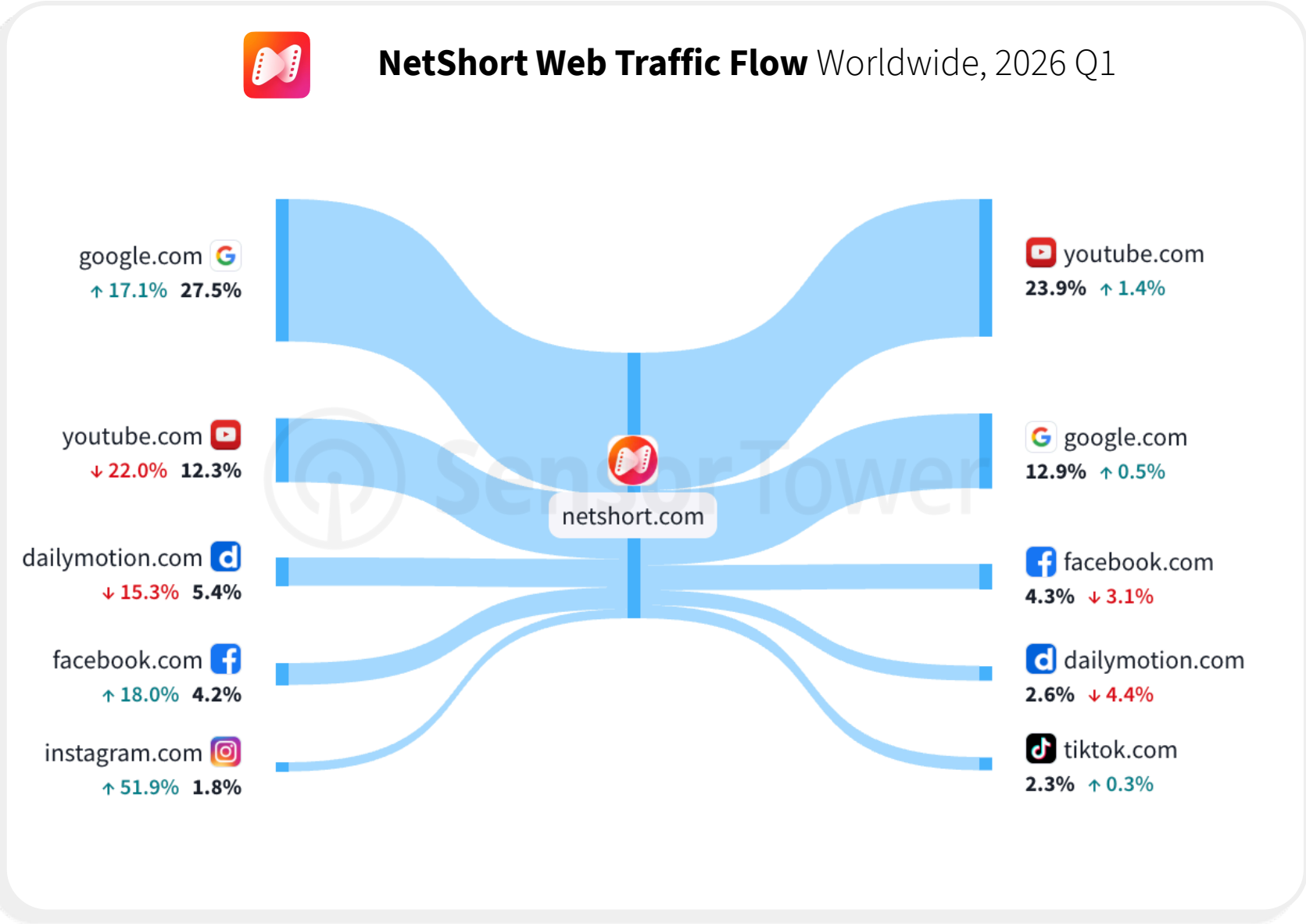
Short drama performance is closely tied to the rhythm of new content releases. NetShort’s download and revenue spikes in early 2026 coincided with a concentrated rollout of new premiere titles, while its iOS in-app events rose sharply to **54 events in May 2026**, suggesting a more active strategy to spotlight new content and bring users back into the app.



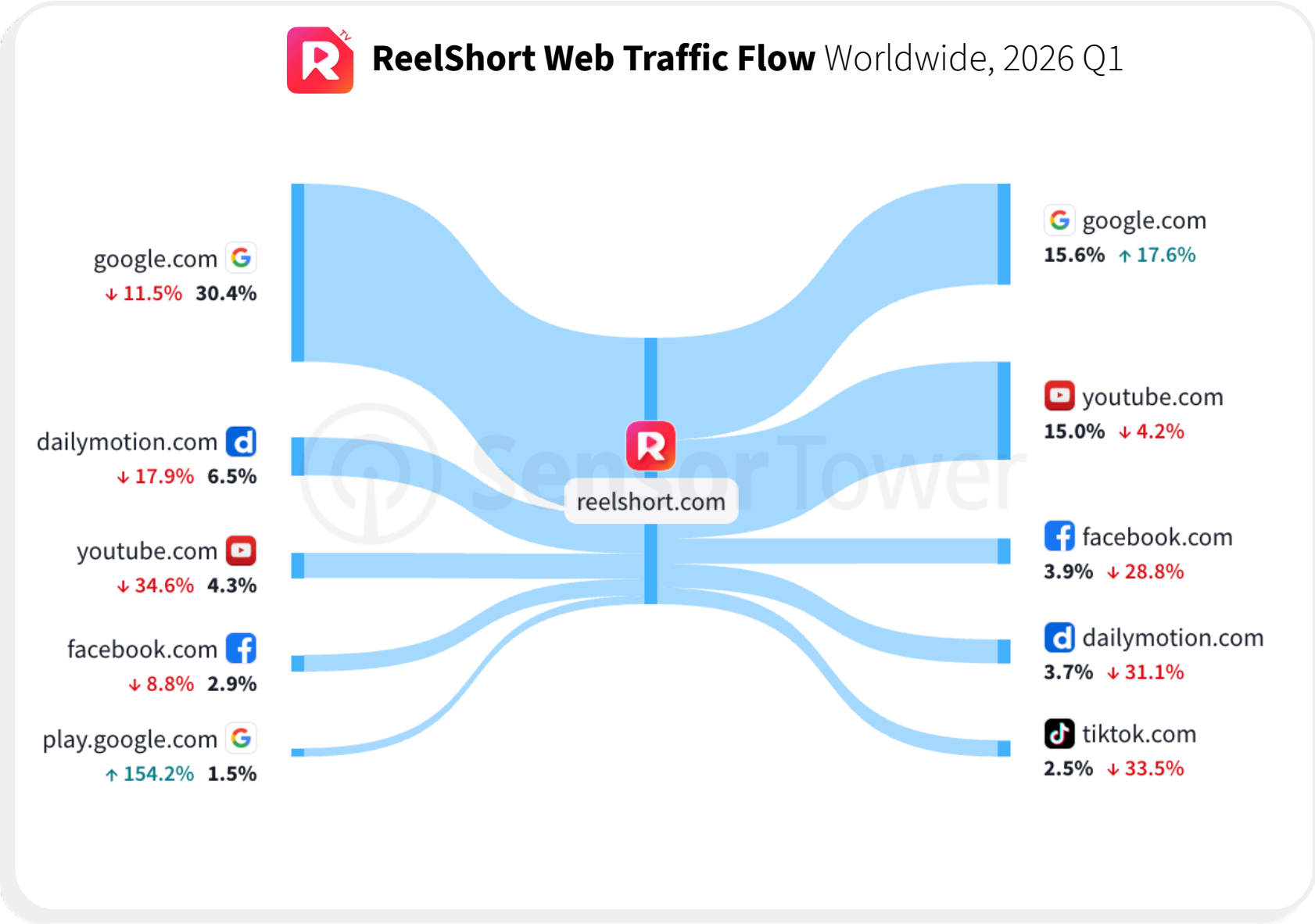
ReelShort shows a similar pattern, with major title launches helping drive sharp download and revenue spikes around key release windows. This suggests that successful short drama apps are not only competing through paid acquisition, but also through a high-frequency content pipeline that creates repeat reasons for users to install, return, and spend.

Short Drama Apps Build Web-Led Discovery Funnels Across Search, Video, and Social Platforms

Data Source: Sensor Tower Web Insights as of June 5, 2026.



Short drama apps are building **discovery funnels** that extend beyond direct app store traffic. *NetShort*'s web traffic flow shows a broad discovery funnel led by *Google* and *YouTube*, with *Dailymotion*, *Facebook*, and *Instagram* also contributing inbound visits in 2026 Q1. Downstream traffic also flows back to major content and social platforms, highlighting how short drama apps use the web as both a discovery layer and a re-engagement channel beyond direct app store acquisition.



ReelShort follows a similar multi-channel pattern, with *Google* representing the largest inbound traffic source, followed by video and social platforms such as *Dailymotion*, *YouTube*, and *Facebook*. Its downstream flow to *Google*, *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *Dailymotion*, and *TikTok* suggests that short drama audiences move fluidly between search, video discovery, social engagement, and app-related landing pages before converting or returning to content.

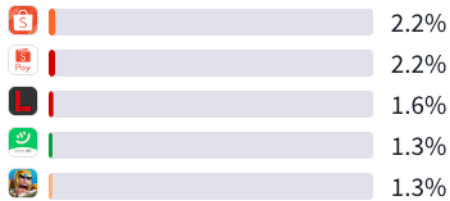
Audience Scale Opens a New Ad Monetization Path for Short Drama Apps

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.



FreeReels Total Ad Impressions by Markets July 2025 - March 2026

Top Advertisers in the selected apps



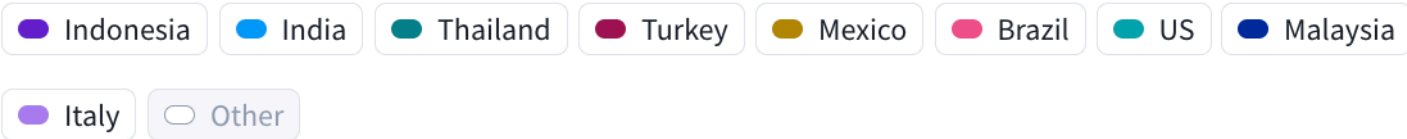
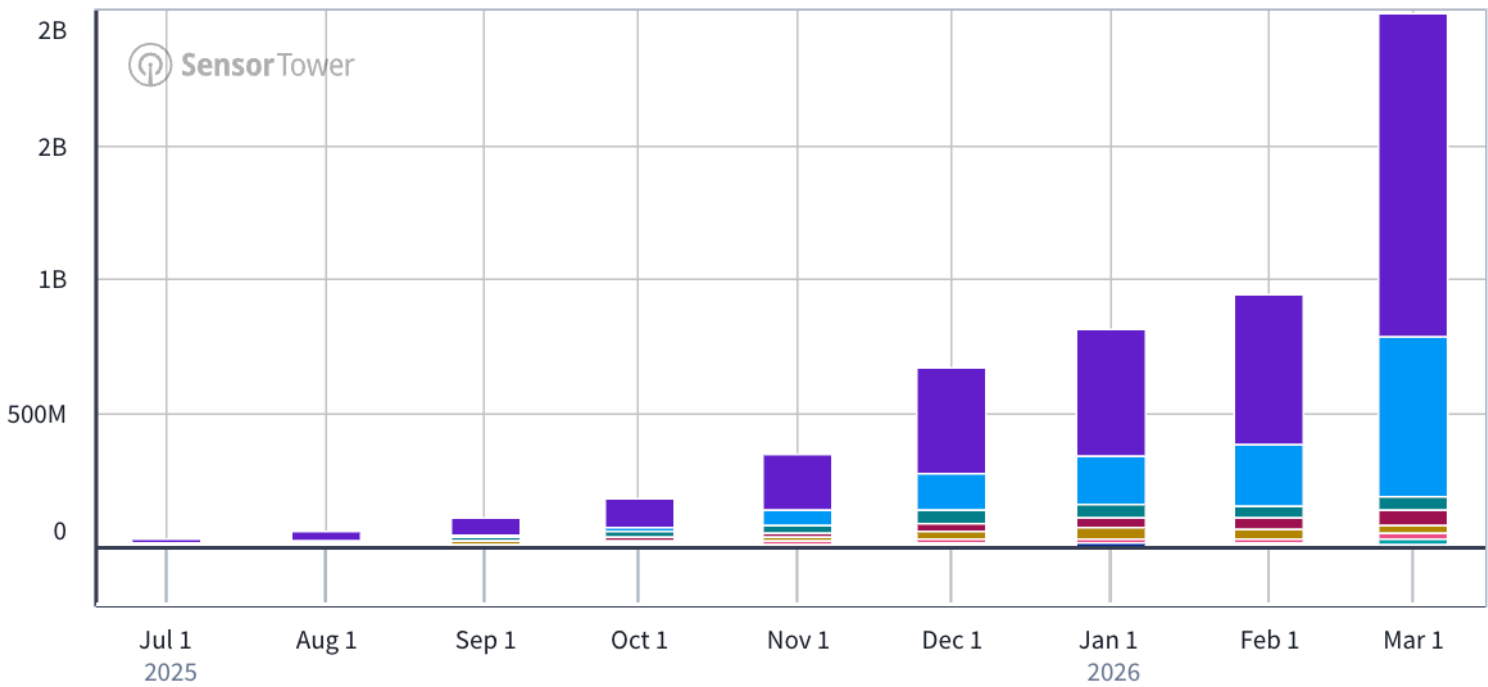
by Total Ad Impressions

Top Advertisers Categories in the selected apps



by Total Ad Impressions

Ad Monetization

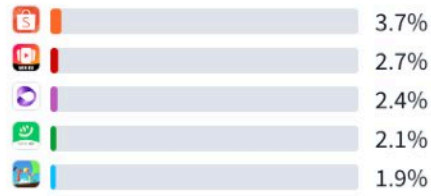


FreeReels' ad impressions ramped up sharply from late 2025, alongside its rapid growth in downloads and MAU. India became a key driver of this expansion, showing how high-volume acquisition in mobile-first markets can quickly translate into scalable ad inventory.



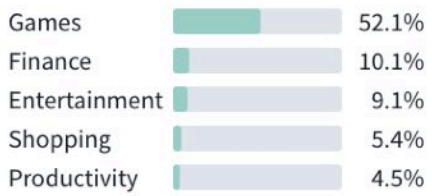
Melolo - Total Ad Impressions by Markets July 2025 - March 2026

Top Advertisers in the selected apps



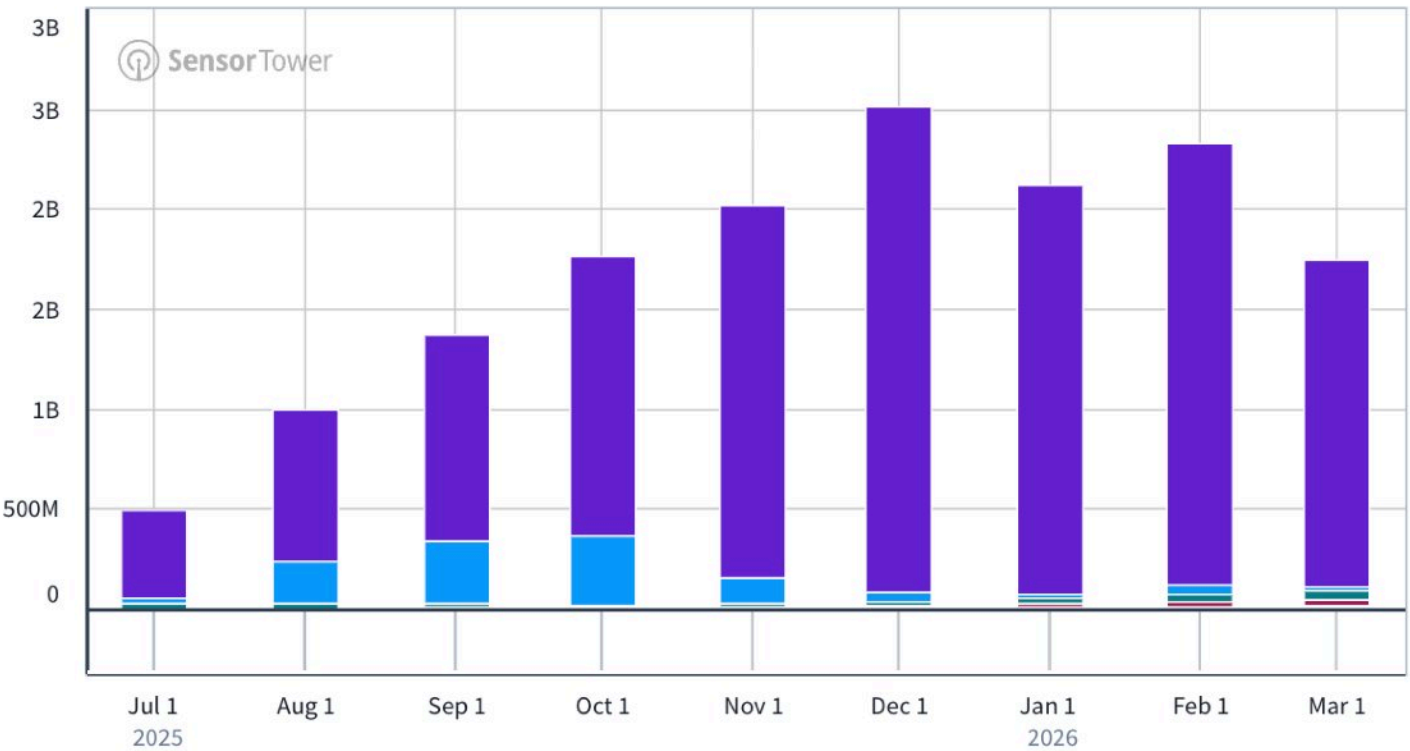
by Total Ad Impressions

Top Advertisers Categories in the selected apps



by Total Ad Impressions

Ad Monetization



Melolo shows a more established ad monetization pattern, with Indonesia contributing the majority of impressions through 2025 and into 2026. Its strong engagement base in Southeast Asia gives the app a foundation to attract advertisers across games, finance, entertainment, shopping, and productivity, highlighting how short drama apps can monetize scale beyond IAP.

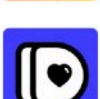
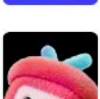
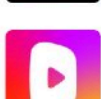
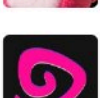
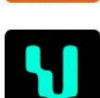
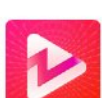
Rankings:

Top Short Drama Apps By Region



Q1 2026 Top Short Drama Apps by Downloads

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.
Note: Sensor Tower's download data is based on estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding pre-installs, re-downloads, and downloads from third-party Android stores. Google Play is not available in Mainland China.

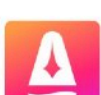
United States	Japan	South Korea	Southeast Asia	Latin America	India
1  ReelShort =	1  GoodShort ▲	1  DramaBox =	1  FreeReels ▲	1  ReelShort =	1  FreeReels ▲
2  DramaBox =	2  NetShort ▲	2  NetShort ▲	2  Melolo ▼	2  FreeReels ▲	2  Story TV ▼
3  ShortMax ▲	3  DramaBox ▼	3  Vigloo ▲	3  NetShort ▲	3  NetShort ▲	3  Kuku TV ▼
4  NetShort =	4  Dramawave ▲	4  Dramawave ▼	4  DramaBox ▼	4  DramaBox ▼	4  QuickTV ▼
5  GoodShort ▼	5  ReelShort ▼	5  MigoReels NEW ▲	5  ReelShort ▼	5  GoodShort =	5  DashReels ▼
6  Dramawave ▼	6  FlickReels =	6  FlickReels ▼	6  Dramawave ▼	6  ShortMax =	6  FreeDrama NEW ▼
7  FreeReels ▲	7  Million ▲	7  Lezhin Snack NEW ▲	7  Pop Drama ▼	7  Dramawave ▼	7  Viral TV ▼
8  My Drama ▲	8  FOD SHORT ▲	8  FreeReels ▲	8  RapidTV ▼	8  Pop Drama ▼	8  Bullet ▲
9  PineDrama NEW ▲	9  ShortMax ▼	9  Micro Drama ▲	9  GoodShort ▲	9  RapidTV ▼	9  Dramawave =
10  CandyJarTV ▲	10  Vigloo ▲	10  RapidTV ▼	10  PineDrama NEW ▲	10  Melolo ▲	10  ShortFree NEW ▲

Download leadership varied more widely by market in Q1 2026, reflecting a less consolidated user acquisition landscape. *ReelShort* held the No. 1 position in the U.S. and Latin America, *GoodShort* led Japan, *DramaBox* remained No. 1 in South Korea, while *FreeReels* took the top spot in Southeast Asia and rose to No. 2 in Latin America. *NetShort* also showed broad momentum, ranking within the top three across Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

Q1 2026 Top Short Drama Apps by In-App Revenue

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.

Note: Sensor Tower's revenue data is based on in-app purchase (IAP) estimates from App Store and Google Play, excluding ad monetisation, revenue from third-party Android stores or direct payments made via official brand websites or other alternative payment channels. Unless otherwise specified as net revenue, all revenue figures refer to gross revenue (i.e. before platform fees are deducted).

United States	Japan	South Korea	Southeast Asia	Latin America	India
1  ReelShort =	1  DramaBox =	1  DramaBox =	1  DramaBox =	1  DramaBox =	1  Dramawave ▲
2  DramaBox =	2  GoodShort ▲	2  Dramawave =	2  Dramawave =	2  GoodShort ▲	2  DramaBox ▼
3  GoodShort =	3  NetShort ▲	3  NetShort ▲	3  NetShort =	3  ReelShort ▼	3  ReelShort =
4  Dramawave ▲	4  Dramawave ▼	4  Vigloo ▲	4  GoodShort =	4  Dramawave =	4  GoodShort =
5  NetShort ▼	5  FlickReels ▲	5  FlickReels ▼	5  ReelShort =	5  NetShort =	5  NetShort ▲
6  FlickReels =	6  ReelShort ▼	6  StardustTV ▲	6  FlickReels =	6  ShortMax ▲	6  Kuku TV ▼
7  My Drama ▲	7  ShortMax =	7  MoboReels =	7  ShortMax =	7  FlickReels ▼	7  FlickReels =
8  ShortMax =	8  MoboReels =	8  ShortMax ▼	8  StardustTV =	8  StardustTV ▲	8  ShortMax ▲
9  DreameShort ▲	9  StardustTV =	9  FlexTV ▲	9  MoboReels ▲	9  FlareFlow ▼	9  Story TV ▲
10  FlareFlow ▼	10  Million ▲	10  ReelShort =	10  iDrama ▲	10  My Drama ▲	10  Kalos TV ▲

DramaBox remained the most consistently dominant short drama app across major overseas markets, ranking No. 1 in Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, while *ReelShort* continued to lead in the U.S. Newer and fast-scaling challengers such as *DramaWave* and *NetShort* also appeared prominently across multiple regions, highlighting a competitive market where leading global players are being joined by regionally strong challengers.

Q1 2026 Top Short Drama Apps by Monthly Active Users

Source: Sensor Tower App Performance Insights as of June 5, 2026.

United States	Japan	South Korea	Southeast Asia	Latin America	India
1  ReelShort ▲	1  DramaBox =	1  DramaBox =	1  Melolo =	1  DramaBox =	1  Kuku TV =
2  DramaBox ▼	2  NetShort ▲	2  Dramawave =	2  FreeReels ▲	2  ReelShort =	2  Story TV =
3  FlareFlow =	3  ReelShort ▼	3  NetShort ▲	3  DramaBox ▼	3  NetShort ▲	3  QuickTV =
4  ShortMax ▲	4  FlickReels =	4  Short Reels ▼	4  ReelShort =	4  GoodShort ▼	4  FreeReels ▲
5  FlickReels =	5  GoodShort =	5  Vigloo =	5  NetShort ▲	5  Micro Drama ▼	5  DashReels ▼
6  GoodShort ▼	6  Dramawave =	6  Popcorn Drama =	6  Dramawave ▼	6  RapidTV ▼	6  ViralTV ▼
7  StardustTV ▼	7  ShortMax =	7  ShortPlay ▲	7  RapidTV ▼	7  FreeReels ▲	7  DramaBox =
8  Dramawave ▲	8  TopShort =	8  StardustTV =	8  Micro Drama =	8  Dramawave ▼	8  FreeDrama NEW
9  RapidTV ▼	9  JOWO =	9  FlickReels ▼	9  ShortMax ▼	9  ShortMax ▲	9  Dramawave ▲
10  Micro Drama ▲	10  RapidTV ▲	10  GoodShort ▼	10  GoodShort =	10  FlareFlow ▼	10  Bullet ▲

DramaBox maintained a strong active user footprint across overseas markets in Q1 2026, ranking No. 1 in Japan, South Korea, and Latin America, while also placing among the top three in the U.S. and Southeast Asia. ReelShort remained the leading app in the U.S., while Melolo took the top spot in Southeast Asia, highlighting how regional leaders are emerging alongside global incumbents as short drama consumption becomes more localized.

Conclusion: Short Drama Apps Enter a New Phase of Scale, Engagement, and Monetization

1

Short Drama's Growth Potential Remains Significant

Short drama apps have already built meaningful global scale, with downloads surpassing **850M in Q1 2026**. As downloads continue to grow faster than revenue, the category still has significant upside to convert its expanding user base into deeper engagement, paid content consumption, and higher-value monetization.

2

Emerging Markets Are Driving the Next Wave of Growth

Southeast Asia, Latin America, and India have become the core engines of short drama growth, accounting for more than three-quarters of global downloads in Q1 2026. These markets are also seeing short drama downloads overtake OTT streaming, underscoring the strength of mobile-first, bite-sized storytelling in high-growth regions.

3

Engagement Is Becoming a Key Competitive Advantage

Short drama apps are increasingly competing for daily entertainment time, not just installs. Users spent nearly 6x more time in short drama apps than a year ago, while daily time spent reached 25 minutes globally by April 2026. Southeast Asia is leading this shift, with engagement approaching 40 minutes per day.

4

Winning Apps Combine Paid Acquisition, Localized Content, and Monetization Depth

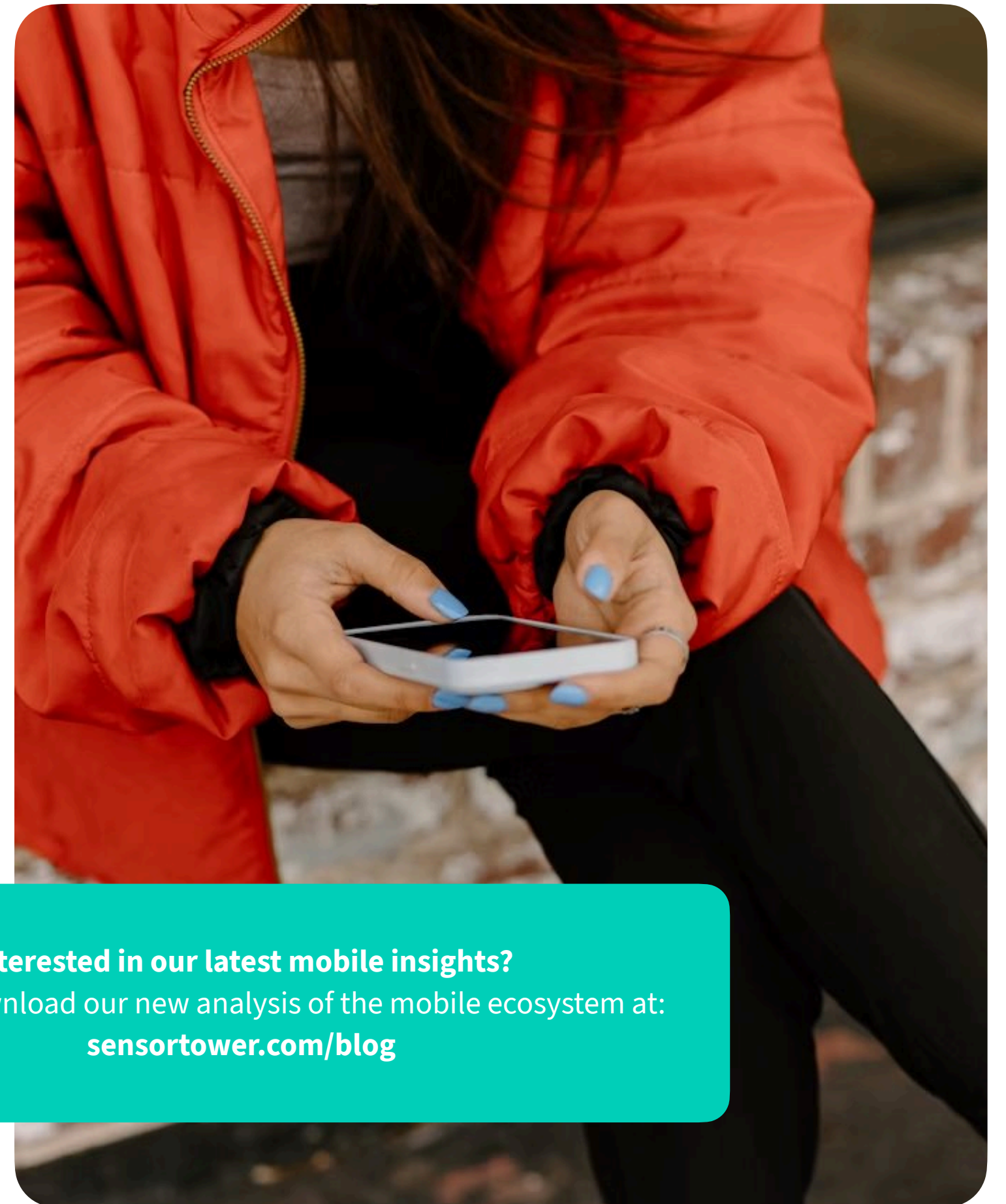
Paid acquisition remains the fastest route to scale, but long-term leadership will depend on broader discovery, localized creatives, frequent content drops, and diversified monetization. Breakout apps such as FreeReels, NetShort, and Melolo show how new players can scale quickly, while leaders like ReelShort and DramaBox continue to set the benchmark for revenue and audience depth.

Sensor Tower

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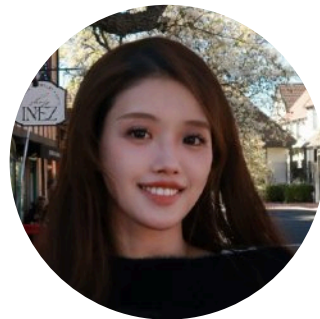
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