

Some Americans Turn to Content Creation for Work

今回は、SNSを通じて自分のキャリアを築こうとするアメリカの人々を紹介した記事です。仕事の形が多様化するなかで、動画や写真を発信して収入を得る人が増えています。YouTubeやTikTokなどのSNSは、個人が自分の考えや才能を世界に届ける場となっています。文中の「platform」は日本語でもよく使われますが、「情報を発信する場」や「サービスを提供する仕組み」という意味で、social media platform（SNSの場）、video platform（動画配信サービス）などのように使われます。こうした新しい働き方が広がる一方で、安定の形も変わりつつあります。あなたは、現代ではどんな仕事が本当の安定をもたらすと思いますか？



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

In a social media video, American Grace Xu told her 300,000 TikTok followers she was likely to lose her job.

She was right, she tells them in a later video. But she was planning to seek a different career anyway: as a content creator.

"I guess the decision has been made on my behalf," she tells viewers in the video posted earlier this year. "The universe has spoken."

U.S. job market

The job market in the United States seems to be holding strong, with employers adding 303,000 workers in March. The jobless rate has remained below four percent for 26 straight months. That is the longest continuous period at that rate since the 1960s.

But the numbers do not necessarily ease worries for thousands of people who have found themselves out of work. Hiring has largely taken place in only a few industries. Technology and [finance](#) companies have added just a small number of jobs in the last 12 months.

Some recently jobless Americans, like the 26-year-old Xu, are turning away from traditional employment. Instead they are building a new career path through online content creation. They aim to make money from brand deals and advertising by producing social media videos.

Labor and employment expert Sarah Damaske of Penn State University in Pennsylvania said, “I think most [employees](#) look at employers now and no longer think that they are going to find [security](#) — permanent security — in a job.”

Damaske added, “I think it makes it less [risky](#) to do something like go and be a content creator because employment with a traditional employer is so much riskier.”

In an estimated \$250 billion industry, four percent of global content creators make more than \$100,000 every year, says Goldman Sachs Research.

YouTube — considered by creators to be one of the best [platforms](#) for earning money — has more than 3 million channels in its YouTube Partner Program. A spokesperson said the platform paid producers more than \$70 billion in the last three years.

Meanwhile, TikTok — which faces the threat of a U.S. national ban that could hurt the video creation business — has seen a 15 percent growth in user monetization, a company spokesperson said.

Many people turn to full-time content creation only after they have seen good results from putting in the work, said Brooke Erin Duffy, an expert with Cornell University in New York.

Pandemic

The pandemic also changed how U.S. employees consider their work lives. Many seek more control over their schedules and the ability to work from home. In February, nearly 440,000 people applied to start their own businesses — up nearly 50 percent from a monthly 300,000 just before the pandemic, the U.S. Census Bureau says.

Among those who started businesses are content creators, although they likely make up only a small percentage of the total.

For Xu, the pandemic permitted her time to rediscover her hobbies. She started making content at that time as @amazingishgrace on TikTok. She built up a following. Even when she left her banking job to move into the tech field for a better work-life balance, she kept on making content.

Xu lost her job last summer. She said she wondered at the time if she should go to content creation full time. She had a deep fear of ruining things she loved by turning them into work. But the job loss sped up her plans.

“You just have to have this belief that, like, once your life is wide open for something, it will come,” she said, “otherwise you’ll drive yourself crazy thinking about it.”

Brooke Schultz reported on this story for the Associated Press. John Russell adapted it for VOA Learning English.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. finance (n.) the business of the management of money

My uncle has been working in finance for the last twenty years.

2. employee (n.) a worker at a company

The growing pizza chain added fifty new employees this month.

3. security (n.) having little or no chance of losing a job; stability in work

Having your own business gives you security, but you always need to find new customers.

4. risky (adj.) possibly causing damage or harm; dangerous

Walking outside during a thunderstorm is risky.

5. platform (n.) a website that provides a service or allows users to make content

The company started out as a music streaming platform.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Why do many people in the US want to become content creators?
2. These days, what platforms are popular places to make money from content creation?
3. How did the COVID-19 pandemic influence people's career choices?
4. In your opinion, what kinds of jobs give employees security these days?
5. Are you interested in becoming a content creator? Why or why not?