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## BUSINESS

# From Oracle to Paramount to TikTok: How Larry and David Ellison Are Building a New US Media Dynasty

David Ellison takes the helm of Paramount Skydance amid expansion plans

By **Martin Toledo**

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Larry Ellison (PHOTO: LARRY ELLISON/ORACLE OFFICIAL WEBSITE)

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Larry Ellison has never fitted the mould of a media mogul. The Oracle co-founder built his fortune in databases and cloud computing, not newsrooms or film studios.

Yet in 2025, Ellison and his son David Ellison have pushed decisively into U.S. media, combining an \$8 billion merger in [Hollywood](#) with a central role in the restructuring of TikTok's American operations.

Together, the Ellisons are positioning themselves as serious rivals to the Murdoch dynasty.

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## Paramount Skydance: The \$8 Billion Power Play

In August 2025, David Ellison's Skydance Media finalised an \$8 billion (£5.95 billion) merger with Paramount Global, forming the new Paramount Skydance Corporation.

The deal combined Skydance's production strength with Paramount's major media assets, including CBS, MTV, Showtime and Nickelodeon.

David Ellison became Chairman and CEO, while Jeff Shell, former NBC Universal boss, was appointed President.

The Federal Communications Commission and European Commission approved the merger earlier this year. Reuters described it as 'a landmark consolidation in the U.S. media industry, cementing David Ellison's position at the top of Hollywood.'

The new company has already been linked to fresh expansion plans. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, Paramount Skydance has explored a bid for Warner Bros. Discovery, which owns CNN, HBO and TBS. Meanwhile, the group has also struck a deal to secure exclusive U.S. broadcast rights for UFC events, strengthening its sports media portfolio.

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## The TikTok Power Play

Beyond Hollywood, Larry Ellison's influence is extending deep into the social media sphere through Oracle's involvement in TikTok's U.S. operations.

President [Donald Trump](#) announced last week that his administration had signed off on a U.S.-China agreement that would allow TikTok to continue operating in America under majority U.S. control.

'TikTok is here to stay,' Trump told reporters, boasting that Chinese President Xi Jinping had personally approved the deal during a phone call.

Yet Beijing has so far offered no public confirmation. [BBC News](#) noted that 'state broadcasters ignored Trump's announcement' and discussion on Chinese social media platforms such as Weibo was 'muted.' The only commentary came from a state-linked academic who described the deal as a 'win-win.'

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The restructuring would see TikTok's U.S. arm spun into a new company dominated by American investors, with Oracle hosting U.S. user data on secure servers.

ByteDance, TikTok's Beijing-based parent, would retain a stake of less than 20 percent. A new board, made up primarily of U.S. figures including [Rupert Murdoch](#), Michael Dell and Larry Ellison, would oversee content moderation and technology policy.

Trump's executive order 'buys TikTok 120 days to finalise the details' of the deal before the threat of a nationwide ban returns.

# Why It Matters

TikTok's reach makes the deal especially sensitive. Pew Research data shows that one in five U.S. adults now uses TikTok as a news source, up from just 3 percent in 2020.

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For Washington, that influence, combined with fears of Chinese access to user data, has turned TikTok into a national security flashpoint.

For Beijing, the app represents a rare global tech success story. Handing over control of its algorithm and U.S. operations could be seen as a major concession.

China's silence 'contrasts sharply with Trump's claim' that Xi had endorsed the plan, highlighting a 'gap between Washington's triumphalism and Beijing's reluctance.'

## Industry Reactions

Industry experts are split on what the Ellisons' growing empire means. Some analysts view their ability to straddle Hollywood, Silicon Valley and social media as groundbreaking.

Others warn of the risks. As one *BBC* analysis put it, 'the consolidation of influence across television, film and a platform as powerful as TikTok raises new questions about political sway and media monopolisation.'

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# The Road Ahead

Trump's order grants a four-month reprieve, during which investors, lawyers and regulators must iron out final details. If [China](#) approves, TikTok will effectively become a U.S.-run platform, overseen by Oracle and its partners. If not, a ban and fresh legal battles may follow.

For now, TikTok's 170 million U.S. users, along with millions of creators and businesses, can breathe easier. But until Beijing breaks its silence, the Ellisons' bet on TikTok remains the riskiest and most ambitious chapter in their bid to reshape American media.

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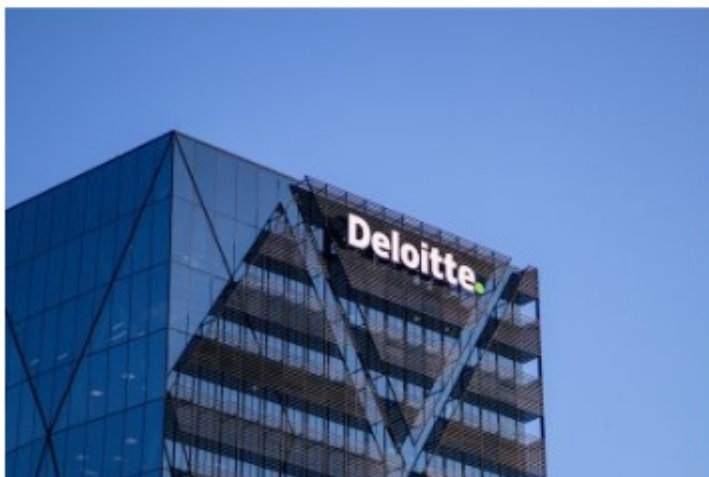
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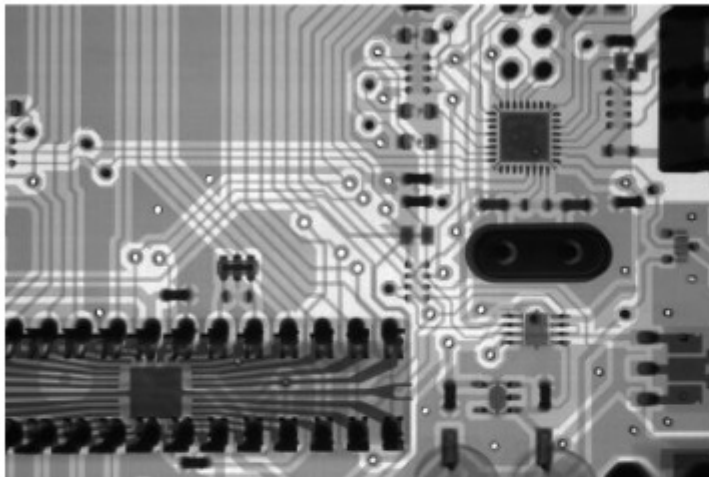
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
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