

The TikTok Marketing Guide:

Top Performing Content Strategies for Brands



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Brands across all industries have embraced TikTok as the high-performance channel for consumer engagement and digital growth.

With 1.5 billion monthly active users, TikTok is unlike any other social channel brands have interacted with in the past.¹ It revolves around trends, music, and of course, the For You Page where organic brand discovery can soar through virality. Even with an ever-looming ban in the United States, it does not appear that the platform's growth is slowing down anytime soon. The opportunities for brands on the platform continue to skyrocket.

Though TikTok was always thought to be, is not just for Generation Z – its reach spans generations and has quickly become an essential channel for brands to create meaningful connections with online consumers. It's not only an opportunity to bolster brand awareness but also a burgeoning medium to drive e-commerce traffic. According to eMarketer, 49% of TikTok users are making purchases influenced by the app at least once per month.² There's no one-size-fits-all strategy for TikTok success but brands across industries are testing the waters with organic and paid TikTok content – and it's paying off in terms of brand relevance and conversions.

49% of TikTok users are making purchases influenced by the app at least once per month. Source: eMarketer

Brands that have adopted TikTok and taken the time to test what styles of content work for their identity and audience have seen monumental results. What differentiates the brands that have found success on TikTok is their step away from traditional approaches to content creation and embrace lo-fi video and spontaneous storytelling. A combination of data and creative content production has catapulted brands to the For You Page (FYP).

Creative and Technical Best Practices

Content creation for TikTok requires some brands to step outside of their comfort zone. The videos that engage your audience on other platforms won't necessarily strike a chord with TikTok users. Finding a balance between following the tips and tricks that are building momentum in the space and participating in a way that expresses your brand's unique POV is key. In terms of technical best practices, video length and sound can make or break a post's chances of making it to the FYP. Creative best practices encourage brands to embrace lo-fi content and lean into spontaneity to capture attention.

Creative Best Practices

Put Your Own Spin on the Latest Trends

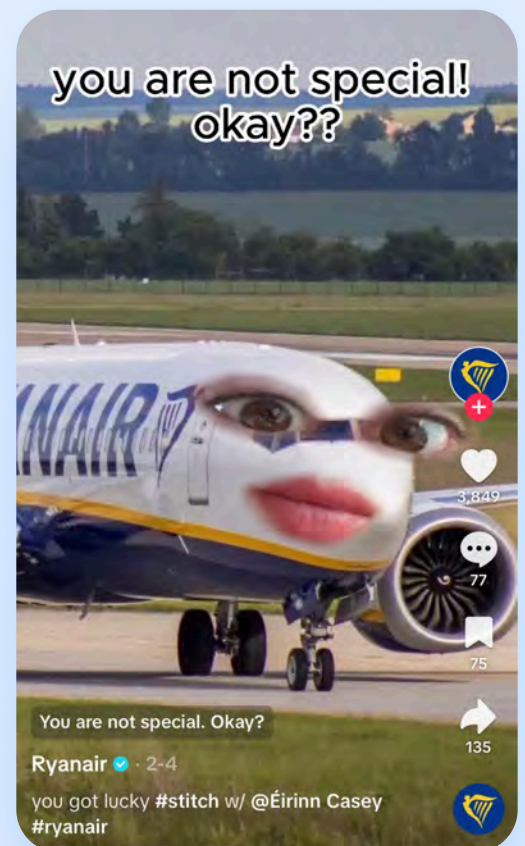
It's important to keep a pulse on what types of videos, music and content are [trending on TikTok](#), but it's equally important to find a creative way to integrate your brand or products into a trend. Tutorials can be an optimal tactic to engage consumers across generations with many users enjoying deeper dives into product uses from brands on TikTok.

Stop the Scroll

First impressions are critical on TikTok. The first few seconds of your video need to hook users enough to keep them watching and maybe even intrigue them enough to engage with your video or visit your profile.

Have Fun With It

TikTok is a place to test new themes, take risks and be unfiltered. 39% of Gen Z consumers said that brands posting jokes, memes and other relatable pieces of content creates or increases the positive perception they have of that brand.³ Users want to go to social media to escape and have fun, use your brand to join that narrative.



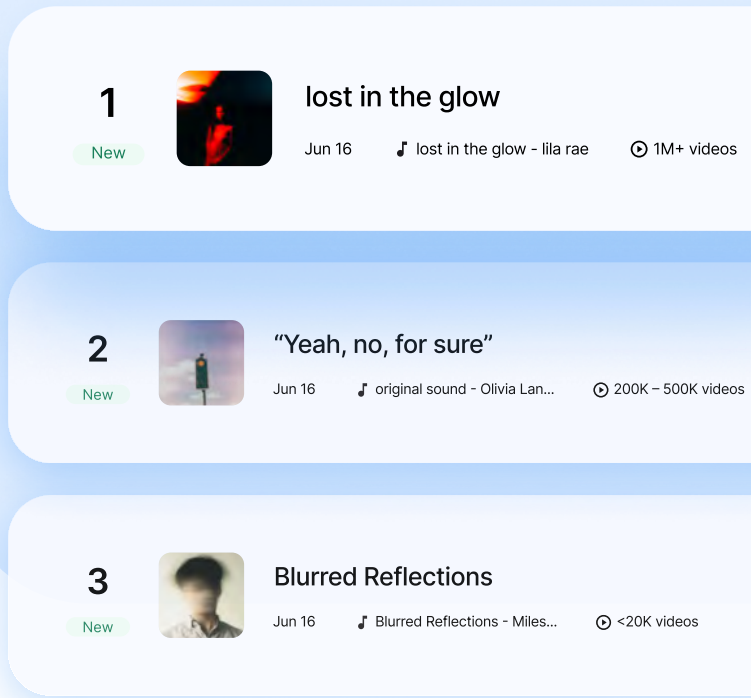
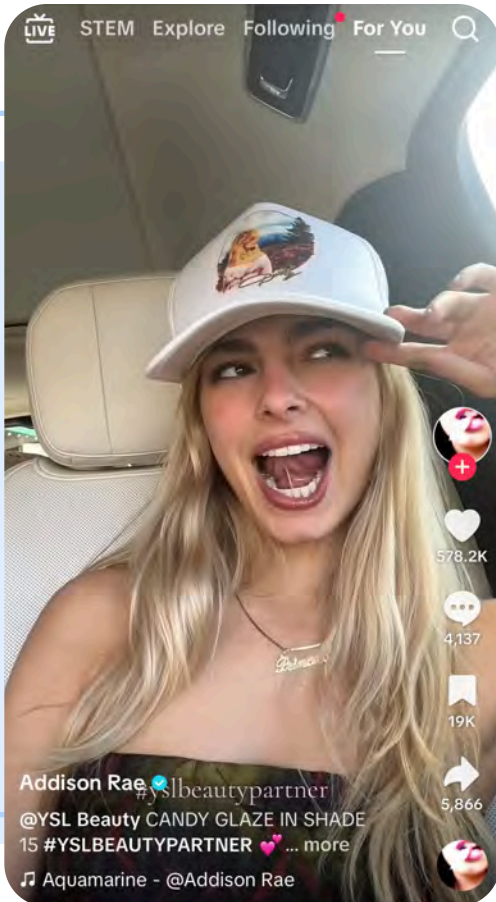
Technical Best Practices

Aspect Ratio

While TikTok supports many different aspect ratios, 9:16 full-screen vertical videos will perform best. This is because they fill the entire screen and help immerse the user in your content.

Video Length

While shorter videos used to reign supreme on TikTok, audiences are shifting focus, engaging and enjoying longer content. Videos over 54 seconds generate the most views on average, while shorter-form content has started to progressively gain fewer views.⁴ We recommend having a mix of short and long content as a part of your strategy to get a good idea of what works for you.



Sound

Keeping a pulse on audio trends is mandatory for a successful TikTok presence. Keep tabs on what's trending and put your own unique spin on trending sounds, but only if it aligns with your brand, of course.

Publishing Cadence

Naturally, higher posting frequency on TikTok equates to higher growth. We recommend posting at least 5-7 times per week. Try a variety of content types to understand what your audience likes.

Hashtags

Less is more with hashtags on TikTok. 2-3 relevant and explanatory hashtags per piece of content are sufficient and will help brands reach new audiences. And no, using #fyp won't up your chances of going viral.

In-App Effects

Leveraging native, easy-to-use effects like TikTok text and filters help create a unique visual experience for your audience and can help your content stand out among hundreds or thousands of other pieces of content about the same thing.

TikTok Strategy

Development and Tips

Finding your brand's TikTok sweet spot largely relies on three key factors: data, authenticity and trends. Brands need to put their own spin on the latest trends while leveraging data to understand which styles of content perform with their target audience and increase their chances of landing on the For You Page. Complex TikTok strategies are unlikely to garner performance, instead flexible strategies that are designed to pivot on the fly will optimize your brand's video views, impressions and reach. Here are some ways you can set your strategy up for success.

Hook the Viewer

The topic of your video should be clear to the audience within the first few seconds, especially as your video may be shown to users who are unfamiliar with your brand. Getting the point across early will capture attention and encourage the viewer to watch the video until the end. The more your videos are being viewed to completion, the higher the chance they have to be served up across the FYP, reaching more new viewers. The most successful videos across TikTok tell a story and benefit the user. Make your videos educational, informative, aspirational or entertaining to provide value and give people a reason to watch, share and comment.

Be Consistent

With TikTok, it's a best practice to keep a regular publishing schedule. Not only so that your followers can look forward to your content, but to provide a bit of runway for when you want to experiment with a new style of video. The Following feed is not shown in chronological order, so there is less chance of bombarding your followers with "too much" content.

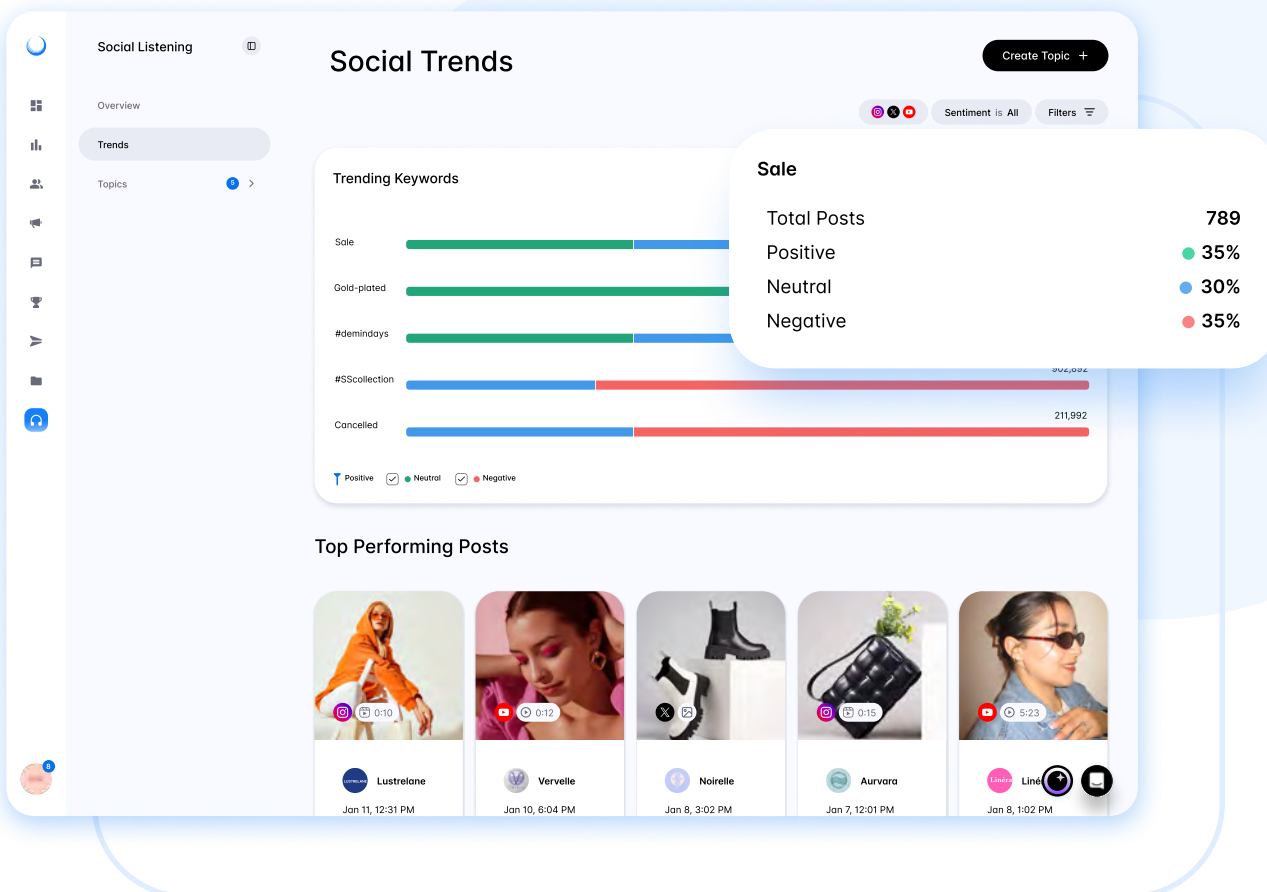
Being consistent also applies to cohesion and authenticity. The videos you post on TikTok should match in terms of tone and quality, so your style is consistent across the board. Your presence on TikTok should also be authentic to your brand's presence off of TikTok. If your videos come across as inauthentic and disingenuous, your viewers will be able to tell. This practice also applies to the creators you partner with. It's best to work with creators who genuinely care about your product and message.

Explore With Creativity

Creativity and originality are rewarded on TikTok. Branded content won't break through on TikTok where original content rules. The platform is designed to make it easy for anyone to be creative in their own way. Trending hashtags and sounds can change quickly and the platform is filled with users adding their take to these trends. Pay attention to popular and up-and-coming trends to share your unique take on them and surface your videos to those who are engaging with those trends. Another tactic to try is to use seamless transitions to keep the pace of your content moving, captivate your audience and keep them guessing as to what's coming next.

Stay Active

Take an active role in managing your presence on the platform and leaning into what makes it unique. Community is big on TikTok. Like and reply to comments and questions that users leave on your videos to build community and encourage engagement. Leverage viewer sentiment with [social listening](#) to guide your content strategy where applicable and ask your viewers questions where you can. Another tactic for visibility and community building is spending time interacting with other users' videos within your vertical, and exploring what else is being done in your niche.



Goals and Objectives

The first step in your approach should be to set goals and determine your brand voice upfront as a guiding light. Ask yourself what purpose TikTok serves for your community. Setting objectives for your videos will help develop your content strategy and reach your ideal users. Keeping a consistent tone will also let your audience know what they can expect when they follow your account. These objectives don't need to be rigid. As you post and learn more about which of your videos are resonating on TikTok, you can adjust accordingly.

TikTok differs from many traditional marketing mediums in that followers and engagement aren't inherently tied. The For You Page is almost entirely algorithm-driven, which means that even small brands can reach large audiences. It's not uncommon to see brands on TikTok with low views on the majority of their posts and to have several posts with hundreds of thousands. Unlike other channels, followers are no longer your ceiling.

As with any new social initiative, establishing goals is crucial to optimizing performance. However, one of the challenges with TikTok is that videos can gain traction months or years after being posted, making optimization difficult. For this reason, it's important to set long-term goals and track content performance over time.

To start, we recommend setting goals tied to posting cadence, creator partnerships and UGC. Sticking to these goals for your first six months on the channel will help you test different types of content and understand what performs best with your target audience. Once you've found your brand's footing on the platform, integrate follower growth, engagement and conversions into your goals. This will look different for different brands, however, best practices suggest that setting flexible goals that can shift as the platform evolves will increase your performance over time. As a channel highly focused on trends, tracking results of specially produced trend content makes it easier to determine areas of opportunity and where to invest for a faster payoff.

Goal Tracking

First 6 months:

- Posting cadence
- Creator partnerships
- UGC

After 6 months add:

- Follower growth
- Engagement
- Conversions

Posts Feat. You
395

EMV
\$65,901

alexnewson
United States

Fashion

2
756K
2.2M



TikTok Trends: Ways to Go Viral

While no one can predict the exact formula for how to go viral on TikTok, there are proven methods to get served up more often and grow your audience through TikTok's For You Page. The FYP is your opportunity to not only net-new reach users but also those who have previously watched your content but haven't followed your account yet.

Unlike other social channels, TikTok is less about curating a brand story and more about presenting on-trend and topical content. One of the biggest challenges brands face is keeping up with the trends and knowing which to act on and which not to.

While there's no magic recipe for going viral on TikTok, the following strategies and trends will increase your chances of landing on the FYP.



TikTok UGC: Generate, Curate and Optimize

User-generated content (UGC) offers brands a powerful opportunity to tap into the style of content that TikTok users crave. Relatability plays a part in what will and won't become a trend and videos with zero props that anyone can create at home using TikTok native post-production climb the virality charts the fastest. Because of this, TikTok is a UGC goldmine for brands. Whether you prompt a flood of community content creation through a creator partnership, paid content or organic campaign, incorporating a content pillar solely for UGC is integral to developing an impactful TikTok strategy.

How To Fuel UGC

Develop a UGC-Focused Campaign

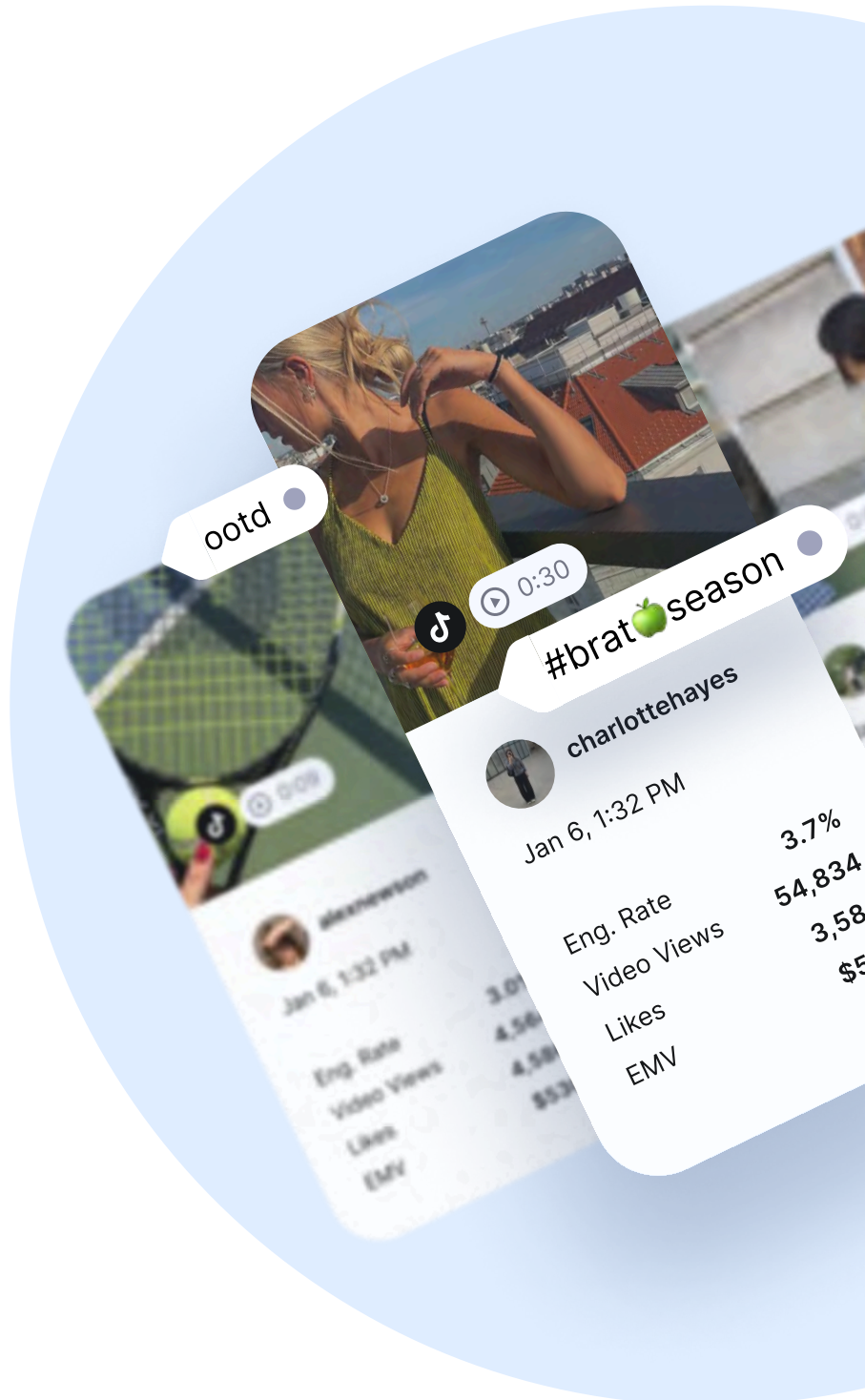
A good UGC-focused campaign will span across all platforms including TikTok, hopefully gathering content that can be used for cross-channel marketing and beyond. In order to get your campaign started you will need to identify what type of UGC you are hoping to get from users and how much of it. From there you can start planning different tactics you will be using to generate engagement and foster UGC creation.

Run Hashtag Challenges

A top tactic for generating UGC is hashtag challenges. A hashtag challenge can be as simple or complex as you want it to be, as long as you can ensure it will get your desired results. Many brands rely on challenges such as these to guide their community growth on TikTok, so they keep them simple and to the point to garner the most engagement and content from customers.

Invest in Creator Partnerships

As mentioned above, creator partnerships present a powerful opportunity to elicit action in the TikTok community. Whether it's showing off a new shopping haul, creating a new dance or offering a cooking tutorial, creators are likely to increase your chances of inspiring and engaging TikTok users to do the same, resulting in more UGC for your brand.



TikTok Creators: Source, Collaborate and Engage

Creator partnerships on TikTok have proven to be a top tactic for brands, with 78% of TikTok users saying they have made a purchase after seeing content in relation to the product or service that was produced or featuring a creator.⁵ In contrast to the editorial-style static imagery of the past, modern consumers demand content that isn't overproduced and creator partnerships on TikTok are meeting these shifting expectations.

TikTok's performance relies on staying on top of trends and creating relevant content quickly. Creators are a great resource to lean on to help advise brands. Creators understand the platform best – they're constantly adapting their content to meet trends and stay relevant, which means that they can help your brand do the same. These partnerships have been a key path for brands to create their own trends and find creative ways to jump on existing ones.

How to Integrate Creators

Start With TikTok-First Creators

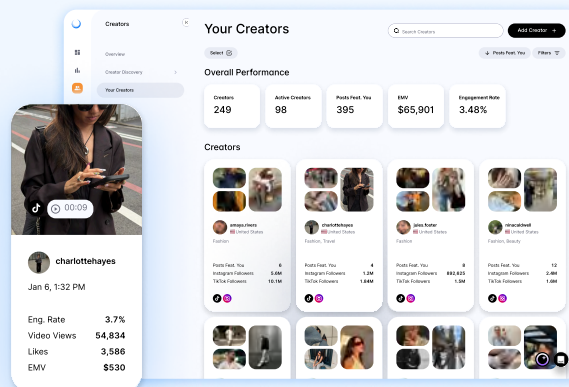
While integrating some existing partnerships into your TikTok strategy will likely be effective, we recommend focusing on partnerships with creators who have already established a TikTok presence. TikTok's rapid-fire nature and focus on fleeting trends require a level of focus that most influencers who are spread across platforms won't fully grasp. Working with TikTok-first influencers ensures that your content reaches an extremely targeted and engaged audience immediately, effectively maximizing conversions.

Test, Measure, Repeat

Instead of segmenting your paid, organic and influencer strategies on TikTok, it's recommended that you consider them one and the same. Putting ad spend behind influencers, who are somewhat of a proven model (if one exists) on TikTok, will likely yield the best results. They're all part of a holistic strategy, which should involve extensive testing and a willingness to be creative and leverage non-traditional tactics.

Blend Product Reviews Into Your Partnerships

Product reviews are one of the most common types of content shared on TikTok organically – but can easily transfer into a paid relationship as well. For example, an influencer could start by asking a question and encourage their audience to stitch with a response. Reviews could be shared on the brand and creator's pages to maximize reach.



INFLUENCER AND CREATOR ROI

Discover and Leverage High-Impact, Creator-Led Content

Your partner in influencer and community-generated content. Effortlessly source, vet, and measure the impact of each of your biggest fans and creator relationships.

[Learn More](#)

TikTok Advertising: Create, Customize and Convert

TikTok advertising has grown exponentially with worldwide ad revenue estimated to climb to over \$1.6 billion in the coming years.⁶ And for good reason – users are 5 times more likely to like, share, comment or bookmark Dynamic Ads on the platform (in comparison to similar ads on other platforms.)⁷ This means the conversion-generating opportunities that TikTok has to offer are equipping digital advertisers with a competitive advantage.

Many of the best practices for organic TikTok ring true for TikTok advertising. The platform’s mantra, “Don’t make ads, make TikToks,” says it all. Authenticity, storytelling and purpose-driven marketing are all key to a successful campaign. Avoid typical sales-based content that is purely product-focused and lean into creative ways to naturally integrate your product into a trend.

How to Utilize Ads

Surprise Your Audience

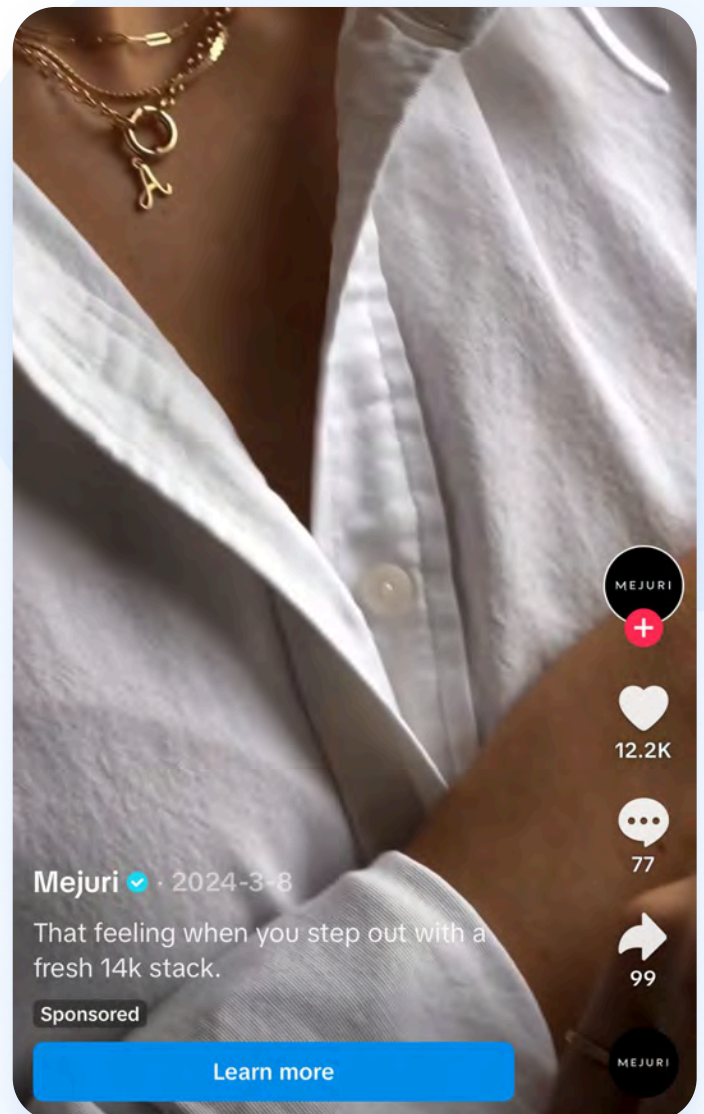
TikTok is the perfect place to introduce new products or launch new campaigns. Videos that have an element of surprise or something unexpected also have a higher chance of going viral, feeding into shareability and reach. Putting ad spend behind this type of content will increase views, and by including a strong call to action or creative story, you’ll be sure to make a lasting impression on your target audience.

Repurpose Creator Content

Where TikTok is a channel that so heavily values unpolished, authentic content, leveraging influencers can provide a canvas for less curated content. Using influencers for ads stops the scroll because viewers recognize the face of a content creator that they already know and love. This can also be used as an opportunity to share promo or discount codes to get users excited.

Create a Seamless Commerce Experience

Creating a frictionless path to check out is just as important as creating a high-performing piece of content. Optimize your TikTok ads to take your audience from TikTok to your website in one step. Include direct CTAs, easy access to product links and quick steps to purchase to maximize ROI.



Translate TikTok Results to the Bottom Line

The connection between TikTok engagement and sales growth continues to strengthen every day. TikTok users in the United States generated over \$3.8 billion in consumer spending in 2023, a number which is expected to be far surpassed in 2024 and 2025.⁸ This means it's more important than ever to bring discovery and purchase closer together, creating an optimized sales funnel for brands to drive real business growth through the platform.

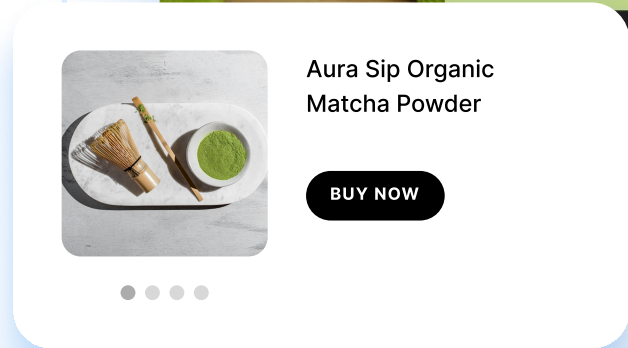
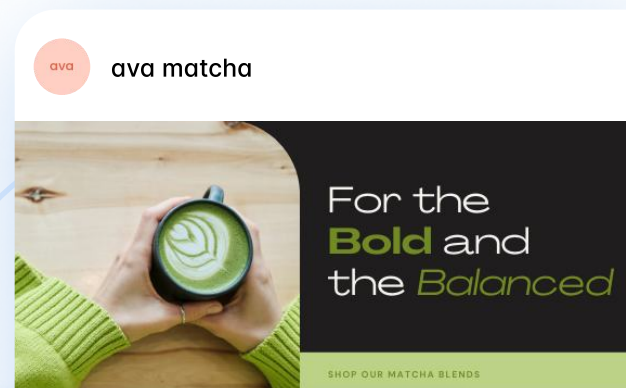
Leverage a Link in Bio

TikTok's unique algorithm gives content its best opportunity to be discovered – and maximize brand awareness in the process – but options to monetize these viral video moments are still limited. Want to make your content shoppable? Here's how to put a link in your TikTok bio that drives audiences directly to your website or product pages:

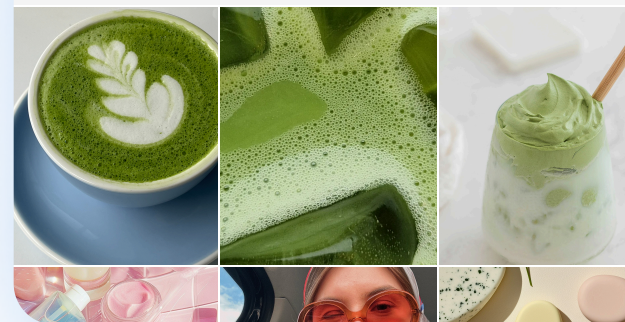
- Check your profile settings to see if you have access to the website feature, then click "edit".
- Leverage [Dash Social's LikeShop](#) to create a standalone URL you can customize for your TikTok feed.
- Measure your clicks and conversions over time to help streamline and maximize your strategy on the channel.

Create Shoppable Galleries

To make the most of the space, consider your goals and how your link will help achieve them. With [Dash Social's Shoppable Galleries](#), for example, you can leverage all of your posts in a standalone URL and add up to 25 shopping links per image. Not only are these posts shoppable, they're also trackable. Your Gallery is the gateway to views and clicks, which means you can set and monitor goals for any period of time and best understand the content that drives revenue – all in one place.



Sign up to be the first to know about the latest drops and deals.

Harnessing TikTok To Find True Success

TikTok revolves around content that consumers resonate with, laugh at, share and recreate. Unlike other social channels, success on TikTok does not equate to developing a clear-cut strategy and posting schedule. Marketers have adapted to the fast-paced nature of social media – but this reality reaches new heights on TikTok. Brands need to understand how to leverage the latest trends, embrace lo-fi style video and let the TikTok community participate in content curation. TikTok is all about relevance. Trends can sweep through the platform in a matter of hours and it's up to brand marketers to decide what is and isn't right for them to jump on board with fast. The brands that are winning on TikTok are the brands that are using it in the way that works for them. They're the brands that took the leap, learned from their results and continue to iterate to evolve with the platform and its community.

**Learn how Dash Social can help your
brand optimize performance on TikTok**

Get a Demo

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