

INFLUENCER MARKETING ON TIKTOK

The purpose of this paper is to identify who TikTok influencers are and why TikTok plays one of the leading roles in modern marketing.

Influencer marketing is now a mainstream form of online marketing. It is a form of marketing that enables businesses to collaborate with individuals who have followers for increased brand exposure. Influencer marketing works because people want to buy from someone they trust. Influencers operate independently, creating their own content and integrating a company's advertising specifications into it. The influencer is in control of the brand's message, choosing how they would like to portray it. Influencers come in five different sizes depending on how many followers they have: nano (fewer than 10 000), micro (from 10 000 to 50 000), medium (from 50 000 to 100 000), macro (from 100 000 to 1 000 000) and mega (over one million followers) [1].

Influencers are good intermediaries. But it is not necessary for a product to be purposefully promoted by the brand with the help of an influencer. Most often subscribers can consume everything they see in the videos or photos of their favorite media-people regardless of whether it is an advertisement or not. A bright picture and a short dynamic video affect a person faster than text. And TikTok does it best.

TikTok is the fastest growing social network in the post-pandemic era. It was the most downloaded application globally in 2020 and 2021, achieving almost 2000 million downloads in these years, much more than Instagram. Unlike other social media platforms, TikTok is home to enticing and easy-to-consume videos that are perfect for the world's shrinking attention span [2].

One of the recent trends on this viral platform is #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt, and it's shaking up the digital marketing industry. This craze is sending millions of people to groceries, malls, and eCommerce stores to buy products that they see online. The impact of TikTok on people's purchasing decisions is significant and wide-ranging. Users are exposed to various goods and services through TikTok's algorithm-driven content suggestions. The social validation tools, such as comments and likes, give recommended products credibility and trust. Ultimately, TikTok marketing benefits consumers and businesses by increasing brand visibility, influencing preferences, and encouraging young adults to make wise purchasing decisions.

It's important to differentiate between influencer marketing on TikTok and in other social media. TikTok influencers are content creators with a significant following who resonate with their audience through creative and relatable videos. Their content ranges from entertaining dances and lip-syncs to educational and informative content. What sets TikTok influencers apart is their ability to foster a sense of community and authenticity, creating a deeper connection with their followers [3].

A clear example of impact of TikTok influencers on trends and buying behavior can be seen in the example of the "explosion" of the popularity of Adidas Samba sneakers.

In 2023 videos of outfits began to go viral, where various stylists and fashion-influencers show these sneakers. These videos were gaining more and more views, more and more people began to attract this model of sneakers. Later Sambas have outgrown the status of locally fashionable model and become popular all over the world. In turn, almost all Adidas Sambas on web-sites were sold out. The price of new deliveries has increased and many fakes have appeared. Soon, because of great popularity, the other side of fashion-influencers started recording videos criticizing Samba, saying that it is “mainstream” and “anti-trend”. A lot of people started to refuse to buy the previously popular model, following the opinion of these fashion influencers.

Advertising on TikTok can affect both directly and indirectly. Direct advertising is when influencers force customers directly to buy from them or to use their services, while indirect marketing revolves more around building awareness around product. Indirectly advertising works very effectively on TikTok because it contains pictures and videos that attract attention, but doesn't directly point out the advertisement.

To test the power of indirect advertising in product promotion, we conducted a survey. We posted a TikTok promoting the photographer's services, without talking about it directly. The account, from which the video was uploaded, has less than 1,000 subscribers. Despite this fact, it has gained almost 5,000 views. Out of the individuals who viewed the TikTok video, 5 expressed a desire to book a photoshoot. These results suggest that the power of influencers should not be solely measured by their number of followers. Even nano-influencers can still have a significant impact on potential customers.

Moreover, our survey points out the growing importance of TikTok as an effective channel for product promotion. With its wide range of users and ability to rapidly disseminate content, TikTok provides a valuable opportunity for businesses to reach a diverse audience and generate interest in their offerings.

In conclusion, TikTok influencers have emerged as a powerful force in shaping consumer behavior. The driving idea is that anyone can be a creator and bring in money and products from companies, which are eager to work with the young and savvy on TikTok. Their authentic approach, combined with the ability to create viral trends, has made them indispensable in successful marketing campaigns. As businesses continue to adapt to the evolving digital landscape, harnessing the potential of TikTok influencers can be a game-changer in their marketing strategies, leading to increased brand visibility, engagement, and ultimately, enhanced sales performance.

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