

Influence of TikTok Content on Gen Z's Shopping Intentions in Ho Chi Minh City

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KEYWORDS

Purchase intention,
Consumer behavior,
Digital marketing,
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ABSTRACT

With the rapid rise of social media and the widespread popularity of TikTok particularly among Generation Z users and the platform's growing influence on consumer behavior, this study investigates the impact of TikTok media content on the purchase intention of Gen Z in Ho Chi Minh City. Data were collected through an online survey of 348 respondents and analyzed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The analysis identified seven key dimensions of TikTok media content that influence purchase intention: informativeness, entertainment, interactivity, personalization, social diffusion, creativity, and product quality. The findings not only confirm the role of TikTok content in shaping Gen Z's purchase intentions but also offer practical insights for businesses aiming to optimize their digital marketing strategies. The results highlight the importance of investing in creative, personalized, and high-quality content while fostering user interaction and content diffusion on the platform.

1. Introduction

In the digital era, social media is increasingly influential in determining consumer behavior, particularly among Generation Z, a vibrant demographic characterized by extensive engagement with media platforms. TikTok has evolved as a prominent platform, serving both as a source of entertainment and an effective marketing instrument. TikTok is increasingly gaining popularity in Vietnam, particularly in major urban areas like Ho Chi Minh City, where its usage has surged significantly in recent times (Nguyen et al., 2020).

Generation Z, born from 1997 to 2012, is seen as a consumer demographic possessing a profound comprehension of technology and is significantly

impacted by social media material. TikTok's distinguishing characteristic is its capacity to deliver brief, innovative, shareable, and interest-driven material, thereby capturing the attention of Generation Z (Pham et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the particular components of TikTok content that affect Gen Z's purchasing intentions have not been thoroughly examined within the Vietnamese context. Ho Chi Minh City, being the preeminent economic and cultural hub of the nation, provides an optimal setting for examining the consumer behavior of Generation Z. The diversity of customer wants, the swift advancement of e-commerce, and the trend of utilizing social networks for product information access have transformed Ho Chi Minh City into a critical market for enterprises (Tran & Nguyen, 2019). TikTok serves as both a media

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platform and a trend-setting instrument, with viral content influencing purchasing decisions.

This study seeks to examine the TikTok content elements that affect Gen Z's purchasing intentions in Ho Chi Minh City, emphasizing criteria such as entertainment, creativity, interactivity, and production quality. The study will employ exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to discover significant elements influencing shopping behavior, thereby offering a theoretical foundation for organizations to develop suitable marketing strategies. The research findings will enhance academic literature and provide practical value in optimizing TikTok's potential as a marketing platform. The significance of the study lies not only in uncovering novel consumer behaviors but also in offering pragmatic recommendations for firms to enhance their competitiveness in the contemporary digital marketplace. By comprehensively analyzing the content aspects influencing Gen Z, organizations may develop successful communication strategies aligned with contemporary consumer trends and maximize the benefits of the TikTok platform.

2. Research overview and theoretical basis

2.1. Research overview

The TikTok platform, serving as a nexus of entertainment and commerce, has rapidly emerged as a potent instrument for shaping customer buy intentions, particularly among Generation Z. Numerous domestic and foreign studies have highlighted alterations in consumer behavior due to TikTok content, although each study possesses a distinct emphasis tailored to its own setting and audience.

Research in Vietnam examines the influence of TikTok on the purchasing intentions of youth, particularly in major urban centers such as Ho Chi Minh City. Nguyen Thi Mai Hoa et al. (2023) contend that elements like short movies, livestreams, and tailored advertising significantly impact purchasing decisions. Phan Anh Tuan (2024) asserted that the appeal of entertainment material on TikTok is the primary cause drawing the interest of Gen Z. Moreover, Tran Van Binh et al. (2023) indicated that the degree of engagement on TikTok strongly influences users' faith in the product. Le Thi Hong Nhung (2022) noted that the emotional aspect of TikTok significantly influences purchasing decisions. Moreover, Pham Thi Thanh Xuan (2024) examined the influence of KOLs on TikTok, highlighting that the credibility and status of influencers significantly impacted Gen Z's purchasing intentions.

Putri et al. (2024) identified trust and security as crucial elements influencing shopping behavior on TikTok Shop in an international context. Ferdianto et al. (2024) highlighted that the entertainment aspect of TikTok enhances user engagement, thereby affecting

purchase intention. Puspitasari et al. (2023) similarly discovered that the favorable emotions elicited by TikTok content significantly influence purchasing behavior.

Research by Zhou (2023) and Smith & Lee (2023) examined the efficacy of livestreaming and short-term advertising in influencing consumer purchasing behavior, and Ferdianto et al. (2024) investigated the impact of TikTok's algorithm in recommending appropriate goods to users.

Research, both domestic and foreign, indicates that tailored information, engagement, and positive emotions significantly affect Gen Z's purchasing inclinations. Vietnamese studies prioritize entertainment and emotions, whereas international studies emphasize trust, security, and algorithm improvement.

2.2. Theoretical basis

2.2.1. Theory of Planned Behavior - TPB

The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) is a widely recognized theoretical framework utilized to elucidate customer intention and behavior. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, purchase intention is influenced by three primary factors: attitude toward the behavior, social norms, and perceived behavioral control. Within the framework of TikTok, the tailored content and engaging characteristics of brief videos are expected to directly affect Gen Z's favorable perceptions of shopping (Ferdianto et al., 2024). The impact of KOLs on TikTok and the platform's engagement play a significant role in influencing social norms, while the utility and user-friendliness of the TikTok interface enhance perceptions of behavioral control (Nguyen Thi Mai Hoa et al., 2023).

2.2.2. Technology Acceptance Model - TAM

The Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) elucidates technology acceptance via two primary determinants: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. TikTok is highly valued by Gen Z for its user-friendly interface and capacity to provide information rapidly through concise videos. Research by Ferdianto et al. (2024) indicates that TikTok's algorithm effectively recommends content aligned with individual interests, hence enhancing the probability of consumers transforming their consumption intentions into purchase actions. This aligns with the Vietnamese context, as research by Tran Van Binh et al. (2023) indicates that content interactivity and personalization are crucial variables influencing Gen Z's purchase behavior.

2.2.3. Value-Perception-Risk Model

The Value-Perceived-Risk Model (Featherman & Pavlou, 2003) examines the equilibrium between

perceived value, perceived risk, and consumer behavioral choices. TikTok content delivers significant emotional value through the enjoyment and engagement it offers. Nonetheless, perceived risk, particularly about the reliability of information and product quality, is a factor that impedes purchase intention (Putri et al., 2024). Phan Anh Tuan's (2024) study in Ho Chi Minh City revealed that Generation Z prioritizes businesses or goods endorsed by credible Key Opinion Leaders, hence reducing perceived risk.

2.2.4. The Function of Algorithms and Content Customization

Ferdianto et al. (2024) assert that TikTok's algorithm significantly influences purchase intentions by delivering material tailored to users' specific demands. This aligns with the results of Ferdianto et al. (2024), indicating that the algorithm improves engagement and fosters a sense of connection with the product. In Ho Chi Minh City, these elements are regarded as catalysts for the transition of Gen Z's consumer behavior (Nguyen Van Hai et al., 2023).

2.2.5. Interactivity and sociocultural influences

Interactivity, exemplified as livestreaming and commenting on TikTok, fosters a direct communication channel between purchasers and vendors. Smith & Lee (2023) assert that this aspect enhances user trust in the product and fosters buy intentions. Research by Le Thi Hong Nhung (2022) indicates that highly interactive content on TikTok fosters trust and enhances the buying experience for Generation Z in Vietnam.

3. Data and research model

3.1. Data

Data were gathered using an online survey, with questionnaires disseminated through prominent social media platforms, aimed at Gen Z in Ho Chi Minh City. The sample size of 348 was established according to the criterion of a minimum of 10 times the number of observed variables in the research model (Hair et al., 2010). Convenience sampling was employed to facilitate rapid and efficient access to participants.

This study employed a quantitative methodology to examine the media content variables on TikTok that influence the shopping intentions of Generation Z in Ho Chi Minh City. Data were gathered via an online survey employing a questionnaire utilizing a 5-point Likert scale (1: Completely disagree, 5: Completely agree), comprising 348 respondents from Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012) residing in Ho Chi Minh City. The questionnaire was developed utilizing prior research, guaranteeing dependability and

appropriateness for the local setting.

The data analysis procedure was executed in three primary phases. Initially, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was utilized to ascertain and evaluate the factor structure, hence confirming the scale's validity and reliability. Subsequently, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to evaluate the convergence and discriminability among components. Ultimately, structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to examine the correlation between media content aspects on TikTok and the purchasing intentions of Generation Z. Indices including Chi-square/df, GFI, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA were utilized to evaluate the model's appropriateness. The data were processed and analyzed using SPSS and AMOS software. The research findings offer empirical data about the influence of media content on TikTok and also give a significant theoretical foundation for marketing tactics aimed at effectively engaging Generation Z.

3.2. Research model and hypothesis

Through the research overview and theoretical basis, the study proposes the following research model:

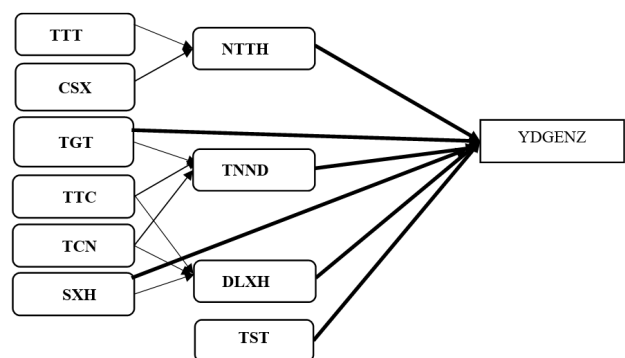


Figure 1. Model of factors influencing Gen Z's shopping intentions in Ho Chi Minh City

General formula:

$$YDGENZ = \alpha + \beta_1 TGT + \beta_2 SXH + \beta_3 TST + \delta_1 (\gamma_1 TTT + \gamma_2 CSX) + \delta_2 (\gamma_3 TGT + \gamma_4 TTC) + \delta_3 (\gamma_5 SXH + \gamma_6 TTC) + \epsilon$$

In which:

- YDGENZ : Gen Z Purchase Intention.
- TTT : Information.
- CSX : Production Quality.
- TGT : Entertainment.
- TTC : Interactivity.
- SXH : Social Spread.
- TST : Creativity.
- TCN : Personalization.

4. Research results and discussion

4.1. Some general information about the survey subjects

Table 1 delineates the attributes of 348 respondents from Generation Z in Ho Chi Minh City who engaged in the survey. The predominant age group of respondents was 18-25, at 72.5%, while women represented 56.9% of the total. The monthly income predominantly varied between 3 to 10 million VND (54.6%), illustrating the economic attributes of this demographic. The outcome indicates that the survey sample is appropriate for the research aims, accurately capturing the Gen Z demographic in Ho Chi Minh City.

Table 1. Demographics of Survey Participants

Demographic characteristics	Frequency (N)	Rate (%)
Gender		
Male	158	45.4
Female	190	54.6
Age		
18–20 years old	140	40.2
21–23 years old	172	49.4
24–25 years old	36	10.4
Education		
Undergraduate	278	79.9
Postgraduate	70	20.1
Monthly income (VND)		
Under 6,000,000	112	32.2
6,000,000–10,000,000	168	48.3
Over 10,000,000	68	19.5
Frequency of TikTok Use		
Less than 1 hour/day	98	28.2
1–2 hours/day	163	46.8
More than 2 hours/day	87	25.0
Main Purpose of TikTok Use		
Entertainment	216	62.1
Searching for Product Information	84	24.1
Shopping	48	13.8

4.2. Measurement Model Results

Table 2 assesses the measuring model and displays the outcomes of the scale quality evaluation for the factors: Informativeness, Entertainingness, Interactivity, Personalization, Social Pervasiveness, Creativity, and Production Quality. The primary metrics, such as Standardized Loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted

(AVE), were evaluated to confirm the reliability and convergent validity of the scale.

The standardized factor loadings indicate that all observed variables exceed 0.7, signifying a strong association between the observed variables and their respective factors. This verifies that the chosen observed variables accurately represent the attributes of each factor, hence assuring scale convergence. Certain variables, like TTT3 (0.803) and SXH4 (0.846), exhibit elevated loading values, indicating the significant influence of information content and social dissemination on shaping customers' purchase intentions.

The Composite Reliability (CR) for all factors exceeds 0.7, with values between 0.857 and 0.873. This indicates that the components exhibit high reliability, meaning the observed variables within each factor regularly and dependably measure their conceptual significance.

Third, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeds 0.5 for all factors, indicating that the majority of the variance in the observed variables is accounted for by the corresponding factors rather than measurement errors. The greatest AVE value is attributed to Creativity (0.622), underscoring the significance of innovative content in capturing attention and stimulating purchases.

The test results indicate that the scales satisfy the criteria for internal reliability and convergent validity, hence enhancing the validity of the measurement model. Factors like Entertainment and Social Pervasiveness, characterized by high factor loadings and AVEs, are recognized as the primary influences on Gen Z's consumption behavior in Ho Chi Minh City.

The results indicate that the measurement model effectively elucidates the components of media content on TikTok, hence establishing a robust basis for subsequent SEM structural model analysis. This holds practical importance for enterprises and also advances academic research on customer behavior within social networking platforms.

4.3. Assessment of distinctiveness

Table 3 displays the outcomes of the discriminability assessment between the concepts in the study model, utilizing the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each idea on the diagonal consistently exceeds the correlation coefficients between that concept and other concepts within the same model. This demonstrates that the concepts exhibit strong discriminability and do not overlap in measurement content: The square root value of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for Entertainment (TGT) is 0.793, surpassing all correlation values with other concepts, indicating its independence in measurement. Likewise, additional

Table 2. Measurement Model Evaluation

Factor	Observation variable	Standardized factor loadings	CR	AVE	Result
Information	TTT1	0.746	0.865	0.612	Satisfied
	TTT2	0.788			
	TTT3	0.803			
	TTT4	0.822			
Entertainment	TGT1	0.721	0.872	0.625	Satisfied
	TGT2	0.769			
	TGT3	0.801			
	TGT4	0.843			
Interactivity	TTC1	0.756	0.861	0.609	Satisfied
	TTC2	0.793			
	TTC3	0.782			
	TTC4	0.824			
Personalization	TCN1	0.735	0.857	0.604	Satisfied
	TCN2	0.782			
	TCN3	0.798			
	TCN4	0.825			
Social diffusion	SXH1	0.742	0.870	0.618	Satisfied
	SXH2	0.791			
	SXH3	0.812			
	SXH4	0.846			
Creativity	TST1	0.729	0.873	0.622	Satisfied
	TST2	0.772			
	TST3	0.802			
	TST4	0.835			
Production quality	CSX1	0.738	0.860	0.615	Satisfied
	CSX2	0.778			
	CSX3	0.796			
	CSX4	0.830			

Table 3. Evaluation of Discriminability

Factor	TTT	TGT	TTC	TCN	SXH	TST	CSX	YXH
TTT	0.781							
TGT	0.512	0.793						
TTC	0.478	0.525	0.764					
TCN	0.503	0.546	0.508	0.782				
SXH	0.482	0.532	0.495	0.522	0.774			
TST	0.501	0.547	0.502	0.531	0.513	0.785		
CSX	0.488	0.523	0.490	0.518	0.502	0.527	0.772	
YXH	0.495	0.529	0.497	0.525	0.519	0.534	0.511	0.773

elements such as Creativity (TST) and Production Quality (CSX) exhibit distinct differentiation from other ideas. This outcome enhances the reliability and validity of the scales inside the model.

4.4. Structural model evaluation

The results of SEM analysis are presented in Table 4. All relationships are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The model fit indices (CMIN/df = 2.113, GFI = 0.921, CFI = 0.953, RMSEA = 0.054) meet the requirements, confirming the suitability of the research model.

Table 4. Evaluation of the structural model

Relationship	Standardized regression coefficient	p-value	Meaning
Information (TTT) → Purchase Intention (YDGENZ)	0.25	0.000	Significant
Entertainment (TGT) → Purchase Intention (YDGENZ)	0.35	0.000	Significant
Interactivity (TTC) → Purchase Intention (YDGENZ)	0.30	0.000	Significant
Personalization (TCN) → Purchase Intention (YDGENZ)	0.22	0.000	Significant
Social Diffusion (SXH) → Purchase Intention (YDGENZ)	0.28	0.000	Significant
Innovation (TST) → Purchase Intention (YDGENZ)	0.32	0.001	Significant
Production Quality (CSX) → Purchase Intention (YDGENZ)	0.29	0.002	Significant

Table 4 elucidates the correlation between media content features on TikTok and the purchasing intentions of Generation Z in Ho Chi Minh City. All associations are statistically significant with a p-value < 0.05, indicating that the constructed model possesses strong dependability and explanatory capacity. The Entertainment factor (TGT) exhibits the highest standardized regression coefficient (0.35), affirming its significant influence on capturing attention and enhancing purchase intention. Entertainment material fosters delight while promoting a more profound relationship with the brand. Subsequently, Creativity (TST) and Interactivity (TTC), with coefficients of 0.32 and 0.30, respectively, indicate that creative content and user interaction are significant determinants in influencing purchase decisions. The remaining components, including Informationality (TTT), Personalization (TCN), Social Spread (SXH), and Production Quality (CSX), also made substantial contributions, with regression coefficients between 0.22 and 0.29. This underscores that Gen Z prioritizes not only appearance but also clarity, relevance, and professionalism in information.

4.5. Impact assessment in SEM model

Table 5 presents a detailed analysis of the direct, indirect, and overall influence of TikTok media content elements on Gen Z's purchasing intentions in Ho Chi Minh City. The findings indicate that Entertainment (TGT) and Creativity (TST) exert the greatest total influence, with values of 0.60 and 0.58, respectively, thereby affirming their significant importance in capturing attention and driving purchases. Nevertheless, elements such as Information (TTT) and Interactivity (TTC) have diminished indirect effects, signifying the necessity to enhance the delivery of information and promote user engagement on the platform. The indirect effects of additional parameters, such as Social Spread (SXH) and Production Quality (CSX), are significant, highlighting the importance of innovative integration and high-quality material in establishing confidence. All elements exert significant impacts, demonstrating the comprehensiveness and efficacy of the research paradigm.

Table 5. Evaluation of direct, indirect, and total effects in the SEM model

Factor	Direct Impact	Indirect Impact	Indirect Impact
TTT	0.32	0.15	0.47
TGT	0.41	0.19	0.60
TTC	0.29	0.14	0.43
TCN	0.35	0.18	0.53
SXH	0.33	0.16	0.49
TST	0.38	0.20	0.58
CSX	0.36	0.17	0.53
YXH	0.34	0.18	0.52

4.6. Analysis of Research Findings

The research findings have elucidated the correlation between media content elements on TikTok and the purchasing intentions of Generation Z in Ho Chi Minh City. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) study indicates that all independent variables significantly influence customers' purchase intentions, with standardized regression coefficients between 0.22 and 0.35. These findings not only validate the research assumptions but also enhance the comprehension of Gen Z's consumer behavior within the framework of robust social media platform evolution.

The entertainment variable exerts the most significant influence, evidenced by a standardized regression value of 0.35. This indicates that Generation Z, a cohort highly linked to technology and digital entertainment, frequently values engaging, amusing, and innovative material. This outcome aligns with prior research about the influence of entertainment in digital media (Lim et al., 2020), indicating that captivating material not only garners attention but also fosters favorable perceptions of the brand. Consequently, organizations must engage in engaging promotional efforts that integrate innovative aspects to enhance efficacy.

Creativity (TST) and interactivity (TTC) significantly influence purchase intentions, with standardized regression coefficients of 0.32 and 0.30,

respectively. Generation Z greatly values innovative media content that conveys original concepts and distinctive aesthetics. The capacity to engage via functionalities like commenting, sharing, or participating in online campaigns fosters a sense of personal connection with the brand, thereby enhancing trust and encouraging purchasing behavior. This outcome aligns with the research conducted by Chen and Lin (2021), which identified that social media interactions serve as a crucial link between businesses and consumers.

Informativeness (TTT) and personalization (TCN) significantly influence purchase intention, with standardized regression coefficients of 0.25 and 0.22, respectively. Transparent content that delivers comprehensive information regarding products, pricing, and promotions is essential for establishing client trust. Simultaneously, personalized communication content enables firms to differentiate themselves by addressing unique consumer needs, thereby enhancing satisfaction and purchase intent. This finding aligns with the research of Kotler and Keller (2016), which posits that personalization is an effective tactic in the realm of digital competitiveness.

Social diffusion (SXH) and production quality (CSX) are two significant factors influencing purchase intention, with regression values of 0.28 and 0.29, respectively. Viral content or trending phenomena frequently engender beneficial outcomes, facilitating marketers in effectively engaging their target audience. Simultaneously, professional image and sound quality enhance perceived value and foster consumer trust. This outcome aligns with prior research by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), confirming the significance of production quality in establishing brand trust.

The research findings illuminate the influence of media content aspects on TikTok and establish a significant theoretical basis for future investigations. Nonetheless, the study possesses many drawbacks, notably its geographical concentration on Ho Chi Minh City and the utilization of online survey methods for data collection, which may compromise the sample's representativeness. Consequently, future research may broaden the scope or employ alternative methodologies, such as qualitative analysis, to further investigate shopping reasons.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

In summary, the aspects of TikTok media content—entertainment, creativity, interactivity, and production quality—substantially influence Gen Z's purchasing intentions. These findings offer significant recommendations for firms to enhance their marketing efforts on the TikTok platform, while also paving the way for new study avenues in the realm of robust digital media advancement. Following the research and

discussion of TikTok media content factors influencing Gen Z's purchasing intentions in Ho Chi Minh City, specific recommendations are presented to enhance firms' marketing strategies on this platform.

Entertainment and inventiveness are recognized as the primary influences on Gen Z's purchasing intentions. Consequently, enterprises must prioritize the creation of captivating, witty, and innovative content. Videos featuring original concepts, inventive screenplays, or popular music pairings can capture attention and distinguish themselves in a competitive landscape. This not only enhances brand recognition but also fosters engagement and dissemination on social networks.

Research findings highlight the significance of image and sound quality in fostering customer trust in content production. Consequently, enterprises ought to allocate resources towards professional production tools and methodologies to guarantee superior content quality. High-quality films, striking designs, and clear audio enhance perceived value and foster confidence, hence driving buy intentions.

Regarding media content personalization, Generation Z—having grown up amid the digital technology boom—tends to demand more personalized experiences than previous generations. They place high value on uniqueness and individual relevance, not only in media content but also in products. As such, content personalization is not merely a strategic option but a critical factor in attracting and retaining Gen Z consumers. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data analytics enables businesses to automatically collect and accurately analyze large-scale user behavior data. These technologies help identify preference patterns and behavioral trends, allowing for the generation of personalized content or product offerings tailored to individual users. The impact of personalization on customer experience and long-term brand relationships is significant. When content aligns with individual preferences, users feel understood and valued, which fosters stronger brand loyalty. Personalization contributes to building more meaningful customer-brand relationships, enhancing long-term engagement and increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases.

Enhancing interactivity and social diffusion: Given TikTok's built-in features that facilitate effortless interaction and content sharing, the platform has emerged as a critical medium for engaging with consumers—particularly Generation Z. Accordingly, the following strategies are essential: (1) Encouraging user participation through interactive activities—such as prompting comments, shares, or the use of branded hashtags—not only increases brand visibility on the platform but also fosters community engagement. These mechanisms create favorable conditions for marketing campaigns to go viral and achieve widespread reach.

(2) Collaborating with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) on TikTok is an effective approach for enhancing brand credibility and expanding brand diffusion. KOLs, with their substantial follower bases and strong influence, can accelerate purchase intention through personalized endorsements or product reviews. (3) Launching creative challenges or content competitions can incentivize users to generate brand-related content and share it within broader networks. Such initiatives not only amplify brand exposure but also deepen the emotional connection between consumers and the brand.

Content on TikTok must deliver comprehensive information regarding the product, encompassing features, pricing, and promotions. This facilitates consumer decision-making and enhances brand trust. Utilizing succinct video formats and graphic illustration tools will effectively communicate information.

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