

Short-Form Content, Long-Term Impact



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Abstract

In recent years, the advertising ecosystem has shifted dramatically, with social and video platforms becoming central to how brands engage and communicate with consumers.

By 2024, global investment in social media advertising soared to an unprecedented \$244 billion, reflecting marketers' growing dependence on digital channels to reach and resonate with users across an increasingly segmented global audience.

This whitepaper examines TikTok's emergence as a uniquely positioned, full-funnel entertainment platform capable of driving short-term performance and long-term consumer impact. Grounded in comprehensive consumer insights and marketer perspectives, this whitepaper reveals how TikTok's blend of intentional

search, spontaneous discovery, and creator-driven credibility drives conversions and strengthens brand loyalty across many categories. However, despite recognizing the importance of long-term brand building, many organizations remain constrained by short-term KPIs and fragmented measurement frameworks. To bridge this gap, this whitepaper outlines four strategic imperatives to help leaders unlock TikTok's potential: Authentic Engagement, Creativity and Community Building, Strategic Brand Governance, and Holistic Measurement Model Adoption. These insights offer a forward-looking framework for leveraging TikTok as a strategic growth driver within evolving marketing models and a rapidly changing digital ecosystem.



COMMERCE IN MOTION:

How Digital Platforms Shape Consumer Behavior and Pathways

The global advertising landscape has undergone a profound transformation in recent years, with social and video platforms emerging as pivotal channels for brand communication and consumer engagement.

In 2024, global social media advertising spending reached a record-breaking \$244 billion¹, underscoring the escalating reliance on digital platforms to connect with increasingly fragmented audiences.

TikTok has rapidly ascended as a cultural phenomenon, distinguishing itself from the crowd as an entertainment platform rather than a traditional social media platform. Renowned for its short-form, creator-led video architecture, TikTok offers brands the opportunity to craft entertainment-driven experiences that foster organic discovery and has demonstrated significant efficacy in sparking consumer interest. On TikTok, 70% percent of users discover new brands and products on the platform² and that discovery translates into effective and efficient business impact. In a recent case with Kiko, TikTok's media investment was comparably small, yet it generated 11.5% of e-commerce sales and 5.7% of in-store sales, showing its ability to drive conversions.³

The current marketing environment demands a comprehensive approach that extends beyond brand discovery. Advertisers increasingly recognize the

importance of full-funnel strategies that encompass both short-term performance metrics and long-term brand building. While brand building is critical for all marketers, only 29% of professionals prioritize these longer horizons and 39% strive to balance both short and long-term objectives.⁴

This shift prompts a critical question: How can brands optimize their advertising budgets to drive immediate sales without compromising enduring brand presence?

TikTok's potential to deliver sustainable results is coming into sharper focus, particularly concerning its lower-funnel capabilities and long-term effects. Evidence suggests that TikTok may be uniquely positioned to deliver on both higher- and lower-funnel capabilities. According to a recent study, 80% of Gen Z and Millennial users are more likely to try a brand or become repeat customers after first discovering it on TikTok.⁵ Also, a recent media mix model meta-analysis of 15 brands across the Nordics demonstrates TikTok's ability to generate both short-term gains and sustained long-term business impact: while the platform delivers an

average short-term Return on Investment (ROI) of 11.8x, its impact goes well beyond immediate results, with measurable effects lasting up to ten months post-campaign.⁶

This influence is particularly powerful in industries like gaming, smart devices, consumer electronics, fashion, and beauty, sectors where only 5% to 25% of consumers typically convert immediately. TikTok distinguishes itself across the entire decision journey: it's rated the most effective platform for building initial awareness (51%), the most helpful during consideration (28%), and the most influential at the point of purchase (29%).⁷

As marketing investments are continually scrutinized for efficiency and effectiveness, Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) and marketing decision makers must find ways to connect the dots between short-term performance metrics and long-term brand building goals. In fact, shifting from a performance-focused strategy to a mixed approach that also focuses on brand building increases ROI.⁸ It is here that TikTok presents an opportunity to bridge this gap.

1 Social Media Advertising – Worldwide. Statista, 2025.
2 TikTok Marketing Science EU TikTok for Full Funnel Research 2023 conducted by Material.
3 TikTok for Business, GroupM Italy MMM analysis for KIKO Milano, 2024. <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/en/blog/tiktok-kiko-groupm-mmm>.
4 TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX.
5 TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.
6 TikTok for Business, 2025. <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/en-US/blog/tiktok-dentsu-from-storytelling-to-sales-nordics>.
7 Kantar, Cross Media Journey Research, 2024.
8 WARC Multiplier Effect Report 2025.

TikTok's advantage begins with user behavior



HIGH LIKELIHOOD TO CONVERT

TikTok generates high-value consumers with stronger retention and purchasing behaviors. TikTok users are 30% more likely to convert from free to paying customers in e-commerce apps compared to users from other entertainment media platforms. Furthermore, users acquired via TikTok spend 20% more time engaging with brands in e-commerce applications than users from other sources.⁹



STRONG BRAND AFFINITY

Beyond immediate conversions, consumers on TikTok show higher retention rates compared to users from other platforms. Their behavior reflects a stronger brand connection and loyalty, with retention rates 19% higher over 30 days compared to users from other platforms.¹⁰ This highlights the platform's ability to maintain consumer engagement beyond the initial conversion.



DRIVEN TO ACTION

Consumer behavior on TikTok reflects a unique readiness to act. After seeing an ad, 87% of users take some form of action such as researching a product, visiting a website, or discussing it with others. One in three go on to research¹¹ or purchase a brand¹² they saw on TikTok, and three in five have shared TikTok content with others.¹³

These findings attest to TikTok's expansive ability to convert new audiences, foster long-term customer retention, and generate repeat purchases at higher rates than competitors, making it a powerful platform for sustained commerce growth. As the digital advertising landscape continues to evolve, brands that integrate TikTok into their full-funnel strategies have the potential to unlock significant advantages.¹⁴ The platform's ability to drive action, and nurture sustained consumer loyalty makes it a key player in modern marketing strategies.

We explored TikTok's impact from multiple perspectives - ranging from consumer behavior to marketing strategies - demonstrating how the platform drives both immediate purchases and long-term brand value.

BRANDS THAT EVOLVE BEYOND THE QUICK WIN WILL OWN THE LONG GAME.

Those that strategically leverage platforms like TikTok can not only capture attention today but build lasting value tomorrow.



Advertisers often face pressure to balance short-term results with long-term brand health, seeing them as competing priorities. TikTok challenges this. Our platform uniquely drives immediate sales through immersive, entertaining experiences while fostering authentic connections that build lasting brand value. Data shows that purchases made on TikTok lead to higher repeat buying, greater lifetime spend, and stronger brand advocacy – making every investment work harder, delivering both instant impact and enduring growth.

Jenny Fernandez,
Head of Research & Insights, EU and Israel,
TikTok

⁹ Digital 2022 Global Overview Report, GWI, we are social e Hootsuite, 2022

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ A 15% lift for generic keyword searches and 22% lift in brand keyword searches was in the case of WeRoad. TikTok for Business, 2023a. <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/en-GB/inspiration/WeRoad-SearchLift?>

¹² Domino's Pizza saw a 6% increase in brand-related browser searches after using a full-funnel TikTok strategy (TikTok for Business, 2024a. <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/es/inspiration/Dominos-spain-cls>). TikTok campaigns also led to a 38% lift in conversions for Zenjob and an 8% sales lift for Coca-Cola France (Mozilla Anonym 2025, <https://blog.mozilla.org/en/advertising/anonym-zenjob/>; TikTok for Business 2023b, <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/fr/inspiration/cocacola-france>).

¹³ TikTok Marketing Science US Media Consumption Study 2024, conducted by GWI.

¹⁴ TikTok for Business 2024, Return on Creative. https://issuu.com/tiktokforbusinesseu/docs/tiktok_x_iab_return_on_creative_



A NEW KIND OF DISCOVERY:

Turning Curiosity into Commerce

TikTok is reshaping how people search and discover, blending intentional exploration with content-based spontaneity. Today, two-thirds of discovery on the platform comes from active search, users explicitly seeking ideas, information, or products.¹⁵ This behavior reflects a shift in search norms: rather than relying solely on traditional engines, users now turn to social and video-first environments for deeper, more visual learning and inspiration. TikTok plays a central role here, surfacing highly relevant, short-form content that enriches the search journey and extends its depth through contextual signals and engagement patterns. In fact, one-third of discovery on TikTok still occurs spontaneously.¹⁶ This is where the platform's distinction emerges.

With TikTok uniquely tapping into spontaneous discovery on top of platform search and retargeting, the platform encourages organic curiosity which often leads to unplanned purchase decisions. This expands beyond the usual practices on other platforms where search results are determined by user queries or where retargeting ads are shown based on past behavior. This subtle, yet effective, mechanism creates lasting purchase intent, often resulting in delayed and indirect conversions as users are repeatedly exposed to products across multiple touchpoints over time.

BEYOND BROAD REACH, DEEP INTO CONSIDERATION

TikTok's powerful impact extends beyond discovery into driving lasting consumer engagement and consideration. Users don't just scroll past a product once and move on. TikTok's feed can repeatedly show products and brands across multiple touchpoints in a manner that feels authentic, allowing the user to build familiarity and trust. Research supports TikTok's unique ability to trigger consumers to actively seek out more information about brands and products, thus turning initial interest into more serious consideration:

43%

of Gen Z consumers begin their product searches on TikTok, driven by its algorithmic recommendations and organic content discovery.¹⁷

65%

of TikTok users are likely to buy a product that they previously saw on TikTok in the future, illustrating the platform's effectiveness in driving conversions through serendipitous exposure.¹⁸

COMMUNITY, INFLUENCE, AND TRUST: CREATOR ENGAGEMENT & CONSUMER LOYALTY

An additional component of TikTok's discovery experience is the way communities form through creator engagement. Users follow voices they trust, and then unite around shared interests, building communities that encourage meaningful and sustained connections. When ads feature creators that users trust, TikTok performs 3x better than other platforms, underscoring its unique ability to turn creator trust and relatability into meaningful consumer action.¹⁹

On TikTok, these trusted interactions are a powerful force driving both engagement and conversion. Unlike traditional influencers, TikTok creators

blur the lines between entertainment and advertising, forging deeper connections with their audience. Creators frequently respond to comments, stitch content, and co-create with their audience, making these relationships feel more genuine and participatory. This shift is reflected in user perception: 57% of social and video platform users agree that TikTok creators are trustworthy, and 72% users find TikTok creator content to be believable.²⁰

Such a connection significantly impacts consumer behavior. Users are not just passive viewers: they form digital connections with creators, which in turn shapes how they perceive and interact with

associated brands.²¹ These connections are often long-lasting, contributing to brand loyalty and repeat engagement. As TikTok's algorithm continues to serve content that aligns with users' preferences, these connections deepen, enhancing its role in long-term lead generation and retention. 63% of TikTok users say that relatable creator content increases their likelihood of purchasing from a sponsored brand.²² As consumers continue to engage with creators they trust, TikTok presents an opportunity for brands to maintain relevance and influence throughout the purchase journey.

15 TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok as a Discovery Engine Study 2023, conducted by Material.
16 Ibid.

17 TikTok Shop Statistics (2025): Revenue, Growth & Trends, Capital One Shopping Research.
18 TikTok Marketing Science EU TikTok for Full Funnel Research 2023.
19 TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.
20 TikTok Marketing Science Global Creators Drive Commerce Study 2022 conducted by Material.
21 Escalas, Jennifer Edson, and James R. Bettman. Self-Constraint, Reference Groups, and Brand Meaning. Journal of Consumer Research 32, no. 3, 2005.
22 TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.

FROM BROWSING TO BELONGING:

The Data Behind Brand Devotion

Historically, brand loyalty was defined by repeat purchases and product satisfaction. On TikTok, loyalty is not just defined by what consumers buy, but in how they connect, engage, and ultimately advocate. Extensive research conducted by Kantar to better understand consumers’ perspectives on TikTok’s impact on purchase behavior reveals that the platform has already reshaped consumer relationships with brands.

TIKTOK IS TRANSFORMING PASSIVE BUYERS INTO ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN A WIDER BRAND EXPERIENCE ECOSYSTEM

With the shift in product discovery and community development, TikTok users are building digital communities, driving conversations and shaping the cultural relevance of brands that excite them. This deep level of engagement also means that consumers are empowered to share feedback and engage in dialogue, encouraging brands to maintain alignment with expectations around values, authenticity, and cultural relevance. To build and sustain connections, brands must stay attuned to cultural nuances. Proactive steps, like strategic content decisions and thoughtful community management, help support brand safety and reinforce trust on TikTok.

The entertainment-first ecosystem within TikTok is where loyalty is built, through shared experiences, interactive storytelling and a sense of belonging. This dynamic has led to higher-engagement, increased repeat purchases, and stronger brand advocacy, with 70% of TikTok users stating that when they are loyal to a brand, they are likely to exclusively use that brand, 1.6 times more than non-users.²³ Additionally, 68% say they’re more likely to be loyal to brands that foster a strong sense of community, and 66% say that brands who communicate via social and video platforms are more likely to earn their loyalty.²⁴

23 TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.
24 Ibid.

Loyalty doesn’t exist in a vacuum. It moves, it amplifies, it influences.

When a TikTok user commits to a brand, that loyalty extends beyond personal preference. Whether it’s through commenting on a brand’s post, stitching content, or engaging with creator-driven campaigns, TikTok users actively amplify their favorite brands within their networks. The latest research suggests that this community-driven loyalty translates into action:

OF LOYAL TIKTOK USERS TRY NEW PRODUCTS FROM THE SAME BRAND ²⁵

88%



REPURCHASE MORE FREQUENTLY ²⁶

84%



ADVOCATE FOR THE BRAND WITHIN THEIR NETWORKS ²⁷

84%



TikTok builds loyalty by making brands a part of cultural conversations, whether through organic content or paid placements. A viral video showcasing an innovative product feature or a well-executed advertisement that mirrors native content can create waves of organic endorsement, reinforcing the brand’s presence in users’ feeds long after an initial purchase. This continuous exposure fosters habitual engagement, where users return to the brand, not just because they need to, but because they want to.

25 TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.



FEELING SEEN FUELS LOYALTY: FROM AUDIENCE TO COMMUNITY

When looking for brands, there is increasing evidence that suggests that consumers are looking not just to buy a product, but to buy into a community. Compared to non-TikTok users, TikTok users are 1.8x more likely to say that creator and influencer content that makes them feel like they're part of a community increases their likelihood to purchase a product.²⁸

Brand partnerships with creators who resonate with their audience tap into a powerful form of social proof, one that feels more like a recommendation from a friend rather than a traditional ad.



DIRECT BRAND ENGAGEMENT: IT'S A TWO-WAY STREET

Consumers today don't want brands that talk at them, they want to talk with them. Brands that take an authentic and responsive approach to their TikTok presence see stronger loyalty retention compared with those that simply push promotional content. In fact, 79% of TikTok users have indicated that their brand loyalty increases when brands communicate directly with consumers through comments on social and video platforms, 1.2x more than non-users.²⁹



LISTENING DRIVES REPURCHASE BEHAVIOR: THE ECHO EFFECT

Loyalty is not just about the first sale; brands that listen will win repeat customers. 49% of TikTok users agree that ads where brands actively listen to their consumers (e.g., by seeing and responding to consumer reactions) make them more likely to spend more or repurchase, 1.5x more than non-TikTok users.³⁰

This means engagement extends further than brand perception, directly impacting the bottom line.



LOYALTY IS CULTIVATED, NOT CLAIMED: CONNECTION OVER PROMOTION

On TikTok, brands must shift from polished promotion to authentic, community-driven engagement. Nearly half of users (49%) say word-of-mouth influences their retail decision, and 44% feel more connected to brands that foster community.³¹

Real stories resonate most, and brands that have the courage to show up authentically, listen actively, and integrate seamlessly into the TikTok experience build, lasting connections.



²⁸ TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

HIGH-STAKES VS. EVERYDAY ESSENTIALS:

How Industry Shapes TikTok’s Influence

While TikTok loyalty spans various industries, certain categories experience a stronger pull due to the nature of their purchase cycles.

HIGH-COMMITMENT CATEGORIES: WHERE TRUST MATTERS MOST

For industries where purchases require greater financial investment or long-term commitment, TikTok users display exceptional brand dedication.

The latest research indicates that users are significantly more loyal to brands, meaning they exclusively use only one brand, are more likely to re-purchase, recommend and try new products of the same brand in high-stakes sectors such as:

Mobile phones³²



Laptops/computers³³



Automotive³⁴



Financial services³⁵



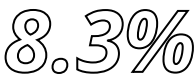
Measurement studies further prove the effectiveness and efficiency of using TikTok in these sectors:

Mobile phones³⁶



Lift conversions

Laptops/computers³⁷



Rel Lift Organic Traffic

Automotive³⁸



Lift more efficient compared to other digital media platforms conversion

Financial services³⁹



New bank account opening

TikTok users in these verticals are twice as likely to be loyal to a high-price-point brand compared to non-TikTok users. This suggests that discovery on TikTok is not just limited to impulse buys: it also influences major, considered purchases. The short-form storytelling format allows brands to showcase product value, educate consumers, and establish credibility, which is crucial for industries where brand trust is a key factor in decision-making. While direct loyalty metrics are more commonly reported for everyday categories, the data strongly indicates that high-commitment sectors benefit from TikTok’s unique ability to build long-term consumer allegiance.

EVERYDAY ESSENTIALS: A BALANCING ACT OF FAST-TURN VERTICALS

For categories with frequent, lower-cost purchases, such as food, beverage, and consumer packaged goods (CPG), TikTok-driven loyalty operates differently. While these industries benefit from TikTok’s ability to create viral product trends, they also face higher churn if brand trust and values fail to align with consumer sentiment.

For brands in these fast-moving categories, ongoing engagement is essential to maintaining customer retention. By leveraging TikTok’s entertainment-driven format, brands can consistently reignite consumer interest, drive repeat purchases, and remain top-of-mind in a highly competitive space.

Still, TikTok users show notable loyalty to brands in everyday categories, including:



The impact of TikTok on consumer loyalty extends beyond traditional strategies. Users do more than buy from brands. They interact with them, promote them, and weave them into their digital lives. In turn, this expands and potentially reshapes what ‘loyal customer’ means with brand allegiance now deeply intertwined with community participation and shared experiences. For brands looking to build lasting consumer relationships through TikTok, they must embrace authentic engagement, leverage creator-driven storytelling, and foster two-way conversations. Doing so, brands can capture consumer attention and cultivate long-term loyalty in unique ways.

32 TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 TikTok for Business, 2024b. <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/en/inspiration/ho-mobile>.

37 TikTok for Business 2024. <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/it/inspiration/samsung-tiktok-fullfunnel?>

38 TikTok for Business, 2024c. <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/es/inspiration/volkswagen-performance-case-study>.

39 TikTok for Business, 2024d. <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/es/inspiration/ING-Bienestar%20digital>.

40 TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.

41 Ibid.

HYPE VS. IMPACT:

Breaking Through Digital Clutter

There are many platforms that have long been go-to choices for driving measurable lower-funnel conversions due to their established targeting and attribution tools. In contrast, TikTok has challenged conventional performance metrics – offering high engagement, unique cultural influence, and an alternative path to consumer loyalty. Yet, questions remained around measurable ROI. Recent studies suggest that TikTok is demonstrating long-term growth potential for brands that integrate it strategically – potential that may have existed for some time but is only recently being more fully recognized and measured.

This shift has not come without tension. Marketers recognize the long-term value of brand-building, with 98% stating that long-term goals are important,⁴² yet many still prioritize short-term performance. The paradox between short-term efficiency and long-term brand growth has led to ongoing discussions about where TikTok fits in the marketing mix.

TikTok delivers a measurable edge in brand positioning: 30% of those surveyed⁴³ report a changed perception after seeing ads, compared to social media, VOD, SEM and linear TV across all age groups.

⁴² TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX. Kantar: Supercharging Volkswagen's campaigns with TikTok. 2025, (<https://www.kantar.com/Industries/Media/Supercharging-Volkswagens-campaigns-with-TikTok>); For Volkswagen, TikTok is the main Brand Image driver in the UK with a total of 41%. For Rimmel, the inclusion of TikTok within a full-funnel approach significantly increased brand awareness and consideration (TikTok for Business 2023c, <https://ads.tiktok.com/business/it/inspiration/rimmel>).
⁴³ TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.



A MARKETERS' DILEMMA: BALANCING IMMEDIATE ROI WITH LASTING GROWTH

Marketing strategies are often shaped by immediate business goals, which is why short-term KPIs like cost per acquisition (CPA), conversion rate (CR), and return on ad spend (ROAS) dominate budgetary decisions. While these metrics provide clear-cut performance indicators, they do not always capture the full spectrum value of customer relationships over time.

Measuring sustained impact is equally critical for long-term business success. Findings suggest a disconnect between intention and execution when it comes to TikTok, particularly evident between in-house marketing teams and agencies:



Overall, 56% of marketers give TikTok a high score (8+ on a 10-point scale) for its long-term impact potential.⁴⁴



In-house marketers are more short-term focused (+8ppt. vs. agencies), largely because they are directly measured by senior management and must adhere to top-down revenue goals.⁴⁵



Agencies prioritize long-term client relationships, making them more likely to advocate for brand-building investments.⁴⁶

Despite this disconnect, TikTok's cultural influence paired with emerging research and brand outcomes presents a compelling case for its long-term brand building potential.

⁴⁴ TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX.
⁴⁵ Ibid.
⁴⁶ Ibid.

MARKETERS ARE PAYING ATTENTION:

It's More Than Just Reach

TikTok has evolved beyond an awareness platform with marketers increasingly recognizing its effectiveness across the full funnel, from consideration to acquisition and retention.

CUSTOMER ACQUISITION: REACHING NEW AUDIENCES AT SCALE



For us, TikTok is an essential platform, particularly for generating engagement with audiences. The virality aspect that TikTok allows us to generate is far beyond other platforms.

Media Director, France, Media Agency



78% of marketers say customer acquisition is a top priority, however, only 44% are allocating budget specifically for it.⁴⁷

TikTok plays a unique role here by penetrating hard-to-reach audiences and increasing brand loyalty through its high engagement formats and creator ecosystem, and as a leading platform for customer acquisition.

74% of surveyed marketers indicated that TikTok is 'good' or 'great' at reaching new customers switching from competitor brands.⁴⁸

Further underscoring TikTok's impact on customer acquisition, 82% of surveyed individuals indicated that the platform is 'good' or 'great' at reaching new category users, outperforming their competition.⁴⁹

OF MARKETERS BELIEVE TIKTOK IS EFFECTIVE IN DRIVING CONVERSIONS ⁵⁰

81%



SAY IT EFFECTIVELY REACHES HIGH-LOYALTY CUSTOMERS ⁵¹

65%



CONSIDER TIKTOK UNIQUE IN DRIVING CONVERSIONS COMPARED TO OTHER PLATFORMS ⁵²

63%



Unlike traditional search engines, TikTok's discovery effect allows brands to tap into new, unexpected audiences, a critical factor in its ability to drive lasting conversions.

⁴⁷ TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

LOYALTY & RETENTION: BUILDING SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT

“

They came up with a product that is more entertaining... one that really creates a very strong emotional connection also with the brand that is capable of using it.

**Performance Marketing Leader,
Germany, Food/Retail**

Retention is where TikTok differentiates itself further. By leveraging immersive ad formats and creator-led storytelling, brands can keep consumers engaged long after their first purchase. This approach has proven effective in industries where sustained brand interaction is crucial.



TikTok is perceived as providing long-lasting positive effects on brand loyalty.⁵³



Marketers rank TikTok among the strongest platforms for long-term impact compared to competitors.⁵⁴

The ability to combine high engagement with commerce is what makes TikTok stand out, not just as a one-time purchase driver, but as a long-term brand-building tool.

“

We initially thought TikTok was only for young audiences, but we've realized our core target (working-age adults) is highly active there... For us, user-generated content and native TikTok style videos perform two to three times better than standard ads.

**Marketing Expert,
France, Financial Services**

UNPACKING THE PUZZLE:

Piecing Together the Long-Term Impact

Surveyed marketers cite TikTok's ability to push repeat sales, with 66% rating it as 'good' or 'excellent.'⁵⁵ However, traditional attribution models struggle to link brand equity to long-term revenue, making it harder to justify sustained investment.⁵⁶ Attribution is the missing link between TikTok's impact and measurable sales. While CPA, CR, and ROAS dominate short-term decision-making, long-term growth metrics require deeper analytical frameworks.



⁵³ TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX.
⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX.
⁵⁶ Ibid.

HOW MARKETERS MEASURE LONG-TERM SUCCESS

When assessing conversions from a long-term perspective, marketers prioritize: Customer Lifetime Value (CLTV), Retention Rate, and ROAS.⁵⁷ ROAS is often considered a short-term KPI because it directly measures the immediate revenue generated from an ad campaign relative to its cost.

However, ROAS can additionally also serve as a long-term KPI when viewed through a broader lens, for example when evaluated beyond single-campaign performance and linked to sustained customer engagement, repeat purchases, and brand loyalty.

Different industries rely on varying KPIs for short-term versus long-term impact measurement:



CPG, Retail, and Travel prioritize ROAS.⁵⁸



Financial Services focus on CPA emphasizing acquisition efficiency.⁵⁹



Tech brands prioritize CR optimizing for immediate transactions.⁶⁰

This fragmented measurement landscape underscores the need for a balanced approach, one that aligns acquisition with retention and integrates short-term efficiency with long-term growth.

CREDIBLE METHODS FOR MEASURING LONG-TERM IMPACT

While performance marketing metrics remain dominant, marketers are increasingly turning to advanced modeling techniques to quantify TikTok's long-term value.

42%

of marketers consider Marketing Mix Modeling (MMM) the most credible method for measuring long-term impact. MMM plays a key role in enabling this broader perspective.⁶¹ By analyzing the full customer journey, MMM helps identify which stages of the funnel are most influenced by specific marketing levers, allowing for a more accurate measurement of both immediate and long-term advertising impacts. In doing so, MMM equips brands with the tools to rethink how they approach brand engagement - moving from isolated performance metrics to a holistic understanding of how media investments drive loyalty, retention, and lifetime value over time.⁶²

40%

use Customer Lifetime Value Analysis (CLTVA), which provides individual-level accuracy but requires first-party data.⁶³

31%

of marketers still rely on Brand Tracking Studies to report back to leadership, assuming brand equity growth leads to increased sales.⁶⁴

Interestingly, different stakeholders favor different methodologies:



In-house marketing teams rely more on CLTV (42%), as they need to demonstrate revenue-driven impact.⁶⁵



Agencies prioritize MMM (51%), which aligns with their broader strategic planning across client portfolios.⁶⁶

This divergence highlights an ongoing industry-wide challenge: how to balance short-term accountability with long-term brand investment in a way that satisfies both internal stakeholders and financial decision-makers. The split may also reflect broader market dynamics: performance-driven, direct-to-consumer brands are more likely to bring media buying in-house, while those selling through intermediaries often rely on agencies with a stronger focus on brand building.

⁵⁷ TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX.

⁶² Real, C., & López, V. (2022). Marketing Mix Modeling (MMM): An Analytics tool for measuring advertising effectiveness. Deloitte.

⁶³ TikTok Marketing Science Global TikTok's long-term effect on ad conversions: the advertisers' view, 2025 conducted by NewtonX.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

MAXIMIZING TIKTOK'S IMPACT:

Our Four Key Principles

As TikTok continues evolving, executives and key decision makers must adapt their strategies to maximize the platform's potential. Ultimately, this requires adjusting strategy, budget, and mindset towards a more dynamic and participatory approach towards brand building. Based on consumer insights, expert research, and specialist impulses from Deloitte, we have identified four key areas of opportunity for organizations to effectively leverage TikTok's capabilities for long-term growth potential.



01

**AUTHENTIC
ENGAGEMENT**

Authenticity is crucial on TikTok. Brands that tap into TikTok's unfiltered, creative ethos are better positioned to forge on-platform connections and foster long-term loyalty.

- ✓ **Prioritize creativity:** Encourage marketing teams to adopt a 'do-it-yourself' (DIY) approach to content creation when it comes to TikTok. This adjustment focuses on the more relatable aspect of storytelling to engage users on a deeper, more personal level.
- ✓ **Tap into the creator ecosystem:** Collaborating with TikTok creators to build and expand the communities facilitates impactful bonds between users and creators. These connections have the potential to drive purchase intent and build trust in a brand.
- ✓ **Showcase your brand values:** TikTok users engage more with brands that express humor, interactivity, and cultural relevance. Compared to other platforms, TikTok users are 1.1x more likely to find ads entertaining and 2x more likely to trust them.⁶⁷ This reflects the unique strength of conveying brand personality and building lasting consumer trust.

Our experts believe that long-term value is built upon charismatic brand ambassadors channeling the relationship with the user. This is echoed by consumer data: 41% of TikTok users report increased trust in brands they encounter on the platforms, and 31% say they are more likely to remain loyal.⁶⁸

On TikTok, brand engagement is fueled by storytelling. The most effective brands create compelling narratives that align with platform culture, providing entertainment and value rather than simply promoting products.

02

**COMMUNICATE &
BUILD COMMUNITIES**

Today's consumers have high expectations from brands, especially when it comes to relationship building and experiential touchpoints. On top of being authentic in communication style, creative content generation, and unique personality: consumers, particularly on TikTok, want a community. Research reveals that TikTok users are 1.5x more likely than non-users to state that being part of a brand's community increases their likelihood of purchase.⁶⁹

- ✓ **Foster interactive dialogue:** Brand engagement ideally should extend beyond ad placements on any platform. Engaging and encouraging meaningful dialogue, responding to users quickly, participating in trends, and offering interactive experiences may help to solidify lasting connections with users.
- ✓ **Empower creators to share the brand story:** 45% of TikTok users say that creators introduce them to new brands, products or services, while 44% state that creators help them understand how a product or service can solve their specific needs.⁷⁰ Partnering with creators who align with an organization's brand values ensures authenticity, builds credibility, and makes brand messages more impactful.
- ✓ **A sense of belonging:** Consumers are clear that they are more likely to purchase from a brand when they feel included in a community. Creating a space where users feel valued and heard works to strengthen loyalty, potentially leading to more long-term relationships.

Strong brand communication on TikTok is built on active participation. Engaging with audiences through comments, trends, and strategic collaborations and partnerships fosters trust and transforms passive viewers into an active community.

03

**SET STRATEGIC
BRAND GUIDELINES**

As TikTok becomes a more central channel in the marketing toolkit, brands have the opportunity to combine creative exploration with thoughtful brand stewardship. The platform's fast-paced structure provides unique avenues for engagement, making it even more valuable to approach content with clarity and consistency. By establishing well-defined guidelines, brands can ensure their efforts are aligned with internal standards and strongly positioned for sustainable long-term impact.

- ✓ **Establish a brand safety playbook:** Clear content parameters help ensure that brand storytelling consistently reflects company principles and meets relevant industry expectations. Thoughtful guidance on how to navigate emerging trends or topics equips teams and organizations to respond with agility and confidence.
- ✓ **Implement transparency & trust measures:** For brands operating in more regulated industries – such as finance, healthcare, or government – streamlined internal guidelines support consistent communication and reinforce credibility. Trust remains a key driver of loyalty: 88% of customers who highly trust a brand have purchased from it again, while 62% of those with high trust buy almost exclusively from that brand.⁷¹ A transparent, values-led approach helps foster both consumer assurance and internal alignment.
- ✓ **Define KPIs for performance and resilience:** Beyond the standard campaign metrics, it is beneficial to assess brand sentiment, perception and preparedness. Building these indicators into the planning process allows teams to monitor brand impact and identify opportunities to adapt and refine strategies over time.

Clear brand guidance creates the conditions for creative success. A well-defined brand framework enables companies to tap into TikTok's potential while ensuring content remains aligned with core values and builds lasting consumer trust.

04

**MEASURE BRAND LOYALTY
& RETENTION METRICS**

The data has been consistent: while performance metrics like CPA and ROAS are valuable, they don't fully capture the enduring impact of TikTok on consumers and brands. To properly assess TikTok's marketing effectiveness, CMOs and key decision makers should work to prioritize metrics that reflect ongoing brand loyalty and engagement over time.

- ✓ **Implement brand lift studies (BLS):** BLS are experimental designs that run alongside sponsored content to measure incremental brand impact. They assess metrics such as Ad Recall, Brand Awareness, and Purchase Intent, providing insights into how campaigns influence consumer perceptions over time.



To effectively address the challenges of evaluating long-term impact, brand lift studies provide critical insights that enhance the overall understanding of brand performance over time.

Dennis Vogt, Senior Manager, Deloitte Germany

- ✓ **Adopt holistic measurement models:** Integrate approaches such as MMM to evaluate the sustained impact of TikTok-driven brand engagement. These models offer comprehensive view of how various marketing efforts contribute to long-term business growth. In addition, we recommend that marketers familiarize themselves with the specific measurement options and methods of TikTok.⁷²

To capture the long-term value of TikTok marketing efforts, CMOs and marketing leaders should prioritize advanced metrics like MMM and holistic models over the more traditional performance indicators. This strategy will provide a clearer view of sustained brand loyalty and engagement over time.

⁶⁷ TikTok Marketing Science Global Long-Term Value of a TikTok User Study 2025 [UK, FR, ES, IT, GER], conducted by Kantar.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Deloitte HX TrustID™ Survey, May 2020 (n=7,500). <https://www.deloittedigital.com/us/en/accelerators/trustid.html>.

⁷² Fabrizio, Davide et. al. Publication. How to Effectively Measure TikTok: Key Principles for Effective Measurement. Deloitte, 2025.



Reimagining Brand Success Through TikTok

In conclusion, TikTok presents a unique opportunity for CMOs and marketing leaders to move beyond the constraints of short-term conversion-driven campaigns and embrace long-term brand-building efforts. It is already established that the platform's viral nature often captures immediate attention, yet recent research highlights TikTok's distinct ability to foster lasting customer relationships and build brand loyalty. By harnessing TikTok's discovery-driven environment, and focusing on creative and authentic storytelling, brands can form deeper, ongoing relevance with their audiences. Furthermore, collaborating with creators who genuinely represent a brand's message empowers companies to tap into the power of discovery commerce.

To fully leverage TikTok's potential as part of a broader marketing strategy, leaders should focus on measuring long-term brand impact rather than solely relying on traditional performance metrics. This will enable brands to more accurately assess how their presence on the platform contributes to enduring brand loyalty and customer retention. By evolving from a performance-driven mindset to one centered around compelling storytelling, community building, and sustained visibility, TikTok can become a key driver of lasting brand success in an increasingly dynamic marketplace.

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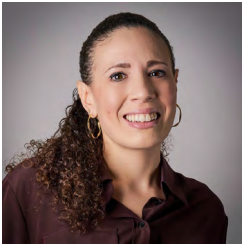
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