

Beyond viral:

How to win fans and influence sales on TikTok



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Entertainment platform TikTok might be famous for its short-form video clips but, as more and more consumer goods brands are discovering, it requires a longer-term strategy to unlock its full potential.

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As the UK craved connection amid successive lockdowns during the pandemic, the popularity of TikTok soared. Four years on, the platform plays a major part in shaping the culinary agenda – from providing recipe inspiration, new food content creators and trending ingredients.

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Entertainment remains at the heart of TikTok, and brands looking to create content that cuts through will need to ensure they're weaving this through into each creative decision, from working with the platform's creators to how they ensure clips feel natural in FYPs.

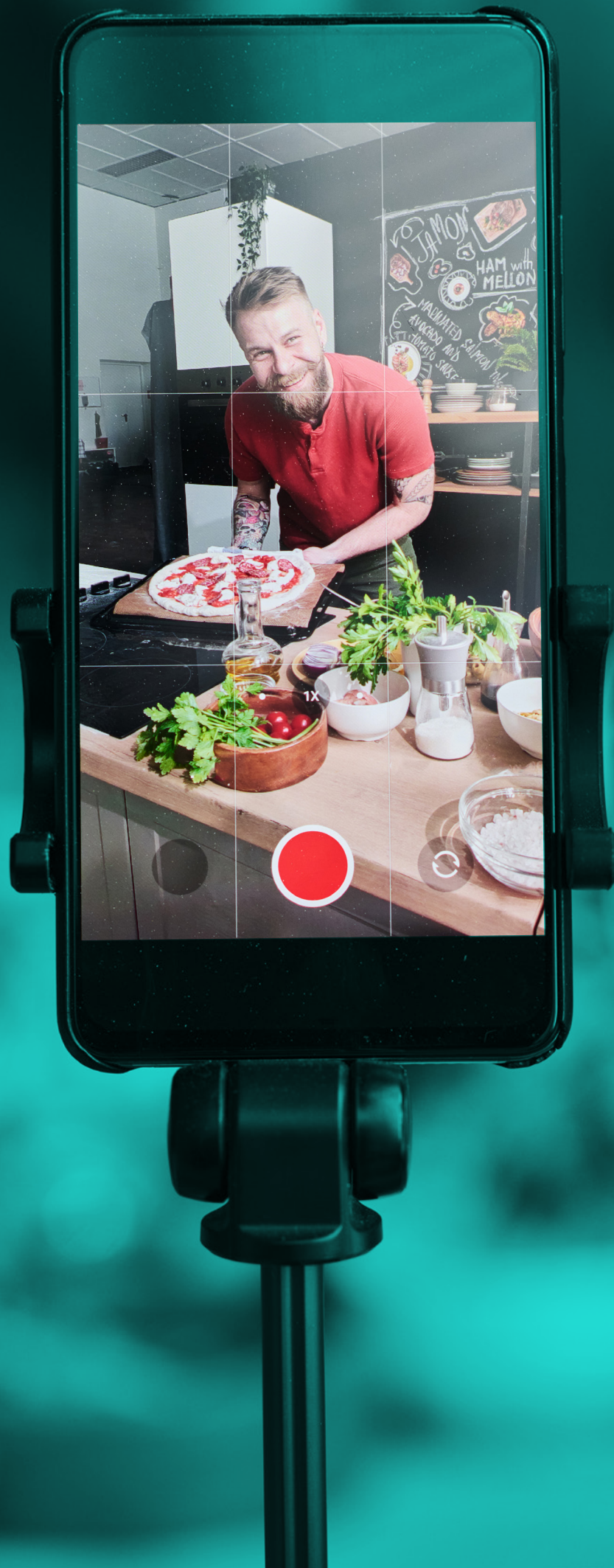
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Rather than sporadic campaigns or 'one and done' activations, the secret to brand success on TikTok is approaching the platform much as brands would more traditional media channels like TV. That means careful planning, a phased approach and using a mix of organic and paid-for tools to amplify impact.

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With the right approach, there are huge potential benefits for brands to gain from a consistent strategy on TikTok. To unlock these though, it's no longer enough to show up.

Contributors

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Introduction

Short-form video, long-term impact: taking TikTok to the next level

More and more consumer brands are leveraging the huge potential in the platform. But could a shift in their approach boost returns further?

Only six years after it first launched in the UK, TikTok has turned into a culinary trendsetter.

From the viral #fetapasta recipes selling out cheese aisles, to the thousands of content creators whipping up midweek meals and indulgent #butterboards filling up For You Pages (FYPs) the platform is now instrumental in shaping tastes, trends and shopping trolleys.

In fact, Nestlé has labelled it “the biggest recipe platform in the world.”

It’s no surprise then that it’s become a hotbed of activity for food and drink brands looking to ensure they’re part of that global dialogue.

Indeed, at a time when inflationary pressures are driving costs up and volumes down, and brands find themselves pitted against cheaper private label ranges, the need to invest in marketing channels that can keep brands top of mind has rarely been greater.

That’s why, from industry stalwarts like M&S, Aero and Nescafé, to challengers like Grind Coffee, Little Moons and Ooh & Aah cookies, more and more leading brands are leveraging TikTok across the full marketing funnel. They’re using

it to amplify brand awareness and shift perceptions, as well as nudge its one billion users (as of 2021) toward consideration and purchase, both on and offline.

M&S marketing chief Sharry Cra-mond has credited the platform with everything from helping the grocer speak to a brand new demographic, to growing its social reach exponentially through creator collaborations and boosting the sales of Percy Pigs.

But those kind of results don’t happen with a ‘one and done’ approach.

Instead, the secret to success on TikTok is a phased, strategic plan. Brands need to map out a compelling creative on the platform and optimise the impact of that content in much the same way they would for a traditional media channel like TV, i.e., utilising tools and analytics to refine who sees it, when, and how often.

For those looking for sustainable, long-term relevance, this may require a shift in approach, away from chasing one-hit viral wonders and towards a strategy with staying power.

So, how should they go about making the change?

In this report we’ll set out:

- TikTok’s evolution – and why it is a critical part of the media mix for consumer goods in 2024
- How to develop an engaging creative on the platform – from how to work with its creators to a tried-and-tested formula for shooting content
- A plan to move from sporadic campaigns to a full-funnel approach when media buying on the platform
- Options to measure success holistically

Chapter One

From viral clicks to shaping food culture: why brands are turning to TikTok in 2024

At a time when food and drink brands are battling for relevance, TikTok has emerged as a powerful part of their media mix. Here's why.

Rarely have food and drink brands operated in a more challenging market.

According to The Grocer's own Britain's Biggest Brands report, 71% of leading 100 grocery brands failed to grow volumes in 2023, as consumers facing their own financial pressures downsized baskets and prioritised price, bumping own label's share of the overall grocery market to 63% by the end of last year, according to NIQ.

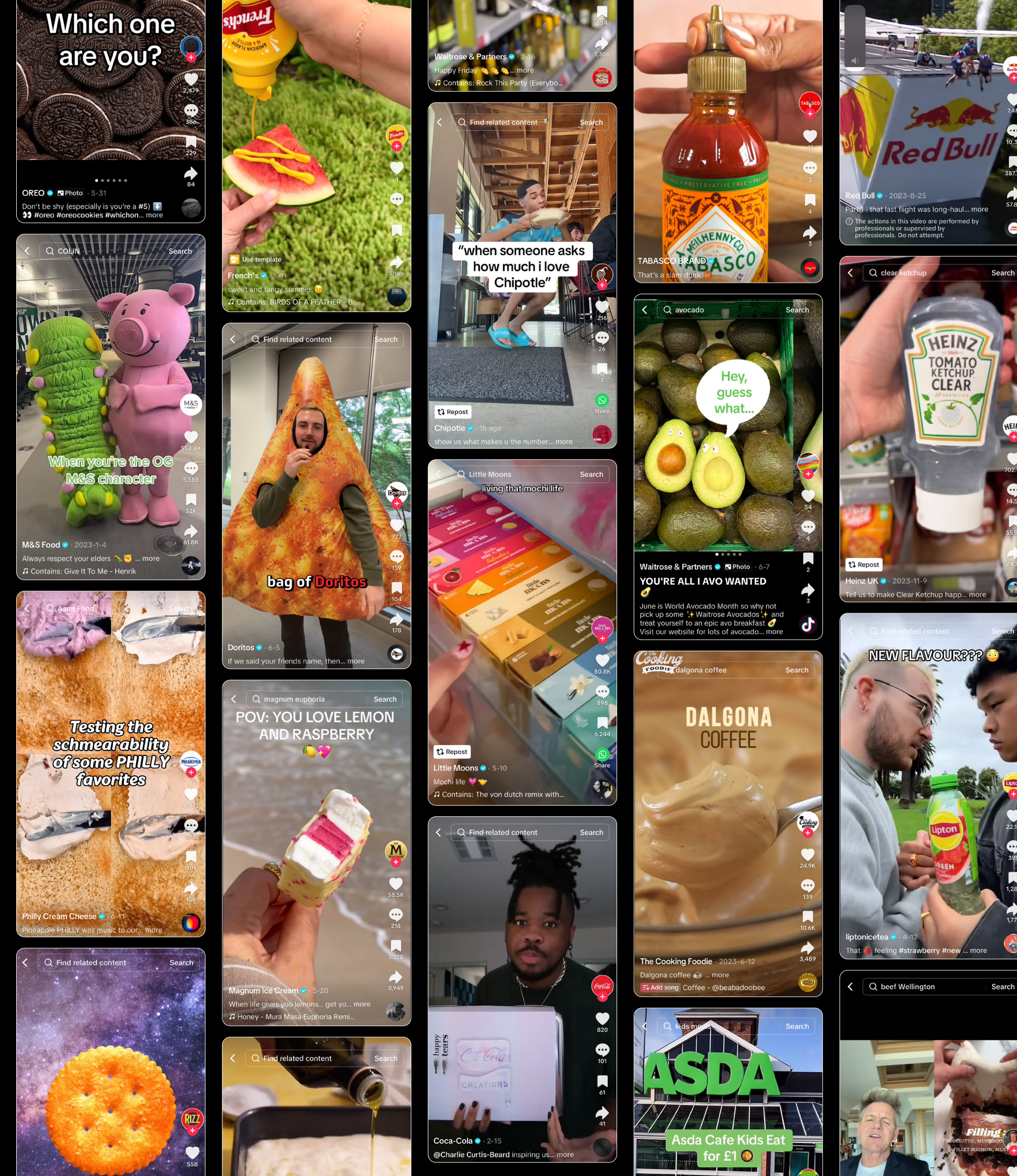
It's an uphill battle for brands, only made more difficult given the ongoing cost inflation in their supply chains. Two thirds of brands have increased their average price per pack last year by double-digits, according to the same survey.

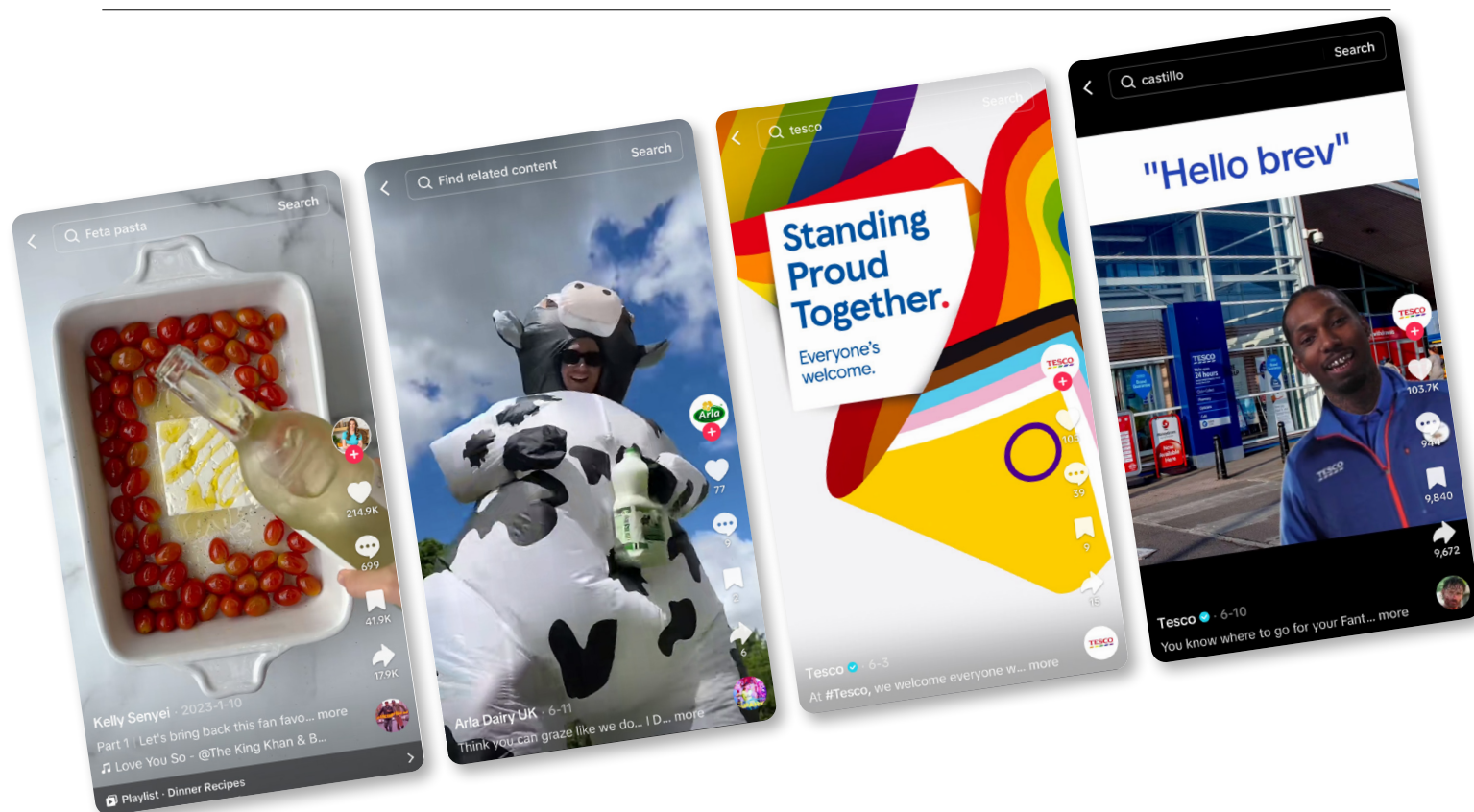
And it's against this backdrop that an

increasing number have turned to TikTok as a way to demonstrate their relevance.

"In a world in which own-label products are soaring, as shoppers trade down for the best price, brands have a real opportunity to drive brand love and a close affinity with their audience through social media, and TikTok in particular, reminding them why they should remain loyalists in loving both the brand and their products," says Rob Waldon, senior account director at Richmond & Towers, which counts Ocado, Pernod Ricard and Pladis among its clients.

TikTok has, after all, undergone something of an evolution. "[It] has transformed from a platform primarily known for short, viral clips to one where users





actively cultivate long-term relationships with creators and content,” believes Kate Kenner Archibald, chief marketing officer at Dash Hudson.

In part, this is because the average user is now all grown up and over 30, according to owner **ByteDance**.

But it’s also driven by more nuanced conversations, more engaged communities and the emergence of a huge breadth of sub-cultures, from #MusicTok and #FilmTok to #RecipeTok. “The entertainment side is still there, but the algorithm has been so strong at content recommendation that communities and niches have developed, leading it to be an all-round social media juggernaut – so much so that people come there for inspiration and knowledge, with it taking over as a search engine for many,” says Josh Little, head of social at Incubeta.

For food and drink in particular, the platform is now globally influential, spawning both a raft of new young food content creators and delivering new clout to established culinary figures. Gordon Ramsay, for example, has more than 23m followers on the app, watching avidly as he reviews meals prepared and uploaded by his fans.

Users are digesting this content and

using it to inform the choices they’re making in supermarkets. Two-thirds (63%) have discovered new food and drink products via the platform and one-third (34%) have purchased a product they first learned about there, according to TikTok’s 2023 Full Funnel Research [see boxout, p.9].

“Its impact is undeniable,” says Waldon. “From shaping culture and conversations to driving sales for brands. From our work with Ocado, we can see sales spikes of certain products – such as feta fuelled by the ever-popular baked feta trend.”

“TikTok is a ‘search engine’ like no other and it plays a huge part in capturing and engaging relevant audiences when it comes to CPGs,” adds Hannah Ryan, senior campaign director at The Goat Agency, which has worked on social campaigns for the likes of Tesco, Arla and Mars. “As a CPG brand, you can interact with your audience and sell your product all in one place; unlike other forms or marketing where the user journey might feel more clunky.”

But how can brands leverage this potential?

Well, it’s no longer enough to simply be present on the platform. Brands will need a plan if they’re to succeed.

“TikTok’s meteoric rise in 2020 came at a time when we needed community connection the most.”

Roisin Gray, EUI CPG marketing solutions lead at TikTok

How TikTok now fuels the food and drink agenda

CREATION: **76%**
of users have created a unique recipe on TikTok*

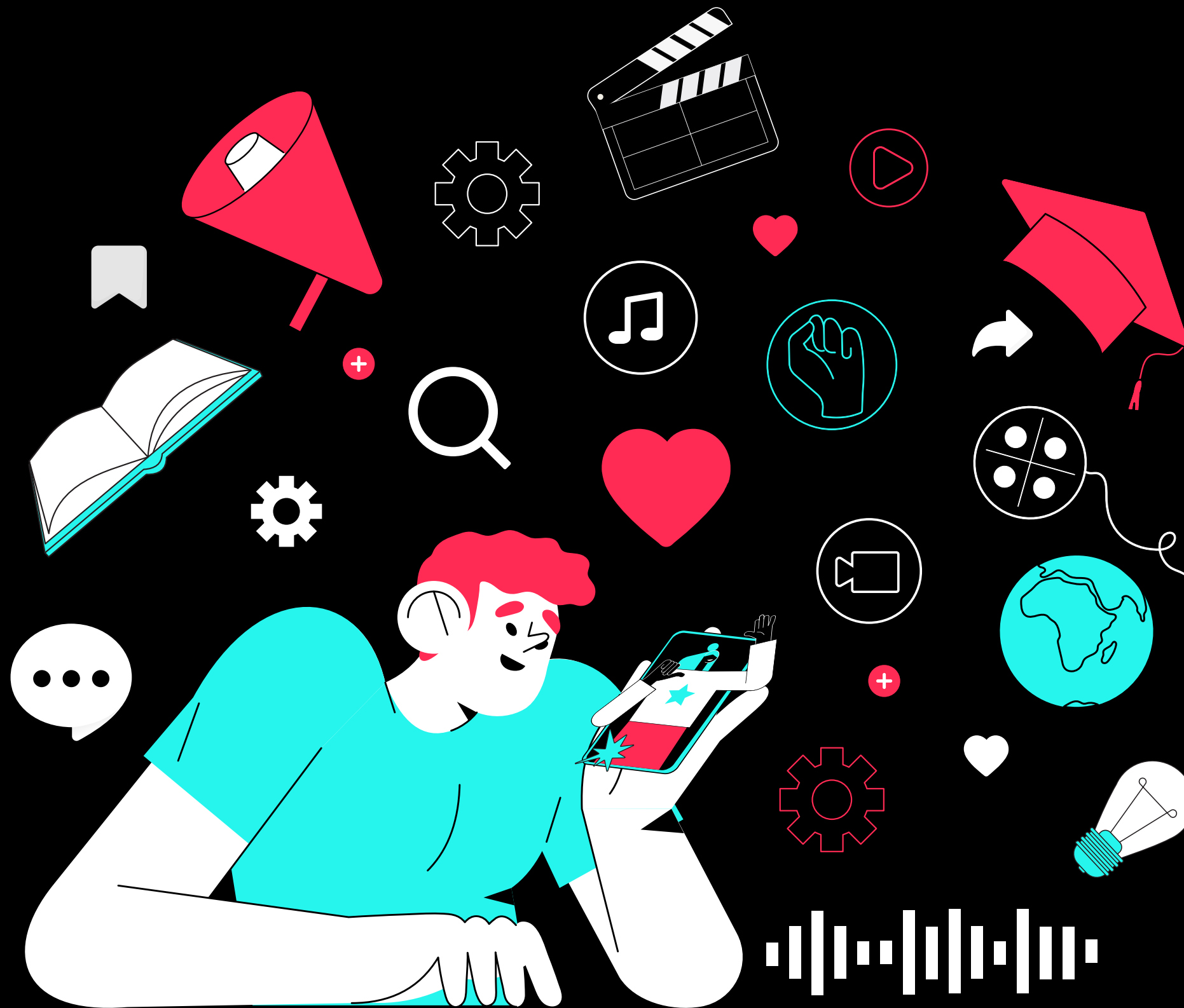
EDUCATION: **63%**
of TikTok users have learned more information about food and drink products while naturally scrolling**

DISCOVERY: **63%**
discover new food and drink products on the platform**

PURCHASE: **34%**
have bought a food and drink product or service that they saw/learned about on TikTok**

* TikTok Marketing Science Global Culinary Survey via AYTm, July 2023 Base: TikTok Monthly Users 18+ and have purchased grocery or F&B products in P3M

** TikTok Marketing Science EUI TikTok for Full Funnel Research 2023 conducted by Material



"Telling the story of the brand, solving user issues and telling them why they should care is vital as the length and attention filter of viewers gets shorter and shorter."

Josh Little, head of social at Incubeta

Chapter Two

Entertain, educate, inspire: the secret to compelling content

A few fundamental principles can help brands elevate TikTok campaigns and engage users.

One thing hasn't changed since TikTok's launch: the platform is built to entertain.

"Content on TikTok is entertaining, at times educational and always engaging," says Waldon. "Memes, trending sounds, viral dances, unique food and life hacks, you name it. But it's not just flashy, high-production content that flies. Yes, videos that are well edited can perform well, but so do stationary, speaking to camera videos and picture montages. The secret is simply: great content, authentic and on trend."

For brands, entertainment therefore needs to be their North Star, be it delivered via humour, inspiration or - as Nescafé Azera found with their #Shake-UpYourSummer campaign [see box: p.13] - education.

Start by using the platform as part of the creative process here, recommends Roisin Gray, TikTok's EUI CPG marketing solutions lead. "Scroll through the FYP to help you discover the language,

trends and aesthetics that our community is using, and find inspiration for your campaign."

Head to TikTok's Creative Centre to discover top-performing ads and trends split by vertical; connect with creative experts on the TikTok Creative Exchange and liaise with the virtual Creative Assistant to inspire ideas and generate scripts. Or dive straight into the brutally honest comment section to get a grasp of what users are looking for.

Don't be afraid of a little spontaneity. Confectionery brand Chupa Chups achieved a huge number of organic views of its 2023 reactive post teasing those who struggled to open their lollipops after Kim Kardashian was caught on camera having the problem at a football match. The team used this as a jumping off point for a longer series of related content that taught users the 'hack' to more easily opening the sweets.

"To perform well on TikTok, social listening and understanding our audience

How to work with TikTok's creators

Nobody knows TikTok's userbase better than its creators.

That makes them invaluable collaborators in building out brand campaigns that hit the right notes.

But how do you identify the right creator? And how can you get the most out of working with them?

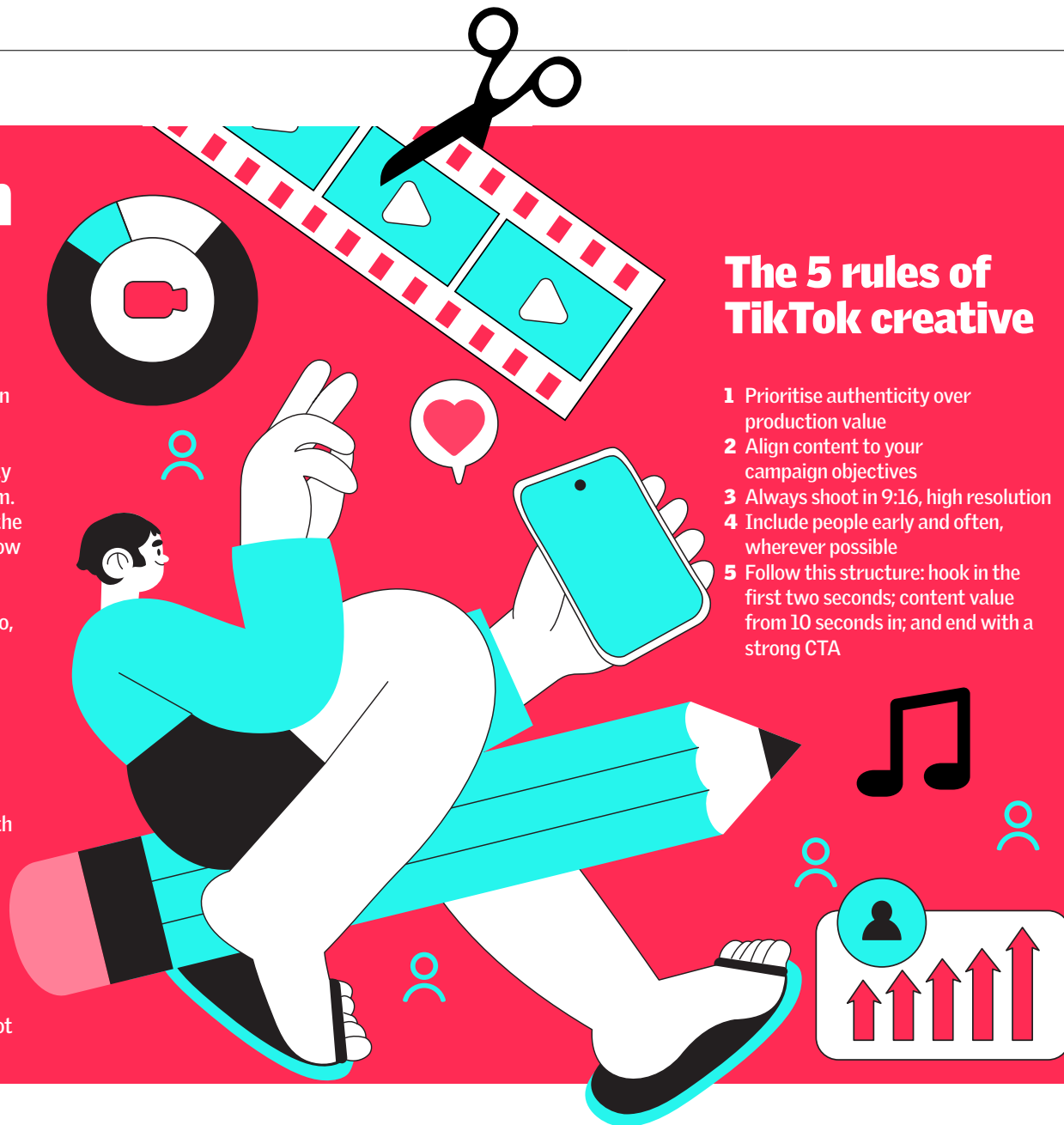
"Select creators based on their intimacy with their community, creativity and identity, and trust them to develop authentic content that they know will have an impact with their community," says Gray. Don't always be blindsided by big followings here. "Popular creators have mass-reach potential, high credibility, and can drive trust, efficacy and fame for your brand with their high cultural currency," she says. [But] "creators with smaller follower numbers have high influence potential, emerging credibility and, as a brand, there's a first-mover differentiator by

partnering with them early."

Work with a diverse collection of creators but aim to develop consistent relationships with a core group to build up familiarity and insight, recommends McKim. "It's a tide that lifts all ships in the briefing process as creators know what brand notes to hit as they build content, and brands don't need to worry about speaking to, or responding to, every 'trend' or hot topic that enters the TikTok lexicon."

And be brave, adds Gray. "To achieve true partnership with creators, brands shouldn't fear losing control to them: instead, fear losing the human touch with your consumers.

Treat [them] like creative directors, rather than influencers – they have built up their community, know its members intimately and know what sort of content will resonate. It's a collaboration, not a transaction."



The 5 rules of TikTok creative

- 1 Prioritise authenticity over production value
- 2 Align content to your campaign objectives
- 3 Always shoot in 9:16, high resolution
- 4 Include people early and often, wherever possible
- 5 Follow this structure: hook in the first two seconds; content value from 10 seconds in; and end with a strong CTA

is key," says a spokesperson for the brand. "Blending careful social media monitoring, test and learn content strategies and tactical trend-jacking while aligning the content with the brand's 'Forever Fun' mantra, has been our key approach to shifting audience focus to Gen Z and raising awareness of Chupa Chups within this demographic."

Or where planning and approval times require a little more leeway, a more measured approach that leverages omnipresent trends on the platform or those with longer staying power can work just as well, says Cody McKim, TikTok's UK CPG partnerships lead.

"It doesn't have to feel forced. There will already be something existing on TikTok to authentically weave in your consideration messaging."

It's quite possible to blend creator or TikTok-first creative with more traditional branded content too. TikTok even facilitates this approach via its TTCX remix packages, designed to convert commercial or other traditional brand assets into content that feels more at home on the platform.

When Nestlé-owned Aero didn't have the capacity to produce native TikTok content for the launch of Aero Melts at the start of 2024, for example, it used the platform's Creative Exchange program

to source relevant creator content instead and combined this with branded assets. The approach achieved a 65% spend uplift across users who saw both branded assets and creator-led assets. In comparison, just 8% of spend uplift came from users who saw only branded assets. "TikTok has been a game-changer for our Aero brand," said senior brand manager Meg Miller, of the campaign.

Whether or not it's adapted from traditional assets or bespoke to TikTok, ensure that content looks and feels native to the platform, blending in effortlessly in user feeds and subtly introducing the brand or product, whether that's

achieved by working collaboratively with creators [see box: p. 12] or self-produced content designed around a few fundamental principles [see box: above].

In addition, with the path from discovery to purchase shorter in food and drink than many other sectors – 72% of users spend less than a week considering whether or not to buy – ensure CTAs are embedded in creatives from the outset.

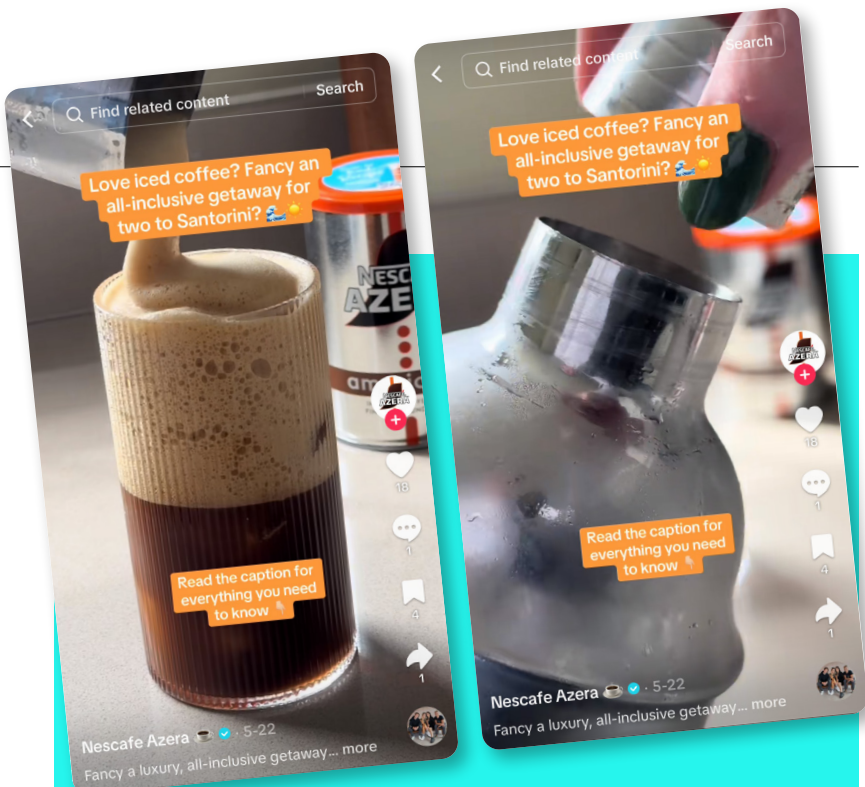
Finally, bear in mind that those brands that excel on TikTok don't stop at putting out a few bits of great creative. They focus on using the platform as a longer-term vehicle to strategically work on brand equity, creating a dialogue and

building a community across users, adds McKim.

"This can be done in a variety of ways, and it doesn't mean posting three to five times per week from an organic standpoint," he says.

"This might be as simple as hopping into the comments on videos you see from your brand handle on TikTok and commenting, sparking further dialogue or appreciation from users when they see brands participating in the culture."

In short, authentic, thoughtful content, created consistently and built around a cohesive brand narrative should be the blueprint for brands looking to achieve long-term relevance.



#ShakeUpYourSummer at Nescafé Azera

When Nescafé Azera wanted to reach out to more under-35s with its range of instant coffees, the brand chose to leverage a growing trend for iced coffee recipes. The #ShakeUpYourSummer campaign demonstrated to viewers a little-known method for dissolving their coffee in cold water, with the brand making multiple iterations of educational videos that showed different ways to turn the method into a range of iced drinks, from shaken frappés to pour-over-ice lattes.

According to a TikTok Brand Lift

study – where two randomised groups from the campaign's target audience (one which sees the promoted content and one which does not) are compared – the brand successfully achieved an +13.8% ad recall and +8.4% for brand awareness with the campaign. These results were amplified where premium ad formats, such as Top Feed, were bundled in alongside In-Feed ads, achieving a relative lift of +10.4% awareness, +47.4% ad recall and +66.7% brand association versus In Feed alone.

THREE TOP TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Aim to entertain – users open TikTok to laugh, to learn something or to feel inspired
- 2 Don't feel restricted to bespoke content. Use TTCX remix packages to leverage existing creative
- 3 Be consistent – plan a longer-term pipeline of content and show up in the comments

Chapter Three

Full funnel, always on: how to optimise impact

Compelling content is only the first step. To see the full benefits of the platform, it's critical that brands refine investment in TikTok as they would any other media channel.

No brand would kick off a TV campaign without a plan in place for when, where and how it will ensure a creative reaches the right people at the right time.

So, why would TikTok be any different?

"Gaining followers and relying on novelty isn't enough," says Jess Dickenson, managing director at Precis Digital. "Brands need to continue to stand out and spark high engagement to make it into algorithmically driven recommendations, even just to make sure that their own followers continue to see their posts."

To achieve that, they need to think full funnel, always on.

First, that means considering TikTok at the earliest stages of the media planning process. That could be when mapping out the narrative or messaging behind the big TV ads that often anchor campaigns in consumer goods. That way "the conversation takes place at the

moment of inception to understand how this messaging will land in a way that feels appropriate for that ecosystem", explains McKim.

Considering the platform at this early stage also allows marketers to plan creative in a phased way that takes users through the traditional funnel framework, from awareness to consideration to purchase, rather than trying to do it all at once.

Second, make use of the suite of tools and paid-for opportunities now available on TikTok to optimise the impact of any planned creative – much as you would on those more traditional media channels.

Think of how you might typically approach TV to amplify a new flavour or to reach out to a new customer demographic, recommends Genny Capper, CPG industry activation strategist at TikTok. Not only "would you use a broad range of TV channels and programmes [but] if you wanted to maximise



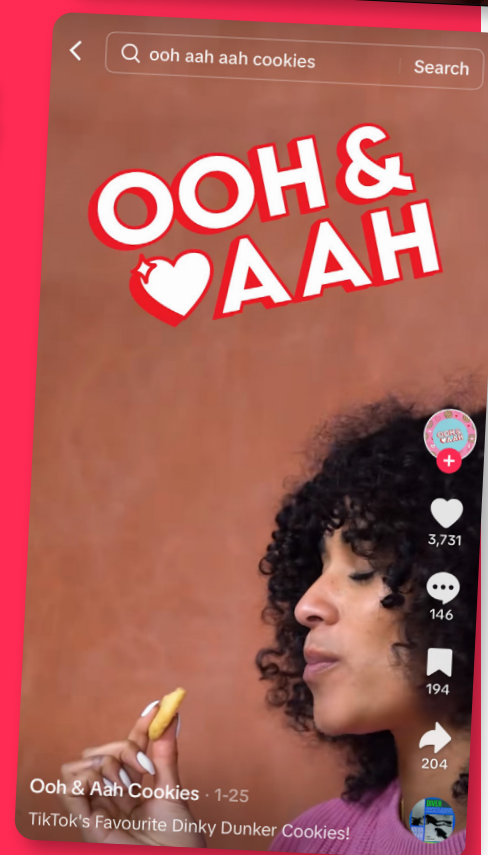
How Ooh & Aah cookies ended up with half its sales coming from TikTok

Direct-to-consumer cookie brand Ooh & Aah had already seen success on TikTok with its organic content but opted for a more strategic approach from September 2023 to January 2024, by leveraging some of the platform's many advertising tools.

The team began with a Creator Competition, which challenged creators to share content that engaged with their personalised cookie products, with the top videos then used in their own ad campaign. To boost the reach of these creative partnerships, they used Spark Ads, a native ad format that allows you to bump the visibility of organic content.

Plus, by making use of TikTok's Audience Insights tool, the brand also tweaked and iterated throughout the four-month campaign period. For example, though they began with a target audience of the whole UK, they used the insights they gathered on conversion – with content driving people directly to their TikTok Shop – to refine this as they went along.

This approach achieved a Return on Ad Spend (ROAS) of 8.8 and achieved a conversion rate of 6%. If that wasn't enough, they've even had to recruit four new members of staff to keep up with the surge in demand, with 57% of sales now generated directly from TikTok.



[Consider TikTok] "at the moment of a campaign's inception to understand how this messaging will land in a way that feels appropriate for that ecosystem."

Cody McKim, UK CPG partnership lead at TikTok

frequency to land and reiterate new branding of a product you would need to advertise in the same programme multiple times or across the same types of programme."

You can do much the same on TikTok. To achieve broad, volume-driving reach, you could use a TopView ad: a full-screen and sound-on video ad that is shown to users when they first open up the app for three seconds before they return to the native in-feed video experience. To refine this reach – and target more specific demographics – combine a TopView ad with TikTok's 'Reach & Frequency' campaign tool, Capper suggests, to control the audiences you reach and the number of times they are exposed to your ad. There's also TopFeed – which allows brands to control when an ad appears in someone's feed – and Pulse, which places ads after contextually relevant content.

Each stage of the funnel will likely benefit from a slightly different combination of organic and paid-for slots, adds McKim. When it comes to building up brand awareness and engagement, for example, "we recommend paid ads of ours that engage the community at scale." That could be making use of

the Branded Mission ad product, which connects brands with TikTok creators by offering them incentives to develop authentic video content; or Branded Effect, a product that allows for mass interpretation using the same filter or effect available to anyone.

Third, consider making use of TikTok shop as part of a full-funnel strategy, advises Ryan. "It changed the game for brands," she says. "It allows brands to work with an array of creators on an affiliate-based programme which speaks to relevant audiences and collaborates with creators on a commission basis. It means [they] can continue to play on those viral moments, sounds, recipes, cleaning products (and more), whilst directing users and consumers to their TikTok shop to purchase the products they're searching for." It's one of the ways in which "the platform has most certainly matured, and as a result it offers unique user experiences which can increase a brands' selling power."

In essence, "TikTok should be used at every stage of the planning journey for planners and marketers, and we have the tools to help you discover, develop, design and deliver your campaign," sums up Gray.

THREE TOP TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Factor in TikTok at the earliest stage of a campaign
- 2 Combine organic and paid-for activity to increase and refine reach
- 3 Use TikTok shop to take users through the full length of the marketing funnel

Chapter Four

Delivering value: a holistic measure of success

By utilising the right metrics, it is possible to attribute investment in TikTok to brand awareness, engagement and even sales.

"Fmcg brands don't have it easy at the moment. Maximising media efficiency and transparency in reporting performance is at the top of the agenda."

Pierre-André Gautier, head of strategic partnerships at LiveRamp

Marketers have rarely been under greater pressure to prove the value of each pound spent.

Amid economic uncertainty, nearly half (47.7%) say they've been left with tighter budgets in the last 12 months, according to one April 2024 survey.

"Fmcg brands don't have it easy at the moment," says Pierre-André Gautier, head of strategic partnerships at LiveRamp. "They continue to navigate a period of constricted consumer purchasing power, with mounting pressure to deliver and prove return-on-investment from their squeezed ad budgets. Therefore, maximising media efficiency and transparency in reporting performance is at the top of the agenda."

So, once they've put all the hard work in, how can brands ensure that TikTok is delivering value?

There isn't a one-size-fits-all metric for success on the platform.

For some brands, it's about driving awareness or consideration across a demographic that may typically have walked straight past them in supermarkets. For others, it's about building excitement around a new launch or rebrand.

There may be a desire to shift outdated perceptions or, of course, drive additional sales, both online and offline.

"Understanding the basics about

which metrics should form a key part of your reporting stack and which shouldn't is key to understanding what drives performance," says Robertas Domarkas, co-founder at Highrise. "On top of that, understanding how to understand data from different sources and being able to make informed and accurate decisions will really set you apart from your competitors."

There's a variety of different ways that brands can then gauge whether or not the platform has delivered on their objectives. They might look at overall reach, media impressions or the average viewing time across their targeted demographic, for example.

Then there's sales. It's well-known that TikTok can drive purchases. As of May 2024, the #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt has over 7.6m published posts. Thirty-four per cent of users have purchased a product they first learned about on TikTok, according to the platform's own 2023 Full Funnel research.

These purchases aren't only online either. Two-fifths of TikTok users who've discovered a product on the platform still go to a physical store too – and that's likely to be higher for consumer goods brands, for which the vast majority of sales happen offline.

But how can brands draw a line between their TikTok campaign and

extra digits on their P&L? There are three main routes: sharing offline data with TikTok; utilising Sales Lift Studies and leveraging the Marketing Mix tool to look at the platform within a brand's wider marketing investment.

For the first option, "we provide various secure methods for advertisers to share offline event data with TikTok, including manual uploads, API integrations and third-party integrations," says Gray. "This ensures real-time data-sharing and enhances the accuracy of conversion-matching."

Via the second, its Sales Lift Studies, the platform can directly measure the increase in sales attributable to TikTok ads. In May 2023, the platform partnered with data and insights company LiveRamp to launch a sales lift measurement tool specifically for consumer goods brands in the UK and France. The solution draws from a number of different data sources to provide a more complete view of performance, explains Gautier, combining TikTok's own impression data with sales data provided to LiveRamp via third-party retailers, using its clean room technology to ensure privacy and anonymity.

Of the UK campaigns that have been measured using the new solution so far, brands saw a +5.5% average incremental sales uplift, say LiveRamp, 1.8x its



Capturing 'immediate, immersive and multisensory' attention

In recent years, attention has emerged as a leading metric for evaluating the impact of marketing campaigns – and exactly how to measure it remains a constant topic of debate.

But what we do know, according to a recent TikTok x WARC collaborative whitepaper, is that not all attention is created equal.

Instead, each platform or ad format has its own 'attention elasticity' – a term coined to describe the range of attention it's able to capture. According to WARC's report, there are three particular qualities to attention created via short-form video. First, it's immediate – the brevity of content engages the neural networks associated with intuitive and quick thinking, so it requires less effort to pay attention to. Second, full-screen,

sound-on content is deeply immersive. And thirdly, the simultaneous engagement of sight, sound and even sensory elements creates a multisensory experience that can trigger richer thought processing.

"It's also more attentionally efficient," points out Sharma. A 2022 study by Dentsu found that shorter ads with the same number of seconds of viewing time as longer ads were able to drive higher recall and choice uplift.

Proprietary research by TikTok itself, meanwhile, has also shown the particular role the platform plays in capturing this attention. Eye-tracking studies, for example, have shown it can draw consumer attention to products in ads more quickly than other channels, even with a single exposure.

benchmark. "Since the tool launched, results have been overwhelmingly positive," he adds.

Third, to understand TikTok's role in driving offline sales within the wider marketing mix, brands can utilise the platform's Marketing Mix Modelling tool, which it rolled out in 2022 following collaboration with a number of industry-leading media modelling providers, including Nielsen and IRI. The tool has shown, for example, that the combination of TV and TikTok as a complementary duo can be really effective, points out Akshara Sharma, marketing solutions specialist at TikTok. "We see strong priming effects between TikTok, TV and streaming when run together," she says. "In addition to boosting brand recognition by up to 20%, the combination also generates 5.5% incremental sales – a 1.5X increase compared to other digital channels."

In short, at a time when both ROI and ROAS are uppermost in marketers' minds, there's no need to rely solely on crude metrics like account followers or likes when it comes to tracking success on TikTok – though these also have their place. Recent advances in data-sharing mean it is more than possible to start drawing a line all the way from discovery on the platform to that all-important decision to buy.

THREE TOP TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Articulate a campaign's objectives at the outset – and use this to select the right metrics
- 2 For top of the funnel activity, look at impressions, reach and average viewing time
- 3 For bottom of the funnel, use external data and tools like Sales Lift Studies and Marketing Mix Modelling to attribute activity to purchase



Testing TikTok's viability at Grind

London coffee brand Grind wasn't interested in creating fleeting engagements on TikTok. Instead, it wanted to know for sure that the platform could help drive measurable activity and sales.

To achieve that, it first worked with agency Highrise Marketing to craft engaging content that resonated with diverse audiences. As 79% of purchases driven by TikTok aren't accurately attributed using last click attribution models, like Google Analytics, it worked with Highrise to create a proprietary tool instead, which combined multiple data streams to assess the platform's impact.

"We developed a tool that blends together data from multiple sources, including TikTok platform data, GA4 data (Google Analytics), first-party data and data from third-party attribution software," explains

Robertas Domarkas, co-founder at Highrise. "We found that going off a single data source often led to very one-sided perspectives and inaccurate optimisations. For example, GA4 data would undervalue TikTok by a significant margin." This approach, however, allowed the brand and its agency to "sense-check certain movements in performance we saw reported from other data sources and allowed us to maintain a calmer and less reactive approach to paid media optimisation."

In fact, using this combined data approach, Grind recorded an +11% boost to ROAS and an overall customer acquisition cost reduction of 28%.

"Without this first-party view, one might have pulled back investment significantly, causing greater damage in the long term," adds Domarkas.

Conclusion

Unlocking the full potential of TikTok

It's no longer enough to simply show up. To succeed on the platform, brands need a plan. By Cody McKim, UK/I Head of Industry, Food & Beverage at TikTok.

Six years after it first launched in the UK, many elements of TikTok remain the same.

Entertainment is still at its core, be it viral dance challenges, comedy skits or foodie creations that leave users salivating over their smartphones.

It continues to attract diverse, committed creators who know their audiences and build loyal communities.

And it's still the best place to find some inspiration for a midweek meal.

But though these fundamental elements haven't changed since it first landed on UK screens, TikTok's meteoric growth has seen it undergo something of an evolution, with more intentional and mature audiences, a far richer breadth of content, communities and subcultures, and a more sophisticated algorithm delivering up clips that users want to see in their FYP.

That brings with it enormous potential for food and drink brands, with users more receptive to discovery and recommendations, and actively seeking out new products and services to enhance their repertoires. In other words, TikTok can nudge them along the full length of the funnel.

And at a time that brands are struggling to maintain their relevance and return to volume growth, that can make the platform an incredibly valuable part of their marketing toolkit.

To leverage this potential though, it's no longer enough for brands to show up without a plan.



"It's no longer enough for brands to show up [on TikTok] without a plan."

Instead, as we've shown through this report, it's critical to treat TikTok with the same long-term strategy they'd apply to any traditional media channel, such as TV, radio or out-of-home.

Rather than 'one and done' activations, they need to consider TikTok at the inception of a campaign to deliver a complementary, integrated and phased creative, paired with a media buying strategy that uses TikTok's suite of tools and ad formats

to reach the right audiences at the right moment and with the right frequency.

As many major fmcg brands and retailers have already discovered, this approach goes way beyond transient viral success, to unlock a far more genuine boost for their long-term prospects.

To learn more about how to optimise your own brand strategy on the platform - and unlock all its benefits - go to TikTok academy [here](#).

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