

The Influence of Social Media Short Videos on Brand Engagement and Communication

Yiwei Zhou *

University of Liverpool Management School, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom

* Corresponding Author Email: zhouyiwei_123@outlook.com

Abstract. With the rapid proliferation of social media, short-video marketing has emerged as a formidable tool for brands to captivate audiences and elevate their visibility. These concise, engaging videos, presented in a lively and dynamic format, swiftly grab users' attention. This paper delves into how brands can harness the potential of short-video platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels to bolster their promotional efforts. By examining the distinctive attributes of short-video content, the study underscores how this marketing approach effectively fosters brand communication by heightening audience engagement, augmenting brand visibility, and nurturing emotional bonds. Popular tactics encompass storytelling, user-generated content, and tutorials, which adeptly seize attention and cultivate consumer trust. Brands are advised to thoroughly comprehend their target demographics, leverage platform algorithms, and consistently assess content performance to refine their marketing strategies. Furthermore, incorporating trends, maintaining a regular posting schedule, and collaborating with influencers can significantly amplify their reach and propel long-term, sustainable growth.

Keywords: Short-video marketing, Brand promotion, Audience engagement, Social media platforms.

1. Introduction

In recent years, platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, along with Chinese platforms like TikTok and Xiaohongshu, have grown rapidly in popularity. These platforms not only engage users with entertaining, creative, and highly tailored content but also improve consumer awareness of various products. In particular, short-video marketing provides a flexible and multifaceted content system that spans diverse marketing contexts and fosters strong user interaction, distinguishing itself from more traditional marketing formats. This format has driven substantial innovation by allowing a range of functionalities that support content consumption, encourage active exploration, and enable deeper user engagement. Additionally, the shift toward mobile-friendly, video-based content has fundamentally transformed how users interact online, positioning short videos as a leading form of digital engagement. This shift has significantly shaped the evolving relationship between brands and consumers, influencing how consumers perceive, investigate, and make purchasing decisions [1-4].

Moreover, short-video marketing is highly cost-effective for acquiring new customers, mainly due to its appeal to a predominantly young, tech-savvy audience that is generally inclined toward higher levels of consumption and often possesses strong purchasing power [1]. Consequently, brands utilizing short-video platforms can confidently focus on target audiences with promising purchasing potential, reducing the need for broad segmentation efforts. This targeted approach not only minimizes costs associated with large-scale advertising but also allows brands to concentrate their resources on reaching audiences with a high likelihood of conversion. As a result, companies can optimize marketing budgets while achieving a quicker return on investment [1-3].

Statistics indicate that completion rates for short videos are significantly higher than those for text and images, allowing brands to convey a substantial amount of information in a short time, enabling users to understand products or services more quickly. Studies show that users process information in short videos much faster than through reading text. This format not only captures user attention but also conveys brand characteristics through vivid visuals and concise content, stimulating interest and driving further interaction or purchase decisions.

This marketing method is especially attractive to younger consumers, who have grown up with digital technology and are quick to adapt to emerging digital platforms. Short videos offer a uniquely immersive and engaging form of advertising that resonates with this demographic, capturing their attention more effectively than traditional methods, such as print ads, early television commercials, or extended articles. This modern format significantly boosts audience engagement while simultaneously raising brand visibility. By fostering a high degree of interactivity and enabling immediate user feedback, short videos create a distinctive avenue for brands to cultivate consumer loyalty and build a lasting brand image. Given that this demographic also tends to have considerable purchasing power, they represent an ideal target for businesses looking to turn engagement into sales [2].

By directing short-video ads toward this demographic, brands are achieving notable results. Young, digitally engaged audiences are highly responsive to novel and compelling content, making short-video marketing an effective means of enhancing consumer engagement and driving sales. As a result, brands seeking to engage today's consumers increasingly view short-video marketing as a strategic priority, offering an effective pathway to convert interest into measurable growth.

This research examines the role of short-video marketing in promoting brand awareness, with particular emphasis on platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels. It investigates how short-form video content can significantly boost brand visibility and deepen audience engagement through various techniques, including storytelling, user-generated content, and educational tutorials. By synthesizing these factors, the research offers actionable insights for brands looking to refine their marketing approaches and foster sustained growth while optimizing consumer interaction in the evolving digital environment.

2. Developing an Effective Short-Video Content Strategy

Data analysis is crucial for refining short-video campaign targeting and enhancing overall marketing strategies. By examining audience demographics, engagement behaviors, and content preferences, brands can make data-informed adjustments that better align with their target markets. A well-crafted short-video content strategy can greatly boost audience interaction, increase brand exposure, and improve conversion rates [5]. To achieve the best results, it is crucial to focus on three core elements, including defining the target audience, creating engaging and authentic content, and effectively utilizing platform-specific features.

2.1. Identifying Target Audience

When crafting a short-video marketing strategy, establishing clear objectives is essential. A robust content strategy relies on a deep understanding of the target audience [6]. Only with precise goals can brands effectively create tailored content, select the appropriate platforms, and assess the success of their efforts. For example, if a brand's goal is to increase brand visibility and expand its market presence, the short-video strategy should focus on elevating brand awareness or attracting a broader audience. In such cases, brands should concentrate on producing captivating, entertaining, and shareable videos and ensure that these reach the platforms where their intended audience is most active.

For instance, younger users who tend to engage more with platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and Xiaohongshu. These platforms excel at short-form video content that is both entertaining and light-hearted, often revolving around viral trends, challenges, dance routines, humor, and creative expressions. Such content appeals to the younger generation, which seeks quick and fun interactions. This demographic not only engages with the content but also plays a key role in its spread, driving further interaction through likes and shares. Therefore, brands can leverage these platforms to connect with an energetic and innovative audience, ultimately enhancing their brand's visibility and extending their reach in the market.

2.2. Creating Engaging and Authentic Content

Short videos with fresh, engaging content are highly effective at capturing user interest. By utilizing compelling visual and auditory elements within a limited timeframe, brands can communicate their core values and distinct personality in an emotionally resonant and impactful way [7]. This approach allows for the creation of narratives that feel authentic, approachable, and relevant, fostering a sense of trust and closeness with viewers. Authenticity in content strengthens both credibility and audience trust, positioning brands as genuine and trustworthy entities. This alignment with audience values contributes to enhanced brand loyalty.

2.3. Effectively Utilizing Platform-specific Features

To enhance user engagement and create more interactive short-video content, brands can implement strategies that encourage direct participation and enable two-way communication. For instance, incorporating interactive features such as polls, quizzes, or live Q&A sessions on platforms like TikTok or Instagram Reels promotes active user involvement with the brand, fostering a dynamic relationship between the audience and the brand. This tactic not only makes the content more engaging and interactive but also strengthens the emotional bond between the brand and its audience. By connecting with their audience in a creative and personalized manner, brands can generate user interest, encouraging further exploration of their content and ultimately boosting brand exposure.

3. Enhancing Brand Engagement through Interactive Video Content

The enhancement of engagement and interaction between brands and audiences can be achieved through the use of interactive video content. Specifically, this means that brands engage viewers by producing videos with interactive elements such as clicks, selections, comments, or real-time feedback, making them more actively engaged with the brand. This kind of interaction can increase the audience's interest in the brand, increase the appeal of the brand, and help the brand to establish a deeper connection with the audience, thereby enhancing the brand's influence and loyalty

3.1. Utilizing User-Generated Content

User-Generated Content (UGC) is an impactful method for adding authenticity to brand marketing by highlighting genuine customer interactions with products or services. UGC encompasses various content types created by a brand's users or supporters, including photos, reviews, and videos, which are shared on platforms like Instagram Reels, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts. Utilizing UGC allows brands to reduce the costs associated with content creation while building a sense of community and trust. For prospective customers, UGC often appears more reliable than traditional advertising, as it provides social proof of other users' positive experiences. This sense of authenticity strengthens brand credibility, positioning UGC as an effective tool for shaping purchase decisions and fostering lasting customer loyalty [8].

3.2. Leveraging Influencer Collaborations

Partnering with influencers or thought leaders presents considerable advantages by expanding brand visibility and enhancing credibility. Collaborations with influencers who have significant followings allow brands to naturally embed their products into influencer-generated content, thereby raising awareness in a more engaging manner. This strategy introduces the brand to both the influencer's existing audience and new potential customers within a familiar and relatable context. Given that these products are endorsed or featured by individuals that followers admire, audiences are often more inclined to trust the promotion and consider a purchase. In comparison to traditional advertising, such influencer partnerships are often perceived as more compelling and credible, fostering deeper engagement and trust within the target demographic [9].

3.3. Encouraging Direct Engagement through Interactive Features

Direct engagement through interactive features, such as voting options, Q&A tools, and real-time comments, enhances user involvement by sparking curiosity and fostering meaningful participation in branded content. Such features motivate users to actively engage, thereby boosting content views and interaction rates. Furthermore, direct interaction fosters a closer emotional bond between brands and users, encouraging goodwill and building brand loyalty. These interactive experiences create a sense of community, enhancing the connection between the brand and its audience on a deeper level.

4. Measuring and Optimizing Short-Video Marketing Performance

Effectively measuring and optimizing short-video marketing performance is essential for brands to make data-driven decisions that improve reach, engagement, and conversions. This process requires identifying appropriate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), implementing A/B testing for ongoing content optimization, and leveraging data to improve targeting and strategic alignment. To effectively evaluate short-video marketing performance, three primary KPIs are identified: View Count, Engagement (including Likes, Shares, and Comments), and Conversion Rate. These metrics comprehensively measure reach, audience engagement, and business outcomes.

4.1. Key Performance Metrics (KPIs) in Short-Video Marketing

To accurately evaluate short-video marketing effectiveness, brands need to set specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that match their objectives. Typical KPIs in this area include measurements like views, engagement through likes, shares, and the rate of conversions.

4.1.1. View Count

View Count reflects the total number of times a video has been viewed on the platform, serving as an indicator of its reach and discoverability. A high view count often signifies that the content has captured attention, drawing more users to click and watch. However, to truly assess the content's effectiveness, it is important not to rely solely on views. Other metrics, such as user retention and engagement rate, should be considered to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how well the content resonates with and impacts the audience.

4.1.2. Comments

Comments provide valuable insights into the deeper emotional and intellectual engagement between viewers and content. A high comment count typically indicates that the content has captured the audience's attention, sparking opinions, questions, or discussions. This metric not only reflects the level of engagement but also suggests the content has had an emotional or intellectual impact. To fully assess the value of comments, it is important to consider both the volume and sentiment. Positive comments often validate the content's success, while constructive feedback highlights areas for improvement or inspiration. Analyzing sentiment - whether positive, neutral, or negative - offers a clearer picture of how well the content meets audience expectations and informs future strategies.

4.1.3. Likes and Shares

Likes act as a key indicator of engagement, showcasing audience approval and positive reception. A high count of likes often implies that the content strikes a chord with viewers, even though likes represent a relatively passive interaction. To gain a fuller understanding of content impact, it is helpful to evaluate likes in combination with comments and shares, as these metrics provide deeper insights into both emotional and intellectual audience engagement.

Shares are essential for evaluating content reach and viral potential. A high share count often suggests that the content resonates with the audience and is perceived as valuable enough to be shared within their social networks. By expanding the visibility of the content, shares extend its reach to wider and potentially new audiences. Examining shares together with likes and comments provides a more comprehensive view of how successfully the content engages and impacts its viewers.

4.1.4. Conversion Rate

Conversion rate is a critical metric that evaluates content effectiveness by calculating the percentage of viewers who complete a desired action - such as making a purchase, subscribing, or registering. A high conversion rate suggests that the content does more than attract attention; it motivates the audience to act in line with campaign goals. This metric is essential in assessing return on investment (ROI) for marketing efforts, as it links viewer engagement with measurable business outcomes. For a comprehensive content strategy, conversion rates should be examined alongside metrics like traffic sources, audience demographics, and engagement levels to identify the most effective content types and distribution methods. A thorough analysis of conversion rates allows marketers to fine-tune their approach, aligning content more closely with audience expectations and enhancing overall results [10].

4.2. Leveraging Data to Refine Targeting and Strategy

Audience Demographics: Platforms like Instagram Reels, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts offer valuable demographic data - such as age, gender, and geographic location - that brands can leverage to refine their content and targeting. By tailoring strategies to meet the preferences of specific demographic groups, brands can increase both engagement and relevance, ensuring their content resonates more deeply with each audience segment.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, short-video marketing has proven to be an indispensable tool for brands aiming to enhance their reach, foster deeper engagement, and increase conversions. By harnessing the power of short videos - known for their ability to immediately capture viewers' attention and convey key brand messages efficiently - companies can effectively target and influence their specific audiences. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts have revolutionized the digital marketing space, offering interactive platforms where brands can establish direct connections with their consumers.

The success of short video marketing is a key factor in determining the overall effectiveness of a brand's marketing efforts, with content quality being a crucial element. High-quality content is capable of quickly capturing the attention of the target audience, boosting brand exposure, encouraging engagement, and strengthening consumer-brand relationships. Effective content must be both captivating and highly relevant to the target demographic, which not only increases viewership but also enhances the transmission of important brand messages. Additionally, the technical aspects of video production play a significant role in shaping brand perception. Clear visuals, excellent audio quality, and smooth editing are essential in delivering a premium viewing experience, thereby enhancing the brand's reputation for professionalism and credibility. On the other hand, low-quality content and poor production values can harm the brand's image, potentially leading to reduced audience retention. Therefore, it is imperative for brands to focus on both the creative and technical dimensions of short video content production.

By ensuring that content aligns with foundational brand values and reinforces a cohesive, positive brand identity, companies can more effectively meet their strategic marketing objectives while fostering stronger consumer trust. This research provides critical insights for professionals, including marketers, content creators, and brand strategists, by offering evidence-based approaches to optimizing short-video marketing. These recommendations aim to boost audience engagement and establish pathways for sustainable, long-term brand success.

However, this study is not without its limitations. Its focus on existing trends within short-video platforms may not fully reflect the ever-evolving nature of consumer preferences and technological progress. Future investigations could expand on these findings by analyzing the implications of emerging technologies like AI-powered content customization, exploring the impact of cultural nuances in international markets, or assessing the prolonged effects of short-video strategies on

fostering consumer loyalty. Such avenues of research would offer deeper insights into the dynamic and complex landscape of digital marketing.

References

- [1] Chen X, Liu Y. Chinese libraries' communication influence based on the Douyin communication index. *Library Hi Tech*, 2024.
- [2] Dong X, Liu H, Xi N, et al. Short video marketing: what, when and how short-branded videos facilitate consumer engagement. *Internet Research*, 2023.
- [3] Yu X, Zhang Y, Zhang X. The short video usage motivation and behavior of middle-aged and old users. *Library Hi Tech*, 2024, 42 (2): 624-641.
- [4] Aiolfi S, Bellini S, Pellegrini D. Data-driven digital advertising: benefits and risks of online behavioral advertising. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 2021, 49 (7): 1089-1110.
- [5] Chen H, Ma D, Sharma B. Short video marketing strategy: evidence from successful entrepreneurs on TikTok. *Journal of Research in Marketing and Entrepreneurship*, 2024, 26 (2): 257-278.
- [6] Ismail MR. Video marketing impact on consumers' Behavior. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 2023, 25 (8): 58-68.
- [7] Jeff M. How to map out a video concept your audience will love. 2023, 2024-11-20, <https://www.storyblocks.com/resources/tutorials/creating-video-concepts-for-target-audience>
- [8] Santos M L B. The "so-called" UGC: an updated definition of user-generated content in the age of social media. *Online Information Review*, 2022, 46 (1): 95-113.
- [9] Pinkerton L A. The power of influencer marketing. 2022, 2024-11-20, <https://www.prsa.org/article/the-power-of-influencer-marketing>
- [10] Ramachandran K K. Evaluating ROI in Digital Marketing Campaigns: Metrics, Measurement, and Insights. *International Journal of Management (IJM)*, 2023, 14 (7).