

Rise of Short-Form Content

In terms of content marketing, long-form has been the status quo for decades. According to [Core DNA](#) this is any content between a short story and a novelette. There is certainly a time and a place for this content. However, with shortened attention spans, the rise of the share button, and algorithms that require daily input to push out; it is more important than ever to master the short-form content game.

Short-form content is typically any written copy that is less than 1,000 words or videos up to 3 minutes. Think blogs, Facebook posts, TikToks, and Instagram reels. These take less than 3 minutes to consume, are typically easily digestible, and are highly shareable.

These are the reasons short-form is taking an unprecedented lead. It is easy to share, easy to make, and easy to engage with.

People expect their favorite accounts to turn out content daily. If the content is 10,000 words on the effect that the advertising industry has had on Western societal views of femininity (if you actually are interested in this - check out [Cinderella Ate My Daughter by Peggy Orenstein](#)) then it is unrealistic for creators to put out content daily. If the content is an 11-second video to a trending song, then it is a bit more manageable.

Short-form content is also easy to engage with. The likelihood of me clicking away from a post to an article, and then spend 15 minutes reading that article is low. The likelihood of me reading a 100-word Facebook post with the highlights from that article is far higher.

Lastly, short-form is easy to share. Sending a study on “the effects of climate change in mixed species breeding” in the family group chat is likely to get a thumbs up from Grandpa at best. Sending a TikTok of a grizzly-polar bear mix will probably cause some commotion.

This is what short-form content is: bite-sized pieces of information that start the conversation.

Why TikTok is Different

The king of short-form content creation and sharing is undoubtedly TikTok. According to [Hubspot](#); Tiktok was the most downloaded app of 2021, it is the number one app for driving consumer spending, and it is by far the most engaging social media app.

Why is TikTok so popular? A number of reasons. The algorithm has made it easier to go viral, and the in-app video studio has made it easier to make content, it consists of exclusively short-form content, and the advanced algorithm assures that everyone's feed is highly tailored to their niche interests and preferences.

TikTok has democratized viral content. Anyone can go viral if they post enough content with enough consistency. This is appealing to creators who have come from other platforms where viral content comes from ad dollars spent, production quality, and partnerships with influencers.

The production of content has also been revolutionized by TikTok. The platform has abandoned the high production quality, aesthetically pleasing reels of Instagram for more casual content that anyone can make in two minutes. Additionally, the in-app video editing studio is far more useful than any other platform. Users can stitch together photos and videos, add in voiceovers, edit the playback speed, store drafts of videos natively in the app, and even use a green screen effect.

The exclusive use of short video content was no mistake. People's attention spans are shorter than ever: we have shorter books, movies, and ads to account for that. Naturally, we are navigating towards shorter social content as well. [Dr. Julie Albright](#) explains the psychology of TikTok. The short videos give users small, consistent dopamine hits which give the platform an immersive experience.

Lastly, users tout the power of the all-knowing algorithm. TikTok's highly advanced AI recommendation system determines which videos will appear on users' For You Page. Users will joke that the algorithm will know things about them before they do because of how highly tailored content will be to users' preferences, interests, and experiences. Additionally, users with similar preferences will likely all be exposed to the same content. Users will say that they are on "cooking TikTok", "Batman TikTok", or "Colorado TikTok" to explain what types of videos are coming up most frequently in their feed. Additionally, users will reference that a video made it to the "right side" or "wrong side" of tiktok depending on the tone of the interactions. If the comments on a video are primarily negative, then it is likely that the algorithm pushed the video out to users with incompatible preferences for the video content. This will result in the infamous "wrong side of TikTok" comments.

Marketing Your Business Using TikTok

Utilizing TikTok to market your business is going to be unlike any other social media marketing you've done in the past. This is because when you make promotional content for Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter; you are making ads. When you make promotional content for TikTok, you

are making a TikTok. Users will scroll at the first sign of promotional content, so it is important for any videos to flow seamlessly into a user's For You Page.

Because of this, businesses are reframing how it looks to interact with customers on TikTok. Content creators are moving from scripted responses to funny, out-of-pocket replies and from perfectly posed photos to videos filmed in one take on their iPhones. This new type of content and interaction is fast, funny, and radically casual.

Making promotional content that works within this unique environment can be hard. TikTok is a space for... whatever the opposite of ads is. So, brands have found ways to promote themselves differently. They post content with workplace humor, share the cool parts of their processes, do skits to popular songs, teach users new tools and information, and just about anything else. The NFL has a popular TikTok account. You will rarely ever find promotions for games or highlights on this account though. Their most recent viral video was a repost of a high school student's Snapchat of an NFL player visiting their school and racing their principal.

[Link from NFL TikTok to embed](#)

There is no one way to do TikTok right, however, there are about a million ways to do it wrong. Here are a few general rules for making a successful TikTok for your brand:

- Keep it short - the highest-performing videos are between 21 and 34 seconds long
- Make it accessible - adding captions increases impressions by 55.7%
- Do something edgy - videos with a distinct point of view do better than ones without
- Team up - partnering with creators boosts view-through rates by 193%
- Hop on the train - Use trending sounds and hashtags
- Casual is better - overproduced videos smell like ads from a mile away
- Consistency is key - when building a following, it is recommended to post once per day
- Engage - your comments on other posts will bring users to your page
- Find your niche - whether it's teaching a skill, doing dances to trending songs, or sharing videos of your office dog

Finally, the most important thing to remember is that you are not making an ad, you are making a TikTok. What has worked on other platforms will not work here - this is the Wild West. TikTok is a bit of a sandbox for brands, everyone is trying on hats that they would not normally wear and it can be a lot of fun. Alright, now you know. So, stop wasting time and get to scrolling!