Revisiting the Inner Workings of Digital Video

The content halo, user control, and beyond
Given newer platforms like TikTok, it's time to revisit…

WHAT MAKES DIGITAL VIDEO TICK?
**Recruitment**

Recruited participants ages 18-54 from a representative global online mobile panel

**Total**  
- United States: 2,561  
- United Kingdom: 2,540  
- Australia: 1,822  
- Canada: 1,860  
- Germany: 1,919  
- France: 1,953  
- Total: $n=12,655^*$

**Sample Definition**

Demographic + media consumption survey to ensure regular usage of at least 1 of 3 tested platforms

**Media Experience**

Participants randomized to a media experience based on consumption habits, then driven to a controlled version of the platform to explore the platform. Test or control ads were served within content

**Brand KPI Measurement**

Post-exposure survey to measure impact on brand KPIs

*Weighted gender 50/50 for analysis*
Who we tested and where

BRANDS

36 TOTAL

INDUSTRY VERTICALS

MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT

RETAIL

CPG

TESTED IN 6 COUNTRIES:

UK

DE

FR

CA

US

AU
Ads used were originally built for each respective platform

**The Platforms**

**TIKTOK**
Mobile TikTok app

- **TEST AD = VIDEO CARD**
  - Served within the feed
  - 100% skippable

- **TWO FORMATS:**
  - Standard TikTok (typical in-feed ad)
  - TikTok Pulse (ad delivered within trending contextual content)

- **MARKETS:** All
- **AD LENGTH:** 29s Average ad length

**ONLINE VIDEO PLATFORM**
Mobile app of popular video sharing platform

- **TEST AD = PRE-ROLL**
  - Served prior to the content
  - Ad skippable after 5 seconds

- **FORMAT:**
  - Premium, contextual version of online video platform

- **MARKETS:** US, UK, CA, DE, FR
- **AD LENGTH:** 15-30s Ad length

**VIDEO ON DEMAND (VOD)**
Mobile app of video platform with on-demand TV content

- **TEST AD = PRE-ROLL**
  - Served prior to content
  - All ads 100% forced view

- **FORMAT:**
  - Mobile version of popular streaming platform

- **MARKETS:** US, UK, AU
- **AD LENGTH:** 15-30s Ad length
The Truth About the Content Halo
We know the content halo is real

Countless research studies have shown this, with a strong focus on high-quality content.
TikTok content uplifts viewers’ mood, delivering a more enjoyable experience than similar platforms.

Mood While Viewing Content - Standard TikTok vs. Online Video Player:
Indexed

Content Opinion - Standard TikTok vs. Online Video Player: Indexed

Indexed to Online Video Player (100)

Q: What was your mood during today’s experience? | Countries Included: US, UK, CA, DE, FR

Q: Thinking specifically about this video, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Mood: Standard TikTok N = 7,342; Online Video Player N = 3,570  |  Content Opinion: Standard TikTok N = 7,342; Online Video Player N = 3,768
Viewers across the globe agree - TikTok content is high quality.

Standard TikTok Content is “High Quality”, By Country

- Strongly/Somewhat Agree
- Neutral
- Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Strongly/Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: How would you rate this video on the following?
Standard TikTok US N = 1,236; UK N = 1,220; AU N = 1,212; CA N = 1,220; DE N = 1,230; FR = 1,224
While quality content is important, popular, suitable content alignment has the strongest positive halo.

For amplification, brands should prioritize beyond high quality alone.

Top Drivers
Drivers of purchase intent on Standard TikTok: Impact modelled based on content perceptions.
Pulse enters the chat

Features

Places brands alongside trending content that is driving conversation and action

- Appears next to top 4% of all videos on TikTok, which are the hottest, most viewed videos each day
- Offers 12 categories that brands can place their ads next to the most culturally relevant content
- Ensures ads run adjacent to verified content with the highest level of brand suitability applied on the platform
Brand metrics thrive when placed next to contextual, relevant and brand-suitable content

The contextual component offered on Pulse enables brands to see a higher return on investments

### Impact of TikTok Pulse Content Attributes on Brand Metrics, Total Audience:

**Impact Modelled Based on Content Perceptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong alignment between content and ad</th>
<th>FAVORABILITY</th>
<th>SEARCH INTENT</th>
<th>PURCHASE INTENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate for brand to appear next to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something I connected with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something I would watch again</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertaining</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trendy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values were modelled using regressions to determine the impact of ad perceptions on brand metrics. All regression coefficients significant at ≥90% confidence.
And when served next to trending content, the same ad becomes even more relevant to viewers.
Contextual adjacency can wield even greater outcomes than audience targeting

Controlling for everything else, when you have contextual alignment, you would expect your brand favorability to be 11% higher

Impact of Targeting vs. Strong Contextual Alignment on TikTok Pulse:
Modelled Impact

Values were modelled using regressions to determine the impact of ad perceptions on brand metrics. All regression coefficients significant at ≥90% confidence.

▲ = Statistically significant difference between exposed/control at ≥90% confidence

Modelled impact: The estimated effect or influence of predictor variables (i.e., input variables) on responses (i.e., output variables)

- Contextual alignment between ad and content
- In-market for advertised product
Suitability is critical regardless of past brand experience

For potential new customers, contextual alignment is more important; however, entertainment matters more for existing customers.

Drivers of Brand Favorability on TikTok Pulse: Impact Modeled Based on Content Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>HAVE NOT PURCHASED BRAND</th>
<th>PURCHASED BRAND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate for brand to appear next to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong alignment between content and ad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values were modeled using regressions to determine the impact of ad perceptions on brand metrics. All regression coefficients significant at ≥90% confidence.
Total: Have not purchased brand = 1,620; Have purchased brand N = 2,056
The Truth About Forced View
Forced views don’t command engagement – in fact, they can hinder it

Platform Perceptions: % Strongly/Somewhat Agree

Having the ability to skip videos makes me more engaged in the experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am more likely to watch videos sponsored by a brand when I have the option to skip

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: Thinking more generally about videos you watch on different platforms, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

US N = 2,561; UK N = 2,540; AU N = 1,822; CA N = 1,860; FR N = 1,919; DE = 1,953
## Forced view isn’t needed to create meaningful impact

While TikTok ads aren’t forced like VOD, they still perform on par or better than forced view offerings

### Impact on Brand Metrics Among In-Market Audiences, By Vertical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vertical</th>
<th>Brand Favorability Delta (Exposed – Control)</th>
<th>Brand Knows How to Connect with Me Delta (Exposed – Control)</th>
<th>Is a Brand I Would Recommend to Others Delta (Exposed – Control)</th>
<th>Purchase Intent Delta (Exposed – Control)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard TikTok</td>
<td>+12%▲</td>
<td>+12%▲</td>
<td>+8%▲</td>
<td>+8%▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOD</td>
<td>+6%▲</td>
<td>+5%▲</td>
<td>+8%▲</td>
<td>+3%▲</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

▲ = Statistically significant difference between exposed/control at ≥90% confidence

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Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about [brand]?  
Countries Included: US, UK, AU  
Standard TikTok CPG: Control N = 313, Exposed N = 333; VOD: Control N = 324, Exposed N = 360  
Standard TikTok M&E: Control N = 288, Exposed N = 326  
▲ = Statistically significant difference between exposed/control at ≥90% confidence
When users choose to watch, fully skippable ads leave a more lasting impression at every step

Just glimpsing the brand on TikTok is enough for people to remember it

Impact On Unaided Ad Recall (Any Mention) by Ad Completion Time:
Delta (Exposed – Control)

▲ = Statistically significant difference between exposed/control at ≥90% confidence
For persuasion, fully skippable ads are most effective at higher levels

Impact on Brand Metrics By Ad Completion Time: Delta (Exposed – Control)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TikTok Pulse (100% skippable)</th>
<th>Online Video Player (skippable after 5 seconds)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-25%</td>
<td>Search Intent 20% ▲</td>
<td>Purchase Intent 10% ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-75%</td>
<td>10% ▲</td>
<td>9% ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-100%</td>
<td>11% ▲</td>
<td>18% ▲</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

▲ = Statistically significant difference between exposed/control at ≥90% confidence

Countries Included: US, UK, CA, DE, FR

TikTok Pulse: 0-25% Control N = 1,317 Exposed N = 265; 26-50% Control N = 126 Exposed N = 265; 51-75% Control N = 126 Exposed N = 265; 76-100% Control N = 200 Exposed N = 200

Online Video Player: 0-25% Control N = 1,176 Exposed N = 578; 26-50% Control N = 578 Exposed N = 620; 51-75% Control N = 274 Exposed N = 282; 76-100% Control N = 1,190 Exposed N = 1,233
Fully skippable ads are so effective, they surpass VOD with just ¼ of the viewing time

**Impact of Ads Among Those In-Market For The Advertised Product, By Platform:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Delta - (Exposed - Control)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIKTOK Pulse</td>
<td>+8%▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOD</td>
<td>+4%▲</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>TIKTOK Pulse</th>
<th>VOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intent</td>
<td>+8%▲</td>
<td>+4%▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand has something unique to offer</td>
<td>+6%▲</td>
<td>+3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand is “fun”</td>
<td>+8%▲</td>
<td>+3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ad Length**

- **TIKTOK Pulse**: 29 seconds
- **VOD**: 15-30 seconds
Brands are more likely to have higher completion rates when appearing next to enjoyable content.

A cumulative score for all content perceptions was calculated, with an average percentage of completeness determined for each score.
Also, better alignment equals more ad completion among in-market potential new customers.

Impact of Contextual Alignment Perceptions on Ad Completion, In-Market Non-Past Purchaser Audience: Correlations

A cumulative score for all content perceptions was calculated, with an average percentage of completeness determined for each score.
Busting the myths of digital video

**MYTH**

Nothing beats audience targeting when it comes to optimizing key metrics

**FACT**

Contextual alignment can be an even stronger driver of key metrics compared to audience targeting

**MYTH**

Alignment with quality content should be the goal

**FACT**

High-quality content should be a focus; however, to amplify actions such as purchase intent, brands should consider leveraging the power of the content halo effect, placing ads next to hot, relevant, brand-suitable content

**MYTH**

Forced views are needed to maximize impact on key metrics

**FACT**

Powerful impact can be achieved in less time by giving viewers autonomy over their experience, making them more likely to engage and connect with content
ADVERTISER TO-DOS

Think beyond high quality content
Brands looking to optimize ad performance should explore contextual placement next to hot, relevant and suitable content.

Consider contextual placement for acquisition
Contextual placement and brand suitability are key when running acquisition campaigns, both for existing and potential new customers.

Leverage contextual placement for longer ad view time
Brands striving for higher ad completion rates should strive for placement next to enjoyable content, as this content primes viewers to be more receptive to adjacent ads and encourage them to stick around longer to watch the ad.
Thank You Thank You Thank You