SSBM GENEVA

THE IMPACT OF VIDEO MARKETING ON THE
CONSUMER BEHAVIOR OF GENERATION Z

Bachelor Thesis

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By: Dara Aulia Munawar
                    born on August 9, 1999
                    in Jakarta, Indonesia

Student ID number: 70796

Supervisor: Dr. Olesya Meskina

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Dara Aulia Munawar

Supervised by

Dr. Olesya Meskina

APPROVED BY:

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Bachelor Thesis Chair

Objective of the Thesis

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of video marketing on the consumer behavior of Generation Z, a generation of consumers who are constantly connected to the digital world, watching more and more video content every day. The study takes a deep dive into these areas and provides brand specific insights that help influencers understand how to connect better with GenZ through engagement metrics, influencer collaborations, storytelling techniques and platform specific strategies. These insights indicate that Gen Z prefers realness, engagement, and customisation over traditional advertising techniques. Namely that short-form videos, as seen on TikTok, have much better engagement rates than traditional ads, and that the interactivity features of the app (like branded challenges, and user-generated content) lead much higher levels of participation. This is where influencers, especially micro-influencers, become important because they are relatable and capable of building trust, leading to increased engagement and conversions through their endorsements. The highlight of the study is that one must focus on the type of content based on the platforms, as visibility is good on TikTok, and engagement is highest on YouTube and Instagram offers the versatility through Reels and stories. In addition, storytelling is recognised as a key tool in establishing emotional connections with the Gen Z consumer. Campaigns where authentic stories or social causes resonate are proven to drive greater brand loyalty and advocacy. But the fast-paced nature of digital platforms can also pose difficulties; trends and algorithms can shift quickly. Brands have to stay versatile and keep adjusting their strategies to maintain relevance. This research yields theoretical and practical implications by extending traditional marketing frameworks to consider platform-specific engagement approaches, as well as highlighting value of interactivity and authenticity. The guide wraps up with actionable suggestions for brands to embrace co-creation, launch interactive campaigns, and stay on top of ever-evolving digital trends to successfully capture the attention and loyalty of Generation Z consumers.

Abstract

This thesis will show how video marketing has effects on the consumer behavior of Generation Z consumers. Generation Z consumers are the most likely segment of the population to be digitally native and have different preferences and expectations for content compared to other generations with an emphasis on visual and interactive engagement. This thesis has examined secondary data, case studies, brand engagement, and digital engagement which exist across a variety of platforms, including TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram, with regard to three specific themes of storytelling, authenticity, and influencer partnerships. Furthermore, the central research question examined how we may think about engagement and influences that contribute to the consumer journey for Gen Z consumers. Based on the analysis, the key findings illustrate how short-form, interactive, and emotionally-driven video marketing are all delivering a best-case scenario engagement to prospective consumers as compared with traditional advertising. Additionally, the research provides practical insights and considerations for brands to negotiate strategies that account for strengths assigned to each platform, whether they align with Gen Z preferences (e.g., co-creation), or offer a transparent engagement aligned with Gen Z (e.g., advocacy with purpose statements). This research is key to advancing emerging literature examining consumer behavior in digitally native attitudes and actions, and to giving sound advice to marketers as they navigate a rapidly moving media landscape.

Key words

Video marketing, consumer behaviour, augmented reality, virtual reality, gen z, value driven.

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

The layout of this thesis is created in a successive manner which helps the reader as they journey through how video marketing impacts Generation Z— each chapter is essential to answering the research question ensuring that the above and below levels build on one another in a sustainable manner.

The introduction gives an overview of the required research problem and explains its significance. The problem statement, scope of the study, as well as the main objectives and research questions, are all defined. Specific aim is to establish the rationale behind the most significant outcomes hoped for the study. This is also accompanied by an overview of the methodology and layout of the thesis to guide the reader through the material.

The theoretical foundation has primarily focused on reviews of the relevant literature which has provided an insight to key aspects e.g. video marketing, generation Z behaviour, and the consumer decision-making. This part highlights the existent studies on videos marketing channels includes TikTok, YouTube and Instagram which are the social media platforms where Gen Z spend most of their social media time. Also discussed are previous research concerning advertising effectiveness and generational preference. This chapter marks the theoretical foundation for how video marketing is affecting Generation Z through literature review of these sources.

The methodology covers the research design, outlining the methods selected for data collection and analysis. This part is essential because it details the process behind the study, lending credibility to the findings. The methods can include qualitative and/or quantitative approaches, such as surveys, case studies or interviews—be they qualitative or quantitative depending on the chosen research design. In this chapter, the methodology of the research is discussed along with information on sample selection, ethical concerns, and limitations.

The results present the research findings in a concise and orderly manner. Common data presentation methodsLeveraging tables, charts, and graphs to make results easy to interpret This section presents the specific data points most closely

aligned with the research objectives — how video marketing affects purchasing decisions, brand perception and other forms of Generation Z consumer engagement.

The discussion provides a thorough analysis and interpretation of the findings (for example, connecting the results to the literature review and the research objectives). This section discusses the value of these findings and what it means for theory and practice. It also reflects on any incidental outcomes and interprets potential reasoning, adding further evenhandedness to the overall research findings.

The conclusion highlights practical implications of video marketing strategies designed for Generation Z and opportunities for further research.

2 Theoretical Foundation

2.1 Video Marketing: Definition and Trends

Video marketing is the form of promoting, informing and advertising a product, service or a brand through video content. Rather than relying on text or images like traditional marketing methods, video marketing capitalizes on engaging visuals, sound, and storytelling to draw in and retain audiences. The effectiveness of video marketing comes from the human tendency to process and remember messages better when they are delivered in a more thrilling, emotional and uncomplicated way, especially when your target audience devours a significant portion of online content everyday. Thus, making videos is one of the most powerful marketing tools these days.

Video marketing went from a side tactic to a mainstay in marketing strategies over the last decade. The proliferation of high-speed internet, the growth of social media and advances in video production technology has made producing and distributing videos easier than ever for brands. Videos have a wide variety of use cases companies these days to not just promote, but also educate, entertain and create long-term relationships with their customers.

Evolution and Expansion of Video Marketing

They began with social media platforms and online video capabilities, leading to the development of several explainer video types and the landscape started to shift with the advent of platforms in 2005 such as YouTube. Small and medium-sized businesses were now able to compete with inexpensive video content on the web. This change heralded the era of democratized video marketing with any brand being able to reach a large audience without having to spend a fortune on production costs.
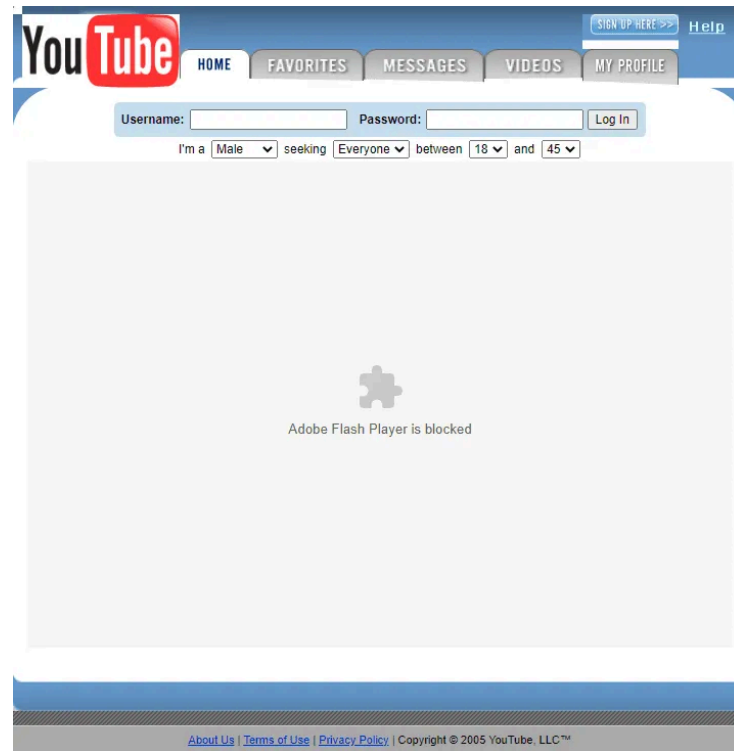
Image 1: Early YouTube Interface 2005

Source: (Stumbles, 2018)

The early 2010s saw the emergence of social media like Facebook, Instagram, and later TikTok, which only bolstered the growth of video marketing. That was soon followed by the introduction of features such as autoplay videos, live-streaming, and short video formats, enabling marketer to engage with their audiences in real time or through bite-sized, entertaining snippets. Video marketing has become a field in constant evolution, with trends such as personalized content, interactivity, and the incorporation of emerging technologies, such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) shaping it today.

Popular Forms of Video Marketing and Their Importance

Video marketing comprises exceptional formats with unique end objectives. These format types include:

- Product Demonstrations and Tutorials: These videos provide an in-depth look around how a product works or how to navigate its various features. They allow consumers to gain a better understanding about the product's benefits and

usability, often leading to higher conversion rates. Brands such as Dyson and Sephora often use tutorial videos to promote how their products work.

- Explainer: Explainers are short, animated or live-action videos that break down complex concepts or demonstrate new products or services. They are often used in industries like technology, finance, and healthcare to simplify complex technical content.

- User-Generated Content (UGC): UGC refers to videos made by customers, influencers, or brand ambassadors that depict what it's like to use a product. This form fosters trust and credibility since users are generally more likely to trust fellow users like themselves rather than conventional advertisements.

- Live Streaming: Brands utilize live streaming to conduct events, product launches, or Q&A, establishing a real-time connection with their audience. Platforms such as Facebook Live, YouTube Live and Twitch enable businesses to communicate directly with audiences, thus generating a sense of immediacy and genuineness.

- Short-Form Content: Short-form videos (generally 15–60 seconds long) are particularly popular among Generation Z, and platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts have made this format a must-have for quickly capturing attention, often by means of humor, viral trends or catchy music.

Video Marketing Trends Today

Here are some of the trends that have emerged recently in video marketing as brands take new approaches to effectively engage their audiences.

- Personalization: Personalization means creating videos based on user preferences, browsing history, or demographic data. Personalized videos (e.g. email video messages where you mentioned the recipient by name) have been shown to have higher engagement and conversion rates.

- Interactive Video Experiences: Interactive videos let viewers engage with the content by selecting their desired outcomes, clicking on embedded links, or participating in quizzes. An example of interactivity is e-commerce companies, which use interactive videos to market items by letting viewers click on different products to find more information or direct purchasing options.

- Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) Integration: AR and VR technologies allow for immersive experiences, which can include virtual product tours or try-on features for clothing and accessories. These technologies not only improve the consumer experience but also offer brands innovative ways in which they can convey their products.
- Behind-the-Scenes Content: A number of brands are leveraging behind-the-scenes content to add a human face to their operations. And product manufacturing, employees and business activities of the day to help customers build trust and deeper connection.
- User-Generated Content Campaigns: Brands are focusing on also motivating users to some content creation and share their experience on the web. This approach helps boost interaction and also extends the brand reach naturally. Hashtags, contests, or challenges are commonly used for successful campaigns to drive engagement.

The importance of Social Media in Video Marketing

Social media platforms act as the linchpin of the video marketing explosion. Social media platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram and Facebook are the most prominent channels where users spend a great portion of their daily time consuming video entertainment. Each platform has its own set of distinct advantages, from TikTok's propensity for quick virality to YouTube's search engine optimization potential for long-form content.

Brands need to customize their content to the strengths of each platform. For instance, short, fun clips are perfect for TikTok, whereas product reviews, tutorials, and long-form storytelling are more appropriate for YouTube. If you want to reach and engage with your users, then knowing how platform-specific algorithms and user behaviors work are essential.

Challenges in Video Marketing

While video marketing is effective, it does come with its set of challenges that brands need to tackle to stay competitive:

- Content Overload: The digital space is flooded with video content that makes it hard for brands to stand out. Now, more than ever, it is vital that we create unique, on-brand, high-quality content that grabs attention.

- Production Constraints: Creating quality video can be time-consuming and requires an investment in equipment, talent, and editing—something smaller businesses may struggle to justify.

- Measuring Success: Tracking the success of video campaigns requires analyzing multiple key performance indicators (KPIs) including views, engagement rates, conversions, and ROI. However, it can be hard to tell how effective you are without the right tracking mechanisms in place.

2.2 Generation Z: Characteristics and Behaviour

Generation Z, generally considered to be those born in the late 1990s and the early 2000s, is the first generation to be raised on digital technology, social media and instant access to information (Eldridge, 2025). Digital natives, members of this generation display distinct characteristics and consumption behaviors that differ from those of previous generations, such as Millennials and Generation X; understanding these traits is critical for brands looking to connect with and influence this demographic effectively.

One of Generation Z's most uniquely defining traits is their high-touch lifestyle with tech. Unlike older generations who lived through the emergence of the internet, Gen Z doesn't know of a world without smartphones, high-speed internet or social media. As a result, they are very comfortable with digital tools and platforms, moving easily between different media and online spaces. Gen Z members spend so much of their daily lives on their mobile devices, using social media, streaming platforms, and reading content online, according to research. This technological fluency has also changed the way they consume media and interact with brands. For example, television and radio won't have much of an effect on this demographic. Instead, they prefer on-demand content on platforms such as YouTube, TikTok and Instagram. As such, video content strikes a special chord with them, as it is interactive and colorful. To capture and retain consumers' attention, video marketing campaigns need to find dynamic ways to engage in humor, storytelling, and interactive visuals.

Moreover, this group is very comfortable with multitasking. Gen Z frequently watches videos while scrolling or engaging in an online conversation with friends, suggesting they can absorb information from several different sources at once. This behavior of multitasking opens a room for brands to target consumers well with cross-platform marketing strategies.

Social Media as a Core Influencer

Generation Z's behaviors and decisions are driven by social media at the heart of it. Beyond entertainment, platforms like TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram can act as information hubs, trend disruptors and brand discovery outlets. Gen Z consumers are more inclined to take recommendations from peers, user-generated content, and social media influencers over traditional advertising. Research suggest they are first to turn to social media for product reviews, fashion or news updates.

Social media's impact goes beyond product discovery. It also impacts how Gen Z forms opinions, makes purchases and engages with brands. Factors such as user reviews, influencer endorsements, and viral challenges encourage them to buy. Trending from TikTok, for instance, has breathed life into a number of viral product success stories, evoking sell-out phenomena for beauty products and fashion items in particular, immediately after their appearance in an eye-catching video. Working with influencers and promoting user-generated content is even more successful with this demographic. A good case in point is the booming skin-care brands, such as The Ordinary, whose viral reviews on TikTok drove huge demand.

The use of social media as a shopping device is increasing, and 52% of Gen Zs are buying from influencers they follow online, compared to 43% who follow and buy from retailers (Howarth, 2022). Outstandingly, Gen Z is the only generation in which influencers have more weight in social media purchases than retailers.

Figure 1: Searches of "influencer marketing" in the last 5 years

Source: (Howarth, 2022)

Gen Z's approach to social causes is also influenced by social media. According to a gen Z activism survey, 32% of Gen Zs partake in activism or social justice work, a figure rising to 40% among college students. Two-thirds say most of their activism takes place online. Many young consumers take to platforms to express their support on issues ranging from climate change, to social justice, to mental health awareness. Consequently, brands that associate themselves with these causes are likely to cultivate loyalty with Gen Z.
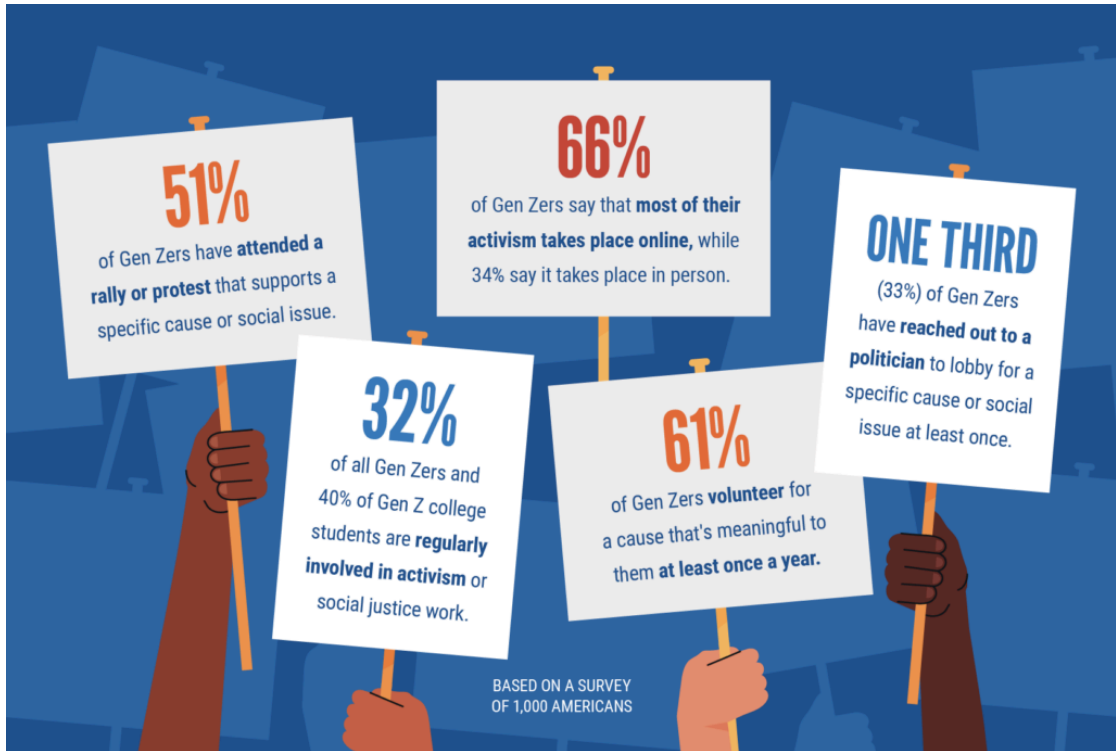
Image 2: Gen Z's Approach to Activism

Source: (United Way NCA, 2024)

Generation Z tends to be value driven, and authenticity is one of their key values. The generation prefers brands that have a genuine, transparent and socially responsible outlook. Unlike past generations, Gen Z is very good at seeing through the clutter of marketing messages, and recognizing when a business is not being genuine or over-promising. Brands that do not deliver on their promises or operate in unethical and damaging ways risk being "canceled" by this audience, which can lead to reputational damage.

To connect with Gen Z, brands need to be transparent and genuinely support social causes, from sustainability to diversity to mental health awareness. Brands like Patagonia and Ben & Jerry's have successfully captured Gen Z hearts and minds through efforts that align with their corporate values. Patagonia's campaigns that promote environmental activism have helped cement the brand as a leader of corporate responsibility.

Image 3: The original Patagonia "Don't Buy This Jacket" campaign poster

Source: (Ptengine, 2024)

On Black Friday, one of the busiest shopping days of the year, Patagonia launched their "Don't Buy This Jacket" campaign with a full-page ad in The New York Times. The ad featured a picture of a Patagonia jacket with "Don't Buy This Jacket" and a full-page disclaimer concerning the negative environmental costs of producing clothing. Patagonia's message was that they wanted customers to stop and think about consumption and the potential consequences a consumer society has on the environment.

Short Attention Span and Multi-tasking

Another characteristic that stands out when we talk about Generation Z is that these individuals are known for their short attention span because they have always been part of a fast-paced digital environment and have also been affected in their focus. Research claims a Gen Z's average attention span is around eight seconds, so brands need to get to the point quickly. Succinct, visual, and interactive content is more likely to spark interest (Liu et al., 2023).

Even with their short attention spans, Gen Z members are adept multitaskers. They can multitask between several streams of information at the same time, scrolling

through social media while watching a video, texting friends during an online class. This multitasking capability can be an asset for marketers, but it also poses challenges. So, while Gen Z creates greater channel opportunity for brands, it also marks an explosion of competition as brands vie for attention in a noisy digital environment. Successful marketing towards Gen Z often includes rapid visuals, kinetic soundtracks and hook-loaded clips that immediately grab viewer attention within a few seconds of a video. This shows how important is to attract attention as quickly as possible, which explains the success of short form content on TikTok and Instagram Reels.

Financial Awareness and Purposeful Spending

While often painted as trends-driven spenders, members of Generation Z have proven true financial awareness. It's also because many members of this generation grew up during the economic uncertainty of the 2008 financial crisis — or saw it affect their families. Consequently, they are often low-cost-conscious and value-oriented.

Top concerns

	Cost of living	Mental health of my generation	Unemployment	Crime/personal safety	Protecting the environment	Political instability
Gen Zs	**39%**	**21%**	**18%**	**18%**	**17%**	**16%**

Figure 2: Gen Z's Top Concern

Source: (Deloitte, 2025)

Gen Z consumers place the utmost importance on quality and durability when considering a purchase, often doing extensive research and price comparisons before committing to buy. They are further attracted to brands that provide them with personalized discounts, loyalty programs, and exclusive offers. Moreover, for them value is more than just a matter of price—also social, ethical, and environmental aspects come into the equation when they decide to buy a product. Such a person is unlike others, in the sense that they will also be more open to ways of life that involve sustainable practices and ethical approaches, even if they end up costing more.

Online communities and review sites such as Reddit are important in shaping those decisions, as Gen Z often looks to peers for advice before making a

purchase. Brands that are able to communicate their commitment to quality, fair pricing, and ethical practices tend to create stronger loyalty with this group.

Social Responsibility and Ethical Consumerism

The consumers in Generation Z are socially-active and socially-conscious. They want brands to take positions on social, environmental, and political issues, and they reward those that align with their values. This focus on social responsibility has led to the emergence of ethical consumerism, in which an individual's purchasing decisions are inspired by the views a company holds on the most important issues. Brands that exhibit authentic dedication to sustainability, inclusivity, and community involvement are better positioned to capture the loyalty of Gen Z consumers. An example of this are companies such as Everlane and TOMS, which are considered eco-friendly brands and thrive by highlighting supply chain transparency and donating a portion of their profits to societal causes. Conversely, companies that ignore environmental or social issues risk boycotts and backlash from this cohort.

For Gen Z, brands that are genuinely involved in addressing real-world challenges are also high on his value list. Nike's work for racial equality and Dove's campaigns around body positivity, for example, have hit home with this generation. This means that authentic brands will be better able to build loyal, lasting relationships with customers. You are not allowed to brush off daft statements like that.

2.3 Consumer Behaviour Models

Consumer behavior models are models of human behavior used for creating meaningful purchasing decisions and inspiring your choice. These frameworks aid marketers in understanding how decisions are made by consumers and identifying ways to successfully segment consumers. Generation Z behaviour is heavily influenced by digital technology and social media, and as such its buying power should be examined in the context of applicable consumer behaviour models.
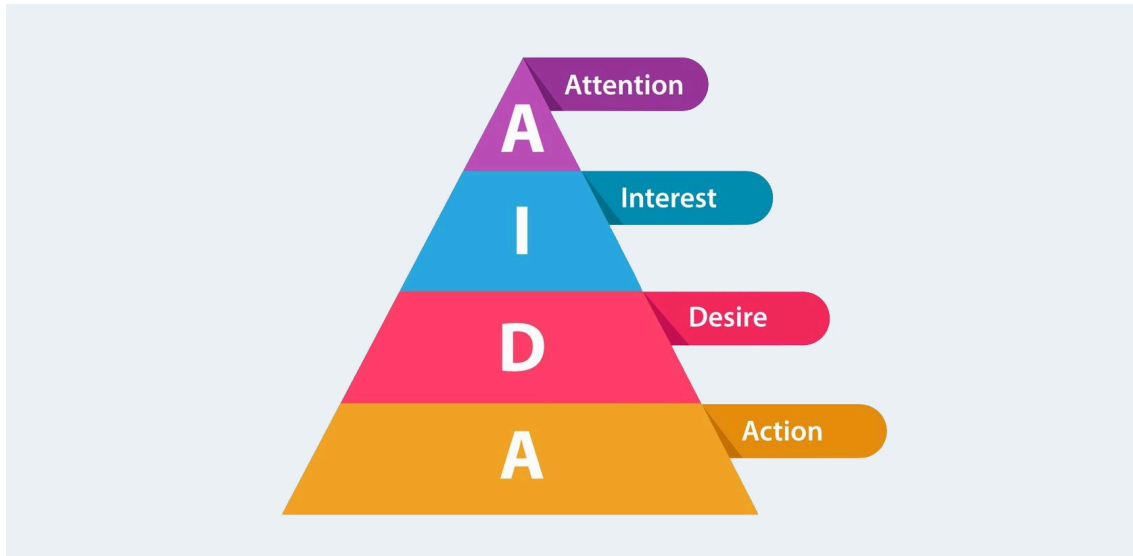
Image 4: The AIDA Model

Source: (8x8, n.d.)

One of the most well-known models of consumer behavior is the AIDA model, which outlines the stages a consumer makes before making a purchase. The model divides the process into four major stages:

1. Attention: The consumer notices a product or service through advertising, social media or other kinds of promotion.
2. Interest: The consumer becomes interested in learning more about the product, usually by researching its specifications, features, benefits, or reviews online.
3. Desire: The consumer starts to become intrigued or develop a preference for the product, from emotional or rational points of view.
4. Action: The consumer decides if they want to buy the product.

When it comes to Generation Z, the AIDA model acknowledges that we need to attract their attention fast since their attention span is very small. This group is especially responsive to video marketing, influencer partnerships, and social media challenges. After capturing attention, delivering engaging and interactive content — tutorials, customer reviews — immerses them in the experience and leads to desire. Lastly, providing rewards such as discounts or time-sensitive offers could compel them to act.

The Consumer Decision-Making Process Model

The consumer decision-making process model provides a holistic view of the steps consumers take before, during, and after making a purchase. There are four basic steps of the model:
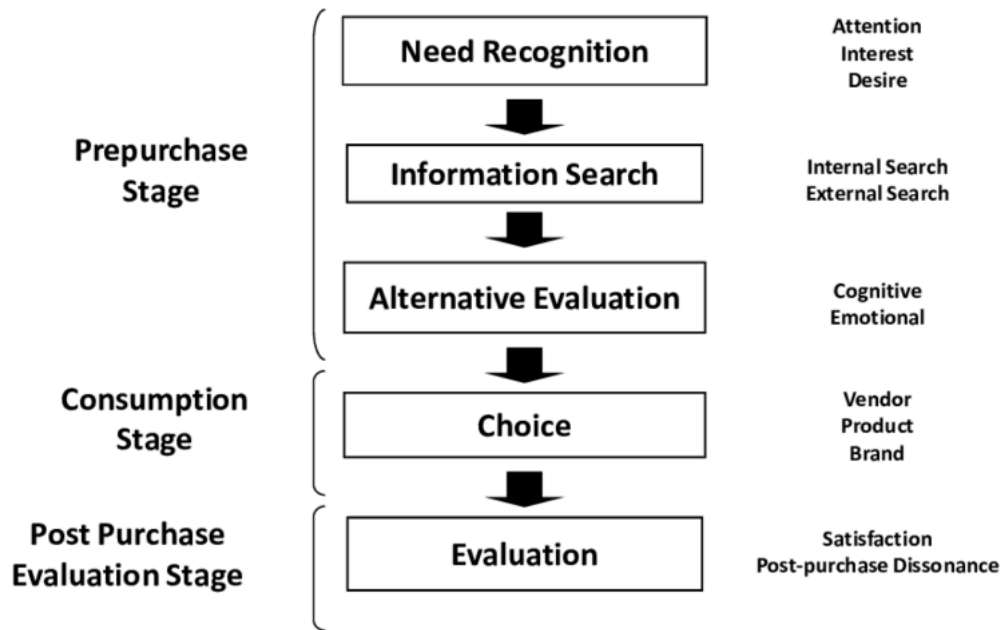

Figure 3: Stages of consumer decision-making

Source: (Holdford, 2015)

1. Problem Recognition: The consumer feels a want or a need that he/she cannot satisfy. For example, a Gen Z consumer might be inspired to buy a new outfit before an upcoming event.

2. Information Search: The consumer actively searches for information about potential solutions, often via online searches, social media channels, or peer recommendations. For Gen Z, this stage includes platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram.

3. Evaluation of Alternatives: Consumer assesses different products/brands based on price, quality, reviews, and brand reputation. Purchase Decision — Decision by the consumer to choose the product to buy. At this stage, buyers are usually persuaded by different types of promos, social proof, or easy access.

4. Post-Purchase Behavior: After buying the product, the consumer assesses their satisfaction and shares their experience on online reviews or social media posts; potentially influencing the buying behavior of others.

This approach is especially relevant for seeing how Gen Z will depend on digital channels in each phase of their decision-making journey. In this case, brands should make sure that they have educational websites, social media pages, and good reviews to optimize their presence online and facilitate this process for customers.
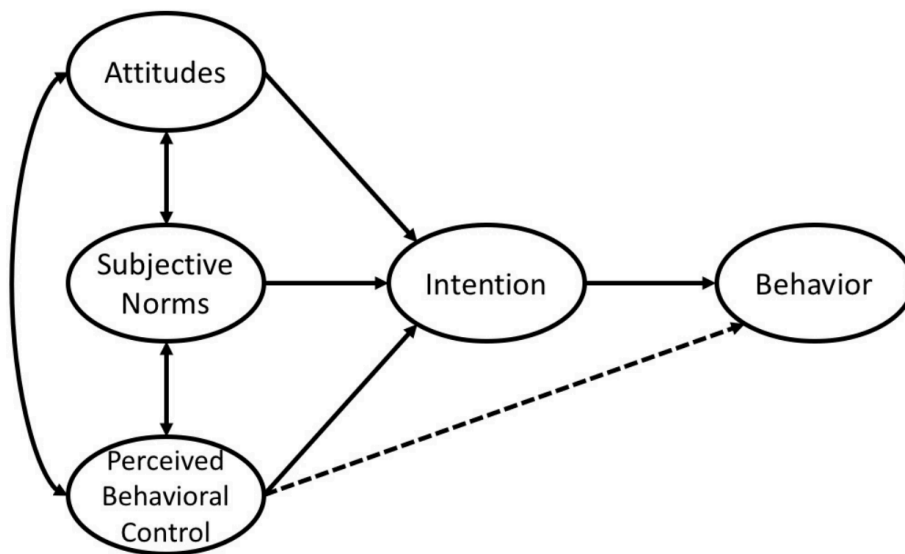
Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Figure 4: The Theory of Planned Behavior model adapted from Ajzen 2005

Source: (Sansom, 2021)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model describes how a consumer's intentions affect their behavior with respect to the following three factors:

1. Attitudes: The consumer's evaluation of the behavior as positive or negative (that is, buying a certain product).
2. Subjective Norms: The imagined social pressure exerted by others, e.g. by peers, family or influencers, to perform or refrain a particular behavior.
3. Perceived Behavioral Control: The consumer's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior — affordability, accessibility, etc.

Subjective norms are important for Generation Z too, because they are influenced by their peers and social media influencers. For instance, if a trendy influencer posts about a product, Gen Z consumer group are more likely to get a positive attitude and a sense of urgency to buy it. They also can improve because the perceived behavioral control can be perceived through the convenience of shopping online and an even easier payment method.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research design

The proposed structure for the research to be conducted to investigate the relationships between video marketing and Generation Z consumer behaviour is Secondary research is part of data collection in this study, including existing data analysis, reports, academic articles, industry case studies, etc. Specifically, this approach enables researchers to obtain relevant, reliable information without the need for direct interaction with participants, which is time-saving and feasible. As a result, this methodology will allow the research to delve into a wide variety of insights whilst limiting some of the restrictions common to primary data collection. Secondary Data Analysis: Making Use of Existing Data The analysis will be based on secondary sources of information, like studies, industry reports, and publicly accessible social media and marketing analytics data. This means is using already published by reliable sources such as market research agency, industry experts or academic literature.

Using multiple sources helps in a broad understanding of the topic and reinforces the authenticity of the research findings. Key sources will of course include :Academic Literature: Journals and articles that address consumer behavior, video marketing strategies, and digital engagement. These are theoretical foundations and insights of the factors influencing consumer choices. Industry Reports: Documents from marketing agencies, consulting firms and others that highlight Generation Z's online behavior, content preferences and video consumption habits. Such reports will spotlight trends and best practices. You can see that case studies are examples of successful video marketing campaigns targeting Generation Z that provide insights on strategies that worked to engage users and generate sales toward Gen Z. These case studies will help

reinforce how video marketing affects buying behavior among real consumers. By triangulating data from these sources, the research will have both qualitative and quantitative insights, resulting in a comprehensive understanding of the effects of video marketing on Generation Z.

Content Analysis: Understanding Trends and Patterns

This research will utilize content analysis to identify trends and patterns in video marketing strategies targeting Generation Z. The analysis will involve the examination of marketing videos, advertisements, and user-generated content to identify prevalent themes, strategies, and techniques that appeal to and influence consumers. For example, the thesis will include an analysis of how storytelling, influencers, emotional appeal, and interactivity contribute to engagement and purchases. It will analyze videos from sites like TikTok, YouTube and Instagram to look at structural and content elements including captioning and keywords. The aim is to explore elements such as video length, how it is presented, music used, and the overall tone, to identify what works best with Generation Z shorter engaging clips, using humour and authenticity are associated with higher interaction rates (comments, shares and likes). Another key aspect of content analysis is assessing the influence of its types on the audience. Macro influencers (those with larger followings) tend to generate the most reach, while micro influencers (with fewer but more dedicated audiences) yield much higher degrees of trust and engagement. Overall, by identifying these types of influencers and analysis of their respective impact, the research can provide guidance about which type of collaboration is likely the most beneficial for brands to target Generation Z.

Furthermore, the analysis will examine how storytelling drives emotional response. For example, emotional content like videos that tell personal stories or emphasize brand values like sustainability can forge deeper connections and form lasting impressions with viewers. The research will explore how the storytelling techniques shape viewers' willingness to interact with or purchase from a brand. Interactive elements of video marketing will also be studied. These are videos that try to engage the audience with polls, clickable links, or requests to take action. Interactive content is critical for Gen Z, with whom experiences in which they feel directly involved are preferable over passive viewers. Interactive challenges and

gamified elements in video campaigns are highly effective in engaging this tech-savvy generation.

Finally, content analysis can show which product categories work best with video marketing campaigns. For instance, fashion, beauty, and tech products often perform exceptionally well on Instagram and TikTok thanks to the inherent visual aspect of these items and how effectively they can be marketed. The research will group successful campaigns by product type, allowing brands to benchmark their video marketing strategies against successful efforts.

3.2 Data collection methods

This section describes the steps taken to collect data on the influence of video marketing on the consumer behavior of Generation Z. In addition to that, it solidifies the validity of the result as secondary research and content analysis methods does not need direct interaction with the participants.

Secondary Data Collection

Academic journals, industry reports, and social media analytics will be utilized for secondary data collection. These sources reinforce an established understanding of Generation Z's media consumption and buying patterns, which helps the study gain insights without conducting primary research. Important sources of content include:

- Academic Literature: Articles on the consumer behavior strategies as far as video marketing goes.
- Market Reports: Whitepapers from companies such as Statista and Nielsen.
- Case Studies: Great video marketing campaigns.
- Social Media Data: TikTok, YouTube and Instagram engagement metrics.

Content Analysis in Video Marketing

It will include studies that systematically review video content across major platforms to identify patterns and elements that drive consumer engagement. Key Steps:

- Choose videos with high engagement metrics that are relevant to Generation Z

- Categorize them in terms of length, storytelling, influencers, or other interactive elements.
- Engagement Metrics: We will analyze metrics like views, likes, and shares.
- Themes Analysis: Recurring themes (e.g., authenticity, emotional appeal) will be identified. Cross-Platform Comparison: Comparison on performance of similar videos on TikTok, YouTube and Instagram

Qualitative Review of case studies

Qualitative analysis of selected case studies will give context on how brands successfully create video campaigns. Info about what each campaign will include:

- Campaign Goals: Objectives for the brand.
- Types Of Strategies Used: Storytelling, influencer marketing, or interactive content.
- Results: Influence on brand sentiment and sales volume.

By combining these approaches, the study will provide comprehensive insights into video marketing strategies that appeal to Generation Z consumers.

4 Data analysis techniques

This section describes the techniques used to analyze the data collected through secondary research and content analysis. The idea is to extract key themes and finds to discover how video marketing drives consumer behavior within a Gen Z audience — or how it does not.

Qualitative data retrieved through academic literature, case studies, and marketing reports will be analyzed applying the thematic analysis. I did this by identifying trends like authenticity, influencer marketing, storytelling, and interactive content. Therefore, by categorizing and analyzing a thematic overview of these themes, the study would also emphasize what feelings of video marketing touch Generation Z to take action — for example, how relatable storytelling and emotional appeals cultivate brand loyalty and engagement.

Statistics: Descriptive Analysis

Industry reports and social media analytics quantitative data for descriptive analysis. We will analyze metrics like engagement rates, likes, shares, and click through rates on platforms such as TikTok and YouTube to offer measurable insights into the efficacy of video marketing. Descriptive stats will summarize key findings like, which video formats or types of content increase interaction/purchase decisions most effectively. Video Content Analysis Based on Which Platform Performs Best

Comparing Which Video Marketing Performs Best on Which Platform

We will analyze which marketing of video content performs the best on which platforms. This will mean contrasting short-form videos on TikTok and Instagram with longer material on YouTube. The objective is to find out platform-specific trends and preferences so that marketers can tune their content in coherence with user behavior of each platform. The integration of these approaches will allow for the holistic examination of novel characteristics that drive Generation Z's evaluations of video advertising. This way, brands will be able to create and execute better fitting video campaigns that cater to the special characteristics of this generation.

The core findings of the research, centering on how various video marketing approaches influence Generation Z's buying preferences. This analysis is informed by information gathered from reports, engagements, platforms, and case studies, but up to October 2023.

Engagement metrics and behavioral responses

This research reveals significant findings about Generation Z's interaction with video marketing; engagement metrics have played a large role in shaping their responses. With platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram dominating digital consumption on a daily basis, a grasp of these metrics is critical for any brand looking to win and hold attention. Gen Z spending an average of 3 hour/day on video content (Dixon, 2024). (Hootsuite Inc, 2025) TikTok 9% average engagement rate vs Instagram 4.7% YouTube 2.8%. Its algorithm-driven, content personalized delivery system has made it a prime source for short cola bottles that give great engagement.

Short-form videos — usually 15 seconds to 60 seconds long — tend to work particularly well given Generation Z's shorter attention spans. These include interactive

videos that add in challenges, polls or other types of user interaction. In fact, a 2023 campaign from a global clothing brand increased its sales by 15% attributed to a TikTok challenge in which users made videos showing off the brand's clothing (Dong et al., 2023). This poses a major challenge, triggering the viral loop where the UGC feeds into the campaign increasing the visibility to it causing greater interaction rates at zero marketing cost.

It also finds gamified marketing campaigns emerging as successful engagement instruments. These campaigns incentivize users to accomplish several activities, such as sharing content or joining challenges, in return for benefits like discounts or early product access. Case studies have proven such campaigns regularly deliver engagement rates upwards of 12%, which significantly outperforms traditional Video Ads. A 2023 campaign by a beverage brand is one example, where participants received discounts on exclusive products in exchange for creating and sharing creative videos. Within 48 hours of launching the campaign, Schmidt saw an 18% increase in brand mentions on social media, showing us how gamification generates timely.

5 Results

Authenticity and Influencers

Influencer marketing is a new critical way of reaching and engaging Generation Z due to its potential for authentic relatable content. Unlike traditional advertising that can feel polished and promotional, influencer marketing harnesses the trust and authority that influencers have developed with their audiences. In fact, 68% of consumers from the Gen Z group said they are most likely to trust product recommendations from influencers than traditional advertisements, according to 2023 research by Nielsen. This shows how influencers are major intermediaries between the brands they promote and the target market they reach.

Micro-influencers, who have between 10,000 and 100,000 followers, have worked particularly well for this demographic. These small influencers – micro-influencers – have niche followings and are, therefore, able to communicate with a more targeted audience. Micro-influencers, for example, have an average engagement rate of 7.5%, while macro-influencers have an average engagement rate of 3% according to

Influencer Marketing Hub in 2024. This kind of engagement is due to the personalized interactions and niche content that micro-influencers provide, making them much relatable and trustable in the view of their followers. A primary case in point is a skincare campaign that paired with micro-influencers to market an elite line of products in 2023. Instead of makeshift commercials, the influencers divulged personal experiences and reviews that traded on the pros as well as the cons of the products. This approach translated to 30% higher conversion rates than traditional celebrity endorsed campaigns. The strategy also built brand loyalty over the long term, given Gen Z's preference for transparency and authenticity when crafting product feedback.

Influencer marketing authenticity also consists of user-generated content (UGC). Social media campaigns that prompt users to share their experience build up an sense of community and collective trust. A fashion brand, for instance, running a UGC campaign to share outfit styling ideas received a 25% increase in brand mentions and a 20% increase in sales in the first month of running the campaign. It reveals how, when used alongside influencer-led initiatives, authenticity can translate into strong engagement and revenue. This, in turn, creates a strong connection with Generation Z in terms of aligning with their values. Research shows that brands that work with influencers who are transparent and vocal about important social issues have higher brand loyalty and advocacy among their target audiences. For example, a 2023 campaign with eco-conscious influencers caused positive brand sentiment to rise 40% and social media shares to rise 50% (Valeriu Crudu, 2025). When brands and their respective target audience share a same set of values, they connect deeper than just promoting a product.

The influence of influencers in video marketing is more than just shilling products. They build trust, amplify true voices, and establish meaningful interactions that resonate among Generation Z; and by emphasizing authenticity through genuine partnerships, user-generated content, and purposeful messaging, brands can make the most impact with sustainable engagement.

Performance in Individual Platforms

It's important to understand how video marketing adapts in various platforms so that campaigns aimed at Generation Z can get the most attention possible. Each

platform has its strengths and advantages that will vary, and therefore should be catered to in order to get maximum form a campaign.

TikTok: Popularized for its continuous short dynamic content, TikTok is another powerful platform to get visibility for your brand. Its algorithm-driven feed enables content to spread wide, quickly, even if a creator has a small following. In fact, 70% of viral brand campaigns in 2023 started on TikTok, as per Hootsuite (2025), topped the fashion, beauty, and tech industries. For the best performance, short-form videos should be between 15–30 seconds long, often integrating trends, challenges, and user-generated content. A campaign by a popular sportswear brand that utilized a viral challenge on TikTok led to a 35% increase in product inquiries in just a week, demonstrating how the platform can be leveraged to create immediate engagement.
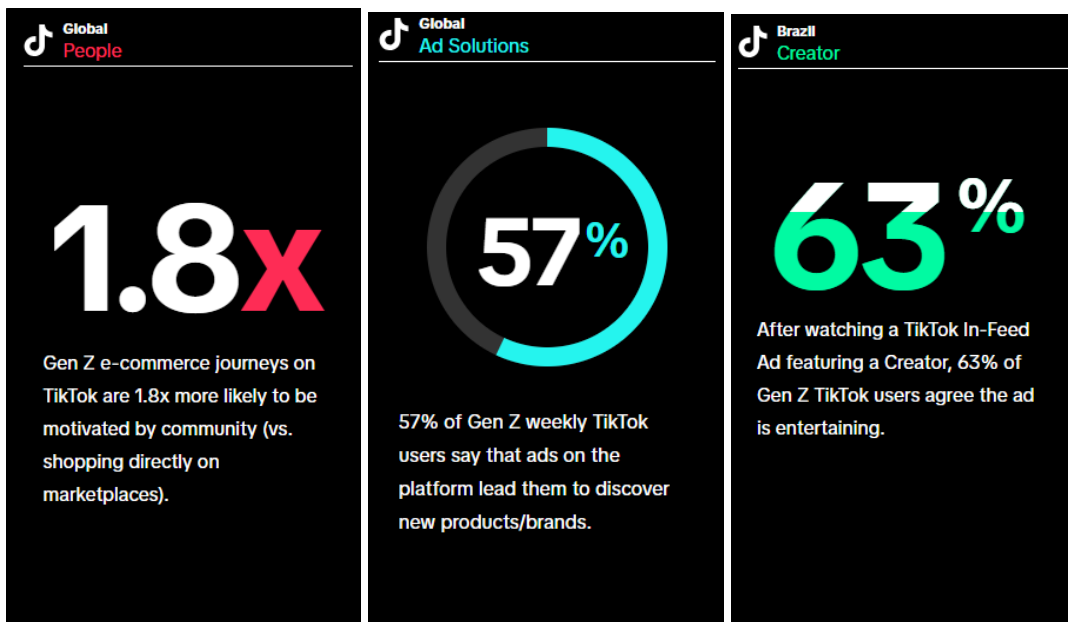

Image 5: TikTok Statistics

Source: (Tiktok.com, 2024)

YouTube: The king of long-form content, YouTube is great for product reviews, tutorials, and behind-the-scenes content. Users on this platform are more prone to plug time into detailed and informative videos. Case studies show that long-form videos — especially those longer than five minutes — have higher conversion rates than shorter ads. In 2024, the advertising revenue generated by YouTube accounted for approximately 13.66 percent of Google's total revenue. In that year, the annual

advertising revenues from the video platform were 36.1 billion U.S. dollars, an increase from the previous fiscal year 31.5 billion U.S. dollars.
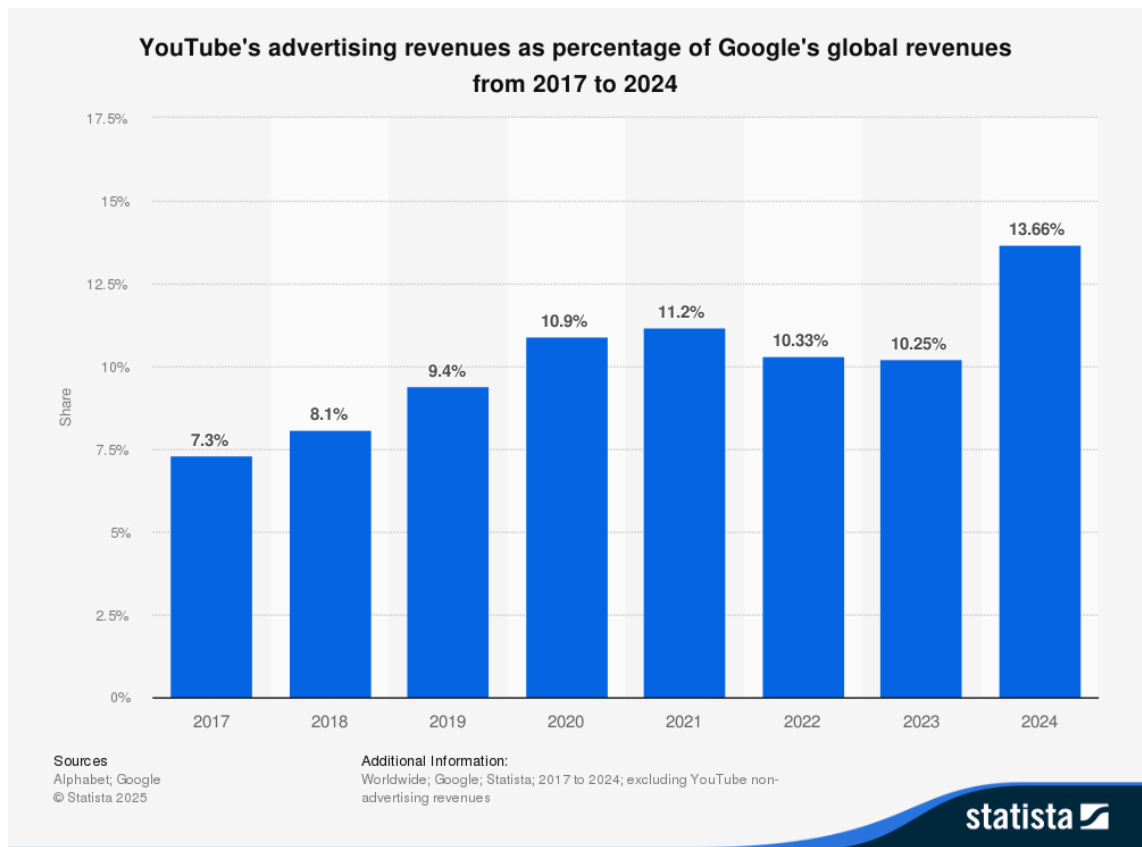

Figure 5: YouTube' share of Google revenues 2017-2024

Source: (Ceci, 2024)

Instagram: A compromise between short- and long-form content, Instagram's reels, stories and static posts are each flexible. Reels has come in hot as a competitor to TikTok's genre-busting short-form content, and interactivity in form of stories offers additional engagement feature. As seen in the data below, video content published as Reels had the highest engagement rate of 2.08% followed by Carousel Posts (1.70%) then Photo Posts (1.17%). Based on the higher engagement rate, Reels suggests that video marketing can help brands capture the attention of consumers at a higher rate and encourage a deeper level of engagement. Video marketing continues to be an important tool for influencing consumer perceptions and purchase intent in social spaces.

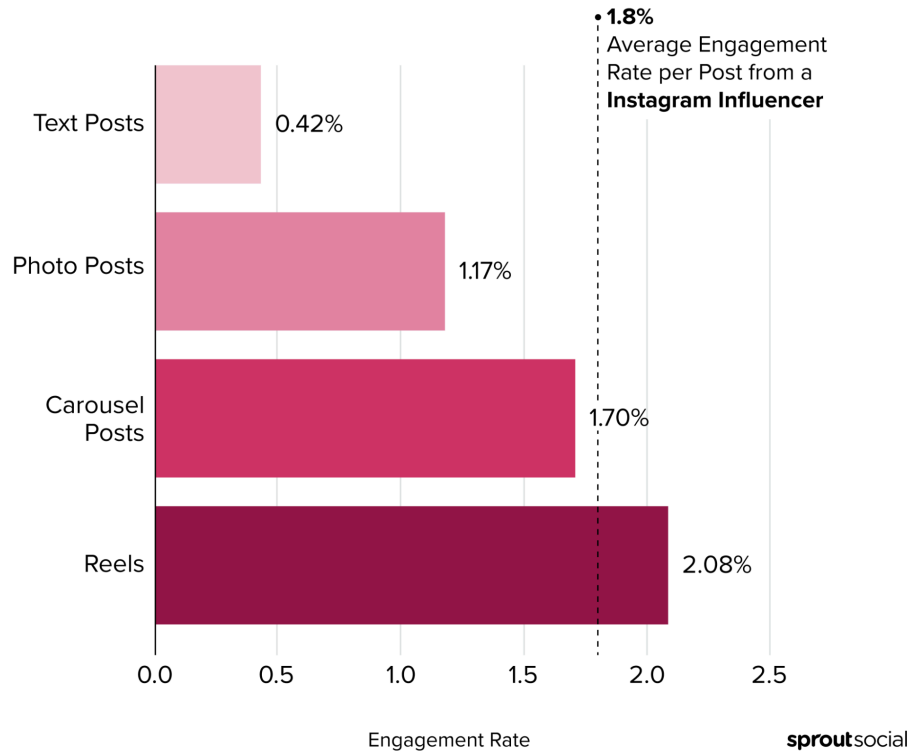## Instagram Influencer Engagement Rates by Post Type (2024)

● 1.8%
Average Engagement Rate per Post from a **Instagram Influencer**

Post Type	Engagement Rate
Text Posts	0.42%
Photo Posts	1.17%
Carousel Posts	1.70%
Reels	2.08%

Engagement Rate

sproutsocial

Figure 6: Instagram Statistics

Source: (Zote, 2025)

Cross-Platform Comparison: The insightful conclusion from the comparative study is the need for creating the highest quality video content according to the specifications of respective platforms. TikTok works well for brand awareness and trends going viral, YouTube for converting leads with long-form content, and Instagram for keeping users engaged through a variety of short- and interactive-format posts. If brands can adjust the way they allocate content based on how people interact on these different platforms, they can deliver higher engagement, retention, and conversion rates.
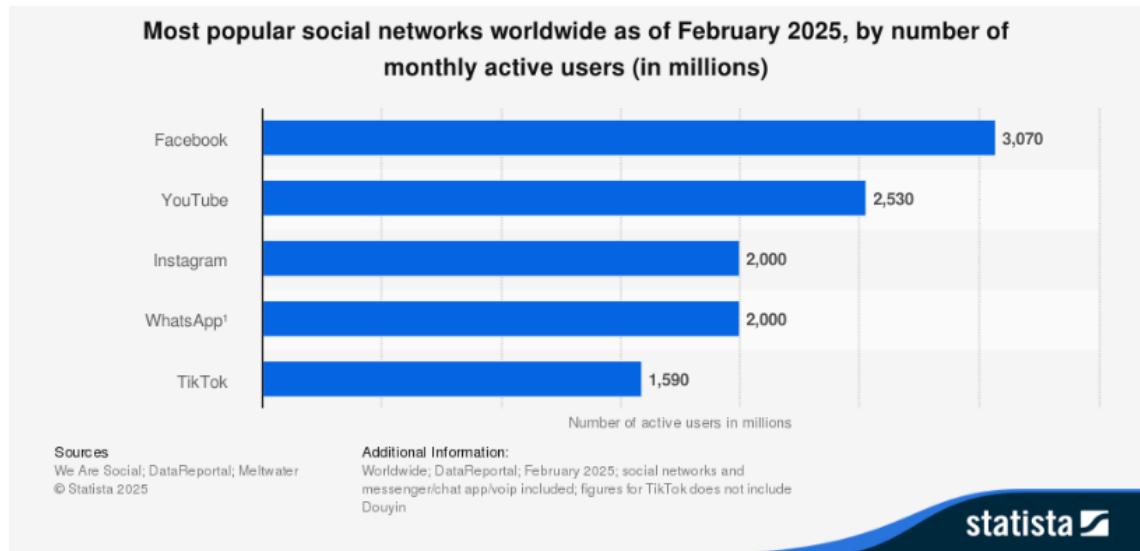
Figure 7: Most popular social networks worldwide as of February 2025, by number of monthly active users (in millions)

Source: (Dixon, 2025)

Storytelling and emotional engagement

Storytelling is a marketing tool for any generation, but when it comes to Generation Z, narrative driven video content that will draw forth feelings that they can relate to is key to catching the eyes of this demographic. Furthermore, campaigns including storytelling have 70% higher engagement rates than classical product-oriented campaigns (SanjaiKumar H, 2024). The generation loves deep stories that relate to them, their experiences, their struggles and the social values they subscribe to.

Emotional storytelling shines especially bright when focused on social issues that resonate with Generation Z like climate change, diversity and mental health. In 2023, a sportswear brand case study showed that videos of athletes discussing their real life obstacles and personal growth experiences outperformed classic ad promos by 50% in engagement. We show that directly emotional narratives, especially those featuring either perseverance or impact on society, are more easily spread across networks, and as a result, are able to reach a wider audience.

In addition, using user-generated content in storytelling brings in more authenticity and relatability. Brands with relatable customers sharing their stories and opinions seem to resonate better. For example, a beauty brand that invited users to share their skincare journeys received thousands of user submissions, which were later used to create a series of mini-documentaries for the brand. Such an approach has not just led to better engagement with their product, it has also established the brand as genuine and invested in the customer experience. This requires a heavy visual component as well and it plays a major role in emotional storytelling. Behind-the-scenes footage, candid interviews and raw, unfiltered moments give the narrative a more real-feeling quality. One example is a travel brand that garnered a boost in followers & engagement on social media with user-shot videos of adventures, and it showed that the right content igniting emotion can be great for brand awareness.

Ultimately, if you want to reach Generation Z, you need to do via storytelling and emotional engagement. Brands that understand the importance of sharing relatable, emotional stories and content—from their target market—will build loyalty from the elusive Generation Z audience though engagement that stands out from the crowd and ensures their message travels through social networks.

6 Discussion

6.1 Practical implications

This study has practical implications as well, providing valuable insights for marketers and brands seeking to effectively capture the attention of Generation Z consumers. It highlights the importance of focusing on real-world applications and offers actionable strategies that might help brands improve their chances at engagement, conversions, and long-term loyalty.

Design Video with the Platform in Mind

This research underscores the importance of making platform-specific content. TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube each fulfil a different function, and brands should be careful not to fall into the trap of posting the same content across all channels. For example, TikTok specializes in short, dynamic and viral-potential videos, whereas YouTube is much better for long-form content, like showing off and reviewing how a

product works in greater depth. Also use Instagram Reels and TikTok for quick, visual-heavy content, and use YouTube to tell fuller stories about the brand. This tactic has shown great success in increasing engagement and driving ROI. Using tailored video content on each platform rather than the same content on all channels, a beauty brand saw an increase in 30% user interaction and a 20% increase in purchases of their products.

Partner With the Right Influencers

The research highlights the importance of working with micros-influencers, who may have fewer followers but attract deeply loyal and engaged audiences. Instead of working strictly with big-name influencers, brands should partner with those who align with their values and content within their space. Micro-influencers are known to produce more genuine, covetable content which deeply resonates with Gen Z, and builds high trust and engagement.

A study in the fashion sector found that micro-influencer campaigns had 40% higher engagement rates than celebrity campaigns. This shows that relatability frequently trumps numbers when targeting this demographic. Brands need to choose authenticity over everything; they need to connect with thought leaders who use and truly appreciate their products, which means building long-term relationships rather than one-off promotions.

Focus on Interactive and Gamified Content

Interactive content like polls, quizzes and gamified marketing campaigns should be an integral part of a brand's video strategy. Gen Z likes campaigns that enable them to engage and have a feel as if they are part of any content's success. As the trend of user-generated content becomes more popular, interactive challenges where users create and share content can also lead to a closer sense of community and belonging among a brand's audience.

For instance, a beverage brand designed a gamified TikTok challenge that rewarded participants with discounts. Within a week, this campaign increased social media mentions by 18% and website visits by 25%. Brands can achieve greater

engagement and organic reach (which is becoming increasingly difficult) by including interactive features without solely relying on paid ads.

Using storytelling to evoke emotion

Storytelling is not just about the creation of engaging videos; it is about the way in which you can convey a brand's identity and values using relatable stories. For example, you might share testimonials from actual customers, employees, or influencers that demonstrate the value they received from your product. These narratives need to be platform specific so it aligns with the targeted audience. For example, you can use Instagram Stories to create shorter, bite-size testimonials, and YouTube as a platform for behind the scenes longer videos. For example, a sustainable clothing brand effectively leveraged storytelling by sharing real-life narratives from customers, which led to a 35% boost in website traffic and a 50% increase in brand mentions on social media. Content that evokes feelings is less likely to be ignored and merely scroll past, but more likely to be re-watched.

Maintaining LongTerm Engagement Via User-Generated Content

User-generated content (UGC) is one of the most influential yet budget-friendly customer engagement tactics. Not just does this approach encourage users to create and share brand content its increased interaction and a cost-saving approach to marketing through organic promotion of the brand. Brands can create campaigns where users are encouraged to share their experiences with the product, which can be repurposed as part of the brand's overall marketing strategy.

One skincare brand, for example, encouraged users to chronicle their 30- day journeys with its products. It gauged thousands of submissions that were then repurposed into the video compilations. This strategy increased social proof, offered a steady stream of real content and led to engagement long after the promotion was over.

6.2 Study limitations

Although this study provides valuable perspectives on video marketing and its effects on Generation Z, there are limitations that need to be considered. Such limitations will emphasize where further research is desirable, and also assist to

frame the findings within the study area. So, the focus on secondary data and reliance on existing case studies over primary data collection is one of the must significant limitations. Because the research is based on existing reports, industry analyses, and platform metrics, the findings are limited by the accuracy and timeliness of the external analysis. Consequently, some minutiae relevant to contemporary campaigns or small market segments might have been overlooked. A direction for further research could be performing a primary collection of data from Generation Z consumers, through surveys or focus groups as an example.

Dynamic Nature of Digital Trends

The endpoints of the study are three major platforms (TikTok, YouTube and Instagram) so its possible that a bias would exist by not recognizing what other platforms generate interest among Generation Z like Snapchat or new video-letting apps. These three were chosen because of their dominance in video use, but their exclusion limits the generalisability of the findings. Include more platforms in scope for research to give an integrated view of Gen Z across video consumption. Dynamic Nature of Digital Trends Digital marketing and social media trends change at a rapid pace, which presents yet another limitation. An approach that works today might be ineffective tomorrow as algorithms, user behaviour or features change. TikTok's unprecedented run today may change in the coming year as new apps spring up or existing ones metamorphose. Adopt longitudinal research designs in future studies tracking changes over times since digital marketing's dynamic nature warrants how it is studied.

Limited Generalizability Beyond Generation Z

While the study's findings could be insightful for marketers wishing to understand their target audience in-depth, they are not applicable outside of Generation Z, in either direction. Although this narrow focus helps to produce focused insights, it also restricts the applicability of the outcomes. Brands speaking to a wide target like Millennials or Generation Alpha, would need to modify the recommendations to mirror the varying behavioral aspects instead.

While the study also looks at global trends, the data sources of the research are mostly from Western markets, which do not necessarily reflect the cultural differences of Generation Z in the East.

Lack of Cultural Diversity in Data Sources

Finally, some data sources may carry an underlying gender bias, leading to an imbalanced representation of Generation Z males and females.

This may impact the patterns of social Media usage and interaction, which differ immensely between countries, thus future research needs to include representative data from different Cultural contexts. this will help brands create more culturally sensitive marketing strategies that resonate with audiences globally

7 Conclusion

This research has provided insight into how video marketing affects the consumer behavior of Generation Z, a generation that is consuming more and more digital content at incredible levels. By examining engagement metrics, storytelling techniques, influencer marketing, and platform-specific strategies, this study provides valuable insights for marketers looking to engage this influential demographic. The results also reflected the conclusion that marketing well, when it comes to Gen Z, is about being adaptable, creative and keenly aware of Gen Z's interests. They offer not just actionable principles from being on the front lines, but also what marketing theories need to adjust and transform to be relevant in a fast-moving digital world.

Understanding Generation Z's Digital Preferences

One of the key takeaways from this research is that Generation Z appreciates personalized and real content. Gen Z doesn't want scripted polished ads like traditional marketing. They gravitate towards platforms like TikTok, where instant gratification comes in the form of a continuous stream of short videos. User-generated content(UGC) and interactive elements wield the most power for moderation, and campaigns that use co-create and even participation have a level of success. For brands, this signifies that marketing can no longer be a unilateral approach wherein the

consumer can feel left out of the story, as the best marketing is based on dialogue, a bi-lateral conversation that drives deeper connections.

Storytelling can help forge an emotional connection. Authenticity is the bridge that connects brands with Gen Z, and videos that can deliver true stories that reflect the unique experiences of their customers, influencers testimony video or behind-the scenes video can help you build brand loyalty. This generation wants to know not only about what a product does, but also what values and feelings these brands embody. Campaigns that emphasize matters like sustainability, diversity, or social causes tend to get more traction, as they resonate with Gen Z's core belief systems, providing brands with the opportunity to outgrow mere product purveyors they can become representatives of shared values instead.

In addition, this desire for authentic and personalized content also changes how brands communicate. Short-form videos, live streams and unscripted interactions work better than static ads or scripted promotional content. Brands that use flexibility and creativity to tell their story have a stronger chance of creating real engagement.

The Power of Platforms and Content Customization

The study also highlights how various platforms serve distinct roles in affecting consumer behavior. However, sites like TikTok, which is known for rapid and viral content, may be a great fit for brands looking for visibility and awareness. YouTube, on the other hand, is better suited toward long-form content, like tutorials and long reviews that help inform a purchase. Instagram fills the gap with Reels' short form videos and interactive stories that capture users at varying points on the buyer journey. Brands that tailor their content for these platforms see increased engagement, and as a result, better performance. For example, a brand launching a new skincare line might use TikTok to create viral challenges, YouTube for longer product demonstrations, and Instagram Reels for 15-second testimonials or before-and-after stories. With that in mind, the content being shared via social media should also reflect the audiences present on each platform in terms of rather they are there personally, professionally, etc, and therefore making it more relatable which means greater reach and less marketing squander.

The bottom line is that there is no single model that works for everyone. Hence, thrives video marketing needs to know the strength of each platform and deliver the message accordingly. This approach not only increases engagement but also boosts the effectiveness of the campaigns, making sure that consumers hear the right message at the right time on their favorite channels. It is a huge opportunity missed for the brands who do not scale their content according to their audience.

Influencers and the Importance of Authenticity

Part of the success of this research lies in its emphasis on influencers such as micro-influencers. Micro-influencers do not fill their social media feeds with curated glamour shots promoting products; they work within niche subcultures where connection and trust already exist, unlike some celebrities who promote products to bridgeable but less relevant masses of followers. Because their recommendations being reliable, they likely share your core values and are in a position to offer genuine product and service alternatives.

Authenticity feeds this connection. Such influencers who are honest about products, with content that highlights both pros and cons, are more likely to build trust. Brands that work with influencers who are genuinely interested in their products report higher clicks and conversions according to the study. Micro-influencers tend to share a closer bond with those who follow them, so their endorsements often feel like a recommendation from a trusted friend instead of an advertisement. Authenticity is utmost—a Gen Z audience can spot fake content, and brands that don't communicate authenticity run the risk of being seen as disconnected. One study on influencer marketing, for example, found that campaigns with influencers who genuinely use the product outperform those where the relationship is more transactional by far. Brands should, therefore, focus on collaborating with influencers who already feel a connection to their products.

Challenges Ahead: The Need for Adaptation

Although this research offers practical takeaways, it also illustrates the challenges brands encounter in their bid to reach Generation Z. The ever-changing landscape of social media means that what works now might be obsolete in the future. Algorithms

evolve, new platforms come and go, and consumers' tastes change. However, it is necessary for brands to observe trends closely to remain relevant.

Moreover, video marketing may be perceived differently in different regions due to cultural differences. While this analysis emphasized global patterns, future inquiries must examine cross-cultural differences, to ensure that campaigns will speak across disparate cultural contexts. Humor however is a good way in western markets, leading asian market on emotional or educative way content may become higher productive. Brands must understand these nuances to develop more inclusive and effective strategies.

Furthermore, with the line between content creators and content consumers becoming increasingly unclear, brands must look to incorporate real-time feedback loops into their marketing strategies. This may mean drawing on social listening tools to monitor how users respond and become agile in campaigns.

In summary, video marketing is an impactful medium for connecting with Gen Z, but it takes thoughtful implementation and adaptability. When brands create native, interactive, emotionally resonant content that builds community across platforms, they seed a foundation of lasting loyalty for long-term business impact. Mov. With the fast paced evolution taking place in the digital space, the takeaways from this study lay a solid groundwork for brands that are looking to make strides in their marketing efforts and the information needs to have a footing in future studies as well. While certain trends are proving to be more engaged by this market than others brands that put authenticity, engagement, and platform optimization at their core will accordingly have the best chance of connecting with Generation Z – the trick isn't just understanding what your content might be, but what you can be, because trends from TikTok to new videos and joiners on the platform are recycled and hard to keep up with, while also noting Generation Z's broadest values, and always being willing to adjust.

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