

# The powerhouse of TikTok

 By [Ashleigh Burton](#)

22 Mar 2022

"But wait - there's more!" - a common trope heard in infomercials is a thing of the past. Now, "as seen on TikTok" is the new "as seen on TV". The ever-growing app has become the place to be for many young consumers, and it's increasingly driving the latest trends, which extends to products and consumer behaviour as well.



TikTok says that 80% of its users who bought something on Black Friday indicated that TikTok had played a role in that decision. Approximately 67% of users said TikTok inspired them to shop even when they weren't looking to do so.

TikTok has launched many a shopping trend which has also culminated in Amazon opening an 'Internet Famous' storefront for users to shop the latest things they've seen on TikTok. TikTok calls this community commerce, which is entertaining, creator-driven word-of-mouth marketing. This content produces genuine product reviews - and honesty is a big differentiator for this platform; most users say they trust others to be their real selves on TikTok.

This is an interesting insight to take note of as social media is often held responsible for driving the age of the scammer and more and more consumers turn away from branded influencer posts on Instagram.

## The anatomy of community commerce moment

Vaseline – a staple from our grandmother's dressers to ours is now a viral trend, thanks to TikTok. With over 100 million views, Vaseline, now a global skincare phenomenon that the younger generation is now referring to as 'slugging', waited over 100 years to become a viral trend. Using this brand as an example, let's look at the four phases of community commerce:

**1. Spark phase: Creator or brand posts an entertaining video featuring a product.**

## **2. Share phase: Communities contribute to a product conversation and help it pick up steam.**

Over the last year, the number of views of TikTok videos in which influencers mentioned Vaseline increased by 46%, according to Traackr.

## **3. Spike phase: Brands start to notice an impact on sales.**

According to Unilever, the multinational consumer goods company that owns Vaseline, mentions of the product went up by 327% on social media during the first week of February this year, compared with the same week last year.

## **4. Sustain phase: Brands take action both on- and off-platform to keep consumers interested.**

Vaseline is now active on TikTok where they share beauty and skincare hacks from popular creators. They have also started using the hashtag #slugging on their Instagram content – the same viral hashtag that made them so popular on TikTok.

## **Tapping into the community commerce trend**

The #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt hashtag trend drives a brand's content viewership, significantly increasing conversion and comes off just as an infomercial would. Product demos with this hashtag grabs people's attention with how effortlessly a product works.

Entertainment is the number-one thing that users seek out when they come to the platform. Coolina USA, a cooking utensil retailer with 3.8m followers on TikTok, creates awe-inspiring cooking videos in beautiful locations to showcase their knives in a unique way.

Content that offers a behind the scenes look at how products are made are extremely popular. TikTok is filled with “pack an order with me” videos which is great for big brands and small businesses alike. The hashtag #packanorderwithme has over 840 million views and counting.

Partner with influencers and content creators but let them have the reigns. Community commerce isn't about talking at your customers but instead, it encourages audiences to create entertaining, compelling content that just so happens to feature brands. In essence, it's the digitization of word-of-mouth marketing - and it empowers brands to form genuine connections with people in a way that drives awareness, favorability, and sales. One source of TikTok's power is how unprofessional it still feels. Even when people are trying to sell you something, their messages seem improvised and genuine. Look at using in-app text, popular music and emojis.

From viral audio to fun challenges, harness the power of trends but put your own unique spin on it. TikTok's Creative Centre has a Trend Discovery Tool that allows you to explore the songs, creators, hashtags and videos that are relevant to your audience and vertical.

South African e-commerce grew by 66% in 2020 and the value of e-commerce transactions in South Africa is expected to surge 150% to R225bn by 2025. To keep up with this demand, digital commerce offerings expanded nearly everywhere over the last year as many digital platforms ramped up their e-commerce solutions.

In September last year, TikTok introduced several new tools and advertising products — including product links, live shopping and even a full-service commerce solution — all aimed at expanding TikTok's reach from culture and creation into commerce.

Is TikTok part of your social commerce strategy?

## ABOUT ASHLEIGH BURTON

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