

# 'De-influencing' is still... influencing

## Article

**The trend:** Creators and influencers who usually use platforms like **TikTok** to promote products are **instead telling audiences what *not* to buy**. [#Deinfluencing](#) videos have racked up roughly 208 million views on TikTok as of February 21.

**Why it's happening:** There's no shortage of reasons for why de-influencing is a TikTok trend of the moment.

- It's hard not to see [#deinfluencing](#) as a response to [#TikTokMadeMeBuyIt](#), which encouraged users to impulse-buy goods featured in viral creator videos. Gen Z is now trading in

overconsumption for more sustainable purchasing habits—at least in theory.

- TikTok beauty creator **Mikayla Noguiera** was recently accused of wearing fake eyelashes in a video promoting a **L’Oreal** mascara. Meanwhile, **Tarte Cosmetics’** lavish influencer trip to Dubai in January sparked controversy, with many onlookers calling the event “tone-deaf.”
- Underlying nearly all of these reasons is the simple fact that consumers’ purse strings have tightened. Many consumers who can afford to spend on discretionary items are being less vocal about it, not wanting to appear insensitive to today’s tough economic reality.

**Yes, but:** “De-influencing” is still influencing. Creators are using their power to sway the purchase decisions of a broader population; **the practice has just been adapted to resonate with consumers during an economic downturn.** Plus, posting critical reviews can help creators distance themselves from controversies that are eroding trust in the influencer industry.

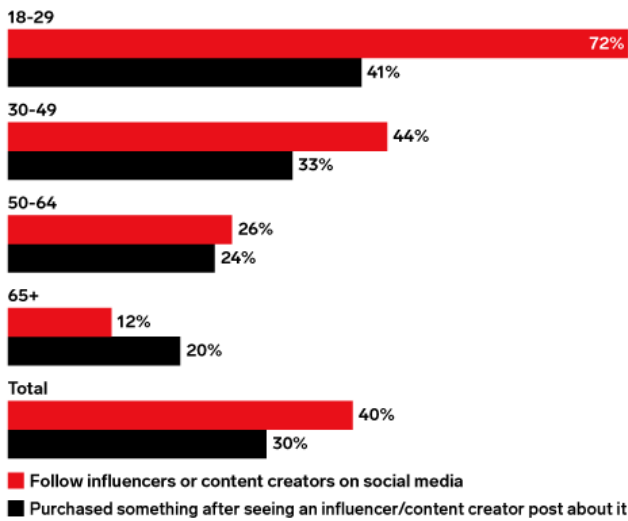
- Creators may be trying to help their followers save and streamline, but they also know that one of the best ways to engage audiences is to connect with them on a personal level.
- Views of TikTok videos tagged with #deinfluencing rose from 23.1 million to 164.6 million from January 26 to February 15, per data from Trendpop. Growth in views of TikTok videos tagged with #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt has slowed but still rose by at least 100 million per day during the same period, reaching 42.3 billion as of February 15.

**Why it matters:** Creators have become a mainstay in brands’ social commerce strategies, particularly those targeting Gen Z and millennials. TikTok is a major driver of both new social commerce sales and buyer growth in 2023, per our latest forecast.

- **US social commerce sales will grow over three times as fast as total ecommerce sales** this year, reaching \$68.92 billion.
- TikTok will account for most of the 5 million new US social buyers in 2023.

## US Social Media Users Who Follow Influencers vs. Have Ever Purchased Something After Seeing an Influencer, by Age, July 2022

% of respondents



Note: influencers or creators on social media; non-responses not shown  
Source: Pew Research Center as cited in company blog, Nov 21, 2022

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**Our take:** Trends come and go, and the hype around “de-influencing” will likely fade when economic conditions improve. But this is a good time for marketers to re-evaluate their influencer marketing strategies to ensure that they are partnering with the right creators and not overloading audiences with sponsored content.

- Marketers should ideally look for creators who have expressed previous interest in the brand, such as through organic product reviews. Several of the big-name beauty creators who attended [Tarte's trip](#) had little prior connection to the brand, per Trendpop data, which noted that Tarte could have mitigated some of the negative PR had it better aligned its brand and creator partners.