

TikTok, AI, and beyond: 6 social strategy takeaways from marketing pros

Article

TikTok and generative AI have changed the brand marketing game more than any other development since the pivot to mobile, and social media marketers must adapt. Here are six takeaways from CMOs and marketing professionals on how to do just that.

1. TikTok has consumers craving “weird,” “cringey,” “uncomfortable” content

The glossy, refined images that worked for marketers in the past don't pass the vibe check on TikTok. "Now you need weird, you need cringey, you need uncomfortable," said Lo Bosworth, founder of Love Wellness, speaking at Marketing Brew's The Brief event last week.

The challenge for lifestyle and wellness brands is figuring out how to deliver that authenticity without compromising brand identity. "What we're up against is really interesting content that verges on fetish content. How do you compete with that?" Bosworth said of brands that employ objectifying tactics to sell women's health products.

For Love Wellness, the best TikTok approach involves quick videos, hooks that grab attention, and eye-catching visuals, according to Bosworth.

2. Micro-influencers can beat Insta-celebs

"We have learned that for our audience, nano-influencers [and] micro-influencers are more significant than macro[-influencers]," said Bosworth. These smaller influencers can offer a more targeted approach that can provide more high-quality leads for less money.

We've heard this before, from [furniture rental company Fernish](#), [ecommerce site Overstock.com](#), and more. The challenge for brands is [finding the right micro-influencers](#).

3. Reactivity can beat proactivity on social

Scrappiness can be a virtue for social media campaigns, especially when you're riding the dialogue brand loyalists are already posting.

For language learning app Duolingo, 70% of all marketing is reactive, quick work, according to head of global marketing Manu Orssaud. [Makeup guru Bobbi Brown](#) found similar success in a viral video where she slathered her Jones Road foundation all over her face, poking fun at [an influencer who had attempted](#) a similar technique.

4. Your brand is a character

Duolingo uses its mascot Duo as a creator with his own storyline, following his own friends, said Orssaud. Duolingo focuses its social presence on being entertaining first, without making any hard sells. Orssaud's advice is to listen to stories and memes from the community in order to elevate the brand.

Liquid Death's vice president of creative Andy Pearson mentioned a similar approach last year, calling the brand “**a character we're writing for.**”

5. Let AI be your co-pilot

Don't shy away from generative AI like ChatGPT as a brainstorming tool and collaborator. “Let those tools do some of that upfront thinking for you, and you can really practice being the editor,” said Katie Potochney, executive creative director and head of Wink at Intuit Mailchimp.

Using AI to conceptualize campaigns and posts can free up time for social teams, who can focus instead on execution and delivery of those features.

6. Performance marketing can't do it all

Brand marketing matters, even for B2B companies. Focusing only on performance marketing works only in the short term, said Angelique Temple, CMO of WeTransfer. B2B buyers are real people, so maintaining a social presence the same way a D2C company might is vital. For WeTransfer, this means working with creators who use the software to bring creative ideas to life, rather than just selling it as a productivity tool.

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