

6 steps to enter the golden age of TikTok influencer marketing in SA

By [Lama Abdelbar](#)

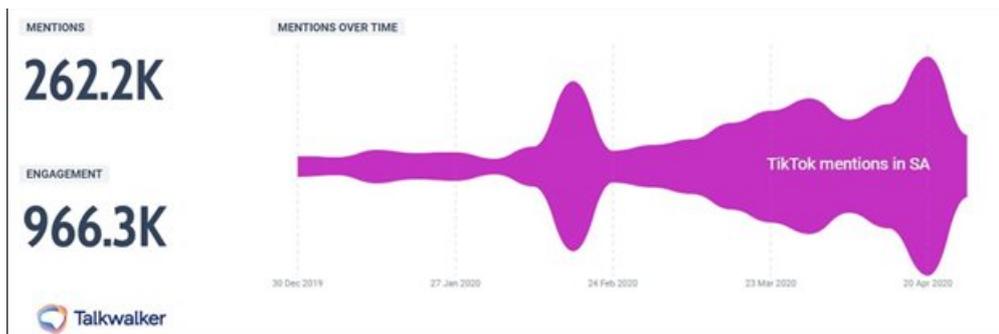
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22.9 million. That's how many times TikTok was referred to in [online conversations in April 2020](#). Crazy, right?



Photo by Kon Karampelas on [Uhsplash](#).

Looking specifically at South Africa, we find a similar trend with a record number of 119,000 mentions of TikTok in one month. That's a 76% increase from the previous month (March 2020) and a whopping 130% increase from the pre-lockdown days of Feb 2020.



So, the numbers are positive, the engagement rates are sky-high, hundreds of influencers in Africa have jumped on the platform, and the whole world is talking about it. What's in it for you? And what have you done about it?

Whether you're looking to understand the world of TikTok to build your next digital campaign or to become an influencer yourself, follow the steps in this guide to get a headstart on TikTok influencer marketing in South Africa.



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Lama Abdelbar 3 Apr 2020



1. Understand the TikTok algorithm

The TikTok algorithm is quite unique.

It's nothing like the ones we know well by know - Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, you name it. And it hasn't been publicly disclosed either.

However, by closely observing TikTok analytics, I can tell you that quite simply, the algorithm favours engaging content. TikTok shows a new video to a small number of users in between popular videos. If the video performs well, then it is shown to more people, until it goes viral.

These are the factors that certainly seem to affect the performance of a video:

- Short-form content: the platform allows you to upload maximum 1-minute long videos anyway. But, time and again, the videos on the shorter end of that minute perform better.
- Attention-grabbing: this factor is extra important precisely because the content is short. The first 3 seconds of a TikTok video should grab an audience's attention and clearly indicate what the video will be about. Using text overlays helps.
- Attention-holding: you'd think that since the videos are so short, you wouldn't have a problem holding the audience's attention for max 1 minute. Well, think again. Attention spans are shorter than ever and scrolling down has never been easier. How much of a TikTok video is watched will act as an indicator of the level of quality.
- Lighting: believe it or not - the lighting of a video can have a huge effect on its performance. It goes without saying that the video quality, in general, should be high - so investing in a good phone or camera and a tripod can be worth it. TikTokers also report that using the "G6" filter on the platform helps.
- Engagement: this is a metric we recognise from other social media platforms, surely. The more likes, comments, shares, and downloads a TikTok video receives, the better it performs. It is speculated that the TikTok algorithm calculates good quality by a minimum of 1 like for every 10 views. If a video then receives 20% more likes in 1 day, TikTok shows it to even more people - and potentially causes it to go viral.
- Hashtags: the seemingly random viewers that TikTok's algorithm chooses to show the videos to, is not so random. The TikTok algorithm shows users new videos based on hashtags they've previously engaged with. That is why having a TikTok hashtag strategy can make or break your performance.

2. Create a TikTok hashtag strategy

Many TikTokers fall into the trap of using the #fyp (for you page) hashtag thinking that will help them land on the For You page (and go viral).

However, that is not the best way to guarantee content reaching the right audience.

As we saw above, users who engage with certain hashtags are shown more new videos using the same hashtag. So

instead of targeting the wide and random audience who have engaged with #fyp hashtag, users should be looking to target a more niche audience using more specific hashtags.

For example, if you are going to upload a TikTok video about food, you might want to use hashtags like #food #TikTokfood #recipe #cookingvideo etc. to target audiences that have previously engaged with food content and are therefore more likely to engage with your TikTok about food!

Brands building their TikTok influencer marketing campaigns need to integrate a TikTok hashtag strategy and work closely with their influencers of choice to ensure they use relevant hashtags.

3. Think about and focus on niche

In just the same way that a niche hashtag can lead to better video performance, niche content will boost performance on TikTok in general.

This advice has held true on all social media platforms. And, here, TikTok is no different.

The more unique and consistent your content is, the higher your chances of success. Check out other [TikTok influencers in Africa](#) for inspiration.

Brands working with TikTok influencers need to consider the influencers' niche factor if they want to unlock those big numbers.

4. Ensure consistent posting

TikTok influencers need to post at least once a day - but ideally 3 times a day - if they really want to see numbers blow up.

Posting at different times allows users to find out which timing works best for their type of content, audience, and time zone.

Posting more regularly allows users to find out which type of content works and gives them plenty more chances to learn from mistakes and optimise content.

Regular posting should, therefore, be a metric to consider when vetting influencers for influencer marketing campaigns.

5. Activate TikTok analytics

To be able to benefit from the above step, you need to dig deep into analytics to see what works and what doesn't.

- TikTok analytics are not activated by default, so you need to follow these steps to get a hold of them.
- Go to your Profile Settings and tap Manage My Account.
- Tap Switch to Pro Account (it's free!)
- Choose a category that best fits the type of content that is/will be featured on your account
- Enter a phone number for your account
- Go back to the Settings menu and now you'll be able to see an Analytics option

TikTok analytics will only include data after you switch to a Pro account - no historical data is available. So, if you want to become a TikTok influencer, turn these analytics on ASAP to be able to share them with potential brand partners.

Likewise, brands need to double-check that their influencers have activated this feature before engaging in a TikTok influencer marketing campaign in order to be able to track their performance.

6. Keep up with trends

Say what you will but there's never been a more trend-obsessed social media platform than TikTok!

Once a TikTok 'sound' or challenge picks up, you'll see thousands of creative renditions of it pop up on your feed.

To ensure you or an influencer you're working with goes viral, you need to be up to date on these trends to jump on them quickly.

And don't just jump on them for the sake of it - think of a creative spin that you can put on the trend that is relevant to your profile or your brand.

TikTok is all about self-expression, authenticity, and fun. So don't lose track of these 3 key main elements when you deep dive into the strange but wonderful world of TikTok.

ABOUT LAMA ABDELBARR

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