

THE 2022 TIKTOK PLAYBOOK



FOR CHALLENGER FOOD & DRINK BRANDS



Fanbytes

HOW TO BUILD CULTURAL RELEVANCE WITH A GEN Z AUDIENCE ONLINE



TikTok is without doubt the biggest means and opportunity for brands to engage Gen Z right now.

With an estimated 1 billion monthly users (**60% of whom are Gen Z**), just this week the platform surpassed YouTube for average watch time in the UK and the US (BBC News, 2021). An astonishing feat considering it only really 'took off' in 2019 and is mostly made up of short 60-second videos.

On the one hand this exponential growth has levelled the playing field for brands that were agile and innovative enough to quickly ride the TikTok wave. An example of this would be **Elf Cosmetics**; an established beauty brand that was struggling to compete with industry leaders such as MAC, L'Oreal and Charlotte Tilbury, while also facing competition from up-and-coming disruptors like Fenty Beauty and Glossier. But by putting TikTok at the centre of their digital marketing strategy in the past year, they've quickly become one of the biggest brands on the platform and have unlocked millions of Gen Z fans (read more about this in our previous report, [15 Challenger Beauty Brands on TikTok](#)).

On the other hand though, many brands – both big and small – have been left behind, unable to react and adapt quickly enough to this constantly evolving world of trends, challenges, sounds and hashtags on TikTok.

2 BILLION TIKTOK USERS

60% ARE GEN Z



WHAT ABOUT IN THE WORLD OF FOOD AND DRINK?



Ok, so we know that the opportunities within TikTok are endless – especially with the expansion of in-app commerce. And yet, we haven't seen quite the same level of activity from the food and drink industry as we have from respective beauty and fashion brands.

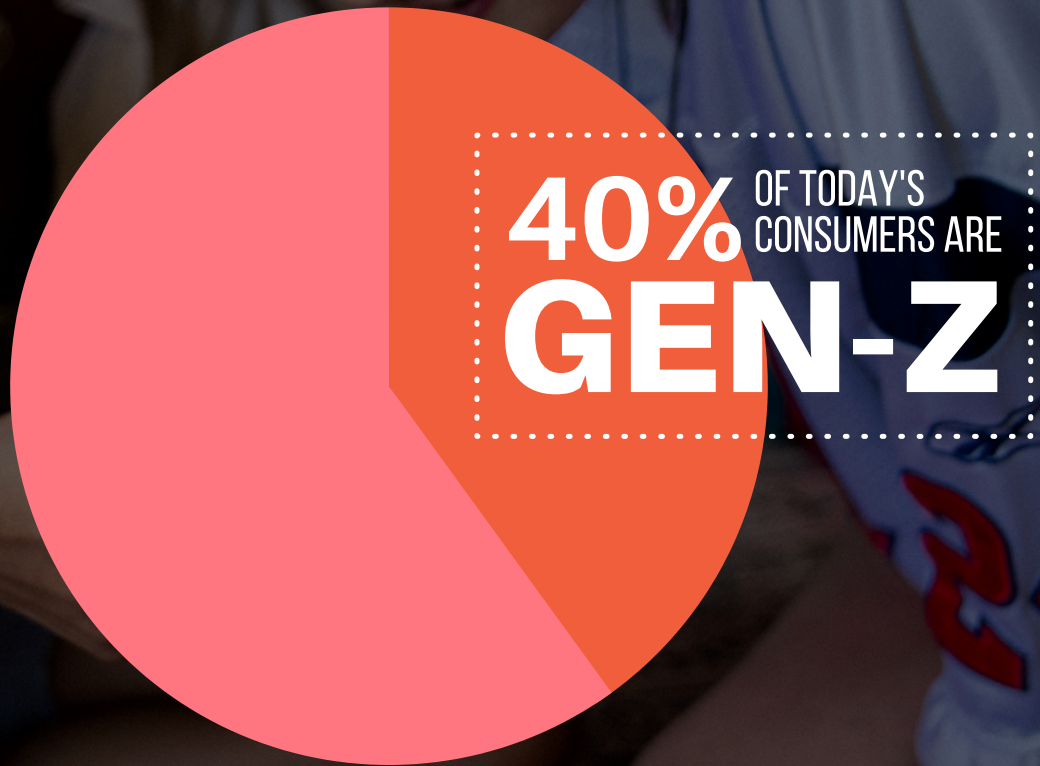
Yes, of course the likes of **Pepsi**, **Coca-Cola** and **Dunkin'** have delivered some phenomenal campaigns. Pepsi created the **#PepsiChallenge** earlier this year which, using the TikTok 'Duet' feature, gave fans the chance to show off their skills alongside football heroes like Messi and Sancho (attracting an incredible 3.3 billion views). **Dunkin'** on the other hand have famously teamed up with the D'Amelio sisters, two of the biggest Creators on the platform, ensuring a truly powerful Gen Z brand ambassadorship.

But in comparison to other sectors like fashion, beauty, gaming and music, brands within food and drink haven't jumped on TikTok in quite the same way, with many seeming to struggle to find their place (and their voice) on the platform.

This is strange given just how ideal TikTok seems to be for food and drink content. Not only are there already lots of existing communities sharing tips for recipes and health, but the format is much more sensory. With video-first and sound-on, there's far more opportunity for movement, interaction, and memorability than with image.

DON'T FALL BEHIND

The reality is that **60% of TikTok users are Gen Z** and **Gen Z make up over 40% of today's consumers** (Mckinsey 2019). If TikTok isn't a priority for your brand right now, you are missing out on a huge existing - and future - customer base.



And with the launch of new formats like **TikTok Stories, TikTok LIVE** and **shopping integrations**, there are a tonne of ways for your brand to stand out and get in front of the pack.

THE Fanbytes PLAYBOOK

In this report, we're going to cover some of the **key opportunities** that challenger food and drink brands should be aware of over the coming 12 months.

Pulling on our experience as one of the UK's leading social media and influencer marketing agencies, as well as exclusive data and insights from our TikTok analytics/social listening tool Bytesights, we'll share:



The **dates and water-cooler moments** that your brand can be a part of to help you build cultural relevance amongst a Gen Z audience.



The **formats and trends** you can explore to drive much higher engagement rates and encourage user generated content.



Case studies and examples of food and drink brands that have unlocked a **Gen Z audience on TikTok** – and what it is you can take from them as learnings.



BACK TO SCHOOL/UNI



HALLOWEEN



CHRISTMAS

5 KEY DATES IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

(and what you could do to make your mark)



NEW YEARS' RESOLUTIONS



VEGANUARY



BACK TO SCHOOL/UNI

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BACK TO SCHOOL/UNI

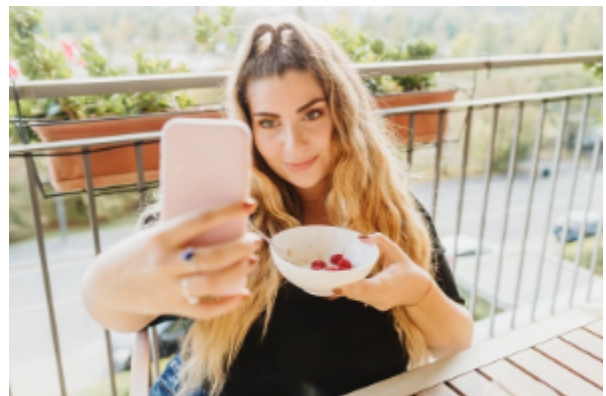
#BACKTOSCHOOL

-  **7.8 BILLION VIEWS**
-  **51.7M LIKES (SEPTEMBER 2020)**
-  **MOST POPULAR SONG: BACK TO SCHOOL CHECK**
-  **BEST DAY TO POST = SUNDAY**

Over the past few weeks, we've seen parents and students alike posting about the return to studying. This is even more of a big deal given how much time they've had at home since the start of the pandemic! And even though this term start has come and gone, it's never too early to start planning for the next one (whether that's coming back after an extended Christmas break or making a splash this time next year).

#BACKTOUNI

-  **218.2M LIKES (SEPTEMBER 2020)**
-  **MOST POPULAR SONG: YOU GOT IT, VEDO**
-  **BEST DAY TO POST: THURSDAY**



What does 'overlooked' Gen Z want from healthy food?

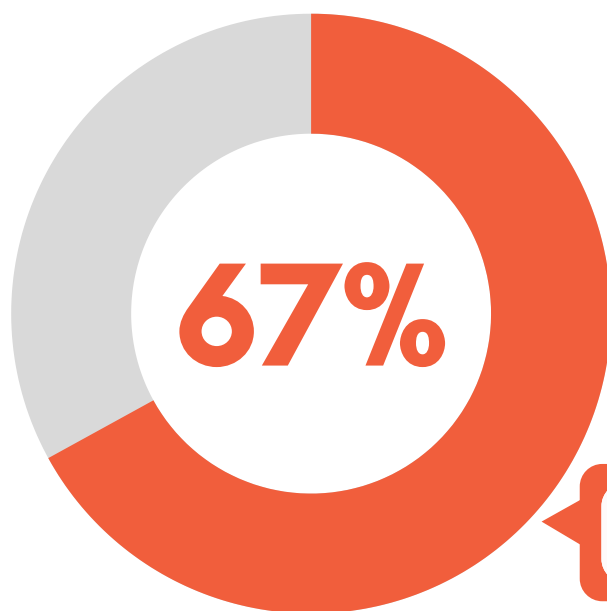
Findings from a Gen Z study commissioned by EIT Food are instrumental to understanding what the food system will look like, as well as which innovations are



BACK TO SCHOOL/UNI

Food & drink brands should be focusing on how to engage and educate Gen Z around their nutrition. Let's face it, many 18-year-olds go off to university without any clue of how to cook for themselves, aside from maybe beans on toast or a pot noodle. But in actual fact, a recent study found that **72% of Gen Zs view healthy eating as an integral part to their physical and mental wellbeing (EIT Food, 2021).**

Despite this though, **75% of Gen Z said that they needed clearer advice on how to eat a healthy diet**, while **61% said it can be hard to know what to eat as there's so much 'conflicting advice'.**



Even more crucially, **67% said they turn to social media such as TikTok and Instagram for healthy food and recipe ideas** – so there is clearly a need for this kind of educational and informational content.

HOW TO COOK???





SO HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

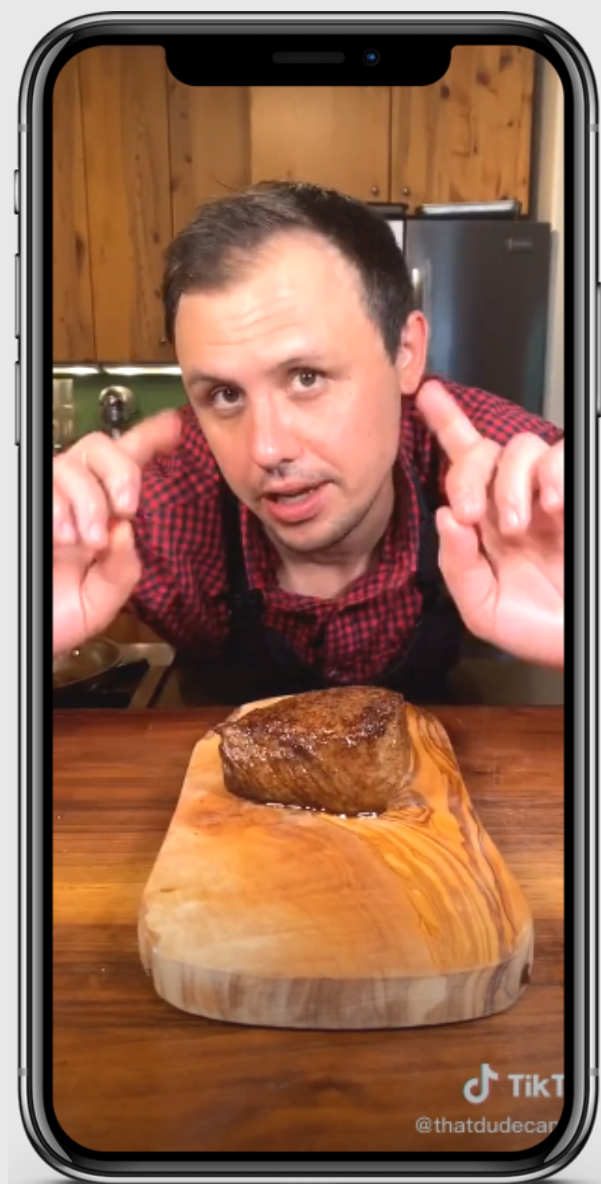
#LEARNONTIKTOK

How-to videos are some of the popular on social media – and this is no different on TikTok. Back in 2020, TikTok created a #LearnOnTikTok campaign with the hashtag featuring prominently on the Discover homepage and attracting over **159.3 billion views**.

This has become a destination for young people to discover something new and is mainly driven by creators and influencers making content about a topic or skill that interests them.

For brands looking to provide much-needed health and wellbeing information, as well as general tips for cooking new meals at university or making better decisions around school lunches, this is the perfect hashtag to tap into.

The key is to work with influencers and creators that will authentically be able to amplify your campaign across the platform – and that the content feels genuine and in-keeping with what the hashtag stands for (learning and education, not ‘selling’ and advertising).



SO HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

CONT.

TAP INTO #ORGANISATIONINSPO

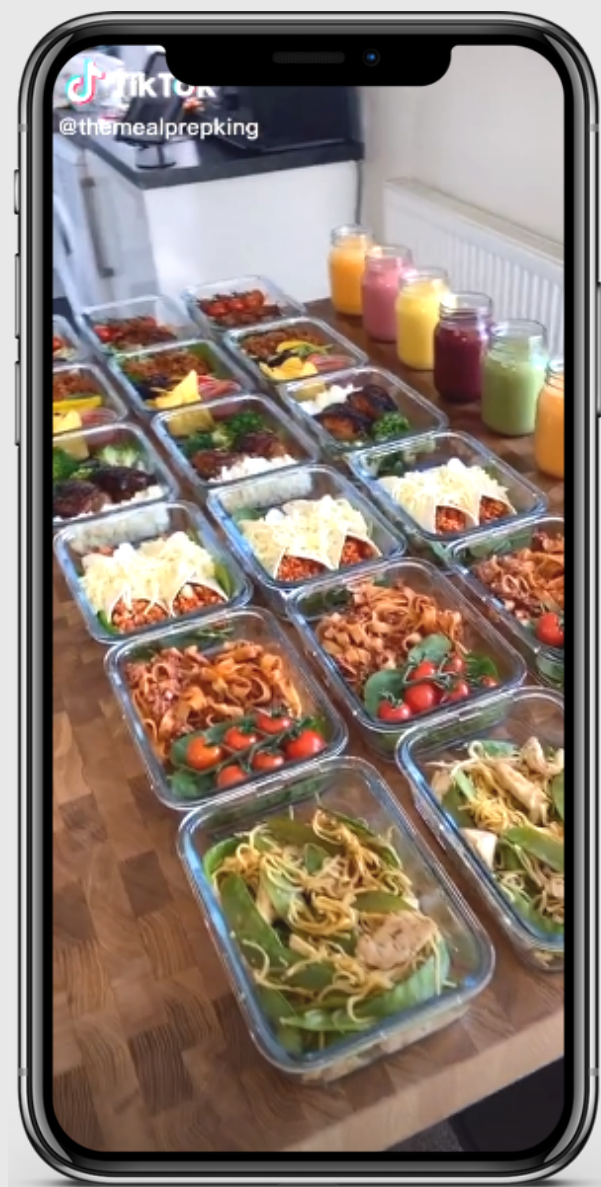
TikTok may seem like Instagram's slightly chaotic younger cousin, but one thing that people LOVE to see is what we like to call 'organisation p*rn'.

Over the past few weeks, we've seen **#MealPlan** go off the charts as TikTok users share tips, tricks and inspiration for prepping easy and healthy weekly meals. The hashtag has attracted an impressive **3.5 billion views**, and in August 2021 alone, there have been over **1.6 million likes**!

Let's be honest, who doesn't *attempt to* turn over an organisational new leaf in time for 'back to school' September? And we all secretly love to see lines of perfectly packaged lunchboxes and fully stocked fridges... right?

Try showcasing your product as part of a weekly meal plan, either on your own brand's TikTok account or through collaborating with creators like **@Twisted**, **@temp-tation** and **@themealprepking**.

One key thing to remember is that more and more people care about sustainability - **a big part of the #MealPrep trend is about minimising food wastage** - so ideally they'll be able to use all of your product at once (or save the rest for a later date).









HALLOWEEN

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HALLOWEEN

#HALLOWEEN

-  **38.4 BILLION VIEWS**
-  **1.9 BILLION LIKES (OCTOBER 2020)**
-  **MOST POPULAR SONG: SPOOKY SCARY SKELETONS, ANDREW GOLD**
-  **BEST DAY TO POST = SUNDAY**

#HALLOWEENFOOD

-  **39.1 BILLION VIEWS**
-  **2.6 MILLION LIKES (OCTOBER 2020)**
-  **MOST POPULAR SONG: MONSTER MASH, BOBBY PICKETT**
-  **BEST DAY TO POST = THURSDAY**

With less than a month until Halloween, we can expect to see lots of spooky content as Gen Zs get into the spirit of one of their favourite holidays. **It's probably one of the biggest moments of the year on TikTok** with the holiday lending itself to all sorts of trends, from beauty and cosplay to home décor and pranks.

Of course, there are many opportunities here for food and drink brands – whether it's a last-minute campaign for 2021 or in preparation for 2022.





SO HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

ALIGN WITH NICHE TIKTOK COMMUNITIES

There's so much going on around Halloween that it's easy to get lost in the noise. One way to make an impact is to focus on a concentrated segment of your audience – rather than trying to be too broad.

There are lots of 'communities' on TikTok; with a **community essentially standing for a group of online users who all enjoy and/or value the same thing**. This could be anything from a cause like Sustainability or LGBTQ+ rights, to a fun hobby (did you know that there's a big #rollerskating fandom on the platform?).

Just because you're a food and drink brand, don't make the mistake of thinking that you should only work with food and drink influencers or content. Think **WIDE** and **look for the nexus between your desired Gen Z audience and your brand**.

We recently worked with **Jaffa Cakes** to amplify their '**Be what you want to be**' brand mantra in their first ever TikTok campaign. To do this, we employed a range of creators with different talents and subject matters – from comedians and illustrators, to makeup artists and style bloggers. This helped to put Jaffa Cakes at the centre of a number of different narratives and tapped into a variety of audiences with different interests!





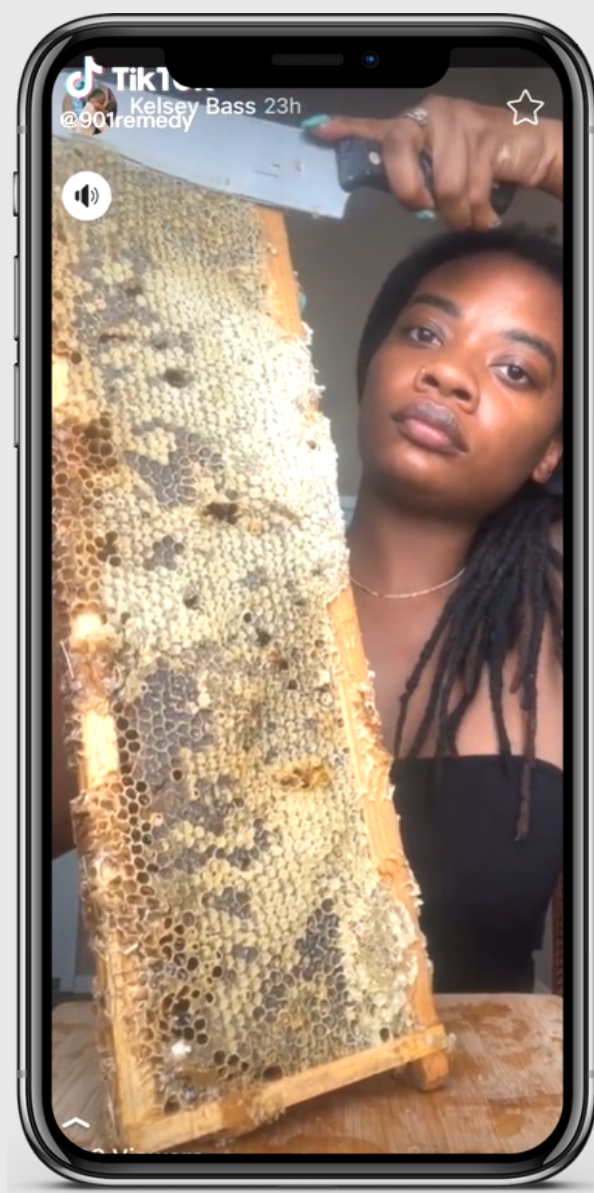
SO HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

CONT.

ASMR

There's a huge community of **ASMR (Autonomous sensory meridian response)** fans on TikTok. So why is this relevant?

Well one of the subsectors of this is **#ASMRfood** – food that gives people an audible or visual sensory reaction of relaxation. In fact, the hashtag has had over **4.1 billion views** and in 2021 alone it's attracted over 123 million likes. We think there could be a real opportunity here for brands to connect Halloween content with ASMR – imagine a trend where TikTok users have to create ASMR videos using different Halloween candy!





CHRISTMAS

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CHRISTMAS

We don't need to say too much about Christmas! We know it's one of the biggest dates in the marketing calendar, and while previous years may have been all about the 'battle of the TV ads', we predict it could be the 'battle of the TikToks' in 2021!

#CHRISTMASFOODS

- 👁️ **92.3 MILLION VIEWS**
- ❤️ **4.2 MILLION LIKES (DECEMBER 2020)**
- 🎵 **MOST POPULAR SONG: JINGLE BELL ROCK, BOBBY HELMS**
- 📅 **BEST DAY TO POST = SUNDAYS**

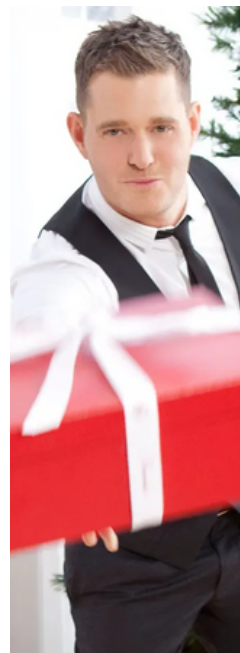


#CHRISTMASRECIPE(S)

- 👁️ **87.7 MILLION VIEWS**
- ❤️ **2.6 MILLION LIKES (DECEMBER 2020)**
- 🎵 **MOST POPULAR SONG: HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS, MICHAEL BUBLE**

#CHRISTMASDINNER

- 👁️ **72.8 MILLION VIEWS**
- ❤️ **4.8 MILLION LIKES (DECEMBER 2020)**
- 🎵 **MOST POPULAR SONG: ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS, MARIAH CAREY**





SO HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

NOSTALGIA

We regularly see trends on TikTok that centre around a feeling of nostalgia, and **Gen Z in particular love sharing videos that take them back to a different time** – whether that's through 90s inspired makeup looks, or 00s dance routines. Christmas is a particularly nostalgic time with every family having their own traditions and memories.

There are plenty of ways that brands could introduce nostalgic elements to their TikTok marketing around Christmas. These could involve a specific filter or challenge that encourages people to reimagine their Christmas from a different era, or Christmas recipes that bring people back to their childhood (what were people doing and eating for Christmas in the late 90s and early 00s?).





SO HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

CONT.

ORIGINAL SOUNDS

Music and sounds are huge around Christmas, and of course we can expect to see regular hits from the likes of Mariah Carey and Michael Bublé.

Many brands have experienced great success from producing original sounds for the platform – even better if you can then incorporate this into a dance challenge that takes off. Last year, we worked with **Idahoan Foods** on a campaign for their instant mashed potato in the US.

With food content on the rise on TikTok, we knew it was the perfect platform to raise awareness for the brand. We activated a two-part campaign designed to fit seamlessly into TikTok culture: a dance challenge to a custom sound incorporating the products, and organic influencer content with authentic creatives. The campaign was a huge success, generating 14.1 million views, 2.8 million likes and an incredibly high 20.1% engagement rate.

We reckon there may be a fair few brands creating their own custom 'Christmas Sounds' this year – so best to get cracking on this now if you want yours to be ahead of the curve!





NEW YEARS' RESOLUTIONS

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NEW YEARS' RESOLUTIONS

#NEWYEARSRESOLUTION

👁 272.1 MILLION VIEWS

❤ 15.3 MILLION LIKES (DECEMBER 2020)

📅 BEST DAY TO POST = TUESDAY

With each New Years comes a national determination to 'turn over a new leaf', and for many people this is centred around maintaining a healthier lifestyle.

On TikTok, hashtags like **#healthyliving**, **#fitness** and **#cleaneating** are massive, and after the comedown of Christmas, Gen Z are likely to be more engaged than ever with this kind of content. This presents the perfect moment for brands to get involved with the conversation and encourage user generated content around your products.





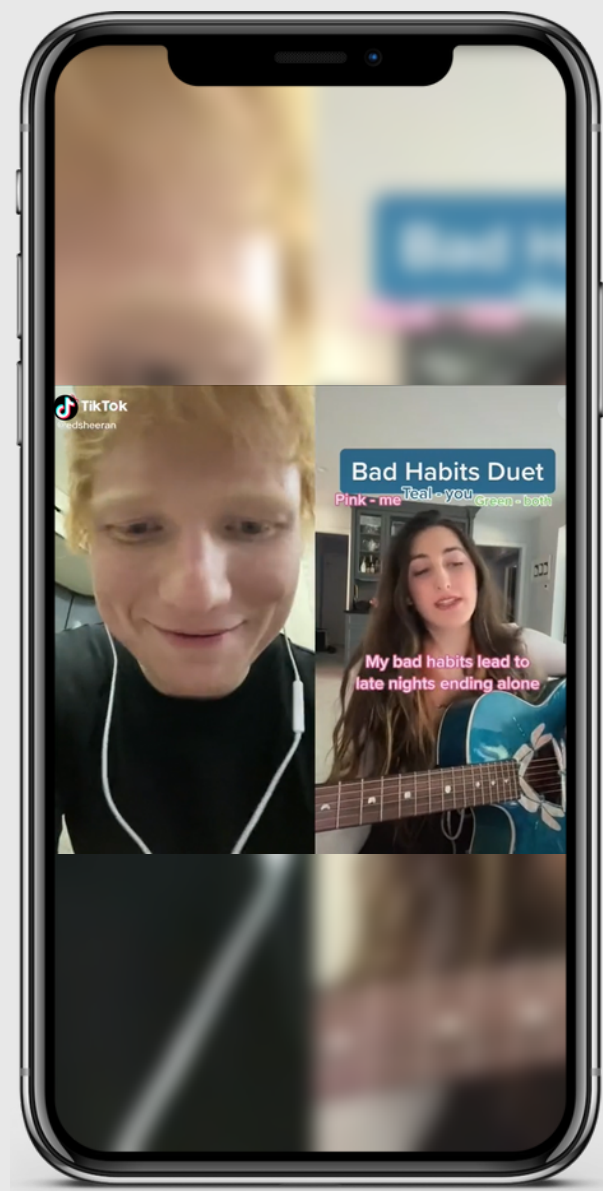
SO HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

DUET FEATURES

The duet feature allows users to create content featuring an initial video, with both videos appearing side by side on screen in a square format.

This type of content is one of the most powerful as it literally demands user generated content.

For food and drink brands this New Years, **think about what kind of 'challenge' you think your audience would engage with around the holiday** (and January blues) – whether it's cooking a meal or making a signature drink/coffee – and work with influencers to get the challenge out there.





VEGANUARY

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VEGANUARY

#VEGANUARY

- 👁️ 224.1 MILLION VIEWS
- ❤️ 15.7 MILLION LIKES (JANUARY 2020)
- 👉 ENGAGEMENT RATE: 11.2%
- 📅 MOST 'ENGAGED' DAY: 6TH JANUARY

A recent study found that Gen Z adults are more than twice as likely to have made 'green' changes to their lifestyle (including taking up a vegan diet) vs over 60s (**Mirror 2021**).

Set up in 2014, participation in Veganuary has **more than doubled** each year. In 2020, over 400,000 people took part in the challenge of taking up a vegan lifestyle for the first month of the year.

#VEGAN

- 👁️ 12.9 BILLION VIEWS
- ❤️ 155.5 MILLION LIKES (JANUARY 2020)
- 👉 ENGAGEMENT RATE: 11.7%
- 📅 BEST DAY TO POST = FRIDAY



Younger generation are most likely to go vegan to help the planet, study finds

A study of 2,000 adults has found what generations are doing to help the environment. 18 to 24-year-olds are nearly twice as likely to have made changes to...



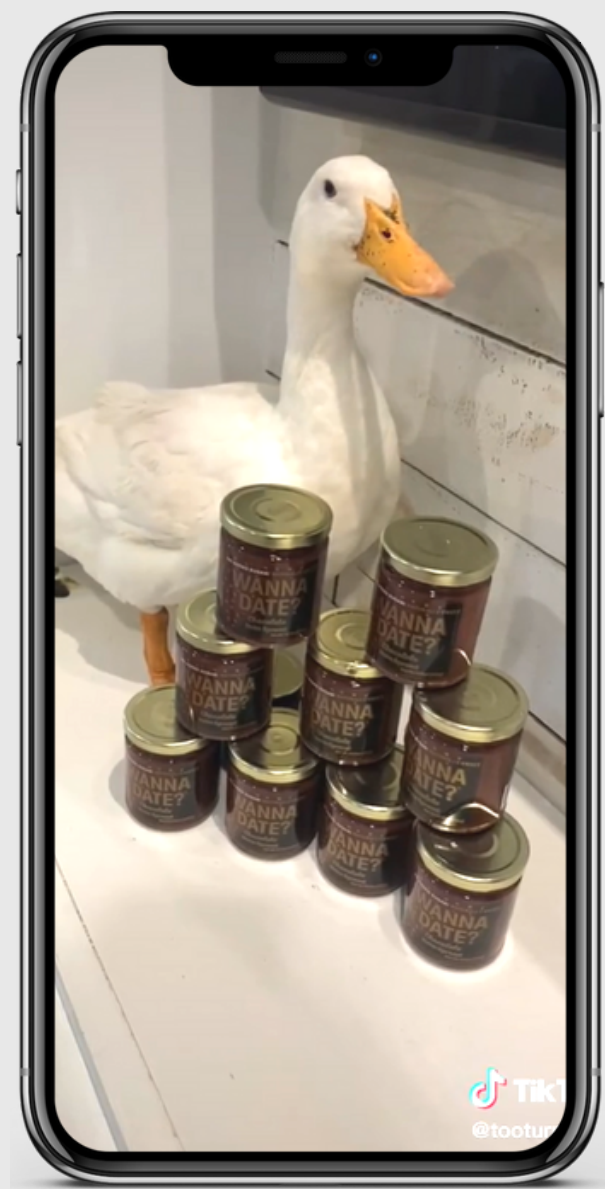
SO HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

TURN BORING INTO FUN

TikTok, more than any other social media platform, is rooted in humour. And Gen Z in particular love finding new, self-deprecating ways to portray a serious topic.

We recently worked with the brilliant **Wanna Date**; a brand providing natural, healthy, vegan date spreads. We decided to play on their fun, light-hearted persona (and the name!) by working with creators on some hilarious videos. It was a perfect example of how risqué content which isn't necessarily super brand safe or salesy performs incredibly well amongst a Gen Z audience.

When it comes to something like Veganuary, don't be too preachy. Find a funny angle to get your brand's message across, then work with creators that you know can deliver it in a way that still feels right for your brand. Most importantly – **BE BRAVE**. **TikTok isn't TV**, take some risks or you won't ever reap the rewards.





4 FINAL TIKTOK TIPS FROM THE FANBYTES TEAM

We spend so much time analysing and discussing what's going on in the world of TikTok and what it means for Gen Z marketing. **Here are four of our biggest tips for marketers from ALL types of brands.**

1 THINK LIKE A BRAND, ACT LIKE A CREATOR.

Before you start posting on TikTok, have you really thought about what your brand's persona is? One of our biggest tips is to think of your brand as if it were a person or creator on TikTok. What kind of content would they be posting and engaging with? Would it be funny? Informative? Stylish? Carefree? Would they participate in silly dance challenges or would that not really be 'their thing'? If you don't know the answers to this yet, that's where you should start.



2 MICRO BEFORE MACRO

Often when approaching campaigns, we'll start with getting micro influencers to post around the hashtag or sound. This will trick the algorithm into thinking more organic usage is happening than in reality, and we can then go on to amplify with macro creators. In general, as with all social media platforms, you should look for a mix of micro and macro influencers, as often those with smaller followings may in actual fact have a more dedicated and engaged audience!



UP YOUR 'REWATCH RATE'

The TikTok algorithm values videos that have a high 'rewatch rate', because essentially this tells it that people are enjoying the content so much that they want to watch it more than once. But this presents a great opportunity to engineer a higher rewatch rate and 'trick the algorithm' to make your videos appear more frequently. A couple of ways you can do this include adding text to your video (users will want to make sure they got all the info), or by including a 'Did you see that?' caption in your video or in the description, encouraging people to go back and see what you meant! Sneaky, hey...

3

4 SERVE THE COMMUNITIES

So many brands come to us wanting to know how they can 'go viral' on TikTok. And of course, we've covered several ideas in this guide for how you can try to do this. But really, this shouldn't be your number one objective. First look at how you can authentically integrate with relevant communities on TikTok. Look at how you can serve them coming from a place of caring and understanding about what it is they want to see. TikTok is above all one giant culture and community and this is how you should be approaching it – with the same sensitivity and emotion as you would any other group.





WHO ARE FANBYTES?

Fanbytes is a leading social media and influencer marketing agency. We specialise in engaging Gen Z on their native platforms of TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube.

With expertise in TikTok (we built Europe's first TikTok creator house!), we've worked with the likes of McVitie's, Burger King, Wanna Date, Idahoan Foods, Papa John's and Nando's to help them unlock Gen Z audiences and grow their TikTok engagement.

Get in touch with us if you'd like to have a chat around how you can:

- Activate to Gen Z around a key calendar date or cultural moment
- Grow your brand's TikTok account through organic and paid campaigns
- Identify and partner with the right TikTok creators
- Tap into trending sounds, challenges and hashtags to unlock massive engagement
- Use data to truly understand how and where your brand should be talking
- Develop and showcase your brand's personality on TikTok



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