



15 *questions with* 15

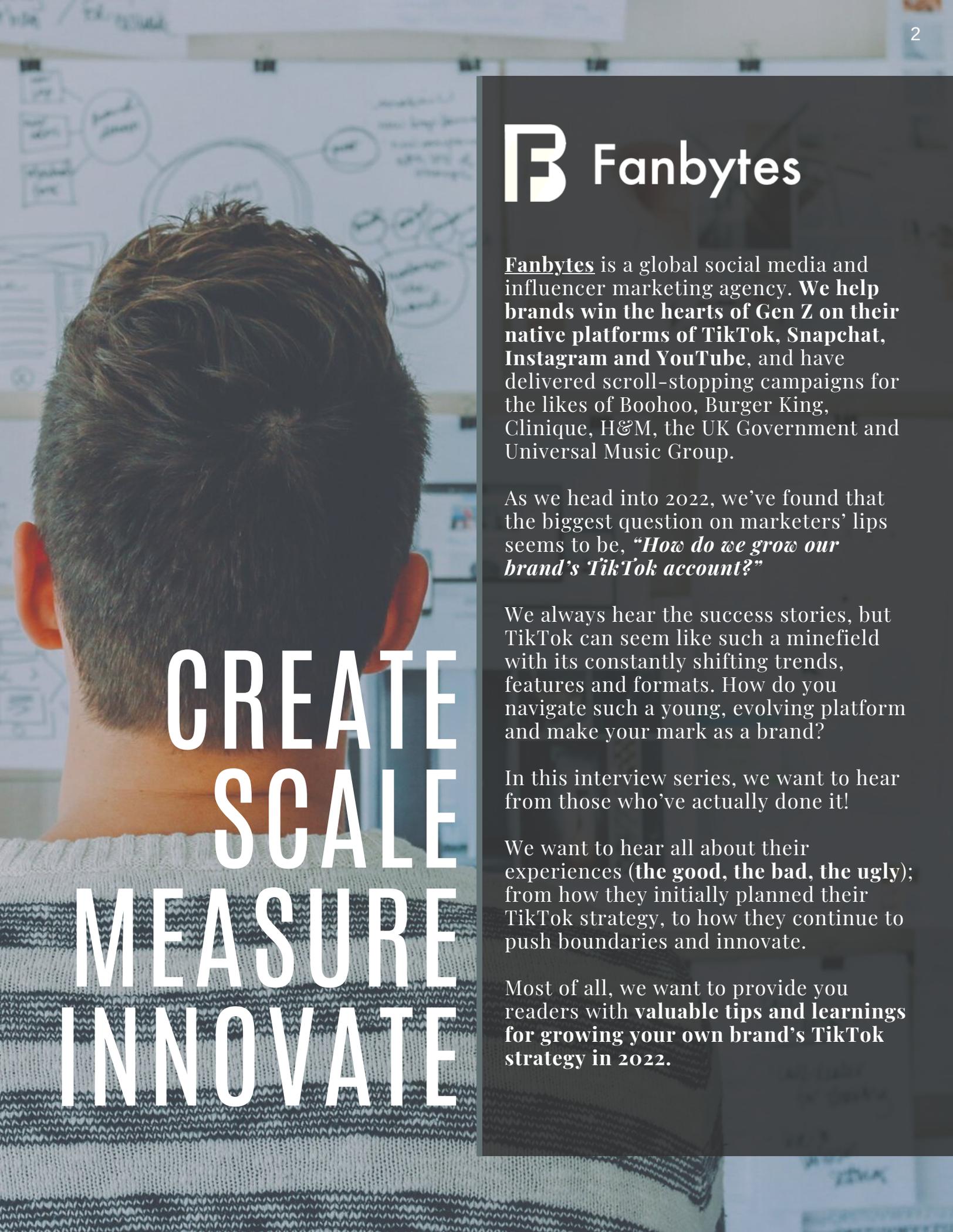
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Social Media Coordinator at Duolingo



HOW TO GROW
YOUR BRAND'S
TIKTOK ACCOUNT

*Our videos aren't to sell anything - we're just using the **creative real estate** to join in on the trends and meet people where they're at.*

A person's back is seen from behind, looking towards a whiteboard covered in diagrams and notes. The person is wearing a grey and white striped sweater. The whiteboard has various diagrams, including a circular flowchart and a rectangular flowchart.

F Fanbytes

Fanbytes is a global social media and influencer marketing agency. We help brands win the hearts of Gen Z on their native platforms of TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram and YouTube, and have delivered scroll-stopping campaigns for the likes of Boohoo, Burger King, Clinique, H&M, the UK Government and Universal Music Group.

As we head into 2022, we've found that the biggest question on marketers' lips seems to be, *"How do we grow our brand's TikTok account?"*

We always hear the success stories, but TikTok can seem like such a minefield with its constantly shifting trends, features and formats. How do you navigate such a young, evolving platform and make your mark as a brand?

In this interview series, we want to hear from those who've actually done it!

We want to hear all about their experiences (**the good, the bad, the ugly**); from how they initially planned their TikTok strategy, to how they continue to push boundaries and innovate.

Most of all, we want to provide you readers with **valuable tips and learnings for growing your own brand's TikTok strategy in 2022.**

**CREATE
SCALE
MEASURE
INNOVATE**



INTRODUCTION

1 Could you give us a bit of an intro to Duolingo and your role there?

Duolingo is a free language learning app with a mission to make education accessible globally! I'm currently the Social Media Coordinator which means I help run our social accounts - Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and of course, TikTok! In my role, I'm responsible for social strategy, content creation and community management.

When you don't try to sell your product, people become curious on their own about who you are and what you offer.

CREATE

2 How would you describe Duolingo's brand identity or 'personality'?

Our personality is fun, quirky and helpful! At the end of the day, we know language learning is hard, so we want to make it fun. We're also a little passive aggressive with our notifications and making sure you remember to do your lesson!

3 How do you reflect this on TikTok?

We were already known for our sense of fun and joke passive aggression prior to joining TikTok, so we brought it to the app! Our videos aren't to sell anything - we're just using the creative real estate to join in on the trends and meet people where they're at. The same thing for our commenting strategy! And, funnily enough, when you don't try to sell your product, people become curious on their own about who you are and what you offer.

**4 What was your approach to TikTok? Did you define a clear strategy, did you do any consumer research, or did you just 'go for it'?**

It was a mixture of all of the above. We definitely knew it was an important place to be and we wanted to figure out the right way to enter the conversation. We had brands we admired on the platform and worked to figure out what we could do to authentically share our POV. After that, we developed a strategy that proved to be successful! At the end of the day, testing and learning is the best way to approach TikTok so there were also "go for it" moments!

All of our growth has been 100% free - we have not put a single dollar behind what we do.

SCALE

5 Can you tell us about the types of creatives you've been using on the platform? And what do you think resonates most with your audience?

We've been using 10 second videos with our Duo mascot. Everyone loves the big green owl so we try to incorporate it as much as possible! We also use trending audios for funny comebacks to comments from our community.

6 Is there one Duolingo TikTok video or campaign that particularly stands out to you?

Yes! We had a video that featured a remix of Adele's song "Easy on Me". We showed Duo twerking on a conference room table and it was a huge turning point for us in establishing our presence on the app with Gen-Z.

**7 What have been the key steps or ingredients to growing your TikTok community and account?**

All of our growth has been 100% free - we have not put a single dollar behind what we do. The key ingredients come down to knowing what's trending, being able to join in authentically and have fun with it! If your objective is to directly sell a product on the app, it's not going to work.

8 What would be your recommendations for brands wanting to grow their TikTok account in 2022?

I'd highly recommend just being a consumer on the app and taking a step back from the pressure of wanting to build a large following. When you take the time to understand the platform, you can use the knowledge that you have about your brand to create awesome content! Also, it's okay if not everything is a viral success right away - it took us quite a few tries to get here!

9 What would you say have been the biggest challenges for the Duolingo team when it comes to TikTok?

At the moment, we're interested in adding more storylines to Duo on TikTok so we're in the process of coming up with natural and funny guest appearances that are still authentic!

MEASURE

10 What does 'success' look like for you and your team on TikTok?

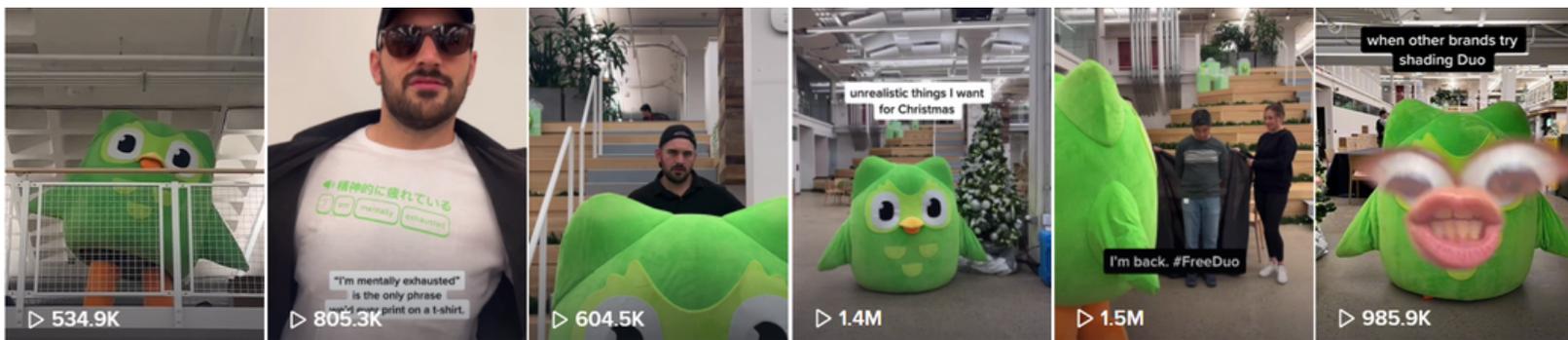
We measure virality by having over 1M views and if we can have trending comments on other creator videos.

11 Have you ever struggled with communicating the purpose of TikTok to other stakeholders? If so, how have you managed that?

We're actually in a super lucky position that we didn't have to advocate for using TikTok. Duolingo values innovation and trying new things, so stakeholders were very excited about what we can do on the platform!

12 How does TikTok play into your wider content and marketing strategy?

At the moment, our TikTok is primarily focused on gaining share of voice. We just want brand recognition and Gen-Z to think "wow, that's so Duolingo!"



INNOVATE

13 Things like TikTok Shopping and TikTok Live are opening up loads of opportunities for brands, particularly with social commerce. What are you most excited about exploring next year?

At this point, we're just looking forward to growing our community and finding new ways to collaborate with different TikTok creators.

14 What would be your one key piece of advice for brands heading into 2022 when it comes to their TikTok and/or Gen Z marketing strategy?

At the end of the day, if you want to make an impact and help your bottom line, you have to step away from directly promoting your product. I know it can sound scary and counterintuitive, but when you have engaging content that resonates, people will be interested!

15 What's your favourite brand account on TikTok and why?

I'm a huge fan of Ryanair! They're one of the few accounts that have followed a similar formula as us and have found success in just engaging with trends!



ABOUT FANBYTES

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

With particular expertise in TikTok (we built Europe's first TikTok creator house!), we've worked with the likes of the **ACCA**, **Burger King**, **Clinique**, **Converse**, **Mattel**, **Vestiaire Collective** and **Universal Music Group** 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:

- 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

Get in touch with us at www.fanbytes.com.

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