

The Influence of TikTok Commercial Advertising Interactivity on Users' Purchasing Decisions

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Abstract:

TikTok's commercials have changed how brands interact with consumers, the commercial factors driving purchase intentions of viewers remain underexplored. Drawing on 134 survey responses, this study investigates how interactivity in TikTok commercial advertisements shapes consumer purchasing behavior, with a focus on the mediating roles of emotional and utilitarian value. The results show that advertisement interactivity significantly increases purchase intention only through utilitarian value (such as product utility, price discount, or convenience link), emotional value (such as the pleasure and emotional resonance generated by the advertisement) had no significant effect on purchase intention, indicating that functional messaging is more influential than emotional appeals in commercial advertising. This suggests that functional messaging is more influential and useful than emotional appeals in TikTok commercials. These insights encourage marketers to focus on tangible value propositions when planning TikTok advertising campaigns. By integrating academic theory with real world marketing practice, this study provides data-driven guidance for companies navigating the rapidly evolving e-commerce landscape on TikTok and highlights key psychological drivers of digital consumer behavior.

Keywords: Commercial advertising; influence; purchase decisions

1. Introduction

In the current digital era, platforms specializing in short video content such as TikTok have revolutionized traditional marketing methods. TikTok is a globally leading short-video platform, focused on 15

second to 3 minute short videos. Users can quickly create and share content through creative tools and interactive functions, also acting as a convenient bridge between businesses and consumers, this is commonly called "e-marketing", many companies and organizations capitalize on the innovations

brought by social media and technology development, slowly replacing traditional advertising. Especially with the rise of “Viral Marketing”, which is one of the activities that can be done from “Digital Marketing”. Viral marketing is a strategy where content such as writing, pictures, songs and videos spreads rapidly much like a virus, through social sharing [1]. Users can watch videos on short-video platforms and also give likes, comments and shares at any time. When a video is commented on and shared, it becomes a symbol that carries this interactive intention. This symbol is passed on in sharing and takes on meaning in mutual comments. When the sharer receives this signal symbol, the meaning of this transmission process deepens [2]. At the same time, TikTok users’ dissemination capability has become even more pronounced. As more and more businesses use TikTok for commercial advertising, they need to clearly identify which factors make videos truly influencing consumer’s purchasing decisions. This not only impacts the effectiveness of business’s marketing strategies, helping them refine their approach and engage more effectively with their target audience, but it also affects consumers’ decision-making processes and behavior. Additionally, this research can offer fresh insights and discoveries for scholars in advertising, communication, or customer behavior studies. As short video ads become increasingly mainstream, overlooking these questions could possibly cause businesses to fail to capitalize on key opportunities of meaningful consumer interaction, potentially leading to a loss of competitiveness in the market.

2. Method

2.1 Research Basis

Interactivity plays a crucial role in enhancing consumer purchase intention. It stimulates purchase motivation by enhancing consumer engagement, improving perceived control and facilitating emotional connection. In social media, brand official websites, live e-commerce and other environments, interactive means (e.g. comments, likes, votes, pop-up chats, etc.), can effectively enhance the user’s immersive experience. AI-Qudah found that the interactivity of branded content in social networks is a determining factor in boosting purchase intention, especially through “likes, comments, retweets “ and other user behaviors as a path [3]. Interactivity is at the core of social media marketing, directly driving purchases while also indirectly influencing consumer decisions by boosting brand awareness [3]. Short video marketing refers to

all marketing activities, including live-streaming initiatives related to short video marketing—that take place on short video platforms across the internet [3]. Mainly through entertainment, creativity, etc. to quickly attract users, stimulate user curiosity and increase brand memory points [4]. Interactivity is the facility of direct communication between individuals and organizations regardless of distance or time [5]. Interactivity can be categorized into three core dimensions, which are controllability, two-way communication, and synchronization. Controllability refers to the user’s ability to directly influence his/her experience through autonomous decision making, which is manifested in the right to make active choices about the path of information and the way the content is presented. Two-way communication refers to the ability of real-time information exchange between users and enterprises, users and users, forming a two-way feedback closed loop. Synchronization refers to the degree of real-time matching between the user’s operation and the system’s response, emphasizing the “no-delay” experience [5]. The interactivity of short videos can stimulate the audience’s willingness to participate and empathize, thus enhancing the purchase intention and brand favorability. Hu Li and Gong Jian pointed out that short video interaction enhances travelers’ emotional engagement and brand involvement, which has a positive effect on tourism destination marketing [6]. Utilitarian value is an important factor affecting marketing, which refers to the ability of consumers to obtain functional benefits or solve practical problems from products or content. In short video marketing, utilitarian value is expressed as practical tips, rational recommendations, and real reviews. It is found that the more practical the content is, the more likely it is to trigger positive interactions, trust, and even word-of-mouth, thus influencing the final purchase decision [7].

2.2 Research Process

This study implemented survey research method, as Fig. 1 shown, the study will be measured through four variables, including Independent variable, Interactivity of short video advertisement and also dependent variable, purchase intention toward viewers after watching the video (whether they are willing to purchase). Based on the previous discussion, the hypothesis will be:

H1: The interactivity of Douyin commercial advertisements positively influences users’ purchasing intentions by enhancing their perception of practical value.

H2: The interactivity of Douyin commercial advertisements positively influences users’ purchasing intentions by enhancing their perception of emotional value.

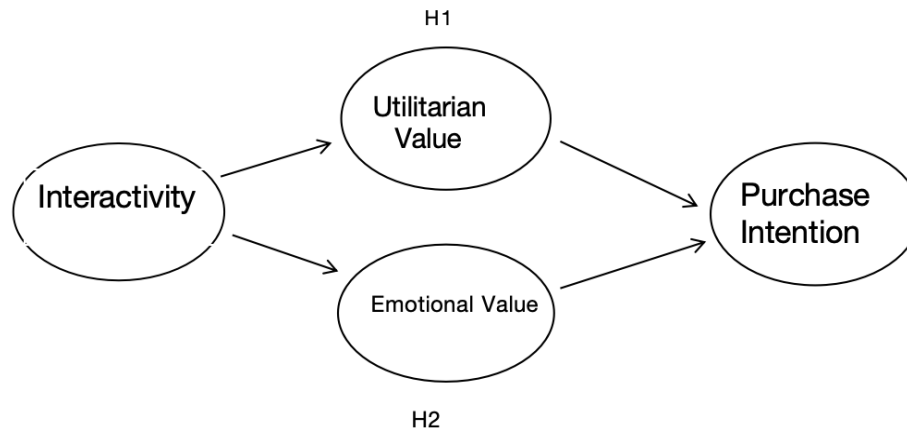


Fig. 1 Research Framework.

In order to explore the impact of short video marketing interactivity on user purchase intention, this study has designed a questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into four dimensions, containing 20 questions, covering short video interactivity, emotional value, practical value and purchase intention. In this research, the measurement scales employed in this study incorporate five-point Likert scale to ensure theoretical validity and measurement reliability. Specifically, the survey mainly conducts the investigation from two key dimensions: interactivity and purchase intention.

To ensure comprehensive measurement of each construct, multiple scales are used to measure each dimension in the research, following established practices in consumer behavior studies. After releasing the survey, a total of 134 valid questionnaires were collected. The basic situation of the respondents is shown. Among them, there are more female respondents (58.21%) participating in the questionnaire than male respondents (41.79%). The higher female participation rate indicates that girls are more interested in short video platform e-commerce; the age ratio of the respondents is: 37.31% under 18 years old, 32.84% between 18 and 24 years old; 12.69% between 25 and 34 years old, 7.46% between 35 and 44 years old, and 9.7% over 45 years old. Respondents under 18 and those aged 18-24 are significantly more interested in the e-commerce functions of short video platforms than those in other age groups, indicating that short video platforms.

3. Results

3.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability coefficient serves as an important measurement to evaluate whether the collected data for each variable adheres to the required standards of consistency. In the context of this research, the questionnaire measured 15

items, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.908. This value considered as acceptable, this indicating that the scale demonstrates satisfactory reliability.

The validity of the questionnaire was verified using KMO and Bartlett tests. The KMO test value of was 0.908, indicating this questionnaire is ready for factor analysis. The Bartlett's test result showed that the approximate chi-square value was 1324.736, thus the validity structure was good.

3.2 Mediation Effect Test

The results show that the overall effect of the interactivity of viral TikTok commercial advertisements on purchase intention is not significant (0.004), there are significant differences in the paths of its effects. Among them, the mediating effect of the „interactivity → utilitarian value → purchase intention“ hypothesis is significant (95% BootCI: 0.029 - 0.25), and the direct effect is not significant (-0.09), indicating that utilitarian value plays a complete mediating role between the interactive nature and purchase intention, by watching commercial short-video advertisements and engaging in interactive activities, users have enhanced the practical value of the product, achieving the desired result of purchasing it, which supporting H1. While the mediating effect of the „interactive nature → emotional value → purchase intention“ path is not significant (95% BootCI includes 0, and the mediating effect value is -0.019). It was demonstrated that by watching commercial short-video advertisements, users did not receive sufficient emotional value, and this did not have a positive impact on their purchasing intentions, which means H2 is not supported. Therefore, the interactive nature of viral TikTok advertisements mainly positively influences purchase intention by enhancing users' utilitarian value, rather than emotional value (see Table 1).

Table 1. Analysis of mediating effects.

Item	Total	Mediated	Direct	95%BootCI	Test conclusion
Interactivity=>Utilitarian Value=>Purchase intention	0.004	0.113	-0.09	0.029 - 0.25	Accepted
Interactivity=>Emotional Value=>Purchase Intention	0.004	-0.019	-0.09	-0.122	Rejected

3.3 Regression Analysis

Table 2 shows the results of a regression analysis of how interactivity impacts viewers' purchase intention. The constant term has a coefficient of 0.049 and a standard error of 0.119, which is not statistically significant ($t = 0.414$, $p = 0.679$). This is suggesting that the initial level of purchase intention when other variables are zero is not meaningful and useful in this study.

Table 2. Data of regression analysis.

Variable	b	Sb	b'	t	P
Constant	0.049	0.119	-	0.414	0.679
Interactivity	1.056	0.056	0.856	19.031	0.000***

In the contrast, the coefficient for interactivity is 1.056 ($SE = 0.056$), and a standardized value of 0.856. This positive relationship is very significant ($t = 19.031$, $p < 0.001$), this is indicating that greater interactivity influences higher purchase intention

The analysis shows a strong fit, with an R-squared of 0.733 and adjusted R-squared of 0.731, meaning 73.1% of the variation in purchase intention is explained by the study. The F-statistic of 362.17 ($p < 0.001$) further confirms the regression's significance. This results suggests that interactivity is definitely a key factor that is influencing purchase decisions and support the study's predictive power.

4. Discussion

Looking at the above data and analysis, it can be seen that the mediating effect of emotional value is not particularly significant. This may be closely related to the intensity of emotions. Emotional value should enhance the intensity of emotional experiences, allowing consumers to feel external stimuli or providing mysterious narratives to leave them with suspense, thereby prompting them to make a purchase. This is a key aspect of emotional value. Additionally, the negative emotions of consumers toward product selection should not be overlooked.

In the future, it may be possible to observe changes in consumers' emotional value toward the same product over the long term (from purchase to disposal). The number of survey questionnaires can be increased across different age groups. Gain a deep understanding of the goals and needs of different groups, analyze their emotional factors to accurately grasp consumers' emotional needs. On the

other hand, it can establish a mechanism for ongoing interaction to gain deeper insights into consumer product usage and promptly respond to consumer feedback, thereby highlighting the importance of interactivity.

5. Conclusion

The research delves into the impact of interactive features embedded within TikTok commercial advertisements on users' purchasing behavior, with a particular emphasis on the mediating roles of emotional value and utilitarian value. After research, the interactivity of short-video advertisements, such as comments, questions and answers, quick links, etc., has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions, making them more eager to purchase the products.

The findings of this study revealed that the interactivity present in TikTok's commercial ads exerted a remarkable positive influence on users' purchase decisions, but this effect was fully mediated by utilitarian value.

This key insight implies that if brands and marketers truly wish to drive sales through TikTok ads, they should prioritize delivering clear, functional, and instrumental information rather than relying solely on emotional resonance. After all, given the inherently commercial nature of these advertisements, users may be more focused on practical benefits rather than emotional connections when making purchasing decisions. The implications of this research are twofold. First, it offers businesses a valuable reference point for refining their TikTok advertising strategies, helping them allocate resources more effectively by emphasizing utilitarian content over purely emotional appeals.

Second, it contributes to the broader academic discourse on advertising effectiveness and consumer behavior, providing empirical support for the role of interactivity and perceived value in digital marketing.

Future research could explore whether these findings hold true across different product categories, cultural contexts, or platforms, further enriching the knowledge of digital consumer behavior.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally, and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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