



Iryna Mudra, Mariana Kitsa

What, How and Why? Tiktok As a Promising Channel for Media Promotion

ABSTRACT

In the article we examined the role of the social network TikTok (for the global news media The use of TikTok by the top 50 global news media was analysed. We found that only 14 of them had verified accounts on this social network and that only 13 of 50 were in actual usage. In the research the amount of videos on TikTok was outlined, their themes, their aims as well as their strategies. It was investigated that in order to be successful and to have a large amount of revisions and comments, media should create specific videos, which are unique and authentic, especially for this social network. The means and elements of the videos which were suitable for TikTok were examined. In particular, such important means are music, speakers, subtitles, as well as themes, mood and graphics. It was concluded that TikTok is a perspective platform for popularization of the content of media, attracting new audiences and explaining complicated themes for young people.

KEY WORDS

Audience. Content. Media. Popularization. Themes. TikTok. Video.

1 Introduction

Social networks have, for a long time, been a popular platform for engaging audiences, keeping them interested in content, increasing traffic to media sites, and communicating with viewers / listeners / readers. Currently, the media market is fiercely competitive. Therefore, the media actively monitor the development of the market of social platforms and look for those that will help them to promote media content. Today on social platforms there exists a potential audience for mass media. Those media, which work effectively on it, attract recipients and increase traffic to their sites.

But every year it becomes more and more difficult for the media to work on social networks, because each social network has its own algorithms for covering published content. Social networks are aimed at making money from advertising, so they are tightening the algorithms for displaying posts from the media and other commercial pages. In turn, media outlets do not always want to pay for advertising on such sites. Therefore, they are constantly studying changes in the algorithms of social networks and monitor the emergence of new and promising platforms to promote their content. Today you will not surprise anyone, because almost each media outlet distributes its content on several social networks and messengers. But for media outlets, this creates an additional burden.

After all, the same content is not suitable for publication on different social networks. Content needs to be created for each social network separately. Moreover, the active audience of the media is now registered on several social networks. Accordingly, recipients are not interested in consuming the same content and with the same presentation of information on different social networks. The user comes to each network for a certain type of content. On *Twitter*, the audience wants to read briefly about the most important things and receive verified information from authorities and politicians. On *Facebook* users come to find more serious content while on *YouTube* – to see the development of events with their own eyes. And on *Instagram* the aim of the audience is to look at good photos, see graphics and consume light content. But *TikTok* is now conquering a niche, where with the help of video you can easily, quickly, pretty and in simple words tell about events, even if they are complex and boring.

The TikTok social network is rapidly becoming popular not only among the young, but among older people as well. Previously unknown bloggers began to gain popularity and have millions of subscribers on this social network. Also, many TikTok videos are shared by users on other social networks and messengers. And it is all thanks to the algorithms of the social network and methods of presenting content. Accordingly, this social network should be of interest to media outlets and become an important tool for the promotion and the popularization of media content. Therefore, in this study we will find the advantages of the social network TikTok, whether media outlets have their own account on it and what content they post.

According to data published in the *Digital Global Overview Report 2022* in the partnership with *We Are Social* and *Hootsuite* there are 7.91 billion people worldwide, of which 4.95 billion are Internet users. Among them 4.62 billion use social networks. That is, almost everyone who has access to the Internet is registered on social networks and consume information from them. Social network users spend an average of 2 hours and 27 minutes per day on social media. TikTok's audience is 1 billion users, of which 884.9 million are 18+.¹ The main audience of this social network is young people under 35, but the number of older users is also growing. More than 167 million videos are watched in TikTok² every minute.

¹ KEMP, S.: *Digital 2022: Global Overview Report*. [online]. [2022-03-04]. Available at: <<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-global-overview-report>>.

² POHRYBNAIA, Y.: "Goldfields" TikTok: Who and How Earns Millions on the Web. [online]. [2022-01-07]. Available at: <<https://enovosty.com/society/full/2312-zoloty-priiski-tiktok-kto-i-kak-zarabatyvaet-milliony-v-seti>>.

Such a large audience makes this social network interesting for the media to distribute their content. It is also worth noting that the audience and content of this social network is changing. Two or three years ago, mostly teenagers and students used this application, and the main content they distributed was music and dance. But now the data shows that more and more older people are interested in the content they create and distribute on this social network. Accordingly, the arrival of a more mature audience has affected the content itself. After all, such an audience led to the fact that many large companies and small businesses wanted to sell their products to them. Therefore, now in TikTok you can meet doctors, lawyers, masseurs, MPs, hairdressers, furniture manufacturers and others. And accordingly, the content has changed, so now, along with entertainment content, you can find a lot of serious and important, but sometimes even boring videos. Therefore, in a short period of time, the social network has transformed from purely entertaining and frivolous to one where it is easy, short, accessible, sometimes with humour, and possible to communicate about important and necessary things. It makes this application promising for media outlets.

Analyzing the activities of the media on TikTok, we see that there already are editors who understand that this social network is becoming more popular every year, and need to work for the future and gain a young audience. TikTok is also starting to pay for unique content, which also makes it promising for the media.

1.1 A Short History of TikTok

In 2016, Zhang Ying, a young Chinese businessman and owner of *ByteDance*, released a new Douyin app for sharing music videos. Initially, the program was intended only for residents of China. However, the application gained popularity and later developed an analogue of Douyin for an international audience – TikTok. The successful launch of the new social network on the international market was facilitated by the purchase of the service *Musical.ly* – an application for teenagers, where they sang famous songs to the soundtrack and recorded videos. After the acquisition of *Musical.ly*, its multimillion-dollar audience actually shifted to TikTok, which had broader functionality and its own system of recommendations based on artificial intelligence. It is often called one of the keys to the success of TikTok.³ Thus, the audience of TikTok at the end of 2018 amounted to more than 800 million users in 150 countries. Bloomberg estimated TikTok at \$75 billion and named it the world's most expensive startup.⁴ But with the development and popularity of TikTok, Douyin has not disappeared. TikTok and Douyin are similar programs from *ByteDance*. The difference between the applications is first of all, geography. Due to Chinese censorship, users outside China cannot fully use the social network.⁵ Douyin is actively implementing a system of automatic face recognition and analysis of user behaviour.⁶ Blogger profiles that are popular on the Chinese Internet have virtually no subscribers outside of China, and conversely, accounts that are popular in Europe, America, or the CIS have no subscribers in China.

³ SAVCHENKO, H.: *TikTok. How He Conquers the World and Where It All Began*. [online]. [2022-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-52576277>>.

⁴ MYKHAILOVA, A.: *Douyin's Popularity and Opportunities for Brand Promotion in China*. [online]. [2022-01-12]. Available at: <<https://as-pacific.com/blog/populyarnost-douyin-i-vozmozhnosti-dlya-marketinga/>>.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ *TikTok or Douyin. What Is the Difference?* [online]. [2022-02-12]. Available at: <<https://senior.ua/articles/tiktok-ili-douyin-v-chem-raznica>>.

1.2 How Does It Work?

This application differs from YouTube and other popular social networks because it allows you to create viral flash mobs, record short videos, streams (online broadcasts). It also has a built-in lightweight and convenient video editor that allows you to speed up or slow down frames, apply different colour filters to videos, apply effects, use masks and AR objects, as well as add music from the service library. After that, you can publish the clip directly on your page or on another social network. Challenges are very common in TikTok - videos where users perform various tasks and offer to repeat them.⁷ Also, this social network attracts the media with its algorithms. It's easier to get on TikTok than on YouTube. Unlike Facebook, which recommends content based on the activity of your friends, TikTok analyzes the behaviour of users in the application to find out their tastes.⁸ By creating the right content, the media can get millions of views. After all, the algorithms of the application show users what they want to see. So even if no one subscribes to the media account, the video can go viral and be seen by millions.⁹ Now the duration of the video is up to 3 minutes, but in 2020 the video on this social network was allowed for up to 60 seconds.

New content monetization opportunities are constantly appearing on TikTok. In 2021, the social network made it possible to monetize those accounts that have more than a thousand subscribers. In particular, you can conduct live broadcasts and receive stickers on them, which are the domestic currency of this social network. To receive coins, you need to share really interesting information live: give a variety of advice and recommendations, entertain the audience or share personal experiences. The second is to involve the viewer, ask questions, answer their comments. Also, some TikTokers perform tasks for donations.

Like every social network, TikTok needs content. But not one that has already been created for other social networks. These are the features of this platform. When the media can create one video for Facebook, Instagram and/or YouTube, such a video is unlikely to get enough audience involvement in TikTok. And it's not just the fact that the audience comes to each social network for new content, not only to limit the duration of the video, but the fact is that the style of information in TikTok is different from other social networks. After all, the emphasis in TikTok is usually on the person, the blogger, who becomes recognizable. They talk about important events, things, while using the available tools of the application (masks, music). The content is varied, both humorous and serious, but presented in an easy, concise and accessible way. The rating of the account is also affected by battles and live broadcasts.

2 Methods

To study the distribution of products by the media we took the world's highest-ranked media. To do this, we used a list published by *Similarweb*.¹⁰ Among the 50 media outlets on the list, only 13 have TikTok accounts. Mentions of the use of mass media were first searched on the website of Similarweb in the section "Social Network Traffic", and then on the media site

⁷ KOROLCHUK, M.: *TikTok, Likee, Kwai: Secrets of Popularity and Hidden Dangers*. [online]. [2022-02-13]. Available at: <<https://learning.ua/blog/202009/tiktok-likee-kwai-sekret-y-populiarnosti-ta-prykhovani-nebezpeky/>>.

⁸ SHOU, D.: *TikTok Stars. Who Are They and How Much Do They Earn?* [online]. [2022-02-11]. Available at: <<https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-51856011>>.

⁹ KOROLCHUK, M.: *TikTok, Likee, Kwai: Secrets of Popularity and Hidden Dangers*. [online]. [2022-02-13]. Available at: <<https://learning.ua/blog/202009/tiktok-likee-kwai-sekret-y-populiarnosti-ta-prykhovani-nebezpeky/>>.

¹⁰ *Top Website Ranking*. [online]. [2022-03-13]. Available at: <<https://www.similarweb.com/ru/top-websites/category/news-and-media/>>.

itself. There we were looking for information if the media content can be viewed / monitored by TikTok media. During these two stages of the search, it was impossible to find information that at least one media outlet from the list has an official TikTok account. In our opinion, this may be explained as the usual inattention of the media management, or due to the fact that society still believes that TikTok is not serious and the media does not want to advertise their activities on this social network.

Therefore, in the third stage searching media using the Similarweb rating we used a search on the site of TikTok itself. The search was carried out in two directions – in the search bar we entered the name of the media, then, if this method did not work, we entered the web address. For the study, only those pages were selected that contained several important elements by which the media could be identified, in particular:

- avatar media logo;
- in the head of the profile it was stated that this is the official page of the media;
- the official web address of the media was indicated in the profile header;
- there was a blue circle with a white tick next to the name of the media. This TikTok icon indicates official verified accounts. Among the media which were selected for the study, only *Timesofindia.com* did not have such a badge, but having analyzed the media site and the account of the same name, we can declare that this is the official media page in TikTok.

So, out of the 50 most rated global media, 14 have accounts on TikTok. But for the purposes of the study were taken only 13, because one of the media, *T-online.de*, posted only 3 videos in 2020, while the subject of the study were those accounts that are regularly updated, so this media on TikTok was not taken for research. During the search we also found several thematic TikTok accounts of the *BBC*, namely *bbcspport*, *bbcnewsjapan*, *bbcbiteseize*, but only a page called *bbc* was selected for the study, because on this account it is declared that this is the Official BBC TikTok account.

The next stage of the research was a detailed analysis of the media account and the content it publishes. 13 media on TikTok were selected for analysis, namely: *bbc.co.uk*, *cnn.com*, *dailymail.co.uk*, *hurriyet.com.tr*, *infobae.com*, *compass.com*, *detik.com*, *washingtonpost.com*, *cnbc.com*, *vnexpress.net*, *tribunnews.com*, *timesofindia.com* and *repubblica.it* (Table 1).

We outlined the following research questions:

RQ1 Which media from the top-50 have their accounts on TikTok?

RQ2 What are the forms of presenting content by media on TikTok?

RQ3 What strategies are used by media on TikTok?

3 Results

Analyzing the content of the media on TikTok, we noticed that the media works in two directions: creating videos specifically for this application or simply posting content that has already been distributed on other social networks.

Most often, the studied media work on this principle. Sometimes you can see that videos which are posted on TikTok are also available on Instagram. A striking example is Dailymail, where many videos have been seen on both TikTok and Instagram. It seemed that one video content was created specifically for two platforms. But when analyzing the Instagram page, we have got the impression that they run it better. We also looked for the same media content not only on Instagram, but also on Facebook and YouTube. And we found out that some TikTok content was duplicated on Instagram and YouTube. This can be explained by the fact that Instagram also allows the publication of short videos and the audience enters this social network mainly for interesting, bright, beautiful and easy and entertaining content (Table 1).

Name of media in Tik Tok	Country	Amount of followers	Approximately frequency of new videos	Total amount of videos
BBC	U.K.	1.1 M	1-2 a day	619
CNN	USA	39 K	Every day	86
Daily mail	U.K.	3.5 M	2-6 a day	More than 2K
Hurriyetcomtr	Turkey	11.5 K	1 a day	103
Infobae	Argentina	700 K	3-4 a day	675
Kompascom	Indonesia	1.9 M	4-7 a day	More than 2K
Detikcom	Indonesia	1.2 M	5-7 a day	More than 2K
Washingtonpost	USA	1.2 M	2-3 a day	More than 2K
CNBC	USA	1700	1 a day	37
VnExpress.net	Vietnam	1.8 M	1-2 a day	More than 3K
Tribunnews	Indonesia	2.4 M	7-9 a day	More than 5K
Times Of India	India	47 K	1 a month	49
La.repubblica	Italy	43 K	2-3 a month	155

TABLE 1: Quantitative Indicators of the Analyzed Media Accounts in TikTok

Source: own processing, 2022

Analyzing many media outlets sometimes the impression is given that the page in TikTok is only for ticks, media follow it on a residual basis and do not try to adapt to its format. Therefore, the user does not attract the attention of such media content in the general feed and does not arouse interest. This is how the BBC, CNN, Infobae, Cnbc, Kompas, Detik, Vnexpress distribute their content. These media outlets distribute mostly light and entertaining content, but sometimes serious videos are published, such as excerpts from government speeches. Infobae posted a video about the Auschwitz concentration camp. They also post announcements of their programs. These media outlets focus mainly on young people, as there are many videos about the stars.

A *Tribunnews* posts mostly serious content that is aimed at older people. This is the only one among the researched media that focuses on the distribution of serious content on important topics. Although such content does not quite fit into the style of videos posted on TikTok, after all, people come to this social network for bright, easy and entertaining content.

Hürriyet publishes many excerpts from its program *Özel Röportajlar* on its TikTok page, thus popularizing them. Full versions of the video program are available on the YouTube media channel. But the views of such videos in TikTok are not great.

There are different forms of conducting content for TikTok. In the first case, media create a video specifically for the application and only for it. Videos are created in up to three minutes and fully meet the specifics of TikTok and the main thing is that such content will not be found anywhere else. Each social network has its own content. And among the researched and analyzed media in TikTok only the *Washington Post* fully adheres to this rule. And accordingly, it offends (?) the views, which are high. The content is fun, interesting and original. There are videos that advertise the newspaper itself, but there are only few of them. You can find all the trendy video formats in this account. In addition, the media does not just promote its product – now it is a full-fledged blog with sketches, challenges and humorous video content. For example, during quarantine, a new video on the topic of self-isolation and remote work¹¹ appears in the account every day. They also present themes on coronavirus and vaccination, laughing at American politicians and more, and even tell the story of Britney Spears' imprisonment.

¹¹ SALDAN, H.: *Why Does Your Media Need a TikTok Account*. [online]. [2022-03-12]. Available at: <<https://medialab.online/news/tiktok/>>.

The *Washington Post* responds quickly to breaking news and publishes new videos almost daily.¹² In comparison to most of the media which we have analyzed, only in the *Washington Post* all information is told or demonstrated by presenters. There are no fragments of plots or programs. Hyperlinks to the site are also missing. There is only video recorded by presenters. And it fits harmoniously into the application format. After all, in TikTok the main characters or faces of the page are presenters or as they are now called – TikTokers. They sing, dance, tell and show, host live broadcasts and battles. This is the format the audience is used to in this application. And in our subjective opinion, ordinary videos in the “Recommendations” or “Follow-up” tapes are not as eye-catching and do not fit into the format of the application, they are not so effective in the news feed of the social media Tik Tok, where in each video there is a blogger (bloggers) who shares its problem or history using a variety of tools offered by this social network.

Media outlets such as *Republica and Dailymail*, in addition to posting excerpts from various videos, post content which is already shot for TikTok, where there is a presenter who narrates the available news.

3.1 Strategies

Based on the analyzed pages of the media on TikTok, we highlighted the strategies used by the media in this application (Table 2).

1. Promotion of programs and other media products on the social network. *Hürriyet* applies this strategy to the program *Özel Röportajlar*, the application contains short excerpts from the program.
2. Increase traffic to the site. Media outlets such as *Infobae, Compas* and *Tribunnews* post hyperlinks to their TikTok videos on a media site where you can read the text to the video.
3. Informing the audience. TikTok media simply tell and show important and interesting information to their audience. This strategy is followed by the *BBC, CNN, Detik, CNBC, Vnexpress*.
4. Clarification of important topics. Media such as the *Washington Post, Republica, Daily Mail* not only provide information about what had happened, but also with the help of infographics, funny pictures, cartoons, illustrations explain important topics, analyze trends and prospects. Thus, they contribute to the audience's understanding of current affairs.
5. **Audience.** The vast majority of researched mass media create and distribute content that is intended for young audiences. However, media outlets such as *Times of India* and *Tribunnews* distribute content aimed at older audiences.

Themes and content. Topics on the pages of the media on TikTok are diverse, you can find sports, political, environmental, cultural, social and other topics. But in the vast majority of the studied media, the content is light and entertaining, which shows different interests, nature, countries, lives of stars, different humorous situations etc.

Media recognition. The main elements of media recognition on TikTok are the presenter, who is the face of the media and/or the logo of the media, which is located in the videos. Media outlets such as *Republica, Daily Mail* and the *Washington Post* engage presenters to maintain a page on TikTok. And *Tribunnews, VnExpress, Detik, Compas, Infobae* and *Hürriyet* can be easily identified on video, because there is the media logo. And in *Times of India*, on top of each video with a red background is the name of the media.

¹² *How the Media are Conquering TikTok. The Best and Non-Standard Examples (from Belarus Too)*. [online]. [2022-01-17]. Available at: <<https://press-club.by/dosved/kak-media-zatiktok-luchshie-i-nestandartnye-pri>>.

Video design and decoration. Most of the analyzed media in TikTok do not care about the design of their page on this social network. Going to the pages of such media as the *BBC*, *CNN*, *Dailymail*, *Infobae*, *Detik*, *Washington Post* and *CNBC*, it is noticeable that the editors constantly use different fonts and colours, as well as templates for video design. On the page, these videos do not look harmonious and are unattractive, and the page is no longer tidy. Interestingly, some of these media on their other social networks follow the same design and colour scheme. For example, such media as *Infobae*, *Detik*, *Washington Post* and *CNBC* adhere to the colour scheme and style of design in Instagram.

Mass media such as *Hurriyet*, *Compas*, *Tribunnews*, *Repubblica*, *VnExpress* and *Times of India* are trying to follow a single style in design. The page of *Hürriyet* on TikTok is decorated in more attractive way, there are just portrait photos of different people and no captions. It looks interesting and harmonious.

The *Compas* page on TikTok shows that each video has text in several colours – white and yellow. The font of the text is the same everywhere and looks neat. *Tribunnews* also adds captions in white font on a blue background. *Repubblica* also follows the same style in the decorated videos – on a white background with captions in black font. And *VnExpress* uses the same template for the design of the video – a pink background with a sprig of sakura and it is written in white letters.

One more method for attracting audience is subtitles. They are used in most videos of *BBC*, *Infobae*, *Washington Post*, *CNBC*, *Tribunnews* and in some videos of *CNN* and *Times of India*. Posts with subtitles facilitate the perception of information. Especially, it is important when the record is not of high quality and when the voices of people are slightly heard in the video. Also, posts with subtitles are convenient for people who have hearing problems, or when it there is no opportunity to turn on the sound, so videos with subtitles can attract wider audiences.

Name of media in Tik Tok	Topics of the videos	Type of the video	Uniqueness, compared to other social networks	Strategy (aim)
BBC	Social, medical, nature	Entertainment, humorous	Unique	Informing the audience
CNN	Social, sport, investigations	Informative, with a journalist in the frame	Unique	Informing the audience
Daily mail	Nature, animals, social	Video-instructions, entertainment, humorous	Some videos are duplicated on Youtube	Explanation of important topics
Hurriyetcomtr	Politics, show-biz, social	Fragment of the interview show	The whole interviews are posted on Youtube	Popularization of own programs
Infobae	Current affairs, recreation	Informative,	3-4 a day	675
without narration	Unique	Increasing the visitors of the web-site	4-7 a day	More than 2K
Kompascom	Current affairs, weather, medical	Video-instructions, informative	Unique	Increasing the visitors of the web-site
Detikcom	Current affairs.	Informative, entertainment, humorous	Some videos are duplicated on Youtube and Instagram	Informing the audience
Washingtonpost	Current affairs, climate changes, COVID-19	Humorous videos in the format of the role scenes	Unique	Explanation of important topics

CNBC	Current affairs	Short humorous videos with questions to followers	Some videos are duplicated in Instagram	Informing the audience
VnExpress.net	Social	Informative, without narration	Some videos are duplicated on Youtube	Informing the audience
Tribunnews	Current affairs	Informative, without narration	Unique	Increasing the visitors of the web-site
Times Of India	Current affairs	Short informative videos	Unique	Informing the audience
La.repubblica	Current affairs, social, medical	Informative, with a journalist in the frame	Unique	Explanation of important topics

TABLE 2: Qualitative Indicators of the Analyzed Media Accounts on TikTok

Source: own processing, 2022

So, of the 50 most popular media outlets, only 13 media outlets have TikTok accounts. The media in different ways run their pages in this application. Some media try to adapt their content to the social network format and gain an audience, while others simply post videos and are not aimed at getting large views, and sometimes distribute videos from the social network Instagram or YouTube to TikTok.

4 Discussion

As far as we have examined, 13 of 50 popular media have their own accounts on TikTok and more of the them create a unique content for this social network. Promoting media through Tik Tok has its advantages. One of the most important is that *“the content of the TikTok is very active, with a lot of activities online and offline, targeting young people with imagination and curiosity”*.¹³ For media it is an opportunity to attract young audiences. Moreover, as we have seen in the results of our researching, some media use TikTok to explain important current affairs, climate problems, medical issues etc. Our research proved the point of Vázquez-Herrero, J., Negreira-Rey, M. C., & López-García, X., who say that *“the popularity of this social network invites news outlets to address a young audience on a platform characterized by visual and short content and dynamics defined by algorithmic recommendations, trending hashtags and challenges”*.¹⁴ Despite the variety of themes which are depicted on TikTok, it has comfortable navigation. Additionally, the use of identification hashtags on TikTok allows users to post multiple videos in succession on the same topic resulting in a thread of related posts. This creates a series of “on-demand” videos for users and an opportunity for spaced repetition learning.¹⁵ Media began to use TikTok for behavioural purposes. For example, Egtesadi & Florea declare that one of the most popular videos that arose amid the COVID-19 outbreak contributed to the rising fame of the following song from Vietnam promoting preventive measures: *“Do not touch your face. Wash your hands. When you greet your friend, do the namaste.”*¹⁶ Gotlieb and Dyer accent that

¹³ See: XU, L. et al.: Research on the Causes of the “TikTok” App Becoming Popular and the Existing Problems. In *Journal of Advanced Management Science*, 2019, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 59-63.

¹⁴ See: VÁZQUEZ-HERRERO, J. et al.: Let’s Dance the News! How the News Media are Adapting to the Logic of TikTok. In *Journalism*, 2022, Vol. 23, No. 8, p. 1. [online]. [2022-02-12]. Available at: <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1464884920969092>>.

¹⁵ See: COMP, G. et al.: Is TikTok the Next Social Media Frontier for Medicine? In *AEM Education and Training*, 2021, Vol. 5, No. 3. No pagination.

¹⁶ EGHTESADI, M., FLOREA, A.: Facebook, Instagram, Reddit and TikTok: A Proposal for Health Authorities to Integrate Popular Social Media Platforms in Contingency Planning Amid a Global Pandemic Outbreak. In *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 2020, Vol. 111, No. 3, p. 389-391.

social media can allow for virtual celebrities and influencers (both medical and nonmedical) to have a significant influence on information spread due to their number of followers, regardless of the accuracy of their information.¹⁷ However, they warn that fast spreading of information through social networks can be harmful because there is a threat of the promotion of incorrect information and disinformation. So it is one more reason why media should have their own accounts on TikTok – they ought to be promoters of truthful, important information for young audiences. Moreover, according to the research of Basch et al., TikTok has the potential, not only to convey important health information, but to address different aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic as well.¹⁸ It means that it is TikTok, who can reach the young audiences by its short videos on important themes. There are different thoughts about the age of the audience of this social network, while Basch et al. say that TikTok is especially popular among those who are 13–24 years of age. Shutsko declares that comedy videos and musical performances turned out to be the most popular and the most frequent categories among both male and female performers on TikTok.¹⁹ Our research proved this thesis, because, as we have noticed, the most popular and commented videos on this social network are humorous, entertainment and comedy. It is worth mentioning, that media often use such entertainment formats for informing audiences about important issues. Sidorenko-Bautista et al. explain one more fact, why TikTok is so popular. It is about technologies. Emerging audiences, especially Generation Z, spend their time in digital environments that do not support this type of content. As a consequence, their interactions and multimedia behaviour focus on vertical, ephemeral content, rendering TikTok as an innovative alternative with a significant growth trend.²⁰ Not each media which we have analyzed, uses all the opportunities of this social media. Some of them just post pieces of their content to popularize the site of the media. One more thing, which is important in videos on TikTok is music. Because of this feature, the user's choice of background music often serves as an alien indicator of the video's content and meaning: song clips become imbued with specific and widely recognized meanings as users pull music from other videos with the same message and incorporate it into their own videos.²¹ Each media which we have investigated, used original music for their videos on TikTok. It doesn't matter if there is a journalist in the frame or not. It is useful for media to include subtitles in their videos. Post hoc analyses showed that subtitles were predominately used in news and oral speech videos. In addition, videos with subtitles received more shares than those without subtitles. This may be because subtitle enables viewers to have a better understanding of video content, which may promote content sharing. In contrast, TikTok videos with only spoken language attracted fewer comments and shares than those without spoken language.²² Only a few media accounts on TikTok had subtitles but most of them use spoken language.

¹⁷ GOTTLIEB, M., DYER, S.: Information and Disinformation: Social Media in the COVID-19 Crisis. In *Academic Emergency Medicine*, 2020, Vol. 27, No. 7, p. 640-641. [online]. [2022-01-22]. Available at: <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/acem.14036>>.

¹⁸ See: BASCH, C. H. et al.: COVID-19 on TikTok: Harnessing an Emerging Social Media Platform to Convey Important Public Health Messages. In *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 2020, Vol. 34, No. 5, p. 367-369. [online]. [2022-04-07]. Available at: <<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/ijamh-2020-0111/html>>.

¹⁹ See: SHUTSKO, A.: User-Generated Short Video Content in Social Media. A Case Study of TikTok. In MEISELWITZ, G. (ed.): *Social Computing and Social Media*. Copenhagen : Springer, 2020, p. 108-125.

²⁰ See: SIDORENKO-BAUTISTA, P. et al.: Use of New Narratives for COVID-19 Reporting: From 360° Videos to Ephemeral TikTok Videos in Online Media. In *Tripodos*, 2020, Vol. 1, No. 47, p. 105-122.

²¹ SACHS, J. et al.: *The TikTok Self: Music, Signaling, and Identity on Social Media*. [online]. [2022-02-17]. Available at: <<https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/2rx46/>>.

²² See: LI, Y. et al.: Communicating COVID-19 Information on TikTok: A Content Analysis of TikTok Videos from Official Accounts Featured in the COVID-19 Information Hub. In *Health Education Research*, 2021, Vol. 36, No. 3, p. 261-271.

5 Conclusion

Social networks are rapidly developing and conquering humanity. The media should be able to use perspective and popular social networks to promote their content, increase website traffic and build a media brand. A media account is a means for popularization of its content, informing the audience and explaining important themes.

One of the perspective social networks is TikTok, which is rapidly increasing its audience. But not each well-known and leading media uses this social network to promote the media and its content. Of the world's 50 highest-rated media outlets, only 13 run their pages on TikTok. And there is an explanation for this, because TikTok requires additional knowledge, skills and tools in order to attract audiences and receive views. Some of the media have chosen an easier way - to post ready-made journalistic videos or publish excerpts from programs. Thus, through the media account on TikTok to attract new users to the media site or to YouTube, which contains full video programs or interviews. However, this approach is not always justified, because the audience that switches from TikTok to other media resources will focus on the platform where the full content is posted.

According to our research, the most views and comments were from videos created specifically for TikTok, in the humorous genre, with additional illustrations, appropriate music and a light style of presentation. TikTok's audience comes for unique, creative, interesting content, and the media is not always ready to offer such content. However, this does not mean that only social content should be presented on this social network. In the example of the *Washington Post* we have noticed that in interesting, funny videos, journalists talk about important events, explain and clarify, thus forming a picture of the world for young audiences. Also, TikTok should be used to promote important ideas in medical topics. In particular, the topic of vaccination, rules of public places, hygiene recommendations, presented in a short, bright, creative form, can have a much greater effect and impact on young audiences than official speeches by the WHO. In order to properly present on the TikTok network, the media need to find specialists who would be able to create unique content for this social network, which correspond to the style and algorithms of this application.

5.1 Limitations and Further Research

Our research has limitations regarding the amount and types of media, which we have analyzed. Our sample was based on the results of Similar Web ratings of the most rating world media. We took into account 50 media of this rating, but there are other quality popular media which have their own accounts on TikTok, for example, *Le Monde*, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph* etc. It would be useful to include in the further research the sample of quality media from all over the world and analyze their strategies of using TikTok.

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Authors



Assoc. Prof. Iryna Mudra

National University "Lviv Polytechnic"
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Lviv, 1-3 Kniazia Romana St.
UKRAINE
iryna.m.mudra@lpnu.com

Iryna Mudra is an Associate Professor in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at the National University, Lviv Polytechnic. Her research interests are management and marketing in mass media, public relations, modern press, and fashion and body image in mass media. She has published a monograph entitled *Marketing Strategies of the Modern Social-Political Newspapers in the Ukraine*.

Assoc. Prof. Mariana Kitsa

National University "Lviv Polytechnic"
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Lviv, 1-3 Kniazia Romana St.
UKRAINE
mariana.o.kitsa@lpnu.ua



Mariana Kitsa is an Associate Professor in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of the National University, Lviv Polytechnic. Her research interests include inequality advertising in Ukrainian printed media, gender representation in mass media, social networks and online media, information warfare. She is an author of a monograph entitled *Pathogenic Advertising in the Ukrainian Print Media* and 2 chapters in collective monographs. Mariana Kitsa has written more than 60 scientific articles.