

# Unveiling the Power of Tiktok: Exploring Consumer Purchase Intentions in the Post Covid-19 Pandemic in Malaysia

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**Abstract:** Despite the growing significance of Tik-Tok as a platform for advertising and entertainment, there is a lack of comprehensive research on how Tik Tok advertising content, particularly considering influencer credibility and sales promotion, influences consumers' purchase intentions in Malaysia after the Covid-19 pandemic. The existing studies focus on specific aspects, such as social media entertainment and Tik-Tok's response to the pandemic, but fail to provide a holistic understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing consumer behavior in the context of Tik-Tok advertising content. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between Tik-Tok advertising content and the purchase intentions of consumers following the Covid-19 pandemic. This study employs non-probability convenience sampling to gather data from 375 randomly selected respondents. The research employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design. The data collection is using Google Forms for survey creation and widespread online distribution. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) serve as the theoretical foundations for this study. The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 27. The research findings revealed that the hypotheses of entertainment, influencer credibility, and sales promotion are accepted and significantly affect consumers' purchase intentions. The study's contribution lies in shedding light on the effectiveness of Tik-Tok as an advertising platform in the context of the post-COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia. It will provide valuable insights for marketers and businesses seeking to enhance their marketing strategies on Tik-Tok and optimize their reach to potential consumers.

**Keywords:** Tik-tok, Advertising Content, And Purchase Intention, Post Covid-19 Publication Details: Received; Revised; Accepted.

## 1. Introduction

Online advertising includes the use of social media platforms that let companies connect with possible customers and existing customers via social media platforms. The practise of social media advertising encompasses a range of formats, including sponsored content generated by influencers who maintain accounts on social media platforms that have gained widespread popularity among users. These platforms include Facebook, Tik-Tok, Instagram, and Twitter and so on. Notably, Tik-Tok has emerged as a rapidly growing platform, especially in Malaysia, with a significant surge in users during the COVID-19 pandemic.

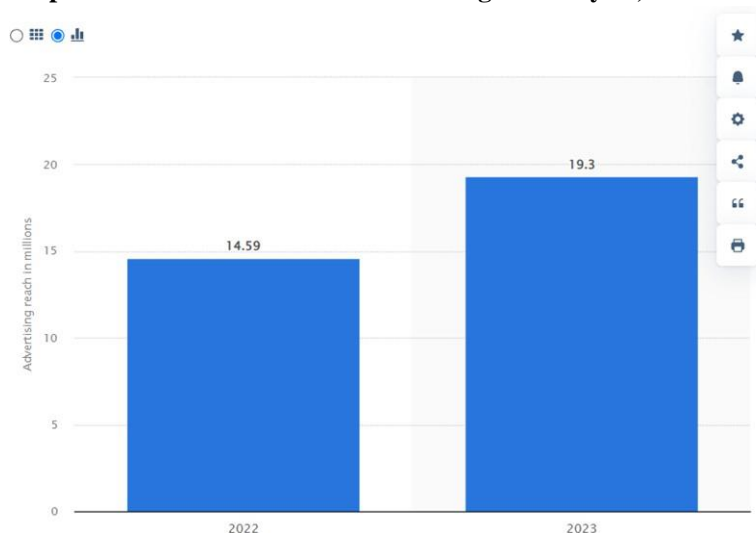
Tik-Tok known for its short-form videos and emphasis on creativity and self-expression, Tik-Tok has become a

favoured destination for entertainment and inspiration. Furthermore, consumers actively participate in influencer-driven marketing campaigns, contributing to the platform's success. According to the New Straits Times (2023), in January 2023, Tik-Tok Malaysia experienced a significant increase in its monthly user base, which rose to 21.9 million from 16.7 million in January 2022. The age demographic of Tik-Tok users in Malaysia is predominantly concentrated within the 18 to 34 age range, accounting for more than 70% of the overall user population (New Straits Times, 2023).

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly affected multiple facets of society, including the consumer's intended purchases. The implementation of lockdowns, social distancing measures, and health concerns has brought about a significant shift in the way consumers interact with businesses, make purchasing intentions, and engage with goods and services (Mehta et al., 2020). Social media platforms, Tik-Tok, have gained increased importance in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The appeal of the platform in Malaysia has been observed to have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Kemp (2022), it is evident that Tik-Tok garnered a substantial user base of 14.59 million individuals who were 18 years of age and older in Malaysia during the initial months of 2022. In the given context, it is noteworthy to mention that the advertising campaigns on Tik-Tok platform managed to achieve a significant penetration rate of 61.2 percent among the adult population aged 18 and above in Malaysia during the initial period of 2022. In the first quarter of 2022, an analysis of Tik-Tok's advertising audience in Malaysia revealed that 56.8 percent of the audience identified as female, whereas 43.2 percent identified as male.

The pandemic has influenced consumer behaviors, leading to a greater reliance on social media platforms for information, entertainment, and shopping (Mason et al., 2021). The implementation of lockdown measures, social distancing guidelines, and E-commerce has become more widely accepted and used as a result of physical business closures. And virtual marketplaces for consumer transactions (Sumarliah et al., 2021). This situation leads consumers to rely more on new product introductions that are on social media, such as TikTok by watching content advertisements and deciding whether to purchase them than by going shopping in physical stores to decide what they want to buy.

**Figure 1: Total potential reach of TikTok advertising in Malaysia, 2022-2023 (in millions)**



Source: Statista Research Department, 2023

According to the Figure 1, the estimated total potential advertising reach on TikTok in Malaysia in the year 2023 was approximately 19.3 million users. This represents a significant increase of 32 percent in comparison to the previous year 2022 (14.59 million users). TikTok has become a unique social media network that has garnered widespread attention worldwide over the past couple of years. The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have led to a notable increase in consumer engagement with digital media. The significance of advertisement content in capturing individuals' attention and stimulating their curiosity towards the promoted product or service is paramount (Jiang & Stylos, 2021).