

# Utilizing TikTok as A Promotional Platform for Small and Medium Enterprises: A Strategic Approach

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## Abstract

Advances in digital technology, such as the emergence of TikTok, have changed how we live, work, and communicate. TikTok is an entertainment medium and a platform to promote businesses because it can reach the target market easily through creative content. This research aims to determine the strategy for using TikTok social media as a promotional medium for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), such as Sultan Mango Malang. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation, observation, and interviews, then analyzed using the data triangulation method. The results of this study show that the strategies successfully implemented by the SMEs include actively following popular trends, interacting directly with the audience, utilizing the live streaming feature, consistently uploading content, working with influencers, and holding discount promos and prizes. It also shows that user participation and interaction are the main keys to assessing the success of TikTok's promotional strategy. Sultan Mango Malang can increase product awareness and improve the quality of services provided as they actively respond to every form of user interaction quickly. Therefore, the findings of this research significantly contribute by offering comprehensive and actionable insights for local enterprises and SMEs aiming to leverage TikTok effectively to enhance sales figures and foster long-term customer loyalty.

Keywords: Promotional Platform; Small and Medium Enterprises; Strategic Approach; TikTok.

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## I. Introduction

The ever-changing times, characterized by increasingly sophisticated technology, cannot be denied. The existence of increasingly sophisticated technology can facilitate all activities, one of which can be utilized as a tool for marketing activities (Nufus and Handayani, 2022). Technology comes in software such as the Internet, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and TikTok, as well as hardware such as laptops, phones, and so on (Mulyani et al., 2023). Economic growth has been significantly affected by the development of the Internet, with many businesses utilizing it to support their operations, including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The ease of technology is now changing the industrial world in terms of marketing its products to shift towards digitalization (Gustiawan and Rahayu, 2023).

Understanding the market and implementing appropriate marketing strategies greatly help companies survive amid fierce competition. One often-used strategy is to utilize social media as a product promotion tool. With the help of effective marketing strategies and appropriate media, businesses can reach their target market, resulting in increased sales and higher revenue (Jonatan et al., 2023). Many media, including social media, can be used to promote a product (Nufus and Handayani, 2022). Social media is a medium to share text, images, sound, and video information with fellow individuals or companies (Novalia et al., 2021). It connects one person with another easily, and social media can also be used to promote products sold by industry players (Gustiawan and Rahayu, 2023). One of the popular tools is TikTok, an application that can view short videos with various expressions from each creator. Users of the application can copy from other users' videos, such as making videos with contemporary music made by everyone (Hasiholan et al., 2020). With just one app, TikTok users can now create their own content thanks to its ease and sophistication. This confirms TikTok's role as an effective and efficient platform for everyone's self-expression (Mardianto, 2023). The rapid development of information technology has provided various small and large companies with opportunities to capitalize on its advancements for their businesses.

These studies provide a strong theoretical foundation and empirical evidence of the importance and effectiveness of social media in marketing strategies. This research has several shortcomings that need to be considered. First, this research only focuses on one case study, namely Sultan Mango Malang, so the generalization of the results of this research is limited. Secondly, the analysis of the financial impact of the implementation of promotional strategies is less in-depth, so information about the performance of each strategy cannot be provided thoroughly. For future research, it is recommended that more case studies from different industries and business sizes be conducted to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of promotion through TikTok. Further research could also deepen the analysis of the financial impact of each promotional strategy implemented, including an in-depth performance assessment. With these points in mind, future research can provide a broader and deeper understanding of using TikTok in business promotion. This research provides a new perspective on combining creative elements with digital marketing strategies.

This research focuses on using TikTok as a promotional tool for local businesses, Sultan Mango Malang, which is different from previous studies that generally discuss social media in general or other platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. The main gap identified is the lack of in-depth research on using TikTok in the context of small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) in Indonesia. Previous research emphasizes more established social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, without paying attention to TikTok's unique features, such as For You Page (FYP), live streaming, and fast-changing viral trends. In addition, many previous studies have focused on large corporations or established brands, while this study pays particular attention to emerging local businesses with limited resources. This creates a gap in the literature that this study can fill by providing more specific and applicable insights for SMEs in utilizing TikTok.

This research focuses on a specific local business, namely Sultan Mango Malang, which has not been widely discussed in the previous literature. Through an in-depth case study approach, this research can provide more detailed practical insights into the strategies and results achieved by Sultan Mango in using TikTok as a promotional tool. The novelty of this research lies in examining how Sultan Mango Malang utilizes creativity and technological features in TikTok to create engaging and effective promotional content.

The TikTok account @sultanmango.mlg is a clear example of how the TikTok app can increase sales. Sultan Mango Malang, a business in the F&B sector, especially beverages, is an example of a business that has just entered the market with limited initial capital. However, Sultan Mango Malang

achieved a monthly turnover of 30-40 million rupiah due to actively utilizing promotions through TikTok. The content uploaded by Sultan Mango Malang on TikTok has attracted more than 100 thousand followers, and more than 10 million people have watched their content on TikTok. Thus, Sultan Mango Malang makes the most of its presence on TikTok to increase the number of sales and strengthen its brand awareness among the public.

The main objective of this research is to analyze the strategy of using TikTok by Sultan Mango Malang as a promotional medium in depth. This research will identify content creation techniques, utilization of TikTok features, and how to interact with users to maximize reach and engagement. In addition, this research aims to provide practical recommendations for other businesses, particularly SMEs, on effectively utilizing TikTok as a promotional medium. These recommendations will be based on empirical findings and analysis of the strategies used by Sultan Mango Malang. This research contributes to the digital marketing literature by highlighting the use of TikTok as a promotional tool. This research will provide new insights into how a rapidly growing social media platform can be utilized to support the marketing strategies of local businesses. This research contributes by providing practical guidance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on how to leverage TikTok to increase sales and build customer loyalty effectively. This research provides practical insights that can be used by other local businesses to optimize their digital marketing strategies so as to achieve better and more sustainable growth.

## II. Literature Review

Social media has become a relatively new phenomenon over the past decade. The development of internet-based technology through media such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and even TikTok makes it easy for people to connect with each other (Gupta and Chahat Chopra, 2020). Social media can be interpreted as online media that uses the internet where users can directly interact, participate, and share their content (Dewa and Safitri, 2021). Through this invisible virtual world, many parties have begun to develop branding strategies for their brands (Gaeni et al., 2022). By utilizing the internet as a digital marketing medium, marketers hope that their marketing coverage will be wider and so will their product brand awareness (Husniati Sya'idah et al., 2019). Social media is one of the communication systems that has functions as administration, listening and learning media, as well as thoughts and media planning (Mulyani et al., 2023). According to Ardiansyah (2020), social media has several indicators: participation, openness, conversation, community, and interconnection. Social media is a communication tool and a strategic platform supporting business growth and development in this digital era. Utilizing the potential of social media wisely can help companies to achieve their marketing goals more efficiently and effectively.

TikTok is an application that can view short videos with various expressions from each creator and users of the application can imitate other users' videos, such as making videos with contemporary music that are also made by everyone (Hasiholan et al., 2020). TikTok offers a variety of features that support creativity and interaction, by utilizing these features, the content created can become more interesting and better attract the attention of the audience. TikTok is one of the platforms that is currently very popular. As one of the social media platforms, TikTok provides a means of sharing content that is very varied and creative, namely in terms of creativity, video challenges, lipsync, songs, dancing, singing, and learning content. Because of the large number of users, TikTok provides an opportunity as a media promotion tool (Dewa and Safitri, 2021). Marketing strategies that can be done with the TikTok platform include using hashtags, keeping up with the trend, collaborating with influencers, providing a clear description, and posting videos frequently, which can be interrupted by advertisements.

Meanwhile, promotion is a way for companies to introduce their products and influence consumer purchasing decisions' Promotion, which is also called a product communication tool, has experienced developments where marketers are easier and faster to promote their products. This is due to the emergence of various new media that can be utilized to reach consumers more quickly and widely (Pamungkas, 2016). Meanwhile, promotion strategy is a strategy that producers of goods or services use continuously to win market competition (Putri et al., 2021). Promotion is closely related to sales so that the promotion will impact the level of product sales in the company. This is because the more effective the promotion is, the higher the company's product sales level. Therefore, companies are required to be able to carry out promotions appropriately so that consumers can accept them and can increase product sales as expected by the company (Rohaeni, 2016).

Promotion, which is also called a product communication tool, has experienced developments where marketers can promote their products more easily and faster. This is due to the emergence of various new media that can be utilized to reach consumers more quickly and widely. The most influential promotion is the promotion carried out through social networks. Promotion through social networks positively and significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions. This is supported by the development of today's increasingly advanced technology so that promotion is no longer an expensive article that costs much money (Pamungkas, 2016).

### III. Method

This study aims to determine the strategy of using TikTok social media as a promotional medium by users of the Sultan Mango Malang TikTok account. This TikTok account has a total of 100 thousand followers. To find out Sultan Mango Malang's strategy in promoting its products on TikTok, researchers used descriptive qualitative methods to gain an in-depth understanding of the community or individual. This research was conducted at the Sultan Mango Malang outlet which is located at Malang City. The data collection process lasted for approximately 4 months, namely February-May 2024. This study uses primary data and secondary data. The data was obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with 5 informants, namely the owner, 2 employees, and 2 consumers of Sultan Mango Malang; the interview process was carried out for 5 days. Researchers use direct observation techniques in order to participate or be involved at the scene to directly observe the operational activities that occur at the Sultan Mango outlet in Malang clearly and in detail, to collect data directly and in detail about the research location and the things needed in this study. In conducting the documentation method, researchers investigate written objects such as books, organizational structures, regulations, sales records, etc. Following this opinion, the author uses the documentation method as a data collection tool from written materials, the implementation of which the author looks for written sources at the research location.

In the data analysis stage, the researcher uses data triangulation. The researcher formulates and raises it as a new finding in the research, then continues by repeatedly reviewing the existing data. The data obtained in the field is quite a lot, so it needs to be recorded carefully and in detail through data reduction. Reduction means summarizing, selecting the main things, focusing on the important things, and looking for themes and patterns. After the data is reduced, the next step is to display the data (data presentation) so that the data is organized and arranged in a relationship pattern so that it will be easier to understand, and after that, conclusions are drawn.

### IV. Results and Discussion

#### 1. TikTok as an Effective Tool in Business Promotion of Sultan Mango Malang

Table 1. Results of the Interview

Informants	Statements of the Informants
Yomata, owner	For now, a very effective media for my business is TikTok. Thanks to TikTok, my business can grow very fast. At first, I only promoted my business via Instagram, but it didn't really have an effect on my sales. Finally, I tried to promote my products on TikTok consistently, and Alhamdulillah, one of my promotional video content on TikTok went viral, reaching more than 6 million viewers because if there is an FYP feature on TikTok, so our video content can reach many TikTok users even though we don't follow each other. TikTok has great potential to increase sales and awareness of my product; through TikTok, my product can be recognized by the wider community, not only in Malang. Through the FYP TikTok feature, my video content can be reached by many audiences, which initially per day sold only 10-15 pcs now, it can be 50-100 pcs and even more, Alhamdulillah.

Informants	Statements of the Informants
Mutiara, employee	Of course, yes, because in TikTok, there is an FYP feature where a random person's video content can go viral by itself; many people watch it, and of course, this is very effective in the business world because it can increase exposure and a wider range. I joined here from the beginning when they opened this business, where at that time, they still relied on promotion through social media alone, which at most only sold 10-15 pcs a day. Then, they started promoting their products on TikTok consistently and finally broke the egg; one of their viral content reached more than 6 million viewers. Thanks to that, the Sultan Mango Malang product per day can reach 50-100 cups, Alhamdulillah.
Putri, employee	Yes, because the first reason is that TikTok is a social media that is being loved by many people at this time, from small children to adults and parents; all of them use TikTok, and if in TikTok, our videos can more easily go viral with the flip feature. With the help of FYP our products can be watched by many people not only from our area but can be seen by people all over the world. Alhamdulillah, the video content posted is, on average, accepted by many; people watch and comment a lot. Of course, it has an effect on the sale of Sultan Mango products. Alhamdulillah, faithfully, the outlet is never empty of ram, per day it can be sold out 50-100 pcs per day and even more.
Sela, customer	Yes, because I see that TikTok's sophisticated algorithms allow relevant and interesting content to gain greater exposure. So, relatively new or unknown products can quickly reach a wide range of TikTok users.
Ulfi, customer	For now, in my opinion, yes, because currently, the social media that many people love is TikTok. It is easier for business people to promote their products with greater reach and exposure than other platforms through the FYP feature.

Based on the interview results in [Table 1](#), it is known that TikTok has become a very effective business promotion tool for a business venture such as Sultan Mango Malang. During the increasingly sophisticated digital era, Sultan Mango Malang is racking its brains to develop its business by promoting through social media. Business owners must be able to see what opportunities can attract consumer interest and continue to promote products to increase sales. Business owners use social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok to promote their businesses. In the beginning, Sultan Mango Malang used Instagram for its promotional media but did not really influence the sale of its products, and finally, Sultan Mango Malang tried to create promotional video content on Tiktok consistently. They see TikTok has soared in popularity in recent years and has become one of the most popular social media platforms, especially among the younger generation. Tiktok's FYP feature allows promotional content to go viral quickly without the need for a large number of followers or an established user base. This makes Sultan Mango Malang's promotional content easily accessible to many TikTok users. FYP or For You Page is a tab that contains a collection of short videos lasting 15 seconds to three minutes, which appear on the TikTok timeline. One of the promotional video content made by Sultan Mango Malang FYP and viral has attracted the attention of millions of viewers, increasing their business exposure significantly; many TikTok users who see Sultan Mango Malang videos are curious or interested in trying this product. TikTok not only increases awareness of the product but also directly contributes to increased sales. This is evidenced by the increase in sales from previously only 10-15 pcs per day to 50-100 pcs per day and even more. Although Sultan Mango Malang has not been established for 3 years, the utilization of TikTok carried out by them has been successful. It increases revenue and can add new business branches.

## 2. Strategy in Utilizing Tiktok as a Business Promotion Media

Table 2. Results of the Interview

Informants	Statements of the Informants
Yomata, owner	I utilize the TikTok live streaming feature to interact with them, such as when launching new products, providing information, or answering their questions directly. This allows us to build closer relationships directly. I always try to post promotional video content three times a day because in TikTok, the system is FYP, and we can't read what the TikTok algorithm is like. So, for me, the important thing is to consistently upload promotional video content, namely posting three times a day, because we don't know which videos will be FYP; just be consistent. I often invite cooperation with food vloggers, which also has an influence on the sale of my products; with my products being reviewed by them, so many people are curious about trying my product, and cooperation with them also increases customer trust in my product. I usually hold promos or discounts during certain events, such as Independence Day promos, blessing Fridays, Sultan Mango Malang anniversaries, etc. Apart from promos and discounts, I also often hold giveaways, which aim to build interaction and approach with customers.

Based on the interview results in [Table 2](#), it is known that planning a detailed and targeted strategy is the key to success in TikTok's social media promotion, as it is with other social media platforms. Carefully orchestrating the steps can optimize TikTok's full potential as a highly effective promotional tool. This allows our business to achieve the goals set more efficiently and measurably. The strategies carried out by Sultan Mango Malang in utilizing TikTok as a promotional medium include capitalizing on popular trends, active interaction with the audience, consistency of video content posting, utilizing the live streaming feature, collaborating with food vloggers, and organizing discount promos and giveaways.

Participating in booming trends can make it easier to reach a larger audience using the FYP feature. For example, adding trending music features and creating viral video content that is in demand by many people at this time with clear and informative captions can help businesses build trust and emotional connections with customers. Other than that, responsive and positive interaction with the audience is very important in promoting TikTok for Sultan Mango Malang. When getting feedback from the audience, such as comments, criticisms, and suggestions, Sultan Mango Malang responds to them as quickly as possible and politely. This provides an opportunity to improve services and strengthen Sultan Mango Malang's customer relationship. Responding to comments in a friendly and informative manner helps increase visibility and trust in Sultan Mango Malang's products. When they receive positive comments, they thank the customer, while for negative comments, they see it as an opportunity to learn and improve. Sultan Mango Malang also utilizes TikTok's live streaming feature to hold open Questions and Answers (Q&A) with their audience. They highly value every input and response given by the audience. Through live streaming, Sultan Mango Malang can interact directly with them, whether launching a new product, providing information, or answering questions directly. This helps Sultan Mango Malang build a strong relationship with the audience and ensures that Sultan Mango Malang's products or services truly meet their needs and expectations. These strategies align with previous research results, which also examined strategies for using TikTok as a business promotion medium ([Mardianto, 2023](#); [Mulyani et al., 2023](#)).

Another important part is consistently posting promotional video content on TikTok Sultan Mango Malang. Although Sultan Mango Malang does not have a fixed posting schedule, consistency in uploading promotional video content 3 times a day is considered an effective strategy with different video content so that audiences do not get bored with the promotional content presented by Sultan Mango Malang. This is due to TikTok's dynamic algorithm, where uploaded content has the potential to go viral through the FYP feature. Sultan Mango Malang collaborates with food vloggers to keep the audience interested. Collaborating with food vloggers or influencers on TikTok positively influences the sales of Sultan Mango Malang products. When food vloggers or influencers review products, many people become curious and want to try them. This can increase customer trust in Sultan Mango Malang products. Getting

endorsements or positive reviews from parties with a reputation in their fields can help strengthen the brand image and influence customer purchasing decisions for Sultan Mango Malang.

To support the strategy, organizing promos or discounts on certain events, such as Independence Day, Friday Blessing, or Sultan Mango Malang Anniversary, is an effective strategy to attract customers' attention and encourage purchases. This can increase sales and strengthen customer relationships. Organizing giveaways helps Sultan Mango Malang build customer interaction and increase brand awareness. It incentivizes customers to interact with the brand and can increase their engagement with Sultan Mango Malang's products. These strategies are also in line with the results of previous research by [Hasiholan et al. \(2020\)](#), which stated the importance of interaction with the audience.

Table 3. Results of the Interview

Informants	Statements of the Informants
Yomata, owner	The feedback I often receive includes positive comments, criticisms/complaints, questions about our products, and testimonials from them. I respond as quickly as possible and politely; it becomes an opportunity to improve our services and products. I try to give accurate answers and maintain a good relationship with customers. I also share positive testimonials from customers to strengthen trust in our products. For positive comments, we always thank customers for their support and appreciation. As for negative comments, we take them as an opportunity to learn and improve. We always respond quickly and in a friendly manner and allow our customers to express their concerns further. Moreover, Alhamdulillah, every time I hold a giveaway on TikTok, their participation and enthusiasm is amazing.
Sela, customer	I often like and comment on their videos, especially when the content catches my attention or provides useful product information. What makes me interested in interacting with Sultan Mango Malang's content on TikTok is how they promote their products in a way that presents content that is entertaining and not too serious, making me feel like I enjoy their promotions more. Almost every time they hold a giveaway, especially on TikTok, I always participate because the challenges given are not too complicated, so I am happy to participate in the giveaway. If I find interesting and relevant promotional content, I will definitely share it with friends or family who might like or need it. But yes, I also understand that everyone has their own tastes, so before I share the content with them, I usually pay attention to their interests first.
Ulfi, customer	I first look at the content, and if it suits their interests and needs, then I will share it with them because we know that everyone has their own tastes and interests. I often like and comment on their videos and give testimonials to other audiences by commenting on Sultan Mango Malang's TikTok account. I like interacting with them because the video content they make is very entertaining to me. I have participated in the giveaways they hold, you could say often, and I have also won the giveaway once.

Based on the interview results in [Table 3](#), it is known that the participation and interaction that Sultan Mango Malang often gets includes various forms, such as positive comments, criticisms or complaints, requests for information or questions about products, recommendations or testimonials, and participation in promos and giveaways held by Sultan Mango Malang. This reflects the diverse level of engagement from users in responding to the content and promotional activities organized by the brand on the TikTok platform. Sultan Mango Malang regards customer interactions as an opportunity to improve their services and products. They respond quickly and politely to any comments, both positive and negative, to improve themselves and strengthen relationships with customers. Sultan Mango Malang also actively shares positive customer testimonials to reinforce trust and expand their brand influence. They take negative comments as opportunities to learn and improve their services or products by responding quickly and kindly and allowing customers to address their concerns in more detail. By listening and responding well, Sultan Mango Malang believes that they can solve problems quickly and improve the quality of their service or product.

This research details the use of TikTok as a means of business promotion, especially in the case of Sultan Mango Malang. The strategies devised, such as following trends, interacting with users, and

collaborating with influencers, follow previous findings in the field of digital marketing. This confirms that principles proven in previous literature are still relevant, even in new contexts such as TikTok. Thus, this study not only provides a deep insight into the effectiveness of TikTok in business promotion but also confirms and extends previous findings in the digital marketing domain. This research highlights the use of TikTok to promote local businesses, specifically Sultan Mango Malang, by paying attention to the platform's unique features, such as the For You Page and live streaming. In contrast to previous, more generalized research on other social media, this study fills a gap in the literature regarding the lack of in-depth research on TikTok for SMEs in Indonesia. Through a case study approach, this research shows that TikTok can effectively increase exposure and sales for local businesses with the right strategies, such as following trends, engaging with audiences, and consistent content. It provides important practical insights for SMEs and broadens the understanding of digital marketing in Indonesia.

## V. Conclusion

Sultan Mango Malang found TikTok more effective than other social media platforms in boosting their sales. They leveraged TikTok's FYP feature to make their promotional content go viral, increasing revenue. Their promotion strategy includes participating in popular trends, actively interacting with the audience, utilizing live streaming, consistent content posting, collaborating with influencers, and hosting discount promos and giveaways. User participation and interaction play a crucial role in evaluating the success of their promotions' success. Sultan Mango Malang responds promptly and politely to all forms of user engagement to enhance customer relationships.

This research has several important contributions in the domain of marketing research and the use of social media for business promotion. First, highlighting the effectiveness of TikTok as a promotional tool for local businesses demonstrates the importance of not relying solely on established social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. This encourages further research into the potential of new emerging platforms in increasing exposure and sales for small and medium-sized businesses. Secondly, the promotional strategy implemented by Sultan Mango Malang provides valuable insights into how to utilize TikTok's special features, such as the For You Page and live streaming, to increase engagement and interaction with audiences. This implication leads to further research on optimizing unique social media platform features to achieve desired marketing objectives. Third, the importance of user participation and interaction in evaluating the success of promotions on TikTok suggests that the relationship between brands and consumers on this platform plays a crucial role in the success of marketing strategies. This underscores the need to consider the two-way interaction between brands and consumers in developing digital marketing strategies. Overall, this research illustrates the importance of continuously exploring and adapting digital marketing strategies to new developments in social media platforms, as well as understanding the role of user engagement in achieving business goals. These implications encourage further research and the development of best practices in utilizing social media for business promotion.

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## Declaration

The authors declare that this article is our original work and has not been previously published or is being considered for publication elsewhere. All authors have contributed significantly to this article's concept, design, analysis, and writing. The research described in this article has been conducted using applicable research ethics standards. Each research subject has provided written informed consent after receiving an adequate explanation of the study. We have obtained all necessary permissions to use copyrighted material in this article, and no part of this article infringes on the copyrights of third parties. We have no conflicts of interest that could affect the results of this study. Any potential conflicts of interest have been clearly stated in the article. We hereby sign this statement in good faith and take full responsibility for the contents of this article.



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