

## The Intersection of Entertainment and Commerce: Buzzhero's TikTok Strategy in Social Commerce

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### ABSTRACT

Digital marketing is developing more and more significantly, especially since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The decision to stay at home in several countries, including Indonesia has forced various levels of society to work from home. As a result, many individuals use social media to carry out activities such as seeking entertainment, socializing, and shopping for daily necessities. This change in behaviour brings fresh air to the Indonesian advertising industry. The use of social media for commercial, entertainment and social purposes has become a new phenomenon called social media commerce. Buzzhero as a Social Media Advertising Platform takes this opportunity by optimizing the TikTok Live Streaming feature in marketing products from various brands, which are their clients. This study aims to analyse Buzzhero's strategy in forming engagement through Social Commerce on TikTok Live Streaming. This study uses a qualitative methodology with an interpretive paradigm. The data collection technique uses interviews as primary data. While the secondary data the authors obtained through observations on TikTok Live Streaming content, documentation, and literature. The results of this research analysis associated using the RACE model (Reach, Act, Convert, and Engage) as a digital marketing framework representing distinct stages of the marketing process that is widely used that facilitates the development and implementation of successful marketing strategies.

**Keywords:** *Digital Marketing, Social Commerce, TikTok Live Streaming, Product Marketing, RACE model.*

### INTRODUCTION

The evolution from traditional marketing to digital marketing has been evident. Social media, a technology with a massive global user base, has emerged as a defining force in this new era. With billions of people actively engaging with social media across various platforms daily, it's no wonder that marketers have wholeheartedly adopted it as a crucial marketing channel. Additionally, academics and practitioners have recognized social media's significance, using it as a research platform for exploring concepts like Digital Marketing, Word of Mouth (WOM), Social Commerce, and other related fields.

The concept of Social Commerce is a growing and expanding trade phenomenon worldwide. Researchers will delve deeper into this emerging trade concept, specifically focusing on Social Commerce in Digital Marketing. Social Commerce is a fusion of e-commerce, social media, and social network signals Miller (2024) define it as a form of social media that enables individuals to actively participate in sales and marketing within

online communities and markets. Social Commerce primarily encompasses three key aspects: incorporating commercial features into social media, integrating social media features into e-commerce, and utilizing social media in offline companies to enhance business performance (Herzallah et al, 2025). In the realm of digital marketing, marketers utilize various strategies like e-marketing, web marketing, online marketing, e-marketing, or e-commerce to engage and reach customers.

Digital marketing has experienced significant growth, especially since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. With stay-at-home measures in place across various countries, including Indonesia, many people have been compelled to work remotely. As a consequence, social media usage has surged, becoming a hub for entertainment, social interaction, and even shopping for daily necessities. This shift in behaviour has breathed new life into the advertising industry in Indonesia. Leveraging digital media for product marketing has emerged as a simpler and more practical approach accessible to everyone. Consequently, social media has become a platform where anyone, anywhere, and at any time can market products. The convergence of commercial, entertainment, and social activities on social media has given rise to a new phenomenon known as social media commerce. A 2023 study revealed that TikTok stands out as the social media platform with the longest duration of user engagement compared to others (Schaffer, 2023). Remarkably, Indonesia ranks second globally in terms of TikTok user numbers (Schaffer, 2023).

The Ipsos study offers valuable insights and key takeaways for brands and creators, uncovering four essential findings that can optimize the benefits of LIVE events and content. Firstly, TikTok LIVE users exhibit strong dedication, data found that in 1 with 5 live streaming users regularly tuning in, and an impressive 62% of this group watching it daily. This presents a valuable opportunity for brands to engage with their communities in real time on a daily basis. TikTok Live fosters deeper connections between viewers and brands. Not only do creators attract audiences to Live sessions, but the TikTok community also actively seeks out LIVE content from brands. Furthermore, TikTok Live has proven to be effective in driving sales. While it excels at creating brand awareness, it also influences consumer purchasing decisions (Ipsos, 2021).

In this research, the scholars conducted their study at a Social Media Advertising Platform company known as Buzzhero. Buzzhero serves as an intermediary between brand owners and advertisers, connecting them with a vast pool of potential consumers who align with the brand owner's target market. This enables the creation of audiences that closely match the brand's marketing objectives. Buzzhero adopts a Digital Marketing Communication strategy to disseminate Brand Awareness to consumers, employing various digital media platforms like TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (TikTok, 2022).

Buzzhero possesses a unique advantage compared to other agencies, as they have secured legal authorization as a rival partner of TikTok, a privilege not commonly held by many agencies. Setting them apart further is their ability to execute end-to-end

campaigns and comprehensive 360 campaigns, offering a full range of digital services, including Key Opinion Leader (KOL) management, video production, ad boosting, and live streaming. This diverse set of services supports their clients' digital marketing endeavors effectively. Additionally, Buzzohero distinguishes itself by providing dedicated accounts for each client, offering round-the-clock assistance and information, a feature that appeals to researchers keen on analysing Buzzohero's client management strategies. The research at hand centers on Buzzohero's Digital Marketing Communication Strategy while engaging in Social Commerce activities through the TikTok Shop feature on the TikTok social media platform.

## LITERATURE REVIEW OR RESEARCH BACKGROUND

### *Computer-Mediated Communication*

Defining CMC can be challenging due to the rapid evolution of technologies, but in general, it refers to the exchange of meaning between two or more individuals using digital technologies, with a focus on the impact of mediation on human communication processes rather than specific technological aspects (Carr, 2021). The notion of "computers" has evolved, now encompassing not just bulky desktop systems but also smartphones, wearable technologies, and Internet-based programs.

The study of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) emerged in 1987 as a novel form of communication. CMC is defined as "any human communication achieved through, or with the help of, computer technology". It combines the permanence of writing with the real-time nature of speaking, representing an entirely new mode of human contact facilitated by the Internet (Ritonga, et al., 2023).

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) includes the exchange of messages, either one-to-one, one-to-many, or many-to-many, using networked computers. These exchanges can occur in real-time (synchronous) or with a time delay (asynchronous) and may involve various modes of interaction, such as typed text, spoken discussions, or visual/video messages (Yao & Ling, 2020). There is a wide range of software that influences CMC, and this collection of tools continues to grow daily. Examples of such tools include email, text messaging, video and audio players, and social networking websites, all of which facilitate seamless communication between individuals.

### *Digital Marketing*

The rise of digital media has revolutionized the way people interact with each other and the companies they patronize. Traditional print and broadcast channels have lost their prominence, leading to a significant shift in the consumer-corporation relationship. Digital platforms have empowered consumers, providing them with new opportunities to engage with businesses. The emergence of digital marketing is a direct result of the vast potential offered by the expansive online market. Digital marketing involves using electronic/internet devices along with various marketing techniques and social media to deliver timely, relevant, and personalized marketing efforts (Herari, 2023).

There are diverse methods to expose a company's offerings to potential consumers, including websites, blogs, and social media. Digital marketing presents an avenue for promoting specific products using internet-based platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LINE, or other social media platforms (Hayati & Afriani, 2022). Marketing products or brands through social media involves creative presentation, leveraging various applications to enhance appeal. Digital marketing revolves around leveraging digital technology to achieve marketing goals. While there isn't necessarily a fundamental requirement to segregate digital from the overall marketing department, both share common objectives. Nevertheless, the term "digital" remains valuable as it signifies the need for specialized skills to effectively utilize digital technology (Sestino et al., 2021).

### *RACE Framework*

The RACE framework is a widely used digital marketing framework that facilitates the development and implementation of successful marketing strategies. RACE stands for Reach, Act, Convert, and Engage, representing distinct stages of the marketing process. This model offers a systematic approach to online marketing endeavors, enabling businesses to effectively connect with their target audience throughout various stages of the customer journey (Rautela, 2021; Sestino et al., 2021). Let's delve into each element of the RACE framework.

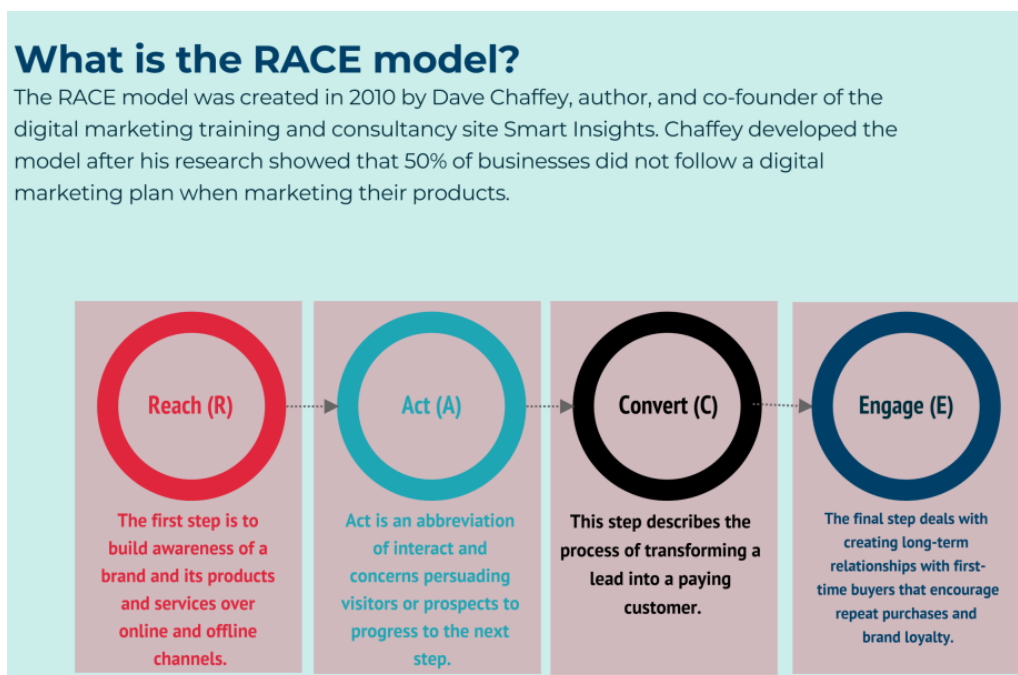


Figure 1: The Race Framework (Cuofano, 2024).

- a. Reach: This stage is dedicated to creating brand awareness and drawing a larger audience to your brand or website. It entails employing a range of

marketing channels to enhance visibility and connect with potential customers. Vital activities during this phase encompass search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, social media marketing, online advertising, and public relations.

- b. Act: This stage is designed to motivate users to take precise actions that demonstrate their interest in your products or services. These actions may involve subscribing to newsletters, accessing downloadable content, or interacting with your website. The primary objective is to convert website visitors into potential leads. Strategies applied during this phase encompass optimizing call-to-action (CTA) elements, crafting effective landing pages, implementing lead capture forms, and deploying email marketing initiatives.
- c. Convert: In this stage, the aim is to transform leads into paying customers. This entails cultivating leads through tailored communication and offering them the necessary information and incentives to make a purchase. Techniques commonly utilized in this phase include personalized email marketing, remarketing campaigns, and compelling content to effectively convert leads into successful sales.
- d. Engage: stage places a strong emphasis on fostering enduring relationships with current customers, with the goal of promoting loyalty and advocacy. Satisfied customers have the potential to become brand advocates, recommending your business to others and driving organic growth. To achieve this, engaging customers through social media, loyalty programs, exceptional customer service, and personalized offers are among the strategies commonly employed during this stage.
- e. The RACE model follows a cyclical process, and marketers continuously analyse data and metrics at each stage to identify areas for improvement and refine the strategies accordingly.

#### *Live Streaming TikTok*

A social network is commonly described as a web of social actors, including individuals, groups, and organizations. Social media or social networks can also facilitate the buying and selling of products, a concept known as social commerce (Attar et al., 2022). The rapid expansion of social networks and the significant increase in smartphone users have contributed to the growing popularity of a novel form of e-commerce called social commerce. This term was initially introduced by Yahoo in 2005. Social Commerce can be defined as a type of e-commerce that leverages well-established Internet-based social networks to communicate and collaborate with potential customers (Ala et al., 2021).

Social Commerce (SC) can be understood as a type of commerce facilitated by social media, a definition supported by numerous researchers. The term "social commerce" refers to conducting e-commerce activities and transactions through social media and web 2.0 software (Becdach et al., 2022). Therefore, Social Commerce can be

regarded as a subset of e-commerce that utilizes social media to aid customers in their commercial transactions and activities. Additionally, many practitioners view SC as a process of customer collaboration and shopping within an environment akin to social networking. Finally, some researchers define social commerce from the seller's perspective, describing it as a form of seller collaboration for advantageous business purposes (Guo et al., 2022).

In contrast to traditional e-commerce, social commerce goes beyond mere buying and selling. Sifat (2024) characterized it as a set of collaborative shopping tools that include the following elements:

- a. User ratings and reviews
- b. Social advertising (such as advertisements on social media platforms)
- c. Online customer communities and forums (facilitating conversations between customers and businesses, as well as customer-to-customer interactions)
- d. Customer-generated product information, advice, and referrals
- e. E-commerce functionality (e.g., having an online store within Facebook, where content and storefronts are tailored to suit the platform)

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically the case study research type, aiming to delve into the meanings, explore processes, and gain a comprehensive understanding of individuals, groups, and situations (Abdussamad, 2021). The research paradigm is interpretive in nature, focusing on the type of understanding. For data analysis, the Miles and Huberman model is applied, which encompasses data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions or verification.

The primary data for this research were collected through in-depth interviews with the Manager of Operations at Buzzohero. Additionally, secondary data was utilized to support the study, which included observing TikTok Live Streaming content, reviewing documentation, and referring to literature to enhance the credibility of the data through source triangulation. Source triangulation involves using two or more sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Husada & Aruman, 2024). The researchers focused on analysing digital marketing strategies through TikTok Live streaming and specifically examined the three most popular categories on the TikTok Shop: fashion, cosmetics, and food and culinary.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TikTok, a rapidly growing social media platform, has evolved into a hub for social commerce through its "Shop" feature, blending entertainment and online shopping into what is known as "shoppertainment." Live streaming, in particular, has become a powerful tool for brands to drive sales, influence consumer behavior, and reach new markets by combining interactive content with real-time purchasing. Buzzohero, a digital marketing-based advertising agency and TikTok Preferred Partner since 2019, earned the Silver Winner award for Creative Agency of the Year at the TikTok Ad Awards

Indonesia 2024 (Wijayatmaja, 2024). To maximize engagement and marketing effectiveness, Buzzohero applies the RACE model (Reach, Act, Convert, Engage), a structured framework that connects brands with their audiences at every stage of the customer journey through TikTok live streaming.

Table 1: Buzzohero's TikTok Live Streaming Strategy Using the RACE Model

RACE Stage	Objectives	Buzzohero's Strategies & Actions	Key Insights / Outcomes
Reach	Build awareness of brand/products on TikTok	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create TikTok account &amp; short videos</li> <li>2. Boosting ads tailored to product &amp; audience (e.g., plus-size fashion targeted ads)</li> <li>3. Use of trending music &amp; emotional storytelling in short videos</li> <li>4. KOL/Influencer endorsements to introduce brand</li> </ol>	Awareness on TikTok must be built first before livestreaming; offline awareness does not guarantee TikTok visibility.
Act	Motivate users to take initial actions (interest, engagement)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Industry-based livestream planning (fashion: brand-fit models, set design; beauty: interactive female hosts)</li> <li>2. Host selection: engaging, interactive, responsive to comments</li> <li>3. Use of screen barrage, online tipping, nonverbal cues to trigger emotional contagion</li> <li>4. Clear CTAs: subscribe, follow, polls, Q&amp;A, giveaways, limited-time offers</li> </ol>	Host plays central role; interactivity increases retention & engagement; urgency tactics push immediate audience action.
Convert	Turn leads into customers (purchases)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Showcase catalog, prices, product details in appealing way</li> <li>2. Eye-catching livestream backgrounds</li> <li>3. Exclusive promotions, discounts, limited-time offers</li> <li>4. Replay key product messages consistently</li> <li>5. Boost livestreams to increase viewers</li> <li>6. Retargeting with TikTok Pixel for abandoned carts</li> <li>7. Measure ROI &amp; ROAS for strategy adjustment</li> </ol>	Conversions rely on urgency, personalized offers, and retargeting; success measured by sales, ROI, and KPIs.

RACE Stage	Objectives	Buzzohero's Strategies & Actions	Key Insights / Outcomes
Engage	Build long-term customer relationships & brand advocacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Select trained hosts with online selling, product knowledge, and experience</li> <li>2. Monthly host training (communication skills, TikTok selling methods)</li> <li>3. Hosts answer consultative questions (e.g., size recommendations, skin type needs, product shelf life)</li> <li>4. Encourage interactive Q&amp;A during livestream</li> </ol>	Strong engagement through host-consumer bonds; satisfied customers are likely to become repeat buyers and brand advocates.

Source: Data Collected by Author (2025)

### Reach Analysis

In the Reach stage, Buzzohero emphasizes the importance of building strong brand awareness on TikTok before conducting live streaming. While some brands assume that offline recognition ensures online visibility, Buzzohero highlights that awareness on TikTok requires a distinct approach. Without prior familiarity, audiences may not respond effectively to live streaming efforts.

To establish awareness, Buzzohero first creates and manages the brand's TikTok account by producing engaging short videos, which are then supported with targeted boosting ads. These ads are customized to match product categories and audience preferences. For example, plus-size fashion campaigns are directed at users actively seeking such options, with careful adjustments to models, visuals, and geolocation. In addition, short-form videos are designed with compelling narratives, relatable content, and trending music to maximize emotional engagement and attract user attention.

Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) also play a central role in expanding reach. They act as endorsers or live-streaming hosts, introducing brands to their established audiences. Each KOL brings unique promotional styles and audience demographics, thereby enriching brand exposure. This finding aligns with previous studies highlighting the effectiveness of KOLs in enhancing livestream performance (Lyu et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2022).

Buzzohero's strategy confirms that successful e-commerce livestreaming requires a systematic foundation of awareness-building through boosting ads, emotionally engaging short videos, and KOL endorsements before moving to subsequent stages of the RACE model.

### Act Analysis

In the Act stage, Buzzohero focuses on stimulating user actions that reflect interest, such as following accounts, engaging with content, or making early purchase decisions. Once

brand awareness is established on TikTok, the agency initiates livestream marketing strategies tailored to the characteristics of each industry.

Buzzohero initiates the process of building awareness by creating a TikTok account and producing short videos, which will be further supported by boosting ads. Once the awareness level is deemed sufficient and consistent, and the brand establishes its presence on TikTok, Buzzohero will proceed with live streaming. According to their logical approach, attempting to conduct live streaming without first establishing a known presence on TikTok may not be effective. If the brand's account is unfamiliar to TikTok users, the audience will lack knowledge about the brand, its products, and its benefits. Consequently, the live stream marketing efforts may not capture the user's or audience's attention.

Therefore, it is vital to prioritize building awareness initially. Buzzohero implements the following strategy for building awareness:

- a. Buzzohero employs boosting ads that are tailored to the products to be featured in the Livestream. The boosting ads will be crafted by posting creative and captivating content on the TikTok brand account. The generated content will subsequently be boosted and customized to cater to the target audience, aligning with the brand's preferences. For instance, in the case of fashion products targeting the plus-size market, the ads will be precisely targeted toward users seeking fashionable options for larger sizes. The ad parameters, including the choice of models (men or women with plus-size figures), the graphic demonstration, and the location, will all be carefully adjusted within the media plan to effectively reach the desired target audience.
- b. To enhance awareness in e-commerce live streaming, Buzzohero creates well-crafted short TikTok videos designed to captivate the audience and convey the core message effectively. They will tailor these videos to suit the target audience. The strategy involves developing a compelling narrative that emotionally engages viewers, showcasing relatable information about the brand. To amplify the emotional impact, trending music and sound will be carefully selected. Utilizing short video production in this manner will significantly improve the chances of effectively raising awareness during e-commerce live streaming, encouraging more users to engage in this innovative shopping experience.
- c. KOL endorsements: Key Opinion Leaders, also known as influencers or creators, are utilized to introduce brands to their respective audiences. These individuals' role involves promoting brands with whom they have genuine partnerships. Thus, their primary function is to endorse the brand, and they may also act as guides during live streaming sessions. Some KOLs have the capability to conduct live streams and possess a thorough understanding of TikTok Shop, while others serve as brand ambassadors without directly participating in live streaming. Nevertheless, the main focus of KOLs remains on promoting the brand itself. Each KOL typically has its unique audience with distinct characteristics. They also have their individual styles for promoting products, showcasing the diversity in

their promotional approaches. Previous studies also mention the role of KOL in Livestream, and the differences they can bring to the streaming (Lyu et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2022)

### *Convert Analysis*

In this stage, Buzzohero focuses on reaching potential customers with personalized and relevant messages, offers, or content to encourage them to make a purchase. They use various tactics, such as conveying product knowledge, sales, and promotions, to engage the audience and drive conversions. Also, to maximize the effectiveness of using TikTok Live Streaming and boost sales on TikTok Shop, Buzzohero optimizes the shopping experience for potential customers. Start by showcasing the product catalog, prices, and product details in a visually appealing and organized manner. Ensure that every brand they're handling at TikTok Shop is having an eye-catching background, highlighting the main product of promotion of that session, providing easy navigation and seamless transactions.

One effective strategy that Buzzohero uses to entice customers to make a purchase is by offering exclusive promotions, discounts, or limited time offers. It also mentions boosting live streaming to increase viewership, which can lead to more purchases. The host keeps replaying the key message and remains consistent, emphasizing the brand and its products. But the specific product and promotion highlighted during each live stream are updated regularly to keep the content fresh and appealing to viewers. This strategy creates a sense of urgency, motivating viewers to take immediate action and convert into buyers.

To re-engage users who have shown interest in products offered but haven't made a purchase yet, Buzzohero implements retargeting strategies using tracking tools like TikTok's Pixel. This allows brands to target these potential customers with personalized ads or offers, reminding them of the products they were interested in and encouraging them to complete the purchase. Buzzohero uses the ROI (Return on Investment) method for measuring success levels. They're also evaluating whether their digital marketing efforts, particularly on TikTok, are generating a positive ROI. If the ROI is good, they continue investing in their digital marketing strategies. However, if the ROAS (Return on Ad Spend) is negative or does not meet expectations, they may reconsider their budget allocation and strategy.

At the "Covert" stage of the RACE model, Buzzohero focuses on converting leads into paying customers by providing personalized and compelling content and offers. Success is measured through ROI and KPIs like sales and viewership.

### *Engage Analysis*

In this stage, marketing activities will involve customers to achieve long-term relationships, with a focus on the idea that satisfied customers have the potential to become brand advocates. In other words, when customers are happy with the service

strategies established by Buzzohero during live streaming for each of its clients' products, they will make the decision to transact and are likely to recommend that business to others. To build a long-term relationship between the brand and customers, Buzzohero sets criteria for hosts who will be selling during live streaming. This is because the host holds complete control during the live-streaming session. The activities that will take place during the live streaming are essentially interactions between the seller and customers. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to maximize the performance of a host for selling. If the host is interactive, engaging, exciting, and fun, it will attract a larger and more engaged audience, encouraging them to stay on the live-streaming platform for a longer duration.

Buzzohero has set criteria for selecting all their hosts: 1) they must be capable of conducting online sales, as not everyone who can sell conventionally can do it online. There is a difference between conventional and online selling using digital media, in this case, on the TikTok social media platform; 2) They must be presentable; a host should be able to present their own brand, have product knowledge, and know the brand image they want to convey; 3) Experience matters; a host with experience will have different qualities compared to a beginner with no experience. Communication skills possessed by experienced hosts are different from those without experience.

One of the advantages of shopping activities on the TikTok social media platform is providing flexibility and opportunities for the audience to explore products more extensively and in detail online without having to visit offline stores. A live streaming host offers a wide space for the audience in various regions to learn and inquire about things they want to know while watching the live streaming. According to Buzzohero, many questions that arise during live streaming are consultative in nature, relating to the audience's specific needs. Like this quote from a question posed by viewers during a live streaming session, as presented by the informant :

For example, in the field of fashion, questions like, "I'm 160 cm tall, what size should I choose?" or in beauty, "My skin is dry, which sunscreen should I go for?" and in F&B, questions focus on the product's materials, content, and shelf life (informant).

In this context, a host must be adept at responding to the audience's questions to create a strong bond between the seller and the audience. To support the achievement of this process, Buzzohero provides special treatment to each of its hosts by conducting internal training every month. The training aims to educate hosts about selling on TikTok, enhance their communication skills, and enable them to interact with the audience interactively and effectively. This training is considered necessary because the approach to offline sales differs from online sales. These training sessions are held once a month, with each session lasting one to two hours. By combining these strategies and actively focusing on customer engagement, strong engagement will be created between the brand and customers, as well as potential customers.

## CONCLUSION

The rise of social media platforms like TikTok, with billions of active users, has accelerated the shift from traditional to digital marketing. Social commerce, a blend of e-commerce and social media, is projected to grow to US\$86 billion by 2028, with TikTok live streaming emerging as a particularly effective strategy. Buzzhero, a social media advertising platform, applies the RACE model (Reach, Act, Convert, Engage) to connect brands with their target audiences. They build awareness through ads, short videos, and live streams; optimize live selling with engaging hosts and promotions; streamline the shopping experience with TikTok Shop features; and foster loyalty through host training and audience interaction.

The strength of social commerce lies in creating direct, personalized, and interactive shopping experiences. By leveraging TikTok's unique blend of entertainment and commerce, businesses can engage vast audiences, drive conversions, and build long-term customer relationships. As technology and consumer behavior continue to evolve, companies must adopt innovative digital strategies to remain competitive in the fast-changing landscape of social media marketing.

## BIODATA

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