

Utilizing TikTok for Survey Participant Recruitment

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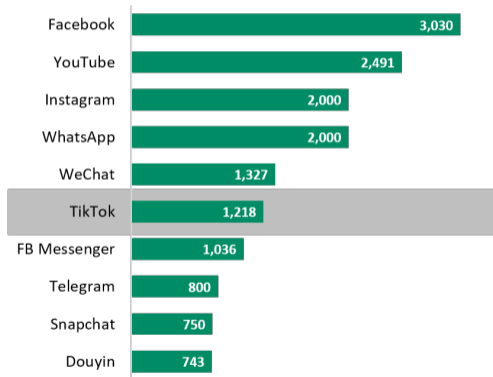
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DEMED Webinar Series 2023
November 21st, 2023
Online

Introduction

Worldwide Social Media usage

The world's most used social platforms in millions (October 2023)



Source: Kepios et al. October 2023.

Exploring TikTok

Company information:

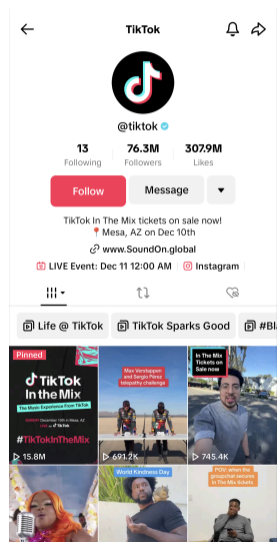
- ▶ Short-form video app
- ▶ Founded in 2012, owned by ByteDance

User base:

- ▶ Over a billion active users globally (1,218 million)
- ▶ Appeals to younger demographics, but gaining popularity across all age groups

Features & Impact:

- ▶ AI-driven algorithm for personalized content
- ▶ High engagement rates, e.g., through challenges and trends
- ▶ Influence on pop culture, music, and internet trends



Social Media Audience Overlaps

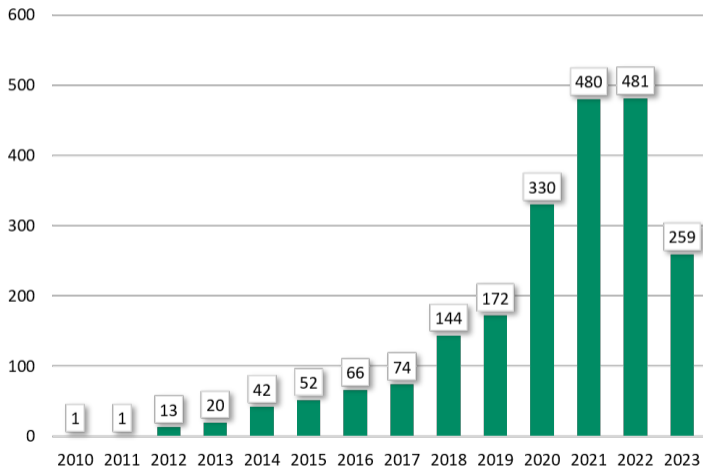
Percentage of active users of each platform aged 16 to 64 (October 2023)

	Unique to platform	Using Facebook	Using Instagram	Using TikTok
Facebook users	0.4%	100%	78.5%	51.1%
Instagram users	0.1%	81.4%	100%	52.0%
TikTok users	0.1%	81.9%	80.4%	100%

Note: Does not include data for China. TikTok is blocked in India, which may result in lower values in TikTok column. Source: Kepios et al. October 2023.

Recruiting Research Participants through Social Media

Publications Over Time



Number of publications that refer to Social Media recruitment in the abstract

Source: Web of Science search as of July 2023; using Boolean operator, narrowed to years 2010-2023 and journal articles in English only.

Publications Over Time



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(Potential) Advantages of Social Media Recruitment

- ▶ **Costs:** Comparatively inexpensive compared to other strategies (online and offline)
(Ali et al. 2020; Webler et al. 2020)
- ▶ **Reach:** Direct and easy access to hundreds of millions of individuals worldwide
(Bennetts et al. 2019; Admon et al. 2016)
- ▶ **Fast Turnaround:** Virtually no setup time; Able to start recruiting in less than 48 hours
(Zhang et al. 2020; Reuter et al. 2019)
- ▶ **Targeting options:** Vast amount of auxiliary information available, allowing for targeted recruiting
(Harfield et al. 2021; Pöttschke & Braun 2017)
- ▶ **Ease of use/Conversion:** Almost exclusive access via mobile devices eases the transition from ad to online survey - just a thumb-click away

Setting Up a TikTok Campaign

Steps in Creating an Ad Campaign

1. Preparation

- ▶ Account setup
- ▶ Host online survey externally

2. Campaign Creation

- ▶ Overall campaign settings
- ▶ Define target groups and create ad groups
- ▶ Select images/videos and create ad texts
- ▶ Create Ads

3. Monitoring

- ▶ Monitor costs, ad(-set) performance, and subgroup sizes
- ▶ Moderate, hide or delete comments

1. Preparation

Preparation - Account Setup

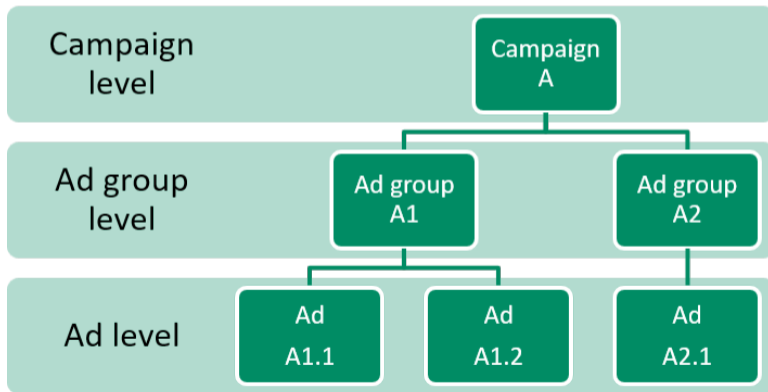
- ▶ Set up a TikTok for Business account (<https://www.tiktok.com/business/>).
- ▶ You must provide the company name, industry, country, and some contact information.
- ▶ Read and accept the Anti-Discrimination Ads Policy:
"Ads that deny opportunities based on personal characteristics such as race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, age, sexual orientation or other protected classes are considered unlawfully discriminatory and are in violation of this policy."
- ▶ **Compared to Meta:** You don't need a page or specific profile to run ads.

Preparation - External Online Survey

- ▶ The online survey must be hosted externally i.e. via a platform independent of TikTok.
- ▶ TikTok does not have access to the survey data at any time - it only serves as a provider for advertisements (**Exception:** Use of tracking pixels)
- ▶ A simple click on an ad will forward a user to your externally hosted online survey

2. Campaign Creation

Campaign Creation - Hierarchical Campaign Structure



Campaign Creation - Campaign Level I

Advertising objective

Awareness



Reach

Show your ad to the maximum number of people.

Consideration



Traffic

Send more people to a destination on your website or app.



Video views

Get more views and engagement for your video ads.



Community interaction

Get more followers or profile visits.

Conversion



App promotion

Get more users to install and engage with your app.



Lead generation

Collect leads for your business.



Website conversions

Drive valuable actions on your website.



Product sales

Sell products from your TikTok Shop, website, and app.

Campaign Creation - Campaign Level II

Settings

Campaign name

Traffic Campaign

Create split test

Get more insights into your ads by split testing your strategy. [Learn more](#)

Campaign budget optimization

Automatically optimize your budget allocation. You'll have some limitations on your bid strategy and optimization goal. [Learn more](#)

Set campaign budget

Daily budget

EUR

- ▶ Choose an overall campaign objective: Reach, Traffic, Video views, Community interaction, App promotion, Lead generation, or Website conversions
 - ▶ **Recommendation:** Traffic → send more people to a destination, i.e., the online survey website.
- ▶ **Recommendation:** Set an upper limit for campaign budget.

Campaign Creation - Ad Group Level I






Placements

Automatic placement

Automatically show your ads across supported placements. [Learn more](#)

Select placement

Manually choose your targeting placement. [Learn more](#)

-  TikTok Include search results 
-  Global App Bundle Powered by Pangle
CapCut/Fizzo 
-  Pangle
Premium global publisher network, available in some regions. [Learn more](#)

► Defining the placements of ads - here you can choose from the family of services: TikTok, Global App Bundle, Pangle

► **Note:** Availability depends on the ad type, targeting, ad creation, and country of delivery.

► **Recommendation:** Use only TikTok, as specific targeting options are only available for TikTok.

Campaign Creation - Ad Group Level II

- ▶ Customizing the ad settings to control the level of user activity.
 - ▶ **Compared to Meta:** (De)activation of user comments, video downloads, and video sharing is possible.

User comment

We recommend keeping user comments on to help your ads achieve more impressions and conversions. You can hide, pin, and reply to comments using our comment management tools. [How to manage comments](#)

Video download ?


Video sharing ?

Campaign Creation - Ad Group Level III

- ▶ Setting the target group for the ads based on targeting parameters available, such as:
 - ▶ location, gender, age group, languages, spending power, device, and specific interests (e.g., sports, games) or behavior on the platform (e.g., video, hashtag, and creator interactions)
 - ▶ **Note:** The countries/regions you can target depend on the country/region you specified at registration of the TikTok For Business account. For a comprehensive list of all available locations per country, see <https://ads.tiktok.com/help/article/placements-available-locations>. For example, the USA can currently only be targeted with ads from the USA or Canada.
 - ▶ **Compared to Meta:** Meta offers very granular regional targeting. TikTok currently only allows targeting certain larger regions or major cities per country.

Campaign Creation - Ad Group Level IV


- ▶ Setting the budget for the ad group, i.e. for all ads within an ad group
 - ▶ **Note:** The link clicks to budget ratio is not linear, but depends on various factors, such as target audience and time of day
- ▶ Setting the ad group schedule, i.e. the start and end dates of the ad campaign
 - ▶ **Note:** An ad group should run for at least 24 hours to ensure the best possible delivery of ads.
- ▶ **Recommendation:** TikTok provides an estimate of the potential reach of an ad group based on the targeting options selected. This estimate can help determine an appropriate budget for your campaign.


Available audience 



Fairly broad

18,756,000-22,925,000

 Due to data security requirements, this figure does not include audiences under 18 years of age. Any delivery as permitted by applicable laws will not be affected.

Targeting summary 

Location

Germany

All

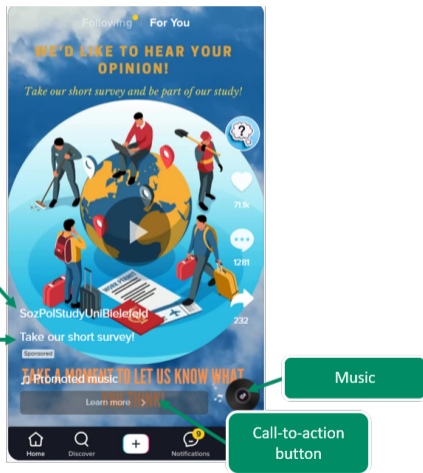
[View all](#)

Languages , Gender , Age , Spending power , Audience (include) , Audience...

Campaign Creation - Ad Group Level V

- ▶ Selecting an optimization goal, i.e., the event for which ad delivery should be improved - either optimization for clicks or landing page views.
 - ▶ **Recommendation:** Clicks
- ▶ Selecting the bid strategy, i.e., how your budget is spent
 - ▶ **Recommendation:** Maximum delivery
- ▶ Billing event is defined automatically, depending on the optimization goal.
For Clicks → Link Click

Campaign Creation - Ad Level I



- ▶ Selection of video, images, and texts should always be based on whether they appeal to the target audience → Ads as a tailored survey invitation letter following the Leverage Saliency Theory (*Groves et al. 2000*)
- ▶ Please make sure to not violate the guidelines on ad content, see <https://ads.tiktok.com/help/article/tiktok-advertising-policies-ad-c>

Campaign Creation - Ad Level II

Identity

Use TikTok account to deliver Spark Ads

Set custom identity

SozPolStudyUniBielefeld

+ Create new custom identity

Ad details

Ad format

Single video
Create an ad with one video or multiple images.

Ad creative

Video [TikTok Video Editor](#)

Smart_Optimization_Video_50565_1659... 00:30 | 720 * 1280

[Update](#) [Thumbnail](#)



- ▶ TikTok is all about the visual! Choose captivating ads that effectively convey the purpose of the survey.
- ▶ The ad format can be a single image, an image carousel, or a video.
 - ▶ **Recommendation:** Video or at least some dynamic elements.
- ▶ **Compared to Meta:** Ads are not linked to a specific account. You can create a new, ad-specific identity for each ad.

Campaign Creation - Ad Level III

TikTok Creative Center (<https://ads.tiktok.com/business/creativecenter>)

The screenshot shows the TikTok Creative Center interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'TikTok: Creative Center', 'Inspiration', 'Trends', 'Creative Tools', and 'Education'. The language is set to 'English' and there's a user profile icon with the letter 'U'. Below the navigation bar is a red banner that says 'Try Creative Assistant' with the subtext 'Write scripts, show top trends, and more.' and a right-pointing arrow. The main headline reads 'Let's elevate your whole creative game'. Below this, there are three main sections: 'Looking for examples of top ads?' with a 'Top Ads Dashboard' card, 'Wondering what's hot on TikTok?' with a 'Trend Intelligence' card, and 'Seeking creative guidance?' with a 'Creative Tips Finder' card. Each card has a 'Get started' button at the bottom.

Campaign Creation - Ad Level IV

TikTok Ad Library (<https://library.tiktok.com/>)

The screenshot shows the TikTok Ad Library interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the TikTok logo and links for 'Ad Library', 'All ads report', 'Other commercial content', and 'FAQs'. The main heading is 'Find ads on TikTok'. Below this is a search filter section with four dropdown menus: 'Ad target country' (set to Germany), 'Ad type' (set to All ad types), 'Ad published date' (set to 10/1/2022–11/20/2023), and 'Advertiser name or keyword' (with a search input field containing 'Search by name or keyword' and a red 'Search' button). The search results section is titled 'Search results' and shows 'Total ads: 9,904,368'. A dropdown menu for 'Last shown date' is set to 'Newest to oldest'. Four ad cards are displayed in a row. The first card is for 'Lubetzky Family Foun...' with a thumbnail image of a building. The other three cards are for 'Pikoya Ltd.' and have blacked-out thumbnails. Each card displays the first and last shown dates and the number of unique users seen.

TikTok [Ad Library](#) [All ads report](#) [Other commercial content](#) [FAQs](#)

Find ads on TikTok

Ad target country: Ad type: Ad published date: Advertiser name or keyword:

Search results

Total ads: 9,904,368 Last shown date: Newest to oldest

Advertiser	First shown	Last shown	Unique users seen
Ad Lubetzky Family Foun...	10/01/2022	11/19/2023	200K-300K
Ad Pikoya Ltd.	10/06/2022	11/19/2023	1K-10K
Ad Pikoya Ltd.	10/06/2022	11/19/2023	1K-10K
Ad Pikoya Ltd.	10/06/2022	11/19/2023	1K-10K

3. Monitoring

Monitoring - Costs, Performance, and Subgroup Sizes

- ▶ Evaluating the cost per click (CPC) and costs per completed interview
- ▶ Monitoring the performance of ad sets and ads (removing or strengthening certain ad sets/ads)
- ▶ Reviewing the actual survey data and net sample composition:
 - ▶ Do ads with high performance (thus, higher costs) also recruit the desired target groups?
 - ▶ Are target sub-populations represented in sufficient size in the survey data?

Based on this: Adjust the distribution of daily campaign budgets across ad sets.

Monitoring - Moderation of Interactions

If comments are enabled:

- ▶ Answer questions regarding your ads or your study.
- ▶ Moderate comments and discussions OR even hide or delete certain undesirable comments (e.g., hate speech).
- ▶ **Recommendation I:** As little intervention as possible but taking action in the case of serious insults or inhuman statements.
- ▶ **Recommendation II:** It may be a little more work, but comments are engagement. And engagement leads to better ad performance. So it is a good idea to keep comments on.

Example Study

Refugee & youth crime 2022

- ▶ Online survey on refugees and juvenile delinquency
- ▶ Target group: General population in Germany and the UK
- ▶ Field phase: August 06-09, 2022 (4 days)
- ▶ Campaign budget: 390 € across 3 ad groups (130 € each)
- ▶ Targeting parameters:
 - ▶ Language: German & English
 - ▶ Country: Germany & UK
 - ▶ Age range: 18-55+ years
 - ▶ Gender: all

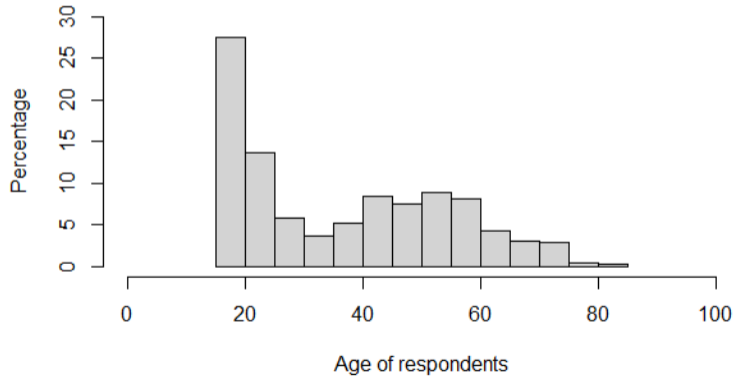
Joint project with Simon Lüttkewitte (Bielefeld University). For more information, see Zindel & Lüttkewitte, 2023

Refugee & youth crime 2022

- ▶ Costs for ads: 387.48 €
- ▶ 205,071 impressions and 117,626 individuals reached
- ▶ 3,603 link-clicks (1.76% CTR)
- ▶ 1,846 started the questionnaire (51.23% of all clicks)
- ▶ 500 complete interviews (13.88% of all clicks; 27.09% of all started interviews)
- ▶ **Compared to Meta:** A higher dropout rate than any of our meta-recruited surveys in recent year → Indicates lower participant engagement.
- ▶ Average net cost for a complete interview: **0.77 €**
- ▶ **Compared to Meta:** Significantly less expensive than recent Meta-recruited surveys

Refugee & youth crime 2022

Age distribution in overall sample



Refugee & youth crime 2022

Language	Germany		UK	Total
	German	English	English	
Age group	Sample in %			
18-24	11.41	70.31	80.00	40.04
25-34	6.46	20.31	4.44	9.75
35-44	17.11	5.47	0.00	10.79
45-54	30.42	2.34	4.44	18.05
55+	34.60	1.56	11.11	21.37

Refugee & youth crime 2022

Language	Germany	UK		Total
	German	English		
Gender	Sample in %			
<i>Men</i>	69.42	52.63	52.68	61.52
<i>Women</i>	28.42	27.82	23.21	27.05
<i>Other gender</i>	2.16	19.55	24.11	11.43

Refugee & youth crime 2022

Language Citizenship	Germany	UK	Total
	German	English	
		Sample in %	
<i>Only German/British</i>	91.32	66.15	82.20
<i>German/British+ other</i>	4.53	15.38	10.00
<i>Other citizenship</i>	4.15	16.92	7.80

Ethic Considerations

Ethics Considerations

- ▶ TikTok is owned by ByteDance, a Chinese company with strong connections to the Chinese state → Concerns: Cybersecurity, privacy, misinformation
 - ▶ Official device bans by government agencies (European Commission, European Council)
 - ▶ Complete prohibitions in some countries
- ▶ Utilizing TikTok for advertisements contributes to its financial revenue → Strengthening its market position.

Ethics Considerations

Data Protection Measures:

- ▶ Ensuring survey data remains inaccessible to TikTok
→ Don't use TikTok's tracking tools (e.g., Pixel)

Recommendation:

- ▶ Consultation with institutions, employers, and ethics committees
- ▶ Determine feasibility within ethical frameworks
- ▶ Guidelines for financial collaborations with TikTok

Summary

Research Potential

TikTok offers unique potential for recruiting people for survey research:

- ▶ It is a fast-growing platform that will become even more relevant in the coming years.
- ▶ It does what Facebook can no longer do easily: It reaches young people in particular.
- ▶ It is very cost-effective (maybe even more cost-effective than Meta?)

Research Gaps:

- ▶ TikTok has not been used much as a recruiting tool. There is an opportunity to be a pioneer in this space.
- ▶ There is still a lack of empirical studies that compare TikTok with other providers such as Meta.

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Thank you.



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