

# Analysis of Nike and Adidas Marketing Strategies on TikTok

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**Abstract.** The sports industry, as an emerging force in China, contributes significantly to economic development and is closely linked to the booming development of the Internet and new media. TikTok, as a popular short-video platform, provides brands such as Nike and Adidas with a highly effective channel to interact directly with consumers thanks to its huge user traffic. Therefore, this paper uses the literature research method and case analysis method to analyze the marketing strategy of Nike and Adidas in TikTok operations. On this basis, it deeply explores the content selection and content creativity, and finally concludes. In terms of content strategy, both focus on graphic video promotion, with a smaller number of live broadcasts, and a focus on low-priced products. In terms of creativity, Nike and Adidas both utilize the challenge form on TikTok to strengthen the brand spirit and interaction. Nike's "#JustDoIt Challenge" and Adidas's celebrity virtual IP dance activities, both enhance brand exposure, which to a certain extent inspires users to participate in the creation and enhance the stickiness. Stickiness is to a certain extent to enhance the benefits of brand publicity. However, Nike's interaction data on TikTok is significantly better than that of Adidas, showing stronger market appeal. Their successful marketing cases are highly valuable to study and learn from.

## 1 Introduction

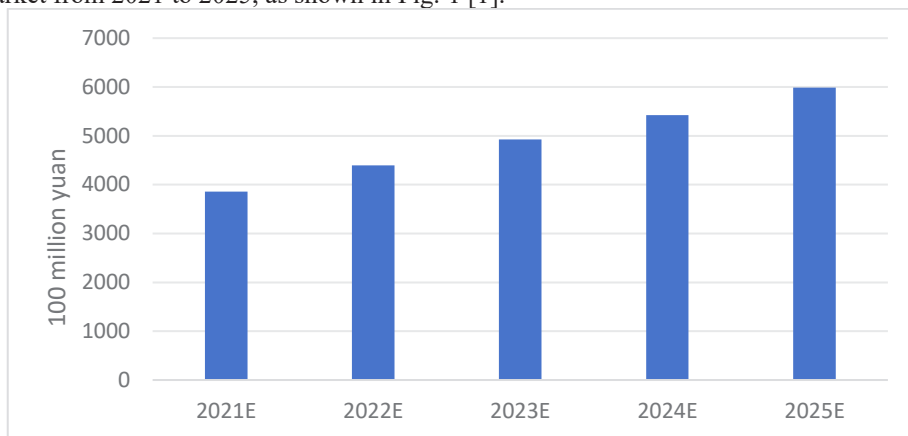
### 1.1 Background

As a sunrise industry in China, the sports industry has a strong economic development potential and is also one of the important sources of China's economic development. Since the State Administration of Sport released the Development Plan for the Outdoor Sports Industry (2022-2025) in 2022, the sports industry has shown strong vitality. As one of the important parts of national sports development, the sports industry can greatly meet the public's demand for sports goods. In this regard, the sports industry has been developing rapidly. In addition, The General Office of the State Council issued the Outline for Building a Sports Power in 2019, which made a comprehensive deployment for building a sports power. This measure provides a strong policy guarantee for the development of sports to a large extent. So far, the development of the sports industry has risen to the level of national

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strategy. IMedia Consulting predicted the size of China's sports shoes and clothing industry market from 2021 to 2025, as shown in Fig. 1 [1].



**Fig. 1.** Market size forecast of China's shoe and clothing industry in 2021-2025 [1]

More and more entrepreneurs and employees aim at this huge market demand and join the ranks of sporting goods, which also directly leads to the intensification of competition in the sporting goods industry. To enhance their brand competitiveness, each brand is looking for various opportunities in the current of The Times and producing more attractive and influential marketing strategies and other content, hoping to attract more users and a wider range of user groups. Among the many sporting goods, Nike and Adidas are the two most representative brands.

## 1.2 Literature review

TikTok was officially launched and put into use in 2016. In the early stage, it mainly featured music and funny videos, which attracted the attention of many young users. TikTok is also constantly iterating in functions, among which TikTok mall has been highly praised, providing great convenience for users and merchants, and achieving remarkable results on product publicity. In the winter of 2018, TikTok far surpassed many other apps on Apple phones, becoming the leader in the field of short video. It is the short video platform with the most users and has a huge market influence [2]. TikTok's internal content marketing, which is inseparable from traffic, fans, and goods is inseparable from quality content. Exquisite and concise video content, clear goals and positioning, as well as novel marketing strategy, have greatly changed the traditional advertising mode, injected fresh blood into the promotion of enterprises and brands, and broadened the development space. Through this way to effectively improve the brand influence, Nike and Adidas are not an exception. Their close cooperation with TikTok has achieved good results [2].

In the enterprise, TikTok content marketing can be divided into three forms, respectively BGC, PGC, and UGC. BGC refers to content crafted by a brand or company to enhance its image, products, or services. It encompasses brand stories, company profiles, culture, product intros, promotions, etc., produced by the brand's content team. PGC professionally generated content is content generated by professional content creators, media companies, or institutions. Such content is often carefully produced, edited, and reviewed, with high production value and professionalism. UGC refers to the content produced and published by ordinary users to convey their own experiences and feelings to other users. This kind of content usually has a stronger authenticity and credibility, which can attract more users' attention and resonance, the former two added after the third party, compared with the system,

a scientific way to make the brand a higher reputation, at the same time, with the help of situational marketing make brand trust. For example, by publishing valuable content (such as blog posts, videos, white papers, etc.) to attract and retain the target audience. This content should focus on the brand's core values and strengths to build brand authority and credibility, and actively engage with fans on social media platforms and respond to their comments and questions [3]. BGC, PGC and UGC are three different ways of content production in the digital age, and they have significant differences in the aspects of generating subjects, content characteristics, and application scenarios. TikTok marketing is mainly divided into four forms: cooperation with the product in the video, cooperation with the original author, benign interaction between consumers, and accurate delivery in content selection. This view was pointed out by Chen Xinjie in the article [4]. Sheffield also mentioned in the article that more and more large and small enterprises have begun to pay attention to TikTok platforms. They believe that if they want to develop effective and scientific marketing strategies, it is necessary to have a deeper understanding of TikTok, develop marketing strategies in line with the form of TikTok, and better establish contact with users [5]. Tang Xiaopeng pointed out in his article that TikTok marketing has a strong interactive and participation value, and users' transformation and communication of information, so that the product can be quickly watched, and even once become a trend. Moreover, reasonable use of big data can accelerate the dissemination of advertising, which is more cost-effective than traditional advertising [6]. Ma Chuanming deeply analyzed the matrix system of the TikTok account carefully constructed by Zhongyue Technology and pointed out that this matrix marketing strategy can not only effectively promote the positive growth of brand value, but also significantly strengthen the market positioning and image building of the brand. Through the carefully arranged multi-account cooperation operation, this strategy not only deepens the user's cognition and memory of the brand, Moreover, but also narrows the distance between the brand and the audience and realizes closer and more efficient user interaction and connection with [7].

Given the new media marketing strategy of domestic sports goods enterprises, Chen Xiaochang made an in-depth analysis with 361 as a specific case. The research points out that at present, many sports goods enterprises are generally faced with a lack of clear strategic positioning in the field of network marketing, leading to a significant conflict between online and offline channels, which affects the overall marketing effect. Based on the traditional 4P (product, price, channel, promotion) marketing theory framework, Chen Xiaochang suggested that sports goods enterprises should focus on improving the core competitiveness of products to ensure that products can maintain a dominant position in both online and offline markets. At the same time, he stressed the need to promote the deep integration of online and offline channels, break traditional boundaries, and realize resource complementarity and advantage sharing. In addition, increasing marketing and publicity and innovating interactive methods are also key measures to enhance brand influence and user engagement. Through the implementation of these strategies, sporting goods enterprises can better adapt to the market changes in the new media environment and achieve sustainable development [8]. Wang Yanjie said in his article that nowadays all enterprises have paid close attention to the development of social media to a certain extent. In the overall environment, all enterprises should pay attention to the database and marketing framework live broadcast, and other means to expand the brand influence and create value for enterprises [9]. Ravi Bhat, Chris Runciman, and Aspex discussed the marketing strategy of sporting goods retailers in the social media environment, and they emphasized that the Internet plays a vital role in the marketing development of sporting goods enterprises. The study points out that the popularity of the Internet has not only profoundly changed traditional marketing methods, but also provided a platform for enterprises to directly build and maintain a large customer base. By accurately using Internet tools, sporting goods companies can reach target

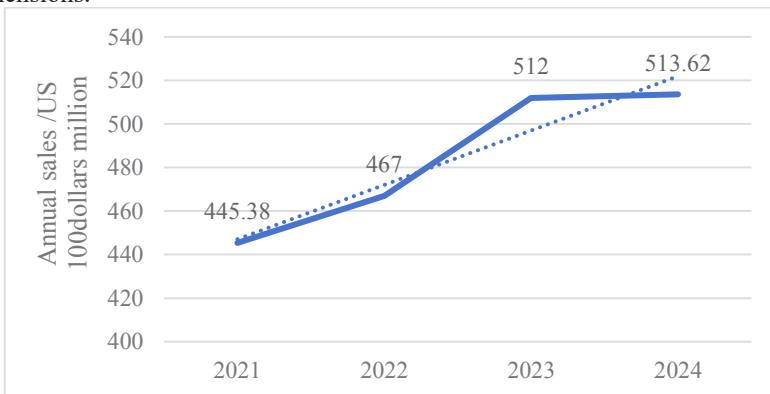
consumers more effectively, enhance brand exposure, and thus drive business growth. This discovery reveals the great potential of the Internet as a marketing channel and its indispensable strategic position in the sporting goods industry [10].

### 1.3 Research motivation

Although many enterprises are marketing in TikTok, the effect is still uneven, which may be caused by the lack of research on TikTok's marketing strategy. This paper will select Nike and Adidas and select the most representative App TikTok of short video platform for case comparison and analysis, and the results are representative. Analyze the TikTok marketing strategies of the two brands summarize their existing problems and put forward corresponding suggestions and solutions.

## 2 Branding notes for Nike and Adidas

Nike, founded in 1972 by Phil Knight and his mentor Bill Bowerman, under the name of Blue Ribbon Sports, was officially renamed Nike in 1978. Known for its innovative technology, stylish design, and excellent product quality, Nike is one of the leading companies in the global sporting goods industry. Nike's brand development can be divided into three stages. From 1970 to 1985, Nike quickly occupied the segment track with its high professionalism and cost performance. From 1985 to 2008, Nike strengthened the brand and expanded the Asian market during this time. Since 2009, Nike improved touch frequency and back-end efficiency through digital technology, and more efficiently personalized and broad coverage of consumer preferences. In addition, Nike is also active on TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, and other social media platforms, covering a wider range of user groups through diversified content forms and marketing strategies. According to the official financial data released by Nike, its sales are increasing year by year from 2021 to 2022 (Fig.2). In 2024, Nike can still maintain positive revenue growth despite severe market challenges. Nike not only leads the world but also is one of the most valuable clothing brands in the world. It also has a wide range of influence and more successful cases on social media and a searchable in other dimensions.



**Fig. 2.** Nike marketing volume changes from 2021 to 2024 [2]

Adidas, the brand originated in Germany and was founded by Adolf Adidas in 1949. The Dussler brothers initially started making footwear at Htgen Oach, went their separate ways, and Adolf founded Adidas. In the 21st century, Adidas has become one of the global market leaders in sports shoes, maintaining a competitive advantage in terms of market share, brand awareness, and consumer recognition. In addition, Adidas has established close cooperation

with top sports, sports teams, and stars in many countries. Adidas Has become a world-renowned sports brand, and its brand influence and market share are at the forefront of the industry [2].

As early as the 1970s, Adidas and Nike began to compete between the masters. In the early 1970s, Adidas sneakers were favored by the public, occupied a dominant position in various international sports events, and were extremely popular among athletes. However, with the rise of jogging, Adidas failed to adjust its marketing strategy in time, ignoring the potential of the emerging sport, and thus providing an opportunity for its rival Nike. Looking at the same period Nike, also seized the huge dividend brought by this trend, and continuously launched several running shoes that follow the trend, which were favored by consumers. At the same time, Nike's market share has greatly increased, greatly shortening the gap with Adidas in the leading position of sports brands. Over time, Adidas's market share has continued to decline, especially since the 1980s, with the replacement of leadership by rival Nike. Although Adidas later started to revitalize the brand and implemented a series of strategic adjustments, such as the joint establishment of a sporting goods group with Salomon, it still failed to return to its peak until now [2].

Adidas The competition with Nike is full of challenges and opportunities. Whether it is the jogging trend in the 1970s, or in today's rapid development of the Internet, the huge dividends brought by new media platforms are not to be missed.

### **3 Analyze of Nike with Adidas**

#### **3.1 Common points of Nike and Adidas**

##### *3.1.1 Abundant category innovation*

From the beginning of Nike, its success lies not only in grasping the dividend of the trend but also in its continuous iteration and innovation to adapt it to the trend of The Times. For example, in 1984, Nike launched the Air Jordan series; since 1990, it has launched disruptive products such as Flyknit and Zoom X, which led the trend and improved the performance of the product. Adidas Although it is slightly inferior in technological innovation, it is also constantly launching its new technologies, such as Boost midsole technology, and Stretchweb mesh vamp technology, which proves that the huge energy invested in the rich category innovation, is one of the main strategies.

##### *3.1.2 Various brand marketing*

Both Nike and Adidas are good at using various marketing methods to enhance the influence and popularity of sponsored sports events such as the Olympic Games, World Cup, Michael Jordan and Lionel Messi; and holding brand activities to increase brand exposure and influence.

#### **3.2 Different points of Nike and Adidas**

##### *3.2.1 Brand positioning*

Nike mainly focuses on the innovation of technology. To improve the performance of professional athletes, the feet are comfortable and in line with the public aesthetic. Its sub-brand Nike360 focuses on fashion, which is more suitable for people aged 19-27 who pursue

fashion. Adidas can be mainly divided into three series, namely, sports performance series, sports classic series, and sports fashion series. The three different series represent different audience groups. Compared with Nike, the division of Adidas is different from it.

### 3.2.2 Marketing strategy on the TikTok

Nike uses the global concept as the template in the TikTok studio, aiming to create a creative and dynamic studio, including clothing demonstration, lifestyle and other information, to provide a diversified experience for consumers. Nike will also invite star athletes to appear in the studio at TikTok to enhance their communication with consumers. Adidas Set the "star + sharp goods" dual drive mode in the broadcast room, and improved the GMV of the broadcast room in this way.

## 4 Nike and Adidas on TikTok

This paper focuses on the in-depth exploration of Nike and Adidas's marketing strategies on TikTok in two dimensions, namely, content selection and content creativity. Based on the preferences of TikTok platform users and the algorithm recommendation behind the App, as well as the characteristics of different types of content, this paper selects short video content and live broadcast content for an in-depth analysis of the TikTok content selection strategy of Nike and Adidas. This paper collects and sorts out the number of short videos and live broadcasts of Nike and Adidas official accounts, and calculates their proportion. See Table. 1 and Table. 2.

**Table 1.** Nike The selection of TikTok official account content on August 30th

	short video			direct seeding
	New number of videos	Share the number of goods	Number	Share the number of goods
Sports flagship store	53	84, 90%	41	100%
Tao Bo (Nike) official studio	526	47.90%	86	100%
Official flagship store	30	85.71%	69	100%

**Table 2.** Adidas The selection of TikTok official account content on August 30th

	short video			direct seeding
	Number of new videos	Share the number of goods	Number	Share the number of goods
Official flagship store	595	71.93%	37	100%
Sports flagship store	653	77.79%	80	100%
Light sports flagship store	761	55.71%	124	100%

### 4.1 Selection of short video content

Adidas Account within the short video is usually defined as 10-20s, 60s +, which are mainly used for electricity official account, most of the goods and selling point (e. g. Table. 2), through the form of short video sales, and the official account emphasis is very different,

including for brand culture, performance, brand spirit of practice, etc., to attract more audience interaction. Its characteristics are as follows: 1) Rich video categories and content with a certain degree of acceptance. 2) It can meet the basic requirements of users for watching short videos for recreation and relaxation.

Under the official account authorized by Nike, the classification form of its short videos is the same as that of Adidas. In the main account of its e-commerce, the content of short videos is usually mainly with goods (such as Table 1), and the appearance of short videos is longer than that of the Adidas similar accounts, usually in the 15s-30s. Nike's official account often posts some cooperation with celebrities or other Internet celebrities. Usually, the number of likes of such short videos is higher than that of other short videos under its official Nike account. These short videos also include new product launches, creative advertising, and the embodiment of brand spirit, etc., which are all in the 60s +. Its characteristics are as follows: 1) Be good at using short videos to publicize all aspects of their brand; 2) Video content attracts people's attention, and is good at grasping user psychology to achieve good benefits.

## **4.2 Selection of live broadcast content**

In most cases, whether Adidas or Nike's official accounts are not live broadcast, only in officially authorized stores or e-commerce accounts. From this situation, it can be concluded that the live broadcast content of the two is highly consistent, and both of them are live broadcasts with goods. These accounts are mainly live broadcasts for profit and do not involve the brand culture in the short video content of similar official accounts.

# **5 Suggestions**

## **5.1 Strategy suggestions for Tiktok Douyin marketing**

First, Nike should pay attention to the integration of the core values of the brand. The spirit represented by "Just do it" symbolizes the spirit of courage and unyielding. The content structure and framework of short videos should be designed more carefully, and the traditional advertising content framework should be abandoned, to arouse the audience resonance as one of the main purposes. Second, strengthen the use of KOL and star effect. The purpose of strengthening the cooperation with KOL is to choose stars or fashion bloggers consistent with the brand image, to better strengthen the cooperation with stars and Internet celebrities in line with the brand spirit at the source, and better show the charm of the brand. Third, increase the promotion of innovative and interactive marketing forms. In the previous creative activities marketing, have achieved good results, and greatly improved the exposure of the brand, so we should promote the marketing model of dry heavy form.

## **5.2 Suggestions on Douyin Marketing Strategy for Adidas**

First, use the form of a short video platform to show the unique product design. The unique product design of Adidas, such as its logo and Boost technology, should be highlighted in the video content to show the brand's advantages, design elements, and fashion sense. Second, follow the trend and lead the trend. Grasp the current trend closely, such as street culture, football culture, etc., and launch more products that follow the trend, and integrate its trend culture through TikTok. Third, enrich the video content and form of expression. To better into TikTok, based on the product, should invest more energy in the video creation and form, do better to attract user interest, while introducing the brand, and let users have the desire to

continue to watch, rather than as traditional advertising, should be abandoned on the TikTok app of traditional advertising framework, etc., comply with the trend of TikTok.

## 6 Conclusion

Nike and Adidas, as the two most representative brands in the international sports industry, have their strengths in TikTok's strategic operation. The similarity lies in that different types of accounts have different operation purposes, such as the official account for spreading brand culture, and spirit and introducing new products, while the officially authorized store accounts mainly function for profit, and the video content is mostly to introduce or promote products, mainly serving the live broadcast content. Different: The number of fans under the Adidas official account is less than Nike, and the video update speed is lower than Nike, there is a certain negative attitude, compared with Nike, its attitude is not positive enough. In addition, Nike's official account is more attention to design and innovation, not only on sports stars or stars.

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