

# Growing with AI

## How TikTok's AI solutions empower connection, creativity and culture

In a fast-moving digital landscape, creators and marketers must achieve more with fewer resources. TikTok's AI tools help them do just that by enhancing creativity, sharpening opportunity and enabling both to reach and engage global audiences more effectively.



# Businesses growing with AI

Marketers are under pressure to deliver greater results, faster, and with tighter budgets. AI-enabled tools that are part of TikTok's trusted platform multiply advertisers' creativity and productivity so they can build brand awareness among a massive and highly engaged global audience.



## From pressure to possibility: how AI is reshaping advertising on TikTok

Marketers today operate under relentless pressure. Budgets are tightening, targets are rising and buyer sentiments are shifting faster than ever. "Consumers now expect brands to speak with cultural fluency: to show up authentically across markets and moments," says Catherine Lautier, global head of media and integrated brand communication at Danone. "For a global company, this means performing at the speed of culture."

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The brief is simple but tough: connect more authentically with wider audiences, at greater speed and with fewer resources. That has made AI a lifeline. Nine in ten executives now believe AI will drive growth and transform innovation, according to a 2025 study on automation for performance by TikTok and NewtonX. The question is not whether to use AI, but how to use it well.

TikTok's answer is to build tools that elevate marketers' ingenuity. Advertisers want systems that free them from repetitive tasks, enhance their ability to see performance signals, and hasten the adaptation of creatives across markets and formats. "Technology—particularly AI—is helping brands understand audiences in real time, adapt creative across markets instantly, and focus investment where it matters most," says Sofia Hernandez, global head of business marketing and commercial partnerships at TikTok.

AI-powered tools from TikTok include the Symphony suite, which automates parts of the creative process from scripting to video production and asset optimisation. Smart+ automates and optimises multiple aspects of campaign management, including targeting, bidding and reporting. And for sellers using TikTok Shop, tools such as Seller Assistant, GMV Max and AI-generated product information help localise, test and refine offers on a large scale.

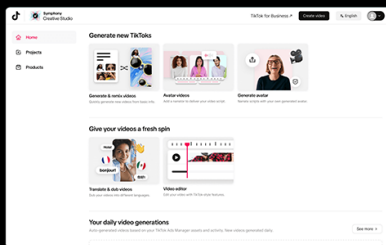
“AI is a creativity and performance amplifier for brands and businesses,” says Ms Hernandez. “Tools like the Symphony suite and Smart+ are designed to make high-performing content accessible to every marketer, not just the biggest teams.”

AI lets advertisers and creators adapt brand-focused ideas into multiple formats tuned for different audiences and contexts. TikTok One is where brands can get inspiration by discovering top-performing ads and user-generated content. It includes Content Suite, where advertisers can discover branded and user-generated content with high ad potential, manage creator authorisations and turn content that resonates with their audiences into ads quickly and efficiently. This turns a marketing campaign from a straight sales pitch into content driven by real expressions of enthusiasm for the product or service.

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## From prompt to production with Symphony

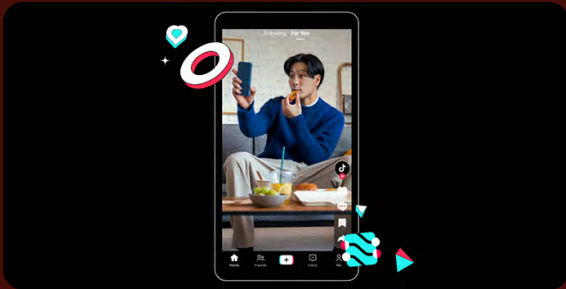
A suite of AI-powered creative tools, integrated into software such as Adobe Express, with capabilities including image-to-video and text-to-video generation, help with testing creative variations, and AI avatars that can present products and services.



## Smarter campaigns and less manual work with Smart+

An automation solution for performance advertising that lets users set parameters for their TikTok campaigns, turn catalogues into shoppable ads and use generative AI tools to produce creatives, enhance or translate existing ones and optimise performance.

## Tools to help TikTok Shop sellers grow



GMV Max is a tool for sellers that automates their advertising campaigns and helps increase their overall sales. The Seller Assistant chatbot is an expert to turn to for solutions to questions such as “what’s the best way to facilitate returns?” And the TikTok Shop Product Optimiser uses AI to determine what images and text will maximise search visibility and recommendation potential.

## Multiplying advertisers’ creativity with AI gets results that add up

Automation is a powerful multiplier of advertisers’ creativity, especially when it is used to set up advertising campaigns for e-commerce. Online retailers, for instance, can now automatically take their catalogues and generate numerous ads tailored for different audiences, geographies and momentary trends.

“There’s a growing belief that with AI, we can do more with less—shorter times, smaller budgets,” says Elav Horwitz, the chief innovation officer at WPP, the world’s largest advertising and marketing-services company. “But the real opportunity isn’t

just efficiency, it’s transformation and value. AI is helping brands move at the speed of culture, adapting creative in real time and reimagining how ideas come to life.”

WPP has built on an application programming interface provided by TikTok to integrate Symphony features into its own AI-enabled marketing platform, WPP Open. This “helps us solve challenges that were once time-consuming or even impossible, like large-scale translation or the creation of virtual influencers,” she explains. “Our teams have already embedded Symphony into their campaigns and creative workflows, allowing them to explore new possibilities and solve client challenges in more innovative, efficient ways.”

Danone was the first of WPP’s global clients to test the Symphony suite through WPP Open.

“Symphony’s AI dubbing, avatar and video-generation tools are helping us create localised, multi-language content in record time, while preserving brand tone and storytelling integrity,” Ms Lautier reports. “It has allowed our teams to scale up cultural relevance—ensuring that our creative speaks to people in their own language and context without losing its soul.”

Many other brands are using AI-enabled automation to improve advertising effectiveness and return on costs. Ulta Beauty offers another example of the benefits. Wanting to promote its expansive product

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catalogue while controlling costs, the business turned to TikTok's Smart+ Catalog Ads to optimise the product selection, creative and copy for a campaign, whose performance it measured against a manual, website-only sales campaign.

The result was a 27% increase in return on ad spend, a 30% drop in cost per acquisition and a 35% reduction in cost per click. "Adoption of TikTok's Smart+ Catalog Ads with website and app optimisation allows for a seamless, tailored experience Ulta Beauty guests were craving," says Jillian Levine, vice-president for paid social at Ulta Beauty's agency IPG Mediabrands Kinesso.

Human oversight remains crucial in using automation to help run campaigns. Smart+, for example, can automatically identify and optimise a campaign towards an audience with whom ads are likely to perform well, but a real marketer has to decide whether these are the right customers for the business. Text-to-image and image-to-video generation still relies on humans to decide on the right source material, be it a prompt or a Polaroid. TikTok's AI tools simply put machine power behind that curatorial sensibility to multiply its effect.

**"The real power of AI lies not in replacing people, but in enabling them to work smarter and create at an entirely new scale."**

**Elav Horwitz**, chief innovation officer, WPP

"The real power of AI lies not in replacing people, but in enabling them to work smarter and create at an entirely new scale," says Ms Horwitz of WPP. "The fundamentals of marketing are more relevant than ever: telling the right story to the right audience, and showing up meaningfully in culture." Ms Lautier agrees. "The future of marketing will be fuelled by data," she says, "but AI is first and foremost a way to tap our collective intelligence, to truly connect with the people we serve."

## Trusted and transparent marketing in the AI era

The importance of the human touch is shown by TikTok's research into audience views on AI labelling. Seventy-eight percent of users want brands to label when AI has been used in content. The rise of realistic AI-generated visuals could undermine trust in a brand's content. For example, the Pew Research Center has found that "Most Americans feel strongly that it's important to be able to tell if pictures, videos or text were made by AI or by humans. Yet many don't trust their own ability to spot AI-generated content."

To give users greater confidence in what they see, TikTok has rolled out labelling for AI-generated content (AIGC) in organic posts and ads, which lets viewers know when these posts include synthetic content or have been significantly modified by AI. It was the first video-sharing platform to implement Content Credentials technology from the Coalition for Content Provenance and Authenticity, which helps platforms label AIGC and record the provenance of genuine media. TikTok AI effects are also labelled as "AI-generated", or include AI in their name and the "effect anchor" shown on content that uses them.

**"Transparency is essential to how AI shows up on TikTok. ... We're committed to ensuring every experience is grounded in clarity and trust."**

**Sofia Hernandez**, global head of business marketing and commercial partnerships, TikTok

"We believe transparency is essential to how AI shows up on TikTok," says Ms Hernandez. "From clearly labelling AI-generated content to collaborating with industry peers on responsible innovation, we're committed to ensuring every experience is grounded



in clarity and trust." The platform is testing features that let users adjust their exposure to AI content: a new control in the "Manage topics" setting governs how much AIGC they see in their For You feeds.

TikTok works with experts and its industry peers to share solutions to emerging challenges around AI-generated content. In February 2023, TikTok was a launch partner to the Partnership on AI's Framework for Responsible Practices for Synthetic Media, a new code that promotes transparency and responsible innovation. And in September 2024, TikTok teamed up with other platforms and organisations to support an AI literacy initiative from the National Association for Media Literacy Education.

Work by TikTok to safeguard users' trust in the brands that advertise on its platform goes further. Moderation systems classify content by risk level so that pre-bid filtering, which lets advertisers bid to appear only alongside content that meets their standards, can ensure campaigns appear in brand-safe contexts.

TikTok proves that people, creators and businesses can thrive and grow together with the support of AI, and it is working to codify that trust across the industry by turning best practices into shared standards. Together, platforms and people can make sure AI does not replace human creativity, but strengthens it.

# Creators growing with AI

TikTok creators find it exhilarating to discover a wide audience for their ideas. But when online trends can rise quickly, creators can use help identifying the biggest opportunities to shine. Now TikTok's AI-powered tools are supporting them in the creative process and giving them a chance to connect with even more viewers.



## Amplifying creators' ability to connect

When TikTok launched in 2017, it became known as a place to discover, create and connect, where anyone's video could gain views. Creators have accumulated millions of followers by posting comedy skits, dance clips and straight-to-camera monologues sharing their thoughts on everyday life. For some, it has been a launch pad to influence and entrepreneurship.

**"My team helps both creators and brands bring their creativity to life to reach the billions of people who use our platform... Our AI innovation makes that process smoother, so creators can focus on ideas."**

**Andy Yang**, global head of creative and brand ads, TikTok



Creators love the feeling of seeing their posts break through to a large audience that feeds them new ideas about what to make next. But the scope and

speed of the process can be challenging. "On TikTok, things move fast," says Andy Yang, the platform's global head of creative and brand ads. "Trends can change in a few hours. For creators, that speed can feel exciting, but also a lot to keep up with."

To catch the moment and build their audience, a creator should respond quickly, experiment with formats and potentially adapt content for multiple languages. So TikTok has introduced tools to amplify their creativity, some of them powered by AI. "Our AI innovation makes that process smoother, so creators can focus on ideas," says Mr Yang.

**"AI isn't replacing the human touch; it's amplifying it."**

**Andy Yang**, global head of creative and brand ads, TikTok

To help creators understand what topics are trending and being searched for, and to identify gaps where content is in high demand but short supply, TikTok has introduced tools such as Creator Search Insights. AI Outline helps creators structure their content by generating video titles, hashtags, hooks and outlines to support their creative process, while Smart Split is an AI-powered editing tool that can clip longer content into shorter videos ready for TikTok.

Creators supported by AI-powered technology can make fuller use of the chances they have on TikTok to be creative and connect with the platform's community. TikTok Symphony, a suite of creative AI tools introduced in 2024, integrates with Adobe Express, a program for creating social media content, to help brands and creators increase their productivity with the software they already use.

## Upgrading personal voices for an age of global scale

TikTok creators thrive on connecting with their community by being their authentic selves. AI-powered tools let creators respond to the global scale of that opportunity more effectively than they could alone, creating a hybrid model of production where machines amplify, but do not replace, personal effort.

**"I felt inspired seeing creators being their authentic selves... TikTok felt like a place to be real."**

**Natalie Choprasert (@Brandnat),**  
AI automation educator

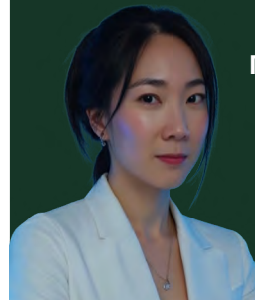
One creator who has embraced the creative freedom that these new technologies can unlock is Natalie Choprasert (@Brandnat). She started using TikTok as a kind of "Dear diary" space to record lessons from her e-commerce journey. "I felt inspired seeing creators being their authentic selves," she says. "When every other platform felt very polished and curated, TikTok felt like a place to be real." Today, with an audience of over 850,000 across multiple platforms, she is an AI automation educator and content creator who has collaborated with major tech companies.

As someone who educates others on how to use AI, Ms Choprasert is an impassioned advocate for

the technology. AI tools "have transformed how I create and post," Ms Choprasert says. She favours AI-enabled beauty filters, editing tools, background generators and even a voice-cloning feature that lets her produce audio narration from text, in her own voice, without recording. "I can produce videos faster without having to put on make-up or rehearse scripts multiple times," she says. This makes content creation sustainable: "I'm not burning out from endless editing or reshooting."

AI frees creators like Ms Choprasert to experiment and respond quickly to emerging trends. Search insights give each post a better chance of finding an audience, while tools that speed creation afford more opportunities to express thoughts in a way that engages audiences. "Often my ideas are messy," she admits. "AI helps me organise everything so I can move faster."

**"I've created a business out of nothing, and these tools made it not just possible, but sustainable."**



**Natalie Choprasert (@Brandnat),**  
AI automation educator

These tools also lower barriers to creation, allowing more people to start producing content. "You don't need expensive equipment or a production team anymore—anyone with a phone and good ideas can build an audience and monetise," Ms Choprasert says. "It's pretty incredible; I've created a business out of nothing, and these tools made it not just possible, but sustainable." She credits TikTok with giving her a level playing field to build her personal channel into a global platform.

In an age where anyone can create, Ms Choprasert believes those creators with a personal voice, who share “raw, genuine thoughts” that AI cannot replace, are the ones best placed to find and keep their audience. TikTok’s own data supports this. The platform’s research shows that ad campaigns balancing the efficient use of AI tools with human input generate twice as many likes as those that lean too heavily on AI.

The lesson is to adopt the hybrid approach where AI helps creators deliver a personal message. “What separates us from AI slop is ultimately the intentionality behind our choices,” says Ms Choprasert. “Your unique perspective comes from your experiences—and that’s something AI can never replicate.”

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AI automation educator

## **To guarantee authenticity, label the unreal**

Audiences value the authenticity of content on TikTok, which can translate into positive sentiment and profitable opportunities. Research from TikTok shows that nearly eight in ten users say relatable creator content makes them more likely to buy from a brand. It also found that content dominated by a creator’s individual voice is 1.6 times more effective than non-creator-led content in lifting audiences’ preference for a brand. The personal element in TikTok content is what makes it so influential.

For brands and creators alike, audience trust is central. As the technology evolves, AI-generated

deepfake-style audiovisual content has the potential to undermine audiences’ trust in what they see and hear. In its 2024 “Authenticity in the Age of AI” study, Adobe found that 74% of consumers have even doubted photos or videos from respected news sources. And TikTok finds that users reject content where the use of AI is hidden, manipulative or excessive.



The answer is to keep creators in control, using personal perspectives and experiences in work that feels like “humans plus AI”, not “AI plus humans”. 77% of TikTok users believe AI content can feel authentic so long as people are in the driver’s seat. AI can cut, edit, translate and repurpose—or even suggest ideas—but creators have to bring their own unique voice and style to achieve a compelling result.

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The premium that users put on the personal touch can even inform their opinion on AI. TikTok users are 1.5 times more likely to trust a creator's perspective on AI than a brand's. That trust, however, is fragile: it depends on transparency.

One way to give people confidence is to put a label on AI-generated content. That is why TikTok's community guidelines require labelling "when AI or editing is used to realistically depict people or scenes", says Mr Yang. And tools from TikTok, such as Symphony Creative Studio, automatically apply labels as needed. "Transparency is at the core of all our AI efforts, including clear labelling, in which TikTok has repeatedly led the industry by being the first to introduce creator labels and the first to begin implementing the C2PA standard." TikTok's research shows that 60% of users believe brands can ease concerns about generative AI by clearly labelling all gen-AI content.

**"Transparency is at the core of all our AI efforts, including clear labelling."**

**Andy Yang**, global head of creative and brand ads, TikTok

TikTok lets creators access the power of AI to keep up with their creative ambitions, but they must still be genuine to win and retain audiences' attention and trust. Once gained, the platform protects that trust by assuring users that what they see is real—by telling them when it isn't. For brands, that makes TikTok a place to connect with potential customers by forging partnerships with creators who offer an authentic and relatable perspective.



# Communities growing with AI

**TikTok's tech-enabled approach to content discovery and recommendation is distinguished by its ability to create a supportive environment where people can unite around interests old and new.** That encourages the playful sharing of ideas to connect communities and amplify the voices of everyday people.



## AI built for participation: TikTok's distinct approach to content discovery

From e-commerce sites to entertainment platforms, many of the algorithms that recommend content and products online are repetitive. Arvind Narayanan, a computer scientist at Princeton, explains that "there's a trade-off between recommending content similar to what the user has engaged with in the past, which is a safe choice, and recommending new types of content so that the algorithm can learn whether the user is interested in it."

If you watch one clip on how to make carrot cake, you'll likely be recommended another—maybe dozens. Showing people more of what they already like leads to further plays and purchases. But when people see the same content over and over, they start to lose interest.

TikTok takes a different approach, which uses people's behaviours and how they interact with the platform to reveal what they like and what they might like, spark curiosity and deliver an optimal experience. "The For You feed is a specially curated space where you can learn new topics and discover creators you don't follow," says Francis Stones, TikTok's head of global brand safety and responsible media. "It does that by using AI technologies, learning in real time what you enjoy to help predict what else you may like, finding content that's right for you."

User controls and education play a crucial role in striking the right balance between familiarity and surprise. TikTok offers tips about how to make the For You feed (known by many of the TikTok community as the For You page, or #fyp) more relevant, such as by favouriting content or following creators, marking unwanted content as "not interested", filtering keywords and topics or muting accounts. Features like Manage Topics allow further customisation, letting users adjust how often they see content in categories including dance, sport, and food and drinks. TikTok recently announced an additional category coming in the future, which will let users control how much AI-generated content they'd like to see.

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**Francis Stones**, head of global brand safety and responsible media, TikTok

"It's important our community has agency over their experience," says Mr Stones. "We give users the ability to customise their For You feed by sharing keywords they want blocked or topics they want to see more or less of. You want to switch things up? Just refresh your feed and start again." Parents can also control teens' content and screen time using the platform's family pairing feature.

On TikTok, control doesn't mean a life without surprises, because the platform shows new things that users might love, even if they don't know it yet. That gives new ideas, creators and businesses of all sizes a chance to thrive.



"The For You page...doesn't worry about who you are, only what you have to say," says Tonee Ndungu (@toneendungu), a TikTok creator and entrepreneur who founded Kytabu, a Kenyan digital education company, and Tribbe Nation, a peer-to-peer savings and lending platform. Mr Ndungu takes a local, relatable approach to technology, but it was when he started sharing ideas about AI on TikTok that it translated to "real influence". He now has more than 107,000 followers.

On TikTok, "You don't need a studio or a script; you need an idea and a reason," he says. "That's powerful for African voices trying to be heard globally. TikTok is how I test ideas, share learning moments and connect with people across Africa and beyond who are shaping how we use AI."

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**Tonee Ndungu (@toneendungu),**  
founder, Kytabu and Tribbe Nation

### **Trusted, not toxic: control and moderation keep TikTok positive**

Mr Stones has compared the For You feed to a colour palette: "If you like blue, it will give you shades of blue, perhaps some green," he says. "But every so often, to aid discovery, it will give you a purple or an orange. You interact with those other colours, and you'll find yourself moving slowly around the palette." The system avoids showing multiple similar posts in a row, and surfaces creators from where you are, creating some of the same serendipity that comes from meeting people in your local neighbourhood.

**"It's raw and real. ... The best thing is how fast positivity travels when a message lands well."**

**Tonee Ndungu (@toneendungu),** founder, Kytabu and Tribbe Nation

Neighbourhood interactions bring you together with people you might like, but who are not necessarily like you. At times, that can create a friendly friction. Similarly, users experience comments on TikTok as lively but good-humoured. "It's raw and real," says Mr Ndungu. "People comment, laugh and agree in the same space. That emotion keeps it alive. The best thing is how fast positivity travels when a message lands well."

That positivity partly comes from careful curation by the platform itself, which is aided by technology. TikTok's Community Principles commit the platform to keeping people safe, supporting a creative and welcoming community, and upholding human rights. To enforce safety policies from its Community Guidelines, TikTok uses technologies including artificial intelligence to moderate content.

Technology reviews all content when it is first uploaded, and continues to monitor for potential

policy violations afterwards. Policies are enforced by a combination of automated technologies and human experts to partner nuanced judgement with the scale, speed and consistency that technology makes possible. The result is that nearly all content that gets removed for violating TikTok's rules is taken down before any user reports it. Mr Stones explains that more than "87% of the content we remove is done by automated tools; we have teams of safety experts who regularly update the rules that tell our technologies what to look for." These workers oversee moderation technologies, write detection rules and help apply the platform's policies as content evolves.

TikTok's emphasis on moderation and trust empowers users to explore familiar and fresh content in a safe and positive atmosphere. This matters to users, and especially to advertisers: 60% of TikTok users say that a positive experience in the comments would make them choose one brand over another.



## Striking the balance between openness and safety

Curating content to foster trust and safety is a delicate task: the challenge is to protect users without discouraging legitimate expression. TikTok acknowledges that perfect consensus is impossible. "It is about balancing freedom of expression, user privacy and protection from harm," says Mr Stones. "There are often circumstances where you won't be able to please everyone with a decision... Our principles are designed to keep the community safe and to be enforceable at scale." TikTok's Community Guidelines prohibit harmful content, and set an additional bar for content that is eligible for recommendation in the For You feed, given its broader audience.

For example, the company's misinformation policy, which is part of its Community Guidelines, disallows false information that could cause significant harm to people or society, regardless of intent. This includes hoaxes, harmful conspiracy theories and other false information about crises, when it could lead to violence or panic.

TikTok works with independent fact-checkers and external experts to assess accuracy, and flags potential misinformation as ineligible for the For You feed to limit its reach. Users may be shown unverified content labels or asked to pause before sharing unsubstantiated material. The system creates accountability.

**"Protecting our users' safety and privacy is our priority. It sets the foundation for our global community to feel comfortable doing what they love on TikTok."**

**Francis Stones**, head of global brand safety and responsible media, TikTok

"More than a billion people from all over the world use TikTok, and we're committed to safeguarding our platform, balancing creative discovery and preventing harm," says Mr Stones. "Protecting our users' safety and privacy is our priority. It sets the foundation for our global community to feel comfortable doing what they love on TikTok."

**"AI...is for everyday people. Technology has to serve culture, not the other way around."**

**Tonee Ndungu** (@toneendungu), founder, Kytabu and Tribbe Nation

TikTok is a discovery platform that lets people explore new ideas in safety and pre-emptively removes or filters content with machine help. It also lets users reset their feed when they want to and adjust their exposure to AI-generated material. That all gives users a sense that TikTok's systems are on their side. The platform grows and changes alongside its community, keeping people firmly in the driver's seat, with empowering technology as a navigator.

TikTok "has proven to me that AI isn't just for labs and coders", says Mr Ndungu. "It's for everyday people. Seeing how audiences respond to AI topics in short, creative videos reminds me that technology has to serve culture, not the other way around."

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