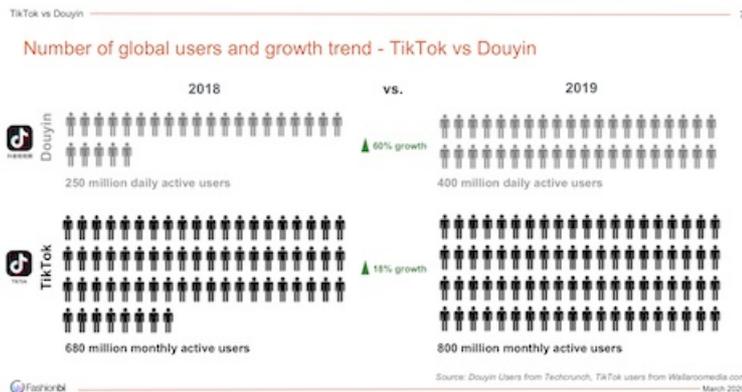


MARKETING

Luxury brands are flocking to TikTok this year

April 3, 2020



Number of global users and growth trend- TikTok versus Douyin. Image courtesy of Fashionbi

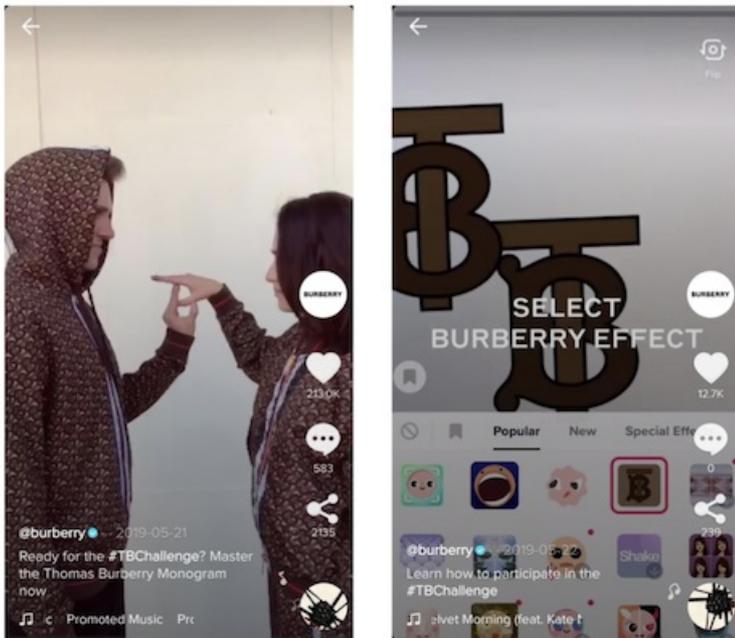
By DIANNA DILWORTH

Luxury brands are turning to emerging social networks TikTok and its Chinese version of Douyin as a new way to reach younger affluent consumers at a time when many are locked down at home and looking for entertaining content on their phones.

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Gucci and Dolce&Gabbana both joined TikTok for the women's fall-winter 2020-21 fashion week season. Last year, Dior, Fendi, Prada and Balenciaga skipped TikTok and created Douyin accounts which have an average engagement of 126 percent higher than TikTok, according to a new report from [Fashionbi](#).

"We see that in the past few months on Facebook and Twitter the followers' growth for many brands is negative, while on these two networks are the fastest-growing networks, so the brands have a chance to grow together with TikTok and Douyin," said Yana Bushmeleva, chief operating officer of Fashionbi, Hong Kong.



Burberry TikTok challenge. Image courtesy of Fashionbi

Top challenges

TikTok is a social network in which users challenge their friends to battles. Brands that want to engage users are creating fun challenges, the report found.

Gucci made its first post in February with its #AccidentalInfluencer campaign for #GucciTennis1977 sneaker. The same content was shared on other channels without any reference to TikTok.

Several days, the brand asked the TikTok users to follow the Gucci account. Gucci increased its followers by 240,000 in less than one month, only promoting the campaign only on TikTok. The videos with the branded moves had between 2.5 million and 7.9 million views on the Gucci page.

Dolce&Gabbana also saw success with its first campaign that ran during men's fall-winter 2020-21 fashion show.

The brand re-posted TikTok videos from 12 influencers on its regular social media channels and encouraged fans to follow its new TikTok channel. The Italian label tapped a new set of influencers for the launch of its TikTok account, which included dances with the hashtag #DGENOUGH.

Finally, Dolce&Gabbana invited another 20 TikTok influencers to promote the women's fall-winter fashion show with dance moves under the #DGFattoAMano song. These videos were shared on all the brands social media account and linked to the TikTok channel. The top videos were played 300,000 times on the TikTok account, as compared to 150,000 views on Instagram.

However, not every attempt is a success.

British fashion label Burberry, for instance, challenged followers to create a Thomas Burberry Monogram with their hands. While the challenge was widely picked up, it did not necessarily benefit Burberry.

On TikTok there are more than 96 million views on the videos under the hashtag #tbchallenge, but less than 1.3 percent of views were about the Burberry brand. The brand generated 23,000 followers and 225,000 likes on the two videos but has not posted since last May.

"The brands should be ready to adapt their tone of voice and video content for TikTok to be in line with the format," Ms. Bushmeleva said. "As of now, many brands were able to reach a wide audience with dance challenges such as Gucci and Dolce&Gabbana."

Top countries for TikTok downloads from the Google Play store in December 2019



Top countries for TikTok downloads from the Google Play store in December 2019. Image courtesy of Fashionbi

Fast company

TikTok is estimated to have about 800 million monthly active users as of March, up from 680 million in November 2018, making it more popular than Tumblr, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Pinterest, according to Fashionbi.

In February alone, TikTok was downloaded 113 million times.

As of November, TikTok was downloaded more than 1.5 billion times, up from 1 billion in February 2019, illustrating the app's popularity and fast growth.

TikTok was the second-most popular free iPhone app downloaded in 2019. It also became the most downloaded mobile app in India last year, with usage up 240 percent over 2018.

The Chinese version of TikTok, Douyin, has attracted 400 million daily active users as of December, up from 250 million in January 2019.

Dolce&Gabbana, Prada, Gucci and Nike are among the fastest growing brands on TikTok, with new accounts launching this year.

Brands that are present on both TikTok and Douyin apps have different speeds of audience growth, but there is no direct correlation between the brand's market segment and the type of platform, Fashionbi found.

For example, Ralph Lauren grows its followers on TikTok by 12,000 users per month, but less than 2,000 on Douyin.

On the other hand, Prada, Dior and Burberry are much more popular on Douyin than on TikTok.

"Influencers are really ruling the platforms, 'next door boys and girls' became the TikTok and Douyin starts with millions of followers, while traditional celebrities are just entering the platforms with a much lower audience," Ms. Bushmeleva said.

"Influencers marketing is a must if the brand wants to gain followers on its new channel," she said.