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BY PUBLICIS GROUPE

Understanding TikTok Advertising Efficiency

Evidence from Marketing Mix Modeling

YOTTA in collaboration with **TikTok**

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Contents

Executive summary

Overall, TikTok in Poland is an efficient media channel that frequently outperforms TV, offline, and online media, although the scale of impact varies by category and execution. On average it delivers ROI, which is 28% higher than TV, but the performance depends on the product category, budget, weekly execution and ad creative.

Key performance indicators

128%

the **average TikTok ROI index vs TV** across all product categories, 152% for CPG & OTC, 138% for Finance & Insurance

168%

average ROI index vs TV for **ad creative themes** with celebrities and self-care

+7%

potential for TikTok's ROI increase by **optimizing weekly** execution

+23pp

ROI index increases with greater **scale of budget** share

+33pp

ROI index increases with higher **TikTok to social budget ratio**

+48pp

ROI index increases with **platform-dedicated ad creative** in comparison to traditional ads

By aggregating insights from **multiple MMM studies**, meta-analysis allows us to distinguish fundamental **drivers of TikTok effectiveness**.

This perspective supports a more **mature use of TikTok**: one that is **grounded in data**, integrated into the wider media mix, and aligned with long-term business value.

Why this analysis matters

As TikTok has become a core component of modern media strategies, the conversation around its effectiveness has matured. The question is no longer whether TikTok can drive impact, but how and under what conditions it delivers sustainable business value.

Across brands and categories, marketers see very different outcomes from TikTok investment. To understand TikTok's true contribution, marketers need to move beyond isolated case studies, short-term performance metrics, or channel-level benchmarks. What is required instead is a perspective that captures structural, repeatable patterns of effectiveness across categories, and investment levels.

By aggregating insights from multiple Marketing Mix Modeling (MMM) studies, meta-analysis allows us to distinguish fundamental drivers of TikTok effectiveness from executional noise. Rather than focusing on individual campaign outcomes, it reveals how TikTok performs across different categories, investment levels and creative strategies. This approach provides a more reliable foundation for strategic decision-making, particularly for brands seeking to scale investment responsibly.

From a business perspective, MMM meta-analysis reframes TikTok not as a standalone performance or awareness channel, but as a growth lever whose impact depends on how it is deployed within the broader media ecosystem.

The objective of the white paper is not to advocate for TikTok in isolation, but to provide evidence-based best practices for investing in TikTok effectively. By understanding when TikTok acts as a powerful accelerator of growth - and when its potential is constrained by planning or execution - marketers can make more informed, more sustainable investment decisions.

Ultimately, this perspective supports a more mature use of TikTok: one that is grounded in data, integrated into the wider media mix, and aligned with long-term business value rather than short-term signal.

This paper aims to answer the questions on **TikTok advertising performance drivers** and identify the conditions for the **highest return on investment**.

Assessing efficiency

with Marketing Mix Modeling

The idea of econometrics is to create a recipe for sales – a model, a simplified version of reality, using mathematical equation.

Marketing Mix Modeling (MMM) is an advanced analytical approach for understanding marketing effectiveness and for guiding data-driven decisions regarding media planning. Thanks to MMM we can answer critical business questions:

How do **marketing mix elements** impact KPIs?

Which media channels are **the most efficient**?

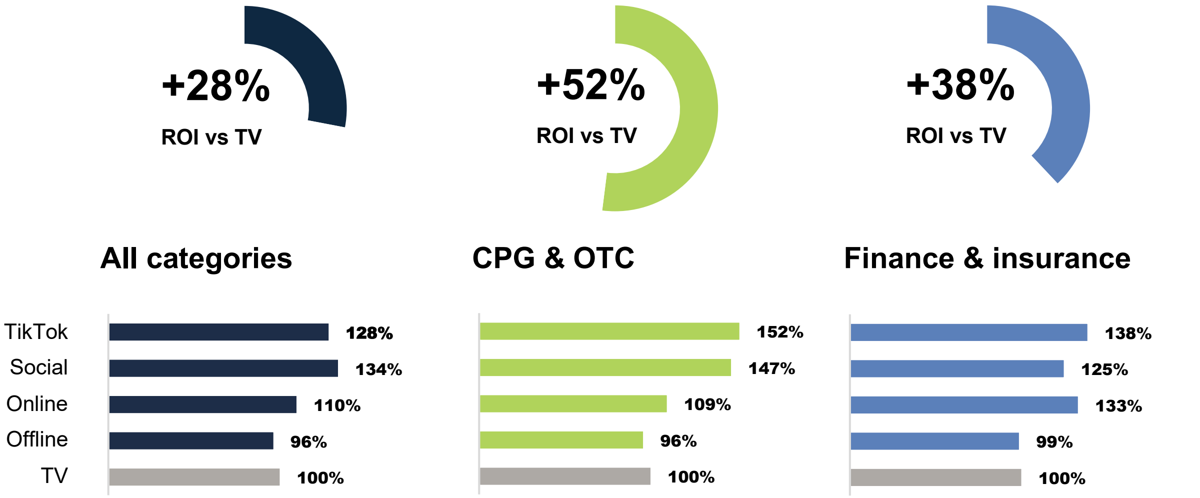
Which **non-media activities** drive sales?

How much should a brand spend on media and when to do it to **maximize return on investment**?

Product category matters

as TikTok ROI varies by industry

The analysis shows that TikTok consistently delivers strong ROI across product categories, but the magnitude of impact varies by category. The strongest performance is observed in CPG and OTC, with solid results also in Finance & Insurance, indicating that effectiveness is shaped by category context.



The average ROI index for TikTok across all the product categories is 128% which means that its ROI is 28% higher than ROI of TV. The average performance is comparable to social media (ROI index 134%) and higher than online and offline media channels (110% and 96%). The efficiency of the media channels varies by product category with the highest TikTok ROI index in CPG & OTC (152%).

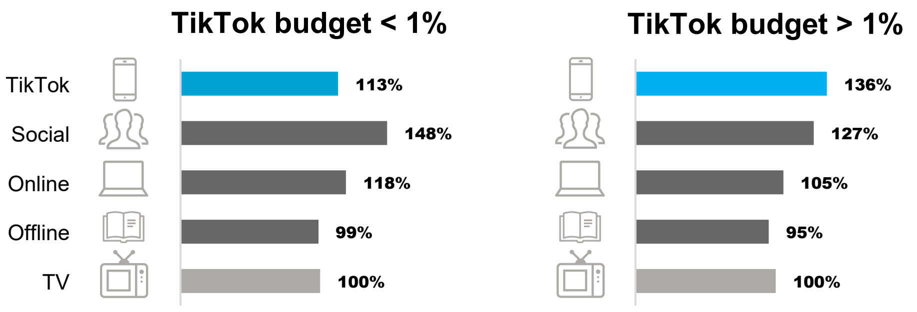
Environment - implications for marketers:

- Ensure TikTok is included in the media mix regardless of category, as it can deliver strong results across a wide range of categories.
- Leverage TikTok particularly strongly in categories with frequent purchase cycles and everyday relevance, such as CPG and OTC.

TikTok efficiency unlocks

when the budget exceeds a minimum threshold

The MMM analysis shows that campaigns where TikTok exceeds a minimum budget threshold within the media mix deliver meaningfully stronger ROI than those where the platform remains marginal.



+23pp Increasing TikTok budget share above 1% of total media spend is associated with an average increase of +23pp in ROI index.

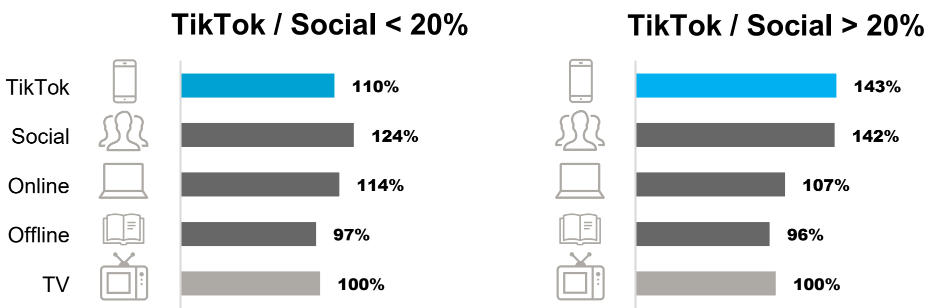
Budget share perspective – key insights for marketers:

- Avoid under-weighting TikTok in media plans, as low budget share can limit its ability to deliver full ROI potential.
- Treat TikTok as a scalable channel rather than a test allocation and evaluate performance once sufficient investment levels are reached.

TikTok-to-social ratio perspective

A higher TikTok-to-social ratio unlocks additional ROI potential

The analysis shows that TikTok delivers higher efficiency when its investment increases relative to the total spend allocated to social media channels. Campaigns where TikTok budget is larger in comparison to the social media budget achieve significantly stronger ROI. This indicates that TikTok's performance improves when it is treated as a standalone platform with dedicated investment, rather than being budgeted proportionally against social media as a group.



+33pp TikTok's performance improves by 33pp when it's budget share relative to social media exceeding 20%.

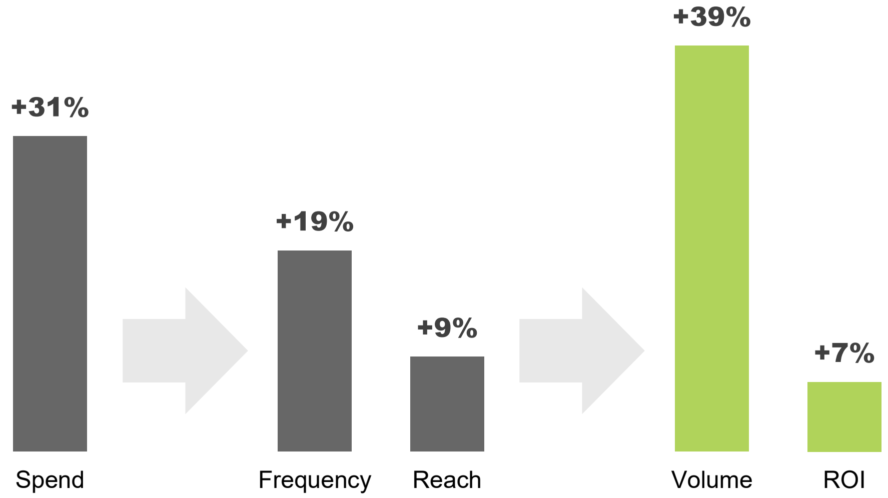
TikTok vs social budget ratio – key insights for marketers:

- Manage TikTok investment as a separate strategic lever, adjusting its share relative to total social media spend to maximize performance.
- Social plans should be built around platform roles and relative efficiency, with TikTok funded according to its potential rather than historical budget splits.

One budget, many outcomes

why weekly spend optimization matters for TikTok performance

TikTok performance is driven by two factors: how budgets are distributed over time and whether weekly investment levels are high enough to unlock the platform’s full potential. Our analysis shows that stronger results come not only from better pacing, but also from higher and more sustained weekly support.



ROI + 7%

significant uplift vs average TikTok efficiency

Across the analyzed cases, the estimated optimal weekly spend is on average 31% above current levels, with a range from +19% to +53% - indicating that TikTok is often underfunded relative to the level required for fully effective delivery. This higher level of support translates into stronger frequency and reach, ultimately generating a significantly greater business impact while simultaneously improving campaign efficiency.

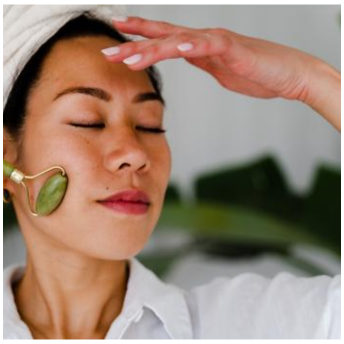
Weekly spend and frequency - key insights:

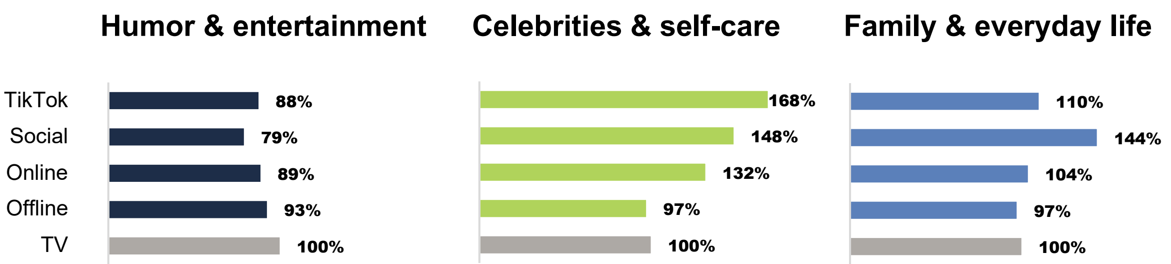
- TikTok performance is driven by two levers: effective budget pacing and sufficient weekly investment levels.
- In many cases, TikTok is underfunded – Increasing weekly spends unlocks stronger business results while maintaining – and in many cases improving – ROI versus observed execution levels.
- Increasing weekly investment allows campaigns to move from an average weekly frequency of 1.83 to 2.19, supporting stronger reach and translating into incremental sales impact without increasing total budgets.

One platform, many contexts

TikTok drives ROI across diverse creative themes

TikTok communication performs across a wide range of thematic contexts - from humor and entertainment to self-care, family, and everyday life - which is a key reason the platform works for brands across categories and stages of growth.





168%

The highest performance we can see in the ad creative theme celebrities & self-care, where TikTok ROI is 68% higher than TV and 20pp higher than social media efficiency.

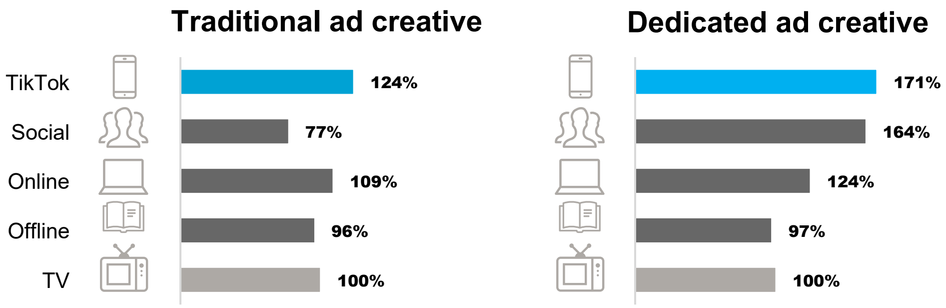
Ad creative themes – key insights:

- Effectiveness is not driven by a single “winning” creative formula.
- Brands can experiment with different narratives, test how they show up in people’s lives and identify the contexts that most strongly drive incremental business impact, rather than being constrained to one rigid communication model.

Built for the platform, built for performance

TikTok-dedicated ad creative outperforms traditional ads

Campaigns that rely on ad creative developed specifically for TikTok consistently outperform those that repurpose generic display or standard digital assets. This indicates that effectiveness on TikTok is driven not only by media investment, but by how creative design reflects the platform's native formats, pacing and user expectations.



+48pp Across our MMM cases, average ROI from TikTok was 48pp higher when the ad creative was prepared especially for the platform.

Ad creative type - key insights:

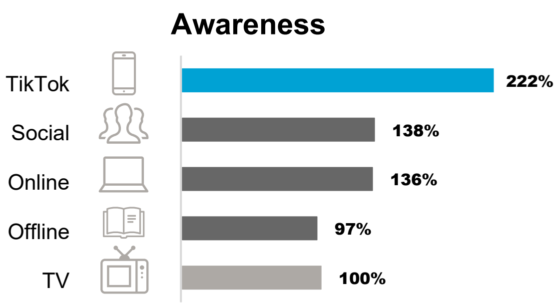
- Using TikTok-dedicated ad creative is associated with an average +48pp higher ROI index compared to traditional video assets adapted from TV or online video formats.
- Campaigns that rely on repurposed, non-TikTok video creative consistently underperform versus those designed specifically for TikTok's native formats and consumption patterns.
- Treat TikTok creative as a platform-specific video investment, rather than an extension of existing TV or digital video production, to fully capture incremental performance gains.

Case studies – campaign goal and KPI

One strategy, different outcomes

Two Marketing Mix Modeling case studies show how TikTok effectiveness varies depending on the campaign objective and KPI.

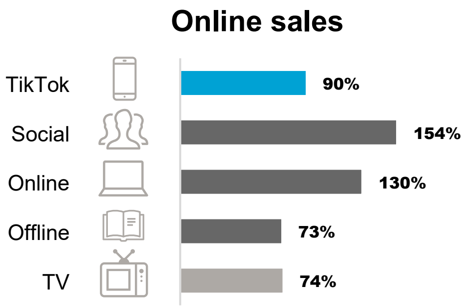
Finance & Insurance case study: well planned campaign and dedicated ad creative can efficiently support awareness

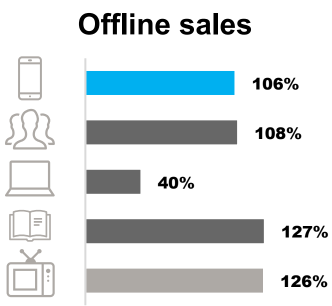


+122%

In this Finance & Insurance case, TikTok delivered exceptionally strong results on the awareness KPI. Supported by a TikTok-dedicated ad creative, featuring celebrities, TikTok achieved a ROI 122% higher than TV.

Retail case study: offline sales with higher tiktok ROI





+16pp

We compared TikTok performance for the same brand across two KPIs: **online and offline sales**. While TikTok proved effective for online sales, its ROI in offline sales was **16pp higher**.

Campaign goal and KPI - key insights:

- TikTok effectiveness is highly KPI-dependent – the same brand can observe different ROI across objectives. Hence KPI-specific strategy is critical when defining TikTok's role in the media mix.
- In Finance & Insurance case, TikTok was over 2× more efficient than TV in building awareness.
- In Retail case TikTok showed +16pp higher efficiency for offline than for online sales channel.

Conclusions

TikTok advertising efficiency

Overall, TikTok is an efficient media channel that frequently outperforms TV, offline, and online media, although the scale of impact varies by category and execution.

On average, TikTok delivers 28% higher ROI than TV across the analyzed MMM cases. The strongest relative performance is observed in CPG & OTC (+52% ROI vs TV) and Finance & Insurance (+38% ROI vs TV), confirming that category context plays a critical role in determining outcomes.

A critical driver of performance is investment scale. TikTok unlocks higher ROI once it reaches a meaningful share of the media budget, while marginal allocations limit its ability to generate incremental business impact. Effectiveness is further enhanced by sustained weekly execution, where sufficient and continuous weekly spending supports stronger reach, frequency, and sales response.

Creative strategy plays a central role. Although TikTok performs across diverse creative themes, platform-dedicated ad creative consistently outperforms repurposed assets, confirming the importance of aligning execution with TikTok's native formats. Finally, outcomes vary by campaign objective, making objective-led planning essential.

Key insights for marketers:

- **Understand your environment.** TikTok performance varies by product category, making category context a critical starting point for realistic ROI expectations.
- **Increase TikTok's budget share.** Increasing TikTok's budget share above 1% of total media spend is associated with a +23pp uplift in ROI versus TV, highlighting the importance of reaching sufficient scale.
- **Optimize weekly execution.** Optimizing weekly spends, frequency and continuity allow TikTok to reach more effective exposure levels, translating into higher reach, sales and ROI.
- **Experiment with ad creative themes.** TikTok performance depends on creative strategy, with different themes delivering different outcomes across categories and KPIs.
- **Prepare TikTok-dedicated ad creatives.** Campaigns using creatives designed specifically for the platform consistently achieve higher ROI than those adapted from traditional video formats.
- **Adapt strategy to the campaign goal and KPI.** Aligning strategy, creative and execution with the selected KPI is essential for maximizing results.

TikTok's perspective

insights for marketers

This analysis reinforces that TikTok's advertising efficiency is not driven by one single factor, but by how the platform is planned, funded, and executed within the broader media mix.

Across the MMM cases, TikTok consistently shows strong ROI potential, particularly when brands move beyond test-level investment, sustain sufficient weekly support, and develop creative that is built for the platform.

For marketers, the implication is that TikTok should be treated as an important, sustained part of the media mix, with investment decisions grounded in category context, campaign objectives, and platform-native execution.

Harrison Davis
Measurement Partner
for EUI Agencies

About YOTTA

by Publicis Groupe

YOTTA Poland serves as the analytical hub for Publicis Groupe markets, leveraging years of experience and a standardized approach to meet client needs for marketing investment optimization. Our team of experts specializes in Marketing Mix Modeling (MMM) delivered at scale through data integration, process automation, and models tailored to diverse industries. We provide actionable insights for media optimization and dedicated tools that accelerate implementation. Our goal is to deliver measurable benefits: optimized budgets, increased ROI, better data utilization, and faster decision-making.

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Appendix

Appendix
scope and methodology

The report is based on 11 Marketing Mix Modeling (MMM) projects conducted by YOTTA in Poland and selected using the following criteria:

- TikTok is modeled as a standalone media channel, not aggregated into social or online video
- Sufficient TikTok spend to ensure reliable efficiency estimation
- Multi-channel media plans enabling true cross-media comparison
- Projects executed on the Polish market.

Only projects meeting these conditions were included to ensure quality, comparable benchmarks.

The analyzed projects cover 2022–2025, span 5 product categories (CPG, OTC, Finance & Insurance, Retail, and Other), and include 5 KPI types: sales value, sales volume, applications, awareness, and call to action.

We have analyzed TikTok efficiency and the average efficiency of social media, online (display, search, video, audio, other), offline (TV, radio, OOH, other) and TV.

Each of the projects met the criteria of $R^2 > 90\%$ and $MAPE < 6\%$.

Indices calculations

To be able to compare results of media efficiency across industries and KPIs, all results are presented as ROI indices relative to TV.

Return on Investment (ROI)

ROI is defined as the value of KPI generated by a given media channel divided by the budget invested in that channel.

$$\mathrm{ROI} = \frac{\boldsymbol{KPI\ generated}}{\boldsymbol{media\ channel\ budget\ in\ PLN}}$$

The generated KPI can include, for example, sales value or volume, applications, or awareness.

ROI index

$$\boldsymbol{ROI\ index} = \frac{\boldsymbol{ROI\ of\ media\ channel}}{\boldsymbol{TV\ ROI}} \times \mathbf{100\%}$$

To enable comparison across industries, KPIs and MMM projects, all results are presented as ROI indices relative to TV, where: TV = 100.

Example: An ROI index of 128 means that the channel delivers 28% higher ROI than TV.