



TikTok made me buy it: the phenomenon of viralization of makeup brands through reviews on TikTok

TikTok made me buy it: el fenómeno de viralización de marcas de maquillaje a través de reseñas en TikTok

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work was to identify the reasons why user content in the form of reviews on TikTok using #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt is linked to the viralization of makeup brands on the platform. We identified the elements that these contents have in common, in order to then find a way for brands to take advantage of them when making their own content. The study was exploratory in scope, and the research approach was qualitative, content analysis. The sample participants were the 15 most shared, commented and liked posts from 3 makeup brands: Fenty Beauty, Maybelline and L'Oréal. Analyzing the publications we could observe the predominance of tutorial and unboxing type reviews and an informative communication strategy with product testing typology. The viralization dynamics that we highlighted were the use of hashtags and trending audios. In addition, the use of advertising discourse execution frameworks, such as informative, testimonial and product demonstration. Based on the results, we made a list of 10 recommendations that brands in the makeup industry could use to generate content with the possibility of viralization.

Keywords: Review; TikTok; Advertising; Viralization; Makeup.

RESUMEN

El propósito de este trabajo fue el de identificar los motivos por los cuales las reseñas en TikTok utilizando el #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt se vinculan con la viralización de las marcas de maquillaje en la plataforma. Identificamos los elementos que tienen estos contenidos en común, para luego, encontrar la manera de que las marcas puedan aprovecharlos a la hora de realizar sus propios contenidos. El estudio fue de alcance exploratorio, y el enfoque de la investigación fue cualitativo, de análisis de contenido. Los participantes de la muestra fueron las 15 publicaciones más compartidas, comentadas y que más likes recibieron por los usuarios, de 3 marcas de maquillaje: Fenty Beauty, Maybelline y L'Oréal. Analizando las publicaciones pudimos observar la predominancia de las reseñas de tipo tutorial, unboxing y una estrategia de comunicación informativa con tipología de prueba de producto. Las dinámicas de viralización que destacamos fueron el uso de hashtags y de audios en tendencia. Además, la utilización de marcos de ejecución del discurso publicitario, tales como el informativo, el testimonio y el de demostración de producto. A partir de los resultados realizamos un listado de 10 recomendaciones que las marcas de la industria del maquillaje podrían utilizar para generar contenidos con posibilidad de viralización.

Palabras clave: Reseña; TikTok; Publicidad; Viralización; Maquillaje.

INTRODUCTION

With the emergence of Web 2.0 and social networks, users went from being mere consumers of content to generating, editing, and sharing it with their community. In Web 2.0, power lies with users, who personalize content based on their tastes and interests, creating a social network with enormous possibilities for viral marketing.(1)

The rise of social media has promoted an irreversible change in consumers' relationship with brands, given that users now grant greater credibility to the opinions and recommendations found from their contacts than to any other communication channel.(2)

In short, we are experiencing a new digital and social wave, in which the centralized content distribution model is broken and the consumer becomes its main creator. This consumer plays a vital role in the advertising strategies of advertisers given the consumer's capacity to intervene in advertising messages.(1)

Since their inception, users have used social media as a loudspeaker to express their experiences with the services and products they consume.(3) A way of communicating their experiences is through the reviews they themselves write about brands and products.

According to the Real Academia Española de la Lengua, a "reseña" is a "note taken from the distinctive features of someone or something for their identification".(4) In the online world, by reseña we refer to a critique, assessment, opinion, or comment given about an object, service, business, or experience. This term also often appears with its English version review.(5)

Reviews have a strong effect on audience behavior and, consequently, on brand image and performance. Reviews published online about a service or product are acted upon just like recommendations from friends, even though they are posted by strangers (5).

As Carlos Zuriguel (6) argues, for quite some time now the opinions and comments of users themselves have become the main added value of several brands, such as the travel website Tripadvisor or e-commerce sites like Amazon. Opinions of this type, in review format, have great credibility for consumers, and most of them take them very much into account, to such an extent that they sometimes become their main argument when purchasing any type of product: from a restaurant reservation to a lipstick.

One article developed by Drew (7) states that "online reviews can be defined as reviews of short, informative, and descriptive texts that are responsible for revealing to the public a brand or product novelty in order to attract the audience's attention."

But reviews do not only take the form of text; they can also be developed in audiovisual format. There are several typologies of reviews, among which we find video reviews, tutorials, and unboxing, which, as Google (8) maintains, is a genre of video review that emerged on YouTube where people show the experience of opening a product: they take it out of the box to get to know it and see what it feels like; or reviews of "dupes." Dupe is the diminutive of duplicate (duplicado in Spanish) that is used when two products are very similar to each other. It can be said that they are not replicas, since they are products from legitimate brands, with safe products, and not counterfeits.

Similar or dupe makeup products are low-cost products compared with brand-name lines that offer expensive options, and the reason they have become so popular on social media is the alternative they represent in consumers' purchasing decisions when compared in quality, consistency, and color (9).

Many of the review videos are user-generated, but brands are also beginning to participate in this trend.

From this perspective, focusing on audiovisual content, as Drew (7) argues, an online review can be considered a good resource within a content marketing strategy.

The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as "a marketing technique for creating and distributing valuable articles, through relevant and consistent content to attract audiences." Kilgour M (10) contribute to this definition, that content marketing can be seen in the role of consumer participation to share and be active in the media interest space.

Figueiredo (11), in his research on content marketing and beauty and cosmetics brands, states that consumers spend most of their time browsing online platforms, whether to seek information before considering a purchase, to share opinions about brands, or to connect with their friends. Therefore, content marketing represents an opportunity that users, content creators, have known how to take advantage of by providing relevant information for their audiences, through their own content: reviews, tutorials, etc.

Castillo Calle (12) In their research: "Content marketing and its influence on millennial consumer behavior on social media of fast-food brands in the dmq"; after a compilation of theories, they propose a content marketing model composed of 5 dimensions: Social network, Content strategy,

Content typology, Content presentation, Content value.

Within each dimension, different items are proposed:

In the social media dimension, the following are identified: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube. For this research, it is relevant to add the social network TikTok.

Regarding content strategy, Castillo Calle (12) lists the different types of strategies, which can be interaction, information, and entertainment.

In addition, the authors describe the content typology dimension and highlight the following items: sketch (fiction), documentary record (reality), quote post (Quotes), memes, product test, tutorial, quiz (Test), challenge (Challenge), storytelling (story of emotional impact), and gamification (dynamics).

Another proposed dimension is that of content presentation, which refers to the format used for its creation. It may take the form of written content, video, images, or combined formats.

Lastly, Castillo Calle (12) takes the content value dimension as part of the content marketing model proposed by Rodríguez (13) in their thesis on the consumer decision process. It is derived from Sheth's (14) model, which establishes 5 consumption values that affect purchase decisions: functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional values.

As Rodríguez (13) states, functional value is defined as the utility acquired from the functional, utilitarian, or physical performance of an alternative. Social value is defined as the perceived utility acquired from the association of an alternative with specific social groups. Social value is acquired when an alternative is associated with positive or negative stereotypes of different groups (social, demographic, economic, ethnic, and cultural). Emotional value is understood as the capacity of an alternative to generate feelings or affective states. Epistemic value is the perceived utility derived from the capacity of alternatives to generate curiosity, which entails satisfying a desire for knowledge. Finally, conditional or circumstantial value is understood as the utility acquired by an alternative as a result of a set of circumstances to which the consumer is exposed at a given moment; it is considered the functional or social value of a specific decision in which certain particular and temporal circumstances of the consumer come into play.

In conclusion, it can be said that, among the many benefits of developing content relevant to the audience (content marketing), the potential for viralization stands out; that is, the dissemination of content by users themselves, especially through social networks (15).

What does viralization consist of? The term "viralization" was coined to refer to the way in which certain content, information, or ideas spread rapidly among a population through social media. This phenomenon is fueled by audiences that retransmit information almost automatically. Currently, audiences are considered active subjects capable of selecting and rejecting online content and sharing messages within their networks (16).

This content shared by users, in the form of reviews, has been gaining prominence in the world of social networks, as more and more users are encouraged to share their opinions on various platforms such as Google, Instagram, Youtube, Facebook, and TikTok.

TikTok is a platform for short-form videos on mobile devices. The application was created in 2014 and is currently among the top 10 best applications worldwide, occupying position number 6 in the Global Apps Ranking and available in more than 150 countries. It was the most downloaded app of 2020, with approximately 115,2 million installs (17).

Juan Arcos (18), in his case study on the TikTok user from the University of Valladolid, notes that the videos created on this social network are short in duration (up to 3 minutes), which makes attention less likely to be lost, since there are many different types of videos with diverse content within an infinite home page where videos related to the user's tastes never stop appearing. These factors give this social network a highly addictive component in terms of entertainment. In addition, the TikTok algorithm promotes video viewing through likes, shares, and searches, which makes the application a powerful tool for viralization.

TikTok users enjoy sharing their purchases, reviews, and tutorials, offering opinions their followers can trust. They are real people sharing their opinions, creating a digital version of word-of-mouth advertising that makes their reviews immediately more authentic and credible (19). In the last year, TikTok demonstrated its efficiency in selling products, particularly through unpaid "viral" posts. This virality has earned TikTok its reputation as a sales machine (20).

Behind this virality effect fostered by the social network TikTok lies the TikTok Made Me Buy It phenomenon, or TikTok me hizo comprarlo in Spanish, a hashtag that currently has more than 21.9 billion views. As Cristel Antonia Russell (21) states in her article on the influence of the TikTok phenomenon, people proudly post items they bought based on the posts they saw on TikTok with #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt; the shared items then become viral and motivate consumers to buy the product in question. In fact, many of these items marketed on TikTok frequently sell out and

become even more popular products.

In other words, this is a viral commerce phenomenon caused by the use of a hashtag.

(...) a hashtag is a word or phrase without spaces, preceded by the hash symbol (#). It is therefore a metadata tag, preceded by a special character so that it can be easily identified by both a user and a system, and it offers those who use it an easy way to communicate around a topic (22).

Furthermore, González Fernández (22) adds to his definition that a hashtag is an effective tool for promoting the viralization of content. Hashtags have spread across all social media and serve two purposes: to tag content and conversations and to identify a community.

Therefore, this element grants greater visibility to a publication on a social network, as occurs with content published on TikTok with the hashtag #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt.

A study conducted by TikTok Business (19) identifies that 42% of users say they are on TikTok to discover new things; and 67% mention that the platform showed them products they were not aware of, demonstrating the extent of its influence on shopping behavior. The fun and collaborative environment encourages users to join any popular trends or audio that are going viral at the time; either by responding with their own TikToks or by buying the product for themselves.

As TikTok states, "A post can be all it takes for a product to go viral." A convincing video or a review by any user can generate new trends, sold-out products, and overnight success for brands.(19)

However, how can content be made to go viral? There is still no formula that is 100% effective for making content go viral on TikTok.

However, in her article "8 tips to make a video go viral on TikTok," Lorena Ramírez (23) outlines some strategies and guidelines that, if taken into account, can help create a viral video. First, she advises using humor.

The National Science Foundation studied the content of 256 video clips to analyze what made a video viral and found that those that included fun were more likely to have more views and be shared more on social media. (23)

Second, she advises encouraging the audience to replicate the content by involving them in a challenge, trying a product, or joining a trend; in this way, participation is incentivized and the impact extends to more people.

She mentions timing as a way to stay aware of the viral content that is being generated in the tool and to seek ways to replicate it in a specific type of business or niche in a timely manner.

Another strategy proposed by Ramírez (23) is the use of hashtags. The hashtag is among the factors that TikTok considers when classifying a video in its home section. This not only helps users find content on a particular topic faster, but also allows the algorithm to understand the video and present it to the intended audience.

It then states a "3-second rule," which refers to the importance of the time users spend viewing content. If the audience watches only the first seconds of a video, the algorithm will identify it as boring and irrelevant content.

Therefore, it is important to generate an immediate impact in the first 3 seconds of the video. The longer the video viewing time, the greater the boost it will receive from the platform.

Another strategy to take into account is the use of trending audios. According to Lorena Ramírez (23), among the most interesting factors of TikTok is the use of musical trends within videos. Therefore, making a correct choice of music and appropriate effects will allow capturing the audience's attention and getting it to interact with the content.

Finally, Ramírez (23) proposes using the surprise effect in videos, since unexpected reactions can lead users to share the content.

On the other hand, we consider it useful to identify whether there are characteristics present in user-generated content that have similarities with the different types of execution frameworks in advertising design, which may favor their viralization. This will later help us analyze how brands can use those resources in the same way in their own advertising content, and how these can have a greater probability of viralization.

Within advertising design, execution frameworks can be identified. "An execution framework is the way in which the advertising resource of an advertisement is presented." (24)

Following Clow's (24) definition, different types of execution frameworks can be identified, such as animation, life passages, dramatization, testimony, authority, demonstration, fantasy, and lastly informative.

Taking into account the research problem and the questions raised above, we consider it relevant to focus on the life passages, testimony, informative, and demonstration execution frameworks.

Clow (24) defines life passages as an advertising resource in which advertisers attempt to offer solutions to the daily problems that consumers or companies face.

On the other hand, when defining the testimonial execution framework, they refer to the

content in which a customer appears in the advertisement talking about their experience with a particular product.

Promoters and celebrities do not always enjoy high levels of credibility, because consumers know that they are paid for the endorsement. In testimonials, ordinary people, often real customers, are the main characters. At other times, they are paid actors who pass themselves off as ordinary consumers.

The demonstration execution framework shows how a product works. The product's attributes are communicated at the same time as the product is exhibited.

Finally, they mention that the informative advertising execution framework, as its name suggests, presents information directly to the public.

"Consumers who are very interested in a particular product category pay more attention to informative advertisements."

Attempting to encompass this phenomenon through generalization and the vast universe of existing brands would complicate the research and require consideration of an infinite number of variables. For this reason, the #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt phenomenon will be analyzed by focusing on the makeup industry, based on a selection of 3 brands: Fenty Beauty, Maybelline, and L'Oréal, which currently have a strong presence on the platform and can provide significant data for this research.

In the case of Maybelline, the brand's viralization resulted from reviews generated by users of its new product Lash Sensational Sky High.

The mascara became popular among the TikTok community thanks to the "chain" trend, in which each user shared a video using the product. The results of the mascara were so surprising that TikTokers were delighted with them, leaving Maybelline's Lash Sensational Sky High out of stock for a time.(25)

In addition, the brand hashtag #Maybelline on TikTok currently has approximately 2.6 trillion views.

L'Oréal currently has approximately 372 200 followers on TikTok, and the hashtag #Loreal has nearly 1,2 trillion views.

A successful case was the one under the hashtag #Infaillible24hrsfreshwear, which has more than 4.7 million views. The brand succeeded in making its challenges transcend barriers and in encouraging thousands of female users around the world to share with their community the results that, in this case, makeup offers based on their own reviews.(26)

Lastly, Fenty Beauty, which was among the first brands to join TikTok, currently has approximately 1.3 million followers, and its hashtag #FentyBeauty has more than 1 trillion views.

Taking the #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt phenomenon applied to the makeup industry as the starting point of our research, we posed the following questions: Why have reviews with #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt taken a leading role in the viralization dynamics of makeup brands on TikTok? What are the common elements in the most shared user-generated posts?

In what ways can brands use these elements in their own content and achieve viralization?

We consider it important to address this phenomenon in our research, since the virality of hashtags such as #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt is making brands eager to decipher the formula that drives sales on TikTok (27), and there is insufficient research addressing this issue in the makeup industry in our local context due to the contemporaneity of the phenomenon.

Returning to Figueiredo (11), we can say that the underlying reason why the beauty and cosmetics industry is experiencing an increase in this type of content, compared with other industries, is that it is a highly experimental industry. Nowadays, customers are interested not only in trying and buying new products but also in learning to use them easily and effectively.

This is where consumer reviews come in, showing products and their ways of use. Major trends, such as #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt, start with smaller groups of users who have the power to communicate with and influence each other, and, as Gladwell (28) argues, brands must understand and pay attention to these specific types of content in order to use them to their advantage.

Taking this into account, the purpose of this work is to identify the reasons why user content in the format of reviews on TikTok using #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt is linked to the viralization of makeup brands on the platform, and to determine which elements predominate in this content in order to discover how brands can use them to their advantage.

After contextualizing the problem and the purpose of this research, we define the general objective of this work as understanding why TikTok reviews generated by users featuring #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt are linked to the viralization of makeup brands, based on the identification of the elements that these contents have in common, and then finding ways for brands to leverage them when creating their own content. Regarding the specific objectives, we mention:

Select 15 consumer reviews that use #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt from 3 viral brands in the makeup

industry. Identify the common elements in posts that may lead to their future viralization.

To discover how brands can use these identified elements in their own content and achieve viralization.

METHODS

Design

The present study was exploratory in scope, given that it addressed a problem that has received little study to date. Exploratory studies “are characterized by being more flexible in their methodology compared with descriptive or explanatory studies, and are broader and more dispersed than these two types”.(29)

Regarding the research approach, it was qualitative, intended for data interpretation.

Furthermore, the design was non-experimental and cross-sectional, since variables were not manipulated and changes in them were not observed over time; rather, data were collected at a specific point in time.(30)

Participants

The study population consisted of all posts made by TikTok users who used #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt. From this existing universe of posts, a total of 15 posts that used the aforementioned hashtag were taken as the sample. The sampling was non-probabilistic and purposive; the participants were those who made the 15 posts that were most shared, commented on, and liked by users within a maximum period of 6 months prior to the start of the data collection stage.

The sample contains 5 reviews made by consumers who used #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt for 3 viral brands in the makeup industry: Fenty Beauty, Maybelline, and L'Oréal, which had the greatest impact in terms of viralization and reach. These are:

Fenty Beauty: #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt + #FentyBeauty

1. “Fenty and Maybelline Dupe” (08/04/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNwmsYrP/>
2. “Buy the fenty invisimatte NOW” (16/04/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNwuB2Wb/>
3. “Gloss bomb, black girls” (07/09/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMFJ2eVDa/>
4. “Review of a Review” (12/09/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMFJ2je52/>
5. “Double review” (13/09/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMFNpNdMP/>

Maybelline: #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt + #Maybelline

1. “Maybelline Lifter Gloss Review” (07/05/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNw7kJ42/>
2. “Review 4 lipsticks” (17/05/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNw7SUBt/>
3. “Liquid Bronzer Review” (17/08/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNw7jpyy/>
4. “Spanish Red Lipstick Review” (11/05/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNw7CJH4/>
5. “Fit Me Powder Review” (21/07/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNw7sPXE/>

L'Oréal: #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt + #Loreal

1. “Lip dupe” (11/07/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNw7axs9/>
2. “Bronzer review” (03/08/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMNw754Te/>
3. “Unboxing Box” (01/10/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMFr26haL/>
4. “Infallible corrector review” (31/03/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMFNpVnUu/>
5. “Box unboxing” (17/05/2022) <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMFNseUJR/>

Instrument

As an instrument for data collection and organization, a self-developed grid was used, based on the categories and units of analysis detailed below:

Analysis

The technique used was qualitative content analysis, which is suitable for exploring a wide variety of documents and studying them from diverse perspectives.(31)

The focus of the analysis was to identify content elements that favor the dissemination of publications made on TikTok.

This content analysis focused on aspects such as content marketing and its different dimensions, viralization strategies on the chosen platform, and advertising execution frameworks, among others. The proposed categories organized the information for an orderly and complete analysis.

Table 1. Content analysis grid

Units of analysis		P.1	P. 2	P.3	P.4	P.5	P.6	P. 7	p. 8	p. 9	P. 10	P.11	P.12	P.13	P.14	P.15
Categories of analysis																
Content MKT	Content social network															
	Content strategy															
	Content typology															
	Content presentation															
	Content value															
Type of review	Tutorial															
	Unboxing															
	Dupe															
Viralization strategies / elements that favor the dissemination of content by users. (On TikTok)	Hashtag															
	Audio recordings															
	Surprise effects															
	Incitement															
	Humor															
	Timing															
	3-second rule															
Advertising design - Execution frameworks.	Passage of life															
	Testimony															
	Informative															
	Demonstration															

RESULTS

To seek the reasons why reviews are linked to the viralization of makeup brands on TikTok and to discover how brands can use these identified elements in their own content to achieve viralization, a qualitative content analysis was conducted of the 15 publications from 3 international makeup brands with high participation on the platform (Fenty Beauty, Maybelline, and L'Oréal) that were most shared, commented on, and liked by users and that used the hashtag #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt or mentioned the phenomenon.

For this content analysis, a self-developed analysis grid was used as the instrument, and the following was observed:

Fenty Beauty

Analysis of the Fenty Beauty publications showed that, regarding the content marketing category, the informative strategy predominates and the videos correspond to the product-testing content typology.

Regarding content presentation, the videos include background audio and text in the description; however, only some include text in the video to reinforce what is narrated.

In certain publications, a distinctive element was used that consists of starting the video with a fragment of another user's review of the same product, contributing to the surprise effect (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Publication “review of a review”



Across the publications, the value of functional content predominates, since the functions of the products are presented throughout the reviews. A distinctive feature appears in the publication “Gloss bomb, black girls” (no. 3), to which a value of social content is added. In it, brown-skinned women are mentioned, creating a positive association of the product with this specific group of women; in the video description, the creator writes “@kimberleypossible_ It came to put us Black and brown-skinned girls because this beauty gloss from @Fenty does it”. In the publication, the creator can be seen using a fragment of the review by the previously mentioned user, using the Fenty Beauty lipstick, and then beginning her own review of the same product.

Regarding review typologies, the tutorial stands out, since it mainly demonstrates how to use the brand’s makeup products. However, a notable feature in this category of analysis is the type of review used by the creator of the post “Fenty and Maybelline Dupe” (n°1), which corresponds to the review type called Dupe, in which 2 products from different brands are compared, in this case a lipstick from the Fenty Beauty brand and another from Maybelline.

In addition, it is worth noting that in publication No. 3, a novel resource is used in the review, consisting of the audiovisual recording made by the creator of the entire journey to the store where she purchases the product (in this case, a lipstick), including some shots of her in the car and of the point of sale.

By observing the different viralization strategies, we can identify that a minimum of 5 hashtags were used in the posts. A distinctive element occurs in publication No. 1 regarding the number of hashtags used, since 19 hashtags were used in the video description, among which were #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt #Viralmakeup #Makeupreview. Furthermore, this publication complies with the 3-second rule, because the total duration of the review is 4 seconds.

It is important to highlight that this publication (No. 1) has the highest interaction in the entire analysis sample, with more than 421 800 likes, 886 comments, and 3 073 shares.

In the sample publications, the use of trending audios predominates. An example is the publication “Buy the fenty invisimatte NOW” (No. 2), which not only used a viral audio that was used in more than 23.9 million videos but also used the voice effects proposed by the platform, which are currently trending.

Although the incitement device does not predominate in the publications, in post no. 2 users are explicitly motivated to purchase the product, since the creator uses phrases such as “Buy now, I’m obsessed.” and “Buy the Fenty Invisimatte now!”. This post obtained 283 shares.

It was possible to observe the absence of the use of the humor strategy in the contents.

Lastly, taking into account the different advertising executorial frameworks, we were able to identify that the informational and demonstration framework prevails, since the reviews present information about the selected makeup products and a demonstration of their use is carried out. Publication No. 2 uses the life passage executorial framework. In this review, the creator records her face and writes “She is oily after using makeup since 5 p.m” showing her shiny skin, then she presents the product and uses it, to show its function of removing the oiliness from her skin, providing a solution to an everyday life problem.

Maybelline

After analyzing the publications about Maybelline, we were able to observe that the informative content strategy and the product-testing content typology stand out. One striking feature of this category occurs in the publication “Spanish Red Lipstick Review” (No. 9). In it, one can see how the user tests the product (Maybelline lipstick) for the first time and, in order to verify the true duration of the product on her lips, records different moments of her day in which she performs various actions involving her lips (eating, touching her face, etc.) to confirm whether the durability of the lipstick that the brand promises is true or false. In this way, a record of reality is made in the publication, also using the documentary content typology. Some phrases that stand out in her testimony are: “I haven’t seen a video by any TikToker who isn’t trying this lipstick,” “It’s comfortable to apply,” and “I don’t like the sticky texture” (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Publication “Spanish red lipstick review”



Audiovisual-format content and functional content value predominate, as the reviews demonstrate the use of the brand’s different makeup products. Tutorial-type reviews, in which the use of the products in question is demonstrated, are widely dominant.

With regard to hashtags, we identified that a minimum of 8 hashtags was used in the posts, with the maximum number of hashtags used being 28. The post “Liquid Bronzer Review” (no. 8) is the most viral, with approximately

36 100 likes, 952 comments and 1 943 shares. This post has a distinctive feature: instead of using the original hashtag of the Tik Tok Made Me Buy It phenomenon, the creator appropriates the phenomenon and publishes, among the 28 hashtags in her description, the following: #BethennyMadeMeBuyIt, with Bethenny being her username.

Trending audios predominate, meaning that the timing strategy is fulfilled; on the other hand, no elements that generate the surprise effect proposed in the analysis categories are identified.

Regarding incitement, we observed in certain posts that there were elements motivating consumers to purchase the products. For example, in the post “Maybelline Lifter Gloss Review” (No. 6), the text “You all need Maybelline’s Lifter Gloss” appears. In post No. 9, users are encouraged to give their opinion about the video and the product: “Tell me what you think and what rating we give it.”

Regarding advertising execution frames, the use of the demonstration frame was identified as outstanding, since the chosen makeup product and its use are demonstrated in the videos. A striking feature of this occurs in the publication “4 Lipsticks Review” (n°7), which, unlike the others, presents 4 shades of the same Maybelline lipstick.

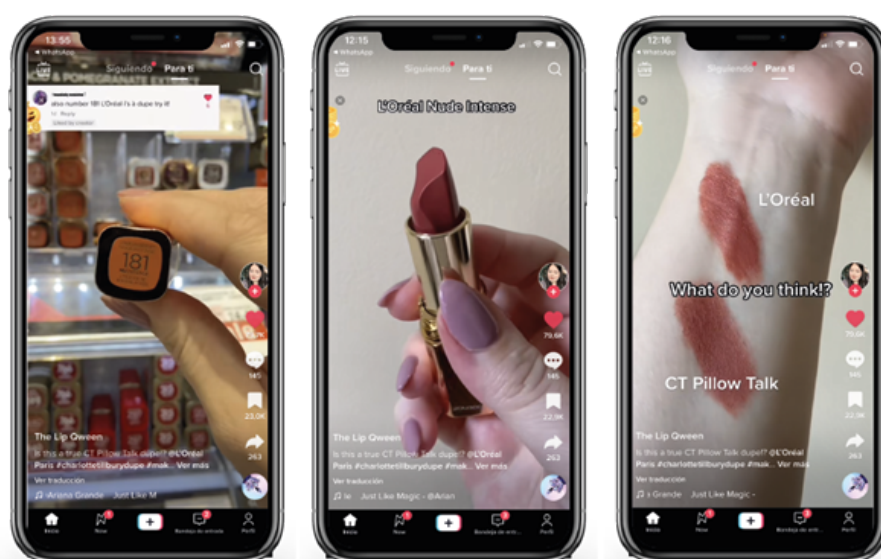
Informational and testimonial execution frames also predominate, in which creators, as they test the product, give their personal opinion about their experience with it. An example worth highlighting is publication no. 8, in which the creator performs a makeup tutorial with a product from the brand and, as she uses it, gives her testimonial. Some phrases can be highlighted, such as “The easiest-to-use liquid bronzer that money can buy” and “This bronzer is the best thing I have done since I started.”

L'Oréal

Analyzing the publications about L'Oréal on TikTok, we observed that the content strategy predominantly used is informative, since, in certain publications, the aim is to present a new product launched by L'Oréal consisting of a box called "TikTok Made Me Buy It by L'Oréal", which contains several products of the brand that were considered viral on the platform. A particular example is the publication "Unboxing TikTokMadeMeBuyIt box" (n°15), in which this new product is presented and whose description states: "Do you remember some of the products that have become viral on Tik Tok during the last year? At Primor you have them with up to a 20 % discount."

In the publications, the product-testing content typology predominates, and the content is presented in audiovisual format. A finding among the publications is the video resource chosen in the publications "Lip dupe" and "Bronzer review" (n°11 and 12), which begins with a video of the creator walking through the point of sale to purchase the L'Oréal product. In addition, in publication n°11, a screenshot of a user comment is presented suggesting that the creator try a specific product. (figure 3)

Figure 3. Post "Lip dupe"



Regarding content value, we found a balanced division between the use of functional value and epistemic value. Regarding functionality, we can highlight that in the publication "Infallible Corrector Review" (no. 14), the creator, using a makeup tutorial, shows 2 functions that the same product can fulfill merely by varying its color tone. The creator gives her testimonial about the product as she uses it: "My makeup looks impeccable and it is definitely worth the hype".

We also found a balance regarding the type of review used in the sample of publications. We found tutorials on the use of the different makeup products and, on the other hand, unboxings, specifically of the TikTok Made Me Buy It product box mentioned above. In the publication "Unboxing Box" (n°13), as the unboxing of the brand's products is carried out, the creator compiles a series of demonstration videos showing the use of each product and presents the name and the main characteristics of each. This video differs from the others since 7 products are presented.

Hashtags are used in posts, with a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 18. We identified a scarcity in the use of trending audios, which translates into non-compliance with timing.

Lastly, analyzing the category of advertising execution frames, we observe that informational and demonstration frames widely predominate, as in the other makeup brands analyzed. For example, in post no. 15, the description reports the promotions available to purchase the TikTok Made Me Buy It box by L'Oréal: "The best thing is that all those brands that have gone viral with tiktok now have up to 20 % off at Primor".

General characteristics of the publications

Broadly speaking, after analyzing all the publications, it was observed that the content strategy that widely predominates is informative, and the most frequently used content typology is product testing. The analyzed contents have consumer content value for users, namely: first, functional, and second, epistemological.

The most frequently used review typologies in the posts are tutorial and unboxing. However,

the most viral post (post number 1) corresponds to the dupe review typology of Fenty Beauty and Maybelline products.

Regarding the category of viralization strategies, we can state that the use of hashtags prevails, with an average minimum of 5 hashtags and a maximum of 18; among these, the most used are: #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt #Viralmakeup #maybelline #lorealparis #fentybeauty #makeuptutorial #unboxing #dupes #makeupreview #beautyreview

The content is presented in audiovisual format, accompanied by text and audio. We identified a predominance of trending audios in the posts, which contributes to compliance with the strategic resource of timing.

Lastly, observing the category of execution frames proposed in the analysis instrument, we were able to highlight that those prevailing in all of the publications are the testimonial frame, in which user-creators comment on their experiences with the chosen products; the informational frame, since names, characteristics, and prices of the products are presented; and lastly the demonstration frame, since most of the videos consist of showing the products and their respective modes of use.

DISCUSSION

In this research, we set out to find the reasons why content generated in the format of makeup reviews on TikTok that use #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt is linked to the viralization of makeup brands on the platform and then to discover how brands can use these elements identified in the reviews in the creation of their own content and achieve their viralization.

We believe it was important to address this phenomenon since there is not enough research dealing with the viralization of makeup brands through reviews on TikTok due to its contemporaneity. In addition, returning to the Adlatina article (27), brands are eager to decipher the formula that drives viralization and the consequent sales on the platform to be analyzed.

Returning to the specific objectives of the research set out in our introduction, we can say that:

With regard to the first specific objective proposed, (selecting 15 reviews made by consumers who use #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt from 3 viral brands in the makeup industry), concerning the definition of the sample to be analyzed, we can say that it was achieved. 15 TikTok posts were collected from the 3 most relevant makeup brands on the platform at present.(32,33)

When selecting the sample, the selection criterion of the hashtag #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt was respected, and, additionally, during the process we decided to add to the sample certain posts that did not use the aforementioned hashtag but that did mention or give relevance to the TikTok Made Me Buy It phenomenon. This allowed us to reach the number of posts (15) previously stipulated for the analysis.

Regarding the second stated objective (identifying which elements the publications that could lead to their future viralization have in common), we can say that it was successfully achieved, since, in the analysis stage, we were able to recognize certain elements that predominated in the publications corresponding to those stated in the theoretical framework of the selected authors. These will be revisited later.(34,35)

The last specific objective proposed (to discover how brands can use these identified elements in their own content and achieve their viralization) was achieved, since, based on what was observed, we were able to develop a series of tips or recommendations so that brands can use these identified elements in publications, in the creation of their own content, and approach viralization. They are presented later.(36,37)

Returning to the results observed in the previous section of this research, we identified certain concordances and discrepancies with respect to the theoretical background and definitions proposed by the authors present in the Introduction section of the work.(38,39)

First, with respect to the different typologies of reviews set out at the beginning of the research, we highlight that in the publications analyzed, tutorial and unboxing reviews predominate. (40,41)

Those tutorial-type makeup reviews present the makeup product chosen by the creator, whether a Maybelline lipstick or an L'Oréal Serum, and teach how to use it (generally an explanation of the steps to achieve a makeup look with the product in question). This characteristic of online reviews in tutorial format means that they can be considered an appealing resource within a content marketing strategy.(7) This occurs because tutorials seek to teach how to use products, which turns them into educational and valuable content that provides added knowledge value to users, leaving aside merely commercial or advertising content. As Figueiredo (11) states, currently

users are not only interested in trying and buying certain makeup products, but also in learning to use them easily and effectively.(42,43)

For this reason, this type of tutorial review can be of great interest to users attracted by makeup products, who (as observed) share, comment on, and like them, causing the consequent viralization of the posts. In view of this, we consider that makeup brands seeking viralization may choose to use this type of tutorial-type review in their content to achieve their widespread dissemination.(44,45)

Regarding unboxing, we can say that this type of review predominated in new product presentations, such as L'Oréal's "TikTok Made Me Buy It" box. This type of review is attractive to users browsing the TikTok platform; this is reflected in the large number of shares, comments, and likes that this type of review received within the sample of posts, which leads us to consider it a fundamental element for their virality. As they are videos in which creators show products freshly taken out of the box and give their testimony about how they feel (8), we believe they give consumers the opportunity to be part of that long-awaited moment of seeing for the first time what the package contains, such as the product, its packaging, label, etc. Achieving greater attention and interaction from users.(46,47)

On the other hand, we want to highlight that, although the dupe review typology did not predominate in the publications, the most viral video (publication No. 1), which obtained the greatest reach of interactions of the entire sample, belonged to this review category in which two makeup products from different brands but with the same characteristics and functions were presented. This leads us to ask why the publication achieved this level of virality unlike the others.(48,49)

In response to this question, we highlight that the publication "Fenty and Maybelline Dupe" (No. 1), in addition to having used this type of dupe review, complies with all the items proposed in the content marketing category of the analysis grid, as well as with 4 viralization strategies (out of 7) proposed by Ramírez (23), which are: use of hashtags, use of trending audios, the 3-second rule, and timing. Likewise, it complies with two execution frameworks of advertising discourse that predominate throughout the entire sample, informative and demonstrative. This results in a publication that consists of elements that coincide with those proposed by the authors cited in the theoretical framework of the research (50).

Continuing with the findings, what we found in these publications is that the most used content strategy is informative. We identified that in the sample of publications the objective of presenting a makeup product and its characteristics to the platform's users predominates, generally accompanied by a demonstration of how to use it; which leads us to highlight a product-test type of content, in agreement with what the authors Castillo Calle (12) propose about content marketing.

From our point of view, we consider that the product testing typology is the most appropriate to use in this type of content, where makeup products are the protagonists. As an online medium, users are exposed to this type of video in which cosmetic products are presented, without the possibility of seeing or testing them for themselves. This represents a challenge for content creators in this industry, from which they must use different types of strategies and typologies to present the products in the best possible way (51).

Product testing is a way for users to see the actual product on the skin, observe its texture, true color, and method of use. This results in a highly appealing review for users interested in makeup products, contributing to the consequent interaction and viralization of these contents.

Furthermore, we observed that in these review-like publications, creators give a testimonial, their personal opinion about the product in question, which contributes to attracting users to this type of content, becoming their main argument when purchasing any type of product.(6)

We identified in the publications of the makeup brands that make up the analysis sample the predominance of 3 viralization dynamics, which were: use of hashtags, use of trending audios, and timing, in accordance with what was proposed by author Lorena Ramírez (23) in her article "8 tips to make a video go viral on TikTok." In turn, certain viralization dynamics were identified that were partially found in the sample; these were: encouraging the user and the 3-second rule.

Regarding the viralization dynamics present in the publications, it can be concluded that the use of the hashtag is a fundamental element for the viralization of the reviews.

This viral phenomenon, in which users share their reviews, generating a "chain" effect that influences other users to buy and share their own reviews of makeup products, acquires a name and a form of identification from the hashtag #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt, which currently has approximately 22 billion views on the platform.

Continuing with the findings, we were able to observe that the use of trending audios widely predominated, this being a key element for the viralization of content, in accordance with what was stated by Ramírez (23).

After specifically observing the metrics of the audios used, we were able to identify that these could be considered viral due to the high number of plays and their use by other creators in their publications (some reaching up to 24 trillion videos). With this in mind, we consider that a trending audio is a great element when it comes to making content viral due to the high exposure they bring with them.

Regarding those dynamics that did not predominate in the sample, we can identify the use of humor in the contents and surprise effects, in discrepancy with what was stated by the author Ramírez (23) in her theory.

With everything presented so far, we consider that these elements present in the reviews are a powerful resource that brands cannot lose sight of when creating their own publications on TikTok and being able to achieve viralization. This leads us to revisit the 3rd objective of the research: "To discover how brands can use these elements identified in their own content and achieve their viralization."

Based on what was analyzed, we decided to create a list of 10 recommendations that brands in the makeup industry could use to generate content with the possibility of viralization.

1. Create posts in review format. Produce content showing one person giving their testimonial about a makeup product and interacting with it.
2. Opt for various types of reviews such as tutorial, unboxing, and dupe.
3. Publish the contents in video format accompanied by text and images that can contribute to the presentation of the makeup product.
4. Use trending audios from the platform. A way to identify whether an audio is trending is by looking at the number of videos created with it. If the number of uses is high, we are probably dealing with a trending audio, which will help our content stand out among the rest.
5. To be innovative in the way the makeup product review is presented.
6. Use excerpts from reviews of the same product by other users as a complement to the user's own review. Document the journey to the store where the makeup product is purchased. Conduct the product review (packaging, price, etc.) at the point of sale.
7. Use an informative content strategy. Present in the publication characteristics of the makeup product to be promoted, such as its name, price, and color shade.
8. In reviews, use the product-testing content typology and add functional and epistemic value to it. We suggest conducting usage demonstrations where users can observe the real product on the skin, observe its texture, true color, use, etc.
9. Employ advertising discourse resources in the contents. Those we suggest are the informative and demonstration execution framework.
10. Use hashtags in the post description (minimum 5, maximum 18); some suggested ones are: #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt #productsoftiktok #virmakeup #makeuptutorial #beautyreview #makeupreview.
11. Create a positive impact in the first 3 seconds of the video. To achieve this, elements that spark user curiosity can be incorporated so that the user continues watching the content until the end.

What has been presented so far must be interpreted taking into account the inherent limitations of the research. The results were obtained from one small sample of 15 posts from 3 makeup brands on the TikTok platform. Therefore, for the results obtained from the sample to be generalizable and applicable on large scales, one larger sample should be used, encompassing more brands in the makeup industry.

Regarding the strengths of this research, we can highlight the richness of the contents chosen in the sample, which allowed covering the content analysis in a complete manner, enabling the identification of the vast majority of the items proposed in the analysis categories.

It should be noted that, in the sample, international brands were selected, two of which are national in scope, which allows the research problem to be adapted to the local context. The recommendations previously proposed are considered for both the local and the international context.

In addition, we reflect on possible future lines of research that could complement what has been presented. We identify the need to further examine the role of the consumer in this viralization phenomenon, in which a "chain" cycle of reviews generated by the platform's users about makeup products is created, achieving their viralization.

We propose to conduct field research in which first-hand information can be collected, by means of surveys and interviews with consumers about their interests and opinions regarding content in the form of reviews; as well as to determine why users give a certain place to this type of content in the viralization dynamics on the platform over others. We present the following question as a trigger: In what way do the platform, the consumer, and the brand interact for viralization on

TikTok?

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, it can be said that reviews have gained prominence in the viralization dynamics of makeup brands on TikTok, not only because of the undeniable spreading power fostered by the use of hashtags (mainly #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt) but also because of the added value they provide to users. Reviews allow users to learn about a makeup product, learn how to use it through a tutorial-type review, hear an opinion about the product (which carries great weight for its purchase decision), and be part of the moment of product acquisition through an unboxing review.

Reviews prove to be content valued by users thanks to the added value of knowledge and functionality they provide. Users respond positively to these publications by giving their likes, comments, and sharing them with other users, generating the consequent viralization.

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