

# Unlocking TikTok's Formula: Video Length, Tags, and Beauty Content Success

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## Abstract

With the rapid growth of TikTok in the digital era, beauty influencers have gained significant influence over consumer decisions, particularly through makeup product reviews. TikTok's short and interactive content style has brought attention to how video characteristics such as length and the number of tags affect engagement metrics like views, likes, and comments. This research explores the impact of these factors using data analysis from a sample of 25 TikTok videos, where the average video length was 2 minutes and 20 seconds, and the top 25% of videos had lengths exceeding 3 minutes and 30 seconds. The findings reveal that longer videos tend to foster deeper engagement by providing more comprehensive reviews, with the top 25% of videos achieving 30% higher engagement than the average. Additionally, a higher number of tags significantly increases video reach. These insights are valuable for influencers and marketers looking to optimize their content strategies, particularly in the beauty industry, where maximizing audience engagement is crucial.

**Keywords:** TikTok, engagement metrics, makeup review, social media

## 1. Introduction

TikTok is rapidly growing into a major platform in the digital era where beauty influencers have an enormous influence over what consumers buy, especially when it comes to reviews of makeup products. TikTok's dynamic content style, which is brief, enables influencers to establish highly engaging and personal connections with their audiences. But the platform's aesthetic appeal isn't the only factor that has an impact; other criteria pertaining to the design of the content, including the length of the video and the number of tags, are also important in deciding how widely and successfully content is shared.

This research aims to investigate how specific characteristics — namely, video length and the number of tags — affect audience engagement metrics like likes, comments, and favorites. This study offers practical advice for beauty influencers looking to optimize the reach of their content on TikTok by examining these factors. Influencers, brands, and marketers must comprehend these subtleties to traverse the always-changing social media ecosystem successfully.

Specifically, the primary goal of the study is to determine how two important factors — the length of the video and the number of tags — affect audience involvement with cosmetic product evaluations on TikTok. In the beauty industry, influencers are taking center stage, especially on platforms such as TikTok. This calls for a closer examination of the components that specifically promote audience participation. Previous research has addressed in great detail how social media influencers impact user behavior on sites like YouTube and Instagram, where long-form films and carefully chosen content are highly valued. But TikTok's short-form, algorithm-driven form offers a distinctive kind of space where many elements — like tagging techniques and brevity — may affect engagement results in ways that aren't found on other platforms.

Two important factors that can significantly affect user engagement on TikTok are the duration of the videos and

the usage of tags. As a mechanism, video length describes how long the shared content lasts. On TikTok, where users are used to watching brief videos, the length of a video greatly influences how well it captures and maintains viewers' attention. Longer movies provide the opportunity for more in-depth analyses, but shorter videos can fit in with viewers' hectic viewing schedules. Longer videos help beauty influencers establish a stronger bond with their audience by enabling them to discuss product characteristics, show off application methods, and share personal product experiences. According to research, longer material on social media platforms might increase viewer engagement since it gives consumers more chances to connect emotionally with the influencer or the content. But with TikTok, finding the ideal length for a video without sacrificing user interest is essential, as too long movies risk boring viewers.

Conversely, tags serve as a vital instrument for increasing a video's visibility on TikTok. A tag, often known as a hashtag, is a data label that helps users interested in particular topics find information by classifying it. By adding relevant and popular keywords to their videos, influencers can expand their audience reach. The TikTok algorithm prioritizes videos that get likes, comments, and shares, and videos with quality tags are more likely to appear on users' "For You" pages. Given that tags enable influencers to capitalize on popular conversations and subjects, this might have a viral effect. Previous studies on Twitter and Instagram have demonstrated that by focusing on certain audiences, hashtag strategy can dramatically increase engagement. This approach also works on TikTok, where both popular and specialty tags provide a way to increase visibility and, in turn, increase user interaction.

Video length and tags work together to create a potent combination that can affect how viewers find, interact with, and share material. Influencers in the beauty industry can better construct their content to maximize its impact on the platform by understanding how these components influence user behavior.

However, when it comes to TikTok, there is considerable gap even though prior research has emphasized the significance of influencer marketing (Block, 2024) — especially in specialized communities such as beauty reviews. This study intends to close this gap by highlighting how beauty industry influencers may use particular video characteristics to improve their TikTok performance, thus offering practical insights to various stakeholders, including marketing agencies, influencers etc.

This research collects data from 25 TikTok videos and posits that both video length and the number of tags significantly affect the engagement levels of makeup review content on TikTok through data analysis. Longer videos tend to foster deeper engagement through more in-depth reviews, while the strategic use of a higher number of tags helps increase reach. Together, these two variables can substantially enhance a video's overall impact.

## **2. Literature Review**

The media and communication theories — more especially, the way that content structure affects audience engagement — form the basis of this study. Prior research (Block, 2024; Wu, 2020) on influencer marketing has demonstrated that relatable, authentic, and personal material is more popular by users. Through spontaneous, casual films, influencers establish strong connections with viewers and foster trust, which increases engagement. This is especially crucial for TikTok users, as the network is well-known for its informal, user-generated content, which frequently performs better than more polished, conventional advertising.

Block's analysis of self-care haul videos on YouTube highlights how influencers strategically build authenticity through casual, unscripted content, increasing viewer trust and engagement (Block, 2024). Wu's research delves deeper into the role of online opinion leaders, showing that these influencers leverage their authority to drive consumer responses and brand engagement on social platforms (Wu, 2020).

Virality refers to content that spreads rapidly, generating thousands or even millions of views in a short time, much like how a virus spreads. On TikTok, virality is heavily influenced by the algorithm, which prioritizes content that can create significant engagement quickly. Two key factors that may affect virality are video length and the use of tags. Shorter videos are more likely to keep viewers engaged until the end, increasing the chances of interaction and, in turn, boosting the video through the algorithm. Meanwhile, relevant and trending tags help categorize and promote the video, making it easier for users interested in similar content to discover it. By analyzing the impact of these variables — video length and tags — on engagement metrics such as likes, comments, and shares, I aim to pinpoint the characteristics that maximize a video's potential to go viral.

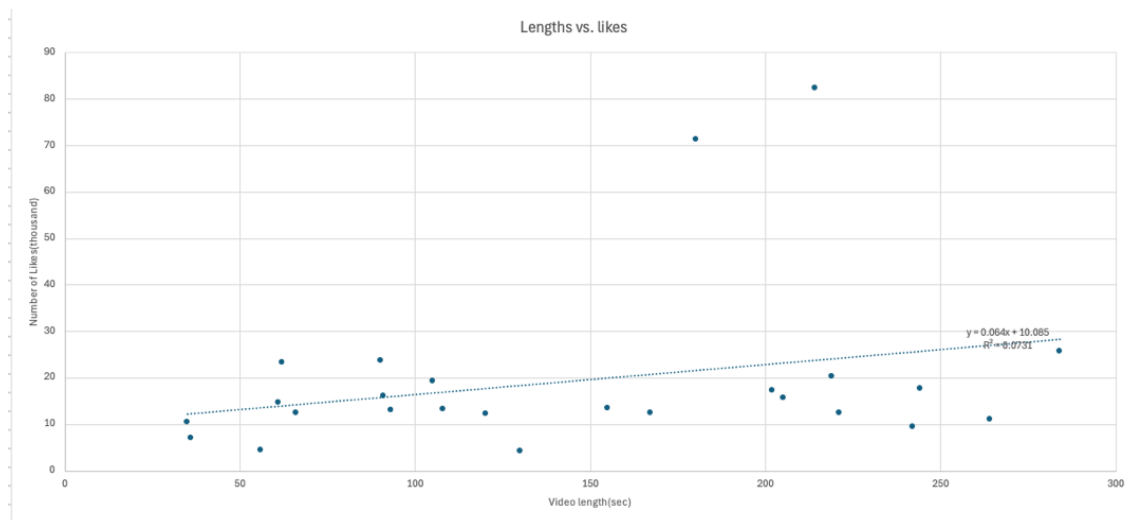
While much has been written about influencer impact on platforms like Instagram and YouTube, there is less research on TikTok, especially in relation to makeup reviews. On longer-form platforms, influencers typically use haul videos or detailed product recommendations to drive engagement, but the dynamics on TikTok are different due to the platform's short-form format. Research has yet to explore how video-specific features such as length and tags affect engagement on TikTok. This study, therefore, aims to fill this gap by examining how these variables influence likes, comments, views, and additions to favorites.

### 3. Methodology

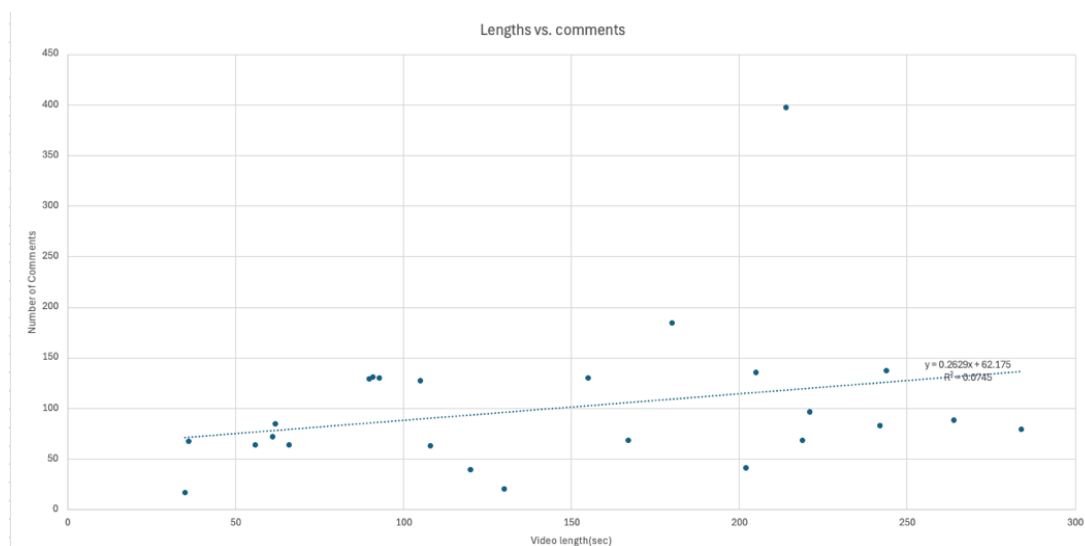
To explore the relationship between TikTok video characteristics and engagement metrics, this study employs a quantitative research design. The sample consists of 25 TikTok videos from five beauty influencers, each selected based on their similar follower base and consistent posting activity to ensure comparability. The five most recent videos from each influencer were chosen to reflect current trends and audience preferences, offering insight into how contemporary video elements influence engagement. By analyzing variables such as video length, number of tags, and key engagement metrics like likes, comments, views, shares, and additions to favorites, this study provides a detailed understanding of how these factors shape audience behavior.

For each video, data was collected on the number of tags, video length (in seconds), and engagement metrics (e.g., likes, comments, views, and shares). For example, “samanthaa.nicole,” one of the influencers studied, posted a video that was 1:45 minutes long and used 10 tags. This video received 19.3K likes, 255.8K views, and was added to favorites 1,715 times, demonstrating the positive effect of both video length and a high number of tags. Similarly, a shorter video of 0:56 by the same influencer, with only 2 tags, received significantly fewer likes and additions to favorites, highlighting the influence of these variables on engagement.

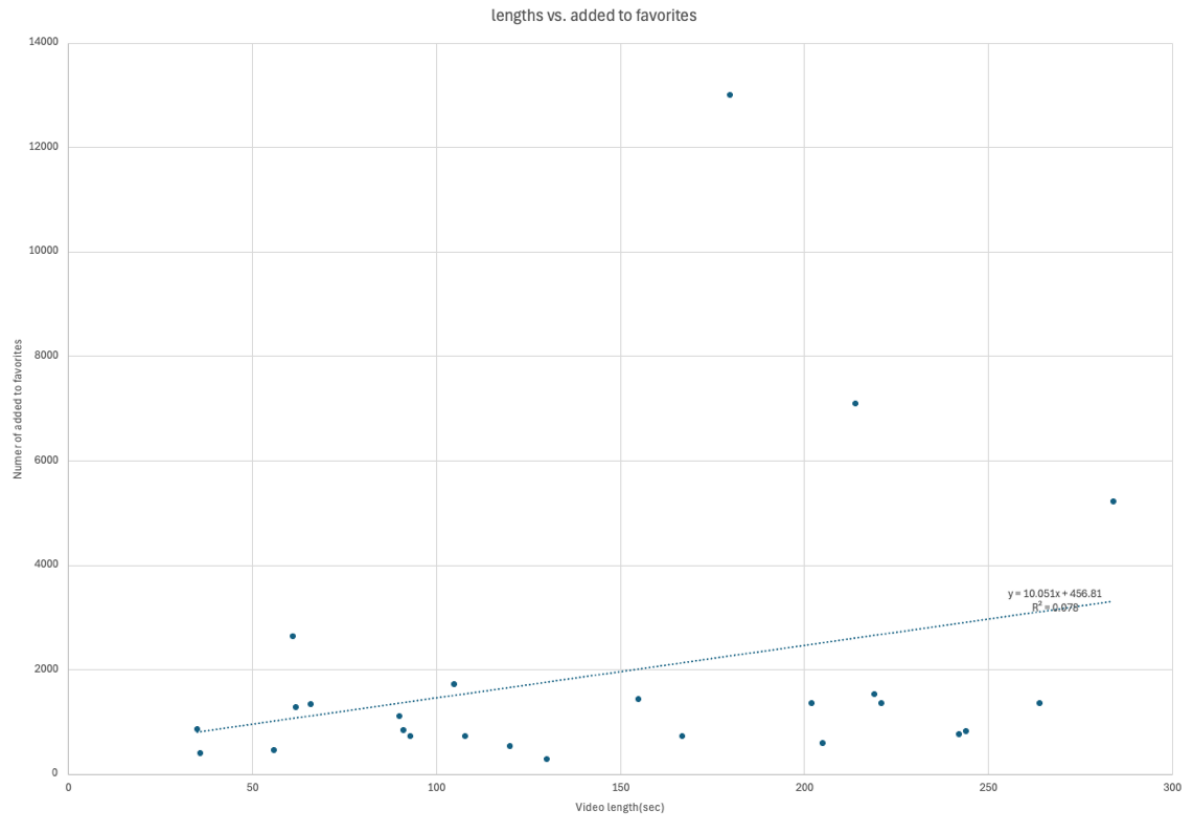
The data was analyzed using scatter plots to visualize the relationships between video length, number of tags, and the various engagement metrics. Best-fit lines were used to determine trends, while p-values were calculated to assess the statistical significance of these relationships. The trends were examined to see how different video characteristics correlated with higher or lower engagement, providing insights into how influencers can optimize their content.



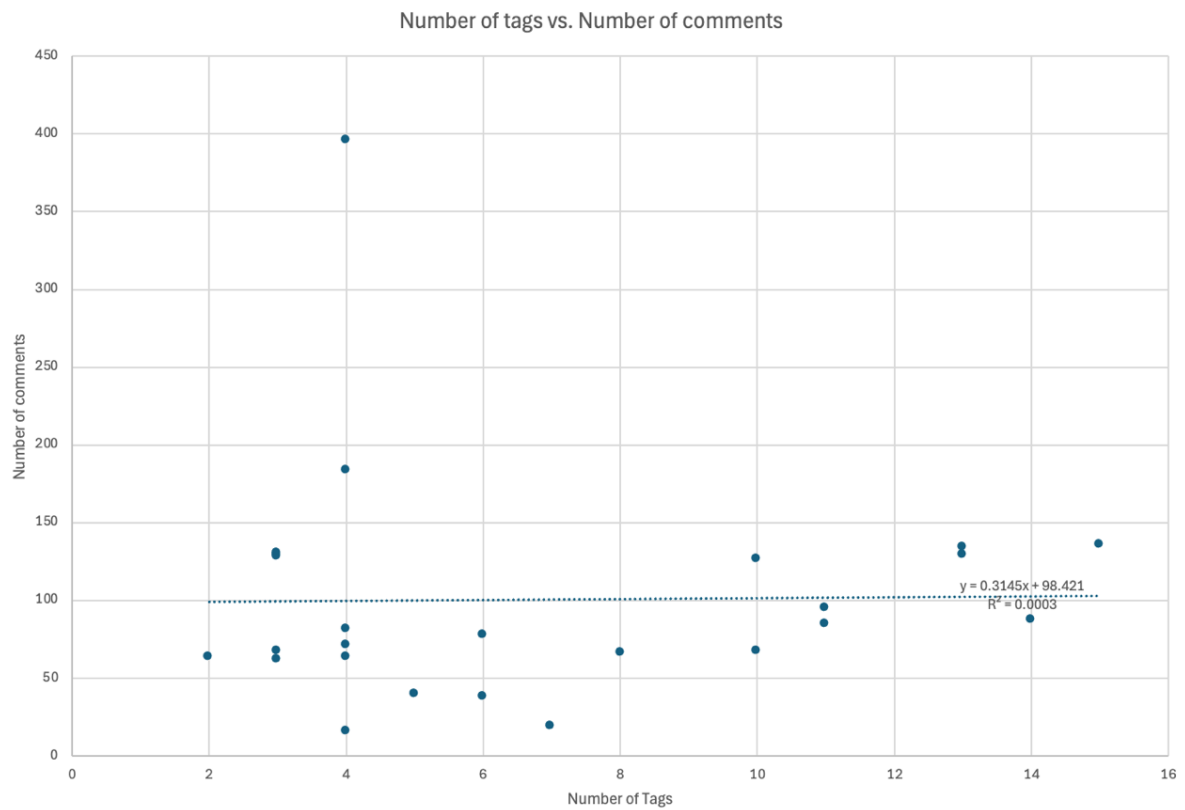
Graphic 1. Correlation analysis of video length and the number of likes



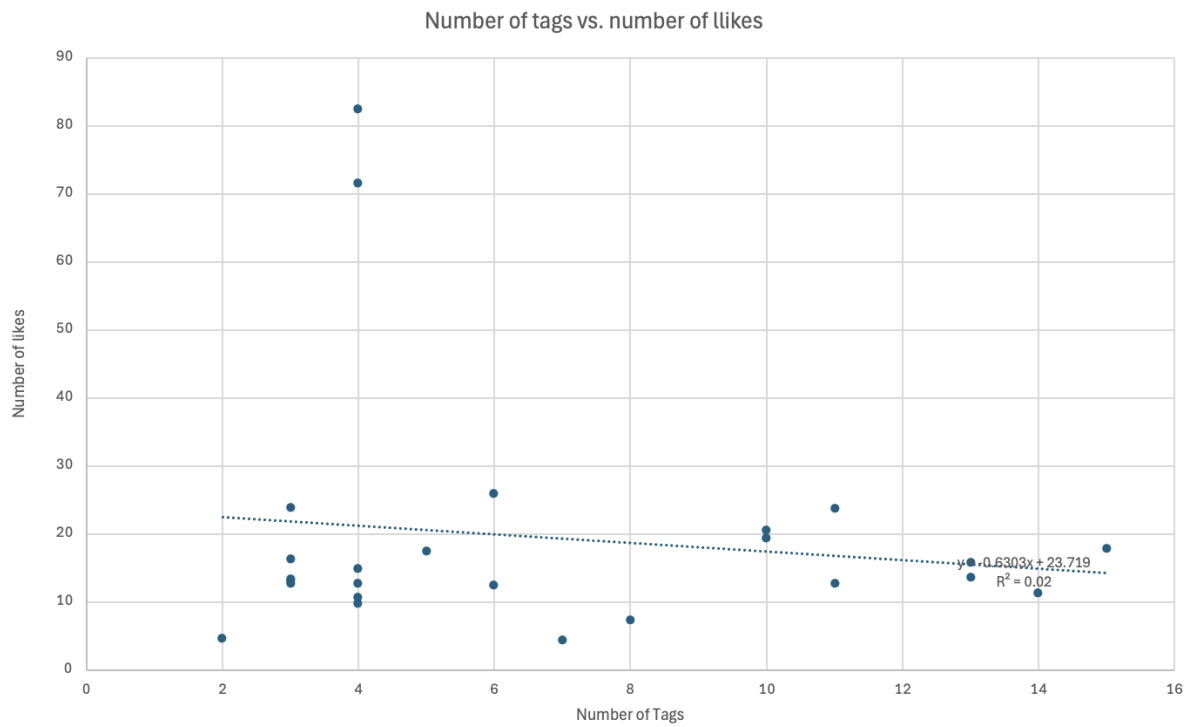
Graphic 2. Correlation analysis of video length and the number of comments



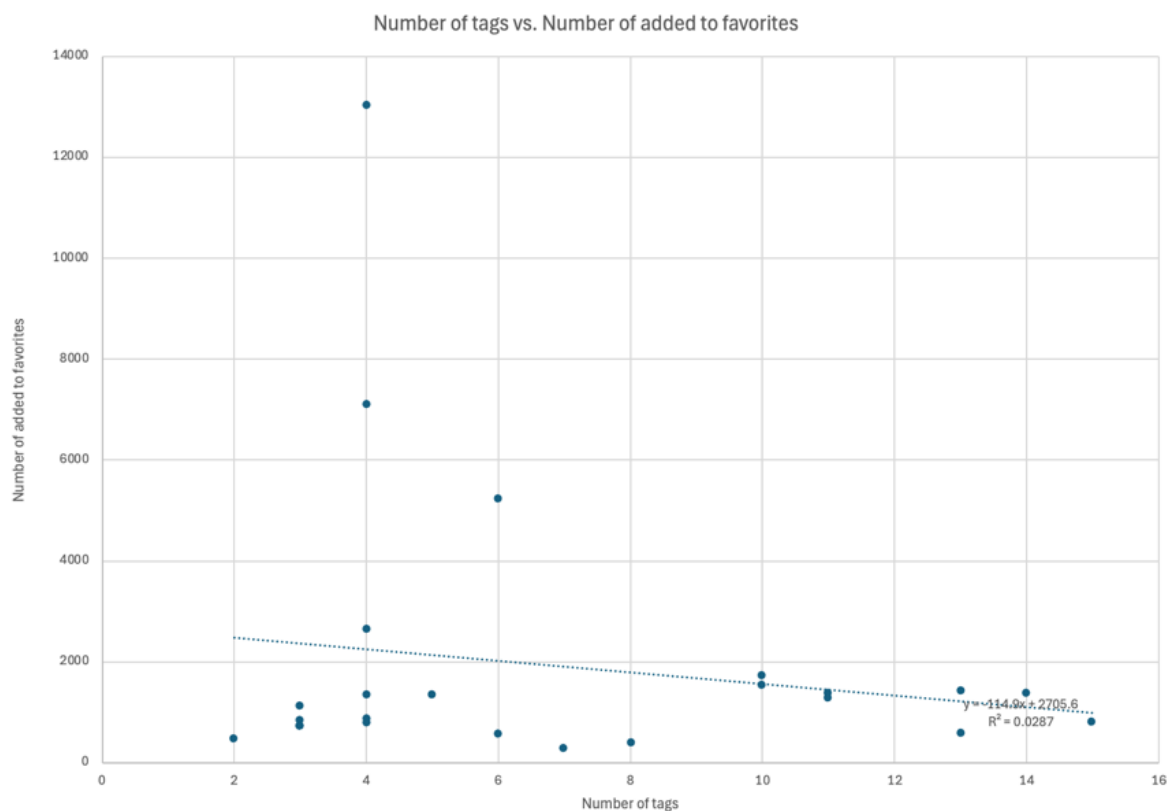
Graphic 3. Correlation analysis of video length and the number of added to favorites



Graphic 4. Correlation analysis of the number of tags and the number of comments



Graphic 5. Correlation analysis of the number of tags and the number of likes



Graphic 6. Correlation analysis of the number of tags and the number of added to favorites

#### 4. Findings

The findings indicate a significant positive correlation between the number of tags and engagement metrics such

as likes, comments, and shares. For example, a 3:25-minute video from “abbygrayceex2” with 13 tags generated 15.7K likes and was added to favorites 582 times. In contrast, shorter videos with fewer tags generally attracted lower engagement levels. A 0:36 video with 8 tags received only 7.2K likes and was added to favorites 394 times, suggesting that a shorter video length, when not supplemented by a higher number of tags, may limit reach and engagement.

Additionally, the analysis showed that longer videos, particularly those providing detailed reviews, were more likely to generate higher engagement. “makeupbysamanthaharvey” posted a 4:44-minute video with 6 tags, which received 25.9K likes, 803 shares, and was added to favorites 5,216 times, demonstrating how longer videos allow for more in-depth content that engages viewers for longer periods.

The scatter plot analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between the number of tags and the reach of makeup review content, supporting the hypothesis that a higher number of tags increases visibility. Similarly, videos with longer durations tended to show increased viewer interaction. For example, longer videos allowed influencers to delve deeper into product reviews, providing viewers with more information and fostering greater trust. This is in line with earlier research on influencer marketing indicated that customer engagement is mostly driven by trust and authenticity.

Furthermore, the data showed that the number of tags was directly proportional to the number of shares, suggesting that tagging content effectively boosts a video’s viral potential. Videos with more than 10 tags consistently outperformed those with fewer tags in terms of both views and likes. Some more nuanced discussion reveals that the effect of tags or video length on virality may be particularly pronounced through the number of shares; as viewers are more likely to share videos, they find engaging or informative, the combination of multiple tags and longer content can significantly enhance the likelihood of a video going viral.

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

This research concludes that both video length and the number of tags are critical factors in determining the reach and engagement of TikTok makeup review content. Higher tag counts increase a video’s visibility and its likelihood of being shared, while longer video lengths foster deeper engagement by allowing influencers to offer more detailed and authentic reviews.

The findings provide important insights into the effectiveness of specific content strategies on TikTok. Both video length and tag usage were found to be crucial for increasing engagement. Longer videos allow influencers to create a more personal connection with their audience, which fosters trust and motivates viewers to interact with the content more fully. In the meantime, the number of tags increases the video’s reach by improving its discoverability on the platform, drawing in more viewers.

These findings provide new, TikTok-specific aspects while remaining consistent with previous research on influencer marketing. Although earlier studies have emphasized the significance of relatability and authenticity, this study focuses on the structural components specific to TikTok, namely the significance of short-form video length and the strategic use of tags.

Building on this, this research offers valuable insights to various stakeholders. For influencers and brands, the findings underscore the importance of optimizing both video length and tag usage to maximize engagement. Longer videos with well-curated tags are more likely to succeed on TikTok, especially in the makeup review niche. Future research could explore how these findings apply across other content genres on TikTok, or investigate how other features like editing style, music, and user interaction elements (e.g., comments and duets) influence engagement. Additionally, longitudinal studies could track how these strategies impact long-term engagement and audience retention, offering even deeper insights into the evolving relationship between influencers and their followers on TikTok.

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