Short-Form Video Marketing and Its Impact on Brand Engagement

Lukasz Bikowski
Australian Marketing Institute, Australia
lb@bikowski.com

Abstract: *Short-form video became a central brand communication format before 2023, driven by the rapid rise of TikTok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts. What began as entertainment-led content evolved into a high-impact marketing tool used to attract attention, shape brand meaning and encourage audience participation. Drawing on a structured literature review of peer-reviewed studies published up to December 2022, this article synthesis research across customer engagement, social media marketing, branded content, online video advertising, influencer communication and mobile media. The review identifies six mechanisms through which short-form video strengthens brand engagement: rapid attention capture, entertainment-led processing, authenticity signaling, interactive participation, creator mediation and algorithmic circulation. These mechanisms influence cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement in distinct but interconnected ways. Short-form video is therefore better understood not as a shortened advertisement, but as a dynamic engagement format that changes how brands generate visibility, relevance, interaction and co-creation in digital environments. The article closes by outlining implications for engagement theory, measurement and brand practice.*
Keywords: short-form video marketing, brand engagement, social media marketing, TikTok, Instagram Reels, digital branding

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, digital marketing has moved from text-heavy and image-led communication toward environments dominated by video, motion, sound and algorithmic discovery. The emergence of short-form video has been especially consequential because it reshaped not only what brands publish but how audiences encounter, interpret and circulate commercial content. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts compressed communication into highly competitive, fast-scrolling encounters in which a user may decide within seconds whether to continue watching, like, comment, share or move on. This shift matters for branding because it places extraordinary pressure

on attention while also opening unusually rich opportunities for emotional connection, cultural participation and user co-creation.

Earlier work on customer engagement and social media had already shown that digital interaction can create value beyond simple exposure or immediate purchase. Brodie et al. (2011) conceptualized customer engagement as a psychological state arising from interactive and co-creative experiences. Muntinga et al. (2011) distinguished consumption, contribution and creation as key forms of online brand-related activity. De Vries et al. (2012) demonstrated that vividness and interactivity shape the popularity of brand posts. Hollebeek et al. (2014) developed a multidimensional view of consumer brand engagement in social media, emphasizing cognitive processing, affection and activation. Together these streams suggested that brands in digital spaces no longer succeed only by being seen. They succeed by being noticed, felt, talked about and woven into consumer participation.

Short-form video intensifies all of these dynamics. It combines vividness, mobility, sound, face-to-camera delivery, interactive tools and recommendation systems inside a single format that is easy to consume and easy to recirculate. It also changes the economics of visibility. Content can reach audiences well beyond existing followers if early engagement signals are strong. That means engagement becomes more than an outcome. It becomes part of distribution itself. A user's watch time, replay, save, comment or share helps determine who sees the content next. Brands therefore operate in an environment where attention, reaction and reach are tightly coupled.

Brand engagement is a particularly relevant concept for understanding this environment. Reach and impressions still matter, but they say little about whether a short-form video builds memory, trust or participation. Engagement captures the quality and depth of audience-brand interaction across cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions. On short-form video platforms, behavioral engagement may include not only likes and comments but also saving, stitching, duetting, remixing, tagging and producing derivative content. These behaviors can extend the life of a brand message and transform users from passive recipients into co-distributors and co-authors.

Despite the strategic importance of short-form video, the academic literature before 2023 remained fragmented. One stream addressed brand engagement, online communities and firm-generated content. Another focused on online video advertising, virality and emotional response. A further stream examined influencer credibility, authenticity and native social media communication. More recent work began to explore TikTok-like platforms, user motivations and mobile short-video behavior. Yet relatively little integrative scholarship explained how these strands fit together to account for the impact of short-form video marketing on brand engagement. This paper addresses that gap.

The article asks a broad but practical question: how does short-form video marketing influence brand engagement? To answer this question, the study uses a structured review of peer-reviewed scholarship published up to December 2022. The analysis develops an integrated framework showing that short-form video influences engagement through six recurring mechanisms: rapid attention capture, entertainment-led processing, authenticity signaling, interactive participation, creator mediation and algorithmic circulation. These mechanisms help explain why some short-form videos create only fleeting amusement while others support recognition, trust, advocacy and ongoing brand participation.

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development UK

This article makes four contributions to the marketing literature. It distinguishes short-form video from both broader social media content and conventional online video advertising, bringing sharper conceptual clarity to a format that is often discussed too broadly. It also brings together the main theoretical lenses used to explain engagement in this setting, especially customer engagement theory, uses and gratifications, stimulus-organism-response logic and social presence. In addition, it integrates the pre-2023 literature into a clearer account of how short-form video shapes cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement. Finally, it translates those insights into practical guidance for brands using TikTok, Reels and similar formats while trying to maintain consistency, relevance and distinctiveness.

LITERATURE

Short-form video marketing refers to branded or brand-adjacent video content designed for rapid consumption and circulation in social media feeds, usually in formats under one minute and often much shorter. Its defining characteristics are brevity, vertical design, native editing tools, strong audio-visual cues, algorithmic distribution and easy audience response. The format draws from earlier traditions of viral video, mobile media, branded content and user-generated media, but it differs from them by uniting all of these properties inside a fast, platform-native encounter.

Customer engagement theory offers the foundation for analyzing this environment. Calder et al. (2009) showed that online engagement is tied to motivational experiences with media. Brodie et al. (2011) framed customer engagement as an interactive and value-creating psychological state. Hollebeek et al. (2014) translated this into a social media context, defining consumer brand engagement through cognitive processing, affection and activation. Dessart et al. (2015) further enriched the discussion by highlighting enthusiasm, attention, absorption, interaction and identification in online brand communities. These studies matter because short-form video rarely works through information alone. It works by combining attention, emotion and action in a tight temporal sequence.

A second crucial stream is consumer online brand-related activity. Muntinga et al. (2011) proposed that consumers engage with brands through consuming, contributing and creating content. This framework fits short-form video particularly well. A user may consume a clip by watching, contribute through liking, commenting or sharing, and create by remixing or reproducing a trend associated with the brand. The boundaries between these behaviors are weaker on short-video platforms than on earlier social media because platform tools make response and imitation easy. De Vries et al. (2012) found that vividness and interactivity increase brand post popularity. Short-form video is intrinsically vivid through motion, sound and editing rhythm, and intrinsically interactive through comments, reaction tools and remix features.

Uses and gratifications theory helps explain why short-form video environments are so effective at attracting audiences. Katz et al. (1973) argued that media users actively select content to satisfy needs such as entertainment, identity expression, information and social interaction. This logic has been applied in social media settings to explain brand-related activities and content participation (Muntinga et al., 2011; de Vries et al., 2017). Studies of TikTok-like environments suggest that entertainment,

escapism, creativity, self-expression and social belonging are particularly salient motives (Omar and Dequan, 2020; Bossen and Kottasz, 2020; Kaye et al., 2021). These motives matter because users typically do not open short-form platforms seeking formal advertising. They enter looking for stimulation, relevance and social connection. Branded content that fits those motives is more likely to generate engagement.

Stimulus-organism-response theory provides another useful lens. In Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) model, environmental stimuli affect internal states, which then shape behavioral responses. In short-form video, stimuli include pacing, visual movement, sound, captions, humor, product demonstration, human presence and trend familiarity. The organismic state includes attention, curiosity, affect, arousal, authenticity perception and social presence. Responses include completion, likes, comments, shares, follows, saves and the creation of derivative content. The appeal of this lens is that it clarifies how formal design choices become engagement outcomes in seconds.

Social presence theory is equally relevant. Short et al. (1976) described social presence as the degree to which a medium conveys the sense of another person being present. Short-form video often heightens social presence because it includes voice, facial expression, gesture, context and imperfection. These cues make communication feel more human than conventional display advertising. Research on influencers supports this logic. Freberg et al. (2011) identified social media influencers as a new type of endorser. Lou and Yuan (2019) showed that influencer value rests on entertainment, informativeness, credibility and attractiveness. Audrezet et al. (2020) argued that authenticity is performed through transparency, passion and relatability. These insights help explain why founder-led, employee-led and creator-led short-form video often outperforms anonymous corporate messaging.

Firm-generated content research adds a strategic perspective. Kumar et al. (2016) demonstrated that firm-generated social media content can influence customer behavior across channels. Ashley and Tuten (2015) showed that creative social media strategies involving experiential, emotional and interactive elements are associated with stronger engagement. Tafesse (2015) found that entertainment, information and interaction shape audience response on Facebook brand pages. Tafesse and Wien (2018) argued that social media marketing should be implemented strategically, not merely tactically. These studies imply that short-form video is most effective when integrated into a broader engagement system rather than treated as isolated trend participation.

The literature on online video advertising and virality provides another important base. Southgate et al. (2010) showed that creative factors influence whether online videos are viewed and shared. Berger and Milkman (2012) found that high-arousal emotions increase sharing. Teixeira et al. (2012) demonstrated that emotional engagement affects attention in internet video advertising. Nelson-Field et al. (2013) similarly showed that emotional intensity matters in viral video. These studies are directly relevant because short-form video competes in a highly compressed attention economy. The opening seconds have a disproportionate influence on whether a message is processed at all.

The broader digital marketing literature places these developments in context. Malthouse et al. (2013) argued that social media changes the nature of customer relationships by enabling dialogue,

participation and advocacy. Stephen (2016) described digital and social media marketing as increasingly shaped by mobile devices, social networks, user-generated content and data. Knoll (2016) reviewed the evidence on social media advertising and highlighted the importance of native formats. Li et al. (2021) later synthesized social media marketing strategy research and emphasized content, value creation and relationship building. Dwivedi et al. (2021) identified influencers, platform governance and video-based interaction as central issues in the future of digital marketing research. Short-form video can be understood as the point where these forces converge most visibly.

Several additional theoretical ideas sharpen the explanation further. Source credibility matters because users often make rapid judgements about expertise, trustworthiness and relatability from visual and vocal cues. Media richness matters because even a very brief clip can carry movement, speech, environment, product use and affect simultaneously. Story compression matters because short-form video often communicates through mini-narratives such as before-and-after reveals, quick tutorials, objections and resolutions, or humor built around a punchline. Identity performance matters because users may share or imitate brand-related content not only because of product interest but because doing so expresses taste, belonging or competence.

Taken together, these literatures suggest that short-form video should be analyzed as an engagement architecture. Platform affordances, content properties and user motivations combine to shape cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement. The next section explains how the review synthesized these streams into a coherent set of findings.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a structured literature review methodology. The objective is not merely to list what has been written on short-form video, but to integrate several related research streams into an explanation of how short-form video marketing affects brand engagement. Structured reviews are appropriate when a topic is emerging, dispersed across fields and conceptually fragmented. That is precisely the case here, because relevant evidence is spread across marketing, advertising, communication, information systems and media studies.

The review was conducted in four stages: scoping, search, screening and thematic synthesis. During scoping, the temporal and topical boundaries were defined. Because the manuscript is positioned as an October 2023 article, only scholarship published up to 31 December 2022 was eligible for inclusion. The review concentrated on peer-reviewed journal articles and foundational books relevant to customer engagement, brand engagement, social media marketing, firm-generated content, online video advertising, virality, influencer marketing, authenticity, mobile media and short-video platforms. Industry reports and non-peer-reviewed commentary were used only to understand context during early scoping and were not retained as core evidentiary sources.

Search terms were developed around five clusters. The first cluster included short-form video, short video, micro video, TikTok, Douyin, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts and vertical video. The second addressed marketing and branding terms such as social media marketing, branded content, digital

branding, content marketing and influencer marketing. The third covered outcome terms such as brand engagement, customer engagement, online engagement, social media engagement and consumer online brand-related activity. The fourth included mechanism terms such as authenticity, social presence, interactivity, entertainment, virality and recommendation algorithms. The fifth captured adjacent online video advertising and mobile media concepts. Searches were undertaken across major academic databases and publisher archives.

Screening occurred in two phases. First, titles, abstracts and keywords were reviewed for relevance. Second, full texts of shortlisted sources were examined. Studies were retained when they clearly addressed at least one link between digital video or social media content and audience engagement, brand-related behavior, persuasive outcomes or theoretical mechanisms relevant to branding. Studies that focused purely on technical platform design, medical communication or unrelated youth media behavior were excluded unless they offered a concept directly useful to the engagement framework.

The final synthesis included foundational engagement studies, social media content strategy studies, online video advertising studies, influencer and authenticity studies, and early work on mobile short-video platforms. The inclusion logic was broad by design because pre-2023 scholarship on short-form video marketing had not yet formed a single canon. Integrative work in emerging fields often requires using adjacent streams that explain different parts of the phenomenon. For each source, attention was paid to theoretical lens, platform or content context, explanatory variables, engagement outcomes and managerial implications.

Thematic synthesis was then conducted abductively. Initial coding drew on the theoretical lenses reviewed in Section 2, but themes were refined through repeated comparison across sources. Six mechanisms repeatedly emerged: rapid attention capture, entertainment-led processing, authenticity signaling, interactive participation, creator mediation and algorithmic circulation. These themes were then linked to the three dimensions of brand engagement, namely cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement.

The method has two strengths. First, it allows a new and fast-moving marketing phenomenon to be addressed without overclaiming causal precision where platform conditions shift quickly. Second, it brings together conceptual and empirical work from multiple disciplines in a way that is useful to both researchers and practitioners. Its limitations are also clear. Terminology is not fully standardized, and some studies address short-video behavior without using the language of short-form marketing. Platform interfaces also changed rapidly between 2020 and 2022. These limitations are acknowledged in later sections, but they do not undermine the value of synthesis.

Table 1 summarizes the main literature streams informing the review.

Table 1. Literature streams informing the review and their contribution to the analysis.

Stream	Core focus	Contribution to this paper
Customer and brand engagement	Psychological and behavioral engagement with brands	Defines cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement outcomes
Social media content strategy	Message, planning and audience response	Explains how branded social content stimulates interaction

Online video advertising	Attention, emotion, completion and sharing	Clarifies why hooks, pacing and emotion matter
Influencer and authenticity research	Credibility, relatability and persuasion	Explains creator mediation and authenticity cues
Short-video and mobile media studies	TikTok-like motives and platform participation	Clarifies native behavior and recommendation logics

RESULTS

The review indicates that short-form video affects brand engagement through six interrelated mechanisms. The first is rapid attention capture. In earlier online video and social media research, vividness, surprise and motion were already shown to improve noticeability (de Vries et al., 2012; Teixeira et al., 2012). In short-form video feeds this becomes even more important because viewers can dismiss content immediately. Strong hooks, visible action, direct questions, unexpected scenes, recognizable audio and immediate product use all help interrupt scrolling. Cognitive engagement starts with this interruption. Without it, the brand never enters further processing.

The second mechanism is entertainment-led processing. Uses and gratifications research suggests that social media users often seek entertainment, escape and social stimulation rather than formal information. Berger and Milkman (2012) showed that high-arousal emotions can increase sharing. Ashley and Tuten (2015) found that experiential and emotional creative strategies stimulate engagement. In short-form video, humor, surprise, transformation, rhythm and narrative compression encourage viewers to stay, replay and share. Emotional engagement often begins before viewers consciously evaluate the brand message.

The third mechanism is authenticity signaling. Influencer research consistently shows that perceived authenticity and credibility strengthen trust and engagement (Lou and Yuan, 2019; Audrezet et al., 2020). Short-form video rewards informal speech, visible imperfection, contextual realism and face-to-camera delivery. These cues make branded communication feel socially native rather than externally imposed. Emotional engagement is therefore shaped not only by what is said but by whether the communication feels believable and appropriately situated in platform culture.

The fourth mechanism is interactive participation. Earlier research had already shown that interactivity improves audience response in social media environments (de Vries et al., 2012; Tafesse, 2015; Voorveld et al., 2018). Short-form video deepens this pattern because participation can take many forms: comments, shares, saves, reactions, duets, stitches, trend adoption or user-generated imitation. Behavioral engagement becomes more visible and more socially layered than in many earlier formats. The brand message persists because people interact with it and sometimes recreate it.

The fifth mechanism is creator mediation. In many short-form video contexts, brands do not speak alone. They speak through founders, employees, customers or influencers who translate the message into a socially credible voice. Freberg et al. (2011) and Lou and Yuan (2019) suggest that trust, relatability and informational value help explain the power of creators. This matters because users often process creator-delivered brand messages as socially embedded recommendations rather than

direct corporate claims. Creator mediation therefore supports both emotional and behavioral engagement.

The sixth mechanism is algorithmic circulation. Unlike older follower-based systems, short-form platforms rely heavily on recommendation engines that surface content according to watch behavior and engagement signals. This changes the role of behavioral engagement. A like, comment, save or rewatch does not simply indicate response. It can help drive the next wave of distribution. Engagement becomes a feedback loop. This partly explains why short-form video can create sudden spikes in brand visibility even for relatively small accounts, while also making outcomes less predictable.

These six mechanisms have different relationships with the three dimensions of engagement. Cognitive engagement is influenced most strongly by attention capture, message compression and distinctive cues that support recognition and recall. Emotional engagement depends heavily on entertainment, authenticity and social presence. Behavioral engagement is driven most strongly by interactive affordances, creator influence and algorithmic amplification. Yet the dimensions overlap. A humorous, authentic video may encourage a comment, while the act of commenting may also deepen memory for the brand.

The review also reveals a recurring tension between native relevance and brand distinctiveness. Brands are told to blend into platform culture, imitate creator aesthetics and participate in trends. Those moves can support engagement because they reduce perceived advertising distance. Yet excessive conformity can weaken brand memory and make the content interchangeable. The strongest examples in the literature balance platform fit with stable brand cues such as a recognizable voice, recurring character, product ritual, founder perspective or distinctive use context.

Another important finding concerns the relationship between information and entertainment. Rather than treating them as opposites, the literature suggests that short-form video works best when useful information is embedded in socially rewarding storytelling. Product education is often more engaging when delivered through routine, comparison, before-and-after demonstration, humor or customer perspective. This helps explain why tutorials, hacks, quick explainers and myth-busting clips often perform well. They combine utility with narrative and emotional payoff.

Short-form video also changes the temporal logic of engagement. Older engagement research often assumed repeated interaction through communities, pages or longer campaign arcs. Short-form video frequently begins with micro-engagements lasting only seconds. Yet those encounters can accumulate into familiarity, trust and participation when brands produce coherent streams of content over time. Repetition with variation allows viewers to learn the brand's tone, values and use cases without perceiving the content as repetitive advertising.

Audio emerged from the reviewed literature as a particularly important but sometimes under-theorized variable. Music, reusable sounds, voice tone and sound effects contribute to pace, emotional framing and cultural recognition. A familiar audio cue can signal belonging to a trend or content genre before the brand message is fully processed. When used consistently, audio can also function as a subtle

distinctive asset. Short-form engagement is therefore multisensory. It depends on what viewers hear as much as what they see.

Comment spaces also play a larger role in short-form video than in many earlier branded content settings. Comments often become part of the content experience itself, offering humor, clarification, objection handling, peer endorsement or collective storytelling. Brands that respond effectively in comment threads can extend the life of a video and deepen social presence. Community management is therefore not secondary to content. It is part of the content system.

Product demonstration appears to benefit disproportionately from the format when value can be shown quickly and clearly. Categories like food, beauty, fitness, home organization and digital tools are well suited because proof, transformation and utility can be communicated visually in seconds. But less tangible categories can also succeed when brands translate abstract benefits into everyday scenes, founder explanations or customer stories. The key is not product tangibility alone. It is whether value can be staged in a socially legible moment.

Seriality and cadence are also important. Many effective short-form strategies rely on recurring formats, not isolated viral attempts. A repeated structure reduces cognitive effort because audiences know what kind of reward to expect. Over time, such franchises can build anticipation, familiarity and user participation. This helps explain how brief encounters can support deeper brand engagement.

Overall, the findings suggest that short-form video should be understood not as a single tactic but as a system in which format properties, platform logic and user participation combine to shape brand engagement.

Table 2. Main mechanisms linking short-form video marketing and brand engagement.

Mechanism	Typical cues	Likely engagement effect
Rapid attention capture	Strong opening, visible action, surprise	Improves initial viewing and cognitive noticeability
Entertainment-led processing	Humor, music, reveal, compression	Strengthens emotional response and sharing
Authenticity signaling	Human presence, informal speech, context	Builds trust, relatability and affinity
Interactive participation	Comment prompts, remix ability, UGC invitation	Increases likes, comments, saves and co-creation
Creator mediation	Influencer, founder, employee or customer delivery	Transfers credibility and cultural relevance
Algorithmic circulation	Retention, rewatch value, early reactions	Extends reach and amplifies feedback loops

DISCUSSION

The findings support the view that short-form video is an engagement architecture rather than merely a compressed advertisement. Traditional advertising models typically separated message creation, placement and audience response. Short-form video collapses these functions. The content itself

shapes attention. Audience reaction shapes distribution. Platform design shapes both interpretation and reach. This makes short-form video a hybrid of media content, social interaction and algorithmic selection.

Customer engagement theory remains useful in this setting, but the review shows that media conditions matter greatly. Uses and gratifications helps explain why users approach short-form environments in search of entertainment, identity expression and social connection. Stimulus-organism-response logic explains how video cues become attention, affect and action. Social presence explains why humanized communication feels more relational and trustworthy. Short-form video is the setting where these perspectives become tightly integrated.

The paper also highlights the difference between engagement quantity and engagement quality. High views and likes may indicate attention, but they do not automatically imply stronger brand outcomes. A trend-based clip may be widely shared yet leave weak brand memory. By contrast, a more modestly performing video may be strategically valuable if it generates saves, useful comments, creator responses or strong recall among a target audience. This distinction is important because short-form dashboards often privilege visible metrics over meaningful brand contribution.

Authenticity emerges in the review as a relational perception rather than a crude visual style. Low production values alone do not guarantee authenticity, and polished content can still feel authentic if it retains social realism and coherent voice. What matters is whether the communication feels contextually appropriate, transparent and credible. This is especially important when brands adopt creator-like aesthetics. Superficial imitation can damage trust if audiences interpret it as forced or opportunistic.

The review also suggests that platform context cannot be ignored. TikTok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts share formal similarities, but they differ in norms, discovery logics and creator cultures. Content does not travel unchanged across these environments. Researchers should therefore avoid treating short-form video as a platform-neutral genre. Practitioners should avoid simple reposting without adaptation. Engagement is shaped by how well content fits the situated expectations of each platform.

Another important discussion point concerns organizational learning. Short-form video produces fast feedback about hooks, objections, humor, creator fit and audience interest. When interpreted carefully, those signals can improve segmentation, positioning and even product understanding. But rapid feedback can also create overreaction. Teams may chase isolated wins, mimic trends excessively or optimize for metrics that do not support long-term brand value. Theory therefore helps practice by giving managers a more disciplined way to read performance.

The broader implication is that short-form video rewards brands that understand communication as participation in culture rather than one-way transmission. Audiences encounter branded clips inside streams filled with creators, peers, trends, jokes and anxieties. Engagement emerges when the brand appears appropriately situated within that social flow while still carrying enough recognizable meaning to support memory and relationship development.

Implication to Research and Practice

For researchers, the paper suggests that short-form video deserves treatment as a distinct object of study rather than as a minor variant of generic social media content. Its brevity, sound dependence, remix ability and recommendation-driven distribution create engagement dynamics that differ from those of static posts or long-form video. Future studies should therefore build measures that connect platform-level metrics with cognitive and relational brand outcomes such as recall, trust, identification and advocacy.

Comparative work across platforms is also needed. TikTok, Reels and Shorts may look similar, but the review indicates that platform cultures and discovery logics differ in ways that affect engagement. Mixed-method work combining content analysis, behavioral data and audience interviews would be especially valuable for unpacking how authenticity, humor, social proof and creator fit operate in specific settings.

For practice, the findings suggest that brands should design short-form content around clear engagement pathways rather than isolated creative tricks. Some videos should prioritize recognition and distinctive memory cues. Others should stimulate conversation, product understanding or community participation. Clarity about the dominant objective helps managers choose appropriate hooks, presenters, story structures and success metrics.

Brands should think in terms of serial content systems. Repeating a recognizable format with enough variation helps audiences learn the brand's voice and reward pattern. This is more sustainable than depending on one-off viral moments. Distinctive assets such as tone, recurring characters, product rituals, consistent use situations or signature audio can help build memory without making content feel like conventional advertising.

Human presence should be used deliberately. Founder stories, employee explainers, creator collaborations and customer reactions often strengthen social presence and credibility when they feel believable. The objective is not to copy every trend but to choose participation styles that fit the brand and audience. Trend literacy matters, but trend dependence is risky. Overreliance on borrowed formats may increase attention temporarily while weakening distinctiveness.

Measurement should also be broadened. Views and likes are too narrow. Managers should evaluate completion rate, rewatch signals, saves, share quality, comment depth, follower conversion, branded search lift and downstream behavior. These indicators help distinguish shallow attention from richer engagement. They also support stronger integration between short-form activity and broader brand goals such as awareness, education, lead generation and loyalty.

Finally, organizations should build capability rather than treat short-form video as a one-off campaign tactic. Effective performance requires editorial rhythm, community management, creator partnerships, platform literacy and clear brand governance. Lighter approval systems with clear guardrails can help teams respond quickly without losing accountability.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper examined how short-form video marketing influences brand engagement by synthesizing scholarship published up to the end of 2022. The review showed that short-form video is best understood as a mobile, participatory and algorithmically amplified communication format that shapes cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement in distinctive ways. Its effects arise through rapid attention capture, entertainment-led processing, authenticity signaling, interactive participation, creator mediation and algorithmic circulation.

The analysis also showed that short-form video does not create strategic value automatically. It can generate visibility without memory and interaction without trust. Stronger outcomes occur when brands combine native platform communication with clear brand meaning, credible human presence and deliberate engagement design. Short-form video marketing is therefore neither just another ad unit nor purely organic expression. It is a hybrid engagement system that rewards relevance, recognizability and co-participation.

Future research should examine short-form video longitudinally so that micro-engagement events can be linked to longer-term brand outcomes such as memory, trust, advocacy and purchase. Experimental work should test how variables such as hook design, length, audio familiarity, brand prominence and human presence affect different forms of engagement. Category-specific work is also needed because the format may operate differently in utilitarian and hedonic categories, in high- and low-involvement decisions, and in B2B, health or financial contexts.

Cross-cultural research is equally important because humor norms, creator cultures, disclosure expectations and platform meanings differ across markets. More work is also needed on the risks of short-form video marketing, including fatigue, trend saturation, disclosure problems and algorithmic dependency. Finally, scholars should build stronger models linking visible engagement metrics to deeper brand outcomes. The core challenge is not only to explain how brands win attention in fast-scrolling environments, but how they convert that attention into meaningful and sustainable brand relationships.

REFERENCES

Anderson, K. E. (2020) Getting acquainted with social networks and apps: TikTok and Houseparty, Library Hi Tech News, 37(4), 7-12.

Ashley, C. and Tuten, T. (2015) Creative strategies in social media marketing: An exploratory study of branded social content and consumer engagement, Psychology and Marketing, 32(1), 15-27.

Audrezet, A., de Kerviler, G. and Moulard, J. G. (2020) Authenticity under threat: When social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation, Journal of Business Research, 117, 557-569.

Berger, J. and Milkman, K. L. (2012) What makes online content viral?, Journal of Marketing Research, 49(2), 192-205.

Bossen, C. B. and Kottasz, R. (2020) Uses and gratifications sought by pre-adolescent and adolescent TikTok consumers, Young Consumers, 21(4), 463-478.

Brodie, R. J., Hollebeek, L. D., Juric, B. and Ilic, A. (2011) Customer engagement: Conceptual domain, fundamental propositions, and implications for research, Journal of Service Research, 14(3), 252-271.

Brodie, R. J., Ilic, A., Juric, B. and Hollebeek, L. (2013) Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis, Journal of Business Research, 66(1), 105-114.

Calder, B. J., Malthouse, E. C. and Schaedel, U. (2009) An experimental study of the relationship between online engagement and advertising effectiveness, Journal of Interactive Marketing, 23(4), 321-331.

Cvijikj, I. P. and Michahelles, F. (2013) Online engagement factors on Facebook brand pages, Social Network Analysis and Mining, 3(4), 843-861.

de Vries, L., Gensler, S. and Leeflang, P. S. H. (2012) Popularity of brand posts on brand fan pages: An investigation of the effects of social media marketing, Journal of Interactive Marketing, 26(2), 83-91.

de Vries, L., Peluso, A. M., Romani, S., Leeflang, P. S. H. and Marcati, A. (2017) Explaining consumer brand-related activities on social media: An investigation of the different roles of self-expression and socializing motivations, Computers in Human Behavior, 75, 272-282.

Dessart, L., Veloutsou, C. and Morgan-Thomas, A. (2015) Consumer engagement in online brand communities: A social media perspective, Journal of Product and Brand Management, 24(1), 28-42.

Djafarova, E. and Trofimenko, O. (2019) Instafamous and social media influencer marketing, Marketing Intelligence and Planning, 37(5), 567-579.

Dolan, R., Conduit, J., Fahy, J. and Goodman, S. (2016) Social media engagement behaviour: A uses and gratifications perspective, Journal of Strategic Marketing, 24(3-4), 261-277.

Dwivedi, Y. K. et al. (2021) Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions, International Journal of Information Management, 59, 102168.

Freberg, K., Graham, K., McGaughey, K. and Freberg, L. A. (2011) Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality, Public Relations Review, 37(1), 90-92.

Hollebeek, L. D., Glynn, M. S. and Brodie, R. J. (2014) Consumer brand engagement in social media: Conceptualization, scale development and validation, Journal of Interactive Marketing, 28(2), 149-165.

Jaakkola, E. and Alexander, M. (2014) The role of customer engagement behavior in value co-creation: A service system perspective, Journal of Service Research, 17(3), 247-261.

Jaakonmaki, R., Muller, O. and vom Brocke, J. (2017) The impact of content, context, and creator on user engagement in social media marketing, Proceedings of the 50th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, 1152-1160.

Katz, E., Blumler, J. G. and Gurevitch, M. (1973) Uses and gratifications research, Public Opinion Quarterly, 37(4), 509-523.

Kaye, D. B. V., Chen, X. and Zeng, J. (2021) The co-evolution of two Chinese mobile short video apps: Parallel platformization of Douyin and TikTok, Mobile Media and Communication, 9(2), 229-253.

Keller, K. L. (2016) Unlocking the power of integrated marketing communications: How integrated is your IMC program?, Journal of Advertising, 45(3), 286-301.

Knoll, J. (2016) Advertising in social media: A review of empirical evidence, International Journal of Advertising, 35(2), 266-300.

Kumar, A., Bezawada, R., Rishika, R., Janakiraman, R. and Kannan, P. K. (2016) From social to sale: The effects of firm-generated content in social media on customer behavior, Journal of Marketing, 80(1), 7-25.

Li, F., Larimo, J. and Leonidou, L. C. (2021) Social media marketing strategy: Definition, conceptualization, taxonomy, validation, and future agenda, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 49(1), 51-70.

Lipsman, A., Mudd, G., Rich, M. and Bruich, S. (2012) The power of like: How brands reach and influence fans through social media marketing, Journal of Advertising Research, 52(1), 40-52.

Lou, C. and Yuan, S. (2019) Influencer marketing: How message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media, Journal of Interactive Advertising, 19(1), 58-73.

Malthouse, E. C., Haenlein, M., Skiera, B., Wege, E. and Zhang, M. (2013) Managing customer relationships in the social media era: Introducing the social CRM house, Journal of Interactive Marketing, 27(4), 270-280.

Mehrabian, A. and Russell, J. A. (1974) An Approach to Environmental Psychology, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

Muntinga, D. G., Moorman, M. and Smit, E. G. (2011) Introducing COBRAs: Exploring motivations for brand-related social media use, International Journal of Advertising, 30(1), 13-46.

Nelson-Field, K., Riebe, E. and Newstead, K. (2013) The emotions that drive viral video, Australasian Marketing Journal, 21(4), 205-211.

Omar, B. and Dequan, W. (2020) Watch, share or create: The influence of personality traits and user motivation on TikTok mobile video usage, International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies, 14(4), 121-137.

Pansari, A. and Kumar, V. (2017) Customer engagement: The construct, antecedents, and consequences, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 45(3), 294-311.

Pavlou, P. A. and Stewart, D. W. (2000) Measuring the effects and effectiveness of interactive advertising: A research agenda, Journal of Interactive Advertising, 1(1), 61-77.

Pentina, I., Guilloux, V. and Micu, A. C. (2018) Exploring social media engagement behaviors in the context of luxury brands, Journal of Advertising, 47(1), 55-69.

Sabate, F., Berbegal-Mirabent, J., Canabate, A. and Lebherz, P. R. (2014) Factors influencing popularity of branded content in Facebook fan pages, European Management Journal, 32(6), 1001-1011.

Schivinski, B., Christodoulides, G. and Dabrowski, D. (2016) Measuring consumers' engagement with brand-related social-media content: Development and validation of a scale that identifies levels of social-media engagement with brands, Journal of Advertising Research, 56(1), 64-80.

Short, J., Williams, E. and Christie, B. (1976) The Social Psychology of Telecommunications, Wiley, London.

Southgate, D., Westoby, N. and Page, G. (2010) Creative determinants of viral video viewing, International Journal of Advertising, 29(3), 349-368.

Stephen, A. T. (2016) The role of digital and social media marketing in consumer behavior, Current Opinion in Psychology, 10, 17-21.

Tafesse, W. (2015) Content strategies and audience response on Facebook brand pages, Marketing Intelligence and Planning, 33(6), 927-943.

Tafesse, W. and Wien, A. (2018) Implementing social media marketing strategically: An empirical assessment, Journal of Marketing Management, 34(9-10), 732-749.

Teixeira, T., Wedel, M. and Pieters, R. (2012) Emotion-induced engagement in internet video advertisements, Journal of Marketing Research, 49(2), 144-159.

Voorveld, H. A. M., van Noort, G., Muntinga, D. G. and Bronner, F. (2018) Engagement with social media and social media advertising: The differentiating role of platform type, Journal of Advertising, 47(1), 38-54.

Vernuccio, M. (2014) Communicating corporate brands through social media: An exploratory study, International Journal of Business Communication, 51(3), 211-233.

Vivek, S. D., Beatty, S. E. and Morgan, R. M. (2012) Customer engagement: Exploring customer relationships beyond purchase, Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 20(2), 122-146.