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TIKTOK AS AN EFFECTIVE PROMOTION TOOL FOR  
MUSIC FESTIVALS: A CASE STUDY ON DEICHBRAND

Dissertation to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to obtain  
a Master's Degree in Communication, Advertising and  
Marketing

By

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Universidade Católica Portuguesa  
Faculdade de Ciências Humanas

September, 2023



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Under the supervision of Professor Patrícia Dias

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## **Abstract**

This research investigates the effectiveness of TikTok as a promotional tool for music festivals among Generation Z, with an emphasis on the case study DEICHBRAND. The main research question - Is TikTok an effective promotional tool for music festivals? - was underlined by six sub research questions which are addressing TikTok's impact on festival awareness and attendance among Generation Z, as well as the platforms' role in impacting festival-related content. In addition, the research investigates the success of DEICHBRAND's partnership with TikTok and other brands, the impact of influencers and TikTok creators on the festival's promotion efforts, and DEICHBRAND's strategic promotion planning on TikTok for 2023. To answer the research questions, a qualitative approach was conducted with five expert interviews and a video content analysis from the DEICHBRAND festival TikTok account and from five influencers. The findings point out TikTok's central role in the festival promotion by presenting, for instance, the platform's distinctive qualities, such as its broad reach potential for Generation Z and engaging livestreaming choices but also DEICHBRAND's TikTok strategy.

Key Words: TikTok, Festival Promotion, Generation Z, Music, Social Media Marketing, DEICHBRAND

## **Abstract Portuguese**

A presente investigação analisa a eficácia do TikTok como ferramenta de promoção de festivais de música junto da Geração Z, com ênfase no caso de estudo DEICHBRAND. A principal questão de investigação - O TikTok é uma ferramenta promocional eficaz para os festivais de música? - foi sublinhada por seis subquestões de investigação que abordam o impacto do TikTok na sensibilização para o festival e na participação da Geração Z, bem como o papel da plataforma no impacto dos conteúdos relacionados com o festival. Além disso, a pesquisa investiga o sucesso da parceria da DEICHBRAND com o TikTok e outras marcas, o impacto dos influenciadores e criadores do TikTok nos esforços de promoção do festival e o planeamento estratégico de promoção da DEICHBRAND no TikTok para 2023. Para responder às questões de investigação, foi adotada uma abordagem qualitativa com cinco entrevistas a peritos e uma análise de conteúdo de vídeos da conta TikTok do festival DEICHBRAND e de cinco influenciadores. Os resultados apontam para o papel central do TikTok na promoção do festival, apresentando, por exemplo, as qualidades distintivas da plataforma, bem como o seu amplo potencial de alcance para a Geração Z, e o envolvimento conseguido com as opções de transmissão em direto.

Palavras chave: TikTok, Promoção de festivais, Geração Z, Música, Marketing nas redes sociais, DEICHBRAND

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## Table of Content

Introduction.....	1
1. How Social Media changed the Music Industry .....	5
1.1 Contextualization of the Music Industry .....	7
1.2 Streaming Platforms .....	10
1.3 TikTok .....	12
2. Generation Z, Social Media and Music .....	19
2.1 Characteristics and Motivations of Generation Z.....	21
2.2 The Usage of Social Media by Generation Z .....	25
2.3 How Generation Z Relates to Music .....	30
3. Social Media Marketing.....	35
3.1 Content Marketing.....	39
3.2 Influencer Marketing .....	44
3.3 Social Media Strategies for Music Festivals .....	51
4. Methodology .....	56
4.1 Research Goals and Questions .....	56
4.2 Case Study as Research Method.....	57
4.3 DEICHBRAND .....	59
4.4 Data Collection Techniques.....	61
4.4.1 Data Collection Techniques for Expert Interviews.....	61
4.4.2 Data Collection Techniques for Content Analysis.....	65
4.5 Data Sampling Techniques .....	67
4.5.1 Data Sampling Techniques for Expert Interviews .....	67
4.5.2 Data Sampling Techniques for Content Analysis .....	69
4.6 Data Analysis Techniques .....	70
4.6.1 Data Analysis Techniques for Expert Interviews.....	70
4.6.2 Data Analysis Techniques for Content Analysis.....	72
4.7 Ethics .....	77
5. Findings.....	79
5.1 Findings of Expert Interviews .....	79
5.2 Findings of Content Analysis .....	90
6. Discussion .....	97
Conclusion .....	112
Bibliography .....	115

Appendices.....	145
Appendix A Transcript of Interview 1: Adil Sbai .....	145
Appendix B Transcript of Interview 2: Manju (Influencer) .....	150
Appendix C Transcript of Interview 3: Jule Benja Heidisch (DEICHBRAND).....	157
Appendix D Transcript of Interview 4: Key Account Manager TikTok (Warner) .....	161
Appendix E Transcript of Interview 5: Teamlead Social Media Marketing & Communication (ALDI).....	166
Appendix F Informed Consent Form Participation in Research .....	173
Appendix G Label Analysis MaxQDA .....	175

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Weekly Follower Analysis of the DEICHBRAND Account. ....	91
Figure 2. Weekly Likes Analysis of the DEICHBRAND Account. ....	91
Figure 3. Results of the Category Video Themes. ....	94
Figure 4. Results of the Category Presenter.....	94

## List of Tables

Table 1. Correspondence between Research Questions, Topics for Interview Questions, and Literature/Explanation. ....	63
Table 2. Correspondence between Research Questions and Coding Analysis Themes. ....	71
Table 3. Correspondence between Research Questions, Categories, and Literature/Explanation. ..	73
Table 4. Video Content Analysis Category System.....	75
Table 5. Results of the Categories Interaction and Tone of Voice. ....	92
Table 6. Results of the Categories Interaction and Presenter. ....	92
Table 7. Results of the Categories Interaction and Video Themes.....	93
Table 8. Results of the Category Interaction in Influencer Analysis.....	95
Table 9. Results of Categories Interaction and Video Themes in Influencer Analysis. ....	96

## **Introduction**

In the rapidly evolving digital landscape of today, social media platforms have proven to be powerful tools for marketing and promotion strategies in various fields. That's why countless companies and brands have already expanded their social media presence to better connect and reach Generation Z (Sayyed & Gupta, 2020). Among all the social media platforms, TikTok has gained significant attention due to its unique ability to engage and connect with younger audiences. "The short video industry is on the rise and plays a mainstream role in the Internet industry" (Xu et al., 2019, p. 63). Also, music is an essential element on TikTok, not only underlining the platforms' content but also shaping the music scene. As Kinnunen et al. (2022) highlight, "contemporary live music venue network has been heavily influenced by active youth and their spontaneous live music culture" (p. 65). This generation has been more profoundly influenced by new music and concepts than any earlier generation, significantly influencing their usage patterns (Kinnunen et al., 2022).

Moreover, studies such as a Statista study from 2021 showed that at least 4.8 million Germans went to festivals or concerts yearly. A third of these participants are under the age of 30 (Statista, 2022a). With this background, the question arose: Is TikTok an effective promotional tool for music festivals?

The field of music festival promotion on TikTok remains largely unexplored in the scientific landscape. That's why the researcher was motivated to choose this specific topic. Furthermore, this information gap in knowledge underlines the importance of the research, which entered unexplored territory to identify untapped opportunities. The researcher's intention was to contribute to academia and create connections between festival promotion and social media strategies on TikTok. In addition, this research provides valuable insights and deepens the comprehension of effective promotional techniques in this dynamic industry by investigating the world of TikTok and its crucial role in social media marketing for festivals.

The purpose of this research was to explore the effectiveness of TikTok as a promotional tool for music festivals, with a particular focus on the case study of the DEICHBRAND festival. The researcher came up with the following goals to gain a thorough understanding of TikTok's position as a powerful marketing tool for music festivals:

- To determine whether TikTok content has contributed to increasing festival awareness among Generation Z;
- To determine whether TikTok content has contributed to increasing festival attendance among Generation Z;
- To examine the impact of festival-related content on Gen Z who did not attend and who attended, and assess whether TikTok content can drive interest and engagement from non-attendees and attendees;
- To analyze and explore the critical factors that influence the effectiveness of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok;
- To assess and understand the effects of integrating influencers and popular TikTok creators on the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional activities as well as to determine whether they can increase DEICHBRAND's promotional reach, raise awareness, and generate a larger audience to the festival;
- Investigate how the TikTok promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 is being planned, as well as identify the key trends and strategies that are likely to shape festival promotion in the future.

According to the mentioned goals, the researcher established the following research questions:

1. Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival awareness among Z Geners?<sup>1</sup>
2. Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival attendance by Z Geners?
3. What was the impact of festival-related content on Z Geners who did not attend and who attended the festival?

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this study, the terms 'Generation Z,' 'Z Geners,' and 'Gen Z' are used to refer to the generation of individuals who were born roughly between the mid-1990s and the mid-2010s. These terms are used similarly to refer to the same generation.

4. What are the critical factors shaping the success of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok?
5. How does the integration of influencers and popular TikTok creators impact the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional efforts?
6. How is the promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 being planned?

For achieving the goals as well as answering the research questions, the study put a focus on the case study of the DEICHBRAND festival. To explore this case study, qualitative methods were employed to support the research. The researcher conducted five expert interviews to gain an in-depth comprehension, but also various viewpoints and opinions in relation to topics such as TikTok as a promotional tool, Generation Z, and the usage of TikTok for music festivals. The other implemented method is a content analysis. For this, the analysis was divided into three different parts. For a general perspective, the researcher investigated DEICHBRANDs TikTok account weekly and analyzed if the follower and like numbers demonstrate an increase or decrease. Also, a video analysis of the account was applied to selected videos from the period of June and July in the years 2022 and 2023. The DEICHBRAND mostly takes place in July, which led to the selection of the specific samples in that time. The researcher analyzed 153 videos in total. The third part was an influencer video analysis, in which the researcher selected five influencer who actively promote the festival and examined three videos from each in the months of May, June, and July of 2023.

To provide clarity and an understanding direction, the present study is structured in the following way: To start with, an overview of important literature regarding the research topic is presented. First, the researcher addresses how social media changed the music industry by dividing the chapter into three sections, the contextualization of the music industry, streaming platforms, and TikTok in particular. The second chapter points out the fields Generation Z in relation with social media, and music. For this, characteristics and motivation of the target audience, their usage of social media, and how Generation Z relates to music are analyzed. Finally, the last chapter of the literature review is about social media marketing, in which content marketing, influencer marketing, and social media strategies for music festivals are explained.

For the methodology section, the investigation starts with the goals and states the research questions for the study. After that, the chosen method of the case study is explained, and some insights about DEICHBRAND are presented. Lastly, the methods for data collection, sampling, and data analysis are discussed. The researcher ends the section by emphasizing the importance of ethical considerations.

This research puts emphasis on TikTok's effectiveness as a promotion tool for music festivals, specifically among the target audience Generation Z through increasing festival awareness and involvement. The potential of the platform to foster relationships with festival attendees and non-attendees, unique and creative content approaches, and long-term partnerships with brands as well as influencers have been discovered as key elements for successful festival promotion on TikTok.

## **1. How Social Media changed the Music Industry**

The music industry has created major obstacles to enter the market, since three large businesses, Universal, Sony, and Warner Music, control most of the global music market (Guichardaz et al., 2019). However, the technological growth of music dissemination in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has presented challenges to the music industry. The music industry was among the first to confront the changes caused by media content digitalization and convergence. Music has become easier to access than ever due to modern technology (Lozic et al., 2022; Dolata, 2022). Platforms such as Spotify and Soundcloud provide users with free access without charging a fee. The traditional music approach was for artists to create music and let their labels advertise and disseminate songs to the audience. But with the rise of social media and digital technologies, not only the way artists and labels engage with their fans has changed significantly, but also, innovative approaches to release music emerged. Besides, artists are looking actively for creative and unique ways to market and promote themselves digitally (Stafford, 2010). Through social media platforms or an artist's website, fans can find out what an artist is up to in real time. It is generally known that artists no longer rely only on traditional gatekeepers such as radio or record labels to get their music out to the audience. According to this, Young and Collins (2010) highlight that “there is a widespread feeling that the major record labels are becoming redundant” (p. 340). The possibility to autonomously release music, publish previews of unreleased tracks, and even crowdsource feedback has given artists enormous creative control and freedom. The internet as a worldwide mass medium can impact all aspects of music production, distribution, and consumption (Amend, 2015). Regarding this, authors such as Young and Collins (2010) talk about Music 2.0, which explains

“a new media environment in which musicians are empowered to create and distribute with unprecedented ease. In short, the promise of 2.0 is that users (in the case of Music 2.0, musicians and audiences) do not need the same level of technical prowess to take advantage of the potential of the Internet” (p. 344).

Wikström (2020) highlights another significant change. The author compares the old and new music industry by pointing out that the goal of music labels in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was to have control and increase income while minimizing illegal use. This was intended because music has the power to restrict, guide, or restrain the flow of information. In the new music industry, it is practically impossible to control the spread of information and monitor fan use

of intellectual property. That's why it's known for aspects such as high connection and limited authority. Non-professionals can produce, remix, and share material online to greater audience network connectivity, diverse music creation tools, and other factors.

Because of the viral character of social media, several artists have become popular even before they have officially published anything. For example, YouTube has played a role in the rise of singers such as Justin Bieber. He was discovered through his YouTube videos (Zanatta, 2017). Also, "Some songs have been able to capture global attention via social media" (Aum et al., 2022, p. 775). Stafford (2010) talks about four distinct methods for exploring music digitally. Each one has enormous possibilities for artist promotion and long-term success.

- 1) Users can come across artists while casually exploring the internet through links as well as genre-based categories highlighting prominent artists;
- 2) The "stumble-upon" approach "which simply means you accidentally encounter an artist you like via the Internet and the sites you visit" (p. 116);
- 3) Peer-to-Peer technique allows individuals to share music recommendations gathered from others, expanding the network of music discoveries;
- 4) The rapid development of social media or networking platforms offers limitless chances "for sharing, blogging and promoting of favorite artists or bands to anyone and everyone on the Web" (p. 116).

In addition, Salo et al. (2013) highlight why consumers use social media for music consumption. They figure five motivations "1) access to content, 2) sense of affinity, 3) participation, 4) interaction, and 5) social identity" (p. 23).

One important name for accessing and discovering new music is the American Brand Billboard. Aum et al. (2022) state that "The *Billboard* chart is a clear barometer for measuring a song's success in the music industry. Therefore, a number of artists and affiliated marketers in the music industry have attempted to determine how to emerge at the top of the chart" (p. 775). The weekly Billboard charts such as Billboard Hot 100 and Billboard 200 can define trends, measure popularity, and give a platform for artists to draw attention to their work. Music fans can use the charts to find new songs.

In conclusion, as the music industry continues to expand, innovations in digital technology provide several difficulties as well as possibilities. The expansion of digital music distribution and convergence has altered how music is discovered and shared. It is critical to explore the contextual factors that have impacted the evolution of the music industry to comprehend its present situation and dynamics. The following subchapter will focus on the music industry's contextualization, examining the different effects and changes that emerged as an outcome of technological improvements, evolving consumer behaviors, impact of streaming platforms, and TikTok.

### **1.1 Contextualization of the Music Industry**

The contextualization will concentrate on the evolution of the music industry from Napster until today. While acknowledging the importance of past advances such as MP3, the focus will be on the more recent paradigm shifts that have occurred by developing digital platforms and their significance in defining the modern music scene.

With the launch of the remarkable pioneer, the MP3 player, in 1998, the actual rise in emerging technologies began. This invention inspired the establishment of online file sharing sites such as Napster as well as the introduction of free peer-to-peer music transfers (Stafford, 2010; Nowak & Whelan, 2014). Also, Young and Collins (2010) point out that with the rise of Napster, the broad adoption of online digital music distribution occurred and took place through both legal platforms and less controlled areas like peer-to-peer networks. It can be highlighted that these were the key points of the second phase of the shift in the music industry (1999-2003) in which free music file-sharing forums thrived on the internet, with Napster gaining prominence. This allowed people to easily access and download digital music, resulting in the music industry losing control over their product and the transformation process (Dolata, 2020). In conjunction with this trend, established formats including full-length albums began to relinquish their commercial supremacy. Music consumption has shifted to fewer units, such as singles, ringtones, as well as publicly accessible music videos (Young & Collins, 2010). Another crucial fact is that with the arrival of Napster in 1999, combined with the general acceptance of extensive file-sharing, an increase in concert attendance was expected (Mortimer et al., 2012). Nevertheless, “Because of its illegality, Napster would eventually be forced to remunerate the recording industry by the development and implementation of a pay structure. Before this, however, some 80

million users were found to have downloaded songs illegally” (Ogden et al., 2011, p. 124). Also, Lozic et al. (2022) state that “Napster was shut down in early 2000, but consumer habits have changed forever” (p. 78). Lastly, in 2001, Apple CEO Jobs launched the initial iPod, which functioned as Apple’s variant of the MP3 player. Apple rapidly established itself as the top online music vendor throughout time, acquiring enormous customer popularity (Knopper, 2009).

The third phase of changes in the music industry was from 2003 to 2013 and showed enormous development in the commercialization and distribution of downloaded music. This development was driven by a third party. In the year 2003, Apple debuted its iTunes Store in the United States, offering a large selection of music online from big record labels. Apple effectively demonstrated an integration of commercial downloads and hardware with the debut of the iPod music player (Dolata, 2020). The topic streaming platforms will be discussed in depth in the next subchapter. Nevertheless,

“The prospect of overcoming the long industry crisis was not in sight until the *fourth phase (since 2013)*, which is characterized by the rapid upturn in commercial music streaming and the associated transition from purchasing music to paid access to music” (Dolata, 2020, p. 6).

With the launch of the smartphone users are no longer needed to observe or engage with one device at a time. The important turning point in mobile technology was the introduction of the first iPhone in 2007 (Zwilling, 2022). It makes it possible to use all media formats virtually at the same time (Turner, 2015). Regarding this, “The use of mobile phones has become increasingly important to the ‘extended’ festival experience” (Danielsen and Kjus, 2019, p. 718). One factor is that the traditional concept of live performances has transformed. The incorporation of digital technology provides the audience with many opportunities to actively engage in live performances. Furthermore, because of technological improvements, the concept of live music has broadened significantly, covering different formats in which performers and audiences are not bound by physical space or time constraints. As a result, festival attendees now have more power in shaping the presentation of live events (Jones & Bennett, 2015).

One of the first digital platforms that became famous was My Space. According to Billboard, the platform gained an outstanding number of 240 000 profiles from amateur and

experienced artists during the year 2005. Nevertheless, they all had the same goal of promoting their music. MySpace provided a forum for artists to showcase their music, embed YouTube music videos, present photographs, and announce future performances. MySpace and YouTube served as pioneering platforms that introduced a new era of active engagement and participation in worldwide communication. After that, Facebook and Twitter emerged as key participants in the global social media landscape, and music practitioners embraced them as extra channels for connecting and promotional activities (Mios, 2013).

The rise of streaming platforms and online music stores has lowered the financial obstacles to music sales and distribution. It has provided musicians the capability to independently market and sell their music on a global basis while retaining their copyrights. In addition, the use of social media platforms, blogs, web pages, as well as videos enables musicians to engage effectively with their audience. This link is intended to encourage fans to actively support the artists' creative activities by contributing to projects such as purchasing merchandise or visiting live performances (Thomson, 2013). It indicates that the fundamental phase of music marketing occurs at the interpersonal level where an artist and the audience interact through music. The connection therefore serves as the foundation for promotional activities at this level. Self-expression and being part of a community are critical themes when creating and characterizing music marketing (Ogden et al., 2011).

In conclusion, the introduction of online file sharing platforms such as Napster, and the rise of digital music distribution through legal platforms and peer-to-peer networks have all placed an adjustment in the traditional music industry model. The development of platforms such as MySpace, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter have transformed the way musicians communicate and promote their music. Furthermore, the arrival of streaming platforms and online music stores has changed music distribution and sales, allowing musicians to distribute their music independently while maintaining ownership of their copyrights.

## 1.2 Streaming Platforms

Streaming platforms became a game-changer for artists, giving them the opportunity to release their new music independently. According to Hagen (2021), the rise of streaming platforms in the music industry has resulted in the establishment of a new "digital divide" (p. 197). The author states "It becomes clear that digital data play a significant part in shaping music-industry practices and that datafication informs the music itself, and the culture it lives in." (p. 197).

Interactive streaming platforms like Spotify distinguish themselves by providing customers with access to large music collections, allowing them to retrieve preferred content at any moment from wherever they are (Maasø, 2018). Individual profiles have been highlighted as valuable tools that can be used to document users' unique music choices and emotions, considering various hours of the day and diverse settings. Spotify's immense playlists are recognized for their major impact on users' music selection, listening habits, and even the exposure of musicians consequently influencing music companies' overall revenue. In addition, streaming services such as Spotify generally strive to convert free users into paid premium subscribers by providing an ad-free listening experience (Dolata, 2020). Also, Hagen (2021) highlights the fact when talking about Spotify that:

"More and more actors are attempting to exploit this artist-audience relationship in the digital age, through access, analysis, evaluation, and creation, with the achievement of strategic and economic success as the goal, and new literacies, currencies, elites, rules, and relationships as the result" (p. 197).

By 2019, streaming services accounted for more than half of music companies' global income, while downloads generated 7%, and tangible audio media accounted for slightly more than 20% (Dolata, 2020). Moreover, Behal (2022) talks about streaming revenues and points out that the average payment an artist receives per stream on certain well-known music streaming services comes to around \$0.004. It's crucial to keep in mind that not all the money gets to the musicians themselves. The owners of the music rights receive a sizeable percentage of these earnings.

YouTube intended to eliminate the technological barriers that individuals without technical knowledge faced when they wanted to publish videos online. The platform features a user-

friendly interface that allows users easily to post, share, as well as stream videos. A large video library gives consumers access to an infinite amount of material (Burgess & Green, 2018). With over 2 billion subscribers, YouTube is the biggest online video platform (Duffett, 2020). It was the first platform to launch live video streaming in 2011, creating a pattern for many to follow. Today, YouTube is an example of a hybrid commercial surrounding, seamlessly blending user-generated content production with smart monetization tactics (Arthurs et al., 2018).

TikTok has established a new opportunity for artists to gain visibility and reach a new audience. The platform developed itself as a marketing tool through the usage of songs for lip-synching and choreographies. Jorgenson (2022) highlights “With ‘Entertainment’ and ‘Dance’ as the two most popular content categories on the app, music is the backbone of almost every single TikTok video that is made” (p. 25). Therefore, music has a significant impact on the feeling and parameters of #challenges on the platform. Jain and Arakkal (2022) state that because of all the famous moves shown across the app, music is an essential element. TikTok is a stimulating new entry option not only for artists to share unique music or audio but also, they can achieve a fast viral recognition because of the For You Page (Jorgenson, 2022). The music integration allows users to take audio snippets from videos and integrate them into their own material, expanding the creative potential (Bereznak, 2019). On the other hand, Arantxa et al. (2023) define users on TikTok as sort of proactive prosumer or “music curator” who relies on participation rather than creation (p. 160). The authors also point out that users preferred video recommendations from TikTok or YouTube, instead of overspending time creating playlists or tracking artists and bands. This is an instance of a developing movement where algorithms play an important part in directing users' musical preferences, fulfilling their need to consume, produce, and publish music videos.

Regarding festivals, nowadays, everyone can follow live concerts digitally due to web-based apps and other video-streaming services since the line separating live and mediated performances has been blurred by technological advancements (Charron, 2017). Regarding this, Danielsen and Kjus (2019) say that “the audience’s festival-related activities on streaming platforms and in social media illustrate the ways in which a live event now extends far beyond the here and now of the actual concert or festival venue” (p. 731). Withing this,

Danielsen and Kjus (2019) state festivals are turning into a “virtual realm” (p. 717). The research by Massø (2018) addresses how big music events affect streaming habits. In a broader sense, the author investigates “the ways in which events planned by a label, a festival, or an editorial team at a streaming service can become ‘top of the mind’ for many users and inform the choices being made by other people streaming music at the same time” (p. 169). In a Statista survey conducted in 2021, German festival and concert attendees were asked about their usage of commercial music platforms for streaming, downloading, and purchasing. Approximately 59,7% of respondents would have utilized music streaming services such as Spotify (Statista, 2022c). When imagining the future of festivals, Robertson and Brown (2014) took a practical and functional approach. They acknowledged that technology and social media were transforming the festival experience as well as its management. They indicate, nevertheless, that despite the convergence of operations and community, the importance of design, leadership, and safety in terms of professionalism will remain equally important as it was then.

In a nutshell, this chapter explored the impact of streaming services on the music industry, with a particular focus on Spotify as a prominent actor. Streaming services have transformed the music industry by allowing artists to distribute songs independently. The rise of streaming platforms has produced a digital divide, changing music business practices and culture through datafication. Spotify, for example, provides users with access to large music collections as well as personalized profiles, affecting their music preferences and behaviors. Streaming services such as Spotify have emerged as the primary source of revenue for the music industry, with the goal of converting free users into paid customers. Furthermore, the distinction between live and mediated performances is shrinking as technology advances, allowing audiences to enjoy festivals digitally through streaming services and social media. Lastly, TikTok has grown as an effective marketing tool. The platform fosters user interaction and allows for viral recognition, while also boosting creative potential through audio integration.

### **1.3 TikTok**

TikTok introduced an innovative format to the social media landscape, including a new way of usage, a new motivation, and a new audience to be engaged with. “Since its launch in 2018, TikTok has become one of the fastest growing social media applications in the world,

being particularly popular among young people” (Zeng et al., 2020, p. 3216). The app is fundamentally a mobile-only application that emphasizes entertaining content that is simple to obtain and watch (Sbai, 2021). It is known for its fast-moving, vertical, and creative videos that can be uploaded in a length from 15 seconds to 3 minutes and are mostly accompanied by music. Also, users are given the ability to produce content in almost real time by minimizing the technical and time effort required for video production since recorded videos can be edited in a user-friendly way, and published in the app. The mission of this leading platform for mobile short videos is to “to inspire creativity and bring joy” (TikTok, n.d.). It can be said that on any other platform, consuming content and promoting its creation is not as significant as on TikTok (Hoang, 2022). Especially with the help of the TikTok algorithm, users can simply gain a high reach (Sbai, 2021).

To give a glimpse into TikTok’s history:

“TikTok (in Chinese: DouYin; formerly known as musical.ly) currently represents one of the most successful Chinese social media applications in the world. Since its founding in September 2016, TikTok has seen widespread distribution, in particular, attracting young users to engage in viewing, creating, and commenting on “LipSync-Videos” on the app” (Montag et al., 2021, para. 1).

Since the sister app Douyin was released for download in China in 2016 and TikTok was launched for the rest of the world in 2017, the special features of the platform have become a manifest part of communication research (Omar & Dequan, 2020).

The platform combines the benefits of product positioning with differentiation strategies in a unique way (Chen, 2017). That’s why it is crucial to understand TikTok since it has become the trend medium for Generation Z (in this investigation, those born between 1995-2012 are considered). This is also recognized among brands and businesses, who are increasingly embracing the medium to position themselves to potential customers (Helm, 2021). In addition, Grome (2022) states “While TikTok is mainly used as a fun application to show trends, it is just as powerful as a marketing tool. Beyond showing off your cool dance moves, you can share helpful life hacks, tips, tricks, tutorials and more” (para 8.). With TikTok, brand managers are modifying their marketing tactics and attempting to mask their advertising purposes with appropriate measures. A possible strategy to hide obvious advertising is Brand Entertainment which is defined as the production of captivating and pleasurable content that is specifically targeted to a brand or its products. This content is

intended to be so appealing and engaging that customers would actively seek it out and interact with it. Furthermore, the content efficiently delivers the intended message about the brand or product (Duttenhöfer, 2006). As a result of TikTok's popularity, it can be noted that the platform has evolved to be significant for marketing and brands-

The main way that TikTok differentiates itself from other social media platforms is by prioritizing creativity instead of communication (Hoang, 2022). The platform offers a diverse range of content that encompasses various aspects of life, offering users a unique experience with each video. For instance, humorous content brings joy and entertainment to users, who are inspired to create and share similar content that spreads positivity. Educational content, such as cooking tutorials, can be applied to their daily routines (Jia, 2017). In addition, Zhi (2018) identifies three unique characteristics that distinguish TikTok from other apps. First, it prioritizes music on its platform and provides a wide range of background music to appeal to a younger audience. Second, it makes use of big data analysis to recognize user preferences and suggest tailored content. Lastly, the limitation on video production takes advantage of users' fragmented time and adjusts to the rapid speed of modern living.

Omar and Dequan (2020) state that TikTok and Instagram have the most features in common because they both let users access short videos. Stellmach (2020) claims that Instagram encourages users to create flawless posts that don't reflect reality. TikTok videos, on the other side, should be considerably more insightful and amusing than most Instagram posts. This is because branding and storytelling are crucial components of TikTok content creation. When branding and storytelling are well performed, a post is welcomed by the TikTok community, which strengthens the platform's algorithm. The algorithm and some of its functionalities essentially differentiate TikTok from other social media platforms (Hesse et. al., 2019). It is largely used to determine users who will be more probable to interact with the video. TikTok selects which videos to present on every user's For You Page, according to their previous usage patterns. Customers spend a long time watching a particular TikTok video because of the high degree of tailored content, which raises the probability that the video will go viral (Doyle, 2020). A video's repeated views or early exit influence what's shown on the FYP. It can be said that each user's algorithm is unique and evolves because of their interactions in the app. Likes and comments are considered as the most fundamental

interaction (Hoang, 2022). Moreover, Wei (2020) compares TikTok's algorithm to the sorting hat from Harry Potter. He states “TikTok’s algorithm is the Sorting Hat from the Harry Potter universe. Just as that magical hat sorts students at Hogwarts into the Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, and Slytherin houses, TikTok’s algorithm sorts its users into dozens and dozens of subcultures (para. 30).

As an explanation for the high success of TikTok, Xu et al. (2017) state the platform “has a variety of effective marketing strategies, precise algorithm technology and meets the needs of users” (p. 62). The extraordinary growth can be measured in tangible numbers. A Statista study showed that TikTok was the most downloaded platform worldwide in 2022 with 755 million downloads and in 2025, the number of TikTok users is expected to exceed around 955.3 million (Statista, 2022b).

TikTok should be considered a product, business model, and professional working tool, not only an app and platform (Kaye et al., 2022). Regarding this, the importance of authenticity in brand communication must be noted. Authenticity challenges brand managers to minimize their visible marketing methods and instead incorporate their companies into communities (Beverland, 2005). The author points out that “brands should become members of communities and appeal to more timeless values, while also delivering to members' needs” (Beverland, 2005, p. 460). TikTok is a crucial platform for advertising and one of the integrated marketing tools for connecting with potential consumers and customers for businesses, particularly if the target audience includes individuals of Generation Z (Hoang, 2022). TikTok Global Creation Strategist Anderson (2022) highlights some results from the TikTok Marketing Global Community and Self-Expression study that are important for cooperating with TikTok: 79% of users believe that TikTok is a platform for brands to express themselves and show personality, 69% of TikTok users claim to feel a stronger connection to brands who use the app. Compared to other platforms, 73% of users think they have a closer relationship with the brands they engage with on TikTok.

The platform brings new opportunities for businesses to get in touch with the target audience. TikTok says “we're excited to introduce TikTok for Business, our global brand, and platform that is home to all current and future marketing solutions for brands” (Puris, 2023, para. 3). With the use of TikTok for Business, companies can cooperate with TikTok on strategies

for promoting their brands. To engage with the relevant target audience and convey unique stories, they are creating a suitable strategy together to reach the company's goals. With alternatives like Creator Marketplace, companies can discover the ideal match for brand collaborations (TikTok for Business, 2023). They can gain “view real-time metrics, get insights” into followers, and “adding information about your business” (TikTok for Business, 2020, para. 4). The analytics tool gathers key information on the growth rate and audience insights, including the gender distribution, the geographic regions from which they access the videos, and user behavior. It will also display the days of the week and hours of the day that have the most remarkably increased (Hoang, 2022).

Next to effects, sounds, or an integrated hashtag challenge where brands can create communication with the audience by motivating them to participate in the challenge, there are some other special features that companies can integrate into their communication on TikTok. For instance, Live performance. Starting a live stream allows content producers to interact with their audience in real time. But to set up a live stream the account must have a minimum of at least 1,000 followers. Nevertheless, it gives a chance to connect with their target audience and expand their community (Hoang, 2022). Another feature is the Effect House Branded Effects. The goal for this feature is “To further empower innovative storytelling and expand creative possibilities for brands on TikTok” (TikTok, 2023b, para. 2). Custom impacts promoted by brands are known as branded effects. Various campaign requirements can be significantly personalized with branded materials and incorporate elements such as calls-to-action and specialized audience targeting. A collaboration with creators for branded effects is favored (TikTok, 2023b). The platform states that with the launch of this feature “we've seen our global community of effect creators bring their creativity to life in so many ways. Effects created for TikTok drive culture, shape trends, powerful storytelling, and inspire creative expression” (TikTok, 2023b, para. 5).

TikTok is categorized as user-generated media (UGC). In other words, users are fundamental to the platform with their (inter)actions, such as uploading, commenting, liking, and sharing content (Omar & Dequan, 2020). Moreover, the Big Five personality traits that fit the usage of TikTok users were explored. These traits are openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Gretzel et al., 2008, cited in Omar & Dequan, 2020). The traits are all directly correlated with generating, engaging,

and consuming behavior on TikTok, excluding agreeableness, which was solely associated with consuming behavior (Omar & Dequan, 2020). Another approach for characterizing the usage of TikTok users is the Uses and Gratification theory. According to Wimmer and Dominick (1994), the origins of the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) approach have been traced back to the 1940s, when researchers were attentive in understanding the motivations for audience involvement with different media types, such as radio listening or newspaper reading. “The approach simply represents an attempt to explain something of the way in which individuals use communications, among other resources in their environment, to satisfy their needs and to achieve their goals, and to do so by simply asking them” (Katz et al., 1973, p. 510). The theory relies on five fundamental presumptions:

1. Media consumption is motivated by specific objectives or goals,
2. Audiences take an active role and are involved in the media they choose,
3. Media competes with alternative sources to fulfill consumer’s needs,
4. Individuals are conscious of their motives to engage with media,
5. The audience determines the evaluation of media information and the gratification derived from media usage (Katz et al., 1973).

Research by Falgoust et al. (2022) investigates how the U&G theory is a helpful framework for understanding why students participate in TikTok challenges. Their motivations were “entertainment, convenience, socialization, seeking or spreading information, social support, and escapism” but also “virality or fame, self- presentation, preserving a memory of a time or place, and representation” (Falgoust et al., 2022, p.12).

TikTok collaborates with festivals such as the Cannes Film Festival 2023. With their #TikTokShortFilm contest, creators could participate through an official document and publish their personal short videos using the hashtag for the community (TikTok, 2023a). Another cooperation involved the Parookaville 2022 festival, with TikTok broadcasting a daily live stream for seven hours. Sets by some of the most well-known DJs in the world were presented, along with behind-the-scenes from the festival (Thiel, 2022).

TikTok provides companies with a unique opportunity to raise their brand awareness. The value of TikTok marketing for a company, however, also depends on its target market. Because some age groups are poorly represented, some businesses may not find it beneficial

to build a TikTok campaign (Hoang, 2022). In addition, TikTok points out an outlook for 2023: “Based on global research studies, we predict that three macro trend forces will shape TikTok in 2023: actionable entertainment, making space for joy, and community-built ideal” (TikTok for Business, 2023, para. 7).

In conclusion, social media has become one of the fastest-growing social media platforms, particularly among the young target audience. With a focus on entertainment, creative content, and storytelling, TikTok distinguishes itself from other social media platforms. In the last few years, TikTok has become more popular among brands to reach potential customers. It can be said that with the emergence of Generation Z as the most dominant consumer group, brands need to understand their preferences and how they engage with music.

## 2. Generation Z, Social Media and Music

*“Gen Z are content collaborators, music streamers and media consumers to a degree that is unmatched by generations who have gone before”* (Madden, 2019, p. 37).

The concept of generation is “one of the indispensable guides to an understanding of the structure of social and intellectual movements” (Mannheim, 1952, p. 163). Generations are a sociological phenomenon that is fundamentally established on the “biological rhythm of birth and death” (Mannheim, 1952, p. 168). Furthermore, they are organized by two fundamental factors: a shared historical location, such as shared events and experiences, and a knowledge of that historical location (Mannheim, 1952).

According to Cole and Durham (2017), generations play a significant role in sociological analysis because they provide an effective perspective for examining the evolution of individuals' identities in both the private and public fields. According to Strauss and Howe (1991), generations are formed up of individuals who were born during a particular period of 20 years. These people have similar experiences of existing in the same historical time and space, which affects their collective identity and gives rise to a distinct group character. Madden (2019) states “Generations are influenced by social changes, technology, demography, world events, politics and rhetoric of their time” (p. 4). The author explains that today’s society consists of six generations: “Builders (born pre-1945), Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964), Generation X (born 1965-1979), Generation Y- The Millennials (born 1980-1994), Generation Z- The Post-Millennials (born 1995-2009), Generation Alpha (born 2010-2024)” (p. 11). For other authors, Generation Z was born around 1995- 2012 and raised in the 2000s during the most significant developments of the century (Schulz & Klär, 2022; Vapaux, 2021; Khatri & Dixit, 2016). Kotler et al., (2021) state Generation Z was born between 1997-2009. Therefore, it is challenging to determine the exact year of birth of this generation and can be an argument against using the concept of generation.

Other limitations of the concept of generation are presented by Mannheim (1952). First, he points out that when it comes to identifying generations, German research excludes the achievements of other countries. He states “To obtain a clear idea of the basic structure of the phenomenon of generations, we must clarify the specific interrelations of the individuals

comprising a single generation unit (p. 164). He highlights that in society are several individuals with different viewpoints, values, and experiences. Therefore Mannheim (1952) argues “Were it not for the existence of social interaction between human beings were there no definable social structure, no history based on a particular sort of continuity, the generation would not exist as a social location phenomenon” (p. 168). Nevertheless, Pichler (1994) says “ Many contributors to generational analysis have pointed out that the way in which Mannheim and others have used 'generation' is really in the sense of 'cohort' and that this would be a more accurate term to employ” (p. 483). Rosow (1978) defines a cohort as “an abstraction of compelling social forces that affect development and warrant wise use in its analysis” (p. 74).

In summary, implementing generation theory, with an emphasis on Generation Z, aids in comprehending the target audience's unique and distinctive characteristics, preferences, as well as gaining valuable insights for the research. It allows to measure the impact of age dynamics on festival attendance and analyze the cultural influences that determine their preferences. Finally, enabling the theory supports the development of more targeted and effective approaches for promoting music festivals on TikTok.

Generation Z is the first truly global generation (Schulz & Klär, 2022). The authors state “The generation only knows the one world with constant access to (digital) information and solutions” (Schulz & Klär, 2022, p. 5). Gen Z has more terminology than any other generation, including iGeneration, Online Generation, Post Millennials, Facebook Generation, Digital Natives, and Net Gen (Dolot, 2018; Schulz & Klär, 2022; Turner, 2015). They also represent 10% of the German population, and with a gross income of almost 20% in 2025, it will be the strongest buyer generation in Germany (Schulz & Klär, 2022). Also, Kotler et al. (2021) state “By 2025, they will make up most of the workforce and thus become the most significant market for products and services” (p. 26).

Concerning significant global events, Generation Z has witnessed the emergence of social media and the COVID-19 pandemic, which have shaped their worldview, values, and collective consciousness (Sakdiyakorn et al., 2021). Other researchers have identified sociocultural experiences that have had a notable impact on Generation Z, including the financial crisis of 2008, the extending income inequality, the emergence of the platform

economy, and the greater visibility and acceptance of the LGBTQ (Francis & Hoefel, 2018; Turner, 2015; Westenberg, 2016). Generation Z is the most diverse generation yet, with greater ethnic and racial diversity than previous generations (Pichler et al., 2021). However, they represent both a potential source of optimism and a challenge. Therefore, it is essential not only for companies but also for parents, teachers, and others to comprehend their attitudes and behaviors to effectively engage and influence this generation (Scholz, 2014).

The following chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the main target audience of TikTok, Generation Z. It will explore their unique characteristics, including their mindset, motivations, and values, as well as their usage of social media platforms, particularly TikTok, and lastly their relationship with music. By analyzing these factors, the aim is to identify the target audience of this research and gain insights into this generation's needs and preferences. As Generation Z currently holds the position of the largest generation in the world, it is crucial to comprehend their unique worldview and be prepared to serve their demands in the consumer market (Tram, 2022).

## **2.1 Characteristics and Motivations of Generation Z**

Generation Z is the first generation who experienced a childhood with significant differences from the previous ones. They are true digital natives, growing up with the internet, social networks, and mobile devices from the beginning (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). Although Generation Y was the first generation to use social media and apps like Facebook, Spotify, and Netflix, they are no longer the intended market for the newest technological developments. As Generation Z encounters mobile devices at an early age, digital technologies are used as a matter of course, both professionally and privately. They take digital technologies for granted (Lorenz, 2019). In Germany, smartphones dominate the device ownership landscape among Generation Z. 96% of those aged between 12 to 19 own a smartphone (Feierabend et al., 2022). This demonstrates that the notable habit of Generation Z using social media platforms regularly is a sign of the technical proficiency that will set the following generation apart (PrakashYadav & Rai, 2017; Vo, 2019; PwC, 2020).

Generation Z deals with quick, current, and real time information that features multimedia content such as photos and videos. Given the massive and overwhelming volume of

information, only the truly captivating information has a chance of being retained (Lorenz, 2019). According to Rothman (2016), the human brain exhibits the capacity to react and adjust to its surroundings. As a result of this adaptive ability, the structural composition of Generation Z brains varies from those of others. Regarding their exposure to sophisticated visual imagery, the region of their brain associated with visual aptitude has expanded, causing them to become more open to visual learning. This increased sensitivity is contrasted with a diminished attention span, implying that they experience boredom more readily and with greater frequency. Such characteristics underline why Gen Z is known for having a short attention span (Rothman, 2016). The author indicates that “In the classroom, the average student’s attention span is seven to ten minutes; but online, it is now eight seconds” (Rothman, 2016, p. 3). The result is that communications should be developed for them using the ‘less is more’ philosophy (Töröcsik, Szűcs & Kehl, 2014).

Generation Z utilizes vocabulary and expressions that others might not use. Regarding this, Hajare (2023) states that “This generation is using a specific language generally known as ‘Slang’ language. Use of slang words turning very popular as it is extensively used in all social media platforms, mobile conversations, and all major online communications” (p. 739). Nonetheless, despite their distinct language tendencies, this generation is living in a globalized world, and they must establish their lives in a world they perceive as being in crisis and filled with global and local uncertainties which include for instance three facts presented by Schulz and Klär (2022):

1. Societal division is becoming more frequent;
2. Intensification of violence, whether it is in the realm of crime or during significant events, for instance;
3. Anxiety about COVID-19's potential health consequences and the pandemic's personal, social, and economic impacts.

Mihelich (2013) states that Gen Z has concerns about environmental problems, expressing a strong feeling of responsibility for the resources of the surroundings. Also, Kotler et al. (2021) point out that Generation Z is “much more concerned about social change and environmental sustainability” (p. 26). Some examples of inspiration and motivation are firstly Greta Thunberg, an activist from Generation Z. In 2019, Time magazine announced her as the person of the year, recognizing the efforts of a global movement calling for

stronger activities against climate change (Alter et al., 2019). Secondly, Malala Yousafzai, who won the Nobel Peace Prize at 17 years old, revering for being able to effect important social change while being so young (Rue, 2018). This leads to increasing political interest and participation of the young generation. Protest movements such as ‘Fridays for Future’ or ‘Black Lives Matter’ prove this assumption (Helm, 2021). In addition, Tyson et al. (2021) state that in comparison to older generations, both Gen Z and Millennials are having more conversations about the importance of acting on climate change. They also reported seeing more climate change content on social media platforms. Furthermore, Gen Z takes an active position in the topic through actions such as volunteering and attending demonstrations. The study by Tyson et al. (2021) also showed that “Among social media users, nearly seven-in-ten Gen Zers (69%) say they felt anxious about the future the most recent time they saw content about addressing climate change” (p. 7). From a critical standpoint, Fromm and Read (2018) point out that Generation Z is less likely to express their personal views on the environment. Djafarova and Foots (2022) indicate that Generation Z is hesitant about posting and might consider twice before giving an opinion on social media. Regarding sustainable consumption behavior, research showed that due to financial constraints, the young people of Generation Z can be hindered from transforming their thoughts and goals towards the purchase of sustainable goods into reality (Dragolea et al., 2023).

Generation Z strives for efficiency in planning daily life, with health and fitness as central elements (Schulz & Klär, 2022). In addition, increased freedom of expression and a stronger willingness to comprehend various types of individuals result from its desire for authenticity. They view the self as a space for experimentation, evaluation, and transformation since their purpose is self-realization (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). Also, a recent study developed by TikTok justified that the two most prominent factors that contribute to the quality of life for Gen Z in Germany are health and self-determination. 93% of respondents consider these aspects to be significant or very significant. Family stability and financial freedom were also ranked as significant or very significant by 87% of the sample (TikTok, 2022a).

In comparison to previous generations, Gen Z is often more “down-to-earth, realistic and pragmatic” (Lorenz, 2019, p. 107). They aim to have the maximum freedom as well as a large percentage of leisure time, living up to their life motto ‘You only live once’ (YOLO). This can result in resistance to outdated structures, laws, and perspectives (Lorenz, 2019).

However, checklists and push notifications assist them in feeling safe, staying focused, and ensuring that crucial tasks are completed (Schulz & Klär, 2022). It can be said that young people nowadays feel more under pressure to enhance their biographies. Their expectations and fear of failure rise in response to this pressure but also the seemingly endless possibilities (Lorenz, 2019). On the other hand, many individuals in Gen Z see work as a flexible, results-oriented act of self-realization rather than a duty to ensure their survival (Lorenz, 2019). Scholz (2014) argues that young people do not clearly distinguish between their personal and professional lives and are therefore more employable. Regarding this statement, the author comes up with a chain of argumentation describing 5 elements: “(1) high motivation, (2) high technological competence, which results in (3) spatial independence and (4) a fluid combination of professional and private life, which ultimately pays off for companies in (5) increased flexibility and better corporate success” (Scholz, 2014, pp. 20-21). Lastly, Gen Z is skilled at giving constructive criticism and fearlessly expressing their ideas. In consequence, they desire a robust and positive feedback culture (Lorenz, 2019).

Moreover, working circumstances are unavoidably altering because of the digitalization transformation of industry. The worldwide, digital network already provided new freedoms in terms of the location and hours of employment. That’s one of the reasons why Gen Z doesn’t see classic office employee jobs as relevant anymore. Along with this, the demands on work and life seem to be changing and subjects such as flexibility and work-life balance move to the center of attention (Lorenz, 2019). Regarding this, Dolot (2018) explains that Generation Z desires to reach an outstanding career path without putting in a lot of effort. They seek career prospects across the world, exploiting their mobility and foreign language competence. That’s why Gen Z tends to frequently change jobs since they prefer variety and avoid monotony in their professions (Dolot, 2018).

Generation Z aspires to guidance, security, and stability. That’s why a strong stable social environment that provides these factors is necessary (Schulz & Klär, 2022). Nevertheless, the youth of today accept very few adults as role models. Young individuals from their generation who have already achieved a certain status, or who are at least well-known, are the most reliable to trust (Töröcsik, Szűcs & Kehl, 2014). Generation Z's trust on young people who have gained social standing and prominence among its own generation is closely linked to the use of social media, which has evolved into a space where young

individuals are able to emerge as relevant personalities, connect with followers, and even become influencers themselves. In this context, the following subchapter will investigate Gen Z's usage of social media.

## **2.2 The Usage of Social Media by Generation Z**

The emergence of social media has led overall expansion of media usage, particularly among Generation Z. Regardless of the form of media content, such as video, audio, or text, the internet is the primary catalyst for consumption. Since Generation Z is also known as the Mobile Generation, they consume all the media online and the usage of multiple platforms is a normality (Egger et al., 2021). Nonetheless, when it comes to traditional media usage, the JIM Study 2022 highlighted that at least a minimum of several times weekly, 14% of 12- to 19-year-olds read printed newspapers (online: 13%) or magazines (only 11%) (Feierabend et al., 2022). The number of TVs that are connectable to the Internet has increased (2022: 81%, 2021: 69%). In addition, the study investigated the reasons for radio consumption and results showed that the most inspiration is significantly enjoying music (82%) (Feierabend et al., 2022).

“Media use is not only an age issue, but also a generational one” (Egger et al., 2021, p. 270). The use of nonlinear audio and video increases with the different population ages. For instance, the media use of those who were born in 2000 and later is more frequently compared to others (Egger et al., 2021). This demonstrates that when it comes to media consumption, no public or private television channel can match the emotional group cohesion of the video platforms, which they primarily use to consume moving images (Egger et al., 2021). The most popular platforms are Netflix and YouTube. German adolescents state that they watch around 137 minutes of TV on a normal day (Feierabend et al., 2022).

“Technology has given young people an unprecedented degree of connectivity among themselves and with the rest of the population” (Francis & Hoefel, 2018, p. 9). Regarding this statement, unconditional acceptance, usage, and adaptation are the effects of frequent access to social media (Schulz & Klär, 2022). Moreover, faster internet speed is seen as an advantageous digital pathway that facilitates improved productivity and communication, primarily using mobile applications (Duffett, 2020). Generation Z desires to be immersed in technology, striving to combine online and offline activities, and participating in online

groups. They do not distinguish between friends they meet virtually or in person (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). The establishment of groups can build a feeling of connection that gives them support even over a considerable distance (Eichenberg & Auersperg, 2018). However, their main motivation for engaging in online socializing is the desire to stay connected and up to date with other people (PrakashYadav & Rai, 2017). That's why, social media platforms are essential for young people to create relationships. They are typically not under adult supervision, giving them opportunities for unsupervised exploration. Noticeable are the so-called selfies that young people post to present themselves (Eichenberg & Auersperg, 2018).

When it comes to online media usage, significant changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic can be observed. In 2021, Gen Z in Germany was online for around 258 minutes daily. In 2022, the average time is 204 minutes again and therefore back to the level before the start of the pandemic (Feierabend et al., 2022). Furthermore, Moll and Thomasius (2019) indicate that caregivers who prioritize online activities over others can be a crucial factor in the increase of developing dependent Internet behavior. The most frequently used social media platforms for Generation Z in Germany are WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. WhatsApp ranks as the most popular app for both females and males. Nevertheless, Snapchat, TikTok, and Instagram are more relevant for females, while YouTube is more significant for males (Feierabend et al., 2022). When it comes to Facebook's usage of social media, Rue (2018) states that "they are still on Facebook to stay in touch with coaches, teachers, and relatives (p. 6). Another study by We Are Social and Meltwater highlights that German online users presently spend an hour and 41 minutes daily on social media platforms, which is a 12-minute increase over the previous year. Also, TikTok is the overall winner, with an average usage per month of one day (We Are Social, 2023). Referring to other social media platforms, Olejniczak (2022) highlighted that Generation Z spends about 95 minutes daily on Instagram. The sampled population's favorite activity was watching and posting stories.

With the convergence from traditional to new media, the internet has established itself as Generation Z's fundamental source of political information. A study by PwC (2020) points out that 18–24-year-olds primarily use websites, podcasts, and blogs (36%) and social media (32%) to gather information. Only 24% use traditional media. Especially Instagram is

becoming more of a medium for Generation Z to learn about daily news (Feierabend et al., 2022). The authors state “among the various ways to getting news and information on current events online, search engines such as Google are the most frequently used by young people (39%), followed by Instagram (30 %) and TikTok (25 %)” (Feierabend et al., 2022, p. 63).

Generation Z’s social media usage may be affected either positively or negatively. Numerous factors can play a role in determining whether someone has a good or bad experience on social media, including the user's demographic and psychographic characteristics, time, the medium, etc. (Jacobsen & Barnes, 2020). This generation is perceived as being physically secure although mentally more sensitive due to their frequent usage of mobile devices (Rue, 2018). Regarding online content, Generation Z has specific expectations. They not only hope for random interactions and unexpected material but also for inspiration and surprising impulses that can enrich their lives through imagination, feeling, and emotionality (Schulz & Klär, 2022.). In recent research by Fisher Appelt, 71% of Gen Z participants stated they feel inspired by social media and 66% that they can gain new knowledge (Minkus, 2023). Furthermore, PrakashYadav and Rai (2017) point out that social media platforms serve as an efficient medium for “positive physical and mental wellbeing by effectively and competently informing about health & nutrition, spirituality, societal concerns to the younger population of the world especially the developing nations at their finger touch” (p. 112). Therefore, the Internet is seen as a safe space for personal interests, opinion-forming, political affiliation, and personal development. For instance, Generation Z is likely to have supportive and open-minded views on same-sex relationships. They are familiar with various people's experiences online, which enables them to comprehend that it's acceptable to be different (Rue, 2018). Regarding the safe space and individual interests, the issue also arises because society creates its reality with the algorithm (Vapaux, 2021). The author states, "The more we scroll through social media, the more the algorithm learns about our behavior, our desires, our insecurities and our dreams" (Vapaux, 2021, p. 20).

Regarding negative outcomes, the excessive utilization of social media platforms is potentially influencing various fundamental aspects of individuals' health, including psychological, physical, and emotional health, as well as societal advancement (PrakashYadav & Rai, 2017). Among negative behaviors that Generation Z faces on the

Internet, fake news, insults, conspiracy theories, and radical political beliefs are named the most (Feierabend et al., 2022). To underline more negative outcomes another study carried out by psychologist Dr. Jean M. shows the influence of social media on the mental of youth. It shows that teenagers who spend more time online are unhappier than those who spend time offline (Twenge, 2018). It is simple to feel excluded when other people's lives are documented on platforms such as Snapchat. With this, comparison occurs automatically (Rue, 2018). For Espinoza and Juvonen (2011), internet addiction is another issue with negative consequences. Teenagers frequently check their social media profiles and updates without even realizing it. This addiction can have unhealthy effects on their education and sleeping patterns, leading to reduced involvement in real-world activities and feelings of isolation, loneliness, and anxiety. Lastly, a study with a focus on undergraduate college students highlights that social media use might put Generation Z under stress from within, lead to moral lapses, and encourage bad customer behavior (Jacobsen & Barnes, 2020). Since the internet provides nearly anonymous communication it can foster the spreading of false stories about the adolescent in public. In the worst circumstances, this can even lead to self-harm and suicide (Seiffge-Krenke, 2021). Regarding this, Turner (2015) argues "The instant and impulsive nature of Internet cyberbullying is a phenomenon entirely unique to Generation Z youth, and it allows for socially disinterested behaviors to proliferate in ways we have never before seen" (p. 110).

The usage of mobile devices has fundamentally altered the frequency of how Generation Z reveals private information (McKercher et al., 2020). Research conducted by Lyngdoh et al. (2023) figured "the importance of perceived social isolation, social anxiety, fear of missing out, rumination thinking, and privacy ethical care in increasing gen z's willingness to share personal information on social media" (p. 19). On the other hand, personal data is published based on self-representation on social media. Regarding this, data and private security are also at risk. With the expanding connectivity of several online platforms, different kinds of personal data are exchanged and become transparent (Kneidinger-Müller, 2023).

Generation Z needs the feeling of the presence of other people, their acknowledgment, their point of view, and their guidance to survive (Vapaux, 2021). The neuroscientist Dar Meshi was the first who used an MRI brain scan to examine the effects of social media. The brain's reward system is triggered by, likes, comments, and messages (Miebach, 2019). Generation

Z thinks of Instagram likes or TikTok views as proof of their popularity. They primarily satisfy the desire for recognition, and it is mainly of quantity because social media is based on number systems that make our level of acceptance directly measurable and, above all, comparable (Vapaux, 2021).

Regarding the usage of TikTok, one out of four participants stated in a survey that they wouldn't want to give up on the usage of TikTok (PwC, 2020). Omar and Dequan (2020) show that social media users are drawn to TikTok for reasons like escapism, social connection, and preservation. They consume TikTok content to escape from stressful situations but also to socialize with others. Furthermore, the study found that consumers consume and participate in TikTok to loosen up and be entertained. Here, it can be noted that capturing the attention of young users can be difficult, given their characteristic short attention span. TikTok with a focus on short-form videos, presents a medium that may aligns with this attention span. Sitter and Curnew (2016) highlight that short videos offer not only possibilities for integration into a variety of settings for instance workshop sessions but also adapt to the attention span of internet users, allowing accessibility to a wide spectrum of online and offline audiences across many platforms. Also, Munsch (2021) states that popular music and humor have a significant impact on catching the attention of Generation Z. A brief digital marketing and advertising message delivered by an influencer with a maximum duration of 30 seconds can effectively capture their attention. Consequently, Seeger and Kost (2020) underline that digital influencers have emerged as role models for younger generations, leading to the significant expansion of influencer marketing as an effective marketing and promotional tool in recent years. Further in the dissertation, a more in-depth examination of the concept and effects of influencer marketing will be presented (see Chapter 3.2.).

TikTok offers an environment for the younger generation to showcase themselves and express their creativity without conforming to traditional standards, trends, or online cultures (Bresnick, 2019). To highlight this, Ahlse et al., (2021) found 6 categories as driving forces for Gen Z for TikTok content creation: “ ‘Entertainment’, ‘Socializing’, ‘Personal Identity’, ‘Information Seeking’, ‘Convenience’, and ‘Status’ ” (p. 51). The researchers studied the engagement of Generation in #challenges which could contain a mix of elements such as

“An element of entertainment, values and interest in-line with the company’s demographics, a campaign connected to a ‘greater purpose’, involve the user(s) in the video, a group-participation element, seeded content to appropriate spokespersons, light editing or investments inside users ordinary activities, allows a showcasing element, a competitive parameter, feature trendy music and sounds effects” (Ahlse, 2016, p. 52)

Stahl and Literat (2022) showed that “Gen Z portrays itself on TikTok as a generation of contrasts: powerful and self-assured, yet vulnerable and damaged” (p. 17). Furthermore, Gen Z values group thinking over individualized viewpoints. They underline that the videos express a strong feeling of generational belonging and genuine concern, often complemented by Gen Z's distinctive humor (Stahl & Literat, 2022). Here, Kotler et al. (2021) state that “In contrast to Generation Y, who likes to post more polished and filtered images of themselves for personal branding, Generation Z prefers to portray authentic and candid versions of themselves” (p. 26).

Related to the gathering of political information, a study by Morning Consult data highlighted the fact that a notable trend has emerged: a smaller number of Generation Z begin their main news investigation on Google compared to other generations. Instead, they utilize TikTok (Tran, 2023). One of the most famous accounts is Tagesschau, a well-known German news program, produced by the public broadcaster ARD. The profile (@tagesschau) currently has 1.4 million followers (Status: 25.03.2023) and provides nearly daily creative short videos aligned with crucial journalistic quality criteria (Tagesschau, n.d.) An enormous audience for a news service that attempts to connect with its young target group through traditional media (Helm, 2021). Finally, the top four fields of interest that concern Generation Z are the war in Ukraine, climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and social equality. Climate change and equality have become more crucial over the past years (Feierabend et al., 2022).

### **2.3 How Generation Z Relates to Music**

Music taste is a crucial aspect of lifestyle (Otte, 2008). Also, certain personality traits may play a role in how people use and experience music (Radocy & Boyle, 2012). Nevertheless, music is one of the favorite activities in individuals and particularly teenagers’ everyday lives (Schramm, 2006; Papinczak et al., 2015; Lonsdale & North, 2011). It has served as a traditional source of identification for individuals approaching adolescence (Saarikallio, 2011).

Gen Z music listeners take streaming and mobile music use for granted. Essentially, it's also the generation that uses music primarily on mobile devices such as smartphones (Lepa, 2014). They always have access to music, and, for them, a smartphone and an Internet connection are synonymous, and the app is the primary source of all the music that is available online. In Germany, Generation Z uses music streaming services for around 98 minutes each day (Feierabend et al., 2022). The two main music sources for their music are YouTube and Spotify (Golden, 2019) but Spotify is used most frequently by young people in Germany (55%). YouTube is mainly used by teenagers aged 16 to 17 for music consumption in Germany (Feierabend et al., 2022).

Regarding Spotify, podcasts have emerged as a convenient method for Gen Z to process challenging life circumstances in a secure setting. Podcasts are more than simply entertainment, particularly for 18 to 24-year-olds transitioning into adulthood because they can provide information, foster community, and potentially enhance one's mental well-being. In addition, 57% of German Gen Z respondents stated they subscribe to at least one podcast or musician who would be considered unique, unusual, or experimental (Spotify, 2022).

Young people use elements from pop cultural discourses and artifacts to create an independent and unique identity. With the guidance of popular culture, they also create modes of self-presentation that empower them to set themselves apart from other people's viewpoints (Heinzlmaier, 2011). That's why, music is also recognized as a powerful medium for the creation of own identity and emotional expression, providing a vehicle for individuals to convey feelings and thoughts that they may not express in regular conversations (Feierabend et al., 2022; Radocy & Boyle, 2012). People can benefit from the assistance of music at all phases of life (Rebecchini, 2021). Especially, when dealing with anxiety, 47% of Generation Z say they listen to music (Minkus, 2023). This indicates that they engage in 'mood management' through the usage of music from an aesthetic perspective (Müller et al., 2002, p. 21). For instance, psychological research shows that young people primarily listen to depressing music to support melancholy moods if they can also derive some benefit from this sorrow (Schramm, 2006). Furthermore, Gen Z makes use of audio to fully immerse themselves in virtual worlds. In the interest of feeling like a character from a particular story, 62% of German Gen Zs have streamed music from a favorite film or television show

(Spotify, 2022). In addition, the User and Gratification model has been used to determine the various purposes served by music, which include enjoyment, decreasing stress, connection with a subculture, and social interaction (Lonsdale & North, 2011).

Heinzlmaier (2011) states that teenagers listen to a broad spectrum of musical genres that trigger a range of emotions and represent significantly varied worldviews and life philosophies. The right music is chosen based on the occasion, the mood, and the individual environment. In the past, music genres were associated with a particular cultural or social identity, such as punk and hip-hop. Nowadays, Generation Z has a varied taste in music and wants to listen to all kinds of genres and styles as opposed to sticking with a single generational style (Green, 2018). According to behavioral data, a significant number of people in the 13–39 age range (79%) do not classify their musical preferences into a particular genre or category. Additionally, over half of the respondents (54%) said that musicians from their era cannot be limited to a certain style. This emphasizes the growing affinity for boundary-less and hybridized music types (YPulse, 2021). Only when it comes to classical music, Generation Z has limited exposure because of certain non-musical attitudes and ideals (Green, 2018). Regarding YPulse's latest music survey, 42% of respondents aged 13 to 39 years old said that COVID-19 and quarantine have influenced their music preferences (YPulse, 2021). The rebirth of emo and punk music genres is largely due to Generation Z. Also, younger fans' ongoing support has contributed to global K-pop. However, the results showed that there are still 28 musical subgenres that appeal to young people (YPulse, 2021). It can be noted that adolescents are becoming less interested in classic genres like pop, rock, and alternative. Rap and hip-hop have seized the lead and are the most popular (YPulse, 2021). Also, they do not share the musical tastes of older customers: when it comes to modern music, the contrasts in tastes between 30+ and below 20-year-olds are noticeable (Kinnunen et al., 2022). Here, Otte (2008) highlights that compared to other generations, Gen Z prefers mainly modern genres such as hip hop, techno, and house since they grow up with these music styles. Referring to these findings, music marketers must be aware of evolving trends to better understand and engage with their target audience. For instance, Generation Z is finding innovative ways to bring old hits back into the limelight through social media. By incorporating old songs into new visual trends such as lip-syncing and dancing challenges (Spotify, 2022).

TikTok has established itself as a hotspot for music discovery on social media platforms. According to Kaye et al., (2022), it is the most recent platform for promoting and exploring music. It stands out for its immense music and audio collection that complements each video (Vizcaíno-Verdú & Aguaded, 2022). TikTok discovers several chart-topping songs that have gained a spot in prestigious rankings by companies such as MTV (Berbineau, 2020). A sizeable section of the platform's user base finds not only new music on the app but also recordings they may not have seen otherwise. A survey by TikTok figures that 63% of TikTok users had never heard of unknown music before being on TikTok, while 75% of respondents said they learned about new musicians using the app (TikTok, 2021).

Due to music festivals' uniqueness and extraordinary appeal, many teenagers attend them, resulting in a significant milestone in today's experience-based culture (Kirchner, 2011). Attending a music festival has evolved into an essential summer activity, especially for younger generations (Iványi & Bíró-Szigeti, 2020). A Statista study shows that in 2021, at least 4.8 million Germans went to festivals or concerts yearly. A third of these participants are under the age of thirty (Statista, 2022a). That's why comprehending the concept of motivation and its relationship with a festival is crucial. In essence, motivation serves as the underlying force that connects individuals with their desired activities (Lee, 2015). The motivation for attending a music festival can vary from each person. While some may be driven by their admiration for the performing artists, others may be motivated by the opportunity to learn more about the local culture that the festival represents (Schofield & Thompson, 2007). Muhs et al., (2020) point out "The music and dance, drug consumption, social factors, the festival experience and camping, were recognized as primary motivational dimensions" (p. 174). Another research showed four main groups of people that attend music events for motivating objectives: "content-, scene-, friendship- and socially-driven adolescents" (Kinnunen et al., 2022, p. 83). Other valuable outcomes of studies are the importance of establishing positive social networks whether during or after the event, and experiencing a sense of social belonging (Packer, 2008; Schofield & Thompson, 2007; Bowen & Daniels, 2005). Getz (2007) argues that interaction and self-representation are key factors for a festival experience. Packer and Ballantyne (2011) say that attendees at music festivals can gain an awareness of the sense of self, meaning, and social connection. "Overall, the contemporary live music venue network has been heavily influenced by active youth and their spontaneous live music culture" (Kinnunen et al., 2022, p. 65). That's why,

studying Generation Z as a target audience for the live music culture in the 2020s is appealing. This generation has been more profoundly influenced by new music and concepts than any earlier generation, significantly influencing their usage patterns (Kinnunen et al., 2022).

In conclusion, the third chapter showed multiple authors who emphasize that Generation Z is the first diverse and globally minded generation in history, exhibiting a fundamentally new manner of behavior and thought. They have access to immediate, up-to-date, real-time information with multimedia content, which indicates that they have a short attention span. WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube in general are their primary platforms. TikTok, on one hand, is used for entertainment and free expression. Instagram, on the other hand, is a major platform for social interaction as well as getting news and information. Finally, Generation Z listens to music to convey their feelings and to build identity. They typically refuse to be limited to a specific genre or style and are therefore known for having a diverse taste in music. It can be said that Generation Z has an impact on both media marketing and the music industry. Countless companies and brands have already expanded their social media presence to better connect and reach Generation Z (Sayyed & Gupta, 2020). Nyilasy (2007) argues "traditional advertising just doesn't seem to work that well anymore" (p. 161). A rising number of companies are striving to abandon traditional marketing tactics and switch to digital ones. The next chapter will develop the key elements of social media marketing.

### **3. Social Media Marketing**

*“Social media marketing is an integral part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century-business”*  
(Felix et al., 2017, p. 118).

Social media presents outstanding possibilities for companies to engage with (potential) customers. The global nature of the Internet is a significant benefit because it enables companies to theoretically reach everyone who uses social media platforms (Schmid, 2010). A Statista study showed that globally, more than 4.26 billion people used social media in 2021, and that number is expected to rise to approximately six billion by 2027 (Statista, 2023f).

In its definition, the term social media refers to any electronic service that enables users of the internet not only to consume but also to produce and distribute a wide range of content (PrakashYadav & Rai, 2017). For Bruhn (2019), social media communication refers to interaction and coordination between social media consumers and companies as well as to their networking with each other. Pahrman and Kupka (2022) state that social media marketing has emerged as an essential discipline that companies must comprehend, rather than a passing trend. They describe social media marketing as marketing operations which occur on social media platforms. These include not only organic material but also paid postings and advertising, such as social adverts. Tuten and Solomon (2018) define social media marketing as the use of social media technologies, platforms, and software to “create, communicate, deliver, and exchange offerings that have value for an organization’s stakeholders” (p. 53).

For numerous companies, social media has, for long, been among the most crucial channels of communication. They take advantage of the direct accessibility of the target audience when establishing their brand presence. “Marketers and academics alike are only beginning to explore the possibilities of Augmented and virtual Reality, the metaverse, Internet of Things, synthetic advertising (visual advertising generated with the help of Artificial Intelligence)” (Dens & Poels, 2022, p. 146). Also, “False positives (organic trends mistakenly labeled as promoted) can be manually filtered out in post-processing and are therefore less costly” (Varol et al., 2017, p. 1). Besides, “With artificial intelligence-powered analytics, it is now possible for marketers to predict the outcome before launching new

products or releasing new campaigns” (Kotler et al., 2021, p. 11). That’s why, it is crucial to highlight that, despite the prominence of social media, there is a rising understanding that branded content might appear artificial, posed, or filtered at times. Consequently, there is now a greater demand for authenticity on social media platforms (Hoang, 2022).

“Social media is increasingly a part of strategic media planning giving its ability to increase brand awareness, brand linking, and brand engagement” (Tuten, 2008, p. 90). Brand awareness is a critical factor in the long-term brand management process (Domazet et al., 2011). According to Aaker (1991), brand awareness is “the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category” (p. 61). Furthermore, consumer experience is directly related to the level of brand awareness (Boo, Busser & Baloglu, 2008). Here, Aaker (1996) identifies four different states of brand awareness: unaware of the brand, brand recognition, brand recall, and top of mind. Especially, in today's digital age, where social media platforms mostly rule information consumption, the spontaneous recall of brands from memory becomes particularly crucial during consumers' search and decision-making processes (Edelman, 2010). Lastly, it can be noted that the concept of brand-self-connection plays a crucial role in brand awareness since it represents the cognitive and emotional link between the brand and the self (Lienemann, 2021).

In theory, Tuten and Solomon (2018) explain social media marketing with the concept of social media zones. It divides the huge diversity of social media into four different zones according to their functionalities and uses: social community, social publishing, social commerce, and social entertainment. The first zone, social community, includes social media platforms and aims the enhancement of relationships and interactions among people who have similar interests. Consumers actively participate in two-way or multi-way communication and cooperation, sharing, socializing, and talking. This zone is the customer relationship management zone, where relationships are established. The second zone, social publishing, involves the creation and transmission of material to an audience using social media platforms. It covers a variety of activities such as editorial, commercial, and user-generated content. It provides users with an environment to display their skills and highlight their ongoing advancement and growth. The third zone, social entertainment, covers performances, events, and activities that give users an appealing surrounding where they're

able to enjoy, express, and entertain themselves. This section focuses on categories including music, art, and games. The last zone, social commerce, concentrates on commercial goals and fosters the use of social networks in online purchasing, shopping, and selling of goods and services, as well as the use of social media advertising and influencer marketing. Also, social media sites can affect purchasing decisions through shared experiences, suggestions, and views. This zone is one of the most essential elements in terms of e-WOM (Tuten & Solomon, 2013, 2018).

Not all messages are seen by everyone in the online world, comparable to real life. That's why it is important to identify oneself with an established recognition value within the relevant audience. It is required to watch different communities and acquire their appropriate norms of behavior (Pahrmann & Kupka, 2022). Therefore, the role of social media marketing is to effectively use all the communities and networks to reach out and communicate to a specific audience about services, products, or company activities that are relevant to customers (Sheth, 2018). It is essential to carefully choose a suitable social media platform. Resources should be concentrated on the most significant platform and other ones that can be used with less effort (Pahrmann & Kupka, 2022).

Social media marketing has numerous benefits, but also some difficulties and disadvantages that companies should be aware of. Companies can employ social media marketing to foster brand awareness, and loyalty among consumers while also enhancing customer service, developing present consumer relationships, as well as expanding their consumer base. They can gain valuable insights through significant interactions with their audience (Pahrmann & Kupka, 2022). Social media presents outstanding possibilities for the company to draw in prospective customers (Schmid, 2010). Social media customer engagement is commonly thought of as being very innovative and up-to-date and can be used for efficient Customer Relationship Management (CRM), which encompasses both attracting and keeping customers. Companies can offer consumer-interaction activities, such as live video features or user-generated content to reach the target audience to share photos and videos related to their content (Pflüger, 2020).

With social media marketing, companies can convey messages to follow and offer constructive feedback (Pflüger, 2020). Additionally, the Internet, particularly social media,

has altered how customers and marketers interact. It occurred a change in communication, social media platforms enable individuals to add contacts to networks of peers (Zhang & Daugherty, 2009). In the context of Marketing, peer communication in social media refers to discussions on products and offerings among individual consumers on computer-aided social networks (Dhar & Chang, 2009). This results in a change from the traditional model of one-to-one communication to a many-to-many (peer-to-peer communication). Heymann-Reder (2011) states that the main value of social media marketing is the facilitation of many-to-many conversations. It works like a snowball principle, which states that information spreads quickly when users promote it to their friends and acquaintances. With this, companies can spread their values and messages as well as encourage criticism (Pflüger, 2020). Moreover, social media platforms not only expand reach and decrease costs (Arsath, 2018) but they also offer a beneficial big data source (Kotler et al., 2021). The authors state that “With such a rich source of information, marketers can now profile the customer at a granular and individual level, allowing one-to-one marketing at scale” (p. 10, 11). Because social media marketing is dependent on data, companies can gain useful insights into consumer behavior, such as preferences, interests, and purchasing patterns. That’s why with the creation of content for individual customers, interactions which enable to design products and services that match their specific needs can be developed (Arsath, 2018).

When it comes to disadvantages, it can be noted that social media platforms are susceptible to security issues and privacy violations that could have an impact on companies and their clients. With each social media posting, there is a chance of losing control and a crisis can rapidly break out (Schneider, 2015). For instance, an unfavorable complaint about something a corporation has done or has not done can develop a crisis (Schneider, 2015). Because people can express input about unwanted viewpoints, it is possible to harm a company’s reputation easily (Pflüger, 2020). Also, Rauschnabel et al., (2012) think that unfavorable reviews can not only quickly develop into negative beliefs and harm a company’s reputation but also have adverse effects on the buying choice. Another evidence for the loss of control in social media is the frequently unsupported, incomplete, or even erroneous content that is often uncritically trusted, especially by people in the younger generation (Keen, 2008). When it comes to the health of social media users, Akram and Kumar (2017) indicate that negative effects are “incorrect self-diagnosis” and “potential

breach of privacy” (p. 349). Regarding the “incorrect-self-diagnosis”, it can be said that social media can tackle a wide range of health literacy barriers, helping people to overcome reading and writing issues. Nonetheless, when compared to the pre-social media period, the prominent qualities of social media and the important social dynamics connected with its use enhance the chance of consumers and patients confronting bigger dangers when exposed to dangerous or untrustworthy content (Lau et al., 2012).

Regarding the goals of social media marketing, Weinberg and Pahrman (2011) point out that they should be “specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and clearly defined in terms of time” (p. 46). Meerman Scott (2010) argues the main goals of social media marketing are developing long-lasting connections with customers, inspiring loyalty, and trust, and delivering enduring enhancements in image and brand recognition.

To better understand the importance of social media marketing for companies and how it differs from traditional marketing, the next subchapters are going to explain some strategies of social media marketing including the benefits and challenges of Content Marketing, Influencer Marketing, and social media strategies for music festivals.

### **3.1 Content Marketing**

Nowadays content marketing is the most vital component of digital marketing and essential to a profitable online advertising campaign (Baltes, 2015). The approach attempts to improve customers' daily lives by creating and sharing interesting content on social media. Diamond (2016) says “Content Marketing is how you provide your customers with the information they need to make decisions and solve problems” (p. 1). As stated by Lammenett (2017), content marketing should draw in or keep clients without being overbearing or even disruptive. Due to the wide range of products and services available today, consumers are increasingly turning to well-known and reputable corporate brands to simplify the decision-making process (Ullrich, 2011). In addition, offering the customer authentic value defines the purpose of content marketing. In a survey, 70% of respondents strongly agree or agree that content marketing provides clients with meaningful added value (Merdzanovic et al., 2023). This can be accomplished for informational purposes or just for fun, and it puts the commercial aspect in the background (Baetzgen & Tropp, 2013). Also, Merdzanovic et al. (2023) state that “The goal of content marketing is therefore not to pitch

one's own products and services to customers, but to provide them with content that adds value and thus binds them to the company in the long term” (p. 12). Some of the famous content marketing tools are blog posts, newsletters, case studies, mailing, brochures, infographics, podcasts, videos, webinars, social media content, press releases, etc. (Eck & Eichmeier, 2014). Finally, Kotler et al. (2021) point out that “Content Marketing has been a buzzword in the recent years, and it is being touted as a subtle alternative to advertising in the digital economy. It uses a mix of entertainment, education, and inspiration to attract attention without the hard to sell” (p. 119).

In general, Kotler et al. (2021) talk in their recent book about Marketing 5.0 explaining it as “the application of human-mimicking technologies to create, communicate, deliver, and enhance value across the customer journey” (p. 6). This means new technologies such as AI or VR. The authors also explain that “When designing the advertising creative and developing content marketing, brand managers can utilize machine learning to gauge customer interests in various combinations of copies and visuals” (p.149).

Content marketing is economically advantageous. Companies already have their information. It is free to produce and distribute formats. Additionally, the information can be applied for a variety of desired outcomes (Sternberg, 2022). Another positive criterion is that content marketing helps to establish a relationship with the audience. Companies can gain a level of trust before individuals become consumers by positioning themselves as resources. Lastly, companies oversee their message, including what content is supposed to convey (Sternberg, 2022). A significant concept related to content marketing is eWOM (electronic word of mouth). As explained by Cheng and Zhou (2010), “EWOM communication refers to any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institution via the internet” (p. 1). If a company uses social media to generate positive feedback and a word-of-mouth effect, it will have a positive impact on how the public perceives it and how trustworthy it is (Ramseier, 2019). This can happen through the creation of engaging shareable material that will appeal to consumers and encourage them to tell others about their experiences.

It's critical to distinguish between copywriting and content marketing. While copywriting concentrates mostly on persuading the target market to take a specific action, often making a purchase of a particular product or service, content marketing seeks to increase brand recognition among the intended audience and cultivate loyalty by offering educational and informative content (Baltes, 2015). Also, content marketing sets itself apart from advertising by emphasizing storytelling over boasting. In essence, while advertising aims to publicly announce a company's status to the outside, content marketing strives to establish and justify that position through the generation of high-quality content (Solomon, 2013).

Regarding content, it must be noted that in today's competitive market, it is not sufficient to merely advertise products and services. A strong brand or company must position itself well from the outset. Based on Esch (2017), it is characterized as brand distinction and brand anchoring in the target audience's mind. To achieve a position that sets a company apart from other similar companies, the attributes of the company should be successfully communicated. In addition, companies should be aware of the evolving communication needs of their customers to achieve their corporate and marketing objectives. According to East et al. (2017), brands' associations with emotions, ideas, and perceptions influence consumers' decisions to purchase a good or service. A growing percentage of users demand individualized customer experiences that consider their unique demands, attitudes, and circumstances (Light, 2014). To engage with customers in personalized meaningful ways, content marketers can produce customized content that is useful to the audience. When a company personalizes its message for each recipient, it can stand out from a crowded field of rivals since customized content is more appealing and pertinent to the target audience (O'Reilly, 2014). Especially regarding the expansion and scope of storytelling, more deeper and valuable relationships are possible. By using natural language, brands can give their social media presence more personality and familiarity, creating a voice for their brand that is more welcoming and approachable (Du Plessis, 2015).

An example of a successful and personalized content marketing strategy is Spotify. Different tools make the content strategy meaningful. For instance, "Blend", is "a shared playlist that combines the best of Spotify's personalization capabilities and collaborative playlist functionality into a single shared playlist, making it easy for users to get into a listening session that is made just for them" (Spotify, 2022, para. 1). Also, with "Wrapped", Spotify

offers users every year, in the end, a review on their listening habits. Additionally, “Only You” provides listeners with information on how they listened to music including musicians, genres, and times. Lastly, they can post and share this content across their social media platforms (Spotify, 2021).

The significance of the content marketing strategy cannot be missed. Diamond (2016) explains the Method of the 5 C’s as a structure to establish a strategy and put a content plan into practice. The First C is company focus. Here, the consideration of company objectives before developing a content marketing plan is necessary. The second C is customer experience to discover the thinking and interaction from potential customers with the company. Tools can be for instance gathering and examining customer data, designing personas, and the customer journey. Especially Personas have gained popularity in marketing and other fields in recent years. They complement essential marketing procedures. Persona’s function as a company's internal representation of real consumers by vividly conveying information about them to life (Pruit & Adlin, 2006). Based on actual data, outcomes, needs, attitudes, and traits, personas are a creation of potential customers. Furthermore, focusing on key characteristics and condensing a lot of information are the objectives of personas (Cooper et al., 2010). The third C is content creation and involves providing high-quality that aligns with the narrative of the company. This also includes creating a plan for categorizing the messages to convey. Here, the question to ask is “How will we create quality content, who will do it, and what will that content be” (Diamond, 2016, p. 9). Setting up a content plan requires defining all the specifics, including objectives and topics that will appeal to the target audience. Information such as “Date of publication, delivery dates by which images, information, etc. must be available, topic/form, brief description, author and person responsible, channel, editing status” (Hilker, 2017, p. 164) should be implemented in the content plan. The fourth C is channel promotion which involves promoting your content through effective channels to reach potential customers. It’s crucial to consider how the chosen audience will find the content and pick it over competitors. This entails for example collaborating with influencers or a variety of media formats. Regarding media format, the PESO (Paid, Earned, Shared & Owned) model has historically been used to categorize four different types of media channels in the context of content distribution (Auler & Huberty, 2019). The fifth C is the check-back analysis with an emphasis on the used metrics and measurements to determine if the goals have been fulfilled

(Diamond, 2016). Defining metrics, tools, and key indicators are crucial. The most used ones are website tracking techniques and content analysis (Sternberg, 2022). One of the most essential key indicators of content marketing success is customer satisfaction. Other significant measures are increased website visits, brand awareness, new customer acquisition, and search engine positioning (Merdzanovic et al., 2023).

Content marketing is becoming an increasingly important strategy because of the constant development of digital technology and consumer behavior. As a result, new trends and strategies are emerging in 2023 that are altering the field of content marketing. According to Jaura and Sharma (2023), influencer marketing and short-form video are expected to be the top two trends that marketers will spend their budget on in 2023, with SEO ranking in third. Additionally, 88% of marketers who already implement an SEO strategy plan to retain or expand their expenditures on SEO in 2023 in comparison to the year before.

Lately, TikTok has become an effective content marketing platform, giving brands and creators a unique opportunity to connect and interact with a youthful and enthusiastic audience. Everyone can become viral on TikTok due to its operating field, which has resulted in a variety of high-demand occasions for consumer brands and goods (Wiley, 2022). Moreover, precision, and creative thinking are required to generate successful content on TikTok. It is critical to create content for the platform that is highly shareable, simply understandable, incentivizing, reachable, and useful. Users become engaged when they form connections with specific companies or products (Dewi, 2021). However, the platform uses an artificial intelligence algorithm to promote content. The success or failure of a given video appears to be an outcome of luck rather than a predicted conclusion for content providers in many cases (Haenlein et al., 2020). Here, also Cervi (2021) highlights that “Tik Tok employs artificial intelligence to analyze users’ interests and preferences through their interactions with the content, based on the videos they like, comment on, and also how long they watch the video to display a personalized content feed for each user” (p. 200). According to Wang (2020), research indicates that TikTok material distinguishes itself from others for being lighthearted and fun. This means that for instance Twitter and Facebook prioritize information sharing, news, and interacting with friends and family, but TikTok prioritizes entertainment and leisure (Haelein et al., 2020). The platform even promotes itself with the slogan "Dont make Ads. Make TikToks” as “an invitation to be more creative, more

authentic, and to create content that truly speaks to people” (TikTok for Business, 2021a, para. 1). In addition, Cervi (2021) explains Challenges, Duets, Cringe, and are the most popular types of content on TikTok. Duets are a significant part of the TikTok experience since they allow users to incorporate themselves into another user's video by imitating the same dance, action, scene, or situation. Cringe videos usually include people attempting to act in an awkward manner. Challenges frequently emerge as trends established by the TikTok community, with multiple users attempting to make videos on the same theme. However, challenges also include sponsored hashtags launched by brands or organizations. Hashtags have an enormous impact on the TikTok platform because “they increase a post’s visibility in the For You feed, where users spend most of their time, and that visibility can push it into viral status” (TikTok for Business, 2021b, para. 3).

In conclusion, this chapter highlighted how content marketing is an essential component of digital marketing, especially social media. It also showed how companies may employ it to engage with their intended audience, increase brand recognition, and enhance customer experiences. The goal of content marketing is to present customers with valuable content that will keep them committed to the company over the long term, not to directly sell them products. Implementing a variety of online tools and creating compelling, personalized content that resonates with the target audience is necessary for effective content marketing. Influencer marketing is a technique employed in a broader context of content marketing that entails using the influence and reach of online personalities to spread information and reach a wider audience. The idea of influencer marketing will be examined in the next chapter.

### **3.2 Influencer Marketing**

*“The world of influencer marketing is a continually moving target. Strategies that used to work for firms a year ago may no longer be effective today”* (Haenlein et al., 2020, p. 20).

With the rise of social media marketing, an increasing number of digital content creators in various fields gained significant amounts of followers, emerging as influencers (Morgan, 2020). Influencer marketing reached its peak in 2017 and has been, since then, the most successful among people between the ages of 14 and 29. When it comes to their purchasing decisions, 87% of this age group were favorably impacted by influencer marketing (Statista, 2017). This shows that influencers have become an integral part of the marketing strategy.

The market value of the worldwide industry was, last year, at a record high of \$13.8 billion (Wiley, 2022). Influencer marketing can affect consumer purchasing decisions at two important points: the moment a person decides to act (information demand) and the moment a person chooses what exact action they want to take (purchasing process) (Brown & Hayes, 2017). It is seen as a crucial component of the marketing mix, as companies are additionally shifting steadily towards digital networking. In a published Statista survey about the benefits of influencer marketing, contrary to traditional web marketing, in Germany, in 2020, 31% of respondents stated that improving communication with a target audience was the most important aspect (Statista, 2023d).

To understand the concept of influencer marketing, researchers point out different viewpoints. Influencer marketing is built on traditional referral marketing. It is an advancement that builds on online word-of-mouth (Kobilke, 2019). Deges (2018) defines influencer marketing as “planning, managing and controlling the targeted use of social media opinion leaders and multipliers in order to increase the value of brand messages and positively influence the buying behavior of the target group through their recommendations” (p. 35). On the other hand, Sammis et al. (2015) explain influencer marketing as “the art and science of engaging people who are influential online to share brand messaging with their audience in the form of sponsored content” (p. 7). Seeger & Kost (2019) state “influencer marketing is a company's attempt to identify key opinion leaders online and leverage their influence and reach to its own end by motivating or rewarding them to share brand messages with their audiences” (p. 41).

Influencer marketing is compared to the idea of celebrity endorsement as an approach to boosting brand recognition and perception, since people tend to believe what celebrities say or even consider them as role models. The distinction regarding influencer marketing is that a new definition of celebrity is created (Sammis et al., 2015). Especially with their knowledge, influencers are experts in specific niches. Also, there are different types of influencers such as “celebrity influencers, mega-influencers, macro-influencers, micro-influencers, and nano-influencers” (Campbell & Farrell, 2020, p. 471). In addition, followers build parasocial relationships with creators. Influencers convey an analog relationship to followers by interacting as they would with friends, this conveys a sense of closeness

(Vapaux, 2021). A lot of adolescents spend more time with influencers than with their friends (Twenge, 2018).

Moreover, “influencers also share similar interests with their audiences and develop strong bonds with them, which ultimately increases the influencer’s credibility and trust among their viewers. Influencers can be referred to as online opinion leaders as a result of their expertise on specific topics” (Morgan, 2020, p. 12).

The root of this context starts with the framework of the "Two-Step-Flow of Communication" by Lazarsfeld et al. (1968) which claims that information passes through two stages. Mass media mainly impacts opinion leaders, who then influence opinion followers. This model changed into a multi-step structure with the rise of digital media, which takes the influence of opinion followers into account (Eisenstein, 1994). Companies and brands function as mass media in the context of influencer marketing.

Another important aspect to consider is the difference between influencer marketing and influencer relations. Jahnke (2018) explicates:

“In comparison to influencer relations, it can be said that in the term influencer relations, companies and agencies cultivate their contacts on a long-term and partnership basis in order to place their products unobtrusively and free of charge in the media. Influencer marketing, on the other hand, is a collaboration on a temporary basis for short-term campaigns and actions with clear start and end dates, which are usually monetarily remunerated" (p. 6).

The two main viewpoints in influencer marketing are the content and the organizational. It is a recently developed digital marketing tool, from a content standpoint, that makes use of social media networks to accomplish campaign objectives. However, from an organizational standpoint, efficient message communication calls for precise planning, guidance, and control in influencer marketing (Deges, 2018). To achieve long-term success and position companies may build long-term relationships with influencers because they serve as the sender in digital marketing communication (Pahrmann & Kupka, 2019).

The primary objective of influencer marketing is to motivate the community to act by interacting with goods and services (Seeger & Kost, 2019), such as making a direct purchase. Additionally, influencer marketing aims to connect with target audiences that are no longer accessible through conventional media (Seeger & Kost, 2019). However, some crucial facts should be taken into consideration. An appropriate influencer must be chosen considering the goals of the campaign as well as the expenses of dealing with several influencers. Also,

selecting niche influencers that support the company might be a challenging procedure (Haenlein et al., 2020). Campbell and Farrell (2020) state that the fan base of an influencer attracts more marketers and brands by “offering organic reach, specific targeting, and increased attention” (p. 473). That’s why a suitable influencer brand fit is so important, Influencers should endorse products that align with their regular content or aesthetic (Morgan, 2020). Therefore, influencer marketing may also be used to create authentic, trustworthy content that attracts new customers. The business can also employ influencer marketing content creation for its promotion. In a survey conducted in 2018 about criteria for selecting an influencer, 80% of the participants pointed out that the most significant part is the brand fit for a campaign (Statista, 2023b)

It also makes sense to assess thoughtfully the success of a company's prior social media initiatives before implementing influencers and with a specific purpose in their marketing strategy. The results of, for instance, a previous SWOT analysis (competitive analysis), which outlines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the company's external environment, might be used to establish the nature of the influencer's engagement. Influencer marketing is mostly concerned with shortcomings because of the variety of applications and new communication channels it uses. Also, campaigns from the competitors are examined to develop targeted strategies for the own campaign based on the findings (Deges, 2018). For an authentic appearance on social platforms, influencers should have long-term brand loyalty. To develop a win-win partnership, it is necessary for both parties, the company, and the influencer, to speak at eye level and to agree on an equitable return on investment (Deges, 2018).

Regarding consumer behavior, the influencer can encourage action at all levels. According to Homburg (2017) “The term consumer behavior encompasses all observed actions of individuals in connection with the purchase or consumption of economic goods” (p. 27). Starting with activation, it’s the foundation of human driving mechanisms. The target audience needs to be engaged and prepared to take in information. In influencer marketing, the influencer frequently teases the presentation of, for instance, new products or discount codes in advance to attract immediate attention (Homburg, 2017). They can also motivate the community through cooperation with a brand for instance by offering discount coupons for the products they recommend. Influencer marketing can affect the emotions of the

audience using a combination of visual and spoken communication. Since individuals already have an emotional link to the influencer, new information will be perceived as being significant quickly (Deges, 2018).

The environment in which influencer marketing takes place is crucial. The target group's attitude is based on how well the product will meet its demands (Rosenstiel & Neumann, 2012). To positively impact customer behavior, the influencer and the target group frequently reflect similar interests. The community's needs are rapidly identified by the influencer, who can then consider them when making product recommendations. Interpersonal relationships are essential for customer satisfaction (Rosenstiel & Neumann, 2012). At this point, the influencer provides trustworthy guidance in prior decisions. Because of this, consumers already have a high level of trust in a variety of product categories before making a purchase (Deges, 2018).

The literature mentions advantages and disadvantages of influencer marketing. Starting with the positive effects, collaborating with influencers enables companies to create a targeted brand positioning on social media platforms. Influencers are aware of the desires and requirements of their community, consequently, they have extensive knowledge of what variables should be considered while designing a communication campaign. They can announce new products by, for instance, storytelling. Likewise, the influencer can quickly create a wow effect with their audience (Hilker, 2017).

When considering influencer marketing's disadvantages, it can be said that the distinction between advertising and journalistically accurate reporting is blurred (Jahnke, 2018). Moreover, the chapter on social media marketing already pointed out a significant fact related to crises on social media platforms. Influencer marketing shows a quick and unrestricted distribution of online content, a single post has the potential to gather a lot of unanticipated popularity. With this, the same outcomes mentioned before have to be considered (Rauschnabel et al., 2012). Nowadays, anyone without formal training in programming may create content online, not just famous influencers who have a big online presence. Any user can be acknowledged if they have the right message to convey (Michelis, 2012). Additional disadvantages of influencer marketing include losing control over user-generated content, a time-consuming selection process that also involves

coordination with the chosen influencers, a lack of social media marketing expertise, high costs for collaborations, and regulatory restrictions like labeling requirements (Deges, 2018; Nirschl & Steinberg, 2018). Finally, results of a survey in 2018 among companies on challenges in influencer marketing in Germany showed that the measurability of influencer marketing metrics has been identified as a challenge by 65% of respondents (Statista, 2023c). In another study conducted in Germany in 2018 regarding common issues with influencer marketing, around 31% of the Influencers claimed to have issues complying with the labeling requirements for advertising (Statista, 2023a). Haenlein et al. (2020) state that „Instagram and TikTok stand out regarding their importance for influencer marketing: They have the youngest user base and therefore attract customer segments who are particularly susceptible to this form of marketing communication” (p.10). But it’s important to consider that each platform works differently for instance “a video that makes a great Instagram story may barely reach any likes on TikTok” (p. 11).

Nevertheless, ethical issues regarding disclaimers of ads or partnerships must be addressed. Hudders and Lou (2022) point out that “influencer marketing often involves young (and vulnerable) audiences, it is important to be extremely careful when implementing those tactics” (p. 152). The authors also say that concerns are for example “the lack of transparency and improper disclosure of sponsored content” (p. 157). Here, Borchers and Enke (2022) highlight that influencers can face temptation from for instance organizations to suppress sponsorship disclosure. When sponsorships are not obviously disclosed, the community of the influencer can get confused about which content is financed and what is behind the business agreement. This lack of clarity may deceive individuals who are uninformed of the message's promotional aim (Hudders & Lou, 2022). Finally, like other professionals in the media sector, “influencers do not have a codified set of ethical principles to guide their work and therefore draw from disparate industries as well as personal experience to develop their ethical frameworks” (Wellman et al., 2020, p. 69).

Influencer marketing on TikTok highlights how comedy and hedonic experiences play a major role in attracting followers. The “perceived originality is an essential driver of intention to follow TikTok influencers’ accounts and advice” (Barta et al., 2023, p. 8). To be distinctive and entertaining are crucial qualities for those who want to be recognized as opinion leaders and successful influencers on TikTok.

Regarding virality for influencers, Hoang (2022) shows that the possibility that information submitted will be noticed by a lot of people improves when viral sounds are used. The effects or sounds used in TikTok videos are noted so that other content creators can readily find them. Related to this, viral marketing is a crucial criterion in influencer marketing. Viral Marketing is commonly referred to as word-of-mouth (WOM) or Buzz Marketing. It is a strategy to establish an environment where individuals with an interest can advertise to one another (Subramani & Rajagopalan, 2003). Understanding the dynamics of information-sharing, influencer convincing others, and recipient reactions on social media platforms serve as essential for viral marketing effectiveness. Instead of being seen as mere representatives or advertisers of marketers, influencers should be recognized as knowledgeable guides within social media (Subramani & Rajagopalan, 2003). Also, Seeger and Kost (2019) refer to viral marketing as the extremely rapid spread and enormous effect a marketing message has when it circulates online. The main objective of a viral marketing campaign is to raise brand awareness and inspire others to share content, as well as collect customer insights for the implementation of future strategies. When sharing material is simple and convenient, without incurring substantial expense or difficulty, that is when viral marketing is the most successful. Also, a social acknowledgment for the community is efficient (Seeger & Kost, 2019).

A crucial impact of influencer marketing regarding the latest events is the pandemic. Social media usage increased, and “the use of TikTok especially has exploded during this period, triggered by the confinement of millions of teenagers around the globe” (Haenlein et al., 2020, p. 22). Given the substantial growth in online purchasing, businesses may devote more of their future advertising budgets to social media platforms, consequently raising the significance of influencer marketing. However, the financial effects of losing employment and revenue can lead to a change toward a more minimalistic way of life, which may reduce the appeal of influencers' positive and idealistic way of life in times of severe crisis. As an outcome, influencer marketing could become less effective and thus less appealing to companies (Haenlein et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the field of influencer marketing is continually evolving, and approaches that were performed before may not succeed anymore. Considering this, the number of

influencers is expanding, and influencer marketing can significantly affect the younger audience. The definition of influencer marketing varies among different researchers, but it is considered a new version of conventional referral marketing, involving the use of online opinion leaders (Influencers) to convey brand messages. Since influencers frequently specialize in a certain field, they can establish strong relationships with their community. Nevertheless, it's critical to select the ideal influencer based on the objectives and budget of the campaign. As companies move towards digital networking in the present digital era, influencer marketing is an essential part of the marketing mix. Long-term collaborations with influencers can also result in long-term achievements. Regarding music festivals, social media shows many possibilities to improve the festival experience and accomplish marketing goals such as producing viral content and utilizing influencers to interact with fans in real time. The next chapter will explore some of the social media strategies for music festivals and how they may improve attendance, raise brand awareness, and foster long-lasting relationships with visitors.

### **3.3 Social Media Strategies for Music Festivals**

Effective marketing serves as the foundation of any successful festival, since reaching and interacting with potential attendees is essential to accomplishing objectives. This entails an in-depth investigation of the cultural product as well as the attraction of visitors who will appreciate distinctive qualities which includes addressing festivalgoers' desires and expectations (Oklobdžija, 2015). Nowadays, music festivals can promote themselves on a much greater level and conduct worldwide campaigns according to the available technology. That is why the internet has evolved into one of the most effective tools for festivals, allowing them to engage with their fans in a variety of ways (Oklobdžija, 2015).

The usage of social media strategies for music festivals is a significant method for raising awareness (Kerr & May, 2011). To underline this, Octarina and Kurniawans's (2021) research points out that social media has been the most successful distribution platform in raising awareness of music festivals. This might be related to the 81% of Generation Z participants in this study, who chose social media over conventional forms of media. Here, Iványi's (2021) research indicates that, especially for Generation Z music festival attendees, social media platforms for sharing pictures and videos can have a substantial impact on the experience. Building a virtual community can be an effective tool for these individuals

because it allows them to gather various kinds of user-generated content simply and quickly from a centralized platform. Moreover, music festivals have a special chance to create enthusiasm, as well as buzz before, during, and after the event. Therefore, music festival organizers should employ social media communication to affect viewers' impressions of the festival brand (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015). With the integration of an outstanding festival experience but also strategic social networking, long-term relationships with attendees can be developed (Hudson et al., 2015; Zhao, 2022). However, Chaney and Martin (2016) highlight that when festivals grow in popularity, consumers are given more options, emphasizing the necessity of consumer loyalty as a critical problem. Especially since music festivals usually last three to four days, it is essential to develop methods that encourage festival brand loyalty during the entire year (Kerr & May, 2011).

Due to the enormous impact of technological innovations and social media, the value of individual stories along with how customers connect and engage with others is more crucial (Robertson et al., 2015). The authors state “The desire for immersive, engaging, and personalized experience will become more prevalent as technology facilitates it” (Robertson et al., 2015, p. 575). As a result, the relevance of the festival's program becomes substantially less relevant. Regarding this, a common way of achieving the goal of boosting brand awareness and encouraging brand loyalty is by interactive material, facilitating the establishment of a digital relationship between festivals and festivalgoers (Kozinets, 1999). Music festivals provide unique chances for more active involvement (Packer & Ballantyne, 2011). With the advancement of mobile technology, a potentially highly efficient usage for product, experience, and connectivity enhancement for music festivals is provided (Van Winkle & Bueddefeld, 2016). One way of creating interactive content is through user-generated content. It “was launched in the early 1990s as a concept for describing media content produced outside of professional media institutions by everyday media users” (Bolin, 2021., p. 267). This strategy can bring advantages for both, the festival organizers, and attendees. It broadens the festival's reach in terms of both scopes, as people tend to capture the events they attend, and depth, as visitors might discover unique and interesting moments that the festival may not provide (Wijnants et al., 2017).

Another significant social media strategy for music festivals is live streaming. According to Benford et al. (2023), a reason for the rising interest is the COVID pandemic. When events

closed, there was no other option, but to switch attention to YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram's freely available and easily accessible live-streaming options (Vandenberg et al., 2021). The authors also state that "to a certain extent, live streams made after the initial COVID-19 outbreak can produce new ritual activities, where the collective focus can turn into collective emotions (Vandenberg et al., 2021, p. 149). Nevertheless, with the advent of digital technology, notably live streaming, the concept of live music has grown to encompass the distribution of musical performances that no longer need audiences to be physically present in the same space and time (Jones & Bennett, 2015). Additionally, live streaming can be very useful for somebody who, for instance, prefers to remain at home and watch a show while connecting with others due to budgetary restraints or physical and cognitive disabilities (Hatch, 2020). However, live streaming presents a challenge in terms of re-establishing social connections and increasing the experience and feeling of musical space. While live performances provide a tangible encounter that engages the audience, the definition of "live" extends beyond real time performance to include social interactions and community building. Therefore, the legitimate nature and value of live music cannot be fully articulated without the incorporation of social networks and physical engagement (Zhao, 2022). According to Vandenberg et al. (2021), on the other hand, the feature of liveness is considered critical to the experience, as indicated by the significantly greater number of comments given during live streams compared to standard videos.

A notable example of live streaming as a social media strategy is Coachella. In 2023, the YouTube account of the music festival offers an all-access pass over six channels for an outstanding digital experience that includes live chat, in-stream purchases, and distinctive short content from popular artists and creators. The official live stream of Coachella was accessible to subscribers with reminders enabled and included all stages and acts throughout the weekend. Users were able to customize notifications for each show at their leisure (Coachella, 2023). Another example is the Tomorrowland festival. Already in 2016, the festival "reached 175 million unique viewers and 490 million touchpoints" (Bein, 2016, para. 2). The viewership and interaction happened because people were watching and connecting with the festival across multiple platforms like Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, or live streams. Snapchat and Facebook had the broadest impact (Bein, 2016).

Engaging with the festival brand on social media has a direct impact on developing an emotional tie to the event, which consequently has a significant effect on generating positive word-of-mouth (Hudson et al., 2015). According to this, Oklobdžija (2015) word-of-mouth is one of the essential components for festival marketing on social media but also the most challenging one since it cannot be controlled. There is proof showing that online community participants are more inclined to embrace similar attitudes and behaviors with other members, boosting the effect of user-generated information. (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2022). In addition, customer impact tends to be correlated with informative content uploaded on social media platforms as a sort of indirect involvement in engagement (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). Another social media strategy for creating positive word-of-mouth is influencer marketing, which music festivals employ to promote their unique brand. For this, Instagram was a pioneer in festival marketing (Malivuk, 2020).

With platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, festival organizers have the constant ability to connect with their worldwide audience. These platforms not only serve a purpose during the festival season but also afterward, as attendees can use them for entertainment and enjoyment, as well as to investigate other elements of the event (Holt, 2016). YouTube is abundant with festival-related content, and several events have dedicated official channels on the platform (Morey et al., 2014). Following the event, visitors actively participate in activities associated with the brand on the festival's Facebook account. Attendees also share their opinions and experiences with friends. These behaviors are driven mostly by a need for social contact and self-identity (Bottiglione & Hódi, 2017).

Numerous festival organizers have recognized the enormous opportunity of developing connections with digital forums utilizing online surveys to measure famous acts or new facility demands (Kerr & May, 2011). Also, virtual concerts are becoming increasingly popular, primarily due to the development of virtual reality glasses and other internet-based offerings that enable consumers to enjoy live concerts digitally (Charron, 2017). Related to virtual reality, music festivals take advantage of the usage of 3D technology. The Tomorrowland festival enables virtual integration to the point where for instance users can watch artists backstage before performing as well as discover the whole festival, from the camping to the music stages (Wilson, 2017). Also, the Coachella Festival launched an AR/VR application in 2017 that offered attendees an authentic AR experience. The mobile

application employed a welcome box for attendees as a tracking indicator, turning it into a little festival. It also included a VR option with free virtual tours aimed to engage participants before their actual festival experience (Rogers, 2018).

Despite TikTok's increasing importance as a social media platform and promotion channel, there is a remarkable lack of research concentrating on its implementation in music festival promotional strategies. This knowledge gap highlights the value and relevance of this research, which aims to examine and clarify new territory, providing significant insights and contributing to the understanding of efficient TikTok social media marketing tactics for festivals.

In conclusion, this chapter highlighted that social media strategies are essential for the success of music festivals since they improve marketing efforts, increase awareness, and encourage audience involvement. The usage of social media platforms enables festivals to interact with a global audience and carry out global campaigns, harnessing the power of the internet to connect with the audience in a variety of ways. The integration of social media communication not only shapes people's perceptions of the festival brand but also enables the establishment of long-term relationships and loyalty with the attendees. Interactive and user-generated content, for instance, fosters digital interactions and expands the festival's reach. Also, live streaming has grown in popularity, and it deepens the meaning of live music through the ability of remote audiences to view concerts in real time. Furthermore, the use of virtual and augmented reality enhances the vivid and personalized experiences accessible during music festivals. The value of word-of-mouth and positive brand interaction across social media platforms cannot be overstated, and methods such as influencer marketing contribute to developing beneficial buzz. Overall, the rapid development of digital technologies and social media has revolutionized the festival experience, highlighting the importance of personal stories, emotional bonds, and affection as well as meaningful interaction with other attendees.

## **4. Methodology**

In the methodology part, the following fields will be discussed. First, the research questions and defined goals that guide the investigation are addressed. After, the chosen method, the case study, is presented. The researcher concentrates on the DEICHBRAND Festival. That's why a short introduction to the festival is included. Furthermore, the data collection techniques, sampling techniques as well as the data analysis techniques are described. Finally, the researcher underlines the relevance of ethical issues in the research, preserving, for instance, the rights and confidentiality of participants.

### **4.1 Research Goals and Questions**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of TikTok as a promotional tool for music festivals, with a special focus on the case study of DEICHBRAND. The following goals are proposed to acquire extensive knowledge of TikTok's position as an effective promotion tool for music festivals:

- To determine whether TikTok content has contributed to increasing festival awareness among Generation Z;
- To determine whether TikTok content has contributed to increasing festival attendance among Generation Z;
- To examine the impact of festival-related content on Gen Z who did not attend and who attended, and assess whether TikTok content can drive interest and engagement from non-attendees and attendees;
- To analyze and explore the critical factors that influence the effectiveness of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok;
- To assess and understand the effects of integrating influencers and popular TikTok creators on the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional activities as well as to determine whether they can increase DEICHBRAND's promotional reach, raise awareness, and generate a larger audience to the festival;
- Investigate how the TikTok promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 is being planned, as well as identify the key trends and strategies that are likely to shape festival promotion in the future.

Overall, the aim is to offer insights and ideas that will assist festival organizers and marketing experts in leveraging TikTok as an effective promotional tool for music festivals, with a special emphasis on the case of DEICHBRAND, drawing good practices from their experience. Moreover, this study adds to the amount of knowledge on social media marketing and festival promotion, as well as aid in shaping future marketing strategies and methods in this field. Lastly, due to the existing research gap in this field, the goal is to contribute to academia by establishing a link between these two significant domains.

For achieving the mentioned goals, the study is guided by the following research questions:

- Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival awareness among Z Geners?
- Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival attendance by Z Geners?
- What was the impact of festival-related content on Z Geners who did not attend and who attended the festival?
- What are the critical factors shaping the success of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok?
- How does the integration of influencers and popular TikTok creators impact the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional efforts?
- How is the promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 being planned?

## **4.2 Case Study as Research Method**

As stated previously, the current study seeks to comprehend if TikTok is an effective promotional tool for music festivals with a particular focus on the DEICHBRAND festival. As a result, a qualitative approach was favored. In the present investigation, the researcher chose the case study method to gain an in depth-understanding of the case DEICHBRAND. This section clarifies what a case study is and why this approach has been chosen, as well as how it was applied to achieve the research goals.

Case study methodology “allows investigator to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (Yin, 2009, p. 4). Also, Baumgarth et al. (2009) describe it as a method of investigating and describing a specific real-life incident where the goal is to precisely capture specific circumstances, provide an in-depth description, and clearly present it. Gerring (2004) defines a case study as “an intensive study of a single unit for the

purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units” (p. 342). Regarding criteria, it can be said that “The first criterion should be to maximize what we can learn” (Stake, 1995, p. 4). Also, “Context-dependent knowledge and experience are at the very heart of expert activity. Such knowledge and expertise also lie at the center of the case study” (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 303). According to Yin (2009), the case study will be beneficial when addressing the “how” and “why” questions about the occurrence (p. 4).

Regarding data gathering, numerous types are conceivable, including quantitative and qualitative data, which can be analyzed and evaluated using multiple methodologies to provide a multidimensional representation of the individual case situation (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2009; Baumgarth et al., 2009). According to Creswell (2009), a case study is an appropriate strategy when the data collecting type involves, for instance, audio-visual materials such as videos.

The case study is distinguished by a high degree of adaptability to the subject of research. It is especially appropriate for research topics in marketing and management that focus on new phenomena (Bonoma, 1985). The method's main advantages are its high level of realism and innovation in the outcomes. Also, its “unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence-documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations” (Yin, 2009, p. 11). The biggest disadvantages are the complexity of the conclusions gained and the high expense of data collecting and evaluation (Baumgarth et al., 2009). Also, there is a restricted foundation for scientific generalization based on a single instance observation (Yin, 2009).

Concerning quality criteria, authors state construct validity, internal validity, and external validity as the central ones (Baumgarth et al., 2009; Yin, 1994). Moreover, the case study is a highly adaptive approach in empirical social research compared to other methodologies. However, to produce scientifically confirmed conclusions, the researcher must ensure that the data is robust and comparable. This provides a difficulty for the researcher. Statistical procedures are not used to validate data in qualitative research, as they are in quantitative research. The researcher becomes the sole assurance of the results' trustworthiness. They must conform to the specified methodology consistently and the researcher must critically review the findings on a regular basis (Baumgarth et al., 2009).

This investigation focused on a single case study as an empirical basis. The distinction between single and multiple case studies is that in the latter, the researcher investigates several cases to understand their similarities and contrasts (Stake, 1995). Nevertheless, single case studies can provide a better understanding of the issue under examination (Dyer & Wilkins, 1991). Considering that the chosen field is relatively unexplored in marketing research, with the added benefit of providing unique access to specific findings of practical significance, the single case arose as a suitable method for identifying the complex challenges and potential solutions within the chosen field. The case study on DEICHBRAND was used to identify fundamental circumstances and starting points for dealing with strategies in festival marketing on the platform TikTok, as well as good practices and relevant guidelines. The festival provided an accessible case to study since it enabled the researcher to focus resources and efforts on a manageable size phenomenon. The result was more efficient regarding the use of time and resources when collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. Even though the researcher acknowledges the limitations of single case studies, it is expected that the findings from the DEICHBRAND festival can be adapted to other music festivals with similar characteristics.

### **4.3 DEICHBRAND**

DEICHBRAND was not only chosen as a case study due to its importance in the German music festival landscape and the changing trends in the field of entertainment, but also, the researcher picked this case regarding inspiration through various published articles. For instance, from TikTok (2022b), in which TikTok and CTS/Eventim, a ticketing and live entertainment company based in Germany, announced a partnership together for two of the biggest festivals in Germany, DEICHBRAND and Rock am Ring in 2022. Through the partnership, they stated the aim of offering the festival experience to the global community on TikTok. With content such as behind-the-scenes videos, live programs, playlists, and hashtag campaigns, the platform intends to use the social media platform to connect performers and fans, thereby broadening the accessibility of live music experiences. In addition, this partnership provides significant insights into the constant evolution of marketing and branding methods used by music festivals, as well as indicating the profound cultural effects of the integration of digital platforms in linking performers and fans, which is what makes the study of this area so significant.

The DEICHBRAND festival publishes yearly magazines which are available for free as an eBook version on their website. It contains a variety of information such as interviews with artists, behind-the-scenes footage, and details about the upcoming festival. The researcher used the information from that magazine and the festival's website as documental sources for the explanation of the case.

The DEICHBRAND Festival was established in 2005 and is one of the biggest festivals in Germany, as well as one of the top 5 most well-known national festivals. Furthermore, the festival lives under the motto "one festival.family.one love" (Deichbrand Magazine, 2022, p. 6). By now, it presents more than 130 bands on six different stages. Besides, variety of genres are presented such as Indie/Alternative, Punk, Techno, Electro, Hip-Hop, Rock, Hardrock/Metal, German Rap, and Pop. However, next to live performances and concerts, DEICHBRAND offers a variety of activities, for instance, swimming in the pool, a flunkyball tournament, or poetry slam. Also, the festival has the ISLE OF CONTENT, which is a place for around 100 content creators with fast Wi-Fi, a whirlpool and much more. In total, the festival ground offers a capacity for around 265.000 people (Deichbrand Magazine, 2022).

The festival states that they present one of Germany's most successful festival accounts on TikTok, including exclusive content, interviews with festival attendees, photos, and more. They point out that "For some time now, we have been using TikTok in particular as an important communication channel" (Deichbrand Magazine, 2022, p. 51). In total, the DEICHBRAND festival is active on the most relevant social media, counting 92,4 K followers on Instagram, 79,7 K on TikTok, 255.166 K on Facebook and 2140 K on YouTube on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Moreover, the festival provides an application with 30.000 users online each year.

DEICHBRAND brings improvements and innovations on a continuous basis, for instance, "Talking Trees", which is a place of retreat with hammocks, and more but most important it has an "Awareness Team" to look for issues that attendees may have encountered at the festival, such as prejudice, racism, and others (Deichbrand Magazine, 2022, p. 52). Also, there is the Green Camping as an option for camping with a particular focus on environment protection (Deichbrand, n.d.)

Regarding sponsorship, DEICHBRAND aims to increase the brand's tangibility, hence improving the overall festival experience. It is essential to cultivate and partnership-based cooperation on an equal basis. The festival seeks long-term cooperation in which partners become vital members of the DEICHBRAND community. Billy Boy and Red Bull are among the first sponsors. Furthermore, ALDI is one of the principal sponsors. Importantly, the supermarket has its own store on the festival grounds, making it one of the largest ALDI stores (Deichbrand Magazine, 2022).

#### **4.4 Data Collection Techniques**

The researcher worked with qualitative data since the aim of this research was to investigate the effectiveness of TikTok as a promotional tool for music festivals, focusing on the DEICHBRAND case. Creswell (2009) describes qualitative research as:

“exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data” (p. 4).

As supporting methods for the case study, the researcher chose a TikTok video content analysis as well as expert interviews. The interviews were conducted first to get more information, insights, and inspiration for the content analysis. After collecting data using both methods, the interviews also served to provide in-depth answers to the research questions. Both research methods were not used in a sequential, but in a “simultaneously (conducted at the same time)” way (Morse, 2010, p. 484) to enhance each other’s effectiveness and interpretation of the data, and to finally propose answers to the research goals and questions.

##### **4.4.1 Data Collection Techniques for Expert Interviews**

Starting with the expert interview, it is a valuable and effective way to collect beneficial data. The method is distinguished by its exploratory nature, which enables researchers to delve further into a subject and gather credible inside knowledge about a specific topic (Bogner et al., 2009). In general, “experts have specific knowledge about an issue, development, or event” (Von Soest, 2022, p. 278). It is the specific knowledge of the social context in which the expert operates (Gläser & Laudel, 2010). In this research, it is the

knowledge and expertise about social media marketing (in particular TikTok), music (in particular music festivals), and Generation Z. The interviewees were chosen for their proximity to the mentioned topics and because of their experience towards them.

The researcher collected primary data with the expert interviews since the original data comes from direct interviewing and interacting with the experts. Semi-structured interviews were conducted. They were organized with:

“clear themes, keywords, and established questions while simultaneously allowing for follow-up enquiries and probes. In this way, they represent a useful combination of structure and flexibility, and facilitate both comparability and context sensitivity” (Von Soest, 2022, p. 280).

However, it must be noted that semi-structured interviews “are time-consuming, labor intensive, and require interviewer sophistication” (Adams, 2015, p. 493).

Table 1 presents an alignment between the research questions, interview questions, and literature or explanation. It must be noted that the interview questions were summarized in topics, since each interview followed a unique script, personalized according to the different experts and job functions. Also, the researcher added some questions that don't correlate with the research questions but focused on other important topics, such as the outlook for social media strategies, or potential challenges in the chosen research topic, thus taking advantage of these opportunities to get insights from relevant experts.

**Table 1.** *Correspondence between Research Questions, Topics for Interview Questions, and Literature/Explanation.*

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Topics for Interview Questions</b>	<b>Literature/Explanation</b>
1. Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival awareness among Z Geners?	TikTok’s impact on festival awareness	The usage of social media strategies for music festivals is a significant method for raising awareness (Kerr & May, 2011). To underline this, Octarina and Kurniawans's (2021) research points out that social media has been the most successful distribution platform in raising awareness of music festivals.
2. Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival attendance by Z Geners?	TikTok’s role in increasing festival attendance	Here, the chosen interview questions seek to elicit opinions from experts in the field on TikTok's influence on Gen Z attendance and its efficiency in driving event engagement.
3. What was the impact of festival-related content on Z Geners who did not attend and who attended the festival?	Impact of TikTok festival-related content on attendees and non-attendees	Especially for Generation Z music festival attendees, social media platforms can have a substantial impact on the experience for sharing pictures and videos Iványi (2021). Also, Attendees share their opinions and experiences with friends. These behaviors are driven mostly by a need for social contact and self-identity (Bottiglione & Hódi, 2017).
4. What are the critical factors shaping the success of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok?	Evaluating partnership success  Reach and Engagement Metrics  Brand and Perception Image	With the integration of an outstanding festival experience but also strategic social networking, long-term relationships with attendees can be developed (Hudson et al., 2015; Zhao, 2022). Effective marketing serves as the foundation of any successful festival, since reaching and interacting with

		potential attendees is essential to accomplishing objectives (Oklobđžija, 2015).
5. How does the integration of influencers and popular TikTok creators impact the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional efforts?	Promotion Effectiveness Impact of Content by Influencers	One social media strategy for creating positive word-of-mouth is influencer marketing, which music festivals employ to promote their unique brand (Malivuk, 2020).
6. How is the promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 being planned?	General Strategy Content Themes Future Promotion Strategies	The interview questions were intended to gather information regarding the promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023, including the involvement of TikTok, providing a comprehensive view to satisfy the research question's inquiry into the festival's promotional strategy.

The interviews took place between May and June 2023. The experts were approached through email contact. For instance, the DEICHBRAND website provides a whole list of the team and their tasks, as well as the email contact. But also, professional networks such as LinkedIn were helpful to get in touch with suitable interview partners. The final sample is discussed in chapter 4.5.1.

Since the interviews were either conducted through Zoom or phone calls, the researcher recorded the audio with a second device for posterior analysis. It must be mentioned that there was one exception. The DEICHBRAND contact was only available via email, since the festival was upcoming by the time of data collection, and an internal approval was necessary due to data protection. Here, the researcher sent a Word document with the questions through mail and got it back with the answers. The interviews had a duration between 20 and 30 minutes and followed semi-structured scripts including 7 to 10 questions, personalized according to each interviewee. The scripts of the interviews can be found in Appendices A to E.

It must be mentioned that the interviews took place in the German language. This conclusion occurred based on the target audience for the interviews. Since the native language of the experts and the researcher is German, the exchange may be more reliable, authentic,

meaningful, and detailed. It also may enable the interview partners to share their thoughts and opinions with more ease and in a comfortable atmosphere. Lastly, because the research was aimed at a specific German festival and audience, it seemed to be more culturally appropriate and suitable for the exploration of the research issue.

Baumgarth et al. (2009) describe the advantages and disadvantages of interviews. Regarding strengths, interviews focus on the case's theme, are insightful, and provide information about connections. For the weaknesses, bias due to incorrect questions or to the interviewee's subjective perspective can appear, as well as inaccuracy due to poor reproduction since answers are influenced by the interviewer.

Finally, with the expert interviews, the researcher's goal was to get an in-depth understanding and different viewpoints and opinions towards for instance TikTok, as a promotional tool, Generation Z but also strategies of music festivals for the usage of TikTok. Finally, all interviewees agreed to an informed consent form before the interview. An empty form as an example can be found in the Appendix F.

#### **4.4.2 Data Collection Techniques for Content Analysis**

The content analysis is "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1952, p. 18). Moreover, Krippendorff (2018) defines the content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 18). Besides, content analysis not only focuses on the text, but also delves into the evaluation of social realities. Additionally, it explores both communication but also fixed communication, which can be communication in a recorded form (Früh, 2007). Lastly, Krippendorff (2018) mentions that content analysis offers new perspectives, improves an investigator's comprehension of a specific phenomenon, or directs practical actions. He also points out that replicability and validity are crucial for the content analysis. "For a process to be replicable, it must be governed by rules that are explicitly stated and applied equally to all units of analysis" (p. 19). For validity, "the researcher's processes of sampling, reading, and analyzing messages ultimately satisfy external criteria" (p. 19) is demanded. On the other hand, Prasad (2008) states that

“Content analysis conforms to three basic principles of scientific method. They are:

1. Objectivity: Which means that the analysis is pursued on the basis of explicit rules, which enable different researchers to obtain the same results from the same documents or messages.
2. Systematic: The inclusion or exclusion of content is done according to some consistently applied rules whereby the possibility of including only materials which support the researcher’s ideas – is eliminated.
3. Generalizability: The results obtained by the researcher can be applied to other similar situations.” (p. 3).

The purpose of analyzing the content of DEICHBRAND’s TikTok account is to extract significant insights, understand the festival's strategy, and contribute to a greater knowledge of the account's goals, communication, and audience engagement while getting solutions for the research questions. The content analysis seemed suitable due to the ability to evaluate all types of recorded communication. TikTok videos represent the recorded communication in this study. However, besides the main object/source of the content analysis, the DEICHBRAND account, other features were playing a role in the content analysis, which will be discussed in Chapter 4.5.2.

The researcher collected data from the DEICHBRAND’s TikTok account for the content analysis, since the content, in this case videos, came directly from the account. Moreover, the content analysis can be applied in three different ways: “conventional, directed, or summative. All three approaches are used to interpret meaning from the content of text data and, hence, adhere to the naturalistic paradigm” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1277). Here, the directed approach was applied since it “starts with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1277). The structure of the category system was oriented by the technique of Mayring (2015), in which the category system includes three components: the category definition, an anchor example for the category, and coding rules. For the category definition, the researcher explained the video components that come within a category. Regarding the anchor example, the researcher either explicated text passages from the interview or video segments but also appropriate information from the literature review to give examples but also explanations for a category. Finally, the coding rules implement specific guidelines for individual categories where there may be separation issues. It should be emphasized that in this study, coding rules and the associated categories were integrated together. Additionally, for the coding, the scaling structuring was applied to provide an overview of the internal structure by evaluating

different categories with their expressions on a scale. This study's scale levels are nominal and numerical scaled expressions. The term nominal refers to the logical exclusion of expressions. Yes and no, or a limited range of alternative expressions. (Mayring, 2015). The other scaling, numeric values are in this case referring to numbers such as Likes and Followers (Creswell & Creswell, 2005). Lastly, a trial run was carried out after the category system was completed. This determined whether the categories were chosen correctly or whether parts in the category system needed to be updated for greater extraction efficiency. After the trial run of 30 videos, the researcher made some modifications, and the final category system applied can be found in the chapter 4.6.2.

Considering limitations, the researcher experienced some disadvantages in content analysis. Regarding objectivity, since the researcher decided on the suitable categories, it involved a subjective judgment. Regarding systematic, unintentionally, researchers could favor or emphasize content that aligns with their own viewpoints or research goals, thereby adding bias to the analysis. As a result, the study put a special emphasis on information transparency.

## **4.5 Data Sampling Techniques**

As pointed out before, this research used a combination of content analysis and expert interviews to gather insights into the impact of TikTok promotion on DEICHBRAND's audience and promotional approaches. Therefore, the research integrated different samples for the different methods.

### **4.5.1 Data Sampling Techniques for Expert Interviews**

Experts' interviews were used to gain beneficial knowledge and expert viewpoints. Five experts were chosen due to their expertise in either music festival promotion, DEICHBRAND, TikTok (in general social media marketing), or the Gen Z audience. A purposive sampling was used, with professionals who have appropriate expertise and experience connected to the research questions being considered. Even though all the interviews focus on TikTok Branding for music festivals in general, it must be noted that one of the interviews (DEICHBRAND) focused especially on the DEICHBRAND case. The sample will be discussed in the following part by explaining why the researcher chose these interviewees.

- **DEICHBRAND:** Jule Benja Heidisch (Online Marketing Management & Influencer Relations), because she can provide firsthand experience in using TikTok as a promotional tool for DEICHBRAND. The interview partner may offer concrete examples of how TikTok content has enhanced festival awareness and attendance. She may also explain strategies and approaches used on TikTok, and share observations on the impact of festival-related content, particularly Gen Z. Also, she may point out any challenges or limitations they encountered when utilizing TikTok as a promotional tool, as well as share thoughts about future trends and strategies that will define TikTok festival promotion.
- **TikTok Expert:** Adil Sbai (CEO of WeCreate, a TikTok Content Creator Agency in Germany) to get in-depth knowledge about TikTok as a promotional tool. The expert can provide a deep understanding of the functions of TikTok and its effectiveness in promoting events. Also, he knows the benefits of TikTok strategies and how they can have positive effects on different topics such as brand awareness as well as point out measurement techniques for the evaluation and practical advice.
- **Influencer:** Manju (over 3 million Followers on TikTok) was considered because she already promoted a music festival. With this interview, the researcher can get suggestions on how to attract a larger audience and develop interesting content that is appealing to TikTok users. But also, beneficial viewpoints regarding experiences, and insights into music event sponsorship, the impact of TikTok content on festival awareness and attendance, effective promotion strategies, success stories, and potential challenges in attracting Generation Z through TikTok can be explored.
- **Music Industry Expert:** The chosen expert is the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner to gain a broader point of view about for instance TikTok's efficiency as a promotional medium, as well as how music festivals can use the platform to reach their target demographic. The interview partner may additionally offer observations and insights regarding broader industry trends and movements in the use of TikTok for event and festival marketing.
- **ALDI:** ALDI was chosen since it is one of the main sponsors of the DEICHBRAND festival. Here, the Teamlead of Social Media Marketing and Communications (short: Teamlead Social Media) was interviewed. In addition, the supermarket is active on TikTok itself. That's why the researcher wanted to gain knowledge about their

expertise in using TikTok for promotional activities, engagement with Gen Z, and contributions to improving the overall festival experience as well as their goals for the partnership with DEICHBRAND.

The researcher also tried to reach out to the Head of Corporate Communication from Eventim and the Global Music Operations Business Development Lead of TikTok but was unable to obtain their collaboration.

#### **4.5.2 Data Sampling Techniques for Content Analysis**

The content analysis was divided into four different parts:

##### **1. DEICHBRAND Sampling:**

- For a general overview, a mixed sampling approach was conducted, combining convenience and purposive sampling. The researcher looked randomly nearly every week into the DEICHBRAND's TikTok account from the end of June 2023 until the start of August (after the festival was finished), did screenshots from the increase or decrease from the follower and likes in total to investigate the growth or decline over the time directly before and after the festival took place. It was a mixed sample, since the DEICHBRAND account is public which means easily accessible and available (convenience) and purposive, since the account is the case of the research, and its characteristics are valuable for the research questions.
- The researcher selected videos from the DEICHBRAND TikTok account from June and July of 2022 and 2023. This enabled a comparison of promotional content and engagement across two years. A systematic sampling strategy was used to select videos from the given timeframe at regular intervals. The specific timeframe of the sample was chosen due to the festival's occurrence in July. In total, the researcher analyzed 153 TikTok videos of the DEICHBRANDS account.

- ##### **2. Influencer Sampling:**
- Regarding the influencer analysis, the researcher employed a random sampling technique and selected five influencers who actively promoted DEICHBRAND 2023 through their TikTok content and profile. The researcher searched on TikTok for #deichbrand 2023 and picked some influencers that used the

hashtag. The number of videos to analyze depended on how many videos the influencers uploaded. Since the selection of influencers posted around three videos, the researcher chose to analyze three videos of each. This sample is significant because DEICHBRAND is using influencer marketing as a promotion strategy. The observation of the posts took place at the same time as the content analysis of the DEICHBRAND account, which was in June and July 2023. But also, May was considered since some influencers started the promotion before.

## **4.6 Data Analysis Techniques**

In this section, the data analysis techniques for the interviews with experts and for the TikTok publications will be presented.

### **4.6.1 Data Analysis Techniques for Expert Interviews**

For the analysis of the interviews, the researcher implemented the conventional analysis, meaning “coding categories are derived directly from the text data” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1277). Also, the researcher followed the steps described by Creswell (2009).

Step 1: Data collection and preparation for the analysis. In this step, the researcher transcribed and posteriorly translated the interviews. It must be noted that, considering the language barrier, the researcher didn’t transcribe the interviews word by word but only the most significant excerpts gave the key answers to each interview question.

Step 2: Examine all the information. A starting point was to gain an overview and understanding of the material and reflecting on its significance.

Step 3: Begin a comprehensive examination with a coding procedure. Coding is the “analytical process of organizing raw data into themes that assist in interpreting the data” (Baralt, 2011, p. 222). For this, the researcher designed “codes that address a larger theoretical perspective in the research” (Creswell, 2009, p. 187).

Step 4: “Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis” (Creswell, 2009, p. 189). In this case, the researcher chose

to create themes to have a more open thematic analysis, since no previous subcategories or values were built.

For this step, the interviews were transferred to MaxQDA, a software that “helps researchers systematically evaluate and interpret qualitative texts” (Creswell, 2009, p. 188). The findings were developed by building labels in advance towards the research questions. With this, the researcher was able to code all the interviews separately and had an overview of all the labels with suitable expert quotes afterwards. Table 2 gives an overview of the different themes/labels:

**Table 2.** *Correspondence between Research Questions and Coding Analysis Themes.*

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Labels (Themes)</b>
1. Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival awareness among Z Geners?	Festival Awareness
2. Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival attendance by Z Geners?	Increase Festival Attendance
3. What was the impact of festival-related content on Z Geners who did not attend and who attended the festival?	Impact of festival-related content Sublabels: Impact Attendees & Impact Non-Attendees
4. What are the critical factors shaping the success of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok?	Reach and Engagement Metrics Brand Perception and Image
5. How does the integration of influencers and popular TikTok creators impact the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND’s promotional efforts?	Impact of Content by Influencers
6. How is the promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 being planned?	Content Themes General Strategy

The researcher also intentionally constructed three more labels: TikTok, Challenges, and Outlook, independently from the research questions. This approach was chosen to point out and highlight crucial ideas that would have been overlooked if the study questions were carefully followed. By creating these labels, the researcher wanted to, first, delve deeply into the platform in general to give a little introduction about TikTok. The label Challenges was

used to draw attention to possible problems and obstacles people may face by using TikTok as a promotion platform. Lastly, the Outlook label allowed a futuristic viewpoint, allowing for a reflection of prospects and trends related to TikTok's role as a promotional platform. The codebook of MaxQDA can be found in Appendix G.

Step 5: Data was demonstrated in a discussion that includes an in-depth exploration of multiple topics exhibiting different perspectives of individuals, as well as quotations. (Creswell, 2009). The final step was the interpretation of the data, which happened at the same time as the discussion.

In conclusion, the same qualities as mentioned in the content analysis must be addressed which are reliability, validity, and generalizability.

#### **4.6.2 Data Analysis Techniques for Content Analysis**

For the data analysis, the categories were structured towards the research questions and based on the literature review. Also, the answers from the expert interviews were used as inspiration and guidance for the coding. In addition, a deductive technique was used to build categories. The categories were built and specified before the study of the videos, which enabled the gathering of relevant data from the material. The categories provided a foundation for evaluating the material's underlying structure (Mayring, 2015). Furthermore, the categories were placed into a category system. If further differentiation of the material was needed, the categories were divided into further characteristics (subcategories).

The order of the categories is random. For the analysis, the researcher put all the information in a Microsoft Excel table, giving each video a number, mentioning the published date and all the designed categories. After the pre-test, emergent categories might have appeared, "With emergent coding, categories are established following some preliminary examination of the data" (Stemler, 2000, p. 2). Table 3 presents the different categories towards the research questions and literature to provide an understanding for the decision of the categories.

**Table 3.** Correspondence between Research Questions, Categories, and Literature/Explanation.

<b>Categories &amp; Subcategories</b>	<b>Literature/Explanation</b>
<b>Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival awareness among Z Geners?</b>	
Interaction	Is one of the most important categories regarding the research questions, as this can illustrate the audience's awareness and engagement. Users are fundamental to the platform with their (inter)actions, such as uploading, commenting, liking, and sharing content (Omar & Dequan, 2020). Also, one of the most essential key indicators of content marketing success is customer satisfaction (Merdzanovic et al., 2023).
Branding	A recognizable feature in the video. When branding is well performed, a post is welcomed by the TikTok community, which strengthens the platform's algorithm (Hesse et al., 2019).
<b>Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival attendance by Z Geners? →</b> Categories cannot answer this	
<b>What was the impact of festival-related content on Z Geners who did not attend and who attended the festival?</b>	
Interaction	See above
Video Themes	The purpose is to review the topic in the video. Suitable themes were mentioned in the interviews: "Content from last year, content about what to expect, line-up Teasers" were mentioned in the interviews (Manju, Appendix B).
Presenter	The video shows a person who provides content to the audience. To highlight this "We have also noticed that it is more effective to have a face as a festival, in order to have the direct (personal) reference to the brand on the For You Page" (Heidisch, Appendix C).
<b>What are critical factors shaping the success of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok?</b>	
Interaction	See above
<b>How does the integration of influencers and popular TikTok creators impact the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional efforts?</b>	
Interaction	See above
Presenter	See above
Video Themes	See above
Promotion	This category was only analyzed in the influencer analysis. Different options are possible such as ticket promotion or the festival in general. The primary objective of influencer marketing is to motivate the community to act by interacting with goods and services (Seeger & Kost, 2019).

<b>How is the promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 being planned?</b>	
Tone of Voice	With the usage of natural language, brands can give their social media presence more personality and familiarity, creating a voice for their brand that is more welcoming and approachable (Du Plessis, 2015).
Type of Content Subcategory: Information  Subcategory: Entertainment	Pansari and Kumar (2017) state that customer impact tends to be correlated with informative content uploaded on social media platforms as a sort of indirect involvement in engagement.  This subcategory is intended to illustrate whether a video is enjoyable and entertaining to the audience. Jorgenson (2022) highlights “With “Entertainment” and “Dance” as the two most popular content categories on the app (p.25) Also, Entertainment is one of the biggest motivations why Gen Z uses TikTok (Falgoust et al., 2022).
Video Themes	See above
Authenticity	Generation Z prefers to portray authentic and candid versions of themselves” (Kotler et al., 2021, p.26).). A lot of DEICHBRANDS videos show festival attendees in their behavior at the festival. With this an authentic atmosphere is given.
Storytelling	When storytelling performs well, a post is welcomed by the TikTok community, which boosts the platform's algorithm (Hesse et al., 2019).
Technical Resource	With all the possibilities that TikTok can offer, this category was built to understand if the festival uses different types of effects for content creation.
Sound	The video contains music or background sounds “music is the backbone of almost every single TikTok video that is made” (Jorgenson, 2022, p.25). The closeness of the music is anchored in the root of the platform (Sbai, Appendix A).
Image	This category was built to understand if DEICHBRAND uses additional resources to highlight its content

To comprehend the coding process of the different categories and subcategories, Table 4 presents an overview of the coding procedure.

**Table 4.** *Video Content Analysis Category System.*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>	<b>Coding</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Interaction</b>	Likes	Numbers	Numbers can vary depending on the video
<b>Interaction</b>	Views	Numbers	See above
<b>Interaction</b>	Shares	Numbers	See above
<b>Interaction</b>	Saved	Numbers	See above
<b>Interaction</b>	Comments	Numbers	See above
<b>Type of Content</b>	Entertainment	Yes/No	Behind-the-Scenes Stories from attendees
<b>Type of Content</b>	Information	Yes/No	Informational content does not illustrate the videos, where festival attendees are answering funny quiz questions. It is content such as presenting the festival line-up or merchandising announcement.
<b>Presenter</b>	X	Channel Host, Festival Attendees, Influencer, None	Channel Host: A presenter, which can be seen in the channel mainly on the videos.  Festival Attendees: Video shows festival attendees  Influencer: An Influencer presents the video  None: No presenter or voice
<b>Storytelling</b>	X	Yes/No	Videos can present content such as stories from festival attendees or an artist's performance.
<b>Authenticity</b>	X	Yes/No	Many DEICHBRAND videos show festival attendees in their behavior at the festival. This creates an authentic atmosphere.
<b>Branding</b>	X	Hashtag, Tagging, Link, Other, None	Examples for the variables can be:  Hashtag: #deichbrand  Tagging: brand or festival artist account  Link: festivals website or playlist  Others: a specific Phrasing
<b>Technical Resource</b>	X	Variable: Naming the filter, effect, or edit program	This category can vary in each video.

<b>Video Theme</b>	X	Variable: Festival Hacks, Music, Attendee Story, DEICHRBAND, Throwback, TikTok Trend, Others	Each video can cover different themes. Also, this category may have more than one theme. Content from last year, content about what to expect, and line-up teasers were mentioned in the interviews (Sbai, Appendix A; Manju, Appendix B).
<b>Mediation</b>	Tone of Voice	informational, humoristic, inspirational (Hanbury, 2011), no voice	Informational: Updates on the line-up Humoristic: Interaction with festival attendees Inspirational: Interview of artists and their journeys No Voice
<b>Mediation</b>	Image	Yes/No	Additional material such as images and statistics is supporting the content.
<b>Mediation</b>	Sound	Song, Voice, Other, None	A video contains music or background sounds.
<b>Promotion</b>	X	Variable: Tickets, Line-Up, DEICHBRAND 2023, None	Tickets: A link to the webpage is included. Line-Up: Upcoming Artists from DEICHBRAND are announced. DEICHBRAND 2023: Information specific to the festival, such as its dates or attractions.

The small table for a general overview with DEICHBRAND's likes and follower increase, or decrease was summarized by pointing out the significant highlights.

The researcher chose Excel as the preferred tool for conducting the content analysis with categorized data because of its flexibility and user-friendly interface. Excel allowed to organize and handle data with greater effectiveness, making it accessible to assign categories to different components. During the evaluation procedure, the researcher decided to use Excel's pivot table function. Pivot tables were a robust tool to summarize and analyze the categorized information, allowing the researcher to extract significant insights, discover trends, and draw conclusions from the data. The combination of Excel's organizational tools with the analytical capability of pivot tables improved the productivity and effectiveness of the researcher's content analysis effort.

## 4.7 Ethics

In this section, the ethical concerns that underlie the research process will be addressed, revealing how subjectivity, permission, and privacy were carefully managed to maintain the validity and reliability of the study.

Regarding the interviews, a crucial bias is subjectivity, since “The information provided is always subjective and colored by the experts’ worldviews, interests, employment status, and cognitive abilities” (Von Soest, 2022, p. 281). Since the researcher interviewed five different experts, different points of views were analyzed, thus reducing the individual bias. Also, unique interview protocols for each interview partner were designed. Before conducting the interview, each interview partner signed the informed consent form and gave permission to participate in the study. Here, the researcher made clear what the research topic was and that:

- The participation of the experts was voluntary, and the interview partner could interrupt and stop the interview at any time;
- The interview was going to be recorded, and a transcript would be produced;
- The name and job description will be mentioned in the transcript, the contributions will not be anonymous, and quotes will be used directly;
- The data will be used only for academic purposes;
- The audio will be destroyed after the thesis defense.

Regarding the content analysis, some ethical concerns could be regarding privacy or the potential misuse of sensitive information. Since the DEICHBRAND account is a public account a permission for the video content analysis was not necessary. Nevertheless, even if the videos are public, the researcher kept in mind the privacy expectations of the people shown in them. Here, the researcher avoided publishing personal information. Also, for sensitive information, the researcher respected the content and intention by trying to avoid misrepresenting or altering the content's original meaning. Instead, interpreting the content within its original context as well as taking the intended purpose into consideration was the goal during the analysis. Lastly, regarding the mentioned principles for the content analysis, the researcher showed replicability by pointing out the rules and explaining the analysis procedures in depth. Validity was considered since the researcher gave an in-depth explanation about the sampling technique, the coding process as well as a pilot testing before

the actual content analysis. Regarding objectivity, it was already mentioned that subjectivity impacted the design of the categories. Nevertheless, the category system could be used by other researchers for comparative purposes. A systematic procedure was given by the category system. Also, the results of the study can be translated or applicable to other situations (Prasad, 2008).

## 5. Findings

The next chapter presents the core results from the expert interviews as well as the content analysis of DEICHBRAND's TikTok account and the other mentioned samples.

### 5.1 Findings of Expert Interviews

This chapter will present the results by pointing out each research question with the chosen labels (themes) and summarizing relevant quotes from the five expert interviews. The interviews were analyzed with MaxQDA, a qualitative data analysis software. The researcher gathered essential findings and effectively responded to the research topic through a process of labeling information (see Chapter 4.6.1). All five interview transcripts can be found in the Appendices A to E.

The label TikTok showed a variety of significant facts about TikTok's effectiveness for music festivals. The platform's strong festival promotion is highlighted by the observation that artists and influencers actively promote these events (Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner, Appendix D). According to the expert, one reason why the strategy of using TikTok seemed to be successful is due to TikTok's broad reach, particularly among the Generation Z audience, and the platform's possibility of livestream use to provide an immerse festival experience. In comparison to other platforms, TikTok's advertising potential was further emphasized by its cost-effectiveness, native advertising capabilities, and precise audience targeting, leading to a powerful tool for promoting festival-related content (Sbai, Appendix A; Manju, Appendix B). TikTok's connection to music emphasizes its ability to push creators and artists into the charts, demonstrating its substantial impact on music festivals (Sbai, Appendix A).

According to the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner, the platform's demographic constantly extends, although it remains connected to Generation Z. However, the expert Sbai pointed out that "the biggest growth is in Gen Y, and we can see that in the statistics. Today, Germany has around 20 million users, which means it can't just be young people anymore" Heidisch highlighted "TikTok is the most effective platform for quickly reaching a large audience" (Appendix C). These findings emphasize TikTok's effectiveness as a

festival promotional tool, as seen by its unique qualities, demographic presence, and potential for effective branding and marketing initiatives.

The first research question - Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival awareness among Z Geners? - was explored with the label Festival Awareness. To begin with, Heidisch, highlighted that through TikTok, DEICHBRAND has “the most viral content, which has given us the most awareness since we started using it”. Heidisch also stated that with TikTok “Our main goal is to build awareness of our festival, and to transfer our image of the “Festival an der Nordsee” to younger people, and ultimately encourage them to attend the festival in long term”. Another insight into the rise of festival awareness was given by the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner, “Festivals create their own unique hashtags (#festivalname) and actively promote them for almost three months”. With multiple possibilities under this hashtag, for instance a live stream, the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner stated, “This strategy attempts to attract more participants and broaden the festival’s reach beyond the traditional audience, with a special focus on the Gen Z audience, which is highly engaged on TikTok”. Moreover, creators attempt to increase the festival’s awareness. Manju pointed out that with her collaboration with a brand for the festival Lollapalooza, “I was asked to promote a specific playlist, created for the festival, featuring the artists performing to raise awareness”.

Regarding the question if TikTok has contributed to increase festival awareness among Generation Z, Manju “would answer the question with a clear yes, simply because with all social media platforms, one never really feels disconnected or offline. If these platforms are used effectively, a massive influx of videos can be generated, enabling users to actively engage in the entire festival experience”. Also, she mentioned that “TikTok content generates such a boost because users are confronted with so much information in a short period of time. This rapid dissemination allows users to swiftly grasp what type of festival it is, its location, and the acts performing”. In general, Manju said, “I’ve never seen so much festival promotion as I have this year, or in the last few weeks”. In summary, these results point out that TikTok contributed to increasing festival awareness among Generation Z, by using different stakeholders for promotion, establishing, for instance, unique hashtags or livestreams, and achieving a fast reach of festival information.

The second research question - Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival attendance by Z Geners ? - was analyzed with the label Increase Festival Attendance. The Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner said, “It’s evident that the Gen Z audience, which is highly active on TikTok, is increasingly attending festivals that are promoted through the platform”. Manju stated “Over the past two years, I have noticed that festivals have become an integral part of our generation. With TikTok as an active player, I do believe that a much larger audience of younger people is being reached”. However, Heidisch said about DEICHBRAND in particular, “We cannot yet determine the extent TikTok has contributed to our increased visitor numbers, but that was not our goal in the first place”. Finally, these findings show that according to the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner and Manju, TikTok content seems to have increased the attendance of Generation Z for festivals. Still, if the platform increased DEICHBRAND’s attendance is still unknown.

The third research question - What was the impact of festival-related content on Z Geners who did not attend and who attended the festival? - was analyzed with the labels Impact of festival-related content and to get deeper insights, the researcher picked the sublabels Impact Non-Attendees and Impact Attendees. According to the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner, the TikTok Gen Z population can actively engage in festivals through real time engagement via promoted hashtags and their subpages. However, Manju said “Depending on whom people follow, an extensive number of festival-related content may be displayed”. Also, Festivals' strategic methods for involvement are highlighted. Manju stated “Festivals also approach it strategically by organizing numerous contests where people have the chance to win two VIP tickets, for example. In general, there are a variety of approaches that festivals can employ to increase the affinity for attending their events”. Heidisch pointed out that “Ticket sweepstakes have increased our followers immensely”. The TikTok expert Sbai said, “I can easily imagine someone watching a video from a particular artist who is also a fan of that artist, they will also buy a ticket”. In general, Heidisch noted that “The impact on TikTok is very high. As soon as the content is “relatable”, we experience a high level of engagement, in this context, content that features faces, follows current trends, and incorporates trending sounds performs better than high quality content”. Regarding TikTok, she mentioned, “Nowhere else could we reach such a young and festival-inexperienced target group, in particular the Corona-generation, who seemed to have no previous connections to festivals”.

First, related to the impact of festival-related content on non-attendees, the researcher discovered various viewpoints. The Teamlead Social Media at ALDI stated “Our goal was to provide anchor points and motivations for individuals to connect with our brand even if they couldn’t attend the event in person” (Appendix E). Also, Manju figured that “Nobody wants to miss out”. She emphasized in the interview the FOMO effect as a major factor, particularly within Generation Z. To give deeper insights, she stated “I can imagine that when someone from a friend group expresses excitement about attending an event and you notice your favorite artists or even influencers are also going, it might have an immense impact on your decision to attend an event”. Sbai highlighted the creation of FOMO for Non-Attendees as well. The Teamlead Social Media at ALDI stated “I believe we can say that as one of the festivals’ major sponsors, we are quite visible, and a great opportunity to connect with the young audiences who are present on-site. It also allows us to present our brand and what we have to offer for individuals who were unable to attend the event”. Finally, Manju featured that the strategic usage of “content overload works effectively to generate buzz and anticipation for upcoming events, making them stand out and attracting the attention of potential attendees”.

In relation to the impact of attendees, the Teamlead Social Media noted that they use on-site activities for the creation of content. The expert said “I believe the most important and critical feature is having an ALDI store on-site with all products available at a great price. The ALDI corner in the infield and the “Brandlöscher” activation are also crucial. When these measures are considered collectively, I think they leave a lasting effect on the attendees”. Regarding sharing user-generated content, the expert noted the effectiveness “Especially when people share their experiences from our one-site activities or from the DEICHBRAND ALDI store. Naturally, we aim to create content that encourages people to share it. This generation is constantly on their phones, and many of them are filming and capturing moments anyway, making it more likely for them to share content”. On top of that, the expert said that the partnership will hopefully “make the festival experience on the grounds a lot easier. Attendees won’t have to worry about carrying all the festival utensils with them”. The Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner underlined the continuous growth of TikTok’s prominence, “It has become deeply ingrained in the Generation Z culture that people turn to TikTok after an event to create a recap and share their best moments with each other. This fosters the formation of entire communities where people create and share

content using specific event or tour-generated hashtags”. For DEICHBRAND itself, Heidisch stated, “We could see from the comments that these “Gänsehaut-Videos” (videos that evoke goosebumps or emotional reactions) trigger a lot of motivation and a longing for the festival experience (“Festivalweh”). Additionally, moving images help immensely in conveying these all-encompassing emotions and impressions of our festival”. In conclusion, these findings highlight that festival-related content on TikTok has a crucial influence on attendees as well as non-attendees by motivating them, causing a FOMO (Fear of Missing out) effect, and encouraging community participation among Generation Z, which ultimately affects their choices and experiences at festivals.

The fourth research question - What are critical factors shaping the success of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok?- was examined with the labels Reach and Engagement Metrics and Brand Perception and Image. Starting with the first label, the Teamlead Social Media at ALDI said even if the brand is still in the evaluation phase of content since the festival just took place, “one of the most important KPIs is the View Duration, which measures how long viewers engage with our content. This provides us with insights into the quality of our content and demonstrates whether we not only reached individuals but also kept them interested enough to stay engaged with the content we provided. In addition, we compare a few media KPIs, such as cost per 1000 impressions (CPM), cost per view (CPV), and engagement rate, to our benchmarks. This allows us to receive a complete view of how well our different content initiatives worked during the campaign”. In addition, Sbai pointed out that “there’s probably no platform that’s cheaper in terms of Cost Per Mille (CPM). But you can also look at what you’ve invested and gotten out in terms of website traffic, followers, but also conversions. What is exciting for many customers, is the brand awareness. For example, how well known is a brand before and after and how is the brand sympathy, before and after as well as the willingness to buy before and after”. In total he prioritized the KPIs CPM, reach, user generation, engagement, sentiment, click on links, conversions, and sales. Here, he noted that “Without market research, assessing something like brand sympathy may need a 50.000 euros advertising investment, which many companies cannot afford”. That’s why Sbai stated that relying entirely on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) would be a big miscalculation if the necessary resources were not available. For him, the importance lies on evaluating the reception of the promotion, as well as the quality of feedback received, rather than relying exclusively on reaching

numbers. The improvement of brand affinity is critical, since it correlates with the attraction to make purchases, which has been observed across many marketing campaigns. Heidisch mentioned that DEICHBRAND works with a pixel within the Ad Manager to track the visits to their ticket store by individuals exposed to content on TikTok through an advertising campaign. In this context, the content employed for this purpose has already gained organic. Heidisch was not allowed to say anything about the goals, guidelines, or numbers to be achieved by the partnership with TikTok. When it comes to the marketing funnel, Sbai noted that a funnel comprises both elements, awareness, and conversion. In his opinion, TikTok addresses both parts but works better in branding or awareness-building.

The second label Brand Perception and Image investigated different viewpoints. To start with ALDI, the Teamlead Social Media pointed out the brand advantages of their on-site activities, and stated that “In this way, we can ultimately contribute to the overall positive festival experience while also positioning our brand, as we did with the Secret Gig, where we had an artist play in front of the store. We had the 257ers last year, and Ski Aggu performed this year. These extra performances allow us to demonstrate that we are a cool, young brand that understands its target audience, especially with the choice of artists”. Furthermore, the Teamlead Social Media at ALDI said “During the performance, we went live on TikTok in front of the ALDI store. This was an innovative strategy for us because we not only live-streamed the event but also advertised it to reach as many TikTok users as possible”. Also, attendees “recognize that ALDI is present, actively participating, and assisting the festival in creating a terrific experience”. From the expert’s perspective, the various strategies ALDI implements at DEICHBRAND are focused on increasing relevance among the young target audience. The brand's objectives are enhancing likeability and conveying brand values or core principles. However, the primary goal is to offer quality products at affordable prices during the festival, thus enhancing the enjoyment and positive festival experience.

In general, Sbai said that if a brand works with an agency to establish a campaign on TikTok, the agency must “understand how the brand works, what values they represent, the tone of voice, etc.”. He pointed out that “with agencies, you must be as detailed as possible. Presenting the brand DNA is crucial because that is where we often struggle. Brands are often so caught up in their bubble and believe you understand everything right away. But

you must pick up the agency. What values do you identify with your brand if you have branding guidance or can explain it, for example, what is your DNA and your positioning? What is the behavior of your target audience? Perhaps you have market research findings”. The expert also noted that some brands don’t know their target audience. In total, the success of the partnership as a marketing strategy can be measured through multiple KPIs such as view duration, cost metrics, engagements, sentiment, and brand perception. The evaluation of how effectively the promotion was received while improving brand affinity was highlighted. Additionally, the findings showed how the partnership can improve the brand's reputation and establish connections, particularly among young festival attendees. The importance of effective communication between brands and agencies when planning TikTok campaigns was also highlighted. Understanding values such as the tone of voice, DNA and behaviors of a brand's target audience is valuable for the development of campaigns that align with the brand's identity and the preferences of the target audience.

The fifth research question - How does the integration of influencers and popular TikTok creators impact the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional efforts? - was analyzed with the label Impact of Content by Influencers. To start, influencer collaborations are one of the main promotion strategies of DEICHBRAND. Heidisch pointed out that “The focus is on creating content BEFORE the festival to boost awareness and ticket sales”. She also stated that “TikTok has given us a significant reach among the younger target audience, especially through collaborations with Germany’s biggest creators”. Moreover, Manju said in the interview that she became aware of DEICHBRAND through influencers. However, Sbai noted “The creator selection must be good; it should be a creator for a certain theme”. Regarding this, Manju suggested that involving a varied range of niche creators that authentically match with the festival can help the festival’s visibility grow significantly and expand its reach as well as attract a bigger audience. Particularly, when these creators share a natural passion in attending festivals anyway. Furthermore, “Some creators design their own soundtracks which others can use for cool videos”. In total, Manju believed that influencer marketing is a crucial component within a festival strategy. Also, the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner noted that implementing creators is significant. One reason was that the audience can “get a lot of information about the festival, both before and after the festival”. The expert also said, creators may be in the position to “reach out to new audiences and enhance overall reach and engagement, especially for festivals that aren’t traditionally

considered as Gen Z-oriented”. Lastly, the Teamlead Social Media at ALDI pointed out that integrating influencers is an essential element in ALDI’s marketing strategy for instance by implementing influencer-generated content from ALDI’s activities on the festival. They also have a long-term collaboration with the influencer Parshad who attended the festival and provided content that will have a lasting presence also after the festival. This approach is consistent with ALDI’s objective of increasing visibility and engaging various audiences with content that lasts beyond the festival's time. The expert stated that “Influencers assist us to access communities and target audiences that we might not have reached otherwise, resulting in a positive overall image for our brand”. In a nutshell, the results showed that influencer marketing is seen as a significant element in the overall festival strategy because it allows the festival to reach new audiences. Especially in the effectiveness of the DEICHBRAND promotion strategy, influencers, and famous TikTok creators are a crucial part of supporting the increase of festival awareness and ticket sales. Collaborating with influencers who fit with the festival, can improve audience engagement and visibility.

The sixth research question - How is the promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 being planned? - was analyzed with the labels General Strategy and Content Themes. Regarding DEICHBRAND, next to the integration of influencer collaborations as a strategy, Heidisch pointed out the usage of Ad Manager. “Here, content that already went viral organically is further promoted with advertising budget. This includes integrating Call-to-Action (CTA) phrases such as “Get your tickets now!” along with the link to the ticket store”. She also pointed out that “Currently, TikTok is the platform with the widest reach for us, and it requires the least amount of effort (if you understand the platform and its algorithm)”. The general social media strategy of DEICHBRAND was described by Heidisch in the following manner: "We primarily use Instagram and, analogously, Facebook, followed by TikTok and YouTube (Shorts). TikTok is the most effective platform for quickly reaching a large audience, but it mostly leads to fleeting interactions. However, it does help us reach the youngest target group. On Facebook, we currently have the biggest following, with more than 250.000 people, who are mainly between 25-59 years old. Instagram is presently the platform where we share the greatest amount of infotainment. On TikTok, the focus is primarily on entertainment. We engage the most with our community on Instagram, providing information and answering important questions. The biggest part of our target group is active here, which we ‘reactivate’ every year. On the other hand, TikTok allows us

to reach a completely new audience and demographic daily, as our content is also shown to users that do not follow or know us”.

In general, the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner pointed out that there is a pre-and post-preparation on TikTok for festivals. Also, the Teamlead Social Media at ALDI agreed with the mentioned fact before. He also said that “we promoted in advance that we would be present at the festival and coordinated content with DEICHBRAND to align the content with people’s expectations”. Manju pointed out “the earlier you begin preventive advertising; the more people will be drawn to it”. The Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner believed that “it is important to be authentic in the content and upload several things. On TikTok it is crucial not just to upload one video but maybe several directly”. On the other hand, Sbai stated “The biggest mistake, in my opinion, is developing too many ad pieces and actively advertising them, instead of focusing on producing fewer but high-quality ones”.

When it comes to Content Themes, the experts suggested several approaches. Heidisch stated that for DEICHBRAND “content like ‘What do I pack for DB23’ or ‘I’m looking forward to these acts at DB23 the most’ have given us a lot of interaction and those ‘AHA-moments’ as well as content that features faces, follows current trends, and incorporates trending sounds" or "moving images help immensely in conveying these all-encompassing emotions and impressions of our festival”.

Manju highlighted that "In terms of general content, posting videos from the previous year's festival is frequently clever. Likewise, content that gives a glimpse of what attendees can expect, like teasing the lineup, can also be effective in building anticipation” but also "Creating a lot of awareness for a festival or brand such as through ticket giveaways or highlighting the experiences and program, resonates well with Generation Z”. Sbai highlighted that "One of the most appealing features are the Spark Ads on TikTok. You scroll down and see the advertising in between the natural, organic content”. He also stated “I would say the best content are videos from the year before, which are emotionally bonding, surprising, and therefore create curiosity, but also generate FOMO. Furthermore, performances of certain artists. I believe the artists matter the most at festivals, and that's why I would use clips from them, and perhaps, if you can afford it, even verbal videos from

them like 'Hey guys, I'm at the festival, come join me', and then short clips of their experiences at the festival. In total, that's the kind of concept I would go for". Finally, the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner suggested a different approach "using a song that's not yet released but has been teased at a festival. With this, you can build further campaigns for the music that is going to be released. Then, you can show the live reactions to the song on TikTok and build further campaigns around the upcoming music. Another way is to give previews in advance, like saying, "Hey, we were at the festival last year, check out some content from last year" or "Look, this is what's going on here, join too!" Or you can tease by saying "Hey, we will bring someone who creates something with this song onto the stage at the festival", creating incentives that serve as a bridge between the festival and music, which can be showcased on TikTok". To sum up, the promotional strategy of DEICHBRAND 2023 includes different elements such as influencer collaborations, specific content themes, and approaches related to the platform to create awareness and engagement. It also incorporates the strategic use of certain social media platforms to reach different audiences. In general, time management was highlighted by starting promotional activities in advance and having pre- and post-preparation tactics.

The researcher also asked questions about Challenges that the experts might have encountered. One of the challenges was the content about alcohol. The Influencer Manju pointed out in the interview that "Even if TikTok has such a young audience, alcohol is often excessively glorified in the videos". With this statement, she referred to the content from creators since festivals must follow specific guidelines in Germany. She stated "My main worry is with a lot of creators who emphasize alcohol in their content, especially when their audience is quite young, even if they are legally able to drink at the age of 18. I feel creators still carry a certain responsibility as role models, and this component is sometimes disregarded in festival programming". Manju also emphasized that, since young individuals might often be unaware of their limits, festival organizers should provide safety information, including emergency contacts or for instance a "safe word" for emergencies. Another challenge was highlighted by Heidisch, who said "Especially the music rights make it difficult for us to highlight our unique selling points (USPs). We are only allowed to use commercial music. Moreover, we don't have a product that we can simply visualize in front of the camera. It requires much more creativity to trigger the interest of our community". In

addition, the Key Account Manager at Warner pointed out that the biggest challenge lies in clarifying rights for instance for live streams, encompassing both publishing and master rights. Because of the involvement of different departments and companies, this procedure is complex and time-consuming. A single song's master and publication rights may be held by different entities. Furthermore, there is no standard process for livestreams due to the varying selection of songs. When examining the use of individual songs for content, there is a standard process people can follow. The expert explained “However, it can be overcome by knowing the lineup early enough and starting rights clarification for these performances in advance. This process comes with associated costs, as some rights may not be easily granted, so budgeting and setting aside money to pay for these rights is essential to make the live stream a reality”. Besides, the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner noted another potential issue which is organization. Given the chaotic nature of festivals with various performances, the question of how to allow TikTok to access acts, capture content, and maintain the smooth technical operation of livestreams emerges. To overcome this, “festivals should truly say that TikTok is an ongoing and crucial component and that they integrate the platform as effectively as possible to also don’t interfere with other sponsors”. Finally, regarding the DEICHBRAND festival, it can also be noted that, for the researcher, it was a challenge to get information about the partnership between the festival and TikTok, since Heidisch said “Regarding a renewed cooperation, we cannot provide any information at the moment”. Also, she was not allowed to give details about general goals, guidelines, or numbers for the partnership. In short, the challenges associated with TikTok content in the context of festivals show concerns over how alcohol is presented in creators’ videos, and the difficult process of securing music rights for content creation, in particular live streams.

To present the Outlook label for future outcomes in relation to if TikTok is an effective promotional tool for festivals, it is important to highlight some insights mentioned by the interview experts. Sbai stated “TikTok is already understood as a channel, and I would be surprised if it doesn’t increase”. According to Manju, the extension of content regarding safety on festivals “has the potential to serve as a new approach to raise more awareness on this topic and appeal to people’s conscience, perhaps given a message like, “Have fun, but it doesn't have to escalate completely”. However, the influencer also noted, when it comes to new strategies for festivals, that "Festivals clearly appeal to a broad spectrum of people,

particularly the younger age. Also, the combination of several music genres in a single festival draws a large audience. As a result, I suppose a lot of things are being done correctly at this time”. Furthermore, the possibility that TikTok might establish itself as a platform for ticket contests in the future was mentioned by the Teamlead Social Media at ALDI. Even if strategies such as ticket contests perform better at Instagram for ALDI, the Teamlead Social Media noted “this does not rule out the possibility of future TikTok contests”. In addition, the creation of specific communities related to a music event or festival might increase because the Key account manager TikTok at Warner mentioned “I believe this kind of phenomenon will get more intense, with these kinds of bubbles that "blow up" again after an event or "hype up" before”. Finally, Heidisch believes that "Using memes and clichés to make content relatable, capturing typical festival situations, and interacting with artists and brands to represent them” as well as “having a recognizable face associated with the festival” to create a personal connection between the user and the brand will be important for future trends and techniques for festival promotion on TikTok in the future. To recap, as a festival promotional platform, TikTok is expected to keep evolving, potentially expanding its role in raising public awareness of safety issues. Festivals already have a large following, especially among younger people, and their marketing tactics seem to be effective. The platform has the potential for promoting approaches such as ticket giveaways and future trends for festival promotion on TikTok including the use of memes, clichés, and interaction with artists and brands.

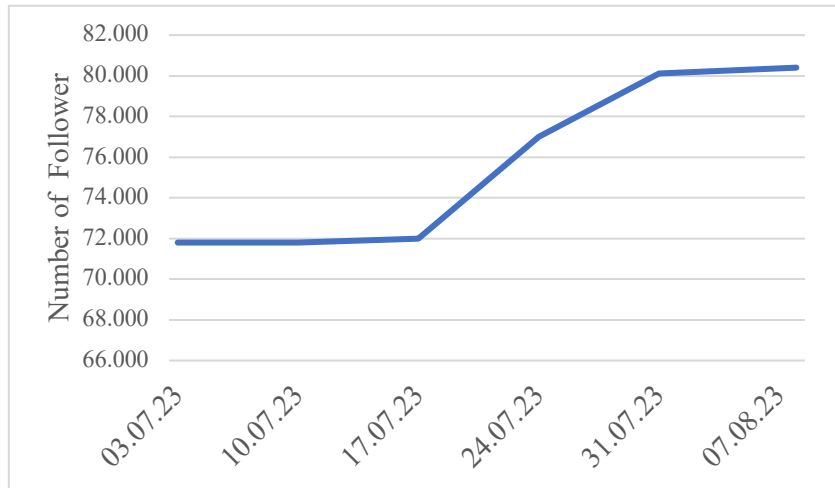
## **5.2 Findings of Content Analysis**

This chapter will address the findings of the video content analysis, starting with the general overview of the follower and like growth or decrease of DEICHBRAND’s TikTok account, followed by the important findings of the analysis from the DEICHBRAND videos (153 in total) and the summary of the influencer video analysis.

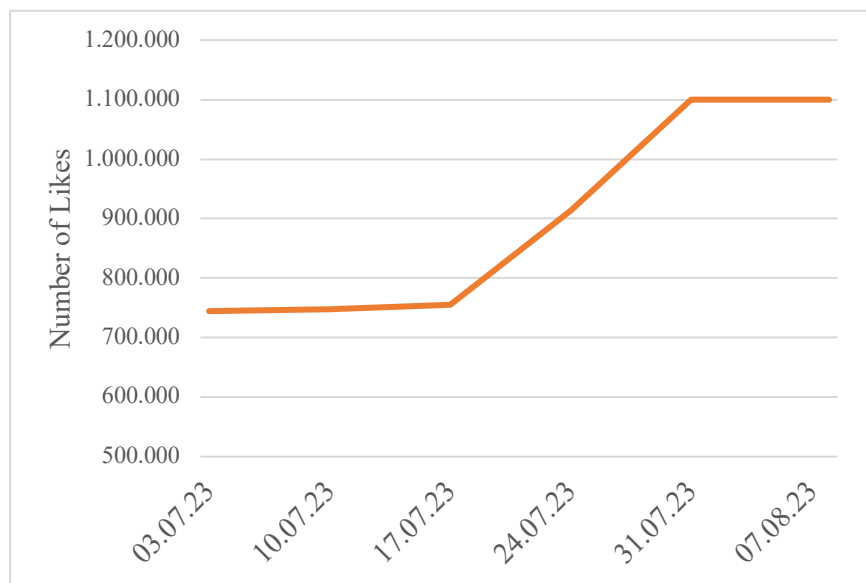
The general overview reflects a significant follower increase in the week when DEICHBRAND happened and one week after. The account showed a 6,94% increase in followers in the week beginning July 17, 2023, followed by a 4,03% rise in the week starting July 24, 2023. In the other weeks, there was no or flat growth (see Figure 1). A similar pattern has been found in the realm of likes. The week of July 24, 2023, showed a 20,95% increase

in likes, followed by a 20,43% growth the week of July 31, 2023. Similar to the follower's metrics, the other weeks showed limited or flat patterns of growth in likes (see Figure 2).

**Figure 1.** *Weekly Follower Analysis of the DEICHBRAND Account.*



**Figure 2.** *Weekly Likes Analysis of the DEICHBRAND Account.*



The DEICHBRAND TikTok account posted 30 videos in 2022 compared with 123 videos in 2023, from which 102 were posted in July 2023, most of them during the festival time (20.07.-23.07.2023).

For the category Interaction in general, the researcher investigated the sum of likes, comments, and views as well as the sum of shared and saved videos from June and July 2022

and 2023. The results showed that the 30 videos from 2022 had a total of 184.387 likes, 620 comments, 1753 shared videos, 12.805.059 views, and 4831 saved videos. In 2023, 123 videos were analyzed and showed a total of 347.997 likes, 2523 comments, 26.424 shared videos, 10.641.114 views, and 16.064 saved videos.

Interaction combined with the category Tone of Voice showed that the videos with no voice had the highest engagement followed by the humoristic tone of voice as seen in Table 5.

**Table 5.** *Results of the Categories Interaction and Tone of Voice.*

<b>Tone of Voice</b>	<b>Sum of Likes</b>	<b>Sum of Comments</b>	<b>Sum of Shares</b>	<b>Sum of Views</b>	<b>Sum of Saved</b>	<b>Number of Videos</b>
humoristic	29,64%	17,18%	16,87%	24,90%	22,47%	47
informational, humoristic	1,32%	1,40%	0,53%	2,86%	0,92%	6
No Voice	69,04%	81,42%	82,61%	72,24%	76,60%	100
<b>Total Result</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>153</b>

In terms of combining the categories Interaction and Presenter, as shown in Table 6, videos featuring festival attendees got the highest amount of likes with a total of 31,51%. The videos presented by both artists and festival attendees got the most comments with 33,15%. Also, the highest level of engagement in terms of shares was seen in videos with artists and festival attendees with 55,69%. Notably, the videos with festival attendees not only achieved the highest view count with 34,84% but also showed the most saved videos with a total of 28,43%.

**Table 6.** *Results of the Categories Interaction and Presenter.*

<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Sum of Likes</b>	<b>Sum of Comments</b>	<b>Sum of Shares</b>	<b>Sum of Views</b>	<b>Sum of Saved</b>	<b>Number of Videos</b>
Artist	16,99%	18,52%	8,57%	11,27%	22,72%	17
Artist, Festival Attendees	16,78%	33,15%	55,69%	11,41%	25,22%	23
Channel-Host	14,12%	7,83%	3,28%	20,27%	8,35%	22
Channel-Host, Others	0,41%	0,35%	0,13%	0,35%	0,24%	5
Festival Attendees	31,51%	25,29%	24,03%	34,84%	28,43%	51
Festival Attendees, Channel-Host	0,31%	0,29%	0,33%	0,32%	0,24%	1
Festival Attendees, Others	0,10%	0,00%	0,00%	0,09%	0,08%	1
Influencer	9,99%	3,18%	0,85%	2,10%	5,68%	2
Influencer, Festival Attendees	0,39%	0,38%	0,16%	0,36%	0,25%	2
None	3,90%	5,89%	3,38%	2,36%	3,92%	12
Others	5,50%	5,12%	3,56%	16,62%	4,86%	17
<b>Total Result</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>153</b>

Regarding the categories Interaction and Video Themes (see Table 7), the researcher discovered that videos focusing on DEICHBRAND featuring musical content received the

highest number of likes with a sum of 33,66%. This was followed by videos with attendee stories, which received 20,56% in total. In terms of views, the highest engagement was seen by videos associated with DEICHBRAND, gathering 23,47% of the views. Similar to that, videos integrating DEICHBRAND, and music had 22,84% of the views in total. Also, the shared videos revealed the strongest interaction with embracing DEICHBRAND and music content reaching 64,49%. After that, videos with attendee stories had a total of 17,58% of shared videos. Lastly, saved videos indicated that videos with DEICHBRAND combined with music content gained the biggest engagement with 47,77%. Notably, the mentioned theme also received the most comments, with a total of 52,69%.

**Table 7.** *Results of the Categories Interaction and Video Themes.*

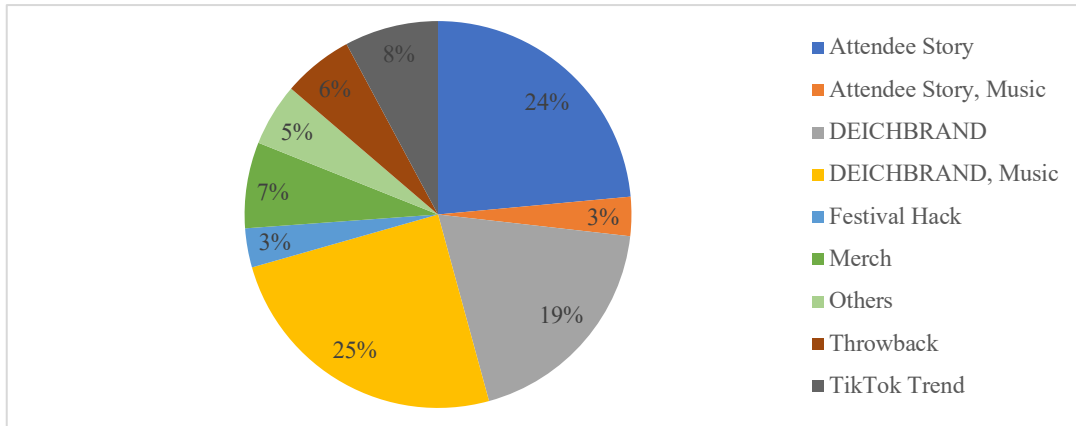
Video Theme	Sum of Likes	Sum of Views	Sum of Shares	Sum of Saved	Sum of Comments	Number of Videos
Attendee Story	20,56%	20,32%	17,58%	17,91%	12,50%	36
Attendee Story, Music	0,90%	0,52%	0,56%	0,87%	1,53%	5
DEICHBRAND	14,25%	23,47%	9,88%	12,43%	16,58%	29
DEICHBRAND, Music	33,69%	22,87%	64,50%	47,83%	52,69%	38
Festival Hack	3,79%	2,14%	3,65%	3,76%	3,31%	5
Merch	0,63%	6,05%	0,15%	0,41%	0,73%	11
Others	10,45%	2,41%	1,20%	6,09%	3,98%	8
Throwback	3,30%	3,19%	1,04%	3,61%	2,99%	9
TikTok Trend	12,44%	19,01%	1,45%	7,07%	5,70%	12
<b>Total Result</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>153</b>

Interaction was also combined with the category Technical Resources. Here, the most interaction was seen in videos with no technical resources, just simple TikTok's. These videos showed a total of 369.616 likes, 13.107.037 views, 24.276 shares, 16.471 saved videos, and 2941 comments.

The category Branding showed that 103 videos were underlined with hashtags, 45 videos with hashtags and tagging, 3 videos with hashtags and a link, 1 video with a hashtag and others, and one video had no Branding. Moreover, the hashtags were analyzed more in-depth. The most common combination was in 75 videos #deichbrand2023, #fesitval, #deichbrand.

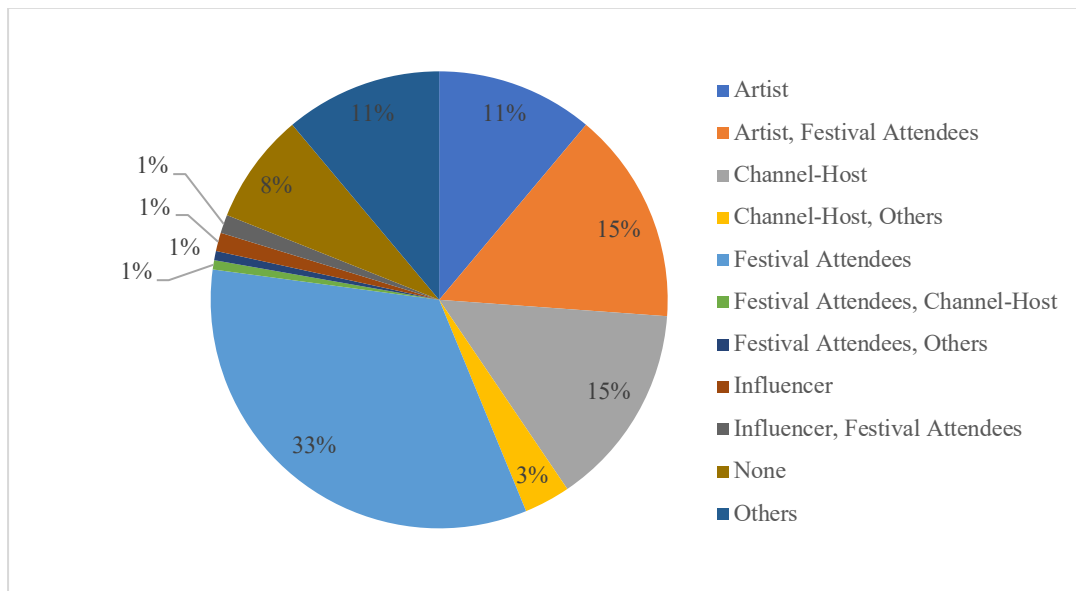
In terms of the category Video Themes, the analysis showed that most of the content was about DEICHBRAND combined with music (25%), Attendee Stories (24%), or the festival in general (19%). In addition, other Video Themes were presented (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3.** Results of the Category Video Themes.



In relation to the category Presenter, most videos were presented by festival attendees (33%), artists and festival attendees (15%), and videos presented by the DEICHBRAND channel host (15%). Figure 4 shows an overview of all the results.

**Figure 4.** Results of the Category Presenter.



For the category Type of Content, the researcher investigated the subcategories Entertainment and Information. It was observed that 108 videos fell under the classification

of entertainment, while 20 videos were characterized as informational content. Moreover, 16 videos demonstrated both informational and entertainment attributes.

Regarding the category Tone of Voice, 100 videos had no voice implemented. In that case, a song was used in the video. Also, 47 videos had a humoristic tone of voice, 6 videos were informational and humoristic.

The category Image showed that 140 videos had no support with images or graphics, and 13 did. Moreover, 137 videos showed Storytelling, and 16 didn't. Finally, 143 videos presented Authenticity, and 11 didn't.

In relation to the Technical Resource, it was observed that 97 videos showed no usage of specific technical resources, meaning they adhered to conventional TikTok formats. 36 videos incorporated textual support, while 7 videos employed a timelapse approach. In addition, 3 videos were made with the CapCut editing tool. Other technical resources like Color Filter, Collage, FLASH WARNING, Greenscreen, Slow Zoom, Face Distortion filter, and Time Glitch were identified in a limited number of one to two videos.

Concerning the video analysis of influencers, three videos of the following influencers were analyzed: *\_hi\_its\_jess*, *eurejungs*, *konradgrosz*, *maischa\_*, *maja.watson2*. For the category Interaction in general, it was noted that *maja.watson2* had the highest numbers in all the subcategories likes, views, shares, saved, and comments. The least engagement was shown on *maischa\_'s* account. Table 8 presents an overview of the engagement from each influencer:

**Table 8.** *Results of the Category Interaction in Influencer Analysis.*

Influencer Name	Sum of Likes	Sum of Views	Sum of Shares	Sum of Saved	Sum of Comments
<i>_hi_its_jess</i>	7,76%	10,41%	2,23%	3,53%	9,21%
<i>eurejungs</i>	21,06%	34,73%	12,70%	19,34%	25,47%
<i>konradgrosz</i>	5,53%	10,90%	1,79%	3,53%	3,25%
<i>maischa_</i>	1,61%	2,38%	0,64%	0,95%	3,52%
<i>maja.watson2</i>	64,05%	41,58%	82,64%	72,65%	58,54%
<b>Overall Results</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

The Promotion category showed that most of the influencers promoted the festival in general (10 videos), two videos promoted tickets for DEICHBRAND 2023, and one video addressed the Line-Up of DEICHBRAND 2023. Two videos had no promotion.

In the Video Themes category, 9 videos addressed the DEICHBRAND festival, and three videos the DEICHBRAND festival as a throwback. Also, one video showed festival outfits, and two videos were analyzed as “others”. Regarding Hashtags, except for one video, all the influencers implemented #isleofcontent, the place where content creators live at the festival.

By looking into the Video Themes combined with Interaction, the researcher noted that the theme DEICHBRAND got the most views. Likes, shares, saved, and comments had the highest numbers with the video theme others. Here, the videos showed some fun content such as “10 types of festival campers”. Table 9 shows an overview of all the video themes and their interaction.

**Table 9.** *Results of Categories Interaction and Video Themes in Influencer Analysis.*

Video Theme	Sum of Likes	Sum of Views	Sum of Shares	Sum of Saved	Sum of Comments
DEICHBRAND	31,38%	51,11%	16,66%	25,50%	35,23%
DEICHBRAND, Throwback	8,96%	7,54%	1,40%	4,09%	5,96%
Others	56,95%	36,54%	81,43%	69,23%	55,83%
Outfit	2,71%	4,80%	0,51%	1,18%	2,98%
<b>Overall Results</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

## 6. Discussion

This section presents the discussion of the results from the interviews and content analysis. The researcher connected the findings with the presented literature and focused on each research question individually.

TikTok's effectiveness for festival promotion is highlighted in this research by its unique features, including its broad reach capabilities. The strong connection between TikTok and Generation Z became clear in the interviews, since all the experts pointed out that TikTok is a platform for reaching Generation Z. This audience never feels disconnected or offline (Manju, Appendix B) and as digital natives, they desire to be immersed in technology, striving to combine online and offline activities, and participating in online groups (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). Especially for DEICHBRAND itself, it's the only platform in which the festival can reach the young and festival-inexperienced target audience and bring awareness to the festival (Heidisch, Appendix C). This indicates that this age group is a significant demographic in the festival industry. Also, ALDI's viewpoint, which was expressed by the Teamlead Social Media, who highlighted enhancing relevance among young consumers as a key goal for collaborating with DEICHBRAND, highlights the statement above (Appendix E).

In relation to the music industry, Sbai highlighted TikTok's ability to bring artists to the charts and therefore associating the platform's impact on music festivals as well (Appendix A). This aligns with the literature, in which, according to Jorgenson (2022), the platform offers a new entry option for artists to gain viral recognition with the help of the For You Page. TikTok also serves as an inspiration tool for new music (Arantxa et al., (2023). It becomes clear, that TikTok has the power to shape the music landscape with its own opportunities such as gaining virality with the help of the algorithm.

The immersive livestream opportunities of TikTok are an outstanding feature. This aspect was well-emphasized by the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner, who noted the unique significance of livestreaming on TikTok in contrast to other platforms (Appendix D). While DEICHBRAND itself didn't mention the usage of TikTok livestreams, ALDI as a main

sponsor did. This year, the brand built an innovative strategy around the platform by showing their act via livestream on TikTok to reach as many users as possible. This represents a unique and forward-thinking approach to festival promotion. The development proves that festivals and their sponsors are adapting to shifting digital trends to engage their audiences. It also relates to Vandenberg et al. (2021) argument that liveness is considered critical to the experience and for collective emotions to be built. Considering that live streams are certainly useful for individuals who prefer to remain at home and watch a show while connecting with others due to budgetary restraints or physical and cognitive disabilities (Hatch, 2020), ALDI's strategy presents an exceptional opportunity for non-attendees to see their artist performance in real time on TikTok. In addition, Benford et al. (2023) stated that the COVID pandemic is a reason for the increased interest in live streaming. This might also be connected to ALDI's choice of trying out livestreams as a new strategy. Finally, these findings prove that festivals are becoming "virtual real" (Danielsen and Kjus, 2019, p.717).

By addressing the first research question - Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival awareness among Z Geners? - the researcher investigated how TikTok content affects festival awareness. The research provides compelling findings that support Hoang's (2022) claims about the unique opportunities that TikTok offers for brand promotion. The content analysis illustrated an enormous rise in followers and likes for the DEICHBRAND festival from 03.07.2023 to 08.08.2023. This notable increase in engagement implies that TikTok functioned as an efficient tool for raising awareness and getting attention among Generation Z effectively achieving the promotional goal.

Notably are the interaction rates in shared and saved videos which show greater numbers compared to the comments. This supports Heidisch's statement that TikTok interactions are typically more fleeting. It could indicate that Generation Z, the main demographic of TikTok users, wants to interact privately rather than publicly. This behavioral trend is in line with Hoang's (2022) argument that the target market's qualities determine how well TikTok advertisements perform. It can still be said that DEICHBRAND shows a successful viral marketing strategy, presenting a high amount of saved and shared videos, as well as using TikTok for brand awareness as the main objective. This can be underlined by Seeger and Kost's (2019) statement that the main objective of a viral marketing campaign is to raise

brand awareness and inspire others to share content. It is most successful when sharing material is simple and convenient, without incurring substantial expense or difficulty. With TikTok sharing and saving videos is one click ahead.

In relation to the findings of the content analysis of DEICHBRAND, the festival has fully integrated TikTok into its marketing and promotion strategy for the year 2023. This is demonstrated by the significant increase in the number of videos uploaded during the festival. It also highlights the fast pace of TikTok's content distribution and the platform's ability to raise brand awareness, as Hoang (2022) suggested. Besides, this year's content not only increased in quantity but also in quality, with a variety of behind-the-scenes views, artist performances, and festival stage highlights. It proves Heidisch's statement that TikTok provides the festival with a multifaceted benefit including huge reach, the possibility for content to go viral, and increased visibility since their initial use of the platform. Nevertheless, the data of the interaction category in 2023 is higher than in 2022 since the account posted only 30 videos in June/July 2022. The videos that the researcher analyzed for 2023 are only four weeks online on the platform. In total, the results could be biased due to the overload of videos in 2023 compared to the year before.

The finding for the second research question, - Has TikTok content contributed to increasing festival attendance by Z Geners? -, showed a lack of investment in the evaluation of DEICHBRAND's campaigns. Heidisch couldn't give any details if the content increased ticket sales. Also, with the video analysis, this aspect couldn't be measured. Still, the researcher assumes that TikTok has the possibility to increase Generation Z festival attendance, especially because Heidisch stated that the festival uses TikTok for reaching the Corona-Generation which is unexperienced when it comes to festivals. The viewpoints given by both the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner and Manju shed light on the significant impact of TikTok on the dynamics of festival attendance. The argument made by the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner that Gen Z, an audience that is especially engaged on TikTok, is more drawn to festivals promoted through the platform, emphasizes TikTok's role in shaping present festival culture. Additionally, Manju's observation over a two-year period emphasizes the widespread effect of this occurrence. Festivals are no longer simply events; they have become an essential part of today's cultural landscape of Generation Z. This aligns

with the literature that for the young audience, music festivals are a significant milestone in today's experience culture (Kirchner, 2011) as well as an essential summer activity (Iványi & Bíró-Szigeti, 2020). TikTok's proactive participation encourages this cultural trend by expanding festival visibility beyond traditional advertising media. This increased reach has the potential to diversify festival visitors, with a considerably bigger number of younger attendees. For future campaign analysis, DEICHBRAND could possibly use the Pixel Ad Manager tracking results for TikTok as well. Heidisch mentioned that they are already using the tool. By linking to the ticket page, it is possible to see how often tickets were bought via an Ad. In this way, it could also be checked whether TikTok content leads to more festival attendance among Generation Z.

In general, the relationship between TikTok and festivalgoers is symbiotic. TikTok's effect on Generation Z generates festival excitement, while festivals rely on TikTok's digital reach with the goal of expanding audiences. This association demonstrates the changing environment of cultural transmission, where social media plays a key part. However, the researcher observed that TikTok is more for raising awareness towards the festival, not driving conversion. Especially because Heidisch herself stated that the main goal is to raise awareness and transmit the festival image on TikTok. This correlates with the given literature that music festival organizers should employ social media communication to affect viewers' impressions of the festival brand (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015). Additionally, Sbai stated that TikTok can be used for conversion but is more significant for building awareness. This also explains that sweepstakes currently perform better on Instagram than on TikTok, as stated by the Teamlead Social Media at ALDI. This pattern certainly emphasizes TikTok's ongoing usage mainly for raising brand recognition, with a less evident emphasis on direct financial benefits.

The third research question investigated the impact of festival-related content on both attendees and non-attendees. The results of this study underline the significance of interactive content in the context of festivals and their relationship with attendees, which is consistent with the argument put forward by Kozinets (1999) in the literature. According to the findings of the content analysis, festival-related content published on TikTok acts as a powerful means of creating engagement and connection, effectively bridging the gap

between attendees' experiences and non-attendees' expectations. A digital story conveying the core concept of the festival is created through video themes such as performances from the festival and attendee stories. This narrative not only appeals to individuals who are physically present at the event, but it also stimulates emotional responses from those who are not. This underlines Danielsen and Kjus's (2019) statement that “the audience’s festival-related activities on streaming platforms and in social media illustrate the ways in which a live event now extends far beyond the here and now of the actual concert or festival venue” (p. 731).

The concept of interactive material fostering digital interactions is strongly tied to the concept of FOMO, which has been identified in the interviews as a psychological trigger particularly for Generation Z. Also, Lyngdoh et al. (2023) pointed out that fear of missing out can be a trigger to boost Gen Z's confidence to share personal information on social media. In this case, the fear of missing out refers to thrilling events, strengthened by the presence of friends, popular artists, or influencers, which is an effective incentive that encourages individuals to connect with festival content and consider attending. This dynamic engagement provided by TikTok content fosters a sense of connection by immersing festivalgoers and potential attendees in the festival's growing story. Furthermore, the research emphasized the efficiency of content overload tactics to generate buzz and excitement for upcoming festivals, thereby attracting the attention of potential attendees. A crucial aspect has been mentioned by Heidisch: content that elicits strong emotions, such as goosebumps-inducing videos, acts as an effective driving factor. Here, the content analysis revealed that showing performances of artists or behind-the-scenes stories of attendees bring the most engagement with TikTok users. This emotional connection not only increases demand for the festival experience, but also may encourage attendees to participate in on-site activities and share their experiences via user-generated content. Engaging with the festival brand on social media has a direct impact on developing an emotional tie to the event, which consequently has a significant effect on generating positive word-of-mouth (Hudson et al., 2015). The combined impact of content analysis findings, interview data, and literature emphasizes that TikTok content establishes a space of shared festival enthusiasm by bridging the gap between participants' experiences and non-attendees' desires.

By evaluating the distribution of video presenters as part of the DEICHBRAND 2023 promotion strategy, interesting patterns became apparent. The largest quantity of videos presented by festival attendees reflects an elevated level of engagement of attendees and a willingness to actively participate in event promotion. The presentation of both artists and festivalgoers in videos demonstrates a collaborative promotional technique that also generates an emotional response that resonates with a broader audience and non-attendees. Furthermore, the presence of DEICHBRAND channel host videos illustrates an effective approach to spreading festival content. This strategy not only focuses on the brand personality, but also gives the festival an element of humanity on TikTok. In a sense, the channel host becomes the embodiment of the festival's content, a tangible character with whom attendees or viewers may establish personal connections. DEICHBRAND 2023 successfully developed a multifaceted online relationship with its audience by utilizing captivating material, generating FOMO, and adopting a collaborative promotional method. This approach is associated with Kozinets' (1999) idea of interactive content in the manner that it establishes relationships and promotes a sense of engagement, ultimately building a digital bond between festivals and attendees.

The fourth research question, - What are the critical factors shaping the success of partnerships between brands and music festivals on TikTok? -, not only provided insights into ALDI's partnership with DEICHBRAND, but also highlighted the connection of their used strategies with the mentioned literature on brand awareness, engagement, and consumer experience. Tuten's (2008) statement that social media plays a critical role in strategic media planning by increasing awareness of the brand, linkage, and engagement finds relevance in the way ALDI's relationship with DEICHBRAND has expanded its marketing ambitions beyond simply product promotion. ALDI tried to position itself as an approachable and youthful brand by leveraging attendees' interests and preferences, building a connection that goes beyond the festival experience itself. However, if the partnership towards content creation on social media platforms was successful cannot be presented since the brand was in the evaluation phase of the social media content.

ALDI's strategy is consistent with Aaker's (1991) definition, that brand awareness is "the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product

category” (p. 61). ALDI's intentional attention to qualitative elements and emotional resonance, demonstrated through the artist's performance and attendee experiences with the brand's activities and the store on site, helps to leave a lasting impression on Generation Z's perspective of the brand. Brand awareness, as emphasized by Domazet et al. (2011), is essential for long-term brand management. The dedication of ALDI to building meaningful connections with the younger audience demonstrates how this cooperation goes beyond short-term success and corresponds also with Heidisch's view of DEICHBRAND's long-term attendance objectives. The potential for establishing long-lasting relationships with festival goers is highlighted by the combination of a remarkable festival experience and purposeful social networking, which is consistent with studies by Hudson et al. (2015) and Zhao (2022). In addition, the analysis showed that the social media marketing strategies accomplished the main goals of social media marketing which are according to Meerman Scott (2010) developing long-lasting connections with customers, inspiring loyalty, trust, and delivering enduring enhancements in image and brand recognition.

The metrics identified in the study, including View Duration, CPM, CPV, and Engagement Rate, serve as direct indications of brand engagement, demonstrating the effectiveness of marketing campaigns or collaborations. According to Boo, Busser and Baloglu (2008), this strategy is consistent with the idea that brand awareness and consumer experience are strongly related. The emphasis ALDI places on view duration demonstrates an intentional emphasis on audience interest and content quality, supporting the idea that brand engagement increases with audience involvement.

In addition, Sbai's insight about the necessity of agencies being aware of brand values and DNA underlines the assumption that an effective partnership depends on a common comprehension of the core principles of a brand. It also confirms that if strategies go within the brand identity, it leads to greater authenticity and successful promotions. Heidisch's argument that the final goal of DEICHBRAND is long-term attendance shows that a successful partnership goes beyond short-term effectiveness. It underscores the long-term importance of active engagement and how it contributes to building long-term relationships with the audience. Furthermore, the expert Sbai pointed out the significance of brand awareness, as well as its relationship with brand sympathy and buy intent, which

demonstrates the multifaceted effects of an effective partnership. This shows that the success of a partnership extends beyond simply awareness and has an impact on attendee behaviors and mindsets. As stated by East et al. (2017), brands' associations with emotions, ideas, and perceptions influence consumers' decisions to purchase a good or service.

The interaction for DEICHBRAND on TikTok shows a success when it comes to likes, saved and shared videos as well as the active engagement of the festival attendees as seen in the results. For improvement, the festival could think about a new strategy to engage the audience to express public opinions about the content. Since the shared and saved videos in comparison to comment numbers in 2023 clearly show a higher increase, it can be assumed that the audience likes the content. A new approach could be more content from artists and festival attendees together since this combination showed the highest engagement in comments. It must be noted that the success of the partnership could only be measured by the researcher because Heidisch was not authorized to give information regarding the partnership. This limitation brings a lack of transparency in investigating the partnership's success.

Regarding the fifth research question - How does the integration of influencers and popular TikTok creators impact the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional efforts? - it can be said that influencer collaborations are a key part of DEICHBRAND's marketing strategy but also an integral part of the festival culture in general. Moreover, long-term partnerships seem to be effective when promoting festivals. These findings align with Pahrman and Kupka's (2019) argument that influencers could assist brands in positioning themselves for long-term success by acting as the sender of communications for online marketing campaigns. Especially among the younger audience, influencers are an immense help to increase reach and awareness. The Teamlead Social Media at ALDI stated that influencers might reach audiences that the brand can't. According to this, Seeger and Kost (2019) pointed out that influencer marketing aims to connect with target audiences that are no longer accessible through conventional media. The interviews also revealed that the importance lies in the influencer selection. Through influencers from different niches, a broad audience can get involved. This aligns with the given literature that a suitable influencer brand fit is not only important but also, they should endorse products that align with their regular content or style (Morgan, 2022).

In the video analysis, the influencer *maja.watson2* appears as the most effective in terms of engagement across all the interaction categories ( see Table 8). This indicates that the content has been well received by her audience and most probably had a substantial effect on the promotion of the DEICHBRAND festival. The gap in engagement levels among influencers, with *maischa\_* having the lowest engagement, could be attributed to variances in content quality, audience targeting, or promotional techniques. This could point to areas in which involvement could be improved. In addition, content that addresses the DEICHBRAND festival had the most views, indicating that content specifically related to the festival itself drew the most attention and interest. It also suggests that attendees are curious about the event experience, lineup, and on-site activities. Regarding the promotional content in the analysis, not enough videos to give meaningful information were found. However, the researcher expected to observe more promotional content related to the line-up or tickets for the upcoming festival since this was also mentioned in Heidisch's interview. Furthermore, the consequent use of hashtags, in this case *#isleofcontent*, helps to create a connected online storytelling around the festival, but also highlights the fact that the influencers are invited by DEICHBRAND to attend the festival.

A more in-depth examination of the festival's promotion strategy on TikTok will answer the sixth research question- How is the promotion strategy for DEICHBRAND 2023 being planned? The content analysis proved that the festival's strategy focused on creating entertainment-oriented content, which is in accordance with Heidisch's viewpoint that TikTok is used for entertainment purposes.

By focusing on entertainment-oriented content, the festival capitalizes on TikTok's capabilities as a platform where engaging and visually appealing content thrives. This strategy could be a response to the platform's user base, particularly Generation Z, but also a purposeful move to fit with the platform's current trends, tapping into challenges, memes, and trends that resonate with the TikTok audience, which was also mentioned by Heidisch for future content suggestions for the platform. Users of social media platforms like TikTok are motivated by a variety of matters, such as “entertainment, convenience, socialization, seeking or spreading information, social support, and escapism” but also “virality or fame, self- presentation, preserving a memory of a time or place, and representation” (Falgoust et al., 2022, p.12). Some of these motives are supported by DEICHBRAND's strategic choice,

which contributed to the creation of shareable and engaging content that fosters positive communication.

Furthermore, social media zones are a concept introduced in the literature by Tuten and Solomon (2018) that classifies various sorts of content and engagement on social media platforms. In this context, the third zone is highlighted where the idea of social entertainment, includes performances, events, and activities that offer consumers a pleasurable setting for self-expression and pleasure. Topics such as music, art, and games are addressed which matches with DEICHBRAND's strategy of providing content related to music, art, and entertainment for instance with attendee interviews and artist performances from the last festival.

By emphasizing TikTok's preference for entertainment and leisure above news and information sharing, Haelein et al. (2020) set it apart from other social media platforms. This supports DEICHBRAND's strategic choice to prioritize entertainment-related over informational content by demonstrating how their promotion plan is in line with the distinctive features of the TikTok platform. Finally, the strategy has the potential to raise content virality and broaden the festival's reach, as well as improve the festival's overall brand image as a provider of engaging and pleasurable moments.

Regarding video themes, DEICHBRAND showed a multi-layered approach. The festival's emphasis on personal experiences and community interaction is shown by "Attendee Stories" having the highest engagement. This strategy may create a sense of bonding and excitement among potential attendees and aligns with Heidisch's statement that content, which is relatable, and features faces, performs the best. Meanwhile the presence of the video themes "DEICHBRAND" and "DEICHBRAND, Music" highlighted the unique festival experience and environment. The variety of content, which included "Festival Hack," "Merch," "TikTok Trend," and "Throwback" videos, demonstrated an intent to reach out to a broad audience. The festival's promotional approach seemed to build a welcoming and engaging campaign that would resonate with both regular attendees and potential newcomers by incorporating personal storytelling, musical highlights, immersive experiences, and contemporary trends.

Moreover, experts stated that it is most effective to post various videos and demonstrate authenticity. This was shown in the content analysis because DEICHBRAND posted more than 15 videos on one day while the festival took place. Also, only a few videos were not authentic, indicating an intentional attempt to build a sincere and reliable relationship with the audience. However, it's important to highlight that, in the context of the emphasis on diverse and authentic content, Sbai's opinion presented a balancing aspect. Quality content is still an issue. Even though DEICHBRAND strongly posted multiple videos to engage the audience during the event, Sbai's perspective showed the importance of maintaining a certain level of content quality over quantity. This implies that, while an original and diverse approach is beneficial, it is also critical to ensure that the content maintains a degree of quality that is compatible with the festival's identity.

DEICHBRAND's TikTok content strategy is primarily distinguished by a humoristic tone of voice that reveals a purposeful desire to engage and entertain the audience. This is congruent with Jia's (2017) research, which emphasizes how consumers can enjoy and be entertained by humorous information. The usage of natural language, can give the social media presence more personality and familiarity, creating a voice that is more welcoming and approachable (Du Plessis, 2015).

Almost all the videos didn't show the category image to promote their content. This is an indication of an intentional choice to emphasize other components, like voice and songs, to deliver the intended meaning. The wide range of storytelling in 137 videos out of 153 points to a narrative-driven strategy that is probably meant to provide the audience with a relatable and authentic experience. DEICHBRAND's use of storytelling is not only consistent with an effective and successful content marketing strategy, which places an emphasis on the use of storytelling over boasting advertising by generating high-quality content (Solomon, 2013) but also increases the possibility of increasing deeper and more valuable relationships (Du Plessis, 2015).

Regarding the use of technical resources, most videos followed standard TikTok formats. However, videos including text support showed that written communication is still important

for the comprehension of crucial facts. Only a few videos made use of different technical resources, which shows that these resources are only applied selectively for certain visual effects. Nevertheless, it might not be a key element in the promotion strategy but since the researcher only analyzed content in a specific timeframe, there might be more usage of technical resources in other months.

According to Schivinski and Dabrowski (2015), music festivals provide a unique chance to foster excitement and enthusiasm before, during, and after the event. This fits with the idea of pre-and post-event interaction. The results of the interviews demonstrate insights into efficient festival promotion strategies, particularly on TikTok, but also suggest a planned strategy that includes pre- and post-promotional measures. This approach is also in line with the insights offered by Kerr and May (2011) who emphasize the strategic timing of material dissemination. Considering that music festivals frequently last three to four days, it is crucial to design strategies to encourage festival brand loyalty all year long. However, it's noteworthy that there were no DEICHBRAND follow-ups on their TikTok account. One day after the festival finished, on July 24, 2023, the final videos were published. This can be related to the festival's information overload, which may result in the decision to put off uploading after throwbacks, attendee stories, and artist performances have already been shown. It is possible that this approach was taken to avoid overwhelming the audience or weakening the impact of the festival-related content. Based on this viewpoint, DEICHBRAND may have made the intentional choice not to publish right away following the festival to maintain the quality of the content and audience involvement.

Since reaching and communicating with prospective attendees is crucial to achieving goals, effective marketing forms the basis of any successful festival. This calls for a thorough examination of the cultural product in addition to efforts to draw in tourists who will value its unique traits, which includes attending to festivalgoers' wants and needs (Oklobdija, 2015). To highlight the need for coordinated promotional activities, the alignment in content and communication between ALDI and DEICHBRAND also demonstrates that they are considering the expectations of attendees. This strategy is associated with Schivinski and Dabrowski's (2015) view of employing social media communications to create audience

impressions of the festival brand, demonstrates a successful approach aimed at generating both engagement and effective promotion.

The importance of the branding category was underlined by the strategic application of hashtags in DEICHBRAND's TikTok's. Almost every video was labeled with hashtags related to the festival. This strategy closely correlated with the opinion of the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner who underlined the creation of unique festival hashtags as a powerful and effective strategy. The intentional usage of festival-specific hashtags in almost all DEICHBRAND's TikTok videos demonstrated their commitment to branding and developing an overall digital identity. This not only made their content simpler to discover on the platform, but also broadens their reach.

It is important to address the challenges mentioned by the interviewers. These difficulties highlighted factors and difficulties involved in using TikTok into music festival promotion methods. First, the ethical obligation festivals have when targeting a primarily youthful audience on TikTok can be seen by the issue raised by the influencer Manju regarding alcohol-related content. Festivals, but especially influencers, must acknowledge their responsibility as role models for impressionable viewers while remaining guided by regulations. This highlights the importance of creating responsible and engaging content, making sure that festival marketing as well as influencer marketing follow social norms and consider the potential impact on their audience. This is in accordance with Hudders and Lou's (2022) warning attitude, who emphasize that because "influencer marketing often involves young (and vulnerable) audiences, it is important to be extremely careful when using those tactics" (p. 152).

The restrictions that festivals confront when utilizing music in their TikTok promotions are made clear by Heidisch's insights into music rights. This difficulty emphasizes the necessity for creativity and innovation in producing compelling material while adhering to these limitations. Instead, then relying entirely on commercial music, festivals need to discover other ways to draw attention to their distinctive features and engage with their audience. This illustrates how crucial storytelling, uniqueness in artistic expression, and viewpoints are to captivating audiences despite challenges. In addition, the challenges associated with obtaining the required approvals for live music performances are made clear by the comment

of the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner on livestreaming and rights negotiations. This problem demonstrates the administrative, judicial, and financial difficulties needed to develop an ideal livestreaming TikTok experience. The importance of advance preparation, cooperation between numerous organizations, and careful budgeting is emphasized to guarantee that rights are effectively secured. This emphasizes how festivals must constantly adjust to the evolving state of the management of digital rights in the environment of live streaming. Furthermore, the description of the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner about the difficulties in sponsor coordination and technical integration highlights the complex arrangement needed for successfully integrating TikTok into the festival experience. This difficulty highlighted the need for careful preparation and synchronization of promotional activities to provide an effortless and continuous festival experience across numerous platforms and sponsorships. In the end, the challenges discovered with expert interviews underline the complex nature of incorporating TikTok into festival promotional efforts. These difficulties highlighted the importance of responsible content production, innovative problem-solving within boundaries, effective rights management, purposeful integration, and strong partnership dynamics. To create effective TikTok advertising efforts that connect with consumers while navigating the complexities of the digital world, acknowledging, and solving these difficulties is crucial.

Finally, the researcher explored how TikTok might function in the future as a promotional tool using the Outlook label. Regarding the expert interviews, it is clear that TikTok is a promising promotion platform for festivals in the future. It became clear that TikTok will be of lasting relevance, as it is a platform that is already known and shows growth potential. In addition, it's a notable discovery that TikTok can be utilized to spread awareness and encourage festival safety. Content creation that promotes festival enjoyment in moderation can connect with users, especially the young audience, and enhance the festival experience. The increase of specific communities only for certain festivals or music events on TikTok was mentioned by the Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner which relates to Iványi's (2021) statement that building a virtual community can be an effective tool for young people to get different user-generated content. Since TikTok is categorized as user-generated media (UGC) (Omar & Dequan, 2020) the potential for this phenomenon is high.

The possibility of future ticket competitions and the formation of festival-related communities on TikTok underscore the development potential. Instagram was mentioned as the pioneer for festival marketing (Malivuk, 2020). Also, the interview partners pointed out that ticket competitions as well as infotainment work better on Instagram. Considering TikTok's distinct features and growing user base, innovative and creative approaches to festival promotion may appear. Especially the attractiveness of the platform to Generation Z, may open possibilities for new tactics that expand existing methods seen on Instagram.

Lastly, interaction between brands and artists was made as a future strategy proposal for festivals by Heidisch. This has already been shown with ALDI and its Secret Gig by the artist Ski Aggu. After the DEICHBRAND happened, videos of Ski Aggu could be found on the TikTok channel of ALDI (@aldinord), in which he presents a new product in an entertaining way. This not only shows that the collaboration has a lasting effect that goes beyond the festival but also that this strategy has the potential to expand in the future.

Overall, the findings show a compelling picture of the role TikTok plays in expanding festival audiences and participation, making it an indispensable tool for the future of festival promotion.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, this study revealed the noteworthy effectiveness of TikTok as a platform for festival promotion, in particular the DEICHBRAND festival, with an emphasis on its influence on Generation Z. The discussion focused strongly on TikTok's distinctive qualities, such as its broad reach potential for Generation Z and engaging livestreaming choices. The partnership between ALDI and DEICHBRAND highlighted TikTok's potential in the field of festival promotion and connecting with the young target audience. In addition, the findings of the investigation not only give an improved understanding of the processes that underlie successful TikTok social media marketing strategies for festivals, but also lay the groundwork for future research and tactical initiatives in digital marketing.

The findings showed essential insights into the effectiveness of DEICHBRAND's promotional efforts on TikTok by answering the six research questions and goals. To sum up the answers to the research questions of the study, it can be said that the results indicate strongly that TikTok content is essential in increasing festival awareness, specifically among Generation Z. Two important evidences of this are the significant increase in followers and likes for DEICHBRAND during the time period of the data collection as well as the overload of video posting for July. The creativity and engagement of TikTok grabbed the attention of potential festival attendees. Furthermore, while there is still a lack of conclusive data on TikTok's impact on increasing festival attendance, certain potential exists, especially among the festival-experienced Corona generation. TikTok content emerged as a powerful bridge between festival attendees and non-attendees. It promotes the fear of missing out (FOMO) and increases emotional connections by creating a collective festival experience. The partnership between ALDI and DEICHBRAND is driven by the principles of brand awareness and engagement. It goes beyond short-term profits and aims for long-term connections with the audience. In addition, the study examined the complex role that creators and influencers play in determining the success of DEICHBRAND's promotional initiatives, which were found to be both a key component of the festival's marketing plan and of today's festival culture. The chosen video theme, targeting, and advertising techniques are key factors in achieving engagement. Additionally, long-term collaborations were shown to be a successful strategy for advertising festivals, which is in line with research that

indicates influencer relationships are essential for digital marketing communication (Pahrmann & Kupka, 2019). It was notably clear that influencers are essential for widening reach and increasing awareness among Generation Z, an audience that brands may be unable to reach on their own. The investigation of DEICHBRAND's promotional strategy 2023 for TikTok revealed some significant strategies such as the usage of entertainment-oriented content, varied video themes, especially attendee stories and the festival in connection with music, authenticity, humorous tone of voice, narrative storytelling, and the strategic timing. Also, the purposeful inclusion of festival-specific hashtags underlines DEICHBRAND's commitment to branding and digital identity. This strategic decision improves their discoverability and increases their reach. Finally, the challenges pointed out during the interviews how difficult it can be to incorporate TikTok into festival promotion activities. These difficulties highlighted the necessity for ethical content creation, creative problem-solving within restrictions, efficient rights management, deliberate integration, and strong interpersonal dynamics. Highlighting the significance of operating by social norms and rules while generating captivating and ethical material for Generation Z. Ethical aspects around content creation, music rights, and sponsorship coordination were discussed.

In relation to the limitations of this study, it must be mentioned that the research focused specifically on one festival and one social media platform. One limitation is the sample for the video analysis of the DEICHBRANDs account, as it only included June and July of 2022 and 2023. It allowed the researcher to gain important insights into how the festival utilizes TikTok, but it might not provide enough understanding for a broader context. The small sample size limits the generalizability of our findings beyond the festival investigated in this study. Furthermore, the study was limited to the Generation Z demographic. Future studies could examine the impact of TikTok across various generations, such as Generation Y, and include a wider selection of festivals to address this limitation. According to the interviewees, TikTok is unquestionably attractive for promoting Generation Z. However, TikTok has established itself also as a popular platform for Gen Y, which has been reported by Sbai (Appendix A). Another limitation is that the findings of the interviews depend on the information provided by the experts. These individual viewpoints could bias the interpretation of the results. To address this limitation, focusing on a bigger selection of data sources such as integrating methods like focus groups or questionnaires might be an

appropriate direction for future research. It allows festival attendees to share their own personal perspectives and thoughts to understand their usage of TikTok for festival content.

The study of TikTok's potential as a future promotional tool paints a promising picture. The insights gleaned from the expert interviews consistently underscore TikTok's central role in the future of festival promotion. The platform's established presence and its growth potential confirm the enduring relevance. TikTok's potential ability to promote festival safety and awareness, especially among younger audiences, is an important entry point for engagement. Future innovations such as ticket contests and festival-oriented communities on TikTok, as well as a focus on effective content strategies, underscore the dynamic and evolving nature of the platform. These findings reinforce TikTok's position as an essential tool for expanding festival audiences and improving participation in the upcoming years.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A Transcript of Interview 1: Adil Sbai

Date of Interview: 27.05.2023

**Researcher:** Hello, Adil! I appreciate your time!

**Sbai:** All good, of course!

**Researcher:** Perfect, let's start right away, shall we?

**Sbai:** Let's Go!

**Researcher:** What do you think makes TikTok an effective promotional tool for music festivals?

**Sbai:** TikTok was born out of Musically, which means that the proximity to music is anchored in the roots of the platform. I believe that getting into the charts as a creator or artists who isn't Helene Fischer, is nearly impossible without TikTok. This shows TikTok's power for music and therefore also for music events, festivals, concerts, and so on. We are also seeing an increase in demand from companies in this segment. In addition, TikTok is a lifestyle and entertainment platform. I can easily imagine someone watching a video from a particular artist who is also a fan of that artist, they will also buy a ticket. Also, in comparison to other platforms, the prices for advertising are still very cheap on TikTok. You can directly link to a web shop. So, it's a very native advertising opportunity and form of advertising for example for festivals. TikTok is already understood as a channel, and I would be surprised if it doesn't increase.

**Researcher:** Do you think there are any special features, especially for Gen Z? Since that is still the platform's main target audience.

**Sbai:** The way of advertising on TikTok is A: Cheap and B: It works! One of the most appealing features are the Spark Ads on TikTok. You scroll down and see the advertising in between the natural, organic content.

**Researcher:** Do you think the only goal is attracting attendees for music festivals or are there any benefits of these strategies on people who do not attend?

**Sbai:** Do you mean if there are other forms of advertising for non-music related businesses or festivals?

**Researcher:** No, more related to whether the only goal is to "attract" visitors who are also attend the festival or is there also an advantage to advertising on Tiktok to attract people who are not going to the festival as well?

**Sbai:** Well, but the festival doesn't care about that at first, in other words, the client. But the festival, in other words, the client, doesn't care about that at first. They seek to win long-term consumers. Of course, TikTok can also be used to discover employees. Furthermore, because TikTok allows to create FOMO, individuals who do not attend will experience some form of FOMO. Otherwise, I would argue that the clients are the most important priority.

**Researcher:** Yes, and in the end it's also about creating awareness for people who go to the festival and for people who don't go to the festival.

**Sbai:** Yes, exactly

**Researcher:** What is TikTok best suited for in terms of strategic goals: raising awareness or driving conversion? Do you believe that different actions on TikTok should be directed towards specific strategic goals? If so, could you provide some examples to illustrate this?

**Sbai:** Both! A marketing funnel always consists of both. You need top of the funnel, awareness, branding, et cetera and then there are different steps leading to the impulse of a purchase. A good funnel always includes branding as well as classic performance marketing or conversion. I think, Tiktok is very good for both. I would tend to say even better for branding or awareness than for hardcore conversion. For the hardcore conversion other tools are probably better such as Google Search, SEO, or SEA, but still TikTok can be used for the full funnel.

**Researcher:** Thank you! How can the success of a TikTok marketing strategy for music festivals be measured?

**Sbai:** As I said before, there's probably no platform that's cheaper in terms of Cost Per Mille (CPM). But you can also look at what you've invested and gotten out of it in terms of website traffic, followers, but also conversions. What is exciting for many of our customers, is the brand awareness. For example, how well known is a brand before the campaign and after and how is the brand sympathy, before and after as well as the willingness to buy before/after.

**Researcher:** Do you have any Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or matrix in mind that are particularly important to track a campaign?

**Sbai:** What we always show is definitely CPM, how much reach, how many people have been reached, how many users have been generated, how is the engagement, the sentiment and of course simply how many clicks were on the link, which is relevant for the conversion but also how many sales were generated, that the client can measure this directly. I would say these are the most important KPIs.

**Researcher:** Can you maybe provide examples for successful TikTok marketing campaigns for music festivals you have worked on if yes, what did you do?

**Sbai:** No, festivals not yet. We have only given a workshop for a brand in the music segment. I know Spotify is doing more on TikTok, but I don't have a specific example.

**Researcher:** What kind of content would you generally develop for a TikTok music festival marketing campaign?

**Sbai:** I would say the best content are videos from the year before, which are emotionally bonding, surprising, and therefore create curiosity, but also generate FOMO. Furthermore, performances of certain artists. I believe the artists matter the most at festivals, and that's why I would use clips from them, and perhaps, if you can afford it, even verbal videos from them like "Hey guys, I'm at the festival, come join me", and then short clips of their experiences at the festival. In total, that's the kind of concept I would go for.

**Researcher:** How do you make sure the TikTok material is consistent with the festival's brand and messaging?

**Sbai:** That's a good question. Honestly, that's the supreme discipline in that case. Good employees, if you don't have them, good agencies that understand how the brand works, what values they represent, the tone of voice etc. It is also the everyday work of a good creative agency, to think about, what kind of creators, videos, pre-production, and post-production fits the brand. Bringing that together as closely as possible is then the supreme discipline. But with agencies, you must be as detailed as possible. Presenting the brand DNA is crucial because that is where we often struggle. Brands are often so caught up in their bubble and believe you understand everything right away. But you must pick up the agency. What values do you identify with your brand if you have branding guidance or can explain it, for example, what is your DNA and your positioning? What is the behavior of your target audience? Perhaps you have market research findings. We've also had clients who didn't know but were honest enough to admit it. Many brands have no idea who their target audience is. We have also conducted market research for clients, which can be an effective method if you don't know.

**Researcher:** Would you generally rely on content creators who are then responsible for precisely conveying this brand messaging on TikTok?

**Sbai:** Sure, Creators are powerful, with festivals I do not know exactly. I once saw something where a creator promoted a festival, I don't think it was good. It was expensive, but not effective. The creator selection must be good; it should be a creator for a certain theme.

**Researcher:** What advice do you have for music festivals interested in partnering with TikTok to promote their events?

**Sbai:** As previously stated, be aware of your brand's DNA and what you want to convey and represent. If you have good employees, they may be able to choose creators themselves, particularly those who are trustworthy and young employees. However, if you lack such resources, relying entirely on KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) would be a huge mistake. What is truly important is how effectively the promotion is received, whether there is real and good feedback, rather than relying solely on reach. The increase in brand sympathy is critical since it correlates with the willingness to purchase, which is a frequent finding in every marketing campaign. The biggest mistake, in my opinion, is

developing too many ad pieces and actively advertising them, instead of focusing on producing fewer but higher-quality ones. It's essential to measure everything you do, but it's also critical to understand that not everything can be measured at the same time. Without market research, assessing something like brand sympathy may need a 50.000 euros advertising investment, which many companies cannot afford.

**Researcher:** And TikTok would track all of this?

**Sbai:** Yes.

**Researcher:** And do you think TikTok is still more a platform for Gen Z or did the audience expand?

**Sbai:** No, the biggest growth is in Gen Y, and we can see that in the statistics. Today, Germany has around 20 million users, which means it can't just be young people anymore.

**Researcher:** That's why my question would be, is it better to use TikTok when the target audience is Gen Z or also the older audience?

**Sbai:** You can advertise for any age range on TikTok; You have the option of for example targeting users aged between 18 25. However, it has some bias because TikTok cannot correctly track all data since many users, particularly kids, are aware that some content, such as drug or sexual jokes, will not be shown to those under the age of 18. As a result, to access such content, young people frequently pretend to be over the age of 18.

**Researcher:** Yes, I can imagine that.

## **Appendix B Transcript of Interview 2: Manju (Influencer)**

Date of Interview: 04.07.2023

**Researcher:** Hello, thank you for taking the time. May I call you Manju?

**Manju:** Yes, no problem!

**Researcher:** Thank you, then I would say, let's start?

**Manju:** Yes, sure!

**Researcher:** Have you been sponsored by or collaborated with any music events before? If yes, can you share your experience and speak about the tasks you had to accomplish as part of the sponsorship or the collaboration?

**Manju:** I'm not sure if I'm allowed to mention the brand with which I had the collaboration with, but I went to the Lollapalooza, where multiple brands were represented, contributing to the festival's overall execution. One of the brands reached out to me if I would be interesting in going to the festival. Since I live in Berlin, where the festival takes place, I didn't have to look for accommodation. Usually, such costs would be also covered by the brands. In return, the requirement is to create stories with brand mentions or links. In my case, I was asked to promote a specific playlist, created for the festival, featuring the artists performing to raise awareness. However, I had a lot of freedom in creating content. Also, I got the tickets for free and a wristband for drinks and food with a daily 50-euro fee, I believe. Aside from myself, many other creators were invited, and we could enjoy the festival together. If travel expenses are also covered, brands might expect a broader return, such as TikTok's or Reels. But it depends on the brand's approach. If you only get the free ticket, they usually don't expect as much. In addition, brands frequently offer VIP tickets or other higher-priced tickets, which is great for us creators, because we would post content at such events anyway, so it is a win-win situation for both parties.

**Researcher:** Do you think TikTok content has contributed to increase festival awareness among Generation Z?

**Manju:** I would answer the question with a clear yes, simply because with all social media platforms, one never really feels disconnected or offline. If these platforms are used effectively, a massive influx of videos can be generated, enabling users to actively engage in the entire festival experience. Depending on whom people follow, an extensive number of festival-related content may be displayed. Hence, I believe that TikTok plays a significant role in this matter. Over the past two years, I have noticed that festivals have become an integral part of our generation. With TikTok as an active player, I do believe that a much larger audience of younger people is being reached.

**Researcher:** Yes, and TikTok, in comparison to other platforms probably offers the chance for higher virality.

**Manju:** Totally!

**Researcher:** What are your thoughts or insights about TikTok content playing a role in raising festival attendance among Generation Z?

**Manju:** I think that TikTok content generates such a boost because users are confronted with so much information in a short period of time. This rapid dissemination allows users to swiftly grasp what type of festival it is, its location, and the acts performing. Therefore, I believe that the earlier you begin preventive advertising; the more people will be drawn to it. Also, as more people actively promote the festival, more people become interested in attending and participating in the event. Nobody wants to miss out, and I think FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) is a major factor, particularly within our generation.

**Researcher:** The previous point you mentioned is also connected to the following question. On the other hand, can you share insights on the effects of festival-related content on Generation Z individuals who did not attend the festival?

**Manju:** In today's digital age, where everything happens online and we are constantly bombarded with content, videos, and images, FOMO becomes significant. I can imagine that when someone from a friend group expresses excitement about attending an event and you notice your favorite artists or even influencers are also going, it might have an immense impact on your decision to attend an event.

**Researcher:** But would you say that FOMO is driven more by friends or music?

**Manju:** It depends on the circumstances, in my opinion. For example, if the artists who are performing are ones you enjoy and your friends are having "the time of their lives" over the full weekend of celebration, I suppose there may be some drawbacks for the one who is not present. However, I believe the greatest influence is on the friends. Nonetheless, the overall experience is important since it is more than simply a concert; it is a weekend where you live at the festival, which cannot be entirely represented through photos or videos. To truly understand what is going on, one must be present in person.

**Researcher:** I agree! Do you think the partnership between TikTok, and festivals is a successful marketing strategy? Do you see any downsides in this partnership?

**Manju:** I'd say it's a combination between both! On the positive side, there is an increasing number of offerings. Festivals are booking more and more impressive acts, creating elaborate stage set ups, providing better camping facilities, and offering improved food options. I've never seen so much festival promotion as I have this year, or in the last few weeks. It's incredible how many festivals seem to be happening almost every weekend. And since TikTok's audience is mainly young, it naturally appeals to people who have just turned 18 and want to live life to the fullest. Consequently, I believe TikTok is a successful festival marketing strategy. It almost becomes a self-perpetuating cycle; as people begin to post about an event, others are inspired to do the same, and the cycle continues like a viral snowball system. A video gets viral, and others think, "Okay, I had a similar experience, why not post something too?" Some creators even design their own soundtracks which others can use for cool videos. Hence, TikTok has emerged as a powerful forerunner in terms of partnership. On the other hand, I also see an issue. Even if TikTok has such a young audience, alcohol is often excessively glorified in the videos.

**Researcher:** Are you referring to the festival accounts or the creators?

**Manju:** Mainly among the creators. Festivals must adhere to specific guidelines, particularly when it comes to alcohol, as there are strict regulations in Germany. For instance, advertising alcohol is generally not allowed if there is a chance that minors could possibly see it. As an outcome, I believe festival accounts generally follow to these

guidelines quite successfully. However, alcohol consumption may still be visible in recordings, such as someone pouring a glass of wine. My main worry is with a lot of creators who emphasize alcohol in their content, especially when their audience is quite young, even if they are legally able to drink at the age of 18. I feel creators still carry a certain responsibility as role models, and this component is sometimes disregarded in festival programming.

**Researcher:** But do you think the partnership TikTok, and festivals is a successful marketing strategy overall?

**Manju:** Absolutely. The existing statistics demonstrate this. Many people are interested in attending numerous festivals. Festivals also approach it strategically by organizing numerous contests where people have the chance to win two VIP tickets, for example. In general, there are a variety of approaches that festivals can employ to increase the affinity for attending their events.

**Researcher:** Also, TikTok is a more affordable advertising tool than other platforms, isn't it?

**Manju:** Yes, that's true. Especially because with TikTok you have a lot of control over who your advertisements are shown to. For example, you can only target audience a female audience or an age group between 24 to 30 or 18 to 25. That is why, currently, I believe it is still within a fair budget, making it justifiable. Overall, I can't think of any disadvantages for the partnership at the moment.

**Researcher:** Based on your point of view, what are the important characteristics or strategies that make a festival promotion effective in attracting Generation Z's attention and engagement?

**Manju:** I'm from the same generation, and something I notice about myself is that I tend to get intrigued when I receive a lot of content at once and realize there is an audience deeply engaged in the festival theme. This is particularly noticeable when I see my colleagues intensely promoting festivals for about two weeks. It attracts my interest and makes me want to learn more "What is it exactly? What happens there? And why is everyone suddenly advertising it? Is it really that cool?" TikTok and festival brands

leverage this approach, creating a sense of information overload by determining specific periods for uploading festival-related content. While you may get annoyed eventually, you still become aware of exciting events where many people come together. This strategic use of content overload works effectively to generate buzz and anticipation for upcoming events, making them stand out and attracting the attention of potential attendees.

**Researcher:** It creates a lasting impression!

**Manju:** Exactly and that's why I believe it's critical to start planning about two weeks before the festival begins or even earlier. During this time, the content can be reintroduced progressively in phases. At first, people may think, "Okay, the event is still some time away," but when additional advertising appears close to the festival, it's quite effective, because it captures the attention of Generation Z. If the videos being advertised are appealing, it will surely catch people's curiosity, especially when everything focuses on the concept of "living your life and making it an unforgettable summer". Also, targeting certain niches by involving a varied range of creators who can authentically promote the festival. Especially when these creators are already naturally inclined to attend festivals themselves, it's smart to engage them. In addition, the festival may expand its reach by cooperating with a diverse range of creators. In terms of general content, posting videos from the previous year's festival is frequently clever. Likewise, content that gives a glimpse of what attendees can expect, like teasing the lineup, can also be effective in building anticipation.

**Researcher:** Does this mean you believe that Influencer Marketing is one of the most effective strategies for increasing awareness and engagement?

**Manju:** Yes, as I previously stated, collaborating with many niche creators who have a huge following in specific sectors allows you to reach a wide number of people and create even more awareness for the festival. That's why, I believe that influencer marketing is one of the most important components in a festival strategy.

**Researcher:** Can you provide examples or success stories involving the usage of TikTok or other social media platforms to promote festivals or music events for Generation Z?

**Manju:** I think the more you hear about a festival, the more it sticks in your mind. For example, I became aware of the DEICHBRAND Festival primarily through influencers. Creating a lot of awareness for a festival or brand such as through ticket giveaways or highlighting the experiences and program, resonates well with Generation Z. However, I don't believe there is one single success story; it is about overloading people with information, so they naturally think, "Okay, I wasn't there this year, but I've heard so much about it, I have to go the next year."

**Researcher:** And from your experience, what are some of the difficulties or concerns that festival/music event organizers should keep in mind while addressing Generation Z through TikTok or other social media platforms?

**Manju:** Since festival can be highly vibrant and wild, organizers must ensure safety for attendees. One example to do this is by providing a "safety post" that clearly states whom to contact in case of any issues or problems. They could also implement a "save word" that everyone understands and can use in case of emergencies. In general, organizers should promote awareness about potential dangers, as many young people may not fully grasp the extent of the risks involved. Safety tips such as "keep an eye on your belongings" and "don't go out alone at night" are important. Many individuals embrace festivals with the "You Only Live Once" (YOLO) mindset, I believe it is the organizers' responsibility to provide education and information to ensure safety. After all, you never know what kind of people will attend the festival.

**Researcher:** Can you think of new ideas or approaches for music festivals to use TikTok for their promotion? What can be done that hasn't been done yet?

**Manju:** To be honest, I can't really think of new ideas because I feel that the current approaches are working well. Festivals clearly appeal to a broad spectrum of people, particularly the younger age. Also, the combination of several music genres in a single festival draws a large audience. As a result, I suppose a lot of things are being done correctly at this time.

**Researcher:** But you mentioned "safety education", and personally, I haven't come across much content on that topic yet.

**Manju:** True, that could indeed be seen as an idea worth considering. I think it is even unfortunate that such content is lacking because, as I mentioned earlier, there are many young people at festivals who may not know their limits. Therefore, this point certainly has the potential to serve as a new approach to raise more awareness on this topic and appeal to peoples conscience, perhaps given a message like, „Have fun, but it doesn't have to escalate completely".

**Researcher:** I think that's a thoughtful and helpful approach!

### **Appendix C Transcript of Interview 3: Jule Benja Heidisch (DEICHBRAND)**

Date of Interview: 07.07.2023

**Researcher:** In your perspective and experience, how effective has TikTok been as a promotional tool for DEICHBRAND attracting and engaging festival attendees, particularly Generation Z?

**Heidisch:** Currently, TikTok is the platform with the widest reach for us, and it requires the least amount of effort (if you understand the platform and its algorithm). On TikTok, we have the most viral content, which has given us the most awareness since we started using it. At the moment, ticket sales are still primarily through our content on Instagram, as that's where we have the most sustained interactions with our brand. Nevertheless, TikTok has given us a significant reach among the younger target audience, especially through collaborations with Germany's biggest creators. Nowhere else could we reach such a young and festival-inexperienced target group, in particular the Corona-generation, who seemed to have had no previous connections to festivals.

**Researcher:** Can you give specific examples of how TikTok content has increased festival attendance and/or awareness for DEICHBRAND? What measures or indicators did you use to assess the impact?

**Heidisch:** We cannot yet determine the extent to which TikTok has contributed to our increased visitor numbers, but that was not our goal in the first place. Our main goal is to build awareness of our festival, and to transfer our image of the "Festival an der Nordsee" to the younger people, and ultimately encourage them to attend the festival in the long term.

The cooperation's with creators through content like "What do I pack for DB23" or "I'm looking forward to these acts at DB23 the most" have given us a lot of interaction and those "AHA-moments". In the comments under these videos people often say "I didn't know that DEICHBRAND exists and that they have such a cool line-up". Ticket sweepstakes have increased our followers immensely. In addition, we work with a pixel in

the Ad Manager, which allows us to observe how many people who have received our content on TikTok through ad campaigns have visited our ticket store. Here, we use content that has already gone viral organically.

**Researcher:** Which other social media platforms does DEICHBRAND use for promotional purposes? Do you believe TikTok is more effective than other platforms in raising festival awareness and/ or attendance, based on your observations and experience?

**Heidisch:** We primarily use Instagram and, analogously, Facebook, followed by TikTok and YouTube (Shorts). TikTok is the most effective platform for quickly reaching a large audience, but it mostly leads to fleeting interactions. However, it does help us reach the youngest target group. On Facebook, we currently have the biggest following, with more than 250.000 people, who are mainly between 25-59 years old.

Instagram is presently the platform where we share the greatest amount of infotainment. On TikTok, the focus is primarily on entertainment. We engage the most with our community on Instagram, providing information and answering important questions. The biggest part of our target group is active here, which we "reactivate" every year. On the other hand, TikTok allows us to reach a completely new audience and demographic daily, as our content is also shown to users that do not follow or know us.

**Researcher:** How did DEICHBRAND use TikTok to promote the festival? Could you explain the key strategies and approaches used to promote the festival on this platform?

**Heidisch:** Influencer collaborations (internally called Creator collaborations): The focus is on creating content BEFORE the festival to boost awareness and ticket sales. Also, Ad Manager: Here, content that has already viral organically is further promoted with advertising budget. This includes integrating Call-to-Action (CTA) phrases such as "Get your tickets now!" along with a link to the ticket store.

**Researcher:** Regarding festival-related content on TikTok, did you notice something about its impact on individuals, specifically Gen Z who did not attend the festival? Is it successful in generating interest and engagement among non-attendees?

**Heidisch:** The impact on TikTok is very high. As soon as the content is "relatable", we experience a high level of engagement. In this context, content that features faces, follows current trends, and incorporates trending sounds performs better than high quality content.

**Researcher:** For Generation Z individuals who attended the festival, how did festival related TikTok videos influence the overall experience or decision? Do you believe it added to their enthusiasm or expectations for the festival?

**Heidisch:** We could see from the comments that these "Gänsehaut-Videos" (videos that evoke goosebumps or emotional reactions) trigger a lot of motivation and a longing for the festival experience ("Festivalweh"). Additionally, moving images help immensely in conveying these all-encompassing emotions and impressions of our festival.

**Researcher:** Regarding the partnership between DEICHBRAND and TikTok as a marketing strategy, what are the general guidelines and goals you want to achieve? How do you evaluate the success of this partnership in meeting those goals, can you provide some numbers?

**Heidisch:** Unfortunately, we are not allowed to say anything about this.

**Researcher:** Have you experienced any difficulties or constraints when utilizing TikTok as a promotional tool for music festivals?

**Heidisch:** Especially the music rights make it difficult for us to highlight our unique selling points (USPs). We are only allowed to use commercial music. Moreover, we don't have a product that we can simply visualize in front of the camera. It requires much more creativity to trigger the interest of our community.

**Researcher:** Is the partnership also planned for the upcoming festival in July? Can you give insights into the promotion strategy being planned for DEICHBRAND 2023?

**Heidisch:** Regarding a renewed cooperation, we cannot provide any information at the moment.

**Researcher:** What trends and techniques do you believe will define festival promotion on TikTok in the future?

**Heidisch:** Using memes and clichés to make content relatable, capturing typical festival situations, and interacting with artists and brands to represent them. Additionally, we have noticed that having a recognizable face associated with the festival increases effectiveness in order to establish a direct (personal) connection to the brand on the “For You Page”.

## **Appendix D Transcript of Interview 4: Key Account Manager TikTok (Warner)**

Date of Interview: 21.07.2023

**Researcher:** In your experience in the music industry, how important has TikTok been in promoting music festivals and concerts, particularly among Gen Z attendees?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** This is extremely important. TikTok itself strongly promotes festivals extensively, and many artists who perform at the festivals also actively promote them. Also, many creators are present at the festival and engage in promotion, which allows the audience to get a lot of information about the festival, both before and after the festival. There is a pre-event preparation and a post-event coverage on TikTok for these festivals. It's evident that the Gen Z audience, which is highly active on TikTok, is increasingly attending festivals that are promoted through the platform.

**Researcher:** How effective, in your opinion, is TikTok content in attracting and engaging festival attendance among Gen Z?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** As just presented a bit, this approach is indeed highly effective. Festivals create their own unique hashtags (#festivalname) and actively promote them for almost three months. There is a lot of German content shared under these hashtags, including content from performing at the festivals. I think the festivals appear to go the extra mile to promote these hashtags, engaging both artists and creators present at the event. The strategy attempts to attract more participants and broaden the festival's reach beyond the traditional festival audience, with a special focus on the Gen Z audience, which is highly engaged on TikTok. By integrating artists and creators in the promotion, they may reach out to new audiences and enhance overall reach and engagement, especially for festivals that aren't traditionally considered as Gen Z-oriented.

**Researcher:** Can you provide any examples of successful TikTok campaigns or strategies used to promote music festivals or events?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** I may have already spoiled the answer a bit, but the biggest, most effective, and successful TikTok campaign is undoubtedly the Hashtag Festival campaign. When it comes to music in general, there are also genre-specific hashtags like #rap, #rock, #electronicmusic, and currently #tomorrowland which is heavily promoted. As part of this Hashtag campaign, there is a dedicated subpage where users can find more content and specifically organized content about the event or music. Furthermore, these hashtags and subpages also feature live streams directly from the festival itself. This means that the Gen Z community on TikTok can enjoy festival content in real time through these promoted hashtags and subpages. Because of this, the reach of a festival or music is much greater.

**Researcher** In this regard, I have a question about live streams. How do you know as a follower when they happen?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** There are several ways to promote a live stream. You can schedule a live stream, and it works like a notification that users can enable to be notified when the livestream starts. You can communicate the upcoming livestream through multiple videos on your account. For example, you can say, “Hey, we have a scheduled live stream. Turn on the notification to be notified when it starts”. There is also the “live page” where followers see a red circle with the word “live” over the profile picture of accounts that are currently live streaming. This allows followers to instantly know when someone is live. Additionally, TikTok can promote live streams to non-followers through advertisements and push notifications. This way, people who don't follow the account can also become aware of your live stream and potentially join in.

**Researcher:** The latter is probably really efficient, especially for people who might not even attend the festival, as it serves as a reminder for them to take a look at it

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** Absolutely!

**Researcher:** When it comes to marketing music festivals, how does TikTok differentiate itself from other social media platforms?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** I think that there are two crucial factors contributing to the success of this approach. First, they can reach a broader audience, especially the entire Gen Z community, and perhaps even those outside of the Instagram bubble. Other social media platforms do not provide such extensive reach. Second, the use of livestreams is a significant favor. I haven't seen such a consistent and extensive livestream of festivals on Instagram. Therefore, I truly think that TikTok is an effective advertising strategy for festivals. It pleases both users as well as the acts that are performing at the festival. Going back to the first point, it allows festivals to connect with an entirely new audience.

**Researcher:** What are some of the most important factors and techniques to consider when using TikTok as a promotion tool for music festivals, especially when targeting younger audiences?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** I believe it is important to be authentic in the content and upload several things. On TikTok it is crucial to not just upload one video but maybe several directly. I also think it's important to keep the TikTok community engaged. Regarding this, I would for example suggest using a song that's not yet released but has been teased at a festival. With this, you can build further campaigns for the music that is going to be released. Then, you can show the live reactions to the song on TikTok and build further campaigns around the upcoming music. Another way is to give previews in advance, like saying, "Hey, we were at the festival last year, check out some content from last year" or "Look, this is what's going on here, join too!" Or you can tease by saying "Hey, we will bring someone who creates something with this song onto the stage at the festival", creating incentives that serve as a bridge between the festival and music, which can be showcased on TikTok.

**Researcher:** Great point! Are there any difficulties or boundaries associated with employing TikTok for festival promotion, and how may they be overcome?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** Yes, the biggest difficulty is the clarification of rights. For the live stream, both publishing copyright, as well as master rights, need to be clarified. This is a very long and complicated process because many departments and companies are involved since a song may have different master rights held by a label,

while publishing rights could be with a different entity. This, I believe, is the major obstacle from a music perspective to use or be allowed to use the music. However, it can be overcome by knowing the lineup early enough and starting rights clarification for these performances in advance. This process comes with associated costs, as some rights may not be easily granted, so budgeting and setting aside money to pay for these rights is essential to make the live stream a reality. Regarding creativity for the content, there are no limits; I don't see any difficulties there. Another potential problem could be organizational issues. Festivals are quite chaotic, with numerous acts, and the question is how to ensure TikTok can access the acts, film content, and ensure all livestreams work smoothly from a technical standpoint. As a result, festivals should truly say that TikTok is an ongoing and crucial component and that they integrate the platform as effectively as possible to also don't interfere with other sponsors.

**Researcher:** Regarding music rights, is that only for livestreams, because you usually need the rights for the content of individual videos as well, right?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** Exactly, but I would say that this is easier to clarify because it follows a standard process in place, making it simpler to clear the rights quickly and obtain approval. However, for live streams there is no standard process because different songs are played each time. When it comes to using individual songs for content, it is just one song and not an entire set of songs. As mentioned before, most of them have a standard process in place, which makes it easier and faster to clear and get the approval for using the songs. But of course, regardless of whether it's for individual songs or live streams, all brands involved must have the legal rights clarified beforehand.

**Researcher:** Okay, I understand. What trends or shifts do you see in the use of social media platforms like TikTok for event and festival marketing on a broader industry level?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** I see the importance of TikTok as extremely significant and continuously growing in prominence. It has become deeply ingrained in the Generation Z culture, where people turn to TikTok after an event to create a recap and share their best moments with each other. This fosters the formation of entire communities where people create and share content using specific event or tour-related hashtags. This trend is becoming more and more popular! A perfect example of this is Harry Styles' Love

on Tour, which has its own unique content world on TikTok. I believe this kind of phenomenon will get more intense, with these kinds of bubbles that "blow up" again after an event or "hype up" before. TikTok plays a significant role in general marketing strategies for song and album releases as well. It's observed that after an artist's preforms live, there is an uplift in music streams, radio play, and even in their follower counts. TikTok has become the go-to platform to search for and engage with these moments effectively.

**Researcher:** But in your opinion, do you think TikTok is only a platform for Gen Z?

**Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner:** It's evolving, and more followers are joining TikTok, but it remains a predominantly young platform. It is not as young as Snapchat; that is a generation younger, and you can find different trending content there. However, when we talk about Gen Z and TikTok, we can see that Gen Z is the largest community. Of course, it is growing older and expanding its user base, but TikTok is still primarily associated with Gen Z. It hasn't changed drastically to the point where we move away from the fact the main audience are under 25 years old.

**Researcher:** Thank you!

## **Appendix E Transcript of Interview 5: Teamlead Social Media Marketing & Communication (ALDI)**

Date of Interview: 02.08.2023

**Researcher:** How was the promotion strategy of ALDI for DEICHBRAND 2023 created? Did the role of TikTok change in comparison to prior years?

**Teamlead Social Media:** The DEICHBRAND festival's advertising approach can be characterized as follows: We were active across various social media platforms, with TikTok being particularly prominent. We had prepared many on-site events including so-called "Brandlöscher" (brand extinguishers) who offered help at the festival, such as tent setup and entertainment. To make things easier, we set up a special WhatsApp channel where attendees could request the "Brandlöscher" assistance. Also, I think the Secret Gig with Ski Aggu was a notable difference from prior years. During the performance, we went live on TikTok in front of the ALDI store. This was an innovative strategy for us because we not only live-streamed the event but also advertised it to reach as many TikTok users as possible. This shift in strategy was a big step for us. In general, we already had a sort of festival communication focused on products before DEICHBRAND started, and we shared a lot of content on TikTok throughout the festival. We continued to post festival-related content after the festival, which is slowly winding down now. In summary, the strategy may be separated into three phases, with the Ski Aggu live performance being a notable shift from the previous year since it was filmed live.

**Researcher:** You mentioned that you promoted the live stream beforehand. How did you promote it? Did you post TikTok's beforehand saying "Hey, we are going live?"

**Teamlead Social Media:** No, we actually promoted the live stream ourselves, about 10-15 minutes before the performance went live. Then, during the live stream, we continued to promote it in the hopes that as many people as possible would see it and be able to click in and watch. We wanted people to know that there was an ALDI concert going on right now.

**Researcher:** What role has Aldi played in the festival's marketing and promotion strategies?

**Teamlead Social Media:** You mean over all?

**Researcher:** Yes.

**Teamlead Social Media:** I believe we can say that as one of the festival's major sponsors, we are quite visible, and a great opportunity to connect with the young audiences who are present on-site. It also allows us to present our brand and what we have to offer for individuals who were unable to attend the event. We largely accomplish this using social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. During the festival, just like in previous years, we had a big store covering over 2000 square meters, where we offered relevant products. We also had a “Cool House Disco” for everyone to enjoy, enhancing the store experience with an entertainment factor. In addition, we had the "ALDI Corner," which served as a meeting point for games and interactions with our brand, providing food as well. This whole approach is a combination of on-site activities as well as engaging content created by us. As previously said, the “Brandlöscher” project is one way where we provide support and help on-site while also incorporating an element of fun. These features provide an outstanding chance for us, particularly at festivals, allowing us to get very close to our relevant target audience through both content and product.

**Researcher:** I think the “Brandlöscher” project is a great concept! It not only improves safety awareness, but also communicates that the brand is thoughtful about such matters. While the focus is on entertainment, it is also essential to address such topics at festivals.

**Teamlead Social Media:** So, regarding the “Brandlöscher”, it's worth noting that there were four or five males and females who you could contact via WhatsApp for example, for example, saying “Hey, I need help setting up my tent.” Then they would come over and help with the tent. Or if you ran out of beer, you could request some through them, and they would come over and distribute it to you. So, it was more of a fun service. We had it last year, and it worked well. That’s why they already had a high level of recognition this year, not only being written to but also approached them in person. This also resulted in content for us to use. Moreover, we sent some influencers along with the “Brandlöscher” team, so we could have influencer-generated content on-site via their own channels. We were able to create engaging content throughout the festival by combining the efforts of the “Brandlöscher” and influencers.

**Researcher:** The next question you already answered a bit but as a DEICHBRAND sponsor, how does your team use TikTok as a promotional tool to connect and interact with potential festival attendees and Gen Z in particular?

**Teamlead Social Media:** Our target audiences at DEICHBRAND are Gen Z and Gen Y. We hoped to develop direct one-on-one communication using WhatsApp and the “Brandlöscher” project. Furthermore, we didn't want to limit ourselves to engaging solely festival participants on-site. We wanted to deliver the content right to the phones of those who couldn't be there in person as well, to display what we were doing at the festival and the many initiatives we had in place. Our goal was to provide anchor points and motivation for individuals to connect with our brand even if they couldn't attend the event in person.

**Researcher:** And the live stream is also a form of advertising, right?

**Teamlead Social Media:** Yes, totally!

**Researcher:** Did you discover specific types of content that are most effective to promote the DEICHBRAND festival?

**Teamlead Social Media:** We are currently in the evaluation phase since the festival has just taken place recently. We promoted in advance that we would be present at the festival and coordinated content with DEICHBRAND to align the content with people's expectations. Now, we need to analyze the performance to identify what worked best: Was it TikTok, the influencer activation, or the content related to the “Brandlöscher”? On Thursday, we will also release a recap video on YouTube, summarizing the festival with a protagonist.

**Researcher:** How do you measure the success of the engagement? Do you have specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that you track?

**Teamlead Social Media:** Yes, one of the most important KPIs is definitely the View Duration, which measures how long viewers engage with our content. This provides us with insights into the quality of our content and demonstrates whether we not only reached individuals but also kept them interested enough to stay engaged with the content we provided. In addition, we compare a few media KPIs, such as cost per 1000 impressions

(CPM), cost per view (CPV), and engagement rate, to our benchmarks. This allows us to receive a complete view of how well our different content initiatives worked during the campaign.

**Researcher:** Thank you! Can you give examples of engaging activities that ALDI delivers to festival attendees?

**Teamlead Social Media:** I believe the most important and critical feature is having an Aldi store on-site with all products available at a great price. The ALDI Corner in the infield and the “Brandlöscher” activation are also crucial. When these measures are considered collectively, I think they leave a lasting effect on the attendees. They recognize that ALDI is present, actively participating, and assisting the festival in creating a terrific experience. While the emphasis is on the products and the store, the overall atmosphere, including the enthusiastic employees and the disco in the store. Also, the unique working environment, adds to the pleasure and offers an out-of-the-ordinary working experience for the employees.

**Researcher:** And the store, if I read correctly, is also one of the largest stores, right?

**Teamlead Social Media:** Exactly, this is our largest store and is set up before the festival and taken down after. But for this one single moment, it is the largest store. In addition, the product range is accordingly customized. It's not like a regular store where you can find everything, but rather focused on meeting the needs of a festival. For instance, there are more tents, camping chairs, and barbeque utensils being sold.

**Researcher:** What do you think, how does this partnership improve the audience's overall festival experience?

**Teamlead Social Media:** Without having present numbers, I am hopeful that our partnership will make the festival experience on the grounds a lot easier. Attendees won't have to worry about carrying all the festival utensils with them. I believe it is always a big point at festivals, when you need to bring a lot of stuff, and this burden is somewhat alleviated by having our store on-site. In this way, we can ultimately contribute to the overall positive festival experience while also positioning our brand, as we did with the

Secret Gig, where we had an artist play in front of the store. We had the 257ers last year, and Ski Aggu performed this year. These extra performances allow us to demonstrate that we are a cool, young brand that understands its target audience, especially with the choice of artists. All this hopefully contributes to the overall impression. One person might say, "Hey, the store, in particular, is cool," while someone else says, "The Ski Aggu concert was amazing," or "The Brandlöscher really saved me because they helped me set up my tent."

**Researcher:** What were the main goals of the partnership with the DEICHBRAND Festival?

**Teamlead Social Media:** From our perspective, the various measures we implement at DEICHBRAND aim to increase relevance among young target consumers. We strive to enhance likability and convey brand values or core principles. As previously said, one of our primary goals is to provide good products at reasonable prices on-site, thus making the festival experience more enjoyable and positively impactful. Through these actions, we also hope to be recognized as supporters of the festival. These key points are crucial to us! Being present and involved with the target audience for three to four days on-site is a unique opportunity. It enables us to get extremely near to the target audience while interacting with them showcasing our products and brand.

**Researcher:** Okay, and in your opinion, did you observe any improvement or untapped prospects on TikTok that may be investigated further for festival promotion?

**Teamlead Social Media:** When you look at the results, there always seems to be something to optimize. Especially in live streaming, there will likely be points for improvement. We have done a few minor things before, but this was our first significant live streaming experience; there's probably potential for improving and lessons to be learnt from it. Also, we can take those learnings and experiences to enhance our approach to live streaming in general. These insights can also be applied to other content pieces on platforms like TikTok, where we can further extend and draw broader conclusions. It's not only about enhancing festival communication; it's also about improving all the other procedures we have in place that could be improved. I believe that we'll find areas to focus on because campaigns constantly teach us something new. We'll look at what went well,

what we can improve, what didn't go so well and why, and then either solve the issues or do things differently the next time.

**Researcher:** I have one last question that just came to my mind. Does user-generated-content also play an important role for you, or is it more about your own content?

**Teamlead Social Media:** We take everything what we can get! Especially when people share their experiences from our one-site activities or from the DEICHBRAND ALDI store. Naturally, we aim to create content that encourages people to share it. This generation is constantly on their phones, and many of them are filming and capturing moments anyway, making it more likely for them to share content.

**Researcher:** But you didn't have a hashtag challenge or anything like that, right?

**Teamlead Social Media:** Yes, that is correct. We didn't have a specific participation challenge. Beforehand, we had contests such as winning tickets on Instagram.

**Researcher:** But for instance sweepstakes are more commonly promoted on Instagram?

**Teamlead Social Media:** That is exactly what I meant earlier. We've learned from previous experiences that contests perform better for us in terms of user participation on Instagram. However, this does not rule out the possibility of future TikTok contests. It's just that the contests we've run so far have performed better on Instagram. The scenario may change but currently Instagram works better.

**Researcher:** Do you also focus on collaborating with influencers who promote such contests?

**Teamlead Social Media:** Yes, influencer activities are an integral part of our standard package for DEICHBRAND. We also had influencers present at the festival, including a long-term partner with whom we collaborate, Parshad, who you can also find on our ALDI-Nord channel. She was on-site and created content that will be published this Thursday. We try to optimize our visibility by creating additional content that will last beyond just the duration of the DEICHBRAND event. Having influencers on-site, including Parshad, is a crucial part of our marketing strategy. Influencers assist us to access

communities and target audiences that we might not have reached otherwise, resulting in a positive overall image for our brand.

**Researcher:** And particularly at the DEICHBRAND festival, there is even the “Isle of content” where all the influencers come together to create content. I think, this also shows that DEICHBRAND places a strong focus on influencers.

**Teamlead Social Media:** I think that influencers are a crucial part of the festival culture. They are often seen at festivals, some of whom might have been booked by the festival organizers themselves, to promote the festival as whole, rather than promoting a specific brand. I am not sure about DEICHBRAND's specifics.

**Researcher:** Thank you! That closes our interview. I appreciate your assistance!

**Teamlead Social Media:** Of course!

## Appendix F Informed Consent Form Participation in Research



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PORTUGUESA

### Informed Consent Form for Participation in Research

**Study Title:** TikTok as an effective promotion tool for music festivals: A case study on DEICHBRAND

**Researcher:** Anna Lena Stiller (ID: 132221024)

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the research project above. This consent form is necessary for me to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation.

Please certify that you approve the following:

- The interview will take around 30 min. I don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time;
- If the interview is conducted in person, through Zoom or via a phone call, it will be recorded as an audio file, and a transcript will be produced by the researcher Anna Stiller;
- Your name and job description will be mentioned in the transcript, your contributions will not be anonymous;
- The data collected will only be used for academic purposes;
- Both the audio files (in the case of a Zoom or phone call interview) and the transcripts will be deleted 6 months after the public defense of the master dissertation by Anna Stiller.

**I also understand that my words may be quoted directly.**

**With regards to being quoted,**

I agree that the researcher may publish documents that contain quotations by me and they will be identified with my name and job description.

**Signing the informed consent form**


I have read this form, and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

<b>Name of the participant</b>	<b>Signature</b>
<b>Date and Time</b>	

**Investigator**

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

<b>Name of person obtaining consent</b> Anna Lena Stiller	<b>Signature of person obtaining consent</b> 
<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>25.05.2023</b>

## Appendix G Label Analysis MaxQDA

### Summary with coded segments - MA.mx22 (10.08.2023)

Label/Theme	Coded segments
<b>Outlook</b>	<p>Also, I think the Secret Gig with Ski Aggu was a notable difference from prior years. During the performance, we went live on TikTok in front of the ALDI store. This was an innovative strategy for us because we not only live-streamed the event but also advertised it to reach as many TikTok users as possible. This shift in strategy was a big step for us.</p> <p>Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 3 - 3 (0)</p> <p>When you look at the results, there always seems to be something to optimize. Especially in live streaming, there will likely be points for improvement. We have done a few minor things before, but this was our first significant live streaming experience; there's probably potential for improving and lessons to be learnt from it. Also, we can take those learnings and experiences to enhance our approach to live streaming in general.</p> <p>Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 29 - 29 (0)</p> <p>We've learned from previous experiences that contests perform better for us in terms of user participation on Instagram. However, this does not rule out the possibility of future TikTok contests. It's just that the contests we've run so far have performed better on Instagram. The scenario may change but currently Instagram works better.</p> <p>Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 35 - 35 (0)</p> <hr/> <p>festivals should truly say that TikTok is an ongoing and crucial component and that they integrate the platform as effectively as possible to also don't interfere with other sponsors.</p> <p>Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 17 - 17 (0)</p>

I believe this kind of phenomenon will get more intense, with these kinds of bubbles that "blow up" again after an event or "hype up" before.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 21 - 21 (0)

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Festivals are booking more and more impressive acts, creating elaborate stage set ups, providing better camping facilities, and offering improved food options.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 19 - 19 (0)

Festivals clearly appeal to a broad spectrum of people, particularly the younger age. Also, the combination of several music genres in a single festival draws a large audience. As a result, I suppose a lot of things are being done correctly at this time.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 37 - 37 (0)

Therefore, this point certainly has the potential to serve as a new approach to raise more awareness on this topic and appeal to people's conscience, perhaps given a message like, „Have fun, but it doesn't have to escalate completely".

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 39 - 39 (0)

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TikTok is already understood as a channel, and I would be surprised if it doesn't increase.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 7 - 7 (0)

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Using memes and clichés to make content relatable, capturing typical festival situations, and interacting with artists and brands to represent them. Additionally, we have noticed that having a recognizable face associated with the festival increases effectiveness in order to establish a direct (personal) connection to the brand on the "For You Page".

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidisch (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 23 - 23 (0)

## TikTok

TikTok itself strongly promotes festivals extensively, and many artists who perform at the festivals also actively promote them.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 3 - 3 (0)

I think that there are two crucial factors contributing to the success of this approach. First, they can reach a broader audience, especially the entire Gen Z community, and perhaps even those outside of the Instagram bubble. Other social media platforms do not provide such extensive reach. Second, the use of livestreams is a significant favor. I haven't seen such a consistent and extensive livestream of festivals on Instagram.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 13 - 13 (0)

Therefore, I truly think that TikTok is an effective advertising strategy for festivals. It pleases both users as well as the acts that are performing at the festival.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 13 - 13 (0)

TikTok plays a significant role in general marketing strategies for song and album releases as well.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 21 - 21 (0)

It's evolving, and more followers are joining TikTok, but it remains a predominantly young platform. It is not as young as Snapchat; that is a generation younger, and you can find different trending content there. However, when we talk about Gen Z and TikTok, we can see that Gen Z is the largest community. Of course, it is growing older and expanding its user base, but TikTok is still primarily associated with Gen Z. It hasn't changed drastically to the point where we move away from the fact the main audience are under 25 years old.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 23 - 23 (0)

Yes, that's true. Especially because with TikTok you have a lot of control over who your advertisements are shown to. For example, you can only target audience a female audience or an age group between 24 to 30 or 18 to 25. That is why, currently, I believe it is still within a fair budget, making it justifiable. Overall, I can't think of any disadvantages for the partnership at the moment.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 25 - 25 (0)

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TikTok was born out of Musically, which means that the proximity to music is anchored in the roots of the platform. I believe that getting into the charts as a creator or artists who isn't Helene Fischer, is nearly impossible without TikTok. This shows TikTok's power for music and therefore also for music events, festivals, concerts, and so on

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 7 - 7 (0)

Also, in comparison to other platforms, the prices for advertising are still very cheap on TikTok. You can directly link to a web shop. So, it's a very native advertising opportunity and form of advertising for example for festivals.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 7 - 7 (0)

The way of advertising on TikTok is A: Cheap and B: It works!

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 9 - 9 (0)

Both! A marketing funnel always consists of both. You need top of the funnel, awareness, branding, et cetera and then there are different steps leading to the impulse of a purchase. A good funnel always includes branding as well as classic performance marketing or conversion. I think, Tiktok is very good for both. I would tend to say even better for branding or awareness than for hardcore conversion. For the hardcore conversion other tools are probably better such as Google Search, SEO, or SEA, but still TikTok can be used for the full funnel.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 17 - 17 (0)

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As I said before, there's probably no platform that's cheaper in terms of Cost Per Mille (CPM). But you can also look at what you've invested and gotten out of it in terms of website traffic, followers, but also conversions. What is exciting for many of our customers, is the brand awareness. For example, how well known is a brand before the campaign and after and how is the brand sympathy, before and after as well as the willingness to buy before/after.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 19 - 19 (0)

No, the biggest growth is in Gen Y, and we can see that in the statistics. Today, Germany has around 20 million users, which means it can't just be young people anymore.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 35 - 35 (0)

You can advertise for any age range on TikTok; You have the option of for example targeting users aged between 18 25. However, it has some bias because TikTok cannot correctly track all data since many users, particularly kids, are aware that some content, such as drug or sexual jokes, will not be shown to those under the age of 18. As a result, to access such content, young people frequently pretend to be over the age of 18.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 37 - 37 (0)

TikTok is the most effective platform for quickly reaching a large audience, but it mostly leads to fleeting interactions.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidisch (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 8 - 8 (0)

## Challenges

Yes, the biggest difficulty is the clarification of rights. For the live stream, both publishing copyright, as well as master rights, need to be clarified. This is a very long and complicated process because many departments and companies are involved since a song may have different master rights held by a label, while publishing rights could be with a different entity. This, I believe, is the major obstacle from a music perspective to use or be allowed to use the music. However, it can be overcome by knowing the lineup early enough and starting rights clarification for these performances in advance. This process comes with associated costs, as some rights may not be easily granted, so

budgeting and setting aside money to pay for these rights is essential to make the live stream a reality.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 17 - 17 (0)

Another potential problem could be organizational issues. Festivals are quite chaotic, with numerous acts, and the question is how to ensure TikTok can access the acts, film content, and ensure all livestreams work smoothly from a technical standpoint. As a result, festivals should truly say that TikTok is an ongoing and crucial component and that they integrate the platform as effectively as possible to also don't interfere with other sponsors.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 17 - 17 (0)

However, for live streams there is no standard process because different songs are played each time. When it comes to using individual songs for content, it is just one song and not an entire set of songs,

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 19 - 19 (0)

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Even if TikTok has such a young audience, alcohol is often excessively glorified in the videos.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 19 - 19 (0)

Festivals must adhere to specific guidelines, particularly when it comes to alcohol, as there are strict regulations in Germany. For instance, advertising alcohol is generally not allowed if there is a chance that minors could possibly see it. As an outcome, I believe festival accounts generally follow to these guidelines quite successfully. However, alcohol consumption may still be visible in recordings, such as someone pouring a glass of wine. My main worry is with a lot of creators who emphasize alcohol in their content, especially when their audience is quite young, even if they are legally able to drink at the age of 18. I feel creators still carry a certain responsibility as role models, and this component is sometimes disregarded in festival programming.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 21 - 21 (0)

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Since festival can be highly vibrant and wild, organizers must ensure safety for attendees. One example to do this is by providing a "safety post" that clearly states whom to contact in case of any issues or problems. They could also implement a "save word" that everyone understands and can use in case of emergencies. In general, organizers should promote awareness about potential dangers, as many young people may not fully grasp the extend of the risks involved. Safety tips such as "keep an eye on your belongings" and "don't go out alone at night" are important. Many individuals embrace festivals with the "You Only Live Once" (YOLO) mindset, I believe it is the organizers' responsibility to provide education and information to ensure safety. After all, you never know what kind of people will attend the festival.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 35 - 35 (0)

I think it is even unfortunate that such content is lacking because, as I mentioned earlier, there are many young people at festivals who may not know their limits.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 39 - 39 (0)

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Creators are powerful, with festivals I do not know exactly. I once saw something where a creator promoted a festival, I don't think it was good. It was expensive, but not effective. The creator selection must be good; it should be a creator for a certain theme.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 29 - 29 (0)

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Especially the music rights make it difficult for us to highlight our unique selling points (USPs). We are only allowed to use commercial music. Moreover, we don't have a product that we can simply visualize in front of the camera. It requires much more creativity to trigger the interest of our community.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidisch (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 19 - 19 (0)

Regarding a renewed cooperation, we cannot provide any information at the moment.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidisch (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 21 - 21 (0)

## General Strategy

We had prepared many on-site events including so-called "Brandlöscher" (brand extinguishers) who offered help at the festival, such as tent setup and entertainment. To make things easier, we set up a special WhatsApp channel where attendees could request the "Brandlöscher" assistance.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 3 - 3 (0)

In general, we already had a sort of festival communication focused on products before DEICHBRAND started, and we shared a lot of content on TikTok throughout the festival. We continued to post festival-related content after the festival, which is slowly winding down now

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 3 - 3 (0)

During the festival, just like in previous years, we had a big store covering over 2000 square meters, where we offered relevant products. We also had a "Cool House Disco" for everyone to enjoy, enhancing the store experience with an entertainment factor. In addition, we had the "ALDI Corner," which served as a meeting point for games and interactions with our brand, providing food as well. This whole approach is a combination of on-site activities as well as engaging content created by us.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 9 - 9 (0)

We promoted in advance that we would be present at the festival and coordinated content with DEICHBRAND to align the content with people's expectations.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 17 - 17 (0)

There is a pre-event preparation and a post-event coverage on TikTok for these festivals.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 3 - 3 (0)

Festivals create their own unique hashtags (#festivalname) and actively promote them for almost three months.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 5 - 5 (0)

the biggest, most effective, and successful TikTok campaign is undoubtedly the Hashtag Festival campaign.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 7 - 7 (0)

I believe it is important to be authentic in the content and upload several things. On TikTok it is crucial to not just upload one video but maybe several directly. I also think it's important to keep the TikTok community engaged.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 15 - 15 (0)

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I believe that the earlier you begin preventive advertising; the more people will be drawn to it.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 13 - 13 (0)

It almost becomes a self-perpetuating cycle; as people begin to post about an event, others are inspired to do the same, and the cycle continuous like a viral snowball system. A video gets viral, and others think, "Okay, I had a similar experience, why not post something too?"

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 19 - 19 (0)

This strategic use of content overload works effectively to generate buzz and anticipation for upcoming events, making them stand out and attracting the attention of potential attendees.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 27 - 27 (0)

Exactly and that's why I believe it's critical to start planning about two weeks before the festival begins or even earlier. During this time, the content can be reintroduced progressively in phases. At first, people may think, "Okay, the

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event is still some time away," but when additional advertising appears close to the festival, it's quite effective, because it captures the attention of Generation Z. If the videos being advertised are appealing, it will surely catch people's curiosity, especially when everything focuses on the concept of "living your life and making it an unforgettable summer".

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 29 - 29 (0)

However, I don't believe there is one single success story; it is about overloading people with information, so they naturally think, "Okay, I wasn't there this year, but I've heard so much about it, I have to go the next year."

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 33 - 33 (0)

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They seek to win long-term consumers.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 13 - 13 (0)

I would say the best content are videos from the year before, which are emotionally bonding, surprising, and therefore create curiosity, but also generate FOMO. Furthermore, performances of certain artists. I believe the artists matter the most at festivals, and that's why I would use clips from them, and perhaps, if you can afford it, even verbal videos from them like "Hey guys, I'm at the festival, come join me", and then short clips of their experiences at the festival. In total, that's the kind of concept I would go for.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 25 - 25 (0)

The biggest mistake, in my opinion, is developing too many ad pieces and actively advertising them, instead of focusing on producing fewer but higher-quality ones.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 31 - 31 (0)

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Currently, TikTok is the platform with the widest reach for us, and it requires the least amount of effort (if you understand the platform and its algorithm)

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 3 - 3 (0)

We primarily use Instagram and, analogously, Facebook, followed by TikTok and YouTube (Shorts). TikTok is the most effective platform for quickly reaching a large audience, but it mostly leads to fleeting interactions.

However, it does help us reach the youngest target group. On Facebook, we currently have the biggest following, with more than 250.000 people, who are mainly between 25-59 years old.

Instagram is presently the platform where we share the greatest amount of infotainment. On TikTok, the focus is primarily on entertainment. We engage the most with our community on Instagram, providing information and answering important questions. The biggest part of our target group is active here, which we "reactivate" every year. On the other hand, TikTok allows us to reach a completely new audience and demographic daily, as our content is also shown to users that do not follow or know us.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 8 - 9 (0)

Influencer collaborations (internally called Creator collaborations): The focus is on creating content BEFORE the festival to boost awareness and ticket sales. Also, Ad Manager: Here, content that has already viral organically is further promoted with advertising budget. This includes integrating Call-to-Action (CTA) phrases such as "Get your tickets now!" along with a link to the ticket store.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 11 - 11 (0)

## Content Themes

I would for example suggest using a song that's not yet released but has been teased at a festival. With this, you can build further campaigns for the music that is going to be released. Then, you can show the live reactions to the song on TikTok and build further campaigns around the upcoming music. Another way is to give previews in advance, like saying, "Hey, we were at the festival last year, check out some content from last year" or "Look, this is what's going on here, join too!" Or you can tease by saying "Hey, we will bring someone who creates something with this song onto the stage at the festival", creating incentives that serve as a bridge between the festival and music, which can be showcased on TikTok.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 15 - 15 (0)

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organizing numerous contests where people have the chance to win two VIP tickets, for example.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 23 - 23 (0)

In terms of general content, posting videos from the previous year's festival is frequently clever. Likewise, content that gives a glimpse of what attendees can expect, like teasing the lineup, can also be effective in building anticipation.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 29 - 29 (0)

Creating a lot of awareness for a festival or brand such as through ticket giveaways or highlighting the experiences and program, resonates well with Generation Z.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 33 - 33 (0)

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One of the most appealing features are the Spark Ads on TikTok. You scroll down and see the advertising in between the natural, organic content.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 9 - 9 (0)

I would say the best content are videos from the year before, which are emotionally bonding, surprising, and therefore create curiosity, but also generate FOMO. Furthermore, performances of certain artists. I believe the artists matter the most at festivals, and that's why I would use clips from them, and perhaps, if you can afford it, even verbal videos from them like "Hey guys, I'm at the festival, come join me", and then short clips of their experiences at the festival. In total, that's the kind of concept I would go for.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 25 - 25 (0)

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content like "What do I pack for DB23" or "I'm looking forward to these acts at DB23 the most" have given us a lot of interaction and those "AHA-moments".

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 6 - 6 (0)

Ticket sweepstakes have increased our followers immensely.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 6 - 6 (0)

content that features faces, follows current trends, and incorporates trending sounds.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 13 - 13 (0)

moving images help immensely in conveying these all-encompassing emotions and impressions of our festival.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 15 - 15 (0)

Using memes and clichés to make content relatable, capturing typical festival situations, and interacting with artists and brands to represent them.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 23 - 23 (0)

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### **Impact of Content by Influencers**

Moreover, we sent some influencers along with the "Brandlöscher" team, so we could have influencer-generated content on-site via their own channels. We were able to create engaging content throughout the festival by combining the efforts of the "Brandlöscher" and influencers.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 11 - 11 (0)

Yes, influencer activities are an integral part of our standard package for DEICHBRAND. We also had influencers present at the festival, including a long-term partner with whom we collaborate, Parshad, who you can also find on our ALDI-Nord channel. She was on-site and created content that will be published this Thursday. We try to optimize our visibility by creating

additional content that will last beyond just the duration of the DEICHBRAND event. Having influencers on-site, including Parshad, is a crucial part of our marketing strategy. Influencers assist us to access communities and target audiences that we might not have reached otherwise, resulting in a positive overall image for our brand.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 37 - 37 (0)

I think that influencers are a crucial part of the festival culture. They are often seen at festivals, some of whom might have been booked by the festival organizers themselves, to promote the festival as whole, rather than promoting a specific brand. I am not sure about DEICHBRAND's specifics.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 39 - 39 (0)

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Also, many creators are present at the festival and engage in promotion, which allows the audience to get a lot of information about the festival, both before and after the festival.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 3 - 3 (0)

By integrating artists and creators in the promotion, they may reach out to new audiences and enhance overall reach and engagement, especially for festivals that aren't traditionally considered as Gen Z-oriented.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 5 - 5 (0)

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as more people actively promote the festival, more people become interested in attending and participating in the event.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 13 - 13 (0)

Some creators even design their own soundtracks which others can use for cool videos.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 19 - 19 (0)

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targeting certain niches by involving a varied range of creators who can authentically promote the festival. Especially when these creators are already naturally inclined to attend festivals themselves, it's smart to engage them. In addition, the festival may expand its reach by cooperating with a diverse range of creators.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 29 - 29 (0)

Yes, as I previously stated, collaborating with many niche creators who have a huge following in specific sectors allows you to reach a wide number of people and create even more awareness for the festival. That's why, I believe that influencer marketing is one of the most important components in a festival strategy.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 31 - 31 (0)

For example, I became aware of the DEICHBRAND Festival primarily through influencers.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 33 - 33 (0)

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The creator selection must be good; it should be a creator for a certain theme.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 29 - 29 (0)

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Nevertheless, TikTok has given us a significant reach among the younger target audience, especially through collaborations with Germany's biggest creators.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 3 - 3 (0)

The cooperation's with creators through content like "What do I pack for DB23" or "I'm looking forward to these acts at DB23 the most" have given us a lot of interaction and those "AHA-moments". In the comments under these videos people often say "I didn't know that DEICHBRAND exists and that they have such a cool line-up".

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 6 - 6 (0)

Influencer collaborations (internally called Creator collaborations): The focus is on creating content BEFORE the festival to boost awareness and ticket sales.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 11 - 11 (0)

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## **Brand Perception and Image**

I believe we can say that as one of the festival's major sponsors, we are quite visible, and a great opportunity to connect with the young audiences who are present on-site. It also allows us to present our brand.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 9 - 9 (0)

They recognize that ALDI is present, actively participating, and assisting the festival in creating a terrific experience.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 21 - 21 (0)

In this way, we can ultimately contribute to the overall positive festival experience while also positioning our brand, as we did with the Secret Gig, where we had an artist play in front of the store. We had the 257ers last year, and Ski Aggu performed this year. These extra performances allow us to demonstrate that we are a cool, young brand that understands its target audience, especially with the choice of artists.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 25 - 25 (0)

From our perspective, the various measures we implement at DEICHBRAND aim to increase relevance among young target consumers. We strive to enhance likability and convey brand values or core principles. As previously said, one of our primary goals is to provide good products at reasonable prices on-site, thus making the festival experience more enjoyable and positively impactful. Through these actions, we also hope to be recognized as supporters of the festival.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 27 - 27 (0)

Honestly, that's the supreme discipline in that case. Good employees, if you don't have them, good agencies that understand how the brand works, what values they represent, the tone of voice etc.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 27 - 27 (0)

But with agencies, you must be as detailed as possible. Presenting the brand DNA is crucial because that is where we often struggle. Brands are often so caught up in their bubble and believe you understand everything right away. But you must pick up the agency. What values do you identify with your brand if you have branding guidance or can explain it, for example, what is your DNA and your positioning? What is the behavior of your target audience? Perhaps you have market research findings.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 27 - 27 (0)

Many brands have no idea who their target audience is.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 27 - 27 (0)

be aware of your brand's DNA and what you want to convey and represent.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 31 - 31 (0)

The increase in brand sympathy is critical since it correlates with the willingness to purchase, which is a frequent finding in every marketing campaign.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 31 - 31 (0)

Our main goal is to build awareness of our festival, and to transfer our image of the "Festival an der Nordsee" to the younger people, and ultimately encourage them to attend the festival in the long term.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidisch (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 5 - 5 (0)

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### **Reach and Engagement Metrics**

Yes, one of the most important KPIs is definitely the View Duration, which measures how long viewers engage with our content. This provides us with

insights into the quality of our content and demonstrates whether we not only reached individuals but also kept them interested enough to stay engaged with the content we provided. In addition, we compare a few media KPIs, such as cost per 1000 impressions (CPM), cost per view (CPV), and engagement rate, to our benchmarks. This allows us to receive a complete view of how well our different content initiatives worked during the campaign.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 19 - 19 (0)

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Both! A marketing funnel always consists of both. You need top of the funnel, awareness, branding, et cetera and then there are different steps leading to the impulse of a purchase. A good funnel always includes branding as well as classic performance marketing or conversion. I think, Tiktok is very good for both. I would tend to say even better for branding or awareness than for hardcore conversion.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 17 - 17 (0)

As I said before, there's probably no platform that's cheaper in terms of Cost Per Mille (CPM). But you can also look at what you've invested and gotten out of it in terms of website traffic, followers, but also conversions. What is exciting for many of our customers, is the brand awareness. For example, how well known is a brand before the campaign and after and how is the brand sympathy, before and after as well as the willingness to buy before/after.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 19 - 19 (0)

What we always show is definitely CPM, how much reach, how many people have been reached, how many users have been generated, how is the engagement, the sentiment and of course simply how many clicks were on the link, which is relevant for the conversion but also how many sales were generated, that the client can measure this directly. I would say these are the most important KPIs.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 21 - 21 (0)

However, if you lack such resources, relying entirely on KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) would be a huge mistake. What is truly important is

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how effectively the promotion is received, whether there is real and good feedback, rather than relying solely on reach. The increase in brand sympathy is critical since it correlates with the willingness to purchase, which is a frequent finding in every marketing campaign.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 31 - 31 (0)

Without market research, assessing something like brand sympathy may need a 50.000 euros advertising investment, which many companies cannot afford.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 31 - 31 (0)

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In addition, we work with a pixel in the Ad Manager, which allows us to observe how many people who have received our content on TikTok through ad campaigns have visited our ticket store. Here, we use content that has already gone viral organically.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 6 - 6 (0)

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### **Impact of festival-related content**

This means that the Gen Z community on TikTok can enjoy festival content in real time through these promoted hashtags and subpages. Because of this, the reach of a festival or music is much greater.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 7 - 7 (0)

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Depending on whom people follow, an extensive number of festival-related content may be displayed.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 9 - 9 (0)

Festivals also approach it strategically by organizing numerous contests where people have the chance to win two VIP tickets, for example. In general, there are a variety of approaches that festivals can employ to increase the affinity for attending their events.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 23 - 23 (0)

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I tend to get intrigued when I receive a lot of content at once and realize there is an audience deeply engaged in the festival theme.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 27 - 27 (0)

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I can easily imagine someone watching a video from a particular artist who is also a fan of that artist, they will also buy a ticket.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 7 - 7 (0)

Well, but the festival doesn't care about that at first, in other words, the client. But the festival, in other words, the client, doesn't care about that at first.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 13 - 13 (0)

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Nevertheless, TikTok has given us a significant reach among the younger target audience, especially through collaborations with Germany's biggest creators. Nowhere else could we reach such a young and festival-inexperienced target group, in particular the Corona-generation, who seemed to have had no previous connections to festivals.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 3 - 3 (0)

Ticket sweepstakes have increased our followers immensely.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 6 - 6 (0)

We could see from the comments that these "Gänsehaut-Videos" (videos that evoke goosebumps or emotional reactions) trigger a lot of motivation and a longing for the festival experience ("Festivalweh"). Additionally, moving images help immensely in conveying these all-encompassing emotions and impressions of our festival.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 15 - 15 (0)

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## **Impact of festival-related content**

### **> Impact Non-Attendees**

I believe we can say that as one of the festival's major sponsors, we are quite visible, and a great opportunity to connect with the young audiences who are

present on-site. It also allows us to present our brand and what we have to offer for individuals who were unable to attend the event.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 9 - 9 (0)

Our goal was to provide anchor points and motivation for individuals to connect with our brand even if they couldn't attend the event in person.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 13 - 13 (0)

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Over the past two years, I have noticed that festivals have become an integral part of our generation. With TikTok as an active player, I do believe that a much larger audience of younger people is being reached.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 9 - 9 (0)

Nobody wants to miss out, and I think FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) is a major factor, particularly within our generation.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 13 - 13 (0)

I can imagine that when someone from a friend group expresses excitement about attending an event and you notice your favorite artists or even influencers are also going, it might have an immense impact on your decision to attend an event.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 15 - 15 (0)

Hence, TikTok has emerged as a powerful forerunner in terms of partnership. On the other hand, I also see an issue.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 19 - 19 (0)

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Also, in comparison to other platforms, the prices for advertising are still very cheap on TikTok. You can directly link to a web shop. So, it's a very native advertising opportunity and form of advertising for example for festivals. TikTok is already understood as a channel, and I would be surprised if it doesn't increase.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 7 - 7 (0)

Furthermore, because TikTok allows to create FOMO, individuals who do not attend will experience some form of FOMO.

Expert Interview 1 Adil Sbai: 13 - 13 (0)

The impact on TikTok is very high. As soon as the content is "relatable", we experience a high level of engagement. In this context, content that features faces, follows current trends, and incorporates trending sounds performs better than high quality content.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 13 - 13 (0)

## **Impact of festival-related content**

### **> Impact Attendees**

I believe the most important and critical feature is having an Aldi store on-site with all products available at a great price. The ALDI Corner in the infield and the "Brandlöscher" activation are also crucial. When these measures are considered collectively, I think they leave a lasting effect on the attendees.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 21 - 21 (0)

Without having present numbers, I am hopeful that our partnership will make the festival experience on the grounds a lot easier. Attendees won't have to worry about carrying all the festival utensils with them.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 25 - 25 (0)

Especially when people share their experiences from our one-site activities or from the DEICHBRAND ALDI store. Naturally, we aim to create content that encourages people to share it. This generation is constantly on their phones,

and many of them are filming and capturing moments anyway, making it more likely for them to share content.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 31 - 31 (0)

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I see the importance of TikTok as extremely significant and continuously growing in prominence. It has become deeply ingrained in the Generation Z culture, where people turn to TikTok after an event to create a recap and share their best moments with each other. This fosters the formation of entire communities where people create and share content using specific event or tour-related hashtags.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 21 - 21 (0)

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Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 9 - 9 (0)

In general, there are a variety of approaches that festivals can employ to increase the affinity for attending their events.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 23 - 23 (0)

This strategic use of content overload works effectively to generate buzz and anticipation for upcoming events, making them stand out and attracting the attention of potential attendees.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 27 - 27 (0)

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We could see from the comments that these "Gänsehaut-Videos" (videos that evoke goosebumps or emotional reactions) trigger a lot of motivation and a longing for the festival experience ("Festivalweh"). Additionally, moving images help immensely in conveying these all-encompassing emotions and impressions of our festival.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 15 - 15 (0)

## **Increase Festival Attendance**

It's evident, that the Gen Z audience, which is highly active on TikTok, is increasingly attending festival that are promoted through the platform.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 3 - 3 (0)

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Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 9 - 9 (0)

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We cannot yet determine the extent to which TikTok has contributed to our increased visitor numbers, but that was not our goal in the first place.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 5 - 5 (0)

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## **Festival Awareness**

We promoted in advance that we would be present at the festival and coordinated content with DEICHBRAND to align the content with people's expectations.

Expert Interview 5 Teamlead Social Media (ALDI): 17 - 17 (0)

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Festivals create their own unique hashtags (#festivalname) and actively promote them for almost three months.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 5 - 5 (0)

The strategy attempts to attract more participants and broaden the festival's reach beyond the traditional festival audience, with a special focus on the Gen Z audience, which is highly engaged on TikTok.

Expert Interview 4 Key Account Manager TikTok at Warner: 5 - 5 (0)

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I was asked to promote a specific playlist, created for the festival, featuring the artists performing to raise awareness.

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Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 7 - 7 (0)

I would answer the question with a clear yes, simply because with all social media platforms, one never really feels disconnected or offline. If these platforms are used effectively, a massive influx of videos can be generated, enabling users to actively engage in the entire festival experience.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 9 - 9 (0)

I think that TikTok content generates such a boost because users are confronted with so much information in a short period of time. This rapid dissemination allows users to swiftly grasp what type of festival it is, its location, and the acts performing.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 13 - 13 (0)

I've never seen so much festival promotion as I have this year, or in the last few weeks.

Expert Interview 2 Manju (Influencer): 19 - 19 (0)

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On TikTok, we have the most viral content, which has given us the most awareness since we started using it.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND): 3 - 3 (0)

Our main goal is to build awareness of our festival, and to transfer our image of the "Festival an der Nordsee" to the younger people, and ultimately encourage them to attend the festival in the long term.

Expert Interview 3 Jule Benja Heidsich (Online Marketing Manager & Influencer Relations, DEICHBRAND) : 5 - 5 (0)