

THE APPEAL OF TIKTOK LIVE AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO DIGITAL MARKETING PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of digital technologies has transformed consumer-brand interactions, shifting from traditional one-way communication to real-time engagement strategies. This literature review systematically explores the role of real-time engagement in digital marketing, with particular emphasis on live streaming platforms such as TikTok. By synthesizing 35 peer-reviewed studies, the review reveals that real-time engagement fosters immediacy, emotional connection, and active participation, significantly influencing consumer trust, brand loyalty, and impulse buying behavior (Addo et al., 2021; Rajput & Gandhi, 2024). Key moderating factors include host credibility, content quality, and platform algorithms (Ko & Ho, 2024; Nguyen et al., 2025). Despite its transformative potential, real-time engagement strategies must navigate challenges such as consumer fatigue and authenticity concerns (Alam et al., 2025). This study highlights the critical need for brands to adopt dynamic, interactive approaches to sustain competitive advantage in the evolving digital landscape.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Digital Marketing, Live Streaming Marketing, Tiktok, Real-Time Engagement.

1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of digital technologies has radically reshaped the marketing landscape, transitioning from static, one-way communication models to dynamic, real-time consumer engagement (Addo et al., 2021; Apasrawirote & Yawised, 2022). Traditional advertising, once reliant on delayed responses and passive audiences, now faces competition from platforms offering instantaneous, two-way interactions. Real-time engagement, therefore, is not merely a technological innovation but a conceptual shift in how brands and consumers relate to one another (Ko & Ho, 2024; Arma, 2022; Mardhiyah, 2022; Tan, 2022; Winata, 2022).

Real-time engagement refers to the ability of brands to communicate with consumers immediately, creating opportunities for feedback, emotional resonance, and participatory experiences (Lin et al., 2021). This concept transcends simple online presence; it demands that brands not only present information but also actively listen and respond in the moment. With the rise of mobile technologies and widespread internet access, consumers increasingly expect brands to offer this level of interactivity, setting a new standard for digital marketing practices (Rajput & Gandhi, 2024; Putri, 2022; Rolando et al., 2022; Setiawan, 2022; Wijaya, 2022).

Social media platforms, especially TikTok, have become central to facilitating real-time engagement. TikTok's algorithm emphasizes personalized content delivery, and its live streaming feature enables real-time conversations between brands and audiences (Andika et al., 2025; Rahardja et al., 2025; Rolando, Chandra, et al., 2025; Rolando, Widjaja, et al., 2025; Widjaja, 2025). This immediacy fosters deeper emotional connections, enhancing trust and creating loyalty among users.

Moreover, the platform's short-form video format aligns with contemporary consumer preferences for quick, engaging interactions (Mulya & Setyobudi, 2024).

In today's hyperconnected environment, immediacy and authenticity have become critical dimensions of brand success (Nguyen et al., 2025; Ingriana et al., 2024; Mulyono, 2024; Rolando & Mulyono, 2025a, 2025b). Consumers, particularly among younger demographics like Generation Z value brands that can engage meaningfully in real time without appearing overly scripted or promotional. This has increased the pressure on marketers to develop live, unscripted content that resonates on an emotional level while still maintaining brand consistency (Ye et al., 2023; Maha et al., 2025; Mulyono et al., 2025; Rolando, 2024; Rolando & Ingriana, 2024).

Despite the growing adoption of real-time engagement strategies, comprehensive research systematically synthesizing its impacts on consumer behavior and marketing outcomes remains scarce. Although individual studies have explored elements such as emotional resonance and trust-building, a holistic framework capturing the full scope of real-time engagement's influence is still developing. Thus, this review seeks to bridge that gap by analyzing existing literature and identifying critical themes and future research directions.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This review follows a systematic approach inspired by PRISMA guidelines to ensure transparency and replicability (Page et al., 2021). The initial database search was conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, utilizing keywords such as "real-time engagement," "live streaming marketing," "consumer behavior," and "digital marketing performance" (Nguyen et al., 2025). Emphasis was placed on capturing studies that focused on consumer interaction in digital marketing environments where immediacy was a central factor.

Only peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2018 and 2025 were considered to maintain the review's relevance to current marketing trends (Addo et al., 2021). Exclusion criteria filtered out opinion pieces, conference abstracts, and research focusing solely on traditional, non-interactive marketing channels. This rigorous process aimed to ensure that only high-quality empirical studies, offering insights into live interaction and consumer behavior, were included (Ko & Ho, 2024).

After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, an initial pool of 72 articles was refined to a final selection of 35 articles. The screening process included title and abstract review, followed by full-text assessment to evaluate methodological quality and thematic relevance. Studies that addressed factors such as emotional engagement, sales conversion, host credibility, and platform interactivity were prioritized (Ye et al., 2023).

Data extraction involved coding each selected study for key variables, including platform used, type of engagement examined, consumer behavior outcomes measured, and moderating factors identified (Lin et al., 2021). This thematic coding allowed for the aggregation of findings across studies, helping to identify consistent patterns and divergences in the literature (Apasrawirote & Yawised, 2022).

The systematic approach adopted enhances the reliability of the review and ensures a comprehensive understanding of real-time engagement's impact across various digital marketing contexts. The following sections synthesize these findings into coherent thematic narratives.

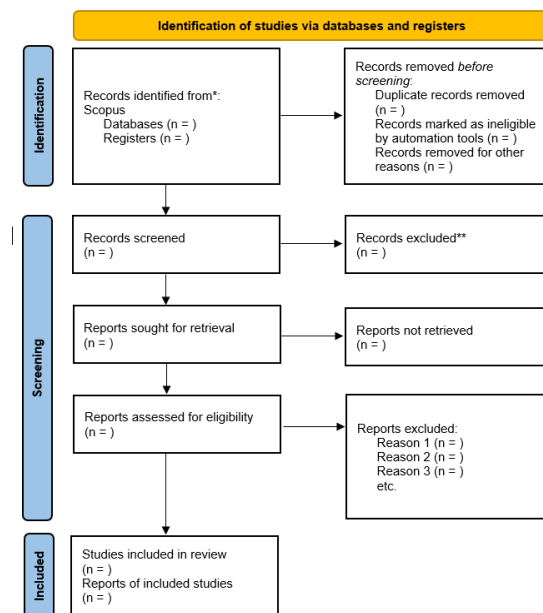


Figure 1. PRISMA SLR: “AI,” AND “Retail”, AND “Impact”

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Real-time engagement fundamentally alters the nature of consumer-brand interactions by fostering immediate, bidirectional communication (Lin et al., 2021). Unlike traditional media where consumers are passive recipients, live interactions empower consumers to comment, question, and react instantly. Platforms like TikTok, where live streaming is seamlessly integrated into the user experience, exemplify how brands can leverage real-time feedback loops to enhance emotional connectivity (Rajput & Gandhi, 2024).

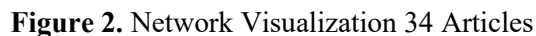
Empirical studies show that real-time engagement significantly influences key consumer behavior metrics, including impulse buying, emotional arousal, and brand loyalty. Rajput and Gandhi (2024) found that consumers exposed to live product demonstrations exhibited higher tendencies to make impulsive purchases compared to those exposed to static advertisements. This is attributed to the heightened emotional engagement and perceived authenticity generated during live sessions (Ye et al., 2023). However, real-time marketing strategies are not uniformly successful; outcomes are significantly moderated by variables such as host credibility and content quality.

Host credibility is particularly critical. Research indicates that charismatic, trustworthy hosts increase viewer participation and positively impact purchase intentions (Nguyen et al., 2025). In contrast, scripted or insincere presentations often backfire, leading to reduced engagement (Apasrawirote & Yawised, 2022). Brands must carefully select and train hosts capable of balancing entertainment value with authenticity to maximize real-time engagement outcomes (Mulya & Setyobudi, 2024).

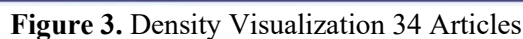
Algorithmic recommendation systems, such as TikTok’s real-time boosting of popular live streams, further reinforce the effects of engagement. Live content that garners rapid audience interaction is promoted more widely, creating a feedback loop that can exponentially increase brand visibility and consumer involvement (Addo et al., 2021). Yet, there is a risk of "overexposure" where repetitive or aggressive live sessions may cause consumer fatigue and skepticism (Alam et al., 2025).

Moreover, demographic differences must be considered. Younger consumers, especially those within Generation Z, demonstrate higher receptivity to real-time marketing techniques compared to older audiences (Ye et al., 2023). This suggests that real-time engagement strategies

3.1 Co-Occurrence Network of Keywords



3.2 Thematic Clustering



The clustering analysis categorizes research into key themes, such as real-time engagement, brand visibility, and consumer interaction. These clusters highlight the diverse yet interconnected aspects of TikTok live streaming in digital marketing. For example, the intersection between user engagement and content authenticity emphasizes the significance of leveraging genuine interactions for effective marketing performance.

3.3 Temporal Trends

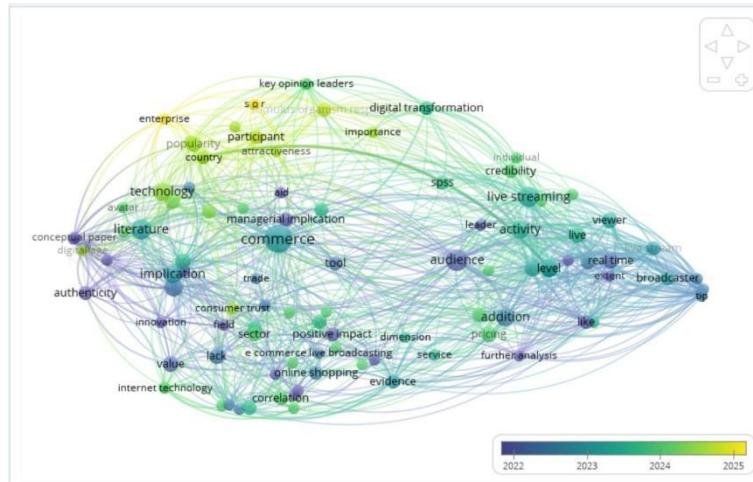


Figure 4. Overlay Visualization 34 Articles

This timeline visualization illustrates the shifting focus of research on real-time engagement strategies, particularly through TikTok live streaming, and their impact on digital marketing performance. Early studies emphasized the foundational aspects of live streaming technologies, while more recent research highlights practical applications, such as audience interaction, real-time feedback, and conversion strategies. Emerging themes like digital trust and authenticity reflect a growing awareness of the long-term implications for brand-consumer relationships.

These visualizations deepen our understanding of how TikTok live streaming is reshaping digital marketing by uncovering patterns, gaps, and future opportunities. The findings indicate that while live streaming offers significant marketing advantages, challenges such as content credibility, audience retention, and platform algorithms must be carefully managed. Addressing these challenges through transparent practices and inclusive engagement strategies is crucial for achieving sustainable success in digital marketing.

4. CONCLUSION

This systematic review concludes that real-time engagement has emerged as a pivotal force in reshaping digital marketing practices (Addo et al., 2021). Through immediacy, authenticity, and interaction, real-time strategies drive deeper emotional connections with consumers, leading to increased brand loyalty, trust, and purchasing behavior (Rajput & Gandhi, 2024).

Platforms such as TikTok exemplify the potential of real-time engagement, enabling brands to foster spontaneous, meaningful interactions with broad audiences (Andika et al., 2025). However, the success of such strategies is highly contingent on execution quality, particularly in terms of host credibility, content authenticity, and audience relevance (Apasrawirote & Yawised, 2022).

Challenges remain, particularly regarding the risk of overexposure, demographic variations in responsiveness, and the need for sustained authenticity (Alam et al., 2025; Ye et al., 2023). Brands must innovate continually to maintain consumer interest while respecting user autonomy and data ethics in real-time interactions.

Future research should explore cross-cultural differences in real-time engagement outcomes, longitudinal impacts on brand equity, and the integration of emerging technologies like AI-driven personalization into live marketing strategies (Nguyen et al., 2025; Xie et al., 2024). Such inquiries will be essential in understanding how real-time marketing evolves in a rapidly changing digital ecosystem.

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In an era where consumer expectations for immediacy and authenticity are at an all-time high, real-time engagement stands as not only an opportunity but a necessity for brands seeking to thrive in the competitive digital marketplace (Ko & Ho, 2024). The findings of this review underline the urgent need for marketers to embed real-time interactivity at the core of their digital strategies moving forward.

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