TikTok

Built to Perform

Web Auction
Best Practices
Guide

Legal Disclaimer

Best practices for optimal web performance

Ensure your campaigns are set up properly so that you can achieve repeatable, reliable results with ease.

Use the best practices in this guide as the foundational building blocks for success on TikTok.

What's inside this guide?

01

Account Structure

Data Connections

Nurture your Ad Account by following best practices and ensuring your data connections are in place.

- Nurtured Account Strategy
- Ad Account Optimization
- Optimal Data Connection Set Up

02

Campaign Set Up

From budgeting and bidding to targeting, there are proven strategies to leverage for optimal campaign performance.

- Setting & Scaling Budgets
- Bidding Strategy
- The Learning Phase
- Targeting

03

Creative

Ensure the longevity of your creative assets on the platform with our tips for formatting and avoiding fatigue.

- Creative Diversity
- Creative Quality
- Creative Optimization
- Ad Fatigue

04

Attribution

Measurement

Capture the entire value of your campaigns by implementing our attribution recommendations and measurement solutions.

- Attribution Strategy
- Campaign Measurement

Ready to put these best practices to use?

Use the Best Practices Checklist and Starter Guide Tool at the end of this guide to ensure your bases are covered.

Nurtured Account Strategy

The key to scalable growth and long-term performance.
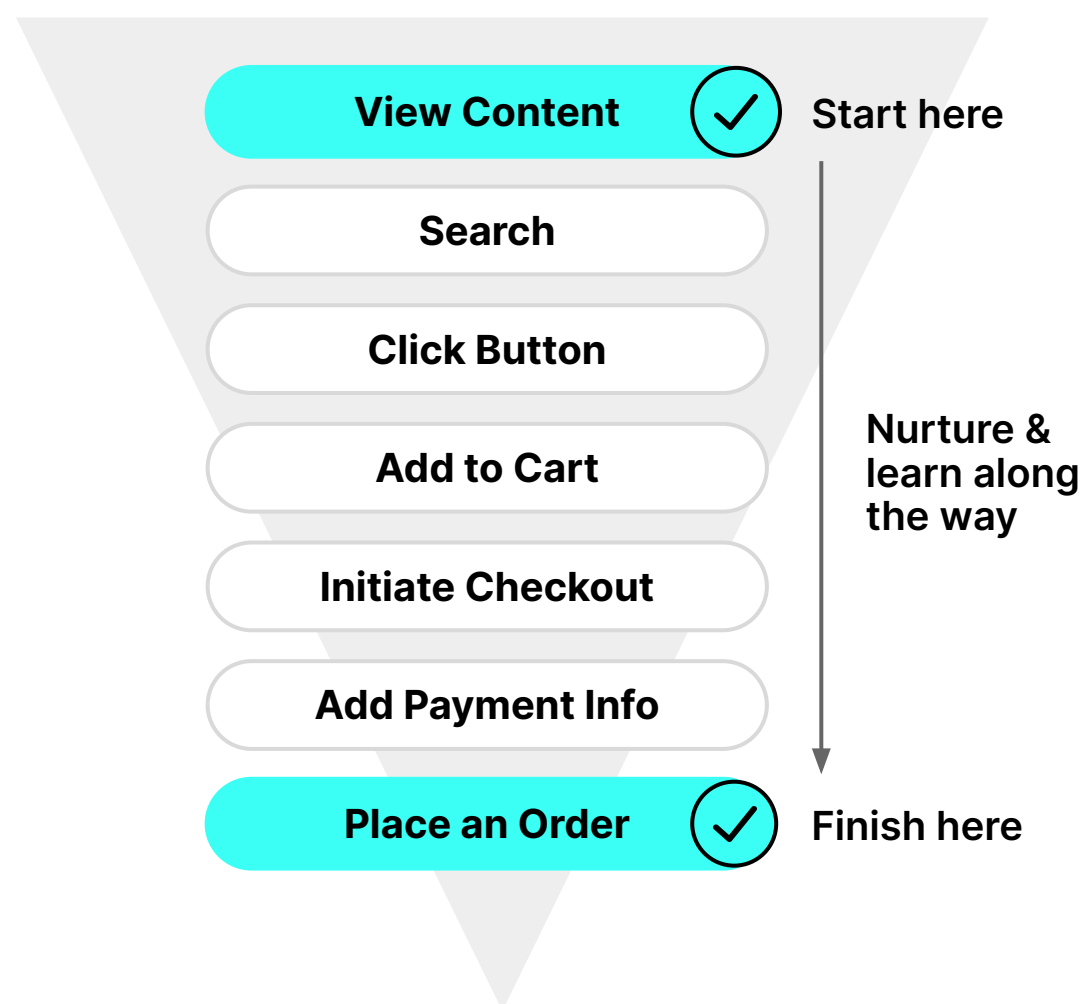
What is a nurtured account strategy?

Best Practice:

Start with upper funnel conversion events (don't immediately start with the lowest funnel events!) and repeat the process for each new Ad Group.

Overview:

For performance advertisers, a nurtured account strategy is a phased approach within the conversion funnel.

The strategy begins with website upper funnel conversion events, such as "search" and "add to cart," and gradually progresses down to lower funnel events such as "complete payment."

This allows our system to learn about your consumers and gain a deep understanding of who is most likely to engage with your ad, and ultimately, who is most likely to convert.

View Content ✓ — Start here

Search

Click Button

Add to Cart

Initiate Checkout

Add Payment Info

Nurture & learn along the way

Place an Order ✓ — Finish here

Nurtured Account Benefits:

For performance advertisers, a nurtured account strategy is a phased approach within the conversion funnel.

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This allows our system to learn about your consumers and gain a deep understanding of who is most likely to engage with your ad, and ultimately, who is most likely to convert.

1 **Increased Web Conversions**

2 **Decreased CPAs**

How do I nurture my account?

1 Ensure your account is structured properly by creating one account and diversifying your Ad Groups (learn more on page 4).

2 Set up your data connections to allow our system to accurately measure and learn from the actions that consumers take on your website (learn more on page 4).

3 Utilize a full-funnel marketing strategy by optimizing upper funnel events (ie. view content) and gradually move through the funnel to optimize towards lower funnel events.

Advertisers utilizing a nurtured account strategy saw:

-70%
lower CPA
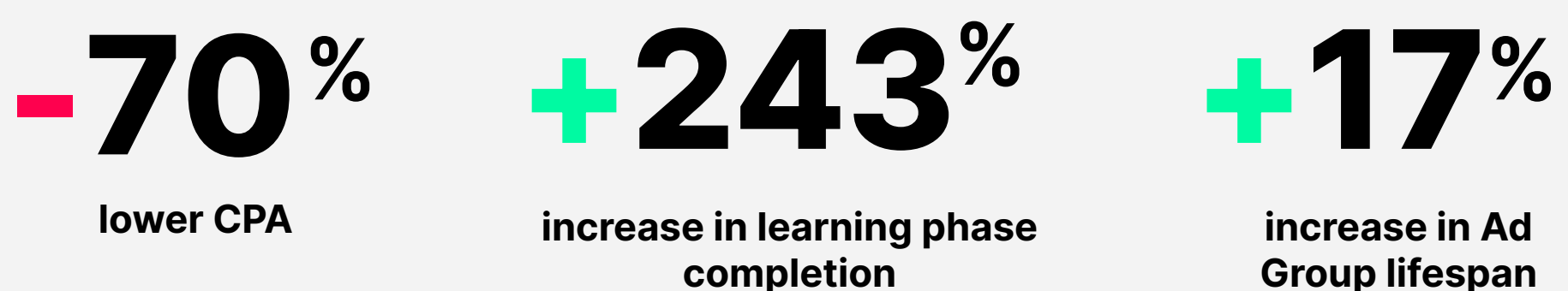
+243%
increase in learning phase completion
(read more about the learning phase on page 6)

+17%
increase in Ad Group lifespan

Source: TikTok Internal Data, 2023

Optimizing Your Ad Account

As part of a nurtured account strategy, ensure your Ad Account is structured towards the end-to-end user journey.

Use One Ad Account

Do not create new accounts as a solution for overbidding, low delivery, or creative fatigue.

By using a single Ad Account to host all of your campaigns, our system can accumulate and accelerate learnings and properly scale your spend.

Combine & Diversify Ad Groups

We recommend having 3-5 diversified Ad Groups within a single campaign.

Having too many similar or duplicate Ad Groups can cause them to cannibalize each other and negatively impact performance over time. By consolidating Ad Groups, they will have a higher chance of exiting the learning phase, reaching broader audiences, and increasing the lifespan of all of them.
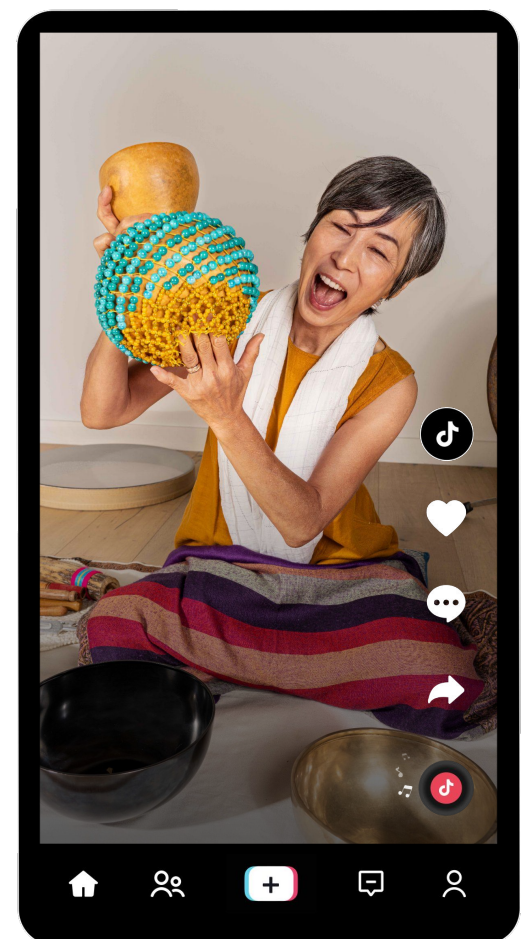
Optimal Data Connection Setup

Data Connections are essential to powering all of your measurement, optimization, automation, and targeting capabilities.

Future proof your business with our safe and reliable data connection solutions to deliver high performance ads. Data connections allow our system to accurately measure and learn from the actions that consumers take on your website in order to maximize the chance of a conversion.

Connection Type

Leverage the TikTok Pixel and Events API together to allow seamless integration between our platform and your systems

Setting up both data connections will set your business up for success now and in the future in the midst of an evolving privacy landscape.

+19%

incremental events

when using the TikTok Pixel and Events API together

Events

Create an event for each action a customer take on your website and enable event optimization

Passing event data back to our platform will help to best optimize your campaign.

Parameters

Pass relevant parameters back to our platform

Build a full funnel strategy by enabling the right parameters to best understand your campaign outcomes.

+15%

improvement on CPA

on average when using the TikTok Pixel and Events API together

Match Keys

Enrich your data connections with match keys using Advanced Matching and build custom audiences.

These will help to grow your audience by ensuring your ads are delivered to the most relevant audiences.

Source: TikTok Internal Study, Nov 2022 - Feb 2023

Setting & Scaling Your Budget

Follow our best practices to ensure you are using your budget as effectively and efficiently as possible. You can set budgets for both campaigns and Ad Groups.

Campaign Budget

Leave campaign-level budget as open budget and use Campaign Budget Optimization (CBO) when optimizing your campaign for the same goal, with at least 2 Ad Groups for best results.

These practices will make your ad spend more effective on the platform.

Ad Group Budget

Use Daily Budget instead of Lifetime Budget.

This will allow you to meet your cost goals and spend efficiently when optimizing for conversion.

Scaling Budget

When nearing 80% of budget utilization, consider increasing your budget.

Consider increasing the budget by no more than 50% at a time. Limit your budget adjustments to twice per day.

Wait 1-2 days to observe KPIs before scaling.
This will allow for maintained stability and will prevent excessive fluctuations.

Pro tip: Once your campaign is published, you cannot change the budget type (daily or lifetime budget) at the campaign or Ad Group level. Plan your budget strategy accordingly before launching your campaign.

Bidding Strategy

The bidding strategy you select tells our system how to bid for you in the ad auction. TikTok offers a range of strategies to help you achieve your desired business outcomes.

Select a bidding strategy that is best aligned to your primary KPI for campaign efficiency.

TikTok Ads Manager supports two recommended bidding strategies for conversion optimization:

	Maximum Delivery (spend-based)	Cost Cap (goal-based)
Bid Strategy	• Maximizes the number of results for the set budget, by controlling the average CPA from auction to drive the most results possible in a given specified budget and period of time.	• Controls the cost of results while maximizing the number of results for the set budget, by keeping your average cost around or lower than your bid. • Aims to minimize CPA by delivering the cheapest results first
Bid Use Cases	• Use If you do not have strict guidelines for maximum Cost Per Action • Use if your primary goal is to spend the full budget and get the most volume of results	• Use if CPA/ROAs are more important than delivery volume / number of conversions • Use when selecting Reach/ Video view objective on auction
Bid Setting	• No bid to be set. • Set a reasonable campaign budget so that the system can balance consumption & CPA within a reasonable scale. The higher the daily budget, the better.	• Set the highest Cost Per Result bid you can accept, bidding directly at a high price performs better vs starting out at a low bid and gradually increasing later. • If you don't know how to set a target CPA, start with Maximum Delivery, then switch to Cost Cap, and set bid around the historical CPA • Use with multiple running Ad Groups to increase spending capability

Some additional tips to use when setting up your campaign:

- It's recommended that advertisers use a combination of Cost Cap and Maximum Delivery bidding strategies across Ad Groups — and tailor the bidding strategy according to the use case:

  1. Use Maximum Delivery to achieve volume goals
  2. Cost Cap for upper funnel advertising and when you need fine-grained control over your Cost Per Action

- Set your campaign budget to "No Limit"

- For Ad Groups, set a daily budget to a minimum of 50x your target CPA based on your account's historical CPAs

- Leverage our suggested bid ratios based on the optimization event:

  1. Complete Payment: at least 5x your target CPA
  2. Other events: at least 20x your target CPA

- Use Campaign Budget Optimization (CBO) when using the Maximum Delivery bidding strategy. Learn more here.

Learn More about Bidding Strategies best practices.

Source: TikTok Internal Data, 2023

+22%

increase in impressions

for campaigns using Campaign Budget Optimization (compared to campaigns not using CBO)

Learning Phase

The initial stage of ad delivery where the system actively explores and targets new customers to find the most relevant audience for your Ad Groups.

This is a crucial step in the ad delivery lifecycle because the data collected during this time is used to train the system, leading to optimized delivery and improved performance.

Fluctuation

During this phase, the CPA may fluctuate but this will stabilize over time.

The learning phase is an experimental process. As the system gathers insights, it will refine its understanding of your target audience and it's behaviors.

Consider using under 20% of your campaign budget during the learning phase.

Wait to use the bulk of your spend after the learning phase for better results. Advertisers using under 20% of their budget clear the Learning Phase in 2-3 days compared to 7-10 days for those spending over 50%.

+49%

Increased budget utilization
when advertisers spend 20% of their budget in the learning phase

(vs. those with 50% spend in the learning phase)

Exiting the Learning Phase

Ad Groups should achieve approximately 50 conversions to exit this phase and will lead to stable performance.

Once the Ad Group exits the Learning Phase and stabilizes its Cost Per Acquisition, you can then confidently scale your budget.

-55%

Reduction in CPA
when advertisers spend 20% of their budget in the learning phase

(vs. those with 50% spend in the learning phase)

Reducing Significant Edits

Be cautious about making large changes to the Ad Groups, as this can retrigger the Learning Phase.

This can include drastic changes to the budget, bid, targeting, creative assets, and campaign pauses.

Learn More about the Learning Phase.

Targeting

On TikTok, you have access to a range of powerful audience targeting tools. From lookalike audiences to behavior based targeting, advertisers can reach customers with flexible and effective targeting options.

Targeting Strategy

If you do not have specific targeting requirements, simply leave it Broad.

If you have the audiences known to work for your business, find them using Demo Targeting, Interest/Behavior Targeting, or Custom Audiences. If you use Audiences or Interest and Behavior, enable Smart Targeting for best results.

If your Data Connections are setup, you can re-target audiences to continue to drive your audience down the funnel.

+20%

Increase in CVR
for Ad Groups using broad targeting

(compared to non-broad Ad Groups)

Avoid Narrow Audience Size

Avoid setting a target that is too narrow. You can expand your audience with Lookalike Audiences or Smart Targeting.

When the audience size is too narrow, Ad Groups will have difficulty exiting the learning phase, increasing the likelihood of creative fatigue. Consider narrow targeting only if you have a specific need (such as operating in a few zip codes), or if you have validated it through testing.

-15%

Reduction in CPA
for Ad Groups using broad targeting

(compared to non-broad Ad Groups)

Learn More about Ad Targeting.

Source: TikTok Internal Data, 2023

Creative

Pave the way to purchase by converting creativity with our best practices.

Creative Diversity

Add at least 3-5 unique creative assets per Ad Group.

If there are too many assets in one group, a few ads may receive the most impressions/clicks/conversions, while the rest will get much fewer. Spread your assets across Ad Groups for better optimization and/or refresh your assets over time.

+13%

Increased CVR

for campaigns with creative diversification compared to ad groups that do not have similar budget utilization

Creative Quality

Consider the following creative best practices to ensure your creative performs well on TikTok:

- **Videos should not be below 720P**

- **Videos should always be vertical and full-screen for the best engagement**

- **Always include audio and sound to best capture attention**

- **Videos should be longer than 5 seconds. The ideal length is 21-34 seconds**

Creative Optimization

Use the tools below to best optimize and strengthen your creative assets.

- **Use diversified Ad Groups to compare the performance of different creative styles**

- **Partner with TikTok creators using the TikTok Creator Marketplace for ads that resonate most with users***

- **Leverage third party tools like CapCut to edit your videos or find third-party agencies to help on TikTok Creative Exchange**
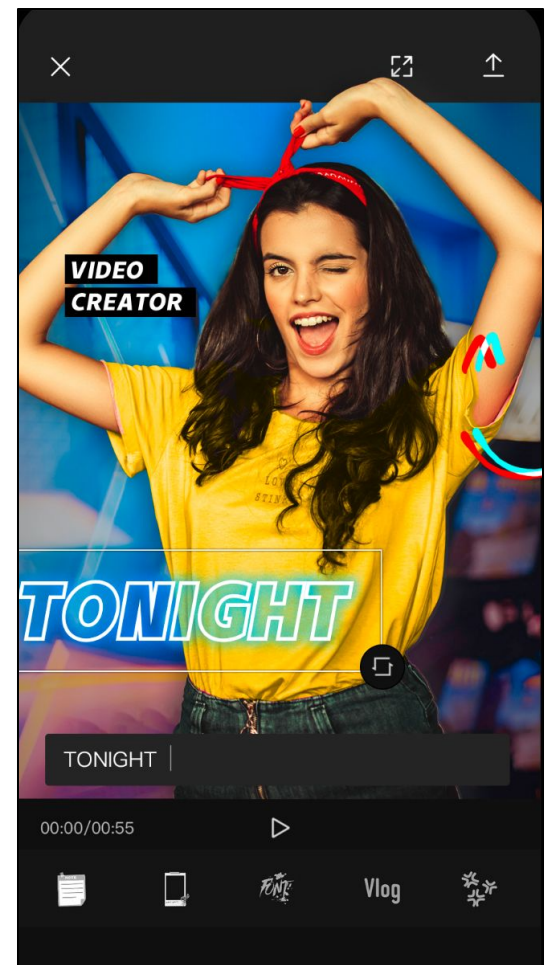
Case Study

MONOS:

Ads with Creator Partnership

Unbreakable luggage? 😊

Read more here

205%

ROAS vs target

-45%

CPA

-18%

CTR

Ad Fatigue

When you reach the maximum number of people who are interested in your ad, you may experience ad fatigue. Use these pointers to detect and avoid it.

Detecting Ad Fatigue

You can measure ad fatigue by tracking frequency and reach metrics for your Ad Groups.

Ideally, you want to have high reach and low frequency. This means you are reaching new and relevant audiences without fatiguing them.
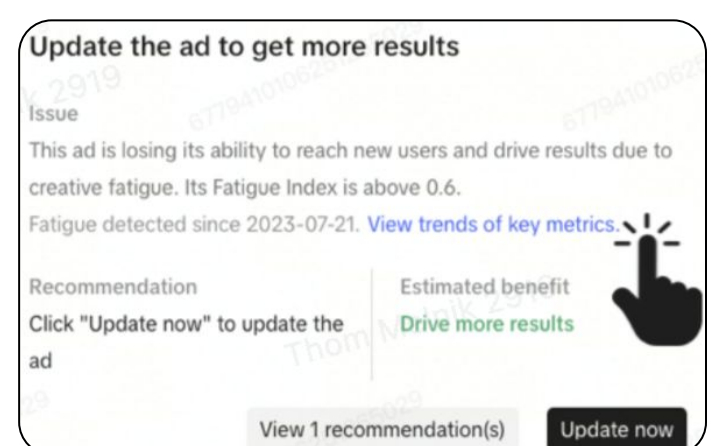
To identify ad fatigue, TikTok uses a "Fatigue Index" that measures day-to-day changes in CPA, reach rate, and performance.

A higher index value indicates a greater degree of fatigue. Once the index reaches 0.6, this indicates your ad has a lower ability to reach new users and drive results.

The TikTok Ads Manager will notify you as to which Ad Groups are experiencing fatigue.

Key Indicators of ad fatigue:

CTR trending down ↓ with frequency trending up ↑
Impressions (reach) trending down ↓
CPA trending up ↑ / ROAS trending down ↓

Update the ad to get more results

Issue
This ad is losing its ability to reach new users and drive results due to creative fatigue. Its Fatigue Index is above 0.6.
Fatigue detected since 2023-07-21. View trends of key metrics.

Recommendation
Click "Update now" to update the ad

Estimated benefit
Drive more results

View 1 recommendation(s)   Update now

Avoiding Ad Fatigue

Refresh your Ad Group with new creative.

Creative is often the driving factor behind ad fatigue. Creating new iterations of your creative or even simply updating your captions can help.

Adjust your targeting, bidding, and budget strategies.

- Expand your targeting by using broad targeting, Smart Audiences, or lookalike audiences.
- Increase your CPA bid to win more auctions.
- Consider creating a new Ad Group, without increasing the budget to the fatigued Ad Group.

Test & Learn Phase

Cost Per Result

Refresh

Fatigue

Optimized Delivery

Campaign Evolution
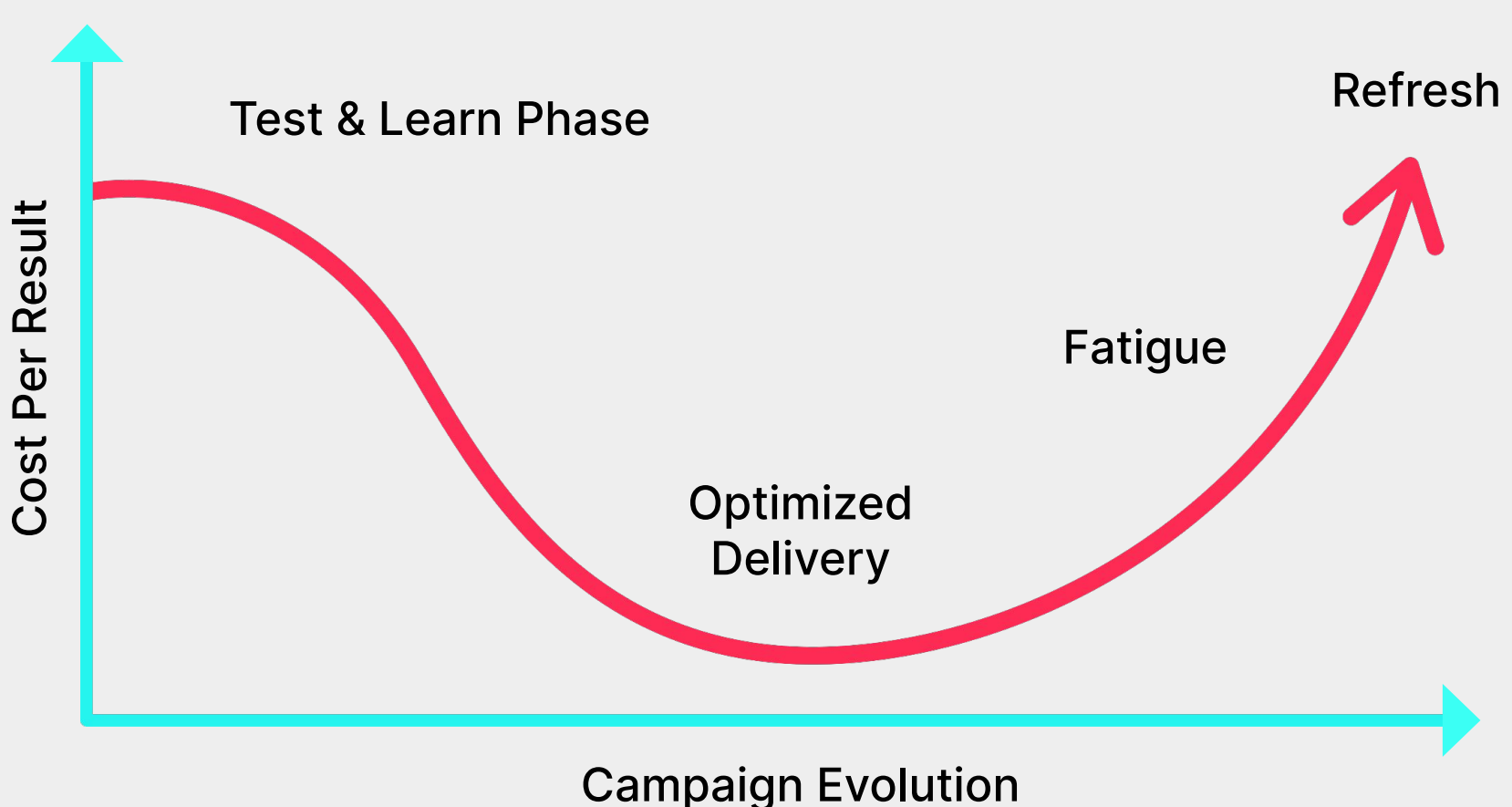
Attribution Strategy

Pave the way to purchase by converting creativity with our best practices.

Tips for understanding what your audience is doing after they see your TikTok ad. Plus, attribution also helps to optimize the success of your bidding and targeting strategies.
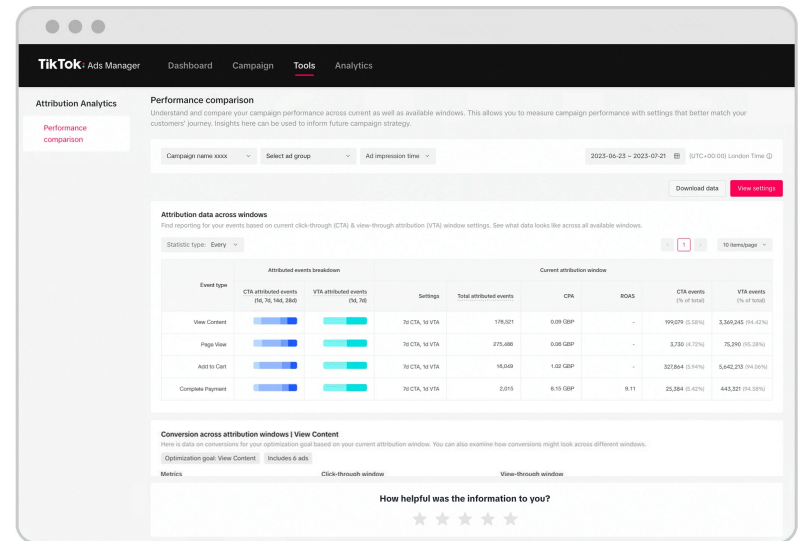
Advertisers can customize their attribution strategy and preferences with the following options		
Type of Attribution	**Explained**	**Best Practices**
Click Through Attribution (CTA)	Conversion credit is given when a user clicks a TikTok ad and then completes the desired conversion action. This will be attributed to TikTok as a **click through conversion**.	We offer 1 day, 7 day, 14 day, and 28 day attribution options.
View Through Attribution (VTA)	Conversion credit is given when a user views (and does not click) a TikTok ad and then completes the desired conversion actions. This will be attributed to TikTok as a **view through conversion**.	We offer 1 day, 7 day, and Off options.
Attribution Window Setting (for both CTA and VTA)	For web events, you can manage your attribution settings in the Attribution Manager. The default attribution window settings are a 7-day click and a 1-day view. You can change attribution windows on Ad Group Level. Learn more.	Use longer attribution windows to capture more events and show the impact of your ads. This allows your Ad Groups to exit the learning phase faster. Do not change your attribution windows *too* often as this will cause your performance to fluctuate.
Multi Touch Attribution (MTA)	This strategy distributes credit to various touchpoints of a user's conversion journey by utilizing statistical modeling of detailed data.	Leverage our integration with TransUnion, a third party MTA provider. Learn more

Attribution Best Practices

Use Click Through Attribution together with View Through Attribution for a holistic view of your campaign.

Attribution Settings

Use different attribution windows for different campaign strategies.

Attribution settings are now available at the Ad Group level. For example, retargeting Ad Groups can use a shorter window versus prospecting Ad Groups

Track click and view through conversions at the event level by using the "Performance Comparison" feature within Attribution Analytics

Gain deeper insight into your TikTok conversions by comparing how many conversions could have been reported within various attribution windows. This will help you to visualize the impact of your attribution settings. Learn more.

Assessing Impact

Use a combined click through and view through attribution strategy in your reporting.

This provides you with valuable insights for a comprehensive view of your campaign performance.

Be mindful when comparing attribution windows across different platforms. Consider the platform-specific differences and their impact on your reporting.

For example, TikTok is a video-first platform. This might result in lower click through rates, but stronger view through attribution.

9 in 10
users take **action** after viewing ads on TikTok[1]

1.5x
more likely to buy an item after **viewing** an ad on TikTok[2]

73%
of TikTok conversions are under attributed by click-based measurement methods[3]

Campaign Measurement

Empower your business with actionable data, enabling you to make informed decisions and reach your full potential on TikTok.

Our measurement solutions help to prove the effectiveness and impact of your TikTok campaign.

79% of purchases driven by TikTok **are not captured** through common attribution methods.
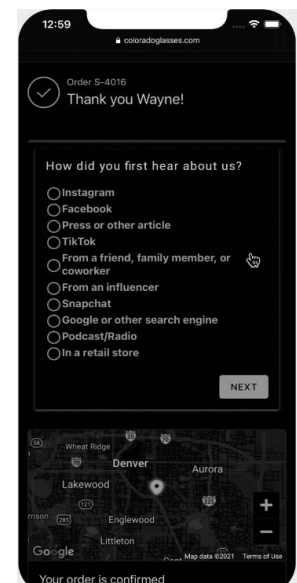
Measurement Strategies:

Post Purchase Survey
Understand audience consumption behaviors

Post Purchase Surveys provide a more comprehensive and nuanced view of your brand's effectiveness on TikTok.

- Use customer-sourced data as an input in your attribution framework
- Use the voice of the customer to reveal the top sources of brand discovery or site visit
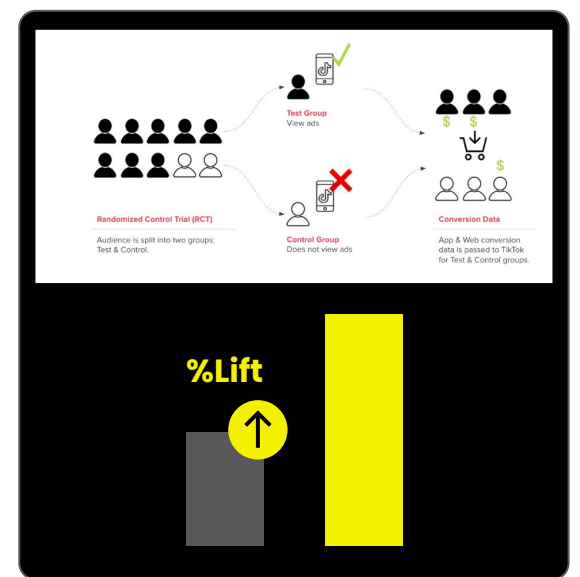
Conversion Lift Study
Measure incremental conversions as a result of your TikTok campaign

Strengthen confidence in your media strategy by proving causal impact between conversions and impressions

- Conversion Lift Studies count conversions differently than attribution strategies and measure different periods of time
- Work with your TikTok representative to align on your campaign strategy before launching a Conversion Lift Study and interpret the learnings afterwards
- Minimize optimization changes during the test period
- Apply a dark period or lower delivery traffic 3-6 days before launch

There are two types of Conversion Lift Studies:

1 Advertiser Level to Campaign Level
- Proves incrementality for your media on TikTok *and* specific campaign objectives

2 Campaign Level - Upper to Lower Funnel Events
- Proves incrementality for both upper and lower funnel events

Store Visit Attribution
Understand incremental foot traffic driven by TikTok campaigns

Store Visit Attribution ties your TikTok media with physical visits to your brick and mortar business locations

- Use Store Visit Attribution to understand your audience better by knowing their offline behaviors
- Revisit your creative strategy afterwards based on your new understanding of which ad formats are driving offline behaviors

Success Story

With Post-purchase surveys, Momentary Ink learned that 60% customers discovered the brand on TikTok

The obiective: Summer is peak season for showcasing skin art, and the brand worked with TikTok and agency partners to design a strategy that would capture the attention of our audience and drive purchases in a cast-effective way

The Solution: The brand amplified reach via **in-Feed Video** and utilised **Post-purchase survey** to highlight the power of discovery to fuel business!

Source: TikTok Internal Data, 2023
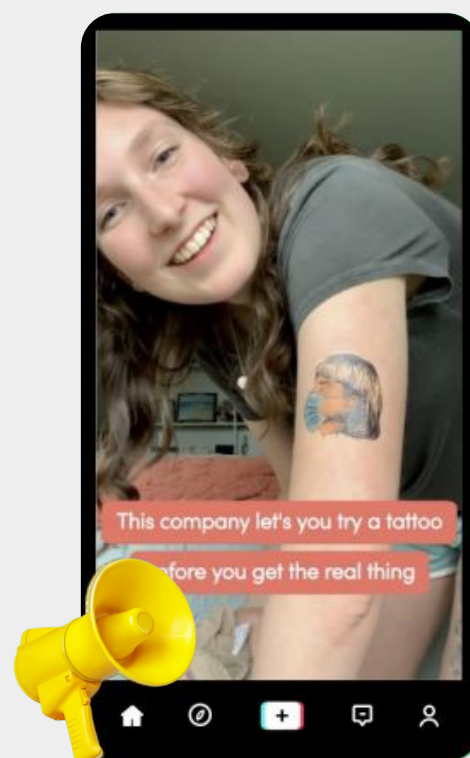
60%
of buyers said they discovered the brand on TikTok

22%
more efficient CPA

Best Practices Checklist

Reference the best practices checklist below for your next web auction campaign.

Focus Area	Strategy		Best Practice
Account Structure	Ad Account Optimization	☐	Create only one Ad Account (per region)
		☐	Diversify your campaigns with 3+ Ad Groups per campaign
		☐	Set up your Data Connections (see below)
Data Connections	Data Connection Set Up	☐	Connection Type: Leverage both the TikTok Pixel and Events API
		☐	Events: Create an event for each customer action in order to share full funnel events with the platform
		☐	Parameters: Ensure the relevant parameters are passed back to the TikTok platform
		☐	Match Keys: Use Auto and Manual Advanced Matching
		☐	Match Keys: Build custom audiences
Campaign Set Up	Setting Budgets	☐	Campaign Budget: Leave campaign level budget as open budget
		☐	Campaign Budget: Use Campaign Budget Optimization (CBO) when optimizing your campaign for the same goal, with at least 2 Ad Groups for best results
		☐	Ad Group Budget: Use Daily Budget instead of Lifetime Budget
	Scaling Budgets	☐	Increase your budget when exceeding 80% of budget utilization
		☐	Increase your budget by no more than 50% at a time
		☐	Limit your budget adjustments to twice per day (wait 1-2 days to observe before scaling again)
	Bidding Strategy	☐	Use Maximum Delivery if your primary goal is to spend the full budget and get the most volume of results
		☐	Use Cost Cap if CPA/ROAs are more important than delivery volume / number of conversions
		☐	Set your campaign budget to No Limit
		☐	For Ad Groups, set your daily budget to a minimum of 50x your target CPA
		☐	Use Campaign Budget Optimization with the Maximum Delivery bidding strategy
	The Learning Phase	☐	Expect CPA fluctuations during this time. They will stabilize.
		☐	Ad Groups should achieve about 50 conversions to exit the learning phase
		☐	Do not make too many changes to Ad Groups during the learning phase
	Targeting	☐	Start with a broad targeting strategy
		☐	Use Demo Targeting, Interest/Behavior Targeting, or Custom Audiences to find the right audiences for your business
		☐	Retarget audiences if your data connections are in place
		☐	If you use Audiences or Interest and Behavior Targeting strategies, enable Smart Targeting for best results.
Creative	Creative Diversity	☐	Use at least 3-5 unique creative assets per Ad Group
	Creative Quality	☐	Videos should not be below 720p
		☐	Ensure your videos have audio/sound
		☐	Videos should be longer than 5 seconds, ideally 21-34 seconds
	Creative Optimization	☐	Use diversified Ad Groups to compare performance of different creative styles
		☐	Partner with TikTok creators using the TikTok Creator Marketplace
		☐	Use CapCut to edit your videos
		☐	Find third-party creative agencies to help on TikTok Creative Exchange
	Ad Fatigue	☐	Refresh creative when experiencing fatigue and/or adjust your targeting, bidding, and budget strategies
		☐	To identify ad fatigue, use "Fatigue Index" that measures day-to-day changes in CPA, reach rate, and performance.
Attribution & Measurement	Attribution Strategy	☐	Track click and view through conversions at the event level by using the "Performance Comparison" feature within Attribution Analytics
		☐	Use a combined click through and view through attribution strategy in your reporting
		☐	Use different attribution windows for different campaign strategies
		☐	Use longer attribution windows to capture more events and show the impact of your ads
	Campaign Measurement	☐	Select between two types of Conversion Lift Studies to demonstrate TikTok's value
		☐	Use Post Purchase Surveys to include the voice and perspective of your customer
		☐	(Optional) Leverage Store Visit Attribution to measure incremental foot traffic driven by your TikTok campaigns

Looking for more?

Use the TikTok for Business Starter Guide to generate a personalized plan for your business.

With our Starter Guide Tool, it takes less than two minutes to create a free, easy-to-follow plan that's tailored specifically to your business.

Click here for more info