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How to succeed on TikTok as a higher education institution?

– Three content concepts for Turku UAS



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How to succeed on Tiktok as a higher education institution?

- Three content concepts for Turku UAS

In this thesis, three different content concepts were created for Turku University of Applied Sciences' Tiktok account. Data was collected from the videos, which could be used to create an overall picture of what kind of videos work best on Turku UAS Tiktok and what kind of videos do not.

In addition, information was collected about generation Z, who in particular have adopted Tiktok as one of their own social media channels and know how to utilize it. Generation Z is also one of the target groups that might be looking for a degree programme and would be interested to study in Turku University of Applied Sciences. In higher education institutions Tiktok videos are utilized especially for the purpose of joint application marketing, but of course, suitable Tiktok videos also increase the sense of community among students and give overall visibility to the organization.

At the end of the thesis, three content concepts are briefly presented, which were formed based on the analysis of this thesis to be used for the needs of Turku University of Applied Sciences.

Keywords:

Social Media, Tiktok, communication, marketing, concepts

Opinnäytetyö (YAMK) | Tiivistelmä

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Miten menestyä Tiktokissa korkeakouluna?

Kolme sisältökonseptia Turun ammattikorkeakoululle

Tässä opinnäytetyössä luotiin kolme erilaista sisältökonseptia Turun ammattikorkeakoulun Tiktok-tiliä varten. Tutkimusta varten Tiktok-tilille luotiin eri tyyppistä sisältöä yhdessä henkilökunnan ja opiskelijoiden kanssa. Videoista kerättiin dataa, jota hyödyntämällä pystyttiin luomaan kokonaiskuva siitä, minkälaiset videot toimivat parhaiten Turun AMK:n Tiktokissa ja minkälaiset videot eivät toimi.

Lisäksi opinnäytetyössä kerättiin tietoa sukupolvi Z:sta, joka erityisesti on ottanut Tiktokin yhdeksi omaksi kanavakseen ja osaa hyödyntää sitä. Sukupolvi Z on myös kohderyhmä, jota Turun ammattikorkeakoulu havittelee hakemaan korkeakouluun. Tiktok-videoita hyödynnetään erityisesti hakumarkkinoinnin tarkoitukseen, mutta sopivat Tiktok-videot lisäävät myös yhteisöllisyyden kokemusta opiskelijoiden keskuudessa ja toimivat orgaanisena sisältönä Turun ammattikorkeakoulun Tiktok-kanavalla.

Opinnäytetyön lopuksi esitellään lyhyesti kolme sisältökonseptia, jotka muodostettiin tämän opinnäytetyön analyysin perusteella käytettäviksi Turun ammattikorkeakoulun viestinnän tarpeisiin.

Asiasanat:

Tiktok, viestintä, markkinointi, konseptointi, sosiaalinen media.

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List of abbreviations

Social Media Algorithm	A program that performs a specific task based on available data and specific rules.
BeReal	A social media app, that was launched in 2022.
Bounce Rate	A metric, that measures the percentage of unengaged session on a social media video.
Concept	In this thesis, content concept is thought as a guideline to help create content for the target audience.
Content	In social media channels, content refers to posts, i.e. image or video content that is regularly produced as part of the channel stream.
Follower	A person or social media user, who follows certain account.
Generation Z	People born between 1997–2012.
Hook	A term used to describe the part of the video, that grabs the attention of a viewer.
Instagram	A social media app where users tend to post photos or videos.
Meme	A video or a picture with text that is meant to have a humorous tone. Memes can spread widely in social media, and they are a way to stay entertained.
Meta	A company that owns Facebook, Instagram, Threads, Messenger and Whatsapp.
Millenials	People older than Generation Z, usually born in the 1980s and 1990s.

Musical.ly	A social media app that preceded TikTok.
Reactions	Likes, shares, saves or comments in a video, that is published on Tiktok.
A save	A Tiktok user can “save” a video to watch it later, otherwise videos get lost easily.
A share	An action, where a Tiktok user shares a video to other Tiktok users, either inside the social media app or to other social media channels.
Social Media	A form of communication, mainly through social media apps, such as blogs, Youtube, Instagram and so on.
Target group	A group of certain types of people, who you are looking to reach out to. I.e. a target group could be aged 18-24 year olds, who are studying engineering.
TikTok	A social media channel, where user can post short (10-30 sek) videos.
Turku UAS	Turku University of Applied Sciences

1 Introduction

With digitalization, social media has become an increasingly important way to reach the desired target group. Social media and its various forms, such as image and video sharing platforms, as well as the development of technology, have made it possible to network with different kinds of people and spread information widely among ordinary people. Before social media developed into its current form, information about world events was mainly shared through traditional media, i.e. newspapers and radio and television news, but social media has given everyone the opportunity to tell about world events. Short examples of this include celebrity issues that spread effectively through social media. This was seen, for example, a couple of years ago when fans used the Free Britney liberation movement to demand an end to the guardianship of singer Britney Spears (Gustafsson 2021).

The purpose of this thesis is to produce suitable content for Turku University of Applied Sciences' Tiktok channel and analyze what kind of content is most suitable and functional for the channel. Data obtain from the Tiktok channel is used to study what kind of videos get the most reactions, such as likes, shares, comments or saves. With the help of data, it is possible to create three content concept proposals, which in turn will help in producing content in the future.

As a rule, videos were produced by the author of this thesis. In some cases there were students involved with the creation of content, but the content is nevertheless coordinated by the author. In addition, some videos may feature staff from Turku University of Applied Sciences. This study is carried out using content analysis. The research question is what kind of content works best on the Turku UAS channel in Tiktok? Answering this question makes it possible to create three content concept proposals that will be presented to the communications team of Turku UAS. Benchmarking was also done of other higher education institutes and specifically of their Tiktok presence.

This development work supports the strategy of Turku UAS, and helps to develop a meaningful brand for the university in the eyes of young people.

First in this thesis report, Tiktok and the way it works is presented. After this I will briefly discuss Generation Z and then continue to analyse the accounts of other higher education institutions in Finland. After that, I discuss more about the development work and its results.

2 Tiktok

Tiktok is a relatively recently established social media channel where users post mainly short video content. Videos can consist of images, various filters, texts and sounds. In some cases, also so-called image carousels, i.e. combining multiple still images, appear on Tiktok, but most of the content is in video format. Videos are typically quite short, the length varies between 10 to 30 seconds. Longer videos are allowed since Spring 2023 and since then it has been possible to create videos that are longer than three minutes (Duffy 2023).

There are two ways to use Tiktok: scrolling through the homepage (former For You page or fyp) or friends page. Your friends are the ones you follow on the social media service in question. In the past, the friends site was known as Following. The Fyp, i.e. the front page, mainly appears with content that you do not yet follow. Tiktok will push content, that it thinks the user might like, to the front page.

Tiktok's predecessor, Musical.ly, was revolutionary when it came out, as it allowed users to film themselves dancing to different songs and gain visibility. Musical.ly merged into Tiktok in 2018. TikTok was already popular in Asian markets and China, and the app wanted to expand its market (Kundu 2018).

2.1 Tiktok users

Tiktok's visitor numbers have increased significantly in the last couple of years. As recently as 2018, Tiktok had 133 million users around the world, but due to the huge growth of the corona years, the number of visitors has since jumped to over 15 billion (Business of Apps 2023).

Tiktok is quite popular in the world and the trend is similar in Finland. Based on 2023 figures, Tiktok's user numbers in Finland have increased by as much as 18% from 2022. According to the latest statistics, the number of users was expected to reach 1.42 million users over the age of 18 in Finland at the

beginning of 2023, making it the sixth most popular social media service in Finland (Kemp 2023). Tiktok is not yet as popular as Instagram and Facebook, since older age groups tend to use Meta's services rather than Tiktok. Yet it is clear, that especially younger generations use more other social media platforms than Meta's services. The typical user of Tiktok is between 18 and 24 years old. Especially 30+ year old people tend to use more other social media platforms, and do not use Tiktok on a daily basis. (DNA report 2024.)

2.2 Tiktok algorithm

With the advent of Tiktok, if not before, people have become familiar with the term algorithm in connection with social media channels. According to Cambridge dictionary's definition, "an algorithm is a set of mathematical instructions or rules that /.../ will help to calculate an answer to a problem." (Cambridge Dictionary n.d.). J.G. Brookshear (2015) defines an algorithm as sequential, unambiguous actions that can be performed and that define the process leading to the outcome.

In social media, algorithms refer to programs that perform certain functions and thus influence, for example, how and what (kind of) content appears on the front pages of social media users, i.e. feeds or fyps (for you page). In practice, they interpret the data collected from social media users and use the data to determine what kind of content the users would be interested in (Adisa 2023). For example, if a user likes Helsingin Sanomat on Facebook, it is likely that publications of that organisation will appear on the front page of this user. Then the user is more likely to react to those posts, and the time spent on the social media channel increases. Moreover, displaying relevant content also engages users on the social media platform. The purpose of such addictiveness is, of course, money. The longer a user browses social media, the more they view ads and the more ad revenue platform owners receive. Miika Auvinen writes in an article in Voima magazine that algorithms manipulate our thinking because they affect how we see the world and relate to our fellow human beings (Auvinen 2021). At the same time, algorithms are closely guarded business

secrets. Therefore, there is no certainty about their exact operating principles. However, there have been speculations about how and on what basis certain content is displayed to users and others are not.

In the early days of most social media services, every user would see updates on their homepage in order of novelty. I remember in the early days of social media and in my early teens that the purpose of social media was first and foremost to keep in touch with friends and acquaintances – after all, it was usually cheaper than calling or sending a text message. This happened in the early 2000s. At that time, updates on my social media homepage appeared in chronological order. The same was true for Twitter, Facebook and, especially, Instagram. Needless to say, this all changed with commercial goals of social media companies.

Tiktok uses a content graphic, i.e. it provides its users content that they are already familiar with (Stokecl-Walker 2021). When a user starts browsing Tiktok, the app asks the user about their interests. After this information, the algorithm assumes that you could be interested in those contents, so it wants to recommend them to the user. For example, a user interested in dogs may receive dog videos on their For you page, which is why the user watches the entire video to the end. It tells Tiktok's algorithm that you might indeed be interested in dogs. Once the algorithm has come to this conclusion, it will likely continue to drive dog-related videos to the homepage. In other words, the algorithm learns its user's interests very quickly and accurately. The more time a user spends on the app, the more relevant the recommendations will be. It is said that Tiktok predicts what you might be interested in before you even know it.

What is remarkable about Tiktok's algorithm, is that it can push video material on the user's homepage that has not yet received many likes or views. Facebook or Instagram are not known to do this, since their algorithm works based on interactions and other signals it receives from their users (Macready 2024). Also, the account on Tiktok that created the video may not have a huge number of followers. Henna Kuvaja, a visual marketing expert from Kuvaja,

writes on her blog that Tiktok would stagger the appearance of videos on Tiktok. She writes that if videos perform well with a small audience on the first view, the algorithm will give it more views with larger audiences. (Kuvaja 2021.)

This type of approach is known to cause a lot of mental health issues among the younger users. If a user has previously liked or seen a video about training, the next video could be about eating more healthy. If the user continues to watch these kind of videos, the content may soon refer to eating disorders and encourage the viewer to engage with unhealthy type of content. To the younger audience it might not be clear how the algorithm works and why different kind of content appears on their FYPs. Seeing harmful content – no matter how unintended it may have been – can create mental health issues. This is the down side of the very effective algorithm, that was mainly designed to keep the audience engaged and therefore bring money to the company behind Tiktok. (Rigatelli 2023.)

Tiktok itself has explained how its own algorithms work, for example, by stating that each user's FYP is completely unique and that it is based on user preferences. The videos that end up on the FYP are affected by factors such as user interactions, video details, device and account settings. By user interaction, Tiktok means, for example, collecting information about which videos the user likes and which videos the user shares, what accounts the user follows, what comments they post, and what kind of content they create. Video details of a user's published video, on the other hand, track the sounds, captions and hashtags used. Device and user settings are used to determine the user's language preference, country, and device type. Moreover, Tiktok says it gives some weight to whether the user watches the video to the end or not. It doesn't really matter if the video creator and viewer are in the same country or not. (Tiktok 2020.)

TikTok's latest algorithm change supposedly¹ took place in late 2023. On Turku University of Applied Sciences' TikTok account, the supposed change was primarily reflected in the low number of impressions. Again, there is no exact information on how algorithms work or change, but various social media influencers noticed, for example, the importance of one's own activity when seeking high impressions. At the time of writing this thesis, there are no very precise conclusions or data on the exact functioning of the current algorithm. The social media and different influencers and creators are speculating about the performance of the algorithm, and one of the assumptions is that a TikTok user that comments, reacts and interacts with the rest of the community is more visible in the feed of the target audience than a user that does not actively interact with the rest of the social media community (Burke 2024).

2.3 Turku UAS's TikTok account

Turku University of Applied Sciences' TikTok account has been established in 2022. Content was created for the first time in spring 2023, when clips from the Taitteessa series were edited. However, the edits in the Taitteessa series are not the most typical TikTok content, so the content and reception did not reach the goals that were set for it. For this reason, Turku University of Applied Sciences has been keen to develop suitable content concepts for the TikTok account.

¹ The change in algorithm happened quickly and was noticed by TikTok influencers, whose video impressions sunk overnight.

Turku UAS's TikTok account had nearly six hundred followers at the beginning of November 2023. For TikTok's mobile app, it is only possible to view analytics from the last 12 weeks from the business account. Analytics show, for example, how large an audience the account has reached during this time period and how much of the audience reached has engaged with the account's posts. In addition, video impressions and so on can be seen from analytics.

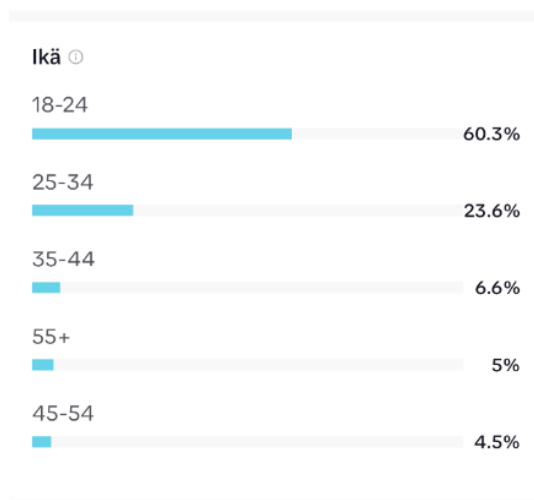


Figure 1. The age groups of the followers of Turku UAS Tiktok account (Turku UAS's Tiktok account 2023).

Tiktok also gives you an idea of what kind of followers Turku University of Applied Sciences' TikTok account has.

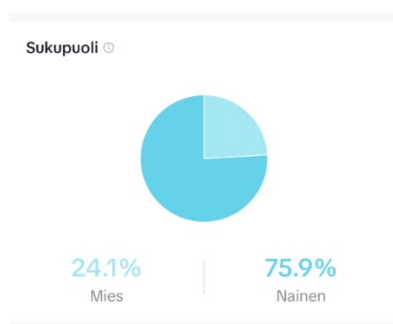


Figure 2. A typical follower of Turku UAS Tiktok account is a female (Turku UAS's Tiktok account 2023).

The most common follower of Turku University of Applied Sciences is a young person or young adult aged 18-24 (figure 1), and typically a female (figure 2). The audience that engages with the Turku UAS Tiktok account is mainly from Finland (figure 3).

However, this is explained by the fact that the language used in the videos/posts/contents is mainly Finnish. What is surprising, however, is that only 14.6% of TikTok followers are from Turku (figure 4). Instead, the majority of

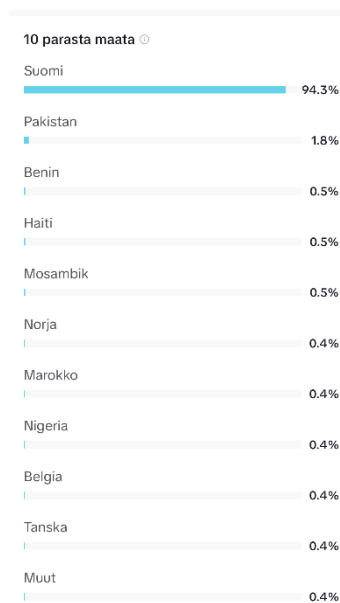


Figure 3. Countries, where Turku UAS's Tiktok account's followers come from (Turku UAS's Tiktok account 2023).

followers come from the Helsinki metropolitan area. A quick conclusion of this City-related finding is that the organization must create more engaging content because the content can be used for marketing purposes.

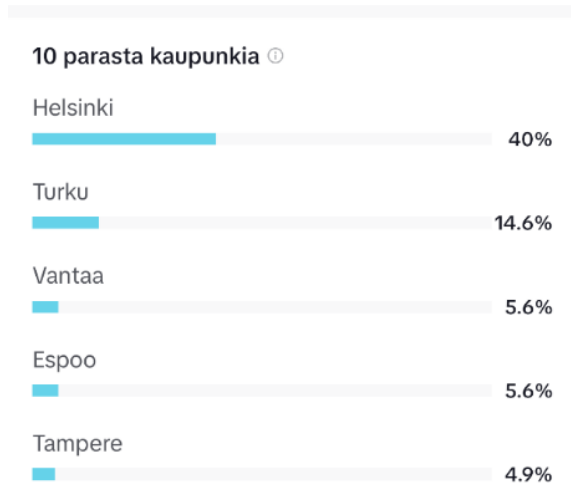


Figure 4. A list of cities, from where followers mainly are (Turku UAS's Tiktok account 2023).

3 Generation Z

A generation can be understood to mean different things. In kinship relationships can be thought of as a relationship between grandparents and children, but computationally a generation is thought to refer to a period of thirty years (Leppälahti 2017). For this thesis, generational thinking refers to generations that are united by a certain kind of shared generational experience. For millennials, generational experience may have been related to technological development or living in a certain kind of transformation, while for the older generation, the generation X, generational experience may be related to, for example, a lack of technology or a certain programme offered by television. According to Leppälahti, this kind of thinking is specifically related to societal generational thinking. (Leppälahti 2017.)

Generation Z, or abbreviated to either Gen Z or Zoomers, is a generation born after millennials and before Generation Alpha. More specifically, generation Z was born between 1997 and 2011, so the oldest zoomers are 27 years old at the time of writing this thesis, and the youngest are 13 years old. In other words, Generation Z is either of secondary school age, in secondary school, in higher education institutes or already in working life. On the other hand, the definition of generation Z varies depending on the sources, and some define generation Z as meaning young people born between 1995 and 2015, while others consider those born in 1990 to be representatives of generation Z (Siltamäki 2020). What is significant for Generation Z is that most of its members are used to using various technical devices and applications from an early age. Also, social media has been around basically throughout their lifetime, unlike for millennials and older generations. Generation Z is said to be the first generation to be fully digital native (Demoupoulos 2023).

3.1 Generation Z values

There are a lot of beliefs and images associated with zoomers. For example, the generation may be seen as self-centered, indifferent to politics, and so on. However, according to a study by Iro Research and researcher Sylva Vahtera, there are many different attitudes towards different things within Generation Z, and they cannot be categorically placed in one mold. (Markkinointikollektiivin aamukahvit 2023.)

Vahtera (Iro Research 2023) states that the core values of Zoomers are traditional, and friends and family are at the heart of life. The generation also values nature and a steady and safe life. Honesty is important and the future is viewed optimally. According to the study, the generation is divided into six different segments: Shoppers, networkers, career-oriented, responsible, trusting politicians and indifferent. According to these divisions, some zoomers are interested in consumption, while others of the generation prefer to invest in sustainable development and ecology. In addition, there are concerns about one's own career in certain segments. In terms of generation, women in particular are active users of social media, although there are active social media users and network users in other segments as well. According to the Vahtera's research, the generation is more career-oriented, feels happier than older generations, moves more regularly and considers shopping an important hobby. They also trust politicians, even though they follow politics less.

What is special about the generation is that its trust in traditional marketers is lower compared to older generations. Instead, the generation relies on peer-reviewed products. It does matter, what social media influencers, friends and acquaintances say when it comes to new products (Vahtera 2023). On the other hand, this may also be affected by changes in the media field: In the early 2000's and 2010's, the young adults or teens sought information about beauty products from youth magazines. Today the number of Finnish youth magazines has drastically decreased (Pyhtilä 2024). It is therefore natural to look for beauty and clothing tips on social media. This, in a way, has created an illusion to the

generation: If a product or service cannot be found online or on social media, it does not exist. Perhaps inspired by this trend, Tiktok has also started offering search engine services and operates as a Google (Rigatelli 2023).

3.2 Zetas in the workplace

Zoomers have at least been thought to have different attitudes towards employers (Heikkinen ym. 2017, 94). Zoomers are interested in a competitive salary and good colleagues, but at the same time they are generally interested in the corporate culture and atmosphere of the workplace. The most important thing for zoomers is work that is interesting and enjoyable (Rubanovitsch 2020, 208). In his book, Rubanovitch talks about a survey conducted in 2018 among upper secondary school students in Espoo who were born between 1999 and 2000. Of course, the survey is a bit incomplete, as only 23 students responded to it, but it also showed that young people wanted responsible, diverse and challenging work that would definitely bring new experiences. In addition, the employer was expected to be flexible, understanding and friendly. Fairness has also been emphasized by employers in these responses.

It can be said that Generation Z has a desire to influence things and express themselves. Gen Z doesn't value hierarchies and wants to collaborate rather than lead. Leadership, on the other hand, is expected to be flexible, inspiring and accepting of differences, and the employer is expected to be transparent. (Ava Academy 2024.)

Zoomers also differ from previous generations in working life: jobs are difficult to find or obtain, and with it economic growth and pensions escape further away. Zoomers might seek out second careers or run a second business alongside their main work or life, since working life has become more fragmented. (Rubanovitsch 2020, 208.) This, of course, increases the pressure on higher education institutes to increase the amount of suitable degree programs or add additional training modules, which can be carried out flexibly from anywhere in Finland.

Many sources about zoomers also emphasize that zoomers want to retire at 30 and also want to enjoy life outside of work (Rubanovitsch 2020; Heikkinen ym. 2017). Although the reasoning is good (and is often based on certain forms of information gathering, such as questionnaires), this type of information should be treated with caution. I believe that any 20-year-old hopes to see and experience as much as possible in and out of working life. Therefore, perhaps the most realistic way to think about zoomers in relation to working life is through the segmentation presented earlier: some zoomers take work more ambitiously and seriously than other segments. A common factor in zoomers' wishes regarding the workplace is that the employer is expected to be flexible and understanding, which is of course quite a good wish for any employee.

So how does all this relate to social media? In the future, bosses and those in management positions in companies will have to take into account the wishes and habits of the younger generation when they are trying to hire motivated personell. Traditional recruitment announcements can be made, for example, on social media and TikTok, where the most important thing is to behave in a way that speaks to the young audience. Friendliness, flexibility and understanding are certainly a good starting point for any recruitment announcement on social media.

In addition, this same practice must extend to the social media activities of every organization. Zoomers are social and collective people, so an organization that actively refuses to interact with this young generation looks hopelessly old in the eyes of this generation. Generation Z is the therefore the first generation that is not used to being just a recipient of content. This means that the generation's everyday social media behaviour is creative, and they are also building their own identity though their own video production. Thus, one could draw the conclusion that the generation also wants to see companies and organizations doing the same: organizations use their social media presence to build their own identity so that it is an interesting and attractive enough brand also for new buyers (Rubanovitsch 2020, 213).

For Turku University of Applied Sciences, this is particularly evident in engaging the young target group on Tiktok. Turku UAS must be openly commenting and interacting with other Tiktok users. Simply entering brand content into fyps' doesn't generate views or increase visibility, but rather does the opposite: reduces the visibility of the content and makes the organization suspicious. A content produced strongly from "top to bottom" receives a more critical reception than content produced from the same level (Rubanovitsch 2020, 213). This justifies the use of "student ambassadors" in HEI's Tiktok channels, because this way the content seems to be more authentic and more relatable.

4 Other organizations communication on Tiktok

Before any content was created, there was a need to benchmark other higher education institutions' social media presence. Through benchmarking it was possible to see what kind of content other higher education institutes are creating and how are these other higher education institutes succeeding on Tiktok. The list of Finnish higher Education Institutions can be found from the appendix (appendix 1).

4.1 Higher Education institutes on Tiktok

According to Studentum, there are currently 38 higher education institutions in Finland. Of these, 14 are universities and the rest are universities of applied sciences (Studentum 2021). Most of these universities are active on Tiktok as only ten of the higher education institutes seem not to have an account on Tiktok (appendix 1). Still, not all accounts on Tiktok are active. The Tampere University and the University of Helsinki are examples of this. They have a profile that looks official, but there is hardly any content.

With a quick comparison, the contents of higher education institutions largely consist of content produced by students or otherwise study-related content. Student life is highlighted either directly or indirectly. An example of indirect content related to student life can be found on Laurea University of Applied Sciences' profile: In the summer, the account posted a video in which it presented an easy dessert recipe. The video highlights its connection to degree programme only in hashtags that mention hospitality management degree programme. However, the video was successful, as it has received almost 190,000 views by the end of 2023. On the other hand, there are no comments at all, the video has only 135 likes, seven saves and eight shares, which could also tell that the video is paid advertising.

As a rule, content produced by higher education institutions has not received large impression or reactions. The highest impression numbers are found on

content that is likely sponsored. For example, videos related to the spring 2023 joint application period have gathered hundreds of thousands of impressions but the content seems to be promoted. Laurea University of Applied Sciences has another example of this: at the end of June, the university has posted a promotional video stating that tickets to Assembly are being awarded (apparently a student event). The video has only received 114 likes and 15 shares, but has over 400,000 impressions.

On the other hand, good visibility has not been achieved by paid content alone. An interesting example of this can be found on the other side of Finland, in Jyväskylä, on the Tiktok profile of the University of Jyväskylä. In 2023, one of University of Jyväskylä's Tiktok video has received as many as 1.2 million views. In the video, exchange students promote a live event where they talk about their studies at the University of Jyväskylä. In terms of comments, likes and shares, I don't think the content is paid (likes 10.5K, comments disabled, saves 35 and shares 96). The popularity can be explained by the fact that the video of exchange students has managed to get the algorithm to offer content to a wider audience than usual with English-language content. It should also be noted that the University of Jyväskylä currently has more than 11,000 followers and many of its videos have also reached good impressions in the past. I consider videos that have been viewed more than 10,000 times to be good impression numbers. But as I said before, at the time of writing this thesis, we cannot be sure that the video of exchange students on University of Jyväskylä's Tiktok is sponsored, and the videos released later in 2023 that reached millions look much more clearly like paid advertising than the video of exchange students.

So, the Tiktok content of universities has a strong focus on student life. In 2023, popular content formats have been, for example, students' My day videos, in which students from different fields tell how they spent their day of studying. In addition, videos related to overalls (a piece of clothing that most bachelor or Master level students wear in Finland) or other aspects of student life have been popular. Funny or humorous videos have also been popular, such as

memes that have been created by using Tiktok's own editing tool CapCut, for which the app has created its own editing templates. In addition, various trends have been actively participated in, or at least almost participated in (Aalto University made a video in which it playfully asked for its viewers opinion on participating in the Tube girl trend that went viral on TikTok in autumn 2023). It should be noted that university staff are hardly visible in the videos, except in the case of paid advertising or, for example, videos related to the joint application process. Secondly, it should be noted that the websites of higher education institutions do not display, for example, content related to RDI business, such as news about current research results. On the other hand, similar RDI content can be seen on other platforms popular among young people in higher education institutions. For example, the University of Turku has published videos on Instagram reels in which university staff talks about their research results or otherwise about their work.

4.2 Finnish Tax Administration

There are many different ways to make addictive content on Tiktok. As a rule, Tiktok instructs you to make addictive starts, so called "hooks", so that those who watch the video are engaged enough to watch the video to the end. The general rule is that the hook should take place already at the 2-3 second mark, because in that time the TikTok user can decide whether to scroll past the video or continue watching. Common addictive starts include, for example, surprising or otherwise strange content that needs to be watched to the end precisely because of its strangeness.

There are plenty of examples of these, but this strange and surprising content has been produced most magnificently lately by the Finnish Tax Administration. One wouldn't expect to see Tiktoks about taxes, but the organization has brilliantly managed to reverse this general idea. This can be partly related to the Tax Administration's strategy: Its goal is to get people to pay taxes and at the same time explain what is being done with the tax money. The goal is therefore simpler than, for example, that of Turku University of Applied Sciences which is

to educate young future experts, but at the same time to conduct significant research and help develop the business life of Southwest Finland. It is difficult to combine these three goals into effective high-impact communication, as the goal includes several different target groups and audiences that all use social media in different ways. It should also be noted that social media is not the only sensible way to reach these target groups even in this respect, but in RDI projects, targeted email communication can be much more effective.

The Finnish Tax Administration's videos therefore stand out from the crowd with their surprising nature, as few would think that a rigid-sounding organization could succeed in communication through humour and sarcasm. However, the Finnish Tax Administration's Tiktok account combines meme templates from CapCut and adds very sarcastic texts and messages. On the other hand, the account also features videos made entirely from scratch, and some of them include Markku Heikura, Director General of the Finnish Tax Administration. At the end of October, Heikura appears in a Halloween-themed video as a giant that arrives behind a window. The caption asks who wants to be a tax official on Halloween. The video has over 50,000 views, so I would describe it as quite successful. Heikura also appears in a video thanking for paying taxes. Heikura holds a picture of a note that reads "Thank you for taxes".

Of course, there is also serious content on the account. Communications Designer Ari Autio appears in these videos and manages to explain the reasons why taxes are collected and who decides on taxes in Finland in the first place.

What is remarkable about these Tax Administration videos is that they do not feel superimposed and their comments and content aims for strong interaction in general. For example, if someone wants to know a few quick responses to tax-related comments the account responds, either by using video format or by commenting. The Finnish Tax Administration may not respond to trolls, unless it has a troll response to offer itself. Approachability and relatability in content are therefore among the reasons why the Finnish Tax Administration has succeeded in creating addictive and always surprising content.

4.3 Yle kiosk in Parliament

By far the most interesting news content is the Yle Kiosk in Parliament account. Yle Kiosk offers content aimed at young people on current topics, and the Parliament account focuses on political issues, as the name suggests. In the autumn 2023, its topics have included, for example, a mobile phone ban, tax exemption for first-time homebuyers, nicotine pouches and student loans. In the videos, journalist Marleena Pelli presents the issues discussed in Parliament in an understandable and clear manner. She may also bring up strange things about Finnish legislation, as she did, for example, in her TikTok video in April by talking about the five oldest laws in Finland.

Typical for videos is that Pelli shoots and hosts the videos herself. She may be holding the phone themselves, or she may have placed it on a stand or other functional support. In other words, videos create the feeling that the performer is speaking directly to the viewer of the video. In addition, the videos have a very built-in hook that attracts attention. Typically, the issue in the video is immediately brought to the top (the price of nicotine pouches rises), and only after that has the subject matter itself been unraveled. In text form, the script of the video could even be thought of as following a traditional news text, with the hook compared to the title of the news story.

It should also be noted that the videos present difficult topics, but they are told in an understandable way. A good example of this is a video showing the border being closed to Russian cars (more than 320,000 views, almost 20,000 likes, about 670 comments and more than 1500 shares). The topic also came up in the discussions of ordinary citizens in September, but thanks to the video, the topic can be said to have also risen to the attention of Finnish young people.

As a whole, the style, tempo and content of the videos are attractive to young people.

5 Development work for Turku UAS

Social media makes it possible to both reach people and influence them. Social media allows a single person to connect with hundreds, if not thousands, of people during the day. This direct channel, i.e. human-to-human communication, is, of course, also very attractive from the point of view of companies. Depending on the social media channel, an active business account can be in contact with up to several thousand people during the day, as already more than 83% of Finns use some social media channel daily. (Iivonen 2023.)

5.1 Background

Turku University of Applied Sciences has several social media channels at its disposal. They have been established out of need, as the aim was to create content that would interest the different target groups of Turku University of Applied Sciences. As social media has changed, channels have also changed over the years. Currently, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and Youtube are the most used channels of Turku UAS. The former Twitter, now X, was also in active use for several years, but due to recent changes, its use has been drastically reduced. Tiktok has become a new channel, and due to its marketing potential, there has been a desire to introduce it into organizational use as well. There are about 1.4 million Finns over the age of 18 on Tiktok and the platform is especially popular among young people, so the advertising potential is huge.

The new social media channel is also needed because of the decline seen on other social media channels. According to statistics from Turku University of Applied Sciences' own social media management application Hootsuite, there has been a decrease in reach on Facebook and Instagram, for example, in the long term (Hootsuite analytics 2023). The same phenomenon seems to be happening on a larger scale too, and the decrease rate is 2–4 % compared to previous year when it comes to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter users (Kemp

2023). Secondly, the Hootsuite and Datareportals data shows that both Instagram and Facebook users are getting older. Just ten years ago, Instagram was a popular social media platform for young people, who were primarily sharing photos. At that time, the app was revolutionary, as millennials were used to traditional text streaming. In addition, it may have reminded many millennials of the familiar IRC gallery, where everyone could add pictures of themselves and where other visitors went to comment. However, with the rise of smartphones, Instagram became a great place to post photos of different moments. That's what Instagram's name, "Instant gram," refers to. In addition, it was easier than before to edit images and add text elements to them.

However, the new generation, commonly referred to as Generation Z or Gen Z, quickly switched to using video instead of pictures for their messaging.

Since Tiktok is a fairly recent channel and its potential in reaching different target groups is great, it has been clear that Turku University of Applied Sciences has also had to create its own Tiktok channel. The problem so far has been, in particular, not knowing what kind of content can be produced on Tiktok and what content specifically works for the audience. Secondly, the person-centeredness of Tiktok, which means that videos feature real people, is a bit of a problem. The main responsibility for content production lies with the communications team of Turku University of Applied Sciences. Content production requires courage, dedication, and the right equipment – a high-quality camera and possibly also an external microphone. The second challenge relates to the potential target group. A student at Turku University of Applied Sciences is typically a young person aged 20–24 who is more likely to speak Finnish as their native language (Vipunen, 2022). There are only 324 young people aged 15 to 19 studying in Turku UAS, which is a fraction of the 20–24 age group (Finnish-speaking, 4629) (Vipunen 2022).

5.2 Planning the development

Based on this, one could judge that TikTok might be the best way to reach prospective, current, and graduate students. This student group is also one of Turku University of Applied Sciences' communication target groups. The goal of Turku University of Applied Sciences is to be an influential higher education institution in Southwest Finland (Turku University of Applied Sciences Strategy 2023) and, among other things, to support the region's business life and its growth. One solution to this is to train good and capable new experts for the needs of companies in the area. Another goal is that the education offered at Turku University of Applied Sciences is attractive and that people apply for them both in Finland and from abroad.

It should also be noted that the development work referred to in this thesis is mainly monitored by using TikTok's mobile application. It is also possible to use TikTok in a browser, which makes it possible to advertise and schedule content, for example. This was used during the joint application period in spring 2024. Development work began officially in September 2023. Sometimes staff and students have been utilized in the work, but the author of the thesis has also appeared in videos when necessary. In addition, various humorous content, mainly memes, have been utilized in the content. TikTok-specific trends (for example, dances, challenges or music) have been present up to a certain point, but changes on the platform, for example in terms of copyright, have significantly limited the use of trending sounds at times. On the other hand, TikTok users have come up with a great loophole for this, and have developed accelerated versions of popular songs.

In the development work, the content has been produced using existing trends, memes and events related to the annual plan of communications. For example, the content takes into account graduation and the start and end of the academic year. iPhone 13 has been used as a tool, as well as external microphones in certain videos and a rig suitable for the phone. Video editing and planning of the content has been done alongside other work.

6 Analyzing the social media content of Turku UAS

In total, 65 videos were created during the review period (September 2023 – June 2024). On average, the duration of one video has been 23.8 seconds (total duration for videos is 1552 seconds, divided by 65).

Videos were used to collect data on the likes, comments, shares and average viewing time. These were the dependent variables of this content analysis. Independent variables were the style and the length of the video. These variables (the number of likes, comments, shares and average watch time, as well as the style of the video and time of posting the video) were coded in an Excel matrix. Percentages of overall reactions were calculated based on the data. Overall reach of a video was also included in the Excel sheet. By reach, I mean the actual number of people who have to see a video. Impressions measure the number of views, but as a metric it does not determine how many individuals have watched a video. Each video's data was added 1-2 weeks after it was published so that it would be better to compare each video to one another. The delay in data collection was due to other work.

During the review period, there have been quieter days and posts that have been affected by, for example, the algorithm's operation or its interpretation of inappropriate content, or suspicions of copyright infringement, for example, with regard to content published at the same time from another Tiktok channel.

The analysis of the data coded in the Excel matrix was carried out using an Excel PivotTable and by adding up certain variables and comparing different types of videos, using their style and length as independent variables. The aim was to find defining factors for what kind of videos are successful and what kind of metrics that measure the successfulness of a video are important, especially in terms of Turku University of Applied Sciences' strategy and the Communications and Marketing unit's own goals. In the next paragraph, I will present the results of the development work and summarize the findings.

6.1 Preparations

The first thing I have done with the data is arranging it properly. This means that I had to determine what types of videos I have created over the nine month period. I chose five different genres:

1. an explanation video,
2. a meme video,
3. a video with students or members of the staff,
4. a video created based on the Taitteessa series and
5. a video with a trending sound or other trending element.

An explanation video is a video that explains a project or another learning event of Turku UAS. There are in total of 14 videos in this genre, and they are also the longest videos in Turku UAS Tiktok account. There is usually one person presenting or explaining the subject to the audience and then showing something in the background to make a statement. The background can be a green screen (a filter that makes it possible to make a sort of green screen videos) and a person usually presenting something is the author of this thesis. One project video and one video about different places to study in EduCity have had the most engagement.

A meme is an internet phenomenon that has survived in the internet for many years. It is typically an image with a piece of text to it and it is humorous in nature. It can be copied and spread rapidly by internet users, and it can be varied. These humorous types of contents are created to make a person laugh or to describe an event in a humorous way. If a picture can speak louder than a thousand words, a meme can speak louder than two thousand words and make a person laugh while doing so. Because of the wide use of the video format these days in social media, memes have become videoclips or gifs (the graphic interchange format) that are attached to videos. A meme video has usually described an element of Turku UAS and been a way to share information about the higher education institution. Memes are usually from different movies or such, and they always have a link somehow to Turku UAS

actions and events. These meme videos were created with CapCut, which is a mobile editing tool designed to work especially with Tiktok. There are in total 17 meme videos in Turku UAS account by early June 2024.

Videos with a member of the student body or staff were created to see how the audience would react to content that was filmed by a member of the staff but where another person would present the topic of the day. Mainly Turku UAS own lecturers attended the videos, but we also had few students to create us content. There are in total of eleven videos like these, and these are from my perspective the most challenging videos to create. They need to have a very luminous person in front of the camera, and that person needs to be able to laugh at themselves. Contents created by students were also good, but maybe a little too safe when it comes to the content itself. The students might have been a little bit too nervous to create content that would actually succeed. Some of the students were paid for creating content, but not all. The content was used in the joint application period marketing during March 2024, and some of it was promoted through Tiktok for business (a marketing tool).

The fourth content type was mainly edited clips of the Taitteessa series, which worked as a marketing tool for the joint application periods. The marketing campaign has been effective and has always included several students. In spring 2024 Turku UAS did not start to produce another series of the Taitteessa, instead we used older seasons as our material. Basically the writer of this thesis edited nice clips that would hopefully create engagement. There are only seven of that sort of videos in the data, and each of those videos was promoted briefly for them to gain impressions and views. The seasons were produced from 2019 to 2023.

The last genre that is introduced in the data is called “trendy videos”. Those depict videos that include trending sounds or movements or edits, that are typically seen in Tiktok over a short period of time. Trends are difficult, since they change constantly and turning them into a message from a company is hard. Also a change in the usage of the audiotracks in the late 2023 and early 2024 made it very difficult for organisations to actually engage with the

audience by using trending sounds. Basically a lot of sounds were taken down from Tiktok because of the legal battle between music industry and Tiktok but also a lot of music was labeled as not to be used for commercial purposes. Even though most of the Turku UAS content was not promoted, the Tiktok account is labeled as a business account, which is why audiotracks were restricted. There are 14 videos labeled as type 5 video in the data.

Next all the other data coded in the Excel was processed so that it was more understandable. Columns were set to calculate percentages, and also numbers that indicate published time of a video were processed into a more understandable format.

6.2 Analyzing the data

Just by simply sorting through the data we can see which type of content has gathered more impressions. The answer is video type number 4, which were the edited clips from the Taitteessa series. Four of those videos have together gathered nearly 340 000 views (table 1).

Table 1. Types of videos with most impressions (Turku UAS Tiktok data 2024).

Video type (genre)	impressions
Taitteessa series (4)	127 000
Taitteessa series (4)	94 000
Taitteessa series (4)	72 000
Taitteessa series (4)	45 000

All these videos were promoted and used as a paid advertisement, and that is what explains such high numbers. On the other hand, the engagement has not been very high with these videos. They have been viewed only for 1,3 seconds on average. It indicates that the videos have mostly been scrolled through and that the beginnings of the videos have not been interesting enough. Also the

likes of the videos have varied from 27 to 90, which is very low number for a video that has been promoted. The data from the paid advertisement campaign was not included in this data, but the overall engagement rate of the paid advertisement campaign was 0,5 percent. Typically a good promoted video has an engagement rate higher than one percent.

Organic content can easily gather the same amount of likes than Turku UAS' paid content, but the impressions are clearly lower (table 3). But impressions are not the only way to measure the successfulness of a video. Every organization has different goals for their content, and Turku UAS is trying to get more engagement than views. Engagement ensures, like we have learned from the algorithm, that our videos resonate with the target group of our choice, i.e. the young people Turku UAS wishes to reach and later have them applying to Turku UAS. Highest number of likes comes from a video that was published in September 26th 2023. It is a meme video, that depicts the variety of study possibilities in Turku UAS. It has an audio and a clip from the Wolf of Wall Street - movie. The caption of the video says: "when you try to explain to another person what you are studying" (table 2).

Table 2. Data from a meme video published in September 2023 (Turku UAS Tiktok data 2024).

Video type	Impressions	Shares	Saves	Likes	Comments	Viewing time
2	35 800	754	219	2624	16	21H37min15sec

The numbers have been gathered shortly after the release of the video, and since then the numbers have changed a bit to higher numbers, but not significantly. What is markable here, is that the overall viewing time is nearly 22 hours, so basically our short video has been played nearly 24 hours continuously. Also the video has not only gathered views, it has gathered reactions, because people who have watched the video have had the need to react to it. Those reactions are far more important to any organization operating

in Tiktok than any other numbers. This video has raised emotions, it was suprising and it also made our organization pop out from the content that is usually seen in Tiktok by other Higher Education Institutions. 18 percent of the viewers have also watched the video right until the end, which tells us that the video has been engaging.

Not only reactions (likes, shares or saves) indicate that a video has been successful. Another good measurement is the percentage of the people who have watched the video to the end. The highest percentage has been marked to a video of the category number one, an explanation video. It was published in April 2024, and edited and scripted by the author of this thesis. Over 35 percent of all of the people who have watched it have made it to the end. The video is about a course where students competed about the best bridges, and it is edited by using a song that was popular in Tiktok but not trending and the captions of the video are related to the course itself. No one is presenting the subject of the video, it is mainly just edited by using video footage and text. The video has nearly 10 000 views, but only 89 likes, one comment, 4 saves and 16 shares.

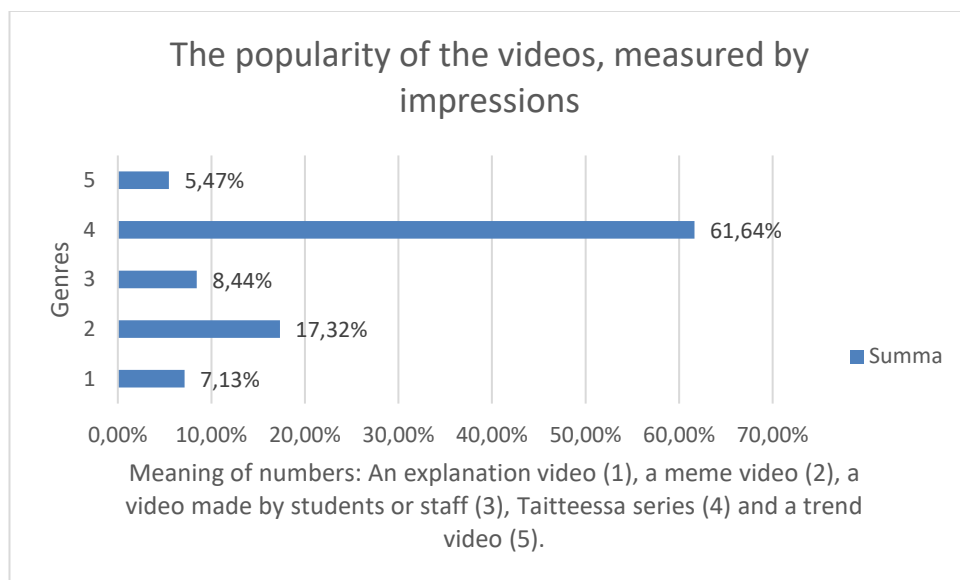


Figure 5. The popularity of videos, measured by impressions (Turku UAS Tiktok data 2024).

So, if we ignore videos in category number four, we'll see that the next most popular videos in terms of impressions have been category two, one, and three. Meme videos have reached over 15% in impressions (table 3).

If you look at videos through interactions, the list of the most popular videos is very different.

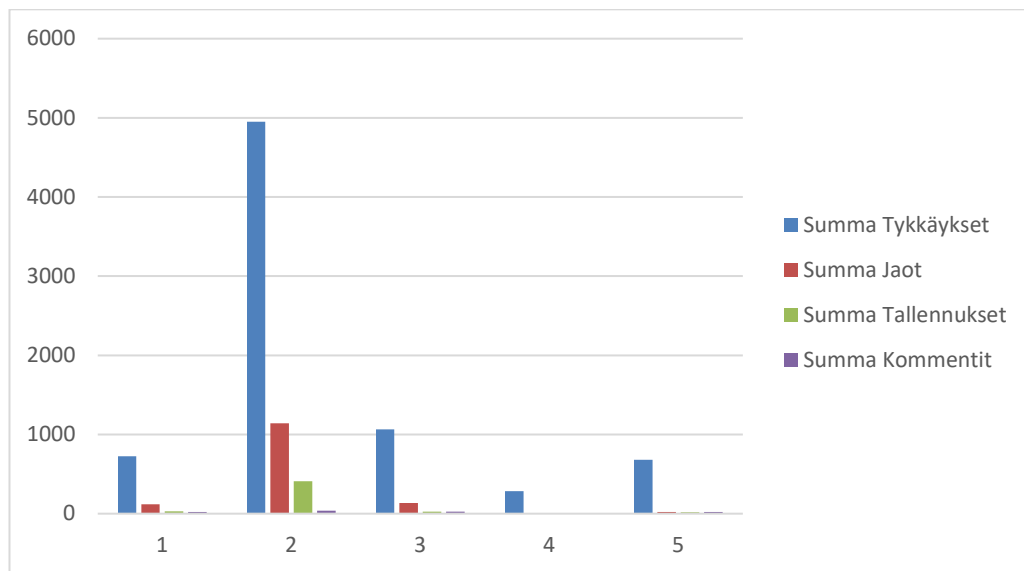


Figure 6. Popularity of videos, measured by reactions (Turku UAS Tiktok data 2024).

A blue line clearly stands out in the video, reflecting the number of likes. The number of shares by category is recorded in red, the number of saves is recorded in green, and the number of comments is recorded in purple. The graphs show that meme videos have received the most likes, videos made by students the second most, and explainer videos the third most (figure 6).

Table 3. Comparison of the reactions between video types and number of videos (Turku UAS Tiktok data 2024).

Video category	1	2	3	4	5
All reactions	896	6543	1251	296	741
Number of videos in the category	14	18	11	7	15
Average number of reactions	64	363,5	113,7	42,2	49,4

If we add up the reactions of each video category and divide them by the number of videos in the category, we get a rough average of how many reactions a video in one category receives on average. Since the communications team examines reactions in its own operations, it is essential to compare them at this point. From this small calculation, you can see that especially video categories one, two and three are more popular than category four or five videos in terms of reactions (table 3).

When you look at the percentage of people who watched the whole video, the dispersion is quite large. Of the 65 videos, only 24 videos have scored above 15%, meaning a certain percentage of viewers have watched the video to the end.

Measured by the percentage of people who have watched the video from start to finish, the explanation video genre has succeeded very well (table 4). Even though the view-through percentage of the video has been successful, it is not a guarantee of high reaction or impression readings. In addition, some of the videos with high viewing time have been banned by Tiktok's algorithm for some reason. In this case, the videos have not had time to accumulate a large viewership, which is reflected in the high percentages of the videos, but the low impressions and the number of audiences reached. Thus, the reactions are also low (table 3).

Table 4. Comparison of the view-through percentage, ranked by percentages over 27%. (Turku UAS Tiktok data 2024).

Style of the video	% people who have seen the video to the end	Impressions	Total audience	likes	shares
1	35,37%	9632	8758	89	16
1	34%	14900	6784	247	49
2	33,87%	430	372	4	0
5	33,01%	10 000	9869	152	10
5	31,11%	639	531	7	1
5	30,23%	1833	1658	58	0
2	27,43%	797	661	14	2

Remarkably, category number 5 videos (trendy videos) are highlighted in this table. In conclusion, the style of the trendy video has not been relatable to a wide audience. Video category number four and five have had the least reactions. Basically, by making our own unique videos such as memes or explanation videos, it is possible to obtain more reactions which are more valuable to Turku UAS communication and marketing teams own goals.

7 Concepts for Turku UAS

The main purpose of this thesis was to create content concepts for Turku University of Applied Sciences' Tiktok account. On the other hand, the purpose of the thesis was to start content production for Tiktok in the first place, because as previously identified, more and more young users are using Tiktok. The aim was also to increase the number of followers through content production, which has succeeded. Turku University of Applied Sciences' Tiktok channel had 500-600 followers in September 2023. At the beginning of June 2024, the number of followers had already risen to just over a thousand, which can be considered a positive sign. A good social media channel can be identified by the fact that it constantly gathers followers, i.e. its content resonates with the target audience.

In terms of content, it is clear that three different types of videos stand out and work best on Turku University of Applied Sciences' social media channels: an explanation video, a video content produced by students and a meme video content. It is likely that these types of content also work as paid advertising.

While this analysis did not directly look at video lengths or analyze the relationship between length and reactions, it should still be noted that a shorter video is likely to gather more engagement than a longer video. The relationship between length and reactions was found irrelevant for Turku UAS's goals and also the continuing change of the algorithms make it hard to estimate the relationship between the length and reactions. On the other hand, if a longer video engages with the audience well enough (either the style of the video or the subject is engaging), a longer video can also work. Although Tiktok as a platform offers longer videos to watch, you can often get your word across with just a one-minute video or a video even shorter than that.

In terms of the video content created by the students, the student's performance in front of the camera and a good and concise picture and script are emphasized. It's a good idea to do something out of the ordinary with videos, but be careful not to include any overstatements. The audience wants

authenticity, and constant overstatements could have a negative impact on bounce rate of the videos and overall viewing time.

On the other hand, high impressions are not an indicator of a video's success. If a video gathers enough reactions, it can lead to higher impressions, but on the other hand, when talking about the success of a video, you shouldn't rely on just one number. When looking at the success of a video, it is good to consider, for example, how many people have watched the video to the end. The elements of a good video consist of good impression numbers, reactions, and when reflecting the collected data, 18-30% of the viewers must have watched the video to the end in order for the video to gather best reactions. The bigger the percentage is, the more engaging the video has been.

The following chapters/sections specify the details of each concept that are presented to Turku University of Applied Sciences Communication and Marketing team.

7.1 An explanation video

An explanation video is a short video of a maximum length of about one minute, explaining a phenomenon, thing or degree programme. The explanation video can also be used to explain in more detail about the organisation's issues, such as the manufacture of products or services. It can also include tips and advice on practical problems or provide guidance and education on a specific phenomenon, for example. In this thesis, explanation videos are mainly thought to be videos made by the staff, which are related to, for example, research, a project or the students' own work. Typically, an explanation video consists of four elements: a spoken title, a short introduction, an in-depth section of information, and some kind of call-to-action, for example regarding a service or project. The call-to-action (CTA) can be used to promote a degree program, a competition or, in Turku UAS' case, it can be a part of the marketing or communications of a RDI project.

The explanation video doesn't have to have logos, but the captions and other visual elements are needed and those should support the brand. If the brand has i.e. brand colours, those colours could be used in the styling of the texts on video. In addition, the performance in the video must be different from the company's usual appearance, i.e. official appearances should be avoided. Although the explanation video is the most official of the concepts presented in this thesis, one must always remember what kind of audience one wants to reach with the help of the explanation video. This video type can therefore be used on other social media platforms as well, but the tone of voice must suit the needs of the target group and social media channel.

In addition to the structure, the explanation video must have the right tempo. When the target group is in Tiktok and its younger users, the tempo of the video must be relatively fast. In practice this means, for example, rapid cuts. In the shooting phase, quick cuts should be taken into account so that a sufficient number of shots are taken, at least seven, for example. The length of the shots does not have to be very long, three to five seconds long clips are enough. In some cases, the tempo does not mean rapid cuts but rather the overall pace in the video. A sped-up, live-like video with an explaining voiceover could work if an industrial process is, for example, needed to be presented.

In addition, at the end of the video there needs to be a call for action. A good way is to lead the viewer in the profile bio, which may contain a link to the company's or organization's website.

Finally, it is a good idea to edit with a mobile editing app. For this thesis, the videos have been edited using CapCut, which is compatible with Tiktok. It is also good to take an advantage of Tiktok's own editing program. Even if you make an explanatory video in CapCut, for example, it's still a good idea to add the background music of the video only in Tiktok's own app. This gives the algorithm more information about the type of audience to which the video should be shown to. The operation of the algorithm was discussed in more detail in chapter two.

7.2 Video made by students or staff

During this thesis, relatively little student-oriented content was created. Students are difficult to reach, and they must be offered a sufficiently large compensation so that content production can be done and run smoothly. In terms of the thesis, the students produced content during the joint application process and told about their own education. These videos were also sponsored. The videos gathered good impressions and reactions as mentioned in the previous chapters, but with bolder content production, the results could also have been better.

Video content produced by students is particularly desirable especially at Turku University of Applied Sciences, but also in other higher education institutions. It has worked well in other higher education institutions, so it is desirable to adopt the concept more extensively also at Turku University of Applied Sciences. Nevertheless, content production must be directed from the Communications and Marketing unit, and more detailed rules and guidelines must be created for it so that it serves not only joint application marketing but also organic content production.

In practice, from the perspective of Turku University of Applied Sciences, students can use videos to present their own education, fields, research, university facilities and everything related to studies or higher education. However, long My Day type videos should only be produced with care. A hook must be included in the beginning of a video. If the organizations goal is to draw attention towards its products or services, a My Day video starting with a person waking up might not be the most sufficient way to reach out to the audience.

On the other hand, the things in the video should also not be too technical or informational. When it comes to the student target group, it should be remembered that Generation Z representatives also want to be entertained on Tiktok, in addition to the correct information. Thus, student-made content must be able to serve both wishes, i.e. be entertaining but also provide correct information. It should also fit the organisation's own brand.

Organisations can utilize the Student Content category in their own communications, for example, by highlighting a few luminous people from their own community to produce interesting content for social media. A person acts as “the face of the organization”, produces partly branded content, but in a more relaxed and approachable way.

7.3 A Meme video

Meme video is perhaps the easiest yet the hardest video format on Tiktok. The correct use of memes requires humorous thinking, but on the other hand, video cannot be inappropriate and it is not appropriate for humor to be directed outside the organization. In certain cases, a meme video also works in such a way that an organization directly laughs at something in its own actions, such as one of the meme videos that was produced in autumn 2023. The meme partly laughed at the fact that it is difficult to tell one's friends about one's own field of study, for example, because the terminology of the field of education is not necessarily familiar to the circle of friends.

On the other hand, making a meme video can also be very quick and easy. With the help of CapCut, Tiktok and Capcut have made CapCut Templates, that can be used in their own videos. Also other Tiktok and CapCut users can create their own CapCut templates. So, these templates are often small cuts of, for example, popular series or remakes of old memes, and are easy to embed into your own video. In the CapCut app, all the user needs to do is select a suitable background image and text or subject for the meme video, and then import the video from CapCut to Tiktok. Meme videos work especially at Turku University of Applied Sciences as throw-in products, i.e. they quickly reach a wider audience than followers, which in turn increases the number of views and reactions of the brand videos or explanation videos.

The length of a meme video ranges from a few seconds to a few tens of seconds. Overlong meme videos should be avoided as their bounce rate is often higher than that of short meme videos. It is because short meme videos

are watched more often so that the message they send is understood with certainty. When it comes to longer meme videos, the opposite happens. As also discussed in chapter two, the algorithm takes into account in its recommendations, for example, for how long the video has been watched and how many people have ignored it. That's why the length of the video matters, and that's why a meme video in particular is a good way to gather enough visibility for an organization, for example, before the launch of a new product or service. Suitable inspiration for meme videos should be sought from social media itself.

8 Conclusions

Posting as an organization on social media is not simple, nor easy. It requires a lot of work, optimization and extensive knowledge and analysis of the followers and the target group. An organization must be able to identify the kind of audience to which it intends to offer its services, but this information alone is not enough. The organization must also understand how its target group consumes services and how it responds to various trend phenomena.

This thesis has mainly examined Tiktok from an organizational perspective and in a targeted way from the perspective of Generation Z. Based on the study, it must be stated that Generation Z wants more humorous content on social media from the organization than other generations have ever wanted, and hopes for the ability to laugh or have a humorous attitude towards the organization's own affairs or services. On the other hand, an organizational account is also required to be transparent, highly agile and service-minded when it comes to social media services or marketing products and services on social media platforms. In other words, an organization needs to be accessible, approachable, and capable of interactivity in order to reach the younger generation on social media. As stated in chapter three, a service or product for young people does not exist if it cannot be found online or on social media. The same can be said of any organization: if an organization doesn't have an account on social media, it doesn't exist.

It is especially important for an organization to be fast and creative in social media. One example of this is the recent trend where individual social media users create likes and comments challenges for each other. For example, they ask a friend or family member how many likes they need to get on one of their videos for that friend or family member to agree to buy the user a new designer bag or car, for example. The video consists of an image carousel, the first image of which shows a screenshot of a conversation between two people on WhatsApp, for example, and shows what kind of like or comment goal to achieve. For example, a woman looking for a Prada bag got close to a million

likes and comments from Prada herself so that her boyfriend would agree to buy her a Prada branded bag. Of course, to make such videos viral, you need a lot of comments and visibility and likes from other social media users in order for it to even reach your organization's account on social media in the first place. Indeed, other Tiktok users have often tagged this particular company in the comments. If commenting on a company takes more than a day, most commenters have a more negative attitude towards the company than before. Therefore, if by default a similar challenge were to occur at Turku University of Applied Sciences, the organization should react as quickly as possible and participate in the interaction. In addition, comments should be humorous but matter-of-fact.

When a company or organization has first identified and perceived its target audience, content planning for that target audience naturally begins. Gen Z is more used to using technology than the previous generation, so you need to take certain technical aspects into account when creating videos, such as angles of view and how to start a video. Typically, for example, young people in Generation Z pick up their phones, press the rec button and don't wait for the recording to start, unlike generations older than Generation Zeta. This creates the illusion of immediacy and ease, and the same style should be used for organizational accounts at the moment.

Secondly, good video content constantly emphasizes authenticity. The content should not be overflowing with marketing, but rather the company or organization should highlight what is happening behind the stage in its videos, so to speak. Instead of presenting its latest product in the form of a sales pitch, for example, the organization can showcase, for example, how the product is built or how it is built in the first place. In the third chapter, I talked about how the generation Z does not believe in ad-like video content, but rather wants a truthful assessment from a peer. So it's a good idea for a company to leverage this insight in their own Tiktok communications and think about making content specifically for their peers. It is, of course, a challenging perspective, especially from the point of view of the management of a company or organization, but for

the generation z, the idea is quite familiar and widely accepted. Of course, there are different types of thinking within the generation, as is briefly presented in the segmentation research in chapter three, but mainly peer thinking and using influencers is a positive thing for the organization.

However, the world of social media is changing all the time. Although this thesis has talked about generation Z and Tiktok, the world situation can change quickly. At the moment, there is still a wide debate about Tiktok, which may lead to a complete ban of Tiktok in Europe in the future. While there are no guarantees of the potential blocking, and while it could also contribute to banning other social media platforms like Tiktok (such as Meta's services), it's to be assumed that content in portrait video format i.e. easy and accessible mobile video content is here to stay. If the shape of mobile phones or other devices were to change radically, horizontal video could also make a "comeback", so to speak. For example, the spread of smart glasses could mean abandoning vertical video if technology at some point decides to choose horizontal video. For this reason, now is the last moment for companies to introduce vertical video in their own communications, as its applications are diverse. Even if Tiktok is banned, the vertical video will remain. In addition, concepts created in one channel can be transferred to the next new social media channel if changes in social media channels take place in, say, the next five years.

8.1 Evaluation of the work

This thesis has been important for the Turku UAS's communications team and has helped planning and the creation of the content. There could have been more videos and deeper analysis of the content. However, this is enough when it comes to Turku UAS. Because of the thesis, we have more metrics to measure the successfulness of a video. We can also guess better what interests the younger generation. This helps with the marketing, when it is targeted at the young adults aged between 18-24 year old. Literature was difficult to find, since even the most recent books and articles seemed to be a

little dated as the technological development of the Tiktok app is very fast and ongoing. It is very potential, that when this thesis is published, some of the technical details have already changed.

As a result of this thesis, a new concept has been created for Turku University of Applied Sciences Tiktok channel, and its idea is to utilize student content in a new way. The concept has been presented and developed in more detail for the communications needs of Turku University of Applied Sciences, and it will not be discussed in more detail in this thesis.

8.2 Potential future research ideas

Generation Z and its way of communication on social media should be looked more thoroughly. It would be very interesting to see when specifically this generation is commenting a Tiktok video and when not. Also it would be very interesting to see what makes people to react to videos, and this could be done with a survey, for example.

There has also been a lot of talk about the ban of Tiktok, which could affect the way people use social media in the future. This would need to be taken into consideration when thinking about next research projects. Also the development of the AI and its use in social media needs to be researched in the future.

For Turku UAS the next potential research topic would be the successfulness of the new concept and seeing what kind of people it attracts the most.

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Benchmarked higher education institutes

Korkeakoulut Suomessa ja TikTokissa	
Korkeakoulu	TikTok-tili
Aalto-yliopisto	Kyllä
Hanken Svenska handelshögskolan	Kyllä
Helsingin yliopisto	Kyllä
Itä-Suomen yliopisto	Kyllä
Jyväskylän yliopisto	Kyllä
Lapin yliopisto	Kyllä
Lappeenranta–Lahden teknillinen yliopisto LUT	Kyllä
Oulun yliopisto	Ei
Taideyliopisto	Ei
Tampereen yliopisto	Kyllä
Turun yliopisto	Kyllä
Vaasan yliopisto	Kyllä
Åbo Akademi	Ei
Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu	Ei
Centria ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Haaga-Helia	Kyllä
Humanistinen ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Kaakkois-Suomen ammattikorkeakoulu – Xamk	Kyllä
Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Karelia-ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
LAB-ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Lapin ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulu	Ei
Oulun Ammattikorkeakoulu	Ei
Satakunnan ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Savonia-ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Seinäjoen ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu	Ei
Turun ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Vaasan ammattikorkeakoulu	Kyllä
Yrkeshögskolan Arcada	Ei
Yrkeshögskolan Novia	Ei
Poliisiammattikorkeakoulu	Ei
Högskolan på Åland	Kyllä