

# **Digital Communication Strategy through TikTok Affiliate and the Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in Content Production: A Qualitative Study of the TikTok Account @fufashionteam**

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## **Abstract**

*This study aims to analyze the digital communication strategy of the TikTok account @fufashionteam in utilizing TikTok Affiliate and Artificial Intelligence (AI) as digital marketing tools. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a case study method and digital content analysis. Data were collected through digital observation, structured interviews, and documentation of TikTok content published between January and March 2026.*

*The findings indicate that the @fufashionteam account implements a communication strategy based on visual engagement, persuasive communication, and soft selling techniques through interactive short-form videos aligned with TikTok trends. The utilization of AI tools such as Gemini and Flow supports the content production process, including idea generation, trend analysis, caption writing, and optimization of marketing communication strategies.*

*The implementation of the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) is proven effective in enhancing audience engagement and driving purchase decisions through TikTok Affiliate features. This study demonstrates that the integration of digital communication strategies, TikTok Affiliate marketing, and AI-assisted content production represents an emerging form of adaptive digital marketing strategy in the era of social media-driven economy.*

**Keyword:** Digital Communication, TikTok Affiliate, Artificial Intelligence

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed patterns of modern communication, particularly in digital marketing and social media ecosystems. Digital transformation not only changes how individuals communicate but also influences economic activities, cultural practices, education systems, and consumer behavior. Advances in information and communication technology (ICT) have enabled information exchange to become faster, more flexible, and more interactive compared to conventional communication media.

According to Castells (2010), contemporary society has entered the era of the network society, in which social structures are highly shaped by digital networks and the internet as the central platform of global communication. Within this context, social media has emerged as a primary communication medium that connects individuals, communities, and business organizations in real time.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The emergence of social media has significantly transformed marketing communication strategies, as organizations and individuals can now build direct relationships with consumers without relying on traditional media intermediaries. Furthermore, Nasrullah (2017) emphasizes that social media functions not only as a communication tool but also as a space for identity construction, digital culture production, and internet-based economic activities.

One of the fastest-growing social media platforms in recent years is TikTok. This short-form video platform has transformed digital communication patterns through its algorithm-based content distribution system, which allows content to reach wide audiences regardless of follower count. TikTok offers a fast-paced, interactive, and visually driven communication model that is highly appealing to digital-native generations. According to Kaye, Chen, and Zeng (2021), TikTok fosters user engagement through a combination of personalized algorithms, audiovisual storytelling, and participatory culture that encourages continuous content creation and consumption.

In Indonesia, TikTok has evolved beyond an entertainment platform into a digital economic space. It is widely used by businesses, content creators, and affiliate marketers for creative and interactive product promotion. This phenomenon indicates that social media has shifted its function from a communication medium to an engagement-based digital economy platform. Kotler, Kartajaya, and Setiawan (2021) argue that marketing in the era of Society 5.0 emphasizes the integration of technology, customer experience, and interactive communication in building brand–consumer relationships.

One of the key features driving digital commerce on TikTok is TikTok Affiliate. This affiliate system enables users to earn commissions by promoting products through video content. This strategy has become increasingly popular because it combines entertainment, persuasive communication, and seamless transaction mechanisms within a single platform. Compared to conventional marketing, TikTok Affiliate marketing is considered more effective because audiences are exposed not only to product information but also to real usage experiences delivered through short-form video content. Ryan (2016) argues that modern

digital marketing is no longer focused on hard selling, but rather on creating emotional experiences and building consumer closeness through relevant content.

The success of TikTok Affiliate marketing is highly dependent on creators' ability to construct engaging and persuasive digital communication. In this context, the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) remains a relevant framework for understanding the persuasion process in digital marketing communication. Kotler and Keller (2016) explain that AIDA describes the psychological stages of consumers from attention, interest, desire, to action. On TikTok, the attention stage is typically generated through visually appealing hooks at the beginning of videos, while the action stage is facilitated through integrated shopping features such as TikTok Shop.

In addition to the development of TikTok Affiliate, advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) have significantly influenced digital content production. AI is no longer limited to industrial applications but has expanded into creative domains such as caption generation, trend analysis, scriptwriting, and automated video editing. Davenport and Ronanki (2018) argue that AI has become a critical component of modern business transformation due to its ability to enhance efficiency, personalization, and data-driven decision-making. In social media contexts, AI supports content creators in understanding audience behavior and producing more relevant and algorithm-friendly content.

AI technologies such as Gemini and Flow are increasingly utilized by TikTok creators to support digital content production. These tools enable faster ideation, more effective communication strategies, and improved audience engagement optimization. This phenomenon reflects a shift in communication practices from human-centered communication toward AI-assisted communication. According to Sundar (2020), the development of AI in digital media has given rise to machine-mediated communication, where message production and distribution are influenced by algorithmic systems and artificial intelligence.

Previous studies have examined TikTok as a digital marketing platform. Faryana (2023) found that TikTok usage can increase online business revenue through engaging visual communication strategies. Mulyani, Wibisono, and Hikmah (2022) also reported that TikTok is an effective promotional medium due to its algorithmic support for rapid content dissemination. Omar and Dequan (2020) further emphasize that users tend to prefer authentic and relatable content rather than formal promotional advertising.

However, research focusing on the integration of TikTok Affiliate and Artificial Intelligence in digital content production remains limited, particularly in the Indonesian context. Most previous studies focus primarily on TikTok's effectiveness as a promotional medium or its influence on consumer purchase intention. There is also limited research analyzing how AI supports digital marketing communication processes within social media ecosystems. Furthermore, studies on TikTok Affiliate marketing rarely apply communication theory frameworks such as AIDA in depth.

This gap indicates that the integration of TikTok Affiliate, digital communication, and AI-mediated content production remains underexplored. Given the increasing role of AI in the creative and digital marketing industries, this phenomenon requires further academic investigation. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing how @fufashionteam

utilizes TikTok Affiliate and Artificial Intelligence in its digital marketing communication strategy.

This research integrates three main aspects: TikTok Affiliate marketing, digital communication, and the utilization of Artificial Intelligence in content production. It not only examines marketing effectiveness on TikTok but also explores how AI supports content creation processes and how the AIDA model is implemented to enhance audience engagement and consumer purchase decisions.

The objectives of this study are to analyze the digital communication strategy of @fufashionteam through TikTok Affiliate, identify the role of Artificial Intelligence in digital content production, examine the implementation of the AIDA model in affiliate marketing content, and explore the influence of AI-assisted digital communication on audience engagement and marketing effectiveness. This study is expected to contribute to the development of digital communication and AI-mediated marketing communication literature, as well as provide practical insights for content creators, SMEs, and affiliate marketers in developing social media-based marketing strategies.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a case study method to gain an in-depth understanding of the digital communication strategy implemented by the TikTok account @fufashionteam in utilizing TikTok Affiliate and Artificial Intelligence (AI) as digital marketing tools. The qualitative approach was selected because this research seeks to explore social and communication phenomena within their specific context, based on experiences and interactions occurring in the research object.

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative research is used to explore and understand the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to social phenomena. Similarly, Moleong (2018) states that qualitative research aims to comprehensively understand phenomena through rich, descriptive explanations in natural settings using words and language.

The case study method is applied because this research focuses on a single bounded system, namely the TikTok account @fufashionteam, which actively utilizes TikTok Affiliate features and AI technologies in digital content production. Yin (2018) defines case study research as an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomena in depth and within real-life contexts. This approach is considered appropriate as the study does not merely examine content forms but also analyzes communication patterns, marketing strategies, and the use of AI in affiliate marketing practices.

In addition to the case study approach, this research adopts digital content analysis to examine TikTok content produced by @fufashionteam. The analysis focuses on visual elements, captions, audio usage, audience interactions, and persuasive communication strategies embedded in affiliate content. Neuendorf (2017) defines content analysis as a research technique used to draw valid and replicable inferences from communication data. In this study, content analysis is used to understand how digital communication strategies are constructed through short-form TikTok videos and how AI is integrated into the creative production process.

The object of this study is the TikTok account @fufashionteam, which is characterized by active engagement in affiliate product promotion. Based on preliminary observations, the account has approximately 7,901 followers and 63,000 likes, with content engagement ranging from hundreds to thousands of views per video. The account's consistent activity in producing affiliate-based content makes it relevant for examining social media-based digital marketing communication.

Data collection techniques were conducted through three main procedures: digital observation, interviews, and documentation. Digital observation involved direct monitoring of content uploaded by @fufashionteam from January to March 2026. The observation covered visual content composition, communication patterns, use of trending audio or music, captions, utilization of TikTok Shop's "yellow cart" feature, as well as audience interaction in the form of comments and engagement metrics. Nasrullah (2017) explains that digital observation refers to the process of observing communication activities occurring within internet-based and social media platforms.

Interviews were conducted in a structured manner with the account manager of @fufashionteam to obtain in-depth information regarding digital marketing strategies, experiences in operating TikTok Affiliate, and the use of AI tools such as Gemini and Flow in content production processes. According to Sugiyono (2022), interviews are used to collect detailed data related to participants' perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of a research phenomenon.

In addition, documentation was collected in the form of screenshots of content, engagement data, audience comments, and archived TikTok videos as supporting research data. Documentation was used to strengthen findings from observations and interviews to ensure a more comprehensive dataset.

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing findings from observation, interviews, and documentation. Patton (2015) states that triangulation enhances research credibility by cross-verifying data from multiple sources and methods.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved selecting and simplifying relevant data aligned with the research focus. Data display was conducted in descriptive form to facilitate interpretation. The final stage involved drawing conclusions based on the analyzed data.

This study is grounded in several theoretical frameworks, including the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action), Digital Communication Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, and the concept of AI-mediated communication and content production. These frameworks are used to analyze digital communication strategies, persuasion processes in marketing, and the utilization of Artificial Intelligence in TikTok affiliate content production within the @fufashionteam account.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study indicate that the TikTok account @fufashionteam implements a digital communication strategy oriented toward visual engagement, persuasive communication, and interactive approaches based on social media trends. The

communication strategy is not solely focused on product promotion, but also emphasizes building emotional closeness with the audience through a relaxed, communicative, and easily understandable style tailored to TikTok users. The content is predominantly in the form of short videos featuring product storytelling, product usage reviews, responses to audience comments, and AI-generated creative content.

Based on observations, the @fufashionteam account effectively utilizes TikTok's algorithmic characteristics, which prioritize engagement and watch time in content distribution. This is reflected in the production of short-duration videos supported by AI-assisted content creation. Such a strategy aims to capture audience attention within the first few seconds of video playback on the For You Page (FYP). The use of a strong hook within the first three seconds is a key strategy to retain audience attention until the end of the video.

In addition, the account demonstrates consistency in content posting frequency. Consistency plays a crucial role in maintaining TikTok algorithm performance and sustaining audience engagement. The account regularly uploads content with varied themes while remaining relevant to the fashion and affiliate marketing niche. This consistency contributes to maintaining visibility in the highly competitive short-video ecosystem.

The findings suggest that digital communication on TikTok functions not only as an information delivery medium but also as a mechanism for building emotional relationships between creators and audiences, including responding to user comments through video replies. This aligns with Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), who argue that social media enables interactive and participatory communication. In the context of TikTok Affiliate, digital communication serves as a key instrument in building audience trust toward promoted products.

The effectiveness of communication strategies is also influenced by the creator's ability to understand audience trends. The creator does not merely follow viral trends but adapts communication styles to the characteristics of the TikTok user base, which is predominantly young. The language used is simple, informal, and communicative, making it easily accessible to digital audiences. Visual expression, fast editing, and dynamic transitions further enhance content attractiveness.

### **Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in Content Production**

The study found that @fufashionteam utilizes Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as Gemini and Flow in the digital content production process. AI is employed as a supporting tool to improve production efficiency, generate creative ideas, analyze TikTok trends, and develop more effective marketing communication strategies. AI is applied in several aspects, including content ideation, caption writing, trend analysis, storytelling development, and optimization of persuasive communication in affiliate videos.

Interview results indicate that AI assists creators in producing content more quickly and consistently. AI is used to identify trending video ideas and to determine communication formats suitable for TikTok audiences. Additionally, AI supports the creation of marketing captions that are more engaging and aligned with platform algorithms.

The use of AI reflects a shift in digital communication patterns from human-centered content production toward AI-assisted content production. Content creators no longer rely solely on manual creativity but increasingly integrate AI as a supporting system in digital marketing practices. This indicates that artificial intelligence has significantly transformed the digital creative industry.

As stated by the account manager:

“Affiliate income is quite good and promising as long as it is done consistently.”

This statement indicates that TikTok Affiliate has become a viable digital economic opportunity for content creators. In this context, AI enhances productivity and helps maintain content quality in an increasingly competitive social media environment.

Beyond content production, AI is also used to analyze audience behavior based on engagement trends. This enables creators to identify preferred content types and adjust communication strategies accordingly. AI also reduces time spent on brainstorming and editing, thereby increasing production efficiency.

These findings are consistent with Davenport and Ronanki (2018), who argue that AI enhances efficiency and effectiveness in modern business activities, including digital marketing. In TikTok Affiliate practices, AI functions not only as a technological tool but also as a strategic component in communication processes that enhance engagement and sales potential.

However, the findings also reveal that AI still requires human creativity in content execution. AI functions as a supporting instrument, while final decisions regarding communication style, visual design, and emotional approach remain under the control of the creator. This indicates a collaborative relationship between humans and AI rather than full automation.

## **AIDA Model Analysis in TikTok Affiliate Content**

### **Attention**

The attention stage is achieved through the use of visual hooks at the beginning of videos designed to capture audience interest. The creator uses attention-grabbing audio, dramatic expressions, and problem-solving content formats relevant to audience needs. Thumbnails, viral audio, and fast-paced editing are also key elements in attracting attention.

Most videos begin by immediately presenting the core problem or product benefit. This strategy is effective because TikTok users typically have a short attention span, requiring immediate engagement within the first seconds of content exposure.

### **Interest**

At the interest stage, the account builds audience curiosity through product demonstrations, benefit explanations, and concise reviews. Content does not merely showcase products but explains their relevance to users' daily needs, thereby increasing relatability.

Audience engagement is reflected in comments, likes, shares, and profile visits. Users also ask questions regarding product price, quality, and usage, indicating growing interest. The communication strategy used is soft selling, allowing audiences to perceive content as natural rather than promotional.

### **Desire**

The desire stage is developed through emotional and rational persuasion strategies. Content often includes before-and-after demonstrations, testimonials, and limited-time promotions to create urgency.

Storytelling plays a significant role in generating emotional engagement. Products are framed not only as commodities but as solutions to specific problems, thereby increasing consumer desire. This aligns with Kotler and Keller's (2016) AIDA framework, which emphasizes the importance of building desire before purchase decisions.

### **Action**

The action stage occurs when audiences complete purchases through TikTok Affiliate features. The TikTok Shop "yellow cart" simplifies transactions, enabling users to purchase products directly without leaving the application.

High engagement with the shopping feature indicates the effectiveness of the affiliate communication strategy. The integrated purchasing system accelerates consumer decision-making within a single platform.

## **Digital Communication and Audience Engagement**

Engagement is a key indicator of digital communication success on TikTok. Authentic, relatable, and trend-based content tends to generate higher interaction compared to formal promotional content. TikTok users prefer content that feels natural rather than explicitly advertising-driven. TikTok's algorithm also plays a significant role in distributing affiliate content to relevant audiences, making marketing communication more personalized and targeted. Creators who understand algorithmic behavior are more likely to increase engagement and reach.

Furthermore, AI helps creators identify trending topics and audience preferences more efficiently, enabling adaptive communication strategies. This supports the identification of high-engagement content patterns and audience behavioral trends. These findings support the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which suggests that social media users seek content that simultaneously provides entertainment, information, and personal experience. In TikTok Affiliate contexts, audiences are not only seeking product information but also entertainment and engaging visual experiences.

Overall, the success of the @fufashionteam account in TikTok Affiliate marketing is influenced by the integration of digital communication strategies, AI utilization, AIDA implementation, and audience behavior understanding. The integration of AI and digital communication represents an emerging form of modern marketing strategy that enhances engagement and sales performance in social media environments.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the TikTok account @fufashionteam successfully leverages TikTok Affiliate as an effective digital marketing communication strategy through visual engagement, persuasive communication, and the utilization of social media trends. The implemented communication strategy is not solely focused on product promotion but also emphasizes building emotional relationships with audiences through authentic, interactive, and contextually relevant content aligned with TikTok user behavior. The use of short-form videos incorporating storytelling techniques, product demonstrations, and soft-selling approaches has proven effective in increasing audience engagement and strengthening the overall effectiveness of digital marketing communication.

The findings also reveal that Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as Gemini and Flow play a significant role in supporting digital content production processes. AI is utilized to assist in content ideation, trend analysis, caption generation, and optimization of persuasive communication strategies. Its implementation enhances production efficiency, maintains content consistency, and enables faster identification of audience preferences. This indicates a broader shift in digital communication practices toward AI-assisted content production within contemporary social media marketing environments.

Furthermore, the implementation of the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) in the affiliate content of the @fufashionteam account is proven to be effective. The attention stage is generated through visual hooks and trending audio, the interest stage is built through product demonstrations and communicative storytelling, the desire stage is strengthened through emotional narratives and purchase urgency, and the action stage is facilitated by the TikTok Shop “yellow cart” feature, which simplifies the digital transaction process.

However, this study has several limitations. First, the research focuses on a single TikTok account; therefore, the findings cannot be broadly generalized to all TikTok affiliate marketing practices. Second, the study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, which does not quantitatively measure the impact of AI utilization and digital communication strategies on sales performance or audience engagement. Third, the observation period is limited to January–March 2026, meaning long-term dynamics of TikTok content development and algorithm changes are not fully captured.

Therefore, future research is recommended to employ a mixed-methods approach or quantitative design with a broader sample in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of AI-based digital communication strategies in social media affiliate marketing.

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