

Make TikTok part of your crisis response



01 Why have we written this guide?



As users of TikTok, we're aware of how quickly and widely crises are spreading on the channel.

Vertical video and TikTok-style content is already an important part of our crisis response training and we want to make sure you are aware, prepared and confident to handle any crisis on any channel, including TikTok.

02 More than 1bn active users



TikTok has been downloaded 4.92 billion times worldwide (source: thesocialshepherd.com).

It also boasts of 1.04 billion monthly active users, dominating as one of the fastest-growing networks ever (source: backlinko.com/tiktok-users).

In November 2024, TikTok's Android users worldwide spent nearly 35 hours on the app-equivalent to more than two full waking days that month (source: datareportal.com).

03 Don't ignore it



With such a high level of engagement and millions of users actively spending hours on the platform, overlooking TikTok could be a costly mistake that hinders your organization's visibility.

04 It's easier than ever to publish and scale



It's so easy to make a video

There are plenty of audio and filter options on TikTok. You can also just point, shoot and post. It takes a matter of moments to post and then it's live for the world to watch.



Anyone can go viral

TikTok uses a content-based algorithm rather than people-based. It's more interested in what content you interact with than the people you follow. It is much easier for people with small follower counts to go viral.



It's easy to share videos to wider networks.

TikTok makes it really easy to share videos outside the platform. With a couple of taps a video can be shared with another user or to another channel entirely, speeding up the distribution of a viral video.



It's easy to contribute to the conversation

Duets, stitches, comments: TikTok has many ways to respond to and interact with videos. Another user might use the original video as a jumping-off point with a similar story to tell, be able to add more context or disagree with it completely, allowing the original story to escalate.

05 The worst-case scenario



- A video complaining about your organization is filmed and uploaded to TikTok. The user might be new to the platform but they've used the right hashtags or trending sound on their video.
- It gains attention and TikTok puts it into thousands of people's feeds. People share the story with their contacts, on the app and externally.
- The video gains millions of views and people comment on the video with similar negative encounters. People are angry and trust in your organization drops significantly.
- Without a presence on TikTok to monitor potential issues and intervene, this is all happening without your knowledge.
- By the time the video spreads to other channels and you're made aware of it, the reputational damage has been done.

06 Get ahead



Get Verified

If you haven't already, set up an official organization account to monitor and respond from. Ideally, get the account verified, but if that's not possible, put out some video content to prove you are who you say you are. You should also set up your profile as a business account and add a link to your website.



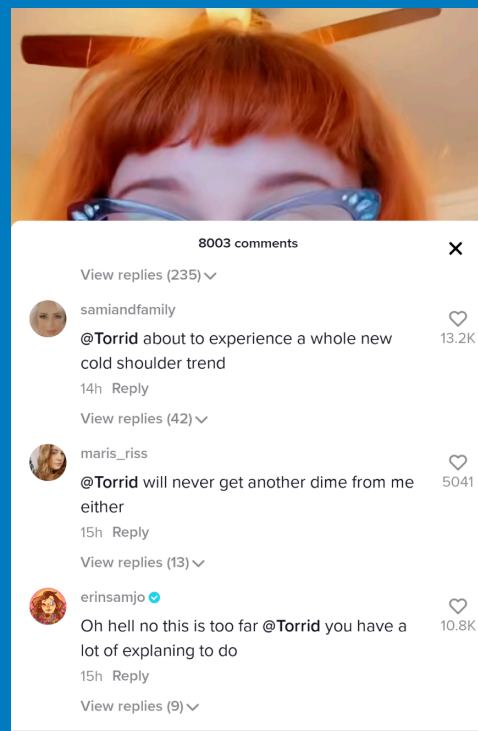
Monitor regularly

There are several online tools e.g. Mention, Brand24, Sprinklr and Pulsar that can monitor mentions and keywords. Check the results regularly to know what 'normal' looks like to help you know what unusual looks like.

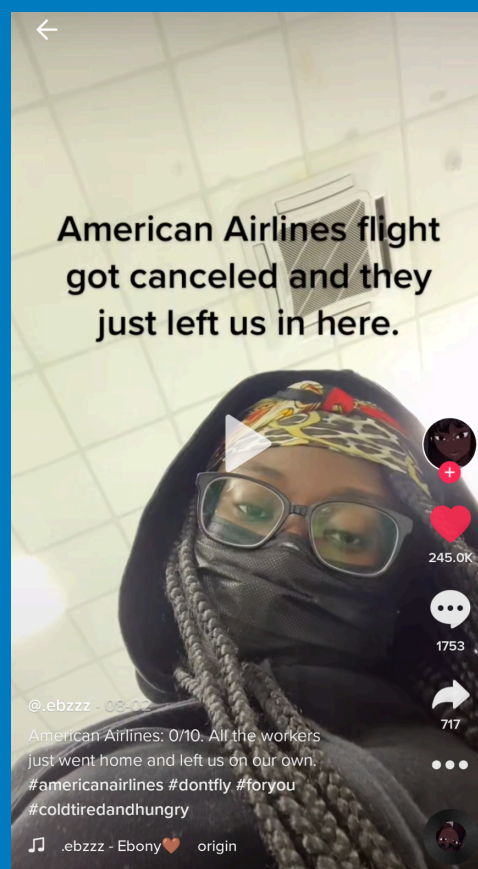
You can also monitor using TikTok's search function. There are useful search filters and you can also save hashtags.

Research the keywords and hashtags that your audiences are using and keep an eye on those too. Don't forget to also monitor acronyms and misspellings.

Remember: Investing time in monitoring helps to prevent crises from escalating and costing you even more time and resources to respond.



1.7 Million views
11.5k Comments
300.5k Likes



1.1 Million views
1.7k Comments
245.5K Likes

07 Responding to a crisis



If you find yourself trending on TikTok for the wrong reasons, it's important to act but not overreact. Don't ignore the problem or delete negative content. Address it directly and be honest. If you've made a mistake, admit it.

Even without all the information, some kind of response is important. Alongside the original poster, you'll often find many people tagging in the brand in the comments and demanding an answer.

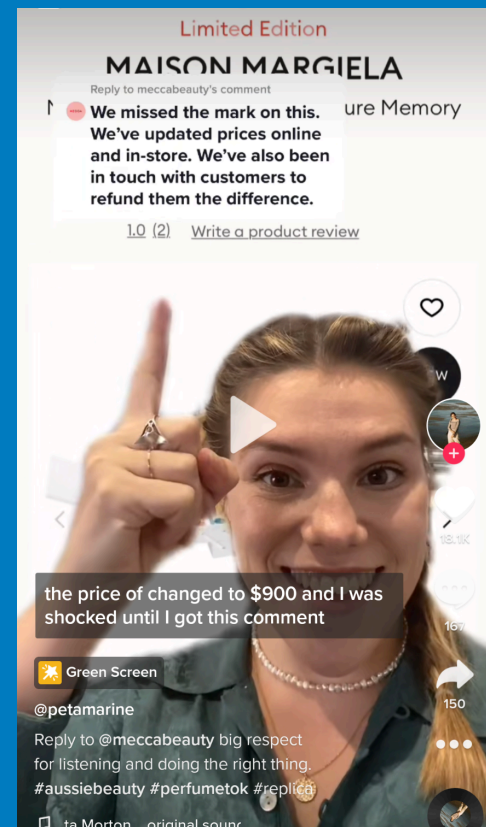
A follow-up response should include:

- Care and concern for the user
- The action you are taking
- The wider perspective or context.

TikTok limits comments to no more than 150 characters so you may have to respond over a series of messages. You could always reply with a video too to help show you're taking the issue seriously.

A great response also includes:

- Responses to other comments
- More information when you have it.



An example of a brand putting out a good response which was well received



315.5K Views
1k Comments
28.4K Likes

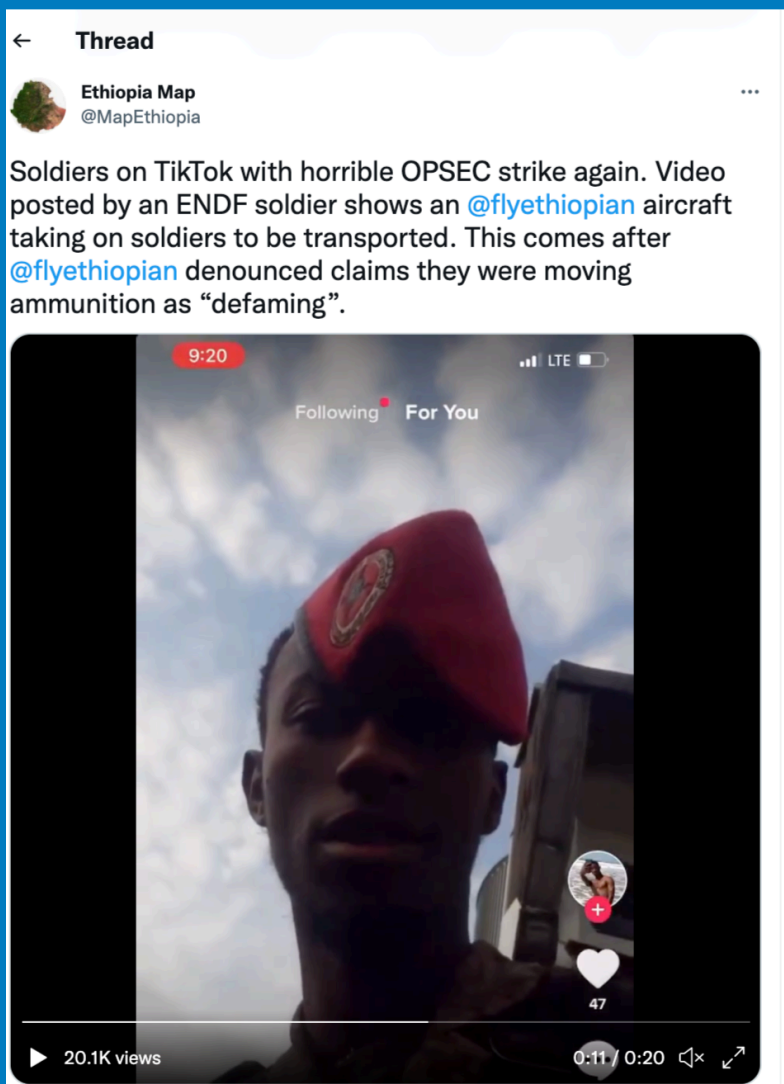
08 Handling Mis- and disinformation



Misinformation and disinformation are big problems on social media, and TikTok is no exception. Its viral nature makes it easy for false info to spread fast. Since people absorb visuals quickly and remember them longer, misleading content can shape opinions before they even realize it. Plus, because we tend to trust images and familiar videos more than text, even fake content can feel real.

If you encounter one of these videos about your organization, it can be dealt with in a few easy steps:

- Report the video. Press and hold on the video to find the report option.
- Check the comments of the original video and respond to any comments and concerns there.
- For videos spreading dangerous misinformation, you should stitch or duet the video to put out a clear rebuttal.



A video from TikTok shared on X.

The contents contradicted a statement from Ethiopian Airlines denying they transported weapons for the army.

Social Simulator

CONFIDENCE + RESILIENCE

Looking for help incorporating TikTok into your crisis plan? Get in touch:

 hello@socialsimulator.com

More useful resources:

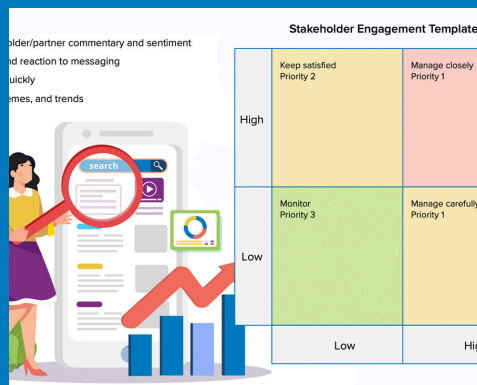
 [Socialsimulator.com/resources](https://socialsimulator.com/resources)

 [@socialsimulator](https://www.linkedin.com/company/socialsimulator)



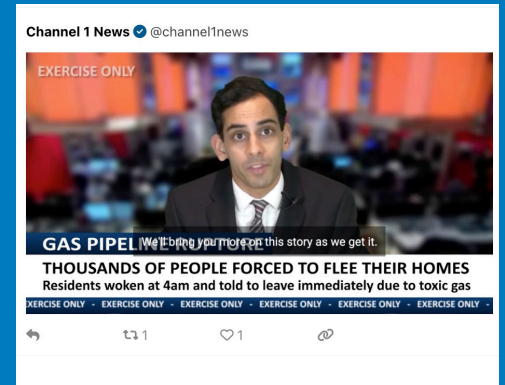
Social media

Training, channel audits, employee advocacy, webinars, and guidance.



Crisis preparedness

Toolkits and training on digital crisis communications, and crisis management.



Crisis response

Social Simulator delivers realistic, secure simulations of a crisis.