

VOXBURNER 

# A Guide To Gen Z & Social Media



# CONTENTS

2 - FOREWORD

3 - TIKTOK

6 - INSTAGRAM

9 - TWITTER

12 - BONUS CHAPTER: EMAIL

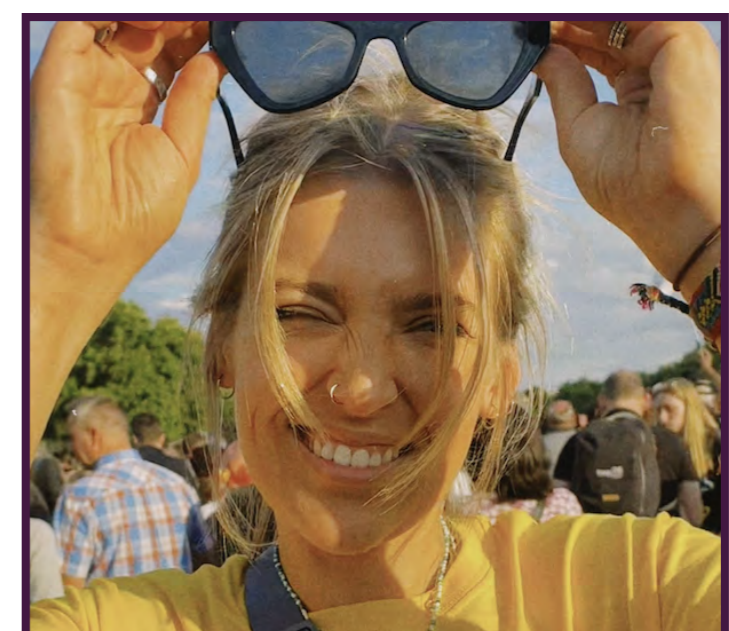
15 - KEY TAKEAWAYS

16 - YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE...

## FOREWORD

Social media marketing: the key to every Gen Zer's heart and an absolute necessity for every youth marketer. You know how important perfecting your social media strategy is and we've created this guide to help you get there. Voxburner research has revealed that 55% of young people would consider buying something from TikTok after seeing it on the app, whilst 92% of the generation use Instagram. These are hard to ignore stats, and with the platforms gaining more and more Tweeters, Instagrammers and TikTokers every single day, now is the time to up your game.

In this guide, we'll be taking a look at four key channels - TikTok, Instagram, Twitter and email - and sharing why these are important, how you can improve your strategies on them respectively and looking at the brands who are really leading the way. We hope you find this content useful, and we can't wait to see where you take your social media marketing next!



**IZZY HALL**

(she/her) Content  
Editor at Voxburner

# TIKTOK

TikTok has been downloaded over 3 billion times worldwide and was the most downloaded app of 2021 - so if it wasn't obvious enough, it's where most of your target audience will be hanging out. To top it off, the average user opens the app 15 times every day - that's so much time for them to be viewing and engaging with your content! In a US survey we conducted this year, we revealed that 54% of young people have bought something after seeing it on TikTok, so it's the perfect place for you to be showing off what you're selling.

The platform is ideal for promoting your products, enlarging your audience and attracting new customers, but that's easier said than done, especially when you're a brand and not just a content creator.

“Nano and micro creators will be cheaper to work with than 'larger' talent - and can get significant results once the content is optimised within the platform. Increasingly, be sure to repurpose the videos across the wider media mix: by utilising on relevant social channels (without the TikTok watermark!), your spend - and results - will go even further.”

**Ruby Soave**

Head of Influencer Marketing,  
Student Beans



## 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR TIKTOK STRATEGY



### DEFINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Who's your target demographic and who you do you hope to reach out to on TikTok? Do your market research - both on and off the platform - to make sure your content is well-aimed. It's worth noting that your current audience might not be on TikTok, but subgroups who have similar interests will be. There's something for everyone on TikTok, so don't worry if your brand or product appeals to a niche interest!

## 2

### USE YOUR ANALYTICS

Make sure you're keeping track of all your hard work so you can find out what content works for your brand. Once you've set up a TikTok business account (which you can find out how to do here) you can access information about your content, followers and even viewer demographics. However, it's important to not get TOO bogged down in the stats - TikTok is predominantly a fun space and Gen Z loves authentic content, so make sure you prioritise creativity and don't be afraid to experiment.

## 3

### POST REGULARLY

Post regularly. When you're working on your strategy, make sure you've factored in continuous posting on the platform. This will help you appear on For You Pages (FYPs) and will boost your brand's visibility. Remember, behind-the-scenes content always goes down well, so even videos as simple as office tours or 'Meet the team' will be a hit.

## 4

### USE TRENDS & HASHTAGS

Use trends and hashtags. Much like posting regularly, using hashtags and hopping on trends will help your content to appear on Gen Z's FYPs. Hashtags will also help with your viewer engagement, as TikTokers will engage with content that contains hashtags. Monitor trends and think which ones align with your brand and how you can produce content on the back of it.

## 5

### INFLUENCER PARTNERSHIPS

Influencer partnerships. TikTok creators are amongst some of the biggest and hottest influencers on the planet right now, and are often recognised globally. These young creators can help you to broaden your audience, grow your following, drive sales and boost your engagement thanks to their expertise and creativity. However, paid promotions can be expensive (especially with some of the big names), so we recommend starting small with micro-influencers.



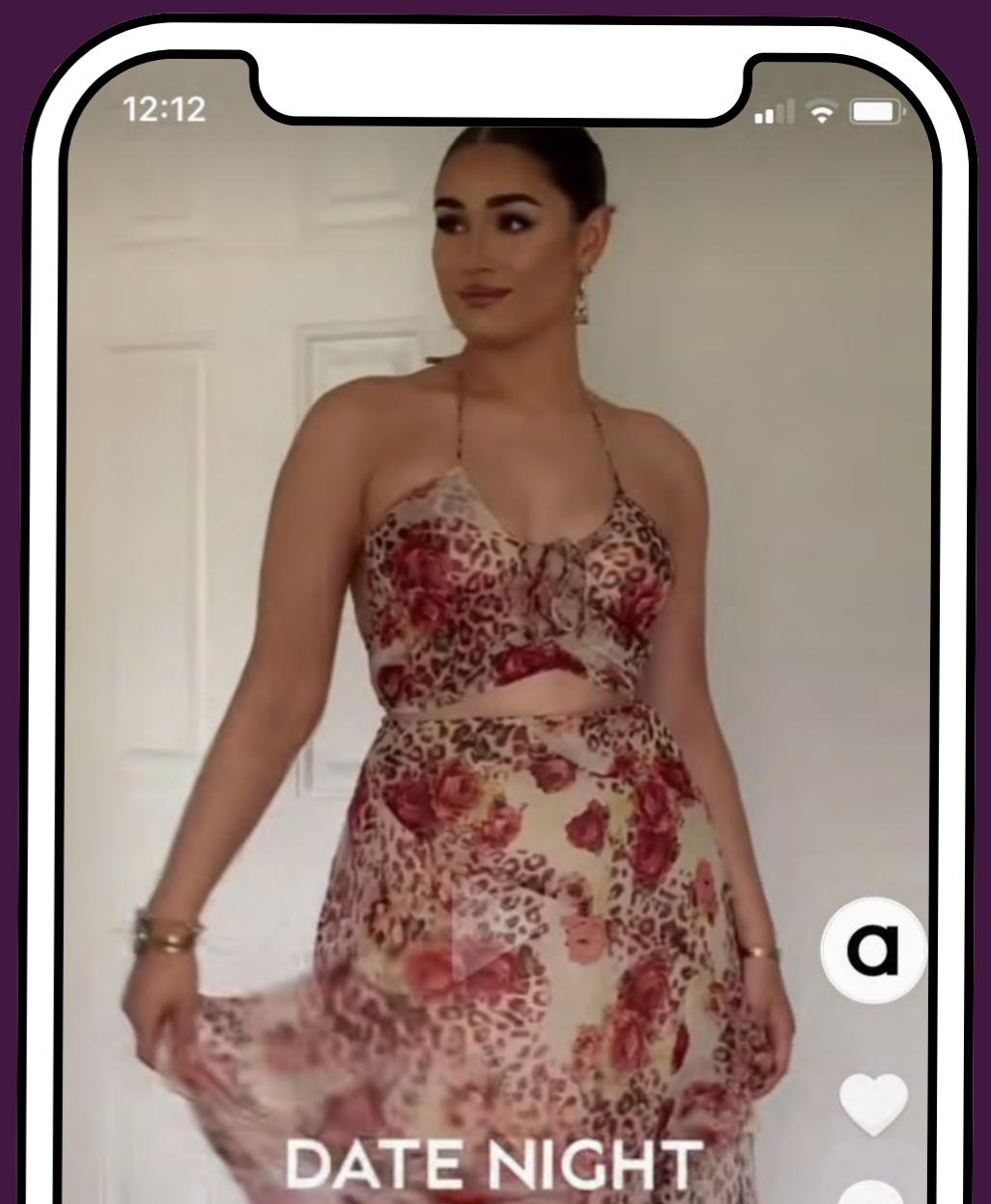
For more tips and tricks, be sure to check out our [Influencer Report on Voxburner+](#).

# 3 BRANDS NAILING IT ON TIKTOK

## ASOS

An online clothing and accessories store.

- The OGs of UGC - majority of their feed is made up of content created by their loyal followers and buyers
- Behind the scenes of their photoshoots and projects - provides extra insights and builds insight
- Fun audios, visuals and transitions. Perfect for their target audience



## Duolingo

An educational technology app helping users to learn new languages.

- Brand's mascot, Duo the Owl, is the star of the account - a funny, familiar and memorable personality
- Hop on viral audios and trends
- Great at user engagement - react and reply to comments using their iconic and sarcastic tone of voice



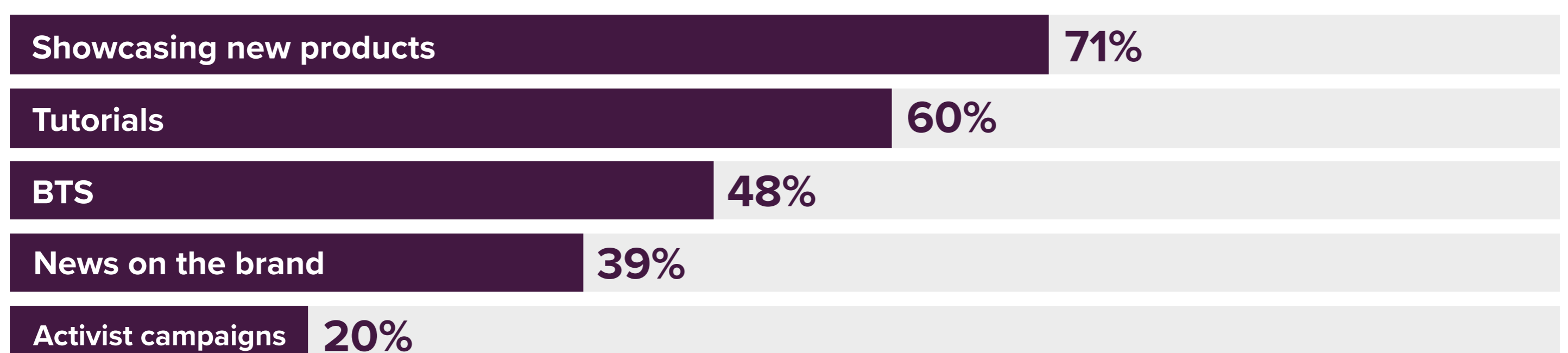
## Ryanair

An ultra-low cost aeroplane transport company.

- Jump on viral trends, mainly superimposing their Social Media Manager's mouth and eyes on to one of their planes (sounds creepy... it isn't!)
- Mocks and banters with its passengers in the comments - great engagement
- Sharing BTS videos of staff and cabin crew



Of those who use TikTok, this is what they want to see from brands on the app:



Source: Voxburner US survey 2022

# INSTAGRAM

As an entirely visual platform, Instagram can perfectly compliment your marketing strategies. With a variety of exciting and useful tools, including posts, stories, highlights, guides, in-app shopping, reels and IGTV, as well as the ability to share polls and run Q&As, Instagram is a diverse and exciting space - so much so that one source reports that 1 in 2 people use Instagram to find new brands and 44% of users shop via the app every week. It's even suggested that brands can achieve 300% more sales when using a combination of shopping tools and ads on the app. Whatever the purpose of your Instagram account (more on this later), these are stats you can't afford to ignore.

In our Youth Trends Report, we revealed that 78% of Gen Z check Instagram every day, so creating and running a successful Instagram account is an absolute must for any brand wanting to make it big with younger generations. With our handy tips and tricks, we guarantee your account will make a brilliant first impression.

“ Gen Z are most likely to take recommendations from their peers, so cultivate that influence. Brands can hone their very own influencer community within Instagram, by encouraging UGC challenges and bringing your existing customers closer to the brand; simultaneously attracting new users, who see their friends' posts. Repurpose that UGC content across owned and paid channels and tap into the UGC marketing trend with content that appeals to - and fosters union - with the ad-weary Gen Z. It's cheaper and easier to execute on Instagram vs TikTok, too! ”

**Ruby Soave**  
Head of Influencer  
Marketing,  
Student Beans

Here's another handy tip.  
Subscribe to our  
Voxburner Weekly Briefing  
and get Gen Z insights and  
research delivered directly  
to your inbox.

## 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR TIKTOK STRATEGY



### IDENTIFY YOUR GOALS

Do you want to use this platform to sell products? Build brand awareness? Or maybe you want to use this space as somewhere to educate your followers on important issues? These are all questions you need to ask yourself whilst working on your strategy, as it will help to streamline your focus.

## 2

### BUILD A STRONG AESTHETIC/ BRAND IMAGE

Okay, so you've established your goals, now you need to build on those. As we've mentioned, Instagram is a platform for more curated content (although don't go over the top!), so make sure you establish a strong colour palette and aesthetic as soon as possible. Not only will this make your page look more professional and trustworthy, but it'll also tempt Gen Z into sharing your posts on their Instagram stories!

## 3

### HAVE AN EYECATCHING BIO

Upon visiting an Instagram account, users want to immediately know what the brand is about, what they sell/do and what their priorities are. Make sure you keep this direct and concise (Gen Z have a short attention span) and use language that is appropriate for this generation.

P.S. Never forget who your target audience are!

## 4

### MAKE THE MOST OF INSTAGRAM'S FEATURES

From Stories to Reels, don't forget to use everything Instagram has to offer, if appropriate for your brand. Stories are best used for interactive content, such as polls, competitions and Q&As, and are also a great place for sharing any UGC that might not necessarily fit in with the rest of your feed. Meanwhile, IGTV is best suited to new product launches, company news and tutorials - a bit like YouTube (i.e. keep it for long-form content, unlike Reels/Tiktok).

## 5

### SET UP AS AN INSTAGRAM BUSINESS ACCOUNT

This will allow you to share shoppable Instagram posts, as well as loads more analytics. And whilst we're at it, get yourself a blue tick - that verification will make all the difference when Instagrammers are trying to decide whether or not you're a trusted brand. You can find out [how to become a business account here](#).

For more why not check out our [Voxburner+ Social Media Report](#) where we look at the opportunities brands should be pursuing on social media and share the common errors youth marketers need to avoid.

# 3 BRANDS NAILING IT ON INSTAGRAM

## Depop

An online fashion marketplace.

- Pinned highlights which coordinate with the brand logo, making it distinctive and organised. Topics include Q&As, Big Names, DIY, Collabs and Style Ideas
- Short, sharp bio letting people know who they are and what they do
- Feed is predominantly UGC. The nature of the brand lends itself to some great content, with cool, edgy and eye-catching shots - perfect for Gen Z
- Use Guides feature to educate Instagrammers. Titles include: How to sell fast on Depop, Buying on Depop and Depop terminology 101. Guides are perfect for visual, bitesized content that need more space than a regular post
- Use Reels for BTS photoshoots, videos to accompany posts, ideas and interviews



## Vurger

A vegan fast food restaurant/takeaway.

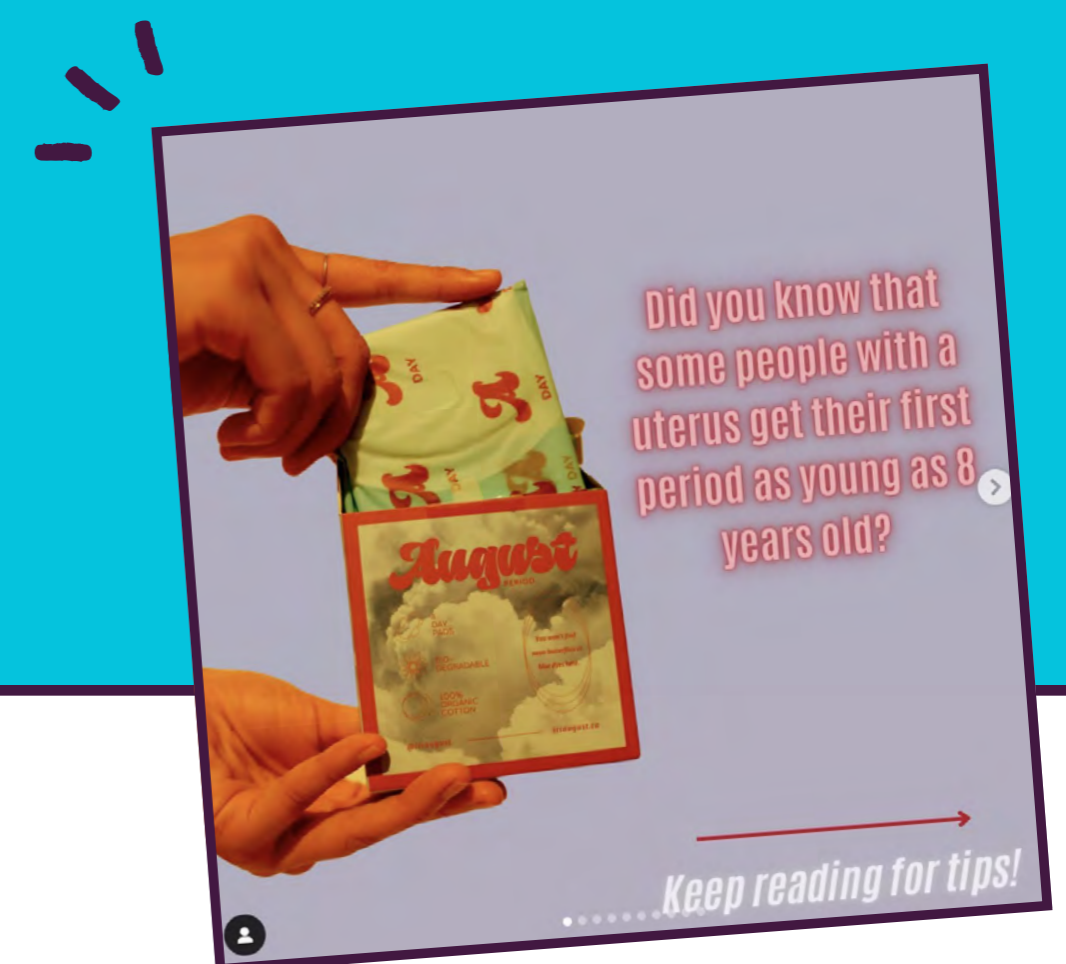
- Colourful, quality pictures that display the food and show off the menu
- Eye-catching posts that make the food look as delicious as possible
- Highlights include: Menu, Awards, Sauces and Shop
- Hop on trends to celebrate milestones in the business - for example, celebrating six years using the scrapbook trend from TikTok
- Share customer photos and videos on stories for UGC - great for sharing it but not clogging up feeds



## August

A sustainable period care brand.

- Due to the nature of their products, August's Instagram focuses on educating people about menstruation-related issues, such as period poverty and sustainability
- Use stories to share UGC content, such as photos of August products, branding and advertising
- Cool, arty photos which fit in with aesthetic and colour palette of the brand
- Share tweets on their Instagram by making them into posts - great for shaking up content and adding some text to feeds
- Photos of models (including founder Nadya), as well as clear photos of products





# TWITTER

Not too dissimilar to TikTok, Twitter gives brands the opportunity to really get their voice across - and often that's the voice that customers don't always get to see. Whilst Twitter is great for sharing content/information quickly, such as blogs and discount codes, Twitter is perfect for B2C marketing because it helps brands connect with customers, lets you keep an eye on your competitors and encourages interaction with potential customers.

Twitter is all about developing a human side to your brand, and it gives your consumers and followers to see 'the real you'. Most young people aren't on Twitter to buy or read self promo - they want direct, concise information that's valuable to them; think videos, pictures, infographics and articles. Plus, that 280 character limit!

“ We know by now Gen Z LOVES social media, but Twitter is its own unique platform for this group. They come to Twitter to engage in what's happening in the world, and this includes what brands are getting up to. Gen Z opinions shared on Twitter are authentic, loud, and proud; that's why brands who want to truly connect with Gen Z will turn to their Twitter accounts. And, with 64% of Gen Z using the platform, why wouldn't you get involved in the conversation? ”

**Louise Donnelly**  
Marketing Manager,  
Voxburner



## 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR TWITTER STRATEGY



### HASHTAGS ARE YOUR FRIEND

Hashtags are great for bringing communities together and connecting people with common interests, but make sure you're strategic about it - you don't want to overkill! Keep a log of which hashtags suit your brand and get the best engagement, and use them sparingly. Not only do they use up precious characters in your tweets, but too many and you could look like a spam account.

## 2

### CONSIDER CUSTOMER SERVICE

One of the things that Gen Z loves about Twitter is the fact that it gives them a direct, instant connection with their favourite brands. Make the most of this and consider using your Twitter account as a form of customer service (amongst other things). Sending a tweet to a brand (or to a customer) is quicker and easier than emailing and calling, and your young consumers] will love the fact that they know they can get hold of you. Make sure your community knows that you're approachable and that they can reach out to you for any queries.

## 3

### ENGAGE IN CONVERSATION

Much like the previous point, Twitter is all about two-way communication. And don't just rely on engagement from customers - why not branch out and tweet other brands, maybe even your competitors! A cheeky tweet in response to your rival's recent campaign or some sarcastic self-promo will always go down well!

## 4

### ESTABLISH A BRAND VOICE

As we mentioned, this is your moment to have some freedom. Don't feel like you have to stick to the 'professional' tone of voice you use on your website - play around and have some fun! Just make sure this is either established early on or adopted wholeheartedly in order to avoid any mixed messaging. And don't forget about GIFs, emojis and polls - a bit of interaction and/or visuals never went amiss! A great example of a brand with a strong social voice is [innocent drinks](#) - more on them later.

## 5

### MONITOR KEYWORDS

This will help you understand what your customers (or potential customers) are searching for, and also what your competitors are engaging with. Twitter lends itself perfectly to this thanks to the handy search bar. For example, if you're the Social Media Manager for a restaurant in London, make sure you're regularly searching keyword combinations such as 'london restaurant recs'. Not only can you keep a track of these keywords, but you can also engage with these tweets and make them aware of your brand.



**64% of 16-24s use Twitter**

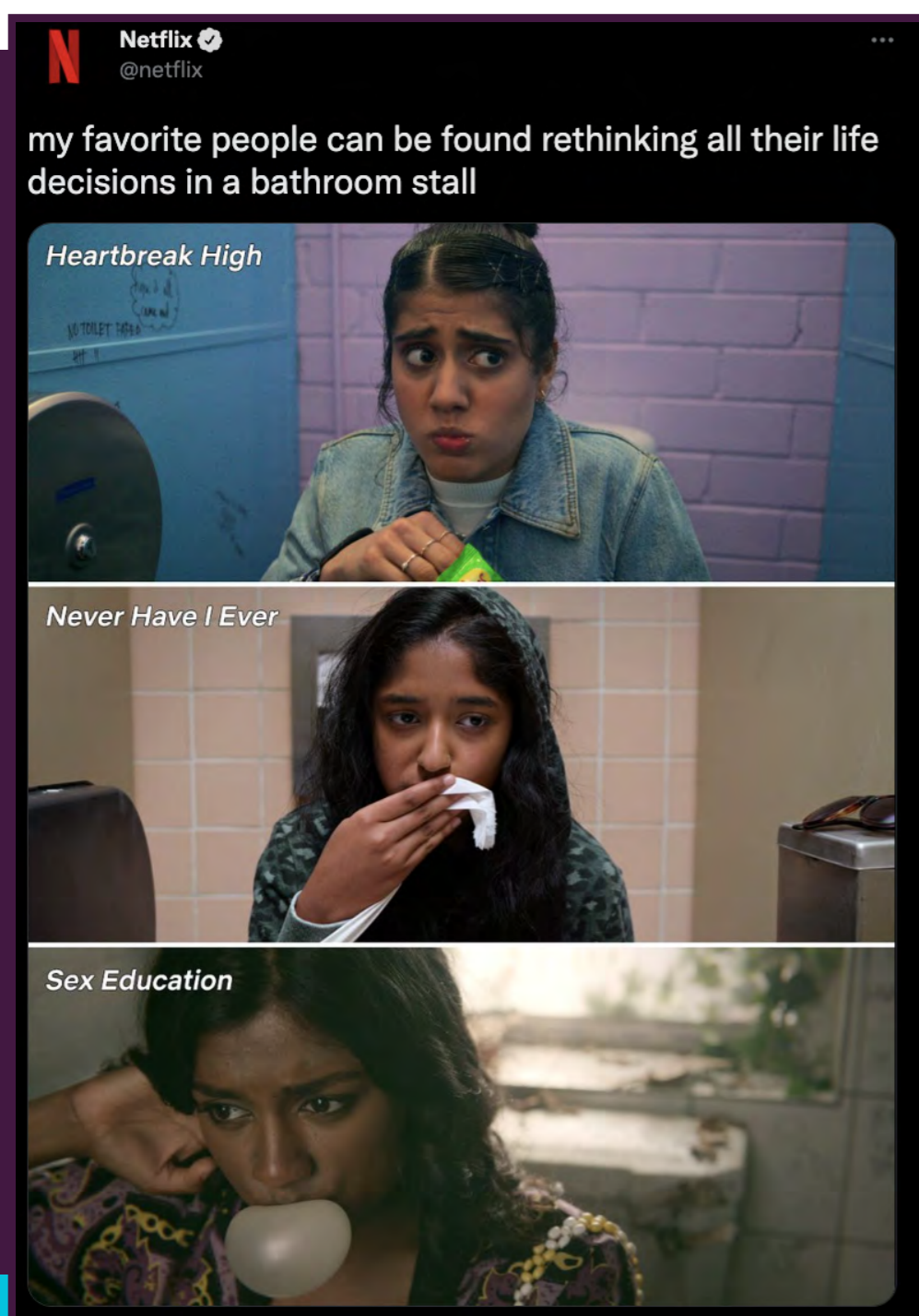
Voxburner UK survey 2021

# 3 BRANDS NAILING TWITTER RIGHT NOW

## Burger King

International fast food restaurant/takeaway.

- Tone sometimes comes close to crossing the line, but that's why Gen Z love it!
- Earned the respect of young people who like to share the brand's tweets as well as engaging with them
- Gen Z can see straight through a fake/forced brand personality, so their love for Burger King means a lot



## Netflix

A video streaming service.

- Share content, memes and videos from their most popular shows and films
- Behind-the-scenes sneak peaks and images from new releases - perfect for building excitement and engagement
- Interact with fans, including liking and retweeting fan edits and comments

## Innocent

A smoothie and juices company.

- Distinctive, sweetly cheeky tone of voice on advertising and packaging which has been carried onto the social platform
- Mainly focus on sharing funny content and starting silly discussions
- Prioritise brand positioning over direct advertising
- Live tweet events, such as The Great British Bake Off



# EMAIL

Whether it's your weekly newsletter to your loyal subscribers or a one off send to confirm a purchase, email marketing is so important when it comes to Gen Z. This unique form of content has the ability to take you above and beyond your competitors and can really confirm you as a great brand in the eyes of Gen Z.

Email is often overlooked as a form of Gen Z marketing thanks to its roots in tradition - after all, it's not necessarily as exciting, colourful or jazzy as TikTok, Instagram and Twitter, is it?! But who said email can't be creative? Not us! In this chapter, we share why email marketing is so important when it comes to Gen Z, share five tips on how to supercharge your strategies and look at some of the brands who are leading the way.

“Unlike some channels, email's easy to measure with many clear-cut metrics. Want to find out what content your audience really enjoys? You can be sure to find some hints through what they're engaging with in your email campaigns! And not only that, it's one of the easiest ways to provide that all-important personalisation for your audience. The more time and effort you invest into your email marketing strategy the more results you'll start to see!”

**Louise Donnelly**  
Marketing Manager,  
Voxburner

1

## 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL STRATEGY

### MAKE SURE YOUR CONTACTS ARE REAL, ACTIVE AND ENGAGED

If lots of your subscribers are disengaged, it'll bring your metrics down and you'll also be making a lot more work for yourself when it comes to segmenting your audiences; there's no point putting all that time and effort into creating the perfect personalised email only for it never to be opened.

Avoid this problem by:

- Creating a double opt-in process for subscribers
- Segment your content, depending on what status your subscribers are at. For example, if they have a low open rate, send them a special offer to get them involved again.
- Sometimes it's best to say goodbye. Sending a 'break-up' email to non-engaged contacts is occasionally the best cleansing exercise you can run.

## 2

### HAVE AN ENGAGING SUBJECT LINE

Split your subscribers and try out different content in your subject line - this way you can figure out what style of subject heading has the best open rate. Do your subscribers like it when their name is in the heading? Maybe they love an emoji (especially if they're Gen Z!), or a straight to the point discount? There's only one way to find out. And remember, Gen Zers have short attention spans, so keep your headlines brief, engaging and direct.

## 3

### EMAIL SEGMENTATION

Much like sorting your active versus inactive subscribers, make sure you're segmenting your subscribers so that you can tailor the content to them and their interests - this is likely to keep the engagement rate high.

And whilst we're here, it's worth mentioning that tone of voice really matters - try not to assume the role of an 'adult' when you're writing or talking to Gen Z. Whether you're sending them a shipping order or asking them to review a recently purchased product, treat them as your equal and use language that they understand and use.

## 4

### INCORPORATE UGC

Okay, so you're on social media and Gen Zers across the world are creating content on the back of your brand and/or products. Consider incorporating these into your emails; if a Gen Zer opens your email to see one of their peers partaking in a trend or showing off your product, they're much more likely to engage with you and relate to your brand. It might even inspire them to create their own social content - great for that brand-consumer engagement!

## 4

### OPTIMIZE YOUR EMAILS ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS

This might be obvious, but your emails need to look good on phones as well as laptop screens. The majority of Gen Zers will be opening their personal emails on their phones, and if your email looks terrible on a small screen, they won't hang around! You want to avoid too much text and pixelated images and make sure that your content doesn't require too much scrolling... the potential errors are endless!



**Pretty Little Thing, ASOS and Nike send the best emails, according to Gen Z.**

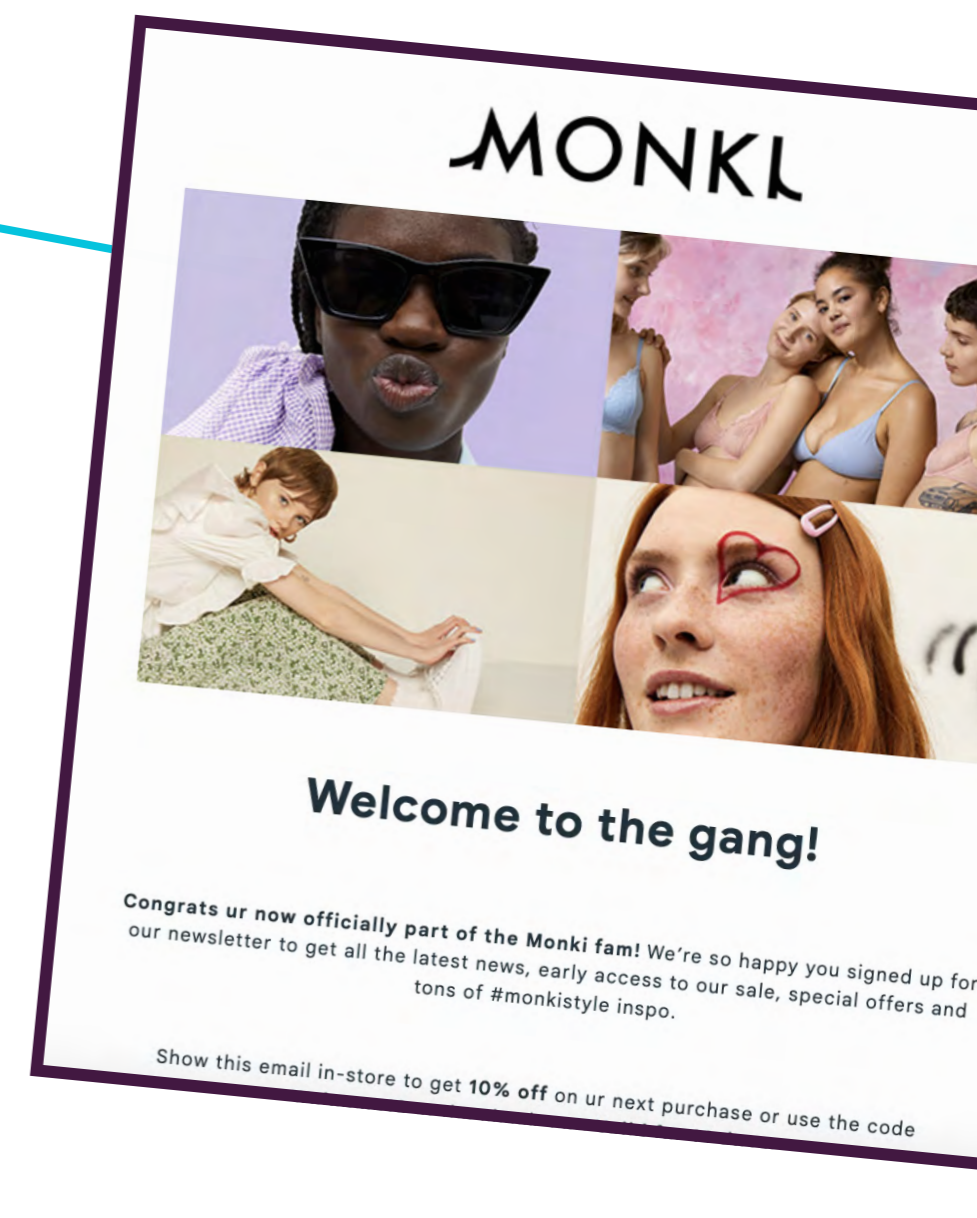
Voxburner UK survey 2019

# 3 BRANDS NAILING EMAIL MARKETING RIGHT NOW

## Monki

A clothing brand.

- Strong headlines, such as '30% off selected tops 🥰'
- Hooks readers in immediately with discounts and fun emojis
- Short, sharp, direct and clear CTAs
- Plenty of colourful images/GIFs which display well on phones
- Gen Z-friendly language, such as 'just in time for the layering szn <3'



## Cake Stories

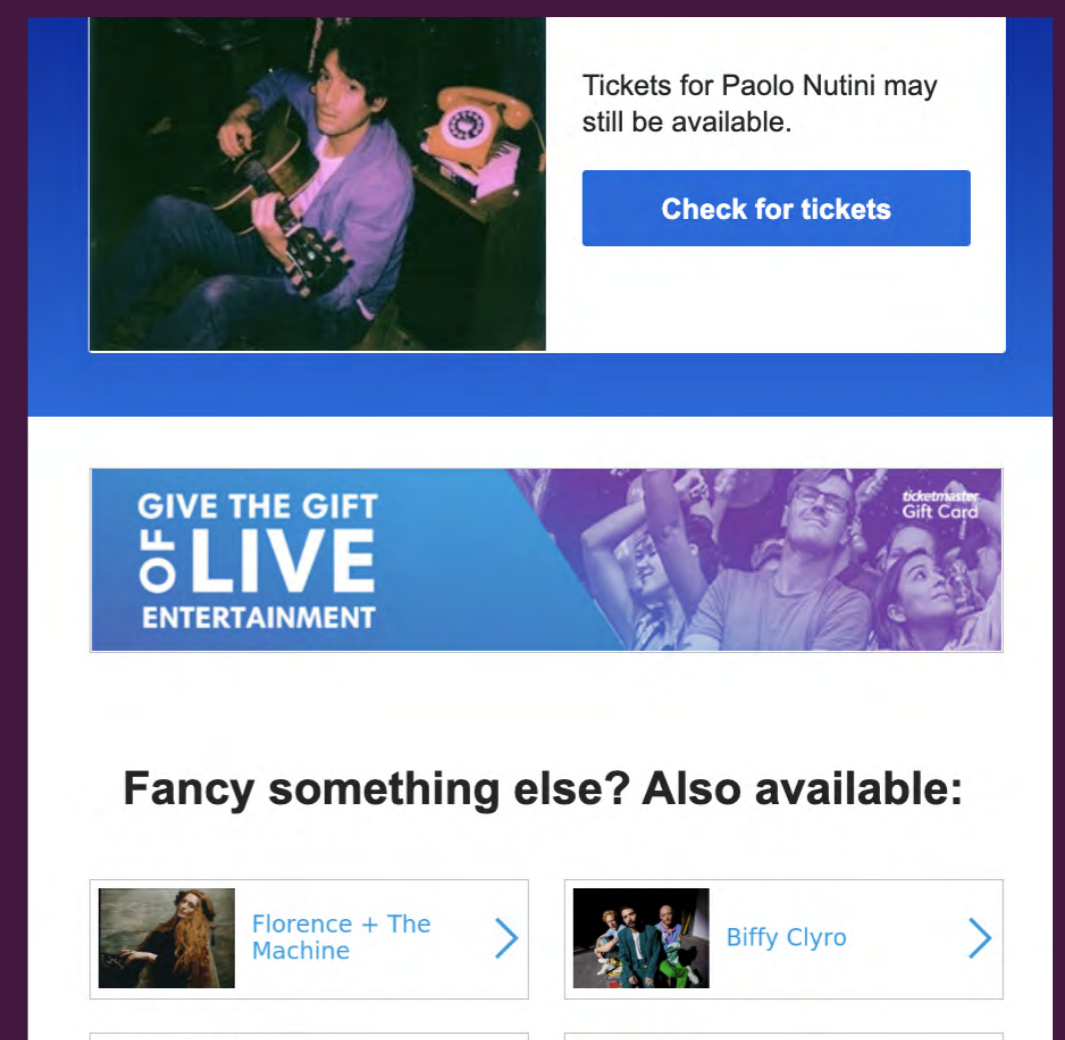
Independent coffee shop based in Newcastle, UK.

- Friendly check-ins to sit alongside their sales emails
- Chatty tone with plenty of bright colours and images
- Regularly share positive world news, including upcoming events and gigs, competitions and awards
- Quote customers - little snippets of their instore successes and happy customers

## Ticketmaster

A ticket and sales distribution company

- Regular 'Your music update is here' emails, personalised to your taste
- Subheadings list artists you like who are on tour - grabs the attention
- Strong, eye-catching images
- Easy-to-understand list format - perfect for scrolling through on a phone
- Concise and identifiable CTAs



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

## Never forget your target audience.

Maybe you're even reaching out to a particular community of Gen Z - gamers, charity shoppers, foodies etc. Every move you make and strategy you plan must have your target audience at the forefront, or else your content will undoubtedly miss the mark.

2

## Identify your goals.

What do you want to use each platform for?! Whether it's selling, educating or building brand awareness, each of these will have unique and different needs when it comes to output. Identify clear goals early on to avoid confusion or crossover.

3

## Adapt your content.

Once you've identified your goals, it's important you adapt and create the content with these in mind. Yes, you may want to use both your TikTok and Twitter for raising brand awareness, but this doesn't mean you can just share the exact same content across the two platforms - after all, as we've discussed, young people use different platforms for different reasons. Adapting content will ensure higher engagement rates across the board.



# YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE...

## More from our blog

Like what you've read? There's loads more where that came from on our Voxburner blog, including:

- [5 Social Media Platforms Gen Z Marketers Need To Be Using](#)
- [Here's How Many Gen Zers Have Spent Money On Virtual Items In A Game](#)
- [5 Tips For Improving Your Youth Marketing Strategy](#)
- [Communeconomy | The Future Of Youth Marketing](#)
- [10 Things Everyone Gets Wrong About Gen Z](#)

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## About the author

Izzy (she/her) is Content Editor at Voxburner

where she predominantly works on creating content for the blog, social media and other platforms/channels in order to share the latest youth insights and hottest Gen Z trends, as well as shining a light on some of the best and most inspiring young people and brands out there.

Izzy's passion for storytelling and giving young people and Gen Z a voice began when she was at university, where she wrote for and was Editor of The Newcastle Tab.

