



MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING MUSIC INDUSTRY VIRALITY THROUGH TIKTOK AND INSTAGRAM

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Article info	ABSTRACT
Corresponding Author: Devanus P. vandurdenofficial@gmail.com IBMT College of Economics, Surabaya	This study aims to analyze marketing strategies for increasing the virality of the music industry through the social media platforms TikTok and Instagram. A qualitative approach with a descriptive research method was employed. Data were collected through interviews with music industry practitioners, observations of content on TikTok and Instagram, and documentation. The data were then analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, while data validity was ensured through source triangulation. The findings reveal that effective marketing strategies include trend research, consistent content creation, active audience engagement, collaboration with influencers, and the effective use of platform features such as Reels, Duets, hashtags, and content performance analytics. However, constantly changing algorithms, intense competition, and the challenge of maintaining long-term audience engagement remain the primary obstacles to increasing music virality through social media. Keywords: <i>Marketing Strategy, Virality, Music Industry, TikTok, Instagram</i>
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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed marketing practices across various industries, including the music industry. In the past, musicians and record labels relied heavily on conventional promotional channels such as television, radio, print media, and live performances to introduce new releases to audiences. These promotional methods often required substantial financial resources and support from record labels, making it difficult for independent musicians to compete with established artists. However, the emergence of social media platforms has significantly changed the marketing landscape by enabling artists to communicate directly with audiences, distribute promotional content instantly, and build long-term engagement without depending solely on traditional media. As digital technology continues to evolve, social media has become one of the most influential communication channels for music promotion because it allows artists to reach audiences worldwide with relatively low promotional costs while encouraging direct interaction between musicians and listeners.

The development of digital platforms has also transformed audience behavior in discovering and consuming music. Rather than relying on radio stations or television broadcasts, audiences increasingly discover new songs through short-form videos, user-generated content, influencer recommendations, and algorithmically curated content feeds. This shift has created new opportunities for musicians to gain recognition regardless of whether they are signed to major record labels. Consequently, successful music promotion today depends not only on musical quality but also on the ability of artists to develop effective digital marketing strategies that maximize visibility and audience engagement across social media platforms.

Among the various digital platforms available today, TikTok and Instagram have become two of the most influential social media platforms for music promotion due to their ability to facilitate content discovery, audience interaction, and viral dissemination of music. TikTok has become a major driver of music discovery through its short-form video ecosystem and algorithm-based content distribution. Unlike traditional social media platforms, TikTok enables content to reach users beyond an account's followers, significantly increasing the possibility that a song can spread organically. Many emerging artists have achieved international recognition after their songs gained popularity through TikTok trends, challenges, and user-generated content. This demonstrates the platform's capability to accelerate music exposure within a relatively short period.

Similarly, Instagram supports music promotion through features such as Reels, Stories, Feed posts, and Live sessions, allowing musicians to maintain audience engagement while strengthening their personal branding. Although Instagram does not emphasize algorithm-driven virality to the same extent as TikTok, it provides a more comprehensive environment for maintaining long-term relationships between artists and audiences. Through consistent content creation and interaction, musicians can cultivate loyal communities that contribute to sustained engagement beyond individual viral moments. Therefore, TikTok and Instagram complement one another by providing opportunities for both rapid content dissemination and long-term audience relationship building.

Marketing strategy refers to a systematic series of activities designed to achieve organizational marketing objectives by considering both internal and external factors affecting business performance. Within digital environments, marketing strategies extend beyond increasing sales and now emphasize audience engagement, brand development, and long-term customer relationships. In the context of the music industry, these strategies involve content planning, audience interaction, trend adaptation, influencer collaboration, and the effective utilization of social media features to maximize audience reach. Digital marketing strategies have become increasingly important because musicians compete not only with other artists but also with millions of pieces of digital content uploaded every day across various platforms. Consequently, successful music promotion requires strategic planning, creativity, consistency, and continuous evaluation of promotional performance.

Viral content itself can be understood as content that spreads rapidly through digital networks because users actively share, recreate, and engage with it. Within the music industry, virality frequently occurs when audiences incorporate songs into user-generated content such as dance challenges, memes, storytelling videos, or other creative formats. As a result, music virality is no longer determined solely by musical quality but also by the effectiveness of promotional strategies implemented across social media platforms. Artists

who understand platform algorithms, audience preferences, and content trends generally possess greater opportunities to achieve broader audience reach than those relying exclusively on conventional promotional methods.

Despite these opportunities, promoting music successfully through TikTok and Instagram remains challenging. Social media platforms continue to evolve through constantly changing algorithms, shifting audience behavior, and increasingly competitive digital environments. Every day thousands of musicians publish promotional content, making it difficult for individual artists to attract attention. Furthermore, successful music promotion requires more than simply uploading songs; it demands strategic planning regarding content creation, timing, audience interaction, trend participation, influencer collaboration, and consistent engagement. Many musicians struggle to integrate these elements into an effective digital marketing strategy, resulting in promotional efforts that fail to achieve significant audience reach or long-term engagement.

This condition reflects a clear research gap between *das sollen* and *das sein*. Theoretically, TikTok and Instagram should enable musicians to reach wider audiences, increase audience engagement, and improve opportunities for music virality through algorithmic content distribution and interactive platform features. Social media is expected to democratize music promotion by allowing both independent and established musicians to compete within the same digital environment. However, empirical conditions demonstrate that achieving viral success remains exceptionally difficult. According to Chartmetric (2024), only approximately 0.35% of newly emerging musicians worldwide successfully achieved viral status during the 2023-2024 period. This phenomenon indicates that although digital platforms provide unprecedented promotional opportunities, many musicians are still unable to convert these opportunities into sustainable music virality because effective marketing strategies are not yet fully understood or consistently implemented. Therefore, understanding practical marketing strategies has become increasingly important for musicians seeking sustainable visibility in today's competitive digital environment.

Several previous studies have examined social media within the context of music marketing. Bodde (2023) concluded that social media platforms have become indispensable tools for music marketing by enabling artists to reach global audiences, improve fan engagement, and expand monetization opportunities through digital distribution. Nevertheless, the study broadly discussed multiple platforms, including Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and Spotify, without specifically examining marketing strategies designed to generate music virality through TikTok and Instagram. Meanwhile, Rosenfeld (2024) emphasized the role of social media marketing in artist promotion, highlighting its contribution to audience communication, personal branding, and digital promotion. However, the research focused primarily on the general promotional function of social media rather than investigating specific strategic approaches that increase music virality on particular platforms. Consequently, previous studies have provided valuable insights into digital music marketing but have not comprehensively explored practical strategies that enable musicians to maximize virality through TikTok and Instagram.

Based on these previous studies, this research offers a distinct contribution by specifically examining marketing strategies employed to increase music virality through TikTok and Instagram. Unlike previous research that broadly discusses social media promotion, this study focuses on identifying practical marketing strategies and the utilization

of platform features that contribute to viral music promotion. Furthermore, this study employs a qualitative approach through interviews with music industry practitioners, providing practical insights derived directly from musicians' experiences in implementing digital marketing strategies. This practitioner-oriented perspective constitutes the novelty (state of the art) of the present research and contributes both theoretically and practically to the growing body of literature on digital marketing within the music industry.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze marketing strategies used to increase music virality through TikTok and Instagram and to identify how platform features can be utilized effectively to support music promotion within today's highly competitive digital music industry. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of digital marketing knowledge while providing practical recommendations for musicians, music industry practitioners, content creators, and future researchers regarding effective social media marketing strategies.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a descriptive research method to explore marketing strategies for increasing music virality through TikTok and Instagram. A qualitative approach was chosen because it enables researchers to obtain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perspectives, and marketing practices of music industry practitioners in utilizing social media for music promotion. Unlike quantitative research, which emphasizes numerical measurement and statistical analysis, qualitative research focuses on understanding social phenomena from the perspectives of participants, making it appropriate for examining the strategic decision-making processes involved in digital music marketing.

The study was conducted online between March and July 2025 through video conferencing (Zoom) and direct messaging platforms. The research subjects consisted of three purposively selected music industry practitioners with experience in promoting music through TikTok and Instagram. Purposive sampling was employed because the selected participants possessed relevant knowledge and practical experience related to the research objectives. The object of this study was marketing strategies aimed at increasing music virality through the utilization of TikTok and Instagram as digital promotional platforms.

Data were collected using three qualitative data collection techniques: semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected informants to explore their experiences, perceptions, and strategies regarding social media marketing within the music industry. This interview format allowed participants to provide detailed explanations while enabling the researcher to ask follow-up questions when necessary. Observations focused on promotional content published through TikTok and Instagram, including the use of platform features, audience interaction, and promotional approaches adopted by musicians. Documentation involved collecting publicly available supporting data, including social media metrics such as views, likes, comments, shares, follower growth, and other relevant performance indicators that supported the interview findings.

The collected data were analyzed using the qualitative data analysis procedures proposed by Miles and Huberman, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, information obtained from interviews,

observations, and documentation was organized and categorized according to the research objectives. The organized data were subsequently presented in a structured manner to facilitate interpretation and identify recurring themes related to marketing strategies for music virality. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting relationships among the findings while ensuring consistency across all collected data.

To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. The triangulation process enabled the researcher to verify the consistency of findings across multiple sources, thereby reducing potential bias and strengthening the validity of the study's conclusions. This approach ensured that the findings reflected not only individual participant perspectives but also evidence supported through multiple qualitative data sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Tabel 1. Summary of Research Findings

Theme	Key Findings	Supporting Informants
Trend research	Monitoring trends helps align promotional content with audience interests.	NONI
Content consistency	Regular content uploads strengthen audience awareness and artist visibility.	Rizky Saimima
Audience engagement	Interaction with followers builds stronger relationships with audiences.	NONI, HMGNC
Platform features	Reels, paid ads, boosting, hashtags, and trending content expand promotional reach.	NONI, HMGNC
Marketing challenges	Algorithm changes, intense competition, and maintaining engagement remain major obstacles.	All informants

The findings indicate that marketing strategies for increasing music virality through TikTok and Instagram vary according to each musician's experience, promotional objectives, and target audience. Nevertheless, all participants agreed that social media has become the primary channel for introducing music to wider audiences and increasing exposure in today's digital music industry. Unlike conventional promotional media, TikTok and Instagram provide musicians with opportunities to distribute promotional content rapidly, interact directly with audiences, and evaluate promotional performance through digital analytics. The participants emphasized that successful music promotion no longer depends solely on artistic ability but also on the capability to design and implement effective digital marketing strategies that respond to continuously changing audience behavior and platform algorithms.

The first major finding reveals that trend research and adaptability are essential components of successful music marketing. One participant explained that promotional planning begins with analyzing current social media trends to ensure that released songs align with content that audiences are actively consuming. Rather than relying on fixed promotional formulas, marketing strategies were described as a continuous process of experimentation, evaluation, and improvement. Participants indicated that monitoring trending hashtags, popular video formats, and audience preferences enables musicians to produce promotional

content that is more relevant and engaging. Furthermore, adapting promotional strategies based on performance metrics such as views, shares, comments, and audience retention was considered essential for maximizing content visibility and increasing opportunities for music virality. These findings suggest that flexibility and responsiveness to digital trends are indispensable characteristics of effective social media marketing.

The second finding highlights the importance of consistency in content creation. Although one participant viewed virality as a bonus rather than a primary objective, regular content uploads were considered fundamental for maintaining audience awareness and strengthening an artist's digital presence. Another participant emphasized coordinated promotional planning involving teaser videos, short-form content, and audience interaction before music releases. Participants also explained that consistent posting schedules help maintain audience interest while allowing platform algorithms to recognize active accounts more favorably. In addition to publishing music-related content, participants recommended sharing behind-the-scenes activities, creative processes, rehearsals, and personal experiences to strengthen emotional connections with audiences. These findings suggest that consistency and structured planning are equally important in supporting promotional success because sustained audience engagement contributes to long-term visibility rather than temporary viral exposure.

The third finding concerns the utilization of TikTok and Instagram features. Participants identified paid advertisements, engagement boosting, Reels, trending content, hashtags, and audience interaction as useful tools for expanding promotional reach. However, opinions differed regarding their effectiveness. Some participants considered paid promotion highly beneficial for increasing visibility, whereas others argued that content quality and consistency contribute more significantly to long-term audience engagement than platform features alone. Participants further explained that promotional success depends on selecting platform features appropriate to the intended marketing objective. For example, TikTok was perceived as more effective for generating rapid exposure through algorithmic recommendations, whereas Instagram was viewed as more suitable for maintaining long-term audience relationships through continuous interaction. These findings indicate that platform features should be integrated strategically rather than used independently if musicians aim to achieve sustainable promotional outcomes.

Finally, the findings reveal several major challenges in achieving music virality. Participants identified rapidly changing algorithms, increasing competition among musicians, maintaining audience engagement, and the temporary nature of viral success as significant obstacles. They emphasized that viral exposure does not necessarily translate into long-term audience loyalty because digital audiences continuously seek new content and rapidly shift their attention toward emerging trends. Consequently, musicians are required to adapt continuously by monitoring platform developments, evaluating promotional performance, and refining their marketing strategies. These findings indicate that sustainable music promotion depends not only on platform features but also on continuous adaptation to evolving digital environments, strategic planning, consistent audience interaction, and the ability to balance creative expression with effective digital marketing practices.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that successful music marketing on TikTok and Instagram extends beyond simply publishing promotional content. Instead, effective marketing

strategies require continuous adaptation to social media trends, consistent content creation, audience engagement, and the strategic utilization of platform features. The participants consistently emphasized that digital promotion is an ongoing process rather than a single promotional activity conducted only when new music is released. Musicians are required to continuously monitor audience preferences, evaluate promotional performance, and adjust their content strategies in response to changing digital environments. These findings support Mahwati's concept of marketing strategy, which emphasizes systematic planning and adaptation to internal and external environmental factors in achieving marketing objectives. In the present study, external factors such as algorithm changes, audience preferences, emerging content trends, and increasing digital competition substantially influenced promotional decision-making. Therefore, effective marketing strategies within the music industry require both creative innovation and strategic flexibility to maintain audience interest over time.

The findings also indicate that understanding platform characteristics has become increasingly important in digital music marketing. TikTok and Instagram, although both categorized as social media platforms, perform different promotional functions. TikTok primarily facilitates rapid content discovery through its recommendation algorithm, enabling musicians to reach audiences beyond their existing follower base. In contrast, Instagram provides musicians with greater opportunities to strengthen artist identity, maintain audience relationships, and build long-term brand recognition through features such as Reels, Stories, Feed posts, and Live broadcasts. Consequently, musicians should avoid relying exclusively on a single platform and instead integrate multiple social media channels into a comprehensive promotional strategy capable of balancing short-term exposure with long-term audience engagement.

The results also reinforce the perspective of Setiawan and Rahayu (2019), who argue that marketing strategies should not focus exclusively on increasing sales but should also emphasize long-term relationship building with consumers. Within the music industry, these consumers represent audiences and fans whose sustained engagement contributes significantly to an artist's long-term visibility and career development. The participants' emphasis on consistent content creation, audience interaction, and community engagement illustrates that relationship marketing has become an essential component of successful music promotion in digital environments. Rather than pursuing viral exposure as a standalone objective, musicians should prioritize developing meaningful interactions that encourage audience loyalty, repeated engagement, and long-term support for future music releases.

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with previous studies by Bodde (2023) and Rosenfeld (2024), which concluded that social media has become an indispensable marketing tool for musicians by expanding audience reach and strengthening artist-fan relationships. However, this study extends previous research by specifically identifying practical marketing strategies that contribute to music virality on TikTok and Instagram, including trend research, experimentation, influencer collaboration, strategic use of platform features, consistent promotional activities, and continuous evaluation of content performance. Unlike previous studies that primarily discussed the general role of social media in music promotion, this research provides practical insights derived directly from the experiences of music industry practitioners. Consequently, the findings contribute additional empirical evidence regarding

how musicians strategically utilize digital platforms to improve promotional effectiveness within increasingly competitive online environments.

Another important implication emerging from this study concerns the relationship between creativity and marketing strategy. The participants emphasized that artistic quality alone is insufficient to achieve widespread audience recognition if it is not accompanied by effective promotional planning. Although producing high-quality music remains fundamental, musicians must also develop digital communication skills, understand platform algorithms, identify emerging trends, and produce engaging promotional content capable of encouraging audience participation. This finding demonstrates that contemporary musicians increasingly perform dual roles as both creative artists and digital marketers, requiring competencies that extend beyond musical production into strategic communication and audience management.

Although social media provides unprecedented opportunities for music promotion, achieving sustainable virality remains highly challenging. The rapidly evolving nature of platform algorithms, increasing competition, and difficulties in maintaining long-term audience engagement require musicians to continuously refine their marketing strategies. Viral exposure often produces temporary increases in visibility but does not automatically guarantee sustainable career development or audience loyalty. Consequently, musicians should view virality as one component of a broader marketing strategy rather than as the ultimate promotional objective. Sustainable success depends on consistent content development, authentic audience interaction, continuous evaluation of promotional performance, and strategic adaptation to changing digital environments. Therefore, successful music promotion should not depend solely on viral moments but should prioritize sustainable audience relationships, high-quality content, and adaptive marketing strategies capable of supporting long-term growth within the increasingly competitive digital music industry.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that effective marketing strategies for increasing music virality through TikTok and Instagram require a combination of trend research, consistent content creation, active audience engagement, and the strategic utilization of platform features such as Reels, hashtags, paid advertisements, and other interactive tools. The findings demonstrate that although each music industry practitioner applies different promotional approaches based on their experience and objectives, social media plays a crucial role in expanding audience reach, strengthening artist branding, and increasing music exposure in the digital era. Furthermore, successful music promotion depends not only on creative musical content but also on the ability of musicians to continuously adapt their promotional strategies to changing audience behavior, digital trends, and platform algorithms. However, achieving sustainable music virality remains challenging due to rapidly changing platform algorithms, intense competition, and the difficulty of maintaining long-term audience engagement. Therefore, successful music marketing should not rely solely on viral moments but should prioritize adaptive marketing strategies, continuous audience interaction, consistent content development, and regular evaluation of promotional performance to achieve sustainable promotional outcomes. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of digital marketing knowledge while providing practical guidance for

musicians, music industry practitioners, and future researchers in designing more effective social media marketing strategies within the increasingly competitive digital music industry.

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