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Mixue are Everywhere: Prosumerism on Users Content Production in Tiktok

Tangguh Okta Wibowo^{1*}, Khairul Syafuddin²

¹Faculty of Communication Science, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara

²Faculty of Communication Science, Universitas Sahid

Corresponding Author: Tangguh Okta Wibowo tangguh.okta@umn.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Mixue is a franchise that is well-known for selling beverages and ice cream. Mixue's viral material on social media, like Tiktok, makes it easy to recognize the popularity of the Mixue's products. This research intends to examine prosumers involved in audio-visual content development who contribute to the marketing of Mixue brand. This research uses interpretative content analysis to examine audio-visual contents created by Tiktok users. The results of the study indicate that videos created by Tiktok users acting as prosumers have a role in the reproduction of diverse values on their experience with Mixue items. The circulation of their videos on Tiktok increases the exposure of the Mixue brand. These scattered videos show various types of performances with different video production techniques and stories. These findings illustrate the intensification of information produced and communication that has been built through the role of Tiktok, which spreads very quickly. This shows that prosumers reproduce videos based on their respective consumer behavior through the creative side of the actors as consumers

INTRODUCTION

Mixue Bingcheng (MXBC) or Mixue Ice Cream is a milk tea brand from China founded in 1997. The brand gained great popularity in China after a series of successful online marketing campaigns in 2018, which included an addictive theme song, a new brand visual identity, and lots of Mixue-related TikTok trends (Zhao, 2022). This success has helped Mixue further strengthen its position in the Chinese milk tea industry. Mixue itself has expanded its business to overseas markets in Southeast Asia and has opened more than 1,000 outlets in these countries, especially in Indonesia and Vietnam (Zhao, 2022).

Mixue has a unique product mascot that is easy for people to remember. It also has audio and video content that strengthens the brand's branding (Azhara et al., 2023). Mixue has succeeded in attracting public attention with its advertising video featuring their mascots dancing and singing the song "I love you". Mixue's content on TikTok has helped this product become known as "empty store filler" and has led to more Mixue stores opening in Indonesia. Moreover, Mixue has received BPOM halal and safe certificates (Azhara et al., 2023).

Previous articles about Mixue have talked about selling ice cream and beverages at low prices (Zhao, 2022) and aiming for the lower-end consumer market (Zhou et al., 2023). Mixue employs an intensive store-opening strategy that increases the efficiency and costs of material distribution and management (Shi et al., 2021). Mixue's success in China has been attributed to its social media campaign and low prices. To succeed in overseas markets, Mixue prioritizes consolidating its central sector, connecting with foreign suppliers, and adapting its brand image and experience to new audiences (Zhao, 2022). Mixue pays attention to product quality and prices set to increase consumer purchase interest and purchase decisions (Oktavian & Wahyudi, 2022).

Furthermore, Mixue also encourages its consumers to take pictures in front of the outlets in order to get ice cream discounts during promotions. The photo must be uploaded on TikTok to get a promo (Shi et al., 2021). TikTok content affects the purchase of Mixue products for students and has been proven through data testing and analysis conducted by researchers with good validity and reliability results. TikTok made Mixue famous and viral among the public, thus increasing buying interest and making

Mixue increase the number of outlets in various regions (Azhara et al., 2023). In addition, Mixue outlets play an important role in improving consumer purchasing decisions and prices, considering that consumers in big cities have money but are still price sensitive (Oktavian & Wahyudi, 2022). Good marketing, through various platforms, can help milk tea stores increase visitor traffic and sales and form an impression of personalization and uniqueness in the minds of customers (Shi et al., 2021).

Based on the explanation above, there is not much research that looks further at how the Mixue brand can be recognized everywhere and go viral on TikTok in an effort to further analyze the agents who play a role in the production of audio-visual content. Therefore, this study contributes to providing insight that consumers who have purchased products from Mixue and create content on social media can strengthen the Mixue brand.

TikTok users are able to make their own content when they share their experience of drinking or buying drinks at Mixue. Users have the power to use internet technology and smartphones to create audio-visual content. In this context, users of a product then produce and circulate information about the product they have consumed (or a kind of testimonial) through social media and personal blogs (Wibowo, 2022). Prosumption refers to the act of individuals engaging in both production and consumption activities at the same time (Sugihartati, 2017; Wibowo, 2022). In the digital era, it is very possible for an actor to have a position not only as a consumer but also as a producer, also known as a prosumer. The term prosumer was first introduced by the American sociologist and futurologist, Alvin Toffler, who introduced the use of prosumer (producer-consumer) in 1980 (Cova & Cova, 2012).

By using the concept of prosumption (or a combination of production and consumption activities), researchers try to further analyze prosumers in content production, which plays a role in marketing the Mixue brand on TikTok. Individuals who own smartphones have the potential to become prosumers. The circulation of their videos on TikTok increases the exposure of the Mixue brand. These scattered videos show various types of performances with different video production techniques and stories. This paper offers a novelty by analyzing the role of consumers who are also unpaid agents from the aspect of mix-up promotion. Therefore, this

research looks further in terms of how video content on Tiktok has an effect on increasing the circulation of the Mixue brand for users who are then interested in buying ice cream and drinks on Mixue.

This paper is descriptive qualitative research. Researchers use interpretive content analysis to look further at signs in language that can be interpreted through videos (de Souza-Leão et al., 2020). For Krippendorff (2013), it goes beyond the descriptive

METHODS

Table 1. Analyzed Tiktok Content List

No	User	Video Title	Views	Link on Tiktok
1	cicibuncits	<i>Yang viral. Pernah cobain Top 5 rekomendasi mereka belum?</i>	2.4 Million	https://www.tiktok.com/@cicibuncits/video/7126878971756760346
2	alfani.sidharta	<i>AKHIRNYA 🍷 cabang Mixue tempat aku beli aku info di akhir video</i>	9.5 Million	https://www.tiktok.com/@alfani.sidharta/video/7173888176635792667
3	angelinngel	<i>Replying to @🌻 ini yg sidoberi nih #mixue</i>	6.1 Million	https://www.tiktok.com/@angelinngel/video/7190171386420432154
4	elsa.novias	<i>Di daerah kalian banyak Mixue gak? Apa malah belum ada?</i>	13.1 Million	https://www.tiktok.com/@elsa.novias/video/7182901797269376283
5	_jamesadam_	<i>Aku cinta Mixue 🥰</i>	4.9 Million	https://www.tiktok.com/@_jamesadam_/video/7189995835025870107?q=mixue&t=1677140428791

Source: Researchers (2023)

Questions of "what" and "how" and moves on to conclusions about "why", "for whom", and "to what effect." In short, an interpretive approach to content analysis is one that goes beyond literal code based on manifest content alone. The researcher can interpret and use the researcher's insights to generate code and create analytical categories or themes. Interpretive content analysis assesses people's reactions to policies or services to identify what is clear and what is not (Ginger, 2006) Researchers can use interpretive content analysis to describe content and meaning, summarize large data sets, and make inferences about intentions, thoughts, and feelings based on speech or other forms of communication. Researchers analyzed audio-visual video content on Tiktok to view it as text. For video selection, three

steps were taken: (1) The researcher typed the keyword "Mixue" into Tiktok search; (2) selecting videos based on those that appear on For Your Page (FYP) or appear in the initial appearance of search results; and (3) the researcher chose five videos with the highest number of views. In addition, the selected video category is the video that has the most views. The rest of this data can be seen in table 1. Then, the video researchers code with interpretation methods to generate code and analytic themes with a further look at codification based on the empirical context of content production. Finally, the results of the analysis are theoretically interpreted in relation to the literature framework that has been previously described.

RESULTS

In the analysis results section, we begin by analyzing the five-audiovisual content on Tiktok, which have been listed in Table 1. The presence of influencers on TikTok adds its own charm to the digital marketing communication process. Even though the video duration in uploaded content is only around 30 to 60 seconds, its power is able to attract interest from consumers. This can be felt in how Mixue as an ice cream product has become a viral product on social media. One of the influencers' presences can be seen in Figure 1, taken from the screenshot of the *cicibuncits* TikTok account. The TikTok account tries to build a message about how delicious Mixue's products are. This is shown in Figure 1.1 which is accompanied by the text "HOW MUCH IS THE TOP 5 BORROWING IN MIXUE!?" In figure 1.1, the actor on the account shows the 5 best products from Mixue. His efforts to emphasize a message where Mixue's products are not only in the form of ice cream but also other products such as boba drinks mixed with ice cream or milk

shakes, even iced tea, are also popular products offered by Mixue.

The message of pleasure from this milk shake is increasingly emphasized in Figure 1.2 through the process of making the product. Taking a visual point of view as carried out by creators cannot be said without reason. The effort to choose the background of the ingredients used as a mixture of the product constructs a message of freshness and sweetness from the product. The process of mixing it with a spoon also conveys the message of a hygienic manufacturing process. The messages from enjoyment to freshness from the Top 5 products in Mixue are also emphasized in Figure 1.3, where *cicibuncits* drink their iced tea products. In taking the visual video, the *cicibuncits* show the logo of the Mixue mascot on the packaging. He also chose a background that shows him in the Mixue store. Even the shirt has a picture of a woman enjoying ice cream. These visuals further reinforce the message regarding the mainstay products sold in the store.



Figure 1. Video *Cicibuncits*: “*yang Viral. Pernah Cobain Top 5 Rekomendasi Mereka Belom?*”

Even in Figure 1.2, there is also a price message from the visualized product. This, at the same time, emphasizes the message of this Mixue product, which is not only to provide pleasure and freshness. But this viral product also has an affordable price for all people.

In the TikTok video produced by *cicibuncits*, this ultimately emphasizes the superiority of the Mixue product. These products not only offer freshness and a delicious taste, but they also emphasize that the price of products in Mixue is cheap and affordable

for various groups. Economic value is also produced through the visuals in the content. In addition, the symbolic and economic values that exist in these products are emphasized in the store in Mutiara Pondok Cabe Ruko. This is shown in Figure 1.4

which shows a store that has just opened. The new store is also shown through the balloon object that is made around the door of the store. These many balloon objects give the message that a store opening ceremony has just been held



Figure 2. Video alfani.sidharta: “AKHIRNYA 🤪 Cabang Mixue Tempat Aku Beli Aku Info di Akhir Video”

The discourse built in Figure 2 is different from Figure 1. This is not only shown through the title or actors, but through the content it produces. This difference can be seen in Figure 2.1 regarding the Mixue bottle product, which is made to resemble the mascot of the product. The bottle is also accompanied by a strap as an aid in draping it on the consumer's body. The availability of these bottles in Jakarta is not only shown through the text in Figure 2.1, but is also emphasized in Figure 2.2 which shows the shelves of the merchandise products offered. These two images build a message that Mixue does not only offer drinks or ice cream products. But to complement it, they also provide merchandise as collectible products. The existence of this merchandise is part of an effort to build symbolic value and fan culture. This is important when a product has gone viral and given rise to a consumerist culture. This culture can be manifested

in a physical form that is represented by various products, such as the bottle.

However, the message built is not only limited to the symbolic value of the existence of the bottle. But this bottle is also associated with ice cream products. This is shown in Figure 2.3 when the Mixue bottle is used as a place for purchased drinks. The use of bottles as a place for beverage products provides another function of the merchandise offered. In addition, the symbolic value of the consumption culture of this drink has also increased. Drinks such as milkshakes, which were originally served in disposable plastic cups, now have special bottles. This is shown by Mixue holding a bottle that resembles its mascot.

Apart from that, alfani.sidharta's content also shows the professionalism of Mixue's waiters. The message is shown in Figure 2.3 which shows the waiter's effort in serving the ordered drinks into bottles. Bottles that are known to have holes that are not as big as those in plastic cups are usually used,

making the waiter look like he is trying harder and more focused on getting the ingredients used. This is shown through the message that the waiter is making a high effort when trying to serve the drink. Messages related to presentation, service, to the products offered by Mixue are ultimately constructed to be able to provide very high satisfaction for consumers. This is shown by Alfani Sidharta in Figure 2.4 when he sipped the drink he ordered from the bottle he owned. This satisfaction is not only shown through the expression when consuming the drink. He also emphasized it in written text with the words "super satisfying".

Each influencer has its own concept of conveying messages through the content they produce. Figure 1 emphasizes the message of enjoyment to economy from the Mixue product associated with the opening of a new store in Pondok Cabe. Figure 2 is more on the symbolic and functional value of the Mixue bottle merchandise that the company offers. Figure 3 is a visual video from Angelinngel's TikTok content, which is also distinct. The videos uploaded via the angelinngel

account emphasize more on the message of enjoying one of the ice cream flavors. This is shown in Figure 3.1 which contains visuals of the strawberry flavor. Mixue ice cream product (pink color). The visual not only emphasizes the pleasure of the pink ice cream flavor, but also builds a simple discourse in the form of a comparison with the vanilla flavor, which is judged to be too sweet.

The message is intended to build an invitation to consume Mixue ice cream for people who don't like anything too sweet. The existence of content produced by Angelinngel provides another offer for products that taste less sweet. Even though he only emphasizes one taste of the ice cream products offered, he also builds a message of hygiene and freshness through the process of serving ice cream carried out by the waiter at Mixue. Starting from Figure 3.2 to Figure 3.3 he shows how Mixue ice cream is produced. This can be used as an effort to attract the desires of consumers. Especially in the process of serving it, it can be seen that consumers are given a very large portion of the ice cream they ordered.

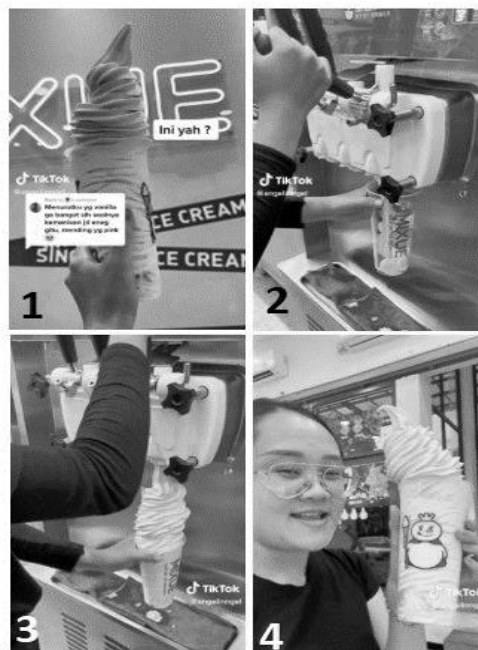



Figure 3. Video Angelinngel: Replying to @ ini yg Sidoberi Nih #Mixue

The number of servings of ice cream provided by Mixue is shown in Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4. The plastic cups used to prepare this ice cream product fall into the jumbo category. This at the same time conveys the message that Mixue's products, which are viral and can be said to be international products,

are not products that are "stingy". Because prices that can be said to be relatively cheap allow consumers to get quite a lot of portions, although consumers' purchases are also available in a variety of sizes based on their preferences.



Figure 4. Video Elsa.novias: *di Daerah Kalian Banyak Mixue Gak? Apa Malah Belum Ada?*

Efforts made by influencers to introduce Mixue do not only focus on issues of taste, symbolic satisfaction, or price, but can also include an introduction to the company's business history. Such as content produced by the elsa.novias TikTok account. He tries to build knowledge related to the business history that has been passed down by entrepreneurs through these ice cream products. Even though his goal is to introduce the history of his business, he also uses the discourse on the empty store issue that Mixue always uses. This discourse can make it easier for consumers of information to recall memories regarding Mixue, which was previously widely reported as a company that always rents empty stores at various points in each region.

This begins with displaying a visual of the store that Mixue has used, as shown in Figure 4.1,

followed by Figure 4.2. The two images show two different stores, which can convey messages regarding the use of several stores by Mixue. This is also emphasized through the written text seen in the two images. Figure 4.1 seeks to draw on the knowledge possessed by consumers regarding news (rumors) about empty stores in Indonesia that have a relationship with Mixue. Meanwhile, Figure 4.2 tries to attach the discourse that Mixue is an angel that picks up empty stores. This analogy indicates that Mixue is likened to an angel of "souls". However, the difference is that this store takes out the "soul" of a store that is not used for the company's use to run its business.

Even though the messages presented are intended to build knowledge about the business history and rumors attached to the company, the

elsa.novias account also continues to build messages regarding the products offered. As shown in Figure 4.3 where there are visuals of ice cream and smoothies' products. Efforts to bring out these products are part of a soft selling strategy. Promotional messages for the products being sold are packaged with narrative knowledge related to the history of the birth of Mixue.

The elsa.novias account also helps people remember Mixue by showing animated images of the mascot. In Figure 4.4 the creator includes a video element about the Mixue mascot in a palace. This simultaneously builds an explicit message that this product is exclusive. This exclusivity can be felt symbolically by consumers when they become part of the people who consume the product. When this is related to their participation as consumers of this ice cream product, they seem to be part of the Mixue culture, which is considered an exclusive lifestyle nowadays.

Mixue's virality in Indonesia is inseparable from the role of the accompanying music. This is shown by the uploads of content produced by the _jamesadam_ account. In Figure 5.1 _jamesadam_

raises a message where a woman wants to listen to the song Mixue. This is emphasized by the name of the kalimba musical instrument, which is a percussion instrument from Africa. Kalimba is a musical instrument that is capable of producing harmonious sounds with every note. This harmony is, at the same time, a simple discourse constructed by Mixue through this TikTok content.

Figure 5 also brings up a discussion about how Mixue uses empty stores, just like Figure 4. The difference in this discourse appears explicitly, as shown in Figure 5.2. The picture shows that the stores at the location where the video was taken cannot possibly have a Mixue store. However, in the process of showing the video up to Figure 5.3, the location of the Mixue store begins to appear. Figure 5.3 also shows the visual emotions of actors who are surprised by this store phenomenon. The emotions that are raised are also strengthened by the visual effect of lightning with a blue screen change. This visual also emphasizes an explicit message that the issue of Mixue as a store that always uses empty stores is a fact.



Figure 5. Video _jamesadam_: *Aku Cinta Mixu*

At the end of the TikTok content scene, the issue of harmony in Mixue is emphasized again. Not only that, this harmony is also accompanied by the

emergence of happy emotions. This happy emotion is manifested through female actors enjoying ice cream. Then this happiness is also integrated with the

harmony that emerges from playing kalimba music. Here, the music played is Mixue's song. In addition, the emphasis on Mixue's products does not only stop at these visuals. But the point of view that uses the store background also produces the message that Mixue exists in various regions.

DISCUSSION

Based on the five videos that have been analyzed, the presence of influencers through social media platforms like TikTok is currently a trend for marketing products digitally. Specifically, the researchers summarized several major themes from the five videos that had been analyzed, including:

Table 2. The Analytical Theme of all five videos

No	Theme
1	the advantages of Mixue products: drinks are affordable and taste good
2	the professionalism of Mixue's waiters
3	reference: servings of many varieties of Mixue drinks
4	business history of Mixue
5	The myth of an empty store from Mixue is true
6	Mixue's harmony from the jingle

Source: Researchers (2023)

The analytic theme in Table 2 shows a production path from users. In general, the researchers mapped the sequences of the practices carried out, namely from buyers buying Mixues -> satisfied with the product -> users creating content on Tiktok -> content being watched and shared to become FYP content on Tiktok. Their presence in the business world is a special attraction, especially to increase consumer buying interest. Specifically intended for the followers of the account. This culture of using influencer marketing ultimately becomes part of efforts to maintain the popularity of products that appear in the midst of the globalization era.

The phenomena seen in Figures 1 to 5 can be seen as a practice of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). This practice becomes a form of persuasive communication carried out by communicators through social media platforms. The influence of social media has influenced many aspects of consumer behavior in the 21st century, including information, opinions, attitudes, purchases, recognition, acquisition, and post-purchase sharing behavior (Tessa & Mohammad,

2022). For Tsao and Hsieh (2015), eWOM has a strong influence on consumer purchasing decisions. The effect that occurs is quite varied, depending on the message produced and the type of product offered. But this is also seen based on which social media is used. Because currently all social media, such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and so on, have become instruments that help businesses market their products. However, when viewed from this phenomenon, this strong influence can be made by influencers who have high followings and credibility. This is not only seen from how many likes you have, but also from the interaction in the form of comments on the content.

Also, the above explanation shows that today's social media can give users the tools they need to make their own audiovisual contents. The term that describes this condition is user generated content (UGC). UGC has been made possible since the arrival of Web 2.0 which gave users or website visitors the possibility to produce their own content. Thus, users in today's digital era are not only passive users who are categorized as consumers, but they are also active users who can produce content. This

description refers to the term prosumer," which can be used to define users who can carry out two practices at once, namely production and consumption, at the same time. Meanwhile, this practice is called prosumption.

Ritzer and Jurgenson (2010) say that the prosumer trend has grown after the birth of fast food restaurants in the mid-1950s, for example, by being a caller on a radio show, pumping your own tires at the gas station, taking money at an ATM machine, using DIY technology (do-it-yourself) in the health field (blood pressure monitor, pregnancy test), and being part of a reality TV show. In producer and consumer capitalism, corporations control the production and/consumption of content (products or services), but prosumer capitalism provides more space for prosumers who produce and consume content. The idea is to give space to prosumers rather than control them.

From a marketing standpoint, production indicates a strong emphasis on collaboration with consumers, which has become a new marketing approach known as service-dominant logic (Lusch and Vargo 2006; Vargo and Lusch 2004, Cova and Cova, 2012:154). According to Tapscott and Williams (2006:126-129), prosumer describes a consumer who participates in a product creation process in an active and sustainable way without any compensation from Mixue.

The discussion shows that this study tries to complete the understanding that the popularity of Mixue according to previous research is built from products that are sold cheaply and aim to reach the lower-end consumer market, intensive store-opening strategies to minimize material distribution and management, and campaigns on social media to increase consumer purchase interest and purchase decisions, but the findings from this study can provide insight that connoisseurs of ice cream Mixue also play a role in indirectly promoting the products they have bought. They produce audiovisual content on Tiktok about the experiences they have when enjoying ice cream, reviewing stores, or visiting stores.

Moreover, the analytic theme in Table 2 shows the variations of the videos that have been analyzed. This is, of course, very possible, there are many other themes that can be demonstrated through other videos on Tiktok. The concept of consumers using products, and then providing input into design and

production, is not new. According to Zwick, Bonsu, and Darmody (2008), today's smart marketers know how to empower consumers through their freedom to meet their needs without aiming to discipline them and based on a certain norm.

Among the different ways this theme was explored, the researchers came to the conclusion that the culture of participation among Mixue consumers indirectly helps to promote the products they have bought. The existence of their content on Tiktok can expand the circulation of messages carried through each content from various Tiktok users. This implies that prosumption activities broaden the reach of media exposure regarding Mixue. Thus, it is not surprising that the spread of the Mixue store in Indonesia is very fast due to the content that is available to Tiktok users.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, this paper shows that today's social media users have a more active role in producing content, which is known as production or user-generated content (UGC). Users and influencers use various approaches to indirectly promote Mixue's products, including emphasizing the pleasure, symbolic and functional value, and price of the product, as well as providing information about the company's business history and its use of empty stores. The visual content produced by each influencer aims to convey different messages, such as the pleasure and value of the product, the symbolism and function of merchandise, and the company's history and its use of empty stores. Additionally, influencers also use soft-selling strategies to promote the product by combining it with storytelling about the company's history. Overall, the message conveyed by the influencers' visual content builds a high level of customer satisfaction with Mixue's products and services.

This phenomenon is seen in influencer marketing practices, where influencers produce content that is shared and watched by other users, which ultimately influences consumer purchasing decisions. The influence of eWOM is also seen in this phenomenon, where the strength of the influence depends on the message produced and the type of product offered. In addition, this phenomenon also shows that social media has now become an important instrument for business people in marketing their products. Furthermore, this

production is a form of collaboration between producers and consumers that can be applied in a marketing approach. In addition, this shows that the role of today's consumers is not only as passive users, but also active in creating content and circulating messages regarding individual experiences of Mixue products.

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