

THE ANATOMY OF A TIK TOK CRISIS

P&B Communication, KE analyzed top 10 crises on Kenya's Tik Tok affecting corporate brands in 2025. The staggering reach of 46.36 million views across more than 300 videos generated by these crises shows the growing power of Tik Tok as a Digital PR tool.



2026

Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our 2025 report presents an analysis of the Top 10 crises and negative PR incidents that took prominence in Kenya during the year 2025. We analyzed over 300 videos related to these incidents, which collectively affected 16 distinct corporate brands (some with global presence). Our analysis was strictly limited to the development of these crises on the TikTok platform. The scale of Tik Tok's power in crisis management is highlighted by the cumulative visibility: all analyzed content attracted a total reach of 46.362 million views. The reach for individual crises ranged between 1.5 million and 6.5 million views.

We focused on TikTok because of its rising influence. The platform rose to occupy the third spot as the most popular social media platform in Kenya in 2025. Its unique algorithm allows any user to go viral, making it a critical, yet volatile, forum for public discourse. This data collection and analysis provides strategic value for corporate brands in Kenya's digital PR landscape.

Our key findings challenge common assumptions:

- **Millennials were more likely to initiate a crisis (60% of cases), contrary to the belief that the platform is dominated by Gen Z.**
- **Multinational companies were the most affected, accounting for 40% of the incidents.**
- **60% of targeted companies were actively present on TikTok, and the majority of initiators were dissatisfied customers leveraging formats like 'Story Time' and 'Rants.'**
- **The 'Occupy' mass action culture manifested in the corporate sphere, with 40% of situations involving threats or actual physical occupation.**
- **The traditional public statement is dying as a crisis management tool as brands embrace video-first crisis management.**
- **Quarters three and four are the most volatile peak seasons for crises on Tik Tok.**
- **Suggestions boxes are long dead but brands still struggle to replace them with proactive digital friendly customer feedback tools.**

This data answers crucial questions for business leaders.

METHODOLOGY

This report is based on the analysis of over 300 videos related to 10 prominent crises and negative PR incidents affecting about 16 brands. Data collection was an ongoing process, spanning several months throughout the year, with the latest incidents tracked through November and early December.

Our data was primarily collected using a combination of methods: PR and Digital Marketing Technology tools were deployed for real-time social listening to catch emerging crises, while manual data collection was used to analyze complex cases. Crucially, the scope was strictly limited to TikTok, to ensure focused insights.

SCOPE & LIMITATIONS

Crisis selection was based on high reach, impact, and the size of the affected brand, ensuring relevance for our corporate audience by excluding smaller sole proprietorships and personal brands. No personal data was collected; all analyzed content and metrics were in the public domain.

The study's margin of error is tied to several challenges, including:

- 01 Missing Videos:** The deletion of critical 'first videos' due to legal action or user choice makes comprehensive visibility difficult.
- 02 Language Barriers:** Difficulty in consistently tracking content posted in vernacular languages, Kiswahili or Kenyan slang. PR tech struggles with tracking certain languages.
- 03 Subjectivity of Qualitative Data:** The generational categorization (e.g., Millennial vs. Gen Z) of crisis initiators is based on subjective or qualitative analysis as personal user data was not accessed.

DEFINITIONS



01 Negative Publicity

An adverse, and **isolated** event that generates unfavourable attention toward a brand. Negative PR primarily affects reputation or a specific product/service perception in the short-term with possibility for long-term impact. An example is a negative news story that portrays a brand negatively.

02 Crisis

A major, unpredictable event that threatens to harm an organization's stakeholders, damage its long-term reputation, and disrupt its business operations.

The Importance of Differentiation

Not all negative attention is detrimental; some negative publicity incidents, even if repeated, may not escalate to a crisis and can, in fact, be leveraged. For several brands analyzed in this report, certain incidents of negative publicity ultimately led to earned media or "free PR," opening up room for constructive public conversation and brand awareness without harming the company's operations. Understanding this threshold is key to avoiding overreaction and allocating resources appropriately.

CHAPTER 01

Who Gets Targeted?

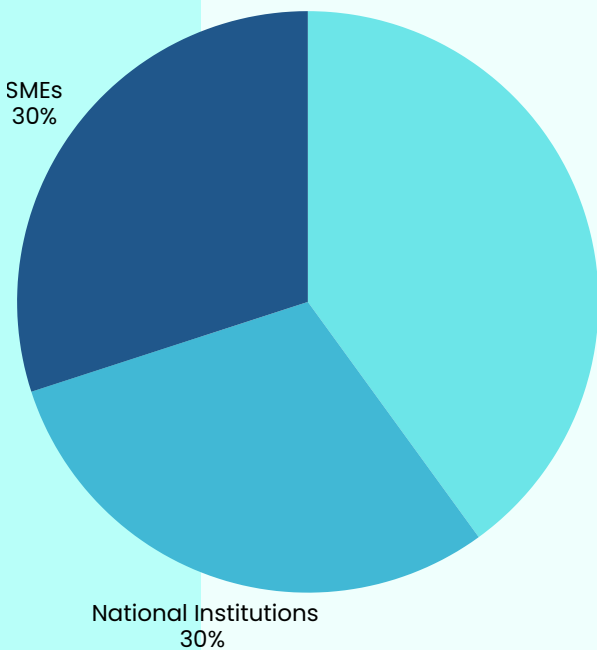
This chapter analyzes the profile of the companies and institutions most susceptible to crisis and negative publicity on TikTok in the Kenyan context, dissecting vulnerability based on company size and platform presence. The analyzed companies operate across diverse sectors including Retail, Manufacturing, Hospitality, Transport, Real Estate, Healthcare, Government, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), and Energy.

1.1 WHO IS AT RISK OF A TIK TOK CRISIS?



The Multinational Risk

Our analysis reveals a distinct trend in targeting, with Multinational Companies (MNCs) proving to be the most vulnerable group. This is likely due to their high brand recognition, substantial market share, and complex operations, which offer a larger potential surface area for public scrutiny. This is aligned with our #100Kenyanbrands report which revealed that brands serving or working with large numbers of people are prone to crisis.



Risk Vulnerability by Company Size

- Multinationals 40%
Multinational Companies (MNCs): 40% of all analyzed crises/negative publicity incidents.
- National-Level Institutions: 30% (This includes large Kenyan corporates and central government agencies).
- Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): 30% of all analyzed crises/negative publicity incidents.

1.2 BRAND PRESENCE

A critical finding of this report is the relationship between a brand's presence on TikTok and its vulnerability to crisis. Contrary to the assumption that absence equals safety, our data indicates that the majority of targeted organizations are already engaged on the platform:

Corporate Tik Tok Adoption

The high percentage of targeted brands with an active TikTok presence highlights a broader trend of corporate platform adoption. Our findings also reveal that a brand's mere presence on TikTok did not have a direct impact on its effectiveness or ability to handle a crisis effectively. Crisis management success was entirely dependent on the brand's creativity, choice of communication tools and the complexity of the incident

60%

60% of the brands we analyzed facing crisis or negative PR incidents are not only present but also active on Tik Tok. Only 40% lacked official accounts on the platform,.

This growing corporate engagement on TikTok marks a shift, given that Kenyan brands statistically still favor traditional social media channels. Our #100 Kenyan Brands Report showed that 92% of brands were active on Facebook and 88% were active on X (formerly Twitter), whereas only 24% were active on TikTok in 2024. While the sample sizes differ, this trend suggests that as corporate brands embrace TikTok, the platform is transitioning from a secondary marketing tool to a primary theatre for both public accountability and potential crisis, demanding a comprehensive and proactive risk management strategy.





CHAPTER 02

The Crisis Initiators: Debunking the Gen Z Myth

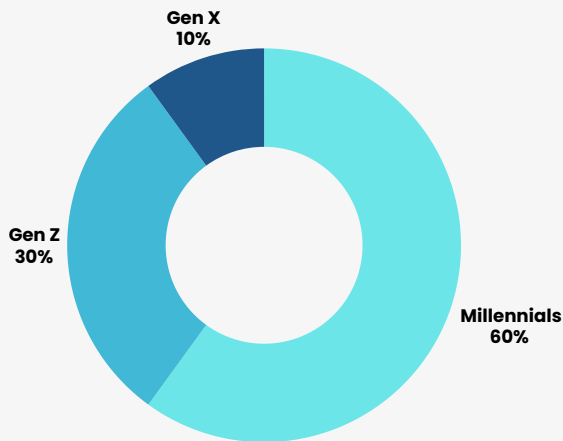
This chapter analyzes the profiles of the individuals who initiate crises and negative publicity on TikTok. Our findings challenge the common narrative that TikTok is exclusively a Gen Z platform. Data analysis unearthed the critical role played by older generations and the influence they possess in initiating corporate damage in Kenya.

2.1 WHO IS INITIATING CRISES ON TIK TOK?

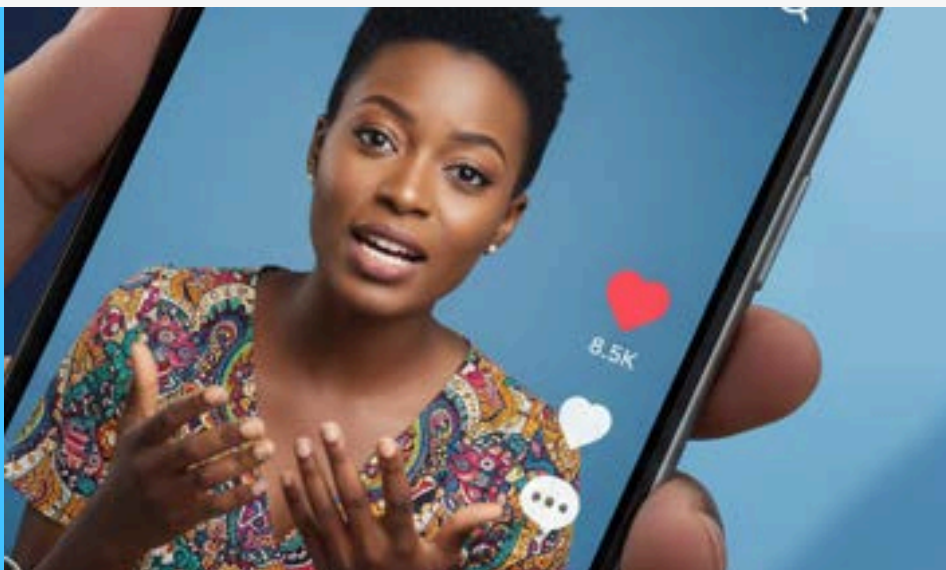


Millennials as the Primary Catalysts

Our analysis, based on qualitative assessment, reveals that Millennials are the primary drivers of crisis initiation, defying the public perception that places Gen Z at the forefront of digital dissent. This could be attributed to Millennials' higher purchasing power given that most negative publicity on Tik Tok is about customer satisfaction or lack of it.

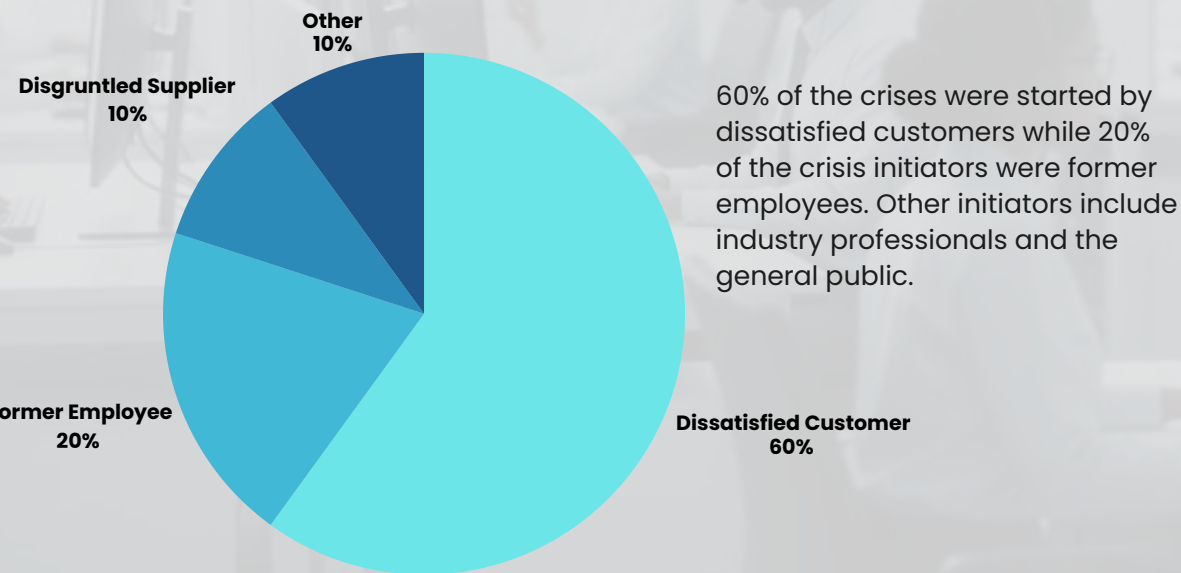


Millennials initiated 6 (60%) of the 10 negative publicity incidents we analyzed, while Gen Zs followed closely, initiating 30% of the incidents. Gen X were responsible for just 10% of the crises. In cases where older generations were involved, the content producers and distributors were mainly younger generations. Additionally, millennials created and posted a big share of the 300 videos we analyzed, a fact that cements their role as crisis catalysts.



2.2 THE DISSATISFIED CUSTOMER

The overwhelming majority of crises we analyzed were sparked by individuals who have had a negative interaction with the affected brand's product or service. Tik Tok, seems to be a safe platform for airing customer satisfaction issues while seeking accountability; without going through a long legal route. Some of these issues reported would not typically gain much attention in mainstream media, which has always been the primary crisis driver for corporates in Kenya. The platform is almost a public court where "ordinary people" can mobilize support and ultimately "punish" brands that do not meet their expectations. The breakdown of initiator roles is as follows:



2.3 CUSTOMER SERVICE GAPS

Crucially, 80% of these initiators' first interaction with the brand occurred offline (e.g. in a physical store, via traditional customer service, or at a workplace). Only 10% started online, and 10% were hybrid. This shows that most digital crises are rooted in real-world service failures or unresolved disputes that are subsequently amplified on TikTok when businesses fail to provide effective customer feedback collection platforms or protocols to address negative feedback.

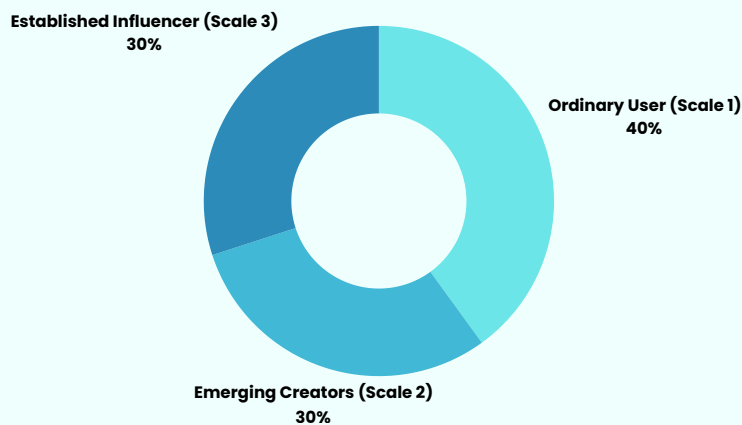
80%

80% of the crisis cases we analyzed emanated from offline interactions between the affected brands and the crisis initiators.

Notably, Tik Tok is turning into an accessible platform where customer complaints are presented to an eager public jury. Perhaps this marks the death of traditional feedback collections tools like suggestion boxes, customer care numbers and customer service emails. It is imperative that brands evolve by providing more accessible and proactive customer feedback collection channels.

2.4 THE EMPOWERED “ORDINARY” TIK TOKER

To determine the influence level of crisis initiators, we used a qualitative scale from 1 (ordinary person with under 5 thousand followers) to 5 (highly influential, publicly recognized figure). The data emphatically demonstrates that influence is not necessary to start a crisis on Tik Tok; a deviation from how crisis spreads on other platforms.



This finding reinforces one of TikTok’s defining features: anyone can go viral. 7 out of the 10 crises and Negative publicity cases we analyzed (70%) as demonstrated in the chart above, were ignited by users with low (scale 1) to moderate (scale 2) influence, meaning brands must now monitor the conversations of all users, not just established influencers.

The ability to go viral, even with a handful of followers is what makes Tik Tok extremely important in digital PR. Out of the 300 plus, videos we analyzed only **63 (21%)** were shared by influential accounts. These include digital media platforms and content creators or public figures. The other posts related to these crisis were shared by emerging creators on scale 2 or ordinary, scale 1 accounts.



2.5 THE RISE OF DIGITAL MEDIA

📺 The Role of Secondary Platforms in Increasing Crisis Visibility

While ordinary users often initiate the crisis, their visibility is significantly boosted by larger, secondary accounts. Influential, high-reach platforms, such as digital news pages, entertainment news, and gossip accounts, played a crucial role in spreading crisis content, though they were not the original initiators. When a negative story is picked up by such a platform, it enjoys dramatically higher visibility. Our findings demonstrate the need to strongly consider emerging digital media in crisis management strategies.

595,000

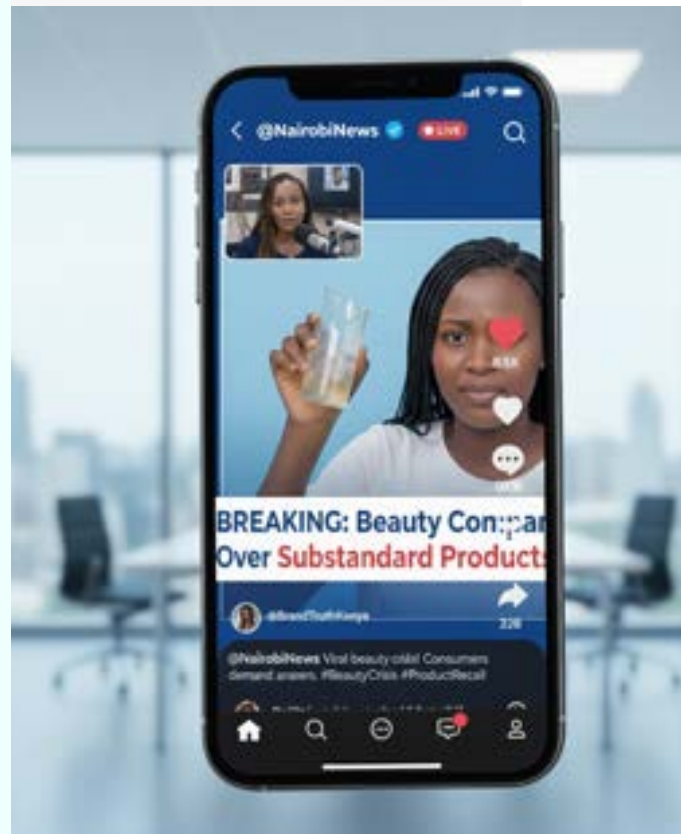
In one of the crisis cases analyzed by P&B Communication, a post shared by a digital media account (with presence on social media only) about the crisis gained close to 600 thousand views making up **36.5%** of the crisis' total reach of **1.63 million views**.

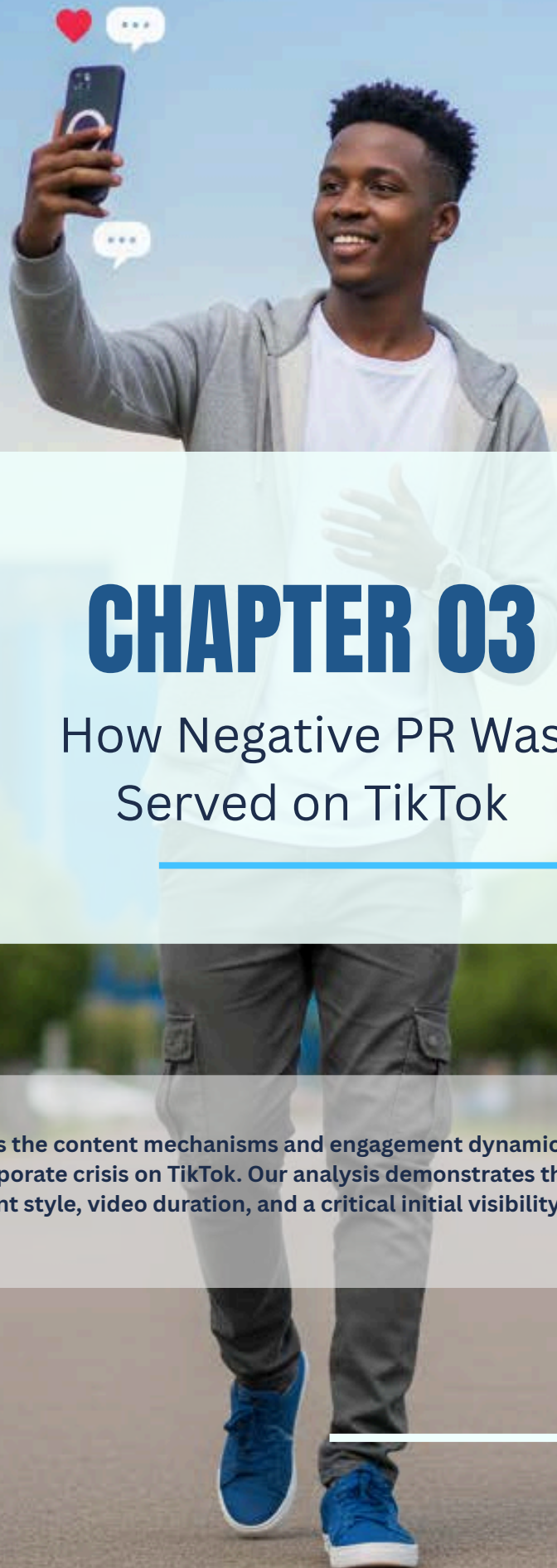
🌐 Digital Media's Role in Crisis Spreading

Digital Media platforms (primarily small, single-person owned social media accounts) need large volumes of content and tend to jump on "juicy" stories about brands. These platforms enjoy large audiences and have proven to be powerful actors in spreading crises.

🔗 Digital Media's Role in Crisis Management

Beyond spreading crisis, these platforms are playing an important role in crisis management. In another case analyzed by P&B communication, a brand that lacked presence on Tik Tok created an effective response video. Though the brand did not share the video on Tik Tok, a digital media platform picked it and shared it on the platform, where the crisis had sparked a conversation. The reshared response gained over **300,000 views**.





CHAPTER 03

How Negative PR Was Served on TikTok

This chapter dissects the content mechanisms and engagement dynamics that transform an individual's complaint into a corporate crisis on TikTok. Our analysis demonstrates that a crisis is driven by the confluence of content style, video duration, and a critical initial visibility threshold.

3.1 THE POWER OF NARRATIVE

Negative sentiment about brands is disseminated on Tik Tok through four primary styles, highlighting the platform's preference for **storytelling and fast-paced trends**.

Our findings are not only important in helping brands know what to anticipate; these content dissemination styles should guide how brands package their responses when caught in a crisis, to ensure maximum reach. We found that three styles dominated crisis content distribution, as broken down below:



Tik Tok Storytime

Highly engaging, narrative-driven content is used to bring attention to an issue by "ticking all the boxes" for newsworthiness (emotion, conflict, and relatability). Storytimes tend to be long videos popular with Millennials.

Tik Tok Rants

Characterized by a direct address and unfiltered emotional expression, often used when narrative structure is less important than urgent communication. Tik Tok rants tend to be emotive and therefore triggering psychological responses that drive engagement. Like storytimes, rants, also tend to be delivered in long form videos (over 90 seconds).

Tik Tok Challenge

Initiators leverage existing trends and sounds to frame the complaint; this method is particularly popular with Gen Z for rapid, high-reach dissemination.

Reshared Photos

Finally, a small percentage of the 300 plus videos we analyzed was attributed to various other styles, including reshared graphics/photos. These have limited reach unless they are addressing an issue with extremely high public interest. They, however, proved to be effective in spreading misinformation.

3.2 VIDEO LENGTH & ENGAGEMENT DYNAMICS

Why Longer Videos Are More Effective in Spreading Negative Publicity

While short content is often associated with the platform, our data on crisis content shows a strong preference for detailed narration. Long Videos (Over 90 seconds) account for 66% (198 posts) of the analyzed content. These videos sacrifice immediate, high-velocity reach for deep engagement, sparking prolonged conversations. Subsequently, public sentiment is easier to track in these kinds of videos through comment sections.

Conversely, Micro Videos (under 10 seconds) only account for 20% of the content we analyzed. While these videos tend to achieve higher reach due to algorithmic preference, they result in lower engagement rates. Short Videos (under 90 seconds) accounted for the remaining 14% of the content. This dynamic reinforces that while reach can be achieved quickly with micro videos, the long-term impact and sustained discussion necessary for a full-blown crisis often rely on the in-depth engagement generated by longer-form content.

3.5M

One of the most viewed posts we analyzed (not the first post initiating the crisis- but rather a follow-up video) gained 3.5 million views. This video, like many others with high view count was longer than 90 seconds.

66%

66% of the posts shared to call out brands or drive attention to an issue, were longer than 90 seconds. This type was notably more popular with millennials while some Gen Zs showed some preference for micro videos and short videos (under 90 seconds).



3.3 WHEN NEGATIVE PR TURNS TO CRISIS

A lot of brands struggle with deciding on what exactly to do when a negative story about them surfaces online.

Understanding the anatomy of a Tik Tok crisis and how it transitions from just negative publicity to crisis is crucial.

Our analysis revealed that crises follow two distinct patterns on Tik Tok. Additionally, the initial viral spark and how the first video performs determines the crisis trajectory:



Acute, Sudden and Brief Crisis Events

These types of crisis are sudden and they last between **3 to 5 days**. They require swift response to prevent long-term reputational damage. Factors such as the first video's performance, engagement, public sentiment (from comments) and who else picks and reshares the content should be important guiding factors for brands. Our analysis revealed that Tik Tok posts that escalated to crises within a brief window had between **100,000 and 500,000 views on the first video**, thus pushing the discussion to viral status. In one case, analyzed by P&B Communication, the first video gained **1.7 million views** sparking a global reaction on Tik Tok. Additionally, public sentiment in the comment section played a huge role in shaping the public's interest and reaction to the crisis. The crisis initiator's influence did not matter and although additional content from other accounts, especially influential digital media pushed the conversation, in some cases, just a few posts by the initiator were enough to escalate a situation from negative PR to crisis.

Gradual, Slow Boil Crisis

Contrary to the sudden and brief crisis events, a gradual Tik Tok crisis revolves around months or even years of negative publicity that eventually leads to a slow boil. Our analysis revealed that gradual crisis may not attract much viewership at first, but ultimately when the crisis reaches a climax, it is almost beyond control. For instance, one of the cases we analyzed attracted about **10,000 views in the first video** and the public sentiment was not supportive of the crisis initiator. The unchecked negative publicity gradually grew over several months, leading to a full-blown crisis. At its peak, one of the most viewed posts about the crisis attracted **3.5 million views**- the highest on any organic posts related to a crisis, we analyzed.

These types of crisis are highly unpredictable and they tend to kill a brand's reputation little by little, unlike the brief crisis which harms reputation in one blow.

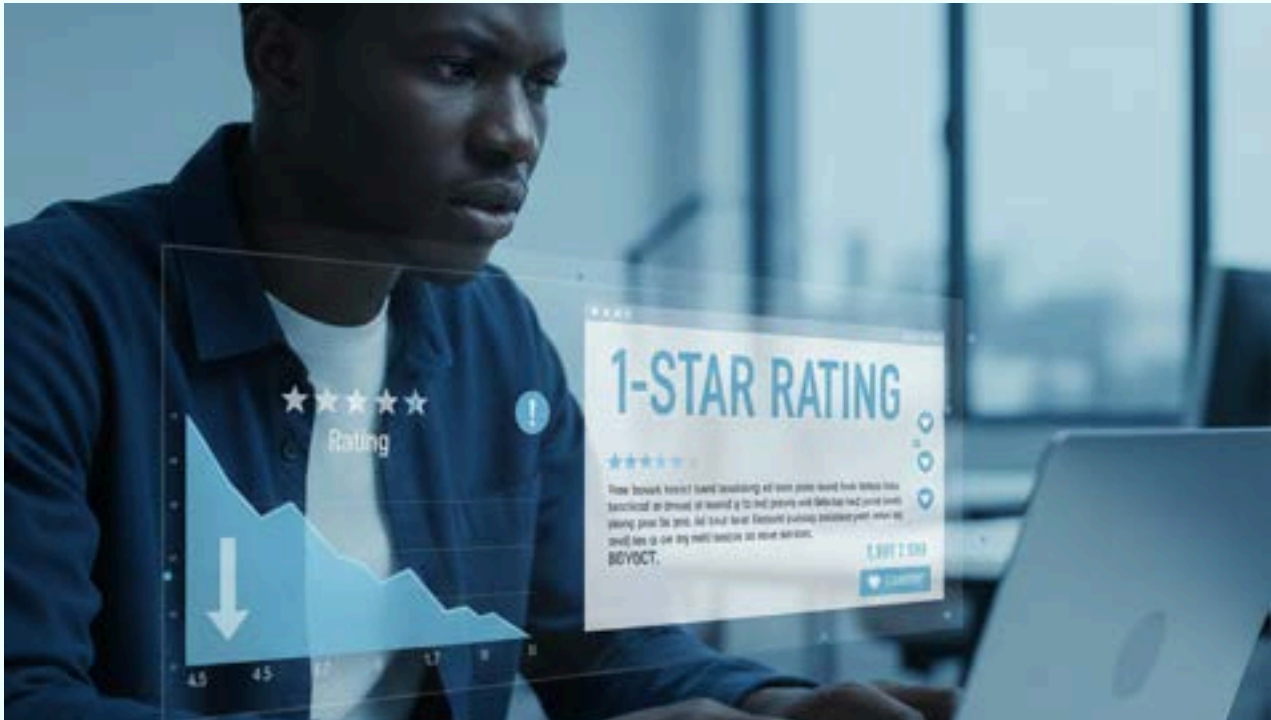
In some cases, a brief crisis can transition into a gradual, repetitive crisis, as we will discuss in chapter 4.

A crowd of people, mostly men, are gathered in what appears to be a public space or a protest. They are holding up signs and some have their hands raised. The signs visible include "BOYCOTT!", "JUSTICE NOW!", and "PAY US OUR OUR MONEY". The overall atmosphere is one of a public demonstration or protest.

CHAPTER 04

The Impact of Tik Tok Led Crisis & Negative PR on Kenyan Brands

This chapter analyses how a crisis or negative publicity story distributed on Tik Tok impacts the affected brands. Our findings show both short-term and long-term impact, whether the negative PR graduates into a crisis or not. One concerning trend is the possibility of physical threats on brands.



4.1 IMPACT OF A TIK TOK CRISIS

Repetitive Attacks and Review Bombs

The most common consequence for brands is the failure to achieve closure. Repeated attacks on the platform affected 70% of the brands analyzed, necessitating that crisis management shift from a reactionary event to a continuous activity. This compounding effect is often fueled by high-engagement dynamics, with 40% of brands enduring hate comments and personal attacks from users. Furthermore, 30% of brands faced critical attacks on their digital reviews (review bombing). This review damage is often long-lasting, inflicting an almost permanent negative impact on their digital footprint, confirming that short-term crisis evolves into a continuous reputation liability. Unique cases, however, showed that negative publicity could translate into "free publicity" when public interest drove content creation in the brand's defense. Most importantly, one brand can endure several or all of these effects as a result of a Tik Tok crisis.

30%

30% of the brands experienced review bombings on Google resulting in long-term impact on digital image.

70%

70% of the brands were either experiencing a never-ending cycle of bad publicity or they attracted repeated online attacks months after their first acute crisis.

4.2 PHYSICAL THREAT & ERODED PUBLIC TRUST

The Rise of Kenya's "Occupy" Culture

A unique and relevant finding is the escalation of digital anger into physical threats. 40% of brands involved in the 10 crises either faced threats for mass action offline or experienced actual "occupation". What began as a political movement in 2024 morphed into an aggressive threat to Kenyan businesses, with threats to "occupy" being extremely serious. Although not entirely a new phenomenon, the "occupy" culture took an aggressive and hostile nature in 2025. A brand's response and reaction to a negative story significantly influenced the public's decision to either go through with mass action threats or simply stop at "just threats".

This demands integration of social listening with thoughtful crisis responses as well as physical security planning.

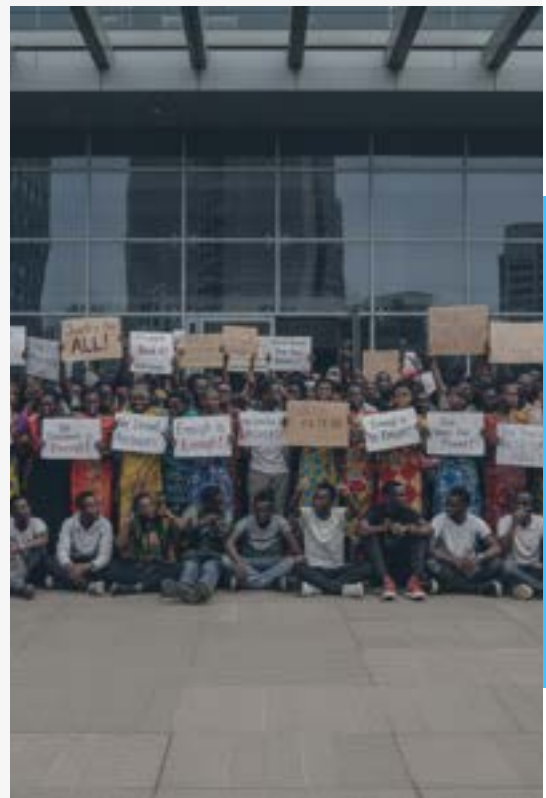
Additionally, 30% of brands appeared to have lost public trust, especially where the crisis revolved around questionable product quality or business practices. Other impacts noted include legal issues sparked by the public outcry or action taken against the initiators.

40%

40% of the crisis led to mass action or threats of physical occupation of business premises, signifying the rise of "occupy" culture in Kenya.

70

What began as a political movement globally, is now turning into a concern for businesses. According to the Global Protest Tracker by The Carnegie Endowment for Peace, between November 2024 and November 2025, more than 70 countries in the world had experienced significant protests. These trends show that masses are embracing mass action as a solution for complex challenges.





CHAPTER 05

Brand Reaction and Crisis Management Effectiveness

This chapter analyzes the response strategies employed by brands following a TikTok crisis and assesses the effectiveness of traditional versus evolving crisis management tools in a video-first environment. Our findings indicate that traditional methods face visibility hurdles, while making genuine amends remains the gold standard for resolution.

5.1 ARE PUBLIC STATEMENTS DEAD?

6.1 The Decline of Traditional Public Statements

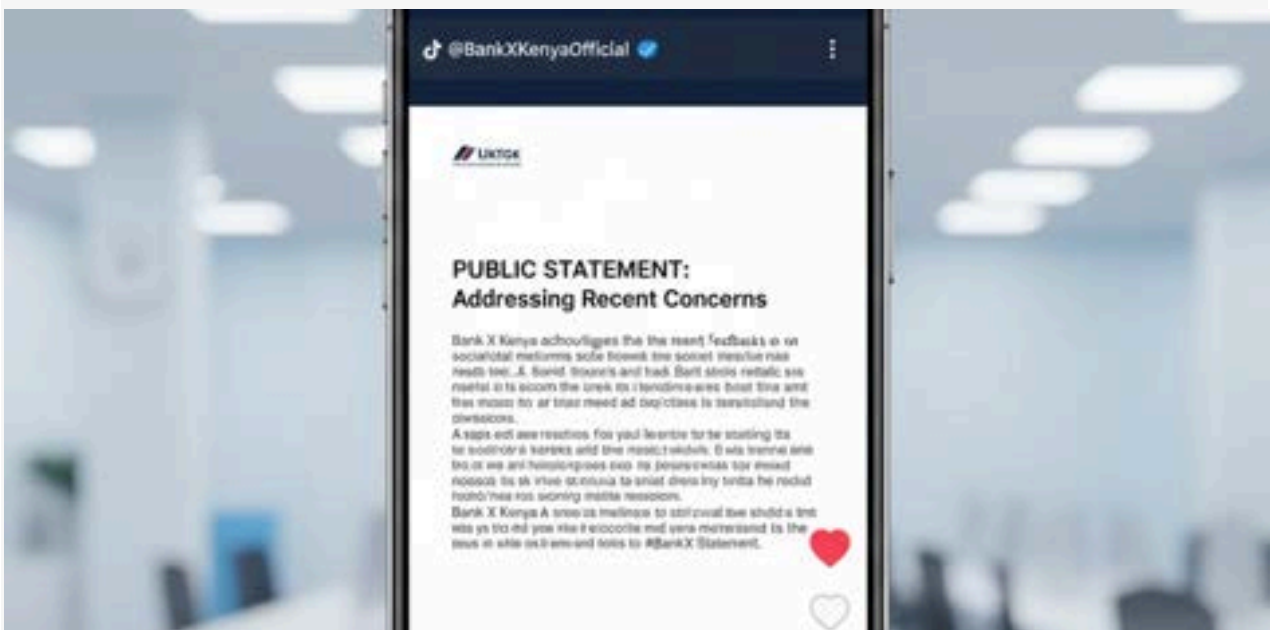
The most popular response tool was the traditional Public Statement, used by 40% of the affected brands. These findings are aligned with P&B Communication’s previous findings in the #100Kenyanbrands (2024) report. According to that report, while 35% of the 100 brands we analyzed did nothing significant about crisis cases, 25% circulated a press release or a public statement.

However, our analysis found severe limitations when this tool was deployed on TikTok. As a video-first platform, TikTok’s algorithm heavily disfavors static content. Although written public statements can be effective as quick responses that buy a brand time, they should not be treated as primary crisis management tools when it comes to social media-led crises.

In one case study, a brand’s public statement, shared as a still photo on Tik Tok, achieved only a few thousand views, failing to match the majority of the 6 million-plus views attained by the crisis content circulated on the platform. This huge disparity demonstrates that the written statement, even if shared elsewhere, is functionally ineffective as a primary TikTok crisis management tool.

 Limited Reach
5,000 Views

 Cumulative Crisis Reach
6,000,000 Views




5.2 THE EVOLVED PUBLIC STATEMENT

The Rise of Video Explainers and Video-First Crisis Management

Conversely, only **12% (2 out of 16)** of the affected brands successfully leveraged an evolved form of the public statement: the explainer video. These videos were meticulously designed for social media in terms of format, length, and content, achieving exceptional results. In one instance, an explainer video addressing public discourse and misinformation about the brand achieved more than three times the cumulative reach of the crisis content and instantly curtailed the negative publicity, proving that public statements are not dead; they simply require video-first repackaging to be consumable and shareable across platforms.

 **Shareability**
300,000

In one compelling case study where we analyzed a crisis that started on other platforms but spread to Tik Tok, the affected brand responded with an explainer video (over 90 seconds) which was distributed on social media and used in mainstream media as well. Despite the brand's absence on Tik Tok, the response video was shared on the platform by a digital media page and it gained over **300,000 views**.

 **Reach**
76.1%

In yet another successful crisis management case, a brand with presence on Tik Tok responded to a crisis with a short explainer video (about 90 seconds). The video gained three times the number of views that crisis had generated in Kenya accounting for **76.1%** of all the views attributed to this crisis. This means the brand's response probably reached everyone exposed to the crisis.



5.3 BEYOND PUBLIC STATEMENTS

□ The Effectiveness of Rectification and Other Approaches

The most effective crisis tool observed was practical action: 18% of brands resorted to making amends by rectifying the initial complaint. This approach consistently worked perfectly in resolving the issue, as today's audiences prioritize visible commitment to change over mere verbal assurances. However, caution is required, as making amends or issuing an apology can be interpreted as an admission of guilt in certain legal cases. This necessitates timely expert consultation before any action.

□ Retaliatory content and comment infiltration

20% of brands responded with retaliatory content or downplayed the allegations. Other tools used included legal action (defamation suits), PR moves such as positive media coverage, CSR and positive social media content as well as the use of influencer marketing to "sanitize" the brand. Furthermore, some brands attempted to infiltrate comment sections to sanitize their image. Ultimately, while each crisis is unique, the key takeaway is that effectiveness is tied less to the message's content (the statement) and more to the medium (video) and commitment (making amends). The public responds positively to genuine commitment to change while PR moves and empty statements are criticized. Infiltrating comments and responding to comments seemed effective in managing public sentiment.

18%

18% of the brands that made amends with the crisis initiators managed to solve their crises effectively. Caution is however necessary when making amends as each crisis is unique and some present legal complications.





CHAPTER 06

Conclusion and Strategic Recommendations

In this final chapter we tie it all together. What do these Tik Tok trends mean for corporate brands in Kenya? The cumulative reach for just 10 crises in 2025 is a number brands need to pay attention to. Additionally, we look into the “peak seasons” for crises and what to expect in 2026 as well as the blueprint for surviving a Tik Tok crisis in the coming years.

6.1 DECODING THE CATASTROPHIC REACH

The cumulative reach of **46.362 million views across just 10 crises** underscores the catastrophic virality of TikTok. Considering Kenya had approximately **15.1 million active social media user** identities at the start of 2025 (Data Reportal), this figure indicates that the crisis content reached a significant number of social media users in the country. This phenomenal reach is not a function of follower count, but of TikTok's aggressive algorithm, which prioritizes content resonance over account influence. For brands, this means a single, compelling negative video can bypass traditional media barriers and instantly expose the entire addressable market to damaging publicity. The algorithm's power to rapidly push content to vast audiences is the most important factor which requires a strategic overhaul in digital PR.

30M

The cumulative reach for just 10 crises in 2025 is a staggering 46.362 million views (including the reach for brand responses. Roughly, the original crisis content accounts for more than 30 million of these views.

Although many brands in Kenya still treat Tik Tok as a "Gen Z" platform. These numbers show the platform's growth into a mainstream social media platform in Kenya. There is an urgent need to incorporate Tik Tok into digital PR strategies. The reach does not just represent catastrophic crises but it also signals opportunities to connect with broad audiences.

6.2 THE NEW DIGITAL THREAT

The Need for Proactive Crisis Management

The 2025 data confirms that the nature of corporate crisis on TikTok has fundamentally changed, challenging several traditional PR assumptions. The threat is driven less by established influencers or influential mainstream media and more by ordinary users and Millennials (60% of initiators) seeking accountability, often over real-world service failures (80% offline trigger). Furthermore, the digital threat now crosses into the physical realm, with the 'Occupy' mass action culture affecting 40% of cases. This convergence requires PR teams to abandon reactive strategies and adopt a continuous risk management posture that focuses on monitoring mentions and real-world customer feedback. Tracking public sentiment on TikTok is also made easier by the comment section's high engagement, which offers immediate insight into the public mood.

Social Listening Strategies

Although social listening has largely been popular with big international brands, with the rise of platforms like Tik Tok where opinions have visibility and they shape public perception. Every sizeable brand needs to consider routine social listening to capture negative sentiment before it turns into a crisis. Tik Tok makes this easier with its search engine capabilities but more sophisticated tech tools can go a long way for brands with frequent mentions.

Fixing Customer Feedback Management

Traditionally the suggestion box and customer care lines have surfaced in collecting customer feedback. However with the rise of online, contact-less service delivery, brands need to rethink how they collect feedback. **Follow-up calls, internal rating and review systems and tech-first complaint submission tools** can help capture customer sentiment in time.



6.3 PEAK SEASON FOR CRISES

When are Brands Likely to Experience a Crisis?

Our analysis of the 2025 data reveals a distinct seasonal pattern for corporate crises and negative publicity. The least likely period for a crisis to occur is **Quarter One**. However, vulnerability significantly increases toward the second half of the year: **50% of the crises we analyzed occurred in Quarter Three and Quarter Four**, with Q4 recording the highest number of negative publicity incidents for corporates. This peak period aligns with increased consumer activity, holiday spending, and year-end performance pressures, suggesting that elevated customer expectations and transactional volume directly translate into higher social media risk. PR teams must allocate disproportionately greater monitoring and resource reserves to the latter half of the calendar year to proactively manage this heightened risk.



Ratio

6.4 THE BLUEPRINT FOR 2026 CRISIS RESILIENCE

What Should Brands Do About These Trends?

Looking ahead, TikTok will continue to grow as a mainstream digital PR tool for brands in Kenya. The public is likely to keep exploring the platform as a free, easily accessible “public court”. While the 'Occupy' culture has endured for two years, its threat to businesses must be continuously monitored in 2026. The core blueprint for resilience involves:




- Monitoring and Presence:** Having a presence on the platform, even if only for monitoring, is non-negotiable. Simple actions like monitoring emerging negative publicity and responding to comments can make a significant difference in damage control.
- Prediction:** Establish the threshold for definitive crisis alarm signal. These signals could be viral negative content, a persistent initiator with repeated negative posts about your brand, repetitive negative public sentiment and growing unaddressed customer concerns offline.
- Response:** Adopt a swift video First crisis response format as the standard for addressing allegations and prioritize making genuine amends over mere verbal apologies, as the audience expects commitment to change. Seek professional advice to avoid legal or PR escalations before responding.
- Strategy:** Integrate social listening with physical security planning to manage the evolving digital-to-physical threat.

THANK YOU

We are ready to assist you

Whether you are experiencing a crisis now or perhaps your company needs to conduct a crisis preparedness audit, reach out for consultations.

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