

Analysis of the “Employee-Generated Content” Marketing Communication Strategy for Sculpt Products on TikTok

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of social media platforms has transformed digital marketing communication strategies, requiring brands to develop more authentic, interactive, and relatable approaches to engage audiences. TikTok, as a short-form video platform, provides opportunities for fashion brands to strengthen consumer relationships through creative content strategies. SCULPT, a shapewear brand, has shifted from relying on external content creators toward an Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy by positioning internal employees as brand communicators. This study aims to examine how SCULPT implements EGC as a marketing communication strategy on TikTok and to identify the reasons behind the adoption of this approach. This research employed a qualitative method using in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving key informants, including the owner, marketing manager, social media specialist, ads specialist, and content creators. The findings indicate that SCULPT's EGC strategy represents an Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) practice through three main dimensions: message consistency, communication channel integration, and relationship building. The strategy maintains consistent brand messages related to comfort, product quality, confidence, and women empowerment while integrating TikTok, TikTok Shop, live streaming, campaigns, and paid advertising channels. Furthermore, employees act as brand representatives who create closer, more personal, and trustworthy interactions with audiences. In conclusion, EGC enables SCULPT to strengthen brand identity, improve audience engagement, and adapt marketing communication to the dynamic characteristics of digital media.

INTRODUCTION

SCULPT is a fashion shapewear brand that has been actively utilizing the TikTok platform as a digital marketing communication medium since 2021. Initially, SCULPT used a User-Generated Content (UGC) approach by utilizing influencers and external parties in the production of promotional content on social media. However, this strategy has not been able to generate stable audience engagement amid increasing competition for digital content. TikTok's presence as a short video-based social media makes marketing communication strategies increasingly dependent on creativity, speed of message delivery, and the ability of brands to build interaction with audiences. Angelin and Paramita (2024) show that marketing communication strategies through TikTok can be used to increase customer engagement through content management, promotions, and communication activities that are able to attract consumer attention. This reinforces the relevance of this study because SCULPT uses TikTok as the main channel in implementing the Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy.

The development of social media, especially TikTok as a short video-based platform, has changed the way brands convey marketing communication messages (Khairunnisaa et al., 2025). Content no longer only functions as an information medium, but must also be fast, interactive, and able to build closeness with the audience. This requires brands to present more authentic communication in order to maintain user attention amid the high flow of digital content (Fatimah (2025)). Along with these changes, SCULPT developed a marketing communication strategy by optimizing the role of internal employees as content creators. Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is content created by employees and used to support social media content marketing strategies, especially in building a brand image that is more humane, authentic, and in line with brand messages and values (Khairunnisaa et al., 2025). In Employee-Generated Content (EGC), employees play the role not only of being an internal part of the company, but also of brand representation that interacts directly with the audience through digital content (Choudhary et al. 2026; Rusi 2025; Saleem et al. 2021; Shahzad et al. 2025).

In addition to being an entertainment space, TikTok has also developed as a medium that influences the way consumers know, assess, and consider a product, especially in the fashion category. TikTok has the potential as a digital marketing medium because its short video format allows brands to convey messages creatively, visually, and easily accessible to audiences. Hadi Surya and Erdiansyah (2024) explained that TikTok can be used as a digital marketing approach, especially in beauty products, because the platform supports the delivery of creative messages and attracts the attention of consumers. This is relevant to this study because SCULPT also uses TikTok to convey fashion shapewear product messages through EGC content. DataReportal notes that by early 2025, the adult TikTok ad audience in Indonesia will consist of 50.8% women and 49.2% men. The composition shows that TikTok has a large reach of female audiences, making it relevant for female fashion brands in building digital marketing communications, Kristi and Dewi (2023). In the context of fashion products, consumers' purchasing decisions on social media are not only influenced by rational needs, but also by emotional factors, visual appeal, message comfort, and pleasant experiences when viewing content. Kristi and Dewi (2023) show that perceived enjoyment and perceived usefulness play a role in encouraging impulse buying of fashion products through Instagram and TikTok content and live. This shows that fashion content on social media needs to be packaged in an attractive, natural, and relevant way to the audience's experience in order to be able to build attention and engagement.

Based on these conditions, SCULPT is a relevant object to be researched because shapewear products are not only related to the function of clothing, but also to the perception of the body, comfort and confidence of women (Chrimes et al., 2023). In marketing its products on TikTok, SCULPT develops a marketing communication strategy by optimizing the role of internal employees as content creators (Kang & Lou, 2022; Lin & Nuangjamnong, 2022). Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is content created by employees and used to support social media content marketing strategies, especially in building a more humane, authentic, and aligned brand image with brand messages and values (Saleem & Hawkins, 2021; Venciūtė et al., 2023). In Employee-Generated Content (EGC), employees play the role not only of being an internal part of the company, but also of brand representation that interacts directly with the audience through digital content (Yuan et al., 2022).

The implementation of Employee-Generated Content (EGC) in SCULPT is characterized by a content style that is more natural, relatable, and close to the audience's daily life (Chu et al., 2022). The content produced includes various formats such as product education, lifestyle, comedy sketches, soft selling, and interactive content that encourages audience engagement in live streaming (Ning et al., 2022; Li & Shen, 2023; Zheng et al., 2022). In addition, SCULPT also utilizes formats such as pranks, interviews, and pre-heating

content to increase audience enthusiasm before the campaign takes place (Liu et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023).

In practice, SCULPT builds a distinctive communication approach through the term "SCULPTcult" to refer to customers, while employees play the role of "Madam". This approach is reflected in various content such as "POV: SCULPTcult asks Madam for a discount during payday sale" and educational content such as "POV: working at SCULPT using a comfortable corset for daily activities". This strategy shows that Employee-Generated Content (EGC) not only functions as a promotional medium, but also as a form of storytelling that builds emotional closeness to the audience.

The change in strategy from influencer-based content to employee-based content shows a shift in digital marketing communication practices. Research shows that content that is considered more authentic and comes from real experiences has greater potential in increasing audience engagement than content that is too commercial (Aalto University Thesis, 2025; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

This phenomenon can be explained through the concept of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), which emphasizes the importance of message integration and consistency of communication across channels. In today's digital context, Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) includes not only uniformity of messages, but also the integration of communication actors, including employees as part of a brand's communication strategy (Philip J. Kitchen et al., 2021).

In addition, the phenomenon of Employee-Generated Content (EGC) can also be analyzed through the perspective of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), which explains how technology-mediated interactions shape the audience's perception of identity, credibility, and relationship with brands. In platforms such as TikTok, audiences judge the authenticity of communicators based on communication styles, content consistency, and digitally constructed interactions (Philip J. Kitchen et al., 2021).

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the marketing communication strategy of SCULPT based on Employee-Generated Content (EGC) on TikTok. Data collection was conducted using multiple techniques, including in-depth interviews, direct observation, and document analysis, to capture a comprehensive understanding of internal practices and strategic approaches. The research informants comprised the company owner, marketing manager, social media specialist, ads specialist, and content creator, providing perspectives from key stakeholders involved in content planning, production, and distribution.

The study applies the theory of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) as the primary framework, focusing on three dimensions: message consistency, channel integration, and relationship building. IMC enables the analysis of how SCULPT coordinates its marketing communications to deliver cohesive and consistent brand messages through digital platforms. As a supporting concept, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) is used to examine interactions between employees as brand representatives and audiences, highlighting how digital media facilitates engagement, credibility, and relational closeness.

Data analysis followed a thematic approach, categorizing findings according to IMC dimensions and assessing how EGC contributes to brand positioning, audience engagement, and trust building. Triangulation of interviews, observations, and documentation ensured the reliability and validity of the findings. Additionally, the study evaluates performance indicators such as content engagement, audience interaction, and conversion metrics to link qualitative insights with measurable outcomes. Through this methodology, the research

captures both strategic intent and practical implementation of EGC as part of SCULPT's integrated marketing communication strategy on TikTok.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews and observations that have been conducted, the Employee-Generated Content (EGC)-based marketing communication strategy implemented by SCULPT through TikTok can be understood as part of an integrated marketing communication strategy. Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is not only used as a product promotion medium, but also as a way for SCULPT to build more authentic, natural, and close communication with the audience. In practice, internal employees not only play the role of being part of the company, but also become communicators who represent the brand's values, character, and message to TikTok's audience.

The discussion in this study uses the theory of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) as the main theory. IMC is used to analyze how SCULPT manages marketing communications through Employee-Generated Content (EGC) in an integrated and consistent manner. In the context of this research, the discussion was directed to the three main dimensions of IMC, namely message consistency, communication channel integration, and relationship building. These three dimensions are used to see how EGC SCULPT content is designed, produced, distributed, and evaluated as part of a digital marketing communication strategy.

In addition, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) is used as a supporting concept to understand how communication between SCULPT employees and audiences takes place through digital media, specifically TikTok. In this case, TikTok is a communication space that allows interaction, image formation, and closeness between brands and audiences through content created by employees.

EGC as SCULPT's Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy

The results show that the use of Employee-Generated Content (EGC) in SCULPT is a form of communication strategy change from content that previously relied more on external parties, such as influencers and User-Generated Content (UGC), to content produced by internal employees. This change is not only related to the need for more content production, but also to the need for brands to have stronger communication controls.

Based on the results of the interview, the owner of SCULPT explained that Employee-Generated Content (EGC) was chosen because it was considered more efficient and effective than external content. Internal employees are considered easier to direct, understand the product better, and are able to follow TikTok trends faster. This shows that the Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy was chosen not only for creative reasons, but also for operational and strategic reasons. In the context of IMC, this shows that SCULPT seeks to manage marketing communications in a more coordinated manner through the company's internal resources.

Employee-Generated Content (EGC) also provides space for SCULPT to maintain the direction of the brand's communication message. When content is created by external parties, brands have limitations in controlling how messages are delivered. On the other hand, when content is created by internal employees, companies can provide briefs, directions, and a clearer approval process. Thus, Employee-Generated Content (EGC) allows SCULPT to maintain alignment between product messages, communication styles, and brand identity.

From the perspective of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), this strategy shows an effort to unify the marketing communication process, starting from message planning, content production, media distribution, to performance evaluation. Employee-Generated Content (EGC) does not stand as separate content, but becomes part of SCULPT's overall marketing communication strategy. Employees who appear in content become a link

between the brand and the audience, as well as a representation of the values that SCULPT wants to build.

In addition, the results of interviews with Marketing Managers also show that Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is developed through a structured planning process. The big theme of the campaign is determined first, then developed into content ideas that suit the product, trends, and needs of the audience. After that, the idea is forwarded to the social media team and content creators to be produced. This process shows that Employee-Generated Content (EGC) content is not created entirely spontaneously, but remains within the framework of a communication strategy that has been determined by the company.

Thus, Employee-Generated Content (EGC) can be understood as part of SCULPT's integrated marketing communication strategy. This strategy combines elements of promotion, storytelling, education, interaction, and employee representation in a more humane form of digital communication. This makes Employee-Generated Content (EGC) not only serve to introduce products, but also to strengthen brand identity and build relationships with audiences.

Message Consistency in EGC SCULPT Content

Message consistency is one of the important aspects of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). In this study, the consistency of the message can be seen from how SCULPT keeps each Employee-Generated Content (EGC) carrying the main values and identity of the brand. Based on the results of interviews and observations, the main messages that often appear in SCULPT's Employee-Generated Content (EGC) are related to product comfort, quality, women's confidence, body confidence, and women's empowerment.

SCULPT's Marketing Manager explained that one of the messages that continues to be maintained in brand communication is comfort and product quality. The message is then lowered into various forms of content, both in the form of product education, storytelling, sketches, and content that follows TikTok trends. In this way, the message conveyed does not always appear in the form of direct promotion, but still leads to the same meaning, which is to strengthen SCULPT's positioning as a shapewear brand that is comfortable, quality, and supports women's confidence.

Message consistency is also maintained through the curation and approval process. Before content is published, content must first be checked to remain in line with the brand's communication goals. The Marketing Manager explained that SCULPT has guidelines and do's and don'ts in content production, including avoiding SARA elements, excessive claims, and content that has the potential to violate the platform's rules. This is important because SCULPT products are related to shapewear and underwear, so the way of delivering messages must remain careful and in accordance with platform regulations.

The SCULPT owner also emphasized that brand communication through Employee-Generated Content (EGC) must be controlled internally so that communication errors do not occur. The verification process is carried out by several parties before the content is published, especially for content related to major campaigns or sensitive issues. From IMC's perspective, this process shows that SCULPT strives to keep the message conveyed through various content in line with the brand's vision.

Apart from the content of the message, consistency can also be seen from the delivery style. SCULPT's Content Creator explains that in creating content, employees need to convey a message with clear articulation, fun expressions, and a natural communication style. The message should also not be conveyed excessively so as not to create the impression of overclaiming. Thus, even though Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is lightly packaged and follows TikTok trends, the message conveyed still has clear boundaries and directions.

Based on these findings, it can be understood that message consistency in SCULPT's Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy does not mean that all content has to be the

same shape. Content can come in a variety of formats, such as educational, POV, comedy sketches, storytelling, or video replies. However, the main message that wants to be built remains consistent, namely that SCULPT is a brand that prioritizes comfort, quality, confidence, and women's experience in using shapewear products. This shows that SCULPT applies the principle of message consistency in IMC through targeted and sustainable message management.

Integration of Communication Channels in the EGC SCULPT Strategy

The second dimension in Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is the integration of communication channels. Based on the results of the research, the EGC SCULPT strategy is not only carried out through one type of content, but is connected to several digital communication channels, such as TikTok, Instagram, TikTok Shop, live streaming, campaigns, and paid advertising. This shows that SCULPT uses EGC as part of a mutually supportive digital marketing communication system.

SCULPT's Social Media Specialist explained that TikTok and Instagram have different functions in brand communication strategies. TikTok is more directed towards sales, revenue, and content that is hard selling and soft selling. Meanwhile, Instagram is more directed towards branding and the formation of a visual brand image. These differences in function indicate that SCULPT does not use all platforms in the same way, but adapts the characteristics of the media to the communication objectives it seeks to achieve.

In the context of TikTok, Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is produced in sufficient quantities to keep up with the fast pace of the platform. The Social Media Specialist explained that content distribution can reach two videos per day, with publication timings tailored to the type of content and ongoing campaigns. For example, preheat or payday content can be published in the morning or noon to support the sale momentum, while engagement content can be published during the day to night. This shows that the distribution of SCULPT content is done strategically and not only based on the desire to upload content regularly.

Channel integration can also be seen from the relationship between EGC content with TikTok Shop and live streaming. EGC content serves to build awareness, explain products, and create audience interest before being directed to follow-up actions, such as watching live or making a purchase. Thus, Employee-Generated Content (EGC) becomes part of the marketing communication pipeline that connects content, interactions, promotions, and transactions.

In addition to being used organically, Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is also integrated into paid advertising strategies. Ads Specialist SCULPT explained that Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is a form of content used in digital advertising strategies because it is considered relatable to the target market's behavior. Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is considered less visible than formal advertising, making it easier for audiences to receive the message being conveyed. This shows that Employee-Generated Content (EGC) not only functions as social media content, but also as marketing communication material used in performance marketing.

In IMC's perspective, this channel integration shows that SCULPT seeks to connect the various communication touchpoints with the audience. TikTok is used to reach a wide audience and drive engagement, TikTok Shop and live streaming are used to support sales, Instagram is used to build branding, while ads are used to expand reach and improve content performance. Thus, the EGC SCULPT strategy shows that there is an integration between channels that support each other in achieving marketing communication goals.

Relationship Building between SCULPT and Audience through EGC

The third dimension in Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is relationship building. In this study, relationship building can be seen from how SCULPT uses employees as the face of the brand to build closeness, trust, and a more personal relationship with TikTok

audiences. Employees not only appear as talents, but also communicators who convey brand messages directly to the audience.

The SCULPT owner explained that one of the main goals of using Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is to build familiarity between the audience and the brand. When audiences see the same employee's faces over and over again in TikTok content, audiences get to know the figure better and feel they have a closer relationship with the brand. In this case, employees become a symbol of the closeness between SCULPT and the audience, because the audience not only sees the brand as an institution, but also sees the internal people behind the brand.

Relationship building can also be seen from the use of special terms such as "SCULPTcult" to refer to customers or audience communities, and "Madam" as a representation of SCULPT employees. The term forms a distinctive communication identity and builds an impression of community. With a special mention, the audience is not only positioned as a consumer, but also as part of the brand community. This strengthens the emotional connection between SCULPT and the audience.

In addition, the communication style in Employee-Generated Content (EGC) content also strengthens relationship building. Based on the results of interviews with Social Media Specialists and Content Creators, Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is packaged through storytelling, sketches, humor, product education, and everyday conversational styles. This approach makes the marketing message feel lighter and less formal. Audiences don't feel like they're seeing ads directly, but they're seeing content that's close to their everyday experience.

Interaction with the audience is also an important part of relationship building. Content Creator explains that audience questions in the comment column are often used as new content ideas, such as questions about how to use the product, size recommendations, or the selection of products that suit certain needs. The question can then be answered through a video reply so that the information provided is clearer. This shows that the audience is not only the recipient of the message, but also influences the content production process. From the perspective of CMC as a supporting concept, the interaction shows that communication between SCULPT and the audience takes place through digital media that allows for a two-way response. TikTok not only functions as a channel for spreading messages, but also as a space for interaction between employees as brand communicators and audiences as message recipients. In the context of IMC, this interaction supports relationship building because brands can maintain continuous communication with their audience.

Employee-Generated Content (EGC) also plays a role in building audience trust. Ads Specialist explains that audiences tend to see Employee-Generated Content (EGC) as a more equal communication because the message is delivered by the employee, not by the brand formally or a public figure. Employees are considered closer to the product because they understand, use, and engage directly in the brand's activities. Thus, the message conveyed in Employee-Generated Content (EGC) can feel more credible and personal.

Based on these findings, it can be understood that relationship building in SCULPT's Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy is built through three main things, namely the consistency of employee presence in the content, a natural and relatable communication style, and direct interaction with the audience. This strategy makes SCULPT's marketing communication not only oriented to product promotion, but also to the formation of long-term relationships with the audience.

Evaluate Employee-Generated Content (EGC) Strategy as Part of Digital Marketing Communication

The results show that SCULPT's Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy does not only stop at the content production and distribution process, but also continues with performance evaluation. Evaluation is carried out to find out whether the published content is

able to achieve the communication goals that have been set, both in terms of engagement, reach, and sales.

Ads Specialist SCULPT explained that content evaluation is carried out through several indicators, such as click through rate (CTR), return on ad spend (ROAS), engagement, views, and ad performance. CTR is used to see how much an audience is interested in making a click after viewing content, while ROAS is used to measure the effectiveness of an ad in terms of revenue generated. In the context of digital marketing, these indicators are important because they can show whether the message conveyed through content is successfully driving audience action. In addition, SCULPT also uses A/B testing to compare the performance of several content with different concepts. Through A/B testing, teams can see which content performs better in a given period. Higher-performing content can be continued, developed, or used as a reference for subsequent content production. This shows that SCULPT's communication strategy is not only based on creativity, but also supported by digital performance data.

Social Media Specialist also explained that engagement rate is one of the important indicators in reading content performance. Engagement is seen through likes, comments, shares, and audience interaction with content. The higher the engagement, the more likely the content is to reach a wider audience. In the context of Employee-Generated Content (EGC), engagement is important because it shows the audience's response to the message conveyed by employees as brand communicators.

The results of the interviews also show that storytelling content and comedy sketches tend to perform well because the audience does not feel that they are seeing the ad directly. This type of content can grab the audience's attention through relatable stories, humor, and situations, before ultimately directing the audience to the product's message. This shows that a natural and less formal communication format can support the effectiveness of marketing communication on TikTok. In IMC's perspective, content evaluation is an important part of integrated marketing communication management. Evaluation helps companies know if the message is consistent, whether the channels used are effective, and whether relationships with audiences can be built through digital interactions. With the evaluation, SCULPT can continue to adjust its Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy to stay relevant to trends, audience needs, and brand marketing goals.

Based on the overall results of the research, it can be concluded that the Employee-Generated Content (EGC)-based marketing communication strategy implemented by SCULPT through TikTok is a form of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) practice in the digital environment. This strategy can be seen from how SCULPT manages messages, channels, and relationships with audiences in an integrated manner. In the dimension of message consistency, SCULPT maintains that each Employee-Generated Content (EGC) still carries the brand's main values, namely comfort, quality, confidence, and women's empowerment. This consistency is maintained through the process of briefing, curation, guidelines, and approval before the content is published. In the channel integration dimension, SCULPT connects TikTok content with Instagram, TikTok Shop, live streaming, campaigns, and paid ads. This shows that Employee-Generated Content (EGC) is not only used as organic content, but also becomes part of a broader digital marketing communication system.

Meanwhile, in the relationship building dimension, SCULPT utilizes employees as brand representatives to build familiarity, closeness, and trust with the audience. Employees who appear consistently in content make the audience more familiar with the face and character of the brand. In addition, interaction through comments, video replies, storytelling, and educational content makes communication between SCULPT and the audience feel more personal. Thus, Employee-Generated Content (EGC) in this study is not only understood as content created by employees, but also as an integrated marketing communication strategy.

Employee-Generated Content (EGC) helps SCULPT consistently convey brand messages, integrate digital communication channels, and build closer relationships with TikTok's audience. This strategy is one of the ways SCULPT adapts marketing communication to the character of social media that is fast, interactive, and demanding authenticity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the purpose of the research to find out how SCULPT performs its Employee-Generated Content (EGC) marketing communication strategy and to find out the reasons why SCULPT uses Employee-Generated Content (EGC) as a marketing communication strategy on TikTok, as well as based on the formulation of the problem regarding how and why the Employee-Generated Content (EGC) marketing communication strategy carried out by SCULPT on TikTok, it can be concluded that the Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy implemented by SCULPT is carried out by utilizing internal employees as the main communicators in the production and delivery of brand messages. This strategy is carried out through a directed process, starting from content planning, determining campaign themes, content production, distribution through TikTok, interaction with audiences, to evaluating content performance. From the perspective of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), SCULPT's Employee-Generated Content (EGC) strategy is seen through the consistency of messages regarding comfort, product quality, confidence, body confidence, and women's empowerment. This integration process is channeled through TikTok, TikTok Shop, live streaming, campaigns, and content that supports digital sales and relationship building activities through the use of employees as brand faces that build closeness, familiarity, and audience trust. SCULPT uses Employee-Generated Content (EGC) because this strategy is considered more in line with TikTok's fast, interactive, and demanding natural and relatable content. Compared to external content such as influencers or User-Generated Content (UGC), Employee-Generated Content (EGC) provides advantages because employees understand the product better, are easier to direct, can follow trends quickly, and are able to convey brand messages more authentically. Through employee engagement as brand representation, SCULPT not only promotes products, but also builds a more personal relationship with the audience. Thus, Employee-Generated Content (EGC) in this study can be understood as an integrated marketing communication strategy that helps SCULPT maintain message consistency, integrate digital communication channels, and build audience closeness and trust through TikTok.

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