

Excellence Awards - 2021 Entry  
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Entry ID: 9549

### Third Party Authorization

*Are you entering on behalf of, or in association with, any third party?:* No

### Basic Information

*Category:* 20. Best Use of Social Media

### Entry Information

*Entrant company name:* The Met Office

*Entry title:*

Met Office TikTok

### Entry

*Brief, objectives and budget:*

The Met Office is funded by Government to provide a national weather service for all citizens of the UK. A critical part of this remit is to equip the public with information that enables them to take appropriate decisions and actions to stay safe, particularly during times of severe weather.

Met Office analytics and research demonstrate regular reach and engagement with all generations of the public through direct/indirect channels, except for 18-24-year olds. As a result, this is the generation with the least awareness of the Met Office, and the least likely to engage and take action. This can be seen specifically through social media where, across all platforms, our audience is higher than the UK average by one age bracket.

The challenge for the Met Office was to find new and effective ways to engage and educate younger audiences.

The objectives included:

1. Find a place to engage younger audiences year-round so, when it really matters, we can communicate important warnings to drive action during severe weather.
2. Raise awareness of the Met Office brand amongst 18-24-year olds and be the 'go to' source of weather and climate information.

3. Find a place to be playful and experimental as a traditional brand to an audience with whom this style would resonate.

Budget - £0, using existing team resources.

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*The idea, research and planning:*

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In trying to reach as much of the UK as possible, the Met Office was already across 6 of the major social media channels with 1.5 million followers, enabling us to take our messages where many people are but younger audiences remained hard to engage. We had addressed this partly through Snapchat but the team kept an eye on the social climate for developments and opportunities, staying aware of how the consumption of information was changing and the emergence of new channels.

The team had been monitoring TikTok since launch. It tops the list of most downloaded non-gaming apps used predominantly by 18-24-year olds and over 60% of users are Generation Z.

Initially we could not see a place for the Met Office amongst dance videos but that didn't stop us experimenting. We created a channel in December 2019 to develop some test content and in January 2020 had published four videos getting just over 4.5k views.

The gamechanger came in April 2020 when TikTok announced they were investing heavily in educational content. Finally, they had a purpose which aligned more closely with ours.

Educational content is an important and growing category on TikTok actively being promoted using #LearnOnTikTok.

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*Strategy, creativity and innovation:*

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We proactively got in contact with TikTok and moved quickly to create a partnership strategy. We proposed posting regular learning and forecast content to raise awareness of the Met Office and amplify our warning messages. They were keen to partner and our account was verified and re-launched in July 2020.

Our strategy included:

- Publishing plan – 2-times-a-week, regular, consistent posting.
- Weekly trending topics to be incorporated.
- Use the #LearnOnTikTok on everything posted.
- 10-30 second clips, using a mix of presenters.
- Build trust through a combination of advice, learning and entertainment content.
- Listen to user feedback and regular reviews with TikTok to monitor what's working and where improvements can be made.
- Monitor trends/techniques as they evolve and experiment in an agile way.
- Monitor and maximise weather mentions in the wider media or by influencers.
- Grow our user base to 10,000 followers by end of 2020.

Creatively, TikTok and the target audience meant we could be more playful as a brand and push the boundaries more so than on traditional channels. For example, our 'It's going to be hot!' video used a trending filter/sound, achieving 238,000 views.

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### *Delivery/implementation of tactics:*

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Key to delivering a successful channel was partnering with TikTok, which was an original objective with many benefits:

- Helped to amplify our warnings and safety messages during named storms and severe weather – ultimately keeping more people safe.
- Meant our posts were included in the 'Discover' section, broadening reach.
- Provided ongoing feedback and encouragement.

To ensure TikTok aligned with our other channels, we brought decisions on our content into our daily editorial process, helping us identify opportunities and guarantee we were telling a consistent story.

We wanted our posts to be engaging and interesting, so captured feedback from TikTok and our followers around things they liked and what they didn't to drive improvement. We set up review meetings with TikTok to maintain a constant feedback loop. As a result, we kept posts under 30 seconds, minimised the use of effects and transitions, and used short titles to make impactful thumbnails.

We maintained regular posting twice weekly from launch, but created extra content around severe weather, noticing that engagement soared for named storm content.

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### *Measurement, evaluation and impact:*

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From the 4,500 views across four videos when experimenting with the channel, we enjoyed early success in the first two months with the re-launched official account using our strategy:

- Over 1 million views on the first 8 videos, with 52k likes and 500 comments.
- After 14 videos, we had 2.3 million combined video views.
- Follower numbers increased by over 1500 in 2 weeks since launch.

And we've seen continued growth throughout 2020:

- From a base of approximately 800 followers, we enjoyed an increase of 2,275% to 19,000 at year end, almost doubling our initial target.
- 4.4 million video views in 6 months.
- 11,237k combined Comments
- 209,392 Likes
- 500,000 views of a single storm warning post

But, most impactfully, we were beginning to see anecdotal evidence of people taking action based on our advice:

"Me planning how I'm going to keep my rabbit safe and downloading Netflix in case of a powercut"

"Me going to tell my mum we need to tie down the trampoline"

"I'm going to let my dog in, he's not really allowed but we let him in for weather like this"

Finally, we loved this comment which made us feel we were in the right space doing something right for this audience:

"I love how the Met Office has to use TikTok to tell teens stuff cos they know for a fact we don't watch the news"

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## Supporting Information

*Additional supporting information (images, artwork, clippings and other media):*

CIPRBestUseofSocialMediaMetOfficeTikToksupportingdoc.pdf

*Campaign image (if entering individual/team awards, upload headshot/team photo here):*

Provided

*Company logo:*

Provided

*Please write a 30 word entry summary in the third person:*

With an official remit to communicate the weather to the whole of the UK, the Met Office launched a TikTok channel to reach the hard to engage demographic of