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Moderator questions in Bold, Respondents in Regular text.

KEY: Unable to decipher = (inaudible + timecode), **Phonetic spelling** (ph) + timecode), **Missed word** = (mw + timecode), **Talking over each other** = (talking over each other + timecode).

Declan Murtagh: Thank you very much, Deborah. Welcome everybody to today's webinar, as Deborah mentioned, that's around social media trends for 2022 and I'm delighted to be here for another webinar on social media hosted by Invest NI. Deborah said, my name is Declan Murtagh from Brilliant Red Digital and without further ado, let's, let's get started. So, I guess over the past two years we've seen I suppose just how important social media is for businesses and no doubt, 2022's gonna be more of the same. And businesses, you know, shouldn't just be wondering, you know, how they're gonna engage their social media audiences this year, you know, they should be asking questions around, you know, what trends should I expect to see this year? What do they mean for my business? What do we need to do to stay ahead of the curve, you know, and how can we plan our social strategy around the latest trends and ships on social media, you know, in order to maximise our opportunities? So, what, what I've done is compile a list of the top social media trends for the year ahead, so let's look at the first trend we've identified. And this is all around TikTok, so I'm sure you all are aware of TikTok now at this stage and what we will continue to see this year is the rise of TikTok and, as more and more businesses start to explore how they can leverage the app's popularity and to how they can use it to increase their, the brand awareness of their company and how they can reach new audiences.

So, you know, TikTok, I guess, exploded during the first lockdown. Now, it's been around for a few years and, and did have a captive audience but it, it really came to prominence around of, the, first lockdown where people were looking at a source of entertainment and a source of escapism and then a lot of people jumped onto the TikTok platform. So, today, it is-, it is now over 1 billion active monthly users, so in around the same as, as Instagram, which is a lot of users globally, but it's also been downloaded 3 billion times as well, so there's a lot of dormant users and maybe obviously different devices and so on. And it's typically dominated by millennials and generation Z audiences, which will be, sort of, anyone born after 1981. So, it is a younger demographic than maybe the likes of Facebook and Twitter would be, which would have an older demographic. Originally, it was launched as a, a short-form video sharing platform for lip-syncing dancing videos, it was a, a merge of, of two different types of apps which one was the lip-syncing app and one was a, a video sharing app and it's now become a fully-fledged, sort of, video content service for all types of viewers and all types of content.

And it's, it's completely surpassed the idea of being a passing, you know, fad or, or trend that we might have seen with other platforms, and, and the key indicator for that is where, where other social media platforms and the, the big social media platforms have now started to experiment with similar forms of content. We've seen Instagram reels come to prominence over the last year. We've seen YouTube shorts,

and, and, and that really is the, the, sort of, the key influencer among TikTok's power, I guess, you know, when, when other platforms start to replicate what they're doing and the numbers certainly still see TikTok growing. So, we'll see more and more businesses over the next year start to experiment with, with TikTok. Like all social media platforms, they have owners, they have shareholders, they have a board and, and so on and there's people dedicated to how they can monetise the app. So what they've done over the last two years is to make it really useful for businesses and they've added tools such as ads and, and business profiles and lots of different creative ways that the businesses and individuals can, can create videos. So, that's something that has developed and has become really, really important over the last year. It has a real, sort of, vibrant, creative and experimental community. There's lots of ways to make, you know, special effect videos, humorous videos, sort of, before and after videos, and transition videos and lots of really, I suppose, cool and creative content options which are highly shareable and what you've probably seen, anybody that's on social media over the last year or so, is that these TikTok videos are easily shareable to other platforms.

You know, I've seen TikTok videos on, on, on Twitter, on, on LinkedIn, on Facebook, and on Instagram so they're they're finding their way on to other platforms as well. You'll see the branded TikTok in the bottom left-hand, or bottom right-hand corner or the top left-hand corner and so on and they're extremely engaging videos. And one thing about TikTok is that there's high rates of user retention. So, what it does is it keeps people on, on, on the app because of the, you know, how easy it is to use, sort of, swipe up to see new videos and, and so on and recommended videos, so it, it keeps people on the app, which is really important if you're advertising on the app, you know, you've more potential to, to, to get in front of various audiences and it's proven to be quite good at, at building an audience quickly, and I don't mean, you know, reaching 2 million followers or even 20,000 followers or so on. The nature of the platform means that even though people may not have even heard of your brand before or, or heard of the particular TikTok profile before, because of their behaviour, they can actually get to, to view your, your video so you can build an audience. Like, I've seen business profiles out there with maybe 5,000 followers on TikTok but millions of, of, of TikTok views because of the nature of the platform, so you can build an audience quite quickly.

And, and in terms of, of TikTok and, and businesses, they've recommended the businesses of campaign, recently, around, you know, 'Don't make ads, make TikToks.' And that's something that, that we do need to bear in mind as, as businesses, it's, it's, to, to make content rather than adverts, and that's something we'll, we'll talk about a little bit later on as well. But there's probably a lot of people on this webinar today that, that are B2B organisations as opposed to B2C and I think it would be fair to say that TikTok, you know, does lend itself slightly easier for, for B2C companies who are targeting consumers and so on. But what I would I say is don't discount it right away, explore the platform, you know, understand the TikTok business tools that are at your disposal, look at the potential audiences that you can reach, look at the culture of the platform, look at other people that are on the platform, other B2B companies and B2C companies, how are they using it, you know, what type of viewership are, are these people getting and so on. We, we can see in the example here from Apex Motion, which are a robotics company that sell to food manufacturing and food production companies, are using TikTok very effectively where they are creating humorous videos around, you know, how their products solves a particular problem. And as you

can see here, you know, they've over a 103,000 likes on this particular video, so they've, they've you know, used it really, really well and there's lots of other B2B brands using it to, you know, some estate agents have, have had great success, and lots of software companies, Shopify, Canva, a lot of B2B software companies are, are using it to, to create affect as well. So, we'll see TikTok really come to prominence for businesses and a lot more businesses starting to explore the platform over the next year or so. Captions by takenote.co