zeo

Combining SEO Marketing
and owned Social Media Marketing

To search optimise Social Platforms and to adapt to *Gen Z's* needs

(Canva generated illustration)

Unique Concept Proposition

The following marketing proposal presents a new strategy, called Zeo, which will be pitched to the marketing agency GA *(see Appendix 1 and Research Log for more information about GA).*

Zeo is a new marketing service strategy that can be offered to GA's relevant clients, in addition to traditional SEO marketing services. Rather than optimising search results on Google, as is the case with traditional SEO marketing, Zeo optimises search results on social media platforms to target a specific audience. As demonstrated in the first part of the degree project, SEO marketing needs to adapt to the search needs of younger generations.

Zeo is the answer to how GA's clients can attract Gen Zs and reach more traffic to their websites by the implication of a search-optimised content strategy on social media. This strategically planned content can be posted on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram or Pinterest, as these social platforms are the most popular ones where the target audience primarily conducts its searches *(See survey - Appendix 2).*

The following pitch includes a strategy plan and also a supportive deliverable, being the piloted version of Zeo and its data insights.

Essentially, Zeo is positioned as a complementary service to traditional search engine optimisation and offers a way to reach younger demographics through social media search optimisation.

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Market Insights
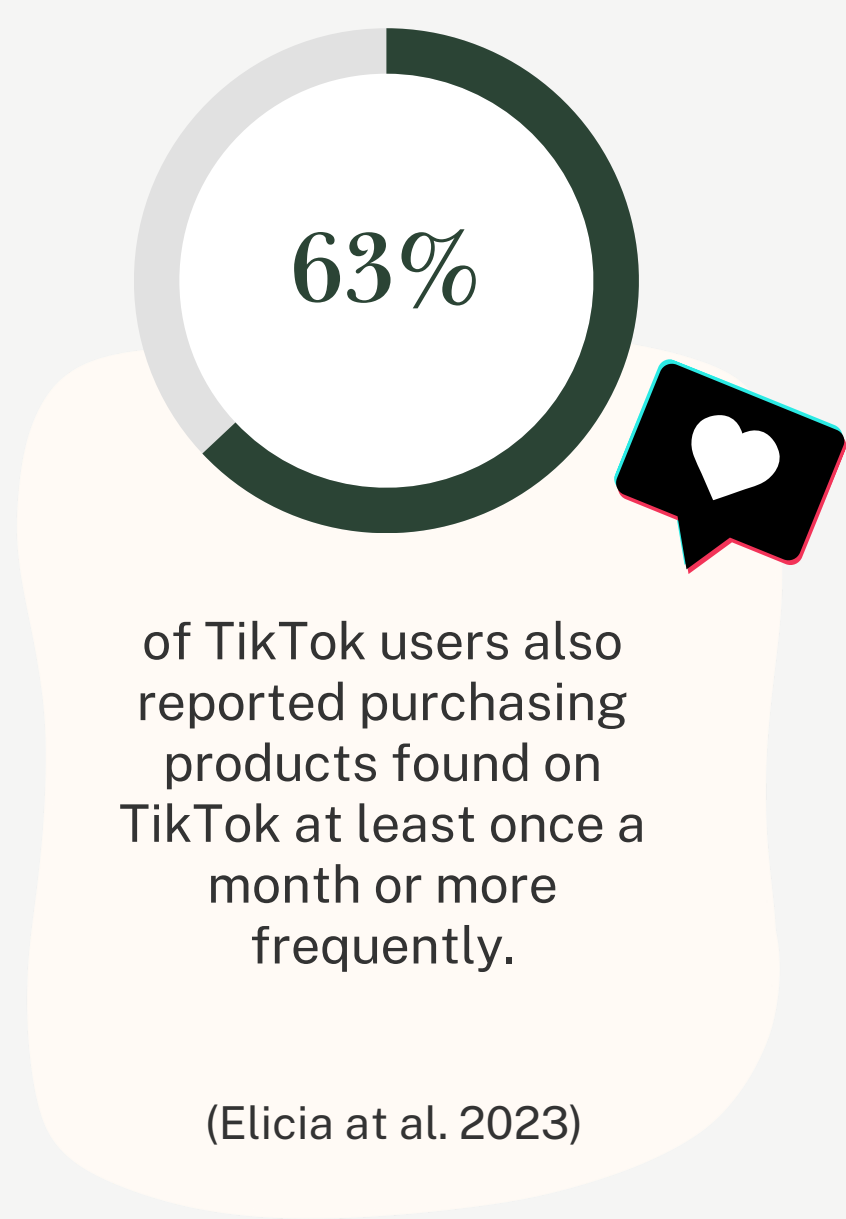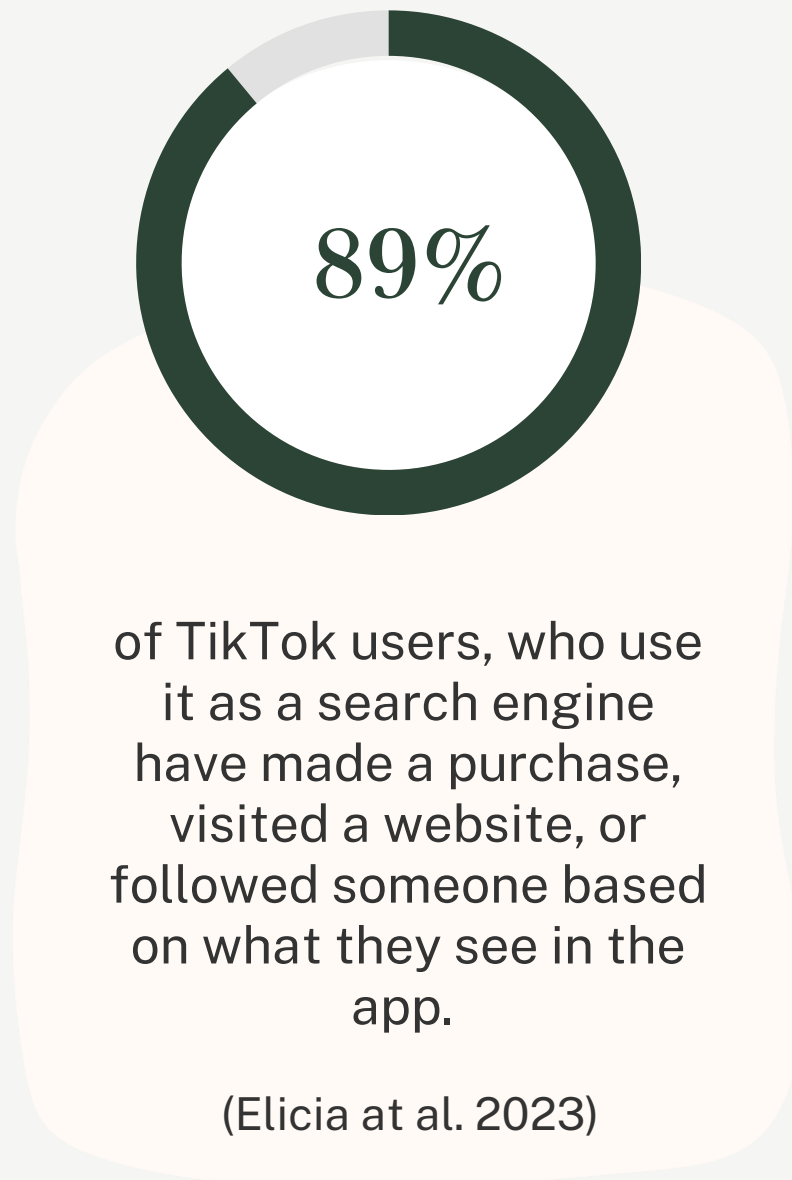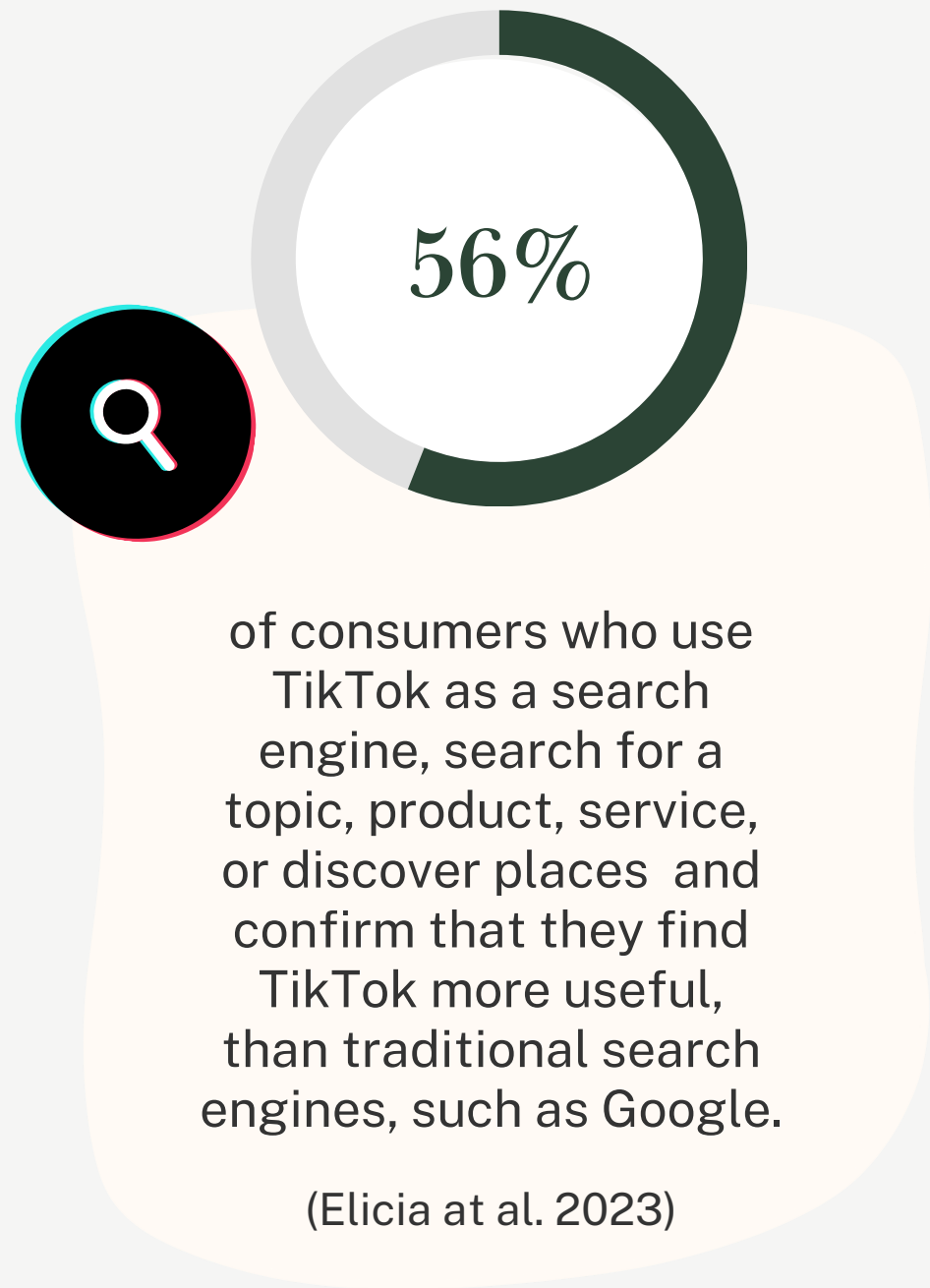
Why ZEO is of importance

Market Insights

According to Google's own revealed data

40%

of Gen Z use social platforms, mainly TikTok and Instagram for discovery search, rather than to search on Google itself (Rocca, 2022).

ZEO

56%

of consumers who use TikTok as a search engine, search for a topic, product, service, or discover places and confirm that they find TikTok more useful, than traditional search engines, such as Google.

(Elicia at al. 2023)

89%

of TikTok users, who use it as a search engine have made a purchase, visited a website, or followed someone based on what they see in the app.

(Elicia at al. 2023)

63%

of TikTok users also reported purchasing products found on TikTok at least once a month or more frequently.

(Elicia at al. 2023)

zeo's

Interest Research

Survey outcome

70 Gen Zs surveyed on interest in social search; key data presented below, full survey in Appendix 2.

1

First of all, **to differentiate in which areas Gen Z's are more likely to search on social media,** they have been asked where they search *for information and where they search for recommendations online.*

Next to Google being the top choice for *informational* searches, the app TikTok also reached almost half of the target audience, with 45%.

In particular, when being asked where they search for *recommendations,* TikTok, Instagram, and other social media platforms dominated the market with more than 65%.

65%

2

To identify which industries can profit from Gen Z's search interest by using social media platforms, rather than traditional search engines, the respondents have been asked to name them. The most popular choices were:

- Fashion industry
- Travel industry
- Food industry
- Book industry
- Tipps and Tricks

3

When asking the respondents if they prefer visual or written content when consuming online information **to find out where the target audiences' preference is**:

Outstanding, *none* of the respondents chose only written content.

However, 49% chose the combination of both visual and written and 51% chose visual content only.

both 49%

visual 51%
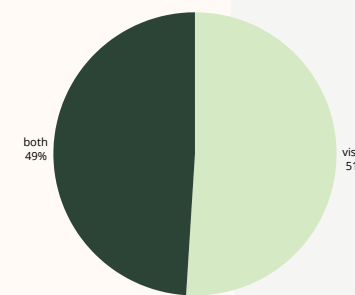
4

To find out if Gen Zs would find a wordy caption area full of search optimised content irritating, the respondents have been asked if they pay attention to the hashtags or captions posted with the content.

70% of all respondents stated that they do not look at the caption area and do not mind the hashtags attached to the posted content.

70%
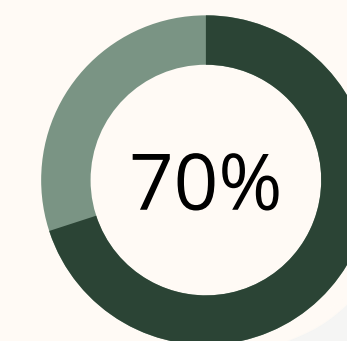
RESOLUTIONS:

1. Consequently, Zeo is in particular of interest for brands, which can fulfil the need in creating recommending content.

2. Therefore, Zeo optimised content for social media posts are of high interest to brands that operate in one of the listed industries.

3. This data proves that visual content has more potential to be appealing to the target audience than written SEO content, and brands need to adapt to this by shifting to social media focused search optimisation.

4. This information is helpful for brands to integrate Zeo's content steps, as the target audience will potentially search for their relevant topic, and the brand can take full advantage of the use of hashtags and keywords, as the audience does not mind it.

Interview 1

The focus of this interview is to determine interest in social search at an SEO agency.

Guido Ampollini, Founder of GA Agency

How do you think search engine optimisation is involving in the future?

Given the shift in younger consumers preferring different search platforms compared to older generations, there is a potential need for us to adjust and demonstrate to our clients that our SEO strategies can evolve accordingly. For instance, one client has already shown an interest in enhancing their TikTok presence, motivating us to further expand our skills in this domain.

In which industry do you think this new service strategy might be of interest?

The brand operates in the travel industry, but also other clients operating in fashion for instance, are potentially of interest to pitch this idea to.

Are you currently considering presenting this service to clients?

At GA, we currently lack expertise in this area. If you are interested in sharing your research with the agency, I highly encourage it as it will benefit us all and enhance our knowledge.

The rest of the interview can be found in Appendix 4.
The video presentation of the research can be located in Appendix 5.

Fig.8 (Photo of Guido Ampollini , n.d.)

GA AGENCY
Fig.9 (GA's Logo, 2020)

Interview 2

Charlotte Stone,
Brand Marketing Manager at the GO-TO

The interview's focus is to determine interest in social search from a brand marketing viewpoint.

Fig.10 (Charlotte Stone, 2014)

THE GO-TO

Fig.11 (The Go-To Logo, 2024)

What do you believe is the most effective method to use SEO for targeting Gen Z?

Whilst our website is already very good on search engine optimisation for our customers - I believe that for Gen Z's search needs to adapt through a very social media focused approach is for the best. However, this costs extra time and expertise we do not have at the Go-To yet.

The GO-TO offers luxury Gift giving. The hashtag #Giftideas has been used by almost 3M users in one month (TikTok, 2024). What are your thoughts on optimising your brands social media posts on TikTok to rank in a better position when users search for relatable search terms?

Optimising social media has for sure not been on my radar before, however, our marketing team's knowledge is non-existing. I'm very interested and would love to be able to add those steps to our TikTok strategy immediately.

Do you believe Zeo has potential for your company?

Depending on the data outcome, but it sounds like a service we should integrate. Potentially it will be even more of interest shortly, with Gen Z and even younger generations entering the luxury gift-giving age.

A piloted mock-up version of Zeo can be found on page 34.

The rest of the interview can be found in Appendix 7.

Key Takeaways of the *Survey*

First of all, the survey has proven the interest of social search from Gen Zs. Additionally, the respondents have given insights into which industries they particularly search on social media platforms. The survey also asked the respondents (See Appendix 2) which gender they identify as and 70% of all social searchers were female. Therefore, the target demographic, in particular female Gen Zs interested in the fashion, food, travel, and book industry are of interest.

Key Takeaways of the *Interviews*

Both interviews were conducted to enhance the interest in social search of companies from two different perspectives: agency viewpoint and in-house marketing standpoint, with a focus on SEO future strategies. In particular, from an agency kind of view, it is important to adapt to consumers' behaviour changes to meet the expectations of the clients and their target audience. As well as it is essential for in-house marketing to know your customer target and meet their demands. They both agreed on the specific demographical focus that social search optimisation can achieve and aim to integrate this service in the near future times to meet Gen Zs search needs.

Consumer profile

Based on the research on consumer interests, the following candidate represents the ideal consumer that Zeo aims to target.

Fig.12 (Photo of Madeleine Baxter, 2023)

Madeleine Baxter

DEMOGRAPHIC: GENERATION Z; FEMALE

INTERESTS: FASHION, TRAVELLING, COOKING, READING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Which platform do you like to use for conducting searches?

My go-to platform for finding things would be TikTok. Always! I search for everything I look for there.

Why not search on traditional search engines instead?

I prefer seeing a real person that shares their own experiences. It feels authentic and I prefer visually appealing content, which I can trust in.

Presenting the service strategy: Zeo

What is Zeo ?

Zeo is a service that provides marketers at GA with a new marketing strategy, which can be integrated into a company's social media content.

Zeo adds value to the ever-changing digital landscape by applying a search engine optimisation (SEO) approach to clients' social media posts. Fundamentally, this will be done by adding searchable keywords to the created content before posting them on social platforms.

This feature aims to **fulfill the needs of Gen Zs** and in future times also younger generations, such as the digital natives, Generation Alpha, when they enter the purchasing age.

Gen Zs have already shown a high interest in using social media platforms, especially TikTok as search platforms.

Its name 'Zeo' comes from its focus: Gen Z Engine Optimisation. By implementing Zeo into clients' social media content it will meet the demand of this demographic to increase their target audience reach.

The aim is to position their content on TikTok for users to ideally find them when searching for relatable keywords. This strategy will help them to appear in the consumers' search results when users are looking for related search terms or hashtags.

For whom is Zeo of interest?

In general, Zeo can be of interest to any digital **marketing agencies** that provide services in SEO and/or social media marketing. As well as Zeo can be of interest **to brands and their in-house marketing teams** directly.

For this matter, Zeo's mock-up version has been piloted on a business called **the Go-To**, where search engine optimised content has been created and posted on TikTok followed by analysing its data insights.

TikTok has been chosen to test out Zeo as it is the only social platform where a business can analyse its data for free to this day. Zeo was able to seamlessly be integrated as an additional step when creating UX-friendly brand posts on the Go-To's TikTok content just before posting them.

Implementing

zeo

How can you implement Zeo *into your marketing strategy?*

In general, Zeo can be implemented **as an additional step** before marketers post their content on social platforms by including the following **search optimised steps** which will be explained in the following slides.

Therefore, social media platforms, in particular TikTok, as TikTok is the first social media platform that offers a search analytical feature where every user, has access to see their search insights of their posted content. These insights include data that then can be analysed to help for further Zeo optimised content.

The analytics feature of TikTok does not only present you how many of your **viewers** have **found** your content **via search,** but also the **impression rate**, **clicks,** and the **ranking position** for your video when searching for its topic.

This allows brands to integrate it into their marketing strategy and analyse its improvements. It is therefore essential to **track** relevant and trending **hashtags** as well as analysing previous **competitors'** work which ranks high in search. The relevant research can then be used to the clients' social media content and can therefore become search optimised.

zeos' Steps

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Content creation for brands owned social media

Keyword research: Related Hashtags, search terms, 'others search for' option on TikTok

Add caption; Voice-over; text on top of the content with keyword targeted focus

Post!

Analyse search results outcome
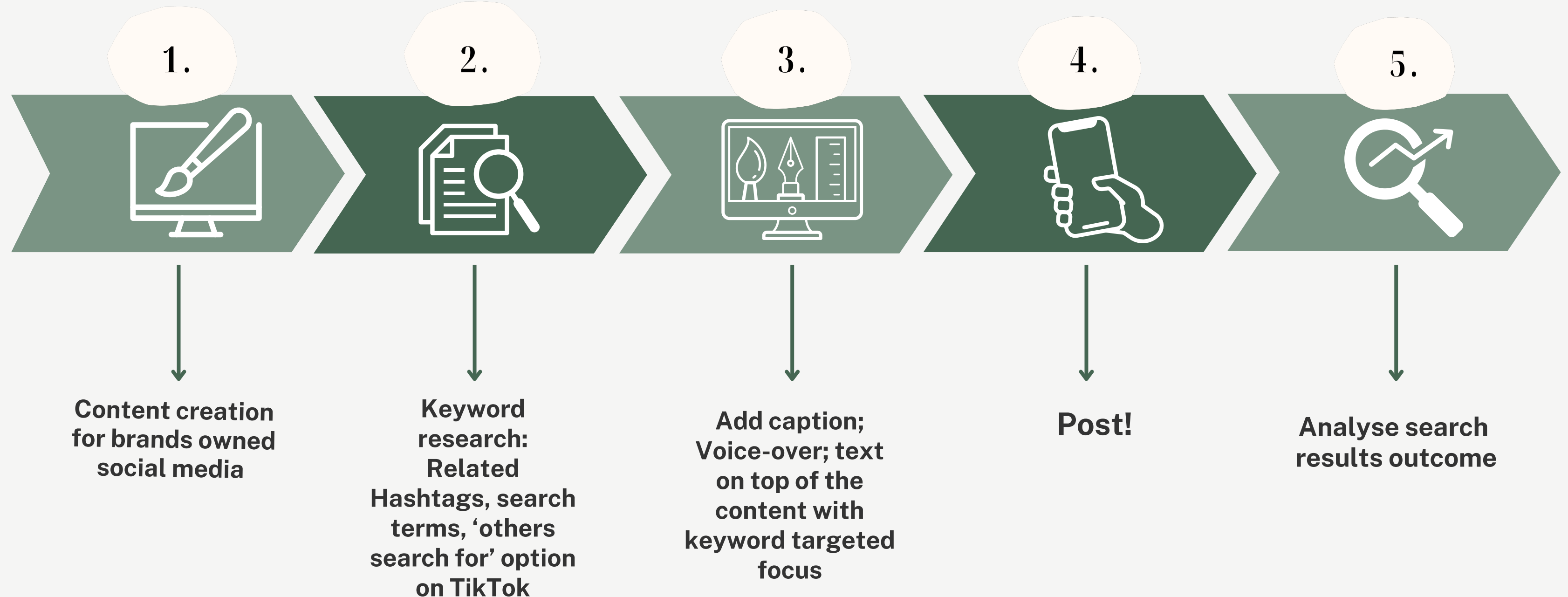
Step 1:

Content creation for clients owned social media posts

Depending on the client, Zeo as a service could contain two options:

Option 1:

The option includes social media content and the strategy. This ensures that the final result is Zeo optimised and the agency takes care of the entire content creation process as part of its package.

or

Option 2:

The client will supply the social media content and the search optimisation steps will be incorporated into the existing content before it is published.

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Step 2:

Keyword research:
Related Hashtags, Search Terms, 'Others Searched for' option

Focus on TikTok: Example for Italian restaurants in London

Fig.2 (TikTok's search bar, 2024)

Hashtags and
Search Terms
with Significant
Interest target;

For further
keyword
research
TikTok.com can
also be viewed

Competitor
research

Some users
looked for
relevant topic
titles which can
also be applied
to your related
content.
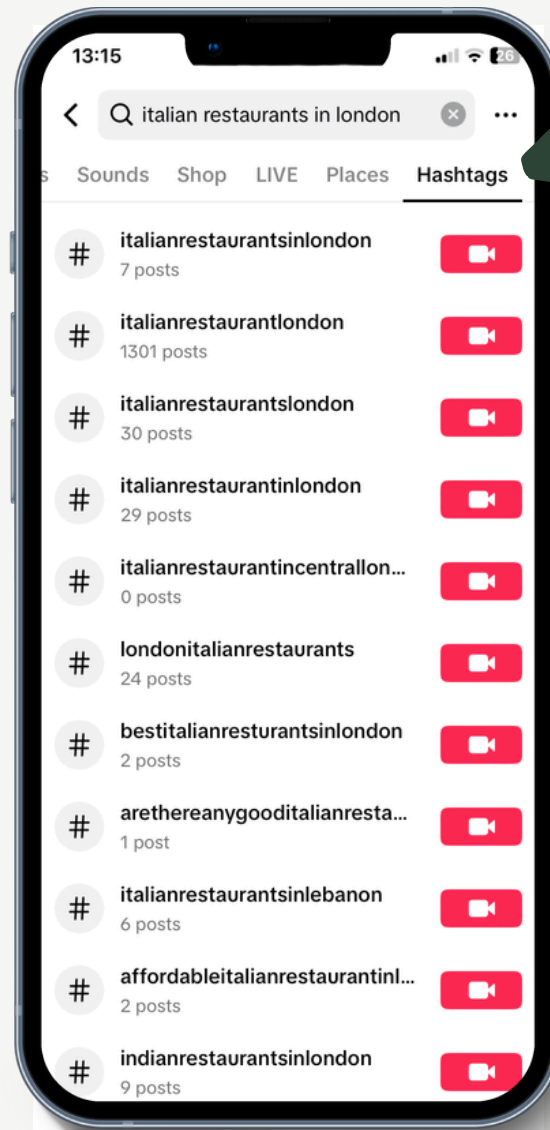
Fig.1 (TikTok Hashtags, 2024)
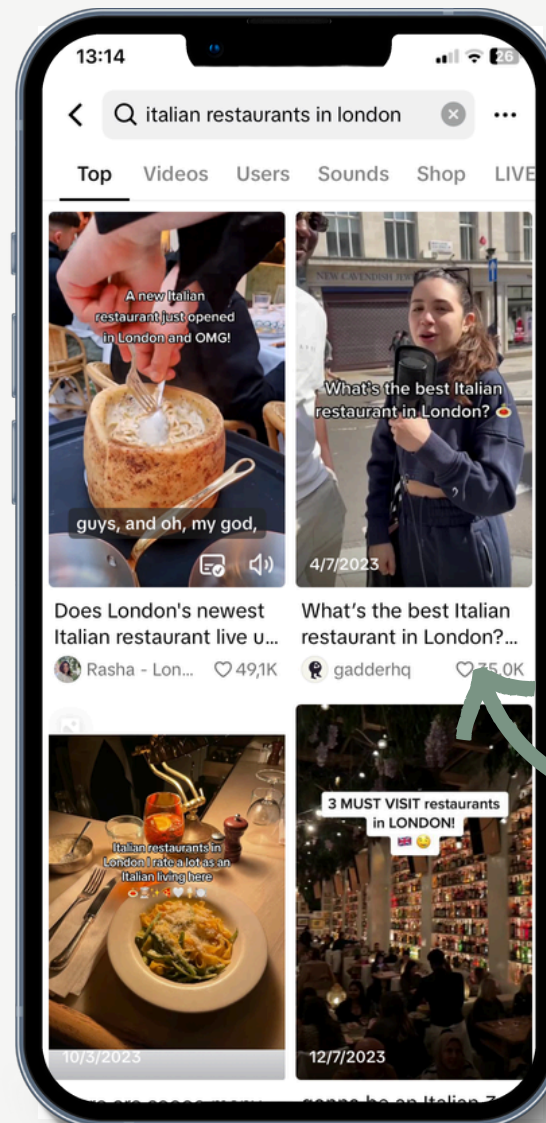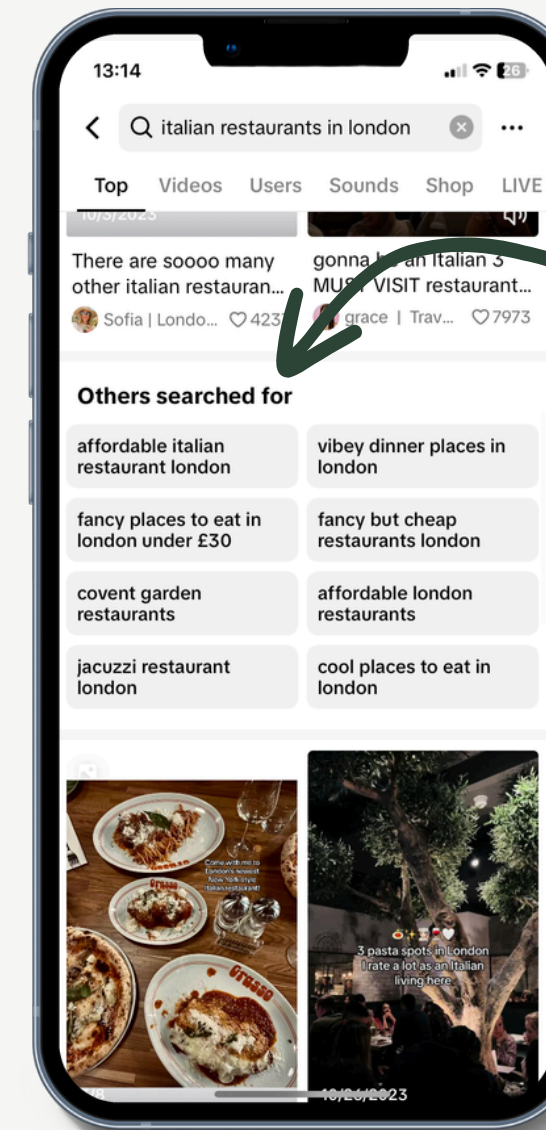
Fig.3 (Other people searched for, 2024)

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zeo

Step 3:

Add caption, or Voice-over, or text on top of the content
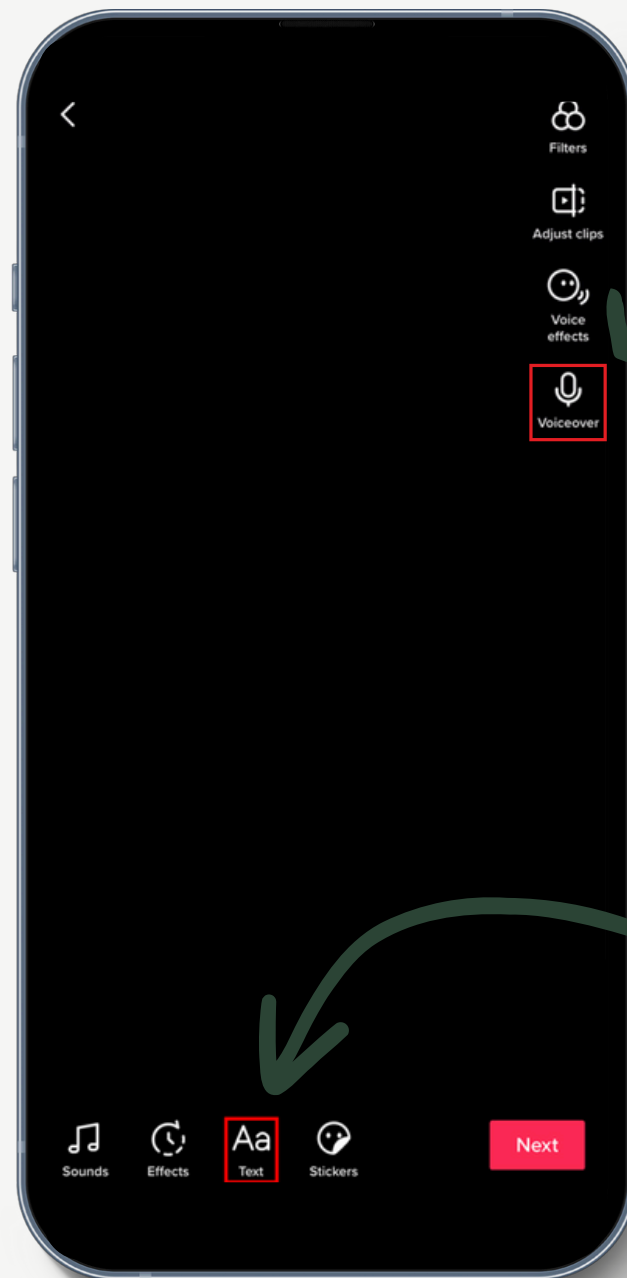
Include a voiceover in which you describe the purpose of this content piece using user-searchable terms.

Include all main keywords, hashtags and a title commonly searched for by users in a written text.

Fig.4 (TikTok post, 2024)
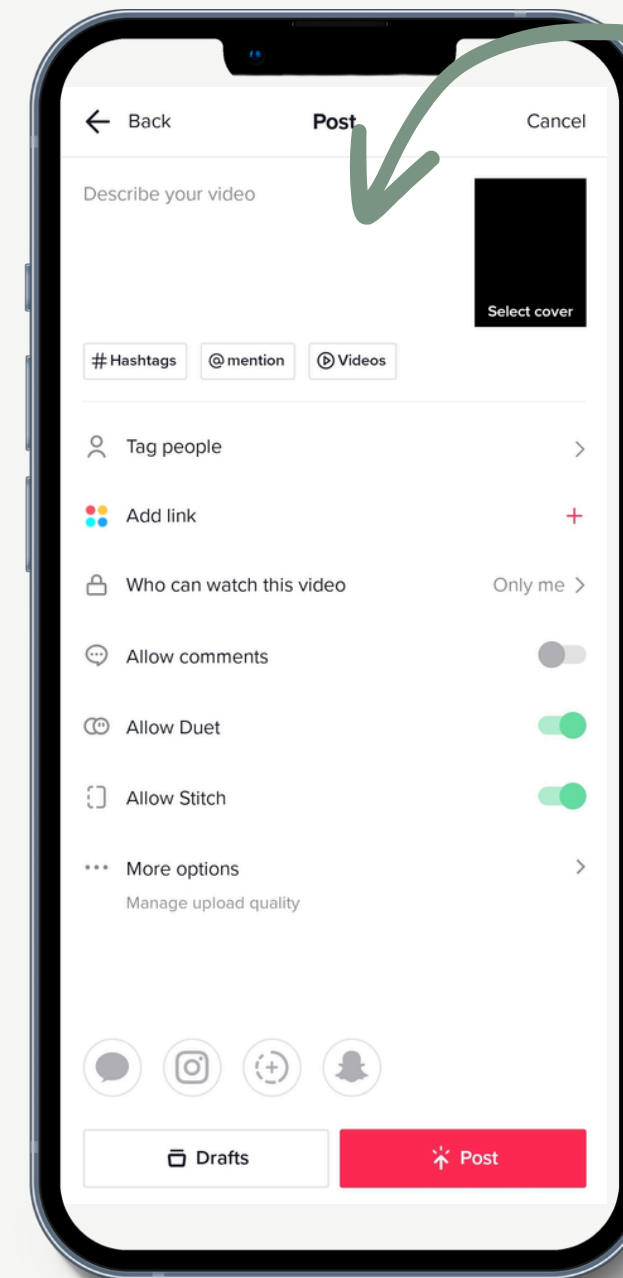
Provide the video captions ensuring they are concise and informative, incorporating essential details, keywords, and hashtags. The character limit for the captions is 4000 (TikTok, 2024).

Fig.5 (TikTok post captions adding, 2024)

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zeo

Step 4:
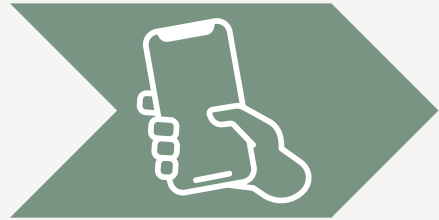
Post!

Focus on TikTok: Example for Valentine's Gift ideas for Men

The caption assesses the subject and incorporates relevant keywords that users may search for.

Title related to the topic that users may search for: H1

Voiceover, including all the necessary keywords.

All relevant primary hashtags have been incorporated.

Fig.6 (TikTok video posted, 2024)

Step 5:

Analyse search result outcome

As discussed before, TikTok is currently the only platform that offers its users a search insights feature to display the contents reach through search.

Fig.7 (TikTok search data insights, 2024)

Clicks:
How many users in total have clicked on your content during a specific period of time

Click-through rate (CTR):
The rate of how many users came across your content and decided to click on it

Average Position:
The position at which your content appears when searching for a relevant topic.

Impressions:
How many users have come across your content piece

7 P's of the Marketing Mix

PRODUCT:
The Service - Zeo
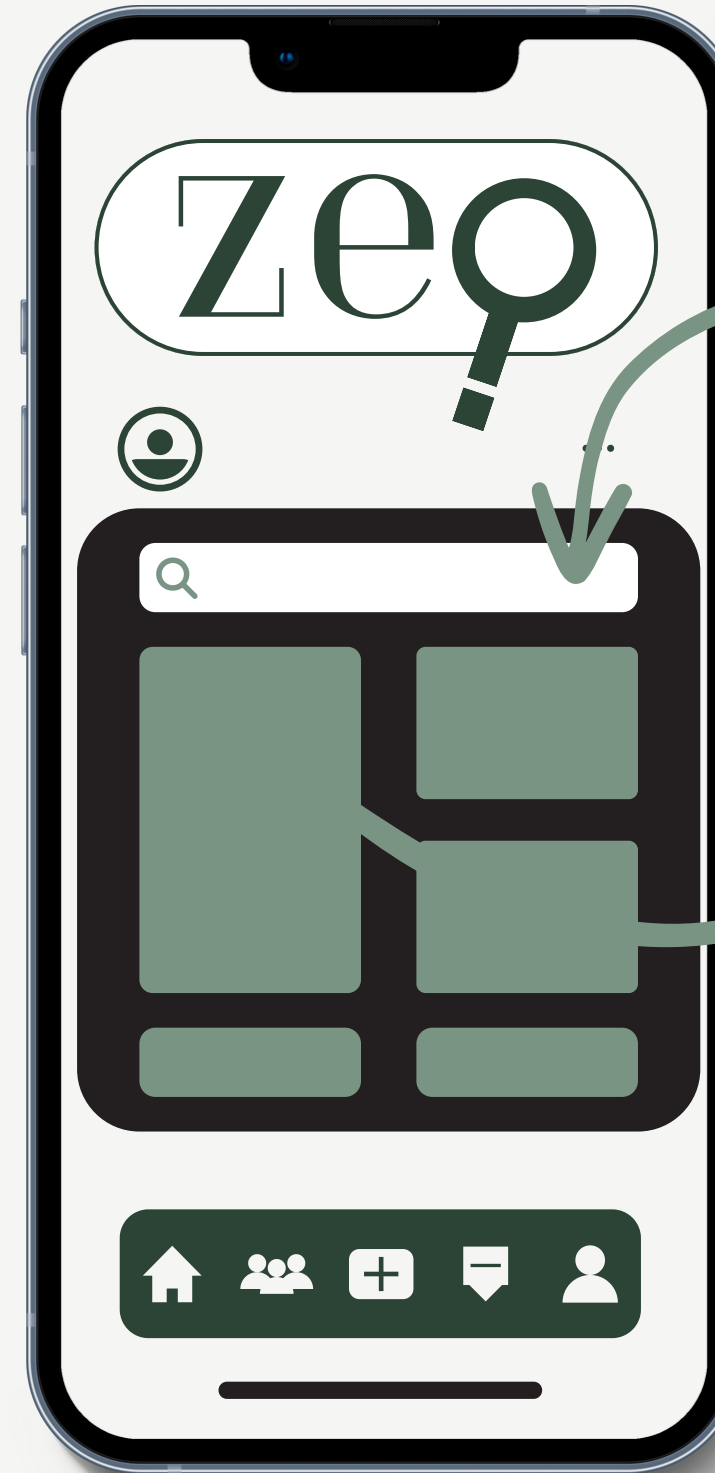
Firstly, the client's social media content will be search optimised by implementing Zeo's Steps.

The goal is it to achieve a top ranking when consumers search for its related topic.

Lastly, tracking the data; analyse it and regularly reporting outcomes to clients.

PRICE:
Individual pricing strategy depending on client budget

The price of Zeo services varies based on the client's budget and desired level of investment. Zeo can complement traditional SEO strategies as an additional service. Clients can choose from two package options:

Option 1:

- Zeo includes all 5 Steps (Refer to page 16)
- This involves: The creative content creation process; the keyword optimisation and adaptation and data analysis

Option 2:

- Zeo covers steps 2 to 5
- This includes keyword optimisation, adaptation, and data analysis
- In this process, the client needs to provide created content before developing the strategy to it

Fig.13 (TikTok Logo, n.d.)   Fig.14 (Instagram Logo, n.d.)   Fig.15 (Pinterest Logo, n.d.)

PLACE:
Digital: Social media platforms

The primary research revealed that TikTok, Instagram, and Pinterest are the top choices for conducting searches on social media platforms. (Refer to Appendix 2 for survey results.)

Currently, TikTok remains the sole platform offering data search insights. Therefore, the immediate priority is to optimise content searching on TikTok until other platforms incorporate this feature.

PROMOTION:
Presented to relevant clients of GA

Zeo is well-suited for brands in sectors like Fashion, Tips and Tricks, Lifestyle, and more, duo high interest according to the survey results (see Appendix 2). This is of interest to GA Agency, as many of their brands operate in this sector. Zeo's can be promoted to these clients, as an additional service and can be added to their scope of work by offering Zeo's Steps it.

Fig.16 (*Presenting a pitch*, 2023)

PEOPLE:
A team of employees

Zeo's relies on the team members' expertise and dedication. How many team members are required depends again on the needs and budget of each client.

For instance, for the travel client, a team of 1-2 highly trained Zeo specialists with strong SEO skills are recommended. These team members will primarily focus on keyword optimisation and effective content data insight analysis.

To ensure that ZEO is seamlessly integrated into the team members' workflow, with a time commitment of approximately 1-2 hours per week for research and optimisation activities. Quality assurance is paramount, with one team member carrying out the tasks and another reviewing the results before presenting them to the client.

Furthermore, 1-2 experts will be tracking the data analysis and reporting efforts, meticulously tracking insights weekly by using Excel spreadsheets to monitor key metrics that are relevant to the client's objectives. The insights gleaned are then synthesised into comprehensive reports, ensuring that the client receives actionable recommendations regularly.

PROCESS
Tracking its success

Our process for tracking data analysis and reporting efforts involves 1-2 dedicated experts who delve into TikTok insights on a weekly basis. Using Excel spreadsheets, we meticulously monitor key metrics relevant to the client's objectives.

The TikTok data insights reveal vital information for each post, including search engine ranking, click and impression rates, and positioning for relevant topics. These metrics provide actionable insights into the effectiveness of our TikTok content strategy and its resonance with our target audience.

By aligning our tracking efforts with the client's objectives, we ensure that our insights drive informed decision-making and optimisation of our marketing initiatives.

Furthermore, regular communication and reporting mechanisms ensure that our clients are kept informed of progress and opportunities for refinement.
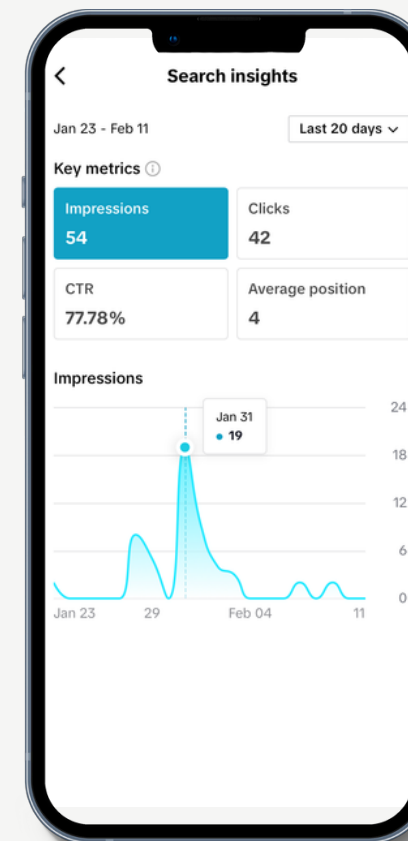
Fig. 17 (TikTok search data insights, 2024)

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE:
Regular report updates

The weekly report serves as a crucial element of Zeo's marketing strategy, which provides tangible evidence of progress, fostering credibility and transparency, facilitating communication and collaboration, and enabling real-time monitoring and adaptation. Its relevance lies in its ability to deliver timely insights that drive informed decision-making and optimise the effectiveness of your marketing efforts.

Depending on the client's expectations, this report update can take place once a week or a month, as well as it can take place via a meeting in person or virtually or be presented as an e-mail.

Fig. 18 (Search data report, n.d.)

Frameworks

For more Frameworks see
Appendix 6 & 7

S.A.V.E.

(Acutt, 2020)

SOLUTIONS

Zeo is positioned as a service that provides a solution for addressing the evolving search behaviour of younger demographics. As younger consumers increasingly conduct their searches on social media platforms rather than Google, Zeo helps GA's clients adapt to this shift in behaviour. By offering a comprehensive approach to search optimisation which includes optimising their social media content.

ACCESS

Zeo enables clients to effectively engage with their target audience and search optimise their online presence on digital social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Pinterest.

VALUE

The value of this service lies in its ability to offer a complementary approach to traditional search engine optimisation (SEO) by focusing on social media platforms. On one hand, the differentiation lies in the specific target audience. Zeo recognises the shifting search behaviours of younger generations and offers a solution to adapt to these changes. By optimising search results on social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Pinterest, Zeo helps clients reach and engage with younger demographics effectively. On the other hand, Zeo focuses on expanding reach and traffic even further by leveraging social media platforms for search optimisation.

EDUCATION

Zeo serves as a new service strategy tailored to address the evolving search behaviour of Gen Zs who increasingly prefer searching on social media platforms rather than traditional search engines. By incorporating Zeo into clients' Scope of Work (SOWs), it offers a specific search engine optimisation strategy to target younger demographics effectively.

SWOT Analysis

S

- **Unique Value Proposition:** Zeo offers a novel approach by applying SEO principles to social media content, specifically targeting Gen Z audiences.

- **Integration with Existing Platforms:** Zeo seamlessly integrates into popular social media platforms like TikTok, enhancing the accessibility and usability of the service for marketers.

- **Potential for Increased Reach:** By optimising social media posts with relevant keywords, Zeo helps brands reach a wider audience and improve visibility in search results.

O

- **Expansion to Other Demographics:** While initially targeting Gen Z, Zeo has the potential to expand its target audience to include younger generations and other demographics who exhibit similar preferences for using social media as search platforms.

- **Collaboration with Social Media Platforms:** Zeo could explore partnerships or collaborations with social media platforms to further enhance its features and integration capabilities, potentially increasing its value proposition for marketers.

- **Continuous Innovation:** As social media trends evolve, there is an opportunity for Zeo to innovate and adapt its features to stay relevant and meet the changing needs of marketers and social media users.

W

- **Limited Platform Compatibility:** While Zeo is designed for TikTok, its effectiveness on other social media platforms may vary, limiting its appeal to marketers who focus on platforms other than TikTok.

- **Dependency on User Behaviour:** The success of Zeo relies heavily on the behaviour of Gen Z users and their preferences for using social media as search platforms. If this behaviour changes or evolves, Zeo's effectiveness may diminish.

- **Competitive Landscape:** As the concept of optimising social media content gains traction, Zeo may face competition from other similar services or in-house strategies developed by marketing agencies and brands.

T

- **Changes in Platform Algorithms:** Changes to algorithms or policies implemented by social media platforms could impact the effectiveness of Zeo's optimization strategies, potentially reducing its value proposition for marketers.

- **Privacy Concerns:** Increased scrutiny and regulations surrounding data privacy on social media platforms could impact Zeo's ability to access and utilise user data for optimisation purposes, potentially limiting its functionality.

- **Market Saturation:** As more marketing agencies and brands adopt strategies similar to Zeo, the market for social media optimisation services may become saturated, making it challenging for Zeo to differentiate itself and maintain a competitive edge.

The Agency **Rise at Seven** revealed a successful strategy plan in January 2024, introducing the integration of an SEO approach into their client's social media content strategy, being the first agency going public with this focus.

Despite Zeo's inception in November 2023, Rise at Seven managed to go public before GA. While Rise at Seven has shared sustained strategy insights, they have yet to disclose their specific clients. Therefore, there is a potential that GA's clients would rather contact an agency with public expertise, rather than stay with GA, which has still not been presented to the client.

This competitor is already highlighting the importance of social search optimisation to clients to attract traffic from younger generations. Consequently, Rise at Seven going public urges GA to adapt to stay competitive. This necessitates GA to invest in Zeo to keep up with the changing landscape (Rise at Seven, 2024).

Fig.19 (Rise at Seven phone visual, 2024)

Zeo's Piloted Version
(Supporting Deliverable)

In collaboration with the Go-To start-up, Zeo has been integrated as an additional component of their TikTok strategy. Following this implementation, thorough data analysis has been conducted with the findings set to be presented to GA Agency.

THE GO-TO X zeo

Fig.20 (The Go-To Logo, 2024)

For for information about the Go-To, see Appendix 7.

How has Zeo been piloted?

To assess Zeo's success rate, TikTok has been selected as the inaugural social media platform for search optimisation. This choice allows for the implementation of Zeo and the trackability and analysis of its performance. Furthermore, TikTok remains the sole social media platform providing free access to its search insights.

Therefore, Zeo's Steps 1 to 5 have been followed (see page 16 for instructions).

Here is an instructive example to demonstrate Zeo as an additional step to the brand's social media strategy:

The Go-To operates in luxury gift-giving.

This post was created before Valentine's Day with Zeo optimised content, targeting couples searching for gift-ideas in February.

It includes all required engine optimised steps as explained previously.
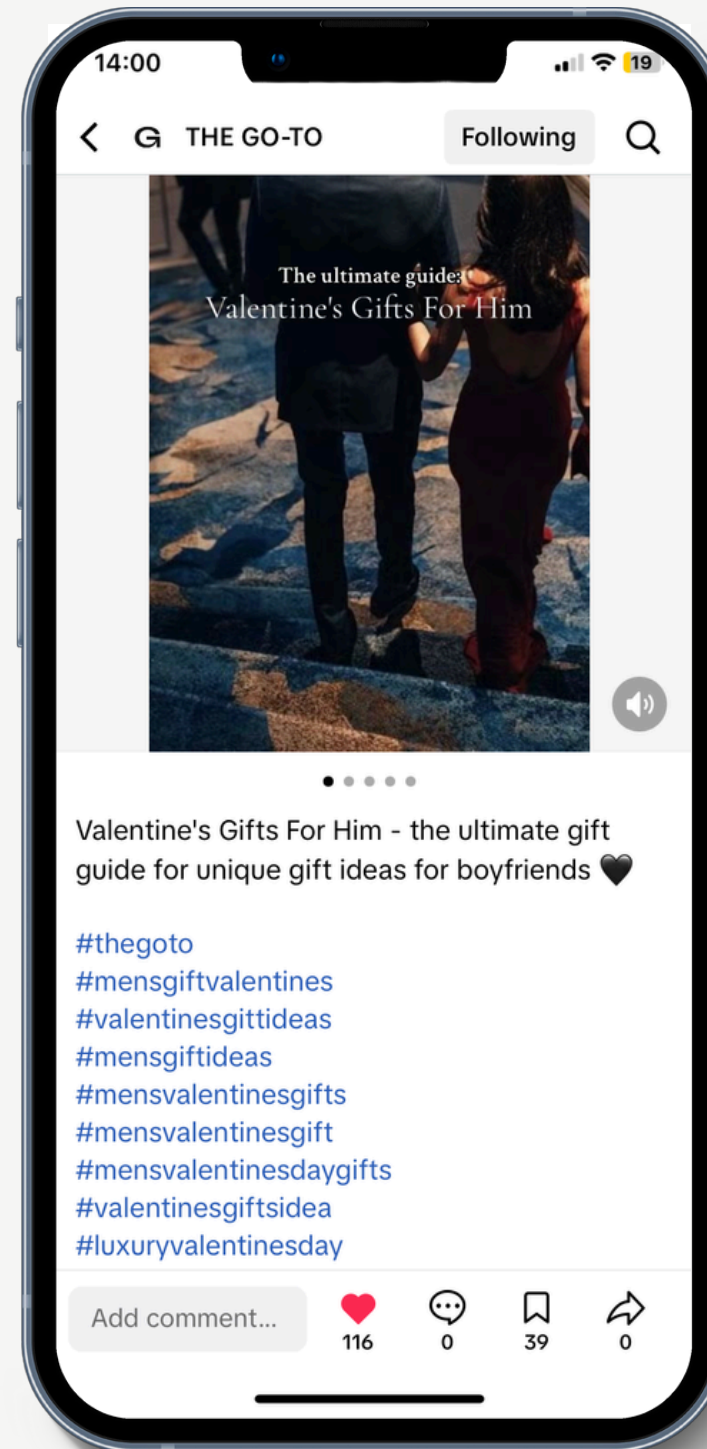
Fig.21 (TikTok video posted, 2024)

THE GO-TO

Fig.9 (The Go-To Logo, 2022)

x

Zeo

Success Rate - *Data Insights*

Here is an example of the Go-To's previous analytic data insights:

Here is an example of the Go-To's *Zeo optimised* analytic data insights:
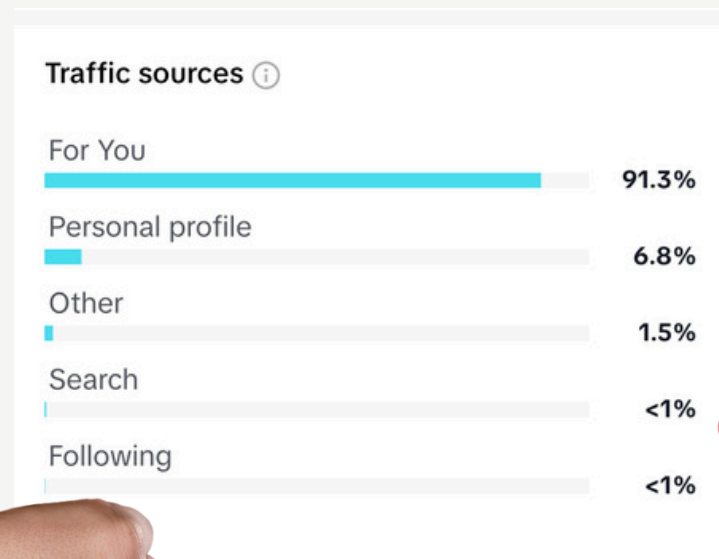
Fig.22 (TikTok's traffic sources, 2024)

The For You Page is TikTok's main landing page. Its most views are always gained here when uploaded.

Their content was almost non-exsisted on TikTok's search option.

Previous content does not even offer the option to *see more* search insights as this content did not reach any.

The Zeo optimised content gained improvement and has been found via search by almost 9.3% of all viewers which is a strong start.

Fig. 23 (TikTok's traffic sources 2, 2024)

This Zeo optimised content piece gained impression & click rates and its click-through rate shows a strong performance of 77.78%. As well as its average position is optimal, as it is under the top first rankings when searching for its title.
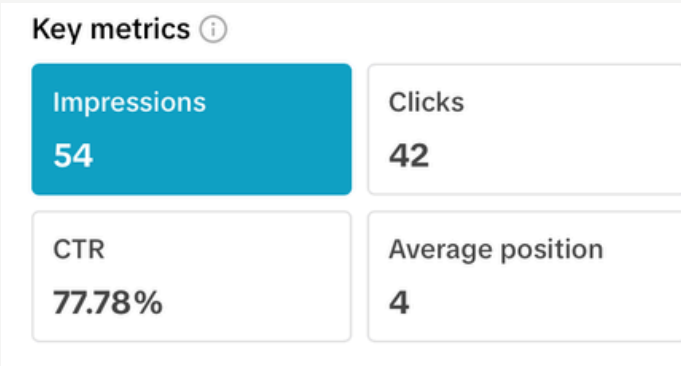
Fig.24 (TikTok's search key metrics, 2024)

Future Steps

Zeo's Future Plan Steps

	MAY	JUNE	JULY
WEEK 1	Conducting research on which of GA's clients are of interest to introduce Zeo as an additional service to them.	Pitching Zeo to the client	Zeo, which is now included in GA's services, will be from now on integrated into GA's daily\weekly tasks and routines. Including optimising content on a daily/ weekly base. Also, analysing its data And presenting it to the clients in monthly reports.
WEEK 2		Working together with 1-2 team members on Zeo's pitch to more relevant clients	
WEEK 3	Working together with 1-2 team members on Zeo's pitch to relevant clients		
WEEK 4		SOW has been approved	Pitching Zeo to more clients
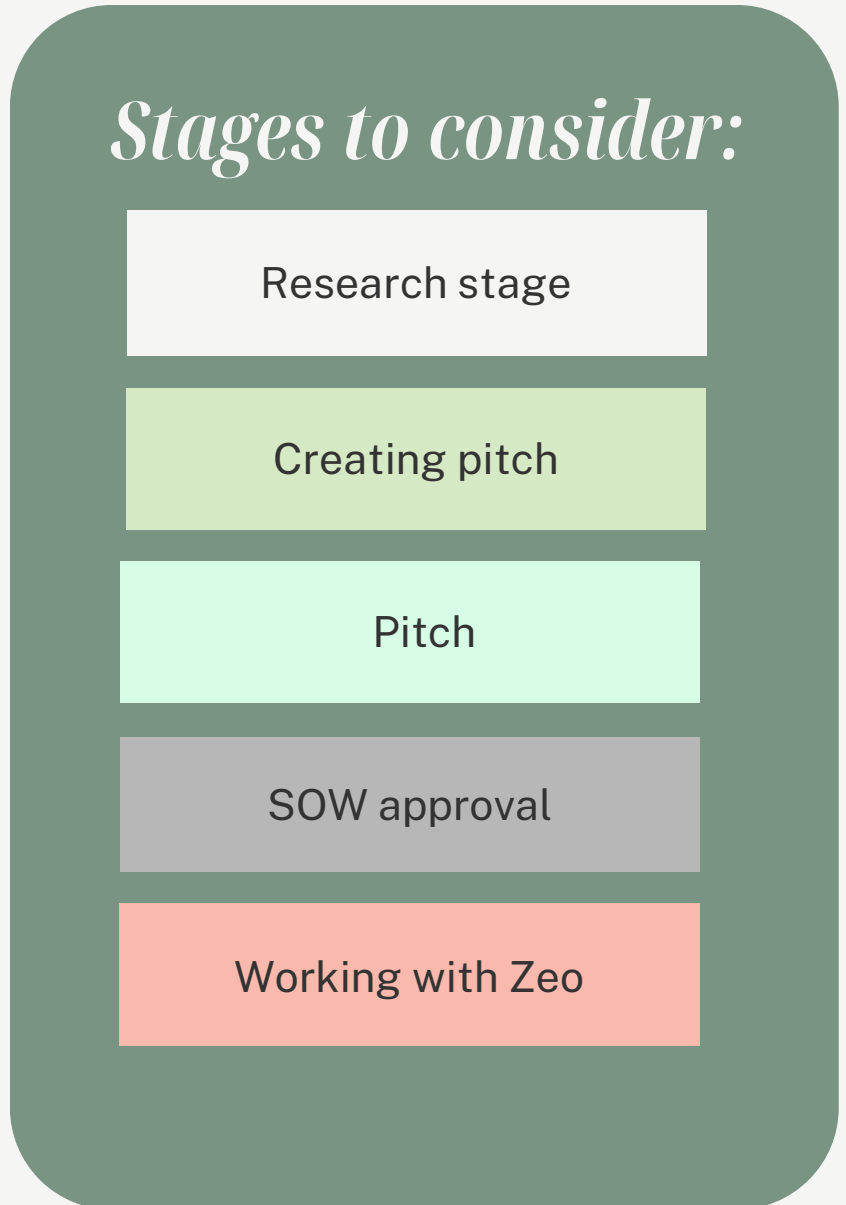
Stages to consider:

- Research stage
- Creating pitch
- Pitch
- SOW approval
- Working with Zeo

Final words
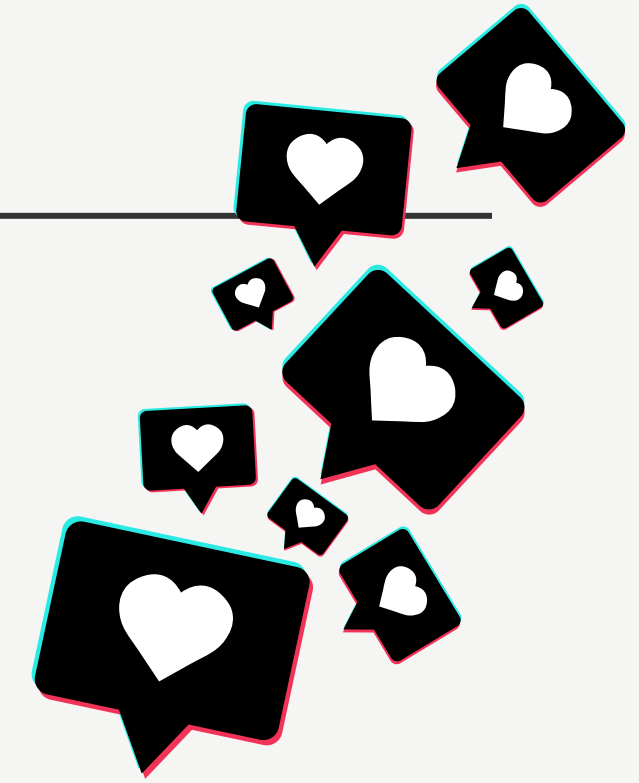
Similar to traditional SEO marketing, tracking search success on social media platforms requires time and patience. Furthermore, social media search optimisation is still in its beginning stage and evolves alongside the dynamic landscape of digital marketing. It demands continuous exploration, experimentation, and refinement to unlock its full potential in driving engagement and achieving marketing objectives to successfully target younger generations.

However, Zeo has proven to become a part of GA's marketing services by diligently tracking and analysing key metrics such as engagement rate, reach, conversion rate, and others. Marketers can adapt their strategies to effectively meet the evolving search demands of younger generation's search demands and achieve their marketing KPI's.

List of Illustrations

Reference List

11.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

GA AGENCY BACKGROUND

Fig.22 (GA's Logo)

GA Agency is located in London, Soho, and specialises in digital marketing services. The agency was founded in 2019 by Guido Ampollini and derives its name from the founder's initials. See the whole interview with the founder in Appendix 3.

The agency's main focus is on operating in SEO marketing and paid media marketing strategies.

GA Agency strategically manages multiple internationally recognised brands worldwide, in the fashion, travel, and food industries for instance. Notable clients include Pronovias, Vera Wang, Expedia, Frescobaldi, and the Calzedonia Group (GA's website, 2022).

Zeo is primarily focused on being pitched to GA, as its founder is employed at GA, as an SEO Executive. See the Research Log for more information about how Zeo's idea came to life.

Appendix 2

Survey Results

Search engine optimisation for Generation Z

B *I* U 🔗 ✕

Dear Participant,

I am conducting this questionnaire as part of my dissertation to gain insights into the search engine use of Generation Z. Therefore, I kindly request that only individuals born between 1995 and 2006 participate in this survey.

The survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete.

Your participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, and you can opt out at any stage by closing and exiting the browser.
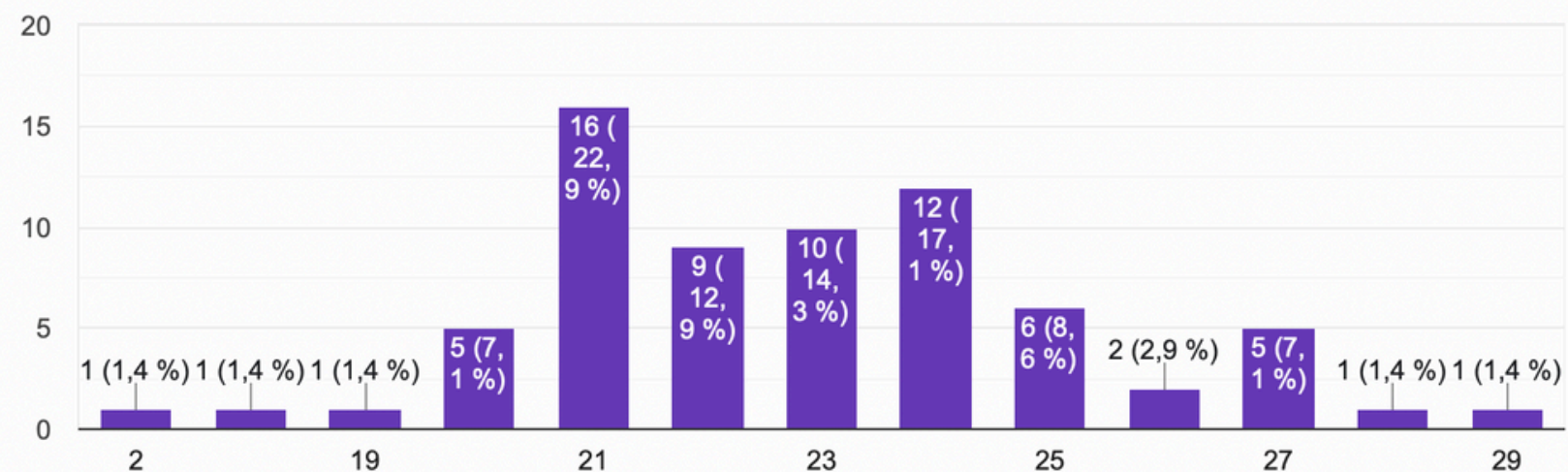
Rest assured, all responses will remain anonymous and will solely be used for research purposes. Your privacy and confidentiality are of utmost importance.

Thank you for your participation.

How old are you?

Kopieren

70 Antworten

1 (1,4 %) 1 (1,4 %) 1 (1,4 %) 5 (7,1 %) 16 (22,9 %) 9 (12,9 %) 10 (14,3 %) 12 (17,1 %) 6 (8,6 %) 2 (2,9 %) 5 (7,1 %) 1 (1,4 %) 1 (1,4 %)

2   19   21   23   25   27   29

Which gender to you identify as?

Kopieren

70 Antworten

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary

82,9%
17,1%
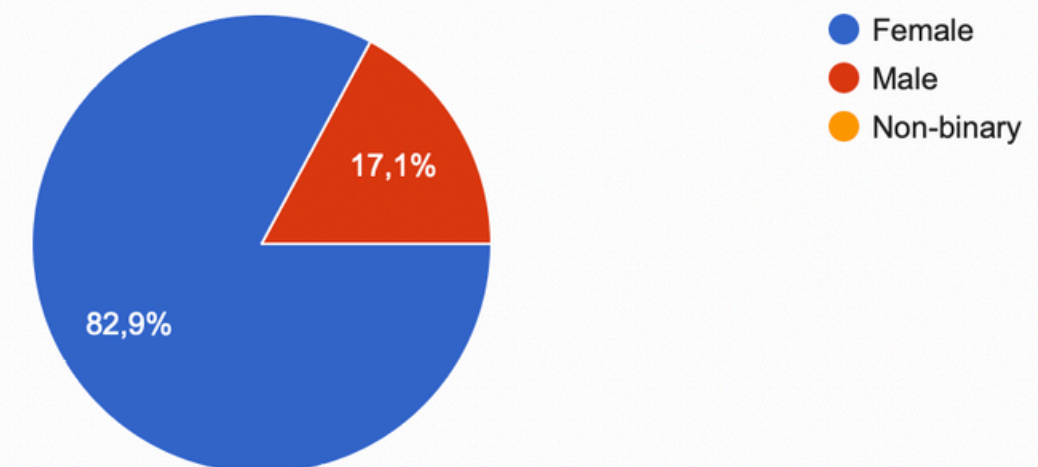
Survey Results

On which platform(s) do you primarily search for information?
70 Antworten

Google — 61 (87,1 %)
Bing — 0 (0 %)
Yahoo! — 0 (0 %)
TikTok — 32 (45,7 %)
Instagram — 15 (21,4 %)
Safari — 2 (2,9 %)
Chat gpt shouldn't be missed o... — 1 (1,4 %)
Ecosia — 1 (1,4 %)
Chat GPT — 2 (2,9 %)
— 1 (1,4 %)
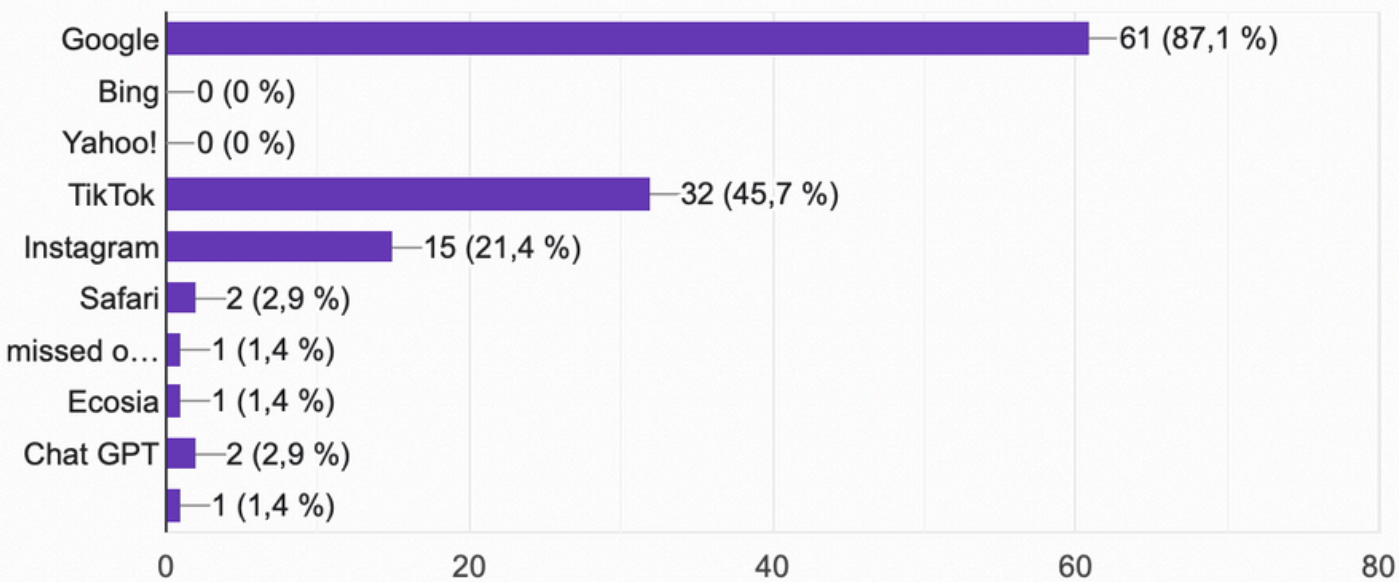
Where do you typically seek recommendations, such as for holidays or product information?
70 Antworten

- Google — 28,6%
- Bing
- Yahoo!
- TikTok — 50%
- Instagram — 14,3%
- YouTube
- Pinterest
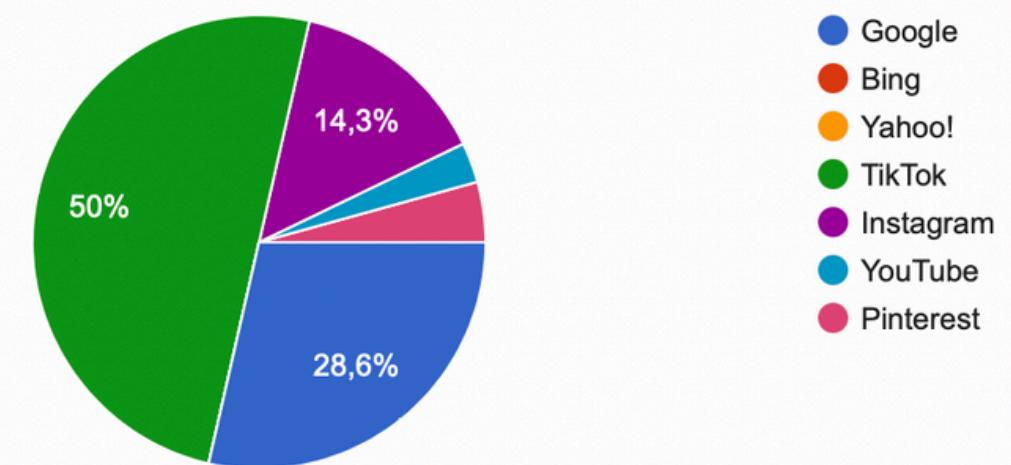
Survey Results

What type of content do you prefer to search for on social media rather than on Google? (Please provide examples if possible)

61 Antworten

fashion

Travel insights

Fashion

Product information

When tying to find someone

Clothing recommendations for example try on hauls

Product insights

Uni research

Cooking videos, influencers content (reviews on products, try on etc..), news articles

---

Holidays, styling tips, recipes, workout exercises

Skincare, clothing recommendations, vacation spots, restaurants

Recipes, things to visit on holiday, makeup, skincare etc

Outfit ideas and product reviews

Food inspirations

Outfits

Videos of nice places to go and how the experience went

Video examples of how to do things.

- Room inspirations, style inspirations, creative things such as painting

---

recipes

Reccomendations and review

Events, museum or gallery openings, recipes, workouts

Meal ideas, outfit ideas and recommendations for places to eat out

Reactions and comments about stuff like movie trailers or football results

Trends, hacks

Restaurant Recommendations, Recipes, Pop Culture News, Activity's to do in a city

Event tickets or affiliate links from influencers (reviews)

Book and food content :)

Food, Fashion, Lifestyle and Health Tips

Recipes and holiday locations

When stalking people, and local news in Facebook groups of a town.

Artists, reals, memes

Recipes or travel recommendations

Beauty

Travel tips („what to do in a day in Dublin"), diy & crafting (knitting)

Entertainment, News

Makeup and clothes (like the opinions of the people who have bought them)

---

recipes, sports exercises

Book recommendations

Make up, clothing, skin care, lifestyle

Lifestyle

Food inspos

Tips and tricks

Lifestyle advices

Life hacks, Travel Tips, Advice

Clothing reviews

Food recipes

UGC, Feedback on products, opinions

Beauty, travel

Fashion

Lifehacks

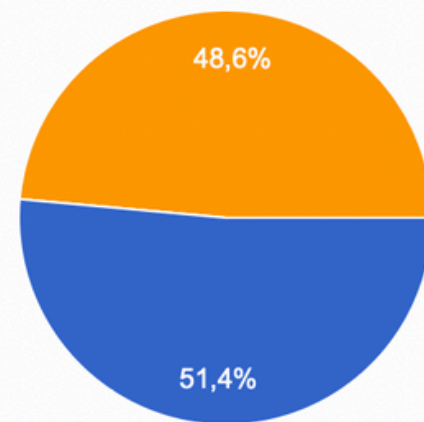Outfits, Decoration inspiration

People

Travel

Food stuff recipes

Survey Results

Do you have a preference for visual or written content when consuming online information?

70 Antworten

- Visual
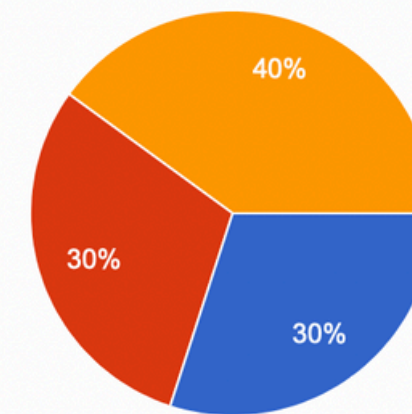- Written
- Both

48,6%

51,4%

When searching for a specific product or brand, where do you usually conduct your search?
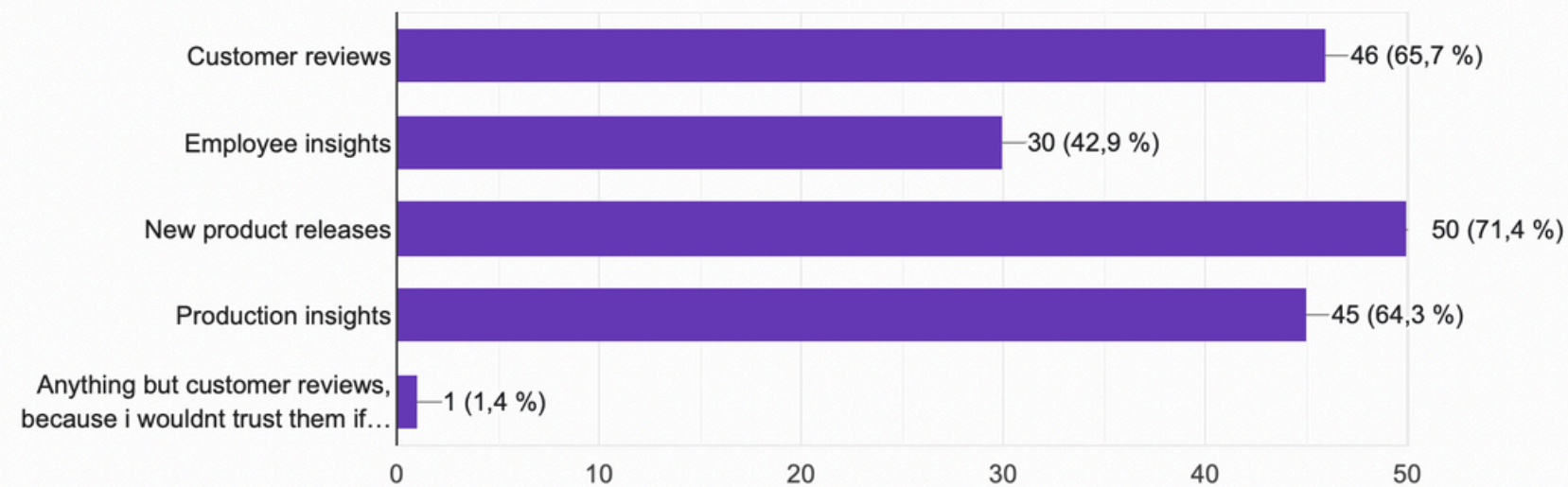
70 Antworten

- On search engines, such as Google
- On social media platforms, such as TikTok
- Both search engines and social media platforms

40%

30%

30%

Survey Results

What types of content do you like to see from brands on their social media channels? (Select all that apply)
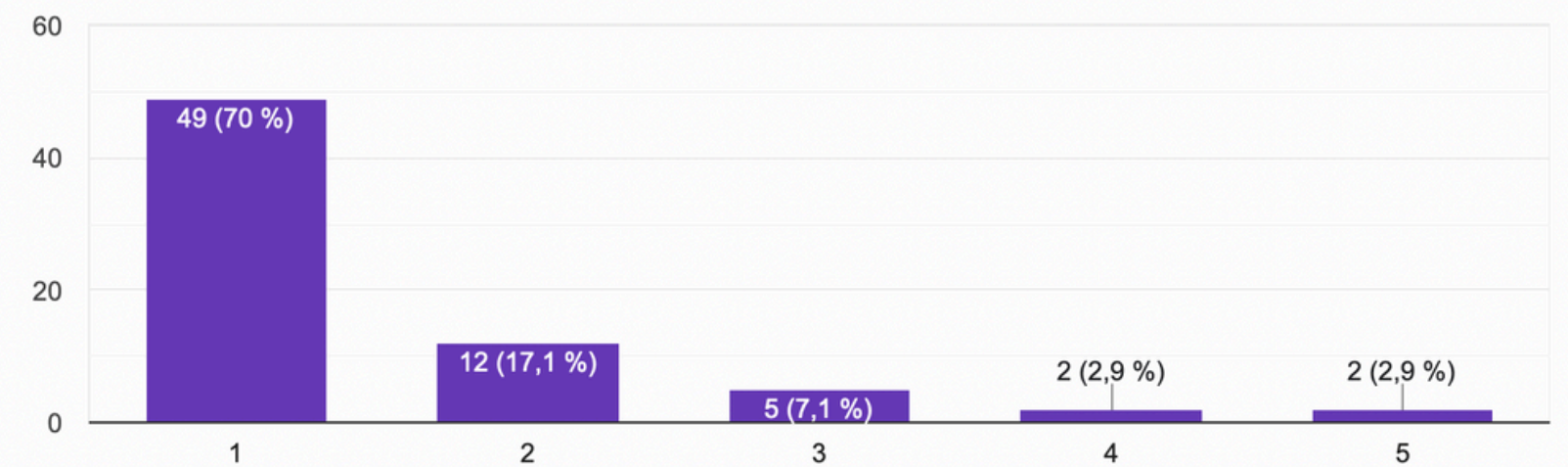
70 Antworten

- Customer reviews — 46 (65,7 %)
- Employee insights — 30 (42,9 %)
- New product releases — 50 (71,4 %)
- Production insights — 45 (64,3 %)
- Anything but customer reviews, because i wouldnt trust them if… — 1 (1,4 %)

Kopieren

When browsing social media content, do you pay attention to the number of hashtags used?

70 Antworten

- 1 — 49 (70 %)
- 2 — 12 (17,1 %)
- 3 — 5 (7,1 %)
- 4 — 2 (2,9 %)
- 5 — 2 (2,9 %)

Kopieren

Appendix 3

Interview 1: Guido Ampollini

How do you think search engine optimisation is involving in the near future?

Given the shift in younger consumers preferring different search platforms compared to older generations, there is a potential need for us to adjust and demonstrate to our clients that our SEO strategies can evolve accordingly. For instance, one client has already shown an interest in enhancing their TikTok presence, motivating us to further expand our skills in this domain.

In which industry do you think this new service strategy might be of interest to?

The brand operates in the travel industry. But also other clients operating in fashion for instance are potentially of interest to pitch this idea to.

Do you see the collaboration between SEO experts and social media specialists evolving in the future to maximise the impact of social search optimisation strategies?

100%. However, potentially we need more tools, such as tracking tools to analyse the data properly. But I have no doubt it will have an impact on our industry focus.

Are you currently considering on presenting this service to clients?

At GA, we currently lack expertise in this area. If you are interested in sharing your research with the agency, I highly encourage it as it will benefit us all and enhance our knowledge.

What resources or skills do you believe are essential for effectively implementing and managing integrated SEO and social media strategies?

You need expertise in SEO fundamentals, of course, like keyword research and technical SEO would be of interest and them being up to date with trends and so on. You need proficiency in social media content creation understand the algorithm of social media platforms and being good with data and analysing insights.

Appendix 4

<u>Video meeting: Introducing Social Media optimasation to GA Agency</u>
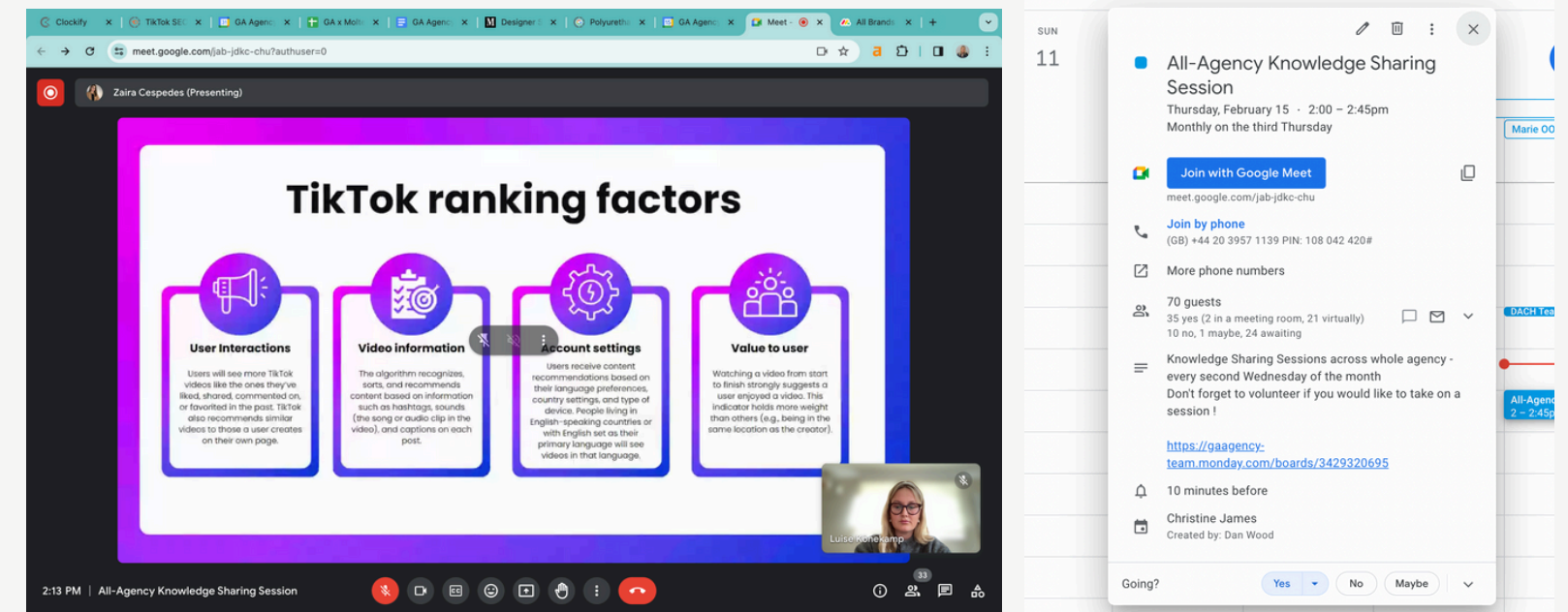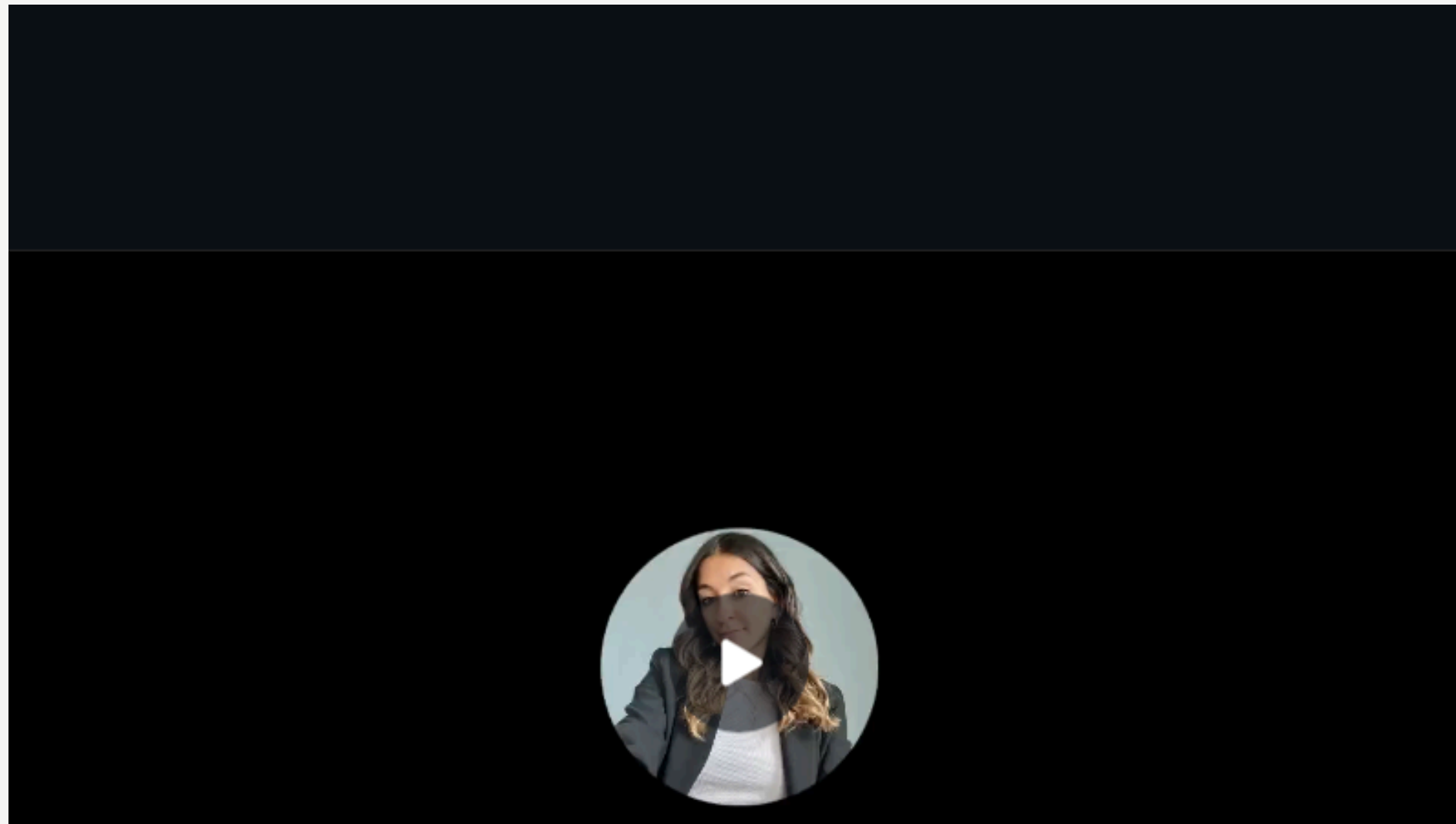
After interviewing the founder of GA Agency, he recommended that I present my research during a meeting with the entire agency. So, my colleague Zaira and I put together a presentation for our "all agency knowledge session" about the future of social search.

Normally, a senior manager shares industry research and knowledge every month at these sessions, and this time I had the honor of presenting some of my own research to the agency.

Watch the meeting:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGCrJljxHI/7ZLzQNZ8iYeSNVJhlOR6ng/watch?
utm_content=DAGCrJljxHI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor

Appendix 5

Interview 2: Charlotte Stone

What do you believe is the most effective method to use SEO for targeting Gen Z?

Whilst our website is already very good on search engine optimisation for our customers - I believe that for Gen Z's search needs to adapt through a very social media focused approach is for the best. However, this costs extra time and expertise we do not have at the Go-To yet.

The GO-TO offers luxury Gift giving. The hashtag #Giftideas has been used by almost 3M users in one month (TikTok, 2024). What are your thoughts on optimising your brand's social media posts on TikTok to rank in a better position when users search for relatable search terms?

Optimising social media has for sure not been on my radar before. However, our marketing team's knowledge is non-existing. I'm very interested and would love to be able to add those steps to our TikTok strategy immediately.

Do you believe Zeo has potential for your company?

Depending on the data outcome, but it sounds like a service we should integrate. Potentially it will be even more of interest in the near future, with Gen Z and even younger generations entering the luxury gift-giving age.

Considering the visual nature of TikTok, how do you integrate visual storytelling and aesthetics to enhance brand perception and appeal to your target demographic?

To create engaging content on TikTok you need a deep understanding of the platform's unique trends and your audience preferences. As well as responses and chats in the comment section are important for community building.

What would be most important to know for creating engaging and shareable content on TikTok that resonates with your target audience?

You need a deep understanding of your own brand identity and its visual appearance, which has to be appealing to the users and of course always be informed about the latest trends.

Appendix 6
Business Model Canvas (Pereira, 2019)

Key Partners	Key Activities	Value Proposition	Customer Relationship
GA Agency and its clients	• GA's employees need to be trained in Zeo's Steps • Pitching Zeo to relevant clients • Integrating Zeo in clients' SOW (Scope of work) • Zeo becoming part of GA's employees day to day business	***Zeo:*** **A service strategy, to search engine optimise client's social media posts, to reach the target Gen Z or a younger generation.** A new strategy proposal for GA to introduce to their clients to adapt to the change of search optimisation.	To begin, Zeo can be introduced to existing clients of GA, as the relationship with these clients brings an opportunity for Zeo to show the client, what Gap Zeo is filling for them

Key Resources

The service strategy and 1-2 employees

Channels

Starting with search optimising the client's organic TikTok channels, as this app is the only social media platform where to find any search data insights so far. When other social media platforms adapt to this, platforms such as Instagram and Pinterest can also become of interest to be optimised

Customer Segments

Gen Zs and upcoming, younger generations, worldwide, with a strong interest in searching on social media platforms, as they prefer visually appealing content

Cost Structure

Depending on clients expectations, budget and needs

Revenue Streams

For GA: Zeo will increase their revenue by offering an additional service to clients and increase revenue by selling an extended SOW.

Appendix 7
PEST

To examine the target consumer market's behaviour:
Generation Z (Part 1)

P
Significant changes have occurred on social platforms such as TikTok and other platforms owned by Meta as a result of the **EU's Digital Services Act**. Notably, users between the ages of 13 and 17 will no longer see paid advertising tailored to their online search activity. **As a result, young users looking for specific brands or discovering new places will find the search tool indispensable for uncovering the content and information they seek** (Vallance, 2023).

S
According to a survey conducted among social media users aged 16 to 24 years in the United Kingdom, data collected shows that a significant **71% of respondents used the Instagram mobile application on a daily basis,** as of October 2022. Furthermore, approximately **seven out of ten respondents stated that they use the social video application TikTok on a daily basis.** (Dixon, 2023).

Over half of Gen Z in the UK pay for their own holidays. This generates a **significant opportunity for travel and vacation operators** to provide what this demographic of travellers is looking for (Mintel, 2023).

E
Generation Z's purchasing behaviour in the United Kingdom is significantly influenced by their engagement with products featured on various social media platforms. **A significant 60% of the UK's Generation Z cohort has explicitly admitted to purchasing items they first saw on social media**. TikTok is an example, where the hashtag #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt has amassed an impressive 40 billion views, according to Bain in 2023. This statistical revelation highlights the profound impact of social media on the consumption habits of the UK's current Generation Z demographic (Bain, 2023).

T
"This generation's media habits and usage of digital technology are forcing businesses to approach them differently than previous generations." (Mintel, 2023). The impact of the digital world and social media on the lifestyle and behaviours of Generation Z is of paramount importance as they are the first group to mature in an environment that is ubiquitously connected through digital platforms. **98% of Generation Z actively use social media platforms,** with a clear preference for TikTok, where they conduct extensive product research before making purchasing decisions. (Mintel, 2023)

Appendix 8

The Go-To Background

THE GO-TO

Fig.23 (The Go-To's Logo)

The Go-To, a start-up based in Kensington, London, is dedicated to redefining luxury gift-giving experiences. With a commitment to excellence, we curate a selection of exquisite gifts that embody sophistication and style.

At the core of our ethos is the digital marketing strategy, meticulously crafted reflect the identity of the brand. Through innovative online campaigns and captivating social content, the Go-To strives to engage with its audience and establish meaningful connections that resonate with our discerning clientele.

# *Research Log*

Table of Contents

Primary research approach

After discussing my primary research options during tutorials, I had two viable choices to consider. To ensure the best decision for my project I also referred to Nick Hillman's recommendation by studying "Good Research Guide: For Small-Scale Social Research Projects" by Denscombe (2014).

However, I received feedback from my tutors suggesting to focus on conducting interviews to gain insights into business marketing. Additionally, I was also advised against creating another survey since my Market Insight already indicated the demand among Gen Zs searching on social media platforms already.

Despite this, I decided to incorporate both methodologies. Consequently, I designed a survey (see Appendix 2) to delve even deeper into the search interests of this generation and which industries are of the highest interest. The survey was shared on platforms like Instagram and TikTok to engage with a large number of Gen Z users who might be interested in my search engine strategy. Multiple shares were necessary to ensure enough participation from Gen Z respondents and overcome the struggle of finding enough respondents.

Reflecting on the interviews on the other side, I would record them in the future rather than solely relying on my notes. This approach would help capture all details accurately, ensuring nothing valuable is overlooked.
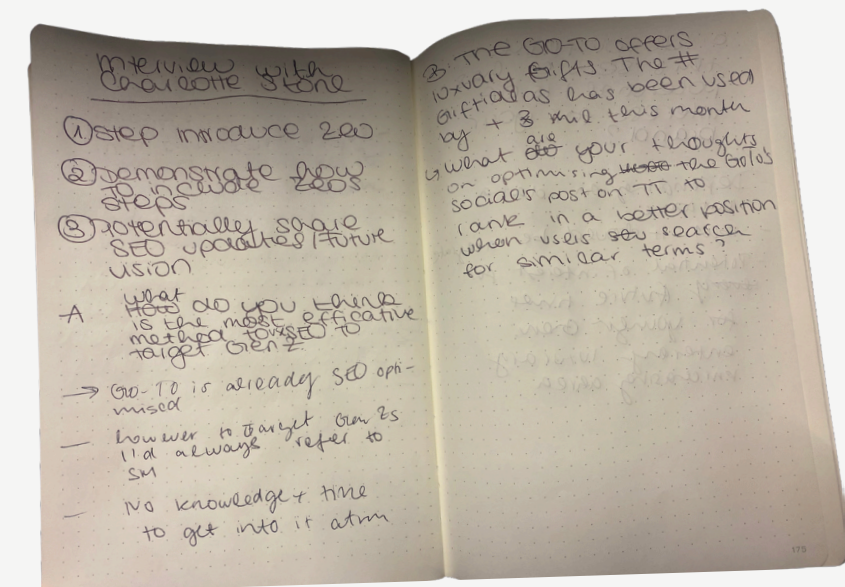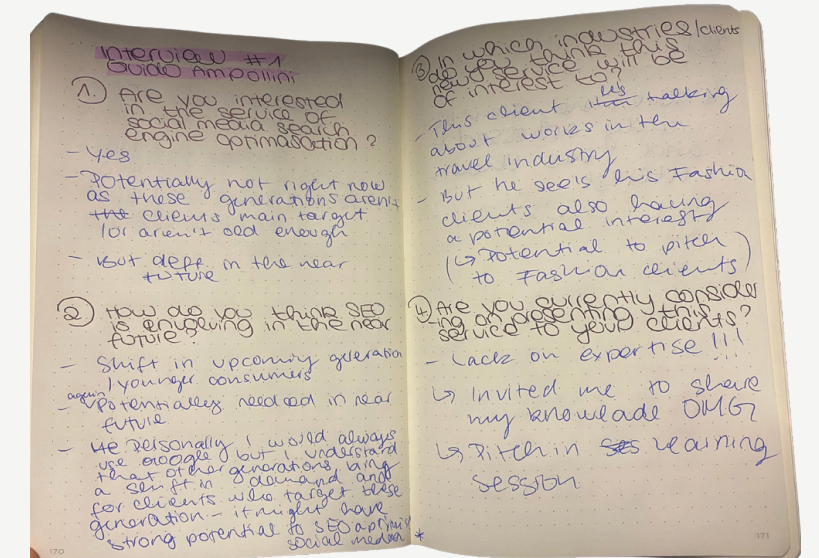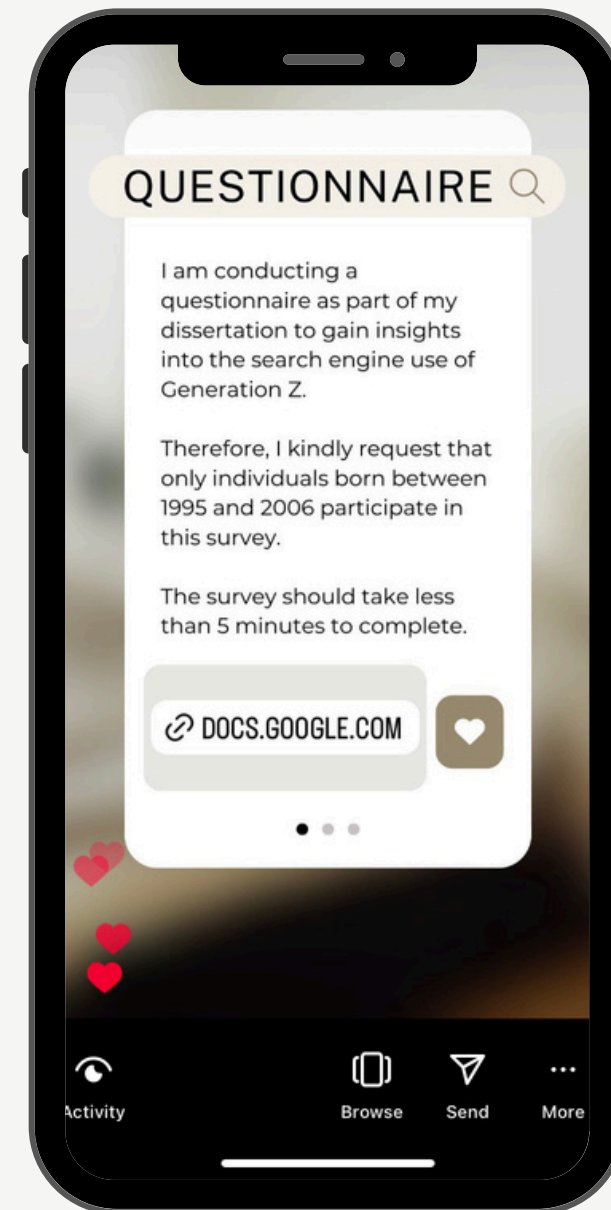
Identifying the need for Zeo

In my role as SEO Executive at GA Agency, I've had the opportunity to immerse myself in SEO marketing and Google trends. To understand these dynamics, I've attended various learning events, including the Brighton SEO conference in September 2023, which focused on the future of search, particularly its intersection with targeting younger demographics through social media search optimisation.

The presentations and discussions at Brighton SEO were insightful, but amidst the wealth of information presented, I noticed a conspicuous gap: A lack of cohesive strategies that combine SEO principles with social media content strategies. While speakers emphasised the importance of social media optimisation going forward, there was a lack of insight on how to effectively merge SEO and social media tactics for brands and agencies alike.

Motivated by this realisation, I felt compelled to delve deeper into the topic and explore ways in which SEO and social media strategies could be effectively combined. Thus, the concept of Zeo was born. The name itself, Zeo, is an amalgamation of "SEO" and "Z" and symbolises the focus on optimising search experiences for the younger demographic, known as Gen Z.

Fig.A *Brighton SEO presenter*

The first part of the degree project

At the beginning of the first phase of my study project, the aim was clear:
to provide evidence of Generation Z's increasing preference for social media as a primary search platform, eclipsing traditional search engines such as Google. Through extensive research, drawing on academic literature, and analysing trends, the evidence became compelling.

This phase of the project was both enlightening and validating. The more I delved into academic articles and macro and micro trends, the clearer the need for Zeo became. It was not just a speculative hypothesis, but a validated concept supported by data and scientific discourse.

The knowledge gained in this first phase of research provided a solid foundation for the subsequent phases of the project. Aside from the academic significance, the validation of the need for Zeo was also gratifying for me as it confirmed the relevance and potential impact of my endeavours in the field of digital marketing on my future career plans.
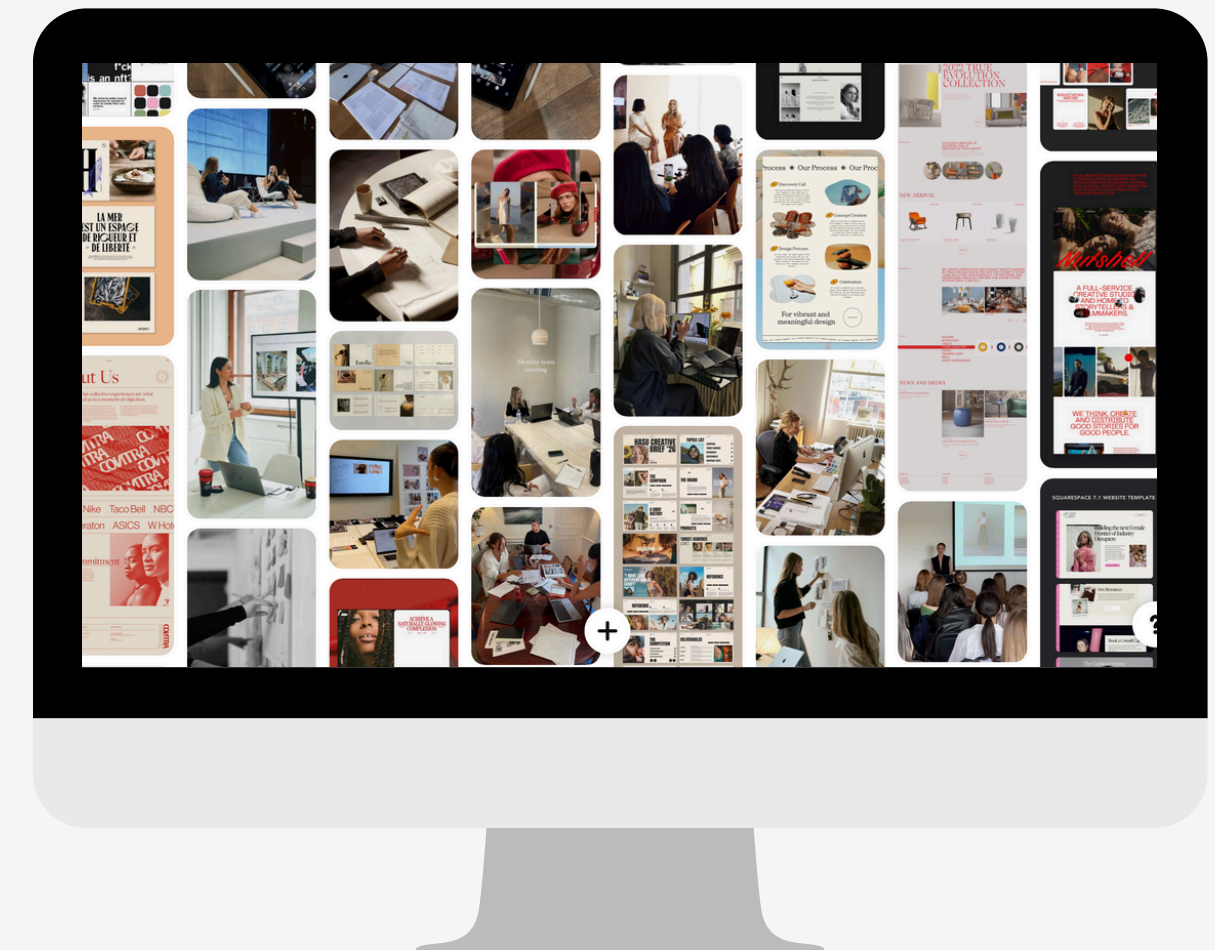
Vision board,
created before have started
with the first part

Fig.B *Mood board*

The initial phase of the second part

As the project moved into the second stage, new challenges emerged, most notably the task of proving the effectiveness of Zeo in a tangible, real-world context. The theoretical framework had been established but putting it into practice presented several hurdles.

One of the biggest challenges was the need to gain access to a brand's social media data - an essential prerequisite for evaluating Zeo's impact. Traditional SEO improvements typically require a significant amount of time and effort to achieve tangible results for Zeo. In addition, finding a brand that was willing to collaborate on this initiative presented some challenges.

To overcome this challenge, I applied for a marketing-orientated internship, as I saw it as an opportunity to bridge the gap between theory and practice. The partnership with The Go-To, an up-and-coming brand with a strong social media presence proved to be a stroke of luck. By working together, I was able to integrate Zeo into their TikTok strategy, gaining invaluable insight into its effectiveness in a real-world setting.
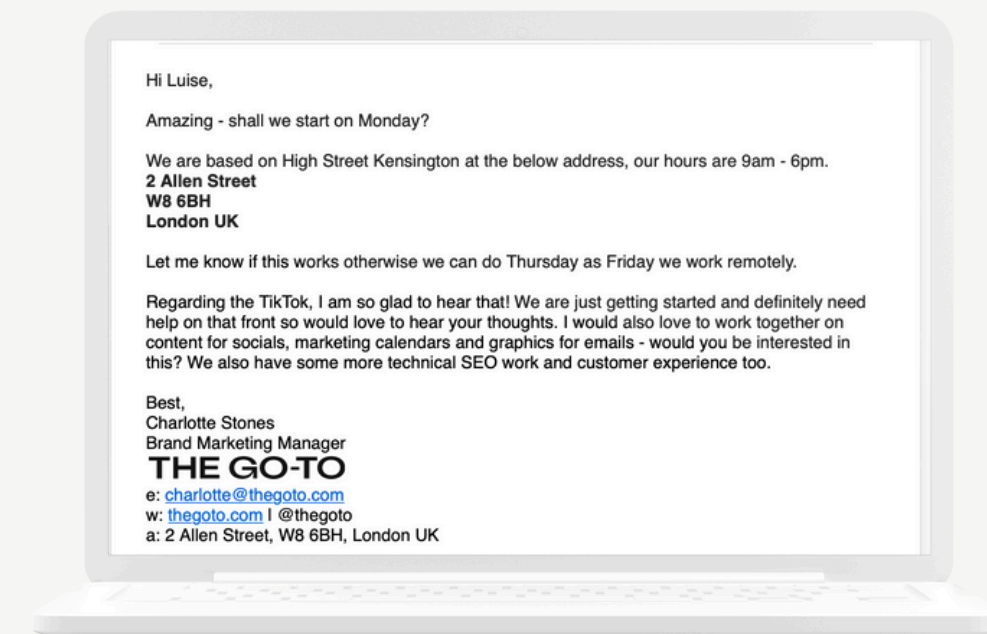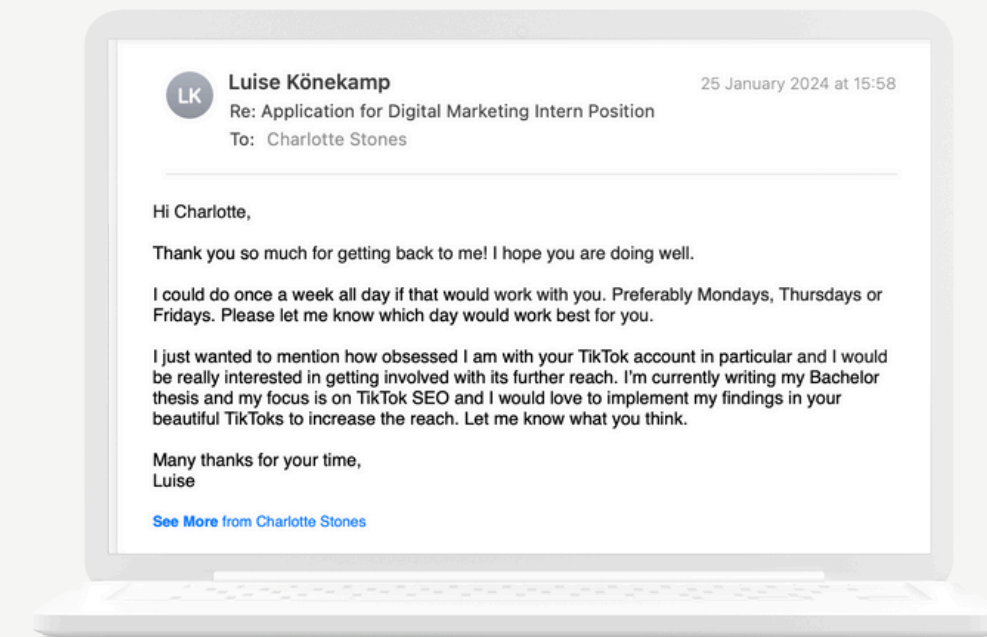
The progress of Zeo

Through this iterative process of research, experimentation, and collaboration, Zeo became more than just a theoretical concept: it emerged as a practical solution with tangible benefits for brands looking to improve their online search visibility and appeal to younger demographics.

The comprehensive strategy that emerged from this process combined the principles of search engine optimisation with the creation of tailored content for social media, ensuring maximum reach and resonance with the target audience.

Zeo's integration with The Go-To's TikTok posts provided empirical evidence of its effectiveness and validated its role in meeting the evolving needs of younger consumers who favour social media platforms for search queries. I dug deep into the TikTok data and was able to increase the company's search presence in just 4 weeks. That's a strong kick-off compared to my usual work as an SEO executive, which I accomplished.
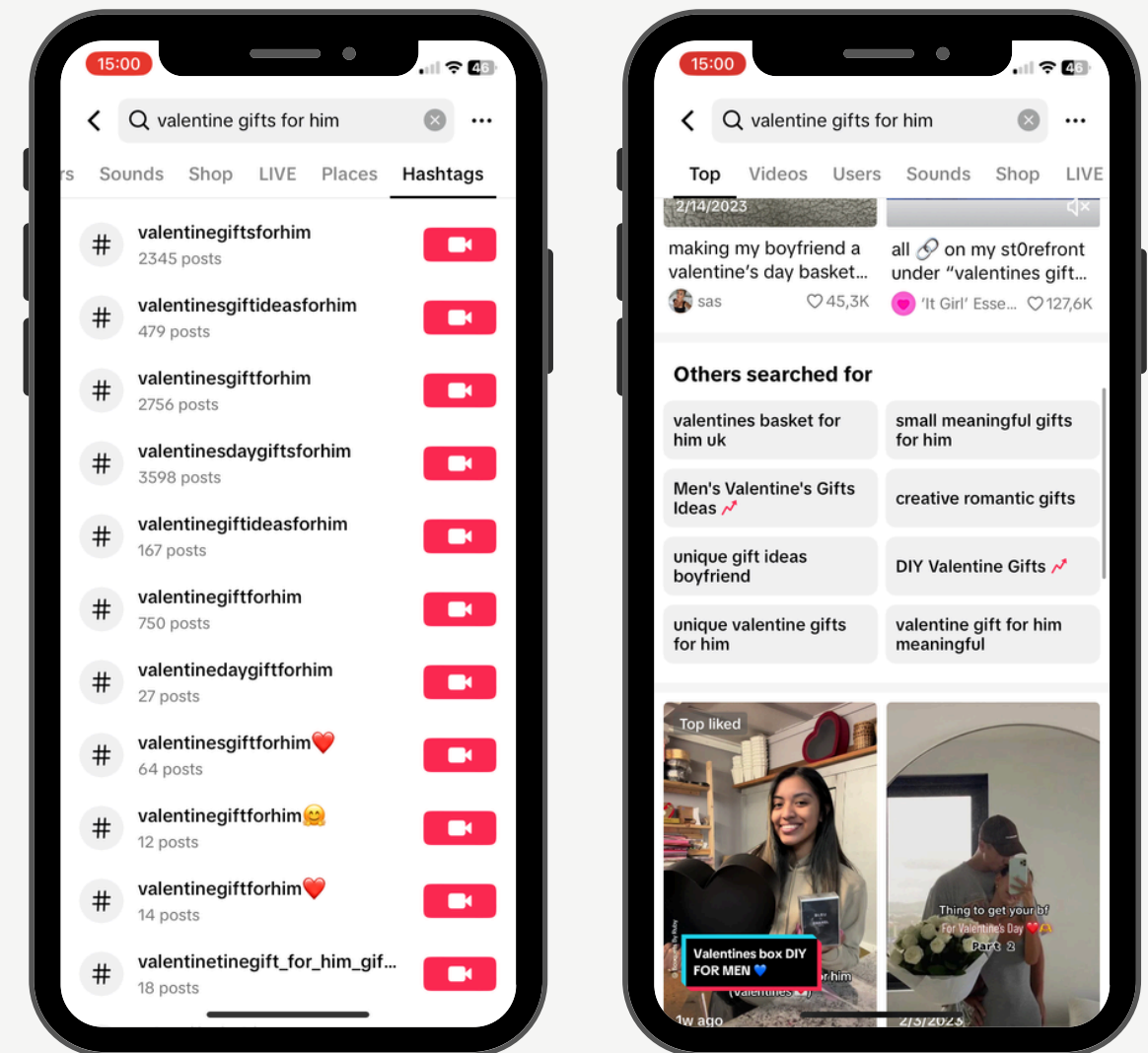
Conducted research on TikTok, when Zeo optimising the Go-To's TikToks.

Fig.C *TikTok search*

Other hurdles and challenges

Achieving a concrete industry outcome with the Zeo pilot project posed a significant challenge, along with various other obstacles. One such hurdle was creating a business-oriented strategic plan that also adhered to academic standards. To tackle this issue and effectively merge both aspects in the latter part of my project, I actively participated in tutorials and engaged in discussions during degree project lectures. These interactions were crucial in addressing my queries and consulting with my professors on the suitable frameworks, essential considerations, and how to incorporate all the learning outcomes. I identified and omitted frameworks that were important to my project, as well as I made sure, by double checking with my main tutors that relevant learning outcomes were included and the ones I did not consider were not suitable for my degree focus. Ultimately, I believe I managed to envision strategy of Zeo that balanced academic rigor with strategic appeal.

The future of Zeo

Looking to the future, Zeo is a promising path for marketers looking to navigate the ever-changing landscape of digital marketing and for generations to come, which is of importance for me personally as well, as I'm presenting to multiple companies and am proud of my achievements. My degree project combines the power of social media and SEO and represent a paradigm shift in the way brands approach search visibility and engagement. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, Zeo and I are ready to play a critical role in shaping the future of marketing strategies, driving business growth, and fostering meaningful connections with audiences across multiple social platforms.

As Zeo gains traction in the marketing landscape, it is imperative to remain adaptable and responsive to new trends and technologies. By continually refining and innovating Zeo strategies, marketers can stay ahead of the curve and capitalise on new opportunities for engagement and growth. With its focus on improving search experiences and optimising content for the digital age, Zeo is well-positioned to support brands and marketers in their quest for success in an increasingly competitive digital marketplace.

Notes

Of my beginning stage
/ idea phase of how I was
planning on structuring my
project

List of Illustrations

Fig. A: Brighton SEO (2023) Brighton SEO presenter Image [Photo] Available at: https://www.oncrawl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Rachel-Greg-Gifford-1024x576.jpeg [2023].

Fig B: Pinterest (2024) Mood board Image [Photo] Available at: https://www.oncrawl.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Rachel-Greg-Gifford-1024x576.jpeg

Fig. C: TikTok (2024) TikTok search Image [Photo] Available at: https://www.tiktok.com/discover/searching

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TikTok - make your day (s.d.) At: https://www.tiktok.com/discover/searching (Accessed 17/04/2024).

Critical Reflection

My Degree Project being relevant for my future career

The focus of my Degree Project was intended to be useful for my future career alongside my academic journey. The career path I aim to follow is clear to me, and the work I invested in my degree has only solidified my choice further. I aspire to pursue a career with a focus on digital marketing, encompassing SEO, social media marketing, and digital PR.

Having recognised the increasing convergence of SEO and social media in the digital marketing landscape, which my degree project represents, I see an opportunity to expand my skill set and expertise across multiple marketing domains. By integrating SEO strategies with social media marketing efforts, I aim to create holistic digital marketing campaigns that deliver comprehensive results for clients. My goal is not only to excel in traditional SEO practices but also to leverage the power of modern media platforms to enhance brand visibility and engage with target audiences in innovative ways, ultimately driving conversions through novel strategies. Presenting this approach to companies serves as a stepping stone towards realising my career vision.

By seamlessly integrating Zeo into companies' social media strategies, I envision myself as a versatile digital marketer capable of navigating the evolving future of search adaptation and delivering impactful results for clients across various industries.

This project serves as a stepping stone towards realising my career vision by allowing me to develop and refine strategies that bridge the gap between SEO and social media marketing. Through continuous learning, experimentation, and adaptation to emerging trends, I aim to stay at the forefront of digital change and make meaningful contributions to the success of my work as an SEO executive and also in my next upcoming job, potentially integrating newer marketing approaches.

Meanwhile, in addition to having received an offer at my current agency to become a full-time employee at GA, I also presented my degree project to other companies to find my ideal job role. This included reaching out to the main competitor: Rise at Seven, which has already started operating with similar strategies for its clients. After conducting research on their campaigns, I emailed them and applied for a digital PR executive role at Rise at Seven. I attended the first interview and presented my degree project focus to the manager, followed by getting invited to the next interview, where I will have to complete a task focusing on presenting Zeo's strategy approach to one of their clients in a theoretical case study. This job role seems to have strong potential to meet my future career vision, as I would be able to create campaigns for clients with a focus on search optimisation, targeting younger audiences. Therefore, implementing Zeo's steps might be of high interest and potentially to learn even more about creating strong, targeted campaigns.

Additionally, I am also in touch with other brands and agencies that have shown an interest in my degree project when attached to my application. One of them is a brand searching for young, innovative marketers willing to come up with new ideas to be added to their marketing strategy. They resonated with my idea and invited me to their office to showcase Zeo's strategy.

However, the biggest supporter during my final project was my current employer: GA Agency. Not only did they encourage my project, but they also took the time to let me interview the founder during my working hours. During this interview, the most revealing outcome was that the founder, Guido Ampollini, then concluded the interview with the outcome of me presenting my research to the entire agency during our monthly "Knowledge Sharing Sessions," where seniors of the company usually share the latest updates and developments in the industry.

As I was nervous, he set me in touch with another colleague to do this meeting together. Over 30 of our colleagues joined, including the founder, Guido, who normally never joins our learning sessions, and my colleague and I presented a vision of the future of social search. From this meeting, I gained a lot of confidence that my project was relevant, and even though I was very nervous, I felt very empowered afterward.

To conclude, during my Final Degree Project, I realised that I have found my future path, and I feel lucky to have completed my studies within this sector, I feel ready to enter my suitable industry choice. When conducting research and also while setting up Zeo's strategy plan I enjoyed the entire process, including the challenging aspects and the trial-and-error approaches by testing Zeo's steps. Creating something of digital significance meant inventing a strategy for a specific target which required focus, necessity, and planning.

Reference List

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