Why My Content Didn't Go Viral

Nowadays, there's an overwhelming amount of content out there. How do you create quality content? On TikTok, I've noticed some patterns. Useful content tends to have higher views, like "Fixing a MacBook Battery Bulge for $5.5" or "How to Watch TikTok on TV." Even after posting for half a year, I still occasionally receive likes on these videos. However, videos about daily life get relatively fewer views. There are just too many daily life videos on TikTok. If we post random snippets of daily life, they can be quite boring because almost everyone, young and old, posts such content.

The question we need to consider is: how can we make a stranger like our content? This is key to organic growth. How do we make our content the best on the internet?

We must understand that our feelings when watching our own videos, videos of people we know, and videos of strangers are completely different.

When we see a video of someone we know, we tend to watch it longer and with more patience. When we really admire someone, it doesn't matter what they post; it's always popular. Love is blind. When we like someone, we tend to like everything they do.

Quality content is usually useful and interesting. TikTok and WeChat are two different ecosystems. What's popular on WeChat might not be popular on TikTok, and vice versa.

Many times, when friends share highly-liked TikTok videos on WeChat Moments, I find them quite ordinary. This is because I have seen too much content on the internet, too many videos. I also spend a lot of time on international platforms like Twitter and TikTok International, so I've seen all kinds of new and interesting things. People on the internet are becoming desensitized to everything.

So, many times, highly-liked TikTok videos get their likes because people are deeply immersed in TikTok and happen to see the video. It resonates with them, so they like it. Or maybe TikTok's algorithm identified the content as music, comedy skits, or inspirational content and pushed it to people who like such content, thus getting high likes. However, when friends post it on WeChat Moments, I'm in a rush to scroll through Moments quickly, and I find it ordinary. Also, I might not have headphones on, so I can't immerse myself in it, and I might not even be a fan of that type of content.

I've seen some TikTok accounts with tens of millions of followers. Their recent videos get fifty to a hundred thousand likes. But when they come to WeChat Channels, they perform average, getting five hundred to a thousand likes. They might have only been on WeChat Channels for a few months and posted a few dozen videos. This means that their followers and likes are more about long-term accumulation on the platform and how well their content fits the platform's trends.

Think about how TikTok influencers can succeed on WeChat Channels. It's easier for big public accounts or those with a large private traffic to succeed on WeChat Channels. They can drive traffic from Moments,

WeChat groups, and public accounts to WeChat Channels. WeChat Channels provide quality content that satisfies the desires of target users. It's harder to drive traffic from TikTok to WeChat Channels because loyal fans are already familiar with you, and following you on another platform seems redundant. This might also be restricted by TikTok's policies.

WeChat Channels have three tabs: Follow, Friends, and Recommendations. How effective are these tabs in growing followers, attracting new users, and making friends?

We need to realize that the audience is vast and diverse. Everyone has different interests. The public accounts I read every day might not be read by my friends. The people I follow might not be followed by my friends. I follow many public accounts, while my friends follow very few. I checked, and I follow 1167 public accounts. According to some data, users were informed when they reached around 1000 accounts, but this restriction seems to have been relaxed this year.

Recently, I checked how many of my friends followed the public accounts I follow. The accounts I consider big and assume everyone knows are followed by only a few hundred of my 5000 friends. "LatePost" has 421 friends following it, "Xiaolai" has 277, "Ten O' Clock Reading" has 653, and "WeChat Daily News" has 1033 friends following it. Most of my friends are young internet professionals.

This means that interests are dispersed. People we consider famous might not be that popular. "Lei Jun" has over 23 million followers on Weibo, "Luo Yonghao" has over 17 million, and the "Weibo Funny Ranking" has over 57 million.

One thing that surprised me is how "Weibo Funny Ranking" kept its account active for so many years by initiating topics every night and engaging everyone in discussions. The account remains highly interactive, with many likes, comments, and shares. This is amazing because everyone participates. The account organizer simply sets up the platform and lets everyone play, giving everyone a chance to be featured in popular comments. Compared to celebrity idols, people care more about themselves.

In China, there are about 80 million people in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. According to a report, there are over 16 million internet professionals in China. How do we define internet professionals? This is difficult to quantify. One category includes people working in internet companies. Alibaba has about 120,000 employees, ByteDance has about 90,000, and Tencent has about 60,000. These three companies alone employ around 270,000 people, roughly 300,000. According to the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), there are 135 internet companies listed domestically and internationally. If we consider these three companies as a sample and multiply by ten, we get around 300 internet companies, representing the number of employees in internet companies, totaling around 3 million. There are many startups and large companies with internet departments. How many internet professionals are there in these companies? Let's say 10 million.

These are internet professionals working in marketing, operations, product, technology, and management in

internet companies. However, do content creators count as internet professionals? How many people work in the e-commerce industry? According to the Ministry of Commerce's "China E-Commerce Report 2019," there are 51.25 million e-commerce professionals.

During a year of operating "Fun Live," a tech live streaming platform, we had about 1.5 million site visits, 150,000 unique visitors, and around 30,000 registered users.

These numbers are logical and consistent. Although we rarely experience large-scale data like millions or tens of millions, when we analyze and compare various data, we find patterns.

Back to content: competition is fierce. How many TikTok accounts have over a million followers? Tens of thousands. How many public accounts have over a hundred thousand followers? Also tens of thousands.

There's a common understanding that many famous people abroad are not well-known in China, and many famous people in China are not well-known abroad. Various platforms and internet celebrities are the same. Influencers popular on Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book) might not be known to people who don't use the platform.

When Lei Jun and Luo Yonghao joined TikTok, they quickly gained millions of followers. This is because they have been topics of discussion for years. They hold press conferences, launch products, and engage in online debates with peers, attracting attention. They have done many things, and their products or stories have influenced many people. This is hard to replicate; they already have many legends in the industry.

How can we elevate our or our product's influence to the next level, from a thousand monthly active users to ten thousand, then to a hundred thousand? What kind of content, product, or service should we offer to make friends with people? In the article "How to Grow Users," I mentioned several growth methods but didn't include topic marketing, event marketing, or cross-industry marketing. These are also methods. Where are our target users, and how can we attract their attention and keep them? Over the past few years, I've done some things and made some friends. New entrepreneurs might find their content, product, or service not reaching many people. Even experienced entrepreneurs like me find it difficult to acquire customers and grow nowadays, as platform relationships are stabilizing.

On WeChat Channels, I've posted dozens of videos with about 180,000 views, averaging two to three thousand views per video. This is with previous accumulation. Today, when I see videos with tens of thousands of likes and accounts with fifty or a hundred thousand followers, it's largely due to their existing followers and some new ones. Gaining new followers is still difficult. These accounts probably have millions of followers on public accounts. When I try to imitate their content, I learn something. When they try to transfer content from other platforms but don't perform as well on WeChat Channels, I learn something else.

For natural content growth, we should analyze which content spreads organically and which content attracts

new followers. Are new followers brought in by system recommendations based on tags or by friend relationships? For early fans on WeChat Channels, we need to understand how they found us. When looking at others' accounts, we should distinguish which videos are liked by old followers, which attract new followers, and which videos perform exceptionally well.

Experience might help, but we might not always understand why. When I try to replicate my successes, it doesn't always work. Other factors are at play. When we ask others how they became popular, they might tell us their journey to success, providing quality content and sharing sincerely. However, it might also be the power of algorithms and platform trends, tapping into people's desires. Many reports say that many accounts peak for only a few months, indicating that more factors are at play than just the content itself

. The market is full of quality content.

Customer acquisition requires continuously delivering quality content in a vertical field. But there's a crucial point here. Why focus on a vertical field? To better cater to users' interests and satisfy their desires. People get what they want here and might make like-minded friends. Why continuously deliver? To attract people with fresh content and provide a rich experience. Once content is consumed, it usually isn't as interesting on subsequent views, especially long articles and videos. Why focus on a vertical field? Because existing users interested in that field might not be interested in other types of content. They might not unfollow, but they might not engage anymore. The brand doesn't occupy their mind, and they don't know what to expect from you.

With so much content today, we need to think about which users we want to satisfy deeply. How can our content stand out on the internet? What do users get from us, and how can we continuously provide that value? How can users remember us and think of us when they need something?

Often, we don't need many users to make money. We can have many users pay us a little or a few users pay us a lot. Both ways can earn us the money we want. Why do we need so many people? Why must they know us and cooperate with us? We all aim to make people's lives better. They don't have to know us. As long as we help improve their lives, that's enough.

In this desire-driven world, emotions become less important. Today, to make money, we need to present our content, product, or service to a stranger and make them want to buy it at first sight. When creating content, writing articles, or making videos to teach college students or career changers programming, it's like finding a college student outside and making them read our article or watch our video. How can we make a complete stranger willing to engage with our content? When making products, it's about getting target users to download our app or mini-program. How do we make someone who knows nothing about our product like it?

The deal must be fair. No one refuses a $10 breakfast in the neighborhood, a few dollars for a drink, $10 snacks on Pinduoduo, a few hundred to a thousand dollars for branded tutoring classes, or a company paying

an efficient engineer a $10,000 salary.

Friends are friends, business is business. Doing business on WeChat and getting support from friends might blur the reality, as friends might patronize us out of friendship. But to sustain the business long-term, we must think about how to do business with strangers. Only when our content, product, or service is valuable to strangers can we sustain it and achieve organic growth.

Providing quality products or services is an area with much room for improvement. For individuals, there are many experts and influencers to learn from. For companies, Apple is a benchmark.

As individuals, we don't have the energy to do many things. Enhancing skills to create quality products or services, acquiring customers, promoting, and serving clients are many tasks. Should we work first to improve skills and gain experience or start creating products or services to earn money? That's a question. When starting a business, should we focus more on creating quality products or use existing products to make money first?

Acquiring customers today is difficult. But the key question is, why do we need so many people? For knowledge-based entrepreneurs, one-on-one training or small classes are great paths. Teach others what we know. If we have worked at big internet companies, we can teach college students or career changers. If we got into college, we can teach kids or high school students. Create quality courses to prove ourselves, start with one student, iterate continuously, and then serve ten students. What do we know that we can teach others? There are many opportunities here. Earning $10,000 a year shouldn't be difficult. Friends who do well can earn $100,000 a year, but it requires years of accumulation, patience, and persistence.

From a growth perspective, switch to a value creation perspective. Maybe it's okay if we're not viral now. If we want to create content, learn to polish it, learn content creation, learn writing or video making, and learn how to help target users. GaryVee inspired me greatly in content creation. His advice is not to worry about today's followers or likes but to create content we genuinely enjoy, learn to document rather than create, and persist for one or two years. He says we are still young and have many things to do and much content to create.

Zhiwei's content didn't go viral, but his understanding of content, dissemination, and internet marketing deepened. Let's give him a thumbs up.