

## Promoting music through user-generated content – TikTok effect on music streaming

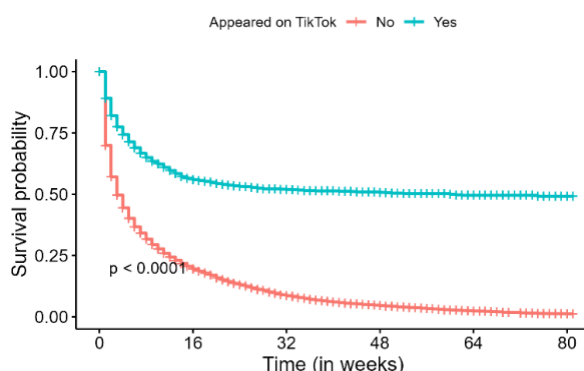
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Recent years have seen the growth of participatory culture around music. One example of such co-creation are the short-form videos hosted on TikTok – a rapidly growing social media platform. Across the media, experts discuss how TikTok changed the music industry by providing space for user-generated promotion. Media stories highlight that songs can become part of viral videos recreated by thousands of TikTok users, and that those videos then contribute to songs' second life in other services. However, lacking empirical evidence, it is unclear whether TikTok can promote songs across music streaming services at a larger scale or whether the observed mechanisms remain true only for a few special cases. Our study is the first to quantitatively investigate the effect of TikTok on music discovery and promotion in other music services. We do so through two complementary approaches.

Firstly, we collect weekly, country-level music chart data for two streaming services (Spotify and Deezer), one audiovisual service (YouTube), and one music discovery service (Shazam). The charts contain the rankings of the most popular songs on those services, and the data comes from the Chartmetric service. We then match the data with charts on the most popular songs in the TikTok platform for 2021 and 2022. Using survival regressions, we check whether trending on TikTok contributes to the time songs spend on music top charts and songs' ranks. In our second approach, we gather historical data at a global level for songs that gained popularity on TikTok. This allows us to enhance our datasets with information on the number of TikTok posts, Spotify streams and popularity, YouTube views, and Shazam counts. Additionally, to create a control group, we utilise the recommendation system of the Spotify API. We search for songs that were not featured in TikTok videos but are most similar to the popular ones on the platform. For these selected songs, we also collected global-level daily measurements. We then conduct analyses aiming to understand the relationships between the services' popularity measures and the number of TikTok posts (videos) featuring a particular song.

Figure 1. The Kaplan-Meier survival plot – when a song appears in TikTok videos, the probability of surviving on Spotify's top chart is significantly higher



Our findings suggest that TikTok plays a significant promotional role for other music platforms. Songs that are featured on TikTok tend to experience greater success metrics, longer durations in the top charts, and slower declines in chart positions. However, it is important to note that the effect is less prominent when it comes to the only audiovisual platform in our study (YouTube).