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Exploring the impact of short-form video content on consumer engagement

A case study of Celsius Suomi

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TIIVISTELMÄ:

Lyhytmuotoinen videosisältö on viime vuosina yleistynyt nopeasti sosiaalisen median alustoilla, erityisesti TikTokissa, ja muuttanut tapoja, joilla kuluttajat kohtaavat ja kokevat brändiviestintää. Samanaikaisesti funktionaalisten energiajuomien suosio on kasvanut merkittävästi, mikä on lisännyt kilpailua markkinoilla. Erityisesti nuoret kuluttajat muodostavat keskeisen kohderyhmän tässä kehityksessä. Näiden kehityssuuntien myötä tarve ymmärtää lyhytmuotoisen videosisällön vaikutuksia kuluttajien sitoutumiseen on korostunut. Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan, miten lyhytmuotoinen videosisältö vaikuttaa kuluttajien sitoutumiseen TikTokissa erityisesti funktionaalisten energiajuomien markkinoilla, tapausesimerkinä Celsius Suomi.

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää, miten Celsius Suomen TikTokissa julkaistava lyhytmuotoinen videosisältö vaikuttaa kuluttajien sitoutumiseen, sekä miten kyseinen sisältö vaikuttaa kuluttajien kokemuksiin ja käyttäytymiseen. Tutkimus perustuu kuluttajan sitoutumisen moniulotteiseen näkökulmaan, jossa sitoutuminen jäsentyy kognitiiviseen, emotionaaliseen, behavioraaliseen ja sosiaaliseen ulottuvuuteen. Näiden ulottuvuuksien pohjalta muodostettu teoreettinen viitekehys ohjaa tutkimuksen empiiristä tarkastelua. Tutkimus on toteutettu laadullisena tapaustutkimuksena, mikä mahdollistaa ilmiön syvällisen tarkastelun kuluttajien kokemusten kautta. Tutkimusaineisto koostuu Celsius Suomen TikTok-sisällön havainnoinnista sekä puolistrukturoiduista haastatteluista. Havainnointiaineistossa analysoitiin 30 videota, ja haastatteluaineisto kerättiin kymmenen haastattelun avulla suomalaisilta nuorilta aikuisilta, jotka käyttävät aktiivisesti sosiaalista mediaa.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että Celsius Suomen TikTok-sisältö painottuu erityisesti emotionaaliseen ja behavioraaliseen sitoutumiseen, kun taas kognitiivinen sitoutuminen jää vähäiseksi. Tutkimuksessa havaitaan, että kuluttajat kokevat brändin sisällön pääosin viihdyttävänä ja visuaalisesti houkuttelevana, mutta sen vaikutus on usein lyhytkestoista eikä synnytä vahvaa sitoutumista kuluttajan ja brändin välille. Samalla havaitaan, että sisältö voi vaikuttaa epäsuorasti esimerkiksi brändimielikuviin ja ostopäätöksiin. Sosiaalinen sitoutuminen ilmenee erityisesti vaikuttajien kautta sekä kuluttajien välisinä keskusteluinä myös sosiaalisen median ulkopuolella. Tulokset korostavat tarvetta kehittää lyhytvideosisältöä tukemaan kuluttajien syvempää ja pitkäkestoisempaa sitoutumista. Tämä edellyttää erityisesti sisällön monipuolistamista, aitouden säilyttämistä sekä merkityksellisyyden lisäämistä. Tutkimus osoittaa, että lyhytmuotoinen videosisältö toimii tehokkaana välineenä brändin näkyvyyden ja tunnistettavuuden lisäämisessä, mutta sen vaikutus syvemmän kuluttajan sitoutumisen rakentamisessa edellyttää strategisempaa ja merkityksellisempää sisällöntuotantoa.

AVAINSANAT: short-form video content, consumer engagement, social media, functional energy drinks

UNIVERSITY OF VAASA**School of Marketing and Communications**

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ABSTRACT:

Short-form video content has grown rapidly on social media platforms in recent years, especially on TikTok, transforming the ways in which consumers encounter and experience brand communication. At the same time, the popularity of functional energy drinks has expanded significantly, leading to increased competition within the industry. Young consumers represent a key target group in this development. As a result, the need to better understand the impact of short-form video content on consumer engagement has become increasingly important. This study examines how short-form video content influences consumer engagement on TikTok, particularly within the functional energy drink market, through the case company Celsius Suomi.

The purpose of this study is to explore how Celsius Suomi's short-form video content on TikTok impacts consumer engagement, and how this content influences consumers' experiences and behavior. This study adopts a multidimensional perspective of consumer engagement, consisting of cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social dimensions. The theoretical framework built on these dimensions serves as the foundation for the empirical part of the study. The research was conducted as a qualitative case study, which allows for an in-depth examination of the phenomenon through consumers' experiences. The empirical data consists of observations of Celsius Suomi's TikTok content and semi-structured interviews. The observational data included 30 videos, and the interview data was collected through ten interviews with Finnish young adults who actively use social media.

The results of the study indicate that Celsius Suomi's TikTok content focuses primarily on emotional and behavioral engagement, while cognitive engagement remains limited. The findings show that consumers perceive the brand's content as entertaining and visually appealing, but its impact is often short-lived and does not create strong engagement between the consumer and the brand. At the same time, the findings suggest that the content can influence consumers indirectly, for example through brand perceptions and purchase decisions. Social engagement is mainly expressed through influencers, as well as through conversations among consumers that take place outside the platform. The findings highlight the importance of creating short-form video content that supports deeper and sustained consumer engagement. This requires content to become more diverse, authentic and relevant to consumers. The study demonstrates that short-form video content is effective in increasing brand visibility and recognition, but building deeper consumer engagement requires more strategic and meaningful content creation.

KEYWORDS: short-form video content, consumer engagement, social media, functional energy drinks

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1 Introduction

In recent years, short-form video content has grown rapidly on social media platforms, significantly changing the way users consume and engage with digital media. Content formats that typically range from 15 to 60 seconds have become popular by platforms like YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels, and TikTok (Dong et al., 2024, p. 1105). These short videos are intended for high engagement and quick consumption, appealing to users' desire for entertainment, authenticity and immediacy (Zhang & Landicho, 2024, p. 211). This development has created new opportunities for brands to capture attention in a competitive online environment by combining creative storytelling, visual appeal, and platform-specific trends (Rahman, 2025).

The popularity of short-form video content is part of a larger change in media consumption habits. Today's consumers, especially younger generations, prefer more visually stimulating, fast-paced and easily digestible content that can be accessed instantly on mobile devices (Wan, 2025, p. 169; Zhang & Landicho, 2024, p. 211). This trend reflects the growing demand for more interactive and relatable digital content that allows users to participate and connect with brands. In response to that, marketers have had to adapt their strategies, moving from traditional advertising toward more experimental forms of engagement. As a result, short-form video content has become a powerful marketing tool, allowing brands to build emotional connections and strengthen brand perception in just a few seconds of viewing time (Zhang & Landicho, 2024).

In marketing research, consumer engagement has become an increasingly important concept for understanding consumer and brand interactions on social media platforms. It represents a shift from viewing consumer relationships only as transactional purchase situations to understanding them as interactive and experiential processes (Dessart et al., 2015, p. 28). Consumer engagement is generally considered as a concept consisting of multiple dimensions rather than having a single, universally acknowledged definition (Ma et al., 2022). In the context of short-form video content, consumer engagement is especially relevant because it captures how consumers cognitively, emotionally,

behaviorally and socially connect with brand-related content (Brodie et al., 2013). Consequently, examining consumer engagement provides valuable information about how short-form video content serves as a communication tool and how audiences respond to brand-related content in constantly changing digital environments (Dong et al., 2024, p. 1105).

Although consumer engagement has been studied in the context of social media marketing, much of the existing research has focused on single dimensions of consumer engagement, especially behavioral elements (Dessart et al., 2015; Dong et al., 2024). These measures have often been used for more traditional social media content and general brand interactions. In contrast, the growing popularity of short-form video content brings new engagement elements that differ in pace, format and overall depth (Manic, 2024). Despite its increasing relevance, there is still limited understanding of the various dimensions of consumer engagement with short-form video content. By adopting a multidimensional approach, this study aims to address this gap and provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer engagement in short-form video contexts.

Gupta et al. (2023) define functional beverages as non-alcoholic drinks that offer health benefits beyond basic hydration. This product category has experienced rapid growth in recent years, driven by increasing consumer interest in health, wellness and active lifestyles. Functional beverages typically contain additional ingredients such as vitamins, minerals or other functional elements, and common examples include energy drinks, sports drinks and vitamin-enriched waters (Gupta et al., 2023). These products are often positioned to support specific lifestyle needs, such as physical performance and overall well-being (McCormack et al., 2012).

Within the functional beverage industry, energy drinks represent one of the fastest growing segments. According to Tamamoto et al. (2010, p. 271), their popularity is largely because of their perceived ability to boost energy levels through high amounts of

stimulants, especially caffeine. Frequently marketed as an alternative to coffee, energy drinks also contain additional functional ingredients such as taurine, antioxidants and vitamins, which are typically associated with performance and health benefits (Tamamoto et al., 2010, p. 271). According to consumption patterns (Bleakley et al., 2022), teenagers and young adults are an important consumer group for energy drinks, making this industry especially relevant when examining social media marketing targeted at younger audiences.

Despite a general decline in the consumption of traditional sugary soft drinks, research shows that young consumers continue to consume energy drinks at relatively high levels (Bleakley et al., 2022). Bleakley et al. (2022) report that a significant number of teenagers regularly consume energy drinks, highlighting the popularity of these products among younger demographics. This trend points out the importance of marketing strategies that resonate with younger generations, digital media habits and identities that are lifestyle focused.

The growing popularity of energy drinks is closely related to targeted branding and marketing strategies that promote athletic performance and active lifestyles. McCormack et al. (2012, p. 11) note that these products are actively promoted to younger, more physically active consumers through sports event sponsorships and partnerships with professional and competitive athletes. Sales data shows that a large amount of energy drinks is purchased by people under the age of 25, which demonstrates the effectiveness of these strategies (McCormack et al., 2012, p. 11).

The case company Celsius Suomi is a functional energy drink brand that focuses its branding on well-being and active lifestyles (Celsius Suomi, 2025). Marketed as a health-focused energy drink, Celsius Suomi stands out from more traditional, high-sugar energy drink branding by focusing on functional ingredients and health benefits. Celsius Suomi has been utilizing social media, especially TikTok, to promote brand values and engage with younger consumers in Finland through short-form video content. This makes the

company a relevant case for exploring how short-form video content can influence brand-related experiences and consumer behavior in the highly competitive functional energy drink industry.

1.1 Research questions and objectives

This study aims to address the research gap by exploring how short-form video content impacts consumer engagement in the context of functional beverage industry. This industry is particularly suitable because functional energy drink brands primarily target younger consumers, who are highly engaged with short-form video content. The empirical research on short-form video content's direct impact on consumer engagement, especially on the Finnish market, is limited. This research gap is particularly relevant for brands like Celsius Suomi, which operate in the highly competitive functional energy drink industry. Understanding how Finnish consumers engage with Celsius Suomi's short-form videos can give perspective on how digital content strategies impact brand perceptions and consumer relationships in local markets.

The purpose of this study is to examine how short-form video content on TikTok stimulates consumer engagement within the functional beverage industry, specifically on the energy drinks market. This study adopts a case study approach focusing on the case company Celsius Suomi to examine how consumers engage with brand-related short-form video content and how these interactions appear in a digital marketing context.

The study aims to answer the research question: *How does short-form video content influence consumer engagement in the context of Celsius Suomi?*

To address the main objective, the study is approached through three sub-objectives:

1. The first sub-objective is to define and discuss the key concepts, short-form video content and consumer engagement.

2. The second sub-objective is to examine how Celsius Suomi utilizes short-form video content on TikTok to encourage consumer engagement.
3. The third sub-objective is to analyze how Celsius Suomi's short-form video content on TikTok impacts consumer engagement.

1.2 Research methods

A qualitative research method was chosen for this study, which is well suited for exploring individuals' experiences and subjective interpretations of the topic (Puusa et al., 2020). This approach allows for an in-depth understanding of how consumers perceive brand-related content in digital environment, making it appropriate for examining engagement with short-form video content. This study adopts an interpretivist and hermeneutic perspective, focusing on understanding the meanings that people attach to social phenomena and recognizing interpretation as an important element of qualitative research (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015, p. 21).

Empirically, the research is conducted as a case study focusing on the short-form video content published on Celsius Suomi's TikTok account. The empirical material consists of observations of the brand's short-form videos and semi-structured interviews with Finnish consumers who are familiar with Celsius or have come across its content on TikTok. The combination of observational analysis and semi-structured interviews was considered the most suitable for this study because it offers the flexibility to explore participants' personal experiences and thoughts of Celsius Suomi's short-form video content.

1.3 Structure of the study

This thesis is structured into five main chapters. The first chapter introduces the study by explaining the background, research question, objectives, and the methodological approach. The second chapter creates the theoretical framework by reviewing relevant literature and discussing the key concepts that form the basis of this research, short-

form video content and consumer engagement. The first sub-objective is also addressed in the second chapter, and it builds the theoretical foundation for the empirical part of the study.

The third chapter explains the research methodology, describing the chosen methodological approach, research method, data collection and data analysis process. In addition, the validity and reliability of the study are covered in this chapter. The findings of the empirical research are presented and analyzed in the fourth chapter. Finally, the fifth chapter concludes the study by presenting the main results in relation to theoretical and managerial implications, discussing the limitations of the research, and giving suggestions to future research.

2 Theoretical background

This chapter provides a broad understanding of the research topic, while introducing the key concepts based on previous research. This theoretical chapter intends to respond to the first sub-objective of the study by defining and creating an understanding of short-form video content and consumer engagement.

2.1 Short-form video content

Short-form video content has become one of the most significant media formats in modern digital communication (Liu et al., 2019). Although definitions vary slightly, short-form video content is typically defined as video content with a duration ranging from few seconds to few minutes, presented in mobile-optimized format, and shared on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts (Liu et al., 2019, p. 784; Manic, 2024, p. 45). Among these, TikTok has become the leading platform because of its mobile-first design, algorithmic recommendation system and trend-driven culture (Scherr & Wang, 2021). Unlike traditional long-form video formats, short-form video content appeals to digital audiences' short attention spans and increased use of mobile media, which encourages fast, captivating and visually stimulating content that can be consumed anywhere and anytime (Manic, 2024, p. 45).

The existing literature often characterizes short-form video content as high-stimulus and fast-paced, emphasizing features such as visual effects, music, on-screen text and quick editing (Dong et al., 2024; Rahman, 2025). These elements are considered important to short-form video content's ability to capture user attention within the attention economy, where audiences are constantly exposed to competing content (Rahman, 2025, p. 41). From this perspective, short-form video content can be seen as a response to shrinking attention spans and fragmented media consumption habits (Rahman, 2025, p. 41).

Another defining feature of short-form video content often mentioned in the literature is algorithm-driven distribution, which has a big impact on how short-form video content is delivered and consumed on social media platforms. Wan et al. (2025, p. 170) state that personalized recommendation algorithms can offer content that aligns with individual user preferences by analyzing their interests and behavioral patterns. Accordingly, Rahman (2025, p. 41) argues that as short-form video content is typically delivered based on user's viewing behavior and interaction habits, brand messages are often seen as organic rather than disruptive. This kind of natural, algorithm-driven exposure creates deeper emotional connections with audiences and strengthens the authenticity of brand communication. As stated by recent research on the advertising potential of these formats, algorithmic distribution increases brand awareness by ensuring that branded content reaches users who are most likely to be responsive to it (Rahman, 2025, p. 42; Peng et al., 2023, p. 2).

In addition to its technological features, short-form video platforms are strongly associated with sharing engaging and entertaining content with others (Dong et al., 2024). In contrast to traditional advertising formats, Xiao et al. (2023, p. 6) argue that short-form videos are often consumed for enjoyment, since users actively seek content that brings relaxation and entertainment and satisfy their hedonic needs. Particularly TikTok centres almost entirely on short-form video content, making video consumption and sharing the platform's primary form of interaction. As a result, consumer behavior on TikTok is expressed through short-form videos rather than through static posts or other content formats (Xiao et al., 2023, p. 6-7).

2.1.1 TikTok as a short-form video platform

TikTok has grown into a leading platform for short-form video content, with a major impact on today's digital media consumption (Zhang & Liu, 2021). The fast growth of the platform is a result of its mobile-first design, entertainment-based nature and highly personalized distribution system (Karizat et al., 2021). Since TikTok is specifically designed for creating and consuming short-form videos, it is a particularly relevant

platform for this research. Therefore, this study examines short-form video content within the context of TikTok.

TikTok offers a wide range of content, including creative and experimental audiovisual contents, entertaining videos such as dance trends, and content featuring celebrities, as described by Klug et al. (2021, p. 84). The platform primarily delivers content through its “For You” page, which provides users with a continuous, algorithmically curated stream of videos that play on an automatic loop and encourage users to keep scrolling (Klug et al., 2021, p. 84; Siles et al., 2022, p. 5703). Unlike traditional social media platforms that prioritize content from users’ existing social networks, Karizat et al. (2021, p. 305:7) argue that TikTok’s content shown on the “For You” page is based on users’ viewing behavior, interaction history and content preferences. Consequently, this mechanism allows both consumers and brands to reach new audiences, which increases the potential visibility of short-form video content.

TikTok positions itself as a global platform for short-form mobile videos that aims to encourage creativity and provide entertainment for its users (Zhang & Liu, 2021). Users can upload videos up to 10 minutes in length, which are mainly consumed through the “For You” page. This feed is displayed on the TikTok website as an algorithm-driven stream of content customized to individual user’s preferences and is positioned as the main feature of the app (Klug et al., 2021, p. 85). Although users have the option to follow specific accounts, TikTok emphasizes how important algorithms are in creating the user experience (Siles et al., 2024, p. 5703). The platform is widely considered to have very powerful and addicting recommendation algorithms compared to other social media platforms (Karizat et al., 2021, Klug et al., 2021; Siles et al., 2024). According to TikTok, its recommender system is mostly based on user interaction data, metadata related to videos and device and account-related settings (Siles et al., 2024, p. 5703).

2.1.2 Short-form video content in marketing communication

Short-form video advertising has transformed the field of online advertising by giving both brands and individual users the opportunity to promote products through social

media platforms (Meng et al., 2024, p. 2). As competition for consumer attention intensifies online, brands are relying on short-form video platforms to improve brand visibility and recognition. Modern brand marketing strategies emphasize reaching audiences where they are most active, and the large user bases of short-form video platforms offer excellent opportunities for achieving these goals (Peng et al., 2023; Meng et al., 2024). The high amount of user traffic has also led many businesses to invest significant marketing resources to short-form video content as a part of their advertising strategies (Meng et al., 2024, p. 1; Xiao et al., 2023, p. 1). Essentially, the strong interactive features and quick distribution of content have made short-form video formats a key marketing tool for many companies (Peng et al., 2023, p. 1).

Meng et al. (2024, p. 2) claim that short-form video advertisements offer a variety of advantages compared to traditional forms of advertising. They note that short length of the video makes it easier for consumers to absorb, and the relatively low production costs and simple creation process, especially on platforms like TikTok, lower the barrier to entry. Furthermore, short-form video advertisements are more socially engaging than traditional ads. The users can comment, like, share and discuss the content with others, which improves social interaction and creates a sense of connection (Meng et al., 2024, p. 2). Additionally, the personalized recommendation algorithms used by short-form video platforms allow these ads to be targeted more precisely to relevant audiences, which increases total conversion rates (Meng et al., 2024; Xiao et al., 2023).

The rapid growth of TikTok has shown that short-form videos are a significant shift in how people interact with digital content, and not just a temporary trend. Brands have quickly begun incorporating short-form videos into their marketing strategies, recognizing their potential to attract attention, communicate messages effectively and improve brand visibility (Dong et al., 2024). Short-form video advertising is characterized by the combination of visuals, sound, text overlays and often humour or storytelling, which allows brands to move beyond traditional static advertising formats (Rahman, 2025, p. 41). This approach allows for more personal and relatable interactions with

audiences and is especially effective among Millennials and Generation Z, who are the most active social media users and prefer content that is fast-paced, authentic and emotionally engaging (Rahman, 2025, p. 41; Wan, 2025, p. 169).

Rahman's article (2025, p. 45) demonstrates that short-form video advertising significantly influences consumers' brand perceptions and engagement, especially among younger audiences who interact with such content daily. Frequent exposure to short-form video content was proven to improve brand recognition and remembering significant brand elements, such as logos, slogans or product features (Rahman, 2025, p. 45). Furthermore, the majority of respondents in Rahman's (2025) study thought that brands appearing in short-form videos came across as more youthful and accessible, indicating that short-form video advertising helps strengthen brand image in addition to delivering information.

2.2 Consumer engagement

Consumer engagement has become an important concept in marketing research, particularly in digital and social media environments. Since consumers interact with brands in ways other than traditional purchasing situations, the concept of engagement has been based on the extended area of relationship marketing (Brodie et al., 2013, p. 106). This relational approach demonstrates how interactions between consumers and different stakeholders in various co-creative situations influence consumer behavior (Brodie et al., 2013, p. 106). As a result, consumer engagement has emerged as an important concept in the marketing context and is viewed as being based on certain interactive experiences (Dessart et al., 2015, p. 28). According to this perspective, consumers and other actors co-create interactive experiences that lead to engagement.

Although the concept of consumer engagement is widely used, there is no single, universally acknowledged definition (Ma et al., 2022). Previous studies have examined engagement in different ways, and there are differences in theoretical perspectives and research contexts. Vivek et al. (2014, p. 416) describe consumer engagement as "an

interactive, reciprocal relationship experienced by the customer with a focal agent/object and is meaningful and nurtured in a network of social connections". Alternatively, Hollebeek et al. (2014, p. 154) define it as "a consumer's positively valenced brand-related cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity during or related to a focal consumer/brand interactions". This shows that the definitions differ in their focus and perspective. However, the lack of a clear definition of consumer engagement has resulted in inconsistent findings, making it difficult to compare results between studies and contexts.

According to Brodie et al. (2011), consumer engagement is becoming more recognized as a strategic goal for improving business performance, including growth in sales, a stronger competitive advantage, and higher profitability, in interactive and quickly developing business environments. They state that this is mostly because engaged consumers actively support marketing efforts by recommending and sharing brands, products and services to others. Furthermore, highly engaged consumers may take part in the development of new products or services and help co-create experiences and value (Brodie et al., 2011). The conceptual foundations of consumer engagement can be traced back to theories of interactive experiences and value co-creation in marketing relationships (Brodie et al., 2013, p. 106).

2.2.1 Multidimensional nature of consumer engagement

Because the concept is complex, many of the current research define consumer engagement as a multidimensional concept that describes the extent of a consumer-brand interaction that goes beyond transactional behavior (Brodie et al., 2011; Ma et al., 2022; Hollebeek et al., 2014). Relevant frameworks in the literature, such as those presented by Brodie et al. (2013, p. 109) and Ma et al. (2022, p. 5), define consumer engagement as consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions. From this perspective, engagement includes consumer's mental attention to a brand, emotional responses and observable actions, such as liking, commenting and sharing content (Ma et al., 2022, p. 4). This multidimensional approach has been widely adopted because it

offers a more complete understanding of consumer-brand relationships in interactive digital contexts.

Although the multidimensional nature of consumer engagement is acknowledged, researchers have different views of the significance of these dimensions. Some researchers focus on behavioral engagement as the most apparent outcome, while others argue that cognitive and emotional engagement are the most important. For instance, van Doorn et al. (2010, p. 253) describe consumer engagement as “behavioral construct that goes beyond purchase behavior alone”. In comparison, Brodie et al. (2011, p. 259) define consumer engagement as “a psychological state, which occurs by virtue of interactive customer experiences with a focal agent/object within specific service relationships”. This contradiction raises the question of whether a single dimension alone is sufficient to represent engagement.

Despite the various definitions in the literature, consumer engagement is commonly considered as a motivational phenomenon with varying levels of intensity (Dessart et al., 2015, p. 29). To date, research has focused mostly on engagement toward brands, products, services or organizations, with brand-focused engagement being especially common (Hollebeek et al., 2014). However, engagement is not limited to the relationship between a brand and a consumer. According to Dessart et al. (2015, p. 29), interactions with other market participants, such as other consumers, can also have a significant impact on brands and organizations.

In conclusion, while consumer engagement is widely recognized as a multidimensional and theoretically important concept, there are still inconsistencies in its definition and measurement. Existing research offers useful perspectives on engagement behaviors (van Doorn et al., 2010), but it often overlooks the psychological dimensions that drive these behaviors. Based on these perspectives, this study adopts a multidimensional approach to consumer engagement, recognizing that it consists of social interactions, cognitive and emotional processes and observable behaviors. This approach allows for a

deeper understanding of how consumers engage with brand-related content in online environments.

2.2.1.1 Cognitive engagement

The cognitive dimension of engagement refers to the level of mental involvement, attention and cognitive processing that consumers direct towards a brand or its content (Hollebeek et al., 2014, p. 154). In this context, cognitive engagement can be understood as how much consumers actively think about, process and consider brand-related content while interacting with the brand (Dessart et al., 2015, p. 35). Within existing literature, cognitive engagement is often associated with processes like focused attention, absorption, interest, and the extent to which consumers actively think about or evaluate brand-related stimuli (Dessart et al., 2015, p. 36). In contrast to behavioral engagement, which is observed through actions, cognitive engagement includes the internal, often less visible aspects of consumer-brand interaction (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021, p. 1418)

Ma et al. (2022, p. 4) suggest that brands often share useful and informative content on their social media accounts, including announcements of new products, special offers, educational posts and advice. This type of content encourages consumers to pay more attention to brand's messages and actively process the information, which can satisfy their need for useful and relevant information (Ma et al., 2022, p. 4). As a result, consumers are more likely to form stronger cognitive engagement with the brand and become more motivated to interact and participate in brand-related activities.

Short-form video content has some characteristics that can increase cognitive engagement. The fast-paces nature of short-form videos, along with audiovisual elements such as music and text overlays, is designed to capture immediate attention (Rahman, 2025). Additionally, consumers are exposed to repetitive themes, trends and brand messages through algorithm-driven content delivery on platforms like TikTok, which can improve recognition and memory through repeated exposure (Rahman, 2025;

Manic, 2024). Research shows that visually rich and dynamic content can offer a higher level of cognitive stimulation, which increases viewers' ability to process and remember information provided in a short period of time (Meng et al., 2024; Dong et al., 2024).

Overall, cognitive engagement in short-form video contexts can be understood as the amount of mental resources consumers invest to processing brand-related content. Short-form video content has the potential to increase cognitive engagement by attracting attention, stimulating curiosity and encouraging viewers to think about and interpret what they see (Dong et al., 2024). This provides a foundation for following emotional, behavioral and social engagement dimensions.

2.2.1.2 Emotional engagement

Emotional engagement refers to the feelings and emotional attachment consumers develop toward a brand, and it reflects their emotions and emotional involvement in the relationship between the brand and the consumer (Dessart et al., 2016, p. 418). Within the existing literature (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021, p. 1418; Ma et al., 2022, p. 4; Dessart et al., 2016, p. 408), emotional engagement is typically associated with emotions such as enjoyment, excitement, anger, sadness, passion and enthusiasm. This dimension describes how interactions with a brand make consumers feel, whether they trigger positive or negative emotions, and how these feelings influence how consumers experience brand messages and form a connection with them (Ma et al., 2022, p.4).

Given the immersive and entertainment-focused nature of online content (Wan, 2025), emotional engagement is especially important in digital and social media environments. Social media platforms are designed not only to inform but also to stimulate emotions, as emotionally engaging content is more likely to draw attention, be remembered and shared among users (Manic, 2024; Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021, p. 1418). Prior studies show that even if not having any direct purchase intentions, emotional responses can strengthen how relevant content seems and create a stronger sense of connection to brands (Manic, 2024; Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021, p. 1418).

In general, in the context of short-form video content, emotional engagement refers to how strongly consumers feel in response to a brand's content. Short-form videos can trigger emotions that enhance consumer engagement by utilizing audiovisual communication, authenticity and emotionally resonant storytelling (Ma et al., 2022, p. 4). Therefore, emotional engagement is an important dimension through which short-form video content can influence how consumers experience and connect with brands in social media.

2.2.1.3 Behavioral engagement

Behavioral engagement refers to the extent to which consumers actively invest their time, effort and energy in interactions with a brand that go beyond the act of purchasing (Hollebeek et al., 2014, p. 154; Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021, p. 1419). Ma et al. (2022, p. 4) suggest that it reflects consumer's willingness to take part in brand-related actions, such as writing reviews, word-of-mouth, commenting on or creating content, and helping other consumers. They also argue that these voluntary and spontaneous behaviors are motivated by consumers wanting to share their opinions and personal identities, which has a significant impact on brand visibility and overall marketing effectiveness.

Although previous studies have suggested that consumer engagement also includes cognitive, emotional and social dimensions (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021; Vivek et al., 2014), behavioral actions appear to be particularly important and visible indicators of engagement, especially on social media. On short-form video platforms, these behaviors are clearly visible through actions (Dessart et al., 2015, pp. 36-37) such as liking, commenting, sharing, saving and reposting videos, all of which show active consumer engagement with branded content.

Based on the level of consumer activity, Xiao et al. (2023, p. 6) argue that engagement behaviors on social media can be divided into three categories: consumption, contribution and creation. Consumption, which includes actions like viewing or clicking

on content, is the most passive form of engagement. Contribution reflects a higher level of engagement and includes behaviors such as liking, commenting on or sharing content. Creation, which involves creating and posting original content, is the highest level of engagement. The most common way that consumers interact with brands on short-form video platforms like TikTok is through contribution-level behaviors, especially liking, commenting and sharing videos (Xiao et al., 2023, p. 6). However, measuring consumer engagement only through behavioral engagement offers a limited understanding of the engagement process, because it overlooks the cognitive, emotional and social aspects that influence how consumers experience and interpret branded content.

Prior research reveals that, in addition to visible behaviors such as liking and commenting, entertainment is a key driver of behavioral engagement in short-form video advertising (Xiao et al., 2023, p. 6). Entertainment has been shown to positively influence consumer engagement in social media, while hedonic value can encourage engagement through activities like sharing knowledge and influencing others (Xiao et al., 2023, p. 6). Given that short-form video platforms are focused on entertainment, entertainment is crucial in motivating consumers to actively engage with branded content.

2.2.1.4 Social engagement

Social engagement refers to the interactive aspect of consumer engagement that is particularly relevant in online environments, where consumers connect and communicate with others around a brand (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021, p. 1419). This dimension focuses on social interaction, co-creation, and the sharing of brand values and content with peers (Vivek et al., 2014, p. 403). Although this social dimension of consumer engagement has received less attention in previous research, Vivek et al. (2014) suggest that social connections are crucial for improving relationships between brand and consumers. In digital context, consumer responsiveness and engagement efforts give people more opportunities to influence both consumers and non-consumers through social interaction (Vivek et al., 2012, p. 137).

Building on the multidimensional approach of consumer engagement, Bowden & Mirzaei (2021, p. 1419) describe social engagement as the interactive relationships that are formed and maintained within social networks. From to this perspective, social engagement goes beyond transactions and represents the added value created through interactions between different stakeholders (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021, p. 1414). Therefore, engagement is not only shaped by interactions between consumers and brands, but also by interactions among consumers themselves (Dessart et al., 2015). As stated by Bowden & Mirzaei (2021, p. 1420), consumers are more likely to socially engage with a brand when they believe that the brand's social identity strongly aligns with their own values or consumption intentions. They argue that this type of social engagement creates a sense of belonging, builds stronger consumer relationships and increases brand loyalty through mutually beneficial interactions.

Overall, social engagement in short-form video context can be described as how consumers engage in shared social experiences and interact with others through brand-related content (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021; Vivek et al., 2014). Short-form video platforms create an environment where participation goes beyond individual actions by enabling interaction, co-creation and participation in communities. Thus, social engagement adds to the cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions and helps understand how consumers collectively engage with brands in social media.

2.3 Theoretical framework

The first sub-objective of this study, which was to define and develop an understanding of consumer engagement in the context of short-form video content, is addressed by the theory presented in this sub-chapter. This sub-chapter brings together the most relevant theoretical concepts presented earlier in the literature review to construct a theoretical framework for the study.

The theoretical framework (Figure 1) of this study is built on the four dimensions of consumer engagement: cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social engagement. It illustrates how short-form video content on TikTok functions as a digital marketing tool that can activate these different engagement dimensions, which in turn influence consumer and brand outcomes. By demonstrating how short-form video content can activate different dimensions of consumer engagement and how these dimensions are represented in consumer responses and brand-related outcomes, the framework provides a foundation for addressing the second and third sub-objectives of the study.

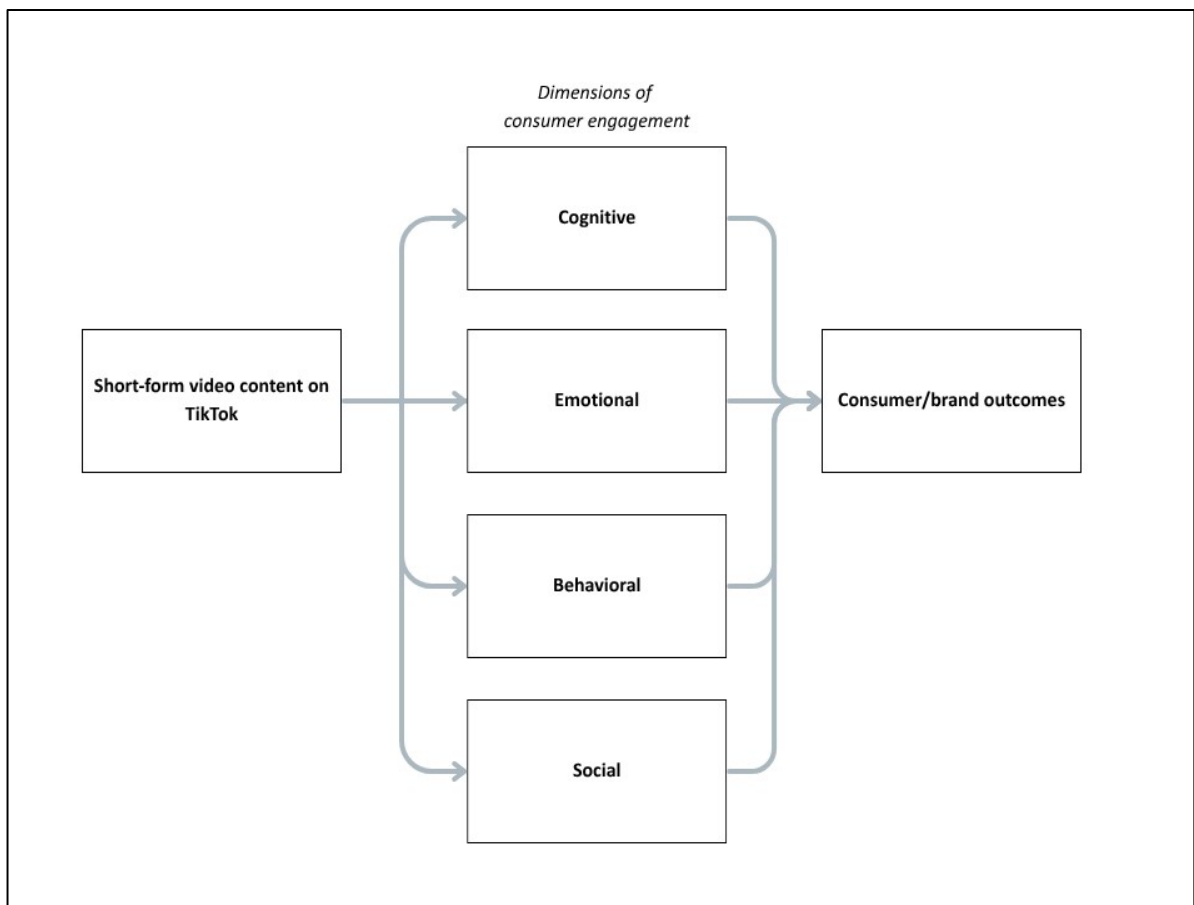


Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

3 Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology and the reasoning for selecting the chosen empirical approach. It begins with an introduction to the overall methodological approach, followed by a description of the specific research method used. In addition, the chapter introduces the case company, describes the data collection and analysis methods, and discusses the reliability and validity of the chosen methodology.

3.1 Methodological approach

A qualitative research approach was selected because the study aims to explore consumers' subjective experiences and interpretations, which is a key feature of qualitative research (Puusa et al., 2020). Particularly in social media contexts, consumer engagement and brand perception are invisible and abstract phenomena that emerge from human interaction and meaning-making processes. Qualitative methods are particularly suitable for understanding the complexity of these phenomena since they are closely linked to a specific time, platform and cultural context (Puusa et al., 2020).

Qualitative research allows for the combination of multiple perspectives and recognizes that individuals may interpret the same brand content in different ways (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015). This is particularly relevant in the context of TikTok, where users consume content in highly personalized media environments influenced by their backgrounds, preferences and past experiences (Klug et al., 2021). Rather than believing in the presence of a single, objective truth, this study acknowledges that knowledge in human research is interpretative and based on perspectives, and that meanings related to brands and media content develop over time through ongoing interaction (Puusa et al., 2020).

The study aims to provide an extensive and detailed understanding of how the case company's short-form video content influences consumer engagement and brand perception by combining observational data with interview material. The qualitative

case study therefore supports the objective of demonstrating the dynamic, context-dependent and interpretive nature of brand-consumer situations in today's social media environments.

3.2 Research method

This study is conducted as a qualitative case study focusing on the short-form video content published on Celsius Suomi's TikTok account. This approach allows for an in-depth examination of how a single brand uses short-form video content on a specific social media platform and how this content is experienced and interpreted by consumers. The limited nature of the case provides a detailed and contextualized understanding of consumer engagement as it emerges in Celsius Suomi's TikTok presence.

In the first part of the empirical data, the brand's TikTok content is examined through observations to understand how Celsius Suomi uses short-form videos in its communication. This observational analysis serves as supportive data for the second and main data source, which consists of semi-structured interviews. A qualitative research method was found suitable for this study, because it focuses on understanding individuals' lived experiences and subjective perceptions of the research phenomenon (Puusa et al., 2020). Therefore, this approach was chosen, as the study aims to observe and evaluate individuals' everyday experiences within the selected case context.

The empirical material is collected using two qualitative data sources. The first consists of observing Celsius Suomi's short-form videos on TikTok to identify recurring themes, content strategies and elements designed to encourage engagement. This observational data helps to contextualize and support the second data source, which includes semi-structured interviews with Finnish consumers who are familiar with Celsius or have seen its content on TikTok. The interviews allow participants to share their opinions, experiences and interpretations in their own words while keeping the discussion focused on the research objectives.

3.3 Data collection

This section of the methodology introduces the case company and explains in detail how the research material was gathered. Since the empirical part of the study consists of two stages, the chapter first outlines the observational approach and then describes the semi-structured interviews.

3.3.1 Case company Celsius Suomi

This study examines the research objectives by focusing on a case company Celsius Suomi, examining how consumers engage with the brand's short-form video content on TikTok. Celsius Suomi is the official importer and representative of Celsius energy drinks in Finland. Established originally in the United States, Celsius Holdings Inc. is a global wellness brand known for its functional energy drinks (Celsius, 2025). In Finland, Celsius Suomi is responsible for the local distribution, marketing, and brand representation of Celsius products. The company is located in Helsinki, and it operates with the primary goal of promoting a healthy and active lifestyle.

Celsius Suomi offers a range of functional energy drinks that are intended to support physical performance and overall wellbeing. Marketed as sugar free, vegan and zero calories product, these drinks are characterized by their use of natural ingredients, such as guarana, green tea extract, ginger and caffeine (Celsius Suomi, 2025). The brand positions itself as a premium alternative to traditional energy drinks, appealing to consumers who are health-conscious seeking an energy boost (Celsius Suomi, 2025).

Within the Finnish energy drink market, Celsius Suomi has successfully achieved a distinctive position by emphasizing the brand's association with health, fitness and functionality (Celsius Suomi, 2025). The brand offers a variety of flavors, such as Strawberry Lemonade, Kiwi Guava and Dragon Fruit, each formulated to provide a refreshing taste experience combined with functional energy benefits (Celsius Suomi,

2025). The drinks are widely available through retail stores, gyms, and online stores across Finland, making them accessible to a broad audience.

The primary target audience for Celsius Suomi consists of active, health-conscious consumers who participate in sports, fitness, or wellness-focused lifestyles, especially those between the ages 18 and 25. This demographic is concerned not only with their physical wellbeing, but also with making mindful consumption decisions that represent their personal values and self-image. By aligning with these consumer identities, Celsius Suomi has positioned itself as a brand that represents positivity, energy and inclusivity (Celsius Suomi, 2025).

Despite their growing popularity, Bleakley et al. (2022) state that there are health risks associated with energy drinks, especially among younger demographics. High caffeine intake from these beverages have been reported to cause anxiety, depression, poor sleep quality, increased daytime fatigue and possible risks to nervous and cardiovascular system (Bleakley et al., 2022). However, Gupta et al. (2023) highlight the intended functional benefits of energy drinks, pointing out that caffeine and other added ingredients are meant to improve endurance, alertness and cognitive performance by stimulating the nervous system. These findings show a clear contradiction between the stated functional benefits of energy drinks and their acknowledged health risks, suggesting the importance of cautious consumption.

Celsius Suomi uses an active marketing strategy that utilizes digital platforms and community-driven content to interact with its audience. Using short-form video content on platforms like TikTok and Instagram is an important element of this strategy. These platforms are especially effective at reaching the brand's target audience, which is very active online and responsive to visually engaging, trend-driven content (Wan, 2025).

Celsius Suomi's active and intentional use of short-form video content makes it a relevant case company for studying the connection between digital media and consumer

behavior. The brand's focus on social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, and its alignment with wellness and lifestyle trends, give an ideal setting for exploring how short-form video content influences consumer engagement and perception of the brand. The empirical part of this study focuses on Celsius Suomi's TikTok account, as it is their most active social media platform for short-form video content and where they have the biggest following. As of October 2025, Celsius Suomi TikTok account has approximately 124 000 followers, reflecting the brand's strong presence in the Finnish social media setting.

3.3.2 Observations

The data collection process began with observations of Celsius Suomi's TikTok content. The purpose of these observations was to gain an in-depth understanding of how the company utilizes short-form video content on TikTok to encourage consumer engagement. In line with the second sub-objective of the study, the observations focused on identifying recurring content characteristics, themes, and interactive elements present in Celsius Suomi's TikTok videos.

The observations were conducted as non-participant and structured observations of the official, publicly accessible TikTok account of Celsius Suomi. As the account operates on an open social media platform, all published content was available for observation without interaction or participation. This approach allowed for the natural examination of the brand's communication practices in their authentic digital environment. The observation period covered approximately one and a half months timeframe (30.12.2025-28.2.2026), during which a total of 30 TikTok videos published by Celsius Suomi was examined. Given the fast-paced nature of TikTok content creation, the selected period was considered appropriate to observe a diverse range of short-form video content and engagement practices. Each video served as a unit of observation.

To guide the observations systematically, a structured observation framework was created based on the theoretical dimensions of consumer engagement: cognitive,

emotional, behavioral and social engagement. The framework focused on specific content elements, including calls to action, emotional appeals, informational messages, and social interaction features incorporated into the videos. Observational notes were recorded for each video, focusing on how these elements were utilized to encourage engagement. The observations provided a descriptive foundation for understanding Celsius Suomi's TikTok content strategies and supported the later stages of the analysis. The findings from this observational phase were later supplemented with interview data, which allowed for a more thorough examination of consumer engagement in the context of short-form video content.

3.3.3 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted after the observational phase, allowing the insights from the observations to guide the development of the interview questions. This ensured that the interview guide was closely aligned with the empirical findings. The interview questions were structured around the four consumer engagement dimensions identified through the theoretical framework and supported by the observational results. The interview guide is included in Appendix 2.

The interview guide was structured into three main sections. The first section gathered general background information, including socio-demographic details, the participant's use of social media, and their overall perceptions of branded social media content. The second part concentrated specifically on Celsius Suomi and its content on TikTok. The participants were presented with three different types of TikTok videos published by Celsius Suomi, followed by a set of questions after viewing each video. This approach enabled to gather insights from both existing consumers who are already familiar with and engaged with the brand on TikTok, as well as from individuals who do not currently interact with or consume the brand, either online or offline. The final part explored the key themes of the study by addressing the four dimensions of consumer engagement identified in the theoretical framework and supported by the observations, cognitive, behavioral, emotional and social engagement. While all questions were covered in each

interview, the depth and focus of the discussion varied depending on the participant's individual experiences.

The respondents selected for the interviews were individuals who regularly use social media and consume energy drinks. All ten interviewees fell within Celsius Suomi's target demographic, aged between 18 and 25. Participants were recruited either through the researcher's prior knowledge of active energy drink consumers or via social media channels. The interviews were conducted between 6th of March and 18th of March 2026. Eight of the interviews took place in person, while two were carried out online in Zoom. A total of 59 pages were produced by transcribing each interview into text. Table 1 below provides an overview of the key background information of the interview participants.

Table 1. Summary of interviews.

Interview	Age	Occupation	Duration	Date	Execution
Int1	25	Working	32min	6.3.2026	Face to face
Int2	21	Student	40min	10.3.2026	Face to face
Int3	24	Student	42min	11.3.2026	Face to face
Int4	22	Student	38min	12.3.2026	Face to face
Int5	24	Student	44min	14.3.2026	Zoom
Int6	24	Student	35min	14.3.2026	Face to face
Int7	24	Working	39min	15.3.2026	Face to face
Int8	20	Student	33min	17.3.2026	Zoom
Int9	23	Student	48min	17.3.2026	Face to face
Int10	23	Working	40min	18.3.2026	Face to face

3.4 Data analysis

After the data collection phase, the empirical material obtained from both the observations and the interviews was analyzed in accordance with the principles of

qualitative research and research ethics. The objective of the analysis was to transform the collected empirical material into a structured representation that enables interpretation and conclusion drawing (Puusa et al., 2020). In this study, qualitative content analysis was selected to analyze the data because it supports both an overall understanding and a deeper interpretation of the phenomenon being investigated (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015, p. 119).

The interview data were analyzed using a content analysis, more specifically a categorization approach. In this approach, the data were coded and organized into categories obtained from the theoretical framework of the study. The four engagement dimensions, cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social engagement, served as the primary analytical categories. The transcripts were reviewed repeatedly to develop a thorough understanding of the material. Relevant quotes were then coded under the dimension that best reflected the type of engagement expressed. The aim of this process was to identify patterns, similarities, and recurring themes across the interviews, as well as to understand how participants experience and interpret engagement in the studied context. The study relies solely on the participants' exact statements from the interviews, presenting their responses as given without any influence from the researcher.

In addition to the interview data, the observational data was analyzed using a similar content analysis approach. The observed videos were analyzed multiple times to identify recurring content characteristics, formats and engagement strategies. Particular attention was paid to elements such as visual style, use of trends and tone of communication. The content was then coded and categorized according to the same four engagement dimensions to examine how different types of content may contribute to different forms of engagement. This systematic categorization enabled the identification of patterns in how engagement is created through short-form video content. In this study, the observations serve as background material to understand what the content is like and what kinds of themes the brand uses. This helped guide the interviews and to have

more meaningful discussion of how consumers perceive and experience the brand's engagement strategies.

3.5 Reliability and validity of the study

In qualitative research, the trustworthiness of a study is often assessed through key criteria such as reliability, validity and ethical considerations (Puusa et al., 2020; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015, p. 304). Additionally, Eriksson & Kovalainen (2015, p. 308) suggest that qualitative research should assess dependability, transferability, credibility and conformability.

Reliability, in this context, refers to the researcher's ability to demonstrate methodological accuracy and competence by selecting and applying appropriate and well-justified methods to address the research problem (Puusa et al., 2020). This involves providing transparent and logical reasoning that allows the reader to evaluate the reliability of the research process. Traditionally, reliability has been a central criterion in qualitative research, where it refers to the consistency of a procedure. According to Eriksson & Kovalainen (2015, p. 304), reliability is associated with the replicability of a study, suggesting that another researcher following the same procedures should be able to reach comparable findings.

This study aimed to improve the reliability of both data collection and analysis by ensuring the anonymity of all interview participants and their responses. This approach encouraged interviewees to respond more openly and share their experiences, as they could be sure all answers and identities were presented anonymously. In addition, the reliability of the study was strengthened through careful preparation of the interview process. The interview questions were formulated in advance to ensure they were relevant and aligned with the research objectives, and the interview setting was structured to support consistent data collection. At the start of each interview, participants were provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose and the overall structure of the discussion.

Validity is another key criterion for evaluating the quality of research and refers to how accurately the findings reflect the topic being studied (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015, p. 305). In this thesis, validity concerns the extent to which the findings give an accurate and reliable representation of how consumers engage with short-form video content. The analysis is supported by the study's theoretical framework and is based on empirical data gathered from observations and interviews to ensure validity. The study aims to provide conclusions that are consistent and representative of the research context, by closely linking the findings to both the data and the existing literature.

Dependability relates to the transparency and consistency of the research process (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015, p. 308). In this study, this has been addressed by carefully documenting the data collection and analysis procedures, ensuring that the research process is logical. Transferability is the extent to which the findings may be applied in different situations (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015, p. 308). Rather than aiming for broad generalizations, this study provides detailed descriptions of the research setting and participants, allowing readers to assess the relevance of the findings in similar contexts.

Credibility refers to how credible and supported by data the findings are (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015, p. 308). The use of multiple data sources, including observations and interviews, as well as the establishment of clear connections between empirical findings and the theoretical framework, all contribute to the credibility of this study. Lastly, according to Eriksson & Kovalainen (2015, p. 308) confirmability refers to how the findings are influenced by the data, rather than the imagination of the researcher. This study's interpretations are strongly tied to empirical evidence, which improves the objectivity and transparency of the analysis.

3.6 The usage of AI

This thesis utilized OpenAI's ChatGPT-4 and Quillbot as supportive AI tools during the research process. AI tools were used to support topic ideation, structure planning and

reflection on alternative research approaches. In the empirical part of the study, AI was used as assistance when formulating interview questions. The suggestions provided by AI were further refined and adapted to ensure their relevance and suitability for the research context. Additionally, AI tools were used to support language-related tasks, such as improving clarity, helping with grammatical accuracy, and translating interview transcripts.

The university's guidelines and regulations regarding the responsible use of AI was followed, and the usage of AI at different stages of the process was carefully considered. AI was not used to independently conduct data or generate research findings. All analysis, interpretations, and conclusions were carried out by the author. The author takes full responsibility for the content, quality, and integrity of the thesis.

4 Findings

This chapter presents the results of the empirical research. The purpose of the chapter is to address the second and third sub-objectives of the study, which are to examine how Celsius Suomi utilizes short-form video content on TikTok to encourage consumer engagement and to analyze how Celsius Suomi's short-form video content on TikTok impacts consumer engagement. The structure of the findings follows the consumer engagement dimensions presented in the theoretical framework to enable a systematic comparison between theory and empirical data.

4.1 Descriptive overview of observed engagement patterns

The literature review identified four dimensions of consumer engagement: cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social engagement. Guided by these dimensions and the theoretical framework of the study, the observations conducted on TikTok aimed to examine what kinds of engagement practices can be found in the short-form video content published by Celsius Suomi. Each video was categorized based on the primary engagement dimension it focused on. Although individual videos may contain elements of multiple dimensions, they were categorized according to the one that appeared most dominant.

The observations indicate that Celsius Suomi's TikTok content mainly focuses on emotional and behavioral engagement. Emotional engagement was found to be the most significant dimension, accounting for 47 % of the observed videos, followed by behavioral engagement (33 %) and social engagement (20 %). In contrast, none of the videos were primarily categorized as cognitively oriented, indicating that the brand's TikTok strategy places less importance on informational or educational content. The observational findings are summarized in Table 2 below and each of the consumer engagement dimensions will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

Table 2. Summary of observation findings.

Engagement dimension	Number of videos	Percentage (%)	Key characteristics
Emotional	14	47 %	Humor, relatability, excitement energy
Behavioral	10	33 %	Calls-to-action, question in caption, challenge invitation
Social	6	20 %	Influencer presence, reply to comment, community language
Cognitive	0	0 %	Informational content largely absent

In terms of content characteristics, the videos were mostly based on face-to-face camera communication (83 %) and frequently included subtitles (80 %). These features indicate a strong focus on direct, personality-driven communication and accessibility, which is typical for short-form video content designed to capture attention quickly (Manic, 2024). Instead of relying on detailed storytelling or providing a lot of information, the content appears to prioritize capturing immediate attention and easy consumption.

In addition to structural elements, the observed content also revealed several repeated patterns. The videos were typically characterized by a high-energy tone and frequently included humor, music and fast-paced editing to maintain viewer attention. Many of them used a casual and conversational tone, which helped create a sense of authenticity and connection. The product was often incorporated into everyday situations or lifestyle scenarios rather than being presented through more traditional advertising formats.

Additionally, influencers were present in most of the videos, highlighting the importance of socially based and personality-driven communication in the brand's content strategy. According to the observational data, influencers were included in 93 % of the analyzed videos. Influencers were often used to present the product in relatable everyday contexts, which supports the social and emotional dimensions of engagement.

4.2 Cognitive engagement

Cognitive engagement refers to how content stimulates consumers' thinking, attention and information processing (Hollebeek et al., 2014, p. 154). In the context of short-form video content, this dimension typically includes the incorporation of informational or educational elements, as well as content that stimulates curiosity and encourages active interpretation (Dong et al., 2024; Meng et al., 2024).

According to the observational findings, cognitive engagement has minimal impact on Celsius Suomi's TikTok content. None of the observed videos were mainly categorized as cognitively oriented, and informational elements appeared only occasionally. This suggests that the brand does not prioritize content that encourages deeper cognitive processing, including educational information, detailed product descriptions or advice. Instead, the content is mainly designed to capture attention quickly and maintain viewer's interest short term. However, this finding contracts slightly with prior research suggesting that informative and useful content can increase cognitive engagement by encouraging consumers to actively process brand-related information (Ma et al., 2022, p. 4). In the case of Celsius Suomi, the limited amount of this type of content indicates that the platform is not used to share information but instead serves mainly as a space for entertainment and brand exposure.

Nevertheless, the interview findings strongly support this interpretation. Respondents repeatedly pointed out that Celsius Suomi's TikTok content does not provide significant informational value, and that it rarely leads to learning or deeper understanding of the

brand or its products. Several respondents explicitly stated that they had not learned anything new from their TikTok content.

“No, I have not really learned anything new from Celsius Suomi’s TikTok content. It’s not very informative. Maybe I learn about new flavors, but that’s about it.” – Int2

“No, there’s not much informational content in their TikTok videos.” – Int4

Even though the content does not offer much deep informational content, certain elements of short-form video content were found to capture attention and create momentary cognitive engagement. In line with Rahman (2025) suggesting that fast-paced and visually dynamic content can attract attention, respondents often referred to elements such as quick editing, text overlays and hooks at the beginning of videos.

“The text on screen suggesting a new flavor caught my attention.” – Int2

“I like clickbaits and when there is some attention-grabbing sentence at the beginning. Then I will 100 % watch the video until the end.” – Int3

“The pace was fast enough to catch my attention, with enough people and quick transitions. People would watch this until the end because they’re curious if there’s some kind of hook or funny moment coming.” – Int4

“Things happened quickly and you actually had to focus. And when the text said “something new,” it immediately made me curious what it was.” – Int5

These findings suggest that while deeper cognitive processing is limited, the content is effective in attracting initial attention. However, this attention does not necessarily lead to long-term cognitive engagement. While short-form video content is designed to capture immediate attention, cognitive engagement requires a higher level of mental involvement, such as reflection, evaluation or interpretation (Dessart et al., 2015, p. 36). In the context of Celsius Suomi, the attention appears to be short-lived, which limits the development of stronger cognitive engagement. This is consistent with the interview

findings, where several respondents described their interaction with the content as passive and uninteresting.

*“Most of the videos didn’t evoke any thoughts. I watched them with a blank stare.”
– Int1*

“I had a neutral attitude towards these videos. They didn’t really interest me that much.” – Int9

Videos with clear product-related content, especially when introducing or teasing new flavors, appeared to be exceptions to this pattern. The respondents were shown a TikTok video that was teasing a new flavor launch. This video was more likely to trigger curiosity and encourage cognitive processing. In this case, the inclusion of concrete product-related cues seemed to activate cognitive engagement by encouraging consumers to process and absorb the information presented.

“After watching this video, I thought this is a good teaser of a new flavor. I was interested to know what new flavors are coming.” – Int8

“My first impression was that this is a teaser for a new flavor. This sparked my interest. Something new is coming, the product was the focus and hinted at new flavors.” – Int1

Overall, the findings suggest that cognitive engagement in Celsius Suomi’s TikTok content is mostly limited to short moments of attention rather than deeper cognitive processing. Although short-form video content could encourage cognitive engagement through curiosity and product information, this potential is not fully used in Celsius Suomi’s analyzed content. As a result, cognitive engagement remains the weakest dimension and offers only a limited foundation for developing stronger forms of consumer engagement.

4.3 Emotional engagement

Emotional engagement refers to the affective responses that consumers experience when interacting with brand-related content, including feelings such as enjoyment,

excitement or irritation (Dessart et al., 2016, p. 408; Ma et al., 2022, p. 4). In the context of short-form video content, emotional engagement is often stimulated through humor, relatability and visual elements that are intended to stimulate immediate reactions (Manic, 2024). It can be understood as the intensity and nature of consumers' emotional responses to brand communication, which is important in shaping how content is experienced (Ma et al., 2022, p.4).

During the observations emotional engagement was found to be the most noticeable dimension of Celsius Suomi's TikTok content, accounting for 47 % of the observed videos. The content frequently utilized humor, high-energy audiovisual elements, and trend-based formats to trigger emotional responses and maintain viewer attention. These findings align with previous research suggesting that emotionally engaging content is particularly important in social media environments, where content is designed to capture attention and stimulate immediate emotional reactions (Manic, 2024).

Wan (2025, p. 172) suggests that content that matches users' personal interests and preferences is more likely to capture and maintain their attention, highlighting the importance of personal relevance in driving emotional engagement. Similarly, the interviews show that personal relevance and individual preferences have a significant impact on emotional engagement. Respondents stated that content that aligns with their interests, lifestyle or experiences is more likely to generate strong emotional responses. This implies that emotional engagement is influenced not only by entertainment value, but also by how well the content resonates with the consumer's identity and interests.

"The kind of content that would stir up my emotions is something that inspires me. I like travel content for example, so content that makes me want to travel myself. Or something relatable like funny memes." - Int10

"I like content that is funny and familiar to me, and videos that relate to my interests. I watch a lot of content, so I need a lot of variety. New and creative ideas are good." - Int2

The interviews further explored the types of emotional responses that Celsius Suomi's TikTok content causes among consumers. The responses revealed that the content is generally found as entertaining and capable of creating positive emotions, although the extent of these emotions varies. Many respondents described the content as entertaining, interesting or momentarily engaging.

"I found this (video) amusing and entertaining, but I wouldn't watch it more than once." – Int4

"This video was entertaining and I would watch it until the end." – Int5

"It (video) is entertaining and I got a good feeling from watching it. A positive impression stayed." – Int6

"This was a funny TikTok-trend. It was relevant and up-to date." – Int8

These responses suggest that the content succeeds in creating positive emotional reactions, especially entertainment and amusement. However, these emotions are often described as temporary and do not necessarily lead to deeper emotional attachment. This indicates that emotional engagement is present, but tends to remain at surface level, with short-term reactions rather than sustained emotional involvement.

At the same time, the interview data revealed that emotional engagement may be limited by the broader context of short-form video content. One of the respondents noted how uncommon it is for content on TikTok to trigger strong emotional reactions or to interrupt scrolling behavior. This shows that even slight emotional reactions, like curiosity or enjoyment, can be considered meaningful in the short-form video content platforms, where users are constantly exposed to large amounts of content and quickly move from one video to another.

"On TikTok it's rare that something makes you stop scrolling, but this was one of those videos where I'd pause and maybe even read the comments to figure out what's going on." – Int3

Emotional indifference is a recurring theme across the interviews, indicating that content does not always succeed in triggering meaningful emotional responses. Despite the use of humor and visually dynamic elements, many respondents reported that the content does not create strong feelings, either positive or negative.

"I didn't really feel any emotions after watching this video. I would scroll past quickly." – Int1

"This video didn't annoy me, but it didn't stand out either." – Int2

"This didn't evoke any strong emotions." – Int5

This finding suggests that although short-form video content can encourage emotional engagement through audiovisual and entertaining elements, the content may blend into the broader stream of similar TikTok content, which can reduce its emotional impact. In line with previous research (Manic, 2024), emotional engagement is closely associated with how relevant and personally meaningful the content feels. Therefore, the absence of strong emotional responses indicates that the content may not resonate with consumers' individual interests or experiences.

The interviews also revealed that emotional engagement can take negative forms, especially when content is considered to be repetitive, predictable or irrelevant. Several respondents expressed irritation toward content that appeared overly similar or relied heavily on recurring formats and influencers.

"This is a typical video from Celsius Suomi. The same people and same content as usual. They should come up with something new, it's getting a bit annoying." – Int2

"The same people appear repeatedly, making it feel monotonous and less authentic." – Int5

"They have used the same influencers again, so this annoys me." – Int7

In addition, the attempt to create humor was not always perceived positively.

“My first impression was that it felt like they were trying too hard to be funny.” – Int10

These findings suggest that emotional engagement is highly sensitive to content variation and authenticity. While humor and trends can initially create positive emotional responses, their effectiveness may decrease when content becomes repetitive. This could result in emotional responses shifting from positive to negative, reducing the overall impact of the content.

Another theme that emerged from the interviews was how emotional engagement builds over time. Although individual videos may not stimulate strong emotional reactions, repeated exposure to the brand’s content can lead to a more positive overall perception of the brand.

“It (Celsius Suomi) stays in mind in a different way when you see so much of their content and in my opinion they as a brand have succeeded quite well in creating a positive image. My attitude towards the brand has changed in a positive direction because of their TikTok content.” – Int6

This indicates that emotional engagement can develop gradually over time, rather than depending only on specific content experiences. When exposure is consistent, even slight emotional responses can contribute to building a positive brand image.

The findings indicate that while emotional engagement is an important aspect of Celsius Suomi’s TikTok strategy, its effectiveness depends on several factors, such as content variety, authenticity, and relevance. Although emotionally stimulating elements are often incorporated in the content, the emotional responses they create are often moderate and short-lived. Stronger emotional engagement is achieved when content aligns with consumer interests, introduces something new or clearly relates to the product. In contrast, repetitive or irrelevant content tends to result in indifference or even negative reactions. This suggests that while short-form video content offers great

opportunities for emotional engagement, its impact depends on how well the content creates meaningful, varied and personally relevant emotional experiences.

4.4 Behavioral engagement

Behavioral engagement refers to how consumers actively dedicate their time, effort and energy in interactions with a brand outside of purchasing (Hollebeek et al., 2014). In social media contexts, this dimension appears in visible actions such as liking, commenting, sharing or saving content, which indicate active participation in brand-related interactions (Dessart et al., 2015, pp. 36-37). These behaviors can be further categorized into consumption, contribution and creation. Contribution-level behaviors, such as liking and sharing, are generally the most common forms of engagement on short-form video platforms (Xiao et al., 2023, p. 6).

According to the observational findings, behavioral engagement is moderately present in Celsius Suomi's TikTok content, accounting for 33 % of the observed videos. Many of the videos incorporated direct calls-to-action, caption-based questions, or challenge-based formats designed to encourage interaction. These elements suggest that the brand is actively trying to encourage consumers to engage with the content through visible actions.

Respondents were asked to describe how they typically interact with Celsius Suomi's TikTok content and branded content in general during the interviews. Although there was some variety in the responses, most respondents described their behavior as mainly passive, which revealed a clear pattern. Instead of actively interacting with the content, consumers typically engage by viewing the content, indicating that behavioral engagement is often limited to consumption rather than contribution.

"I wouldn't interact with this video. It wasn't good enough for me to like or comment." - Int1

"I rarely interact with TikTok videos, especially if the content is branded." – Int2

"I'm very conscious about interacting with branded content. I avoid interacting with ads so that they don't flood my feed." – Int3

These responses suggest that consumers may intentionally avoid interacting with branded content, which reduces the effectiveness of strategies intended to increase visible engagement. This finding highlights the importance of passive consumption in short-form video environments, in contrast with prior research that points out active participation as a key indicator of engagement (Dessart et al., 2015, p. 37).

According to Xiao et al. (2023, p. 6), on short-form video platforms such as TikTok, consumers most frequently engage with brands through liking, leaving comments or sharing content with others. Similarly, the interview responses show that low-effort interactions were the most common form of engagement. Several respondents stated that liking a video requires minimal effort and can occur if the content is even somewhat entertaining. However, commenting or sharing were described as more active forms of engagement, and less frequent.

"Yes, I might like the video. It had a humorous element that I liked." – Int4

"I could like this video from Celsius Suomi, but I don't think it's funny enough that I would share it." – Int6

The interviews further explored what motivates consumers to engage more actively with content. The responses revealed that stronger behavioral engagement depends on the situation and how valuable the content is perceived to be. Respondents emphasized that content needs to be particularly engaging, personally relevant or have emotional impact to motivate stronger behavioral actions like sharing or saving. This demonstrates the connections between different dimensions of engagement, as emotional relevance appears to be an important driver of behavioral responses.

“For me to save or share a video, it should really be something that I’m super excited about. Then I could maybe send it to a friend.” – Int6

“In my opinion, if you save videos it has to be something that inspires you or gives you something that you would like to go back to. This video from Celsius didn’t do it for me. It was a nice video and made me feel good, but not something I would return to.” – Int8

Furthermore, commenting was described as unusual behavior and often relied on external incentives rather than personal motivation. Several respondents mentioned that they would only comment in specific situations, such as during competitions or giveaways. This shows that calls-to-action alone may not be enough to encourage meaningful engagement, and that consumers often need additional motivation to actively participate in brand-related activities.

“I would usually mostly interact with something like a giveaway where you can win something, then I could comment. I’m generally quite lazy to comment on anything.” – Int2

“I rarely comment on videos on TikTok, especially branded videos. I don’t really like to do that. But I might participate in a giveaway or share something interesting to my friends.” – Int10

More broadly, the interviews indicate that consumers tend to take a passive role when interacting with branded content on TikTok. Respondents described scrolling behavior as fast and continuous, with engagement taking place only when content clearly stands out or provides immediate value. It reflects the fast-paced and highly competitive nature of TikTok, where users are continuously exposed to large volumes of content and selectively engage with it.

“If the branded content is something that doesn’t resonate with me at all or interest me, then I just scroll past as quickly as possible.” – Int9

Despite the relatively low level of visible engagement, the interviews revealed that short-form video content can influence consumer behavior in more indirect ways. Responses

showed that even though users might not regularly interact with the content through platform features, repeated exposure increases brand awareness and recall, which can affect purchasing decisions.

*“Celsius Suomi has gained more visibility because of their TikTok videos, in my opinion. I might buy their products occasionally, especially if there is a new flavor.”
- Int8*

“I see quite a lot of Celsius Suomi’s content, which keeps the brand somehow in mind. Like if I go to the store to buy an energy drink, then quite often it is Celsius. It (the brand) stays more in mind because of their TikTok content.” - Int10

Additionally, product-related content, such as new flavor announcements, was found to influence consumers’ willingness to try or purchase products. This suggests that visible platform interactions are not the only way to perceive behavioral engagement. It can also include indirect outcomes such as increased brand recognition and purchase intention, which may take place even without active engagement.

“Their (Celsius Suomi’s) TikTok content does affect my interest to buy their products sometimes. For example, if I’ve seen that there is a new flavor and I go to the store, I’m like “hey, this is the new flavor, I could try it”.” - Int7

Overall, the findings show that although Celsius Suomi actively incorporates strategies to encourage behavioral engagement, visible consumer interactions, such as liking or commenting on TikTok, are still limited. Engagement is mostly limited to low-effort actions such as viewing and occasional liking, while more active forms of engagement only happen under certain circumstances. At the same time, the content influences consumer behavior indirectly by increasing brand awareness and purchase intention, demonstrating the importance of considering both visible and less visible forms of behavioral engagement in short-form video contexts.

4.5 Social engagement

As stated by Bowden & Mirzaei (2021, p. 1419) social engagement is the interactive aspect of consumer engagement in which consumers connect and communicate with others around a brand. Through brand-related content, it highlights social interaction, shared experiences and the sharing of brand values (Vivek et al., 2014, p. 403). In digital environments, social engagement goes beyond direct brand-consumer interactions and includes connection among consumers themselves, fostering a feeling of community and shared identity. Social engagement in short-form video platforms is often encouraged by content that enables participation, relatability and interaction, either directly within the platform or indirectly through broader social contexts.

The observational findings indicate that social engagement is present in Celsius Suomi's TikTok content, accounting for 20 % of the analyzed videos. This is mainly reflected through influencers, who function as a link between the brand and consumers. By placing the brand in relatable everyday contexts, influencers help make the content more socially relevant and thereby strengthening the social dimension of engagement. However, direct interactive formats, such as reply-to-comment videos or visible brand-consumer dialogue, were mostly absent. This indicates that social engagement is more based around creating a sense of connection through people and content, rather than on active two-way communication between the brand and its audience. This may also suggest that Celsius Suomi does not fully utilize the interactive potential of TikTok as a platform, where dialogical communication and community-building features are important.

During the interviews the respondents were asked about how they view the social aspects of Celsius Suomi's TikTok content, including the role of influencers and whether the content creates a sense of connection or community. The responses revealed several common themes, especially related to how relatable and authentic the influencers are, and the way social interaction is experienced.

One of the common topics across the interviews was the role of influencers in making the content feel more relatable and socially engaging. Several respondents described influencers as an important element that makes the brand seem more approachable and visible in their everyday media use. This suggests that influencers are crucial to increasing brand visibility and placing the brand in socially relevant contexts. According to Bowden & Mirzaei (2021, p. 1420), social engagement is strengthened when consumers sense that their identity and the brand's social representation are aligned. Influencers appear to support this alignment by representing lifestyles, values and interests that resonate with the target audience.

"Celsius Suomi stands out from other energy drink brands because the influencers have a bigger role. Those influencers are relatively well-known people, so that has caught more of my attention than Nocco for example. I feel like for Celsius Suomi that is their strength. They have gotten those trending names right now, so that resonates with me." - Int6

"I follow influencers who make content for Celsius Suomi, so the influencer content of course comes up. I probably see the brand more through influencers." - Int9

In addition to relatability, influencers were also associated with increased authenticity and trustworthiness. Multiple respondents stated that content feels more genuine and believable when presented through individuals. This suggests that social engagement is influenced not only by direct interactions, but also by how the messages are perceived. Influencers make communication feel more relatable and human, which can help strengthen the connection between the brand and consumers.

"Their (Celsius Suomi's) TikTok content seems fairly authentic, especially since they use influencers. That makes it feel more authentic." - Int1

"The influencers in general make their (Celsius Suomi's) content feel more authentic. If it's the right influencer for the brand and they work with the brand, then in my opinion they (Celsius Suomi) have succeeded quite well in that, because they have those lifestyle-type influencers. So, they are more relatable and bring the brand closer to consumers." - Int10

However, the interview responses also reveal certain limitations related to the heavy reliance on influencers. Several respondents noted that using the same influencers repeatedly can reduce the perceived authenticity and diversity of the content, which may weaken social engagement over time. This suggests that although influencers might enhance social engagement, relying too much on a limited set of influencers can make social interactions and content seem less authentic.

“This is a typical video from Celsius Suomi, meaning that there are the same people and the same content. They should come up with something new.” – Int2

“I don’t like influencer-based advertising. I prefer clear separation between ads and more personal content.” – Int3

“I’m not the biggest fan of their (Celsius Suomi’s) content. It relies heavily on influencers, and often the same ones.” – Int7

Beyond influencer-driven content, the findings indicate that social engagement also occurs through indirect interactions among consumers, such as conversations and shared experiences related to the brand. Although respondents reported limited direct connection with content on TikTok, they mentioned communicating with others about the brand and its products in offline or private contexts. These responses demonstrate that social engagement includes broader social communication surrounding the brand, in addition to visible platform interactions. This supports the idea that engagement is shaped through interactions among consumers as well as between consumers and brands (Dessart et al., 2015).

“I do talk about energy drinks with my friends. Mainly the conversations are centered around flavors, comparing prices and brands, and the amount of caffeine.” – Int1

“Me and my friends often talk about energy drinks, and Celsius especially, comparing different brands, flavors and preferences.” – Int5

“We talk about energy drinks a lot with my friends. Especially about flavors, like which flavor is the best. And price as well, I feel like energy drinks are all around

the same prices. Then of course there are Monster and Red Bull which are cheaper, but they are not as good. We also compare different brands.” – Int6

At the same time, the interviews suggest that there is not much direct participation in online brand-related interactions. Respondents did not actively engage with comment sections or community discussions on TikTok, and social interaction within the platform itself appeared to be minimal. This indicates that while social interaction is a key feature of short-form video platforms, it does not always turn into active participation with branded content. Instead, consumers appear to adopt a more passive role, where social engagement is experienced indirectly rather than through active contribution.

“I don’t really notice other people interacting with brands, I don’t pay attention to it.” – Int2

“I don’t think I feel more connected to a brand if I see other interact with it. But I do appreciate when brands respond to comments.” – Int3

“I haven’t really paid attention to other people interacting with a brand. Like if there is a video from Celsius Suomi, I don’t necessarily start checking how many comments there are. So it doesn’t really affect me.” – Int6

“I only read comments on a branded video if there is something dramatic going on.” – Int9

Overall, the findings suggest that social engagement in Celsius Suomi’s TikTok content is mainly shaped by influencer-driven communication and indirect forms of interaction, rather than direct conversations on the platform. Social engagement is not restricted to the platform itself, but also continues through offline conversations and shared experiences. This shows that social engagement in short-form video contexts is broader and often less visible than what can be seen through platform interactions alone.

4.6 Summary of the research findings

The results of this study demonstrate that short-form video content provides Celsius Suomi with multiple opportunities to increase consumer engagement, while also

revealing several limitations in how this engagement occurs in practice. By combining observational and interview data, the findings address both how short-form video content is utilized and how it influences consumer engagement across cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social dimensions.

The findings indicate that Celsius Suomi mostly uses TikTok as an entertainment-oriented platform, where content is designed to capture attention and evoke instant reactions rather than to provide informational value. The observational analysis shows that the brand's content is strongly focused on emotional and behavioral engagement, with a particular focus on humor, high-energy audiovisual elements, and influencer-driven content formats. In contrast, cognitive engagement was not strongly present, as the content rarely included informational or educational elements. This suggests that Celsius Suomi does not position TikTok as a channel for delivering product knowledge, but rather as a platform for increasing visibility and brand presence.

The interview findings further supported this observation, as respondents consistently described the content as entertaining, visually appealing and aligned with current trends, but not particularly informative in terms of providing deeper knowledge of the product. However, while the videos were often perceived positively, the respondents typically described the emotional impact of the content as moderate and short-lived. Respondents admitted that the content can be entertaining but rarely created a strong emotional attachment or lasting impressions. Furthermore, repetitive content and frequent use of similar formats and influencers were seen to reduce emotional engagement over time, sometimes even causing irritation.

In terms of behavioral engagement, the findings reveal a clear gap between the brand's efforts to encourage interaction and actual consumer behavior. Although many of Celsius Suomi's videos included calls-to-action and other interactive elements, most respondents stated that they do not actively engage with branded content on TikTok. Engagement was mainly limited to passive consumption and occasional low-effort

activities, such as liking videos. More active forms of engagement, like commenting, sharing or saving content, were described as uncommon and dependent on specific situations, such as strong personal relevance or external motivations like giveaways. This suggests that while short-form video content can encourage interaction in theory, observable behavioral engagement on the platform remains relatively low in practice.

Despite the low level of active engagement, the findings suggest that short-form video content can affect consumer behavior in more indirect ways. Several respondents noted that repeated exposure to Celsius Suomi's content increases brand recall and maintains the brand's presence in their minds, which may have an impact on purchasing decisions. Specifically, content related to new product releases was found to stimulate curiosity and encourage consumers to try the product. This demonstrates that behavioral engagement is not limited to visible platform interactions but also includes outcomes such as brand preference and purchase intentions.

Social engagement emerged mainly through influencer-driven content and indirect interactions among consumers. The results show that influencers are important in making the brand more relatable and accessible, supporting the development of a social connection between the brand and consumers. Most of the respondents described influencer content as more authentic and engaging compared to typical brand communication, as it incorporates the product into everyday situations. However, direct interaction within the platform, such as taking part in community discussions or comment sections, was limited. Instead, social engagement was often expressed outside the platform through conversations and shared experiences, such as discussing products or content with friends. This suggests that social engagement extends beyond visible online interaction and is incorporated in broader social contexts.

Overall, the findings indicate that Celsius Suomi's use of short-form video content is effective in maintaining brand awareness, increasing visibility and creating a generally positive brand image. However, the impact on consumer engagement varies across

different dimensions. Cognitive engagement remains minimal, emotional engagement is present but often surface-level, behavioral engagement is mostly passive, and social engagement mainly occurs through influencers rather than direct interaction. These findings show that although short-form video content has a lot of potential to engage consumers, its effectiveness depends on the relevance of content and the ability to create meaningful connections with the audience. The results also demonstrate the multidimensional and inconsistent nature of consumer engagement in short-form video environments, where visibility and entertainment are easily achieved, but deeper and more active levels of engagement remain more difficult to accomplish.

5 Discussion

The purpose of this thesis was to examine how short-form video content influences consumer engagement in the context of the functional beverage industry, with a specific focus on Celsius Suomi's TikTok content. As short-form video platforms such as TikTok have rapidly grown in popularity, brands are increasingly utilizing these platforms to reach and engage audiences. This has created a need to better understand how short-form video content functions as a marketing tool and how it shapes consumer engagement in digital environments.

While previous research has examined consumer engagement and social media marketing, the direct impact of short-form video content on consumer engagement, especially in the Finnish market, has received limited attention. Based on the findings, this study explores how Celsius Suomi uses short-form video content to encourage consumer engagement, as well as how consumers respond to and interact with such content. The following sections present the theoretical implications and managerial implications of the study, followed by a discussion of its limitations and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Theoretical implications

This study contributes to the existing literature on consumer engagement and social media marketing by providing empirical evidence of how short-form video content influences consumer engagement across cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social dimensions. By applying a multidimensional engagement framework in the context of TikTok, the study extends current understanding of how different forms of engagement are found in short-form video environments.

Firstly, the results further contribute to existing literature by highlighting the limited role of cognitive engagement in short-form video content. In contrast to previous literature highlighting the significance of informative and useful content in enhancing cognitive

processing (Ma et al., 2022; Dong et al., 2024), the findings indicate that Celsius Suomi's TikTok content lacks informational and educational elements. This could be because of the platform's focus on entertainment, as well as the brand's positioning, which appears to emphasize lifestyle, energy and overall brand image rather than providing detailed product information. As a result, consumers do not seem to actively process or reflect on the content after the initial exposure. This suggests that, in the case of Celsius Suomi, short-form video platforms may be used as tools for quick attention capture and brand exposure rather than as channels for cognitive engagement.

This conclusion is especially relevant in the context of functional energy drink industry. Functional beverage brands, including Celsius Suomi, are typically positioned around product-related characteristics, such as ingredients, flavors and performance attributes. These characteristics would theoretically offer excellent opportunities for cognitive engagement through informative and educational content. However, such information may not be included in short-form video platforms, as Celsius Suomi might prefer to avoid drawing attention to potentially unhealthy ingredients (e.g. caffeine or artificial sweeteners) or sharing details that could be replicated by competitors. Instead, brand communication is adapted to fit the entertainment-focused logic of TikTok, which may prioritize visibility and attention over informational depth. Therefore, the findings of this study extend existing theoretical understanding by indicating that the potential of short-form video content to increase cognitive engagement is not always achieved, especially in entertainment-focused communication strategies and even in product categories where the role of informational content could be significant.

The findings of this study also further emphasize the important role of emotional engagement in short-form video content. In the case of Celsius Suomi, emotional engagement was found to be the most dominant dimension, as the content relied heavily on humor, fast-paced audiovisual elements and trend-based formats to capture attention and create immediate affective reactions. This supports previous research suggesting that emotionally engaging content is especially effective in social media

environments with high content saturation and short attention spans (Manic, 2024; Zhang & Landicho, 2024).

At the same time, the findings extend existing literature by showing that emotional engagement in short-form video contexts may remain mostly surface-level. While the content was often viewed as entertaining and visually appealing, the emotional responses it created did not result in strong emotional attachment or deeper brand connection. This introduces a significant distinction between immediate emotional stimulation and sustained emotional engagement, suggesting that not all emotionally engaging content leads to meaningful consumer-brand relationships. In the context of short-form video platforms, emotional engagement may therefore function more as a way of capturing attention than for building long-term relationships.

The results also reveal new perspectives on behavioral engagement by highlighting an inconsistency between the intentions of consumers to engage with content and their actual behavior. Although earlier studies have emphasized observable actions such as liking, commenting and sharing as key indicators of engagement (Dessart et al., 2025; Xiao et al., 2023), the results of this study indicate that such behaviors are still limited in practice. Consumers mostly interacted with Celsius Suomi's content passively, with active participation happening only under specific conditions, such as high personal relevance or external benefits (e.g. competitions or giveaways).

This finding contributes to existing literature by suggesting that behavioral engagement in short-form video environments may be overestimated when it is measured only through platform-based metrics. Even though brands actively encourage interaction and make engagement features easily accessible, consumers might not always utilize them. Instead, engagement may show up in less visible ways, such as increased brand recognition or purchase intention. This challenges the assumption that visible interaction is equivalent to meaningful engagement and highlights the need to consider both observable and less observable consumer responses. In addition, this finding is

particularly relevant to the functional energy drink industry, where factors such as availability, habits, and product appeal often impact purchase decisions. The results indicate that short-form video content may indirectly encourage these processes by keeping the brand relevant and creating interest in new products, rather than by directly promoting interactive engagement on the platform.

The results of this study also contribute to the understanding of social engagement by revealing its indirect nature in short-form video contexts. According to prior research (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021; Vivek et al., 2014), social engagement involves interaction, connection and shared experiences among consumers. However, in the case of Celsius Suomi, this interaction was rarely expressed through direct communication within the platform. Instead, social engagement extended beyond TikTok through offline discussions and shared consumption experiences. This broadens existing theoretical approaches by suggesting that social engagement in short-form video contexts may be less driven by interaction than previously assumed. Rather than actively participating in discussions or community-building, consumers may engage socially by observing, interpreting and sharing brand-related meanings in their own social environments. In this way, traditional platform-centric views of online interaction are challenged as social engagement becomes less visible and more distributed.

5.2 Managerial implications

The managerial implications highlight the key insights obtained from the findings of the study that can be applied in the practical business context, particularly within the functional energy drink industry. As social media and short-form video content continue to have an impact on shaping consumer perceptions and brand relationships, companies operating in this highly competitive market must carefully consider how they use these platforms to engage their target audiences. This study provides new perspectives on how short-form video content can be used to influence consumer engagement, while also identifying several challenges that brands should consider.

The findings suggest that short-form video platforms such as TikTok have become an important communication channel for functional energy drink brands, especially when targeting younger and digitally active consumers. In this industry, where branding is closely connected to lifestyle and well-being, short-form video content offers an effective way to position the brand within everyday consumer contexts. Therefore, companies should see TikTok as a tool for building presence and supporting long-term brand visibility and relevance, rather than just an advertising platform. The results show that emotionally engaging and visually appealing content can successfully attract attention and create positive brand associations, even when deeper engagement remains limited. Thus, in order to stay relevant in consumers' daily media consumption, brands should focus on content that is entertaining, visually appealing and aligned with current platform trends, such as participating in trending formats and adopting a style and tone that matches the fast-paced nature of TikTok.

Previous literature has shown that effectively utilizing social media content to engage consumers remains a significant challenge for companies, particularly in fast-paced digital environments such as short-form video platforms. Accordingly, this study offers marketing management a valuable framework for understanding how short-form video content can be used to support different dimensions of consumer engagement. This study may help decision-makers to better evaluate and design their social media content strategies by providing a thorough overview of how cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social engagement appear in practice. Additionally, the study offers marketing decision-makers insights on how to strategically use short-form video content in brand communication in the functional energy drink industry. The findings demonstrate the importance of entertaining content, influencer collaboration, and product visibility in shaping consumer responses. This might be helpful for companies with, for example, defining their social media communication objectives, selecting content formats and developing more effective approaches to engaging target audiences on platforms like TikTok.

The findings also indicate that short-form video platforms offer companies opportunities to strengthen emotional connections, increase brand recall and encourage indirect consumer engagement, such as word-of-mouth or purchase intention. The study also identifies several challenges, including the difficulty of generating active behavioral engagement, maintaining authenticity and balancing entertainment with informational value. Therefore, this research helps companies to utilize short-form video content more effectively, especially when creating content strategies that not only capture attention but also create more meaningful and sustained consumer engagement.

In addition, the findings highlight the strategic role of influencers in functional energy drink marketing. Influencers were found to improve relatability and make brand communication more approachable by integrating products into everyday lifestyle contexts. This was clearly visible in Celsius Suomi's TikTok strategy, which relied heavily on influencer-driven content. This shows how important it is for marketing decision-makers to select influencers who align with the brand's identity and target audience. However, the results also suggest that relying too much on a limited number of influencers can weaken authenticity and reduce content diversity. Hence, companies should aim to balance consistency and variation when working with influencers on their content.

Furthermore, the results show that social engagement frequently takes place outside of the platform itself. Consumers reported discussing products, flavors, and brand-related content with others outside of TikTok, indicating that social influence operates through broader social interactions. This suggests that marketers should think of social media not only as a platform for direct interaction, but also as a tool for broader conversations and shared experiences. Providing content that is relatable, relevant, or related to everyday consumption situations may strengthen this form of indirect social engagement.

5.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study investigated how short-form video content impacts consumer engagement in the context of Celsius Suomi, specifically within the functional energy drink industry. By adopting a qualitative case study approach, the research provides in-depth understanding of consumer perceptions and engagement habits. However, this also creates certain limitations that should be acknowledged. Furthermore, the chosen research design and subject provide several opportunities for future research, which are discussed below.

One of the main limitations of the study is the case study format of the research. The research focuses on a single brand, Celsius Suomi, which limits how widely the results can be applied. While the case provides valuable information on how short-form video content performs in practice, the results may not be directly applicable to other brands, industries, or cultural contexts. Therefore, future research could expand the topic by examining multiple brands or comparing several companies in the functional energy drink industry or other product categories. This would allow for a broader understanding of how short-form video content influences consumer engagement in different contexts.

Another limitation is related to the sample size and formation of the interview data. The study relies on a relatively small group of respondents, all of whom are Finnish consumers who are familiar with the brand or its content. Although this approach is suitable for qualitative research, it may limit the diversity of perspectives. Future research could include a larger and more diverse selection of respondents from other demographic groups, cultural backgrounds or levels of familiarity with the brand. Comparative research between different age groups could offer deeper understanding of how short-form video content impacts engagement among different consumer segments.

In addition, the study focuses mainly on consumers' opinions and self-reported behavior, which may not accurately represent their actual behavior on short-form video platforms.

Respondents reported low levels of active engagement, for instance, but this may differ from patterns that could be observed through platform analytics. Therefore, future research could combine qualitative methods with quantitative data, such as engagement metrics or experimental approaches, to gain a more thorough understanding of consumer behavior in short-form video environments. Moreover, another limitation is the focus on TikTok as the primary platform for analysis. While TikTok is currently one of the leading platforms on short-form video content, other platforms such as Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts may differ in terms of user behavior, content formats and engagement dynamics.

Furthermore, even though this study adopts a multidimensional perspective on consumer engagement, the results indicate that these dimensions are not always clearly visible in practice. More specifically, cognitive engagement is shown to be limited in this case scenario, raising questions about how and when this dimension can be effectively activated in short-form video contexts. Future research could explore ways to include more informational or educational elements into short-form videos without compromising entertainment value, especially in industries like functional energy drinks, where product-related information is important for brand positioning.

Finally, the findings reveal that consumer engagement in short-form video contexts often takes place in indirect and less visible ways, such as through offline discussions or increased brand recognition. These forms of engagement are difficult to measure using traditional engagement metrics or self-reported interview data. Hence, future research could further investigate these indirect engagement processes, for example by examining how short-form video content influences word-of-mouth, brand perception and purchasing behavior over time.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Semi-structured interview questions

Background questions

- Name?
- Age?
- Gender?
- Occupation? (student/employed/other)

General introductory questions about social media

- Which social media platforms do you use?
- How often do you use these platforms? F. ex. if daily, how long approximately?
- Can you explain and/or give examples of content that usually catches your attention and makes you want to engage with, not just scroll by?
- Why do these videos catch your attention and in which way?
- What kind of social media content from brands usually catch your attention?
- Can you think of a particular TikTok video from a brand that as caught your attention?

Relationship to TikTok and Celsius Suomi

- Can you tell me about your experience with Celsius Suomi on TikTok?
- What kind of image do you think Celsius Suomi wants to create for potential and existent customers on TikTok?
- Do you think Celsius Suomi's videos stand out in some kind of way in comparison to other energy drink brands? How so? Or if not, in what way does it not stand out?
- How suitable do you think TikTok is as a platform for Celsius Suomi? Why?

Stimulus material: 3 TikTok videos

- What are your first impressions of this video?
- What caught your attention the most?
- What thoughts come to mind after watching this video?
- How does this video make you feel?
- Would you interact with this video on TikTok (e.g. like, comment, share, save)?
Why or why not?
- Would this video make you interested in trying or purchasing the product?
- Would you share this video to someone or talk about it with friends?

Consumer engagement dimensions**Cognitive engagement**

- After watching these videos, do you think Celsius Suomi's TikTok content influences the way you think about the brand or its products?
- Have you learned something new about Celsius from their TikTok content?
- Do you think Celsius Suomi's videos stand out in some kind of way? How so? Or if not, in what way does it not stand out?
- If you were the content manager at Celsius, how would you create video content that sticks to memory and creates a positive brand image?

Emotional engagement

- What kind of video content in general stir up your emotions?
- What kind of video content makes you feel indifferent – that is not positive nor negative emotions?
- Thinking about the videos we just watched, how did they make you feel?
- Have your feelings toward Celsius Suomi changed over time because of their TikTok content?

- Do you feel that the style of Celsius Suomi's TikTok videos aligns with the type of content you personally enjoy on TikTok? Why or why not?
- How authentic do their TikTok videos feel to you?

Behavioral engagement

- What kind of content makes you most likely to interact with a brand on TikTok?
- Have you ever followed or unfollowed a brand because of its TikTok content?
Has this happened with Celsius Suomi?
- Have you interacted with Celsius Suomi's TikTok content? Why or why not?
- Would videos like the ones we watched make you more likely to interact with the brand?
- Has Celsius Suomi's TikTok content ever influenced your interest in purchasing or trying their products?

Social engagement

- Does seeing an influencer in the video affect how you feel about the brand?
- Have you ever discussed energy drinks with other people, for example friends?
What do these conversations usually focus upon?
- Can you remember if you have talked about Celsius specifically?
- Do you feel more connected to a brand when you see others engaging with it on TikTok?
- Have you ever shared or discussed Celsius Suomi's TikTok content with others, either online or offline?
- Do you feel any sense of community or social connection around Celsius Suomi on TikTok? Why or why not?
- Have you ever felt like Celsius Suomi's TikTok content was aimed at "people like you"?