



SMB Week 5 – TikTok, Advanced Video Editing, and AI Strategy

This course, delivered by **Evan** on behalf of the **Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Limerick**, marked the final week of a five-part social media marketing bootcamp. Having previously covered Facebook and Instagram, this session focused on mastering **TikTok**, professional **video editing** using Meta's "Edits" app, and elevating **AI usage** to a professional business level.

1. TikTok: The New Mainstream for Business Marketing

Evan began by dispelling the myth that TikTok is merely a "kids' app". He explained that while it began as Musical.ly, it rebranded into a video-first social network that reached **one billion users** faster than any other platform. Evan noted that TikTok's success was so significant that Meta essentially "copied" it to create Instagram Reels.

The TikTok Interface and Feeds Evan detailed the three primary feeds on TikTok:

- **For You Feed:** This is the primary landing page where AI determines content based on user interest, often showing videos from accounts the user does **not** follow. Evan emphasized that this is a major departure from Facebook and Instagram's traditional models.
- **Following Feed:** Contains videos exclusively from accounts the user has chosen to follow.
- **Friends Feed:** A newer addition designed to "lock users in" by connecting them with their real-life contacts and Facebook friends.

Researching Your Niche Evan advised participants to use the search function (top right) to research their industry. He suggested searching for terms like "life coach" or "handbags" to see what competitors are posting and whether those video styles are achievable for the participant's business.

Account Setup and Branding When setting up an account, Evan recommended using a **mobile number** for the primary marketing account to leverage TikTok's "sync contacts" feature, which alerts real-world contacts to the business's presence. He highlighted two critical branding tips:

1. **Name vs. Username:** Unlike Instagram, where the username is prominent, **TikTok displays the "Name" more clearly**, so Evan urged users not to clutter it with keywords.
2. **Bio for Search:** The **bio is searchable on TikTok**, so it must include clear context about the business and its location.

Personal vs. Business Accounts Evan discussed the trade-offs of switching to a **Business Account**. While it allows for a clickable website link and access to ads, it restricts the user to **stock music**, losing access to trending commercial hits. Evan noted that many businesses remain on personal accounts to keep the "good" music unless they intend to run ads or open a shop.

TikTok Shop and Affiliates Evan explained that **TikTok Shop** allows for frictionless e-commerce within the app. TikTok takes an **8% commission**, and businesses can tag products directly in their videos. Furthermore, businesses can enlist **affiliates** to promote their products in exchange for a commission (e.g., 10-15%), which Evan said can exponentially increase reach.

The Algorithm: Training the AI For both users and uploaders, Evan explained that the AI is highly sophisticated. New users should "train" their algorithm by swiping past irrelevant content and lingering on/liking content related to their business. For uploaders, Evan stated that **TikTok will find your audience for you**, even with zero followers, by scanning the video's content and showing it to an initial "test" group of a few hundred people.

2. Professional Video Editing with the "Edits" App

A key theme of the bootcamp was the importance of video. Evan introduced **"Edits" by Meta**, a free editing app designed to compete with CapCut. He described the built-in Instagram editor as a "Ford Fiesta" and the **Edits app as a "BMW 5 Series"**—more powerful and full of features.

The Power of Overlays (B-Roll) Evan argued that a video featuring only a person talking to the camera is often "bad" marketing because it fails to showcase the product. He demonstrated the **"Overlay"** feature, which allows a creator to place video clips or photos of their products (e.g., roast beef, shoes, or a hotel room) on top of the footage of them speaking. Evan said this keeps the viewer's attention by changing the scene and visually "selling" what is being discussed.

Advanced Editing Techniques

- **Cutting Silences:** Evan showcased an AI tool within the Edits app that automatically scans for and deletes pauses at the start, middle, or end of a video, making the editing process nearly instantaneous.
- **Precision Splitting:** For manual edits, Evan showed how to "split" and "delete" unwanted segments by using the white playhead line as a guide.

- **No Watermarks:** Evan highlighted that videos exported from the Edits app have **no watermark**, meaning they can be posted across TikTok, LinkedIn, and YouTube Shorts without penalty.

Equipment Essentials Evan stressed that **good audio is more important than good video**. He recommended:

- **Microphones:** The **Hollyland Lark M2** (highly recommended for its size and magnet mount) or the **Ulanzi** (a more budget-friendly option).
- **Stability:** A tripod and a proper phone holder are essential for professional-looking content.
- **Lighting:** A 18-inch ring light for indoor shooting.

3. Advanced AI Strategy: Moving to "Level 5"

In the final segment, Evan returned to AI, explaining how to transition from basic usage to an advanced "expert" level.

The Five Levels of AI Usage Evan categorized AI users into five levels:

- **Level 1:** Basic, unformatted questions.
- **Level 2:** Using "Personalisation" to give the AI context about the business.
- **Level 3:** Switching from the "Fast" model to the **"Thinking" model** for more reasoned, comprehensive answers.
- **Level 4: Deep Research.** Evan explained that ChatGPT now has a "Deep Research" mode that spends 10–20 minutes scanning up to 30 sources to produce a 15–25 page report on a specific business or industry.
- **Level 5: Projects.** This is the pinnacle of AI strategy.

Implementing a "Level 5" Project Evan instructed participants to create a **"Project"** in ChatGPT specifically for their digital marketing. Inside this project, users should:

1. **Upload Context:** Attach the Deep Research reports (Level 4) on their business and industry.
2. **Custom Instructions:** Tell the project to "always act like an expert" and "write in my specific tone".
3. **Memory:** Evan noted that projects maintain a **complete memory** of every previous conversation, preventing the need to repeat information and allowing the AI to offer smarter, historically informed advice.

Gemini for Free Features Evan suggested using **Google Gemini** for specific "bells and whistles" that are often paid features in ChatGPT. This includes **video analysis** (where Gemini can watch a reel and offer marketing tips) and **image analysis**.

Action Point List for Participants

1. **TikTok Setup:** Create a TikTok account (if you haven't already). Set it to **Public** if using it for marketing to ensure the AI puts your videos into the "For You" feeds of potential customers.
2. **Market Research:** Spend 15 minutes on TikTok searching for your industry keywords. **Like and save** videos that resonate with your brand to "train" your algorithm.
3. **Optimize Your Profile:** Ensure your "**Name**" is your clear business name and your "**Bio**" contains searchable keywords describing what you do and where you are located.
4. **Install the "Edits" App:** Download the Meta Edits app and link it to your Instagram account.
5. **Invest in Audio:** Purchase a dedicated microphone (e.g., **Hollyland Lark M2**) to ensure your "talking to camera" videos have professional sound quality.
6. **Practice Video Overlays:** Record a video of yourself talking about a product. Use the Edits app to **overlay "B-roll"** (photos or video) of that product on top of your speech.
7. **Conduct Deep Research:** Use ChatGPT's **Deep Research mode** to generate two reports: one on your specific business and one on your industry's current trends.
8. **Create a Marketing Project:** Set up a "Digital Marketing Project" in ChatGPT. **Upload your Deep Research reports** as files to ensure every answer you get from then on is laser-focused on your specific business context.

This was created with the help of one of our AI colleagues 😊