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E-learning in the time of Tik Tok

The successful features of Tik Tok (the social media app of the moment) offer useful food for thought also for the e-learning sector, according to Teleskill.

Tik Tok is a very popular app for young and very young people. In 2019, it was the most downloaded app worldwide: over 1 billion downloads and 500 million monthly users. The Italian users of TikTok are teenagers and generation Z and are over 2.4 million: an interesting target for the online education and digital learning sector. What are the reasons for Tik Tok's success? What can be the parallels with the e-learning sector? Let's understand if the functions of this social network can make room for more effective and engaging online courses.

Immediate social learning

Tik Tok allows you to show your skills and get immediate gratification, through social approval, quickly and with very little effort. The app helps the user to make the video in which he interprets songs or choreography and pushes him to continuously improve with the experience and feedback of other users. What can be observed is an interesting mix of informal learning and **learning by doing**, two e-learning trends that we have already talked about previously. In addition, many users invite peers to use the app through Challenge (of the challenges we will see in the "Gamification" section of this article): this is clearly an application of the **peer learning** and **collaborative learning** principle. In this case, it is well understood how the training path is configured as something more than a tool of shared knowledge. Collaborative learning, in fact, "*to be effective must be realized around the needs and desires of the members; allow participants to independently manage their role and the contribution offered to the community; offer a real opportunity to enrich and deepen the matter; to create a protected climate to express oneself, in which one has the freedom to make mistakes or inaccuracies and that exclusively becomes a process within the community* ".

"*In addition, a collaborative learning platform must be able to grow, decrease, change based on the natural life cycle of the community. Just like a social network, collaborative learning communities can take on various connotations based on how they develop; they can resemble a tribe that survives through learning, a band of artists looking for new forms of expression, a group of engineers working on similar problems, a clique of pupils who want to challenge the school, a network of surgeons born to explore new techniques. Configuration is not important as long as it is favorable to the goal to be achieved* ".

Artificial intelligence

Compared to competitors, Tik Tok uses Artificial Intelligence in a very refined way and maps the interests of users finely: it profiles them and suggests future interests. Tik Tok's goal is not to attract advertisers, or influencers, but to make users spend more and more time on the platform. The parallel with the eLearning world is very pertinent.

Mobile (learning)

Tik Tok is used from a smartphone: being able to use it everywhere and always having it at hand is part of the causes of its success and its diffusion. The result? Users access the concepts with maximum freedom and feel protagonists. This is also a very pertinent trend in eLearning: **mobile learning**, according to which training contents and eLearning platform are increasingly used in mobility.

Short contents (microlearning)

Tik Tok allows you to share clips of 15 or 60 seconds combined with music, sound effects and filters. As we have seen, the clips show ballets and sketches assembled quickly and intuitively. The affinity with **microlearning** is evident which uses very short forms of training content to make them easier to use and assimilate.

Gamification

TikTok users are called up to participate in challenges. Worldwide, the most viral challenge was #Theclimate (400 million views): in this race the users attested in a clip an eco-sustainable behavior that they had started to adopt. The eLearning training aims to involve users through races, rankings, quizzes. The goal of **gamification** is precisely to encourage involvement of learners (engagement).

Article taken from Teleskill