

ANALYSIS OF BRAND STORYTELLING IN SKINTIFIC'S SHORT-FORM VIDEO CONTENT

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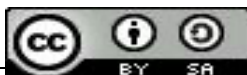
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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the brand storytelling of Skintific's short-form video content and evaluates the effectiveness of influencers in promoting skincare products on Instagram, targeting the millennial and Gen Z demographic in Indonesia. The Indonesian skincare industry is experiencing significant growth, driven by a shift in consumer preferences toward skincare as a primary need, and social media's increasing influence has transformed traditional marketing. Skintific has capitalized on this trend, becoming a top brand on major e-commerce platforms. This research uses a qualitative approach with a content analysis method to identify patterns and themes in Skintific's short videos. The study's sample includes Skintific videos uploaded to TikTok and Instagram Reels between June and July 2025, selected based on their popularity and engagement. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for business owners and serve as a reference for future research on social media marketing in the beauty industry.

KEYWORDS

Brand Storytelling, Influencer Marketing, Skincare Industry, Short-form Video Content



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INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram have elevated the influence of beauty trends to new heights. In the past, beauty companies relied on traditional advertisements like TV commercial and magazine to sell products and set trends. They would show flawless skin models with perfect hair and makeup. These campaigns used to be very effective, but now the rise of social media completely changed the industry (Komala and Sumarwan, 2024). Instead of companies showing consumers instant results with dramatic before-and-after changes, a new wave of content creators began to influence the market (Waang and Lee, 2021). These creators used products in tutorials, shared reviews, and encouraged their followers to try them as well, effectively shifting the power from the companies to the consumers.

The skincare industry in Indonesia is expected to experience its growth, identified as a priority sector in the National Industrial Development Plan (RIPIN) (Jakarta Globe,

2024). The Indonesian skincare industry is expected to experience significant growth projected from 2022 to 2026, the market presents lucrative opportunities for both local and international brands (Ken Research, 2024). There has been a shift in consumer preferences from makeup to skincare products that skincare is a primary need, not just a lifestyle.

Skintific is an example of the brand that has successfully navigated this new landscape. Skintific has experienced significant growth among skincare enthusiasts in Indonesia, becoming the top beauty category across nearly all e-commerce platforms in Indonesia, including Shopee, Tokopedia, and other platforms. A new generation of influencers and creators has been emerged, becoming the new arbiters of beauty trends. In Indonesia, celebrities play important role in increasing awareness, informing consumers, boosting sales, gaining followers, and improving search engine optimization. Consequently, the Skintific's campaign is effective in enhancing Millenial and Gen Z by increasing their understanding of the products and by directly engaging in their interest. Millenial and Gen Z as digital natives prefer to learn about products through short-form video content rather than static ads (Prasanna dan Priyanka, 2024).

In contrast to the static imagery of old, these creators engage with their audience in real-time, offering authentic product reviews, detailed tutorials, and honest first impressions. They share their personal experiences and showcasing how products work on their own skin. This approach builds a level of trust and credibility that traditional advertisements like TV ads and magazine could never achieve. Followers are no longer passive recipients, they are active participants in a community, encouraged to try products themselves and share their own results. This shift has democratized the beauty industry, making it more accessible and transparent.

Skintific's use of brand storytelling through short videos on social media platforms like Instagram Reels and TikTok allows them to connect with this audience on a deeper, more personal level. The videos don't just show a product, they tell a story about its benefits, how it fits into a daily routine, and the real-world results it can deliver.

The purpose of this study is to analyze how brand storytelling of Skintific's Short-form video content evaluates the efficiency of Influencers in promoting skincare products on Instagram. This research is expected to be useful for business owners, and produce empirical data that can be used as a reference for further research on social media.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a content analysis method. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to identify patterns, themes, and meanings in text, image, or video data (Krippendorff, 2018). Research Sample: Skintific short videos uploaded to TikTok and Instagram Reels platforms during the period June - July 2025. Videos were selected based on popularity (number of views and engagement) to ensure the most effective content representation. For this study, the researcher chose three videos featuring two Indonesian influencers, Molita Lin and Angelica Marthin, one brand ambassador Nicha Yontararak (Minnie) a K-pop idol from Thailand, and Indonesian singer Naura Ayu.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The core scientific finding of this study is that Skintific's brand storytelling strategy, as executed through Instagram reels video content, successfully outperforms traditional advertising in connecting with its target audience. This success can be attributed to a sophisticated and intentional adaptation to the evolving media landscape and shifts in

consumer behavior, enabling the brand to establish a more profound connection with its target audience.

Social media has shifted power from companies to consumers, which aligns with the finding that consumers now rely more on influencers than traditional advertising (Komala and Sumarwan, 2024). Gen Z and Millennials prefer short-form video content over static ads strongly supports this finding (Prasanna and Priyanka, 2024). These preferences explain why Skintific's short-form video formats on Social Media important to examine.

The results of this study not only validate the initial hypothesis about the effectiveness of Skintific brand storytelling, but also provide empirical insights into how brands can successfully navigate the ever-changing digital marketing landscape by leveraging semiotics, personalization, and authenticity strategies.

The content analysis of Skintific's short-form videos, featuring Brand Ambassador (BA) Minnie (G)I-DLE and influencers Molita Lin, Angelica Marthin, and Naura Ayu, revealed a consistent and effective brand storytelling strategy. The videos move beyond traditional product-centric advertisements to create narratives that resonate with the target audience. The storytelling is not about simply showing a product, it is about demonstrating its practical application within a daily routine and its impact on real skin concerns.

To analyze the content analysis on the collaboration reels between Skintific with Molita Lin, Angelica Marthin, Naura Ayu, and Minnie, we paused the video from Skintific's official Instagram account @skintificid, then screenshot several scenes. The images then combined into a collage for further analysis. The table below is the source of the content links that have been analyzed.

Table 1. Table Instagram Reels Sources

Influencer and BA	Sources
Molita Lin	https://www.instagram.com/reel/DLcH7yxyIEM/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==
Angelica Marthin	https://www.instagram.com/reel/DLMqu2hxQuI/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==
Naura Ayu	https://www.instagram.com/reel/DMKre4hhu5F/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==
Minnie	https://www.instagram.com/reel/DMg7_xQToPo/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

Roland Barthes's Semiotic Theory emphasizes three pillars of thought that form the core of his analysis: denotative, connotative, and mythical meaning (Hatam and Al Ghabra, 2021). The first system of meaning is called denotative, and the second is called connotative. The Roland Barthes Semiotic Concept Table below serves as a mapping table for the research analysis.

Table 2. Table Barthes' Signification Process (Fadillah & Sounvada, 2020)

Signifier	Signified
Denotative sign	Connotative Signified
Connotative Signifier	

Denotative is a sign's explicit or literal meaning that can be clearly seen, while connotative is the social, cultural, and emotional meanings connected to a sign (Pakpahan, 2021). The word connotation is commonly used in the phrases positive connotation and negative connotation. That's because people associate good or bad things with a lot of words. They're used in the same context, to describe words or meanings.



Figure 1. Molita Lin

Table 3. Molita Lin's Instagram Reels Transcription

Are people still using sunscreen that leaves a result like this? Maybe you chose the wrong one. Let me explain. Actually, there's nothing wrong with using one with white cast, but it's more suitable for outdoor activities and water activities. But for daily use, the white cast will be really annoying. I personally prefer sunscreen that doesn't have a white cast but has a tone-up effect. And this is my current favorite from Skintific, the Bright Fit Serum Sunscreen that gives a natural tone-up with a glowing effect. It has a brightening effect but not too much and the finish is like really healthy glowing skin. My face looks bright but not oily, you know what I mean? Korean brands do have a more whitening tone-up, but if you have medium to tan skin, honestly, it often turns gray. So it's better to just use this, because it's very comfortable to wear every day and safe to wear makeup. This is my makeup look, looks good, right?

The denotative level of Molita Lin's video is the most straightforward. It literally shows her applying a sunscreen product to her face. The core denotation is the comparison between two sunscreens: one that leaves a white cast and another (Skintific's Bright Fit Serum Sunscreen) that provides a natural tone-up effect. The video displays the product's physical properties: its texture, its application, and its finish on the skin. It also denotes its specific features, such as being suitable for "daily use" and providing a "glowing effect." The literal message is that Skintific offers a superior, more comfortable daily sunscreen compared to products that leave a noticeable white cast.

At the connotative level, the video layers on deeper, culturally specific meanings. The white cast is connoted as a problem or an annoyance for daily use, which is a significant pain point for many consumers, particularly those with medium to tan skin tones. The phrase "Korean brands do have a more whitening tone-up, but it often turns gray" directly addresses a common frustration in the Indonesian market, where many imported products are not formulated for local skin tones.

Through Molita Lin's personal endorsement, the brand establishes a sense of authenticity and realism, making her recommendation feel genuine and trustworthy. The product itself is presented as a tool for effortless beauty, creating a "natural tone-up" and "glowing effect" that promises a healthy and radiant look without heavy makeup. Furthermore, its qualities of being "very comfortable to wear every day" and "safe to wear makeup" frame it as a practical choice for a modern, no-fuss beauty routine. Skintific isn't just selling a cosmetic, it's tapping into the cultural myth of accessible and inclusive beauty, making the brand's message resonate beyond its immediate function.

The core myth being promoted is that advanced, high-quality skincare is not just for fair-skinned individuals or for those following a specific aesthetic. By explicitly addressing the "gray" cast problem on medium to tan skin, the brand positions itself as a solution for Indonesian consumers who have long been overlooked by the mainstream beauty industry. Skintific understands the local market's specific needs and skin tones.

The video promotes the myth of authentic self-care. Molita Lin's content celebrates an attainable and natural look. The myth is that beauty is not about covering up flaws but about enhancing natural radiance with the right products. By choosing a product that provides a natural tone-up instead of a whitening effect, the brand reinforces the idea that true beauty lies in healthy glowing complexion. This is a powerful counter-narrative to the historical dominance of fairness-centric beauty standards.



Figure 2. Angelica Marthin

Table 4. Angelica Marthin's Instagram Reels Transcription

Don't make the wrong choice between tone up sunscreen and white cast sunscreen. It's already 2025, really sad if you're still using white cast sunscreen like this. Well, a natural tone up like this is beautiful, right? See the before and after. Instant glow, healthy skin. Discoloration, redness, and my pores are much more concealed. Like my skin but a lot better. Only use Skintific bright fit serum sunscreen. The texture is watery, easy to blend, and very easy to absorb. Very light on the skin. Contains Niacinamide, Alpha Arbutin, and Tranexamic Acid. Three in one bottle, serum moisture and sun protection. SPF 50+ PA++++. Look at that glow. Sunscreen feels like primer. It feels light, not greasy, not sticky. Crazy, this sunscreen deserves to go viral in 2025.

At the denotative level, the reels by Angelica Marthin is a straightforward product demonstration. It literally shows the influencer comparing two types of sunscreens: one that leaves a white cast and another, Skintific's Bright Fit Serum Sunscreen, that provides a natural, glowing tone-up. The video denotes key product features such as its watery texture, ease of blending, and quick absorption. It also lists the active ingredients—Niacinamide, Alpha Arbutin, and Tranexamic Acid—and states its protective claims: SPF 50+ PA++++. The literal message is a direct comparison showing Skintific as a more modern, superior alternative sunscreens.

The reels use a strong connotative meanings to highlight the difference with other sunscreens. The white cast sunscreen is framed as being outdated and "sad," creating a clear contrast with the modern and sophisticated Skintific sunscreen. Skintific is positioned as a cutting-edge brand that provides effortless radiance, suggesting a look of natural and healthy beauty rather than just covering flaws. Its multi-functional nature—offering serum, moisture, and sun protection in one—connotes efficiency and value, making it a smart choice for a busy lifestyle. Furthermore, the product is described with positive sensory

language as "light," "not greasy," and "not sticky," directly addressing common user complaints and connoting a comfortable and pleasant experience.

The initial concept is the myth of the "better self," wherein the product is presented as an instrument for personal improvement. The phrase "my skin but a lot better" suggests that the sunscreen isn't just for protection, it's a vehicle for achieving a more refined, glowing version of oneself, aligning with the modern emphasis on self-improvement and self-care. The second is the myth of smart consumerism, which frames the viewer's choice as a savvy one. By contrasting the "wrong" choice of outdated sunscreens with the "right" choice of Skintific, the video empowers the audience, positioning their purchase not just as a transaction but as an intelligent decision that reflects their modern, informed lifestyle.



Figure 3. Naura Ayu

Table 5. Naura Ayu's Instagram Reels Transcription

Starting my day with fresh makeup look. Since I like clean makeup for daily, skintint is actually enough for me. And I always use the newest baby from Skintific. Now, I'm done. Look how smooth my complexion is. Try it out your self, and tell me how you think about their new skintint. Bye.

The denotative level of Naura Ayu's Instagram reels is a straightforward product demonstration. The video shows her applying Skintific's new skintint to her face as part of her makeup routine. The core denotation is the product application and its immediate result: a smooth complexion. It denotes the product's function as a base for a "fresh makeup look" and its suitability for a "clean makeup for daily". The literal message is that the skintint is a lightweight product that can be used daily to create a smooth, natural-looking base.

At the connotative level, the video layers on deeper, culturally specific meanings. Naura Ayu is a young celebrity (born in 2005) of Javanese, Minang, and Palembang descent. Also, she has a characteristic medium to tan skin tone. Her presence itself implies authenticity, relatability, and a deep connection to Indonesian identity. Skintific's choice of Naura Ayu highlights the brand's commitment to inclusivity and cultural relevance.

The video shows her flawless complexion after using the skintint, assuring viewers that the product is effective and beautiful on a variety of Indonesian skin tones. This strategic choice directly addresses a common market issue where many foundations and tints don't match or flatter deeper complexions. By featuring Naura, Skintific demonstrates that it understands and celebrates Indonesian beauty in all its forms.

Skintific's selling the myth of authentic Indonesian beauty. Naura Ayu's video reinforces this by showing how the product enhances her complexion without altering her

natural skin tone. The skintint becomes a tool for achieving a "better" version of her own skin. This is a powerful counter-narrative to the historical dominance of fairness-centric beauty standards, which often marginalized individuals with deeper skin tones. By featuring a public figure with medium to tan complexion, Skintific empowers Indonesian woman to embrace her natural beauty.



Figure 4. Minnie

Table 6. Minnie's Instagram Reels Transcription

A new leading innovation. Skintific 10% pure vitamin C and brightening serum. Keeping it fresh and potent. Intelligent formulation and technology. Skintific repair your skin barrier.

At the denotative level, the video featuring Minnie is a straightforward presentation of a new product: the Skintific 10% Pure Vitamin C and Brightening Serum. The video literally shows a new product bottle and mentions its key features. The text "new leading innovation," "fresh and potent," and "intelligent formulation and technology" denotes the product as being scientifically advanced and effective. The phrase "Skintific repair your skin barrier" denotes its specific function as a restorative treatment. The literal message is that Skintific has released a new, technologically-advanced serum designed to brighten skin and repair the skin barrier.

The video expertly layers deeper cultural and emotional meanings onto its literal message. The choice of Minnie, a Thai-born K-pop idol, as the primary signifier carries powerful connotations. Her global popularity immediately associates the brand with international quality and trendiness, positioning Skintific as a global contender on par with popular Korean beauty brands and appealing to consumers who admire the Korean beauty aesthetic. Furthermore, the use of phrases like "intelligent formulation and technology" and "pure vitamin C" builds trust and connotes scientific credibility, framing the serum as a high-quality product backed by modern research.

At the mythical level, the video taps into a powerful cultural ideology: the myth of K-beauty excellence. For many consumers across Asia, K-beauty represents the pinnacle of innovative skincare and effortless radiance. By featuring a K-pop idol, Skintific is not just selling a serum, it's selling a connection to this highly sought-after cultural trend. The myth is that Skintific delivers the same level of innovation and quality as leading Korean brands, but with a focus on local needs. Furthermore, Minnie's role as Brand Ambassador promotes the myth of aspirational transformation. She represents the ideal of flawless, glowing skin that many desire, and the video suggests that using Skintific is a way to achieve this "fresh and potent" look, aligning consumers with a global beauty standard.

Skintific cleverly employs a variety of brand storytelling strategies tailored to each target audience. Through collaborations with public figures such as Molita Lin, Angelica Marthin, Naura Ayu, and Minnie, Skintific successfully builds diverse brand connotations, ranging from authenticity and practicality to modernity and global credibility. This approach demonstrates Skintific's deep understanding of relevant cultural myths and values, enabling them to connect with consumers across various market segments.

Each piece of content analyzed functions as a semiotic text that goes beyond product descriptions. By positioning Skintific within a larger narrative of inclusive beauty, smart lifestyle, local authenticity, and global excellence, Skintific successfully positions itself beyond simply a beauty product provider. It becomes a brand that represents the diverse aspirations and identities of its consumers, strengthening its position in the market as a relevant and valuable brand.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Skintific's brand storytelling strategy, as executed through short-form video content on Instagram Reels, is highly effective in building a strong connection with its target audience, surpassing traditional advertising methods. The initial hypothesis of this research—that Skintific's brand storytelling is successful—has been validated and strengthened by empirical findings. This success is not coincidental, it is the result of a sophisticated adaptation to the shifting consumer behavior and media landscape, where audiences, particularly Millennials and Gen Z, rely more on authentic influencer recommendations than static advertisements.

The semiotic analysis of the videos featuring Molita Lin, Angelica Marthin, Naura Ayu, and Minnie demonstrates how Skintific strategically uses different narratives for various market segments. Each collaboration not only showcases the product's function but also ties it to powerful cultural myths—such as the myth of the "better self," "smart consumerism", "authentic Indonesian beauty", and "K-beauty excellence". As a result, Skintific successfully positions itself as a brand that not only sells products but also represents the diverse aspirations, values, and identities of its consumers. This research provides valuable insight into how brands can navigate the dynamic digital market by leveraging strategies of personalization, authenticity, and semiotics to build long-term credibility and relevance.

Based on these findings, future research could explore the effectiveness of this strategy more quantitatively, for example, by analyzing user engagement metrics (such as sales conversion rates or comment sentiment) from these campaigns. Furthermore, it would be interesting to compare Skintific's brand storytelling strategy with other beauty brands in the Indonesian market to identify the most effective best practices in the current digital landscape.

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