

Think with Google

# How to prove the value of media

A media effectiveness guide  
for CMOs (and CFOs)



# Why media effectiveness is critical today

## A letter to modern CMO

Over a 100 years ago, a marketer John Wanamaker famously said “Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half.” Today, no CMO should have this little insight into their media effectiveness and few organizations would survive, if any, by wasting half of their media budget.

For many brands, competition became global decades ago, which means that there is a line “out of the door” for every prospective customer that your brand should be winning, but may very well end up with your competitors if you do not reach her with the right message, at the right time, on the right medium. In crowded markets, businesses need to make sure that their marketing efforts are as efficient and effective as possible. Accurate media measurement helps outpace competition in the race for the customers.

The digital landscape is constantly evolving, with new channels and ad formats emerging regularly. Consumers are spread across a multitude of platforms and devices, making it difficult to get a complete picture of their media consumption.

The need for privacy-preserving measurement solutions is becoming increasingly important: changing privacy preferences and regulations have led to more limited data collection and usage, which poses challenges for accurate tracking and attribution.

At the same time, there's a very strong and growing emphasis on proving the value of every marketing dollar spent. Businesses are under increased pressure to optimize their budgets and demonstrate a clear return on investment. The proliferation of data and analytics tools has made it easier to track and measure marketing performance. This has led to a greater expectation that marketers will use data to justify their spending. By accurately measuring media effectiveness, companies can pinpoint which media channels and campaigns are performing best, and which are underperforming. This allows for the optimization of marketing budgets, ensuring that resources are allocated to the most effective activities.

The demand for media effectiveness measurement solutions is a reflection of the increasing need for marketers to be data-driven and accountable. At the same time, media effectiveness still remains less than clear cut, and many CMOs struggle building their media effectiveness tool kit and proving the value of media to CFOs. A McKinsey research shows that even though 83% of CEOs see marketing as a growth driver, [45% of CFOs have declined a marketing budget](#) because it didn't demonstrate a clear line to value. Clearly, there is work to be done to link marketing, and by extension, media to business outcomes.

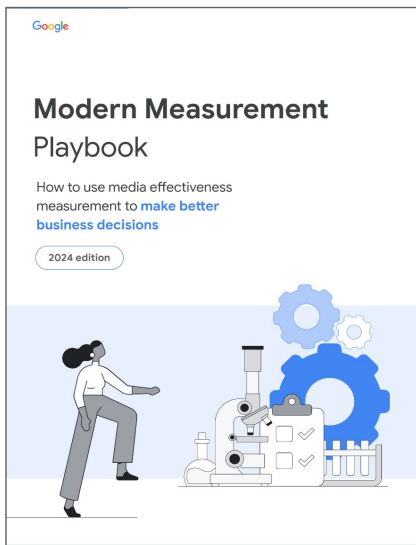
If these challenges sound familiar, this guide is for you and your organization.

# How to use this guide

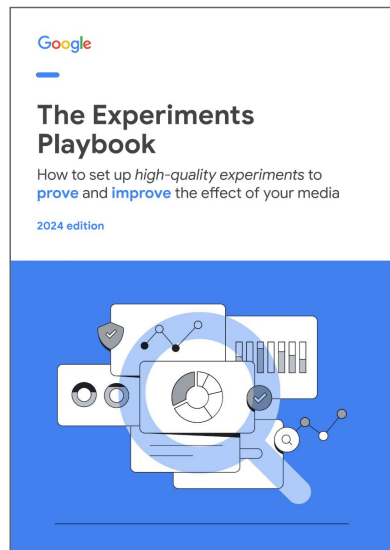
This guide is designed to complement deep-dive resources on incrementality, MMM, experiments and modern measurement by establishing measurement foundations:

1. A robust, business objective-driven KPI framework
2. Understanding customer journey
3. Creating a KPI framework
4. Taking ownership of media effectiveness
5. Organizational set up for data-driven decisions.

The guide is completed with a measurement framework workbook, which can be adapted for your organization. We recommend starting with the media effectiveness guide and completing your education in media effectiveness with the deep dive resources:



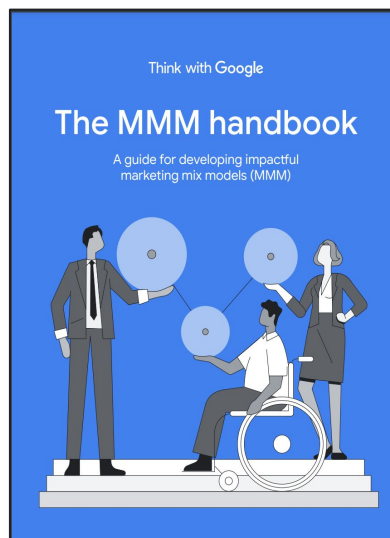
ThinkWithGoogle: [The modern measurement playbook: How to optimise your marketing effectiveness and fuel growth](#)



ThinkWithGoogle: [How to run high quality marketing experiments](#)



ThinkWithGoogle: [How marketers can connect brand investment to business outcomes](#)



ThinkWithGoogle: [Marketing Mix Modelling: A CMOs handbook](#)

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4 Assemble a measurement toolkit

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7 Set up organization for success

8 Measurement workbook

# 1

## Effectiveness fundamentals

### Always start with business objectives

An objective is a clearly defined goal.

**Business objective:** A broad, top-level goal for your company (e.g. increasing revenue, profit margin or volume).

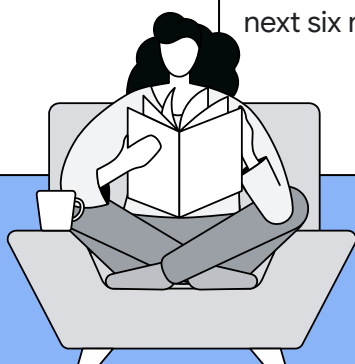
**Marketing campaign objectives:** Campaign goals designed to support your business objectives (e.g. increasing awareness in order to find and secure new customers).

### Differentiate between KPIs and metrics

The terms 'metrics' and 'KPIs' are often used interchangeably because they both refer to quantifiable measurements, but they are not the same thing.

[A KPI \(Key Performance Indicator\)](#) is a measurement of progress towards a specific goal. It's a metric useful for explaining why a campaign succeeded or failed. For example, if you want to beat your personal best on a 100m sprint, what you care about most is your running time: that's your KPI. Everything else – stride length, pace, arm swings rate, etc. – are the metrics that help you pursue your goal.

	Campaign KPIs	Campaign metrics
Answer the question	Did I succeed or fail?	Why did I succeed or fail?
By defining	Business marketing objectives	How marketing objectives will be delivered
How many?	One objective per campaign	Many, if they are relevant
Example	To increase T-shirt sales by 10% over the next six months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cost per view</li><li>• Completion rates</li><li>• Engagement rates</li><li>• Ad recall</li><li>• Reach</li></ul>



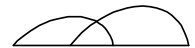
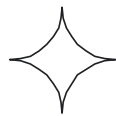
## Set targets and use benchmarks correctly

**Judging a campaign's performance requires setting a target for the KPI.** Target setting is both an art and a science: for mature companies, growth rate is likely to be modest as there is increasingly less room to grow.

However, low single-digit growth for a large brand may translate into more sales than a double-digit growth for a small brand. Therefore, a less established company could reasonably aim for more ambitious growth.

On the other hand, setting targets on a newly tracked KPI may require making a guess the first time around — with history available, past performances can inform targets.

**Benchmarks make it easier to spot if a campaign is underperforming, based on selected metrics.** Benchmarks are averages based on the performance of past campaigns from the brand or from the industry it belongs to.



“With history available, past performances can inform targets.”

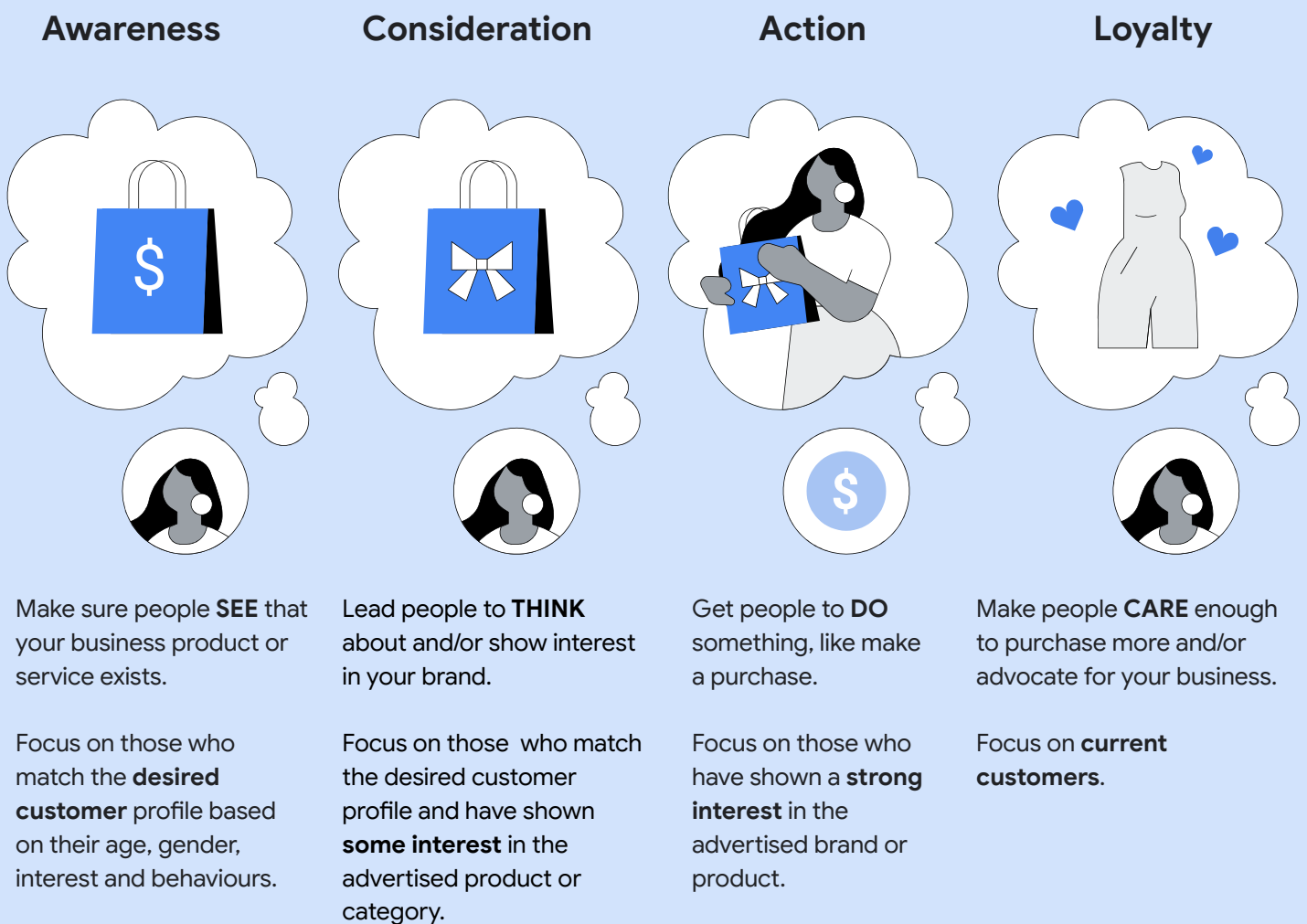


# 2

## Customer-centric marketing in focus

### Understand your customer's journey

The core function of marketing is to connect the right people to the right product by providing the right messages at the right time. This boils down to following a potential customer on their purchase journey and communicating the right ideas based on their mindset.



Consumers' changing preferences and desire for more privacy, regulatory requirements, and internet browsers limiting post-click and post-view tracking have made it more challenging to connect the dots between ad exposure and outcomes. However, modelling can help. With advanced techniques like experiments, marketing mix modelling and attribution, marketers can get a good idea of how ads perform at each stage of the customer journey.

## Balance short and long term

Your marketing strategy can effectively work by either focusing on immediate sales or by nurturing potential customers for future purchases.

Advertising plays a crucial role in building brand familiarity and recognition, which can influence customers to choose your products over competitors. An advertisement seen today can not only drive immediate sales but also lay the groundwork for future conversions. Research, such as the [2021 Nielsen Brand Resonance Report](#), indicates that a 1 percentage point increase in brand awareness and consideration can lead to a 1 percentage point rise in sales later on. Furthermore, Les Binet mentions Share of Search as a valuable metric for assessing both [brand strength](#) and the [impact of advertising](#). The most successful marketers strategically invest across all stages of the customer journey, diligently measuring the impact of their marketing efforts on desired outcomes at each stage.

Marketers now have increased capabilities to measure the impact of their brand-building campaigns, connect these measurements to tangible business results, and leverage these insights for planning, investment, and optimization of their brand investments. You can find more information about linking brand investments to business outcomes [here](#).





# 3

## Build your KPI framework

### Measuring awareness campaigns

Choose a KPI that best represents your campaign objective

Tools	Metrics	What it measures
Brand lift surveys	Awareness	Did my brand awareness improve?
Marketing mix modelling	Long-term ROI <i>Caution: do not use short-term sales ROI for measuring the effectiveness of awareness campaigns</i>	What is the long-term ROI from awareness media?
Google Query Volume	Indexed Brand Search Query Volume	Did more people search for my brand as a result of my campaigns?

If the ideal KPI is not measurable, choose one metric to be your 'Proxy KPI'




Tools	Metrics	What it measures
Brand lift surveys	Ad recall	Do ad-exposed audiences recall my ad?
Active View	Viewable impressions	How many times were my ads viewed?
Third Party Verification tools (e.g. IAS, Doubleverify)	% of viewable impressions	What share of impressions are in view?
	% of brand safety passed/ failed impressions	What share of impressions did not pass my brand safety standards?
	% of fraudulent impressions	What share of impressions were fraudulent?
	Video completion rates	How much of the video did audiences watch?
Reach Metrics	Unique users	How many people saw my ad?
	Daily views	How many daily views did my ad get?
	Average impression frequency per user	How many times did a user see my ad?
Third Party Reach & Frequency	Unique reach	How many people saw my ad?
	Impressions	How many total views did my ad get?
	Frequency	How many times did a user see my ad?
Cross-media reach	Incremental reach	How many people were reached exclusively by a given media channel?
Google Trends	Share of Search	What share of all searches in the category is coming from my brand's own searches?






**Pro tip!** Avoid measuring awareness campaigns based on short-term sales — most people who become aware of a brand do not immediately react. Awareness is about creating a memory of the brand in relation to a particular category.

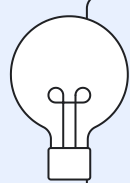
## Measuring consideration campaigns

Choose a KPI that best represents your campaign objective

 Tools	 Metrics	 What it measures
Brand lift study	Brand favourability	Did the impression of my brand improve?
	Consideration	Did consideration of my brand improve?
	Purchase intent	Did purchase intent of my brand improve?
Search lift study	Search uplift	Did volume of searches on Google and YouTube increase?
Conversion lift based on users	Traffic to site Product Page Views Cart Adds (or similar consideration outcomes)	How many of my micro-conversions would not have happened if the person didn't see the ad?
Marketing mix modelling	Short and long-term ROI <i>Caution: do not use short-term sales ROI for measuring the effectiveness of awareness campaigns</i>	What is the short- and the long-term ROI from consideration media?
Google Query Volume	Indexed Brand Search Query Volume	Did more people search for my brand as a result of my campaigns?

If the ideal KPI is not measurable, choose one metric to be your 'Proxy KPI'




 Tools	 Metrics	 What it measures
Google Trends	Query volume	What is the volume of Indexed Google Search Query?
	Share of Search	What share of all searches in the category is coming from my brand's own searches?
Micro-conversion tracking on the website lift	Incremental micro-conversions	What actions were completed on my website that are known to be leading indicators of sales?
Previous/benchmark views	View-through rate (VTR)	What is the volume of conversions from audiences who saw my ad?
Previous/benchmark clicks	Click-through rate (CTR)	What is the volume of conversions from audiences who clicked on my ad?






**Pro tip!** Measuring consideration campaigns based on short-term sales, may not be the correct approach for all brands — most people who increase their consideration of a brand, product or service do not immediately react by completing an action on the brand's site. Consideration is about winning hearts and minds.

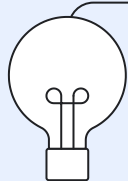
## Measuring action campaigns

Choose a KPI that best represents your campaign objective

 Tools	 Metrics	 What it measures
<b>Marketing mix modelling</b>	Return on ad spend (ROAS) Return on investment (ROI) Cost per action (CPA) Cost of sales (COS)	What is the relative profitability of media investment by channel?
<b>Conversion lift based on Users</b>	Relative lift in conversions, incremental conversions (iCPA, iROAS)	Did my ad generate incremental conversions that would not have happened otherwise?
<b>Conversion lift based on Geos</b>	Relative lift in conversions, incremental conversions (iCPA, iROAS)	Did my ad generate incremental conversions that would not have happened otherwise?
<b>Attribution</b>	Return on ad spend (ROAS) Return on investment (ROI) Cost per action (CPA) Cost of sales (COS)	What is the relative profitability of media tactics within a channel?

If the ideal KPI is not measurable, choose one metric to be your 'Proxy KPI'

 Tools	 Metrics	 What it measures
<b>Micro-conversion tracking on the website</b>	Lead submissions	Do prospects become leads as a result of media exposure?
	Purchases/transactions	How much did my ads sell online?
<b>Micro-conversion tracking on the mobile app</b>	In-app purchases	What volume of in-app purchases did my ad deliver?
	Downloads	Did exposed audiences download my app?



**Pro tip!** Measuring sales impact may require using more than one tool, including offline and online media as well as offline sales channels, to ensure comprehensiveness and granularity (results at the channel, campaign and ad level). For example, it may be necessary to use attribution — to receive ongoing insights into digital campaign performance — while using marketing mix modelling to allocate credit between traditional and digital channels.

Be sure to use a non-last-click attribution (preferably a data-driven attribution) to assess digital campaign performance more fairly.

# 4

## Assemble a measurement toolkit

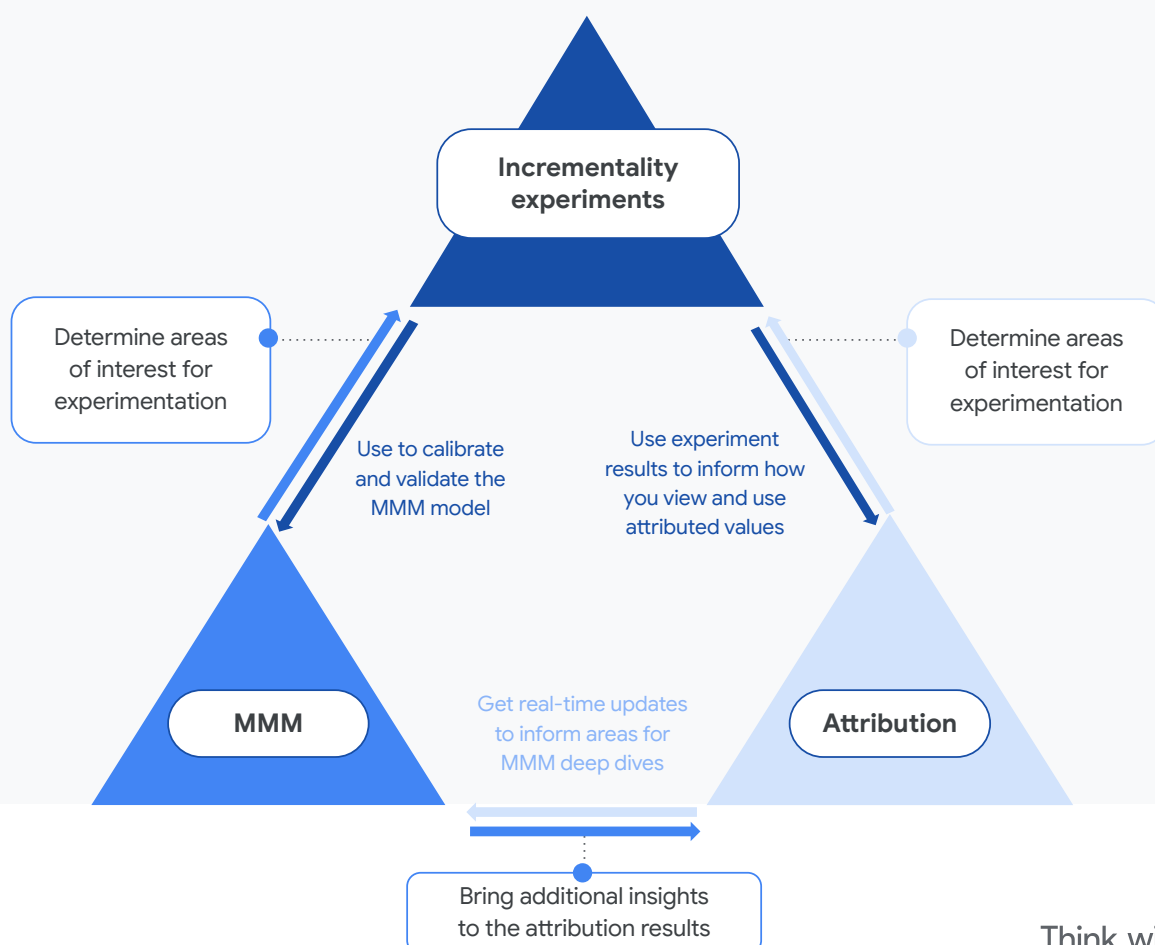
### Balance action and accuracy through a Modern Measurement

When it comes to measuring media effectiveness, there is no “silver bullet” solution which can isolate the impact and optimise your marketing across the customer journey. Chapter 3 illustrates that each stage of the customer journey has a number of relevant KPIs and metrics, which are sourced from multiple tools.

When we start combining different tools, questions and differences will arise. It is key to have a **strong framework to align right tools with appropriate decisions they can support**. Each tool has strengths and weaknesses and should be used accordingly. For example, attribution is great for day to day optimisations but not for cross-channel budget allocation.

[The modern measurement playbook](#) deep dives into each of the solutions to help you understand their different roles and gives you practical insights and knowledge to build your own framework combining attribution, incrementality and MMM to evaluate the full impact of media.

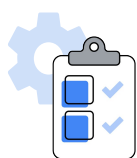
Overview of some of the many ways in which attribution, incrementality experiments, and MMM can work together to strengthen each other:



## Keep your measurement tool kit current

The measurement toolkit is evolving to become more privacy-centric. Marketers can no longer expect to observe and attribute all conversions via tags, stitch user journeys, or fully rely on user-based MTAs. Advances in modelling will preserve robust attribution for the foreseeable future. Data-driven attribution is here to stay and will retain a key role in your measurement toolkit. However, where attribution alone was sufficient in the past, today's marketers require other tools such as incrementality testing and media mix modelling (MMM). **No single tool has all the answers any more — you will need a combined approach that uses each tool's strengths and fills in the gaps.**

### What are the key changes that you should know about?



- **Attribution** has reinvented itself to **continue to provide real-time data** by relying on modelling to cover tracking gaps.
- **Incrementality experiments are becoming more accessible** and popular among advertisers, thanks to more open source resources and increased availability to run experiments in platform.
- **MMM is living a renaissance** with its future-proof nature (it relies 100% on aggregated data), increased ability to show granular results, and improved frequency of updates.

### Overview of media effectiveness measurement tools

	What is it?	Benefits	Challenges	Frequency	Best used for
<b>Data-driven attribution</b>	The process of assigning credit to the different touchpoints that are found on the path to a conversion.	<b>Fast and easy to scale.</b> Gives real-time insight into drivers of performance, fuelling better automated bidding and optimisations at campaign, channel, and cross-channel level.	Limited to digital channels and best suited for measuring short-term impact. Modelling-reliant. Requires large-scale experiments to calibrate accurately.	Ongoing, real time.	Daily channel and campaign optimisations.
<b>Incrementality experiments</b>	Uses randomised controlled experiments to compare the change in consumer behaviour between groups that are exposed or withheld from marketing activity while keeping all other factors constant.	The gold standard to <b>measure causality</b> , so it gives the most rigorous view of the incremental value brought by the marketing investment.	It gives a snapshot of a concrete strategy at a concrete point in time. Can be difficult to scale.	Quarterly.	Adding an extra level of incrementality awareness for your attribution and MMM efforts.
<b>MMM, e.g. Meridian</b>	Top-level modelling that utilises advanced statistics to understand what drives sales. It measures media investment efficiency on top of base sales and other external factors that impact sales (e.g. seasonality, pricing, economy).	Gives a <b>holistic overview</b> of all channels, sales, and external factors. It can also provide a longer-term view of media impact. It doesn't require user-level data, making it more future-proof.	Requires modelling with causal inference assumptions and at least two years of historical data. Can be expensive to run.	Twice a year. <i>However, some advanced advertisers do it quarterly.</i>	Cross-channel budget allocation.

Resources available to learn more about the tools: [Measure the full value with attribution](#) | [Incrementality fundamentals](#) | [MMM explained](#) | [Brand efficiency measurement](#) | [AB experiments](#)

# 5

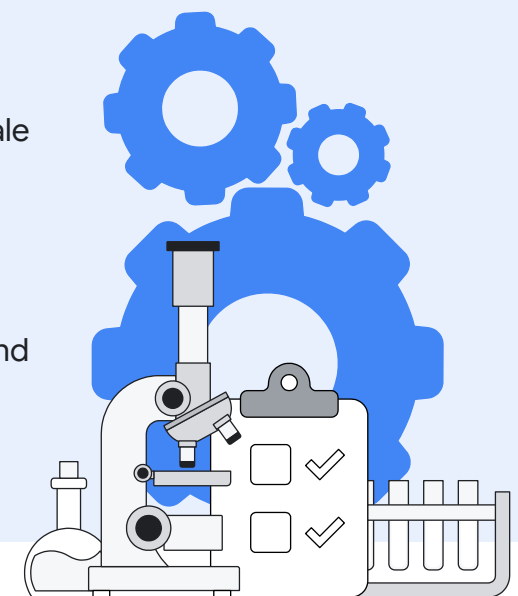
## Build a culture of continuous learning

### Adopt a test-and-learn mindset

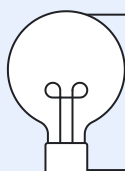
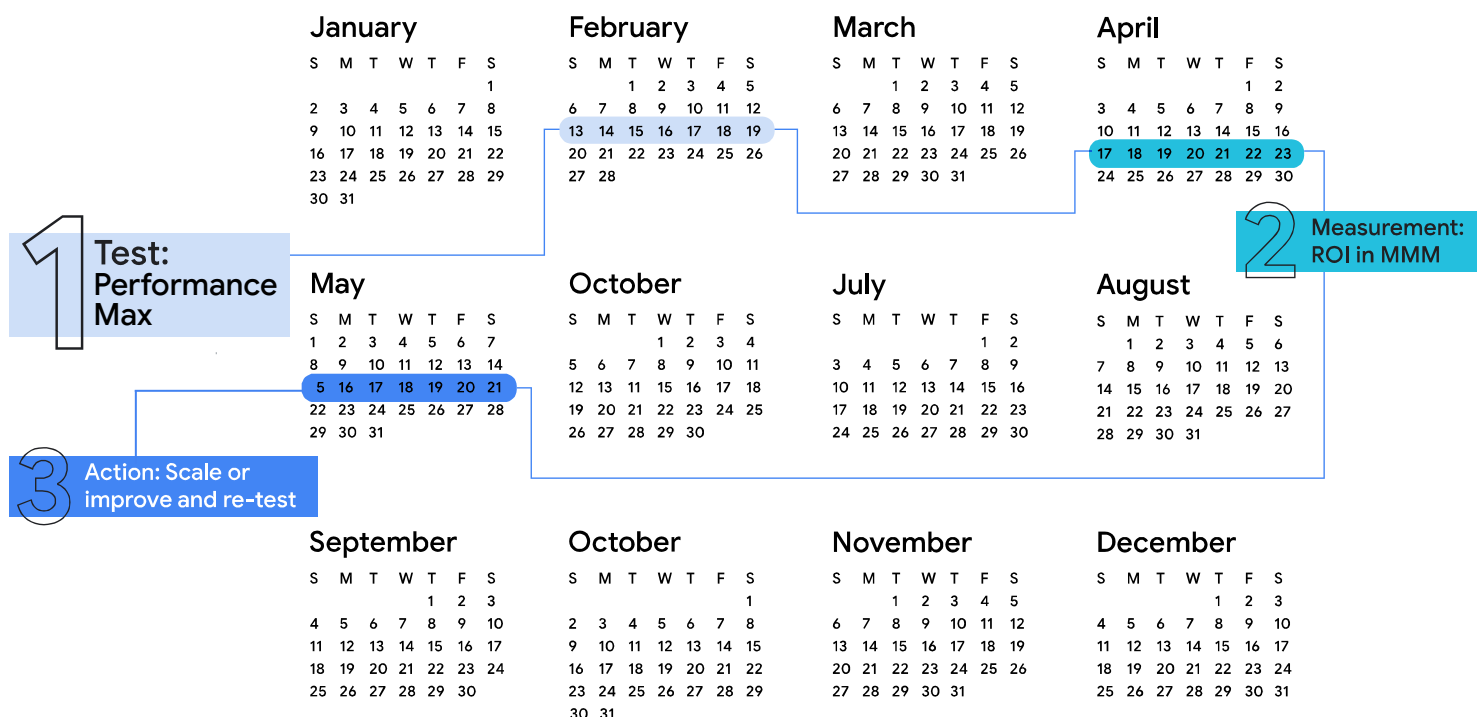
**What is a test?** A procedure intended to establish the quality, performance or reliability of something, especially before it's widely used.

**The test-and-learn process** measures the effects of small-scale changes in order to answer key questions. **Brands that test-and-learn achieve a 25-70% higher ROI\*.**

**The test-and-learn program** process has a defined learning agenda, a list of hypotheses to test and agreed upon actions and owners. Experiments are at the core of any test-and-learn program. Read more about running high-quality experiments [here](#).



### Example of how test-and-learn works



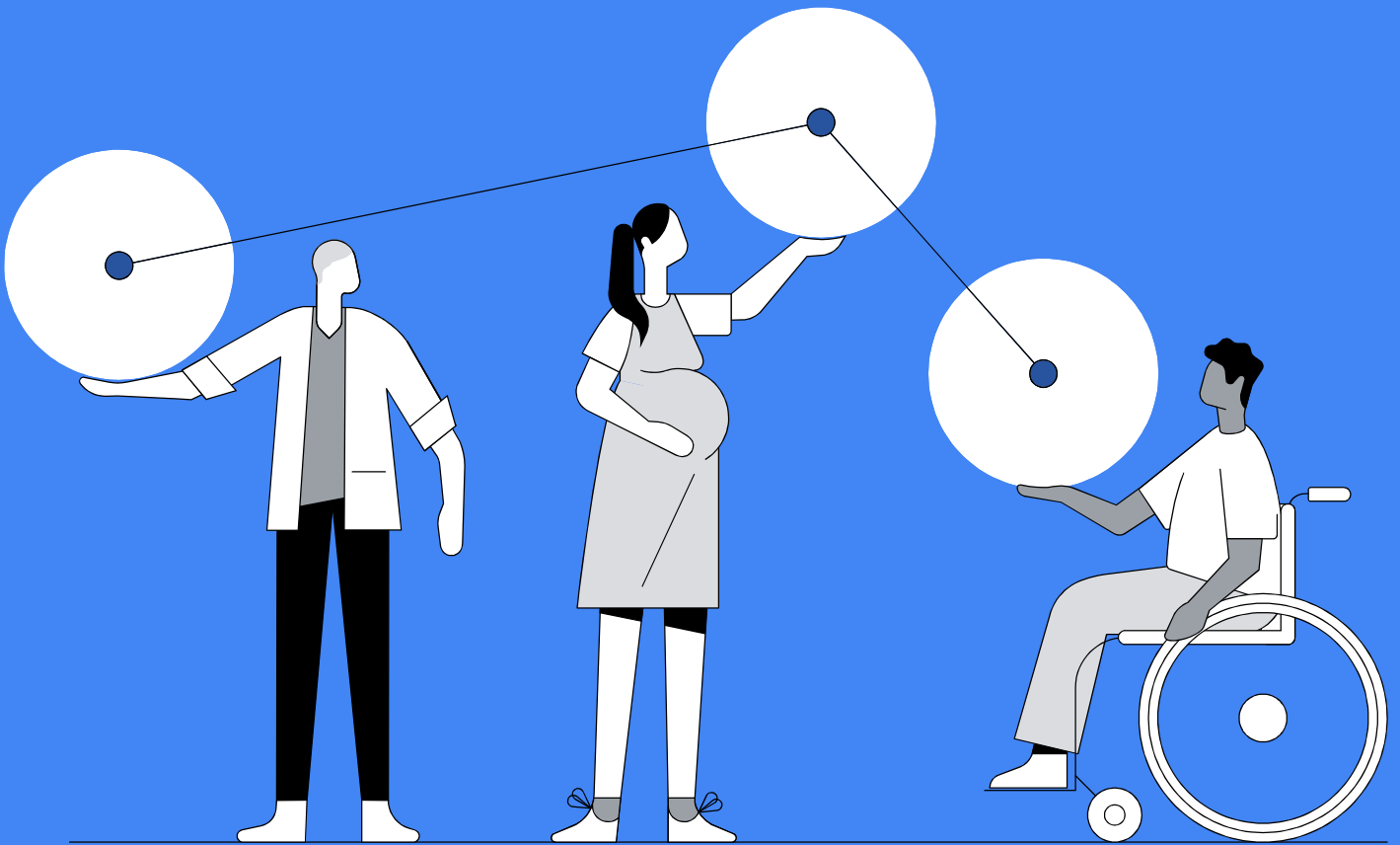
**Pro tip!** Test-and-learn processes can work with a number of different measurement solutions. Savvy marketers use a toolkit that enables them to choose an appropriate measurement tool for each type of question.

\*Source: Analytic Partners, ROIgenome Intelligence Report, The Advertising Revolution, 2021

# 6

## Democratise data via dashboard

Build a data-driven culture by making KPIs accessible to all



### 1.

- Use data visualisation packages to aggregate KPIs in one view and demonstrate marketing impact on business.
- Start each week by examining how your marketing campaigns' KPIs are performing.
- Share progress on KPIs across the entire organisation and bring data to all meetings.

### 2.

- Instead of asking team members “what do you think?”, ask “what does data suggest we do?”

### 3.

- Aim for better, not perfect: embrace margins of error and statistics to drive reliability.
- Adopt a test-and-learn mindset and encourage sharing learnings from errors.



# 7

## Set up organization for success

### Assign a Marketing Measurement Lead

#### Excellence demands ownership

One of the most critical roles that are missing from many marketing organizations are **measurement owners**. In such organizations *media managers* are tasked with measuring the effectiveness their own campaigns. Media Managers are heavily involved in the day-to-day operations of campaign execution. This leaves limited time to delve deeply into complex data analysis and strategic evaluation. Becoming a true expert in media effectiveness requires dedicated time for learning and applying advanced analytical techniques. It's a specialized field that demands focused attention. Furthermore, true objectivity requires separation execution from measurement as well as ability to draw on many sources of truth, thanks to the complexity of today's media landscape and lack of "silver bullet" measurement solutions. Meanwhile, savviest advertisers have invested not only in a measurement owner but an entire team!

If your organization does not have a measurement owner yet, there is good news: appointing one will your company a step ahead of competition. Leading measurement as a part-time role can be the right start for some of the leaner organizations. Finding the right person should not be daunting: there are likely people who have a passion for data-driven decisions who are good communicators with a knack for cross-functional collaborations!

1. Assign a measurement owner
2. Centralise all marketing measurement through this person
3. Measure marketing effectiveness based on business outcomes throughout the entire customer journey

#### Measurement Owner minimum qualifications:

- No PhD in statistics needed — measurement is as much about people as it is about numbers! There are many tools that help a measurement lead do their job.
- Must be relentlessly passionate and curious about the customer journey across all channels and devices.
- Responsible for developing, clarifying, deploying and acting upon a shared KPI framework, which brings all marketing teams together to learn, adopt and rely on it.
- An expert storyteller — a measurement lead should be able to combine learnings from multiple tools, analyses and providers into a narrative about marketing performance that is distributed and shared throughout the entire organisation and used when discussing marketing and media budgets with the CFO and CEO.
- Familiarity with advanced methods based on statistical analyses such incrementality and econometric model **a strong plus**.



## 5 P's of media effectiveness

BCG has outlined out a [24-month roadmap to media effectiveness](#), identifying key building blocks such as:

- A cross-organizational KPI framework
- A Learning Agenda tied to business objectives
- MMM and Experiments to isolate value

When starting on the media effectiveness journey, it is important to recognize important enablers of effectiveness evolution. Do not succumb to the illusion of simplicity: companies with strong media effectiveness capabilities might appear to have a seamless and effortless operation, but this belies the crucial human element.

KPI framework, learning agenda, MMMs and Experiments are **Products** of a system. But they do not appear from ether and certainly do not work by themselves.

**People play a central role:** Measurement owners and their teams are the driving force behind leveraging media effectiveness tools and insights. Their expertise and advocacy are indispensable. They have a strong understanding of measurement methodologies (both short-term and long-term) and their limitations, leading to consistent and well-grounded recommendations. Measurement owners actively seek to expand their knowledge by engaging with industry leaders.

### Key Responsibilities of Measurement Owners:

- Simplifying complexity for non-experts.
- Intervening when data-driven decisions are not being made.
- Applying measurement best practices.
- Holding the organization accountable for using these practices.

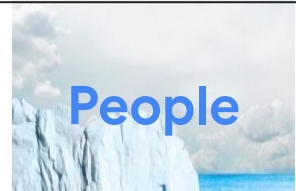
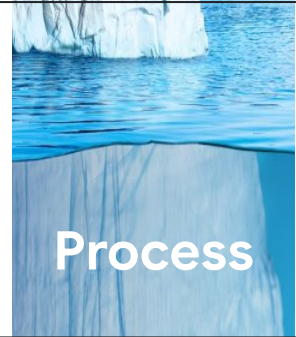
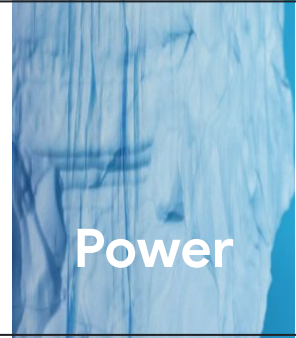

**Process is important:** People create the necessary processes to translate data and insights into actionable strategies.

**Measurement power:** Measurement owners possess significant influence due to C-level endorsement and their recognized expertise, impacting budget decisions and marketing spend allocation.

**The 5 P's Framework:** explains how **POV**, Power, Process, People, and Products work together as key enablers of media effectiveness best practices and manifest in 4 behaviors linked to strong financial performance (as identified by BCG).

## Leverage 5 Ps of Media Effectiveness

According to BCG, top performing organizations that are 9x more likely to achieve top quartile EBITDA growth<sup>1</sup>, do **4 things differently** when it comes to media effectiveness. Marketing effectiveness is a discipline that requires engagement across the entire organization. **People** and **products** (right things happening at the right time) are what is visible, but in order for them to make a difference, right **processes** and **power** to drive change are required. Media effectiveness practices should be informed by a unified **point-of-view (POV)** that is based on the industry best practices.

Media Effectiveness building blocks	1. Elevate measurement to the C-suite table	2. Learning Agenda linked to business objective	3. Test & experiment to isolate value	4. Integrate insights & calibrate solutions to drive ROI
 <b>Product</b>	A shared KPI framework endorsed by the C-level with differentiation between KPIs and metrics.	A learning agenda with learning goals	Advanced methods: incrementality testing and MMM	Incrementality testing MMM Attribution Real time dashboards
 <b>People</b>	Head of Measurement	Marketing Effectiveness Team: MMM Lead    Incrementality Lead    Tracking & attribution Lead (can be in-house or at an agency / partner)		
 <b>Process</b>	Discuss how marketing campaigns support business objectives	Quarterly review of media learning goals and prioritization of hypotheses to test	Measurement integrated in every campaign planning, including review of available insights and hypothesis testing on a new campaign	Quarterly insights review & data driven budget optimization
 <b>Power</b>	Enforce shared KPI framework to be used at all levels of organization	Approve hypothesis and methods for testing	Advise CFO on the size of the marketing budget and CMO on budget allocation	Advise CMO on improving marketing efficiency
 <b>POV</b>	<a href="#">Media Effectiveness Guide</a> <a href="#">KPI: an essential framework</a>	<a href="#">Your 24-month roadmap to media effectiveness</a>	<a href="#">MMM Handbook</a> <a href="#">Test-and-learn playbook</a>	<a href="#">Modern measurement playbook</a>

1. BCG EMEA Media Effectiveness Survey

# 8

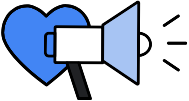
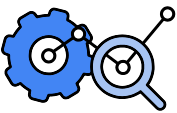


## Measurement workbook

How does media help fulfil your marketing objectives at each stage of the customer journey? How should success be measured?

	What do we expect audiences to <b>think, feel, or do</b> after seeing the ad?	How should we <b>measure</b> the outcome?	Which <b>tools</b> should we use?	Which media metrics can help <b>optimise campaigns</b> or add insights?
	Objectives	KPIs	Tools	Metrics
 Awareness				
 Consideration				
 Action				
 Loyalty				

## Measurement workbook example

How does media help fulfil your marketing objectives at each stage of the customer journey? How should success be measured?

	What do we expect audiences to <b>think, feel, or do</b> after seeing the ad?	How should we <b>measure</b> the outcome?	Which <b>tools</b> should we use?	Which media metrics can help <b>optimise campaigns</b> or add insights?
	Objectives	KPIs	Tools	Metrics
 <b>Awareness</b>	To improve how much a well-known brand is liked	Brand favourability	Brand lift study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ad recall</li> <li>• Reach</li> <li>• Frequency</li> </ul>
 <b>Consideration</b>	To get people to want to buy the brand	Purchase intent	Brand lift study	Brand query growth Video completion rates CPM/CPV
 <b>Action</b>	To maximise revenue by maintaining required profitability	ROI	MMM for ROI measurement,  Cross-channel attribution for digital channel optimisation	Micro-conversions
 <b>Loyalty</b>	To make existing customers repeat purchases	Life-Time Value	Internal analysis	Churn rate NPS Product review Social sentiment