

Introduction to Digital Marketing:

Concepts, Purpose, and Examples



- Digital marketing uses online channels to reach audiences, distinct from offline traditional methods



- It enables precise targeting, real-time measurement, and greater cost efficiency



- Digital conversion rates average 2.9% vs 0.5% for traditional, with 62% lower cost per lead



- Digital now represents 69% of global ad spend, growing to \$1.06 trillion in 2026



- This training covers channels, strategy, measurement, and real-world applications



The Digital Marketing Ecosystem: Owned, Earned, and Paid Media

- **Owned media:** channels you control (website, blog, email list) — builds long-term equity.
- **Paid media:** advertising you buy for reach (Google Ads, social ads) — immediate but stops when budget does.
- **Earned media:** visibility gained through merit (press coverage, reviews, shares) — credibility driven.
- **Partnership media:** affiliate and influencer collaborations — performance-based reach amplification.
- **Strongest strategies blend all:** owned as foundation, earned for credibility, paid for acceleration.



Core Digital Marketing Channels

- **Search:** SEO for long-term organic visibility; PPC captures immediate intent-driven traffic.
- **Social media:** organic + paid content on Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, and Facebook.
- **Email marketing:** highest ROI channel — approx. \$42 per \$1 spent — via owned audiences.
- **Content marketing:** blogs, videos, podcasts costing 62% less than traditional marketing.
- **Display & programmatic:** automated ad buying, increasingly integrated with retail media.
- **Align channels with intent:** search captures demand, social creates it, email & content nurture.



Organic

Long-term signal



Paid

Immediate signal



SEARCH



**SOCIAL
MEDIA**



**EMAIL
MARKETING**



**CONTENT
MARKETING**



**DISPLAY &
PROGRAMMATIC**

Emerging Channels and Trends **Shaping 2026**



▶ **AI-powered search & GEO:**

Optimize for AI Overviews and ChatGPT citations



- ▶ **Retail media:** \$145B global spend, 11.4% growth, closed-loop attribution



- ▶ **Connected TV (CTV):** \$38B market with shoppable, brand-building formats



- ▶ **Agentic commerce:** AI agents mediate purchases; optimize for algorithms



- ▶ **Micro-communities & creators:** Authentic engagement driving higher ROI than broad paid social



The Customer Journey: From Funnel to Flywheel

- Traditional funnel: Awareness, Consideration, Conversion, Retention, Advocacy.
- Modern flywheel: customers at the center; delight and advocacy build momentum.
- Campaigns create short-term spikes; flywheels deliver compounding growth.
- Balance 40–60% brand building with performance marketing for optimal ROI.
- Every touchpoint is a chance to connect, convert, and build loyalty.



Mapping Tactics to the Funnel



Content and Messaging That Connects

- Content fuels all digital channels – paid, earned, and owned media depend on it.
- Storytelling wins: emotion-driven narratives outperform feature lists.
- Maintain a consistent brand voice across all platforms and formats.
- Adapt messaging: authenticity for creators, ROI clarity for business teams.
- Top ROI formats: short-form video (48.6%), UGC (24%), blog posts (22.3%).



Setting **SMART** Marketing Goals

- SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
- Align marketing goals to revenue, pipeline, and retention outcomes
- Track North Star metrics: LTV:CAC ratio, Marketing Efficiency Ratio
- Use diagnostic metrics (CTR, conversion rate) to explain KPI movement
- Match KPIs to campaign type: awareness vs. lead gen vs. revenue



Essential Digital Marketing KPIs



- Prioritize revenue-connected KPIs: lead quality (39.4%) and conversion rates (33.9%) lead 2026 metrics.



- Critical outcome metrics: ROMI (31.1%), CAC (29.8%), ROAS, and LTV:CAC ratio of 3:1 or better.



- Conversion rate for paid search averages 8.18% in 2026; measure actions, not just traffic.



- Avoid vanity metrics: social likes and raw follower counts alone don't drive revenue.



- Pair conversion data with engagement metrics for a complete performance view.

KEY MARKETING KPIs



MQL



ROMI



CAC



CLV



ROAS



AVOID VANITY METRICS

Social likes and raw follower counts alone don't drive revenue.



Analytics and Making Data-Driven Decisions

- GA4 now uses engagement rate, not bounce rate; Core Web Vitals (LCP, INP, CLS) signal page health.
- Incrementality testing reveals true ad impact—branded search holdouts often show 50-70% would convert anyway.
- Marketing mix modeling (MMM) and tools like Meridian/Meta Robyn guide budget decisions at diminishing returns.
- Standardize every test readout: lift, iCPA/iROAS, confidence intervals, and guardrail metrics.
- Start simple: track 2-4 outcome KPIs; consult diagnostic metrics only when anomalies appear.



Practical Walkthrough

Part 1: Planning a Campaign



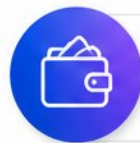
Scenario: Launching 'EcoMug,' a sustainable mug for young professionals.



- **Audience:** 25–35, urban, eco-conscious, \$45–75K, on Instagram and TikTok.



- **SMART goal:** 500 leads and a 3% conversion rate in 90 days.



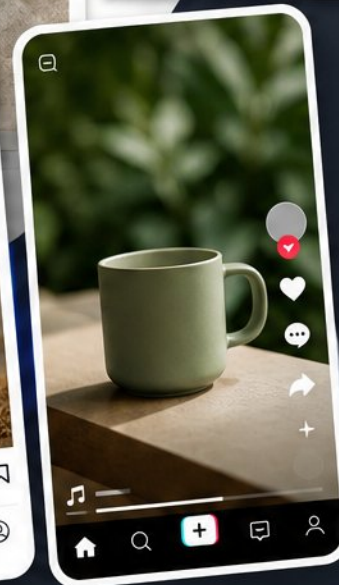
- **\$5K budget:** Owned content, paid social ads, and influencer seeding.



- **Channels:** Instagram/TikTok (awareness), Google Ads (intent), email (nurture).



- **Core assets:** Short-form demos, UGC, landing page, email welcome series.



Practical Walkthrough Part 2: Execution and Analysis



- Launch paid ads, organic posts, influencer seeding, and email over 30 days



- Track CTR, landing page CVR, email clicks, and cost per lead (CPL)



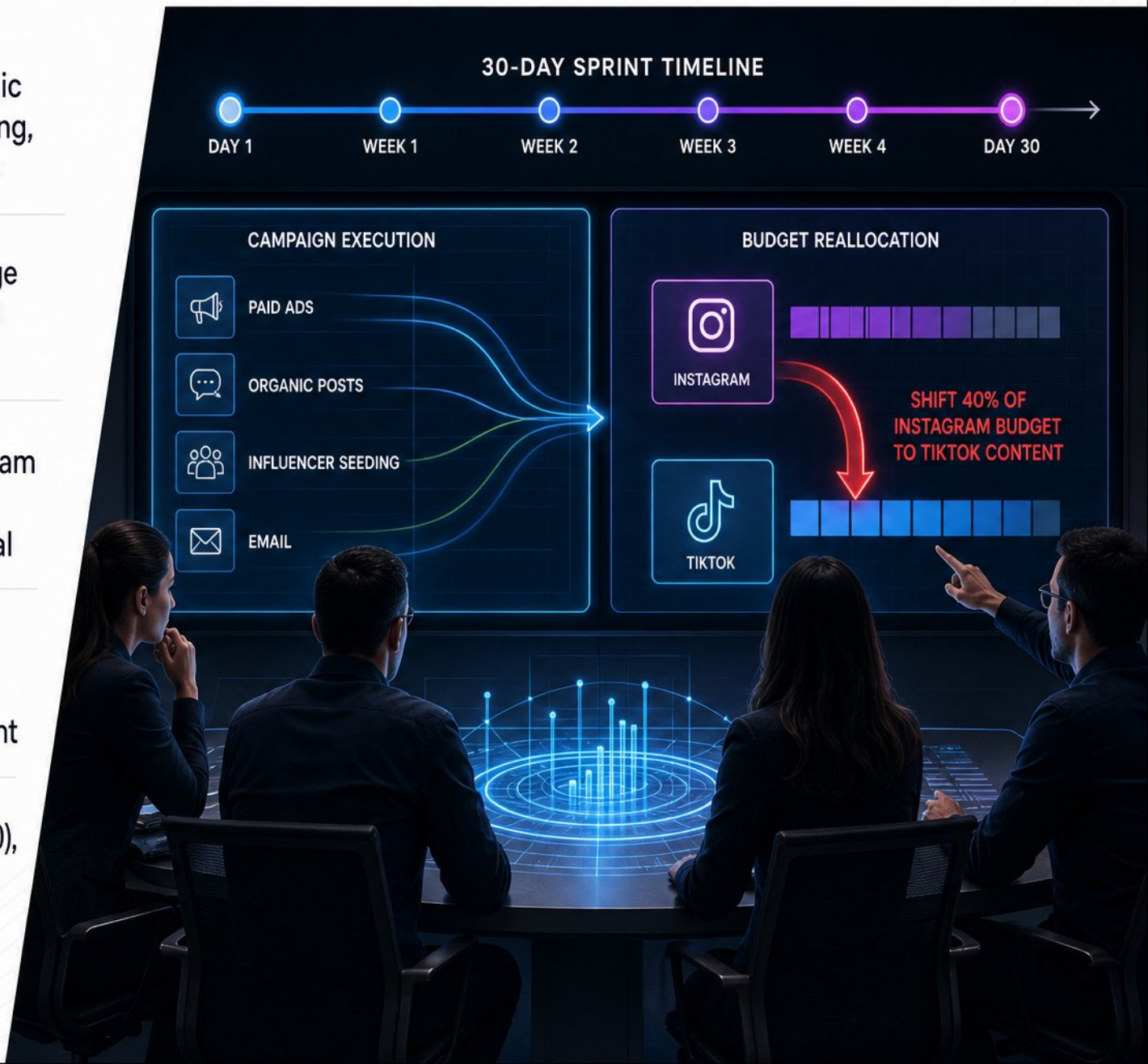
- Week 2 insight: Instagram CPL high, but TikTok organic video goes viral



- Pivot: shift 40% of Instagram budget to boost the TikTok content



- Final: 520 leads (goal: 500), 2.8% CVR (goal: 3%), \$9.62 CPL



AI in Digital Marketing:

2026 Trends and Practical Use



- 86.4% of teams use AI;
67.5% can measure AI impact



- Top uses: content creation (42.5%),
media creation (37.2%)



- AI personalization lifts site
conversion from 0.5% to 2.9%



- Agentic AI is coming: optimize
for GEO and AI agents now



- Only 41% prove AI ROI —
prioritize high-impact workflows



Key Takeaways and Next Steps



- Digital marketing spans owned, earned, paid, and partnership channels; strategy ties tactics to the funnel.



- Creators: build owned audiences, experiment with short-form video and micro-communities.



- Students: master SMART goals, core KPIs, and stay current with GEO and AI trends.



- Business teams: align with revenue goals, invest in owned assets, adopt AI incrementally.



- Free tools: GA4, Google Search Console, HubSpot CRM, Canva, Semrush (limited), Meta Ads Library.



- Continue learning: HubSpot Academy, Google Skillshop, Kantar reports, WARC, DMA webinars.



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