

Marketing Analytics and Metrics: Measurement and Interpretation



Budget credibility depends on defensible evidence, not dashboard screenshots



Four jobs: descriptive, diagnostic, predictive, prescriptive



Reach and clicks are diagnostics — they cannot carry a budget decision



2026 reality: signal loss and over-attribution mean no single source of truth



Roadmap: stack, metrics, data, causality, economics, forecasting, communication



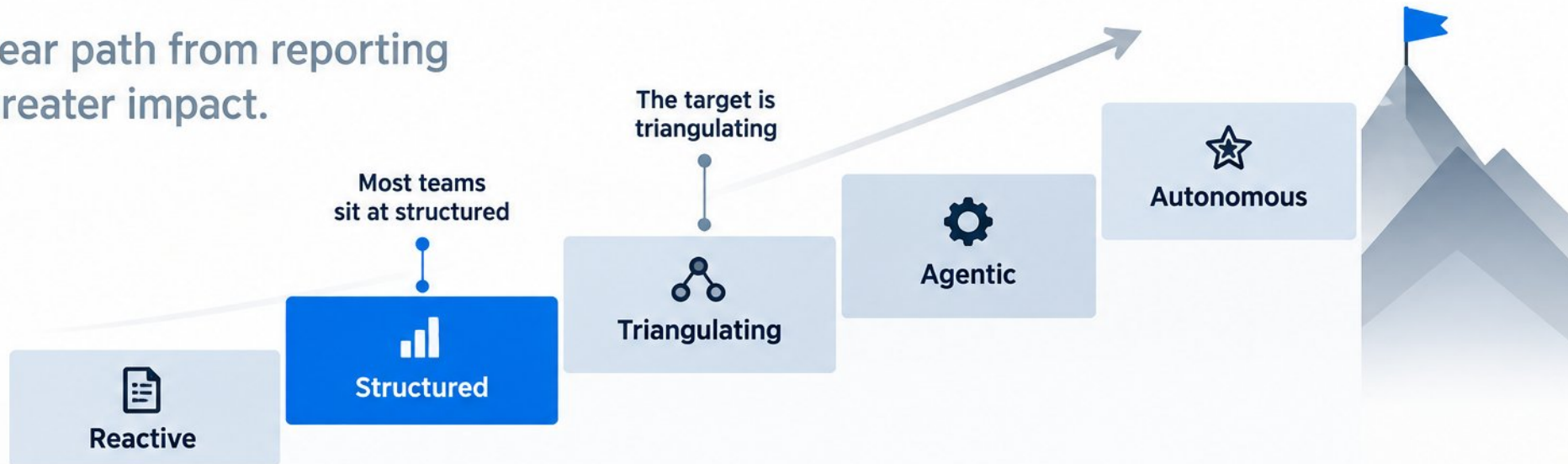
Decisions supported: cut or scale, defend budget, allocate, report contribution



The Analytics Maturity Path: From Reactive Reporting to Decision Support

PEOPLE PROCESSES INSIGHTS
BETTER DECISIONS

A clear path from reporting to greater impact.



Key Takeaways



Five levels: reactive, structured, triangulating, agentic, autonomous



Most teams sit at structured; the target is triangulating



Maturity is a process problem first, not a tool purchase



Each level requires one structural change, not a new platform



Diagnostic tests: time from anomaly to documented action



Hypothesis backlog and automation coverage of recurring optimization



Only 8% of in-house marketers consistently use advanced analytics



86% say they cannot find a clear signal through the noise



ROI is captured in the hypothesis-test-recommendation loop



Realistic 2026 target: triangulating in production, agentic in pilot

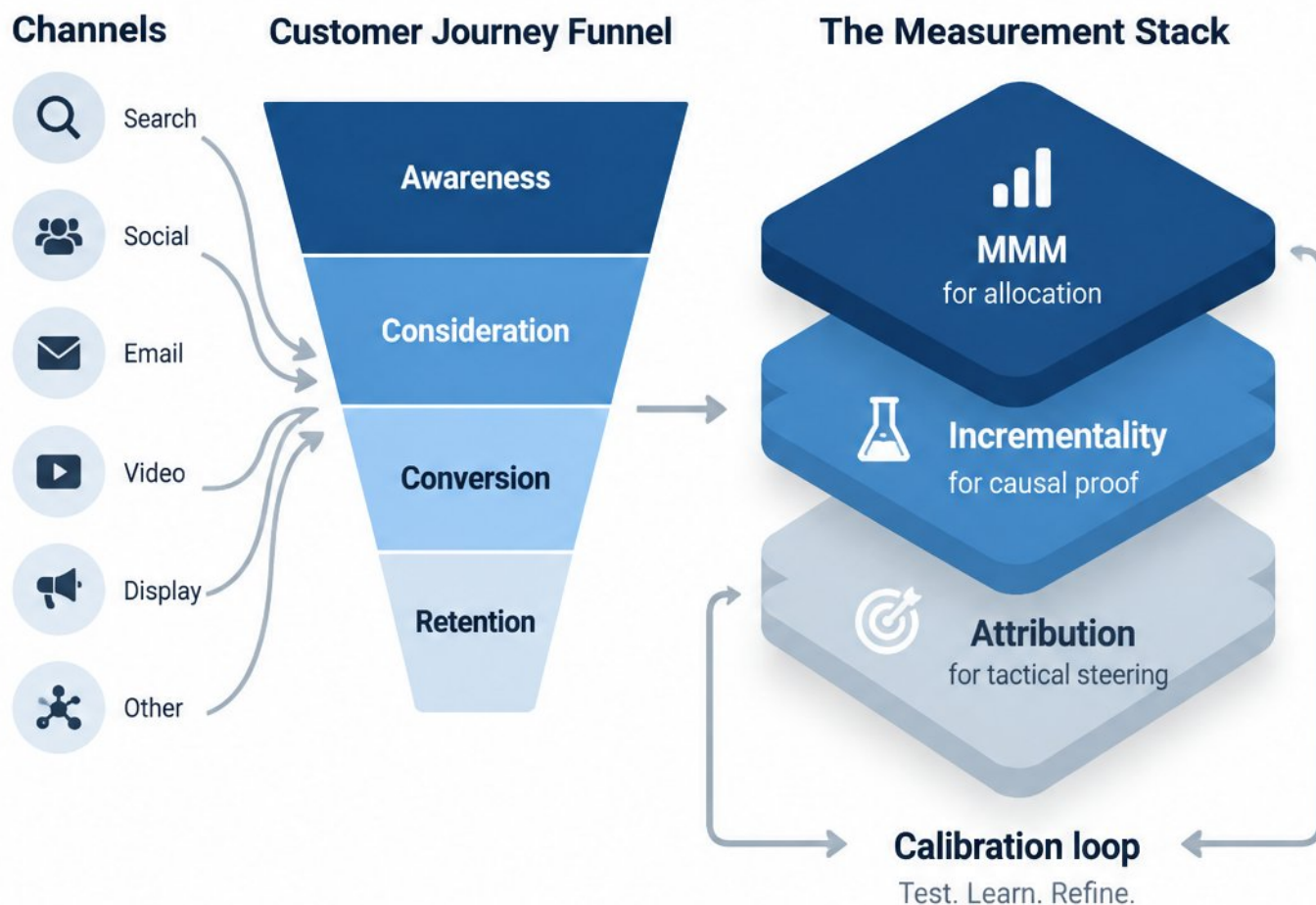


**From insight
to impact.**

A MORE MATURE
ANALYTICS PRACTICE
BUILDS A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW.

The Measurement Stack: Channels, Funnels, and Customer Journeys

Connect channels. Understand impact. Make smarter decisions.



- Map channels to funnel stages: awareness, consideration, conversion, retention
- Attribution models each carry bias: first-touch, last-touch, linear, time-decay, position-based, data-driven
- Three layers: MMM for allocation, incrementality for causal proof, attribution for tactical steering
- Budget sets entry: attribution under \$1M, geo-lift tests in low millions, MMM past \$5M
- Calibration loop: lift tests feed MMM priors; MMM frames testing; attribution stays inside validated bounds
- Platform-reported ROAS is reported, not causal – platforms grade their own homework

Choosing the Right Metrics: Leading, Lagging, and Diagnostic

MEASURE WHAT MATTERS. MAKE BETTER DECISIONS.



Leading

Signal future outcomes

Examples: qualified pipeline, engaged sessions, new-customer percentage



Owned by: Marketing



Lagging

Confirm results

Examples: revenue, LTV, contribution margin



Owned by: Finance



Diagnostic

Explain movement

Examples: conversion rate, AOV, repeat rate, frequency



Owned by: Analytics



Selection criteria: actionability, decision sensitivity, stability under noise, named owner



Vanity and proxy traps: impressions, cheap clicks, platform-reported CPA can't carry investment decisions



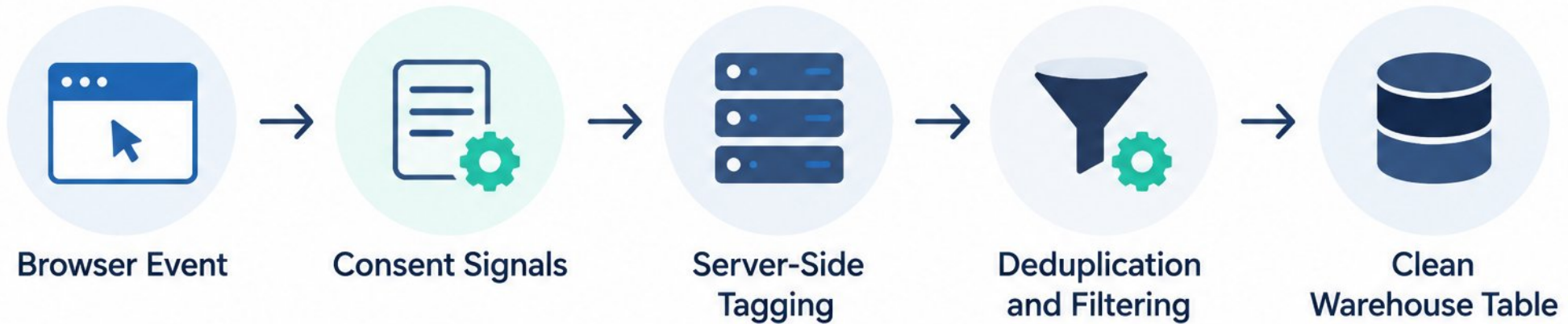
Metric quality is governance: undocumented definitions let teams quote opposite numbers



Match primary and guardrail metrics to campaign type



Data Foundations: Tracking, Hygiene, and Privacy Constraints



- 1 Tagging plans: data layer schema, event taxonomy, measurement IDs, named ownership
- 2 Hygiene: deduplication, bot filtering, consent handling, quality thresholds
- 3 Consent Mode v2: four signals — `analytics_storage`, `ad_storage`, `ad_user_data`, `ad_personalization`
- 4 Recovery is partial: advanced mode models in reports, not in BigQuery exports
- 5 Document lineage and blind spots so dashboards avoid silent gaps

From Data to Insight: Interpreting Performance Reports

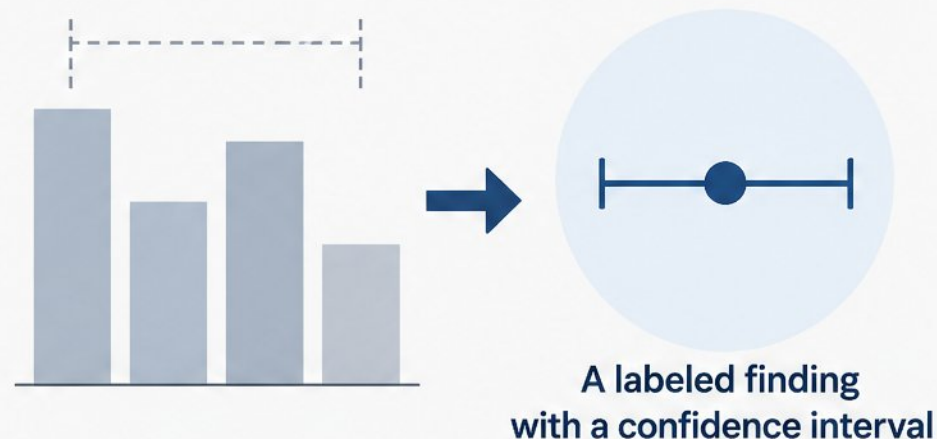
Different sources, different numbers

It's common for platforms to report different results.



Reframe the gap as insight

A difference in numbers can point to a useful finding.



Start from the question, not the number that supports your plan



Slice by channel, cohort, geography, new vs. returning, device



Separate trend from data point: significance, seasonality, sample size



Discordant platform, GA4, MTA, and CRM numbers signal information, not failure



Label modeled vs. observed; never blend into one headline figure



Defensible narrative: claim, evidence, source, confidence, decision

Causality: Experiments, Incrementality, and Lift Measurement



Design toolkit: user holdouts, geo-splits, ghost ads, platform lift studies



Incrementality vs. attribution: retargeting and branded search often finish demand, not create it



Valid test design: 80% power, 95% significance, 10–20% holdout, 2–4 weeks



Guard against leakage: freeze creative and budget, use server-side suppression



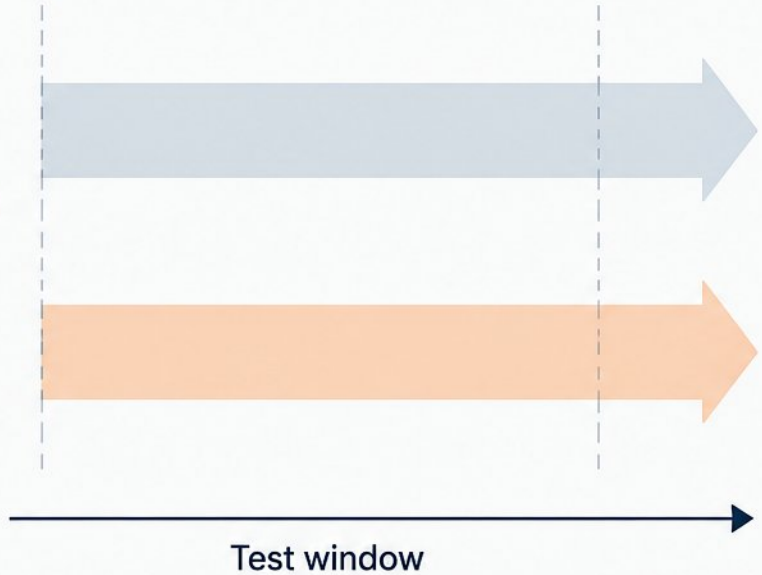
Incremental ROAS = (treatment revenue – control revenue) ÷ treatment spend



When testing isn't practical: pre/post with control series, MMM with light calibration


Holdout Control


Treatment



Incremental ROAS = (treatment revenue – control revenue) ÷ treatment spend

Unit Economics: CAC, LTV, ROAS, and Payback

- Platform ROAS is inflated post-iOS14; it's a channel tactic metric, not business truth
- $MER = \text{total revenue} \div \text{total marketing spend}$ — the honest business-level efficiency read
- $\text{Blended CAC} = \text{total spend} \div \text{new customers}$; pair with LTV at 3:1 minimum
- Pick strict or fully loaded CAC scope and never silently switch mid-quarter
- Payback period drives cash flow; watch trends, not single periods

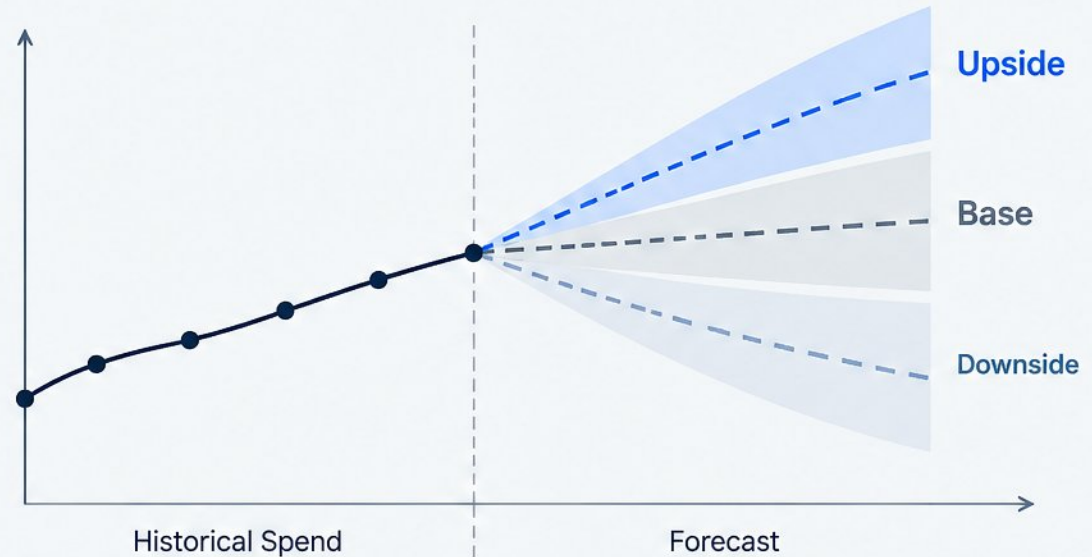
Break-even $MER = 1 \div \text{contribution margin}$



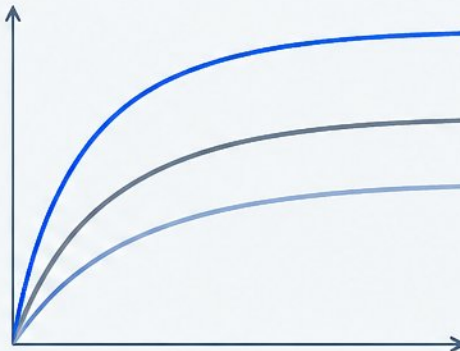
Forecasting and Budget Allocation Under Uncertainty

- Forecast from spend, incrementality factors, and saturation curves — not last quarter's platform ROAS
- Budget the marginal dollar: which channel does more work at the next increment?
- Scenario plan base, upside, downside: consent rates, fatigue, auction pressure, competitor entry
- MMM allocates, calibrated quarterly by lift tests, rebuilt monthly where possible
- Sensitivity: if true lift is 20% lower, does the recommendation change?
- Give leadership ranges and decision thresholds, not false precision

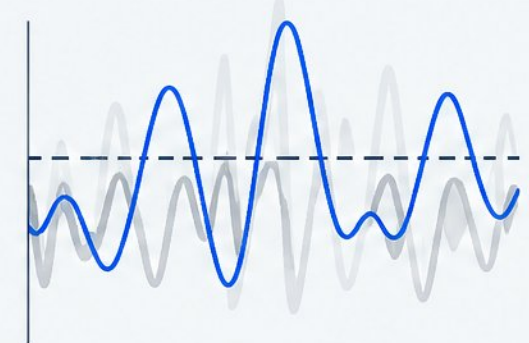
Forecast Scenarios



Channel Saturation Curves



Signal vs Noise

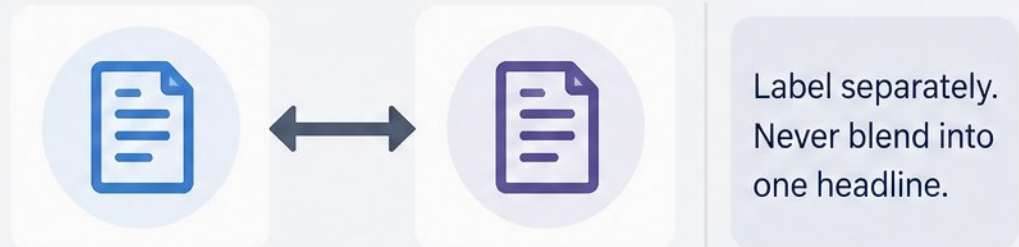


Communicating Results: Stakeholder-Ready Reporting

- Tailor the read: analysts get method, finance gets margin and payback, executives get the decision and the risk
- Metrics contracts: agreed definitions, formula next to the number, an owner, a target, and a review cadence
- Label platform-reported, attribution-attributed, and MMM-modeled numbers separately; never blend into one headline
- Incrementality test results override models for the channel and period they cover
- Be transparent about assumptions, modeled-vs-observed share, and known data gaps
- Finance alignment: MER, blended CAC, contribution margin, payback, new-customer percentage



Conflicting Numbers From Two Sources



Operating Rhythm: Governance, Tooling, and Continuous Improvement



Daily

Review cadence:
daily channel ROAS



Weekly

Review cadence:
weekly MER



Monthly

Review cadence:
monthly CAC



Quarterly

Review cadence:
quarterly payback

Metric Dictionary

v1



Named owners for tagging, CRM sync, and reporting beat diffuse accountability



Versioned metric dictionary: definition, formula, owner, source, effective date



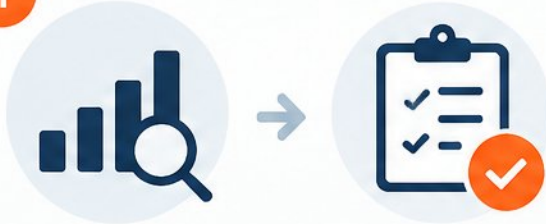
Change control and audit trail for collection changes and model assumptions



Quarterly incrementality tests plus an annual measurement stack review

Common Measurement Failure Modes and How to Avoid Them

1



Trusting platform-reported ROAS; discount it, validate with holdouts before scaling

2



Using one incrementality multiplier across all channels; lift shifts by channel and season

3



Making channel mix decisions on blended CAC or MER; use incrementality for mix

4



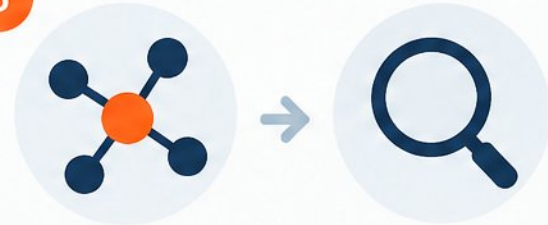
Building dashboards before fixing data quality; broken pixels surface everywhere

5



Quietly redefining metrics between quarters; version-controlled definitions protect finance trust

6



Testing only small, convenient channels; validate your largest line items

Putting It to Work: A 90-Day Measurement Action Plan

From a stronger data foundation to confident, causal decisions.



Days 1-30

unify spend and conversion data; write the metric dictionary; audit Consent Mode and event taxonomy



Days 31-60

run one clean incrementality test on your largest or most suspicious channel, settings frozen



Days 61-90

show platform, attribution, and modeled numbers side by side; run first MMM allocation



Standing cadence:

weekly MER and new-customer percent, monthly CAC and payback, quarterly lift test



Success criteria:

one documented source per number, model-change audit trail, one budget decision moved by causal evidence



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