

The 3-Step Guide for Course Correcting Your Marketing Campaigns

Over the past few years, the structure and focus of marketing teams have evolved to address rapidly changing buying habits and consumer experience expectations. However, even as marketing efforts, channels, and skill sets have progressed, many of us still rely on legacy marketing measurement tools. How can Marketers succeed in developing prospective insights across all marketing efforts when the tools we are using to measure rely on outdated data?

In order to be successful today, marketing teams need to harness the data and foresight to course correct active campaigns, also referred to as in-campaign optimizations, across the entire marketing mix.

With the unified measurement tools of the *now*, like Marketing Evolution, changing campaigns that are in-flight is now not only possible, but necessary for those brands looking for a competitive advantage.

Executive leadership is looking to their marketing teams—and more importantly, the CMO—to deliver results today, not three to six months from now. To deliver these results, marketers need to be in the driver's seat, allowing for the ability to course correct changes to control spending, creative rotation, messaging, targeting, and media mix in order to reach maximum marketing performance and achieve larger business goals.

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Brands are now adopting a culture (and the technology) that empowers their marketing teams to be agile and improve campaigns as they progress, not after the fact. Yet, implementing the results and recommendations you've learned from active campaigns requires a few prerequisites. Here we explore the three steps, in particular, to help turn active campaign recommendations into revenue: role clarity, creative trafficking, and budget flexibility.

Role Clarity

Clearly defining roles is important in any marketing team, but it becomes that much more essential when optimizing the execution of paid media and advertising initiatives. These efforts require the input and coordination of several

teams, thus the need for clear responsibilities alongside your central data and measurement hub.

Internally, the organization must clearly define who the decision-makers are by business unit and department.

Using the recommendations of a unified measurement solution will also deepen the breadth of role responsibilities. Rather than managing media from the top down, the line-by-line message and media mix recommendations roll up into the overall media mix changes. The marketer isn't reallocating media mix as much as he or she is *optimizing* at the individual consumer and message levels.

Therefore, before the campaign begins it's important to define who approves the creative rotation, within media, portfolio, cross-media, and overall budget. In larger organizations, there may be different people who approve different parts of the media plan. In many organizations, the agency plays a key role in this decision-making process. Ultimately, the company needs to assign a primary decision-maker. It's also important that there's clarity around who the secondary parties who influence the decisions are, including:

For creative rotation for each media:

- Brand Marketing/Advertising (client)
- Account Management (agency)

For media budgets or brand portfolio budgets:

- Media, Brand Marketing, or Finance/Procurement

In a larger marketing organization, we find different people responsible for each medium:

- Media specialists approve the creative rotation and "within media" changes
- A more senior person approves cross-media mix changes and generally also approves the portfolio changes within a set of pre-set governance rules
- Overall budget changes generally come down from Finance, and the allocation is typically decided by the same person who approves portfolio changes

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Ad Operations and Creative Rotation

Unified measurement is undoubtedly the future, but it calls for a change of responsibilities for the media stakeholders. This new form of measurement delves into the recommended media and budget optimizations at the tactic level, as well as the impact across channels.

For example, prime-time TV may be better at building awareness. Other channels, like targeted search keywords, are better at purchase conversion, but that doesn't mean that prime-time TV ads can't drive purchases through online channels.

To see the channel-level impact in deep detail and how it rolls up to the overall marketing ROI requires the right steps be taken prior by the Ad Operations point person responsible for ad trafficking. This role is critical to making the volume of changes needed within each media channel to ensure optimizations are implemented.

To facilitate these changes, unique IDs are assigned to both digital and traditional media channels. For TV and radio, typically it's referred to as an ISCE code. A tracking system needs to be put in place with documentation to track the creative IDs and ISCE codes to ensure all parties are aligned and well organized. It's the responsibility of Ad Operations to maintain all IDs, both online and through traditional media, to allow for other teams to measure creative rotation.

Here are a few self-check questions to ask yourself: Does each advertisement have its own ID? How is your agency providing their forward-looking media buy details? Do you have visibility into the buy for one week out? A month out?

In-campaign optimization reveals which message works best with which audiences, as well as producing recommendations for exactly which media placements to buy for each message to maximize impact.

Media Budget Flexibility

In the past, marketers have traded away flexibility in favor of a media discount. In this old-world approach, the marketer didn't get any insight into how the advertising messages were working while the campaign was running. Advertising was a big gamble anyhow, so what was the harm?

Marketers can now have visibility into how advertising messages are working with different audiences on different channels while the campaigns are running. In-campaign optimization reveals which message works best with which audiences, as well as producing recommendations for exactly which media placements to buy for each message to maximize impact.

Ad dollars can be shifted across channels to find the right audience at the right

time with the right message. But in order to achieve this agility as a marketing unit, budget flexibility is a necessity.

Budgets are hard fought, and for this reason, those who manage these budgets feel the pressure to execute them accordingly, and rightfully so. High-performing brands have teams who advocate for the efforts that will deliver the highest performance for the business, not just the area for which they're responsible. In order to do this, the team needs access to holistic and transparent insight into the performance of all channels to see more clearly what's working, what's helping, and, perhaps, what's hurting the overall effort.

Digital channels tend to become the home for shorter-term, easy-to-make optimizations, which provide ample flexibility. This level of foresight not only steers your future campaigns, but it can also impact the outcome of active campaigns with unified measurement solutions with person-level insight like Marketing Evolution—thus putting the power of flexibility back in the marketers' hands.

Having some flexibility in the media plan allows for the ability to make the right mix of the best-performing media channels *and* partners while weeding out the poorly performing tactics. But to find the highest-performing channels, it'll require in-depth measurement of the creative and messaging.

Defining role clarity is the most critical step to setting the foundation for the full benefit of in-campaign optimizations. In addition to role clarity, ensure that message tracking is implemented for visibility into what is planned to run and where. Lastly, solidifying the flexibility to make changes in the budget, supported by the campaign data will prepare your team and team efforts to generate the highest return on investment through in-campaign optimizations.

Marketing Evolution provides the most powerful marketing measurement and optimization solutions that increase campaign performance, sales, and engagement. Our breakthrough person-centric approach provides marketers with actionable insights to prospectively recommend media, message, and budget allocation empowering them to make the best decisions that maximize marketing return on investment (ROI) and brand impact.

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