

Thought paper

The certainty of uncertainty:

Why marketing needs a new measurement mindset

This thought paper unpacks a lingering thought that marketers push to the back of their mind, more often than not... "is my measurement result giving me the full picture?"

Spoiler alert: **probably not.**

The truth is, assuming we will get 100% accuracy is assuming people are 100% predictable.

Through case studies, expert interviews, and primary data from the region, we'll explore how an evolving measurement approach, one that embraces real-world data nuances can help marketers make confident decisions, even when perfect certainty isn't possible.



Foreword from WARC



Paul Stringer

Managing Editor, Research & Advisory,
WARC

Brands have been taking on the challenge of proving their worth ever since John Wanamaker said that “half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don’t know which half.”

While we know more than ever before about how brands grow, it remains challenging to connect communications activity with commercial results.

And far from clarifying things, the abundance of data and technology is clouding the issue.

We’ve identified five forces of “Tech Turbulence” that are disrupting the industry and creating a sense of overload; from the “analysis paralysis”

of data fragmentation, through to simply accepting Last Click Attribution when they know it is flawed, marketers aren’t finding it easy.

At the same time, we’ve also found that the opportunity is greater than ever.

In developing our GRO measurement framework, we’ve identified three stages to guide brands towards a more sustainable model of measurement. The model is based on getting the basics right, aligning teams behind broad business goals and ambitions, understanding capability, capacity and accepting imperfection, and creating systems that are built for the future rather than the present.

Foreword from TikTok



Mahmoud Shammout

Head of Research and Insights,
TikTok For Business, METAP

In today’s fast-moving marketing landscape, measurement is under pressure. Platforms are evolving, consumer journeys are increasingly non-linear, and data sources are fragmented. The challenge isn’t just about tracking more; it’s about aligning measurement to what truly matters: business outcomes and user behavior.

At TikTok, we believe the future of measurement isn’t about finding one perfect model. It’s about adopting agile, adaptable approaches that evolve alongside the market. Static systems no longer serve marketers, especially in regions like MENA, Turkey, and

South Africa, where growth is rapid and complexity is high.

Drawing on industry leaders’ perspectives and grounded in research, this report explores why measurement needs to shift, not just to reflect change, but to keep pace with it. The goal isn’t perfection or permanence. It’s building systems that are fit for purpose, flexible by design, and aligned with real business impact.

Our role is to help marketers connect the right signals – across content, commerce, and consumer behavior – to make confident decisions, even in uncertain conditions. Because adaptability isn’t a feature of modern measurement. It’s a requirement.

How we got here: The evolution of marketing measurement

Then

Assumptions over evidence

- Marketing relied heavily on gut instinct.
- Fewer channels meant broader reach and simpler choices.
- Limited tools made linking marketing to business outcomes nearly impossible.

Now

Data-rich, decision-poor

- More data than ever, but trust in it is shaky.
- Marketers are stuck between brand and performance, struggling to balance both.
- Easy-to-measure metrics dominate, even if they don't drive real growth.

Next

Adaptability is the new advantage

- Holistic, real-time, cross-channel visibility remains the goal, but data fragmentation persists.
- AI and synthetic data show promise, but adoption is early and regulation uncertain.
- The brand vs. performance divide is fading, but real change demands a cultural shift, not just new tools.

Content

Foreword from WARC and TikTok	2
Chapter 1: The Measurement Paradox	7
Chapter 2: Keeping up in an era of overload	14
Chapter 3: Getting it right with 'GRO'	20
Closing the loop, from challenge to solution	31

Research approach:

This report includes findings from a survey of 1991 of 18+ year old consumers across KSA, UAE, Turkey, South Africa and use video platforms at least once a week. Research conducted in February 2025.

This was in addition to a series of in-depth interviews with senior marketers and industry experts. The analysis of the data and insights from this research, combined with a review of WARC's global data and industry knowledge.

Industry experts interviewed for this report



Elie Milan
Chief Performance Officer
Publicis Media MENA, Dubai



Matt Nelson
Senior Director Marketing
Performance,
Miral Destinations, Dubai and
Abu Dhabi



Stanislaus Brunais
Marketing Director,
Ounass, Dubai



Ali Yilmaz
Co-CEO,
SEM, Turkey



Efsun Janset Yilmaz
Deputy General Manager,
Boyner Büyük Mağazacılık, Turkey



Atakan Demirci
Chief Digital Officer,
Omnicom Media Group, Turkey



Tanja De Korte
Managing Director,
Rainmaker Media, South Africa



Sadika Fakir
Group Executive for Digital and Media,
ABSA, South Africa

From chasing perfection to embracing reality

There is no single source of truth and insisting on one is holding us back.

The marketing industry has been chasing the holy grail of attribution for over a decade. We were promised perfect visibility: a clean line from spend to sale. Instead, we got fragmentation, closed ecosystems, incompatible data sets, and an endless cycle of chasing cleaner data, better dashboards, and one-size-fits-all models.

Here's the uncomfortable truth: the perfect model doesn't exist and never did. The media landscape is too complex, consumer behavior too fluid, and business goals too nuanced. The more we try to simplify reality into a single metric or platform, the more we disconnect from how growth actually works.

What separates high-performing marketers today isn't access to better data. It's the mindset to use imperfect data better. It's about shifting from the false comfort of precision to the actionable clarity of strategic alignment.

They design measurement systems that reflect the real world and not the ideal one. Systems that accept imperfection, account for incrementality, and help teams move faster, not slower.

It's time to stop obsessing over accuracy and start building for adaptability. Because the goal isn't a source of truth. It's a source of confidence.



It's not precision, it's tunnel vision. The Fatal Attraction of last-touch attribution

In a world where nothing feels fully measurable, last-touch attribution offers comfort: fast data, clean numbers, instant ROI. It simplifies a complex journey into a neat, clickable endpoint, and in doing so, seduces marketers into believing they've found truth.

But it's not how people actually buy. Last-touch ignores everything that happens before the final click: brand equity, creative exposure, social discovery, offline influence, even economic context.

The appeal makes sense. Faced with uncertainty, marketers gravitate toward what's easy to measure like clicks, conversions, and lower-funnel KPIs because, they feel tangible. They look like progress. But the real cost is hidden: over-investment in performance, underinvestment in brand, and a growing disconnect between metrics and outcomes.

The data is clear:

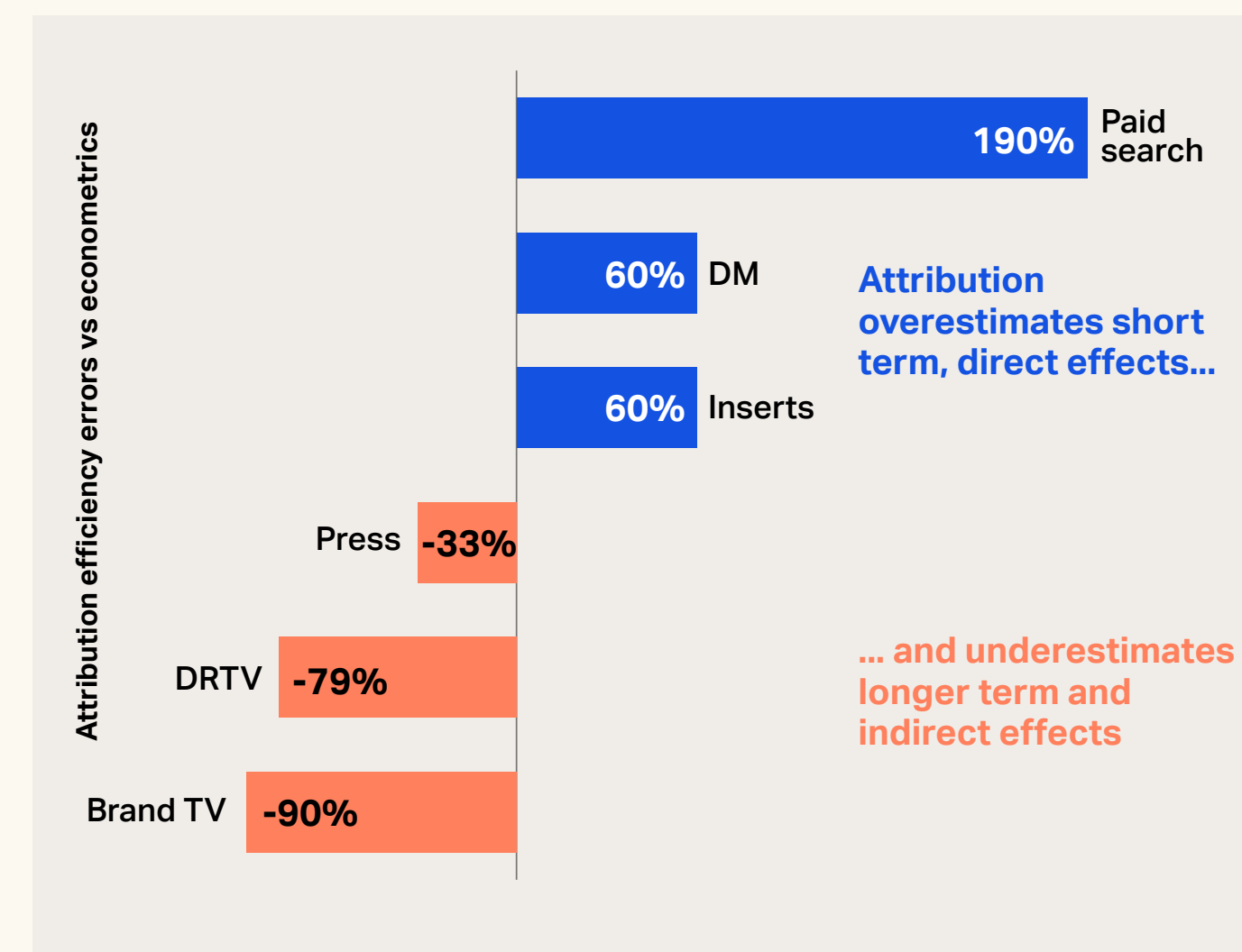
- **35%** of LTA-driven spend generates zero incremental sales¹
- Paid search is overstated by up to **190%**²
- **60%** of underperforming marketers focus too heavily on conversion metrics³

¹ ANALYTIC PARTNERS, Genome Project, 2023

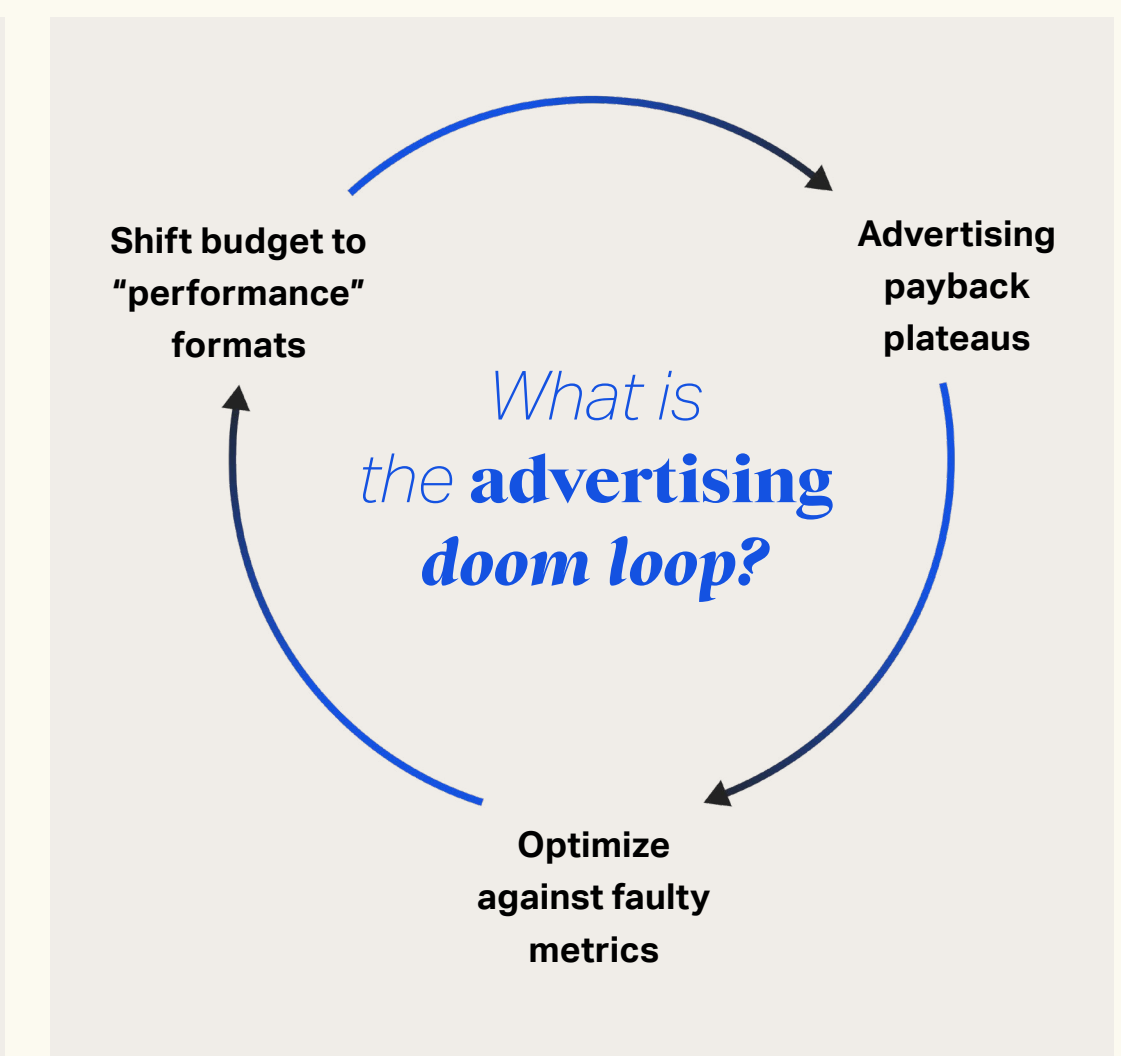
² WARC, The Multiplier Effect, February 2025

³ PROPHET, Brand & Demand, Marketing's Great Love Story, Dec 2024

How bad is the attribution problem?



Source: WARC, The Multiplier Effect, February 2025



The result? A doom loop. Optimising for the wrong signals, chasing short-term wins, and missing the real drivers of long-term growth.

Escaping this cycle doesn't require perfect measurement: it requires better judgment. Marketers must embrace the messiness of real-world behavior and build systems that reflect the full journey, not just the final click.

The *measurement* **paradox**

Marketers have more data at their disposal than ever before, and yet the pace and scale of change make it more challenging to confidently link specific activities to specific outcomes. The prevalence of last-touch attribution and short-term performance metrics is leaving brands at risk of falling into a “doom loop” where optimizing for what’s easy to measure, rather than what impacts business success, ends up winning out.

How can marketers break free from outdated measurement frameworks and adopt a system that truly reflects how brands grow?

The measurement paradox

Marketers are focussing on short-term measurement tools like last-touch attribution, despite most of marketing's payback occurring over the long term. This "Measurement Paradox" has created a gap between how brands actually grow and how success is being measured.

Brands are risking significant losses by focusing on short-term attribution

- More than **\$741 billion** was spent on digital advertising in 2024¹
- **60%** of underperforming marketers are focused on lower-funnel conversion²
- **35%** of last-click attribution spend generates zero incremental sales³

Sustainable brand growth is the result of long-term investment decisions⁴

- The "brand baseline" is for **30%** of spend to go against long-term, equity-led executions
- Sustained investment over +3 years drives up to **50%** higher long-term revenue growth
- Median revenue boost from switching from pure-performance to a combined brand and performance approach is **90%**

¹ WARC, Global Ad Spend Outlook, Nov 2024.

² PROPHET, Brand & Demand, Marketing's Great Love Story, Dec 2024

³ ANALYTIC PARTNERS, Genome Project, 2023

⁴ WARC, The Multiplier Effect, February 2025

Short-term measurement is incompatible with the complexity of customer purchase journeys

Customers don’t move through clear stages before purchasing; our research echoed existing studies in showing that journeys are never straightforward.

People move between online and offline environments. They see things they like and save them to come back to later. They use information from brand websites, but also friends and family.

In the real world people behave irrationally, in ways models can’t predict and that short-term attribution doesn’t pick-up.

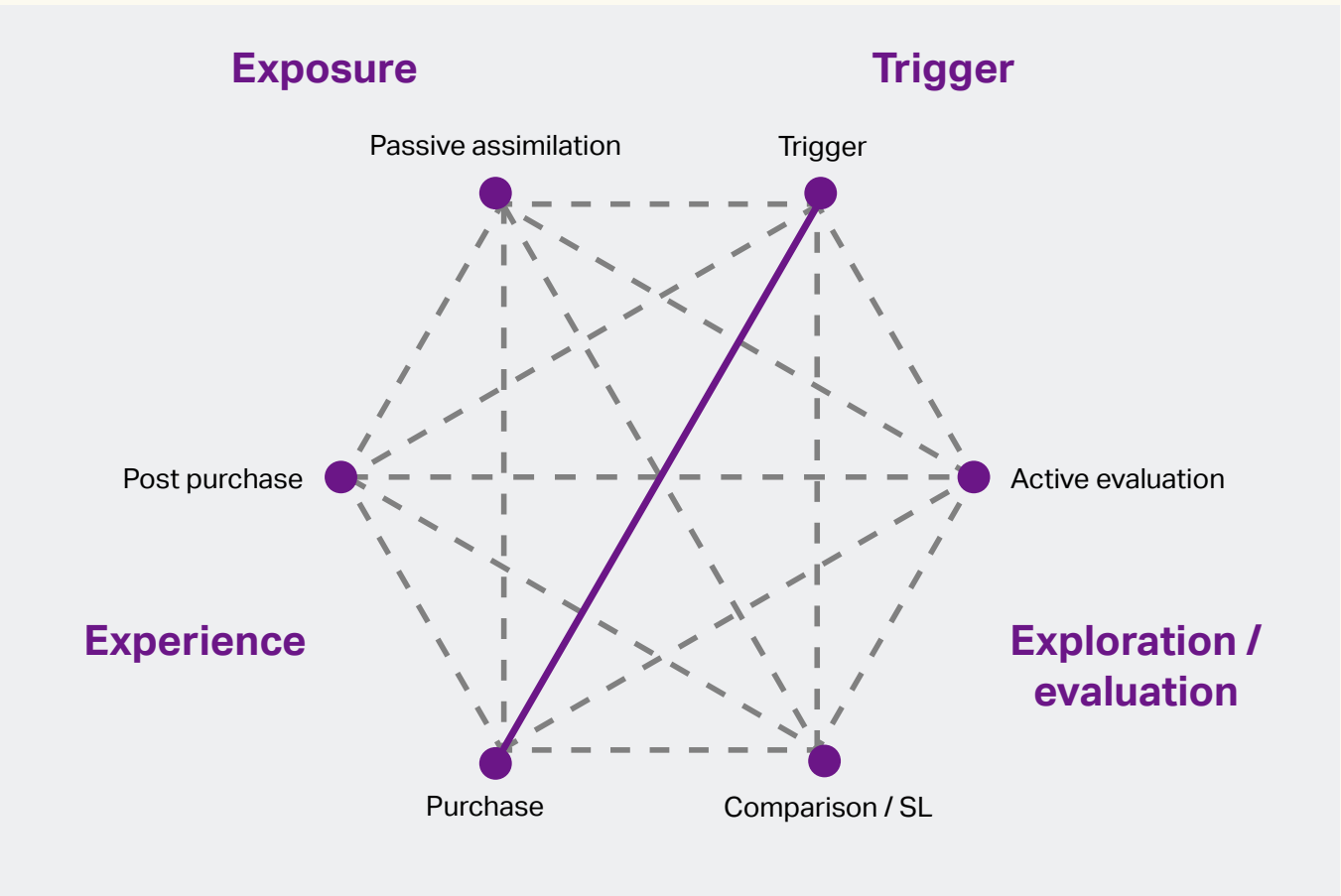
Likelihood of a same day purchase on average by category:

Food and drink	73%
Beauty and personal care	46%
Clothing and accessories	42%
Gaming / electronics	28%
Telecoms	22%
Luxury items	16%
Holiday / travel	12%
Finance (eg insurance, loan)	12%
Automotive	9%

1 Source: TikTok Marketing Science Middle East, Turkey + South Africa consumer survey, 'Why Marketing needs a New Measurement Mindset' 2025, conducted by WARC – February 2025

2 JAMES HANKINS, Forget Funnels, February 2021

James Hankin’s Hexagon



There have been many models attempting to explain the complexity of customer journeys. **James Hankin’s Hexagon²**, or example, demonstrates how at any one time, a consumer sits in one of approximately six states, and a person can make their own way to purchase via whole variety of routes. With very few fixed pathways, it shows how hard it is to predict consumer behavior, given the highly individualized nature of purchase journeys.

“The challenge is to try to understand everything that’s going on, how consumers are behaving when it comes to media and non-media touchpoints and how to harness these evolutions. Synchronizing these different walled gardens is the key barrier to overcome.”



Elie Milan
Chief Performance Officer
Publicis Media MENA, Dubai

The lines between “performance” and “brand” channels have become increasingly blurred and interdependent

To make measurement more challenging, the lines between channels consumers spend their time in, and what they use that time for, have become increasingly blurred.

Nowhere is this more evident than the ways Social and Search have collided. Search engines, previously the ultimate “performance” channel are being challenged – and in many categories overtaken by search functions in social channels.

In customer’s buying decisions, social and search are the most significant sources of information, ranking higher than recommendations from friends and family, and almost all (**93%**) survey respondents said they were using video platforms to search for products ahead of making a purchase.¹

The blurring of lines shows up in research from Analytic Partners. Which demonstrated how **30%** of search ‘clicks’ were actually due to other non-search related activities.²

¹ Source: TikTok Marketing Science Middle East, Turkey + South Africa consumer survey, ‘Why Marketing needs a New Measurement Mindset’ 2025, conducted by WARC – February 2025

² WARC, The Multiplier Effect, February 2025

93%

Of people say they search on video platforms ahead of making a purchase



95%



93%

Turkey



90%

KSA



93%

81%

Agree discovery has changed and through video platforms ‘they come across brands / products they have not seen before’



88%

KSA



84%

Turkey



77%

UAE



75%



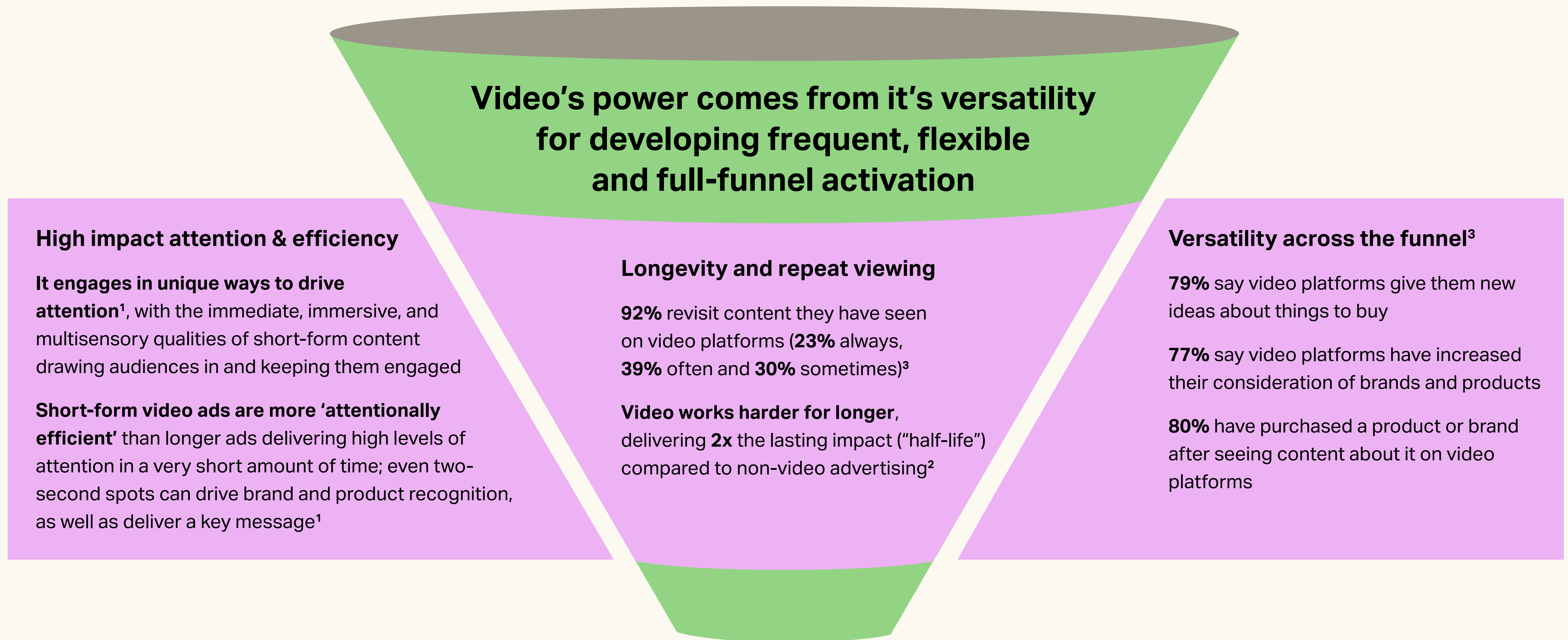
TikTok doesn’t even call itself a social platform anymore... They’re positioning themselves as a search and an entertainment engine, and with an in-app experience you do not want to break. That’s something brands need to take into consideration when they’re creating their captions, when they’re creating their hashtags, when they’re creating the actual video content and voice content.



Sadika Fakir

Group Executive for Digital and Media,
ABSA, South Africa

Video drives “brand” and “performance” and everything in between



¹ WARC & TIKTOK, How to supercharge your media mix, 2024

² WARC, The Multiplier Effect, February 2025

³ Source: TikTok Marketing Science Middle East, Turkey + South Africa consumer survey, 'Why Marketing needs a New Measurement Mindset' 2025, conducted by WARC – February 2025

Visible lower-funnel data is just the tip of the iceberg; most conversion starts much deeper, below the surface

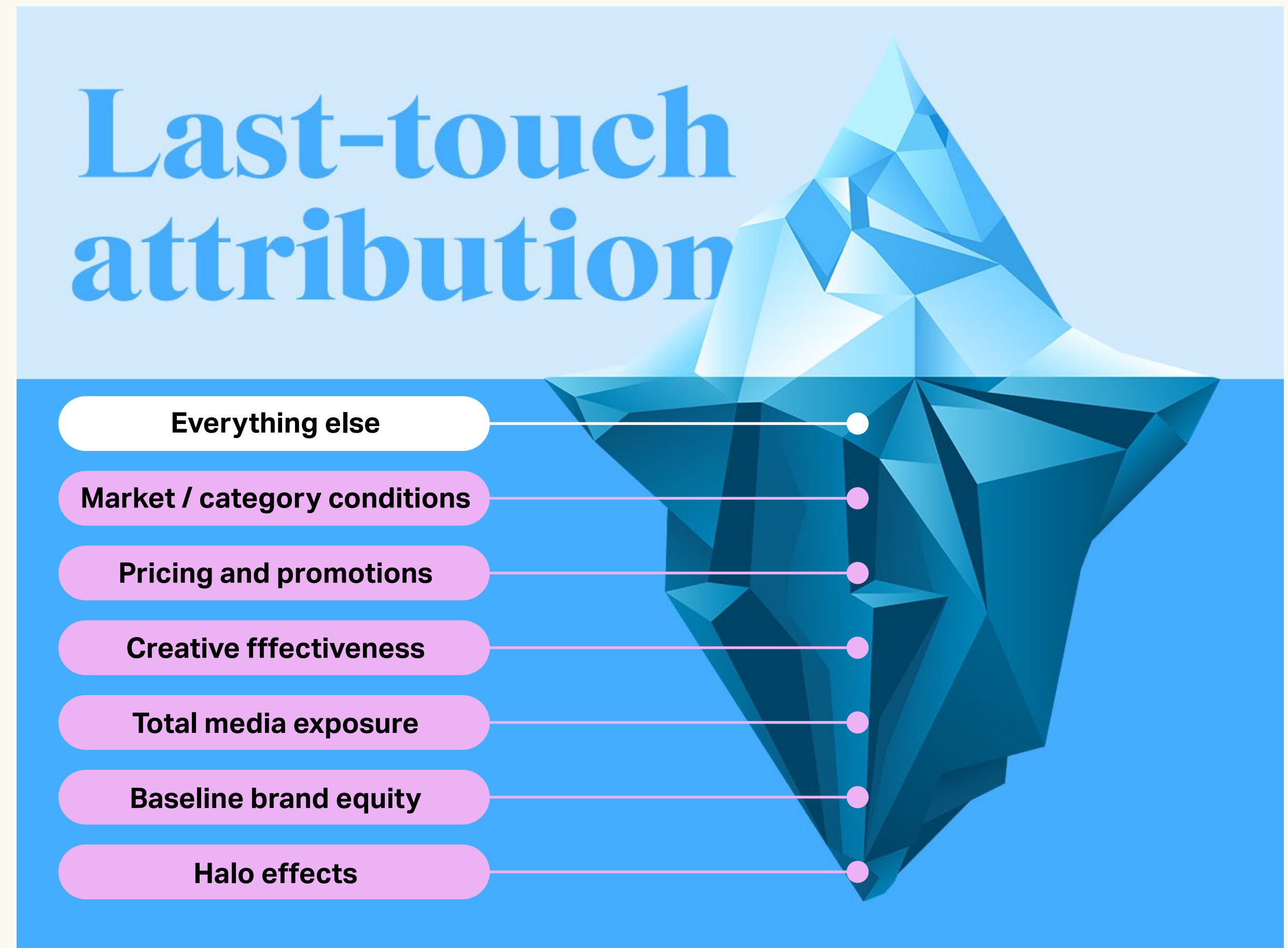
Lower funnel conversion metrics offer immediacy, but with a limited perspective. They capture the visible “touch” which happened immediately before purchase, but don’t account for everything that comes before that.

This obscures the broader set of factors that influence performance but are less immediately trackable, including brand equity, economic conditions, pricing strategy, media exposure and creative effectiveness.

Our research found that while **80%** of users say they have made a purchase after seeing video content for most, it’s not immediate: with **70%** saying they usually come back later to decide.¹

In one study, **22%** of TikTok-driven sales were wrongly attributed to lower-funnel channels², while another found **79%** of conversions missed entirely by Last-Click Attribution.³

The result is the risk of misguided optimization, misplaced spend, and undervaluing of the upper and mid-funnel approaches that build long-term commercial impact.



¹ Source: TikTok Marketing Science Middle East, Turkey + South Africa consumer survey, 'Why Marketing needs a New Measurement Mindset' 2025, conducted by WARC – February 2025

² FOSPHA, Last Click Continues to Undervalue Paid Social, 2024

³ TIKTOK, Lite Talks, Beneath the surface with TikTok, 2022

View from the industry

The promise of accurate, real-time digital performance measurement

“It can get very overwhelming, and there are high levels of complexity and high levels of complex data sets that are required to measure true ROMI or return on marketing investment. There’s huge complexity, and if there was a little red button on my laptop that just spewed out your ROMI and your split channel mix, that would be fantastic.

**Sadika Fakir**

Group Executive for Digital and Media,
ABSA, South Africa

“At one point in time, we were sold the dream of multi-touch, data-driven attribution - a system that could capture the entire customer journey and attribute every click, every view, and every dollar earned. The reality is, it’s just not practical - and if it does exist, it certainly doesn’t live up to what was promised a decade ago.

**Matt Nelson**

Senior Director Marketing Performance,
Miral Destinations, Dubai and Abu Dhabi

“These challenges are pretty common across organizations and the main hurdles to adopting better measurement methods are usually lack of resources, whether it’s technical expertise, tools, or budget, and sticking to old ways that prioritize convenience over accuracy. On top of that, there is often resistance to change and marketers tend to stick with familiar but outdated methods like last-click attribution, which just slows down progress.

**Atakan Demirci**

Chief Digital Officer,
Omnicom Media Group, Turkey

Keeping up in an era of overload

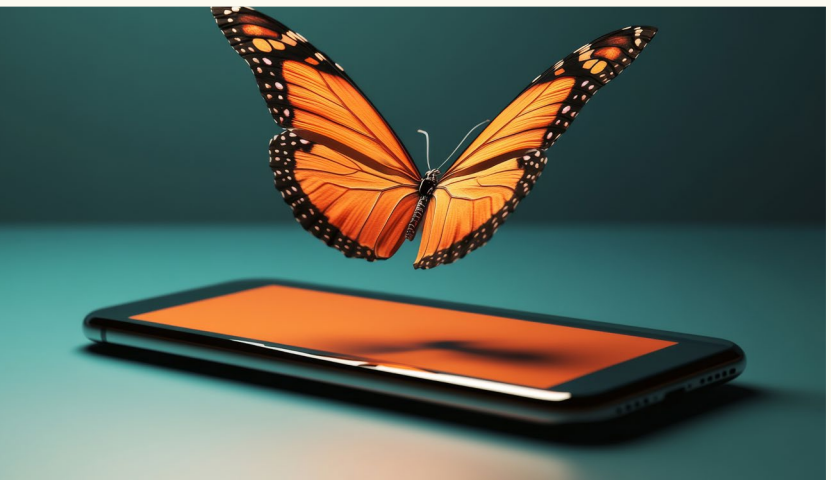
The explosion of new channels, new platforms, evolving consumer behaviors, AI-driven content, and ever changing regulations has left many marketers feeling overwhelmed, undervalued, and exhausted. With data scattered across fragmented systems, “**analysis paralysis**” is on the rise, making it harder than ever to separate clear signals amongst the noise.

In a world where change is a constant, how can brands put simplicity at the heart of their approach in order to drive results across the whole organization?



Marketing is experiencing tech-turbulence, at high speed

Our discussions with leaders across the Middle East, Turkey and South Africa reveal five critical areas of technological change rapidly reshaping the industry; forces which are fundamentally altering how brands are able to demonstrate effectiveness.



Evolving media and consumer landscapes¹

Short-form video, social commerce, and influencer content are transforming engagement. The evolution of social platforms is creating new formats, while shoppable videos and UGC complicate performance tracking.



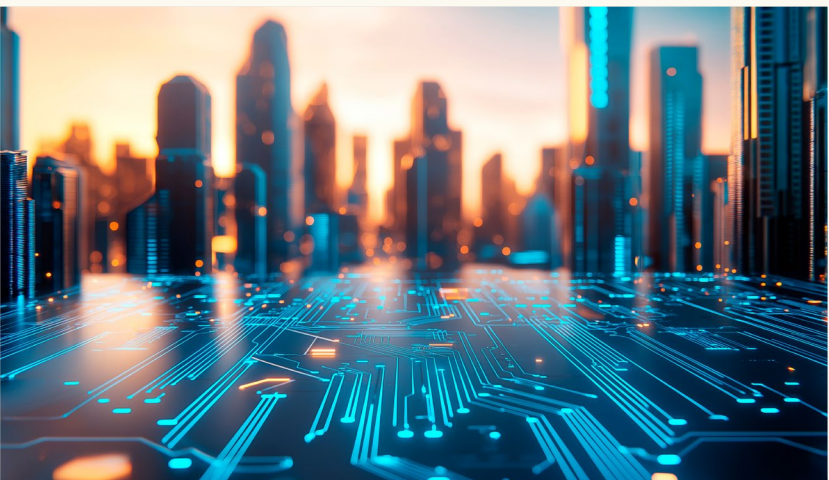
Search in a socially driven world

Consumers increasingly use social channels as search engines², shifting discovery away from the traditional search engines. Algorithm-driven content makes organic visibility unpredictable, forcing brands to rethink their SEO and content strategies.



Measurement fragmentation

Last-touch attribution is still used by a majority of marketers, and cross-platform measurement is fragmented and only **4%** of marketers are using the full selection of measurement techniques available³.



The rise of artificial intelligence

AI is all pervasive, impacting marketers' lives across creative, media and measurement⁴. It's a change as big as the internet, if not bigger, and is creating uncertainty about the future.



Privacy, regulation and data restrictions

The list of data tracking and regulation changes is daunting, including but not limited to iOS changes, GDPR tracking, cookie changes, first-party data collection and ad-privacy legislation.

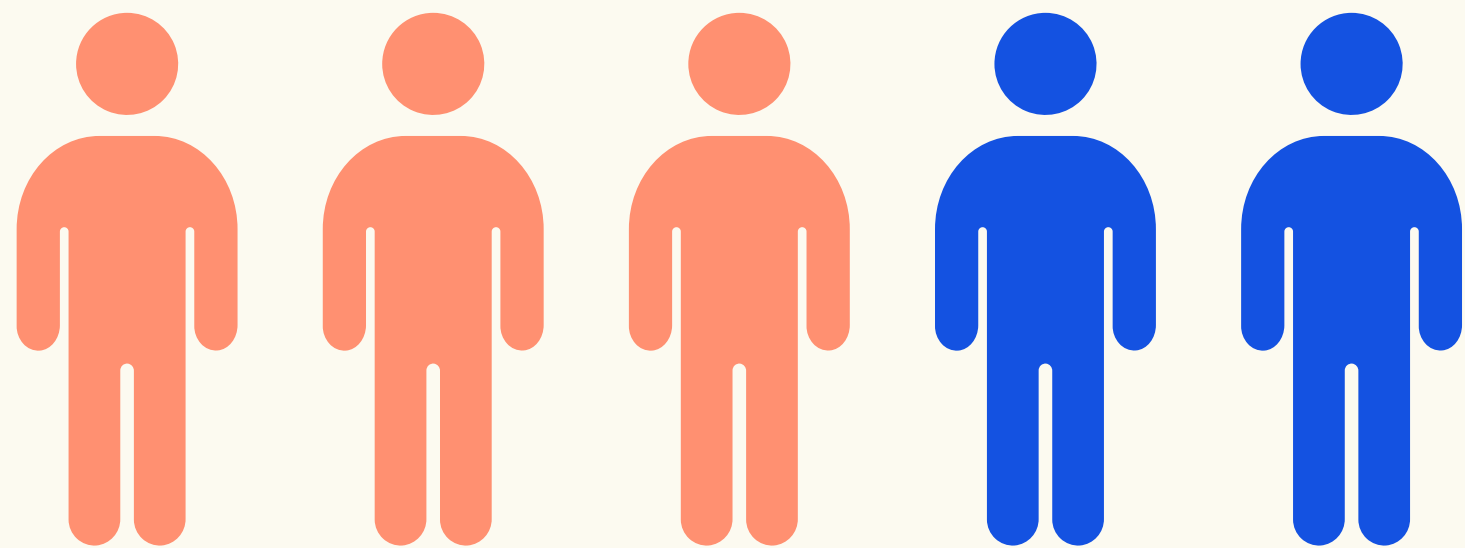
¹ WARC, The Future Of Media. January 2025
² Source: TikTok Marketing Science Middle East, Turkey + South Africa consumer survey, 'Why Marketing needs a New Measurement Mindset' 2025, conducted by WARC – February 2025
³ WARC, The Voice of the Marketer 2024
⁴ WARC, The Marketer's Toolkit, 2024

The pace of change is leaving leaders facing frustration, uncertainty and “Analysis Paralysis”

The cumulative impact of technological change is leaving marketers overwhelmed and stuck; between the legacy / heritage of outdated measurement techniques and the unrealised possibility and potential of the future.

New research by BBD Perfect Storm illustrates the challenge, finding that over two-thirds of business leaders fear admitting when they don't understand technology because they are worried about appearing out of touch.

Three in five leaders feel their business is struggling to keep up, half have lost sleep or felt stressed over the pace of change, and over half admit to investing in digital services they don't fully understand.¹



Three in five leaders feel their business is struggling to keep up

“I’ve never succeeded at an integrated dashboard, and there’s always something missing. It’s an industry problem with measurement tracking. There’s an almost overwhelming number of multiple tools, and all the APIs that go into all of the tools.

There’s analysis paralysis in some cases.



Sadika Fakir
Group Executive for Digital
and Media,
ABSA, South Africa

¹ WARC, Digital change challenges the C-suite, July 2024

This era of overload is taking its toll on marketers

A combination of internal business pressures, rapid technological shifts, and macroeconomic uncertainty has created an environment where practitioners are feeling severely overwhelmed.

Marketers are being asked to deliver short-term results while also building long-term brand value. They are being asked to deliver the same results or better, using less

resources, at the same time as working more holistically across organizations and in a time of massive consumer behavior change.

A 2025 Career & Salary Survey revealed the human cost of this turbulence: in the past year, **58%** of 3,500 marketers surveyed have felt overwhelmed, **56.1%** undervalued, and **50.8%** emotionally exhausted.¹

Have you experienced the following over the past 12 months?

Feeling overwhelmed	58.1%
Feeling undervalued	56.1%
Emotional exhaustion	50.8%
A lack of enjoyment in work that used to engage you	48.2%
Detached / negative attitude	47.6%
Sense of ineffectiveness	40.3%

Source: 2025 Career & Salary Survey

Have you ever experienced imposter syndrome?

Female	84.9%
Male	72.2%
CMO / Director / VP	77.8%
Senior Manager / Manager	82%
Junior manager / executive / assistant	78.7%

1 WARC, Marketers feeling overwhelmed and close to burnout, February 2025

View from the industry

While marketers recognise the limitations of lower funnel attribution many teams are still using it

“To treat last-click attribution as a single source of truth or the sole metric of success is one of the biggest mistakes organizations make. Performance marketing teams often fall into this trap - equating measurable, attributable ROI with effectiveness. But that mindset leads to short-term thinking and, ultimately, a race to the bottom.

Matt Nelson

Senior Director Marketing Performance,
Miral Destinations, Dubai and
Abu Dhabi



“The behaviors are not simple, the funnel is not linear. We are using it as the final touchpoint for the conversation, but it's not simple anymore. It doesn't feel like it captures the impact of upper funnel activities, like awareness and conversion campaigns. That's why we are trying to improve it.

Efsun Janset Yilmaz

Deputy General Manager,
Boyrer Büyük Mağazacılık,
Turkey



“The primary limitation of last-click attribution is its inability to capture the entire consumer journey by focusing solely on the final touchpoint. It overlooks the influence of earlier interactions and leads to skewed results and diminished returns over time.

**Atakan Demirci**

Chief Digital Officer,
Omnicom Media Group, Turkey

“Relying purely on last-click attribution would be like shooting ourselves in the foot because we would prioritize only the channel that led to the sale. But there are so many touchpoints that happen before a sale that we need to take care of and be able to judge... it's faster and gives comfort, but it does not necessarily represent the 100% truth of how customers are actually behaving.

**Stanislaus Brunais**

Marketing Director,
Ounass, Dubai

Escaping the era of overload

Marketers looking to escape the overload need step back from the edge of the doom-loop, refocusing on the bigger picture and avoiding the risk of spiralling into inefficiencies.

A more balanced approach to measurement is needed, supporting brand-building strategies where equity-led advertising drives current and future sales, and performance activity efficiently reinforces that brand activity.

Specifically, this means rebalancing away from lower-funnel metrics and short-term attribution models, and towards a system that connects activity to more meaningful business outcomes. Brands need to start with what the business is trying to achieve and work backwards, rather than just optimizing the minutiae.

Amidst all the challenges, our interviews uncovered a continued optimism about the future, especially for those marketers who can accept the ambiguity, and build for an ever changing world.

The framework that follows offers a practical way to navigate that shift. It is designed to help marketers regain control by aligning measurement with true business objectives, avoiding the trap of short-term temptation.

“Accepting the chaos and letting go of the idea of a single source of truth is step one. From there, experimentation becomes one of the most powerful ways to understand impact across different areas of the marketing mix.”



Matt Nelson

Senior Director Marketing Performance,
Miral Destinations, Dubai and
Abu Dhabi

“We need to keep things simple and avoid intimidating with measurement. Measurement needs to be a normal part of our daily lives, and if you have the tools and processes set up correctly upfront, it can flow like the way we breathe.”



Sadika Fakir

Group Executive for Digital
and Media,
ABSA, South Africa

“Success lies in reflecting the unique goals and dynamics of individual brands rather than defaulting to a one-size-fits-all approach. The diversity of user engagements and customer journeys demands a revaluation of traditional approaches.”



Atakan Demirci

Chief Digital Officer,
Omnicom Media Group, Turkey

“Not all measurement is created equal and different platforms have different ways of measuring. It's important to be clear about what you are trying to measure and transparent about how you got there.”



Tanja De Korte

Managing Director,
Rainmaker Media, South Africa

Getting it right with ‘GRO’

In a world obsessed with instant results, the GRO framework offers a smarter path: one that aligns goals, accepts complexity, and evolves with your brand. This chapter outlines a practical, scalable approach to attribution that connects marketing activity to true business impact, without chasing mythical perfection.

The GRO model; a more sustainable approach to attribution and impact

The GRO measurement framework provides a simple approach to measurement, helping brands move beyond data-overload to build a system that balances both short and long-term impact.

It follows three key stages:

- **Goals**; aligning teams behind broad business objectives, across the funnel
- **Readiness**; assessing, realistically, a businesses measurement capabilities and capacity
- **Optimization**; building a measurement framework which will evolve over time

This model cuts through the paralysis of data overload by providing a structured pathway for brands to build a measurement system that is both actionable and adaptable.

It moves marketers away from the limitations of last-touch attribution, instead focusing on incrementality and cross-channel impact.

Crucially, it ensures that measurement is not just a reporting function which teams have to obsess about, but a strategic enabler which teams can align behind, and which can simplify decision making.



Start with simple, aligned **G**oals

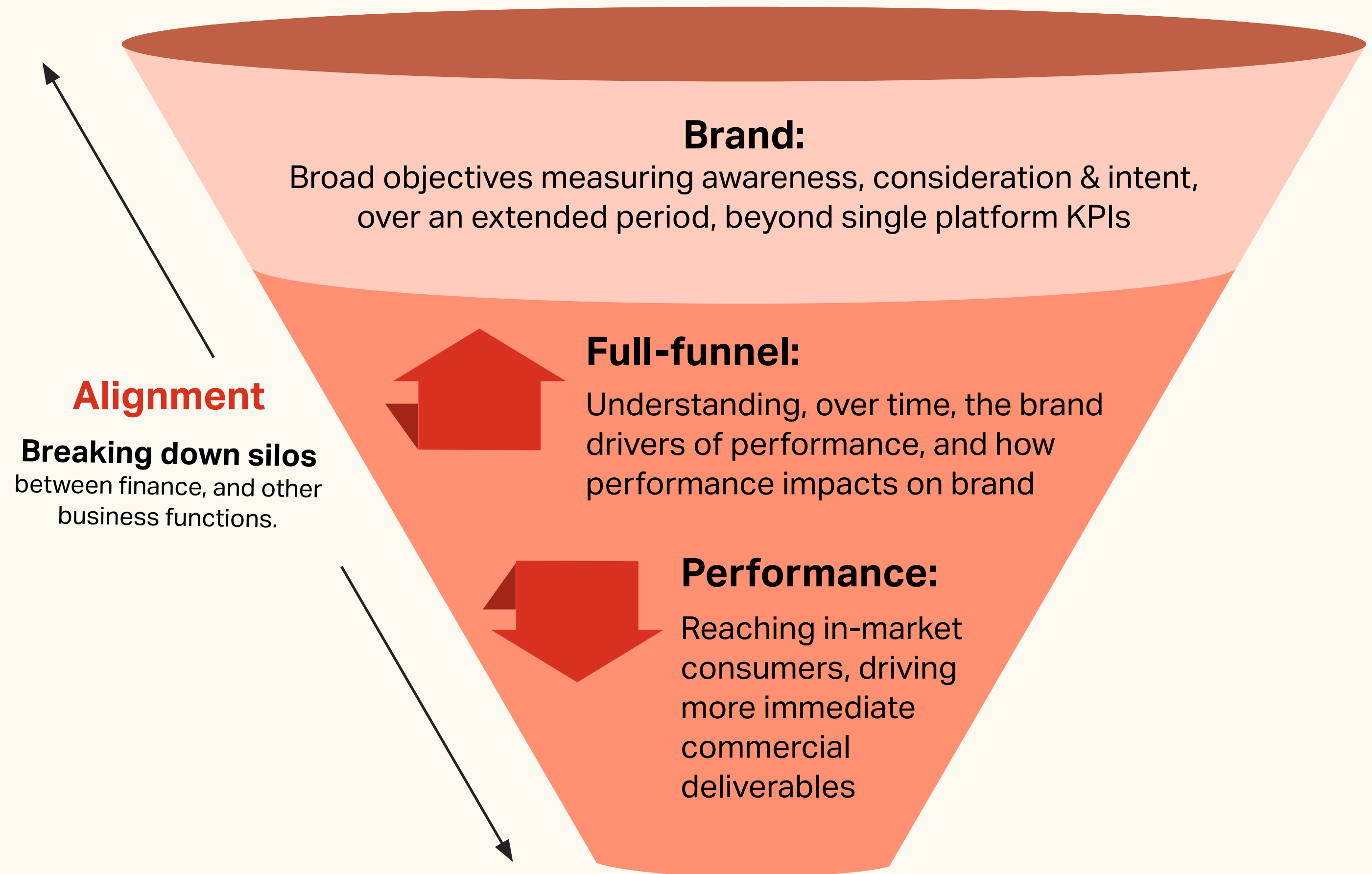
Putting focus in the right places to found clarity in a complex landscape

We've seen how the era of overload has left marketers with more data than ever before, yet a growing sense of uncertainty about what actually drives business success.

This is as much a measurement challenge as it is a strategic risk, and brands risk falling into the "Doom Loop" of optimising for short-term gains and end up experiencing diminishing returns.

To escape this cycle, businesses need to align behind a set of goals, structured around ambitions across customer journeys; including **Brand**, **Performance** and **Full-Funnel** objectives.

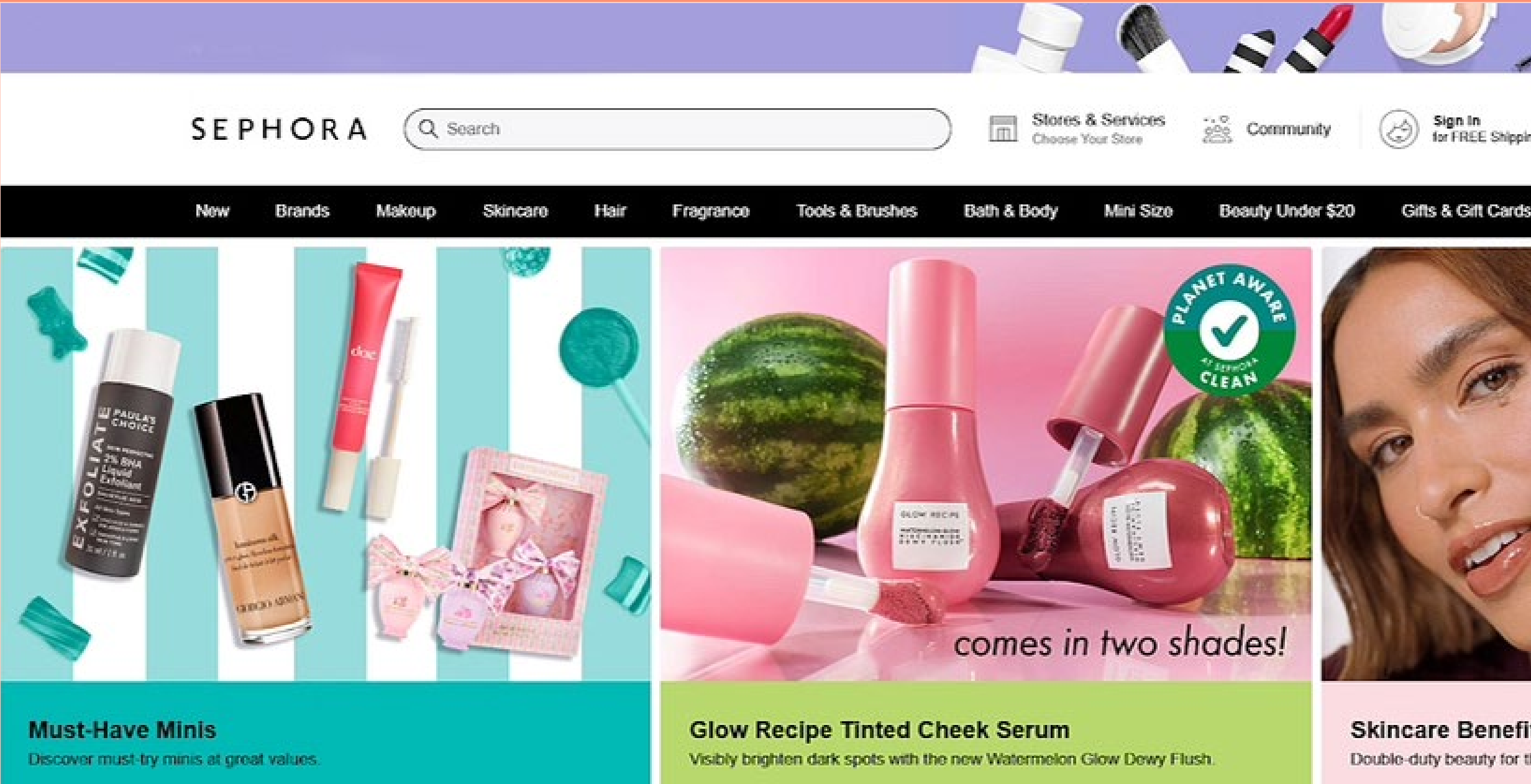
Critically, these ambitions and objectives need to be aligned across internal functions and external partners to ensure subsequent actions drive towards common goals.



Case study

Sephora Türkiye:

Aligning internal and external teams behind full-funnel business objectives to drive more meaningful measurement



Strategy:

Sephora’s needed to align stakeholders around goals that extended beyond just sales, with previous measurement approaches having focused on driving online conversion

The team worked across internal departments and external partners to align on a shared, full-funnel measurement strategy, with a three-tiered structure:

Top of Funnel (brand): Improving brand recall and familiarity

Mid Funnel: Measuring uplift in organic search traffic driven by increased brand interest.

Bottom of Funnel (Sales): Capturing incremental lift in actual purchases.

Outcome:

A clear set of goals enabled better tracking of impact across the full funnel.

Those results which showed how branding influenced intent and conversion – not just short-term clicks.

- **Ad Recall: +4.5%**
- **Brand Familiarity: +4%**
- **Organic Search: Up to +40% increase**
- **Incremental Sales: +9.2%**

Key takeaways:

Aligning on a clear **set of objectives across the funnel** – not just defaulting to what’s easy to measure – provides a stronger foundation for effectiveness.

Cross-functional collaboration is key; Sephora’s internal measurement teams worked closely with marketing and external partners to build shared goals.

Goal clarity allowed for a richer understanding of the campaign’s impact – from **awareness to action** – demonstrating the power of aligned ambition.

View from the industry

Measure what matters, not just what's easy

“A key issue in measurement is that too often, brands start with what is easiest to measure rather than what actually matters to business success... You need to align on the objective and relevant metric of success, rather than just defaulting to clicks or impressions because they are available. If your objective is to create awareness for example you will have to target a boarder audience which can negatively impact sales conversion. If your objective is to drive sales, you would apply more precise targeting, reaching less people but improving ROAS. It's all about trying to match the measurement metric to the objective more accurately.



Tanja De Korte
Managing Director,
Rainmaker Media, South Africa

“Measurement is the cornerstone of everything we do. A key mantra we apply to every marketing investment, whether it's digital or offline, is: 'If it's not measured, then it's not worth it.' But measurement has to be meaningful. We don't rely on artificial or secondary metrics that don't tie back to business outcomes.



Stanislaus Brunais
Marketing Director,
Ounass, Dubai

“The biggest area is always that journey that we go on with our clients, starting from the very basics, making sure we have the right setup, and then evolving from there. It's not just about choosing the right models; it's about ensuring alignment on what success looks like. If you don't set the right measurement priorities from the start, you risk measuring the wrong things and optimizing for the wrong outcomes.

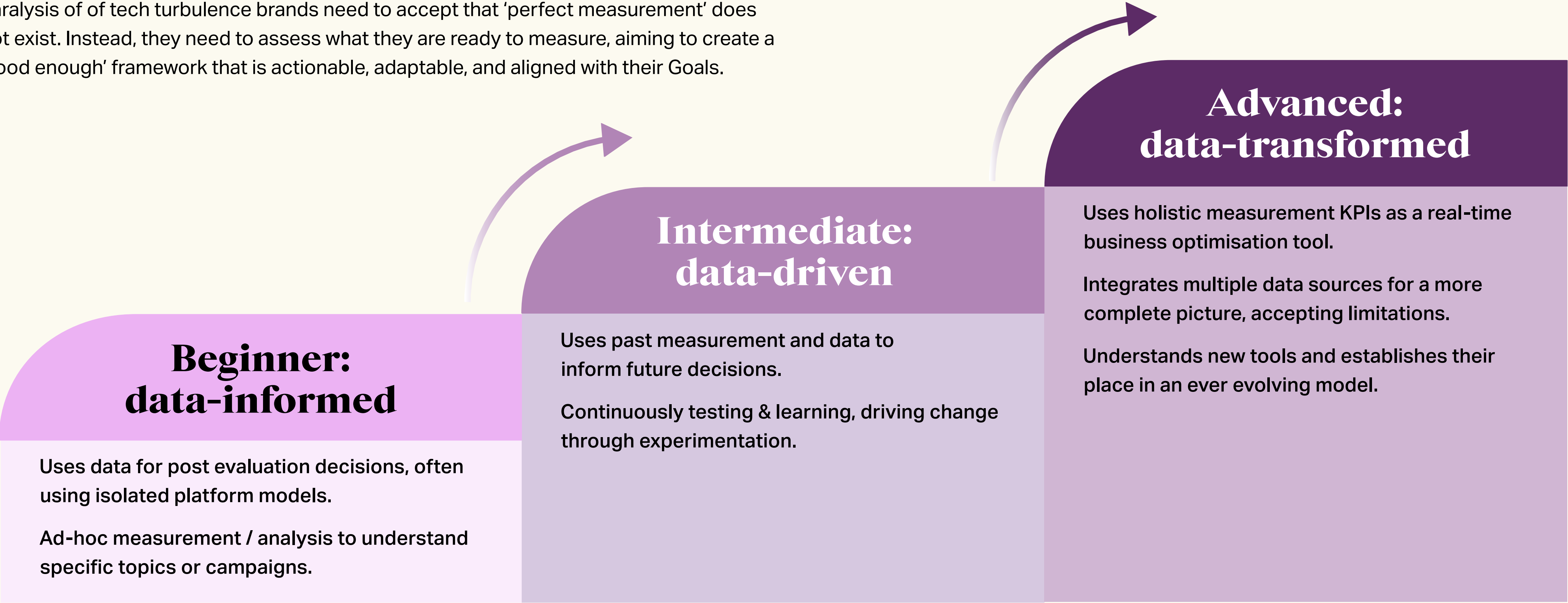


Elie Milan
Chief Performance Officer
Publicis Media MENA, Dubai

Assess your **R**eadiness to ensure ambitions are achievable

The complexity of today’s consumer journeys – where at least six touchpoints are used by more than 40% of consumers before they make a purchase¹ – has made data transparency and evaluation complicated. Most brands are failing to take full advantage of the full suite of modern measurement techniques. To avoid the analysis paralysis of tech turbulence brands need to accept that ‘perfect measurement’ does not exist. Instead, they need to assess what they are ready to measure, aiming to create a ‘good enough’ framework that is actionable, adaptable, and aligned with their Goals.

Where does your business stand? The Readiness Assessment can be used as a straightforward start-point to review how high a brand should set their ambitions for measurement / attribution models; In today’s landscape, while anything might be possible, solutions will be different for everyone.



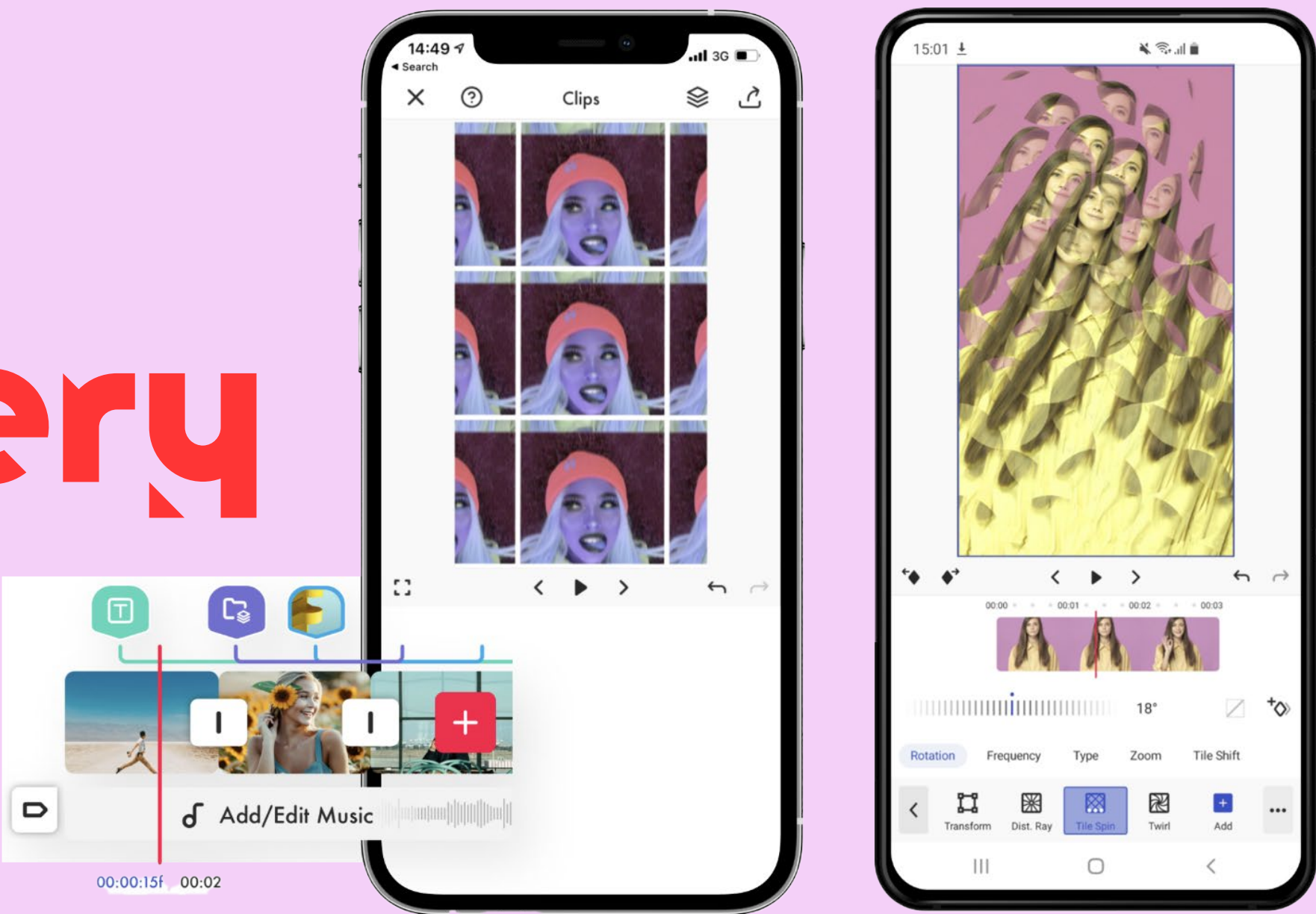
¹ Source: TikTok Marketing Science Middle East, Turkey + South Africa consumer survey, ‘Why Marketing needs a New Measurement Mindset’ 2025, conducted by WARC – February 2025

Case study

Pixery:

Building fit-for-purpose measurement by recognising limitations of existing models and evolving incrementally

Pixery



Strategy:

Pixery, a mobile video technology brand identified opportunities to extend their existing measurement approach, looking for a model that matched their needs and capabilities.

Previously the “data-informed” brand relied upon familiar but limited MMP (Mobile Measurement Partner) models.

The brand needed a model which would reflect the broader impact of upper and mid-funnel activity, and avoid misjudgements in platform performance.

Pixery took a practical step: joining a MetricWorks. Marketing Mix Modelling (MMM) program to get a more comprehensive view of their marketing performance – a methodology they had the capacity to implement, manage, and learn from.

Outcome:

The shift to MMM made Pixery more “Data-Driven” – giving them a clearer view of channel effectiveness.

The model revealed that some platform were performing between **3X** and **10X** better than previously estimated, compared to other platforms. Those results highlighted imbalances in prior attribution assumptions and prompted a reassessment of media mix strategy.

The brand is now progressing to becoming more “Data-Transformed”: shifting more resources toward higher-performing platforms based on progress to date.

Key takeaways:

Start from where you are: Rather than waiting for perfect systems, Pixery worked with what was available and evolved their measurement maturity step by step.

Realistic readiness unlocks better decisions: By understanding the limitations of MMP attribution, Pixery built a pathway to more holistic insight and understanding

Advanced models like MMM create clarity: The move to Marketing Mix Modelling enabled a shift towards more data-transformed decision-making, improving confidence in future investment strategies

View from the industry

When it comes to measurement frameworks, the best is the enemy of the good



There's a lot of complexity and data required to get results, and we have diminishing resources in the industry from a skills and capability perspective – but measurement is not a big, scary, ugly word, it's fundamental to growing business, understanding the customer, and unlocking more budget.



Sadika Fakir

Group Executive for Digital and Media,
ABSA, South Africa



It's about tailoring the right mix of tools and methodologies, and being deliberate about where we place emphasis based on the specific marketing objectives we're trying to achieve.



Matt Nelson

Senior Director Marketing Performance,
Miral Destinations, Dubai and
Abu Dhabi



The main hurdle to adopting better methods is usually a lack of resources – technical expertise, tools, budget and sticking to old ways – so there is often resistance to change. These challenges often create negative feedback loops where measurement strategies stay focused on just one or two KPIs. This narrow approach leads to optimizing for individual metrics instead of tying everything back to bigger business goals. The result is disconnect. The metrics might look good, but they don't actually help the business grow, slowing down real progress and innovation.



Atakan Demirci

Chief Digital Officer,
Omnicom Media Group, Turkey

Prove, improve and scale; a path towards Optimization

The landscape is in a state of constant change, shaped by shifting consumer behaviour, evolving media platforms, and transformation on data privacy and transparency.

Brands are reliant on outdated, convenient measurement tools, and struggling to keep up with the complexity or uncertainty in the alternatives.

The answer is not to wait for a perfect attribution model but to build a flexible, evolving measurement system that adapts over time.

The **prove** → **improve** → **scale** approach encourages brands start by establishing what works, refine their approach based on real-world learnings, and embed measurement as a long-term business enabler.

Establish a baseline:

Of real impact, using a variety of approaches to move beyond simplistic metrics.

Ensure cross functional buy-in:

To what you're proving; before and after any experiments.

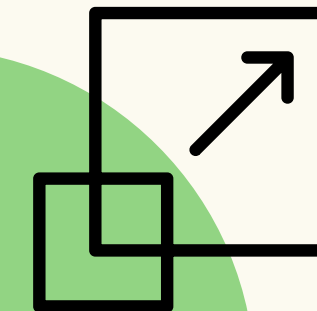


Prove

Improve



Scale



Embed measurement systems:

Into business operating procedures

Remove silos:

Ensuring the same framework is used across teams.

Maintain flexibility:

As a mindset, evolving and improving as technology enables.

Embed a test-and-learn:

Approach, moving beyond one-off / reactive experiments

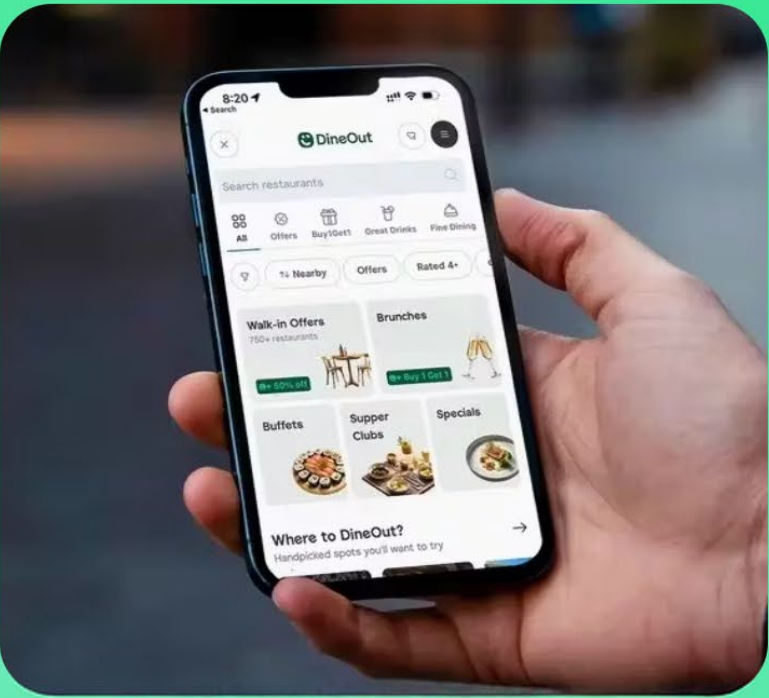
Refine data over time:

Connecting, collecting and optimising across inter- dependent teams.

Case study

Careem:

Using controlled experimentation to optimize discovery and conversion across platforms



Strategy:

Middle East super-app, Careem, aimed to improve cross-selling by testing how targeted media could drive grocery app engagement.

The brand wanted to understand the true incremental effect of performance media, and whether it could support a more sustained, always-on strategy.

Working with Adjust, Careem used audience segmentation identify users active in the app, but inactive in grocery.

Running incrementality experiments enabled them to get clear understanding of uplifts in discovery and conversion.

Outcome:

Controlled testing identified where performance media was driving meaningful results, enabling the brand to scale:

Sample uplift data showed:
5.9% – 25% lift in grocery discovery
15.4% lift in first orders

Control and test groups showed conversion rates, which highlighting where results were consistent and where investment might need to be refined.

These insights gave Careem the confidence to adjust its strategy based on evidence, not assumption.

Key takeaways:

Optimization starts with understanding impact: Careem used a structured, progressive test-and-learn approach to review performance.

Controlled experiments provide clarity: Incrementality models isolated genuine lift, supporting informed decisions on investment.

Effective optimization requires nuance: By identifying the variations across operating systems, Careem could tailor their future approach to platform-specific performance.

View from the industry

Evolving and adapting are mindsets to adopt in a world where change is the only constant

“Utilizing AI-driven tools to predict customer behavior and optimize campaign performance is one factor in future-proofing measurement. New privacy regulations will continuously reshape how we measure effectiveness, so it's becoming more important to invest in first-party data, structure it correctly, and build measurement systems that can evolve with new technologies. Adapting to change and staying current with industry trends is crucial.

Ali Yilmaz
Co-CEO,
SEM, Turkey



“The digital landscape changes very quickly, so we have to be able to quickly adjust our strategies, measures and measuring tactics, to vary our response to new platforms, technologies and consumer trends. You need to test and learn, and sometimes retest again until you have really good measurement results.



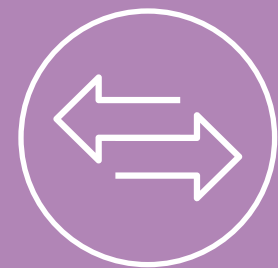
Efsun Janset Yilmaz
Deputy General Manager,
Boyner Büyük Mağazacılık,
Turkey

“Measurement should be an iterative process, constantly refined as consumer journeys evolve. Over the past few years, they have become increasingly more and more complex based on the multiplication of digital channels and touchpoints. It's not about relying on 'one right way' to measure impact, but about comparing different attribution models and coming to a conclusion about what works best for specific categories or customer types.



Stanislaus Brunais
Marketing Director,
Ounass, Dubai

Closing the loop, from challenge to solution



Addressing the measurement paradox

Brands have an opportunity to move beyond short-term metrics and build measurement systems that support real growth. By shifting focus from isolated lower-funnel indicators to a full-funnel approach, businesses can better connect brand building with commercial success. **The future belongs to those who balance measurement of long-term impact alongside short-term gains; so measurement reflects the true value of marketing today.**



Overcoming an era of overload

Brands that simplify their approach can gain a competitive advantage. Instead of being overwhelmed by fragmented data and ever-evolving platforms, **businesses can build stronger connections by being single-minded on what truly matters; shared objectives, alignment across teams, and a flexible system that “accepts the chaos” and evolves alongside consumer behavior.**



Leaning into agility

Customer journeys are unpredictable. The best systems are understood, trusted, and flexible. Instead of chasing precision, businesses should **focus on the GRO framework, which provides a structured way for brands to assess their measurement capabilities, and to prove, improve, and scale their way to confidence in their measurement and attribution results**

View from the industry

A final word on the future



It's always better to take a step back and embody the persona of the consumer or the target audience, understand how they consume media, how they react to brands, and then make sure that your approach to measurement is a reflection of that.

Elie Milan

Chief Performance Officer
Publicis Media MENA, Dubai



Accepting the chaos and accepting that you can't measure a neat path from dreaming to research to booking is key to moving past outdated promises of what digital measurement could deliver. What matters now is building a consistent set of tools and methodologies that are compatible enough to paint a picture of what's happening.



Matt Nelson

Senior Director Marketing Performance,
Miral Destinations, Dubai and Abu Dhabi



We make digital marketing too complex. We use too many acronyms. There's too much complexity, and we intimidate a traditional marketing set; we irritate as well with our jargon, with too much complexity. How do you simplify digital marketing in a marketing mix? That's a huge gap.



Sadika Fakir

Group Executive for Digital
and Media,
ABSA, South Africa

Who we are

At WARC, our purpose is to save the world from ineffective marketing by putting evidence at the heart of every marketing decision.

We believe that effective marketing is based on facts and not opinions.

Since 1985, we've brought confidence to marketing decisions through the most trusted research, case studies, best practice, data and inspiration.

Today, we help 75,000+ marketers across 100+ countries. Our clients include the world's leading brands, advertising and media agencies, media owners, research companies and universities – including the top-five largest agency groups and top-five largest advertisers in the world.

Learn more about WARC Advisory [here](#).

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About TikTok For Business

TikTok For Business is the leading platform for short-form mobile video that empowers businesses to connect with highly engaged and diverse businesses.

Our mission is to help brands **inspire creativity**, drive **joyful, impactful experiences**, and deliver **smarter** business results. TikTok For Business offers a suite of powerful products and tools to help brands **optimize their campaigns, build meaningful connections**, and achieve **tangible outcomes** across a variety of industries.

With global offices in **Los Angeles, New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Dubai, Singapore, Jakarta, Seoul, and Tokyo**, TikTok For Business is positioned to support brands worldwide.

Find out more about **TikTok For Business** [here](#).

