STRATEGY FORMULATION AND PLAN

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LESSON 1: ANALYZING A DIGITAL STRATEGY
So, what we are going to talk about here today is an organization strategy. So, what does that mean? It means what does the organization stand for, what is its value, what is its purpose? And examples could be maybe an organization is here to sell a particular product. They're here to sell a particular service. And the thing every organization needs to think about is how to distinguish themselves from anywhere else, anybody else who is doing this in the market. And why that would matter, why would people care about it.

So, there's a couple of steps to do that is to understand, “Okay, so how do we stand out? How do we differentiate ourselves in the market? What is our purpose?” Once you have a purpose, a goal, and an objective, that's when you can start thinking what to define my purpose. Say, my purpose is to sell a particular product and to provide a service really well for my customers. In that instance, you would then start thinking, “Okay so what are the key initiatives that are coming in within my organization that I need to prioritize and then allocate resources to it?” Because in a real-life business, you would always have brilliant ideas, and they could all be good ideas, but most of them couldn't be implementable. So then you need think which one is a good idea and how much benefit is this going to deliver versus the cost I'm going to spend on them. And accordingly, you prioritize your resources to that particular objective.

The third thing you would then need to do is where do you stand as an organization from an internal capability and an external environment. And by that, what I mean is, say for example, the world around an organization is not static. So, the world's moving on, the market's moving, the economy is moving, the competitors are moving, technology is moving. So, along with all of these moving parts, you kind of constantly need to understand, “Okay, am I ready for innovation? Am I ready for five years ahead of time? Whatever new innovation is coming in the industry? Am I coping myself? Am I doing research? New products? New challenges? So that I am ready for this new innovative techniques that's coming in five years' time.” So that's getting prepared for the external environment. At the same time, you need to analyze your own internal capabilities and need to think, “Okay, have I trained my people? Have I given them their expected skills? Are they capable enough in a technical and a managerial way, in a leadership way, to lead this organization?” So that's our third point.

Our fourth point would then be that once you have assessed internal and external, you kind of need some definite goals. So, going back to my example of where your objective is to sell a product and deliver the best value to your customers, you kind of need to think, “Okay, what are three ways I can do that?” Maybe one of the ways could be to give them a seamless customer journey. Make it easy for them, make it hassle-free for them. And so, ensure that this is not a difficult decision to take when they're in a purchase process. So they could be a couple of your goals. Once you have the goals, the next thing would be, “Okay so at the top level of the organization you have the goals. How do you then provide a direction to the different parts of the organization, the different business units? And how would you then make that goal or that strategy be tangible, so that each division has its own outcome, which is measurable, and you can review that against that goal? And then finally, what you do is understand, “So how do I now put all of these targets and the goals and then how do you work towards itself and review from time to time whether you have made progress against these goals?”

And I think the key thing to keep in mind is as you're making progress, let them be incremental rather than big leaps because as the market and the industry is moving forward, you constantly need to innovate, see your results, and then think, “Okay, is this too late for the market?” And then kind of take the next steps. So that's, in a nutshell, what strategic planning is all about.
The next component that we are going to discuss is Digital Strategy. So, linking back to an organization that’s there, and it has its overall strategy and its purpose, then if you dig it down to a digital strategy level and we are here to contact our customers digitally and send them communications to be of value to them. What are the three steps that it would consist of?

The way I structured this is the first would be to ensure that your digital strategy has a permission, and has an acceptance at an executive level because if you are trying to embed something within your division, you would want your executive to give support to that. So ensure that’s one that’s joined up and got their support and stakeholder approval. And then the common pitfall that happens is when we are trying to implement a digital strategy, say for email campaign, and there’s a different strategy that’s been tried against social media. Nine out of ten times, they are not joined up because departments don’t talk to each other. They work in silos. They imagine that their strategy or their campaign is the only campaign from a customer’s perspective. These are all different pieces of communications that a customer is receiving at different points in time. At the end of the day, all they see is one company. They don’t understand the different business divisions, so the key step is to remember how one digital strategy fits with the another and how do they work in sync.

And the final component of this is to understand how do you implement this in accordance with your change management strategies. So what that really means is you have a definite campaign and you have an overall strategy for your digital campaign, but then you need to think, “What are the few things that I need to think about? I need to think about resources. I need to think about my creative agencies. I need to think about my print suppliers. I need to think about my timelines, my costs.” You need to think about how to make it real, and actually deliver the desired outcomes.

Some of the value-outcomes that we would want to think about when we are designing a digital strategy would be some of the following examples. So first of all you think about how do you reach your customers, how do you increase your reach. You have a particular brand and product and your aim is that more people across different channels, multiple channels, across different geographies, locations, are aware of your brand and product. How do you do that? So, that’s probably one of the key reasons why people come up with digital campaigns, digital strategies. You think about the different channels so you can think about, “Am I thinking about my websites, my banners, my emails, my social, and how do all of them work together to increase my reach?”

The second key point while devising a digital strategy, you need to think about, “How do I improve my organization’s profit and my return on investments and the key KPIs that deliver value to my shareholders?” While doing that you will narrow down your profit matrix into key components. So you will think, “Okay, so I am devising a campaign, maybe that’s an email campaign, and you think about what will an email campaign do. Once it goes to a customer it will enable them to open the email, to click on the email and then maybe go to a website and come back to my own website and buy a product.” So, at the end of that, your aim is to increase and improve your product sales and show that if it’s a social channel you think about more people share and talk about your brand, improve the brand advocacy. So these are some of the key levers to improve the brand equity and who will improve your return on investment and increase your profit for your company.

The third thing that you obviously need to think about is, “What are the different insights? What do you know about customers?” Because if you come up with a digital campaign or a strategy which is just you thinking in a silo, then nine out of ten times it won’t be appropriate to what your customers want. So, organizations go through different levels of research and insight gathering exercises. Some of that could be they talk about customer research, where they do focus groups, they do surveys to
customers. They ask, “What do you want? Have you looked at our current email campaign? This is the product we have come up with. What do you think? Does it deliver value to you?” So that different ways they go to customers, they also gather and analyze this data and say, “Okay, is there something in the data that correlates?” Maybe it says that people living in London in postcode NW want a particular kind of product and they have an affinity to a particular type of brand. So these are some of the key insights that you drive. And how do you drive it? You have targeted your campaigns towards that customer, they have come back and clicked your emails or gone to your websites and actually bought your products.

This insight then helps you to optimize your digital strategy. As you do, one of the key things you will think is, “Okay, I will have so many digital campaigns. I’m targeting $2 million, $5 million. My bigger books of customers, there needs to be a level of automation and you think, “I can’t manually run my 500 emails in a month. I need a multi-step campaign; I need Facebook to be joined up with my email campaign. That needs to join up with my brand advertising, and they all kind of need to talk to each other, so there definitely needs to be some level of automation where the data from one feeds into the other. And the insights can help deliver your channels, to deliver your overall digital strategy.

Now we are going to talk about how to implement a digital strategy and there are several key points that you need to consider. The first of that is less resource wastage. So while you think about a strategy I think the key thing you need to think about is, “How do I deliver it?” So, what are my timelines, what resources internal and external do I need about it. I definitely do not want re-work, I want to reuse stuff inside that I’ve already got and that’s how you have an allocation plan where you allocate the key dependent projects, in a way, that you do not waste resource and don’t work on something that doesn’t end in the value you had expected to deliver.

The next would be, “How do you prioritize your objectives?” The way we would do it in a digital strategy, you kind of think, “Okay, so I am thinking about a campaign in the last CRM project that I’ve done. We have kind of thinking about a campaign, and there are several ways that we could contact our customers. So when we think about prioritizing based on value objectives, you think about what’s the most important. I can improve my retention. I can improve my sell rates so I can sell more products to them. While they have one product, I’m trying to sell them a different product from our portfolio, or I want to improve their brand awareness. These could be the three different outcomes or objectives that could be for my campaign. And you need to think about, “How do I prioritize that? What is more important?” At one time, you might want to structure a campaign in a way that you would focus on one key measure. And you structure a campaign in a way you work out your resources and timelines in a way that you deliver that key measure.

The third one you would think about is, “How do you get your ability to obtain resourcing and also your approval from senior stakeholder?” So you need to come up with a strategy, ensure you have a timeline, a cost, a plan and some key success criteria defined in that strategy. And then you need to work out, “How do you gain approval with stakeholders?” So maybe you’re doing a strategy in a marketing division. However, the benefits of this strategy would improve new business sales for another part of the business. So one of the key things you need to consider is which parts of the business will be impacted due to the benefits from this digital strategy. One of the goals would be how to take your stakeholders on a journey so you go have meetings with them, you tell them what’s in it for them, get their permission, and also ensure that they are bought in. So all you’re doing is warming up stakeholders bottom-up and top-down. So from an exec level down to your independent business division, at the same time, you’re working across different silos of the organization and ensure that everybody is bought in to your idea.
The fourth one you would think about is, “What could be the future? Any kind of problems or opportunities?” So when you’re coming up with a digital strategy, say, and you think about so maybe when I’m going ahead with this campaign maybe I have not thought about how customers will get in touch with me when they have a problem. So maybe I’m sending them an email, they’re going to a micro-site, but I haven’t thought about how would customers come back to me if they have any queries. So these are things you have not thought about, and this could be a problem associated with your campaign as you go through implementation. Again, things that people often forget to think about is, “What are the opportunities?” Maybe it’s an email campaign, where all you are doing is you’re trying to send an email to your customer to sell a particular product. However, at the same time there’s an opportunity where you tell them, “Hi customer, while I’m coming to you to talk about my brand and my product, I’m also interested. How do you think I can improve my service?” So this is a great opportunity because you get the permission to talk to a customer, you want to ask them about the service because they are already your existing customers. They know your brand, they bought your products, they would have some key golden nuggets about your service, what can you improve, what you do really well. So what it does, an email campaign, which was aimed at sales of new business, not only gets those metrics delivered, it also gets you valuable insight about how can I improve my service. So that is how you kind of optimize your campaign as you’re devising it and implementing it based on what other opportunities are there.

The fifth thing that we also need to think about is, as I’ve already mentioned, you need to destroy silos in the organization because otherwise, we would be devising a digital campaign at one part of the business and that might work in contradiction to the other parts. An example I would give is say, for example, a brand has gone through a brand portfolio strategy, a brand positioning, and the brand has a purpose where it has a unique feature in the market and what it does for its customers. However, if you’re not aware with that and you’re not talking about all the brand awareness campaigns that’s going on and you sit in your silo and come up with your social campaign, it would look very disjointed and what you would do is, the brand messaging and the social campaign’s objectives would be quite apart and they wouldn’t be leading to the same objectives.

So therefore it’s very important that you keep talking to each other. Say, for example, we are going out with a social campaign, we would definitely want to know, “What is PR doing in the market? What are they talking about? What customer problems are they solving? What research is going on?” So you would to know as much inside and break those barriers before you go ahead and come up with a digital strategy.

And the final point is you would try to stop any duplication so you would very clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities while implementing the strategy. Who is accountable for a strategy? Who needs to be consulted while implementing the strategy? And you would keep a transparency. I think the best way, from my experience, to do this is generally when you come up with a digital strategy, you gain stakeholder sign-off from different parts of the organization. But nine out of ten times, people forget that once the project is implemented, and there are different problems, different issues that come up, you kind of forget to keep the buy-in of your stakeholders.

The best way to have that transparency is to set up weekly calls, you set up monthly review meetings with your internal stakeholders, your external stakeholders. You call out the key risks and issues, and you take everybody on the journey and that would then give a voice to the rest of the business to have an active part in the strategy. So what would then happen is when the strategy gets implemented and you come up with business benefits, everybody would feel that they are part of that strategy and they have designed that strategy, and implemented it along with you. So remember to take everybody on a journey with yourself.
We will now talk about the SOSTAC process of implementing a digital strategy. So this process comes with some different steps in terms of how do you implement a digital strategy. So the first step would be the situation analysis. In this step, you think about the internal and the external factors that you need to consider. So you think about your internal capabilities. Are you ready? Are you technically and equipped to deliver the strategy? Do you have the right resources, the right skills and capabilities to work on this campaign, and deliver the desired outcomes? You then think about the external factors, so you think about what are your competitors doing? And is this the right time, right moment to implement this digital strategy, and would that really differentiate yourselves from the others? So you think about that.

You also do a bit of listening, so think about what your customers have told you in across different channels. They have given you feedback, they have given you insight. These are their pain points, so you think about all of that, and that’s the situation analysis part of it. The next part would be the objectives. So think about how does your digital strategy objectives fit in and marry with your overall organization’s objective, and of course they need to be in sync. So if your overall purpose is to deliver a hassle-free service, an easy service to your customers, your digital strategy should complement that, not kind of work in different directions from it. So that’s aligning your digital strategy objectives with your organization’s objective.

Then you think about your overall strategy. So overall strategy, while we are implementing this strategy, you think about, “Okay, so which other... how does my customers look like?” So you think about a different way of segmenting your customers, so maybe some customers are alike. They like very one-line messages in their campaign. Some customers will need a long email campaign which gives them gifts and hints and benefits and talks about everything they should be aware of. So there are different needs of customers, and accordingly the customers could be segmented based on their behavior, their needs, their attitudes. So think about the segmentation, you think how you would target them. And by joining this segmentation and targeting, you come up with your overall strategy.

And the fourth point we would think about is what would be your tactics. So how would you go about implementing the strategy, and what are the different steps you would think? How would you join up your objectives with your deliverables, and how would you implement this? And then finally you would say, “Okay, so from...” Once you know how you would do it, you think about what key measures do you want to dial up once you deliver the strategy. So think about the actions, and how would you benchmark it. So if you’re successful from this campaign, often what people don’t think about is, “Okay, what am I measuring again?” So what’s my control? Yeah? So what’s my control? So if I don’t send this audience an email campaign, how would they behave? So my control is a group of customers who might not send an email campaign. And my part of the group, the group of the campaign, people who received the strategy is my target audience, so I’m trying to measure the benefits that my target audience receive from this campaign versus the control group who haven’t had a digital strategy impact implemented on them.

And that’s overall the SOSTAC process of how do you implement a digital strategy.

Assessing Internal Capabilities

We would then need to think about how do we build up the digital skills and the knowledge within the organization, which would help us to frame a digital strategy and implement it. So there are different ways you could do that. You think about in-house training, and you say, “Okay, maybe I need to train my employees within the organization, and how do I do that?” So you think about
different training courses, and what are the skills I want them to develop. So for them to implement a digital strategy and to frame a digital strategy, the few key skills would be you would need some analytical capability, analytical skills, problem solving skills. So that they should be able to think about a problem, and then structure a way to address that problem, and then define smart measures so that they can understand whether their problem...whether their process is working on not. So that’s a very analytical, and a logical mind, so you think about that.

The second thing you would think about is they need to have some kind of experience and training in digital. So you would think about, “Okay, have they worked in any kind of digital tools? Have they got any digital graduation? Any diplomas in digital training? Have they worked with any searching and analyzing tools?” You think about that. And finally, you would think about is, “Okay, can they join all of these different information together? Can they look at data, analyze data and then understand and bring insights forward?”

So these are the three things you would consider. You would also think about, in terms of training, you would think about, “Okay, how do you improve people’s experience and on a real-time job?” So often what we do in organizations is when there’s a new employee in the organization, we do a mentor-mentee pairing up, where they work on a project together with somebody who is quite experienced and you receive feedback from your mentor. So you give them some examples of how you would do it differently. And that’s how they get the real-time feedback while actually job shadowing somebody in a mentor-mentee setup.

You also do employee service, so you ask your employees what do they think. So maybe they have been with the organization six months to a year. There are several organizations who do employ surveys to understand what does employees feel particularly engaged about. What would they like to change? What training would they want? What development would they want? And you ensure that you listen and you actually action what feedback comes out of these service, so that they’re more transparent and they’re more genuine about this.

You also think about building business excellence or knowledge centers, so you might have within your team there are experts. Somebody who has worked in digital marketing for years, somebody who is really good in a social tool, you would want to grow that expertise. So that over time you have different skill sets within the team, and you’re not relying on one person to lead the campaign, do the strategy, do the execution. Because that way, you’re not growing your team, you’re not building their knowledge and expertise.

And of course in addition to all of this, you would look or encourage people to do different diploma courses, different certificates, certifications, trainings. And I think from my experience, the best way to learn is where you know the theoretical angles about it, the tools, the structures, the strategy, but you actually do a digital campaign from start to finish. And you learn it on the job, you learn it through the real experience. Before you embark on delivering a digital marketing plan, you need to think about, “Am I geared up with the right resources? With the right team members who will help me deliver this digital marketing plan?” And I think the key way to do it you kind of need to assess and you understand what kind of skills would you require.

So from a long-term perspective, say you’re building a CRM team, you think, “Okay, I would need some kind of creative people within my team. I would need some data person because I need to get loads and loads of raw data, I need to analyze that and make sense of that and give me insight.” I would need some special people who have maybe statistics capability to kind of say, okay, when I join up this data and I then say which customers are behaving in a different way so that I can then target better targeted campaigns to their customers. So you need to think about the different skills in
a team, and then appropriately you need to recruit and fill in the gaps and build knowledge centers.

So the few key ways to do this is you invest, you need to invest in the long-term learning and development of your staff. And the way organizations who are really best in it do it is they really, genuinely care and they are passionate about their people right from the exec level to the business division level. And that... I think that care and genuine desire to see your people stretch themselves and not be a mediocre person helps them devise their learning and development plan so that everybody is quite keen, takes their own learning and development in their own hands to come up with their development plans, and show that they’re progressing on the job, and at the same time they’re planning in terms of how to move forward. So I think that’s very key.

The second thing would be recruiting new staff. You want a team which is diverse in terms of their skills, diverse in terms of their thinking, and the way they approach problems and that would give you the strength of a well-functioning team. You would then think about, okay, so where there are gaps, like your team, you and your team might not be good at everything, and you might want to utilize the energy, the resource, the creative of third-party suppliers.

So you think about, okay, maybe I’m not so good at data analyzing, and maybe I want to outsource that or I want to take help of a third-party service who would then get my details of my campaign, my raw data. They would analyze it, and then they would provide me insights. And that’s the choice you make and the best thing to do would be you then benchmark, understand which service providers you would go with, do an assessment and then kind of sign up with the third-party service provider. What you would also do, you would kind of, while implementing a digital strategy or digital marketing plan, you think about your agencies. So we often work with different creative agencies, and some of them are really good with their creative ideas, their concepts, whereas some of them are really good with their CRMs. And you kind of want to leverage the best skills in each of these agencies and work with them as one team to ensure that you deliver the most efficient marketing campaign.

**Benchmarking Against Competitors**

Now we will talk about competitor analysis. So how do I... before coming up with a digital marketing plan, how do I compare my offerings and understand where I stand? So the key things you need to think about is first of all, you need to know about who your competitors are. And whichever industry you are, whatever product or service you’re offering, I think it’s very important to know not only a static view of your competitors, but a kind of dynamic view. Because every month, every week, every quarter, there are new entrants coming into the market. So if you might be thinking that, okay, these are my top three competitors, and I constantly look at them and review what they’re doing and trying to catch up, maybe you miss all the new entrants that come into the market. So think about your key competitors and the new people who are entering the market. Try to understand what their objectives are, and the best way you do it in real life is you go through the different... you know different tools, different insights, different research agencies which provide you information on a monthly, quarterly basis of, “Okay, how’s the market moving? How are your competitors doing? What have they come up with a new product or offering during Christmas time that you’re not aware of?”

Maybe they’re doing a new summer campaign, and they’re offering a special price discount you weren’t aware of. So try to look out and have a... create an avenue of constantly educating yourself and your team about the market and the competitors. Because if you do not, then you’re constantly lagging behind and you’re not in the game. Then you need to think about is what’s the competitor’s strategy? So, again, it’s a hard one, because you don’t see it published in a public domain, so you have to understand through their activities what could be their strategy. So maybe a particular
competitor is focusing on giving different price discounts, they are doing different campaigns, they’re giving offers.

So you think about and through their activities you try to understand, okay, maybe this is a kind of promotion time for them. Maybe they’re trying to give different offers to attract customers and you look at the type of customers they are attracting. So there are different kinds of graphs, different kinds of data available in the market saying, “Okay, who are your competitors who are taking your customers away? Which customers are you taking away from your competitors?” So there are two ways of looking at this data. And by that you would know the different segments that your competitors are targeting. Then you think about is, you know, what are their capabilities. So how are they doing something that you are not capable of? And you think about “Okay, are the capabilities technological capabilities?” Because if they are, then you need to gear up your technological capabilities.

So say, for example, one particular competitor is allowing it...they are selling all different types of products and a customer can access their products in one place in an app. So you look at that and you think about, “Okay, do I have the technology, the skills to come up with an app?” And maybe I don’t, so what do I need to do? I need to bring in a team, bring in a group of people who have the relevant skills, who can think about the app strategy for my company. So as you progress on a daily, quarterly, monthly basis, you need to constantly understand your competitor’s capabilities, and then gear yourself up. And then the final thing you would do is what are the assumptions, and some of the advantages that the competitors have over you? And how would you kind of break these barriers? So you think about, “Okay, maybe a particular competitor is doing really well in a particular service they’re giving to their customers.” And you think about, “Okay, how do I provide that? And what are they doing it? And how they’re doing it?” So think about “Okay, is it their resources?” Maybe you’re lacking in resources, maybe you’re trimming up your resources. So I think overall, you need to constantly know about your competitors, know what they’re doing, benchmark them, and then help yourself gear up to stay ahead of the game.

So the next topic we would discuss is how do you benchmark. So how do you benchmark against your digital leaders? And there are different steps to do it. So you kind of think about the benchmarking would ensure that you compare yourself to competitors. So you see that in the previous slide we spoke about how do you compare yourselves and know where you stand in the market. You then identify your gaps. So you kind of say maybe we don’t offer a particular service, we don’t work on a particular channel, which other of our competitors are doing so there definitely is a gap. Because when customers come to us they will see that we don’t offer maybe a social channel. Our customers cannot talk to us on an online web portal.

So these are the gaps and you kind of think so these are my gaps, then you think about what are the improvement. So if these are my gaps what can I improve? And you kind of assess your internal and external capabilities, and think about these are the improvements I would bring about. Then you would think if I bring about these improvements, will that enable me to kind of leapfrog ahead of my competitors? And you will think about what kind of certifications would I do to kind of say this gives me an authority in the industry because I am certified. An independent group has assessed me and provided me with a certification. And then I think about by doing this activity now that I have benchmark myself. How do I enhance value for my customers? And there are several tools by which this principle of benchmarking against digital leaders, there’s several tools online that you could look up. So there is a Google search, there is cloud etc.

So what are the advantages of benchmarking? I think one of the key tools that industries use in the market is Google Analytics. So it helps you... Google Analytics is a tool which helps you look how are
you doing against your objectives. And how do you compare yourselves with the market with your competitor? So it helps you set meaningful targets. So kind of in Google Analytics, you can say I’m doing an email campaign and I want to see how long are people coming to my website. When are they clicking on my website? When are they opening my email, clicking my email going to my website? How long are they dwelling on my page? Which articles are they clicking? On a particular article how long are they reading that article? When they’re clicking on an article, are they sharing it with anybody else? So they are different. The whole customer end-to-end funnel you can be able to see by using tools like Google Analytics.

What you also do is you gain valuable insight and you kind of see trends occurring. So maybe while you look at your results to Google Analytics you see a particular group of customers are clicking on the email, opening it, going to the website, then they’re dropping off. So there must be something in the welcome page of the website that’s causing them to drop off. So you kind of look at these insights and then develop and optimize your customer journey. You also say how do I then compare against my industry. So maybe that kind of say an average dwell time on a particular article across your industrial is X percent and you look at your particular dwell time and you see that’s much lower than the industry. So you start thinking what are the factors that might influence? You also kind of look at how you’re doing with your competitors. So in Google Analytics you’re able to see a similar kind of organizations in your industry. What are their key KPIs, like email open rate, click rate, website dwell rate, the average view rate on an article? And you kind of compare these KPIs against your competitors. So it’s a very useful tool and it gives you an advantage of benchmarking.

So the importance of competitive advantage, as Jack Welch says, is “an organization’s ability to learn and translate the learning into action rapidly is ultimate competitive advantage.” So what it means is as I was saying that while you constantly need to innovate, you constantly need to learn and see how you stand in the market. And how do you stand against your competitors? You need to constantly be ahead of the game. So say, for example, you have invested multi-billion pounds on a system that’s going to give you the best of pricing, the best tools and the best of competitive advantage. But by the time this system comes in the market which may be five years down the line you’re already behind the curve. So you’re better off making incremental improvements and then constantly checking how far you have progressed rather than embarking on multi-million pound projects.

**Information Gathering**

Here we’re going to talk about how do you assess performance. So you think about the tactics you have used and how do the tactics work with the other tactics used within the organization. You think about the different channels. How do the channels online and offline work together? And what are the outcomes you’re expecting from these tactics? And do you deliver against your outcomes? And are you delivering the right return on investment? And that overall should give you a well-defined understanding of how do you assess performance.

In this slide, we are going to talk about how do you analyze your digital activities, and how do you utilize your past activities to inform your future key strategies. So in a kind of direct marketing world, in a CRM world, the way we do it is we look at our KPIs the same time last year and kind of say was there any seasonality. You think about in the last 12 months if you have done exactly same campaigns in the current 12 months you kind of think about what factors to consider. That could be seasonality. That could be that as an organization you have delivered different strategies. Maybe you have changed your price, maybe have given different offers. So you need to think about the different components that are impacting your strategy and how do you then pull apart the impact of your campaign, of your digital strategy from several factors that are influencing your overall performance.
So here we are going to focus on the current digital activities and understand their benefits. So you think about the portals value chain as we talk about. So there are some primary parts of the organization, primary activities, and there are some secondary activities. So when you think about an organization what are your primary activities? Its sales, operations, its logistics, its marketing, these are some of the primary activities that an organization needs to do to sell its product or service. And some of the secondary activities could be the firm’s infrastructure, maybe human resources, maybe its central office, its technology, its procurement. So some kind of other functions which help support the primary activities. And kind of it’s important to understand how do the different parts of the organization work together to deliver the benefits of a digital activity. And how do you deliver the margin from a digital activity?

In this slide, we’re going to talk about social listening. So what is social listening all about? In a generation where we are kind of in a network, in a social network. It’s a generation of Facebooks, Twitters, Google. I think social listening is a big place to play in marketing. And what we mean by that is companies, organizations constantly sit on their social channels and try to understand what customers are talking about them. And this could be completely you’re not sitting with an objective to listen to customers, but it could be random. So maybe a particular organization has launched a campaign and there are lots of comments on the Internet, on Facebook where the customers are talking about the campaign. There are some good comments and there not so good comments. So what one of the key things for organizations these days you would want to kind of listen to customers on these social channels and ensure that you work on them. So say for example, in a consultancy I’ve worked before where they were trying to sell a particular brand of product. Their customers told them that they would want these kinds of offers. So immediately what they did is they pulled the campaign and changed the offers because they heard their customers and understood what they really wanted.

So social listening is extremely powerful and there are different tools in the market like cloud, Google Analytics, and several other social tools and just look up online to kind of understand what these tools do. But the summary is it gives you a forum to listen to your customers utilizing the social channels, answer questions, get key insight that would help you to drive and optimize your strategy and improve your campaigns.

So what’s the benefits of social listening? And in the slide, we’re going to talk about the different benefits of social listening. So I think one of the key benefits is it strengthens your market knowledge. So it helps you to understand when you’re launching a campaign, when you’re doing some kind of new changes to your website, when you’re coming up with a new TV ad. You want to understand how your audience or how is the market responding. So in social as you as soon as you come up with a new campaign you see people sharing, people liking it, people having a big footprint on the social world. And that helps you understand the impact of your campaign.

The second thing you would do is kind of understand how do you then utilize this insight to kind of... take key insights from this and improve your strategy. So you kind of say customers have said that this particular service or this particular campaign is part of the campaign it’s not working, we don’t like it, we don’t like the comments or the other communications you have used. What you could immediately do is to change your campaign, change your comps, change the offers that you’re doing. And kind of ensure that you go back to the customers and respond positively.

Again there could be situations where something blows up. Maybe an organization has not kind of reacted to a customer’s query or pain point quite appropriately and that blows up on a social network. So the next thing that organizations do is they have to demonstrate that they have listened to their customer, they have kind of understood the pain point, gone back and provided this service
and delivered value. Because on the social network it is so powerful that one single customer could kind of have a bad experience and that bad experience could actually cause a big detriment to a brand and spread across the network in kind of a few minutes, few hours.

The third thing people do is enhance their customer service utilizing the social listening. So there are organizations and marketing organizations that I have worked in where they utilize their social channels and listen to what their customers say, and they’re after coming up with better customer service. So kind of where customers have said, when I call you up there’s a long queue and people don’t answer the calls. When they answer the calls, they don’t understand my requirements. So you then think about these are the pain points. So how do I improve my service? How do I improve a product that I’m sending to a customer? Maybe the logistics side of it is not working. So it gives you different insights and golden nuggets to improve your customer service.

And the final point is you kind of... social listening ensures that you kind of know who your advocates are. So when your brand is really powerful and customers like it that talk about it constantly, they hashtag it, they are advocates, they spread your brand and that’s word of mouth is extremely powerful. At the same time, you would want to know where customers are really not happy about your product or service. And you would want to go back to them firmly with a response which is timely rather than allowing it to blow up on a social network. Because that would be really damaging for your brand.

Now, we’re going to talk about industry insight in a digital activity. What are the sources of industry insight? So you kind of have different tools in the market where you can find about what are the industry trends. So maybe if you’re insurance, if you’re in banking, you’re in retail you kind of see what other new innovations in the industry. What are the key factors, the key way is the industry... there’s a price match going on in the industry? What kind of offers is the industry coming up? And there are different tools that you use in the market. So you could look at industry reports like Forrester and Gartner, you could look at Google surveys, you could look at a different kind of reports, the market reports that come out. Which shows is the market stagnant, is the price improving, is there some inflation problems, what’s the economy doing. It also talks about what are the key trends of your industry. So say if you’re in a retail industry, maybe the key trend of a retail industry at that point in the year is they are doing different promotions, maybe they’re doing price offers, they’re doing price matching. So you kind of need to be aware of the direction in which the industry is moving and what your competitors are doing so that you’re constantly kind of progressing at par with them.

**SWOT Analysis**

So one of the key things we talk about while working on a digital strategy is a SWOT analysis. And a SWOT analysis focuses on four key things. So talks about your strengths, it talks about your weaknesses, the opportunities, and threats. And I think it’s very important that every organization while coming up with its digital marketing plan it knows and has done SWOT analysis in some form of the other. And by that, you would know what you’re really good at. So what are the strengths of an organization? Maybe you’re really good at mobile communications. Maybe mobile is your channel and you’re really good at that because you are sending about communications. You get a good response. You can send one communication. You can talk to your customers really easily. So that might be your strength. Your weakness might be that your email and social channels don’t talk to each other. So what would you do? So when you are doing a mobile strategy you need to ensure that, that same strategy is reflected across your other channels.

If you know about your weaknesses, you can do something about it. You can come up with a plan to kind of link the channels when you come up with a campaign. You then think about also what are the
opportunities. And as I have previously mentioned that there are opportunities maybe at the start of the campaign when you have defined the brief, when you have worked with your agencies to come up with a plan, you haven't identified any opportunities. But as you go along there are new opportunities coming up with a campaign that you have devised. So think about while I'm sending somebody an email campaign is there other ways, is there other things or other valuable insight that I could count. Maybe I could ask them, okay, I could form a view of their behavioral pattern. So maybe I would want to know what kind of brands they prefer, what kind of offers do they like. Do they like to go for holidays? And that would help me tailor the kind of offers I would do for them. But that wasn't your primary focus. This is an opportunity you have identified during the campaign to gain insight for your future campaigns.

And always think about the threats. So there could be that you are used to selling one particular product and a particular service. So however, you never thought about a different company is coming in and selling this product as pay as you go. So people don't think about people, about new innovations in the market, and people don't think about that the same product can be bought in a different way. Maybe there's the need for that product is dying out. So think about the innovations that are happening in the market, and those could be a potential threat. So the key thing going to be to be constantly aware of your strength, weakness opportunities and therefore kind of staying ahead of the game.

We are going to now review our SWOT analysis in a customer-facing situation. So while we spoke about SWOT analysis at an organization level, it's always important that you know where your strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats stand in a customer-facing position. So what you would do is start with a customer list and kind of do some kind of profiling on them to understand, you know, so what's the age of our customer typically, you know, which area do they live, what are their household income, say for example. And there could be different attributes by the way you could profile your customers. Start with that and then you might want to... you might identify some particular target groups or segments that you would want to go out to understand or do a survey to understand your strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats.

So there are different kind of surveys that are in space, you know, people do focus groups, people do open-ended surveys, they do research, they kind of give a survey on a paper to customers, they do surveys online. They kind of invite a group of customers, a forum where they have customers or prospective customers coming up and talking about one another and kind of giving feedback. And by doing that, you would know, you know, what are customers thinking about your product or service. What are the key areas where they distinguish themselves? What do they think about your brand and what are some of the weaknesses and opportunities there?

You would also see that there, customers talk to themselves naturally, so there are forums where you could create and see, maybe customers talking about a Christmas campaign that's done by one of your competitors. So these are avenues where it would help you to learn what are they thinking about your competitors and is there an opportunity there. So always kind of ensure that you review your SWOT in a customer-facing or customer-centric way so that you're aware and listening to what your customers are saying.

The next thing we would talk about is how do you review your SWOT analysis. And you would constantly want to evaluate it and review it in maybe a quarterly, in a half-yearly basis, and kind of ensure that it is current and it is fit for purpose. So what you would do is what are the things that could impact your SWOT analysis. So you need to think about, okay, maybe the market changes, maybe the way that people used to buy a retail product, say milk and food is different. Now people don't buy milk and food, say by going to a shop. Maybe they buy it online, maybe their refrigerator
orders it for them. So that’s... what is it? That’s a buying pattern changing which means the market is changing. People are no longer buying groceries going to retail shop. So that you will need to be aware when such changes happen.

You also need to be aware when there’s a change in target audience. So maybe, you know, like in 10 years, 15 years ago, people didn’t consume advertising on multimedia. People are now constantly switching between channels, so people are starting to look at an ad on a TV then they wanted to... they started on a tablet, then they move to a mobile phone. So they are constantly moving between one device to another. So, what is that? That’s a difference in the behavior of the target audience, which means historic methods of doing TV advertising is changing. People are no longer wanting to be served TV ads [on a] constant basis. They want to watch ads the way they like to watch, so they might want to pause an ad. You might want to serve individual ads to people based on their needs. You might want to serve an ad to me versus a different ad to somebody else, and my preference is I want to watch an ad at 8pm, somebody wants to watch an ad at 7am while he is having breakfast. So there’s a different way customers are consuming content, consuming the way they’re browsing channels, the way they’re buying product, they’re buying service is changing. So, of course, you need to evaluate your SWOT analysis as soon as on a quarterly, periodic basis, that you are kind of in tone or in line with those changes.

And thirdly, you kind of also need to think about, okay, you know, maybe there have been changes in the way the websites have been designed. Websites don’t work the same way, the way people are buying are no longer the same, the markets change, the target audience has changed and also the kind of changes have been made to the web traffic. So considering all of these factors, you need to consistently review your SWOT and ensure that your strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats are appropriate at that right time and for the right customer.

Here we need to think about who our priority audiences are. So in an organization, you would, of course, have hundreds, thousands, millions of customers. So you will need to think about how do you segment those customers and put them into buckets based on their profitability. Because, again, you wouldn’t have a one-size-fits-all approach, so you would have different needs and different behaviors of different segments. And you might want to know, okay, who are your top priority segments? So who are your customers or groups of customers where if you focus your marketing budget or your digital strategy, digital marketing spend, you would get the maximum benefit? So once you have thought about that, those are the customers you target. So basically they are our most profitable, most valuable customers and you would want them to stay with you, not to churn, so that you don’t spend more money acquiring them the next time. So the key thing would be to identify these priority audiences based on some measures, maybe profitability, maybe the value they bring, maybe the return on investment, maybe how long they are staying with us.

So there could be different KPIs in which you prioritize your audiences. So then you need to also think about how do you rank your priority audience and the two factors that you need to think about while you rank them is the value they deliver. So are these audiences delivering the best number of sales or the highest profit? So what is the value they are bringing in? Or maybe they’re staying with me for longer. So maybe a customer is loyal to me. They are staying for me for 10 years. Therefore, I don’t need to spend as much money retaining them or going to bring in external customers, so that’s the value they’re delivering. Also, you need to think about for a digital marketing plan is accessibility because as you think, you know, one primary need is people should be able to consume your media in a digital channel. So people need to access, they need to have the internet, they need to have a tool, a TV or tablet or mobile to access your email campaigns, your website traffic. So, accessibility is another key criteria and you need to think about these criteria while you’re prioritizing your audience.
because if they don't do one or the other, you wouldn't put them in the priority bucket and you wouldn't spend your marketing budget on these audiences.

What we also do is we come up with something called an audience persona and what you mean by that is there is a different way customers behave and you can create almost like an image of a customer. That image can be based on, you know, their demographic information, so maybe their age, their gender, their height, weight, etc. It could be decided by where they live, you know. The income...the amount they earn, the newspapers they read. Or it could be based on motivations, you know. What motivates them? Maybe somebody really likes, you know, going for ski holidays. Maybe somebody is really interested in adventure sports, somebody’s really interested in a spa day. So there’s different ways you can create your audience personas and there are agencies that are specialists in the market to help you do that because creating this audience persona is very important because then you know, “Okay, so for this particular group of customers, this is the language I’m going to use because this is my customers who like, you know, they like long communications, they like to read their content, they want to mull over it, they want a bit of hand-holding, they want people to give them the assurance that they’re here to be looked after.”

And there could be another different audience who say, you know, they’re really net-savvy, they know exactly what they want, they’re quite to the point, they do their own research and they can exactly serve themselves by going online. So you don’t need a customer helpline for them, you don’t need to call them. So this is the way you tone or you tailor your messages, your campaigns based on the different segments or different audience personas you have created by doing “A Day in the Life of,” demographic information, you know, preferences, etc.

Okay, now as we spoke about audience persona, you also need to think about what channels you would target these audiences with. So there are different ways, you know, people are consuming content in different ways. Now there could be a group like under 18 to 25 who, say... who are constantly on, you know, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat. And all and every one of them is they are in a world where they are on this, you know, on this social network and they are constantly consuming information, digital media, they are sharing with their friends, they are forming a network, they’re creating likes. So what marketing advertisers and marketing organizations need to be is [they] need to be able to create content where you tailor this content for these audiences, where maybe it’s user-generated content, maybe you do a campaign where you tell customers to provide photos or selfies of themselves on Valentine’s Day. So maybe that really energizes and tells your audience that they are a part of the campaign and that might be more suited to an under 18 to 25 rather than over 50s. So, again, you need to think about, you know, which channels are these audience personas using and how are they consuming content. What are their preferences? What is their day-to-day pattern on the internet?

Then you think about, say users 25 to 40, maybe they’re looking about you know...they’re looking on LinkedIn, Facebook. Maybe they’re using multi-channels, they’re moving from one media to the other and you need to think about, “Okay, how do I ensure that they are...they see my campaign, whatever they are seeing in a banner advertising while reading a newspaper, they’re seeing exactly the same, similar kind of messages through my email content, through my Facebook content.”

Again, you kind of think about users over 40, you kind of think, “Okay, is that what is appropriate for them? Maybe users over 40 I need to split them into different buckets, maybe I need to do...maybe a direct marketing campaign, a digital campaign for my over 40s which say something different from my digital campaign for 50 to 65.” Again, you need to think about the preferences, the behavior, and the way they consume content across different channels and age groups, and accordingly, tailor your campaign.
LESSON 2: DOCUMENTING A DIGITAL STRATEGY
So in the first part where we define the digital objectives, they need to be SMART. What that means is they need to be specific. So if you keep your objectives or your targets quite vague the risk is that you don’t know what you’re aiming to achieve. And therefore your team doesn’t know what they’re delivering, and how they will be measured, and how would we attribute the success. So therefore come up with some specific targets. So, of course, when you have a specific target they need to be measurable. So whatever your targets are, you need to have some KPIs against that. So when I’m successful in a campaign I’m going to measure this X KPI to understand whether I’ve been moved...able to move that X KPI by Y percentage, by 1%, say, for example, to understand whether my campaign is a success. Then those...then you also need to understand whether these objectives are actionable. So once you specify them and you have set up some specific measures against them, you need to have some tangible action plans to say, “Okay, to deliver these objectives I would have these action plans to implement my strategy.” And then you would kind of review the results and kind of put it into action.

So these SMART objectives is extremely important for a digital objective. And I think the definitions or the examples we use in kind of from my experience would be say, for example, for a digital campaign you would say “I would improve my retention rate by 1%.” And that is a SMART objective and you’re saying, “I’m going to improve my retention rate from 1% over a period of six months.” So what you would have to do at that point is you would say, “Okay what’s my baseline retention rate? That is maybe 70%. I’m going to move that by 1% point.” So as a result you have to be quite clear about where you stand, your baseline, and then you kind of define your objectives and you set a SMART criteria for it. What we’re going to talk about now is how do you kind of gain organizational support to kind of implement a digital strategy. So you think about...the first part of this is kind of you need to share the information. So a critical part of this is you need to communicate the vision. So when you have a kind of organization vision and a digital strategy you kind of need to talk to.

So a key part of how we do this is we go to different kind of key forums within the business, where senior stakeholders are there to present the strategy to gain their buy in, to ask questions, to kind of ensure that you are taking people with you on the journey. The second thing you would do is you kind of personalize tasks. So once you’ve communicated the vision you have ensured that everybody has bought in to the vision from top down and bottom up then in your individual business unit, you then personalize tasks. So you allocate tasks to different resources and you say, “Okay, X task needs to be done by Y person over four weeks.” And that’s how you allocate a task.

What you also need to do is as the task is progressing you need to follow up. So you need to check, okay, have you actually...how far have you delivered the task. What are the gaps that are there and how are you going to follow up? If you haven’t completed your task what are the actions you would take to complete the task? You would also think about, you know, are there any resources or any people within the organization who are offering resistance. Because you would want to deal with those resistances upfront rather than waiting for them. So say, for example, a particular business unit is not bought into your digital plan and they come up with objections why you shouldn’t launch the campaign. Your first objective would be to have meetings, to have discussions preferably face to face to understand the reasons why they’re objective and kind of come up with tangible descriptions in terms of how are you going to meet their needs. That way you’re nipping this resistance in the bud, and not letting it grow up and then maybe derail you just closer to your launch.

And at every point you need to listen to feedback. So I think a successful organization is one who’s ready to accept mistakes. So people think about different campaigns, different big projects, multi-
million pound, where they embark on a project, maybe done that for a year or two years and realized that there are areas in that which are not working. You should be honest enough with yourself and with your organization and with your employees to accept feedback, listen to it, pause and then respond accordingly, maybe take a different step in your campaign that you haven’t thought about.

The next slide is all about SMART criteria. So when you’re setting up objectives you need to think about who am I targeting? So if you think about say for a particular digital campaign that I’ve worked on maybe I’m targeting to over-50s customer. So these are over-50s people. Maybe they’re pensioners. They’re retirees. Maybe they stay alone. Maybe they’re empty nesters. Their children have gone away. And what am I targeting them with? So maybe I’m targeting them with a communication where I’m talking about their specific needs and what they would like to want from their product. Yeah. Then I need to think about, okay, when am I active? Is my campaign going to be an always on? Is it going to be a seasonal campaign? Is it going to an offer-led campaign operating in particular times of the year? And what am I offering?

So then I need to think about, okay, what are these particular segments of customers who are over-50s interested in. Maybe they’re interested, say, in a treat for two, kind of evening tea. Maybe they’re interested in bottles of wine. So my offers that I would link with my campaign would be based on their needs, and what they would like to do. And then you need to think of the overall objective and kind of say, “Okay, from this campaign what am I looking to deliver?” Maybe I’m trying to improve my sales for my over-50s customers and I want them to stay with them. Maybe I want them to go more on the Internet and buy my product. Maybe I want them to talk about my brand on the different channels and improve my brand advocacy. So you need to think about all of this while you’re structuring and coming up with objectives.

Now, we’re going to talk about, you know, measurable objectives. So you need to think about how can you make your objectives measurable. So think about the quantity. So say, for example, if I’m saying, “Okay, I always used to sell one product per customer. However, I wanted to improve it. So I want to buy... not only sell them my primary product. I also want them to cross-sell my secondary product. So that’s a definite quantity. So I want to say per customer I want to improve the product holding by two products. So that’s a quantity. You then need to think about the quality. So maybe you think about, “Okay, what kind of service do I deliver?” Maybe I deliver a service which is a hassle-free service, a painless journey. When a customer comes to my website they should be easily able to find their product. They can click on the product and they buy it. Their product gets delivered within...whenever they want, maybe over a day. So that’s the quality of service. And you kind of think about, “Okay, what’s the cost of doing this?”

So when I’m thinking about the quantity and the quality of service that I’m offering what does this come with? So how much money am I spending on it? So these measurable objectives help you to define SMART criteria for your campaigns. So while you’re thinking about the SMART criteria you also need to think about the available resources. So you need to think about, okay, do you have enough people in your team. Do you have the right skills? And how many resources do you need? Do you need external resources? Do you need agencies? Do you need internal? Do you need to work across teams? Maybe you need cross-function collaboration, so maybe a person within marketing and a person within a product team need to work together. In that case, you would need buy-in and support from their division heads. So think about the availability of resources and how much of their time you would need, what kind of scooping out needs to be done, what kind of hands-on time needs to be done. So think about that.

Think about what’s the timeline. So be realistic about your timeline because when a problem is quite vague you don’t know what you’re trying to achieve. It takes some time structuring that problem, to
kind of define specific measures and outputs, and then you kind of say, “I will then turn it into tangible outcomes for the project.” So that’s how you define a project timeline and you kind of put measures and checks at every point saying, “Maybe my digital marketing plan... I’m going to review every few weeks. I’m going to see how am I doing against my key success criteria. I’m going to share that progress with my stakeholders.”

What you also need to think about is your team skills. So do you have the right people in the team? So maybe you have a creative person who’s really good at writing a creative, writing a copy, coming up with the design. Maybe you have a social person who has worked with social tools, has experience with social. But maybe you don’t have a data person. So think about how you’re going to complement your skills. Are you going to recruit? Are you going to go externally? Are you going to look for other divisions to come and support you? And how are you going to get the appropriate skill to support this program?

Now, we’re going to talk about the timeliness of SMART criteria. So you would need to kind of work out saying, okay, these criteria, these objectives that you have set up, is this indefinite? No, surely not. So maybe they are the criteria for today and in three weeks’ time. In a month’s time, your criteria might change. So how are you going to constantly stay on top of these criteria, review them and ensure that you’re optimizing them based on how the market and your competitors are moving? So say, for example, you have launched a campaign, a through the line marketing campaign, which is using all channels to talk about your new product or service. And maybe this is a campaign that is going to go out for the next six months.

Now, you’ve defined the campaign. You have come up with its timelines. You have allocated resources and have launched it. But what we need to do is constantly monitor it. So you monitor it today. Maybe in two weeks’ time you see something else has happened. Maybe the government has just come up with a higher interest rate and your campaign has some impact because of this say higher interest rate. So you need to constantly learn and change and optimize your campaign. Maybe there’s a flood. So if there’s a flood people aren’t able to kind of... people are not thinking about that so maybe you need to talk about some kind of topical content in your campaign at that point. So the key objective of this is to constantly review your criteria from today into a couple of weeks in a month’s time, and constantly optimize that based on your market and competitor changes.

So watch out for, you know, say, a particular customer is complaining because they haven’t got a product that they had asked, the quality of the product that they had bought is bad and they’re complaining on a network, on Facebook. So what you would want to do as an organization is listen to that complaint, understand it, look into it, investigate it, ensure that you make that customer satisfied and kind of nip it in the bud. You wouldn’t want that complaint to go viral and therefore damage your brand advocacy, your brand awareness where people are associating your brand and your product with not delivering a good customer service. Then we would talk about SMART criteria objectives. So whenever you have a digital marketing plan you would need to define some target date for completion.

Saying, “Okay, I’m going to deliver this campaign over the next... it is going to take me two and half months to devise a strategy to build it and then deliver my campaign.” So you need to define a target date for completion. Then you need to think about “Okay, what can I do today to reach my goal?” So you need to think about, “Okay, today I need to kind of first of all come up where I stand, you know. What are my strengths and weaknesses? What are my goals of this campaign?” You need to come up with those defined SMART measurable objectives. Then you need to think about, “Okay, as my plan is progressing and I’m implementing my campaign or my digital marketing plan, I need to think about, okay, how am I progressing? Do you think I will be able to meet my criteria?”
And maybe my criteria, as in my previous example, I'm saying is improve my product holdings. So I want to sell more products per customer. I want a customer to have multiple products. So you need to kind of constantly evaluate. So in three weeks' time, in a month's time you evaluate your success criteria. And you check how are you progressing. How are you measuring against your goals? And you say, okay, maybe we have got some feedback and insight from the campaign which is saying customers are actually dropping off in the funnel. They're dropping off during... once they have opened the email, gone to the website, looked at a particular content they're dropping off. So what do you need to do? You would have to change the design of your website. Maybe the way you've put the offers is too much deep in your website, and it's not visible to customers. So it's not giving them an incentive enough to buy your product. So you need to change your strategy, change and optimize your strategy as you're moving across the campaign. And then you think about, “Okay, is this fit for future?” So maybe it's delivering the results as of now. But would it really help me define my objective in future and what do I need to tailor? So you might kind of chop and change your design, chop and change the way your emails are looking. Maybe you need to send the follow up emails. So you need to constantly look out and optimize your strategy.

**Documenting a Digital Strategy**

Here we’re going to talk about documenting a digital strategy and what are the benefits of that. So whilst a strategy is mainly a way to solve a problem and you kind of come up with an approach, structure it, there are several reasons why you should document it. Because you don’t want the dependency of one person, and it’s one person’s vision. You want something which is documented, which is tangible and which has SMART measures. So that the rest of the business, rest of the team, can follow it and carry on. So the key benefits of documenting it, is helps with easy handover. So say resources are moving on. They’re moving on internally and externally. You would want to train your new resources that have come into the team on your digital strategy. So what you would want to do is you would want to document what you have done in the last six months, what’s your plan for the future, what are your strengths and weaknesses, which customers are you targeting and you would want to document all of that.

Secondly, is you would also want to document it for your third-party services. So, say, for example, you're working with your agencies, with your suppliers, and they are not privy to your organization strategy or your digital marketing plan. So you would want them to be quite tangible and written in a way that these external suppliers kind of understand your vision and your strategy and are kind of working towards the same common goals. They should also be available for investor reporting. So constantly an organization needs to report on its return on investment and profit to its shareholders. So your strategy needs to be documented so that it’s visible if ever required for audit purposes for investor reporting. It should also be visible for executive reporting. So whenever you are implementing a digital marketing plan you need to provide progress reports to your senior stakeholders, to the exec, in terms of how you’re allocating your budget, how are you delivering your success criteria.

And above all you, of course, needed to train your existing and your new staff. So there are several benefits of documenting a digital strategy. So what kind of documentation types exist in a digital marketing strategy? So, you know, that could be strategy document...overall strategy document. There are, you know, value propositions. So you can talk about, okay, what kind of propositions do I want to give to my customers? Do I want to give them a product, a service, a particular offering at their point of need? You also talk about, you know, your audience personas. So we have spoken about audience personas in the previous slides. So you want to talk about how do your customers look, how do they behave, how do they buy, and what is the journey they go through.
You also talk about your SMART criteria. So you have set in some specific objectives for your campaign. You talk about those objectives. You understand how you're performing against those objectives. Often you also need to do a SWOT analysis. So you do a SWOT with respect to your organization. You also do a SWOT in the lens of a customer, what a customer wants from it. And then you also have tangible implementation plans, which means you would have timelines. You would have cost. You would have the different ways in which you are going to implement the project. You will think about the whole fulfillment aspect of a campaign. Digital marketing strategy also consists of, you know, team member reports, executive reports and several such documents, which helps you understand the end-to-end strategy from an organization to a campaign level.

Here we are going to talk about the different components of a strategy document. So in a strategy document you talk about who are you targeting. So who is the strategy that you are aiming for? So what customers are you aiming for? How do they look like? What's their age? What's their demographics? What are their needs? So those would define your target audience. You would also talk about your competitors because you would need to know that when you implement the strategy how does it put you in a competitive advantage. So you talk about your competitors. You find out about their strengths and weakness, their innovation, the things they're doing better in the market, their gaps, opportunities, etc. You think about your strategic goals, so it defines your strategic goals in a structured and SMART measurable way, so that you know where the organization is heading for and you know what this particular strategy would help you achieve.

You think about your techniques. So what techniques would you use for your campaign? Would this campaign be just for an email channel? Is it going to work across email and social? Is it going to work email, social and maybe banner advertising? You think about the different channels it's going to operate in. What organizations also do is they do situation analysis. So they think about a particular customer need, a pain point, and imagine that maybe a customer has a particular need in a particular situation. How good [does] their product or service help them? That then helps them to troubleshoot this situation and come up with recommendation.

So in addition to that you also think about your content. So in a strategy document you often talk about, “Okay, now that I know who I am targeting, I know what my purpose is, what my key objectives is, what am I going to talk to them about? So what are my different comms? Maybe I'm going to dial up the comms for some audience. I'm going to keep it quite short and snappy for some. I'm going to do offers for some, seasonal offers, maybe always-on offers.” So different kinds of offers tailored for different audiences. And above all you would also think how to run this as a structured project with some specific timelines and deliverables, and any kind of risks and issues that you would want to take to your senior stakeholders.
LESSON 3: IMPLEMENTING A DIGITAL STRATEGY
## Evaluating Tactics

First topic is you need to consider the following factors when you’re selecting your tactics. So what do you think about the channel value? So when we talk about the channel value you think about the matrix you would want to influence. So maybe you want to improve your email open rate, click rate by X percentage point. So that’s your channel value. That is a definite measure for your channel. You also then think about the effort required.

So you think about, okay, to improve our open rate by X percentage point and my click rate by Y percentage point I need to do a campaign. I need to do digital marketing plan. And I need full resources for it. So I need to think about their salaries, my company overheads, my fixed costs to kind of optimize my cost per acquisition. So how much money, how much effort am I spending per customer that I’m acquiring? And that’s how you define the effort spent. You also need to think about the overall... how does it link in to the overall digital goals? So maybe we have a definite set of budget within the digital marketing team and you need to think about that I would need to improve my email open rate and my click rate by X percent to improve...to align with my digital goal. So you need to line up your email matrix open rate along with a digital marketing plan and you need to sharpen that, so that they are in sync.

You also need to think about the audience habits. So who are the key people you are targeting? What do they do? How do they consume content? Do they browse on different channels? Do they work on different devices? Maybe they consume while they’re traveling from one place to another. Maybe they’re not playing video with sound. You need to think about the different way your customers are consuming content. You also need to think about their demographics. So maybe you need to know, you know, what’s their gender, what’s their age, what are their shopping habits, you know, which particular brands do they like. You know, you need to think about what are the audience demographics, which postcodes delivered.

And then, finally, you need to think about is it relevant to my audience. So how relevant is this to my customers? Because these are the... this is my marketing plan and these comps I’m going to send to my customer on a particular channel which is accessible to them and would provide value to them. But is this relevant because say you do not want to send a communication about a family to a customer who doesn’t have a family. Maybe he or she hasn’t set up a family yet. You want to send something about, you know, children and bringing up children, and how to look after children, how to teach them...how to cope up with early years of a school. But you want to send that maybe to a new mother, maybe to a young family. So you need to make your comms contextual.

In this slide, we were going to talk about, you know, how do you calculate your value versus effort. So when we calculate value you need to think about, okay, there are different aspects you need to think about. So, say, for example, for a digital marketing campaign you need to think about, okay, are there any referrals? So what are the different ways customers are coming to my organization? Say I’m thinking about my website, yeah. I need to think about, okay, the different ways, different stages of the funnel. So maybe some people are just browsing on Google and putting the name of my company and they are coming to my website. Some people are coming just new visitors, so they are looking for maybe a retail product like who sells cameras and they’re kind of finding the name of my company and they’re coming to my website. So these could be my new visitors. Maybe I’m doing a campaign where I’m sending them a particular email. They’re clicking on that email, opening that, clicking that, going to the website and that’s how they’re coming to my website. Maybe I’m sending them some kind of direct mail campaign where there’s a link to my website. Maybe I’m sending them a social link.
So you need to think about the different ways they’re coming. You also need to think about, okay, how... so what can you improve? You can improve the referrals, so the word of mouth, you know, where people have been referred about my company through advertising. Yeah. You might want to improve your number of new visitors. You might want to improve your open rate, click rates of your email. You want to improve the number of impressions that a Facebook ad has created, a Facebook campaign has created. And you might want to improve your conversion rates. So, say, for example, you might want to say that I want to improve the number of people who are coming to my website and looking out for information about my product. I want to improve the number of people who are adding them to the basket and then finally purchasing them. So this is the kind of the value lens.

Then we talk about the effort lens. So when you think about the effort you need to think about what’s the total marketing budget? Yeah. So total budget for the company. How much budget is allocated to my particular division, to my particular channel? You then think about, okay, how many resources do I have? Okay. I need to think about their salaries, their bonuses. I need to think about any overhead costs, any kind of facility costs that I have. I also need to think about, you know, any kind of content. So maybe I have content. I have to source some offers. Maybe I need to give... with my campaign I need to give 100 offers on spa days. How much would per offer cost me? How many customers would get it? How would this work? Is this going to work as a lucky draw? Is it going to be a free for all? Do they need to go to a website and claim it? So I need to think about all of that to work out the total effort of cost of a campaign and then weigh it against the value I’m delivering. And to make it hurdle, to make it a proper kind of well-thought-through business case we should always aim to deliver more value than the effort you have spent. And that would give a fruitful business case to be approved by senior stakeholders.

**Implementing Tactics**

Here we’re going to talk about how do we implement the tactics.

So, say, for example, for a search engine optimization there are several ways that you implement a tactics. You look for...you know, you do keyword analysis, you say how many people have actually searched for what keywords. Are they’re looking when they’re looking for buying a washing machine? Maybe what are the keywords are they looking for? Are they looking for an effective washing machine, best washing machine, washing machine that’s fast, that cleans well? There are several words that they’re entering. So you kind of need to look at, you know, what keywords are they looking. You kind of need to think once they land on my website, what journey are they taking? Maybe someone is coming to the home page and then clicking to your product page. Somebody is going directly to your product page. Some people are looking for your price and your service messages. So look at the page optimization, then you think about, okay, you know, is that particular content I would want to target? So what kind of content? Maybe you’re driving traffic into a website, and you want to tailor your content based on the channel they have come in.

Maybe you want to do a specific content for a Facebook audience, so someone who has seen you on Facebook and linked on to your website. You want to do a specific competition for a Facebook audience. That they want to look at your product, like it. Maybe do a competition which is fun, which is user content generated. They share it with their friends. So all you are doing there for that particular channel is you’re improving brand advocacy. You’re making people talk in a community about your product or service. What you also do is you think about the link building. You think about how does it link to the other channels. Yeah. If somebody has come by Facebook can I put a Facebook link on my email campaign? Does the email campaign refer to the TV ad that’s gone out? So you kind of
want to implement the links between each channel. In this slide, we are going to talk about how do you roll out a tactics.

So you need to think about four key steps. You need to think about, okay, what are the tasks that need to be completed. So maybe you're coming up with a digital marketing plan for an email marketing campaign. So your task would be that... defining a strategy. Your task would be coming up with the concept for the email campaign, designing the concept, building the email, analyzing the results and deploying it. So those are the different tasks that you want in an email campaign. You, secondly, need to think about the timing for implementation. So if an email campaign is taking you six months you need to think about, okay, this is an email marketing campaign that's going to run from say January to August. Yeah. And you think, okay, I'm going to take about two months to make the campaign live to kind of create the creative, think about the full film, and work with my agencies to deploy them. So these are the key components of your timing plan and you should build on the dependencies of one task with the other.

Third, you need to think about, you know, who are the resources and have you allocated the resources based on the skills? Or are they... or have you given tasks to people who are not so good at that? And if you're doing that who's going to ensure that the task is accurate? And, finally, you would want to measure key metrics for measuring effectiveness. So say you have a marketing plan for different media channels, yeah, TV, social, email, banner advertising, SEO, PPC, etc. You would want to know, you know, how each of these channels have contributed to your overall marketing measures. And the best way to do is, you know, the attribution modeling. So you kind of have attribution method of measuring the effectiveness of each channel.

So you would think, okay, how do I know that the sales I have resulted is only because of my TV campaign? Has the TV campaign caused a halo effect on my customers who have received my email campaign, and how do the two work together? So there are different ways and methods and specialist in the market who does that.

**Strategic Outsourcing**

In this slide, we are going to talk about marketing outsourcing, so digital marketing outsourcing. So you would think about why do organizations outsource. And there are different reasons and which are the parts of marketing that you might think about outsourcing.

So, first of all, if you think about why do organizations outsource, there are several reasons for it. The first being, you know, it saves you time. So maybe you don't have enough time to do a research on a customer and there's a research agency who are experts in it. So it saves you time. It gives you expert knowledge that you don't have which you're trying to complement by going out externally. It also gives you an external perspective because sometimes you're looking at too internally, so you don't know what maybe you can draw parallels from other industries which your agency comes up with and you have never looked at in the past. So these could be a few reasons why you outsource.

Now, when we talk about marketing outsourcing, there are different aspects that you talk about. You talk about website management. So there are situations where you ask your agency to build a website for you. So they do everything from designing that website, the copy of the website, how the links are going to sit on the website, how they're going to work with your emails, they do the entire management of it, which IP is the website going to sit, etc. Then you also talk about social media management. So there are agencies where you could delegate that they look at your social media results. They answer...they do the social listening, respond to queries from your customers. You have agencies who help you with SEO analysis, PPC advertising, you know, content marketing.
Also you have, you know, specific brand management. So there are strategic agencies which help us repositioning your brand, coming up with an overall brand perspective. What does a brand stand for? How would you come up in your PR stories to enhance your brand positioning? And you could also outsource to kind of do your digital designs. So maybe you outsource to an agency who comes up with specific apps they design to reach your customers. How would those apps work? How would they talk to your existing channels? How will the app strategy fit in with your other online offline channels? So there are several areas you would outsource but it would depend on what expertise you’re trying to gain and why you’re outsourcing.

In this slide, we are going to talk about in-house versus third-party capabilities. So, the reasons of having a digital marketing plan and implementing it in-house are several-fold, the first one being faster communication. So, when you have an in-house strategy, an implementation of strategy, you kind of have a better buy-in to the organization vision. You know what the organization stands for, what is its purpose, and you’re able to communicate that, and get people’s buy-in quite easily. You have a closer control as well, which means when you are implementing a digital marketing plan, these are people who work within your organization. So you know their capabilities. You know their work hours, their patterns, the way they are motivated. You can constantly go and monitor, check how you are doing against your success criteria, and you can optimize and change it.

You, of course, have more savings, because you don’t spend the money by making another digital agency work on it. You have the added advantage of knowing what your organization stands for. You are fully joined up with the company strategy, with your overall marketing strategy. And there’s a synergy, because you know how your other channels are working, you know the key action plans in your other channels, and you work together better. However, having said that, there are several reasons why organizations tend to go to third-party suppliers, one of the key reasons being saving time.

So, as you know, the key aspect of digital marketing is you need to come up with your propositions and products and services in a joint method. So you need to be constantly innovative, coming up with new things, keep them fresh, and go to market on time. So, time is quite critical. And often, organizations outsource. They kind of keep the thinking and the strategy in-house. However, they outsource doing part of the campaign, where they outsource the creative, the creative would be designed by an agency, the website would be built by an agency. So it helps them save time. Also, they are relying on the professional expertise. So, maybe, one particular agency is excellent in building websites, and coming up with content, because they have relationships with different suppliers, who provide different kinds of offers. You know, sometimes they refresh offers with spa offers versus hotel offers versus a holiday offer. So they have some expertise in those domains. So you want to go to them.

Also, you get an external perspective. So, when we go out to agencies, I think one of the key asks is, we ask them to think about outside our industry. We ask them to draw parallels. Maybe we are working in a retail industry. We want to draw a parallel with the airline industry. We want to see, okay, how do airlines look after their customer, how does airlines make it easy for their customer. We also get access to specialized technology. Maybe an agency has a specialized tool, by which they are analyzing the results, and providing insight to an organization, and you would want to harness that tool. You want to build up on that expertise. So, when we are looking at assessing third parties, there are different benchmarking exercises that we do, so the first one being commercial rate optimization.

So, when you think about, okay, which third party... is this third party suitable to deliver my business objectives, you kind of need to measure them, and you need to do a proper, you know, request for proposal, you know, proper RFP process, where you evaluate suppliers on the similar criteria. So, you
would want to know, okay, are they able to deliver my key objectives? You know, are they able to convert my customers more? So, maybe I’m losing customers once they are coming on my website, and I would want this supplier to design my website in a manner that more customers are converting when they’re looking at my product. Maybe I want them to build a brand persona, a brand character. So I want them to.... you know, I want to know how they fit in, so whatever communication or strategy they are offering, how does it fit in with my brand overall... overall brand positioning. Does it align with my brand messaging? Because you do not want an agency to come up with a communication which jars with your brand positioning.

The third thing is, how does their processes work? So, are their processes fully audited? Do we follow a quality assurance process, and how do they deliver their campaigns? So the different processes that ensures how they build the campaign, how they deliver it, and how they measure success, are all the processes in place, and is there proper reporting and QA process. You also need to think about, you know, who are the people whom you’re going to work on a day to day basis of this third party. What are their personalities like? Are they easy to work with? Are they friendly? Would they raise issues with you upfront rather than trying to hide it under the carpet? You need to think about this. You also need to think about, you know, what’s their sense of urgency.

So, when you have a commitment, a deadline, how quickly can an agency or a third party react, and how quickly can they turn around things? You also need to think about their commitments. Are they really committed and working towards the same goal as yourself? How committed are they towards their projects? What’s their reputation in the market? What does other players who have worked for them, or worked with them say about their expertise? And, finally, you cannot forget, how equipped they are for the technology. So, if we are working with a CRM agency, we need to think about...or a CRM third party, we need to think about, do they have the CRM capability? How do they measure their email matrix? How do they measure website visits? What kind of reporting would we get? Is their technology smart enough to send a multi-step campaign, etc.? So, as you do the evaluation, the questions you would ask is, you know, which method do you use to communicate reports? You know, how do you do your report?

So often what we do, in my previous roles, we spec out a report, that this is a report I expect to be delivered, to be reported against, on a weekly, daily basis, once my campaign is live. What we also ask them is, we ask them do they have any evidence of past successes. So, we often do calls with the supplier, with other clients these agencies have worked with. We get feedback from these clients and find out how they have helped them deliver these projects. We also, you know, work out, you know, what’s the cost model. So, is there a fixed term cost upfront and maybe there’s some recurring costs on a monthly basis. And maybe you are doing a campaign, which is a pilot. So, what you would want to know is, how would the cost change as you’re rolling this pilot into BAU, because you would have more customers. It would be rolled along the organization. Is it scalable?

So, you also want to find out, you know, how do you transfer the knowledge, so that they know enough about your business, industry market and your customers. You would want to know their expertise, you know, and their credibility. So, have they worked in your industry. Maybe they haven’t worked in retail, maybe they haven’t worked in insurance, and you cannot work with them, because they don’t have enough knowledge of your industry. You also need to think about, you know, how do you plan to execute digital marketing differently. So, when you outsource, nine out of 10 times you would want to do it differently from what you currently do. But, I think people forget that, and people want to replicate a process, or a structure that you already have in-house. And therefore, they don’t utilize the capabilities that the third-party supplier is providing. So, you would, first of all, do a benchmarking exercise, or a baselining exercise where you see what are the structures and processes in which you do campaigns, and if you’re bringing a third party, what advantage do they
offer. Maybe they are offering something you've never thought about, and you would want to leverage on that.

So then you also think about your current digital marketing process, maybe your quality audits, your reviews, your reporting, your benchmarking third party kind of manage those expectations. And how do you... above all you may also think about how do you plan to do things differently. So, you find out if they can come up with great ideas, innovative ideas which should help you to differentiate in your market, and these would be some of the questions you would ask in your request for proposal while you're doing a third-party bid.
LESSON 4: REVIEWING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A DIGITAL STRATEGY
So first of all, what are KPIs? KPIs are key performance indicators, and KPIs can tell an organization... it’s a matrix which helps you understand, you know, how you are delivering against your objectives. So at an organization level, you have key KPIs that an organization needs to deliver. So this could be that I want to improve... I want a return on investment of X percent. I need to improve my profitability by Y percent, or I improve my number of customers on my book by Z percent. These are an organizational-level KPIs.

You also need to think about, and those KPIs help an organization to set its purpose, so it says, you know, my purpose is to enable me to sell products to my customer and service their needs so that I can deliver these KPIs for my customers. There are customer KPIs and there are shareholders’ KPIs. So while I'm here to make a profit, I also want to improve my customer KPIs.

Say I want to improve my net promoter score, my customer satisfaction, my customer... you know, customer loyalty. This could be your customer KPIs. So while an organization has its key KPIs, we also need to think about what our particular digital marketing campaign KPIs are. So a KPI for your campaign is improve my conversion rate. I want to retain my customer. I want to improve their email open rate and click rate. I want to improve the number of impressions on my Facebook, and they could be, you know, some different objectives which are quite smart and measurable.

So... and what are targets? Targets are basically a goal that you set before you start a digital strategy. So you kind of say, my digital strategy... and it needs to be quite tangible and defined so that, you know, you don't try too many things from a campaign. So your target could be that I want to improve my click-through rate for my emails, and I want to make it 30 percent, and maybe a current benchmark is 10 percent. So I'm trying to improve my click-through rate. That's a very specific. Also what you attach is, you attach a timeline with it. So your click-through rate by 20 percent over a three-month period, and that could be your target.

What we are now going to talk about how do you set your target and what are baked-in measurements. So ahead of every activity or campaign, you need to kind of set up a scale of your measurement. So how are you going to measure? So which scale are you going to?

So say for a marketing campaign, you're talking about, you know, your conversion matrix, your improving engagement, your engagement scores, your improving NPS and then what you score for the customer, you're talking about selling more products, etc. So you need to set that ahead of the campaign. You also need to define the time period for measurement. So while you might say that, okay, I'm going to check my progress every two months. So that's a repeating primary. Every two months, I'm going to look at my campaign. So once a month, I'm going to look at my campaign. I'm going to see my email open rate, click rate, the number of visits to my website and the number of products they have bought. Maybe those are my four KPIs.

I also might want to look at it in a slightly different... wearing a slightly different lens. So I want to look at it in a rolling period. So I might say, I want to look at my campaign performance from June, 2015... June, 2016 to June, 2017, which is a rolling period. How have I progressed? And how have I... how have my products moved? So a number of products that a customer holds moved during this period. And has my campaign caused any change? I might also want to define it in a fixed-time period. So I might say, okay, I've launched my campaign in February, and I'm going to look at it in September, on the 30th of September, and see how is my campaign progressing. And when I measure it, I measure the success against the key success criteria that are my objectives that I've set. Also what I do is, we need to ensure that the campaigns are constantly monitored. So you do not want to launch a
campaign... devise a digital strategy, launch a campaign and then forget about it. You want to measure it, monitor it, on a daily-weekly basis. So that you are aware, on top of it, and you can constantly optimize it.

**Using Analytics**

The next section we are going to talk about is analytics. So there’s several analytics techniques and tools in the market that can help you to understand the analytics of your channels, and what organizations are really struggling these days and working really hard is to understand the analytics as customers move from one channel to the other. So they’re trying to stitch the data saying, okay, maybe you have opened my email. Come to my website. So I want to know my email marketing analytics. I want to know my open rate, my click rate, my unsubscribe rate, my abuse rate, people who have complained, who have marked me as spam. I want to know all of that for my email marketing.

However, I also want to know that which of these email audience who have received my emails have then gone and shared my content on social media. So I want to know how many have shared it on social. How many impressions have I got? So that’s my social marketing analytics... social media analytics. I would also want to know my website activity. So when they click the email, they’ve gone to the website. They have... they are reading your content. They’re looking at your offers, and they’re clicking on you offers, and that’s leading them to come to your webpage. So you want to see the entire website activity. Where are they dropping off? Where are they offering? How long are they staying on our article, the dwell time? How they are moving from article to article? Where are they clicking on the article? You want to know the entire website activity analytics.

So, plus you would want to know, you know, how are they coming to that page. So are they looking on Google’s AdWords? You know, what level of ad ranking are you on? So that if you’re a one, two or three ranking, maybe they’re looking on your AdWords and clicking on that and coming too. So how do you need to change the position of your ranking? How do you need to think about your third-party advertising? So maybe when you’re displaying banner ads on a Telegraph reader, you want to know, okay, is this banner ad suitable for this particular person, or am I just displaying a one-size-fits-all? And how is the person reacting to this banner ad? What are the analytics I’m getting? Maybe he’s coming on Telegraph, seeing the banner ad of a retail company then clicking on my website.

So getting analytics across different channels is a challenge for the 21st century, and this is where an organization is struggling, is how to join up, you know, how to join up and stitch up a customer where a customer has moved between watching a TV ad to surfing something on the internet, on a tablet, moving to a mobile, clicking on an email, going to social. How do you stitch up a customer? And how to do ensure that you trace a customer across a different media and content that they are consuming?

Here we want to talk about the goals of analytics. So there could be different goals that you set for your analytics tools. So maybe you’re talking about, you know, the specific pages. So you want to see, okay, which pages of your brochure were... like, of your online website, are the customers visiting? How are they moving between pages? Are they moving from page one to page two? Maybe they’re not able to find the product information. Maybe if they want to... they want to contact the retailer or the insurance company or the bank, but they can’t find he phone number. So you want to see how they’re navigating between pages.

You might also want to look at, you know, which are the screens. So which page are they visiting? How long, you know? Which screens are they going in and how are they navigating? You know, are
they going back to the home page and then accessing the content? Maybe you do not have a back button. So this kind of analytics helps you see the customer journey and how customers are accessing your content through that funnel. From the point of contact to the point of sale.

What we also need to consider is, you know, how many pages of screens they view in a session. So okay, you have sent them an email. They’ve opened the email. Gone to your website. Are they reading the content and unbundling the session? Maybe they’re moving from the content to the up-front to your main website to buy your product. So what are the different sessions? And in each session, how many pages or offers are they looking at? So it’s important because that’s how you devise a journey that’s appropriate to your customer. You don’t devise a journey working in isolation. You tailor it, optimizing, based on customers’ behavior and pattern in which they’re consuming the content.

You might also want to think about, you know, how long are they staying on this site. So what’s the dwell-time on your content or on the app? If they’re dwelling on an app for maybe, say, two minutes, you set yourself a criteria. You know that article or that content is really popular. So if they’re clicking on it, means they’re really interested in the offer. Okay, are they redeeming the offer? So you have given them a spa offer. You want to see how many people are actually going to the spa and visiting. You kind of say, okay, next month, do I give them a spa offer or do I give them a bottle of wine offer? What works better?

You might also want to know, you know, what events they triggering. So when they are going back on your website, or on your Facebook channel, you want to say, okay, are they having conversations with their friends in a social network? Are they sharing your content? Are they clicking, maybe, a call-back button? What events are they doing? And you might want to tailor those events. So you wouldn’t want to miss any opportunities to sell. Maybe you want to target a customer who has gone on your website, added a product to your trolley, and then abandoned the basket. So you know this particular customer. There’s a group of customers you’ve identified who added the product to their trolley and abandoned the basket. You want to target them with an email and say, okay, just to remind you, you have one item on your trolley and you haven’t purchased it. Maybe you want to consider that. So these are different strategies that come up based on monitoring the customer behavior.

In this slide, we are going to talk about, you know, the website analytics, and how do you identify the different segments. So, when you think about the website analytics, you need to think about the sources of traffic. So, say, for example, you have a website for selling a product, yeah. And it could be... you know, it could be a product which is used in every household, maybe a washing machine or a refrigerator, something like that. You want to see, you know, how are people coming to your product page. So, you could see... okay, maybe you’ve done a campaign where they’ve got an email from you with a link to the product page. That’s one source of traffic. You want to see, okay, maybe you have advertised it on Facebook, done some Facebook blog. People are coming from the Facebook page. That’s another source of traffic.

So, you identify the different sources of traffic. You kind of want to see, okay, what kind of customers are they? So, when these customers are coming and clicking on your website, and then going to your product page, and then buying your product, what kind of customers are they? So you do some kind of customer segmentation, profiling of customers, and you look at their attributes. So, look at, okay, what are their attributes? You know, maybe you have their age, gender, their income, where they dwell. You have different kind of attributes. You also kind of segment them, or look at them based on their behavior. Maybe a group of customers are going to a website, and then reading content in a particular way versus some other. And there are some key insights coming out. Maybe
you want to surface some content on an app to a certain group of customers versus a website. Maybe you need a mobile optimized app, because 70% of your consumers are reading your content on a mobile versus a desktop. So these kind of analytics help you optimize and tailor your content, and surface it appropriately to the right audience.

What we would talk in this session is about your performance review. So, how would you review your analytics, and how do you know that you are achieving your goals? So, I think, based on my experience, you need to constantly review performance, regularly, on a daily, weekly, monthly basis, to see how are you delivering on your target. You also kind of need to see how you’re benchmarking against the market. You know, so, what are other things going on around you? So, maybe you are doing a campaign to improve your product sales. However, in the market, in the economy, in general, the economy is in recession. You know, the government is putting on more tariffs. So, these kind of external, you know, kind of factors might impact your product sales. So you need to consider the market factors, industry insights, anything else that’s going outside, which is not in your control, which might impact your campaign criteria.

And at that point, you need to optimize, review, and change your campaign criteria.

**KPI Reviewing**

So, here we are going to talk about daily tracking. So, what kind of tracking could you do on a daily basis, once you have deployed your campaigns? So, from an email campaign perspective, you could look at, you know, how many people are... you can look at your deliverability. So how many emails are getting... how many emails are you sending on a daily basis? How many emails are actually reaching the customers’ inbox? Maybe some of them are landing in spam, some of them have been blocked by the mailbox provider, and some of them are reaching in their inbox. So you want to look at the deliverability rate.

You want to then look at maybe open rate, click rate, you know, click-through rate, and then you want to see, you know, are there any unsubscribes. So are any people saying, “I don’t want to receive any marketing for you?” Because, those are the people you need to be watching out [for]. You don’t want to aggravate them by sending them next month’s campaign. In terms of what other matrix you could look at, you could look at your social media reach. So you could kind of see, you know, how many impressions am I getting on social media, are people sharing my content. You might look at, you know, email click-through rate. You might also go to your, you know, website and see, okay, once people are going to your landing page, are they converting, or are they... what are they doing? What’s their behavior once they’re going to the landing page? Are they moving between content? Which content are they reviewing more?

And you also kind of look at, you know, the different ways people are coming to the website. So what are the different sources of traffic? Maybe people are coming via... from the mobile to your website. Maybe people are searching for Google AdWords, putting your name of your company, or name the product you’re selling, and then coming to your website. Or they are coming via targeted campaign they are doing. So, the different tracking matrix on a daily basis you would want to monitor these kind of key KPIs.

Here we are going to talk about the frequency of reviews. So, how do you review the success or performance of your campaign? So you would do different kinds of, you know, review types. So you would do a daily review, you know, where you are looking at your key KPIs. You know, you’re looking at, okay, are there any... maybe some emails are not getting delivered to customers. Some emails are blocked. Maybe your website is not working. So, as you look at a daily review, you kind of come up
with issues, you know, urgent issues. You come up with complaints. You escalate that. You make sure that you investigate these complaints, go back to the customers.

And your speed is of essence, I think, when you do your daily checkup. What you also do is you do some kind of biweekly, maybe a look-up and discovery phase. So, you work with your team to look at...you know, biweekly, you would kind of look at your results, and you share the results with your rest of your stakeholders. You measure yourselves. You measure your key criteria against your success objectives, your success criteria. You also do some kind of monitoring. So, if a campaign is going out, say, for six months, you would want to do maybe a monthly monitoring, where you would look at the daily KPIs. You would then aggregate them at the monthly level. You would see, okay, how am I measuring...how am I delivering against my objectives. Am I getting more sales, or am I spending more money? You kind of measure your value versus benefit, value versus cost. And then you say, “This is how my monitoring on a monthly basis tells me how I am tracking against my overall objectives.”

You also do some kind of deep dives. So, maybe you decide, “Okay, this is a campaign that goes on for a year. I’m going to do a deep dive every three or four months, and I’m going to see, okay, what are the insights we have learned.” Maybe you look at the content that’s worked. What are the offers that have worked? Which customers have reacted to your content or campaign in a positive way? Which customers have reacted in a not-so positive way? And what kind of feedback have they given? You look at the analytics from the different channels, and you kind of try to understand the customer journey. You know, where are customers dropping off? Maybe I need to integrate my email channel with my social channel better. Maybe I need to signpost that they have seen a TV ad before I send them an email communication. Maybe I need to send them another email, post the initial email, to kind of ensure those people, who have not opened or clicked, I kind of warm them up.

So, there are different tactics that you can come up with as you go through this regular review process. In this slide, we will be talking about, you know, the overall monitoring performance that would help us in a long-term decision making. So, as I mentioned, there’s a daily check. Then you have biweekly, monthly checks. You would also want to do, you know, quarterly checks. So, maybe you sit with your suppliers, your agencies, your stakeholders, and look on a quarterly basis. How have I moved my campaign criteria and success features? Have I delivered against them? Where are my gaps? How can I improve? What new content and offers could I come up with for the following month or for the following quarter? Because you would want to keep it fresh.

You also want to do it as a biannual checkup. So it’s something like, you would want to see, okay, is this campaign still relevant. Maybe the market has moved on. Maybe the needs of customers have moved on. And I’m still sending them an email which was designed maybe a year ago. Do I need to refresh it? Do I need to talk about things which are more topical? You would also want to do kind of annual reviews, to say, “Okay, maybe I have a CRM program for my customers. However, during this year, we have done different changes to our campaigns. We have optimized it. This is what the results are. And I want to measure the success of this campaign on an annual basis. And, I want to say, okay, what are our learnings? How do we...do we need to optimize this campaign for next year? Do we have some insights that we can share with other divisions, and get learnings from them?” So, this ongoing monitoring on a quarterly, biannual, and an annual basis helps you to come up with insights, valuable feedback that can inform your long-term decision, and your long-term strategy.