

A grayscale background image showing a person's hands holding a smartphone. The person is wearing a striped shirt. The image is slightly blurred, focusing on the hands and the phone.

IN | MARKET

The 2025 Digital Marketing Playbook

DECEMBER 2024

Introduction

It's been a tumultuous couple of years for the industry as marketers have faced evolving privacy regulations, shipping delays, inflation and economic uncertainty, evolving consumer preferences, and more. More specifically, the media landscape has evolved rapidly with the growth of streaming services, CTV, social media, and more. And additionally, consumers are moving across mediums seamlessly to consume content and information, further posing challenges and opportunities for marketers.

The best word to describe the current state of the marketing industry is “**fragmented**.” Both the media landscape and consumer behaviors are incredibly fragmented, requiring today's modern marketers to rethink how to best engage consumers, acquire new customers, and drive loyalty that lasts long into the future.

Heading into 2025, marketers must ensure that strategies, solutions, and partners reflect the reality of this new and increasingly complex world in order to achieve maximum success. InMarket's **2025 Digital Marketing Playbook** contains ten strategies to help marketers achieve peak performance in a 2025 fragmented market.

10 Strategies for 2025 Marketing Success:

1. Data Decisioning & Planning Investments Will Pay Huge Dividends
2. Become a Channel & Campaign Optimization Champion
3. It's about the Journey—Orchestrate Top- and Bottom-of-the-Funnel Activities
4. Amplify & Go Viral—Tap into Social Media & Influencer Marketing
5. A is for AI Always!
6. Keep Holiday Momentum Going into Q1 With Event-Based Initiatives
7. Stand Out with Interactive & Immersive Creative Experiences
8. Holistic Measurement—A Non-Negotiable
9. Experiment
10. Collaborate, Benchmark & Share Success Stories

A dark, grayscale background image showing a meeting table with laptops, notebooks, and hands of people in business attire. The text is overlaid on this image.

1. Data Decisioning & Planning Investments Will Pay Huge Dividends

Let's face it—there is no shortage of data these days. However, turning data from multiple signals in a highly fragmented market into actionable insights that power outcomes is not easy. Intent, visitation, media consumption, campaign, and commerce data, when combined together, tell the story that can both create and inform strategy to drive incremental ROAS. Invest in platforms that allow you to test various scenarios to inform your media planning in real time. Strive to

build practical, turnkey, actionable insights and programs that align with key priorities. This may include programs designed to recapture lapsed or lost customers, or efforts to understand new customers who are new to the category or brand, or even initiatives focused on identifying and engaging the millions of “moveable middle” shoppers who have the potential to become brand loyalists.





2. Become A Channel & Campaign Optimization Champion

CTV, RMNs, social media, mobile, OOH, in-store activations, the list of channels at marketers' discretion feels never-ending. Today's advertising landscape is increasingly fragmented, and consumers are being overwhelmed with ads—up to 10,000 per day—all competing for their attention. It's become critical for brands to integrate online and offline shopping experiences to create seamless and personalized full-funnel experiences. By understanding the impact of each channel and making the appropriate investments in each based on their impact and influence in driving the desired outcomes (awareness, consideration, purchase), marketers can drive

incremental results and efficiencies from their advertising investments. Once your strategic channel optimization and investments are made, it doesn't mean you're done. Leverage real-time technologies and signals to make the most of every dollar invested by optimizing inflight. A/B testing messaging, creative, media, and more tied to key KPIs are possible today through modern platforms that can process signals and empower marketers to make changes based on those KPIs inflight. A recent joint study by [InMarket and the CMO Council](#) found that marketers who adopt always-on, inflight optimization improve media efficiency by up to 11 times.

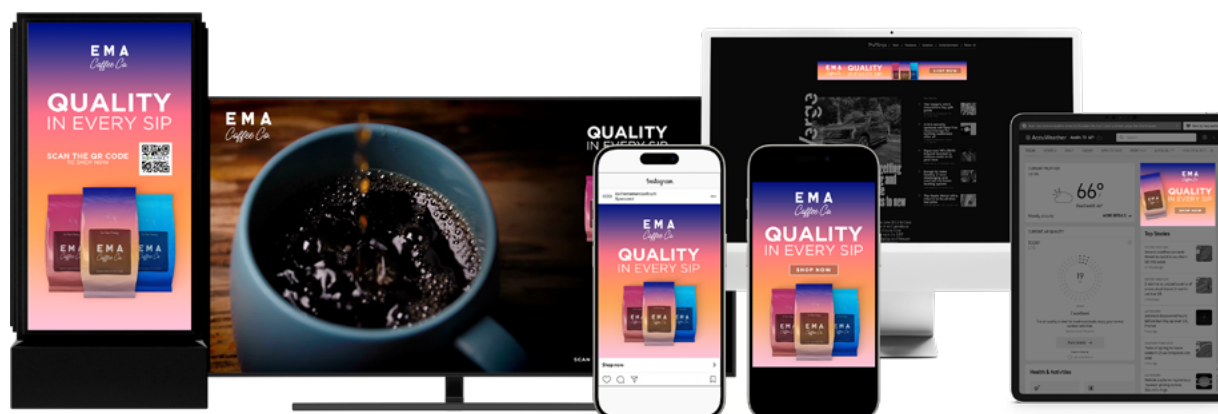
Always-on, inflight optimization can eliminate wasted media by up to 11x!

Source: 'Getting Smart About Ad Waste', InMarket & CMO Council, June 2023.

3. It's about the Journey—Orchestrate Top- and Bottom-of-the-Funnel Activities

In this era of fragmentation, connecting with shoppers in the moments that matter is difficult. However, advances in real-time technology and the power of AI are enabling marketers to connect with consumers throughout their journey, driving desired outcomes. By leveraging these tools, today's marketers can coordinate top- and bottom-of-the-funnel activities to

amplify campaign effectiveness and maximize consumer engagement, no matter where shoppers are in their journey. Strong coordination can lead to powerful results—brands that combine top- and bottom-of-the-funnel efforts often see much stronger engagement than when running individually.

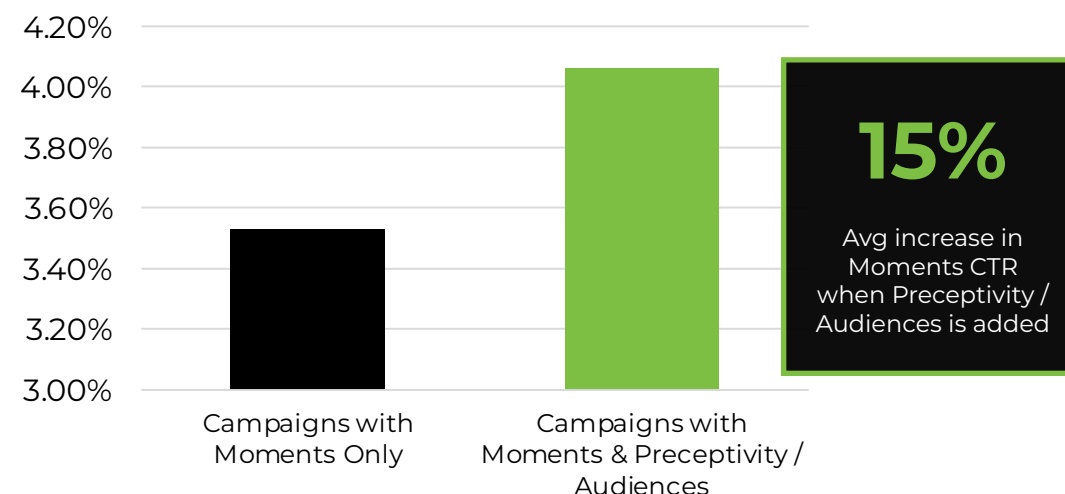


Awareness

Consideration

Purchase

Moments CTR by Campaign Type



4. Amplify & Go Viral—Tap into Social Media & Influencer Marketing

It's no secret that consumers spend a considerable amount of time on social media each day. TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, X, Reddit, Snap, and Pinterest—dozens of apps capture consumers' precious time every single day. Now, most have also become destinations to drive commerce. In 2025, brands should look for opportunities to 'go viral' via paid and organic social media and consider influencer partnerships that align with their target audiences. These platforms enable brands to activate highly engaged consumers with authentic, highly relevant content that not only attracts consumer attention but actually drives consumers to purchase. The key here is for brands to remain authentic to their core identity—audiences are smart enough to recognize when branded content is not true to a brand's mission.

2h 30 min

Average time global internet users spent with **social media & messaging** in H1 2024

Source: [eMarketer](#).

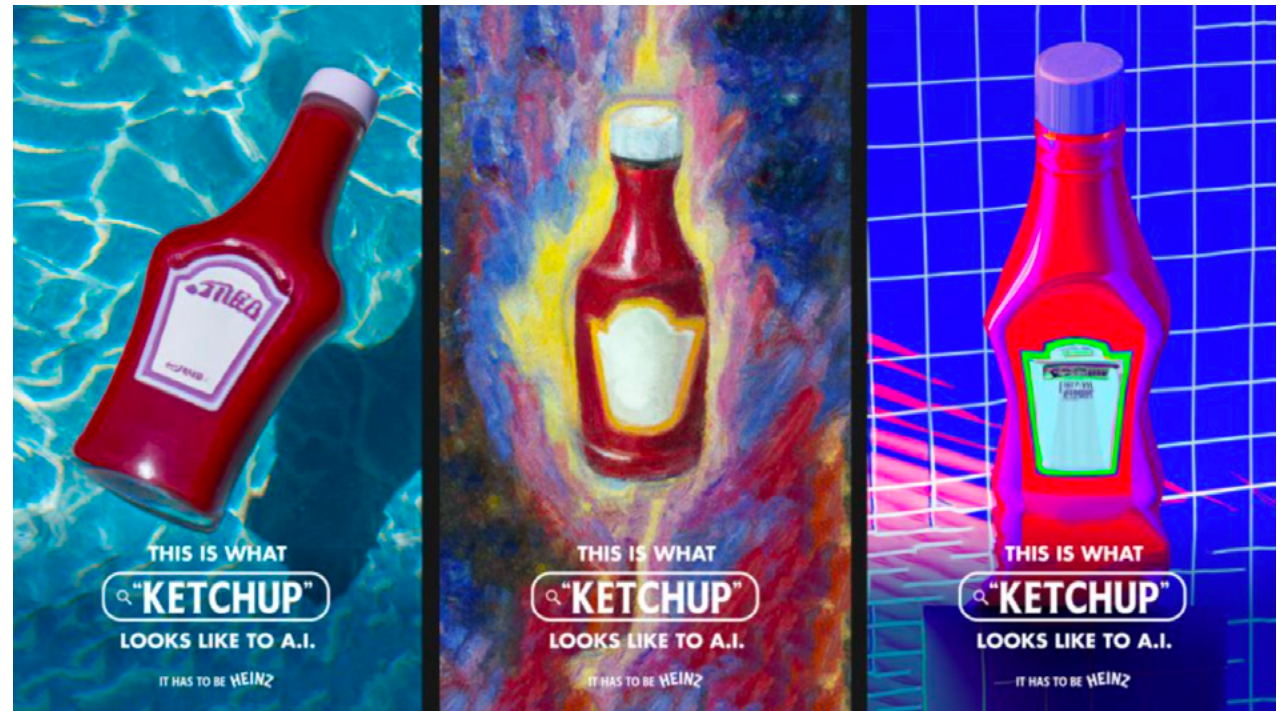


The main reason **Gen Z** uses **Pinterest** is to **find information about products or brands**.

Source: [Pinterest](#).

5. A is for **AI Always!**

AI is at the forefront of every marketer's mind—InMarket's [2025 Predictions survey](#) found that more than half of marketers are in the test-and-learn phase of incorporating AI into their organizations. 2025 will be the year for marketing teams to test, implement, and ideally, optimize with AI-driven tools. From content brainstorming to creative development to audience targeting and more, AI-powered tools can drive incredible efficiencies for marketing teams that identify and attract new customers, optimize campaigns, and maximize ROAS.



The Power of AI: A Heinz campaign demonstrated the power of AI to create a realistic “Ketchup” ad campaign.

Source: [The Kraft Heinz Company](#)

6. Keep Holiday Momentum Going into Q1 with Event-Based Initiatives

2024 holiday spending is set to break records—the [NRF](#) is projecting sales to increase between 2.5% and 3.5%, reaching up to \$989 billion. Interestingly, according to InMarket's [2024 Holiday Gifting survey](#), gift cards are on the shopping lists of more than half of all shoppers this holiday season, second only to clothes. With approximately [70%](#) of gift cards being used within the first six months, marketers have a powerful opportunity to drive incremental purchases and foster loyalty amongst new, lapsed, and returning customers. But don't stop there. Key seasonal holidays or events specific to your brand or category, like, for example, National Lavendar Day on July 10th, offer additional opportunities throughout the year to make and own a moment.



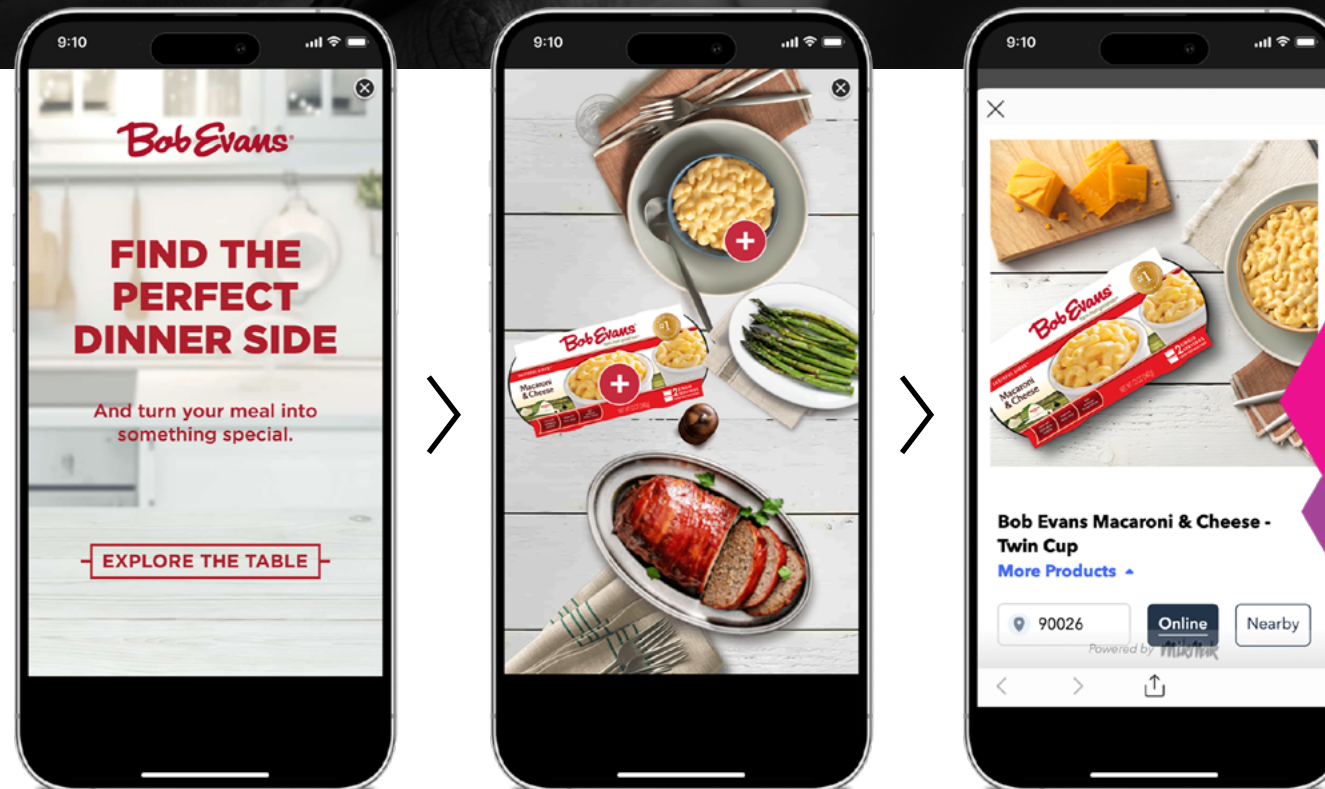
54%

of holiday shoppers plan to purchase gift cards during the 204 holiday season.

Source: [InMarket's 2024 Holiday Gifting Insights](#).

7. Stand out with Interactive & Immersive Creative Experiences

Consumers are exposed to thousands of advertisements every single day, demanding brands to stand out from the crowd with captivating experiences worthy of consumers' time. The latest advancements in creative unlock innovative ways for brands to activate shoppers with unique experiences—panoramic 360° video, augmented reality, shoppable video, gamified ads, dynamic content, and more. By upleveling traditional static ads, brands can stand out in a crowded field and drive awareness, consideration, and ultimately, purchase.



This InMarket partnership with Bob Evans Farms, featuring an immersive creative, won the **MarTech Breakthrough Award** for “**Best Mobile Marketing Platform**” and the **MarCom Gold Award**.



8. Holistic Measurement—A Non-Negotiable

In 2025, measurement should be the backbone of every single marketing strategy and campaign. A holistic measurement approach, which combines **Media Mix Modeling** (MMM) and **Multi-Touch Attribution** (MTA), is critical for brands to eliminate wasted media spend. With MMM, marketers can strategically plan and optimize channel investments, while MTA insights enable teams to optimize inflight campaigns in real time and generate closed-loop reporting. By coordinating both measurement approaches, marketers can maximize campaign efficiency and effectiveness, thereby driving superior ROAS.

**“Half the money I
spend on advertising is
wasted; the trouble is I
don’t know which half.”**

— John Wanamaker



9. Experiment

With so much fragmentation within the industry, an incredible number of channels, platforms, and technologies are available at marketers' disposal—the list is overwhelming. Marketers should use 2025 to experiment across the board, seeing what strategies and tactics drive the most success and growth. Also, don't be afraid to revisit things that haven't worked in the past—advancements in audience targeting,

dynamic and interactive creative, real-time optimization, and more have improved the effectiveness and efficiency of campaigns. Most importantly—budget for it. Dedicate 10% to 15% of your budget to test and learn new things. You'll have some wins—and some losses—but most importantly, you'll benefit from the learnings and continue to advance your programs forward, with the goal of optimizing ROAS.





10. Collaborate, Benchmark & Share Success Stories

The best teams—within a department, across an organization, and with partners—see the most success when collaboration is at the core. Wins and losses, learnings, and best practices should be routinely shared across teams for one primary goal—to replicate and amplify success. Key partners should absolutely be included in this process, at a minimum on a quarterly basis (QBRs—quarterly business reviews), to review successful campaigns and strategies, critical learnings, opportunities, and more. Teams should be sure to establish

benchmarks to hold campaigns accountable, while also giving grace to test and learn new strategies. The best benchmarks are those that you establish for yourself, which allow you to push the success of your program forward. Done regularly, this active sharing of information across teams, internal and external, fosters rich brainstorming sessions that can lead to new experiments and opportunities that ensure continued growth and powerful innovation.



Maximize 2025 Success

The start of a new year ushers in a wave of momentum for marketers to ensure alignment across all strategies, technologies, and partners. The strategies outlined here help marketers achieve success throughout the entire upcoming year by engaging consumers via connected commerce experiences, optimizing campaigns in real time, and driving iROAS.

For help ensuring your 2025 marketing strategies are set up for success, [get started with InMarket today](#).

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