# The Maturity Curve for Performance Marketing

## Accelerate Your Marketing Evolution: Unlock Growth, Efficiency, and Competitive Advantage

adstra

the new ideal

# The Maturity Curve for Performance Marketing

Performance marketing is not a one-size-fits-all solution—it's a spectrum. Every marketer sits at a different point on the maturity curve, depending on their tools, sophistication, and goals. The journey begins with simple optimizations but evolves into a more complex, tailored strategy that connects every dollar to meaningful outcomes.

In the 2020s, the tactics and tools of performance marketing have grown more sophisticated, and they require marketers to approach their strategy as a progressive process. To bring this concept to life, we'll track the marketing team of a regional nonalcoholic beer company through seven stages of the maturity curve. At each stage, we'll explore the questions they ask, the problems they solve, and the results they achieve. The initial few stages below should come as no surprise to anyone practicing performance marketing, but they also represent where many people stop. This is especially true now that Google is holding off on third-party cookie deprecation, and because consumers are more omnichannel than ever before.

Let's look at the seven stages of maturity that can take marketers from the building blocks of performance marketing into marketing mastery.

**TOPICS:**

STAGE 1

## Stage 1: Optimizing To an Action

The building block of performance marketing lies in assessing campaign activity and determining whether the desired result was achieved. At this stage, performance metrics guide marketers in refining their approach, adjusting campaigns to drive immediate actions such as clicks, impressions, or opens. By targeting specific lists, audiences, creative, or offers, marketers aim to improve efficiency and maximize results.

However, many marketers stop here, equating performance solely with immediate actions. This approach often reflects the limitations of earlier tracking methods, when direct connections to outcomes like conversions were difficult to establish. As a result, surrogate metrics like clicks and impressions became the default measure of success.

While useful, these metrics primarily indicate awareness and not true performance.

Optimizing for action is an important first step, but it's only the beginning of a broader journey. True performance marketing requires moving beyond these surface-level indicators to connect actions with meaningful business outcomes.

TYPICAL PERFORMANCE CALCULATION:
**Minimize Cost per Action**
(Click, Impression, Open, etc)


EXAMPLE MARKETER:
**Regional Nonalcoholic Beer Company**

A regional nonalcoholic beer manufacturer is trying to drive sales but faces a significant challenge: they do not control the endpoints of distribution. Their products are sold through local grocery and convenience stores, leaving them without direct visibility into purchase data.

To address this, the marketing team focuses on building awareness through email campaigns targeting various customer lists in their region. They track success by measuring email opens and clicks, with cost per action (CPA) serving as their key metric. However, this strategy stops short of connecting these actions to actual sales.

*Goal: Maximize "Actions" for given Budget (Minimize Cost Per 'Action")*

**Inputs**

| | List 1 | List 2 | List 3 | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Audience Size (Names Available) | 50,000 | 30,000 | 20,000 | |
| List Cost (cpm per Name) | $50 | $65 | $75 | |
| Deployment Cost (cpm per Name) | $25 | $25 | $25 | |
| Action rate (Open/Click/etc.) | 1% | 1.25% | 1.50% | |
| Cost per Action (CPA) | $7.50 | $7.20 | **$6.67** | |
| Spend Limit | | | | $8,000 |

**Expected Outputs**

| | List 1 | List 2 | List 3 | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Names Used | 44,000 | 30,000 | 20,000 | 94,000 |
| $ Spend | $3,300 | $2,700 | $2,000 | $8,000 |
| # of Actions | 440 | 375 | 300 | 1,115 |
| **Effective CPA** | | | | **$7.17** |

The team also faces decisions about which lists to prioritize. They calculate CPA by dividing the cost of acquiring and targeting each list by the number of observed actions (clicks, impressions, or opens). Looking at this marketing performance example: **List 3 has the highest performance, followed by List 2, with List 1 performing the lowest.** Actions from higher-performing lists are targeted first to maximize the efficiency of the budget.

While this approach improves click rates and minimizes CPA, it highlights the early challenge of performance marketing: optimizing visible actions without connecting them to sales.

# STAGE 2

**Stage 2: From Proxy Actions to Business Outcomes**

The next step in performance marketing goes beyond counting actions to evaluating their impact on the business. At this stage, marketers connect those actions—like clicks or impressions—to desired outcomes such as sales, conversions, or other business results.

This step is about understanding not just what happened, but what it's worth. A deeper analysis often reveals that the list or audience driving the most clicks doesn't always deliver the most revenue or efficiency. For example, one email list might generate more actions, but those actions lead to lower conversions or smaller transaction values. These insights can profoundly affect your optimization strategy.

The key difference from Stage 1 is the shift from measuring simple actions to understanding the financial contribution of those actions. However, this assessment often remains limited to a single channel, connecting specific outreach efforts to specific results without considering cross-channel impacts.

VALUE CALCULATION:

**Optimize Based on Campaign Contribution to Sales**

EXAMPLE MARKETER:

**Regional Nonalcoholic Beer Company**

The regional nonalcoholic beer manufacturer has taken an important step forward: they now control the endpoints of distribution through an online sales channel and food delivery platforms. With this direct control, the marketing team can track not only email opens and clicks but also link these actions to actual purchases.

The team uses this newfound clarity to calculate success with metrics like financial return on investment (ROI) or return on ad spend (ROAS). This enables them to:

- Identify which email lists drive the most revenue.

*Goal: Maximize Net Revenue (Contribution) for a given Marketing Budget*

**Inputs**

| | List 1 | List 2 | List 3 | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Audience Size (Names Available) | 50,000 | 30,000 | 20,000 | |
| List Cost (cpm per Name) | $50 | $65 | $75 | |
| Deployment Cost (cpm per Name) | $25 | $25 | $25 | |
| Action rate (Open/Click/etc.) | 1% | 1.25% | 1.50% | |
| Conversion Rate | 25% | 30% | 20% | |
| Revenue per Conversion | $40 | $40 | $40 | |
| Contribution per Name (per 000) | $25 | **$60** | $20 | |
| Spend Limit | | | | $8,000 |

**Expected Outputs**

| | List 1 | List 2 | List 3 | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Names Used | 50,000 | 30,000 | 15,500 | 95,500 |
| $ Spend | $3,750 | $2,700 | $1,550 | $8,000 |
| # of Actions | $500 | $375 | $233 | $1,108 |
| Conversions | $125 | $113 | $47 | $284 |
| Revenue | $5,000 | $4,500 | $1,860 | $11,360 |
| **Total Contribution** | **$1,250** | **$1,800** | **$310** | **$3,360** |

- Optimize budget allocation toward higher-performing lists.

For example, List 2 generates fewer clicks than List 3 but leads to more purchases and higher revenue. The team prioritizes List 2 despite its lower CPA, focusing on return on investment rather than actions alone.

Building on this, the marketer also evaluates the rate at which actions convert into sales, calculating the contribution per name for each list. Contribution per name is determined by multiplying the expected actions per name by the conversion rate and revenue per conversion, less the cost per action. This analysis reveals that while List 3 had the most actions, its weaker conversion rate makes it less effective overall.

# STAGE 3

**Stage 3: From Immediate Results to Lifetime Value**
Once marketers understand immediate impact through metrics like return on ad spend (ROAS), the next step is to shift their focus beyond short-term gains. While immediate results are valuable, optimizing solely for one-time buyers risks leaving long-term opportunities untapped. Performance marketing at this stage becomes about building lasting customer relationships that maximize lifetime revenue and reduce the cost of capturing future spend.

Evaluating the return on marketing investment over a longer timeframe allows marketers to better align value assessments with the extended lifecycle of their customers. This broader perspective ensures that campaigns not only generate quick wins but also create sustainable growth by fostering brand loyalty and recurring purchases.

VALUE CALCULATION:
**Optimize Lifetime Contribution for Campaign Spend**

EXAMPLE MARKETER:
**Regional Nonalcoholic Beer Company**
The regional nonalcoholic beer manufacturer has been in business for eight years and has amassed a wealth of customer data. Using insights from this data, the marketing team tracks the lifetime revenue of customers acquired through different email lists and campaigns.

They recognize two key customer types: Brand Loyalists, ie. customers who sign up for monthly delivery subscriptions and provide steady, predictable revenue over time, and Trend Followers, ie. customers who make large, one-time purchases but rarely return for repeat business.
With these insights, the team begins evaluating campaigns not just by immediate ROI but by the lifetime value (LTV) of the customers they attract. This allows them to prioritize campaigns that drive long-term value. For example, when analyzing their three email lists from a lifetime revenue perspective, the team discovers the following:

List 2, which performed well in earlier stages, has the lowest expected lifetime contribution because its customers generate the least additional revenue over time.

List 1 and List 3 attract higher-value customers with stronger recurring contributions, making them the top priorities for campaign spend.
Lifetime Contribution is calculated differently than Initial Contribution. It includes both the revenue captured in the initial sale, and the expected recurring revenue generated per year for the number of years a customer remains active.
In this case, List 2's lower recurring revenue significantly reduces its overall lifetime value. As a result, the team uses List 1 first, then List 3, and finishes with List 2 if the budget allows.
However, as in Stage 2, the marketer faces budget constraints that limit the ability to capitalize fully on List 2, even though it still provides a positive contribution. For example, with $5,000 worth of additional names available on List 2, the team calculates they are leaving $1,050 of potential lifetime

*Goal: Maximize Net Lifetime Revenue (Contribution) for a given Marketing Budget*

**Inputs**

| | List 1 | List 2 | List 3 | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Audience Size (names available) | 50,000 | 30,000 | 20,000 | |
| List Cost (cpm per name) | $50 | $65 | $75 | |
| Deployment Cost (cpm per name) | $25 | $25 | $25 | |
| "Action" rate (Open/Click/etc.) | 1.00% | 1.25% | 1.50% | |
| Conversion Rate | 20% | 30% | 15% | |
| Revenue per Conversion | $40 | $40 | $40 | |
| Average Add'l Revenue per Year | $40 | $20 | $120 | |
| Average Years on File | 4 | 2 | 1 | |
| Average Lifetime Revenue | $200 | $80 | $160 | |
| Lifetime Contribution per Name (per 000) | **$325** | $210 | $260 | |
| Spend Limit | | | | $8,000 |
| **Expected Outputs** | | | | |
| Names Used | 50,000 | 25,000 | 20,000 | 95,000 |
| $ Spend | $3,750 | $2,250 | $2,000 | $8,000 |
| # of "Actions" | 500 | 313 | 300 | 1,113 |
| Conversions | 100 | 94 | 45 | 239 |
| Initial Conversion Revenue | $4,000 | $3,750 | $1,800 | $9,550 |
| Lifetime Revenue | $20,000 | $7,500 | $7,200 | $34,700 |
| **Total Lifetime Contribution** | **$16,250** | **$5,250** | **$5,200** | **$26,700** |

revenue on the table due to budget restrictions. This stage highlights the importance of prioritizing campaigns that maximize both immediate and long-term value while carefully managing budget limitations.

**Intermediate Stages**

Let's pause here. Stage 3 is where even the most sophisticated marketers often stop in their evolution, satisfied with their ability to evaluate customer relationships over time. However, digital marketing campaigns—often constrained by limited insight and control—can lead marketers to slide back to the simpler metrics of Stage 1. The real transformation comes in Stage 4, where the focus shifts from isolated campaigns to managing marketing efforts as interconnected events across multiple touchpoints. This stage recognizes that real customer journeys take place across more than one channel and more than one campaign.

STAGE 4

### Stage 4: From Single Campaigns to Multi-touch Journeys

Performance marketing evolves significantly when marketers stop thinking of campaigns as isolated efforts and instead view them as a series of interconnected events. Stage 4 is about managing the sequence of campaigns—understanding how they work together to nurture prospects and drive results over time.

At this stage, marketers focus on creating a cohesive plan where each campaign builds on the last, forming a deliberate progression that guides customers through the buying journey. Success isn't tied to the performance of a single campaign but to the cumulative impact of multiple campaigns working together.

VALUE CALCULATION:

**Optimize the return on multi-touch campaigns or multiple campaigns**

EXAMPLE MARKETER:

**Regional Nonalcoholic Beer Company**

The regional nonalcoholic beer manufacturer begins to refine its approach, realizing that individual campaigns don't exist in isolation. Analysis of email activity reveals that customers exposed to multiple campaigns are far more likely to convert. Armed with this knowledge, the team shifts its focus to managing the sequence and timing of campaigns. Their new multi-campaign strategy includes:

*Layered Messaging:* Building consistent but evolving messages across campaigns to maintain relevance.

Expiring Offer Strategies: Using countdowns (e.g., "Only 3 days left!") in later campaigns to drive urgency.

*Optimal Frequency Testing:* Experimenting with the number of campaigns sent to prospects to avoid fatigue.

For the team, the challenge is determining the right number and sequence of campaigns to maximize engagement without overwhelming the audience. They evaluate success based on the ROI and expected lifetime revenue generated from the entire series of

*Goal: Maximize Return on $ Invested in the Customer Journey*

**Inputs**

| **Emails Sent** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Audience Size (names available) | 10,000 | 10,000 | $10,000 | 10000 |
| List Cost (cpm per name) | $50 | $50 | $50 | $50 |
| List Reuse Cost (cpm per name) | $0 | $20 | $20 | $20 |
| Deployment Cost (cpm per name) | $25 | $25 | $25 | $25 |
| "Action" rate (Open/Click/etc.) | 1.00% | 1.50% | 2.25% | 1.00% |
| Conversion Rate | 20% | 20% | 20% | 20% |
| Revenue per Conversion | $40 | $40 | $40 | $40 |
| Average Add'l Revenue per Year | $40 | $40 | $40 | $40 |
| Average Years on File | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Average Lifetime Revenue | $200 | $200 | $200 | $200 |
| **Expected Outputs** | | | | |
| Names Used | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| Initial Cost | $750 | $750 | $750 | $750 |
| Reuse Cost | $0 | $450 | $900 | $1,350 |
| Total Campaign Cost | $750 | $1,200 | $1,650 | $2,100 |
| Actions | 100 | 150 | 225 | 100 |
| Conversions | 20 | 30 | 45 | 20 |
| Conversions Revenue | $800 | $1,200 | $1,800 | $800 |
| Lifetime Revenue | $4,000 | $6,000 | $9,000 | $4,000 |
| Total Return | $3,250 | $4,800 | $7,350 | $1,900 |
| **ROI** | $4.33 | $4.00 | **$4.45** | *$0.90* |

campaigns, rather than from individual efforts.
The team is now focused on orchestrating campaigns that complement one another, creating a seamless customer journey that drives stronger results over time.

The team examines List 1 from the previous examples to understand how to maximize return on investment (ROI) within this audience.  The team conducts an experiment, breaking their campaign into four equal segments, with each segment receiving a different number of emails:
Engagement rates increase significantly with the second and third contacts.
Engagement drops off sharply with the fourth contact.
From these insights, the team determines the optimal frequency for contacting names on the list.
They also calculate ROI by dividing the total return (revenue generated) by the total cost of the campaign, which includes both initial and reused name fees.
Their findings highlight the importance of balancing cost efficiency with audience engagement dynamics, ensuring that campaigns are neither under- nor over-targeting their audience.

STAGE 5

## Stage 5: From Siloed Channels to Omnichannel Strategies

Marketing today spans many channels, and no marketer should analyze performance metrics in isolation. To gain a complete picture of consumer behavior, it's critical to read results across all channels and connect the dots.

This stage builds on the work done in Stages 2 and 3, focusing on understanding business outcomes holistically rather than within a single channel. For example, a direct mail campaign might not generate immediate responses through mail but could prompt digital engagement instead. By taking a cross-channel view, marketers can uncover hidden contributions and gain clarity on how campaigns work together to drive results.

Stage 5 introduces the concept of Total Revenue—combining results from all relevant channels into a unified measure of success. This allows marketers to identify which channels contribute the most value and where to allocate future resources for maximum impact.

VALUE CALCULATION:

**Calculate Total Revenue by adding the contributions from all relevant channels (e.g., online sales and in-store sales) to assess the holistic financial impact of marketing campaigns**

EXAMPLE MARKETER:

**Regional Nonalcoholic Beer Company**

The regional nonalcoholic beer manufacturer is continuing its efforts to drive sales and support business growth. While their multi-touch email strategy has been effective in boosting online revenue, the team notices a pattern: unsolicited sales at their partner stores fluctuate alongside email activity.
To investigate further, they use their loyalty card program (buy 10, get one free) to capture in-store shopper identities. By matching these identities to their email prospect lists, they uncover new insights: Some email campaigns, while generating less online sales, correlate with significant increases in in-store purchases.
One underperforming email list for online revenue, List 2, drives the highest overall business return when in-store sales are included.

*Goal: Maximize Return on Investment*

### Inputs

| | List 1 | List 2 | List 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Audience Size (names available) | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 |
| List Cost (cpm per name) | $50 | $65 | $75 |
| Deployment Cost (cpm per name) | $25 | $25 | $25 |
| Action rate (Open/Click/etc.) | 1.00% | 1.25% | 1.50% |
| Conversion Rate | 20% | 30% | 15% |
| Revenue per Conversion | $40 | $40 | $40 |
| Average Add'l Revenue per Year | $40 | $20 | $120 |
| Average Years on File | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| Average lifetime Online Revenue | $200 | $80 | $160 |
| Average In Store Matchback to Prospect File | 0.05% | 0.25% | 0.15% |
| Average In Store Sales (12 months) | $40 | $100 | $150 |
| **Expected Outputs** | | | |
| Spend | $2,250 | $2,700 | $3,000 |
| Actions | 300 | 375 | 450 |
| Conversions | 60 | 113 | 68 |
| Conversion Revenue | $2,400 | $4,500 | $2,700 |
| Lifetime Revenue (Online only) | $12,000 | $9,000 | $10,800 |
| In Store Revenue | $600 | $7,500 | $6,750 |
| Total Revenue (Lifetime + In Store) | $12,600 | $16,500 | $17,550 |
| Total Return | $10,350 | $13,800 | $14,550 |
| **ROI** | $4.60 | **$5.11** | $4.85 |

By combining these data points, the team calculates Total Revenue for each list, which includes both online and in-store sales contributions. Their analysis shows that for every dollar invested in List 2, the business generates $5.11 in incremental revenue—highlighting the importance of viewing campaigns through a cross-channel lens.

This stage demonstrates how integrating data from multiple channels can transform how marketers evaluate success, shifting the focus from isolated metrics to a comprehensive understanding of overall impact.

**Advanced Stages**

As marketers progress to the advanced stages of the performance marketing maturity curve, the focus shifts to mastering multi-channel and multi-touchpoint strategies while pushing the boundaries of known audiences. These stages require greater analytical sophistication, more rigorous testing, and a deeper understanding of how channels and audiences interact.

# STAGE 6

**Stage 6: Multi-Touch Attribution and Media Mix Modeling**

Building on the insights from Stage 4's journey management, this stage involves fully integrating all available channels and touchpoints into a unified strategy. The goal is to understand how each element in the marketing mix contributes to customer engagement and business outcomes. Marketers at this stage face significant challenges, particularly in attribution. Multi-touch attribution (MTA) becomes essential for assessing the contribution of each channel and touchpoint in a complex, multi-channel environment. By testing various scenarios and observing how different channels interact, marketers can develop a clearer picture of which combinations deliver the best results. Success at this stage depends on consistency in attribution models, occasional re-testing to refine assumptions, and careful consideration of channel costs relative to their impact on customer engagement and lifetime contribution.

VALUE CALCULATION:

**Evaluate channel contributions by analyzing response rate impact, channel costs, and lifetime value, using these insights to optimize the marketing mix**.

EXAMPLE MARKETER:

**Regional Nonalcoholic Beer Company**

The regional nonalcoholic beer manufacturer expands its strategy to include a mix of media channels. To better understand the impact of each channel, the team tests eight different scenarios of media engagement.

*Scenario A* involves reaching customers solely through direct mail.

*Scenario G* represents full-channel engagement, combining direct mail, email, CTV, social media, and search. By running regressions on the results, the team uncovers the relative impact of each channel. For example: Search has the highest impact on response rate, at 0.53%. Email follows with a 0.42% impact. Surprisingly, CTV shows a slight negative impact (-0.06%) on response rates.

However, when channel costs are factored in, relative impact changes.  Direct mail's high execution cost, for example, makes it one of the weaker performers in overall return. The team takes these insights as directional rather than definitive, continuing to test and refine their approach to optimize channel performance.

*Media Channel Impact Test*

| Scenario | Mail (M) | Email (E) | Display (D) | Search (S) | CTV Ads (C) | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | X | | | | | 1.00% |
| B | X | X | | | | 1.50% |
| C | X | | X | | | 1.25% |
| D | X | X | X | | | 1.75% |
| E | | X | X | X | | 1.80% |
| F | X | | X | X | | 1.90% |
| G | X | X | X | X | X | 2.10% |
| H | | X | X | X | X | 1.90% |

Regression Results

| **Response Rate =** | **0.36%M** | **+ 0.42%E** | **+ 0.25%D** | **+ 0.53%S** | **- 0.06%C** | **+ 0.68%** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

*Media Channel Contribution*

| **Average Lifetime Revenue Per Conversion** | | | **$200** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Media | CPM | Revenue | Contribution |
| Mail | $500.00 | $0.72 | $0.22 |
| Email | $25.00 | $0.84 | $0.82 |
| Display | $10.00 | $0.50 | $0.49 |
| Search | $150.00 | $1.06 | $0.91 |
| CTV | $200.00 | -$0.12 | -$0.32 |

At this stage, the focus is not just on identifying high-performing channels but on balancing response rates with media costs to maximize overall return on investment.

STAGE 7

## Stage 7: Testing, Prospecting and Learning

At this stage, marketers move beyond engaging known audiences to explore untapped markets and identify new customer opportunities. Prospecting is about expanding the boundaries of performance marketing to discover high-value segments, refine strategies, and build a sustainable pipeline of future customers.

This stage requires a mindset shift: there's no such thing as "waste" in prospecting. Non-performing spend isn't a loss—it's a critical test budget used to learn which strategies, channels, and creative approaches resonate with new audiences. The insights gained from these efforts form the foundation of future growth.

Prospecting success hinges on applying the principles of performance marketing—multivariate testing, attribution modeling, and lifetime value analysis—to uncover the best paths for customer acquisition. By continuously optimizing the learning process, marketers can expand their reach without over-targeting or sacrificing efficiency.

### VALUE CALCULATION:

**Use test budgets strategically to uncover new high-value segments and acquisition strategies. Success is measured not just by immediate returns but by the depth of insights gained and their impact on future campaign performance**

### EXAMPLE MARKETER:

**Regional Nonalcoholic Beer Company**

Having mastered earlier stages, the regional nonalcoholic beer manufacturer turns its attention to growing its customer base. The team uses performance marketing techniques to test new audience segments and acquisition strategies.

They allocate a portion of their budget specifically for testing, which includes:

*Creative Variations:* Testing different messages and visuals to see what resonates.

*Channel Mixes:* Experimenting with new platforms like influencer partnerships and podcasts alongside proven channels like email and search.

*Audience Segments:* Exploring segments like fitness enthusiasts or parents with young children.

The team embraces non-performing spend as an investment in learning. For example, while targeting fitness-conscious consumers generates lower initial conversions, it provides critical data on which messages and channels work for this segment. Over time, they refine their approach, improving efficiency and identifying high-performing combinations for acquisition.

Through this iterative process, the company uncovers new customer segments that complement its core audience, extending its marketing reach while maintaining cost-effectiveness.

# THE FUTURE

.

**The future of performance**

Some performance marketers zoom in on tightly-defined audiences at all costs. But by limiting themselves to a subset of business prospects, marketers risk building an underperforming marketing strategy. It's entirely possible to optimize the learning process and stretch the concept of performance into the wider world of marketing.

Marketers that master their way through all seven stages will find that they have highly successful, data-driven campaigns. In an era where every ad dollar is scrutinized, the ability to connect spend with business results, and then back that up with a constantly-optimized strategy, is one that marketers will reap the benefits of for years to come.

# What stage are you at?

**Progressive Qualifying Questions by Stage**
Each stage builds on the previous stage to determine where you are in the performance marketing curve.

**Stage 1: Optimizing an Action**

*Are you tracking specific customer actions (e.g., clicks, impressions, opens) to measure campaign performance?*

*Is your primary metric of success based on actions that you believe influence sales, even if you cannot directly observe their connection to sales?*

**Stage 2: Understanding Immediate Results**

*Can you directly attribute customer actions (e.g., clicks or impressions) to specific business outcomes, such as sales or conversions?*

*Are you using revenue or return on ad spend (ROAS) to evaluate the financial impact of your campaigns?*

**Stage 3: Tuning to Lifetime Results**

*Do you calculate the lifetime value (LTV) of your customers based on specific audience segments (e.g., by list, channel, or profile)?*

*Are your marketing goals focused on maximizing the lifetime contribution of your customers rather than just immediate returns?*

**Stage 4: Managing the Journey**

*Do you evaluate the collective impact of multiple campaigns rather than individual campaign performance?*

*Are your campaigns structured to guide customers through a cohesive and deliberate journey (e.g., layered messaging, optimal timing)?*

**Stage 5: Reading Across Channels**

*Are you integrating performance data across multiple channels to measure their combined impact?*

*Do you have visibility into how one channel influences or complements another in driving customer actions?*

**Stage 6: Using All Channels**

*Are you testing combinations of channels to understand their individual and collective impact on customer engagement?*

*Do you compare the cost of each channel relative to its contribution to overall performance?*

**Stage 7: Prospecting and Learning**

*Are you allocating a portion of your budget specifically for testing new audiences, channels, or strategies?*

*Do you view non-performing spend as part of the learning process to identify what drives customer acquisition?*