

# **Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales d'Alger**



**This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the master's degree in Commercial Sciences**

**Major: Digital Marketing**

**The Impact of Search Engine and Social Media  
Advertising on Lead Acquisition  
Case Study: ITComp Academy**

**Submitted by:**

Mr BOURAHLA Mehdi

**Supervised by:**

Dr. MESSAOUDI Naima

*Senior Lecturer at EHEC*

**12th Class**

**June 2025**



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## Dedication

*To myself,  
For never giving up.  
For choosing growth over comfort,  
and for rising again, even when it felt impossible.  
This thesis is a quiet testament to your persistence and evolution.*

*To my beloved parents,  
Your unconditional love, your prayers whispered in silence,  
your sacrifices that no words can ever measure —  
this journey was made possible because of your strength.*

*To my two brothers, Abd El Mouine and Mouhamed,  
You are my pillars of pride.  
Your support, even in the smallest gestures, has carried me forward.*

*To my beloved family — especially Hassina, Ilham, and Radia —  
Your love, encouragement, and quiet strength have carried me through.  
You've been my roots, my wings, and the light that guided my way.  
Thank you for all your support, from the depths of my heart.*

*To my friends — each one of you, by your name,  
Thank you for the late-night talks, the unwavering encouragement,  
the shared doubts, the bursts of laughter, and the reminders of my worth  
when I almost forgot it myself.*

*And to you —  
My favorite person.  
You know who you are.  
For the silent strength, the unexpected warmth,  
and the way your presence shaped this chapter of my life  
without needing to say a word.*

*This thesis carries pieces of all of you.  
It was never a solo journey — it was ours.*

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## **Abstract**

In the context of rapid digital transformation, search engines and social media advertising have emerged as essential levers in modern lead acquisition strategies. This thesis examines the effect of digital advertising campaigns on lead generation at the ITComp Academy, a specialized IT training institution in Algeria. Drawing on a mixed-methods approach, this research combines a structured online survey and the analysis of campaign data from Google and Meta-platforms.

This study examines the impact of various factors on conversion rates, including platform selection, advertising format (video vs. image), social proof integration, call-to-action clarity, and landing page relevance. Particular attention is paid to the performance differences between Google Ads and Meta-Ads, the comparative effectiveness of ad formats, and the psychological role of trust signals in motivating users to take action.

The findings reveal that the strategic integration of search and social media ads, when aligned with audience behavior and data-driven optimization, significantly improves both lead volume and quality. This thesis concludes with practical recommendations to enhance the performance marketing efforts of the ITComp Academy and strengthen its digital acquisition strategy.

### **Keywords:**

Digital marketing, lead acquisition, Meta Ads, Google Ads, conversion rate, advertising formats, social proof, and performance marketing.

## ملخص

في ظل التحول الرقمي المتسارع، أصبحت إعلانات محركات البحث وشبكات التواصل الاجتماعي من الركائز الأساسية في استراتيجيات اكتساب العملاء المحتملين. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل أثر الحملات الإعلانية الرقمية على اكتساب العملاء في أكاديمية ITCComp ، وهي مؤسسة جزائرية متخصصة في التكوين في المجال الرقمي والتقني. يعتمد البحث على منهجية مزدوجة تجمع بين الاستبيان وتحليل بيانات الحملات الإعلانية المنفذة عبر منصات جوجل وميتا. وتركز الدراسة على مجموعة من العوامل المؤثرة في تحويل الزوار إلى عملاء، مثل اختيار المنصة، صيغة الإعلان (فيديو أو صورة)، إدراج عناصر الإثبات الاجتماعي، وضوح الدعوة إلى الإجراء، ومدى فعالية صفحة الهبوط. أظهرت النتائج أن الاستخدام المتكامل والمنظم لإعلانات البحث والتواصل الاجتماعي، عند دعمه باستراتيجية محتوى موجهة وتحسين تقني مبني على تحليل البيانات، يُساهم بشكل كبير في رفع حجم ونوعية العملاء المحتملين. واختتمت الدراسة بتوصيات عملية تهدف إلى تعزيز الأداء التسويقي الرقمي للأكاديمية.

### الكلمات المفتاحية:

التسويق الرقمي، اكتساب العملاء، إعلانات ميتا، إعلانات جوجل، معدل التحويل، صيغة الإعلان، الإثبات الاجتماعي، التسويق بالأداء.

## Resume

Dans un contexte de transformation numérique accélérée, la publicité sur les moteurs de recherche et les réseaux sociaux est devenue un levier incontournable des stratégies d'acquisition de clients potentiels. Ce mémoire analyse l'impact des campagnes publicitaires numériques sur l'acquisition de leads au sein de l'Académie ITCComp, un établissement algérien spécialisé dans la formation aux métiers du numérique et des technologies.

L'étude repose sur une approche méthodologique mixte combinant un questionnaire structuré et l'analyse des données issues des campagnes menées sur les plateformes de Google et de Meta. Elle examine l'influence de plusieurs facteurs sur les taux de conversion, notamment le choix de la plateforme, le format publicitaire (vidéo ou image), l'intégration de preuves sociales, la clarté des appels à l'action, et la pertinence des pages d'atterrissage.

Les résultats révèlent qu'une utilisation stratégique, coordonnée et fondée sur les données des publicités sur les moteurs de recherche et les réseaux sociaux permet d'améliorer significativement la quantité et la qualité des prospects. L'étude se conclut par des recommandations concrètes pour renforcer les performances des campagnes de l'Académie ITCComp.

### **Mots-clés :**

Marketing digital, acquisition de leads, publicité sur les réseaux sociaux, publicité sur les moteurs de recherche, taux de conversion, formats publicitaires, preuve sociale, marketing de performance.

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## Abbreviations list

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
IT	Information Technology
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
CPL	Cost Per Lead
SEA	Search Engine Advertising
SMA	Social Media Advertising
SEM	Search Engine Marketing
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SERPs	Search Engine Results Pages
SMM	Social Media Marketing
PPC	Pay Per Click
CPM	Cost Per Mille (Cost per 1,000 impressions)
CPC	Cost Per Click
MOFU	Middle of Funnel
BOFU	Bottom of Funnel
TOFU	Top of Funnel
ROI	Return on Investment
ROAS	Return on Ad Spend
CTA	Call To Action
UX	User Experience
AI	Artificial Intelligence
UGC	User-Generated Content
B2B	Business to Business
B2C	Business to Consumer

KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
RTB	Real-Time Bidding
DSP	Demand-Side Platform
DPA	Dynamic Product Ads
SMO	Social Media Optimization
API	Application Programming Interface
H1	Hypothesis 1
H2	Hypothesis 2
H3	Hypothesis 3
GTM	Google Tag Manager
CLV	Customer Lifetime Value
DCO	Dynamic Creative Optimization
DSPs	Demand-Side Platforms (plural of DSP)
CCPA	California Consumer Privacy Act

## Summary

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# **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

In today's digitally connected world, marketing has experienced a fundamental shift from traditional approaches to performance-driven digital strategies. Among the most influential tools reshaping customer acquisition are Search Engine Advertising (SEA) and Social Media Advertising (SMA). These channels offer unprecedented precision in targeting, real-time analytics, and personalized communication, making them essential components of any lead generation strategy. In particular, the education and training sector has increasingly adopted these platforms. This trend allows institutions to reach, engage, and convert prospective learners more effectively in an increasingly competitive digital marketplace.

Within the Algerian context, this transformation is especially significant. With rising internet penetration, a young and tech-savvy population, and increased demand for IT skills, educational institutions must reassess their digital outreach strategies. ITComp Academy, a specialized tech training institution, represents a compelling case for exploring how targeted digital advertising can enhance lead acquisition. Its positioning as a 100% tech-focused academy offers fertile ground for performance-driven experimentation and optimization in digital marketing.

This thesis aims to investigate the impact of search engine and social media advertising on lead acquisition, taking ITComp Academy as a case study. The objective is not only to assess the effectiveness of these campaigns in attracting qualified leads but also to identify the most appropriate platforms, advertising formats, and content strategies. Ultimately, the goal is to provide actionable recommendations to improve conversion outcomes and enhance the institution's return on advertising investment.

The motivation for this study is both academic and professional in nature. On the academic level, the research contributes to a better understanding of how digital advertising influences user behavior and decision-making in the education sector. On the professional side, it reflects a personal ambition to work in the field of performance marketing by applying data-driven strategies to real business contexts.

The choice of ITComp Academy was driven by the opportunity it offers. As a specialized tech training institution in a rapidly growing digital environment, it provides a valuable context for exploring and developing new advertising strategies. Rather than assessing a well-established digital presence, this study aims to help ITComp Academy strengthen its advertising efforts and build a more structured, performance-driven lead acquisition strategy.

To address this objective, the following problem statement is proposed: “To what extent do search engine and social media advertising campaigns influence the lead acquisition outcomes of online training programs?”

To respond to this central issue, three research questions are posed:

- Which advertising media channel generates the highest number of leads and achieves greater cost-efficiency?
- Which advertising format (e.g., video, image, carousel) drives better conversion results?
- How do advertisements that incorporate social proof, such as testimonials and success rates, affect click-through and conversion intentions?

To answer these questions, we posed the following hypotheses:

- **H1:** Meta Ads are more effective in generating leads and achieving greater cost-efficiency compared to Google Ads for ITCComp Academy.
- **H2:** Video-based advertising generates better conversion results than image- or text-based formats in online campaigns.
- **H3:** Advertisements incorporating social proof (e.g., testimonials, success rates) positively influence click-through rates and conversion intentions.

The hypotheses presented herein provide a testable framework for the empirical investigation of the effects of diverse advertising strategies on lead-generation outcomes. This study aims to achieve these objectives through a mixed-methods approach, integrating a theoretical literature review with an empirical analysis. The theoretical review establishes the conceptual framework and situates the study within the existing body of literature, whereas the empirical analysis facilitates hypothesis testing and practical observations.

Consequently, the hypotheses were examined through the analysis of a structured survey and campaign performance data, culminating in actionable recommendations.

A quantitative methodology was employed to empirically evaluate the hypotheses and observe actual performance. The approach comprised two primary components: a structured survey designed to measure user behavior and perceptions of advertising and the collection of

campaign performance data, specifically key performance indicators (KPIs) from Meta and Google Ads platforms. The integration of survey findings with platform analytics facilitated the assessment of the effectiveness of various advertising formats and strategies for lead acquisition.

This methodological approach enables a comprehensive evaluation of research questions by combining subjective user data with objective advertising performance metrics.

To better understand the subject, we have structured this study into three chapters.

The first chapter, titled Theoretical Foundations of Social Media and Search Engine Advertising in Digital Marketing, is divided into three sections. The first covers the fundamentals of digital communication, while the second and third focus, respectively, on social media advertising and search engine advertising as key drivers of visibility and conversion.

The second chapter, titled Theoretical Approach to Lead Acquisition, is also composed of three sections. The first section introduces core concepts related to lead generation, including definitions and various types of leads. The second examines strategies for acquiring leads, such as landing pages, A/B testing, and copywriting techniques. The final section presents methods and indicators for measuring acquisition performance.

The third chapter will be dedicated to the empirical study. The case study begins by presenting the company ITComp, followed by a detailed introduction to ITComp Academy, which serves as the core of the case study. The second section outlines the research methodology, combining insights from a quantitative survey with performance data from advertising campaigns. The final section presents the main findings and offers strategic recommendations to improve advertising effectiveness and lead acquisition outcomes.

**CHAPTER ONE: Theoretical  
Foundations of Social Media and  
Search Engine Advertising in  
Digital Marketing**

**Introduction of chapter ONE**

In a world where people are easily distracted, and a brand's digital presence is what makes it visible, effective communication is both a strategic necessity and a competitive advantage. Moving from traditional media to interactive digital platforms has changed how institutions connect with their audiences. Instead of trying to reach as many people as possible, they now focus on targeted, data-driven interactions.

The rise of online ecosystems has blurred the lines between media producers and consumers, enabling real-time dialogue, personalized messaging, and algorithmically mediated engagement. Social media platforms and search engines, in particular, have emerged as critical arenas for influence, positioning, and lead generation. They not only allow brands to reach specific user segments but also empower users to shape the narrative, making communication more participatory than ever before.

This chapter provides the study with a theoretical foundation. It begins with the fundamentals of digital communication, then transitions to the theoretical aspects of social media advertising, and finally, the theoretical aspects of search engine advertising. This provides a structured approach to understanding how visibility, interaction, and lead acquisition work in today's digital landscape.

## **Section 01: Fundamentals of Digital Communication**

Digital communication is the foundation of modern marketing systems, enabling businesses to maintain ongoing, interactive, and measurable conversations with their customers. It enables you to send content in real time, interact with people across multiple channels, and utilize highly personalized messaging strategies, which traditional media cannot achieve. The rise of internet technologies has transformed how messages are created and disseminated. Instead of being sent out to everyone at once, they are now sent out in a more dynamic and focused manner, tailored to the user.

This section begins by defining the concept of digital communication, followed by an analysis of the emergence of digital marketing and its principal types. It further introduces the Paid, Owned, and Earned Media framework, examines online user behavior and the attention economy, explores the role of algorithms and data in advertising, and concludes with real-world use case to illustrate how theory translates into practical digital strategy.

### **1. Definition of Digital Communication**

Digital communication encompasses all strategies and methods that use digital tools to convey messages and information to people. It must support all aspects of communication and ensure the coordination and consistency of all actions carried out on social media platforms.<sup>1</sup>

Digital communication, redefined by the digital revolution, is transforming the way messages are produced, received, and disseminated. This field explores how digital technologies reshape sender-receiver interactions and impact the organizational structures of companies. The goal is to understand these changes in order to better adapt communication strategies to the digital age.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> REGUER, (D) : « Optimiser sa communication digitale », DUNOD, Paris, 2010, P.168. Our translation

<sup>2</sup> PELET (J.E) et BOURSIER (J) : « Aide-mémoire : communication digitale », Dunod, Paris, 2017, P.39. Our translation

## **2. The Emergence of Digital Marketing**

### **2.1. Definition of digital marketing**

With the rise of the internet, the world became more digital. Businesses had to switch to a new type of marketing called "digital marketing" in order to get their names out there, reach customers, and give them the best online experience possible.

According to the American Marketing Association, « Digital marketing is the use of digital channels to promote a brand or reach consumers. This kind of marketing can be executed on the internet, social media, search engines, mobile devices, and other channels»<sup>3</sup>, it's also an integral part of all marketing activities. This includes PR, creative direction, brand, CRM, retention, product development, pricing, proposition, and communications, the entire marketing mix.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, research demonstrates that digital marketing is profoundly affecting every industry, including all kinds of industries.<sup>5</sup>

In summary, digital marketing is a novel approach to the field of marketing. Businesses must adapt and establish an online presence to communicate with and convert consumers who are increasingly present online. This necessitates the implementation of innovative marketing strategies and approaches.

### **2.2. Digital marketing and Internet**

The arrival of the Internet and online technologies facilitated new paradigms of marketing communication by enabling more interactive, targeted, and measurable communication.<sup>6</sup>

This evolution can be traced through the distinct phases of Web 1.0, Web 2.0, and the emerging Web 3.0, each marking significant shifts in digital interaction and marketing strategies.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ama.org/topics/digital-marketing/>; consulted on 02/04/2025 at 8:20AM

<sup>4</sup> SIMON (K): *Digital Marketing Strategy: An Integrated Approach to Online Marketing*, Ed. 1, Kogan Page edition, 2016, p. 6-7

<sup>5</sup> SUN (Y): *Research on the Application of Digital Marketing in Business Operation*, Business Management, King's College London, 2022, p. 22

<sup>6</sup> NESTERENKO (V), MISKIEWICZ (R), ABAZOV (R): *Marketing Communications in the Era of Digital Transformation; Virtual Economics, Ukraine, 2023*, pp. 57–70.

The evolution of digital marketing is deeply tied to the development of the Internet. During the Web 1.0 era of the 1990s, digital marketing began with static websites that served as digital brochures—informational but non-interactive. User engagement was limited, and communication was one-directional. The introduction of the first SEO crawler in 1994 marked a foundational shift, enabling early search optimization practices. With the rise of tech giants like Google, innovations such as AdWords, mobile email, and algorithm-based search have expanded the scope of online marketing, enabling businesses to target audiences more effectively and personalize content.

The rise of Web 2.0 in the early 2000s transformed websites from static to interactive, driven by user engagement. Instead of a complete overhaul of the technology, it was a change in the way websites were designed to make it easier for people to interact with each other and build communities. Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and Pinterest are among the platforms that have enabled users to become active content creators.<sup>7</sup>

Google has also improved digital marketing with tools like AdWords, cookies, and algorithms that enable people to target audiences based on their behavior. Due to these changes, marketers are placing greater emphasis on engagement, personalization, and real-time interaction.

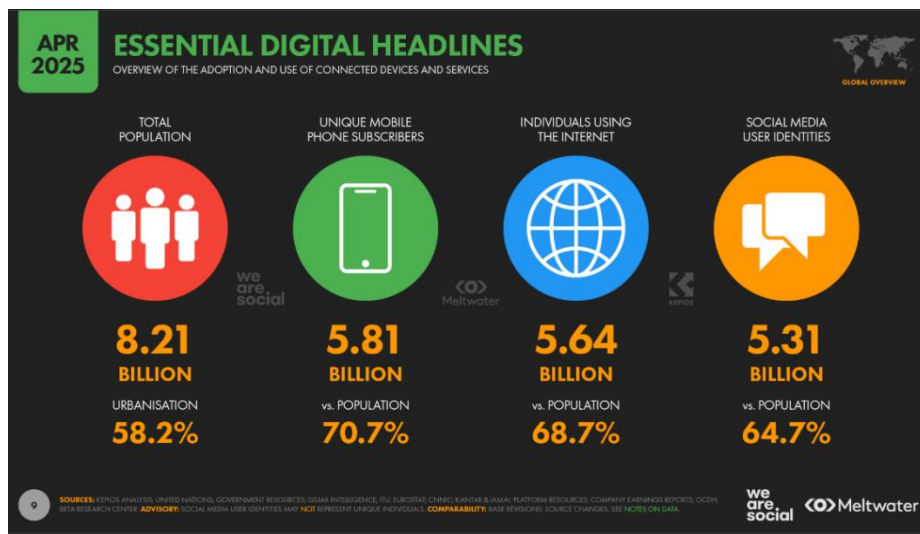
Today, the Internet is moving toward Web 3.0, driven by artificial intelligence, blockchain, and semantic technologies. This phase prioritizes personalization, decentralization, and user control over data. Web 3.0 emphasizes transparency and autonomy, requiring marketers to adopt ethical, privacy-conscious strategies that respect data ownership. It opens up opportunities for intelligent, trust-based engagement, where marketing is based on what users do, what they agree to, and how well things are working in real time. Because of this, brands need to shift toward models that are more responsible and user-focused if they want to remain helpful in a decentralized digital world.

Consequently, not only is the web growing, but the global population utilizing the internet is also seeing significant growth, as seen by the latest statistics:

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<sup>7</sup> SIMON (K):*Op cit.* 2016, p: 7

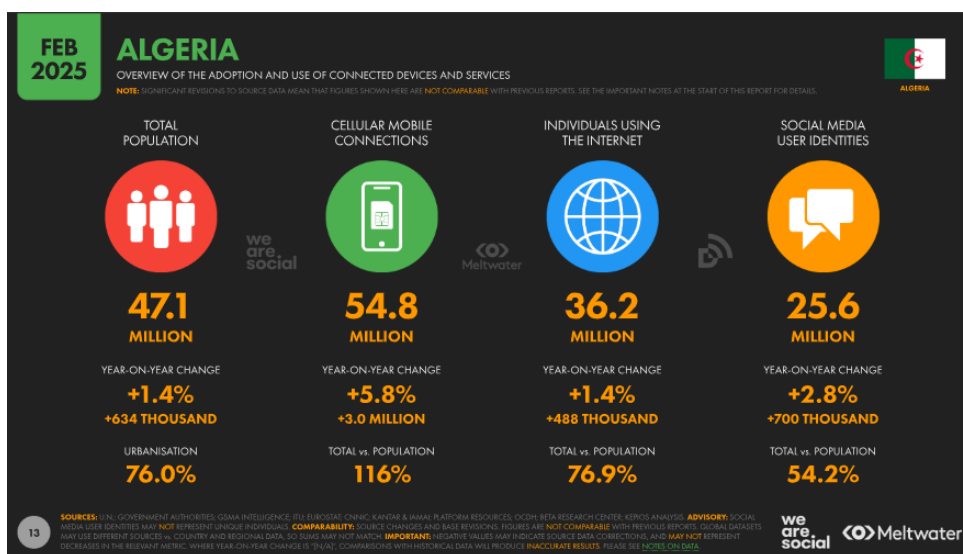
Figure I.01: Overview of internet use in the world



Source : <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-global-overview-report>

As of early 2025, approximately **5.64 billion people** worldwide are using the Internet, representing **68.7% of the global population**. This marks an increase of **144 million users** over the past year, reflecting a **2.6% year-on-year growth rate**. While the pace of growth has moderated compared to previous years, the upward trend continues, indicating the Internet's integral role in daily life and commerce.

Figure I.02: Overview of internet use in Algeria



Source : <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-global-overview-report>

Focusing on Algeria, the country has experienced notable digital advancement. By January 2025, there were **36.2 million internet users**, accounting for **76.9% of the population**. This reflects an increase of **488,000 users** (+1.4%) from the previous year. Despite this progress, approximately **10.9 million people** (23.1% of the population) remained offline at the beginning of 2025, indicating potential areas for further digital inclusion efforts.

### **2.3.Types of digital marketing**

Digital marketing encompasses a variety of methods for reaching audiences through online platforms and electronic devices. Each type is uniquely suited to different marketing goals and target audiences.

#### **2.3.1. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) refers to the practice of enhancing a website's visibility in search engine results by aligning its content and structure with the criteria used by search engines like Google and Bing. It enables search engines to better understand the relevance and value of a website's content in response to user queries. The primary objective of SEO is to rank on the first page of search engine results for targeted keywords, thereby attracting qualified traffic. Applicable to any website, SEO improves online discoverability—whether for promoting products, offering services, or sharing expert knowledge. As both digital behavior and technology evolve, SEO strategies must adapt to changing search algorithms and user interaction trends.<sup>8</sup>

#### **2.3.2. Content Marketing**

Content marketing is a strategy that involves creating and promoting content through all possible means on various channels to attract, convert, and retain targeted audiences. It serves to feed the conversion tunnel and assists customers throughout their decision-making journey.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <https://searchengineland.com/guide/what-is-seo>, Consulted on: 29/05/2025 at: 06:06 PM

<sup>9</sup> TRUPHEME (S) : *Content Marketing : Créer des contenus qui font vendre*, édition Dunod, 2019, p.3, our translation.

### **2.3.3. Search Engine Marketing (SEM)**

SEM refers to paid strategies used to increase visibility on search engine results pages (SERPs). It includes activities such as pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, often implemented via platforms like Google Ads.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) = Search Engine Optimization (SEO) + Search Engine Advertising (SEA)

### **2.3.4. Email Marketing**

Email marketing is a type of direct digital marketing that utilizes email to send targeted, personalized messages to a specific group of people, promoting goods and services or fostering relationships with customers. It is often used to nurture leads, retain customers, run promotional campaigns, and send valuable content. Effective email marketing strategies rely on segmentation, automation, performance tracking (e.g., open rates and click-through rates), and compliance with data privacy regulations, such as the GDPR and CAN-SPAM. It remains a cost-effective channel due to its scalability and ability to deliver measurable results.

### **2.3.5. Social Media Marketing (SMM)**

Social media marketing (SMM) is a technique that employs social media (content created by everyday people using highly accessible and scalable technologies such as social networks, blogs, micro-blogs, message boards, podcasts, social bookmarks, communities, wikis, and vlogs).<sup>10</sup>

### **2.3.6. Affiliate Marketing**

An affiliate marketer is someone who introduces others to products and services on behalf of a company or organization. The affiliate marketer does not develop, ship, or handle payments to the merchant. He refers others to products and/or services offered on the internet, and when a sale is made, he earns a commission.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> SINGH (S), DIAMOND (S): *Social Media Marketing for Dummies; Ed. 4, For Dummies edition, 2020, p.8.*

<sup>11</sup> SUDOL (T), MLADJENOVIC (P): *Affiliate Marketing for Dummies; Ed. 1, For Dummies edition, 2019, p.7.*

**2.3.7. Mobile Marketing**

Is an increasingly important form of interactive marketing by which marketers can use text messages, software apps, and ads to connect with consumers via their smart phones and tablets.<sup>12</sup>

**2.3.8. Video Marketing**

This form utilizes videos to promote and explain products or services, commonly deployed via YouTube, social platforms, or embedded on-site videos.

**2.3.9. Influencer Marketing**

Influencer marketing refers to the strategic collaboration between brands and individuals who possess a substantial and engaged following on platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. These influencers promote products or services to their audiences, leveraging established trust to drive consumer behavior and purchasing decisions. While often associated with celebrity endorsements in business-to-consumer (B2C) contexts, influencer marketing can also be effective in business-to-business (B2B) environments, particularly when partnering with industry-specific thought leaders who command credibility within niche professional communities.<sup>13</sup>

**2.3.10. Audio Marketing**

Audio marketing is a type of marketing that uses music, podcasts, and other sounds to promote your brand. Audio advertising differs from other forms marketing in that it can be very experiential and engaging.<sup>14</sup>

**2.3.11. Display Advertising**

Display ads are a type of online advertisement that combines text, images, and a URL that links to a website where a customer can learn more about or buy products. There are many ad

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<sup>12</sup> KOTLER (P), KELLER (K): *Marketing management, 15th Global Edition, Pearson edition, 2015, p.652*

<sup>13</sup> ROSARIO (R. A.), ROSHINI (R.), PILLAI (V.): *A study on digital marketing and its types: A deep review of pros and cons, Integr. J. Res. Arts Humanit, India, 2022, p.143.*

<sup>14</sup> <https://advertising.amazon.com/library/guides/audio-marketing>, Consulted on: 29/05/2025 at: 09:09 PM

formats. These ads can be static, featuring an image, or animated, incorporating multiple images, video, or changing text (also known as rich media ads).<sup>15</sup>

### **3. Paid, Owned and earned media**

In the digital age, knowing the difference between paid, owned, and earned media is essential for planning and carrying out advertising campaigns. Brands use these three main types of communication to talk to customers, build trust, and get qualified leads. Each sort of media affects the user journey in its own way, and how they are combined strategically has a significant effect on how well ads work and how many people buy anything.

#### **3.1.Paid media**

This type of media refers to the advertising promotions that you pay for. When choosing these options, you need a budget and a conviction that you will get a return on the money you spend.<sup>16</sup>

#### **3.2.Owned media**

This is media owned by the brand. Online this includes a company's own websites, blogs, email list, mobile apps or their social presence on Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter. Offline owned media may include brochures or retail stores. It's useful to think of a company's own presence as media in the sense that they are an alternative investment to other media and they offer opportunities to promote products using similar ad or editorial formats to other media. It emphasizes the need for all organizations to become multichannel publishers.<sup>17</sup>

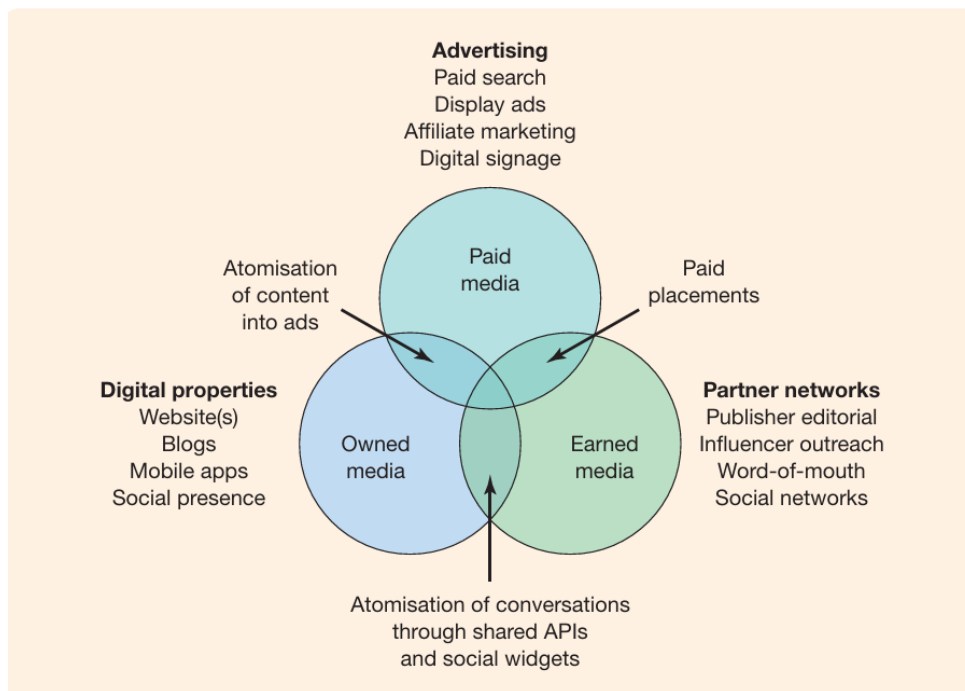
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<sup>15</sup> <https://mailchimp.com/marketing-glossary/display-ads/>, Consulted on: 29/05/2025 at: 06:30 PM

<sup>16</sup> DIAMOND (S): *Digital Marketing All-in-One For Dummies; Ed. 1, For Dummies edition, 2019, p.387.*

<sup>17</sup> CHAFFEY (D), ELLIS-CHADWICK (F): *Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice; Ed. 6, Pearson Education, 2015, p.11*

**Figure I.03:** Three main types of media channels marketers need to consider today



**Source:** Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2016). *Digital Marketing Strategy, Implementation and Practice, 7/E*. In *Pearson eBooks*, p: 12

### **3.3.Earned media**

Refers to brand exposure gained through unpaid channels such as press coverage, word-of-mouth, online reviews, and social media mentions. It is seen as more credible because it is generated by third parties, not directly controlled by the brand.<sup>18</sup>

As illustrated in Figure X, the integration and overlap of paid, owned, and earned media are essential for a cohesive digital strategy. This convergence enables consistent messaging and maximizes campaign effectiveness through content atomization and shared distribution mechanisms.

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<sup>18</sup> DENISWARA (F. D. P.), AFIFA (N. H.), MUNAWAR (M. H.): Advertising on Earned Media in Social Media: Systematic Literature Review, *Jurnal Ekonomi Kreatif Dan Manajemen Bisnis Digital, Indonesia, 2024, p. 380.*

#### **4. Online User Behavior and Attention Economy**

**Online user behavior encompasses** the patterns and interactions users exhibit when navigating digital platforms such as websites, social networks, and mobile applications. Understanding these behaviors is crucial for digital marketers aiming to boost user engagement, personalize experiences, and refine conversion funnels. Data-driven insights into user preferences and interactions enable the development of tailored marketing strategies that align closely with evolving consumer expectations.<sup>19</sup>

##### **4.1.Determinants of Online User Behavior**

###### **4.1.1. Content Relevance and Personalization**

The relevance of digital content is a key factor in keeping users interested. Data segmentation and AI-powered recommendation engines enable personalized experiences. These experiences are valuable because they match content to each user's interests. For instance, Spotify and Netflix use predictive algorithms to keep users interested by dynamically curating content. This demonstrates how user interest modeling can help keep users engaged for an extended period.<sup>20</sup>

###### **4.1.2. User Experience (UX) and Interface Design**

A simple and easy-to-use interface is essential crucial for guiding user behavior. Responsive layout, minimal cognitive load, and easy navigation are all important UX design principles that significantly impact the duration of a session and the likelihood of conversion. Airbnb and other well-designed platforms demonstrate that prioritizing the user in design enhances both customer satisfaction and business outcomes.

###### **4.1.3. Social Influence and Peer Engagement**

Social dynamics, such as peer reviews, social proof, and digital word-of-mouth, have a significant impact on how people make decisions. Platforms often utilize features like

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<sup>19</sup> ÖNDEN (A): *Marketing Management and Online User Behavior: A Comprehensive Review and Prospects for Future Research; Spectrum of Engineering and Management Sciences*, 2(1), 56-69.

<sup>20</sup> LI (Y), LIU (B), WANG (C): *Study of the Evolution of Online User Interest Behavior, IEEE Conference edition, China, 2019, p.166-171.*

community ratings and verified testimonials to establish trust and influence user behavior. A study of Shopee's digital marketplace demonstrates how prominently displayed user reviews effectively serve as persuasive triggers in the online purchasing journey.

## **4.2.The Attention Economy : Concept and Implications**

### **4.2.1. Competing for User Attention in a Saturated Digital Landscape**

The Attention Economy views user focus as a limited resource and digital platforms compete to capture and retain it. As more and more digital content becomes available, only the most interesting content can keep users' attention. Platforms such as Facebook and TikTok employ attention-optimization strategies, utilizing engagement-driven algorithms to retain users for more extended periods.

### **4.2.2. Role of Algorithms in Capturing and Maintaining Attention**

Machine learning algorithms play a crucial role in optimizing attention. They make it possible to curate content, predict behavior, and target ads, which keeps users coming back and gets them more involved. YouTube's autoplay and TikTok's infinite scroll are two examples of how algorithmic design encourages people to use the site regularly.<sup>21</sup>

## **4.3.Strategies for Maximizing User Attention**

### **4.3.1. Engaging Content Formats (Videos, Interactive Media)**

Videos, animations, and interactive quizzes are examples of dynamic and visually engaging content that capture users' attention more effectively than static media. Short-form content that generates much interaction is what platforms like Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts are all about.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> BAEZA-YATES (R), FAYYAD (U.M): *The Attention Economy and the Impact of Artificial Intelligence; Ed. 1, Springer edition, Switzerland, 2022, p.123-134.*

<sup>22</sup> DESHPANDE (D), DESHPANDE (S): *Online User Behavior: A Decade's Perspective; IEEE Conference edition, India, 2017, p.977-984.*

### **4.3.2. Retargeting Strategies to Recapture Visitor Interest**

Retargeting uses ads based on users' behavior to bring back people who left without completing their intended actions. For example, platforms often use programmatic advertising to display products that users have already viewed, reinforcing their intent and encouraging them to make a purchase.

### **4.3.3. Cross-Channel Consistency to Maintain User Engagement**

A unified cross-platform strategy ensures that the message and experience are consistent across email, social media, and websites. These kinds of integrated strategies help customers get to know your brand better and stay interested throughout their journey.

## **5. Roles of algorithms and data in digital advertising**

Algorithms play a key role in the targeting of digital advertisements. They are used to compose and serve ads in a personalized manner. This personalization is based on analyzing vast amounts of data about user activity, preferences, and demographics in real time.<sup>23</sup>

Data makes algorithm-driven advertising stronger by letting advertisers personalize ads in real-time and target specific groups of people based on their behavior and intent. It lets ads be delivered at the right time and with the correct information, which increases engagement and conversions. Data-driven insights also help improve targeting, measure the success of a campaign, and make sure that marketing is effective at every stage of the customer journey.

### **5.1. Role of Algorithms in Ad Targeting**

Algorithm-driven advertising leverages technology to target audiences more effectively by analyzing user data such as online behavior, interests, location, demographics, and search history.

- **Automated Audience Segmentation**

Algorithms segment audiences into groups based on factors such as behavior, demographics, and interests. This allows marketers to show ads that are highly relevant and encourages people to interact with them more. Over time, Google, Facebook, and other

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<sup>23</sup> *The Influence of Algorithm-Based Advertising on Social Media on Millennial Consumer Behavior; Asian Journal of Management Analytics, Indonesia, 2025, pp. 291–300.*

platforms collect information about users to create detailed profiles for targeted advertising. Demographic, interest-based, and in-market groups are among the most common. There are also options for retargeting and lookalike audiences to reach people who are similar to your current customers.<sup>24</sup>

- **Real-time Bidding and Ad Placements**

**Real-time bidding (RTB)** is a cornerstone of modern programmatic advertising, where ad impressions are bought and sold in automated auctions conducted within milliseconds. When a user loads a webpage, information such as browsing behavior, location, and device type is analyzed in real-time by demand-side platforms (DSPs), which bid for the impression. The highest bidder's ad is displayed, ensuring that advertisements are targeted to the most relevant audience at optimal cost.<sup>25</sup>

## **5.2.Role of Data in Campaign Optimization**

Data is critical for optimizing digital campaigns by understanding user behavior, tracking performance, and enabling personalization.

- **User Behavior Analysis**

Data analytics play a critical role in optimizing digital ad campaigns. User behavior data, such as page visits, clicks, and interaction times, provides insights into consumer interests and preferences. This information allows advertisers to tailor campaigns to specific user groups, enhancing relevance and engagement. Platforms continuously monitor these behaviors to predict user intentions, allowing for more strategic ad placements. For example, if a user frequently searches for travel-related content, platforms can prioritize travel advertisements for that user, increasing the chances of conversion.

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<sup>24</sup> COMPETITION AND MARKETS AUTHORITY (CMA): *Online Platforms and Digital Advertising Market Study, Appendix F: The Role of Data in Digital Advertising; Ed. 1, CMA edition, United Kingdom, 2020, (p.F1-F63).*

<sup>25</sup> KSHIRSAGAR (R. P), AGARWAL (N), CHINTHA (V. R), SHRIVASTAV (A), JAIN (S. K), GOEL (O): *Real Time Auction Models for Programmatic Advertising Efficiency; Universal Research Reports, India, 2022, pp. 451–472.*

- **Performance Tracking and Personalization**

Effective digital marketing relies on performance tracking through metrics such as CTR, conversion rates, and bounce rates. Real-time feedback enables strategy adjustments to enhance outcomes. Personalization enhances success by tailoring ads to a user's past behavior. Platforms like Amazon and Netflix utilize historical data to enhance retention and conversions by providing personalized recommendations and aligning content with individual preferences.<sup>26</sup>

### **5.3.Integration of Algorithms and Data: A Synergistic Effect**

The integration of algorithms and data enables highly effective advertising campaigns. Algorithms process vast datasets in real-time to optimize targeting, while data provides insights to enhance accuracy. This feedback loop continually improves with each user interaction, leading to more refined audience segmentation and ad placement.

Platforms like Google and Meta leverage real-time bidding, predictive analytics, and automated segmentation to maximize ad relevance and return on investment. Their mastery of data and algorithmic targeting solidifies their dominance in the digital advertising landscape.

## **6. Case studies of successful digital advertising campaigns**

Digital advertising in education and training has advanced rapidly, although challenges persist, including data privacy concerns (such as GDPR and iOS 14), ad fatigue, and difficulties targeting niche audiences. The following case studies (2022–2024) highlight how organizations addressed these issues through the strategic use of search and social ads.

### **6.1.Case Study 1**

#### **School Admissions Campaign – Overcoming Ad Fatigue & Policy Hurdles<sup>27</sup>**

Context : A K–12 school in the UAE wanted to get more kids to sign up for primary and secondary programs in 2023. The goal was to encourage parents to ask questions and increase the brand's visibility in a crowded market.

Challenges :

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<sup>26</sup> COMPETITION AND MARKETS AUTHORITY (CMA): *Op cit.*2020, (p.F1-F63).

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.leadsdubai.com/digital-marketing-for-school/> (Consulted on: 11/04/2025 at: 10:24 PM)

- The landing page did not function properly and violated ad rules, resulting in temporary ad suspensions.
- Initially, social creatives struggled to get users to interact, so they had to conduct A/B testing frequently.
- It was important to narrow the audience down to parents of kids aged 1 to 20 in the area.

Strategies :

- Google Ads (Search): High-intent keywords like “school admissions in [City]” targeted actively searching parents. The landing page was redesigned and optimized for improved performance.
- Meta Ads (FB/IG): Used demographic + interest targeting with CTAs like “Book a School Tour.” Retargeting kept the brand top-of-mind.
- Creative Rotation : Varied creatives (carousel ads, testimonials, videos) mitigated fatigue.

Results : The campaign successfully boosted lead generation and engagement, as shown in Table 1.

**Table I.01:** Key Performance Metrics – School Admissions Campaign (UAE, 2023)

Metric	Performance Outcome
Google Search Ads	5,000+ impressions served
Search Leads	100+ admission forms initiated
Meta (FB/IG) Ads	250,000+ impressions served
Social Leads	250+ lead forms submitted
Lead Funnel Integration	All leads automatically piped to the school CRM (via Zapier) for prompt follow-up.

Source : <https://www.leadsdubai.com/digital-marketing-for-school/>

The Google Ads delivered a steady stream of high-intent inquiries (100+ form starts), while the Facebook/Instagram ads generated over 250 fully completed lead forms. In total, the school’s ads were seen over 255,000 times across search and social channels, creating a huge boost in brand visibility. The integration of Zapier to pass leads directly to the admissions office helped ensure no inquiry fell through the cracks, speeding up response time.

**Key Takeaways:** Search captured high-intent users; social expanded reach. Optimizing creatives and utilizing native lead forms enhanced engagement and conversions, while CRM integration streamlined response times.

## **Section 02: Social Media Advertising**

In today's digital landscape, social media advertising (SMA) has become a fundamental component of online promotional strategies. With billions of active users, platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok provide powerful tools for reach, engagement, and conversion. This section defines SMA and explores its global scope, highlighting platform-specific advantages and the diversity of available ad formats. It presents a comparative analysis of major networks and their strategic applications across different objectives. Finally, it addresses critical challenges, including ad fatigue, privacy regulations, and tracking limitations, forming a solid foundation for assessing social media's role in lead acquisition strategies.

### **1. Definition and scope of social media ads**

Social media has revolutionized global communication, facilitating unparalleled connectivity and information dissemination. As of January 2025, there are roughly **5.24 billion social media user accounts** globally, representing about **63.9% of the total population** and **94.2% of internet users**. This augments **206 million users (+4.1%)** compared to the previous year.<sup>28</sup>

#### **1.1. Definition of Social Media**

The TechTarget website states, "*Social media is the collective of online communication channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing, and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis are among the different types of social media.*"<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-global-overview-report> (consulted on February 28, 2024 at 3:56 PM).

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/social-media> (Consulted on 12/04/2025 at 6:56 PM)

Dr. **GATTIKER (U)** also defines social media as, *"any tool or service that uses telecommunication technology, including digital media, to facilitate the production and exchange of data/information and action, including conversation. Social media empowers content consumers to become content producers relatively quickly and easily, without having to be geeks. Social media can shift communication from a broadcast model of few-to-many to a model of many-to-many and many-to-few."*<sup>30</sup>

Social media comprises many online platforms and tools that facilitate community contact, content dissemination, and cooperation. It enables the generation and dissemination of information, allowing individuals to become content creators without necessitating technical proficiency. It transforms communication dynamics from conventional one-way broadcasting to a more interactive many-to-many or many-to-few approach.

### **1.2.Types of Social Media**

Due to social media platforms' prominence and influence, businesses and marketers pursue diverse social media networks to identify and convert their clients. Most individuals are acquainted with platforms like Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Snapchat, and Instagram. Nonetheless, marketers and firms must consider many social media channels, each crucial in identifying and converting prospects.

The subsequent table delineates the many categories of social media, their definitions, and illustrative examples:

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<sup>30</sup> *GATTIKER, U. (2013). Social Media Audits: Achieving Deep Impact Without Sacrificing the Bottom Line. Ed. 1, Elsevier Science edition, p. 17-18*

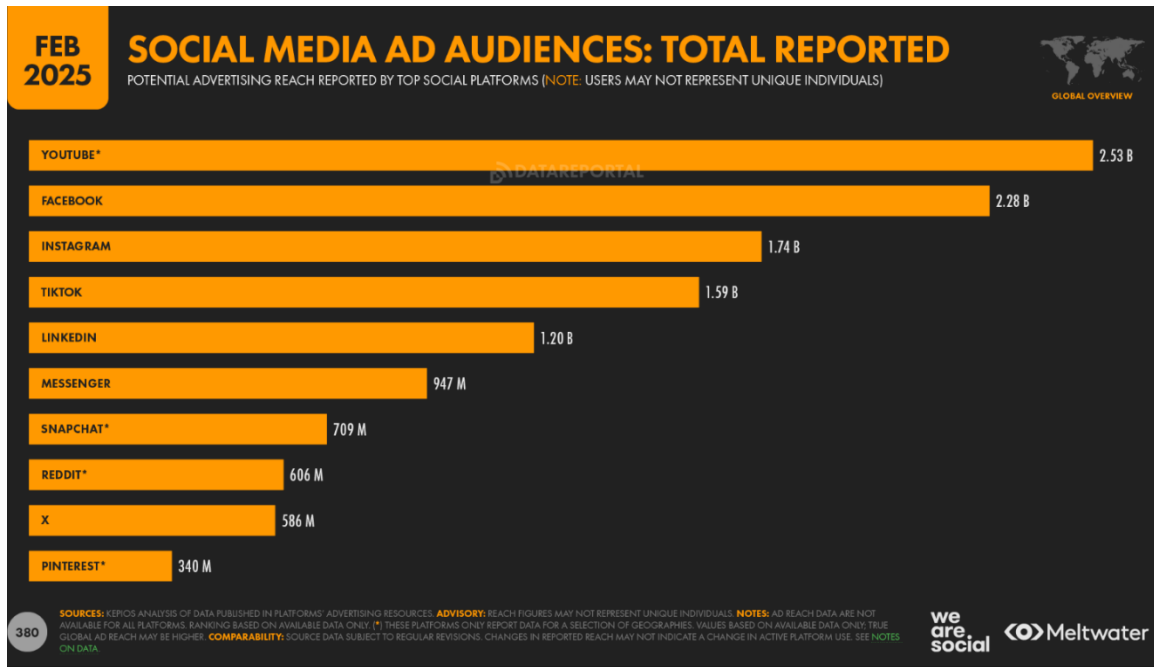
**Table I.02:** Different types of social media

Type	Description	Examples
Social Networks	Platforms used to connect with individuals and brands online, aiding in branding, awareness, relationship building, customer service, and conversions.	Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn
Media Sharing Networks	Platforms for discovering and sharing photos, live videos, and other media.	Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube
Discussion Forums	Platforms for finding, sharing, and discussing various information, opinions, and news.	Reddit, Quora, Digg
Bookmarking & Content Curation Networks	Platforms to discover, share, discuss, and save trending content and media.	Pinterest, Flipboard
Consumer Review Networks	Platforms to find, share, and review information about products, services, or brands.	Yelp, Zomato, TripAdvisor
Blogging & Publishing Networks	Platforms for publishing, discovering, and commenting on articles, blogs, and other content.	WordPress, Tumblr, Medium
Social Shopping Networks	Platforms to discover the latest market trends or shopping tips.	Etsy, Fancy
Interest-Based Networks	Platforms to connect with others who have similar hobbies or interests.	Goodreads, Houzz, Last.fm

**Source:** <https://www.digitalvidya.com/blog/types-of-social-media/> (consulted on April 20, 2025 at 5:13 PM).

The following figure presents the most widely used social media platforms worldwide, based on their reported advertising reach as of February 2025.

**Figure I.04:** The world’s most used social platforms



Source : <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-global-overview-report>

As we can see, YouTube leads with a reported advertising reach of 2.53 billion users, followed by Facebook with 2.28 billion, and Instagram in third place with 1.74 billion. TikTok follows closely with 1.59 billion users. Notably, three of the top four platforms—Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger—are owned by Meta, highlighting Meta’s dominant presence in the social advertising space, which may raise concerns about competition and market concentration.

**2. Definition of Social Media Advertising**

According to the **WebFX** website, "Social media advertising is a digital marketing strategy that enables you to run paid advertisements on social media platforms. This strategy involves

*paying to promote content on social media sites to reach interested leads and get them to check out your business.*"<sup>31</sup>

Social media advertising leverages platform-specific targeting to directly promote brands, products, or services to segmented audiences. By utilizing demographic, behavioral, and psychographic data, marketers can deliver highly personalized ads that resonate with user interests, optimizing engagement and conversion.

## 2.1.Scope of Social Media Advertising

Social media advertising is highly effective in increasing brand awareness and campaign performance because it can reach people worldwide, target specific groups, utilize various formats, and optimize based on data.

## 2.2.Audience Segmentation and Reach

Social media sites have billions of users, allowing advertisers to target specific groups based on their location, interests, behaviors, and demographics. LinkedIn is great for B2B marketing, but Instagram is better suited for campaigns that rely on visual content.

## 2.3.Ad Format Diversity

Platforms support various engaging formats:

- **Static** (image ads) for clarity
- **Dynamic** (video ads) for storytelling
- **Interactive** (carousel) to showcase multiple products
- **Native ads** that blend into user feeds

This variety maximizes user interaction across touchpoints.

## 2.4.Data-Driven Optimization

Strong analytics enable the tracking of performance indicators, such as reach, impressions, and conversions, in real time. Social Media Optimization (SMO) helps campaigns achieve better results and a higher return on investment (ROI) by closely monitoring them.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.webfx.com/blog/social-media/what-is-social-media-advertising/> (Consulted on 14/04/2025 at 4:36 PM)

### **3. Major Social Media Platforms and Their Advertising Capabilities**

Social media advertising encompasses various platforms offering unique features, audience demographics, and advertising ecosystems. Selecting the appropriate platform depends on the company's communication strategy, target audience profile, and campaign objectives.

#### **3.1. Facebook Advertising**

Facebook provides organizations with numerous advertising options, enabling them to execute ads during all phases of the buyer's journey, from **awareness** to **consideration** to **conversion**. At each phase, many categories of advertisements might be employed to achieve the objective.

The latest numbers indicate that Facebook's reach exceeds a quarter of the population, which is significant.

##### **3.1.1. Facebook ad objectives**

When advertising on Facebook, the first step is to set your **ad objective**. Facebook offers many objectives to help you accomplish specific business goals. These include:

- **Awareness**

This objective is designed to reach new customers and boost awareness of your business, products, and services. Facebook offers two primary awareness objectives:

- Brand Awareness
- Reach

- **Consideration**

After creating awareness, the next step is to drive people further down the purchase funnel with consideration objectives. Facebook advertising offers six key considerations :

- **Traffic:** Drive more visitors to your website.
- **Engagement:** Boost interactions with your content.
- **App Installs:** Promote app downloads directly from Facebook ads.
- **Video Views:** Increase viewership of your video content.
- **Lead Generation:** Collect leads via email and information forms.
- **Messages:** Start direct conversations with potential customers.

- **Conversion**

This objective focuses on driving specific actions, such as purchases or sign-ups. Facebook provides three main conversion objectives :

- Conversions
- Catalog Sales
- Store Visits<sup>32</sup>

### **3.1.2. Facebook Ad Targeting**

Once the ad objective is determined, the next step is **ad targeting**. Facebook offers several targeting options to help you reach your ideal audience:

- **Saved Audiences:** Create a custom audience based on **demographics, age, gender, location, interests, and behaviors**.
- **Custom Audiences:** Leverage data and interactions from your website or Facebook page to target users who have engaged with your brand online.
- **Lookalike Audiences:** Target new users similar to those in your **Saved** or **Custom Audiences**. These users share demographics or behaviors similar to those of your existing customers.<sup>33</sup>

### **3.1.3. Types of Facebook Ads**

Facebook supports a range of ad formats, allowing marketers to choose the most effective way to engage their audience :

- Single Image Ads.
- Photo Ads.
- Video Ads.
- Carousel Ads.

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.webfx.com/blog/social-media/what-is-social-media-advertising/> (Consulted on 15/04/2025 at 7:54 PM)

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.webfx.com/blog/social-media/what-is-social-media-advertising/> (Consulted on 15/04/2025 at 3:52 PM)

### **3.2.Instagram Advertising**

Instagram offers ads that are similar to Facebook, and you can manage ads for both platforms through the same interface Meta Ad Manager.

#### **3.2.1. Instagram Ad Objectives under Meta Technologies**

As part of the **Meta Technologies ecosystem**, Instagram shares the same advertising structure and objectives as Facebook, enabling seamless cross-platform campaign management. Advertisers can select from three main categories of objectives to align with marketing goals :

- Awareness
- Consideration
- Conversion

#### **3.2.2. Meta’s Unified Advertising Ecosystem**

Through Meta's unified advertising platform, campaigns can be created and managed across Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, and the Audience Network. This integration allows for synchronized targeting, streamlined budgeting, and comprehensive performance analysis. The ecosystem optimizes efficiency and brand reach across all Meta platforms, ensuring a cohesive advertising experience.

Instagram's advertising objectives align with Facebook's, allowing businesses to extend their reach and enhance campaign effectiveness across both networks with minimal friction.

### **3.3.LinkedIn Advertising**

LinkedIn is the premier platform for professional advertising, particularly in the B2B (Business-to-Business) sector. Its advertising solutions target professionals based on industry, job title, company size, skills, or education level. This enables highly specific audience segmentation, making LinkedIn ideal for businesses seeking to reach decision-makers, executives, and industry specialists.

### **3.3.1. LinkedIn Ad Targeting**

LinkedIn offers robust ad targeting options, enabling marketers to reach specific professional audiences based on detailed criteria:

- **Demographics:** Target users based on age, gender, geographic location, etc.
- **Company Info:** Segment audiences by company name, industry, and size.
- **Job:** Target professionals by job title, job duties, fields of study, education level, and degrees.
- **Matched Audiences:** Reach users based on LinkedIn's data and external data such as web traffic or email lists.<sup>34</sup>

### **3.3.2. Types of LinkedIn Ads**

After selecting the ad targeting options, LinkedIn allows advertisers to choose from various ad formats:

- Single Image Ads
- Document Ads
- Carousel Ads
- Video Ads
- Text Ads
- Dynamic Ads
- Sponsored Messaging<sup>35</sup>

## **3.4.Snapchat advertising**

Snapchat is a platform used mainly by younger generations. It offers immersive advertising formats adapted to mobile usage.

### **Snapchat Advertising**

Snapchat is a highly visual platform that enables advertisers to connect with younger audiences through interactive and immersive content. Its advertising ecosystem supports various targeting options and engaging ad formats designed to capture attention and drive interaction

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<sup>34</sup> <https://www.webfx.com/blog/social-media/what-is-social-media-advertising/> (Consulted on 15/04/2025 at 4:51 PM)

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.cognism.com/blog/linkedin-advertising> (Consulted on 15/04/2025 at 6:56 PM)

### **3.4.1. Snapchat Ad Targeting**

Snapchat allows advertisers to target users based on the following criteria:

- Interests and Behaviors
- Demographics
- Location
- Custom Audiences
- Lookalike Audiences

### **3.4.2. Types of Snapchat Ads**

Once targeting options are selected, advertisers can choose from a variety of engaging ad formats<sup>36</sup>:

- Snap Ads
- Collection Ads
- Story Ads
- AR Lenses
- Filters

## **3.5. TikTok Advertising**

TikTok has rapidly positioned itself as a significant platform for advertisers seeking to engage with younger audiences through short-form video content. Its viral, interactive content emphasis is ideal for boosting brand visibility and driving user engagement.

### **3.5.1. Advertising Objectives**

TikTok supports multiple advertising objectives designed to align with marketing goals :

- **Brand Awareness:** Enhance brand visibility among targeted audiences.
- **Reach and Impressions:** Maximize the number of views and exposure to the brand.
- **Traffic:** Drive visitors to a specific website or landing page.
- **App Installs:** Encourage users to download mobile applications directly from TikTok ads.
- **Engagement:** Boost interactions with videos, challenges, and branded content.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://www.webfx.com/blog/social-media/what-is-social-media-advertising/> (Consulted on 20/04/2025 at 2:36 PM)

- **Lead Generation:** Collect valuable user information through TikTok's native lead forms.
- **Video Views:** Increase the viewership of short-form video content.
- **Conversions:** Encourage purchases, sign-ups, and other valuable user actions.

### **3.5.2. Ad Formats**

TikTok provides a range of interactive ad formats tailored to maximize user engagement:

- **In-feed Ads:** Short video ads that appear in users' feeds as they scroll through content.
- **Brand Takeover Ads:** Full-screen ads that appear when the app is first opened, capturing immediate attention.
- **TopView Ads:** High-visibility ads featured at the top of users' feeds for enhanced exposure.
- **Lead Generation Ads:** Designed to capture user information directly within TikTok, simplifying the lead collection process.
- **Branded Effects Ads:** Custom filters and augmented reality (AR) experiences that encourage interactive user engagement.
- **Deep Link Ads:** Drive traffic to specific website or app sections directly from TikTok.
- **Branded Hashtag Challenges:** Interactive challenges that encourage user-generated content, boosting brand visibility.
- **Collection Ads:** Allows users to browse multiple products within the ad itself.
- **Dynamic Showcase Ads (DSAs):** Automatically display relevant products to users based on their interests.
- **Shopping Ads:** Promote product sales directly within the TikTok platform.
- **Reach and Frequency Ads :** Ensure a consistent presence by controlling the frequency of ad delivery.
- **Top Feed Ads :** Secure top positions within TikTok's feed for maximum visibility.

### **3.6.X (formerly Twitter) Advertising**

X enables advertisers to reach users in real time with text, video, and promoted content formats. Its platform is particularly effective for engaging with trending topics and time-sensitive promotions, allowing brands to capitalize on real-time events and conversations. X's

advertising capabilities support brand awareness, engagement, and traffic generation, making it a versatile tool for immediate audience connection.

### 3.6.1. X Ad Objectives

To get started with X advertising, advertisers need to select from the following ad objectives :

- Awareness
- Engagement
- Traffic
- App Installs
- Followers
- Video Views

### 3.6.2. X Ad Targeting

X allows advertisers to implement a range of targeting strategies to reach specific audience segments:

- **Keywords:** Connect with an audience based on keywords and phrases they search for or engage with.
- **Demographics and Interests**
- **Lookalike Audiences**
- **Remarketing**

### 3.6.3. Types of X Ads

After selecting the objectives and targeting strategies, advertisers can choose from the following ad formats:

- **Promoted Ads:** Standard formats including image, video, carousel, and text. Used for visibility, engagement, and traffic.
- **Vertical Video Ads:** Full-screen vertical videos for mobile-first users. Enhances immersive storytelling.
- **X Amplify:** Aligns ads with premium publisher video content. Boosts contextual relevance and brand impact.

- **X Takeover:** Premium placements offering dominant visibility. Ideal for mass awareness and major launches.
- **X Live:** Enables real-time event broadcasts with audience interaction.
- **Dynamic Product Ads (DPA):** Auto-delivers products based on user behavior. Effective for personalized retargeting.
- **Collection Ads:** Combines browsing, storytelling, and purchasing in one interactive format.
- **Ad Features (Standard & Branded):** Enhancements like polls and branded hashtags to boost engagement across formats.<sup>37</sup>

### **3.7. Pinterest Advertising**

Pinterest is a visual discovery platform that allows users to explore and save creative ideas. For advertisers, it presents an opportunity to showcase products and drive engagement through highly visual content.

#### **3.7.1. Advertising Objectives**

Pinterest supports a range of advertising objectives designed to meet various marketing goals:

- Brand Awareness
- Traffic
- Engagement
- Conversions
- App Installs
- Video Views

#### **3.7.2. Ad Formats**

Pinterest offers diverse ad formats to engage users with visually appealing content :

- Standard Image Ads
- Video Ads
- Carousel Ads
- Shopping Ads
- **Idea Pins:** Interactive, multi-page stories highlighting ideas, products, or tutorials.
- Collection Ads

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<sup>37</sup> <https://business.x.com/en/advertising/formats.html#live-twitter> (Consulted on 21/04/2025 at 9:17 PM).

### **3.8. Youtube Advertising**

YouTube offers brands many advertising methods to engage consumers at every stage of the purchasing process, from product awareness to consideration and final acquisition. At each phase, marketers can select from several advertising formats tailored to assist them in achieving their marketing objectives.

#### **3.8.1. YouTube Advertising Objectives**

YouTube supports several advertising objectives that align with different stages of the customer journey:

- Increasing Brand Awareness
- Driving Consideration
- Generating Leads
- Boosting Conversions
- Fostering Engagement
- Building Brand Loyalty

#### **3.8.2. YouTube Ad Formats**

YouTube provides various ad formats to help brands achieve their marketing objectives:

- **Skippable In-Stream Ads:** Ads that appear before, during, or after other videos and can be skipped after 5 seconds. Ideal for longer storytelling.
- **Non-Skippable In-Stream Ads:** Shorter ads (15–20 seconds) that users must watch before accessing their content.
- **In-Feed Video Ads:** Appear in YouTube search results and the recommended videos sidebar, encouraging users to click and watch.
- **Bumper Ads:** Non-skippable ads that are **6 seconds or less**, designed for quick, impactful messages. These ads appear on YouTube and Google video partners before, during, or after videos.
- **Outstream Ads:** Mobile-only ads that appear on websites or in mobile apps within the Google Video Network, but not directly on YouTube.
- **Masthead Ads:** High-visibility ads that appear at the very top of the YouTube homepage, accessible on desktop, mobile, TV screens, and tablets.

## 4. Ad Formats

Social media platforms offer diverse ad formats designed to achieve specific marketing objectives. These formats cater to different audience behaviors and content consumption styles, ensuring that brands can effectively communicate their messages and drive engagement.<sup>38</sup>

### 4.1. Image Ads

The most common format across platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X is a single image that conveys the message clearly and quickly.

- **Applications:** Promoting discounts, new product launches, or brand awareness.
- **Best Practices:** Use high-quality visuals, include text overlays for promotions, and maintain a clear call-to-action (CTA).

### 4.2. Video Ads

Dynamic and engaging, supported on platforms like TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook. They enhance product understanding through visual storytelling.

- **Formats:** Reels, YouTube pre-roll, mid-stream ...
- **Best Practices:** Utilize user-generated content, show real people interacting with the product, and focus on relatability and engagement.

### 4.3. Carousel Ads

Interactive ads with multiple images or videos users can swipe through. Effective for storytelling and product showcases.

- **Applications:**
  - Highlighting different product features.
  - Showcasing various service offerings.
  - Demonstrating product usage steps.
- **Best Practices:** Maintain visual consistency across cards, use clear CTAs, and logically guide users through the story.

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<sup>38</sup> <https://buffer.com/resources/social-media-advertising-guide/> (Consulted on 22/04/2025 at: 12:23 PM)

## 4.4. Collection Ads

Available on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and more, these blend a primary image or video with a scrollable gallery beneath, ideal for e-commerce.

- **Applications :**
  - E-commerce product showcases.
  - Interactive shopping experiences.
- **Best Practices:** Ensure high-quality images, include product descriptions, and integrate a seamless checkout experience.

## 4.5. Story Ads

Story ads are full-screen, immersive ads that appear within the Stories feed on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. These ads are highly effective due to their temporary 24-hour lifespan, which drives urgency.

- **Formats :**
  - Images or short video clips.
  - Vertical layout optimized for mobile viewing.
- **Applications :**
  - Flash sales.
  - Event promotions.
- **Best Practices:** Use bold visuals, minimal text, and clear CTAs to swipe up or click.

## 4.6. Messaging Ads

Messaging ads enable brands to deliver their promotions directly to users' inboxes. This format is available on Facebook Messenger and LinkedIn Sponsored Messages. Unlike traditional ads, messaging ads are more personal and create a direct communication channel.

- **Applications :**
  - Event invitations.
  - Exclusive promotions.
  - Direct product inquiries.
- **Best Practices:** Personalize the message, include a CTA that prompts a reply, and maintain a conversational tone.

#### **4.7. Dynamic Ads**

Dynamic ads are interactive and customizable based on user behavior and preferences. Available on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, TikTok, and X, these ads allow real-time customization, such as surveys or form submissions.

- **Applications :**
  - Collecting user data through interactive forms.
  - Running surveys and mini-games for engagement.
  - Dynamic product recommendations based on browsing behavior.
- **Best Practices:** Simplify form fields, provide incentives for completion, and ensure mobile optimization.

Each social media ad format is designed to meet specific marketing objectives, ranging from brand awareness to direct sales conversions. By strategically leveraging these formats, brands can engage with their audiences more effectively and drive measurable results. Selecting the appropriate ad type, based on campaign goals and platform strengths, is critical for maximizing advertising ROI.

#### **5. Challenges: Ad fatigue, privacy laws (GDPR), tracking limitations (18/07 Law)**

While social media advertising is a cornerstone of digital marketing, its effectiveness is hindered by several key challenges. Marketers contend with ad fatigue, stricter privacy regulations such as the GDPR, and technical limitations in user data tracking.

Additionally, in Algeria, Law No. 18-07, which regulates the protection of individuals concerning the processing of personal data, imposes strict requirements on how companies collect, store, and utilize personal information for advertising purposes. These constraints force marketers to adopt more creative, ethical, and data-driven strategies to ensure the sustainability and performance of their campaigns.

Figure I.5: Tracking Restrictions Between 2018-2023



Source: <https://arcalea.com/blog/digital-advertising-after-third-party-cookies>,

Consulted on 06/05/2025 at: 13:23 PM

## 5.1. Ad Fatigue

### 5.1.1. Definition

According to Silberstein et al. (2023), “Ad fatigue occurs when users see the same advertisement multiple times, leading to a decrease in their click-through rate (CTR) as they become less responsive to the ad content. This phenomenon negatively impacts both user experience and advertising effectiveness.”<sup>39</sup>

### 5.1.2. Causes

#### Elements of Digital Advertising Causing Ad Fatigue

Ad fatigue occurs when users become unresponsive to advertisements due to excessive exposure, leading to decreased engagement. The main elements contributing to this phenomenon include:

<sup>39</sup> SILBERSTEIN (N), SHOHAM (O), KLEIN (A): *Combating Ad Fatigue via Frequency-Recency Features in Online Advertising Systems*; Ed. 1, ACM edition, USA, 2023, p. 4822-4828.

- Repetitive Exposure: Constantly seeing the same ad can lead to boredom and reduced interest.
- Reduced Novelty: Users crave fresh content; repeated ads lose appeal, decreasing click-through rates.
- Negative User Experience: Overexposure to ads can annoy users, resulting in negative brand perception.
- Poor Targeting: Ads shown to uninterested audiences increase fatigue and decrease engagement.
- Lack of Diversity: Limited ad variations lead to quicker user disengagement and lower interaction.

### **5.1.3. Impact**

The direct consequence of ad fatigue is a noticeable decline in click-through rates (CTR) and engagement metrics. This reduction forces advertisers to spend more to achieve the same level of visibility and conversion, thereby impacting campaigns' overall cost-efficiency.

## **5.2. Privacy Laws and Regulations**

### **5.2.1. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) — European Union**

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), effective on May 25, 2018, is a comprehensive data privacy law enacted by the European Union (EU) to enhance the protection of personal data for its residents. It applies to all organizations, regardless of location, that process the personal data of EU residents. The GDPR has significantly impacted technology platforms and data architectures, necessitating thorough assessments of data collection, storage, and processing practices.<sup>40</sup>

### **5.2.2. California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) — United States**

The California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), enacted in 2018 and effective from January 1, 2020, is a data privacy law that grants California residents enhanced rights over their personal information. It applies to businesses that collect personal information of California residents and meet specific thresholds, such as having annual gross revenues of \$25 million or more,

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<sup>40</sup> <https://www.ibm.com/cloud/compliance/gdpr-eu> (Consulted on: 23/04/2025 at 11:30 PM)

processing data of 100,000 or more consumers, or deriving 50% or more of their annual revenue from selling consumers' personal information.<sup>41</sup>

**Consumer Rights:**

- Right to Know: Customers have the right to request information from a company about the personal data it has collected about them, including how it is used and shared.
- Right to Delete: Consumers have the right to request the deletion of their personal information, subject to certain exceptions.
- Right to Opt-Out: People can choose not to have their personal information sold or shared.
- Right to Non-Discrimination: Consumers have the right not to be discriminated against for exercising their CCPA rights.

**5.2.3. 18/07 Law — Algeria**

According to Marketing Interval Website, “the 18/07 Law, enacted on June 10, 2018, is a fundamental regulation designed to protect the personal data of individuals in Algeria. It applies to all public and private organizations established in Algeria or those that process the personal data of Algerian residents, regardless of their physical presence in the country. The law aims to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and security of personal information, setting strict guidelines for data collection, processing, and storage. Businesses must comply with these requirements to avoid heavy penalties and maintain consumer trust. This regulation serves as a cornerstone for privacy protection, reflecting global standards like the GDPR while addressing specific local concerns.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California\\_Consumer\\_Privacy\\_Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Consumer_Privacy_Act) (Consulted on: 24/04/2025 at:11:48 PM)

<sup>42</sup> <https://intervalle-technologies.com/blog/loi-18-07-protection-donnees-personnelles/> (Consulted on: 24/04/2025 at:12:48 PM)

### **Data Processing Principles Under Law 18-07**

Law 18-07 establishes clear principles for data processing, including :

- Lawfulness, Fairness, and Transparency : Data collection must be legal, transparent, and fair to users.
- Purpose Limitation: Personal data must only be collected for specific, explicit, and legitimate purposes.
- Data Minimization: Only the data strictly necessary for the intended purpose should be collected and processed.
- Accuracy: Personal information must be accurate and kept up to date.
- Retention Limitation: Data should not be retained for longer than necessary for its intended purpose.

### **Consumer Rights to Data Access, Deletion, and Opt-Out**

Law 18-07 grants Algerian citizens several important rights over their data:

- **Right to Information**: Individuals must be informed about the purpose of data collection, the data controller's identity, and their rights.
- **Right of Access**: Citizens can access their personal information upon request.
- **Right of Rectification**: Individuals can request corrections to any inaccuracies in their data.
- **Right to Deletion**: Individuals can demand the removal of their data when it is no longer necessary or if consent is withdrawn.
- **Right to Object**: Individuals may object to the processing of their data for legitimate reasons, particularly for marketing purposes.

### **Impact on Personalized Advertising**

Law 18-07 imposes strict conditions on personalized advertising in Algeria, requiring explicit user consent for data collection and restricting the use of tracking technologies, such as cookies (Marketing Interval, 2024). It also mandates transparency in how personal data is used, challenging marketers who depend on third-party data. In response, companies are turning to first-party data and contextual advertising to remain compliant while effectively engaging consumers.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> <https://intervalle-technologies.com/blog/loi-18-07-protection-donnees-personnelles/> (Consulted on: 24/04/2025 at:1:48 PM)

### **5.3. Tracking Limitations**

#### **5.3.1. The Increasing Focus on User Privacy**

In recent years, user privacy has emerged as a critical concern, reshaping the technological foundations of digital advertising. Traditional online marketing strategies have relied heavily on third-party cookies to facilitate cross-site tracking and behavioral profiling. However, this model has faced mounting scrutiny due to privacy violations and data misuse. The shift toward privacy-centric design is evident in both regulatory changes (e.g., GDPR, CCPA) and technological adaptations by browser vendors and ad platforms.<sup>44</sup>

#### **5.3.2. Impact of Browser Privacy Settings**

- **Safari (Intelligent Tracking Prevention, ITP):** Blocks third-party cookies, preventing advertisers from following users across different sites. This disrupts data collection for remarketing and behavioral targeting.
- **Firefox (Enhanced Tracking Protection, ETP):** Similar to Safari, it blocks third-party trackers and reduces fingerprinting, limiting cross-site tracking capabilities.
- **Reduced Retargeting Efficiency:** Advertisers find it harder to re-engage users who visit multiple platforms, lowering the impact of personalized ads.

#### **5.3.3. Limitations from Third-Party Cookie Restrictions**

Google Chrome's decision to eliminate third-party cookies, which was completed in late 2024, was the most significant change. This change had a greater impact because Chrome held a significant market share. It marked the end of an era in programmatic advertising. To fill the gap left by the end of cookies, Google started the Privacy Sandbox project, which has:

- **Topics API**, which classifies users into broad interest groups based on recent browsing history.
- **Protected Audience API**, designed for remarketing without revealing granular user-level identifiers.

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<sup>44</sup> COOPER (D. A.), YALCIN (T.), NISTOR (C.), MACRINI (M.), PEHLIVAN (E.): *Privacy Considerations for Online Advertising: A Stakeholder's Perspective to Programmatic Advertising*; *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 40(2), United Kingdom, 2022, pp. 235–247

These tools aim to support privacy-compliant advertising while reducing the risk of user re-identification. Early studies indicate that the Topics API provides better privacy than regular cookies, with a significantly lower risk of re-identification (<3%).<sup>45</sup>

Nonetheless, vulnerabilities remain. A separate study demonstrated that persistent tracking using Topics API could still enable user re-identification in 15–17% of cases, depending on browsing behavior and site diversity.<sup>46</sup>

### **Section 03: Search Engine Advertising**

Search engines serve as powerful gateways for digital discovery, enabling advertisers to reach users with clear intent at the moment of their search. Search Engine Advertising (SEA) capitalizes on this intent, positioning ads alongside relevant search results to drive targeted traffic and conversions. This section begins by defining SEA and its core mechanisms. We then explore key components such as keyword targeting, bidding strategies, and quality score. Finally, we highlight emerging trends, including automation, artificial intelligence, and Google’s Performance Max campaigns.

#### **1. Definition and Functioning of SEA (Google Ads, Microsoft Advertising)**

##### **1.1. Definitions**

###### **➤ Search Engines**

Search engines are programs searchers use to find products, services, content, and more online<sup>47</sup>

###### **➤ Search Engine Advertising (SEA):**

Search Engine Advertising (SEA) involves placing paid advertisements on search engine results pages (SERPs) to attract targeted traffic. When users enter specific keywords or phrases, these ads typically appear at the top or bottom of search results.

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<sup>45</sup> ALVIM (M. S.), FERNANDES (N.), MCIVER (A.), NUNES (G. H.): *A quantitative information flow analysis of the Topics API, Proceedings of the 22nd Workshop on Privacy in the Electronic Society, ACM Conference Series, November 2023, pp. 123–127.*

<sup>46</sup> JHA (N.), TREVISAN (M.), LEONARDI (E.), MELLIA (M.): *On the Robustness of Topics API to a Re-Identification Attack, Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies, 2023, pp. 66–78.*

<sup>47</sup> DIAMOND (S): *Op cit., 2019, p.402.*

Unlike organic search results, SEA enables businesses to gain immediate visibility by bidding on keywords that match user intent.

The pay-per-click (PPC) model is the most common method for Search Engine Advertising (SEA) to work. In this model, advertisers only pay when users click on their ads. This model is cost-effective because it links spending to measurable user interactions, rather than just ad impressions. The PPC model also enables granular budget control, performance tracking, and immediate ROI visibility, making it particularly appealing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) seeking scalable customer acquisition channels.<sup>48</sup>

## 2. Key Platforms

### 2.1. Google Ads

According to Semrush Website, “Google Ads (previously Google AdWords) is an online advertising platform that lets you advertise your products or services on Google’s online properties. These include the search engine, partner websites, and YouTube.”<sup>49</sup>

#### **How Google Ads Work:**

Google Ads uses an auction-based bidding system where advertisers bid on specific keywords relevant to their products or services.

**Auction-Based Bidding:** Advertisers bid on keywords, competing for placement on search engine results pages (SERPs).

**Ad Rank:** Determines the ad's position on the SERP.

#### **Quality Score:**

This score determines the cost-per-click (CPC) and the ad's position.

A higher Quality Score reduces costs and improves positioning.

#### **Ad Formats:**

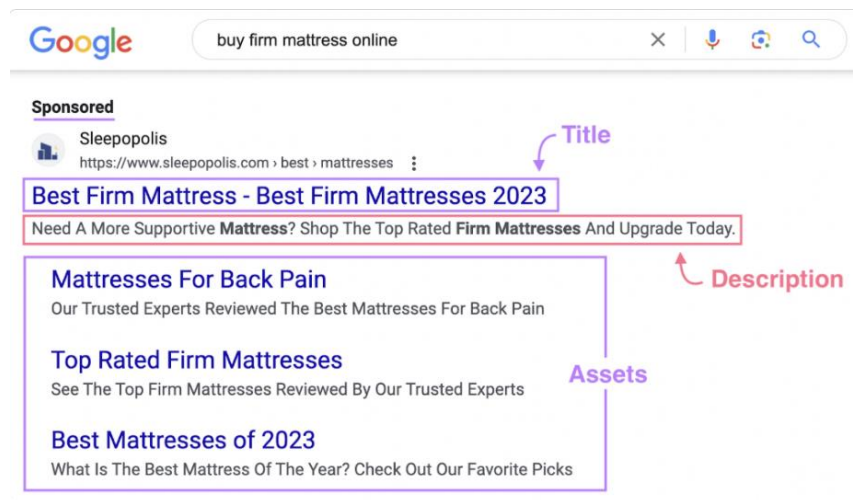
**Search Ads:** Google search ads show up on Google’s search engine results pages (SERPs) when users search for specific keywords.

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<sup>48</sup> KALA LINCY (M.J), JES BELLA (K.M): *Effectiveness of Online Marketing Based Search Engine Advertisements: A Study on Google and Bing in Chennai; Indian Journal of Information Sources and Services edition, India, 2024, p.133-137*

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.semrush.com/blog/google-advertising/> (Consulted: 01/05/2025 at: 11:58 PM)

**Figure I.06:** Example of a Google Ads Search Campaign Advertisement



**Source:** <https://www.semrush.com/blog/google-advertising/>, Consulted on:02/05/2025 at: 13:34 PM

- Display Ads
- Shopping Ads
- Video Ads
- App Promotion Ads
- Call-Only Ads
- Discovery Ads.
- Performance Max Campaigns
- Local Services Ads

### Targeting Options in Google Ads:

Google Ads enhances campaign effectiveness through advanced targeting features. Advertisers can reach specific audiences by selecting relevant keywords, refining demographics, and using geographic filters. Remarketing options further enable engagement with users who previously interacted with the brand, while ad scheduling ensures visibility during peak times. These tools collectively enhance the relevance and conversion potential of digital campaigns.

## **2.2. Microsoft Advertising (Bing Ads): Definition and Key Features**

According to **Laurence Santy from the INVOCA Website**, “Microsoft Advertising is a pay-per-click (PPC) advertising platform enabling businesses to display adverts on Bing Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs) and affiliated websites. It permits advertisements on its owned platforms, including MSN, Outlook.com, and LinkedIn. It is a formidable tool that challenges Google's dominance by assisting businesses in reaching their target customers and increasing website traffic and conversions.”<sup>50</sup>

### **2.2.1. How Microsoft Advertising Works**

Microsoft Advertising operates on a pay-per-click (PPC) basis, using an auction-based bidding system to determine ad placements:

- **Auction-Based Bidding:** Advertisers bid on keywords, and ad placement is determined based on the bid amount and relevance to the search query.
- **Ad Rank and Quality Score:** Microsoft evaluates bid value and the ad's quality to assign an Ad Rank, influencing its visibility on the Bing SERPs.

### **2.2.2. Ad Formats in Microsoft Advertising**

Microsoft Advertising supports various ad formats, designed to engage users effectively across its network:

- Search Ads
- Display Ads
- Shopping Ads
- Multimedia Ads
- Responsive Search Ads
- Dynamic Search Ads
- App Install Ads
- Vertical Ads

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<sup>50</sup> <https://www.invoqa.com/blog/using-microsoft-advertising-and-bing-has-big-benefits-for-your-ppc-campaigns>  
(Consulted on: 02/05/2025 at: 1:33 AM)

### **3. Keyword Intent and Match Types**

#### **3.1. Understanding Keyword Intent in Search Engine Advertising**

The keyword intent is the reason or goal behind a user's search query. To make effective search engine advertising (SEA) campaigns, you need to know exactly what people mean when they type in a keyword. It affects click-through rates (CTR) and conversions by affecting ad copy, landing page design, and bidding strategies.<sup>51</sup>

Keyword intent is generally classified into four main categories:

##### **Informational Searches:**

Users perform this search type when primarily seeking information or answers to questions. Common keywords include phrases like **"how to," "what is,"** or **"best ways to..."**. These searches are not typically conversion-focused but represent the early stages of the buyer's journey, where users gather knowledge.

*Example:* "How to improve digital marketing skills," "best SEO techniques for 2025."<sup>52</sup>

##### **Navigational Searches:**

Navigational searches are conducted when users know exactly what they want, such as a specific brand or website. These keywords are often branded and direct users to specific platforms or online services.

*Example:* "ITComp Academy login," "Google Analytics dashboard," "Facebook Ads Manager."

##### **Transactional Searches:**

Transactional keywords indicate strong purchasing intent. Users searching with these terms are typically ready to purchase or take a significant action, such as signing up for a service or downloading an app. These keywords are highly valuable for conversion-driven campaigns.

*For example,* "Buy SEO tools," "subscribe to Netflix," and "order MacBook Pro online."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> SCHULTZ (C. D.): *Informational, Transactional, and Navigational Need of Information: Relevance of Search Intention in Search Engine Advertising; Information Retrieval Journal, 23(2), Netherlands, 2020, pp. 117–135.*

<sup>52</sup> DIAMOND (S): *Op cit, 2019, p.156.*

<sup>53</sup> DIAMOND (S): *Ibid, 2019, p. 156*

## Commercial Investigation Intent:

Users with commercial investigation intent research and compare products or services before making a purchase decision. These searchers are often at the consideration stage of the buying process, comparing options.

*Examples:* "Best digital marketing courses 2025," "ITComp Academy vs Udemy for digital marketing," and "Top CRM software for small businesses."

Understanding and applying keyword intent enables marketers to match user expectations better. For example, transactional queries should lead to action-oriented pages, while commercial investigation terms benefit from content that compares features or highlights unique value propositions.<sup>54</sup>

## 3.2.Match Types in Search Engine Advertising

Match types in search engine advertising determine how closely a search query must match a keyword to trigger an ad. By selecting the appropriate match type, advertisers can control the relevance and reach of their ads. The primary match types include<sup>55</sup>:

- **Broad Match:**

The default match type that allows ads to appear when any word in the keyword phrase is searched, in any order, including **synonyms and related terms**. Broad match maximizes visibility but may lack precision, potentially attracting unrelated traffic.

*Example:* For the keyword "**luxury car**," ads may appear for searches like "**expensive vehicles**," "**luxury SUVs**," or "**high-end automobiles**."

- **Phrase Match:**

This match type displays ads when a user searches for the **exact keyword phrase**, even if additional words are added before or after the primary phrase. Phrase match provides a balance between reach and relevance.

*Example:* If the bid is on "**lawn mowing service**," the ad may also appear for "**affordable lawn mowing service**" or "**lawn mowing service near me**."

- **Exact Match:**

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<sup>54</sup> JANSEN (B. J.), BOOTH (D. L.), SPINK (A.): *Determining the Informational, Navigational, and Transactional Intent of Web Queries; Information Processing & Management, United Kingdom, 2008, pp. 1251–1266.*

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.wordstream.com/keyword-match-types> (Consulted on: 04/05/2025 at: 3:33 AM)

Exact match triggers ads only when the search query exactly matches the targeted keyword or its close variations, such as plurals or slight misspellings. This match type ensures the highest relevance but limits reach.

*Example:* If the bid is on "**black cocktail dress**," the ad will appear only for that specific search or very close variants like "**black cocktail dresses**."

- **Negative Match:**

Negative match prevents ads from being displayed for specific search terms that are irrelevant or unprofitable for the business. By excluding specific keywords, advertisers can minimize unqualified traffic and reduce wasted ad spend.

*Example:* If a business sells **luxury cars**, it might use the negative keyword "**cheap**" to avoid traffic from users searching for "**cheap luxury cars**."

#### **4. Ad Rank: Bidding Strategies and Ad extensions**

##### **4.1. Definition**

Ad Rank is a metric that determines the **position of an advertisement** on the Search Engine Results Page (SERP) and whether the ad is eligible to appear at all. It is calculated using a combination of the advertiser's bid and multiple quality-related factors.

According to Google Support: "Ad Rank is a value that determines your ad position and whether your ads will show at all. It's calculated using your bid amount, auction-time ad quality (including expected clickthrough rate, ad relevance, and landing page experience), the Ad Rank thresholds, the context of the person's search, and the expected impact of extensions and other ad formats."

- **Ad Rank Formula:**

Ad Rank= Maximum Bid×Quality Score+Expected Impact of Ad Extensions and Formats

##### **Ad Rank Components and Their Inclusions**

###### **Maximum Bid:**

The most an advertiser will pay for someone to click on their ad. This is the least amount you need to bid to participate in the auction.

**Quality Score:**

A way to check the quality and usefulness of the ads, keywords, and landing pages. Google gives it a score from 1 to 10.

**Expected Impact of Ad Extensions and Formats**

Google examines how using different ad formats and extensions will likely affect the effectiveness of an ad and people's perceptions of it.

**4.2.Bidding Strategies**

Effective bidding strategies are central to optimizing ad performance and maximizing return on ad spend (ROAS) in Google Ads. These strategies determine how much an advertiser is willing to pay for user interactions and are typically structured around performance goals.<sup>56</sup>

- **Manual Cost-per-Click (CPC) Bidding**

Advertisers can change their bids for keywords or ad groups with manual CPC bidding. Each keyword means saying how much one is willing to pay for a click on the ad.

- **Automated Bidding**

Google Ads' automated bidding strategies use algorithms to find the best ad bids. These algorithms focus on performance goals to increase the likelihood of people clicking on or converting.

- **Smart Bidding**

Smart Bidding is a subset of automated bidding that leverages machine learning and auction-time signals to maximize conversions or conversion value. It includes strategies like:

- **Target CPA (Cost per Acquisition):** Automatically sets bids to get as many conversions as possible at a target cost per acquisition.
- **Target ROAS (Return on Ad Spend):** Aim to maximize revenue relative to ad spend.
- **Maximize Conversions and Conversion Value:** Utilize your available budget to achieve the highest possible conversion metrics.

Google's Smart Bidding adjusts bids in real time based on factors such as device type, time of day, location, and past performance. This makes each auction different.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> <https://www.semrush.com/blog/google-ads-bid-strategy/> (Consulted on: 10/05/2025 at: 12:45 PM)

<sup>57</sup> GUPTA (P), BHATIA (K. K), DUHAN (N): An Assessment on Real Time Bidding Strategies for Advertising Markets; in: *Proceedings of the 2022 Fifth International Conference on Computational Intelligence and Communication Technologies (CCICT), IEEE, India, 2022, pp. 138–145.*

**4.3.Ad extensions**

Ad Extensions are additional information that increases the visibility and interaction of search engine ads. They increase an ad's footprint on the search engine results page (SERP), providing users quicker access to relevant material. When done correctly, ad extensions can improve click-through rates (CTR) and get more qualified traffic to landing pages.

**4.3.1. Types of Ad Extensions**

**Table I.03:** The Different Types of Google Ads Extensions and Their Functions

<b>Extension</b>	<b>What it does</b>
Sitelink	Displays additional links to deeper content on an advertiser's site beyond the main landing page. Sitelinks extend the value of ads by showcasing additional targeted and relevant links for users whose search queries have triggered these ads.
Enhanced sitelinks	Displays large-format sitelinks that contain a snippet of text describing each sitelink, in order to help users know whether a link is relevant for what they are looking for.
Rating	Displays user-submitted ratings information about sellers next to their ads. These reviews reflect users' buying experience with these businesses, rather than their experience with particular products.
App (mobile only)	Displays a link to directly download a mobile application from either the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store.
Price and Promotion	Displays a price or a promotion for some of an advertiser's business offerings.
Click-to-Call (mobile only)	Displays an action button to open the phone dialler and directly calls the advertiser.
Location	Displays location information for an ad such as a map, an address, or the distance to an advertiser's business.
Phone Number (desktop only)	Displays a phone number which cannot be clicked.
Call to Action	Displays a call-to-action button.
Ad disclosure	Displays disclosures about the ad, such as political ad disclosures for political ads.

**Source:** <https://support.google.com/adsense/answer/7591159?hl=en>, **Consulted on:**

**10/05/2025 at: 01:23 AM**

## **5. Role of landing page experience in SEA performance**

Landing Page Experience in Search Engine Advertising (SEA) is about how good and useful the webpage people go to after clicking on an ad is. This experience is very important for getting people to interact with the ad, converting them, and making the ad as a whole work. A well-optimized landing page improves the user's journey by lowering bounce rates and raising the chances of conversions.

### **5.1.Key Elements of a High-Quality Landing Page**

- **Clarity:** A landing page needs to be clear about what it does and help users without getting in the way.
- **Simplicity:** Minimal text and clean design help users absorb information quickly. Cluttered layouts lead to confusion and drop-offs.
- **Visual Appeal:** Effective use of colors and fonts enhances user experience and captures attention.
- **Call to Action (CTA):** Prominent, benefit-focused CTAs (e.g., “Get Started”) are essential for conversion.
- **Mobile-Friendliness:** Pages must be responsive to function seamlessly across all screen sizes and devices.
- **Loading Speed:** Fast-loading pages reduce bounce rates. Optimizing media and scripts improves performance.
- **Trust Elements:** Security badges, client logos, and testimonials all contribute to building trust and credibility.
- **Relevance:** The content must meet the audience's needs by providing precise and helpful information.
- **A/B Testing:** Regular testing identifies the most effective versions, improving conversion rates.

Integrating these components ensures that landing pages drive engagement and support campaign success.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>FABISIAK (L), JAGIELSKA (B): *Designing “Landing Page” for Websites Based on the User Experience: Review, Analysis, and Interpretation*; in: *Updates on Software Usability, Poland, 2022, pp. 1–19.*

## **5.2.How Landing Page Experience Affects SEA Performance**

### Quality Score Impact

Google and other search engines use the Landing Page Experience as part of an advertisement's overall Quality Score. Higher Quality Scores lower the cost-per-click (CPC), making ad campaigns more cost-effective and improving overall visibility on search engine results pages.

### Better Ad Rank

A well-optimized landing page will help your Ad Rank go up. Search engines give better placements to ads that lead to good user experiences, making it more likely that the right people will see them.

### Optimizing the Conversion Rate

Landing pages that are made with the user in mind lead to higher conversion rates. You can do this by meeting user expectations, making navigation easier, and keeping the promises made in the ad copy.

## **6. Trends: Automation, AI, Performance Max Campaigns**

Search Engine Advertising (SEA) has undergone notable changes due to the fast development of technology, with Automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Performance Max Campaigns rising as main trends. By means of machine learning and real-time modifications, these technologies let advertisers improve efficiency, maximize bidding tactics, and raise conversion rates.

### **6.1.Role of Automation in SEA**

**Automation in Search Engine Advertising (SEA)** is the software-driven automatic optimization of campaign management. It allows marketers to efficiently search engine ad campaigns using robotic process automation and algorithms. Marketers can autonomously enhance performance by automating bid modifications, ad placement, targeting, and timing, utilizing third-party apps to manage the workload.

## 6.2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) in SEA

Artificial Intelligence (AI) transforms Search Engine Advertising (SEA) by facilitating creative bidding methods, refined audience targeting, dynamic ad generation, and superior campaign performance analytics. Utilizing AI-driven solutions enables firms to enhance efficiency, decrease expenses, and attain superior returns on investment (ROI).

- **Smart Bidding:** Google's machine learning adjusts bids in real-time based on goals like Target CPA and ROAS.
- **Dynamic Search Ads (DSA):** Automatically generate ads from website content, reducing the need for extensive keyword lists.
- **Automated Extensions:** Google Ads can automatically create site links, callouts, and snippets, improving click-through rates (CTR) and visibility.

## 6.3. Performance Max Campaigns

### • Definition

Performance Max is a goal-based campaign type that allows performance advertisers to access all of their [Google Ads inventory](#) from a single campaign. It's designed to complement your keyword-based Search campaigns to help you find more converting customers across all of Google's channels like YouTube, Display, Search, Discover, Gmail, and Maps.

Performance Max helps you drive performance based on your specified conversion goals, delivering more conversions and value by optimizing performance in real-time and across channels using Smart Bidding. Performance Max uses Google AI across bidding, budget optimization, audiences, creatives, attribution, and more. They're all empowered by your specific advertising objective, for example, if you have a CPA or ROAS target, and the creative assets, audience signals, and optional data feeds you provide.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> <https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/10724817?hl=en> (Consulted on: 12/05/2025 at: 3:35 AM)

Performance Max is the best option to use when:

- You have specific advertising and conversion goals. For example, driving online sales, lead generation, and others.
- You want to maximize the performance of your campaign, and you aren't limited by which channel your ads appear on.
- You want to easily access all of Google's advertising channels using a single campaign.
- You want to gain additional reach and conversion value beyond keyword-based Search campaigns.

**Conclusion of chapter ONE**

In conclusion, the emergence of search engines and social media advertising has reshaped modern marketing practices and consumer outreach. These tools enable businesses to precisely target their audiences, personalize content, and maximize visibility across various digital channels. As platforms evolve, engagement becomes more intentional and results more measurable. Advertising is no longer limited to exposure—it now drives interaction, behavior, and lead acquisition. This growing effectiveness is rooted in algorithmic targeting, data use, and user-centric content strategies.

# **CHAPTER TWO: Theoretical Approach to Lead Acquisition**

**Introduction of chapter TWO**

Lead acquisition represents a pivotal element in digital marketing strategies, particularly for online education providers like ITCComp Academy. It refers to the process of identifying, attracting, and converting potential users into actionable prospects by capturing their attention and encouraging them to take measurable steps, such as submitting contact details or engaging with promotional offers. In an increasingly competitive digital environment, mastering lead acquisition mechanisms has become essential for organizations aiming to sustain growth and reach qualified audiences.

This chapter lays the theoretical groundwork for understanding lead acquisition within the context of digital advertising. It begins by defining the concept of a lead and operationalizing it by current marketing practices. Then, it classifies leads, such as Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) and sales Qualified Leads (SQLs), and differentiates between cold and hot leads before examining the distinction between lead generation and lead nurturing.

The structure of the lead funnel is then detailed, highlighting the user's path from awareness to conversion, complemented by the buyer's journey as a behavioral model. The second part of the chapter focuses on key strategic levers used in digital campaigns to drive lead acquisition. These include landing page optimization, persuasive copywriting, A/B testing, the use of lead magnets, and social proof. The latter is particularly emphasized for its psychological impact on user trust and decision-making.

By establishing this theoretical framework, the chapter supports the empirical investigation that follows, enabling a clearer understanding of how digital advertising tactics influence user behavior and lead to specific outcomes.

## **Section 01: Fundamentals of Lead Acquisition**

This section examines the fundamental concepts associated with lead acquisition in digital marketing. It defines the concept of a lead in both general and operational terms, explaining its role in online conversion strategies. The classification of leads is discussed, including distinctions between MQL, SQL, and lead temperature (cold, warm, hot).

The section also differentiates between lead generation and lead nurturing and introduces the lead funnel stages and buyer's journey as frameworks for structuring acquisition efforts.

### **1. Definition of a Lead in Digital Marketing**

#### **1.1.General Definition of a Lead**

At its core, a **lead** is defined as an individual or organization whose information has been collected based on a potential interest in a product, service, or offer. This information may include a name, email address, phone number, or other identifiable data. Importantly, the individual does not have to be ready to make a purchase but should belong to a segment that matches the company's target market.<sup>60</sup>

A lead may be identified through a range of behaviors, including filling out a form, clicking on a call-to-action, or browsing specific product categories. These behavioral indicators form the basis for further interaction and qualification.

#### **1.2.Definition of a Lead in Digital Marketing**

In **digital marketing**, a lead takes on an operational meaning. It refers to a user interacting with a company's digital channels, such as a website, landing page, or advertisement, and voluntarily providing identifiable information. This information is typically captured through forms, chatbots, registration pages, or downloadable resources.

A digital lead is not merely a visitor; it is someone who has transitioned from passive browsing to active engagement. This individual has shown measurable interest and is now eligible for further marketing efforts, such as nurturing sequences or sales outreach.

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<sup>60</sup> HUBSPOT: *An Introduction to Lead Generation; United States, 2020, p. 4. Available at: <https://offers.hubspot.com/lead-generation-introduction> (Consulted on: 12/05/2025 at: 4:35 AM)*

## 2. Operational Definition for This Study

This thesis will use the following operational definition of a lead to keep things consistent: "A lead is defined as any individual who, after seeing a digital marketing action—whether through a search engine or a social media channel—voluntarily provides identifiable contact information, thereby signaling a qualified interest in ITCComp Academy's educational training offers and entering the lead acquisition funnel for subsequent nurturing or conversion."

This definition will help us examine acquisition strategies in the context of ITCComp Academy. It will be especially useful for understanding how users acted based on questionnaire and interview data.

## 3. Types of Leads: MQL, SQL, Cold vs Hot Leads

Classifying leads is crucial for aligning marketing efforts with sales goals. By assessing user behavior and engagement, businesses can identify Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) and Sales Qualified Leads (SQLs) and categorize leads based on temperature, such as cold, warm, and hot. This segmentation enhances targeting and enables sales teams to focus on high-potential prospects.

### 3.1. Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs)

A **Marketing Qualified Lead (MQL)** is a lead that the marketing team has identified as more likely to convert based on specific behavioral and demographic signals. These leads are typically not ready for a sales conversation but have interacted with the brand in ways that indicate interest and fit. Actions such as downloading a whitepaper, attending a webinar, or visiting pricing pages signal heightened engagement and intent.<sup>61</sup>

Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) are typically identified through lead scoring, which evaluates user actions and attributes to determine their suitability. For instance, a prospect engaging with multiple content assets and fitting the target profile may reach the MQL threshold. Strategically, MQLs help streamline the handoff to sales, ensuring only high-potential leads are prioritized. This classification also informs marketing performance by highlighting the impact of content, user behavior, and campaign effectiveness.

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<sup>61</sup> ROTHMAN (D): *Lead Generation For Dummies; Ed. 1, For Dummies edition, 2014, p.281*

### 3.2.Sales Qualified Leads (SQLs)

Once an MQL has been reviewed and accepted by the sales team, it may become a Sales Qualified Lead (SQL). SQLs are considered at a stage in the buyer journey where direct sales engagement is appropriate. These leads meet specific criteria that confirm both interest and purchase potential. The transition from MQL to SQL is often governed by frameworks such as BANT—Budget, Authority, Need, and Timeline—used to ensure the lead fits the profile of a likely buyer.<sup>62</sup>

Sales Qualified Leads (SQLs) are identified through direct engagement or strong purchase intent. This status enables sales teams to focus on prospects who are ready and able to make a purchase. Tracking SQL-to-deal conversion rates offers valuable insights into lead quality and sales efficiency. A high rejection rate may signal misalignment in lead qualification or deficiencies in sales support.

### 3.3.Cold, Warm, and Hot Leads

Beyond MQL and SQL, another popular categorization method groups leads by purchase readiness and brand awareness into cold, warm, and hot leads. This segmentation helps guide the tone, frequency, and type of campaign outreach.

#### 3.3.1. Cold Leads

Cold leads are individuals or businesses with little to no interaction with the brand. They may come from purchased lists or outbound targeting and do not recognize the company's value or offerings. These leads require awareness-building strategies, including top-of-funnel content, social media visibility, and educational messaging.<sup>63</sup>

#### 3.3.2. Warm Leads

Warm leads have already interacted with the brand in meaningful ways. They might have visited the website, engaged with a post, or downloaded content. While not immediately ready to convert, they understand the brand and are evaluating options. At this stage, **nurture**

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<sup>62</sup> ROTHMAN (D): *Op cit*, 2014, p.281

<sup>63</sup> BONDARENKO (S.), LABURTSEVA (O.), SADCHENKO (O.), LEBEDIEVA (V.), HAIDUKOVA (O.), KHARCHENKO (T.): *Modern Lead Generation in Internet Marketing for the Development of Enterprise Potential; International Journal of Innovative Technology and Exploring Engineering*, 8(12), India, 2019, pp. 3066–3071.

**campaigns** that emphasize benefits, case studies, and testimonials can be highly effective in moving them closer to a decision.<sup>64</sup>

### **3.3.3. Hot Leads**

Hot leads demonstrate a clear intent to purchase. They have taken decisive actions like requesting a quote, scheduling a demo, or contacting the sales team. These leads require immediate and personalized follow-up to close the deal efficiently. Sales teams typically prioritize hot leads due to their high conversion potential.<sup>65</sup>

## **4. Lead Generation vs Lead Nurturing**

Lead generation and lead nurturing are fundamental to customer acquisition, each fulfilling a distinct role. While lead generation attracts potential customers, nurturing develops relationships and moves them closer to a purchase. Together, they support higher conversion rates and sustainable business growth. The following sections provide a detailed exploration of their functions and interactions.

### **4.1. Lead Generation**

#### **4.1.1. Definition**

The strategic process of drawing in and turning prospects into identifiable leads using a variety of marketing strategies is known as lead generation. Building a pipeline of people or organizations that show early interest in a brand's offerings is its primary goal.<sup>66</sup>

Lead generation, the first step in acquiring new customers, stimulates marketing and sales efforts by generating interest and gathering vital prospect data.

#### **4.1.2. Purpose**

The primary purpose of lead generation is to build a database of potential customers who have expressed interest, providing the sales department with a pool of individuals to engage with.

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<sup>64</sup> FARRIS (P), BENDLE (N), PFEIFER (P), REIBSTEIN (D): *Marketing Metrics: The Manager's Guide to Measuring Marketing Performance*; Ed. 3, Pearson FT Press, 2015 p.204

<sup>65</sup> BONDARENKO (S.), LABURTSEVA (O.), SADCHENKO (O.), LEBEDIEVA (V.), HAIDUKOVA (O.), KHARCHENKO (T.): *Op cit*, 2019, pp. 3066–3071.

<sup>66</sup>Dayna Rothman, *Op cit*, 2014, p:10

## 4.2. Lead Nurturing

### 4.2.1. Definition

In contrast to the initial attraction phase of lead generation, lead nurturing is concerned with building and maintaining relationships with leads throughout their buying journey. The objective is to keep prospects engaged, informed, and gradually moved toward making a purchase decision, regardless of their initial readiness to buy.<sup>67</sup>

### 4.2.2. Purpose

Lead nurturing improves the quality of leads passed to sales by increasing their readiness to buy. It recognizes that not everyone who shows initial interest is immediately prepared to make a purchase, and nurturing ensures these potential customers are engaged until they are ready to make a purchase decision.

## 4.3. Key Differences

The key differences between lead generation and lead nurturing lie in their focus and the stage of the customer journey they address:

### Focus:

- Lead generation focuses on acquiring new potential customers and gathering their initial contact information.
- Lead nurturing focuses on engaging and building relationships with existing leads.

**Timing:** Lead generation happens early in the customer journey, aiming to attract individuals who may be completely unaware of a problem or solution.<sup>68</sup>

After a lead has been captured, lead nurturing occurs in the middle stages to move them towards a purchase decision.<sup>69</sup>

### Objective:

- The primary objective of lead generation is to increase the volume of potential customers entering the sales funnel.
- The primary objective of lead nurturing is to improve the quality of leads passed to sales by increasing their readiness to buy.

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<sup>67</sup>NIEMI (A): *Digital Lead Generation and Nurturing: A Holistic Approach*; Aalto University, Finland, 2017, p.11.

<sup>68</sup>DIAMOND (S): *Op cit.*, 2019, p.72.

<sup>69</sup>Dayna Rothman, *Op cit*, 2014, p: 4

**Interaction :**

- Lead generation often involves broader outreach methods to attract a wide audience and capture initial interest.
- Lead nurturing involves more personalized and targeted communication tailored to the individual lead's interests and needs.

**Readiness :**

- Lead generation targets individuals showing initial interest but may not clearly understand their needs or the solutions available.
- Lead nurturing targets leads who have shown interest but are not yet sales-ready and require further education and relationship building.<sup>70</sup>

**4.4.Importance of Balancing Both for Effective Acquisition Strategies**

An effective lead acquisition strategy requires a balance between generating new leads and nurturing existing ones. Lead generation maintains a steady flow of prospects while nurturing ensures these leads are guided toward conversion. Neglecting either element can lead to missed opportunities and reduced returns on marketing investments.

An optimal lead acquisition strategy involves creating a seamless process wherein leads are continuously generated and nurtured through personalized and contextually relevant interactions.<sup>71</sup> Such an approach facilitates the steady development of qualified leads, enhances the sales team's effectiveness, maximizes conversion rates, and ultimately drives sustainable business growth.

Companies that strategically integrate lead generation with lead nurturing activities are better positioned to guide potential customers throughout the buyer's journey. This integration fosters trust, builds stronger relationships with prospects, and significantly increases the likelihood of purchase once the lead reaches the decision stage.<sup>72</sup>

Neglecting lead nurturing remains a common weakness that can diminish the impact of strong lead generation efforts. A comprehensive strategy must not only attract new prospects

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<sup>70</sup> Hubspot, *Op cit*, 2020, p 34.

<sup>71</sup> Dayna Rothman, *Op cit*, 2014, p: 4

<sup>72</sup> BONDARENKO (S.), LABURTSEVA (O.), SADCHENKO (O.), LEBEDIEVA (V.), HAIDUKOVA (O.), KHARCHENKO (T.): *Op cit*, 2019, pp. 3066–3071.

but also sustain their interest through consistent engagement, ensuring long-term marketing effectiveness and business growth.

## 5. Understanding the Lead Funnel Stages and the Buyer's Journey

Effective lead acquisition relies on understanding the path from initial interest to purchase. The lead funnel outlines the company's structured conversion process, while the buyer's journey represents the prospect's decision-making stages. Integrating both frameworks supports more targeted and strategic marketing efforts.

### 5.1. Definitions and Conceptual Distinctions

#### 5.1.1. Definition of Lead Funnel

The lead funnel represents the process of attracting potential customers and systematically guiding them towards a purchase decision.<sup>73</sup> It illustrates how many prospects enter at the top, with a smaller proportion converting into customers at the bottom.<sup>74</sup>

#### 5.1.2. Definition of Buyer's Journey

The buyer's journey is the sequence of stages a potential customer goes through, from first becoming aware of a problem or need, through evaluating possible solutions, to ultimately making a purchase decision. It is typically segmented into three phases: awareness, consideration, and decision.<sup>75</sup>

### 5.2. Difference Between the Lead Funnel and the Buyer's Journey

The lead funnel and the buyer's journey differ primarily in perspective. The company-centric lead funnel outlines the internal process of attracting, qualifying, and converting leads. It is concerned with structured marketing and sales interventions. In contrast, the buyer's

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<sup>73</sup> Meyer, D. (2019). *The marketing funnel versus the flywheel: Generating consistent leads through a new model of engagement*. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing.*, 7(2), p:106.

<sup>74</sup> Stephanie Diamond; *Op cit*, 2019, p: 222

<sup>75</sup> Marvasti, N., Huhtala, J.-P., Yousefi, Z. R., Vaniala, I., Upreti, B. R., Upreti, B. R., Malo, P., Kaski, S., & Tikkanen, H. (2021). *Is this company a lead customer? Estimating stages of B2B buying journey*. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 97, (p: 126–133).

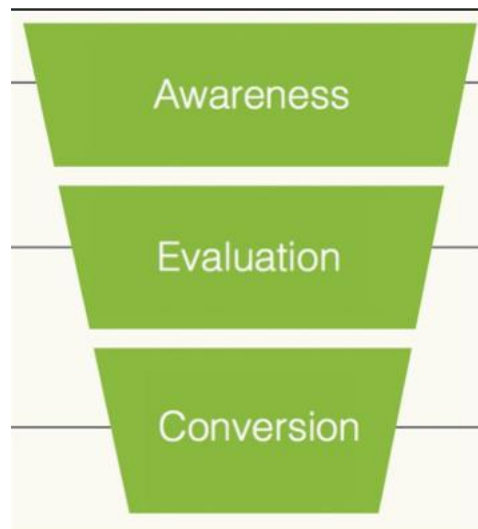
journey is customer-centric, highlighting the prospect's evolving intentions, information needs, and evaluation criteria.

While the lead funnel emphasizes organizational strategy, the buyer's journey reveals customer behavior and psychological stages. Integrating these two models enables marketers to align content and outreach efforts with user intent, enhancing marketing precision and impact.

### 5.3.The Marketing Funnel: Awareness → Consideration → Conversion

Understanding the lead funnel is essential for organizing digital marketing efforts around the stages that guide potential customers from initial contact to final conversion. This model, often visualized as an inverted pyramid, segments the customer journey into three main stages: Awareness, Consideration, and Conversion. Each stage involves distinct marketing goals, tools, and psychological triggers.<sup>76</sup>

**Figure II.01:** Visual Representation of the Three Stages of the Marketing Funnel



**Source:** Diamond, S. (2019c). *Digital marketing All-in-One for dummies*. p: 222

#### 5.3.1. Awareness Stage

The awareness stage marks the entry point in both frameworks. Prospects realize they have a problem or need and seek information. According to the lead funnel perspective, the objective

<sup>76</sup> Stephanie Diamond; *Op cit*,2019, p: 222

is to generate interest across a broad audience and introduce the brand as a relevant solution provider.

The main goal at this stage is to make potential customers “problem-aware” and “solution-aware,” while simultaneously establishing brand recognition.

### **5.3.2. Consideration Stage**

In the consideration stage, prospects actively compare solutions and begin evaluating providers. The lead funnel at this level focuses on educating, building trust, and maintaining engagement.

This stage prioritizes credibility and relationship-building, laying the groundwork for eventual conversion.

### **5.3.3. Conversion Stage**

The conversion stage is the final phase where qualified leads commit to a purchasing decision. In the lead funnel, this represents the bottom stage, where marketing and sales activities aim to secure conversions

Content at this stage should be concise, persuasive, and sales-focused, including pricing, features, and clear value propositions to facilitate final decision-making.

## **5.4.Funnel Variations : Alternative Models and Adaptations**

Over time, numerous models have been proposed to offer more nuanced representations of consumer progression through decision-making stages. These variations support distinct marketing objectives and are applicable across diverse contexts, ranging from brand awareness campaigns to innovation diffusion strategies.

### **5.4.1. AIDA Model**

The AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action), developed by Elmo Lewis in 1898, outlines consumers' psychological stages in the buying process. First, marketers must grab attention, then stimulate interest by highlighting features. This leads to desire, where consumers

develop a need or want for the product. Finally, effective persuasion results in action, typically a purchase. It remains a foundational model for advertising and promotional strategies.<sup>77</sup>

#### 5.4.2. Hierarchy-of-Effects Model

The Hierarchy of Effects Model outlines the stages a consumer moves through from becoming aware of a product to making a purchase. Introduced by Lavidge and Steiner and expanded from Lewis's early AIDA concept, the model includes cognitive (awareness, knowledge), affective (liking, preference, conviction), and behavioural (purchase) stages. It has proven flexible across traditional and digital media, including TV, social media, and online ads. Modern adaptations like AISDALS Love and sponsorship hierarchies reflect evolving customer behaviour and media use. Despite criticisms in digital contexts, it remains a core framework in advertising strategy.<sup>78</sup>

#### 5.4.3. The Innovation-Adoption Model

Has five steps: Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption.

This model is based on Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory. It shows how people start using new products, technologies, or ideas. It is beneficial for new marketing ideas or products which people are very interested in. People go through awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption stages. The model shows how consumer confidence and perceived value grow over time before they become part of behavior.

#### 5.4.4. Communications model

The stages of the communications model are exposure, reception, cognitive response, attitude, intention, and behavior.

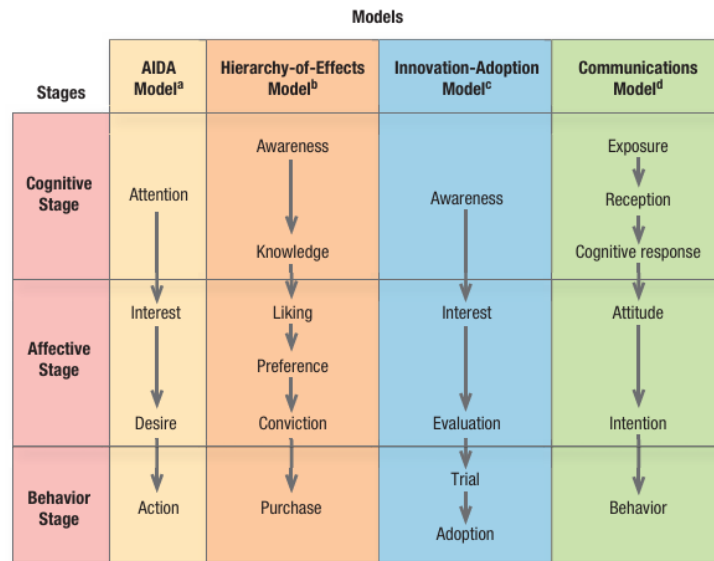
**This model draws on psychological and communication theories to explain how advertising influences behavior.** It addresses the whole process from message reception to emotional reaction and behavioral intent, making it particularly effective in persuasive contexts by accounting for how individuals process information and form attitudes.

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<sup>77</sup> PRAMITA (K.), MANAFE (L. A.): *Personal selling implementation and AIDA model: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action, International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business Development*, 2022, p. 489.

<sup>78</sup> ZHANG (Y.): *Marketing Communication Theory: The Hierarchy of Effects Model*, *Journal of Applied Economics and Policy Studies*, Vol. 5, 2024, pp. 62–67.

Figure II.02: The four classic response hierarchy models



Source: KOTLER (P), KELLER (K): Marketing management, 15th Global Edition, Pearson edition, 2015, p.585

**Section 02: Strategies for Lead Acquisition**

In this section, we will look at the main ways to get leads in the digital world. We begin by comparing paid and organic acquisition channels, highlighting the pros and cons of each in terms of attracting qualified traffic and generating sales.

Next, we examine the key components of high-performing landing pages, such as headlines, forms, and calls to action, as fundamental tools for enhancing lead capture. Much attention is paid to how persuasive copywriting and a strong value proposition can change how people act and how likely they are to convert.

We then discuss the importance of A/B testing as a method for improving performance by trying out different approaches repeatedly. Finally, we discuss how to utilize lead magnets and social proof, such as testimonials, success rates, and user statistics, strategically to encourage people to engage and trust you more. These strategies work together to create a robust framework for maximizing the effectiveness of digital lead generation.

**1. Organic vs Paid Acquisition Channels**

Acquisition channels are the digital methods that brands use to get new leads. Some of these services are free, such as search engine optimization, while others are paid, like Google Ads. It

is essential to understand and utilize these channels because acquiring new customers relies on generating consistent, high-quality traffic.<sup>79</sup>

### 1.1.Organic Acquisition Channels

Organic acquisition channels are methods of gaining customers without directly paying for advertising.

These strategies focus on building a natural and sustained presence over time.

#### 1.1.1. Key Organic Acquisition Strategies

- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** Improves a website's visibility in search engine results by optimizing content and technical aspects to rank for targeted keywords.
- **Content Marketing:** Aims to create informative, valuable content that attracts, educates, and retains users throughout the buying process.
- **Social Media Marketing (SMM):** Utilizes platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to build brand awareness and engage audiences organically.
- **Organic Email Marketing** focuses on building a database of engaged subscribers through voluntary sign-ups, often incentivized via gated content or value exchanges.

### 1.2.Paid Acquisition Channels

Paid acquisition channels involve directly paying for advertising to attract new customers.

#### 1.2.1. Key Paid Acquisition Strategies

- **Search Engine Marketing (Google Ads, Bing Ads):** This involves placing messages on a search engine to encourage click-through to a website when a user types a specific keyword phrase.<sup>80</sup>
- **Paid Social Advertising (Meta Ads, LinkedIn Ads ... ):** This involves using paid advertisements on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to reach a wider audience.

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<sup>79</sup> LI (K.), LIN (M.), LIN (Z.), XING (B.): *Running and Chasing – The Competition between Paid Search Marketing and Search Engine Optimization*, Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, USA, 2014, pp. 3110–3119.

<sup>80</sup> CHAFFEY (D), ELLIS-CHADWICK (F): *Op cit.* 2015 p.32.

- **Display Advertising:** Uses visual banners and interactive ads placed across websites and mobile apps to capture user attention.
- **Affiliate and Influencer Marketing:** Engages third parties to promote products, often on a commission basis. Influencers can significantly affect user decisions, especially on platforms like TikTok and Instagram.

In affiliate marketing, partners earn commissions based on performance metrics such as sales or clicks, offering a cost-effective and scalable model for customer acquisition.<sup>81</sup>

Influencer marketing leverages the **credibility and audience reach** of social media personalities to enhance brand awareness and drive conversions. Studies show that influencer partnerships can significantly impact purchasing behavior, especially on platforms like TikTok and Instagram<sup>82</sup>

**1.3.Key Differences Between Organic and Paid Channels**

Organic and paid acquisition channels differ fundamentally in their cost structure, speed, scalability, and sustainability.

**Table II.01:** Key Differences Between Organic and Paid Channels

Dimension	Organic Acquisition	Paid Acquisition
<b>Cost</b>	Requires investment of time, resources, and content production; low direct financial costs.	Involves direct monetary payments for advertising placements; cost scales with reach
<b>Speed to Results</b>	Generates traffic and engagement gradually; typically requires months to build significant traction.	Delivers immediate visibility and results upon campaign launch.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Produces long-term, compounding benefits; organic rankings and audiences can persist with minimal maintenance.	Traffic ceases once advertising spend is halted; requires continual investment

<sup>81</sup> HUSNAYETTI (H.), RAMADHANTY (C. A.), ERION (E.): *Marketing Affiliates, Influencers, and Purchase Decisions of Shopaholic Users in Jakarta*; *Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 5(1), United Kingdom, 2023, pp. 63–68.

<sup>82</sup> ALLEGRINI (A.): *TikTok as an Influencer Marketing Channel for User Acquisition*; *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 11(2), United Kingdom, 2023, pp. 107–114.

<b>Scalability</b>	Limited by content creation capacity and algorithmic constraints.	Highly scalable with increased advertising budgets and broader targeting capabilities
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**Source:** Elaborated by Me

#### **1.4.Strategic Use of Organic and Paid Channels in Lead Acquisition**

A successful digital marketing strategy requires integrating both organic and paid acquisition channels. Each approach offers distinct advantages that, when combined, create a synergistic effect. Organic methods contribute to trust-building, brand authority, customer loyalty, and sustainable long-term growth by fostering relationships through content creation, search engine optimization (SEO), and community engagement. In contrast, paid acquisition channels provide immediate visibility, precise audience targeting, accelerated traffic generation, and rapid scalability to meet specific business objectives.

Several key factors influence the evolution of the optimal blend of organic and paid strategies. These factors include the age of the business, the competitiveness of the market, the audience's behavior, the business's financial resources, and its overall strategic objectives.

## **2. Landing Page Optimization: Key Elements and Best Practices**

Landing pages are foundational in digital marketing strategies, especially for lead acquisition. While previous sections introduced their role within advertising campaigns, this section delves deeper into their construction and optimization, focusing on key components and best practices that significantly impact conversion rates and user experience.

### **2.1.Definition**

A landing page is an independent web page designed explicitly for marketing or advertising campaigns, where a visitor arrives after following a link in an email, advertisement, or search result. The main aim is to transform visitors into leads or customers by concentrating on a singular, persuasive call-to-action (CTA).

Landing pages can be stand-alone pages with no connection to your main website, specialized microsites focused on a particular audience and outcome, or a specific page deep within your main website.

According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, a landing page is “A destination page is the webpage that a user accesses after clicking on an advertisement or another type of link from a referring site. It may serve as a home page; however, it is more commonly and preferably a page featuring messaging centered on the advertisement's offer. This will optimize conversion rates and enhance brand favorability.”<sup>83</sup>

## 2.2.Core Components of an Optimized Landing Page

### 2.2.1. Headline

The headline is the first and most critical copy on a landing page.<sup>84</sup> Its primary goal is to grab the visitor's attention and communicate the benefit of the offer.

- **Best Practices:**

- Use clear, simple, direct language focusing on the visitor's main benefit.
- Highlight a strong value proposition in the headline (solve a need, fulfil a desire).
- Use emotionally resonant words if appropriate to increase engagement.
- Continuously A/B test different headline styles (questions, "How-To", urgency-based) to optimize performance.

### 2.2.2. Lead Capture Form

The form is the mechanism through which leads provide their contact information. Forms are hosted on landing pages. They consist of fields that collect information in exchange for an offer.<sup>85</sup>

- **Best Practices:**

- Keep forms short by asking for only essential fields (name, email) when making the first contact.
- Add trust symbols like privacy policies, security badges, and customer protection guarantees near the form.
- Optimize forms for mobile usability with easy tap areas and minimal typing.
- Regularly test form layouts, number of fields, button size, and submit text for best conversion rates.

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<sup>83</sup> CHAFFEY (D), ELLIS-CHADWICK (F): *Op cit*, 2015 p.439

<sup>84</sup> DEISS (R), HENNEBERRY (R): *Digital Marketing For Dummies; Ed. 1, For Dummies edition, 2017, p.135.*

<sup>85</sup> HUBSPOT: *Op cit*, 2020, p. 22.

### 2.2.3. Call to Action (CTA)

A call to action tells people exactly what you want them to do and how to do it. It's a simple command statement, such as "buy now," "click here," "download now," or "register here".<sup>86</sup>

- **Best Practices:**

- Use strong, action-oriented verbs ("Download Now," "Claim Your Free Guide," "Start Today").
- Ensure CTA buttons are large, visually distinct, and surrounded by whitespace.
- Test different CTA colors, wording, and positions to determine the highest-performing combination.

### 2.2.4. Visual Elements and Images

Visual elements support textual content by enhancing appeal, trust, and understanding.

- **Best Practices:**

- Use high-quality, relevant images directly illustrating the product, service, or benefit.
- Implement "hero shots" showcasing the product or people benefiting from the offer.
- Ensure all images load quickly and are optimized for desktop and mobile screens.

### 2.2.5. Social Proof and Testimonials

Testimonials are statements from satisfied customers that endorse a product, service, or company. They serve as a form of **social proof**, influencing potential customers by demonstrating positive experiences from others.

- **Best Practices:**

- Use honest testimonials with full names, job titles, and professional photos if available.
- Place testimonials strategically near CTAs or forms to influence decision-making at the critical moment.

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<sup>86</sup> DEISS (R), HENNEBERRY (R): *Op cit*, 2017, p.141.

### 3. Why Copywriting and Value Proposition Are Important

Copywriting and value proposition are central to effective online marketing and lead acquisition. While the value proposition defines the unique benefit offered, copywriting conveys this value through persuasive, targeted messaging. Together, they play a critical role in attracting and converting prospects.

#### 3.1. Copywriting

Copywriting is the calculated application of written copy to elicit action from the audience, whether subscribing, buying, or interacting with a company. It is important for influencing user perception, decision-making, and conversion rates. By delivering engaging stories and clear, pertinent information, copywriting turns passive website, ad, or email viewers into active sales leads.

##### ➤ Role of Successful Copywriting in Lead Acquisition

- Effective copy should grab user attention right away by explicitly conveying the offer's value proposition, avoiding premature disengagement.
- Trust is built through intentional messaging incorporating social proof, emotional connection, and transparency.
- An emotionally engaging narrative is often stronger than factual communication, as it builds personal connections and encourages user action.
- The most impactful copywriting aligns the brand's promises with the audience's goals, ensuring that the perceived benefit is immediate and relevant.

#### 3.2. Value Proposition

A value proposition is a short, persuasive statement that explains the most important benefit the company provides to its customers or partners. It indicates how the firm generates value in its business model, products, and/or services. Creating an efficient value proposition necessitates an in-depth comprehension of customers' needs and the external drivers in the decision-making process.<sup>87</sup>

##### ➤ Strategic Importance of the Value Proposition

- It promotes differentiation in competitive and saturated markets.

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<sup>87</sup> PIEPPONEN (A.), RITALA (P.), KERÄNEN (J.), MAIJANEN (P.): *Digital Transformation of the Value Proposition: A Single Case Study in the Media Industry*; *Journal of Business Research*, 150, 2022, pp. 311–325.

- It answers the core question consumers ask: "Why would I select this brand versus some other?"
- It forms the groundwork for all marketing communication, providing consistency among digital and offline channels.
- A well-articulated value proposition improves conversion rates by eliminating uncertainty and increasing perceived value.

### **3.3. Relationship Between Copywriting and Value Proposition**

Copywriting is critical for communicating the value proposition clearly to the target audience. Headlines, body copy, and calls to action need to demonstrably and uniformly represent the core value promise of the offering. In the absence of a strongly differentiated value proposition, copywriting has no direction and no convincing power. On the other hand, even the best value proposition needs persuasive language in order for it to be meaningful and attractive. Whereas the value proposition describes why the brand is unique, copywriting turns this into appealing content that encourages user action. Both these components ensure that marketing communication is clear and compelling.

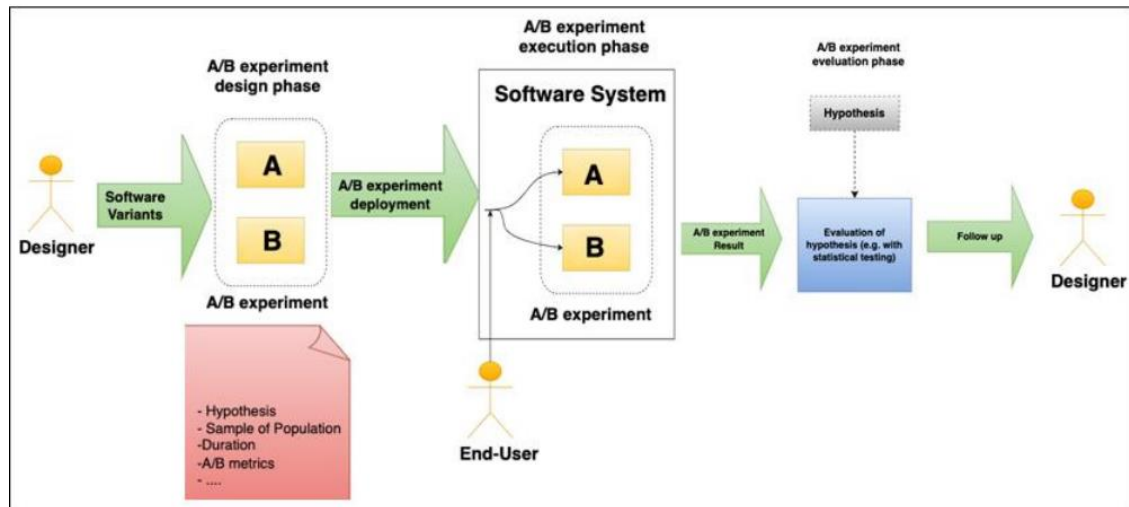
### **4. Role of A/B Testing in Conversion Optimization**

**A/B testing is a standard method used to optimize conversion rates by comparing two variations of a marketing element.** By dividing the audience into groups, marketers can assess performance and identify user preferences more effectively. This data-driven approach supports the continuous improvement of marketing strategies.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> KATHIRIYA (S.), KUMAR (S.), MULLAPUDI (M.): *Data-Driven Design Optimization: A/B Testing in Large-Scale Applications*; *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 11(6), 2022, pp. 1969–1972.

Figure II.03: General A/B testing process



**Source:** KATHIRIYA (S.), KUMAR (S.), MULLAPUDI (M.): Data-Driven Design Optimization: A/B Testing in Large-Scale Applications, 2022, p. 1970.

#### 4.1. Goals of A/B Testing in Lead Acquisition

Marketers employ A/B testing primarily to:

- Identify the design, content, or call-to-action (CTA) elements that most effectively enhance conversion rates.
- Optimize user experience by refining components based on real-time behavioural data.
- Increase return on investment (ROI) by improving the efficiency of existing traffic and assets.<sup>89</sup>

#### 4.2. Elements Commonly Tested

- Typical elements subjected to A/B testing include:
- Headlines.
- CTA Buttons.
- Forms.
- Images and Layout.
- Value Propositions or Offers.

<sup>89</sup> FEDORCHENKO (A.), PONOMARENKO (I.): A/B-Testing as an Efficient Tool for Digital Marketing; Problems of Innovation and Investment Development, 19, 2019, pp. 36–42

### **4.3.Step-by-Step Process for Conducting an A/B Test**

Like a scientific experiment, an A/B test follows a set process. The usual steps are as follows:

#### **4.3.1. Setting the goal and the hypothesis**

Effective A/B testing begins with a clear objective and a well-defined hypothesis. Marketers must identify what is being tested and why, aligning the goal with broader business outcomes such as increased clicks or conversions. A focused hypothesis ensures purposeful testing and meaningful results.

#### **4.3.2. Identify one variable to test**

It is very important to find one variable that is thought to affect the goal. The main rule is to change only one thing between the two versions, whether it's a small change or a complete redesign of the page.

#### **4.3.3. Create two versions (A = original, B = variation)**

Two versions were made based on the variable found: Version A (the original or control) and Version B (the variation with the tested change).

#### **4.3.4. Giving traffic out at random and evenly**

Visitors to the website are randomly put into either version A or B. The best thing is for the traffic to be evenly split so that the results are not biased. Randomization helps ensure that any performance differences are only due to the variable being tested.

#### **4.3.5. Doing the Test for a Statistically Valid Amount of Time**

The test must run long enough to get a large sample size and show statistical significance.

#### **4.3.6. Looking at and measuring the results**

After the test is over, the performance of each version is compared to set KPIs, like cost per lead (CPL), click-through rate (CTR), or conversion rate (CVR). The result is based on data that can be measured and is objective.

After that, the results are examined to see how the tested variable affected the outcome. To avoid technical problems that could affect the integrity of the data, it is best to write down the test plan, including the exact elements and values that will be tested, and use a quality assurance (QA) protocol.

## 5. Social Proof and Lead Magnets

### 5.1. The Role of Social Proof in Lead Acquisition

Social proof is a psychological phenomenon where individuals look to the behavior and opinions of others to guide their actions, especially in uncertain situations. It is often used in marketing to influence consumer behavior by leveraging the idea that if others are doing something, it must be the right choice.<sup>90</sup>

There are several common forms of social proof widely used in advertising:

- **Testimonials:** Positive feedback from previous customers can significantly influence potential buyers.
- **Success rates**, such as “98% job placement after graduation”.
- **User count statistics**, like “over 5,000 learners trained”.
- **Product Reviews and Ratings:** Online reviews serve as a form of social proof, where consumers rely on the experiences of others to make informed decisions, particularly in uncertain situations.<sup>91</sup>
- **Third-party endorsements**, including partner logos or certification badges.
- **Case studies** are documentation of how your business solved a specific problem for a client.<sup>92</sup>

#### ➤ The Importance of Social Proof in Lead Acquisition

Recent empirical findings highlight the strategic function of social proof in facilitating lead acquisition, particularly in digital and high-trust service contexts. A study within the domain of Internet banking demonstrated that the inclusion of positive customer reviews and peer recommendations significantly increased users’ willingness to submit personal information and proceed with onboarding processes. This outcome underscores the significance of perceived social credibility in alleviating concerns about data privacy and transactional risk,

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<sup>90</sup> PARK (S.), MCCALLISTER (J.): *The Effects of Social Proof Marketing Tactics on Nudging Consumer Purchase*; *Journal of Student Research*, 12(3), United States, 2023.

<sup>91</sup> BEGHO (T.), LIU (S.): *Does Social Proof and Herd Behaviour Drive Food Choices of Consumers?*; *British Food Journal*, 126(3), United Kingdom, 2024, pp. 1050–1064.

<sup>92</sup> <https://blog.hubspot.com/service/psychology-social-proof#how-to-generate-social-proof>, Consulted on: 28/05/2025 at: 12:33 PM

two persistent obstacles to acquiring high-quality leads for services that necessitate trust-based engagement.

Complementary evidence by Patwa et al. (2024) further supports this position, showing that user-generated content, especially reviews, contributes to both the quantity and quality of lead generation efforts. Their analysis reveals that the credibility of such content is not merely a function of positivity but is enhanced through balanced and nuanced customer feedback, which consumers interpret as more authentic and reliable. This balance strengthens initial engagement decisions, thereby increasing the likelihood of conversion.<sup>93</sup>

In addition, Kuši (2021) found that the presence of social validation cues, such as endorsements, testimonials, and perceived authority, has a significant influence on consumer evaluations of products. From a lead generation perspective, these cues, when embedded in early funnel touchpoints such as landing pages and call-to-action interfaces, enhance users' confidence and motivation to engage with the brand, thus improving lead acquisition rates.<sup>94</sup>

Collectively, these findings confirm the effectiveness of social proof as a strategic tool in lead generation strategies. By enhancing informational credibility, reducing psychological barriers to engagement, and signaling normative approval, social proof mechanisms substantively contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of digital lead acquisition strategies.

## 5.2. What Are Lead Magnets?

In lead acquisition, a lead magnet is an incentive for a prospect's contact information. The sources frequently refer to this concept using the term "gated offer". A gated offer provides a small piece of value that solves a specific problem for a specific market.<sup>95</sup> and requires prospects to submit their contact information, typically an email address, to receive this value. This exchange of contact information for value is a fundamental transaction in the lead generation process.

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<sup>93</sup> PATWA (N.), GUPTA (M.), MITTAL (A.): *Social Proof: Empowering Social Commerce through Social Validation, Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication, 2024.*

<sup>94</sup> KUŠI (D.): *Are You Certain You Really Like Those Jeans You Are Wearing? The Influence of Social Proof and Authority on a Product Evaluation, Doctoral Dissertation, RIT Croatia, 2021, p. 1–42.*

<sup>95</sup> DEISS (R), HENNEBERRY (R), *Op cit, 2017, ,p 40*

The value provided in a gated offer should be of high quality, even though it is free, because the prospect has given value by sharing private contact information and their time and attention. The end goal of a gated offer is to gain leads that can be nurtured into customers over time.<sup>96</sup>

### 5.2.1. Common Types of Lead Magnets

Lead magnets, or gated offers, can take various forms, often consisting of content that educates the lead on a topic related to the brand or highlights features of a solution, product, or service. Common types mentioned in the sources include:

- eBooks & Guides: Industry-relevant resources offering insights, trends, or best practices in exchange for user contact details.
- Webinars & Video Training: Live or recorded sessions requiring registration, ideal for capturing qualified leads.
- Reports & White Papers: In-depth materials used in B2B marketing to exchange valuable information for lead data.
- Case Studies: Gated content showcasing real-world strategies and outcomes to educate and convert leads.
- Discounts & Free Trials: Incentives like limited offers or exclusive access to drive immediate conversions in eCommerce and SaaS.

**Although lead magnets are effective, audience responses vary significantly.** Customizing them to specific segments enhances relevance and performance, as different groups have distinct needs and preferences.

### 5.2.2. The Role of Lead Magnets in the Lead Acquisition Process

- Improving the lead acquisition process depends on lead magnets—gated offers that help convert prospects into leads.
- They build trust and show knowledge by providing value before asking for a commitment.
- They facilitate the first interaction by urging visitors to provide their contact information in exchange for beneficial material.
- They commence targeted email workflows by acquiring contact information via gated offers.

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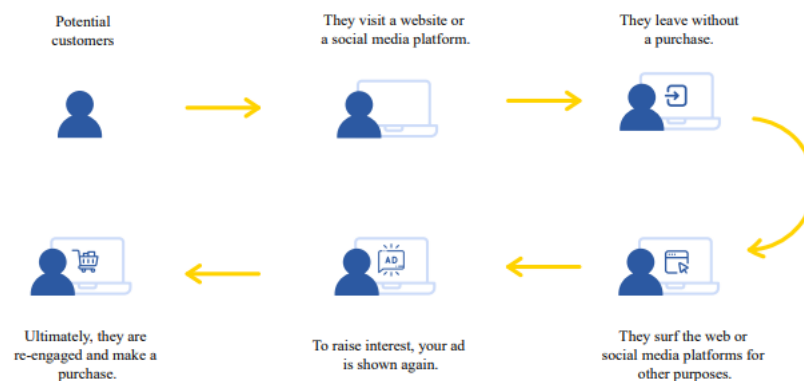
<sup>96</sup>DIAMOND (S), *op cit*, 2019, (p 83)

- They advance prospects through the sales funnel by facilitating tailored nurturing according to articulated interests.

## 6. Retargeting Strategies and Cross-Channel Remarketing

Retargeting is a way to interact with potential customers online and is considered as one of the most important strategies of digital advertising. It has a critical technological infrastructure for efficient use of advertising budgets. It is common for customers to exhibit non-purchasing behavior after their initial visit to a web page and even forget the name of the seller.<sup>97</sup>

**Figure II.04:** Retargeting Process



**Source:** YÜKSEL (D.): Remarketing and Retargeting, in: TARAKÇI (İ. E.), ASLAN (R.) (Eds.), *The Essentials of Today's Marketing*, 2023, p. 57.

### 6.1.Important Retargeting Plans

- Site-based retargeting: Website visitor retargeting represents the predominant method of remarketing, targeting individuals who have demonstrated interest by accessing particular pages. It functions via a tracking pixel that installs a cookie in the user's browser, allowing advertising platforms to identify the visitor across many websites and provide tailored advertisements.
- Abandoned cart retargeting: targets people who put things in their shopping cart but leave before finishing the purchase. Messages sent at the right time and with a reward can help you recover lost sales.

<sup>97</sup> Yüksel, D. (2023). *Remarketing and Retargeting*. Tarakçı İ. E. Aslan R. (Eds.), *The essentials of today's marketing*, 53-63

- Video Viewers or Engagement-Based Retargeting: This type of retargeting goes after people who watched part of a brand's video or interacted with its social media posts. It uses interest signals to keep the brand in front of people and move them further down the funnel.<sup>98</sup>

Other specific retargeting types mentioned:

- Search retargeting allows displaying an ad after a visitor has searched a particular term.
- Retargeting can target app users.
- Retargeting existing contacts by uploading a file of prospects or customers is possible within platforms like Facebook.

### **6.2. Cross-Channel Remarketing Explained**

Cross-channel remarketing refers to re-engaging users across multiple digital platforms following their initial interaction with a brand. Rather than restricting follow-up advertisements to a single channel, this approach distributes the brand's message across various platforms, including Google Ads, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and programmatic display networks. This strategy helps ensure that the brand remains top-of-mind for potential customers, regardless of where they spend their time online.<sup>99</sup>

### **6.3. Best Practices for Retargeting and Cross-Channel Consistency**

#### **Apply Frequency Capping:**

Limit the number of times an individual sees a retargeting ad to avoid annoyance or ad blindness.

#### **Ensure Message Alignment Across Platforms:**

Harmonize offers, tone, and branding across channels to reinforce trust and avoid confusion.

#### **Use Platform-Specific Creatives:**

Customize visuals, ad dimensions, and language to fit the expectations and norms of each platform while maintaining core messaging consistency.

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<sup>98</sup> THILAGAVATHI (K): *AI-Driven Customer Segmentation: Targeting and Retargeting Strategies in Digital Marketing*; Ed. 1, *Journal of Data and Computer Science* edition, India, 2024, p.400-415

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/cross-channel-remarketing-campaigns/>  
(Consulted on: 21/05/2025 at: 9:54 PM)

**Segment Audiences Precisely:**

Retarget based on specific behaviors (e.g., product page views vs. blog readers) for more relevant and personalized messaging.<sup>100</sup>

**Tracking:**

Effective retargeting requires tracking visitor behavior using pixels and cookies. This includes tracking the origin or referring site of visitors.

**7. Personalization and Marketing Automation**

Personalization in digital marketing tailors content and interactions to individual user preferences, behaviors, or demographics. By moving beyond generic messaging, it fosters more relevant experiences that strengthen engagement and customer loyalty. According to Liu (2024), “personalization relies heavily on data-driven insights and artificial intelligence (AI) to tailor content dynamically, thereby increasing relevance and emotional resonance with the consumer . In today’s saturated media environment, personalization not only improves user satisfaction but also strengthens conversion rates and brand attachment by creating the sense that a brand “knows” the customer “.<sup>101</sup>

**7.1.Role of Marketing Automation in Lead Acquisition**

Marketing automation involves deploying technology platforms to automate repetitive yet essential marketing tasks, particularly those concerning lead generation, segmentation, nurturing, and conversion. These platforms allow marketers to manage interactions at scale, while maintaining relevance and personalization across customer journeys. Automated systems can send follow-up emails, score leads based on their engagement behavior, segment audiences, and execute multi-step workflows—all with minimal manual intervention (Gupta & Goel, 2024).

In lead acquisition, automation plays a transformative role by enabling:

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<sup>100</sup> MUTHURAMAN (S.): *Rejuvenate the Digital Marketing Strategies; International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 7(6), India, 2023, pp. 869–874,

<sup>101</sup> LIU (H.): *The Role of Personalization in Modern Digital Marketing: How Tailored Experiences Drive Consumer Engagement; Strategic Management Insights*, 1(8), United States, 2024, pp. 34–40

- Seamless lead capture through embedded forms or pop-ups on websites and landing pages.
- Instant responses such as welcome emails or retargeting campaigns, reducing the gap between interest and engagement.
- Behavioral scoring to prioritize leads based on their likelihood to convert.
- Real-time audience segmentation, delivering tailored messages across different funnel stages.

These capabilities significantly increase campaign efficiency, reduce operational load, and enhance user experience. Marketing automation ensures that high-value leads are nurtured with timely and relevant communications, improving both conversion rates and marketing ROI.<sup>102</sup>

### 7.2. Personalization Tactics in Lead Acquisition

To enhance lead acquisition outcomes, digital marketers deploy a variety of personalization tactics grounded in behavioral data and AI tools<sup>103</sup>:

- **Dynamic Website Content:** Adjusts headlines, visuals, and calls to action based on user behavior or traffic source, delivering contextually relevant experiences.
- **AI-Powered Recommendations:** Suggests products or courses aligned with user preferences and browsing history, increasing conversion potential.
- **Triggered Email Flows:** Sends automated, personalized emails based on what users do to keep them interested throughout the lead nurturing process.
- **Chatbots and Virtual Assistants:** Utilize natural language processing to provide real-time, personalized assistance, minimizing friction and guiding users effectively.

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<sup>102</sup> GUPTA (G.), GOEL (S.): *op cit*, 2024, pp. 7–11

<sup>103</sup> GUNAWAT (A), KHANDELWAL (N), GUPTA (N): *AI-Powered Personalization in Digital Marketing: Transforming Consumer Engagement and Strategy; Ed. 1, Research Review International Journal of Multidisciplinary edition, 2024, p.183*

### **Section 03: Measuring Lead Acquisition Success**

In this section, we will focus on measuring the effectiveness of lead acquisition efforts. Accurate tracking and performance evaluation are essential for optimizing digital marketing campaigns and maximizing return on investment.

We will begin by presenting key performance indicators (KPIs), including conversion rate, click-through rate (CTR), cost per lead (CPL), and return on ad spend (ROAS). These metrics help assess campaign efficiency and user engagement.

Next, we will explore data visualization tools and reporting practices that enhance clarity in decision-making. We will also discuss benchmarks for cost per lead (CPL) in the education sector to contextualize campaign performance and identify opportunities for strategic improvement.

#### **1. Key Metrics: CPL, CVR, ROAS, LTV**

Effective measurement is fundamental to understanding the performance of digital marketing efforts, particularly in the crucial area of lead acquisition. By tracking key metrics, businesses can evaluate campaign effectiveness, gain valuable insights into visitor behavior, and make data-driven decisions to optimize their strategies and improve results.

#### **Importance of Measuring Lead Acquisition Performance**

Performance metrics are essential for measuring the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns, particularly in lead acquisition strategies. These indicators allow marketers to make data-informed decisions, allocate budgets effectively, and optimize conversion pathways. Without such metrics, efforts to acquire leads risk inefficient and financially unsustainable. As digital advertising becomes increasingly competitive, measuring what works, through standardized performance benchmarks, becomes indispensable to justify spend and improve targeting precision.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> RAMACHANDRAN (K. K.): *Evaluating ROI in Digital Marketing Campaigns: Metrics, Measurement, and Insights*, *International Journal of Management (IJM)*, 2023, pp. 190–204.

## 1.1. Cost Per Lead (CPL)

### 1.1.1. Definition

CPL measures the average cost incurred to acquire a single lead through marketing activities. It helps determine the cost-effectiveness of lead generation campaigns.

### 1.1.2. Formula

$$\text{CPL} = \text{Total Campaign Cost} \div \text{Number of Leads Generated}$$

CPL consists of two elements:

**Total campaign cost:** All expenses linked to the campaign, such as ad spend, design assets, software, and agency fees (e.g., \$1,500 on ads + \$500 on design = \$2,000 total).

**Number of leads generated:** The total individuals who completed a desired action (form submission, subscription, demo request), tracked through tools like Google Analytics, CRM systems, or ad reports.

### 1.1.3. Examples

- **Scenario:**

An online professional development academy runs a Facebook campaign offering a free webinar on career advancement. The campaign cost is \$1,200 and generates 240 sign-ups.

- **Calculation:**

$$\text{CPL} = \text{Total Campaign Cost} \div \text{Number of Leads}$$

$$\text{CPL} = \$1,200 \div 240 = \$5$$

- **Interpretation:**

The academy pays \$5 for each lead, indicating a cost-effective social media strategy for lead generation.<sup>105</sup>

### 1.1.4. Relevance to Lead Acquisition

This measure enables companies to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of their advertising campaigns. Maintaining a low CPL while guaranteeing lead quality is vital in higher education marketing to stay competitive. A high CPL could suggest poor targeting or uncreative

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<sup>105</sup> <https://www.klipfolio.com/resources/kpi-examples/digital-marketing/cost-per-lead> (Consulted on: 23/05/2025 at: 9:54 PM)

ideas. Monitoring CPL frequently enables marketers to hone their campaign components and increase return on investment.

## 1.2. Conversion Rate (CVR)

### 1.2.1. What is a conversion

A conversion is an action taken by a customer that holds value for the business, and this action can be defined according to the organization's specific objectives. Such actions may include website clicks, purchases, or new user registrations for email newsletters. Businesses may also establish multiple conversion actions and corresponding conversion rates to more accurately assess performance and align measurement with defined goals.<sup>106</sup>

### 1.2.2. Conversion Rate (CVR)

Conversion rate measures the percentage of users who took a desired action after clicking on an ad. This could include signing up for a newsletter, purchasing, or filling out a contact form.<sup>107</sup>

### 1.2.3. Formula

$$\text{CVR} = (\text{Number of Conversions} \div \text{Number of Visitors}) \times 100$$

Number of Conversions: Users who complete the intended action (e.g., registering for a course or submitting a contact form).

Number of Visitors or Clicks: The total audience that interacted with the campaign asset (e.g., number of ad clicks or page visits).

### 1.2.4. Example

If 50 out of 1,000 visitors complete the action:

$$\text{CVR} = (50 \div 1,000) \times 100 = 5\%$$

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<sup>106</sup> <https://advertising.amazon.com/library/guides/conversion-rate> (Consulted on: 23/05/2025 at: 11:54 PM)

<sup>107</sup> ALMESTARIHI (R), AHMAD (A.Y.), FRANGIEH (R.H.), ABUALSONDOS (I.A.), NSER (K.K.), ZIANI (A): *Measuring the ROI of Paid Advertising Campaigns in Digital Marketing and Its Effect on Business Profitability*, Jordan, 2024, p.1279.

**Interpretation:**

A 5% CVR means that 5 out of every 100 visitors performed the desired action, reflecting the effectiveness of the campaign or landing page in converting traffic into leads or customers.

**1.2.5. Relevance to Lead Acquisition**

This measure shows how relevant and convincing a landing page and ad are to consumers. A good CVR suggests that the message and user experience well match the user's purpose. Improving CVR can immediately increase the funnel's, particularly in paid advertising.

**1.3. Return on Ad Spend (ROAS)****1.3.1. Definition**

ROAS calculates the revenue generated for every dollar spent on advertising. It helps advertisers understand the efficiency of their campaigns in terms of revenue generation.<sup>108</sup>

**1.3.2. Formula**

ROAS = Revenue from Ads ÷ Ad Spend

Total Revenue from Campaign: Revenue that can be directly attributed to the campaign (tracked via UTM parameters or attribution software).

Total Cost of Campaign: All costs directly linked to the advertising channel or campaign (media spend, management fees).

**1.3.3. Example**

If a campaign generates \$5,000 in revenue from \$1,000 in ad spend:

$$\text{ROAS} = \$5,000 \div \$1,000 = \mathbf{5:1}$$

**Interpretation:**

A ROAS of 5:1 means that for every \$1 invested in advertising, \$5 in revenue was generated, indicating a highly profitable campaign.

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<sup>108</sup> ALMESTARIHI (R), AHMAD (A.Y.), FRANGIEH (R.H.), ABUALSONDOS (I.A.), NSER (K.K.), ZIANI (A): *op cit*, 2024, p.1279.

### 1.3.4. Relation to Lead Acquisition

ROAS enables decision-makers to evaluate which campaigns yield the highest return. It helps determine optimal budget allocation across platforms such as Google Ads, Meta Ads, or LinkedIn Campaign Manager.

## 1.4. Return on Investment (ROI)

### 1.4.1. Definition

ROI is a comprehensive metric that assesses the net profit generated by a campaign relative to the total investment. Unlike ROAS, which looks only at revenue from ad spend, ROI includes all operational and fixed costs, offering a broader view of campaign financial success.

### 1.4.2. Formula

$$\text{ROI} = (\text{Net Profit} \div \text{Investment Cost}) \times 100$$

Net Profit: Revenue minus all campaign-related costs, including creative development, platform tools, staff time, and ad spend.

Total Investment: The full sum of financial input into the campaign.

### 1.4.3. Example

If a campaign costs \$2,000 and earns \$5,000 in revenue:

$$\text{Net Profit} = \$5,000 - \$2,000 = \$3,000$$

$$\text{ROI} = (\$3,000 \div \$2,000) \times 100 = \mathbf{150\%}$$

#### **Interpretation:**

An ROI of 150% means the campaign generated a return 1.5 times greater than the original investment, indicating strong profitability.

### 1.4.4. Relation to Lead Acquisition

A strong ROI demonstrates that the marketing efforts not only attracted leads but also converted them into paying customers efficiently. Monitoring ROI helps educational institutions assess the profitability of their marketing campaigns and make informed decisions about future investments.

## 1.5. Customer Lifetime Value (LTV)

### 1.5.1. Definition

Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) is the present-day value of the net profit a business expects to generate from a customer or customer segment over the entire duration of their relationship. It accounts for revenues earned from the customer minus costs related to acquisition, selling, and servicing, while incorporating the time value of money. CLV is a financial metric for forecasting long-term profitability and a marketing index reflecting customer loyalty, satisfaction, and engagement.<sup>109</sup>

### 1.5.2. Formula

$LTV = \text{Average Purchase Value} \times \text{Purchase Frequency} \times \text{Customer Lifespan}$

Average Purchase Value: Revenue from a typical transaction (e.g., \$200 for a course).

Purchase Frequency: Number of purchases in a period (e.g., 2 courses/year).

Customer Lifespan: Expected duration of engagement (e.g., 3 years).

### 1.5.3. Example

#### Scenario:

A student at ITComp Academy buys 2 courses per year at \$200 each, and remains enrolled for 3 years.

#### Calculation:

$LTV = 200 \times 2 \times 3 = \$1,200$

#### Interpretation:

Knowing that each student is likely to generate \$1,200 in revenue helps marketers decide how much to invest in acquiring that student. For instance, a \$50 CPL becomes acceptable if the projected LTV is high.

### 1.5.4. Relevance to Lead Acquisition

LTV helps institutions determine acceptable CPL and ROI thresholds. It also supports segmentation efforts by prioritizing campaigns that attract higher-value students.

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<sup>109</sup> DANDIS (A.O.), AL HAJ EID (M.B.), ROBIN (R.), WIERDAK (N): *An Empirical Investigation of the Factors Affecting Customer Lifetime Value; International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, United Kingdom, 2021, p.910-935

## 2. Tracking Tools: Google Analytics, Meta Business Suite, CRM Systems

To find out how well lead acquisition works in digital marketing, you need to use advanced tracking tools that give you detailed information about how users act, how well your campaigns are doing, and how you manage your leads. These tools help marketers gather, analyze, and show data at every stage of the lead acquisition funnel. This helps them make informed strategic choices and continually improve their performance. Google Analytics, Meta Business Suite, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems are all popular tools in the education sector.

### 2.1. Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

According to Neil Patel, "Google Analytics 4 (GA4) is the latest generation of Google's powerful analytics platform, offering deeper insights into both website and app traffic to help achieve marketing goals."<sup>110</sup>

Unlike its predecessor, Universal Analytics (UA), which focused primarily on session-based tracking, GA4 is built around an event-based data model. This shift allows for more granular tracking of user interactions, providing insights into specific events such as clicks, page views, and video plays.

GA4 gives marketers more detailed information about user journeys by letting them define and track custom events like form submissions, click behavior, and video engagement

The platform's **Funnel and Path Exploration** tools are particularly valuable in visualizing user navigation and identifying drop-off points in the conversion process.<sup>111</sup>

In the context of lead acquisition, GA provides several features to track how visitors become leads and which marketing efforts drive those conversions:

- **User Behavior & Conversion Paths:**

Google Analytics (GA) tracks interactions, such as page views and form submissions, visualizing user journeys through funnel and path explorations. The Attribution Paths report shows how users move from visit to conversion and assigns credit to influencing channels.

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<sup>110</sup> <https://neilpatel.com/blog/google-analytics/#what-is-google-analytics-ga4>, (Consulted on: 12/05/2025 at: 01:58 PM)

<sup>111</sup> SHAHEEN (A.S): Maximizing Website Performance with Google Analytics; Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education, Turkey, 2023, p.1273-1978.

- **Traffic Source & Goal Tracking:**

GA identifies how users reach the site (e.g., ads, search, social media) and tracks defined conversion events. In GA4, any key action can be marked as a conversion, enabling the assessment of channel performance and conversion rates.

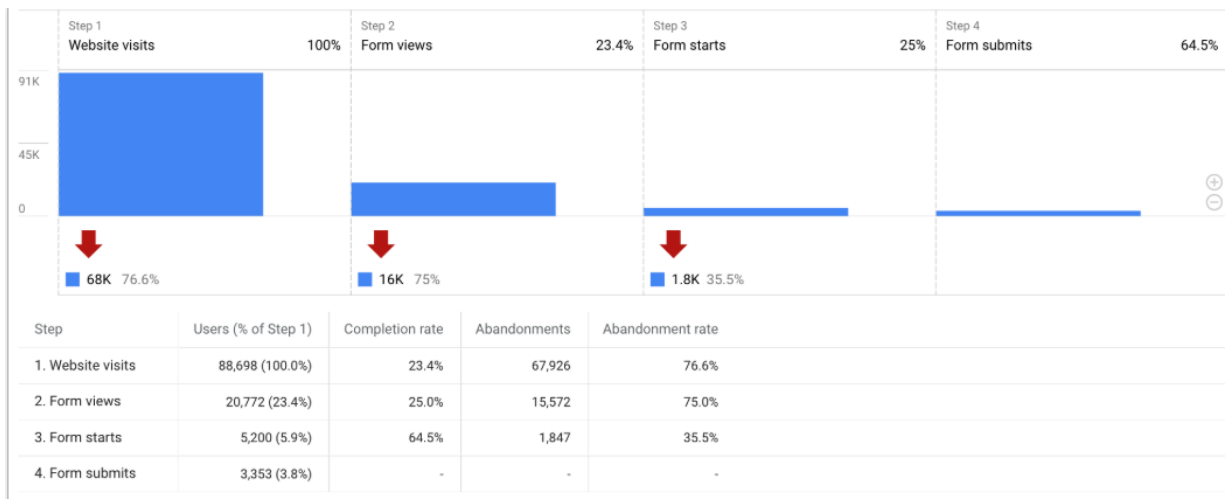
- **Custom Reports & Attribution Insights:**

GA4 Explorations and dashboards allow segmentation by campaign or page. Attribution models compare the contribution of channels to conversions, guiding budget optimization toward the most effective sources.

*Example:*

A Google Analytics 4 funnel exploration for a lead-gen form shows the journey from website visit to form submission, highlighting drop-off points. This helps marketers pinpoint where potential leads are lost, enabling targeted optimizations.

**Figure II.05:** An exploration to measure the drop off at each stage between visiting the site and submitting the form



**Source:** (<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/12944921?hl=en>), (Consulted on: 12/05/2025)

## 2.2. Meta Business Suite

According to **Ankita Srivastava, Priyanka Malik From sprinklr Website,**” Meta Business Suite (by Facebook/Meta) is an all-in-one platform for managing a brand’s presence across Facebook and Instagram, including advertising insights. It provides powerful tools for running ads, then tracking their performance and audience engagement”.<sup>112</sup>

Marketers can monitor key performance metrics, such as reach, click-through rate (CTR), and cost per lead (CPL), in real time with MBS. These metrics are beneficial for figuring out how well advertising is working as a whole. They let you make changes to creative content or budget allocation based on how well the ads are doing.

One of the best features of MBS is that it seamlessly integrates with Lead Ads, which utilize pre-filled native forms to simplify data collection. This design makes it easier for users to fill out forms, increasing the likelihood that they will become leads. When paired with Meta Pixel, MBS also supports advanced targeting features such as retargeting and the creation of lookalike audiences, allowing advertisers to extend their campaign reach to new users who exhibit behavioral similarities to existing converters.

## 2.3. CRM Systems: Integration and Lead Management

CRM stands for Customer Relationship Management, a system designed to manage all interactions with current and potential customers. Its main goal is to improve relationships to grow the business by staying connected to customers, streamlining processes, and enhancing profitability. CRMs help track interactions through sales calls, service interactions, marketing emails, and social media.

CRM tools unify customer and company data from multiple sources, often leveraging AI (artificial intelligence) to optimize relationship management across marketing, sales, digital commerce, and service interactions.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> <https://www.sprinklr.com/blog/how-to-use-meta-business-suite/> (Consulted on: 25/05/2025 at: 02:33 PM)

<sup>113</sup> <https://www.salesforce.com/crm/what-is-crm/>; Consulted on: 12/05/2025 at: 02:09 PM

### 2.3.1. CRM System Applications in Lead Acquisition

- Lead Capture and Centralization

Modern CRM systems collect and centralize data from various acquisition points—such as web forms, advertisements, and social platforms. This ensures accurate tracking and immediate accessibility for sales and marketing actions.<sup>114</sup>

- Qualification and Lead Scoring

Engagement history, demographics, and behavior determine how CRM systems score and qualify leads. By prioritizing, sales teams can concentrate on high-quality possibilities, maximize resource distribution, and raise conversion rates.

- Management of Sales Pipelines

CRM dashboards enable sales teams to monitor lead status in real time, highlighting where delays or losses occur in the sales funnel. This transparency facilitates informed decision-making and effective resource allocation.<sup>115</sup>

- Nurturing and Marketing Automation

CRMs run marketing campaigns automatically with tailored follow-up emails, reminders, and prompts. User actions set off these processes, guaranteeing constant involvement without manual effort.

## 3. Attribution Models

An attribution model in the digital marketing ecosystem is defined as a set of rules used to assign values to the different touchpoints (e.g., channels, campaigns, etc.) a user has interacted with before performing the desired action, also known as conversion (for example: make a purchase, complete a form, etc.). Note that the set of interactions of a user with the different touchpoints is referred to as the user's path.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> REDDY (K.D.), KUMAR (G.S.), NIKITHA (K.), REDDY (K.N.): *Development of Website/App for Building CRM; Ed. 1, Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research edition, India, 2021, p.b477-b482*

<sup>115</sup> HEINZELBECKER (K): *CRM, CXM, and Marketing Automation; Ed. 1, Springer edition, Germany, 2023, p.51-63.*

<sup>116</sup> ROMERO LEGUINA (J.), CUEVAS RUMÍN (Á.), CUEVAS RUMÍN (R.): *Digital Marketing Attribution: Understanding the User Path; Electronics edition, Switzerland, 2020, p.1822.*

There are two main types of attribution modeling<sup>117</sup>:

- **Single-Touch Attribution:** Single-touch, or simplest attribution techniques, gauge the influence of one specific touchpoint in the consumer path. Like clicking on an ad or social media content, the first engagement the consumer has with a brand determines the credit for every conversion under first-click (or first-touch) attribution. On the other hand, last-click (last-touch) attribution gives credit to the last engagement prior to the conversion.
- **Multi-Touch Attribution (MTA):** MTA models, such as cross-channel or time-decay attribution, aim to provide a more holistic view of how different marketing channels contribute to conversions by considering multiple touchpoints along the customer journey. These models can offer a more nuanced understanding of the customer's path to conversion and help you allocate resources more effectively across various channels.

### 3.1.Types of Attribution Models

The following table presents the main types and their characteristics.

**Table II.02:** overview of the different attribution models and how they work

Attribution model	How it works	Examples
First-click	Assigns credit based on the initial touchpoint that introduced the user to the brand or product	First visit to a website or interaction with a social media post
Last-click	Assigns credit based on the final interaction the user has with the brand or product	An email sequence during a demo period resulting in a conversion
Multi-touch (MTA)	Considers all touchpoints across the conversion journey	Multiple ads appearing over a period of time
Cross-channel	Measures the effectiveness of various marketing channels and touchpoints in a customer's journey,	Content appearing across a variety of channels, including ads, organic

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.appsflyer.com/glossary/attribution-modeling/> (Consulted on: 12/05/2025 at: 12:22 PM)

	including online and offline influences	search, social media, and email marketing
Linear	Assigns equal weight to all touchpoints along the customer journey	Equal credit for a social media post, a website visit, and a remarketing ad
Time decay	Gives more weight to touchpoints that occur closer to the time of conversion	If a buying journey takes 10 days, assign 10% credit to touchpoints in days 0-4, 30% credit for days 5-8, and 60% for days 9-10
U-shaped	Assigns more weight to the first and last interactions, with credit distributed evenly to the intermediate touches	Give 40% credit to the first touch, 40% to the last touch, and distribute the remaining 20% across the middle interactions
W-shaped	Assigns more weight to the first and last interactions as well as a lead consideration or post-purchase step	Give 30% credit to the first touch, 30% to the last touch, and distribute the remaining credit among intermediate touches such as signing up for an email newsletter

**Source:** <https://www.appsflyer.com/glossary/attribution-modeling/> (Consulted on: 13/05/2025 at: 02:20 PM)

### 3.2.Data-Driven Attribution

A new generation of data-driven attribution models has emerged to address the limitations of traditional approaches. These models are built on mathematical and statistical principles and rely on historical advertising campaign data to more accurately assign credit across the various touchpoints involved in the customer journey.

### 3.3. Why is Attribution Modeling Important

Attribution modeling gives marketers insights into the performance of their marketing efforts, revealing which campaigns or channels are most effective in driving conversions. This enables marketers to allocate resources more efficiently, prioritize high-performing channels, and eliminate budget waste on underperforming tactics. According to a recent study, companies using multi-touch attribution (MTA) models report higher satisfaction with their marketing spend effectiveness than those using single-touch models.

### 3.4. Selecting the Appropriate Attribution Model

Choosing the right attribution model relies on several elements, including:

- Long, multi-step purchasing paths gain from multi-touch models under customer journey complexity.
- While longer sales cycles call for multi-touch models, shorter sales cycles may be better reflected by first-click or last-click approaches.
- Advanced models such as Data-Driven Attribution need significant data to operate properly.
- Objectives of Marketing: Whether focusing on awareness, consideration, or conversion, models should fit the campaign's goals.

## 4. Lead Scoring Systems

Lead scoring is a marketing technique that helps decision-makers identify the more profitable potential customers among the generated leads. As a result, the salesforce professionals will not waste time randomly contacting all prospects and will only concentrate their efforts on more likely converted ones. The main idea is to assign scores to all prospects based on how their characteristics match a converted customer's preestablished profile. The leads that score above a specific threshold are considered ideal targets. The bottleneck of such an approach is the determination of profile-relevant attributes with their respective weights.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> JADLI (A.), HAMIM (M.), HAIN (M.), HASBAOUI (A.): *Toward a Smart Lead Scoring System Using Machine Learning*; Ed. 1, *Indian Journal of Computer Science and Engineering, India, 2022, p.434*

### 4.1. Traditional Lead Scoring

Traditional lead scoring relies on marketers or sales managers to define key attributes and assign point values to them. Scores are typically based on demographic fit and behavioral engagement. However, this approach may reflect subjective biases and static decision-making, as it often depends on personal experience rather than objective criteria.

**Figure II.06:** Traditional Lead Scoring System

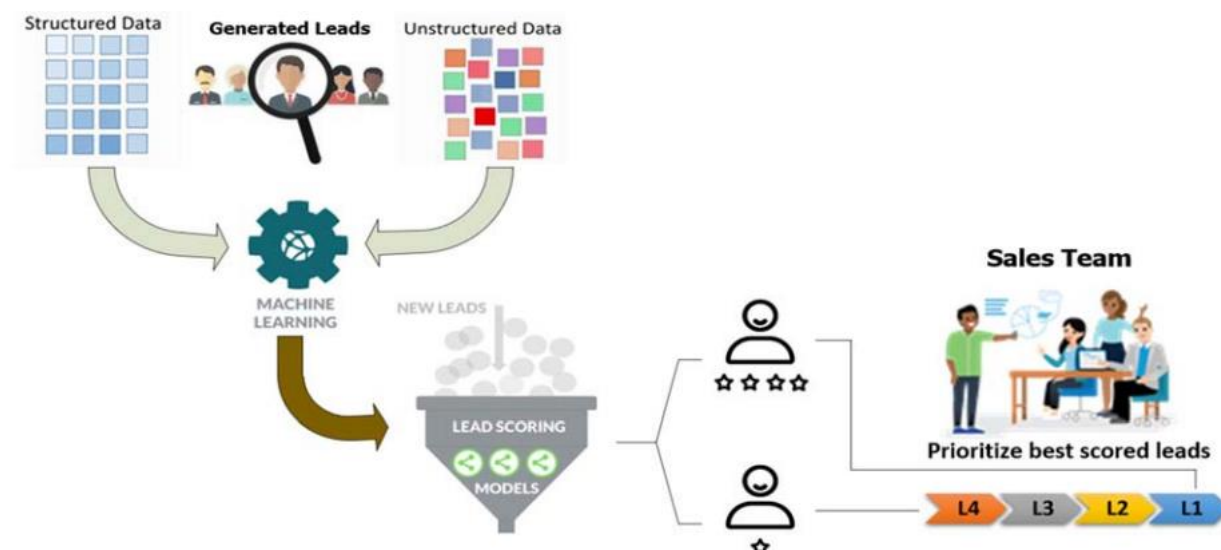


**Source:** JADLI (A.), HAMIM (M.), HAIN (M.), HASBAOUI (A.): Toward a Smart Lead Scoring System Using Machine Learning, *Indian Journal of Computer Science and Engineering*, 2022, p. 434.

### 4.2. Smart Lead Scoring

Predictive lead scoring applies propensity modeling and machine learning to estimate a lead's likelihood of conversion. By analyzing historical sales data, algorithms identify relevant patterns and attributes. The model continuously updates to improve accuracy and adapt to market changes, reducing false positives and enhancing decision-making.

The primary difference between traditional and predictive lead scoring is that the latter can analyze data and uncover more profound insights that can help improve performance. Machine learning enables predictive models to discover connections and patterns in large datasets, making them faster and more effective at making decisions than traditional methods. It also reduces the process's dependence on human expertise by automating it and introducing improvements that can be scaled up as more data is added.

**Figure II.07:** ML-based Predictive Lead Scoring System

**Source:** JADLI (A.), HAMIM (M.), HAIN (M.), HASBAOUI (A.): Toward a Smart Lead Scoring System Using Machine Learning, *Indian Journal of Computer Science and Engineering*, 2022, p. 435.

### 4.3.Types of Lead Scoring Models

The main types of models are outlined below.<sup>119</sup>

#### 4.3.1. Demographic Lead Scoring

This model evaluates job title, company size, industry, and location to determine alignment with the target profile. For example, a B2B firm may prioritize leads with executive roles or from large corporations while deprioritizing those outside operational regions. This ensures efforts are directed toward prospects with higher strategic fit.

#### 4.3.2. Behavioral Lead Scoring

Behavioral scoring measures lead engagement with marketing content, such as visiting key web pages, opening emails, or downloading resources. High interaction levels typically reflect purchase intent. Tracking these signals helps identify sales-ready leads and enables timely, relevant communication.

<sup>119</sup> <https://coresignal.com/blog/lead-scoring/>, (Consulted on: 22/05/2025 at: 03:33 PM)

### **4.3.3. Firmographic Lead Scoring**

In B2B marketing, firmographic scoring assesses business-level data like company size, revenue, and sector. For instance, companies from high-need industries (e.g., finance for cybersecurity solutions) may receive higher scores than those less relevant. This approach filters out low-potential accounts early in the sales process.

### **4.3.4. Predictive Lead Scoring**

Predictive models apply AI and machine learning to historical and real-time data to forecast lead conversion likelihood. These systems update continuously and offer automation, personalization, and improved accuracy, helping teams focus on the most promising prospects and optimize campaign strategies.

## **4.4. The Role of Lead Scoring in Effective Lead Acquisition**

Lead scoring is critical in the lead acquisition process, enabling marketing and sales teams to prioritize high-potential leads efficiently. By distinguishing between low-engagement and high-engagement prospects, companies can allocate resources more effectively, reduce acquisition costs, and improve overall conversion rates. Implementing effective lead-scoring models accelerates the sales cycle and enhances the quality of leads transferred to the sales team, resulting in higher closure rates and optimized revenue growth.

## **5. Reporting and Dashboard Best Practices**

Reporting and dashboards are crucial for performance analysis and decision-making in digital marketing. They transform complex marketing data into obvious, actionable insights, enabling marketers to monitor important performance indicators (KPIs), evaluate campaign success, and dynamically optimize plans.

### **5.1. What is Dashboard reporting**

According to Indeed Editorial Team, “A dashboard is a tool that displays your most pertinent information in a visually accessible and interactive manner. In this format, data is easy to understand, allowing you to use it to make critical business decisions needed to achieve your goals and objectives. Dashboards are intuitive toward readability because they consolidate and order information on one screen, allowing you to monitor and review what you need with a

simple glance. Data visualization is a core element of dashboards, utilizing an array of techniques like bar graphs, scatter plots, pie charts and many other data presentation methods.”<sup>120</sup>

## **5.2. Best Practices for Reporting and Dashboards**

### **5.2.1. Identify Reporting Requirements**

Define business objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) before creating a dashboard. Understand the target audience to ensure relevant and actionable insights.

### **5.2.2. Select the Right Type of Dashboard**

Choose the appropriate dashboard type<sup>121</sup>:

Operational Dashboards: Track real-time metrics to detect issues and enable prompt responses.

Strategic Dashboards: Present key performance indicators to support long-term executive planning.

Tactical Dashboards: Monitor project progress and flag delays for timely team intervention.

Analytical Dashboards: Analyze detailed data to uncover customer trends and market opportunities.

### **5.2.3. Optimize for User Experience (UX)**

Use clear labels and a consistent design.

Highlight key metrics at the top for quick understanding.

Enable interactive features like filters and drill-down options.

### **5.2.4. Automate Data Collection and Real-Time Updates**

Ensure dashboards are synced with data sources for real-time accuracy and minimal manual updates.

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<sup>120</sup> <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/dashboard-design> (Consulted on: 05/05/2025 at: 05:43 PM)

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.atlassian.com/work-management/project-management/dashboard-reporting> (Consulted on: 22/05/2025 at: 06:32 PM)

### 5.2.5. Leverage Data Visualization

Visual elements like charts, graphs, and heat maps make data more comprehensible.

### 5.2.6. Ensure Mobile and Web Accessibility

Dashboards should be accessible across all devices for flexible decision-making.

### 5.2.7. Regularly Update and Maintain

Periodically review and adjust dashboards to align with business changes and goals.

Implementing these best practices ensures that dashboards are intuitive, data-driven, and effective in supporting business decisions.

## 5.3. Best Tools for Reporting and Dashboard Management Looker

### 5.3.1. Google Data Studio

Google Data Studio is a free, collaborative data visualization tool that enables users to transform raw data into informative and customizable reports and dashboards. Launched as part of the Google Analytics 360 Suite in 2016, Data Studio integrates seamlessly with other Google products such as Google Analytics, Google Ads, Google BigQuery, YouTube, and Google Sheets. It leverages Google Cloud Storage (GCS), Google authentication, and Google Docs to ensure secure data handling, real-time collaboration, and easy sharing across teams.<sup>122</sup>

### 5.3.2. Tableau

Tableau is a visual analytics platform transforming the way we use data to solve problems—empowering people and organizations to make the most of their data.<sup>123</sup>

### 5.3.3. Power BI

According to Avijeet Biswal From Simplilearn, “Power BI is a business analytics service provided by Microsoft that lets you visualize your data and share insights. It converts data from different sources to build interactive dashboards and Business Intelligence reports.”<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> APRIANI (D.), AAN (M.), SAPUTRA (W. E.): *Data Visualization Using Google Data Studio*, *International Journal of Cyber IT Service Management*, 2022, p. 14.

<sup>123</sup> <https://www.tableau.com/why-tableau/what-is-tableau> (Consulted on: 29/05/2025 at: 03:22 AM)

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.simplilearn.com/tutorials/power-bi-tutorial/what-is-power-bi> (Consulted on: 29/05/2025 at: 04:35 AM)

**Conclusion of chapter TWO**

In conclusion, lead acquisition has become a core objective of digital marketing strategies, particularly in the online training sector. By defining and classifying different lead types, marketers can better target users based on their readiness to convert. Techniques such as optimized landing pages, persuasive copywriting, lead magnets, and retargeting have proven essential for attracting and converting prospects.

The integration of strategic content, user behavior insights, and performance tracking enhances the overall effectiveness of campaigns. These elements form the backbone of successful digital acquisition efforts.

**CHAPTER THREE: Empirical  
Study — ITComp Academy**

**Introduction of chapter THREE**

In a competitive digital environment, educational institutions must adopt data-driven advertising strategies to attract and convert potential learners. The first two chapters laid the theoretical groundwork for digital advertising mechanisms and lead acquisition processes—both of which underpin this empirical investigation.

In this chapter, we will examine the impact of search and social media advertising campaigns on lead generation. The objective is to assess how variables such as platform choice, ad format, and social proof influence users' decision-making and conversion behavior in the context of professional training.

We will begin by presenting ITComp, a company specializing in digital education and IT services, before focusing on ITComp Academy, its dedicated training division. This overview will provide essential background on the institution's mission, positioning, and program offerings within the Algerian tech education market.

Next, we will describe the methodological framework, including the survey structure, sampling process, and advertising campaign data used to test the research hypotheses. While also acknowledging certain research limitations, most notably the recent rebranding of ITComp. Finally, we will analyze the key findings, both from user survey responses and campaign performance metrics, and conclude with data-driven recommendations aimed at enhancing lead acquisition strategies in similar educational contexts.

### **Section 01: The fieldwork**

This section introduces the organizational ecosystem in which the empirical study is embedded. It begins with a detailed profile of **ITComp**, a major Algerian player in digital services and training, outlining its historical development, strategic branches, and internal structure. This broader context is essential for understanding the technological and institutional environment that supports ITComp Academy.

The section then narrows its focus to **ITComp Academy**, the specialized academic division founded in 2023, which delivers immersive, career-oriented digital education. By examining the company's mission, digital advertising practices, and lead acquisition challenges, this fieldwork provides the operational foundation for the empirical investigation that follows.

#### **1. Presentation of ITComp**


##### **1.1. Historical Background of IT Comp**

With over two decades of experience, a client portfolio exceeding 500 organizations, and a team With over two decades of operational experience, a client portfolio comprising more than 500 organizations, and a team of 66 qualified professionals, **ITComp has established a solid presence in Algeria's IT services and digital training sector.**

Founded in 1999, the company initially focused on specialized training programs designed to develop digital competencies and address the national gap in technological skills.

Over time, ITComp expanded its scope beyond education to offer a broader range of IT solutions, including software development, system integration, and cloud services. This evolution reflects its adaptation to the growing demand for advanced technologies and digital infrastructure across various sectors.

**Table III.01:** ITComp technical specifications

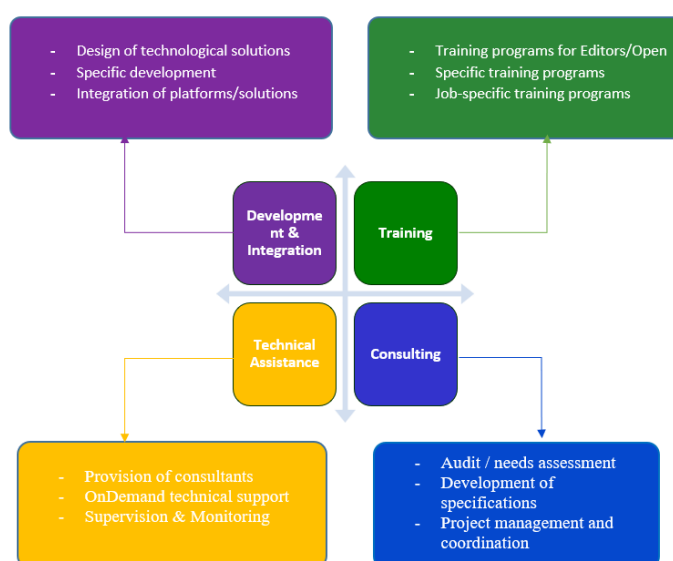
Company name (legal name)	ITComp
Legal form:	SPA ITComp Academy
Date of establishment:	1999
Number of employees:	66
Manager's name (CEO):	Mr Bachir Mihoubi
Business sector:	IT
Company logo:	
Company slogan:	<i>"Tout ce qui est IT, c'est IT Comp."</i>

**Source:** Compiled by the author, based on ITComp internal reports (2024)

Headquartered in Algiers, **ITComp** is now a strategic and certified partner of several globally recognized technology vendors. It is pivotal in digital transformation projects, offering in-depth expertise in cutting-edge technologies and high-performance system architectures. The company's portfolio reflects a commitment to modernizing client information systems and digitizing operational workflows.

The following figure provides an overview of ITComp’s integrated service offerings, illustrating its technical capabilities and core areas of specialization across the IT landscape.

**Figure III.01:** ITComp Services



**Source:** Internal documents of ITComp Company. Our translation (2024).

### 1.2.Strategic Branches of IT Comp

IT Comp is structured into six specialized divisions to efficiently serve its clients and achieve its ambitious digital transformation goals. Each division is designed to address specific market needs while leveraging IT Comp's expertise in technology and innovation<sup>125</sup>:

**Table III.02:** Strategic Pillars, Divisions, and Their Core Missions Within the Organization

Strategic Pillar	Division Name	Main Mission
<b>Technologies &amp; Engineering</b>	<b>IT Comp Engineering</b>	Software development, system integration, cybersecurity, cloud services
<b>B2B Training &amp; Upskilling</b>	<b>IT Comp Training</b>	Developing technical and business skills for employees
<b>ERP &amp; Digital Operations</b>	<b>IT Comp Solutions</b>	Odoo integration to connect operations and digitalize business management
<b>Digital Health</b>	<b>HMS by IT Comp</b>	Modern hospital management platform designed for healthcare facilities undergoing digital transformation
<b>Digital Education</b>	<b>UNIFLOW SUIT by IT Comp</b>	Integrated school management system to modernize educational institutions
<b>Academic Training</b>	<b>IT Comp Academy</b>	Preparing youth and students for future technology careers

**Source:** Internal documents of ITComp Company (2025). Our translation.

### 1.3.Mission of IT Comp

IT Comp empowers businesses and institutions in their digital transformation journey by delivering innovative IT solutions, advanced training programs, and state-of-the-art technology. Through its specialized divisions, IT Comp enhances technological capabilities, optimizes information systems, and drives sustainable growth for its clients across multiple sectors.

### 1.4.Objectives of IT Comp

The primary objective of IT Comp is to be a reliable partner that supports companies in their technological evolution and enhances the performance of their information systems. This is achieved through a mastery of relevant technologies and by offering high-quality solutions

<sup>125</sup> Internal documents of ITComp Company, marketing department. Our translation.

that drive digital transformation, optimize business processes, and ensure technological excellence in various sectors.

### **1.5. Organizational Structure of IT Comp**

#### **1.5.1. Organizational Chart**

The organizational structure of IT Comp is composed of several key departments, each contributing to the company's technological innovation and market growth. The chart below (refer to Appendix N<sup>o</sup>: **06**) visually represents the hierarchical structure and the distribution of responsibilities across different divisions.

#### **1.5.2. Presentation of the Different Departments of IT Comp**

ITComp's organizational structure is led by General Management, which oversees strategic direction and coordination across six core departments: the Technical, Training, Commercial, Finance, Administration & HR, and Marketing Departments.<sup>126</sup>

##### **➤ General Management**

The General Management defines IT Comp's strategic direction by setting its vision, mission, and long-term goals. Its core responsibilities include guiding digital transformation, managing strategic partnerships and market expansion, and ensuring interdepartmental alignment with organizational objectives.

##### **➤ Technical Department**

The Technical Department is central to IT Comp's service delivery and is organized into four key units. The Development unit focuses on creating web, mobile, and software solutions, while the infrastructure unit manages systems, networks, and security. The Data Platform unit handles database management, business intelligence, big data analytics, and ERP integration. Finally, the Project and Quality Management unit ensures that project execution meets defined quality standards.

##### **➤ Training Department**

The Training Department delivers structured learning and professional development programs. It comprises two central units: the Schooling unit, which offers academic pathways

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<sup>126</sup> *Op cit. Our translation.*

and certifications for students and professionals, and the Certifications unit, which provides industry-recognized credentials through partnerships with organizations such as Microsoft, Oracle, and Fortinet.

➤ **Commercial Department**

The Commercial Department oversees business development and client engagement at IT Comp. Its core functions include providing commercial training services, delivering IT and infrastructure solutions to enterprise clients, managing pre-sales and partner relations, and leading international expansion efforts across Africa and Europe.

➤ **Finance Department**

The Finance Department manages IT Comp's financial activities and ensures regulatory compliance. Its responsibilities include overseeing accounting operations and maintaining relationships with financial institutions to support funding and investment strategies.

➤ **Administration & HR Department**

The Administration and Human Resources Department oversees personnel management and administrative support. It handles career development, payroll, and employee well-being while also managing logistics operations, including procurement and maintenance. Additionally, it ensures the security and safety of IT Comp's facilities.

➤ **Marketing Department**

The Marketing Department is a key IT Comp pillar responsible for leading communication, brand positioning, and campaign execution across all business units. Targeted strategies and coordinated actions support visibility, lead generation, and alignment with the company's digital and educational mission. Managed by a Marketing Director and specialized project managers, the department ensures each division reaches its audience effectively. It contains several specialized units, including digital communication, content creation, event coordination, and market analysis.

**1.5.3. Mission of the Marketing Department**

To develop and implement strategic marketing initiatives that enhance IT Comp's brand image, expand market reach, and support business growth across all divisions through creative communication, targeted promotion, and consistent audience engagement.

The Marketing Department is led by a Marketing Director, supported by three Project Marketing Managers and a Graphic Designer. They ensure consistent brand communication and effective promotion across all IT Comp divisions.

## **2. ITComp Academy**

### **2.1.Presentation of IT Comp Academy**

**Founded in 2023**, IT Comp Academy is the academic division of the IT Comp Group. It is positioned as a premier institution dedicated to immersive training in digital professions such as web development, data analysis, and more. The Academy was created to meet the growing demand for career-ready education in the tech sector, offering rigorous programs tailored to students, young graduates, and professionals seeking career transition.

As a natural extension of IT Comp’s ecosystem, the Academy combines the credibility of a leading Algerian tech brand with the agility of a new-generation learning environment. It positions itself not as a traditional school but as an elite academy that transforms ambition into employability. Its educational model is based on selective admissions, hands-on learning, and mentorship by industry experts. Programs are intensive, focused, and result-oriented, lasting six months, and structured to lead directly to employment in the tech sector.

### **2.2.Mission**

The mission of IT Comp Academy is to train the next generation of tech professionals in Algeria through immersive, high-impact programs that combine technical expertise, real-world projects, and professional mentorship. The Academy aims to equip ambitious individuals with the tools, mindset, and practical skills needed to excel in the digital economy.<sup>127</sup>

### **2.3.Vision**

To become the leading tech academy in Algeria, recognized for its selective, career-driven approach to digital education and its ability to bridge the gap between training and employment. IT Comp Academy seeks to set a new standard in tech education by promoting a culture of excellence, innovation, and measurable outcomes.

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<sup>127</sup> *Op cit. Our translation*

### 2.4.IT Comp Academy's Logo

The IT Comp Academy logo features the brand name in a clean, modern font that reflects technological innovation and academic credibility. The design likely incorporates elements such as structured shapes, digital motifs, or vibrant colors to emphasize the brand's focus on future-ready tech education. It symbolizes IT Comp's commitment to preparing the next generation of digital professionals.

**Figure III.02:** The logo of the ITComp Academy



**Source :** <https://itcomp-academy.com/>; consulted 02/05/2025

### 2.5.ITComp Academy Website

ITComp Academy has a website that presents essential information about the institution. The site includes sections such as About the Academy, Contact Details, and an overview of the Training Programs Offered.

Although simple, the website is a valuable reference for anyone interested in learning more about the academy's mission and available courses.

See ITComp Academy's website in Appendix N°07.

### 2.6.ITComp Academy social media

ITComp Academy is currently present on 4 platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and TikTok:

**Figure III.03:** ITComp Academy social media accounts

**Source:** Personal design

### 3. Existing Digital Advertising Practices

The company's current digital advertising efforts are still in the early stages of development and lack strategic integration. Social media advertising is primarily conducted through Meta platforms—namely Facebook and Instagram—with campaign objectives generally oriented toward message dissemination and, occasionally, lead generation. However, these campaigns are executed without a structured testing framework, optimization protocols, or alignment with a defined marketing funnel, thereby limiting their overall impact.

Although ITComp maintains a LinkedIn presence, its use is sporadic, and its potential as a B2B communication channel or employer branding tool remains largely underexploited. Similarly, while a TikTok account exists, it remains inactive and unincorporated into any formal advertising strategy.

The company has also experimented with Google Search Ads; however, these initiatives were carried out in a short-term and unstructured manner, lacking proper planning, audience segmentation, and performance monitoring. Consequently, the capacity to derive actionable insights from these campaigns has been significantly constrained.

Additionally, despite having a corporate website, it suffers from a poor user experience (UX), outdated visual design, and inadequate search engine optimization (SEO), all of which hinder its effectiveness in digital campaigns and conversion of traffic into qualified leads.

Email marketing remains an untapped opportunity, as it is not currently employed for re-engagement or lead nurturing purposes. Content marketing activities, though present, are similarly underdeveloped, characterized by the absence of a structured editorial calendar, coherent branding, or integration with the broader customer journey.

In summary, despite having numerous digital platforms, the company's advertising remains scattered, experimental, and inconsistent with modern performance-driven digital marketing standards.

#### 4. Description of Past Advertising Funnel

An assessment of the company's previous advertising initiatives reveals a notable absence of a structured marketing funnel. The campaigns were not aligned with the conventional stages of the customer journey —namely, awareness, consideration, and conversion —and lacked a differentiated content strategy corresponding to each phase.

Advertisements were disseminated without distinguishing between cold, warm, or hot audiences, and no segmentation was applied based on user behavior, interests, or previous interactions. Geographic targeting was confined to Algiers and its surrounding regions and was implemented uniformly across campaigns, regardless of audience intent or readiness.

Furthermore, the same ads and messages were used across all user touchpoints, and there were no options to retarget, follow up via email, or improve conversion rates. The company struggled to nurture potential leads through the decision-making process because there was no personalization or sequential targeting.

Without funnel logic, it was also impossible to track users' progress or make iterative improvements based on performance data. As a result, advertising efforts were separate, one-time events rather than part of a larger plan to generate leads.

#### 5. Goals and Challenges in Lead Acquisition

The company's primary goal in its digital marketing efforts is to **generate qualified leads** for its training programs and services. Specifically, it aims to attract individuals interested in IT and tech-related education, drive them to inquire or sign up through its website or social platforms, and ultimately convert them into enrolled learners or corporate clients.

However, several challenges hinder the achievement of these goals:

- **Lack of strategic planning:** Campaigns are launched without clear objectives, audience segmentation, or performance benchmarks.
- **Limited funnel structure:** As previously discussed, the absence of a marketing funnel prevents effective lead nurturing and conversion.

- **Low website performance:** The current website suffers from a weak user experience, poor design, and minimal SEO optimization, which significantly reduces its ability to convert visitors into leads.
- **No retargeting or follow-up mechanisms:** Users who show interest are not re-engaged through retargeting ads or email sequences, leading to missed conversion opportunities.
- **Underutilized platforms:** Platforms like TikTok remain inactive, and email marketing is not employed, which reduces multi-channel reach and engagement.
- **Non-optimized advertising:** Short-term tests on Google Ads and inconsistent meta-campaigns result in limited data and weak ROI.

Despite these challenges, the company remains focused on improving lead acquisition through future improvements in campaign planning, better platform integration, and enhanced content strategy.

## **Section 02: Methodological Framework**

This section outlines the methodological framework employed to investigate the impact of digital advertising, specifically on Meta and Google platforms, on lead acquisition for ITCComp Academy. Grounded in a mixed-method approach, the study integrates both survey data and advertising performance metrics to provide a multidimensional understanding of user behavior and campaign effectiveness.

The framework is designed to ensure that it is reliable, objective, and aligned with the research problem and hypotheses. It provides detailed information about the research design, the creation and administration of the survey, data collection methods, and the rationale behind the use of statistical tools. By triangulating user perceptions with real campaign data, this methodological approach enables a robust evaluation of the effectiveness of advertising formats, platform selection, and psychological triggers such as social proof.

### **1. Research Design and Methodological Choice**

To address the central question—"**To what extent do search engine and social media advertising campaigns influence lead acquisition outcomes for online training programs?**"—a quantitative research design was selected. The primary instrument is a structured questionnaire designed to gather data on user behavior, platform effectiveness, ad

format impact, and the role of social proof. This is supported by a performance analysis of Meta Ads (Facebook and Instagram) and a Google Search Ads campaign.

This dual approach ensures triangulation by linking subjective user perceptions with objective and performance data, thereby providing a clearer view of the conversion dynamics.

### **1. Hypotheses of the Study**

The following hypotheses were formulated in alignment with the research questions:

**H1:** Meta Ads are more effective in generating leads and achieving greater cost-efficiency compared to Google Ads for ITComp Academy.

**H2:** Video-based advertising generates better conversion results than image- or text-based formats in online campaigns.

**H3:** Advertisements incorporating social proof (e.g., testimonials, success rates) positively influence click-through rates and conversion intentions.

## **2. Survey Design and Objectives**

### **2.1. The Survey Sample**

The survey targeted a population composed of Algerian internet users of varying ages, genders, and professional backgrounds, all of whom actively use at least one digital platform such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, or TikTok. A non-probability sampling technique, more precisely the convenience sampling method, was adopted. Respondents were selected based on accessibility, availability, and willingness to participate. The inclusion criterion was the regular use (at least once a week) of one or more major digital platforms.

### **2.2. The Survey Tools**

To collect the primary data required for this research, a structured questionnaire was employed as the principal instrument of inquiry.

#### **2.2.1. Definition of the Questionnaire**

According to Ouacherine, the questionnaire is defined as *“a direct scientific investigation technique used with individuals, enabling them to be queried in a directive manner and to*

*produce a quantitative sample that allows the discovery of mathematical relationships and quantified comparisons.*"<sup>128</sup>

The questionnaire was designed using Google Forms and disseminated online via Facebook to Algerian users. It was presented bilingually, with each question and its corresponding response options displayed simultaneously in both French and Arabic, ensuring accessibility and comprehension across linguistic preferences.

### 2.2.2. Questionnaire Administration

The questionnaire was structured into five logically organized sections, each targeting a specific component of the research objectives:

- **Section 1: Filter Question.** This section assessed whether respondents used social media platforms or search engines at least once per week.
- **Section 2: Platform Use and Advertising Exposure.** This section collected information on users' frequency of platform use, their interaction with digital advertisements, the types of formats encountered, and the motivations behind their engagement.
- **Section 3: Advertising Format Effectiveness.** This section explored user preferences for ad formats (video, image, carousel, text) and their influence on trust and conversion. It assessed how often users click on relevant ads and how effectively they find them. Special focus was placed on the role of video in boosting confidence and interest in training programs.
- **Section 4: Role of Social Proof.** This section evaluated how credibility indicators, such as testimonials, user ratings, and success metrics, affect users' intention to take action.
- **Section 5: Demographic Profile.** This final section gathered respondent data on age, gender, educational background, and employment status.

This structured segmentation ensured clarity, minimized respondent fatigue, and allowed for high-quality, analyzable data.

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<sup>128</sup> CHABANI (S), OUACHERINE (H) : *Guide de méthodologie de la recherche en science sociales, 2nd Edition, Algiers, 2013, p.77. Our translation.*

### 2.2.3. Structure of the Questionnaire

Prior to its official launch, the questionnaire was pretested to ensure clarity, logical flow, and technical reliability. The finalized instrument consisted of 20 structured items, all designed to capture relevant behavioral, perceptual, and demographic data aligned with the study's objectives. The following question types were employed:

**a) Closed questions.** All core items were designed as closed-ended questions to ensure structured and quantifiable responses. These included:

- **Dichotomous questions:** Presented respondents with two mutually exclusive options.
- **Multiple-choice questions:** Offered either single or multiple answer selections. Some of these items included an "Other (please specify)" option, allowing respondents to add a personalized response. These open fields enhanced data richness without constituting independent open-ended questions.

**b) Rating scale questions.** Likert-type scales were used to evaluate respondents' attitudes, trust levels, and behavioral intentions in relation to advertising content. These scales provided a continuum of agreement or perceived effectiveness, facilitating detailed quantitative analysis.

**Table III.03:** Distribution of the Questionnaire by Type of Question

Type of Question	Questions Included
Closed (Dichotomous)	Q1, Q13, Q18
Closed (Single Choice)	Q8, Q17, Q19, Q20
Closed (Multiple Choice)	Q2, Q3, Q4, Q14
Rating Scale (Likert)	Q5, Q6, Q7, Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12, Q15, Q16

**Source:** Developed by our means

### 2.3.Data Collection: Period and Location

The choice of the data collection method is a very important phase because the quality of the information collected impacts the results of the analysis. Our survey took place from the 19th till the 25th of May. The questionnaire was administered on social medias in order to reach several age categories and several regions of the territory (Mainly in Algiers). Thus, a total of 382 responses were received.

## **2.4.Data Processing and Analysis**

After data collection, all responses were compiled and cleaned to eliminate incomplete entries. The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version: 26), following a structured approach:

### **2.4.1. Flat Sorting (Tri à Plat)**

Each variable was analyzed individually using frequency and percentage tables. This provided a clear view of platform usage, media preferences, and participant attitudes toward social proof.

### **2.4.2. Cross Sorting (Tri Croisé)**

To deepen the analysis of advertising effectiveness, cross-tabulation was employed to assess the associations between key campaign variables. Specifically, three relationships were analyzed: first, the connection between the platform respondents deemed most effective for discovering training programs and their evaluation of Meta Ads' ability to motivate conversion; second, the association between preferred advertising formats and users' confidence in taking action; and third, the impact of social proof elements on users' stated likelihood to engage. This method provided a structured understanding of how different ad features influence perceived effectiveness and conversion-related intent within digital lead acquisition strategies.

### **2.4.3. Chi-Square Test ( $\chi^2$ )**

Chi-square tests were used to evaluate the independence between categorical variables and determine whether the differences observed were statistically significant. This method was appropriate for the survey's closed-ended question structure.

Results were presented through tables and visual charts, each supported by analytical commentary. The analysis contributed to interpreting user trends and evaluating the effectiveness of digital advertising strategies in lead acquisition.

All responses were anonymized in compliance with the data protection regulations. Incomplete or inconsistent submissions were excluded from analysis. Outlier responses, such as unusually short completion times or contradictory answers, were flagged and assessed manually before final data processing.

### 3. Advertisement Campaign Data Sources

In parallel with the survey-based data, this research incorporated quantitative performance metrics from advertising campaigns executed on Meta (Facebook and Instagram) and Google Search. These sources provide a practical lens through which to evaluate the real-world effectiveness of platform selection, media format, and targeting strategies within the context of lead generation for ITCComp Academy.

#### 3.1. Meta Ads (Facebook & Instagram)

Meta campaigns ran from Q3 2024 to Q2 2025 with the goal of generating leads for ITCComp Academy's tech training programs. Targeting users in Algiers and nearby cities, the campaigns used both video and image formats. Performance was evaluated using key metrics including impressions, clicks, CTR, form submissions, and cost per lead (CPL). Data collected from Meta Ads Manager facilitated benchmarking and format-based comparisons.

#### 3.2. Google Search Ads

A short-term Google Ads pilot was conducted in May 2025 to promote the "Formation DevOps" program. Despite a limited budget of approximately 40 EUR and a 3-4 days duration, the campaign provided valuable behavioral data to complement survey insights. Key metrics included impressions, clicks, CTR, average CPC, and conversions, tracked via a thank-you page. The campaign complied fully with Algerian Law 18/07 on data protection.

Although the data volume was modest, efforts were made to extract meaningful insights, particularly regarding click performance and lead cost. This analysis enriched the interpretation of survey results and helped inform evidence-based recommendations.

#### 3.3. Data Processing and Analysis Approach

To assess the effectiveness of platform strategies and media formats, a structured analytical framework was applied to the advertising campaign data:

- **Data Consolidation:** Raw KPIs from Meta and Google Ads were compiled and reviewed to ensure internal consistency and eliminate discrepancies in tracking. Metrics were standardized for comparative analysis (CTR, CPC, CPL).

- **Performance Analysis:** The data were interpreted based on several campaign metrics, focusing on CTR (as a proxy for user engagement) and CPL (as a proxy for both cost-efficiency and overall campaign effectiveness). Platform-level performance was compared between Meta and Google Ads, while format-level analysis contrasted video and image ads. The impact of social proof was assessed by comparing ads with and without credibility indicators.

All advertising campaign data were analyzed under strict quality assurance conditions. While these data sets do not contain personal identifiers, consistency was verified, and anomalies (e.g., extremely low CPL or spike anomalies in CTR) were manually reviewed to ensure interpretive integrity. Analysis was based exclusively on validated and ethically processed datasets.

### 3.4. Interpretation and Limitations

The advertising campaign data were interpreted within the methodological boundaries of the available dataset. Several analytical limitations must be acknowledged:

- **Meta Campaign Constraints:** Campaigns lacked synchronized deployment across formats and programs. Variations in budget allocation, targeting, and timing reduced the ability to make rigorous comparisons, especially for format performance (e.g., video vs. image).
- **Google Ads Limitations:** The campaign was small in scale and short in duration, which limited its statistical robustness. Although it adhered to regulatory requirements and used standard tracking protocols, its experimental nature restricts its generalizability.
- **Confounding Variables:** Heterogeneity in audience demographics, messaging styles, and regional exposure introduces interpretive challenges, particularly in aligning ad performance with specific user segments.

Despite these constraints, campaign performance data offered valuable operational insight. It complemented the survey results by anchoring user-reported perceptions in actual behavior, thereby reinforcing the mixed-methods framework. Together, the survey and campaign analyses contributed to a deeper understanding of digital advertising strategies and performance dynamics in the context of education-focused lead generation.

### 3.5. Research Limitations

This study, while offering insightful conclusions, is subject to several limitations that may affect the validity, depth, and generalizability of its findings:

- Ongoing Rebranding of ITCComp: The most significant limitation encountered was the whole rebranding process of ITCComp during the study period. This organizational transition disrupted brand consistency and directly impacted the advertising strategy. In particular, it restricted the possibility of launching or sustaining a full-scale lead generation campaign during the core research window. As a result, the study relied on existing campaign archives and limited test campaigns, reducing the ability to control all variables in real-time.
- Short Campaign Durations: The advertising campaigns analyzed were conducted over brief timeframes, which limited the volume of data collected. This constraint reduces the statistical robustness of the performance metrics and prevents longitudinal analysis of campaign effects.
- Lack of Optimization Practices: Previous campaigns lacked critical optimization elements, including A/B testing, audience segmentation, and structured conversion funnels. These absences hinder accurate performance evaluation and limit the precision of the recommendations provided.
- Channel Limitations: Several potentially high-performing advertising channels, including TikTok and email marketing, were excluded from this study. These exclusions were due to the company not having yet implemented these channels despite their growing importance in the education and training sector.

Despite these limitations, the dual approach combining real-world campaign data with user-reported insights ensures that the findings remain both relevant and actionable. The study lays the foundation for a foundational understanding of digital advertising performance and provides strategic guidance for institutions aiming to enhance lead acquisition outcomes through targeted digital strategies.

### 3.6. Conclusion of the Methodology

This methodological framework integrated survey-based analysis and advertising campaign performance data to evaluate platform effectiveness, the impact of media formats, and trust

signals in lead acquisition. The use of flat sorting, cross-tabulation, and chi-square tests allowed for structured hypothesis testing and behavioral interpretation.

Campaign KPIs from Meta and Google Ads were critically analyzed to validate self-reported responses. Although certain constraints, such as campaign scale, segmentation gaps, and survey sampling bias, were noted, the dual-method approach strengthened the study's reliability. Together, these methods offer a comprehensive analytical foundation for the results and discussions in the following chapter.

### **Section 03: Presentation of findings**

This chapter presents the empirical findings derived from the two complementary methods outlined in the previous section: the online questionnaire and the performance data from the advertising campaign. The objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of search and social advertising strategies in generating leads for ITComp Academy.

Results from the survey are first introduced using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations to identify behavioral trends and validate hypotheses regarding platform preference, media format effectiveness, and the role of trust indicators. Subsequently, advertising performance metrics from Meta Ads and Google Search Ads are analyzed to compare real-world engagement and conversion outcomes.

This integrated presentation bridges self-reported data with operational results, allowing for a more grounded evaluation of digital advertising strategies within the education and training sector.

#### **1. Reminder of the Research Problem and Hypotheses**

##### **1.1. Problem Statement**

In the context of digital advertising for online training programs in Algeria, to what extent do search engine and social media advertising campaigns influence lead acquisition outcomes for ITComp Academy?

### 1.2.Hypotheses

**H1:** Meta Ads are more effective in generating leads and achieving greater cost-efficiency compared to Google Ads for ITComp Academy.

**H2:** Video-based advertising generates better conversion results than image- or text-based formats in online campaigns.

**H3:** Advertisements that include elements of social proof, such as the number of students enrolled or notable success rates, enhance conversion intentions and increase click-through rates.

## 2. Data Analysis and Presentation

To evaluate the validity of our hypotheses and respond to the central research question, we conducted a quantitative analysis of the questionnaire data using two analytical methods:

### 2.1.Flat-sorting analysis

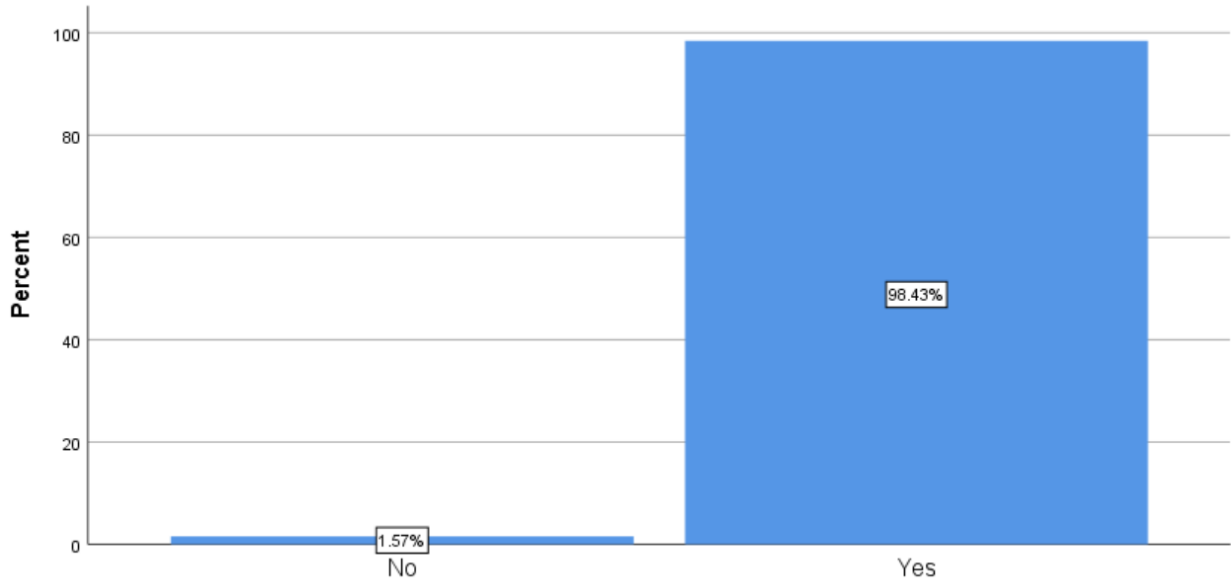
**Question 1:** Do you use social media platforms or search engines at least once per week?

**Table III.04:** The distribution of the sample according to digital platform usage (at least once per week)

	Frequency	Percent%
No	6	1.6%
Yes	376	98.4%
Total	382	100.0%

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.04:** Distribution of the sample according to digital platform usage (at least once per week)



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

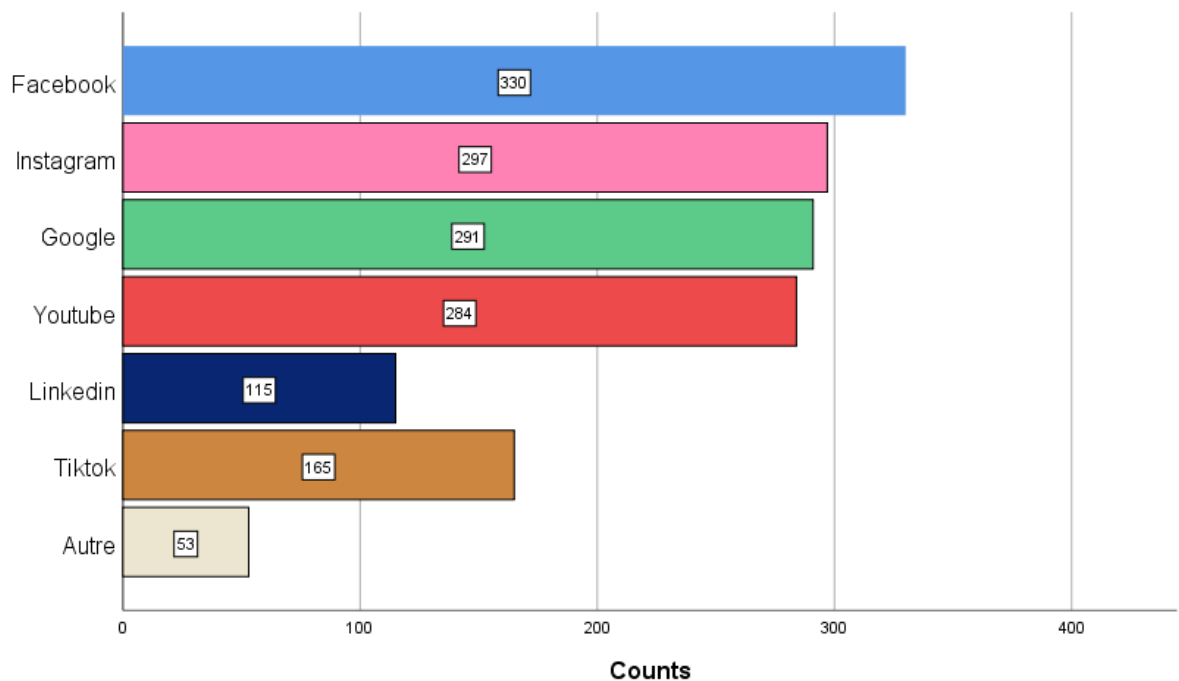
The vast majority of respondents (98.4%) reported using social media platforms or search engines at least once per week, confirming the relevance of these channels in the daily lives of the target audience. This high penetration rate justifies the strategic use of digital platforms for lead acquisition efforts, as the likelihood of audience exposure to online advertising is virtually universal within the surveyed group.

**Question 2:** Which of the following platforms do you use at least once a week?

**Table III.05:** The distribution of the sample according to weekly platform usage

	Count	Percent
Facebook	330	21.50%
Instagram	297	19.35%
Google Search	291	18.96%
YouTube	284	18.50%
LinkedIn	115	7.49%
TikTok	165	10.75%
Other	53	3.45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.05:** The distribution of the sample according to weekly platform usage

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The analysis shows that **Facebook** and **Instagram** are the two most used platforms on a weekly basis, representing **21.50%** and **19.35%** of total mentions, respectively. They are closely followed by **Google Search (19.96%)** and **YouTube (18.50%)**, confirming that both social and search-oriented platforms dominate user habits.

**TikTok** accounts for **10.75%**, indicating a significant but secondary role, especially among younger demographics. **LinkedIn**, while less used (**7.49%**), still plays a relevant role in professional circles.

The relatively low rate of “**Autres / Others**” (**2.76%**) reinforces that the selected platforms capture the majority of user behavior. These findings justify prioritizing Meta (Facebook & Instagram), Google, and YouTube in multichannel campaign planning for training programs.

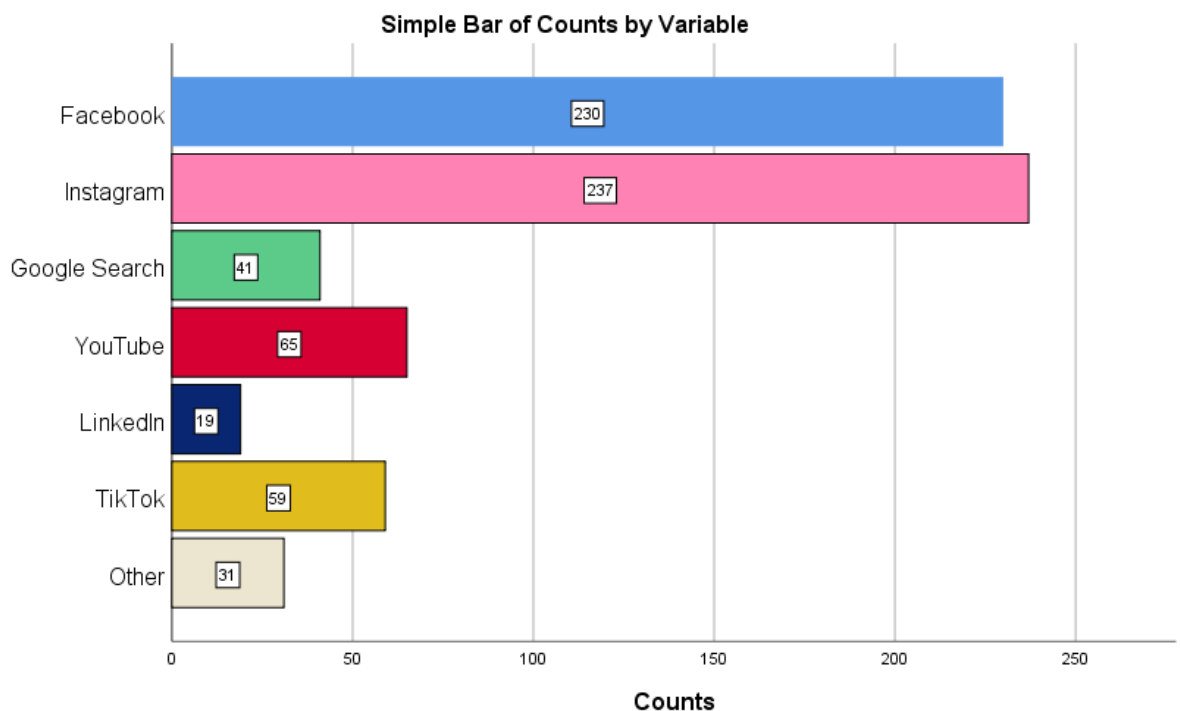
**Question 3:** On which platforms have you clicked on advertisements in the past 30 days?

**Table III.0 6:** Distribution of ad-click activity by platform over the last 30 days

	Count	Percent
Facebook	230	33.72%
Instagram	237	34.75%
Google Search	41	6.01%
YouTube	65	9.53%
LinkedIn	19	2.79%
TikTok	59	8.65%
Other	31	4.54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.06:** Distribution of ad-click activity by platform over the last 30 days



Source: Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The data indicates that Instagram (34.75%) and Facebook (33.72%) collectively account for over two-thirds of all reported ad clicks, confirming the dominant role of Meta platforms in user engagement. Their mobile-optimized interfaces and visual ad formats appear particularly effective in driving interaction. In contrast, Google Search records a relatively low click rate (6.01%), suggesting its primary use remains informational rather than transactional.

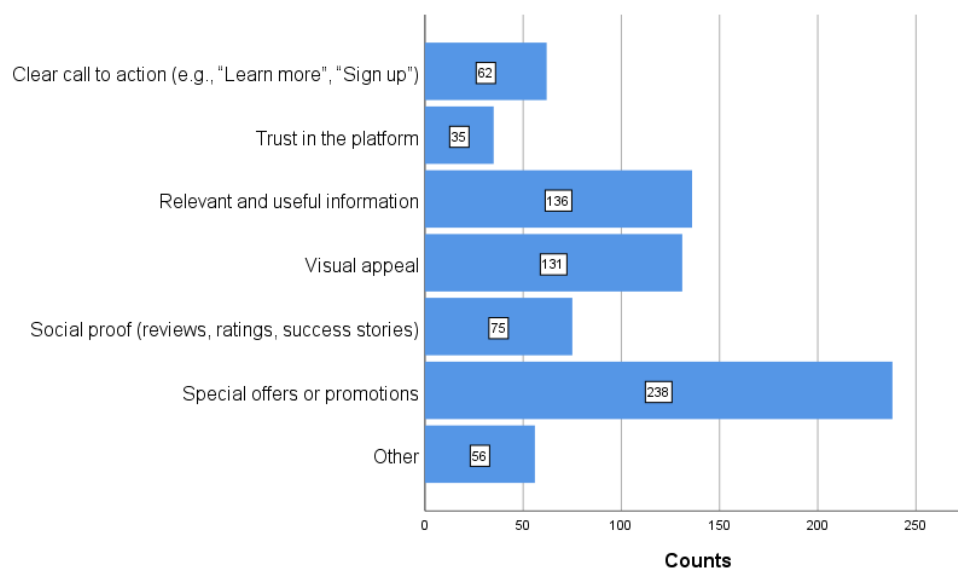
YouTube (9.53%) and TikTok (8.65%) show moderate engagement, potentially reflecting differences in ad formats or perceived relevance. LinkedIn (2.79%) and other platforms (4.54%) register minimal activity, likely due to limited exposure or weaker alignment with user intent. These findings underscore the need for platform-specific strategies, prioritizing Meta for engagement while refining targeting and messaging on secondary channels.

**Question 4:** What motivates you to click on ads?

**Table III.07:** Distribution of user motivations for clicking on digital advertisements

	Count	Percent
<b>Special offers or promotions</b>	238	32.46%
<b>Relevant and useful information</b>	136	18.55%
<b>Visual appeal</b>	131	17.87%
<b>Social proof (reviews, ratings, success stories)</b>	75	10.23%
<b>Clear call to action (e.g., “Learn more”, “Sign up”)</b>	62	8.46%
<b>Trust in the platform</b>	35	4.77%
<b>Other</b>	56	7.64%
<b>Total</b>	733	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.07:** Distribution of user motivations for clicking on digital advertisements

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

Promotional offers are the primary driver of advertising engagement, representing 32.46 percent of responses. This underscores the effectiveness of financial incentives in attracting attention, particularly in the competitive and price-sensitive context of online training.

Content relevance and visual appeal also influence engagement, accounting for 18.55 percent and 17.87 percent respectively. These results indicate that users respond not only to promotions but also to informative and visually attractive content.

Social proof, including reviews and testimonials, received 10.23 percent of mentions. Although less frequent, this reflects the role of peer validation in building trust, especially for decisions related to education. Calls to action (8.46 percent) and platform trust (4.77 percent) appear to have a lower impact. This suggests that persuasive language or brand familiarity alone is not sufficient without strong content or value perception.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of value-driven elements in campaign success. Advertisers in the education sector should prioritize offers, clarity of message, and visual appeal to improve engagement and lead quality.

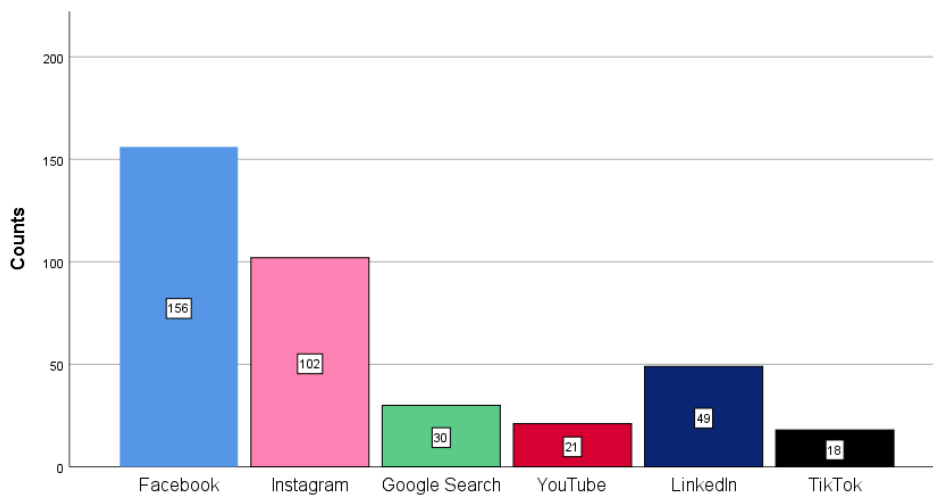
**Question 5:** Based on your personal experience, which platform has been the most effective for discovering training programs (e.g., Data Analytics, Web Development)?

**Table III.08:** The distribution of the sample according to the most effective platform for discovering training programs

	Count	Percent
Facebook	156	41.49%
Instagram	102	27.13%
Google Search	30	7.98%
YouTube	21	5.59%
LinkedIn	49	13.03%
TikTok	18	4.79%
Total	376	100%

Source: Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.08:** The distribution of the sample according to the most effective platform for discovering training programs



Source: Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

Based on the data, Facebook emerges as the leading platform, with 41.49% of respondents considering it the most effective for discovering training programs. This highlights Facebook's strong visibility and targeting capabilities within the education and training sector. It can be seen that Instagram also holds a significant share (27.13%), confirming its visual-first appeal and relevance for younger audiences. In contrast, LinkedIn is perceived as more effective (13.03%) than Google Search (7.98%) or YouTube (5.59%), reflecting its professional context and audience alignment.

The data exhibits a user tendency to associate social platforms, especially Meta's, with greater exposure to educational opportunities. This suggests that the awareness phase in lead acquisition for training programs benefits more from social media advertising than from traditional search channels.

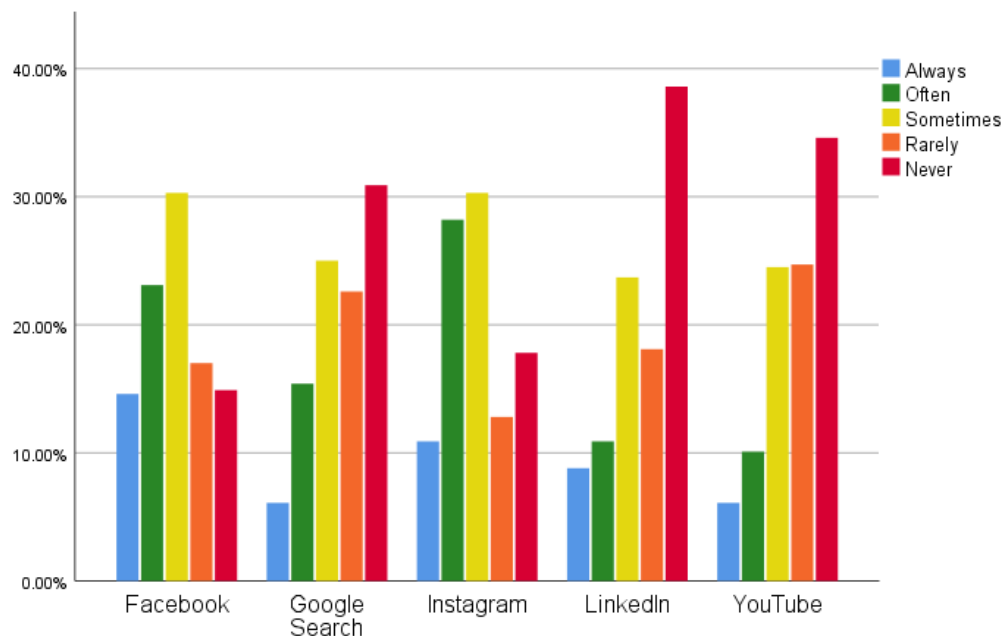
**Question 6:** How effective are the ads on each of these platforms at encouraging you to submit your contact information or register for a training program (e.g., Data Analytics, Web Development)?

**Table III.09:** The distribution of the sample according to click frequency on each advertising platform

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
<b>Facebook</b>	Count	55	87	114	64	56
	%	14.6%	23.1%	30.3%	17%	14.9%
<b>Instagram</b>	Count	41	106	114	48	67
	%	10.9%	28.2%	30.3%	12.8%	17.8%
<b>Google Search</b>	Count	23	58	94	85	116
	%	6.1%	15.4%	25%	22.6 %	30.9%
<b>YouTube</b>	Count	23	38	92	93	130
	%	6.1%	10.1%	24.5%	24.7%	34.6%
<b>LinkedIn</b>	Count	33	41	89	68	145
	%	8.8%	10.9%	23.7%	18.1%	38.6%

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.09:** The distribution of the sample according to click frequency on each advertising platform



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The data exhibits platform-specific disparities in how effectively ads encourage user action. Based on the results:

**Facebook and Instagram** stand out, with 37.7% and 39.1% of respondents respectively indicating they always or often take action (submit their contact information or register for a training program) after seeing ads. This reinforces the strategic value of Meta platforms in lead acquisition, suggesting that users are not only exposed to ads but are also more likely to convert.

**In contrast,** Google Search shows weaker performance in prompting action, with only 21.5% reporting always or often taking action, and a substantial 53.5% reporting rarely or never doing so. This suggests a possible disconnect between search ads and user intent in the context of training programs, where visually engaging platforms may prove more persuasive.

**YouTube and LinkedIn** reflect the lowest levels of high-intent response, with 16.2% and 19.7% respectively taking action frequently. This may stem from the passive or content-driven nature of these platforms, YouTube users primarily seek video content and tend to ignore ads, while LinkedIn users may be more selective, responding mainly to ads with direct professional relevance.

Overall, the data confirms that visual, feed-integrated platforms like Facebook and Instagram more effectively drive user action. This implies that ad design, placement, and contextual alignment with user intent are critical to maximizing lead generation effectiveness.

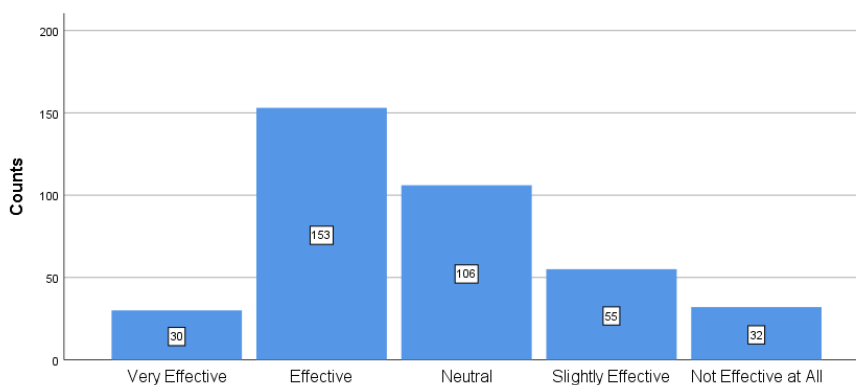
**Question 7:** How effective do you consider Meta advertisements in encouraging you to submit your contact information or enroll in a training program (e.g., Data Analytics, Web Development)?

**Table III.10:** The distribution of the sample according to the perceived effectiveness of Meta Ads in prompting enrollment or lead submission

	Count	Percent
Very Effective	30	8.0%
Effective	153	40.7%
Neutral	106	28.2%
Slightly Effective	55	14.6%
Not Effective at All	32	8.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.10:** The distribution of the sample according to the perceived effectiveness of Meta Ads in prompting enrollment or lead submission



Source: Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

Based on the data, 48.7% of respondents consider Meta ads either *very practical* or *effective* in motivating them to provide contact information or enroll in a training course. This highlights the strategic role of Meta advertising in stimulating conversion-related actions, confirming its positioning as a performance-oriented platform for educational marketing.

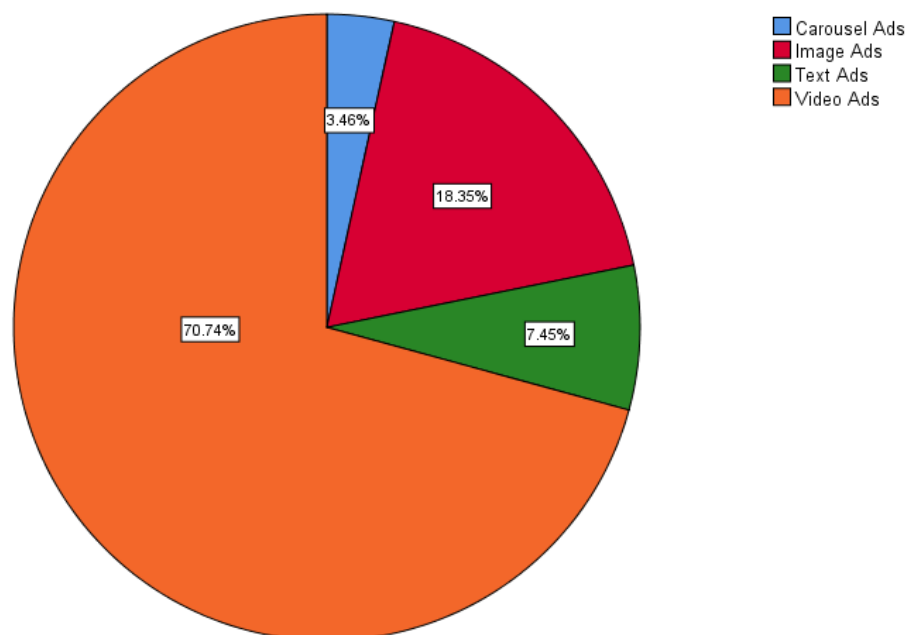
Only 23.1% of participants view Meta ads as *slightly practical* or *not effective at all*, suggesting a generally favorable reception among users, particularly for ad content that aligns with their training needs. The 28.2% who responded neutrally may reflect ad fatigue, unclear calls-to-action, or targeting gaps, which presents opportunities for optimization in future campaigns.

The data reveals a persuasive impact of Meta Ads on a significant portion of the audience while also highlighting the importance of refining creative execution and targeting strategies to engage the undecided and skeptical segments more effectively.

**Question 8:** Which ad format do you prefer the most?**Table III.11:** Distribution of the Sample According to Their Preferred Advertising Format

	Count	Percent
<b>Video Ads</b>	266	<b>70.7%</b>
<b>Image Ads</b>	69	<b>18.4%</b>
<b>Text Ads</b>	28	<b>7.4%</b>
<b>Carousel Ads</b>	13	<b>3.5%</b>
<b>Total</b>	376	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.11:** Distribution of the Sample According to Their Preferred Advertising Format

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

Based on the data, it can be seen that video ads are overwhelmingly preferred, with 70.7% of respondents selecting them as their favored ad format. This suggests that video content, which often blends visual cues, auditory stimuli, and narrative structures, resonates more effectively with users' attention patterns and cognitive engagement—particularly in contexts like education and skill acquisition.

In contrast, the relatively low preference for image (18.4%) and text ads (7.4%) implies a declining impact of static formats, which may lack the emotional or explanatory depth required to persuade users in high-consideration decisions like enrolling in training programs. The minimal preference for carousel ads (3.5%) likely reflects user friction or content overload, especially on mobile-first interfaces, where simplified formats tend to perform better.

The data exhibits a clear strategic implication: future advertising efforts targeting training-oriented audiences should prioritize video formats, not merely for engagement but because they align with user content consumption preferences and decision-making behavior.

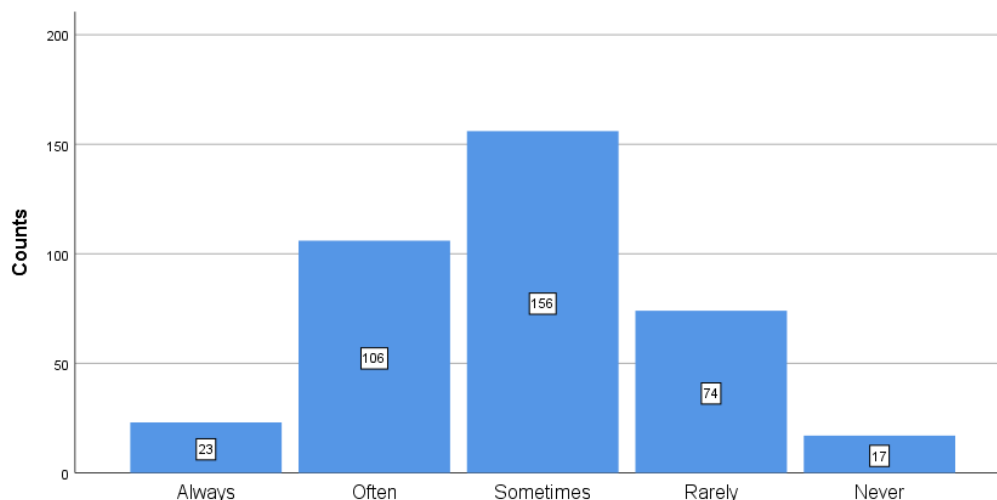
**Question 9:** How frequently do you click on ads that match your interests or needs?

**Table III.12:** The distribution of the sample according to the frequency of clicking on ads that match their interests or needs

	Count	Percent
Always	23	6.1%
Often	106	28.2%
Sometimes	156	41.5
Rarely	74	19.7%
Never	17	4.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.12:** The distribution of the sample according to the frequency of clicking on ads that match their interests or needs



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The data shows that a large majority of users interact with ads when the content aligns with their interests. Specifically, 41.5 percent click "sometimes" and 28.2 percent click "often," indicating that 69.7 percent are moderately to frequently responsive to relevant advertisements.

A smaller segment of 6.1 percent reports always clicking on relevant ads. This group may represent highly engaged or impulsive users. In contrast, 24.2 percent report low or no interaction, which may result from skepticism, ad fatigue, or previous negative experiences.

These findings emphasize the importance of ad relevance and targeting accuracy. Personalizing ad content based on user behavior can increase engagement. Additionally, behavioral segmentation allows for the development of tailored strategies to better reach low-engagement segments.

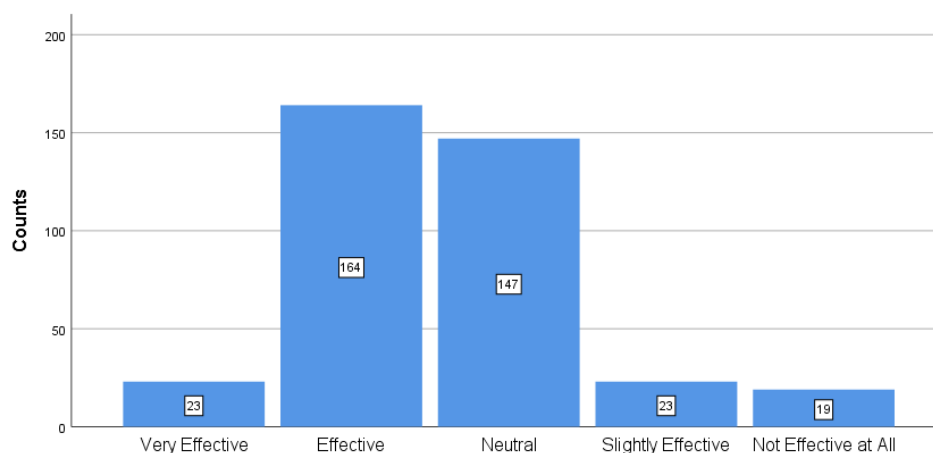
**Question 10:** How effective are online ads in encouraging you to explore a product or service further or learn about a training program?

**Table III.13:** The distribution of the sample according to the perceived effectiveness of online ads in encouraging further exploration or learning about a training program

	Count	Percent
Very Effective	23	6.1%
Effective	164	43.6%
Neutral	147	39.1%
Slightly Effective	23	6.1%
Not Effective at All	19	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.13:** The distribution of the sample according to the perceived effectiveness of online ads in encouraging further exploration or learning about a training program



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

Approximately 50% of the respondents perceived advertisements as either "effective" or "very effective" in encouraging exploration. This moderate-to-high evaluation emphasizes the importance of designing advertisements that not only convey information but also spark curiosity.

At the same time, 39.1% of respondents remained neutral, suggesting a possible disconnect between ad content and user interest. This neutral stance may reflect ad fatigue, insufficient personalization, or a lack of clarity in messaging. The small portion of participants who rated ads as "slightly effective" or "not effective at all" (11.2%) reinforces the importance of refining creative elements and aligning campaign messaging with audience needs and expectations.

Together, these findings underscore the importance of more comprehensive engagement strategies in digital advertising—particularly in the training and education sector, where users expect value-driven and informative content that aligns with their personal or professional goals.

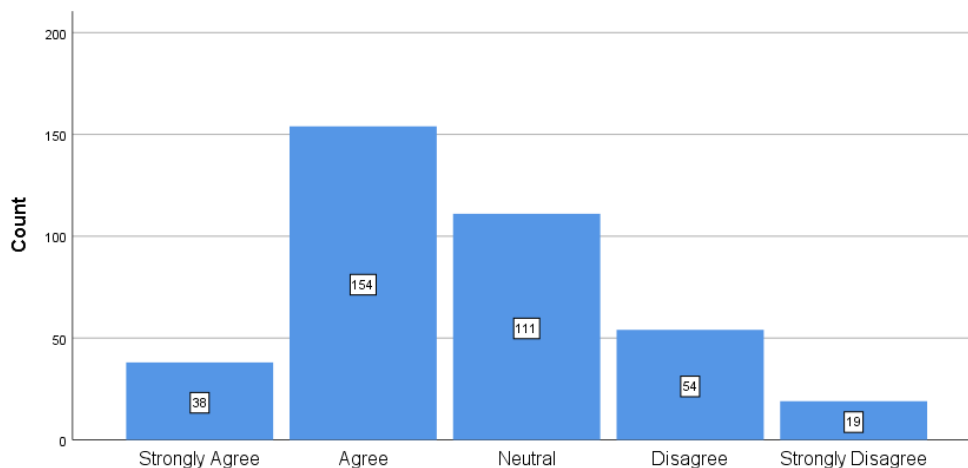
**Question 11:** Does video content increase your confidence when deciding to take action (e.g., submitting a form or registering)?

**Table III.14:** The distribution of the sample according to the perceived confidence-building effect of video content when deciding to take action

	Count	Percent
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	38	<b>10.1%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	154	<b>41.0%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	111	<b>29.5%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	54	<b>14.4%</b>
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	19	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	376	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.14:** The distribution of the sample according to the perceived confidence-building effect of video content when deciding to take action



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The data indicates that 51.1 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that video content increases their confidence in taking action. This suggests that video is a persuasive medium that can build trust by offering clarity, testimonials, or demonstrations.

A neutral response from 29.5 percent of users points to a segment that may require additional elements. These may include stronger messaging, credibility signals, or more targeted content to influence their decisions.

Meanwhile, 19.5 percent expressed disagreement, implying that video alone may not be effective for all users. This highlights the need to integrate video with other trust-building strategies.

Overall, the findings confirm the strategic value of video in enhancing decision-making confidence. In educational campaigns, well-crafted and informative video assets can strengthen user intent and improve conversion outcomes.

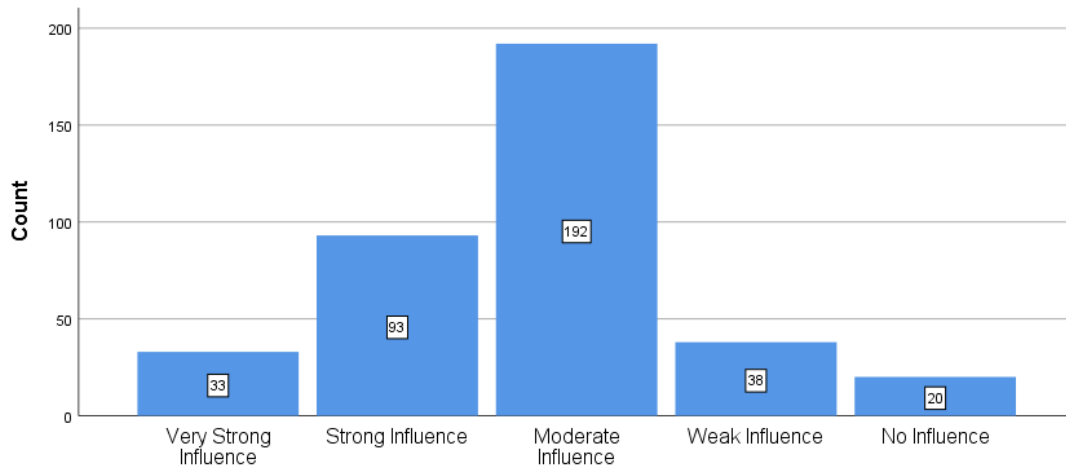
**Question 12:** Compared to other ad formats, how much do video ads influence your interest in exploring a training program?(e.g., Data Analytics, Web Development)?

**Table III.15:** The distribution of the sample according to the perceived influence of video ads compared to other formats in exploring training programs

	Count	Percent
<b>Very Strong Influence</b>	33	<b>8.8%</b>
<b>Strong Influence</b>	93	<b>24.7%</b>
<b>Moderate Influence</b>	192	<b>51.1%</b>
<b>Weak Influence</b>	38	<b>10.1%</b>
<b>No Influence</b>	20	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.15:** The distribution of the sample according to the perceived influence of video ads compared to other formats in exploring training programs



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

According to the data, a significant proportion of respondents (84.6%) perceived video ads as having at least a moderate influence on their interest in exploring training programs. Notably, 51.1% of participants indicated a moderate influence, while 33.5% reported a strong influence. This underlines the comparative advantage of video formats in stimulating interest and driving initial exploration behaviors.

The data exhibits a gradient of influence, where only 15.4% of respondents reported weak or no influence, suggesting that while video ads are widely appreciated, they are not universally persuasive. These findings suggest that while video ads are generally effective, their performance depends on the quality of execution, relevance of content, and alignment with user intent.

In the context of promoting training programs, video ads emerge as a powerful medium for capturing attention and encouraging initial engagement, especially when compared to static formats. Their ability to convey information dynamically likely contributes to their higher influence scores, reinforcing their strategic importance in digital advertising campaigns focused on lead acquisition.

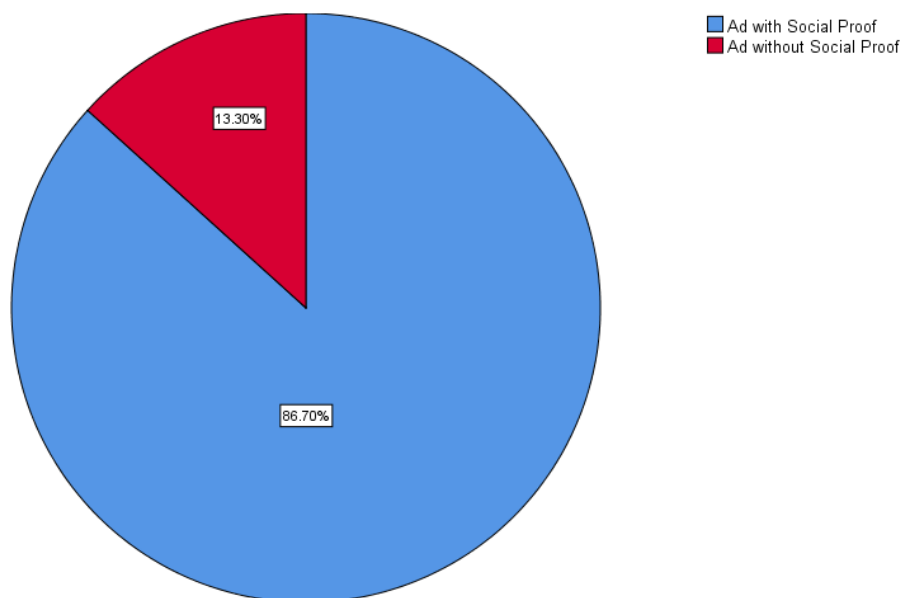
**Question 13:** Which type of advertisement are you most likely to click on?

**Table III.16:** The distribution of the sample according to their preference for ad types based on the presence of social proof

	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Ad with Social Proof</b>	326	<b>86.7%</b>
<b>Ad without Social Proof</b>	50	<b>13.3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	376	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.16:** The distribution of the sample according to their preference for ad types based on the presence of social proof



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The results provide clear and compelling evidence that the inclusion of social proof significantly increases the likelihood of ad engagement:

A dominant **86.7%** of respondents indicated that they are more likely to click on an advertisement that includes **elements of social proof** such as testimonials, ratings, or success stories.

In contrast, only **13.3%** preferred ads **without** any social proof, confirming that such content often lacks persuasive power or perceived credibility.

These findings strongly support the **strategic integration of social validation mechanisms** into advertising campaigns. By incorporating visible signals of trust, such as real user feedback, enrollment numbers, or outcome statistics, marketers can enhance the perceived legitimacy and appeal of their message. This is particularly crucial in competitive sectors like online education, where consumers seek reassurance before submitting personal information or enrolling.

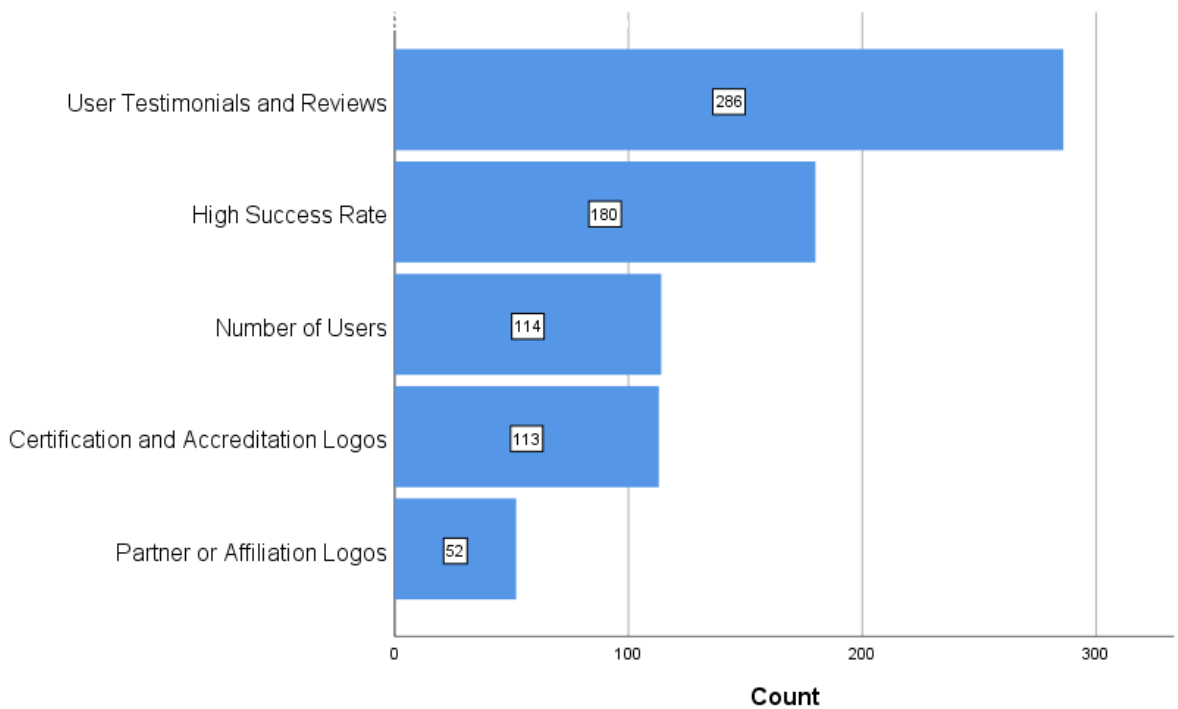
**Question 14:** Which type of social proof increases your trust the most?

**Table III.17:** The distribution of the sample according to the most trust-enhancing type of social proof in digital advertisements

	Count	Percent
User Testimonials and Reviews	286	38.4%
High Success Rate	180	24.2%
Number of Users	114	15.3%
Certification and Accreditation Logos	113	15.2%
Partner or Affiliation Logos	52	7.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.17:** The distribution of the sample according to the most trust-enhancing type of social proof in digital advertisements



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

According to the data, user testimonials and reviews were the most influential form of social proof, chosen by 38.4% of participants. This suggests that authentic, peer-generated content plays a critical role in building consumer trust, likely due to its relatability and perceived honesty.

The data also exhibits a strong preference for performance-based indicators such as high success rate (24.2%) and user numbers (15.3%), highlighting a trust dynamic driven by demonstrated outcomes and popularity. Meanwhile, certifications (15.2%) and partnership logos (7.0%) were less cited, indicating that institutional authority, while relevant, is less impactful than social consensus in this context.

These insights underscore the importance of leveraging personal success narratives and user feedback to enhance the credibility of ads promoting training programs.

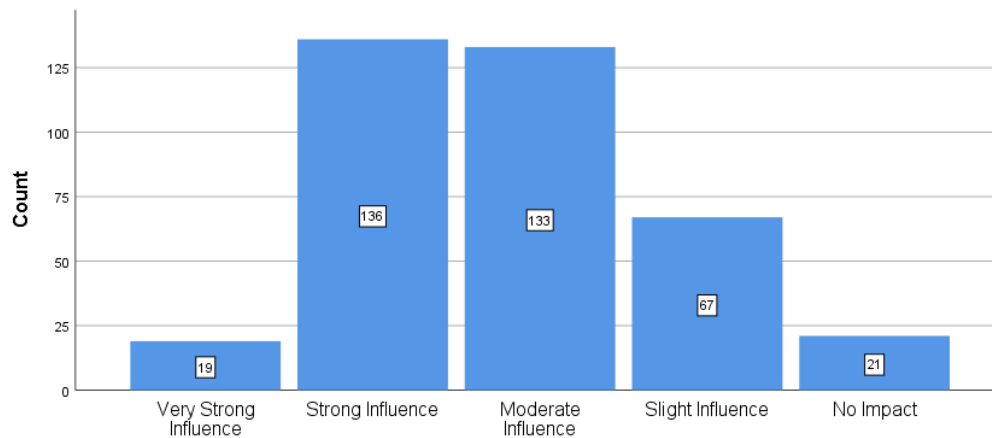
**Question 15:** To what extent does seeing that a product or service has over 20,000 users or a large number of positive reviews influence your perception of its quality?

**Table III.18:** Distribution of Responses on the Impact of User Volume and Reviews on Quality Perception

	Count	Percent
<b>Very Strong Influence</b>	19	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>Strong Influence</b>	136	<b>36.2%</b>
<b>Moderate Influence</b>	133	<b>35.4%</b>
<b>Slight Influence</b>	67	<b>17.8%</b>
<b>No Impact</b>	21	<b>5.6%</b>
<b>Total</b>	376	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.18:** Distribution of Responses on the Impact of User Volume and Reviews on Quality Perception



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

Based on the data, social validation, as measured by user volume and positive reviews, plays a significant role in shaping perceived quality. A combined 71.6% of respondents reported a moderate to strong influence, underscoring the psychological weight of popularity metrics in digital advertising.

This tendency reflects cognitive heuristics such as the bandwagon effect or social validation, where users infer quality from the behavior of others. While only 5.6% indicated no impact, this minority suggests that a small segment of users may prioritize other decision-making factors (e.g., personal relevance or product features) over popularity cues.

These findings reinforce the strategic value of incorporating visible metrics, such as review counts, user testimonials, or usage statistics, into ad creatives, particularly in competitive markets like online training, where differentiation through social proof can be crucial.

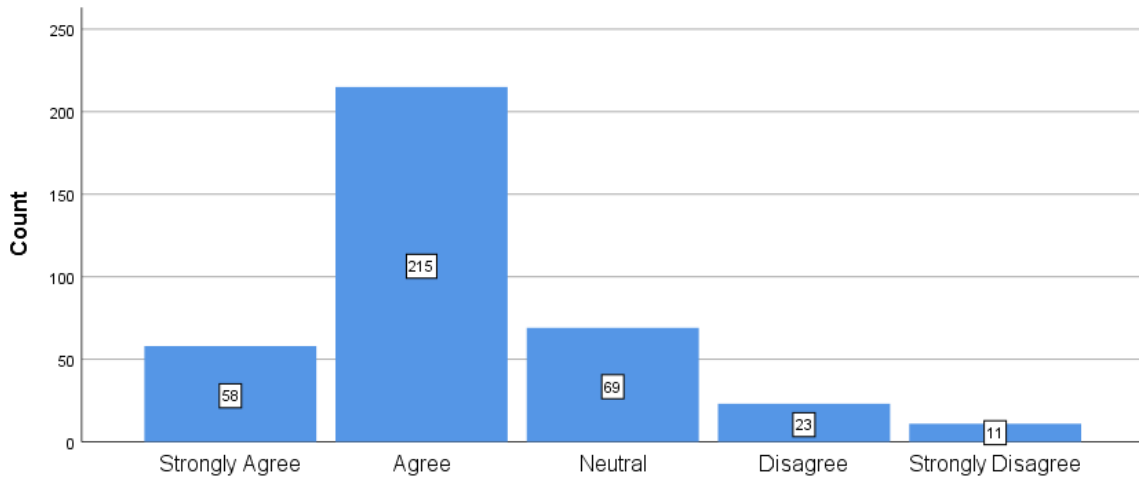
**Question 16:** Does the presence of social proof (e.g., number of users, ratings) make you more likely to take action (submit your information, fill out a form)?

**Table III.19:** Distribution of Responses on the Influence of Social Proof on Conversion Behavior

	Count	Percent
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	58	<b>15.4%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	215	<b>57.2%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	69	<b>18.4%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	23	<b>6.1%</b>
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	11	<b>2.9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	376	<b>100%</b>

Source: Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.19:** Distribution of Responses on the Influence of Social Proof on Conversion Behavior



Source: Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

According to the data, 72.6% of respondents either “agree” or “strongly agree” that social proof increases their likelihood of taking action, such as submitting personal information or completing a form. This majority underscores the persuasive influence of social validation mechanisms in digital advertising, particularly when aiming to achieve conversion goals.

The data exhibits that only a marginal portion (9%) explicitly disagrees, suggesting that resistance to social proof messaging is relatively limited. The 18.4% neutral responses may indicate uncertainty or a lack of conscious awareness regarding the influence of such signals, which still opens room for strategic nudging through design or copy emphasis.

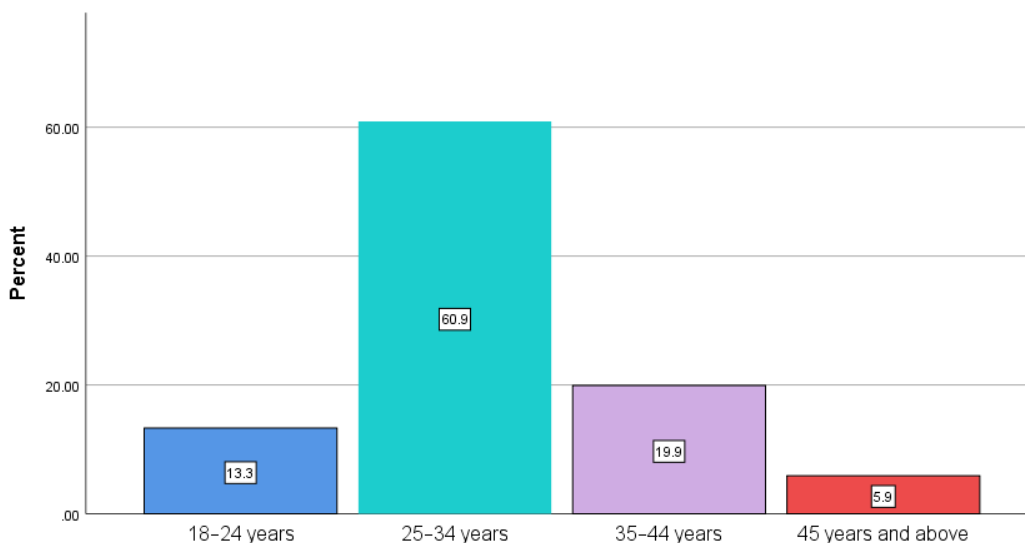
These findings confirm the strategic role of social proof in driving conversions, particularly in competitive sectors such as online education. Displaying high user numbers, ratings, or reviews can serve as a trust signal, reducing hesitation and reinforcing perceived legitimacy, which is particularly crucial when requesting personal data or form submissions.

**Question 17:** What is your age?**Table III.20:** The distribution of the sample according to age group

	Count	Percent
<b>18–24 years</b>	50	<b>13.3%</b>
<b>25–34 years</b>	229	<b>60.9%</b>
<b>35–44 years</b>	75	<b>19.9%</b>
<b>45 years and above</b>	22	<b>5.9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	376	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.20:** The distribution of the sample according to age group



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The data shows that the majority of respondents (60.9%) are between 25 and 34 years old, indicating a predominance of young adults in the sample. The 18–24 and 35–44 age groups follow with 13.3% and 19.9%, respectively, while respondents aged 45 and above represent a small minority (5.9%). This demographic distribution suggests that the survey primarily reached a population segment that is typically active online and engaged with digital platforms.

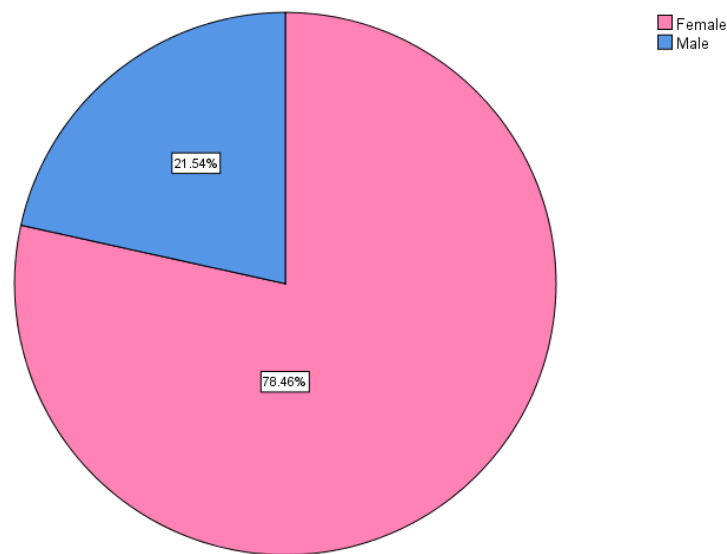
**Question 18:** What is your gender?

**Table III.21:** The distribution of the sample according to gender

	Count	Percent
<b>Female</b>	295	<b>78.5%</b>
<b>Male</b>	81	<b>21.5%</b>
<b>Total</b>	376	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.21:** The distribution of the sample according to gender



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The results show that the majority of respondents were female (78.5%), while males represented 21.5% of the sample. This distribution reflects a gender imbalance that may be attributed to higher female engagement with the survey or greater interest among women in online training programs promoted through digital advertising.

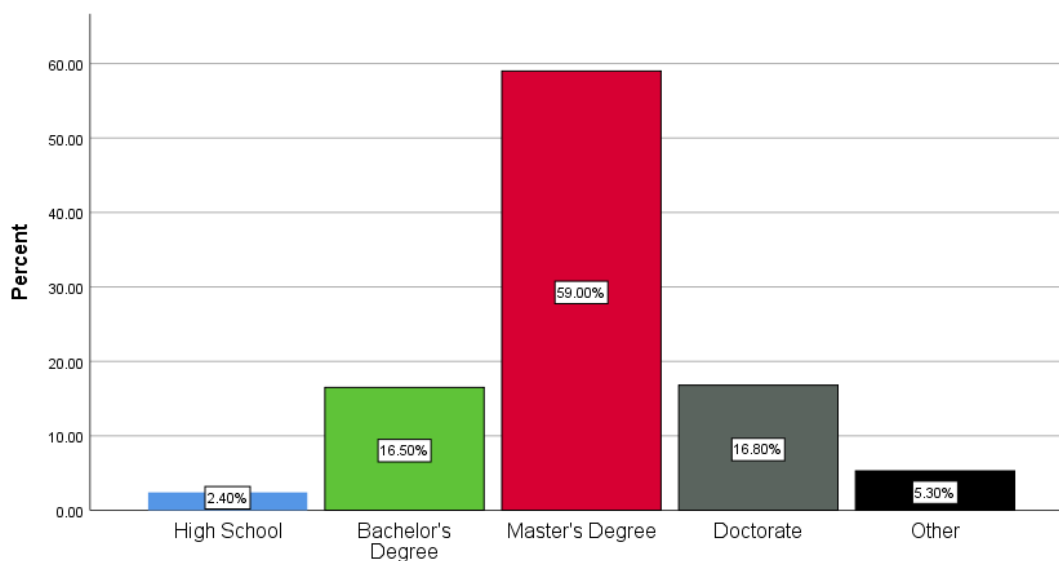
**Question 19:** What is your highest level of education?

**Table III.22:** Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level

	Count	Percent
High School	9	2.4%
Bachelor's Degree	62	16.5%
Master's Degree	222	59.0%
Doctorate	63	16.8%
Other	20	5.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.22:** Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

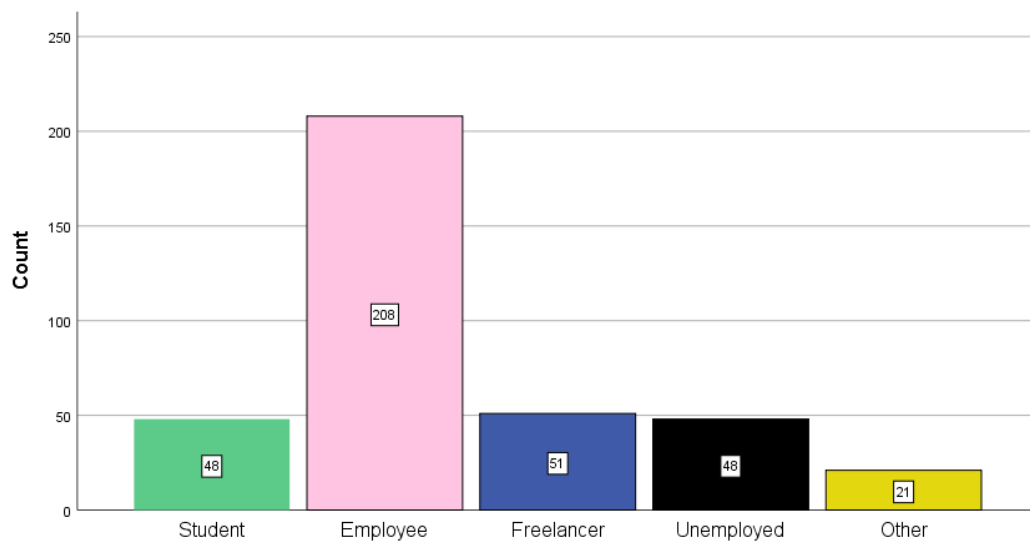
The data reveal a highly educated sample, with 59.0% holding a Master’s degree and an additional 16.8% holding a Doctoral Degree. This indicates a strong academic background among respondents, which may influence their awareness and evaluation of online training programs. Only a small proportion (2.4%) reported having a high school diploma as their highest level of education.

**Question 20:** What is your highest level of education?

**Table III.23:** Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level

	Count	Percent
<b>Student</b>	48	<b>12.8%</b>
<b>Employee</b>	208	<b>55.3%</b>
<b>Freelancer</b>	51	<b>13.6%</b>
<b>Unemployed</b>	48	<b>12.8%</b>
<b>Other</b>	21	<b>5.6%</b>
<b>Total</b>	376	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.23:** Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The majority of respondents (**55.3%**) are employed, indicating a stable income base that is open to professional training opportunities. Students and unemployed individuals each represent **12.8%**, while **13.6%** are freelancers, a group often interested in upskilling. The presence of these diverse employment statuses reflects a varied audience with different motivations for engaging with digital advertising and training programs.

## 2.2. Cross-sorting analysis

**To what extent does the preferred discovery platform influence conversion intention on Meta Ads (Facebook & Instagram)?**

**Q5:** Which digital platform do you consider the most effective for discovering online training programs?

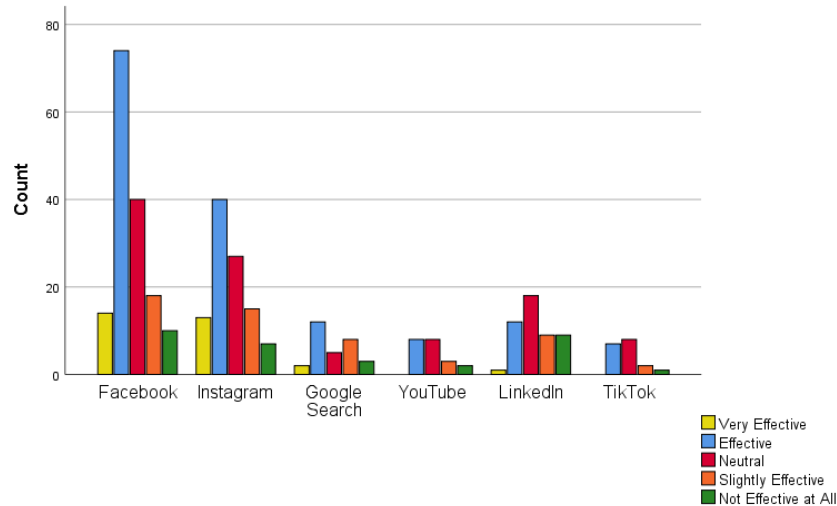
**Q7:** To what extent do Facebook and Instagram ads encourage you to take action (such as submitting your contact information or registering for a course)?

**Table III.24:** The distribution of the sample according to their preferred discovery platform and their conversion intent toward Meta Ads

		Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Slightly Effective	Not Effective at All	Total
<b>Facebook</b>	Count	14	74	40	18	10	156
	%	3.7%	19.7%	10.6%	4.8%	2.7%	41.5%
<b>Instagram</b>	Count	13	40	27	15	7	102
	%	3.5%	10.6%	7.2%	4.0%	1.9%	27.1%
<b>Google Search</b>	Count	2	12	5	8	3	30
	%	0.5%	3.2%	1.3%	2.1%	0.8%	8.0%
<b>YouTube</b>	Count	0	8	8	3	2	21
	%	0.0%	2.1%	2.1%	0.8%	0.5%	5.6%
<b>LinkedIn</b>	Count	1	12	18	9	9	49
	%	0.3%	3.2%	4.8%	2.4%	2.4%	13.0%
<b>TikTok</b>	Count	0	7	8	2	1	18
	%	0.0%	1.9%	2.1%	0.5%	0.3%	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	Count	30	153	106	55	32	376
	%	8.0%	40.7%	28.2%	14.6%	8.5%	100.0%

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.24:** The distribution of the sample according to their preferred discovery platform and their conversion intent toward Meta Ads



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The descriptive cross-tabulation shows that Facebook and Instagram are the top platforms preferred for discovering online training programs. Notably, users who selected Facebook and Instagram as their discovery platforms tended to rate Meta Ads (Facebook & Instagram) as more effective in prompting action, with a combined 46.6% of Facebook users and 44.1% of Instagram users marking the ads as either “Effective” or “Very Effective.” By contrast, platforms like Google Search, YouTube, and TikTok reflected lower conversion intent scores in response to Meta Ads, even among their users.

**Calculating Chi-square and testing the hypothesis:**

**H<sub>0</sub>** (Null Hypothesis): There is no relationship between the preferred discovery platform and the level of intention to take action on Facebook and Instagram ads.

**H<sub>1</sub>** (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a relationship between the preferred discovery platform and the level of intention to take action on Facebook and Instagram ads.

Significance level = 0.05

**Table III.25:** Table of observed values (O)

	<b>Very Effective</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Slightly Effective</b>	<b>Not Effective at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	14	74	40	18	10	156
<b>Instagram</b>	13	40	27	15	7	102
<b>Google Search</b>	12	12	5	8	3	30
<b>YouTube</b>	0	8	8	3	2	21
<b>LinkedIn</b>	1	12	18	9	9	49
<b>TikTok</b>	0	7	8	2	1	18
<b>Total</b>	30	153	106	55	32	376

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Table III.26:** Table of expected values (E)

	<b>Very Effective</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Slightly Effective</b>	<b>Not Effective at All</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	12.4	63.5	44.0	22.8	13.3	156
<b>Instagram</b>	2.4	12.2	8.5	4.4	2.6	30
<b>Google Search</b>	8.1	41.5	28.8	14.9	8.7	102
<b>YouTube</b>	3.9	19.9	13.8	7.2	4.2	49
<b>LinkedIn</b>	1.4	7.3	5.1	2.6	1.5	18
<b>TikTok</b>	1.7	8.5	5.9	3.1	1.8	21
<b>Total</b>	30.0	153.0	106.0	55.0	32.0	376

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Table III.27:** Calculation of Chi-square:  $X^2 = (O-E)^2/E$ 

	Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Slightly Effective	Not Effective at All	Total
Facebook	0.1938	1.7438	0.3600	1.0178	0.8086	4.12
Instagram	0.0647	0.0035	1.4134	2.9725	0.0782	4.53
Google Search	2.9043	0.0546	0.1072	0.0004	0.3255	3.39
YouTube	2.1654	3.1609	1.2686	0.4685	5.5937	12.66
LinkedIn	1.4362	0.0144	1.6866	0.1522	0.1847	3.47
TikTok	1.6755	0.0348	0.7306	0.0017	0.0253	2.47
<b>Total</b>	8.4399	5.0119	5.5664	4.6131	7.0159	$X^2 =$ 30.65

**Source:** Developed by us using EXCEL

$X^2$  (Chi-square) = 30.647

DF (Degrees of Freedom) =  $(6-1) \times (5-1) = 20$

P-value = 0.060

#### Decision:

Since **P-value = 0.060 > 0.05**, the null hypothesis **H<sub>0</sub>** is **accepted** at the 5% significance level. This suggests that **there is no statistically significant relationship** between the platform respondents consider most effective for discovering training programs and the degree to which they perceive **Meta Ads** (Facebook & Instagram) as effective in encouraging them to take action.

However, while the result is not statistically significant, the descriptive data reveals a practical insight: **Audiences who use Facebook and Instagram for training discovery also report higher conversion intent** on these platforms. This trend, though not statistically validated, **partially supports Hypothesis 1** and suggests that platform familiarity may play a subtle role in perceived ad effectiveness.

**Does the preferred advertising format influence users' confidence in video-based ads as a trigger to take action?**

**Q8:** *Which ad format do you prefer the most?*

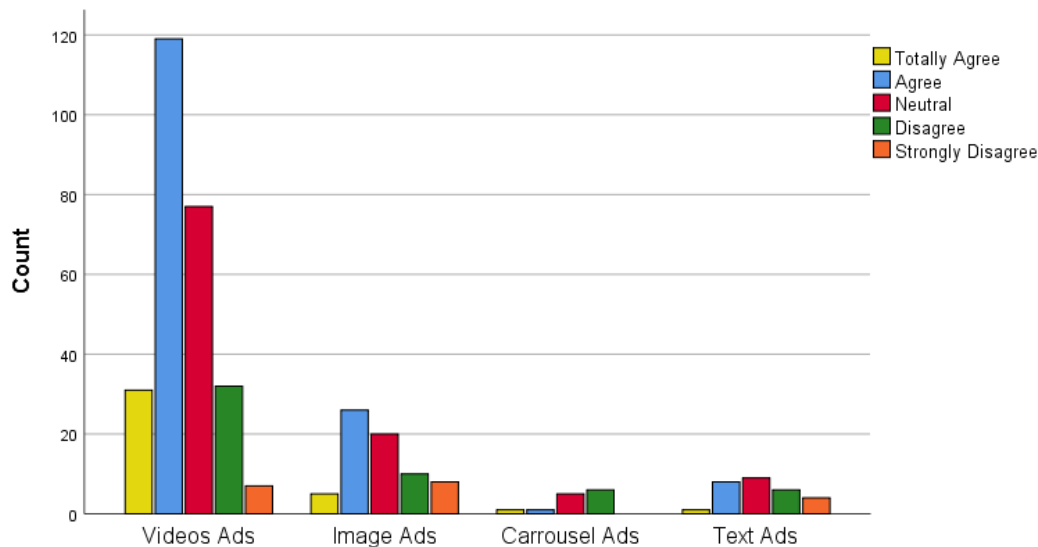
**Q11:** *Do video ads increase your confidence to take action (e.g., submit your contact information or register for a course)?*

**Table III.28:** The distribution of the sample according to their preferred advertising format and their confidence in video-based ads to encourage action

		Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Slightly Effective	Not Effective at All	Total
<b>Videos Ads</b>	Count	31	119	77	32	7	266
	%	8.2%	31.6%	20.5%	8.5%	1.9%	70.7%
<b>Images Ads</b>	Count	5	26	20	10	8	69
	%	1.3%	6.9%	5.3%	2.7%	2.1%	18.4%
<b>Carrousel Ads</b>	Count	1	1	5	6	0	13
	%	0.3%	0.3%	1.3%	1.6%	0.0%	3.5%
<b>Text Ads</b>	Count	1	8	9	6	4	28
	%	0.3%	2.1%	2.4%	1.6%	1.1%	7.4%
<b>Total</b>	Count	38	154	111	54	19	376
	%	10.1%	41.0%	29.5%	14.4%	5.1%	100.0%

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.25:** The distribution of the sample according to their preferred advertising format and their confidence in video-based ads to encourage action



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The data shows that **video ads** are the most preferred advertising format, selected by **70.7%** of the sample. Among these users, **39.8%** rated video ads as *effective* or *very effective*. In contrast, **image ads**, chosen by **18.4%**, received lower positive ratings, with only **8.2%** expressing high effectiveness.

Formats such as **carousel** and **text ads**, representing **3.5%** and **7.4%** of the sample respectively, showed limited engagement, with the majority of responses falling into *neutral* or *slightly effective*.

**Overall**, the data confirms that **video ads are perceived as the most engaging and persuasive format**, especially for audiences seeking to discover and act on educational offers.

**Calculating Chi-square and testing the hypothesis:**

**H<sub>0</sub> (Null Hypothesis):** There is no relationship between the preferred advertising format and the level of agreement that video content increases confidence to act.

**H<sub>1</sub> (Alternative Hypothesis):** There is a relationship between the preferred advertising format and the level of agreement that video content increases confidence to act.

Significance level = 0.05

**Table III.29:** Table of observed values (O)

	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Videos Ads	31	119	77	32	7	266
Image Ads	5	26	20	10	8	69
Carrousel Ads	1	1	5	6	0	13
Text Ads	1	8	9	6	4	28
Total	38	154	111	54	19	376

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Table III.30:** Table of expected values (E)

	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Videos Ads	26.9	108.9	78.5	38.2	13.4	266
Image Ads	7.0	28.3	20.4	9.9	3.5	69
Carrousel Ads	1.3	5.3	3.8	1.9	0.7	13
Text Ads	2.8	11.5	8.3	4.0	1.4	28
Total	38.0	154.0	111.0	54.0	19.0	376

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Table III.31:** Calculation of Chi-square:  $X^2 = (O-E)^2/E$ 

	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Videos Ads	0.6249	0.9367	0.0287	1.0063	3.0567	5.6533
Image Ads	0.5714	0.1869	0.0078	0.0010	5.7857	6.5529
Carrousel Ads	0.0692	3.4887	0.3789	8.8474	0.7000	13.4842
Text Ads	1.1571	1.0652	0.0590	1.0000	4.8286	8.1100
Total	2.4227	5.6776	0.4745	10.8547	14.3710	34.010

**Source:** Developed by us using EXCEL

$X^2$  (Chi-square) = 34.010

DF (Degrees of Freedom) =  $(4-1) \times (5-1) = 12$

P-value = 0.001

#### Decision:

Since P-value = 0.001 < 0.05,  $H_0$  must be rejected at the level of significance 0.05. This confirms the suspicion that there is a statistically significant relationship between the sample's preferred advertising format and the level of agreement that video-based content increases confidence to take action.

Thus, Hypothesis 2 is supported: users' ad format preference is significantly associated with how effective they perceive video content in encouraging behavioral response (such as submitting contact details or registering).

**Does the presence of social proof in advertisements influence users' intention to take action?**

**Q13:** Which type of advertisement are you most likely to click on: The one with social proof (e.g., testimonials, success rate, number of users) or without?

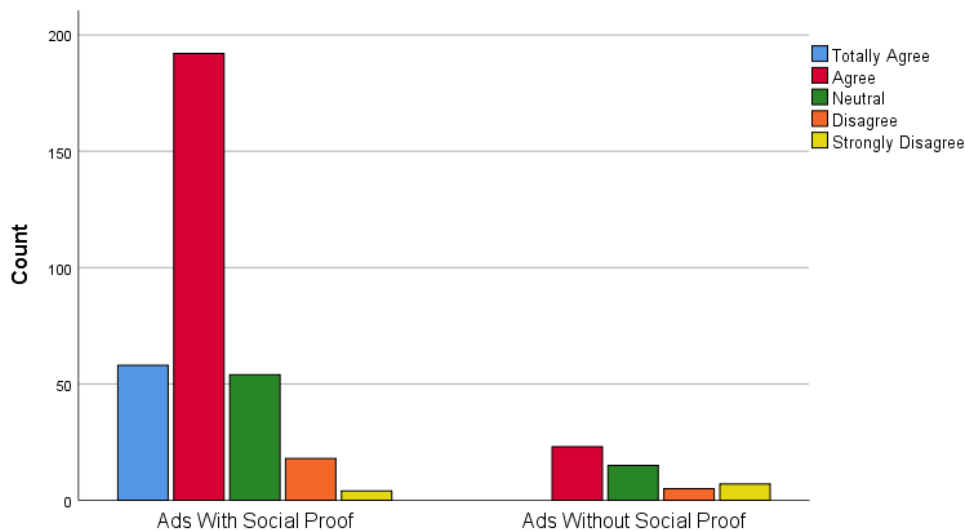
**Q16:** How likely are you to take action (e.g., submit your information or register) when the advertisement includes social proof elements?

**Table III.32:** Cross-tabulation between Ad Preference and Likelihood to Take Action when Social Proof is Present

		Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
<b>Ads With Social Proof</b>	Count	192	54	18	4	58	326
	%	51.1%	14.4%	4.8%	1.1%	15.4%	86.7%
<b>Ads Without Social Proof</b>	Count	23	15	5	7	0	50
	%	6.1%	4.0%	1.3%	1.9%	0.0%	13.3%
<b>Total</b>	Count	215	69	23	11	58	376
	%	57.2%	18.4%	6.1%	2.9%	15.4%	100.0%

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Figure III.26:** Cross-tabulation between Ad Preference and Likelihood to Take Action when Social Proof is Present



**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Comment:**

The data shows that **ads with social proof** are preferred by the majority of the sample (**86.7%**). Within this group, **65.5%** *totally agreed* or *agreed* that social proof increases their likelihood to act. By contrast, only **13.3%** of respondents preferred **ads without social proof**, and their agreement levels were significantly lower, with just **10.1%** expressing a positive opinion.

The *neutral*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* categories were more prominent among those who did not prefer social proof, indicating skepticism or resistance toward its impact. **Overall**, the data confirms that **social proof is a highly persuasive factor in advertising**, with a clear majority associating it with increased confidence and action-taking behavior.

**Calculating Chi-square and testing the hypothesis:**

**H<sub>0</sub> (Null Hypothesis):** There is no relationship between ad preference (with or without social proof) and the likelihood to act if social proof is present.

**H<sub>1</sub> (Alternative Hypothesis):** There is a relationship between ad preference (with or without social proof) and the likelihood to act if social proof is present.

Significance level = 0.05

**Table III.33:** Table of observed values (O)

	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Ads With Social Proof	58	192	54	18	4	326
Ads Without Social Proof	0	23	15	5	7	50
Total	58	215	69	23	11	376

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Table III.34:** Table of expected values (E)

	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Ads With Social Proof	50.3	186.4	59.8	19.9	9.5	326
Ads Without Social Proof	7.7	28.6	9.2	3.1	1.5	50
Total	58.0	215.0	69.0	23.0	11.0	376

**Source:** Developed by us using SPSS

**Table III.35:** Calculation of Chi-square:  $X^2 = (O-E)^2/E$ 

	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Ads With Social Proof	1.1829	0.1677	0.5671	0.1890	3.2149	5.3216
Ads Without Social Proof	7.7128	1.0931	3.6973	1.2324	20.9609	34.6965
Total	8.8957	1.2608	4.2644	1.4214	24.1758	40.018

**Source:** Developed by us using EXCEL

$X^2$  (Chi-square) = 40.018

DF (Degrees of Freedom) =  $(2-1) \times (5-1) = 4$

P-value = 0.000

**Decision:**

Since P-value = 0.000 < 0.05,  $H_0$  must be rejected at the level of significance 0.05. This confirms the suspicion that there is a significant relationship between the sample's preference for ads with or without social proof and the level of agreement with the idea that social proof increases their likelihood to act.

Thus, the presence of social proof in advertising is statistically proven to influence user behavior. These results support Hypothesis 3 and highlight the importance of incorporating social validation elements in advertising strategies aimed at lead generation.

The analytical phase, utilizing flat sorting and cross-tabulation, provided clear insights into user behavior regarding digital advertising. Flat sorting revealed key patterns in platform preference, ad format effectiveness, and responses to social proof. Cross-tabulation facilitated hypothesis testing, confirming significant associations, particularly regarding ad formats and social proof, while others revealed descriptive trends. These analyses were essential in validating the study's hypotheses and guiding actionable recommendations for campaign optimization.

### 2.3.Campaign Performance Analysis

To strengthen the empirical basis of this study, real-world advertising campaign data from Meta Ads (Facebook & Instagram) and Google Ads (Search Network) were analyzed to test the hypotheses. This data-driven approach complements the questionnaire results by integrating actual campaign performance metrics, enabling a more robust validation of the study's three hypotheses. Rather than relying solely on stated user perceptions, the use of live campaign outcomes strengthens the credibility and practical relevance of the research.

To ensure clarity and methodological rigor, the campaign analysis is organized into three distinct parts, each aligned with a specific hypothesis and designed to isolate a single independent variable:

**H1** compares the overall platform performance between Meta Ads and Google Ads, using comparable campaigns with a Lead Generation objective.

**H2** examines the impact of advertising format by contrasting a single video ad against a group of three image-based ads that contain no social proof elements.

**H3** evaluates the influence of social proof by comparing the video ad (which includes social validation cues) to three image-based ads that lack such elements.

The same video ad is used in both H2 and H3 due to a constraint in available data; it was the only video ad deployed during ITComp Academy's lead generation campaigns at the time of the study. Notably, this video features a headline that includes a form of social proof, making it relevant to both hypotheses. Although the same video ad is reused in both H2 and H3, each hypothesis focuses on a distinct analytical dimension—format (H2) versus content

(H3)—ensuring methodological integrity by isolating the effect of the independent variable in each case.

Additionally, the six image-based ads were divided logically:

- Three were used for H2 to compare the isolation format (image vs. video).
- Three were used for H3 to isolate the impact of social proof (with vs. without), as none of the image ads included any social proof elements.

Using the same six image ads for both H2 and H3 could have compromised the methodological clarity of the analysis by introducing redundancy and overlap between hypotheses. By dividing the image ads into two distinct groups — three for H2 (format comparison) and three for H3 (social proof comparison), each hypothesis could isolate and test a single variable independently. This separation avoids confounding effects and ensures a cleaner analytical design, where ad format is assessed in H2 and social proof in H3, thereby strengthening the internal validity and interpretability of the findings.

All ads were consistent in objective (Lead Generation), call-to-action structure, audience targeting, and placement across platforms, ensuring that differences in performance are attributable to the independent variable under analysis.

To evaluate performance across platforms and formats, the following campaign metrics were analyzed: results, cost per result, the total amount spent, impressions, CPM (cost per thousand impressions), CPC (cost per click), and CTR (click-through rate). These KPIs provide quantifiable evidence of ad effectiveness, supporting the empirical validation of each hypothesis.

This structured approach, despite the data constraints in the budget, time frame (notably, the Google Ads campaign ran for only 4 days with a €40 budget), and available creatives, reflects a defensible strategy for extracting actionable insights and validating hypotheses through real campaign data.

### 2.3.1. Case Study 1 – Meta Ads vs. Google Ads: Platform Performance Comparison

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Meta Ads are more effective in generating leads and achieving greater cost-efficiency compared to Google Ads for ITComp Academy.

#### Campaign Context and Methodology

- Campaign Objective: Lead Generation
- Target Audience: Adults based in Algiers and surrounding cities expressing interest in professional IT training programs
- Platforms: Meta Ads (Facebook & Instagram) and Google Ads (Search Network)
- Timeframe: Meta Ads (Q1–Q2 2025); Google Ads (4-day campaign in May 2025)
- Focus: Platform Performance Comparison
- Note: This case compares cumulative Meta Ads performance data with a short-term Google Ads test campaign. The difference in campaign duration (Meta: multi-month vs. Google: 4 days) is acknowledged as a potential limitation for direct comparability, though both campaigns shared the same objective and targeting structure.

#### Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

**Table III.36:** Aggregated Lead Generation Performance of Meta Ads vs. Google Ads

Metric	Meta Value	Google Value
Impressions	621185	1,240
Clicks	6236	75
Leads	394	6
Spend	€ 521.8	39.75€
CTR (%)	0.90%	6.05%
CPC (€)	0.10€	0.53€
CPM (€)	0.81€	32.06€
CVR (%)	6.32%	8.00
CPL (€)	1.88€	6.63€

**Source:** Developed by the author using internal campaign data from ITComp Academy, 2025

**Interpretation:**

The analysis highlights key performance differences between Meta and Google Ads across lead generation metrics. Although Google Ads demonstrated stronger engagement per impression, as evidenced by a higher click-through rate (CTR) of 6.05% and a conversion rate (CVR) of 8%, the platform generated only six total leads, with a relatively high cost per lead (CPL) of €6.63. This outcome reflects a costly conversion process within a limited campaign budget and duration, which may have constrained its reach and lead volume.

In contrast, Meta Ads delivered 394 leads at a substantially lower CPL of €1.88, supported by a broader reach and an optimized cost per click (CPC). While Meta's CTR (0.90%) and CVR (6.32%) were more modest, the campaign benefitted from a longer duration, greater budget allocation, and multiple creative variations, which enhanced its overall scalability and cost-efficiency.

Thus, when considering lead volume and acquisition cost, the results provide empirical support for Hypothesis 1. However, it is important to note that differences in campaign scope, duration, budget, and ad creative formats between the two platforms may have influenced these outcomes.

**2.3.2. Case Study 2: Video Ads vs. Other Format (Image Ads)****Hypothesis 2 (H2):**

Video-based advertising generates better conversion results than image- or text-based formats in online campaigns.

**Campaign Context and Methodology**

- Campaign Objective: Lead Generation
- Target Audience: Users interested in IT training programs, located in Algiers and surrounding cities (Blida, Boumerdès, Tipaza ...)
- Platform: Meta Ads (Facebook & Instagram)
- Timeframe: Q1–Q2, 2025
- Independent Variable: Ad Format
- Note: This case compares one video ad against three image ads (used as a group), representing different advertising formats(Only Image). Although these campaigns promoted different ITCComp training programs, they shared the same objective, audience, and placement strategy. Nevertheless, the differences in program content could potentially affect user engagement and conversion outcomes. The video ad also contains social proof, but for this analysis, we focus strictly on the difference in format.

**Table III.37:** Comparative Performance Metrics of Video Ad vs. Average Performance of the Image Ads

Metric	Video's Value	Images Value
Impressions	148,641	226,310
Clicks	2,895	1,307
Leads	189	105
Spend	164.50€	179.83€
CTR (%)	1.95%	0.64%
CPC	0.10€	0.14€
CVR (%)	6.5%	8.03%
CPL (€)	0.87€	2.05€
CPM (€)	0.81€	0.78€

**Source:** Developed by the author using internal campaign data from ITComp Academy, 2025

### Interpretation

The comparative results highlight notable performance differences between the two ad formats. The video ad outperformed the image ads in terms of click-through rate (CTR: 1.95% vs. 0.64%) and cost per click (CPC: €0.06 vs. €0.14), indicating that it generated more engagement at a lower cost. Although the image ads recorded a slightly higher conversion rate (8.03% vs. 6.53%), the cost per lead (CPL) for the video ad was 135% lower (€0.87 vs. €2.05), reflecting greater cost-efficiency in lead generation at scale.

These findings suggest that video-based advertising is more effective for cost-efficient lead acquisition within the Meta Ads platform, particularly when high impression volume and click engagement are achieved. With budget, audience targeting, and campaign objective held constant, the format difference likely influenced these outcomes.

Accordingly, these results provide empirical support for Hypothesis 2, which proposes that video formats are more effective than image formats for lead acquisition in paid social advertising campaigns.

### 2.3.3. Case Study 3: Ads With vs. Without Social Proof

#### Hypothesis 3 (H3):

Advertisements incorporating social proof (e.g., testimonials, success rates) positively influence click-through rates and conversion intentions.

#### Campaign Context and Methodology

- Campaign Objective: Lead Generation
- Target Audience: Individuals in Algiers and surrounding cities (Blida, Boumerdès, Tipaza ...) interested in IT and professional development training
- Platform: Meta Ads (Facebook & Instagram)
- Timeframe: Q1–Q2, 2025
- Independent Variable: Presence or absence of social proof
- Note: The video ad included social proof (e.g., '+20,000 students trained') while the group of image ads did not. This design isolates the presence of social proof as the independent variable, enabling a direct comparison of its influence on conversion outcomes.

**Table III.38:** Comparative Performance Metrics of the Ad with Social Proof vs. Average Performance of the Image Ads (without Social Proof)

Metric	Ad With Social Proof Value	Ad Without Social Proof Value
Impressions	148,641	246,234
Clicks	2,895	2,034
Leads	189	100
Spend	164.50€	177.47€
CTR (%)	1.95%	0.82
CPC (€)	0.10€	0.09€
CPM (€)	0.81€	0.75€
CVR (%)	6.53%	4.92
CPL (€)	0.87€	2.05€

**Source:** Developed by the author using internal campaign data from ITCComp Academy, 2025

## Interpretation

The comparison highlights the measurable impact of social proof on advertising performance. The ad incorporating social validation cues outperformed those without such elements across all key performance indicators. It achieved a 137% lower cost per lead (€0.87 vs. €2.05), a 58% higher click-through rate (1.95% vs. 0.82%), and a stronger conversion rate (6.53% vs. 4.92%).

These discrepancies highlight the behavioral impact of credibility indicators in promoting user trust and motivating action, especially in decision-intensive contexts such as professional training. While the data suggest a strong association between social proof elements and improved ad performance, caution is warranted in attributing causality, as other factors such as ad creative quality or audience context may also influence these results.

Accordingly, these results provide robust empirical support for Hypothesis 3, which states that the inclusion of social proof enhances advertising effectiveness across both engagement and conversion metrics.

## 3. Interpretation of Results and Strategic Recommendations

### 3.1. Summary of the Results

The empirical findings, based on 382 total responses and complementary campaign data, offer valuable insights into digital advertising effectiveness for ITCComp Academy:

A vast majority (98.4%) reported using social media platforms or search engines at least once per week, confirming the strategic relevance of digital platforms in users' daily lives.

Facebook (21.50%) and Instagram (19.35%) emerged as the most frequently used platforms, followed closely by Google Search (19.96%) and YouTube (18.50%). TikTok and LinkedIn were used less frequently but remain relevant in specific segments.

Respondents identified special offers (32.46%) as the primary driver of ad engagement, followed by relevance, visual appeal, and informational value. Although cited less frequently (10.23%), social proof demonstrated a notable psychological impact.

Approximately half of the respondents considered Meta Ads (Facebook & Instagram) to be either "effective" or "very effective" in motivating them to submit their contact details or enroll in a training program.

Video formats were overwhelmingly preferred (70.7%), significantly surpassing image (18.4%) and text formats (7.4%), reflecting stronger user engagement with audiovisual content. A total of 69.7% reported clicking on relevant ads “sometimes” or “often,” while only 6.1% stated they “always” do so. Meanwhile, 24.2% reported little to no interaction, emphasizing the importance of improved targeting.

Around 50% considered online ads effective in encouraging exploration, although 39.1% responded neutrally—potentially due to ad fatigue or lack of personalization. Over half (51.1%) agreed that video ads increased their confidence to take action, such as submitting a form or registering—highlighting the persuasive value of video in decision-making.

A total of 84.6% reported that video ads had at least a moderate influence on their interest in exploring training programs, with 33.5% noting a strong influence. Social proof was a key motivational factor: 86.7% indicated a higher likelihood of clicking on ads that included elements such as testimonials, ratings, or success stories. Among the various types of social proof tested, user reviews (38.4%) and success rates (24.2%) were the most trusted, followed by user volume (15.3%). Certifications and partnerships were less impactful.

A total of 72.6% agreed or strongly agreed that social proof increased their likelihood to act, while only 9% disagreed—reinforcing the persuasive power of social validation. The dominant age group was 25–34 years (60.9%). The sample was predominantly female (78.5%) and highly educated, with 59.0% holding a Master's degree.

Most respondents were employed (55.3%), with students (12.8%), freelancers (13.6%), and unemployed individuals (12.8%) also represented, indicating a varied professional profile. Among the cross-tabulation and hypothesis testing:

Respondents who reported using Facebook and Instagram as their primary platforms for discovering training programs also rated Meta Ads as more effective in prompting action, which supports the confirmation of Hypothesis H1.

Preference for video formats was significantly associated with increased confidence in taking action, which supports the confirmation of Hypothesis H2.

Respondents who preferred ads containing social proof showed significantly higher agreement that such elements influenced their likelihood to act, which supports the confirmation of Hypothesis H3.

**Among campaign results:**

Meta Ads delivered a higher number of leads and demonstrated greater cost-efficiency (lower CPL), with a competitive conversion rate and consistent audience engagement compared to Google Ads. These results support the confirmation of Hypothesis H1.

Video ads achieved a lower CPL (€0.87 vs. €2.05), a higher CTR (1.95% vs. 0.64%), and generated a higher number of leads compared to image formats. These results supported Hypothesis 2 regarding the effectiveness of video formats in driving conversion results.

Ads with social proof delivered a higher CTR (1.95% vs. 0.82%), a higher conversion rate (6.53% vs. 4.92%), and a lower CPL (€0.87 vs. €2.05) compared to those without. These results supported Hypothesis 3 on the positive impact of credibility signals on conversion.

### 3.2. Validation of the Hypotheses

The validation of the research hypotheses is based on a triangulated analysis combining both survey responses and campaign performance data. The goal is to assess whether user perceptions align with measurable advertising outcomes, particularly in terms of lead acquisition efficiency. Each hypothesis is evaluated through this dual lens to ensure academic rigor and practical relevance.

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Validation</b>
<b>H1:</b> Meta Ads are more effective in generating leads and achieving greater cost-efficiency compared to Google Ads for ITCComp Academy.	Both campaign data and survey results supported Hypothesis 1.	<i>Accepted</i>
<b>H2:</b> Video-based advertising generates better conversion results than image- or text-based formats in online campaigns.	Both campaign data and survey results supported Hypothesis 2.	<i>Accepted</i>
<b>H3:</b> Advertisements incorporating social proof (e.g., testimonials, success rates) positively influence click-through rates and conversion intentions.	Both campaign data and survey results supported Hypothesis 3.	<i>Accepted</i>

### 3.3.Strategic Recommendations for ITComp Academy

Based on the combined analysis of audience feedback and advertising performance metrics, the following strategic recommendations are proposed:

#### a. Prioritize Meta Platforms for Lead Acquisition

Given both survey responses and Meta Ads performance, it is advisable to allocate the majority of the digital advertising budget to Instagram and Facebook, which demonstrated the lowest CPLs and highest audience engagement. Meta platforms offer both reach and conversion at scale.

#### b. Expand and Optimize Google Ads Testing

Although the initial Google Ads campaign showed limited results due to budget constraints, its high CTR (6.05%) and CVR (8%) suggest potential for optimization. ITComp Academy should relaunch the campaign with a minimum duration of two weeks and a budget exceeding €100 while testing various keyword match types and ad copy strategies to refine targeting.

#### c. Use Video Content as the Primary Advertising Format

Video ads outperformed image ads across all key KPIs (CTR, CVR, CPL). It is recommended that short-form, mobile-optimized videos featuring dynamic visuals, testimonials, or success metrics become the core creative asset in future campaigns.

#### d. Systematically Integrate Social Proof in All Campaigns

Both data sets confirm that ads incorporating trust signals, such as the number of students trained, reviews, or real success stories, generate higher user confidence and conversions. These elements should be highlighted in headlines, subtexts, or visuals across all ad types.

#### e. Launch Structured A/B Testing Across Variables

To continuously optimize performance, implement regular A/B tests comparing:

- Headline wording (e.g., direct CTA vs. curiosity-based)
- Visual focus (instructor, student, or badge imagery)
- Offer types (discount, free webinar, career roadmap)

- Pair each variation with real-time CPL and CTR tracking.

**f. Implement a Funnel-Based Lead Nurturing Strategy**

Adopt a three-stage strategy to increase conversion rates over time:

- Top-of-Funnel (Awareness): Run attention-grabbing video ads.
- Mid-Funnel (Consideration): Offer downloadable guides, live sessions, or quizzes.
- Bottom-of-Funnel (Conversion): Retarget warm leads with urgency-based offers.

**g. Strengthen Content Marketing and Organic Presence**

Invest in ongoing content creation:

- Weekly Instagram Reels and TikTok videos
- Student testimonials and success stories
- Instructor “behind-the-scenes” clips
- Consistent content will build brand familiarity and support paid efforts.

**h. Implement CRM and Automated Follow-Up Workflows**

Adopt CRM tools such as HubSpot, Zoho, or Brevo to:

- Automatically follow up via email or SMS
- Assign lead scores for prioritization
- Monitor lead behavior (opens, clicks, etc.) to personalize nurturing

**i. Develop KPI Dashboards for Campaign Monitoring**

Create monthly dashboards to monitor (CTR, CPL, CVR, CPM) for internal use. Use Excel, Google Data Studio, or Meta Ads reporting tools to track and optimize campaign outcomes consistently.

**Conclusion of chapter THREE**

In this chapter, we present and analyze the empirical results obtained through survey responses and advertising performance data to evaluate the impact of digital advertising on lead acquisition at ITComp Academy. The study focused on three key hypotheses related to platform effectiveness, ad format, and the role of social proof.

The results confirmed the relevance of search and social ads when strategically integrated, highlighting the superiority of video content and trust signals in driving conversions. A synthesis of the findings and strategic recommendations has been provided. Also the research limitation. In the final general conclusion, we will revisit the initial problem and assess the validity of our hypotheses.

# **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

In a context marked by the rapid evolution of digital tools, this thesis examined the impact of search engine and social media advertising on lead acquisition, with a particular focus on ITComp Academy. Through a combination of theoretical analysis and empirical investigation, the research demonstrated that digital advertising, when strategically implemented, can generate measurable and positive outcomes for educational institutions operating in competitive environments.

To support these findings, the study relied on both survey responses and campaign performance data. The quantitative study and KPI analysis from Meta and Google campaigns enabled the validation of the three research hypotheses. More specifically, the empirical investigation confirmed the following:

- **Hypothesis 1:** Meta Ads (Facebook and Instagram) significantly outperformed a test Google Ads campaign in terms of number of leads, cost per lead (CPL), and click-through rate (CTR). This confirms that, in the context of ITComp Academy, social media advertising is currently more effective than search engine advertising for generating leads. The finding is also supported by the survey data.

- **Hypothesis 2:** Survey responses and campaign data confirmed that video ads generate higher engagement and conversions compared to static image formats, validating the effectiveness of video content in driving user action.

- **Hypothesis 3:** Ads incorporating social proof (e.g., testimonials, success metrics) had a clearly positive influence on user trust and conversion. Both the survey data and campaign KPIs supported this hypothesis.

Taken together, these results demonstrate a positive and significant impact of digital advertising across both platforms and formats on lead acquisition. The study revealed that thoughtful platform selection, creative format optimization, and the integration of credibility-enhancing elements, such as social proof, can significantly improve campaign outcomes. Rather than producing marginal gains, the differences between the tested strategies and formats were substantial, confirming the strategic value of performance-based advertising in this sector.

However, while Meta platforms outperformed Google Ads in this case, the key insight lies in understanding how to effectively leverage each channel's strengths. The findings also underscore the importance of continuously testing and adapting advertising formats to align with user expectations and behaviors, particularly in an educational context.

At the same time, it is essential to acknowledge the study's limitations. These include the short duration of the campaigns, the limited advertising budget, and the potential impact of the recent rebranding of ITComp Academy on user behavior and perceptions. These factors may affect the generalizability of the results beyond this specific context.

Nonetheless, these limitations also provide a form of ecological validity. The short, budget-limited Google Ads campaign mirrors the operational realities of many small and mid-sized educational institutions in Algeria and comparable markets. Rather than weakening the findings, this context-specific constraint emphasizes the potential for strategic optimization even within restricted resources. It illustrates that measurable, performance-oriented insights can still emerge under modest conditions, making the recommendations particularly useful for institutions with similar profiles and constraints.

Based on the analysis, several recommendations are proposed for ITComp Academy:

- Focus efforts on high-performing platforms, such as Meta, to maximize lead generation results.
- Prioritize video ads that clearly and persuasively communicate the core value of the training programs.
- Use social proof elements (e.g., testimonials or success stories) only when they enhance message credibility and align with the campaign objective.
- Allocate advertising budgets based on past performance data to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
- Develop simple dashboards and reports to regularly track key metrics, such as leads, cost per lead (CPL), and click-through rate (CTR), to inform future decision-making.

Ultimately, although ITCComp Academy's digital advertising approach is still evolving, this thesis has served both as a diagnostic and a strategic roadmap for enhancing its acquisition efforts. The choice of ITCComp Academy was intentional, offering a practical context to explore and support the development of tailored digital strategies within a real-world organization.

In conclusion, this study confirms that well-executed digital advertising strategies, particularly those that align platform choice, ad format, and trust-building mechanisms, can have a substantial and positive measurable impact on lead acquisition. These findings provide actionable insights not only for the ITCComp Academy, but also for other educational institutions aiming to enhance their digital marketing effectiveness in a rapidly evolving landscape.

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# **APPENDICES**

## Appendix N °01: Section 01 of the questionnaire



Section 1 of 5

### Questionnaire sur l'Influence des Campagnes Publicitaires sur les Moteurs de Recherche et les Réseaux Sociaux dans la Génération de Leads

B I U ↻ ↺

Cher Participant,

Vous êtes invité à participer à une étude dans le cadre d'un projet de mémoire de fin d'études à l'EHEC. Cette recherche explore l'impact de la **publicité sur les moteurs de recherche et les réseaux sociaux** (Google Search, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) sur l'engagement des utilisateurs et la conversion. Le questionnaire est **anonyme**, et toutes les données seront traitées avec la plus grande **confidentialité**. Le temps de réponse est estimé à **3-5 minutes**.

Utilisez-vous des plateformes de réseaux sociaux ou des moteurs de recherche au moins une fois par semaine (par exemple, Google, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, TikTok) ? \*

Oui نعم

No لا

## Appendix N °02: Section 02 of the questionnaire

Parmi les plateformes suivantes, lesquelles utilisez-vous au moins une fois par semaine ? \*

(Sélectionnez toutes celles qui s'appliquent)  
 من بين المنصات التالية، أيها تستخدم على الأقل مرة واحدة في الأسبوع؟ (اختر كل ما ينطبق)

Facebook / فيسبوك

Instagram / إنستغرام

Google Search / بحث جوجل

YouTube / يوتيوب

LinkedIn / لينكد إن

TikTok / تيك توك

Other...

---

Sur quelles plateformes avez-vous cliqué sur des publicités au cours des 30 derniers jours ? \*

(Sélectionnez toutes celles qui s'appliquent)  
 على أي من المنصات قمت بالنقر على الإعلانات خلال الـ 30 يوماً الماضية؟ (اختر كل ما ينطبق)

Facebook / فيسبوك

Instagram / إنستغرام

Google Search / بحث جوجل

YouTube / يوتيوب

LinkedIn / لينكد إن

TikTok / تيك توك

Other...

\* ما الذي يدفعك للنقر على الإعلانات؟ Qu'est-ce qui vous pousse à cliquer sur les publicités ?

- Un Appel à l'Action clair (En savoir plus, S'inscrire, Commencer) دعوة واضحة لاتخاذ إجراء (مثل "أعرف المزيد"، "سجل...")
- Confiance envers la plateforme الثقة في المنصة
- Informations pertinentes معلومات مفيدة وملائمة
- Attrait visuel جاذبية بصرية
- Preuve sociale (Avis, Notes, Histoires de réussite) الإثبات الاجتماعي (آراء، تقييمات، قصص نجاح)
- Promotions ou Offres spéciales عروض وخصومات
- Autre أخرى

\* D'après votre expérience personnelle, quelle plateforme a été la plus efficace pour découvrir des programmes de formation (Data Analytics, Web Development...)?

بناءً على تجربتك الشخصية، أي منصة كانت الأكثر فعالية في اكتشاف الدورات التدريبية؟

- Facebook / فيسبوك
- Instagram / إنستغرام
- Google Search / بحث جوجل
- YouTube / يوتيوب
- LinkedIn / لينكد إن
- TikTok / تيك توك

\* À quel point les publicités sur chacune de ces plateformes sont-elles efficaces pour vous encourager à soumettre vos coordonnées ou à vous inscrire à une formation (Data Analytics, Web Development...)?

ما مدى فعالية الإعلانات على كل من هذه المنصات في تشجيعك على تقديم معلوماتك أو التسجيل في دورة تدريبية؟

	Toujours	Souvent	Parfois	Rarement	Jamais
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Google Search	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
YouTube	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LinkedIn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* À quel point les publicités sur Facebook et Instagram sont-elles efficaces pour vous encourager à passer à l'action (soumettre vos informations, remplir un formulaire) ?

ما مدى فعالية إعلانات فيسبوك وإنستغرام في تشجيعك على اتخاذ إجراء (تقديم معلوماتك، ملء نموذج)؟

- Très Efficace / فعالة جداً
- Efficace / فعالة
- Neutre / محايدة
- Peu Efficace / غير فعالة
- Pas Efficace / غير فعالة على الإطلاق

## Appendix N °03: Section 03 of the questionnaire

Quel format publicitaire préférez-vous ? \*

ما نوع الإعلان الذي تفضله؟

Publicités Vidéo إعلانات فيديو

Publicités Image إعلانات صور

Publicités Carrousel إعلانات كاريوسال

Publicités Textuelles إعلانات نصية

À quelle fréquence cliquez-vous sur des publicités correspondant à vos intérêts ou besoins ? \*

كم مرة تنقر على الإعلانات التي تتوافق مع اهتمامك أو احتياجاتك؟

Toujours دائماً

Souvent غالباً

Parfois أحياناً

Rarement نادراً

Jamais أبداً

Dans quelle mesure les publicités en ligne vous incitent-elles à explorer davantage un produit, un service ou à en savoir plus sur une formation ? \*

ما مدى فعالية الإعلانات عبر الإنترنت في تشجيعك على استكشاف منتج أو خدمة أكثر أو التعرف على برنامج تدريبي؟

Très Efficaces فئة جداً

Efficaces فئة

Neutres محايدة

Inefficaces غير فعلة

Très Inefficaces غير فعلة تماماً

Le contenu vidéo augmente-t-il votre confiance lorsque vous décidez de passer à l'action (par exemple, remplir un formulaire ou s'inscrire) ? \*

هل يعزز المحتوى المرئي ثقتك عند اتخاذ قرار بتنفيذ إجراء (مثل ملء نموذج أو التسجيل)؟

Tout à fait d'accord / أوافق بشدة

D'accord / أوافق

Neutre / محايد

Pas d'accord / لا أوافق

Pas du tout d'accord / لا أوافق إطلاقاً

Comparé à d'autres formats publicitaires, quelle influence les publicités vidéo ont-elles sur votre décision d'explorer une formation (Data Analytics, Web Development...)?  
مقارنةً بصيغ الإعلانات الأخرى، ما مدى تأثير إعلانات الفيديو على قرارك في استكشاف دورة تدريبية؟

- تأثير كبير جدًا / Très grande influence
- تأثير كبير / Grande influence
- تأثير معتدل / Influence modérée
- تأثير ضعيف / Faible influence
- بدون تأثير / Aucune influence

#### Appendix N °04: Section 04 of the questionnaire

Dans quelle mesure le fait de voir qu'un produit ou service compte plus de 20 000 utilisateurs \* ou de nombreux avis positifs influence-t-il votre perception de sa qualité ?

إلى أي مدى يؤثر رؤيتك لمنتج أو خدمة لديها أكثر من 20,000 مستخدم أو عدد كبير من التقييمات الإيجابية على تصورك لجودتها؟

- ليس له تأثير / Aucun impact
- تأثير طفيف / Légère influence
- تأثير متوسط / Influence modérée
- تأثير قوي / Forte influence
- تأثير قوي جدًا / Très forte influence

La présence de preuve sociale (par exemple, le nombre d'utilisateurs, les évaluations) vous rend-elle plus susceptible de passer à l'action (soumettre vos informations, remplir un formulaire)?

مقارنةً بصيغ الإعلانات الأخرى، هل يجعلك وجود إثبات اجتماعي (مثل عدد المستخدمين، التقييمات) أكثر احتمالاً لاتخاذ إجراء (تقديم معلوماتك، ملء نموذج)؟

- أوافق بشدة / Tout à fait d'accord
- أوافق / D'accord
- محايد / Neutre
- لا أوافق / Pas d'accord
- لا أوافق إطلاقاً / Pas du tout d'accord

Sur quelle publicité seriez-vous le plus susceptible de cliquer ? أي إعلان تكون أكثر ميولاً للنقر عليه؟ \*

Publicité avec Preuve Sociale إعلان يحتوي على إثبات اجتماعي

Publicité sans Preuve Sociale إعلان بدون إثبات اجتماعي

Quel type de preuve sociale renforce le plus votre confiance ? ما نوع الإثبات الاجتماعي الذي يعزز ثقتك أكثر؟ \*

Nombre d'utilisateurs عدد المستخدمين

Taux de réussite élevé معدلات نجاح مرتفعة

Témoignages et avis des utilisateurs شهادات وآراء المستخدمين

Logos de certifications et d'accreditation شهادات الشهادات والاعتمادات

Logos de partenaires et d'affiliations شهادات الشركاء

## Appendix N °05: Section 05 of the questionnaire

Quel est votre âge ? كم عمرك؟ \*

- Moins de 18 ans
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45 ans et plus

Quel est votre sexe ? ما هو جنسك؟ \*

- Homme ذكر
- Femme أنثى

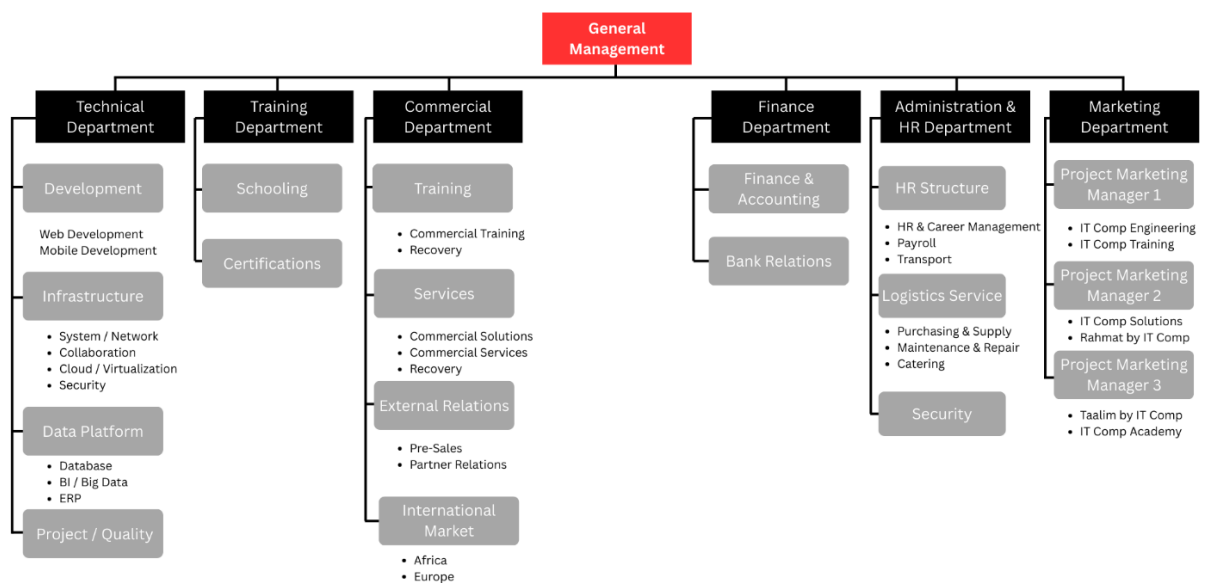
Quel est votre niveau d'études ? ما هو مستوى تحليتك؟ \*

- Lycée ثانوي
- Licence (Bac +3) بكالوريوس (بكالوريوس)
- Master (Bac +5) ماجستير
- Doctorat دكتوراه
- Autre أخرى

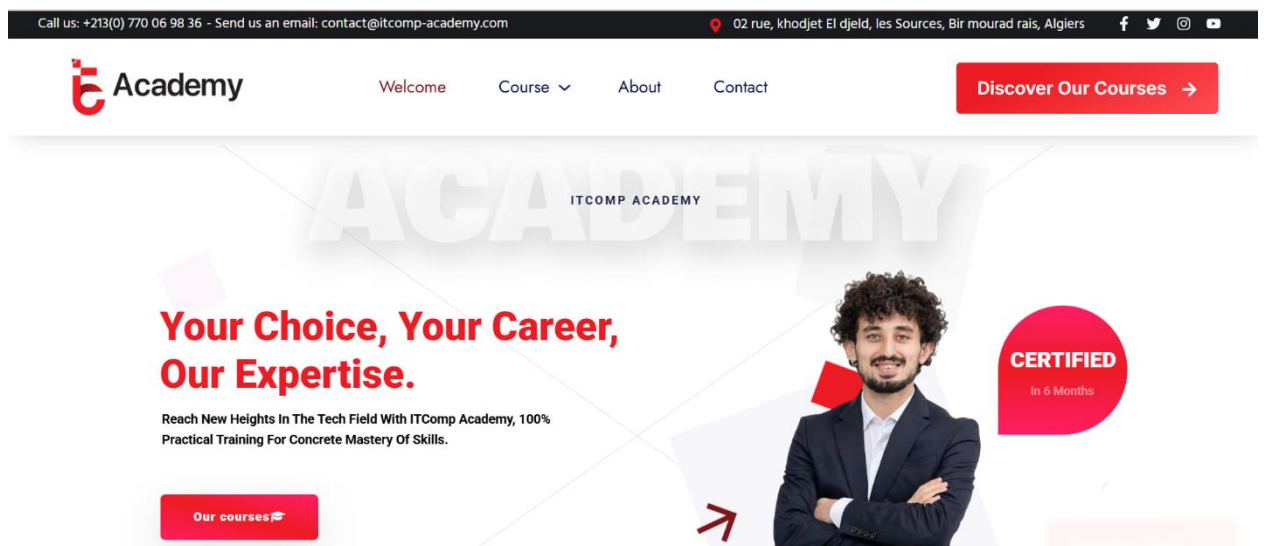
Quel est votre statut professionnel actuel ? \* ما هو وضعك المهني الحالي ؟

طالب Étudiant  
 موظف Employé  
 عامل حر Travailleur indépendant  
 عاطل عن العمل Sans emploi  
 أخرى Autre

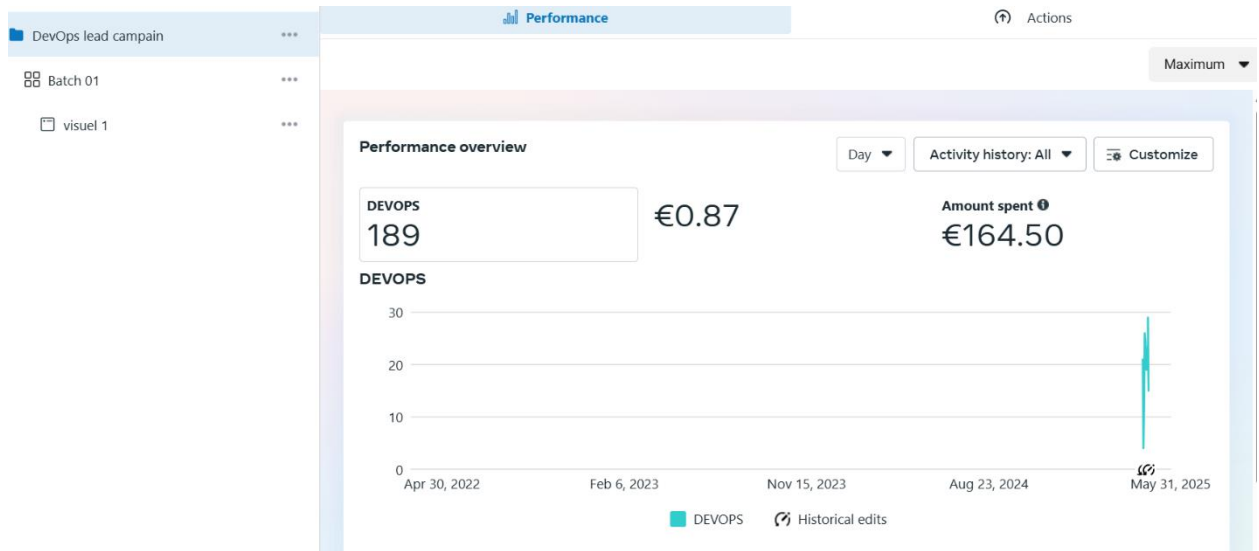
Appendix N °06 : ITComp’s organization chart



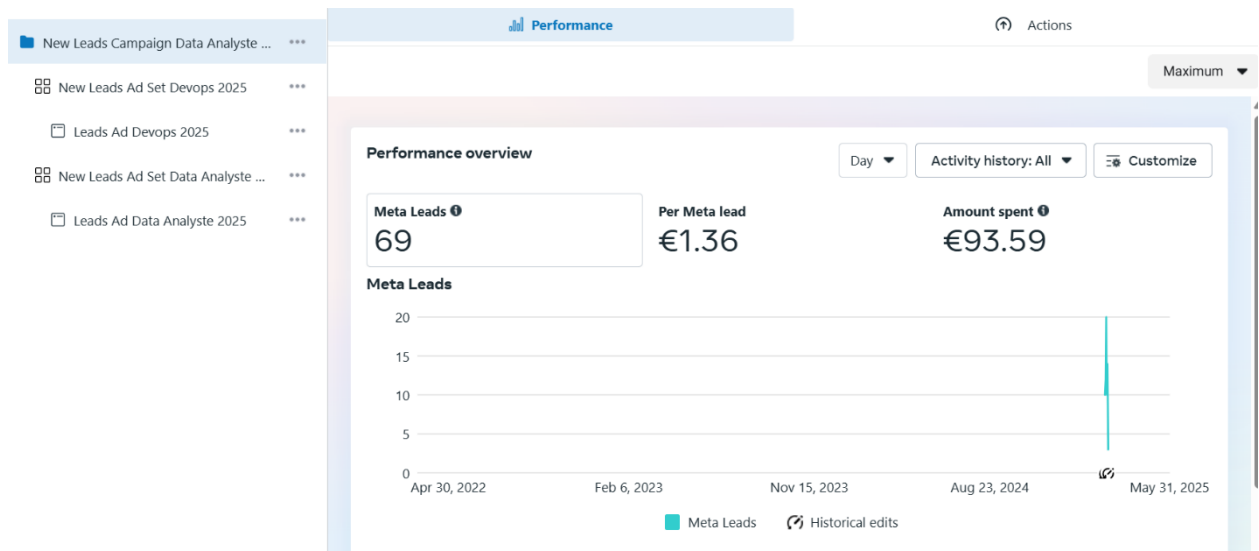
Appendix N °07: ITComp Academy’s website



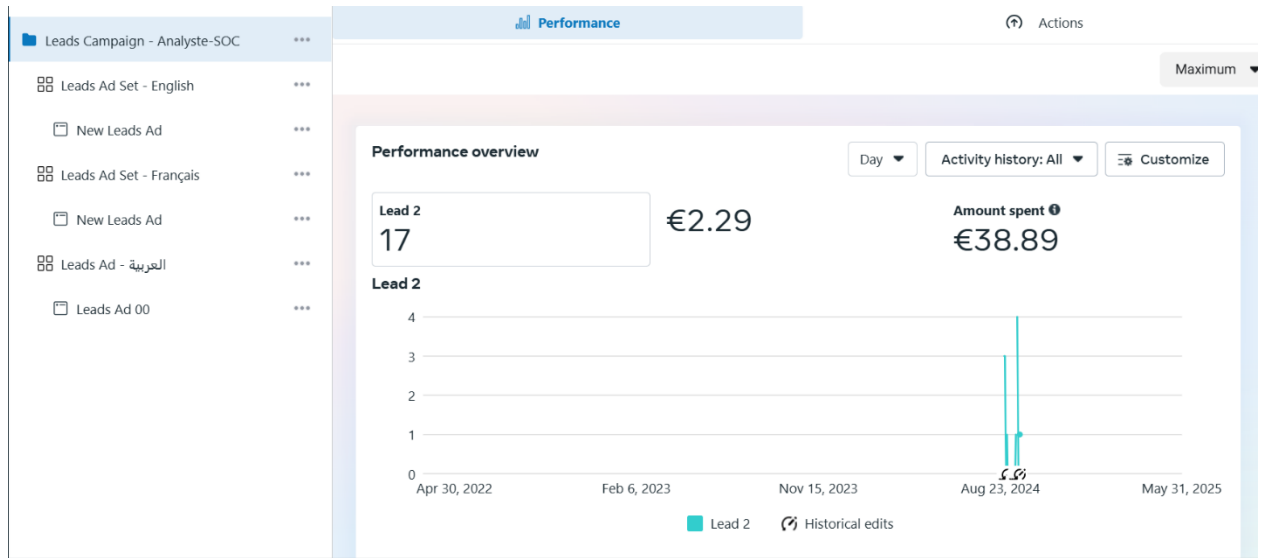
**Appendix N °08: Performance KPIs of the Video Ads Lead Generation Campaign – ITComp Academy**



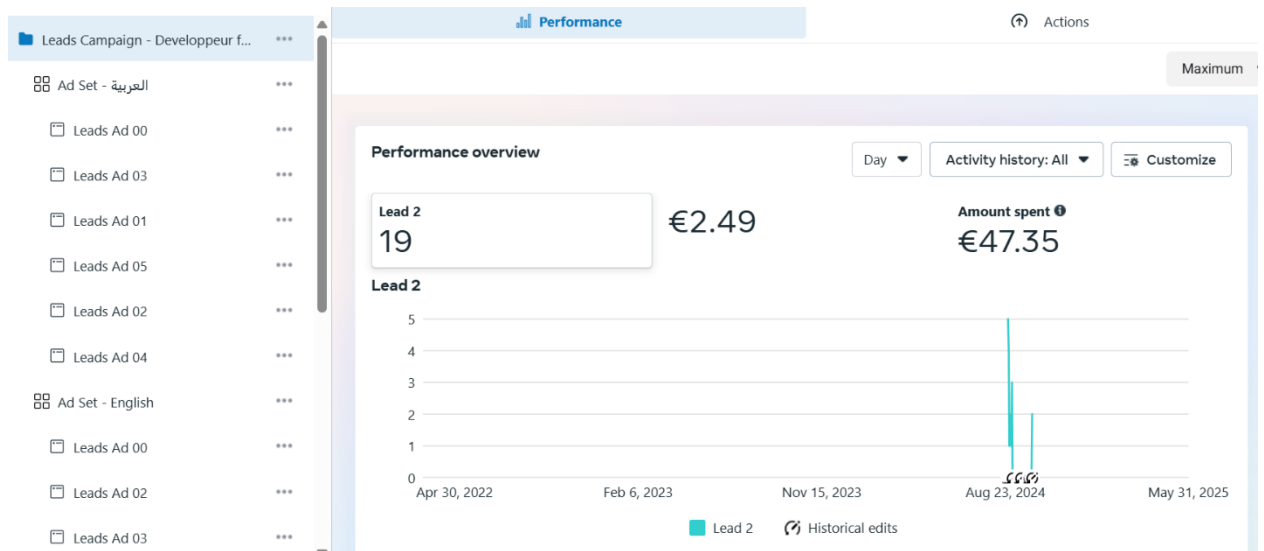
**Appendix N °09: KPIs of the First Image Ads Lead Generation Campaign – ITComp Academy**



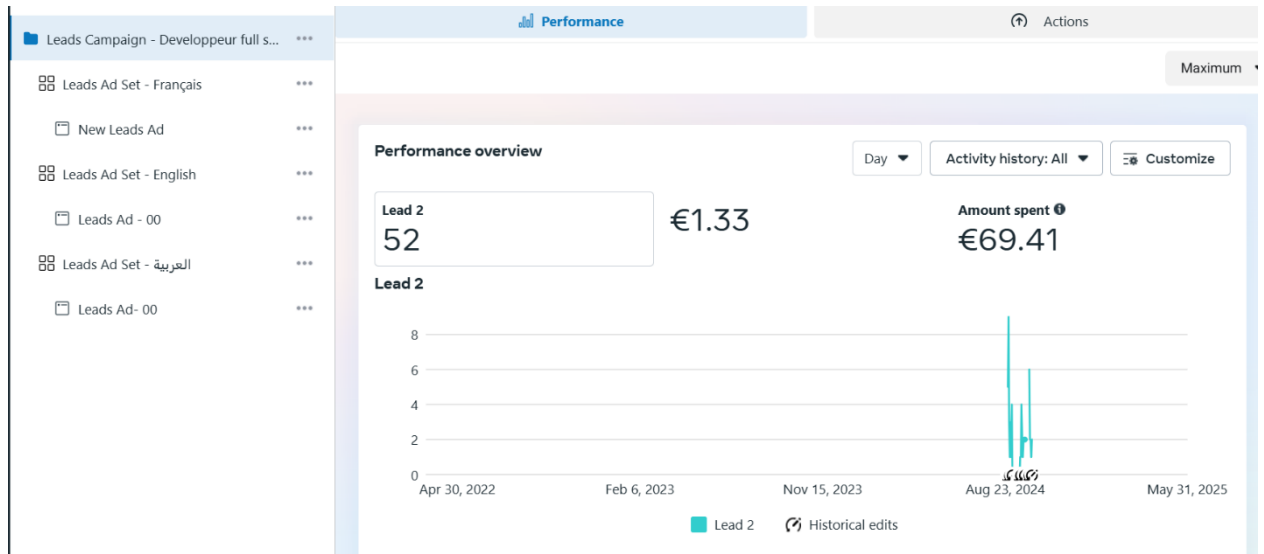
**Appendix N °10: KPIs of the Second Image Ads Lead Generation Campaign – ITComp Academy**



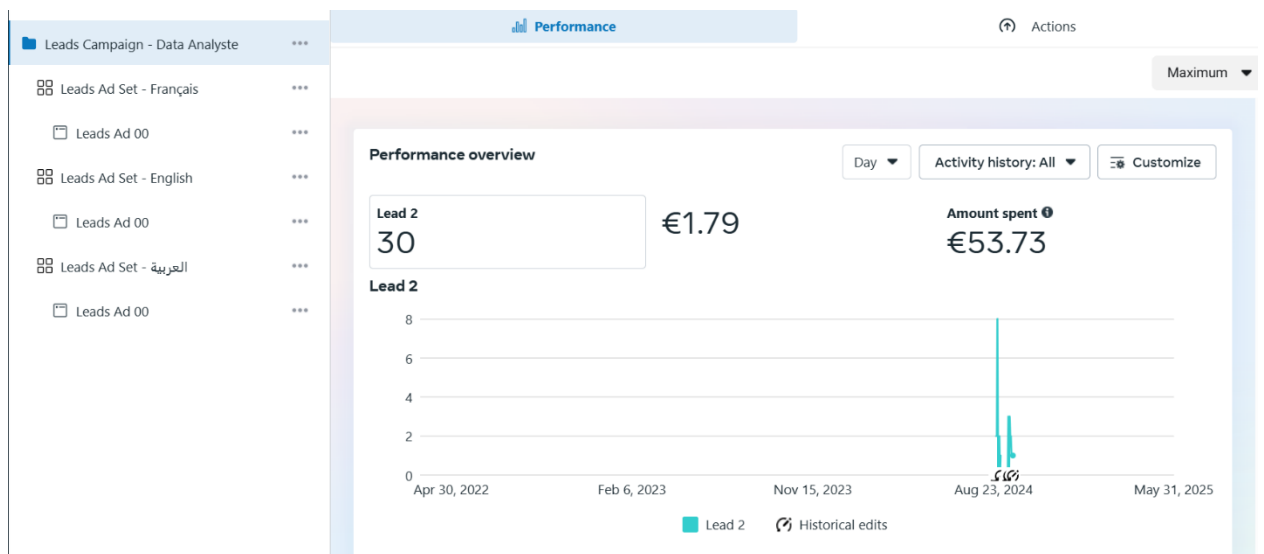
**Appendix N °11: KPIs of the Third Image Ads Lead Generation Campaign – ITComp Academy**



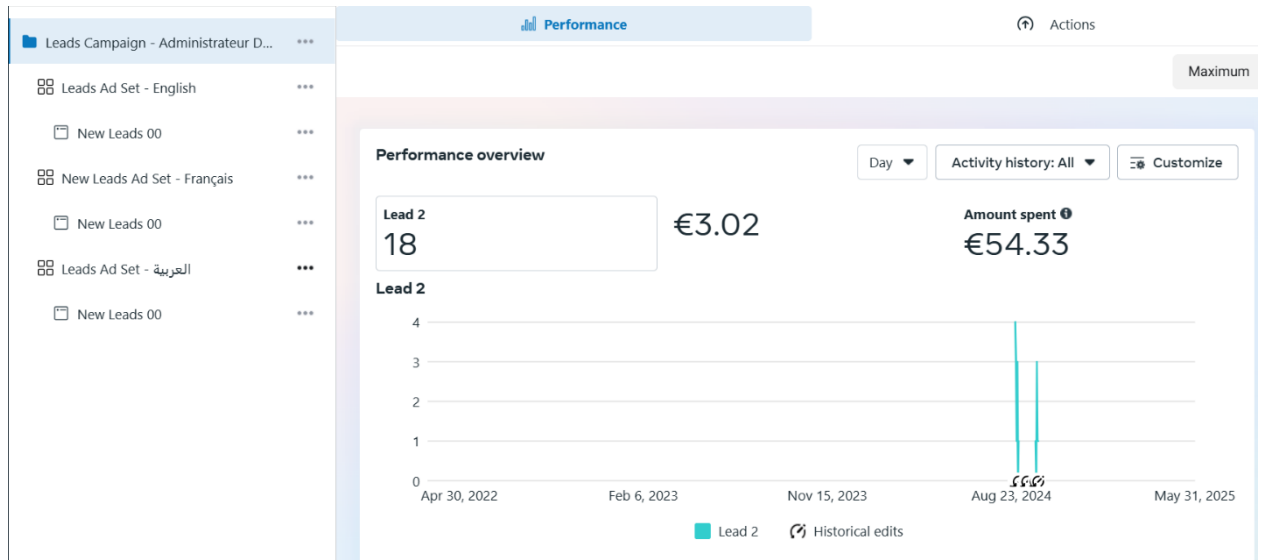
**Appendix N °12: KPIs of the Fourth Image Ads Lead Generation Campaign – ITComp Academy**



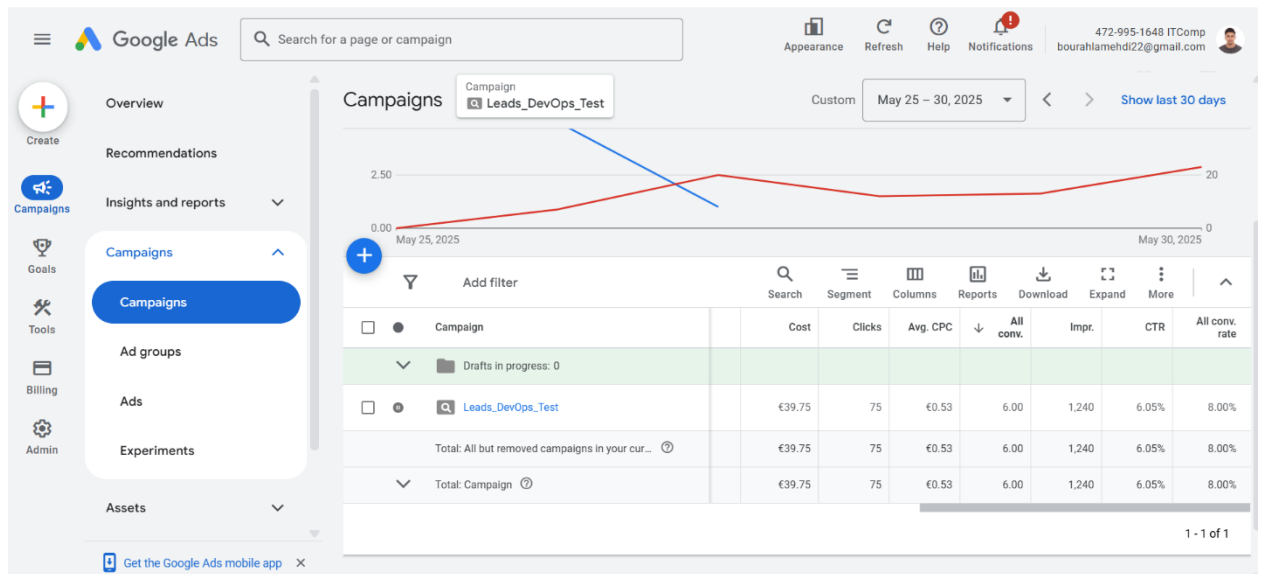
**Appendix N °13: KPIs of the Fifth Image Ads Lead Generation Campaign – ITComp Academy**



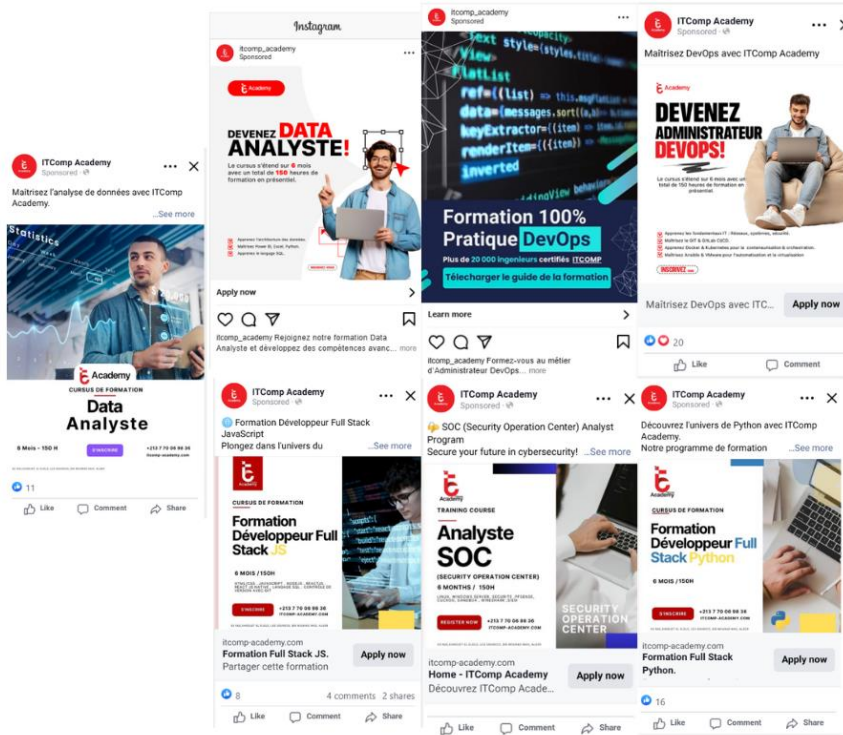
**Appendix N °14: KPIs of the Sixth Image Ads Lead Generation Campaign – ITComp Academy**



**Appendix N °15: KPIs of the Google Ads Search Lead Generation Campaign – ITComp Academy**



Appendix N °16: Meta Ads Used in the study



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