

UNIT-3

ACQUIRING & ENGAGING USERS THROUGH DIGITAL CHANNELS

I. FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIP

A. THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL OF MODERN MARKETING

1. **CONTENT:** Content: The vehicle that carries your message
2. **BRANDING:** The emotional and psychological relationship
3. **SALES:** The commercial outcome of effective communication

B. THE EVOLUTION FROM TRANSACTIONAL TO RELATIONAL

TRADITIONAL MODEL	MODERN MODEL
Product → Advertising	Content → Brand Building
Sales → Customers	Trust → Relationships
Repeat Business	Advocacy → Sales

II. CONTENT AS THE BRAND VOICE

A. CONTENT DEFINES BRAND PERSONALITY

CONTENT TYPES	BRAND ASSOCIATIONS
Educational Content	Authority/Expertise
Entertainment Content	Personality/Fun
Inspirational Content	Values/Aspirations
User-Generated Content	Community/Trust
Behind-the-Scenes	Authenticity/Transparency

B. THE CONTENT-BRANDING CONNECTION FRAMEWORK



C. CASE STUDY: RED BULL

CONTENT STRATEGY	Extreme sports, adventure, youth culture
BRAND IDENTITY	Energy, excitement, pushing limits
SALES IMPACT	43% market share in energy drinks \$7.8 billion in annual revenue Premium pricing power
KEY INSIGHT	Content so compelling people would consume it even without product

III. BRANDING AS THE EMOTIONAL FOUNDATION

A. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF BRAND-DRIVEN PURCHASES

Emotional Triggers in Decision Making:

- **Identity Alignment:** "This brand represents who I am"
- **Social Proof:** "People like me choose this brand"
- **Trust & Security:** "I know I can rely on this brand"
- **Aspiration:** "This brand helps me become who I want to be"

B. BRAND EQUITY COMPONENTS THAT DRIVE SALES

1. Brand Awareness

- *Top-of-mind recognition*
- *Consideration set inclusion*

2. Brand Associations

- *Quality perceptions*
- *Value alignment*
- *Emotional connections*

3. Brand Loyalty

- *Repeat purchases*
- *Price insensitivity*
- *Word-of-mouth advocacy*

C. THE TRUST PYRAMID

ADVOCACY



LOYALTY



TRUST



FAMILIARITY



AWARENESS

IV. THE DIRECT IMPACT ON SALES

A. HOW CONTENT & BRANDING INFLUENCE THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

a) AWARENESS STAGE

- Content: Educational blog posts, social media content
- Branding: Memorable identity, clear value proposition
- Sales Impact: Top-of-funnel lead generation

b) CONSIDERATION STAGE

- Content: Case studies, product comparisons, testimonials
- Branding: Trust signals, social proof, authority building
- Sales Impact: Higher conversion rates

c) DECISION STAGE

- Content: Demos, free trials, detailed specifications
- Branding: Emotional connection, risk reduction
- Sales Impact: Closed deals, premium pricing

d) RETENTION STAGE

- Content: Onboarding, tutorials, advanced tips
- Branding: Consistent experience, promise delivery
- Sales Impact: Repeat purchases, upsells

B. QUANTIFIABLE BUSINESS IMPACTS

REVENUE IMPACTS

- 23% higher revenue growth for consistent brands
- 31% higher consideration for brands with strong content
- 50% higher customer lifetime value for brand-loyal customers

COST IMPACTS

- 50% lower customer acquisition costs for referral customers
- 30% lower marketing spend for established brands
- 20% higher ROI on content marketing vs. traditional advertising

V. CONTENT → BRANDING → SALES FUNNEL

THE INTEGRATED MARKETING FUNNEL

FUNNEL STAGE	CONTENT TYPES	BRAND BUILDING FOCUS	SALES OUTCOMES
TOFU (Top of Funnel)	Blog posts, Social content, Info graphics	Awareness, Recognition, Top-of-mind recall, Brand association	Leads, Email signups, Website traffic, Social followers
MOFU (Middle of Funnel)	Case studies, Webinars, Email newsletters	Consideration, Trust building, Value alignment, Preference formation	Qualified leads, Demo requests, Free trials, Cart additions
BOFU (Bottom of Funnel)	Product demos, Testimonials, Comparisons	Decision, Risk reduction, Emotional connect, Urgency creation	Customers, Purchases, Subscriptions, Contracts
Retention / Loyalty	Tutorials, User communities, Exclusive content	Loyalty, Relationship building, Emotional bond, Identity alignment	Advocates, Repeat buys, Referrals, Reviews

SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

A form of online marketing that promotes websites by increasing their visibility in search engine results pages (SERPs) primarily through paid advertising.

The Goal: To place ads in front of high-intent users at the precise moment they are searching for something related to your business.

Common Misconception: Often used interchangeably with SEO, but they are distinct:

- **SEM (Paid):** Immediate visibility through paid placements. (The topic of these notes).
- **SEO (Organic):** Long-term visibility through unpaid, earned rankings.

The largest SEM platform.

- **Where Ads Appear:**
 - Top of search results (above organic listings).
 - Bottom of search results.
 - Google's Search Partner network.
- **The Auction System:** Ad placement is not just about who pays the most. It's a real-time auction that happens every time a search is conducted.
- **Key Metric: PPC (Pay-Per-Click)**
 - You only pay when a user clicks on your ad.

COMPONENTS OF AN SEM CAMPAIGN

A. KEYWORDS: THE FOUNDATION

- What they are: The words/phrases users type into a search engine.
- **Keyword Research:** The process of finding the right keywords to target.
 - Tools: Google Keyword Planner, SEMrush, Ahrefs.
 - Focus on: Search Volume, Relevance, and Commercial Intent (e.g., "buy running shoes" vs. "what are running shoes").
- **Keyword Match Types:** Control how closely a search query must match your keyword to trigger your ad.
 - Exact Match: [buy blue widgets] - Highest intent, most restrictive.
 - Phrase Match: "blue widgets" - Contains the phrase in order.
 - Broad Match: blue widgets - Reaches the widest audience, least restrictive (can be inefficient).
 - Broad Match Modifier: +blue +widgets - Specific words must be present.

B. AD COPY: THE HOOK

- **Structure (Responsive Search Ads - RSAs):** Create multiple headlines and descriptions. Google's AI mixes and matches them to perform best.
 - Headlines: Include primary keyword, value proposition, and a call-to-action (CTA).
 - Descriptions: Elaborate on benefits, offer, and urgency.

- **Best Practices:**
 - Be relevant to the keyword.
 - Use a strong CTA (e.g., "Buy Now," "Get a Quote," "Learn More").
 - Highlight Unique Selling Propositions (USPs) like free shipping or a price match.
 - Use ad extensions.

C. AD EXTENSIONS: THE ENGAGEMENT BOOSTERS

- What they are: Additional pieces of information that make your ad larger and more useful.
- **Types:**
 - **Sitelink Extensions:** Link to specific pages on your site (e.g., "View Our Services," "Contact Us Today").
 - **Call Extensions:** Display your phone number for direct contact.
 - **Location Extensions:** Show your business address and map.
 - **Price Extensions:** Display products/services with prices.
 - **Structured Snippets:** Highlight specific features of your product/service.

D. LANDING PAGES: THE CONVERSION POINT

- The page a user arrives at after clicking your ad.
- **Critical for:** Quality Score and Conversion Rate.
- **Best Practices:**
 - Message Match: The ad copy and the landing page content must be consistent.
 - Clear CTA: A single, obvious action you want the user to take.
 - Fast Loading Speed: Users will leave if it's slow.
 - Mobile-Friendly: The majority of searches are on mobile.

MEASURING SUCCESS: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

1. **Impressions:** How many times your ad was shown.
2. **Clicks:** How many times your ad was clicked.
3. **Click-Through Rate (CTR):** ($\text{Clicks} \div \text{Impressions}$). Measures ad relevance.
4. **Cost Per Click (CPC):** The average amount you pay for each click.
5. **Conversion:** A valuable action completed by a user (purchase, form submit, etc.).
6. **Conversion Rate (CVR):** ($\text{Conversions} \div \text{Clicks}$). Measures landing page effectiveness.
7. **Cost Per Acquisition (CPA):** ($\text{Total Ad Spend} \div \text{Conversions}$). The ultimate metric for efficiency.
8. **Return on Ad Spend (ROAS):** ($\text{Revenue from Ads} \div \text{Ad Spend}$). Measures profitability.

MOBILE MARKETING

Mobile Marketing is an overarching strategy to reach and engage a target audience on their smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices through a variety of channels and tactics. It recognizes the mobile device as a personal, always-on companion.

Definition: Any marketing activity conducted through mobile devices to provide personalized, context-aware, and location-sensitive information to promote products, services, and ideas.

The Goal: To meet users where they are—on their phones—with the right message, at the right time, and in the right context.

Key Mindset Shift: It's not just about a smaller screen; it's about a different user behavior:

- **Micro-Moments:** Intent-rich moments when users turn to their devices to act on a need.
- **"On-the-Go":** Users expect immediate, relevant, and easily digestible information.

CHANNELS & TACTICS FOR ACQUISITION & ENGAGEMENT

A. MOBILE-OPTIMIZED WEBSITE & WEB ADS

- **Acquisition:** Running PPC campaigns (like Google Ads) with a focus on mobile-specific targeting (e.g., device, location).
- **Engagement:** Ensuring the website provides a flawless mobile user experience (UX).
 - Must be Responsive: Adapts to any screen size.
 - Fast Loading Speed: Users abandon slow sites.
 - Thumb-Friendly Navigation: Easy to use with one hand.
 - Clear Call-to-Actions (CTAs): Buttons like "Call Now" or "Get Directions."

B. SMS & MMS MARKETING

- **Acquisition:** Collecting opt-ins (e.g., via a website form) to build a subscriber list.
- **Engagement:** Sending direct messages.
 - SMS (Text): For time-sensitive alerts (shipping confirmations, appointment reminders), promotions, and updates. High open rate.
 - MMS (Multimedia): Includes images, GIFs, or short videos for richer engagement (e.g., new product images).

C. MOBILE APPS & IN-APP MARKETING

- **Acquisition:**
 - **App Store Optimization (ASO):** The "SEO for app stores." Optimizing the app's title, keywords, description, and screenshots to rank higher.
 - **Paid User Acquisition:** Running ads on other platforms (like social media or Google's UAC) to drive app installs.
- **Engagement:**
 - **Push Notifications:** The primary tool for re-engagement. Send reminders, updates, or personalized content to bring users back into the app.
 - **In-App Messages:** Contextual messages displayed while the user is inside the app (e.g., tutorials, special offers).
 - **Deep Linking:** Linking directly to a specific page or piece of content inside the app from an external source (like an email or ad).

D. LOCATION-BASED MARKETING

- **Acquisition:** Targeting users based on their real-time or historical geographic location.
- **Engagement:**
 - **Geofencing:** Triggering an action (like a push notification or ad) when a user enters or exits a virtual boundary around a physical location (e.g., "Get 10% off when you're near our store!").
 - **Beacon Technology:** Using small Bluetooth devices in physical locations to send hyper-localized messages to nearby smartphones (e.g., in a museum, sending info about an exhibit you're standing near).

E. MOBILE WALLET MARKETING (APPLE WALLET, GOOGLE PAY)

- **Acquisition:** Encouraging users to save loyalty cards, coupons, or event tickets to their mobile wallet.
- **Engagement:** Sending updates to passes already in the wallet (e.g., updating a loyalty point balance, pushing a new coupon when the user is near a store).

MEASURING SUCCESS: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

- **FOR MOBILE WEB:**
 - Mobile Traffic Share, Bounce Rate, Pages Per Session, Conversion Rate.
- **FOR SMS/MMS:**
 - Delivery Rate, Open Rate, Click-Through Rate (CTR), Opt-Out Rate.
- **FOR MOBILE APPS:**
 - Installs: Number of downloads.
 - Launch Rate: How many users open the app after installing.
 - Retention Rate: % of users who return after a certain period (e.g., Day 1, Day 7, Day 30 retention).
 - Average Session Length: Time spent in the app per visit.
- **FOR LOCATION-BASED:**
 - Foot Traffic, Visit Duration, Conversion Lift in physical stores.

MARKETING GAMIFICATION

Gamification is the application of game-design elements and game principles in non-game contexts, like marketing. It uses psychology to make marketing activities more fun and engaging, thereby motivating participation, loyalty, and action.

- **Definition:** The strategic integration of game mechanics into marketing campaigns and customer experiences to drive engagement, motivation, and loyalty.
- **Goal:** To tap into intrinsic human desires for competition, achievement, status, and reward to influence consumer behavior.
- **Mindset:** It's not about building a full-fledged video game. It's about using playful elements to make mundane tasks (like filling out a form or making a purchase) more enjoyable and rewarding.

GAME MECHANICS & THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

GAME MECHANIC	DESCRIPTION	PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE	MARKETING EXAMPLE
Points & Scoring	Quantifiable metrics for completing actions.	Instant Gratification: Provides immediate feedback.	Earning points for purchases, social shares, or reviews.
Badges & Achievements	Visual symbols of accomplishment for reaching milestones.	Goal-Setting & Status: Represents mastery and creates a collection mindset.	A badge for "First Purchase," "Review Guru," or "Social Butterfly."
Leaderboards	Public rankings that display user performance relative to others.	Competition & Social Comparison: Drives users to compete for status.	A top 10 list of most active community members or top referrers.
Progress Bars	Visual indicators of how close a user is to completing a task or goal.	The Goal-Gradient Effect: Motivation increases as one gets closer to a goal.	A bar showing "You're 2 purchases away from Gold Status!"
Challenges & Quests	A series of tasks or a narrative that guides user actions.	Purpose & Mastery: Gives users a clear mission and a sense of accomplishment.	"Complete your profile to unlock a secret discount."

THE USER JOURNEY: ACQUISITION & ENGAGEMENT

STAGE	GAMIFICATION ACTION	GOAL
1. AWARENESS & ACQUISITION	Referral Contests: "Refer a friend, both get 100 points!" Interactive Ads: A "scratch card" or "spin-the-wheel" ad.	Lower customer acquisition cost (CAC) and generate buzz.
2. ONBOARDING & EDUCATION	Progress Bars: "Complete 3 steps to set up your account." Quests: A checklist of "first steps" to learn a product.	Increase activation rate and time-to-value for new users.
3. ENGAGEMENT & RETENTION	Loyalty Programs: Points for purchases that lead to tiers (Silver, Gold, Platinum). Challenges: "Post 5 times this week to earn a badge."	Increase frequency of visits, usage, and brand interaction.
4. ADVOCACY & LOYALTY	Leaderboards for top brand advocates. Exclusive Badges/Achievements for long-term customers or high-value actions (e.g., writing 50 reviews).	

ONLINE CAMPAIGN MANAGEMENT & ANALYTIC SEGMENTATION

Online Campaign Management is the end-to-end process of planning, executing, tracking, analyzing, and optimizing digital marketing initiatives. Using analytics for segmentation is the practice of dividing a broad target market into smaller, more manageable subgroups (segments) based on shared characteristics to deliver more personalized and effective campaigns.

ONLINE CAMPAIGN MANAGEMENT LIFECYCLE

This is a continuous, iterative process.

1. PHASE 1: PLANNING & STRATEGY

- Define Campaign Goals (SMART):
 - Specific: Increase email sign-ups by 25%.

- Measurable: Track via Google Analytics form conversions.
- Achievable: Based on historical data and resources.
- Relevant: Aligns with business objective of growing the marketing database.
- Time-bound: Within the next quarter.
- **Identify Target Audience:** Initially a broad definition (e.g., "small business owners in the US interested in accounting software").
- **Set Budget & Channels:** Allocate spend across chosen channels (e.g., Social Media, SEM, Email).

2. PHASE 2: EXECUTION & LAUNCH

- **Implement Campaign Assets:**
 - Launch ad sets on platforms (Google Ads, Meta Ads Manager).
 - Schedule and send email blasts.
 - Publish social media posts.
- **Ensure Tracking is Active:**
 - Implement UTM parameters to track traffic sources.
 - Verify pixel installation (Meta Pixel, Google Ads tag) for conversion tracking.

3. PHASE 3: MONITORING & ANALYSIS

- **Real-Time Dashboards:** Monitor key metrics (Impressions, Clicks, Spend, Conversions) as the campaign runs.
- **Analyze Performance:** Compare results against the goals set in Phase 1.
- **Gather Data for Segmentation:** This is where analytics tools become critical for understanding who is responding.

4. PHASE 4: OPTIMIZATION

- **A/B Testing (Split Testing):** Test different elements (ad copy, images, landing pages, subject lines) to see what performs best.
- **Bid & Budget Adjustments:** Shift budget towards better-performing channels, ad sets, or keywords.
- **Refine Audience Segments:** Use initial campaign data to create more precise segments for subsequent campaigns or real-time retargeting.

MARKETING ANALYTIC TOOLS FOR SEGMENTATION

"Platforms that collect, measure, and analyze data from your digital marketing efforts."

EXAMPLES:

- **Google Analytics 4 (GA4):** For website/app user behavior.
- **Adobe Analytics:** An enterprise alternative.
- **Platform-Native Tools:** Meta Business Suite, Twitter Analytics, LinkedIn Campaign Manager.
- **CRM Platforms:** Salesforce, HubSpot (for customer data).
- **Email Marketing Platforms:** Mailchimp, Klaviyo.

KEY DATA DIMENSIONS FOR SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTATION TYPE	WHAT IT IS	EXAMPLES (HOW TO SEGMENT)
Demographic	Basic personal attributes.	Age, Gender, Income, Education, Job Title.
Geographic	Physical location of the user.	Country, City, Radius around a location, Climate.
Psychographic	Internal traits like values and interests.	Interests, Lifestyles, Values, Personality traits.
Behavioral	The most powerful for optimization. Based on user actions.	Purchase History, Browsing Behavior, Engagement Level, Device Used, Loyalty Status.

USE ANALYTICS TOOLS TO CREATE & APPLY SEGMENTS

STEP 1: DISCOVER SEGMENTS FROM DATA (ANALYSIS)

- In Google Analytics 4 (GA4), use the "Explorations" feature to:
 - Find users who purchased a specific product and see what other pages they visited.
 - Identify a segment of users who spent over 5 minutes on the site but didn't convert.
 - Analyze the traffic source of your most valuable customers.

STEP 2: BUILD THE SEGMENTS (AUDIENCE CREATION)

- In Google Ads or Meta Ads Manager, use the insights from GA4 to build custom audiences. For example:
 - "High-Value Cart Abandoners": Users who added products >\$100 to cart but didn't purchase in the last 7 days.
 - "Blog Engagers": Users who read more than 3 blog posts in the last 30 days.
 - "New vs. Returning Customers": Create separate campaigns for each with different messaging.

STEP 3: ACTIVATE SEGMENTS IN CAMPAIGNS

- Targeting: Use these segments as the audience for new, highly specific campaigns.
- Exclusion: Exclude existing customers from a prospecting campaign aimed at new leads.
- Personalization: Use segment data to personalize email content (e.g., "We see you liked X, here's Y...").

STEP 4: MEASURE SEGMENT PERFORMANCE

- Compare the Cost Per Acquisition (CPA) and Return on Ad Spend (ROAS) of different segments.
 - You may find your "Email Subscribers" segment has a much lower CPA than your "Social Media Prospecting" segment, allowing you to optimize budget accordingly.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

SEO is the practice of improving a website to increase its organic (non-paid) visibility and traffic from search engine results pages (SERPs). It's a long-term strategy focused on earning visibility, rather than paying for it.

Goal: To align your website's content and technical structure with the factors search engines (like Google) use to rank pages, in order to appear as the best possible answer to a user's query.

THE THREE CORE PILLARS OF SEO

SEO is typically broken down into three main categories that work together.

1. TECHNICAL SEO

This is the foundation. It's about ensuring a search engine can find, crawl, and understand your website's structure and content easily.

- **Crawlability:** Making sure search engine bots can access all important pages on your site (using a robots.txt file and a sitemap).
- **Indexing:** Ensuring search engines add your pages to their database (index).
- Site Speed: How quickly your pages load. This is critical for user experience and a direct ranking factor.
- **Mobile-Friendliness:** Your site must render and function well on mobile devices. Google uses mobile-first indexing, meaning it primarily uses the mobile version of your site for ranking.
- **Site Architecture:** A logical, flat site structure with clear navigation that helps users and bots find content easily.
- **HTTPS & Security:** Having a secure website (SSL certificate) is a standard ranking signal.

2. ON-PAGE SEO

This focuses on optimizing the content and HTML source code of individual pages to rank for specific keywords.

- **Keyword Research:** Identifying the words and phrases your target audience uses to search for your products, services, or information. This is the starting point for content creation.
- **Content Quality & Relevance:** Creating high-quality, comprehensive, and original content that best satisfies the user's search intent (why they are searching).
- **Title Tags:** The clickable headline in the SERPs. This is one of the most important on-page elements.
- **Meta Descriptions:** The short blurb under the title tag in the SERPs. It doesn't directly affect rankings but heavily influences click-through rate (CTR).
- **Heading Tags (H1, H2, H3):** Using headings to structure your content logically. The H1 should be the main topic of the page.
- **URL Structure:** Creating clean, readable, and keyword-relevant URLs (e.g., yoursite.com/blue-running-shoes).
- **Image Optimization:** Using descriptive file names and alt text for images to improve accessibility and provide context to search engines.
- **Internal Linking:** Linking to other relevant pages on your own site. This helps users navigate, establishes site hierarchy, and distributes "link equity."

3. OFF-PAGE SEO

This involves actions taken outside of your own website to improve your site's authority and reputation, primarily through link building.

- **Backlinks (Inbound Links):** Links from other websites to yours. They are like votes of confidence; a link from a highly authoritative and relevant site is a very strong ranking signal.
- **Link Building Strategies:**
 - Creating exceptional "link-worthy" content that others naturally want to reference.
 - Digital PR and outreach.
 - Guest posting on reputable industry blogs.
- **Local Citations:** For local businesses, having your business Name, Address, and Phone Number (NAP) listed consistently on other sites (like directories and review sites) is crucial for local SEO.
- **Brand Mentions & Social Signals:** While the direct ranking impact is debated, being talked about on social media and other platforms increases brand visibility, which can indirectly lead to more organic traffic and links.

THE SEO PROCESS

- **Keyword Research & Strategy:** Discover what your audience is searching for.
- **Technical Audit & Fixes:** Ensure your website is healthy and crawlable.
- **Content Creation & Optimization:** Create the best content on the internet for your target keywords and optimize on-page elements.
- **Earning Links & Mentions (Off-Page):** Promote your content and build authority.
- **Monitoring, Analysis, & Iteration:** Use tools like Google Search Console and Google Analytics to track rankings, traffic, and user behavior, then refine your strategy.

SEO VS. SEM: A QUICK COMPARISON

Factor	SEO (Organic)	SEM (Paid - e.g., Google Ads)
Placement	"Organic" results	"Paid" ads (top & bottom of SERPs)
Cost	Time, effort, resources	Pay-per-click (PPC) model
Timeline	Long-term (months to see results)	Immediate (ads run as soon as campaign starts)
Sustainability	Results can last for a long time	Stops the moment you stop paying
Trust/CTR	Often perceived as more trustworthy; can have higher CTR	Seen as advertisements; typically lower CTR