

Sales and Marketing Essentials: Masterclass

Unlock your potential

Marketing is how you earn attention.

Sales is how you earn trust.

Together, they build the company
you're dreaming of.

What We'll Cover Today

01 Marketing Refresher
— the *Brilliant Basics*

02 The Lean Marketing
Framework

03 Social Media
Marketing

04 From Marketing to Sales:
How Founders Convert

05 AI-Driven Sales and
Marketing Tools

06 Q&A + Key Takeaways

What You'll Learn (and Actually Use)...



How to build trust and momentum with marketing — even on a shoestring budget



Social media strategies that actually work for startups



Quick, practical tools you can apply today (no fluff)



How to connect your marketing to real sales outcomes



Bonus: AI hacks and detailed prompt cheat sheets.



01

Marketing Refresher — *the Brilliant Basics*

This session is about marketing that builds trust and sales momentum — even if you don't have a budget yet.



Brilliant Basics: Marketing Definition

“Marketing is a “*discovery mechanism*” for uncovering value that no one knew existed — either through **discovering an unmet need**, or servicing an existing need **through innovation**.”

— Rory Sutherland

Vice chairman of Ogilvy & Mather, one of the world's largest advertising agencies



Why Marketing Matters, Especially For Startups



Build Awareness & Interest

Everything starts with visibility. Without attention there's now action.



Shape Your Brand Identity

Your story, values, and tone get defined... whether you control it or not.



Adapt to Market Change

Your messaging must evolve as your market shift, and fast.



Drive Sales & Conversion

Even the best product won't sell itself. Great marketing connects the dots.



Attract Talent & Investors

Investors and early hires buy into the mission before the model.

Founder Tip: Marketing is how your startup is understood, remembered and trusted.

Brilliant Basics: Example of a Marketing Funnel



Test. Learn. Optimise. Repeat.

Each customer type/persona is different

—

- Which are the most valuable?
- How to acquire them?
- How to retain them?
- How to increase LTV?



Who on Earth?

Understand who your customers are — and who will **actually** pay you money for business

Stop Bothering Me!

Where do they spend their time — and will they be **happy** to receive your message

Say What Now?!

Communicate in **their language** — memes, witty headlines, information, etc

Why Should I Care?

What's the **value exchange**? Convince me! You have ~3 seconds (less with youths).

Brilliant Basics: 8 Components of a Marketing Campaign

- 01 Objective:** The goal you aim to achieve with your campaign.
- 02 Target:** The audience you want to reach and engage.
- 03 Messaging:** The key message you want to communicate.
- 04 Channels:** The platforms or mediums used to deliver the message.
- 05 Creative Elements:** Visual and content aspects that grab attention.
- 06 Budget:** The financial resources allocated to the campaign.
- 07 Timeline:** Schedule for planning, executing & assessing campaign.
- 08 Measurement and Analysis:** Tracking performance and analyzing results to gauge success.

*"A **marketing campaign** refers to a coordinated set of activities and strategies that are designed to promote a product, service, brand, or organization."*

02

The Lean Marketing Framework

This session is about building fast, testing smarter, and learning quickly — so you can grow without burning your budget.



**Lean Marketing =
High ROI with low cost**

Lean Marketing = High ROI with low cost

Minimal Resources
with a **Maximum** Impact

Key Principles of a *Lean Marketing Framework*

01 **Rapid Experimentation:**

Run quick tests to determine what works before scaling.

03 **Data-Driven Decisions:**

Prioritise measurable outcomes over assumptions or intuition.

05 **Growth Hack:** Use available (free) tools wherever possible

02 **Customer-Centric:**

Focus on genuine customer feedback and real-world market responses.

04 **Iterative Improvements:**

Continuously refine campaigns based on feedback and results.

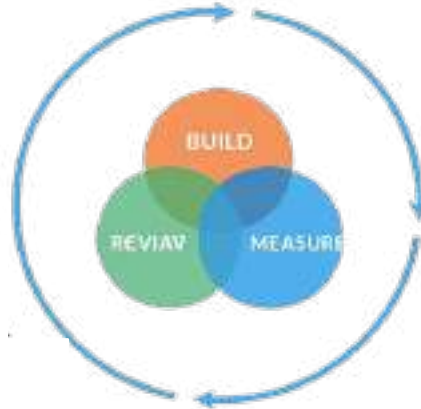
Lean Marketing Framework

Test Fast. Learn Faster. Grow Smarter.



Set Marketing Objective

What are you trying to achieve?
Define clear goals and map out
your key assumptions
(LOFAs — Leap of Faith Assumptions)



Founder Tip: It's OK to fail but **Fail Fast** and then **Adapt Fast**.

Lean Marketing Framework

Test Fast. Learn Faster. Grow Smarter.



1 Set Marketing Objective

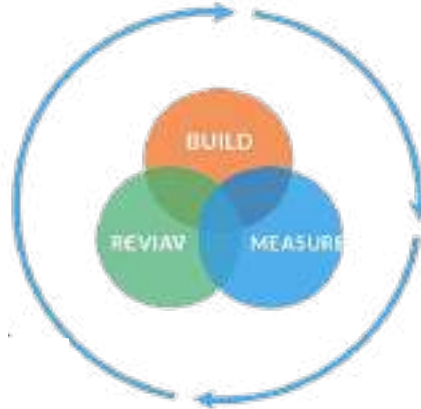
What are you trying to achieve?
Define clear goals and map out
your key assumptions
(LOFAs — *Leap of Faith Assumptions*)



2 Design a Test

Build fast, using
AI and free tools

Use AI
to save
time



Founder Tip: It's OK to fail but **Fail Fast** and then **Adapt Fast**.

Lean Marketing Framework

Test Fast. Learn Faster. Grow Smarter.



1 Set Marketing Objective

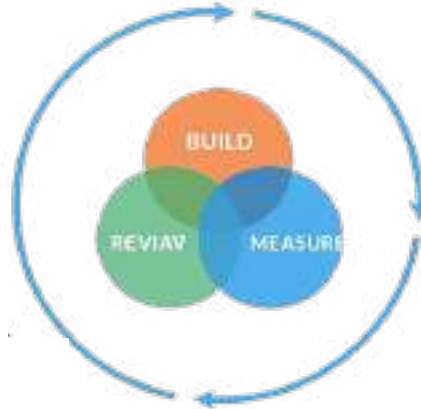
What are you trying to achieve?
Define clear goals and map out
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2 Design a Test

Build fast, using
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Use AI
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time



3

Run Experiments



Use low-cost or
no-cost tools.
Test often.
Improve iteratively

Use free
tools to
launch
quickly

Founder Tip: It's OK to fail but **Fail Fast** and then **Adapt Fast**.

Lean Marketing Framework

Test Fast. Learn Faster. Grow Smarter.



1 Set Marketing Objective

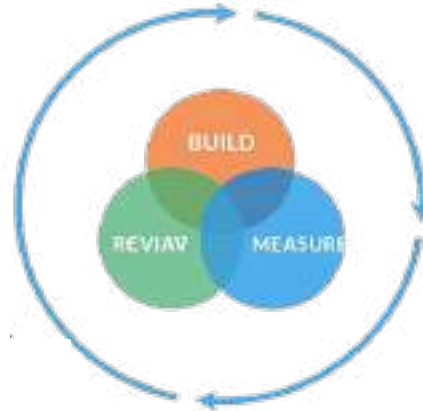
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Use free
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4

Review and Analyse



What does the data say?
(Validated Learning)

Founder Tip: It's OK to fail but **Fail Fast** and then **Adapt Fast**.

Lean Marketing Framework

Test Fast. Learn Faster. Grow Smarter.



1 Set Marketing Objective

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2 Design a Test

Build fast, using
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Use AI
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time



3 Run Experiments

Use low-cost or
no-cost tools.
Test often.
Improve iteratively

Use free
tools to
launch
quickly



4 Review and Analyse

What does the data say?
(Validated Learning)

Should you adapt
or double down?
Improve what works.
Change if it doesn't.

Focus on
organic
reach

Founder Tip: It's OK to fail but **Fail Fast** and then **Adapt Fast**.

03

Social Media Marketing

This session is about using the right platforms in the right way — turning attention into action, even with zero ad spend.



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OVERVIEW OF THE ADOPTION AND USE OF CONNECTED DEVICES AND SERVICES

NOTE: SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS TO SOURCE DATA MEAN THAT FIGURES SHOWN HERE ARE **NOT COMPARABLE** WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS. SEE THE IMPORTANT NOTES AT THE START OF THIS REPORT FOR DETAILS.



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Total Population



35.8
MILLION

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE

+1.2%
+427 THOUSAND

URBANISATION

79.4%

Cellular Mobile Connections



43.3
MILLION

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE

+1.1%
+474 THOUSAND

TOTAL vs. POPULATION

121%

Individuals Using The Internet



34.9
MILLION

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE

+1.2%
+417 THOUSAND

TOTAL vs. POPULATION

97.7%

Social Media User Identities



25.1
MILLION

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE

+4.1%
+1.0 MILLION

TOTAL vs. POPULATION

70.2%

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OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE

HEADLINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ADOPTION AND USE (NOTE: USER IDENTITIES MAY NOT REPRESENT UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS)



MALAYSIA

NUMBER OF SOCIAL
MEDIA USER IDENTITIES



25.1
MILLION

QUARTER-ON-QUARTER CHANGE
IN SOCIAL MEDIA USER IDENTITIES



0%
[UNCHANGED]

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN
SOCIAL MEDIA USER IDENTITIES



+4.1%
+1.0 MILLION

AVERAGE DAILY TIME SPENT
USING SOCIAL MEDIA



2H 46M
YOY: -1.0% (-2 MINS)

AVERAGE NUMBER OF SOCIAL
PLATFORMS USED EACH MONTH



8.1
YOY: +2.5% (+0.2)

SOCIAL MEDIA
USER IDENTITIES vs.
TOTAL POPULATION



70.2%

SOCIAL MEDIA USER
IDENTITIES AGED 18+ vs.
POPULATION AGED 18+



87.0%

SOCIAL MEDIA USER
IDENTITIES vs. INDIVIDUALS
USING THE INTERNET



71.8%

FEMALE SOCIAL MEDIA USER
IDENTITIES vs. TOTAL SOCIAL
MEDIA USER IDENTITIES



45.9%

MALE SOCIAL MEDIA USER
IDENTITIES vs. TOTAL SOCIAL
MEDIA USER IDENTITIES



54.1%

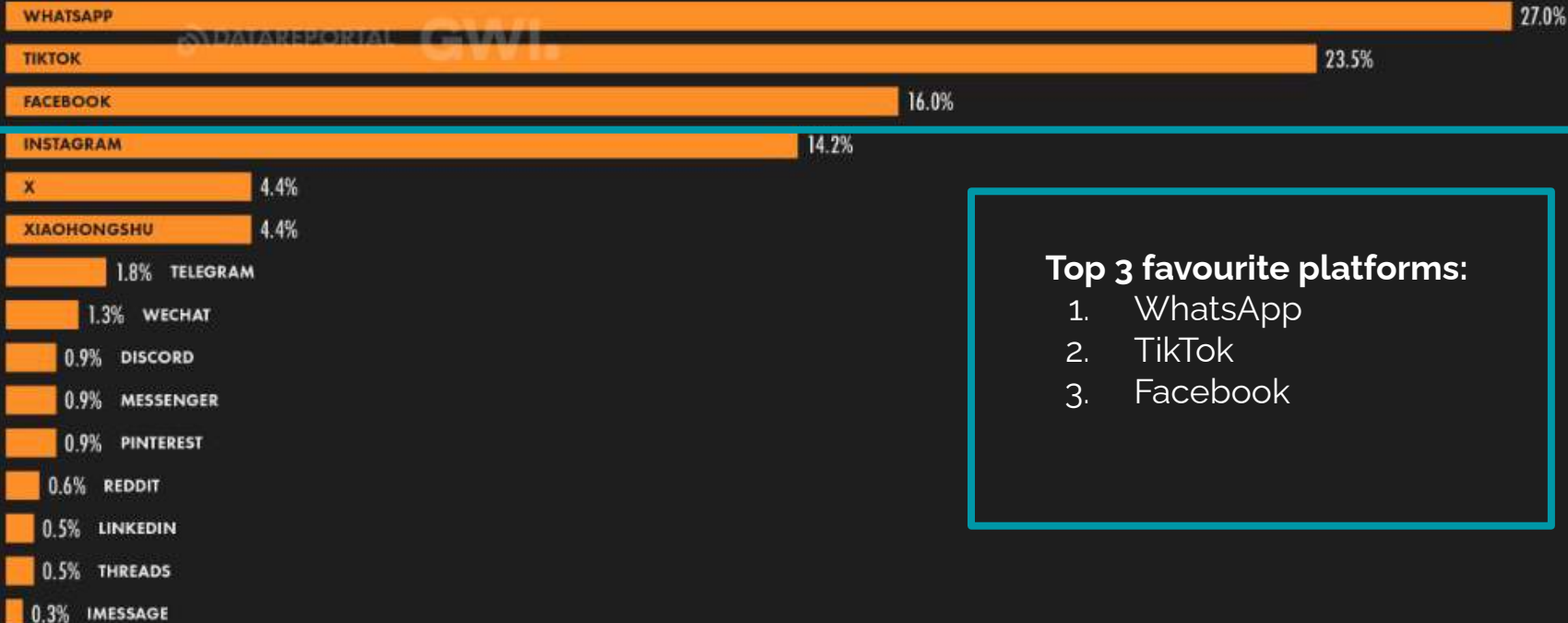
SOURCES: KEPRIOS ANALYSIS, COMPANY ADVERTISING RESOURCES, CHNHC, BETA RESEARCH CENTER, OCCH, U.N., GWI (Q3 2024). **NOTES:** WHERE PRESENT, "[BASE REVISIONS]" INDICATES THAT VALUES FOR TRENDS OVER TIME ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHANGES IN ACTUAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE. AVERAGE NUMBER OF PLATFORMS INCLUDES DATA FOR YOUTUBE. **ADVISORY:** SOCIAL MEDIA USER IDENTITIES MAY NOT REPRESENT UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS. DATA FOR YOUTUBE IS BASED ON THE NUMBER OF ACCOUNTS, NOT THE NUMBER OF VIEWS. DATA FOR YOUTUBE IS BASED ON THE NUMBER OF ACCOUNTS, NOT THE NUMBER OF VIEWS.

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FAVOURITE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

PERCENTAGE OF ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS AGED 16+ WHO SAY THAT EACH OPTION IS THEIR "FAVOURITE" SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

NOTE: YOUTUBE IS NOT AVAILABLE AS AN ANSWER OPTION IN THE SURVEY QUESTION THAT INFORMS THIS CHART



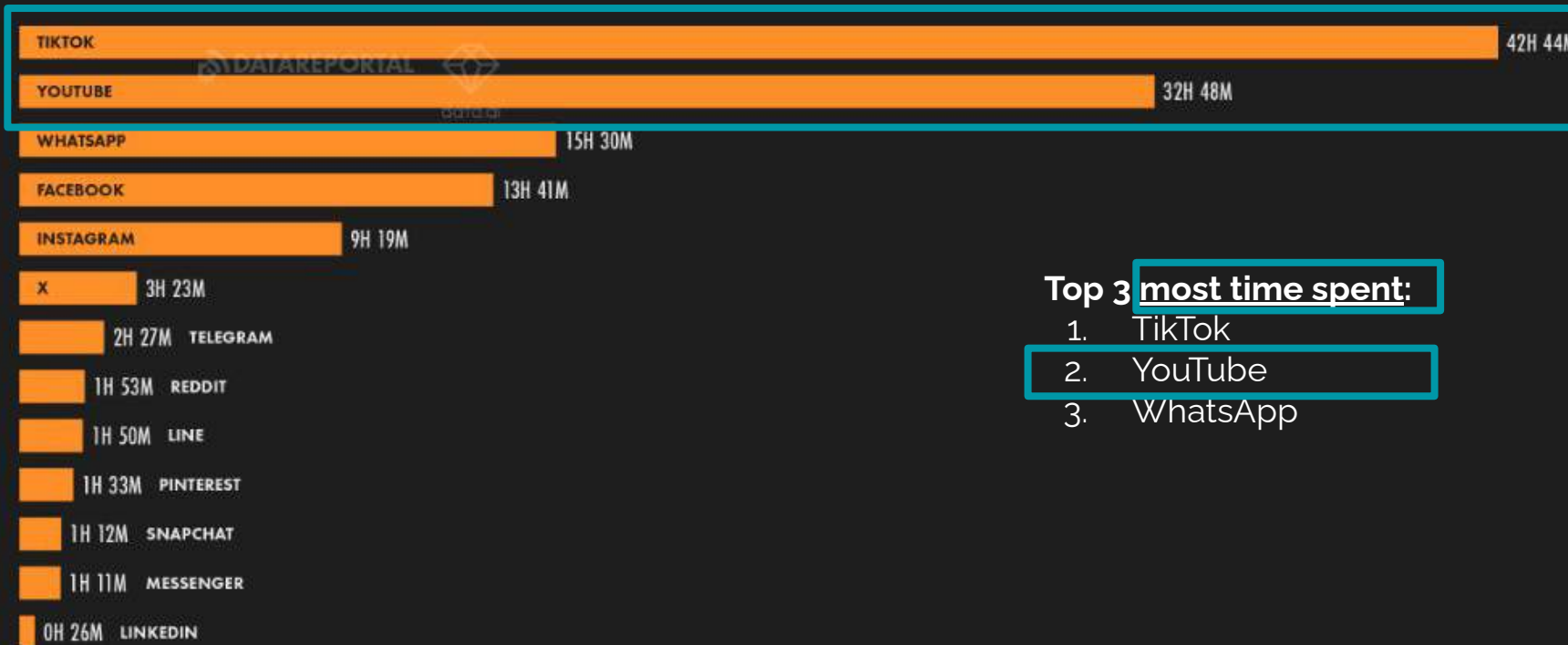
Top 3 favourite platforms:

1. WhatsApp
2. TikTok
3. Facebook

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SOCIAL MEDIA APPS: AVERAGE TIME PER USER

AVERAGE TIME PER MONTH THAT ACTIVE USERS SPENT USING EACH PLATFORM'S ANDROID APP IN NOVEMBER 2024



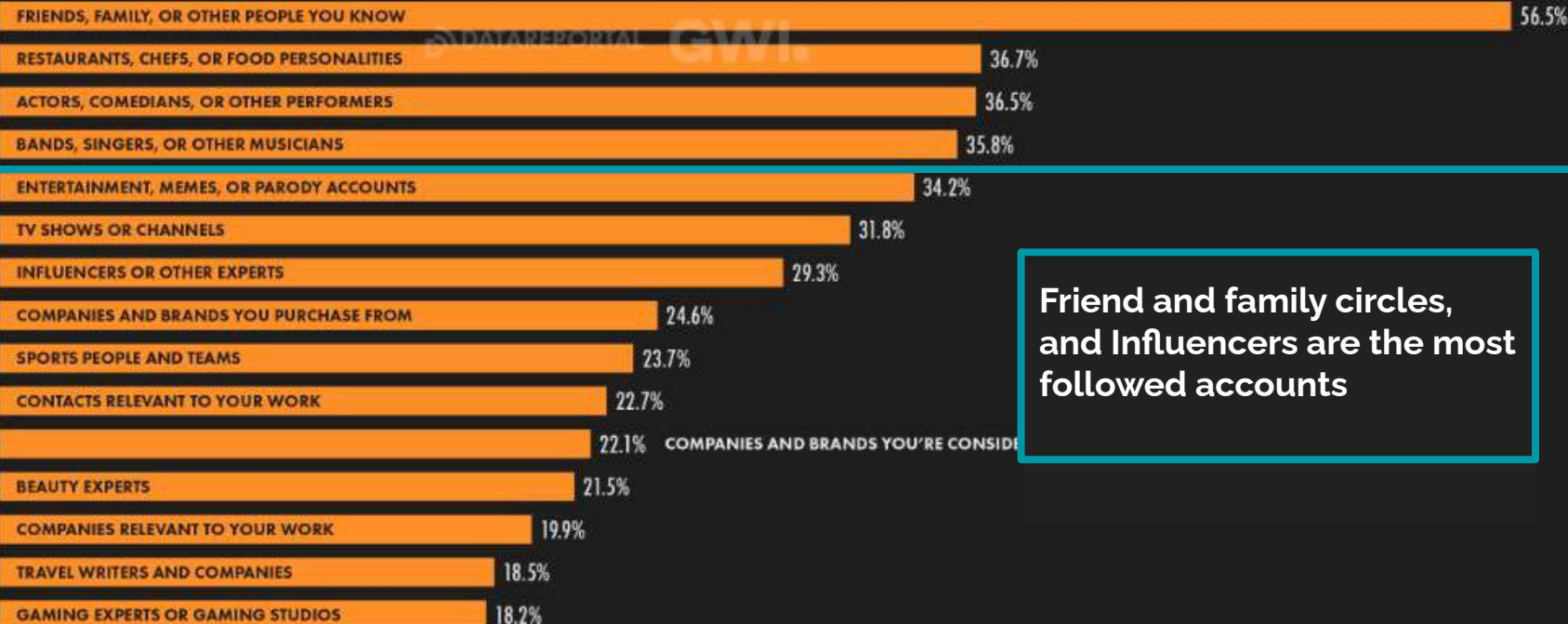
Top 3 **most time spent:**

1. TikTok
2. YouTube
3. WhatsApp

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SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT TYPES FOLLOWED

PERCENTAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USERS AGED 16+ WHO FOLLOW EACH TYPE OF ACCOUNT ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Friend and family circles,
and Influencers are the most
followed accounts

Instagram



Best For: Branding & Engagement

Key Strategy:

Storytelling, reels, influencer collaborations

Key measurement metrics:

- Engagement rate*
- Reach
- Impressions
- Follower growth
- Story metrics

- **Visual Appeal:** Instagram is an ideal platform for building a brand presence through visuals. New entrepreneurs can showcase their products, services, and **brand identity** with visually appealing posts, stories, and reels.
- **Storytelling:** Craft stories about your brand, your journey, and customer experiences. This helps **humanise** your brand and connect emotionally with your audience.
- **Influencer Collaborations:** Collaborating with influencers or micro-influencers can amplify your brand reach and **credibility**, especially for niche products or services.

**Engagement rate: (Likes + Comments + Shares + Saves) ÷ Total Followers x 100*

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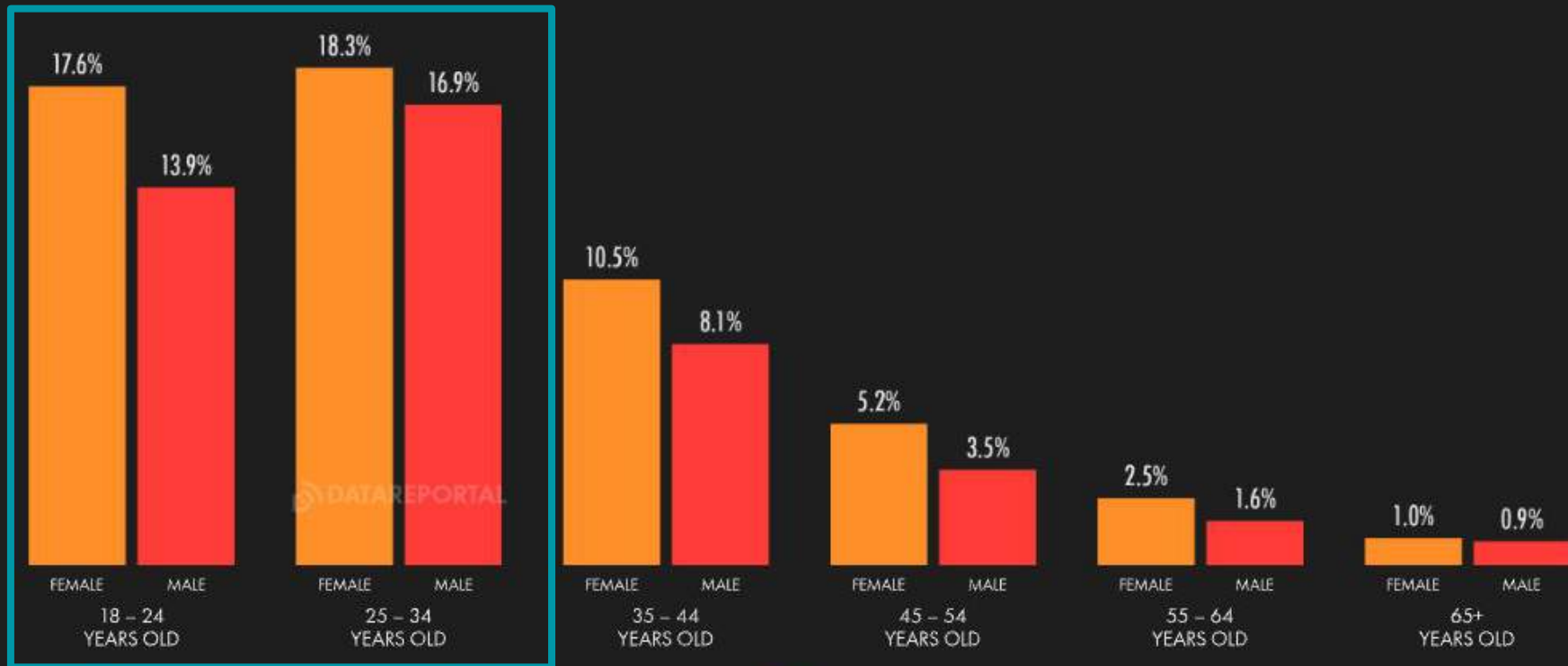
INSTAGRAM: ADVERTISING AUDIENCE PROFILE

SHARE OF INSTAGRAM'S ADULT ADVERTISING AUDIENCE AGED 18+ BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER

NOTE: PLEASE READ THE IMPORTANT NOTES ON COMPARING DATA AT THE START OF THIS REPORT BEFORE COMPARING DATA ON THIS CHART WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS



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110

SOURCES: META'S ADVERTISING RESOURCES, KAPO5 ANALYSIS. **NOTES:** VALUES USE MIDPOINTS OF PUBLISHED RANGES. **NOTE:** META'S ADVERTISING TOOLS NO LONGER PROVIDE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA FOR USERS BELOW THE AGE OF 18, SO WHILE THERE MAY BE ACTIVE USERS OF THE COMPANY'S PLATFORMS BELOW THIS AGE, THESE USERS NO LONGER APPEAR IN THE COMPANY'S POTENTIAL AD REACH DATA. GENDER DATA ARE ONLY AVAILABLE FOR "FEMALE" AND "MALE". **ADVISORY:** VALUES MAY NOT MATCH SHARE OF TOTAL ACTIVE USER BASE. USER AGE MISSTATEMENTS MAY DISTORT SOURCE DATA. **COMPARABILITY:** SOURCE DATA INCONSISTENCIES MAY MEAN THAT VALUES SHOWN HERE DO NOT CORRELATE WITH VALUES SHOWN ELSEWHERE IN THIS REPORT. BASE REVISIONS: SEE [NOTES ON DATA](#)

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Source: [Wearesocial Meltwater Malaysia 2025](#)

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Facebook



Best For: Branding & Community Building, B2C Engagement, Targeted Advertising

Key Strategy: Content Variety, Engagement through Comments & Groups, Targeted Ads

Key measurement metrics:

- Engagement rate*
- Reach
- Click-Through Rate (CTR)**
- Follower growth
- Page/Video views
- Post clicks
- Conversion rate
- Bounce rate (ads)
- Shares

- **Brand Awareness & Community:** Build awareness and loyalty through pages, interactions, and niche groups.
- **Content Variety:** Experiment with text, images, videos, and stories to see what works.
- **Engagement:** Use comments, likes, and polls to build trust and connection.
- **Facebook Groups:** Engage with potential customers in niche groups.
- **Targeted Ads:** Reach specific audiences using Facebook's advanced targeting options.

**Engagement rate: (Total Engagements ÷ Total Reach or Impressions) x 100*

***Click-Through Rate: (Total Clicks ÷ Total Impressions) x 100*

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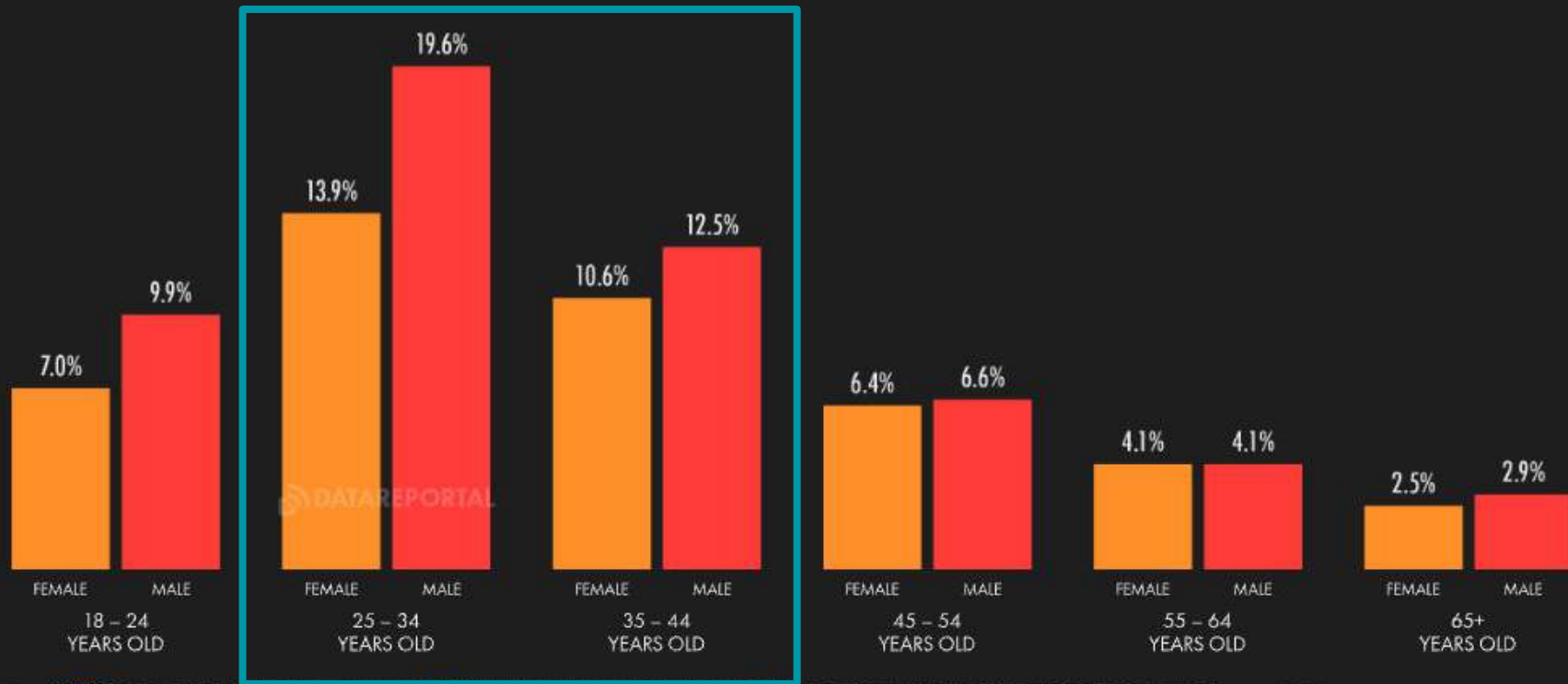
FACEBOOK: ADVERTISING AUDIENCE PROFILE

SHARE OF FACEBOOK'S ADULT ADVERTISING AUDIENCE AGED 18+ BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER

NOTE: PLEASE READ THE IMPORTANT NOTES ON COMPARING DATA AT THE START OF THIS REPORT BEFORE COMPARING DATA ON THIS CHART WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS



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105

SOURCES: META'S ADVERTISING RESOURCES, KIPROS ANALYSIS. **NOTES:** VALUES USE MIDPOINTS OF PUBLISHED RANGES. **NOTE:** META'S ADVERTISING TOOLS NO LONGER PROVIDE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA FOR USERS BELOW THE AGE OF 18, SO WHILE THERE MAY BE ACTIVE USERS OF THE COMPANY'S PLATFORMS BELOW THIS AGE, THESE USERS NO LONGER APPEAR IN THE COMPANY'S POTENTIAL AD-REACH DATA. GENDER DATA ARE ONLY AVAILABLE FOR "FEMALE" AND "MALE". **ADVISORY:** VALUES MAY NOT MATCH SHARE OF TOTAL ACTIVE USER BASE. USER AGE MISSTATEMENTS MAY DISTORT SOURCE DATA. **COMPARABILITY:** SOURCE DATA INCONSISTENCIES MAY MEAN THAT VALUES SHOWN HERE DO NOT CORRELATE WITH VALUES SHOWN ELSEWHERE IN THIS REPORT. BASE REVISIONS, SEE [NOTES ON DATA](#).

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Source: [Wearesocial Meltwater Malaysia 2025](#)

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Best For: B2B & Thought Leadership

Key Strategy: Authority-building, niche expertise

Key measurement metrics:

- Engagement rate*
- Impressions
- Click-Through Rate (CTR)**
- Follower Growth
- Lead Generation

- **Professional Network:** LinkedIn is essential for B2B entrepreneurs. It's the go-to platform for establishing credibility, building partnerships, and networking with industry leaders.
- **Content Focus:** Entrepreneurs should focus on creating and sharing thought leadership content that showcases their expertise in the industry. This could be articles, case studies, or commentary on industry trends.
- **Building Authority:** Consistently sharing insightful content and engaging with relevant groups helps in building authority and becoming a trusted voice within a niche.

*Engagement rate: $(\text{Likes} + \text{Comments} + \text{Shares}) \div \text{Total Impressions} \times 100$

**Click-Through Rate: $(\text{Clicks} \div \text{Impressions}) \times 100$

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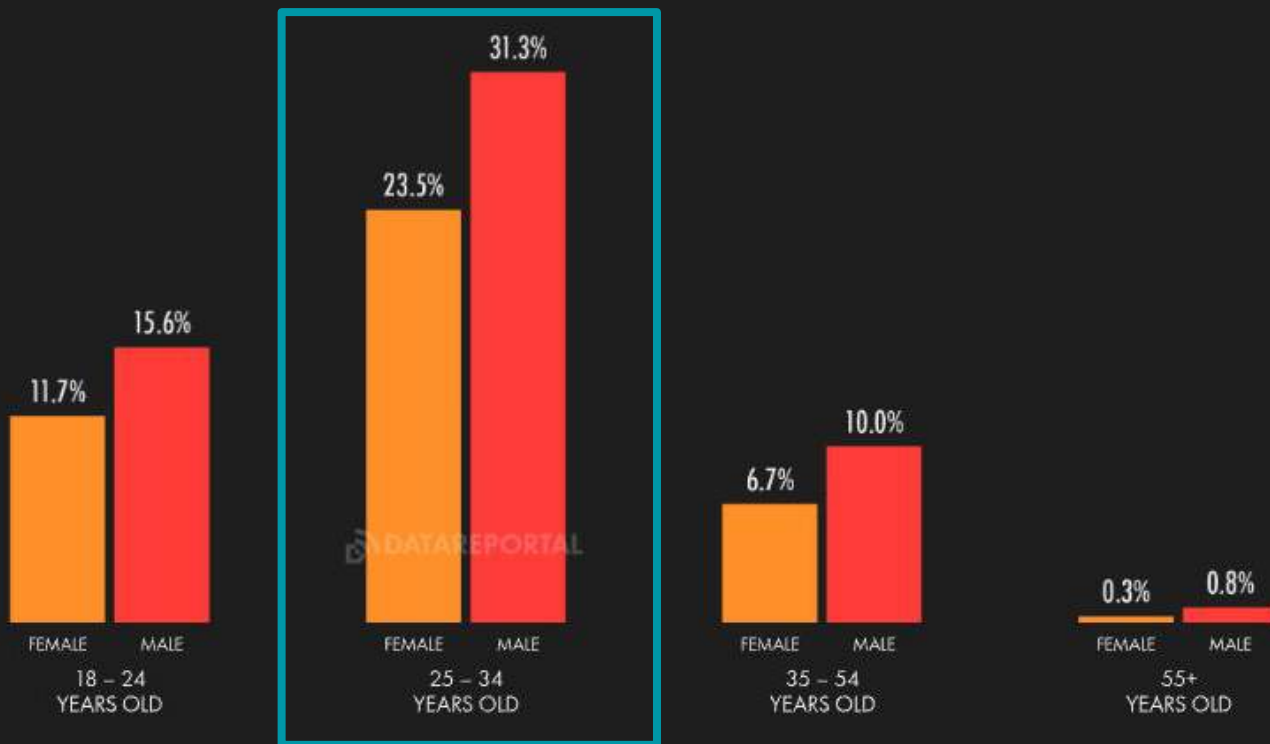
LINKEDIN: ADVERTISING AUDIENCE PROFILE

SHARE OF LINKEDIN'S ADVERTISING AUDIENCE BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER

NOTE: PLEASE READ THE IMPORTANT NOTES ON COMPARING DATA AT THE START OF THIS REPORT BEFORE COMPARING DATA ON THIS CHART WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS



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119

SOURCES: LINKEDIN'S ADVERTISING RESOURCES; PERIOD: ANALYSIS. **NOTES:** GENDER DATA ARE ONLY AVAILABLE FOR "FEMALE" AND "MALE". **ADVISORY:** VALUES MAY NOT MATCH SHARE OF TOTAL ACTIVE USER BASE. USER AGE MISSTATEMENTS MAY DISTORT SOURCE DATA. **COMPARABILITY:** SOURCE DATA INCONSISTENCIES MAY MEAN THAT VALUES SHOWN HERE DO NOT CORRELATE WITH VALUES SHOWN ELSEWHERE IN THIS REPORT. BASE REVISIONS: SEE [NOTES ON DATA](#).

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TikTok



Best For: Virality & Engagement

Key Strategy:

Trendy short-form content, interactive

Key measurement metrics:

- Engagement rate*
- Views
- Follower Growth
- Completion Rate
- Shares

- **Engagement:** TikTok is highly interactive and can create a viral effect for content. New entrepreneurs should take advantage of trending challenges, memes, and hashtags to capture attention.
- **Creative Freedom:** The platform rewards creativity and authenticity. Entrepreneurs should not hesitate to try new, quirky content formats that resonate with their target demographic.
- **Building a Community:** Engage directly with followers through comments, replies, or user-generated content to create a loyal fanbase.

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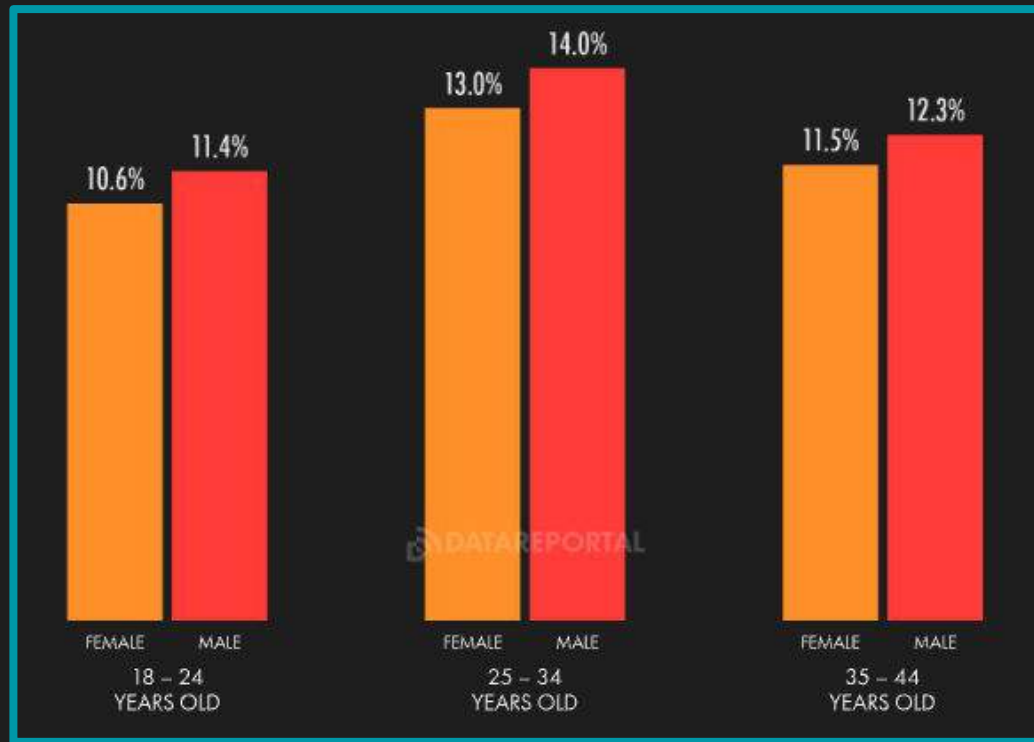
TIKTOK: ADVERTISING AUDIENCE PROFILE

SHARE OF TIKTOK'S ADULT ADVERTISING AUDIENCE AGED 18+ BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER

NOTE: PLEASE READ THE IMPORTANT NOTES ON COMPARING DATA AT THE START OF THIS REPORT BEFORE COMPARING DATA ON THIS CHART WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS.



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DATA REPORTAL

115

SOURCES: TIKTOK'S ADVERTISING RESOURCES; KEVLOS ANALYSIS. **NOTES:** REACH DATA ARE ONLY AVAILABLE FOR "FEMALE" AND "MALE" USERS AGED 18+ VALUES BASED ON MIDPOINTS OF PUBLISHED RANGES. **ADVISORY:** VALUES MAY NOT MATCH SHARE OF TOTAL ACTIVE USER BASE. USER AGE MISSTATEMENTS MAY DISTORT SOURCE DATA. **COMPARABILITY:** SOURCE DATA INCONSISTENCIES MAY MEAN THAT VALUES SHOWN HERE DO NOT CORRELATE WITH VALUES SHOWN ELSEWHERE IN THIS REPORT. BASE REVISIONS. SEE [NOTES ON DATA](#).

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Source: Wearesocial Meltwater Malaysia 2025

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YouTube



Best For: Video
Discoverability

Key Strategy:
Mini-tutorials,
engaging hooks

**Key measurement
metrics:**

- Views
- Engagement rate*
- Watch time
- Subscriber growth
- Click-Through Rate (CTR)**

- **Quick Tutorials & Demos:** YouTube are perfect for creating tutorials or product demonstrations that catch the eye of users searching for solutions in your industry.
- **Strong Hooks:** Ensure your video opens with a hook within the first 3-5 seconds to grab attention, as viewers are highly consumed by users with short attention spans.
- **Discoverability:** The algorithm favors new content, so it's a great opportunity for entrepreneurs to get discovered quickly by a wide audience.

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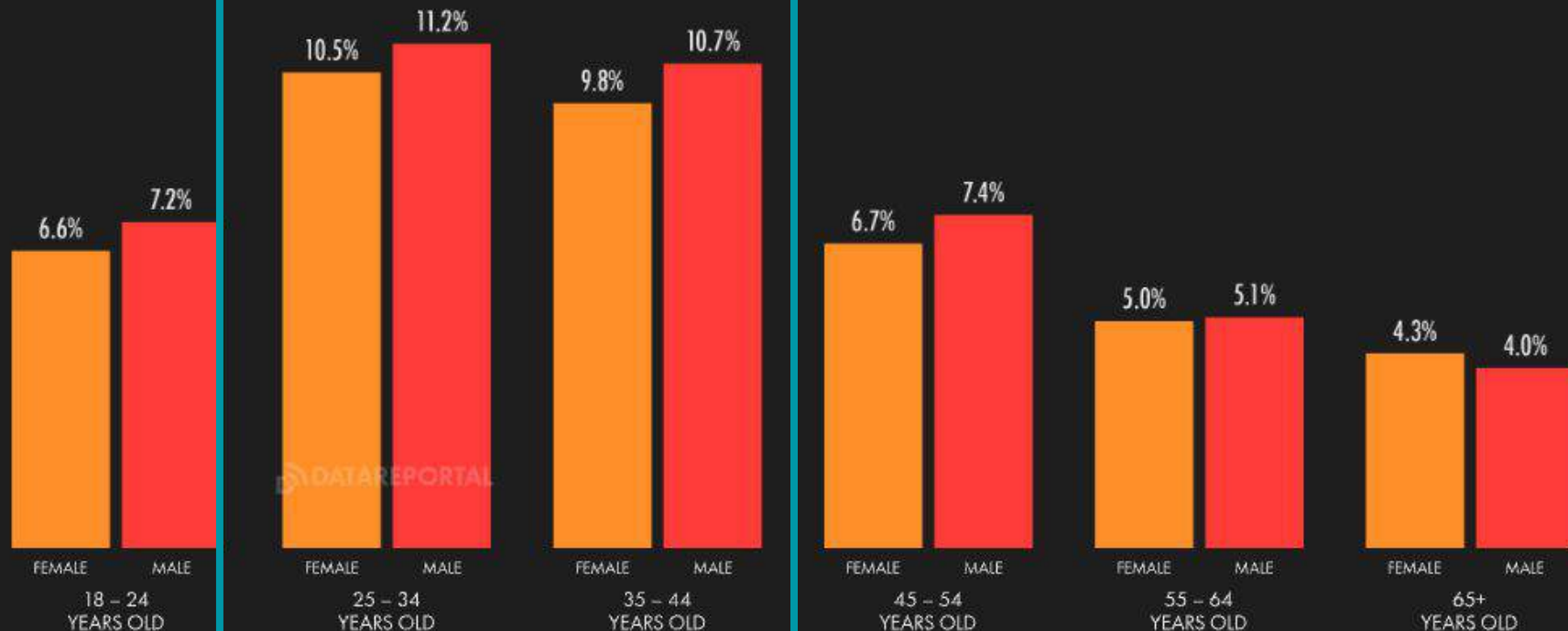
YOUTUBE: ADVERTISING AUDIENCE PROFILE

SHARE OF YOUTUBE'S ADVERTISING AUDIENCE BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER

NOTE: PLEASE READ THE IMPORTANT NOTES ON COMPARING DATA AT THE START OF THIS REPORT BEFORE COMPARING DATA ON THIS CHART WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS



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100

SOURCES: GOOGLE'S ADVERTISING RESOURCES, KETROS ANALYSIS. **NOTES:** AGE AND GENDER DATA ARE ONLY AVAILABLE FOR "FEMALE" AND "MALE" USERS AGED 18+, BUT GOOGLE'S RESOURCES ALSO PUBLISH A VALUE FOR TOTAL AUDIENCE. VALUES SHOWN HERE REPRESENT SHARE OF TOTAL AUDIENCE, SO WILL NOT SUM TO 100%. **ADVISORY:** VALUES MAY NOT MATCH SHARE OF TOTAL ACTIVE USER BASE. USER AGE MISSTATEMENTS MAY DISTORT SOURCE DATA. **COMPARABILITY:** SOURCE DATA INCONSISTENCIES MAY MEAN THAT VALUES SHOWN HERE DO NOT CORRELATE WITH VALUES SHOWN ELSEWHERE IN THIS REPORT. BASE REVISIONS, SEE [NOTES ON DATA](#).

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Source: [Wearesocial Meltwater Malaysia 2025](#)

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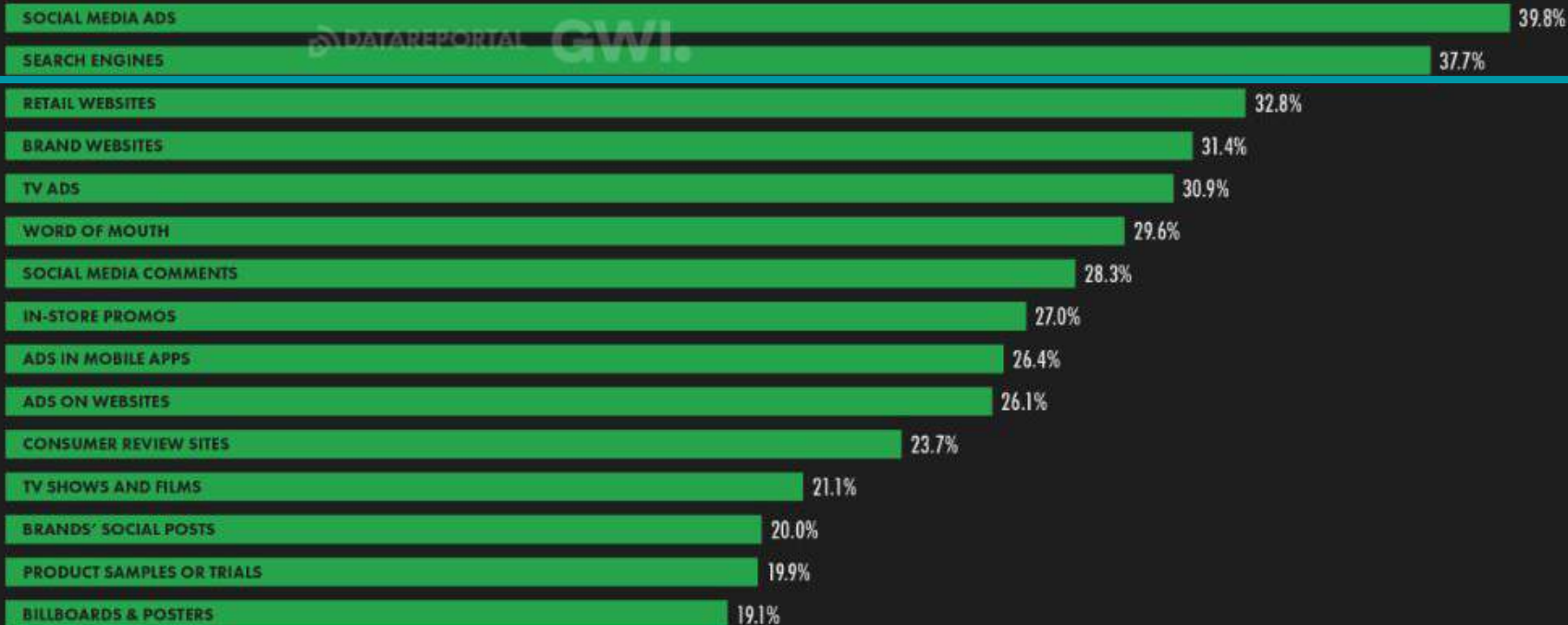
Cheat Sheet: Maximise Social Media Channels

Platform	Best For	Key Strategy	Key Metrics
Instagram	Branding & Engagement	Storytelling, reels, influencer collabs	Engagement rate, Reach, Impressions, Follower Growth
LinkedIn	B2B & Thought Leadership	Authority-building, niche expertise	Engagement Rate, Impressions, Click-Through Rate, Lead Generation
TikTok	Virality & Engagement	Trendy short-form content, interactive	Engagement Rate, Views, Completion Rate, Shares, Follower Growth
YouTube	Video Discoverability	Tutorials, Engaging hooks	Views, Engagement Rate, Watch Time, Subscriber Growth, CTR
Facebook	Branding & Community Building, B2C Engagement	Content Variety, Engagement, Targeted Ads	Engagement Rate, Reach, Impressions, CTR, Conversion Rate, Lead Generation

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SOURCES OF BRAND DISCOVERY

PERCENTAGE OF INTERNET USERS AGED 16+ WHO DISCOVER NEW BRANDS, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES VIA EACH CHANNEL OR MEDIUM



133

SOURCE: GWI IQ3 2024; COMPARABILITY: CHANGES IN AUDIENCE COMPOSITION AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY. SEE NOTES ON DATA.

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Quick Question

Which platform do you think fits your business or brand the best?

04

From Marketing to Sales — *Converting to Sale*

This session is about how good marketing drives sales — and how to sell without ever sounding like a salesperson.



People don't buy what you **do**
— they buy how it makes them **feel**.

Quick Start: Sales Thinking for Founders



The reality is you're already selling when you...

- Pitch to an investor → Selling the *future*
- Hire your first team member → Selling *belief*
- Convince a customer to try your beta → Selling *trust*
- Post on LinkedIn → Selling *your voice and story*

Old Mindset

"I hate selling"



"Sales feels pushy"



"I'm not a salesperson"



Reframed Sales Mindset

"I tell stories that attract the right people"

"Sales is helping someone make a smart decision"

"I'm the best person to show why this matters"

Good Marketing Is the Product

Remember: *Perception = Value*

- Great marketing doesn't decorate the product — it defines how it's understood.
- Consumers don't buy specs. They buy meaning, status, convenience, identity.
- If your product is invisible, or misunderstood — it doesn't exist to most buyers.

We value things not by what they are, but by what they mean.



Founder Tip: If your insight makes people say “I never thought of it like that” — put it in an ad, not your pitch deck.

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Don't Make It Faster, Make It Feel Better

Psychological friction matters more than physical time.

	Friction Type		Fix Psychologically
01	Wait time	➡	Show progress (map, timer)
02	Cost friction	➡	Use instalments, anchors
03	Fear of risk	➡	Show testimonials, guarantee

People don't hate waiting. They hate not knowing how long they'll wait

Grab taxi maps don't reduce wait time — they reduced anxiety.

Focus on perceived pain points, not just mechanical ones.



Founder Tip: Don't just ask "how fast can this be?" Ask "how does this feel to the customer?"

Insights Are Not Collector Cards!

Stop hoarding insights. Share them like they're meant to go viral.

- Don't treat insights like rare Pokémon cards — too valuable to play.
- The best ones should be everywhere: landing pages, social posts, outreach emails.
- A powerful insight sparks connection and conversation — that's how you sell.

Startups often treat insights like rare cards — kept safe, unused. They should be played, shared, and traded



The Psychology of Small Nudges

Tiny tweaks, huge behavioural impact.

Problem

Long copy gets ignored



Smart Psychological Tactic

Use it as a *signal of confidence* (Jack Daniel's)

Product too cheap



Frame as “*cost-saving for you, not a compromise*”

Unfamiliar new tech



Apply the **MAYA Rule**: Most Advanced Yet Acceptable

Low conversions



Add a micro-effort (e.g. *make your IKEA furniture*) to create ownership

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Founder Tip: Not all friction is bad — small effort can drive commitment and memorability.

Defaults, Upgrades & Foot-in-the-Door Sales

Most buying decisions are automatic. So engineer the defaults.

- Most customers stick with defaults. Make your best plan the default option.
- People are more likely to upgrade once they've started buying — this is the “sunk cost” effect.
- Bundle upgrades with simple copy: “Since you're here...”

Example copy: “Want the Pro plan? Most founders do — and it's only \$2 more.”



Price Is a Feeling, Not a Number

Anchors, contrast, and perception shape value.

- Customers ask: “Does this feel worth it?” not “Is this mathematically fair?”
- Use a comparison to make the real price look small.
- Frame as saving time, identity, or hassle — not just money.

Examples:

“One coffee a day” pricing (anchor)

“Other startups spend \$4K/mo. You pay \$399.” (contrast)

“Get back 12 hours/week” (time as value)



The Metrics That Matter (And How to Read Them)

Don't just track what's visible. Track what's valuable.



Non-Metrics

- Page views
- Social followers
- Website visits
- Email opens
- Likes/shares

These are **attention metrics**. They measure noise, not movement.



Valuable Metrics

- Qualified leads per week
- Conversion rate from lead to action (e.g. booked call, signed up)
- Customer retention (who stays past month)
- Revenue per user/account
- Activation rate (how quickly users engage post-signup)

These are **traction metrics**. They measure belief, commitment, and money.



Founder Tip: Growth is not a vibe. If your dashboard doesn't make a decision easier, you're tracking the wrong thing.

Your Founder Story Is the First Funnel Stage

People buy into people before they buy products.

- Why you started this
- What problem you were solving
- What makes you care deeply about the customer experience

Example:

"I created [Product] because I was tired of wasting hours doing X. I figured if I needed this, others probably did too."



Founder Tip: In the early days, your story converts faster than your software.

Add a Moment of *Unreasonable Hospitality*

Be unreasonably good at one thing.
That's what people remember.

- You don't have to be perfect everywhere.
- Make one moment feel magical, memorable, or deeply human.
- Small surprise = Big story shared.

Examples:

Handwritten welcome note

Surprise upgrade or gift

Call from the founder

Re-posting a customer shout-out



Founder Tip: Make one moment of your onboarding or delivery worth telling friends about.

Behavioural Anchors in Sales Conversations

How to frame value before you pitch price

- Buyers don't assess price in a vacuum, they compare it to an anchor.
- Smart sellers introduce the anchor first, so the product feels like a smart move.

Examples of Anchors in Conversation:

- “Most teams waste 10+ hours a week trying to do this manually.”
- “To solve this using freelancers, you're looking at \$4–5K/month.”
- “You could build this internally — if you have 6 months spare.”

Then → ***“We built [Product] to shortcut all that for \$299/month.”***



Founder Tip: Anchor high, then land your offer softly.

How to Sell Without Sounding Salesy

Switch from pitch to permission

- Stop “selling” — start teaching.
- Frame your product as a shortcut to something your audience already wants.
- People hate being sold to, but love being helped.

Replace this: “Let me walk you through our pricing tiers.”

With this: “Let me show you what we’ve learned from working with 100 startups like yours.”

Lead with insight (e.g. “What we’re seeing across Series A teams...”)

Show empathy (“That’s actually what we built this to fix.”)

Make it feel like a favour (“Want me to show you a shortcut?”)



Founder Tip: Frame your product as insider knowledge, not a feature list.

Frictionless Calls-to-Action (CTAs)

Don't just *pitch* — prompt the next action

- The biggest CTA killer = vagueness
- Make your CTA feel easy, safe, and low-commitment
- Use “because” to justify your ask (it improves conversions)

Weak CTA: “Let me know if you’d like a demo.”

Stronger CTA: “If you’re curious, I can walk you through how 3 teams like yours saved 20+ hours a month — takes 15 minutes.”



Founder Tip: People aren't allergic to sales — they're allergic to unclear effort.

Tell a System 1 Pitch Story

Make your story *feel right* before it *proves right*

System 1 Characteristics:

- Fast, emotional, visual, rhythmic, familiar
- Hates uncertainty, complexity, hesitation

Your Story Should Flow Like This:

1. **Relatable Pain:** “We kept seeing founders lose hours every week just chasing payment data...”
2. **Personal Discovery:** “We tried outsourcing. We tried Zapier hacks. Nothing worked.”
3. **Simple Solution:** “So we built a dashboard that connects to Stripe and shows you everything in 10 seconds.”
4. **Proof = Reassurance:** “We rolled it out to 5 early-stage teams. All of them asked to keep using it after month one.”
5. **Call to Action:** “Want to see what your numbers might look like in it?”



Founder Tip: If it feels like a story, it gets remembered. Logic comes second.

The Founder Sales Checklist

Don't hire sales before *you* can sell it yourself.

The Sales Readiness Checklist:

- Have you closed your first 10–20 customers yourself?
- Can you confidently pitch the product in 3 minutes?
- Have you written or sent at least 50 outreach messages yourself?
- Do you know the top 3 reasons why customers buy (and don't)?
- Have you heard (and overcome) real objections in a live call?
- Do you have at least one repeat customer or active user?
- Have you manually followed up post-sale to learn how customers use the product?

You can't teach sales if you've never sold the thing yourself.



Founder Tip: Hiring a sales team too early = funding a guessing game.

Diagnose the Drop-Off

What Your Metrics Are Really Telling You

If you see...



High clicks, low sign-ups



Strong sign-up conversion



High churn



Few leads

It means...

Curiosity, but unclear value

Interest, but not ready yet

Customer don't stick

No attention

Take action...

Fix your **landing message**

Add **trust content** (testimonials, use cases)

Improve **onboarding** or targeting

Revisit **top-of-funnel** content or distribution

Founder Tip: Your metrics should tell a story — not just show a number.

Your Founder Sales Stack

(Build it once, reuse it everywhere)



One-Sentence Pitch

For intros, cold emails, investor hooks



Mini Insight Deck (3-5 Slides)

Demo calls, warm leads, pitching



Founder Story

About page, PR, content marketing



Objections FAQ

Pre-empt hesitation, train your team



Testimonial or Case Study

Instant proof, useful in email & on social



Founder Tip: If it's worth saying once, it's worth repackaging it a hundred ways.

Remember: every founder is in sales —
but the best ones sell *without sounding
like it.*

05

AI-Driven Marketing Tools

This session is about working faster, looking sharper, and scaling smarter — using a simple AI stack made for startups.



My Favourite AI Marketing Tools...



+



Write Better Prompts. Get Smarter Results.

Great prompts don't ask AI to guess — they tell it what to build.

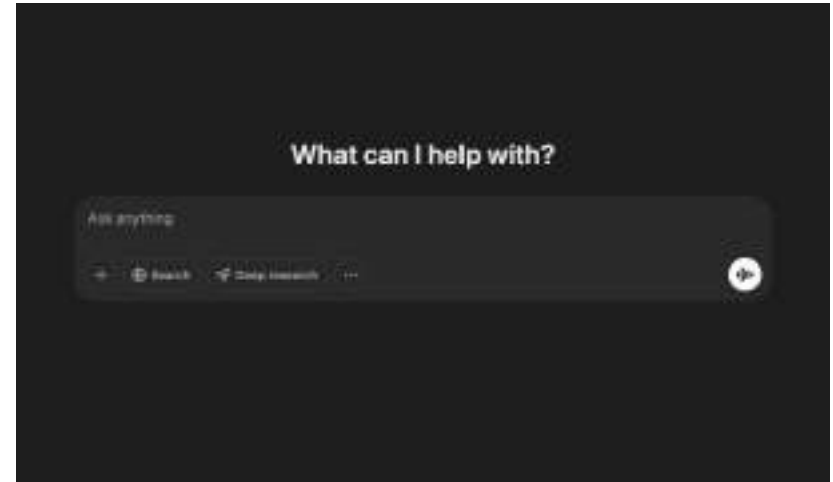
1. **Clear Objective:** Define exactly what you want the AI to deliver.
"Summarise vs. Rewrite vs. Create from scratch"
2. **Add Context:** Tell the AI who it's for and what it's for.
"Founder targeting investors" gives better results than ***"make it sound smart."***
3. **Use Action Words:** be clear from the outset.
Start with ***"Generate," "Summarise," "Suggest," "Fix," "Translate,"*** etc.
4. **Include Format:** Clearly specify desired output format.
Ask for: ***"in bullet points," "as a headline," "in paragraph form,"*** etc.
5. **Test, then Tweak:** One good follow-up prompt can double the quality.
Ask for ***"another version"*** or ***"make it sharper."***

Writing: ChatGPT



Marketers to produce compelling, consistent, and effective content efficiently.

- **Versatile Writing Styles:** quickly adapts to tone and style
- **Creative Ideation:** from headlines to concepts
- **Personalisation at Scale:** easily customises messages to resonate with diverse audience segments.
- **Content Optimisation:** assists in crafting clear, SEO-friendly content
- (Paid for) **Memory:** You can also train it in your brand guidelines, voice, tone—even for different projects. (*Highly recommended!*)



Research: Perplexity.ai



An efficient, reliable research companion ideal for startups aiming to deeply understand and target the right customers:

- **Fast**, accurate insights
- User **friendly** interface
- **Free**(ish):
- Great at **personalisation** and **refinement**:
- **Real-Time Data**: Accesses up-to-date insights (from 2024 or 2025 sources), ensuring decisions are based on the latest market conditions.

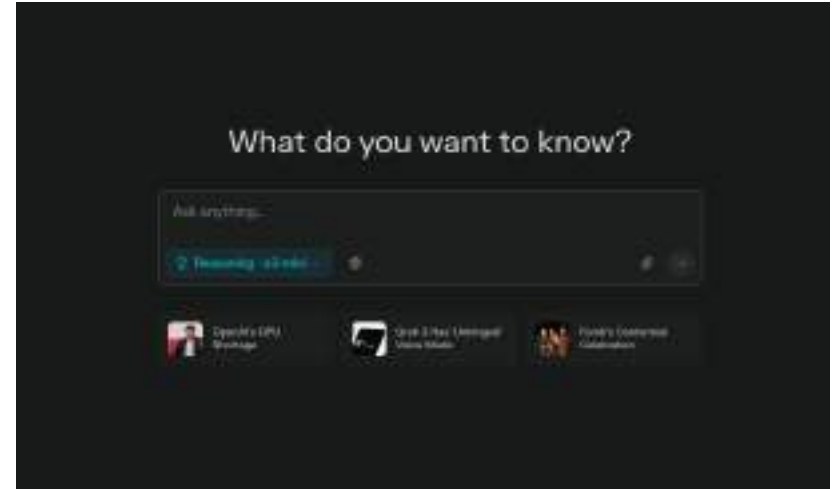
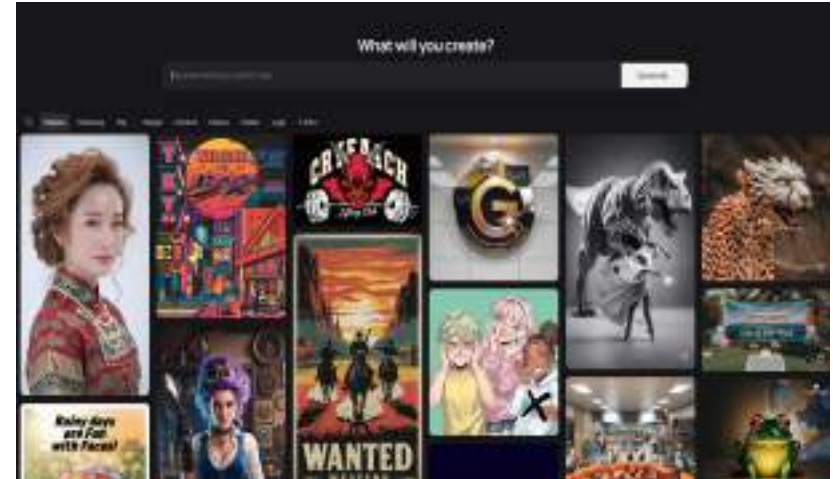


Image Creation: Ideogram



Simplifies content creation, empowering marketers to produce impactful visuals from day one.

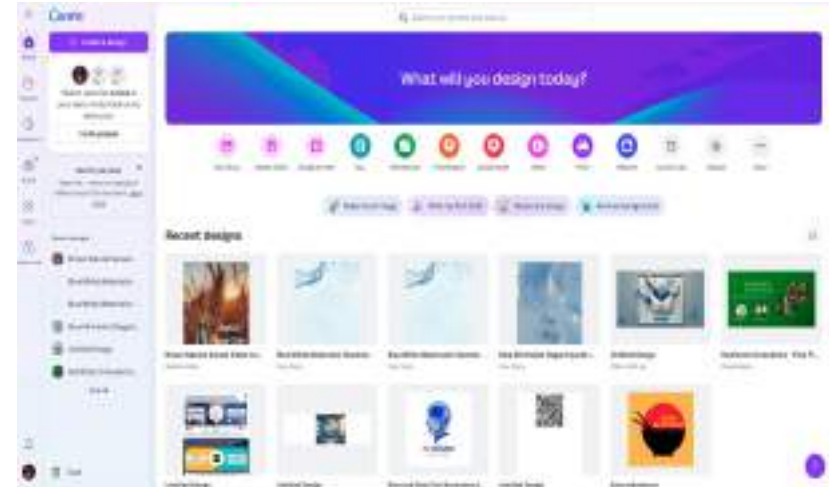
- Fast, Easy Visual Creation
- Ideal for Rapid Experimentation
- Enables marketers to test, iterate, and optimise visuals efficiently.
- Affordable and Scalable
- Provides professional-quality designs suitable for tight startup budgets.
- User-Friendly Interface



Marketing Assets: Canva

Allows startup marketers to quickly create professional visuals without design experience.

- **Easy-to-Use** Design Platform
- Thousands of **Customisable Templates**, including for all SOCMED
- **Cost-Effective** and Scalable
- **Short learning curve** is worth the effort.



Your Founder AI Stack Cheatsheet

Smart Tools. Simple Workflow. Startup Speed.



AI writing & ideas

Generate copy, hooks, and concepts



AI research

Streamline competitor and market analysis



AI images

Create visuals—for ads, presentations, etc.



AI design

Customize graphics and branded content

You don't need 20 AI tools — just the right few that save you time, sharpen your message, and make you look good fast.



Founder Tip: The best AI stack works like a co-founder — fast, flexible, and always ready to test your next big idea.

Key Takeaways from today

- **Marketing doesn't need a big budget.**
But it does need clarity, trust, and relevance.
- **Great marketing sparks conversations.**
Those conversations lead to conversions.
- **Founders who sell with story, insight, and simplicity**
build trust faster, close smarter, and scale better.
- **AI is your secret weapon.**
It saves time, sharpens your message, and speeds up testing.
- **Don't be afraid to fail.**
Just fail fast, learn faster, and try again better.



TL;DR:

Marketing creates the conversations.
Stories close the sale.

**YOU'VE
GOT**

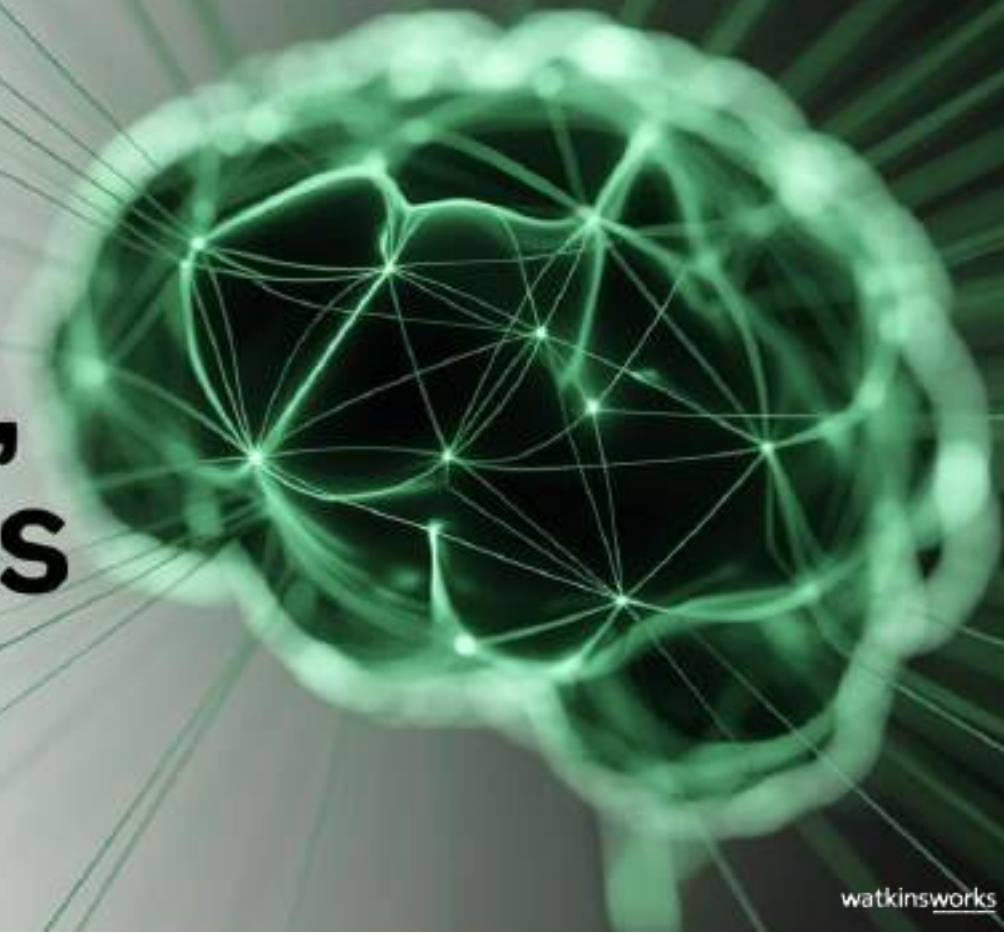


THIS!

**THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.
ANY QUESTIONS?**

[watkinsworks](https://www.watkinsworks.com)

Bonus: AI Prompts, Tips & Tricks



My Favourite AI Marketing Tools...



+



Cheat Sheet: Top 10 Hooks for Social Media Posts

1. The 'Did You Know?' Hook

Educate your audience while subtly promoting your brand's expertise.

- *Example (Tech Company - Cybersecurity): Did you know that 90% of data breaches happen because of weak passwords? Our AI security tool keeps you safe.*
- *Example (Consumer Brand - Skincare): "Did you know that 80% of skin damage comes from blue light exposure? Our new SPF mist protects you – even indoors!"*

2. The 'Mistake' Hook

Highlight common industry mistakes and position your brand as the solution. *But do not disparage other brands.*

- *Example (E-commerce Store - Fashion Brand): Are you making these 3 fashion mistakes? Here is how to dress for confidence every day!*

3. The 'Numbered List' Hook

Make complex topics digestible with lists.

- *Example (B2B SaaS - Marketing Automation): 5 AI-powered tools that will save your team 10+ hours every week.*

Cheat Sheet: Top 10 Hooks for Social Media Posts

4. The 'How-To' Hook

Show practical steps on how your product solves a problem.

- *Example (Fintech Startup): How to save \$500/month using AI-driven budgeting tools.*

5. The 'Curiosity Gap' Hook

Spark curiosity to drive engagement.

- *Example (Electric Car Brand): You are probably charging your EV wrong... Here is how to maximize battery life!*

6. The 'Shock Factor' Hook

Capture attention with bold, surprising facts.

- *Example (Fitness Brand): 99% of pre-workout drinks contain artificial junk - here is what to use instead.*

7. The 'Challenge the Norm' Hook

Challenge conventional wisdom to stand out.

- *Example (Real Estate Brand): Buying a house is not always a good investment. Here is why renting might be smarter in 2024.*

Cheat Sheet: Top 10 Hooks for Social Media Posts

8. The 'Storytelling' Hook

Use personal or brand storytelling to build trust.

- *Example (Startup Founder - AI Company): Five years ago, I struggled to find funding. Today, our AI startup is working with Fortune 500 companies.*

9. The 'Engagement Question' Hook

Encourage customer interaction.

- *Example (Travel Agency): If you could teleport to ANY destination right now, where would it be?*

10. The 'Proven Formula' Hook

Demonstrate a structured solution.

- *Example (Productivity App): The 3-step formula our clients use to 2x their productivity with AI-powered workflows.*

Cheat Sheet: Turn your AI longform content into blog posts

1. AI can help you find interesting ideas for posts

- *I run a startup called [Startup Name], which provides [briefly describe product/service] to [target audience or customers]. My customers often struggle with [common problems or pain points your audience faces]. Suggest 10 relevant, interesting, and helpful blog article topics that address these challenges, educate my audience, and position [Startup Name] as a trusted expert in [industry or niche]. These topics should be engaging, practical, and SEO-friendly, helping me attract more readers who could become potential customers.*

2. AI can help you craft a clear structured outline:

- *I'm writing a blog article titled "[Your Blog Article Topic]" for my startup, [Startup Name], which offers [briefly describe product/service] to [target audience or customers]. The main goal of this article is to [explain primary purpose: educate, solve a specific problem, offer insights, etc.].*
- *Provide a clear, practical, and engaging outline for this article. Include the following sections:*
- *Introduction: Briefly introduce the topic and why it's relevant to my audience.*
- *Main Points: Suggest 3-5 key points or subheadings to structure the article clearly. Each point should directly address my readers' interests or pain points.*
- *Conclusion & CTA: Summarise the key takeaway and suggest a relevant call-to-action that motivates readers to engage further with [Startup Name] or explore our solutions.*
- *Make the outline easy to follow and helpful to my audience, positioning [Startup Name] as knowledgeable and trustworthy in [industry or niche].*

3. You can even ask AI to write it. Either wa

Cheat Sheet: Turn your AI longform content into blog posts

3. AI can write a draft of the post

- Write a clear, engaging, and SEO-friendly blog article for my startup, [Startup Name], titled "[Your Blog Article Topic]". Use the provided outline as your guide:
- [Paste your outline here]
- The tone should be helpful, conversational, and position [Startup Name] as an expert resource for [target audience or customers].
- Include a compelling introduction, practical advice in the body, and a clear call-to-action at the end.

4. Ensure you ask for all the SEO (search engine optimization) information

- Optimise the following blog article to make it fully SEO-friendly. Use the details provided below:
- Article Title: [Your Article Title]
- Focus Keyword: recommend a focus keyphrase and focus keywords. Add them naturally throughout the article):
- Provide a Short Meta Description (max. 160 characters, engaging and keyword-rich):
- Instructions for Optimisation:
- Use appropriate H1, H2, and H3 tags clearly structured around main sections and subheadings.
- Naturally incorporate the focus keyword into the title, introduction, subheadings, body content, and conclusion.
- Ensure the tone remains engaging, conversational, and helpful to my audience, highlighting [Startup Name] as an expert in [industry or niche].
- Original Article: [Paste your blog article here]

Activity: Level Up Your LinkedIn Bio

- Does LinkedIn reflect you / your business in the best light?
- An interactive prompt you can help to level up your Bio

I want you to help me create a professional, engaging, and concise LinkedIn bio tailored specifically to highlight my strengths, experience, and unique value. Please ask me a series of clear, step-by-step questions to gather the information you need. After I've answered all your questions, craft a compelling and professional LinkedIn bio that showcases who I am, what I offer professionally, and why I'm someone others would want to connect with. Ask me the questions one by one, so: ask me a question, let me answer, move on to the next question. When you have enough information, create my first draft bio and ask me what I would like to amend.

Activity: Level Up Your LinkedIn Presence

01

Research first:

- Research your competition on LinkedIn.
- Ask Perplexity who your competitors are (if needed)

02

Create & post your first content piece:

- Use ChatGPT to ideate 5 article concepts for your business
- Pick a 'hook' (e.g. a question, tip, myth-busting fact).
- Ask ChatGPT for an outline — be thorough and continue to prompt

03

Create an accompanying asset

- Create an image on Ideogram to accompany the article
- *Remember to be authentic!*

Other Areas that Tools can Help

- **Copywriting and Content Creation AI Tools** (e.g. Claude AI, ChatGPT, HeyGen)
- **Social Media Management and Scheduling** (e.g. Zoho Social, Hootsuite, Buffer, Social Media)
- **Social Listening and Analytics Tools** (e.g. Google Alert, Mention, BuzzSumo)
- **Viral Content Creation Tools** (e.g. Canva, Crello)
- **Influencer Marketing Platforms** (e.g. heepsy)
- **Chatbots and Customer Engagement Tools** (e.g. Manychat, Route Mobile)
- **Paid Ads Optimisation Tools** (e.g. AdEspresso by Hootsuite)
- **AI for Video Marketing** (e.g. CapCut, Hailuo)
- **AI for SEO and Hashtags** (e.g. SEMrush).

**Thank
You
for Your
Time**