MARKETING ASSIGNMENT

Digital Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, and Global Branding

Prepared in accordance with the assignment guidelines

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Course: Marketing

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Submission Date: _____

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Abstract

This report examines three closely connected areas of contemporary marketing: the transformation of marketing strategy through digital technologies, the psychological influences underlying Nike's “Just Do It” campaign, and the role of positioning and brand equity in competitive global markets. The analysis argues that digital technologies have moved marketing from largely one-way communication toward an interactive, measurable, data-informed system in which firms can segment audiences, personalize messages, test campaigns, and develop long-term customer relationships. Social media and analytics have expanded the speed and precision of these activities, while also creating new challenges involving privacy, consumer fatigue, platform dependence, and trust. The Nike case demonstrates how emotional appeals, identity, aspiration, social belonging, and motivational framing can transform an advertising slogan into a durable brand asset. Finally, the report explains how global brands use positioning to establish meaningful differences in crowded markets and how brand equity protects those differences over time. Examples including Nike, Apple, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, and Starbucks illustrate how successful companies combine consistent core identities with local adaptation. Overall, effective contemporary marketing requires integration: technology should improve customer understanding, psychology should make communication meaningful, and branding should provide a coherent reason for consumers to choose one organization over alternatives.

Keywords: digital marketing, social media, data analytics, personalization, consumer behaviour, Nike, Just Do It, brand equity, positioning, global marketing.

1. Introduction

Marketing has changed substantially as consumers have moved from traditional mass-media environments into digitally connected ecosystems. Earlier marketing systems relied heavily on television, newspapers, radio, outdoor advertising, sales promotions, and physical distribution. These channels remain important, but digital technologies have changed the relationship between organizations and customers. Consumers can now compare products

instantly, publish reviews, interact with brands, follow influencers, create content, and receive highly targeted messages. At the same time, firms can observe customer journeys, measure campaign performance, and adapt communication in near real time. This has created a shift from broad mass marketing toward increasingly segmented, interactive, and personalized approaches.

The change is not simply technological. Marketing strategy is concerned with creating value for customers and capturing value for the organization. Digital tools influence how companies understand customers, communicate value, build relationships, and evaluate outcomes. Similarly, consumer behaviour remains strongly influenced by emotions, identity, social norms, memory, motivation, and perception. Therefore, successful digital marketing cannot be reduced to collecting data or purchasing online advertising. It requires an understanding of why consumers respond to particular messages and how brands become meaningful in people's lives.

This report addresses the three assignment themes together. First, it evaluates how social media and data analytics have transformed traditional marketing and enabled personalized marketing. Second, it examines Nike's “Just Do It” campaign as a case of psychological and emotional marketing. Third, it analyses positioning and brand equity in global markets. The report uses established marketing theory and real-world examples to connect conceptual ideas with managerial practice.

2. Literature Review

2.1 From Mass Marketing to Relationship Marketing

Traditional marketing frequently treated the market as a relatively large audience to which standardized messages could be delivered. The logic of segmentation and targeting developed this approach by recognizing that different groups have different needs. Kotler and Keller (2016) describe segmentation, targeting, and positioning as central strategic activities because firms cannot serve every consumer in exactly the same way. Relationship marketing extends this logic by emphasizing retention, interaction, trust, and customer lifetime value rather than

treating each transaction as an isolated event.

Digital technologies strengthen relationship marketing because communication can occur continuously. Email, mobile applications, social networks, websites, customer-service platforms, and loyalty programs create repeated touchpoints. Instead of asking only whether a customer purchased, organizations can analyse browsing, engagement, frequency, recency, and response to communication. This creates opportunities for firms to provide more relevant offers while also creating risks if personalization becomes intrusive.

2.2 Social Media and Interactive Marketing

Social media has changed the role of consumers from passive recipients to active participants. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) note that social media enables user-generated content and interaction. Consumers can comment on brand posts, share experiences, recommend products, criticize organizations, and create content that reaches audiences beyond the original customer. As a result, brand communication is no longer fully controlled by the organization.

The strategic value of social media includes reach, engagement, community building, social proof, influencer partnerships, customer service, and rapid feedback. However, high visibility also increases reputational risk. A poorly designed campaign can be criticized publicly and spread rapidly. Effective social media strategy therefore requires authenticity, responsiveness, consistent brand identity, and an understanding of platform-specific behaviour.

2.3 Data Analytics and Personalization

Data analytics refers to the use of data to identify patterns, support decisions, measure performance, and predict future behaviour. In marketing, analytics can combine demographic information, purchase history, website behaviour, campaign engagement, and other permitted data sources. Wedel and Kannan (2016) explain that marketing analytics supports customer-level decisions and increasingly sophisticated targeting in data-rich environments.

Personalization occurs when marketing content, offers, recommendations, or experiences are adapted to an individual's or segment's characteristics. Recommendation systems used by

online retailers and streaming services illustrate this approach. Personalization can increase relevance because consumers receive information that better matches their interests. Nevertheless, the benefits depend on data quality, transparency, privacy protection, and consumer expectations. If customers believe that an organization knows too much about them, personalization can become uncomfortable rather than valuable.

2.4 Consumer Psychology and Brand Meaning

Consumer decisions are not purely rational. Motivation, emotion, perception, memory, identity, and social influence all affect behaviour. Keller (1993) argues that strong brands are built when consumers develop favourable, strong, and unique associations in memory. Brand meaning can therefore extend beyond functional product attributes to include personality, values, lifestyles, and symbolic benefits.

Emotional marketing is particularly powerful when a brand becomes associated with aspirations or identities that consumers want to express. Nike provides an important example because its communications often connect athletic products with determination, achievement, confidence, and personal transformation. The product remains important, but the brand also sells a narrative about what the consumer can become.

2.5 Positioning and Brand Equity

Positioning concerns the place a brand occupies in consumers' minds relative to competing alternatives. A successful position communicates a clear and meaningful value proposition. Aaker (1991) describes brand equity as a set of assets and liabilities associated with a brand name and symbol, including awareness, perceived quality, associations, and loyalty. Keller (1993) similarly emphasizes consumer-based brand equity, where the value of a brand emerges from consumers' knowledge and associations.

In global markets, positioning must balance consistency and adaptation. A brand needs a recognizable core identity, but language, culture, regulations, consumer preferences, and competitive conditions differ between countries. Global companies therefore often standardize fundamental brand values while adapting execution to local markets. This balance can protect

brand equity while improving cultural relevance.

3. Review Methodology

This report uses a qualitative literature-review and case-analysis methodology. The approach combines established marketing concepts with analysis of widely documented business examples. Academic marketing literature was used to establish theoretical foundations for segmentation, relationship marketing, social media, analytics, consumer-based brand equity, and positioning. The Nike “Just Do It” campaign is examined as a case study because it provides a clear example of psychological and emotional branding. Additional global brands are used as comparative examples to demonstrate how positioning and brand equity operate in competitive markets.

The analysis is interpretive rather than experimental. It does not claim that a single campaign or technology causes a specific consumer outcome in every market. Instead, it evaluates strategic mechanisms: how firms create relevance, how consumers interpret marketing messages, how digital data changes targeting, and how repeated brand associations contribute to long-term competitive advantage. This approach is appropriate for the assignment because the questions ask how marketing practices have changed and why particular strategies can influence consumer behaviour and brand performance.

4. Assignment 1: The Evolution of Marketing Strategies in the Digital Age

4.1 Transformation of Traditional Marketing

Digital technologies have transformed marketing by changing four fundamental activities: market intelligence, communication, customer experience, and measurement. In traditional mass marketing, a company might purchase television advertising and estimate reach using audience research. Digital platforms provide more granular information about impressions, clicks, engagement, conversion paths, and customer segments. This does not make traditional marketing obsolete, but it changes the balance between broad awareness and measurable

individual interaction.

The first major transformation is targeting. Digital platforms allow organizations to define audiences using combinations of demographic, behavioural, contextual, and interest-based characteristics. A sports retailer, for example, can communicate different messages to new visitors, returning customers, high-value buyers, and consumers who viewed a product without purchasing. Such segmentation can reduce irrelevant communication and allocate marketing budgets more efficiently.

The second transformation is interaction. A traditional advertisement generally provides a message and waits for a response. Digital marketing allows immediate action. A consumer can see a social post, click to a website, read reviews, compare prices, add an item to a basket, and complete a purchase within the same session. This shortens the distance between communication and transaction. It also creates data that can be used to improve future campaigns.

The third transformation is measurement. Digital campaigns can be monitored using indicators such as click-through rate, conversion rate, customer acquisition cost, return on advertising spend, engagement, retention, and lifetime value. Managers can conduct A/B tests and compare creative executions or landing pages. This supports a more experimental approach to marketing, in which campaigns are treated as learning systems rather than fixed one-time events.

4.2 Social Media as a Strategic Marketing Environment

Social media has also changed brand storytelling. Instead of a company speaking only through paid advertising, customers, creators, employees, and communities participate in brand communication. User-generated content can provide authenticity and social proof because consumers often value the experiences of other users. Influencer marketing uses trusted personalities or niche creators to reach communities that may be difficult to access through conventional advertising.

The strategic challenge is that engagement is not identical to business value. A post may receive thousands of likes but generate little sales impact. Conversely, a smaller community may produce high levels of trust and repeat purchasing. Organizations should therefore connect social metrics to strategic objectives rather than treating follower counts as the primary measure of success. Social media should contribute to awareness, consideration, conversion, retention, or advocacy depending on the role of the channel.

Social listening provides another advantage. Companies can analyse customer comments and discussions to identify emerging needs, complaints, trends, and perceptions. This turns social media into a source of market intelligence. However, ethical data practices are essential. Firms should respect platform rules, privacy expectations, and applicable regulations, and should avoid misleading consumers about how their data are used.

4.3 Data Analytics and the Rise of Personalization

Data analytics enables marketing to move from broad assumptions toward evidence-informed decision making. Customer relationship management systems can combine purchase histories with service interactions. Website analytics can identify points where users abandon a journey. Email platforms can test subject lines and timing. Retail loyalty programs can reveal purchasing patterns. These systems allow companies to design more relevant customer experiences.

Personalization can take several forms. Basic personalization includes addressing a customer by name or remembering preferences. More advanced personalization includes product recommendations, individualized offers, dynamic website content, and predictive models that estimate the likelihood of purchase or churn. The strategic objective is not personalization for its own sake; it is to reduce information overload and provide value at the right moment.

Netflix and Amazon illustrate the broader logic of recommendation-driven personalization. Streaming and e-commerce platforms can use behavioural signals to organize large product or content catalogues into experiences that appear more relevant to each user. The benefit is

convenience, but there is also a strategic trade-off: algorithms can narrow exposure and reinforce existing preferences. Managers must therefore balance relevance with discovery and diversity.

A second important example is Spotify, which has used personalized playlists and recommendation features to turn listening data into a distinctive customer experience. The marketing value extends beyond advertising because the product itself becomes personalized. This demonstrates an important principle of digital marketing: the strongest personalization is often embedded in the customer experience rather than added as a promotional message.

4.4 Benefits and Challenges

The major benefits of digital marketing include improved targeting, lower communication friction, measurable performance, rapid experimentation, customer engagement, and scalable personalization. These advantages can improve efficiency and customer relevance. Yet digital transformation also creates challenges. Privacy concerns can reduce trust, algorithmic decisions can introduce bias, excessive advertising can create fatigue, and dependence on large platforms can reduce organizational control.

Another challenge is the quality of data. Large quantities of inaccurate, duplicated, outdated, or poorly integrated data do not automatically produce good decisions. Marketing teams need data governance, analytical capability, and clear objectives. They must also interpret metrics in context. A high conversion rate, for example, may be misleading if the campaign attracted customers who make only one low-value purchase.

4.5 Critical Evaluation

The shift from mass marketing to personalized marketing should therefore not be viewed as a simple replacement. Mass communication remains useful for building broad awareness and cultural presence, while personalization is valuable for relevance and conversion. The strongest strategy integrates both. A global brand may use a broad campaign to create emotional meaning and then use digital channels to deliver personalized product recommendations or offers.

The central managerial lesson is that technology is an enabler, not the strategy itself. A company can possess sophisticated analytics and still fail if its value proposition is weak. Conversely, a company with a strong brand can use digital tools to deepen relationships. Successful adaptation requires customer insight, creative quality, ethical data use, experimentation, and organizational learning.

5. Assignment 2: Consumer Behaviour and Psychological Influences on Marketing Decisions

5.1 Nike and the “Just Do It” Campaign

Nike's “Just Do It” campaign is one of the clearest examples of how a simple verbal idea can become a powerful psychological brand asset. Rather than focusing only on product specifications, the campaign frames sport as an opportunity for action, determination, self-improvement, and personal achievement. The message is broad enough to apply to professional athletes and ordinary consumers. This flexibility helped the slogan become associated with a mindset rather than a particular product category.

The psychological strength of the campaign lies partly in its motivational simplicity. Consumers often experience barriers such as fear of failure, lack of confidence, tiredness, or uncertainty. “Just Do It” presents action as the answer to hesitation. From a consumer-behaviour perspective, the message connects with intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy: the belief that a person can take action and improve through effort. The advertisement does not need to explain every product feature because it appeals to a deeper personal goal.

The campaign also uses identity. Consumers frequently buy brands not only for functional performance but also for what those brands symbolize. Wearing Nike can communicate an interest in sport, ambition, confidence, youthfulness, or an active lifestyle. The brand therefore becomes part of the consumer's self-concept. This is an example of symbolic consumption, in which products and brands can help individuals express who they are or who they want to become.

5.2 Emotional Triggers

Emotion is central to Nike's approach. Advertising can generate feelings of inspiration, determination, excitement, pride, belonging, or even constructive discomfort. Emotional responses can improve attention and memory because consumers are more likely to remember communications that are personally meaningful. Nike frequently places individuals in narratives involving obstacles and achievement, allowing viewers to imagine themselves overcoming similar barriers.

Social influence also matters. Athletes function as reference figures whose performance and credibility can shape consumer attitudes. Celebrity and athlete endorsement can transfer associations from the individual to the brand, particularly when the spokesperson is perceived as authentic and connected to the product category. Nike's extensive use of elite and culturally influential athletes strengthens its position as a performance-oriented brand while also giving consumers aspirational role models.

5.3 Impact on Consumer Behaviour and Brand Loyalty

A successful emotional campaign can influence consumer behaviour at several levels. At the awareness level, the slogan improves recognition. At the consideration level, emotional associations can make Nike more attractive than a functionally similar competitor. At the purchase level, strong brand associations can reduce perceived risk and increase willingness to choose the familiar brand. After purchase, satisfaction combined with identity and community can encourage repeat purchasing and advocacy.

Brand loyalty is particularly valuable because it can reduce price sensitivity and make consumers less likely to switch when alternatives are available. Loyalty does not mean that consumers will always purchase the same brand; competitors can still attract them through price, innovation, availability, or changing preferences. However, strong emotional and symbolic associations create psychological switching costs. A consumer may feel that another brand does not represent the same identity or values.

5.4 Critical Analysis of the Case

The strength of “Just Do It” also creates a strategic responsibility. Emotional branding is persuasive because it connects products with personal identity, but organizations must support the promise through actual customer experiences. If product quality, service, labour practices, or corporate behaviour contradict the communication, consumers may perceive the brand as inauthentic. In the digital environment, inconsistencies can be rapidly exposed through social media.

The case therefore demonstrates that psychology cannot be separated from operational performance. Advertising can create expectations, but product and organizational behaviour must reinforce those expectations. Nike's long-term brand strength comes not only from one slogan but from repeated alignment between athletic performance, product innovation, athlete partnerships, storytelling, and consumer identity.

The broader lesson for marketers is that emotional campaigns work best when the emotional territory is credible and distinctive. A company should not copy another brand's emotional strategy simply because it appears successful. Instead, marketers should identify a meaningful human motivation that the brand can legitimately support. The message should then be repeated consistently while being refreshed through new stories, platforms, and cultural contexts.

6. Assignment 3: Branding, Positioning, and Competitive Advantage in Global Markets

6.1 Differentiation Through Positioning

Global markets are often crowded with products that offer similar functional benefits. Positioning helps a company answer the consumer's question: why should I choose this brand rather than another? A meaningful position can be based on performance, quality, price, convenience, design, heritage, sustainability, service, innovation, or symbolic identity. The most effective positions are relevant to customers, credible for the organization, and difficult for competitors to imitate.

Apple provides an example of positioning around design, innovation, ecosystem integration, and premium experience. Its competitive advantage is not based only on technical specifications. The brand communicates a coherent experience across hardware, software, services, retail environments, and communication. This consistency strengthens associations in consumers' minds and contributes to willingness to pay premium prices in many markets.

Coca-Cola demonstrates a different form of positioning. The brand has historically connected itself with refreshment, happiness, togetherness, and cultural moments. The product itself is relatively simple, but decades of consistent communication have built strong memory structures. This demonstrates that differentiation can be psychological and cultural rather than purely functional.

6.2 The Role of Brand Equity

Brand equity is a long-term strategic asset because it influences how consumers interpret information and evaluate alternatives. High awareness increases the probability that a brand enters the consideration set. Positive associations can increase perceived value. Perceived quality can justify premium pricing. Loyalty can reduce customer acquisition costs and stabilize demand. Together, these effects can create competitive advantage that is difficult to reproduce quickly.

Keller's (1993) customer-based brand equity perspective is particularly useful because it emphasizes what exists in consumer memory. If consumers have strong and distinctive associations with a brand, competitors may find it difficult to replace those associations through short-term promotions. Brand equity therefore acts as accumulated marketing knowledge. Every advertisement, product experience, sponsorship, customer-service interaction, and social-media conversation can strengthen or weaken it.

Brand equity also provides resilience. When a company launches a new product under a trusted brand, consumers may be more willing to try it because the brand reduces uncertainty. However, brand extensions can also damage equity if the new product conflicts with established associations. Strategic consistency is therefore essential.

6.3 Global Consistency and Local Adaptation

Global branding creates a tension between standardization and adaptation. Standardization can generate economies of scale, consistent recognition, and a unified identity. Adaptation can improve cultural relevance and local acceptance. The appropriate balance depends on the category and the degree of cultural sensitivity.

McDonald's illustrates this balance. Its global identity is recognizable, but menus and promotional activities can be adapted to local tastes, cultural expectations, and market conditions. Such adaptation does not necessarily weaken the global brand. Instead, it can make the brand more locally relevant while preserving core visual and experiential elements.

Starbucks provides another example. The brand has a consistent global identity based on coffeehouse experience, community, and recognizable store design, while local products and seasonal offerings can reflect regional preferences. The principle is to protect the core meaning of the brand while allowing controlled flexibility in execution.

6.4 Positioning in Saturated Markets

In saturated markets, differentiation requires more than claiming that a product is “better.” Competitors can quickly copy functional improvements, promotional discounts, or generic claims. Sustainable positioning therefore requires a combination of tangible and intangible resources. Tangible differentiation can include product technology, distribution, service, or quality. Intangible differentiation includes brand heritage, community, trust, personality, and cultural meaning.

A strong position should also be easy to understand. If a brand tries to own too many ideas simultaneously, its meaning can become unclear. The organization must identify the associations it wants consumers to remember most strongly and then reinforce them through every major touchpoint. This is particularly important in digital environments, where consumers encounter brands across websites, social networks, search engines, marketplaces, reviews, and physical stores.

Competitive advantage is strengthened when the brand position is supported by organizational capabilities. A company cannot sustainably position itself around premium service if it cannot deliver that service. Similarly, a sustainability position requires credible practices rather than only green advertising. The closer the connection between promise and performance, the more durable the competitive advantage.

6.5 Critical Evaluation

Global positioning should therefore be treated as a dynamic process rather than a fixed statement. Consumer expectations change, technologies evolve, competitors imitate successful ideas, and social values develop. Brands must protect their core identity while refreshing the way that identity is expressed. Excessive change can confuse consumers, but excessive consistency can make a brand appear outdated.

The strongest global brands solve this problem through a stable strategic core and flexible execution. Their logos, names, values, and central associations remain recognizable, while campaigns, product features, local partnerships, and digital experiences evolve. This creates continuity without stagnation. Brand equity is consequently both an asset to protect and a platform from which innovation can occur.

7. Findings

The combined analysis produces five major findings. First, digital technologies have shifted marketing from predominantly one-way communication toward interactive, measurable, and increasingly personalized customer relationships. Second, social media has reduced the organization's control over brand communication because customers and creators now participate in meaning creation. Third, data analytics improves targeting and decision making, but its value depends on data quality, ethical governance, and appropriate interpretation. Fourth, the Nike case shows that emotional and identity-based marketing can create stronger associations than purely functional communication. Fifth, global competitive advantage depends on distinctive positioning supported by long-term brand equity and credible organizational capabilities.

A further finding is that these themes reinforce each other. Digital data can identify customer interests, psychological insight can explain why those interests matter, and brand strategy can determine how the company should respond. For example, a sports brand can use digital behaviour to identify an audience interested in running, create motivational content based on psychological needs, and deliver that content through a brand position associated with performance and determination. Technology, psychology, and branding therefore should not be managed as isolated activities.

8. Discussion

The most important implication for marketing managers is that digital transformation increases both opportunity and responsibility. Organizations have more information about customers than ever before, but information alone does not create customer value. Managers must convert data into useful insights and then into experiences that consumers actually appreciate. Personalization should answer a consumer need rather than demonstrate that the company can track behaviour.

The second implication concerns trust. As personalization becomes more sophisticated, privacy and transparency become strategic issues rather than purely legal concerns. Consumers are more likely to accept data-driven experiences when the value exchange is clear. Loyalty programs, recommendations, and personalized services can be attractive when customers understand the benefit. Hidden or excessive data collection can undermine the relationship that marketing is intended to build.

The third implication is that emotional branding remains relevant despite technological change. Digital channels change how messages are delivered, but they do not eliminate human needs for achievement, belonging, recognition, security, identity, and enjoyment. Nike's success demonstrates that a powerful human insight can travel across media. The technology may change from television to social video to mobile experiences, but the underlying psychological motivation can remain meaningful.

The fourth implication is that brand equity provides a bridge between short-term campaigns and long-term strategy. Performance marketing often emphasizes immediate clicks and conversions, whereas brand building focuses on memory, associations, and future demand. Organizations need both. Excessive focus on immediate measurable outcomes can weaken long-term differentiation, while excessive focus on brand awareness without conversion can waste resources. A balanced marketing system should connect brand and performance objectives.

Finally, global brands need cultural intelligence. A message that is motivating in one market may have a different interpretation elsewhere. Local adaptation should therefore be based on research rather than assumptions. Successful international marketing protects the central promise of the brand while allowing local consumers to see themselves within that promise.

9. Conclusion

Marketing has evolved from a predominantly mass-communication discipline into a complex system of data, interaction, personalization, psychology, and brand management. Social media has increased participation and transparency, while data analytics has improved targeting, measurement, and customer insight. Personalization can create meaningful relevance, but only when supported by quality data, ethical practices, and a clear customer benefit.

Nike's “Just Do It” campaign demonstrates that successful marketing also depends on psychological understanding. The campaign connects sport with motivation, identity, aspiration, and action, allowing the brand to become more than a functional product provider. Emotional associations can strengthen awareness, preference, loyalty, and advocacy when the organization consistently supports the promise it communicates.

In global markets, positioning and brand equity provide the foundation for sustainable differentiation. Companies such as Apple, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Starbucks, and Nike demonstrate different approaches to building distinctive meaning. The strongest brands combine a stable core identity with innovation and controlled local adaptation. Overall, the

future of marketing is not simply more digital. It is more integrated: technology provides information and reach, psychology provides relevance and meaning, and branding provides continuity and competitive identity.

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11. Appendices

Appendix A: Summary Comparison of Traditional and Digital Marketing

Dimension	Traditional approach	Digital approach
Targeting	Broad segments and mass audiences	Detailed segments and behavioural targeting
Communication	Mostly one-way	Interactive and multi-directional
Measurement	Estimated reach and periodic research	Real-time dashboards and conversion metrics
Personalization	Limited	High potential through data and algorithms
Feedback	Slower and less direct	Immediate comments, reviews, clicks and behaviour
Customer role	Primarily audience	Audience, participant, creator and reviewer
Main risks	High media cost and limited feedback	Privacy, platform dependence and data misuse

Appendix B: Suggested Managerial Checklist

- Define the customer problem before selecting a digital channel.
- Use segmentation to improve relevance rather than simply increasing targeting complexity.
- Connect social-media metrics to business objectives.
- Protect customer privacy and communicate data practices transparently.
- Use emotional insight to strengthen brand meaning without making unsupported claims.
- Maintain a clear global brand position while adapting execution to local culture.
- Measure both short-term performance and long-term brand equity.
- Review campaign results continuously and use experimentation to improve future decisions.