A GUIDE TO BETTER DIGITAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE

MediaSense®

DiPA™

Digital

Performance

Analytics

INTRODUCTION
SEEING THROUGH THE TREES

Brands are allocating more media spend to digital channels in an attempt to improve their customer centricity, and a critical success factor is the management, control and oversight of their digital media communications.

The opportunities offered by digital media platforms and programmatic trading are significant, yet they have also created greater complexity for brand marketers, which, in turn, present additional challenges:

DATA / **multiple data sources across multiple digital platforms in varying formats creates a data integration problem**

METRICS / **KPIs are in abundance and are evolving; yet measurement standards are variable and often incomplete**

SUPPLY CHAIN / **gaining full disclosure of investment information across platforms, technology, data, and inventory remains challenging**

Although technology enables brands to target more cost efficiently, this is no guarantee of delivering true optimal performance.

Programmatic has transformed the way media is traded and audiences reached, but whilst targeting is progressively laser-like, issues still persist around low quality inventory, non-viewable and low engagement advertising.

Recent brand safety issues have also highlighted the status of quality above cost, and are compelling brands to reconsider their digital buying strategies. The complexity and fragmentation of the media supply chain has been exploited at the clients' expense all too often.

This confirms the strategic imperative for objective evaluation of digital media performance. Brands have realised their digital supply chain is potentially chaotic and toxic, and are turning to independent organisations to provide perspective, clarity and transparency.

Increasingly, marketers are looking to optimise their media performance against their communication objectives, and they can do so because they have access to more customer data as well as their own performance history.

Brands are also discovering that measuring digital media as a simple commodity against market averages is a false economy. Organisations are now turning away from "audits" and instead turning towards "analytics".

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

We believe the remit for digital performance optimisation is to uncover and flag areas of risk and opportunity for brands, and this can only be done with access to appropriate data sources and forensic analysis.

A new bar for digital performance measurement is required, one which evaluates the full performance spectrum of KPI selection, Inventory Quality, Brand Safety, Media Neutrality, Transparency, Viewability and Optimisation.

The real benefit of performance measurement is in explaining “cause and effect”; identifying the additional value which can be unlocked through powerful data analytics processes.

A new professional standard is also required for the collection, processing, structuring and analysis of digital data.

The guide covers six areas which are critical for success:

We also provide insights for marketers on how to navigate the challenges they face. Complementing the guide is a new service, ‘Digital Performance Analytics’ or DiPA™, which ensures all elements of the value chain are assessed and which enables advertisers to review data at scale across multiple platforms.

By exploring all potential value levers, the DiPA™ process identifies meaningful opportunities for improving performance and value, and achieving dramatic efficiency gains, which are otherwise undetected by legacy pool-based audits.

1. SET THE RIGHT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2. GET THE MOST FROM MEDIA PLANNING

3. SEE INTO YOUR MEDIA SUPPLY CHAIN

4. MONITOR CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE AND CONTROL

5. ACCEPT ONLY QUALITY, BRAND SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

6. INSIST ON ACTIVE CAMPAIGN OPTIMISATION

1.

SET THE RIGHT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Choosing and working with clearly defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is essential and should be a focus for any planned activity.

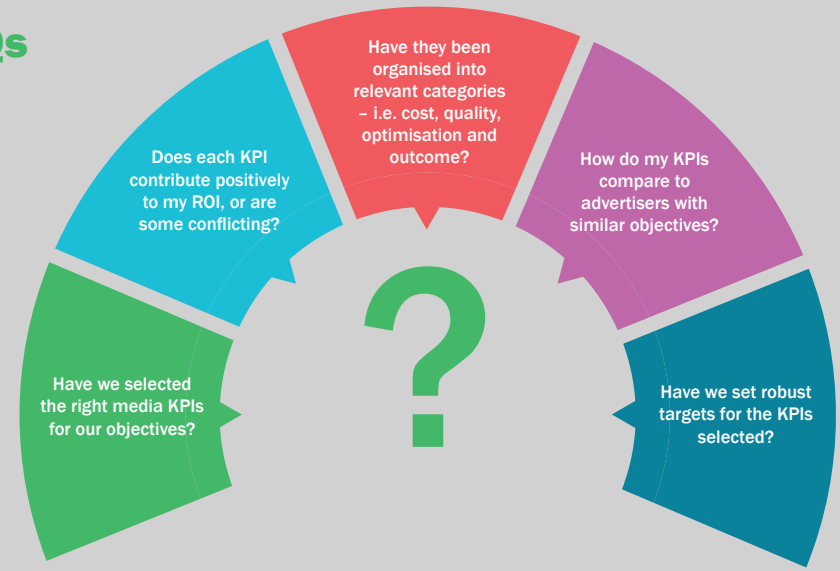
They must be measurable, objective-led, realistic and most importantly, relevant to the desired outcome of the campaign.

The blend of KPIs selected will heavily dictate planning investment decisions and optimisation strategies, so securing the right combination is key to achieving desired outcomes.

Many campaigns are planned against irrelevant, conflicting or incomplete KPIs and therefore under perform at best and destroy value at worst.

More and more organisations are finding it useful to organise KPIs into a framework of 'Delivery, Cost, Quality & Outcomes'. This helps with prioritisation and briefings.

FAQs



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETERS

/ Start by categorising, mapping and prioritising KPIs using data evidenced from previous campaigns.

/ Only select KPIs that are relevant to campaign and business objectives. Less is more.

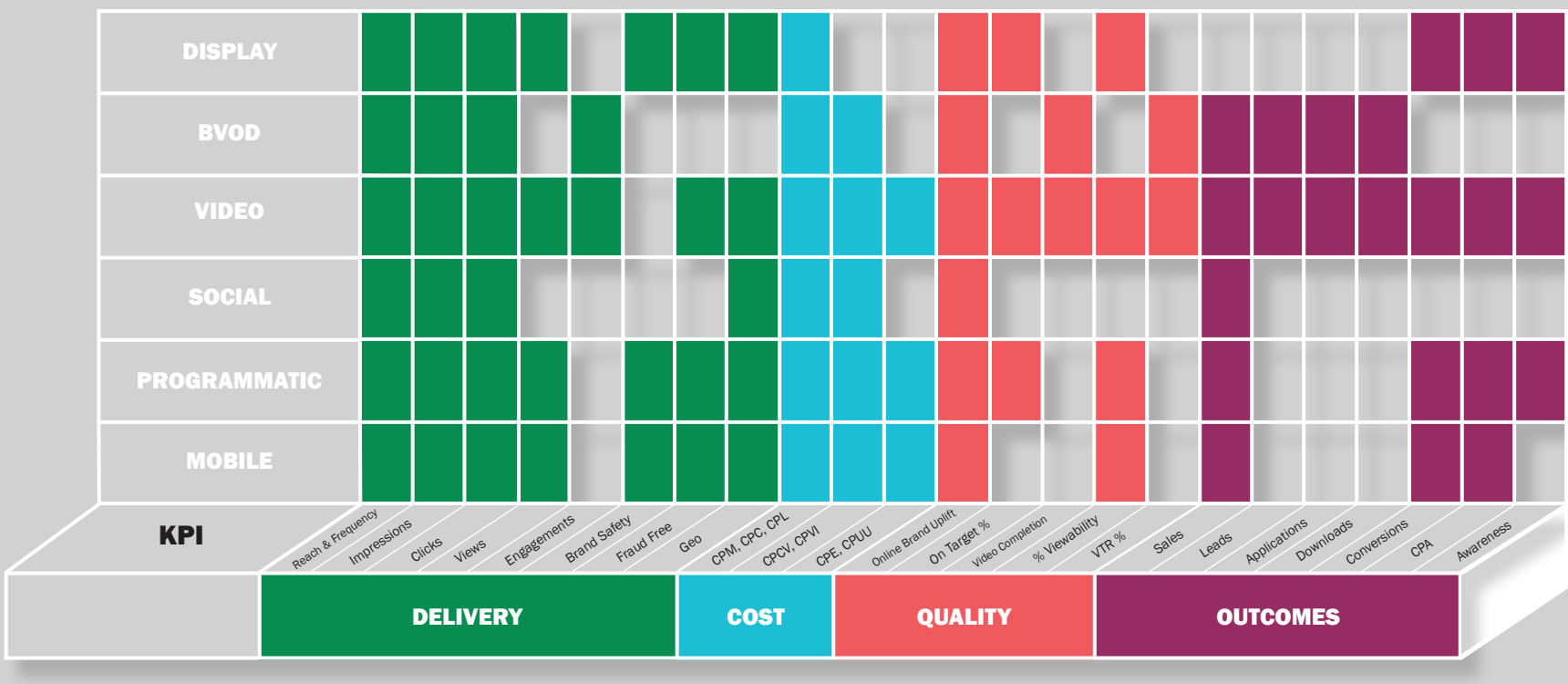
/ Be realistic and clear about what your buyers are optimising against so that the right tools, analytics and negotiation skills are deployed.

/ Check you have not inadvertently selected KPIs which might conflict or compromise optimal performance.

/ Ensure you understand how each KPI is defined and the limitations around the data.

BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE KPI FRAMEWORK DELIVERS OPTIMAL OPPORTUNITY

Moving away from a legacy KPI pool of impressions, clicks, CPMs and CPAs provides a more substantial measurement of campaign success. Using a broader KPI framework that is both relevant to your campaign and specific to each platform, supports a more comprehensive and informed campaign planning approach which is more likely to yield business success.



2.

GET THE MOST FROM MEDIA PLANNING

It can be hard to assess the effectiveness and neutrality of a digital media plan given the vast array of choices.

Yet it is critically important to understand the available options in order to challenge an agency's strategic approach and the choices they have made across:

TRADING / Selection of platform, trading strategy and inventory sources.

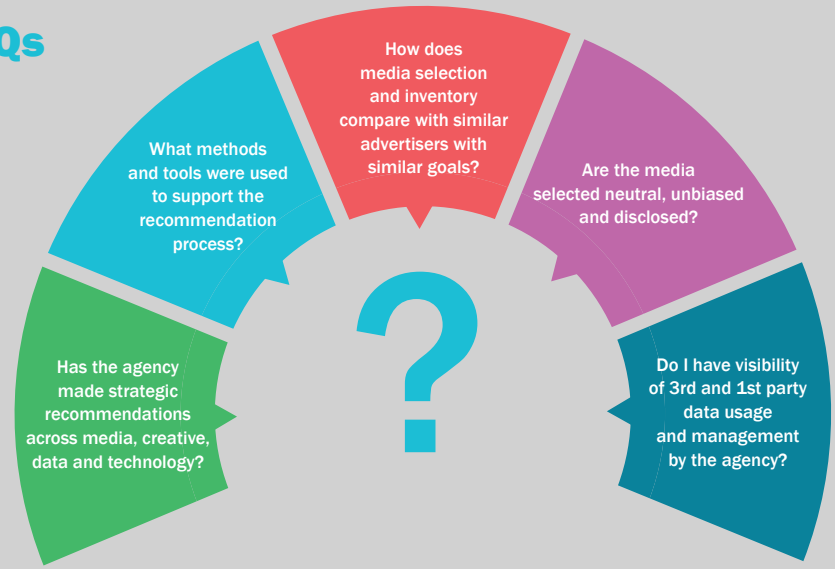
DATA / Assessment of data strategy, activation and selection of data partners.

CREATIVE / Mix and prioritisation of media formats for specific campaign objectives.

COMPETITORS / Understanding what, where and how your competitors advertise can provide valuable contextual insights.

MEASUREMENT / Implementation and application of data intelligence, verification and attribution technology.

FAQs



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETERS

/ Ensure you understand why decisions on media, creative, data and technology have been recommended.

/ Challenge the media plan if it lacks evidence, logic or clarity.

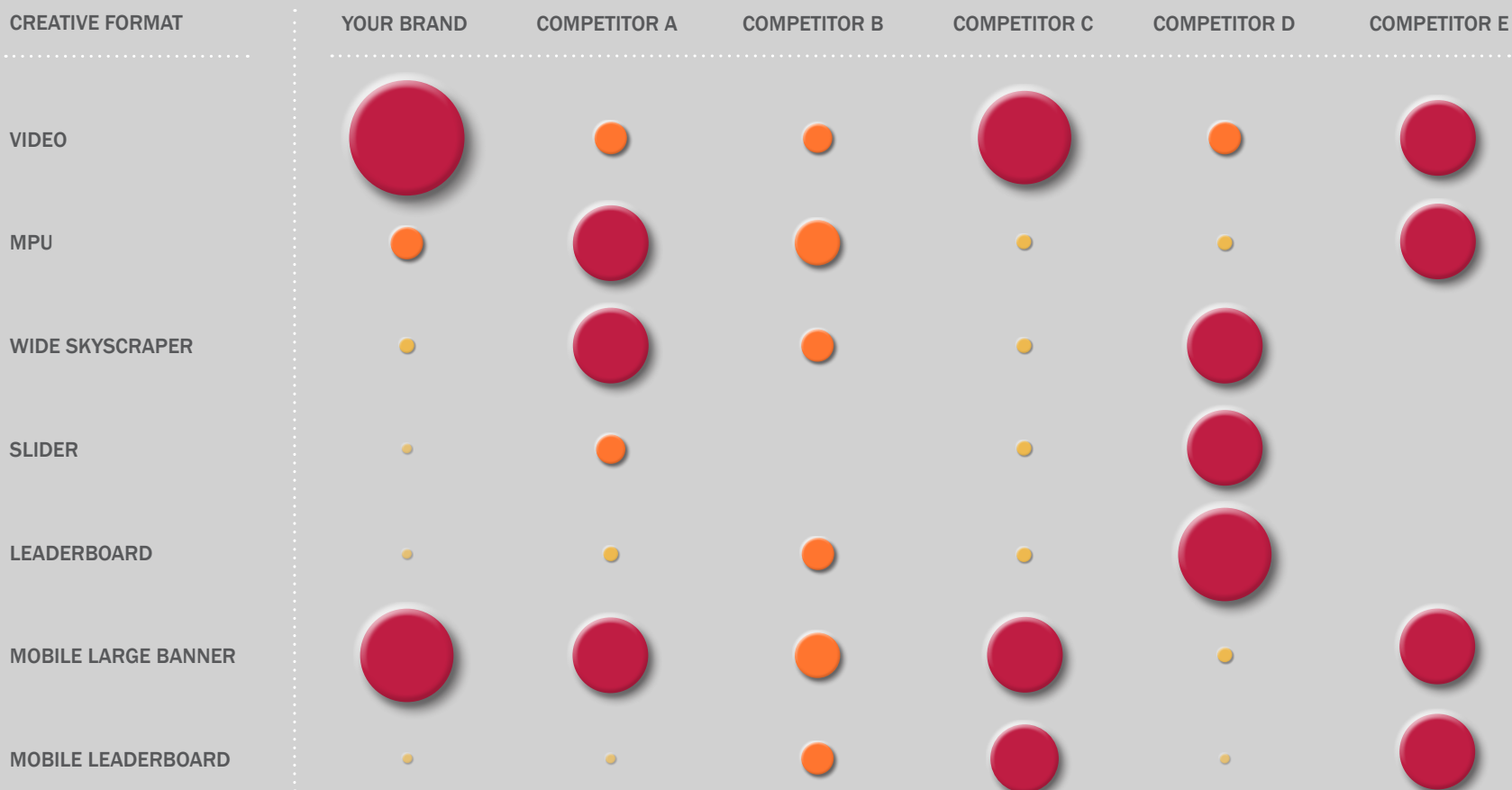
/ Utilise campaign histories and competitor analysis to ensure full discovery in your media planning process.

/ Look for new channel opportunities and set up tests or trials for new media formats.

/ Probe the rationale for spend allocations, especially when buying undisclosed or unmeasurable inventory.

MAPPING YOUR MEDIA PLANNING AGAINST COMPETITORS YIELDS GREATER INSIGHT

Comparing spend levels, buy types and format selection across websites, platforms and channels to your competitive set usually yields valuable insights and deepens the level of debate around media planning decisions.



3.

SEE INTO YOUR MEDIA SUPPLY CHAIN

In 2018, 75% of all digital media will be traded programmatically. This is problematic, as the trading ecosystem is still a murky environment where value is easily eroded through low traffic, low quality placements and over-priced data and technology.

Transparency should be a prerequisite, and all campaign plans should provide full visibility of investment on working media, talent, data and technology costs.

Developing an informed roadmap of budget allocation means visible costs can be mapped out to indicate where spend can be more productively deployed or diverted.

Ensuring contractual direct access to ad-server, DSP & platform delivery reports is essential for improving transparency across the supply chain and for identifying where potential value leakage is occurring.

FAQs

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETERS

/ Track channel investment to understand the full breakdown of costs for working media, talent, data and technology.

/ Benchmark working media investment ratios against your peers.

/ Insist on full transparency of supply chain in your media services contract and scope of work.

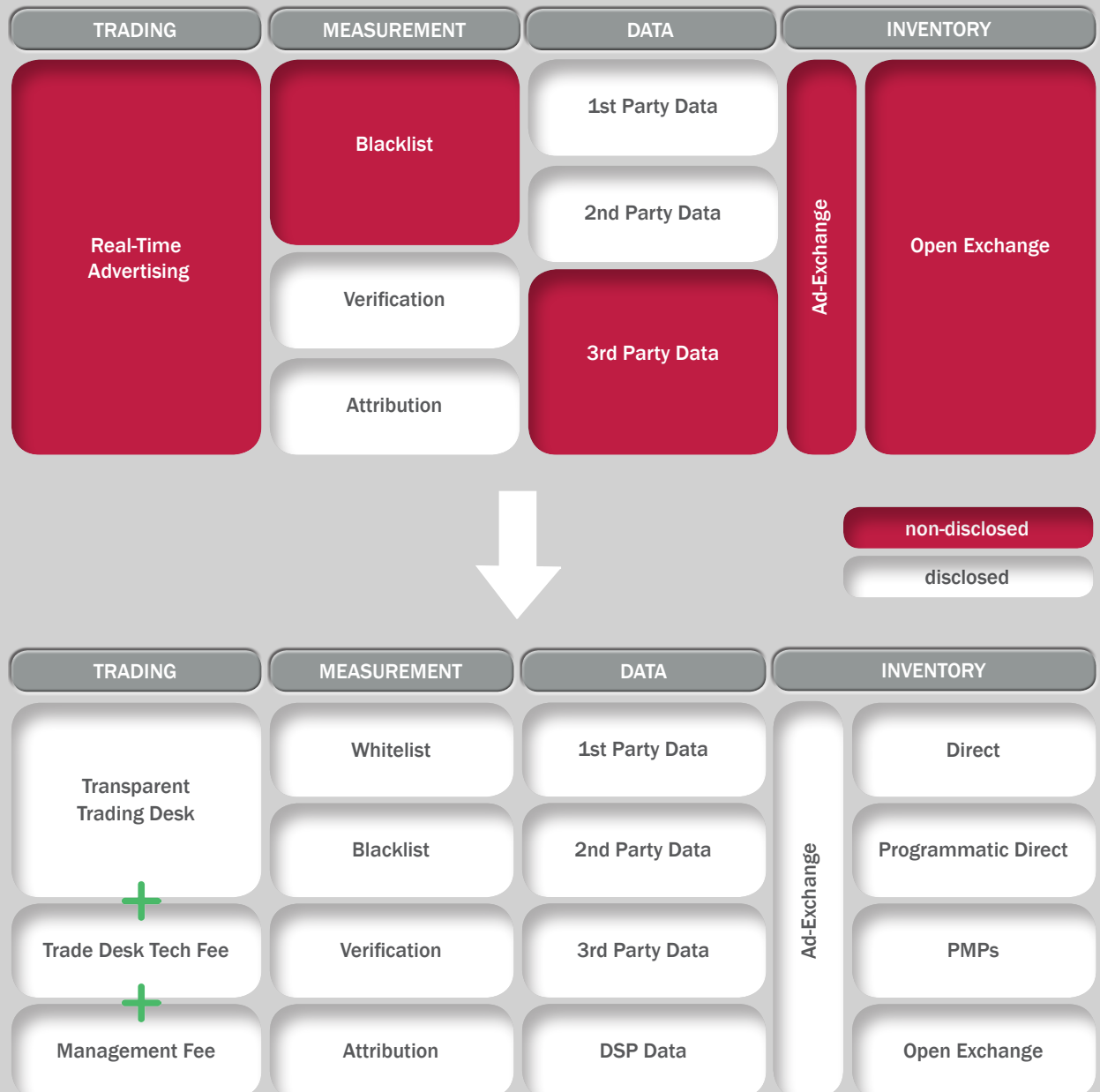
/ Identify where the value "leaks" are occurring through direct access to your platform reports.

/ Challenge your agency's investment in platforms they own or part own.

MOVING FROM UNDISCLOSED TO FULLY TRANSPARENT SUPPLY CHAIN IMPROVES ACCOUNTABILITY

Every brand is entitled to know how their budgets are being spent, what data is been utilised and where their ads are appearing.

Moving from non-disclosed to fully disclosed models is not for everyone, but does provide more security, accountability and insight.



4.

MONITOR CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE AND CONTROL

Monitoring results over time and assessing performance delivery versus plan across multiple channels and data sets is a given.

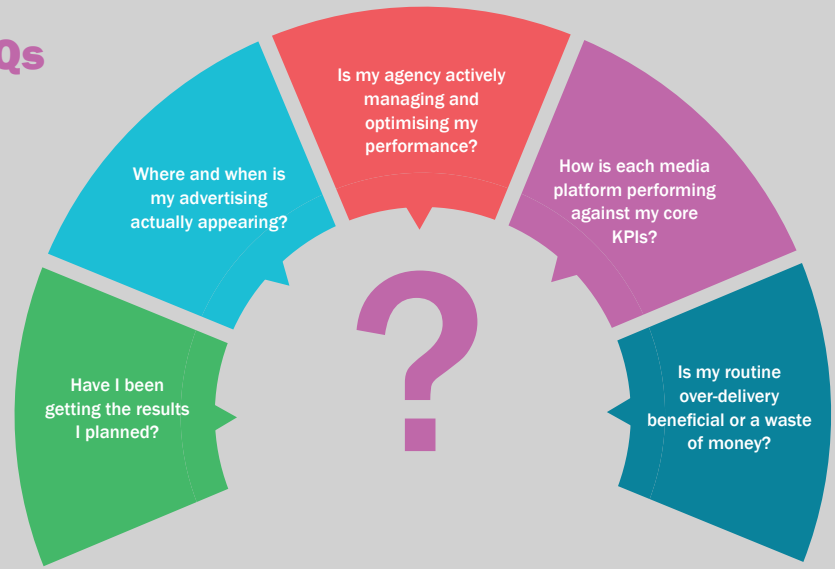
But day-to-day campaign management needs to be a very 'hands-on' process to ensure campaigns are being delivered as effectively as possible.

Even more important is analysing granular data *at scale* to reveal insights. For example, an over-delivery of impressions is wasteful if this has an adverse effect on quality or campaign optimisation.

The absence of tight control on flighting and daypart scheduling can lead to poor performance - scheduling needs to be regularly revised and assessed.

In digital, the devil is well and truly in the detail...

FAQs



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETERS

/ Insist on regular in-campaign reports of delivery versus plan against custom KPIs.

/ Ensure you understand the reasons for shortfalls or over delivery of target.

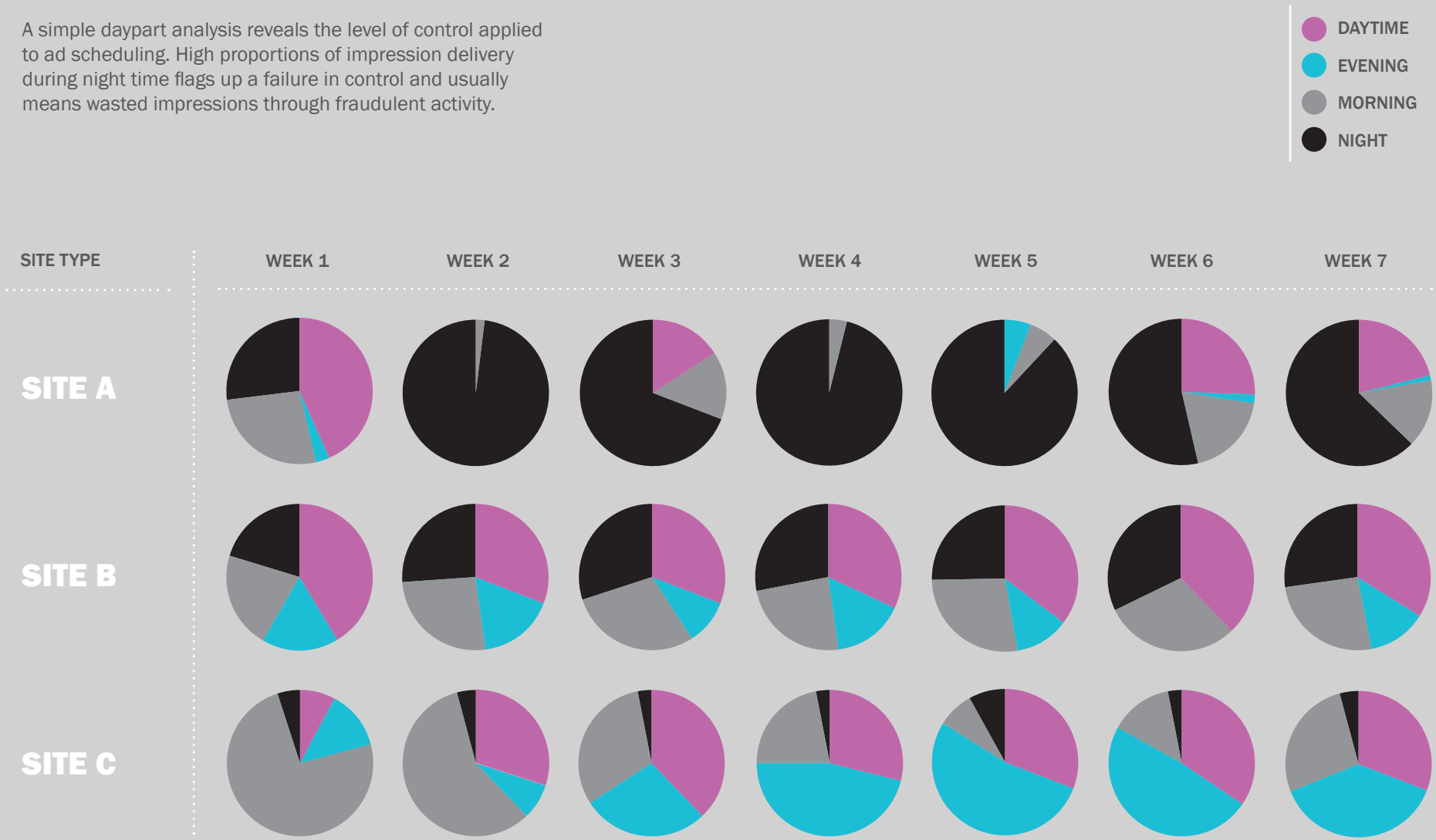
/ Gain full visibility of inventory, creative, format and technology to ensure all relevant information is on the table when evaluating campaign performance.

/ Regularly review post-campaign reporting content and processes to ensure continuous improvement.

/ Re-forecast and re-plan activity based on reallocating budget into higher performing inventory.

USING CAMPAIGN ANALYTICS TO UNDERSTAND CONTROL ISSUES AND INCONSISTENCIES ANALYSIS

A simple daypart analysis reveals the level of control applied to ad scheduling. High proportions of impression delivery during night time flags up a failure in control and usually means wasted impressions through fraudulent activity.



5.

ACCEPT ONLY QUALITY, BRAND SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

The industry is recovering from the damage caused by recent brand safety breaches.

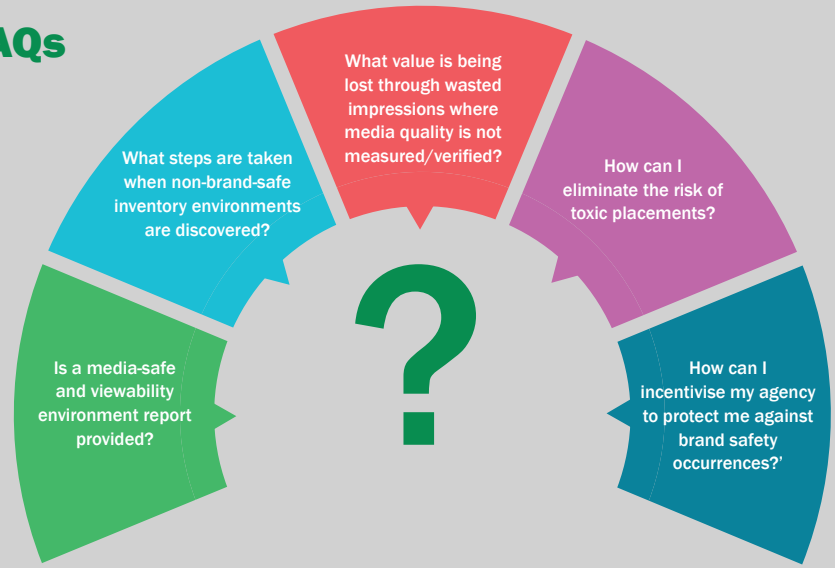
However, it will take time to de-risk ad inventory completely. Agency whitelists and blacklists provide reassurance but a 100% solution does not exist.

Programmatic makes targeting easier but without the right measures in place can lead to safety and fraud concerns. Mobile is still poorly measured as a category.

Brands should determine what level of quality compliance they need, and then should not pay for impressions which fall below their compliance standard.

Only then can a digital impression carry the same weight and credibility as an equivalent offline placement.

FAQs



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETERS

/ Determine what level of quality compliance your brand requires.

/ Ensure appropriate brand safety guidelines are in place and quality impression KPIs are set in accordance with custom standards.

/ Insist on full disclosure of audience and inventory verification data, plus In-view, Geo and Brand Safe analysis by site, format and creative.

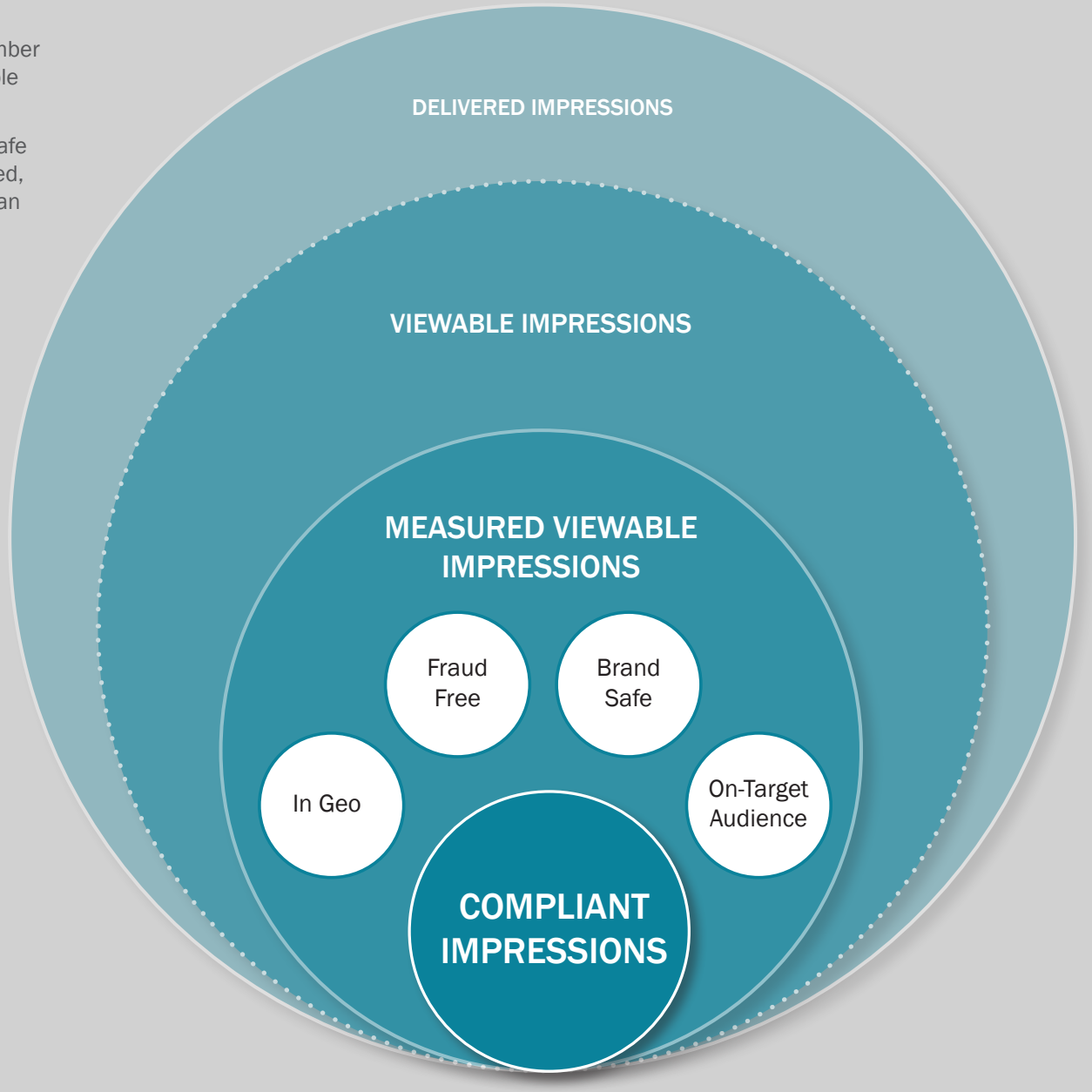
/ Review inventory against blacklist, quality and verification standards to reduce non-compliant impressions.

/ Start to KPI your agency against compliant impressions – why pay for anything else?

MEASURING AND PAYING FOR COMPLIANT IMPRESSIONS HELPS BRANDS IMPROVE CAMPAIGN QUALITY

Most campaign reports show delivered impressions, yet this includes a large number of impressions which are either unviewable or not measureable.

Once these and non-geo, fraudulent, unsafe and non-targeted impressions are removed, the level of truly compliant impressions can be relatively low.



6.

INSIST ON ACTIVE CAMPAIGN OPTIMISATION

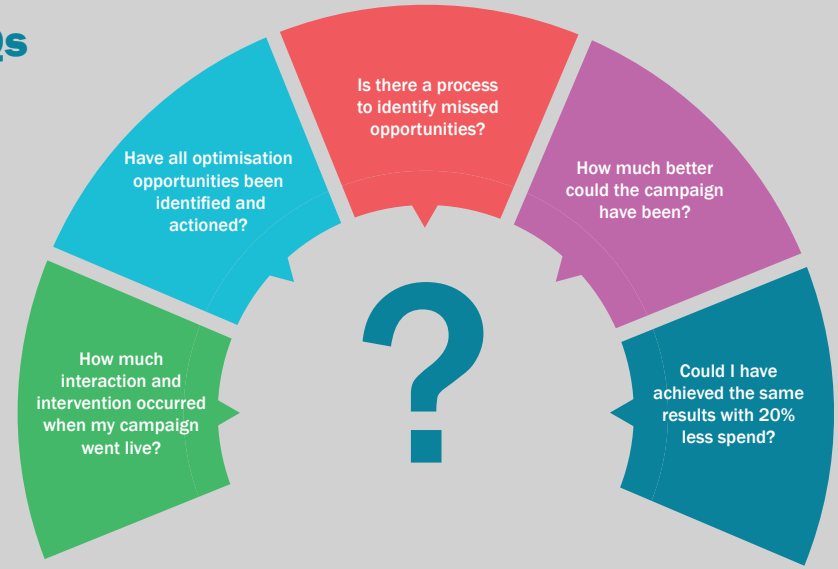
Digital is a unique channel in signalling and transmitting consumer/audience behaviours.

Optimisation is therefore a key attribute of digital media planning and execution. A core requirement for the media buyer is to identify opportunities to redistribute investment from worst- to best- performing media, rearranging site placements, hours and dayparts, media platform and creative execution – all combining to optimise campaign performance.

The role of the agency is to actively improve performance over the campaign duration, learning from prior outcomes to enhance future improvements.

If executed correctly, performance optimisation creates an upwards trend on delivery of quality custom KPIs whilst optimising cost efficiency, thus delivering the same performance for less or better quality for the same.

FAQs



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETERS

/ Understand what actions, tools, technology and data have been utilised to optimise campaign cost per outcome.

/ Carry out full optimisation analysis across all sites, formats and creative.

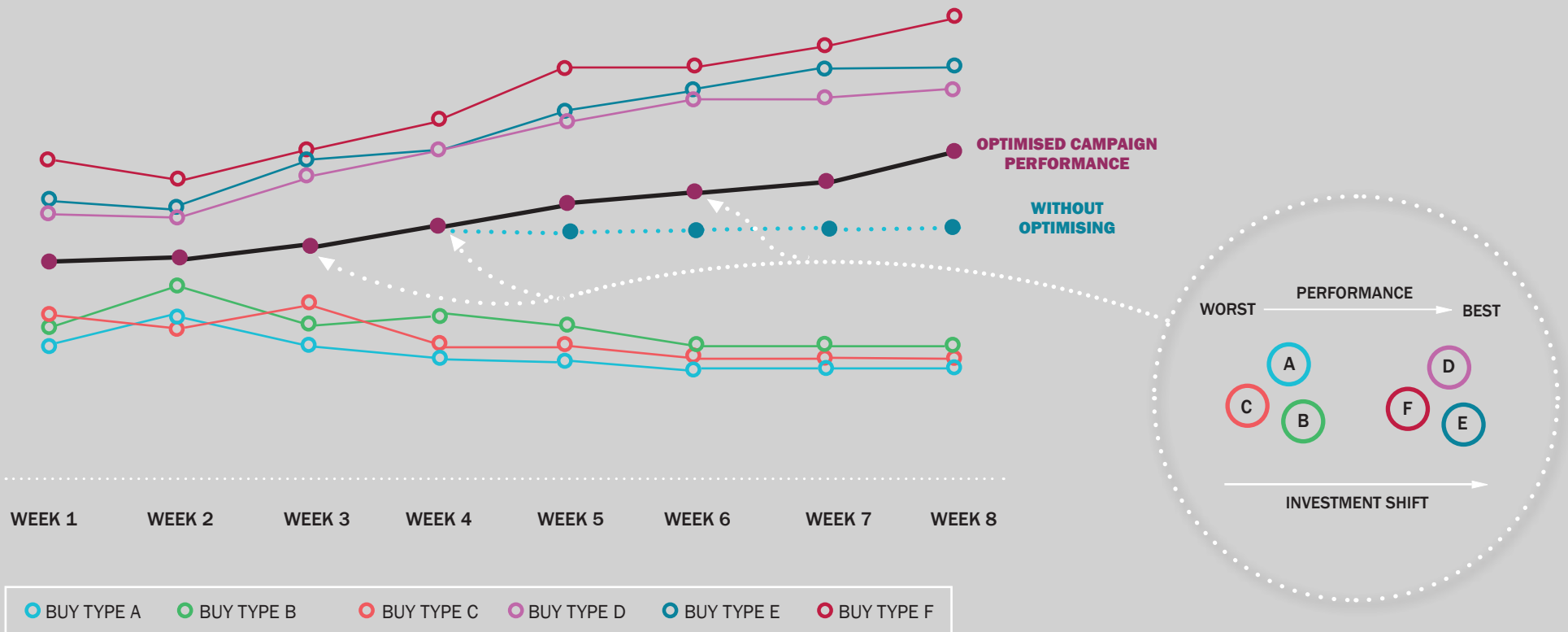
/ As part of the Post-Campaign Analysis (PCA), ask your agency to recommend how the next campaign can be better.

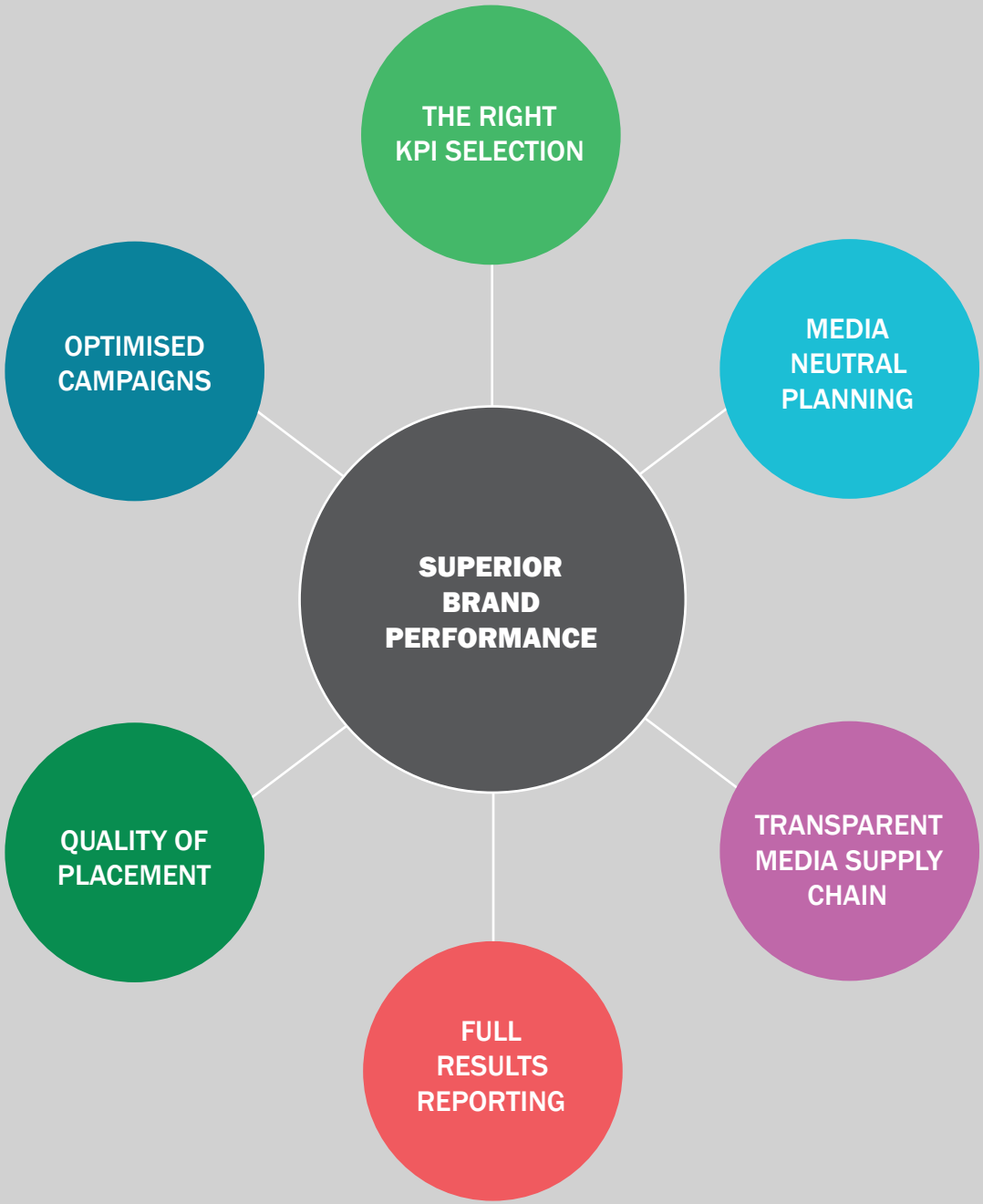
/ Undertake attribution analysis as standard practice.

/ Incentivise the agency to optimise rather then let the campaign run uninterrupted.

ACTIVATING REAL-TIME ANALYTICS TO SHIFT RESOURCES INTO BETTER PERFORMING MEDIA

Buyers should strive to optimise campaigns as efficiently as possible. Taking learnings and moving spend from underperforming buy types into the better performing buy types will improve overall campaign performance and reduce inefficient media placements.





DiPA™ DIGITAL PERFORMANCE ANALYTICS

Legacy media auditing simply does not deliver for digital. DiPA™ provides a more consistent and effective measurement solution.

Current media performance measurement practice is clearly inadequate for delivering the full range of checks and data insights that brands require. The traditional practice of benchmarking, characterised by periodic audits, has little or no value for brands with customised goals and KPIs.

Brands require a multi-layered, forensic and wide-ranging set of analytics from their advisors. For this reason, brands are moving from auditing to analytics.

With an analytical approach, brands can:

- Achieve transparency across the media supply chain
- Drive more neutrality in selecting technology and inventory
- Select KPIs which drive improved outcomes, and minimise wasted effort
- review levels of media quality and improve campaign performance.

DiPA™ provides a comprehensive assessment of digital media performance, raises standards in digital media and delivers value beyond savings.

DiPA® EVALUATIONS ARE STRUCTURED AROUND THE FRAMEWORK BELOW:

More opportunities for improving performance can be identified by exploring all the potential value levers.

With DiPA™, a more circumspective assessment of media buying strategy and execution is undertaken, unearthing dramatic efficiencies otherwise undetected by legacy pool-based audits.

Get a DiPA™ understanding of your digital media performance.

To find out more about the service, and how we've helped our clients with their digital media performance, please get in touch:

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