



TEN26 MEDIA  
ADVERTISE WITH PURPOSE



# A Guide to Building a Profitable Paid Media Strategy for Your Travel Business

eBOOK



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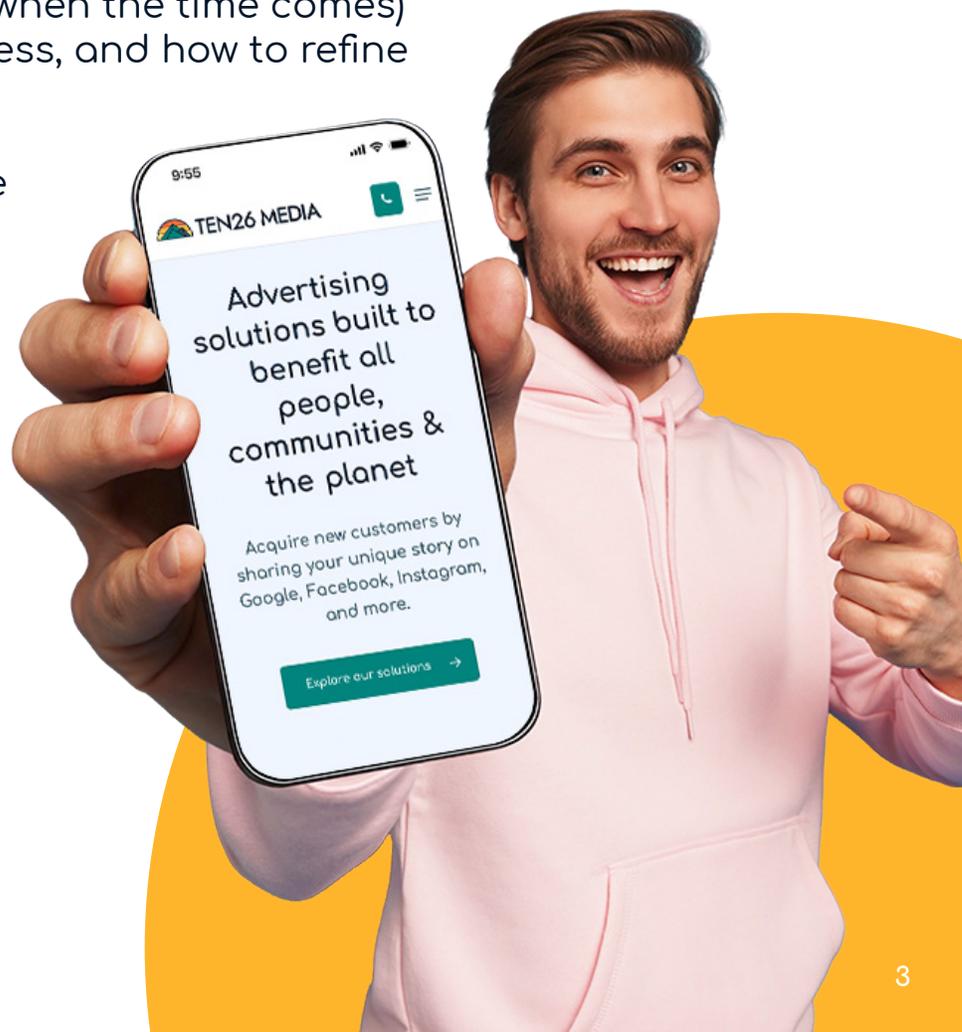
# 01. Introduction

In today's digital age, it has become essential for businesses to leverage the power of paid media to drive traffic and conversions to their websites, especially in the travel industry. As a travel business, you must have a strong online presence to attract customers and stand out in this highly competitive industry.

However, with the vast amount of options available, it can sometimes be overwhelming to decide which paid media channels to use, how much you should invest, and how to measure the effectiveness of your campaigns. Well, look no further, because this eBook will be the tool for you, and give you the inside scoop on all things paid media.

In this guide, we will be walking you through the process of building a profitable paid media strategy for your travel business. We will cover the basics of paid media, what it is, and include the different types of channels available to your disposal and even how to choose the right ones for your business. We'll also discuss how to set up and optimize your campaigns (when the time comes) while measuring your success, and how to refine your strategy over time.

By the end of this guide, we believe you'll have a solid understanding of how to use paid media to drive traffic and conversions and even more fun stuff for your travel website and ultimately, grow your business. But before we jump into it, let's take a look at the facts.



# Industry Stats and News



We have to admit, the travel industry has undergone some pretty significant changes in recent years due to various factors. These include technological advancements, changes in consumer behavior, global pandemics (but we won't go into the specifics on that one), and more.

“Global tourism arrivals will increase by 30% in 2023, following growth of 60% in 2022 but will remain below pre-pandemic levels.” (Economist Intelligence Unit)

Today, the travel industry is an insanely complex ecosystem of online travel agencies, airlines, tour operators, destination management companies, and more that would leave anyone's head spinning.

One of the most significant changes that we think everyone could agree on in the travel industry would be the rise of online booking platforms. These platforms have made it easier than ever before for travelers to book hotels, flights, activities, and more all at the click of a button. Online travel agencies (OTAs) like Expedia or Booking.com have become dominant players in the industry, with many travelers using travel companies to plan and book their trips; but news flash, they aren't the only ones!

In fact, “90% of respondents want to experience a destination “like a local” and two-thirds of millennial respondents specifically worry about whether it's an authentic experience.” (Pokora, Forbes Advisor)

But what are the plans for the future? Well, a major trend that we've seen in the travel industry has been the rise of sustainable tourism and adventure/experiential tourism. We as travelers have become more and more aware of the environmental impacts of our travel, hence the growing demand for sustainable and responsible travel options. This has led to the development of eco-friendly hotels and tours, as well as an increased focus on conservation and community development in destination areas around the world.

## 02. What is Paid Media?

So, what exactly is paid media? Paid media refers to the use of advertising and other promotional tactics that require payment in return for the promotion and visibility of your brand, products, or services. It also includes a variety of types of advertising such as display ads, search engine advertising, social media advertising, sponsored content, and so much more.

The end goal of paid media is to increase brand awareness, generate leads, and drive conversions by targeting specific audiences through numerous channels. By coming up with the right paid media strategy, your travel business can reach its highest potential of customers who may have yet to find your website through an organic search or even through social media channels.

Paid media also allows your business to target specific audiences or demographics, interests, and behaviors of your ideal customer. So, by targeting your ads to the correct audience, you will significantly increase the likelihood of conversion, and all in all, your company gets the most out of your marketing budget.

Another advantage of using paid media is the ability to track the performance of your campaigns. With metrics like click-through rates (CTR), conversion rates, and return on ad spend (ROAS), your travel business can measure the success of your campaigns, and have the ability to refine your strategy over time.

In short, paid media will be an essential part of your business if your goals are to increase online visibility, reach new audiences, and drive conversions.

Who wouldn't want that?



# Picking the Right Paid Media Channels

Since you've gotten this far – might as well learn which one of these channels is the most effective for your business model! Choosing the right paid media channel for your travel business depends on various factors such as your target audience, your budget, and your goals. There are a lot of things to factor in though, so below are a few to consider:

## PAID SEARCH ADVERTISING

This form of advertising involves placing ads on search engines (like Google and Bing), where you pay every time someone clicks on your ad. PPC can be highly targeted and very cost-effective, making it a popular choice for travel businesses like yourself looking to drive website traffic and generate leads.

## DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Display ads involve placing banner ads on third-party websites, which can be targeted to a specific audience based on interests and behaviors. These types of ads are useful for building brand awareness and also increase website traffic.

## VIDEO ADVERTISING (YOUTUBE)

Video advertising incorporates creating and distributing video ads with the end goal of reaching your specific target audience. It involves the use of online platforms such as Youtube, Google, Facebook, etc. to deliver video ads to viewers based on interests, behaviors, and demographics. Video advertising is a popular form of advertising because it can capture the attention of consumers and convey messages quickly and effectively.

## SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

Social ads allow you to reach a highly targeted audience on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and more. Social helps your company to showcase your offerings and, again, drive traffic to your website.

## RETARGETING

Retargeting involves displaying ads to people who have previously visited your website but unfortunately didn't convert. Retargeting can be highly effective at reminding those potential customers about your specific travel business and encouraging them to book something through you.

## PROGRAMMATIC ADVERTISING

Programmatic advertising involves using automated systems to buy and place digital ads, which can be highly targeted and cost-effective. Programmatic advertising can be used for various forms of advertising like display, video, and mobile advertising.

**Keep in mind that each channel has its strengths and weaknesses, so it's imperative to understand which channels align with your goals and budget.**

# 03. Industry Platforms of Paid Media

## Paid Search

“Paid search advertising is still king for travel brands. It’s projected that in 2023, **more than 55%** of tourism companies will earmark their marketing budgets for paid search ads.” (Shumaker. Hearst Bay Area)

Spending on Google search ads for travel **increased 16% Y/Y** in 2022. The increase in Cost-per-Click (CPC) likely attributes to increased competition, as COVID restrictions eased during Q4 of 2021 as people began traveling more frequently.

## Social

Instagram is the most popular social media platform for travel influencers, with 93% of them using the platform.

A study by Facebook Business found that travel ads featuring people in the imagery or video received **2.3x higher click-through rates (CTR)** than those without.

60% of travelers use social media to research their trips, and 72% of travelers say that seeing someone else’s trip photos on social media inspires them to travel to that destination. -TripAdvisor

## Other

“Unlike most industries, which lean heavily on mobile, travel is balanced between mobile and desktop/laptop ad spending (50.9% versus 49.1%).”

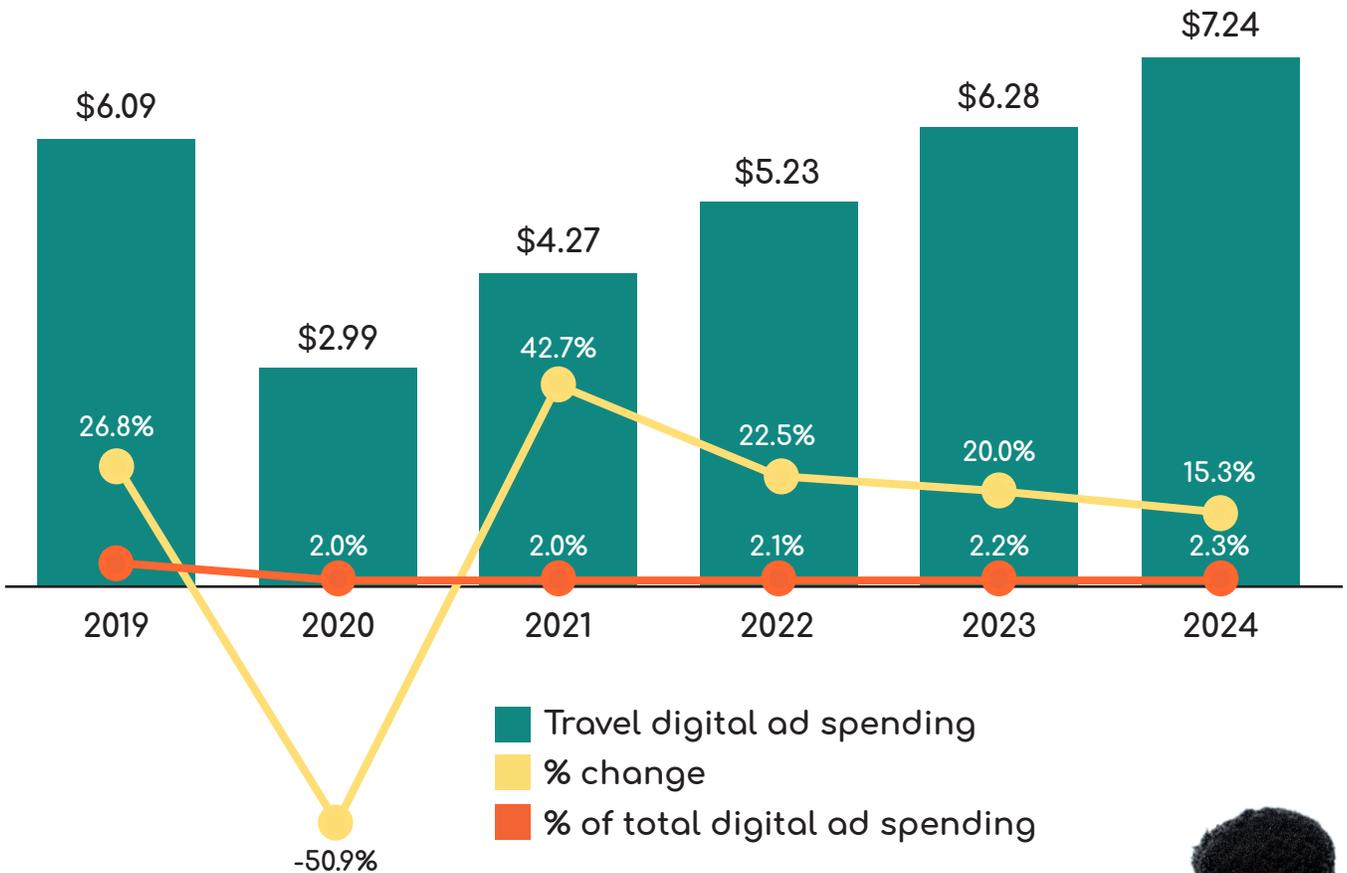
- eMarketer

“As other industry verticals rapidly decelerate their ad spending growth, travel’s rebound is maintaining its momentum. After an unexpected 42.7% boom in digital ad spending in 2021, **the travel industry is set to increase its ad buying by another 22.5% this year.**”



# US Travel Digital Ad Spending 2019-2024

billions, % change, and % of total digital ad spending

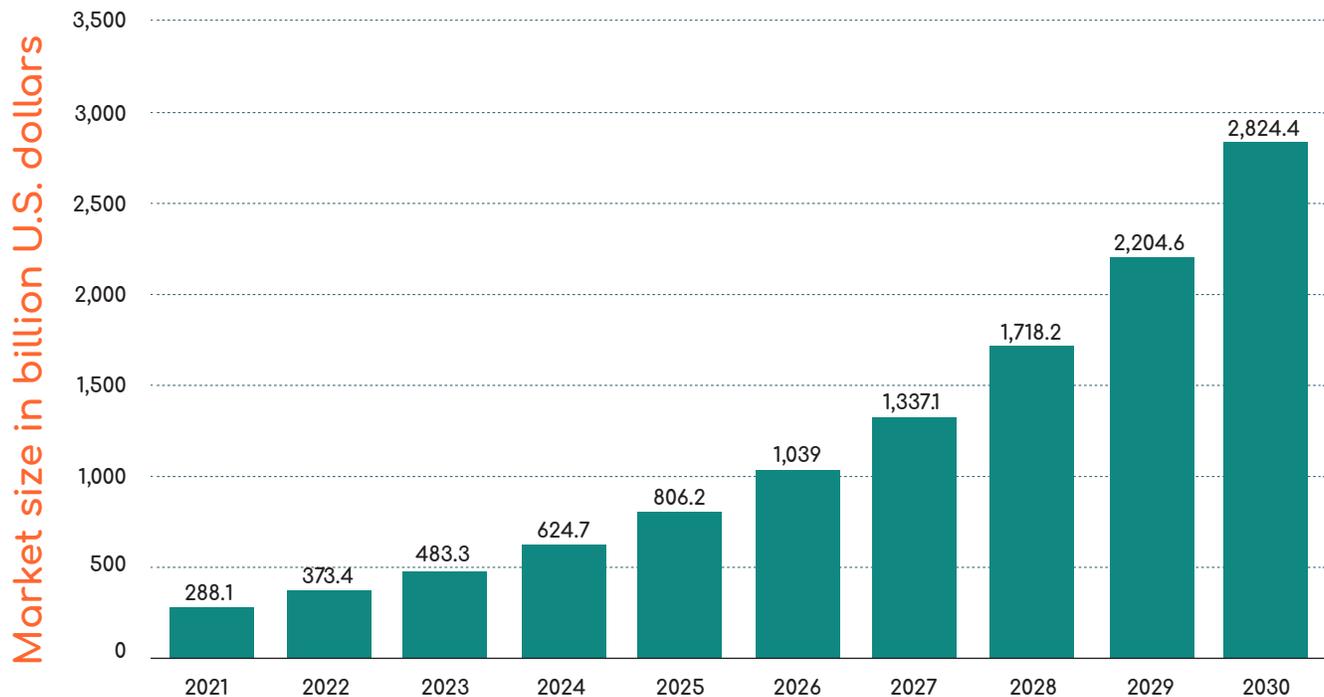


Note: includes advertising that appears on desktop and laptop computers as well as mobile phones, tablets, and other internet-connected devices on all formats mentioned.  
 Source: eMarketer, July 2022



# Adventure tourism market size worldwide in 2021, with forecast until 2030

(in billion U.S. dollars)



Source:  
NextMove Strategy Consulting

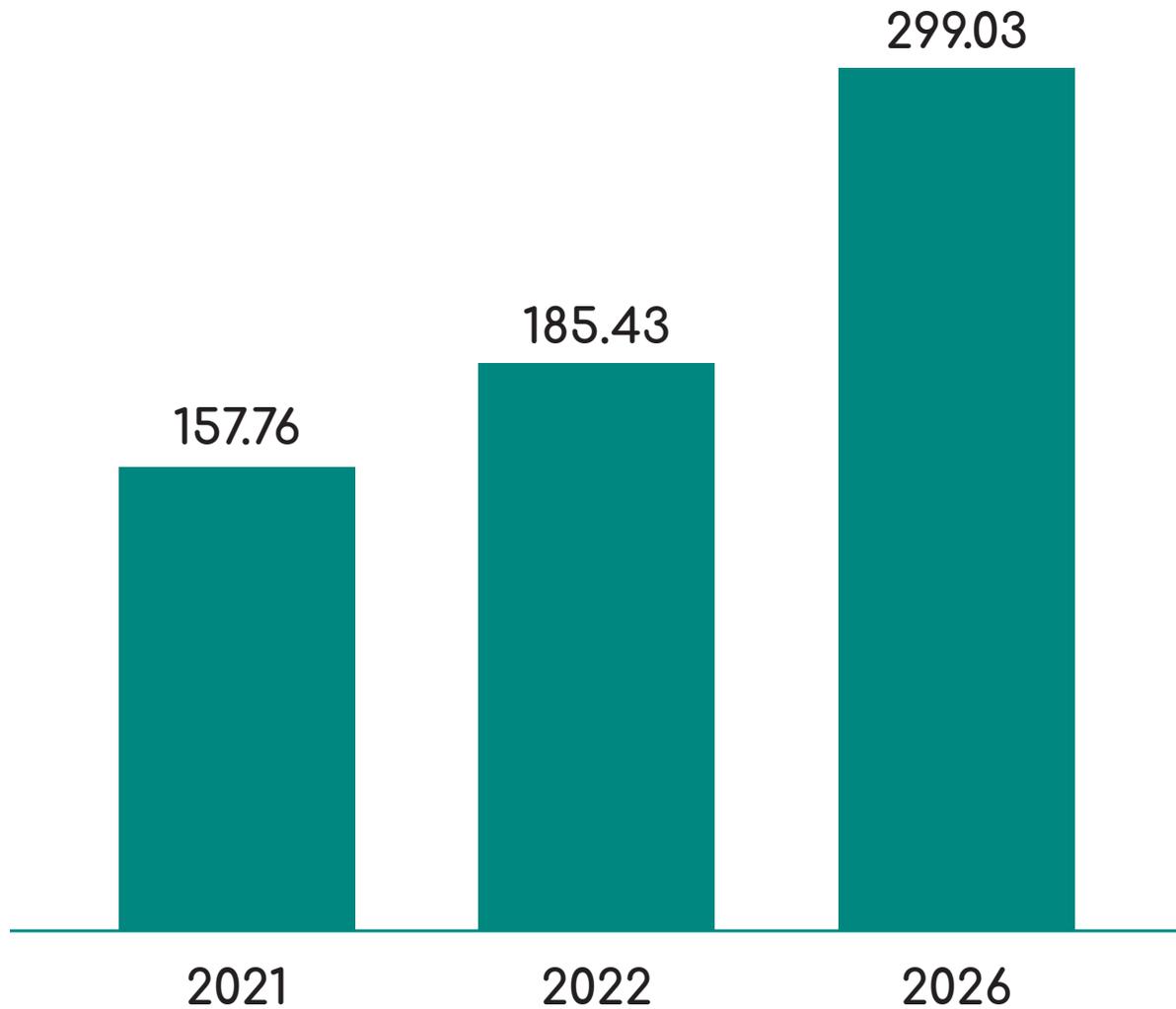
Additional Information:  
Worldwide; 2021

"the global adventure tourism market is on a spur owing to the exponential growth of the tourism industry. Besides the inclination of youth towards exploring undiscovered destinations, rising demands of adventure sports, increase in disposable incomes, and reasonable travel packages are expected to supplement the market growth through the forecast period. [...] The global Adventure Tourism Market size valued at USD 288.08 billion in 2021, is expected an elevation of USD 2824.42 billion by 2030." Source: NextMSC. 2022.



# Ecotourism predicted market size

(in billions USD)



Source: Radical Storage

“By the end of 2022, the ecotourism market size globally is predicted to have grown to \$185.43 billion, an increase of 17.5% from \$157.76 billion in 2021. By 2026, the global ecotourism market size is expected to increase to \$299.03 billion, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.7%.”  
-Radical Storage



# 04.

# Is Paid Media Right For Your Business?

Short answer – of course!

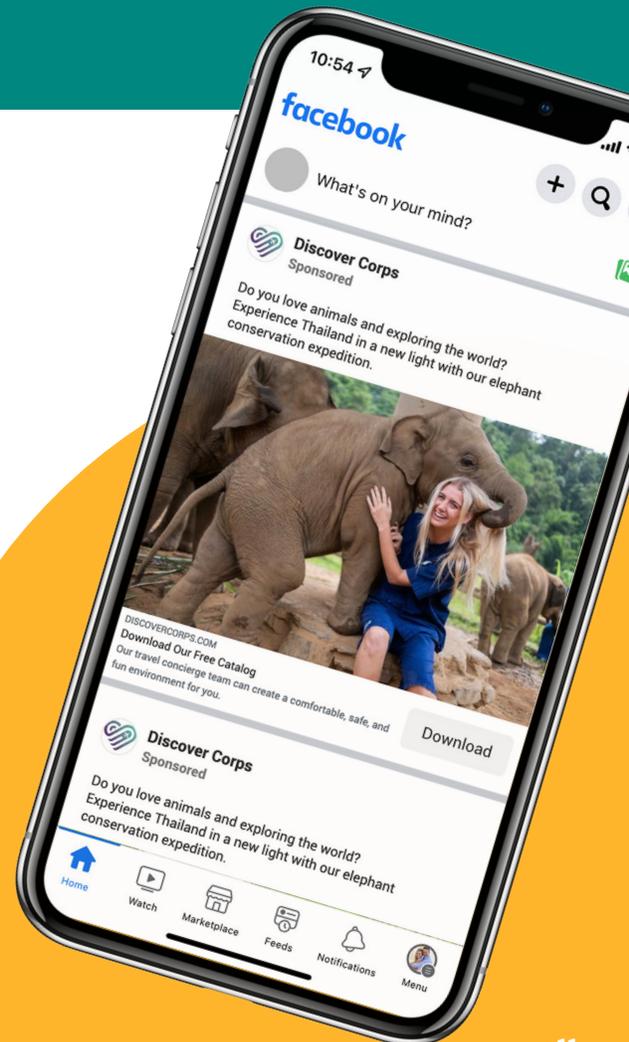
Long answer: Having a website on its own doesn't always promise long-term results. If you are not promoting your business in front of people and have a wowing pitch, you're at a disadvantage. No matter how great your travel business is, you have to make people aware of it.

## But Why?

It has been “scientifically” proven that investing in paid media truly works if your goals are to increase brand awareness, conversions, and lead generation. People can't use your travel business if they don't know who you are.

## So you're probably wondering, “How do I reach people then?”

Well, you go to them! There are millions of people interacting and browsing on Google, Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and more. Paid media allows your business to get in front of your target audience directly.



# 05. How to Build a Paid Media Strategy

Building a paid media strategy for your travel business involves understanding your target audience, identifying the most relevant platforms to be able to reach them, creating engaging content that resonates, and measuring the effectiveness of the campaign. Here are some steps to get you started:

## 01 DETERMINE YOUR GOALS

What do you want your business to achieve with your paid media strategy? Would it be to increase brand awareness, drive website traffic, generate leads, boost sales, or increase customer loyalty? Once you have a clear objective in mind, you can start to develop a plan to achieve these goals.

A great tool to use to set your goals is by using SMART goals.

Smart goals are those that are:

**S**pecific  
**M**easurable  
**A**ttainable  
**R**elevant  
**T**ime-based

## 02 DISTINGUISH YOUR AUDIENCE

Who are your ideal customers? What are their demographics, interests, and online behavior? What motivates them to travel or how do they plan to travel? Is your travel business already geared towards a niche audience, and how does it match up with your current clientele? You can use tools like Google Analytics and Facebook Insights to get a better insight into your audience and if your business is targeting them correctly.

Now that you have these goals set in stone and your audience established, you can move on to executing your strategic media plan!



## Executing the Strategy

Now that you've finished your research and your strategy is defined, it's time to get your campaigns up and running.

### 03 SELECT THE RIGHT CHANNELS

When you've finished your audience research, you can then decide which platforms will be worthwhile in reaching your target audience. Options could include the channels listed previously.

### 04 SET A BUDGET

Calculate how much your company is willing to spend on each platform, and set a budget accordingly. Consider the CPC, cost-per-impression (CPM), or cost-per-action (CPA) for each ad and how many ads you will be running.

### 05 CREATE & DEVELOP ATTENTION-GRABBING AD STRATEGIES

Your ads should be visually appealing, informative, and relatable to your audience. Elements of an effective ad include concise messaging, high-quality visuals, strong headlines, and call-to-actions that entice the consumer. Outside of Search and Social Media, you might have to consider Display and Retargeting Ads as well.

## CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

| PHASE                     | WEEK |
|---------------------------|------|
| Discovery/Kickoff Meeting | 1    |
| Research & Analysis       | 1-2  |
| Strategy Development      | 2-3  |
| Present Strategy          | 3    |
| Campaign Setup            | 3-4  |
| Go Live/Launch            | 5    |



## Campaign Management

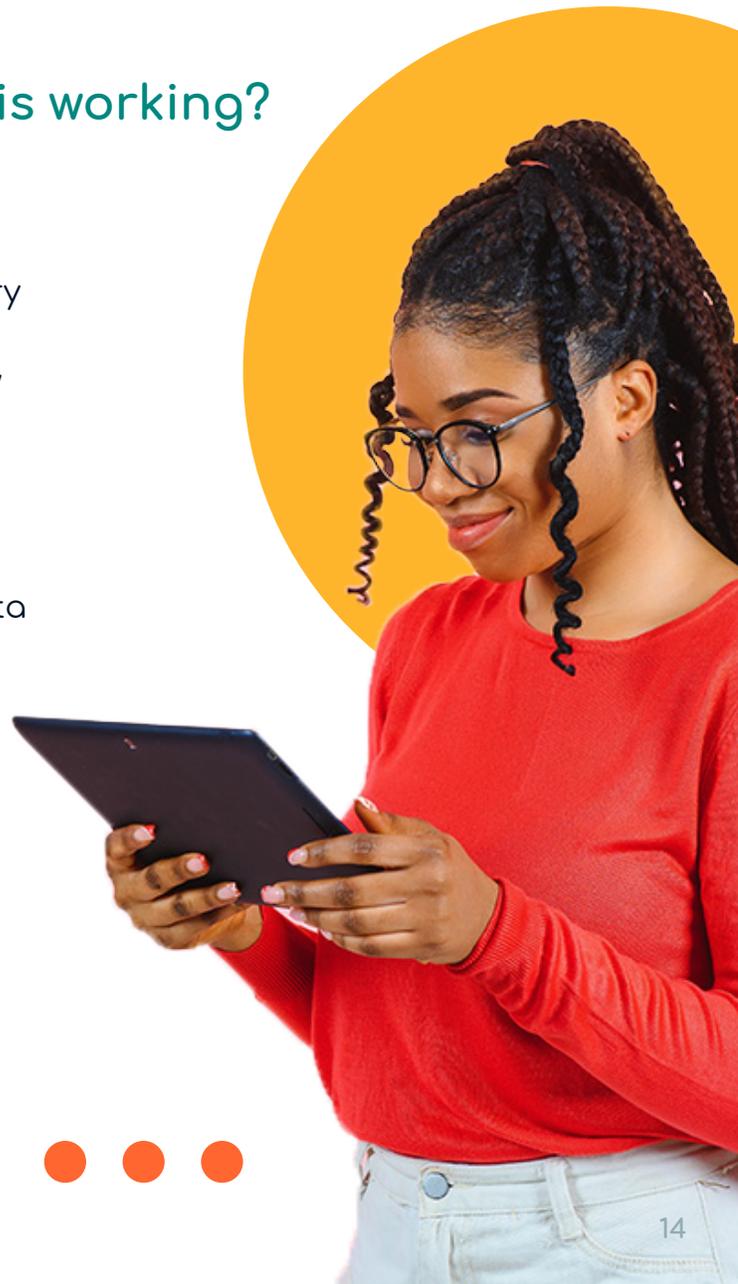
After you've set up the campaigns and started the ad spending, it's time to sit back, relax, and watch all the new leads roll in, right? Unfortunately, that's not the case. To have a fulfilling paid media campaign, there are some things you must follow up with.

Now, you could hire someone like us to do your campaign management and analytics, and we'll take care of it for you. Otherwise, you will need to constantly manage and optimize your campaign to ensure you are getting the highest return on advertising spend (ROAS).

## Campaign Reporting

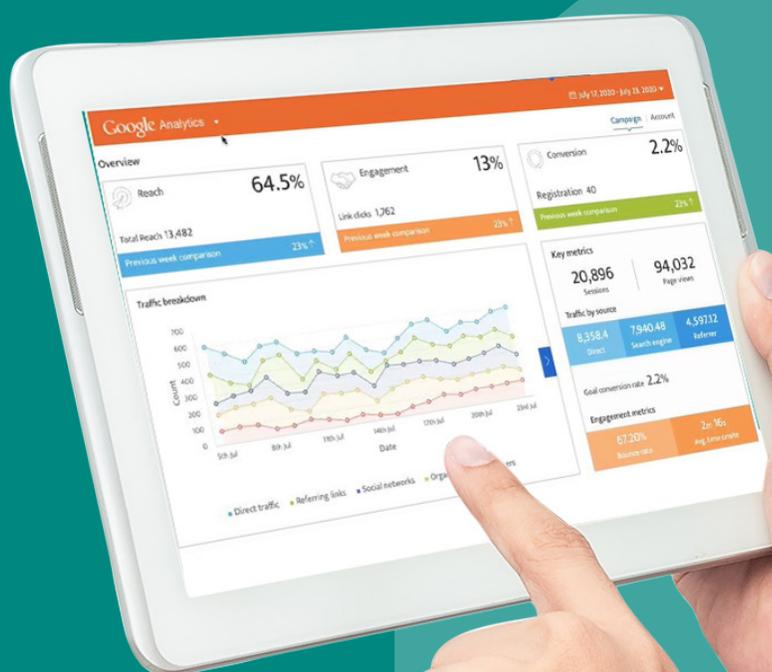
### How do you know if all of this is working?

Don't worry if you choose to go with us - we provide monthly reports including valuable campaign metrics and results and a summary of all the optimizations and insights we have from the previous month. We will let you know which ad groups and ads perform the best and what we are doing to deliver the most conversions. There are various tools, either in-platform or external software, that allow you to truly get into the nitty-gritty of the data you've collected from the campaigns. You can then use your in-depth reports to adjust existing campaigns and refer to them when developing your next. When we said that the old days of advertising are over, we meant it.



# 06. Key Elements Of A Paid Media Strategy

There are several key elements of a successful paid media strategy. However, at Ten26 Media, we believe in working smarter, not harder. We know that utilizing extensive data analysis tools allows us to manage successful campaigns easier, cheaper, and smarter.





## MONITORING

Use a workflow management system to ensure your ads are running smoothly.

As we mentioned before, campaign monitoring and management will take a bit of time and resources. You and your team will need to delegate tasks to make sure your campaigns are running efficiently. A dedicated account manager can help streamline that process by checking in daily to ensure that all your ads are running smoothly with no interruptions or technical issues. Technology is reliable but not perfect all the time, so you'll need to check daily to confirm your ads are performing as planned.

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## OPTIMIZATION

Thoughtfully review your campaigns weekly to optimize your ad budgets

Running a campaign is not a crockpot where you can just throw the ingredients together to “let it sit for a while”. You need to continuously check in on ad performance and adjust accordingly. You don't want to be paying for an ad to run if it is not conveying the right messaging or reaching the appropriate audiences. Therefore, it is essential to make weekly updates to creative copy, targeted keywords, bid management, landing pages, and target audiences to make the most of your paid media. Simultaneously, you should also replace underperforming ads with new variations to improve your relevance score and overall campaign results.

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## REPORTING

Use marketing analytics and reporting tools to monitor and analyze your campaign data

Perhaps the most critical element of paid media strategy, campaign reporting, and analyzing your KPIs will help you improve your online reach and overall performance; meaning you can reach even more customers for less money. In other words, a monthly deep dive into your analytics can help keep your ROAS high. Some of the digital marketing platforms already have in-depth analytics software built into them. Still, if they do not, there are plenty of digital analytics software available to help you keep track of key metrics in one place to easily monitor the revenue earned from your digital marketing efforts. The insights you will gain from thoroughly analyzing your campaign data will be extremely valuable for any future digital marketing efforts.



## 07. Next Steps

Okay, so you get it now. If you haven't begun the journey of building your paid digital media strategy, there has never been a better time to do so (seriously). The power of digital marketing is proven- you can reach consumers more directly and effectively with the right tools and strategy behind you. You understand that with relatively low-cost ad rates across the board, larger competitors pulling back spending, and high engagement rates, right now is a prime time to launch a digital marketing campaign.

**But where do you go from here?**

## 3 Things to Remember

### 1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK

We aren't your teacher, but we still need to remind you to do your homework first. And by homework, we mean your market research, competitor analysis, audience profiles, keyword research, SMART goal setting, landing page optimization, ad spend budgeting, timeline setting, and strategy development. You need to understand your situation, resources, limitations, and goals before making a plan of action. Use the resources and tools available to help you do the work thoroughly.

### 2. THINK ABOUT THE "R" IN ROI

Sometimes it can be hard to convince yourself of the actual return on advertising investment. As the old adage goes, you have to spend money to make money. With campaign reporting and analytics, we can show you exactly how many sales (or whatever goal you set) result from a specific campaign. While your competitors might be cutting back on ad spend, you understand that there hasn't been a more perfect time to push forward to see that "R" with your paid digital marketing campaigns.

### 3. TALK TO EXPERTS

Digital marketing can be confusing, we get it. There are a lot of numbers, terminology, and technology involved, which can be overwhelming to a business owner who has a million other things on their plate. Running a business takes a lot of time, and creating an effective paid digital media campaign is a full-time job itself. That's why we're here to help. We use industry best practices and have years of experience working with companies on their paid digital media strategies. Let us take the load off your back and trust that we are capable of delivering you real results from a digital marketing campaign.



# 08. About Ten26Media

Ten26 Media is a digital advertising agency in Denver, CO, that helps businesses amplify their impact using integrated creative, media, & technology solutions.

Established in 2012, our strategists have managed more than \$30M in paid media spend for companies in travel, tourism, education, sustainability, and more.

To learn more about how Ten26 Media can help you build a profitable paid media strategy and grow your business, please contact us at:

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www.ten26media.com



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