

A practical guide to digital marketing transformation

By [Johan Walters](#), [Ansa Leighton](#) & [Niamh NicLiam](#)

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[Johan Walters](#), [Ansa Leighton](#) and [Niamh NicLiam](#) at Incubeta, provide a guide to digital marketing transformation.



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Most board agendas have digital transformation as one of the key recurring talking points and marketing leaders are increasingly being critiqued on their own transformation progress. But without a clear starting point, a proper plan, and a good idea of what success looks like, many companies will either abandon their implementations, or end up blowing budgets on technology they don't know how to use.

Google partner, Incubeta, draws on their experience working with global brands and shares practical advice on how best to approach digital transformation, using the Digital Maturity Transformation (DMT) programme.



Unpacking Google's DMT two years on - still an enigma for many

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At the outset, it's important to remember that successful digital marketing transformation is about improving how marketing is championed, structured and implemented, so a brand can respond to rising consumer expectations and deliver relevant, useful and assistive experiences.

This process should be anchored in creating a digital-first mindset, supported by technology in order to develop customer-centric marketing strategies.

In our experience this can be achieved by:

1. Understanding where you are now

Before any meaningful transformation can take place, companies need to take stock of their current situation and where they are in relation to the market in general. This can be achieved by measuring their digital maturity - or the degree to which a company is using digital marketing methods to connect with customers.

The kick off point in DMT is the Digital Maturity Benchmark assessment which measures a brand's digital maturity based on 'The five As and an O' (audience, access attribution, assets, automation and organisation). The Benchmark also reveals where the organisation sits across the four maturity levels: Nascent, Emerging, Connected, and Multi-moment.

2. Understand where you want to be and what that will look like

With a good understanding of where they are at, companies are better able to understand what they are working towards. Understanding and defining what success looks like means marketing leaders can intelligently build an incremental plan of action that will allow them to graduate up the maturity framework.

3. Understand how you are going to get there

Nothing works without a good plan. Crafting a digital roadmap with clearly defined milestones and an associated investment to achieve each one will set a company on the right path.

4. How will you measure your success?

Like everything in life, measuring progress makes it quantifiable and sustainable. By having defined KPIs in place marketing leaders will be able to reward success, but they will also be better able to course-adjust should they need.

5. Who will help you get there?

More than just working with clients to build digital road maps, Incubeta ensures that clients create a governance plan and identifies leaders across the organisations who will champion the initiative and actively participate in a governing body. The importance of company-wide buy-in cannot be overstated. More often than not, marketing leaders will rely on other departments when it comes to operational requirements.

When it comes to the people conversation, it doesn't stop at leadership. A thorough gap analysis of the people and skills required to achieve maturity goals needs to happen. If there are gaps to be filled, companies need to know if these can be filled by training, or if they need to bring in new skills. The importance of change management during any operational restructure must not be underestimated and should be factored in at the start of the transformation journey.

Working around silos

Digital marketing transformation is not a colour-by-numbers exercise. There are a host of complications that need to be addressed before you begin implementing the transformation roadmap. Unfortunately many global enterprises are dealing with siloed structures that make any change difficult.

South Africa's larger companies are no different. In any given environment, not only is there a tangled web of technology, each generating their own data points, but there are separate departmental budgets and even legal requirements which have to be taken into account.

What's more, many departments will have their own agencies and consultants and these must be made aware of the work being done on digital marketing transformation. Having a trusted, external partner who is able to act as coordinator is critical in order to minimise the time and pain it takes to move from one level of digital maturity to another.

Empowering teams to take charge

Enabling your teams to better understand what lies ahead will not only help minimise resistance but will help the champions of digital transformation build broad buy-in of the process and excitement about the end-goal.

With this in mind, Google is working with partners, including Incubeta to help navigate the road to digital maturity through mini labs which include interactive sessions with hands-on activities and real world examples. Mini labs help organisations explore their business objectives, and through careful review of their Digital Maturity Benchmark (DMB) results, craft a DMT plan.

Finally, a good way to understand what should be expected and what can be achieved is to learn from companies which have already walked the path. Over the past two years Incubeta has worked with Google and the DMT programme to deliver digital transformation to a number of global brands. These have included Perfetti van Melle, Goodyear and Air Asia. The results have been impressive, with tailored digital strategies delivered across multiple regions. For local companies looking to fast track their own digital transformation, it's good to know that with the right partner and a pragmatic approach, they could also see significant improvements in their digital maturity.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Johan Walters, lead tech solutions consultant, Ansa Leighton, lead platform and media consultant, Niamh McLiam, head of business partnerships at Incubeta

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