



KANTAR

EFFECTIVENESS 2026

*Inspiration, insight and practical
tips to get more from your 2026
marketing investment*

Today's format



IDEA



CHAT



SHARE



REPEAT

Our experts today



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Analytics Manager



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Analytics Director



Seth Hardcastle

Senior Analytics
Consultant

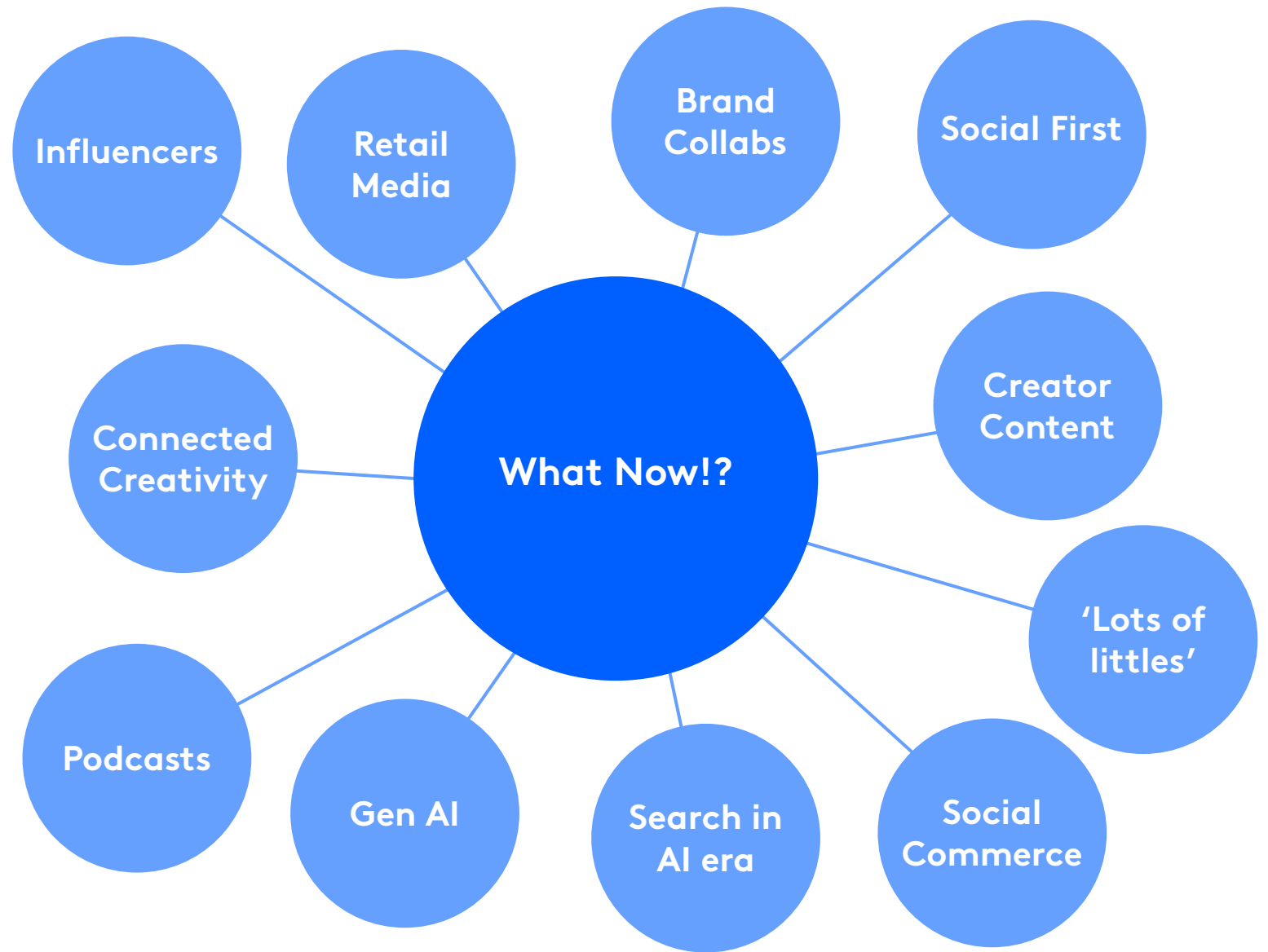


Farah-Noer Osman

Sales Development
Representative

The honest pause

We are dealing
with relentless
innovation and
complexity





The measurement confidence gap

48%

Marketers are confident in their
ability to measure effectiveness

Today's agenda

01

**2026: THE YEAR WE
BALANCE EFFICIENCY
AND EFFECTIVENESS?**

02

**CREATIVE QUALITY:
THE BEST KEPT SECRET
TO MAXIMISE ROI?**

03

MAKE IT HAPPEN

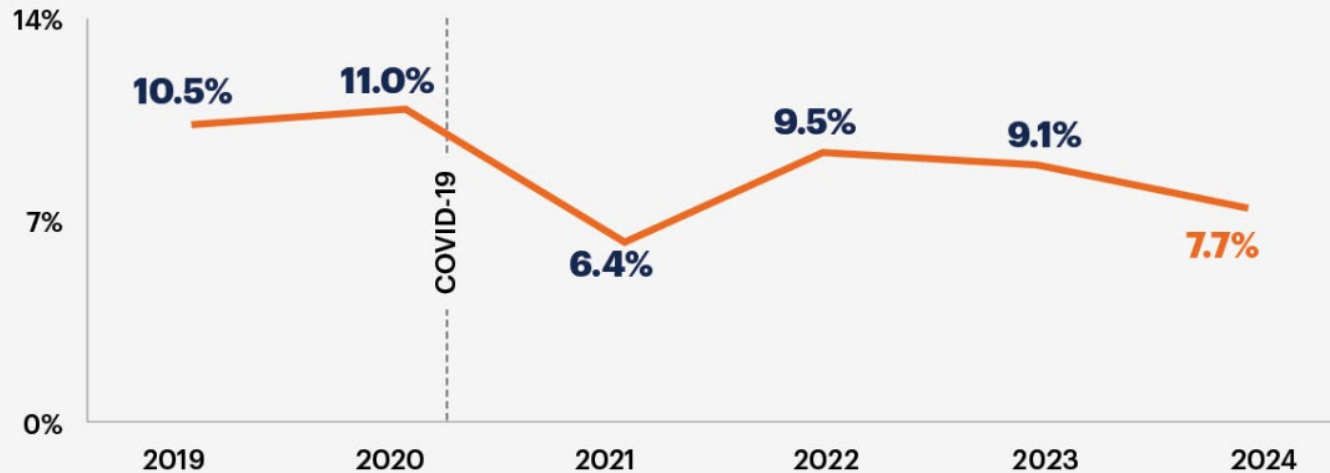
A hand is shown reaching out from the right side of the frame towards a dense, glowing field of fiber optic cables. The cables are illuminated with a bright blue light, creating a starburst effect. The background is dark, and the overall color palette is dominated by blue and white. The hand is positioned as if it is about to touch or interact with the cables.

01

2026: The year we
balance efficiency and
effectiveness?

Average Budgets Fall to Post-Pandemic Low

2024 marketing budget as a percent of total revenue



n = 395 (2024); 410 (2023); 400 (2021); 342 (2020); 342 (2019); 618 (2018); 350 (2017); 375 (2016) CMOs, excluding "Don't Know"
Q. What percentage of your revenue is being allocated to your total marketing expense budget in 2024?
Source: 2024 Gartner CMO Spend Survey
© 2024 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. CM_GBS_3018953

Gartner

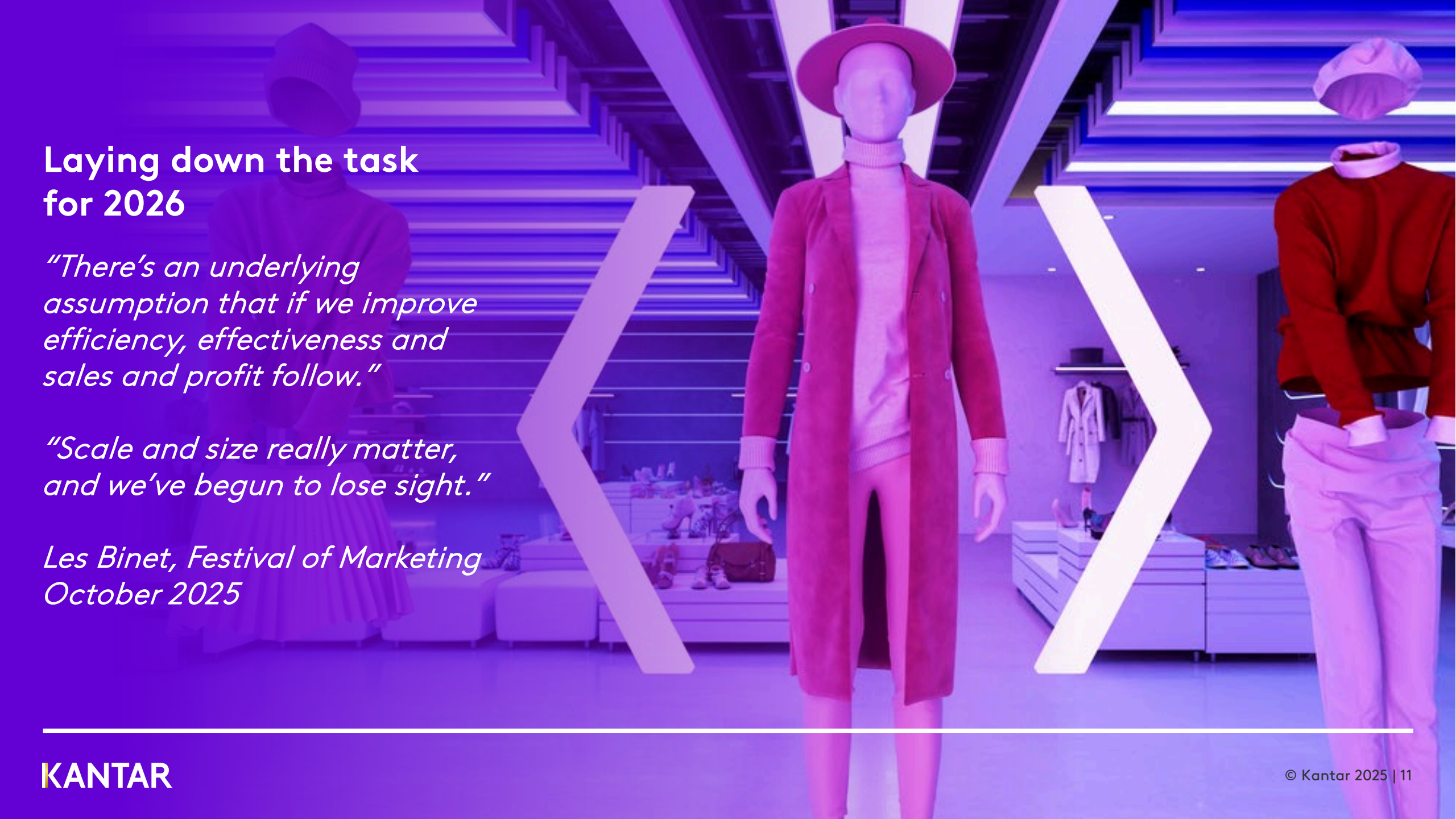
Go big or go home?

+4%

Media ROI
(Efficiency)

-11%

Incremental Profit
(Effectiveness)



Laying down the task for 2026

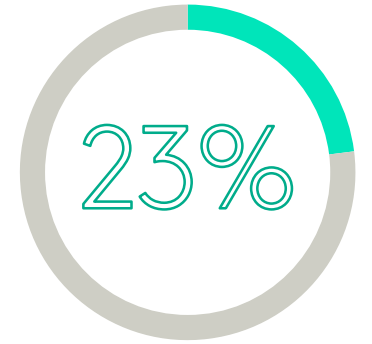
“There’s an underlying assumption that if we improve efficiency, effectiveness and sales and profit follow.”

“Scale and size really matter, and we’ve begun to lose sight.”

*Les Binet, Festival of Marketing
October 2025*

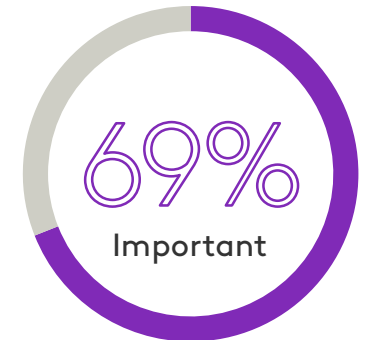
How well are brands *really* set up for success in 2026?

Only 23% integrate understanding on Sales and Equity at the same time.



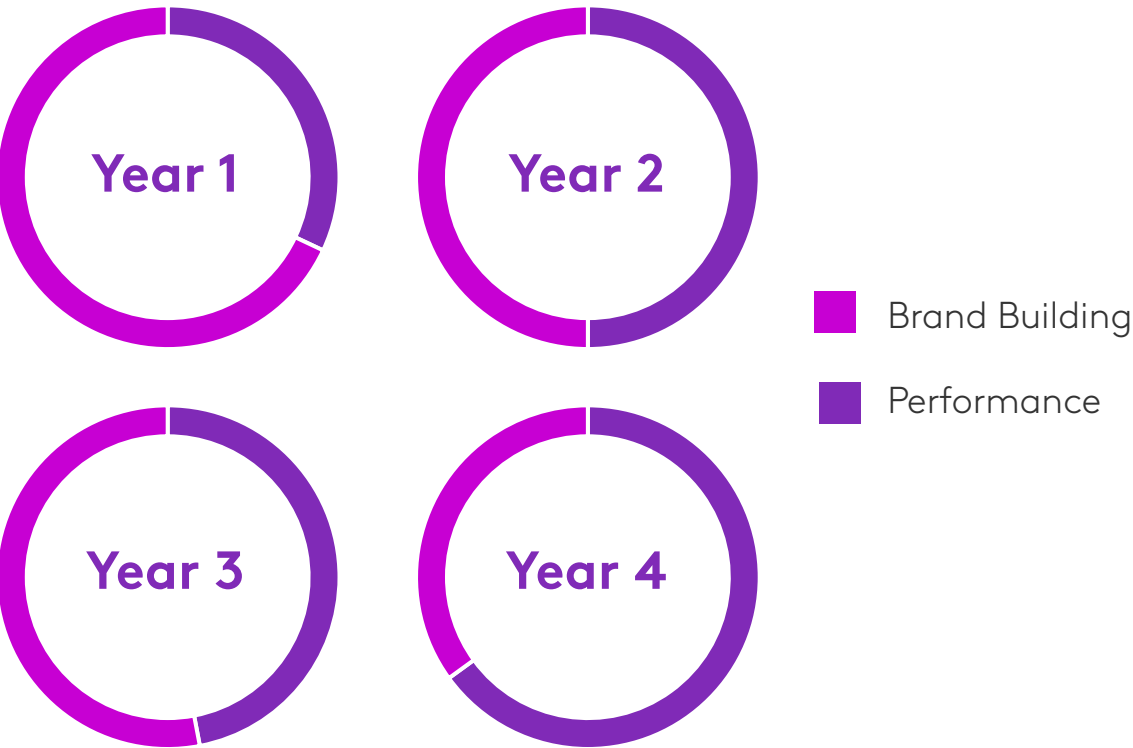
How confident are you that your organisation has the right balance between brand building and performance marketing?

Balancing short vs. long-term marketing investments

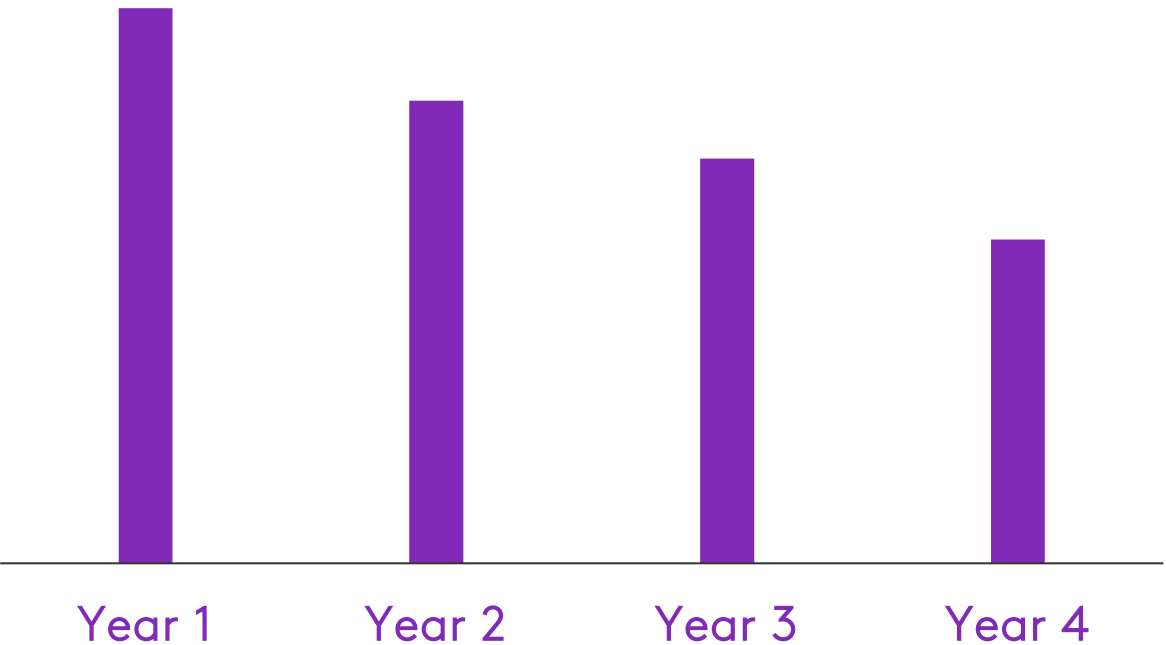


The cost of not balancing efficiency and effectiveness can be severe

Marketing spend

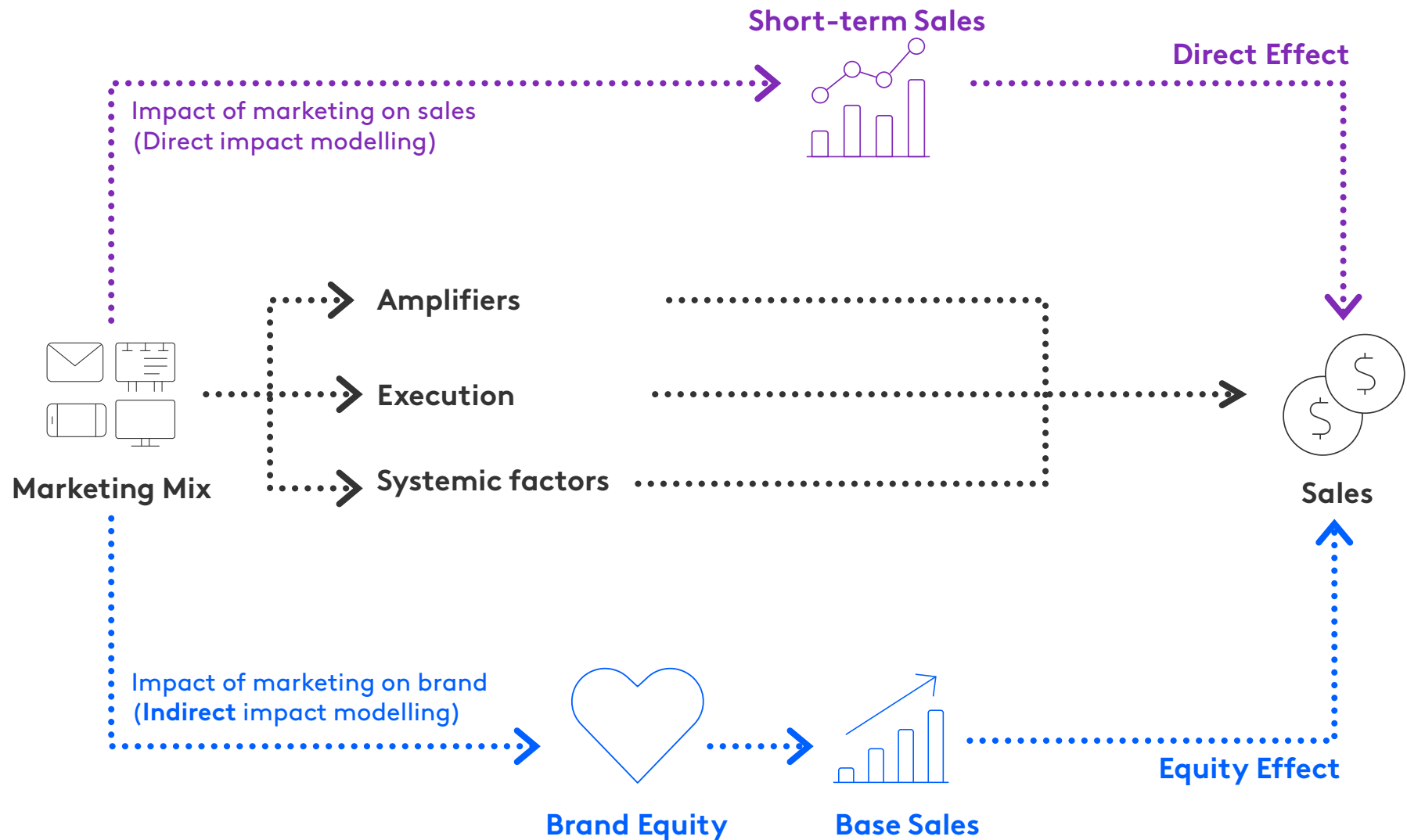


Decline in base sales



The solution:

Modelling both direct and longer-term effects of media on sales



Efficiency AND Effectiveness = x4 impact

Case study: Alcohol brand

Paid media sales contribution

Short term

3.92%

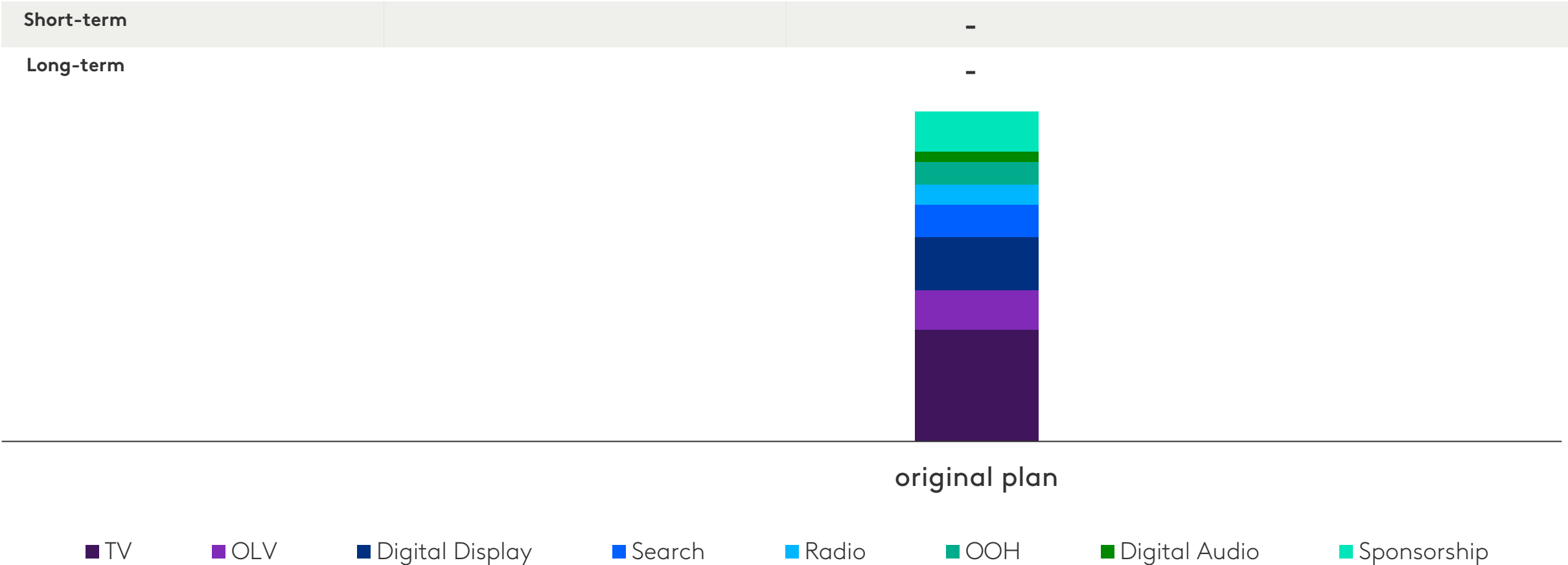
Short and
long term

20.6%

Efficiency and Effectiveness in action, case study, FS - Germany - 2024



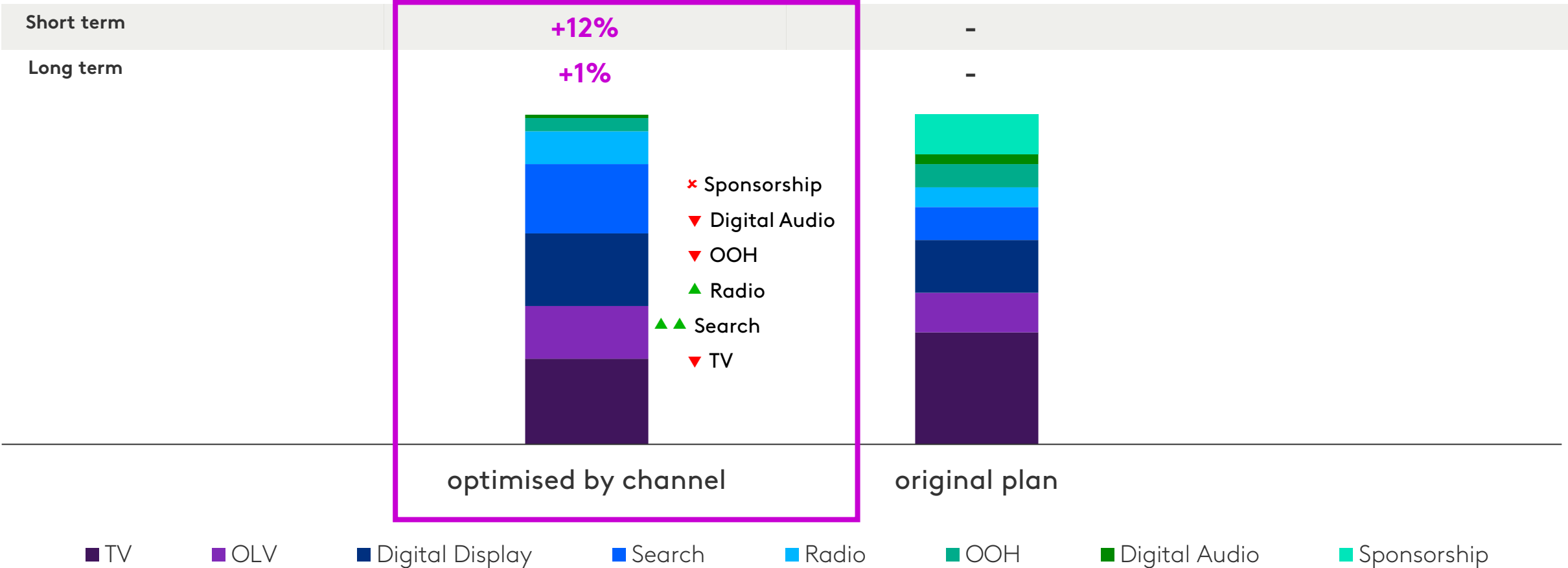
Yearly budget optimisation using Kantar LIFT ROI – target new sales + upsell



Efficiency and Effectiveness in action, case study, FS - Germany - 2024



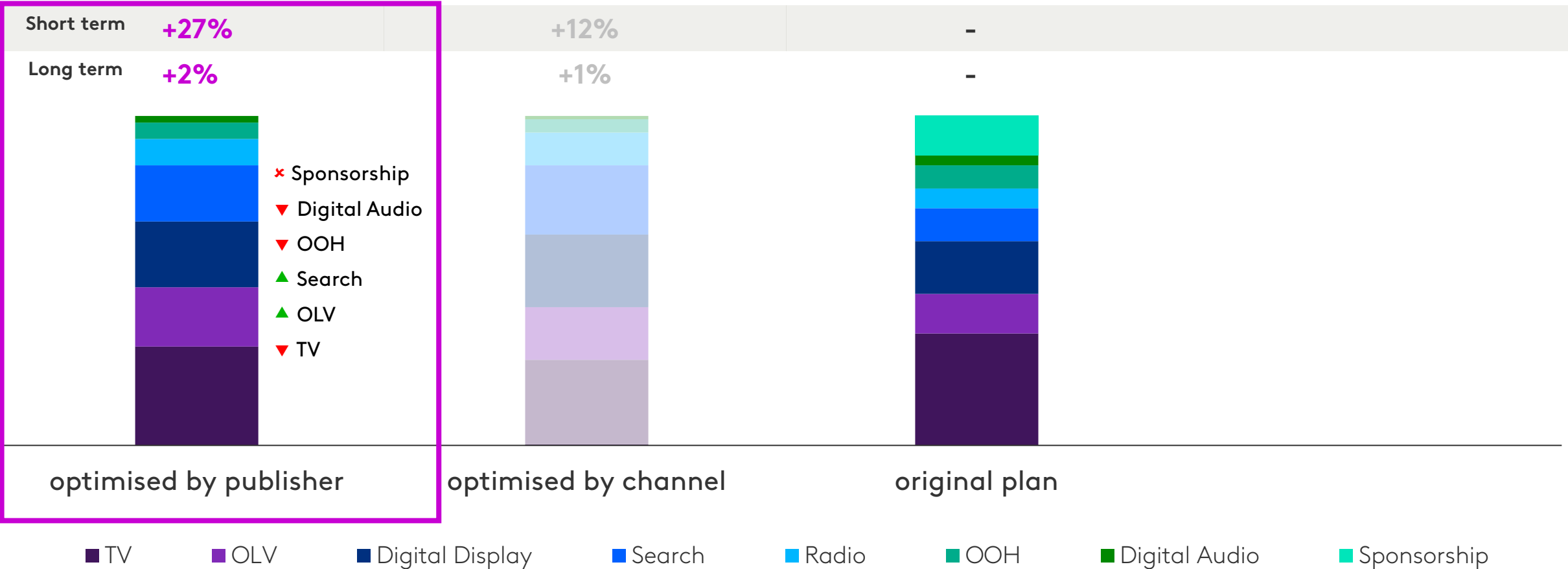
Yearly budget optimisation – 1st iteration by channel



Efficiency and Effectiveness in action, case study, FS - Germany - 2024



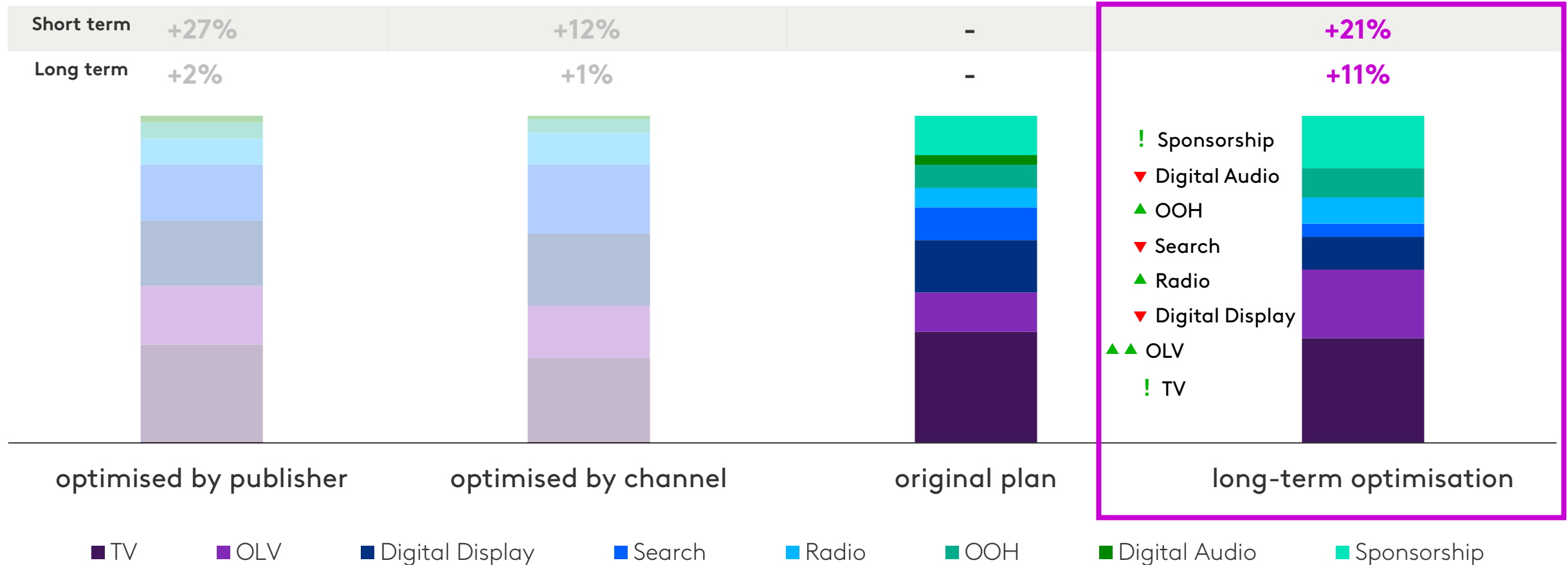
Yearly budget optimisation – publisher level optimisation



Efficiency and Effectiveness in action, case study, FS - Germany - 2024



Yearly budget optimisation – balanced optimisation = highest sustainable growth (>80 weeks)



Creator led campaigns can deliver BIG impact



KANTAR
CREATIVE
EFFECTIVENESS
AWARDS 2025

70+ Creators

Proven impact on brand building including

- +27% brand recall
- +8 Meaningful Index
- +10% brand image
- +15% purchase intent

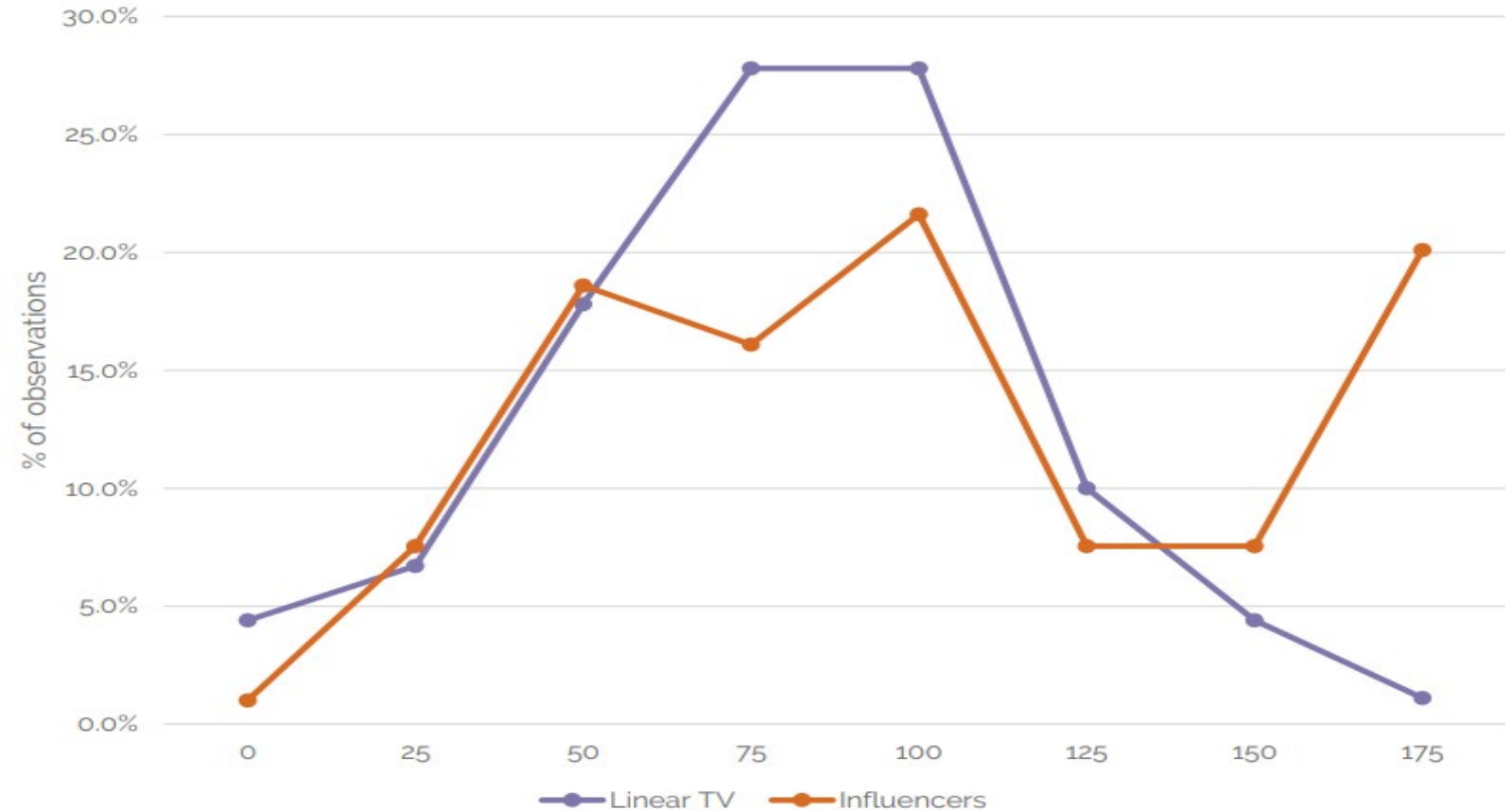
KANTAR



Influencers
ROIs are much
less likely to
be “average”
with extremes
and outliers
much more
present

Brands are experiencing huge variations in ROI

100= channel average ROI



Sources: IPA Influencer Benchmarking (2025) & WPP Media benchmarks

NB: Based on sample definition, no campaigns are included where influencer spend was present but did not produce a result at some level — therefore 0–25 ROI index likely to be significantly under-reported.

Balancing Efficiency and Effectiveness in 2026

3 Implications to maximise return of every £

Long Term Effects

Only

40%

MMM models attempt to model brand effects

Hypergranularity

+45%

Marketing driven sales uplift when using publisher level optimisation

Creators

#1

Proving ROI top challenge for marketers with Influencer and Creator campaigns

DISCUSSION #1

How well is your brand set to balance efficiency to effectiveness in 2026?

What's missing today?

A pair of hands, one palm up and one palm down, are shown holding a large, dense cloud of fine, glowing particles. The particles are primarily blue and purple, with some red and green specks scattered throughout. The hands are positioned in the center-right of the frame, with the fingers slightly curled. The background is a deep, dark blue, creating a sense of depth and focus on the glowing particles.

02

**Creative
quality: the
best kept
secret to
maximise ROI?**

The Achille's heel of effectiveness programmes?

8 out of 10

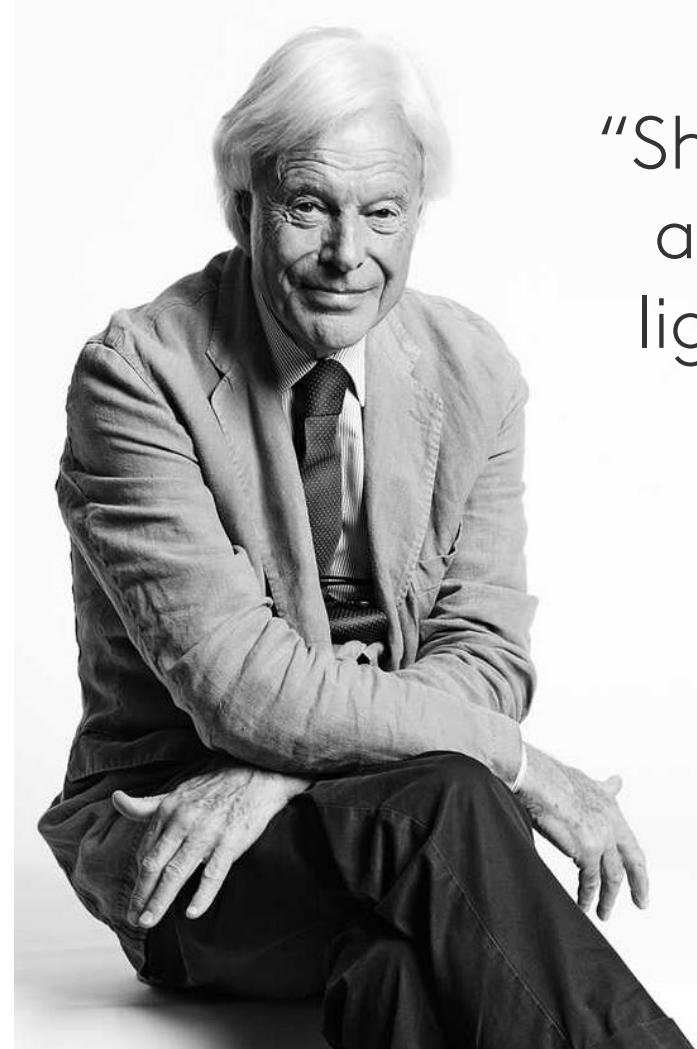
marketers agree creative
quality is a key driver
of effectiveness*

46%

marketers
measure creative
effectiveness

High quality creative
generates

x4 Return on
Marketing
Investment



“Shit that arrives
at the speed of
light is still shit”

David Abbott
AMV BBDO

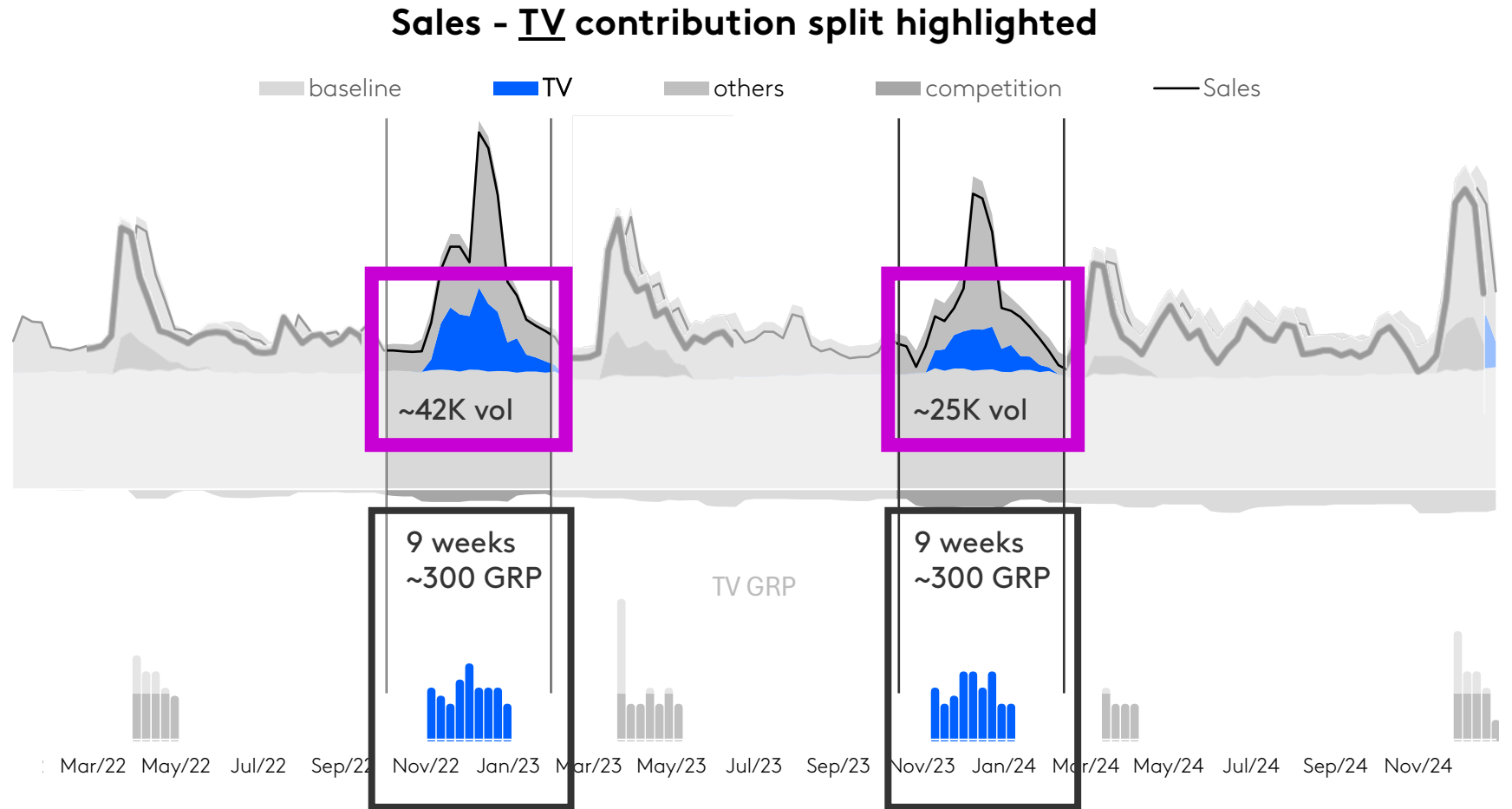
Why similar campaigns perform differently?

Same pressure

Same seasonality

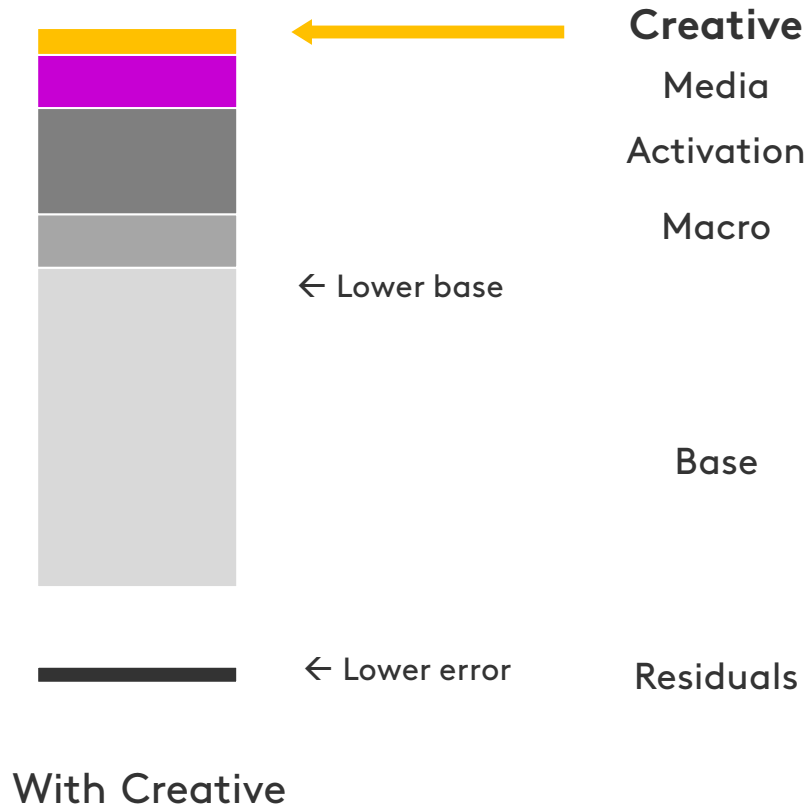
Similar laydown

Different outcomes



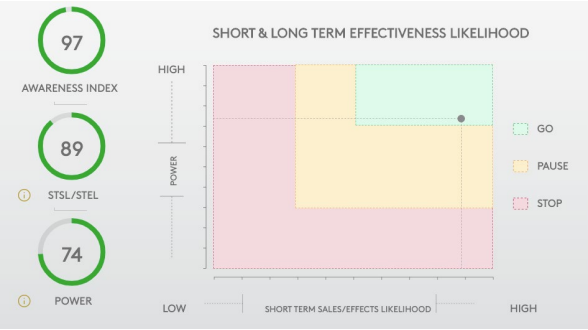
It's not a best-in-class MMM unless it accounts for creative quality

If creative quality is not measured, its contribution often falls into the **unexplained baseline**, increases **model error**, or gets wrongly attributed to other layers.

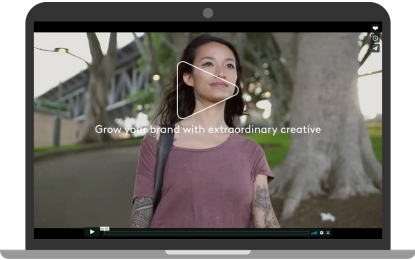


AI powered testing is transforming how we account for creative effectiveness

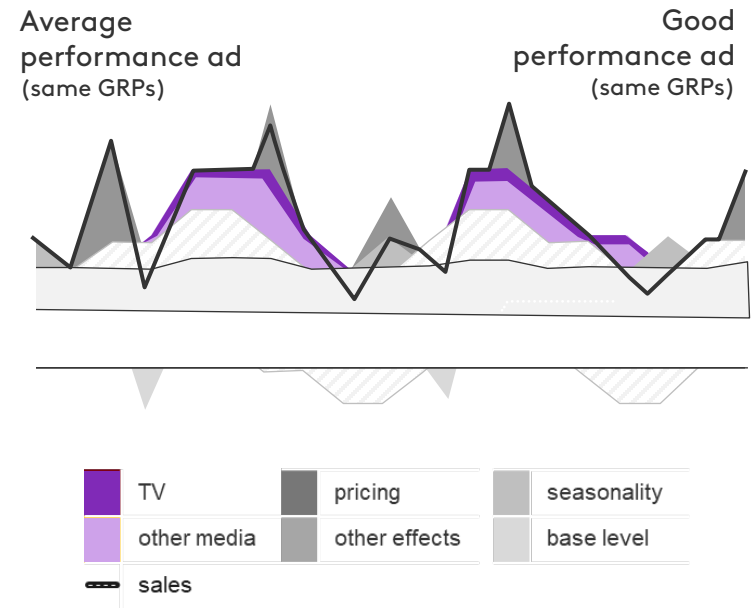
01 LINKAI creative testing assessing creative elements against norms



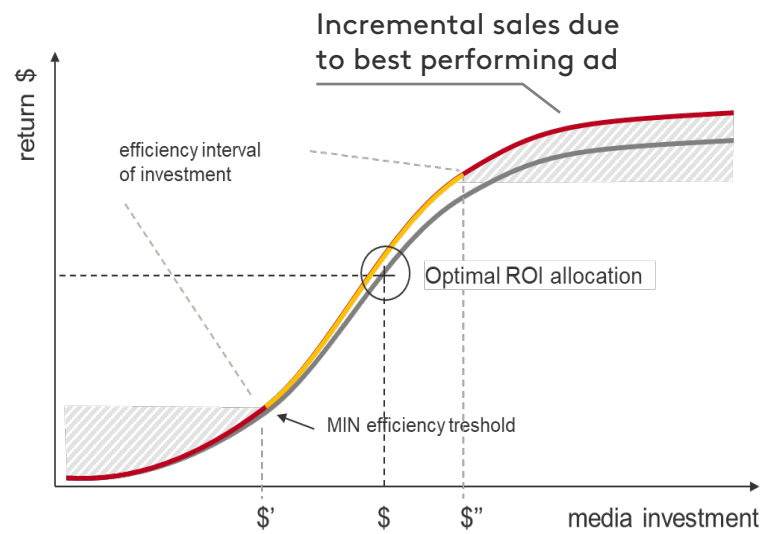
LINK



02 Isolating the effects of the campaigns across time



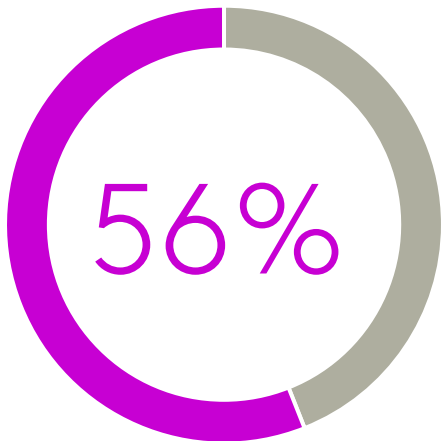
03 Optimising the efforts to allocate media budget



Case study: how creative quality unlocks additional ROI for FMCG brand

Creativity drives sales

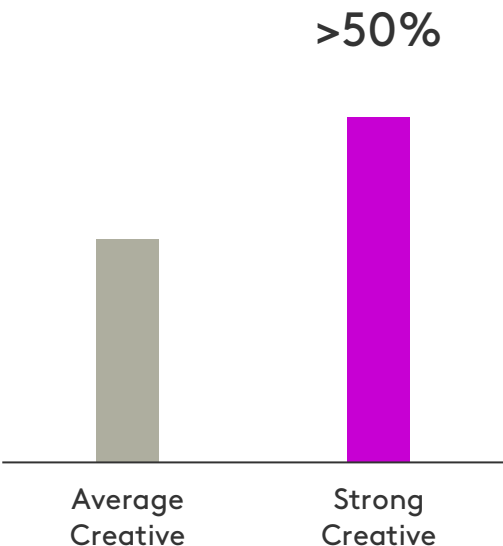
Average Contribution to ROI



FMCG Brand

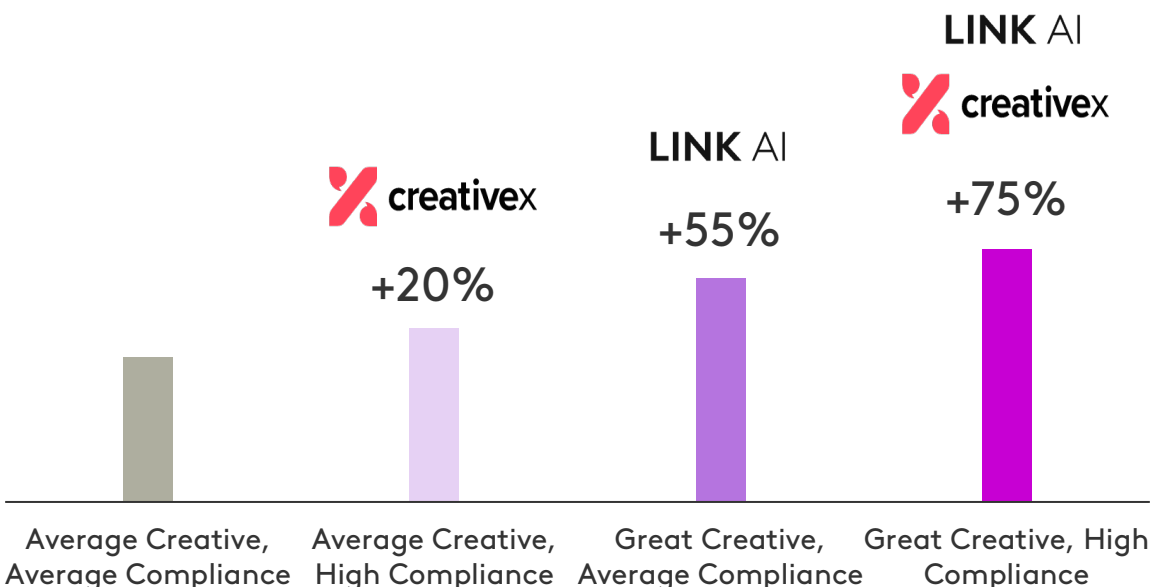
GREAT creative can drive incremental ROI

Contribution to ROI Growth by Test Score Range



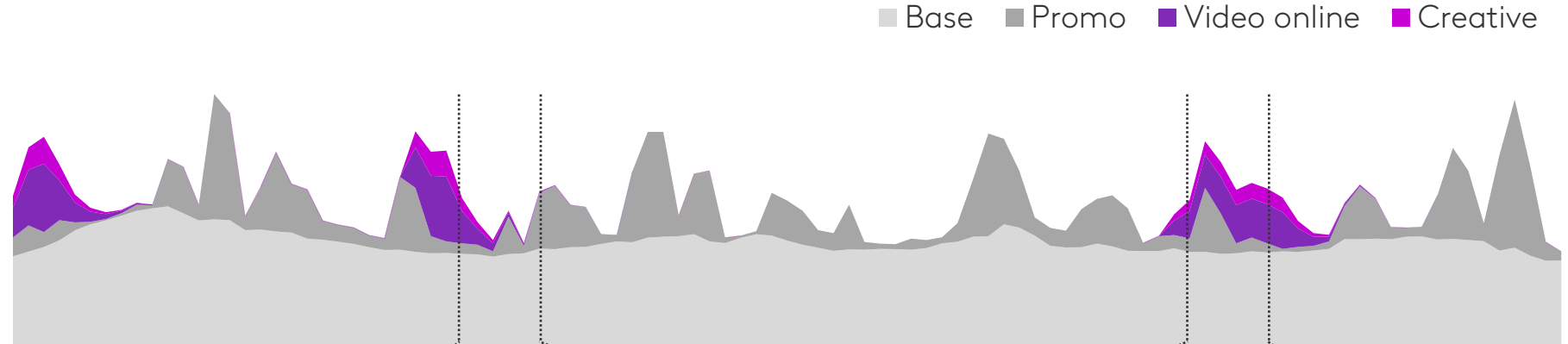
Compliant, GREAT quality creative maximises the impact of Digital

Contribution Growth by Compliance and Creativity Range



CASE STUDY

Integrating creative quality in MMM helped KFC optimise their budget allocation and drive results



x1.5

sales uplift

x1.3

increased ROI



Campaign A

ROI	\$1.24
Rev	\$3.45m
Creative	Product



Campaign B

ROI	\$1.58
Rev	\$5.23m
Creative	Brand



Creative quality: the best kept secret to maximise ROI?

3 Implications for 2026

Find your missing ROI multiplier

Up to

50%

Contribution to ROI

Measure, Model, Optimise

1.3x

Improved sales
uplift from same
budget for KFC

Unlock Creative Best Practice

New evidence and
impetus to engage
organisation on
creative
effectiveness

TABLE DISCUSSION #2

Could creative quality be
your secret weapon in
2026?

What would most help you
make a leap forwards?

03

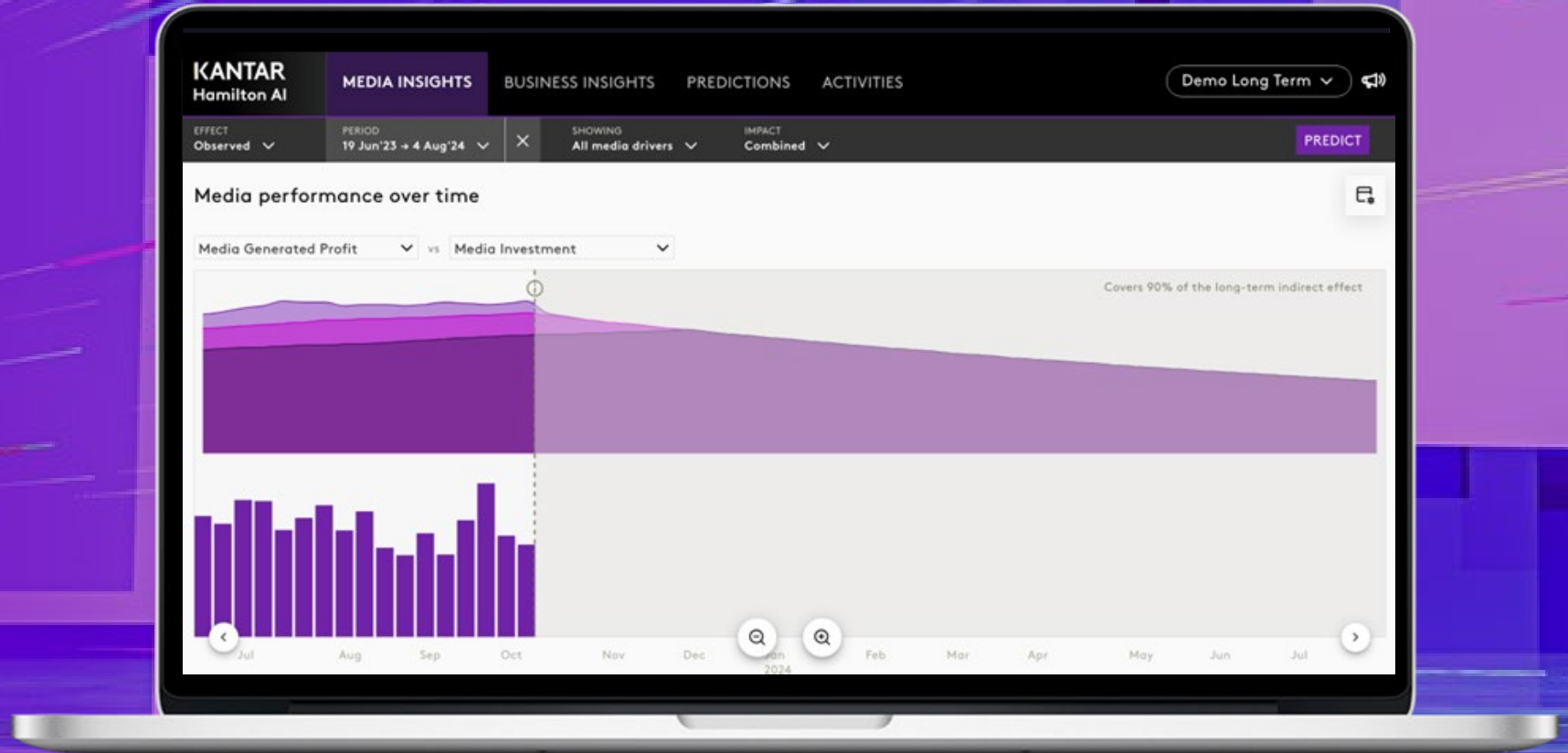
*Make it
happen*



Imagine if....

01

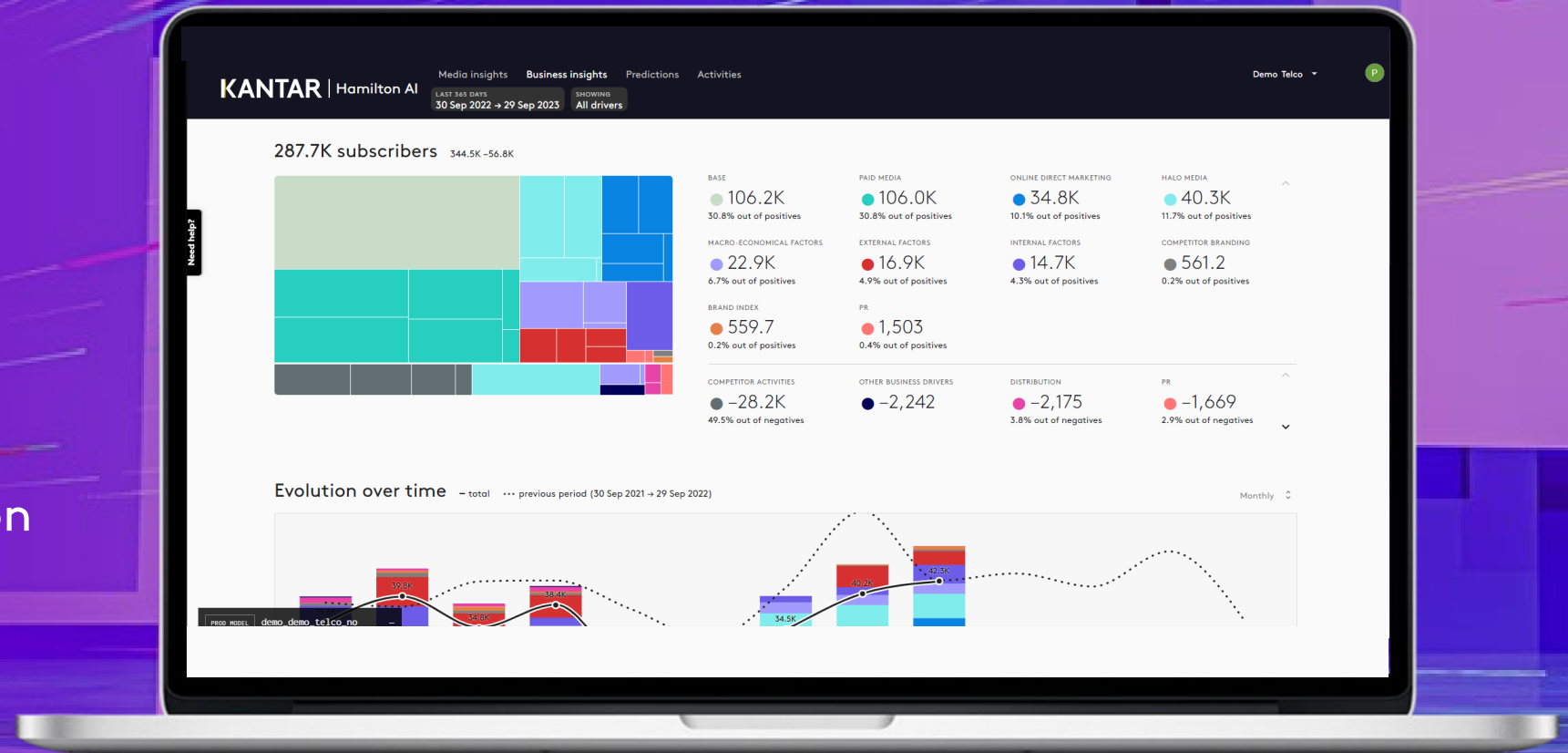
You could instantly have
the evidence to defend
continued investment
in brand building media
channels vs price promo?



Imagine if....

02

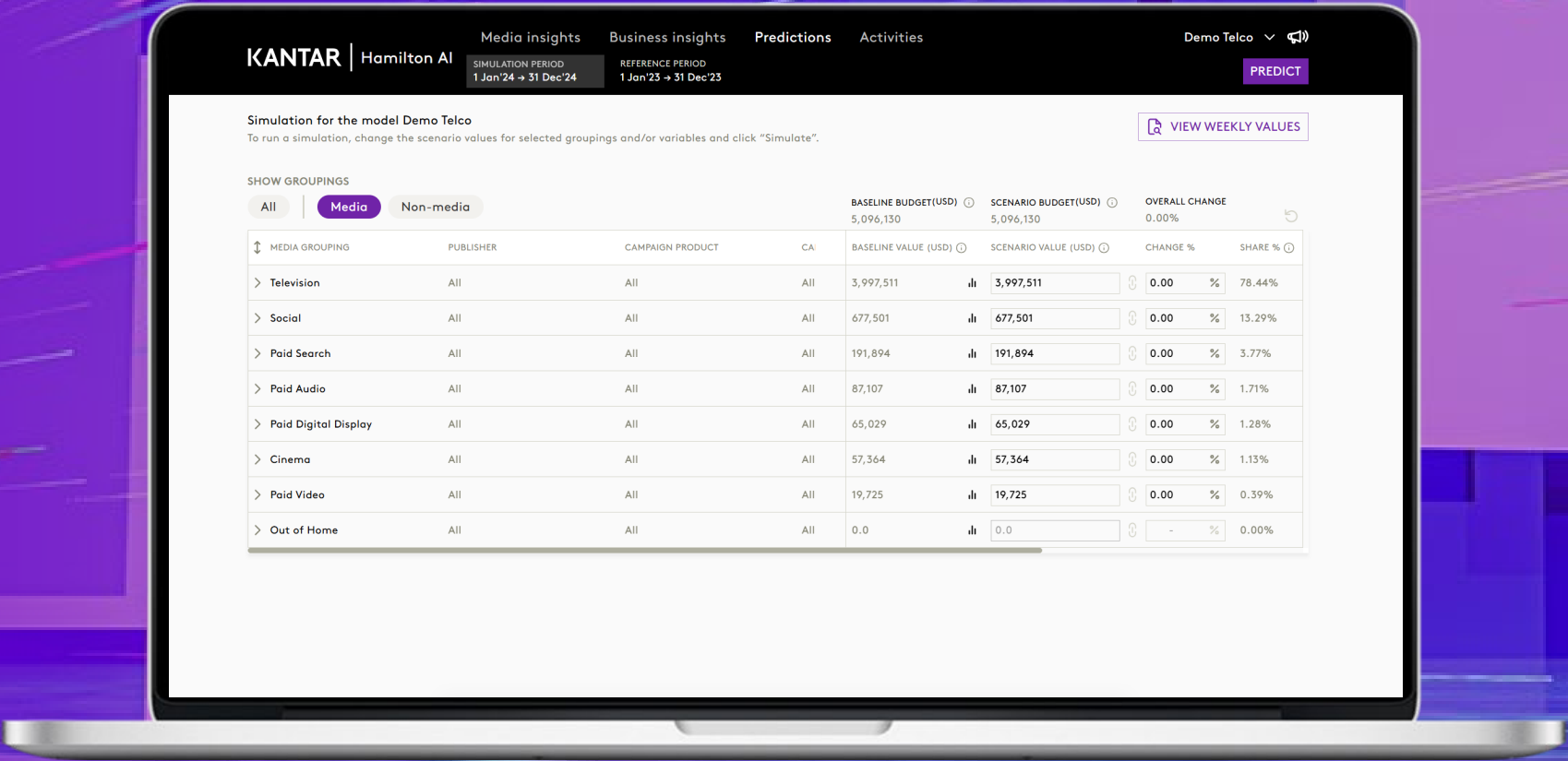
You could quantify the influence of non-media factors like your customer experience, weather or PR on sales performance?



Imagine if....

03

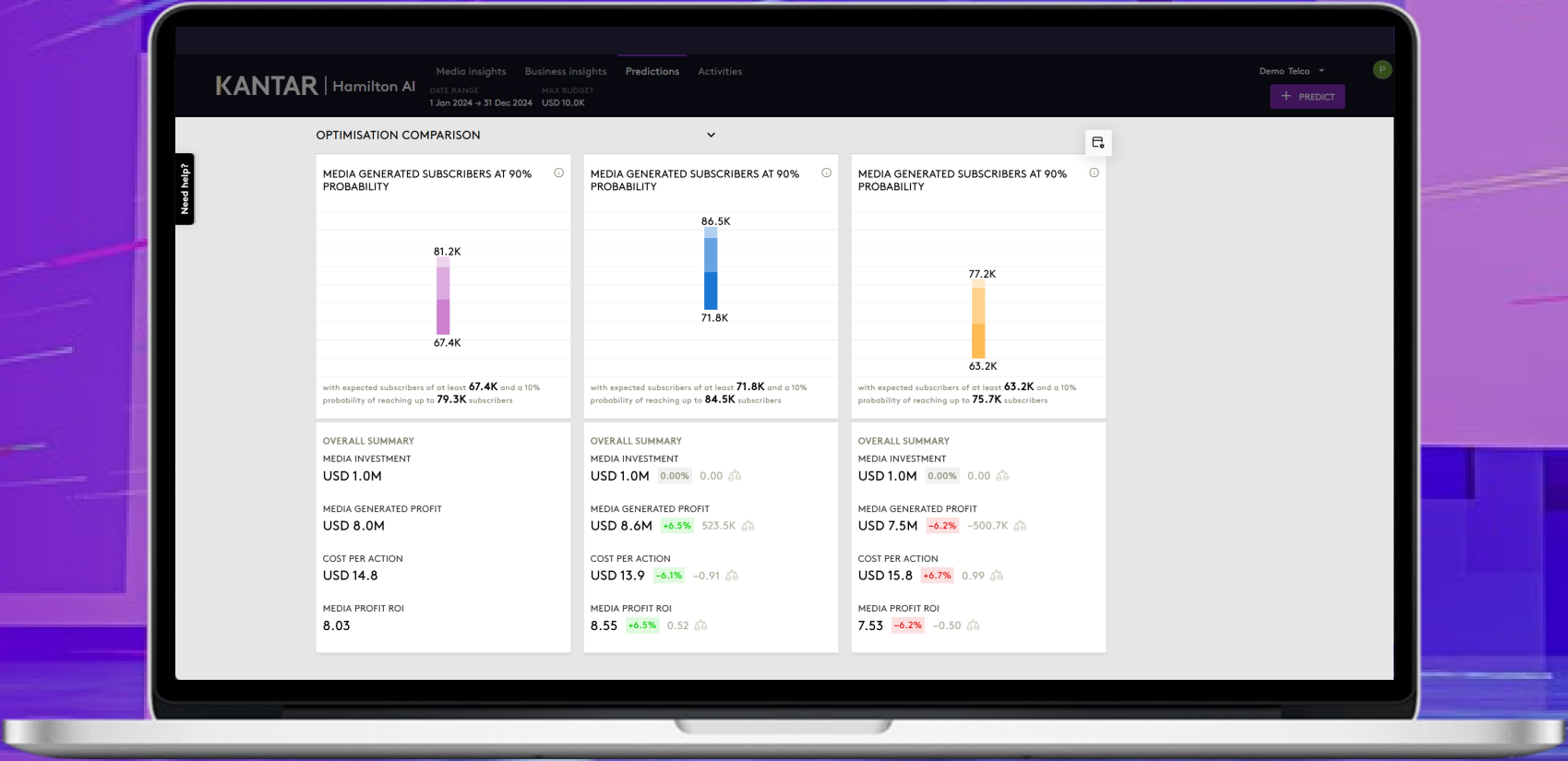
You could simulate your media investment and pay back for the next quarter, year or budgeting window



Imagine if....

04

You could receive optimised investment scenarios on the fly balancing both efficiency and effectiveness outcomes

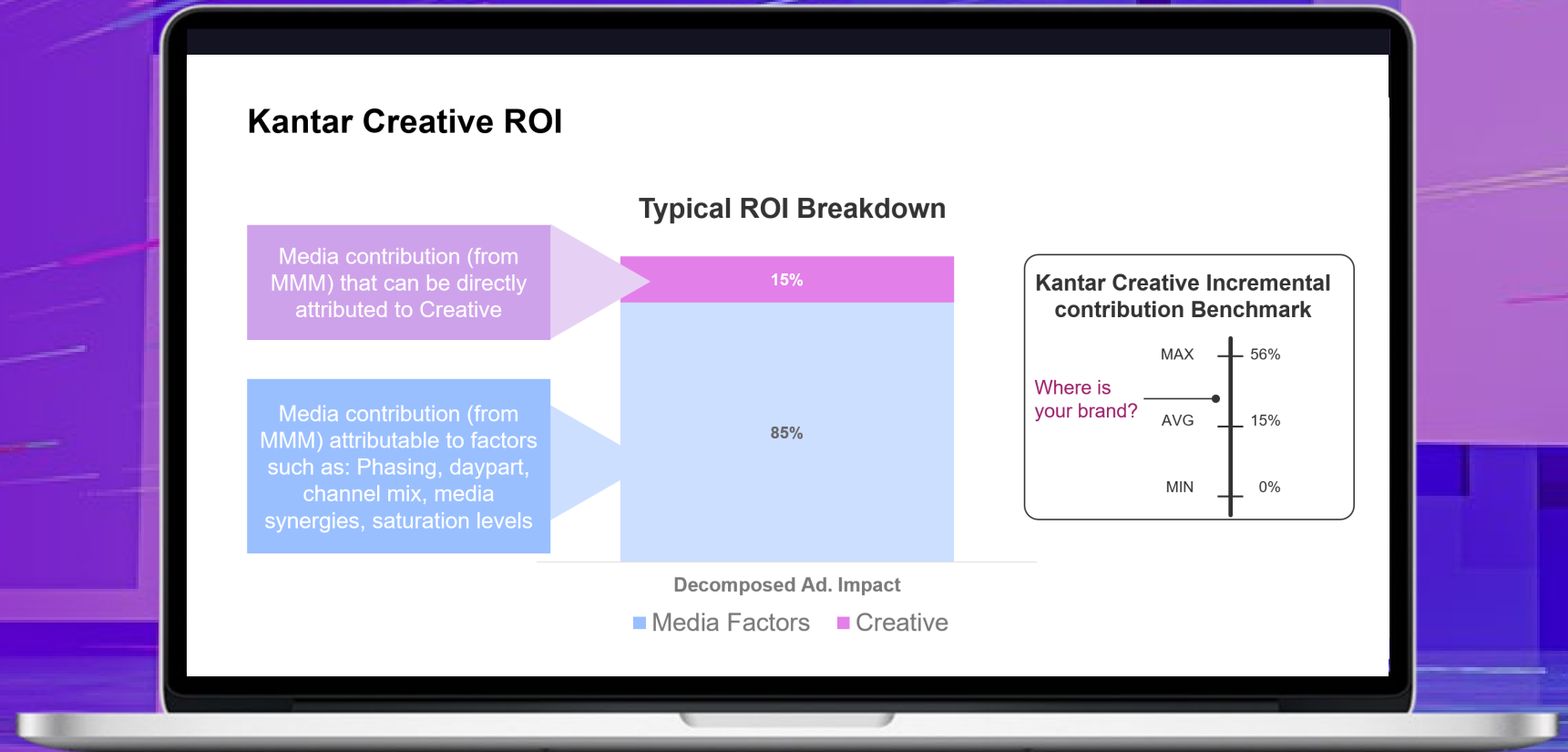


Imagine if....

05

You could find out how effective your creative really is?

How does great creative boost sales impact, profit and ROI



Imagine if....

06

You could measure the commercial impact of your creator content (beyond likes and engagements)

KANTAR | Hamilton AI

Media insights

Business insights

Predictions

Activities

DATE RANGE

1 Jan 2024 - 31 Dec 2024

HAX BUDGET

USD 10.0K

Demo Telco

+ PREDICT

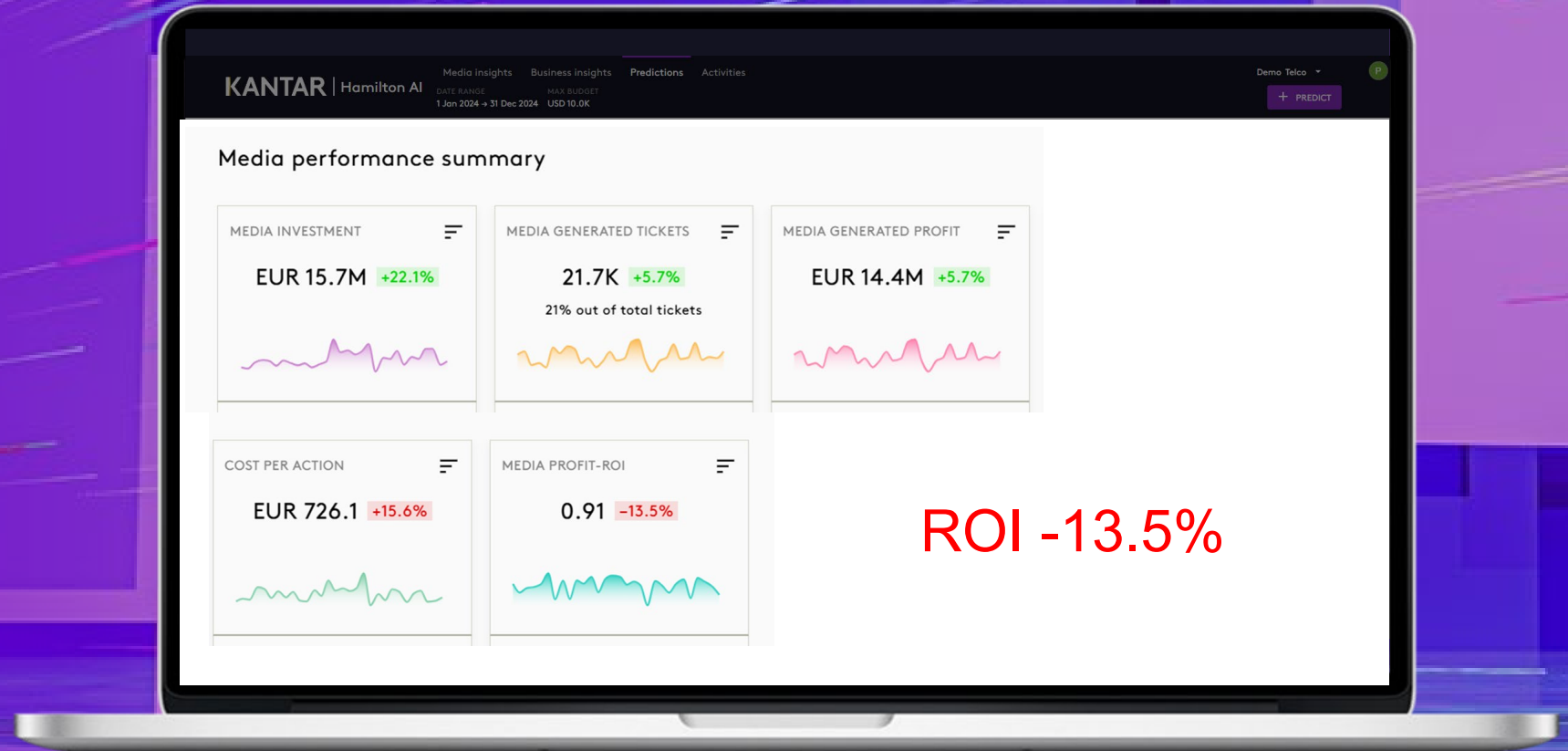
Media performance data table :: Influencers

Segment	Campaign	Spend	Sales	ROI
A	1			
A	2			
A	3			
B	4			
B	5			
B	6			
B	7			
B	8			
C	9			
C	10			
C	11			
C	12			
D	13			
E	14			

Imagine if....

07

You could find the true relationship between sales and ROI, side-stepping the ROI doom loop



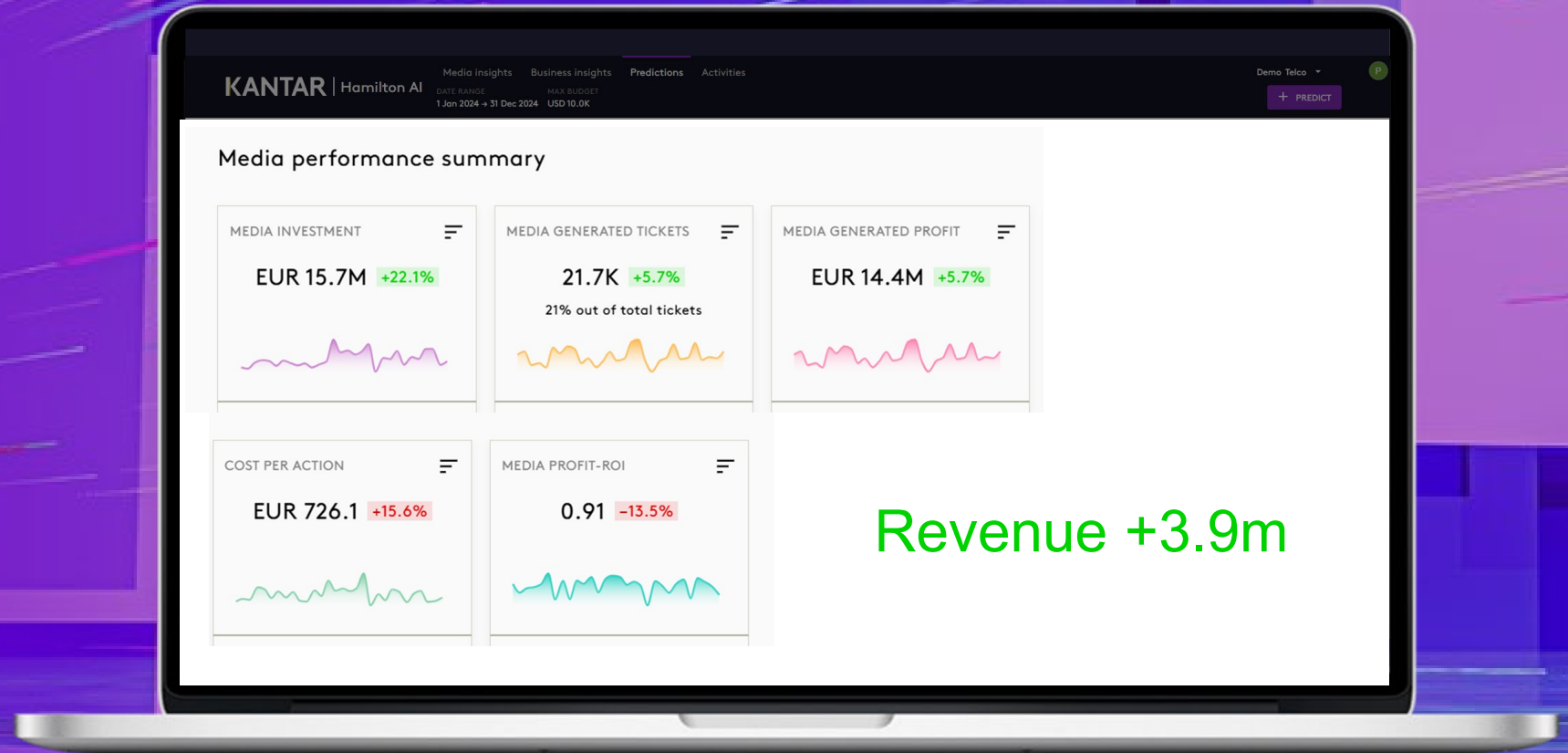
Imagine if....

07

Incremental spend
+2.8m

Incremental revenue
+3.9m

Change the ROI narrative



GROUP DISCUSSION

What is the one initiative you would like to put into action for 2026?

01

You could **instantly have the evidence** to defend continued investment in brand building media channels vs price promo?

02

You could **quantify the influence of non-media factors** like your customer experience or PR on sales performance?

03

Imagine if you could **simulate your media investment** and pay back for the next quarter, year or budgeting window.

04

You could **receive optimised investment scenarios** on the fly balancing both efficiency and effectiveness outcomes.

05

You could **find out how effective your creative really is?**
How does great creative boost sales impact, profit and ROI.

06

You could measure the commercial impact of your creator content (beyond likes and engagements).

07

You could find the true relationship between sales and ROI.