

## FROM BRIEF TO LUNCH: A PROJECT MANAGER'S GUIDE TO FLAWLESS MARKETING CAMPAIGN EXECUTION

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### Abstract

The increasing complexity of modern marketing campaigns has created a growing need for structured and efficient execution processes. Campaigns now span multiple channels, involve diverse stakeholders, and operate under tight timelines, making coordination and alignment critical for success. This article presents a practical guide for managing marketing campaigns from brief to launch by integrating project management principles with marketing practices. Using a conceptual and best-practice synthesis approach, the study draws on industry insights, case examples, and established project management frameworks to develop a structured execution model. The proposed framework outlines key phases, including campaign brief development, planning and strategy, team coordination, and content creation. The findings highlight that clear objectives, stakeholder alignment, and structured workflows are essential for reducing delays and inefficiencies. Additionally, effective communication and cross-functional collaboration play a crucial role in ensuring smooth execution. The study also emphasizes the importance of balancing planning structure with resource efficiency and combining role clarity with communication workflows. Overall, the article demonstrates that disciplined project management enhances campaign performance and consistency. It concludes that organizations adopting structured execution frameworks can improve efficiency, reduce risks, and deliver more impactful marketing outcomes.

**Keywords:** *arketing campaign management; project management; campaign execution; cross-functional collaboration; workflow optimization*

### INTRODUCTION

Marketing campaigns have become increasingly complex due to the rapid expansion of digital channels and the growing demand for integrated, multi-platform strategies. Organizations now execute campaigns across social media, search engines, email, influencer partnerships, and traditional media, all within tight timelines. This multi-channel environment requires coordination among diverse teams, including creative, media, analytics, and external partners (Kramarz & Kmiecik, 2024). As a result, managing campaigns has evolved from a straightforward process into a highly dynamic and interconnected activity. Each channel introduces its own requirements, tools, and performance metrics, further adding to the complexity. Without a structured approach, it becomes difficult to maintain consistency and alignment across all campaign elements. Consequently, the need for effective coordination has never been more critical (Plekhanov et al., 2022).

In this context, structured project management has emerged as a key enabler of successful marketing execution. Applying project management principles such as planning, scheduling, resource allocation, and risk management helps ensure that campaigns are delivered efficiently and effectively. Structured workflows provide clarity on roles, responsibilities, and timelines, reducing confusion and duplication of effort (Karam et al., 2021). They also facilitate better communication among stakeholders, enabling teams to stay aligned throughout the campaign lifecycle. By introducing standardized processes, organizations can improve both speed and quality of execution. This approach is particularly valuable in fast-paced marketing environments where agility and precision are essential (Darvidou, 2024). Ultimately, project management brings discipline and control to complex campaign execution.

Despite these advancements, many organizations continue to face challenges in executing marketing campaigns effectively. Common issues include delays caused by unclear timelines, misalignment between teams, and inefficiencies in coordination (Rietveld & Schilling, 2020). Scope creep, where campaign requirements expand without proper control, further complicates execution. Additionally, communication gaps between stakeholders can lead to errors, rework, and missed deadlines. These challenges not only affect campaign performance but also increase costs and reduce overall efficiency. In competitive markets, such inefficiencies can significantly impact a brand's ability to respond quickly and effectively (Krishen et al., 2021). Addressing these problems requires a more systematic and structured approach to campaign management.

In response to these challenges, this article aims to provide a practical guide for managing marketing campaigns from brief to launch. It outlines a structured framework that covers key phases, including planning, coordination, execution, and monitoring. The article emphasizes the importance of aligning stakeholders, defining clear objectives, and maintaining effective communication throughout the process. By integrating project management principles with marketing practices, it offers actionable insights for improving campaign execution. The goal is to help project managers and marketing professionals deliver campaigns that are both efficient and impactful. Ultimately, this guide seeks to bridge the gap between strategy and execution in modern marketing environments.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Marketing Campaign Management**

Marketing campaign management refers to the process of planning, executing, monitoring, and evaluating marketing initiatives to achieve specific business objectives. It involves coordinating multiple activities, including strategy development, content creation, media planning, and performance tracking. The key stages of campaign management typically include briefing, planning, execution, monitoring, and post-campaign analysis (Nwabekee et al., 2024). Each stage requires careful alignment of objectives, resources, and timelines to ensure smooth execution. As campaigns become more complex and multi-channel, the need for structured management increases significantly. Effective campaign management ensures that all elements work cohesively toward a unified goal. It also enables organizations to optimize performance and improve return on investment (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020).

The importance of structured workflows in campaign management cannot be overstated. Structured workflows provide a clear sequence of tasks, responsibilities, and deadlines, reducing ambiguity and inefficiencies. They help ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and contribute effectively to the campaign. Standardized processes also improve consistency and quality across different campaigns (Cai & Lo, 2020). Additionally, structured workflows facilitate better tracking and control, allowing managers to identify issues early and take corrective action. This is particularly important in time-sensitive marketing environments. By implementing structured workflows, organizations can enhance coordination, reduce errors, and improve overall campaign performance (Yadav, 2025).

### **Project Management in Marketing**

Project management in marketing involves applying established project management principles to ensure that campaigns are delivered on time, within budget, and according to defined objectives. Key principles include scope management, which defines the boundaries and deliverables of the campaign, and time management, which ensures adherence to schedules and deadlines (Vrontis et al., 2021). Cost management focuses on budget allocation and control, while quality management ensures that outputs meet required standards. These principles provide a structured framework for managing complex marketing initiatives. By integrating these elements, project managers can maintain control over campaign execution. This approach reduces the likelihood of delays, cost overruns, and quality issues. As a result, project management enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing activities (Gao et al., 2019).

Marketing projects can be managed using different approaches, primarily agile and traditional (waterfall) methodologies. The waterfall approach follows a linear and sequential process, where each stage must be completed before the next begins. This method is suitable for well-defined campaigns with stable requirements (Page, 2015). In contrast, agile approaches emphasize flexibility, iterative development, and continuous feedback. Agile is particularly useful in dynamic marketing environments where changes are frequent and rapid adaptation is required. Teams can test, learn, and refine campaign elements in real time. While both approaches have advantages, many organizations adopt hybrid models to balance structure and flexibility. Choosing the right approach depends on the nature and complexity of the campaign (Bolton et al., 2021)

### **Cross-Functional Collaboration**

Cross-functional collaboration is a critical component of successful marketing campaign execution, involving the coordination of diverse teams such as creative, media, analytics, and other stakeholders. Each team contributes specialized expertise, from developing compelling content to optimizing media placement and analyzing performance data. Effective collaboration ensures that these contributions are aligned with overall campaign objectives (Gerea et al., 2021). It also enables the integration of different perspectives, leading to more innovative and effective campaigns. In B2B and large-scale marketing environments, collaboration often extends to external partners such as agencies and vendors. Managing these relationships requires clear communication and well-defined roles. As a result, cross-functional collaboration is essential for delivering cohesive and impactful campaigns (Hayes & Kelliher, 2022).

However, collaboration across multiple teams presents significant communication and alignment challenges. Differences in priorities, workflows, and communication styles can lead to misunderstandings and delays. Information silos may prevent teams from accessing critical data, reducing efficiency and coordination. Misalignment on objectives or expectations can result in inconsistent messaging or duplicated efforts (Dwivedi et al., 2020). These challenges are often exacerbated in fast-paced environments with tight deadlines. To address these issues, organizations must establish clear communication channels, regular updates, and shared goals. Tools and processes that facilitate transparency and collaboration are also essential. By improving alignment and communication, organizations can enhance the effectiveness of cross-functional teamwork in marketing campaigns (Cortellazzo et al., 2019).

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a practical and conceptual approach by developing a structured framework for marketing campaign execution based on best-practice synthesis. Rather than relying on empirical data collection, the methodology focuses on integrating established project management principles with real-world marketing practices. The approach draws on industry-proven methods used by project managers to handle complex, multi-channel campaigns. Sources include industry guidelines, case examples, and widely accepted project management frameworks that inform effective execution strategies. By combining these insights, the study aims to create a comprehensive and actionable process for managing campaigns from brief to launch. The emphasis is on translating theory into practical application that can be used by marketing professionals. This approach ensures relevance to real-world challenges faced in campaign execution.

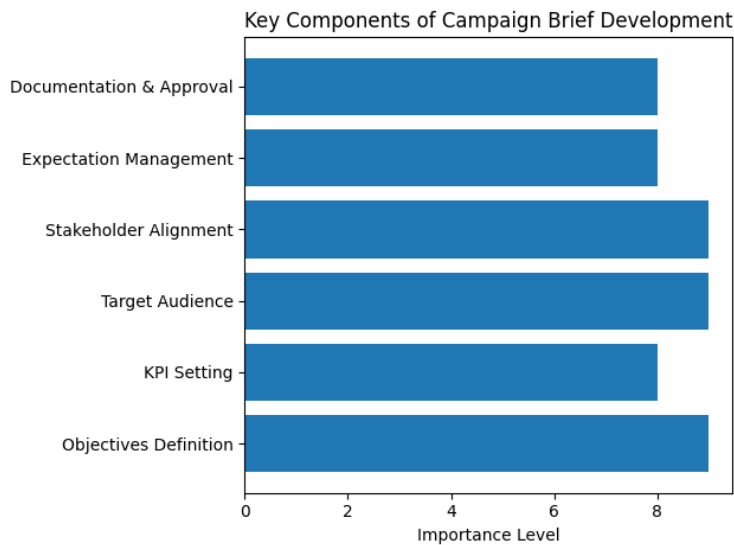
The analytical approach is based on process mapping and framework development, which involves identifying key stages, tasks, and decision points within the campaign lifecycle. This method allows for the creation of a clear and structured execution model that outlines responsibilities, workflows, and coordination mechanisms. However, the methodology has certain limitations. The reliance on industry practices means that insights may be context-specific and not universally applicable across all organizations or sectors. Additionally, variations in team structure, resources, and organizational culture may influence how the framework is implemented. The absence of empirical validation may also limit the generalizability of the findings. Despite these limitations, the methodology provides practical value by offering a structured guide for improving marketing campaign execution. It serves as a foundation for future refinement and adaptation in different contexts.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Phase 1: Campaign Brief Development**

The campaign brief serves as the foundation for the entire marketing initiative, providing a clear direction for all stakeholders involved. This phase begins with defining key elements such as campaign objectives, key performance indicators (KPIs), and the target audience (Cortellazzo et al., 2019). Objectives should be specific, measurable, and aligned with broader business goals to ensure relevance and focus. KPIs help translate these objectives into measurable outcomes, enabling performance tracking throughout the campaign. Understanding the target audience is equally critical, as it informs messaging, channel selection, and creative direction. A well-defined brief reduces ambiguity and sets clear expectations for execution. As a result, it plays a crucial role in ensuring alignment across all campaign activities (Rehman & Jajja, 2022). Equally important in this phase is aligning stakeholders and managing expectations from the outset. Marketing campaigns often involve multiple internal teams and external partners, each with different priorities and perspectives. Early alignment ensures that everyone shares a common understanding of goals, deliverables, timelines, and success criteria (Gollapudi, 2022). This process typically involves stakeholder meetings, feedback sessions, and approvals to finalize the brief. Clear documentation

of decisions helps prevent misunderstandings later in the campaign. Additionally, establishing accountability at this stage ensures that responsibilities are clearly defined. By securing stakeholder alignment early, organizations can minimize conflicts and streamline execution (Hosseini & Ivanov, 2020).



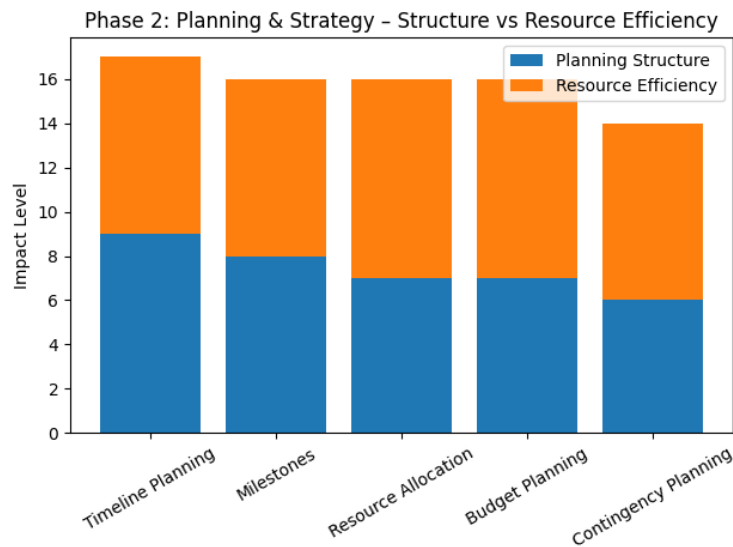
**Figure 1.** Key Components of Campaign Brief Development and Their Relative Importance

The chart highlights the relative importance of key components in the campaign brief development phase, emphasizing that successful execution begins with a strong foundation. Objectives definition and target audience identification emerge as critical elements, as they guide the overall direction and strategic focus of the campaign (Kramarz & Kmiecik, 2024). Stakeholder alignment is equally significant, underscoring the need for early coordination to ensure all parties share a common understanding of goals and expectations. Supporting elements such as KPI setting, expectation management, and documentation play an essential role in providing structure, clarity, and accountability. The distribution of importance across components suggests that no single element is sufficient on its own; rather, effective brief development requires a balanced and integrated approach (Plekhanov et al., 2022). By addressing both strategic and operational aspects, organizations can reduce ambiguity and improve execution efficiency. Overall, the chart reinforces that a well-defined and aligned campaign brief is fundamental to achieving successful marketing outcomes.

## Phase 2: Planning and Strategy

The planning and strategy phase translates the campaign brief into a structured execution plan. This involves creating a detailed timeline that outlines key activities, deadlines, and dependencies. Milestones are established to track progress and ensure that the campaign stays on schedule (Karam et al., 2021). Effective timeline planning allows project managers to anticipate potential bottlenecks and allocate resources efficiently. It also provides a roadmap that guides the entire team throughout the campaign lifecycle. Strategic planning during this phase ensures that all activities are aligned with campaign objectives. As a result, it lays the groundwork for smooth and coordinated execution (Darvidou, 2024).

Budget allocation and resource planning are also critical components of this phase. Organizations must determine how financial resources will be distributed across different channels, activities, and tools. This requires balancing cost efficiency with the need to achieve desired outcomes (Rietveld & Schilling, 2020). Resource planning involves assigning personnel, tools, and technologies required for campaign execution. Ensuring that the right resources are available at the right time is essential for maintaining workflow continuity. Additionally, contingency planning helps address unexpected challenges or changes in scope. By carefully managing budget and resources, organizations can optimize performance while controlling costs (Krishen et al., 2021).



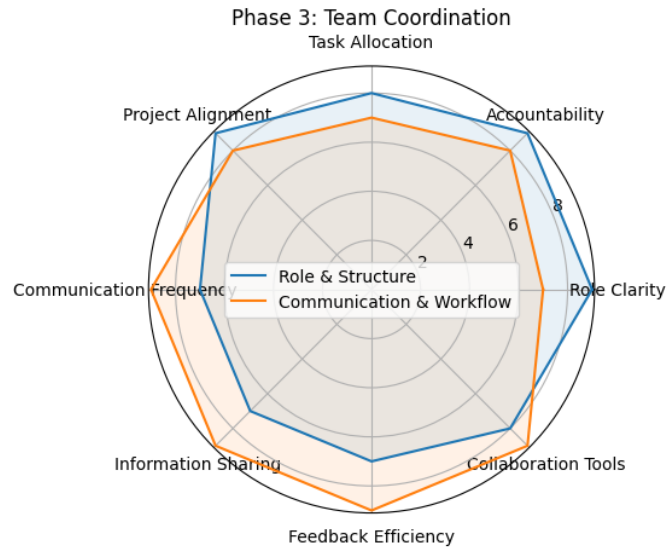
**Figure 2.** Double Stacked Bar Chart of Planning and Strategy Phase: Planning Structure and Resource Efficiency

Figure 2 illustrates the dual focus of the planning and strategy phase by highlighting the interplay between planning structure and resource efficiency across key activities. Timeline planning and milestone setting show strong contributions from the structural dimension, emphasizing their role in providing clarity, sequencing, and control over campaign execution (Nwabekee et al., 2024). In contrast, resource allocation and budget planning exhibit higher contributions from the efficiency dimension, reflecting their importance in optimizing the use of financial and human resources. The combined height of each bar indicates that both dimensions are essential and must work together to ensure effective planning. Contingency planning, while slightly lower in structural emphasis, demonstrates a strong efficiency component, underscoring its role in managing uncertainty and maintaining flexibility (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020). The chart suggests that focusing solely on structure without efficient resource use, or vice versa, may limit campaign success. Overall, the figure reinforces that balanced planning—integrating clear timelines with efficient resource management—is critical for achieving smooth and coordinated campaign execution.

### Phase 3: Team Coordination

Effective team coordination is essential for translating plans into action, particularly in complex marketing campaigns involving multiple stakeholders. This phase begins with clearly assigning roles and responsibilities to each team member. Defining who is responsible for specific tasks ensures accountability and reduces confusion. It also helps prevent duplication of effort and ensures that all aspects of the campaign are covered (Cai & Lo, 2020). Project managers play a central role in coordinating activities and ensuring that teams remain aligned with objectives. Clear role definition enables smoother collaboration and more efficient execution. As a result, it enhances overall campaign performance (Vrontis et al., 2021).

Establishing communication workflows is equally important for maintaining alignment and coordination. Regular meetings, status updates, and reporting mechanisms help keep all stakeholders informed about progress and potential issues. Communication tools such as project management platforms and collaboration software facilitate real-time information sharing. Clear communication protocols ensure that feedback is delivered efficiently and decisions are made promptly (Gao et al., 2019). This is particularly important in fast-paced marketing environments where delays can impact outcomes. Transparent communication also fosters trust and collaboration among team members. By implementing effective communication workflows, organizations can improve coordination and reduce execution risks (Page, 2015).



**Figure 3.** Double Radar Chart of Team Coordination: Role Structure and Communication Workflow

The chart as shown in Figure 3 illustrates the dual dimensions of team coordination by comparing role and structure with communication and workflow capabilities. The role and structure dimension shows strong performance in areas such as role clarity, accountability, and project alignment, highlighting the importance of clearly defined responsibilities in ensuring efficient execution (Bolton et al., 2021). In contrast, the communication and workflow dimension excels in communication frequency, information sharing, feedback efficiency, and the use of collaboration tools, emphasizing the need for continuous interaction and real-time coordination among team members. The overlap between the two dimensions indicates that effective coordination depends on both clear organizational structure and strong communication practices (Gerea et al., 2021). While structured roles provide direction and accountability, communication workflows enable adaptability and responsiveness. Any imbalance between these dimensions can lead to inefficiencies or misalignment. Overall, the chart demonstrates that successful team coordination in marketing campaigns requires an integrated approach that combines structured management with dynamic communication processes.

#### **Phase 4: Content Creation and Development**

The content creation and development phase focuses on producing the creative assets that bring the campaign to life. This process involves developing concepts, designing visuals, and crafting messaging that aligns with the campaign brief. Creative teams work closely with strategists to ensure that content reflects brand identity and resonates with the target audience. This phase often includes multiple formats, such as digital ads, social media content, videos, and landing pages (Hayes & Kelliher, 2022). Maintaining consistency across all content elements is essential for delivering a cohesive campaign experience. Creative development also requires balancing innovation with adherence to strategic objectives. As a result, this phase plays a key role in shaping the campaign's impact (Dwivedi et al., 2020).

Iteration, approvals, and feedback loops are critical components of the content development process. Creative assets typically go through multiple rounds of review to ensure quality and alignment with stakeholder expectations. Feedback from different teams, including marketing, legal, and brand management, must be incorporated efficiently (Cortellazzo et al., 2019). Structured approval processes help prevent delays and ensure that content meets required standards before launch. Iterative development allows teams to refine ideas and improve effectiveness based on feedback. However, excessive revisions can slow down progress, making it important to manage feedback cycles effectively (Rehman & Jajja, 2022). By establishing clear approval workflows, organizations can maintain both quality and efficiency in content development.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The successful execution of marketing campaigns from brief to launch requires a structured and disciplined approach that integrates both marketing expertise and project management principles. This study highlights that each phase of the campaign lifecycle—from brief development and planning to coordination and content creation—plays

a critical role in ensuring seamless execution. Clear objectives, well-defined roles, and effective communication are essential for aligning stakeholders and minimizing inefficiencies. Additionally, structured workflows and strategic planning help organizations manage complexity and maintain control over timelines and resources. By adopting a systematic approach, firms can reduce common challenges such as delays, misalignment, and scope creep. Ultimately, effective campaign execution depends on the ability to translate strategy into coordinated action. This reinforces the importance of project management as a core capability in modern marketing.

From a practical perspective, the framework presented in this article provides actionable guidance for project managers and marketing professionals seeking to improve campaign performance. It emphasizes the need for cross-functional collaboration, continuous monitoring, and iterative improvement throughout the execution process. While the framework offers a comprehensive structure, its implementation may vary depending on organizational context, team dynamics, and campaign complexity. Future developments in marketing technology and automation are likely to further enhance execution efficiency and coordination. Organizations that embrace structured processes and adaptive practices will be better positioned to deliver impactful campaigns. Additionally, continuous learning and refinement of processes will be essential for maintaining competitiveness in dynamic environments. Overall, a well-managed campaign execution process is key to achieving both operational efficiency and strategic success.

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