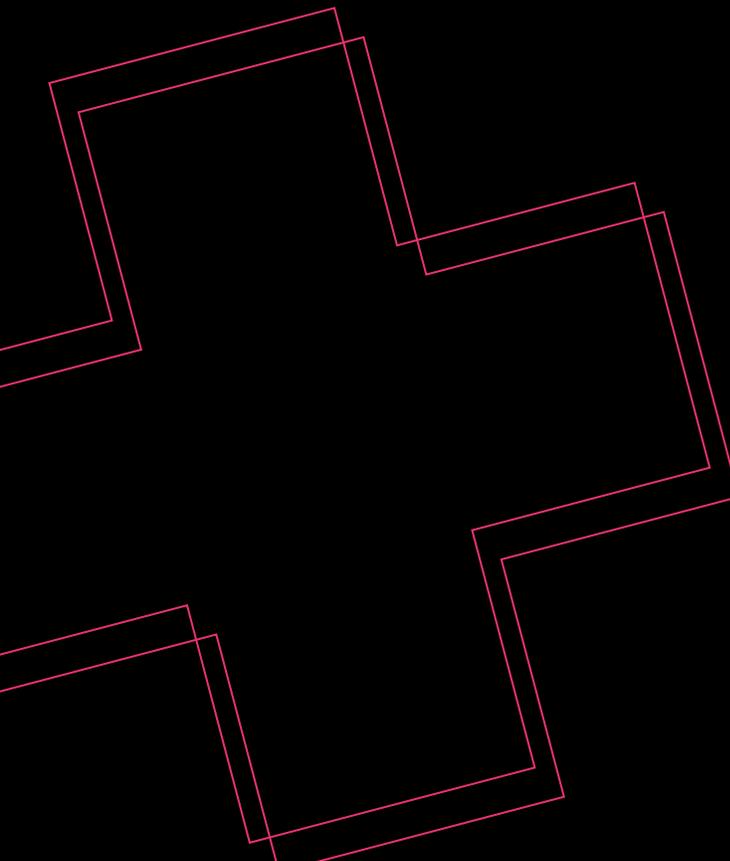


Google Marketing Live

Reengineering Search for an AI-First World





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Foreword

01



Dan Roberts

Global VP Search, Assembly



*AI changed the
game for search.
Now it's time to
change how we
play*

Google Marketing Live 2025 arrives at a defining moment for our industry, not just because of what's changing, but because of what's being rebuilt. Search is no longer a siloed keyword query engine. It's becoming a dynamic intelligence machine that shapes how people search, scroll, stream, and shop.

In a world where AI makes more decisions, competitive advantage lies in what we feed them, and how we guide them.

At Assembly, we've spent the last two years reengineering our Search proposition around one belief: AI doesn't just automate performance, it amplifies intelligence. But only when we give it the right inputs, meaningful oversight, and the freedom to test, learn, and adapt at speed.

This POV isn't simply a reaction to product updates from Google Marketing Live 2025. It's a strategic interpretation of what they mean for the brands we serve globally. The direction of travel is clear from this year's GML and Google I/O: AI is reshaping not only how Search works, but how marketers need to think. Legacy models will struggle. Intelligent systems (powered by structure, signals, and strategy) will thrive.

This is where STAGE, and our proprietary solutions & approach at Assembly helps our clients move beyond optimization and enables us to start engineering for growth.

What follows is a globally informed view, shaped by the expertise of our teams, and grounded in real-world experience helping clients transition from traditional SEM to AI-powered growth engines. It reflects the conversations we're having every day with clients and platforms alike; about control, transparency, incrementality, and the pursuit of lasting advantage.

What's clear from Google Marketing Live 2025 is that **growth won't come from yesterday's playbook.**

It's time to design for what's next, and **to find the change that fuels growth** for tomorrow.



Executive Summary

Google Marketing Live 2025 and Google I/O 2025 made one thing clear: AI is no longer a feature; it's the operating system of modern marketing. From campaign automation to creative generation, from bidding to analytics, AI now powers every layer of Google's advertising infrastructure.

But here's what matters most: adoption is happening, but through familiarity, not novelty. The biggest behavioural shifts are emerging where AI supports what consumers already do, not what marketers assume they should. Search, Shop, Scroll, Stream – these behaviours still define the decision journey. AI is simply speeding them up, smoothing the friction, and making them more multi-modal.

That's why this whitepaper is structured around **Google's 4S Framework**:

- ✦ **Searching** – when users seek answers or solve problems
- ✦ **Shopping** – when they evaluate or buy
- ✦ **Scrolling** – when they discover
- ✦ **Streaming** – when they watch and engage deeply

These aren't funnel stages, they're behavioral modes that users move through fluidly, often within the same session. AI is reshaping each one, creating new surface areas, shortening decision paths, and turning signals into actions.

We'll explore:

- ✦ How the new Power Pack of Performance Max, AI Max for Search, and Demand Gen is changing campaign design
- ✦ The biggest creative, measurement and data infrastructure changes in Google's history
- ✦ How to prepare for the rise of agentic advertising and AI co-pilots
- ✦ Strategic actions for brands to unlock durable growth across all four behaviors



Assembly's POV

Growth won't come from adapting to change later. It will come from designing for it now with systems that understand behavior and unlock AI's full potential.

Searching

What's New

Overviews Expand Globally

AI Overviews are now live in over 200 countries and 40+ languages, embedding Gemini-powered responses directly into search results. Google reports a 10% increase in search activity when these are shown – a strong signal that users trust generative responses. Ads now appear within these summaries, offering new real estate at the top of the page.

AI Mode Leaves Labs

Originally introduced in 2024, Google's conversational "AI Mode" is now exiting Labs and rolling out to a broader audience. Powered by Gemini 2.5, users can engage in multi-turn conversations, get structured guidance, and interact with multimedia results. Ads are being tested as "next best actions" following AI responses.

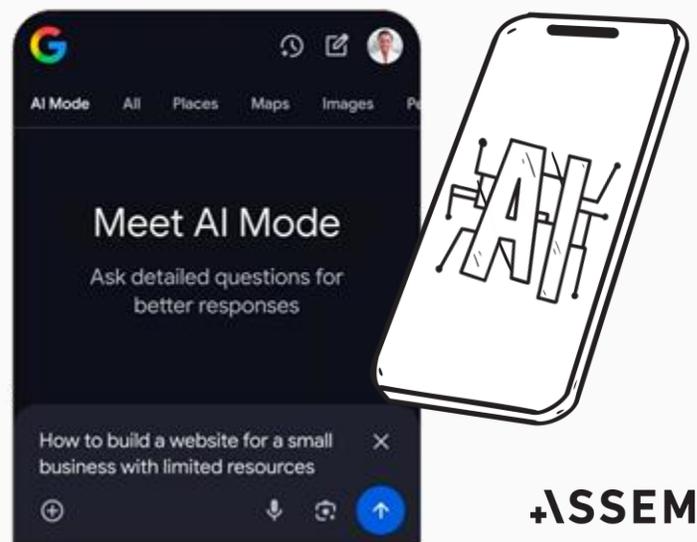
Smart Bidding Exploration

Smart Bidding Exploration is Google's biggest bid model update in a decade. Now in global beta, it allows flexible ROAS targets to unlock high-value but previously untapped search queries. Google reports up to 27% more conversions for campaigns using this exploration model.

AI Max for Search Campaigns

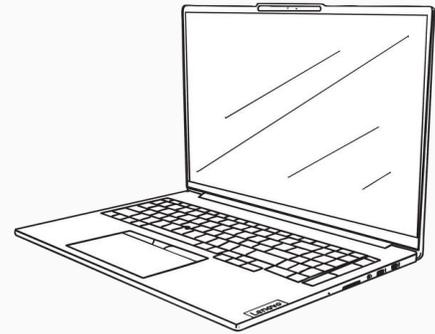
AI Max combines broad match, keywordless reach, and new creative enhancements in one click. It expands on existing Search and Performance Max logic, helping advertisers tap into additional, performant demand while still maintaining strategic guardrails. It's built for automation-first advertisers who want transparency and control.

***Search reimagined.
From queries to
contextual intelligence.***



Searching

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Assembly's POV

This is the beginning of a new phase in Search; one where precision planning and structured experimentation are more valuable than granular manual control. Your inputs matter more than ever.

Search is no longer a list of links, it's a language model interface. Our job is to train it with the right signals and be present where decisions begin.

What Clients Should Do:

Action

Why It Matters

Optimise content and feeds for AI Overviews

Generative responses favour trusted, well-structured information and surfaces with rich metadata.

Use AI Max to expand intelligently

Combine broad reach with exclusions, brand safety checks, and consistent testing.

Monitor conversational placements

Ensure ad assets are assistive, contextually relevant, and serve as natural next steps in AI Mode.

Adopt Smart Bidding Exploration strategically

Use ROAS flexibility to discover new value but manage it within a controlled bidding architecture.

Reframe attribution logic

Top-of-funnel placements in AI Mode and Overviews require measurement models that value contribution, not just conversion.

Shopping

What's New ↙

AI-Driven Product Discovery

- AI Mode for Shopping blends Gemini with Google's Shopping Graph to guide product exploration with generative inspiration, side-by-side comparisons, and personalized filters.
- Users can now browse in natural language and get visually enriched product suggestions based on use cases, not just specs.

Performance Max Evolves for Retail

- Channel performance reporting shows how ads perform across YouTube, Search, Gmail, Discover, Display and Shopping – offering new transparency to optimize budgets.
- Search term insights are coming to PMax, giving advertisers keyword-level visibility that was previously unavailable.
- Customer exclusion controls allow brands to exclude recent website visitors, app users, and brand searchers to refine prospecting performance.

Merchant Center Becomes a Brand Hub

- Merchant Center Next now supports video management, predictive content suggestions, lifestyle imagery generation, and AI-powered product storytelling.
- Brands can manage their Search profiles directly – shaping how they appear across Google properties with curated narratives and visual assets.

New Shopping Formats

- Shoppable CTV ads allow users to interact via QR codes.
- YouTube Masthead becomes shoppable on mobile.
- Demand Gen on Maps enables brands to drive footfall by placing Promoted Pins where people browse local areas.

***Shopping reinvented.
From listings to
immersive journeys.***



Shopping

07

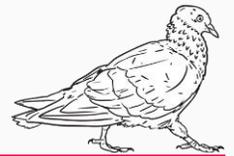
Assembly's POV

Shopping behaviors are converging with brand-building. Google's latest tools blend inspiration, education, and transaction – all in the same scroll. It's no longer enough to optimize feeds. Retail success in 2025 requires experience design, creative excellence, and structured automation.

The lines between brand, creative and commerce have officially blurred. Google is making Shopping feel like social media – and our job is to make it convert.

What Clients Should Do: Action

Why It Matters



Optimize for generative discovery

Update feeds and product copy to align with AI Mode logic – focus on use cases and benefits, not just features.

Treat Merchant Center as a brand tool

Curate videos, imagery, and brand messaging to differentiate in organic and paid Shopping surfaces.

Experiment with PMax exclusions

Refine prospecting by excluding known audiences and monitor impact through A/B testing.

Leverage video assets

Use lifestyle video assets to enhance visibility across surfaces like YouTube, Discover, and Search.

Integrate store and ecommerce strategies

Demand Gen + Maps lets you bridge the gap between online discovery and offline intent.

Scrolling

Scrolling has always been a passive behavior, but AI is turning it into a performance engine. From Shorts and Discover to Gmail and Display, users aren't just grazing anymore. They're discovering, engaging, and buying in environments designed to feel native, visual, and assistive.

What's New

Demand Gen Goes Multiformat and Multi-Moment

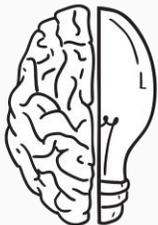
- Demand Gen campaigns are now **enhanced with accelerated checkout**, allowing YouTube shoppers to go straight from video to cart in one click.
- New **Promoted Pins in Maps** help brands capture local footfall directly within exploration-based scrolling.
- **Audience exclusions** give advertisers greater control — removing users who have already engaged with brand channels, apps, or sites.

AI-Powered Creative Comes to Every Format

- **Peak Points** uses AI to insert ads at the most emotionally resonant moments within YouTube videos.
- **Asset Studio** enables generation, preview and management of assets (image + video) in one creative workspace.
- **Generative video** resizing lets advertisers repurpose content across formats and placements using scene extension.

Discovery to Conversion with New Ad Formats

- Shoppable Masthead and Shoppable CTV **extend product-driven video ads** across high-impact formats.
- Performance Max and Demand Gen campaigns **now support video ads** across Search, Image, and Shopping for dynamic discovery.



***Scrolling recast.
From feed browsing
to demand creation.***

Scrolling

09



Assembly's POV

This is discovery without compromise. AI enables storytelling at scale, and now performance media needs to behave more like brand media. Your scroll presence isn't just awareness. It's demand creation, lead generation, and bottom-line growth.

Discovery is no longer soft performance. In an AI-first world, scroll-based environments are where demand is sparked and now, increasingly, where it's closed.

What Clients Should Do:

Action

Why It Matters

Launch video-led Demand Gen tests

Video is a high-performing format, not just on YouTube.

Use audience exclusions to reduce waste

Filter out prior engagers to focus spend on net new demand and fresh interest.

Incorporate generative tools in creative ops

Asset Studio and video resizing allow teams to scale storytelling without needing net-new production.

Connect Demand Gen + PMax for dual intent capture

Activate both top-of-funnel demand creation and mid-funnel conversion coverage in parallel.

Track video influence beyond view

Use branded search lift, view-through conversions, and assisted conversion paths to see the full impact.

Streaming

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Streaming is no longer just a lean-back experience. It's becoming a high-impact, interactive, and measurable space where brands don't just speak; they build lasting influence. YouTube's evolution into a commerce and conversion platform means that advertisers must now plan for attention, resonance, and response simultaneously.

What's New

YouTube Becomes a Shoppable Canvas

- **Shoppable CTV experiences** bring product discovery to the living room through QR codes, now integrated with Performance Max and Demand Gen.
- **YouTube Masthead** is now shoppable on mobile globally; a major shift in how product discovery happens in premium environments.

Intent Signals and Creator Influence

- The new **Creator Partnerships Hub** allows advertisers to manage and scale influencer marketing directly within Google Ads.
- **Insights Finder** helps brands identify trending creators and content themes, with audience affinity, format performance, and device data.
- **Peak Points** enables smarter video placements by surfacing emotionally resonant moments in content.

Cross-Device Attribution and Brand Impact

- **Enhanced brand search metrics** now track how many users search for your brand after seeing a video ad.
- **View-through conversions** and cross-device lift attribution are becoming standard in YouTube measurement.
- **Interactive ad formats** and **accelerated checkouts** help shorten the distance between video impression and conversion.

Streaming redefined.
From viewership to value.



Streaming

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Assembly's POV

Streaming is now part of the performance funnel, and YouTube is its flagship. It's not enough to run pre-rolls. Brands must invest in contextual creative, emotional storytelling, and measurement frameworks that capture influence over time.

Streaming used to be a reach play. Now it's a revenue channel. YouTube's evolution into a shoppable, data-rich ecosystem changes what good looks like; and how we prove it.

What Clients Should Do:

Action

Why It Matters

Activate shoppable formats on CTV

These new experiences turn attention into action, especially in upper funnel moments.

Leverage Creator Partnerships in Google Ads

Influencer content can now be programmatically scaled and measured; with brand safety controls built-in.

Use branded search and assisted conversion as KPIs

These metrics capture long-term impact, not just short-term clicks.

Treat YouTube as a dynamic journey channel

Different formats drive different outcomes, plan storytelling across devices and moments.

Sync video with product feeds and promotions

Make creative feel timely and actionable by connecting to live promotions and local availability.

AI's Growth Enablers: Creativity, Measurement & Data, Agents

As AI reshapes how people interact with content, platforms, and brands, it's not just behavior that's changing; it's the infrastructure beneath it. Creativity, data, and automation aren't supporting functions anymore. They are strategic growth levers.

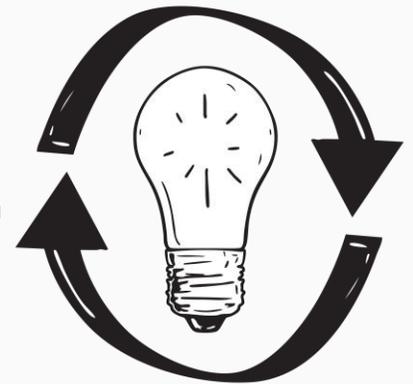
This section explores the three cross-cutting enablers that make Google's AI-first vision work, and what it takes for brands to extract real advantage from them

Creative: From Production to Participation

Creativity has been reborn as a performance input. With tools like Asset Studio, Veo-powered generative video, and dynamic AI extensions. Google is making creative not just scalable, but strategic.

What's New

- **Asset Studio** centralizes creative generation, import, and variation management in Google Ads.
- **Video generative resizing** creates all necessary aspect ratios automatically.
- **Product-centric image generation** lets brands show items in lifestyle contexts, directly from Merchant Center.
- **Peak Points** identifies the most resonant moments in video to optimize ad timing.



Assembly's POV

Creative is now a dynamic system, not a static asset. Brands need modular creative strategies, built around testing, automation, and contextual relevance; not just big campaigns.

AI's Growth Enablers: Creativity, Measurement & Data, Agents

Measurement & Data: From Reporting to Strategic Infrastructure

AI needs signals, and measurement needs to evolve to keep up. Google's 2025 upgrades in incrementality, attribution, and data activation form a new backbone for growth.

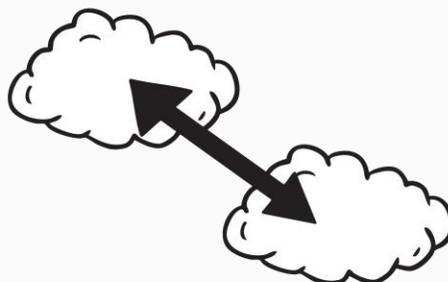
It is now possible to do your budgeting and forecasting across all your media spends, not just the Google owned media but any offline costs that you choose to upload, Meta, Snap, Pinterest etc. It uses historical data to determine recommendations for future media initiatives - right in GA4. This to me is driving GA4 to be used as the tool of choice as an Advertising integration platform / GA4 the performance hub.

What's New

- **Incrementality testing** now available across all campaign types with lower spend thresholds, down to £5K from £100K and native UI reporting.
- **View-through conversions + brand search lift** are now standard in YouTube attribution.
- **Data Manager** connects BigQuery, HubSpot, Salesforce, Shopify and more, and delivers actionable data strength scores.
- **Meridian MMM and Scenario Planner** support modern media modelling across channels.

Assembly's POV

This is not just measurement modernized; it's infrastructure for performance. We treat analytics and attribution as strategic design challenges.



AI's Growth Enablers: Creativity, Measurement & Data, Agents

Agentic Capabilities: From Automation to Intelligence

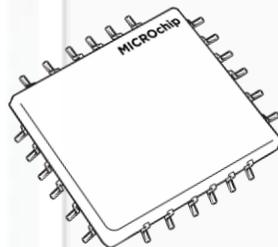
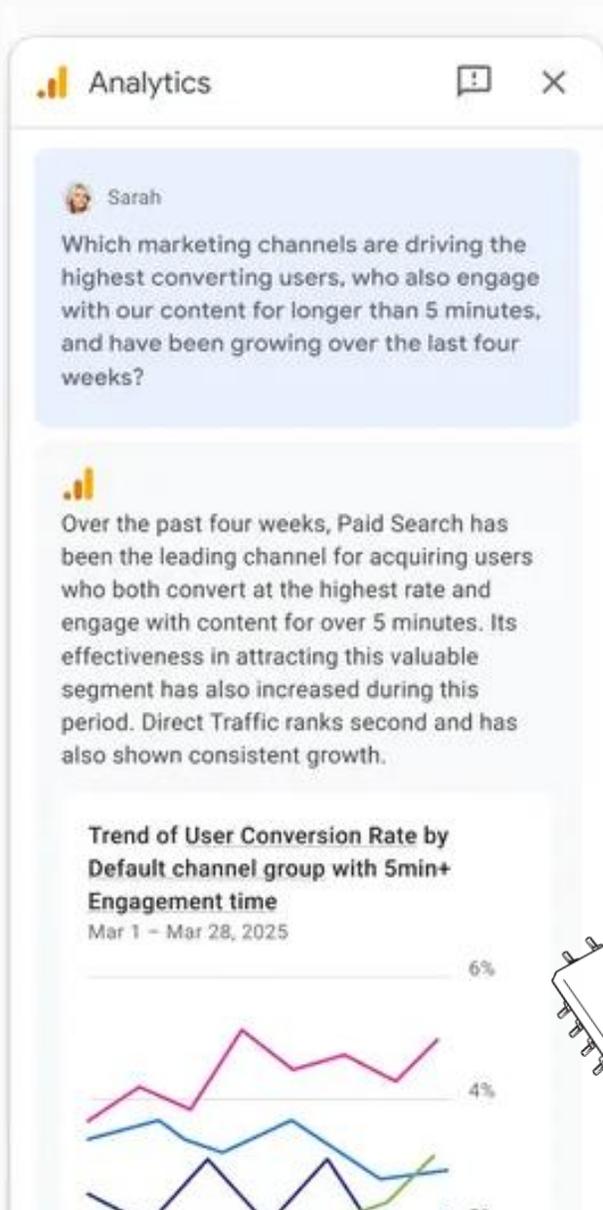
Google is now deploying agentic AI; systems that don't just suggest but do. From campaign co-pilots to Chrome-based assistants, the tools are moving from automation to orchestration.

What's New ↙

- **Google Ads Expert:** Builds campaigns, suggests improvements, and fixes errors proactively.
- **Google Analytics Expert:** Surfaces strategic insights and visualises trends.
- **Marketing Advisor in Chrome:** Offers contextual, real-time advice across workflows.
- **AI Essentials 2.0:** A diagnostic system for content, data, performance, and automation readiness.

Assembly's POV

These tools change the shape of teams and workflows. But success isn't about letting go, it's about knowing where to hold on. Governance, experimentation, and intent still drive impact.



**Together, these three enablers
(Creative, Measurement, &
Agentic Intelligence) power every
part of the customer journey.**

**They are the multiplier effect on
every campaign, behavior, and
investment.**

**The brands that master these
levers won't just keep up.
They'll lead.**



Final Thoughts

What Google Marketing Live 2025 made undeniably clear is this: AI is not a layer; it is the foundation. Whether in the behavioral shifts of how people search, scroll, shop and stream, or in the creative, measurement, and decision-making infrastructure beneath them, AI is remaking digital marketing from the inside out.

The winners in this new era will not be those who automate the fastest, but those who guide the system with intention.

We are now operating in a world where:

- ✗ Search results are generated, not ranked
- ✗ Creative assets are produced and placed by machine learning
- ✗ Campaigns are built, managed, and optimized by intelligent agents
- ✗ Measurement models are predictive, cross-channel, and privacy-first by design

For clients this means designing for change, not reacting to it.

Assembly's Commitment

We are not observers of this AI shift. We are builders, partners, and leaders within it.

As Google transforms its advertising ecosystem, Assembly is already delivering measurable growth by designing systems that:

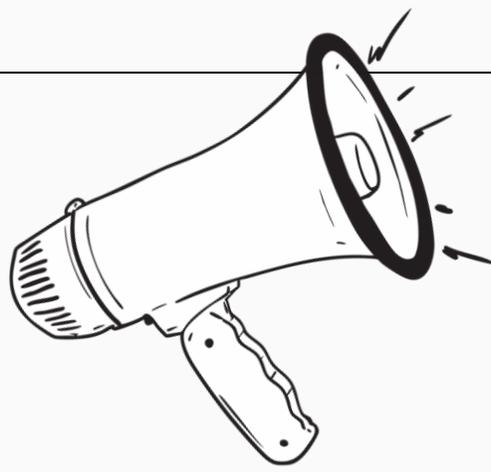
- ✗ Harness AI for clear, commercial outcomes for our clients
- ✗ Engineer smarter inputs (creative, data, and signals) to guide AI effectively
- ✗ Govern experimentation with speed, structure, and transparency
- ✗ Upskill teams across every region and platform to lead with AI

Clients choose Assembly not just because we understand AI, but because we turn AI potential into infrastructure that performs.



Takeaways

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Where to Focus Now: 5 Principles for AI-Era Growth

As we move from promise to practice, here are five principles that should anchor every marketing strategy:

- 1 Rewire for Real-Time Relevance**
The funnel is fractured. Growth comes from connecting search, stream, scroll and shop in real time, wherever your audience is.
- 2 Search Is Now a Predictive Engine**
AI Overviews and AI Mode don't just respond, they anticipate. Influence begins before the query is fully formed.
- 3 YouTube = Discovery + Demand**
It's not just a video platform. It's where trust builds, creators convert, and shopping happens natively.
- 4 Run on the Power Pack**
Performance Max, Demand Gen, and AI Max are now core infrastructure, with more transparency and control than ever.
- 5 Feed the System, or Fall Behind**
AI only performs as well as the inputs you give it. Better creative, stronger signals, cleaner data — that's the real competitive edge.

***We're not here to optimize the past.
We're here to engineer the future.
Let's build it, together.***

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