

Full Sail University

Smosh

DIGITAL MARKETING PLAN

Prepared By

JOSHUA MCGOWAN

Jmcgowantgr@gmail.com

Table of Contents

Executive Summary:	9
Mission Statement	10
Organization Description & Background	10
Product Description	11
Company History:	11
Revenue Model	13
Pricing Strategy	14
Goals & Objectives	15
Marketing Goals & Objectives	16
Brand Strategies	18
Branding Introduction	18
Smosh Brand Strategy Elements	19
Brand Name	19
Brand Identity/Logo	19
Smosh's Purposed Business Card	21
Tagline	22

Brand Messaging and Archetype	23
Brand Story	23
<i>Differentiation Points & Positioning</i>	24
Competitive Differentiators.....	25
<i>SWOT Analysis & Chart</i>	26
Strengths:	26
Weaknesses:	27
Opportunities:.....	27
Threats:	28
<i>Industry Analysis.....</i>	29
Industry Growth and Opportunity	29
Competitive Landscape	29
Industry Challenges and Risks	30
Public Perception and Cultural Positioning	30
<i>Competitor Analysis</i>	31
<i>Organizational Brief (Internal Analysis).....</i>	33
Target Market.....	33
Customer Analysis & Buyer Persona	34
"Comedy-Loving Chris"	34
Demographic Snapshot	34

Psychographics.....	34
Goals & Motivations	35
Pain Points.....	35
Media Consumption & Shopping Behavior	35
Why This Persona Engages with Smosh	36
Digital Marketing Strategies 1 (New/Social Media).....	37
1. YouTube (Primary Platform)	38
2. TikTok.....	38
3. Instagram Reels & Stories	39
4. Discord Community	40
5. Twitter/X.....	40
New Media & Social Media Overview.....	41
Platform Strategy Overview	41
2. Smosh Brand Ambassador Program.....	42
3. Social Media Tactics (Owned Media).....	43
4. Integration Strategy	44
Digital Marketing Strategies 2 (Mobile Marketing & Experiential Technology)	45
1. Text Messaging (SMS/MMS) Campaigns	45
2. Location-Based Services (LBS)	46
3. Game-Based Marketing.....	46
4. Augmented Reality (AR) Engagement Campaigns	47
5. Mobile Application Optimization	48
6. Experiential Storytelling via Mobile	48
Digital Marketing Strategies 3 (Website Optimization & User Experience).....	50

Homepage/Landing Page	50
Funnel Navigation	54
Digital Marketing Strategies 4 (Search Engine Marketing (SEM): SEO + PPC Strategy)	59
Organic Competitor Landscape	60
Keyword Strategy & SEO Optimization	60
Budget Allocation & Performance Modeling	63
Campaign Timeline & Optimization Plan	64
Paid Campaign Tracking Framework	64
SEM Conversion Goals Summary	66
Digital Marketing Strategies 5 (Email Marketing & Customer Messaging)	67
Email List Growth Strategy	67
Email Conversion Goals Summary:	68
Cross-Channel Message Reinforcement	71
Digital Marketing Strategies 6	73
1. Partner Marketing Strategy	73
2. Affiliate Marketing Strategy	74
3. Strategic Integration with Social & PR Channels	75
Digital Marketing Strategies 7 (Public Relations Strategy)	77
1. Communications & Media Relations Plan	79
2. Strategic Partnerships & Co-Branding	79
3. Value of External Backlinks	80
• Earn 3+ placements in relevant media outlets (e.g., Tubefilter, Mashable, AdWeek) and secure at least 500 monthly visits from backlinks with a bounce rate below 35%	81
4. Media & Influencer Targeting	81

5. PR Timeline & Wire Distribution	82
Offline Marketing: Broadcast, Print, Live Event Strategy.....	84
2. Print Advertisements (Targeted Zines, College Newspapers).....	85
Digital Marketing Strategies 8 (Three Example Campaign Briefs)	88
Campaign 1:	89
Campaign 2:	90
Campaign 3:	91
Campaign 4:	93
Digital Marketing Budget Page (Financial Projections and Budget Breakdown).....	95
Budget Breakdown	95
Campaign Budget Summary: “LOL Before You Scroll” – YouTube Pre-Roll Blitz.....	95
Traffic & Budget Metrics	96
Budget Breakdown.....	96
Revenue Projection	97
Measurement Plan.....	97
Additional Cost Considerations	98
Digital Marketing Evaluation (Evaluation, Control, and Improvement Analysis Metrics) “LOL Before You Scroll” Campaign.....	100
Measurement, Control, and Improvement Plan:	102
Digital Marketing Legal Considerations – Summary of Special Considerations.....	103
Jurisdiction and International Law Compliance	103

Data Privacy and Protection	104
Intellectual Property and User-Generated Content	106
Marketing to Minors (Children’s Privacy and Advertising)	109
Free Speech Considerations and Content Moderation (First Amendment Issues)	112
Email Marketing and CAN-SPAM Compliance	115
Influencer/Ambassador Program Compliance (FTC Endorsements)	117
Website Terms of Use and Digital Contracts (Browsewrap vs. Clickwrap vs. E-Sign)	120
<i>Digital Marketing Plan – Resource List</i>	<i>124</i>
<i>References</i>	<i>127</i>

Executive Summary:

This digital marketing plan outlines a bold and strategic path for elevating Smosh's brand presence, deepening audience engagement, and driving sustainable monetization in an increasingly competitive digital landscape. Rooted in Smosh's long-standing reputation for chaotic, character-driven sketch comedy and fan-fueled creativity, the plan leverages innovative storytelling and data-backed strategies to transform the brand's reach across digital channels.

The plan is guided by three primary objectives: (1) increase traffic to Smosh's core platforms, particularly YouTube and their direct-to-consumer site; (2) boost merchandise sales through smarter content-to-commerce integration; and (3) cultivate brand loyalty through interactive fan experiences. These objectives were shaped by a thorough analysis of platform trends, audience behavior among Gen Z and Millennial viewers, and the evolving role of creator brands within the entertainment economy. Consideration was also given to Smosh's current digital footprint, content performance data, and opportunities for cross-platform storytelling.

To achieve these goals, the strategy integrates four distinct but interconnected campaigns: a fan-powered Brand Ambassador program that amplifies user-generated content and peer influence; a YouTube optimization and retargeting strategy to enhance visibility and session duration; a merch-focused search and shopping campaign on Google that defends brand equity while targeting high-intent audiences; and an immersive AR campaign that turns Smosh merchandise into a literal gateway to exclusive content experiences. Together, these initiatives blend organic reach, paid amplification, influencer marketing, and emerging technology to meet fans where they are, and invite them deeper into the Smosh universe.

Mission Statement

While Smosh does not have a formalized mission statement, the brand's focus on delivering high-quality comedic content to engage its audience is clear. According to Balmer and Greyser (2003), a mission statement should communicate a company's purpose and value to its audience. A potential mission statement for Smosh could be: "To bring joy, laughter, and a sense of community to audiences through authentic and creative comedy." This statement would encapsulate Smosh's core objective and offer a clear articulation of its purpose within the entertainment industry. Defining this mission will also help guide future content and business decisions as the brand expands into new media like TikTok and Twitch.

Organization Description & Background

Smosh's origin story begins with a YouTube channel created by two friends in 2005 making comedy videos just for fun. Smosh's rise from a small, independent channel to a multimedia entity reflects a narrative of grassroots success. They expanded their cast from two, to an entire cast as well as permanent retainers to all the crew needed to run a production company. The brand's ability to maintain its comedic roots while evolving into new content formats has allowed it to remain relevant to its long-standing fanbase (Schroeder & Salzer-Mörling, 2006). Smosh is adaptable, yet grounded, contributing to the brand's continued success in the digital landscape.

Product Description

Smosh offers a variety of comedic content, primarily centered around sketch comedy videos, long-form podcasts, and live-streaming. Their product portfolio has expanded significantly from their early days as a pure sketch comedy channel (OpenAI, 2024). In addition to their main sketch-based YouTube channel, Smosh now operates sub-channels such as Smosh Pit, which focuses on behind-the-scenes content, challenges, and game shows. As well as Smosh Games, which offers video and board game-related content. Smosh has also ventured into podcasting with “The SmoshCast,” providing long-form discussions on internet culture, comedy, and their own creative processes. Merchandise, including apparel and accessories inspired by popular sketches, serves as an additional product line that engages their fanbase.

Company History:

Smosh, originally founded by Anthony Padilla and Ian Hecox in 2005, began as a YouTube channel primarily focused on comedy sketches and parodies. The duo first met in sixth grade and bonded over their shared sense of humor, eventually collaborating on projects creating funny or interesting websites and animations. Their first viral video, a parody lip-sync of the *Pokémon* theme song, gained millions of views before YouTube took it down due to copyright issues. Despite this setback, the video helped establish Smosh's presence as one of the earliest influential channels on the platform (Alexander, 2019). As YouTube grew, so did Smosh. By 2008, the channel had amassed millions of subscribers, positioning itself as one of the top channels on the platform. The comedic style of Smosh often relied on absurdist humor, slapstick, and internet culture, making it appealing to a broad audience of younger viewers. Over time, the brand expanded, creating additional channels such as *Smosh Games* in 2012 and *Smosh Pit* for

unscripted, personality-driven content. Smosh's success led to multiple business ventures, including the release of their feature-length film, *Smosh: The Movie*, in 2015.

In 2011, Smosh was acquired by Defy Media, a multi-channel network, which supported the brand's growth by providing resources and production capabilities. However, when Defy Media shut down in 2018, Smosh was briefly left in limbo. In early 2019, Smosh was purchased by Rhett and Link's company, Mythical Entertainment. This acquisition allowed Smosh to regain its creative independence and reinvigorated the channel under a new production team. Co-founder Anthony Padilla left Smosh in 2017 to pursue individual projects, but in 2023, Padilla rejoined Smosh, signaling a reunion with Ian Hecox, which reignited fan excitement and nostalgia for the channel's earlier days (Reyes, 2023). Today, Smosh remains one of YouTube's longest running, and most iconic, comedy brands. With over 25 million subscribers and multiple content streams, Smosh continues to adapt to the evolving digital landscape, balancing new comedic approaches with the playful irreverence that initially brought it success.

Revenue Model

As Smosh continues evolving as a dominant force in digital entertainment, it is crucial to understand the foundations of its revenue generation. This section outlines the company's monetization approach, exploring the different revenue models it leverages to support sustainable growth. From merchandise sales to affiliate partnerships, Smosh's pricing strategy complements its brand narrative while aligning with evolving consumer behaviors.

Smosh operates a diversified revenue model that reflects its evolution from a pioneering YouTube comedy channel into a full-scale digital media brand. The company generates income through the following key revenue streams:

- **Retail and E-commerce Sales:** Smosh sells branded merchandise, apparel, and accessories through its online store, often tied to video content or special campaigns. This is supported by limited drops and influencer-driven promotions to drive urgency and exclusivity.
- **Ad Revenue and Sponsored Content:** As a high-subscriber YouTube channel, Smosh earns revenue through pre-roll ads, mid-roll placements, and YouTube Partner Program monetization. Additionally, they collaborate with brands for integrated sponsored content and paid placements.
- **Affiliate Partnerships:** Through select influencer programs and product shout-outs, Smosh earns commissions from affiliate links embedded in YouTube descriptions, social media posts, and newsletters.

- Platform Monetization: Smosh leverages YouTube’s “Super Thanks,” memberships, and ad-sharing, as well as monetization from platforms like Facebook and Instagram for video content.
- Live Appearances and Events (*planned growth area*): As part of this DMP, Smosh aims to increase revenue via live fan events, meet-and-greets, and pop-up merchandise sales, aligning digital campaigns with offline engagement.

Pricing Strategy

Smosh primarily uses a value-based pricing strategy across its products and sponsorship tiers, aligning pricing with perceived audience engagement and content relevance. Merchandise is priced competitively to balance fan accessibility with premium positioning for limited editions. Sponsorship packages and ambassador collaborations are tiered based on audience reach, brand alignment, and multi-platform integration.

Goals & Objectives

1. Expand Audience Reach

- Grow their subscriber base across YouTube channels. (Smosh, Smosh Pit, etc.)
- Increase global reach and penetration into new audience demographics. (e.g., Gen Z, younger Millennials)

2. Monetize Content More Effectively

- Diversify revenue streams beyond YouTube ad revenue, such as:
 - Brand partnerships
 - Merchandise
 - Live events
 - Patreon/subscription models
 - Podcast monetization

3. Strengthen Brand Identity Post-Reacquisition

- Solidify Smosh's brand as an authentic, creator-driven, sketch comedy empire.
- Re-establish legacy goodwill while evolving the brand for modern viewers.

4. Increase Community Engagement and Retention

- Foster loyalty by deepening fan interaction via Discord, comments, polls, and events.
- Build Smosh as a cultural "hangout" space, not just a content brand.

5. Attract and Retain Top Creative Talent

- Position Smosh as the comedy collective of choice for digital creators and writers.
- Expand cast while maintaining strong team cohesion and audience connection.

Marketing Goals & Objectives

1. YouTube Subscriber Growth

Goal: Increase Smosh's main YouTube channel subscribers by 15% (approx. 1.3 million new subscribers) over the next 12 months through targeted SEO, cross-promotions, and content optimization.

- Specific: Targeting YouTube channel subscriber count
- Measurable: 15% increase
- Achievable: Based on past growth patterns and new content strategies
- Relevant: Directly impacts audience reach and ad revenue
- Time-bound: 12-month timeline

2. Brand Partnership Revenue

Goal: Boost brand partnership revenue by 30% by the end of Q2 next year by launching a brand ambassador program and optimizing B2B pitch decks.

- Specific: Increase in revenue from partnerships
- Measurable: 30% increase
- Achievable: Supported by new B2B marketing efforts
- Relevant: Supports monetization and business sustainability
- Time-bound: End of Q2 next year

3. Engagement on New Platforms (i.e., TikTok & Instagram Reels)

Goal: Achieve 500K followers and an average engagement rate of 8% on TikTok within 6 months, by posting daily behind-the-scenes and sketch clips optimized for mobile and Gen Z.

- Specific: Platform-specific follower and engagement goal
- Measurable: 500K followers, 8% engagement
- Achievable: With consistent, relevant content
- Relevant: Builds community and expands reach
- Time-bound: 6 months

4. Merchandise Sales Uplift

Goal: Increase average monthly merch sales by 20% within the next quarter by launching a limited edition drop campaign featuring fan-voted designs.

- Specific: Boosting merchandise sales
- Measurable: 20% monthly increase
- Achievable: Backed by fan engagement and promotional tools
- Relevant: Diversifies revenue beyond ads
- Time-bound: Next quarter

Brand Strategies

This brand strategy analyzes and evaluates Smosh's current brand elements. The strategy considers Smosh's brand name, logo, tagline, archetype, mission statement, brand story, promotional plans, target audience, and competitive differentiators. The analysis offers recommendations for strengthening the brand's identity and engagement with its audience. The goal is to ensure that Smosh's unique voice remains distinct while maximizing its impact in an increasingly competitive digital landscape. This strategy also aims to enhance Smosh's ability to adapt to new content formats and audience preferences. By implementing these recommendations, Smosh can continue to thrive and lead in the online entertainment space.

Branding Introduction

Branding is essential for any company, particularly in the entertainment industry. In the highly saturated world of online content creation, where competition is constantly growing, a well-defined brand strategy helps ensure long-term success. Smosh, as one of the early pioneers on YouTube, has built a strong brand based on humor and community engagement. However, in order to maintain relevance and grow its audience, the brand must evolve while preserving the core elements that have contributed to its success. By refining its strategic focus and tapping into emerging digital trends, Smosh can future proof its brand while retaining its loyal audience base. Continuous engagement through audience feedback will also be critical for future growth.

Smosh Brand Strategy Elements

Brand Name

The name "Smosh" is a distinctive asset that aligns with the company's comedic content.

According to Thompson (2018), brand names that are easy to remember and pronounce contribute to brand recognition. "Smosh" fits these criteria, offering a memorable, playful, and recognizable name that reflects the brand's lighthearted nature. Over time, the name has become synonymous with internet comedy, further embedding it in the cultural zeitgeist. Its brevity also allows for seamless integration into hashtags and digital campaigns, enhancing social media engagement. The name's alignment with humor ensures it remains timeless despite shifts in digital trends.

Brand Identity/Logo



Smosh's logo employs bold, stylized text, which makes it flexible for use across multiple media platforms. According to Aaker (2014), effective logos should be simple, memorable, and versatile. The arrow-like design in the logo conveys movement and energy, symbolic of Smosh's ability to adapt to shifts in content trends while maintaining its core identity. The simplicity and adaptability of the logo allow it to maintain brand consistency across a variety of formats, from social media banners to merchandise (Keller, 2013). Furthermore, the logo's minimalistic design lends itself well to dynamic iterations for different campaigns or collaborations. This flexibility ensures that the logo remains a central part of Smosh's evolving visual identity, regardless of the ever-shifting color palettes used during campaigns to promote their brand in powerful ways. The current iteration is a bold black font on a white background, with clear lines and their signature arrow. The iconography within the arrows is a nod to Smosh original cast member Anthony Padilla's first designs for Smosh.com. To this day their dedication to their own brand's visual identity has engendered an intensely loyal fanbase.



Smosh's Purposed Business Card

Smosh does not publicly display any business cards on its website or social media platforms.

Therefore, a custom design was created that emphasizes a blend of natural professionalism and the brand's traditionally simple and fun media presence. The business card features a soft light brown background, with flowing fonts used for the title and a bold, standard font for the contact details. This design choice reflects a balance between Smosh's approachable, humorous brand identity and a more formal, professional aesthetic, aligning with their broader multimedia focus.





Tagline

A well-crafted tagline can encapsulate a brand's message in a few words. Smosh, however, currently lacks a consistent tagline. Developing a tagline such as "More Than Just Comedy" would align with the brand's evolution from a sketch comedy channel to a multimedia entity, including podcasts and other content formats. According to Ries and Trout (2001), an effective tagline should communicate the brand's value proposition succinctly and memorably. A tagline that reflects Smosh's growth would reinforce its identity while offering clarity to both new and existing audiences. This added clarity would also differentiate Smosh from its competitors, allowing for stronger positioning in new content categories. Consistency in messaging across all media touchpoints would further solidify the tagline's impact.

Brand Messaging and Archetype

Smosh's brand identity is most closely aligned with the "Jester" archetype, which is characterized by a focus on fun, humor, and engaging with the audience (Mark & Pearson, 2001). The Jester archetype, according to these authors, seeks to entertain, often challenging norms and breaking conventions in a playful way. Smosh's content consistently reflects this archetype, from absurdist sketches to parodies of internet culture. The Jester's role in branding is to create memorable, emotionally resonant content, and Smosh's consistent humor-driven approach supports this framework (Aaker, 2014). Additionally, the Jester archetype helps Smosh build emotional connections with its audience by creating a sense of community and shared experience. As humor continues to be a universal connector, Smosh can use this archetype to attract new demographics while keeping its core audience engaged.

Brand Story

Smosh's origin as a YouTube channel created by two friends in 2005 offers a compelling brand story. Origin stories help humanize brands and create a sense of authenticity that resonates with audiences (Herskovitz & Crystal, 2010). Smosh's rise from a small, independent channel to a multimedia entity reflects a narrative of grassroots success. The brand's ability to maintain its comedic roots while evolving into new content formats has allowed it to remain relevant to its long-standing fanbase. This narrative positions Smosh as an adaptable, yet grounded, content creator which contributes to the brand's continued success in the digital landscape. Emphasizing this journey in brand communications will reinforce Smosh's authenticity, resonating with both nostalgic fans and newer viewers. A well-crafted brand story can also inspire brand loyalty, enhancing long-term audience retention.

Differentiation Points & Positioning

To stand out in a competitive landscape, Smosh employs strategic positioning that builds on its legacy and focuses on differentiation. This section outlines how the brand defines its uniqueness in comparison to both direct and indirect competitors, highlighting the messaging and tactics that reinforce its position in the hearts of its audience.

Smosh positions itself as a digitally native, culturally fluent comedy brand that thrives on community, consistency, and creativity. Unlike traditional sketch comedy outlets or celebrity-driven platforms, Smosh's brand message centers around "comedy by the internet, for the internet" which is a nod to its fan-centric, participatory legacy and continuous adaptation to the online space.

Key messaging woven throughout this marketing strategy emphasizes authentic humor, relatable personalities, and ongoing audience engagement through user-generated content, brand ambassadorships, and platform-specific storytelling. Smosh's ability to operate like a creator-driven collective, rather than a top-down production studio, gives it an edge in building loyalty among younger, digitally fluent audiences.

Against direct competitors like CollegeHumor and Funny or Die, Smosh stands out through:

- A deeper YouTube legacy and wider range of character-driven series
- Fan integration via comment-driven sketches, reaction content, and ambassador campaigns
- An increasingly diversified media model, incorporating e-commerce, live events, and social campaigns

When compared to indirect competitors like BuzzFeed and Barstool Sports, Smosh maintains a tighter comedic focus and stronger brand coherence, which allows for sharper audience targeting and better message alignment across platforms.

To dominate the category, Smosh is investing in:

- A full-funnel digital strategy that blends display ads, social storytelling, and experiential mobile marketing
- First-party data growth through email collection, ambassador engagement, and retargeting
- Campaigns like *“LOL Before You Scroll”*, which weaponize scroll stopping visuals and algorithm-friendly formats to capture attention and convert users into long term fans

These steps position Smosh not only as a nostalgic internet comedy brand but as a forward-facing category leader for digital-first sketch content in the creator economy era.

Competitive Differentiators

Smosh’s competitive edge lies in its consistency and adaptability. While many content creators struggle to maintain relevance over time, Smosh has successfully navigated changes in platform algorithms and audience preferences by diversifying its content and retaining a strong connection to its audience. Smosh’s longevity is also a testament to its ability to remain relatable and community-driven (Lieb, 2011). As the brand continues to evolve, its dedication to humor and engagement will remain key differentiators in a crowded market. By continually refreshing its content approach and leaning into its core strengths, Smosh can remain competitive against new

entrants. The ability to blend innovation with consistency will be crucial in maintaining its leadership in the space.

SWOT Analysis & Chart



Strengths:

- **Strong Brand Recognition:** As one of the earliest and most iconic YouTube channels, Smosh has significant brand equity and recognition, particularly among long-time YouTube users.
- **Diverse Content Portfolio:** With multiple channels (e.g., Smosh Games, Smosh Pit), Smosh offers a variety of content to cater to different audience segments, increasing engagement and revenue potential.

- **Established Fanbase:** Smosh has cultivated a loyal and engaged fanbase that has supported the brand through various changes, including the departure and return of co-founder Anthony Padilla.
- **Backed by Mythical Entertainment:** The acquisition by Rhett and Link's Mythical Entertainment, though no longer the owners, has provided Smosh with additional resources, production support, and financial stability, allowing for more ambitious projects.

Weaknesses:

- **Dependence on YouTube:** Smosh's business model heavily relies on YouTube's platform for distribution and monetization, making it vulnerable to algorithm changes, policy shifts, and demonetization issues.
- **Nostalgia Fatigue:** While nostalgia drives much of Smosh's appeal, relying too heavily on past content and inside jokes may limit its ability to attract newer viewers who are unfamiliar with its history.
- **Limited Expansion into Other Platforms:** Although Smosh has branched into podcasts and occasional social media content, its core business remains focused on YouTube, limiting potential revenue diversification.

Opportunities:

- **Growing Digital Advertising Market:** The increase in digital ad spend provides Smosh with more opportunities for partnerships, sponsorships, and branded content, helping to boost revenue beyond traditional ad revenue.

- **Expansion into New Media Formats:** Platforms like Twitch, TikTok, and podcasting offer new opportunities for Smosh to reach broader and younger audiences. Smosh can also tap into longer-form storytelling or live event experiences.
- **Revitalizing the Brand with Nostalgia:** The return of Anthony Padilla creates opportunities to capitalize on the "reunion" buzz, attracting both old fans and new viewers.
- **Merchandising and Licensing:** With a strong brand identity, Smosh can continue to grow its merchandise lines and explore licensing deals with other media properties, increasing revenue and fan engagement.

Threats:

- **Increasing Competition:** The digital entertainment space is highly saturated, with countless new creators emerging every day. Smosh competes with other established creators as well as newer, niche channels that cater to highly specific interests.
- **Platform Policy Changes:** YouTube's frequent updates to its monetization policies, algorithms, and community guidelines can directly impact Smosh's revenue streams and visibility.
- **Shifting Audience Preferences:** The comedy landscape is always evolving, and younger audiences may have different tastes than the fans who grew up with Smosh's earlier content.
- **Economic Downturns:** A global recession or economic downturn may cause brands to cut advertising budgets, reducing the potential for sponsorship deals and affecting overall revenue.

Industry Analysis

The current state of the digital entertainment industry presents both challenges and opportunities for content-first brands. This section assesses market trends, competitor movements, and cultural shifts that may affect Smosh's marketing performance. By understanding the macro environment, the brand can better anticipate threats and leverage opportunities.

Smosh operates within the digital content creation and online entertainment industry, a fast-evolving sector currently experiencing both maturation and transformation. The demand for online video, influencer-driven storytelling, and interactive media continues to grow, particularly among Gen Z and younger Millennials who prioritize authenticity and platform-native content over traditional entertainment.

Industry Growth and Opportunity

The global digital content market was valued at over \$180 billion in 2023 and is projected to exceed \$300 billion by 2027 (Statista, 2023). Platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram Reels are driving this growth, creating new revenue opportunities through monetization, advertising, subscriptions, and e-commerce integration. Smosh is uniquely positioned to benefit from this shift due to its longstanding brand presence, deep community roots, and flexible content model.

Competitive Landscape

The space is highly competitive, with both legacy players (i.e., CollegeHumor, BuzzFeed, Barstool Sports) and newer creator collectives (i.e., RDCWorld1, OfflineTV) fighting for attention. However, most competitors either lack the multi-platform infrastructure of Smosh or McGowan, DMP

haven't developed the same level of internal brand consistency and fan loyalty. The resurgence of the original Smosh founders has further revitalized the brand, offering a unique positioning as both nostalgic and current.

Industry Challenges and Risks

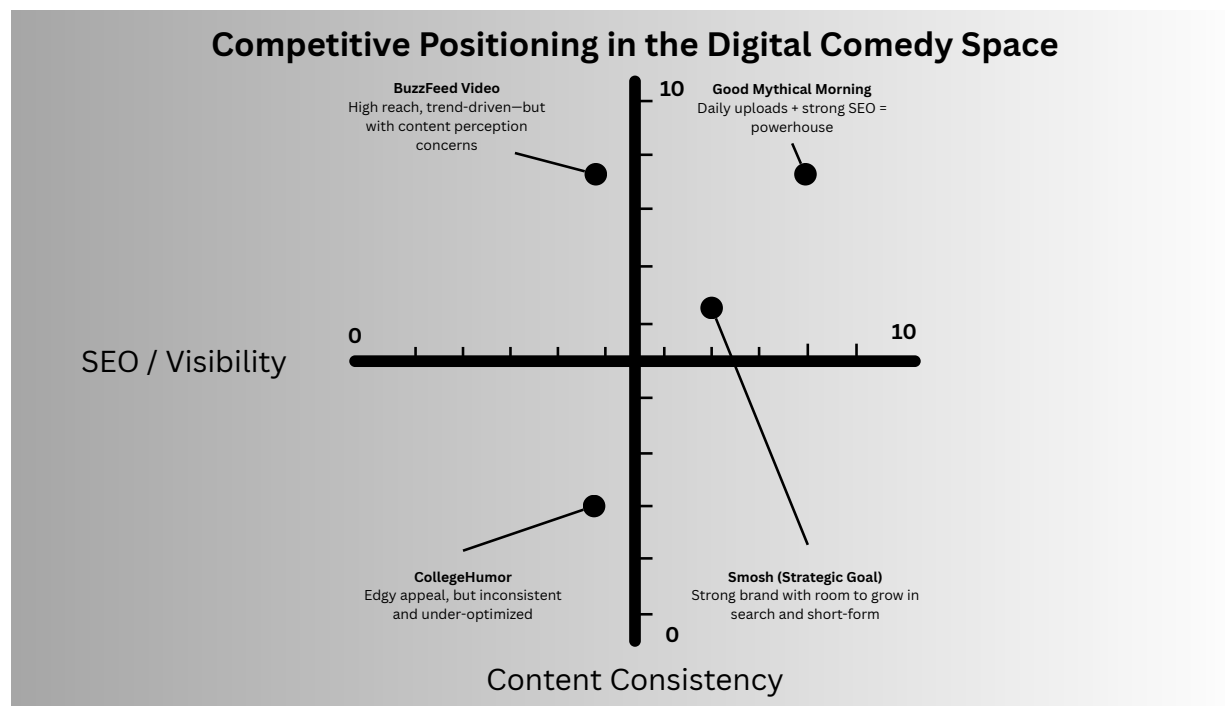
- Platform volatility: Algorithm changes on YouTube or Meta can directly impact visibility and monetization, requiring constant adaptability in content format and upload frequency.
- Ad revenue fluctuations: Macroeconomic factors and advertiser pullbacks can reduce CPMs and brand partnership opportunities, making diversified revenue (merch, events, UGC programs) essential.
- Public scrutiny: The industry is under increased scrutiny for content moderation, creator burnout, and ethical sponsorships, these are issues that Smosh must navigate carefully while scaling.
- Legal and privacy regulations: New data privacy laws and platform policies (especially regarding cookies, behavioral targeting, and UGC IP) could impact email marketing, retargeting, and ambassador engagement.

Public Perception and Cultural Positioning

The public continues to view digital creators as more authentic and relatable than traditional celebrities, especially among younger consumers. Smosh benefits from this sentiment, but must maintain transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness to preserve that trust. Especially as the brand grows its monetization and promotional footprint.

Competitor Analysis

This analysis evaluates three key competitors in the digital entertainment space: CollegeHumor, Good Mythical Morning (GMM), and BuzzFeed Video. Each competitor offers unique strengths and opportunities that directly impact Smosh's position in the market.



CollegeHumor specializes in sketch comedy with an edgy, youthful tone aimed at college-aged viewers. Their Unique Selling Proposition (USP) lies in their irreverent humor and subscription-based premium content (Dropout.TV), which offers uncensored and ad-free videos. Despite this, their content frequency has been inconsistent, impacting audience retention and engagement.

CollegeHumor's audience is mostly aged 18-34, and while engagement through platforms like YouTube remains strong, it has suffered from sporadic uploads. They have embraced trends such as TikTok-style videos but still lag in consistently delivering new content. Customer

feedback highlights the humor as a strength, but many mention the inconsistent release schedule as a key frustration. In terms of design, CollegeHumor's website is clean and easy to navigate, with clear calls to action for subscriptions. However, the platform's SEO performance is moderate, with room for improvement in keyword optimization, particularly around trending topics.

Good Mythical Morning (GMM) excels in content consistency, delivering daily, family-friendly comedy that appeals to a wide age range from teens to adults. Their USP is their engaging, quirky format led by charismatic hosts, Rhett & Link, which has created a loyal fanbase. Audience engagement is strong due to daily uploads, interactive content, and merchandise tie-ins, helping GMM build a multi-revenue model beyond ad-based content. Customer feedback reflects high satisfaction with GMM's content, though some express concerns over an increasing number of sponsored segments. GMM's website and YouTube channel are well-designed with intuitive navigation, making it easy for users to access content and shop for branded merchandise. Their SEO strategy is well optimized, with high visibility for keywords around talk shows and entertainment, giving them a competitive edge.

BuzzFeed Video is known for its viral, short-form content, designed to be easily consumed and shared across social media platforms. Their USP is their ability to quickly capitalize on viral trends, making them a leader in digital media. They engage a wide audience, primarily Gen Z and millennials, who thrive on fast, bite-sized entertainment. While BuzzFeed's social media presence is unmatched, with high engagement across TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, some customers express frustration with their clickbait-style content. The website design focuses heavily on media and is sometimes cluttered, but navigation remains simple and effective for

their target audience. SEO performance is strong, ranking high for viral and trend-based searches, making BuzzFeed a dominant player in capturing online visibility.

In conclusion, among the competitors, Good Mythical Morning stands out for its consistent content delivery, strong engagement, and diversified revenue streams. BuzzFeed Video is a close second, excelling in viral content and social media engagement but with some issues in content perception. CollegeHumor lags behind, primarily due to inconsistent content uploads, but presents an opportunity with their subscription model. For Smosh, the primary opportunities lie in increasing content consistency, adopting innovative content formats like short-form videos, as well as leveraging merchandise and exclusive content strategies. Smosh can also improve keyword optimization and SEO to capture a larger share of relevant search traffic.

Organizational Brief (Internal Analysis)

Target Market

Smosh's target market is primarily composed of Generation Z and Millennials, with a focus on individuals aged 16 to 34. Demographically, this audience is predominantly located in North America, with secondary markets in Europe and Australia, reflecting the global reach of YouTube as a platform. Psychographically, Smosh's audience is characterized by an affinity for digital content, a preference for humor that pushes boundaries, and a strong engagement with internet culture. These viewers are often active on social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter, where they engage with short-form comedic content and memes. This group values entertainment that is irreverent, witty, and relatable, often seeking out creators who challenge conventional norms in a playful and accessible way.

This audience tends to be highly engaged with creators who cultivate a sense of community, aligning with Smosh's approach to audience interaction and fan involvement. Additionally, they appreciate diverse forms of content ranging from quick, easily digestible videos to more in-depth podcasts and live streams. By focusing on this specific demographic and psychographic profile, Smosh can tailor its content and messaging to resonate deeply with its core fanbase, while also expanding into adjacent audiences who share similar values and interests.

Customer Analysis & Buyer Persona

"Comedy-Loving Chris"

Demographic Snapshot

- Age: 18–34
- Gender: All genders (slight male skew)
- Location: Primarily United States (urban/suburban), with secondary audiences in Canada, the U.K., and Australia
- Occupation: College students, early-career professionals, freelance creatives, or part-time workers
- Income Level: Low to moderate disposable income

Psychographics

- Personality Traits: Loyal, nostalgic, irreverent, and internet-savvy
- Values: Authenticity, creativity, inclusivity, and freedom of expression
- Lifestyle & Interests:
 - Spends substantial time on YouTube, TikTok, Discord, and Instagram Reels

- Enjoys long-form and short-form sketch comedy, behind-the-scenes content, gaming culture, and podcast discussions
- Follows multiple digital creators and comedy collectives (e.g., Smosh, Mythical, Corridor Digital)

Goals & Motivations

- Primary Goals:
 - Stay entertained through high-quality, creative, and relatable comedy
 - Be part of an engaging fan community with shared inside jokes and nostalgia
 - Discover new digital experiences that reflect personal humor style
- Emotional Drivers:
 - Seeks humor as an escape from daily stress
 - Craves a feeling of belonging through familiar personalities and content
 - Desires transparency from creators over commercial motivations

Pain Points

- Overexposure to generic or overproduced “corporate” content
- Distrust of over-commercialized influencer partnerships
- Frustration with creators losing their comedic edge or authenticity
- Difficulty finding consistent, reliable content with a familiar cast and tone

Media Consumption & Shopping Behavior

- Preferred Platforms: YouTube, TikTok, Instagram Reels, Spotify, Discord

- Content Formats:
 - Sketch comedy and parody videos
 - Podcast clips and cast interviews
 - Reaction-based humor and bloopers
- Engagement Style:
 - Participates in comment threads and polls
 - Occasionally purchases limited-edition merch
 - Follows individual Smosh cast members on social platforms
 - Shares favorite videos and memes within friend groups or online communities

Why This Persona Engages with Smosh

Comedy-Loving Chris connects deeply with Smosh due to its long-standing authenticity, evolving comedic tone, and the sense of community that surrounds the cast. The return of co-founder Anthony Padilla further reestablished legacy appeal while sparking new interest. Chris finds Smosh to be a comfort brand, both nostalgic and experimental, delivering reliably funny content with a personal, approachable edge.

Digital Marketing Strategies 1 (New/Social Media)

Social and new media remain essential pillars of Smosh's growth strategy. This section introduces the brand's multifaceted approach to engaging audiences across platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, as well as introduces key activation efforts including the Brand Ambassador Program. These strategies aim to drive interaction, shareability, and user-generated content across channels.

Smosh's success as a legacy YouTube brand stems from its ability to evolve with the digital landscape, and our marketing strategy builds on that legacy by leveraging new media platforms to drive brand awareness, engagement, and fan loyalty across today's most influential social channels.

This section outlines how Smosh will use platform specific content, fan interaction, and community building tools to support the key goals identified in our broader digital strategy:

- Grow audience reach by expanding visibility across TikTok, Instagram Reels, and Shorts
- Increase engagement and watch time on core platforms like YouTube
- Build long-term loyalty through immersive fan experiences and ongoing community dialogue

Each tactic detailed in the following pages aligns with Smosh's overarching KPIs, including:

- A 15% increase in YouTube subscriptions and average watch time
- A 500K follower increase on TikTok with 8% engagement
- A 25% boost in traffic from social platforms to primary content hubs

- A measurable rise in community retention and direct interactions through Discord and Instagram Stories

Smosh's new media strategy will leverage platform-native content and strategic engagement tactics across major digital channels to increase brand awareness, foster brand engagement, and build lasting fan loyalty. Each platform serves a different role in the audience journey and ties back to Smosh's core value: authentic, community-driven comedy.

1. YouTube (Primary Platform)

- Marketing Message: "Smosh is where comedy lives, created by fans, for fans."
- Goal: Brand loyalty & deep engagement
- Strategy:
 - Weekly sketch uploads and podcast content
 - Cross-promotion between channels (Smosh, Smosh Pit, Smosh Games)
 - Community tab usage for polls, memes, behind-the-scenes photos
- Customer Interaction:
 - Pinned comments from cast members
 - Fan submissions featured in sketches (i.e., fan submitted "Try Not to Laugh" jokes)
- Conversion Goal:
 - Increase average watch time and subscriptions by 15%
 - Boost community tab engagement by 30%

2. TikTok

- Marketing Message: “Quick comedy clips made for you, meet the Smosh crew, one sketch at a time.”
- Goal: Brand awareness & audience acquisition
- Strategy:
 - Daily short form clips from sketches and bloopers
 - Trend driven videos featuring cast
 - Use of popular sounds and filters to increase discoverability
- Customer Interaction:
 - Duets, stitches, and comment callouts to create viral moments
- Conversion Goal:
 - Gain 500K new TikTok followers in 6 months
 - Reach 8% average engagement rate per post

3. Instagram Reels & Stories

- Marketing Message: “Behind the scenes with the funniest cast online (and Angela), follow the chaos.”
- Goal: Brand engagement & community connection
- Strategy:
 - Reels for character-based skits and cast moments (with a specific cast member in mind (Angela))
 - Stories with polls, Q&As, and countdowns for new episode drops
 - Cast takeovers to humanize the brand
- Customer Interaction:

- “Ask Me Anything” Story replies
- Story reposts of fan reactions and artwork
- Conversion Goal:
 - Increase link clicks to YouTube by 25%
 - Grow follower count by 20% quarter-over-quarter

4. Discord Community

- Marketing Message: “Not just fans. Family. Join the Smosh community.”
- Goal: Fan loyalty & retention
- Strategy:
 - Host live watch parties and cast Q&A sessions
 - Dedicated channels for memes, art, episode reactions
- Customer Interaction:
 - Role-based shoutouts (e.g., Superfans, Meme Kings)
 - Community contests with merch giveaways
- Conversion Goal:
 - Double Discord membership over 12 months
 - Boost fan retention with monthly activity benchmarks

5. Twitter/X

- Marketing Message: “The jokes don’t stop: Smosh humor, hot takes, and behind-the-scenes all day.”
- Goal: Real-time engagement and brand personality expression

- Strategy:
 - Live tweeting episode premieres
 - Meme replies, retweets, and trending topic hijacking
- Customer Interaction:
 - Cast replies to top fans
 - Weekly fan spotlight threads
- Conversion Goal:
 - Increase post interactions (likes, replies, RTs) by 40%
 - Funnel traffic to new YouTube uploads via teaser tweets

New Media & Social Media Overview

Smosh's new and social media strategy is designed to drive brand awareness, social engagement, and community-generated content by leveraging both targeted media placements and grassroots fan involvement. This dual approach ensures synergy between high-reach advertising and authentic interaction, supporting Smosh's KPIs: increasing brand awareness by 25%, boosting engagement by 30%, generating 150 pieces of user content, growing the email list by 20%, and collaborating with 50 micro-influencers within 18 months.

Platform Strategy Overview

1. YouTube, Instagram, and Email Display Ad Campaigns

While not fully covered in this section, a robust paid media campaign has been developed for YouTube (pre-roll), Instagram (Reels/Stories), and high-reach email newsletters. These efforts are designed to drive traffic, increase subscriber counts, and build anticipation around exclusive content and merchandise drops.

2. Smosh Brand Ambassador Program

The Smosh Brand Ambassador Program is a cornerstone of our new media strategy, transforming passionate fans into micro-influencers and community leaders.

Objectives

- Boost social media engagement by 30% in 18 months
- Generate 150 pieces of user-generated content (UGC) in 12 months
- Collaborate with 50 micro-influencers within the campaign timeline

Audience Targeting

- Primary Audience: Digital-native fans aged 18–34, located primarily in the U.S., who engage regularly with comedy, gaming, and meme-driven content
- Psychographics: Highly social, motivated by online recognition and community belonging
- Secondary Audience: Emerging content creators seeking exposure and alignment with a legacy digital brand

Program Features

- Virtual Launch Event with onboarding kits and branding guides
- Private Social Groups (e.g., Discord/Facebook) for ambassador collaboration and ideation
- Community Manager as liaison and moderator, enabling access to Smosh leadership during strategic Q&A sessions

- Bi-weekly metric reviews to optimize output and performance

Incentives

- Exclusive content access, early merch previews, and event invites
- Recognition through platform spotlights
- Collaboration opportunities with Smosh creators

3. Social Media Tactics (Owned Media)

Instagram & TikTok

- Content Style: Viral moment highlights, behind-the-scenes clips, and creator takeovers
- Engagement Tools: Polls, Q&As, hashtag challenges (#SmoshSquad, #SketchDrop), and interactive giveaways
- Conversion Goals: Drive new video traffic, follower count growth, and UGC submissions

YouTube Community Tab

- Weekly polls, sneak peeks, and fan art showcases
- Used to maintain top-of-funnel retention and push to merch and livestreams

Twitter/X

- Timely memes, cultural commentary, and live engagement during Smosh drops
- Conversion Goals: Fan Q&A prompts, trendjacking, and user-retweet strategies to maximize visibility

4. Integration Strategy

This social-first approach is fully integrated with our display and content campaign calendar.

Social media activations will support major YouTube releases, merch drops, and sponsored campaigns. For example:

- Brand ambassadors will receive early content to promote
- Hashtag challenges will mirror YouTube or merch themes
- Email newsletter incentives will be echoed on social platforms for omnichannel reinforcement

5. Conversion Goals

CONVERSION GOALS BY PLATFORM		
Platform	Conversion Goal	Tactics
Youtube	10% boost in returning viewers	Creator features, previews, collabs
Twitter	20% increase in engagement rate	Polls, trends, live tweet campaigns
TikTok	25% UGC challenge participation	Branded effects, ambassador duets
Instagram	15% growth in followers and Reel shares	UGC reposts, giveaways, ambassador-led posts

Digital Marketing Strategies 2 (Mobile Marketing & Experiential Technology)

As audiences increasingly consume content via mobile devices, Smosh's strategy must be equally mobile-centric. This section explores how Smosh integrates text messaging, location-based marketing, mobile optimization, and experiential storytelling into its digital framework to enhance audience experiences and deepen engagement.

To deepen engagement and reach Smosh's core digital-native audience, our mobile and experiential strategy focuses on leveraging always-on connectivity, interactivity, and playful immersion. From text messaging campaigns to AR filters, Smosh will meet fans where they already are, which is on their phones, scrolling, sharing, and laughing.

This strategy is designed to support core KPIs: boosting engagement by 30%, increasing brand awareness by 25%, and improving conversion rates for content and merchandise.

1. Text Messaging (SMS/MMS) Campaigns

Strategy:

We will launch an opt-in Smosh Mobile Club offering fans behind-the-scenes updates, meme alerts, early access to merch, and exclusive Q&A invites via SMS and MMS.

- SMS: Quick updates on video drops, merch releases, and major announcements.
- MMS: Send short exclusive clips, memes, or promo posters for upcoming sketches.

Conversion Goal:

McGowan, DMP

- Achieve 10,000 mobile opt-ins in 6 months.
- Drive a 20% click-through rate (CTR) from SMS to merch pages or new videos.

2. Location-Based Services (LBS)

Strategy:

Geo-targeted campaigns will trigger location-specific offers for fans attending live events, conventions, or screenings.

- Example: At VidCon or Comic-Con, fans near Smosh booths receive exclusive discount codes or early content access.
- Future potential: AR pop-ups tied to real-world landmarks ("Find the Smosh Easter Egg").

Conversion Goal:

- 15% engagement rate on geo-triggered offers.
- 5% of local participants convert to merch purchases or channel subscriptions.

3. Game-Based Marketing

Strategy:

Gamify engagement through interactive quizzes and Smosh-style mini-games embedded in Instagram Stories, the website, and mobile app.

- "Which Smosh Character Are You?" personality quiz.

- Limited-time scavenger hunts (e.g., "Find the Meme") tied to YouTube Shorts or social posts.

Conversion Goal:

- 100,000 total game plays in first 6 months.
- 10% email capture rate via quiz results page.

4. Augmented Reality (AR) Engagement Campaigns

Strategy:

We will expand beyond simple AR filters to launch fully integrated mobile-based AR activations as part of our broader display ad campaign strategy. This includes:

- A WebAR-driven campaign titled “Unlock the Sketch”, where users unlock Smosh skits in their physical environment through AR overlays.
- Scannable QR codes on merchandise and live event booths that trigger immersive 3D comedy sketches and character experiences.
- Location-based AR scavenger hunts that encourage sharing and engagement with rewards such as promo codes or exclusive behind-the-scenes clips.

These campaigns merge our mobile-first strategy with real time, interactive storytelling. This allows fans to become participants, not just viewers.

Conversion Goals:

- 500,000 total AR engagements across all platforms (Instagram, TikTok, WebAR)

McGowan, DMP

- 12% of participants click through to merch or video content following AR interaction
- 25% lift in campaign recall among Gen Z users (measured via social listening & post-campaign polling)

5. Mobile Application Optimization

While Smosh does not have a standalone mobile app, we will optimize mobile experiences across existing platforms:

Strategy:

- Responsive Website Design with seamless UX across devices.
- Faster loading speeds, mobile-first layout, and swipeable video carousels.
- Integrated push notifications for logged in users on mobile.

Conversion Goal:

- Reduce mobile bounce rate by 15%.
- Increase merch CTR from mobile homepage by 20%.

6. Experiential Storytelling via Mobile

Smosh will implement mobile-exclusive content drops and immersive story arcs told across platforms.

Strategy:

- Multi-platform sketches that begin on TikTok and conclude on YouTube.

- Choose-your-own-ending format polls via Stories (Instagram, YouTube Community).

Conversion Goal:

- Achieve 250,000 total engagements on mobile storytelling campaigns.
- Double retention rate for serialized content sequences.

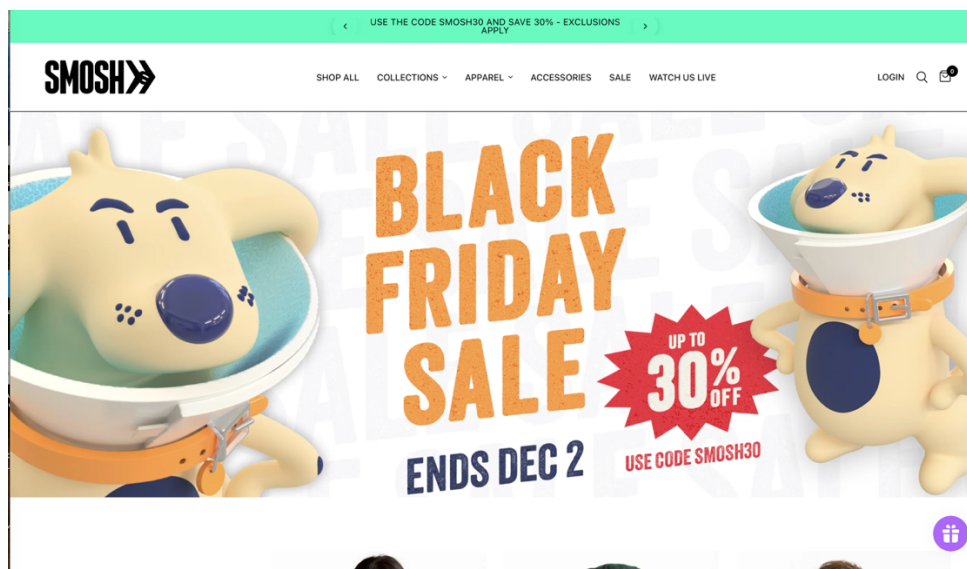
These mobile first activations also serve as high yield inputs for Smosh's ambassador and influencer content pipeline. AR filters and interactive storytelling create naturally shareable moments, encouraging fans to co-create and distribute branded content across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. This further reinforces the social and ambassador strategy outlined earlier. Smosh's mobile and experiential plan merges tech savvy execution with creative storytelling. Whether it's a geo-targeted offer at a live event, an AR experience, or an interactive game, each mobile experience reinforces fan loyalty and drives measurable action. This is where fandom becomes interaction, and where interaction becomes conversion.

Digital Marketing Strategies 3 (Website Optimization & User Experience)

Driving traffic to you is only part of the equation, converting that traffic into meaningful outcomes requires a strong digital user experience. This section analyzes Smosh's current website structure, identifies optimization opportunities, and discusses the funnel navigation tactics that streamline visitor actions toward defined goals.

An effective website is not only a content hub but also a conversion engine. Smosh's current homepage, while clean and functional, lacks key usability features that align with both modern UX standards and the brand's high-energy comedic voice. This section outlines a digital strategy to enhance user flow, strengthen brand personality, and increase mobile performance which is all essential to supporting Smosh's broader KPIs: subscriber growth, merchandise sales, engagement, and repeat visits.

Homepage/Landing Page



Key Strategic Areas

1. Homepage Navigation Overhaul

Current Issue:

The site's navigation bar is overly simplified and lacks clear access points to video content and merchandise. This hinders discoverability.

Proposed Strategy:

Implement a dropdown navigation system with clearly defined categories such as:

- Watch (Latest, Most Popular, Sketches, Series)
- Shop (New Merch, Bestsellers, Collections)
- Community (Join, Events, Ambassador Program)

Conversion Goal:

- Increase average session duration by 20%.
- Improve video content discovery rate by 30% (measured via click-throughs to episodes and sketches).

2. Call-to-Action (CTA) Consolidation

Current Issue:

The homepage contains too many competing CTAs, with no clear visual priority.

Proposed Strategy:

Adopt a hierarchy-first design. Use one dominant CTA, such as "Watch Latest Video,"

supported by secondary CTAs like “Shop New Merch” or “Join the Squad.” Feature rotating seasonal CTAs (e.g., Black Friday sales, livestream events) in a banner position.

Conversion Goal:

- Increase click-through rate on primary CTA by 35%.
- Boost merch traffic by 15% through seasonally promoted banners.

3. Hero Banner and Layout Enhancements

Proposed Strategy:

Introduce a hero banner that rotates featured or trending content (latest sketch, behind-the-scenes episode, or a collaboration). Organize content into clear, scrollable sections:

- Hero Banner (Top video or campaign)
- New Releases
- Fan Favorites
- Merch Teasers
- Social/UGC Showcase

Conversion Goal:

- Reduce homepage bounce rate by 25%.
- Drive 10% more users to secondary content (measured through page depth and scroll tracking).

4. Mobile Optimization Improvements

Current Issue:

Tight spacing, small text, and awkward button placement negatively impact the mobile experience.

Proposed Strategy:

Adopt a mobile-first redesign with:

- Touch-friendly buttons
- Responsive content carousels
- Larger, readable font styles
- Fast-loading video previews
- Sticky nav bar with condensed icons (Watch, Shop, Search, Menu)

Conversion Goal:

- Increase mobile click-through rate by 20%.
- Raise mobile engagement time by 15%.

5. Brand Personality Integration

Current Issue:

Despite being a comedy powerhouse, the homepage feels too neutral and misses the opportunity to reflect Smosh's signature voice.

Proposed Strategy:

Incorporate playful microcopy, dynamic animations (e.g., character interactions on hover), and hidden "Easter eggs" or interactive jokes. Examples:

McGowan, DMP

- Loading spinner with a Smosh meme reference
- “Error 404 – Anthony got lost in the Smoshiverse”
- Subtle hover sound effects pulled from Smosh sketches on Shop items

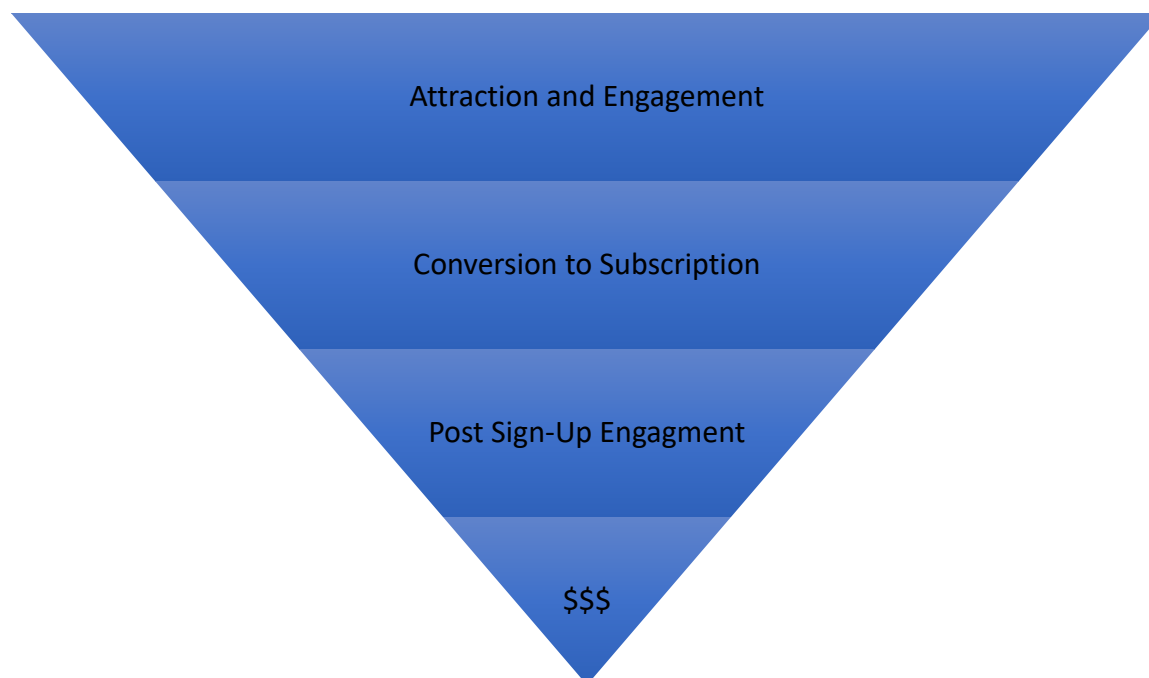
Conversion Goal:

- Improve user sentiment and satisfaction scores (via feedback surveys).
- Increase return visits by 10% within 90 days.

Revamping Smosh’s website goes beyond aesthetics, it’s a performance-driven move that centers around improved usability, brand authenticity, and optimized mobile functionality. These changes will not only support organic growth and conversion but also reinforce Smosh’s positioning as a modern, fan-first digital comedy brand.

Funnel Navigation

To convert casual visitors into engaged subscribers and active community members, Smosh’s site experience must follow a clear and compelling conversion funnel. The homepage redesign will be structured around this funnel, with optimized calls to action, strategic content placement, and tailored user experiences at each step.



Funnel Step 1: Attraction and Engagement

Goal: Capture attention and guide new visitors toward discovering Smosh content and the value of joining the community.

Key Elements:

- Hero banner with rotating content: "New Episode Drop," "Behind the Scenes," "Fan Favorites"
- Headlines such as:
 - *"Unlock Exclusive Smosh Content: Join Our Community Today!"*
 - *"Don't Miss Out on Smosh's Hottest Releases"*

Visuals & Experience:

- Vibrant imagery of Smosh cast with fans

- Short video montage featuring bloopers and BTS footage
- Sticky nav CTA: *“See What’s Inside”*

Conversion Goal:

Increase homepage click-through to “Subscribe” and “Watch” sections by 30%

Funnel Step 2: Conversion to Subscription

Goal: Encourage visitors to convert by highlighting exclusive content and perks of membership.

Landing Page Features:

- Offer summary:

“Join the Smosh family and enjoy exclusive member-only content, priority event access, and personalized merchandise offers.”
- Trust Statements:
 - *“Trusted by millions of fans worldwide.”*
 - *“Spam-free experience. We value your privacy.”*
- CTA Variants for A/B Testing:
 - *“Join Now!”*
 - *“Get Exclusive Smosh Perks – Subscribe!”*
 - *“Become a Smosh Insider Today!”*

Conversion Goal:

Achieve a 20% conversion rate on newsletter/merch subscribers from landing page traffic.

Funnel Step 3: Post-Signup Engagement

McGowan, DMP

Goal: Immediately welcome new subscribers and encourage active participation.

Confirmation Flow:

- Email verification with links to exclusive content
- Personalized merch recommendations
- CTA: “*Start Your Smosh Journey*”

Welcome Visuals:

- Limited-edition merch showcase
- Upcoming Q&A event invite for members
- Direct access to member-only videos

Conversion Goal:

Ensure 70%+ verification rate and 50% of new users engage with at least one exclusive content piece within the first 7 days.

Testing & Optimization Strategy

To refine the funnel, we will implement Multivariate Testing across all landing page elements:

- Headlines
- Offer summaries
- CTA phrasing
- Trust indicators
- Visual assets (images vs. video)

Metrics Tracked:

- Conversion rate
- Bounce rate
- Average engagement time
- CTA click-through rate (CTR)

This data will guide iterative improvements, ensuring the funnel delivers optimal performance throughout the campaign's life cycle.

Digital Marketing Strategies 4 (Search Engine Marketing (SEM): SEO + PPC Strategy)

Search is a vital source of discovery, and Smosh's SEO and PPC plans are crafted to maximize visibility and conversions. Following the brand-building initiatives outlined in the social media, ambassador, and mobile marketing strategies, this section focuses on performance-driven digital channels: search engine optimization and paid search campaigns. These efforts aim to capture high-intent users, drive traffic to owned platforms, and convert awareness into measurable outcomes such as email signups, merch sales, and increased video engagement. The combination of organic and paid traffic will act as the primary acquisition engine for the rest of the funnel.

Smosh's SEM strategy fuses long-term SEO optimization with a high-impact Pay-Per-Click (PPC) campaign to capture both organic and paid traffic across search engines and social platforms. As Smosh seeks to expand beyond its YouTube stronghold, this integrated approach will improve search visibility, drive new user acquisition, and grow e-commerce revenue through Smosh.com.

Organic Competitor Landscape



Keyword Strategy & SEO Optimization

Core Keyword Segments (from SEO & PPC analysis):

Keyword Type	Example Terms
Branded	“Smosh store,” “Smosh merch,” “Smosh videos”
Content-Driven	“funny YouTube videos,” “best comedy skits”
Transactional	“buy comedy merch,” “funny graphic tees”
Competitor-Based	“Rooster Teeth apparel,” “Good Mythical Morning merch”

Current Rankings:

McGowan, DMP

Branded terms perform well organically, but Smosh is vulnerable to competitors bidding on these terms (i.e., Comedy Central, TikTok). Meanwhile, Smosh underutilizes long-tail keywords with high purchase or discovery intent.

SEO Optimization Plan:

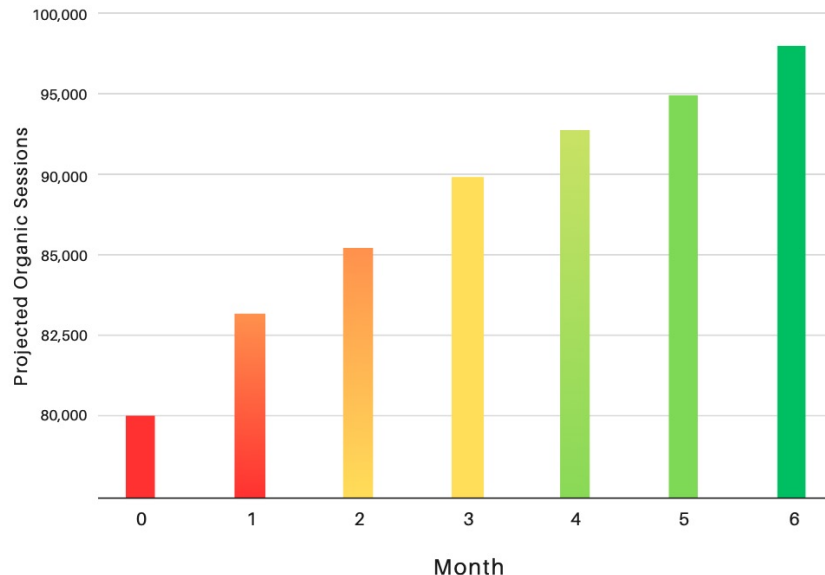
- Improve on-page SEO with keyword-rich H1s, alt text, and meta descriptions
- Launch weekly blog/editorial content targeting search terms like “sketch comedy videos” and “internet comedians”
- Link to SEO-optimized landing pages from YouTube video descriptions and social posts
- Secure backlinks from media and partner sites (e.g., Variety, Mashable, creators)

SEO Conversion Goals:

- Achieve page-one rankings for 5+ non-branded keywords within 6 months
- Increase organic search traffic by 25% over baseline
- Decrease bounce rate from SEO-driven visits by 20%

Projected Organic Traffic Growth (6 Months)

Goal: 25%
Growth = 100K
Sessions



PPC Strategy: Campaign Execution & ROI Modeling

Objective

Use targeted PPC campaigns to:

- Increase traffic to Smosh.com
- Boost monthly merch sales
- Reduce customer acquisition costs
- Expand beyond YouTube into new search-driven audiences

Ad Platforms & Formats

Platform	Format & Strategy
Google Search Ads	High-intent text ads on transactional and branded keywords

McGowan, DMP

Platform	Format & Strategy
Google Shopping Ads	Visual merch ads for specific product pages
YouTube Ads	Pre-roll/mid-roll skippable ads promoting exclusive merch & content
Facebook & Instagram	Carousel and retargeted video ads driving store traffic and sign-ups
TikTok Ads	Short-form video ads using humor + creator voice to engage Gen Z users

Sample PPC Messaging

- *Headline:* “Laugh Out Loud – Watch Hilarious Comedy Sketches!”
- *Copy:* “Trending sketches, viral comedy, and funny reaction videos. Subscribe and shop the Smosh store today!”
- *CTA:* “Watch Now” or “Shop Smosh”

Budget Allocation & Performance Modeling

Platform	Monthly Budget	Est. CPC	Est. Clicks	Conv. Rate	Projected Sales
Google Search Ads	\$5,000	\$1.50	3,333	3.0%	~100
YouTube Ads	\$4,000	\$0.80	5,000	2.5%	~125
Facebook/Instagram	\$3,000	\$0.75	4,000	3.5%	~140
TikTok Ads	\$3,000	\$0.60	5,000	2.0%	~100

Projected Monthly Revenue

- Avg. Order Value (AOV): \$40
- Total Est. Sales: 465
- Est. Revenue: \$18,600
- Est. ROI: 124% (\$3,600 return on \$15,000 spend)

Campaign Timeline & Optimization Plan

Timeframe	Actions
Week 1	Campaign setup, creative production, audience segmentation
Weeks 2–4	Launch ads, monitor early performance, start A/B testing
Month 2	Refine keywords, adjust bids, optimize landing pages
Month 3	Scale high-performing ads, deepen retargeting, expand creatives
End of Q	Full review: sales, CTR, CPA, ROI → Propose long-term roll-out

Paid Campaign Tracking Framework

Platform	Messaging Focus	Metrics Tracked	Conversion Goal
Google Ads	Search for “funny sketches”	CTR, CPC, conversion rate	3%+ conversion, CPC < \$1.50

Platform	Messaging Focus	Metrics Tracked	Conversion Goal
YouTube	Merch pre-roll ads	Watch time, CTR, sales	125+ purchases/mo from ads
Instagram/Facebook	“Get the Drop” merch ads	Engagement rate, purchases	3.5%+ conversion, \$12k monthly revenue
TikTok	Comedy moments → merch	Video CTR, link clicks	2%+ CTR, 10K link clicks/mo

SEM Conversion Goals Summary

SEO Goals

- Achieve page-one rankings for 5+ non-branded keywords within 6 months
- Increase organic search traffic by 25% over baseline
- Decrease bounce rate from SEO-driven visits by 20%

PPC Goals

- 465+ monthly conversions across platforms
- \$18,600/month in revenue from \$15,000 ad spend
- Maintain or exceed 124% ROI

With a performance-first mindset and creative assets tailored to each platform, Smosh's integrated SEO and PPC strategy ensures maximum impact across organic and paid search. This approach balances brand awareness, direct conversions, and long-term visibility, allowing Smosh to strengthen its presence not only as a content channel but as a scalable entertainment brand.

Digital Marketing Strategies 5 (Email Marketing & Customer Messaging)

Once audiences have engaged with the brand via social content, YouTube ads, or search queries, email marketing becomes the key mechanism for nurturing and retaining those users. This section outlines how Smosh will build and segment its mailing lists, develop targeted messages, and distribute content that strengthens fan loyalty and drives repeat interactions. These efforts support long-term business sustainability through both branded storytelling and direct conversion.

Smosh's email marketing strategy focuses on converting casual viewers into loyal, recurring fans by delivering personalized, value-driven messaging. Email remains a core tool for direct engagement, supported by additional customer messaging channels such as social media, RSS, and on-site notifications. This ecosystem is designed to deepen brand affinity, drive traffic, and support merchandise sales and content discovery.

Email List Growth Strategy

Our approach to collecting and growing email subscribers is tightly integrated with Smosh's website experience, social media campaigns, and mobile activations.

List Building Tactics

- Website CTAs placed on homepage and content pages (i.e., “Get Early Access to New Videos” or “Join the Smosh Squad”).
- Exit-intent popups offering 10% off first merch purchase for email signup.

- Instagram and TikTok Swipe-Ups and Story Links during sketch drops.
- SMS-to-Email Flow: Users who opt in to mobile texts are invited to complete their profile via email capture.
- Interactive Games & Quizzes (i.e., “Which Smosh Character Are You?”) with email-gated results requiring sign-up.

Email Conversion Goals Summary:

- Grow the email subscriber list by 25,000 within 12 months through lead generation and ambassador-driven campaigns
- Convert 15% of users who engage with campaign-related Instagram and YouTube posts into verified email subscribers within 12 months.
- Maintain an average open rate of 25% and CTR of 6% across all outbound campaigns
- Convert 2–3% of email recipients into buyers during merchandise launches or seasonal promotions

Customer Messaging Strategy

Smosh messaging is designed around three tiers of audience engagement: awareness, participation, and loyalty. We use segmented email campaigns alongside supporting messages via RSS feeds and social platforms.

1. Welcome Email Series

Message Type: Email

Message Summary:

McGowan, DMP

Introduce new subscribers to Smosh's world, highlighting key content, exclusive perks, and community values.

- Subject Line: "Welcome to the Smosh Squad, Here's What You Get!"
- Content: Links to top videos, member-only merch codes, and upcoming livestream invites

Goal:

Build brand awareness and prompt first engagement.

Conversion Goal:

- 70% open rate
- 50% click-through to videos or shop
- 20% convert to merch or content engagement

2. Weekly Content Digest

Message Type: Email / RSS Feed

Message Summary:

Keep subscribers updated on the latest sketches, trending fan reactions, and channel news.

- Subject Line: "Don't Miss This Week's Funniest Sketch!"
- Content: Video thumbnail + direct YouTube link, embedded meme of the week, and creator quote

Goal:

Drive brand engagement and consistent viewing behavior.

Conversion Goal:

- 10% increase in returning YouTube views
- 5% click-through to featured merch or event page
- 2,000+ weekly unique clicks

3. Merchandise Launch Alert

Message Type: Email / Social Media Announcement

Message Summary:

Announce exclusive merch drops or discount codes to segmented fan lists.

- Subject Line: “🔥 New Smosh Drop Just Landed, Get It First!”
- Content: Countdown timer, influencer-styled product photos, and early access link

Goal:

Drive purchase behavior and loyalty.

Conversion Goal:

- 5% of opens convert to purchase
- 15% increase in store traffic on launch days
- \$20,000 in merch revenue per drop

4. Event & Livestream Invites

McGowan, DMP

Message Type: Email / Social / SMS

Message Summary:

Invite fans to attend virtual events, Q&As, or premiere livestreams with the Smosh cast.

- Subject Line: “You’re Invited – Livestream with Smosh This Friday!”
- Content: Personalized invite + Add to Calendar link + direct livestream access

Goal:

Create deeper community engagement and real-time connection. Email audience segments can also be mirrored in social retargeting campaigns and used to personalize mobile experiences, such as geo-specific offers and SMS-based drops as well as ensuring that engagement data from one channel enriches performance across others.

Conversion Goal:

- 30% attendance rate from invited list
- 10% of attendees follow additional social platforms or subscribe to email

Cross-Channel Message Reinforcement

Each email campaign is paired with supporting messages on:

- YouTube Community Tab (polls, post reminders)
- Instagram Stories (swipe-ups for event or merch reminders)
- Twitter/X (reactive memes and campaign countdowns)
- Discord/Private Ambassador Channels (early notices and bonus incentives)

Smosh's email and messaging strategy is built on multi-platform storytelling, fan interactivity, and conversion-first segmentation. From the moment a user signs up, they are nurtured through exclusive perks, consistent touchpoints, and highly sharable content that turns them from viewers into brand advocates.

Digital Marketing Strategies 6 (Partner & Affiliate Marketing Strategy)

Smosh's community first strategy extends to collaborative relationships. This section outlines tactics to attract, retain, and optimize partnerships. Whether through content co-creation, affiliate tracking, or distribution alignment in order to boost reach and shared value.

Smosh's partner and affiliate marketing strategy focuses on attracting synergistic media relationships, leveraging social amplification, and activating creator-aligned affiliate networks to drive traffic, expand audience reach, and increase conversion across merch and content channels. This strategy builds on Smosh's strong legacy in digital entertainment, the high visibility of the "Anthony Padilla return" campaign, and Smosh's grassroots appeal within the online creator economy.

1. Partner Marketing Strategy

Smosh's media-facing PR efforts double as high value partnership plays, targeting industry-leading platforms like Variety, The Verge, Bloomberg, Mashable, and Polygon. These relationships are cultivated through:

Tactics to Attract & Retain Media Partners:

- Exclusive access to executive commentary and teaser assets (EPKs, stills, early cuts).
- Press Room Hub hosted on the Smosh website for easy journalist access.
- Segmented outreach based on publication focus (i.e., digital creators vs. pop culture).

- Personalized emails with angle-aligned pitches (business, cultural impact, creator evolution).

Messaging Strategy:

- Positioning: “Smosh is redefining what legacy looks like in the digital creator space.”
- Tone: Bold, confident, reflective of Smosh’s comedic voice but strategic in media framing.
- Message Goals:
 - Brand awareness in the digital creator space
 - Industry legitimacy
 - Strategic audience expansion

Conversion Goal:

- Secure at least 3 feature placements in top-tier digital publications within the launch window
- Increase website press room visits by 30% by Q4
- Generate 1M+ social impressions from shared media mentions

2. Affiliate Marketing Strategy

Smosh will initiate a creator-based affiliate network, focusing on micro- and mid-tier influencers in the comedy, gaming, and reaction video niches. These individuals already align with Smosh’s brand and audience, allowing for authentic recommendations and higher conversion potential.

McGowan, DMP

Tactics to Attract & Optimize Affiliate Relationships:

- Offer tiered affiliate commissions for merch sales (starting at 10%, scaling up based on volume).
- Provide custom referral codes and tracked links.
- Deliver affiliate-exclusive assets (memes, reaction GIFs, “first look” merch teasers).
- Highlight top-performing affiliates on Smosh social media as part of ongoing recognition.

Messaging Strategy:

- Outreach Example:
 “Want to earn by making people laugh? Join the Smosh Affiliate Team. Share your favorite sketches and drops with your audience and earn exclusive rewards while you do it.”
- Support Materials: Onboarding kits, Discord channel access, monthly analytics summaries.

Conversion Goal:

- Recruit 50 active affiliates in the first 6 months
- Achieve \$50,000 in merch sales driven by affiliate links in Year 1
- Generate 200+ pieces of affiliate-driven content (e.g., TikToks, tweets, review videos)

3. Strategic Integration with Social & PR Channels

Affiliate partners and media collaborators will be woven into broader campaigns, especially on social. For example:

McGowan, DMP

Channel	Messaging	Goal	Conversion Target
Instagram	“Affiliate Highlight of the Month”	Foster loyalty	3:1 ROI on shared affiliate posts
YouTube	“Smosh Reacts To Fan Reactions” collab series	UGC + creator integration	500K views per collab video
TikTok	Creator code drops with “Behind the Merch”	Social virality	10K link clicks per drop
Press Kits	“As featured on Rolling Stone & Polygon”	Social proof + SEO lift	Increase CTR by 15%

Conversion Goal Summary:

- Achieve at least 5,000 monthly site visits from affiliate referral traffic and generate 300+ purchases from affiliate links by Q4.

Smosh’s partner and affiliate marketing strategy is relationship-first but performance-driven. By cultivating long-term media connections and empowering fans and creators to become advocates, Smosh can significantly expand its cultural footprint and sales ecosystem, without relying on interruptive ad models.

Digital Marketing Strategies 7 (Public Relations Strategy)

Beyond paid and owned media, earned media plays a vital role in credibility and discovery. This section covers Smosh's PR goals, media targeting, link-building collaborations, and influencer outreach, all supported by a structured calendar and tactical messaging plan.

Smosh's public relations strategy is designed to extend the brand's reach beyond its owned platforms and foster a robust network of earned media opportunities. Central to this effort is leveraging the momentum created by the Brand Ambassador Program and user-generated content (UGC) initiatives. These campaigns not only energize Smosh's core community but also generate authentic content that can be amplified through co-branded media partnerships, influencer collaborations, and editorial outreach.

Potential PR partners include adjacent creator collectives, pop culture content hubs, entertainment focused newsletters, and streaming platforms that serve overlapping audiences. Opportunities for co-branded partnerships include cross promotions with fan merchandise companies, guest appearances on comedy or YouTube focused podcasts, list sharing agreements with complementary fan communities, and editorial features on legacy digital media outlets like Mashable, Polygon, or The Verge.

From a technical standpoint, these partnerships also support Smosh's SEO strategy by driving high-quality backlinks from authoritative websites. A single feature or shared campaign with a site like IGN or Collider not only exposes Smosh to millions of potential fans but also boosts page authority and keyword rankings for targeted landing pages.

Targeted outreach will focus on:

- Influencers and fan creators who have built audiences around sketch comedy, animation, or Gen Z humor.
- Media outlets covering digital-first entertainment (i.e., TubeFilter, Insider, Variety's digital desk).
- Podcasts and livestream shows where Smosh cast members can guest, deepening fan intimacy and discoverability.

Each PR initiative is tied to a specific brand message:

- Community-first creativity: Supporting brand loyalty and reinforcing Smosh's fan-driven legacy.
- New era of Smosh content: Elevating awareness around the restructured cast, experimental formats, and revived sketch momentum.
- Laugh-forward storytelling: Driving engagement by emphasizing humor as a unifying experience in an overstimulated content landscape.

A seasonal PR calendar will align campaigns with major content drops (i.e., new sketch series), product launches (i.e., exclusive merch capsules), or cultural tentpoles (i.e., VidCon). Where appropriate, Smosh will leverage PR wire services for national releases, particularly around strategic brand announcements or partnerships.

Conversion Goals:

- Secure 10+ high-quality backlinks from media features or guest content

McGowan, DMP

- Generate 25K+ referral traffic visits from earned media within the first 6 months
- Achieve 15% lift in branded search queries during active PR pushes

1. Communications & Media Relations Plan

Core Message

“Smosh is back - stronger, funnier, and ready to lead the next generation of digital comedy. With a legacy dating back to the dawn of YouTube and a refreshed voice for 2025, we’re not just entertaining audiences - we’re defining digital humor.”

Goals

- Position Smosh as a legacy-meets-modern digital brand
- Drive high-traffic coverage of Smosh campaigns, creators, and content
- Generate high-authority backlinks from trusted sources
- Reinforce launch of ambassador, affiliate, and product campaigns

2. Strategic Partnerships & Co-Branding

We will seek ancillary partnerships with companies and creators that align with Smosh’s voice and fan interests.

Potential Partners & Strategies:

Partner Type	Example	Co-Marketing Tactic	Conversion Goal
Merch Platforms	CrowdMade (existing vendor)	Co-branded merch drops with timed PR releases	\$25K+ in sales per drop
Streaming Communities	Rooster Teeth, Dropout.tv	Guest appearances, list sharing, cross-subscriber email	10% email list growth; site backlinks
Creator Economy Tools	Spring, Discord, Koji	Affiliate boosts, community contests	5% traffic increase from creator posts
Digital Creators	Try Guys, Kurtis Conner, Chad Chad	Sketch collabs + YouTube simulcasts	500K+ views per collab
Niche Media Blogs	Tubefilter, Laughing Squid	Guest articles: “Why We Returned,” BTS sketch deep dives	3+ backlinks per article

3. Value of External Backlinks

High-quality incoming links from relevant domains (e.g., *Variety.com*, *Mashable*, *The Verge*) boost Smosh’s domain authority, increasing the likelihood of ranking higher for competitive terms like “YouTube comedy shows” and “viral sketch videos.”

Backlink Strategy Integration:

- All press releases hosted on Smosh’s Press Room (SEO-optimized)

- Partnered co-posts and guest blogs include embedded anchor text linking to Smosh home, merch, and campaign landing pages
- Every press feature contains canonical links to content or EPK assets

Conversion Goal:

- Secure 15 high-quality referring domains in the first 6 months
- Earn 3+ placements in relevant media outlets (e.g., Tubefilter, Mashable, AdWeek) and secure at least 500 monthly visits from backlinks with a bounce rate below 35%

4. Media & Influencer Targeting

Smosh will pursue a tiered outreach strategy, targeting both major digital outlets and niche influencer voices:

Media Outlets & Contacts

Outlet	Contact	Messaging Angle	Goal
Variety	Todd Spangler	Industry evolution + legacy creator story	Feature story & quote
The Verge	Julia Alexander	Creator economy and digital independence	Digital trend spotlight
Bloomberg	Ashley Carman	Business model pivot and revenue diversification	B2B relevance & industry legitimacy

Outlet	Contact	Messaging Angle	Goal
Mashable	Social media reporter	Cultural nostalgia + Gen Z fandom	Coverage in entertainment roundup
Polygon	Pop culture section	Internet comedy's generational evolution	Thought-piece guest feature

Influencer & Blogger Targets

- YouTube Creators: Sarah Schauer, Drew Gooden – sketch and reaction synergy
- Bloggers: Tubefilter, YouTube Community Blog – creator-specific press
- Podcasters: *Creator Upload*, *The Colin & Samir Show* – creator-first narratives

Conversion Goals:

- Secure 5 major press placements in Q1
- Achieve 1 million+ impressions across influencer and media mentions
- Generate 50K+ direct traffic visits from featured posts or embedded videos

5. PR Timeline & Wire Distribution

Date	Activity	PR Wire Used	Goal
Week 1	Finalize press release and EPK for "Anthony Padilla Returns"	PR Newswire & PR Web	SEO optimization + 100K reach via syndication
Week 2	Personalized journalist outreach begins (Variety, Verge, Bloomberg)	No (direct pitch)	3 confirmed interviews or features

Date	Activity	PR Wire Used	Goal
Week 3	Launch social teaser campaign w/ #WeBoughtSmosh	N/A	500K organic impressions from teaser content
Week 4	Official press drop + influencer amplification	PR Newswire	1M+ reach and 5 high- authority backlinks
Weeks 5–6	Follow-up with feature pitches, guest posts, and list-sharing partners	N/A	3 guest blogs, 2 email swaps, 15% email growth

Smosh's public relations strategy is rooted in legacy storytelling, strategic partnerships, and search-forward amplification. By blending earned media with creator collabs and guest content distribution, Smosh will not only stay relevant but also secure new audiences, higher visibility, and stronger SEO authority in a highly competitive digital entertainment market.

Offline Marketing: Broadcast, Print, Live Event Strategy

While Smosh's core presence is online, targeted offline marketing will be used to complement digital campaigns and drive deeper audience connection. These efforts will emphasize community, nostalgia, and the evolving identity of Smosh as a legacy brand re-entering the spotlight with renewed voice.

1. Live Event Activations

Strategy: Smosh will host and appear at pop-culture conventions and creator-centric festivals (i.e., *VidCon*, *SXSW*, *Comic-Con*) to promote content, merch, and ambassador recruitment.

Messaging:

- “Join the Smosh Squad IRL - Meet Your Favorite Creators and Go Behind the Scenes.”
- “The Internet's Funniest Show - Live.”

Goals:

- Support Brand Loyalty and deepen parasocial fan relationships
- Convert event visitors into email subscribers, YouTube followers, and merch buyers

Digital Tie-In:

- On-site QR codes linked to exclusive digital giveaways
- Livestream panels promoted on YouTube and social
- “IRL to URL” recap content (TikToks, BTS reels)

McGowan, DMP

Conversion Goals:

- 2,000+ new email sign-ups per event
- 10% increase in social engagement during event window
- \$15,000+ in event-related merch sales

2. Print Advertisements (Targeted Zines, College Newspapers)

Strategy:

Place short-run print ads in entertainment-focused publications like *Entertainment Weekly*, select college newspapers, and digital-culture zines (i.e., *Adolescent Content*).

Messaging:

- “Laugh Out Loud. Smosh is Back.”
- “The Internet’s Comedy Kings - Still Reigning.”

Goals:

- Boost Brand Awareness among retro and Gen Z offline readers
- Drive direct traffic to featured sketch pages or campaign launches

Digital Tie-In:

- Include print-exclusive QR codes for free merch or hidden sketches
- Retarget visitors digitally after they scan using UTM tags

Conversion Goals:

McGowan, DMP

- 5,000 QR code scans
- 10% convert to site visit or social follow
- 1,000+ claimed digital offers

3. Street Posters / Campus Billboard Campaign

Strategy:

Deploy posters and small-format billboards in youth-centric environments like:

- University campuses
- Indie theater districts
- Pop culture events (i.e., LA's Meltdown, NYC's UCB Theater zone)

Messaging:

- "Watch. Laugh. Repeat."
- "Sketch Comedy Has a New Old King - Smosh."
- "Scan for Sketches →" (with QR codes)

Goals:

- Increase Top-of-Funnel Brand Awareness
- Engage users physically in key comedy culture environments

Digital Tie-In:

- QR code redirections to YouTube playlists, merch, or ambassador sign-up pages
- Posters tagged for geo-retargeting via mobile ads

McGowan, DMP

Conversion Goals:

- 20,000 impressions per city per week
- 2,000 QR scans per region
- 5% conversion to content or email list

Though not central to Smosh's strategy, offline tactics provide experiential reinforcement of the digital message. Each physical campaign is designed to drive users back into the online ecosystem, using QR-enabled touchpoints, geo-tracking, and coordinated event content. These methods serve as tangible, loyalty building extensions of Smosh's digital-first philosophy.

Digital Marketing Strategies 8 (Three Example Campaign Briefs)

To meet Smosh's core marketing objectives (brand awareness, engagement, and monetization) a combination of four integrated campaign strategies have been developed. Each approach leverages unique digital tactics tailored to platform behavior and fan culture. These include: a social-driven Brand Ambassador Program to harness UGC and peer influence; a YouTube focused Content Amplification Strategy to optimize discoverability and retention; an Influencer Activation Campaign to broaden reach across adjacent fandoms; and an emerging tech campaign using augmented reality to bring Smosh's chaotic sketches into the real world. Together, these campaigns form a scalable, data-driven foundation to evolve Smosh's marketing while staying authentic to its comedic DNA.

Campaign Matrix			
Side - By - Side			
Campaign Name:	Objective	Key Channel	Conversion Goals
LOL Before You Scroll	Boost Gen Z engagement via mobile-first short-form video.	TikTok + YouTube Shorts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3M video views 5% CTR to site or product 250K engagements
Scroll-Stopping Sketches	Drive merchandise sales & expand fan-generated content	Instagram (Reels & Shop) + Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% increase in merch sales 15% CTR from email 10K shares of sketches
Search. Laugh. Shop.	Drive merchandise sales and traffic via SEO and PPC.	Google Search (Paid + Organic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5+ non-branded page-one rankings 465+ monthly conversions 124% ROI or higher
UnlockThe Sketch	Expand reach through ambassador UGC and community activation.	Instagram, TikTok, Referral Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500 ambassador signups 20K referral-driven visits 5K new email subscribers

Campaign 1:

“LOL Before You Scroll” – Smosh’s Brand Ambassador UGC Campaign

Description: This campaign doubles as Smosh’s formal Brand Ambassador Program rollout, activating superfans to promote content, share branded experiences, and distribute UGC across platforms. By empowering followers to become micro-influencers, the campaign turns fans into an extension of the Smosh creative engine. We accomplish this with a high energy campaign featuring 6–15 second non-skippable YouTube pre-roll ads that showcase Smosh’s iconic sketch humor. The tone reflects Smosh’s irreverent voice and invites both new and loyal viewers to subscribe, watch, and explore exclusive content. It complements Smosh’s video release schedule and strengthens traffic to Smosh.com.

Business Program Supported:

- YouTube channel growth
- Smosh.com video and merchandise traffic

Marketing Objectives:

- Drive a 10% increase in YouTube subscribers
- Generate 100,000+ qualified visits to Smosh.com
- Promote exclusive video drops and cross-platform engagement

Marketing Strategies / Tactics:

- Launch non-skippable YouTube ads across Smosh and partner comedy channels
- Retarget viewers with display ads

McGowan, DMP

- Use humorous CTA overlays like “Click or Cry” or “It Gets Funnier”
- A/B test creative formats by lead talent

Conversion Goals:

- 15,000+ new subscribers
- 100,000+ Smosh.com visits
- 3% click-through rate from pre-roll to landing pages

Measurement Plan:

- YouTube Analytics (subscribers, engagement)
- Google Ads dashboard (CTR, CPC, video completion rate)
- Weekly performance checks

Success = 10% sub growth and 3% CTR

Campaign 2:

“Scroll-Stopping Sketches” – Instagram Reels + Stories Campaign

Description: A visually engaging mobile-first campaign using Instagram Reels and Stories to highlight viral sketch moments, short comedic loops, and user-submitted duets. Designed to increase engagement through humor and user interaction.

Business Program Supported:

- Social channel engagement and fan community building

McGowan, DMP

Marketing Objectives:

- Grow Instagram follower count by 15%
- Generate at least 250 pieces of user-generated content (UGC)
- Drive traffic to new video premieres and featured merch

Marketing Strategies / Tactics:

- Deploy Story ads and Reels targeting core Smosh demographic
- Run "Fan Reaction Challenge" and incentivize with giveaways
- Collaborate with micro-influencers to boost UGC

Conversion Goals:

- 45,000 new followers
- 10,000 swipe-ups
- 250+ tagged UGC posts (#SmoshChallenge)

Measurement Plan:

- Instagram Insights and Meta Business Suite
- Monitor hashtag usage, story engagement, and swipe-up CTR weekly

Success = 15% follower growth and strong UGC participation

Campaign 3:

“Search. Laugh. Shop.” – Google Display + Shopping Campaign

McGowan, DMP

Description: A performance-driven campaign across Google Search, Shopping, and Display to capture high-intent searchers looking for comedy content or merch. This campaign promotes Smosh products while defending branded keywords against competitor bidding.

Business Program Supported:

- E-commerce sales from Smosh merch store
- Newsletter list-building through promotions

Marketing Objectives:

- Increase merch revenue by 20%
- Capture 10,000 new email subscribers
- Maintain a 3X return on ad spend (ROAS)

Marketing Strategies / Tactics:

- Bid on branded and competitor terms
- Use Shopping Ads with limited-time promo visuals
- Retarget abandoned carts and bounced visitors with banner ads

Conversion Goals:

- \$60,000+ in merch revenue
- 10,000+ new email signups
- 3X ROAS maintained over 3 months

Measurement Plan:

McGowan, DMP

- Google Ads and Google Analytics for traffic and ROI
- Shopify and CRM dashboard for revenue and email tracking
- Weekly monitoring

Success = \$60K revenue + 3:1 ROAS

Campaign 4:

“Unlock the Sketch” – AR Engagement Campaign

Description: This is an augmented reality (AR)-based campaign that transforms physical Smosh products and digital touchpoints into immersive comedy portals. Fans scan QR codes found on merch tags, YouTube end screens, or Instagram Stories to open exclusive AR experiences (featuring alternate endings, bloopers, or deleted scenes) bringing Smosh’s signature chaos into fans’ real-world environments.

Business Program Supported:

- Merchandise promotion and exclusivity-based fan engagement
- Content diversification and loyalty-building among Gen Z audiences

Marketing Objectives:

- Increase merchandise interaction and time-on-site
- Boost returning user engagement across platforms
- Elevate brand perception as innovative and interactive

Marketing Strategies / Tactics:

McGowan, DMP

- Place scan-enabled QR codes on merch packaging, digital assets, and event materials
- Develop mobile-friendly AR filters or browser-based portals with Smosh branding
- Integrate campaign into ongoing YouTube series and major merch drops
- Incentivize sharing through user rewards (i.e., discount codes, exclusive clips)

Conversion Goals:

- 15% increase in engagement duration per merch-linked user
- 5,000+ QR code scans within the first 60 days
- 10% increase in repeat purchases tied to AR-linked products

Measurement Plan:

- Shopify and QR analytics for scan and purchase tracking
- Google Analytics and UTM links for traffic attribution
- Monthly campaign reviews to optimize content drop timing and placement

Success = 5,000+ scans, 15% session time lift, and 10% increase in repeat merch buyers

Digital Marketing Budget Page (Financial Projections and Budget Breakdown)

Sound budgeting is key to ROI. This section outlines a detailed campaign budget that includes both tangible costs and soft expenses, such as labor. It reflects realistic allocations for digital ad placements, platform tools, and strategic rollouts.

This budget outlines the projected costs and performance expectations for Smosh’s “LOL Before You Scroll” YouTube Pre-Roll Campaign which is a top-of-funnel digital marketing initiative designed to drive subscriber growth and brand awareness through short-form video ads.

With a total media spend of \$4,000 and an additional \$500 in production costs, the campaign aims to deliver over 1 million impressions, generate 8,000 paid clicks, and result in approximately 200+ new YouTube subscribers and 30 merchandise conversions. Although immediate return on ad spend (ROAS) based on merch revenue alone is low, the campaign prioritizes audience acquisition and long-term engagement value, reinforcing Smosh’s subscriber base and setting the stage for future monetization through retargeting and content-driven loyalty. The included data reflects realistic expectations for CTR, conversion rate, and cost per action based on industry benchmarks and Smosh’s prior campaign performance.

Budget Breakdown

Campaign Budget Summary: “LOL Before You Scroll” – YouTube Pre-Roll Blitz

Category	Value
Campaign Duration	30 Days

Category	Value
Ad Platform	YouTube (Google Ads Pre-roll and Mid-roll)
Ad Format	6–15 sec Non-skippable Pre-rolls (1080p)
Target Audience	Ages 18–34, U.S.-based, comedy content viewers
Conversion Type	YouTube Subscriptions & Smosh.com visits
Average Transaction Value	\$0 (content engagement), \$28 (for merch CTR)

Traffic & Budget Metrics

Metric	Projected Value
Total Impressions	1,000,000
Click-Through Rate (CTR)	0.80%
Paid Clicks (Visitors)	8,000
Conversion Rate (Subscribers)	2.5%
Estimated New Subscribers	200
Estimated Merch Visitors	1,000
Estimated Merch Conversions	30 (3.0%)

Budget Breakdown

McGowan, DMP

Item	Cost
Ad Spend (YouTube Ads)	\$4,000
Cost Per Click (Avg.)	\$0.50
Cost Per Conversion (Sub)	\$20.00
Cost Per Conversion (Merch)	\$133.33
Creative Production (1x video)	\$500
Total Campaign Cost	\$4,500

Revenue Projection

Source	Value
Avg. Order Value (Merch)	\$28.00
Est. Merch Orders	30
Estimated Revenue	\$840.00
ROI from Revenue Alone	-81.33% (Loss)
ROI from Subscriber Value	Positive (Long-term audience gain, not tracked as immediate \$)

Measurement Plan

- Tools: YouTube Analytics, Google Ads dashboard, Google Analytics (for referral traffic to Smosh.com)

McGowan, DMP

- Tracked KPIs:
 - Subscriber growth (target: 200+)
 - CTR (target: 0.8% or higher)
 - Merch click-throughs & purchases (via UTM-tagged links that will be used to isolate campaign impact from organic content)
- Review Cycle: Weekly optimization, 30-day final review
- Success Thresholds:
 - 2.5%+ subscription conversion
 - 1,000+ site visitors
 - Positive brand lift indicators via engagement rate

Additional Cost Considerations

While the media spend and production budget account for the most visible expenses in this campaign, there are several “soft” or indirect costs that also impact the total investment. One of the most significant is labor hours which includes internal staff time spent on creative development, copywriting, media buying, and performance analysis. For example, a digital strategist and marketing coordinator spending a combined 20 hours at an average blended rate of \$40/hour would contribute an additional \$800 in labor cost. Similarly, community management and engagement tracking during the campaign period (especially for comments, retargeting responses, or content scheduling) which may require another 10–15 hours of staff time, equating to \$400–\$600 more in internal resource value.

If an external agency or freelancer is used for video editing, campaign setup, or analytics reporting, those fees can range from \$500 to \$1,500 per campaign depending on scope. Even

“free” platforms like YouTube or Google Ads require time-intensive setup and monitoring to yield optimal ROI. Factoring in these labor-based and ancillary costs gives a more accurate picture of total campaign investment, raising the true cost of a \$4,500 ad campaign to potentially \$6,000–\$7,000 when resource hours are properly valued. This broader perspective helps stakeholders align expectations and plan resources accordingly.

While the direct ROI is modest or negative when measured purely in merch dollars, the value of this campaign lies in subscriber acquisition, video retention, and ongoing monetization potential. The campaign serves as a top-of-funnel blitz, designed to rekindle YouTube growth momentum, prime the audience for future drops, and retarget for lower-cost conversions later in the funnel.

Digital Marketing Evaluation (Evaluation, Control, and Improvement Analysis Metrics) “LOL Before You Scroll” Campaign

Evaluation and adaptability are vital for ongoing success. This section evaluates the performance and control plan for a marquee campaign, “LOL Before You Scroll,” offering insights into expected KPIs, tracking strategies, and improvement cycles.

Campaign Name:

LOL Before You Scroll – YouTube Pre-Roll Blitz

Campaign Description:

This is a bold, humor-forward YouTube pre-roll advertising campaign featuring 6–15 second non-skippable video ads designed to stop scrollers in their tracks and instantly introduce (or reintroduce) them to Smosh's iconic sketch style. The messaging leans into the brand's irreverent, meme-friendly voice and teases high value content drops with strong CTA's. The purpose is not only to entertain but to drive measurable actions such as subscribing, clicking through to Smosh.com, and engaging with Smosh's broader content ecosystem. It is a brand awareness and engagement campaign, focused on the top of the funnel.

Business Program(s) Supported:

- YouTube channel growth and watch-time expansion
- Smosh.com traffic acquisition
- Retargeting pool expansion for future merch and premium content pushes

McGowan, DMP

Marketing Objectives:

1. Increase Smosh YouTube subscribers by 15,000+ over the campaign window
2. Drive 100,000+ new sessions to Smosh.com from pre-roll click-throughs
3. Build a qualified audience pool for future retargeting and conversion campaigns




Specific Marketing Strategies / Tactics:

- Launch non-skippable YouTube pre-roll ads targeting comedy lovers aged 18–34 in the U.S.
- Run A/B tests comparing different video intros (talent-led vs. punchline-led) to determine the best-performing hook
- Use custom UTM links for precise tracking from YouTube ads to Smosh.com landing pages, UTM-tagged links will also be used to isolate campaign impact from organic content
- Integrate humorous, clickable overlays (“Click or Cry”) and retarget video viewers across Google Display Network
- Schedule drops to coincide with major sketch premieres or seasonal viewership spikes (i.e., Halloween, Back-to-School)

Conversion Goals:

- 15,000+ new YouTube subscribers
- 100,000+ Smosh.com sessions
- 30+ merchandise conversions from secondary callouts
- 3%+ click-through rate on pre-roll ads

Journey Map:

“LOL Before You Scroll” Mobile Fan Journey Map			
Stage	Touchpoint	Experience	Goal/Conversion
 Discovery	Instagram, Tiko, YouTube Shorts	User sees a short, funny Smosh video or AR meme filter in their feed	Stop scrolling and engage with the content
 Interaction	AR filter, Poll, SMS opt-in, Geo-triggered content	User uses a Smosh-branded AR effect or replies to a mobile poll	Click to “watch more” or sign up for alerts
 Immersion	Linked Story content, behind-time-scenes SMS scavenger hunts	User participates in a limited-time scavenger hunt or serial sketch series	Follow the story arc or enter mobile club
 Engagement	Website, Merch drop, YouTube Full Video	Redirected to full sketch or merch release via link	Watch full content, share, or click merch page

Measurement, Control, and Improvement Plan:

Success will be measured using a mix of Google Ads, YouTube Studio, and Google Analytics.

Key performance indicators include a minimum target CTR of 2.5%, CPV under \$0.03, 20% lift in retargeted conversions, and on-site behavior (bounce rate, time on site). Monitoring will be done weekly to identify underperforming ad sets, test new creatives, and reallocate spend based on early winners. Control mechanisms include setting CPC caps, frequency capping, and using retargeting only on engaged viewers. A successful campaign will show at least 3% CTR, 2.5% subscription conversion, and a view completion rate over 70%. Improvements will be iterated via creative refresh, targeting refinement, and placement optimization throughout the 30-day campaign window.

McGowan, DMP

Digital Marketing Legal Considerations – Summary of Special Considerations

As digital marketing grows in complexity, so do legal implications. This section identifies key legal risks, such as CAN-SPAM compliance, IP use, jurisdiction, and more. Along with proactive strategies to navigate them responsibly.

Digital marketing initiatives can expose a company to various legal risks. Below is an “issue spotting” analysis of potential legal issues in the company’s digital marketing strategies, each with a description of the issue, which marketing tactics are vulnerable to it, and recommendations to prevent or manage the risk. *Note:* Many of these issues are complex and consulting legal counsel is advised, but proactive precautions are also outlined here.

Jurisdiction and International Law Compliance

Issue: The company’s online marketing may reach audiences outside its home state or country. Laws differ by jurisdiction – what is legal marketing in one region may violate regulations in another. For example, privacy and consumer protection laws in the EU or Canada could apply if the company’s digital campaigns attract users there, even though the core audience is U.S.-based. This raises questions of which country’s or state’s laws govern certain online activities and where the company could face legal action.

Vulnerable Strategies: Any globally accessible web content or social media campaign can trigger jurisdiction issues. If the company collects personal data or sells products online

internationally, it may be subject to foreign laws (e.g. GDPR in Europe, CASL in Canada). Even within the U.S., marketing to consumers in multiple states can invoke different state laws.

Recommendations:

- **Define Target Markets & Adjust Campaigns:** Clearly identify the geographic target of campaigns. If actively marketing to foreign audiences, ensure compliance with those countries' key laws (for instance, GDPR if any EU user data is collected). It may be wise to geofence or tailor content for regions with strict rules.
- **Terms and Jurisdiction Clauses:** Include a clause in website Terms of Use specifying the governing law and forum for disputes (i.e. all disputes to be resolved under New York law in U.S. courts). While this may not block foreign enforcement, it establishes the company's home court preference.
- **Localized Legal Compliance:** Be aware of local advertising standards (i.e. required disclaimers, language translation, or prohibitions on certain ads). Adapt or restrict campaigns in locations where the product or marketing method is regulated. For example, some countries ban comparative ads or require specific consumer notices.
- **Consult Counsel for Key Markets:** For any significant international campaign, get legal guidance on country-specific requirements (privacy notices, age restrictions, contest rules, etc.) to avoid unknowingly violating laws abroad.

Data Privacy and Protection

Issue: Digital marketing relies on user data (emails, location data, cookies for behavior tracking, etc.), which triggers privacy laws and data protection concerns. Collecting or using personal data for analytics and retargeting must comply with regulations and respect user consent and privacy

expectations. Laws like the EU's GDPR and California's CCPA impose strict rules on data collection, disclosure, and user rights. Non-compliance can lead to fines or lawsuits, and data breaches could harm users and the company's reputation.

Vulnerable Strategies: Web analytics tracking (e.g. Google Analytics), personalized ads/retargeting based on user behavior, and email marketing all involve gathering personal identifiers. If the marketing plan uses cookies to track visitors or builds customer profiles from location and behavior data, those tactics are subject to privacy regulation. Email lists and any form of personal information (even just an email address tied to an individual) require careful handling.

Recommendations:

- **Privacy Policy & Transparency:** Draft and prominently display a comprehensive Privacy Policy explaining what user data you collect, how it's used, with whom it's shared, and how long it's stored. Transparency is key – users (and regulators) should clearly understand your data practices. Update this policy whenever new data-capturing features (like a newsletter sign-up or tracking pixel) are added.
- **Consent for Data Collection:** Implement consent mechanisms where required. For instance, use a cookie consent banner to get explicit opt-in from EU users before placing any non-essential cookies (like analytics or ad trackers). Even if not strictly required in all jurisdictions, obtaining user consent for tracking fosters trust. For email marketing, it's best practice to use confirmed opt-in (the user proactively signs up), even though U.S. law is opt-out based.

- **User Controls and Opt-Outs:** Provide easy ways for users to control their data. This includes an unsubscribe link in emails (discussed under CAN-SPAM), and a “Do Not Sell My Personal Info” link or privacy settings page if CCPA applies (for allowing California residents to opt out of certain data sharing). Honor any user requests to access or delete their data as required by law (GDPR and CCPA grant these rights).
- **Data Minimization and Security:** Collect only data that is truly needed for the marketing purpose. Unnecessary data not only increases legal risk but also violates the principle of data minimization. Ensure all personal data is stored securely (encrypted where appropriate) and implement security measures to prevent breaches. Also, establish a breach response plan – many laws require notifying users and authorities of certain data breaches.
- **Compliance Monitoring:** Keep up with evolving privacy laws. Regularly audit your data practices against current regulations, since laws are tightening and new ones (especially at the state level in the U.S.) continue to emerge. If the company scales up data collection or expands to new regions, consult privacy legal experts to review compliance (i.e. if planning to use sensitive data or new adtech tools).

Intellectual Property and User-Generated Content

Issue: Intellectual property (IP) issues can arise in digital marketing whenever content is created, shared, or repurposed. The marketing plan calls for significant use of user-generated content (UGC) – i.e. customers’ photos, testimonials, or contest submissions – which raises questions of copyright and permission. If the company uses a customer’s photo or a fan-made video in an ad, the user technically holds copyright to that content; using it without explicit permission can infringe their rights. Likewise, any identifiable person in content has publicity/privacy rights in

McGowan, DMP

their likeness that must be respected. UGC also carries risk of defamation or false statements – if a user’s content makes false claims or negative statements about others, the company could face legal trouble by amplifying it. Additionally, the company must ensure it isn’t inadvertently using another brand’s trademarks or copyrighted material in its marketing (for example, using a popular song in a video or a competitor’s logo in a graphic without permission).

Vulnerable Strategies: Campaigns involving UGC (such as photo contests, hashtag challenges, or reposting customer reviews) are directly vulnerable to IP issues. The ambassador/influencer program also deals with content created by third parties (the ambassadors), which the company might repost or share. Even in in-house content creation (website visuals, blog posts, videos), the team must be careful not to use images, music, or text that they don’t have rights to. Anywhere content appears – website, social media, emails – IP rights need review.

Recommendations:

- **Obtain Permission and Licenses:** Always secure rights before using UGC in marketing. This can be done by asking for explicit permission from the content creator (e.g. reply to a user’s Instagram post asking to DM for consent to repost), or by having clear terms and conditions for UGC submissions that grant the company a license to use the content. Never assume that content tagged with your brand or shared publicly is free to use – the safest route is written permission or a click-through agreement where the user grants usage rights. Similarly, ensure you have licenses for any stock images, fonts, or music used; avoid “google image” finds unless they are confirmed public domain or open-license.

- **Respect Copyright and Trademark Boundaries:** Train the marketing team on basic IP rules – for example, using short quotes or acknowledging sources if referencing third-party content, and avoiding use of others’ logos/taglines in a way that implies endorsement. If comparative advertising is part of strategy, consult legal counsel on fair use of competitor names or logos. Register and protect the company’s own trademarks (brand name, logo) and include TM/[®] as appropriate to signal your rights, discouraging others from misuse.
- **Right of Publicity and Privacy:** If user content or any campaign features a person’s face, name, or other likeness, make sure you have a model release or equivalent consent. This is crucial for ambassadors – include in their contract that the company can repost their photos/videos. For random UGC from customers, you might need them to sign a simple release if their identifiable image will appear in, say, a major ad campaign. Using someone’s likeness commercially without permission can violate their right of publicity. (laws for this vary by state, but as a rule, get consent).
- **Content Moderation & Legal Review:** Establish a moderation process for UGC before it’s reposted or featured. Screen submissions for any potentially infringing material (i.e. someone uploads a meme with a famous cartoon – likely copyrighted) or illegal content. Also watch for defamatory or false statements in UGC – i.e. a customer “testimonial” that disparages a competitor or makes unverified claims about your product curing an illness. Do due diligence to ensure UGC claims are accurate and not knowingly false, as the company could be held accountable for disseminating false advertising if it republishes those claims. If in doubt, don’t share the content or edit out problematic parts (with the creator’s permission).

- **UGC Terms and Takedowns:** If the company hosts UGC on its own website (like comments, reviews, or a community forum), have Terms of Use that clearly state users must only post their own original content and not violate others' IP. Include a DMCA takedown policy (Digital Millennium Copyright Act) on the site, so that if someone reports an infringing user post, you can promptly remove it to limit liability. Keeping records of permissions and releases for any UGC used in ads is also wise— documentation can defend you if someone later claims you used their content without consent.

Because audience data is shared across email, SMS, and social for retargeting, consent management tools and clear opt-in language will be implemented to ensure compliance with privacy regulations like GDPR and the CAN-SPAM Act.

Marketing to Minors (Children's Privacy and Advertising)

Issue: Marketing that involves minors (whether as customers, users of your digital platforms, or participants like ambassadors) comes with special legal considerations. **Children under 13** are protected by the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) in the U.S., which **requires parental consent** before collecting personal information from them online. If the company's digital tactics (like a mobile app, website sign-up, or contest entry) might collect a child's name, email, or even IP address, COPPA is triggered. Violating COPPA can lead to hefty fines and enforcement by the FTC. For teens (13–17), privacy laws are rapidly evolving: several states (California, Montana, etc.) now require opt-in consent from minors (generally 13–16) (or their parent) before personal data can be sold or used for targeted advertising. Additionally, advertising content must be age-appropriate – what's acceptable for adults might be deemed unfair or harmful if marketed to kids. If the ambassador program includes minors (e.g. teen

influencers), there are child labor and endorsement considerations as well. Overall, failing to take extra care in youth marketing can result in legal sanctions and public backlash.

Vulnerable Strategies: Any digital marketing channel where minors could be present or engaged. Examples: a social media campaign that appeals to trendy youth culture could attract under-18 followers; a user-generated contest might have participants under 18 submitting content; an ambassador program might recruit high school or college-age individuals (some of whom could be minors). Also, any data analytics or retargeting that inadvertently tracks minors is problematic (i.e., if your site isn't age-gated, Google Analytics might be collecting data on under-13 users unbeknownst to you). If the company's product or service is not *strictly* adult-oriented, one must assume some minors may see the marketing.

Recommendations:

- **Avoid or Limit Direct Marketing to Young Children:** As a general rule, do not knowingly target or collect data from children under 13. If the campaign is not meant for kids, say so – for instance, have a site notice or terms stating the service is not intended for under-13 users. If you do intend to involve children (i.e. a family-oriented campaign), you must implement verifiable parental consent mechanisms for any personal data collection. This could include requiring a parent to sign a consent form or using age verification gates that stop under-13 sign-ups without a parent's approval.
- **Parental Consent for Minors' Participation:** In scenarios like the ambassador program, if any ambassador is under 18, get a parent or guardian to co-sign their contract. The agreement should acknowledge the minor's role and include the parent's permission for using the minor's name/image in marketing. Similarly, if you run a contest that might

have minors participate, include a rule that entrants under 18 need parental consent to enter and to have their content featured. This protects against legal issues and demonstrates due diligence in respecting minors' rights.

- **Comply with Emerging Teen Privacy Laws:** Keep abreast of new requirements for teen data. For example, as of 2025, California's law (and some others) say that for ages ~13–16 you need opt-in consent *before* using their data for targeted ads or selling their info. As a precaution, treat teens almost like adults with an added layer of consent – provide a clear opt-in choice for any behavioral advertising, and honor opt-outs. It may be prudent to avoid targeted advertising to under-18s altogether, as some jurisdictions are moving to ban it outright. Adjust your ad audience settings on platforms to exclude minors if possible.
- **Age-Appropriate Content & Offers:** Ensure that all marketing content is suitable for the youngest in your audience. Steer clear of exaggerated claims that might mislead a less mature audience. If marketing a product with age restrictions (like a 18+ rated game or alcohol), absolutely do not direct those promotions at minors and use age gating on digital platforms. Adhere to industry self-regulatory codes (i.e., the Children's Advertising Review Unit guidelines) for additional best practices in advertising to minors.
- **Protect Minors' Data and Dignity:** If minors contribute UGC or are featured, handle their personal data with extreme care – do not expose things like a child's full name or location publicly. Also, moderate any forums or social media pages to quickly remove harassment or inappropriate interactions involving minors. The company has an ethical

duty (and under some laws, a legal one) to provide a safe online environment for underage users.

Free Speech Considerations and Content Moderation (First Amendment Issues)

Issue: The marketing plan's use of interactive and social platforms means the company will host or curate content – such as user comments, reviews, or social media posts. This raises the question of free speech and moderation. Some users might claim a “First Amendment” right to say anything on your platforms, but the First Amendment restricts government, not private companies. In fact, private online platforms have a First Amendment right to moderate content as they see fit, as an exercise of their own editorial judgment. legally, the company can remove or restrict user content that violates its rules (and it should, to protect the brand and other users). However, the company should do so carefully: inconsistent moderation could lead to disputes or bad PR, and there are limited scenarios (like if a company's page is deemed a public forum by government involvement) where constitutional questions arise. Additionally, from a marketing standpoint, any content the company itself publishes is considered commercial speech – it is protected under the First Amendment, but not as broadly as personal speech. False or misleading commercial statements have no First Amendment protection and can lead to regulatory action (e.g. FTC or state attorney general for false advertising). Thus, the company must balance allowing open user engagement with protecting its platform and ensuring its own messaging remains truthful.

Vulnerable Strategies: Any tactic involving user interaction or publication of user content: social media pages (where users can comment on posts), community forums or blog comment

sections on the company site, and UGC campaigns where users' words/photos are showcased. Also, real-time interactive marketing (like live Q&A sessions or webinars) where users may say or ask anything publicly. In addition, all advertising copy and promotional content created by the company is subject to truth-in-advertising laws. If the marketing strategy involves bold claims or comparative statements about competitors, those need legal vetting for accuracy.

Recommendations:

- **Set Clear Content Guidelines:** Publish “House Rules” or community guidelines for any platform where users can post. In the Terms of Use, include acceptable use policies (no hate speech, harassment, illegal content, IP infringement, etc.) and make it clear the company can remove content at its discretion. This manages user expectations – it’s easier to defend moderation decisions when users have agreed to those rules upfront.
- **Moderate Actively and Fairly:** Don’t shy away from moderating UGC – removing offensive or harmful posts is not only your right but often your responsibility to maintain a civil environment. Document your moderation actions (what was removed and why) in case they are challenged. Consistent enforcement of rules will help avoid claims of bias. Remember, content moderation by the company is protected expression in itself, so from a legal standpoint you have leeway to curate your brand’s online presence. Just avoid editing someone’s content in a misleading way – if something needs heavy editing, it’s safer to not publish it at all.
- **Handle Trolling or Controversy Wisely:** If a user is posting problematic content (spam, defamatory comments about the company, etc.), it’s usually best to remove it and possibly ban the user if they’re a repeat offender. However, for less clear-cut cases (like a

user criticizing your product), consider responding constructively rather than deleting, to avoid the Streisand effect of seeming to silence criticism. There's no legal requirement to leave negative comments visible, but from a PR view, transparency can build trust – just ensure any responses are factually correct and polite.

- **Truthful Marketing Content:** Internally, instill a rule that *all claims in marketing materials must be substantiated*. Do not exaggerate benefits beyond what you can prove. Avoid comparative claims like “#1 in the world” unless you have a legitimate source or study to back it. Misleading advertising can lead to FTC enforcement or consumer lawsuits, and it's not defended by free speech rights. Train ambassadors and social media managers on this as well – even casual statements on Twitter are public advertising. If using humor or satire in content, make sure it won't be reasonably interpreted as a factual claim about a competitor or your own product's capabilities. When in doubt, include disclaimers (i.e. “simulated screen image” or “individual results may vary”) for clarity.
- **Political or Sensitive Content:** If the marketing ever wades into political or social issues (intentionally or through user posts), be aware of potential First Amendment tangents. For example, endorsing a political stance could subject the post to campaign laws if it's close to an election. Or deleting a user's political comment might draw criticism. These are not straightforward legal violations, but in some cases, laws like state social media laws or even discrimination laws could be alleged. The best practice is to have a neutral, business-focused stance on official channels and a consistent moderation approach to all viewpoints (except where the content violates clear rules like hate speech or misinformation).

Email Marketing and CAN-SPAM Compliance

Issue: Email marketing is governed by the CAN-SPAM Act in the U.S., which sets requirements for commercial emails. If the company plans to send newsletters or promotional emails, it must follow these rules to avoid legal penalties. Key requirements include not using deceptive headers or subject lines, identifying the message as an advertisement, including a valid physical postal address, and providing an easy way for recipients to opt out of future emails. Failing to honor unsubscribe requests or sending emails to people who have not given any consent (especially in bulk) can lead to fines per email and damage to the company's reputation. While CAN-SPAM does not require prior opt-in in the U.S., purchased or scraped email lists are risky – spam complaints could still bring enforcement.

Vulnerable Strategies: The company's email outreach – i.e. monthly newsletters, promotional blasts, follow-up sequences from website sign-ups – all must be compliant. Also, automated emails (like a welcome series or cart abandonment emails) should be treated as marketing communications if they include promotional content. If the digital marketing plan involves cold emailing potential customers or a referral program, those too are subject to anti-spam rules. Essentially, any non-transactional email with a marketing purpose falls under CAN-SPAM.

Recommendations:

- **Include Required Email Content:** Ensure every marketing email contains the mandatory elements. This means the “From” and “Reply-To” fields should clearly identify your company or brand (no fake or misleading names). The subject line must reflect the content of the email and not be deceptive about the nature of the offer. The email body should make it clear it's an advertisement or offer (an explicit label isn't

required, but it should be obvious from context). Always add a physical mailing address of the company in the footer (PO Box or office address) – this is required by law. And most importantly, include a conspicuous unsubscribe link or instructions. Common practice is a one-click unsubscribe link that immediately removes the user from the list.

- **Honor Opt-Outs Promptly:** Develop a process to handle unsubscribe requests. CAN-SPAM gives you 10 business days to stop sending emails to someone after they opt out, but it's best to do it as soon as possible. Use email marketing software that automatically flags opted-out addresses to prevent accidental re-mailing. Also, do not complicate the opt-out – it should not require the recipient to log in or navigate through many pages. A simple one-click or a direct reply option is ideal. Never charge a fee or ask for personal information besides the email address to process an opt-out (that's prohibited).
- **Manage Your Email List Responsibly:** Only email people who have a reasonable expectation of hearing from you. Ideally, this means they voluntarily subscribed or gave you their email (i.e. by downloading a brochure or signing up on your site). If you're using emails collected from Google Analytics or other tools for retargeting, ensure those were collected with proper notice (and if from EU users, with consent). Don't harvest emails from websites or social media without permission – that can lead to high spam complaint rates. Maintain records of how each contact joined the list (date, method of signup) in case of a challenge. Regularly clean the list by removing invalid addresses and those who haven't engaged in a long time, to reduce the chance of being flagged as spam.
- **Monitor Email Content and Frequency:** Besides the legal requirements, following best practices will also keep you out of trouble. Use honest and straightforward language in your email copy – no misleading promises or clickbait that could be considered

deceptive. Sending emails too frequently or with shady content can trigger spam filters or complaints. Set a reasonable schedule (as outlined in the marketing plan, e.g. weekly or monthly) and stick to it. Also, include a line like, “You are receiving this email because you signed up at [Company]” in your footer to remind people that they opted in, which can reduce spam reports. If expanding to international email campaigns, remember other countries have different rules (i.e. Canada requires explicit consent under CASL, and the EU under GDPR), so adjust practices accordingly when targeting those audiences.

Influencer/Ambassador Program Compliance (FTC Endorsements)

Issue: The ambassador program implies working with customers or fans who promote the brand (a form of influencer marketing). This practice is regulated by the FTC’s Endorsement Guides. Whenever there is a “material connection” between an endorser (ambassador) and the brand – for example, being paid, receiving free products, or even being an employee or formal ambassador – that connection must be disclosed clearly in the endorsement content. In other words, an ambassador posting on social media about the company must make it obvious they have a relationship with the brand (using hashtags like #ad, #Sponsored, or clear language like “Partner”). Failure to disclose is considered deceptive advertising. Moreover, the company is expected to advise and monitor its ambassadors: the FTC can hold the company responsible if an influencer makes false claims about the product or doesn’t disclose their affiliation. There’s also potential liability if an ambassador violates intellectual property or publicity rights of others in their content – but the main legal focus here is on honest advertising and disclosure.

Vulnerable Strategies: The brand ambassador program itself is directly impacted. Any time an ambassador writes a post, review, or creates content endorsing the company, these rules kick in.

Similarly, if the marketing strategy involves incentivizing customers to refer friends or share content for a reward, those customers are acting as micro-influencers and should disclose the incentive. Even online reviews: if you ever plan to share user testimonials, ensure they are real and disclosed if the user was compensated. Essentially, all word-of-mouth marketing that the company orchestrates needs to be transparent about being marketing.

Recommendations:

- **Establish Ambassador Guidelines:** When onboarding ambassadors, provide written guidelines about compliance. Make it explicit that they must disclose their relationship whenever they post about the brand. Give examples of acceptable disclosure (i.e. a simple “Thanks @Company for the free gear! #BrandAmbassador” in a caption). Emphasize that the disclosure should be clear and conspicuous – not hidden behind a “Read more” fold or mixed with a dozen hashtags. A good rule: put “#ad” or an equivalent at the beginning of posts.
- **Monitor and Remind:** The company should follow its ambassadors on their platforms and monitor what they’re posting about the brand. If you see a post without a disclosure or with an exaggerated claim, reach out immediately and ask them to correct it or take it down. Keep records of these communications. The FTC expects companies to have a degree of oversight – a formal, periodic check-in can be part of the program (i.e. monthly reminders or a report ambassadors submit of their activities). Document that you provided training on the endorsement rules.
- **Truth-in-Endorsement:** Instruct ambassadors that they should only share their honest opinions and actual experience with the product. They shouldn’t make claims that the

company itself couldn't make (i.e. unproven health benefits). If an ambassador says, "This product changed my life in one day!" and that's not typical, the post could be deemed misleading unless it's clearly their personal opinion and not a general claim. It's best to give them talking points or facts they can mention and caution them against any dubious claims. Also, any specific results or testimonials they provide might need a disclaimer if used in company ads (i.e. "individual results may vary").

- **Contractual Protection:** Have each ambassador sign an agreement that covers these points. The contract should outline the dos and don'ts of their role: include clauses that they must follow all applicable advertising laws and the company's guidelines, that they give the company permission to reuse their content (avoiding IP issues), and maybe an indemnification clause if they go rogue (though enforcement of that is tough, it's a deterrent). If ambassadors are compensated in any form (free products, discounts, payment), specify that, and clarify they are not employees (to avoid employment law issues). For any under-18 ambassadors, get a parent's signature as noted earlier. By formalizing the program, you not only set expectations, you also show regulators you're serious about compliance.
- **Platform Specific Rules:** Be aware of and inform ambassadors of any additional platform-specific requirements. For example, YouTube has a built-in disclosure tool for paid sponsorships, Instagram requires use of the "Paid Partnership" tag for certain brand relationships in addition to hashtags. Complying with these helps ensure visibility of the ambassador relationship. Finally, continue to stay updated: the FTC updates its guidance periodically (most recently clarifying that tags like "#ambassador" might **not** be clear

enough by itself – better to say #BrandAmbassador or #Partner). When in doubt, more transparency is the best strategy.

Website Terms of Use and Digital Contracts (Browsewrap vs. Clickwrap vs. E-Sign)

Issue: The company’s digital marketing will drive people to its website or app, where legal agreements come into play. This includes Terms of Use for the website, privacy policy consents, and possibly online sales or service agreements. The way users agree to these terms matters greatly for enforceability. A “browsewrap” agreement – where terms are posted via a link (like in the footer) but the user is not required to take any action – is generally not enforceable if a dispute arises, because users can claim they never saw or agreed to it. In contrast, “clickwrap” (or click-through) agreements – where the user must click “I Agree” to the terms – are widely upheld as binding, since the user took an affirmative action to consent. There are hybrids like “sign-in wrap” (agreeing to terms by signing up), but the principle is the same: explicit consent is stronger. Additionally, when engaging in actual transactions online (purchases, registrations, electronic signatures on documents), laws like the E-SIGN Act and UETA govern electronic contracts. The good news is these laws give electronic contracts the same validity as paper as long as certain conditions are met, but only if you obtain and record that consent properly. Failing to do this could mean your online contracts (like a user agreeing to pay subscription fees or an ambassador e-signing an agreement) might not hold up in court.

Vulnerable Strategies: All parts of the digital experience where a contract or terms are involved. For example, when a user signs up for the company’s newsletter or creates an account on the website, that’s an opportunity (and necessity) to get agreement to Terms of Service and to

acknowledge the Privacy Policy. If the marketing plan includes e-commerce (selling products or services online), then each transaction is governed by Terms of Sale that should be agreed to. Any online promotions (like a contest entry form) should likewise have official rules that users accept. The ambassador program likely involves signing an agreement – doing that via an e-signature platform or via email consent must comply with e-signature legal requirements. Essentially, every digital touchpoint where an agreement is formed or user data is collected needs a legally sound consent mechanism.

Recommendations:

- **Use Clickwrap for User Agreements:** Whenever possible, implement a true clickwrap. For instance, at user registration or checkout, include a checkbox or “I Agree” button that the user must click, along with a clear notice like “By clicking Sign Up, you agree to our [Terms of Service] and [Privacy Policy].” Make sure the terms are hyperlinked and accessible in that prompt. Courts have repeatedly upheld clickwrap agreements because users actively consent, whereas browsewrap (just passively using the site implies agreement) is shaky and “usually unenforceable”. Do not rely on buried terms that a user might never see; it costs little in UX to add a checkbox and it could save the company from an unenforceable contract claim.
- **Conspicuous and User-Friendly Terms:** Even with clickwrap, the content of the Terms matters. Keep the Terms of Use and any consumer contract in plain language as much as possible – if it’s too convoluted, a court might decide it wasn’t understood by users. Present important points (like arbitration clauses, warranty disclaimers, or auto-renewal terms) clearly, possibly with emphasis (some sites use ALL CAPS for certain clauses to

mirror the emphasis often required in paper contracts). While the legal text might primarily be counsel's job, as a marketing team ensure that accessing these terms is easy from the site (footer links, etc.) and that the checkout or sign-up flow doesn't skip this step.

- **Implement E-Signature for Contracts:** For transactions or agreements beyond a simple terms of service, use a reputable e-signature platform (such as DocuSign, Adobe Sign, etc.) or at least a verified electronic consent method. Under the E-SIGN Act (a federal law) and corresponding state laws, electronic signatures and records are legally valid if the user's intent to sign is captured and record of the transaction is retained. So, for example, when enrolling an ambassador, you could email them a link to an e-sign form where they check a box or type their name and click "I agree." The system should then email a copy of the fully executed agreement to both parties and log the date/time of acceptance. This creates an audit trail. Even for things like an online purchase with terms of sale, a checkbox "I agree to pay and accept the terms" creates a record. Always store those records (database entry of the agreement timestamp, etc.) in case you need to prove the user agreed.
- **Digital Transaction Best Practices:** If the marketing strategy involves facilitating contracts or sales online (like signing people up for subscription services, etc.), follow best practices to make those transactions clear and legally binding. For instance, if it's a subscription with recurring billing, clearly disclose the terms of billing and obtain separate affirmative consent for that (California law, for example, requires clear consent to automatic renewal terms). Use email confirmations to users for any significant contract

or purchase they make, reiterating the terms they agreed to. This not only solidifies the contract but also is good customer service.

- **Regularly Update and Notify:** The Terms of Use and other online agreements should be kept up-to-date as the business and laws change. If you update terms, ideally notify users (i.e. via email or a notice on login) and have them agree again if the changes are significant, especially if the user base is still small or during a sensitive time. For major changes (like introducing a new arbitration clause), a fresh clickwrap consent is safest. Keep version archives of what terms were in effect on what dates, in case an issue arises about which version a user agreed to.

Conclusion: By identifying and addressing these legal issues proactively, the company can significantly reduce the risk of costly legal problems in its digital marketing efforts. It's crucial to integrate legal compliance into the marketing strategy – not as an afterthought but as part of campaign planning (i.e. obtaining proper consents, setting up terms and disclosures at launch). In summary, ensure transparency with users, obtain clear agreements, protect individuals' rights (privacy, IP, etc.), and stay within the bounds of advertising and data laws. These steps, combined with consultation from legal counsel for any gray areas, will help the company safely execute its digital marketing plan and focus on growth, knowing that its legal bases are covered.

Digital Marketing Plan – Resource List

To execute the strategies outlined in this plan, Smosh will rely on an integrated toolkit of platforms, software, and systems. This section details those resources, organized alphabetically for clarity and planning efficiency.

- Adobe Creative Cloud

For video editing, motion graphics, and design assets across YouTube and display ads (Premiere Pro, After Effects, Photoshop).

- Buffer or Later

Social media scheduling and automation for Instagram Reels, Twitter, and Facebook posts.

- Canva Pro

Rapid visual asset creation for branded ambassador materials, story posts, and email headers.

- Facebook Ads Manager

Platform for running and monitoring Facebook and Instagram ad placements, especially for display and retargeting.

- Figma

For UI mockups and creative collaboration on landing page updates and ambassador toolkit assets.

- Google Ads

Management of YouTube pre-roll campaigns, search ads, display network ads, and PPC performance tracking.

- Google Analytics 4 (GA4)
Website performance tracking, behavioral flow analysis, retargeting insights, and audience segmentation.
- Google Data Studio (Looker Studio)
For real-time dashboarding and visual performance reports shared with internal stakeholders.
- Google Tag Manager
Custom tracking setup, UTM parameter integration, and behavioral trigger configuration across Smosh.com.
- HubSpot or Mailchimp
Email marketing and CRM for ambassador communications, campaign automation, list segmentation, and CAN-SPAM compliant messaging.
- Meta Pixel (Facebook Pixel)
Tracks conversions from social ads and supports retargeting for Facebook and Instagram campaigns.
- Shopify or equivalent e-commerce platform
To manage merchandise sales, checkout funnels, and integration with email campaigns and retargeting audiences.
- Sprout Social or Hootsuite
Social listening and analytics tools for monitoring audience engagement, UGC trends, and sentiment.

- Trello or Asana

Project management platforms for coordinating campaign timelines, asset production, and cross-team collaboration.

- Wix or WordPress CMS

Content management for Smosh.com blog updates, UGC curation, and ambassador program integration.

- YouTube Studio

Performance metrics and video publishing management for Smosh's primary video channel.

References

Associated Press. (2024, March 6). *Conservative activist sues Meta over chatbot lies*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/eb587d274fdc18681c51108ade54b095>

Erhart, A. [@AdamErhart]. (n.d.). *YouTube marketing tutorials and strategy guides* [YouTube channel]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/c/AdamErhart>

Facebook. (n.d.). *About Meta Pixel*. Meta for Business. <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/742478679120153>

Federal Trade Commission. (n.d.). *CAN-SPAM Act: A compliance guide for business*. <https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/resources/can-spam-act-compliance-guide-business>

FindLaw. (n.d.). *Workplace privacy*. <https://www.findlaw.com/employment/employee-rights/workplace-privacy.html>

Google. (n.d.). *Get started with YouTube ads*. Google Ads Help. <https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/2375497>

Google. (n.d.). *Set up Google Analytics 4*. Google Analytics Help. <https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/9304153>

Google. (n.d.). *About enhanced conversions*. Google Ads Help. <https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/9888656>

HubSpot. (2024). *Email marketing benchmarks: Key industry stats for 2024*. <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/email-marketing-benchmarks>

Mailchimp. (n.d.). *Email marketing tips and benchmarks*. <https://mailchimp.com/email-marketing/>

Neil Patel. (n.d.). *Digital marketing strategy and content marketing resources* [YouTube channel]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/user/neilvkpatel>

Patel, N. (n.d.). *The beginner's guide to SEO*. Neil Patel Blog. <https://neilpatel.com/what-is-seo/>

Search Engine Journal. (2023, November 1). *YouTube ads benchmarks: CPC, CPV & CTR by industry*. <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/youtube-ads-benchmarks/>

Statista. (2023). *Global digital ad spend forecast 2023–2027*. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/237974/online-advertising-spending-worldwide/>

WordStream. (2024). *Average cost per click (CPC) in Google Ads by industry*. <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2016/02/29/cost-per-click>

YouTube Help. (n.d.). *Understand YouTube analytics reports*. <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/9314417>

OpenAI. (2025). *ChatGPT (July 8 version)*. <https://chat.openai.com/chat>