

THE MARKETING ACRONYM GUIDE

Plain-English definitions for the terms you'll hear from agencies, marketers, and dashboards — built for faster hiring conversations and cleaner leadership reviews.

GROWTH & PERFORMANCE

CAC	Customer Acquisition Cost — average cost to acquire one new customer.
LTV / CLV	Lifetime Value — estimated value of a customer over the full relationship.
ROAS	Return on Ad Spend — revenue generated compared with advertising spend.
ROI	Return on Investment — overall financial return generated by an investment.
CPL	Cost Per Lead — average marketing cost required to generate one lead.
CVR	Conversion Rate — percentage of people who complete the desired next step.
AOV	Average Order Value — average revenue generated per transaction or order.
MER	Marketing Efficiency Ratio — revenue compared with total marketing spend.
MRR	Monthly Recurring Revenue — predictable revenue expected each month.
QoQ	Quarter over Quarter — performance compared with the previous quarter.

DIGITAL MARKETING

SEO	Search Engine Optimization — improving visibility in traditional search engines.
AEO	Answer Engine Optimization — content built for AI-driven answer surfaces.
GEO	Generative Engine Optimization — how AI-powered search understands your brand.
SEM / PPC	Paid search advertising, typically charged when someone clicks.
CTR	Click-Through Rate — percentage of people who saw something and clicked.
CRO	Conversion Rate Optimization — improving pages, forms, and paths so more people act.
SERP	Search Engine Results Page — where organic, paid, local, and AI results appear.
CPA	Cost Per Acquisition — average cost to generate one completed customer action.
CPM	Cost Per Thousand Impressions — media cost for every thousand views.
LSA	Local Services Ads — Google lead ads often used by service businesses.

CUSTOMERS, DATA & TECHNOLOGY

CRM	Customer Relationship Management — software for leads, customers, and sales activity.
CMS	Content Management System — platform used to manage a website.
CDP	Customer Data Platform — technology that unifies customer data from many sources.
GA4	Google Analytics 4 — Google's website and digital analytics platform.
GBP	Google Business Profile — business listing across Google Search and Maps.
POS	Point of Sale — transaction system, often the source of customer data.
UTM	Tracking tags added to links so campaigns can be measured more clearly.
API	Application Programming Interface — connection that lets systems share data.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator — metric used to judge progress against goals.
MTA	Multi-Touch Attribution — assigning credit across several customer interactions.

B2B & SALES

MQL	Marketing Qualified Lead — a lead marketing believes is likely to convert.
SQL	Sales Qualified Lead — a lead sales has vetted and is actively pursuing.
ABM	Account-Based Marketing — B2B approach focused on high-value target accounts.
ICP	Ideal Customer Profile — the customer type most valuable to your business.
GTM	Go-to-Market — plan for launching and selling a product or service.
SLA	Service Level Agreement — shared expectations between marketing and sales teams.
RFP	Request for Proposal — formal process used to compare vendors or agencies.
ARR	Annual Recurring Revenue — predictable yearly revenue from subscription customers.
ACV	Annual Contract Value — average yearly revenue from one customer contract.
SDR	Sales Development Representative — role focused on prospecting and qualifying leads.