

The decision framework

A one-page planning handout for teams deciding whether a channel, spend change, or new tactic is adding to the business.

1. Confirm proportionate signal	A modest 10–20% change should be capable of producing a decision-useful read. Do not force a test that requires the business to double itself just to create signal.
2. State the allocation decision	Move past “does the channel work?” Define the spend or presence decision, the expected return, and where marginal return may fade.
3. Choose the outcome	Use the closest stable outcome with enough volume. Revenue may work; orders or a validated proxy may be safer when order value is unusually distorted.
4. Validate the counterfactual	Choose treatment and comparison cells that predict each other out of sample. States, DMAs, and synthetic controls are design options—not automatic answers.
5. Set the safety rules	Define invalid-execution stops, business-survival limits, and the owner’s acceptable tradeoff between speed and certainty before launch.
6. Read the result as a decision	Review the estimate and range, credible alternative comparisons, orders and revenue, media cost, and the action rule together.
7. Act, then learn again	Deploy, hold, reduce, or run the next test. Carry a credible test finding into the wider MMM discussion as an anchor, not as a universal rule.

Before you launch

Decision	If the result is positive, what will we actually do?
Outcome	Why does this measure predict business success, and is there enough volume?
Comparison	Can the untreated path be predicted in an untouched period of history?
Safety	What invalidates the study, and what business loss is unacceptable?

A test is not a dashboard score. It is a pre-agreed way to make the next budget decision with more evidence and visible limits.
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