



FOR MARKETING AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

US

Marketing Benchmarks 2026

Channel performance benchmarks, cost metrics and conversion data for US small and medium businesses — in US dollars, including connected TV.

June 2026

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Introduction

This report compiles marketing performance benchmarks relevant to US small and medium businesses with annual revenues between \$250,000 and \$10 million. Data is drawn from CM Beyer client engagements, publicly available platform research, and aggregated US digital advertising market data.

The benchmarks are reference points, not targets. Individual performance depends on sector, geography, competitive intensity, creative quality and dozens of other variables. Use these figures to gauge whether your current performance is broadly in line with the market — and to spot channels where you are significantly over- or under-performing.

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Digital Advertising Benchmarks

Search (Google Ads)

Metric	US SME Average	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Click-through rate (CTR)	4.3%	6.9%+	Below 2.5%
Cost per click (CPC)	\$2.45	\$1.20–\$1.70	\$3.60+
Conversion rate	4.9%	8.3%+	Below 2.1%
Cost per conversion	\$44	\$17–\$26	\$74+
Quality Score (avg)	5.9 / 10	7+	Below 4

Meta (Facebook & Instagram)

Metric	US SME Average	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
CPM (per 1,000 impressions)	\$12.80	\$7.50–\$9.80	\$18+
CTR (link clicks)	1.4%	2.2%+	Below 0.7%
Cost per lead	\$21	\$9–\$14	\$36+
ROAS (e-commerce)	2.9x	4.6x+	Below 1.5x
Creative fatigue onset	9–13 days	17+ days	Under 7 days

LinkedIn (B2B)

Metric	US SME Average	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
CPC (sponsored content)	\$5.60	\$3.00–\$4.10	\$8.40+
CTR	0.8%	1.3%+	Below 0.4%
Cost per lead	\$68	\$32–\$46	\$104+
InMail response rate	12%	22%+	Below 6%

03 Connected TV & Podcast

Connected TV is the largest and most developed digital-video market in the world; podcast advertising adds host-read trust that display cannot match.

Metric	US Average	Top Quartile	Notes
CTV completion rate	94%	97%+	Roku / Hulu / YouTube TV
CTV CPM	\$30–\$55	\$25–\$38	Below linear TV
Podcast CPM (host-read)	\$18–\$45	\$15–\$28	By show & category
Video view-through rate	26%	42%+	Sub-30s creative

04 SEO & Organic Search

Metric	US Average	Top Quartile	Notes
Organic traffic growth (12 mo)	+18%	+45%+	With active content
Domain authority (Moz)	22	35+	New sites start 1–10
Avg. position (target kw)	18.4	Top 10	50+ tracked keywords
Organic conversion rate	2.8%	5.1%+	Lead-gen sites

Metric	US Average	Top Quartile	Notes
Time to rank (new content)	4–8 months	2–4 months	Competitive terms

05 Email Marketing

Metric	US SME Average	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Open rate	28%	39%+	Below 18%
Click-through rate	3.2%	5.5%+	Below 1.5%
Unsubscribe rate	0.4%	Below 0.2%	0.8%+
List growth (monthly)	+2.1%	+4.5%+	Declining
Revenue per email (e-com)	\$0.13	\$0.36+	Below \$0.05

06 Budget Allocation

US small businesses allocate, on average, 7–10% of revenue to marketing (higher than many markets). Allocation varies by stage: early-stage businesses investing in acquisition often spend 12–18%, while established businesses in maintenance mode may spend 4–6%. The most common error among US SMBs is spreading spend too thinly across too many channels and platforms.

Typical budget allocation by business type

Channel	B2B Services	B2C / E-commerce	Local Services
Paid search (Google)	25%	28%	35%
Paid social (Meta / LinkedIn)	18%	32%	15%
Connected TV (CTV)	17%	12%	10%
SEO / content	22%	15%	18%
Email marketing	8%	8%	7%
Brand / creative	10%	5%	15%

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How to Use These Benchmarks

Compare your current performance against the “US SME Average” column first. If you are significantly below average on a channel you actively invest in, there is usually a structural problem — targeting, creative, technical issues or messaging. If you are at or above average, focus on reaching the top quartile through iterative testing.

Do not abandon a channel after a short trial. Most digital channels need 60–90 days of consistent investment to produce statistically reliable data. Decisions made on less than 30 days, or on budgets too small to generate meaningful sample sizes, are essentially guesses.

For a review of your marketing against these benchmarks, contact CMB Insight.

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