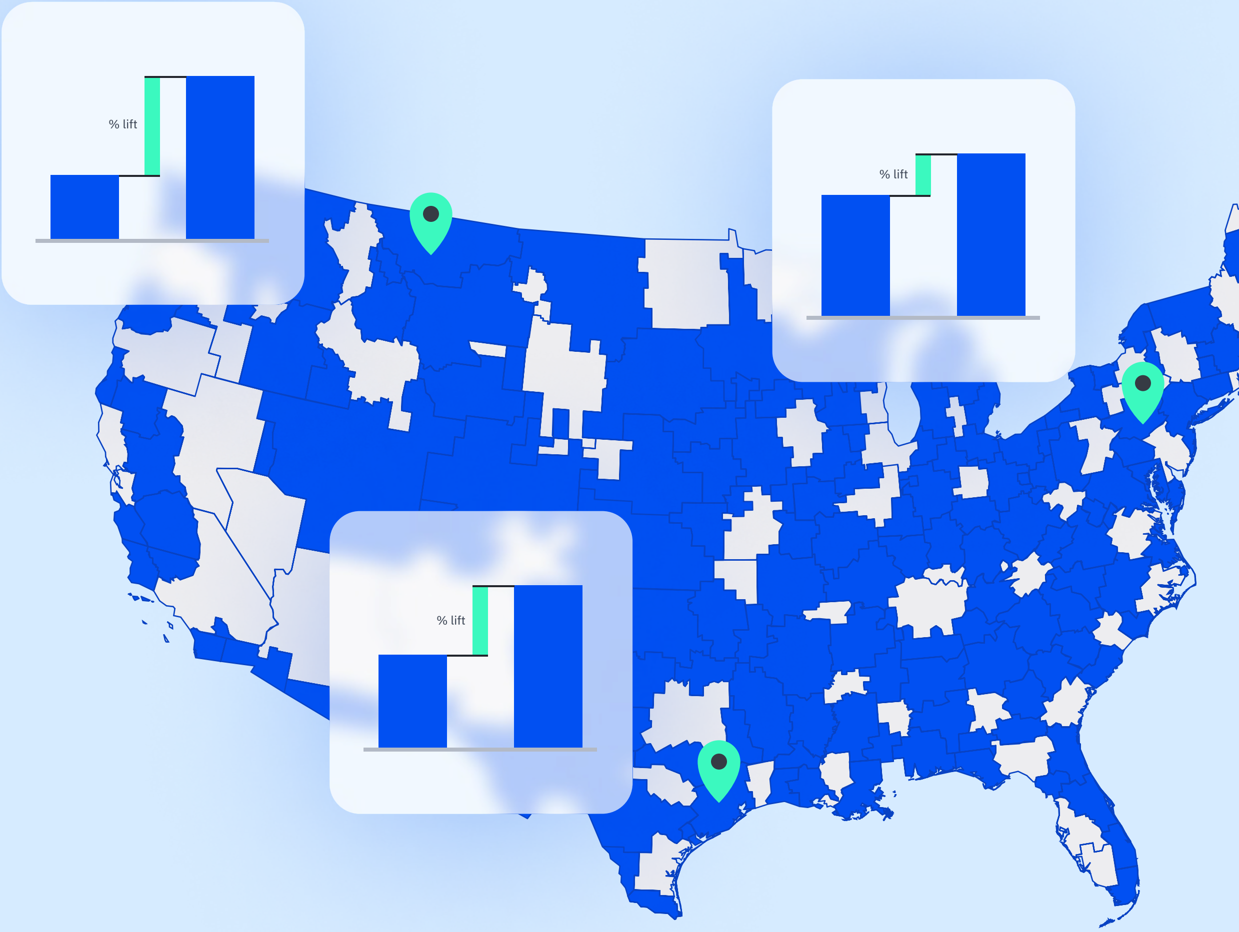

Unlocking Incrementality: A Guide for Marketing Success

A comprehensive guide to mastering marketing experiments and maximizing brand performance.

Haus

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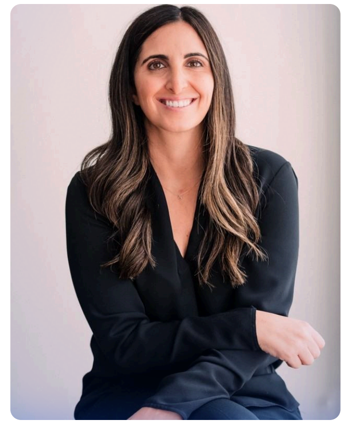
This is Incrementality 101



Olivia Kory
Haus, Head of Strategy

Today's marketers face unprecedented complexity. The modern customer journey isn't straightforward – it's a dizzying maze of channels and touchpoints that continually evolves. Add in the wave of privacy initiatives reshaping digital marketing and platform-specific disruptions (TikTok ban, anyone?) and you're looking at a marketing landscape defined by uncertainty and constant change.

Unfortunately, chaos doesn't fly when you're dealing with millions in ad spend. That's why more and more brands are ditching outdated attribution models and making incrementality the foundation of their measurement stack. Why? Because incrementality is privacy-durable and gets at causation instead of correlation.

But we get it: Incrementality still might feel like one of those trendy buzzwords thrown around by marketing podcasters and LinkedIn influencers. Maybe you recognize the word and have a rough definition in mind, but if someone really quizzed you on the ins and outs of incrementality, you might not pass with flying colors.

That's why some of the smartest folks at Haus have put together these easily digestible resources, which will demystify incrementality. They'll cover the basics of incrementality, offer examples of incrementality tests, explain how real-world brands measure incrementality, and outline who exactly needs incrementality testing.

Then we'll dive a little deeper into the science (don't worry, no PhD required). And to top it all off, our guy Reggie will give some actionable tips for building a culture of incrementality experimentation. After all, what are useful insights for if you're not going to put them to use?

These lessons aren't meant to be 201s or 301s — this is incrementality 101 for you, the marketer or financial stakeholder who's heard the word and needs a primer that's deeper than surface level, but not scientist-dense. Snack-sized, if you will. (And nope, no pop quiz at the end.)

So enough preamble — let's lay out everything you need to know to master incrementality.

— **Olivia Kory**, Haus, Head of Strategy

What is Incrementality?

Emily K. Schwartz
Haus, Content and Brand Lead

Incrementality.

What's the first thing you think of?

It might be testing, it might be something related to attribution or marketing measurement, it might be something associated with experimentation or statistics or advertising spend but you're not quite sure how to connect the dots. Or maybe you've heard the word thrown around, feel like it's something you should be familiar with, but aren't really sure what it means or how to use incrementality experiments in practice. If so, you certainly wouldn't be alone.

That's why we're here: to not only help explain this concept, but to walk you through how to use incrementality experiments in marketing and business decision-making. We have a strong viewpoint on this stuff – so let's dive in.

Three incrementality experts, one shared understanding

Let's start with the basics: Haus' Head of Strategy Olivia Kory likens incrementality to randomized control trials in healthcare:

> *"When you're rolling out a new drug, you're going to give one group of people a placebo drug (the control group) and you're gonna give another group of — statistically indistinguishable from the control group — the drug (the treatment group).*
>
> *Then, you observe the difference in behavior between those two groups to validate the efficacy of that drug — that's incrementality testing.*
>
> *With Haus, we have a counterfactual to understand what would have happened anyway in the absence of this marketing intervention, whether it's search, or video, or YouTube, or OOH. What was that group going to do anyway? And that's fundamentally what we mean when we talk about incrementality testing."*

Haus Principal Economist Phil Erickson takes us one step further, transitioning us from the concept of incrementality to how we might use in incrementality testing in a practical sense:

> *“Incrementality measures how a change in strategy causes a change in business outcomes. For example, how would my revenue increase if I increased my ad budget by 10%? Or how many more units would I sell on Amazon if I moved 50% of my ad spend from YouTube to Google PMax?”*

Lastly, chew on this — from our no-nonsense Head of Science Joe Wyer:

> *“Attribution and incrementality are two frameworks for understanding marketing impacts. Attribution frames impact as ‘crediting’ each customer event to some strategy or tactic. Incrementality frames impact as the change in customer events caused by a change in the application of strategy or tactic.*
>
> *The thing about “incrementality” is that it's just the non-scientist-friendly way of saying ‘causality.’”*

Causality. Incrementality = causality.

Here’s an open secret: Whereas traditional marketing measurement solutions are rooted in correlational or observational data (yes, even traditional MMMs), incrementality is rooted in causation. Actual causation — that enables you to know exactly what’s working instead of what may-or-may-not be working.

> “Using Haus’ experimentation platform has created immediate business value and given us the credible feedback we need to challenge assumptions and change course with confidence — and we're just getting started.”

Noa Gutterman
Tally, Senior Director, Acquisition

MISTPLAY®

Next up? Let’s learn more about what kinds of things you can measure with incrementality testing — and the potential real-world business consequences of punting on experimentation.

What Can You Incrementality Test?

Emily K. Schwartz
Haus, Content and Brand Lead

“In any brand at any moment, there’s money being wasted,” says Maddie Dault, Haus’ Customer Marketing Lead and former Director of Growth Marketing at vitamin brand Ritual. “Incrementality is about finding that money and preventing the waste, but then also reallocating it to things that are actually working.”

> “Incrementality is about finding that [wasted] money and ... reallocating it to things that are actually working.”
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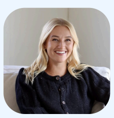
> 
>
> **Maddie Dault**
> Haus, Customer Marketing Lead

Things that are actually working. That’s the key. So in this section, we’ll run through concrete examples of what you can test with incrementality experiments — so that you can identify the things that are actually working. Let’s give it a shot.

So, what can you test with incrementality experiments?

“Most of the major media buying and media planning questions that you’ve been circling for a while can be answered with incrementality tests,” says Maddie. “For example, you can test the ideal amount of spend to pour into a channel or tactic, and find the point of diminishing returns.”

Depending on your business, you might start off big-picture. For example: What is the incrementality of Google brand search? Understanding whether it’s worth putting spend behind branded search terms is a common conundrum — and incrementality tests can help reveal if that money is well-spent.

For omnichannel brands, incrementality tests can provide a fact-based view into how marketing efforts affect sales across a variety of storefronts and channels. For example, a brand can test whether an Instagram ad that leads to their Shopify store has a halo effect on Amazon and retail sales (or not).

Alternatively, brands can get hyper-specific with what to test and learn. For example, rather than testing the impacts of channels at large, you could design an incrementality test to optimize your specific buying strategy — like whether you should optimize Meta spend towards 7-day click or 7-day click 1-day view. Incrementality tests routinely help brands answer questions like:

- What's the optimal investment for every campaign?
- Are customers purchasing from the places marketing promotes, or are they buying elsewhere? For example, if we point folks to our Shopify website from a Meta campaign, are customers incrementally converting there, on Amazon, or in retail?
- How can we determine if a new channel is incrementally viable?
- Is my sale incremental or just pulling forward existing demand?
- Should I include or exclude branded search terms in my PMax campaigns?
- What's the right media mix optimization for incremental growth?
- Are UCG or polished brand ads more incremental for my brand?
- Which paid marketing efforts are incrementally contributing during peak seasonal or holiday periods? How does this differ during low season?

Reflecting on her own growth marketing experiences, Maddie recalls life before and after incrementality tests:

> *"At Ritual, we were wasting $10,000 a day — and about to waste more — on an untested TikTok campaign. It seemed like we were crushing it from our attribution numbers, and we were considering majorly ramping up our spend, but I wanted to test before we put any more money towards it. Turns out it wasn't incremental at all — truly, zero lift to our business. Incrementality testing instantly saved us a ton of money. Ultimately, we iterated on our TikTok strategy and found a way to make it incrementally viable, but there's such an opportunity cost to not testing."*

No better time than now to embrace incrementality

There will always be a laundry list of to-dos in business — competing priorities, quarterly planning, big partnerships, new product launches.

But when it comes to marketing spend, “marketing without knowing your incremental returns is just lighting money on fire,” says Nick Doren, Haus’ Customer Success Lead. With a deep background in growth marketing and analytics, Nick has seen a lot on the frontlines while working closely with some of Haus’ biggest customers.

> “As a brand with strong organic momentum, we use Haus to validate the incrementality of paid ads on both our DTC and Amazon business. We’ve seen north of a 10x ROI on our annual investment in Haus in the first 2 months alone.”
>
> 
>
> **Aaron Zagha**
> Newton Baby, CMO
>
> newton

“If you don’t have a sense of the incrementality of your channels, you’re likely spending a lot of money that is not driving any actual value for the company,” he says. “You’re paying for things that are already likely to convert anyway, so you’re hurting the bottom line of the company.”

“Take this example: Let’s say you’re advertising in a channel that’s zero percent incremental, but you don’t know that yet, and you’re continuing to spend on it. That investment is theoretically driving $0 in return — so marketing goes from a revenue driver to purely a cost center, when that money could instead be reallocated towards something that’s driving incremental revenue. You might be spending a million dollars a month on something that’s zero percent incremental.”

If that sounds far-fetched, you’d be surprised. Incrementality tests are just as valuable in identifying what is working as what’s not working — so you can finally answer with objective confidence that media spend question you’ve been mulling over, and reallocate to what's effective.

Now let’s take a deeper look at the various ways brands measure incrementality.

What Makes Incrementality Different

Tyler Horner
Haus, Solutions Engineering Lead

If an ad is shown on your TV but no one is home to see it, does it make an incremental impact?

The answer, it turns out, depends on how it's being measured.

Given that we don't want to light money on fire (see: Nick's stressful quote in the last section), we'd say it's worth figuring out what's incremental and what's not. So let's unpack some of the traditional ways brands measure impact — and where these methods fall short.

Attribution as an "incomplete and inaccurate solution"

Before we dive into the wonderful world of randomized controlled trials, let's take a look at the most common tools marketers are using today to drive media buying decisions: Google Analytics and platform reporting.

These tools are cheap and easy to implement but the convenience has a hidden cost: Google Analytics supports the narrative that paid search is the most effective advertising channel, while platform reporting is known for suggesting that advertising is somehow collectively driving more sales than appear on the business' P&L.

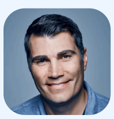
These tools belong to the "attribution" class of measurement products, implying they can appropriately attribute credit to the ads responsible for driving sales. Yet such products are largely unthinking and rules-based, relying on tracking digital ad interactions, which are then linked to web conversions via cookies — akin to invisible stalkers that live in your web browser, waiting and watching from the moment you see an ad until you buy.

Multi-touch-attribution (MTA) software that intelligently splits credit across all advertising was once hailed as the cure-all for these limitations, but as Feliks Malts, a Solutions Engineer at Haus, puts it: "The rise of consumer privacy policies and loss of data availability that followed has rendered MTA an incomplete and inaccurate solution going forward."

Not only are MTAs largely blind to ad interactions that don't result in a click (e.g. impressions), but they also lack the ability to connect these touchpoints to sales that happen off-site (e.g. Amazon or in-store). (Hulk has been blindfolded by regulators and stripped of his favorite kind of cookies — it's not a good environment for accurate smashing… err, recognition of causal impact.)

In short, while these tools check an "optimizing-day-to-day-performance" box, they don't tell a story rooted in causality — in other words, whether a campaign is incremental to your business.

> "We needed a partner who could help us future-proof our business as privacy changes limited the data we could use for marketing measurement. The Haus platform provided us clarity in our data and led to better investments that saved us millions of dollars."



Brian Borkowski
FanDuel, SVP Marketing

FANDUEL

Media modeling shortcomings

If the basic logic of attribution is too pedestrian, wait for this one: A traditional (aka, not causal) media mix model (MMM) is filled with opaque mathematics that'll make your head spin.

Albeit a powerful tool for legacy consumer packaged goods (CPG) brands with global distribution and decades of historical data, traditional MMMs applied to modern brands are all too often a CPG-shaped peg in a DTC-shaped hole.

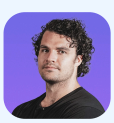
While an MTA identifies relationships based on clicks and conversions, a traditional MMM doesn't like to get its hands dirty dealing with pixels and messy user-level data. With just two variables — spend and sales — one can build a traditional MMM using linear regression. By identifying how sales respond to shifts in spend on a channel over time, the model aims to predict how increasing budget on a channel will impact sales.

The trouble is that linear regression cannot prove causation on its own. It can illustrate correlations, but it doesn't define which way the arrow of causality points.

For example, you could decide to ratchet up your connected TV (CTV) spend every time your business achieves a new record-high sales figure. Unchecked, a traditional MMM would pretty soon tell you that if you want to increase sales, you should increase your spend on CTV, even though the chain of causality in this case was exactly the opposite.

Statistical hazards like this cause a lot of mental pretzels for marketers trying to apply these models to their business. Absent a deep understanding of the math behind traditional MMM, the best we can do is gut-check what it's recommending. If it agrees with our expectations, we accept it; if it disagrees, we reject it. In either case, we haven't learned anything new. However — pair MMMs with experiments — and a glimmer of promise emerges.

> "When it comes to testing the incrementality of advertising channels, there is no better way to do it than geo-holdouts. Why? Because they show REAL data over the same time period, whereas other methods are modeled, or run period over period. Haus makes it easy to implement geo-holdouts and understand the data. If you're looking for ways to measure incrementality, Haus is for you!"



Connor Rolain
Hexclad, Head of Growth

HEXCLAD

Just test it

Many of us have been burned by negative experiences with attribution and traditional MMM solutions, but they're not entirely hopeless. As Feliks will tell you, "These solutions are only as accurate as the incrementality tests calibrating them."

While both attribution and traditional MMM tools are inherently biased and flawed – the former due to its love for clicks and the latter in its reliance on correlation — they can be saved and harnessed for good. All they need is the assistance of an old-fashioned experiment. Or, in the case of Haus, a new-fashioned one.

An incrementality test is just short for a randomized controlled trial — the gold standard for evaluating the effectiveness of medical interventions. It's the most accurate and simple way to understand the cause-and-effect relationship between an intervention and an outcome.

In a geo experiment – the primary type of experiment we run here at Haus – we randomly assign markets across a specific country to receive the treatment (advertising on a specific channel) or the placebo (no advertising). By analyzing the lift in sales for the markets receiving ads, we're able to determine their true, causal impact.

In other words: Unless the TV ad playing in an empty home set off an inexplicable chain reaction that made someone want to buy your product, an incrementality test wouldn't attribute any credit to it — just how it should be.

So does your brand need incrementality testing? Take it away, Marisa.

Who Needs Incrementality Testing?


Marisa Trichter
Haus, Product Marketing Lead

If you couldn't tell, we're pretty big fans of incrementality over here at Haus (it's what we do). But does every business need to invest in it? And when is the right time for a brand to start incrementality testing?

The answer ultimately comes down to where a company is in its growth marketing journey. In this section, we'll walk through a few scenarios to show how incrementality becomes increasingly important as a business grows and marketing strategy becomes more complex.

Bring in the noise, bring in the incrementality

Incrementality testing can be critical to understanding what drives your business, but whether you need it depends on your company's maturity level. Here, "maturity" isn't about how old you are or your sudden need for reading glasses — it refers to the complexity of your business' sales and advertising strategy. To assess a brand's level of maturity, you want to consider ad spend, ad platforms, and sales channels.

> "Using Haus, we found that not only has our YouTube been quite profitable, but ramping up is likely going to be a very good idea."
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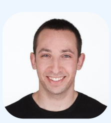
> 
> **Cody Plofker**
> Jones Road Beauty, CEO
>
> JONES ROAD

For smaller, less mature companies, you might only be advertising on one or two platforms, making it relatively straightforward to see what's working. But as your business grows, you may want to fuel that growth by investing more in advertising, diversifying your ad spend across multiple platforms, and expanding your retail presence. These additional dimensions make it murkier to tell what's working and what isn't.

Think about it in terms of music. Imagine an up-and-coming business as a singer with an acoustic guitar. With only one person performing, every note is crystal clear. If they miss a beat, strum the wrong chord, or are out of tune, it's relatively easy to notice. This is like advertising at an early-stage company: You can see how your marketing dollars are generally working because there's very little 'noise' in the mix. But as your business grows and you add more platforms, channels, and ad spend, your simple solo set evolves into a complex symphony orchestra. Now, there's a lot of noise. With so many instruments and layers of melodies, harmonies, and rhythms — it becomes much harder to tell if someone misses a note, is off-key, or is even playing at all.

Incrementality testing helps you identify which parts of your marketing orchestra are actually contributing to your growth. With consistent incrementality testing, you can continuously fine-tune your advertising strategy as it grows, making sure every instrument is adding value instead of just adding noise.

So… are you ready for incrementality testing?

Now that you have a feel for why incrementality tests add value as your business grows, here's how to think about whether incrementality testing makes sense for your business:

- [ ] You're spending millions of dollars on media annually and are concerned that your ad dollars aren't going as far as they should.
- [ ] You're advertising on multiple ad platforms (Meta, Google, YouTube, TikTok, CTV, Pinterest, etc.), and you aren't spending the majority of your budget on one channel, so it makes it harder to understand what is actually driving sales.
- [ ] You're selling in/on multiple channels (e-commerce, Amazon, retail), and you're unsure what tactics are driving customers to purchase.

If you checked these boxes, you're likely in a good place to embrace incrementality testing to clarify what's driving growth — and reallocate budget to incrementally profitable marketing levers.

Randomized Control Experiments, Conversion Lift Testing, and Natural Experiments

Emily K. Schwartz
Haus, Content and Brand Lead

We talk a lot about experiments at Haus. After all, our thing is that we enable brands to design and launch tests in minutes to measure what marketing efforts are actually driving incremental results – scientifically and objectively.

(Say that three times fast.)

But every once in a while, we field questions about experiments more broadly. What's so special about geo experiments, anyway? What about other types of experiments out there? That's what we're here to cover in this next section of Incrementality School. So let's get into it.

> "Attributing changes in data ... is incredibly hard to do well, and extremely easy to screw up. The world is huge and chaotic, and there are a million things that could be messing up your measurement."
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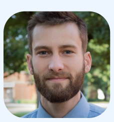
> 
>
> **Simeon Minard**
> Haus, Economist

The gold standard in causal inference

"Attributing changes in data (ex: 'my KPI went up or down') to certain factors (ex: 'we upped spend in an ad channel') is incredibly hard to do well, and extremely easy to screw up," explains Haus' Economist Simeon Minard. "The world is huge and chaotic, and there are a million things that could be messing up your measurement."

So what's a marketing team to do? This is where an economist like Simeon might recommend randomized control experiments – otherwise known as the "gold standard of causal inference."

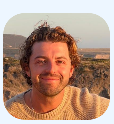
"When you do a true, well-designed randomized control experiment," he explains, "You end up with data that has variation caused by 1; the true effect of your action (think ad channel) and 2; random noise. It turns out we understand the math of random noise really well, and this makes it possible to get an excellent read of what the true effect was — along with how certain we are about it."

At Haus, we use stratified random sampling to ensure balanced treatment and control groups – no selection bias. Factor in our use of synthetic controls and models optimized for marketing contexts, and even the largest markets can be included in test designs without distorting results. There's the gold standard.

Where conversion lift testing fits into the equation

If you're advertising on ad platforms like Google and Meta, the question of conversion lift testing might be lingering in the back of your mind. Conversion lift testing is when an ad platform adjusts whether they share your ad to a customer at the individual level, and can be used to measure platform-specific incrementality. This involves using conversion pixels – so brands can understand if a customer visited their website and took an action like making a purchase or entering a lead flow after seeing or engaging with an on-platform ad.

> "Implementing Haus was one of the best decisions we made. The insights and ROI from the first month alone paid for our Haus contract."



Connor Dault
Caraway, VP Growth & Digital Product

Caraway

While conversion lift testing is typically highly powered, it doesn't capture view-through or omnichannel halo effects. For example, "If someone watches a YouTube ad on their TV and then goes and takes an action based on that ad on a different device, that 'view-through' conversion isn't captured," explains Haus'

Head of Science Joe Wyer. "If they take action in an additional sales channel like retail or on Amazon from exposure to that YouTube ad, that'd also be missed with conversion lift testing."

While conversion lift testing can be a beneficial tool in a testing toolbox, the approaches that platforms use to develop these tools tend to be inconsistent. "The modeling methodologies tend to be like a Rube Goldberg machine behind the scenes," says Joe. In practice, that may mean that the data these platforms consider and how they analyze that data to influence results can differ across the board. "At the end of the day, you have to remember these platforms are grading their own homework."

How natural experiments stack up

"You don't always have experiments that were made with intention," explains Joe. "With something like GeoLift or conversion lift testing, you're trying to randomly vary what you're doing across some dimension — be it place or people – that you have control over."

With natural experiments, that control is removed – and serendipity takes over.

For example, let's imagine there's a random, unpredictable outage on your website that impacts a specific user flow in a certain region. How does this outage impact sales? Or does it? What can you learn from this? Maybe it had a disproportionate impact – or maybe it didn't even impact sales numbers at all. This is an example of a natural experiment.

Natural experiments can be remarkable learning opportunities – but as Joe reminds us, "How many natural experiments are going to show up for your business on the things that are really important for you to make decisions on?" In other words: Don't bank on them. "It takes a ton of effort to find cases that are really natural experiments," stresses Simeon. "And it takes a ton of expertise to actually get good measurements from them."

Orienting towards outcomes

"A lot of people use the term 'experiment' to mean 'change something and see what happens,' says Simeon. "But when it comes down to it, if you don't do this in a way that is set up to actually measure the outcome, you might just be running in circles."

Next up: what to actually do with incrementality test results and how to take action on them.

How to Foster A Culture of Incrementality Experimentation

Reggie Panaligan
Haus, Enterprise GM

“A fool with a tool is still a fool.” — Grady Booch

At Haus, we provide what we believe to be an essential tool that makes incrementality testing much easier for many brands. But as renowned engineer Mr. Booch said so eloquently above, having the right measurement toolkit for your business is only meaningful insofar as your team’s ability to use that tool.

Having spent my career helping companies to make sense of the impact of their media, one of the most important factors in a team’s ability to effectively utilize media measurement tools is having a true “culture of experimentation.”

So, what is a culture of experimentation?

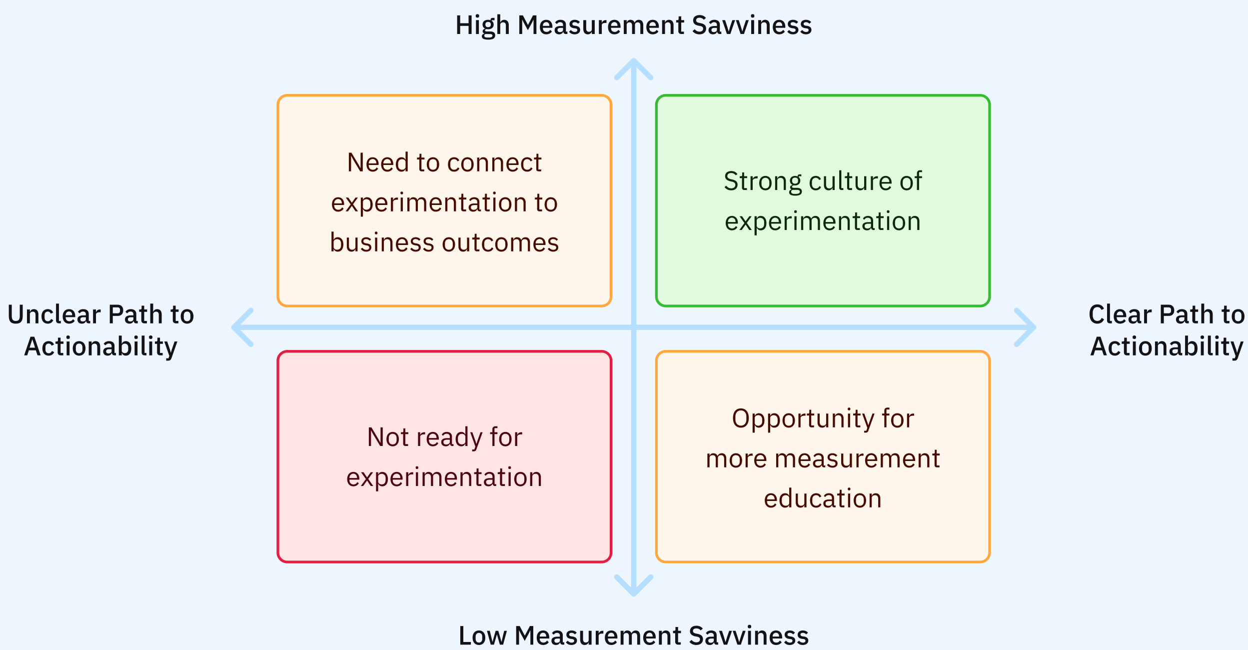
A 2020 article from Harvard Business Review breaks it down pretty nicely (TLDR: cultivate curiosity, prioritize data over opinion, and democratic experimentation). In this blog post, I present a complementary framework that can help you assess just how strong your organization’s culture of incrementality experimentation is.

I’m of the belief that the world can often be broken down into a simple 2x2 matrix, and in this instance, I posit that a strong culture of incrementality experimentation comes down to your organization’s level of measurement savviness and path to actionability from your experiments.

Measurement Savviness

Marketing measurement’s constant state of flux over the past few years has been well-documented, and 2025 should continue to see greater evolution (see Rob Webb’s useful overview from his Growthish newsletter).

A framework for assessing your “culture of experimentation”



In order to gain a competitive advantage, marketers have to have a deep understanding of the pros and cons of each measurement tool available (e.g. Incrementality, MTA, Media Mix Modeling, in-platform attribution), and a discerning eye to understand the various methodologies that underlie each tool, particularly experimentation solutions.

Here are a few signals that I’ve found to be key indicators of an organization’s measurement savviness:

- **Level of advanced measurement knowledge:** A very savvy organization understands the key differences of each of the areas of media measurement (incrementality, MTA, media mix modeling, in-platform attribution, etc.), and how you might prioritize and utilize each tool in conjunction with another. For example, a savvy marketer would utilize incrementality to fill in gaps in their click-based MTA solution to understand the halo effects of an upper-funnel YouTube or TikTok campaign has on offline sales. They also know incrementality experiment results should constantly calibrate their MMM, if they use one. On the flip side, a more nascent marketer might rely solely on last-click attribution as its north star, and might not be ready to jump right into building an incrementality experimentation program.

> "Our first Haus test was a crucial factor in gaining executive alignment around our go forward omnichannel strategy, and specifically how to approach our growing Amazon business. This one test has given us value that exceeds the annual cost, and we are thrilled to continue to gain more value from the tests we run with the team over the next year."
>
> 
>
> **Nicola Ryan**
> Fresh Clean Threads, VP Marketing
>
> Fresh Clean Threads

- **Level of methodological understanding:** This one is for all my data scientists and economists out there who know that not all incrementality experiments are created equal. Less savvy organizations see incrementality testing and experimentation as a commodity, and are less likely to distinguish between various types of testing (i.e. A/B experimentation, incrementality hold-outs) and methodologies (i.e. quasi-experiments, matched market testing, synthetic control, difference-in-differences, etc.). The methodologies and test types you choose can have real implications for your business, and, most importantly, how confident you can be in making multi-million dollar media allocation decisions based on experiment results. You certainly don't need to be a PhD to run effective experiments, but it helps to have folks on your side to help you make sense of your options.

- **Focus on data-driven decision making:** This is pretty self-explanatory. What level of importance does your organizational place on making sound data-driven business decisions? There's two sides to this. For example, some marketers rely heavily on the gut intuition of their founders, or let their creative teams lead the way. Data is rarely present. On the flipside, some marketers rely too heavily on data, often paralyzing decision-making if the data isn't perfect and all pointing toward the same direction. Companies with a strong culture of experimentation know the balance. They grasp the concept of an "opportunity cost of testing" (i.e. the potential hit to your business by not advertising to the holdout group), are comfortable using a mix of art and science, and embrace experiment results may be directional vs. perfect, all while choosing to move forward in pursuit of a more data-driven decision.

Path to actionability

Experimentation without action is just an academic exercise. As much as it would be nice to revert to simpler times sitting in our Intro to Stats lecture hall (or Zoom calls), a marketer's job has real stakes and requires us to, you know, actually act. A clear "path to actionability" ensures that experiment owners have the authority and resources to implement changes based on the insights generated. This empowerment ensures that valuable learnings translate into tangible improvements across your organization.

- **Clearly articulated use cases:** As with any journey, the path is easier when you know the endpoint and the guardrails before you start. Having clearly articulated research questions and use cases for your incrementality experimentation that are – very important – also directly tied to your critical business objectives will be key. In my experience, organizations are much more likely to act on experiment insights and see improvements if they've spent time thinking about their experimentation roadmap for the year and are prioritized by their expected business impact.

- **Variety of use cases:** Somewhat related to the point above, but having a variety of use cases in mind for your incrementality experiments is also critical. Companies with a strong culture of experimentation know that sound incrementality tests could help you understand the impact that any of your key marketing channels on a variety of your business KPIs, from online sales to offline sales, from conversions to upper funnel awareness metrics, and across a wide range of time periods (from short-term to longer-term). On top of that, these savvy marketers know that incrementality test results should be continually reevaluated based on seasonality, changing consumer and macroeconomic trends, and any other factors that might render previous results less applicable.

Speed from insight-to-action: Simply put, this is an assessment of how well your organization is to quickly action on the results of an experiment. I've often seen that organizations not in a position to act quickly are held back for a variety of reasons. For example, experiment owners lack internal political capital to drive change, or different parts of the organization have misaligned incentives (e.g. brand teams prioritizing upper-funnel KPIs, performance teams prioritizing online conversions), or the experiment owner is able to act, but not in a meaningful way tied to what the C-Suite cares about. On the flipside, organizations that have very strong alignment between the day-to-day experiment owners and the business decision-makers often act quickly and decisively on the most critical questions pressing their business.

Sticking the experimentation landing

These two factors – **Measurement Savviness** and **Path to Actionability** – define the strength of an organization's culture of incrementality experimentation.

If your organization falls short in either of these, know that you aren't alone. It is a constantly evolving space and the bullseye keeps moving based on data privacy and regulatory changes, consumer preferences, etc.

That said, using this framework can help diagnose how you move forward to build that strong culture. If you're falling behind on the measurement savviness elements, it's a sign that your organization has an opportunity for more education on the various types of measurement solutions and methodologies that exist, and how each tool might be useful for your particular needs. If it's an unclear path to actionability that is holding you back, it'll be important to take a step back and align on the top use cases and research questions your organization needs to address, and/or find a way to empower your experiment owners to be able to truly drive change within your organization.

And, well, if you're nailing both – congratulations! Keep experimenting, keep learning, and keep growing.

Ready to get testing?

We hope these lessons have given you the confidence to hit the ground running with incrementality testing. Sure, we've made lots of references to "school" in this series — but don't think of incrementality testing as homework. Instead, it's a practice. And when done correctly and consistently, it can unleash more informed, assured decision-making.

But as you've maybe noticed, this isn't a practice that you can get up and running with overnight. It takes a bit of know-how to calibrate a platform, build a testing roadmap, start experimenting, then act on your learnings. Brands can't go at it alone — which is why Haus has emerged as a trusted partner for teams looking to build a culture of experimentation from the ground up.

If you're ready to make incrementality testing a core part of your marketing strategy, we're here to help you take that first step. Whether you want to launch a new channel, optimize spend, or use an MMM grounded in incrementality experiments, our team of experts can guide you through the process.

The chaos of the marketing landscape doesn't look like it's going to let up anytime soon. So schedule a demo today to learn how Haus can help you unlock the full potential of your marketing investments.

Schedule a demo today →