GUIDE

Related Adaptive Marketing Terms

A map of 21 terms in this area: what each means, how it relates to Adaptive Marketing, whether we use it as our own terminology, and what it is most often wrongly collapsed into.

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Why this page exists

A great deal of apparent disagreement in this area is vocabulary. Two people can hold identical views about how marketing should respond to change and spend an hour arguing because one of them calls it agile and the other calls it adaptive.

So each entry states four things: what the term means, how it relates to Adaptive Marketing, whether this site uses it as its own terminology, and what it is most often wrongly treated as a synonym for.

The map

Terms, in order of relevance

Adaptive Marketing P0 TARGET

> An approach to marketing in which strategy, messaging, channels, evidence and execution are continuously adjusted in response to meaningful changes in customer behavior, market conditions, performance, technology and context.
>
> **Relationship to Adaptive Marketing.** The subject of this cluster. Everything else on this page is defined by how it sits next to it.
>
> **Do we use this term?** Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** Agile Marketing, Real-Time Marketing, or marketing that simply changes often. Deeper treatment.

Adaptive Brand Management LOCKED

The ongoing discipline of keeping a brand aligned with a moving market: continuing responsibility for how a business is understood, found, trusted, experienced and kept relevant as conditions change, while its core identity is preserved.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Broader than Adaptive Marketing. Adaptive Marketing adapts marketing activity. Adaptive Brand Management accepts responsibility for the wider condition of the brand, of which marketing is one part.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing, and never shortened to "adaptive branding". Deeper treatment.

Customers in Motion LOCKED

The observation that a customer's readiness, trust and consideration change continuously and largely independently of brand action, so marketing always operates on a moving target.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. The reason Adaptive Marketing is necessary rather than merely fashionable. If customers were stationary, a fixed plan would keep working.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** A journey stage, a lifecycle phase, or a funnel step. Deeper treatment.

Adaptive Management EXISTING

The general practice of observing changing conditions, interpreting what matters, deciding what should move and what should hold, adjusting the response, verifying whether alignment improves, and learning from the result.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. The general form. Adaptive Marketing is the marketing-specific application of the same loop.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing, which is narrower, or Adaptive Brand Management, which is a commercial responsibility rather than a practice. Deeper treatment.

Adaptive Marketing Capabilities REFERENCE

In the research literature, the organizational capabilities that let a firm sense and respond to fast-moving markets: vigilant market learning, adaptive market experimentation, and open marketing.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. The academic ancestor of the modern practice, and not a synonym for it. Capabilities are what an organization is able to do. Adaptive Marketing is what it actually does with them.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** The whole modern practice of Adaptive Marketing. Deeper treatment.

Agile Marketing REFERENCE

A way of organizing marketing work borrowed from agile software development: short iterations, small cross-functional teams, visible backlogs, frequent review.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Agile Marketing is mostly about how the team works. Adaptive Marketing is mostly about what the outside world is doing and what should change in response. A team can be agile and poorly adaptive, or adaptive without ever running a sprint.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing. They answer different questions. Deeper treatment.

Marketing Agility REFERENCE

The speed and fluency with which a marketing organization can sense, decide and act.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. A property of the organization, closer to a measure of how fast adaptation can happen than to a description of what should change.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing. Speed is not direction. Deeper treatment.

Real-Time Marketing REFERENCE

Responding to an event, a trigger or a moment as it happens, usually within minutes or hours.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. One operating mode inside Adaptive Marketing, and the least often correct one. Some adaptation should be immediate, some weekly, some quarterly, and some signals should produce no action at all.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing, which does not require every decision to be immediate.

Dynamic Marketing NON-PREFERRED

A loose descriptive phrase for marketing that changes, used inconsistently across the industry and sometimes to mean dynamic creative or dynamic content specifically.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Adjacent and vaguer. Where the intended concept is Adaptive Marketing, we say Adaptive Marketing.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing. It has no settled definition to be a synonym with.

Responsive Marketing NON-PREFERRED

A descriptive phrase for marketing that reacts to what customers or markets do.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Describes the reaction without the judgment. Adaptive Marketing includes deciding which signals deserve a response, which is the part that does the work.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing.

Contextual Marketing REFERENCE

Changing a message or experience according to the context it is delivered in: device, location, referring source, time, page, or stage of a relationship.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. A technique that can be used within Adaptive Marketing. Context is one of the inputs adaptation reads.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing, which also changes strategy and evidence, not only delivery.

Personalized Marketing REFERENCE

Adjusting content, offers or experiences to an individual or a segment, using known or inferred attributes.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. One possible adaptive response, not the discipline. Personalization adapts to who someone is. Adaptive Marketing also adapts to what has changed around them.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing.

Predictive Marketing REFERENCE

Using historical and current data to estimate what is likely to happen next: who will churn, who will convert, which demand will rise.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Prediction is an input to adaptation, not adaptation itself. A forecast changes nothing until somebody decides what to do about it.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing.

Marketing Optimization REFERENCE

Improving the performance of marketing that already exists: better conversion, lower cost, higher yield from the same structure.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Optimization improves the current answer. Adaptation asks whether the current answer is still the right one. A campaign can be optimized to its ceiling and still be aimed at a condition that has passed.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing. Optimizing harder is the most common substitute for adapting.

Adaptive Content REFERENCE

Content that is changed, extended, re-sequenced or retired as customer need, evidence, context and market conditions move.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Adaptive Marketing applied at the level of what is published. It is an application, not a brand and not a separate discipline.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** Publishing more often.

Adaptive Advertising REFERENCE

Advertising in which audience, creative, bidding, budget allocation, offer, channel and timing are changed as evidence and conditions change.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Adaptive Marketing applied to paid media. Paid media is where adaptation is easiest to see and cheapest to test, which is exactly why it gets mistaken for the whole discipline.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing as a whole.

Adaptive Selling REFERENCE

A salesperson adjusting their communication and presentation to the individual buyer in front of them, in the moment.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Adjacent, and a genuinely separate body of work. It concerns one conversation. Adaptive Marketing concerns a market.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Marketing.

Brand Adaptation REFERENCE

A specific act: a brand changing something in response to a change around it.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. Describes an event, not a discipline. The discipline that produces those events on purpose and continuously is Adaptive Brand Management.

Do we use this term? No. It is credited to others and used only when describing their work. **Not a synonym for:** Adaptive Brand Management, which is the named discipline and is never shortened.

AIO LOCKED

AI Optimization: the discipline of making a business accurately understood, retrievable and correctly represented by AI systems.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. One environment Adaptive Marketing observes and adapts to. It is the ecosystem standard term, and it is the term we use.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** SEO, and not interchangeable with AI visibility. Deeper treatment.

AI Visibility LOCKED USAGE

The observable condition of how, how often and how accurately a business appears in AI answers.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. The outcome AIO works on. A change in AI visibility is evidence that may trigger an adaptation, and evidence alone does not justify one.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** AIO, which is the discipline rather than the condition. Deeper treatment.

SEO STANDARD

Search engine optimization: making a site findable and correctly understood by search engines.

Relationship to Adaptive Marketing. A separate and still valid discipline. Where search engines are genuinely the subject, we say SEO and do not substitute AIO.

Do we use this term? Yes, as our own terminology. **Not a synonym for:** AIO. Deeper treatment.

A note on the two locked terms

Adaptive Brand Management is never shortened to adaptive branding, and it is not a synonym for Adaptive Marketing. It is a broader commercial responsibility, set out in full in the Foundations paper published here and applied commercially by Digilu.

AIO is the standard term for AI Optimization across this ecosystem, and **AI visibility** is the observable condition rather than the discipline. Competing acronyms for AI-search optimization are not used as first-party terminology here. Third-party material is quoted as written.

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A customer behavior model describing how a customer in motion gives a message attention, and how trust, relevance, and timing then shape whether it draws closer, drifts away, or returns.