

15 Interview Questions To Ask Your Next Digital Marketer Candidates via @sejournal, @brookeosmundson

Hiring the right digital marketer can make or break your marketing team.

With new tools, platforms, and regulations cropping up constantly, you're not just looking for someone who "gets PPC" or can crank out social media posts.

You need a pro who can adapt to change, think strategically, and roll with the punches when things don't go as planned (because they rarely do).

Whether you're at an agency or in-house managing a marketing department, hiring for digital marketing roles today means going beyond surface-level questions.

It's about diving deeper to understand how candidates think, problem-solve, and approach their craft in a way that aligns with your business goals.

Sometimes, the "why" behind these questions is more important than the question itself.

Here are 15 crucial interview questions to help you hire your next digital marketing rockstar.

Tactical Knowledge Questions

The first set of questions focuses on an individual's tactical knowledge of digital marketing.

1. How Do You Use AI And Automation To Improve Your Campaigns?

AI and automation aren't just buzzwords anymore. They're tools shaping how marketers work.

This question uncovers whether the candidate is using these tools for better performance or simply riding the hype wave.

- **What to listen for:** Candidates should provide specific examples, such as using AI for bid adjustments in PPC or helping analyze campaign data for better optimizations. Red flags include vague responses or over-reliance on automation without understanding its impact.

2. What's Your Approach To Building And Refining Audience Segments For Targeted Campaigns?

Audience targeting has become more nuanced, and it's a skill you can't skip.

This question dives into their strategy for reaching the right people at the right time.

- **What to listen for:** Specific techniques like combining customer relationship management (CRM) data with platform insights or testing lookalike audiences. Be wary of candidates who rely solely on pre-set audience templates without customization.

3. What Platforms Are Your Favorite To Work In, And Why?

Asking this question helps understand the individual's strengths in certain channels, and where they could use room to grow.

- **What to listen for:** A great digital marketer should be able to comfortably work across platforms and different tools. This is true whether you're talking about hiring someone for PPC or SEO, or even a cross-channel marketer.

4. How Do You Leverage First-Party Data To Inform Your Campaigns?

First-party data is becoming increasingly valuable as the reliance on third-party cookies still remains questionable. This question uncovers how a candidate adapts to this shift of having a privacy-first mindset.

- **What to listen for:** A candidate may talk about strategies like email segmentation, loyalty programs, or even how they've approached capturing first-party data to ensure they're able to properly use them in campaigns. A potential red flag is relying on outdated cookie-based methods without a backup plan.

5. Can You Share An Example Of Using Cross-Platform Advertising That Has Driven Results?

As digital marketers, we know most campaigns aren't "one and done" on a single platform. Candidates need to show how they think holistically about digital ecosystems.

- **What to listen for:** Strong examples include integrating

Google Ads with Meta campaigns or leveraging TikTok for awareness and retargeting on a different platform. A red flag is a candidate focusing only on one platform without considering how they interconnect and inform each other.

6. What's Your Experience With Data Visualization Tools, And How Do You Present Campaign Performance To Stakeholders?

Explaining results is just as important as achieving them. This question gets into their communication skills and ability to tell a story with data.

- **What to listen for:** Candidates should mention the use of different tools like Looker Studio and explain how they tailor reports to different audiences. Watch out for overly technical explanations that might confuse stakeholders.

Strategic Knowledge Questions

It's not only important to know how to do the job, but also to know why you're doing what you're doing.

The next set of questions allows you to dive deeper into the candidate's mindset and see if they can put the strategic pieces together for clients.

7. How Do You Stay On Top Of Industry Changes, And What's Something You've Learned Recently That Impacted Your Work?

The digital landscape changes every single day.

If someone isn't staying current with best practices and

platform changes, it can be detrimental to client success. You need to have someone on the team who is fully aware of any changes in the industry that could impact performance.

- **What to listen for:** Understanding what methods a candidate uses to stay “in the know” is important. If a candidate says they’re too busy to set aside time to read up on trends, I’d consider that a red flag.

8. Have You Had To Pivot A Campaign Due To Changing Data Privacy Regulations?

Data privacy laws have changed the name of the game, especially in PPC.

This question tests how the candidate navigates regulations while keeping campaigns effective and compliant.

- **What to listen for:** Look for examples like shifting to first-party data or adjusting targeting strategies in light of GDPR or CCPA. Red flags include ignoring compliance issues or struggling to adapt when audience data becomes restricted.

9. How Do You Measure Success Across Different Types Of Campaigns?

Success isn’t one-size-fits-all. The answer should show how they align goals, metrics, and performance analysis for various strategies.

- **What to listen for:** Candidates should mention setting specific KPI goals based on the channel and objective of a campaign. Be wary of those who rely on vanity metrics like impressions without tying them to business outcomes.

10. How Do You Explain Complex Answers To A Client Or Someone In A C-Suite Role?

This will inevitably happen in any digital marketing role. It's easy when you're working as a team, and everyone knows the ins and outs of acronyms, in the weeds content.

Sometimes, you need to explain something like you're talking to a third grader. Less is more.

- **Green flags to listen for:**

- Candidates who know how to navigate their language based on the role of the person they're talking to.
- When a candidate has the knowledge of basic business questions that the role cares about.
- They know how to explain the "why" behind performance peaks and valleys.

- **Red flags to listen for:**

- Does the candidate dance around this question?
- Is this candidate someone who might have difficulty thinking on their feet?
- Do they believe in sharing too much data in order to avoid questions?

Culture & Fit Questions

This last set of questions is really looking at the long-term impact of your digital marketing hire.

You're not looking to hire temporarily; you're hiring for the long haul.

You want to feel confident in your candidate selection based on their character, the ability to collaborate with others (teams and clients), and, of course, the empathy factor.

11. What Is Your Management Style, And How Do You Ensure Alignment Within A Team?

Leadership and collaboration are critical in marketing roles.

This question helps assess how their approach complements your team dynamics.

- **Green flags to listen for:** Strong candidates will mention fostering open communication, using clear goal-setting frameworks, or adapting their style to individual team members.
- **Red flags to listen for:** If you notice any micro-management tendencies or when the candidate avoids conflict resolution.

12. How Do You Balance Working Independently With Collaborating Across Departments?

Similar to the question above, digital marketers often juggle solo tasks with cross-functional initiatives.

Everyone performs their duties well in different scenarios. In some cases, digital marketers are required to work alone, on a team, or both.

This question highlights their adaptability to working together as a team versus in a silo.

- **What to listen for:** Examples of successfully managing independent projects while aligning with other team departments. Be cautious of candidates who struggle to collaborate, communicate, or prefer working in silos.

13. Can You Describe A Time You Contributed To Maintaining A Positive Team Culture?

A strong company culture is key to retention and productivity.

This question reveals how they value and influence workplace dynamics.

- **What to listen for:** Specific instances where they recognized a fellow colleague, facilitated team bonding, or helped resolve conflicts. Avoid candidates who dismiss culture-building as unimportant.

14. How Do You Handle Constructive Feedback, Both Giving And Receiving It?

Feedback is essential for any type of growth. This question assesses their ability to engage in productive conversations.

- **What to listen for:** Look for examples of accepting feedback gracefully, acting on it, and offering constructive criticism thoughtfully. Red flags include defensiveness or avoiding difficult conversations.

15. What Are You Looking For In This Role?

Personally, I used to cringe at this question. Now, I find myself asking this to anyone I interview.

Bringing in a new person to an organization costs a lot of time and money. Think of all the training that goes into a new hire, the staffing that's required to help train and mentor them, etc.

- **What to listen for:** If they don't have a clear answer, that's a potential red flag. Are they simply looking for

a stepping-stone position? While there's nothing wrong with that, it's better to know upfront to align expectations for both parties.

At the end of the day, do their motives fit in with your company's culture and values? If not, they likely aren't the right candidate.

Wrapping It Up

Hiring the right digital marketer isn't just about finding someone with a great resume.

It's about finding someone who fits with your team, aligns with your company goals, and has the skills to thrive in an ever-changing space.

Use these questions to dig deeper and uncover candidates who have the mix of experience, adaptability, and strategic thinking you need for this year and beyond.

Because let's face it: You're not just hiring for today's challenges – you're hiring for tomorrow's opportunities.

More Resources:

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