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# Strategic Plan & Operating Priorities 2026



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## Housekeeping

- Please remain on **mute** when not speaking
- Please log in with your **full name**
- Please **identify** yourself if asked
- Do place **questions** in the chat
- The session is being **recorded**
- We will share the recording (without the questions) for **watch-back**
- For more **information** visit [www.isba.org.uk](http://www.isba.org.uk)
- Members can sign in to access the **member area** and member content



CONTEXT  
MATTERS



## PRIORITIES

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



## 101 Knowledge Sessions

Stay ahead with drop-in learning covering a wide range of marketing and media topics – free for all ISBA members.

Next online sessions:

**101: Understanding the role of media & communications** – Wednesday 4 March

**101: Delivering audience and brand insights** – Friday 6 March

Find out more:



## **Maximum Effectiveness: Total TV from reach to results**

Deep dive event into the latest insights on TV advertising effectiveness - a collaboration between ISBA, Barb, and Thinkbox

Open to members only

**Soho Hotel, London – Thursday 19 March, 2pm**

Find out more and sign up:



## Just launched: Proprietary Media Guidance

ISBA guidance designed to help advertisers confidently evaluate and manage proprietary media solutions in an increasingly complex marketplace

ISBA's **Media Leaders** and **Procurement Groups** have been key contributors to this guidance, alongside input from industry consultancies.



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# Industry Context



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We are the voice of 170 UK advertisers representing £6.2bn of spend



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# Advertisers are under more pressure than ever before

Biggest Change in Living Memory



Whilst Navigating Stormy Waters



Driven by a cocktail of internal & external challenges...

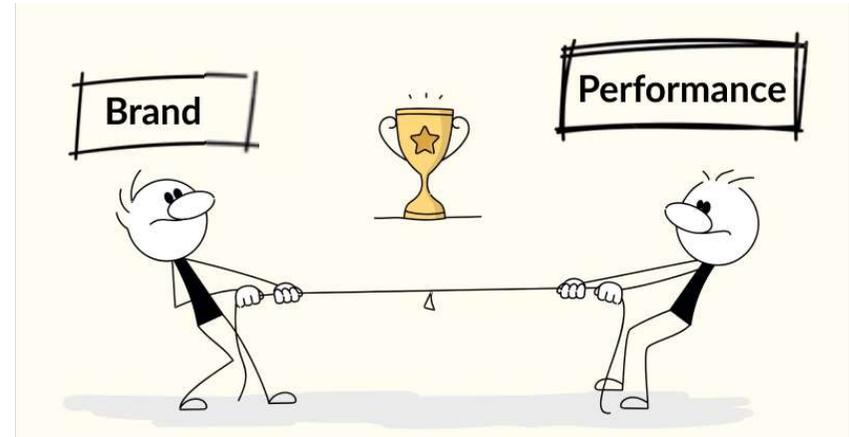


# Compounded by internal challenges in the Boardroom...

Flat to shrinking budgets



Poor understanding of Marketing



Swings in growth strategy



CMO churn / demotion



# As well as challenges within the marketing & advertising process

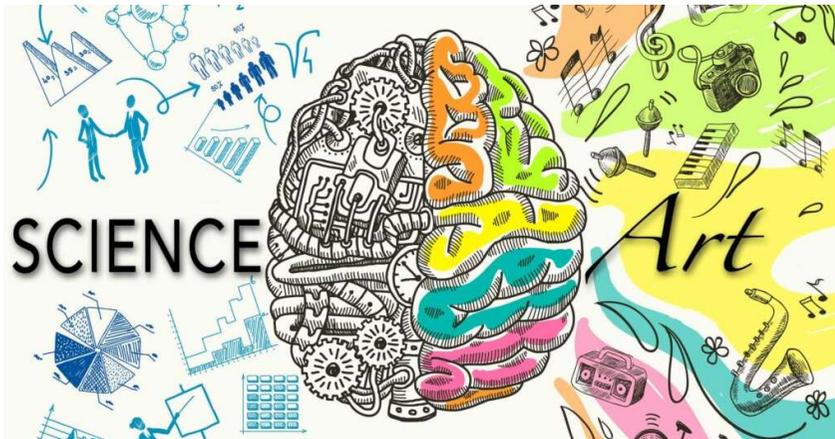
Complex Measurement



Misunderstanding of the Funnel



Decline in Creativity



Growing Skills Gaps

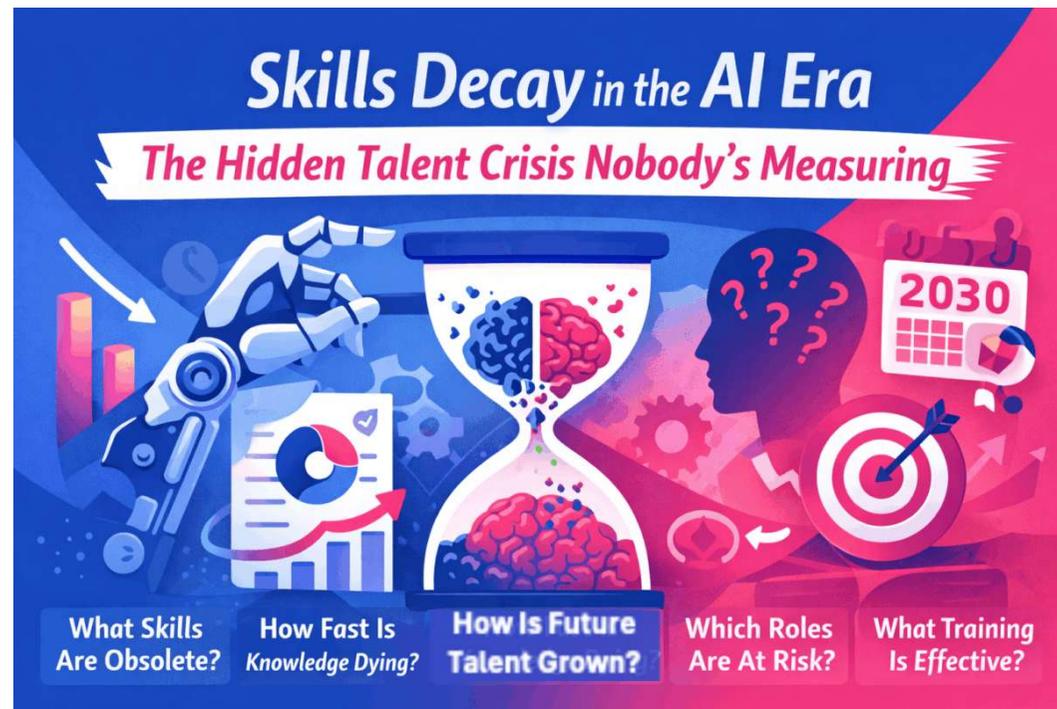


## Leaving CMOs wrestling with two major systemic questions

Implications for Operating Models?



Implications for Talent & Skills?



Left unanswered, Marketing teams could quickly become unfit for purpose

## This context is reflected in conversations with members every day

The growing tension between short-term performance marketing and long-term brand building. Over-investing in activation because it delivers quick, measurable results, but under-investing in brand-building, which drives sustainable growth.

How to develop the skillset of the marketer of the future in light of AI - use of AI to replace administrative tasks, potentially leading to a knowledge gulf

We are going through a major transformation of our op model and Ways of Working to ensure we are ready for, and making best use of, AI. But I'm not sure we have the knowledge or skills internally to build this out.

Ensure that training/development content address the need for marketers to deliver effectiveness with reducing budgets

Re-establish the power of marketing among CEO and CFO in board rooms, as future force for growth of businesses, communities, talent

Medium term risk of LHF restrictions moving to alcohol. More aggressive stance of the ASA.

Objective, straightforward, cross media measurement and communication of that into the business in a way that is believed and understood to drive discussions

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# 3-5 Year Strategic Plan



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## **Our Mission:**

Help our members to navigate, shape, and succeed-in  
the most complex and fast-changing advertising  
landscape in living memory.



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# Strategic Priorities

**1) Enable Effectiveness & Trust in Advertising**

**2) Ensure Transparency of Supply Chains**

**3) Help Members Navigate the Future**

## Key Workstreams

- **Cross-Media Measurement**
  - Origin scale-up & rollout
- **Advertising Best Practise**
  - The case for balanced Demand Creation & Conversion plans
  - Retail / Influencer / GEO etc.
- **Responsible Advertising**
  - Sustainability / Accessibility / Inclusion / Regulatory Affairs

- **Online Safety – Brand & User**
- **AI Automated Processes**
  - Creative / Media / Research / Strategy / Social Media
- **Agency Contracting & Remuneration**

- **Mergers & Acquisitions**
  - Media & Agency
- **Agency Operating Models**
  - AI / Talent / value-chains etc.
- **Advertiser Operating Models**
  - In-housing vs Out-sourcing / AI Integration / Talent & Skills Requirements

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# 2026 Operating Priorities



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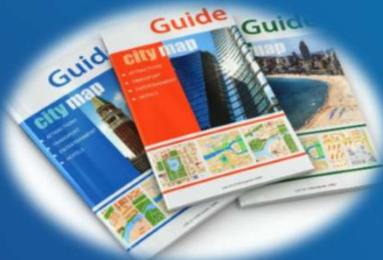
# 2026 Strategy to Action Plan

## 1) Enable Effectiveness & Trust in Advertising

### BAU Activity



origin



#### X-Media Measurement

- Market coverage
- Scale up
- Use cases

#### Guidance

- Responsible Media Guide
- Retail Media Framework
- Influencer Code of Conduct

#### Forward Planning

- 2027 Media Budget Forecasts

#### Regulation

- LHF/HFSS Advertising: New Nutrient Profiling Model

#### Responsible Advertising

- Commercial case & best practise for sustainability, inclusion, and accessibility

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# 2026 Strategy to Action Plan

## 1) Enable Effectiveness & Trust in Advertising

Industry Shaping &/or Transformative for Members  
**BIG BET**

The Definitive Business Case for a Balanced, Cross-Media Approach to Growth Marketing



# The industry is caught in a misleading & counter-productive debate

Brand vs Performance



Long or Short



Why? – When this was never what was meant and isn't what the data says

## Redressing the narrative has inherent challenges...

Data Sources are Disparate



They can be Seen as Biased



Despite a collective body of compelling data-based evidence

## Those leading the charge on the Boardroom are on the back foot

Can I Have Some More?



Can I Rob Peter to Pay Paul?



In the eyes of the CEO / CFO, it is hard for the CMO to be seen as objective

# This is about a reset that champions sustainable business growth

## Reclaiming the Narrative



## Reestablishing Marketing as an Engine for Growth



We will do this by...

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# Uniting the industry to create a definitive business case & toolkit



## 2) Ensure Transparency of Supply Chains

## BAU Activity

**Sky/ITV Acquisition**

- Protecting advertiser interests
- Influencing a suitable outcome

**Agency M&A**

- Advising/supporting on implications

**Agency Contracting**

- Latest creative & Media Frameworks

**Accountability**

- Appropriate protections re: AI and Brand Safety

**Proprietary Media**

- Publish Proprietary Media Guide
- Ongoing Dialogue

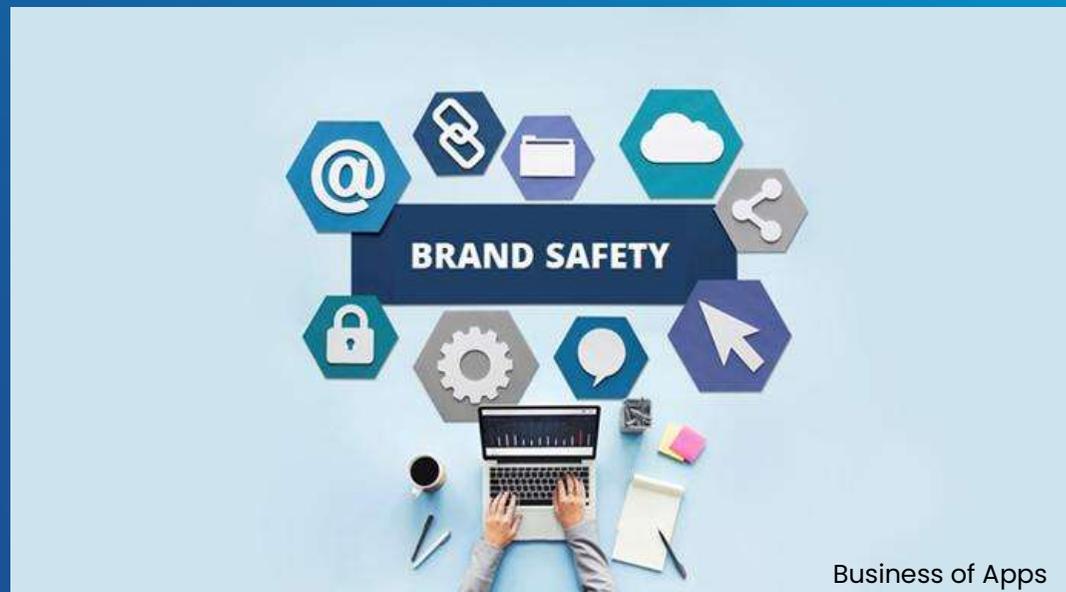
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# 2026 Strategy to Action Plan

## 2) Ensure Transparency of Supply Chains

Industry Shaping &/or Transformative for Members  
**BIG BET**

Shaping the Future of a Brand Safe Online Environment





Household names unwittingly pay extremist supporters and pornographers as adverts dumped online

**TIMES INVESTIGATION**

**Alexi Mostros** Head of Investigations  
 Some of the world's biggest brands are unwittingly funding Islamic extremists, white supremacists and pornographers by advertising on their websites, *The Times* can reveal.  
 Advertisements for hundreds of large companies, universities and charities, including Mercedes-Benz, Waitrose and Marie Curie, appear on hate sites and YouTube videos created by supporters of terrorist groups such as Islamic State and Combat 18, a violent pro-Nazi faction.  
 The practice is likely to generate tens of thousands of pounds a month for extremists. An advert appearing alongside a YouTube video, for example, typically earns whoever posts it \$760 for every 1,000 views. Some of the most popular extremist videos have more than one million hits.



F-Pace SUV from Jaguar, the British carmaker, runs next to the video.  
 Sandals Resorts, the luxury holiday operator, is advertised next to a video promoting al-Shabaab, the East African jihadist group affiliated to al-Qaeda. Last night a Sandals spokeswoman said that it made "every effort" to stop its adverts appearing next to inappropriate content. It said that YouTube had "not properly categorised the video" as sensitive.  
 Adverts for Honda, Thomson Reuters, Halifax, the Victoria & Albert museum, Liverpool university, Argos, Churchill Retirement and Waitrose also appear on extremist videos posted on YouTube by supporters of groups that include Combat 18.  
 After *The Times* informed Google,



From proportionate regulation of tech platforms & demonetisation, to advice to UK-based marketers on responsible media



... but the challenge of harmful content continues ...



The screenshot shows the top of a news article on the Channel 3 Now website. At the top left, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The Channel 3 Now logo is prominently displayed in the center. A red banner with the word 'FALSE' and a white warning triangle icon is overlaid on the left side of the page. Below the banner, a navigation menu includes links for NEWS, WORLD, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, BUSINESS, POLITICS, and TECHNOLOGY. The main headline reads: '17-year-old Ali Al-Shakati arrested in connection with the stabbings in Southport, England'. Below the headline, a sub-headline states: 'Ali-Al-Shakati was on MI6 watch list and was known to Liverpool mental health services. He was an asylum seeker who came to UK by boat last year.' At the bottom left, there is a small Channel 3 Now logo, the text 'Published 1 hour ago on 29 July 2024', and 'By Channel3 Now Staff'.

**FALSE** 

NEWS WORLD ENTERTAINMENT SPORTS BUSINESS POLITICS TECHNOLOGY

**NEWS**

## 17-year-old Ali Al-Shakati arrested in connection with the stabbings in Southport, England

Ali-Al-Shakati was on MI6 watch list and was known to Liverpool mental health services. He was an asylum seeker who came to UK by boat last year.

 Published 1 hour ago on 29 July 2024  
By Channel3 Now Staff

Examples continue of advertising inadvertently monetising harmful content – on platforms and on the open web

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... with the debate charged by international controversies



Litigation in the US and EU is challenging platforms – with incidents like AI-generated imagery on Grok driving national government responses

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## The funding model of the platforms puts advertisers in the crosshairs



House of Commons  
Science, Innovation and  
Technology Committee



*New regulatory oversight, clear and enforceable standards and proportionate penalties are needed to cover the process of digital advertising ...*

*Transparency is needed for participants in the digital advertising market.*

**Dame Chi Onwurah MP**

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## Online Safety Act 2 remains a real possibility – and society is increasingly demanding change



Press release

### **PM: “No platform gets a free pass”: Government takes action to keep children safe online**

The Government will give parents and carers greater clarity and support as the Prime Minister announces immediate action to make the online world safer for children.



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## 3) Help Members Navigate the Future

## BAU Activity

**Adopting & Scaling AI**

- Guidance on using Gen' AI in creative
- Gen' AI Adoption Survey & Event
- Practical AI Training

**Agency Models**

- Study on the future of agency commercial models & remuneration

**Talent Growth**

- Expand "101" Training Programme
- Mentoring Scheme
- Future Needs

**Marketing Inbetweeners**

- Programme of support for senior leaders in transition

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# 2026 Strategy to Action Plan

## 3) Help Members Navigate the Future

Industry Shaping &/or Transformative for Members  
**BIG BET**

Operating Models of the Future: Bridging the gap between theoretical and practical

### Skills Development



### Interdisciplinary



### Options & Trade offs



## Addressing the question of future fit operating models is not as simple as it used to be



**AI challenges the underlying assumptions and constraints of existing models**

**Opening new opportunities on multiple fronts that are not yet fully understood**

We need to help advertisers navigate these new opportunities



## AI & shifting market dynamics have led to radical change in a short space of time

### Agencies

Mergers, acquisitions,  
restructures, and divestitures

Transformation of services

Evolving commercial models

Challenger agencies

### AI Solutions

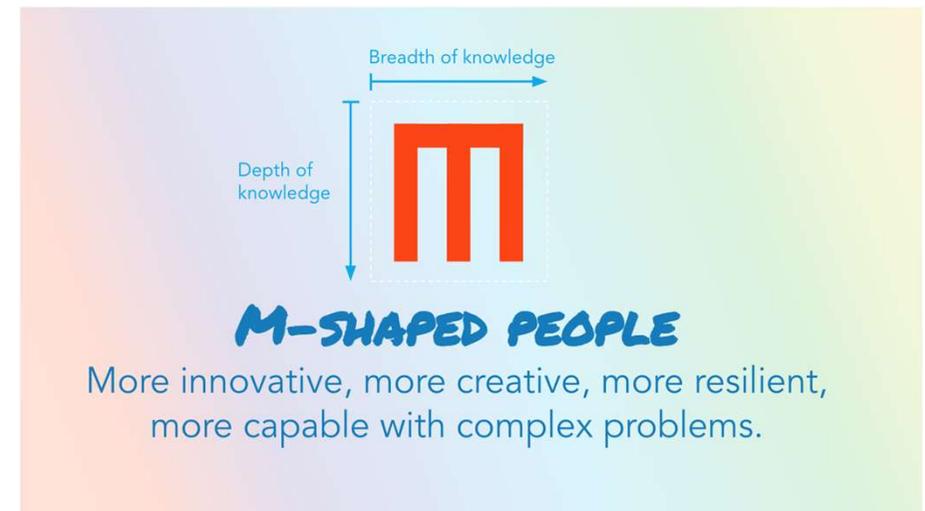
New capabilities

New domains

Accessible

Inexpensive

## Underpinning this is a scarcity of critical skills



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# Strategic Priorities

**1) Enable Effectiveness & Trust in Advertising**

**2) Ensure Transparency of Supply Chains**

**3) Help Members Navigate the Future**

## BIG BETS

**A Balanced Approach to Growth Marketing**

**Shaping the Future of a Brand Safe Online Environment**

**Building Future Fit Advertiser Operating Models**



For more information about ISBA please email: [membershipdepartment@isba.org.uk](mailto:membershipdepartment@isba.org.uk)

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Thank you



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