The Marketing Brief
by GrowUp

Is bad UTM hygiene killing your marketing ROI?

You're managing a $4M annual budget, but the moment your CEO asks which $1M actually drove revenue, your answer starts with, "It depends on how you define…"

That hesitation usually comes from bad data hygiene. More specifically, UTM parameters that have been improvised, duplicated, or forgotten by every campaign manager since Q1.

Let's fix it.

Below I'll walk you through:

- What poor UTM hygiene really costs your team
- The framework we use at GrowUp to standardise campaign tracking
- The action plan to fix your data and keep it clean

The hidden cost of bad UTM hygiene

When UTMs aren't standardised, the impact goes far beyond messy spreadsheets:

- **Lost credibility:** When marketing data doesn't tie neatly to pipeline, leadership stops trusting your dashboards.
- **Lost budget:** If you can't prove ROI clearly, you lose funding to teams that can.
- **Lost focus:** Every performance discussion starts with "it depends," instead of actionable insights.

A framework for consistent UTM tracking

Here's the standard four-parameter framework we use to bring order and traceability to campaign data.

- **utm_source** = where the traffic came from (linkedin, reddit, email)
- **utm_medium** = the marketing channel type (profile, company_page, post, newsletter, cpc)
- **utm_campaign** = the specific initiative (welcome_series, q1_enterprise_push, product_launch_v2)
- **utm_content** = funnel stage + specific asset (tofu_product_demo, mofu_roi_calculator, bofu_security_whitepaper)

What this structure allows you to answer:

- **"Which campaign drives the most pipeline?"** - Campaign shows your initiative (q1_enterprise_push vs product_launch_v2).
- **"What's our conversion rate by funnel stage?"** - Content parameter has the funnel stage, so you can filter all TOFU vs MOFU vs BOFU content.
- **"Which BOFU assets actually close enterprise deals?"** - Filter content by "bofu_" and see which specific pieces (security whitepapers, implementation decks) convert.
- **"Should we create more TOFU or MOFU content for enterprise buyers?"** - Compare performance across funnel stages within content parameter.
- **"Which LinkedIn placement works best for bottom-funnel enterprise content?"** - Cross-reference medium (profile vs company_page) with content (bofu_security_whitepaper).

How to implement this framework

- **Audit the last 90 days.** Pull every variation of your top five traffic sources. You'll likely find "LinkedIn," "linkedin," and "LI" all coexisting. Consolidate them.
- **Create a one-page standards doc.** Define six approved sources, five mediums, three formatting rules. Simple enough that anyone can follow it in 30 seconds.
- **Build a UTM generator.** A locked spreadsheet or form that only allows approved values.
- **Add UTM validation to your launch checklist.** Treat it like creative or legal sign-off, non-negotiable.
- **Assign ownership.** One person responsible for monthly reviews and taxonomy enforcement. Not a committee. One name.

I know this isn't some transformational AI-powered attribution strategy you'd rather be building. But you can't optimise what you can't measure, and you can't measure what you haven't tagged consistently.

Fix your UTM hygiene. Then fix your attribution model.

Sincerely,

Muiz Thomas, Founder & CMO
GrowUp

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