

UNDERSTANDING ADVERTISING MATURITY IN SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi in a Snapshot

Digitally native population

Accelerating e-commerce adoption

Concentrated platform ecosystems

Rapidly expanding data capabilities

99% of Saudi Arabia's population has internet access, giving advertisers near-universal digital reach.¹

Advertisers in Saudi Arabia are in a particularly enviable position. Nearly everyone is online – internet access has reached 99% of the population. There are more than 48 million mobile connections, equivalent to ~140% of the population.² It's also one of the fastest-scaling digital economies globally, with digital activities accounting for SAR 495 billion in economic value and almost 16% of GDP in 2025.³

Unsurprisingly, digital advertising delivery is fundamentally mobile-led. It accounts for ~64% of spend and ~67% of impressions – and it's accelerating.⁴ Spend is projected to rise from ~0.9 billion USD in 2020 to ~2.8 billion USD in 2029, growing at a 10% CAGR.⁵

However, increased spend does not automatically translate into proportional commercial impact. It can actually amplify inefficiency if not harnessed correctly. To translate this reach into measurable business outcomes, greater maturity is needed across four capabilities.

In collaboration with Kearney, we combined industry expertise, proprietary data and advertiser insights to inform the creation of a diagnostic model that defines effective digital advertising in Saudi Arabia.

¹ Communications, Space & Technology Commission. ² Saudi Arabia Market Research by Euro Group Consulting. ³ Communications, Space & Technology Commission. ⁴ Ipsos advertising data (KSA 2025). ⁵ MAGNA Atlas, by MAGNA Intelligence (IPG Mediabrands), Saudi Arabia advertising market forecast; 2. IAB MENA – MENA Digital Adspend 2024.

Introducing the Digital Advertising Maturity Diagnostic

With Snap, advertisers in Saudi Arabia can now assess their current capabilities, identify priority gaps, and define clear steps for improvement.

By adhering to four core pillars that convert ad spend into sustained business value, organisations will not only engage in digital growth, but *lead* it.

1. Alignment

Align strategy, objectives, and budgets but adapt to insights and evolving market conditions.

2. Localization

Embed Saudi cultural relevance across creative development and content execution.

78%

of digital spend is generated by Arabic and bilingual executions.⁶

73%

respondents positively perceive brands featuring Saudi creators.⁷

89%

of respondents agree — strategic presence during key local moments drives stronger brand perception.⁸

3. Activation

Avoid optimizing platforms independently as this approach tends to under-deliver. Instead, design integrated consumer journeys that connect discovery, engagement and conversion

70%

of platform-driven impact is linked to synergy across channels.⁹

4. Data

Build stronger data and measurement foundations for advanced targeting, performance evaluation and continuous optimization.

Day-to-day platform dashboards aren't enough. Add advertiser first-party data verification and independent third-party validation — such as incrementality testing and mix modeling — to make investment decisions much easier.

⁶ Snapchat × Annalee × Omnicom MediaGroup: Uncovering Snapchat's ROI in the GCC. ⁷ Snapchat: Navigating the new era of media measurement. ⁸ Snapchat: Navigating the new era of media measurement. ⁹ 2025 KSA Kantar Cross Media Analysis commissioned by Snap Inc.

Spotlight on Structures

1. Local large enterprises

2. Local SMEs

3. Established global enterprises

4. Global newcomers

5. Government and semi-government entities.

Saudi Arabia has five structurally distinct advertiser cohorts.

Each cohort has their own unique strengths and constraints which influences how effectively the four pillars are developed. The diagnostic structure remains consistent, but its application can vary, so organizations can track their own progress using a consistent evaluation approach.

Let's Talk Stats

Revenue growth

Organizations with advanced digital advertising maturity typically demonstrate annual revenue growth rates of

10–30%¹⁰

Cost efficiency

Mature digital advertising systems are associated with almost **30% reduction in operational costs**¹¹ and roughly **25% lower nonproductive spend**.¹²

Sales and acquisition

Advanced digital maturity correlates with an **18% lift in total sales**, alongside stronger capital efficiency.¹³

Precision targeting and integrated activation

Increases the customer lifetime value to customer acquisition cost ratio (LTV/CAC) to

6.7x

compared with approximately 4.0x under traditional approaches.¹⁴

Perception and consideration

Top-performing brands achieved overall perception scores of approximately

78–80%

while lower-performing brands clustered closer to the

60–65%

range.¹⁵

^{10,11} AI Digital Group (2026) — Martech: Complete guide to advertising technology in 2026. ¹² Nielsen (2024) — Optimizing in-flight digital ad campaigns; ¹³ AI Digital Group (2026) — Martech: Complete guide to advertising technology in 2026. ¹⁴ Macabus (2026) — Forecasting CLV: Modeling Customer Lifetime Value Changes. ¹⁵ Ipsos survey, 2025, 400 participants in Saudi Arabia. ⁹ 2025 KSA Kantar Cross Media Analysis commissioned by Snap Inc.

Case in Point: High Maturity vs Maturity Gaps

Here, a local brand’s cross-pillar maturity results in strong perception, while a global retailer’s localisation gap leads to weaker audience resonance.

Company	Type	Maturity score	Brand perception	Key gap
Local FMCG brand	Established local player	High – all four pillars	~80% perception strength	None identified
Global digital retailer	New market entrant (Saudi Arabia)	Mixed – weak on one pillar	46% feel content is locally relevant	Creative, Content & Localisation – uses regional formats rather than Saudi-specific content

Sign Up for the Saudi Digital Advertising Maturity Diagnostic

This modular tool can increase capability across the four aforementioned pillars for all five advertising cohorts, effectively driving performance throughout the tunnel by assessing organizations across standardized maturity scores: Nascent, Emerging, and Advanced. To find out more, reach out to the Snap team who, in partnership with Kearney, will run the diagnostic, identify priority capability gaps, and define targeted actions to progress.

[Download the Whitepaper](#) 