CONCEPT

Growth Marketing and Viral Marketing: Referral Loops, K-Factor and Rapid Experiments

9 – 13 August 2027
Barcelona - Eixample district four-star



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Ref: 926_21434 **Date:** 9 – 13 August 2027 **Location:** Barcelona - Eixample district four-star **Fees:** 23500 SAR

Introduction:

Growth marketing replaces one-off campaigns with a repeatable system of small experiments, yet many teams still buy reach, watch sign-ups leak away after the first visit and launch referral schemes that nobody shares. Viral marketing is treated as luck rather than as mechanics that can be designed and measured. This Core Concept course shows digital, social media and product marketing teams how to map the pirate funnel, build growth loops, engineer shareability, raise the K-factor and run a disciplined testing rhythm. Participants produce a Growth Experiment Backlog and Referral Loop Design for a case brand.

Course Objectives:

- Diagnose where a brand loses users across acquisition, activation, retention, referral and revenue and choose the stage worth fixing first
- Set a north star metric and redesign linear funnels as self-reinforcing growth loops
- Calculate the K-factor and viral cycle time and design a double-sided referral programme with fraud controls
- Engineer shareable content, word-of-mouth triggers and user-generated content that spread without paid media
- Run a weekly experimentation cadence with ICE-scored hypotheses and rapid landing-page and message tests
- Protect retention and brand trust with cohort tracking, re-engagement sequences and a no-dark-patterns review

Target Audience:

- Digital marketing leads who own customer acquisition targets and channel test budgets
- Social media managers responsible for organic reach, sharing and community engagement
- Product marketing managers who own launch, activation and feature adoption messaging
- Customer lifecycle and CRM leads accountable for retention and win-back programmes
- E-commerce and subscription marketing managers who run referral, loyalty and promotion schemes

Course Outline:

Day 1: Growth Marketing Foundations and the Pirate Funnel

- Growth Marketing Versus Traditional Campaign Marketing: Team Structure and Operating Rhythm
- AARRR Pirate Funnel: Acquisition, Activation, Retention, Referral and Revenue Stages
- Product-Market Fit Signals and the Must-Have Survey Before Scaling
- Leaky Bucket Audit: Stage-by-Stage Conversion and Drop-Off Snapshot
- Growth Opportunity Map for Consumer, Subscription and B2B Brands

Day 2: Growth Loops, North Star Metric and Viral Mechanics

- North Star Metric Selection and Input Metric Levers
- Growth Loops Versus Funnels: Viral, Content, Paid and Sales Loop Types
- K-Factor Viral Coefficient: Invitation Rate, Conversion Rate and Viral Cycle Time
- Viral Transmission Vehicles: Pass-Along, Incentive-Based and Trend-Based Spread
- Market Mavens, Social Hubs and Network Effects in Seeding Plans

Day 3: Referral Programmes, Shareable Content and Community-Led Growth

- Referral Programme Architecture: Single-Sided and Double-Sided Reward Structures
- Referral Incentive Choice: Sender, Recipient, Shared and Donation Rewards
- STEPPS Shareability Checklist: Social Currency, Triggers, Emotion, Public, Practical Value and Stories
- User-Generated Content Campaigns: Hashtag Challenges, Reviews and Customer Showcases
- Community-Led Growth: Ambassador Circles, Member Forums and Advocate Recognition

Day 4: Experimentation Cadence, Retention and Growth Ethics

- Weekly Growth Meeting Rhythm and Hypothesis Card Template
- ICE Scoring: Impact, Confidence and Ease Prioritisation of Test Ideas
- Rapid Landing-Page and Message Split Tests: Headlines, Offers and Calls to Action
- Cohort Retention Curves, Re-Engagement Sequences and Win-Back Offers
- Dark Pattern Red Flags: Fake Urgency, Confirmshaming, Roach Motel and Referral Spam

Day 5: Case Study: Growth Experiment Backlog and Referral Loop Design

- Case Brand Brief: Stalled Sign-Ups and Low Sharing for a Subscription App
- Pirate Funnel Diagnosis and North Star Metric Choice for the Case Brand
- Referral Loop Blueprint with K-Factor Targets and Abuse Safeguards
- Growth Experiment Backlog Build with ICE Scores and Six-Week Test Calendar
- Backlog and Loop Pitch to a Growth Review Panel with Peer Challenge

Skills You Will Gain:

- Pirate Funnel Diagnosis
- Growth Loop Design
- Viral Coefficient Modelling
- Referral Incentive Structuring
- Shareable Content Engineering
- Experiment Prioritisation
- Cohort Retention Reading
- Ethical Growth Review

Why Attend This Course:

- Leave with a Growth Experiment Backlog and Referral Loop Design built on a case brand and ready to adapt to your own
- Stop guessing which campaign idea to fund by ranking every test on impact, confidence and ease
- Turn existing customers into an acquisition channel through referral rewards they actually want to share
- Compare growth practice with marketers from retail, subscription, technology and service brands

Conclusion:

Sustainable growth comes from loops that feed themselves, customers who want to share and a team that tests every week instead of guessing. The course moves from the pirate funnel and growth marketing foundations, through north star metrics, growth loops and viral mechanics, to referral programmes, shareable content and community-led growth, then to experimentation cadence, retention cohorts and dark-pattern risks. The final day applies the method to a case brand and produces a Growth Experiment Backlog and Referral Loop Design ready for review.