

Campaign naming conventions that survive a year

One string, six fields, always in the same order. Anyone can read a campaign name twelve months later, and any tool can split it back into columns.



Six rules

- 1 Lower case only.** "Brand" and "brand" count as two different values in every report.
- 2 Underscores between fields, hyphens inside one.** `retarget-cart` is a single audience.
- 3 All six fields, in this order.** None of them is optional.
- 4 Only codes from the tables below.** Add a code to its table before anyone uses it.
- 5 Periods that sort as text.** `2026q3` or `2026m09`, never `sep26`.
- 6 Never rename a live campaign.** A changed setup gets the next variant instead.

The codes

MARKET

<code>ph</code>	Philippines
<code>sg</code>	Singapore
<code>my</code>	Malaysia
<code>au</code>	Australia
<code>us</code>	United States
<code>ww</code>	Several markets

PLATFORM

<code>goog</code>	Google Ads
<code>msft</code>	Microsoft Advertising
<code>meta</code>	Facebook, Instagram
<code>tt</code>	TikTok
<code>li</code>	LinkedIn
<code>eml</code>	Email platform

TYPE

<code>search</code>	Search ads
<code>pmax</code>	Performance Max
<code>shopping</code>	Shopping ads
<code>display</code>	Display, banners
<code>video</code>	Video ads
<code>feed</code>	Social feed ads
<code>email</code>	An email send

AUDIENCE

<code>brand</code>	Brand searches
<code>generic</code>	Non-brand searches
<code>prospect</code>	New to the brand
<code>retarget</code>	Past site visitors
<code>retarget-cart</code>	Left a cart
<code>customer</code>	Customers

PERIOD

<code>2026q3</code>	A quarter
<code>2026m09</code>	A month, two digits
<code>always</code>	Evergreen

VARIANT

<code>v1</code> <code>v2</code>	Next number per setup
<code>v2a</code> <code>v2b</code>	Side-by-side test

Examples

✓	<code>ph_goog_search_brand_2026q3_v2</code>	Brand search in the Philippines, the second setup this quarter.
✓	<code>sg_meta_feed_retargert-cart_2026m09_v1</code>	Cart retargeting on Facebook and Instagram in Singapore, for September.
✓	<code>ww_goog_pmax_generic_always_v4</code>	An evergreen Performance Max campaign across markets, on its fourth setup.
✗	<code>PH_Google_Brand Search_Q3</code>	Capitals, a space, codes that are not in the tables, and two fields missing.
✗	<code>ph_goog_search_brand_sep26_v1</code>	Sorted as text, <code>oct25</code> lands between <code>aug26</code> and <code>sep26</code> .
✗	<code>ph-goog-search-retarget-cart-2026q3-v1</code>	Hyphens everywhere, so <code>retarget-cart</code> cannot be told apart from two fields.

Splitting a name back into columns

Google Sheets `=SPLIT(A2, "_")`

Excel (Microsoft 365) `=TEXTSPLIT(A2, "_")`

In Looker Studio, add one calculated field per column:

Market `REGEXP_EXTRACT(Campaign, "^([_]+)")`

Platform `REGEXP_EXTRACT(Campaign, "^[_]+_([_]+)")`

Type `REGEXP_EXTRACT(Campaign, "^(?:[_]+){2}([_]+)")`

Audience `REGEXP_EXTRACT(Campaign, "^(?:[_]+){3}([_]+)")`

Period `REGEXP_EXTRACT(Campaign, "^(?:[_]+){4}([_]+)")`

Variant `REGEXP_EXTRACT(Campaign, "^(?:[_]+){5}([_]+)")`

Replace Campaign with the name of your campaign field. With the Google Analytics connector it is Session campaign.

Checking a name before it goes live

In Google Sheets, this returns TRUE when the name in A2 follows every rule above:

```
=REGEXMATCH(A2, "[a-z]{2}_[a-z]+_[a-z]+_[a-z]+(-[a-z]+)*_(\\d{4}(q[1-4]|m(0[1-9]|1[0-2]))|always)_v\\d+[a-z]?")
```

Keeping the list honest

- One person owns the code tables. Everyone else asks before adding a code.
- Record the date each code was added, so an old name can still be read.
- Use the full name as `utm_campaign`, so GA4 and the ad platform report the same string.
- Run new names through the check above before anything goes live.