

# Announcing the 2025 Digital Marketing Workshop: Know Your Customer

In today's rapidly evolving world of technology, connecting with your customers and enhancing their experience is more important than ever. But how can you do that if you don't truly know them? Today, the EMU Center for Digital Engagement announced its annual [Digital Marketing Workshop](#), themed "Know Your Customer." The event will take place on November 21 at EMU's Student Center, Grand Ballroom, 900 Oakwood St., Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

Registration is currently open with [\\$35 half price general admission tickets](#) available through Nov 7, 2025. Substantial discounts for [current students](#) and [faculty](#) at local area high schools, colleges, and universities are also available.

The full-day workshop brings together marketing professionals, industry leaders, the business community and the university community to explore strategies for connecting with customers with a focus on engagement. The day includes:

- **Breakfast Keynote (8:00–9:00 a.m.) - How Knowing Your Customer Can Drive Revenue:** Derek Janis, the CMO of AcquireUP, shares insights from developing a marketing strategy that took BrightDrop, GM's new commercial EV and last-mile delivery company, from start-up to over \$1 billion in revenue in two years. In his current role at AcquireUp, Derek is applying these skills to developing a sales generation platform for financial services.
- **Panel 1 (9:10-10:00 a.m.): How Performance Marketers Get to Know Their Customers:** Experts from Pinterest, Google, Ford, and CareerNow Brands will discuss how performance marketers guide customers along their journeys to successful outcomes. Speakers include Jorel McCree (Lead Client Partner, Pinterest), Kayla Villegas (Senior Account Executive, Google Large Client Services), Liz Ledlie (Senior Marketing Leader, Ford), and Taylor Nash (Manager, Marketing Automation).
- **Networking Break (10:20–10:50 a.m.): Sponsored by the Digital Summer Clinic:** Co-hosted by EMU College of Business representatives Kim Barker (Management Department), Sufian Qrunfleh, and Alankrita Pandey, together with Nick Woods (Senior Account Manager, Google). Attendees will have an opportunity to connect.
- **Panel 2 (10:50 a.m.–12:00 p.m.) Connecting with Sports Fans through Storytelling:** Learn how major league sports teams engage fans through storytelling, both in the moment and throughout seasons. Panelists include Emma Nye (Director of Social Media, Detroit Tigers), Mal Smith (Senior Producer, Detroit Pistons), Andrew Kristoff (Director Digital Media, Detroit Red Wings), moderated by Bilal Saeed (Co-founder CLR

Academy and Co-owner of AFC Ann Arbor).

- **Lunch Panel (12:00–2:00 p.m.) What We've Learned Today:** Bud Gibson, Director of EMU Center for Digital Engagement, will host a discussion with the day's contributors to review key points, answer questions, and share practical takeaways.

"This will be our 15th Digital Marketing Workshop," said Bud Gibson, Workshop and Center Founder. "We started with around 70 attendees and local business speakers. Last year, we attracted approximately 250 attendees featuring nationally recognized Detroit speakers, and this year, we'll feature leaders from Google, Ford, local Career Now Brands, and Detroit's major sports teams. It's all about the topic of "Know Your Customer." In today's digital age, knowing your customer has taken on a whole new dimension, and that's what this workshop is here to explore. With panelists ranging from diverse companies, there will truly be something for everybody. We believe this event provides a unique opportunity to learn from and network with local area professionals interested in digital."