

# Alexa Marketing Guide

*How to Market Your Alexa Skill*

If you *\*only\** build it...they won't come.

# What to Expect from this Guide

When building an Alexa skill for your client or brand, there's more to consider than bringing the skill to life. The right measures must be put into place to bring the skill to your intended audiences, too. There are many avenues for driving your audience to your skill; it's imperative to plan for these.

This Alexa Marketing & Advertising Guide walks agencies through what should be considered for skill marketing and promotion across channels. Through upfront planning, the go-to-market plan, and potential opportunities with Amazon, this guide will help drive engagement goals with strengthened strategies for driving skill discovery and usage.

The guide contains the following sections:

Skill Creation with Marketing in Mind

Creating Your Go-To-Market Plan

Potential Marketing Opportunities with Amazon

Examples & Cases

Evaluating Success

How to Get Started

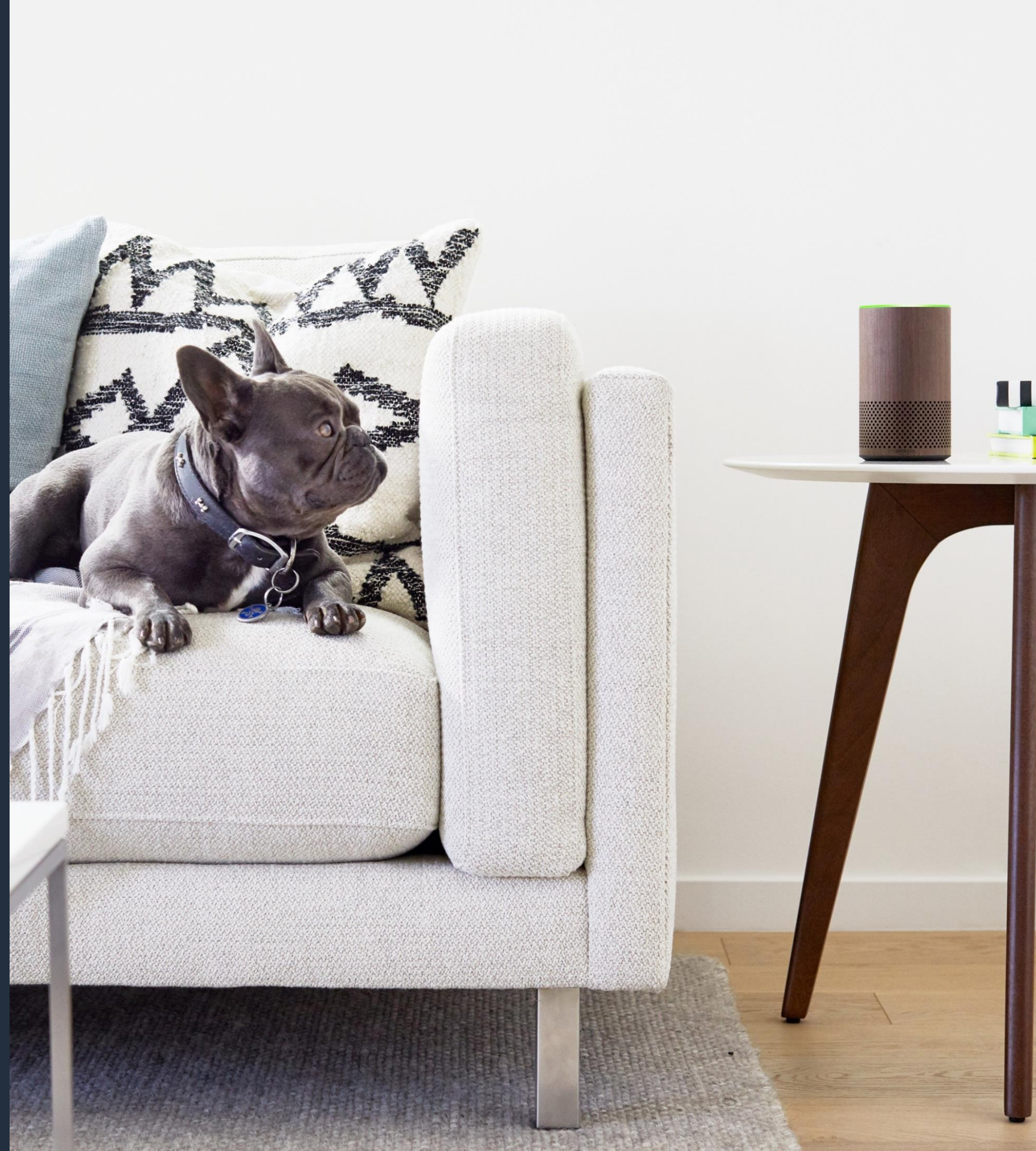
*Refer to the [Amazon Echo/Alexa Brand Guidelines](#) for guidance on appropriate usage of Amazon Echo and Alexa brand assets. TV commercials, film, video advertising, radio broadcasts, packaging, sweepstakes, or contests will require Amazon review. Please reach out to [ae-skills-partners@amazon.com](mailto:ae-skills-partners@amazon.com).*

# Skill Creation with Marketing in Mind

Marketing your skill is not only about ensuring promotion at launch. It starts from the beginning.

HERE'S WHAT WE'LL COVER IN THIS SECTION:

- 1 Asking the Right Questions
- 2 Optimizing the Foundation







1

Skill Creation with Marketing in Mind

# Asking the Right Questions

# Asking the Right Questions

Don't wait until your skill is ready to launch before planning your marketing. You should begin planning your marketing as soon as your skill is being defined. By keeping marketing (or what will be "news worthy" about your skill) in mind when the skill is being defined, it may lead to ideas for changes or enhancements in the skill experience.

Take the time to thoughtfully consider answers to the following questions. These answers may shape your skill and are what you should highlight in your marketing.

1. What makes your skill different than the others already available to customers today?
2. What advantage does voice give your service or experience? Does it save time? Is being "hands free" enhancing the customer's day to day life? Is it fun? Is it personalized?
3. What will customers expect your skill to do for them? Can you fully complete the task for the customer?
4. What about your skill will entice customers to use it regularly?
5. Can your skill function independently of an app or website?
6. Does your skill represent your brand and your brand messaging?

# 2

Skill Creation with Marketing in Mind

## Optimizing the Foundation

After identifying the motivations for customers to habitually use your skill, the next step is to optimize your skill features toward fulfilling these.

These best practices for this stage are detailed over the following slides:

- Optimize your skill name and invocation name
- Add an eye-catching skill icon
- Choose stand-alone example phrases
- Write a clear, value-rich description
- Refresh content regularly and often
- Maximize discoverability with keywords

# Optimizing the Foundation

### OPTIMIZE YOUR SKILL NAME AND INVOCATION NAME

Be sure your skill has a clear and intuitive name that speaks to its purpose and value. The name should set clear expectations of what your skill can do and what the customer experience will be like. Also, make sure your skill name doesn't over promise and set false expectations.

If you are expanding a well-known brand to the Alexa universe it could be as simple as, "Alexa, open X." For skills with a brand not yet part of customers' daily lives, it is important to keep the skill name short, direct, and easy to remember.

A new skill with no existing branding needs to think about the skill name the same way you would think about naming a new company, product, or service. All the basics still apply: keep it simple, short, unique, flexible, and easy to pronounce. Think about whether or not your skill's name will be part of a broader brand. Will it allude to what the skill is about or what the skill does? It is entirely your responsibility as the developer to make sure your skill name does not break any legal trademark laws. Find additional guidance on requirements for your invocation name [here](https://developer.amazon.com/docs/custom-skills/choose-the-invocation-name-for-a-custom-skill.html)<sup>1</sup>.

Your skill name should also be easy to remember so customers can recall it when they are ready to activate your skill. Avoid names that are long or hard to pronounce. Think through what variations customers may use and select the most natural, easiest to remember phrase ("Alexa, open Flightchecker" versus "Alexa, open Flightchecker the Flight Time Authority").

After deciding on the perfect invocation phrase, make sure it also makes sense in a single interaction intent. For example, "Alexa, open Daily Horoscopes and give me the horoscope for Taurus." Remember that people don't always speak in grammatically correct sentences and you shouldn't expect them to change. Be sure your invocation name and follow-up intents allow for natural language, mistakes and all.

Be sure the invocation works. Test it before submitting your skill for certification. Customers are unlikely to try a skill a second time if their initial experience was broken.



# Optimizing the Foundation

### ADD AN EYE-CATCHING SKILL ICON

Along with a description, your skill icon is important to your overall brand. Every skill in the Alexa Skill Store has an icon to help the skill stand out, and multi-modal devices can display your branding or complementary imagery when a customer is using your skill. Use your skill icon as another opportunity to grab customers' attention.

As the graphic representation of your skill, think through what you want customers to see. If you have a well-known brand already, this Alexa skill logo is likely a reformatted version of your logo you already have for the dimensions and purposes of Alexa. If your skill is a new concept or brand to customers, you'll need to think through what you want your skill logo to be and how it represents your skill visually.

Keep in mind the skill logos are sometimes small and appear mostly on white background and you will not be able to fit much text comfortably.

Your icon doesn't have to be flashy; in fact, some of the best icons feature thoughtful and intuitive design that visually speak to what the skill is all about. As you're designing your skill icon, keep in mind a few design best practices:

- **Keep It Simple.** Avoid cluttering the icon with fine detail, which will be hard to see in small sizes.
- **Keep Text To A Minimum.** If you have to include text, make sure it fits in the boundaries of the icon frame, and make it big enough to be legible even at the smallest sizes.
- **Avoid Using Detailed Photographs.** Unless cropped, they quickly become hard to see at smaller sizes.
- **Make It Recognizable.** Customers should be able to identify your icon at a glance and have some idea what the skill represents.

# Optimizing the Foundation

## ADD AN EYE-CATCHING SKILL ICON (EXAMPLES)

### Established Brand Examples



*"Alexa, open The Tonight Show"*



*"Alexa, start Call of Duty"*



*"Alexa, ask U.S. Bank to get my checking account balance"*



*"Alexa, Open Prudential Retirement"*

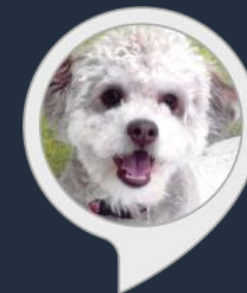
### Skills with New Brands



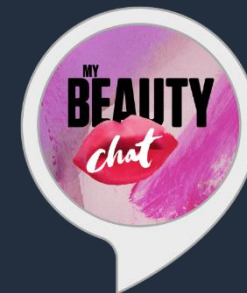
*"Alexa, open Doubles Trouble"*



*"Alexa, start Chompers from Gimlet"*



*"Alexa, ask Jurassic Bark to bark"*



*"Alexa, open My Beauty Chat"*



Try out the Alexa icon builder for your skill [here](#).

# Optimizing the Foundation

### CHOOSE STAND-ALONE EXAMPLE PHRASES

In the developer portal, you have the option to add up to three example phrases for your skill. When completing this step, only include the invocation phrase or a single intent utterance as your example phrase. These examples are important as they are displayed on your detail page, on the landing page of the Alexa Skill Store, and (if your skill is selected) on any marketing sent out by Amazon.

Notice that there are a variety of utterances in the above example. As a best practice, this utterance should always be the phrase that will invoke your skill or is a single interaction phrase ("Alexa, open My Horoscopes." and "Alexa, open My Horoscopes and give me the horoscope for Taurus."). Sharing an utterance out of context is frustrating to customers, even if your skill has conversational capabilities. For example, do not include "How do I make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich?" in your example utterances if the customer needs to state "Alexa, open Easy Recipes" first.

*"Alexa, open My  
Horoscopes."*

*"Alexa, open My  
Horoscopes and give me  
the horoscope  
for Taurus."*

# Optimizing the Foundation

### WRITE A CLEAR, VALUE-RICH DESCRIPTION:

When customers visit the Alexa Skills Store or ask Alexa about skills, they have tens of thousands of skills to choose from. Along with an intuitive skill name, a well-written skill description for the Alexa Skill Store and a short first-time voice introduction will go a long way in drawing customers' attention and convincing them to give your skill a try.

Make sure your skill description clearly articulates the value of your skill and what customers can expect it to do. Share how your skill makes a task faster, easier, or more delightful with voice. Include details and utterances that showcase your skill's key features and pique customers' interest.

Include your refresh cadence in the description. Share how often you plan to update your skill so customers will know to keep coming back for more delightful interactions. Getting customers to use your skill for the first time is only the beginning.

*Skill Value*

*Expectation*

*Feature Showcase*

*Utterance Samples*

*Refresh Cadence*

# Optimizing the Foundation

## REFRESH CONTENT REGULARLY AND OFTEN

The launch phase of your skill is only the first step. You should be actively planning what updates you will be making to your content and/or product. There are lots of skills out there. What will make customers keep coming back to yours?

If the skill is content based (trivia questions, news headlines), you should have a plan to update the content at a cadence that provides fresh content as appropriate for your category, and you should tell the customer when they can expect updates to be live.

If the skill is not content based (skills that turn on/off lights, create a to-do list, etc.), you should be thinking about how to innovate on behalf of the customer.

Once you have launched, read your skill reviews and see what updates customers are asking for.





# Optimizing the Foundation

### MAXIMIZE DISCOVERABILITY WITH KEYWORDS

Keywords help your skill surface when customers search in the Skills Store and explore skills via voice browsing. Adding keywords to your skill during skill creation in the Developer Portal is one of the easiest marketing steps to take and should not be overlooked.

You can add up to thirty relevant keywords to help customers find your skill and to stand out from the rest of the catalog. While your skill name should be pithy, you should add as many rich keywords as possible. For example, you name your skill "Beauty Bests," but keywords may include: beauty, makeup, skincare, advice, tips, hacks, expert, morning routine, nighttime routine, beauty trends. This will now help your skill surface when a customer asks or searches for: "beauty hacks," "skincare," "makeup advice," etc.

Keep in mind that your keywords will be reviewed and monitored; you shouldn't add "video game" to a beauty skill. You can continue to update skill keywords in the Developer Portal.

*"Beauty Bests" keyword examples:*

*beauty* *skincare*  
*makeup*  
*advice* *expert* *tips* *hacks*  
*morning routine* *beauty trends*  
*nighttime routing*

# Creating Your Go-to-Market Plan

It is important to invest in a go-to-market plan for your skill just as you would for any other new brand initiative.

HERE'S WHAT WE'LL COVER IN THIS SECTION:

- 1 Begin with a Funnel
- 2 Channels to Consider - Owned, Earned, and Paid
- 3 Creative Inclusions





**1**

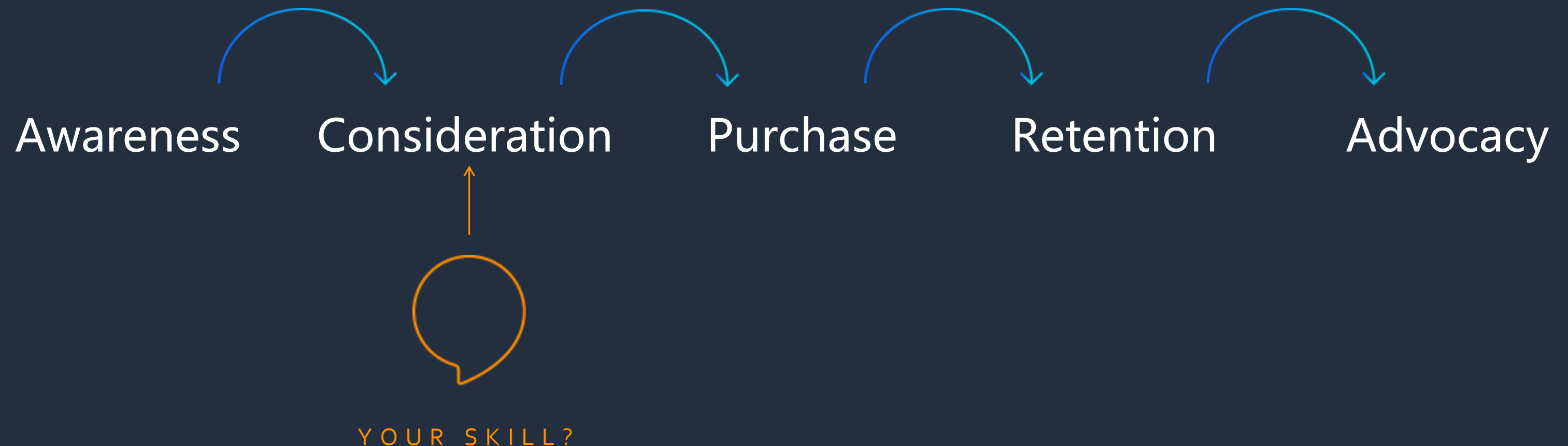
Creating Your Go-to-Market Plan

# Begin with a Funnel

# Begin with a Funnel

Understand your customer, where they are in their journey, and what value your skill provides. Where can voice play a role? The answer won't be the same for every brand, so it's important you look at your specific business case and customer to find where voice can best fit in – and make waves.

Note that first adopters of your skill will likely be existing brand loyalists.



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2

Creating Your Go-to-Market Plan

# Channels to Consider

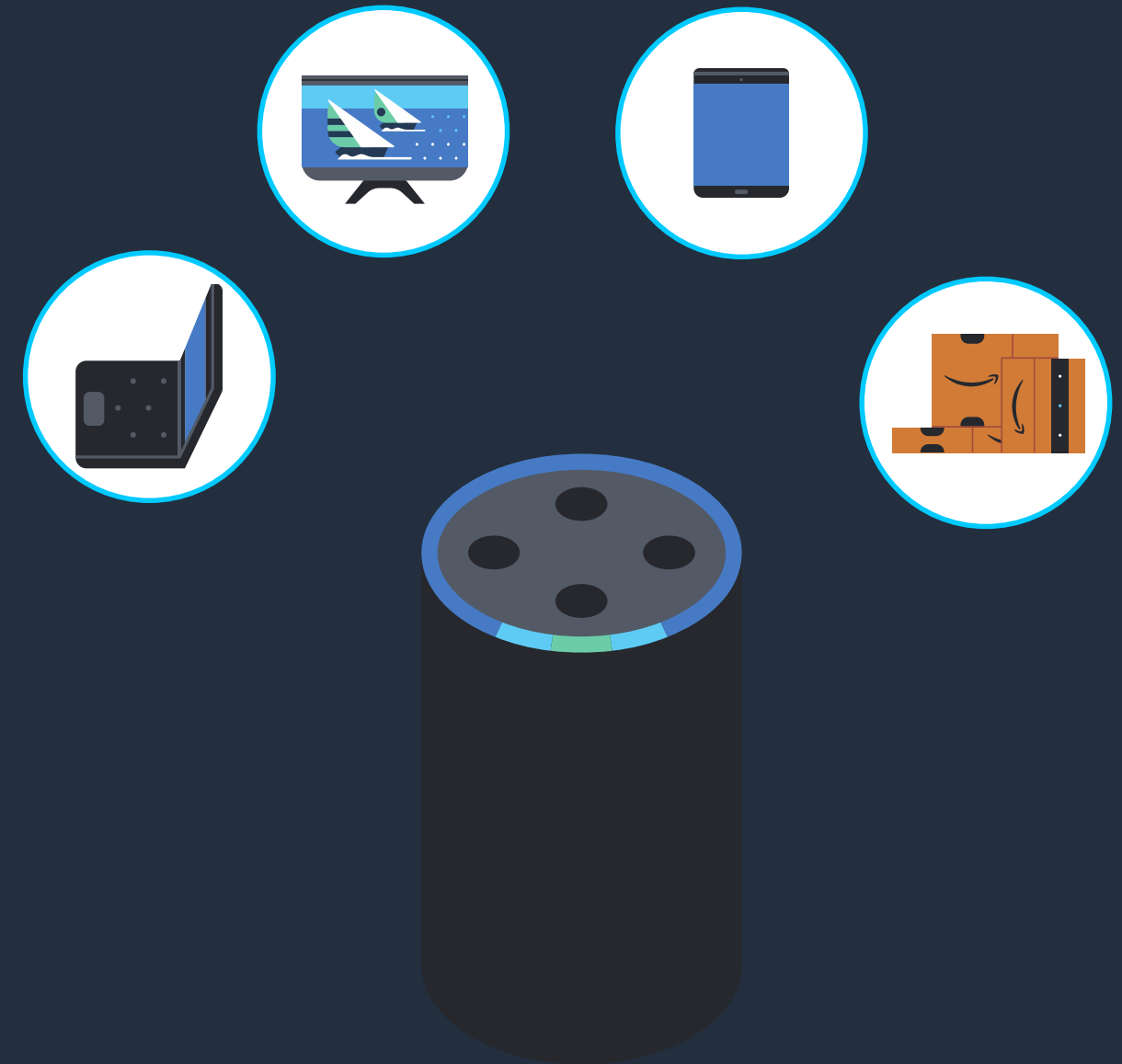


# Channels to Consider

We can't emphasize enough how important it is to promote your skill. This will ensure your intended users show up. Consider owned, earned, and paid channels in your go-to-market plan, such as: a dedicated webpage with detailed information about the skill, TV, radio, print &/or OOH campaigns or placements, online display, email marketing, SEO & SEM, social media, packaging, and PR.

Across marketing, always lead with your invocation name in the form of an utterance and use Alexa branding to leverage customers' awareness. Among your content, consider creating a demo video to use across your channels for customer education.

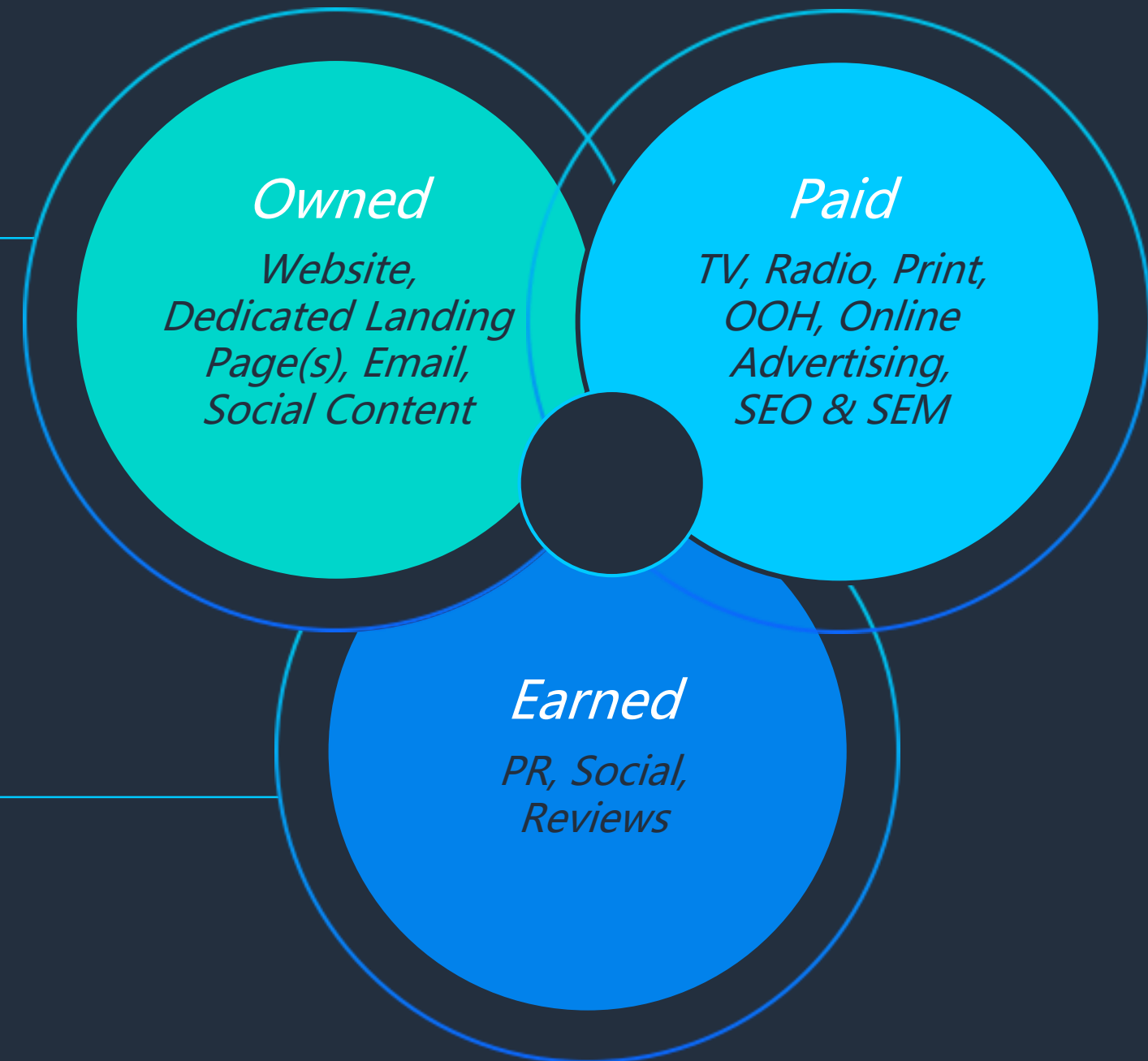
There is a possibility your skill may be featured in Amazon owned marketing. We'll go into more details on that in an upcoming section, but you shouldn't solely rely on these channels as there are many skills and limited placement opportunities. Take control of growing your skill customer base and market it regularly to help it stand out.



# Channels to Consider

Here are examples of owned, earned, and paid channels to consider in your skill's go-to-market plan.

Again, treat this as you would any other new brand initiative in terms of strategically conveying a message across mediums relevant for your targets.



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3

Creating Your Go-to-Market Plan

# Creative Inclusions

# Creative Inclusions

Here are three main suggestions for what to include in the creative you distribute across channels:



### ALWAYS LEAD WITH YOUR INVOCATION NAME IN THE FORM OF AN UTTERANCE.

On all marketing material, include the utterance to invoke your skill. It is best to include the full phrase in quotes (e.g. "Alexa, open Big Sky."). This quickly and easily lets the customer know how to interact with your skill.

No matter how beautiful your marketing material is, or how engaging the skill experience, customers need to be told how to open your skill. They will want to try your skill the moment they hear about it and attention spans are short. If they have to guess how to invoke your skill and they get it wrong, they are unlikely to come back later to try again.



### USE ALEXA BRAND AWARENESS.

The Alexa branding is instantly recognizable and using it boosts your credibility. Think of it like an app store icon, or social icons. The Alexa branding should become part of the channel branding you utilize for your existing services or products.

For guidelines on using the Amazon Echo and Alexa brands in your promotion material, as well as downloadable "Just Ask" badges, check out the [Alexa Skills Marketing Guidelines](#).



Today, seeing and hearing is understanding when it comes to voice technology. To create a more enticing social media post, try to take a short video of your skill in action and post it on Twitch, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, or any other social network.

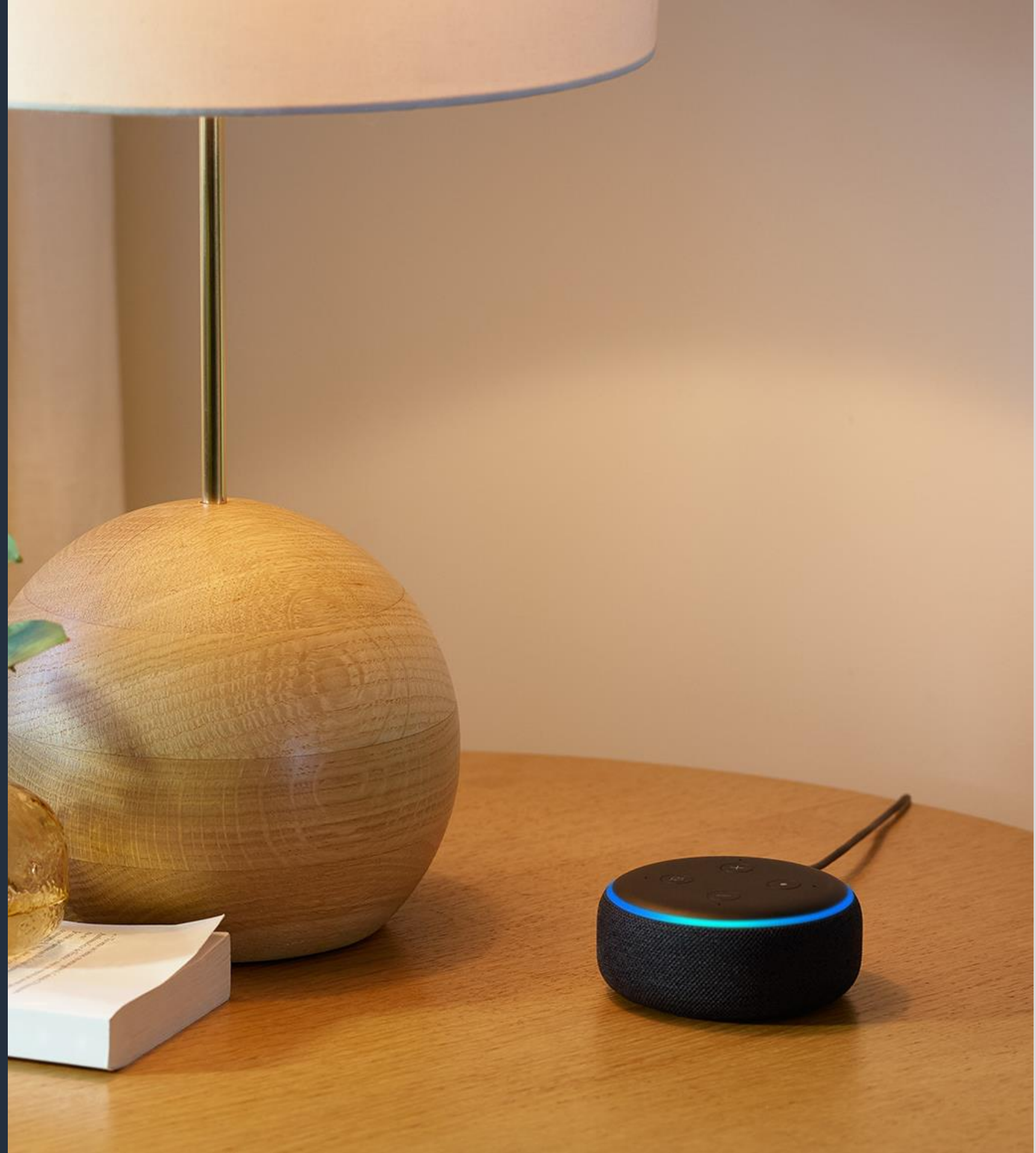
Make your video short and engaging; highlight the most compelling ways customers can use your skill and how to invoke it.

# Potential Marketing Opportunities with Amazon

While it's imperative to think and execute beyond Amazon in marketing your skill, there are potential opportunities with Amazon, too.

HERE'S WHAT WE'LL COVER IN THIS SECTION:

- 1 Amazon Paid Media Opportunities
- 2 Best Practices for Amazon Promotion







1

Potential Marketing Opportunities with Amazon

# Amazon Paid Media Opportunities

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Potential Marketing Opportunities with Amazon Advertising\*

# Amazon Paid Media Opportunities

Boost discovery and awareness of your skill by reaching Amazon customers and Alexa users through a suite of exclusive paid media opportunities.

## AMAZON MUSIC AUDIO ADS ON ALEXA

Reach Alexa users with your key messaging points via a 10-30 second audio spot that you can run during listening on Amazon Music's free streaming tier on Alexa. Highlight your Alexa enablement utterance and listeners can instantly take action to experience your skill.

## VIDEO

Utilize video to show your skill in action and engage Amazon audiences across Amazon's video inventory spanning OTT on Fire TV, Amazon, and Amazon DSP.

## REACH ALEXA USERS ON OTHER CONNECTED AMAZON DEVICES

Fire Tablet and Fire TV are enabled with Alexa voice, which is why there is strong correlation with Alexa users. Display media across Fire TV and Fire Tablet also provide a beautiful, sizable canvas through which you can deliver a memorable and educational message.

## UNIQUE AMAZON AUDIENCES

Combine Alexa and smart home audience behaviors with unique Amazon shopping and entertainment insights to find the right audience to reach for your skill. Options to incorporate your own audience information as well.

## REPORTING

Full funnel reporting on media (impressions, reach, completion rate, click-through-rate, etc.) including related product searches, purchases, and more.

See metrics on "unique customers" and "utterances" in the Alexa dashboard. Historical performance sees lifts in these metrics while media is live.

Potential Marketing Opportunities with Amazon Advertising\*

# Amazon Music audio ads on Alexa

Amazon audio ads provide a seamless path to deliver a message to customers during breaks when listening to Amazon Music's free streaming tier on Alexa enabled devices.



10-30 second "in-home audio ads" that reach connected home audiences on Alexa



Audio ads run during breaks within Amazon Music's free streaming tier



Brands can utilize exclusive Amazon first-party audiences to reach the most relevant audiences for your skill promotion message



Amazon can produce custom audio creative highlighting your skill's key features and enablement utterance



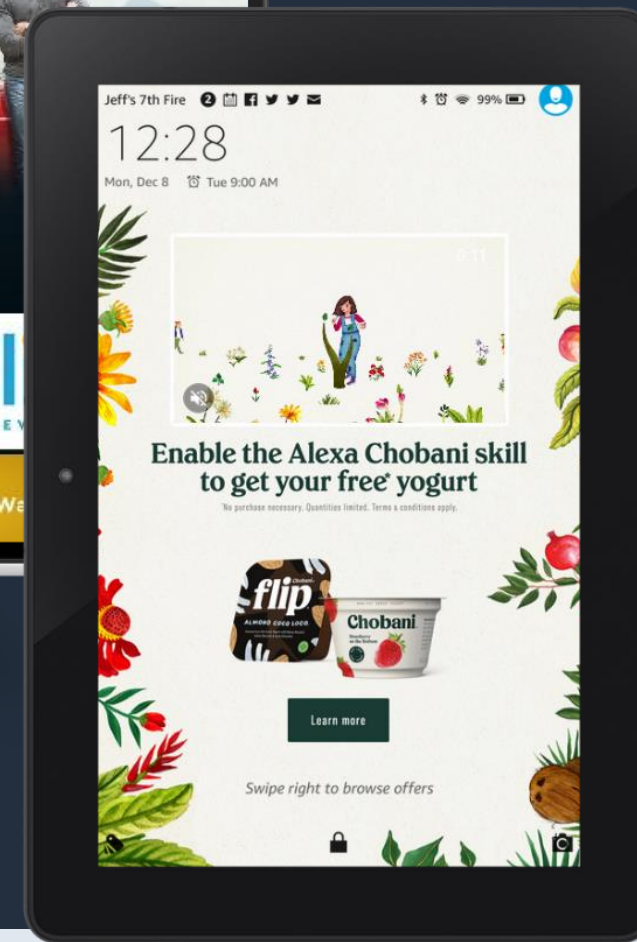


Potential Marketing Opportunities with Amazon Advertising\*

# Additional Paid Media Tactics

*Video*

*Fire Tablet & Fire TV*



## Potential Marketing Opportunities with Amazon Advertising\*

# Educate with an Amazon Landing Page

Drive your media to a custom Amazon landing page which can serve as the home of customer education for your skill. Highlight skill insights, video, and drive customers to enable!





2

Potential Marketing Opportunities with Amazon

# Best Practices for Amazon Promotion

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# Best Practices for Promotion

Browse through the Alexa Skills Store, and you'll see the innovations of our developer community on display. Together we can make sure customers know about the incredible voice experiences you've built to meet their needs, which is why we feature the most engaging skills to customers through various marketing channels like email, social, the Alexa App, and the Alexa Skills Store. We feature skills across all categories, as well as skills created by all types of developers, from big brands to hobbyists.

One of the most common questions we receive from developers is "How can I get my skill featured by Amazon?" We review and consider all skills. The ones that we choose have a few things in common:

- **High Customer Engagement.** They are customer-focused and keep users coming back for more.
- **Great Customer Experience.** They are fully functional and user tested to eliminate friction in the customer experience.
- **Fresh Content.** They offer new, exciting, or up-to-date content to keep customers coming back.
- **High Reliability.** They are load tested and able to handle high customer traffic.

We look at a variety of factors including Alexa Skills Store ratings, engagement, and repeat usage as positive signals that skills meet the above criteria. The next slide features a few best practices to help your skill shine and increase the chances of it being featured by Amazon.

# Best Practices for Promotion

## DESIGN YOUR SKILL WITH YOUR CUSTOMER IN MIND

We want to ensure we're featuring the highest-quality and most engaging skills. We've found that the most engaging skills are ones in which the developer has focused on meeting a specific customer need. As a result, customers continue to use the skill again and again.

When designing a new skill, make sure it has a clear customer benefit.

## KEEP CUSTOMERS COMING BACK WITH FRESH CONTENT

When we see that a skill is being used repeatedly, we know customers find the skill engaging and are more likely to consider it for promotion. That's why developers of the most successful skills are constantly adding new content to keep customers engaged.

When building your skill, establish a content workflow that enables you to quickly and easily add new content to your skill.

## DELIVER A SEAMLESS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

It's important to create a frictionless voice experience to ensure customer satisfaction. Start by choosing a unique skill name, and a memorable invocation name and utterance.

Optimize the customer experience by clearly setting expectations for what your skill can do in the skill description. It's also important to test your skill regularly and ensure your skill responds quickly to customer requests, ideally within 2 seconds.

## MAKE SURE YOUR SKILL IS CONSISTENTLY RELIABLE

Even the most compelling and delightful voice experience won't gain traction if it isn't available whenever customers ask. To be eligible for Amazon promotion, your skill must be load tested and capable of handling an influx of customers without breaking.

To have a consistently reliable skill, configure a professional-grade backend for your skill.

## PROMOTE YOUR SKILL TO DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

One of the criteria for selection is high customer engagement. When you have more customers using your skill, we see that as a signal that your skill provides an engaging voice experience.

Promote your skill to eager Alexa users and generate a baseline of customers to enhance your promotion eligibility.



Read more on these best practices for Amazon promotion [here](#).



# Example Case

Let's look at a real-world example to provide a clearer picture of possibilities and inspiration.

HERE'S WHAT WE'LL COVER IN THIS SECTION:

An Example Activation:

Jurassic World Skill for Alexa





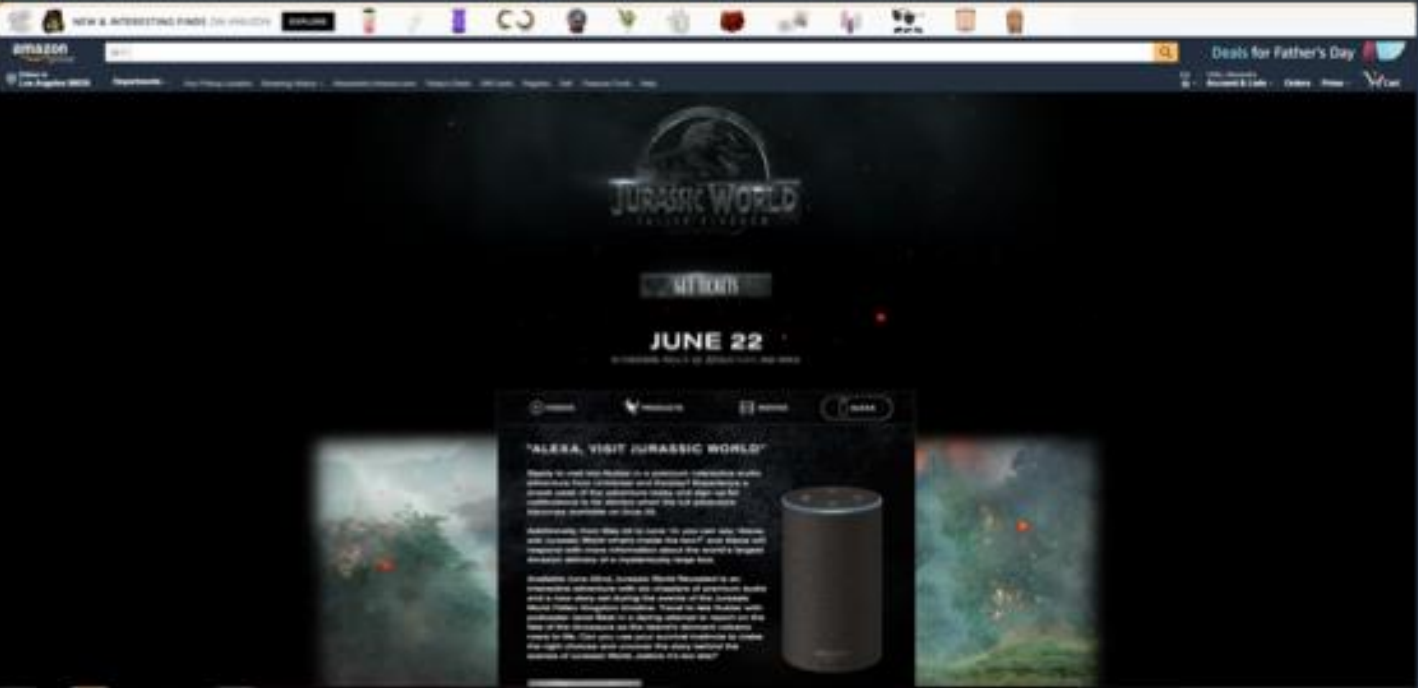
Example Case

# Jurassic World Skill for Alexa



Example Activation

# Jurassic World Skill for Alexa





# Evaluating Success: KPIs and Reporting

Once your skill and its marketing is live, you will want to measure — and optimize — the success of your promotional efforts. And you'll be able to evaluate the skill itself, too.

HERE'S WHAT WE'LL COVER IN THIS SECTION:

- 1 Reporting for Marketing Optimizations
- 2 Reporting for Skill Optimizations



1

Evaluating Success: KPIs and Reporting

# Reporting for Marketing Optimizations

## Evaluating Success: KPIs and Reporting

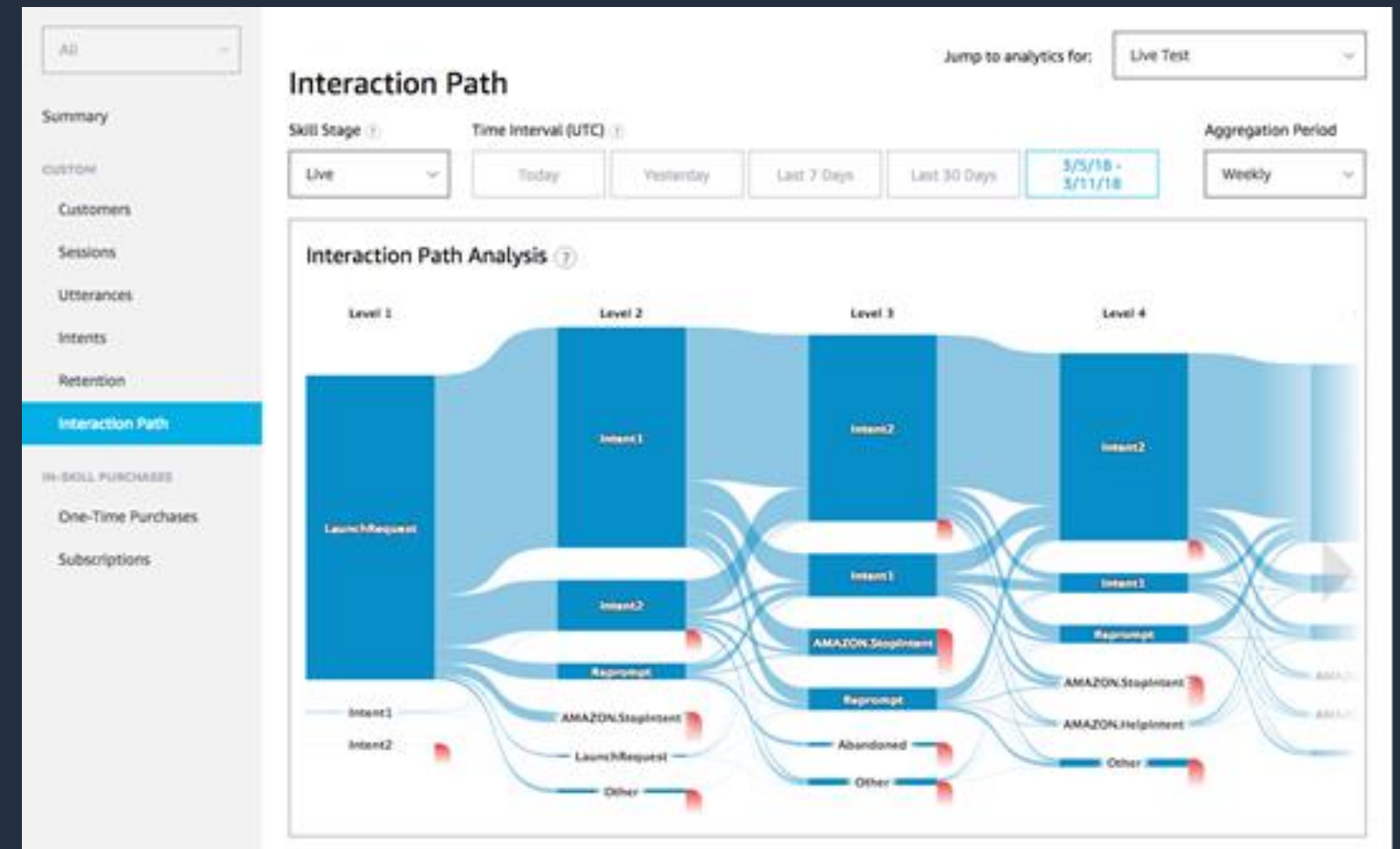
# Marketing Optimizations

After trying any marketing tactic, you will want to measure the impact it had on your skill. This will enable you to garner learnings that can optimize the marketing efforts to be most effective.

The following metrics are available in the developer portal. Note that permissions from the skill's brand must be obtained for access:

- Sessions
- Unique customers
- Utterances
- Intents
- Retention
- Interaction path

There will, of course, be many factors that influence skill usage, but look at these before and after marketing your skill to measure impact. What metric you hone in on will depend on what action you were hoping the customer would take. Most marketing campaigns focus on unique customers, sessions, and retention (though you may not accomplish these all in one campaign).



2

Evaluating Success: KPIs and Reporting

# Reporting for Skill Optimizations



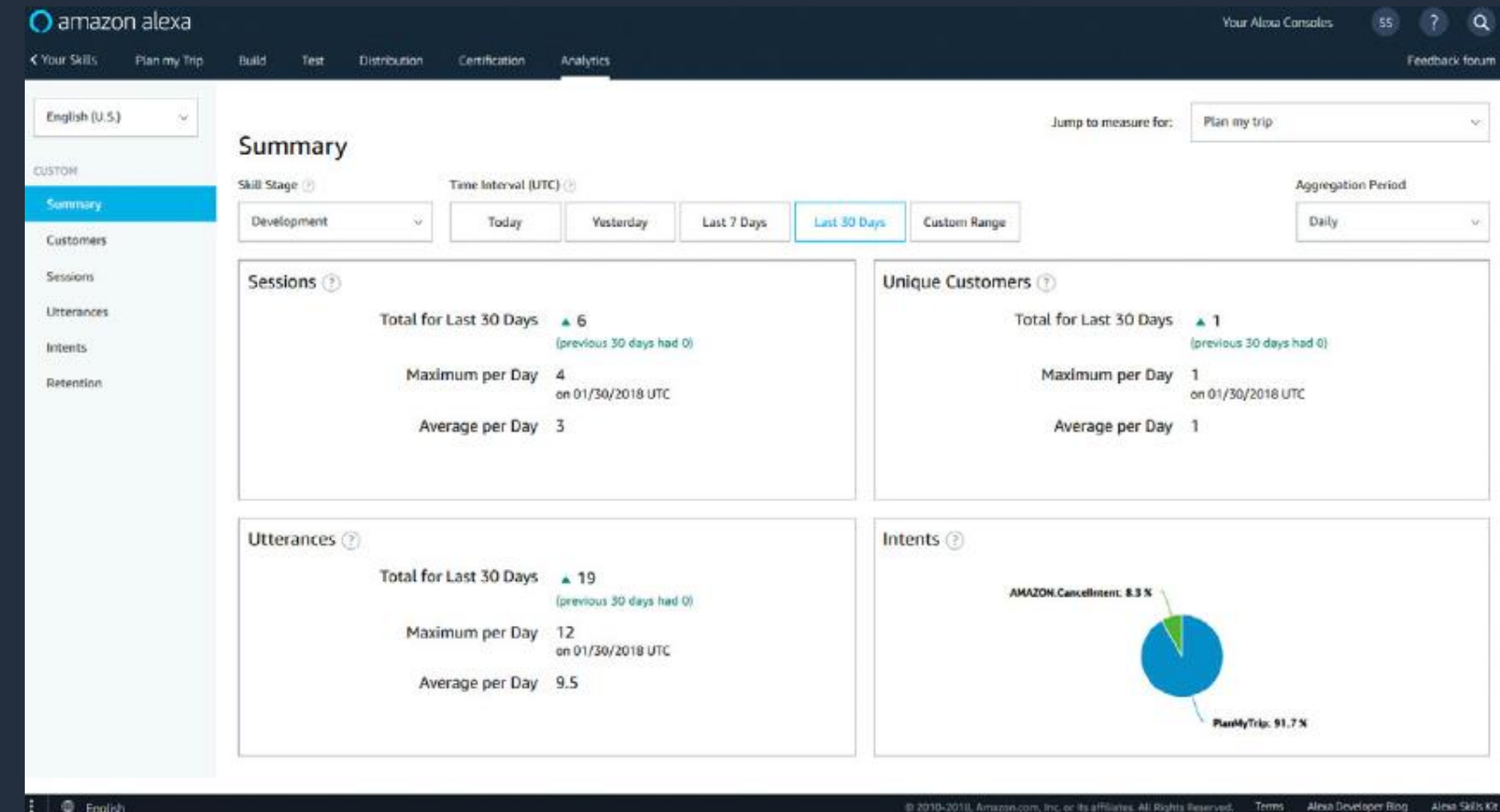
## Evaluating Success: KPIs and Reporting

# Skill Optimizations

You can also garner learnings for optimizations to your product itself. With every request a customer makes of your skill, you have an opportunity to make your skill even better. The key to all of this is to manage and keep track of those requests, and then use that data to make improvements to your skill.

For common data points, like users, intents, sessions, and utterances, the Measure dashboard inside the Alexa Developer Console can help you collect and visualize engagement data for your skill. If you're trying to improve a published skill, you can look at these numbers at least once a week to see if any user behaviors are trending since your last release.

More on using analytics to make skill enhancements can be found [here](https://developer.amazon.com/blogs/alexa/post/e2fa7472-a529-40e3-b35e-53af602e72ab/things-every-alexa-skill-should-do-use-analytics-to-make-enhancements)<sup>2</sup> as well as in the Skill Delivery Framework guide.



# How to Get Started

Now it's time to put this guide into action.

HERE'S WHAT WE'LL COVER IN THIS SECTION:

Resources



# Resources

Prior to submitting your PR and/or marketing materials using the Amazon/Alexa brand for approval (must be submitted a minimum of 7 days prior to release), make sure all of your materials are in compliance with the Amazon and Alexa Guidelines.

## GUIDELINES RESOURCES

Be sure to familiarize yourself with the Amazon and Alexa Marketing Guidelines. Failure to use the Alexa brand or Amazon trademarks accordingly may result in loss of permission to use either.

[Alexa Brand Usage Guidelines](#)

[Amazon Trademark Guidelines](#)

[Alexa Skills Marketing Guidelines](#)

## TEMPLATE RESOURCES

We have also created several templates that you can use to create your skill marketing materials.

[PowerPoint Templates](#)

[Photoshop Templates](#)

[Alexa Speech Bubble Template](#) (be sure to review the [Co-Branded Utterance Bubble Guidelines](#))

**You are now ready to market your Alexa skill.**

You know how your skill will surprise and delight customers, you have optimized your invocation name, added keywords, and have a robust marketing plan that includes frequent updates.

All of your marketing material includes your invocation phrase, and you know how to properly utilize the Alexa brand and trademark.

Any collateral that you already own is updated (current email newsletters, website, etc.) and you have researched paid advertising.

In time, your skill will engage your target users, and it is well on its way to fulfilling your brand goals.





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