

Integrated Marketing Communication

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NOTHING TECHNOLOGY - IMC Plan Phase 1

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## **Advertiser Overview**

Nothing Technology Limited is a consumer electronics company, founded in 2020 by Carl Pei (former director of OnePlus Global), and headquartered in London, United Kingdom. The brand is known for its minimalist design and transparency, featuring sleek, modern aesthetics and unique product features such as the glyph interface built into their smartphones. Their products include the Nothing Phone (2), as well as a series of wireless earbuds (Ear series) and smartwatches (CMF) (Nothing, n.d.).

Despite its niche appeal, Nothing faces significant challenges in expanding its presence in the Canadian market, which is dominated by giants like Apple & Samsung (Statista, 2025). Nothing lacks direct partnerships with major Canadian carriers like Rogers, Bell, or Telus, limiting its availability to online sales and select third-party retailers. This absence in mainstream retail makes it difficult for potential buyers to experience the product before purchasing. Additionally, Nothing's reliance on social media and influencer marketing has not effectively translated into mainstream recognition, although some influencer partnerships have gathered attention, it has not translated to mass market recognition (Nothing Technology, n.d.).

A targeted Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) strategy presents an opportunity for Nothing to establish a stronger presence in Canada by expanding into traditional advertising, retail partnerships, and experiential marketing. Traditional advertising through billboards, TV, and transit ads, can increase brand visibility and credibility, while strategic partnerships with major carriers would improve retail availability and encourage in-store interactions. By integrating a multi-channel marketing approach, Nothing can adapt their online buzz into mainstream consumer adoption, and thus position themselves as a compelling alternative in the Canadian smartphone market.

## **Stage 2: Target Market and Systems of Benefits**

Nothing Technology's phone, audio, and tech accessories company strives to set themselves apart from competitive popular brands. They offer unique and aesthetically appealing products for their customers, setting them apart from the leading brands in the industry.

Their phone products contain a glyph interface by aesthetic choice but also is a functional innovation creating features unlike the rest:

- They display different light patterns for specific contacts, allowing users to know who is calling without looking at the screen
- Act as a progress bar for charging using visual indications of battery levels
- Sync ringtones to create unique audio-visual experiences
- And function as a fill light for the camera for softer illumination for photos and videos

(Designlab, 2021)

Nothing's smartphone looks very unique compared to other brands we traditionally use. They aimed to focus on a fresh and unique look by having custom widgets, monochromatic color schemes, and a dot-matrix font (Designlab, 2021).

Not only do they value their brand image and physically distinct features, but they also prioritize the true benefits of having a cell phone rather than having it for entertainment and distraction. Their brand aims to focus on improved focus, reduced screen time, enhanced security and privacy, reduced phone addiction, environmental impact, and an increased battery life. The

Nothing phone is a simplistic device that has no internet connection, no camera, no social apps, and no flashy features (Henderson, 2024). It is strictly a basic phone used for the basic purposes of having a phone. These core features set their technology brand apart from others because it truly focuses on the phone's actual main functions rather than it being used as a smart device. With the increasing issues of mental health, this phone brand could potentially damage the reputation of phones being a negative cause in consumers' mental wellbeing.

Since Nothing Technology has all the right new features like aesthetics and a positive annotation of user benefits, they strive to be better for the environment. The brand claims to be made up of 100 percent recycled aluminum and 50 percent of the phone's plastic components are made with bio-based recycled products. Their packaging also contains bio-friendly soybean ink and recycled fibres (Smith, 2022). Not many other big tech companies can say their products and packaging are fully environmentally friendly. This is another leading issue in today's environment. Companies like Nothing are putting a positive spin on all aspects of their way of technology for consumers' benefit.

Nothing is a revolutionary newer technology company trying to expand in today's market full of technology experts and users. Since their products are so unique, it is important they find the right target market of consumers who are interested in making the next generation of technology products more valuable. Their target market consists of a specific demographic in age, income, education, occupation, and location. They aim to target tech-savvy individuals between the ages of 18-45 who have a premium income level with a larger disposable income allowance. They value targeting consumers who have a college degree or high education levels and professionals working in tech-related industries. The location of individuals depends on high concentrated areas of technology enthusiasts (Canvas Business Model Team, 2023). These

demographics are more difficult to focus on because a large portion of them are likely involved in other globally top brands containing tech products that do anything you can ask your phone to do and it will do it.

The best targeted market they should focus on is tech enthusiasts. This is a niche group of people, typically in larger cities, who value the importance and use of the technology they are putting in their hands daily. Another key target group is consumers who are early adopters. These consumers tend to quickly embrace new products and enjoy the value of using them. Customers with specific needs of design and value connectivity benefit hugely from Nothing's products because their sleek, minimalistic, and seamless integration offers this niche group of individuals a product they are likely going to contribute to. Lastly, with the newest importance of becoming environmentally friendly, customers who are brand-conscious to reduce waste are those who they believe will purchase and support their brand (Canvas Business Model Team, 2023). Nothing has a unique set of features, design, and target market and because they are so different from other leading technology brands, it is important they continue to stick to their company values, models, and customers to reach their goals of such a dynamic product in today's market.

### **Section 3: Diagnosis of Advertiser Situation**

A) Analysis and evaluation of the advertiser's symptoms:

Market Share Challenges: Nothing is a new emerging brand in the billion dollar tech industry, first launching "Ear (1)" in July 2021 and later coming out with "Phone (1)" in July 2022. This industry is dominated by big tech companies like Apple, Samsung, and Google. While the brand has established some attention for the unique design, it hasn't been able to really grasp the consumer's attention where they are making the switch from Apple to Nothing. Low market

share is foreseen in this industry but Nothing's low market share can likely be attributed to its current advertisements. When analyzing their advertising, they do a good job at showing the sleek design of the phone and their marketing team makes very cool edits. However, none of the brand benefits are conveyed through these messages. Their main campaigns for their phones show the phone spinning around and one ad is an octopus attaching to the phone for a whole minute and that's it (Nothing, 2023)! The brand is not communicating the relevant benefits to the audience. Focusing on their market share is very important, especially in a growing market.

**Sales Plateau:** After the first wave of ad campaigns and its crazy transparent back design calms down, sales will hit a plateau as the wow factor dies off and the competition keeps getting stronger. That is why Nothing cannot be focusing solely on showing the aesthetic of this iPhone. Relying on the design alone is not sustainable and it only targets a select few audiences.

**Brand Awareness Gaps:** Despite the strong branding Nothing has which is similar to Apple, they haven't been able to reach most of the world. The company achieved a lot of success in 2024 in India with a 567% year over year growth rate. The success of this growth was attributed to Nothing introducing new models of phones that catered to diverse consumer needs and preferences (Press Trust of India, n.d). While Nothing has been able to find success in the Indian market, it has yet to establish any market share globally. Their reach is really lacking as nobody that I know has ever heard of this brand, because if I had I would have actually been interested.

These Symptoms can somewhat be directed towards their current advertising as the ads are great and similar to Apple but because they are not that big of a brand they need to establish their goals as a brand and show that in the ad. For example, being more of a literal phone rather than a smartphone. The company had a reported loss of 59.4 million pounds in 2023 which they

said reflects its marketing centre (Hunt, 2025). This demonstrates that there's a problem with the advertising of the brand. Differentiating this phone in terms of its uses is going to be important for Nothing to focus on. The product itself doesn't need to be changed, the message just needs to be communicated better.

## B) Consumer Behaviour Analysis:

Consumers shop for Nothing tech online at various stores but their website for Canada is [ca-en.nothing.tech](https://ca-en.nothing.tech), or in select stores across the world. This is the same way that consumers will purchase any other company's tech, either online or in-store. Customers can be segmented into different categories:

- Tech enthusiasts who love new cutting edge tech, design, and unique features that have never been seen before.
- Budget friendly consumers who seek affordability as the main reason to purchase.
- The younger audience would be fascinated by the transparent background, cool animations, and lights.
- Environmentally friendly users looking for a product that coincides with their beliefs.

Consumers value brand loyalty and owning technology products all with the same brand. Consumers also tend to shop for smartphones from trusted carriers who will push bigger brands' smartphones that have multiple products to encourage customers to purchase more than 1 product (Verdict, 2022). The advertisers of Nothing could capitalize on a trend of consumers shifting towards reducing screen time as "Canadians devoted less time to music streaming or gaming activities" (Statista, 2024). This would align with Nothing's features of being less of a smartphone, which will automatically discourage screen time. Ecosystem integration, like

Apple's iOS systems and updates, is still lacking for Nothing as they are a new company but that comes with age and customer feedback. Trying to be more innovative than the big guns is a hard task for a small company to achieve. The CEO understands that this industry is one of the world's most competitive, which is why he decided to focus on building the operational foundations for the first couple of years and just trying to survive. But in 2024 they shifted focus to expanding their product portfolio, and "leveraging Nothing's cutting-edge design and user experience innovations in new market segments". The CEO stated that Nothing's focus for 2025 will be innovation (United News of India, 2024).

Benefits that are prioritized are the aesthetic, and performance features like audio quality from their earbuds or battery life across all their devices. Specifically for the phone, a rational benefit would be the quality, emotional benefits would be the social connection and access to information that the phone provides whereas experiential benefits would be the communication. The customer's benefits are aligned with the brand's benefits, the brand's benefits just need to be conveyed effectively. As mentioned previously, they need to take a step back and really emphasize how their devices differ from the competitors. Like the way their phone is literally just a phone, not an entertainment piece, and only used for the essentials like calling, texting, and pictures. Their ads are too simple, showcasing the design a lot which will catch someone's eye but just the design isn't going to convert customers. Consumers need to be captivated and shown why they need to purchase during the ad. Apple has a simplistic approach to their commercials that show mainly just the new features because everyone knows what the interface looks and feels like. Nothing doesn't have that recognition yet so they need to dive deep into how their phone really works and what it's good for. Is it user friendly? How's the battery life? Durability? What sets them apart from the giants?



### C) Analysis of Competitors and Positioning

Nothing's competitors vary across the tech industry from reputable brands like Apple and Samsung to smaller brands like OnePlus.

**Apple:** Apple dominates every aspect of tech and has created a strong reputation. They have a very aesthetic and minimalist design. Apple has excellent brand loyalty and integration. Their products are priced very high but their loyal consumers don't mind. They offer many add-on features like Apple Care but they lack customization. Apple is exploring new augmented reality and how that can be something they work towards in the future. (Haoxuan, 2024).

**Samsung:** Samsung also dominates with a wide variety of products and pricing, focusing on innovation and performance. They offer many customization options and are also priced high but slightly lower than Apple. Samsung faces challenges when it comes to maintaining quality across all of its devices. This is due to having such a large product line. (Haoxuan, 2024).

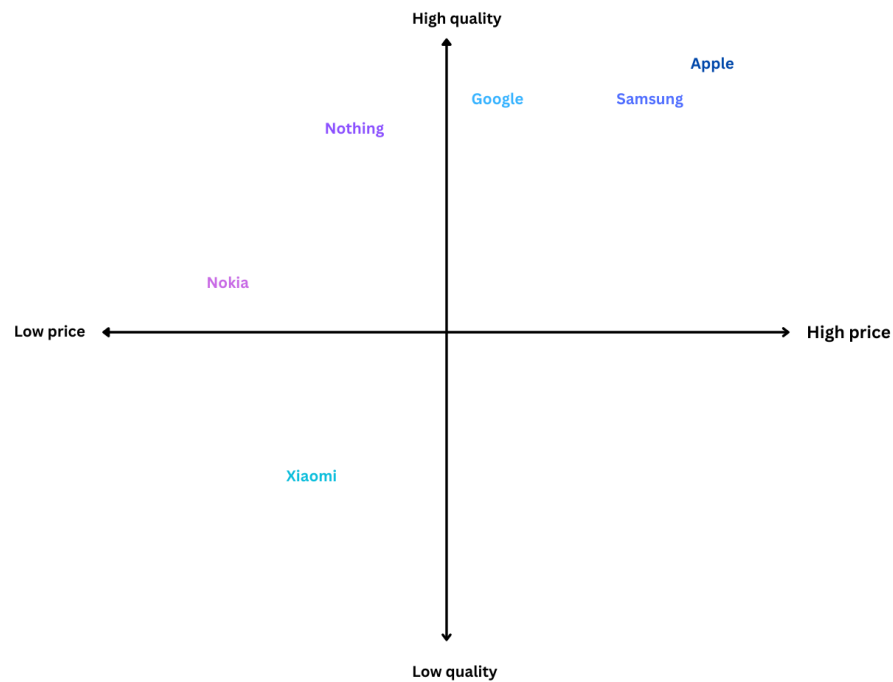
**Google:** Competes with their Pixel lineup, using a lot of AI and software integration as Google is more of a computer company.

**Nokia:** They lack innovation and have been rather stagnant over the years. They have decent quality and user friendly products but they struggle with market share (Bhasin, 2024).

Compared to Nothing, Apple and Samsung are premium options and Google has many AI capabilities. Product substitutes for Nothing would be all the companies mentioned above smartphones as well as earbuds and smartwatches. Competitors tend to offer a variety of products like a watch, phone, iPad that can all be synced together. Nothing doesn't offer any larger tablet options. After comparing different competitors, a positioning map was created to

give a visual. Quality and price were used as the benefits as these are most relevant to the consumers.

Made with Canva:



Apple and Samsung are big threats but they are difficult to take down, especially with their customer loyalty. So competitors to attack would be the smaller brands like Nokia and Xiaomi. Nothing is priced similarly to these yet their quality is much higher. If Nothing can convey their innovation at a lower price point, they should be able to capitalize and convert some of these companies' customers.

## Objectives

The ultimate effect of this advertising campaign is to increase the brand awareness of Nothing by 30% in Canada. By focusing on a growing segment of consumers seeking mid-tier alternatives to the dominant Apple, Google, and Samsung devices, we believe that our marketing efforts, strategic partnerships, and distribution channels will drive this increase within the year. In a market where the brand is still widely unfamiliar, we anticipate that Nothing's unique UI, minimalist design, mid-level price and fresh approach will capture attention, helping us break through the market norms and gain traction quickly in this segment. Along the way, intermediate effects such as securing carrier partnerships, increased retail availability, and the implementation of traditional marketing will be integral to achieving our ultimate goal.

To expand on the penetration of Nothing into the North American market, an important intermediate effect of this campaign is to secure an official carrier partnership with one of Canada's major cell phone providers such as Rogers, Bell, or Telus. This is expected to be achieved within the year, allowing Nothing entry into retail stores across the country. With a growing market share and interest in mid-tier alternative brands (Statista 2015), we expect that carriers will be incentivised to provide more options to this growing market. Additionally, after proving their ability to create beneficial partnerships with carriers in Europe such as O2 and Deutch Telekom, Nothing shows a promising track record in establishing and maintaining carrier relationships internationally. This further reinforces the confidence we have in securing one partnership with a Canadian carrier over the next year.

In order to increase brand awareness, it is important that consumers are able to see and interact with the Nothing phone. Especially given the unique design and interface, physical accessibility is essential to the growth of the brand. Increasing retail availability, especially in carrier retail stores, will serve as a great benefit to the brand as it will help in creating trust and

brand recognition around the Nothing phone. Additionally, to increase visibility, traditional marketing efforts will be implemented in the form of billboards, TV ads, and influencer partnerships. By increasing tangible and visible touchpoints, we expect to observe an increase in online engagement which can be measured in the form of hashtags, tags, and follows in Canada.

By setting these timely and achievable goals, we expect to see the ultimate effect by the end of the year. By increasing retail availability, securing carrier partnerships, and expanding marketing efforts, Nothing can effectively drive brand awareness in Canada by 30%, leveraging its unique design and market positioning to capture consumer awareness and recognition.

## **Budget**

Proposed Advertising Budget:

It is evident that Nothing Technology's current advertising has excelled in showcasing minimalist aesthetics but has fallen short in effectively conveying the product's functional benefits and in establishing a strong retail presence (Henderson, 2024; Smith, 2022). To overcome issues related to low market share, sales plateaus, and brand awareness gaps, the revised budget places greater emphasis on experiential marketing and retail partnership support while refining traditional and digital channel investments.

Historical Context and Strategic Needs:

Nothing Technology's prior advertising efforts were predominantly digital and influencer-driven. However, the strategic audit reveals that this focus has not translated into mainstream consumer recognition. Key challenges include:

- Insufficient communication of the phone’s literal, essential functions beyond its sleek design (Designlab, 2021).
- A limited retail presence that restricts opportunities for consumers to interact with the product.
- An overreliance on aesthetics at the expense of demonstrating tangible benefits.

To address these issues, the revised budget realigns expenditures to create a balanced, integrated marketing communications (IMC) approach that emphasizes physical accessibility and strategic messaging (Belch & Belch, 2020).

#### Total Budget and Allocation:

Maintaining the overall annual advertising investment at approximately CAD 10.8 million, the revised allocation is designed to bolster both reach and consumer engagement. The proposed breakdown is as follows:

Channel/Category	Allocation %	Proposed Amount (CAD)	Rationale
Traditional Advertising	40%	~\$3.78 million	Investment in TV, billboards, and transit ads will continue to build broad brand awareness and credibility among mainstream

			consumers (Statista, 2025).
Traditional Advertising	30%	~\$2.70 million	Focused digital initiatives will shift toward clear, benefit-driven messaging that underscores the product's essential functions while engaging tech-savvy early adopters (Designlab, 2021).
Experiential Marketing	20%	~\$2.70 million	An increased allocation supports pop-up events, in-store demonstrations, and interactive activations—critical for translating online buzz into tangible consumer

			experiences (Henderson, 2024).
Retail Partnership Support	10%	~\$1.62 million	Enhanced support for retail initiatives (e.g., point-of-sale displays and carrier partnership efforts) is essential for overcoming distribution limitations and building consumer trust (Canvas Business Model Team, 2023).

Integration of Heuristics and Analytics:

This reallocated framework is grounded in industry heuristics that recommend reinvesting in advertising during expansion phases while using real-time analytics to monitor channel performance (Belch & Belch, 2020; Canvas Business Model Team, 2023). Key performance indicators—such as media reach, conversion rates, and consumer engagement—will be tracked continuously to enable data-driven adjustments throughout the campaign lifecycle.

### Implementation and Monitoring:

A phased rollout is proposed over the campaign period, with quarterly reviews to assess performance and reallocate funds dynamically as needed. Real-time analytics dashboards will provide insights into each channel's effectiveness, ensuring that investment shifts can be made promptly to optimize overall impact.

In summary, by realigning the advertising budget to emphasize integrated, multi-channel marketing communications, Nothing Technology is positioned to better convey its unique product benefits, secure critical retail partnerships, and enhance its presence in the competitive Canadian market. This revised budget supports the strategic audit's objectives of increasing brand awareness by 30% and establishing a stronger, more tangible consumer connection.



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