

Practical guide: Measure your marketing

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MARKETING PERFORMANCE

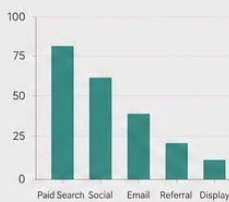
Measure. Optimize. Grow.



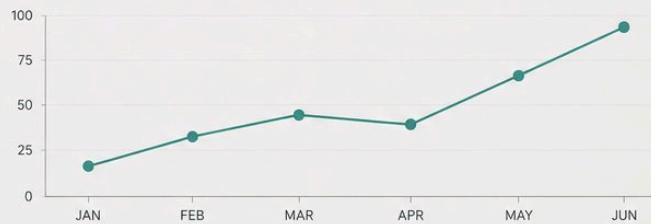
CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE

Track key campaign metrics to understand what drives the best results.

TOP CHANNELS



OVERALL PERFORMANCE



CONVERSION RATE

3.6%

▲ 12%
vs. last period

RETURN ON AD SPEND

4.2x

▲ 18%
vs. last period

ENGAGEMENT RATE

6.8%

▲ 8%
vs. last period

LEADS GENERATED

1,250

▲ 15%
vs. last period

TRAFFIC GROWTH

+28%

▲ 22%
vs. last period



AUDIENCE RETENTION

72%

▲ 9% vs. last period



GOAL PROGRESS

78%

On track



STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

Data-driven decisions. Measurable impact.

What you can and cannot measure

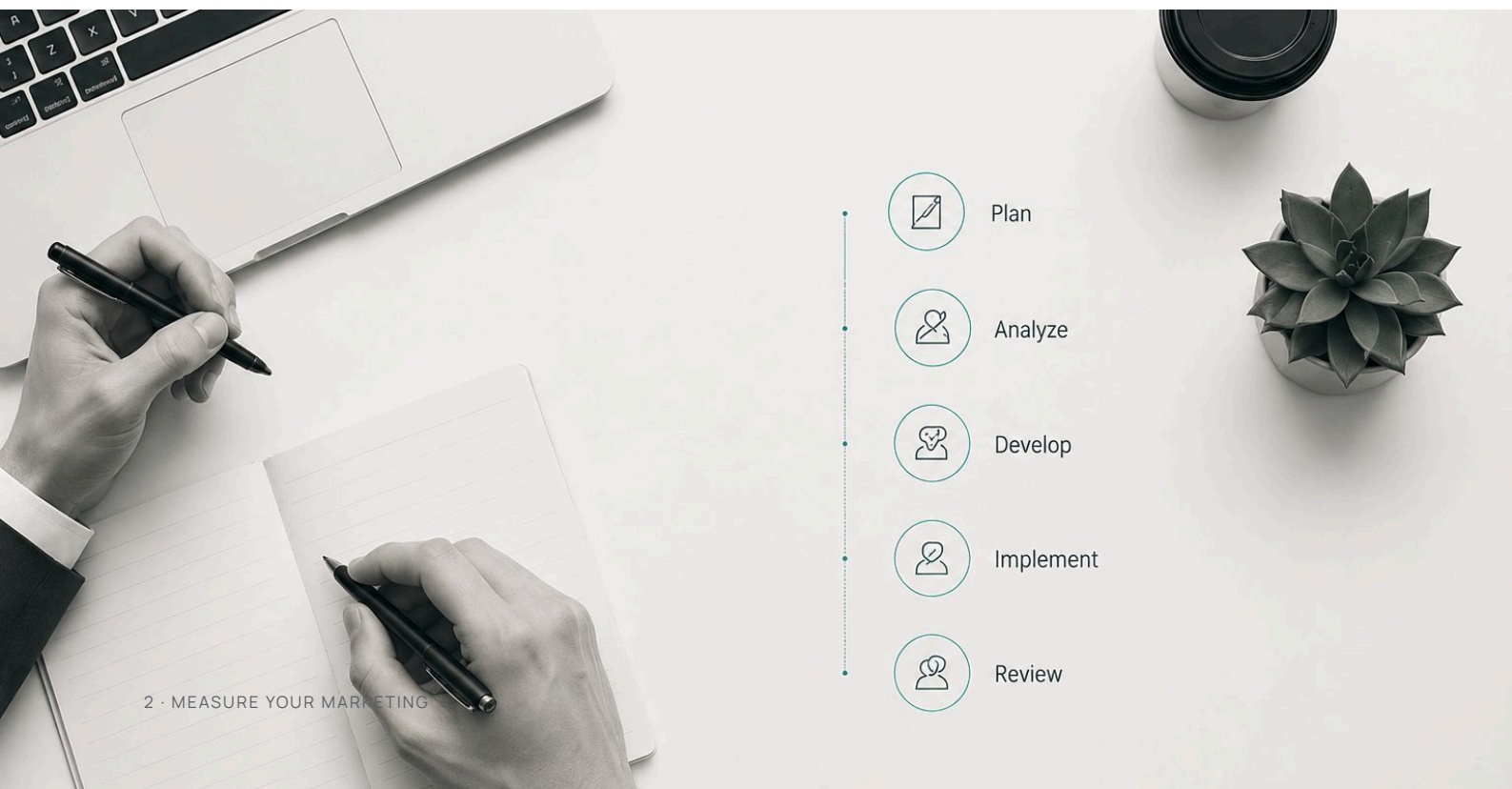
Measuring your marketing means being able to say, with numbers you trust, what your spend produced: which enquiries, at what cost, converting at what rate, into how much revenue.

There are three levels. Counting activity: posts published, emails sent, events attended. Measuring performance: enquiries by source, cost per enquiry, conversion, revenue won. And measuring effect: what happened that would not have happened without the spend. Most businesses stop at the first level, which measures effort rather than results.

What it is not

It is not more data. A dashboard with forty numbers hides the three that matter. The aim is fewer numbers, defined precisely, trusted by everyone who sees them.

It is not proof of everything. Some effects, brand building especially, show up over quarters and cannot be read off a weekly report. Part of measuring well is being honest about what your budget can and cannot prove.



What unmeasured spending costs you

Four reasons, each of them commercial rather than technical.

Unmeasured spend gets cut first

When costs are reviewed, the budget that cannot show its return is the budget that goes. Michael Kaminsky argues in Harvard Business Review that this is why marketing loses the argument with finance: it reports reach and engagement while finance asks what came back. Marketing that reports in revenue terms keeps its budget.

Waste stays invisible without it

In most small businesses I audit, at least one channel is producing activity and nothing else. Measurement is how you find it. The money recovered usually funds everything else in this guide.

The industry warning

The BoF-McKinsey State of Fashion 2026 reported a 12% fall in economic profit across the 400 listed companies in the McKinsey Global Fashion Index in 2024, while marketing spend rose. More spending with less to show for it is what happens at scale when measurement lags spending.

Trusted numbers change the conversation

Once the owner, the accountant and whoever runs marketing accept the same three numbers, marketing stops being a matter of opinion. Decisions get faster, and the person running marketing gets judged on results rather than visibility.



Three numbers a board will believe

The working system I install in most small businesses is three numbers, defined in writing, reported every month without the definitions ever changing.

Pipeline created

The value of qualified enquiries generated this month. The work is the word qualified: agree with whoever sells what counts, write it down, and never move it. This is the number that shows marketing feeding the business.

Cost per qualified enquiry

Everything you spend on marketing, divided by the qualified enquiries it produced. Decide once whether spend includes salaries and agency fees, write the decision down, and keep it. The trend matters more than the level.

Return on marketing spend

Revenue won from marketing-sourced enquiries, divided by the spend. Decide whether you measure it on revenue or margin with whoever runs the money, because that decision changes the answer, and both are defensible.



What a small budget can and cannot prove

The honest limits

A channel-level return for every channel on a small budget spread across five channels cannot be measured reliably. The IPA's free guide *Econometrics Explained 2*, by Louise Cook, explains why. An effect has to be roughly twice the normal week-to-week variation in your sales before it can be seen at all. Full marketing mix modelling costs tens to hundreds of thousands of pounds and wants three years of weekly data.

Report ranges, with agreement

Kaminsky's advice is to report ranges rather than single figures: "between 2.2 and 3.8 on current data" rather than "3.1 times". Agree with whoever runs the money how a range will be treated before you present one, because untrained readers fund the bottom of the range.

Where each number comes from

Enquiries by source	Enquiry form field, call log, GA4
Qualified enquiries	The written definition, applied by sales
Revenue won	Accounts or CRM, tagged by source
Spend	One ledger line, defined once
Branded search	Google Search Console, monthly

A board would rather have three numbers it believes than thirty it doubts.



Actions to set up your measurement

01

List every number you currently collect

Write down each figure anyone reports, and beside it the decision it has ever changed.

Numbers that have never changed a decision come off the report. Expect to remove most of them.

02

Agree the three numbers with whoever runs the money

Pipeline created, cost per qualified enquiry, return on marketing spend is the starting set; adjust it to your business in one meeting.

The agreement matters more than the selection. Numbers imposed by marketing get doubted by everyone else.

03

Write the definitions down

What counts as qualified. What spend includes. Whether return uses revenue or margin. One page, signed off, never quietly changed.

When a definition must change, change it in the same meeting that set it, and mark the break in the trend.

04

Fix the source of each number

Add a "how did you hear about us" field to the enquiry form, log phone and walk-in sources, connect GA4 and Search Console, and tag revenue by source in the accounts or CRM.

An afternoon of setup, and the single most common gap I find in small businesses.

Actions to set up your measurement

05

Record the baseline

Fill the template on page 9 with today's figure for each number, dated, before anything changes.

Without a baseline, every future argument about whether marketing works is opinion.

06

Build the one-page monthly report

The three numbers, their trend, and one sentence per number on what changed and why. Add one brand measure, branded search volume, beside the commercial numbers and leave it there for four quarters.

One page. The discipline of the single page is what keeps the vanity numbers out.

07

Hold the monthly review

Thirty minutes, same day each month, with the owner and whoever runs marketing and money present. Each number gets one decision: continue, change, or stop something.

A report nobody meets about is a filing exercise.

08

Test one channel at a time

Where you doubt a channel, turn it off for four to six weeks in one area or period and watch the three numbers. On a small budget, a clean on-and-off test tells you more than any attribution report.

Test one thing at a time, or you will not know which change did what.

A worked example

A made-up dental clinic in Dubai, two chairs, AED 4.2 million revenue, spending AED 18,000 a month across five channels. The names and figures are invented; the pattern is one I see constantly.

Before

The clinic reported followers, likes, impressions and website sessions. Nobody could say what a new patient cost. The booking system did not record where patients came from, and phone enquiries, most of the total, were not logged at all.

The setup month

A source question was added at booking and on the phone. Spend was gathered into one ledger line. The three numbers were agreed with the owner and the accountant: pipeline as booked first appointments valued at the average first-course fee, cost per booked appointment, and return measured on treatment revenue from marketing-sourced patients.

The baseline: 74 first appointments a month, AED 243 per booked appointment, return around 5.1 times on revenue.

What the numbers showed

Two channels produced 80% of booked appointments: search ads on treatment terms, and referrals from existing patients. A listings platform taking a third of the budget produced enquiries that rarely booked and never returned. It was turned off for six weeks as a test; bookings did not move.

After

The listings budget moved to a referral thank-you programme and more search cover. Six months on: 91 first appointments a month, AED 176 per booked appointment, and a monthly report the accountant produces in twenty minutes.

The point

Nothing clever happened. The clinic counted the right things for one month, and the budget reallocated itself.



The one-page measurement sheet

Print this page or copy the headings into a document. Fill the definitions before the figures; the definitions are the work.

NUMBER 1 · PIPELINE CREATED: DEFINITION, AGREED WITH

NUMBER 2 · COST PER QUALIFIED ENQUIRY: WHAT SPEND INCLUDES

NUMBER 3 · RETURN ON MARKETING SPEND: REVENUE OR MARGIN

SOURCE OF EACH NUMBER

BASELINE FIGURES, AND THE DATE TAKEN

BRAND MEASURE HELD BESIDE THEM · REVIEW DAY

CHANNEL TESTS PLANNED: WHAT, WHEN, EXPECTED RESULT

Mistakes to avoid and sources to read

Six mistakes I see most often

- ☐ Reporting activity: followers, likes and impressions in place of enquiries and revenue.
- ☐ Definitions that drift, so this year cannot be compared with last.
- ☐ Not logging phone and walk-in enquiries, usually the biggest source.
- ☐ Judging brand spend on a weekly report it can never show up in.
- ☐ Buying an attribution tool before fixing the enquiry form.
- ☐ Presenting a range to a reader who was never told how to treat one.

Sources

IPA, Econometrics Explained 2, by Louise Cook. Free at ipa.co.uk. Michael Kaminsky, When CMOs and CFOs Align Their KPIs, They Deliver More Value, Harvard Business Review, September 2025 (paid read, summary free). Daniel McCarthy and Eva Ascarza, Measuring Customer Acquisition Cost, Harvard Business School (paid). The Business of Fashion and McKinsey, The State of Fashion 2026 (free).

Related reading

On ataylorcmo.com: Marketing measurement for small businesses, Marketing ROI: measuring what matters to a board, and Building a marketing performance dashboard for your C-suite, all under Insights. Related guides in this series: Build a marketing plan, at ataylorcmo.com/guides.



Conclusion

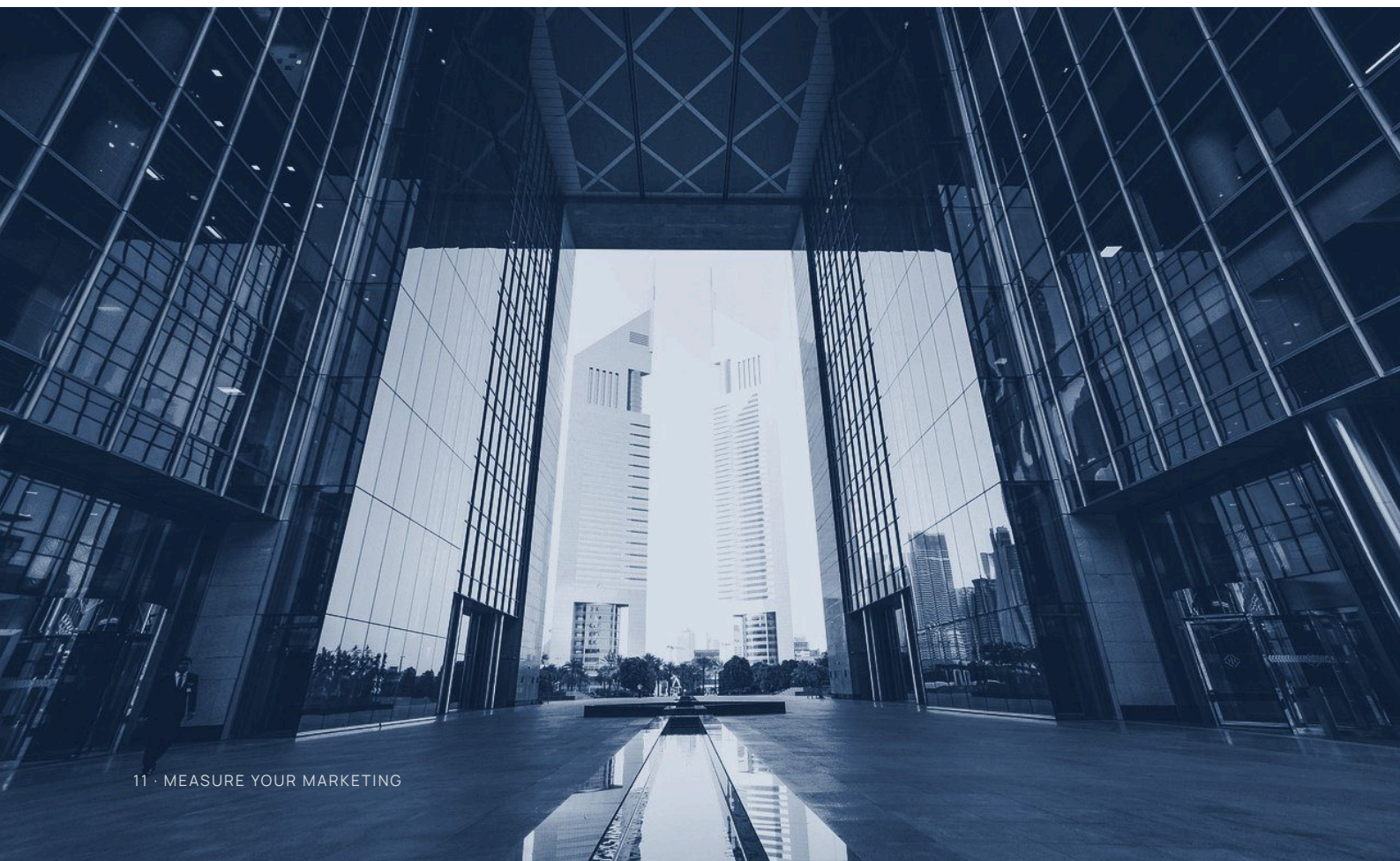
Setting up measurement properly takes about a month: an afternoon of fixes, a meeting to agree the numbers, and then one ordinary month of collecting them. After that it costs half an hour a month, and it pays for itself the first time it finds a dead channel.

Agree three numbers, write the definitions down, record the baseline, and hold the monthly review. Everything else in marketing measurement is refinement.

Next step

If you would like a second opinion on your measurement sheet, or help agreeing the three numbers with your accountant, I offer a 30 minute discovery call at no charge.

Book at ataylorcmo.com, or write to adam@ataylorcmo.com.



Adam Taylor

MSc, FCIM, CDMP. A marketing leader with more than 20 years of international experience driving growth, market expansion and competitive positioning across luxury retail, real estate, free zones, automotive and mega-events.

I work as a fractional chief marketing officer for owners, executives and boards in the UAE, the UK and internationally. My career includes Group Head of Marketing at Emaar, Director of Events and Entertainment at Expo 2020 Dubai, and marketing leadership of a UAE free zone, with more than 5,000 events and activations delivered for premium brands.

Credentials

MSc Marketing. Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing. Certified Digital Marketing Professional.

Experience

More than 20 years across the UAE, the wider Middle East, the UK and global markets.

Specialisms

Marketing strategy, brand positioning, UAE market entry, growth and marketing return on investment, events and experiential, and board governance.

Brands and organisations

Emaar · Expo 2020 Dubai · The Dubai Mall · IFZA · Al Tayer Motors · Ferrari · Gucci · Harvey Nichols · Bloomingdale's · Dolce and Gabbana

Contact

If you have a question about this guide, or want a second opinion on your marketing measurement, write or call. I reply within one working day.



adam@ataylorcmo.com



ataylorcmo.com



linkedin.com/in/adam-taylor-msc



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Working hours

Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 18:00 Gulf Standard Time
UK appointments by arrangement

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