

Digital marketing funnel examples

Four funnel shapes, the arithmetic that works backwards from a target, and where to fix first.

The six stages

Stage	The question it answers	Metric	Drop measured by
Reach	How many people see us?	Impressions / reach	n/a
Click	How many come?	Clicks / sessions	CTR
Engage	How many get far enough to care?	Key page views	Bounce / page depth
Enquire	How many ask?	Conversions	Conversion rate
Qualify	How many are worth talking to?	Qualified leads	Lead quality
Buy	How many pay?	Customers	Close rate

Working backwards from a target

Most plans are built forwards from a budget, which hides whether the target is reachable at all. Work backwards instead and the constraint becomes obvious.

Step	Calculation	Result
Customers needed	The target	10 a month
Qualified leads	$10 / 0.25$ close rate	40
Enquiries	$40 / 0.4$ qualification rate	100
Sessions	$100 / 0.02$ conversion rate	5,000
Impressions	$\text{sessions} / 0.03$ click-through rate	~166,667

Ten customers a month at these rates needs 100 enquiries, 5,000 sessions and roughly 166,700 impressions. Against 1,200 sessions today that is a 4.2x increase in reach -- which is the honest finding, and no amount of landing-page work substitutes for it.

Four funnel shapes

Illustrative business types. What matters is which stage to work on first -- it differs completely.

Business type	Funnel shape	Where to work first
B2B services (illustrative)	Narrow and slow. Few enquiries, high value, long qualification.	Work on qualification and close rate before spending on reach -- one extra won deal beats a hundred extra sessions.
Ecommerce (illustrative)	Wide and fast. Reach matters, and small conversion changes compound.	Conversion rate and repeat purchase. Reach is the easy part to buy.
Local services (illustrative)	Short. High intent, tiny reach, decided in one session.	Capture, not nurture. Be findable and answer the phone.
SaaS free tier (illustrative)	Two funnels stacked: signup, then activation.	Activation. Signups are vanity if nobody reaches the point of value.

Mistakes

- Optimising the stage that is easiest to change rather than the one losing the most.
- Working forwards from budget instead of backwards from a target.
- Treating the funnel as a real sequence -- buyers loop, leave and return.
- No qualification stage, so lead volume looks like success while sales quietly waste time.
- Using benchmark conversion rates instead of your own.

Your funnel

Customers needed

Close rate

Qualification rate

Conversion rate

Click-through rate

Sessions today

Reach multiple needed