

“Can you just...?”

The words quietly eating your marketing budget



50%

of total marketing cost is usually
your people

Not brand. Not events. Not paid media.

People.

And in most businesses, that resource
is often distracted.

The question is: **distracted doing
what?**

Marketing gets asked to help. Constantly.



"Can you just write a quick sales deck?"



"Can you just do a LinkedIn post?"



"Can you just brand this proposal?"



"Can you just pull together a slide for the board?"

Each one feels small. None of them are tracked. All of them cost time.

Why is it invisible?

EVERYBODY TRACKS

Event costs

Agency fees

Media budget

Software licences

VS

PEOPLE FORGET

The “quick” sales deck

The product icons

The internal launch video

Leadership presentations and reports

If cost isn't recognised, then neither is value.

1

Marketing costs are absolute. Value is not.

Finance know what Marketing costs. They don't know how much of it is directed to support other areas of the business.

2

Invisible work creeps...

"Can you just" work fills the diary and the team's focus dips. Priority projects get pushed and output drops.

3

Value conversations fall flat.

Resource is squeezed and budgets get cut. Without cost clarity, real value is impossible to prove.

Two questions that change the pattern

Apply these to every budget line and every team activity

01

How visible is this work?

Can leadership actually see what's being done
— and why?

02

How connected is it to a KPI?

Can you draw a line from this activity to an
outcome that matters?

Next: mapping this across your buyer journey →

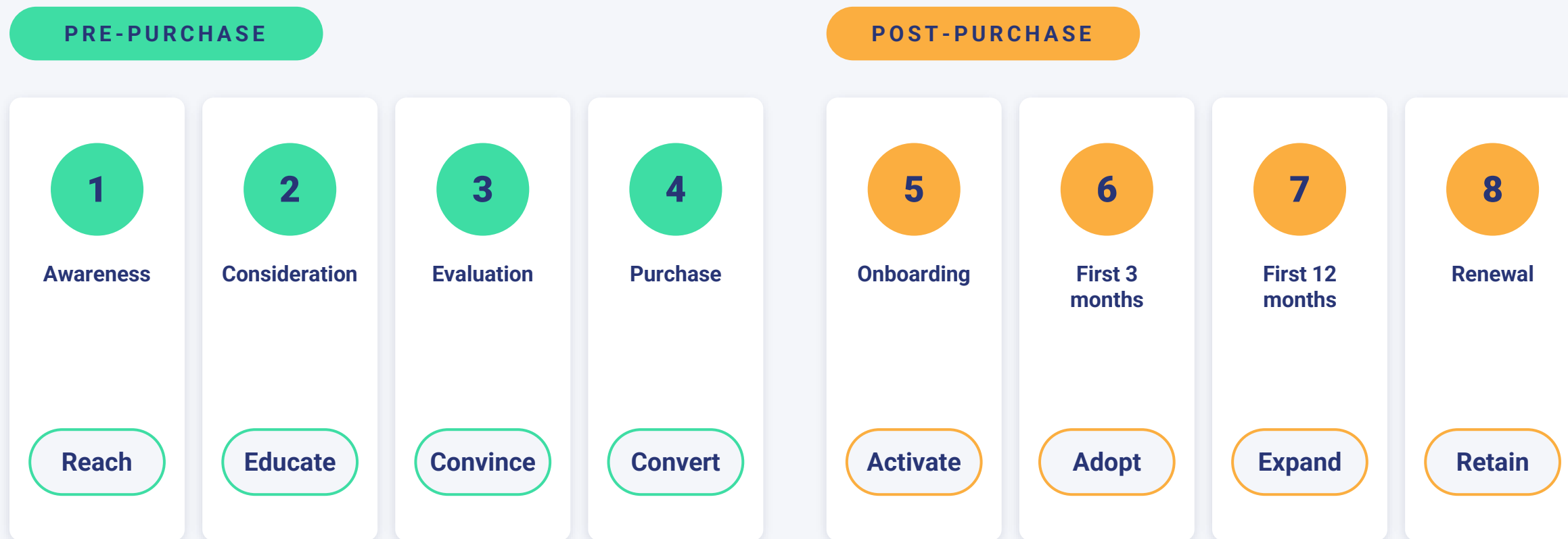
KNOW YOUR COST: SHOW YOUR VALUE

If 50% of your marketing cost is people... where is it actually going?

A simple model to map your costs across the buyer journey.



Your marketing covers 8 stages of the buyer journey



Most marketing teams spend across all 8 – but rarely map the cost.

There are two types of cost to map

And they don't always tell the same story



External Budget

The spend finance can already see.

Media. Agencies. Events. Software licences.

Visible. Tracked. Scrutinised.



People Time

Where your team's hours actually go.

Planned work. Reactive requests. The "can you just" list.

Often assumed. Rarely mapped.

What the model tells you

For each stage: how visible is the work to leadership, and how connected is it to a KPI that matters?

High visibility

REASSESS

High visibility · Low KPI impact

Seen but not moving the needle. Is the effort justified, or does focus need to shift?

DOUBLE DOWN

High visibility · High KPI impact

Your growth engines. Keep investing, and make sure leadership knows it.

Low visibility

REDIRECT

Low visibility · Low KPI impact

Hard to justify. Reduce, redirect or stop. This is where distracted resource often hides.

RAISE VISIBILITY

Low visibility · High KPI impact

Valuable work nobody sees. Communicate it better before budget conversations happen.

← Low KPI relevance

High KPI relevance →

Most teams uncover a few surprises.

External budget goes one way.

People's time goes another.

And it goes unseen and untracked.

Where are your biggest surprises? 📌

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