

White paper · Measurement

# From keyword to revenue: measuring what trade marketing is really worth

Where trade and home-service Google Ads tracking goes wrong,  
and how to build a measurement stack that ends in jobs won  
rather than clicks

---

White paper · September 2026

For owner-operators, growing trade companies, multi-site service brands



## The short version

Most trade businesses cannot say what their marketing is worth, and the reason is rarely the marketing. It is the measurement. SoudCoh's research sample of Australian trade and home-service advertisers shows that 32% counted taps on a phone number as conversions, 77% left Google's default value of one dollar on every enquiry, and only 9% told Google Ads what a job was actually worth. This paper shows where trade tracking goes wrong — taps, calls, values, networks, pages and AI assistants — and sets out a five-layer measurement stack, and an audit any business can run, that ends in jobs won.

### Key findings

---

**+92%**

overstatement of real enquiries where taps were counted as conversions

---

**77%**

of trade advertisers leave Google's default one-dollar value on every enquiry

---

**9%**

of trade advertisers tell Google Ads what a job was actually worth

---

**32%**

of advertisers capture both calls from ads and calls after a website visit

---

**21%**

of advertisers had Search campaigns also serving on the Display Network

---

**49%**

of answered calls from ads last less than a minute

### What it means for your business

---

**01** Audit the Conversions column before judging a campaign, an agency or a channel; taps and page views are signals, not enquiries.

---

**02** Record calls from the ad and calls after a website visit, and count each caller once.

---

- 03** Set the counted call length for your business after listening to a sample of short calls, rather than accepting the default.

---

- 04** Read any ROAS built on a default value as a count of enquiries, not a measure of revenue.

---

- 05** Keep Search campaigns on Google Search, and split every report by network.

---

- 06** Record every won job against the lead that produced it, and send the value back to Google Ads as a secondary conversion first.

---

- 07** Judge campaigns on rolling quarters and on the median job as well as the total, because a few large jobs swing any single month.

---

- 08** Ask every new enquiry how they found you, because analytics barely sees visits from AI assistants.

---

# The gap between the dashboard and the phone

Before any campaign can be judged, the Conversions column has to count enquiries, not intentions.

Ask a trade business owner whether Google Ads is working and they will usually answer from the phone, not the dashboard: it has been busy, or it has not. Ask the dashboard and it will usually tell a better story. The difference is rarely the campaign. It is measurement that was set up once, often by someone else, and never checked against the job book.

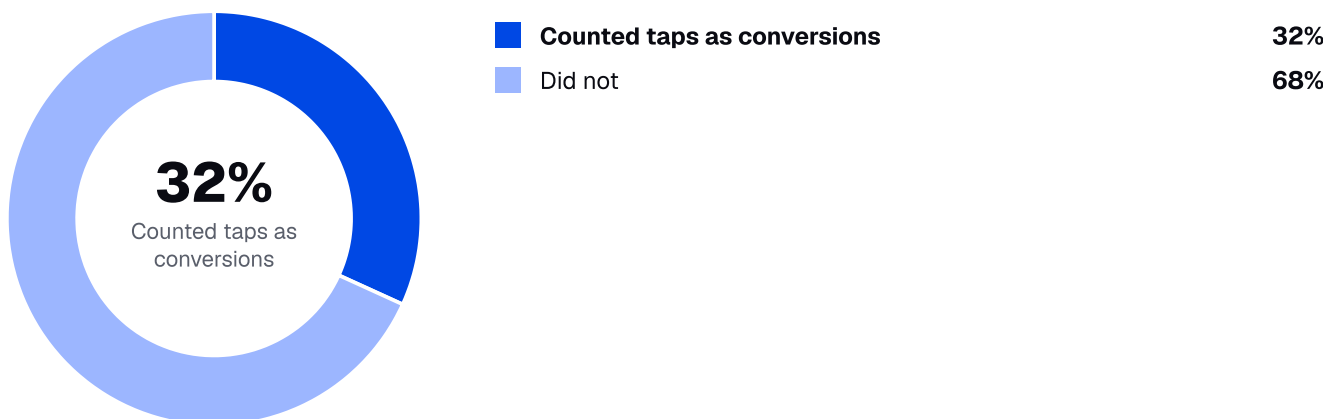
The single most common gap is what Google Ads is told to count. A tap on a phone number, an email address or a WhatsApp link can be recorded as a "conversion". It tells you someone meant to get in touch, not that they did: many taps never connect, some are existing customers, and the same person can tap three times. In 32% of SoudCoh's research sample, those taps were counted as conversions.

---

## Exhibit 1

### One in three trade advertisers count taps as conversions

Share of the sample whose Conversions column included taps on a phone number, email or messaging link



---

**How to read this:** A tap is a click, not an enquiry. Where taps sit in the Conversions column, bidding chases the people most likely to tap.

Source: SoudCoh analysis of reported Google Ads data.

Where taps were counted, they made up 45% of everything Google Ads reported as a conversion for the median advertiser, and the Conversions column overstated real enquiries — connected calls and submitted forms — by close to double (+92%). A campaign that reports nearly twice as many conversions as it produced real enquiries shows a cost per enquiry at roughly half the truth. Every decision made on that figure is made on the wrong number: the budget, the bid targets, the verdict on the agency. We look at the mechanics in [how phone-tap conversions inflate trade leads](#).

There is a second, quieter cost. Automated bidding optimises to whatever sits in the primary Conversions column. When taps are there, Smart Bidding learns to find the people most likely to tap, which is not the same as the people most likely to book. The account gets better at producing the wrong thing, and the report says it is improving.

The arithmetic is worth doing on your own account. If taps make up 45% of the conversions in a report, the true cost per enquiry is about 1.8× the reported figure — a campaign that looks comfortably inside its target may be well outside it. Nothing about the campaign has changed; only the denominator has. That is why the first question in any review of a trade account is not "how are the campaigns going?" but "what is being counted?"

## Where taps were counted, they made up 45% of everything Google Ads reported as a conversion.

**32%**

of trade advertisers counted taps as conversions

**45%**

of reported conversions were taps, where taps were counted

**+92%**

overstatement of real enquiries where taps were counted

**Table 1**

### Three piles: what belongs in the Conversions column

| Pile             | Examples                                                                              | Where it belongs                                                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Enquiries</b> | Calls that connected, forms submitted, bookings made                                  | Primary conversions: the only actions bidding optimises to                             |
| <b>Signals</b>   | Taps on a phone number or email, directions, profile clicks, page views, time on site | Secondary conversions: visible in reports, never steering bids                         |
| <b>Revenue</b>   | Jobs won, with the value of each job                                                  | An offline conversion added later, kept secondary until enough months have accumulated |

Check campaign-level goals as well as account settings: a campaign can still bid on an action the account has marked secondary.

## Definition

### What counts as an enquiry

In this paper, and in every benchmark SoudCoh publishes, an **enquiry** is a phone call recorded as a call or a form that was submitted. Taps on a phone number or email link, page views, clicks and other soft actions are never counted, however they are labelled in the account. A **won job** is an enquiry that became paid work, with its value recorded.

## Calls: two routes, one caller, and the 60-second question

Trade businesses live on the phone, and most measure only part of it.

For [plumbers](#) and [electricians](#) the phone is the business. Calls arrive by two routes, measured by different machinery. A caller can tap the number in the ad itself, which Google records as a call from the ad, or read the website first and ring the number on the page, which is only recorded if the site shows a tracked number to paid visitors. Both are enquiries, and both come from the same budget. Most trade advertisers record calls in some form, but only 32% capture both routes.

The website route is the one most often missing, and it is the harder one to set up well. The usual method is a tracked number that is swapped onto the site only for visitors who arrived from an ad, so the call can be tied back to the click, the landing page and, once matched, the keyword. The business's main number stays unchanged everywhere else — on the Google Business Profile, directories, the van and the invoices — so nothing that customers already rely on breaks. Test it from a phone after every website change, because a swapped number that silently stops swapping looks exactly like a quiet week.

---

### Exhibit 2

#### Only a third of advertisers measure both call routes

How trade advertisers record phone enquiries (share of the sample)



---

**How to read this:** An account that captures only one route undercounts what its strongest pages produce, and steers budget away from them.

Source: SoudCoh analysis of reported Google Ads data.

An account that records only calls from the ad misses the people who read three pages first — often the most considered buyers, sent by the pages working hardest. An account that records only website calls misses the quick tap-to-call from the ad. Either way, budget drifts away from whatever is not being counted. Track both, and count each caller once.

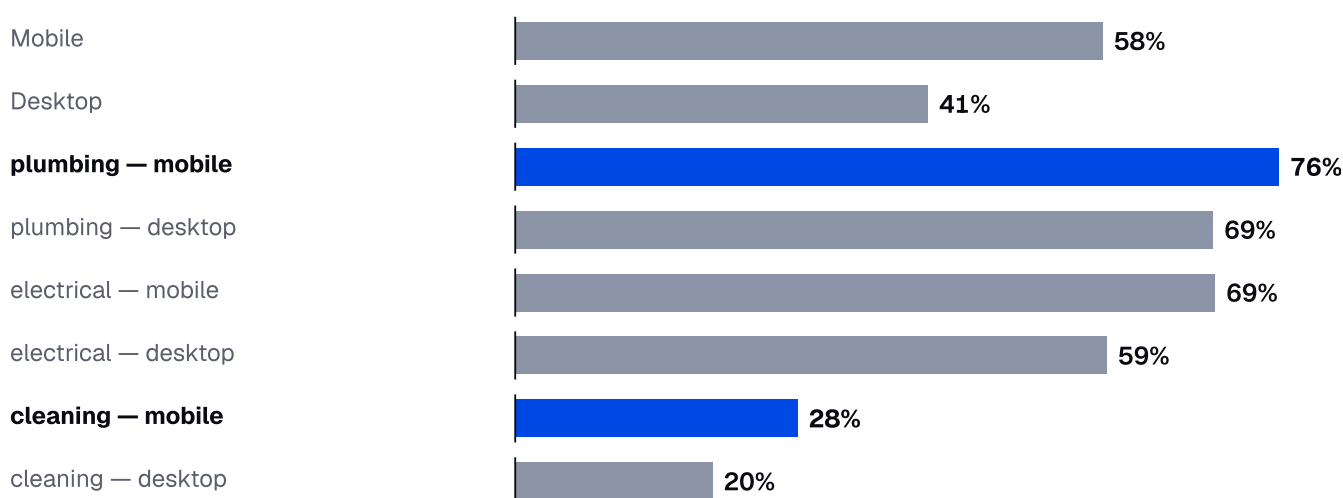
The balance between calls and forms depends more on the job than on the device. For the median advertiser, calls were 58% of mobile enquiries and 41% of desktop enquiries — but the trade matters more: plumbers and electricians get mostly calls on both devices, cleaners mostly forms on both. Urgent, hard-to-describe jobs such as a leak or a fault arrive by phone whatever the screen; planned, easy-to-describe jobs such as a bond clean or a carpet clean arrive as forms even from phones. Trades that live on calls need the number, call tracking and someone answering; trades that live on forms need a short form, an instant acknowledgement and a fast reply. Every site still needs both doors.

---

### Exhibit 3

#### The job decides the channel more than the device

Calls as a share of enquiries, by device and by trade (median advertiser)



---

**How to read this:** Plumbers and electricians live on calls on every device; cleaners live on forms even from phones.

Source: SoudCoh analysis of reported Google Ads data.



For most trades the phone is where the job starts, and the part of the funnel measured least well.

Once calls are recorded, three rules decide which ones count, and the defaults rarely fit a trade business.

**Call length.** Google counts a call from an ad as a conversion only if it lasts 60 seconds or more, unless someone changes the setting. About 49% of answered calls from ads last less than a minute. Short calls are a mix: wrong numbers and hang-ups, but also the quick "can you come Thursday?" that books a job. A fixed 60-second rule hides the second group from bidding and keeps the first out of reports — neither is ideal. Listen to a sample of short calls before deciding where the threshold should sit, and revisit it by service: a blocked-drain call is often short and decisive ([short ad calls and the 60-second rule](#)).

**Repeat callers.** About 19% of calls to a tracked number come from someone who has already called — chasing a quote, confirming a time, calling back after a missed call. They matter to the business, but they are not new enquiries. Count unique callers, otherwise cost per enquiry looks better than it is. Google's "one per click" counting stops a single ad click being counted twice, but a caller who rings back later can still count again; apply a unique-caller rule deliberately wherever your call tracking allows it.

**After-hours calls.** About 26% of calls from ads arrive before 7am, after 6pm or on a weekend. If the roster is set to office hours, those calls are paid for and then missed. Report missed and after-hours calls separately, because they are an operations problem no bid change can fix: either answer them — a call-answering service usually costs less than the ads that produced the call — or schedule the ads to the hours someone can pick up.

---

**Table 2****Call measurement: the common default and a better rule**

| Question                          | Common default                                 | Better rule                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Which calls are recorded?</b>  | Calls from the ad only, or website calls only  | Both routes, each carrying the click that produced it                                 |
| <b>How long must a call last?</b> | 60 seconds                                     | A threshold set for the business after listening to a sample of short calls           |
| <b>Who is counted?</b>            | Every call                                     | Each caller once; repeat calls reported separately                                    |
| <b>What about missed calls?</b>   | Invisible, or mixed into the total             | Reported separately, as an operations measure                                         |
| <b>When do ads run?</b>           | All hours, with calls answered in office hours | Ads scheduled to the hours calls are answered, or calls answered in the hours ads run |

## Value: why most trade ROAS figures are placeholders

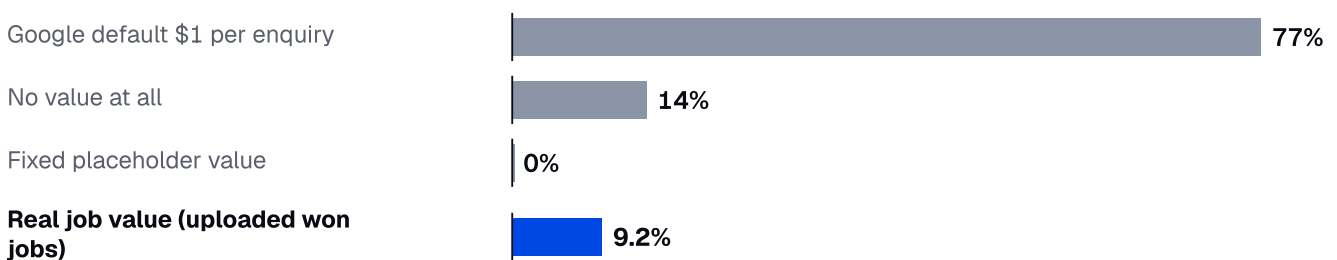
Google Ads can only optimise for revenue if it is told what jobs were worth, and few trade advertisers tell it.

Return on ad spend is the number every owner wants, and for most trade advertisers it is not measuring what it claims. When a conversion action is set up, Google suggests a default value of one dollar per conversion unless someone changes it. 77% of trade advertisers leave that default on every enquiry. The "conversion value" column then simply counts enquiries in dollars, and the ROAS column divides that count by spend.

### Exhibit 4

#### What trade advertisers tell Google an enquiry is worth

Share of trade advertisers by the conversion value they record



**How to read this:** Fewer than one in ten advertisers send real job values; the rest report enquiry counts dressed as revenue.

Source: SoudCoh analysis of reported Google Ads data.

A one-dollar default is harmless until someone reads the ROAS column or switches to a value-based bid strategy. At that point Google optimises for the number of enquiries while everyone believes it is optimising for revenue. Only 9% of trade advertisers told Google Ads what a job was actually worth — and none did it through website or call tags. The only real values came from won jobs uploaded after the fact ([why a default conversion value makes ROAS meaningless](#)).

That is not a failure of effort; it is how trade work is priced. A website cannot know what a job is worth when the form is sent, because the price is set on site, days later. So real value has to come back from the job book: record each won job against the click or call that produced it, and upload it to Google Ads as an offline conversion. Until then there are two sound choices — leave value empty and bid on enquiries, or feed it real job values — and one mistake: reading a placeholder ROAS as if it were revenue.

Even with real values, trade revenue is lumpy. In the median business, the biggest tenth of won jobs carried 41% of recorded revenue. A switchboard upgrade, a full re-pipe or a leak that became a bathroom can swing a month's return more than any campaign change. Judge campaigns on rolling quarters, look at the median job as well as the total, and keep a separate eye on the services that produce the large tickets, because they are rare enough to be cut by mistake.

**The biggest tenth of won jobs carried 41% of recorded revenue in the median business — so a single large job can swing a month's return on ad spend more than any campaign change.**

## **Sending won-job value back to Google Ads**

**1**

### **Keep the click with the lead**

Make sure every form and tracked call stores the click identifier Google adds to the page address. Without it, a won job cannot be matched to the ad that produced it; Google's enhanced conversions for leads can match on a hashed email or phone number as a fallback.

**2**

### **Record the win, the value and the date**

When a quote is accepted, mark the lead won with the job value and the date it was won, in the job-management tool, CRM or spreadsheet the business already uses.

**3**

### **Create a separate conversion action for won jobs**

Set it up as an offline import and mark it secondary, so it appears in reports without changing what bidding optimises to.

**4**

### **Upload on a steady rhythm**

Upload won jobs weekly or monthly, by file or through an integration. Google only accepts offline conversions for clicks from the previous 90 days, so slow-quoting services need a regular rhythm, not an annual clean-up.

**5****Read it before you bid on it**

Compare revenue per ad dollar by service and ad group over rolling quarters. Consider value-based bidding only when several months of uploads are complete and consistent.



Cost per lead treats a hot water replacement and a quick call-out as equal; the job book does not.

The practical response is to connect jobs to the ad group that produced them — even a monthly spreadsheet is enough to start — and to give the services that produce the large tickets their own campaigns and budgets, so they are not starved by cheaper, faster-converting work. Judge calls and forms alike by the jobs they win. Budget should move on revenue per ad dollar once the data is complete enough, never on a single month and never on cost per lead alone.

## Where the clicks come from: Display and search partners

A campaign labelled Search is not always on Search, and the report will not tell you unless you split it.

The Google Ads report shows one total per campaign. Inside a Search campaign, that total can include three very different audiences: people searching on Google, people searching on partner sites that use Google's results, and people reading something else entirely on the Display Network. In 21% of the sample, campaigns labelled "Search" were also serving ads on the Display Network.

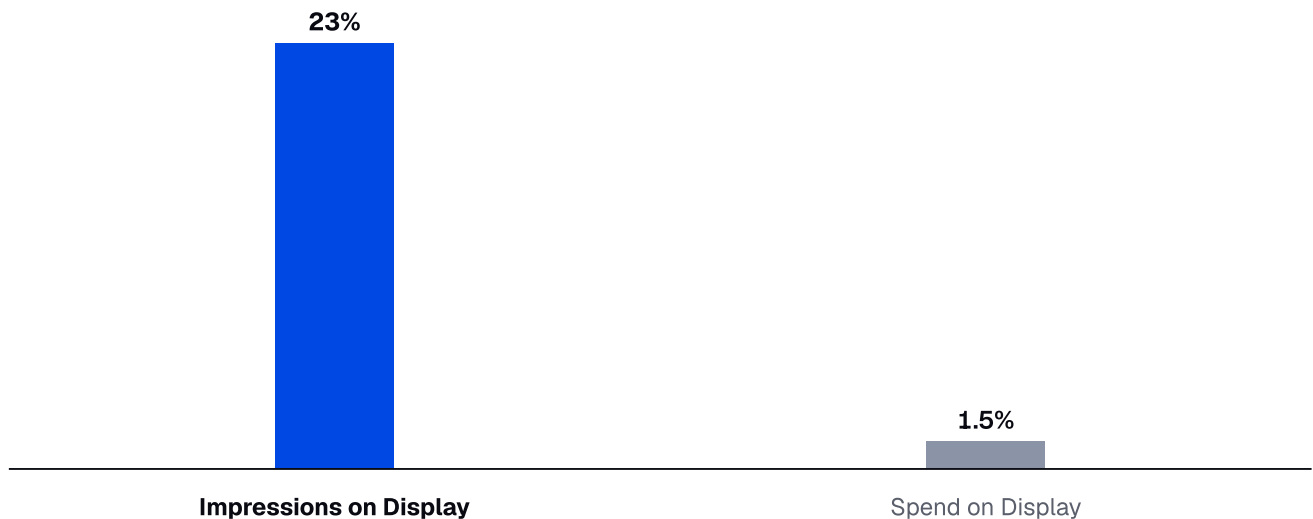
The Display option is switched on by default when a Search campaign is created in the interface, and Google can shift delivery towards Display without any entry appearing in the change history. The campaign still says "Search", the report still shows one total, and the leads get worse. Where Display ran inside Search campaigns, it took 23% of their impressions but only 1.5% of the spend — inflating reach while barely touching the budget line anyone checks.

---

### Exhibit 5

#### Display inside Search: many impressions, little spend

Display's share of impressions and of spend in Search campaigns that also served on Display (median advertiser)



**How to read this:** Cheap impressions swell the totals: impressions climb, click-through rate falls, and the budget line barely moves.

Source: SoudCoh analysis of reported Google Ads data.

Cheap impressions flatter the averages, and cheap clicks flatter cost per click. What matters is enquiries. A Display click inside a Search campaign produced a real enquiry at about 4% of the rate of a Google Search click in the same campaigns. Display clicks come from people reading a news article, playing a game or checking the weather, and some are accidental taps. On a fixed daily budget, every dollar spent there is a dollar not spent on someone searching for a plumber ([the Display Network inside trade Search campaigns](#)).

Search partners are subtler. They are real searches, on other sites that use Google's results, and their clicks are cheaper. But for the median trade advertiser, search-partner clicks converted at only 16% of the Google Search rate, so each enquiry cost more, not less. A trade business pays for enquiries, not clicks. Check enquiries per dollar by network in your own account; if partners lose, switching them off is one tick-box. If you want Display at all, give it its own campaign with its own goal.

**Table 3**

### Network check for every Search campaign

| Network                | What it is                                        | Enquiry rate against Google Search                     | Default action                                                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Google Search</b>   | Searches on Google itself                         | The baseline                                           | Keep                                                                     |
| <b>Search partners</b> | Searches on other sites that use Google's results | 16% of the Search rate for the median trade advertiser | Switch off unless the account's own data shows more enquiries per dollar |
| <b>Display Network</b> | Ads on websites and apps people are reading       | About 4% of the Search rate inside Search campaigns    | Switch off inside Search; run separately with its own goal if wanted     |

Split every report by network rather than reading campaign totals, and check the network setting on every Search campaign, including inherited ones.

## Where the clicks land: pages that turn visits into enquiries

What the first screen shows decides whether a click becomes an enquiry.

The common advice is to send every ad to a specific service page rather than the home page. Service pages earn their keep: they make ads more relevant, lift Quality Score and give Google and AI assistants something specific to cite. But a new address is not a conversion fix on its own; what turns a click into an enquiry is what the page shows. Put the phone number and a short form in the first screen, name the job and the suburb, and show proof.

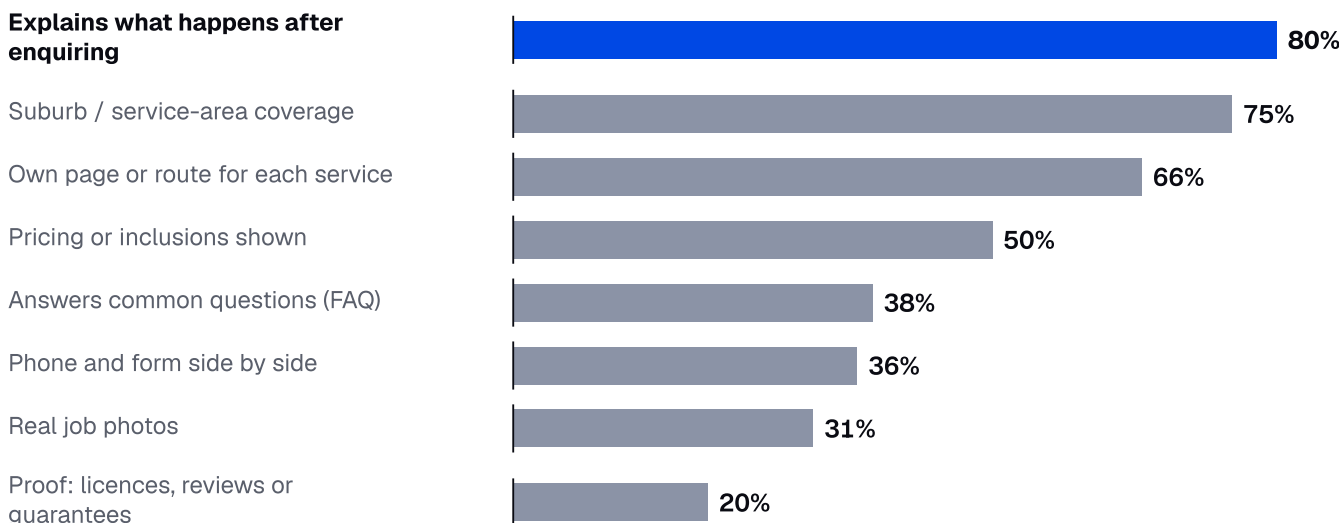
The same goes for suburb pages. A per-suburb campaign can send each click to a page that names the suburb, but the page has to be real — local jobs, local photos and travel times, not a template with the suburb name swapped.

Across the trade websites SoudCoh has built, the components that recur are the ones that answer a homeowner's questions before they call: do you do this exact job, do you come to my suburb, and what happens after I press send? 80% of those sites explain what happens after someone enquires, and most show suburb coverage and give each service its own page. None of those needs a big budget; they need specific content.

## Exhibit 6

### What SoudCoh builds into trade websites

Share of trade websites built by SoudCoh that include each component



**How to read this:** The recurring components answer three questions: do you do this job, do you come here, and what happens next.

Source: SoudCoh analysis of reported Google Ads data.

Measurement matters here too. Most trade enquiries come from mobile clicks — 76% across the sample — so pages should be judged on a phone: a tap-to-call button that works, a form that fits on one screen, and a page that loads before the searcher gives up. Then measure each page on enquiries per click, split into calls and forms, and fix the first screen before building more pages. When comparing pages, compare like with like — the same service, the same kind of search — over enough clicks to mean something. We cover the page itself in [what a trade website needs to turn clicks into calls and forms](#), and trade-specific builds on our pages for [plumbers](#), [electricians](#) and [cleaning businesses](#).

#### ✓ Do this

### Check your landing pages in five minutes

Open each page your ads point to on your own phone, on mobile data. Can you see the phone number and a short form without scrolling? Does the first screen name the job and the area? Does the page say what happens after someone enquires? Tap the number: does it ring the right line? If any answer is no, fix that before changing a bid.

## AI assistants: the channel analytics barely sees

More buyers now ask an assistant before they search, and almost none of those visits are labelled as such.

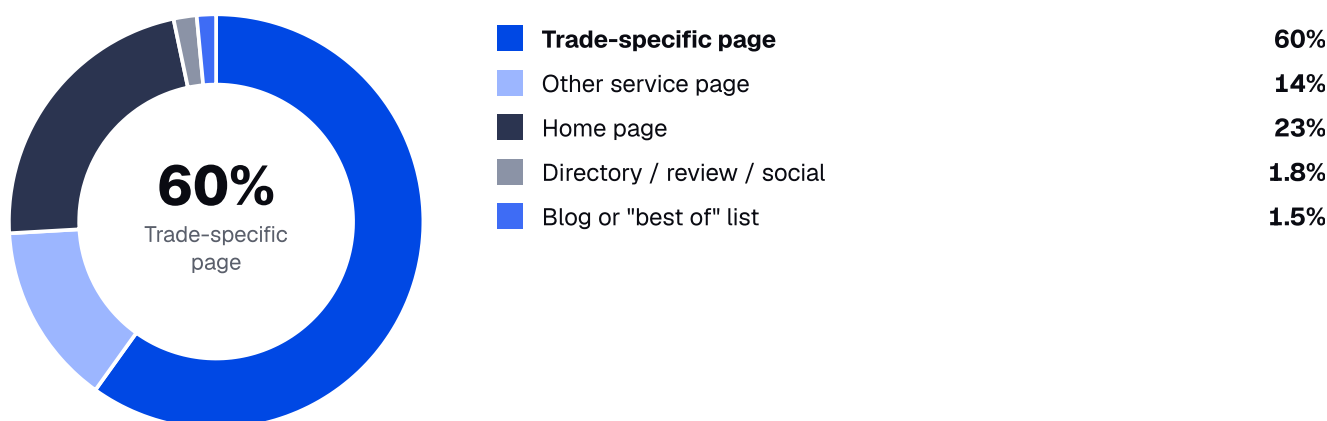
Some research now starts with a question to an AI assistant rather than a search. Measuring it is hard. On SoudCoh's own website, visits that analytics could attribute to AI assistants were 0.2% of sessions — well under one in a hundred — because most AI-influenced visits arrive with no referrer and are filed as "Direct". When someone copies a name from an AI answer into a browser, or taps a link inside an app that drops the referrer, nothing tells analytics where they came from. So analytics understates AI discovery badly.

What the assistants cite can be observed, and it follows a clear pattern. When ChatGPT-style assistants answer "who does marketing or websites for [trade]", they mostly cite agency pages built for that exact trade — not agency home pages or directories. The lesson carries over to any trade business: assistants answer the question they were asked, so a page that plainly states who it is for, what the work involves, where, and what it costs is more likely to be quoted than a general home page. If you want to be recommended for a service, publish a page for that service.

### Exhibit 7

#### What AI assistants cite

Share of citations by type of page when AI assistants were asked who does marketing or websites for a trade



**How to read this:** Assistants cite the page that answers the exact question; general home pages and directories are quoted far less.

Source: SoudCoh analysis of reported Google Ads data.

Assistants are also unstable. Ask one the same buyer question three times and only a minority of the websites it cites appear in all three answers (25% in SoudCoh's testing). There is no fixed "AI ranking" to win. Being on the short list — through a page that directly answers the question, a directory profile and independent mentions — matters more than being first in any one answer.

For measurement, that means three habits. Ask every new enquiry how they found you, and store the answer on the lead record. Give AI assistants their own channel in analytics, so the visits that can be identified are not lost in "Referral". And measure visibility by asking a fixed set of buyer questions several times, on more than one assistant, recording who is named and which pages are cited — never by asking once. We explain how assistants choose in [how ChatGPT chooses which business to recommend](#).

The question on the lead form matters more than it looks. A free-text "How did you hear about us?" box collects answers that cannot be counted; a short list — Google search, Google Maps, an AI assistant such as ChatGPT, a friend or neighbour, a van or sign, social media, other — can be. Ask the same question on the phone and record the answer on the same field, so calls and forms are counted the same way. Over a few months, the gap between what customers say and what analytics recorded is the most practical estimate most businesses will get of how much of their demand starts outside a search box.

## The measurement stack: five layers from click to won job

Each layer answers one question, and each depends on the layer beneath it.

None of the fixes above is expensive. What they need is order. Measurement in a trade business works as a stack, and each layer depends on the one beneath it: bidding cannot optimise to revenue if the lead record does not carry the click, and the lead record is little use if the Conversions column is counting taps. The five layers below are the ones SoudCoh sets up for clients, and any business can build them for itself, whether it is one owner with a phone or a multi-site brand with a call centre and a CRM.

**Figure 1**

### The measurement stack

|                          |                                                                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Clean conversions</b> | Only connected calls and submitted forms are primary            |
| <b>Both call routes</b>  | Ad calls and website calls, each caller counted once            |
| <b>One lead record</b>   | Source, click, landing page and search term captured on arrival |
| <b>Outcomes</b>          | Contacted, quoted, won or lost, with the job value              |
| <b>Value back</b>        | Won jobs sent to Google Ads and analytics, secondary first      |

Build from the first layer up. Each answers a question the one below cannot: did they enquire, how, from where, did they buy, and what was it worth?

**Layer one: clean conversions.** Open the conversion actions and sort them into the three piles — enquiries, signals and revenue. Only enquiries belong in the primary column. Check campaign-level goals too, and redo the audit whenever the website, tag manager container or call-tracking provider changes, because each can quietly add or break an action.

**Layer two: both call routes.** Record calls from the ad through Google's call reporting, and calls from the website through a tracked number shown to paid visitors, with the click and landing page attached to the website call and passed back to Google Ads. Count each caller once, above a duration set for the business, and report missed and after-hours calls separately.

**Layer three: one lead record.** Every form, call and booking should be written to one record with its source captured at the moment it arrives: the click identifier Google adds to the page address, campaign tags, landing page, device and — once the click is matched — campaign, ad group, keyword and search

term. A tag that captures the click on landing and keeps it for weeks means a visitor who returns days later to enquire is still attributed. The same source field should flow into the CRM or job system, so sales follow-up and reporting read the same thing. Existing Google conversion tags stay in place; the lead record adds to them.

**Layer four: outcomes.** Each lead is marked contacted, quoted, won or lost, with the value of the job when it is won. The system matters less than the habit: a job-management tool, a CRM or a spreadsheet updated monthly will do. Record how revenue arrives — entered as it happens or imported from a sheet, and where the won date comes from — because two businesses that record revenue differently cannot be compared on return on ad spend.

**A note for multi-site brands.** A business with several locations, brands or call centres needs one more rule: every lead carries the location or brand that handled it, and every location uses the same definitions of an enquiry, a quote and a win. Without that, one branch's "enquiry" is another branch's "booked job", and no comparison between sites — or between the campaigns that serve them — can be trusted.

**Layer five: value back.** Upload won jobs to Google Ads as an offline conversion against the original click or call, created as a secondary action at first so it informs reporting without changing bidding until enough months have accumulated. Send the same lifecycle events to analytics exactly once, so channel reports can be read in jobs rather than form fills, and keep analytics key events restricted to real enquiries.

**Table 4**

## What each layer answers, and how to check it

| Layer                    | Question it answers              | What usually breaks it                                               | How to check                                                                                        |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Clean conversions</b> | Did a real enquiry happen?       | Taps, page views or duplicate tags counted as primary                | List the primary actions; place a test call and form; tap the number and confirm nothing is counted |
| <b>Both call routes</b>  | How did they get in touch?       | Only one route recorded; repeat callers counted twice                | Call from the ad and from the site on a phone; check each appears once                              |
| <b>One lead record</b>   | Where did the enquiry come from? | Click lost between landing and enquiry; source not passed to the CRM | Submit a form from a paid click and find its campaign and keyword on the lead                       |
| <b>Outcomes</b>          | Did it become a job?             | Won jobs never recorded, or recorded without a value                 | Pick ten recent jobs and trace each to a lead                                                       |
| <b>Value back</b>        | What was the enquiry worth?      | Default values left on; uploads made primary too early               | Check the value settings and the status of the offline conversion action                            |

 **Watch out**

**Do not switch bidding to value too early**

Once real job values arrive, it is tempting to move to a value-based bid strategy straight away. Wait. Trade revenue is lumpy — the biggest tenth of jobs carried 41% of recorded revenue in the median business — and a few months of uploads are rarely enough for bidding to tell a pattern from a lucky job. Keep won-job value secondary, read it in reports over rolling quarters, and change bidding only when the data is complete enough to trust.

## A tracking audit you can run yourself

Most of these checks take minutes, need no special tools, and should be repeated whenever the website or phone system changes.

The checklist below is the audit SoudCoh runs before judging any campaign, written so that a business owner or office manager can run it themselves. Work through it in order. The first half checks what Google Ads is counting; the second half checks whether enquiries can be traced to jobs. Anything that fails is worth fixing before any campaign, agency or channel is judged.

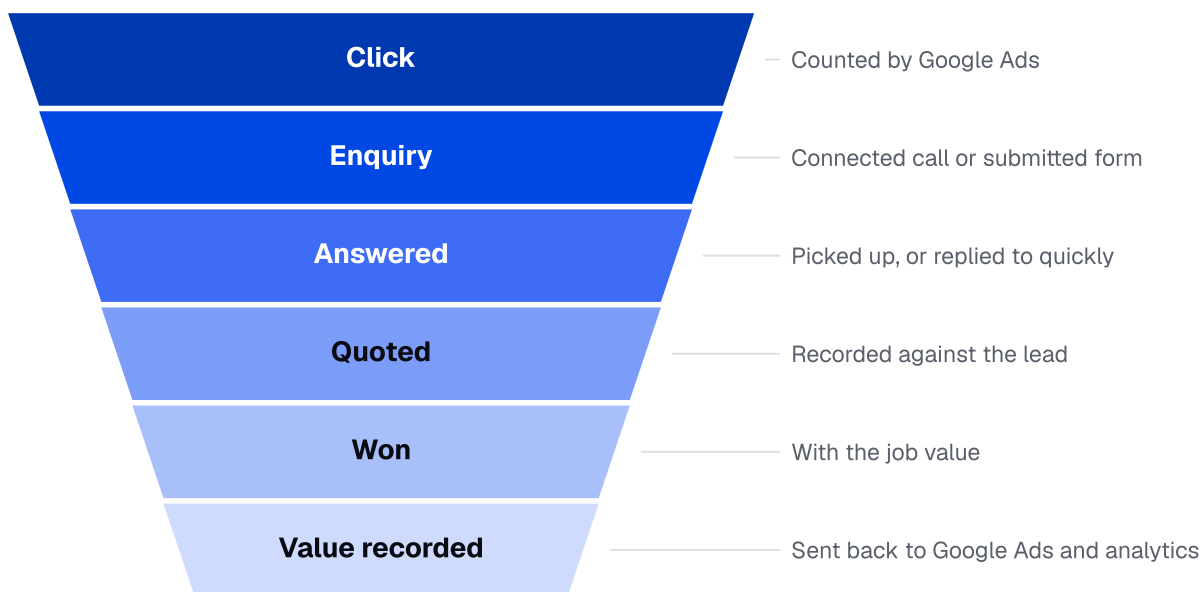
## Tracking audit checklist

- ☐ List every conversion action marked primary. Anything that is not a connected call, a submitted form or a booking — a tap on your number or email, directions, a page view — should be secondary.
- ☐ Check each campaign's conversion goals, not just the account settings, to confirm no campaign is still bidding on a secondary action.
- ☐ On a mobile phone, place a test call from an ad and another from your website. Confirm each appears once, against the right campaign.
- ☐ Tap your phone number on the site without calling. Confirm nothing appears in the primary Conversions column.
- ☐ Submit a test form after arriving from an ad, or with Google Tag Assistant open. Confirm it fires one conversion, and that the lead arrives carrying its source, campaign and landing page.
- ☐ Check the minimum call length on call conversions. Listen to a sample of calls under a minute and decide where the threshold should sit for your business.
- ☐ Check how repeat callers are counted: one conversion per caller, not one per call.
- ☐ Pull a report of missed and after-hours calls, and compare it with the hours your ads run.
- ☐ Open the value settings on each conversion action. If every enquiry is worth one dollar, read ROAS as a count of enquiries until real values arrive.
- ☐ Open the network settings on every Search campaign. Confirm the Display Network is off, and review search partners against enquiries per dollar.
- ☐ Segment last quarter's results by network and by device, and compare enquiries per dollar, not clicks.
- ☐ Pick ten recent won jobs and trace each back to a lead, a campaign and, ideally, a search term. Note where the trail breaks.
- ☐ Ask your next twenty enquiries how they found you, and compare the answers with what analytics recorded.

- ☐ Diary the next audit, and repeat it whenever the website, tag manager or call-tracking provider changes.

**Figure 2**

### **Where an enquiry can leak between the click and the job**



Each step can lose an enquiry for a different reason. Only the first is fixed inside the ad account.

Once the audit passes, read the numbers differently. Judge campaigns over rolling quarters rather than single months, because a few large jobs swing any month. Look at the median job as well as total revenue. Compare services on revenue per ad dollar, not cost per lead. And keep a line in every report for what the dashboard cannot see: missed calls, repeat callers and enquiries whose source is unknown. If you use an agency, those are fair questions to ask of its monthly report ([what a good agency should report every month](#)).

A useful monthly measurement report fits on one page. It shows enquiries split into calls and forms, cost per enquiry by service, missed and after-hours calls, the share of enquiries whose source is unknown, jobs won and their value, and revenue per ad dollar over the latest rolling quarter alongside the median job. Each line answers a different question, and together they show where an enquiry leaks between the click and the job: not answered, not quoted, not won, or won but never recorded. The fix for each leak is different, and only one of them is a change to the ads.

This paper is the measurement half of a pair. Its companion, [Launch, discover, control: the first 90 days on Google Ads](#), covers how a campaign should be built, how it discovers what customers search, and how to control it without cutting off customers. For the wider picture across home-service

marketing, read [Marketing for home services in Australia](#); for how we set up call and form tracking, see [tracking and measurement](#); and for how enquiries become booked work, [lead generation](#). If you would like us to run the audit on your account, [get in touch](#).

✓ **Do this**

**If you do only one thing**

Make connected calls and submitted forms the only primary conversions, today. It costs nothing and takes minutes, and every other number in the account — cost per enquiry, bid targets, return on ad spend — starts to mean what it says.

# Methodology

SoudCoh research sample: reported Google Ads campaign data from Australian trade and home-service businesses — conversion settings, calls, forms, networks and won-job records. An enquiry is a phone call recorded as a call, or a submitted form; taps on a phone number or email link never count. Figures are medians across the sample unless stated. AI-assistant findings come from repeated buyer questions put to assistants and from SoudCoh's own website; website components describe trade sites SoudCoh has built.

## Questions readers ask

---

### **Should phone-number taps count as conversions in Google Ads?**

Not as primary conversions. A tap shows intent, not an enquiry: many never connect, some are existing customers, and one person can tap several times. Where taps were counted, the Conversions column overstated real enquiries by close to double (+92%) for the median trade advertiser. Keep taps as secondary signals and count only connected calls and submitted forms.

---

### **What call length should count as a conversion?**

Google's default for calls from ads is 60 seconds, but about 49% of answered calls from ads are shorter — a mix of wrong numbers and quick bookings. Listen to a sample of short calls and set the threshold for your business, and for each service if they differ.

---

### **Why is my Google Ads ROAS meaningless?**

Most likely because every enquiry carries Google's default value of one dollar: 77% of trade advertisers do this, and only 9% send real job values. Record won jobs against the leads that produced them and upload them as an offline conversion, secondary at first.

---

### **Should I switch off search partners and the Display Network?**

For most trade Search campaigns, yes. Display clicks inside Search campaigns produced enquiries at about 4% of the Google Search rate, and search-partner clicks at 16%. Check enquiries per dollar by network in your own account before deciding.

---

## How do I track which keyword produced a job?

Capture the click and its source on the lead when it arrives, match it to the campaign, ad group and search term, mark the lead won or lost with its value, and upload won jobs to Google Ads against the original click or call. A job-management tool, a CRM or a monthly spreadsheet can hold the outcome.

---

## How can I tell whether AI assistants are sending me customers?

Ask every new enquiry how they found you and store the answer on the lead, and give AI assistants their own channel in analytics. Analytics alone understates it: on SoudCoh's own site, visits it could attribute to AI assistants were 0.2% of sessions, because most arrive with no referrer.

---

## Should every call count as a new enquiry?

No. About 19% of calls to a tracked number come from someone who has already called — chasing a quote, confirming a time or calling back after a missed call. Count each caller once as an enquiry and report repeat calls separately, otherwise cost per enquiry looks better than it is.

---

# Further reading

---

### [Article](#)

**Phone taps are not enquiries: how Google Ads overcounts trade leads →**

---

### [Article](#)

**The default conversion value that makes trade ROAS meaningless →**

---

### [Article](#)

**Is your Search campaign quietly running on the Display Network? →**

---

### [Article](#)

**Short calls and the 60-second rule: which Google Ads calls should count? →**

---

[Article](#)

**How ChatGPT chooses which business to recommend →**

---

[Article](#)

**How Do I Know If My Leads Are Being Tracked Properly? →**

---

[Article](#)

**What does a trade website need to turn clicks into calls and forms? →**

---

[Article](#)

**What Should a Good Agency Report On Every Month? →**

---

[White paper](#)

**Launch, discover, control: the first 90 days on Google Ads →**

---

[White paper](#)

**Marketing for home services in Australia →**

---

[Page](#)

**All SoudCoh white papers →**

---

[Page](#)

**Tracking and analytics →**

---

[Page](#)

**Lead generation for service businesses →**

---

[Page](#)

**Google Ads management →**

---

[Page](#)

**Google Ads benchmarks for Australian trades →**

---

[Industry](#)

**Websites for plumbers →**

---

## References

---

1. [About primary and secondary conversion actions](#) — Google Ads Help
2. [About phone call conversion tracking](#) — Google Ads Help
3. [Set up tracking calls to a phone number on a website](#) — Google Ads Help
4. [About conversion counting options](#) — Google Ads Help
5. [About conversion values](#) — Google Ads Help
6. [About offline conversion imports](#) — Google Ads Help
7. [About enhanced conversions](#) — Google Ads Help
8. [About the Google Search Network](#) — Google Ads Help

Most relevant to: Plumbing, Electrical, Cleaning, HVAC, Pest control, Roofing, Painting, Removals, Construction.

### Want these checks run against your own account?

Tell us about your business and the account you run today, and we can look at it with the same questions this paper asks.

[soudcoh.com/contact](https://soudcoh.com/contact) · 1800 315 165