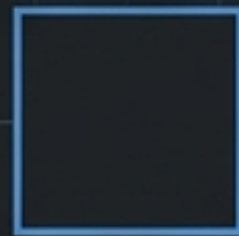
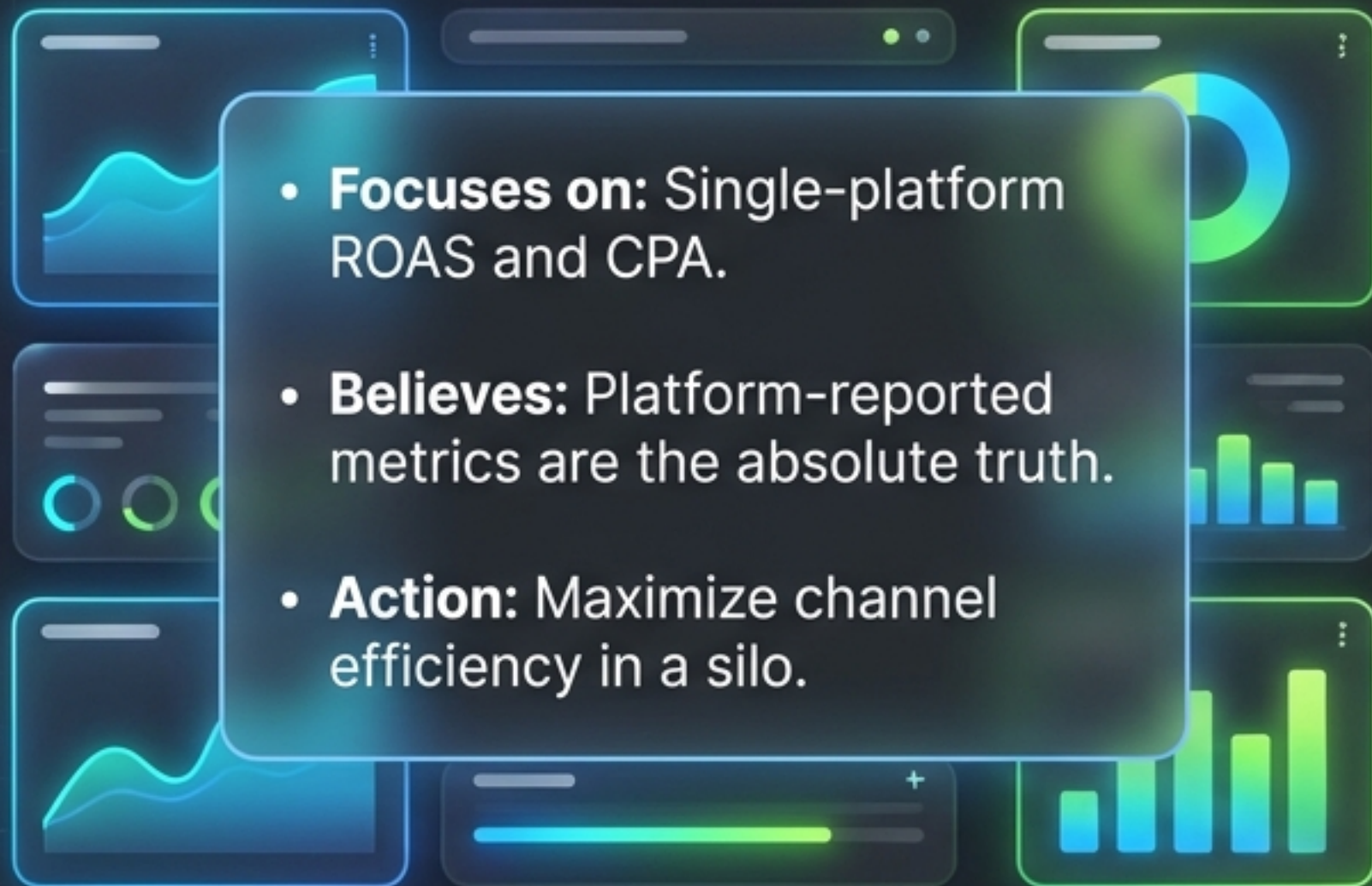


# Ground Truth: The Performance Budget Owner's Playbook

Cross-Channel Attribution, ROI Forecasting,  
and Making the Budget Case to the CMO.



# The Campaign Manager



# The Budget Owner

<b>Focuses on:</b>	Marginal ROI and incremental revenue.
<b>Believes:</b>	The CRM/backend is the only ground truth.
<b>Action:</b>	Allocate ₹1Cr+ dynamically across channels based on de-duplicated impact.

**To step into multi-channel budget ownership, you must stop acting like an algorithm manager and start acting like an investor.**

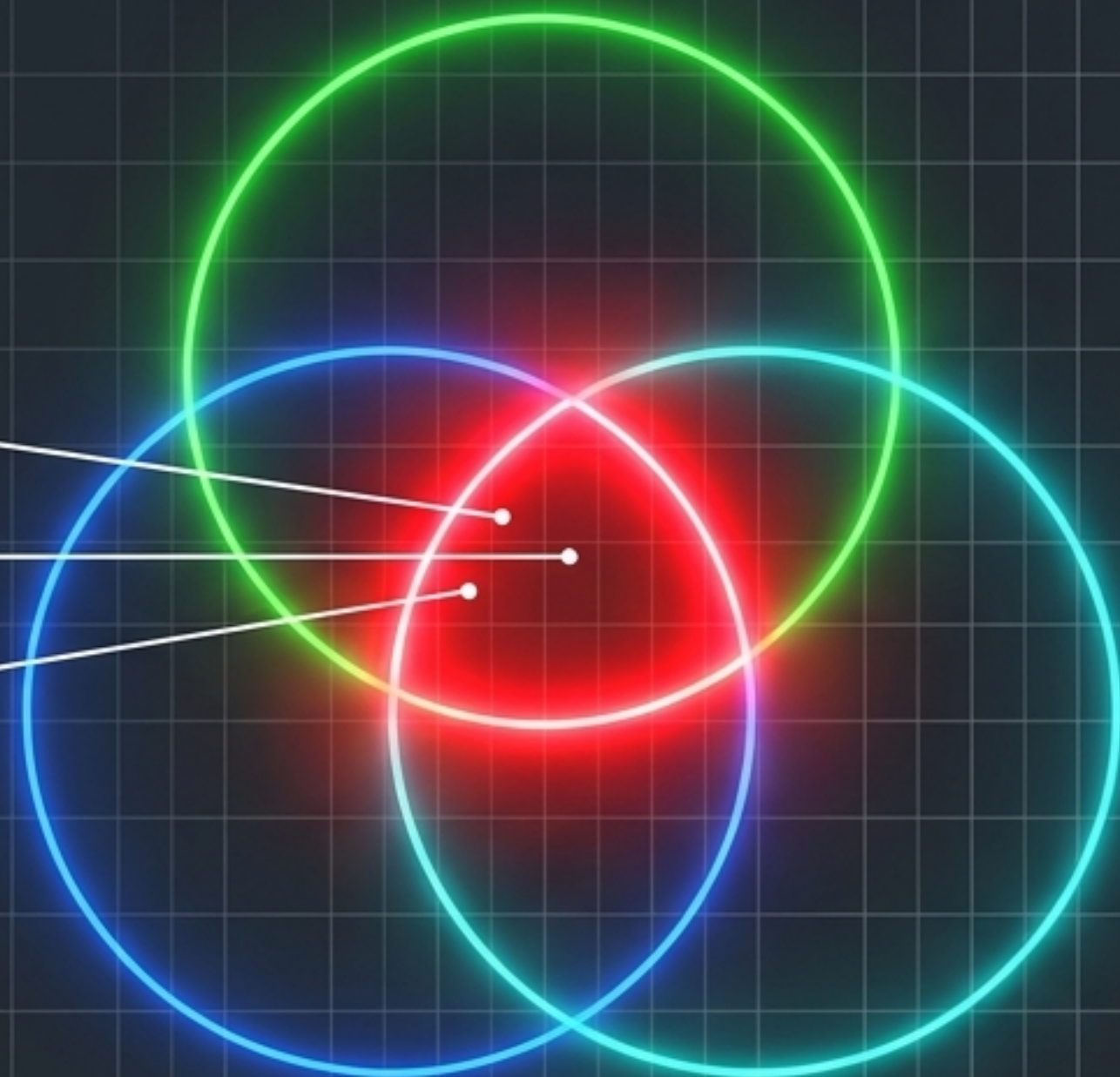
# The Walled Garden Problem

Every platform is a credible narrator of its own version of the truth. None of them shows you the whole story.

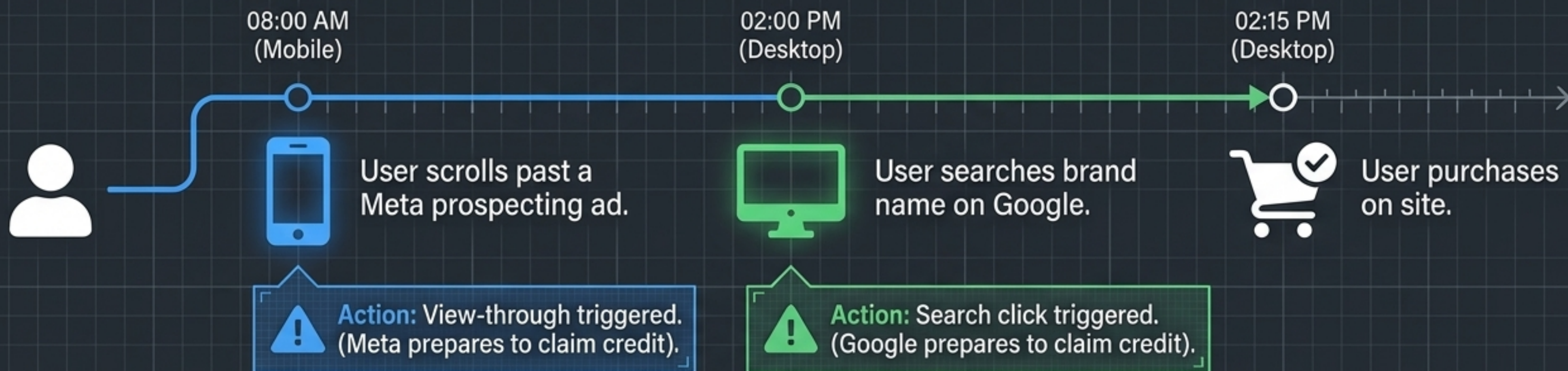
1. **Cross-Channel Overlap:** Customers touch multiple platforms before converting.
2. **View-Through Defaults:** 1-day/7-day view windows claim credit without clicks.
3. **Cross-Device Fragmentation:** Mobile ad exposure matched to a desktop checkout.

**Data Note:** At ₹50L/month of combined spend, your platform-reported conversions will easily add up to 1.5x–2x your actual backend conversion count.

The Reality Cap (Total CRM Orders)



# The Anatomy of a Double-Count



$$[\text{Meta claims 1 order}] + [\text{Google claims 1 order}] = [\text{1 Actual CRM Order}]$$

The platforms report 2 conversions. Your business only made 1 sale.  
The math is broken at the source.

# The Attribution Bias Matrix

Model	How it works	Over-Credits	Under-Credits / Blindspot
Last-Click	100% to final touch.	Bottom-funnel (Branded search, retargeting).	Awareness/Prospecting.
First-Click	100% to first touch.	Top-funnel.	Closing channels.
Linear	Equal split.	(N/A)	Arbitrarily assumes a view-through has the exact same impact as an active branded search.
Data-Driven Attribution (DDA)	Machine learning lift analysis.	(N/A)	<b>It only sees its own platform inventory.</b> Google DDA optimizes for Google; Meta DDA optimizes for Meta.

# The Reality Check: Platform Illusion vs. Backend Ground Truth

## The Dashboard View (Platform Reported)

Google Brand: ₹12L Spend | 800 Convs | 6.7x ROAS

Google Non-Brand: ₹22L Spend | 540 Convs | 3.3x ROAS

Meta Prospecting: ₹10L Spend | 320 Convs | 2.2x ROAS

Meta Retargeting: ₹6L Spend | 280 Convs | 4.2x ROAS

**Total Claimed:** ₹50L Spend | 1,940 Conversions | 4.0x ROAS

### The Gap:

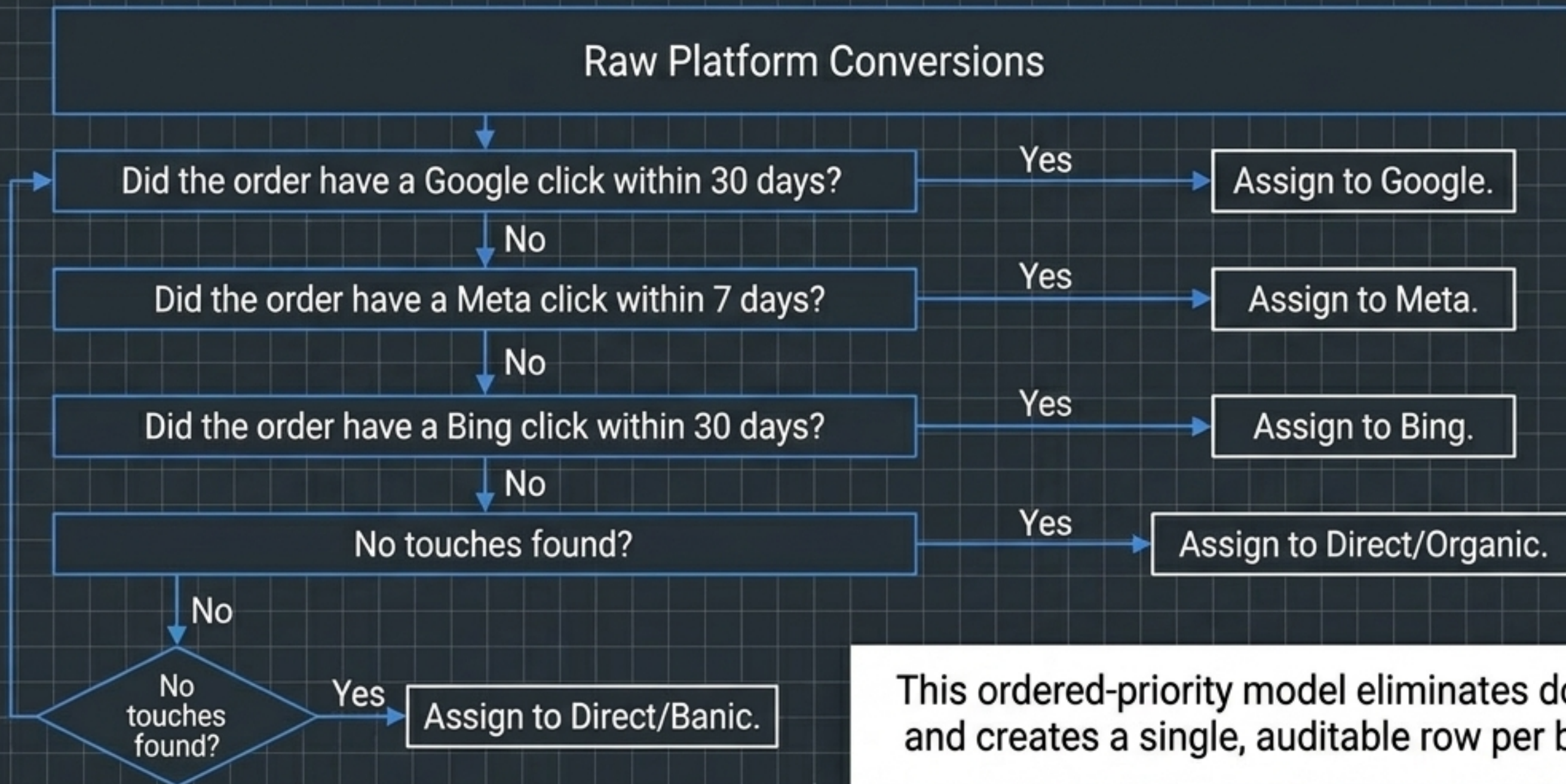
460 phantom orders  
claimed by  
platforms that  
never happened.

## The Ledger View (CRM Actuals)

Total Confirmed: 1,480 Conversions

# Building a De-duplicated View: The Priority Waterfall

**Step 1: Anchor to Truth.** Base your dataset solely on backend Order IDs and Revenue.



This ordered-priority model eliminates double-counting and creates a single, auditable row per backend order.

# Calculating the Platform Inflation Factor

[Platform-Reported Revenue]

[De-duplicated Channel Revenue]

=

The Inflation Factor

**Example:** If Google claims ₹30L in revenue, but the de-duplicated waterfall only attributes ₹22L to Google...

**1.36x**

(Google is over-reporting by 36%)

**Application:** Use this coefficient to discount the platform's daily dashboard metrics so you can pace budgets against reality, not inflated algorithmic claims.

# The Incrementality Question: Causality vs. Correlation

**Core Insight:** Attribution models—even perfectly de-duplicated ones—only answer “who touched the customer?” They fail to answer the **multi-million rupee question: “Would they have converted anyway without the ads?”**

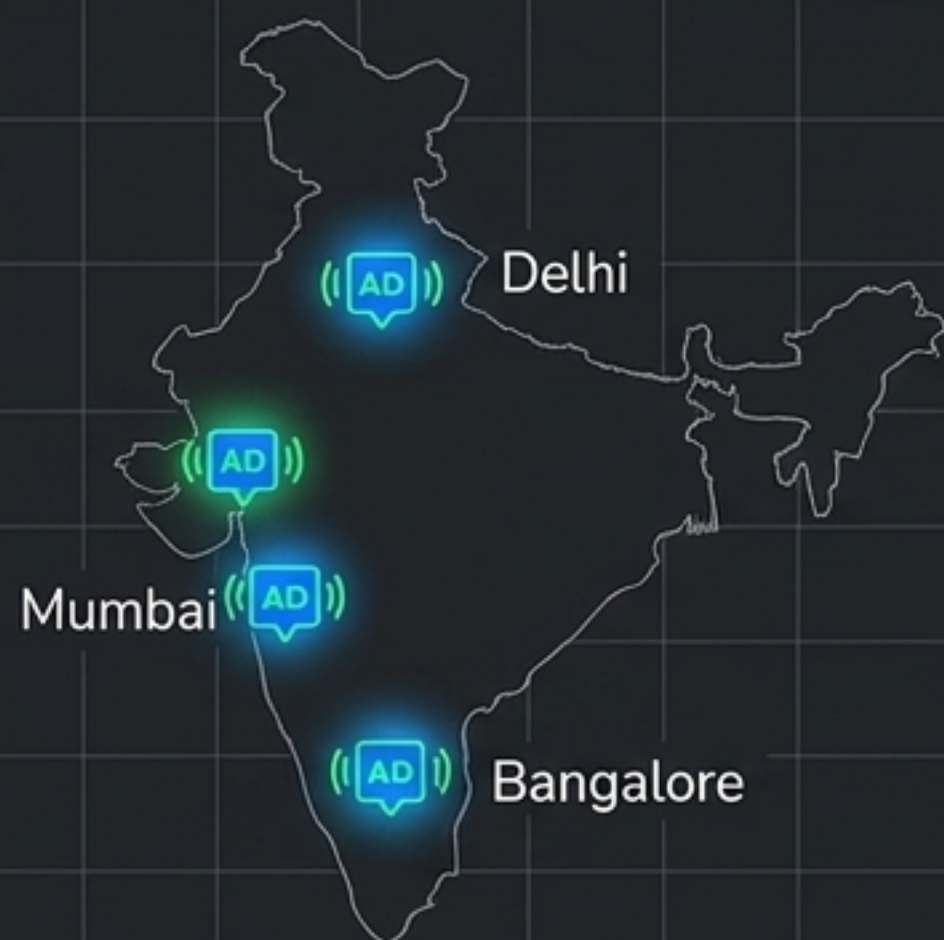


**The Branded Search Trap:** A platform might report a 6-7x ROAS on Branded Search, but if 40% of those users were just using Google as a navigation bar to type your URL, your true incremental ROAS is **vastly lower**.

# The Geo-Holdout Mechanics Map

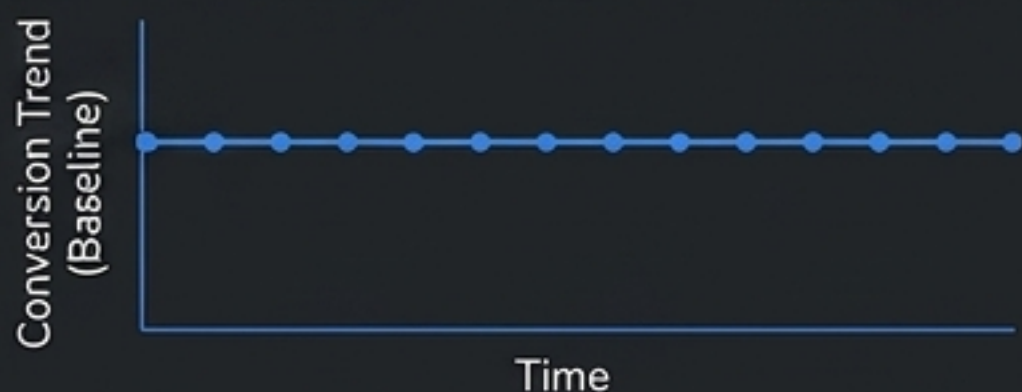
## Control Cities

ADS ON



## Test Cities

ADS OFF



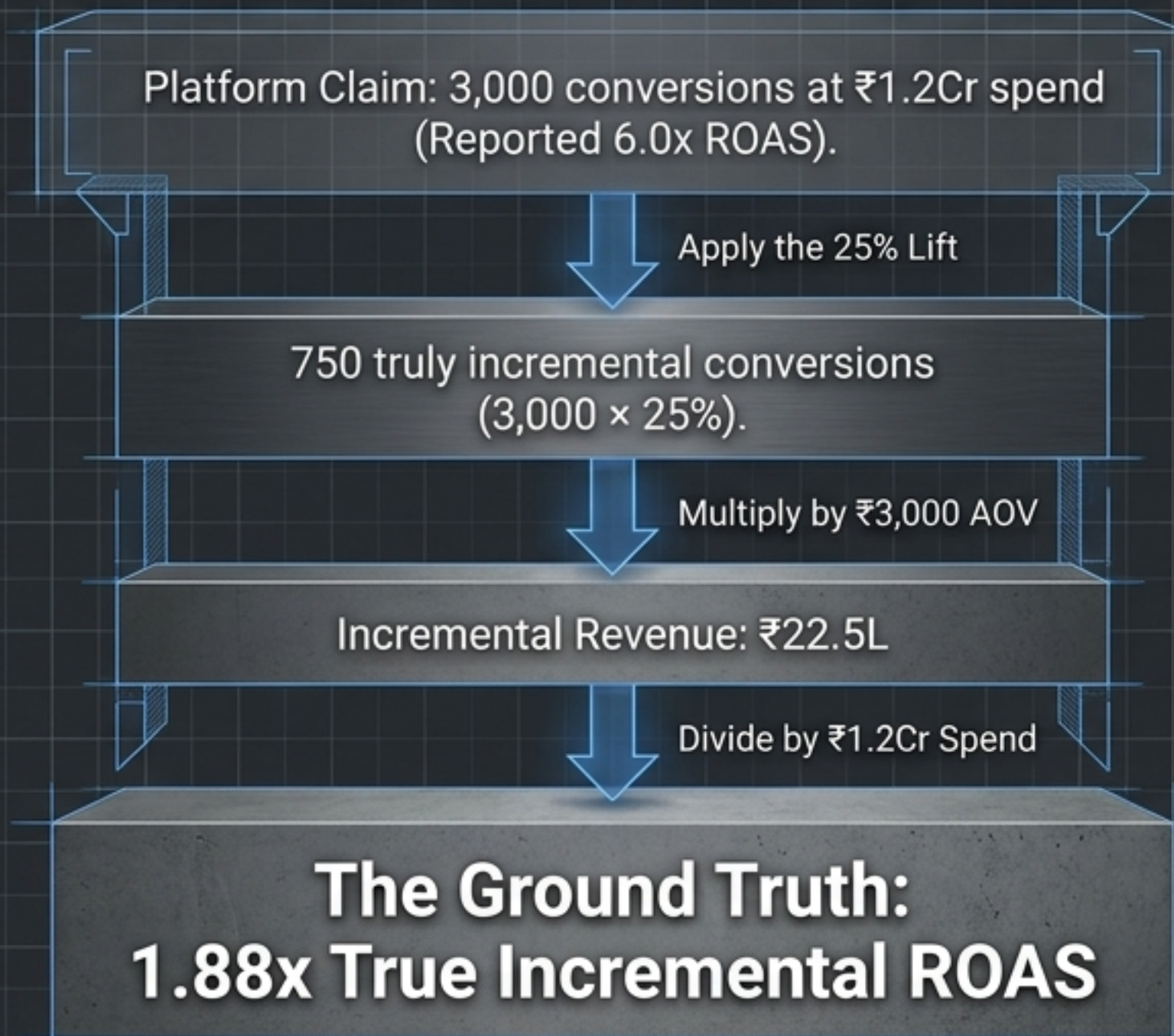
- **Step 1: Match Regions.** Split 4–6 comparable cities based on historical conversion rates and population size.

- **Step 2: Darken the Test Group.** Turn off (or significantly reduce) ad spend in the Test cities (e.g., Pune, Ahmedabad) for 2 to 4 weeks.

- **Step 3: Measure the Gap.** Compare the conversion rate drop in the Test cities against the stable baseline in the Control cities.

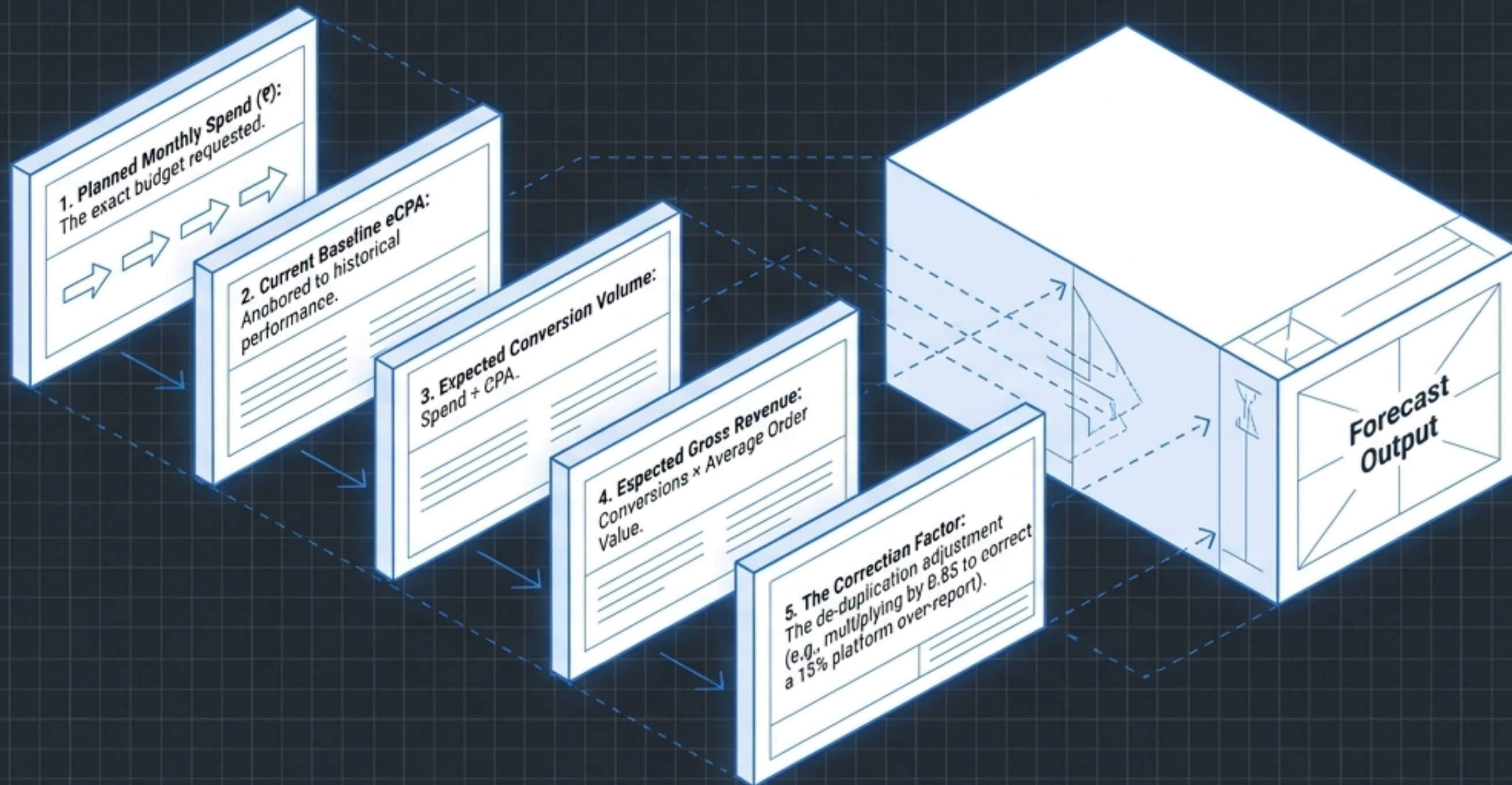
# Translating Lift into True ROAS

**The Test Result:** Control cities maintained a 2.4% conversion rate. Test cities dropped to 1.8% when ads were removed. **Result:** A 25% incremental lift.



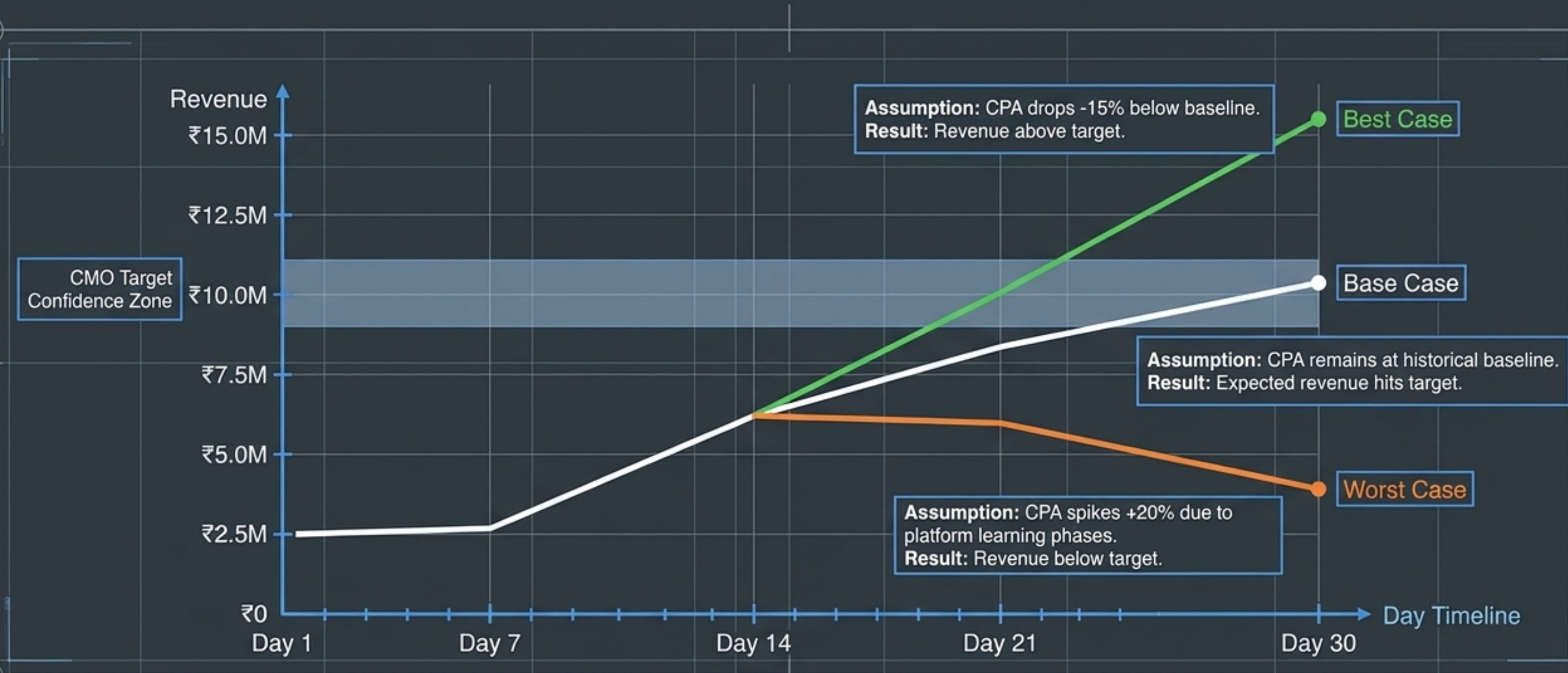
It's far from the 6x the platform reports. But now you have an honest number to build a business case around.

# Building a Credible 30-Day ROI Forecast



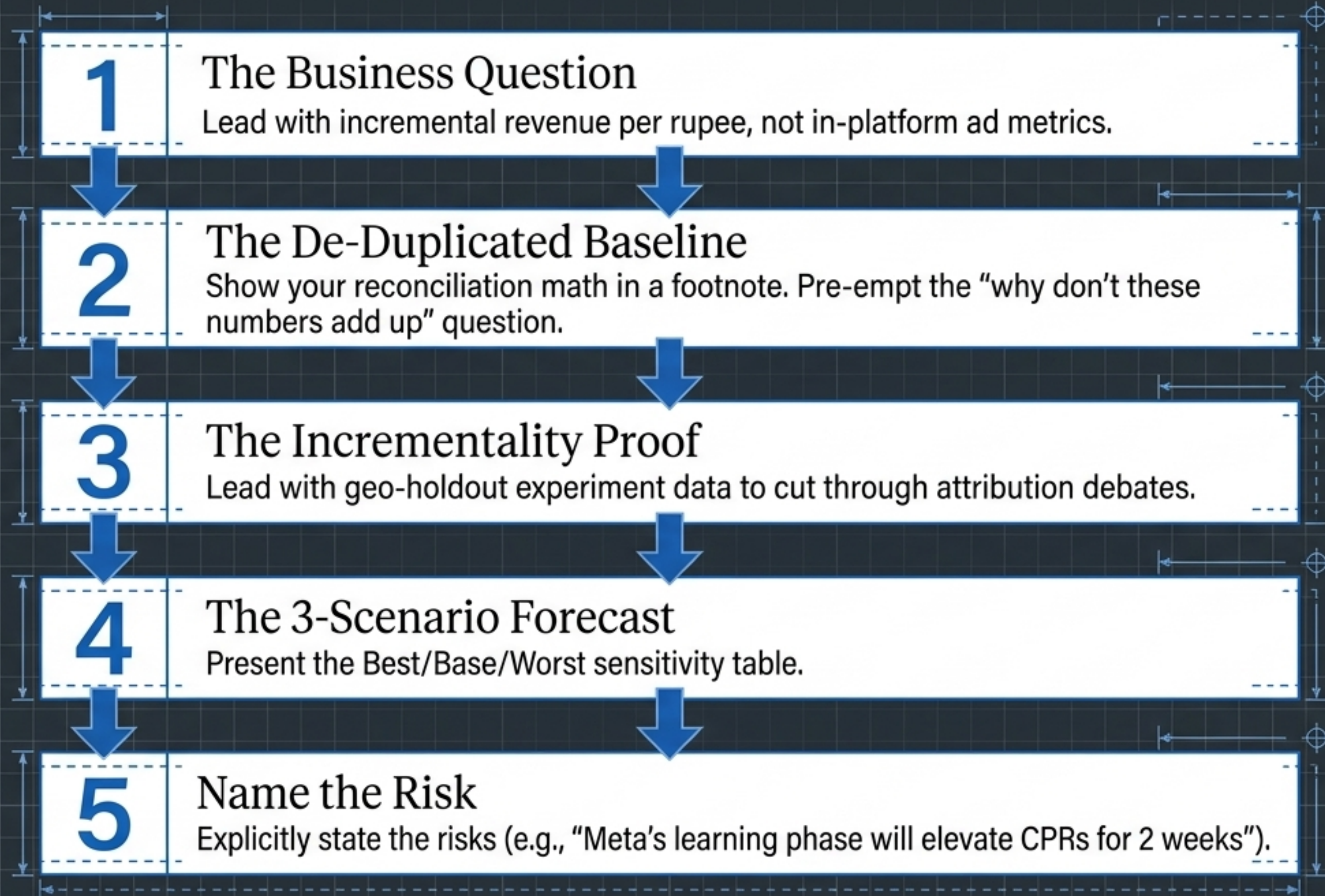
**THE GOLDEN RULE: NEVER FORECAST USING PLATFORM-REPORTED NUMBERS. ALWAYS APPLY YOUR ATTRIBUTION CORRECTION FACTOR FIRST.**

# The Sensitivity Dashboard (Never Present a Single Point)



A range with explicit assumptions demonstrates rigor.  
A single-point forecast guarantees you will be exactly wrong.

# The CMO Budget Memo: A 5-Step Architecture



# The Pitch Makeover



## The Campaign Manager Pitch (Bad)



We should increase Meta spend by ₹5L. Our ROAS improved from 3.2x to 3.8x last month, and CPAs are looking really cheap. The algorithm is dialed in.

**Critique:** Uses inflated platform ROAS. No risk acknowledgment. Sounds like an operator, not an owner.



## The Budget Owner Pitch (Good)

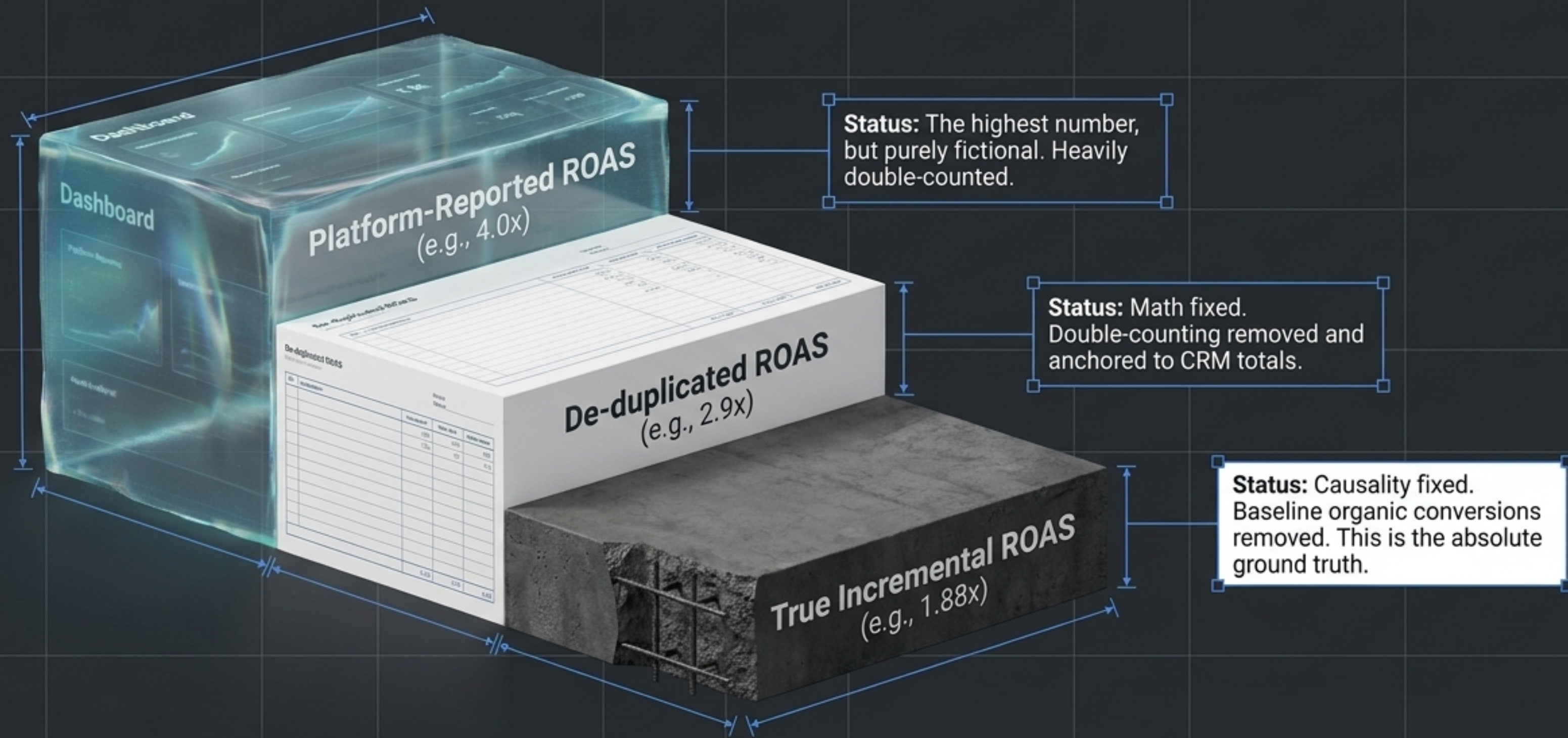
Requesting a ₹5L budget increase for Meta.

Based on our Q1 holdout test showing 28% incremental lift, we project this will generate ₹18L in base-case incremental revenue.

**Risk:** a 2-week learning phase penalty on CPA. Recommending a 4-week hold period.

**Critique:** Anchored in incrementality. Sets realistic expectations. Names the risk.

# The Hierarchy of Truth



The number gets smaller, but your strategic confidence gets higher. Budget owners operate exclusively on the bottom step.

# The Budget Owner's Checklist

- Audit:** Export CRM data and map the gap against platform-reported totals.
- Build:** Run the priority waterfall to calculate your unique inflation factor.
- Test:** Launch a 2-week geo-holdout test on your highest-spend channel.
- Pitch:** Build the 3-scenario ROI forecast and write the risk-adjusted CMO memo.

Stop managing the algorithm. Start managing the business.