

Incrementality

Marketing

The only question that matters: what would have happened anyway.

Incremental effect is the difference between exposed and comparable unexposed groups.

Incremental = Exposed outcome – Control outcome

Brand-term search ads

They would have found you.

Often low incrementality

Retargeting

Buyers were returning anyway.

Frequently overstated

Geo holdout

Turn off in matched regions

THE COMMON MISTAKE

✗ **Reading platform-reported conversions as incremental**

✓ **Testing against a holdout**

Platforms count conversions they touched, not conversions they caused. The two differ substantially.

Geo holdouts are the practical test for most businesses: switch off in matched regions and compare the difference.