

LIVE WEBINAR

picking your first paid channel for early stage b2b saas

adlabz

the most expensive mistake at pre-seed isn't \$15k of wasted ad spend.

It's the quarter of poisoned data that follows.

The data you needed for your raise. Now you can't tell if paid doesn't work for your SaaS, or if you just picked the wrong channel.



what you'll walk away with

- 01 the 4 inputs that actually decide your first channel
- 02 when google wins, when linkedin wins, when meta is wrong
- 03 what a sane 90-day test looks like at \$3k, \$5k, \$10k
- 04 the cac trajectory you should expect at day 30, 60, 90
- 05 what one quarter of waiting costs you at the next raise

YOUR HOST Umer, founder of Ad Labz. Ex-CTO. We build paid acquisition systems for pre-seed and seed B2B SaaS.

why most founders pick the wrong channel

they optimize for
CPC.

CPC is what an impression costs. Nothing more.

CPC is a downstream metric.

It tells you nothing about whether the lead will book a demo, qualify, or close.

The cheapest channel is rarely the right channel for B2B SaaS.

channel choice is a math question, not a taste question

WRONG QUESTION

"Which channel is cheapest?"

RIGHT QUESTION

"Which channel's economics match my sales motion?"

The right channel is decided by 4 measurable inputs about your business. Not by what the platform charges per click.

input 1: annual contract value

01

ACV

ACV determines what you can afford to pay per lead.

Rough CPL ceilings (assuming ~10% lead-to-close, 12-month payback target):

Under \$10K ACV → CPL ceiling ~\$300. Tight. Limits channels.

\$10K to \$30K ACV → CPL ceiling ~\$600. Most channels viable.

\$30K+ ACV → CPL ceiling \$1,000+. LinkedIn comes online.

If your ACV can't support a channel's typical CPL, the channel doesn't fit. Doesn't matter how cheap the clicks look.

input 2: sales cycle length



Sales cycle length decides whether intent-capture or awareness-building wins.

Under 30 days → buyers are actively searching. **Google.**

30 to 90 days → mixed. Google for the searching, LinkedIn for the not-yet-searching.

90+ days → multi-touch awareness wins. **LinkedIn.**

Short cycles reward intent. Long cycles reward consistency.

input 3: ICP search behavior

03

SEARCH BEHAVIOR

Does your ICP actually Google for solutions in your category?

Test: search 5 to 10 phrases your ICP would use.

✓ **Real, relevant results** → search demand exists → Google viable

✗ **Generic, spammy, unrelated** → ICP doesn't search → Google won't work

Search-driven categories: CRM, PM, analytics, dev tools, accounting.

Discovery-driven categories: new categories, novel workflows, persona-specific tools.

input 4: budget viability

04

BUDGET VIABILITY

Every channel has a minimum spend below which the data isn't statistically meaningful.

Google → \$3K/month floor

LinkedIn → \$5K/month floor

Meta → \$2K/month floor (but B2B SaaS quality drops off fast)

Below the floor, you're not testing the channel. You're testing whether you got lucky.

If you can't fund the floor, don't pick that channel.

when google wins

CRITERIA

- ✓ Sales cycle under 60 days
- ✓ ICP actively searches for solutions in your category
- ✓ ACV \$5K to \$50K
- ✓ Budget \$3K+/month
- ✓ Existing demand for your category

BEST FIT

Established SaaS categories where buyers know the problem and are searching for the answer.

when linkedin wins

CRITERIA

- ✓ ACV \$25K+
- ✓ Sales cycle 90+ days
- ✓ Specific decision-maker title and firmographic profile
- ✓ Budget \$5K+/month
- ✓ Category is new, or buyer doesn't know to search yet

BEST FIT

Persona-targeted SaaS. New categories.
Specific roles, seniorities, industries.

why meta is usually wrong for b2b saas

WHY IT BREAKS

- ✗ Targeting is interest-based, not job-based. Can't reliably reach a "VP of Eng at a 50-person fintech."
- ✗ CPL looks cheap on the dashboard. Lead-to-close is brutal.
- ✗ Lead quality drops fast as you scale spend.

THE EXCEPTION

PLG products with consumer-style appeal
(founders, creators, solopreneurs as buyers).

Meta can work there.

**For traditional B2B SaaS with named buyers,
almost never.**

the decision matrix

	GOOGLE	LINKEDIN	META
ACV	\$5K to \$50K	\$25K+	<i>Any (quality drops fast)</i>
Sales cycle	Under 60 days	90+ days	<i>Any</i>
ICP behavior	Actively searches	Doesn't search yet	<i>Consumer-style buyer</i>
Budget floor	\$3K/mo	\$5K/mo	\$2K/mo
Best fit	Established categories	Targeted personas, new categories	<i>PLG / consumer crossover</i>

Stack the 4 inputs against this. The right channel is usually obvious.

what a sane 90-day test costs

\$3K
per month

- One channel only (Google, most likely)
- Single campaign type
- Enough data for go/no-go in 90 days
- Tight ad and LP testing

\$5K
per month

- One channel, two campaign types
- Or one channel + small retargeting layer
- Faster signal, more iterations

\$10K
per month

- One primary channel + meaningful test of a second
- A/B test more variables
- Statistically clean CAC inside 60 days

RULE • *Don't split a small budget across channels. One channel at \$3K beats two channels at \$1.5K each, every time.*

cac trajectory: day 30, 60, 90

DAY 30

First clean conversion data

CAC will be 2 to 3x your target.

This is normal.

Zero qualified leads = setup problem, not channel problem.

DAY 60

Signal stabilizing

CAC trending toward target.

Lead quality stabilizing.

If CAC isn't moving, kill the channel or do a major rework.

DAY 90

Board-deck ready

CAC at or below target.

Pipeline data is board-deck ready.

If still 1.5x+ over target after iteration, channel doesn't fit.

WHAT "NOT WORKING" LOOKS LIKE AT DAY 90

- CAC 1.5x+ over target after creative and audience iteration
- Lead-to-demo conversion under 10% with no improvement
- Demo-to-close stuck under 10% (lead quality issue)



THE COST OF WAITING

the hidden cost of waiting

Next raise 9 months out. You need 90 days of pipeline data in the deck.

Your real decision deadline is 6 months from now.

EVERY MONTH PAST THAT

- 15 to 30% valuation discount on a one-channel GTM story
- At seed: \$300K to \$750K in founder dilution
- \$30K to \$75K per quarter in pipeline not being built
- Competitive window: CPCs inflate as competitors enter

One quarter of delay = \$400K to \$1M in combined dilution and lost pipeline.

the framework, on one slide

- 1 4 inputs decide your channel: ACV, sales cycle, ICP search behavior, budget viability
- 2 3 channels, 1 right answer for your SaaS
- 3 Test it for 90 days against pre-defined go/no-go criteria
- 4 **Don't bet on CPC. Bet on math.**

IF IT'S USEFUL

how we can help

The SaaS Pipeline Sprint:

we build, launch, and manage the paid acquisition system for pre-seed and seed B2B SaaS.

90 DAYS

Fully managed, end to end

WALK-AWAY CLAUSE

If the numbers miss the criteria we define together upfront, you walk away and keep everything we built

30 DAYS LIVE BEFORE YOU PAY

Setup fee and first month of management deferred until you've seen 30 days of live results

8 CLIENT CAP

2 new clients per month. Built so every account gets direct access to the person running your campaigns

YOUR NEXT STEP

want this framework applied to your saas?

WHAT YOU GET

- ✓ Channel recommendation for your specific ACV, cycle, ICP, and budget
- ✓ 90-day test plan with go/no-go criteria
- ✓ CAC projections for your vertical

45-minute working session. No pitch, no obligation. You get the doc either way.

FREE

the ads plan

adlabz.co/ads-plan

Book in the chat. Link will be sent in the follow-up email.

questions?

Drop them in the chat.

adlabz.co/ads-plan

thank you.

WHAT'S NEXT

RECORDING

Sent to your inbox

FREE ADS PLAN

adlabz.co/ads-plan

ADS AUTOPSY

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