Booth vs. Search Budget Worksheet

Compare a booth and a search campaign in the same unit.

BrightLine
AVIATION-ONLY MARKETING AGENCY

Fill in last year's real numbers, or this year's quotes. The booth invoice is only the start: count every line below, then divide by the conversations that were actually qualified (Step 3 on page 2).

STEP 1

Trade Show Booth: The Real Cost

Floor space / booth fee	$	
Booth build, graphics and rentals	$	
Freight, drayage and setup	$	
Travel, hotels and meals	$	
Staff days off the ramp *days x day rate*	$	
Pre-show outreach and meeting booking	$	
Post-show follow-up time	$	
Giveaways, printing and other	$	
A1. Total booth cost	$	
A2. Qualified conversations from the show *count, see Step 3*		
A3. Booth cost per qualified conversation *A1 / A2*	$	

STEP 2

Paid Search: The Same Period

Ad spend *months x monthly budget*	$	
Management fee	$	
Landing page work	$	
Call tracking and conversion setup	$	
B1. Total paid search cost	$	
B2. Qualified leads from search *count, see Step 3*		
B3. Search cost per qualified lead *B1 / B2*	$	

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Decide where next year's budget goes.

STEP 3

What Counts as "Qualified"

Count a conversation or lead only if it meets all four. Badge scans and casual booth visits do not count.

- [ ] They had a specific need you solve (a route, a rating, an AOG repair, a part).
- [ ] The aircraft, program or location fits what you offer.
- [ ] Their budget and timeline are in a range you can serve.
- [ ] It reached a real conversation: a call, a meeting, or a booked discovery flight.

STEP 4

Compare the Two Numbers

> If B3 is lower than A3, search is the cheaper way to capture demand. Move that share of the budget to paid search.
>
> If A3 is lower, check what the show bought: was it new demand, or existing customers saying hello?
>
> Either way, budget the booth from a "presence" line, not a lead-generation line.

STEP 5

Shows That Still Earn Their Space

Keep a show only if it does at least one of these jobs. Fund one or two anchor shows, cap the spend, and let search carry demand.

- [ ] Dealer or distributor signings
- [ ] OEM procurement face time
- [ ] Airframe, STC or product launches
- [ ] Pilot and technician recruiting
- [ ] Regulator and association relationships
- [ ] Trust building with a few large buyers

STEP 6

Fix the Follow-Up Gap

- [ ] One named owner for booth leads before the show opens
- [ ] Every badge scan called or emailed within 48 hours
- [ ] Search leads routed to the CRM with the search term attached

Want us to run the numbers with you?

BrightLine Digital builds aviation Google Ads around buyer intent. Book a free audit at brightlinecm.com/contact-us/