MIDAS
BY NETTSCIENCE

FREE RESEARCH REPORT

The Attribution Problem Solved

A Practical Guide to Cross-Channel Marketing Attribution

Platform-reported attribution is broken by design. Every platform overstates its own contribution. This report explains why — and how to build an attribution model that actually tells the truth.

200–400%	Last-click	Content	Daily
How much platforms overstate conversions	Default model hiding what really works	Channel most under-credited	How often MIDAS runs attribution

THE CORE PROBLEM

Your Attribution Model Is Not Telling You the Truth

Attribution — assigning credit for a conversion to the marketing activities that drove it — is one of the most commercially significant problems in marketing. Get it right and you know exactly which channels, content, and audiences are generating revenue. Get it wrong and your budget allocation decisions are built on a false picture of reality. Most marketing teams are getting it wrong. Not through negligence, but because the systems they rely on are structurally designed to produce the wrong answer.

THE FIVE WAYS YOUR ATTRIBUTION MODEL FAILS YOU

01

Every Platform Overstates Its Own Contribution

Google Ads reports conversions using Google's attribution window. Meta reports conversions using Meta's attribution window. LinkedIn does the same. Each platform's counting methodology is set to maximise the number of conversions it can claim credit for. When you add up the conversions each platform reports independently, the total routinely exceeds your actual conversion volume by 200–400%. This is not fraud — it is the predictable output of every platform being its own judge and jury on attribution.

02

Last-Click Hides What Actually Built the Relationship

The default attribution model in most platforms gives 100% of conversion credit to the last marketing touchpoint before a customer converts. In a typical B2B journey: a prospect reads a blog post, sees a LinkedIn ad three days later, clicks a Google search ad a week after that, and converts. Google Ads gets 100% of the credit. The blog post gets nothing. The LinkedIn ad gets nothing. You defund what actually built the relationship and scale the closing mechanism that benefited from it.

03

Content and Organic Are Systematically Under-Credited

Content marketing, organic search, social media — channels that introduce prospects, build trust, and nurture consideration — almost never appear as the last touchpoint before conversion. Under last-click attribution, they are permanently invisible. Under platform-reported attribution, they cannot be seen at all because they do not live inside the platforms doing the reporting. The result: content investment is systematically undervalued and underfunded relative to its actual contribution to revenue.

04

Platforms Cannot See Across Their Own Boundaries

The fundamental structural problem: Google's attribution model can only see touchpoints that occurred within Google's ecosystem. Meta's can only see touchpoints within Meta's. Neither can see the full customer journey — the email that re-engaged a lapsed prospect, the blog post read three weeks before the search query, the social post that introduced the brand. True attribution requires a vantage point that sits above all platforms simultaneously. No individual platform can provide this by definition.

05

Your Attribution Model Doesn't Learn From Outcomes

Most attribution models — even sophisticated ones — are static. They apply the same rules or the same algorithmic weights regardless of what you learn over time. The attribution model that worked for your audience mix twelve months ago may be systematically wrong for your current mix. Without a system that continuously recalibrates based on actual CRM outcomes — which leads converted, which churned, which expanded — your model is working on assumptions that may no longer be valid.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The attribution number your platforms show you is not a measurement of reality. It is each platform's self-interested estimate of its own contribution. The gap between platform-reported attribution and actual contribution is where most budget misallocation lives.

THE BUSINESS COST

What Bad Attribution Actually Costs You

Attribution errors are not abstract measurement problems. They have direct, compounding consequences on every budget allocation decision you make. Because attribution drives investment decisions, a systematically biased attribution model produces systematically biased investment decisions — at scale, every budget cycle.

Budget flows to closing channels, not building channels

Last-click attribution makes Google Search and retargeting look like your highest-performing channels — because they are always the last touchpoint. Top-of-funnel investment that builds the audience those channels convert gets defunded. Over time, your conversion channels stop working because the pipeline feeding them has been starved.

Content investment is cut or misdirected

When blog posts, social content, and email nurture sequences are invisible to your attribution model, they appear to deliver no ROI. Content budgets get reduced. The channels that build brand, trust, and consideration are systematically under-invested relative to their actual contribution.

High-value audiences are mis-identified

Platform-reported attribution cannot connect a Google click to the LinkedIn ad that first introduced that person to your brand three months earlier. Your 'best-performing' audience segments in any one platform may simply be the segments best served by that platform's own retargeting — not genuinely the highest-quality prospects.

The same attribution errors repeat every cycle

Because most attribution models are static, the budget misallocation patterns they produce are also static. The channels that appear to over-perform continue to receive more budget. The channels that appear to under-perform continue to be defunded. Without a model that learns from actual CRM outcomes, the error compounds with each budget cycle.

ATTRIBUTION MODELS COMPARED

From Last-Click to True Cross-Channel

MODEL	HOW IT WORKS	WHAT IT MISSES	VERDICT
Last-Click	100% credit to final touchpoint before conversion	*Everything that built the relationship*	*Structurally wrong*
First-Click	100% credit to first touchpoint	*Nurture, consideration, closing channels*	*Equally misleading*
Linear	Equal credit across all touchpoints	*Relative importance of each touchpoint*	*Better — still simplistic*

Time-Decay	More credit to recent touchpoints	*Early-stage channels that drive consideration*	*Favours paid over content*
Data-Driven (platform)	Algorithmic within one platform's data	*Everything outside that platform's ecosystem*	*Limited by platform boundary*
Cross-Channel (MIDAS)	Multi-touch modelling across ALL channels including content, organic, email, CRM	*Nothing — full journey visibility*	*The accurate model*

THE SOLUTION

What Proper Cross-Channel Attribution Looks Like

True cross-channel attribution requires four things that no individual platform can provide: a unified data warehouse, full-journey tracking across all channels including content and email, a modelling approach that operates above the platform level, and continuous recalibration based on actual business outcomes from the CRM. Here is what each of those requirements means in practice.

01

A Unified Data Warehouse Above All Platforms

Attribution that crosses platform boundaries requires data from all platforms to exist in the same place, in a consistent format, under a consistent data model. This means Google Ads, Meta, LinkedIn, GA4, email, organic search, social media, and CRM data unified into one warehouse — with one definition of a campaign, a conversion, a cost, and a customer. Without this foundation, cross-channel attribution is not possible. Every platform stays inside its own walls, reporting on what it can see.

02

Full Journey Visibility Including Content and Organic

True attribution must include the channels most attribution models ignore. A blog post read three weeks before a Google search query. An email newsletter that re-engaged a lapsed prospect. An organic social post that introduced a brand for the first time. These touchpoints are invisible to paid media attribution but they are real touchpoints in real customer journeys. A proper attribution model captures them — and gives them the credit they deserve.

03

Multiple Models Run in Parallel — Not One Answer

There is no single 'correct' attribution model — there are models that are more or less appropriate for different business contexts. The most useful approach is to run multiple models simultaneously and compare their outputs. Where models agree, you have high confidence. Where they diverge significantly, you have identified a decision worth investigating further. MIDAS runs rules-based and data-driven models in parallel — and shows you the difference between each model's output and platform-reported attribution side by side.

04

Continuous Recalibration From CRM Outcomes

The most accurate attribution model is one that learns from what actually happens downstream. Which attributed leads became customers? Which customers had the highest lifetime value? Which channels produced leads with the lowest churn? This information lives in the CRM — and feeding it back into the attribution model progressively improves the model's accuracy. Attribution is not a one-time configuration. It is a model that should get better with every conversion cycle.

THE ATTRIBUTION SELF-DIAGNOSTIC

5 Questions to Test Your Current Attribution Model

01	Can you show the actual customer journey — across all channels — for your last 50 conversions, including which content assets they consumed before converting?
02	What is the difference between what your platforms report as conversion volume and your actual CRM pipeline from the same period and same traffic sources?
03	Which of your blog posts, social series, or downloadable assets contributed to revenue last quarter — and how much credit does your current model give them?
04	If you turned off your top-performing paid channel tomorrow based on platform attribution data, would you actually know which revenue stream would be affected?
05	Has your attribution model been validated against actual business outcomes — or is it a configuration you set up once and have not revisited since?

MIDAS ATTRIBUTION

How MIDAS Solves the Attribution Problem

MIDAS is purpose-built around the attribution problem. Every architectural decision — the unified data warehouse, the cross-platform data model, the nightly ETL, the CRM integration, the content classification engine — exists because true attribution requires all of these working together. Attribution in MIDAS is not a feature. It is the central organising principle of the entire intelligence layer.

All channels in one warehouse

Google Ads, Meta, LinkedIn, GA4, Search Console, email, CRM, and social unified nightly into a single PostgreSQL warehouse. One consistent conversion definition across all sources. Platform-reported attribution and MIDAS cross-channel attribution calculated and stored side by side.

Content and organic fully included

Blog posts, social content, organic search queries, email touchpoints — all connected to the same customer journey model. Content assets classified by type, intent, and funnel stage. Pipeline contribution tracked from first content touchpoint through to CRM deal closure.

Multiple models, daily recalculation

Linear, time-decay, and data-driven attribution models run every night on the previous day's full data set. Results stored with full lineage. Model outputs compared to platform-reported attribution — differences surfaced as intelligence, not just noise.

CRM feedback loop

Lead quality outcomes from the CRM — conversion rates, deal values, churn rates — fed back into the attribution model. Attribution weights progressively recalibrated based on what actually converts and retains, not just what clicks.

Plain-language attribution insights

AI generates weekly plain-language summaries of what the attribution data shows: which channels are over- or under-credited relative to modelled contribution, which budget shifts are implied, which content assets are earning their investment.

Delivered as a managed service

No data engineering resource required. No modelling expertise required. NettScience builds and operates the attribution infrastructure. Your team receives the intelligence — not the engineering problem.

ABOUT MIDAS

Built by Practitioners Who Solved This Problem Manually for Years

NettScience built cross-channel attribution models for clients manually for over a decade before building MIDAS. We know exactly what the problem costs — because we saw it in client after client. MIDAS automates the work we used to do by hand: nightly data unification, cross-channel modelling, content attribution, CRM feedback loops — running continuously, as a fully managed service on infrastructure the client owns.

Book a Demo	Download the Client Brief	Talk to the Team
See attribution in MIDAS on real anonymised data. midas.nettscience.com	Full platform capabilities, onboarding timeline, data sources.	Send a mail to analytics@nettscience.com