REVENUECAT APP GROWTH ANNUAL

Nothing works until it does

The app marketing sequence

What to test first. What to fix next. When to scale.

Yuliya Lennox · Growth Consultant

THE SEQUENCE

You don’t need to do everything. You need to do things in order.

01

Demand
before assumptions

02

A working journey
before more traffic

03

Economics
before bigger budgets

04

A repeatable process
before a bigger team

More activity is not the same as more progress.

DEMAND

Start with product-market fit. Not founder-product fit.

FOUNDER-PRODUCT FIT

“I love this”

≠

PRODUCT-MARKET FIT

“People will pay for this”

Your enthusiasm is a reason to start.

It is not evidence that the business works.

Build something because you love it? Absolutely.

If revenue is the goal, test for revenue.

DEMAND

Six stories founders tell themselves

"I love it. Other people will too."

"I'll build an amazing product. The money will follow."

"I'll launch. Twitter will find me."

"People can't afford it. I have to charge less."

"They love it for free. They'll love it when it's paid."

"Once I know every benchmark, I'll know what to do."

DEMAND

Free love is not paid demand

Free usage	tells you something about usage.
Free retention	tells you something about retention.
Neither	**tells you enough about willingness to pay.**

Test the paid proposition—not just the free product.

DEMAND

Your launch is not your distribution strategy

AN ACTIVITY

“We’ll post about it.”

A BUSINESS QUESTION

How will the right people find it, and at what cost?

Build a way to reach users. Don’t wait to be discovered.

DEMAND

Before you build more, look at the market

01 Who already solves this problem?

02 What do customers pay for?

03 Which promises get their attention?

04 How do competitors move people toward payment?



If there are no competitors, ask why.

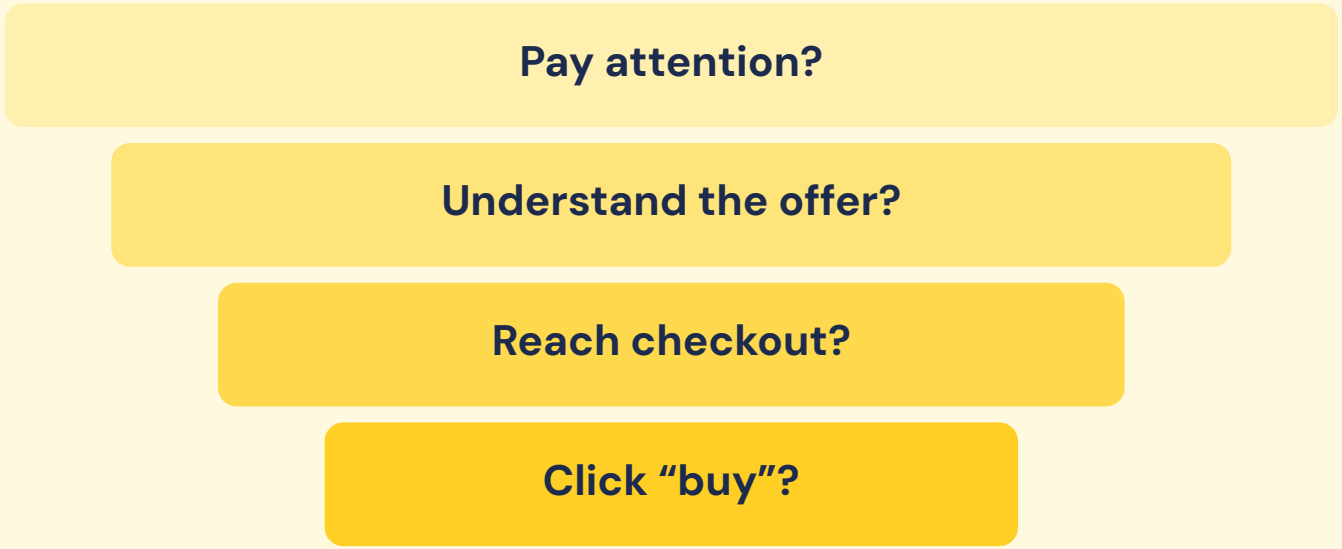
An empty market can mean opportunity—or missing demand.

DEMAND

Test the promise before you overbuild the product

Start with a landing page or a simple funnel.

Can you get the right person to:



DEMAND · CREATIVE

Make a lot. Make it different.

Twenty versions of the same idea are **not twenty different hypotheses.**

EXPLORE

- Different motivations
- Different messages
- Different formats
- Different ways to show the product

Volume helps when it creates more learning.

Calm
Sponsored

Never heard of Bilateral Stimulation? Wondering how sound can calm your nervous system? Curious about EMDR-inspired approaches? Want to try something that actually supports regulation?
Calm's EMDR-Inspired Bilateral Audio uses Bilateral Stimulation to help your body settle.
✅ Works on nervous system patterns…



Calm
Sponsored

🎧 Bilateral stimulation can help you regulate ❌ No matter what you've tried before, EMDR-inspired bilateral audio works differently — on your nervous system itself. 🏆 Experience Calm's Bilateral Stimulation! Trusted by millions worldwide.



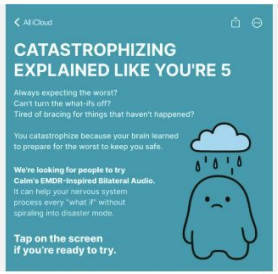
Calm
Sponsored

Stop what you're doing ✋ How many minutes have you been mindlessly scrolling? Take a pause and switch the scroll for a 3-minute breathing session with Calm



Calm
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🎧 This is how bilateral stimulation works
❌ No matter how activated you feel, bilateral stimulation can help your nervous system downshift.
🏆 Try Calm's EMDR-Inspired Bilateral Audio! Trusted by millions worldwide.



Calm
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E se amanhã fosse mais leve?



Tudo bem fazer uma pausa. Install Now

Calm
Sponsored

Para as noites em que você não consegue dormir e os dias que pesam demais.



Experimente grátis. Continue se ajudar. Install Now

Calm
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Foco não é sobre se esforçar mais. É sobre silenciar o que atrapalha.



Você já tentou de tudo. Agora experimente Calm. Install Now

Calm
Sponsored

Menos ruído. Mais clareza. Comece com 10 minutos.



Deixe o Calm te ajudar a recomeçar. Install Now

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Sponsored

21 days to a calmer you. Start now.



PLAY.GOOGLE.COM
Give yourself a moment Install now

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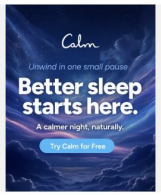
21 days to a calmer you. Start now.



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Stop what you're doing ✋ How many minutes have you been mindlessly scrolling? Take a pause and switch the scroll for a 3-minute breathing session with Calm



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BREAK THE OVERTHINKING LOOP Learn more

Calm
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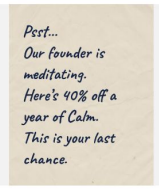
A new you can start with just one step - try Calm now



SHOP.CALM.COM
Rated 5-Stars by 2.5M+ Users Shop Now

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DEMAND · CREATIVE

Pretty is not a performance metric

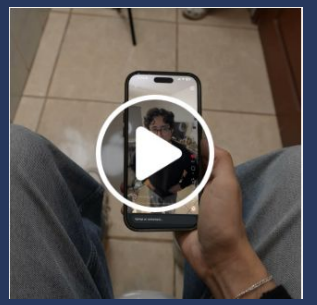
POLISHED

A polished ad can be ignored.



ROUGH

A rough ad can make someone stop.



Judge creative by the response it produces—not by whether a designer approves of it.

Taste is useful. Results still need testing.

DEMAND · CREATIVE

Learn from others. Then make something of your own.

YOU CAN SEE the execution.

YOU CAN'T SEE every condition behind the result.

01
Study what gets attention.

→

02
Look for the idea behind the execution.

→

03
Adapt it to your product and audience.

→

04
Test it against your own ideas.

Copying the surface is not the same as understanding why it works.

TEAM

Do it yourself before you build a team around it

You don’t need a department to run your first useful experiments.

AI tools can help you make early assets and variations.

DOING THE WORK YOURSELF TEACHES YOU

- What you’re testing.
- What good execution needs.
- Where help would actually make a difference.

DEMAND

Your checklist for this stage

WHAT TO LEARN

- [ ] **Build your first funnel**
  Ad → landing page → checkout, built with no-code tools. Track every step: click, start, checkout, purchase.

- [ ] **Find creatives that work**
  Start from the problem and the promise. Test several different ideas on small budgets. Judge by purchases, not clicks.

- [ ] **Iterate on the creatives that work**
  Keep the idea, change one thing at a time: hook, visual, format. Refresh when results drop.

Team

You. One person can run this stage.

Hand off assets and the funnel build to AI tools or a freelancer. Keep hypotheses and analysis yourself.

Traffic sources

One paid channel where your audience already is.

Add a second only when the first gives a readable signal. Set the test budget before you start.

PART 2 OF 4

A working journey before more traffic

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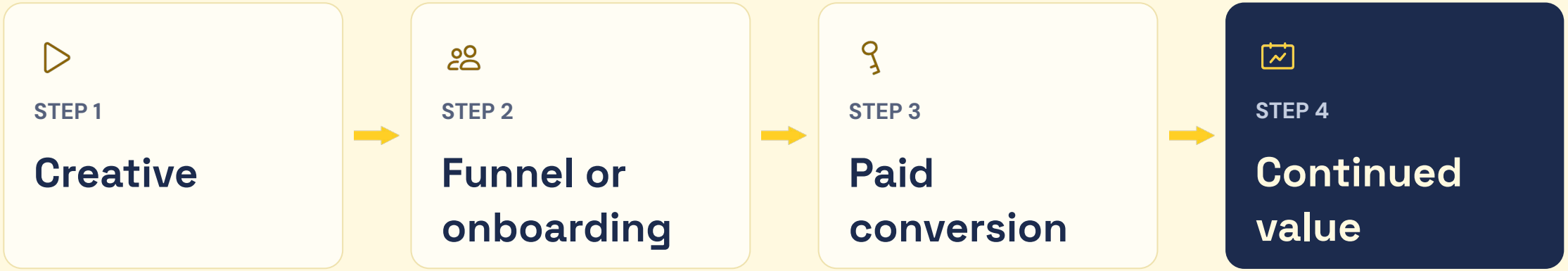
Economics
before bigger budgets

04

A repeatable process
before a bigger team

JOURNEY

Test the whole journey



A good result at one step does not rescue every other step.

Find where the journey breaks.

Test that part next.

JOURNEY

Your creative is a test of your promise

TEST DIFFERENT

- **Problems**
- **Benefits**
- **Angles**
- **Ways to explain the value**

You’re not just testing whether an ad looks good.

You’re testing what makes someone care.

JOURNEY

Talk to the people behind the metrics

- Why did you come here?
- What did you expect?
- What are you trying to do?
- What almost stopped you?
- Why did you pay—or decide not to?

Understand the user's journey.

Don't just watch the conversion rate.

JOURNEY

Your checklist for this stage

WHAT TO LEARN

- [ ] **Measure the whole journey**
  Track creative → onboarding → paid conversion → continued value as one funnel. Find the step where most people stop.

- [ ] **Match the ad's promise to onboarding**
  The first screens should deliver what the ad promised. If they don't, fix that before buying more traffic.

- [ ] **Talk to the people behind the metrics**
  Interview users who paid and users who didn't. Ask why they came and what almost stopped them.

Team

A marketer owns the hypotheses, traffic and analysis.

A designer makes the creatives and onboarding screens.

A funnel builder ships landing, onboarding and paywall changes fast.

Traffic sources

Stay on the channel that brought your first signal. New channels won't fix a broken journey.
Buy enough traffic to see where people stop. Then fix, then add.

PART 3 OF 4

Economics before bigger budgets

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Economics
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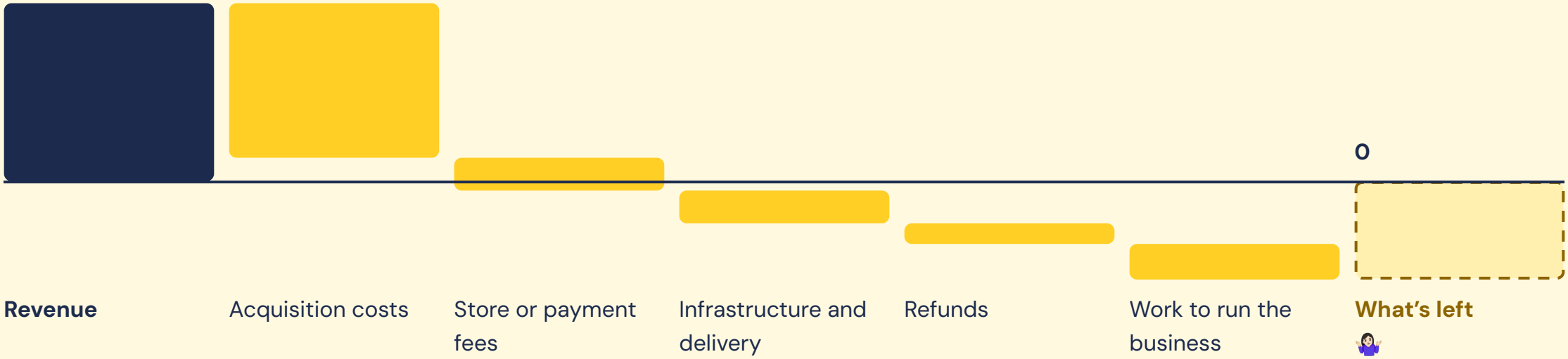
04

A repeatable process
before a bigger team

ECONOMICS

Calculate the business. Not just the ad account.

Illustrative · not to scale



For an AI product, usage has a cost. **And eventually, you need to pay yourself.**

ECONOMICS

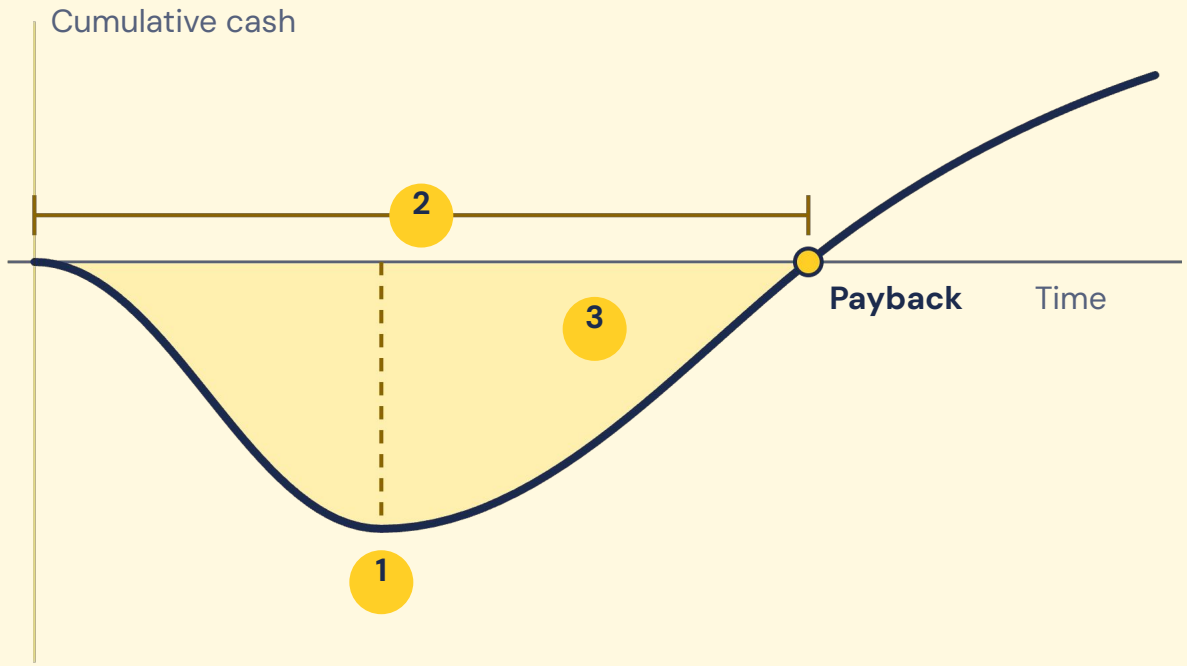
Can you afford the path to payback?

A business can look promising and still run out of cash.

Ask:

1. How much do I spend before I earn it back?
2. How long does that take?
3. Can I fund that gap?

If not, change the experiment—not just the budget.



ECONOMICS

When is there enough signal to keep going?

- Several creatives get a meaningful response.
- Some users actually subscribe.
- The gap between current and viable acquisition cost looks manageable.
- You understand why users come and what they want.

Not perfect. But specific enough to choose the next experiment.

ECONOMICS

“Keep testing” and “scale” are different decisions

Acquisition costing **1.5×** your target is a different problem from costing **7×** your target.



That’s a way to think about the size of the gap—not a universal scaling rule.

Signs of potential justify another test.

Viable economics justify a scaling test.

ECONOMICS

Scale a repeatable result. Not one lucky ad.

BEFORE INCREASING SPEND, CHECK

- ✓ Does more than one creative work?
- ✓ Do users convert beyond the install?
- ✓ Do they stay and generate value?
- ✓ Can you afford the payback period?

Then increase spend
and see what still holds.

ECONOMICS

Your checklist for this stage

WHAT TO LEARN

- [ ] **Calculate the whole business**
  Acquisition, store and payment fees, infrastructure, refunds and your own time. For AI products, count usage costs.

- [ ] **Build a product, not an arbitrage**
  Make it genuinely useful, so people stay. Long-term retention is what keeps the economics working.

- [ ] **Tell “keep testing” from “scale”**
  Know your target acquisition cost. Signs of potential justify another test; viable economics justify a scaling test.

Team

You lead.

Marketer runs the campaigns.

Funnel builder builds the funnels.

Creative producer comes up with the ideas.

Designer makes the creatives.

Traffic sources

Test whether your main channel holds as spend grows.

Add a second channel to check the result repeats beyond one source.

PART 4 OF 4

A repeatable process before a bigger team

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THE SEQUENCE

Build evidence before you build scale

Demand	BEFORE	assumptions
A working journey	BEFORE	more traffic
Economics	BEFORE	bigger budgets
A repeatable process	BEFORE	a bigger team

Don’t do everything at once.

Do the next thing that proves something.