DemandGentic
Human-Led Strategy · AI Execution

ARTICLE

Cost Per Qualified Meeting Calculator: Agency vs AI

A booked meeting isn't a qualified meeting. Most calculators stop at cost per booked meeting — but if half the meetings don't show up, and only half of those are qualified, your true cost is 4x higher than the quoted rate. This calculator shows the gap.

6 min read | cost per lead calculator | cpl calculator | cost per lead agency

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The Calculator

Enter your numbers below to see the true cost of each model:

Select Model Agency (retainer + per-meeting) Pay-per-appointment In-house SDR AI SDR Monthly Cost ($)
Retainer or loaded SDR cost + tools

Meetings Booked per Month Show Rate (%)
% of booked meetings that actually happen

Qualification Rate (%)
% of held meetings that meet your criteria

Optional Pipeline Inputs

Opportunity Rate (%) Win Rate (%) Avg Deal Value ($) Calculate True Cost

Your Results

Cost per Booked Meeting

$1,062.50

Cost per Held Meeting

$1,416.67

Cost per Qualified Meeting

$2,361.11

True Cost Multiplier

2.2x

quoted vs. true qualified cost

Pipeline Generated

$150,000

ROI per Dollar

17.6x

How to Read Your Result

Scenario 1: Agency with Strong Metrics

An agency quoting $1,000 per booked meeting with a 75% show rate and 70% qualification rate appears competitive. But doing the math: 100 bookings × 0.75 × 0.70 = 52.5 qualified meetings. At $50,000/month, your true cost is $952 per qualified meeting — nearly identical to the booked rate.

Scenario 2: Pay-Per-Appointment with Low Qualification

A vendor promises $250 per appointment. Your team shows a 50% show rate and 40% qualification rate. The math: 100 booked = 50 held = 20 qualified. Your true cost is $1,250 per qualified meeting — 5x the quoted rate.

Scenario 3: AI SDR with Strong Qualification

AI SDR quoting $800/month with 10 meetings booked, 80% show rate, and 65% qualification. Held = 8, Qualified = 5.2. Cost per qualified = $153.85 — the lowest true cost among these scenarios.

The Formulas

Understanding the math behind your results:

Metric	Formula
Held Meetings	Booked Meetings × Show Rate
Qualified Meetings	Held Meetings × Qualification Rate
Cost per Booked	Monthly Cost ÷ Booked Meetings

Metric	Formula
Cost per Held	Monthly Cost ÷ Held Meetings
Cost per Qualified	Monthly Cost ÷ Qualified Meetings

Worked Example: DemandGentic Managed ABM

Using DemandGentic's published pricing: an ABM managed program starts with a 60-day pilot at $8,500/month.

- Monthly cost: $8,500
- Meetings booked per month: 8 (typical for managed ABM)
- Show rate: 75%
- Qualification rate: 60%

The calculation:

- Held meetings = 8 × 0.75 = 6 meetings
- Qualified meetings = 6 × 0.60 = 3.6 meetings
- Cost per booked = $8,500 ÷ 8 = $1,062.50
- Cost per held = $8,500 ÷ 6 = $1,416.67
- Cost per qualified = $8,500 ÷ 3.6 = $2,361.11

The gap: Your true cost is 2.2x the quoted per-booking rate.

This is why DemandGentic delivers every lead with evidence — including show rate and qualification data — so you can see exactly what you're paying for.

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the difference between cost per booked vs. cost per qualified meeting?

Cost per booked meeting divides your total spend by the number of meetings vendors claim to have scheduled. Cost per qualified meeting accounts for two critical filters: how many booked meetings actually happened (show rate) and how

many of those meetings met your qualification criteria. A $500 quoted rate can easily become $2,000 once you factor in a 50% show rate and 50% qualification rate.

Why does show rate matter so much?

Show rate directly multiplies your effective cost. If you book 20 meetings but only 10 people show up, you've already doubled your cost per held meeting — before considering qualification. High show rates (70%+) indicate better targeting, stronger value propositions, and more committed prospects.

How do I estimate my qualification rate?

Look at your last 90 days of meetings. Count how many meetings were held, then divide by how many met your criteria (budget, timeline, authority, need). If you held 50 meetings and 20 were qualified, your rate is 40%. Track this monthly — it varies by channel, target audience, and offer.

Which model has the lowest cost per qualified meeting?

It depends on your metrics. AI SDRs often show lower costs per booked meeting, but qualification rates vary. In-house SDRs have higher fixed costs but may achieve better qualification with deep product knowledge. Agencies bring expertise but add margin. The calculator reveals the true cost for your specific numbers.

How does pipeline factor into the calculation?

Pipeline adds context, not just cost. If your cost per qualified meeting is $1,000 but your average deal is $50,000 with a 20% win rate, you're generating $10,000 per meeting — a 10x return. Add opportunity rate, win rate, and deal value to see whether your meeting costs make business sense.

Can I use this for budget planning?

Yes. If you need 10 qualified meetings per month and your historical qualification rate is 50%, you need to book 20 meetings. At $500 per booked meeting, your budget should be $10,000/month — not $5,000. Working backward from qualified meeting goals prevents budget shortfalls.

Ready to See Your True Meeting Cost?

The gap between quoted and true costs can be 2x, 5x, or even 10x depending on your show and qualification rates. Run your numbers, then talk to a team that delivers every lead with evidence you can verify.

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