CASE STUDY · PERFORMANCE MARKETING

Scaling a B2B Demand Engine to $12M+ in Annual Spend at 350%+ ROAS

How I rebuilt the paid media, CRM and SEO infrastructure at Vaco by Highspring to drive a sustained 30% MoM sales lift across national finance and accounting placement services.

Vaco by Highspring · National finance & accounting placement firm

$12M+
ANNUAL AD SPEND MANAGED

350%+
SUSTAINED ROAS

3,000%
CRM DATABASE GROWTH

1,122%
ORGANIC IMPRESSION LIFT

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01 · THE SITUATION

A Fragmented Marketing Function

Vaco by Highspring is a national finance and accounting placement firm. The brief: build a marketing function that generates qualified B2B leads at scale, proves revenue contribution, and does it on a budget finance would defend every quarter.

THE CHALLENGE

- Fragmented digital presence across 5 separate websites causing keyword cannibalization and brand dilution
- No end-to-end attribution, so paid spend ran without clear CPL, cost per SQL or ROAS visibility
- Stale, underused CRM with email open rates stuck at 20% and disengaged subscribers dragging deliverability
- Underperforming organic search, with fewer than 350 top-10 keyword rankings
- No formal lead scoring or routing, so sales received unqualified noise alongside real pipeline

What Success Had to Look Like

Leadership wanted three things: predictable lead volume tied to revenue, paid media that justified itself to finance, and a CRM that produced compounding value instead of inbox decay.

02 · THE STRATEGY

Three Pillars

I rebuilt the function on three pillars: paid media as the demand engine, CRM as the conversion engine and SEO as the compounding foundation.

PILLAR 1 · PAID MEDIA DEMAND ENGINE

- Restructured Google Ads around buying intent: high-intent placement keywords, mid-funnel category research and competitor conquest, each with its own bidding, copy and landing page
- Layered Performance Max against Responsive Search with strict audience signals so it didn't cannibalize core search
- Built a Meta and LinkedIn paid social layer for prospecting and remarketing to lower CPL on warm audiences
- Ran bi-weekly reviews with a dedicated Google rep to surface inventory gaps and bid optimizations

PILLAR 2 · CRM AND LIFECYCLE CONVERSION

- Rebuilt the HubSpot environment with list architecture, behavioral segmentation and lifecycle stage gating
- Automated nurture by service line, geography and lifecycle stage, with monthly cleanup of inactive subscribers
- Built lead scoring and routing so qualified leads reached the right account executive within minutes

PILLAR 3 · ORGANIC COMPOUNDING

- Consolidated content across the 5 fragmented properties to end cannibalization
- Location-based SEO targeting metro-level placement queries
- Surfer SEO content optimization and Google Business Profile authority building

03 · EXECUTION

Owning Every Layer

I owned every layer end to end, from media buying to attribution to the reporting cadence with executive leadership.

Paid Media Mechanics

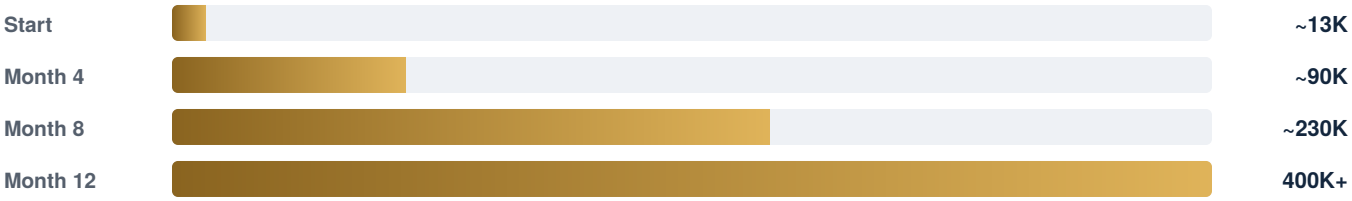
Sustained $1M+ in monthly ad spend ($12M+ annualized) across Google, Meta and LinkedIn, with continuous bid optimization, audience refinement and creative testing. Up to 150 leads and 90 SQLs per month in peak periods, unified through UTM-based attribution.

$1M+	<$1K	60%
MONTHLY SPEND	COST PER LEAD	QUALIFIED LEAD RATE

Attribution and Reporting

Implemented end-to-end UTM frameworks, GA4 event tracking and HubSpot reporting connecting every dollar of spend to a lead, an SQL, an opportunity and revenue. CPL, cost per SQL, CPA, CAC, lead value, ROAS and ROI were tracked in one dashboard, reviewed weekly with leadership.

CRM Database Growth



A Predictable, Attributable Engine

PAID MEDIA

- Sustained 350%+ ROAS across $12M+ in annualized spend
- Sub-$1,000 CPL maintained across Google, Meta and LinkedIn, down from over $2,000
- 60% qualified lead rate, with up to 150 leads and 90 SQLs per month at peak
- March 2025: 92 leads, 24 job orders and a 78% SQL rate

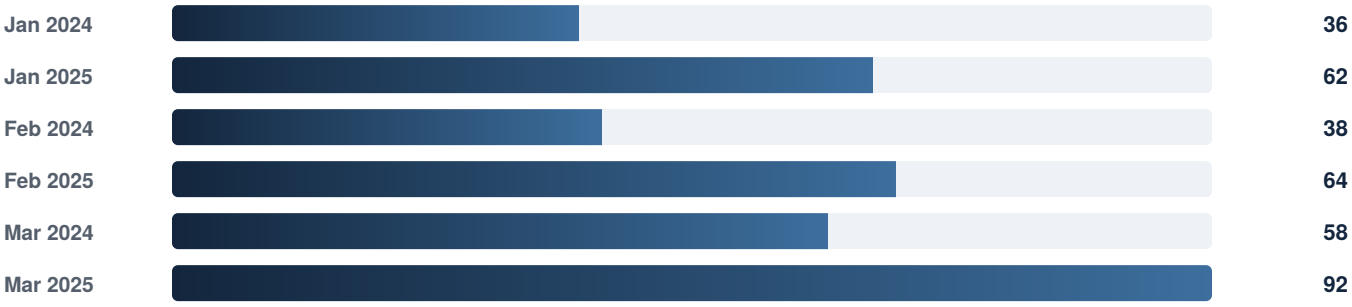
CRM AND LIFECYCLE

- Scaled the CRM database 3,000%+ to 400,000+ contacts through paid acquisition, content gating and partnerships
- Drove a sustained 30% MoM sales lift through lifecycle automation and segmentation
- Doubled email open rates from 20% to 40% through list hygiene, segmentation and A/B testing

ORGANIC SEARCH

- 1,122% lift in organic impressions and 410K SEO clicks over 12 months
- Top-10 keyword rankings grew from 350 to 659
- Landed the firm's first ChatGPT-referred lead in late 2024

Q1 Inbound Leads, 2024 vs. 2025



05 · LESSONS

What This Work Taught Me

1. Attribution is the unlock, not the dashboard.

Most teams report on what they can measure. The hard work is making what matters measurable. Once every dollar of spend had a clean line to a lead, an SQL and revenue, channel reallocation, budget defense and hiring decisions all got easier.

2. A CRM is a compounding asset or a liability.

A stale list with 20% open rates actively degrades deliverability and sender reputation. A clean, segmented, engaged list is one of the highest-leverage assets marketing owns. The 30% MoM sales lift came from finally treating the CRM like that asset.

3. Paid and organic compound together.

Paid search captures intent today; SEO and brand build the long-term moat. Once keyword strategy, Google Business Profile authority and paid bidding worked from the same intent map, CPL dropped and organic share grew at the same time.

> *Performance pays the bills now. Brand compounds the math later. Marketing leadership makes sure both budgets work from the same map.*

Capabilities Demonstrated

Paid search and paid social architecture · multi-channel attribution · CRM rebuild and segmentation · lifecycle automation · SEO and Google Business Profile authority · creative testing systems · executive reporting and budget defense · cross-functional work with sales and finance.