



# A Successful High-Ticket Coaching Funnel



How do you effectively sell a high-priced backend product? Simply Converting's Luke Smith discusses the funnel and marketing methods that are getting great results for his business.



Luke Smith

**James:** James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is Episode 738. Today we are talking about a successful high-ticket coaching funnel. For that, I've brought along Luke Smith from [SimplyConverting.com](https://SimplyConverting.com). Welcome, Luke.

**Luke:** Hey, James, thanks for having me on.

**James:** It's great to chat. I see you regularly. You're a member of [SuperFastBusiness](https://SuperFastBusiness.com). You come to the Sydney local meetups. I enjoy our conversations and you always have something interesting to share.

And one of the things that caught my attention was that you had been working for a traffic agency and doing a stellar job, and then you got an opportunity to come into the family business and take over a brand new campaign. And the results you were getting caught my attention and I wanted to ask you about it. So if you'd be willing to share some of that, I think it would be really helpful for our audience, who many of them are experts, authors, speakers, product owners, agencies. I think almost all of us could do with having a high-ticket product or service of some kind. And some of the things you're going to share with us, I'm sure, will be quite helpful.



**Luke:** Yeah, definitely. I think high ticket, with rising costs of all ad traffic, Facebook and Google AdWords, etc. over time, having something in the back end at a high price point is definitely going to help you, at least, build an audience. It essentially will pay for itself.

**James:** Right. So why don't you just give us a small snapshot of what you were doing just prior, and then how the transition happened, and what you were faced with. Because I know at some point, you had to start the campaign from scratch. And this is good for us to hear, because we're currently, some of us, are looking at a campaign from scratch. Now, I'm not, so I have to put myself in the shoes of someone listening to this. I already have a high-ticket program. I've been doing that for the last 10 years straight, which has been a really interesting funnel, but I'm sure it's very different from most other people's funnel. I've probably the world's simplest and least advertised funnel, but it's highly successful.

## From awareness campaigns to direct response

So I want to find out your experience. What were you doing at the beginning there?

**Luke:** Yeah, well, you know, initially it was different for me specifically because I came from an agency running large budgets, but they were primarily awareness-based. It's actually my mom's business. When she split from her previous agency partner, that's when I sort of came on board. And it was that mindset shift from you know, going for broad reach, video views, all that kind of stuff, to a very much direct response style marketing funnel. And so we just had to make sure that all the pages had been in place, you know, taking people from Facebook to a landing page, having them register for a webinar at times that are suitable for them, and then getting them to show up. And then, obviously, booking in a strategy call from there. Because we wanted to get people into conversations.

**James:** So just on that, are you talking about the difference between big agency branding type stuff to actual, real world direct response where you need to make a return on investment shift?

**Luke:** Yeah, exactly. A lot of those big companies are actually KPI'd to spend budgets. If they don't spend out entirely, they might not get the same marketing budget the following year. So it's a huge mindset shift from a marketer's perspective. And when you start working with small businesses as well, every dollar really counts. And especially with direct response, you see volatility day to day with conversions and leads coming in. Whereas when you're running awareness campaigns, you can very much be quite confident that it's going to work well over a week or a month.

**James:** Awareness campaign, it just sounds like such an easy target. It sort of summarizes everything that used to drive me insane about working for enterprise customers. Like, I used to be in those big companies. In fact, I just had a conversation this morning with a client of mine, and one of his clients, just before they came to him, had spent \$1 million on a campaign for an unproven, untested product, and it flopped. And it just boggles my mind that someone could waste that much. It's basically just pure and utter waste. And like you said, that whole idea that you spend it or lose it, and you don't get it again next year, it's what's wrong with corporate in the first place – like, the amount of waste, the big-ticket spends.

## The road to results from ground zero

So you have now basically come to the performance world where you live and die by results. And thankfully, sounds like you've been getting results.

**Luke:** Yeah, so it was very interesting. So this was about April last year, is when I first took over. And her business had essentially zero people on their email list, because the previous agency owned a lot of the assets. So we were starting from absolute ground zero. So we were re-recording the webinar, making sure that that was, you know, a good length, we thought it was going to convert people. And at the end of the day, you can sort of get a good script in place, and run through it a few times, but you're not really going to know until you run people through the entire funnel. And then we just basically started by setting out a budget, setting aside a budget, and we thought if we run 100, 200 people through this, there's going to be a certain amount of people who click on the ad; a certain amount of people opt in through the landing page; then you're going to get a certain percentage to actually show up to the webinar. And so it's just about starting relatively slow, but getting enough people through that funnel so that you can really identify where the drop-off points are and optimizing from that point on.

## Piecing together a go-to webinar funnel

**James:** Right. So talk me through what that looks like. If it was written up on a whiteboard as a customer journey, perhaps, what are the pieces of this puzzle that you would go in? Like, for example, I think in your family business, you're in the property renovation type market. But let's say we get an expert who's good at something else, like stock trading or whatever. What would you say would be your sort of go-to funnel that you'd write up on the whiteboard and say, "This is what you need"? What are the pieces?

**Luke:** This is what I would do, and the reason that I would do this is because I think it's why the webinar funnel works so well, is because you're able to build that trust and authority quickly, and you're able to turn a prospect into a customer in a relatively short amount of time. So you can take someone from a 30-day sales cycle down to three days if you get that conversation within that, you know, two-to-three-day window. So the pieces would be: Facebook ad straight to a landing page, so short-form landing page to test first, basically just with a strong hook; an image that would correlate to what you're running on the Facebook ad itself; some key bullet points as to what that person is going to learn, because even though the training is free, people often forget that you still need to sell it. So you're still selling people into the webinar, whether there's a price point attached or not.

And from that point, we basically use EverWebinar as the webinar platform. And that has automatic email. So as soon as someone registers on that landing page, they're going to get automatic reminders saying the webinar starts in, you know, you can set it to however long out from the webinar, they're dripped in. But typically, we'll have a one hour and a 10 minute. And you'll see the open rates on those are quite strong, because people opted in to receive something, and then the click rates are equally as high.

So they're clicking through a link on that email. They're watching the webinar. And there's actually a chat function on the right hand side, so, you know, builds engagement as well. People often think that the webinar is live. So you're building that trust, people are commenting, and that gives you feedback as well to put back into the marketing funnel, and from there, if it's a 60-minute webinar, at about the 45-minute mark, you're gonna start introducing the sell. And you're essentially just selling someone onto a strategy call. And then there's going to be a button to take them to a booking page, which is typically just a short page with an embedded calendar. And we use ScheduleOnce there. And once they book in, they'll leave the book-in with the business owner, who will bring them into their course, if they're the right fit. It's more of an application style process.

**James:** Nice. So you've gone from Facebook to a short page selling a training. The training is in the form of an on-demand webinar. Is it on demand?

**Luke:** So we'll typically run three, we'll do it just in time, which is the on-demand. It might be on every, you know, 10 minutes out from when they actually register, so they don't really have to wait at all. And then we'll do an 11am and a 7pm. The 11am, in case, you know, they've got the time during the day. And the 7pm, just because people will be at work, and sometimes you get a bit more watch time on the 7pm, so when they're, you know, sitting at home, and they can actually give you their undivided attention.

**James:** And then it goes from that to a call to action to make an appointment. And then you have a phone sales process.



## Challenges of scaling a phone sales process

**Luke:** Correct. And so, yeah, the difficult thing, once you scale to a certain point, the next logical step is to try and remove the business owner from the phone. And that's where we actually have a few problems, because then you're trying to train up sales people, and at the end of the day, it's very hard to find a salesperson that can sell the product as well as the business owner can, just because, you know, they might, they might be great salesman, but you can feel that the passion for the product may not be there or at that same level.

**James:** Gotcha. Yeah, I've seen this happen with plenty of clients where they go from being the primary person answering the phone to training up salespeople. We did telephone sales training inside SuperFastBusiness membership. And that came from all of our experience at Mercedes-Benz. A good sales process can be taught, and can actually in some cases get better results than the owner, who might be focused on other aspects of running their business. They might also be prone to a little bit of emotional attachment or making concessions at some times. Once you get the scale, though, away you go. We've got other clients who have entire call centers dedicated to scaling lead generation campaigns.

Do you have tips for the telephone side of it? I'm just really curious as someone who came from a sales background. Do you use a script? Do you have a specific methodology for that process?

**Luke:** We do use a script, which is sort of a combination of a few programs that we've been through and some training that we've had. So we've combined that into, you know, renovating real estate sales script. And then Belinda, she'll actually run the sales team when they come on board through, you know, her process. And we'll have an objection sheet, because we want to pull those together. So the sales guys, if they're unsure, if they see an objection, they can read that over before the calls, so they know how to handle those specific to our business. So we're just trying to gather as much data as we can, so that we can refine the process over time. And we are using an Excel spreadsheet at the moment to track all the numbers – you know, close rates, cancellation rates. Because you might have, say, a hundred people book in for a call off of that webinar. But what we're seeing is maybe, you know, 28 percent of people won't even show up. So at the end of the day, you're getting, what's that, 72 people actually show up to the call. So when you're calculating the close rates, you want to be sure to calculate the close rates from the actual conversations had. Because if you're calculating those close rates off your calls booked, it's going to be, you know, misrepresenting the actual sales, right?

**James:** That's good. And we used to run a call tracker in the dealership, and you track each salesperson and you compare their ratios. Because one person might have a 10-percent ratio and another person might have a 50-percent ratio. You literally have someone who's five times more effective, and you want to find out what they're doing and cross train the other ones, or eliminate the bottom stack, because they're just killing the lead source. It's very good to track the leads.

## The tech behind the calls

Do you use a specific technology to do the calls? I know some of my clients are using Dialpad.

**Luke:** So we set up Pipedrive, but we haven't fully launched it as yet. So we're actually at the stage now where we're re-recording the webinar just to make it more present. But the spreadsheet is in Excel that we're using. And to your point before, we're actually calculating the return on ad spend per sales got. So we've got a number of numbers where we're calculating sort of on a monthly basis, and then total as well over the last eight to 12 months, how much it's actually costing us to have this specific person receive a phone call.

And then every time that person takes a phone call, how much revenue are they generating? So we're really working back to a return on ad spend per sales person. So we've got their close rates from calls taken, and we've got this, essentially, what is the ROAS per sales team member. And that gives us a huge amount of insight to where we can redirect those phone calls. Because we've got full control in ScheduleOnce when we're using what's called a resource pool. So if you've got a number of sales guys, it can automatically allocate the phone calls that come in through the same master booking page, but it will allocate them to a number of different sales team members. And then based on their performance and what we're seeing in that spreadsheet, we can uprate or downrate the number of calls we want a certain person to receive.

**James:** Right. And you're only calling people who fill out the ScheduleOnce after the webinar?

**Luke:** Yes. So we want to keep them as qualified as possible. So the webinar does a great job of warming people up. We then have them book in for a call and then fill out a survey. The reason being is we wanted to bring in a bit more volume of calls. If we wanted to increase the quality of those people further, what we'll do is we'll actually switch that survey to happen prior to them booking a call. And then we can set conditional logic to actually filter them out. If they're not qualified, they won't even see the call booking page. And if they are successful in their, you know, survey application, they can see the call booking page. And that's another way which we can, you know, direct people to specific sales team members, depending on their survey responses. So there's different ways that we can increase that quality over time. It's just about balancing the cost per call booked through the entire funnel, and then sort of balancing that out with the quality that we're seeing come through.

**James:** It's such an important distinction. What would be your tool to use for that logic?

**Luke:** I'm using JotForm at the moment, which I find quite good. I've used Typeform previously, but right now I'm using JotForm. And what you can do is, based on specific answers, you can send them to a different thank you page. So in that sense, you know, you could have a call booking page per sales team member, and then depending on the survey responses, they would hit a different thank you page, which would essentially force them into booking a call with a specific team member.

**James:** Perfect. Yeah, I've got some clients who love Typeform, other clients use LeadsHook. And even on my own site, I've got a choose-your-own-adventure pathway that will lead people to a different offer. The goal here is to only show your offer to the right customer. And I think that's important. I've actually got a client, and what they do when people register for the webinar is they get the phone number, and they phone every single person who registers for the webinar, even no matter what happens to them viewing the webinar, or going through the back end. So that would be one way to massively increase the call quantity, but it would be interesting to compare that to see if the sales were any different to people who successfully went through the funnel and ended up doing the survey and getting the result. You might end up with a scenario where you get the exact same number of actual buyers, but with a lot more cost and difficulty in straining through your list to get to them. So it's such a sensitive thing when you're looking at the whole makeup of that.

## When they don't watch the webinar...

Now, what do you do for people who don't complete the webinar or don't watch the webinar? Do you have different sequences for them?

**Luke:** Yeah, we've got a number of different sequences, both on Facebook and on email. So just quickly, if someone does watch the webinar, but they may not have booked a strategy call, we'll have Google AdWords campaigns running as well. Because what we've found is, people will come off that webinar, they might not book a call, but they'll still be intrigued. And so the first thing they'll typically do is Google the brand name or the product name that they've just learned about. So it's another touch point where you want to be present on Google AdWords there. And it's very, very cheap to target those brand terms, from your own business's perspective, and you're just serving more impressions really, staying top of mind, and then you can give them the opportunity to book in a call again, on Google.



**James:** It's genius. I mean, this is the first thing people do, they go and look for the name plus review, and they also use other words – I'm not going to say the word here, but it's catering for that skeptical buyer. I have to give a hat tip to [Ilana Wechsler](#), because she set up my brand-driven Google AdWords. And I just looked yesterday, and I think I have made a significant amount of sales to people who have gone and searched for my brand name and clicked on a Google ad, where I'm bidding on my own name, and come through back to my funnel. I'm not saying this so that someone goes out and starts cybersquatting on my own name. I'm saying this to say, if you have any kind of product or service or you're an individual expert, and you're not running that campaign on Google, you're probably missing out on super low-hanging fruit. But it is very clever. You're anticipating what your prospect is thinking, you're entering into that conversation in their mind, and we know that people search Google with intent. So you're right there to catch them.

## What platforms are involved?

So it sounds like you're playing, at least so far, we've heard Facebook and Google mentioned. Are you using any other platforms as well?

**Luke:** Those two are the main ones. We're using a number of placements around the Google network, being Gmail and [GDN](#), as well. So we've got banners pushing people to book that strategy call, if they haven't yet, as well. So just serving those extra impressions.

**James:** It's like a remarketing campaign.

**Luke:** Exactly, yeah. Yep. And on the Facebook side of things, we have quite a long sequence. So essentially, after someone attends the webinar, we'll have what's almost 30 days post-webinar, and every four days we'll use audience membership durations to switch the angle. So the first four days might be just, you know, book a strategy call. But then from days maybe five to nine or so, you might be hitting a different objection as to why they might not have booked that call yet. And then the four or five days following, you might be hitting a pain point. And then the following four to five days might be benefit focus. So you're just really switching up those ad angles. In that way, you're avoiding ad fatigue, but you're staying top of mind. And you might trigger one of those pain points that's going to push them to book that call after they've watched the webinar a number of days later.

**James:** I love that. You're just addressing the different angles, like longline fishing or putting out different lures to see if one of them takes. When I go fishing on Sydney Harbour with this professional fisherman, he uses different bait to try and see which ones are going to respond. By the way, it's usually squid that works the best for the king fish we're after.

## Hyper-targeting driven by survey data

Now, what about using some of the survey data back into that segment to run specific campaigns that are super hyper-targeted? Do you ever do that?

**Luke:** Yes. So the survey works well in two ways, is that it gives the sales guys a lot of information about that person before they speak to them. So we changed up our questions and found that people are actually really spilling their guts. You'll get people writing 500 to 800 words on some of those questions.

**James:** Is it the ladies?

**Luke:** It is. We're targeting females only.

**James:** Because just anecdotally, whenever I get a really, really, really long response in my forum, or via email, often it's a lady. They seem to share more.

**Luke:** Yeah. I mean, it's good for us. It gives us loads of data. And like you said, we're using that to help the sales guys anticipate, you know, where people are at before they speak to them. And then we're also pulling that information back and trying to use it as best we can in both our targeting and also our ad copy. So, creating different personas. So there's a number of people in the property space, which is where we're playing. They might be interested in renovating, but, you know, are they looking to renovate their own home or is it an investment property? You know, there's a number of different ways we can cut that cake.

**James:** It's really clever. And I imagine you're just helping people better too, because it's more relevant. They feel like you're listening to them, you're understanding their specific concerns, and you're able to address it with the right solution. This is advanced marketing, even though it shouldn't be, where we've gone from just one message pushed one way to having, you know, you've got quite a multi-dimensional approach here on your funnel. From where they started to where they end up, it's really started to become behavioral-based, it's responding to the inputs that the customer is putting in.

## How many products are we talking about?

Do you have many products or just one product? I'm curious, you know, how this approach happens from the business product line perspective.

**Luke:** Yeah. So we're trying to keep it as simple as possible. So we have two products, the first one being the renovation secrets course, which is the high-ticket program that we're selling, and that's priced at 4K. I think we've just put it up to 5K. And that includes a three-day live bootcamp. So people love the live events as well. So we'll bring them through in this webinar funnel, they'll get a free ticket to attend that boot camp. And then at that boot camp is an opportunity to invite them to join the high-level program, which is the renovation consulting mastery course. And that basically will say, you know, if you love renovating so much, why not turn it into a full-time job? Here's how you can become a renovation consultant, where people pay you to consult on their own renovations. And then we can start matching the renovation secret students with those renovation consultants. And it can become, you know, an environment where they're really helping each other out. And that higher level program is priced at 25K. So we're only promoting that at the moment in the live events, which happen twice a year. But we're actually looking to build an ascension funnel to help move those lower level program people up into the higher level program throughout the year without relying on those two boot camps only.

## Transitioning of events to streaming

**James:** What are you doing in terms of live events versus streamed events? Are you making a transition there?

**Luke:** We are. So we started in April last year. And you know, we scaled quite quickly. We did probably from April to December close to 500K revenue just from the webinar funnel. So it was working really well, in terms of driving revenue. And like I said, these high-ticket programs, the benefit is that, you know, we built an email list, you know, pretty big and people are quite engaged. And because the price of the product is so high, it hasn't really cost us to build that audience. So that's another added benefit of this high-ticket funnel. But we have, in January and February, before the Coronavirus crisis sort of hit, we started testing some free workshops and they worked really well. We're still refining our model as to, you know, pricing – should we charge? Is it free? Now, we've found that the free events are working better. But moving forward, we're going to be looking at doing a little bit of a combination. So in a free intro event, and the webinar funnel, ideally we'd like to keep that evergreen as well.

**James:** Nice. I'm sure you can. I've just had recent guests on this very podcast talking about [how they've transitioned from professional speaking to doing virtual keynotes](#), even talking about hologram decks and so forth. I think the world is shifting in that regard. There will still be plenty of opportunities for you.

## Where the traffic comes from

And what I love about what you're doing is you've brought some good direct response marketing basics, you've got some advanced segmentation, you're really considering the different stages of the journey, you've counted for scale by building a system that your sales team can leverage. So that sort of just means it's what you can put in at the start of that funnel. You're starting with the Facebook stuff. Do you also do any other organic marketing or partner marketing aside from the paid traffic funnels?

**Luke:** So the business has quite a big organic following, because she's been in the space for about five years, but she didn't really have the products, and it's pivoted a number of times. But just naturally during that time, she's built up a bit of an audience. But all of our webinar revenue has been going to cold traffic. So that's been 100 percent reliant on paid traffic, particularly Facebook. We're looking at branching out into other platforms. Potentially YouTube would be the next one we'll be trying, with some of those pre-roll videos – they seem to be working quite well in terms of lead costs, especially for webinars. So that'll be our next point of call, but it has been primarily paid traffic.

**James:** That's awesome. Luke, this is great. I really appreciate it. A concise, impactful explanation of a funnel that's working really well, that I'm sure will be beneficial for plenty of people listening to this.

## Some parting knowledge for the interested

In summary, what sort of advice would you have to someone who's listened to this and has a taste for doing something similar? What would be your instructions to them?



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IT REALLY POSITIONS YOU DIFFERENTLY WHEN YOU START GETTING INBOUND CALLS AND USING A SPECIFIC SALES SCRIPT. THE CONVERSION RATES CAN BE HIGHER THAN YOU WOULD THINK, AND YOU END UP WORKING WITH LESS ACTUAL CUSTOMERS AND MAKING THE SAME OR MORE.

- Luke Smith

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**Luke:** I would say, have a think about what the price point is currently. And then have a think about increasing the price and structuring a funnel in this way, because it really positions you differently as well, when you start getting inbound calls and using a specific sales script. The conversion rates can be higher than you would think, and you end up working with less actual customers and making the same or more. So it's a funnel that I really stand by, and I would definitely tell people to give it a go and try and build that trust quickly with a webinar funnel.

**James:** Yeah, perfect. Yeah, one day I might talk about the [SilverCircle](#) funnel if there's interest. If you're listening to this, and you want to find out about that, let me know, I'd be curious. But that's stood the test of time, it's been in operation for over 10 years, it is perhaps the simplest funnel to do, somewhere between that and what you've got, Luke. There is plenty of opportunity to sell four, five, 10, 15, \$20,000 products with a fairly short turnaround time, if you hit the mark, right in the center. Like, super relevant. You've got to have good products and services, of course. Reputation is going to come into it. As soon as people are hitting Google, they're going to be finding all sorts of reviews and comments. So that's something to keep in mind - have good products and services. And away you go.

Luke, that's been great. We've been listening to Luke Smith from [SimplyConverting.com](#). I really appreciate you coming to share. And also, thank you for being a member of SuperFastBusiness, because you're often posting really helpful comments for other members as well, because you obviously know what you're doing.

**Luke:** No worries. Thanks for having me on, James. I really appreciate the forum too, I get a lot of value from it.

**James:** My pleasure.



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