

The Five-Minute Rule

Why slow follow-up is already costing you money, and a three-question check you can run on your own business today.

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If a lead waits an hour for a reply, it is basically gone. Five minutes is the real window. Most businesses run on 47 hours.

That gap is not a marketing problem. Nobody needs another ad, another post, or another campaign to close it. The enquiry already happened. The person already raised their hand. The money was already sitting on the table. It walked out the door because nobody answered fast enough, not because nobody was interested.

This is a capture problem, not a leads problem. The revenue is already in the business. It is just not being caught.

Why this keeps happening

It rarely looks like one dramatic loss. It looks like a form submission that sits in an inbox until Monday. A call that goes to voicemail after 5pm and never gets a callback. A Google review, good or bad, that sits unanswered for three weeks while the next prospect reads it and moves on to a competitor who replies. Each one is small. Add them up over a year and the number gets uncomfortable fast.

Most owners have never actually timed their own response speed. They guess. The guess is almost always faster than the reality, because the slow cases do not stick in memory the way the fast ones do.

The three-question check

Run this on your own business this week. It takes fifteen minutes, no software required.

DO THIS NOW

1. **Time it for real.** Send your own business a test enquiry through whatever channel a real customer would use, website form, phone, or Instagram DM. Note the exact time. Note when a human actually responds. Not when it was seen, when it was answered.

2. **Check after hours.** Call your own business line after 6pm. Does it ring out, hit a generic voicemail, or does something intelligent pick up and capture the enquiry?
3. **Check your reviews.** Look at your last five Google reviews. How many have an owner response, and how long after the review did that response land?

What the number actually means

If the answers are rough, that is normal. Almost nobody has measured this before, which is exactly why it stays invisible. The fix is not spending more to generate fresh leads while the existing ones keep leaking out the same hole. The fix is closing the gap between the enquiry landing and a real response going out, and doing it without hiring another full-time person to sit by the phone.

That is what AI-backed systems are actually for here. Not novelty, not a chatbot for its own sake. A missed call gets a text back in seconds instead of nothing. A review gets a same-day response instead of a three-week silence. An after-hours enquiry gets captured instead of lost. The system catches what a person would have caught if they had been standing there twenty-four hours a day.

Want the real number for your business?

The Revenue Leak Calculator takes about ninety seconds and turns your own answers into an actual dollar figure, not a guess.

[Run the calculator](#)

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