THE MARGINSEYE ENTERPRISE AI SEO ROI TEMPLATE

The Comprehensive Truth Framework

PHASE 1: THE REAL COST (THE HIDDEN BLEED)

Ai isn't free. it just shifts the cost from writing to editing, strategizing, and damage control. if you only count the software subscription, you're lying to yourself.

Direct AI Costs (Monthly)

AI Writing / SEO Tool Subscriptions: [$ / KES]
API Costs / Token Usage: [$ / KES]
Freelance / Contractor AI Prompters: [$ / KES]
Hidden Human & Quality Costs (Monthly)
Hours spent by senior staff reviewing/editing AI output: [hours] x [hourly rate] = [$ / KES]
Hours spent fixing AI hallucinations / fact-checking: [hours] x [hourly rate] = [$ / KES]
Opportunity Cost: What high-level strategy was not done because the team was managing AI? [estimated value] = [$ / KES]

TOTAL TRUE MONTHLY COST: [Sum of all above] = A

PHASE 2: THE REVENUE MAP (LTV & ATTRIBUTION)

We don't just count the first sale. a 5,000 KES lead that stays for three years is worth infinitely more than a 50,000 KES one-and-done. and we don't just look at last-click. we look at the whole journey.
Macro-Conversions (The Money Makers)
Direct Sales from Organic: [number] x [Customer Lifetime Value (LTV)] = [$ / KES]
Qualified Demos Booked: [number] x [historical close rate %] x [LTV] = [$ / KES]
Attribution Model Comparison
Run the numbers both ways to see the full picture.
First-Touch Value: (Credits the AI content that started the journey): [$ / KES]
Data-Driven / Multi-Touch Value: (Credits the AI content's role in nurturing): [$ / KES]

TOTAL TRACKED REVENUE VALUE (Monthly): [Sum] = B

PHASE 3: THE LAG TIME REALITY (PATIENCE AS A METRIC)

AI writes fast. Google indexes slow. human trust takes even longer. we track the maturity curve so we don't pull the plug prematurely.
Cohort Analysis: Content Published [X] Months Ago
Revenue generated at 30 days: [$ / KES]
Revenue generated at 60 days: [$ / KES]
Revenue generated at 90 days: [$ / KES]
Revenue generated at 180 days: [$ / KES]

Street wisdom: if the 90-day number is growing but the 30-day is flat, the strategy is working. don't panic. let it compound.

PHASE 4: CONTENT-LEVEL DRILL DOWN

Aggregate numbers hide the truth. which specific cluster is actually making money?

Top Performing AI Cluster: [e.g., "Best CRM for Kenyan SMEs"]
Traffic: [number]
Conversion Rate: [%]
Revenue Attributed: [$ / KES]
Underperforming AI Cluster: [e.g., "Generic Industry Definitions"]
Traffic: [number]
Conversion Rate: [%]
Revenue Attributed: [$ / KES]
Action Required: [e.g., "Rewrite with local case studies or delete"]

PHASE 5: THE REALITY ADJUSTMENTS

The market breathes. algorithms change. we must remain humble before the machine and the market.
1. Seasonality Adjustment
Current Month Revenue: [$ / KES]
Same Month Last Year Revenue (YoY): [$ / KES]
Note: Always compare YoY, not just MoM. January will always look bad after December.
2. Multi-Channel Influence
Estimated % of this organic revenue that was also touched by Paid Ads or Email: [%]
Why this matters: it proves SEO is a force multiplier, not a silo.
3. Risk Adjustment (The AI Volatility Discount)

Because AI content can be vulnerable to future algorithm updates, we apply a conservative risk discount to projected AI revenue.
Risk Discount Rate (e.g., 10-15%): [%]

Risk-Adjusted Revenue: [Total Tracked Revenue B x (1 - Risk Discount)] = C

THE FINAL CALCULATION (THE UNFILTERED TRUTH)

Total Risk-Adjusted Value Generated: [C + Efficiency Time Saved] = D
Total True Monthly Cost: [A] = E
Net Monthly Profit from AI SEO: [D - E] = F
True ROI Percentage: [(F / E) x 100] = [%]
Industry Benchmark Check:
Are we above or below the [insert industry, e.g., 4:1] benchmark? [Yes / No]
If no, the bottleneck is: [e.g., traffic quality, conversion rate, or sales follow-up]

HOW TO LIVE WITH THIS TEMPLATE

A template is just a piece of paper if you don't have the discipline to use it right. here is how we do it at marginseye.

1. Fill it out on the same day every month.
don’t wait until the client asks for it. if you wait until they ask, you’re already defensive. pull the numbers on the 1st of every month. own the data before anyone else sees it.

2. Respect the opportunity cost.
If your best strategist is spending 15 hours a week babysitting AI output, that’s 15 hours they aren’t building high-level strategy. track it. if the AI isn’t freeing up time, it’s a net negative, no matter what the traffic says.

3. Use it to kill bad strategies without ego.
If Phase 4 shows a content cluster has high traffic but zero revenue for three months, kill it. don’t defend it because you spent time prompting it. the market has spoken. take responsibility and pivot.

4. Translate it for the room.
Your client or CEO doesn’t care about the spreadsheet. they care about the story. when you sit down with them, don’t show them the math. show them the Net Profit (F) and the YoY growth. say, "here is what we spent, here is the conservative, risk-adjusted return, and here is where it’s going."