Do not spend anything yet.

Priya Shah · Paid acquisition, care plan calculator · 11 August 2026

MAXIMUM COST PER SUBSCRIBER: £0.46. A subscriber would realistically cost you £3.33. That is short by 7.2 times, and it does not clear on a 30-month payback window either. There is no kill rule to write because there is no campaign to run. **The number that has to move is revenue per subscriber, not the ad budget.**

Revenue per subscriber	Max cost per subscriber	Realistic cost	£300 test buys
£1.07	£0.46	£3.33	90 subs
12-month window	Below market	7.2x too high	Unreadable

THE GATE PASSED

This worker will not plan a campaign for somebody who does not know what a subscriber is worth. Four months ago this run would have ended in one line.

The August audit produced the figure, so the gate is met and we go to the arithmetic. The arithmetic is where it stops.

REASON 1: THE ARITHMETIC FAILS BY SEVEN TIMES

From your own numbers, not a benchmark.

STEP	VALUE
Revised expected value per Kinsta customer	£190 over ~30 months
One-off, net of drag, lands about month 3	£65.57
Recurring	£4.15/month
Share arriving inside 12 months	£107.05 (56%)
Actual conversion rate, 4 conversions from 386	~1%
Revenue per subscriber, 12-month window	**£1.07**
Revenue per subscriber, full 30-month window	£1.90

Worth pausing on one thing: **the scout's 1% conversion assumption turned out to be roughly right.** It was the plan tier that was wrong, not the conversion rate. That matters, because it means the funnel is working and the economics are the problem. Those need different fixes.

What you can afford to pay

> Maximum cost per subscriber = revenue per subscriber over the payback window × (1 - refund drag) ÷ safety factor

12-month window: £1.07 × 0.861 ÷ 2	**£0.46**
30-month window: £1.90 × 0.861 ÷ 2	£0.82

Safety factor of 2 because this is a first campaign and **paid subscribers are reliably worth less than organic ones.** They arrived from an interruption rather than a search or a recommendation, and they convert worse. Assume that until your own data says otherwise.

What it would actually cost

At £1.00 a click and a 30% opt-in conversion, which are ordinary rather than pessimistic for a professional audience, a subscriber costs **£3.33**.

Maximum you can pay	£0.46
Realistic cost	£3.33
Short by	**7.2x**

It does not clear on the 30-month window either, at £0.82. **There is no payback window long enough to make this work**, and stretching the window is the standard way people talk themselves into a losing campaign.

£7.74

REVENUE PER SUBSCRIBER NEEDED. YOU ARE AT £1.07

REASON 2: THE TEST COULD NOT TELL YOU ANYTHING

Say you set aside £300 as money you can afford to lose entirely, which is the honest framing rather than calling it an investment.

> £300 ÷ £3.33 per subscriber = 90 subscribers

Under 100 subscribers, conversion, cost per subscriber and revenue per paid subscriber all swing too widely to distinguish a good campaign from a bad one.

A test that cannot produce a readable result is not a test, it is a donation. Either the budget goes up substantially or the campaign waits. At your income, the budget going up is not the sensible half of that sentence.

REASON 3: THE TERMS MAY PROHIBIT IT, AND NOBODY HAS CHECKED

From the April grade, section 4.5.6:

> Refer traffic to Kinsta through any pay to read, pay to click, banner exchanges, click exchanges, **PPC advertising**, pop-up/under, press releases, or similar methods.

Section 4.5.5 separately bans bidding on Kinsta's trademarks, which means 4.5.6 is doing different and broader work. Read plainly, it prohibits paid traffic as a method rather than only brand bidding.

Whether it reaches paid traffic pointed at your own opt-in page, which then contains an affiliate link, is genuinely unclear. That was question 3 on the list the grader gave you in April and it has still not been answered.

> Do not spend money on an unresolved reading of a clause that could cost you the account. Get it in writing first. It costs one email.

THE SHAPE, RECORDED SO YOU RECOGNISE IT LATER

Not recommended today. Written down because the structure does not change when the numbers do.

> Ad → your opt-in page → thank-you page (first offer) → the sequence

- **Paid traffic goes to a page you own. Never to an affiliate link.** Sending paid clicks straight to somebody else's checkout is arbitrage: you buy the click at a price you control and get paid on a conversion you do not, by a merchant who can cut the rate whenever it likes. Thin at the best of times, negative the moment anything moves.
- **One platform, not two.** You cannot read two.
- **Every ad sells the calculator, never Kinsta.** The magnet is what the person gets for clicking. Promising anything else buys a click that bounces.
- **Tag paid subscribers at signup.** Paid and organic behave differently, and averaging them hides a losing campaign inside a healthy list. You cannot separate them afterwards.
- **The kill rule, as a number, before anything runs:** stop at £300 spent if cost per subscriber is above £3.50, or if fewer than 90 subscribers have arrived. It exists because the decision to stop is impossible to make honestly while the money is already gone.

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

The constraint is revenue per subscriber. There are three ways it moves and only one of them is quick.

LEVER	EFFECT	WORKER
Raise the value of a referred customer	Direct and proportional, with no extra traffic at all	**negotiate my affiliate rate.** You have fourteen unmonetised Kinsta referrals as the case. Strongest lever you have
Raise the conversion rate	Already at the modelled 1%, little obvious slack	Marginal. Email 5 is worth a look
Get the second programme working	Raises revenue per subscriber and cuts the 98% concentration at the same time	plan my promote content, the Cloudways-at-scale piece already in the plan

Growing the list does not help here. More subscribers at £1.07 each is a bigger version of the same arithmetic. It is also the free version, which is why organic stays the right route for now.

RE-RUN THIS WHEN REVENUE PER SUBSCRIBER CLEARS ABOUT £4. Not before. At £4 the maximum cost per subscriber is £1.72 and paid becomes arguable rather than absurd. At £7.74 it clears comfortably. Next: **negotiate my affiliate rate**, which is the one lever that moves this number without needing another reader.
