

Definition

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Definition Key takeaways

- A lead is simply a person you can contact.
- An engaged lead is a person you can contact who has also shown interest in the stuff you sell.
- Engaged leads are the true output of advertising and the leads that matter.
- Many actions can be ambiguous as "leads" (clicks, follows, purchased contact lists, comments, phone numbers, walk-ins, subscribers), so clarity is required.
- Examples of engaged leads include someone who gives contact info on a site or replies to an email campaign.
- The next step after defining leads is to get leads to engage naturally.

Checklist

1. Define "lead" in your context
 - State that a lead = any person you can contact (phone, email, DM where allowed, etc.).
 - Why: A clear definition prevents confusion about what counts as a lead for measurement and targeting.
2. Define "engaged lead" in your context
 - Specify that an engaged lead = a contactable person who has shown interest in what you sell (e.g., opted in, replied, requested info).
 - Why: Engaged leads are higher-value; they indicate purchase intent and are the real output of advertising.
3. Inventory all touchpoints that produce contactable people
 - List actions that create contactability: follows (if messageable), email signups, phone numbers, scheduled calls, walk-ins, subscribers, commentors, etc.
 - Why: Knowing every source helps categorize leads and identify which can be converted into engaged leads.
4. Categorize each touchpoint as "lead" vs "engaged lead"
 - For each touchpoint, decide if it meets the contactable criterion and whether it shows interest (e.g., opt-in vs passive view).
 - Why: This enables accurate reporting and prioritization of follow-up efforts.
5. Create offers/content to convert contacts into engaged leads
 - Provide something (offer, content, incentive) that elicits interest so contacts move from "meh" to "pick me."

- Why: Advertising's goal is to produce engaged leads; giving value converts passive contacts into buyers.

6. Track engagement actions as advertising outcomes

- Measure replies, opt-ins, form submissions, and other engagement behaviors as the true output metrics.
- Why: These metrics reflect real interest and better predict sales than simple clicks or views.

7. Assess messaging options per platform

- Note where you can message contacts directly (e.g., Instagram DMs if allowed) versus where you cannot (e.g., some YouTube viewers).
- Why: Only contactable interactions qualify as leads; understanding messaging limits informs follow-up strategy.

8. Plan to get leads to engage naturally

- Design funnels and content that attract contactable people and stimulate an expression of interest.
- Why: Natural engagement yields higher-quality leads and reduces reliance on purchased lists or low-intent traffic.

Examples:

- Someone who follows you on social media and can be messaged = a lead.
- A person who gives contact information on a website = an engaged lead.
- A recipient who replies to an email campaign = an engaged lead.
- A YouTube viewer who cannot be messaged directly but can comment = ambiguous unless comment is treated as contactable interest.

Definition Note:

- Use the simple rule "lead = person you can contact" and elevate priority to those who have shown interest (engaged leads), because engaged leads are the real output you should optimize advertising for.