

UNSCRIPTED SMALL BUSINESS • FIELD GUIDE

Trust, Not Clicks

The Fractional Chief Communications Officer's playbook for small businesses — from the Unscripted interview with Joshua Altman.



Joshua Altman

Managing Director, Beltway Media

CHAPTER 1

What a Fractional CCO Actually Is

“Fractional” means contractual and part-time — but fully integrated into your team. Instead of a 40-hour-a-week communications chief, you get a senior leader for a quarter of that. Sometimes as little as five to ten hours a month.

The role brings every communications function — internal and external, marketing, branding, advertising — under one leader whose entire job is to shape perception and build and maintain trust.

“We’re the expert at communicating your expertise. You’re the expert in home remodeling. You want to be doing home remodeling — you don’t want to be managing your social media feeds.”

JOSHUA ALTMAN

And it makes sense earlier than you’d think: from the solopreneur who got stuck “owning” marketing by default, up to 100–250-person companies that scaled engineering and finance but never thought about communications.

CHAPTER 2

The Four Languages Model

When it's time to choose channels, Beltway starts with one framework: what people **read, see, hear, and experience** — and how each language amplifies the others.



A visual business belongs on visual media. A brand starting from zero should try everything and follow the traction. And crucially, there are no “content police”:

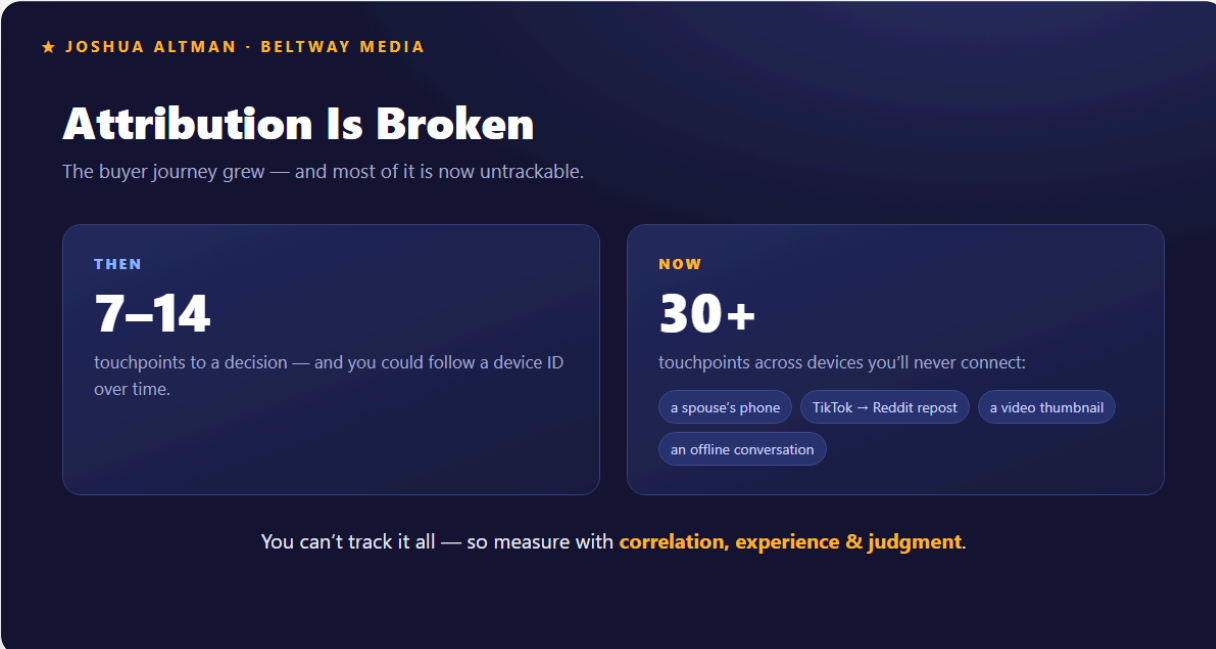
“These aren’t laws of nature. No one is gonna come after you. If you do one a week, that makes sense in your cadence. And we repurpose a lot — one post, one idea can become a post on every channel.”

JOSHUA ALTMAN

CHAPTER 3

Why Your Metrics Are Lying

The old “7 to 14 touchpoints” rule of thumb is gone. Joshua puts the real number closer to 30-plus — and most of it is invisible.



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Attribution Is Broken

The buyer journey grew — and most of it is now untrackable.

THEN	NOW
7-14	30+
touchpoints to a decision — and you could follow a device ID over time.	touchpoints across devices you'll never connect:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a spouse's phoneTikTok → Reddit reposta video thumbnailan offline conversation

You can't track it all — so measure with **correlation, experience & judgment.**

“That conversation you had with your spouse about it — that was an important part of that buyer journey. But we can’t measure that.”

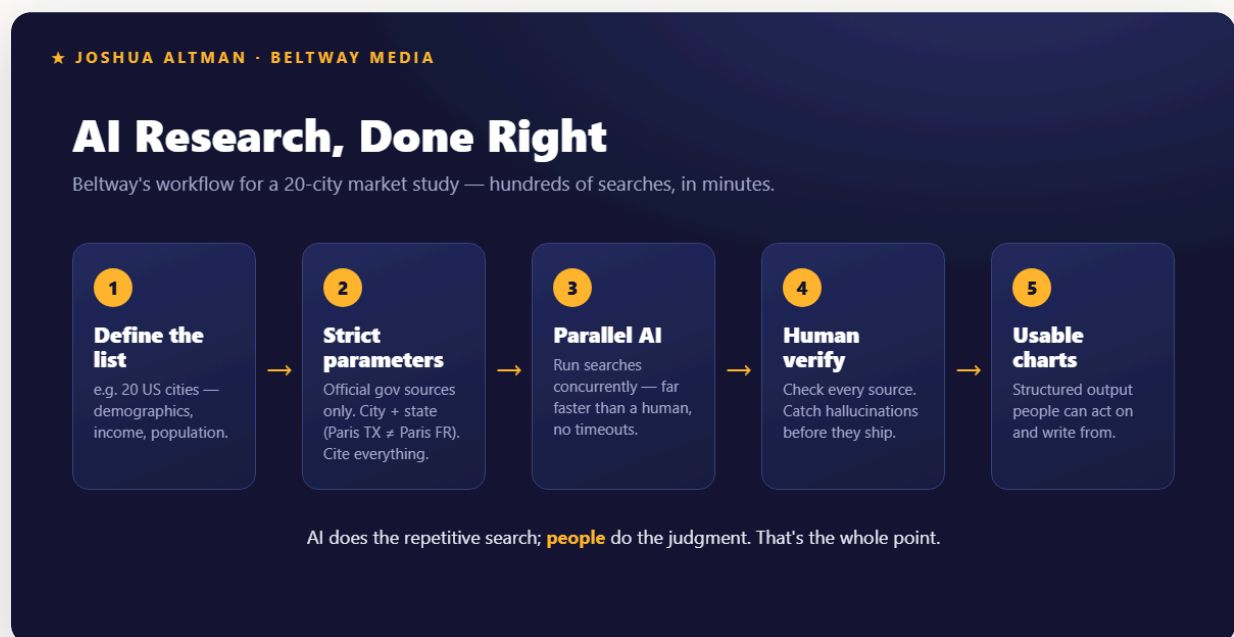
JOSHUA ALTMAN

The fix isn’t “ignore the numbers.” It’s correlation plus judgment, tested deliberately: drop everything but one channel for a short window and watch what happens to leads and mentions. Businesses grew for a century on exactly this reasoning — Sears tracked by ZIP code and catalog and did just fine.

CHAPTER 4

AI: A Tool, Not a Voice

Beltway uses AI openly — but with hard boundaries. It never ships final brand content without human editing. Where it shines is repetitive research and machine-readable structure.



“Bots are really good at talking to other bots. If you need to fill a page with all the keywords, metadata and schema so it surfaces for the bot, we have a bot that does it — and then we check it, because we all know it hallucinates.”

JOSHUA ALTMAN

The rule: let the machine handle the machine-readable layer; keep people on the brand and the bigger ecosystem.

CHAPTER 5

The One Rule: Be Useful

Everything in Joshua’s worldview collapses into a single test.

“Everything you produce should be useful. An ad that’s just a billboard doesn’t help anyone. But things that provide value and help people will drive people to you.”


JOSHUA ALTMAN

Even a home remodeler can publish a DIY tip on replacing cabinet pulls — and give someone a reason to discover and trust them. Useful assets earn discovery, citations, and trust. A billboard earns nothing.

Take these five ideas into your next campaign — and measure them by whether people came back, not just whether they clicked.

Keep going.

This guide came from a single conversation on the Unscripted Small Business Podcast. There's a lot more where it came from.

 Beltway Media — beltway.media

 Free tools & quizzes — beltway.media/our-free-tools

 Joshua Altman — [LinkedIn](#)

 The show — unscriptedseo.com