

Entrepreneurship Surges, but Converting Interest Into Customers Remains a Challenge

As more people launch businesses, new data highlights ongoing gaps between inquiries and actual sales

ATLANTA, GA, UNITED STATES, April 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A record number of Americans are starting businesses, but turning that activity into consistent revenue remains a challenge for many.

More than 5.5 million new business applications were filed in the United States in 2023, the highest level on record, while an estimated 64 million Americans freelanced last year, representing about 38% of the workforce . The increase reflects a broader shift toward self-employment, side ventures and independent work following recent layoffs and changes in the job market.



Engels J Valenzuela

At the same time, conversion data tells a different story. Industry research shows that roughly 80% of leads never become paying customers and only a small share of businesses respond to new inquiries within the first few minutes, when conversion rates are highest .

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Across online discussions and search behavior, the gap shows up in familiar ways. Phrases such as “how to get more clients,” “how to get more customers,” and “more leads but no clients” continue to appear frequently in forums, Q&A platforms and business communities. The

pattern suggests that while visibility and inquiries may be present, [converting that interest](#) into

revenue remains uneven.

[Engels J. Valenzuela](#), a customer acquisition strategist, said the issue often comes down to what happens after someone expresses interest.

“In a lot of cases, there’s already activity via website visits, messages or calls but no consistent movement toward a decision,” he said. “The steps between first contact and becoming a customer are often unclear or take too long.”

Research supports the importance of timing. One study found that contacting a lead within five minutes can increase the likelihood of conversion by several times, yet most businesses take significantly longer to respond . Meanwhile, the cost of acquiring new customers has risen in recent years, increasing pressure on businesses to make better use of existing inquiries .

[Shifts in how people search](#) and evaluate options are also playing a role. With a growing share of searches ending without a click and more consumers relying on reviews and comparisons before making decisions, businesses may have fewer opportunities to re-engage potential customers once initial interest fades .

Valenzuela said three issues tend to appear repeatedly in businesses trying to get more clients online: unclear positioning, overly complicated steps between inquiry and purchase and inconsistent follow-up.

“These are not always obvious from the inside,” he said. “But when you map the full path from first interaction to paying customer, you can usually see where people are dropping off.”

He has also published additional analysis on why businesses struggle to get more clients online, along with examples of how simplifying the path from inquiry to purchase can improve results.

As business formation continues to rise, the ability to convert interest into customers may become a more important factor than generating additional traffic.

About Engels J. Valenzuela

Engels J. Valenzuela helps profitable entrepreneurs, coaches and consultants turn more of their traffic and attention into clients by replacing scattered marketing with one clear path from first click to paying customer. He’s a customer acquisition strategist who designs and builds simple systems that bring in leads, booked calls and sales every week, drawing on experience at Fortune 50 companies.

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