

Brighterly: Engineering the Strategic Exit



Meet Brighterly

Founded in 2024 within the SKELAR venture builder ecosystem, Brighterly is a K-12 math and reading tutoring platform serving the US market. The company is led by Eugene Kashuk, a Ukrainian serial entrepreneur with a background in e-commerce, and supported by a team of ~40 professionals.

Brighterly is experiencing strong momentum, nearly tripling ARR year over year. In 2025, the launch of its English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum further accelerated growth — doubling the number of tutors and increasing active users by 2.5x.

With this trajectory, the Board & leadership have set a strategic objective: to position Brighterly for acquisition by a strategic buyer or private equity fund within the next three years.

Disclaimer: The case narrative and all data are fictional.



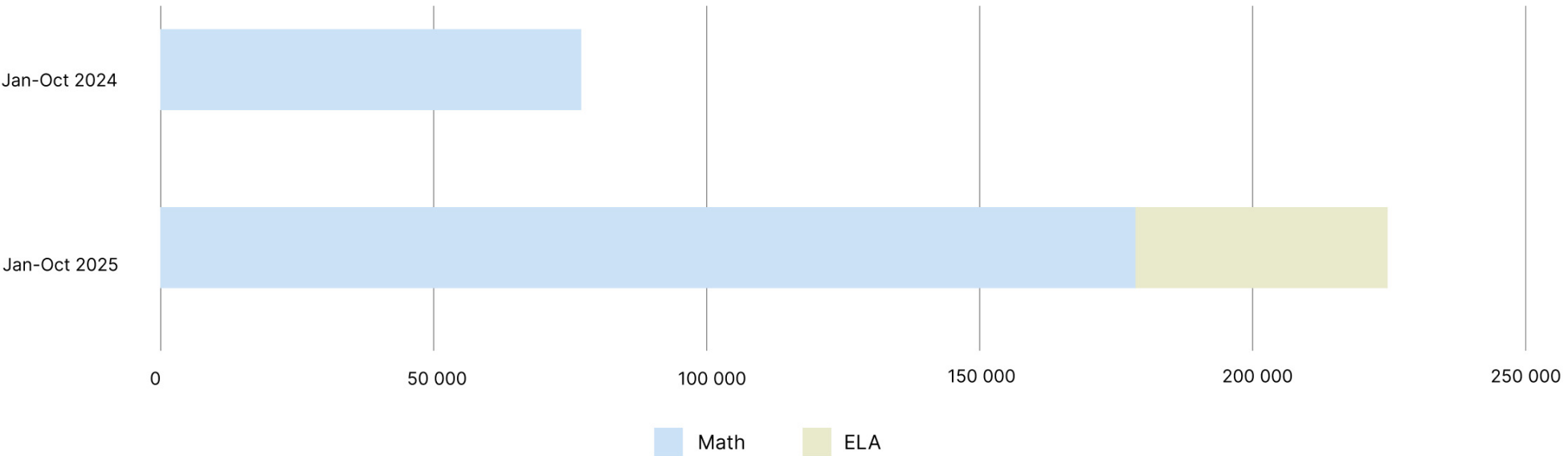
Product & Tech

Brighterly offers personalized 1-to-1, 45-minute sessions:

- **Math Program:** custom-tailored curricula ranging from elementary math to Algebra and Geometry.
- **ELA Program:** focuses on Reading (phonics, fluency, comprehension), Writing, Speaking, and Listening.

The ELA program is rapidly gaining popularity, significantly shifting the share of lessons away from Math-only subscriptions.

Exhibit 1. Total Number of Lessons Completed



To support this learning, Brighterly built its own tech stack. Students study in a proprietary, interactive virtual classroom accessible only via a web browser. It features real-time video/audio, a digital whiteboard for collaborative work, and gamified elements.

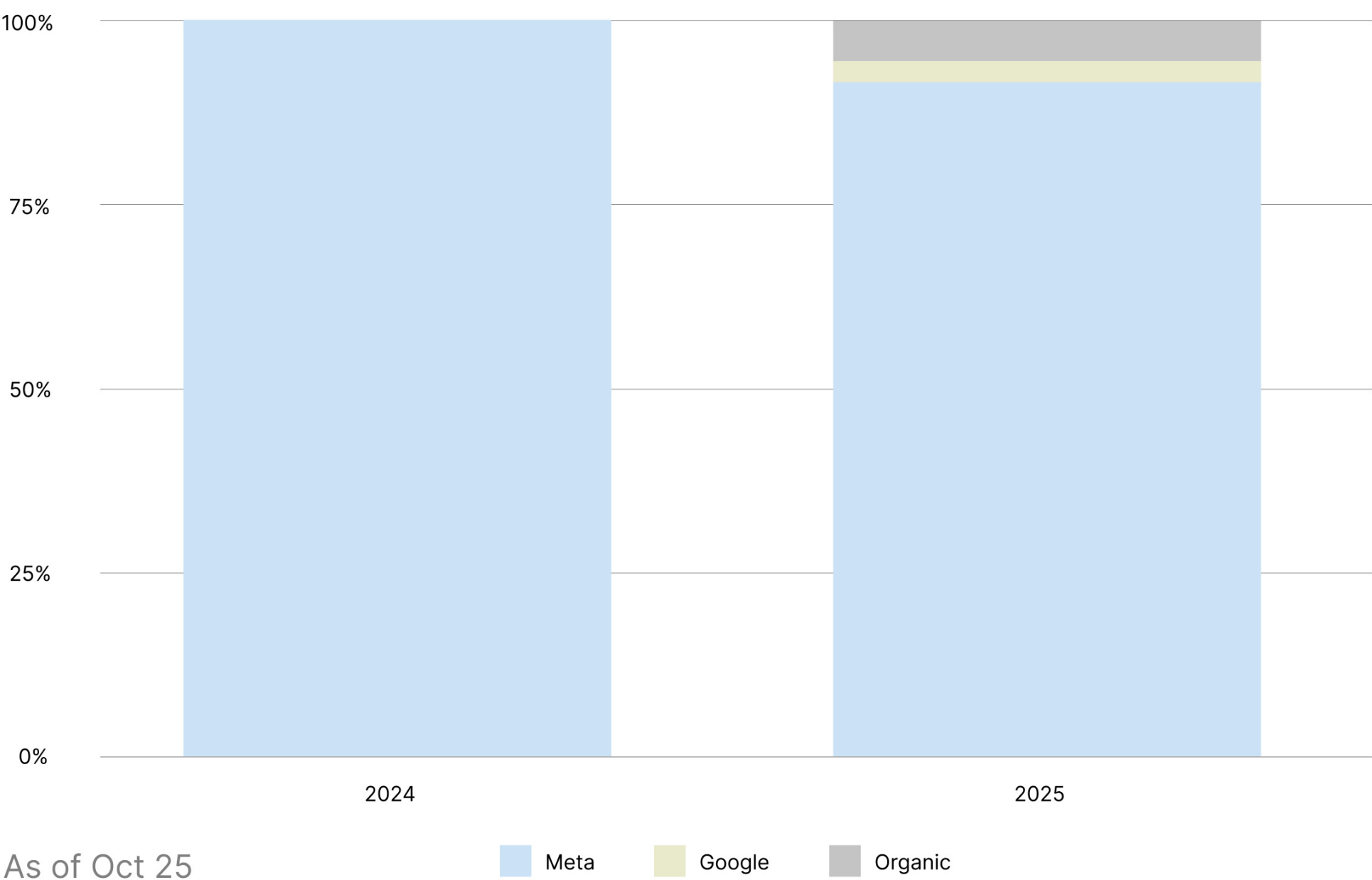
Brighterly offers 4 subscription packages:

1 month \$23 per lesson	3 months \$22 per lesson	6 months \$21 per lesson	12 months \$19 per lesson
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User Acquisition Funnel

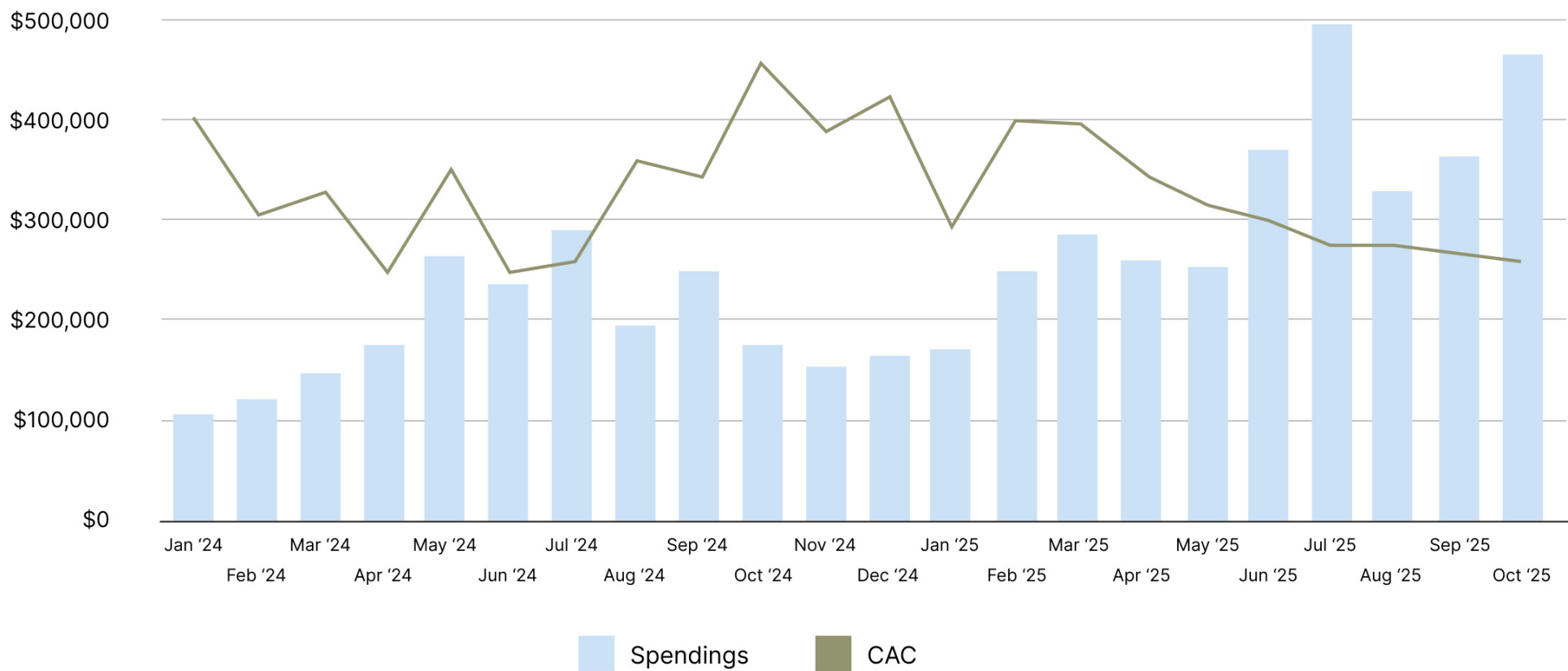
Historically, Brighterly’s growth has been driven by paid marketing, with Meta (Facebook/Instagram) serving as the primary channel.

Exhibit 2. User Acquisition by Marketing Channels



The acquisition flow utilizes a web-based funnel model, where ads drive traffic to interactive quizzes to qualify intent. While scaling was previously volatile due to unit economic challenges, the 2025 ELA launch proved to be a stabilizer, successfully lowering Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC) and enabling consistent growth.

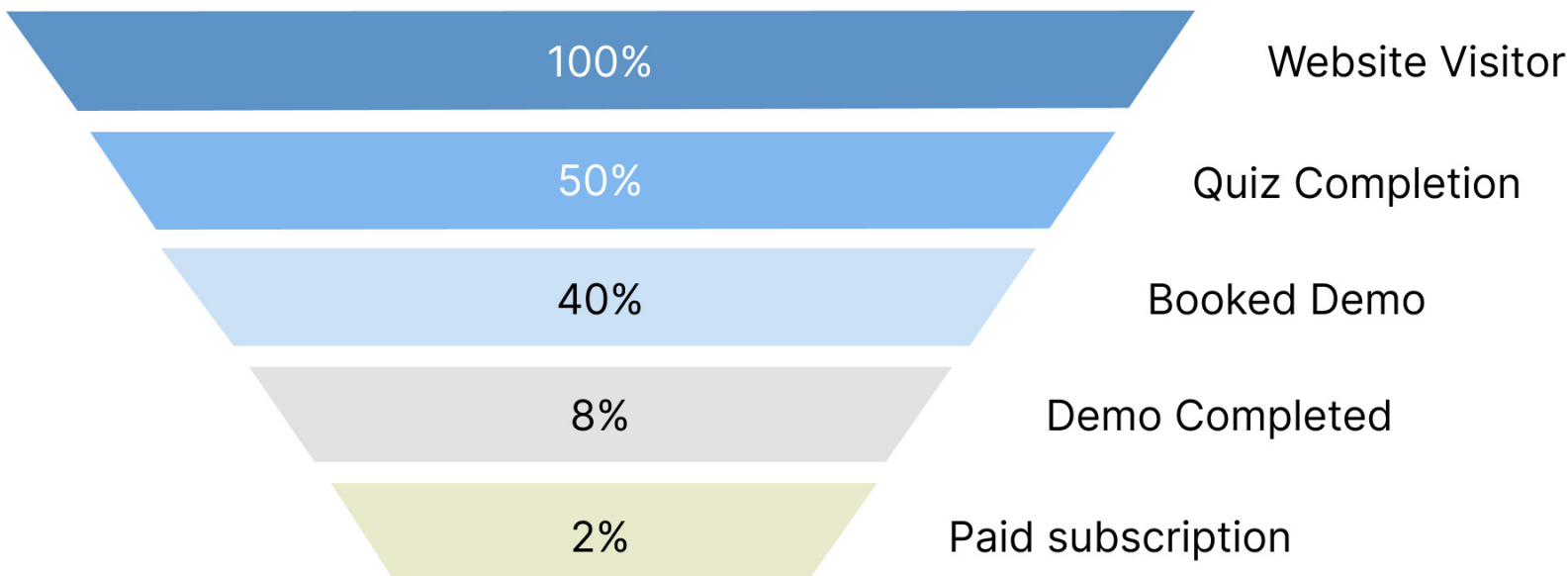
Exhibit 3. Marketing Spend–CAC Relationship



Upon completing the quiz, families book a live Demo Lesson with a tutor. This session is critical to the funnel, allowing parents to experience the teaching style and vetting the educational approach firsthand.

Following the demo, the conversion process is twofold: a Sales Representative contacts the parents to close the deal, or the family can purchase a subscription via self-service. The efficiency of each stage in this journey is detailed below.

Exhibit 4. Funnel Conversion Rates



Operations

While marketed as an "online learning platform," Brighterly's internal operations function more like a traditional service agency than a scalable tech product. The value delivery is strictly human-to-human, driven by a labor-intensive lifecycle involving four distinct layers:

1**Tutors (Acquisition)**

The process begins with tutors conducting live, one-on-one "demo lessons" to prove value to potential customers.

2**Sales Team**

Follow up on these demos to convert leads into paying subscribers.

3**Customer Success Managers (CSMs):**

Manually onboard families, handle scheduling logistics, and assign specific tutors based on student needs.

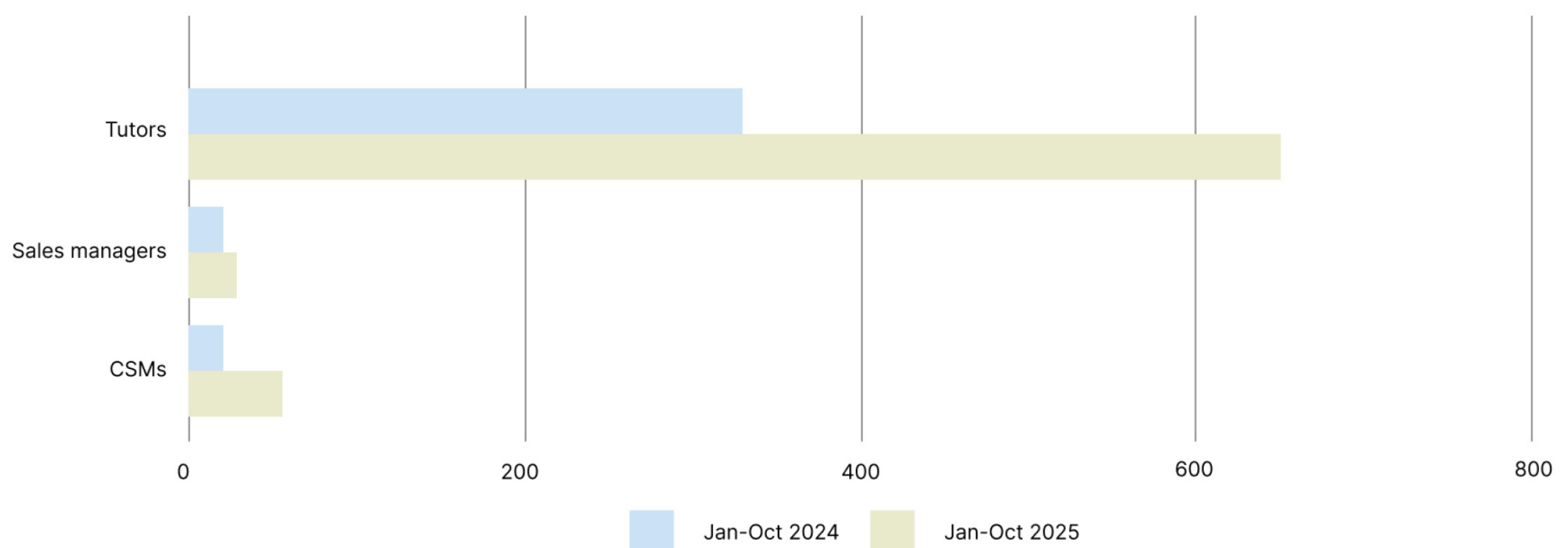
4**Tutors (Retention & Delivery)**

Take ownership of the educational product, delivering live lessons and managing progress manually.

At its core, this strategy is a "bet on humans." By prioritizing vetted experts, Brighterly ensures a safe, confidence-building environment. However, this dependency creates a strategic bottleneck: the reliance on manual labor drives up variable costs and restricts leverage, creating a fundamental tension between maintaining high-touch service quality and achieving exponential growth.

This friction is evident in recent hiring data: to support growth, Brighterly had to double its tutor base, increase sales staff by 1.5x, and nearly triple the CSM headcount.

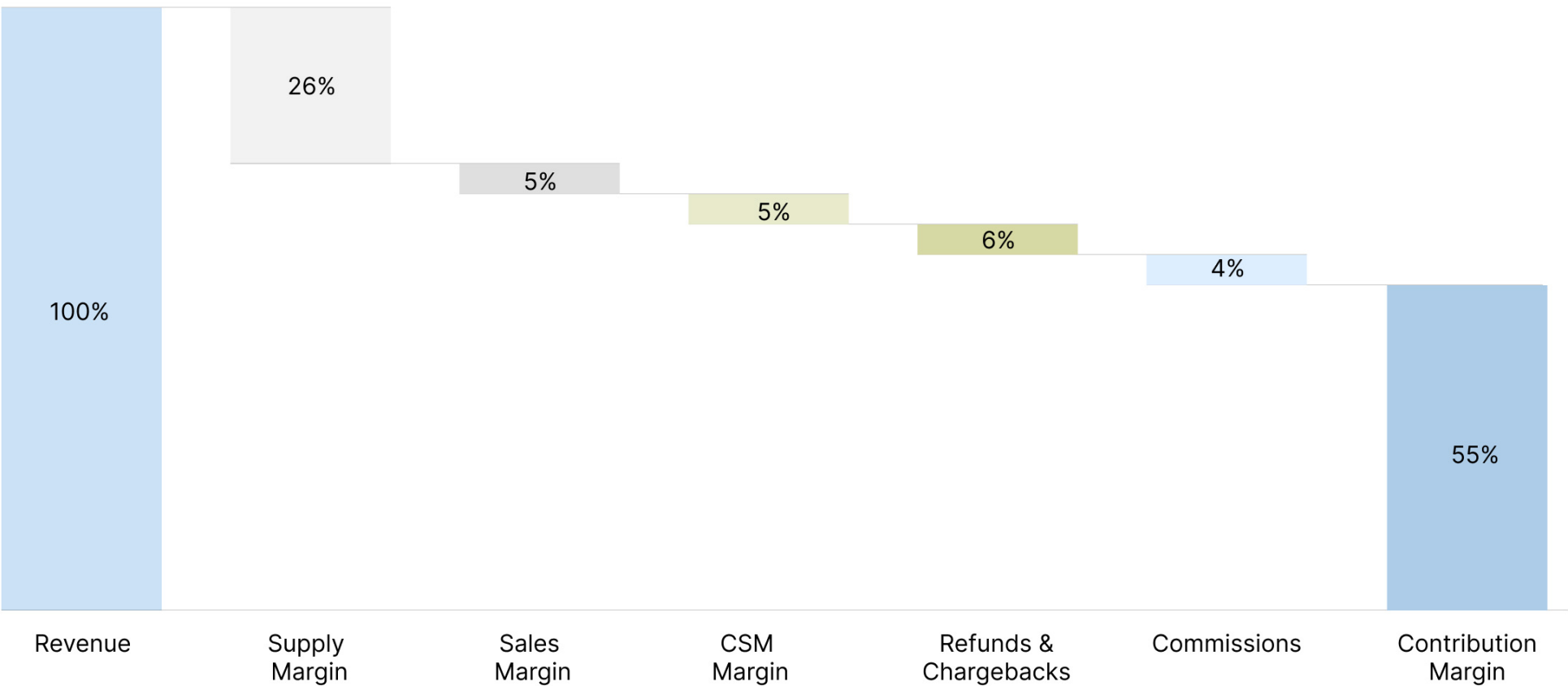
Exhibit 5. Number of Tutors, Sales Managers, and CSMs



Key Economic Metrics

The breakdown reveals a capital-intensive operation where Customer Acquisition and Supply Costs are the primary drivers of expense, leaving a relatively thin Net Revenue margin.

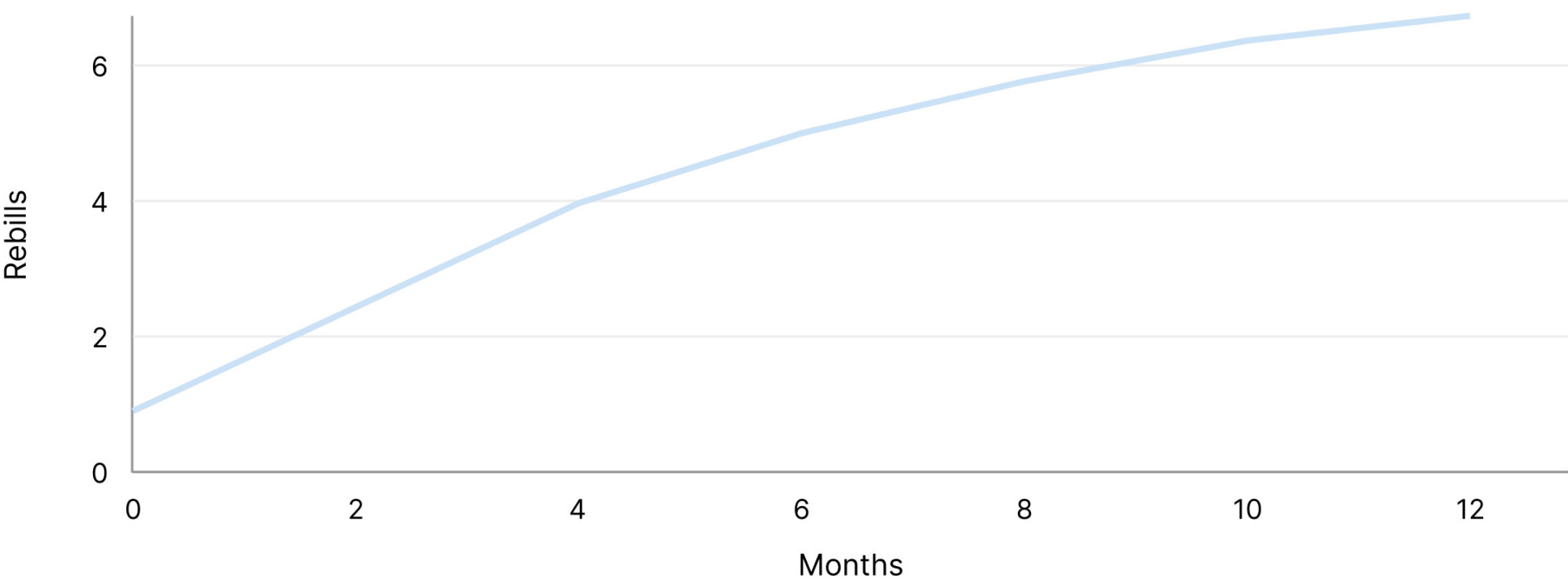
Exhibit 6. Unit Economics Breakdown



As of Oct 25

Despite the high costs, the product demonstrates strong stickiness: the LTV curve shows a steady upward trajectory, with the average user generating nearly 6 rebills within the first 12 months. This indicates that once a customer is acquired, the high-touch human experience drives retention, tripling the initial value by month 4 and nearly increasing it sixfold by year-end.

Exhibit 7. LTV Curve



Product

Brighterly generates strong initial monetization, with an Average Order Value of approximately \$200. Customer commitment is promising, evidenced by an activation rate (first lesson completion) that trends between 85% and 92%.

Momentum is further accelerated by the ELA program, which is driving a measurable surge in completed lessons. These metrics collectively validate the platform's ability to not only acquire high-value customers but also successfully engage them in the learning process immediately.



Your Task

As a member of SKELAR's Investment Team, your task is to develop a strategic plan outlining your recommendations for transforming Brighterly into a premium acquisition target for a strategic buyer or private equity firm within the next three years.

You will present your proposal to the Executive Committee, including SKELAR's CFO and Investment Director, Brighterly's CEO, and a Board Member from Horizon Capital, an early investor.

You must execute a comprehensive analysis—leveraging internal data and external market insights—to address four key objectives:

Business Audit

Analyze Brighterly's current performance to identify key issues affecting efficiency, profitability, and growth potential.

Market Landscape

Analyze the US EdTech ecosystem to define Brighterly's competitive positioning and identify the key market drivers shaping the industry.

Strategic Vision

Identify what potential acquirers will look for in targets over the next three years, and define the type of company Brighterly should become to attract them.

Transformation Roadmap

Recommend concrete actions and a timeline to bridge the gap between current operations and the target exit profile.

Deliverable - Investment Committee Deck:

Synthesize your analysis, strategy, and roadmap into a presentation designed to secure executive approval for the transformation plan.

