Tool 01: The Leak Check

Purpose

Find which of the eight leaks may be costing the owner jobs, and which chapter to read first. Chapter 1. Covers all eight leaks; the frames (Can't tell, No system) are routed through questions 12, 14 and 17.

Inputs

- A phone.
- 15 minutes.
- The office person, if someone else answers the phone.
- Logins you think you own (domain, Google Business Profile, ad accounts). You don't need to open them yet. You need to know whether you could.

Steps

Answer each question **yes**, **no** or **don't know**. If a question doesn't apply to your business, answer **yes**.

Leak 1: Not found

1. If you search "[your trade] [your city]" on your phone, do you appear in the Google Maps top three? (Several towns: search the one you want the most work from.)
2. If you ask ChatGPT, "Which [trade] companies in [city, state] should a homeowner call? Name the companies and the sources.", does it name you? (Ask twice; count yes if either answer names you. Chapter 15 has the full check.)
3. Do you have a page on your website for each main service you want more of?

Leak 2: Not trusted

4. Did you get a new Google review in the last 30 days (remodelers: the last 90 days)?
5. Search your business name on your phone. Does page one show your current business name and a working phone number? And do your website, Google profile and BBB or state license record all show the same name, phone and, if your trade is licensed, license number? (Answer no if either part fails. A tracking number or legal name listed on your brand sheet isn't a mismatch.)
6. Does your website show real photos of your own work and crew, not stock images? (A stock photo on the first screen counts as no.)

Leak 3: Not called

7. On a phone, can a homeowner see your number and a call, estimate or booking button without scrolling (a call button counts)?
8. Does every way you offer homeowners to reach you (call, text, chat, form or online booking) get answered reliably, and do you offer the ones your customers need, such as

text for photos or booking for set appointments?
9. Does your homepage say what you do, where you do it, and what happens next, in plain words?

Leak 4: Called, but lost

10. Call your own business number just after your office closes on a weekday. Does a person, or a service that actually helps, answer? If you don't offer evening answering, does the message say truthfully when you'll call back, and do you keep that promise (question 11)?
11. Is every missed call about a potential job returned within your stated callback time: by the end of the business day for calls during business hours, or by the time your after-hours message promises?
12. Do you know roughly how many calls you missed last week?

Leak 5: Wrong calls

13. Does your website say which jobs you do and don't do, and which towns you serve?
14. Do you know which of your lead sources sends the most jobs you actually want?
15. Do you review each paid lead source's suitable inquiries, booked and won jobs and total cost, and act when it misses the limits you set? (If you don't pay for leads, answer yes.)

Leak 6: Quoted, but not hired

16. Do you follow up on every quote at least once if you haven't heard back?
17. Do you know your close rate, the share of booked jobs (estimates and service visits) that you win?
18. When you lose a job, do you usually find out why?

Leak 7: Not owned

19. Is your domain registered in your name, with a login you control?
20. Are you the primary owner of your Google Business Profile, and an admin on your ad accounts? (No ad accounts: answer for the profile.)
21. If you stopped working with whoever built or runs your marketing (agency, freelancer, friend or relative), would you keep your website, your phone number and your customer list?

Leak 8: Feast or famine

22. Do you know which months are slowest for your trade in your city? (Water damage: do you know which events, such as freezes and storms, bring your busy weeks?)
23. Do you have something that brings in work in the slow months: maintenance plans, past-customer reminders, seasonal offers?
24. In your busy season, do you have a way to catch calls you can't take yourself? (Voicemail alone doesn't count.)

How to read the result

Count your **no** and **don't know** answers in each group of three.

No or don't-know answers in a group	What it means
0	No sign of that leak in these questions. Keep checking (chapter 19).
1	One warning sign. Worth checking, but not first.
2 or 3	Two or three warning signs: a leak, or one you can't rule out yet.

These cut points are a rule of thumb, untested. Three questions per leak can't measure anything precisely. The split (0, 1, 2 or more) was chosen so that one stray "no" doesn't send an owner to the wrong chapter, while two "no" answers on the same leak point to a pattern, not an accident. It is a way to pick a starting chapter, not a score of the business. A "don't know" is something to check first, not a loss you've proven.

Before you pick a chapter, write down what you want: more of one kind of work, steadier months, fewer hours, or growth, and what the shop can actually handle. A full calendar you chose isn't a leak. Carry that goal into the work order (tool 11).

First, an override. If something is broken right now (a dead line, a broken form, a promise you can't keep), fix it today. Then use the table.

First match wins. Stop at the first row that fits. N means no; ? means don't know.

If...	Then
Any **N** or **?** on questions 19 to 21	Chapter 2. ? = find out who holds it (tool 04); N = start recovery.
A leak has 2 or 3 N or ?	The earliest such leak in the fix order: 7, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1, 8. Ties go to the earlier leak.
No leak has 2 or more, but some have 1	The earliest of those in the fix order.
All yes	Keep chapter 19's routine.

The rules in detail:

- **Any "no" or "don't know" on questions 19 to 21:** start with **chapter 2** before anything else. A "don't know" means find out who holds it (tool 04); a "no" means start recovery. Whatever you build next should be yours. The ownership inventory (tool 04) usually takes one to two hours, spread over a week if vendors need to answer. Meanwhile, fix any obvious problem a homeowner can see, like a phone number buried in the footer, and while you wait on a vendor, start the next leak in the fix order. If everything turns out to be in your name, come back to the routing below.

- **Otherwise,** start with the earliest leak, in the fix order, that has two or three "no" or "don't know" answers. If any of them are "don't know", run that chapter's 10-minute check first, then fix what it finds:

Leak	Part	Start with
7	I. Own the ground	Chapter 2
2	III. Show why they can trust you	Chapters 5, 6 and 7 (your name search)
3	IV. Make it easy to hire you	Chapter 8
4	IV. Make it easy to hire you	Chapter 9
5	IV. Make it easy to hire you	Chapter 10
6	IV. Make it easy to hire you	Chapter 11
1	V. Show up where they look	Chapters 12 to 15
8	VI. Keep it and compound	Chapters 16 and 18, and chapter 17 if you rent leads to fill slow months

- **If no leak has two or three,** start with the earliest leak in the fix order that has one. Two leaks with the same count: take the earlier one in the fix order.
- **If every answer is yes,** keep the routine in chapter 19 and take the check again next quarter.
- **For leak 1, open the chapter for where you're missing:** Maps, chapter 12; a service page, 13; directories and other sites on page one, 14; AI answers, 15; homeowners confusing you with another name, 7. These are starting points, not diagnoses.
- **A no or don't know on question 9 or 13:** read chapter 4 too.
- **If the problem you bought this book for isn't where the check sends you,** read that chapter too.
- **A no or don't know on questions 12, 14 or 17:** you need **chapter 3.** Either way you don't know the number yet, and until you do, you can't tell if anything works.
- **A confirmed urgent failure comes first:** a dead line, a broken form, or a promise you can't keep. Fix it today, whatever the scores say.
- **Chapter 17 follows chapter 2** if you pay for leads or ads. After the first task, take the next leak the same rules pick.

  My first task: **__\ What it needs first: _\ *Who does it:* \ *Done when:*** ___

Get the minimum before copy or spending: brand-sheet facts before any copy; chapter 3's numbers before any spending decision.

Fix the first leak properly before starting the second.

Limits

- It is self-reported. An owner who thinks the phone gets answered after hours may be wrong. Questions 10 and 12 exist so the owner checks instead of guessing.
- Question 2 is two AI answers on one day. AI answers change between runs and between tools (chapter 15). A "no" means "check again", not "invisible".
- Question 1 depends on where the phone is standing. Maps results shift across a city.
- Equal weight per leak is a writing choice, not a finding. Owners don't feel all leaks equally (the owner-passage counts in chapter 1 show where owners talk, not how common a problem is).
- It does not measure revenue lost. The owner's math in chapter 1 is a scenario using your assumptions, not a measured loss.

Next action

Go to the chapter in the routing table. Then set up tool 08 (the monthly numbers) so the fix can be seen in your own numbers.

From *The Next Name on the List* by Youssef Hodaigui. Free to use in your own business; please don't resell.

Leak Check scoring sheet

Circle Y (yes), N (no) or ? (don't know). If a question doesn't apply, circle Y.

Leak 1: Not found

N + ? = ____

1. If you search "[your trade] [your city]" on your phone, do you appear in the Google Maps top three? (Several towns: search the one you want the most work from.) **Y N ?**
2. If you ask ChatGPT, "Which [trade] companies in [city, state] should a homeowner call? Name the companies and the sources.", does it name you? (Ask twice; count yes if either answer names you. Chapter 15 has the full check.) **Y N ?**
3. Do you have a page on your website for each main service you want more of? **Y N ?**

Leak 2: Not trusted

N + ? = ____

4. Did you get a new Google review in the last 30 days (remodelers: the last 90 days)? **Y N ?**
5. Search your business name on your phone. Does page one show your current business name and a working phone number? And do your website, Google profile and BBB or state license record all show the same name, phone and, if your trade is licensed, license number? (Answer no if either part fails. A tracking number or legal name listed on your brand sheet isn't a mismatch.) **Y N ?**
6. Does your website show real photos of your own work and crew, not stock images? (A stock photo on the first screen counts as no.) **Y N ?**

Leak 3: Not called

N + ? = ____

7. On a phone, can a homeowner see your number and a call, estimate or booking button without scrolling (a call button counts)? **Y N ?**
8. Does every way you offer homeowners to reach you (call, text, chat, form or online booking) get answered reliably, and do you offer the ones your customers need, such as text for photos or booking for set appointments? **Y N ?**
9. Does your homepage say what you do, where you do it, and what happens next, in plain words? **Y N ?**

Leak 4: Called, but lost

N + ? = ____

10. Call your own business number just after your office closes on a weekday. Does a person, or a service that actually helps, answer? If you don't offer evening answering, does the message say truthfully when you'll call back, and do you keep that promise (question 11)? **Y N ?**
11. Is every missed call about a potential job returned within your stated callback time: by the end of the business day for calls during business hours, or by the time your after-hours message promises? **Y N ?**
12. Do you know roughly how many calls you missed last week? **Y N ?**

Leak 5: Wrong calls

N + ? = ____

13. Does your website say which jobs you do and don't do, and which towns you serve? **Y N ?**
14. Do you know which of your lead sources sends the most jobs you actually want? **Y N ?**
15. Do you review each paid lead source's suitable inquiries, booked and won jobs and total cost, and act when it misses the limits you set? (If you don't pay for leads, answer yes.) **Y N ?**

Leak 6: Quoted, but not hired

N + ? = ____

16. Do you follow up on every quote at least once if you haven't heard back? **Y N ?**

17. Do you know your close rate, the share of booked jobs (estimates and service visits) that you win? **Y N ?**

18. When you lose a job, do you usually find out why? **Y N ?**

Leak 7: Not owned

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19. Is your domain registered in your name, with a login you control? **Y N ?**

20. Are you the primary owner of your Google Business Profile, and an admin on your ad accounts? (No ad accounts: answer for the profile.) **Y N ?**

21. If you stopped working with whoever built or runs your marketing (agency, freelancer, friend or relative), would you keep your website, your phone number and your customer list? **Y N ?**

Leak 8: Feast or famine

N + ? = ____

22. Do you know which months are slowest for your trade in your city? (Water damage: do you know which events, such as freezes and storms, bring your busy weeks?) **Y N ?**

23. Do you have something that brings in work in the slow months: maintenance plans, past-customer reminders, seasonal offers? **Y N ?**

24. In your busy season, do you have a way to catch calls you can't take yourself? (Voicemail alone doesn't count.) **Y N ?**

Score each leak: 0 = no sign of that leak here; 1 = one warning sign, worth checking but not first; 2 or 3 = two or three warning signs, a leak or one you can't rule out yet. Rule of thumb, untested.

First: if something is broken right now, fix it today. Then stop at the first row that fits: 1. Any N or ? on Q19 to Q21: chapter 2 (? = find out who holds it; N = start recovery). 2. A leak with 2 or 3: the earliest in the fix order. 3. Otherwise the earliest leak with 1. 4. All yes: chapter 19.

Fix order: 7, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1, 8; ties go to the earlier leak. N or ? on Q9 or Q13: chapter 4 too. On Q12, Q14 or Q17: chapter 3 right after your first fix.

My goal: _____

My first task: _____ Who: _____ Done when: _____

Full rules: chapter 1 and tool 01.

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Tool 02: Website and contact-path inspection

This tool combines the five-second phone test, the contact-methods count, the after-hours self-call and a check of the page's parts.

Purpose

Check whether a homeowner who found you can reach you without effort. Leak 3 (Not called) and leak 4 (Called, but lost). Chapters 8 and 9.

Inputs

- Your own phone, and a second phone that isn't saved as you in the office.
- Someone who hasn't seen your website before (a spouse, a friend, a new hire).
- A timer.
- Full inspection: about 35 minutes in daytime, plus 5 minutes one evening and one weekend.
- Quick check (the after-hours call in step 12 alone): 5 minutes.

Steps

A. The five-second phone test

1. Hand your homepage, open on a phone, to the person who hasn't seen it.
2. Give them five seconds, then take the phone back.
3. Ask: What does this company do? Where? How would you contact them? What happens after you do?
4. Write down their answers word for word. Don't help.

B. The contact path

5. On the phone, without scrolling, note what you can see: phone number, a "call" button, an "estimate" or "book" button, a text option.
6. Tap the phone number. Does it dial?
7. List the ways to reach you: call, text, chat, form, online booking. For each, note who answers it and how fast.
8. Fill in your own form as a homeowner. Note the time. Note when, and whether, anyone replies.
9. If you offer booking, try to book a real time slot, then cancel.
10. Keep a route log, one line per channel you offer: page, where the message goes, test time, what the system recorded, who received it, how fast they replied, result, retest date. A confirmation screen isn't proof that anyone received it.
11. With your web person, on a test copy of the site, never the live one, make a valid request fail to send. The page should say it didn't go, keep what was typed where it can, and offer another way to reach you. A failed optional photo upload shouldn't block the request, and a reload shouldn't send it twice.

C. The after-hours self-call

12. From the second phone, test the after-hours path in one of two ways. (a) If you advertise live answering after hours, call inside those advertised hours. (b) If you don't, call just after your office closes and check that the message gives a truthful callback time, then check that the callback happens by that time.
13. Call again in a weekend hour you advertise (10 a.m. Saturday, say). If you promise 24 hours, add a call overnight, when a different person or service covers the phone.
14. Write down what happened each time: a person, an answering service, an AI, voicemail, a full mailbox, or nothing.
15. If it went to voicemail, leave a message as a homeowner and note when the callback comes.
16. Compare with the hours on your Google Business Profile. If the listing says open or 24 hours, does the call match the promise?
17. Write your availability as four separate facts, and check each: when someone answers; what they can book; when the work can actually be done; what happens outside those hours. An answering service picking up isn't emergency dispatch, and a request form isn't a booking. Test once during coverage, once outside it, and once when no slot is free.

D. The parts of the page (chapter 8)

18. Read only the headings on your homepage and your main service page. Do they answer: do you do this job, do you work in my area, are you legitimate, what drives the cost, what happens when I call?
19. On a phone, scroll down through the page. Are a "Call" button and your main button still in reach?
20. Run your button colors and phone number through a free contrast checker. Text should reach at least 4.5 to 1 (3 to 1 for large text), and the parts of buttons and form fields people need to see to use them 3 to 1 (WCAG 2.2; your designer can check the exceptions).
21. On a computer, is the menu visible, not hidden behind an icon? Are the labels the words homeowners use?
22. Put the mouse away. Using only the Tab and Enter keys, can you reach the menu, the phone link, the form and any chat or booking widget, see where you are at each step, and close any pop-up? Does every form field keep a visible label once you start typing? Send the form with one field left wrong: does it say what to fix, and keep what you already typed? Make the text bigger in your phone's settings: does the page still work? Ask your web person whether the spam check and error messages work with a screen reader. These are practical checks, not a compliance certificate (WCAG 2.2).
23. Count your form fields. Cross out any you could find yourself, ask later or do without. Keep a field only when the answer changes what the office does next (chapter 8).
24. On the service page's cost line: a range with the conditions that change it, or the cost drivers and how you set a quote. Never a range you made up.
25. Look next to the main button. Is there one line of proof: license, rating with review count, years in business?

26. Send your own form. Does the thank-you page say who will call, when, and the number for urgent jobs?
27. If you run search ads, don't click your own ads (each click costs money). Open each ad's landing page from the ad account or Google's ad preview tool. Does it go to the matching service page, with the same offer?

E. Before and after, by landing page (chapter 8)

Fill in one row per landing page for the month before a change and the month after it.

Landing page	Month	Visits from your service area	New inquiries (one person, one new job)	Inquiries that fit (G marks, chapter 10)	Booked jobs

For each inquiry, keep four things apart: the source (and how you know it), the page they entered on, the page they sent the form from, and what the customer says. A form sent from the Contact page doesn't mean the Contact page brought the visit. Where you can't tell, write "unknown".

Event	What it proves
A tap on the phone number	A tap, not a call
A form that failed its checks	Nothing yet; not an inquiry
A call and a form about one job	One inquiry
Your own test submissions	Nothing; leave them out
The city in your analytics	Where the visitor was, not where the job is

To trace a gap between tracked calls and the office log: match calls by number and time; a tracked call missing from the office log was missed or not logged; and check whether the tracking counts repeat callers and existing customers.

How to read it: visits from outside your area are a reason to investigate, not proof of a problem; an analytics city isn't the job's location (someone elsewhere can book work on a local property), so check the calls before changing the service-area message (chapter 10); a how-to page with many visits and few inquiries isn't a contact problem; ad visits landing on the wrong page are an ad problem (step 27).

How to read the result

- Fix in chapter 8's order: a broken path first (a call or form that reaches nobody), then a page so slow the call button never shows, then the first screen. If the five-second reader can't say what you do and where, that's the first-screen fix.
- The first screen should show a next step suited to the job: call for urgent work; an estimate or consultation request for planned work. Say when you'll respond.
- There's no right number of ways to reach you. Make the channels you offer reliable, and add another when it serves a customer need and someone can answer it. A channel nobody answers is a broken promise.
- Any after-hours call that reached nothing, or a full mailbox, is a leak you now know about. A listing that says 24 hours and a phone that doesn't answer is a broken promise.
- A form reply that took more than a day: compare with tool 05 before deciding it matters for your trade.
- Part D items are checks against published guidance (WCAG, Nielsen Norman Group, Google Ads help) and our judgment. None of them is a measured effect on calls for contractors.

Limits

- A crawl or a self-test shows what a page offers. It can't show how many homeowners left. Nobody can claim abandonment from this test.
- One evening call is one call. Run it twice before changing staffing.
- A friend reading for five seconds isn't a homeowner with a burst pipe. It finds confusion; it doesn't measure conversion.
- Booking widgets suit some trades better than others. Remodeling sites show booking far less often than plumbing sites (chapter 8, and Appendix B), and that may be the right choice for project work.

Next action

- Page problems: chapter 8.
- Phone problems: chapter 9 and tool 05 (inquiry-handling review).
- Hours mismatch: fix the Google Business Profile hours the same day (chapter 12).

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Tool 03: Reputation and business-facts check

This tool combines the name-search check, the trust-source match, review pace and the AI check.

Purpose

See what a homeowner, and an AI tool, find when they check you. Leak 2 (Not trusted) and part of leak 1. Chapters 5, 7 and 15.

Inputs

- A phone, logged out of your Google account (or a private browser tab).
- Your license number, exact business name and main phone number.
- Your Google Business Profile, BBB page and state license record open in tabs.
- 30 minutes.

Steps

A. Name search

1. Search your exact business name.
2. Write down every result on page one, in order: your site, Yelp, Facebook, BBB, MapQuest, Angi, others.
3. Note whether your own site is first.
4. Note any complaint, old address, old phone number or a business with a similar name.
5. Note whether Google shows an AI Overview, and what it says.

B. Trust-source match

6. Make a four-column table: your website, Google Business Profile, BBB, state license record.
7. For each, write: business name, phone, license number, service area, years in business.

	Website	Google Business Profile	BBB	State license record
Business name				
Phone				
License number				
Service area				
Years in business				

8. Circle anything that doesn't match. A tracking number or legal name listed on your brand sheet (chapter 4) isn't a mismatch; check that it rings you and that you control it.

C. Review pace

9. Count your new Google reviews in the last 30 days.
10. Note the date of your newest review.
11. Note how many reviews have an owner reply.

D. The AI check

12. Before you ask, write a setup line so the next check matches: date, tool and version or mode (app or website, search on or off if you can see it), new conversation, signed in or out, the city you asked about and where you were. Where you can, use a chat that doesn't draw on your history (signed out, or the tool's temporary or incognito mode). Your own account may already know your business. These modes reduce personalization; they don't guarantee identical answers. Save each full answer and its links.
13. Ask ChatGPT this, word for word: "Which [trade] companies in [city, state] should a homeowner call? Name the companies and the sources."
14. Ask a second tool the same question (Claude, Perplexity, Gemini or Google AI Mode). Ask each tool twice and date every answer (chapter 15).
15. For each answer, record the four fields below, then who else is named and which sources it links.
16. Then ask about you by name, using the study's own branded prompt: "A friend recommended [Business] in [City, ST]. What can you tell me about them? Are they legit and good to hire?" Note any doubt, wrong fact or "I couldn't find".
17. Before you ask any source for a correction, write a correction record: the answer's claim, the linked page, what that page says, and the verified fact. The linked page may not contain the error.

The four fields (they can overlap). The study's "named" counted a name or a link to the business's site, so don't compare its counts directly with these fields.

- **Mentioned:** the answer names your business, or a name you can document as yours (a former name, say). If you can't tell whether it means you, write "unclear".
- **Own site cited:** a source link that opens your official page. Your domain written as text isn't a citation; check where any redirect lands.
- **Recommended:** the answer suggests contacting or hiring you. Being a "top pick" is stronger presentation; note it separately.
- **Facts right:** check each claim on its own: correct, incorrect, partly wrong, unverified, or none made. Keep these claim marks apart from your judgment of the whole answer.

Edge cases

- A former name, or your site linked without your name: record exactly what appeared.
- A franchise: note whether it linked the corporate site or your local page.
- A business with the same or a similar name: record it, and don't count it as you.
- Ratings, review counts and review summaries are facts to check.
- "I couldn't find" isn't proof of an identity error; check your setup first.
- Leaving you out isn't a wrong fact.

An example (fictional). Juniper Wrench Plumbing, formerly Alder Plumbing, doesn't offer overnight dispatch. An answer says: "Also try Juniper Wrench Plumbing, formerly Alder Plumbing. It offers 24-hour emergency dispatch," and cites its page. Mentioned: yes. Own site cited: yes, if the link opens the official page. Recommended: yes, as an alternative. Facts right: partly wrong. The citation doesn't show where the wrong claim came from.

How to read the result

- Every circled mismatch in step 8 is a fix. Homeowners and AI tools check the same sources, and a conflict gives both a reason to doubt.
- If your site isn't first for your own name, chapter 7 explains what page one is made of and what you can change.
- Review pace: compare yourself with your own trade, not with a generic number. The study medians in Appendix B are context, **not targets**. They describe businesses in the sample. Nobody has shown that hitting them produces a result.
- AI check: being named once means little; being missing once means little. Look for a pattern across two tools and two runs, and for which sources the tools link. Those are the sources to make accurate.
- An answer that can't find or verify you by name: check your setup line, the wording and the location before you call it an identity problem.
- An accurate complaint repeated in answers: fix the service issue, not the answer.
- An unsupported judgment ("not the most responsive"): keep a note of the wording; don't invent a correction.
- A request that was refused, went unanswered or can't be traced isn't "fixed": record it as unresolved. A Google recrawl doesn't mean other AI tools have refreshed.

Limits

- One AI answer is a snapshot. In our November check (chapter 15), the AI tools named very different sets of businesses for the same question on the same day.
- Logged-out results still vary by location and device.
- Review pace correlates with being named by AI in our data. That does not show reviews cause it. Businesses with more reviews also tend to be bigger.
- This tool can't see reviews on platforms you don't check.
- No one can promise you a place in an AI answer. This check tells you what to make accurate, not what you'll get.

Next action

- Mismatches: fix the facts at the source, starting with the state license record and Google Business Profile (chapter 5).
- Page one owned by directories: chapter 7.
- Old name, old address or old phone still showing, or an AI answer that mixes you up with another company: chapter 7, "If you've renamed or moved".
- Review pace below your trade isn't an automatic trigger. First compare completed jobs, requests sent and your own history (chapter 5). If requests aren't going out, ask within

Google's rules and the FTC rule, with no incentives and no asking only the happy customers (chapter 5).

- Repeat the AI check twice a year (tool 09).
- Profile suspended: follow Google's "Fix suspended or disabled profiles" page. Sign in to the Google account linked to the profile, open Google's appeals tool, select the decision and submit one appeal: Google says appeals can be submitted only once. Attach what proves the business is real, such as a business registration, license, tax certificate or utility bill, with the name and address matching the profile. Don't create a new profile for the same business; Google says not to (chapter 12).

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Tool 04: Marketing-asset ownership inventory

Purpose

Know what you would still have if you stopped paying every vendor tomorrow. Leak 7 (Not owned). Chapter 2, used again in chapter 17 and in "How to hire help without getting burned" near the back of the book.

Inputs

- Every invoice from marketing vendors in the last 12 months.
- Your email inbox (search "domain", "renewal", "invitation", "access").
- The office person, if they handle logins.
- One to two hours, spread over a week if vendors need to answer.

Steps

1. Copy the table below.
2. For each row, log in yourself. Don't take anyone's word for it, including your own.
3. Where you can't log in, ask the vendor in writing: "Show me who's listed as owner." Save the reply.
4. Fill every column. "Don't know" is an answer; write it.
5. Mark each row green (you own it and hold a login), yellow (you own it, but access is inadequate: someone else holds the only login), red (another party owns it) or gray (ownership unknown; find out before anything else). Keep "don't know" apart from "lost".
6. For each red row, write in the last column whether it's a rental you chose on purpose or a dependency you won't accept. For a rental, note what's rented, any exclusivity, the cost, the notice period and what you keep when you leave.
7. Clear gray rows first. Then add your own login and recovery details to each yellow row. Then work on the red rows you marked as dependencies you won't accept, one at a time. A rental you chose stays as it is.
8. Several locations: add a location column, one row per asset per location.

Asset	Where it lives	Who is listed as owner	Who has admin	Who holds the login	Renewal date	What leaves if the vendor leaves	If red: rental by choice, or dependency you won't accept?
Domain name	Registrar (name it)						
Hosting	Host (name it)						
Website files and content	Host or platform				n/a		
Site platform	Vendor platform / rented builder / portable (for example, WordPress on your own hosting)						
Business email	Email provider						
Google Business Profile	Google (Primary owner vs owner vs manager)				n/a		
Bing Places, Apple Business					n/a		
Google Analytics					n/a		
Google Search Console					n/a		
Google Ads account					n/a		
Local Services Ads account					n/a		
Main business phone number	Carrier (name it)						

Asset	Where it lives	Who is listed as owner	Who has admin	Who holds the login	Renewal date	What leaves if the vendor leaves	If red: rental by choice, or dependency you won't accept?
Call-tracking numbers	Tracking vendor (name it)						
Review profiles (Yelp, BBB, Angi, others)							
Social pages					n/a		
Customer list	CRM or spreadsheet						
Photos and video of your work					n/a		

How to read the result

- **Google Business Profile:** being a "manager" is not ownership. You want to be the primary owner, with vendors added as managers you can remove.
- **Call-tracking numbers:** if the vendor owns the numbers printed on your trucks, listings and site, those calls stop or reroute when you leave. Before you sign, get in writing whether each number can be transferred to you or forwarded when you leave. A number in the vendor's own call-tracking account is a contract matter, not something phone-company porting rules settle (chapter 2).
- **Site platform:** a vendor platform or a rented builder can be fine to run on. The question is what you can take with you: the content, the design, the domain, the page addresses. A portable site on hosting you own leaves with you.
- Gray means ownership is unknown; yellow means it's yours but you can't get in on your own; red means another party owns it. A red row you rent on purpose isn't a fault to fix: keep its exit terms on file. A red row that's a dependency you won't accept is the one to work on. A yellow row is one bad breakup away from a lockout.
- A content export isn't a working move. Before you switch, test the pages, forms, phone numbers and email on the new setup.
- A disputed Google Ads or Local Services Ads account: check Google's current help pages for the official route, and keep owner, admin, billing and manager access apart.

Limits

- This tool shows who controls an asset today. It doesn't show what your contract says. Read the contract's ownership and termination sections next to this table.
- Platform labels in our research come from code fingerprints on homepages. They can over- or under-count, and they show the technology, not who owns or controls the account.
- Some assets can't be moved on any platform (a vendor's own proprietary page builder). That's a reason to ask before signing, not proof of bad faith.

When a vendor won't hand it over

Work in this order (chapter 2):

1. **Collect the evidence.** The domain lookup at lookup.icann.org, your role on the Google Business Profile (primary owner, owner or manager), and the account IDs for analytics, Search Console, ads and call tracking.
2. **Request the Google profile yourself,** through Google's request-access route (chapter 2). It doesn't need the domain.
3. **Send the written request** below for the domain, numbers and accounts. Keep a copy.
4. **Set a reply-by date.** My rule: give a reply-by date two weeks out. If they miss it, send the request once more with a new date. If they miss that too, start the new-domain path (chapter 2) while you keep asking.
5. **Before you cancel anything,** test the site, the forms, the business email and the phone, from a phone, the way a homeowner would.

If the profile can't be recovered, use Google's ownership and duplicate-profile support route, not a second profile.

Two domain rules from ICANN's transfer policy (chapter 2):

- If you've paid for the domain, a registrar can't deny the transfer over a payment dispute between itself and a reseller or business partner, which covers an agency that bought it for you through a registrar it resells for.
- A change of registrant brings a 60-day lock on moving to another registrar, unless the registrar offers an opt-out before the change. ICANN has adopted rule changes not yet in force, so check the current policy.

Written request (template)

> Subject: Transfer of [business name] marketing accounts
>
> [Vendor name],

> We're moving our marketing accounts into our own name. By [date], please confirm in writing: 1. Domain [domain]: who is the registrant on record, and the transfer (AuthInfo) code or a change of registrant to [your legal business name]. 2. Google Business Profile: [your email] added as primary owner. 3. Phone and tracking numbers [list them]: which are on our account and which on yours, and whether each can be ported or forwarded to us. 4. Analytics, Search Console and ad accounts: [your email] added as owner or administrator. 5. A copy of our website files and content, call recordings and reports.
>
> Please reply to this email so we have your answer in writing.
>
> [Your name, role, business name, date]

This is a request, not a legal notice. If a lot is at stake, have someone qualified review it.

Next action

- Red rows: chapter 2's exit checklist.
- A vendor won't hand something over: chapter 2, "When the vendor won't hand it over" (domain, Google profile, phone numbers).
- Before signing any new vendor: tool 07, the ownership questions.
- Re-run this inventory twice a year, or whenever something changes (tool 09).

From *The Next Name on the List* by Youssef Hodaigui. Free to use in your own business; please don't resell.

Tool 05: Inquiry-handling review

This tool combines the 7-day missed-call log, the call-quality tally, speed to callback and form follow-up.

Purpose

Find out what happens to the calls and forms you already get. Leak 4 (Called, but lost) and leak 5 (Wrong calls). Chapters 9 and 10. It also helps with "can't tell" (chapter 3).

Inputs

- Your phone system's call log (carrier app, office phone, or call-tracking report).
- Your form and email inbox.
- A sheet on the office desk, or a shared spreadsheet.
- Seven ordinary working days. Not a holiday week.

Steps

A. Missed-call log (7 days)

1. Each day, list every missed call: time, number, whether a voicemail was left, when you called back, what it turned out to be.
2. Mark each: real new job (a returning customer's new job counts), call about a job already counted, wrong job, spam or robocall, unknown.
3. Mark whether it came in business hours or after hours.

B. Call-quality tally (same 7 days, answered calls)

4. For every answered call, one tick in one column: job you want, price shopper, out of area, wrong trade, fake or recycled lead, existing customer about a current job (a returning customer's new job is a good inquiry: tick "job you want"). Mark a price shopper only after your screening questions; a first question about price alone goes in a separate "price asked" note.
5. Note the source if you know it ("How did you hear about us?").

C. Speed to callback

6. For each missed call that was a real job, write the minutes between the call and your callback.

D. Form follow-up

7. For every form or online request, write when it arrived and when someone first replied.
8. Note whether anyone tried a second time if the homeowner didn't answer.

Missed-call record

Date and time	Number	Voicemail?	Business hours or after	Called back when	Reached?	Real new job, job already counted, wrong job, spam or unknown

Count a missed opportunity once per person and job; a miss you called back and reached is recovered.

Call-quality tally (one tick per answered call)

Day	Job you want	Price shopper	Price asked	Out of area	Wrong trade	Fake or recycled lead	Existing customer	Source, if known

Day	Job you want	Price shopper	Price asked	Out of area	Wrong trade	Fake or recycled lead	Existing customer	Source, if known

How to read the result

- The owners' debate is "answer every call" against "most misses are junk". Your own log settles it for your business. Count the missed calls that were real jobs.
- Multiply the unique, real new-job inquiries you missed and didn't recover by your booking rate, your close rate and what you keep per job after direct job costs (the owner's math in chapter 9) to put a dollar range on it. Use your numbers, not ours.
- If after-hours misses are a large share of real jobs, compare options in chapter 9: an office person, an answering service, an AI receptionist, a callback window, text-back.
- If the tally is heavy on price shoppers or out-of-area calls, the fix is upstream: tool 06 and chapter 10. Whether to keep a paid source is chapter 17's cost-per-booked-job decision, not the share of bad calls alone.
- If forms wait more than a day for a first reply, that's a gap you can close without spending anything.

Limits

- Seven days is a sample. Repeat the log once before your busy season and once before your slow season.
- Unknown numbers that never call back can't be classified. Keep them as "unknown"; don't guess.
- The published answer rates in chapter 9 come from vendors' own customers or campaigns. They show the size of the problem in general. They are not a standard your business should hit.

Next action

- Real missed jobs: chapter 9.
- Wrong-call heavy tally: tool 06 and chapter 10.
- Unknown lead sources: tool 08 and chapter 3.

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Tool 06: Offer and customer-fit worksheet

Purpose

Say plainly which jobs you want, where, and what drives the price, so the wrong calls filter themselves out before they ring. Leak 5 (Wrong calls), and the base for leaks 2 and 3. Chapters 4 and 10.

Inputs

- Your last 20 completed jobs (type, town, invoice amount, margin if you know it).
- Your last 20 jobs you turned down or lost.
- A map of where your crews actually drive.
- 45 minutes.

Steps

1. **Jobs you want.** From the last 20 completed jobs, circle the ones you'd take 10 more of tomorrow. Write the job types.
2. **Jobs you don't want.** From turned-down and lost jobs, list the types you'd rather never quote.
3. **Real service area.** List the towns your crews reach without losing money on drive time. Not the whole metro unless that's true.
4. **Cost drivers.** For each job type you want, list what makes the price go up or down (size, access, materials, permits, urgency).
5. **Price-range language.** For each job type, decide whether you can publish a typical range or a "starting at" figure, and write the sentence. If you can't, write the cost drivers instead.
6. **One-sentence offer.** "We [job types] for [who] in [towns]. Most jobs [range or what drives the price]. [What happens after you call]."
7. **Filters.** Write the two or three lines your website and listings should carry so the wrong caller stops: jobs you don't do, towns you don't serve, minimum job size if you have one.
8. **The first-call script.** Write how the person answering handles "How much?" before they understand the job.

How to read the result

- If steps 1 and 2 surprise you, trace where those jobs came from before blaming the website.
- If you can't write step 6 in one sentence, homeowners can't repeat it either.
- Posting ranges and cost drivers on the site, and not firing off a number on the phone before you understand the job, are two halves of the same idea. Chapter 10 explains why they don't conflict.

Limits

- Publishing prices can draw complaints from competitors or customers who see the low end. Write ranges with their conditions.
- The studies behind this worksheet (chapters 8 and 10) are vendor or trade surveys with specific conditions. They suggest a direction, not a rule for your trade.
- This worksheet doesn't set your prices. It makes the ones you already have understandable.

Next action

- Put steps 6 and 7 on your homepage and service pages (chapter 8).
- Train the first-call script (chapter 9).
- Run tool 05's call-quality tally again in a month to see if the mix changed.

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Tool 07: Questions for any marketing provider

Used in "How to hire help without getting burned" near the back of the book, and with chapters 2, 3, 13 and 17.

Purpose

Hire help, or keep the help you have, without losing control of your assets or paying for reports you can't check. For "can't tell" and being burned, and leak 7 (Not owned).

Inputs

- Your completed tool 04 (ownership inventory).
- Your tool 08 numbers, even rough ones.
- The proposal or contract.
- Ask in writing. Keep the answers.

Steps

Ask every question. Write the answer. Ask for the document that shows it.

Ownership

1. Who will be listed as owner of my domain, website, Google Business Profile, ad accounts and analytics?
2. Who owns the phone numbers you put on my site and listings? Can I take them with me?
3. If I leave, what do I keep: content, design, photos, page addresses, data? In what format, and how fast?

Terms and exclusivity

4. How long is the contract, and how do I end it? What does ending it cost?
5. Do you work for my direct competitors in my area? Will you tell me if you start?
6. What's included in the price, and what costs extra?

Who does the work

7. Who will actually work on my account? Who do I call?
8. What do you do in a normal month? Show me last month for a client like me, with names removed.

Reporting I can check

9. Which of my five numbers (calls and forms, booked jobs, close rate, average job value, cost per booked job) will your report show?
10. Where does each number in your report come from? Can I see the raw source myself?

What they won't promise

11. What results do you not promise?
12. If you mention AI or Google rankings, how do you describe what you can and can't influence?

Exit

13. Walk me through the last client who left. What did they keep?

How to read the result

Red flags:

- They won't put ownership in writing.
- The phone numbers, domain or profile will be in their name.
- The report is built on impressions, "visibility" or an AI mention score you can't check.
- They promise a ranking, a map position or a place in AI answers. No one can honestly promise those.
- You can't name the person who works on your account.

What owners have said after it went wrong (verified quotes, credited by platform and year):

- "It should not become the client's full-time job to manage their marketing agency." (Trustpilot, 2026)
- "if you ever want to leave, you risk losing your website and campaign data because they control the assets." (Trustpilot, 2025)
- "wedged itself between you and your customer" (ContractorTalk, 2024)

Limits

- Good answers on paper don't prove good work. Combine this with the vendor's sample report and a reference you find yourself.
- Not every "no" is bad faith. A vendor platform can be a fair trade if the terms are clear and you know what stays behind.
- What AI answers say about choosing an agency ("How to hire help") comes from what AI tools answered when asked how to choose an agency, not from how buyers actually choose one, or how homeowners choose a contractor. Keep these apart.

Next action

- Any ownership red flag: fix it before signing, or walk (chapter 2).
- Reporting gaps: set up tool 08 yourself so you don't depend on their report (chapter 3).

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Tool 08: The monthly numbers

One page, filled in once a month, with a row for each source and the rent-or-own questions from chapter 17.

Purpose

Know whether marketing is working, in numbers you can check yourself. For "can't tell" (chapter 3). The owner's math in every chapter uses these numbers.

Inputs

- Call log or call-tracking report for the month.
- Form and booking inbox.
- Estimates sent and jobs won (your job software, invoices or a notebook).
- Marketing invoices for the month.
- 30 minutes, first week of each month.

Steps

1. **Calls and forms.** Count new inquiries: one person asking about a new job counts once, however many times they call, text, fill in a form or book. Count a returning customer's new job too, marked R. Write missed calls nobody returned on a separate line. Exclude spam, wrong numbers, sales calls and calls about a job already booked.
2. **Booked jobs.** Count estimates or service visits booked from those inquiries. A booking that's cancelled stays in the count; mark it cancelled.
3. **Close rate.** Jobs won (signed or approved) ÷ booked jobs from step 2, cancellations included. Write it as "won N of D, O still open" and update it as open ones are decided.
4. **Average job value.** Invoiced revenue ÷ the jobs it was invoiced for. A signed job isn't revenue until you invoice it; if customers pay late, keep cash received on its own line.
5. **Cost per booked job.** Marketing spend for the month ÷ booked jobs. Do it per source if you can. To see what a new customer costs, use won jobs not marked R.
6. Ask every new customer two questions and tally the answers: "How did you hear about us?" and "Did you look us up first?"
7. Write one line: what changed this month, and why you think so.
8. Keep these at the top of the page and revisit them each quarter: your goal (chapter 1), what the shop can handle, the cost ceiling you agreed (chapter 17), the amount per job you keep for overhead and profit, each source's review date, stop conditions and contract notice.
9. Cost per booked job with no booked jobs is undefined, not zero; write "none booked". While estimates are open, mark the close rate provisional. An estimated contribution at or below zero can't support a positive marketing fee.
10. For each inquiry, keep the source and how you know it apart from the page it came from (tool 02, part E). Several locations: add a location column; one record per job, even when a central office passes it on.

Month	Calls and forms	Booked jobs	Close rate (won N of D)	Average job value	Spend	Cost per booked job	Top source

Per source (one row per paid or tracked source, every month)

Lead month (when the inquiries came in)	Source	Spend that month	Calls and forms	Booked jobs	Closed jobs (so far)	Revenue	Cost per booked job

Credit each closed job to the month its inquiry came in, not the month it closed, so a long sales cycle charges the right month's spend. Update earlier rows as jobs close.

The rent-or-own questions (chapter 17, every paid source, every quarter)

Question	Your answer
Source and what we pay for (lead, call, click, job)	

Question	Your answer
Why we're using it (slow season, new area, new business, job type)	
Start date and stop date	
Monthly spend	
Leads or calls	
Booked jobs	
Closed jobs and revenue	
Cost per booked job (spend ÷ booked jobs)	
What you keep per closed job, before marketing (K)	
Estimated contribution after this source's cost, before overhead (closed jobs × K − monthly spend)	
Account in our name? Phone number ours?	
Contract term, auto-renewal, cancellation notice, termination fee	
Customers added to our own list this month	
What replaces it when we stop	
Decision: keep, cut, or keep until [date]	

If you run plans or recurring routes (pest control, HVAC maintenance, other service agreements), add this, every month

Month	Plan customers at start	New plans sold	Plans renewed	Plans cancelled or lapsed	Plan customers at end	Repeat or referral calls (chapter 16)	Revenue from plan customers

Write renewals as "renewed N of D due this month". A new customer from a rented source who signs a plan is worth more than the first job (chapter 17), so note which source each new plan came from.

What you keep per job (K, in the owner's math). Take three recent invoices for typical jobs. From each, subtract the direct costs of that job: materials, the labor of whoever did the work (your own hours on the job included) and any other cost of doing that job, such as a permit or rented equipment. Don't subtract marketing here; it comes off once, separately. Average the three. That's gross profit: overhead, your management pay and what you take out of the business still come out of it. Three invoices are a first approximation, not a figure for every job.

How to read the result

- Compare each month with your own last month and the same month last year. Searches for most trades rise and fall with the seasons (chapter 18), so a drop in November may be normal for you.
- Cost per lead can look cheap while cost per booked job is high. Cost per booked job shows what it costs to reach an appointment. Check it alongside the jobs won and what's left after the source's cost.
- We found no industry close-rate benchmark with a stated method. Every "average contractor close rate" we found came from a vendor blog with no stated method (chapter 3). Don't measure yourself against one.
- If a vendor's report shows numbers you can't trace to steps 1 to 5, ask where they come from (tool 07).

Don't buy reports built on:

- impressions or "reach";
- "visibility scores";
- AI mention counts or scores you can't check;
- leads with no booked-job count behind them.

Limits

- Small numbers swing. Three booked jobs vs five in a month is too small a change to read on its own; look at three months together.
- "How did you hear about us?" answers are memory, not tracking. They're still worth more than nothing.
- This scorecard shows whether things change. It can't prove which single action caused the change.

Next action

- Can't fill a box: that's the first fix (chapter 3).
- Cost per booked job rising on one source: chapter 17, the rent-or-own decision.

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Tool 09: The system calendar

Purpose

Keep each fix from sliding back. For "no system" and leak 8 (Feast or famine). Chapters 16, 18 and 19.

Inputs

- Your current fix and any tools you've completed; add tasks as you finish more.
- A calendar (paper or phone) and one named person for each task. Several locations: one calendar per location, or a location column.
- Your trade's busy and slow months for your city (chapter 18 and Appendix B).

Steps

Part A: The system calendar (chapter 19)

Every week (30 minutes)

1. Review the missed-call log and check that every missed call about a potential job was returned within your stated callback time (chapter 9).
2. Check that every job finished this week got the review request at the agreed milestone, sent by the person responsible, the same way every time. Catch up on any that were missed. No incentives, and no asking only the happy customers. Count requests sent and reviews received, by platform.
3. Reply to new reviews, good and bad.
4. Add 3 to 5 job photos with job type and town.
5. Follow up every open quote older than a few days.

Every month (one hour)

6. Fill in tool 08, the monthly numbers.
7. Check your Google Business Profile: hours, services, photos, any edits Google or others made. This is an audit; one named person handles Google's edit notifications as they arrive, within Google's 4 days (chapter 12).
8. Run the after-hours self-call once (tool 02, part C), and test every contact route on the route log (tool 02, part B). Monthly is our practical judgment, not a tested interval. Retest any route after a change to the site, phones or staff.
9. Check your newest review date and 30-day count against your own last month.
10. Booked jobs and cost per booked job by source (chapters 3 and 17).
11. Check the past-customer calendar is on track: thank-yous, check-ins, reminders (part B).
12. Map position: your three main searches from the same spots as last month, searched in person (chapter 12). If you use a grid tool instead, ask three things of it: does it search from the points it shows, on the same day each month? Does it use your searches as homeowners type them? Does it show the three names above you at each point, not only a score?

Every quarter

13. Re-check the trust-source match: site, Google profile, BBB, state license (tool 03, part B).
14. Review lead sources: keep, cut or set a stop date on anything rented (chapter 17).
15. Export the customer list to a file you own (chapters 2 and 16).
16. Re-run the Leak Check (tool 01). Note which leak is now first.

Twice a year

17. Search your business name logged out. Note page one (tool 03, part A; chapter 7).
18. The AI check with two AI tools, same prompt, same city (tool 03, part D). Record who is named and which sources are linked.
19. Re-run the ownership inventory for anything that changed (tool 04).
20. Re-check the directories and lists in your service-and-town searches, and your place on each (chapter 14).

Before each season (from your trade's pattern)

21. Before the busy season: plan how calls get caught when you can't answer, raise the bar on which jobs you take, line up capacity (part C).
22. Before the slow season: past-customer reminders, maintenance-plan renewals, any rented channel switched on with a stop date (part C).

Part B: The past-customer calendar (chapter 16)

Put it on one page. The office runs it. The owner checks it once a month.

When	What	Who
Day of the job	Leave two cards.	Tech or crew lead
At the agreed milestone	At the agreed milestone, the person responsible sends the request, the same way every time. No pressure, and no telling them what to say (chapter 5).	Person responsible (tech, crew or project lead)
Within 1 day	Thank-you text or email, with warranty details	Office
2 to 4 weeks	"How's everything working?" check-in	Office
Each season	One useful seasonal reminder to the whole list	Office
Before the slow season	Plan renewals, tune-up reminders, inspection offers (chapter 18)	Office
Before warranty ends	Reminder and offer of an inspection	Office
Every quarter	Export the customer list to a file you own (chapter 2)	Owner
Every month	Count repeat and referral calls in the call log (chapter 3)	Owner

Part C: The slow-season calendar (chapter 18)

Fill this in once a year from your own call log, then check it against your trade's pattern in chapter 18.

When	What	Who
6 weeks before busy season	Test answering and after-hours coverage; fix Google hours	Owner and office
4 weeks before busy season	Line up subs and referral partners; set the job filter	Owner
Busy season	Pause rented leads when full (owner); protect plan customers (office)	Owner and office
End of busy season	Set money aside; note what you missed	Owner
6 weeks before slow season	Plan renewals, reminders, inspection offers to past customers	Office
4 weeks before slow season	Offer dates for planned work; decide on rented sources and stop dates	Owner
Slow season	Pages, listings, photos, training	Owner and office

How to read the result

- When an item is missed, deal with the customer first. Then find the cause: time, access, authority, information or capacity. Fix the process, reassign the task, or defer it to a written date. A solo shop defers with a written date too (chapter 19).
- The intervals are a **rule of thumb, untested**. They follow how fast each thing changes: calls every day, reviews every week, listings every month, name searches and AI answers more slowly.

Limits

- The calendar keeps work steady. It doesn't create demand in a month when nobody searches for your trade.
- Twice-yearly AI checks are snapshots; compare patterns, not single answers.
- Seasonal patterns come from search volumes, not from booked jobs.

Next action

- Put items 1 to 22, and the rows in parts B and C, into the calendar with a name next to each. Then return to your current leak's chapter.

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Tool 10: The page plan

Purpose

Plan the pages on your website before anyone writes them, so the site only carries pages you can fill with true detail. Leak 1 (Not found). Chapters 8 and 13.

Inputs

- Your brand sheet (chapter 4): the jobs you want, your real towns.
- The questions your office hears most on the phone.
- Your job entries and photos (chapter 6).

Steps

Put your plan on one page before anyone writes a word. It keeps the site to pages you can fill with true detail.

Page	Main search it answers	What makes it yours	Proof on the page	Next action and review date
Service 1 (from brand sheet)	"[service] [town]"	Your process, your photos	License, job entries, reviews	
Service 2				
Service 3				
Question 1 (heard on calls)	"how much / how long / should I"	Your real answer and cost drivers	Your range or drivers	
Question 2				
Town 1 (only if real)	"[trade] [town]"	Jobs done there, travel, local homes	Local reviews, local photos	

Fill the service rows first, then questions, then towns.

When the data is thin or the pages overlap

- **No row in Search Console.** The Performance table leaves out searches made very few times, though they still count in the chart totals unless you filter by search. A missing row isn't proof the page never showed. Check related phrases, compare a longer period (three months, or the same season last year), and log a few live searches with the date. Don't rewrite a page because of a missing row.
- **No Search Console access yet.** Get it first (chapter 2). Until then, run the live search on a phone in a private window and write down which of your pages shows.
- **Your name versus everything else.** In the Performance report, split searches into those containing your name (with its misspellings, old names and short forms; write the

list down) and all the others. Growth only on name searches shows people who already know you looking you up, not new people finding you. Searches left out of the table can't be split, so the split covers only the searches listed.

- **Two pages answer the same need.** If they serve different needs (repair versus replacement, say), make each say so and link between them. If they really overlap, keep the one that already performs better or fits better, move the useful detail into it, and ask your web person which address stays, whether the other redirects to it, and to check that links and contact buttons still work. If a page you already have ranks and suits the need, don't build a new one.
- **Inquiries you can't trace to a page.** A shared phone number or one form for the whole site may not say which page someone came from. Ask your web person whether the form can record the page it was sent from. Where it can't, write "page unknown" and judge the service by its booked jobs from all sources (tool 08).

How to read the result

- A row you can't fill with true, specific detail is a page you shouldn't build yet.
- Google's spam policies name pages targeted at specific cities that funnel users to one page as doorway abuse (chapter 13). Town pages are for towns you really serve.

Limits

- The plan doesn't make a page rank. We didn't measure whether any page type changes rankings or AI answers (chapters 13 and 15).

Next action

- Build the service rows first (chapter 13), then the question rows, then real towns.

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Tool 11: The work order

One line for every change you hand to someone (profile, listings, reviews, quotes, pages, phones, sources), so you can tell later what was done, by whom, and whether it held. Used across the book, most in chapters 12, 14 and 15.

Purpose

Change one uncertain thing at a time and judge it at the right moment, instead of changing several things and guessing which one worked. Several known defects can be fixed together.

Inputs

- The finding from chapter 12's table, chapter 14's listing check or chapter 15's checklist.
- The monthly review date (tool 09).

Steps

1. Write the finding in the words you saw it, with the search or answer where you saw it.
2. Write the one change you'll make, and who makes it.
3. Write the date you plan to finish. When it's done, write the date and the evidence (a saved recording, a screenshot, a link).
4. Set the recheck for the next monthly review (from when Google revisited the page, for a website change, chapter 13).
5. At the recheck, record what the agreed measure shows, using the relevant log, test or comparable search.

Work order line (one per task; copy this page for more)

Finding	
Goal	
Change	
Who	
Inputs and access needed	
Can decide alone / needs approval	
Done when	
Planned date	

Done (date, evidence)	
Checked by	
Blocked? Next step	
Recheck date and measure	
What the recheck showed	

Finding	
Goal	
Change	
Who	
Inputs and access needed	
Can decide alone / needs approval	
Done when	
Planned date	
Done (date, evidence)	
Checked by	
Blocked? Next step	
Recheck date and measure	
What the recheck showed	

The tracking register at the end of this file lists every line on one landscape sheet.

Keep "work done", "work checked" and "results seen" apart. Several locations: add a location column. Chapter 1 ends with one filled line, start to finish.

How to read the result

- A recheck that shows no change isn't proof the change failed; we didn't measure how fast results change after a fix. Don't stack a second uncertain change before the recheck. Confirmed defects (a wrong number, a broken form) can be fixed together right away.
- A change nobody can date didn't happen, as far as your records go.

Limits

- The work order shows what you did and what followed. It can't prove the change caused what followed.

Next action

- Bring open lines to the monthly hour (chapter 19).

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Tool 11: The work order: tracking register

One row per work order line.

Finding	Goal	Change	Who	Inputs and access needed	Can decide alone / needs approval	Done when	Planned date	Done (date, evidence)	Checked by	Blocked? Next step	Recheck date and measure	What the recheck showed

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