

WHY ISN'T MY PHONE RINGING?



J O N S M I T H

THE LOCAL SERVICE OWNER'S PLAYBOOK FOR GETTING FOUND,
GETTING **CALLED**, AND GETTING **BOOKED**



REVOPSFLOW

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The Truck Was Full, The Phone Was *Dead*

The plumber shut the truck door harder than he needed to.

Inside: tools, fittings, clean drop cloths. Everything required to solve somebody's problem. Outside: another morning with nowhere urgent to go.

Three slow weeks. He had checked his phone so often the battery was tired before he was.

Then a supplier mentioned another plumber nearby was booked out. This was the guy whose work he had been called to fix. Apparently the customers hadn't received that memo.

That evening, he searched for plumbing help the way a homeowner would. His competitor appeared. His own business took work to find. The competitor's listing showed recent jobs and customer reviews. The plumber's website opened with a long paragraph about his commitment to excellence.

His phone number was hiding below it.

This is an illustrative composite, like the owner stories throughout this book. But the frustration will feel familiar if you have ever watched an empty calendar and wondered why being good wasn't enough.

You can do excellent work and still make yourself hard to hire.

That stings because you already did the expensive part. You learned the trade. Bought the equipment. Took the calls nobody wanted. Went back when something wasn't right. You earned a reputation with people who know you.

A stranger searching on a phone doesn't know any of that yet.

They see a map listing, a photo, a review, a page. They decide whether you look relevant, available, and safe to call. Sometimes they never reach your website. Sometimes they reach it and leave because they cannot tell whether you serve their neighborhood.

You call that a slow month. The customer calls somebody else.

■ YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONE ASKING

59% of small business owners named finding customers their top challenge Alignable 2026 State of Small Business survey	53% of 11,426 owners named customer demand their primary challenge Small Business Expo 2026 State of Small Business Report	59% of home service pros say referrals and repeat work are their top lead sources Jobber 2026 Home Service Trends Report
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This book gives you a practical way to find those gaps and close them. The goal is more calls over the next month before you put another dollar into ads. That is a working target, not a promise that a search engine will move your listing on command. You control the repairs. Customers control whom they hire.

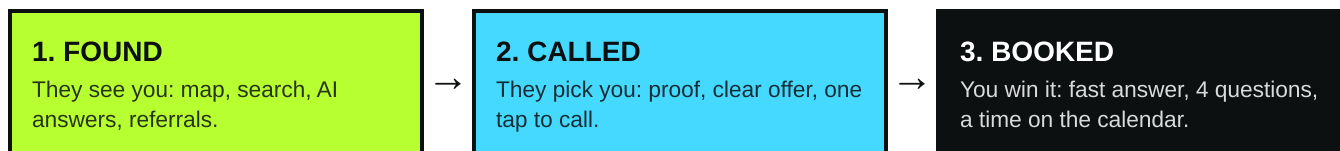
Start with the parts you can fix.

Found. Can somebody with the right problem find your business? Your Google Business Profile, service pages, city information, and business details need to agree about who you help and where you work.

Called. Once they find you, is calling the obvious next move? A clear service promise, visible reviews, and a working phone button should beat a page full of corporate throat-clearing.

Booked. When the phone rings, does somebody answer and guide the customer to a real appointment? A ringing phone is an opportunity. It is not a job on the calendar.

■ THE FRAMEWORK: FOUND, CALLED, BOOKED



Every slow week breaks at one of these three steps. Fix them in order.

Our team audits profiles, rebuilds sites, and listens to call recordings for home service businesses every week.

The same practical questions keep coming up. Can a customer understand the business without guessing? Does the page make the next step easy? Does the person answering know what to do?

Chapter 1 puts you inside your customer's search. You will search by service and city, by “near me,” and by the problem itself. You will save what actually appears, instead of arguing with your memory.

Chapter 2 fixes your place on the map: categories, service areas, real job photos, useful posts, and a review habit your crew can follow without awkward begging.

Chapter 3 builds the information beyond that listing. Separate service pages. Useful city pages. Consistent contact details. Plain answers to real questions. Then a sensible point at which to consider paid traffic.

Chapter 4 makes your website easier to call from. One clear offer. Proof where people can see it. A phone test that exposes confusion fast.

Chapter 5 handles the call itself. Answer quickly, ask the right questions, and offer an appointment while the customer is still talking to you.

You do not need to become a marketing expert. You need to become harder to overlook and easier to hire.

Commit to doing the work as you read. Keep your phone nearby. Open your listing. Give each repair a person responsible and a place on the calendar. If somebody else edits your website, send them specific instructions from the chapters.

The truck is ready. Let's give it somewhere to go.

01

■ CHAPTER 1

Your Customer's 90-Second *Decision*

A homeowner hears water running behind a wall. The faucet is off. The floor feels damp. She searches on her phone while looking for the shutoff.

A plumber across town would be a good fit. He handles that exact problem. His crew works in her neighborhood. But his listing describes general maintenance, and his website leads with a photo of a beautiful kitchen.

Another business makes the decision easier. Its listing says plumbing repair. Its hours are visible. A review mentions a similar leak. The phone button is right there.

She calls that business.

Later, the first plumber searches his own company name. There he is. Nice logo. Correct phone number. He decides his marketing looks fine.

They both used Google. They asked completely different questions. His search proved that people who already knew him could find him. Her search tested whether a stranger with a problem could find help.

THE LESSON

Search like the customer who needs you, then fix the gaps their search reveals.

Why owners get it wrong

You know your business name. Your next customer may know only that the drain smells awful.

Searching your name is a useful identity check. It does not tell you whether your business appears for the services that pay the bills. It also hides a harder question: when you appear beside other businesses, why should a stranger choose you?

The chapter title is our working lens, not a measured shopping deadline. Picture somebody making a fast decision on a small screen. Their attention belongs to the problem. You have to earn the part they

give you.

RULE

Your name search checks your identity. A problem search checks your visibility.

The fix

1 Google your service plus your city.

On your phone, search {main service} {main city}, replacing the placeholders with your actual work and location. Example: “drain cleaning Marietta.” Note the search location Google displays and whether you are signed in. Screenshot the results before scrolling, then the map listings and visible business websites. Our time budget: ten minutes.

2 Google your service plus “near me.”

Search from a place you actually serve. Example: “plumber near me.” Save the same views. Write down where you searched from. If a crew member repeats the search elsewhere, keep their location with their screenshots. Our time budget: ten minutes. Private browsing does not remove the influence of location.

3 Google the customer's problem.

Use words you hear on calls. Example: “water heater leaking from bottom.” Save the businesses, answers, and pages that appear. Open the strongest relevant local result and note what makes it useful. Our time budget: ten minutes. Compare the information offered, not just the position on the screen.

You are collecting a baseline, not a permanent ranking report. Results vary by location and can change. One screenshot cannot prove that your business appears everywhere, or nowhere. It can show what a customer in that situation had available.

- ☐ Exact words searched: {query}
- ☐ Place searched from: {location}
- ☐ Date checked: {date}
- ☐ Paid placements visible: {businesses}
- ☐ Map listings visible: {businesses}
- ☐ Website or answer results visible: {pages}
- ☐ My business visible here: {yes or no}
- ☐ Reason I would call the strongest result: {specific reason}

Screenshot who wins

“Who wins” means who earns the call in the screen you are studying. A paid placement may appear first. A map listing may catch the eye. A useful page may answer the question that makes the customer comfortable calling.

Write observations you can act on. “Their marketing is better” helps nobody. “Their listing has recent repair photos, while ours has only a logo” gives you a task. “Their page explains whether they handle this problem” gives you another.

When a search includes an AI-generated answer, note which useful details it supplies and any sources it shows. Do not treat appearing in an answer as something you can guarantee. Build clear information a customer can verify, whether they arrive through a map, a regular result, or an assistant.

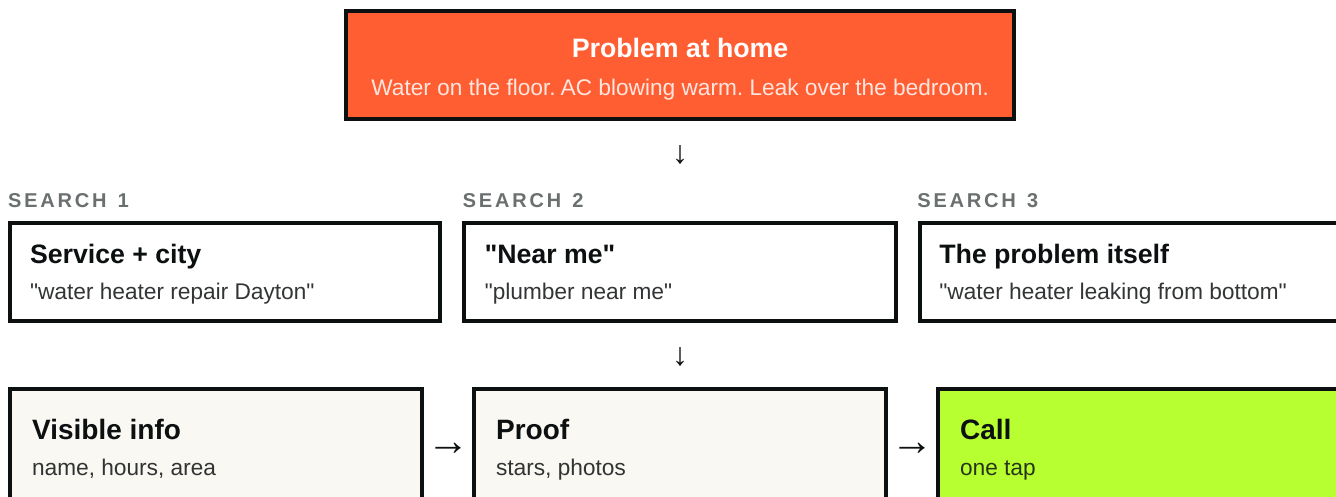
OWNER MISTAKE

Copying a competitor's claims copies their risks too. Borrow the clarity. Use your own services, proof, and promises.

Choose the repair closest to the buying decision. If your listing has the wrong hours, fix that before debating headline fonts. If your page does not mention the service, fix that before writing another company history.

BEFORE The owner searches the company name, finds the business, and assumes strangers can find it too.	AFTER The owner saves service, proximity, and problem searches, then assigns repairs to the missing information each search exposes.
SEARCH AUDIT	

■ HOW A HOMEOWNER GETS FROM PROBLEM TO PHONE CALL



Make your next move small enough to finish

Mark each gap Found, Called, or Booked. Missing from relevant searches belongs under Found. A buried number belongs under Called. An unanswered test call belongs under Booked. The rest of the book follows that order so you can work through the problems without bouncing between projects.

QUICK WIN

Save the screen before you fix the business. Your memory will make the old version look better than it was.

The plumber in the story stopped using his company name as the whole test. He searched the repair he wanted to sell and saw the disconnect. That gave him a specific brief for his listing and website: show the problem he solves, where he solves it, and how to reach him.

The customer did not need to learn his whole business. She needed to recognize her problem in his offer.

Your customer searches for relief before they search for your company.

- ☐ Search your main service plus your main city.
- ☐ Search your main service plus “near me” from your service area.
- ☐ Search a problem customers describe on calls.
- ☐ Screenshot the businesses and pages that win your attention.
- ☐ Record location, date, and paid placement labels.
- ☐ Assign the clearest gap to a person who can fix it.

Own the *Map*

An HVAC owner outside Phoenix looked at his Google listing after a customer asked whether the business was still open.

He was offended for about a breath. Then he looked at the photos.

An old truck. A blurry condenser. A logo from before the repaint. The hours did not match the office schedule. The category described a smaller part of the business than the work his crew actually did.

He had treated the profile like a directory entry. Fill it out, then forget it.

His customers treated it like a storefront. They wanted to know what he handled, where he went, and whether anybody had hired him lately.

The owner had plenty of proof sitting on crew phones and in thank-you emails. None of it was helping a stranger make the call. His business was active. His listing looked abandoned.

THE LESSON

Keep your map listing as accurate and current as the schedule you expect customers to trust.

Why owners get it wrong

A profile is easy to ignore because it does not send you an invoice for being neglected. The cost shows up somewhere else: confusion, hesitation, and calls that never happen.

Owners also try to fix visibility by adding every category they can find or listing places the crew would rather not drive. That creates the wrong expectations. Your profile should describe the business you can deliver today.

Start while signed into the Google account that manages your business. Find your Business Profile through Search or Maps. If you lack access, resolve ownership before asking an employee to make changes from a personal account. Keep account access under business control.

RULE

Accurate beats ambitious. List the work you do and the places you actually serve.

The fix

1 Fix primary and secondary categories.

Choose Edit profile, then Business information, and find the business category field. Select the available primary category that best describes your main business. Add secondary categories only for other work you genuinely provide. Save, then check the public listing when approved. Our time budget: fifteen minutes. Use [profile editing help](#) if the controls differ.

2 Set service areas honestly.

In the profile's location or service-area settings, enter the cities or postal areas your crew serves. Remove places you cannot cover reliably. If you visit customers and do not receive them at your address, configure the address accordingly. Follow [service-area guidance](#). Our time budget: fifteen minutes, including an hours and phone check.

Service areas deserve an operational check. Ask whoever dispatches the trucks whether the list matches reality. A place you served once as a favor does not automatically belong in your regular coverage. Listing a city also does not buy you a position there.

1 Add ten real job photos and schedule a weekly post.

Our starter target: ten useful photos you have permission to share, showing your crew, equipment, and completed work. Remove visible customer details before upload. Use the profile's photo controls, then its post controls for a factual service update. Our time budget: half an hour. See [photo guidance](#) and [post guidance](#).

For the weekly post, write something you can stand behind. Example: "We repair leaking water heaters in {actual service area}. Call during {actual hours} to discuss the problem and available appointments." Replace the fields before publishing. Do not promise same-day service unless you can provide it.

Photos and posts help explain the business. Keep them current and useful without expecting a guaranteed ranking increase.

OWNER MISTAKE

An old promise can create a new complaint. Remove expired offers and availability claims you cannot honor.

1 Run a thirty-day review push.

Our rule: ask eligible customers consistently after completed work, in person and by email. Use the profile's review-request option to copy your review link. Put it in the email below or on a printed QR card. Ask for honest feedback regardless of expected sentiment. No discounts, gifts, or screening. See [review tips](#).

2 Reply to every review within twenty-four hours.

Make this your office rule. Open the profile's review controls, read the review, and write a specific, calm response. Thank positive reviewers. For a complaint, acknowledge the concern and offer a business phone or email for follow-up without publishing private job details. Our daily time budget: ten minutes. See [review management](#).

IN-PERSON REVIEW ASK

SCRIPT

YOU Thanks for having us out. Would you share an honest Google review about your experience? I can email you the link, or you can use this card.

CUSTOMER What should I write?

YOU Whatever you think would help another homeowner understand the experience. It is completely your choice.

Ask consistently. Do not offer a reward or ask only customers you expect to praise you.

REVIEW REQUEST

EMAIL TEMPLATE

Subject: How was your service, {first name} ?

Hi {first name}, Thank you for choosing {business} for {service}. Would you share an honest review of your experience? {Google review link} Your feedback helps other local customers decide whom to call. Thank you, {your name}

BEFORE

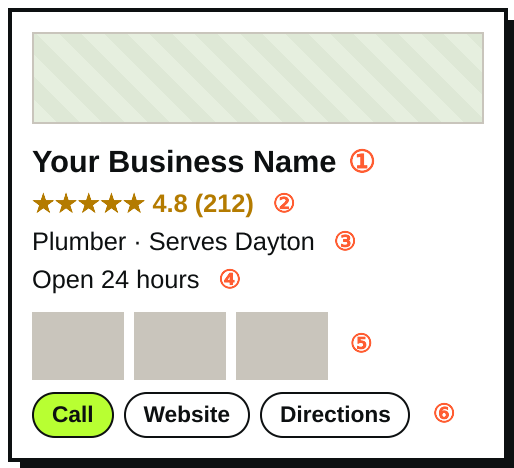
A vague category, stale photos, uncertain hours, and unanswered reviews leave customers guessing.

AFTER

Accurate categories and coverage, current job photos, useful updates, and thoughtful review replies show an active business.

THE PUBLIC STOREFRONT

MAP LISTING ANATOMY: WHAT EACH PIECE ANSWERS



1. **Name**
Is this a real local company?
2. **Rating + review count**
Do people like them?
3. **Primary category + area**
Do they do what I need, where I live?
4. **Hours**
Can they help me right now?
5. **Photos**
Do they look like pros? Real trucks, real crew.
6. **Call / website**
How fast can I reach a human?

Generic illustration with example values. Google decides the layout and the order; you control the accuracy and the proof.

QUICK WIN

Put review replies beside tomorrow's dispatch check. A routine beats remembering when you feel like it.

The HVAC owner made the listing part of the office routine. Crews supplied approved photos. The office checked hours, sent review emails, and answered feedback. Customers could see the work that had been happening all along.

He could not control every search result. He could control whether his storefront looked open for business.

Your listing should look like somebody works there.

✓ DO THIS TODAY

CHECK IT OFF

- ☐ Confirm business-controlled access to your profile.
- ☐ Correct the primary and relevant secondary categories.
- ☐ Match service areas and hours to actual operations.
- ☐ Collect and upload your starter set of real job photos.
- ☐ Schedule a useful weekly post.
- ☐ Start consistent in-person and email review requests.
- ☐ Assign daily review checks and replies.

Want us to run this for you? See the last page.

Beyond the *Map*

A cleaner near Atlanta kept getting calls for work her team did not offer.

Her website said residential and commercial cleaning. Under that, it listed almost everything a cleaning company might do. Some services were current. Some were ideas she had abandoned. They all lived on the same page.

A homeowner looking for move-out cleaning had to read past office cleaning, recurring visits, and a paragraph about company values. A property manager could not tell whether the crew served his building's location.

The owner wanted more traffic. Her office wanted fewer confusing calls.

When she sat with the page open and answered the questions callers actually asked, she saw the problem. The page made every visitor sort through the entire business. It never gave the right customer a direct answer.

She had published a list of capabilities. Her customers needed help choosing the next step.

THE LESSON

Give each important service and top service city a useful page that answers the customer's actual question.

Why owners get it wrong

Your customer does not want to study the relationship between all your services. They want to know whether you can handle a clogged main drain, clean a rental before move-out, or replace a failing furnace where they live.

One giant page makes each answer harder to find. At the other extreme, a pile of nearly identical city pages gives people very little useful information. Replacing a city name in the same paragraph is not local knowledge.

OWNER MISTAKE

One page for every service makes the customer do your sorting. Give important services their own clear explanation.

The fix

1 Create one page per important service and top city.

In your website editor, open Pages and add a page for the first service. Use service plus area in the page title and main heading where accurate. Add the problem, scope, visit process, proof, and call action. Create a useful top-city page linked to relevant services. Our time budget: an hour for each first draft, then fact-check before publishing.

Example service heading: “Drain Cleaning in {actual service area}.” Under it, explain which drain problems you handle, what happens during the visit, what information to have ready, and how to call. Do not diagnose a hidden problem from a generic paragraph. Help the customer understand the service and request an assessment.

A city page should explain your real coverage there. Include relevant services, actual scheduling limits, and approved local job photos or descriptions when available. Avoid invented offices, addresses, or neighborhood experience. If you cannot add anything useful yet, improve the service page first.

Connect the pages. A service page can link to the cities you serve. A city page can link to available services. Your main navigation should let people reach important services without guessing what a clever menu label means. “Drain Cleaning” beats “Explore Our Solutions.”

SERVICE-PAGE DRAFTING BRIEF

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Page title and heading describe the actual service and coverage.
- ☐ Opening paragraph names the customer problem.
- ☐ Scope explains what is included and what needs assessment.
- ☐ Visit description explains the next step without inventing a diagnosis.
- ☐ Proof uses real work, accurate credentials, or permitted reviews.
- ☐ Hours, service area, and phone action are easy to find.
- ☐ Links point to relevant city and service pages.

1 Match name, address, and phone everywhere.

Write a master business record with the real name, public address if appropriate, primary phone, hours, and website. Compare your website header, footer, contact page, Google profile, and other listings. Correct old details. Keep private service-business addresses private where appropriate. Our time budget: half an hour for the first audit. Check [Bing Places](#) and [Apple Business](#) too.

Consistency is about the same business identity and reachable contact details. Do not waste an afternoon debating harmless punctuation while a directory sends callers to a disconnected line. If you intentionally use call tracking, have the person managing it document the setup and test the routing. Do not replace working numbers at random.

RULE

Every public contact detail needs an owner. Give somebody responsibility for keeping the master record current.

1 Write FAQs the way people ask.

Pull recurring questions from office notes and customer emails. Add an FAQ section in the website editor with each question as a heading and a direct answer beneath it. Include coverage, visit process, availability, and how estimates work. Our time budget: half an hour for a first draft. Have the person answering calls check every answer before publication.

Example question: “Do you clean homes after tenants move out?” Example answer: “Yes, we provide move-out cleaning in {actual areas}. Call with the property size, condition, and required completion date so we can discuss scope and availability.” Publish that only if it describes your operation.

Example question: “Can you come today?” Answer with your actual process: “Call to check today’s openings. We confirm availability before booking.” Do not publish around-the-clock or same-day promises because they look good in a heading.

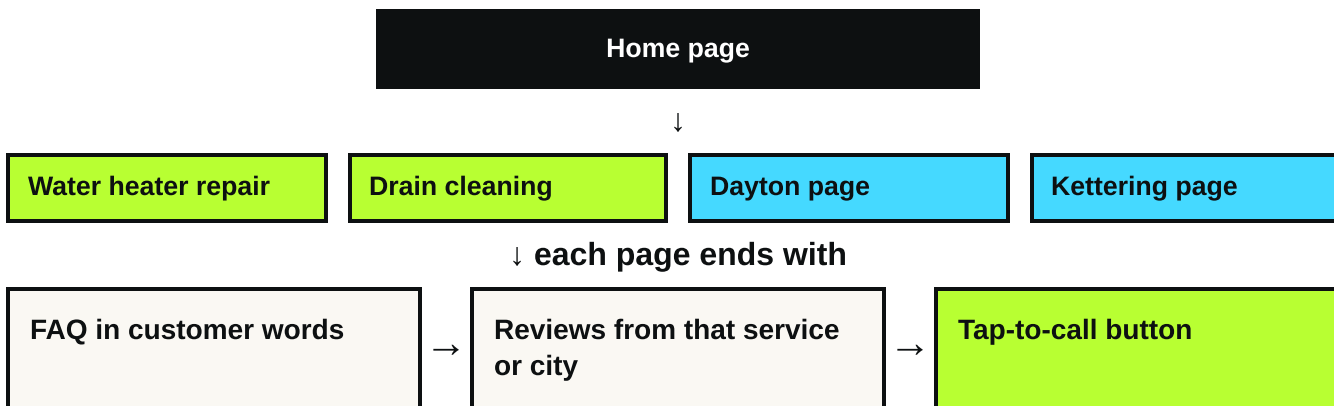
These answers help customers and give AI assistants clear information to interpret. They do not guarantee an AI mention. FAQ sections are worth writing for people even though FAQ rich results are no longer shown for most sites.

1 Decide when paid ads make sense.

Review your pages, phone buttons, call coverage, and booking capacity before buying traffic. If those work and you need additional demand, compare suitable options, including [Google Local Services Ads](#). Write the service, area, spending ceiling, and definition of a qualified call before launch. Our rule: approve the operating plan before the ad budget.

BEFORE Every service shares a vague page, city coverage is uncertain, and contact details disagree across listings.	AFTER Important services and top cities have useful pages, FAQs answer real questions, and business details match.
USEFUL WEBSITE COVERAGE	

SITE STRUCTURE: ONE PAGE PER SERVICE, ONE PER TOP CITY



Service pages link to the cities you serve. City pages link to the services you offer there. Every destination ends in a call.

QUICK WIN

Use tomorrow's caller questions as today's page outline. Your office already knows what needs explaining.

The cleaner separated the work she actually offered and removed the abandoned services. Her city information matched the crew's coverage. The office could send callers to a specific page instead of explaining the whole business from scratch.

The site finally helped customers sort themselves into the right conversation.

A useful page answers the question that stands between the customer and the call.

✓ DO THIS TODAY

CHECK IT OFF

- ☐ Choose the first service page and top-city page to build.
- ☐ Draft real scope, coverage, visit process, and proof.
- ☐ Link relevant service and city pages together.
- ☐ Create a master business record and correct conflicting details.
- ☐ Publish plain answers to actual customer questions.
- ☐ Check call handling and capacity before approving paid traffic.

Want us to run this for you? See the last page.

Make Calling the Obvious *Move*

A pest-control owner handed his phone to somebody who had never seen his website.

He expected a compliment. He got a question: “What do you actually do?”

The first screen showed a big house, a slogan about protecting what matters, and a button labeled Learn More. The business name was visible. The service area was not. Neither was a phone number.

He explained that the number appeared farther down. Then he explained that the menu had a contact page. Then he explained that clicking the logo would bring you home.

By the time he finished, he had accidentally demonstrated the problem.

A customer with ants in the kitchen was not going to wait for his guided tour. The website needed to do the explaining while he was out handling the work.

The owner had approved the design on a large monitor. His customers were trying to hire him from a phone.

THE LESSON

Make the service, service area, proof, and phone action obvious on the first mobile screen.

Why owners get it wrong

The homepage should answer what you do, where you do it, and how to call. It should also give them a reason to feel comfortable calling. Reviews help with that decision: 51% of customers consider reviews when choosing a provider (Jobber 2026 Home Service Trends Report).

You do not need a wall of praise. You need visible, accurate proof and a clear next action. “Learn More” often describes what the website owner wants. “Call to Schedule” describes what the customer can do.

RULE

The first screen has a job: make the next step clear.

The fix

1 Put a tap-to-call number at the top right.

In your website editor's header settings, add the visible business number at the top right on larger screens. On mobile, keep a labeled Call button visible instead of hiding the number in the menu. Choose the editor's phone-link option and enter the actual number with country code. Our time budget: twenty minutes, including a live phone test.

If your editor asks for a link destination, use its telephone format: tel: followed by the country code and number. Have your website editor enter your actual business number. The button label should say what happens when somebody taps it. "Call {business}" works. An unexplained symbol is harder to trust.

Publish, then test on your phone. Check that tapping opens the dialer with the correct number. Complete the call and confirm it reaches the right person or routing. A button that opens a dialer is only part of a working call path.

1 Lead with one offer.

Replace the vague hero slogan with service plus area and a truthful reason to call. Set the main button to the same call action as the header. Our time budget: half an hour for copy and editing. Example: "Pest Control in {actual city}. Call to discuss the problem and available appointments." Add only promises your team can keep.

An offer does not have to be a discount. It can be a clearly defined next step: schedule an inspection, discuss a repair, or book a cleaning estimate. Tell the customer what happens after they call.

Pick the action that fits the operation. If you cannot price a hidden leak by phone, do not imply that the customer will get an exact repair quote before anyone sees it. If an inspection has a fee, explain the actual terms before booking. Clarity at the start prevents an argument at the door.

OWNER MISTAKE

An offer your crew cannot deliver is a complaint in draft form. Check the promise with the person running the schedule.

1

Put reviews above the fold.

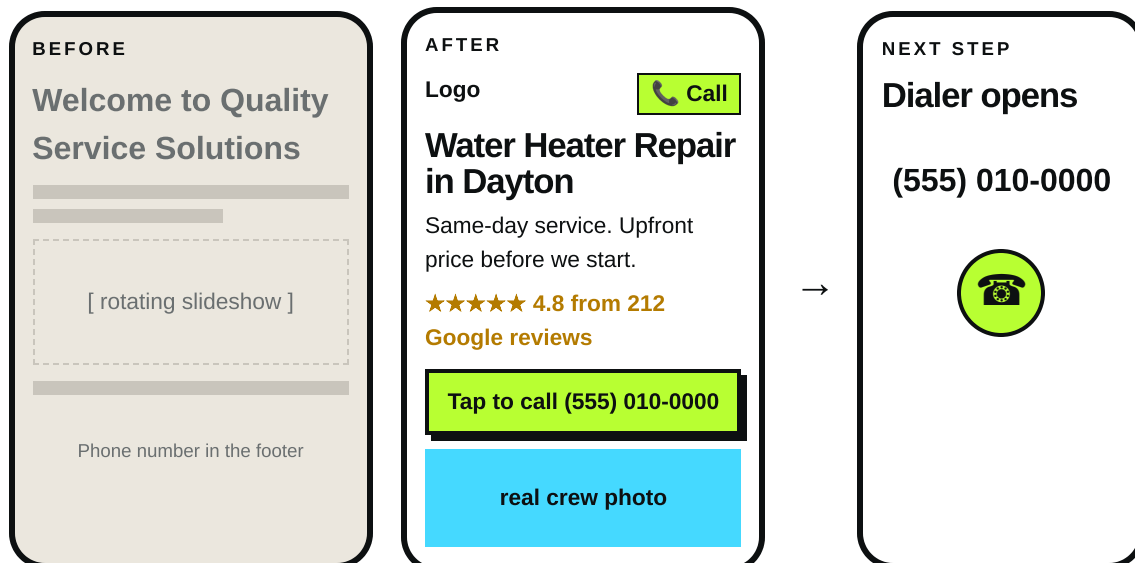
Add a short, permitted customer review and accurate source near the headline and call action, visible before scrolling on the phone you are testing. If you show a rating and review count, verify both and assign updates. Our time budget: twenty minutes. Keep the proof readable and compact so it does not push the call button off screen.

“Above the fold” means the part a visitor sees before scrolling. It changes with screen size. Your desktop preview is not proof that the same information fits on a customer's phone.

Use an actual review that supports the decision. A customer describing clean work, clear communication, or the relevant service can help a stranger picture the visit. Do not rewrite the review into a claim the customer never made. Get permission where needed and use the source accurately.

BEFORE	AFTER
“Protecting What Matters.” Large generic house photo. Learn More button. Phone number below several sections.	“Pest Control in {actual city}.” Clear appointment offer. Real customer proof. Visible business number and Call to Schedule button.
HOMEPAGE FIRST SCREEN	

THE FIRST PHONE SCREEN: BEFORE AND AFTER



Example values only. The improved screen states service + city, one truthful offer, compact review proof, and a call button that opens the dialer.

1 Run the five-second phone test.

Our test rule: show the live page to somebody unfamiliar with the business for five seconds, then hide it. Ask what you do, where you work, and how they would contact you. Write their answers before explaining anything. Our time budget: ten minutes. Repair whatever they missed, then repeat with another unfamiliar person.

PHONE TEST

SCRIPT

YOU Look at this page as if you need help at home. I will hide it after a quick look.

Hide the screen. Do not give hints.

YOU What does this company do? Where does it work? What would you do to contact it?

Record the answers in their words. A wrong answer is evidence to fix the page.

Check loading on a normal mobile connection as well. If the first screen stalls, reduce oversized images or ask your editor to inspect the page with [PageSpeed Insights](#). You are trying to help a customer act, so test the usable page rather than admiring a screenshot.

QUICK WIN

Let an unfamiliar person fail the page before a customer does. Their confusion is a useful editing instruction.

The pest-control owner replaced the slogan, moved proof upward, and made calling visible. He stopped explaining the page during the test. The page started answering for itself.

That is the standard. A stranger should understand enough to take the next step without you standing over their shoulder.

If your website needs a tour guide, the customer needs another website.

✓ DO THIS TODAY

CHECK IT OFF

- ☐ Put the business number at the top right and a visible call action on mobile.
- ☐ Test the live button through to the answered call.
- ☐ Replace the vague slogan with service and actual coverage.
- ☐ Choose one truthful offer and primary action.
- ☐ Place accurate review proof on the first mobile screen.
- ☐ Run the phone test without coaching the tester.
- ☐ Fix the first point of confusion and test again.

Want us to run this for you? See the last page.

Answer, Qualify, *Book*

A roofer in Texas saw the missed call after he finished unloading.

He was tired. The number was unfamiliar. There was a voicemail about a roof leak, but it was late in the workday and he wanted to check the next morning's schedule before calling back.

He returned the call the following morning. The homeowner had already booked somebody else.

The roofer was annoyed. He could have inspected the problem. He worked nearby. He had done everything needed to earn that call except answer it or return it while the customer was still choosing.

On paper, his marketing had worked. The homeowner found him and called. In the real world, the appointment went elsewhere.

He had been treating a missed call as a task he could fit around the work. The customer was treating it as a request for help that needed an answer.

THE LESSON

Answer quickly, ask enough to identify the right next step, and offer a real appointment on the first call.

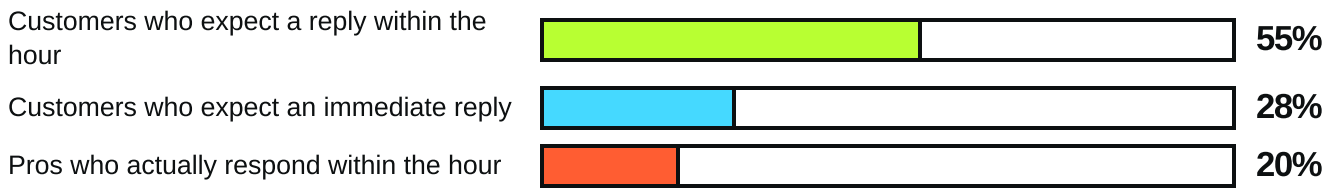
Why owners get it wrong

You know why you missed the call. The customer only knows nobody answered.

A full day makes a delayed callback feel reasonable from inside the business. From outside, it can feel like uncertainty. Will you return the call? Do you serve the area? Is the problem something you handle?

Over 55% of customers expect a reply within an hour, while only 20% of pros respond within the hour (Jobber 2026 Home Service Trends Report). You do not need to guess whether speed deserves attention.

■ WHAT CUSTOMERS EXPECT VS. WHAT PROS DO



Source: Jobber 2026 Home Service Trends Report

Bars show the reported figures (55% is reported as "over 55%"). The gap between the first bar and the last bar is where jobs go to the next company.

Your goal is a booked appointment that fits the job, the service area, and the schedule. You are not trying to perform a roof inspection over the phone or squeeze every caller into a slot you cannot honor.

RULE

Our rule: answer within three rings or call back within five minutes during covered hours. Assign coverage before you promise speed.

The fix

1 Set the answer and callback rule.

Name the primary call handler and backup for each covered period. Open your phone system's routing settings and check where unanswered calls go. Set the three-ring answer target and five-minute callback target as your operating rules. Our time budget: half an hour to assign coverage and test the routing. Publish honest hours and an accurate after-hours message.

Coverage needs names. "Whoever is free" is how a phone rings while everybody assumes somebody else has it.

For calls outside covered hours, state when someone will return the call. Do not advertise emergency response unless your business can provide it. If the caller describes immediate danger, follow your trade's approved safety procedure and direct them to appropriate emergency help. A receptionist should not improvise a technical diagnosis.

YOU Hi, this is {name} with {business}, returning your call. What can we help with?

CUSTOMER I need somebody to look at a leak.

YOU I can check whether we handle that and what appointments are available. Let me get the details.

Confirm it is a good time to talk. If there is no answer, leave your business name, number, and honest callback availability.

1 Use the four-question call script.

Put the script beside the phone or in your call notes screen. Ask about the problem, location, timing, and the caller's role in arranging access and approval. Record answers in the same order each time. Our training budget: twenty minutes of practice with the actual call handler, followed by a test call. Listen before offering a slot.

YOU What is happening, and what service do you need help with?

YOU What is the service address, including the city or postal code?

YOU When did this start, and when are you hoping to have someone out?

YOU Are you the person arranging the work, and who should be present or approve access?

Confirm name, callback number, and email separately. Use the approved safety procedure for urgent hazards.

OWNER MISTAKE

A friendly conversation without a next step still leaves an empty calendar. Help the customer choose what happens next.

1 Book on the first call.

Give the handler access to actual appointment availability and approved fee information. Offer a specific available visit or estimate slot. State the visit's purpose, any applicable charge, and what remains subject to assessment. Confirm the address, arrival window, access, and contact details. Our rule: enter the appointment while the customer is on the phone, then send an email confirmation.

APPOINTMENT OFFER

SCRIPT

YOU We handle {service} in your area. Our next available appointment is {actual day and arrival window}. The visit covers {purpose}; {actual fee terms}. Would you like me to reserve that?

CUSTOMER Yes.

YOU I have booked {day and window} at {address}. Please confirm the best callback number and email. You will receive the appointment details by email.

Use only real availability and approved terms. Never invent a slot to keep the customer talking.

APPOINTMENT CONFIRMATION

EMAIL TEMPLATE

Subject: Your {business} appointment: {day}

Hi {first name}, Your {visit type} is booked for {day}, with arrival during {window}. Service address: {address} Visit purpose: {scope} Applicable fee and terms: {actual terms} Access instructions: {instructions} To change the appointment, call {business number} or reply to this email. Thank you, {business}

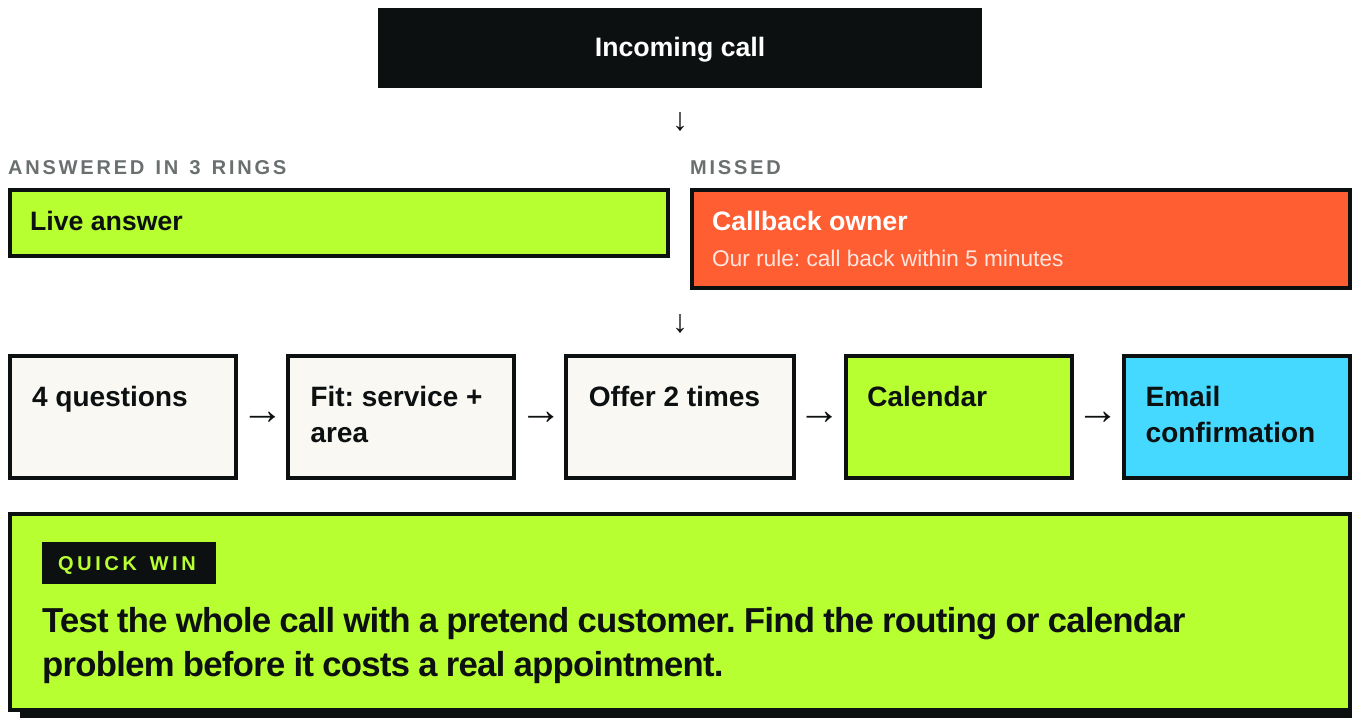
BEFORE

A voicemail waits until the next morning. The customer books another roofer before the callback.

AFTER

A named handler returns the call during coverage, qualifies the request, and confirms a real appointment while the customer is available.

FROM MISSED CALL TO APPOINTMENT



The roofer assigned call coverage and gave his backup access to inspection slots. His new rule removed the morning-after decision from the process. When he could not answer, somebody knew who had to call back and what they could book.

He still had roofs to inspect. Now the office could help put those inspections on the calendar.

The lead belongs to nobody until somebody owns the next step.

The next book, *The Leads You Already Paid For*, takes over after this first conversation. It covers tracking inquiries, following up on estimates, and revisiting unfinished opportunities. First, make this book's call path work from search to appointment.

- ☐ Assign a primary call handler and named backup.
- ☐ Test unanswered-call routing and after-hours messaging.
- ☐ Adopt the answer and callback targets for covered hours.
- ☐ Put the qualification script beside the phone.
- ☐ Give the handler real availability and approved fee terms.
- ☐ Practice booking and sending the confirmation email.
- ☐ Check every new inquiry has a recorded next step.

Found, Called, *Booked*

An empty calendar can have different causes. This scorecard helps you find the repairs you can verify.

Our scoring rule: give yourself one point for each yes and zero for each no. There are ten checks per section, for a total of thirty points. Count a yes only when you can show the working page, setting, record, or test. An assigned task is progress. It earns its point when completed.

FOUND: OUT OF TEN

Can the right customer find and understand you?

- | | |
|---|------|
| ☐ Have you saved your service-plus-city search results? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Have you saved your “near me” search results? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Have you saved a real customer problem search? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does your profile have accurate primary and secondary categories? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Are service areas, hours, and contact details accurate? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Have you uploaded the starter set of ten real job photos? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Is a useful weekly profile post assigned? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Is the thirty-day review request routine active? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Do important services and top cities have useful pages? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Do public business details match and FAQs answer actual questions? | 1 pt |

Your score: _____ / 10

CALLED: OUT OF TEN

Does the page make calling easy?

- | | |
|--|------|
| ☐ Does the opening heading name your actual service? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Is the service area visible on the first mobile screen? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Is the number at the top right on larger screens? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Is a labeled call action visible on mobile? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does tapping it open the correct number? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Have you completed a call through that button? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does the first screen present one truthful offer? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Is accurate customer proof visible before scrolling? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Can an unfamiliar tester explain service, area, and contact method? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Have you checked the live page on a mobile connection? | 1 pt |

Your score: _____ / 10

BOOKED: OUT OF TEN

Can the office turn the call into a real appointment?

- | | |
|--|------|
| ☐ Does each covered period have a named primary handler? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does each covered period have a named backup? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Have you tested unanswered-call routing? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does the team use the three-ring answer target? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does the team use the five-minute covered-hours callback target? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does the after-hours message state honest callback availability? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Is the four-question script available to the handler? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Can the handler see real appointment availability and approved terms? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does a booking enter the calendar and trigger an email confirmation? | 1 pt |
| ☐ Does every new inquiry have a recorded next step? | 1 pt |

Your score: _____ / 10

Fix an urgent broken link in the process first: a wrong phone number, unusable call button, or unanswered routing problem. Then work through the remaining no answers. Give each one a person responsible and a completion date.

THIS WEEK	CHECKLIST
☐	Save the search baseline and identify the clearest visibility gaps.
☐	Correct categories, coverage, hours, and contact details.
☐	Upload real photos and assign weekly profile maintenance.
☐	Start consistent in-person and email review requests; assign daily replies.
☐	Draft and publish the first useful service and top-city pages.
☐	Match business details and answer common customer questions.
☐	Repair the first mobile screen and complete the phone test.
☐	Practice answering, qualifying, booking, and sending the confirmation.

Keep the review push running through the month. Recheck the original searches from the recorded locations and repeat the live call test after edits. Keep a simple record of inquiries and booked appointments so you can see what the business is receiving, not just what the listing looks like.

The next time the truck is ready and the phone is quiet, you will have somewhere useful to look. Follow the customer's path. Find the broken step. Fix it.

Links in this book

profile editing help

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/3039617>

service-area guidance

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/9157481>

photo guidance

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/6103862>

post guidance

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/7342169>

review tips

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/3474122>

review management

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/3474050>

Bing Places

<https://www.bingplaces.com>

Apple Business

<https://businessconnect.apple.com>

Google Local Services Ads

<https://ads.google.com/local-services-ads/>

PageSpeed Insights

<https://pagespeed.web.dev>

Links checked Oct 2026; verify before use. Statistics are quoted from the named sources; stories are anonymized composites, and anything marked "example" is illustrative.

■ THE NEXT STEP

Want this done *with you?*

RevOpsFlow is a marketing team for small businesses, based in Atlanta and working with home service companies everywhere. We build and run the systems in this book: Google Business Profile and map work, service and city pages, AI search visibility, ads with tracking, and call handling that books the job. One connected team, one plan, fewer handoffs between the click and the customer.

Where the work in this book lives at RevOpsFlow:

Website Fast, phone-first sites with booking and instant lead alerts. revopsflow.com/services/website	SEO & AI Search Visibility Help Google, Bing, and AI assistants read your site and find you. revopsflow.com/services/seo-ai-search
Paid Ads Google and Meta ads with tracking set up first. revopsflow.com/services/paid-ads	Social Media 12 on-brand posts a month you approve before they go out. revopsflow.com/services/social-media
Dedicated Call Reps Lead response, qualification, and appointment setting. revopsflow.com/services	Growth Plan Website, SEO and AI search, ads, and social run by one team. revopsflow.com/growth-package

Book a free 20-minute Lead Leak Review.

If you'd rather have someone do this with you, book a free 20-minute Lead Leak Review. We'll look at your Google Business Profile, your site on a phone, and how your calls get answered and show you where calls are slipping. If we're not a fit, you still leave with the list.

Book my Lead Leak Review at revopsflow.com/contact →

Prefer the phone? Call **(770) 525-8493**. No hard sell.

NEXT IN THE SERIES · BOOK 2

The Leads You Already Paid For

How to stop losing jobs after the phone rings.