Grow That Local

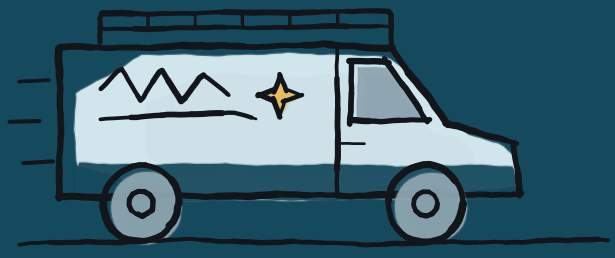
a free guide

100 reasons not to hire a marketing company, answered

Every doubt a local owner has about marketing help, answered plainly, one at a time. Where the doubt is right, we say so.

For skeptical owners.

- 10 short sections in 5 parts
- 40 things you can do in the next 24 hours
- An example in every section
- Sources for every figure



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Before you start

Most owners who say no to marketing help have a good reason. Some got burned. Some are too busy to think about it. Some get all the work they want from word of mouth. This guide takes the 100 reasons we hear most and answers each one honestly.

The 100 reasons sit in ten short sections: money, bad past experiences, trust, results, time, doing it yourself, size, timing, specific channels, and who stays in control. Each section has a short made-up example and a checklist you can do in the next 24 hours. Read the section that sounds like you. Each answer makes sense on its own, so you can skip around.

We sell marketing, so we have a side. Where a reason is right, we say so, and some answers end with "don't hire anyone yet."

Two rules we kept while writing it:

- Every number has a public source you can check, listed at the end. When we didn't have one, we say "GTL estimate" and tell you why we think it.
- Every example is made up to show the idea. None of them are real customers or results.

Our own monthly prices are in the list at the end of this guide.



Part 1

Money and bad memories

1 The money doubts

The idea. "It costs too much" is the most common reason, and sometimes it's right. The fair test is the price against what one extra job is worth to you.

1. "It's too expensive." Sometimes it is. Work out what one extra job is worth to you after materials and labor, then compare that with the monthly price. If one extra job a month wouldn't cover it, it's too expensive for you right now, and that's a fair answer.

2. "I can't afford it right now." Then don't spend on it yet. Marketing that goes on a credit card you can't pay off is a bad deal at any price. Start with the free things: add job photos to your Google profile, and ask every happy customer for a review the day you finish.

3. "I don't know what I'd get for the money." That's the right worry. Plenty of companies sell fuzzy things like "visibility" and "brand awareness." Before you pay anyone, ask for a written list of what they'll do each month. With us, you see a free sample made for your business before you pay anything.

4. "Marketing is a cost, not an investment." Some of it is a cost. Ads stop working the day the money stops. Other work keeps paying: reviews stay on your profile, and a good website keeps bringing calls for years. If you spend at all, start with the kind that keeps working.

5. "I'd rather put the money into equipment." If you're turning work away because you're short a truck or a tool, buy the truck. Marketing makes sense when your schedule has gaps, not when it's overflowing. Look at last month's calendar and count the empty days before you decide.

6. "There are always setup fees and hidden costs." At a lot of companies there are, so ask in writing before you sign. At Grow That Local there are no setup fees and no hidden costs. If you don't have a domain name yet, we get you one free with your website.

7. "I'll be stuck paying every month forever." With a long contract, you can be. Ask how to cancel before you sign anything, and get the answer in writing. Everything we do is month to month: text us to cancel and we do it the same day, with no forms and no fees.

8. "I paid for ads once and the money just vanished." Ads stop the moment the budget runs out, and if nobody counts the calls, you can't tell what you got. That's a reason to count calls, not proof that marketing can't work. None of our services are ads, so there's no ad budget to burn through.

9. "Someone will always do it cheaper." True, and price matters. Compare what's included each month, and who owns the website and domain when you leave. A cheap site registered in someone else's name can cost you the whole site later.

10. "I'll spend on marketing once I'm making more money." Waiting makes sense for things that work fast. Reviews and Google rankings take months to build, so they need to start before you need them. Start with one small, cheap thing now, so it's working by the time you want more calls.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up painter's average exterior job is $4,000, and about $1,200 of it is profit after paint and labor. A service at $200 a month costs $2,400 a year. Two extra jobs a year covers it, with room to spare. If the same painter averaged $600 jobs with $150 profit, they'd need 16 extra jobs a year, and that's a much harder bet.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Pull your last ten invoices and work out your average job size.
- [ ] Work out roughly what's left of that average after materials and labor.
- [ ] Divide a monthly price you're weighing by that number. That's how many extra jobs a month it needs to pay for itself.
- [ ] Write the answer down and keep it for every sales call.

2 When you've been burned before

The idea. Many owners who say no have paid a marketing company before and got little or nothing. The fix is to write down exactly what went wrong last time and check for it this time.

11. "I got burned before." That happens a lot, and it usually isn't the owner's fault. Write down exactly what went wrong: no reports, a long contract, slow replies, or they kept your stuff. Ask any new company about each one, in writing, before you pay. With us, you see a free sample first, everything is month to month, and your logo, photos, business details and domain stay yours.

12. "They took my money and I never saw results." Often the work was never defined, so nobody could show it was done. Before you hire again, write down the one number you want to move, like calls a month or new reviews, and find last month's count. Then ask every company how its work moves that number and how you'll see it.

13. "They held my website hostage when I left." This is one of the most common horror stories. Before you sign with anyone, ask who owns the domain, the site and the Google profile, and get the answer in writing. With us, your logo, photos, business details and domain name stay yours.

14. "I signed a 12-month contract and couldn't get out." Long contracts protect the company, not you. Ask for month to month, and walk away from anyone who won't offer it. Everything we do is month to month, and you can cancel any service by text.

15. "Their reports were pages of charts I couldn't read." A report you can't read is a report that hides things. A fair report fits on one page: what was done, what changed, and what's next. Ask to see a sample report before you sign. Ours come in plain English, every month.

16. "They promised page one of Google and never got me there." Nobody controls Google, so nobody can honestly promise a ranking. Walk away from anyone who does. No honest marketer can promise exact results. What a company can promise is real work every month, plain updates, and a way out if it isn't worth it.

17. "I could never get them on the phone." Ask any company how you'll reach them and how fast they answer, then test it before you sign. Send a question and time the reply. With us, everything happens by text: you text a change, we do it and tell you when it's done.

18. "They made my business look like everyone else's." Templates are cheap, so many companies use the same one for every client in a trade. Ask to see work made for your business, with your real jobs and your town, before you pay. That's what our free sample is for.

19. "They did something shady with my reviews." Fake or paid reviews break Google's rules. Google bans offering payment, discounts or free services for reviews, and it bans asking only your happy customers (Google Maps content policy, support.google.com). The FTC also banned buying fake reviews in 2024 (FTC, ftc.gov). Asking every customer for an honest review is allowed, and it's all we do.

20. "I don't want to go through that again." Fair. Shrink the risk instead of avoiding it: start with one small thing, see the work before you pay, keep everything in your name, and pick a company you can leave by text. If the first month isn't worth it, you've lost one month.

Example. A made-up roofer writes down what went wrong with their last agency: a 12-month contract, a monthly report full of charts, and a domain registered in the agency's name. They turn each one into a question: "Is it month to month? Can I see a sample report? Whose name is the domain in?" They ask every company the same three questions, by text, so they have the answers in writing.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Write down, in one line each, what went wrong last time.
- [ ] Turn each line into a question you'll ask any company before you pay.
- [ ] Look up your domain at lookup.icann.org and write down who it's registered with.
- [ ] Open "People and access" in your Google profile settings and check that you're the primary owner.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Your first report card, this month

The monthly report card is free.

Monthly report card: growthatlocal.com/services/report-card

or we can do it for you

Free sample: A preview of your new site

Websites start at $1 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

Websites: growthatlocal.com/services/websites



Part 2

Trust and results

3 The trust doubts

The idea. Owners who don't trust marketing companies often have reasons. The way through is to check the company's work and the deal before any money moves.

21. "All marketing companies are scammers." Some are, and the bad ones give the rest a bad name. Judge any company by three things you can check: whether you see the work before you pay, whether you can leave any month, and whether your stuff stays in your name. A company that passes all three has little room to scam you.

22. "I don't trust online reviews." Plenty of reviews are fake, so the doubt is fair. But your customers read them anyway: in BrightLocal's 2026 survey of 1,002 US adults, 97% said they read reviews for local businesses, and 74% only care about reviews from the last three months (BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2026, brightlocal.com). That's why steady, recent, real reviews matter more than a big old pile.

23. "You don't know my trade." A company that doesn't know your trade will write things your customers can tell are wrong. Ask them to name your busiest season, your most common job and what customers worry about most. Then judge their sample: if the words sound like your trade, they know it.

24. "You're not local, so you don't know my town." Local knowledge matters, and the town names, streets and neighborhoods on your pages should be right. Most of the work, though, happens online and by text, so the company's own address matters less than whether they get your details right. Check the sample for your town, your service area and the jobs you actually do.

25. "I don't want to give anyone my passwords." That's the right instinct. Google lets you add someone as a manager of your Business Profile without sharing your password, and you stay the owner. We never need your Google password, and you can remove us any time.

26. "How do I know you're even a real company?" Ask for the company's legal name and look it up. Ask for work you can see before you pay. Grow That Local is a brand of Grow That Pro Inc., and the free sample is work you can judge before any money changes hands.

27. "You'll spam my customers." Texting people who never agreed to it is spam, and federal rules require consent for marketing texts and a way to opt out by replying STOP (eCFR, 47 CFR 64.1200, ecfr.gov). Texts should go only to your own customers, and only with a real reason, like asking for a review or a reminder that a job is due. Ask any company how they get consent and handle STOP before you hand over a single number.

28. "Marketing people call me every single day." Those calls are tiring, and many come from companies hiding who they are. You don't owe anyone a call. Everything with us can happen by text, and if you'd like to talk, you ask.

29. "I can't understand what marketing people are talking about." If a company can't explain its work in plain words, it may not be doing much. Ask them to say what they'll do this month in one sentence a task. If you still don't follow, that's your answer.

30. "You'll say anything to make the sale." Every seller has a side, us included. So judge the work, not the pitch. With us, you see a free sample made for your business. If it isn't right, tell us what to change, and if it still isn't right, walk away owing nothing.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up house cleaner reads their own Google reviews. They have 14, and the newest is eight months old. The top cleaner in town has 120, and the newest is from last week. The cleaner's work is just as good. Their reviews just stopped when they stopped asking.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Search your trade and town on Google Maps and write down the top three names.
- [ ] Write down each one's review count and the date of their newest review, and yours.
- [ ] Text your review link to five happy customers from the last month.
- [ ] Write down the three questions you'd ask any company to test whether you can trust it.

4 Will it even work?

The idea. "It won't work for me" is often a fair guess from past results. The answer is to measure: know your numbers today, so you can tell in a few months whether anything changed.

31. "Marketing doesn't work for my kind of business." Some kinds don't. Flashy ads rarely sell a septic pump-out. But nearly every local customer looks you up before they call, and what they find either backs you up or sends them to someone else. Start with what people see when they search your name.

32. "How would I even know if it's working?" Count before you start. Write down last month's calls, booked jobs and new reviews, and ask every new customer how they heard about you. Then check the same numbers every month. We send a plain-English update and a report card every month, so you see the numbers without digging.

33. "It takes too long to see results." Some of it does. Google rankings and a strong review count build over months. But some work shows sooner: a fixed-up Google profile looks better right away, and ranking gains usually take a few weeks of steady work. Expect slow things to be slow, and judge them over a season.

34. "Can you promise me more customers?" No, and be wary of anyone who does. No honest marketer can promise exact results. What we can promise is real work every month, plain-English updates on what we did, and that you can cancel any time if it's not worth it to you.

35. "I posted on Facebook for months and nothing happened." That's common. Posts rarely bring calls on their own. They help most when someone has already heard your name and looks you up, so a steady page backs up a referral instead of making the first sale.

36. "My customers don't look online." Some don't. They call the number on the magnet on their fridge. But most do look: 97% of people in BrightLocal's 2026 survey said they read reviews for local businesses (BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2026, brightlocal.com). Even a referral often searches your name before calling, so your profile needs to look alive.

37. "Likes and clicks don't pay the bills." Agreed. Judge marketing by calls, quotes and booked jobs, and ignore anything that only counts likes, views or reach. If a company reports only those, ask them to count calls too.

38. "More leads just means more tire-kickers." It can. Bad marketing brings anyone with a phone. Good marketing shows the jobs you want, the area you serve and real photos of your work, so the wrong people skip you. If you get price shoppers now, look at what your profile and site say first.

39. "I already show up fine on Google." Maybe you do. Search your main service and your town on your phone and write down where you appear, then try a town next door. Results change with where the searcher stands, so check from a few places. Our free monthly report card shows where you stand against your top local competitors.

40. "My competitor does tons of marketing and they're still not busy." You can't see their books, so you don't really know. Marketing also can't fix slow call-backs, missed calls or bad work. Look at what they do badly online and do it well yourself.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber asks every caller for a month, "How did you hear about us?" and keeps a tally on a notepad by the phone. Of 42 calls, 18 came from word of mouth, 15 from Google, 6 from the truck and 3 from somewhere else. Now they know Google already brings a third of their calls, and they have a starting number to beat.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Count last month's calls, booked jobs and new reviews. Write all three down.
- [ ] Put a note by your phone: "How did you hear about us?" Ask every caller this week.
- [ ] Search your main service and your town on your phone and write down where you show up.
- [ ] Set a monthly reminder to check the same numbers again.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Your first 10 requests sent

Review requests is $100 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

Review requests: growthatlocal.com/services/reviews

or we can do it for you

Free sample: A profile check-up with 10+ fixes

Google Business Profile is $200 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

Google Business Profile: growthatlocal.com/services/google-business-profile



Part 3

Your time

5 No time for it

The idea. Busy owners are right to guard their hours. The question is how many minutes the work takes from you, whether you do it or hand it off.

41. "I'm too busy." Busy is good, and it's also when marketing slips. The risk is the slow month after busy season, when the phone goes quiet and nothing was kept up. Handing it off should take very little of your time, and with us it's a few quick questions and a look at what we make.

42. "I don't have time to learn all this." You don't need to learn it to hire it, and you don't need to learn all of it to do some yourself. Pick the one thing that matters most for your trade, often your Google profile and reviews, and learn only that. Leave the rest until it matters.

43. "Agencies are slow. Changes take weeks." At some companies they do, because every change waits in a queue. Ask how changes get requested and how long they take, then test it with a small one. With us, you text a change, and we tell you when it's done. Free samples are usually ready within a day of you answering a few quick questions.

44. "I don't want to sit through calls and meetings." You shouldn't have to. Ask any company whether the work can happen by text or email. Everything with us can happen by text, and a call only happens if you ask for one.

45. "I don't have time to take photos." Photos of real jobs matter more than almost anything else online. You don't need good ones: one phone photo at the end of each job is plenty, and before-and-after pairs are even better. Send them in, and we turn real job photos into polished posts.

46. "I don't have time to answer more calls." Then fix the phone first, before you add any marketing. Missed calls waste every dollar you spend getting people to call. Set a voicemail greeting that says when you'll call back, and text back every missed caller within the hour.

47. "Every time I hire someone, I end up doing the work myself." That means the company needed too much from you. Ask, before you sign, exactly what you'll have to do each week. With us, it's very little: answer some quick questions at the start, send photos when you have them, and look over what we make.

48. "I'm not good with computers." You don't need to be. If you can send a text, you can work with us. We do the techy parts, and you answer questions in plain words.

49. "I'll do it in the evenings." Some owners do, and do it well. But evenings run out in busy season, which is when the work slips. If you go this way, pick one task, set one time each week, and put it in your phone.

50. "Writing about my business is a pain." For most owners it is. You know the work, not the words. We write everything, and the most you'll do is tell us what's wrong with a sentence.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up HVAC owner times a week of keeping up their own marketing: 20 minutes to add photos to their Google profile, 25 minutes to reply to reviews, 45 minutes to write and post twice on Facebook. That's an hour and a half a week, or about six hours a month. At the $90 an hour they bill on a service call, that's $540 of their time each month.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Write down every marketing task you did last month and roughly how long each took.
- [ ] Write down what one hour of your own work bills.
- [ ] Multiply the hours by that rate.
- [ ] Set a voicemail greeting that says when you'll call back.

6 I'll do it myself

The idea. Plenty of owners do their own marketing, and some do it well. The honest question is which parts are worth your hours and which are better handed off.

51. "I can do it myself." Often you can. Your Google profile and asking for reviews are two of the best things to do yourself, because they're free and you know your customers. The cost is your hours, so work out what an hour of your time is worth and compare.

52. "My nephew does my website." Free help is great while it lasts. Check four things: is the domain in your name, can you log in yourself, does it load fast on your phone, and when did it last change. If the answer to any is "no" or "not sure," fix that before your nephew moves on.

53. "Someone in my family runs our Facebook page." That can work well, especially if they enjoy it. The usual problem isn't skill, it's keeping it up when life gets busy. Look at the date of the last post. If it's more than a month old, decide whether they'll keep going or hand it off.

54. "I'll just build a site on a website builder." That's a fair choice if you'll spend the evenings and keep it current. Budget 10 to 20 hours to build it the first time, then about an hour a month. Test it on your own phone before you call it done, because that's where most customers will see it.

55. "ChatGPT can write it all for me." Chat assistants can write a post or a page in seconds. They don't have your job photos, your prices or your town's streets, and they won't post every week for you. The writing is rarely the hard part. Keeping it going every week is.

56. "My Google profile is already set up." Setup is the start, not the job. A profile that wins keeps getting new photos, updates and replies to reviews, all year. Find the date of your most recent photo. If it's more than a month old, the profile has gone quiet.

57. "I'll ask for reviews myself." You should. An owner asking face to face is the best ask there is. Where it goes wrong is the busy weeks, when you finish the most jobs and forget to ask. Save a short text with your review link on your phone, and send it the same day every job ends.

58. "Marketing is just common sense." Mostly it is. Most good local marketing is simple things done every week: photos, reviews, a site that works on a phone. The hard part is doing it every week for a year.

59. "I've watched videos on SEO, so I'll handle it." Good. Knowing the basics helps you do it or judge whoever does it. SEO is the slowest kind to show results and the hardest to do well alone. Start with one page for each service and each town you serve.

60. "My office manager can handle it." That can work if it's on their job list with real time set aside. When it's squeezed between phones and invoices, it tends to stop. Give them one weekly task, a set time, and one number to report back.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up landscaper's nephew built their site four years ago. They check it: the domain is in the nephew's name, nobody remembers the login, and the newest photo is from 2022. On their phone, the site takes nine seconds to show anything. The work was a gift, but the site now needs an owner.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Look up your domain at lookup.icann.org and write down who it's registered with.
- [ ] Try to log in to your website yourself. Write down whether you can.
- [ ] Open your site on your phone with Wi-Fi off and time how long it takes to load.
- [ ] Find the date of the last post on your Facebook page and your last photo on Google.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Two weeks of posts, ready to go

Social media posts is $200 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

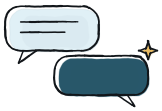
Social media posts: growthatlocal.com/services/social-media

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Your first newsletter, written

Email newsletter is $50 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

Email newsletter: growthatlocal.com/services/email-newsletter



Part 4

Fit and timing

7 Too small, or busy enough already

The idea. Small businesses and full schedules are both good reasons to be careful. For a small or busy business, the goal is usually better jobs and steadier seasons, not more calls.

61. "I get enough word of mouth." Word of mouth brings the best customers, so protect it. But referrals usually look you up before they call, and what they find can lose the job. Word of mouth can also dry up fast if a big referrer moves, retires or switches to someone else. Count how many of last month's jobs came from word of mouth, and from how many people.

62. "I'm a one-person business." Then your hours are the scarcest thing you have, and marketing has to fit around them. You don't need much: a Google profile that's kept up, steady reviews, and a site that works on a phone. That's enough for many one-person businesses to stay full.

63. "I'm too small for marketing." Small businesses need less of it, not none of it. A neighbor searching for your trade sees the same map as everyone else, and a small business with recent reviews and real photos can show up next to big ones. Start with one thing that fits your size.

64. "I don't want to grow." That's a fine choice. Marketing doesn't have to mean more jobs. It can mean better ones: higher-paying work, jobs closer to home, or a full slow season. Decide which of those you'd want, and only do marketing that moves it.

65. "I'm booked out for weeks." Then you don't need more calls right now, so don't pay for them. Use being busy to raise your prices or choose the jobs you want. Keep asking for reviews, so the next slow season starts with a stronger profile.

66. "All my work comes from builders and contractors." Referral partners are great, and they're worth looking after. But the homeowners they send you still look you up, and a profile with old photos can make the builder look bad for sending you. Keep your Google profile and reviews current, even if you never pay for anything else.

67. "I only work in one small town." That's an advantage. Fewer competitors means each review, photo and page counts for more. Make sure your town is named clearly on your Google profile and your website.

68. "Big companies with big budgets will always beat me." On ads, they often will. On reviews, real photos and local know-how, a small owner who keeps up wins plenty of searches. Compete where money matters least.

69. "I'm going to retire or sell in a few years." Then your online presence is part of what you're selling. A buyer can see a profile with steady reviews, a site in the business's name, and a customer list with dates. Get those in order now, so they're worth something when you sell.

70. "Most of my work is repeat customers." That's a strong business. Repeat customers still forget when their next job is due, and a few always drift to whoever reminds them first. A short reminder text when the job is due, sent only to customers who agreed to texts, keeps them with you.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up landscaper counts last month's 30 jobs: 21 came from word of mouth, and 14 of those came through just two people, a neighbor and a property manager. If the property manager retires, they lose almost half their work. That's the reason to keep a few other ways for new customers to find them.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Count last month's jobs that came from word of mouth.
- [ ] Write down who sent them, and how many came from your top two sources.
- [ ] Search your own business name on Google and write down your newest photo and review dates.
- [ ] Pick the one thing you'd want more of: better jobs, closer jobs or a fuller slow season.

8 Not right now

The idea. "Not now" is often honest. The trick is to find out what "the right time" means to you, and whether waiting costs anything.

71. "Now's not a good time." It may not be. Ask yourself when would be, and write the date down. If you can't name one, start with something free today, like adding last month's job photos to your Google profile.

72. "It's my slow season, so I can't spend." Holding cash in a slow season is smart. But slow season is when you have time, so it's the best time for the free work: photos, review requests to the year's customers, and fixing your profile. Do the free things now, and decide on paid ones when cash comes back.

73. "It's my busy season. I can't think about it." Fair. Busy season isn't the time to start a big project. Do one small thing: text your review link to every customer you finish this week. Busy season is when you finish the most jobs, so it's when reviews come easiest.

74. "I'll start after the new year." That can work if you put it in your calendar now. Anything that takes months, like reviews and Google rankings, will be months behind wherever you start. If you're waiting, write down the date and the one thing you'll do first.

75. "Let me think about it." Do. Write down what you'd need to see to say yes: a price, a sample, an answer about contracts. Then ask for exactly that. Our free sample costs nothing to look at, so it can be part of your thinking.

76. "I need to talk to my spouse or partner first." You should. Decisions about money go better with everyone on board. Show them the actual work and the actual monthly price, not a sales pitch. A free sample made for your business gives you something real to show them.

77. "The economy is too uncertain." Being careful is right. Cut anything that doesn't bring work, and keep the cheap, steady things that do. When money is tight, customers compare more, so reviews and a site that works on a phone matter more, not less.

78. "I'm waiting until my new logo or truck wrap is ready." You don't have to. Reviews, photos and a profile that's kept up don't depend on your logo. Start those now and add the new look when it's ready.

79. "I'm changing my business name soon." Then hold off on anything printed, like postcards, signs and wraps. Your Google profile and reviews can stay with you: you edit the name on the same profile, though Google may ask you to verify the business again. Keep collecting reviews in the meantime.

80. "I'll start once I hire another crew." Hiring and marketing take time to line up. If the crew starts before the calls do, you pay wages for empty days. Start small a couple of months ahead, so work is coming in when the new crew starts.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up painter's slow months are December through February. Instead of waiting for spring, they spend two evenings in January texting their review link to the 40 customers they painted for last year, and they get 9 new reviews. When spring calls start, their profile shows nine reviews from the last three months.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Write down your slow months and your busy months.
- [ ] Write down the date you'd actually be ready to start, if you're waiting.
- [ ] Do one free thing today: add five recent job photos to your Google profile.
- [ ] Write down the three things you'd need to see to say yes.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Your first 25 customers texted

Win-back texts is $100 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

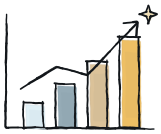
Win-back texts: growthatlocal.com/services/win-back-texts

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Your ad, designed and shown on the card

Neighborhood postcard is $400 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

Neighborhood postcard: growthatlocal.com/services/neighborhood-postcards



Part 5

Channels and control

9 That channel doesn't work for my trade

The idea. Owners often reject one kind of marketing because it didn't work once. Sometimes they're right about that channel. The question is what each channel is good for, and whether it was given a fair test.

81. "Facebook doesn't work for my trade." For bringing calls on its own, it often doesn't, especially for trades people hire once every few years. Where it helps is when someone has heard your name and checks you out. A page with recent job photos backs up the referral. A page that went quiet two years ago makes people wonder.

82. "Nobody reads email newsletters." Plenty go unread. But past customers who liked your work are more likely to open a short, useful email than a stranger is, and one well-timed email can remind them to call. Keep it short and send it monthly. Under the CAN-SPAM Act, you must honor an unsubscribe within 10 business days (FTC CAN-SPAM guide, ftc.gov).

83. "Postcards go straight in the trash." Many do. A postcard works by showing up on the same streets again and again, so your name is familiar when someone needs you, and one mailing isn't a fair test. Ours is a shared card: your ad sits on one card with other local businesses, and you approve the design.

84. "Lead sites like Angi and Thumbtack send junk." Shared leads often go to several businesses at once, so you end up racing on price. People who find you on your own Google profile or website already chose you. Many owners keep a lead site for slow weeks but don't let it be their only source.

85. "Websites don't matter. Everyone uses Google Maps." A lot of calls do come straight from the map. But people who aren't sure yet tap through to your website to see your work and your service area before they call. A slow or missing site loses those people.

86. "SEO is a scam." Some of what's sold as SEO is. Real SEO is plain work: a page for each service and town, your business listed the same way everywhere, and checking where you rank. Ask for a monthly report that shows where you rank for named searches, like your main service plus your town.

87. "Texting customers is pushy." Texting strangers is. Texting your own customers, who agreed to it, with a real reason, like a review request or a reminder that their next job is due, is a service. Federal rules require consent for marketing texts and a way to opt out by replying STOP (eCFR, 47 CFR 64.1200, ecfr.gov).

88. "Nextdoor is just people complaining." A lot of it is. But neighbors also ask, "Who do you use for this?" and those posts get answered by name. A happy customer tagging you there is word of mouth in writing. Make sure your business page exists, so they can find you to tag.

89. "Paid Google ads cost too much for my trade." For some trades they do, especially when each click is pricey and the job is small. For urgent, high-value jobs, like an emergency repair, ads can pay. If you try them, track every call they bring, and stop if the math doesn't work. We don't sell ads, so we have no

stake in this one.

90. "People ask ChatGPT for recommendations now, not Google." More people are trying chat assistants for local recommendations. Those assistants answer from what's already written about you online: your reviews, your Google profile and your website. So the same basics that help on Google help there too.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up roofer scores every channel they've tried on one sheet. Facebook posts: no calls they can trace, but customers mention seeing their photos. A lead site: 12 leads last year, 2 jobs, both won on price. Google profile: 20 calls last month. They keep Google first, keep posting photos to back it up, and stop paying for the lead site.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] List every kind of marketing you've tried and when you last did it.
- [ ] Next to each, write how many calls or jobs you can trace to it.
- [ ] Write down whether each one got a fair test: weeks of steady work, not one try.
- [ ] Pick one to keep, one to stop and one to try again properly.

10 Who stays in control

The idea. Owners don't want strangers speaking for their business, holding their accounts or owning their stuff. They're right. Every good arrangement keeps you as the owner, able to see the work and leave any time.

91. "I want to stay in control of my own business." You should. Hiring help shouldn't mean handing over the keys. Keep the domain, the Google profile and the website login in your name, see the work before it goes live, and keep the right to leave any month.

92. "I don't want someone else talking for me online." Fair. Your name is on every post and reply. Ask any company what they'll post and whether you can see it first. With us, you see a free sample before anything else, and you can text a change any time.

93. "If I leave, I'll lose everything." With some companies you would. Before you sign anywhere, get it in writing: who owns the domain, the photos and the profile when you leave. With us, your logo, photos, business details and domain name stay yours.

94. "I don't want to share my customer list." Your customer list is one of the most valuable things you own, so be careful with it. Ask any company, in writing, what they'll use it for and whether it will ever be shared. You can also start with services that don't need it, like your Google profile or your website.

95. "I don't want my ad on a postcard next to other businesses." That's a fair preference. Your own card to your own routes costs more but is all yours. Our postcard is shared: your ad sits on one card with other local businesses, and you approve the design. If shared isn't for you, skip it.

96. "What if you reply to a bad review the wrong way?" A bad reply can do more harm than the review. Ask how replies get written and whether you can see the tricky ones first. We write calm, professional replies and flag reviews that break Google's rules.

97. "Can you remove my bad reviews?" No. No one can honestly remove a real review, and anyone who says they can is a risk to your profile. You can reply calmly, and you can flag reviews that break Google's rules. A steady flow of new, real reviews is what pushes an old bad one down the page.

98. "I don't want to depend on one company for everything." Fair. Spread it out if you like, or start with one service and see how it goes. Everything we do is month to month and works on its own, so you can use one service, add more, or leave.

99. "I want to own my Google profile." You should be its primary owner, not your marketing company. On Google, only owners can add or remove people, and only the primary owner can hand over primary ownership (Google Business Profile Help, support.google.com). Add any helper as a manager, and you can remove them any time.

100. "I'd rather just keep doing what I'm doing." If it's working, that's a fine answer. The way to know is to check once a month: your calls, your reviews, and how you compare with the top three in your trade and town. Our free monthly report card does that check for you, even if you never buy anything.

Example. A made-up house cleaner checks what's in their name. The domain is: they bought it themselves years ago. The Google profile isn't: its primary owner is a web designer they stopped using. They text the designer asking to move primary ownership to them, and write down the date they asked.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Open "People and access" in your Google profile settings and write down who has access and what role.
- [ ] Remove anyone you no longer work with.
- [ ] Look up your domain at lookup.icann.org and write down who it's registered with.
- [ ] For anything not in your name, send a short written request to move it to you.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: A ranking check and 10 fixes

SEO is $400 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

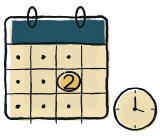
SEO: growthatlocal.com/services/seo

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Your first report card, this month

The monthly report card is free.

Monthly report card: growthatlocal.com/services/report-card



Your first 24 hours, in one list

If you only do five things this week, do these:

- [ ] Work out your average job and how many extra jobs a month a price needs to pay for itself (section 1).
- [ ] Check you're the primary owner of your Google profile and that your domain is in your name (sections 2 and 10).
- [ ] Count last month's calls, booked jobs and new reviews (section 4).
- [ ] Count how many of last month's jobs came from word of mouth, and from whom (section 7).
- [ ] Text your review link to five happy customers from the last month (section 3).



If you'd rather hand it off

Grow That Local does all nine for local businesses. Each service starts with a free sample, so you see the work before you pay.

Best fit for this guide: Websites. Free sample: a preview of your new site. Websites start at $1 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

Websites — **from $1 a month · 7-day full refund**
A fast, good-looking site that turns visitors into calls. Free sample: a preview of your new site.

Google Business Profile — **$200 a month · 7-day full refund**
Show up in the map when neighbors search for what you do. Free sample: a profile check-up with 10+ fixes.

Review requests — **$100 a month · 7-day full refund**
More 5-star reviews, without the awkward asking. Free sample: your first 10 requests sent.

Social media posts — **$200 a month · 7-day full refund**
Fresh posts every week, made from your real job photos. Free sample: two weeks of posts, ready to go.

Email newsletter — **$50 a month · 7-day full refund**
Stay top of mind, so past customers call you first. Free sample: your first newsletter, written.

SEO — **$400 a month · 7-day full refund**
Climb Google for the searches that bring in jobs. Free sample: a ranking check and 10 fixes.

Win-back texts — **$100 a month · 7-day full refund**
Bring past customers back for their next job. Free sample: your first 25 customers texted.

Neighborhood postcard — **$400 a month · 7-day full refund**
Your ad in mailboxes across nice neighborhoods. Free sample: your ad, designed and shown on the card.

Monthly report card — **free**
See how you stack up against local competitors. Free sample: your first report card, this month.

Text us at (423) 924-2014, or start at growthatlocal.com/start.

Sources

Every statistic above, with where to check it:

1. BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2026 (1,002 US adults): 97% read reviews for local businesses. brightlocal.com (sections 3 and 4)
2. Same survey: 74% only care about reviews written in the last three months. (section 3) (brightlocal.com)

Rules and guidance cited (not statistics), all checked November 12, 2026:

- Google Maps user contributed content policy, "Prohibited and restricted content" (no incentives for reviews; no discouraging negative reviews or selectively asking for positive ones; asking for genuine reviews without incentives is allowed): support.google.com (section 2)
- Federal Trade Commission, final rule banning fake reviews (announced August 2024, in effect October 2024): ftc.gov (section 2)
- Google Business Profile Help, "Manage your Business Profile owners and managers" (managers can be added without sharing a password; only owners add or remove people; only the primary owner transfers primary ownership): support.google.com (sections 3 and 10)
- FCC rules, 47 CFR 64.1200 (eCFR): consent for marketing texts and opt-out by reply. ecfr.gov (sections 3 and 9)
- FTC, CAN-SPAM Act compliance guide for business (honor opt-outs within 10 business days): ftc.gov (section 9)
- ICANN Lookup, the free public tool for domain registration data: lookup.icann.org (sections 2, 6 and 10)

GTL estimates

These are our own judgment, not measured facts:

1. Reviews and a good website keep working after you've paid for them; ads stop when the money stops (section 1). Reasoning: a review stays on your profile and a site stays up, but an ad only shows while its budget lasts.
2. Reviews and Google rankings take months to build (sections 1, 4 and 8). Reasoning: reviews arrive one job at a time, and rankings move with steady work over weeks and months, not in one go.
3. A fair monthly report fits on one page (section 2). Reasoning: an owner reads it between jobs, and the three things that matter (work done, numbers that moved, next steps) don't need more room.
4. Nearly every local customer looks a business up before calling, even after a referral (sections 4 and 7). Reasoning: with 97% reading reviews for local businesses (source 1), most people who hear your name will search it before they call.
5. Posts rarely bring calls on their own (sections 4 and 9). Reasoning: people seldom hire a trade from a post they scrolled past, but they do check a page after a neighbor names you, and an empty page there costs trust.
6. A one-person business can stay full with a kept-up Google profile, steady reviews and a phone-friendly site (section 7). Reasoning: those are what a neighbor sees first when they search, and a one-person business only needs a few new jobs a week.
7. Building your own site takes 10 to 20 hours the first time, then about an hour a month (section 6). Reasoning: picking a template, writing pages, sorting photos and fixing the phone view each take an evening or two the first time.

8. Past customers are more likely to open a short email from a business they used than strangers are (section 9). Reasoning: they already know your name and had a good job done, so the email isn't from a stranger.
9. Shared leads from lead sites often go to several businesses at once (section 9). Reasoning: these sites commonly send the same request to more than one pro, which pushes the job toward the lowest price.
10. Chat assistants answer local questions from what's already written about a business online (section 9). Reasoning: they have no other way to know a local business than its reviews, profile and website.
11. A buyer values a business with steady reviews, a site in its own name and a dated customer list (section 7). Reasoning: those keep bringing work after the owner leaves, which is what a buyer is paying for.

want it done for you?

Every part of this guide is something we do.

Each one starts with a free sample, so you see the work before you pay. Text us at (423) 924-2014 or start at growthatlocal.com/start.

Grow *That* Local