Grow That Local

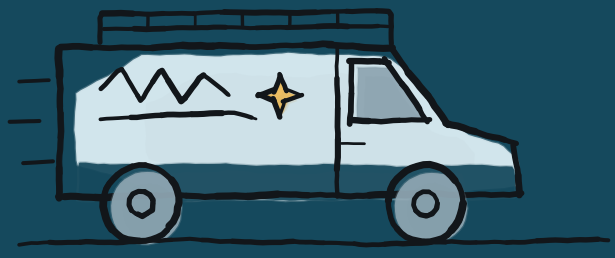
*a free guide*

# The painter marketing playbook

## Every step to more painting calls, one idea at a time.

For painting business owners who want more of the right calls.

- 31 short sections in 11 parts
- 131 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

This is the whole job of getting a painting company more calls, broken into 31 short sections. Each one holds one idea, one example and a short list of things you can do in the next 24 hours.

You don't need to read it in order. Pick the part that hurts most, do its checklist today, and come back next week for the next one.

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, reviews or results.

If you'd rather hand a part off, each area ends with the free sample we'll make for you.



*Part 1*

# Start here

## 1 Know which of your three jobs pays best per crew-day

**The idea.** Many painters run three businesses under one name: interiors, exteriors and cabinets. They book at different times of year, take different crews and pay very differently for a day's work. Before you spend a dollar on marketing, know which one you want more of. Every later section asks you to pick.

The number that matters is profit per crew-day, not job size. A big exterior that eats two weeks of weather delays can pay less per day than a quick kitchen of cabinets.

**Example (sample numbers).** A made-up painter pulls last year's invoices and writes three lines on a sticky note:

> **Interiors: average job $2,400, about 3 crew-days, $800 a day.**
>
> **Exteriors: average job $5,500, about 6 crew-days with weather, $917 a day.**
>
> **Cabinets: average job $4,200, about 4 crew-days, $1,050 a day.**

Now they know where to point their marketing in the slow months: cabinets first.

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Sort last year's jobs into interior, exterior and cabinets (add decks or commercial if you do them).
- [ ] For each group, write the average job price and the average number of crew-days.
- [ ] Divide price by crew-days. Circle the highest.
- [ ] Write down what one extra job a month of that type is worth over a year. Keep it on your phone.



*Part 2*

# Your website

## 2 Give the first screen three doors: inside, outside, cabinets

**The idea.** A homeowner looking at a peeling porch and one looking at a dated kitchen want different painters in their heads. If your first screen says only "Painting," both have to dig. Name your three jobs right up top, each with a real photo, so each visitor sees their job in one glance.

Then make the first step easy. Most painting jobs can be roughly sized from phone photos, so offer "Text us photos" right beside the call button.

**Example.** A first screen that works on a phone:

> **House painting across (your county). Inside, outside and kitchen cabinets.**
>
> **(Three photo tiles: a painted living room · a freshly painted house front · a painted kitchen)**
>
> **(Big button: Call for a free estimate) (Button: Text us photos of the rooms)**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Open your site on your phone. Can you tell in three seconds which jobs you do and how to reach you?
- [ ] Rewrite your top headline so it names painting, your area and your main job types.
- [ ] Pick one real photo for each job type. No stock photos of a smiling model with a roller.
- [ ] Add a "Text us photos" button next to the call button.

## 3 Show your prep, because that's where your price comes from

**The idea.** Two painting quotes for the same house can be far apart, and the homeowner can't see why. The difference is mostly prep: scraping, sanding, filling, caulking, priming, masking, protecting floors and plants. Paint looks the same on day one either way. Prep decides whether it peels in year two.

If your site doesn't show your prep, you're compared on price alone. A short "How we prep" page, with photos from real jobs, gives the homeowner a reason to pay for the careful painter.

**Example.** A made-up painter's "How we prep" page, in five photos with one line each:

> **1. Furniture moved and covered, floors taped with drop cloths.**
> **2. Loose paint scraped and sanded smooth on the window trim.**
> **3. Nail holes and dings filled, cracks caulked.**
> **4. Bare wood spot-primed before any color goes on.**
> **5. Plants and walkway covered before we spray.**

Under it, one line: "Ask any painter you're comparing us with to walk you through their prep."

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Take five prep photos on your next job, one per step above.
- [ ] Write one plain line under each.
- [ ] Put them on a "How we prep" page and link it from your homepage and every estimate.
- [ ] Add your prep steps, in plain words, to your written estimate so it's there when they compare quotes.

## 4 Give every job you want its own page

**The idea.** People search for the job, not the trade: "cabinet painting," "exterior house painters," "deck staining," "painting a 1950s house." One page per job tells Google and the homeowner you do exactly that. It also lets you show the right photos to the right person.

Two pages many painters miss: one for older homes (built before 1978, see section 26) and one for agents and landlords who need fast, neutral repaints (sections 28 and 29).

**Example.** A made-up painter's menu:

> **Interior painting · Exterior painting · Cabinet painting · Decks and fences · Older homes (lead-safe) · For agents and landlords · Areas we serve**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] List the jobs you want more of, starting with the one you circled in section 1.
- [ ] Check which ones have their own page. Write down the missing ones.
- [ ] For each missing page, pick five photos of that kind of job.
- [ ] Add an "Areas we serve" page that names every town you work in.

## 5 Answer the painting questions people are too polite to ask

**The idea.** Painting customers are letting a crew into their home for days. Their real worries are about living through the job, not the paint brand. How long will it smell? Do I have to move the furniture? Can we sleep in the bedroom tonight? Who picks the colors? Will you fix the dings in the drywall? What happens if it rains on exterior day?

Answer them in plain words on your site and you'll get calls from the people who would have kept browsing.

**Example.** One answer, written the way a painter would say it:

> **Can we stay home while you paint?**
> **Yes, most people do. We paint one or two rooms at a time, so the rest of the house stays normal. We use low-odor paint inside and open windows when the weather allows. We'll tell you which rooms are fine to sleep in that night and which need longer.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Write down the six questions you hear most at estimates, especially the ones about living through the job.
- [ ] Answer each in two or three short sentences.
- [ ] Add them near the bottom of your homepage and to each job page.
- [ ] Add your license number (if your state licenses painters) and proof of insurance where people can see them.

*or we can do it for you*

**Free sample: A preview of your new site**

Made before you pay anything. Websites start at $1 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

**Websites: growthatlocal.com/services/websites**



*Part 3*

# Your Google Business Profile

## 6 Get the basics right, then add every paint job as a service

**The idea.** When someone searches "painters near me," the map usually shows before anything else. Your Google Business Profile decides if you're in it. For painters, a common miss is the services list: a profile that says "Painter" and nothing else loses the "cabinet painting" and "deck staining" searches.

Google's rules are strict. Your business name must match the name on your sign and paperwork, with no extra keywords. If customers don't visit you at a shop, Google asks you to hide your address and set a service area instead. It doesn't accept P.O. boxes or virtual offices as addresses (Google Business Profile Help, support.google.com). Breaking these can get a profile suspended.

**Example.** A made-up painter lists their name as "(Your Name) Painting | Cabinet Painting | Best Painters." That breaks Google's rules. The fix: "(Your Name) Painting," primary category "Painter," and each job added as its own service with one line about it: interior painting, exterior painting, cabinet painting, deck staining, drywall repair, color consultation.

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Look at your profile the way a customer sees it, on your phone.
- [ ] Make the name match your sign and paperwork exactly. Remove any keywords.
- [ ] Set your primary category to "Painter." Look in the category list for others that fit work you really do.
- [ ] Add every job you do as a service, each with a one-line description.
- [ ] Take screenshots of the profile today, so you have a record if anything goes wrong. Make big changes one at a time.

## 7 Caption your photos with the color names

**The idea.** Homeowners shop for color before they shop for a painter. They search a paint color's name, save photos of it, and ask "what color is that house?" When your Google, Facebook and website photos name the color, brand and sheen, you show up in that hunt, and you look like the painter who knows color.

New photos every week also show you're active. A profile that hasn't changed in a year looks closed.

**Example.** A made-up painter's weekly upload, every Friday:

> **Five photos from this week's jobs, each captioned with the town, the job and the color: "Front door and shutters in (brand) (color name), satin. North side of town." Plus one short update: "Finished a full exterior this week. Two colors, new caulk on every window, and the porch ceiling in a pale blue."**

### Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Upload ten of your best job photos to your Google profile today.
- [ ] Caption each with the job, the town and the paint color name (ask the customer if they're happy for you to share it).
- [ ] Add a photo of your crew at work and your truck (with your crew's OK).
- [ ] Set a weekly phone reminder for five photos and one post.

*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 4*

# Reviews

## 8 Ask for the review when you hand over the touch-up kit

**The idea.** Reviews decide which painter gets called. In BrightLocal's 2026 survey, 97% of consumers said they read reviews for local businesses, and 74% look for reviews from the last three months (BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2026, brightlocal.com).

Painting gives you a perfect moment to ask: the final walkthrough, when you hand over the leftover paint. Make it a real touch-up kit. Label each can with the room, the color name and the sheen. Add a small brush. The homeowner is pleased, and you've just done something no other painter they called would have done. That's when you ask.

**Example.** A text sent from the driveway, right after the walkthrough:

> **Thanks for having us. Your touch-up kit is in the garage, one can per room, all labeled. If you have a minute, a quick Google review helps a small company like ours a lot: (your review link)**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Get your Google review link from your profile (look for "Ask for reviews" or "Share review form").
- [ ] Buy blank labels. Write room, color name, brand and sheen on every leftover can from now on.
- [ ] Save the text above in your phone as a shortcut.
- [ ] Text it to every customer whose job you finished in the last 30 days.

## 9 Answer every review, and turn the drip on the floor into proof

**The idea.** The next customer reads your replies, not just the review. In the same 2026 survey, 89% of consumers said they expect owners to respond to reviews, and 42% said they're unlikely to use a business that ignores its reviews (BrightLocal 2026, brightlocal.com).

Painting complaints are usually small and visible: paint on a light switch, a drip on the hardwood, a missed spot behind the door, a sticky window. They're easy to fix, and a reply that fixes one fast shows every future reader what happens if something goes wrong.

For a bad review: thank them, own what's fair, say exactly what you'll fix and when, and take it offline.

Then make the fix so good it can't be seen. The complaint painters get after a fix is "now I can see the patch." A small touch-up often shows as a shinier or duller spot, especially on eggshell, satin and gloss. When the fix is on a wall, repaint that wall from corner to corner, using the same color and sheen from

your color record (section 13). It costs you an hour. It saves the second bad review.

**Example.** A reply to a two-star review about paint drips on a hardwood floor and a patchy touch-up:

> **Thanks for telling us, and I'm sorry. Drips on your floor are exactly what our drop cloths are supposed to stop, and you shouldn't be able to see a touch-up. I'll come by this week to clean the floor and repaint that hallway wall corner to corner so it's one even finish. I'll call you today to set a time.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Reply to every unanswered review, good or bad.
- [ ] For good ones, name the job and the color ("Glad the navy door worked out").
- [ ] For bad ones, use the steps above, call the customer and book the fix.
- [ ] Make "corner to corner" your crew's rule for every wall touch-up after a complaint.
- [ ] Turn on review alerts so you see new ones the same day.

## 10 Keep reviews coming in winter, or spring shoppers see a quiet profile

**The idea.** Painting is seasonal. Exterior work bunches up in the warm months, so reviews do too. But 74% of shoppers look for reviews from the last three months (BrightLocal 2026, brightlocal.com). In early spring, when exterior shoppers arrive, those three months are winter. If you only asked after big exterior jobs, your profile looks quiet right when it matters most.

The fix is to ask after every interior room, cabinet job and touch-up in the slow months. Ratings matter too: 31% of consumers say they only use businesses with 4.5 stars or more (BrightLocal 2026, brightlocal.com).

GTL estimate: aim for at least two new reviews every month, all year. Our reasoning: shoppers look at the last three months, so you need several fresh reviews in every three-month window, including the one that ends in March.

**Example (sample numbers).** A made-up painter does about six interior and cabinet jobs a month in winter. If they ask every customer and half say yes, that's three new reviews a month going into spring.

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Count your reviews from the last 90 days.
- [ ] Count your reviews from last December through February. If it's fewer than six, winter is your gap.
- [ ] Ask the customers from your last five small jobs, too. One room counts.
- [ ] Look up the top three painters in your map results and write down their review counts.

*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**



*Part 5*

# Social media posts

## 11 Take before-and-after photos that actually show the change

**The idea.** Before-and-after photos are a painter's best ad. Benjamin Moore's own advice to homeowners says painters' Instagram and Facebook accounts "usually feature before-and-after photos," and tells them to look (Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com). So shoppers are checking yours.

Many painting before-and-afters fail for one reason: the two photos don't match. Different angle, different time of day, lights on in one and off in the other. The change gets lost. A wall that went from beige to white looks like nothing at all.

**Example.** A made-up painter's shot rules, taped inside the truck:

> **1. Stand in the same spot for before and after. Mark it with a bit of tape on the floor or a stake in the lawn.**
>
> **2. Same time of day for exteriors. Same lights on for interiors.**
>
> **3. Hold the phone level, at chest height.**
>
> **4. One close-up of the worst spot before (peeling trim, a water stain, a dated cabinet door).**
>
> **5. The same close-up after.**
>
> **6. A wide shot with the room or house tidy, drop cloths gone.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Tape those rules in every truck.
- [ ] On your next job, mark the "before" spot so the after matches.
- [ ] Make a shared photo album for job photos, one folder per job.
- [ ] Post one matched before-and-after today, with the color name in the caption.

## 12 Post the colors your town is choosing

**The idea.** Everyone thinking about painting is stuck on the same question: what color? Real local houses and rooms, with the color named, answer it better than any paint chip. Neighbors save and share those posts, and the painter who posts them becomes the one people ask.

Post each job with its colors. Then share it where neighbors talk: your town's Facebook group and Nextdoor, not only your own page.

**Example.** A made-up painter's post:

> **Finished this one in (neighborhood) today. Body in (brand) (color name), trim in (color name), front door in (color name). The owners were nervous about a dark door. We painted two sample boards first and they picked the second. Swipe for the before.**

Once a month: "Colors we used most this month," with three photos.

### Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Post your last finished job with every color named.
- [ ] Ask the homeowner if you can name the neighborhood. Never show the house number or a street sign.
- [ ] Share it in one local Facebook group or on Nextdoor, following the group's rules on business posts.
- [ ] Start a note on your phone: "colors this month." Add every job's colors to it.

*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**



*Part 6*

# Email newsletter and referrals

## 13 Keep every customer's colors on file, and tell them you did

**The idea.** A year after the job, almost nobody remembers what color their dining room is. When they need a touch-up, add a room or sell the house, they have to guess or peel a chip off the wall. If you kept the record, you're the obvious painter to call.

Keep a simple color record for every job: room or area, brand, color name, sheen, date. Email it to the customer at the end of the job. Then stay in touch a few times a year. Litmus's survey of marketers found an average return of $36 for every $1 spent on email (Litmus, litmus.com). That's a self-reported average across many industries, so treat it as a sign email is worth doing, not a promise for you.

**Example.** A made-up painter's end-of-job email:

> **Here's your color record, in case you ever need it:**
>
> **Living room walls: (brand) (color name), eggshell · Trim: (color name), semi-gloss · Front door: (color name), satin**
>
> **Keep this email. If you need a touch-up or another room, reply here and we'll have the colors ready.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Make a color record template on your phone: room, brand, color, sheen, date.
- [ ] Fill one in for every job you finished this month and email it to each customer.
- [ ] Put every past customer's email in one list in a simple email tool.
- [ ] Only email people who've worked with you or asked to hear from you, and include an unsubscribe link.

## 14 Send each email when that job is on people's minds

**The idea.** A newsletter that only sells gets deleted. One that matches what homeowners are thinking about that month gets opened. For painters the year has clear moments: exterior planning in late winter, porches and decks in spring, kids' rooms in summer, guest rooms before the holidays, kitchens in the dead of winter.

**Example.** A made-up painter's year of emails:

**Late winter:**
**"Exterior dates for spring are opening. Here's how to tell if your paint is failing, from the ground."**

**Spring:**
**"Your deck and fence after winter: when stain needs redoing."**

**Late summer:**
**"Kids' rooms, before school starts."**

**Fall:**
**"Guests coming for the holidays? Book interiors by (date)."**

**Winter:**
**"Kitchen cabinets: a new-looking kitchen, without a remodel."**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Put your five email topics in your calendar, each about six weeks before that season's work.
- [ ] Write the next one now, under 150 words.
- [ ] Add one photo of a real job that fits the season.
- [ ] End each email with one ask: reply, call, or forward it to a neighbor.

## 15 Get known at the paint store counter and with the trades around you

**The idea.** Some people hear about painting jobs before you do. Benjamin Moore tells homeowners looking for a painter to "call or visit your locally owned store for recommendations" (Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com). So the person behind the paint counter gets asked for names. So do interior designers, home stagers, flooring installers, drywall finishers and kitchen cabinet installers who don't paint.

You're at the paint store every week anyway. Make sure the staff know your name, your jobs, and how to reach you.

**Example.** A made-up painter leaves a small stack of cards at the counter of the store they buy from, with a line on the back: "Interiors, exteriors and cabinets in (town). Free estimates, usually this week." They also send the flooring installer they work with a photo of every job where they painted after the new floors went in.

**Do it in 24 hours**

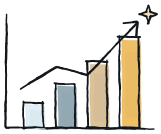
- [ ] Ask the staff at your paint store whether homeowners ever ask them for painters, and what they say.
- [ ] Leave a few cards there, if the store allows it.
- [ ] Write down five designers, stagers or trades you've crossed paths with on jobs.
- [ ] Text two of them a photo of a recent job you did together, and ask what they need from a painter.
- [ ] Thank anyone who has already referred you, in writing.

*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 7*

# SEO: showing up on Google

## 16 Win the searches that bring the job you circled

**The idea.** You can't rank for everything. Start with the searches that match the job you want more of from section 1, in the towns you want. For painters, the list splits by season: exterior work fills the warm months, interior and cabinet work carries the cold ones. If you only chase "painters near me," you miss the people who know exactly what they want.

**Example.** A made-up painter who wants more winter work writes this list:

> **cabinet painting (town) · kitchen cabinet refinishing (town) · interior painters near me · painting contractor (town) · drywall repair and painting · lead-safe painter (town)**

They search each one on their phone while parked in that town, and write down whether they show in the map, the regular results, or not at all.

**Build the winter page in summer.** The page that wins "cabinet painting (town)" in January has to exist long before January. GTL estimate: a new page can take a few months to settle in Google's results. Our reasoning: Google has to find it, read it and weigh it against older pages that already rank. So build each season's page while you're busy with the other season, and fill it with that job type's photos as you go.

**Use your color posts.** Section 7's color-named photos can live on your job pages too. A page that shows "(color name) on a 1960s ranch in (town)" matches what a homeowner hunting that color is typing.

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Write eight to ten searches: half for your best job type, the rest for your others.
- [ ] Search each one on your phone from inside your main town. Note where you appear.
- [ ] Note which competitors show up most often, and look at the page that ranks.
- [ ] Make sure each search has a matching page on your site (section 4).
- [ ] Mark the page for your next slow season and start it this week, not when the season arrives.

## 17 Fix the listings homeowners check before they let a crew inside

**The idea.** Before someone hands a stranger the key for a week, they check you out, and not only on Google. They look at BBB, Nextdoor, Angi or Yelp, Houzz (where designers and remodel shoppers look) and your state license, if your state licenses painters. If you're lead-safe certified, EPA runs a public search of certified firms (EPA firm search, cdxocsppapps.epa.gov). ChatGPT and Google's answer boxes also draw on public listings when someone asks for "a good painter near me."

A wrong phone number on any of them is a lost call. Names that don't match also make it harder for Google to be sure the listings are all you.

**Example.** A made-up painter does a 30-minute listing sweep. Their BBB page shows an old phone number. Their EPA firm listing is under their old company name. Their Houzz profile has no photos. That's three dead ends, fixed in one sitting.

**Do it in 24 hours: the 30-minute listing sweep**

- [ ] Write your exact business name, phone number and website on one line. That's your master copy.
- [ ] Check these against it: Google profile, BBB, Nextdoor, Angi or Yelp, Houzz, and your state license lookup if you have one.
- [ ] If you're lead-safe certified, find your firm in EPA's search and make sure the name and phone match.
- [ ] Search your old phone number in quotes on Google to catch listings you forgot.
- [ ] Ask ChatGPT "Who's a good house painter in (your town)?" Note who it names and which sites it mentions. Those are the next listings to fix.

*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**



*Part 8*

# Win-back texts and fast follow-up

## 18 Text back every missed call before they call the next painter

**The idea.** You can't answer the phone from a ladder with a brush in your hand. But the homeowner is working down a list. Benjamin Moore tells homeowners to "plan three consultations and get quotes from each" (Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com). So you're often one of three, and the first painter to reply gets the first look at the house.

Speed wins. In a well-known Harvard Business Review study, companies that contacted a lead within an hour were nearly seven times more likely to qualify that lead than companies that waited longer, and 23% never responded at all (HBR, "The Short Life of Online Sales Leads," 2011, hbr.org). The study is older and wasn't about painters, but the lesson fits.

GTL estimate: aim to reply within five minutes during work hours. Our reasoning: a homeowner booking three estimates usually books them in the order painters reply, and the first one in sets the standard the others are judged against.

**Example.** An automatic text sent when you miss a call:

> **Sorry we missed you. We're probably up a ladder. What are you looking to get painted? Reply here, or send a few photos of the rooms or the house and we'll get back to you quickly.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Turn on missed-call text-back on your business line (most phone systems and apps offer it).
- [ ] Record a voicemail greeting that asks callers to text photos.
- [ ] Decide who checks messages, and how often, while crews are working.
- [ ] Call back every missed call from last week today.

## 19 Follow up on every estimate that went quiet, for the real reason it stalled

**The idea.** Painting estimates go quiet for reasons that have nothing to do with you. They can't pick a color. One partner wants to wait. The HOA hasn't approved the color yet. It's November and they're thinking about spring. A generic "just checking in" doesn't help with any of those. A follow-up that solves the actual hold-up does.

GTL estimate: three follow-ups over about three weeks is a good default, then one more when the season turns. Our reasoning: painting is rarely urgent, so one message is easy to ignore, but more than three in a row starts to feel pushy.

**Example.** A made-up painter's follow-up texts:

> **Day 2:**
> **"Just checking the estimate came through OK. Any questions?"**
>
> **Day 7:**
> **"Still deciding on colors? We can paint two big sample boards so you can see them on your own walls at different times of day."**
>
> **Day 14:**
> **"If you're in an HOA, we can help fill in the color approval form. Just send it over."**
>
> **When the season turns:**
> **"We're booking spring exteriors now. Want us to hold a week for you?"**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Pull every estimate from the last 90 days that didn't turn into a job.
- [ ] Next to each, write the likely reason: color, timing, HOA, price, partner, or don't know.
- [ ] Send each one the follow-up that matches its reason.
- [ ] Set reminders for day 2, 7 and 14 on every new estimate.

## 20 Use paint age as your calendar for old customers

**The idea.** You know when you painted every house and room. That's a calendar of future work. InterNACHI's life-expectancy chart puts exterior paint at 7 to 10 years and interior paint at 10 to 15 (InterNACHI, nachi.org). Sun, prep and paint quality change that a lot, but it gives you a clear, honest reason to check in.

There's a closer reason too: a one-year look. Caulk shrinks, a door sticks, a scuff shows up. A free one-year visit to fix small things is easy for you, and it puts you in the house again when they're thinking about the next room.

**Example.** A text to a customer whose house you painted six years ago:

> **Hi, it's (your name), your painter. We did your exterior back in (year). The south side usually fades first, so we're offering a free look while we're working nearby next week. Want us to stop by?**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Sort past jobs by year and type.
- [ ] Pick 25 customers: exteriors five or more years ago, and interiors from about a year ago.
- [ ] Check you have their permission to text. Federal rules require consent for marketing texts, and you must stop when someone replies STOP (FCC, fcc.gov). If unsure, ask a lawyer.
- [ ] Send the check-in text to those who've agreed to hear from you.

*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**



*Part 9*

# On the street: the neighbors, the yard sign and the mailbox

## 21 The neighbors are watching the job, so give them something to ask about

**The idea.** An exterior repaint is a show that runs for days on one street. Neighbors walk dogs past it, slow down in their cars, and watch the color go on. Many of their houses were built at the same time and are fading at the same rate. The question they all want to ask is "what color is that?"

Make it easy to ask and easy to answer. Keep the site tidy, park the marked truck where it's seen, and give the crew a stack of cards that answer the color question and lead to your number.

GTL estimate: an exterior repaint keeps your crew visible on one street for three to six working days. Our reasoning: prep, two coats on the body and trim, and weather days add up, and every one of those days is a day neighbors see you.

**Example.** A made-up painter's "color card," handed to any neighbor who stops to ask:

> **Front: a photo of the house you're painting, the colors named (body, trim, door).**
>
> **Back: "Thinking about your own house? Free estimate, usually this week." (Phone number, large.)**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Print 100 simple color cards for your current exterior job (ask the homeowner first).
- [ ] Tell the crew: if a neighbor stops, be friendly, hand over a card, and keep working.
- [ ] Clean the site every evening: ladders down, cans closed, drop cloths folded.
- [ ] Park the marked truck facing the street, not around the corner.

## 22 Leave a yard sign on the freshly painted house

**The idea.** A freshly painted house is your best billboard while it still looks brand new. Everyone on the street notices it, and the sign answers "who did that?" Many painters either skip the sign or take it down the day they leave.

A good painter's sign says who painted it and how to call, big enough to read from a moving car. Nothing else.

**Example.** A made-up painter's yard sign:

> **FRESHLY PAINTED BY (YOUR NAME) PAINTING**
> **(phone number, as big as the name)**
> **(Small QR code to that job's before-and-after photos)**

They ask at the estimate, not at the end: "Can we leave our sign up for two weeks after we finish? We'll come back for it."

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Stand across the street from your sign. Can you read the phone number?
- [ ] Add the sign question to your estimate checklist.
- [ ] Check your town's and the HOA's rules on yard signs. Some HOAs limit them.
- [ ] Make the QR code go to a page with photos of jobs in that area.

## 23 Mail the street when the job is done

**The idea.** When the crew leaves, the neighbors are still looking at the result. A postcard to the homes around a finished job turns that attention into calls. Homes in the same subdivision were often painted by the builder at the same time, so many of them are fading together.

GTL estimate: expect only a few calls per thousand cards from a single mailing. Our reasoning: only the few homes already thinking about painting will act that month. Mailing the same streets more than once, right after jobs nearby, does better than a one-off blast.

**Example.** A made-up painter's postcard front:

> **We just painted a home on your street. Here's the before and after.**
> **(Matched before-and-after photo, house number hidden)**
> **Thinking about yours? Free estimate, usually this week. (Phone number, large)**

**Do it in 24 hours**

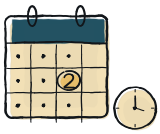
- [ ] Pick your last three finished exteriors.
- [ ] Draw a circle of about 100 to 200 homes around each on a map.
- [ ] Write the card in two sentences: what you just did nearby, and what you'll do for them.
- [ ] Get a print and mail quote from a local printer or the post office's Every Door Direct Mail service.

*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 10*

# The painting moments: seasons, color, older homes, cabinets, agents, landlords and HOAs

## 24 Market inside in the cold, outside before the warm

**The idea.** Painting has two seasons running side by side. Exteriors depend on weather: temperature, rain and dew. Interiors don't. It's easy to let the weather decide what you sell. The better plan is to market each season about six weeks before it starts, so the calendar is already full when it arrives.

Check the data sheet for the paint you use. The limits are often wider than people think. Sherwin-Williams, for example, sells an exterior paint it says can go on "down to 35° F" (Sherwin-Williams Duration Exterior, sherwin-williams.com). Other products have other limits. Knowing yours tells you how many weeks you can really sell exteriors in spring and fall.

**Example.** A made-up painter's year:

> **Jan to Feb:**
> **Market cabinets and interiors. Email past exterior customers to book spring dates.**
>
> **Mar to Apr:**
> **Exterior estimates. Postcards around last year's jobs.**
>
> **May to Sep:**
> **Exterior season. Yard signs and color cards on every job.**
>
> **Oct:**
> **Last exteriors. "Before the holidays" interior push.**
>
> **Nov to Dec:**
> **Interiors, cabinets and touch-up visits. Referral thank-yous.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Look at the last two years of invoices by month. Mark your three slowest months.
- [ ] Pick one marketing action to start six weeks before each slow month.
- [ ] Look up the lowest application temperature for the exterior paint you use most.
- [ ] Put "start booking exteriors" in your calendar for six weeks before your first painting weather.

## 25 Offer a color consultation as the first step

**The idea.** Color is a common place for a painting job to stall (section 19). A homeowner who can't decide doesn't say no. They just don't call back. A color consultation turns that stall into a booked visit. You come out, look at the light and the floors, and paint real sample boards. It's a reason to meet, and the painter who helped choose the color is in the best spot to paint it.

You can offer it free with an estimate, or charge for it and credit it to the job. Either way, it moves the decision forward.

GTL estimate: homeowners who get a color consultation book more often than those who get an estimate alone. Our reasoning: the visit removes the biggest reason painting estimates stall, and the homeowner has already spent time choosing with you.

**Example.** A made-up painter's estimate page line:

> **Not sure about colors? We'll bring large sample boards and help you choose on your own walls, in your own light. Ask for a color visit with your estimate.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Decide whether your color visit is free with an estimate or paid and credited to the job.
- [ ] Buy a few large poster boards for samples.
- [ ] Add the color visit to your website, your estimate form and your follow-up texts.
- [ ] Offer it to every quiet estimate from section 19 that stalled on color.

## 26 Make lead-safe work in older homes your strongest trust signal

**The idea.** A lot of the houses you paint are old. About 47% of owner-occupied US homes were built before 1980, and their median age was 42 years in 2024 (NAHB analysis of Census American Community Survey data, Eye On Housing (eyeonhousing.org)). EPA cites a 2021 analysis estimating that 30.9 million pre-1978 houses still contain lead-based paint, and 3.8 million of them have a child under six living there (EPA fact sheet, 2024, epa.gov).

So federal lead rules aren't a side issue for painters. They come up on estimates in every older neighborhood. EPA's Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule says:

- Anyone paid to disturb paint in homes, apartments or child care facilities built before 1978 must be a certified firm, sole owners included, and workers must be trained in lead-safe practices (EPA, epa.gov).
- Small repair jobs are exempt if they disturb 6 square feet or less of paint per room inside, or 20 square feet or less outside. Window replacement and demolition are always covered (EPA, epa.gov).
- Firms may not advertise covered work without certification (EPA, epa.gov).

- Give the owner EPA's *Renovate Right* pamphlet no more than 60 days before starting, and get a signed receipt (40 CFR 745.84, law.cornell.edu). Keep your records for three years after the job (40 CFR 745.86, law.cornell.edu).
- Some states run their own program. Check yours.

Many homeowners have never heard of it. A painter who explains it calmly, shows the certification and does the job by the book looks like the safest choice. Certified firms can put EPA's Lead-Safe Certified Firm logo, with their certificate number, on vehicles, uniforms and other materials. Uncertified firms can't, and neither can your subcontractors unless they're certified (EPA logo guidelines, epa.gov).

**Example.** A made-up painter's line on every estimate for a pre-1978 home:

> **Your home was built before 1978, so federal rules apply to this job. We're an EPA lead-safe certified firm. Here's your copy of EPA's *Renovate Right* booklet. Before we start, we'll show you how we'll contain dust and clean up each day.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] If you're not certified, look up the certified renovator course and firm certification on EPA's site, or your state's program if it runs its own.
- [ ] If you are, check your firm in EPA's public search and put the logo, with your certificate number, on your site and truck.
- [ ] Add "What year was the home built?" to your estimate form.
- [ ] Print a stack of *Renovate Right* booklets and a receipt form for the truck.
- [ ] Write a short "Older homes" page in plain words (section 4). Don't promise anything about health. Explain what you do.

## 27 Sell cabinet painting as the kitchen they get without a remodel

**The idea.** Cabinet painting has a different buyer from wall painting. They aren't comparing you with other painters. They're comparing you with a kitchen remodel. In the 2025 Cost vs Value report, even a minor midrange kitchen remodel averaged $28,458 nationally (JLC Cost vs Value 2025, jlconline.com). Your cabinet price, next to that number, is the whole pitch.

It needs its own page, its own photos and its own promise about the kitchen being out of action. Homeowners worry about two things: how long they'll lose the kitchen, and whether the finish will chip. Answer both up front, using the cure times on your product's data sheet.

**Example.** A made-up painter's cabinet page headline and first lines:

> **A new-looking kitchen, without the remodel.**
>
> **We paint your cabinet boxes in place and finish the doors in our shop. Your kitchen is back in use in (your real downtime). We'll tell you how long the finish needs before heavy scrubbing, from the maker's own data sheet.**

At estimates, they bring one finished sample door in a popular color, so the homeowner can touch the finish.

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Make a cabinet painting page with five matched before-and-after kitchens.
- [ ] Write down your kitchen downtime and finish cure times from your product's data sheet, and put them on the page.
- [ ] Paint one sample cabinet door to carry to estimates.
- [ ] Email past interior customers in older kitchens about cabinets this winter (section 14).

## 28 Be the painter agents call the week a house lists

**The idea.** When a house goes on the market, the agent often wants fresh, neutral paint fast. Buyers notice: 83% of buyers' agents in NAR's 2025 survey said staging made it easier for buyers to picture the property as their future home (NAR Profile of Home Staging 2025, nar.realtor). Fresh paint is part of that picture.

Agents care about three things: speed, a price before they ask the seller, and a painter they don't have to babysit. Give them all three and one agent can send you a steady stream of jobs.

GTL estimate: listing repaints usually need to start within one to two weeks of the agent's call. Our reasoning: agents line up photos and the listing date around the paint, so a painter who can't start soon gets skipped.

**Example.** A made-up painter's one-page sheet for agents:

> **Listing repaints in (town). Estimate from photos within one business day. Neutral color set ready, so your seller doesn't have to choose. Start within (your real lead time). Photos sent to you when we finish.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Pick a short list of neutral wall, trim and ceiling colors you'll offer for listings.
- [ ] Make the one-page sheet above with your real lead time.
- [ ] Drop it at two local real estate offices, or send it to two agents you know.
- [ ] Add "For agents and landlords" to your site menu (section 4).

## 29 Make property managers' turnovers easy, and know the lead rule that applies to them

**The idea.** Every time a tenant moves out, the unit usually needs paint, fast, in the same colors as last time. Property managers want a painter who keeps the colors on file, quotes per unit, and turns it around before the next tenant arrives. That's steady work in every season.

The lead rule matters here too. Rental housing built before 1978 is covered by EPA's RRP Rule, and property management companies that perform, offer or claim to do this work must themselves be lead-safe certified (EPA, epa.gov). A painter who handles that for them takes a real worry off their plate.

**Example.** A made-up painter's offer to a property manager:

> **Standard colors on file for each property. A per-unit price for one-, two- and three-bedroom turnovers. Started within (your real lead time) of move-out. Lead-safe certified for your older buildings.**

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Write a simple per-unit turnover price list, based on your real numbers.
- [ ] Make a color record template for rental properties (section 13).
- [ ] List three property managers or landlords in your area and call or email one.
- [ ] Mention your lead-safe certification if you have it.

## 30 Know the HOA color rules better than the homeowner does

**The idea.** About 78.1 million Americans live in 373,000 community associations: HOAs, condos and co-ops (Foundation for Community Association Research, 2025 Statistical Review, reported by National Law Review (natlawreview.com), April 2026). Many of those associations limit exterior colors and need a form approved before work starts. For an exterior painter, the HOA is often the hidden reason a job is late or stalls.

Turn it into your edge. Keep a file of each local HOA's approved color list and approval form. Help the homeowner fill it in. Then you're the painter who knows "the (HOA name) palette," and neighbors in that HOA hear about you.

**Example.** A made-up painter's estimate note for a home in an HOA:

> **Your HOA needs color approval before we start. We have their approved color list and the form. Pick from the list, and we'll fill in the form with you and attach the color chips. On our past jobs there, approval has taken about (your real time).**

### Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] List the HOAs where you've painted in the last two years.
- [ ] For each, find the approved color list and approval form (ask the homeowner or the HOA manager).
- [ ] Save them in one folder on your phone.
- [ ] Add "Are you in an HOA?" to your estimate form.

*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 11*

# Tracking and your report card

## 31 Count estimates and jobs by type, not likes, and check yourself against the top 3

**The idea.** You can't fix what you don't measure. Many painters know how many jobs they did, but not which job types came from where, or how many estimates it took. Track a few numbers every week, split by interior, exterior and cabinets, and once a month see how you stack up against the painters above you on the map.

Be exact with words. A tap on your call button isn't a call, and a call isn't a customer. Keep them separate.

Two numbers matter more for painters than for most trades:

- **Win rate by job type.** Jobs booked divided by estimates done, for interiors, exteriors and cabinets separately. If cabinets win one in two and exteriors one in five, you know where your estimate time pays.
- **Why estimates stalled.** Keep the tally from section 19: color, timing, HOA, price, partner. If "color" leads, the color visit (section 25) is your next fix. If "price" leads, your prep page (section 3) isn't doing its job.

**Example (sample numbers).** A made-up painter's weekly sheet:

> **Calls and texts answered: 14 · Estimates done: 6 (interior 3, exterior 2, cabinets 1) · Jobs booked: 2 · Where they came from: Google 6, referral 3, yard sign 2, postcard 1, other 2 · Stalled this week: color 2, HOA 1, timing 1**

Once a month: win rate by job type, review count, star score, and their spot in the map for "painters near me," next to the top three in town.

**Do it in 24 hours**

- [ ] Make a weekly sheet with the lines above.
- [ ] Work out last quarter's win rate for each job type from your estimates and invoices.
- [ ] Ask every new caller "How did you hear about us?" and write it down.
- [ ] Check the Performance section of your Google profile for calls and website clicks.
- [ ] Write down the review count and star score of the top three painters on your map today.

*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 eight things this week, do these:

- [ ] Work out your profit per crew-day for interiors, exteriors and cabinets (section 1).
- [ ] Add "Text us photos" next to your call button (section 2).
- [ ] Fix your Google name and category, and add every job as a service (section 6).
- [ ] Label every leftover can and text a review request to last month's customers (section 8).
- [ ] Turn on missed-call text-back (section 18).
- [ ] Follow up every quiet estimate for the reason it stalled (section 19).
- [ ] Add "What year was the home built?" and "Are you in an HOA?" to your estimate form (sections 26 and 30).
- [ ] Start your weekly numbers sheet (section 31).



# If you'd rather hand it off

Every part of this playbook is something Grow That Local does for painters. Each one starts with a free sample, so you see the work before you pay.

**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: 97% of consumers read reviews for local businesses. brightlocal.com (section 8)
2. Same survey: 74% look for reviews written in the last three months. (sections 8, 10) (brightlocal.com)
3. Same survey: 89% expect business owners to respond to reviews. (section 9) (brightlocal.com)
4. Same survey: 42% are unlikely to use a business that ignores its reviews. (section 9) (brightlocal.com)
5. Same survey: 31% will only use a business with 4.5 stars or more. (section 10) (brightlocal.com)
6. Litmus: average $36 return for every $1 spent on email (self-reported marketer survey). litmus.com (section 13)
7. Harvard Business Review, "The Short Life of Online Sales Leads" (2011): contacting within an hour made qualifying a lead nearly 7 times more likely. hbr.org (section 18)
8. Same study: 23% of companies never responded to the lead. (section 18) (hbr.org)
9. InterNACHI Standard Estimated Life Expectancy Chart: exterior paint 7 to 10 years. nachi.org (section 20)
10. Same chart: interior paint 10 to 15 years. (section 20) (nachi.org)
11. Sherwin-Williams, Duration Exterior Acrylic Latex product page: "Low temperature application down to 35° F." sherwin-williams.com (section 24)
12. NAHB Eye On Housing (March 2026), from the Census American Community Survey: about 47% of owner-occupied homes were built before 1980 (2024 data). eyeonhousing.org (section 26)
13. Same source: median age of owner-occupied homes was 42 years in 2024. (section 26) (eyeonhousing.org)
14. EPA, "Understanding EPA's Lead-Based Paint Dust Rule" fact sheet (October 2024): a 2021 analysis estimated 30.9 million pre-1978 houses still contain lead-based paint. epa.gov (section 26)
15. Same fact sheet: 3.8 million of those houses have one or more children under six living there. (section 26) (epa.gov)
16. JLC Cost vs Value Report 2025: minor kitchen remodel (midrange), national average job cost $28,458. jlconline.com (section 27)
17. NAR 2025 Profile of Home Staging: 83% of buyers' agents said staging made it easier for buyers to visualize the property as a future home. nar.realtor (section 28)
18. Foundation for Community Association Research, 2025 Statistical Review (released April 1, 2026): 78.1 million Americans live in community associations. natlawreview.com (section 30)
19. Same release: 373,000 community associations (HOAs, condominiums and cooperatives). (section 30) (natlawreview.com)


### Rules and guidance cited (not statistics):


- Google Business Profile guidelines (business name, service-area address, no P.O. boxes): support.google.com (section 6)
- Benjamin Moore, "How to Find and Hire a Painting Contractor" (ask your local store, check before-and-after photos, get three quotes): benjaminmoore.com (sections 11, 15, 18)
- FCC, unwanted robocalls and texts, consent and STOP: fcc.gov (section 20)

- EPA Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Program (who must be certified, property managers, authorized state programs): epa.gov (sections 26, 29)
- EPA RRP for contractors (6 sq ft interior and 20 sq ft exterior minor-repair limits; no advertising covered work without certification): epa.gov (section 26)
- 40 CFR 745.84, pamphlet no more than 60 days before work, with written acknowledgment: law.cornell.edu (section 26)
- 40 CFR 745.86, records kept 3 years after the renovation: law.cornell.edu (section 26)
- EPA Lead-Safe Certified Firm logo use guidelines: epa.gov (section 26)
- EPA search for lead-safe certified firms: cdxocsppapps.epa.gov (sections 17, 26)

# GTL estimates

**These are our own judgment, not measured facts:**

1. Aim for at least two new reviews a month, all year (section 10). Reasoning: shoppers look at the last three months, so you need fresh reviews in every three-month window, including the one that ends in March.
2. Reply to new leads within five minutes in work hours (section 18). Reasoning: homeowners booking three estimates tend to book them in the order painters reply.
3. Three follow-ups over about three weeks, then one when the season turns (section 19). Reasoning: painting is rarely urgent, so one message is easy to ignore, but more than three in a row feels pushy.
4. An exterior repaint keeps your crew visible on one street for three to six working days (section 21). Reasoning: prep, two coats on body and trim, and weather days add up.
5. A single postcard mailing brings only a few calls per thousand cards (section 23). Reasoning: only the few homes already thinking about painting act that month.
6. Homeowners who get a color consultation book more often than those who get an estimate alone (section 25). Reasoning: the visit removes the biggest reason painting estimates stall.
7. Listing repaints usually need to start within one to two weeks of the agent's call (section 28). Reasoning: agents schedule photos and the listing date around the paint.
8. A new page can take a few months to settle in Google's results (section 16). Reasoning: Google has to find it, read it and weigh it against older pages that already rank.

*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