Grow That Local

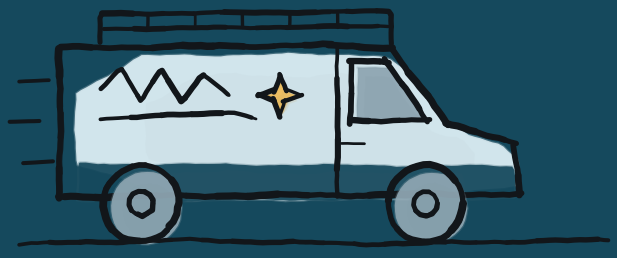
a free guide

The HVAC storm and season playbook

What to post, text and mail before each peak, through heat waves and cold snaps, and in the shoulder weeks.

For HVAC business owners planning their busy and slow months.

- 8 short sections in 5 parts
- 33 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

HVAC has two busy seasons and two quiet ones. The weather sets the dates, and it usually gives you a few days' warning. The companies that do well set up before each peak, run the rush calmly, and fill the shoulder weeks with work that doesn't break.

This guide takes you through that year one moment at a time. Each section says what homeowners search for and worry about right then, gives you a post, a text and a postcard to copy, and ends with a checklist you can finish in 24 hours.

Three 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, homes or results.
- Texts go only to customers who've agreed to hear from you by text. Say who it's from, and stop the moment someone replies STOP or asks you to. The FCC says consent is needed for automated texts to cell phones and can be taken back at any time, in any reasonable way (FCC, fcc.gov).

The search phrases in each section are examples of how homeowners word things. To see your own area's two peaks, compare "ac repair" and "furnace repair" for your state in Google Trends (trends.google.com). It shows interest on a 0 to 100 scale, compared with all searches in that place and time, not a count of searches (Google Trends Help, support.google.com).



Part 1

Six weeks before each peak

1 Find your two peaks, then count back six weeks

The moment. Any quiet week in spring or fall. Before you can plan "six weeks ahead," you need to know when your rushes really start.

The pattern shows up in national energy use. The US Energy Information Administration says homes have both a summer and a winter peak in electricity use: nearly every home with air conditioning cools with electricity, and even homes heated by gas or oil use electricity for furnace fans and pumps (EIA, Today in Energy, eia.gov). Which peak is bigger depends on where you are. A Phoenix company lives on cooling. A Minneapolis company lives on heating.

What homeowners search and worry about. Nothing yet. In mild weeks, few people think about their system until it fails. Your best audience now is your own customer list.

Example: what to text (made up), to maintenance members, six weeks before the first hot week.

> **Hi [first name], it's [your name] at [business]. Summer's about six weeks out. Pick your tune-up time now and you'll be done before the first heat wave: [booking link]. Reply STOP to opt out.**

Example: what to post (made up).

> **Spring tune-up dates are open. Book now and we'll check your AC before the first hot week, while there's still room on the schedule.**

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Look at last year's calendar. Write down the dates of your first big repair rush, hot and cold.
- [ ] Count back six weeks from each. Put "start tune-up push" on those dates.
- [ ] Compare "ac repair" and "furnace repair" for your state in Google Trends to check your peaks.
- [ ] Sort your customer list by neighborhood, so tune-ups can be booked street by street.

2 Book tune-up season before the weather turns

The moment. Four to six weeks before each peak. Spring for cooling, fall for heating.

ENERGY STAR advises checking the cooling system in spring and the heating system in fall, because contractors get busy once summer and winter arrive, and recommends checking filters every month (ENERGY STAR maintenance checklist, energystar.gov). That's your reason to call, in a government agency's own words.

GTL estimate: start booking four to six weeks before your first usual hot or cold week. Our reasoning: reminders need a few weeks to work, and once the weather turns, repair calls crowd tune-ups off the schedule.

What homeowners search and worry about. "AC tune up near me," "furnace inspection cost," "how often should I service my AC." The worry is a breakdown on the worst day of the year.

Example: what to text (made up), to fill gaps by neighborhood.

> **Hi [first name], [business] here. We'll be on your street Tuesday. Want a tune-up while we're there? Reply YES for a time, or STOP to opt out.**

Example: what to mail (made up). A postcard to neighborhoods with systems 10 or more years old: "Tune-up dates open now. Book before the first hot week, not during it."

Do it in 24 hours

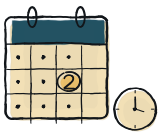
- [ ] Email and text maintenance members first. Then the rest of the list a week later.
- [ ] Put an online booking link for tune-ups on your website and Google profile.
- [ ] Write and save your "we'll be on your street" text.
- [ ] Check your van stock against the parts that fail most in your hottest and coldest weeks.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Your first 25 customers texted

We'll start with your tune-up reminders. Win-back texts is $100 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

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



Part 2

Heat waves

3 Two days before a heat wave

The moment. The forecast turns hot for the end of the week. You have a day or two before the calls pile up.

The National Weather Service's HeatRisk forecast shows heat danger for your area up to seven days ahead, on a scale from 0 (little or no risk) to 4 (extreme) (NWS HeatRisk, wpc.ncep.noaa.gov). When your area turns orange or red, get ready.

What homeowners search and worry about. "AC not cooling," "AC running but not cold," "how to keep house cool in heat wave." The worry is a parent, a baby or a pet in a house that won't cool.

Example: what to post (made up).

> **Heat is coming Thursday. Before you call us, check three things: is the thermostat on Cool and set below the room temperature, is the breaker for the outdoor unit on, and when did you last change the filter? Still warm? Call or text us. We're booking repairs now.**

That post saves your techs from some easy calls and earns trust for the big job later.

Example: what to text (made up), to maintenance members.

> **[business] here. Heat's coming Thursday. As a member, you're on our priority list if anything goes wrong. Save our number: [phone]. Reply STOP to opt out.**

Do it in 24 hours (before the heat)

- [ ] Check the HeatRisk forecast for your area each morning in summer.
- [ ] Post the "three things to check" post two days before the heat.
- [ ] Switch your website banner to "AC repair booking now."
- [ ] Agree with your team on overtime and on-call for the hot days.

4 Days 2 and 3 of the heat: run the rush honestly

The moment. The heat is here, and the phone hasn't stopped. You can't reach everyone today.

GTL estimate: no-AC calls pile up fastest on the second and third hot day. Our reasoning: houses hold some cool on the first day, then heat up, and older units that have run nonstop for two days are the ones that quit.

What homeowners search and worry about. "Emergency AC repair," "AC repair near me open now," "how long to wait for AC repair." The worry is being forgotten in a queue.

Example: the order of visits (made up).

> **First: no cooling with an elderly person, a baby or someone with a health condition at home. Then maintenance members. Then everyone else, in route order. Every caller gets an honest time window and a text when the tech is on the way.**

Example: what to post (made up), on day 2.

> **We're running every tech we have. Today's wait for a new repair is about [hours]. If someone at home is elderly, a baby or unwell, tell us when you call and we'll move you up.**

Do it in 24 hours (during the heat)

- [ ] Post today's honest wait time each morning.
- [ ] Give every caller a time window, and text them when the tech leaves.
- [ ] Book visits in tight route clusters so each tech sees more homes.
- [ ] Turn on missed-call text-back, or extend phone hours for the week.
- [ ] Ask every repair customer for a review once the house is cool again.



Part 3

Cold snaps

5 Before and during a cold snap

The moment. A hard freeze is in the forecast for the weekend. Furnaces that limped through fall will be pushed hard, and no-heat calls are emergencies.

Safety comes first in winter. If a caller smells gas, they should leave the house and call the gas company from outside. If they're using a space heater while they wait, the U.S. Fire Administration says to keep it at least 3 feet from anything that can burn and plug it straight into a wall outlet (USFA, usfa.fema.gov). If they have gas appliances, the CDC advises a carbon monoxide alarm near every sleeping area (CDC, cdc.gov).

What homeowners search and worry about. "Furnace not working," "heat not turning on," "emergency furnace repair," "is it safe to use a space heater." The worry is a cold house tonight, and kids or a parent in it.

Example: what to post (made up), two days before.

> **Hard freeze Saturday. Before you call us: is the thermostat on Heat, is the furnace switch on (it often looks like a light switch near the furnace), and is the filter clean? Smell gas? Leave the house and call the gas company from outside. Never heat the house with the oven.**

Older furnaces are the ones to reach first. InterNACHI puts a furnace's life at 15 to 25 years (InterNACHI, nachi.org).

Example: what to text (made up), to customers with furnaces 15 or more years old.

> **Hi [first name], [business] here. Hard freeze this weekend. If your furnace has been noisy or slow to start, we have a few check-up slots Friday. Reply YES, or STOP to opt out.**

Do it in 24 hours (before the cold)

- [ ] Post the cold-snap checks and gas safety line two days before.
- [ ] Write a five-line no-heat phone script with the safety questions first.
- [ ] Decide your after-hours fee and say it on every after-hours call, before dispatch.
- [ ] Stock igniters, flame sensors and inducer motors on every van.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Two weeks of posts, ready to go

Written for your next heat wave or cold snap. Social media posts is $200 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

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



Part 4

The shoulder weeks

6 Fall: heating checks and furnace safety

The moment. September and October. The AC rush is over, and the first cold mornings are coming.

What homeowners search and worry about. "Furnace tune up," "carbon monoxide detector placement," "furnace smells like burning first time." The worry is safety and cost: is the furnace safe to start, and will it last the winter?

Example: what to post (made up).

> **First time running the heat this year? A short burning smell for a few minutes is often dust burning off. If it lasts, or you smell gas, turn it off and call. And test your CO alarms this week.**

Example: what to text (made up), to every customer with a furnace.

> **Hi [first name], it's [your name] at [business]. Fall heating checks are open. We'll clean, test and check for safety before the first cold week. Reply YES for times, or STOP to opt out.**

Example: what to mail (made up). A postcard to older neighborhoods: "Heating check before the first cold week. We test the furnace and the CO alarms, and tell you how many winters it has left."

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Start the fall tune-up push six weeks before your first usual cold week.
- [ ] Post the "first time running the heat" tip.
- [ ] Set special holiday hours on your Google profile now for Thanksgiving through New Year (Google Business Profile Help, support.google.com).
- [ ] Follow up every open replacement quote before cold weather.

7 Mild weeks: sell the jobs you never have time for

The moment. Spring and fall, when the weather is mild and the phone goes quiet. That's when to sell work that doesn't break: duct sealing, a mini-split for a hot room, and planning a replacement before the old system quits.

Ducts are a strong offer. ENERGY STAR says that in a typical house, about 20 to 30 percent of the air moving through the ducts is lost through leaks, holes and poor connections (ENERGY STAR, energystar.gov).

What homeowners search and worry about. "One room always hot," "upstairs too hot," "should I replace my AC before it breaks." The worry is a slow, nagging discomfort they've stopped believing can be fixed.

Example: what to post (made up).

> **Is one room always too hot or too cold? Often the system is fine and the air just isn't reaching that room. This month we have open days to find out why and fix it.**

Example: what to text (made up), to open replacement quotes.

> **Hi [first name], [business] here. Still thinking about the new system we quoted? Doing it now means no rush, no heat wave, and your pick of install dates. Reply STOP to opt out.**

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] List the jobs you turn down or push back in peak season. Those are your mild-week offers.
- [ ] Write one post and one email about the "one room is always hot" problem.
- [ ] Text every past customer who mentioned an uncomfortable room.
- [ ] Send the "before the season" text to every open replacement quote.



Part 5

Your year on one page

8 An HVAC company's month-by-month plan

The moment. Any mild afternoon. Put the whole year on one sheet so nothing depends on remembering it during a heat wave.

This one is for a made-up company in a place with real summers and real winters. In hot climates, stretch the summer rows. In cold ones, stretch winter.

Months	What's happening	Post	Text	Mail
Jan to Feb	No-heat calls	Cold-snap checks, gas safety	Priority texts to members	Plan sign-up card in every invoice
Mar to Apr	Mild, six weeks before heat	"Tune-up dates open"	Spring tune-ups, members first	Tune-up postcard
May to Aug	Heat waves	Three things to check	Priority texts, honest waits	Postcards around installs
Sep to Oct	Mild, six weeks before cold	Heating checks, CO alarms	Fall tune-ups, quote follow-ups	Heating check postcard
Nov to Dec	First cold snaps, holidays	Cold-snap checks	Holiday hours, member reminders	Holiday card to customers

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Copy the table and change the months to match your two peaks.
- [ ] Put each row's first action on your calendar, six weeks before that row starts.
- [ ] Put your heat-wave kit and cold-snap kit deadlines in your calendar.
- [ ] Share it with your office and techs so everyone knows what's coming.



Your first 24 hours, in one list

If you do these today, you'll be ready for the next heat wave or cold snap before it's in the forecast:

- [ ] Write down the dates of your first hot and cold rush, and count back six weeks (section 1).
- [ ] Save your "we'll be on your street" tune-up text (section 2).
- [ ] Bookmark the NWS HeatRisk forecast (section 3).
- [ ] Write your no-heat phone script with the safety questions first (section 5).
- [ ] Copy the month-by-month table and fill in your months (section 8).



Where to go next

This guide comes from The HVAC Marketing Playbook, our free guide to the whole job of getting more HVAC calls: your website, your Google profile, reviews, posts, follow-up, maintenance plans, rebates and both peaks.

Two free tools go with it. Is your business ready for busy season? gives you a score and the gaps to close first. Your slow months shows how much work you're short in the mild weeks and how many jobs fill the gap.

To see the months people near you search for an HVAC company, read When Your Town Searches for HVAC: Your Busy Season Calendar.



If you'd rather hand it off

Grow That Local does this work for HVAC companies every month. Each service starts with a free sample, so you see the work before you pay.

Best fit for this guide: Win-back texts. Free sample: your first 25 customers texted. Win-back texts is $100 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

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.

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.

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. U.S. Energy Information Administration, Today in Energy, "Homes show greatest seasonal variation in electricity use" (March 4, 2013): homes have summer and winter peaks; virtually all homes with air conditioning cool with electricity. eia.gov (section 1)
2. ENERGY STAR, Duct Sealing: in a typical house about 20 to 30 percent of the air moving through the duct system is lost to leaks, holes and poor connections. energystar.gov (section 7)
3. InterNACHI Standard Estimated Life Expectancy Chart: furnace 15 to 25 years. nachi.org (section 5)

Rules, tools and guidance cited (not statistics):

- FCC, Stop Unwanted Robocalls and Texts (consent for automated texts to cell phones; consent can be revoked at any time in any reasonable way): fcc.gov (before you start)
- Google Trends Help, how Trends data is normalized (0 to 100, relative to all searches in that place and time): support.google.com (before you start)
- ENERGY STAR, Maintenance Checklist (check cooling in spring, heating in fall; check filters monthly): energystar.gov (section 2)
- National Weather Service HeatRisk forecast (0 to 4 scale, seven days ahead): wpc.ncep.noaa.gov (section 3)
- U.S. Fire Administration, Heating Fire Safety (space heaters 3 feet from anything that can burn, plugged directly into the wall): usfa.fema.gov (section 5)
- CDC, Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Basics (CO alarm near every sleeping area): cdc.gov (section 5)
- Google Business Profile Help, special hours for holidays: support.google.com (section 6)

GTL estimates

These are our own judgment, not measured facts:

1. The search phrases in each section are examples of common wording, not measured search volumes (all sections). Reasoning: they're how homeowners describe these problems; Google Trends shows the real pattern for your area.
2. Start booking tune-ups four to six weeks before the first usual hot or cold week (sections 1, 2). Reasoning: reminders need a few weeks to work, and once the weather turns, repair calls crowd tune-ups off the schedule.
3. In a heat wave, no-AC calls pile up fastest on the second and third hot day (section 4). Reasoning: houses hold some cool on day one, and units that have run nonstop for two days are the ones that quit.
4. Text furnace customers before a cold snap once their furnace is 15 or more years old (section 5). Reasoning: InterNACHI puts furnace life at 15 to 25 years, so these are the units most likely to struggle in the first hard cold.

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.

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