

Who gets **the call**?

Are Google, ChatGPT and your own phone sending customers to you, or to the business down the street? 21 checks you can run this week, in about an hour, with no agency and no software to buy.

Found

Do people searching Google, the map and AI answers find you?

Answered

When they call or write, does anyone pick up?

Shown

Can you see what your marketing actually did?

Before you start

Most leaks are **silent.**

No alarm goes off when a call at 6:40 p.m. goes to voicemail and the caller dials the next shop. No report tells you the map shows your old hours. This checklist is how you hear the leaks yourself.

- 1. Run the checks yourself.** Each one takes two to five minutes: a search, a phone call, a login. Use your own phone, and for the call checks, a number your staff won't recognize.
- 2. Tick the box only if it passes.** Be strict. "Mostly" is a red. An empty box is a leak.
- 3. Count the empty boxes per column.** The scorecard on the last page tells you where the money is going first.
- 4. Fix one column at a time.** Found brings people to you. Answered keeps them. Shown tells you whether any of it worked. Fixing the second without the first is how budgets disappear.

Why these three. People search, then call whoever answers, then decide whether to trust you again. Every check in this guide sits on one of those three moments. Nothing here depends on buying a tool; a few checks name free ones you already have access to.

01 Found

Can someone who has never heard of you find you on Google, on the map and in an AI answer, and see the right service, hours and phone number?

- ☐ **Your Google Business Profile's primary category is the exact service you sell.**
How: search your business name on Google, open your profile, check the first category.
Red if it's generic ("Contractor", "Marketing") instead of the job people search for ("Furnace repair service").
- ☐ **Hours, holiday hours and service area are true today.**
How: read them as a customer would, on your phone.
Red if it says "Open 24 hours" and nobody answers at night, or the service area misses a neighbourhood you serve.
- ☐ **Name, address and phone are identical everywhere.**
How: search your phone number in quotes. Compare the website footer, Google, Facebook, Yelp, HomeStars and the BBB.
Red if any listing shows an old number, an old address or a different spelling.
- ☐ **Each main service has its own page on your website.**
How: open your site's menu and count the pages that name one service.
Red if everything lives on a single "Services" page.
- ☐ **You got a new Google review in the last 30 days, and every review has a reply.**
How: sort your reviews by newest.
Red if the newest is months old or questions and complaints sit unanswered.
- ☐ **ChatGPT, Gemini and Perplexity name you for your own service and area.**
How: ask each one: "Who should I call for [your service] in [your neighbourhood]?" Note which sources they cite.
Red if you're not named, or the answer quotes old details about you.
- ☐ **Your homepage loads fast on a phone.**
How: run it through Google's free PageSpeed Insights, or the speed test on oleglitvin.com.
Red if the mobile score is in the red, or you wait for it on your own phone.

Search moves on two clocks. The map and your Google profile can move in days to weeks. Pages ranking in the top ten is slower: an Ahrefs study of two million keywords found only 5.7% of pages got there within a year, and most of those took 61 to 182 days.

Source: Ahrefs, "How long does it take to rank in Google?"

02 Answered

When someone who found you calls, texts or fills in a form, what happens in the next minute, and at night, and on Saturday?

- ☐ **A call at 6:40 p.m. reaches a person or a real answer.**
How: call your business after hours from a number your team doesn't know.
Red if it rings out, the voicemail is full, or the greeting gives no next step.
- ☐ **A missed call gets a text back within a minute.**
How: call, hang up before anyone answers, and watch your phone.
Red if nothing arrives, or it arrives the next morning.
- ☐ **A Saturday form gets a reply before Monday.**
How: fill in your own website form on a Saturday and note the time.
Red if the first human reply comes Monday or later.
- ☐ **A customer can book or ask for a quote without waiting for you.**
How: try it on your site, on your phone, with one thumb.
Red if the only option is "call us during business hours".
- ☐ **Quotes that weren't accepted get a follow-up.**
How: pull the last ten quotes you sent and check what happened after day three.
Red if most were never followed up.
- ☐ **Every finished job gets one review request, with the customer's permission.**
How: ask your last five customers whether they received one.
Red if it depends on someone remembering.
- ☐ **You know how many calls you missed last month.**
How: open your phone provider's call log or report.
Red if you can't find the number, or you're guessing.

Why speed matters. A study in Harvard Business Review found companies took 42 hours on average to respond to an online lead, and that figure excludes the 23% that never responded at all. The business that answers first gets the first conversation.

Source: Oldroyd, McElheran & Elkington, "The Short Life of Online Sales Leads", Harvard Business Review, 2011 (2,241 companies).

03 Shown

Whoever does your marketing, you or an agency: can you see, in writing, what was done and what came back?

☐ **Your domain, website, Google Business Profile, ads and analytics are in your name.**

How: try logging in to each one yourself, today.

Red if any of them is only in someone else's account.

☐ **You got a written list of what was done last month.**

How: find it in your inbox.

Red if all you have is an invoice and a chart.

☐ **Your ad reports show calls and bookings, not just clicks.**

How: open the last report and look for a number of calls or booked jobs.

Red if it only shows impressions, clicks or "reach".

☐ **Ad spend goes straight to Google or Meta on your card.**

How: check who is billed inside your Google Ads account.

Red if the ad budget is folded into someone's monthly invoice.

☐ **You know what one new customer is worth to you.**

How: average job value × how often a customer comes back in a year.

Red if you can't say what a missed call costs you.

☐ **Your contract says what happens if you leave.**

How: read the term, the notice period and who keeps the data.

Red if leaving means losing your website, your listings or your ad history.

☐ **You could explain last month's marketing in two sentences.**

How: try it, out loud.

Red if the honest answer is "I'm not sure what they did".

What owners actually complain about. We read 1,058 real one- and two-star reviews of GTA marketing agencies. The most common complaint, in 123 of them (11.6%), was being billed for work nobody could show was done. In the positive reviews, "they answer fast" was the second most common praise, in 4,079 of 16,342 (25.0%).

Source: Oleg Litvin's review of Google reviews of GTA marketing agencies, 2026. Complaint categories can overlap.

Your scorecard

Count the empty boxes.

Found

_____ of 7

Answered

_____ of 7

Shown

_____ of 7

0 to 2 empty in a column: that part of your business is in good shape. Keep the habit.

3 or more empty in one column: that's a system problem, not an effort problem. Start there.

3 or more in two or three columns: fix them in order: Found, then Answered, then Shown. Traffic you can't answer is wasted, and results you can't see can't be improved.

Want a second pair of eyes on your red boxes?

The fit call is free and takes 20 minutes. Oleg looks at your results with you and tells you plainly whether he can help. Plans are published at oleglitvin.com/pricing, and a custom quote, bigger or smaller, is something he only puts together on that call.

Book my 20-minute fit call · oleglitvin.com/book

Rather talk now? Sofia answers on oleglitvin.com, day or night.