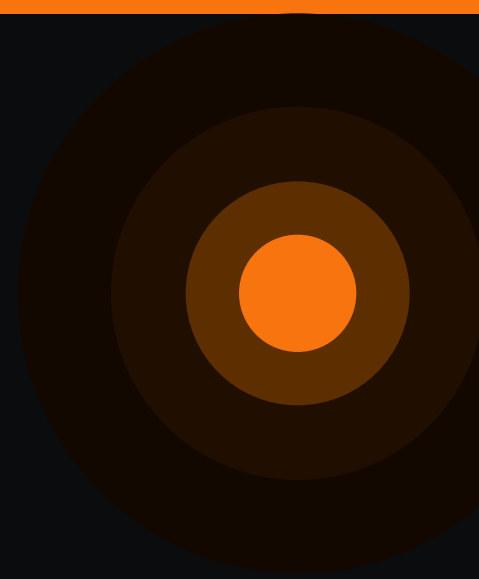




The Ultimate Fence & Deck Contractor's Marketing Guide

To Dominate Your Local Market

From basic presence to full-funnel dominance — every channel, every tactic, every metric that matters for fence & deck contractors.

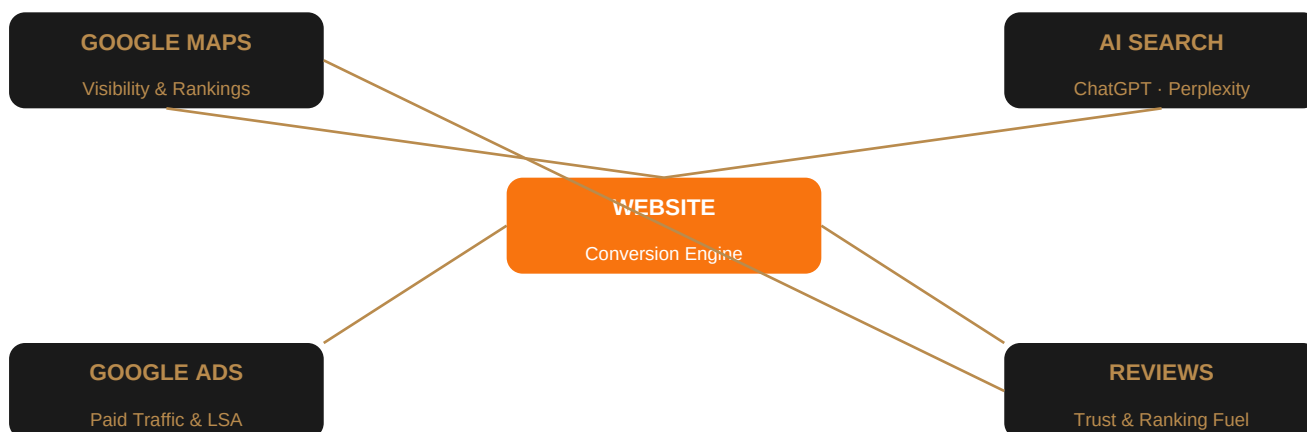
WHAT'S INSIDE THIS GUIDE

- Chapter 1 — Google Maps & GBP: The complete ranking system from profile to citations
- Chapter 2 — AI & Voice Search: Entity authority, schema markup, and topical content
- Chapter 3 — Website Architecture: Core Web Vitals, conversion design, location pages
- Chapter 4 — Conversion Optimization: Heatmaps, A/B testing, trust signals, form science
- Chapter 5 — Google Ads: Campaign structure, Quality Score, RLSA, LSA, attribution
- Chapter 6 — Review Systems: Velocity strategy, NPS filtering, keyword-rich review tactics
- Chapter 7 — Metrics & Seasonal Strategy: What to track, when to invest, and the compound effect
- Advanced Checklist — 80+ implementation points across all seven chapters

How the Full Digital Ecosystem Works

The five channels, how they connect, and why managing them in isolation keeps you stuck

Most contractors try digital marketing the same way they built their first fence: one piece at a time, without a plan for how everything connects. They run ads for a month, stop when it feels expensive, get a few reviews when they remember, and wonder why competitors with worse work keep winning jobs online. The answer is almost always systemic: the channels that drive local dominance don't work in isolation. They amplify each other. Reviews lift your Maps ranking. Maps ranking drives website traffic. Website traffic feeds ad retargeting audiences. Schema markup gets you into AI results. Every weak link drags all the others down. This guide covers each channel at depth — and comes back to how they reinforce each other at every step.



FOUR WAYS WEAK LINKS KILL YOUR PIPELINE

- Low review count → poor Maps ranking → invisible organic presence → 100% dependency on paid ads to get any leads at all.**
Contractors averaging under 20 reviews pay 3–5× more per lead than those with 60+.
- No schema markup → AI tools can't parse your entity → absent from ChatGPT and Perplexity recommendations even when homeowners specifically ask for fence companies.**
AI search is now a primary discovery channel, not a future trend.
- Slow website → 53% of mobile visitors leave before seeing your work → every ad click wasted on a visitor who bounced in 2 seconds.**
A 1-second load improvement increases mobile conversions by up to 27%.
- Generic homepage, no location pages → Maps ranking limited to one city → invisible to homeowners in every surrounding town you actually serve.**
Service area pages are the highest-ROI SEO investment for contractors.
- Review requests only when remembered → inconsistent velocity → ranking stagnation even as competitors with the same work quality pull ahead.**
The algorithm rewards consistency, not occasional spikes.

Google Maps & GBP: Profile Optimization

Every ranking signal inside your Google Business Profile — and how to engineer each one

Google's local algorithm weights three factors for every Maps result: Relevance (does this business match what was searched?), Distance (how close is it?), and Prominence (how well-known and trusted is it?). Distance is largely fixed by your address. Relevance and Prominence are fully engineered — and most contractors are only scratching the surface of what's possible inside their GBP alone.

42%

of local searches result in a Maps pack click — not the organic results below it

7×

more calls from a fully complete GBP vs. an incomplete one (Google, 2026)

268%

more profile views for businesses posting on GBP weekly vs. never

Sources: AIOSEO 2026; Google Business Profile Research 2026; Publer GBP Engagement Study 2026

GBP PROFILE DEPTH — BASIC THROUGH ADVANCED

Primary Category Precision

Use 'Fence Contractor' or 'Deck Builder' as your primary — never 'General Contractor.' Primary category carries 3–5× more ranking weight than secondary. Add up to 9 secondary categories (Fence Supply Store, Deck Builder, Patio Enclosure Supplier) for broader query coverage.

Business Description — Keyword Architecture

The first 250 characters of your description appear in search previews. Lead with your core service + city: 'Panther Leads is a [city] fence and deck contractor specializing in wood privacy fences, vinyl fencing, and composite deck installation.' Use the remaining 700 characters to naturally mention every material type you work with.

Services Listed Individually With Descriptions

Don't use a single 'Fencing' entry. List every service: Wood Privacy Fence, Cedar Fence, Vinyl Fence, Chain-Link Fence, Aluminum Fence, Composite Decking, Pressure-Treated Deck, Fence Repair, Deck Staining, Gate Installation. Each service entry is a separate relevance signal.

Q&A Seeding — The Overlooked Ranking Tactic

Anyone can post questions on your GBP — and the answers appear directly on your listing. Seed 8–12 keyword-rich Q&As yourself: 'Do you install cedar privacy fences in [city]?' → 'Yes, cedar privacy fence installation is one of our most requested services in [city] and surrounding areas.' These are indexed by Google and appear before a homeowner even visits your website.

Google Posts — Weekly Engagement Signal

Google Posts (What's New, Offer, Event) are one of the few GBP actions that directly signal recency and activity to the algorithm. Post once per week minimum: a completed project with photos, a seasonal offer, or a tip for homeowners. Posts expire after 7 days — consistency over volume. Businesses posting weekly receive 268% more profile views.

Photo Strategy by Category and Volume

GBP separates photos into categories: Exterior, Interior, At Work, Team, and Product. All categories should be populated. At Work photos (in-progress job shots) perform best for contractor profiles. Upload minimum 25 photos to start; add 2–4 new photos weekly. Name your image files before uploading: 'wood-privacy-fence-[city]-installation.jpg' — file names are read by Google's image crawler as additional relevance signals.

GBP Website Link — UTM Tagged

Your GBP website link should point to your most relevant service page (not your homepage) and include UTM parameters so you can track GBP-sourced traffic in Google Analytics: ?utm_source=google&utm_medium=gbp&utm_campaign=maps. Without this, GBP traffic gets lumped into 'organic' and you can't measure your Maps ROI accurately.

Google Maps & GBP: Citations, Reviews & Insights

Off-profile ranking signals: the citation architecture, review mechanics, and GBP analytics

CITATION ARCHITECTURE — TIER 1, 2, AND 3 STRATEGY

Citations are mentions of your business Name, Address, and Phone (NAP) across external websites. Google cross-references these to verify your business is real, active, and located where you claim. Inconsistencies — even minor formatting differences — reduce Google's confidence score and suppress your Maps ranking. The goal is 40+ consistent citations across three tiers of authority.

Tier 1 — High-Authority General Directories

Yelp, Angi (Angie's List), Better Business Bureau (BBB), Facebook Business, Apple Maps, Bing Places, Yellow Pages, Foursquare, Citysearch. These carry the highest domain authority and are crawled most frequently. Every contractor should be listed on all nine with identical NAP.

Tier 2 — Home Services & Contractor Directories

HomeAdvisor, Thumbtack, Porch, BuildZoom, Houzz (especially for decks), Nextdoor Business, Bark.com, Contractor Connection. These directories are specifically used by homeowners searching for contractors — they carry both citation value and direct lead potential.

Tier 3 — Local & Niche Citations

Local Chamber of Commerce, city business directories, neighborhood association sites, local news business listings, trade association directories (American Fence Association, NADRA for deck contractors), manufacturer dealer/installer pages (Trex, TimberTech, Veranda). Tier 3 signals are powerful precisely because they're local and niche — Google trusts them as genuine community validation, not just directory spam.

NAP Consistency Audit — What to Check

Before building new citations, audit existing ones. Common inconsistencies: 'Street' vs 'St', 'Suite 200' vs '#200', area code formatting, old phone numbers from previous business lines, slight business name variations ('Fencing Co.' vs 'Fencing Company'). Use BrightLocal or Whitespark to run a full citation audit. Fix existing inconsistencies before adding new listings — adding more wrong information at scale makes the problem harder to correct later.

REVIEW RANKING MECHANICS — THE FOUR SIGNALS GOOGLE WEIGHS

Volume — The 50-Review Threshold

Businesses with 50+ reviews are statistically 266% more likely to appear in the top 3 Maps results. Below 20 reviews, you're fighting for presence. At 50+, you're competing for position 1 vs. 2 vs. 3.

Velocity — 2 to 4 Per Week, Consistently

Gaining 20 reviews in 72 hours triggers Google's fraud detection — reviews get held for evaluation or removed entirely. A natural pace of 2–4 per week signals organic growth. Never run mass review campaigns that spike volume unnaturally.

Recency — The 90-Day Decay Window

Reviews older than 90 days carry diminishing ranking weight. A competitor gaining 3 fresh reviews per week while you gained none in 60 days is actively pulling ahead of you even if your total count is higher. Recency forces your review system to be ongoing, not a one-time push.

Content — Keywords Inside Reviews Boost Relevance

When a customer writes 'cedar privacy fence installation in [city]' in their review, those keywords become part of your GBP relevance signal for that query. You cannot write reviews for customers — but you can frame your review request to naturally prompt them to mention the service: 'We'd love to hear about your experience with the vinyl fence we installed for you.'

AI & Voice Search — Entity Authority

How ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI decide which contractors to recommend

AI search tools don't rank ten blue links — they return one answer with two or three names. A contractor who doesn't appear in that answer doesn't exist to that homeowner. AI systems build entity models: they recognize named businesses as real-world entities and assign each one an authority score based on how consistently and credibly that entity appears across trusted web sources. A fence company with a basic website and 15 directory listings is a low-confidence entity. One with consistent citations, topical content, schema markup, and mentions on trusted sites is high-confidence — and gets recommended.

58%

of homeowners used an AI tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity) to research a local service in 2026

40%

of Google searches trigger an AI Overview box — appearing above all standard organic results

None

AI tools have a 'page 2.' They return 1–3 names and stop. Everyone else is invisible.

Sources: BrightLocal AI & Local Search Study 2026; SeoProfy 2026; Search Engine Land AI Overview Research 2026

BUILDING ENTITY AUTHORITY — SIX CONCRETE ACTIONS

Schema Markup — The Language Machines Speak

Schema is JSON-LD code in your website's <head> that tells AI crawlers exactly what your business is, does, and where it operates. Required schemas: LocalBusiness (name, address, phone, geo-coordinates, service area, hours). Service schema for each offering. FAQPage schema on any Q&A section — Google pulls these directly into AI Overview boxes. HowTo schema on process pages ('how fence installation works'). AggregateRating schema to surface your star rating in AI results. Each schema type adds a distinct entity signal. Without them, AI systems guess — and often get it wrong or skip the business entirely.

Topical Authority — Own the Fence & Deck Content Space

AI systems favor entities that demonstrate broad, consistent expertise across a topic cluster. Map out every question homeowners ask during a fence or deck project: 'What's the difference between cedar and pressure-treated wood?' 'How long does vinyl fence last?' 'What's the cost of composite decking per square foot?' 'How deep should fence posts be set?' Each question becomes a dedicated page with a clear, direct answer written in plain language. 20–30 well-targeted pages in a content cluster outperform a single 'ultimate guide.' Google sees a business that covers its topic comprehensively as an authoritative entity, not just a service page with contact information.

E-E-A-T Signals for Contractor Websites

Google's quality evaluator guidelines score content on Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-E-A-T). For contractors: Experience = real job photos with project details, named team members, years in business. Expertise = material comparison guides, installation process content, FAQ answered correctly. Authoritativeness = mentions in local news, trade association memberships, manufacturer certifications. Trustworthiness = license/insurance information displayed, real testimonials, secure site (HTTPS). High E-E-A-T signals make AI systems more confident recommending you.

Voice Search Query Mapping

Voice queries are conversational, local, and specific. Map the exact questions homeowners ask voice assistants: 'Hey Siri, who installs cedar fences near me?' 'Alexa, find a deck builder in [city].' 'OK Google, what does fence installation cost?' Your website and GBP content should contain verbatim versions of these queries. Local search queries with 'near me' have grown 500% in 5 years — voice-optimized content captures an audience most contractor websites miss entirely.

Website Architecture & Technical Foundation

Core Web Vitals, service area structure, SEO architecture, and what Google actually measures

A contractor website has two jobs: rank in search, and convert visitors into quote requests. Most contractor websites do neither well. The ranking job requires technical health — speed, structure, schema, internal linking — that most DIY or template sites skip. The conversion job requires intentional design of every page element based on how homeowners actually make decisions. This chapter covers the technical foundation. The next covers conversion.

53%

of mobile visitors leave a page taking over 3 seconds to load — before seeing anything

27%

increase in mobile conversions from a single 1-second improvement in load time

3.4×

more quote requests from contractor sites with 10+ location pages vs. generic service pages

Sources: Google/SOASTA Mobile Research 2024; Portent CRO Study 2024; BrightEdge Local SEO Benchmark 2025

CORE WEB VITALS — THE THREE METRICS GOOGLE MEASURES

LCP — Largest Contentful Paint (Target: Under 2.5 Seconds)

LCP measures how long it takes for the largest visible element on the page — usually your hero image or main headline — to fully render. Common causes of LCP failure: uncompressed images over 500KB, shared hosting with slow server response times, no browser caching, render-blocking JavaScript. Fix: convert all images to WebP format and compress below 200KB, use a CDN (Content Delivery Network), enable browser caching, and defer non-critical JavaScript. Check your score at PageSpeed Insights monthly.

INP — Interaction to Next Paint (Target: Under 200 Milliseconds)

INP replaced FID in 2024 and measures how quickly the page responds when a visitor taps or clicks something (a button, menu, phone number). Poor INP is caused by heavy JavaScript executing during page load — bloated page builders, unused plugins, third-party chat widgets, and Google Tag Manager configurations that haven't been cleaned up. Fix: audit your GTM container, remove unused plugins, defer non-critical JS.

CLS — Cumulative Layout Shift (Target: Under 0.1)

CLS measures how much the page 'jumps' as elements load — buttons that shift when an image loads above them, text that moves when fonts swap. A high CLS score is one of the top reasons mobile visitors immediately abandon a site. Fix: specify width and height dimensions on all images and video embeds, preload custom fonts, and avoid inserting content dynamically above existing content.

SERVICE AREA & PAGE ARCHITECTURE

Hub-and-Spoke Location Page Structure

Build one strong main city page (hub) and one dedicated page for every surrounding town you serve (spokes). Each spoke page must be genuinely unique — real project photos from that town if possible, a paragraph about specific local context, the city name used naturally (not keyword-stuffed). Duplicate pages with only the city name swapped are detected and penalized. Done correctly, this structure multiplies your Maps ranking footprint to every city you actually work in.

Service Page Architecture — One Page Per Service

A single 'Services' page is not enough. Every major service needs its own URL: /wood-fence-installation, /vinyl-fence-installation, /chain-link-fencing, /composite-deck-building, /fence-repair, /deck-staining. Each page should target a specific keyword cluster, include relevant photos, answer common questions about that service, and have its own CTA. This structure means you can rank for 'wood fence installation [city]' and 'vinyl fence [city]' independently rather than competing with yourself.

Conversion Optimization & Trust Architecture

Heatmaps, A/B testing, form science, trust signals, and what turns browsers into buyers

Getting a homeowner to your site is only half the equation. The other half is converting that visit into a phone call or quote request. Conversion rate optimization (CRO) for contractors is not about tricks — it's about removing friction and building trust fast. The average contractor website converts 1–2% of visitors. A well-optimized site converts 5–8%. On 1,000 monthly visitors, that's the difference between 10 leads and 70 leads from the same traffic.

5 sec

is all you have — 75% of visitors form an opinion of your credibility in under 5 seconds

160%

higher conversion rate for sites with trust badges (BBB, license, insurance) prominently displayed

↓ 11%

each additional form field drops form completion rate by approximately 11% on mobile

Sources: Nielsen Norman Group 2024; Vendasta Contractor Trust Study 2025; Formstack Form Optimization Report 2025

ABOVE-THE-FOLD OPTIMIZATION — THE FIRST 5 SECONDS

What a Visitor Sees Before Scrolling

The 'above the fold' area — visible without scrolling — must accomplish four things in under 5 seconds: tell them who you are, tell them what you do, tell them where you serve, and give them a clear next step. Most contractor homepages use a vague headline, a large stock photo, and a buried contact form. Instead: Headline: 'Wood Fence & Deck Installation in [City] — Free Estimates.' Subheadline: '[X] years · Licensed & Insured · [Star rating] from [number] reviews.' Prominent click-to-call button and a short quote form — above the fold on mobile.

Star Rating and Review Count in the Hero

Displaying your Google star rating and review count in the hero section — '4.9 stars from 87 Google reviews' — is one of the highest-impact trust moves. It answers the homeowner's first unconscious question ('can I trust this company?') before they've read a word. This single change has been shown to increase contact form submissions by 40–60% in contractor A/B tests.

Real Photos, Never Stock

Homeowners know stock photos instantly. A hero image of your actual crew installing an actual fence communicates real-world competence in a way no stock photo library can match. Before-and-after photos are the highest-performing format for contractor sites: they show transformation, craftsmanship, and scale in a single image. Include captions with location and material type.

LEAD CAPTURE, FORM SCIENCE & TRUST SIGNALS

Form Length — The 3-Field Rule for Contractors

Every form field reduces completion rate. The optimal quote form for a contractor: Name, Phone Number, and one dropdown ('What can we help with?'). Email is secondary — a phone number is all you need to follow up and close. On mobile, a form with 6+ fields loses 60–70% of potential submissions. If you need more info, collect it on the call — not before they've even spoken to you.

Micro-Conversion Tracking as Lead Signals

Not every website visitor fills a form. But many signal intent through actions: clicking your phone number, scrolling 75%+ of a page, clicking a photo gallery, spending over 2 minutes on a service page. Track these as micro-conversions in GA4. Visitors who trigger phone click micro-conversions but don't call are a remarketing audience showing very high intent — target them with RLSA in Google Ads.

Google Ads — Campaign Architecture & Auction Mechanics

Quality Score, RLSA, LSA, match types, seasonal bidding, and attribution for contractors

The Google Ads auction doesn't simply give the top position to the highest bidder. $\text{Ad Rank} = \text{Bid} \times \text{Quality Score} \times \text{Context Signals}$. A competitor bidding \$10 with a Quality Score of 9 beats you bidding \$18 with a Quality Score of 4 — and pays roughly half as much per click. Understanding this mechanics layer is the difference between a \$28 cost-per-lead and an \$85 cost-per-lead on identical budgets.

QS 7–10

earns a Google CPC discount of 16–50% vs. QS of 4 or below at the same bid

4.7×

higher CTR for Local Service Ads (Google Guaranteed) vs. standard search ads for home services

2.5×

higher conversion rate when ad headline, keyword, and landing page are tightly message-matched

Sources: WordStream Google Ads Benchmark 2025; Google LSA Industry Data 2026; Google Quality Score Research 2025

QUALITY SCORE — ENGINEERING ALL THREE COMPONENTS

Expected CTR — Ad Copy That Mirrors the Query

Google predicts whether searchers will click your ad based on how well it matches what they typed. Dynamic Keyword Insertion {Keyword:Fence Installer} automatically includes the searcher's query in your headline — making it look like a precise answer. Test 3–5 headline variations per ad group. Headlines that include the city name ('Wood Fence Installation in Charlotte') consistently outperform generic ones. Let each variation accumulate 300+ impressions before drawing conclusions.

Ad Relevance — Campaign Structure by Service Cluster

One campaign targeting 'fence installation, vinyl fence, wood fence, deck builder, fence repair' in a single ad group will have poor relevance for all of them. Correct structure: one tightly themed ad group per service type, each with its own tailored headlines, descriptions, and landing page. Typical structure for fence contractors: Wood Fence | Vinyl Fence | Chain-Link | Aluminum Fence | Fence Repair | Deck Installation | Gate Installation. Each group targets 3–5 exact/phrase match keywords maximum.

Landing Page Experience — Match the Entire Search Journey

Google grades your landing page on relevance (does the page content match the ad?), navigability (easy to use on mobile?), and trustworthiness (does it appear credible?). An ad about vinyl fence installation sending visitors to your homepage fails all three. Each ad group should link to a dedicated, stripped-down landing page: service-specific content, one CTA above the fold, minimal navigation, load time under 2.5 seconds, and click-to-call prominent on mobile.

Negative Keywords — Protecting Budget from Day One

Negative keywords prevent your ad from showing for irrelevant queries. Must-have exclusions for fence contractors: 'DIY', 'how to', 'plans', 'designs', 'ideas', 'rental', 'temporary', 'dog', 'invisible', 'electric', 'barbed wire', 'cheap', 'free'. Add competitor names you don't want to pay for. Review your Search Terms report weekly for the first 60 days and add 10–15 negatives per week as you see what irrelevant searches are triggering your ads.

Match Types — How to Balance Volume and Precision

Exact match [keyword] shows only for that exact query or close variants. Phrase match 'keyword' shows for queries containing your phrase. Broad match (no modifier) shows for loosely related queries — avoid for high-value terms. For fence/deck contractors: run exact match on your top 5 converting keywords at higher bids, and phrase match on a broader discovery set at lower bids. Review conversion data weekly and shift budget toward exact match terms that convert.

RLSA — Bidding Higher for Past Visitors

Remarketing Lists for Search Ads lets you bid differently for people who've already visited your site. A homeowner who visited your deck installation page then searches 'deck builder near me' again two days later is 2–3× more likely to convert than a cold visitor. Layer RLSA audiences: set +40% bid adjustment for page visitors in the past 30 days. This is one of the most underused tactics in contractor Google Ads — and one of the highest-ROI.

Review Systems — Velocity, NPS Filtering & Keyword Strategy

Building a review machine that ranks, converts, and compounds month over month

Reviews are simultaneously your most powerful ranking signal, your strongest sales tool, and the most consistently mismanaged part of a contractor's digital presence. A contractor with 12 reviews isn't just behind a competitor with 75 — they're playing a completely different game. The difference isn't customer satisfaction. It's process. High-review-volume contractors have systematized collection, optimized every request, and managed the velocity and content of their reviews the same way they manage job scheduling.

99%

of consumers read reviews before contacting a local business — reviews are the new word of mouth

4.4×

more profile clicks for businesses with 50+ reviews vs. those with fewer than 5 (BrightLocal 2026)

+120%

conversion increase from improving star rating from 3.5 to 3.7 — a fraction of a star matters

Sources: BrightLocal Consumer Review Survey 2026; BrightLocal GBP Click Study 2026; BrightLocal Conversion Data 2026

THE COMPLETE REVIEW SYSTEM — EIGHT COMPONENTS

NPS Pre-Screening — Only Ask When You'll Win

Before sending a Google review link, send a one-question internal NPS: 'On a scale of 1–10, how satisfied are you with the work we did?' Customers responding 9–10 receive the Google review link. Customers responding 7–8 receive: 'We appreciate that — is there anything we could have done better?' This opens a recovery conversation before a 3-star review goes public. Customers responding 1–6 get a direct call from management. This is a filter, not manipulation — you're learning who will represent you well before asking them to speak publicly on your behalf.

Timing — Ask Within 24 Hours of Job Completion

Customer satisfaction is highest immediately after a successful project. Waiting 3 days loses 40% of potential reviews. Waiting a week loses 70%. Build the NPS text into your job completion workflow: send automatically when you mark a job complete in your CRM, or set a reminder to send manually the same afternoon. On-site asks ('before I leave, would you be willing to leave us a Google review?') combined with a follow-up text achieve the highest rates.

The Request Message — Framing Without Coaching

The review request should be short, personal, and mention the specific service: 'Hi [Name], it was great completing your wood privacy fence. If you're happy with how it turned out, a Google review would mean a lot to our small team — here's the direct link: [link]. No pressure at all.' Mentioning the specific service (wood privacy fence) naturally prompts the customer to include it in their review — adding keyword value without telling them what to write.

The One Follow-Up Rule

If no review has been left within 72 hours, one polite follow-up is appropriate and usually welcomed: 'Just a quick follow-up — I know it's easy to forget, and no pressure if it's not for you. Either way, we really appreciated the opportunity.' More than one follow-up crosses into pressure and risks a retaliatory review. One is enough. Most people who will leave a review do so within 96 hours of asking.

Velocity Management — The 2-4 Per Week Rule

Google's fraud detection monitors the rate of review acquisition across all businesses. A natural pace for a mid-sized contractor is 2–4 reviews per week. If you're running a catch-up campaign after a long period of no reviews, stagger requests over 3–4 weeks rather than sending all at once. A burst of 20 reviews in 72 hours will trigger review suppression — some reviews get held for evaluation or removed, undoing the effort.

Metrics, Seasonal Strategy & The Compound Effect

What to measure, how to interpret it, and the annual calendar that separates leaders from reactors

GBP INSIGHTS — WHAT TO TRACK MONTHLY

Search Impressions: Direct vs. Discovery vs. Branded

Direct = people searching your business name (brand awareness metric). Discovery = people searching 'fence company near me' (Maps ranking performance metric). A growing Discovery trend with stable Direct means your ranking is improving. Declining Discovery with stable Direct means a ranking issue, not a brand issue. These require different solutions — confusing them leads to the wrong fix.

Direction Requests by Location

GBP shows where direction requests originate. Requests from zip codes outside your core city signal your Maps ranking is extending — a key performance indicator of your service area page strategy working. Requests clustering only around your business address suggest your location footprint hasn't expanded yet.

Photo View Count vs. Category Average

GBP Insights shows your photo views alongside the average for your category. Below average means your profile looks visually thinner in side-by-side comparisons. Target 2× your category average. Add new project photos weekly — recency of photos is a separate signal from total photo count.

Call and Website Click Trends

Month-over-month trends in calls and website clicks from GBP are your Maps conversion metrics. A drop in calls while impressions hold steady indicates a profile presentation issue (photos, reviews, description). A drop in impressions indicates a ranking issue (citations, reviews, schema).

THE ANNUAL DIGITAL CALENDAR FOR FENCE & DECK CONTRACTORS

Q4 — Oct through Dec: Build the Foundation

CPCs are 40–60% lower in October than April. Run campaigns now to train the algorithm at low cost. Build all citation Tier 1, 2, and 3 listings. Run a post-season review collection push on all completed fall jobs. Install schema markup. Build location pages for every service area city. This quarter funds next year's spring season at a fraction of the cost.

Q1 — Jan through Mar: Content & Ranking Investment

Google needs 60–90 days to rank new content. Pages published in January compete by April. Publish your full topical authority cluster: cost guides, material comparisons, FAQ pages. Run low-budget awareness campaigns to warm audiences 8 weeks before demand spikes. Test landing page variants and ad copy while CPCs are still reasonable.

Q2 — Apr through Jun: Maximum Capture

Spring is peak demand. Activate RLSA for Q1 website visitors. Increase bids on highest-converting exact match keywords. Ensure all conversion tracking is firing correctly — every lead must be attributed. Post on GBP weekly. Run before-and-after content on your most profitable services.

Q3 — Jul through Sep: Nurture, Review, and Gap Analysis

Collect reviews within 7 days of every spring job completion. Photograph every completed project for Q4 and Q1 content. Run a competitor gap analysis: identify keywords your top 3 local competitors rank for that you don't — and build that content before the next season starts.

"The compound effect in digital marketing is real: reviews build rankings, rankings build traffic, traffic builds behavioral signals, behavioral signals lower ad costs, lower costs free budget for content, content builds authority. The contractors who feel like it runs on autopilot have closed the loop."

— Panther Leads, 2026

80-Point Audit: GBP, Citations, AI Search & Website

Check off what is complete. Gaps here are where competitors are pulling ahead. Prioritize in order of chapter.

GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

- ☐ Primary category: 'Fence Contractor' or 'Deck Builder' (not General Contractor)
- ☐ Up to 9 secondary categories selected (Deck Builder, Fence Supply Store, etc.)
- ☐ Business description: top keywords in first 250 characters
- ☐ Business description: all materials and services mentioned naturally
- ☐ Every service listed individually with its own description
- ☐ Q&A section seeded with 8–12 keyword-rich questions and answers
- ☐ Google Posts published at least once per week (ongoing)
- ☐ Minimum 25 photos uploaded; 2–4 new photos added weekly
- ☐ Photos span all categories: At Work, Exterior, Team, Before/After
- ☐ Image files named with keywords before uploading
- ☐ GBP website link UTM-tagged and pointing to relevant service page
- ☐ Booking button connected to estimate form or Calendly
- ☐ Messaging feature enabled; response time under 1 hour
- ☐ Accessibility attributes filled in (Free estimates, Serves your area, etc.)
- ☐ Holiday hours updated in advance for every public holiday
- ☐ Suggested Edits reviewed monthly — inaccurate edits rejected
- ☐ GBP Insights reviewed monthly: impressions, calls, website clicks, direction requests
- ☐ Products section used to showcase fence/deck types with photos and descriptions

CITATIONS & NAP

- ☐ NAP (Name, Address, Phone) is 100% identical across all listings
- ☐ Tier 1: Yelp, Angi, BBB, Facebook Business, Apple Maps, Bing Places, Yellow Pages
- ☐ Tier 1: Foursquare and Citysearch listed and verified
- ☐ Tier 2: HomeAdvisor, Thumbtack, Porch, BuildZoom, Houzz, Nextdoor Business
- ☐ Tier 2: Bark.com and Contractor Connection listed
- ☐ Tier 3: Local Chamber of Commerce listing active
- ☐ Tier 3: Municipal or city business directory listed
- ☐ Tier 3: Trade association directory (AFA or NADRA) listed
- ☐ Manufacturer dealer/installer page (Trex, TimberTech, Veranda) if applicable
- ☐ BrightLocal or Whitespark citation audit completed; inconsistencies corrected
- ☐ 40+ total citations across all three tiers

AI SEARCH & SCHEMA

- ☐ LocalBusiness JSON-LD schema on every page (name, address, phone, hours, geo)
- ☐ Service schema for each major service offering
- ☐ FAQPage schema on all FAQ sections (feeds Google AI Overview boxes)
- ☐ HowTo schema on installation and process pages
- ☐ AggregateRating schema surfacing star rating in search results
- ☐ Business mentioned in at least one trade association directory
- ☐ Manufacturer dealer page lists your business as an installer
- ☐ At least one local news or community website mention or feature
- ☐ Topical content cluster: 15+ pages answering specific homeowner questions
- ☐ Voice search queries mapped: pages answer conversational 'near me' questions
- ☐ Reviews present on Google, Yelp, Houzz, Facebook, and Angi
- ☐ Schema validated using Google's Rich Results Test tool

WEBSITE — TECHNICAL FOUNDATION

- ☐ HTTPS (SSL certificate) active; no mixed content warnings
- ☐ Core Web Vitals: LCP under 2.5s (verify in Google Search Console)
- ☐ Core Web Vitals: CLS under 0.1 (verify in Google Search Console)
- ☐ Core Web Vitals: INP under 200ms (verify in Google Search Console)
- ☐ Mobile PageSpeed score above 70 (PageSpeed Insights)
- ☐ All images converted to WebP format and compressed under 200KB
- ☐ XML sitemap created and submitted to Google Search Console
- ☐ Robots.txt verified — no critical pages accidentally blocked
- ☐ Google Search Console set up; no crawl errors or manual actions
- ☐ Google Analytics 4 properly connected and tracking properly
- ☐ Dedicated service page for every major service (not one combined page)
- ☐ Hub-and-spoke location pages: one per city/town in service area
- ☐ Location pages are unique — not duplicate templates with city name swapped
- ☐ Each page has exactly one H1 tag with primary keyword
- ☐ Alt text on every image, keyword-descriptive
- ☐ Internal links from homepage to all service pages
- ☐ Internal links from service pages to relevant location pages
- ☐ 404 error page set up with links back to main service pages

80-Point Audit: Conversion, Ads, Reviews & Strategy

Continue your audit below. Every unchecked item is an opportunity your competitors may already be working on.

WEBSITE — CONVERSION & TRUST

- ☐ Hero section: clear service + city + CTA visible above fold on mobile
- ☐ Star rating and review count displayed in hero section
- ☐ Real job photos used (no stock imagery) — before/after pairs prioritized
- ☐ Click-to-call phone number on every page, tappable on mobile
- ☐ Lead form: 3 fields maximum (Name, Phone, Service type)
- ☐ Microsoft Clarity or Hotjar installed for session recording
- ☐ Scroll depth and CTA clicks tracked as micro-conversions in GA4
- ☐ Phone number click tracked as a micro-conversion in GA4
- ☐ Cost estimator or quote calculator tool on website
- ☐ License number, insurance info, and certifications visible on every page
- ☐ Trust badges (BBB, AFA/NADRA, manufacturer certs) in header or footer
- ☐ Video testimonial or slideshow of real customer reviews on homepage
- ☐ SMS or live chat widget installed with sub-1-hour response protocol
- ☐ Exit intent popup on high-traffic pages (2-field form or lead magnet)
- ☐ A/B test running on at least one key page (headline or CTA variation)
- ☐ All form submissions confirmed working and going to correct email/CRM

GOOGLE ADS

- ☐ Campaigns structured by service cluster (not all services in one)
- ☐ Each ad group has 3–5 tightly themed keywords maximum
- ☐ Exact and Phrase match types used for all high-value keywords
- ☐ Broad match used only for discovery, with Target CPA bidding
- ☐ Negative keyword list: 20+ exclusions active from day one
- ☐ Search Terms report reviewed weekly; new negatives added
- ☐ Each ad group links to a matching, specific landing page
- ☐ Quality Score monitored: target 7+ on all active keywords
- ☐ Dynamic Keyword Insertion used in at least one headline
- ☐ Call tracking active: Google forwarding number for GBP and ads
- ☐ Form submission conversion tracked in Google Ads
- ☐ RLSA audience (30-day website visitors) active with +40% bid adjustment
- ☐ LSA (Google Guaranteed) account set up and receiving leads
- ☐ Data-driven attribution model active (or Linear until 50+ conversions/month)
- ☐ Seasonal bid adjustments scheduled for spring ramp and fall pullback
- ☐ Ad schedule set (not running at 2am when no homeowners convert)

REVIEW SYSTEM

- ☐ NPS pre-screen sent before Google review link (filter for 9–10 responders)
- ☐ Review request sent within 24 hours of job completion
- ☐ Request message mentions the specific service completed
- ☐ One polite follow-up at 72 hours if no review received
- ☐ Google review link short URL or QR code created and tested
- ☐ Review velocity target: 2–4 new reviews per week (not burst campaigns)
- ☐ All reviews responded to within 7 days (positive and negative)
- ☐ Negative review response: acknowledge, offer resolution, take offline
- ☐ Review content audited quarterly for keyword coverage by service type
- ☐ 50+ Google reviews; 4.6+ average star rating
- ☐ Active review presence on Yelp, Houzz (decks), Facebook Business, Angi
- ☐ Star rating and review count embedded on website (homepage and service pages)
- ☐ Review snippets in Google Ads as Ad Extensions

STRATEGY & MEASUREMENT

- ☐ Q4 foundation plan: citations, schema, and location pages built Oct–Dec
- ☐ Q1 content calendar: 10+ topical pages scheduled Jan–Feb for Apr ranking
- ☐ Q2 budget plan: aggressive bidding schedule mapped for Apr–Jun
- ☐ Q3 review and photo collection plan for all completed spring/summer jobs
- ☐ GBP Insights dashboard reviewed monthly with trend tracking
- ☐ Search Console: Core Web Vitals, crawl errors checked monthly
- ☐ Google Analytics 4: traffic sources, conversion paths reviewed monthly
- ☐ Google Ads: Search Terms, Quality Score, ROAS reviewed weekly
- ☐ Top 3 competitor GBP profiles audited quarterly for gaps
- ☐ Competitor keyword gap analysis run at least twice per year
- ☐ Year-over-year review velocity tracked (are you gaining ground monthly?)
- ☐ Cost-per-lead by channel tracked and updated monthly



PANTHER LEADS

About Panther Leads

Panther Leads works exclusively with fence and deck contractors. Every strategy, campaign structure, benchmark, and metric in this guide was built for this trade — not adapted from a plumbing or HVAC template. We understand your seasonal demand cycles, your job ticket economics, your homeowner decision timeline, and which channels actually move the needle for a local fence and deck operation.

A Note on This Guide

This guide covers each channel at a depth most marketing content doesn't reach — because we believe you deserve to understand what is actually involved, not a simplified version that makes everything sound easy. Schema markup, Quality Score engineering, RLSA audiences, Core Web Vitals, citation architecture, review velocity management — these are real systems that take real expertise and ongoing attention to implement correctly. Whether you implement this yourself, hire someone in-house, or work with specialists, you now have the context to evaluate the work being done on your behalf and ask the right questions.

Would You Like an Honest Assessment of Where You Stand?

If after reading this guide you'd like a professional, honest review of your current digital presence — across all seven areas we've covered — we'd be glad to do that at no charge. We'll audit your Maps ranking, review profile, Core Web Vitals, schema implementation, ad campaign structure if you're running one, and AI search visibility. We'll show you what we find clearly and without sales pressure. If the gaps are things you can fix yourself, we'll say so. If it's something we could genuinely help with, we'll tell you that too — and leave the decision entirely with you.

THE FREE 30-MINUTE AUDIT INCLUDES:

- Google Maps ranking audit — your position for your top 5 service + city combinations vs. competitors
- AI search check — whether you appear in ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews
- Core Web Vitals assessment — LCP, CLS, INP scores with specific identified issues
- Schema markup audit — what's installed, what's missing, and its impact on AI visibility
- Ad account review (if running) — Quality Score, campaign structure, wasted spend
- Review velocity analysis — volume, recency, keyword density vs. top 3 local competitors
- Honest prioritization: what to address first for the most meaningful impact on leads

Book your free audit here:

calendly.com/hamza-pantherleads/free-lead-generation-audit

<https://calendly.com/hamza-pantherleads/free-lead-generation-audit>

No obligation. No sales pitch. Just an honest look at where you stand.