Unavoidable Marketing

Free guide for UK builders and building firms

2026 EDITION

The Builder's Playbook

How to get more booked jobs from Google, your website and social media in 2026

01 Google Local Services Ads
02 Google Ads
03 Business Profile and reviews
04 SEO and AI search
05 Websites that convert
06 Social media
07 Speed to lead

By
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Founder, Unavoidable Marketing

INSIDE THIS PLAYBOOK

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Seven short chapters, each one written for builders, and a 30-day checklist to put it all into action. Read it in one sitting, or keep it in the van and do one chapter a week.

Who this is for

- Small builders who want extensions and renovations, not just odd jobs
- Building firms with crews to keep busy between big projects
- Anyone paying for leads and not sure what they actually get back

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A WORD BEFORE YOU START

Most builders do not need more marketing. They need the right marketing, set up properly.

I have worked with trades since 2012, and builders tell me the same thing. Word of mouth is strong, but the gaps between big projects hurt, and the extensions they want go to firms that are simply easier to find, easier to trust and quicker to call back.

The fix is rarely one big thing. It is a handful of small things done properly: a Google Verified listing set up around the projects you want, a Business Profile full of real reviews, a website packed with finished work, and a phone that gets answered.

This playbook sets out exactly what we do for builders across the UK, from Cornwall to Fife, Kent to County Down. Use it yourself, hand it to whoever does your marketing, or ring me and we will talk it through. Either way, I hope it fills a few more months in your diary.

> **One good extension can fill a month. Judge every channel on signed jobs, not enquiries.**

UK-wide, Leeds-based

Working with trades across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

AH

Andrew Heppinstall
Founder, Unavoidable Marketing

HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

One chapter a week
Each chapter stands on its own. Start with the one that costs you most jobs.

Use the checklist
The 30-day checklist turns the whole book into small weekly jobs.

Track signed jobs
Note where every enquiry came from and whether it signed.

2012	390+	92%	40+
working with trades since	projects delivered	of clients come back	UK trade businesses we work with

CHAPTER 1

01 Google Local Services Ads and Google Verified

Local Services Ads sit at the very top of many Google searches, with a Google Verified badge. You pay per lead, a call or message, not per click. You can apply to Google yourself for free, or use an agency. For builders, one good lead for an extension or loft can be worth months of small jobs.

What Google checks before you can show

- A verified Google Business Profile
- Your VAT number or Companies House registration number
- Public liability insurance
- Any licence the law requires for the work you advertise. There is no general builder's licence, but work still needs Building Regulations sign-off where required

Checks usually take about 3 to 4 weeks after your documents go in.

How the cost works

1. **You pay per lead**
   A lead is a call or message about a project, not a click.
2. **You set a weekly budget**
   Google spends within it, so you stay in control.
3. **The budget is separate**
   Your lead budget is paid straight to Google.

Set it up around the work you want

Job types

Switch on only what you do and want: extensions, loft and garage conversions, renovations, structural work and brickwork.

Service area

The towns your crew can work from each day, not a radius that adds an hour to every site visit.

Opening hours

Only the hours someone will answer. Builders rarely need nights, so keep it to working hours.

BAD LEADS

Google no longer lets you dispute bad leads by hand, so the real protection is the set-up: tight service areas, only the job types you actually do, opening hours that match when you can answer, and rating every lead in your dashboard.

What helps you show more often

- Answering calls quickly
- Plenty of genuine, recent reviews
- A profile full of finished projects
- Being close to the customer
- Enough weekly budget

COMING IN 2027

Google is moving UK Local Services Ads accounts into Google Ads. Export your lead history now so you know which jobs, such as extensions or lofts, and which areas paid off.

02 CHAPTER 2 Google Ads

Search ads show for exactly what people type, so you can be there for "house extension builders Reading" as well as "knock through wall and fit steel". Unlike Local Services Ads you pay per click, which means the set-up decides whether those clicks turn into signed jobs or just cost money.

Split campaigns by job type

Extensions
Single and double storey, kitchen extensions. High value, long to decide.

Loft and garage conversions
Dormers, hip-to-gable, garage rooms. Planned months ahead.

Renovations
Knock-throughs, steels, full refurbishments and structural work.

Smaller works
Brickwork, garden walls, repairs. Fills the gaps between projects.

Negative keywords builders need

- jobs
- apprenticeship
- salary
- course
- how to
- DIY
- materials
- merchants
- skip hire
- calculator
- wholesale
- free

Add these so you stop paying for DIYers and people shopping for materials.

Get the basics right

- Target people in or regularly in your area, not people merely interested in it
- Call tracking on every ad and website number
- Conversion tracking on quote and site visit forms
- A landing page for each job type, so extension searches see real extensions

Measure cost per signed job



Divide what you spend by the number of signed jobs, not clicks or leads. Building jobs take time to sign, so judge campaigns over a quarter, not a week.

OUR RESEARCH

What a click costs builders

Median cost per click, UK: £5.03

"house extension builders": £13.25

One signed extension covers a lot of clicks, so send them to pages full of real projects. Source: Unavoidable Marketing analysis of Google data, 22 October 2026.

SEASONALITY

Push extensions and lofts after Christmas, when many families plan the year ahead, and garden walls and outdoor work in spring. Keep a smaller-works campaign running to fill gaps, and turn budgets down when you are booked months ahead.

03 CHAPTER 3 Google Business Profile and reviews

When a family decides it is time to extend, they type "builders near me", look at the map, then study the photos and reviews. Your Business Profile is that listing: close by, well reviewed, full of real projects. It also feeds your Local Services Ads and Google AI Overviews.

Set the profile up properly

1. **Primary category: Builder**
   Add secondary categories only for work you genuinely do.
2. **Service area, not home address**
   List the towns you really cover and keep your home private.
3. **Every service listed**
   Extensions, lofts, garage conversions, renovations, brickwork.
4. **Hours you can answer**
   Or a promise to call back the same day, and keep it.
5. **Real project photos**
   Progress shots, finished rooms, your crew. No stock images.

Posts through the building year

Autumn
Book now for a spring start

Winter
Plans and drawings for the new year

Spring
Extensions and garden walls underway

Summer
Loft conversions and finished reveals

Avoid getting suspended

- Adding "extensions" or towns to your name
- More than one profile for the same business
- Showing a home address customers never visit
- Different phone numbers on different sites

Ask for reviews that name the job and the town

HELPS A LITTLE

☆☆☆☆☆

"Brilliant builders, very happy."

→

HELPS A LOT MORE

★★★★★

"Built our kitchen extension in Reading on time, kept us updated every week and sorted building control."

REPLYING TO A BAD REVIEW

Stay calm and keep it short. Thank them, set out the facts without arguing, and offer to sort it out by phone. For example: "Sorry to hear this, Paul. The extension passed its building control inspection last week and the snagging list is nearly done. Please ring me and I will come round and go through it." Future customers read your reply as much as the review.

A review routine that works

- Ask at handover, in the finished room
- Text your review link with a personal note
- Ask every customer, not only the happy ones
- Reply to every review by name, calmly

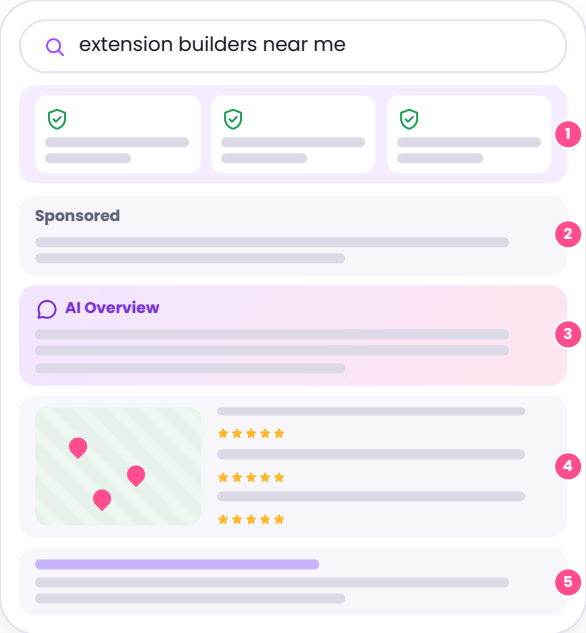
KNOW THE RULES

Fake reviews have been unlawful in the UK since April 2025 under the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act. Google also bans incentives, like money off the final invoice for a review, and asking only happy customers.

04 CHAPTER 4 SEO and AI search

> SEO is how you show in the normal results and the map without paying per click. More and more people now also ask ChatGPT, Gemini or Google AI Overviews "who is a good builder for extensions in Reading?". The good news is that the same groundwork helps with both.

Where you can show on one Google search



1. **Local Services Ads** — Google Verified badge, pay per lead — Ch 1
2. **Search ads** — Marked Sponsored, pay per click — Ch 2
3. **AI Overview** — An AI summary that can name businesses — Ch 4
4. **Map pack** — Your Business Profile and reviews — Ch 3
5. **Organic results** — Your website pages, earned with SEO — Ch 4

The layout changes with the search, the device and where the customer is. The aim is to be in as many of these places as you can.

The pages your site needs

Homepage
Says who you are, what you do and where, in the first two lines.

A page per service
Extensions, lofts, renovations, brickwork, each on its own page.

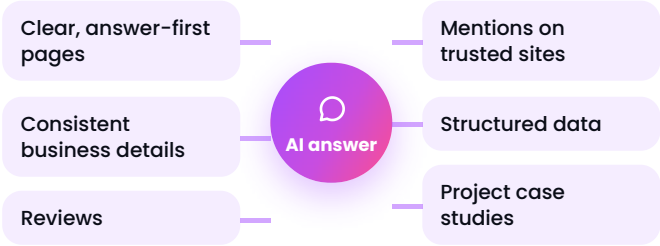
Real local projects
Case studies, photos and reviews from each town. Never copy and paste.

FAQs
Planning, Building Regulations, timescales, living in during works. Answer first.

Local SEO foundations

- The same name, address and phone number everywhere
- Listings on UK directories and trade association sites
- Schema markup so search engines read your details
- Reviews that mention projects and towns
- Pages that load fast on a phone signal

What AI assistants look for

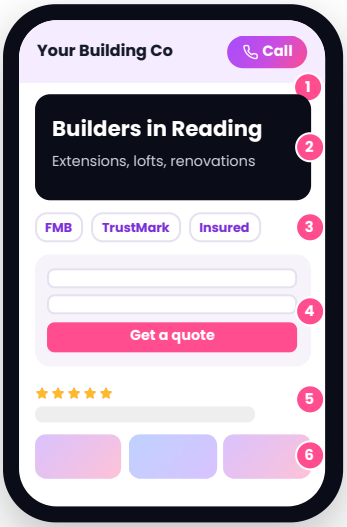


Nobody can guarantee being named. Try asking ChatGPT "who builds loft conversions in Swindon?" and see who comes up, and why.

05 CHAPTER 5 A website that converts

Most people find you on a phone, then come back to your site again and again before they decide. Your website has one job: make booking a site visit the obvious next step. Pretty is nice. Real projects, clear steps and proof you are insured win the job.

What a builder's homepage needs



1. Tap-to-call button at the top
2. Headline that says what and where
3. Trade body and trust badges
4. Short enquiry form
5. Real reviews
6. Real project photos

Must-haves

- Tap-to-call on every page, at the top
- An enquiry form that asks the right questions: project type, postcode, plans, start date, photos
- Fast on a phone signal
- Memberships such as FMB or TrustMark, insurance, and how you handle Building Regulations sign-off
- Real project photos, case studies and area pages
- Reviews from Google on the page

A form that asks the right questions

Book a site visit

What is the project?
Extension, loft, renovation

Postcode
e.g. RG1

Do you have plans?
Yes, in progress, not yet

Ideal start date?
Spring, this year, later

Photos of the space
Upload from your phone

Request my site visit

Avoid

- Template sites full of stock houses
- A site or domain you do not own
- A contact form hidden on one page
- Slow sliders and pop-ups on mobile

OWN IT

Make sure the website and the domain are in your name. If you part ways with whoever built it, the site, the reviews and the rankings should stay with you.

What every service page should include

1. **Answer first** — What you do and where, in two lines
2. **What you get** — Design to sign-off, step by step
3. **Proof** — Projects, reviews, memberships
4. **Areas covered** — The towns you really serve
5. **FAQs and a call to action** — Call button and enquiry form

Answer-first pages and schema markup help Google and AI assistants understand exactly what you do and where. Build them in from day one.

06 CHAPTER 6 Social media, organic and paid

Building work is made for social media. People save extension and loft ideas months before they pick up the phone, so social is strongest for planned, higher value jobs: extensions, loft and garage conversions, and full renovations.

Organic: build trust

Free posts on your own pages that show real work and real people, so your name is the one locals remember.

- Progress shots, naming the town
- Before and after reveals
- Crew faces on site
- Planning and design tips

Paid: bring enquiries

Facebook and Instagram ads you aim at the postcodes you cover, one job type at a time.

- Lead ads with qualifying questions
- Local targeting around your base
- Retargeting website visitors
- New-year project pushes

A simple weekly rhythm

Mon
Progress shots from each site

Wed
A short tip or site walk-round

Fri
A finished reveal or a review

Daily
Reply to comments and messages

What not to do

- Buying followers
- Posting nothing but adverts
- Showing customers' homes without asking
- Spamming groups that ban business posts

Lead ad questions that filter out time-wasters

Extension campaign

- Q1 Single or double storey?
- Q2 Do you have plans yet?
- Q3 When would you like to start?
- Q4 Your postcode

Loft conversion campaign

- Q1 Terrace, semi or detached?
- Q2 Dormer, hip-to-gable or roof lights?
- Q3 Rough start date?
- Q4 Your postcode

Good questions mean fewer enquiries from browsers and more from people ready to book.

LOCAL GROUPS AND NEXTDOOR

People ask "can anyone recommend a reliable builder?" in community groups every week. Read each group's rules, keep your page complete, and ask happy customers for Facebook recommendations the same way you ask for Google reviews.

07 CHAPTER 7 Follow-up and speed to lead

> Someone planning an extension contacts three or four builders. The first to call back and book a site visit often sets the standard the others are judged by. Every pound you spend on marketing is wasted if the enquiry goes cold, so this chapter is the cheapest win in the book.

What should happen after every enquiry

STRAIGHT AWAY	SAME DAY	WITHIN A WEEK	AFTER THE QUOTE	AT HANDOVER
1	2	3	4	5
Auto-reply	**Call back**	**Site visit**	**Follow up**	**Ask for a review**
A text confirming you have it and when you will call.	Talk it through and book a site visit.	Measure up and listen properly.	A friendly nudge, then another a week later.	By text, with your direct link.

Never miss a call

- Divert to a mobile, a team member or a call-answering service when you are on site
- Set up a missed-call text back
- Keep one shared list of every enquiry
- Get alerts for new form and ad leads on your phone

Keep a simple lead log

Date	Source	Job	Signed?
Mon	Google Verified	Extension	**Visit booked**
Tue	Website form	Loft conversion	**Quote sent**
Wed	Facebook ad	Knock-through	**Yes**

Note where every enquiry came from and whether it signed. After a few months you will know which sources are worth paying for.

Three texts worth setting up today

AUTO-REPLY

Thanks for getting in touch with Your Building Co. We have your message and will call you today to talk through your project and book a site visit.

QUOTE FOLLOW-UP

Hi Sarah, just checking you got our quote for the extension. Happy to go through it line by line or meet on site. We could start in the spring.

REVIEW REQUEST

Thanks for having us. If you are happy with the new extension, a quick Google review mentioning the project and your town would really help. Here is the link.

WHO ANSWERS WHEN YOU ARE ON SITE?

Decide now who picks up when you cannot: a partner in the office, a team member or a call-answering service. On Local Services Ads, answering quickly also helps you show more often.

PUT IT INTO ACTION

Your 30-day action checklist

Tick these off over the next month. Each one is small. Together they make you easier to find, easier to trust and quicker to book.

30 days

Week 1 — FOUNDATIONS

- [ ] Claim and verify your Google Business Profile
- [ ] Set Builder as your primary category
- [ ] Switch to a service area, hide your home address
- [ ] List every service you offer
- [ ] Gather VAT or Companies House number, insurance and memberships

Week 2 — GET VERIFIED AND FOUND

- [ ] Apply for Local Services Ads and Google Verified
- [ ] Choose only the job types you want
- [ ] Set opening hours you can answer
- [ ] Upload real project photos
- [ ] Check your name, address and phone match everywhere

Week 3 — CONVERT MORE

- [ ] Put tap-to-call at the top of every page
- [ ] Add the right questions to your enquiry form
- [ ] Explain how you handle sign-off
- [ ] Start asking every customer for a review
- [ ] Reply to every review you have

Week 4 — FOLLOW UP AND MEASURE

- [ ] Set up missed-call text back
- [ ] Start a lead log with source and outcome
- [ ] Add negative keywords to any Google Ads
- [ ] Post three times on Facebook and Instagram
- [ ] Work out your cost per signed job

Your numbers this month

ENQUIRIES	SIGNED JOBS	SPEND	COST PER SIGNED JOB

Stuck on any of these? Book a free 30-minute call and we will go through your list with you.

Book a free 30-minute call

DONE FOR YOU

How Unavoidable Marketing can help

If you would rather spend your time on site, we can do all of this for you. We are a UK-wide, Leeds-based agency working with builders and other trades across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and founder Andrew Heppinstall is on every strategy call.

Local Services Ads
Set-up, Google Verified checks and weekly running

Google Ads
Split by extensions, lofts, renovations and small works

Business Profile
Set-up, posts, photos and a review routine

SEO and AI search
Being found on Google, ChatGPT and Gemini

Websites
WordPress, you own it, typically built in 3 to 4 weeks

Social media
Organic posts and ads for extensions and lofts

How we work

1. **Flat monthly fee**
   Quoted after a free call, based on what you need.
2. **Your ad spend, your card**
   Paid straight to Google or Meta, never marked up.
3. **No contract**
   Rolling 30-day terms. We keep you by results.
4. **Measured on signed jobs**
   Not clicks or likes. Clear monthly reports.

2012	390+	92%	40+
working with trades since	projects delivered	of clients come back	UK trade businesses we work with

Talk to Andrew, not a sales team.
Free 30-minute call. No obligation, no hard sell.

Book a free 30-minute call →

Unavoidable Marketing

READY WHEN YOU ARE

Let's fill your diary with the jobs you want.

Book a free 30-minute call with Andrew. We will look at how builders in your area are winning work, where your enquiries come from now, and what to fix first.

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unavoidablem.com

UK-wide, Leeds-based

Scan to book your free call

Book a free 30-minute call →

unavoidablecrm.com/book?co=2&service=1

ON THE CALL

1

Your area

Who shows up when local customers search for a builder, and why.

2

Your set-up

A look at your Google profile, any ads and your website.

3

Your plan

What to fix first, and a flat monthly fee if you want us to do it.

Working with trades since 2012

Flat monthly fee, quoted after a free call

No contract