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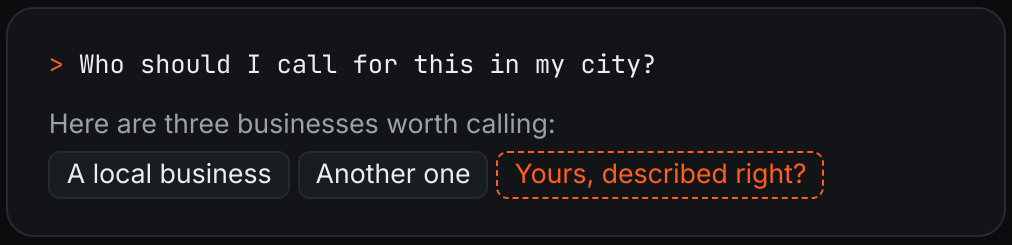



~/ a workbook for local business owners

# The Name AI Gives

How to get recognized, and described correctly, when customers ask ChatGPT, Google's AI or Perplexity who to call.

Gary VanHorn · GVX Digital

gvxdigital.com/found · November 2026

# The list became a name

For twenty years a customer typed "roofer near me" and got a page of choices. A map, ten links, some ads. Being on the page was enough to get a look.

Ask ChatGPT the same thing and you get a short answer. "Here are three roofers in Louisville worth calling," with a sentence on why each one made it. The customer may never see a fourth name.

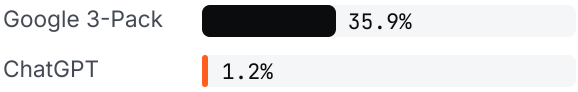
This is already common. In BrightLocal's 2026 Local Consumer Review Survey of 1,002 US adults, 45% said they had used ChatGPT or another AI tool for local recommendations. A year earlier it was 6%.[1]

BrightLocal, 2026

**45%** up from 6%

of US adults surveyed had used ChatGPT or another AI tool for local recommendations.

SOCi, 2026




Share of 350,000+ chain locations shown in Google's local 3-Pack, and recommended by ChatGPT.

The answer is also much harder to get into than the map. SOCi studied more than 350,000 locations belonging to 2,751 multi-location brands. ChatGPT recommended 1.2% of those locations. The same locations showed up in Google's local 3-Pack 35.9% of the time on average.[2] That study covers chains, and SOCi sells local marketing software, so read it as direction.

> **Being good at the work isn't enough.** A business can have twenty years of happy customers and still be missing from the answer, because an AI tool only knows what it can read about you. The rest of this workbook is about giving it something to read.

# Where the answer comes from

Google has a Business Profile you can claim. Bing has Bing Places. ChatGPT has nothing like that for local businesses.

When someone asks for a plumber or an accountant in your city, the AI tool looks across the web and names the businesses it can find consistent, specific and trusted information about. Five kinds of information do most of the work.

01 **Your listings.** Google Business Profile and Bing Places are the first records to get right. Categories, services, hours and service area all get read.

02 **Whether your facts match.** Your name, phone number and city should be the same on your website, your listings and every directory. One old phone number on one site makes all of them a little less believable.

03 **Your reviews.** AI answers usually give a reason for each business they name, such as "known for fast emergency service." That reason tends to come from reviews.

04 **Your own pages.** A page that answers a real question in plain sentences gives the AI tool something to quote. A page that says "we do it all" gives it nothing.

05 **The places it cites.** Most answers link to their sources. For local questions those are often directories and lists: Yelp, the Better Business Bureau, Angi, a trade association, a local "best of" article. If you're missing from the sources, you're usually missing from the answer.

A search engine ranks one best page for a query. An AI tool gathers from many sources and is more likely to name a business when several of them say the same thing. LinkedIn's 2026 guide for marketers makes that point well.[3] For a local business, "several sources" means your listing, your site, your reviews and a couple of directories all telling one story.

> **One more thing has to be true: the AI tool has to be able to read your site.** Some website hosts and security plugins block AI crawlers. OpenAI's own documentation says a site that opts out of its search crawler, OAI-SearchBot, will not be shown in ChatGPT search answers.[4]

# Ask it yourself: a 20-minute test

Does AI know your business, and does it have you right? You can check today, for free. The blank sheet is on the next page.

## Step 1. Write five questions

Two about you by name, to see what AI knows:

- "What does [your business name] in [your city] do?"
- "How do I reach [your business name], and when are they open?"

Three the way a customer would ask, to see whether it connects you to your work:

- "Who should I hire for [your service] in [your city]?"
- A specific job you want more of: "Who replaces sewer lines in Jeffersontown?"
- A price question: "How much does a new roof cost in Louisville, and who should I call?"

## Step 2. Ask each question in three tools

ChatGPT, Google (look for the AI Overview at the top of the results) and Perplexity. Start a new chat for each question. Sign out first if you can.

## Step 3. Mark the sheet and add it up

For each answer, mark whether it has you right. Right means it includes your business and gets the basics correct: your name, what you do, where you work and how to reach you. Write down anything wrong or missing, and which sources it linked to. Section 4 uses both.

Five questions in three tools is 15 answers. Your number is "right in X of 15." If a tool shows no AI answer for a question, leave it out.

### The faster way

The free Found check asks three buyer questions on ChatGPT, Perplexity and Google's AI Overviews, nine answers in all. In about 90 seconds it shows whether those answers name your business, and which businesses they name when they don't.

foundbygvx.com/check

~/ fill in here, or print

# Your answer sheet

Type into this page or print it. Write your five questions once, ask them the same way every month, and fill in one sheet per month. Mark each box R (has you right), W (has you wrong), M (you are missing) or a dash (no AI answer).

| YOUR QUESTION | CHATGPT | GOOGLE AI | PERPLEXITY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |

`date`

`right in`

answers that have you right, of answers you got

`what it got wrong`

name · services · area · phone · hours

`what it left out`

`sources the answers linked to most`

# The six fixes, in order

These are in the order I'd do them. You can do every one yourself.

fix 1

## Claim and complete your listings

Google Business Profile first, then Bing Places. Pick the right primary category. List every service by name. Keep hours current, including holidays. Don't skip Bing: ChatGPT's web search uses outside search providers, and Bing has long been one of them. Bing Places can copy most of your details from your Google profile in a few minutes.

fix 2

## Make your facts match everywhere

Write down one official version of your business name, phone number, address or service area, and hours. Then check your website footer, your contact page, both listings, your Facebook page and the top directories for your trade. Fix every one that differs. A business that moved three years ago can still have the old address on four sites.

fix 3

## Earn recent reviews, and answer them

Ask every happy customer, on Google first, in the week the job finishes. Reply to each review in a sentence or two. Reviews that mention the job and the neighborhood help most: "Replaced our water heater in Middletown the same day" tells an AI tool what you do and where. "Great service" tells it very little. Never write reviews for customers. You can ask them to mention what you did.

fix 4

## Write one page for each question customers ask

Put the question in the heading and the answer in the first few sentences, then the detail. LinkedIn's guide recommends the same pattern for articles: a direct answer of 30 to 80 words under a question heading.[3] Here it is for a plumber. Fill the brackets with your real numbers.

yoursite.com/water-heater-replacement-cost

THE QUESTION, AS THE HEADING

### How much does a water heater replacement cost in Louisville?

THE ANSWER, FIRST

A standard 50-gallon gas water heater costs [your low price] to [your high price] installed in the Louisville area. That includes the permit and hauling away the old tank. Tankless units cost more because they need new venting and often a larger gas line. Most tank replacements take three to four hours.

**Then the detail:** what changes the price, which brands you install, how warranties work, and when a repair makes more sense than a replacement. Prices last checked: [month and year].

Use the words customers use on the phone. Give real prices or ranges, timelines and the neighborhoods you cover. Then add what only you know from doing the work. Start with the questions on your sheet that AI got wrong or left you out of.

fix 5

## Add structured data, and let AI crawlers in

Structured data, also called schema markup, puts your name, phone, city, hours and services into a form software can read without guessing. Most website platforms have a setting or plugin for it. Then open yoursite.com/robots.txt. If you see "Disallow" next to OAI-SearchBot, PerplexityBot, ClaudeBot or Google-Extended, an AI tool is being turned away. Ask your web host or whoever built the site to allow them.

fix 6

## Get on the directories AI cites for your trade

Look at the sources on your answer sheet. If the same three directories keep showing up, those are the three that matter for you. Claim your profile on each, with the same details as everywhere else. Which directories matter is different for a roofer, a law firm and an IT company, so go by your own answers.

> **What I'd skip.** Bulk directory packages, anything sold as a "ChatGPT submission" (there is nothing to submit to), filler blog posts with nothing of your own in them, and chasing one question until you "win" it. These are my opinions, not measured results.

# Measure every month, and be patient

1. **Same questions, same wording, every month.** Change the wording and you can't compare the months.
2. **One run is one data point.** A trend needs three or more. Write down losses the same way as gains.
3. **Write down what you changed, and when.** Without the dates, you can't tell which fix moved the number.

**Give it time.** LinkedIn's guide advises waiting at least 30 days before judging a change, citing Profound data on about 900 pages that AI tools went on to cite: half were first cited within about 7 days, 90% within about 37.[3] Plenty of pages are never cited at all.

## Your monthly log

One line a month is enough. Take the number from your answer sheet.

| MONTH | RIGHT IN | WHAT YOU CHANGED, AND WHEN |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**A word on LinkedIn.** LinkedIn's guide reports that LinkedIn is the most-cited site for professional questions in AI search (Profound data), and that about 75% of the cited LinkedIn content came from individual people, not company pages (Meltwater data).[3] I haven't checked that research, and none of it measures local questions. If other businesses hire you (accounting, insurance, law, IT), fill in your own profile and publish one article a month that answers a client question. If homeowners hire you, do the six fixes first.

> **Be careful with anyone who** guarantees a ranking or a mention, offers to "submit" you to ChatGPT, shows one screenshot as proof, writes reviews for you, can't say what they changed last month, or puts your listings in their own name.

# Your first 30 days

Tick the boxes here, or print this page.

week 1

## Find out

- [ ] Run the 20-minute test, or the free Found check.
- [ ] Save the answer sheet. That is your baseline.
- [ ] Claim your Google Business Profile and Bing Places listing if you haven't.

week 2

## Get the facts straight

- [ ] Write down one official name, phone, address or service area, and hours.
- [ ] Fix every listing and directory that differs.
- [ ] Ask five recent customers for a Google review.

week 3

## Answer two questions

- [ ] Pick the two questions from your test that AI got wrong or left you out of.
- [ ] Write one page for each, answer first.
- [ ] Turn on structured data, and check that robots.txt lets AI crawlers in.

week 4

## Fill the gaps

- [ ] Claim your profile on the three directories your answers cited most.
- [ ] If other businesses hire you, finish your LinkedIn profile and publish one article.
- [ ] Check that a customer can tap to call you from your home page on a phone.

day 30

## Ask again

Same questions, same wording, same three tools. Fill in a new sheet.

Then keep going: one fix and one re-run every month.

~/ if you'd rather have it done

# How Found fits

Everything in this workbook you can do yourself. The test takes 20 minutes. The fixes take longer, and they don't stay done: listings drift, reviews age and the answers keep changing.

If you'd rather hand it off, that is what Found by GVX is. It works in steps. Each step has a fixed price, and you can stop after any of them.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 01 | **The free check**<br>Free · about 90 seconds | I ask ChatGPT, Perplexity and Google's AI Overviews three questions your customers ask. You see whether each answer names you and which businesses it names instead. In a short call I show you the one fix that matters most. |
| 02 | **Found Snapshot**<br>$299 one time · limited-time price | Your Found Score out of 100 next to local rivals, what AI tools say about you today, and the three fixes that matter most. Delivered in two days. |
| 03 | **Fix Sprint**<br>$995 fixed price | I make those three fixes: answer pages, structured data and listings, on your own site and profiles. One to two weeks. |
| 04 | **Found, monthly**<br>$1,000 to $1,500 a month | Steady fixes to your site and listings, new pages, review and profile work, and a monthly report. Three-month first term, then month to month. |

Prices as of November 2026. Current prices, terms and a sample report are at foundbygvx.com.

> **Why the reports show other businesses.** The businesses AI names for your work show what it trusts: the listings, reviews and pages it is reading. Seeing them next to yours is the fastest way to find what yours is missing. The goal is still that AI knows your business and describes it correctly.

**What I won't promise:** a ranking, a place in any AI answer, a number of leads, or results by a certain date. I report visibility. I never promise it.

~/ before you hire anyone, me included

# Four questions to ask

Ask these of anyone who offers to get you into AI answers. My own answers are beside each one.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 01 | **What do you measure, and how often?** | A fixed set of your customers' questions, asked the same way every month, so one month can be compared with the next. |
| 02 | **Will I see every answer, including the bad ones?** | Yes. Each report shows which AI answers name you and which businesses they name instead, whether the number went up or down. |
| 03 | **Do I approve changes before they go live?** | Yes. Every change is drafted from your own facts, and nothing is published until you say so. Each report lists what I changed, and when. |
| 04 | **If I stop, what do I keep?** | Everything. Pages, listings and accounts I set up are yours, in your name. |

Be careful with anyone who can't answer all four, and with anyone who guarantees a result.

## Sources


1. BrightLocal, *Local Consumer Review Survey 2026*. Published February 11, 2026. 1,002 US adults.
   https://www.brightlocal.com/research/local-consumer-review-survey/
2. SOCi, *2026 Local Visibility Index*. January 28, 2026. 350,000+ locations, 2,751 brands.
   https://www.soci.ai/news/in-ai-driven-discovery-few-brands-are-chosen-most-disappear/
3. LinkedIn, *Unlocking AI Search Visibility: The B2B Marketer's Guide to LinkedIn* (2026). Figures it attributes to Profound and Meltwater were not checked against the original research.
   PDF, hosted by LinkedIn at delivery-p143253-e1476319.adobeaemcloud.com (link)
4. OpenAI, *Overview of OpenAI Crawlers*.
   https://developers.openai.com/api/docs/bots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FOUND by GVX

~/ next step

# See who AI names when your customers ask.

The check is free and takes about 90 seconds. If you want to talk it through, book 15 minutes with me.

**Run the free Found check**

foundbygvx.com/check

On paper? Scan with your phone's camera to run the free check.

**Book a 15-minute call**

app.cronslot.com/gary/15-minute-call

Scan to book a 15-minute call.

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**About the author.** I'm Gary VanHorn. I've worked in IT since 1989: 25+ years writing software and 12 years running a managed-IT business in Louisville. Found by GVX is part of GVX Digital, my one-person software and systems business. You work with me, start to finish.

GVX Digital, LLC
1935 S Hurstbourne Pkwy, Suite 1102
Louisville, KY 40220
gvxdigital.com