

THE NO-BS CONTRACTOR LEAD FIELD GUIDE

How to Make Your Phone Ring Without Paying for Ads

Practical steps for small contractors who want steady, consistent work — without marketing companies, gimmicks, or wasted money.

by T.J. Stoner

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

How to Make Your Phone Ring Without Paying for Ads

Section 1 — The Fastest Ways to Get Calls This Week (Zero Cost)

- 1. The Neighbor Knock Method**
 - 2. The Yard Sign Trick That Works**
 - 3. The 3-Text Blast Method**
 - 4. Before/After “Shock Photos”**
 - 5. The 10-Review Sprint**
-

Section 2 — The Simple System That Brings Calls Every Week

- 1. Setting Up Your Google Business Profile Correctly**
- 2. Service Area Expansion**
- 3. Photo Posting Routine**
- 4. Writing Descriptions That Make People Call**
- 5. Getting Into the Local Map Pack**

Section 3 — The High-Intent Places Where Customers Already Look

- 1. Facebook Local Groups**
- 2. Nextdoor Dominance**
- 3. Free Local Marketplaces**
- 4. HOA & Neighborhood Boards**
- 5. The Referral Engine (Contractor Version)**

Section 4 — The Website Setup That Makes People Call (Minimum Required)

- 1. What Your Website MUST Show**
- 2. What to Remove**
- 3. High-Converting Homepage Layout**
- 4. Using Photos as a Selling Tool**
- 5. The Only 3 Pages You Need**

Section 5 — The “Every Job = 3 Jobs” Strategy

- 1. Getting Referrals Onsite**

2. Making It Referral-Friendly

3. Natural Upsells

4. Post-Job Follow-Up

5. Leaving Something Behind

Section 6 — The Weekly No-BS Marketing Checklist

Weekly Actions

Photo Routine

Review Routine

Availability Posts

Old Lead Follow-Up

Google Updates

Network Touches

Conclusion

What Actually Makes the Phone Ring

INTRO

If you're reading this, your phone isn't ringing enough.

Work slowed down.

Jobs dried up.

Or you're tired of relying on word of mouth and hoping next week is better than this one.

I've been there.

And if you're like most small contractors, every time business slows you start thinking:

- "Should I run an ad?"
- "Should I hire a marketing company?"
- "Should I post more on Facebook?"

Here's the truth:

****Small contractors don't need ads.**

They need a system.**

A simple, repeatable way to make the phone ring without paying Google, Facebook, or some agency that's never swung a hammer in their life.

That's what this guide is.

Not theory.

Not marketing jargon.

Not crap written by someone in an office.

This is the no-BS approach to getting more calls using what actually works in the field:

- how to get calls fast
- how to keep calls coming weekly
- how to turn one job into three
- how to show up where customers already look
- what to say, what to post, what to fix, and what to stop doing

- how to do all of this free

If you're a one-man show or a small crew, this guide is built for you.

You don't have time to waste.

You don't want complicated.

You want calls. Period.

So here it is — the real playbook.

Follow it and your phone will ring more.

Ignore it and you'll stay stuck in stop-and-go work forever.

Let's get into it.

SECTION 1 — The Fastest Ways to Get Calls This Week (Zero Cost)

These are the moves that get your phone ringing **right now**.

Not six months from now.

Not "after you build a brand."

This week.

Do these when work slows or whenever you want more calls coming in.

They work because they put you directly in front of people who already need what you do.

1. The Neighbor Knock Method

Most contractors finish a job and pack up without realizing something important:

Every house around the job you just finished probably needs the same work.

That's the fastest source of new calls you'll ever get.

Here's the move:

1. Finish your job.
2. Before leaving, walk to **3–5 houses** next door or across the street.
3. Say this exact line:

“Hey, I’m working over at your neighbor’s place.

We’re already in the area, so if you’ve got anything you need done, I can take a look while I’m here and save you a trip fee.”

This line works because:

- it’s low pressure
- you’re already there
- they see your truck/tools
- homeowners love saving money

This method brings in more *same-day* work than anything else.

2. The Yard Sign Trick That Works

A yard sign doesn’t work if it’s tiny, ugly, or says too much.

Here’s what DOES work:

BIG, SIMPLE, CLEAR.

Something like:

**TREE WORK
678-555-1234**

or

**DIRT WORK / DRAINAGE
CALL: 678-555-1234**

Not a website.
Not a slogan.
Not social media icons.

Just **service + phone number**.

Put two signs:

- at the jobsite
- at the nearest busy intersection

Leave the intersection sign for 48–72 hours max.
More calls come from one good sign than a full week of Facebook posts.

3. The 3-Text Blast Method

This works stupid well.

Make a list of:

- past customers
- estimates you did but didn't get
- people who called you months ago

Then send this simple text:

“Hey, this is Mike with ABC Contracting.
I've got an opening this week if you need anything done.
Let me know — I can stop by and take a look.”

This fills dead weeks fast.

Don't overthink it.
Just send the text.

4. Before/After “Shock Photos”

Homeowners react to visuals way more than words.

Your photos should show:

- messy → clean
- overgrown → cleared
- broken → fixed
- flooded → draining properly

Post 2–3 of these photos in **local Facebook groups**, not your business page.

Caption:

“Finished up this job today.
If you need anything like this done, I’m available this week.
Text me at 678-555-1234.”

Post it once.

Not daily.

Not spam.

One real, quality post pulls calls.

5. The 10-Review Sprint

Reviews move you up in local searches **fast**.

Here’s the sprint:

1. Call or text your last 10 customers.
2. Say this:

“Hey, this is Mike.
I’m trying to build up my Google page.”

Would you mind leaving me a quick review?
It really helps me out.”

Send them your review link directly.

Even 4–5 new reviews can bump you up in map results within days, which boosts calls.

What Section 1 Does

These 5 tactics generate:

- same-day calls
- same-week calls
- quick fill-ins
- emergency jobs
- small jobs that turn into bigger work

They don't require:

- ads
- websites
- marketing knowledge
- good weather
- a big crew

Just effort.

These are the **fastest** ways to get work when you need it.

SECTION 2 — The Simple System That Brings Calls Every Week

Section 1 was about quick wins.

This section is about building a **steady flow of weekly calls** so you don't hit panic mode every month.

This is the “do this consistently” part of the Field Guide.

These steps are free, fast, and work for every type of contractor.

1. Set Up Your Google Business Profile Correctly

Most contractors have a Google Business Profile (GBP), but 90% of them set it up **wrong**.

GBP is the #1 way homeowners find contractors online — and it's free.

Here's how to make yours work:

A. Use real job photos, not stock crap

Upload:

- before photos
- after photos
- equipment photos
- jobsite photos
- close-up photos of your best work

B. Fill everything out

Categories

Services

Service area
Description
Hours
Phone number

C. Post 2–3 photos every week

Google rewards activity.
This alone can move you up in the map pack.

2. Service Area Expansion (the cheap trick for more visibility)

Even if you only work in 1–2 cities, list **5–10 surrounding towns** in your service area.

Google uses these to decide **where** to show you.

Add towns like this:

- City A
- City B
- City C
- City D
- City E

Reason:
You only show up in towns Google *thinks* you serve.

This simple step increases calls without extra work.

3. Photo Posting Routine That Boosts Rankings

Google ranks contractors with:

- lots of real photos
- recent activity
- consistent updates

Here's the routine:

Every Monday: Upload 3–5 new photos

Every Wednesday: Post a short update (like “Finished a drainage job today off Oak Ridge Rd”)

Every Friday: Add a before/after pair

This takes **10 minutes** and moves your listing above dead profiles.

4. Write Descriptions That Make People Call You

Don't write generic crap like:

“We provide quality work at affordable prices.”

That makes you sound like every other broke contractor.

Use direct, clear lines like:

- “We answer the phone.”
- “Same-week service on most jobs.”
- “Free on-site quotes.”
- “We specialize in ____.”

- “Locally owned, no BS pricing.”

Homeowners want speed, clarity, and honesty.

This improves both ranking AND conversions.

5. How to Get into the Local Map Pack Without an Office

Google wants:

- reviews
- photos
- activity
- accurate info
- proximity

You can get into the map pack without a physical office by:

A. Adding neighborhoods you’ve worked in to updates

Example:

“Finished a trenching job in Silver Creek neighborhood today.”

B. Posting job photos with location tags

When possible, include city names organically like:

“Driveway culvert installed in Temple.”

C. Getting reviews from customers in your target city

Reviews from people in that city help Google place you there.

D. Keeping your service area accurate

Don't list 500 cities.

List 5–10 max.

What Section 2 Does

This creates the **week-to-week stability** that keeps your phone from going cold.

Once this system is running, you'll see:

- consistent new calls
- stronger ranking
- more map visibility
- easier expansion into nearby areas

Section 1 is about **fast calls**.

Section 2 is about **steady calls**.

SECTION 3 — The High-Intent Places Where Customers Already Look

Most contractors waste time trying to “market” in places where homeowners aren't actually hiring from.

This section puts you where people are **already searching for help**, which means **faster calls and better-quality customers**.

No BS. No complicated strategies.

Just go where the buyers are.

1. Facebook Local Groups (the easiest free lead source)

Every city has “buy/sell/trade” groups, community groups, yard sale groups, and neighborhood groups.

These groups are gold because:

- people actually live there
- homeowners ask for contractor recommendations
- you can respond instantly
- jobs come in same-day

What to post (simple):

Option A – Before/After Post

“Finished this job today in [CITY].
If you need anything like this done, I’ve got openings this week.
Text me at 678-555-1234.”

Option B – Availability Post

“If anyone needs [SERVICE] done this week, I’ve got one opening.
Text me at 678-555-1234.”

Option C – Recommendation Thread

Whenever someone says,

“Looking for someone to ____,”
you reply with:
“I can help. I’m local. Text me at 678-555-1234.”

Rules:

- Don’t spam

- Keep posts clean
- Use real photos
- Post 1–2 times per week max

This alone can bring you steady weekly calls.

2. Nextdoor Dominance (better than Facebook for certain services)

Nextdoor is underrated but extremely powerful for:

- tree work
- handyman work
- landscaping
- drainage
- pressure washing
- small excavation jobs

Homeowners love posting problems here.

How to dominate Nextdoor quickly:

1. Create your business page
2. Add job photos
3. Add reviews from your customers
4. Post once a week:

“Finishing up work in [neighborhood].
If anyone needs [service], text me at 678-555-1234.”

What makes Nextdoor effective:

- people trust recommendations here more than Facebook
 - your posts show up to neighbors automatically
 - the same post can circulate for weeks
-

3. Free Local Marketplaces

These get overlooked, but they bring real jobs:

- Craigslist Services
- Facebook Marketplace
- OfferUp Services
- Thumbtack Free Listing (don't pay for leads)
- HomeAdvisor Free Profile (don't buy leads)

What to post:

A simple ad with:

- What you do
- Cities you serve
- 3 photos
- A phone number for texting

These bring slow-but-steady calls every month.

4. HOA & Neighborhood Boards

HOAs hire contractors constantly:

- drainage fixes
- grading
- tree work
- pressure washing
- concrete
- handyman
- fencing

How to get in:

Send this simple message:

“Hi, I’m a local contractor.
If your neighborhood ever needs help with [service], I can give free quotes and fast service.
Here are a few photos of recent work.”

Attach 2–3 before/after shots.

HOA jobs pay very well and repeat often.

5. The Referral Engine (contractor version)

Most contractors only get referrals by accident.

Here's how to get them *on purpose*:

Step 1 — Ask at the right moment

Ask right after a customer compliments your work.

Say:

“I appreciate that. If you know anyone who needs this kind of work, send them my way. I'm trying to stay booked solid.”

Step 2 — Make it easy

Text them your digital business card:

“Here's my info if you think of anyone.”

Step 3 — Follow up once

Two weeks later:

“Hope you're doing good. Just reaching out — if you hear of anyone needing work done, keep me in mind.”

This easy system brings in repeat calls without you nagging people.

What Section 3 Does

This puts you directly where **homeowners already ask for help**, which means:

- faster calls
- better-quality customers
- less wasted time
- more jobs without ads

Section 1 = fast leads.

Section 2 = weekly leads.

Section 3 = high-intent leads.

SECTION 4 — The Website Setup That Makes People Call (Minimum Required)

You don't need a fancy website.
You don't need 20 pages.
You don't need a "brand."

You need **one simple setup** that gets people to pick up the phone.

This section shows exactly what works — and what kills calls.

1. What Your Website **MUST** Show to Generate Calls

When a homeowner lands on your site, they're asking one thing:

"Can this person fix my problem, and can I trust them?"

Show them these 5 things immediately:

A. What you do

Clear, simple, fast.

"Drainage solutions, grading, trenching — serving Douglasville and West GA."

B. Real photos

Not stock nonsense.

Your real work sells jobs.

C. A direct phone number at the top

Big, bold, clickable.

D. Your service area

People need to know you're local.

E. Proof

Reviews, before/after shots, customer comments.

If you show these 5 things on the homepage, your calls go up immediately.

2. What to Remove Because It Kills Calls

Most contractors make their website worse by adding too much.

Remove these:

- long paragraphs
- fancy sliders
- giant logos
- “about us” walls of text
- multiple navigation links
- pointless certifications
- cheesy slogans

Homeowners don't care.

They want:

- clarity
- speed
- proof
- a phone number

Everything else is noise.

3. How to Layout a Homepage That Makes People Call

Use this layout. It works for every contractor:

Top Section (Hero)

- Clear service line
- Real photo
- Phone number
- Simple bullet list
- “Get a quote” button

Section 2 — Before/After Photos

3–6 pairs.

These sell more than any paragraph.

Section 3 — What You Do (Simple List)

Just list services.

No long text.

Section 4 — Service Area

List cities you actually serve.

Section 5 — Reviews

3–5 screenshots from Google or Facebook.

Section 6 — Call To Action

Repeat your phone number and a short line like:

“Text me for a fast quote: 678-555-1234”

This structure turns visitors into calls.

4. How to Turn Photos Into a Selling Tool

Most contractors post random job photos. That’s not enough.

Photos must **tell a story**.

Use these 4 types:

A. Before/After

Most powerful.

B. Action Shots

You working. Equipment in action.

C. Problem → Solution

Flooded yard → dry yard

Overgrown area → cleared

Broken pipe → fixed

D. Clean Finish Photos

End results that look “professional.”

Bonus Tip

Add simple captions:

“Fixed a drainage issue off Pine Ridge Rd.”

“Tree removal in Villa Rica.”

Small detail. Big impact.

5. The Only 3 Pages a Contractor Website Needs

You don't need a full site. Just these 3:

1. Homepage

This is your call-generator.

2. Services Page

Short sections with a photo for each service.

3. Contact Page

Phone number

Text number

Simple form

Areas served

That's it.

No blogs.

No 15-page website.

No fluff.

Just the minimum setup that gets calls and supports your Google visibility.

What Section 4 Does

This creates a website that:

- looks legit
- removes friction
- shows real proof
- builds trust

- gets calls from people already searching
- reinforces everything in Sections 1–3

You're not "building a brand."
You're building a **call machine**.

SECTION 5 — The “Every Job = 3 Jobs” Strategy

Most contractors think a job ends when they get paid.
Wrong.

A job ends when it produces **more jobs**.

If you treat every job like it should lead to **three more**, you'll never run out of work.

Here's the system.

1. Get a Referral Before You Leave the Jobsite

Don't wait until later.
Don't hope for word of mouth.

Ask them **right when they're happy**, which is usually after they see the finished result.

Say this:

“If you know anybody who needs this kind of work done, send them my way.
I'm trying to stay booked up.”

Simple.
Non-pushy.
Works amazingly well.

Bonus move:

Hand them your phone and say:

“Here’s my contact card — can you save it real quick?”

People refer you **way more** when they already saved your number.

2. Make It “Referral-Friendly”

Homeowners forget what you do 5 minutes after you leave.
So make it stupid simple:

A. Text them your business card

“Here’s my info if you ever need me again.”

B. Send them the before/after photos

People love to show off good work.
When they forward the pictures, your number goes with them.

C. Give them one extra line

Something they can repeat when referring you:

“He does good work and actually shows up.”

That line alone brings work.

3. Upsell Naturally (Not Pushy)

Don’t force upsells.
Just point out problems you already see.

Like this:

“By the way, while I was here I noticed your ___ could use some attention.
If you ever want me to take a look at that, just let me know.”

No pressure.
Just awareness.

A lot of homeowners will say:

“Yeah, go ahead and quote it.”

That’s a bonus job you wouldn’t have had.

4. Follow Up After the Job — Once

This is where most contractors drop the ball.

Follow up **3–7 days later** with a simple text:

“Hey, just checking in. Everything still looking good?”

If they say yes (they usually do), you reply:

“Good deal. And listen — if you hear anyone needing work, keep me in mind.”

This one follow-up doubles your referral rate.

5. Leave Something Behind That Sells for You

This works *extremely* well:

A. A simple door hanger

Not cheap ad junk—just your name, service, and number.

B. A refrigerator magnet

Stays there forever.

C. A small card taped near the work

(Example: under a sink after plumbing, in a control panel after electrical, on a sump pump install.)

This keeps your info where it matters.

What Section 5 Does

This turns:

- one job
- into two or three jobs
- consistently

Instead of chasing new customers all the time, this system makes your old jobs keep paying you.

Most contractors ignore this.
The ones who do it stay busy.

SECTION 6 — The Weekly No-BS Marketing Checklist

This is the part most contractors never do — and it's exactly why their phone goes dead.

You don't need to spend hours "marketing."
You don't need to hire anyone.
You don't need to make videos or post every day.

You just need this **simple weekly checklist**.

Do this every week and you'll stay booked.

Skip it, and the work dries up.

1. Post 3–5 Job Photos to Google Business Profile

Every single week.

Why?

Because Google rewards:

- activity
- fresh photos
- real jobsite content

This pushes you up in the map results and gets you more calls.

Takes 5 minutes.

2. Add One Before/After Photo Pair

Before/after photos are the most powerful sales tool a contractor has.

Post one pair every week to:

- Google
- Facebook business page (optional)
- Nextdoor (optional)

Homeowners react to visuals.
These posts bring calls.

3. Get One Review Per Week

Just one.

Ask one customer:

“Hey, it would help me out a ton if you could leave a quick Google review.”

One review a week keeps you climbing and keeps you ahead of competitors with dead profiles.

4. Make One “Availability Post” in a Local Group

Once a week — not daily.

Simple post:

“If anyone needs [service] done this week, I’ve got one spot open.
Text me at 678-555-1234.”

That’s it.

This post brings in the “urgent” customers — the best kind.

5. Send the 3-Text Blast to Old Leads (Every Other Week)

Every two weeks, send this text to:

- old customers
- people who got quotes but didn't hire
- anyone you've worked with before

Text:

"Hey, this is Mike.
If you still need anything done, I've got an opening this week.
Text me if you want me to swing by."

This fills holes in the schedule.

6. Update One Service Area or Description on Google

Google loves freshness.

Every week or two:

- add a new nearby town
- tweak a description
- add a service
- update a line

Small changes give you a small ranking boost.

7. Touch 5 People in Your Network

This can be:

- texting past customers
- shaking hands with a neighbor at a job
- messaging a realtor
- checking in with a property manager
- waving down someone who stops to watch your work (happens all the time)

You're staying present without being annoying.

These low-pressure touches bring jobs.

The Power of This Checklist

If you do these steps weekly:

- Google ranks you higher
- homeowners see you more
- referrals rise
- your schedule stays full
- your slow weeks disappear
- your competition gets buried

All without:

- ads
- SEO companies
- tricks
- complicated marketing

- spending a dime

Just consistent, simple actions.

CONCLUSION — What Actually Makes the Phone Ring

If you're reading this, you now know something most small contractors never learn:

****Your phone doesn't go dead because of "the economy."**

It goes dead because you don't have a system.**

Slow weeks aren't random.

Busy weeks aren't luck.

Your schedule is a result of what you do (or don't do) every single week.

This Field Guide gave you the no-BS, real-world steps to:

- get fast calls
- get steady weekly calls
- get high-intent calls
- turn every job into more jobs
- stay visible
- stay busy
- and do it without paying for ads

Nothing here is complicated.

Nothing requires a marketing degree.

Nothing requires a big crew or fancy tools.

It's simple:

****Be visible.**

Be active.

Be fast.

Be consistent.

Be real.**

If you do what's in this guide, your phone will ring.

If you skip it, you'll keep having the up-and-down weeks you've always had.

Your future work schedule is in your hands now.

So here are the last three steps:

1. Pick one thing from this guide and do it TODAY.

Not tomorrow.

Not "sometime soon."

Today.

2. Build your weekly checklist as a habit.

Consistency beats every contractor in your area who's sitting around hoping for calls.

3. Don't overthink any of this.

Simple wins.

Effort wins.

Visibility wins.

This is the no-BS way small contractors get more customers.

Now get after it — and keep your phone ringing.