

What a homeowner sees *before they call you.*

Nine things every Bay Area contractor can check in ten minutes. No software required.

Word of mouth doesn't end at the recommendation anymore. Someone gives your name at a barbecue, and before dialing, the homeowner types that name into their phone. What loads in those next ninety seconds decides whether you get the call or the second name on the list. This checklist is what we look at when we study how a contracting business appears online. Nothing here requires hiring anyone - most of it is free and takes an afternoon.

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- ☐ **1. Google your own company name, on a phone, logged out.**
Not your laptop, not while signed into your own account - that view is flattering and false. **Whatever shows in the first screen is your storefront.**
Fix it today: Ask someone who has never searched you to do it and screenshot what they see.
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- ☐ **2. Does your Google Business Profile exist, and is it claimed?**
This is the single highest-value free asset a local contractor owns. An unclaimed or empty profile is the most common reason a real, licensed business loses to a newer competitor.
Fix it today: google.com/business - claim it, set service area, hours, and phone.
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- ☐ **3. How many photos of your finished work can a stranger see right now?**
Not on your phone - **publicly visible.** Homeowners buy the evidence of finished work, not adjectives about quality. Under ten public photos is a real gap.
Fix it today: Post 10-20 finished jobs to your Business Profile this week. Free.
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- ☐ **4. How many Google reviews do you have, and when was the last one?**
Recency matters as much as the count. Twelve reviews from this year beats forty from 2019 - old reviews read like a business that has slowed down.
Fix it today: Text your last five happy customers a direct review link. Most say yes.
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- ☐ **5. Is your license number visible where a customer can verify it?**
In California a homeowner can check any license on the CSLB site in seconds - and cautious ones do. Showing the number turns a stranger into a verified professional.
Fix it today: Put your CSLB number on your website footer, profile, and estimates.
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- ☐ **6. Does your site load fast on a phone, on cell data?**
Most contractor sites are viewed on a phone, often in a driveway on a weak signal. If it takes more than a few seconds, most people are already gone.
Fix it today: Test it on your own phone with wifi off. If it crawls, that is the finding.
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- ☐ **7. Is your phone number tappable, and does it ring the right phone?**
A number typed as plain text instead of a tap-to-call link costs real jobs. So does an old number nobody answers.
Fix it today: Tap it yourself on your phone. It should dial. If not, that's an easy fix.
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☐ **8. If someone wants a quote at 9pm, what happens?**

Most quote requests happen after work hours. If the only route is calling during business hours, you are only collecting the customers patient enough to wait.

Fix it today: Add any simple request form, or even a text-us line. Something must catch 9pm.

☐ **9. Is the work shown actually yours, and is it recent?**

Stock photos are recognizable and they quietly cost trust. Your real, imperfect job photos outperform professional stock every time.

Fix it today: Replace every stock image with a real job. Phone photos are fine.

How to read your score

7-9 checked: you're in good shape - protect it by keeping photos and reviews recent.

4-6 checked: normal for a busy contractor. The gaps are costing referrals you already earned. Most are fixable in one afternoon, free.

0-3 checked: not a reflection of your work - it's a reflection of how little time running jobs leaves for this. Start with #2 and #4; they cost nothing and move the most.

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