

LOCAL SEO CHECKLIST

The website fundamentals that make a home service business rank, convert, and compound

WHO THIS IS FOR

Home service operators who know their website should be producing leads but cannot tell what is broken, what is missing, or what to fix first.

WHAT YOU GET

A complete, sequenced checklist for the on-page work that drives local rankings and converts the traffic once it arrives. Covers site structure, service area pages, schema, FAQs, conversion elements, internal linking, and the content cadence that holds rankings once you get them.

BASED ON

Field research and audit data across 200+ home service operators, including multi-location brands generating \$100M+ in annual revenue. Every benchmark in this checklist is sourced from operators who have tested it in production.

WHY YOUR WEBSITE IS THE LEVER, NOT YOUR ADS

A contractor with no website, no Google listing, no reviews, and unwrapped trucks cannot turn off paid ads without killing the pipeline. The organic infrastructure has to exist before the business can survive without renting attention from the major lead aggregators or Google itself.

That infrastructure is four assets: a real website, a verified Google Business Profile, Google reviews, and branded trucks. The website is the one you control directly. It is also the one that compounds the longest. Once it ranks, leads keep arriving whether you spend on ads that month or not.

Two numbers to anchor on before you start.

Seventy percent of all home service searches happen on Google. At peak SEO performance, operators running mature organic programs report more than half of their leads coming from organic search and Google Business Profile combined. More than half of lead flow at zero cost per click. The working rule: spend at least half your marketing energy on Google.

Conversion rate is the multiplier most operators ignore. One home service site converted 1 in 400 visitors into estimate requests. After proper design and conversion work, a comparable site converted 1 in 50. Same 400 visitors, eight leads instead of one. An 8x improvement on the same traffic. If your site converts at 1 in 400, more SEO will not save you.

You need both. Rank, then convert. This checklist is sequenced in that order.

SECTION 1: SITE STRUCTURE (WHAT MOST OPERATORS GET WRONG FIRST)

Before you touch a page, fix the structure. The wrong structure caps everything you do later.

EVERY SERVICE GETS ITS OWN URL

Pressure washing gets domain.com/pressure-washing. Soft washing gets domain.com/soft-washing. Gutter cleaning gets domain.com/gutter-cleaning. Each URL matches the exact phrase a customer types into Google.

Grouping every service onto one page is the single most common structural mistake. Google cannot rank one URL for ten different intents. It picks one and ignores the others, or it ranks the page for nothing in particular. This was the top structural fix cited across the majority of home service sites reviewed in field audits.

The fix: one service, one page, one URL.

SERVICE AREA PAGES, DONE RIGHT

For every city or town you serve, build a dedicated service area page. The URL is `domain.com/locations/cityname` or `domain.com/cityname-service`. The page targets a named geography in the headline. The hero copy says exactly which towns and which services. The trust signals (reviews, photos, license info) are local to that market.

Do not build fifty thin service area pages by swapping the city name in the same template. Google has been catching this for years. Each page needs unique local content: a sentence about the neighborhood, photos from a real job in that town, the customer reviews from that market.

STOP STUFFING THE HOMEPAGE WITH CITY NAMES AND KEYWORDS

Cramming every city name, zip code, and service keyword into the homepage footer is an outdated tactic that no longer moves rankings. Google evaluates page design, load speed, and mobile experience instead. Energy that used to go into keyword lists should now go into design and speed.

BIFURCATE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL

If your website looks residential, you will get residential customers. If you serve both, you need clearly separated paths: a residential layout with home photos and homeowner language, and a commercial layout with HOA, property manager, and apartment building photos.

In some cases the right answer is a separate branded website entirely. A lawn care operator may actively suppress commercial snow leads because property managers search for snow-specific companies and disqualify a residential-sounding brand before they click. A separate commercial site, linked from the residential site, can carry inherited authority while signaling clear commercial intent.

SECTION 2: THE HOMEPAGE THAT CONVERTS

A visitor decides in a few seconds whether your site is for them. They are asking three questions: What services do you offer? Do you serve my area? Are you for someone like me? If your homepage does not answer all three immediately, they bounce.

THE ABOVE-THE-FOLD CHECKLIST

- Service area named in the page title, in the hero text, and in the top visible section. If a visitor has to scroll to the about page or footer to find out whether you serve them, you have already lost them.
- Estimate request form embedded directly above the fold. Not behind a button. Not on a separate contact page. Customers hesitate when they do not know where a button will send them. Removing that extra step measurably reduces bounce and lifts capture.
- Brand photos of your truck, crew, uniforms, and equipment doing actual work. Stock images signal you could be anyone. Your own photos justify premium pricing.

- A visible phone number with click-to-call on mobile. Roughly 80% of ad clicks in multi-location network data are on the call button, not the website link. People want to call. Make it one tap.

TWO-STAGE LEAD CAPTURE BEATS A BOOK NOW BUTTON

A button alone asks the visitor to commit before they have evaluated you. A two-stage form converts better: collect contact information first with a short form, then redirect to scheduling. This captures the visitor who is not ready to book but is willing to share their info.

TRUST SIGNALS THAT WORK

Google-schema-linked star ratings, pulled directly from your Google reviews where users can click through and verify, are far more credible than static testimonials nobody can check. Customers immediately distrust testimonials they cannot independently verify. Connect the schema, show the live count, let them click through.

WHAT KILLS CONVERSION

The 2026 home service audits identified a consistent list:

- Slow load time from oversized images, video backgrounds, and excessive plugins
- A homepage that loads 27 to 28 megabytes of uncompressed image data, when the target is under 3 to 4 megabytes
- One-page sites where every service is stacked vertically under one URL
- No sticky header, no clear call to action, no mobile optimization
- Logo and contact info hard to read or hidden

A sloppy site signals a sloppy contractor. Prospects who land on it will only accept your bid if you are the lowest price.

SECTION 3: FAQ SECTIONS (THE UNDERRATED RANKING MOVE)

Every service page and every location page gets a FAQ section. Eight to twelve questions per page, answered in plain English, in the customer's own words.

Why this matters more than it used to: operators who restructured every location page with FAQ sections specifically for AI-first content consumption saw an uptick in traffic from AI search sources. The same FAQs that help your prospects also feed the AI engines that increasingly recommend contractors directly.

HOW TO SOURCE THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Open Google Search Console. Find the location and service pages that already get impressions. Look at the queries Google reports for each page. Those are the literal questions your prospects type. Add a FAQ block on the page that answers each of those queries in the headline of the question and the first paragraph of the answer.

A proven Search Console tactic: identify blog posts and pages with high impressions in Search Console, then add content using the exact queries Search Console reports, without touching the title tag or existing copy. This method has produced organic traffic increases every single time it has been applied across client sites. No exceptions.

QUESTION CATEGORIES THAT PERFORM

- Service area and coverage ("Do you serve [neighborhood]?")
- Pricing transparency ("How much does [service] cost in [city]?")
- Process and timeline ("How long does [service] take?")
- Credentials and trust ("Are you licensed and insured in [state]?")
- Edge cases and concerns ("What if I'm not happy with the work?")
- Comparison and decision ("Should I choose [your service] or [alternative]?")

Answer the question in the first sentence. Then add the supporting detail. AI engines and Google's featured snippets both reward this structure.

SECTION 4: SCHEMA MARKUP (THE LEVER AI ENGINES READ FIRST)

Schema is structured data that tells Google and AI engines what your page is about in machine-readable form. For a home service business, schema is the single most accessible lever for getting AI engines to surface you. AI engines read schema first, before any other on-page signal.

SCHEMA TYPES EVERY HOME SERVICE SITE NEEDS

- **LocalBusiness** schema on the homepage and footer, with business name, address, phone, hours, service area, and price range.
- **Service** schema on every service page, with the service name, description, area served, and provider.
- **FAQPage** schema wrapping every FAQ block. This is what gets your questions surfaced as featured snippets and pulled into AI answers.
- **Review** schema connected to your Google reviews so star ratings appear in search results.
- **BreadcrumbList** schema on every page so Google can map your site structure.

If you use WordPress, plugins like Rank Math or Yoast handle most of this. If you have a custom site, your developer can add JSON-LD blocks to each page template. Either way, validate every page with Google's Rich Results Test before you call it done.

CREDIBILITY SIGNALS THAT FEED SCHEMA

Top-performing operators are actively feeding AI engines a continuous stream of credibility signals: background checks, awards, employer-of-choice designations. Each of these becomes structured data the AI can verify. Winning local awards and third-party recognitions is no longer just a PR tactic, it is a structured AI-credibility feeding strategy that puts verifiable proof into the machine's training data.

SECTION 5: INTERNAL LINKING (THE FREE AUTHORITY TRANSFER)

Internal links pass authority from one page to another. Most home service sites use them poorly or not at all.

THE RULES

- Every service page links to the relevant location pages where you offer that service.
- Every location page links to the services offered in that location.
- Every FAQ answer links to the deeper service page or location page that goes into more detail.
- The homepage links directly to your top three to five revenue services with descriptive anchor text ("pressure washing in Peabody," not "click here").
- Your blog posts link out to the service and location pages they support.

THE VIRAL HOOK THAT BUILDS LINKS THE RIGHT WAY

One operator ranked a keyword priced at \$60 to \$70 per click in PPC organically within two months using a single outstanding blog post. Two days of creation, four press releases (two paid, two free), social sharing, and the social signals drove the ranking with no additional link building.

A second proof: a garage door company ranked number one for the same high-value keyword within four months primarily on the strength of a viral blog post about cool things to do in your man cave. The post earned massive social shares and press pickups, which built domain authority and lifted the service pages.

The pattern: write something the local press and social networks will share, link it internally to your service pages, and the authority flows downhill. A "30 weirdest things in [your city]" list post with original photos is a proven format. The viral hook and the service offer stay separated so the content earns distribution without looking like an ad.

SECTION 6: CONVERSION RATE OPTIMIZATION

Once traffic arrives, this is the section that decides whether you have a business or a billboard.

THE FRAMING THAT MATTERS

The working definition for what a high-converting home service site has to do: does the visitor stop searching because your website gave them confidence, clarity, and a clear next step, or do they bounce to your next competitor because they are confused by the design, cannot find the estimate request form, or do not understand your service area or what you actually offer.

INSTALL CONVERSION TRACKING BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING ELSE

Ranking number one in local SEO does not generate leads if your site does not convert, because Google does not know whether someone who reaches the site becomes a customer. Install Google conversion tracking on the thank-you page that loads after an estimate request. Once Google sees which visitors convert, ad relevance improves and organic ranking improves for the right audience.

If you are running Google Ads, this is the same conversion tracking. The data feeds both systems.

THE CRO CHECKLIST

- ☐ Page load under three seconds on mobile
- ☐ Estimate form above the fold on homepage
- ☐ Click-to-call phone number in the sticky header
- ☐ Service area named in the hero
- ☐ Trust strip with Google-schema review count
- ☐ Brand photos, not stock
- ☐ Two-stage lead capture (contact first, then schedule)
- ☐ Conversion tracking installed on thank-you page
- ☐ Live chat or chatbot for after-hours capture

THE HIDDEN HESITATION KILLERS

Hesitation is the primary killer in a tightening market. On the website, hesitation lives in these specific places:

- A homepage that does not name a service area in the first screen
- Pricing that is hidden behind a form when a competitor shows a ballpark
- An estimate form that asks for too many fields
- A scheduling tool that requires creating an account
- No clear answer to "what happens after I submit this form"

Every field you remove and every question you answer in the open shortens the path to a call.

SECTION 7: CONTENT CADENCE (WHAT HOLDS RANKINGS ONCE YOU GET THEM)

Rankings decay. Pages that ranked a year ago drop unless something tells Google the business is active.

THE MINIMUM CADENCE

- **Weekly:** One Google Business Profile post (covered in the GBP guide), one new piece of website content or one update to an existing page
- **Monthly:** One full new service or location page, or one substantial blog post (1,200+ words) targeting a researched keyword
- **Quarterly:** Refresh the top three pages that drive your traffic with new photos, updated FAQs, and current year references in the copy

WHERE TO FIND THE CONTENT TOPICS

Google Search Console is your topic engine. The "Performance" report shows you every query that produced an impression. The queries where you ranked positions 5 through 20 are the ones to target next: Google already thinks you are relevant, and one good update can move you to the top three.

The same Search Console method applies here: take a page with high impressions, add content that answers the exact queries Search Console reports, leave the title tag alone. Track the rankings two weeks later.

YOUTUBE COUNTS AS SEO

YouTube is the second largest search engine. Project videos uploaded there with keyword-optimized titles, descriptions, and timestamps become discoverable assets that link back to your site. A short walkthrough of a real job in a target city, titled with the service and the city, lives forever.

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

Structure (do this first):

- ☐ One URL per service, one URL per location
- ☐ Homepage has service, area, and trust above the fold
- ☐ Estimate form embedded on homepage above the fold
- ☐ Residential and commercial paths separated where applicable

- ☐ All images compressed; homepage under 4 megabytes total

On-page essentials:

- ☐ FAQ section on every service page (8 to 12 questions)
- ☐ FAQ section on every location page
- ☐ Brand photos throughout (no stock)
- ☐ Click-to-call phone number in sticky header
- ☐ Google-schema review stars visible above the fold

Schema:

- ☐ LocalBusiness schema on homepage and footer
- ☐ Service schema on every service page
- ☐ FAQPage schema on every FAQ block
- ☐ Review schema connected to Google reviews
- ☐ Validated in Google Rich Results Test

Internal linking:

- ☐ Services link to relevant locations
- ☐ Locations link to relevant services
- ☐ Homepage links to top services with descriptive anchors
- ☐ At least one cornerstone blog post that earns external links

Conversion:

- ☐ Two-stage lead capture in place
- ☐ Google conversion tracking installed on thank-you page
- ☐ Page load under three seconds on mobile
- ☐ Live chat or chatbot active

Cadence:

- ☐ One website content update per week
 - ☐ Monthly review of Search Console queries for ranking opportunities
 - ☐ Quarterly refresh of top three traffic pages
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WHAT THIS CHECKLIST PRODUCES

A home service site that works is the difference between leads pouring in when you turn off ads and leads going to zero. Operators who built the four core assets (website, GBP, reviews, wrapped trucks) repeatedly report keeping most of their leads even after pausing paid spend. The website is the one of those four assets where the compounding runs longest.

Start with the structure. One URL per service. Estimate form above the fold. FAQs on every page. Schema validated. Conversion tracking installed. The traffic strategy comes next, but the traffic is wasted without the structural floor.

The contractors who treat the website as the foundation, not a brochure, are the ones still standing in 2027.

Tactics in this checklist are sourced from field audits and interviews with operators running home service businesses from \$1M to \$400M+ in annual revenue. Full source index available in the BurksUP Field Intelligence Library.

• WHAT'S NEXT •

READY TO *INSTALL* THIS?

BurksUP builds the marketing systems that make home service operators findable, bookable, and referable. This guide is the playbook. We're the team that installs it.

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