AI SYNDICATE RESEARCH · NOVEMBER 2026

How home-service contractors can stay ahead of AI

48%

of AI's #1 contractors were described by their BBB rating (ranked 11th+: 8%)

ChatGPT · Claude · Gemini · Perplexity · Google AI Overviews · Microsoft Copilot · Grok · Meta AI · DeepSeek · Mistral · Siri · Alexa

2,050	12	10	240,848
US MARKETS	AI ASSISTANTS	HOME-SERVICE TRADES	MENTIONS READ

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IN ONE PARAGRAPH

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of 240,848 mentions of home-service contractors by 12 AI assistants in 2,050 US markets, the contractor ranked #1 was described by a star rating or review count in 96% of markets, by its years in business in 60% and by its BBB rating in 48%. At the same number of mentions, top-three contractors were described as BBB-rated, licensed or family-owned about twice as often as those ranked 11th or lower. A local business was #1 in 76% of markets, and "best affordable" put a different contractor first in 62%.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

When a homeowner asks ChatGPT, Gemini or Siri for a plumber, roofer or HVAC company, the answer is a few names with a reason beside each. We read what 12 AI assistants said in 240,848 mentions of contractors in 2,050 US markets to find which contractors they put first, what they say about them, and which sites they read.

CITE THIS REPORT

> AI Syndicate Research, "How Home-Service Contractors Can Stay Ahead of AI: What 12 AI Assistants Say About the Contractors They Recommend," November 2026, measured 1–9 November 2026, https://www.aisyndicate.com/research/how-home-service-contractors-stay-ahead-of-ai-november-2026/

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Executive summary

FIGURE 1 **What AI says about the contractors it recommends, November 2026**

76%
Markets where AI's #1 contractor is a local business, not a national brand
1,557 of 2,050 markets

96%
AI's #1 contractors described by a star rating or review count
Ranked 11th or lower: 55%

60%
AI's #1 contractors described by their years in business
Ranked 11th or lower: 24%

48%
AI's #1 contractors described by their BBB rating
Ranked 11th or lower: 8%

62%
Markets where "affordable" gets a different #1 than "best"
Same #1 for all three questions: 22%

30%
Citations that point to contractors' own websites
Review sites and directories: 35%

Source: AI Syndicate Research, How Home-Service Contractors Can Stay Ahead of AI, November 2026 (**aisyndicate.com**)

Key findings

1. **AI tells customers who you are, not just your name.** In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of 240,848 mentions of home-service contractors by 12 AI assistants in 2,050 US markets, the assistants described the contractor they ranked #1 by its star rating or review count **96%** of the time, by its years in business **60%**, by its prices **61%** and by family or local ownership **50%**.

2. **The contractors AI ranks first are described with trust facts about twice as often.** Comparing contractors named the same number of times (4 to 6 answers), those ranked in the top three were described as BBB-rated 2.7 times as often as those ranked 11th or lower (33% against 12%), as licensed, bonded or insured 2.3 times (27% against 12%) and as family or locally owned 1.9 times (56% against 28%).

3. **Local contractors win most #1 spots, but not in every trade.** A local business was AI's #1 in **76%** of the 2,050 markets. National brands held #1 in 62% of water damage markets and 56% of window replacement markets, and in 1% of HVAC and 2% of roofing markets.

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4. **AI's #1 is a contractor most assistants agree on.** The #1 contractor was named by a median of **7 of the 12 assistants**, and by five or more in 93% of markets. 24% of ranked contractors were named by one assistant only; the 30% named by four or more took 60% of all mentions.

5. **"Affordable" is a different race.** In **62%** of markets the #1 for "best affordable" was not the #1 for "best". The same contractor led all three questions in only 22% of markets.

6. **Your own website is the second most-cited kind of source.** Of 145,317 citations in the answers, **30%** went to contractors' own websites and 35% to review sites and directories (Yelp, Angi, Google, Thumbtack, the BBB). 96% of #1 contractors had a website on record, against 75% of those ranked 11th or lower.

7. **ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude almost always name the #1.** ChatGPT named the market's #1 contractor in 96% of markets, Gemini in 93% and Claude in 93%. The memory-only assistants rarely did: Grok 22%, DeepSeek 26%, Mistral 28%.

What it means. When a homeowner asks an AI assistant for a plumber, roofer or HVAC company, the answer is a short list with a reason beside each name: a rating, a number of years, an owner, a certification, a price policy. The contractors that lead are the ones whose trust facts are written down where the assistants read: their own website, their review profiles and the BBB. These are patterns in what the assistants said, not guarantees and not proof of cause.

Scope. 240,848 mentions of 45,374 ranked contractors in 2,050 US markets (205 metro areas in 50 states, 10 home-service trades), from the answers of 12 AI assistants to 73,800 questions asked between 1 and 9 November 2026 for the November edition of AI Syndicate Local. No business is named in this paper.

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01

How did we measure what AI says about contractors?

AI Syndicate Local asks 12 AI assistants the same three questions about a type of business in a city every month: **who are the best** ones, **I need one, who do you recommend**, and **which is the best affordable** one nearby. A market is one city and one trade. This paper reads the ten home-service trades in the 4,100 US markets of the November 2026 edition: plumbers, HVAC and air conditioning, electricians, roofing, garage door repair, pest control, water damage restoration, window and door replacement, solar installation and moving companies. That is 2,050 markets and 73,133 answers.

A business is **ranked** in a market when at least two independent answers name it. After the edition was published, a model read every stored answer and kept, for each business it named, the short phrases the answer used about it ("family-owned since 1998", "A+ BBB rating", "24/7 emergency service"). We sorted those phrases into 14 subjects with fixed keyword rules, published with the analysis script.

- **Live web search:** ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini and Perplexity answer with web search on. Google AI Overviews is the overview Google shows for the question. Microsoft Copilot answers come mostly from Microsoft's Bing-grounded AI service.
- **Model memory only:** Grok, Meta AI, DeepSeek and Mistral answer from what the model learned.
- **Voice:** Siri and Alexa cannot be asked programmatically. We reconstruct their answers from the kinds of sources each draws on.

Terms used in this paper

Term	What it means here
Market	One metro area and one trade, such as roofers in Tampa
Mention	One contractor named in one answer by one AI assistant
Ranked contractor	A contractor named in at least two independent answers in its market, so it appears on that market's AI Local ranking
#1 contractor	The contractor at the top of a market's AI Local ranking, which weighs how many answers name it, how high, and how widely each assistant is used
Described by	At least one assistant said this about the contractor in an answer that named it
National brand	A business whose website or name appears on the rankings of many metro areas in three or more states (franchises included)
Citation	A link an assistant gave as a source in its answer

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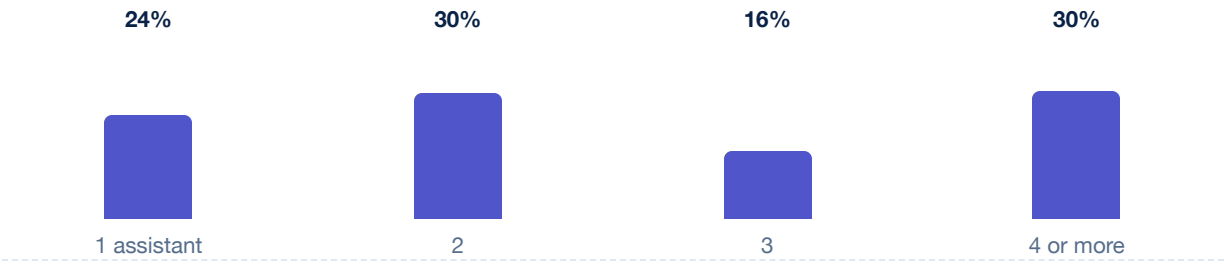
02

How many contractors does AI recommend in a city?

A median of 54 different contractors were named per market, but most were named once or twice. In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study, 24% of the 45,374 ranked contractors were named by a single AI assistant, and 30% by four or more. That smaller group took **60%** of all mentions (95% range 59.4–60.6%).

FIGURE 2 **How many of the 12 AI assistants named each ranked contractor**

Share of 45,374 ranked contractors in 2,050 US home-service markets, November 2026.



Source: AI Syndicate Research, How Home-Service Contractors Can Stay Ahead of AI, November 2026 (**aisyndicate.com**)

The #1 contractor in a market was named by a median of **7 of the 12 assistants**, and by five or more in 93% of markets. A contractor named often by one assistant does not get to the top: being found by several assistants, which read different sources, does.

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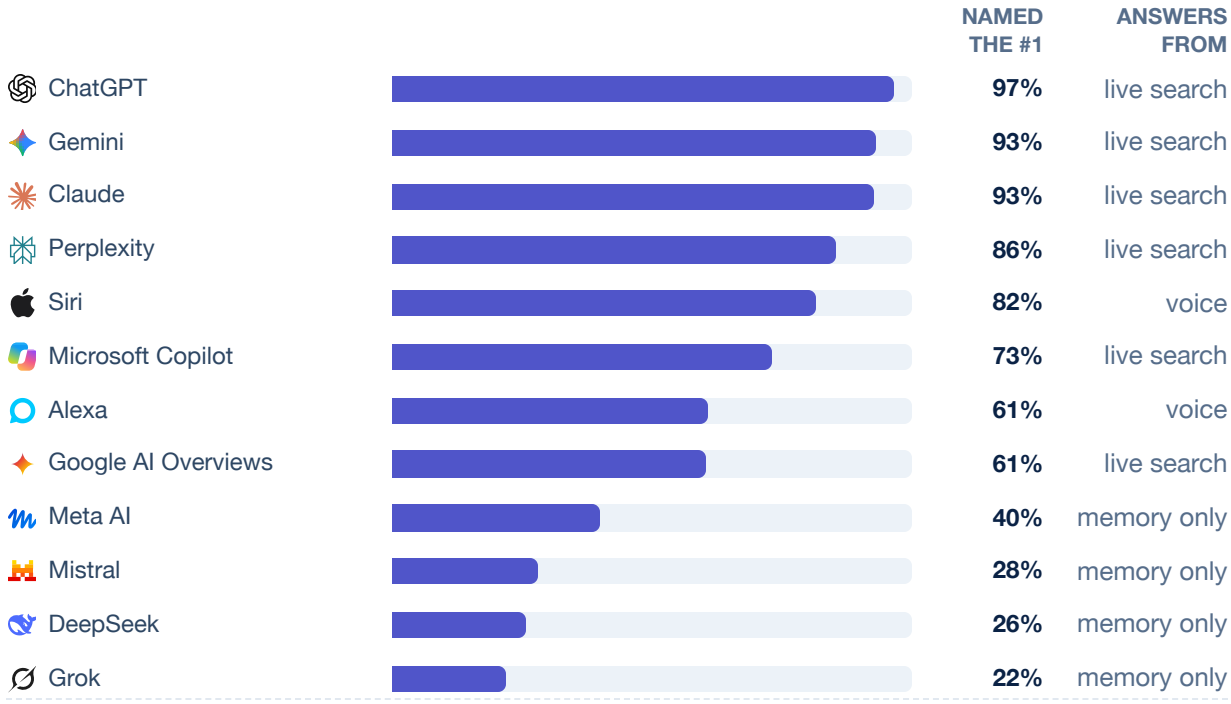
03

Which AI assistants recommend the top contractor?

ChatGPT named the market's #1 contractor in 96% of the 2,050 markets, the most of any assistant. Gemini (93%) and Claude (93%) were close behind. The four assistants that answer from memory named it far less often: Meta AI 40%, Mistral 28%, DeepSeek 26% and Grok 22%.

FIGURE 3 **Share of markets where each AI assistant named the #1 contractor**

2,050 US home-service markets, November 2026. A market counts for an assistant when it answered at least one of the three questions. Siri and Alexa answers are reconstructed.



Source: AI Syndicate Research, How Home-Service Contractors Can Stay Ahead of AI, November 2026 (**aisyndicate.com**)

Part of this is how the ranking works: it weighs each answer by how widely the assistant is used and how high the name appears, so the most-used assistants count for more in who is #1. Even so, the gap is wide. So a contractor that AI ranks first is, in practice, a contractor that the live-search assistants find on the web today. The memory-only assistants mostly name older, better-known businesses, or none at all, and change only when their models are retrained.

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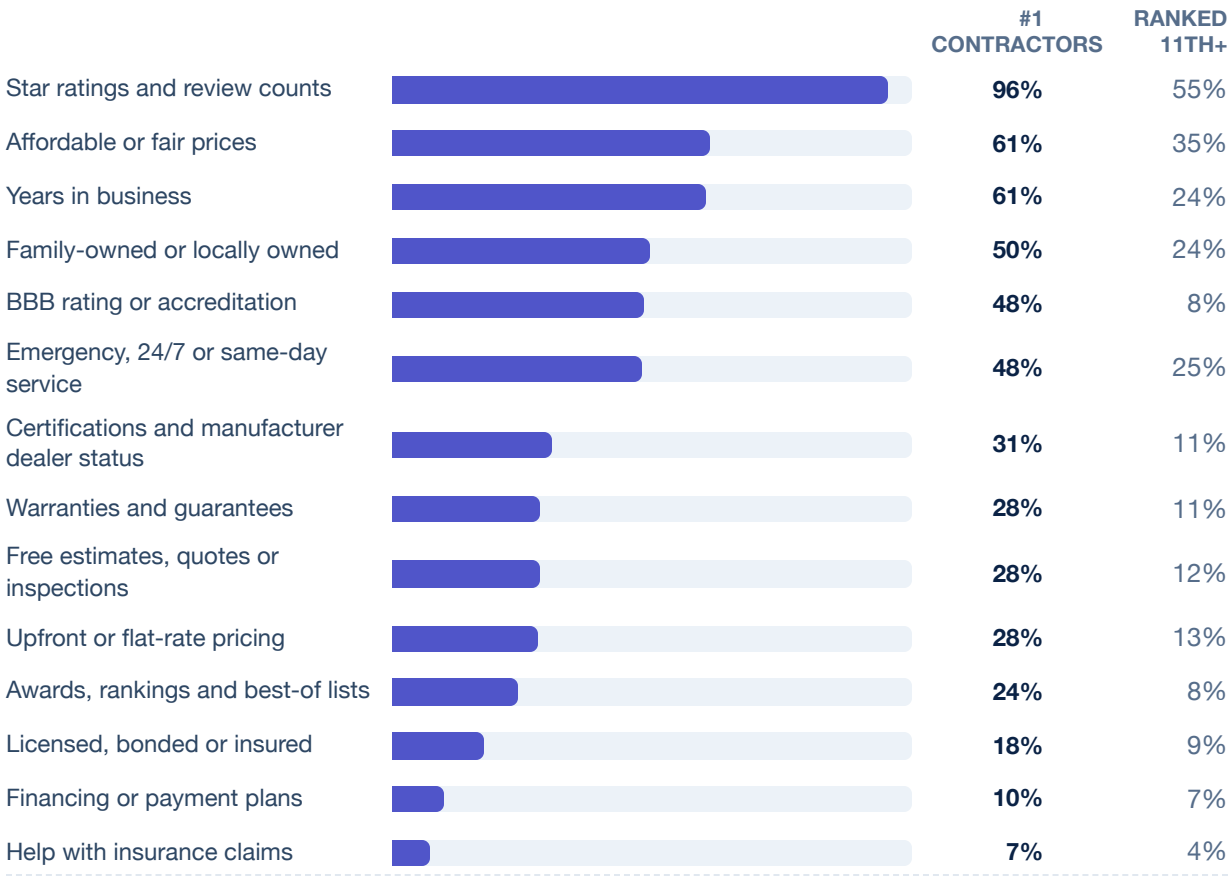
04

What does AI say about the contractors it ranks first?

A star rating or review count, years in business, prices and ownership. In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study, the assistants described the contractor they ranked #1 by a star rating or review count in **96%** of markets, by its years in business in **60%**, by its prices in 61%, by family or local ownership in 50%, by its BBB rating in 48% and by emergency or same-day service in 48%.

FIGURE 4 **What AI assistants said about the #1 contractor in each market**

Share of 2,043 #1 contractors that at least one assistant described this way. Second column: contractors ranked 11th or lower (25,362). 12 assistants, 2,050 US markets, November 2026.



	#1 CONTRACTORS	RANKED 11TH+
Star ratings and review counts	**96%**	55%
Affordable or fair prices	**61%**	35%
Years in business	**61%**	24%
Family-owned or locally owned	**50%**	24%
BBB rating or accreditation	**48%**	8%
Emergency, 24/7 or same-day service	**48%**	25%
Certifications and manufacturer dealer status	**31%**	11%
Warranties and guarantees	**28%**	11%
Free estimates, quotes or inspections	**28%**	12%
Upfront or flat-rate pricing	**28%**	13%
Awards, rankings and best-of lists	**24%**	8%
Licensed, bonded or insured	**18%**	9%
Financing or payment plans	**10%**	7%
Help with insurance claims	**7%**	4%

Source: AI Syndicate Research, How Home-Service Contractors Can Stay Ahead of AI, November 2026 (**aisyndicate.com**)

Some of that gap is volume: a #1 contractor was named in a median of 15 answers, one ranked 11th or lower in 3, so the #1 has more chances to have something said about it. To take that out, we compared contractors

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named in the same number of answers (4 to 6). The gap shrinks for star ratings and prices but stays wide for the trust facts:

What the answer said	Top 3 in the market	Ranked 4th–10th	Ranked 11th or lower
BBB rating or accreditation	33%	17%	12%
Licensed, bonded or insured	27%	16%	12%
Family-owned or locally owned	56%	41%	28%
Years in business	54%	46%	32%
Free estimates, quotes or inspections	26%	21%	16%
Emergency, 24/7 or same-day service	44%	37%	30%
Certifications and manufacturer dealer status	22%	19%	16%
Upfront or flat-rate pricing	21%	20%	17%
Star ratings and review counts	80%	72%	69%
Affordable or fair prices	52%	47%	45%
Warranties and guarantees	18%	16%	16%
Help with insurance claims	6%	6%	6%
Awards, rankings and best-of lists	11%	13%	13%
Financing or payment plans	7%	7%	11%

Contractors named 4 to 6 times: 584 in the top 3, 5,110 ranked 4th–10th, 5,342 ranked 11th or lower.

At the same number of mentions, a top-three contractor was described as BBB-rated **2.7 times** as often, as licensed, bonded or insured 2.3 times, as family or locally owned 1.9 times and by its years in business 1.7 times as often as one ranked 11th or lower. Financing was the one subject said more often about lower-ranked contractors (11% against 7%).

This does not show that publishing a BBB rating moves a contractor up. Contractors with those facts may differ in other ways: older firms have more reviews and more pages written about them. It shows what the assistants choose to repeat about the contractors they put first.

National brands are described differently from local contractors. The assistants mentioned warranties for 26% of national brands and 12% of local contractors, and family or local ownership for 37% of local contractors against 13% of brands. Years in business: 38% of local contractors, 24% of brands.

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05

What does each AI assistant say about contractors?

Mistral, ChatGPT and Gemini say the most; Grok and DeepSeek say the least. Of the ranked contractors each assistant named, Mistral said something specific about 92%, ChatGPT 88% and Gemini 85%. Grok (29%) and DeepSeek (36%) mostly gave names with little or nothing about them.

Assistant	Answers from	Said something specific	Star rating or reviews	BBB rating
Mistral	memory only	92%	65%	16%
ChatGPT	live search	88%	47%	26%
Gemini	live search	85%	27%	5%
Meta AI	memory only	79%	33%	4%
Siri	voice	78%	36%	3%
Claude	live search	78%	51%	5%
Perplexity	live search	78%	45%	12%
Microsoft Copilot	live search	73%	35%	4%
Alexa	voice	69%	28%	3%
Google AI Overviews	live search	53%	27%	1%
DeepSeek	memory only	36%	7%	0%
Grok	memory only	29%	4%	0%

Share of the ranked contractors each assistant named. Every assistant named at least 5,424 ranked contractors; Claude named the most (21,104).

ChatGPT is the assistant that checks credentials. It mentioned a BBB rating for 26% of the contractors it named and a licence, bond or insurance for 11%, sometimes with the licence number itself. Perplexity mentioned the BBB for 12%. Claude leaned on reviews (51%) and outside rankings (10%). Gemini and Meta AI talked about price more than most (26% and 28%).

Read Mistral's detail with care. Mistral answers from memory and gave a star rating or review count for 65% of the contractors it named, more than any assistant that searches the web. In our November study of phone numbers, only 23% of the numbers the memory-only assistants gave matched the business's own listing (**Can you trust the phone number AI gives you?**). A precise rating from a model's memory may be out of date or wrong.

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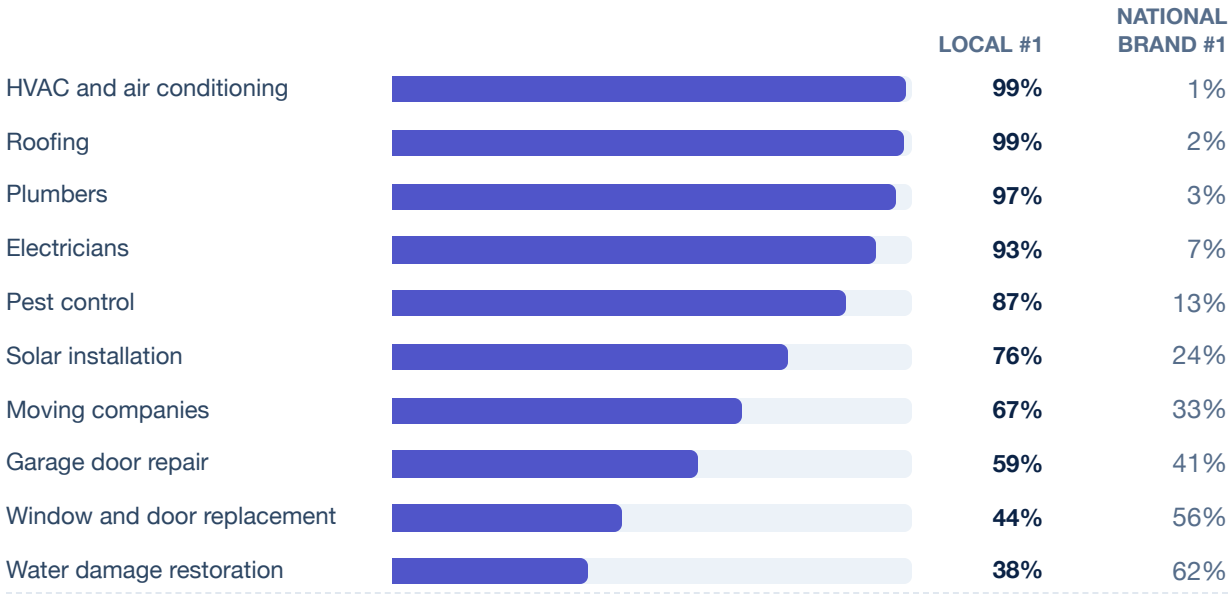
06

Does AI recommend local contractors or national brands?

Local contractors, in most trades. In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study, AI's #1 home-service contractor was a local business in **76%** of 2,050 markets (95% range 74–78%). In HVAC, roofing and plumbing, a national brand held #1 in fewer than 1 market in 30.

FIGURE 5 **Share of markets where AI's #1 contractor is a local business**

205 markets per trade, 12 assistants, November 2026. Second column: share where it is a national brand or franchise. A franchise that uses a different name and website in every city counts as local.



Source: AI Syndicate Research, How Home-Service Contractors Can Stay Ahead of AI, November 2026 (**aisyndicate.com**)

Four trades are different. National brands held #1 in **62%** of water damage restoration markets, 56% of window replacement markets, 41% of garage door markets and 33% of moving markets. These are trades where a few brands have a location, and a page, in almost every metro. Our **national chains paper** measures this across all 20 trades.

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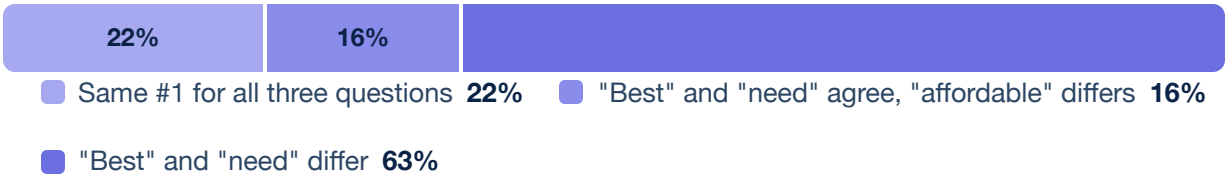
07

Does asking for an "affordable" contractor change AI's pick?

Yes. "Affordable" picks a different #1 in 62% of markets. AI Local asks every assistant three questions per market. In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of 2,047 home-service markets, the contractor ranked first on "Who are the best ___ in [city]?" was not first on "Best affordable ___ near [city]?" in **62%** of markets (95% range 59–64%).

FIGURE 6 **Did the three questions put the same contractor first?**

2,047 US home-service markets, 12 assistants, November 2026.



Source: AI Syndicate Research, How Home-Service Contractors Can Stay Ahead of AI, November 2026 (**aisyndicate.com**)

The questions are close cousins, so the lists overlap: in 91% of markets at least one contractor was in the top three for both "best" and "affordable". But the leader changes. "Best" and "I need one, who do you recommend?" gave the same #1 in 37% of markets. Solar installation was the most stable trade ("affordable" changed the #1 in 43% of markets); roofing the least (68%).

For a contractor, being the answer to "best" and being the answer to "affordable" are separate goals. The assistants answer the affordable question from what they can read about price: price ranges in dollars, "free estimates", "upfront pricing", financing and discounts.

Review sites and the contractors' own websites, about a third each. In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study, 35% of the 145,317 citations in the assistants' answers went to review sites and directories and **30%** to the websites of contractors on the rankings, including national brands' sites and the online booking pages a contractor links from its site. Best-of lists and comparison sites took 15%, social media and forums 7%.

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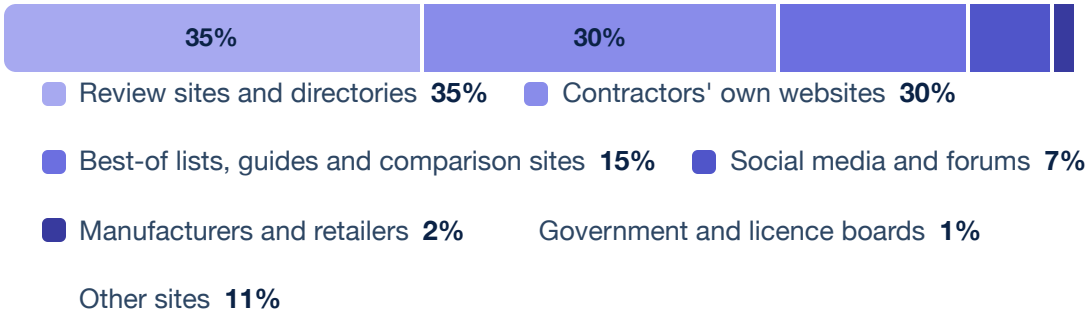
FIGURE 7 **What kind of site AI assistants cited when recommending contractors**

145,317 citations to the 25 most-cited sites in each of 2,050 US home-service markets, November 2026. Pooled across the assistants that cite sources.



Source: AI Syndicate Research, How Home-Service Contractors Can Stay Ahead of AI, November 2026 (**aisyndicate.com**)

Site	Share of citations	Cited in this share of markets
Yelp	6.3%	98%
Angi	4.9%	85%
Google	3.8%	88%
Thumbtack	3.7%	64%
Facebook	3.5%	78%
Better Business Bureau (bbb.org)	3.3%	72%
Expertise.com	3.2%	61%
Reddit	2.9%	61%
Today's Homeowner	2.0%	44%
HomeAdvisor	2.0%	52%
ConsumerAffairs	1.6%	22%
EcoWatch	1.6%	20%

Yelp was cited in 98% of home-service markets. Each trade has its own specialists: EnergySage, EcoWatch and SolarReviews for solar, MoveBuddha for moving, EcoWatch for windows. For water damage, servpro.com alone took 12% of citations, more than any review site.

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Trade	Most-cited site	Share of citations to contractors' own sites
Plumbers	Angi (9%)	24%
HVAC and air conditioning	Yelp (7%)	30%
Electricians	Yelp (7%)	22%
Roofing	Angi (6%)	23%
Garage door repair	Yelp (7%)	34%
Pest control	Yelp (8%)	39%
Water damage restoration	servpro.com (12%)	45%
Window and door replacement	EcoWatch (8%)	30%
Solar installation	EnergySage (13%)	24%
Moving companies	MoveBuddha (10%)	26%

A contractor's own website matters twice over. It is cited directly, and it is where the assistants pick up the facts they repeat: 96% of #1 contractors had a website on record, against 75% of contractors ranked 11th or lower. Memory-only assistants cite nothing, and citations are pooled across the assistants that do, so these shares are not per assistant.

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08

Does AI keep recommending the same contractor every month?

About half the time. In the 700 home-service markets that AI Local also measured in October 2026, the November #1 contractor had been #1 in October in **54%** (95% range 51–58%). In 9% the new #1 had not been on the October ranking at all.

The ranking rule and how we reach some assistants also changed between the two editions; our **November AI Local Report** tests this and finds the movement is not simply a side effect. A #1 spot is not a fixed asset. The live-search assistants read the web again for every answer, so new reviews, pages and listings can move a contractor up or down within a month. That cuts both ways: the contractors at #2 and #3 are often close enough to take it.

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09

How does AI choose a contractor in each trade?

Each answer below stands alone, for the contractor who only wants their own trade.

How does AI choose a plumber?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of plumbers in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 60 different plumbers per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 6 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (91%), the assistants most often described the top three plumbers by emergency, 24/7 or same-day service (80%), affordable or fair prices (67%) and years in business (58%). A local business was #1 in 97% of markets. The most-cited site was Angi (9% of citations), and 24% of citations went to plumbers' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different plumber first in 67% of markets.

How does AI choose an HVAC company?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of HVAC companies in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 62 different HVAC companies per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 7 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (92%), the assistants most often described the top three HVAC companies by emergency, 24/7 or same-day service (78%), years in business (73%) and affordable or fair prices (60%). A local business was #1 in 99% of markets. The most-cited site was Yelp (7% of citations), and 30% of citations went to HVAC companies' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different HVAC company first in 62% of markets.

How does AI choose an electrician?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of electricians in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 61 different electricians per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 7 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (91%), the assistants most often described the top three electricians by affordable or fair prices (60%), years in business (57%) and emergency, 24/7 or same-day service (53%). A local business was #1 in 93% of markets. The most-cited site was Yelp (7% of citations), and 22% of citations went to electricians' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different electrician first in 67% of markets.

How does AI choose a roofer?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of roofers in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 61 different roofers per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 6 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (95%), the assistants most often described the top three roofers by years in business (69%), a BBB rating or accreditation (65%) and certifications or manufacturer dealer status (60%). A local business was #1 in 98% of markets. The most-cited site was Angi (6% of citations), and 23% of citations went to roofers' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different roofer first in 68% of markets.

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How does AI choose a garage door company?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of garage door companies in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 39 different garage door companies per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 9 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (96%), the assistants most often described the top three garage door companies by emergency, 24/7 or same-day service (85%), affordable or fair prices (60%) and years in business (59%). A local business was #1 in 59% of markets. The most-cited site was Yelp (7% of citations), and 34% of citations went to garage door companies' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different garage door company first in 62% of markets.

How does AI choose a pest control company?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of pest control companies in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 48 different pest control companies per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 7 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (93%), the assistants most often described the top three pest control companies by family or local ownership (69%), years in business (64%) and affordable or fair prices (58%). A local business was #1 in 87% of markets. The most-cited site was Yelp (8% of citations), and 39% of citations went to pest control companies' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different pest control company first in 61% of markets.

How does AI choose a water damage restoration company?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of water damage restoration companies in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 46 different water damage restoration companies per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 8 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (85%), the assistants most often described the top three water damage restoration companies by emergency, 24/7 or same-day service (99%), certifications or manufacturer dealer status (69%) and help with insurance claims (53%). A local business was #1 in 38% of markets. The most-cited site was servpro.com (12% of citations), and 45% of citations went to water damage restoration companies' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different water damage restoration company first in 62% of markets.

How does AI choose a window replacement company?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of window replacement companies in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 48 different window replacement companies per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 9 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (88%), the assistants most often described the top three window replacement companies by affordable or fair prices (63%), warranties or guarantees (62%) and years in business (58%). A local business was #1 in 44% of markets. The most-cited site was EcoWatch (8% of citations), and 30% of citations went to window replacement companies' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different window replacement company first in 60% of markets.

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How does AI choose a solar installer?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of solar installers in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 47 different solar installers per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 8 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (93%), the assistants most often described the top three solar installers by years in business (65%), affordable or fair prices (54%) and warranties or guarantees (53%). A local business was #1 in 76% of markets. The most-cited site was EnergySage (13% of citations), and 24% of citations went to solar installers' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different solar installer first in 43% of markets.

How does AI choose a moving company?

In AI Syndicate Research's November 2026 study of moving companies in 205 US metro areas, AI assistants named a median of 60 different moving companies per market, and the #1 was named by a median of 8 of the 12 assistants. Beyond star ratings (94%), the assistants most often described the top three moving companies by affordable or fair prices (70%), years in business (50%) and a BBB rating or accreditation (48%). A local business was #1 in 67% of markets. The most-cited site was MoveBuddha (10% of citations), and 26% of citations went to moving companies' own websites. "Best affordable" put a different moving company first in 62% of markets.

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How can a contractor get recommended by AI?

Put the facts the assistants repeat where they can read them, in plain words, on your own site and your listings. Everything below comes from what the 12 assistants said about the contractors they ranked first.

1. **State your trust facts in one place.** Years in business (said of 60% of #1 contractors), who owns the company (50%), your BBB rating (48%), your licence number and that you are bonded and insured. Write them as sentences on your home page and about page, not only as badges in an image, which an assistant cannot read.

2. **Make your rating easy to quote.** The assistants gave a star rating or review count for 96% of #1 contractors. Keep your Google, Yelp and Angi profiles current and claimed; Yelp alone was cited in 98% of markets. Reply to reviews, and ask every finished job for one.

3. **Say what you do on an emergency call.** Emergency, 24/7 or same-day service was said of 48% of #1 contractors, and of 99% of the top-three water damage companies and 80% of the top-three plumbers. If you answer at 2 a.m., say so, with your response time.

4. **Answer the price question yourself.** "Affordable" changed the #1 in 62% of markets. Publish typical price ranges, whether estimates are free, whether you charge a trip fee, and whether your pricing is flat-rate or upfront. Those are the phrases the assistants repeat.

5. **Name your certifications and dealer status.** For roofing, water damage and solar, certifications were among the top things said about the leaders (GAF or Owens Corning for roofers, IICRC for restoration, NABCEP and manufacturer status for solar, NATE for HVAC technicians). Write the exact name of the certification and the manufacturer.

6. **Be found by several assistants, not one.** The #1 was named by a median of 7 of the 12. Different assistants read different sources: keep your name, address, phone and website identical on your site, Google, Bing, Yelp, Angi, the BBB and Apple Maps.

7. **Get on the lists your trade's assistants read.** Best-of lists and comparison sites took 15% of citations. Find the ones cited in your trade and your city (EnergySage for solar, MoveBuddha for movers, Expertise.com and Today's Homeowner in several trades) and make sure your entry is accurate.

8. **Check again next month.** The #1 held in 54% of markets from October to November. Your position can change within weeks, for better or worse.

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For franchise owners. National brands' pages describe the brand, not your location. The assistants mentioned family or local ownership for 13% of brand locations and years in business for 24%. A location page with its own reviews, its own team and how long it has served the area gives them something local to say.

How this data is used. This research feeds the AI Syndicate platform, so our clients have the leading edge. Clients see which of the 12 assistants name them, what each one says about them, which sites it cites, and which competitor it picks instead, in their dashboard, with the fixes to make on their own site.

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How was this measured, and what can it not tell you?

Data. AI Syndicate Local, November 2026 edition: the 2,050 US markets in ten home-service trades (205 metro areas in 50 states), 12 assistants, 3 fixed questions each, asked between 1 and 9 November 2026 with the city named in the question and no user location or account history. Canada, the United Kingdom and the six trades added in November are left out.

Rankings. A market's ranking is AI Local's: a business is ranked when at least two independent answers name it, and its position weighs how many answers named it, how high in each answer, and how widely each assistant is used. Rankings are capped at 25 per market. 45,670 contractors were ranked; 45,374 had at least one kept mention and are counted here.

What was said. A language model read every stored answer and kept, for each business it named, short phrases the answer used about it, with the assistants that used them. Up to 24 distinct phrases are kept per business, most-repeated first; 9,682 contractors reached that limit, almost all of them highly ranked, so figures for top-ranked contractors slightly undercount. The phrases (582,661 kept) were sorted into 14 subjects by fixed keyword rules, published with the analysis script; we read samples of the matches under each subject and of the unmatched phrases before using them. A phrase can match more than one subject. "Not BBB accredited" and other negations are not counted.

Like-for-like comparison. Because a better-ranked contractor is named in more answers, it has more chances to have something said about it. The table that compares contractors named in 4 to 6 answers takes out most of that. It does not take out everything: a contractor named 5 times ranks higher in a smaller city than in a large one.

National brand or local. As in our national chains paper: a business is a national brand when its website appears on the rankings of five or more metro areas, when its name is "<brand> of <place>" and that brand appears in five or more metros, or when its whole name appears in eight or more; and the brand reaches three or more states. Everything else is local. The rule errs toward local.

The three questions. Each market's per-question rankings use the same method on the answers to one question. The #1 for a question is the top of that ranking.

Citations. Each market keeps its 25 most-cited sites with their citation counts. Sites are sorted into kinds by a fixed list published with the analysis script; a site of any business on a home-service ranking, and the online booking pages contractors link from their sites, count as contractors' own websites. Memory-only assistants cite nothing; Gemini and Siri citations are recorded by the domain they name.

What this cannot tell you.

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- It shows what the assistants say about the contractors they rank first, not that saying it makes a contractor rank first. Associations do not show cause.
- The phrases come from a model's reading of the answers. We did not hand-check a sample for this paper. The subject rules are keyword rules and will miss some wordings and catch a few wrong ones.
- We did not check whether what the assistants said is true. Ratings, years and licence numbers from memory-only assistants in particular may be wrong.
- It is one month of answers, and the rankings cover one city name per metro area.
- Siri and Alexa answers are reconstructions, read as close approximations, not recordings.

What stays private. No business is named in this paper. Per-assistant answer sets are not published.

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Statistical notes

- **Units.** Shares of contractors count each ranked contractor once per metro area (a contractor ranked for two trades in one metro is counted once; figures by trade use the 44,579 ranked for one trade). Shares of markets count each market once. Citation shares count citations.
- **Ranges.** 95% ranges come from resampling the 205 metro areas 1,000 times (seed 7), which allows for answers in one city resembling each other. They are given in the key figures and findings.json.
- **Assistants.** A contractor is described by an assistant when at least one kept phrase about it came from that assistant. The denominators are the ranked contractors each assistant named.
- **Named the #1.** For each market and assistant we count whether any of the assistant's three answers named the market's #1, among markets where the assistant answered at least one question.
- **Month to month.** October 2026 covered 70 metro areas in 14 states, so the comparison uses the 700 home-service markets measured in both months.

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Key figures

Every key figure in this report, in one table. The same figures are in **findings.json** and **findings.csv**, free to quote with credit. Ranges are 95% intervals from resampling metro areas.

Finding	Value	95% range	Sample
Share of markets where AI's #1 home-service contractor was a local business	**76%**	74.1–77.9%	2,050 markets
Share of #1 contractors that AI assistants described by a star rating or review count	**95.6%**	94.6–96.5%	2,043 contractors
Share of #1 contractors that AI assistants described by years in business	**60.5%**	58.5–62.4%	2,043 contractors
Share of #1 contractors that AI assistants described by affordable or fair prices	**61.2%**	59.1–63.4%	2,043 contractors
Share of #1 contractors that AI assistants described by family or local ownership	**49.6%**	47.7–51.7%	2,043 contractors
Share of #1 contractors that AI assistants described by emergency, 24/7 or same-day service	**48.1%**	46.8–49.5%	2,043 contractors
Share of #1 contractors that AI assistants described by a BBB rating or accreditation	**48.4%**	46–50.8%	2,043 contractors
Share of contractors ranked 11th or lower that AI assistants described by a star rating or review count	**55.2%**	54.3–56.1%	25,362 contractors
Share of contractors ranked 11th or lower that AI assistants described by years in business	**23.8%**	23.1–24.4%	25,362 contractors
Share of contractors ranked 11th or lower that AI assistants described by a BBB rating or accreditation	**8.5%**	8–9%	25,362 contractors
Share of top-three contractors (named in 4 to 6 answers) described by a BBB rating or accreditation	**32.9%**	29.1–36.7%	584 contractors
Share of top-three contractors (named in 4 to 6 answers) described by being licensed, bonded or insured	**26.9%**	22.8–31.2%	584 contractors
Share of top-three contractors (named in 4 to 6 answers) described by family or local ownership	**55.5%**	51.4–59.6%	584 contractors
Share of top-three contractors (named in 4 to 6 answers) described by years in business	**54.1%**	48.8–58.8%	584 contractors
Share of contractors ranked 11th or lower (named in 4 to 6 answers) described by a BBB rating or accreditation	**12.3%**	11.3–13.2%	5,342 contractors

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Finding	Value	95% range	Sample
Share of contractors ranked 11th or lower (named in 4 to 6 answers) described by being licensed, bonded or insured	**11.8%**	10.9–12.7%	5,342 contractors
Share of contractors ranked 11th or lower (named in 4 to 6 answers) described by family or local ownership	**28.5%**	27.3–29.7%	5,342 contractors
Share of contractors ranked 11th or lower (named in 4 to 6 answers) described by years in business	**31.8%**	30.6–33%	5,342 contractors
Share of ranked contractors named by only one AI assistant	**24.3%**	23.7–25%	45,374 ranked contractors
Share of all mentions that went to contractors named by four or more assistants	**60.1%**	59.4–60.6%	240,848 mentions
Share of markets where five or more of the 12 assistants named the #1 contractor	**92.9%**	91.7–94.1%	2,050 markets
Share of markets where "best affordable" put a different contractor first than "best"	**61.5%**	59.4–63.7%	2,047 markets
Share of markets where the same contractor was #1 for all three questions	**21.5%**	19.6–23.2%	2,047 markets
Share of citations to contractors' own websites	**29.5%**		145,317 citations
Share of citations to review sites and directories	**34.7%**		145,317 citations
Share of #1 contractors with a website on record	**96.4%**	95.7–97.2%	2,050 #1 contractors
Share of markets where the November #1 contractor was also #1 in October	**54.3%**	50.6–57.7%	700 markets
Share of markets where ChatGPT named the #1 contractor	**96.5%**		2,050 markets
Share of markets where Grok named the #1 contractor	**22%**		2,050 markets
Share of the contractors ChatGPT named that it described by their BBB rating	**25.5%**		11,127 contractors
Share of markets where a national brand was AI's #1: water damage restoration	**62.4%**	55.6–68.8%	205 markets
Share of markets where a national brand was AI's #1: window and door replacement	**55.6%**	48.8–62%	205 markets
Share of markets where a national brand was AI's #1: hvac and air conditioning	**1%**	0–2.4%	205 markets
Share of markets where a national brand was AI's #1: roofing	**1.5%**	0–3.4%	205 markets

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Sources

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THE DATA

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