

ORVX.AI

THE PAINTER'S GUIDE TO AI

**You quoted
eight jobs last
week. You won
two. The other
six never heard
from you again.**

Where a painter's week actually goes, why you're losing quoted work to slower painters, and how to get found by the clients who pay for quality.

Written by ORVX AI, the AI specialists for Australian tradies. September 2026.

WHERE YOUR WEEK GOES

You're a painter for 32 hours a week. The rest is quotes that go nowhere.

Painting is the most quote-heavy trade there is. More site visits, more comparisons, lower win rates. Count where it goes.

THE JOB THAT ISN'T THE JOB	WHAT IT ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE	HOURS A WEEK
Quoting	Drive out, measure, count doors and windows, write it up, send it, silence	5 hrs
Missed and returned calls	Roller in hand, on a plank, phone in the other room	2.5 hrs
Colour and product questions	'Can you send me the colours again', 'is it washable', 'how many coats'	1.5 hrs
Scheduling	Job runs long, the next one moves, ring everyone	1.5 hrs
Invoicing and chasing	Sent late, chased twice, paid eventually	1.5 hrs
Customer updates	'Which room today', 'can I use the kitchen', 'when are you done'	1 hr
Marketing you meant to do	Before-and-afters that would win jobs, unposted	0.5 hrs
Total	Time you are not billing	13.5 hrs

13.5 hrs

a week off the tools, before you've fixed a single thing on site

648 hrs

a year. That's 16 full working weeks of admin

\$27,540

a year at \$85/hr, if only half of those hours became billable time

These are estimates for a typical 1 to 8 person painter business, not a measurement of yours. Put your own numbers in. Most owners who do this find they were guessing low.

A painter who quotes eight jobs a week and wins two isn't cheap enough or dear enough. He just never sent the second message.

PLAIN ENGLISH

What AI actually is, and what it isn't

For a painter, AI is a fast, patient office worker who never sleeps, never gets sick of the same question, and can read, write and talk in plain English. That's the whole definition.

What it does well

- Answers the phone and texts when you can't, and takes the job details properly
- Writes the follow-up you keep meaning to send
- Turns a voice note into a quote, a job note or a site diary entry
- Sorts enquiries so the tyre kickers don't cost you a site visit
- Sends the customer updates you'd send if you had the time
- Drafts your Google posts, reviews replies and job photos captions

What it can't do

- Fix cashflow. It can chase invoices, it can't make a builder pay retention
- Find you a good apprentice
- Do the work. Nobody's software is picking up a shovel
- Replace your judgement on a price, a variation or a dodgy client
- Work without a system. If your jobs live in your head, start there
- Sign off on lead paint handling or a heights safety plan. That stays with you and your licence

Three myths that cost painters money

- 01** "It's too expensive for a business my size." The tools you already pay for (job management, Xero, your phone plan) mostly have AI features switched off. Most of the wins in this guide cost nothing or under \$100 a month.
- 02** "My customers want to talk to a person." They want an answer. A text back in 30 seconds beats a callback at 6pm every time. You still ring them. You just ring them before your competitor does.
- 03** "I'm not technical." If you can send a voice note and read a text, you can run every system in this guide. The setup is the only hard bit, and it's a one-off.

AI doesn't replace the tradie. It replaces the two hours of admin the tradie does after dinner.

FIX THESE FIRST

Five leaks to plug before you buy anything else

In order. Number one is worth more than the other four combined for most painters.

01 Quote follow-up, automated

Most people getting three painting quotes pick the one who followed up, not the cheapest. Three messages over ten days, written once and sent automatically, is the difference between winning two in eight and winning three or four.

Do this: Message one: 'did you get the quote'. Message two: 'happy to bring colour samples'. Message three: 'we've got a gap in three weeks'. Automate.

02 Missed-call text-back

You're on a plank with a roller. The phone rings. It goes to voicemail, they ring the next painter. A text-back in 20 seconds captures the job and keeps them.

Do this: Switch it on today.

03 Quotes from a voice note and photos

Walk the house, photograph each room, voice-note the surfaces, prep and coats. AI drafts the quote with your standard prep, product and exclusions. You add the price per room and send it that night.

Do this: Templates for interior per room, exterior per square metre, roof, fence, prep levels. Fill by voice.

04 Colour and product answers that send themselves

The client asks the same five questions every job. A short 'your colours and products' summary generated from the quote and sent at booking answers them before they ask.

Do this: Build it once. AI fills it per job.

05 Same-day invoicing with reminders

Final coat done, invoice sent from the driveway, reminders at 7 and 14 days. You stop chasing.

Do this: Switch the reminders on in your job software.

THE PAINTER'S PROBLEM

You're losing quoted work to painters who aren't better. They're just faster.

A painting client gets three quotes. The one that arrives first, looks professional and gets followed up wins more often than the cheapest. Speed and follow-up are the two things a solo painter has least time for, and the two things AI does best.

Old way

- Site visit Tuesday
- Quote written Sunday night, sent Monday
- One email, no follow-up
- Client picked someone Thursday

New way

- Site visit Tuesday, photos and voice note in the car
- AI drafts it, you price it, sent Tuesday night
- Follow-ups day 2, 5 and 10, automatic
- You ring on day 7 only if they replied

The maths on speed and follow-up

YOUR NUMBERS	EXAMPLE	YOURS
Quotes a week	8	
Won now	2 (25%)	
Won with same-day quote and automatic follow-up	3 (37%)	
Average job	\$3,200	
Extra revenue a week from jobs you already visited	\$3,200	
Over 48 working weeks	\$153,600	

Example figures, not a promise. Halve them if you like. It's still the biggest lever in a painting business and it costs almost nothing.

Repaint reminders

Exteriors need repainting on a cycle. Rentals get repainted between tenants. Every past client is a future job on a date you can predict. AI sends the reminder in your name.

Property managers

One property manager can send you a repaint a week. They use whoever quotes fastest and turns up. A monthly check-in message to each one, drafted for you, keeps you on the list.

QUOTING AND BUDGETING

Quotes priced off today's material prices, not last year's list

Most painters quote from memory, a stale price list and a gut feel. Then materials cost more than the quote said and the margin disappears.

How automated quoting works

1. You describe the job by voice note on site, with photos. "Three bedrooms and a hallway, walls and ceilings, two coats low sheen, trims in gloss, fill and sand, move the furniture."
2. AI builds the scope and material list from your own templates, with your standard inclusions and exclusions.
3. Prices come from live sources: your trade supplier price files (Dulux Trade, Taubmans, Haymes, Bunnings PowerPass) and current retail pricing for the odds and ends. Priced on the day.
4. Labour comes from your rate sheet. AI applies it, you adjust it.
5. You check it and send it, with a price validity date, so if copper or timber moves next month you're covered.

Budgeting and job costing

Once the quote is built from real line items, the budget exists automatically. As invoices and timesheets come in, AI matches them to the quote and tells you mid-job whether you're on margin or bleeding. For a painter the coverage maths is where money leaks: a second coat that became a third, or a colour change that meant new tins. Track litres against the quote.

What the materials line looks like

ITEM	PRICED FROM	EXAMPLE
Low sheen interior, 20L	Dulux Trade price file	\$310
Ceiling white, 10L	Dulux Trade	\$120
Gloss enamel trims, 4L	Taubmans	\$110
Sealer and filler	Bunnings Trade	\$85
Tape, drop sheets, rollers, sundries	Retail, current	\$95
Labour: 2 painters, 2.5 days	Your rate sheet	\$3,400
Furniture moving and cover	Your rule	\$150

Example items and figures, not a price list.

Where it breaks

It prices materials accurately. It doesn't price what's behind the wall, so keep your contingency. Retail and trade prices differ, so use your trade accounts. Prices move, so the validity date isn't optional. And your labour estimate is still yours: AI applies your rates, it doesn't know how slow that client's driveway is.

The painter who knows what the paint costs today quotes in ten minutes. The one guessing quotes on Sunday night.

MORE LEADS

Where your next 20 jobs are already sitting

You don't need more traffic. You need to stop losing the enquiries you already get. Then you need Google to trust you. In that order.

1. The leads you're already losing

Missed calls, web forms answered the next day, quotes never chased. Pages 4 and 5 cover them. The short version: reply in under five minutes, follow up three times, and you're usually the only one who did.

The one most painters forget: old customers. Exteriors get repainted every 8 to 12 years. Rentals every tenancy. Every past client is a future job on a predictable date, and AI can send the reminder.

2. The leads you're not getting yet

- **Google Business Profile.** Most painter searches end in the map, not the website. Your profile needs 50+ reviews, weekly photos and a post a week. AI drafts the posts and the review replies.
- **Review requests on autopilot.** A text two hours after job completion, with the direct review link. No asking, no forgetting.
- **Referral partners.** Real estate property managers, builders, strata managers, plasterers and interior designers send painting work every week to whoever they remember. A monthly check-in message to each of them, drafted for you, keeps you top of mind.
- **Directories with a purpose.** hipages and Airtasker are pay-to-play and everyone's on them. Use them to fill gaps, not as the plan.

What "lead qualification" means for you

Before you drive to a site visit, you want to know four things: interior or exterior, roughly how many rooms or the size, where it is, and when they need it done. An AI assistant on your phone or web form asks those four questions the moment someone enquires and puts the answers in your job system. You only ring back the ones worth ringing.

Cheapest doesn't win the painting job. Fastest quote, followed up, does.

RANKING ON GOOGLE

How a painter actually gets to the top of Google

Nobody is searching "best painter in Australia". They search "painters near me" at 7:40am, ring the first one that answers, and never look at page two. Local SEO for a painter is a map problem first and a website problem second.

The map pack (do this first)

- ☐ Claim and fully complete your Google Business Profile: every service listed, every suburb you cover, hours, licence number
- ☐ Get to 50 reviews, then 100. Ask every single customer, by text, same day
- ☐ Reply to every review within 48 hours. AI drafts it, you approve it
- ☐ Upload 3 to 5 real job photos a week. Phone photos, not stock
- ☐ Post once a week: a job, a tip, a before and after
- ☐ Same business name, phone and address everywhere online. Any mismatch costs you

The website (do this second)

- ☐ One page per service you want to be found for, not one page listing everything
- ☐ One page per main suburb or area you work in, with real jobs from that area on it
- ☐ Phone number tappable at the top of every page on mobile
- ☐ Loads in under 3 seconds on a phone. Test it on your own
- ☐ Answers the questions customers ask you on the phone. AI can turn your voice notes into those pages

What people actually type

SEARCH	WHAT THEY WANT
painters near me	Ready to get quotes, comparing three
house painter [suburb]	Standard search, map pack decides
exterior painting cost [city]	Researching, the honest price-range page wins the enquiry
interior painter [suburb]	Smaller job, faster decision
roof painting [city]	Specific, higher value, wants photos
commercial painter [city]	Property managers and strata, repeat work

Build a page or a Google post around each of these. Use the words your customers use, not the words your supplier uses.

Where AI fits in SEO

It won't rank you. It removes the reason you never did the work: it drafts the suburb pages from your job notes, writes the weekly post from your photos, answers reviews, and keeps the whole thing running when you're flat out. The photos and the reviews still have to be real.

A painter's before-and-after is the most convincing photo in the trades. Post one a week with the suburb and Google does the rest.

MARKETING

Marketing that takes 20 minutes a week, not your Friday

You already make the best content in your industry every day. It's called your work. The only reason it never gets posted is that posting takes time you don't have. That's the exact job AI is for.

The 20-minute system

- 01** Monday to Thursday, on site: take one photo or a 10-second video per job. Before and after if you can. Send it to a WhatsApp group or folder with a one-line voice note.
- 02** Friday, 20 minutes: AI turns the week's photos and voice notes into a Google post, a Facebook post, an Instagram post and a review reply or two. You read them, fix anything that doesn't sound like you, hit approve.
- 03** Once a month: one longer piece. A common problem you fixed, explained the way you'd explain it to the customer. That becomes a website page and gets you found.

Posts that work for painters

- Before and after, same angle, one room, with the colour name
- The prep nobody sees: sanding, filling, taping. Clients trust it
- Exterior transformation with the street name blurred and the suburb in the caption
- 'Which white' posts. People search this constantly
- Time-lapse of one wall, 15 seconds
- Review screenshot with a thank-you and the suburb

Rules that stop you sounding like every other tradie page

- Show the mess before the finish. Customers trust the before photo more than the after
- Name the suburb. "Bathroom reno in Belconnen" gets found. "Another great job" doesn't
- Explain one thing. What went wrong, why, what you did. That's the whole post
- Never post a stock photo. One real photo of your ute beats ten of someone else's
- Read every AI draft out loud once. If it doesn't sound like you at the counter, change three words

Your job photos are the marketing. AI is just the bloke who finally posts them.

START THIS WEEK

Your first 30 days

Most of this uses tools you already have. Don't buy anything new until week three.

Week 1: stop the bleeding

- ☐ Switch on missed-call text-back. Your job management software or a \$30/month tool does this
- ☐ Write your three quote follow-up messages once. Set them to send automatically at day 2, 5 and 10
- ☐ Set a review request text to send after every completed job

Week 2: get found

- ☐ Complete every field on your Google Business Profile
- ☐ Upload 10 real job photos. Reply to every existing review
- ☐ List every suburb you work in as a service area

Week 3: give your evenings back

- ☐ Start sending voice notes instead of typing job notes. Use AI to turn them into text in your job system
- ☐ Use AI to draft your quotes from a voice description of the job. Connect your supplier price lists so the materials line is priced on the day
- ☐ Put every exterior job from the last ten years on a repaint reminder

Week 4: make it run without you

- ☐ Set up the 20-minute Friday content routine
- ☐ Put an AI assistant on your web form or WhatsApp to ask the four qualifying questions
- ☐ Measure: missed calls, quotes sent, quotes won, reviews. Four numbers, once a week

Tools worth knowing (we don't sell any of these)

JOB	OPTIONS PAINTERS USE	COST
Job management, quotes, invoices	ServiceM8, Tradify, Fergus, or Xero plus a calendar	\$30 to \$150/mo
Missed call text-back, review requests, follow-ups	Your job software if it has it, otherwise a CRM like GoHighLevel or Podium	\$0 to \$100/mo
Voice notes to quotes, posts, replies	Claude, ChatGPT, or the AI inside your job software	\$0 to \$30/mo
Phone answering when you can't	AI receptionist (many options), or a human answering service	\$50 to \$300/mo
Connecting it all so it runs itself	Your job software's built-in automations first. Then Zapier, Make or n8n if you need more	\$0 to \$50/mo

Switching everything on yourself works if you've got a spare weekend and patience. Most owners get to week two and stall. That's normal. Pick the one fix worth the most to you, finish it, and only then start the next.

STEAL THESE

The messages. Copy them, change the name, send them.

Every system in this guide runs on a handful of texts. Here they are, written for a painter. Put them in your job software as templates and they send themselves.

Missed-call text-back (sends 20 seconds after a missed call)

Hi, it's [your name] from [business]. Sorry I missed you, I'm on a job. If it's urgent reply URGENT and I'll ring you within 15 minutes. Otherwise reply with your suburb and what you need and I'll call you back before 5.

Review request (2 hours after job done)

Thanks for having us today [first name]. If you were happy with the interior repaint, a quick Google review helps us more than you'd think. Takes 30 seconds: [review link]. And if anything's not right, reply here first and I'll sort it.

Quote follow-up 1 (day 2)

Hi [first name], [your name] here. Just checking the quote for the interior repaint came through OK. Any questions on it, ring me or reply here.

On the way

Hi [first name], [your name] from [business] here, I'm about 20 minutes away. See you soon.

Quote follow-up 2 (day 5)

Hi [first name], happy to run through the quote if anything's unclear, or I can drop round with colour samples. No pressure, just want to make sure you've got what you need to decide.

Weather or delay reshuffle

Hi [first name], the current job's run a day over and I can't start yours tomorrow. I've moved you to [new date], [time]. If that doesn't work reply here and we'll find another slot. Sorry for the stuff-around.

Quote follow-up 3 (day 10)

Hi [first name], last one from me. We've got a spot open [week] if you'd like to lock it in, after that it's about three weeks out. If you've gone another way, no worries at all, thanks for the chance to quote.

Past customer re-engagement

Hi [first name], [your name] from [business]. We did the exterior for you a while back. It's about that time for a wash-down and a touch-up before the weather gets into it. Reply if you'd like me to book it in.

Web form auto-reply (instant)

Thanks [first name], got your enquiry. So I can give you a straight answer fast: interior or exterior, roughly how many rooms or the size, where it is, and when they need it done? Reply here and I'll call you today.

BEFORE YOU GO

The short version, if you read nothing else

- 01** You're losing more jobs to a missed call than to a competitor. Switch on missed-call text-back today. It's the cheapest thing in this guide and the biggest.
- 02** The quote you never chased was the job you already paid for. Three follow-ups, written once, sent automatically. Page 11 has them.
- 03** Price the materials off today's prices, put a validity date on the quote, and stop paying for the difference yourself.
- 04** Your job photos are your marketing. One a day, posted on Friday in 20 minutes. Suburb in the caption.
- 05** Your past customers are your quiet months. A message on the right date, in your name, sent for you.
- 06** AI does the admin. It doesn't do the trade, the judgement or the cashflow. Anyone telling you otherwise is selling something.

Written by ORVX AI, the AI specialists for tradies.

If you'd rather not set it up yourself

Thirty minutes on the phone. You tell us where your week goes, we tell you which two things would move the needle for your business, roughly what they'd cost to wire up, and whether you should just do it yourself. If the answer is do it yourself, we'll say that.

Book a 30-minute call at orvxai.com

Or ring +61 2 5300 4038, or email hello@orvxai.com. We answer it.

The painter who won the job wasn't cheaper. He sent the quote Tuesday and the follow-up Thursday.