

# The 5 Ways Home-Service Businesses Leak Money

*And the one fix you can set up for each — this Monday. No hype. About a 10-minute read. One thing to do this week.*

## WHO MADE THIS

I'm Eric. I build AI for a living, and I've led product at Electronic Arts (EA Sports) and T-Mobile. I co-founded Potentia Labs, which won a 2014 Department of Veterans Affairs Industry Innovation Competition. Now I help home-service operators use this stuff — in plain English.

## START HERE

# Same trade, same five leaks

You're great at the work. You didn't sign up to run an office. Every home-service business — cleaning, lawn care, HVAC, plumbing, handyman — bleeds money in the same handful of places. Not because you're bad at it. Because the phone rings while you're under a sink, on a roof, or in the back of a truck.

Here are the five biggest leaks, what each one quietly costs, and the one move that plugs it. Fix one this week and you'll feel it.

*The dollar figures in this guide are examples — plug in your own numbers to see your real picture. They show what's on the table when a leak goes unplugged.*

## THE FIVE LEAKS AT A GLANCE

- |          |   |                         |                                |
|----------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Missed calls &amp; slow replies</b><br>Lifecycle stage: Lead Capture | missed jobs             | <a href="#">More on this ▶</a> |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Quotes with no follow-up</b><br>Lifecycle stage: Quoting             | quotes gone cold        | <a href="#">More on this ▶</a> |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Scheduling by memory</b><br>Lifecycle stage: Scheduling              | wasted slots & no-shows | <a href="#">More on this ▶</a> |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Never asking for reviews</b><br>Lifecycle stage: Reviews             | fewer local leads       | <a href="#">More on this ▶</a> |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Slow or no invoicing</b><br>Lifecycle stage: Invoicing               | cash stuck waiting      | <a href="#">More on this ▶</a> |

# 1

LEAK 1 · LEAD CAPTURE

## Missed calls & slow replies

You're on a job and the phone rings — you can't pick up. The hard part: 85% of people who don't reach you on the first try never call back; they just call the next name on the list. And 78% hire whoever responds first. Some of those calls were ready-to-book jobs that went to the next guy. Here's a believable example — swap in your own numbers:

### THE MISSED-CALL LEAK — EXAMPLE MATH

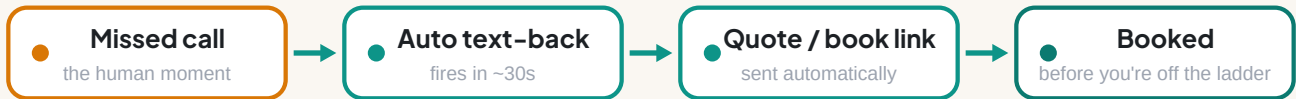
2 × 85% × ~25% × \$400 × 52  
missed calls / wk    don't call back    were jobs you'd have won    avg job    weeks

**\$8,800/yr**

*on the table in a year — example; swap in your own numbers*

Example: 2 missed calls/wk × 85% who don't call back × ~25% that were real new-job leads you'd have won × \$400 × 52 weeks.

### WHAT THE FIX LOOKS LIKE



### THE MONDAY FIX

#### Turn on missed-call text-back.

When a call goes unanswered, an automatic text fires back in seconds: "Sorry I missed you — what do you need? I can book you now." Most CRMs (Housecall Pro, Jobber) have it built in; Google Voice auto-reply is a free alternative. It catches the lead before they dial the next guy.

[More on this ▶](#)

## 2

### LEAK 2 · QUOTING

# Quotes with no follow-up

You send the quote and move on. No follow-up goes out. Most quotes that go cold didn't die on price — they died on silence; the customer got busy too. A simple day-1 / day-3 / day-7 nudge closes 15–25% more of them. Here's what that's worth in a year — example numbers, swap in your own:

#### THE QUOTE-FOLLOW-UP LEAK — EXAMPLE MATH

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} 8 & \times & \$400 & \times & 15-25\% & \times & 12 \\ \text{quotes / mo} & & \text{avg job} & & \text{more closes} & & \text{months} \end{array}$$

**\$5,800–\$9,600/yr**

*on the table in a year — example; swap in your own numbers*

Example: 8 quotes/mo × \$400 × 15–25% more closes from follow-up × 12 months.

#### THE MONDAY FIX

### Set up an automatic day-1 / day-3 / day-7 follow-up.

After a quote goes out, schedule three short check-ins: "Still want me to get you on the calendar?" Most jobs you think you lost were just waiting for a nudge. Jobber and Housecall Pro do it automatically; a phone reminder and three saved texts is the free version. Set it once; it runs on every quote.

[More on this ▶](#)

# 3

## LEAK 3 · SCHEDULING

# Scheduling by memory

You run the calendar in your head and a string of texts. Double-bookings. No-shows. Open slots nobody filled. An empty slot earns nothing — and you can't get the day back. This one isn't a single number; it's the slow drip of a day that runs you instead of the other way around.

### MANUAL

- ✗ Phone tag to find a time
- ✗ You forget to confirm
- ✗ No-show — the slot is just gone
- ✗ It all lives in your head

### AUTOMATED

- ✓ They book from a link you send
- ✓ Auto-confirm + reminders go out
- ✓ No-show? It nudges them to rebook
- ✓ The calendar is the single source

### THE MONDAY FIX

#### Put your calendar behind a booking link.

Give customers a free booking link to pick a slot themselves, with automatic confirmations and reminders — Calendly or Square Appointments (free). Fewer back-and-forth texts, fewer no-shows, no more double-bookings. You stop being the scheduling software.

More on this ▶

# 4

## LEAK 4 · REVIEWS

# Never asking for reviews

You do great work and never ask for the review — most operators don't; it feels pushy in the moment. But Google's local 3-pack (the little map box at the top of the results) is where the next customer actually looks, and reviews are a big part of how you get into it.

### WHY REVIEWS MOVE THE NEEDLE

## Reviews are one of the biggest factors in whether customers find you.

When someone searches for your trade nearby, that little map box at the top is where they look first — and how many reviews you have, and how recent they are, is a big part of who shows up in it. The fix isn't a trick; it's asking, every time.

### THE MONDAY FIX

## Send an automatic review request ~2 hours after the job.

Set up one text that goes out a couple of hours after you finish — while they're still happy and the work looks new — with a direct link to your Google review page. This is the 2-hour review window. You're not nagging; you're asking once, at the right time, every time. NiceJob or your CRM automates it.

[More on this ▶](#)

# 5

## LEAK 5 · INVOICING

# Slow or no invoicing

The job's done; the money isn't. Paper invoices and "I'll send it tonight" turn into weeks of waiting to get paid — money you already earned, sitting in someone else's account. Every day it sits, it's a little harder to collect.

### WHY IT BLEEDS

## The longer an invoice sits, the harder it gets to collect.

Unpaid invoices quietly eat into the money you already earned — cash that belongs in your account, not someone else's. No fancy math needed: the fix is to stop letting them sit.

### THE MONDAY FIX

## Auto-invoice the moment a job is marked done.

Send the invoice before you leave the job, with a card-on-file or pay-by-link option and automatic reminders until it's paid — Wave or Square Invoices (free). The work and the bill go out together, so you stop financing your customers for free.

[More on this ▶](#)

YOUR MONDAY MOVE

# Don't fix all five. Fix one.

Pick the leak that stings the most and set up that one fix this week. One plugged leak you can feel beats five you meant to get to. If you only do one thing: turn on missed-call text-back. It's the most common leak and the fastest fix.

- 1 Pick your #1 leak (or take the 3-minute quiz below to find it).
- 2 Set up the one fix for it this week.
- 3 Watch one week of calls, quotes, or reviews — and feel the difference.

FIND YOUR #1 LEAK

## Take the Revenue Leak Score

3 minutes. Answer a few questions about your business and get your own number, ranked, with a custom fix-plan.

Start the quiz

[theautobotics.com/leak-score](https://theautobotics.com/leak-score)

GET ONE FIX LIKE THIS EVERY WEEK

The Home Service Edge — a short weekly email. One leak, one fix, one thing to do Monday. Free. Subscribe at [theautobotics.com](https://theautobotics.com).