The General Contractor Marketing Playbook

Win more additions, whole-home remodels and custom projects with a marketing system built for general contractors

By the SmallBiz Marketing team
Contractor marketing specialists · 20+ years of marketing experience

smallbizmarketing.net

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PART 1

Know your market

Who hires a general contractor and why.

SECTION 02

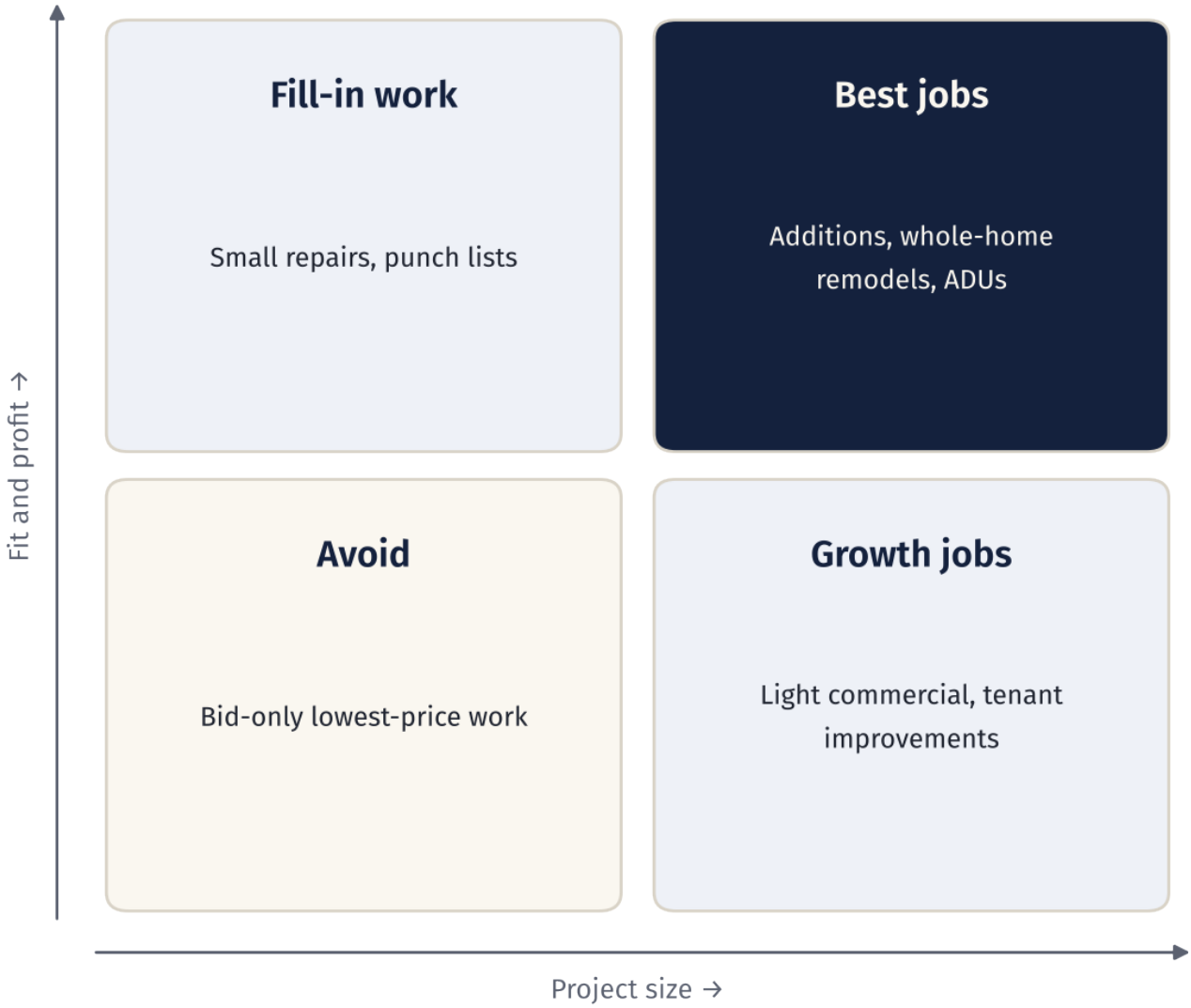
Why general contracting is different

General contractors sell coordination. Homeowners and small businesses hire a GC because they don't want to manage permits, schedules and a dozen subcontractors themselves. Your marketing should prove you can run a complex project calmly and predictably.

- Projects are large, long and complex
- Clients are buying project management as much as construction
- Referrals from architects, designers and past clients matter a lot
- "General contractor" is broad, so specialization helps you stand out

SECTION 03

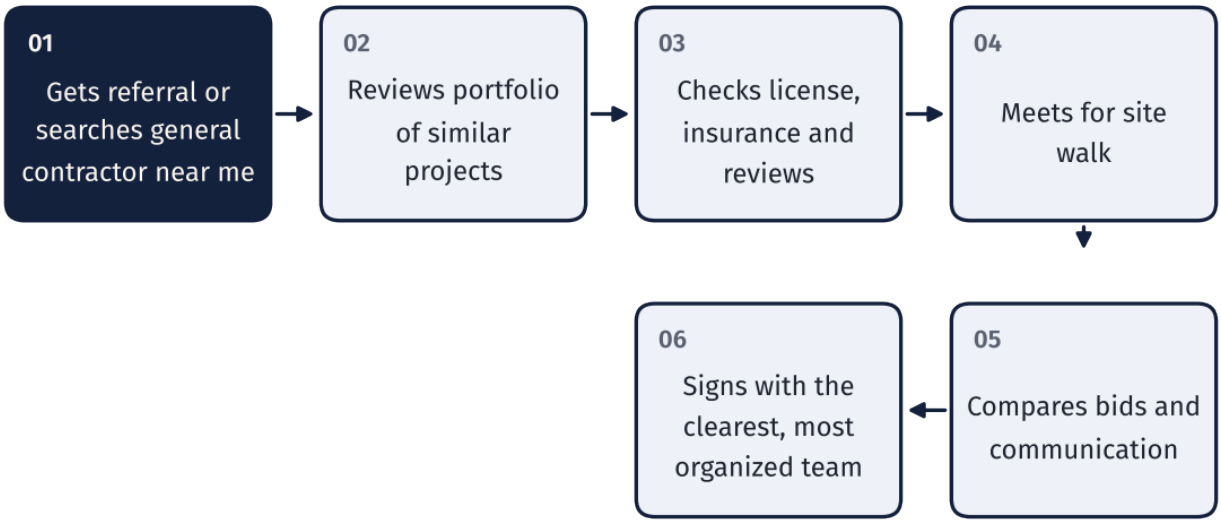
Pick your lane



Choose the projects you want and lead with them.

SECTION 04

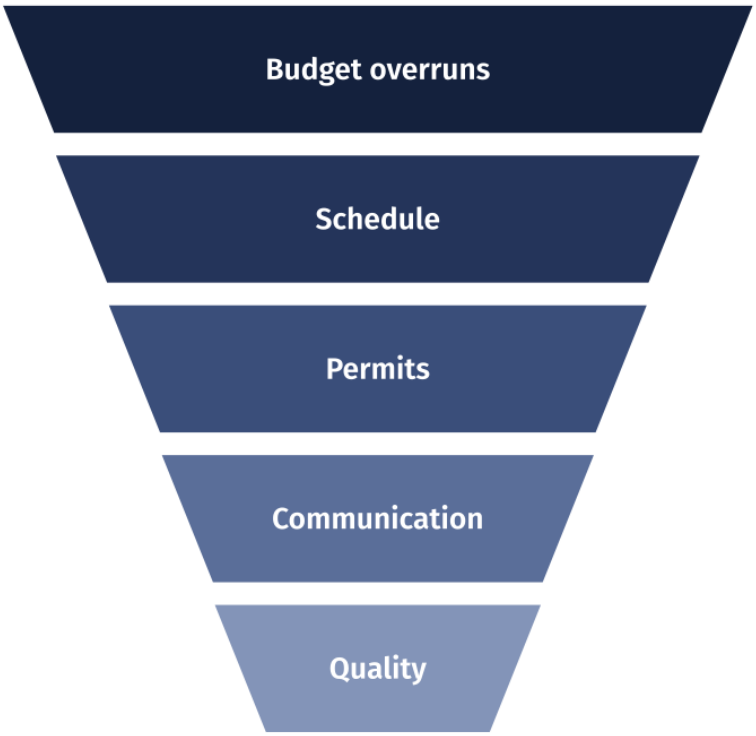
How clients choose a GC



Communication and organization often decide close bids.

SECTION 05

What GC clients worry about



change orders and surprises

delays and subs not showing up

handling inspections

knowing what's happening

finished details

Address each worry on your website and in your proposals.

PART 2

Build your foundation

SECTION 07

Your GC website: the pages you need

- Home: your specialty, area, best projects, contact
- One page per project type: additions, whole-home remodels, ADUs, kitchens and baths
- How we manage projects: permits, scheduling, communication
- Portfolio with project descriptions, scope and timeline
- License, insurance and team
- Reviews, About and Contact

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Wix

Website builder with portfolios and forms for project inquiries.

Visit Wix at wix.com →

SECTION 08

Homepage copy for a GC

EXAMPLE

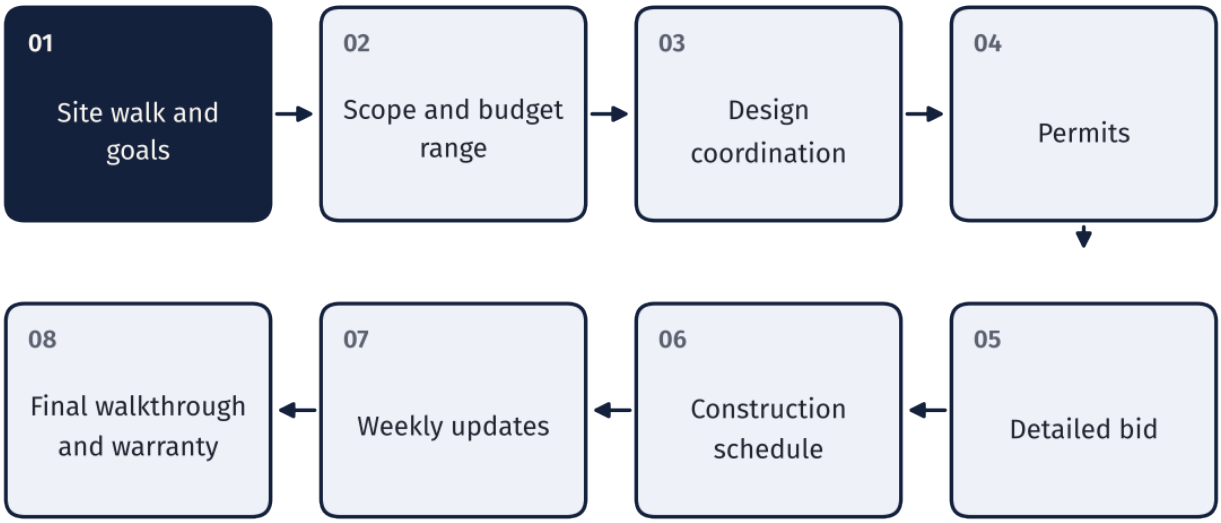
Headline: Home additions and whole-home remodels in [City] and [County].

Subheadline: One licensed team manages design coordination, permits, subcontractors and construction, with weekly updates from start to finish.

Button: Start your project

SECTION 09

How you manage projects



Put this on your website and in your bids.

SECTION 10

Google Business Profile for GCs

- Primary category: General Contractor, or a more specific category if it fits your main work
- Services: additions, remodels, ADUs, permits coordination
- Photos: finished projects and progress milestones

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Google Business Profile

Free listing on Google Maps.

Visit Google Business Profile at business.google.com →

PART 3

Win the project

SECTION 12

Bids that win without being cheapest

- Clear scope and exclusions
- Allowances clearly listed
- Schedule with milestones
- Communication plan: who, how often, which app
- Change order process
- Payment schedule tied to milestones

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Jobber

Quotes, scheduling, invoicing and client communication.

Visit Jobber at getjobber.com →

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Housecall Pro

Mobile-first job management with marketing tools.

Visit Housecall Pro at housecallpro.com →

SECTION 13

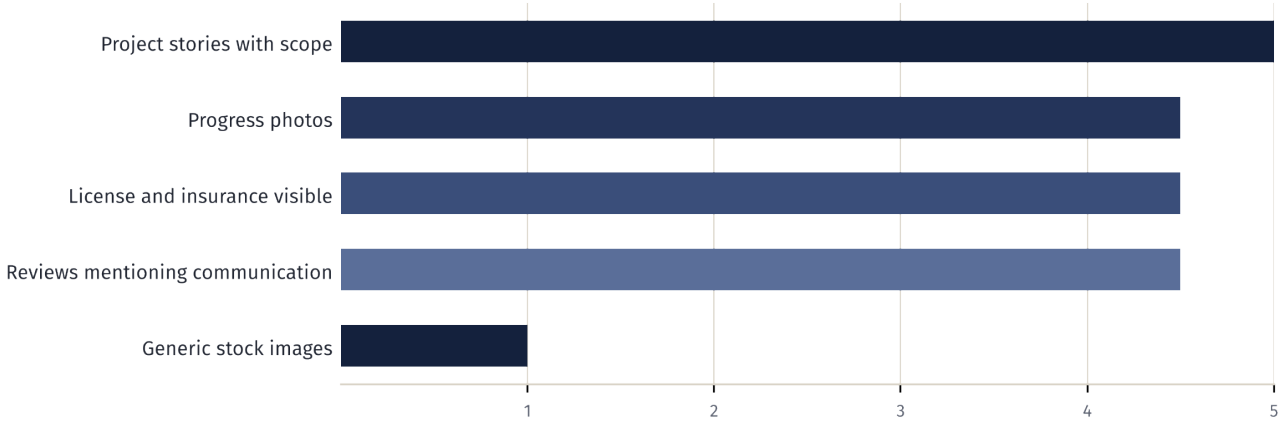
Referral partners for GCs

- Architects and designers
- Real estate agents and investors
- Specialty trades who need a GC
- Past clients and neighbors

SECTION 14

Portfolio that proves you can do it

For each project, show before, progress and after photos, plus a short story: the goal, the challenge, the timeline and the result.



Our view of what convinces GC clients, rated 1 to 5.

SECTION 15

Local SEO for GCs

EXAMPLE

General contractor [City] → homepage

Home addition contractor [City] → additions page

ADU builder [City] → ADU page

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Semrush

See which construction searches bring clients to competitors.

Visit Semrush at semrush.com →

SECTION 16

Real-world scenario: becoming the go-to addition builder (illustrative)

This is an illustrative example. A GC does a bit of everything and competes on price. They choose additions and ADUs as their focus, build pages for each, add project stories with timelines and introduce themselves to three local architects. Over time, more inquiries arrive pre-qualified for larger projects.

SECTION 17

Troubleshooting for GCs

Competing only on price	Specialize, show project stories and explain how you manage risk.
Clients complain about communication	Set a weekly update schedule and put it in every bid.
Few referrals	Build relationships with three architects or designers.

PART 4

Your toolkit

30-DAY ACTION CALENDAR

30 days to better projects

Do one task a day. Tick the box in your head, or print this page and cross off each day as you go.

DAY 1 Choose specialty	**DAY 2** List target areas	**DAY 3** Pick best projects	**DAY 4** Write headline	**DAY 5** Draft project type pages
DAY 6 Write project management page	**DAY 7** Write 3 project stories	**DAY 8** Build pages	**DAY 9** Add portfolio	**DAY 10** Add inquiry form
DAY 11 Claim Google profile	**DAY 12** Set category	**DAY 13** List services	**DAY 14** Upload photos	**DAY 15** Write description
DAY 16 Ask 5 clients for reviews	**DAY 17** Reply to reviews	**DAY 18** Build bid template	**DAY 19** Write communication plan	**DAY 20** Write change order process
DAY 21 Contact architect 1	**DAY 22** Contact architect 2	**DAY 23** Contact designer	**DAY 24** Contact realtor	**DAY 25** Ask 5 more clients
DAY 26 Connect Search Console	**DAY 27** Post a project	**DAY 28** Post progress photos	**DAY 29** Review leads	**DAY 30** Plan next month

SECTION 20

Worksheet: your GC positioning

Project types you want more of

Your service area

How you manage schedules and subs

Referral partners to contact

TRACKER

Monthly results

Month	Inquiries	Site walks	Bids sent	Projects won
Month 1				
Month 2				
Month 3				
Month 4				
Month 5				
Month 6				
Month 7				
Month 8				
Month 9				
Month 10				
Month 11				
Month 12				

SECTION 22

Glossary for GCs

Exclusions	Work specifically not included in a bid.
ADU	Accessory dwelling unit, a secondary living space on a property.
Draw schedule	Payments tied to project milestones.

SECTION 23

Recommended tools

These are the tools mentioned in this playbook. Some links may be affiliate links; we only recommend tools we use or would set up for clients.

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Wix

Website builder for general contractors.

Visit Wix at wix.com →

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Google Business Profile

Free listing on Google Maps.

Visit Google Business Profile at business.google.com →

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Jobber

Quotes, scheduling and invoicing.

Visit Jobber at getjobber.com →

RECOMMENDED TOOL

Housecall Pro

Mobile-first job management with marketing tools.

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RECOMMENDED TOOL

Semrush

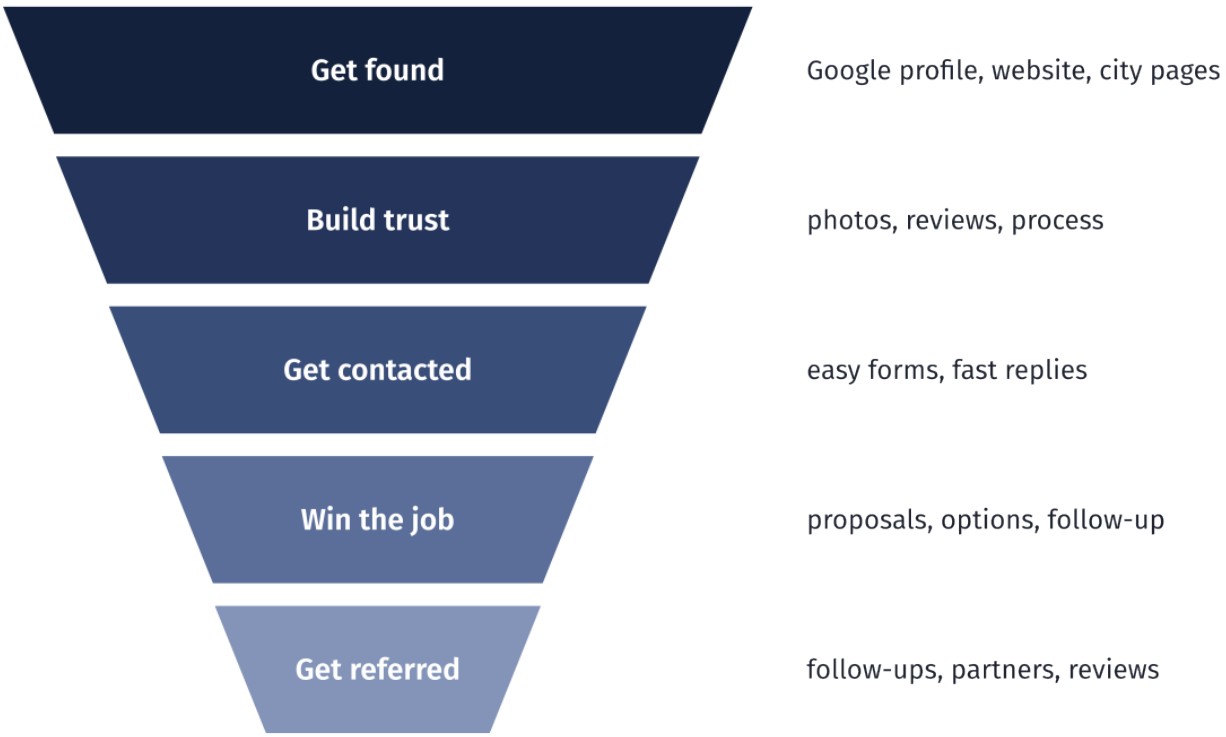
Keyword research and rank tracking.

Visit Semrush at semrush.com →

SECTION 24

Bonus: the contractor marketing system on one page

Every playbook in this series fits into one simple system. Homeowners find you, trust you, contact you and refer others. Each part supports the next.



The five stages of contractor marketing and the tools for each.

SECTION 25

Bonus: your weekly marketing hour

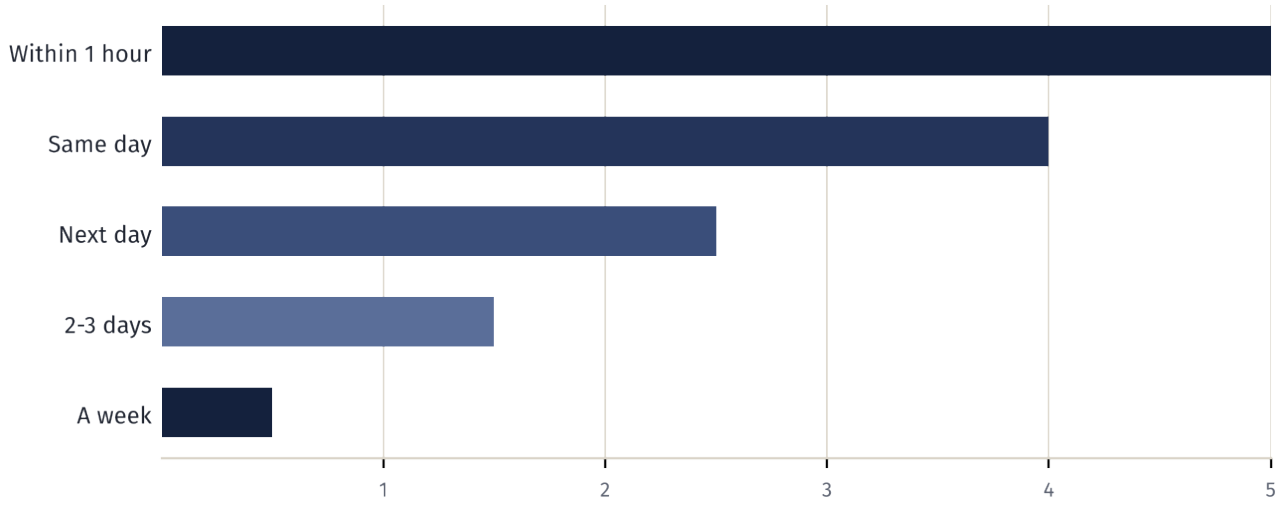
You don't need a marketing department. One focused hour a week, done consistently, beats occasional bursts of effort.

- First 15 minutes: answer every new lead and message
- Next 15 minutes: send review requests for finished jobs
- Next 15 minutes: upload new project photos to your website and Google
- Last 15 minutes: work on one improvement from your current playbook

SECTION 26

Bonus: how fast to reply to a lead

Homeowners often contact several contractors at once. The first professional reply makes a strong impression.



Our view of how reply speed affects your chances of winning the job, rated 1 to 5. Based on experience, not a study.

SECTION 27

Bonus: master checklist

- [ ] Website with a page for each main service
- [ ] Contact form on every page
- [ ] Google Business Profile complete and active
- [ ] Review request after every job
- [ ] Real project photos added monthly
- [ ] Pages for your top cities
- [ ] Job management software for quotes and payments
- [ ] Follow-up with past clients and partners
- [ ] One marketing hour every week

SECTION 28

Bonus: when to get help

Doing it yourself works if you have the time. If your calendar is full of jobs, it's often worth having a professional set up the foundation so you can focus on the work you do best. SmallBiz Marketing builds premium contractor websites and Google setups and can run your monthly marketing for you.

ABOUT SMALLBIZ MARKETING

SmallBiz Marketing builds premium websites and Google visibility for home-improvement contractors. Our team brings 20+ years of marketing experience, and every playbook is built from the same systems we use for client websites.

Rather have it done for you?

We build premium websites and Google setups for contractors, live in 5 days. Tell us about your business through the contact form at smallbizmarketing.net/contact.

Contact us →

Contractor website	$2,495
Website + Google setup	$3,495
Monthly growth plan	$995/mo

Some links in this playbook may be affiliate links. We only recommend tools we use or would set up for clients. Tool features and pricing change; check each company's site for current details.