

CLICKFLAME

EST. 2004

SMOKE OR RECEIPTS?

WINNING LOCAL SEARCH FOR 20+ YEARS

The how to manual for local service
owners who want calls, not reports.

RECEIPTS	
FROM THE TOOLS · NOT THE PITCH	
Tracked calls, bail bonds	11,665
Tracked calls, auto repair	10,898
ChatGPT visits, 28 days	153
Cost a click, bounce houses	\$0.27
Cost a lead, Vegas injury	\$28
PRICE	\$7
	

BY THE FOUNDER OF CLICKFLAME

ANTHONY LIMPert

SMOKE OR RECEIPTS?

Winning Local Search For 20+ Years

By **Anthony Limpert**, founder of Clickflame
Long Beach, California

A plain how to manual for the owner of a local service business. Every number in this book comes from a tool we can open on a call, like CallRail, Google Analytics 4, Search Console or a Google Ads account, or from a public study we name. The full list is in the back.

© 2026 Clickflame. All rights reserved. clickflame.com · (562) 568-8305

First edition, October 2026. Prices, ad rules and Google features change. Check the dates next to each number.

WHAT IS IN THIS BOOK

	Before You Start	4
1	Why Most Local SEO Is Smoke	6
2	Google Business Profile, Step by Step	10
3	Citations and Listings	12
4	The Website That Rings	14
5	Reviews Are the Ranking You Control	16
6	Content That Earns the Spot	18
7	Receipts Start With Call Tracking	20
8	Ads That Pay	22
9	AI Search Without the Hype	24
10	When Google Will Not Index You	26
11	Your 90 Day Plan	28
12	The Case Files	30
	Data Sets You Can Use	32
	Worksheets	35
	Sources	39
	About the Author	40

SMOKE OR RECEIPTS?

I have been doing local search since 2004. In that time I have heard every pitch there is. Page one. Top of Google. Guaranteed. Most of it was smoke.

Smoke is a monthly report with no phone calls in it. Smoke is a chart that goes up while your phone stays quiet. Smoke is a ranking for a phrase nobody types.

Receipts are different. A receipt is a call you can count, from a tool you can open. It has a date, a source and a number. When my team says a client got 11,665 first time callers in 25 months, that is a CallRail export, not a feeling.

This book is built on receipts. Every number in it comes from one of four places.

- A call tracking account, like CallRail.
- Google Analytics 4 or Google Search Console.
- A Google Ads account we run.
- A public study, and we name it.

If I could not point to where a number came from, it did not go in the book.

WHO THIS BOOK IS FOR

You own or run a local service business. A shop, a crew, a truck, an office. You get paid when the phone rings and somebody books the job. You have been burned by an agency, or you are about to hire one and you do not want to be.

You do not need to be a tech person. If you can send a text and fill out a form, you can do almost everything in here.

WHO I AM

My name is Anthony Limpert. I founded Clickflame in 2004. Before that I built, scaled and sold three marketing agencies. Then I built an auto repair shop from scratch, Supercanic, and ran my own playbook on it. That shop went from about 10 tracked calls a week to more than 300.

So I am not guessing what a shop owner needs from the internet. I needed it too.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Read Chapter 1 first. It will save you money on its own. After that, jump to whatever is on fire.

12**Chapters**

Each one ends with a checklist

90**Day plan**

Week by week, in Chapter 11

5**Data sets**

Real numbers you can use

6**Worksheets**

Print them and fill them in

THE ORDER THAT WORKS

Most owners try to do everything at once. That is how you burn out by week six. Here is the order we use for our own brands and for clients.

- 1. Track first.** Put call tracking and analytics in before you change anything. If you do not, you will never know what worked. That is Chapter 7, and it is the most skipped step in local marketing.
- 2. Own your Google Business Profile.** It is the map listing, and for most local searches it brings in more calls than your website. Chapter 2.
- 3. Fix your listings.** Same name, address and phone everywhere. Chapter 3.
- 4. Build a website that rings.** A page for every service and every city you want. Fast on a phone. Your number on every screen. Chapter 4.
- 5. Ask for reviews after every job.** Chapter 5.
- 6. Write content that answers real questions.** Chapter 6.
- 7. Then, and only then, buy ads.** Chapter 8.

AI search, the stuff people now call AEO, sits on top of all of it. Chapter 9 shows you our own data on what AI tools send and what makes them pick you.

HOW THE CHECKLISTS WORK

Each chapter ends with a checklist. Do not move on until every box on the one you are working is checked. A half done profile and a half done website lose to a competitor who finished both.

A WORD ON NUMBERS

Google changes. Ad rules change. Prices change. Every number in this book has a date next to it, or in the Sources list at the back. When you read this, check the date. The method lasts longer than any one number.

Let's go find out if you are paying for smoke.



CHAPTER 1

WHY MOST LOCAL SEO IS SMOKE

Smoke is a report with no calls in it. Receipts are calls you can count. Here is how to tell the two apart before you spend another dollar.

In this chapter • The six signs of smoke • What a receipt looks like • The four places you show up • The 15 minute agency test

THE SIX SIGNS OF SMOKE

We audit a lot of local businesses. The worst setups all share the same few habits. Here they are, worst first.

1. NOBODY IS COUNTING CALLS

This is the big one. The agency sends traffic charts and keyword lists. Nobody can tell you how many calls came from search last month. If the phone is the product, and for you it is, a report without calls is smoke.

2. PAGE ONE FOR A PHRASE NOBODY TYPES

"You rank number one for *best affordable emergency drain service near the lake*." Great. Nobody searched it. Ask how many people search the phrase each month before you clap.

3. TRAFFIC WENT UP AND THE PHONE DID NOT

A site can rank and still not ring. Traffic is the middle of the story, not the end. If visits climbed and calls stayed flat, the problem is on the page. Chapter 4 has the seven leaks we find most.

4. THEY OWN YOUR STUFF

Your domain sits in their account. Your Google Business Profile was verified by their team and you are not an owner. That is a hostage setup. You should own the domain, the profile and the content. They can be a manager.

5. A GUARANTEE WITH NOTHING BEHIND IT

Nobody controls Google. A promise of first place with no refund if it misses is a slogan, not a guarantee. A real one puts the agency's own money on the line.

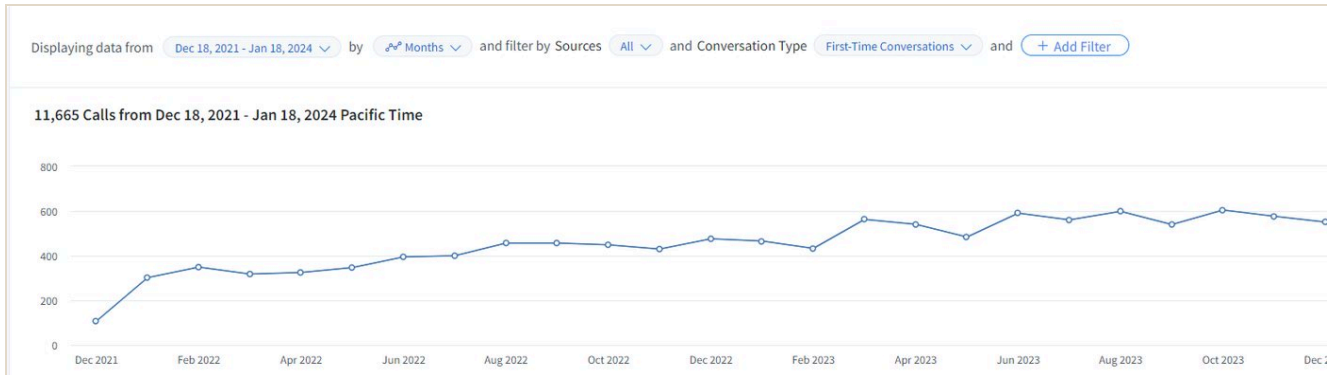
6. THE PRICE IS TOO GOOD

"Full local SEO" for \$200 a month buys you \$200 of work. That is usually a listing tool and a template report. Real local SEO is real labor.

If the phone has not started ringing more, they got you to a spot that does not matter.

WHAT A RECEIPT LOOKS LIKE

Here is a real one. This is a CallRail chart from Abba Bail Bonds, a client in California. It counts first time callers only, so repeat calls do not pad the number.



Abba Bail Bonds first time callers in CallRail, December 2021 to January 2024. Caller names and numbers are cropped out.

CALLRAIL • ABBA BAIL BONDS CASE STUDY

11,665

First time callers
25 months, CallRail

3,890

Jail call conversions
Aug 2022 to Apr 2024

+19%

Los Angeles line
Same 28 days, a year apart

Look at what this chart does that a ranking report never will. It has a date range. It has a source. It counts the thing that pays the bills. And anyone can open the account and check it.

Bail bonds is a brutal market. The family member calling is scared and in a hurry. The first credible phone that rings gets the bond. So we put call tracking on every channel first, with a number for each source and call recording. Then we went to work on search and ads at the same time.

That is the whole idea of this book in one page. **Measure first. Then spend.**

ASK EVERY AGENCY FOR THIS

Ask any agency you talk to for a chart like this one, from a current client, in the tool the data came from. A real local SEO company can pull it up on a call in two minutes. If they send you a PDF instead, you have your answer.

THE FOUR PLACES YOU SHOW UP

Local search used to be three places. In 2026 it is four. A good plan works all four at once.

1. THE MAP PACK

The three businesses with the little map at the top. It runs on your Google Business Profile. For most local service searches, this is where the calls come from.

2. LOCAL ORGANIC RESULTS

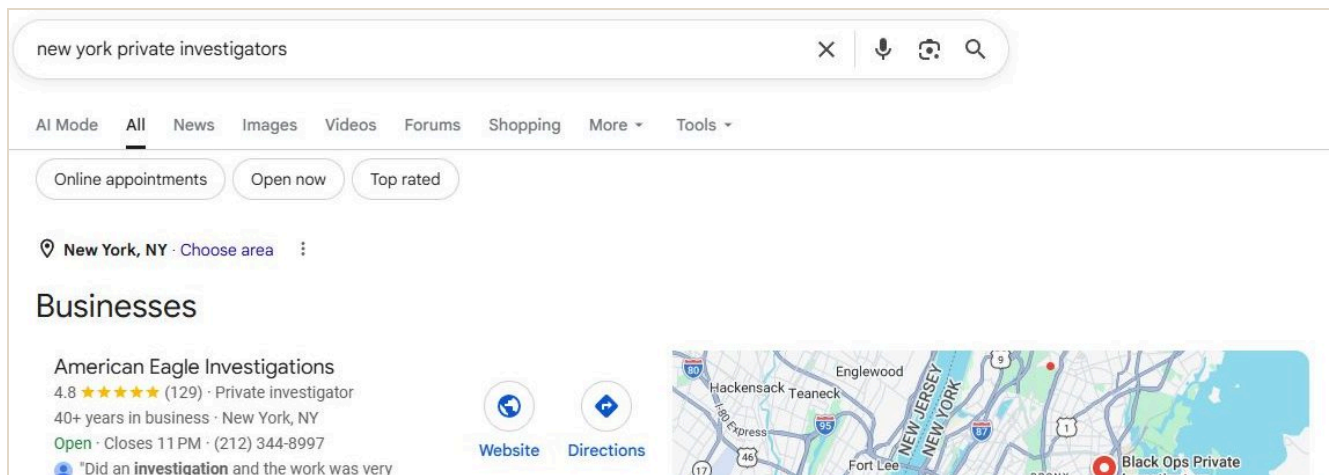
The website results under the map. Your service pages and city pages live here.

3. LISTINGS AND REVIEWS

Your business on Yelp, Bing, Apple, the BBB and trade directories, plus your reviews. They tell Google you are real.

4. THE AI ANSWER

ChatGPT, Gemini and Google's AI Mode now answer "who is the best locksmith near me" with a short list of names. Those answers are built from the first three.



New York Intelligence Agency, a Clickflame client, in the map pack and first in the results below it for "new york private investigators." This is what winning looks like.

GOOGLE SEARCH, NEW YORK, 2026

THE 15 MINUTE AGENCY TEST

- ☐ Ask for five live client sites and their rankings today.
- ☐ Ask for call tracking data from a current client, by source.
- ☐ Ask who owns the domain, the profile and the content. The answer should be you.
- ☐ Ask what happens if you leave in month four.
- ☐ Ask how their own site ranks for "local SEO" in their own city.
- ☐ Ask to see AI referral traffic for a client in Google Analytics 4.

END OF THE FREE SAMPLE

GET THE WHOLE MANUAL

\$7

INSTANT PDF DOWNLOAD

Eleven more chapters. Google Business Profile step by step, citations, the website, reviews, content, call tracking, ads that pay, AI search and a 90 day plan. Every chapter ends with a checklist. The back has data sets and worksheets you can print.

BUY THE BOOK • \$7

Rather do it with a guide? The free course is at learn.clickflame.com