



MARKET RESEARCH · PEST CONTROL

WHAT PEST CUSTOMERS ASK, SEARCH AND BUY, AND HOW YOU **WIN** THEM.

A deep dive into homeowners, renters, home buyers and facility managers with a pest problem: their questions, where they look for answers, who wins those searches today, and what a pest control company can build around the gaps.

13,962

pest keywords measured

21.8M

US Google searches a month

1,178

Google FAQ questions collected

171,626

Reddit posts classified

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CUSTOMER IS UP FOR GRABS.

Pest control is a \$13.4B industry where half of homeowners hire a pro each year, yet nobody owns the moment they search. Reddit answers their questions, listings with only a handful of reviews crowd the map, and the two national giants are moving money from search to doors.

\$13.4B

US structural pest control revenue in 2025, up 6% (Specialty Consultants via NPMA)

52%

of homeowners used a licensed pro in the past year (Harris Poll for NPMA, 2026)

80.5%

customer retention at Rentokil Terminix North America in 2025 (Rentokil 2025 results)

\$127.6M

a month in Google click value across pest searches

Seven things the data says

1. **Reddit owns pest answers, not pest companies.** Reddit is in Google's top 10 on 85% of 174 pest result pages and ranks #1 on 70 of them. Forums and review sites hold a top-3 spot on 73%. Orkin has 3.2% of visibility, Terminix 2.3%, Aptive none.
2. **The map pack is weak and beatable.** In 21 metros, 31 of the 63 top-3 Google Maps spots for "pest control" go to listings with fewer than 10 reviews, and 30 carry the city name in the business name. National brands hold 1 of the 63.
3. **The money is in "hire someone now" searches.** "exterminator near me" costs \$36.39 a click and "pest control near me" \$32.48 (165K a month). "termite inspection" gets 60K searches at \$29.09 with difficulty 3.
4. **Google's AI answers lean on YouTube.** 84% of pest searches show an AI answer, and 95 of the 146 AI answers cite a YouTube video. The top YouTube results are won by a pest company channel (Arrow Pest Service) and DIY pros, not the national brands.
5. **Price is the question nobody answers.** Cost and contracts is the biggest topic in Google's question boxes (127 questions). Google keeps asking "Is \$50 a month for pest control a lot?" (12 result pages). No national brand publishes a price.
6. **The pain is emotional and it repeats.** Anxiety and disgust is the top pain theme in 171,626 Reddit posts (8,335 posts), followed by bed bugs and German roaches that keep coming back. 2,864 posts say the treatment didn't work.
7. **The giants are pulling back from search.** Rollins says its search-driven brands slowed in 2026 and digital spend changes "didn't move the needle"; Rollins and Rentokil Terminix are both expanding door-to-door sales. "pest control near me" is down 18% on last year. Search is less contested for a local company that does the basics.

The play in one line: Be the local company that answers first. Publish real prices and plain contract terms, win the map pack with reviews and service-area pages, answer every pest question better than Reddit, on video and in text, then turn one-time jobs into a cancel-anytime plan.

WHO THE PEST CONTROL CUSTOMER IS

13.3M

residential customer
accounts served in 2025

85%

of residential revenue is
recurring service

16,565

pest control firms; 81% run
one or two locations

109,384

technicians; 37% of
operators say staffing limits
growth

BIGGEST VOLUME

THE HOMEOWNER WITH A PROBLEM TODAY

Ants in the kitchen, mice in the garage, bites in the morning. Tries a can from the hardware store first; ants and spiders are the pests people DIY, while termites, roaches, rodents and bed bugs get a call. Searches Google or Maps the same day and books whoever answers. Angi puts a one-time visit at \$108 to \$261, and the same person is shocked by \$1,000 to \$4,000 for bed bugs. **Needs:** a same-day answer, a clear price, proof it worked.

MOST REVENUE

THE RECURRING-PLAN SUBSCRIBER

Suburban homeowner, often in the South or West, often signed at the door by a summer rep or kept on after a one-time fix. Pays quarterly or monthly. Third-party estimates (HomeGuide, unverified) put national plans at \$500 to \$1,000 a year. At Rentokil Terminix North America, customer retention was 80.5% in 2025, so roughly one in five accounts did not stay. On Reddit the reasons are price rises, missed visits and cancel fees. **Needs:** service they can see, easy cancel, no surprise renewal.

DEADLINE-DRIVEN

THE BUYER OR SELLER WHO NEEDS A TERMITE LETTER

Driven by a closing date, not a bug. A VA buyer in a required county, an FHA buyer whose appraiser saw damage, a seller where a WDO letter is customary. The agent or lender usually picks the inspector. Volume follows 4.06M existing-home sales in 2025, the lowest since 1995. **Needs:** a fast NPMA-33 the lender accepts.

FASTEST GROWTH

THE COMMERCIAL FACILITY MANAGER

Restaurant GM, food plant QA lead, property manager, clinic administrator. Buys to pass an inspection or audit. Commercial grows about 7% a year, faster than residential. Wants documentation, trend reports and a tech who shows up on schedule. **Needs:** audit-ready records and one accountable contact.

Where they research

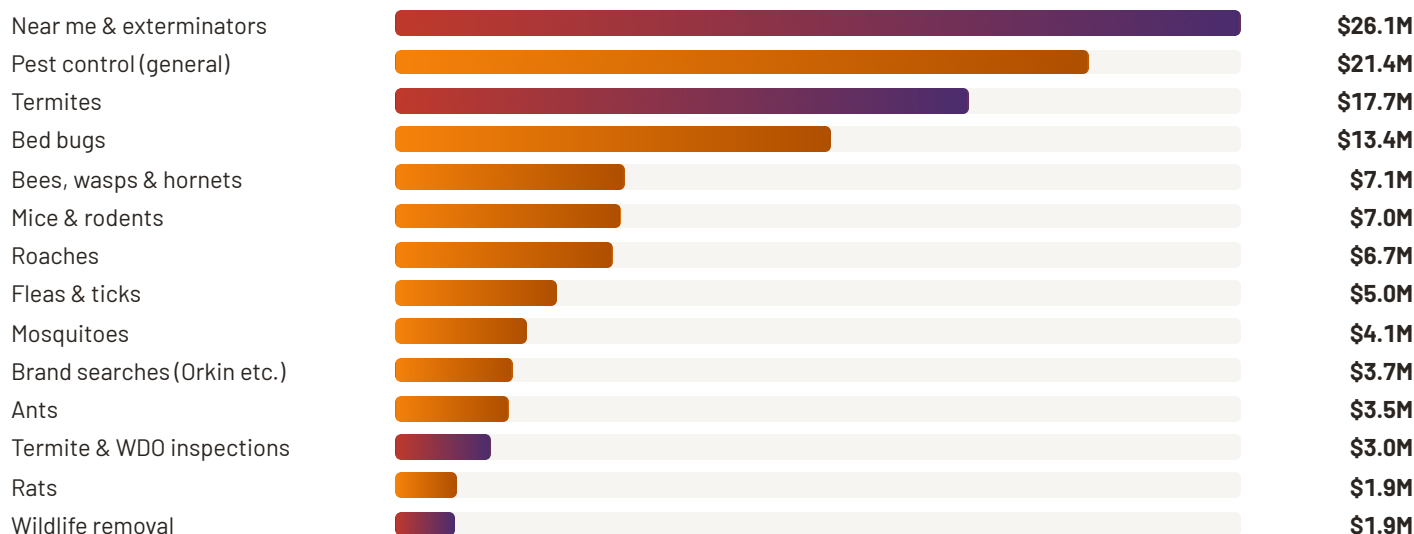
CHANNEL	WHAT IT'S USED FOR	EVIDENCE
Google search and Maps	Finding someone today, prices, "is this normal"	21.8M pest searches a month; Google mentioned in 3,409 Reddit posts and comments
Reddit	"What bug is this?", "did the treatment work?", "is this quote fair?"	171,626 posts in 15 subreddits over 24 months; Reddit in the top 10 on 85% of pest result pages
ChatGPT and AI	Identifying bugs, checking advice	Mentioned in 901 posts and comments, four times YouTube (230); Google shows its own AI answer on 84% of pest searches
YouTube	DIY how-to, "what to expect", termite and rodent work	Cited in 95 of 146 Google AI answers; video carousels on 35% of result pages
Lead sites and reviews	Comparing companies	Yelp in the top 10 on 26 result pages; Angi leads down 9% in Q4 2025; no consumer app found from Orkin, Terminix or Aptive

Sources: Specialty Consultants via NPMA (Apr 2026), Harris Poll for NPMA (2026), Rentokil 2025 preliminary results, BLS OOH, NAR via PBS/CNBC, Angi Q4 2025 release and cost guides, HomeGuide (unverified estimates), Apple iTunes Search API (pulled 2026-10-01).

WHERE THE SEARCHES AND THE MONEY ARE

13,962 US keywords, grouped into 7,374 distinct searches so close variants aren't counted twice. Total: about 21.8M searches a month, worth about \$127.6M a month in ad clicks. Click value is volume times cost per click. It ranks where advertisers spend; it isn't a revenue forecast.

Monthly click value by category (top 14)



Purple bars are the "hire a company" categories: near me, termites, inspections, cost and plans, wildlife, commercial. Bed bugs, mosquitoes and fleas carry huge volume but mostly at \$2 to \$4 a click, because most of those searches are "what does it look like" and "how do I treat it myself".

Where the clicks cost the most

\$36.39

"exterminator near me", 90K searches a month

\$32.48

"pest control near me", 165K a month

\$24.35

Termite and WDO inspections, average per click

\$21.95

Commercial pest control, average per click

By type of search (top 6)

STAGE	SEARCHES / MO	CLICK VALUE / MO	AVG CPC
Hire a pro	2.9M	\$52.0M	\$18.00
Infestation: insects	9.4M	\$26.6M	\$2.82
Termites	1.3M	\$17.7M	\$13.31
Outdoor & seasonal	5.9M	\$16.9M	\$2.84
Infestation: rodents & wildlife	2.0M	\$10.7M	\$5.39
Inspections & real estate	122K	\$3.0M	\$24.35

THE EASIEST MONEY ON THE TABLE

These searches have high value and low competition: keyword difficulty 20 or under (out of 100), buyer intent, no brand names, at most two per category. 948 searches pass these filters; these are the top 15.

#	KEYWORD	SEARCHES / MO	CPC	DIFFICULTY	CLICK VALUE / MO	PEAK
1	termite control	90,500	\$19.73	20	\$1,785,565	May
2	mice pest control	40,500	\$18.61	1	\$753,705	Oct
3	exterminator spider	33,100	\$17.38	0	\$575,278	Sep
4	exterminator rat	18,100	\$30.00	5	\$543,000	Jan
5	ant exterminator	18,100	\$28.79	8	\$521,099	Sep
6	yellow jacket exterminator	27,100	\$18.29	10	\$495,659	Aug
7	nest of wasp	49,500	\$9.22	9	\$456,390	Jun
8	termite control near me	14,800	\$28.78	15	\$425,944	Feb
9	exterminator mice near me	14,800	\$24.56	8	\$363,488	Oct
10	carpenter ants control	60,500	\$5.98	0	\$361,790	May
11	roach exterminator service	27,100	\$12.75	0	\$345,525	Sep
12	exterminator flea	12,100	\$27.22	0	\$329,362	Sep
13	rat exterminator near me	9,900	\$30.76	0	\$304,524	Sep
14	german roach exterminator	22,200	\$12.56	6	\$278,832	Sep
15	bed bug pest control company	18,100	\$13.89	13	\$251,409	Sep

Difficulty is DataForSEO's estimate from the backlinks of pages ranking now. Many local pest searches score near 0 because the map pack and directories rank, not strong pages. That's an opening, but a page alone won't win a "near me" search; the Google Business Profile does.

Moving up and down (12-month trend)

RISING PESTS

"pest control for kissing bugs" is up 653% to 40K a month. "mosquito control" is up 83% (40K, \$11.84 a click). "yellow jacket exterminator" is up 124% at \$18.29. Ants (+16%) and spiders (+22%) grew as categories.

HIRING SEARCHES ARE DOWN

"pest control near me" is -18% on last year, "pest control service" -45% and "exterminator" -45%. The near-me category is down 13% weighted. Rollins described the same slowdown in its Q2 2026 call.

DIY QUESTIONS HOLD UP

Gel bait, borax, diatomaceous earth and "how to see if you have bed bugs" are all up 100% or more. All pest demand, weighted by volume, is -2% on last year. 272 clusters rose 50% or more and 423 fell 40% or more.

THE PEST YEAR: WHEN TO PUSH WHAT

Each cell shows that month's search volume against the category's own average. Darker means busier. Use it to publish content 6 to 8 weeks before each peak and to set ad budgets.

CATEGORY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Bees, wasps, hornets	.2	.3	1.0	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.8	1.7	1.3	.8	.4	.2
Mosquitoes	.4	.4	.8	.9	1.4	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.0	.5	.3
Ants	.4	.5	.9	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.1	.9	.5	.4
Termites	.6	.6	1.1	1.5	1.9	1.2	.9	.9	1.1	.9	.7	.6
Termite / WDO inspections	.8	.7	1.1	1.3	1.8	.9	.9	.8	1.1	1.1	.8	.7
Fleas & ticks	.5	.4	.7	1.2	1.6	1.5	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	.9	.6
Spiders & scorpions	.6	.6	.8	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	.8	.6
Roaches	.7	.6	.7	.8	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.0	.8
Bed bugs	.7	.7	.9	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.1	.8	.7
Wildlife removal	.8	.8	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.2	.9	.8	.8
Mice & rodents	1.0	.8	.9	.8	1.2	.8	.9	.9	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1
Rats	1.0	.9	1.0	.9	1.1	.9	.9	.9	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.0
Near me & exterminators	.9	.8	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.4	1.1	.7	.8
Cost, plans, contracts	.6	.6	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	1.2	.9	1.2	.6
Commercial pest control	1.9	1.2	1.3	.4	.4	.4	.7	.5	1.8	1.3	.9	1.3
All pest demand	.6	.6	.9	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.1	.8	.6

JAN - MAR

Commercial peaks in January (1.9x). Rats and mice stay high. Build termite and WDO pages now; the swarm season starts in March.

APR - JUN

Termites peak in May (1.9x) with WDO inspections (1.8x). Ants, fleas and ticks peak. Mosquitoes start.

JUL - AUG

Bees and wasps peak in July (1.8x, 8x their low month). Mosquitoes and bed bugs run high.

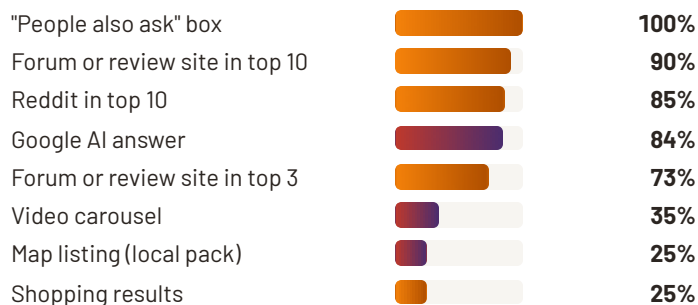
SEP - DEC

Roaches and "near me" searches peak in September. Mice peak in October and November as it gets cold. December is the quietest month overall.

WHO WINS PEST ANSWERS ON GOOGLE TODAY

We ran 174 pest searches across the whole customer journey, from "what bug is this" to "cancel pest control contract", and recorded everything on each result page. The winners are Reddit, Facebook and video, not pest companies.

What shows up on the page (share of 174 result pages)



By topic: map listings show on 62% of plan and contract searches, 57% of bee and wasp searches and 50% of commercial searches. Video carousels show on 67% of termite and 62% of roach searches.

Share of visibility (weighted by rank)

SITE	SHARE	#1 SPOTS	AI ANSWER CITES
reddit.com	21.0%	70	47
facebook.com (groups, posts)	3.7%	0	27
orkin.com	3.2%	10	34
terminix.com	2.3%	3	33
quora.com	2.2%	0	19
youtube.com	2.0%	1	95
yelp.com	1.9%	5	2
crittercontrol.com (Rollins)	1.2%	3	9
epa.gov	1.1%	3	9
angi.com	0.4%	0	9
thumbtack.com	0.3%	0	5
goaptive.com (Aptive)	0.0%	0	0

What this means: Google showed no classic featured snippets on these searches (0 of 174). All 1,608 "People also ask" answers were written by Google's AI with no source link. You get quoted by being a source the AI trusts, and for pest control that means YouTube, Reddit and pages that read like a real technician wrote them. A generic "10 signs of termites" post won't get quoted.

Where forums hold the top spots and no company has a good answer yet

On 146 of 174 result pages, forums and review sites hold 2 or more top-10 spots, a top-3 spot, or a "Discussions and forums" box. Reddit's share is highest on **cost (35% of the cost cluster)**, **stinging insects (33%)**, **ants (30%)** and **roaches (29%)**. The most forum-heavy pages: best pest control spray, roach exterminator, Orkin vs Terminix, palmetto bugs, cancel pest control contract, pest control smell, termite swarmers.

Wildlife is the one niche a brand owns. Critter Control (a Rollins franchise brand) holds 16% of wildlife visibility, ahead of Reddit at 14%. Everywhere else, the top company domain has single digits.

THE MAP PACK IS WIDE OPEN

We pulled the top 20 Google Maps results for "pest control" in 21 large US metros (420 listings). Map listings decide most "near me" searches, and in most cities the top spots go to profiles with very few reviews rather than established companies.

31 OF 63

top-3 map spots held by listings with fewer than 10 Google reviews

30 OF 63

top-3 listings carry the city name in the business name

24 OF 63

top-3 listings show no website

1 OF 63

top-3 spots held by a national or big regional brand

METRO	#1 REVIEWS	TOP-3 REVIEWS	UNDER 10	MAP ADS
Atlanta	2	2, 10, 0	2 of 3	0
Austin	16	16, 1181, 4	1 of 3	0
Charlotte	264	264, 6355, 628	0 of 3	0
Chicago	172	172, 8, 26	1 of 3	0
Columbus	10	10, 305, 1	1 of 3	0
Dallas	1	1, 1, 2	3 of 3	0
Denver	308	308, 438, 145	0 of 3	0
Houston	3	3, 1, 1	3 of 3	0
Las Vegas	3	3, 435, 6	2 of 3	0
Los Angeles	10	10, 0, 165	1 of 3	0
Miami	1	1, 1, 12	2 of 3	1
Nashville	1	1, 2676, 601	1 of 3	1
New Orleans	3512	3512, 4, 4	2 of 3	0
New York	340	340, 2, 1	2 of 3	0
Orlando	1389	1389, 382, 1	1 of 3	0
Philadelphia	2	2, 252, 807	1 of 3	0
Phoenix	2	2, 4, 53	2 of 3	1
Raleigh	394	394, 13, 1	1 of 3	1
San Antonio	250	250, 0, 1	2 of 3	0
Seattle	837	837, 1483, 45	0 of 3	0
Tampa	2	2, 1, 1	3 of 3	0

What this means: across all 420 listings, 99 have zero reviews and the median is 11. Only 23 of the 63 top-3 spots belong to a company with 100+ reviews. Where a real company shows up with a full profile and a steady flow of reviews (Charlotte, Seattle, Denver, New Orleans), it holds the top spots. A local operator who asks every customer for a review can outrank most of this field. Only 4 of 21 metros showed a paid map ad.

Source: DataForSEO Google Maps live results, desktop, keyword "pest control", one search per metro, October 1, 2026. Business names are left out on purpose. A listing with few reviews may simply be new; we report counts, not judgments about any business.

THE QUESTIONS PEST CUSTOMERS ASK MOST

On Google ("People also ask")

Number of pest result pages (out of 174) where each question appeared.

QUESTION	PAGES
What is the hardest pest to get rid of?	41
Is \$50 a month for pest control a lot?	12
Do bed bugs go away if you shower?	12
What smell do termites hate the most?	12
What time of year is worst for bed bugs?	11
Can you ever fully get rid of termites?	10
What pests are most expensive to remove?	10
Is \$45 a month for pest control good?	9
Is pest control a rip-off?	9
What kills bed bugs 100%?	8
What is the 5 day mouse rule?	8
How long after pest control is it safe for humans?	7
What month are roaches the worst?	7
How many bed bugs do I have if I see one?	5
How much does Orkin cost per month?	4
Is \$128 a good price for pest control quarterly?	4
How many mice do you have if you see one?	4
Does homeowners insurance cover termites?	3
Should pest control be paid by the landlord?	3
Who is cheaper than Orkin?	3

1,178 unique questions in total. By topic: cost and contracts 127, termites 110, wildlife 98, rodents 82, safety 61, bed bugs 58, real estate and inspections 51.

On Reddit (171,626 posts, 15 subreddits)

Ranked by a demand score that combines Reddit question posts (75%) and Google autocomplete matches (25%).

QUESTION	POSTS
What bug is this, and is it a problem?	37,942
Is this a bed bug or a carpet beetle?	18,561
Who do I call for raccoons, squirrels, bats?	1,293
Did I bring bed bugs home?	5,833
Mouse or rat? What do the droppings mean?	5,558
Is Orkin, Terminix or Aptive any good?	345
Silverfish, carpet beetles, moths, pantry pests	2,542
Termites: liquid, bait stations or tenting?	2,142
German roach (infestation) or a stray?	4,399
How do I know it's really bed bugs?	4,154
How do I get rid of scorpions?	2,062
How do I get rid of wasps / yellow jackets / a nest?	686
How do I get rid of rats?	596
How do I get rid of mice myself (traps, bait, sealing)?	924
How do I control mosquitoes / ticks in my yard?	362
How do I stop worrying after bed bugs?	2,320
The treatment didn't work. Now what?	2,377
How do I deal with spiders in the house?	401
Do I have termites? What are the signs?	2,071
How do I get rid of German roaches for good?	1,791

Of the 171,626 posts, 77% are questions, and "what bug is this?" alone matches 37,942. Where the poster's situation could be told: 9,840 renters, 1,031 businesses, 551 home buyers or sellers, 370 plan customers, 329 pest pros.

Top questions on Google by search volume

how can we get rid of bed bugs (90K) · how to inspect for bed bugs (90K) · what do fleas look like (90K) · how get rid ants (50K) · how to get rid of fleas (50K) · what do termite look like (50K) · how to exterminate mice (33K) · where do bed bugs come from (33K) · can roaches bite (27K) · how get rid of roaches (27K) · how much do exterminator cost (8K, \$12.7 a click). In total 1,638 question searches get 3.5M searches a month.

WHAT PEOPLE TYPE INTO GOOGLE

We ran 320 autocomplete lookups: 40 pest topics, each paired with how, why, can, what, best, vs, cost and near me; 267 returned suggestions. That gave 3,222 suggestions, 2,585 of them unique. They show the exact words people type before they see a single result.

What the suggestions are about (unique suggestions)

Hiring: company, service, near me		1,103
Cost and price		557
DIY and products		146
Safety: pets, kids, health		125
Real estate and inspections		121
Contracts, plans, how often		68

Some suggestions fall under more than one theme. "Near me" suggestions reflect the location of the computer that ran the lookups, so they were left out of the examples below.

MONEY

EVERY PRICE QUESTION

pest control cost per month · pest control cost for roaches · pest control cost for mice · pest control cost for house · pest control cost per year · pest control cost for ants · pest control cost monthly

SAFETY

"IS IT SAFE FOR MY..."

what pest control is safe for pets · what pest control spray is safe for pets · what pest control is safe for cats · pest control and pets · what termite treatment is safe for pets · can termite treatment hurt dogs · termite treatment and pets

PLANS

HOW OFTEN, HOW LONG, HOW TO CANCEL

pest control cost monthly · how often termite treatment · how often flea treatment dog · how often flea treatment for cats · how often termite tenting · monthly pest control service cost · quarterly pest control service cost

REAL ESTATE

TERMITE INSPECTIONS

how termite inspection is done · how much termite inspection cost · what to expect during a termite inspection · is a termite inspection worth it · how long does a termite inspection take · how to termite inspection · is yearly termite inspection necessary

COMMERCIAL

BUSINESSES AND LANDLORDS

what is commercial pest control · how much does commercial pest control cost · what do commercial pest control use · how to get commercial pest control license · how to sell commercial pest control · what do commercial pest control use for mosquitoes · how to price commercial pest control

DOUBT

CAN A PRO EVEN FIX IT?

why pest control is important · why pest control is required · why pest control is important in food industry · why pest control is bad · can pest control get rid of mosquitoes · can pest control get rid of gnats · can pest control get rid of ants

What this adds to the plan: price is a top theme (557 unique suggestions), and people want it per pest: "pest control cost for roaches", "for mice", "for bed bugs", "per month", "per year". Safety questions name the pet and the product, so the answer page should too. Contract questions ("how do pest control contracts work", "how long are they", "how to cancel") show that people are wary before they sign.

WHAT HURTS PEST CUSTOMERS MOST

We ranked 25 pain points by how often they come up and how upset people are (scored 1 to 5 from the words they use). Sources: 171,626 Reddit posts and 15,472 top comments. The biggest pain isn't a bug; it's the stress, and the angriest posts are about landlords, contracts and treatments that didn't work.

#	PAIN POINT	POSTS	CMTS	ANGER	TYPICAL \$	IN THEIR WORDS (PARAPHRASED)
1	Anxiety, paranoia, disgust	8,335	144	2.2	\$960	Sleeping about four hours a night for most of a year because of bed bugs.
2	Bed bugs: repeat treatments, no sleep	4,863	137	2.0	\$1,150	A year of store bombs and sprays before calling a pro, and now we doubt the pro too.
3	German roaches that won't die	4,210	130	1.9	\$717	Bought our first home and found a roach infestation after closing.
4	Mice and rats in walls, attic, kitchen	4,336	143	1.7	\$2,200	Three mice in a week, in one kitchen drawer and under the sink.
5	Treatment didn't work, pests came back	2,864	36	2.1	\$2,000	Paid for treatment and a week later still waking up with fresh bites.
6	Pests from the neighbors' unit	2,412	44	2.0	\$825	Will they just come back if the neighbors never treat their unit?
7	Fleas in the house	2,228	32	1.9	\$400	Came home from three weeks away to a house full of fleas, even after treating the dog.
8	Tech rushed or nothing changed	1,762	41	2.0	\$1,400	Months of mice, countless snap traps and service visits, and nothing works.
9	Termite damage, often found at purchase	2,064	36	1.3	\$1,787	The flipper covered termite damage with new wood; is a lawyer worth it?
10	Chemicals around kids, pets, pregnancy	1,347	47	1.8	\$500	How do I keep mice out of the garage without poison around my dogs?
11	Ants that keep coming back	983	19	1.7	\$500	Every spring the ants march in through the kitchen window frame.
12	Wildlife in the attic	790	45	1.7	\$2,000	Woke up to the cat playing with a live bat in the hallway.
13	Price shock on quotes	568	20	2.0	\$800	Pest control quoted \$350 for ants, is that a rip-off?
15	Landlord won't deal with it	385	7	2.6	\$350	Landlord ignoring a growing hornet nest in the patio closet.
18	Can't cancel, auto-renewal, billing	299	10	2.0	\$316	My husband signed up with a door-to-door rep and now we're reading the contract.

Typical \$ is the median dollar amount mentioned in posts on that pain, which mixes quotes, repair bills and rent. Paraphrases summarize real example posts; they are not quotes.

SERVICE HORROR THEMES

Paying for treatment and still waking up with bites. Store bombs and sprays for months before calling a pro, then doubting the pro too. A neighbor's unit reseeding roaches into yours. Sellers covering termite damage before a sale. Landlords who set traps and never call anyone. Door-to-door contracts people regret reading.

WHAT PEOPLE TRUST

Net sentiment (positive minus negative mentions, as a share of those that took a side): local or independent company +59, Orkin +0, Terminix -20. Pro products used by DIYers score high (Advion gel bait +56, Gentrol IGR +82); store sprays (-4) and peppermint oil (-41) score low. ChatGPT is mentioned 878 times. Counts of sided mentions are small, so read these as direction.

WHAT CUSTOMERS USE, AND WHO WINS VIDEO

Most-mentioned products and companies on Reddit

Net = positive mentions minus negative, as a share of those that took a side. "Sided" is how many took a side; small numbers mean a weak signal.

PRODUCT OR COMPANY	MENTIONS	NET	SIDED
Diatomaceous earth, boric acid	2,466	+7	131
CimeXa, Crossfire, Aprehend (bed bugs)	2,163	+40	114
Raid, Hot Shot, Ortho, Spectracide	1,889	-4	115
Glue boards	1,677	-4	71
Rodent bait (Tomcat, d-Con)	1,627	-3	91
Advion (roach/ant gel bait)	1,374	+56	95
Snap traps (Victor etc.)	1,085	-18	73
Terro (ant bait)	982	+43	56
Amazon	836	+36	53
Peppermint / essential oils	820	-41	81
Bug bombs / foggers	786	0	64
Orkin (Rollins)	641	0	38
Gentrol / IGR	607	+82	44
Local / independent company	554	+59	63
Termidor / fipronil	503	+65	34
Terminix (Rentokil)	338	-20	25

People talk about products far more than companies: diatomaceous earth alone gets more mentions than Orkin and Terminix combined. The DIY attempt is part of almost every story. The products pros use (Advion, Gentrol, Termidor) are trusted; store sprays, foggers and essential oils are not.

Who wins pest YouTube searches

817 videos from 50 pest YouTube searches (public results page, first page each). "Top-3" counts how often a channel ranked in the first three results.

CHANNEL	TOP-3	RESULTS
Arrow Pest Service	6	29
Solutions Pest & Lawn	6	18
Jonas Olson	4	22
Dan The Bug Man	4	16
The Home Depot	3	5
Natural Health Remedies	2	14
Gates Wildlife Control	2	14
Terminix	2	11
Pest Protection Plus	2	9
Pest Control Business Blueprint	2	7

A pest company wins YouTube. Arrow Pest Service, a working pest control company, has the most top-3 slots and 34.1M views across the results we saw. Solutions Pest & Lawn and Dan The Bug Man are next. National brands hold 5 of 150 top-3 slots. 51 of the 150 top-3 videos are five or more years old, so a steady channel of real jobs can still break in.

THE PLAYERS AND HOW THEY GET CUSTOMERS

COMPANY	WHAT THEY SELL	HOW THEY GET CUSTOMERS	MOAT	WEAK SPOT
Rollins (Orkin, HomeTeam, Fox, Critter Control) \$3.76B revenue 2025 · 2M+ customers · 26 deals in 2025	Free inspection → one-time treatment → quarterly or monthly plan → termite bond, wildlife, commercial	Orkin on brand and search; HomeTeam via home builders; Fox and Sacla door-to-door; acquisitions	Density, brand, a roll-up machine	Search-driven residential slowed to +3.6% organic in Q2 2026; FTC ended its noncompetes
Rentokil Terminix \$4.29B North America 2025 · pest services +1.1% organic	Inspection → plan → termite plan with damage warranty → commercial monitoring	National brand, 220 small branches, door-to-door pilot (25 territories, 40 in 2026)	National commercial coverage	80.5% customer retention; \$384M termite damage provision; 2,915 BBB complaints in 3 years
Apptive, Hawx, Moxie, EcoShield	Discounted first service at the door → 12-month auto-renewing plan	Summer door-to-door reps	Fast sign-ups without paying Google	AG actions: Delaware \$600K (2026), Pennsylvania \$220K; LA County v. Hawx
Anticimex (EQT)	Local brands kept under their own names; SMART connected traps for commercial	Acquisition of strong local companies	Connected-trap platform	No consumer brand in the US
Arrow, Massey, Truly Nolen, Cook's	Pest and termite plans; Massey bundles lawn	Regional density, referrals, M&A	Family brands in the Sun Belt	Regional; no consumer apps
Sunday, Pestie, big-box DIY	\$27 product → \$49 kit → \$54 to \$184 a year DIY plan	Shelves, Amazon, social ads	Price for ants, spiders, mosquitoes	No help for termites, bed bugs, rodents in walls
Angi, Thumbtack, Google LSA	Pay per lead (\$20 to \$80 reported)	Own the search and app entry point	Traffic and reviews	Shared leads; Angi leads -9% in Q4 2025; LSA badge lost its guarantee

Churn and contracts are the industry's open wound

80.5%

Rentokil Terminix North America customer retention, 2025 (Rentokil 2025 results)

\$384M

Terminix termite damage claim provision at the end of 2025, up \$201M in the year

\$60M

Alabama AG settlement with Terminix over termite bonds (2020)

18,000+

Rollins workers freed from noncompetes by the FTC (June 2026)

Sources: Rollins FY2025 10-K, Q4 2025 and Q2 2026 releases and call; Rentokil 2025 preliminary results and H1 2026 interim; Delaware and Pennsylvania AG releases; LA County complaint; Alabama AG; FTC (June 2026); BBB profiles (2026); Angi Q4 2025 release; Sunday and Pestie pricing pages.

WHITE SPACE NOBODY OWNS



1. A PLAN YOU CAN CANCEL BY TEXT

Every regulator action we found targets the door sale, the iPad contract and the cancel fee, and Rentokil Terminix North America kept 80.5% of its customers in 2025. "Month to month, cancel by text, no fee" turns the industry's biggest complaint into a headline.

2. PUBLISHED PRICES

No national or regional brand publishes a price, and Google's own question boxes ask "Is \$50 a month a lot?" on 12 result pages. A plain menu (general pest, rodent exclusion, bed bugs, termite inspection, WDO letter) wins the comparison shopper.

3. THE MAP PACK

31 of 63 top-3 map spots across 21 metros go to listings with under 10 reviews. A real company with a complete profile, service-area pages and a review ask after every visit can take most of them.

4. ANSWERS THAT BEAT REDDIT

Reddit is #1 on 70 of 174 pest result pages. The answers are threads from strangers. A licensed tech's answer, with photos from real jobs and a short video, can win the spot and the AI citation.

5. "WHAT BUG IS THIS?" BY TEXT

Identification is the top Reddit question (37,942 posts), and bug-ID apps have 45K ratings while the big brands have no consumer app. A "text us a photo, get an ID and a price" flow connects the question to a booking.

6. FAST TERMITE LETTERS FOR AGENTS AND LENDERS

VA added required counties in July 2025 and lenders need the NPMA-33 within days. "termite inspection" gets 60K searches at \$29.09 a click. Nobody markets a guaranteed 48-hour letter to agents, or turns the inspection into a termite plan.

7. RENTERS AND PROPERTY MANAGERS

9,840 posts come from renters stuck between a landlord and the bugs, and "Landlord won't deal with it" is among the angriest pains. A property-manager program with tenant self-booking is open in most metros.

8. PROOF THE TREATMENT WORKED

2,864 posts say it didn't work, and anxiety is the top pain. Visit reports with photos, what was used, and what to expect next week answer both, and make the plan easy to keep paying for.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR A PEST CONTROL COMPANY

The ladder below turns the demand and the gaps in this report into a growth plan for a local or regional pest control company. Each rung feeds the next: free answers bring the search traffic, a priced first job converts it, and a plan people trust keeps it. Prices are for the company to set; the point is to publish them.

FREE • REACH ANSWER EVERYTHING • Pest answer hub built from the 1,178 Google questions, with FAQ markup • "Text us a photo" bug ID • Tech YouTube channel • Price pages per pest	ENTRY • \$ BOOK A FIRST VISIT • Published one-time prices • Same-day and next-day slots shown online • Free inspection with photos • 48-hour termite letter for closings	RECURRING • \$\$ A PLAN PEOPLE KEEP • Month to month, cancel by text • Photo report after every visit • Free re-service between visits • Test against the "\$50 a month" anchor	HIGH TICKET • \$\$\$ THE BIG JOBS • Termite plans with published yearly inspection reports • Rodent exclusion and attic repair • Bed bug heat treatment • Wildlife removal	PARTNERS • B2B STEADY ACCOUNTS • Realtors and lenders (WDO) • Property managers with tenant self-booking • Restaurants and food plants: audit-ready records
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90-day plan (starting October)

WHEN	BUILD	WHY NOW
Weeks 1–3	Fix the Google Business Profile in every service area: categories, services with prices, photos, hours. Start asking every customer for a review by text the day of the visit.	31 of 63 top-3 map spots in 21 metros are held by listings with under 10 reviews. Map listings show on 62% of plan searches.
Weeks 1–4	Rodent push: "mice in walls", exclusion and attic pages with real job photos, plus an exclusion package.	Mice searches peak in October and November (1.2x and 1.2x); "mice pest control" gets 40K searches at \$18.61 with difficulty 1.
Weeks 2–6	Price and plan pages: starting prices per pest, what a visit includes, how to cancel. FAQ markup on each.	Cost and contracts is the biggest question topic (127 questions), and Reddit holds 35% of the cost results.
Weeks 2–12	Tech YouTube channel: two short videos a week from real jobs ("what we found", "what to expect"), embedded on the matching answer page.	YouTube is cited in 95 of 146 AI answers, and a pest company channel already wins the most top-3 slots.
Weeks 4–8	Answer hub, first 50 pages: the top Google questions and the forum-held pages (roach exterminator, palmetto bugs, termite swarms, pest control smell, Orkin vs Terminix, cancel a contract).	Forums hold a top-3 spot on 73% of pest result pages; these are the easiest to take.
Weeks 6–10	Realtor and lender program: 48-hour WDO letter, one-page sign-up, a termite plan offer in every report.	Termite and WDO searches peak in May (1.8x); agents pick the inspector, so sign them up before spring.
Weeks 8–12	Termite and swarm season content (signs of termites, swarms vs flying ants, bait vs liquid vs tenting with prices) and a property-manager program.	Termite searches start rising in March and peak in May (1.9x); "termite control" gets 90K searches at \$19.73.

APPENDIX

HOW THIS WAS BUILT

WORKSTREAM	WHAT WAS PULLED
Google demand	30 DataForSEO Labs keyword-suggestion requests returning 22,653 rows, filtered to 13,962 relevant US keywords in 7,374 groups. A keyword counts only if it names a pest and carries a household problem or service signal; species trivia and pet care were left out. Includes volume, cost per click, difficulty, intent and 12 months of trend. Plus 320 free Google autocomplete lookups (40 topics × 8 question words).
Google results pages	176 seed searches (174 returned), desktop, 40 results deep, with "People also ask" expanded and AI answers loaded. That gave 1,608 question slots and 1,178 unique questions.
Google Maps	Top 20 map results for "pest control" in 21 metros, 420 listings.
YouTube	50 YouTube searches from the public results page, 817 videos, grouped into channel rankings.
Reddit	171,626 public Reddit posts from 15 subreddits (pest subreddits over 24 months; homeowner, buyer, landlord and renter subreddits over 12 months, kept only when they mention a pest), plus 15,472 top comments and 21,051 Google and YouTube autocomplete suggestions. Posts were classified by type, situation, topic and intensity. No usernames or personal data were stored.
Market and competitors	NPMA and Specialty Consultants, SEC filings (Rollins, Ecolab, Angi), Rentokil results, state AG and FTC releases, BBB, Census AHS, BLS, company pricing pages, and Apple's public app search.

Caveats

- Search volumes are Google Ads estimates rounded into buckets. "Click value" ranks where advertisers spend; it isn't a revenue forecast. Labs returns up to 1,000 keywords per seed sorted by volume, so the long tail of the largest seeds is incomplete.
- Topic labels were assigned by keyword rules, so a small share are filed under the wrong topic. Flea searches include pet flea treatment.
- Share of visibility is weighted by rank position, not by search volume. Local packs on the results pages reflect one sample location; the Maps sample covers 21 metros on one day.
- Reddit posts were classified by keyword rules, not read one by one, so treat counts as relative. Most posts don't say who the poster is, so the situation counts cover only the posts that do. Reddit's own top-post feeds blocked us, so posts were not weighted by popularity.
- Two results-page searches ("what to expect from pest control service", "general pest control plan") failed twice with a Google error and were not pulled. The free Google suggest endpoint returned 403 partway through, so autocomplete used Google's alternate public endpoint.
- Figures labeled unverified (third-party price estimates, some lead prices) came from secondary sources and could not be checked against a primary page. PCT's Top 100 list blocked automated reading.



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