

The 3-Question Front Office Leak Checklist

Find the biggest leak in your local business in under 5 minutes

Candace Lee · Virtual Outreach Solutions

The 3-Question Front Office Leak Checklist

Find the biggest leak in your local business in under 5 minutes.

By Candace Lee · Virtual Outreach Solutions · South Central Kentucky

Most local businesses don't lose customers because their service is bad. They lose them in the first 5 minutes — before a real conversation ever happens.

Missed calls. Voicemails nobody returns. Web forms that go to an inbox nobody checks. A text that sits for 3 hours.

By the time you follow up, the customer has already called the next business on the list.

This checklist is the same one I use on the first pass of every Front Office Check. Three questions. Honest answers. You'll know within 5 minutes where your biggest leak is.

Grab a pen. Don't overthink it.

Question 1 — The Missed Call Test

Right now, pick up your phone. Call your own business number from a number it doesn't recognize. Then hang up before anyone answers.

Now wait. Set a timer.

Score yourself:

- **A call back within 5 minutes** → You're in the top 10% of local businesses. Keep it tight.
- **A call back within 1 hour** → Decent, but you're losing the customers who called you and the next business in the same minute.
- **A call back later that day** → You are leaking revenue every single week.

- **No call back at all** → This is your biggest leak. Fix this first. Nothing else matters until this is fixed.

Why it matters: Industry research shows roughly 35% of calls to local service businesses go unanswered, and the majority of those callers don't leave a voicemail — they call the next business. If you don't return missed calls fast, you're not "missing a call." You're handing that customer to your competitor.

Question 2 — The After-Hours Test

Look at your business right now. If a customer found you at 8pm on a Saturday — through Google, Facebook, or a referral text from a friend — what happens?

Walk it through honestly:

- Can they **book, buy, or leave their info** without talking to a human?
- Does someone get notified, or does it sit in an inbox until Monday?
- If they text your business number, does anyone see it before morning?

Score yourself:

- **They can book/buy/submit AND someone is notified instantly** → You're doing this right.
- **They can submit info, but nobody sees it until next business day** → You're capturing the lead and then losing it to the wait. 18+ hours is a long time for a hot customer to stay hot.
- **They have to wait until you open** → You're invisible to anyone who shops outside business hours, which is most people.

Why it matters: A huge share of local service inquiries happen evenings and weekends — that's when people actually have time to deal with their problem. If your business goes dark at 5pm, you're competing only for the 9-to-5 slice of the market.

Question 3 — The Follow-Up Test

Think about the last 5 leads you got — calls, web forms, DMs, walk-ins, anyone who showed interest but didn't buy on the spot.

Be honest:

- How many got a **second touch** within 48 hours?
- How many got a **third touch** within a week?
- How many are sitting in your head, your phone, or a sticky note — and have not been followed up with at all?

Score yourself:

- **4–5 got a second touch in 48 hours** → Your follow-up game is strong. Most owners can't say this.
- **2–3 got a second touch** → You're closing half the deals you could.
- **0–1 got a second touch** → This is almost certainly costing you more than missed calls. The lead already wanted you. They just needed one more nudge.

Why it matters: Most local sales don't happen on the first contact. They happen on the second, third, or fourth touch. If you only follow up once — or you wait for them to come back to you — you're paying for marketing that books a fraction of what it could.

What to Do With Your Answers

Look at your three answers. The one that scored worst is your biggest leak.

That's where to fix first. Not the one that's easiest, not the one that feels like a "marketing problem" — the worst score.

- **Missed calls?** A simple missed-call auto-text closes most of this gap in a week.
- **After-hours dark?** A basic booking link and a forwarded notification will recover most of these leads.
- **No follow-up?** A 3-touch follow-up sequence — even a manual one — typically lifts close rate noticeably.

None of this requires a new website. None of it requires a marketing agency. It requires plugging the leak.

Want me to find the rest?

This checklist catches the obvious leaks. The Front Office Check catches the ones you can't see — the broken form, the slow load, the listing that points to the wrong number, the voicemail greeting that talks customers out of leaving a message.

If you want me to do the full pass on your business — real calls tested, real response times measured, real gaps identified — that's the **\$197 Front Office Check**. Delivered in 48 hours.

virtualoutreachsolutions.com/front-office-check

Or book a free 15-minute call first if you want to talk it through:
virtualoutreachsolutions.com

*Virtual Outreach Solutions · Bowling Green, KY · 270-606-8807 ·
hello@virtualoutreachsolutions.com*

*This is not a marketing agency. We help local businesses stop losing customers to
missed calls and slow follow-up.*