

THE EVERYTHING · FIELD GUIDES FOR TRADE BUSINESSES

The AI Pest Control Playbook

How to run a pest control business in the age of AI

— and out-earn outfits three times your size.

THE COMPLETE SYSTEM · NO FLUFF · FREE TO SHARE

THE EVERYTHING

Read this first

Ten years ago, running a proper pest control business meant someone on the phone, a bookkeeper, and still working out the call-out, the labour and the chemical on a scrap of paper in the ute between jobs.

Today, a one-van pest tech with the right setup answers every panic call, quotes straighter, gets paid quicker — and turns more of those one-off jobs into plans than a ten-van outfit across town. And he spends zero nights on paperwork.

He's not smarter than you. He's not a better tech. And he's definitely not a computer person — one of the best we've seen was still pricing jobs on a pad on the passenger seat two years ago. He just worked out one thing before everyone else: **the boring half of the business** — the calls, the quotes, the on-site reports, the invoices, the landlord and strata and insurer chasing, the compliance records — can now do itself. So he put his energy where the money is: on the tools, and turning frightened callers into customers who stay.

This is the playbook for how he does it. No “50 prompts to copy”. No tech-bro nonsense. The actual system — how to think about it, what to set up, in what order, and the mistakes that make good techs quit before it clicks. Read it start to finish and you'll run a tighter, more profitable pest control business than you do right now, even if you never spend a cent on software.

A STRAIGHT WORD ON WHAT STAYS YOURS

Nothing in here promises a home is termite-free, certifies a property clear, or decides what goes down the drum — and it never replaces your inspection at the property, your licence, or the directions on the label. It carries the admin. Whether the timber's sound is a skill call; what a report can honestly say is a judgement call; who foots the bill is a legal one; and what product goes down, at what rate, is bound by the label and your licence. All of it stays yours, start to finish.

What's inside

01 The New Playing Field

The 3 things a frightened customer judges you on — and why the job's won before you reach the property.

02 Think AI-First

Stop bolting AI onto old habits. Re-draw the business with AI touching everything first.

03 Never Miss a Job Again

Every panic call answered and calmed — every after-hours job captured, not sent to voicemail.

04 Quote Before You Leave the Driveway

Why an honest price needs an inspection — and how the AI qualifies the job before a van rolls.

05 Get Paid Without the Awkward Chase

Owner, tenant, landlord, strata, buyer or business — the right invoice to the right payer, chased for you.

06 The Inbox That Runs Itself

Sorted, drafted, and watching your money — even read to you on the drive.

07 Your Digital Office Manager

The morning brief, job files and compliance records that build themselves.

08 Look Twice as Big as You Are

Branded everything, and the review-referral flywheel that feeds itself.

09 The 30-Day Switch

One week at a time, the trust dial, and why three processes beat one.

✓ The 2-Minute Leak Audit

Find exactly where your business is leaking plans — and what to fix first.

01

CHAPTER ONE

The New Playing Field

Someone who's just found mud tubes running up a skirting, or a wasp nest by the kids' trampoline, or roaches streaming across the kitchen at 6am, can't tell if you're a good tech. They judge you on what they can reach — and that's where most pest outfits quietly lose the best work of the year.

Nobody wakes up wanting a pest controller. The phone rings because something went *wrong* — and worse, something's crawling. They're frightened, a bit disgusted, and in that state they barely shop. They ring down the Google list until someone picks up — and the job, plus the plan behind it, goes to whoever gets three things right first:

- 1 Did you actually pick up — and calm them down?** A frightened caller hires the first business that answers and sounds like it has this handled. Ring out to voicemail and they're already dialling the next number — most won't leave a message.
- 2 Did you sound calm and get a van moving?** Whoever says “we'll get someone out and sort it” and means it owns the job — and the quarterly plan, the termite treatment or the contract behind it. The panic call isn't the small job — it's the audition for the annuity.
- 3 Was dealing with you easy — and did you sound legit?** A real local address, a licence you'll show, a branded van, a written scope once you've looked. In a trade where anyone with a spray pack can hang out a shingle, easy and above-board wins the plan and the next call.

Notice what none of those are about? How neatly you handle the sprayer. All three are about being reachable, sounding calm and running the admin — the exact stuff you hate at the end of a day on the tools. And here's the bit nobody's telling you: the other side already runs on AI. The question isn't whether AI comes into pest control — it's whether it's working for you or against you.

The good news? This is the first time the technology favours the small operator. The big firms rolling up the trade run committees, rollouts and training programs. You can decide on a Tuesday and be answering every call by Friday. The playing field just flipped: the small, fast, reachable tech can now look and perform like the national brand — without the national brand's overheads.

“But I'm not a computer person”

Neither are the trades doing this best. One of the fastest adopters we've seen is a trade-business owner with 26 years on the tools who only picked up a computer three years ago. His words: **“Don't worry about spelling. Don't worry about grammar.”** If you can send a text or leave a voice message, you can run everything in this playbook. Being able to say what you want is the new requirement — and pest techs, who talk a rattled customer calm every day, are already good at that.

**\$300–
1,000**
+ per month

What most trade job-management and quoting software charges in AUD — and it still makes you do the typing and the on-site write-up. One owner was paying a grand a month, some months three, for software his crew barely used. Everything in this playbook either replaces that spend or makes it earn its keep.

The firms three times your size are slow because they're big. That's your opening. This playbook is about walking through it.

02

CHAPTER TWO

Think AI-First

Before we touch a single tool, we need to fix how you think about this — because the biggest mistake isn't buying the wrong software. It's bolting AI onto your old way of working and wondering why nothing changed.

Every process in your business was built on one assumption: a human has to do each step. Someone answers the phone. Someone writes up the inspection and types the quote. Someone rings the property manager about who's paying. Your whole day is shaped around that assumption — and that assumption just died.

Don't automate your old process. Re-draw it — with the AI touching everything first, and you supervising. Three mental shifts:

Shift one — delegate outcomes, not steps

Stop thinking “which buttons do I click”. You now talk to your business the way you'd talk to a good apprentice: say the outcome, let it work out the steps. One owner reorders stock by sending one message from the supplier counter — “grabbing the bait stations and two litres of concentrate for the Nguyen termite job” — and the order, the expense and the books sort themselves.

Shift two — AI first, you second

The AI does the first pass of everything, and you approve, tweak or overrule. The quote is drafted before you sit down. One customer described it: **“Nine times out of ten it's perfect. Just go — yep, send.”** Your job shrinks to ten seconds of judgment, not forty minutes of typing.

Shift three — corrections are investments

With normal software, you fix the same mistake forever. With AI, you fix it once. Tell it a standard general-pest quote carries the call-out, that a German roach job should always book the two-week follow-up, and that you never promise a firm price before you've inspected — it answers, **“I’ll remember that from now on.”** Every correction compounds. Six months in, it quotes like you, writes like you and knows your rules — because you taught it, once.

The re-imagining exercise

Walk your business and ask one question about every interaction: “What would this look like if the AI touched it first?”

INTERACTION	THE OLD WAY	AI-FIRST
Panic call comes in at 6am	Voicemail. Job lost to whoever answered.	Answered and calmed, details captured, inspection booked — the plan quote drafted by morning.
Wrong product turns up from the supplier	You notice on site, chase the counter, lose the slot.	Flagged against the job, re-ordered automatically — you hear only if it slips again.
Supplier's price-list update lands	Buried under 200 emails. Old rates on your next quote.	Extracted, applied to your rates — “concentrate and monitoring stations up on six lines.”
Job finishes	Invoice “tonight”. Plan never offered.	Invoice sent from the van. Plan offered while the fear's still fresh.

Every chapter from here is just this exercise applied to one part of your business.

03

CHAPTER THREE

Never Miss a Job Again

Let's start with the leak that costs you the most and hurts the least — because you never see the bill.

The highest-value work in pest control doesn't arrive at 10am with a polite enquiry. It arrives as a panic — termites found in a wall cavity, a wasp nest over the back door, roaches through a café kitchen before the health inspector's due — and it arrives while you're on the tools, driving, or asleep. The phone buzzes in the van. It rings out. That caller — a spray today, a termite treatment next week, a plan behind both — rings the next mob on the list. Gone.

1 in 3

calls rings out

The typical operator misses around a third of inbound calls — a hand's-full moment under a house, or already on another job. It's brutal here, because a frightened caller barely shops: reportedly around 4 in 5 won't leave a voicemail — they just ring the next number — and conversion falls off a cliff within minutes. A missed call isn't a deferred sale — it's a sale, *and the plan behind it*, handed to a competitor. And it drags your ranking down, so it costs you the next one too.

The customer with white ants in the wall doesn't leave a voicemail. They ring the next mob. Voicemail is where the best jobs of the year go to die. The AI-first fix is bigger — because a call is really two problems.

Problem one — the call you couldn't take

An AI receptionist answers in your business's name, 24/7, sounds calm and normal on the phone, and captures every detail — what they've seen, where, what kind of property, who's paying — while you're still asleep or under a house. And it does the thing that wins the plan: it calms them while the fear's still fresh, because a customer who's just been frightened is the most receptive they'll ever be to “let's keep it that way.”

Problem two — the promise you couldn't keep

The second half of a missed call is the promise nobody wrote down. “I'll get someone out to you this week.” “I'll ring your property manager Monday.” The AI captures the promise and chases it — you, or the customer — until it's done.

- ✓ Every call answered in your business's name — including 6am, including Sunday, including the first warm week of spring when every pest phone in town is going at once.
- ✓ A searchable transcript of every call — “what did we agree about the call-out and who's paying?”
- ✓ Promises land somewhere that chases you — not a notebook, not your memory at the end of a 14-hour day.
- ✓ Job details from the call — pest, property, access, who's paying — flow straight into the job, not re-typed three times.

The phone stops being the thing that costs you the best jobs and becomes the thing that books them — and books the plan behind them — even at 6am, even when both hands are full.

04

CHAPTER FOUR

Quote Before You Leave the Driveway

Pest control has a quoting trap most trades don't: the honest answer to “how much?” down the phone is often “I can't say until I've looked” — and out of your mouth that can sound like a dodge.

No firm price

down the phone

You haven't seen the property, the pest or how far it's gone. A few ants along a bench, a German roach infestation through a kitchen, a subterranean colony in a wall and a whole-house barrier are wildly different work and product — and how bad it is stays unknown until you inspect. A firm phone price is a guess. Guess high and you lose the job; guess low and you either eat it or hit them with a “variation” at the door that torches trust and the review.

So the honest operator quotes the *structure* confidently and defers the *number* honestly: call-out or inspection, plus treatment scoped to what's found, plus the follow-ups the pest actually needs, plus the warranty period. A fixed all-in number quoted sight-unseen isn't confidence — it's the amateur tell.

AI-first quoting makes that easy: the AI *qualifies* the job before a van rolls. Here's what that looks like in a real pest control business today.

- ✓ **It asks the right questions first.** From the call, the AI works through what actually sets the price — pest type, property size and construction, how established it looks, and who owns it and who's paying — so you roll a van to a real job, not a maybe.
- ✓ **It prices from YOUR structure.** Feed it your past jobs and it learns your call-out, your labour, your per-metre barrier rate and your plan pricing — and gives an honest bounded range, not a number you can't honour.
- ✓ **It catches what you forgot.** It doesn't get tired and leave off the second roach visit, the yearly termite monitoring, or the fact a rental job needs the landlord's say-so before you start.

Same day

quote, done right

A trade-business owner — 26 years on the tools, barely touches a computer: “Quotes that used to take me two or three days, my AI does in half a day. I did one yesterday that would've taken two days — sent it off the same day.” Pricing came in “pretty much on par” with his own numbers, because it learned from his past jobs.

The written on-site scope isn't red tape — it's the sell

Because the honest price depends on what you find at the property, the move is to get moving now and confirm the price on site, in writing, before you treat. Framed right, that's not a delay — it's the thing that tells a nervous customer you're not the bloke who doubles it once the job's open. “We give you a written scope on site before we treat” turns your honesty into the reason they picked you.

Then the bit everyone skips — the follow-up. One message, two days later: “Just checking you got the quote for the treatment and the quarterly plan.” That single message wins more jobs than dropping your rate ever will. AI-first, the follow-up isn't a habit you build. It's a thing that just happens.

THE POINT ISN'T THE SOFTWARE

It's the standard: qualify before you roll, never quote a firm price you haven't seen, put it in writing at the property, follow up every time. A tech with a notepad who hits that standard beats one with an app who doesn't. The AI just makes the standard effortless.

05

CHAPTER FIVE

Get Paid Without the Awkward Chase

You've done the work. Now you've got to get the money — and in pest control that's rarely as simple as one customer and one invoice.

Who pays?

ask before you spray

The person who rings isn't always the one who pays. A mess from a tenant's own housekeeping is often theirs; a problem there at move-in or built into the place is the landlord's; common areas — foyers, gardens, roof voids — can be the body corporate's; a job inside one unit is the owner's; a pre-purchase inspection is the buyer's; a café or warehouse is the business's. Get that wrong and the invoice bounces around for weeks. Get it right up front and the money follows the work.

The chasing is a system problem, not a people problem. Fix the system and you never have the awkward conversation again.

- 1 Route by payer before the van rolls.** The first question — “is this yours, a tenant's, a landlord's, the body corporate's, a buyer's or a business's?” — decides the invoice, the paperwork and the upsell before you've left the driveway.
- 2 Invoice the right payer the second the job's done.** One sentence from the van: “invoice the Wilson job to the property manager.” On a plan or contract it bills automatically on the agreed cycle, so nobody has to remember.
- 3 Take the card on site.** A tap or a “pay now” link at the door gets paid faster than “here are my bank details” — and the reminders at day 3, 7 and 14 send themselves.
- 4 Escalate the tone only if you have to.** Most pay on nudge one or two. You stay the good guy the whole way.

Money is money: this is the one place you keep the AI on a short leash at the start. It drafts, you approve — until you've watched it be right for a month.

06

CHAPTER SIX

The Inbox That Runs Itself

Your inbox is where quiet money leaks out and stress leaks in.

Supplier statements, chemical safety data sheets, a property manager asking who signs off a turnover treatment, a builder chasing a termite certificate before a handover, an audit due at a restaurant account, price-list updates — all mixed in with junk, all landing while you're under a house with a torch in one hand and a duster in the other. One store manager started with a backlog of 24,000 emails: "I'd read one email, it'd get lost. I wouldn't even be able to find it again."

AI-first, the inbox becomes something that's already handled by the time you look:

- ✓ **Triaged.** The three emails that matter today float to the top, flagged with why — "this one's the strata approving the roof-void treatment."
- ✓ **Drafted.** Routine replies — "yes we do pre-purchase termite inspections", "we're booked till end of week" — written and waiting. You glance, tweak, send.
- ✓ **Answered on demand.** "What did we quote that café for the monthly service?" — and it finds it instantly.

THE PART NOBODY EXPECTS — IT GUARDS YOUR MONEY

Because the AI reads everything, it catches things. One business: "It's already saved me thousands in mis-ordered products — it said, hold on, based on your past jobs you probably want this one." Another had a supplier accidentally invoice at a 50% discrepancy — flagged automatically before it was paid.

07

CHAPTER SEVEN

Your Digital Office Manager

Every pest control business has an office manager. Usually it's you, doing it badly at 10pm.

+20 jobs
in one week

One trade business's admin person went on leave for a week. The owner: "We haven't had her in the office for a week, and it's helped us do her job — and we've had probably an extra 20 jobs come in through this week." Not survive the week. Their biggest week.

The morning brief

Before you turn the key: today's jobs in order, which termite job is waiting on product from the supplier, which panic call should become a plan, who to chase for payment, and the one thing that'll bite you if you forget it. Two minutes with a coffee — and your offside knows too.

Job files that build themselves

Every photo, quote, invoice, inspection report and email attaches itself to the right job — so when the customer rings in eight months about the same property, the whole history's there. The panic call, the treatment, the conducive conditions you noted, the warranty terms, the email where strata said yes — all in one place.

The paperwork without the dread

The inspection report, the record of what you could and couldn't get to on the day, the safety data on what went down, the audit log for the commercial account — prompted, captured against the job, and kept where you can find it. Never invented for you, and never a substitute for your own inspection at the property — just stopped from going missing.

08

CHAPTER EIGHT

Look Twice as Big as You Are

Here's a secret the big firms rely on you not knowing: most of “looking professional” is presentation — and presentation is now nearly free.

A one-van pest tech and a fifty-person outfit can send the identical, spotless, branded quote and inspection report — and show the same real address and licence. The customer can't tell which is which — so the small operator who bothers gets treated like the big one, trusted like the big one, and can charge like it.

The referral flywheel — on purpose, not by accident

- 1 **Retain** — make the whole job easy, above-board and clear, so they keep your magnet on the fridge and have you back every season.
- 2 **Review** — ask for the Google review at the moment they're happiest, right after the place is theirs again and the crawling's stopped, automatically, with the link. Reviews and fast response lift you up the rankings — and a frightened buyer leans hard on them.
- 3 **Refer** — the job you did for one unit gets you the next one in the building; the good turn for one property manager gets you all their doors; one real-estate agent feeds you pre-purchase inspection after pre-purchase inspection.
- 4 **Resell** — this is the whole game. The one-off spray becomes a quarterly plan; the termite inspection becomes a treatment and a yearly monitoring renewal; the café becomes a compliance contract. It's all in the call and the job file. A reminder at the right time — before next season — turns one panic job into an annuity.

START TODAY — EVEN WITH ZERO TECH

Ask every happy customer for a review before you pack up the van, and always ask the one question that opens the ladder — “want us back before they are, so it never gets this bad again?” A customer who's just been through it is the most receptive you'll ever find them.

09

CHAPTER NINE

The 30-Day Switch

Everything above works. The reason most techs don't get it working is they try to do it all at once, get overwhelmed mid-job, and go back to the old way. So: one thing at a time, without stopping work.

- 1 Week 1 — Stop the biggest leak: the phone.** Every call answered and calmed, every panic job captured, promises pulled out automatically. This starts paying for the whole exercise immediately.
- 2 Week 2 — Fix quoting.** The AI qualifies the job and gives an honest range from your structure; you correct it — and every correction is a lesson it keeps. Written on-site scopes with the two-day follow-up, and the plan offered every time.
- 3 Week 3 — Fix getting paid.** The right invoice to the right payer, plan and contract billing on a cycle, card on site, automatic reminders — with you approving everything money-related until it's earned the leash.
- 4 Week 4 — Hand over the back office.** Inbox triaged and drafted, morning brief running, job files and compliance records building themselves, reviews asked automatically.

Why all four? Because one process never feels like much. Three is where the “holy hell” moment happens — because that's when the pieces start talking to each other. The call becomes the job. The job becomes the plan. The plan becomes the invoice and the review.

The trust dial — how to hand over without losing sleep

You don't hand a new apprentice the van and a job on day one. Same here:

- 1 **Weeks 1–2: it asks about everything.** Every email draft, every invoice — “here's what I'd send, OK?” You approve, correct, teach.
- 2 **Weeks 3–4: it asks about the important stuff.** Routine replies just go; money, new customers, and anything with legal weight — inspection reports, warranties — still get your nod.
- 3 **Month two onward: it asks about exceptions.** Now it runs, and you get the morning brief and the flags. You're still the boss — you've just stopped being the bottleneck.

The mistakes that make good techs quit before it clicks

- ✓ **Doing all four weeks at once.** Don't. One a week. Each banks a win before you add the next.
- ✓ **Bolting AI onto the old process.** If you're still typing every job into the same old software and asking AI to “help”, you've missed the point. Re-draw the process (Chapter 2).
- ✓ **Treating it like software instead of staff.** Software you configure once and curse forever. This, you teach — and it gets better every week.
- ✓ **Waiting for perfect.** A rough system running today beats a perfect one you'll set up “when things quiet down”. Pest work never quiets down — it just changes pest.



BEFORE YOU PUT THIS DOWN

The 2-Minute Leak Audit

Most pest controllers aren't short of skill or hours — they're leaving the annuity on the table. A typical solo turns around 1,200 jobs a year, but only about 1 in 3 is new work — the other two in three are servicing plans they already sold. That's the tell: the money isn't in doing more one-offs, it's in turning the one-offs you win into plans, termite monitoring and commercial contracts. A one-off costs more to win than it earns; the plan behind it is the whole business. Be honest — tick the ones that are true right now.

- ✓ I regularly miss calls after hours and in the spring rush — and I don't know how many jobs it's cost me.
- ✓ A panic call has gone to voicemail and I never knew the phone rang.
- ✓ I've given a firm price down the phone before inspecting — or lost a job because I wouldn't.
- ✓ I don't always follow up after sending a quote.
- ✓ I do a great one-off job, then let the customer evaporate instead of offering a plan.
- ✓ I've started work before I confirmed who was actually paying — owner, tenant, landlord, strata, buyer or business.
- ✓ I leave the inspection or compliance paperwork to the last minute.
- ✓ I only push termite inspections and plans once the phone starts ringing — never ahead of the season.
- ✓ My inbox stresses me out, and important stuff gets buried.
- ✓ If a customer rang about a job from last year, it'd take me a while to find the details.

0–2

Tight ship. A few tweaks and you're flying.

3–6

You're leaking real plans in the boring half — and it's all fixable. Start with Week 1.

7+

Mate, you're doing the hard work and handing the annuity to whoever calls the customer back first. Good news: it's exactly the stuff that's now easiest to fix.

The biggest lever isn't more leads — it's turning the calls you already win into plans that pay you all year. Your biggest tick is your biggest opportunity. Start there.

Want it set up for you?

Everything in this playbook, you can build yourself — and you should, if you've got the time and the patience. Plenty do. If you'd rather it was just done — the AI that answers your phone at 6am and calms the customer, captures every panic job, qualifies it and gives an honest range, routes the invoice to the right payer, keeps the compliance records and chases the money, and turns one-off jobs into plans — all in one, working in your pest control business this week — that's what we build. It's called

- ✓ 14-day free trial. Cancel anytime. No fixed contracts, no catch.
- ✓ Nothing important — a quote, an invoice, a customer message — ever goes out without you seeing it first.
- ✓ It lives in Microsoft Teams and the tools you already use.

See it working on your own jobs at the-everything-app.com — no credit card to look.

Honest note: this won't fix a broken business, and it won't make a home termite-free, promise the pests are gone for good, or certify a property clear — that's still you, your inspection and your licence. What it fixes is the office job you've been doing for free after dark.