

Where AI search customers show up

Six ways a customer gets from an AI answer to your business, and the place each one leaves a trace. Only some of them reach your analytics. The one we suspect is biggest only shows up if somebody asks.

WHAT THE CUSTOMER DOES	WHERE IT LANDS	HOW YOU CATCH IT	VISIBILITY
Clicks a link in ChatGPT, Gemini, or Copilot Source arrives as chatgpt.com , gemini.google.com , copilot.microsoft.com	→ GA4 AI Assistant channel Default channel group since May 2026, forward-only	→ Traffic acquisition report Mark call clicks and form submits as key events; check landing pages	Visible
Clicks a link in Perplexity or Claude Source arrives as perplexity.ai or claude.ai	→ GA4 Referral (sometimes) Not on Google's documented AI Assistant list	→ Filter by session source Add these to your monthly check by hand	Partly visible
Clicks from an app that strips the referrer Common with phone apps	→ GA4 Direct Looks like someone typed your URL	→ Can't recover it Watch for direct-traffic jumps on deep service pages	Hidden
Clicks a citation in an AI Overview or AI Mode Referrer is Google Search	→ GA4 Organic Search Mixed in with blue-link clicks; Search Console lumps it into Web	→ No clean split Ask at booking; run AI Mode in your prompt checks	Hidden
Visits your site from an AI answer, then calls Website shows a tracking number for AI-sourced visitors	→ AI tracking number Dynamic number insertion, website only	→ Call tracking report Keep your real number on Google Business Profile and directories	Visible
Calls the number in the answer, never visits Name, phone, and hours pulled from your profile and listings	→ Your main line, unlabeled Looks like any other new customer	→ "How did you hear about us?" AI app as its own option, logged in the job record with revenue	Only if you ask

Before any of it: monthly prompt checks
Same 8–10 prompts, same day each month, in ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, and AI Mode

"Best plumber near Westerville for a water heater replacement"

"Who does emergency drain cleaning on weekends in Dublin, Ohio"

"How much does a tankless water heater cost in Columbus"

"Is [your company] any good"

THE SCORECARD, CHECKED MONTHLY (EXAMPLE QUARTER, ILLUSTRATIVE NUMBERS)

GA4 AI sessions
31 / 7 key events
AI Assistant channel plus Perplexity and Claude referrals

Intake answers: "an AI app"
9 of 140 jobs
About \$72,000 in booked work at an \$8,000 average job

Calls on the AI tracking number
5
Website visitors who came from an AI answer and picked up the phone

Prompts that name you
4 of 10
Leading indicator; up from 2 of 10 last quarter