

Answer Every Customer: The 24/7 Front Desk Tool Guide

Ready-made tools that answer your calls and texts when you can't, compared side by side with real prices. Pick a level, pick a tool, and be set up this week. No building required.

Prices checked September 25, 2026. Prices change, so confirm before you buy.

The three levels at a glance

LEVEL	WHAT IT DOES FOR YOU	STARTING PRICES IN THIS GUIDE
1. Missed-call auto-text	Texts every caller you miss, so they don't call the next business on the list.	About \$14 to \$59 a month
2. AI text assistant	Answers texts and website chats for you, asks what they need, and can book the job.	\$29 a month add-on and up, or quote only
3. AI receptionist	Answers the phone 24/7, takes the details, and books or transfers the call.	\$0 (25 calls) to \$79 a month to start

How to read the tables

- **Starting price** is the lowest plan that does the job, and what that plan includes. "Billed yearly" means you pay for 12 months up front.
- **Watch-out** is the one thing most likely to surprise you after you sign up.
- Tools are listed in no particular order. Every price and feature comes from the vendor's own pricing page or help center.

What's inside

- **Page 2:** Level 1 tools, compared
- **Page 3:** Level 2 tools, compared
- **Page 4:** Level 3 tools, compared, plus all-human options
- **Page 5:** Which level fits you, and the questions to ask before you buy



LEVEL 1

Missed-call auto-text

When you can't pick up, the caller gets a text from your business number within seconds. You call or text them back when you're free.

TOOL	STARTING PRICE (WHAT IT INCLUDES)	FREE TRIAL	BEST FOR	WATCH-OUT
Quo (formerly OpenPhone) Business phone app for your cell and computer. Auto-texts callers you miss.	\$19/user/mo , or \$15 billed yearly. One number per user, unlimited US and Canada calls and texts. Missed-call auto-replies on every plan.	Yes, 7 days	Owners who want a separate business line on the cell phone they already carry	Texting needs carrier registration: \$19.50 one-time, plus \$1.50 to \$3 a month.
Grasshopper Virtual business number. "Instant Response" texts callers you can't answer.	\$14/mo billed yearly (True Solo: 1 number, 1 extension). Instant Response is on all three plans.	Yes, 7 days, no card	Solo owners who want the simplest add-on number	It texts new callers only. Texting registration: \$19.50 one-time plus \$1.50 a month. Monthly-billing price: check pricing page.
Housecall Pro Field-service software. Its Voice phone feature can text callers you miss.	\$59/mo billed yearly (\$79 monthly) for the Basic plan. Voice is a separate plan: check pricing page.	Yes, 14 days, no card	Home-service businesses already running on Housecall Pro	Its help center says the text goes to existing customers, so brand-new callers may not get one.
TextBack Standalone app. Texts missed callers, asks what they need, and sends you a summary. Works with your current number through call forwarding.	\$49/mo for 500 texts. First month is \$10 as an intro offer.	No (30-day money-back guarantee)	Trades who want text-back without switching phone apps	Newer, smaller company, so read reviews first. US only.

How to choose: If you like your current phone app, turn on its missed-call text first. It may already be included. If not, pick the tool that lets customers keep calling the number they already know.

2 LEVEL 2 AI text assistant

An AI (artificial intelligence) assistant answers texts and website chats for you. It answers common questions, asks what the customer needs, and hands the lead to you or books the job.

TOOL	STARTING PRICE (WHAT IT INCLUDES)	FREE TRIAL	BEST FOR	WATCH-OUT
Quo Sona (texting) Texts back when a lead texts in or you miss a call, answers questions, and collects their details.	Included with any Quo plan (from \$19/user/mo). The texting feature is free while it's in beta.	Yes, 7 days (Quo)	Quo users who want AI replies by text	It's a beta feature, so it may change or get its own price later.
Jobber Receptionist AI that answers texts and calls to your Jobber number and can book jobs into your Jobber calendar.	\$29/mo add-on for 30 conversations, then \$0.79 each. Unlimited on the Plus plan (\$499/mo). Needs a Jobber plan (Core lists at \$49/mo).	Yes (Jobber trial, no card)	Home-service businesses that schedule in Jobber	Sold as an add-on to "select plans," and you need a Jobber dedicated phone number.
Housecall Pro CSR AI AI built into Housecall Pro that answers website chats and calls and books jobs on your schedule.	Price not listed: check pricing page. Needs a Housecall Pro plan (from \$59/mo billed yearly).	Housecall Pro: 14 days	Home-service businesses that schedule in Housecall Pro	Answering texts is still listed as "coming soon" (alpha).
Rosie (website chat and texting) AI chat on your website. Optional add-on for AI text conversations with website visitors.	Chat widget comes with any Rosie plan (from \$49/mo) . Website Texting add-on: \$50/mo for 25 conversations, then \$1 each.	Yes, 7 days	Businesses that also want Rosie answering the phone (Level 3)	Chat and texting ride on a Rosie phone plan. They aren't sold on their own.
Podium AI Employee AI that answers texts, webchat, calls, email, and social messages from one inbox, and schedules.	Quote only.	Not listed	Busier or multi-location businesses	No public pricing, so you'll need a sales call.

How to choose: If you already run your jobs on Jobber or Housecall Pro, start with the AI built into it, because it can see your calendar. Otherwise, pick the tool attached to the phone number or website customers already use.

3 LEVEL 3

AI receptionist

An AI voice assistant answers your phone 24/7. It says it's an AI, answers basic questions, takes the caller's details, and books the job, sends a booking link, or transfers the call to you.

TOOL	STARTING PRICE (WHAT IT INCLUDES)	FREE TRIAL	BEST FOR	WATCH-OUT
Quo Sona AI agent that answers calls 24/7, answers common questions, texts a scheduling link mid-call, and transfers calls.	Included on every Quo plan (from \$19/user/mo) with 10 AI-answered calls a month. More: \$25/mo for 40 calls, \$49 for 100, \$99 for 250. Or \$1.00 per extra call.	Yes, 7 days	Quo users with a low call volume	Books by sending a scheduling link. It doesn't book straight into your calendar.
Rosie AI answering service that learns your business from your Google profile and website.	\$49/mo for 250 minutes (Professional). Booking straight into your calendar and live transfers start at Scale: \$149/mo for 1,000 minutes.	Yes, 7 days	Solo owners who mainly need messages taken	The \$49 plan sends booking links. Calendar booking needs the \$149 plan.
Upfirst AI receptionist priced per call. Answers every call, overflow only, or after hours.	\$24.95/mo for 30 calls (\$20/mo billed yearly), then \$1.50 per extra call. Booking, transfers, and call summaries included.	Yes, 14 days	Low call volume and a tight budget	Extra calls add up fast in a busy month.
Goodcall AI phone agent with unlimited minutes, priced by unique callers.	\$79/mo per agent (\$66/mo billed yearly). 100 unique callers a month, then \$0.50 each.	Advertised. Terms not listed	Busy lines with long calls	The Starter plan keeps only 7 days of call and customer details.
Smith.ai AI Receptionist AI answers first. Complex calls can go to Smith.ai's live North America-based receptionists.	Free plan: 25 calls/mo, then \$3.00 per call. Pro: \$150/mo for 75 calls (\$2.00 each), then \$2.50 per extra call.	Free plan instead of a trial	Owners who want a human backup behind the AI	Cost of a live-agent handoff isn't listed. Spam that gets through counts, and cancelling takes 30 days' notice.

Prefer a real person? All-human answering costs more. Smith.ai's human receptionists start at \$300/mo for 30 calls. Ruby starts at \$250/mo for 50 minutes.

How to choose: Count your calls for one week first. Low volume: a per-call plan (Upfirst, Smith.ai Free) or Quo Sona if you already use Quo. Long calls: pricing that doesn't charge by the minute (Goodcall, Upfirst, Smith.ai). Want a person behind the AI: Smith.ai.

Which level fits you?

IF THIS SOUNDS LIKE YOU	START HERE
You miss a few calls a week and usually call back the same day.	Level 1: missed-call auto-text
Customers text you or use your website chat, and wait hours for an answer.	Level 2: AI text assistant
You miss calls every day, or callers hang up instead of leaving a voicemail.	Level 3: AI receptionist

You don't have to pick just one. Start at Level 1 and add a level when you're ready. Some tools cover two levels: Quo Sona and Jobber Receptionist answer both calls and texts, and Rosie's phone plans include website chat.

Ask these before you buy

- **Can I keep my current number?** Most tools work by forwarding calls you don't answer.
- **How is it priced?** Per user, per minute, per call, or per conversation. What happens when I go over?
- **Does it book into my calendar, or just send a link?**
- **Can it hand a caller to me, or to a real person?**
- **Does it tell customers it's an AI?** It should, at the start and whenever asked.
- **Are there texting fees?** US carriers require business texting registration, usually a one-time fee plus a small monthly fee.
- **Test it during the trial.** From another phone, call and text your number and see exactly what a customer gets.

Rather build your own? Comment BUILD for the AI Agent Build Plan.

Sources

Checked September 25, 2026 on each vendor's own site: quo.com/pricing, quo.com/sona, quo.com/product/messaging/automated-text-messages, grasshopper.com/pricing, housecallpro.com/pricing, housecallpro.com/features/csr-ai, help.housecallpro.com (Voice Settings Overview), textbackapp.com, getjobber.com/pricing, help.getjobber.com (Receptionist powered by Jobber AI), heyrosie.com/pricing, podium.com/pricing, podium.com/product/ai-employee, upfirst.ai/pricing, goodcall.com/pricing, smith.ai/pricing/ai-receptionist, smith.ai/pricing/receptionists, ruby.com/pricing.