

FIRST-PARTY AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH • JUNE 2026

How AI Picks Local Businesses in Australia

We asked ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity and Claude to recommend local tradies and service businesses across every Australian capital. They didn't agree, and they didn't even agree with themselves.

~330

AI answers analysed

4

AI engines

12

trades

8

cities

3

query types

1. AI can't make up its mind — same question, different businesses

We asked each engine the identical question three times. This is the share of recommended businesses that stayed the same across all three runs. ChatGPT changed almost its entire answer every time; Claude barely moved.

AI Engine	Stability (%)
ChatGPT	8%
Gemini	24%
Perplexity	38%
Claude	89%

Source: Dossis Digital, 8 queries × 4 engines × 3 runs, June 2026. Stability = businesses appearing in all 3 runs ÷ all businesses named.

2. Four engines, four different trusted sources

There is no shared "AI directory." Each engine leans on a different layer of the web to decide who to recommend. Your own website is the most-cited source in every engine, but the supporting directories differ completely.

Engine	Backbone it leans on	Most-cited source layers
ChatGPT	Bing + listicles	starworks.com.au"best-of" blogsRedditProductReview
Perplexity	widest mix	hipagesAirtaskerFacebook groupsYelpReddit
Gemini	Google + review widgets	TrustpilotProductReviewLocalsearch.gov.au

Engine	Backbone it leans on	Most-cited source layers			
Claude	Brave Search	Oneflare	Word of Mouth	Yellow Pages	ThreeBestRated

Recommendation queries across 12 trades and 8 cities. Cost / "how much" queries instead cite government regulators and independent cost-guide blogs, almost never a business's own site.

What it means for your business. Getting recommended by AI is not one job, it's four. You need your own site optimised as the anchor, presence across each engine's different directory layer, and a steady stream of reviews, because in big cities a single recommendation does not stick: the answer changes every time someone asks.