



UK Marketing Prices 2027

Edition 1

What UK firms publish about their prices.
Thirteen studies, prices read June to October 2026.

Jacob Whitmore

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whito[®]

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By Jacob Whitmore

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Prices are as published by each firm on the dates stated in each chapter. Nothing in this book is financial, legal or purchasing advice. Check a firm's own price page before you buy.

This edition and its download page: <https://whito.co.uk/research/uk-marketing-prices-2027/>

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About this edition

This book collects thirteen price studies Whito published on whito.co.uk between June and October 2026. Each one records what UK firms put in writing about their prices on a stated day: marketing agencies, software vendors, creator platforms, plumbers, electricians, locksmiths, heating engineers and dentists. The last study tests what AI engines say those things cost.

Every chapter is the study as it stood on whito.co.uk on 18 October 2026. The words, tables and figures are unchanged. We took out the page furniture: question-and-answer blocks, links to related pages, data download offers, a budget calculator and share buttons. Each chapter opens with the date the study was published, the date it was last updated and the address of the live page.

What the 2027 in the title means

This edition is the reference to plan 2027 budgets against. It is not a forecast. Every price in it was read between June and October 2026, and every chapter carries its own date. Prices change. When a figure matters, check the live page or the firm's own price page before you rely on it.

What the studies have in common

Whito reads the price a firm publishes on its own website, on one day, and records exactly what it says. A price that is not on the page is recorded as not published. Each chapter states its own sample, its own method and what it does not prove. Nobody paid to appear in any of them.

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To cite a single figure, link to the live page given at the top of its chapter. That page carries any later correction.

Corrections

If you think a figure is wrong, tell us at whito.co.uk/contact-us. Corrections are made on the live study page, dated, with the original figure kept on the record. The next edition carries them.

The thirteen findings

One sentence from each study, as published. Each is free to quote with a link to the page named under it.

1. 128 published prices from 47 UK providers, read in June 2026: the median published SEO price across all 45 data points is £799 a month, and the median one-off price across 28 published website packages is £520.

Chapter 1. whito.co.uk/research/uk-marketing-prices-study

2. 47 of 50 UK marketing agencies publish no price anywhere, 94%, and only two publish a complete price list, according to Whito's July 2026 check of the top five agencies in ten UK cities. Published SME retainers run from £999 to £2,500 a month.

Chapter 2. whito.co.uk/research/uk-agency-pricing-transparency

3. Of 39 UK agency pricing pages read on 29 September 2026, 19 do not say how you leave, and one publishes a setup fee.

Chapter 3. whito.co.uk/research/uk-agency-contract-terms

4. On 1 October 2026 the brand-name marketing stack for a one-person UK business cost £2,667 a year before VAT, and tools doing the same five jobs cost £1,319.73.

Chapter 4. whito.co.uk/research/uk-marketing-stack-cost

5. A five-person UK service business pays about £2,635 a year including VAT for a standard software stack, roughly £44 per person per month, while a credible sole-trader stack costs about £18 a month, according to Whito's price check of 50 tools on 2 July 2026.

Chapter 5. whito.co.uk/research/uk-business-software-price-index

6. Of 35 UGC and creator platforms read on 12 October 2026, 17 publish no price at all and only 3 let a business work out the full cost of a first order from the page alone.

Chapter 6. whito.co.uk/research/ugc-platform-prices-uk

7. On 8 October 2026, the only figure in pounds in OpenAI's ChatGPT Ads help centre was a £15 minimum daily budget; of 19 ranking ChatGPT ads cost guides Whito read, 6 quoted it and none linked to the OpenAI article that lists it.

Chapter 7. whito.co.uk/research/chatgpt-ads-cost-uk

8. Fewer than half, 45.5 per cent, of 200 independent UK small business websites across ten trades and ten cities publish any price at all, and 0 of 20 plumbers publish a single figure, Whito's August 2026 price transparency study found.

Chapter 8. whito.co.uk/research/uk-price-transparency-study

9. 117 of 179 emergency plumber websites checked across eight UK towns published no call-out price at all on 2 October 2026.

Chapter 9. whito.co.uk/plumbers/research/emergency-plumber-callout-prices

10. 113 of 135 emergency electrician websites checked across eight UK towns published no call-out price at all on 2 October 2026.

Chapter 10. whito.co.uk/electricians/research/emergency-electrician-callout-prices

11. 43 of the 70 UK locksmith websites that publish any emergency price said only no call-out charge on 2 October 2026; the median published price is £0.

Chapter 11. whito.co.uk/locksmiths/research/emergency-locksmith-callout-prices

12. Of 197 heating engineer websites checked across eight UK towns on 3 October 2026, 146 published no boiler service price at all.

Chapter 12. whito.co.uk/research/boiler-service-dental-checkup-prices

13. Asked 44 UK marketing cost questions on 6 October 2026, no AI engine got more than 74% right, and 33 of 115 software answers quoted US dollars for tools that show UK buyers a price in pounds.

Chapter 13. whito.co.uk/research/ai-price-accuracy-league-table

Part 1. What agencies and marketing services charge

1. What Marketing Really Costs UK Businesses in 2026: 128 Published Prices Analysed

Published on whito.co.uk on 12 June 2026. Last updated 12 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/uk-marketing-prices-study

128 published prices from 47 UK providers, read in June 2026: the median published SEO price across all 45 data points is £799 a month, and the median one-off price across 28 published website packages is £520.

Executive summary

Ask Google what a small business website costs and you will be told £3,000 to £6,000. Ask the UK providers who actually publish their prices and the median is £520. Both numbers are real. They describe two different markets, and almost nobody tells business owners which one they are shopping in.

This study does something the cost guides do not. Instead of quoting other articles, we collected every published price we could find from UK web design, SEO, PPC and social media providers in June 2026: 128 individual prices from 47 providers, taken directly from their own pricing pages. We then put those numbers next to the major UK freelance rate surveys and what small businesses say they actually budget.

- **£520 Median Website Build.** Median one-off price across 28 published website packages (Whito analysis, June 2026)
- **£447 Median Entry SEO Tier.** Median cheapest published SEO retainer across 16 UK providers
- **£250 The Budget Ceiling.** 58% of UK SMEs spend less than this per month on all marketing combined (SME Marketing Report, 2025)

Key findings

- The published-price market is far cheaper than the quoted-price market. Providers who publish prices cluster at £299 to £999 for a brochure website, while mid-market agencies quoting £3,000 plus almost never publish a number. Price transparency and price level move together.
- SEO retainers stratify into three clear bands: budget operators at £99 to £300 a month, mainstream small business providers at £350 to £1,000, and established agencies starting at £1,500 and running past £5,000. The median published SEO price across all 45 data points is £799 a month.
- Freelancers price 30 to 50% below agencies for comparable scope, in every category we measured.
- PPC management is now priced almost exclusively by ad spend band in the published market. The median published fee is £470 a month, and percentage-of-spend deals are essentially never published.
- Social media management is a barbell: productised plans at £50 to £350 a month on one side, strategy-led retainers from £500 to £1,500 plus on the other, with very little in between.
- There is a structural gap between budgets and prices. Most UK small businesses budget under £250 a month for all marketing, while the median published price of a single managed channel is £358 to £799. That gap, not a lack of effort, explains most disappointing results.

The transparency gap

The most useful finding in this study is not a price. It is a pattern about who publishes prices at all.

Across all four categories, the providers willing to put a number on their website are overwhelmingly the cheaper ones: productised services, regional studios, freelancers and volume operators. Mid-market and premium agencies almost universally hide pricing behind a contact form. Several say so openly on their own packages pages.

This has a practical consequence for any business owner doing research. Every “how much does X cost” guide is describing the quoted market, where prices are negotiated and start around £1,000 a month. Every pricing page you can actually find is describing the published market, where prices start around £100. Comparing a £99 published package against a £1,500 quote is not comparing like with like. They are different products sold to different buyers.

The rule of thumb from the data: if a provider publishes their prices, they are selling a defined deliverable at the budget end of the market. If they will not publish a price, you are buying judgement and strategy, and the floor is roughly £800 to £1,500 a month. Neither is wrong. Buying one while expecting the other is where money gets wasted.

Websites: What published prices say

We collected 33 published website prices from 19 UK providers, from Glasgow to Cornwall. They split into three distinct products.

Market segment	Published price	What you get
Pay-monthly subscription	£19 to £145/month	Template-based site, hosting included, 12 to 24 month term, ownership usually transfers after the term
Fixed-fee budget build	£299 to £999 one-off	5 to 12 page brochure site, often bundling domain, a year of hosting and basic SEO
Freelancer custom build	£500 to £2,500 one-off	Customised or from-scratch design, direct relationship with the builder
Regional agency (quoted market)	£3,000 to £6,000 one-off	Bespoke design, copywriting support, project management. Rarely published, typically quoted

Whito analysis of 33 published prices, June 2026. Across the 28 one-off builds: cheapest £299, median £520, upper quartile £898.

Published one-off website prices: distribution across 28 UK packages

Cheapest published	£299
Lower quartile	£399
Median	£520
Upper quartile	£898
Highest published	£4,500

Two warnings hide inside the cheap end. First, several budget builders pair a low headline price with a mandatory monthly care fee of £25 to £30, which roughly doubles the two-year cost of a £299 site. Second, VAT treatment is inconsistent across the market: some prices include it, some add 20%, and many pages do not say. Always ask.

The pay-monthly model deserves more attention than it gets. At £19 to £44 a month with hosting included, it is now the cheapest professional route online for a new business, provided you check who owns the site if you stop paying.

SEO retainers

SEO produced our largest sample: 45 published monthly prices from 16 providers. The structure of the market is remarkably consistent. Almost every provider sells three tiers, and each tier costs roughly 1.7 to 2 times the one below it.

Band	Monthly price	Who sells it
Budget	£99 to £300	Volume operators and productised packages. Defined task lists, little strategy
Mainstream business	£350 to £1,000	Regional agencies and specialist freelancers. The realistic floor for proper local SEO
Established agency	£1,500 to £5,000+	Award-winning and national agencies. Most publish ranges rather than fixed prices, or nothing at all

Whito analysis of 45 published prices, June 2026. Median entry tier £447. Median across all published prices £799. Median top tier £1,500.

Median published SEO retainer by tier (16 UK providers)

Entry tier (median)	£447
All prices (median)	£799
Top tier (median)	£1,500

Freelancers and sole traders consistently undercut agencies by 30 to 50% for similar scope, and one structural reason is easy to miss: sole traders below the VAT threshold charge no VAT, an automatic 20% advantage over a VAT-registered agency.

Where providers split local from national work, national SEO costs 1.5 to 2 times the local price. One 2026 wrinkle worth knowing: nearly every pricing page now bundles AI search visibility (ChatGPT, AI Overviews) into standard packages at no extra charge. If a provider quotes it as a paid add-on, that is now against the market.

For what agencies charge across all services on retainer, see our [UK agency retainer research](#), and our dedicated [UK SEO pricing study](#) digs deeper into this market. For channel-by-channel reference ranges that include the quoted market, the [UK Marketing Cost Index](#) is the companion page to this study.

PPC management

The published PPC market has settled on one dominant model: a flat monthly fee banded by your ad spend. A typical ladder runs £275 a month to manage up to £1,000 of spend, £385 up to £2,000, £495 up to £4,000, and £660 up to £6,000.

Measure	Published monthly fee
Cheapest published	£145
Lower quartile	£280
Median	£470
Upper quartile	£829
Highest published	£2,150

Whito analysis of 24 published prices from 9 UK providers, June 2026. Fees exclude ad spend in all but one case.

Percentage-of-spend pricing, the model most cost guides lead with, is essentially invisible in the published market. Agencies that charge 10 to 20% of spend are quote-only. London anchors the expensive end: published London fees rarely start below £600, while remote and regional specialists publish from £145.

Management fees are only half the PPC bill. What the clicks themselves cost in the UK is covered in our [UK Google Ads cost data](#).

Social media management

Social media management has split into two markets that barely overlap, and the published prices show it clearly.

Published social media management prices: the barbell (26 prices, 11 providers)

Cheapest published	£50
Lower quartile	£100
Median	£358
Upper quartile	£774
Highest published	£1,500

The cheap side is productised: fixed posts per week on a fixed number of platforms, cancel any time, from £50 to £350 a month. The providers are deliberately based outside London, in County Durham, the Isle of Wight and Greater Manchester, and they compete on price and process.

The expensive side sells strategy: content creation, community management, reporting and a named account manager, from roughly £500 to £1,500 plus, usually on 3 to 12 month terms. Video is the dividing line. Plans that include Reels or TikTok production start around £199 to £365 and climb fast.

The honest question before buying either: do you need someone to keep your channels alive (buy the cheap side), or do you need social to produce revenue (budget for the expensive side, or do not bother). The £200 middle ground mostly buys disappointment.

Freelance day rates

Packages tell you what providers sell. Day rates tell you what the underlying labour costs. The three major UK surveys agree with each other to a striking degree.

UK freelance day rates, marketing roles (2025–2026 surveys)

Copywriter (average)	£480
Marketing & comms	£418
Social media manager	£350
SEO manager	£325
PPC manager	£300

Sources: ProCopywriters Survey 2025 (474 respondents, average £480/day, up 9% on the year); Major Players Creative Industries Census 2025 (4,140 respondents); YunoJuno 2026 Rates Report (platform booking data). Day rates are averages, not minimums.

These rates are the sanity check for every retainer above. A £300 a month SEO package buys roughly one day of a competent freelancer’s time. That is enough to maintain a Google Business Profile and fix obvious issues. It is not enough to write content, build links and do technical work, whatever the package page promises. When a price looks too good against the day rate, the hours are coming from somewhere: junior staff, automation, or simply not doing the work.

The budget gap

Now put the two halves of this study together. According to the SME Marketing Report 2025, 58% of UK small businesses spend less than £250 a month on marketing in total. The median published price of one managed channel is £358 to £799 a month. Most UK small businesses cannot afford the median price of a single professionally managed channel, let alone three.

This is the quiet structural fact underneath most marketing disappointment. The typical small business budget buys one of three things: the owner’s own time plus good tools, one budget-tier package, or a slice of a freelancer. It does not buy an agency relationship, and pretending otherwise is how £250 a month gets spread across five channels and vanishes.

The data points to a clear order of operations. Fix the free and cheap foundations first: a working website, a complete Google Business Profile, reviews. Then fund one channel

at its realistic price rather than several at token prices. What that total budget should be for your size of business is covered in our [UK marketing budget benchmarks](#).

How to use these numbers

- **Match the market to your budget.** Under £500 a month total, shop the published-price market and expect defined deliverables. Over £1,000 a month for one channel, you are in the quoted market, so get three quotes and compare scope, not just price.
- **Use day rates to test quotes.** Divide any retainer by the relevant day rate. If a £500 package implies more than a day and a half of skilled work each month, ask who is actually doing it.
- **Always confirm VAT and total cost of ownership.** The two most common surprises in our data were unstated VAT and mandatory monthly care fees attached to cheap website builds.

Methodology

Whito collected 128 individual prices from 47 UK marketing providers in June 2026, covering web design (19 providers), SEO (16), PPC management (9) and social media management (11). Every price was taken directly from the provider's own published pricing or packages page. Prices from third-party cost guides were excluded. Where a provider published a range rather than a fixed price, the midpoint was recorded and is flagged in the dataset. Templated multi-city networks publishing identical prices under different city names were counted once. Published prices skew towards the budget end of the market because mid-market and premium providers typically do not publish pricing; this bias is discussed openly in the analysis rather than corrected for. VAT treatment varies by provider and is noted where stated. Day rate figures come from the ProCopywriters Survey 2025, the Major Players Creative Industries Census 2025 and the YunoJuno 2026 Rates Report. The small business budget figure comes from the SME Marketing Report 2025. The full provider-level dataset, including every price and source URL, is available on request via [our contact page](#), and this page is free to cite with a link to Whito.

2. How Much Does a UK Marketing Agency Cost? We Checked 50 Agency Websites (2026 Data)

Published on whito.co.uk on 14 July 2026. Last updated 29 September 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/uk-agency-pricing-transparency

47 of 50 UK marketing agencies publish no price anywhere, 94%, and only two publish a complete price list, according to Whito's July 2026 check of the top five agencies in ten UK cities. Published SME retainers run from £999 to £2,500 a month.

Do UK marketing agencies publish their prices? How much does a marketing agency cost in the UK? Nobody will tell you, and that is the finding. This is original Whito research, July 2026 data. We took the top five marketing agencies in each of ten UK cities, fifty firms in total, and checked every website for a published price. Two published a proper price list. One buried “from” figures in an FAQ. Forty seven published nothing at all, and a number of them ask what your budget is before they will discuss theirs.

Executive summary

Every other industry you buy from tells you the price. The accountant has a fee schedule. The insurer gives you a quote online. The software company has a pricing page with three tiers on it. Marketing agencies, almost without exception, do not.

We checked fifty UK marketing agency websites. Not a survey, not a sample of estimates gathered from forums. We went to each firm’s own site and looked for a number.

Two of the fifty publish a price list you can read without speaking to anyone.

Forty seven publish no figure at all. Instead you get “request a proposal”, “book a discovery call”, “send us your brief”, or a form that asks for your budget.

This is not a scandal. It is a structure, and it is working exactly as designed. When only one side of a negotiation knows the going rate, the price is set by what you reveal, not by what the work costs. Every business owner who has ever wondered whether they overpaid an agency was operating without the one piece of information that would have told them. Even where agencies do publish a price, 19 of the 39 pricing pages do not say how you leave, in a Whito read on 29 September 2026.

Key figures

- 2 of 50 publish a complete price list
- 1 of 50 publishes “from” prices, in an FAQ, with no price on the packages themselves
- 47 of 50 publish no price anywhere

- 10 UK cities: London, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow, Bristol, Sheffield, Liverpool, Nottingham, Cardiff

What we did

We ran the same search, “marketing agency [city] UK”, across ten UK cities. In each city we took the top five genuine marketing agency websites. We excluded directories, aggregators and “top ten agencies” listicles, because we wanted agencies, not lists of agencies.

For each of the fifty firms we fetched the homepage, and where one existed, the pricing, packages, plans or services page. We then looked for a single thing: a number.

Full. A complete price list or priced package tiers, published on the site, readable without giving up your email address.

Partial. One figure, or a set of “from” figures, but no priced package list.

None. No price anywhere. Contact us, request a quote, bespoke only.

We did not count a price that appears only in a page’s meta description and not in the visible copy. We did not count a “what is your budget?” dropdown on a contact form, because that is your price, not theirs.

Finding one: 47 of 50 publish nothing

Forty seven of the fifty agencies we checked publish no price for their services anywhere on their website. That is 94%. It held across every city and every size of firm. The big London network agencies do not publish prices. Nor do the five-person shops in Sheffield. Liverpool and Sheffield returned ten out of ten with no figure at all. In a Whiteo check of 34 UK digital PR agencies on 11 September 2026, 28 of the 34 publish no figure for anything they sell.

The language is remarkably consistent. “Request a proposal.” “Book your discovery call.” “Send us your brief.” “Let’s chat.” Every one of those phrases performs the same function, which is to move the pricing conversation off the page you can read at 11pm on a Tuesday and onto a call where someone can ask you questions first.

Some agencies gesture at price without giving one. CMS Advertising in Leeds offers its services “for a low monthly fee” and never says what the fee is. Fenti in Sheffield promises “one simple retainer fee, a set monthly fee”, with no figure attached. Thinktank in Manchester advertises “delivering more, for less” and leaves you to guess what less means. Even among 13 UK agencies we found publishing actual monthly figures in August 2026, only 2 of the 13 say how many hours the money buys.

Value claims are not prices. If the number is genuinely good, the number is the argument.

Finding two: they will not name their price, but they will ask yours

This is the finding that matters, and it is the one nobody talks about.

Several of the agencies that publish no pricing at all have a contact form that asks what your budget is. Serotonin in Manchester has a “monthly marketing budget” dropdown running from “under £750” to “over £100,000”. The Bristol Marketing Company asks “what is your budget?” on a form headed “request a proposal”. London Marketing Company has an unlabelled budget field on its enquiry form.

Read that structure back slowly. They will not tell you what the work costs. They will ask you what you can afford to pay for it. Then they will send you a proposal.

You are not being quoted. You are being sized.

There is nothing illegal or even unusual about it. It is how most bespoke professional services are sold, and there are legitimate reasons a genuinely custom scope carries a genuinely custom price. But you should understand what game you are in. In every other purchase you make, you see the price and decide whether it is worth it. Here you state what you can spend, and the price arrives shaped to fit.

The information flows one way. It flows away from you.

Finding three: the price Google can see and you cannot

Creative Ideaz in Birmingham has an SEO packages page. The page itself carries no price. Its on-page FAQ, asked directly how much SEO costs, answers: “it really depends on what you want”, and invites you to get in touch.

The page’s meta description, the text Google reads and displays in search results, ends with the words “Starting from £199 a month”.

The price exists. It is written down. It is served to the search engine and withheld from the person reading the page. That is almost certainly a leftover from an older version of the page rather than a deliberate trick, and we say so plainly. But it is a neat illustration of where the incentive actually sits. The number is worth publishing when it wins a click. It is not worth publishing when it might let you compare.

Finding four: pricing pages with no prices

Two agencies have gone to the trouble of building the page and then left the number out.

The Munro Agency in Glasgow publishes nine named packages, sets out in detail what is in each one, and attaches to every single one a button reading “send pricing and package details”. The prices exist. They are behind your email address.

The Yellow Agency in Liverpool does the same, with a form that says “fill out the form to be sent our production process and prices” and a button that says, without irony, “send me prices!”.

Arise in Sheffield has a page at /pricing/. On it there is an embedded third-party estimator tool and some links to blog posts about cost. There is no price.

A pricing page with no price on it is not an oversight. It is a lead capture form wearing a pricing page’s clothes.

The three that do publish

Credit where it is earned. Three of the fifty give you a number before they give you a sales call.

Agency	City	What they publish
Republic Marketing	Birmingham	Three priced tiers: Launch £999/mo + VAT, Grow from £2,500/mo + VAT, Scale from £4,500/mo + VAT, with a feature comparison table and minimum contract terms
Pxa Marketing	Cardiff	Two example retainers, itemised: “Something Basic” £1,500/mo and “Something Comprehensive” £2,500/mo, broken down by service
Our Agency	Leeds and Wakefield	“From” figures in the FAQ: SEO from around £1,200/mo, growth from £1,800/mo, audits from £450, PPC management £300 to £600/mo. The named packages themselves carry no prices

One honest note, because we check the ones we like as hard as the ones we do not. Pxa’s itemised line items for the £2,500 “comprehensive” package add up to £1,600, not £2,500, as published. We are not suggesting anything is wrong. We are pointing out that even the most transparent pricing in a fifty-firm sample does not fully reconcile, which tells you how little pressure this market is under to get pricing right.

What this actually costs you

Here is the mistake most business owners make. They assume the absence of a price means the price is bespoke. Sometimes it is. Often it means there is no anchor, and in the absence of an anchor, **you become the anchor**.

You have no published figure to compare against, so you cannot tell whether £2,000 a month is a good price or double what the firm next door pays. You disclose your budget on the enquiry form, so the proposal that comes back is calibrated to your ceiling rather than to the cost of the work. You have no idea how many hours you are buying, because nothing is itemised. And when the retainer underdelivers, you have no basis to challenge it, because you never agreed what you were paying for in the first place.

That is not an accident of a busy market. It is the predictable output of an information structure where one side knows the going rate and the other does not.

Our [analysis of 128 published UK marketing prices](#) and our [agency retainer research](#) give you the wider range to test any quote against.

Now look at the three that publish. Republic's entry tier is £999 a month. Pxa's [basic retainer is £1,500 a month](#). Our Agency's SEO starts around £1,200 a month. Those are the only public anchors that exist in a sample of fifty firms, and they are the closest thing the UK market has to a going rate for a small business retainer.

If you are being quoted well above that for comparable work, that is not proof you are being fleeced. It is a question you are now equipped to ask.

What to do before you speak to an agency

- **Work out your number first.** Start with the [UK Marketing Cost Index](#) and [what a lead costs in your sector](#). What is a customer worth to you, and what can you afford to pay to acquire one? If you cannot answer that, no agency price is meaningful, cheap or expensive, because you have nothing to compare it to.
- **Do not fill in the budget field.** Leave it blank, or write "please quote your standard rates for this scope". If they cannot price the work without knowing your ceiling, they are not pricing the work.
- **Ask for the scope in hours or deliverables, in writing.** "Ongoing optimisation" is not a deliverable. "Four hours of technical SEO and two blog posts a month" is.
- **Ask what the minimum contract term is, and what leaving early costs.**
- **Compare against the published anchors.** [£999 to £2,500 a month](#) is the visible range for an SME retainer across our sample.
- **Structure before scale.** If your website does not convert and nobody can find you, a retainer buys you a more expensive version of the same problem. Fix the foundations first, then buy the growth.

The sharp takeaway

Forty seven out of fifty UK marketing agencies will not tell you what they charge. A good number of them will ask what you can spend.

That is not a pricing model. It is a negotiating position, and you are on the wrong side of it until you walk in with your own number.

Get your number first. Then ask for theirs.

Methodology

Data collected 14 July 2026. Search performed for "marketing agency [city] UK" across ten UK cities: London, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow, Bristol, Sheffield, Liverpool, Nottingham and Cardiff. The top five genuine agency websites in each city

were taken, excluding directories, aggregators, listicles and location landing pages belonging to agencies based elsewhere.

For each agency we fetched the homepage and, where linked, the pricing, packages, plans, services or costs page. Up to two pages per agency. Every one of the fifty sites was successfully fetched. There were no failures.

A price was counted as published only if it appears in the visible body copy of a page. Prices appearing only in a meta description were not counted, and are reported separately. Budget bands on contact forms were not counted, as they describe the client's spend, not the agency's price. All three published-price findings were independently re-checked against the live source pages before publication.

Whito has no commercial relationship with any agency named on this page, and does not sell marketing services. We publish this because we think the going rate should be public.

Honest limitations. This is a snapshot of one search, on one day, in ten cities. A different search would return a different fifty. Agencies do give prices on the phone, and this study does not measure what those prices are, only who will tell you before you call. Publishing a price is not automatically virtuous, and genuinely bespoke work can carry a genuinely bespoke price. The finding is not that agencies are dishonest. It is that the going rate is not public, and that this asymmetry costs the buyer.

3. The Fees UK Agencies Don't Quote: 39 Pricing Pages Read Against Their Own Terms

Published on whito.co.uk on 29 September 2026. Last updated 16 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/uk-agency-contract-terms

Of 39 UK agency pricing pages read on 29 September 2026, 19 do not say how you leave, and one publishes a setup fee.

Data last verified: 29 September 2026 .

Read: 29 September 2026. 39 UK agencies that publish a monthly price, every page public, nothing behind a login. This page names every agency and quotes their own wording.

The monthly price is the number agencies compete on, so it is the number they publish. The cost of leaving is a different matter. A setup fee, a minimum term and a notice period each change what a retainer really costs, and none of them has to appear anywhere near the headline price.

We read the pricing page and the public terms of 39 UK agencies in one day. 19 of the 39 pricing pages do not say how you leave. Twelve of the 39 carry a minimum term somewhere, and five of those twelve keep it out of the pricing page entirely. The longest minimum term in the set, twelve months with automatic renewal, appears only in a terms document the pricing page never mentions. Exactly one agency of the 39 publishes a setup fee.

For organisations: the one-minute brief

- 19 of 39 UK agencies with a public monthly price do not say on the pricing page how you leave.
- 12 of the 39 carry a minimum term somewhere; 5 of those 12 keep it out of the pricing page entirely.
- The longest minimum term found, twelve months with automatic renewal, appears only in a terms document the pricing page never mentions.

Method: the public pricing pages and terms of 39 UK agencies, read on one day, 29 September 2026. Free to quote with a link. [The working data behind this study is sold as files →](#)

What we read

The sample is UK agencies whose own websites publish a monthly price in pounds for an ongoing service: SEO, PPC management, social media management, marketing packages, or website care and support retainers. Two sources built it:

- **21 providers from our UK agency retainers dataset**, re-read on 29 September 2026. One site was unreachable on the day and is excluded, leaving 20.
- **19 further agencies found by web search the same day**, kept only if a page on their own domain showed a specific monthly price in pounds.

For each agency we read the pricing page, then went looking for the document that actually governs the service: a terms and conditions or terms of service page linked from the site, or sitting at a standard address. We recorded three things and where each one is stated: any setup fee, any minimum term, and any notice period. “Not stated” means we read the pricing page and every public terms page we could reach and found nothing on that point. It does not mean no such term exists in the contract a client eventually signs.

Finding 39 price-publishing agencies meant opening far more sites than 39. Another 18 UK agencies we checked publish no price at all, which matches what we found in our [digital PR pricing study](#), where 4 of 34 agencies published a price.

The leave-date test

Before reading on, try this against any agency you are considering. From the pricing page alone, write down the earliest date you could stop paying and what you would have to do by when. Call it the leave-date test. A page passes if it states both whether a minimum term applies and how leaving works: a notice period, or clear cancel-anytime wording.

The leave-date test, 39 UK agency pricing pages, 29 September 2026	Pages
Pass: the pricing page states the minimum term position and how to leave	20
Fail: the pricing page states neither, or only one of the two	19
Of the 20 passes: pages whose own terms document then gives a different answer	2

So the page carrying the price told you how to leave at 20 of 39 agencies, and at two of those 20 the terms document disagrees with the page. Both disagreements are quoted in full below.

Setup fees: one number in 39

Of the 39 pricing pages, exactly one publishes a setup fee for the monthly service. Spiderscope, an SEO agency in Ashby-de-la-Zouch, states on [its packages page](#) that “there is a £125 + VAT set up fee for new customers”.

Six more agencies state the opposite, a zero: Rocking Tech (“No setup fees”), Xinc (“Setup fees: £0”), Web Dev Wales (“No setup fees”), Studio 36 Digital (“Free Setup”), Wise (“No setup fee”) and Whitehat SEO, whose pricing page says every price includes setup and onboarding.

The other 32 pricing pages say nothing about setup either way. Silence is not a price. Onboarding fees in the wider market are real money: our [UK Marketing Cost Index](#) records CRM onboarding fees of £1,310 to £3,050 charged by software vendors, and agency proposals routinely carry a first-month uplift. If the fee exists, it is in the proposal, and by the time you are reading a proposal you are no longer comparing agencies.

Minimum terms: five of twelve are kept off the pricing page

Twelve of the 39 agencies hold a minimum term somewhere on their own site. Seven print it on the pricing page. Five do not:

Agency	Minimum term	Where it is stated	What the pricing page says
Novi Digital	12 months, auto-renewing in 12-month periods	Terms and conditions only	Nothing on term or notice
Whitehat SEO	6 months (SEO and PPC projects)	Terms of service only	"30-day rolling contracts"
Xinc	6 months from activation	Terms of service only	"Contract length: None"
Spiderscope	3 months	Terms page only	Nothing on term or notice
ClickDo	Fixed-term contracts: no mid-term cancellation, length not stated	Terms page only	Nothing on term or notice

The other seven state their minimum on the page that sells the service, which is where it belongs: Minty Studios (3 months, then a 3 to 12 month agreement), Rubberduckers (3 months), WP Care Pros (3 months initial), Rocking Tech (3 months), The Good Marketer (6 months), Bee Viral (3 months) and Design for Online (3 months initial on two of its four tiers).

The twelve-month case rewards reading twice. Novi Digital's pricing page publishes clear monthly figures, [£1,500 plus VAT a month for Google Ads management](#) among them, and says nothing about how long you are signing for. Its terms and conditions state that "Managed and consultancy services carry a minimum term of 12 months, followed by a notice period of 30 days", and that "agreements automatically renew for successive 12-month periods unless either party gives at least 60 days' written notice of non-renewal". On those terms, a client who misses a 60-day window is committed for another year. Every word of that is public. None of it is on the pricing page.

When the pricing page and the terms disagree

Three agencies in the set say one thing on the page that sells and a different thing in the document that governs. We record the disagreement; the contract each client signs

decides which wording governs their case. Both sentences in each pair were read on the agency's own site on 29 September 2026.

Whitehat SEO. The pricing page: “All monthly retainers operate on 30-day rolling contracts. We don’t believe in locking clients into 12-month agreements.” The terms of service: SEO and PPC projects “run for a minimum of six months” and after that may be terminated with 30 days’ notice.

Xinc. The care plans page: “Contract length: None”, with one month’s notice to cancel. The terms of service: “All hosted services and care plans are subject to a minimum term of six months from the date the service is first activated.”

Bee Viral. This one runs the other way. The packages page states a 3-month minimum before rolling monthly. The terms state: “You may cancel a recurring Service (such as monthly social media management) at any time, with no notice period and no cancellation fee.” The document is more generous than the page.

Two more are worth reading twice rather than calling contradictions. Red Eagle’s hosting page says “No exit fees, no notice period, no retention calls to talk you out of leaving”, while its general terms require 30 days’ written notice to terminate unless otherwise specified, and 30 days’ notice before renewal to stop subscription auto-renewal; which clause reaches the cancel-anytime hosting plan is not spelled out. Design for Online’s pricing page states a “3 Month initial term” on two package cards while the FAQ on the same page says its packages are month to month with no long-term contracts.

The document that binds you is usually the one you cannot read

The terms document is where minimum terms and notice periods live when they are not on the pricing page. At most of these agencies, you cannot read it before you enquire:

Public service terms, 39 UK agencies, 29 September 2026	Agencies
A readable terms document that covers the service	17
Terms readable but silent on the service (website-use terms only)	6
No terms page found on the site	9
A terms page exists but would not load, sat behind an error, or is referenced without a link	6
Legal document referenced is a private agreement, not published	1

That is 22 of 39 agencies where no usable service terms could be read from the public site on the day. Thirteen of the 39 state no notice period anywhere we could reach. For

those agencies, the commercial terms exist only in the proposal and the contract, after the sales conversation has started.

One agency in the set shows how little effort full disclosure takes. Rocking Tech's pricing page states the setup position ("No setup fees"), the minimum term ("The minimum commitment is 3 months") and the notice period ("rolling monthly with 30 days' notice"), and its terms page repeats all three in the same words. It is the only agency of the 39 with all three on the pricing page and mirrored in the terms.

The full register

Every agency read, with what its public pages state. "Terms only" means the fact appears in a terms document and never on the pricing page. Prices are the entry price for the cheapest published monthly tier and are as shown on the page, some plus VAT.

Agency	Service	From /month	Minimum term	Notice period	Setup fee	Leave-date test
100 Pound Social	Social media	£125	None ("no contracts")	30 days written	Not stated	Pass
AffordableSocials	Social media	£39	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
ALT Agency	Website care	from £475	None stated	1 month	Not stated	Pass
Bee Viral	Marketing packages	from £225	3 months (page); none (terms)	None (terms)	Not stated	Pass
Bromley Web Design	Website care	£79.99	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
ClickDo	SEO packages	£149	Fixed-term, length not stated (terms only)	30 days written (terms only)	Not stated	Fail
Conor Bradley	Website care	£35	None stated	Before renewal date (terms only)	Not stated	Pass
Design for Online	Social media	£365	3 months initial, two tiers	1 calendar month (terms only)	Not stated	Pass
EJK Web Solutions	Website care	£90	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Feeling Peaky	Website care	£75	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Freelance SEO Essex	SEO	from £500	None stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Gilmour Web Design	Website care	£49	None stated	End of billing period (terms only)	Not stated	Pass
The Good Marketer	Marketing packages	£845	6 months	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Hello Social Avenue	Social media	£1,750	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Little Nerd Web Design	Website care	£50	None stated	Not stated	Not stated	Pass

3. The Fees UK Agencies Don't Quote: 39 Pricing Pages Read Against Their Own Terms

LoudLocal	SEO packages	£430	None stated	30 days	Not stated	Pass
Minty Studios	Website care	£95	3 months, then 3 to 12 month agreement	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Morris Communications	Website care	£50	None stated	Effective following month	Not stated	Pass
Novi Digital	PPC and consultancy	£600	12 months, auto-renewing (terms only)	30 days; 60 days over 12 months (terms only)	Not stated	Fail
One PPC Agency	PPC management	£360	None stated	7 working days (site FAQ)	Not stated	Fail
Piece of Cake Marketing	Social media	from £349	Not stated	1 month	Not stated	Fail
Red Eagle	Hosting and support	£99	None stated	Page: none; terms: 30 days	Not stated	Pass
Rocking Tech	Dev support	£450	3 months	30 days	None	Pass
Rubberduckers	Website care	£125	3 months	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Spiderscope	SEO packages	£295	3 months (terms only)	1 clear month (terms only)	£125 + VAT	Fail
Studio 36 Digital	SEO packages	£399	None stated	30 days	Free	Pass
SuperHub	Social media	£450	None stated	30 days	Not stated	Pass
TDWDS	Website care	£50	None stated	30 days written	Not stated	Pass
VI Designs	Design retainer	£2,500	None stated	30 days; 90 days enterprise	Not stated	Pass
Visionary Marketing	SEO packages	£1,300	None stated	30 days written (terms only)	Not stated	Pass
Web Dev Wales	Website plans	£39	Not stated for site plans	30 days written (terms only)	None	Fail
Web-tastic	Website care	from £15	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Website Maintenance Services	Website care	£49	None stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
Whitehat SEO	SEO retainer	from £1,967	30-day rolling (page); 6 months (terms)	30 days after minimum (terms)	Included	Pass
Why Matters	Ecommerce retainer	£650	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Fail
WP Care Pros	Website care	£49	3 months initial	30 days	Not stated	Pass
Wrise	SEO and social	£99	None stated	None stated ("cancel anytime")	None	Pass
Wyedean Marketing	Marketing packages	from £450	None stated	30 days written (terms only)	Not stated	Fail
Xinc	Website care	£50	None (page); 6 months (terms)	1 month	£0	Pass

What this does not prove

- **This is published wording only, read on one day.** Every fact on this page comes from pages on the agencies' own sites read on 29 September 2026. Pages change. A term recorded here may be reworded or gone tomorrow, and the register above will not update itself.
- **"Not stated" is not "does not exist".** It means we found nothing on the point on the pages we could reach. A setup fee or minimum term may well exist in the proposal or contract a client signs. That gap between the public page and the signed document is the finding, not proof of any hidden charge.
- **A disagreement between two pages is not an accusation.** Where a pricing page and a terms document conflict, we quote both. Which wording governs a given client is a matter for the contract they signed, and several agencies' terms allow a signed agreement to vary them.
- **The sample is agencies that publish prices, and they are the minority.** Most UK agencies publish no price at all, so this set is already the more transparent end of the market. Nothing here compares these 39 to the agencies that publish nothing.
- **Terms pages at unusual addresses may have been missed.** We followed footer links and standard addresses. Six sites returned errors on their terms pages; those are recorded as unreadable, not as having no terms.
- **Pages were read by automated fetches, with the key claims re-read manually.** Every quoted sentence and every named figure was verified by a second, direct read. Aggregate counts rest on single reads of each page.
- **No agency was asked for comment before publication.** Every agency named can correct factual errors through our [corrections](#) page. Corrections change facts, and any change is dated on this page.

What to do with this

If you are hiring an agency: run the leave-date test before the first call. From the pricing page alone, write down the earliest date you could stop paying. If you cannot, you have found your first question, and it is better asked by email than on a sales call. Three things, in writing: the setup or onboarding fee if any, the minimum term, and the notice period with the date it runs from. Our [agency retainers report](#) shows what the monthly numbers themselves look like across the market, and the [UK Marketing Cost Index](#) covers every channel's going rate.

If you run an agency: the register above is a free audit. If your minimum term lives only in your terms document, every client who feels ambushed by it was avoidable, and one line on the pricing page fixes it. One agency in this set already does it in full.

Part 2. What software and platforms charge

4. What a UK Marketing Stack Costs in 2026: Five Jobs, Priced

Published on whito.co.uk on 1 October 2026. Last updated 2 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/uk-marketing-stack-cost

On 1 October 2026 the brand-name marketing stack for a one-person UK business cost £2,667 a year before VAT, and tools doing the same five jobs cost £1,319.73.

Data last verified: 1 October 2026 .

Read: 30 September and 1 October 2026. 19 marketing tools, five jobs, prices taken from each vendor’s own pricing page on a UK connection. Annual costs are before VAT unless we say otherwise.

A UK business planning next year’s marketing budget usually prices the agency, the ads and the staff. The software arrives one subscription at a time, and nobody adds it up.

So we priced the stack. On 1 October 2026 the brand-name marketing stack for a one-person UK business cost £2,667.00 a year before VAT. Tools doing the same five jobs cost £1,319.73. For three people and 5,000 email contacts the figures were £5,678.16 and £1,871.58.

The five jobs and the two stacks

Most small business marketing runs on five pieces of software. We defined each by the job it does, then priced two ways of doing it: the brand-name tool, and the cheapest paid plan we found that does the same job. Free plans get their own section below.

The five jobs as we defined them

Job	What the tool must do	Brand-name tool	Cheaper tool
CRM	Shared contact and deal records	HubSpot Sales Hub Starter	Zoho CRM Standard
Email	A monthly newsletter and sign-up forms	Mailchimp Essentials	Brevo Starter
SEO	Rank tracking, a site audit and keyword research for one site	Semrush SEO plan	SE Ranking Core
Analytics	Website traffic and conversions	Google Analytics 4	Google Analytics 4
Social scheduling	Scheduled posts to three channels	Hootsuite Standard	Buffer Essentials (one user) or Team (more users)

Why these brand names: each was named in Google AI Mode’s answer when we asked for the best tool in its category for a UK small business on 1 October 2026, and four of

the five also appeared in ChatGPT's answers. Analytics is the same in both stacks because Google Analytics 4 is free and nothing cheaper exists.

Two business sizes. **One person:** one login on every tool, 1,000 email contacts, three social channels, one website. **Three people:** three logins on the CRM and the social tool, one person running email, SEO and analytics, 5,000 email contacts. We used annual billing wherever it was offered, because it is the cheaper option, and converted dollar and euro prices at HMRC's October 2026 monthly rates (£1 = \$1.3456, £1 = €1.1665).

One person: £2,667 or £1,320

One-person business, a year, prices read 30 September to 1 October 2026

Job	Brand-name stack	A year	Same job, cheaper tool	A year
CRM	HubSpot Sales Hub Starter	£216.00	Zoho CRM Standard	£144.00
Email	Mailchimp Essentials 501-1,500 contacts	£242.16	Brevo Starter 10k emails / 1,500 contacts	£129.96
SEO	Semrush SEO	£1,140.84	SE Ranking Core	£912.00
Analytics	Google Analytics 4 Standard	£0.00	Google Analytics 4 Standard	£0.00
Scheduler	Hootsuite Standard	£1,068.00	Buffer Essentials, 3 channels	£133.77
Total before VAT		£2,667.00		£1,319.73
Total with 20% VAT		£3,200.40		£1,583.68

The brand-name stack costs 2.02 times the cheaper one. The biggest single line in both is SEO: Semrush's SEO plan at £1,140.84 a year is 43% of the brand-name total, and SE Ranking Core at £912.00 is 69% of the cheaper total. If all you need from an SEO tool is keyword and competitor research, Ahrefs Starter at £23 a month (we did not read its annual price), which Ahrefs describes as "See what people search and spy on competitors", would bring the one-person cheaper stack to £683.73.

HubSpot is the line to watch. Its pricing page showed Sales Hub Starter at £7 a seat a month on annual billing, and £9 on monthly, against a struck-through £18. The page did not say how long the lower price lasts or who qualifies, so we used £18. At £7 the one-person brand-name stack would come to £2,535.

Free	Starter	Professional
Start closing deals faster with time-saving sales tools you can use for free	Essential marketing, sales, service, content, and data management software	Comprehensive sales software to automate and scale your sales processes
Starts at	Starts at	Starts at
£0/mo	£7/mo/seat ~~£18/mo/seat~~	£77/mo/seat ~~£85/mo/seat~~
Free for up to 2 users. No credit card required.		
	Pay Monthly Pay Annually	Pay Monthly Pay Annually

Screenshot: hubspot.com/pricing/sales, 1 October 2026. Starter shown at £7 against a struck-through £18. No end date for the lower price was shown on the page.

Three people: the three-login jump

Three-person business, 5,000 email contacts, a year, prices read 30 September to 1 October 2026

Job	Brand-name stack	A year	Same job, cheaper tool	A year
CRM	HubSpot Sales Hub Starter, 3 seats	£648.00	Zoho CRM Standard, 3 users	£432.00
Email	Mailchimp Essentials 2,501-5,000 contacts	£685.32	Brevo Starter 20k emails / 500,000 contacts	£260.04
SEO	Semrush SEO	£1,140.84	SE Ranking Core	£912.00
Analytics	Google Analytics 4 Standard	£0.00	Google Analytics 4 Standard	£0.00
Scheduler	Hootsuite Standard, 3 users	£3,204.00	Buffer Team, 3 channels	£267.54
Total before VAT		£5,678.16		£1,871.58
Total with 20% VAT		£6,813.79		£2,245.90

We call the difference between the one-person bill and the three-person bill **the three-login jump**. For the brand-name stack it was £3,011.16 a year. For the cheaper stack it was £551.85.

Most of the brand-name jump is logins. Hootsuite charges per user, so two extra people add £2,136 a year, which is 71% of the jump on its own. Two extra HubSpot seats add £432. The bigger email list adds £443.16 on Mailchimp. On the cheaper side, Buffer’s

Team plan charges by channel and allows unlimited team members, so going from one user to three added £133.77 a year in total.

Standard	Professional	Advanced
Manage up to 10 social media accounts from one calendar.	Manage unlimited social accounts and automate repetitive work.	Streamline approvals and co-work across teams.
£89 per user/month*	£169 per user/month*	£349 per user/month*

Screenshot: hootsuite.com/en-gb/plans, 1 October 2026. The page footnote reads that prices are based on annual billing and exclude applicable taxes.

Before you add a login, ask which tool charges for it. A per-user social tool and a per-seat CRM grow with headcount. Email tools grow with the list. In our model the SEO and analytics lines did not change at all.

What VAT adds

The prices above are as the vendors display them. Hootsuite's page says its prices exclude applicable taxes and MailerLite's says prices may be subject to them, so we treated every price as before VAT. A business that is not VAT registered cannot reclaim VAT it is charged, so for most sole traders and micro businesses the real bill is higher. With 20% added, the one-person brand-name stack is £3,200.40 a year and the cheaper one £1,583.68. For three people the figures are £6,813.79 and £2,245.90. How VAT applies to software bought from overseas suppliers is covered in our [per-seat software pricing research](#). This is not tax advice; check your own position with your accountant.

The £0 stack, and where it stops working

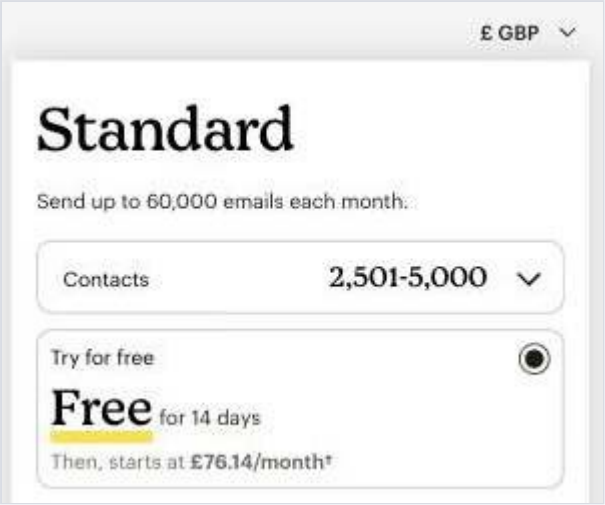
A one-person business can run all five jobs for nothing, with limits. Zoho CRM is free for up to three users and HubSpot's free CRM for up to two. Brevo's free plan allows 300 emails a day. Google Search Console and Google Analytics 4 are free. Buffer's free plan connects up to three channels for one user account, with ten scheduled posts per channel.

The first job to force a payment as the business grows is email. At 300 emails a day, one newsletter to 5,000 contacts takes 17 days to send. The second is the social tool: Buffer's free plan has one user account, so a second person scheduling posts means paying.

Prices that move overnight

Mailchimp's pricing page showed sterling prices to the penny, and they changed between our two reading days. The Standard plan for 2,501 to 5,000 contacts was £76.04 a month on 30 September and £76.14 on 1 October. Essentials for 501 to 1,500 contacts went from £20.15 to £20.18. Every band we read moved up by a similar small amount.

Odd-penny prices that change day to day behave like a converted foreign-currency price, though Mailchimp's page does not say how its sterling prices are set.



Screenshot: mailchimp.com/pricing/marketing, 1 October 2026. The same band read £76.04 on 30 September 2026.

Six of the 19 tools we priced showed no sterling price at all on a UK connection: MailerLite, BrightLocal, Fathom, Buffer and Later in US dollars, and Metricool in euros. For those, the pound cost moves with the exchange rate. HMRC's monthly rate went from \$1.3554 in September to \$1.3456 in October, so a dollar subscription cost 0.73% more in pounds this month than last, with no change on the vendor's side.

What AI search quotes for these tools

Before opening a pricing page, a buyer can now ask an AI assistant what a tool costs. On 1 October 2026 we asked Google AI Mode and ChatGPT for the best CRM, email tool, SEO tool, analytics tool and social scheduler for a UK small business, then checked the prices either answer gave against the vendor pages read the same morning.

We counted a quote as matching if at least one price on the vendor page fell inside the quoted range, give or take 10%. We left out quotes for tools we did not price (Freshsales, Klaviyo, EmailOctopus, Mangools, Screaming Frog, Microsoft Clarity, Meta Business Suite and monday CRM) and AI Mode's BrightLocal figure, because BrightLocal's page displayed only its annual-billing price. Of the 23 quotes left, 19 matched and 4 did not.

Prices quoted by AI search against the vendor page, 1 October 2026

Engine	Tool	Quoted	On the vendor page (in pounds)	Result
Google AI Mode	Capsule	£14/user/mo	£14.00	Matches

Google AI Mode	Pipedrive	£14/user/mo	£14.00	Matches
Google AI Mode	HubSpot	£15/mo starter	£7.00, £9.00, £18.00 (Page: £7 annual or £9 monthly offer, list £18)	Does not match
Google AI Mode	Zoho CRM	£12/user/mo	£12.00	Matches
Google AI Mode	MailerLite	around £7-£8/mo	£8.03, £8.92 (Page in dollars: \$10.80 yearly, \$12 monthly)	Matches
Google AI Mode	Mailchimp	around £13-£17/mo	£9.90, £15.23	Matches
Google AI Mode	Brevo	around £5.50/mo	£5.42, £6.00	Matches
Google AI Mode	SE Ranking	~£37-£76/mo	£76.00, £95.00 (No plan below £76 on the page)	Matches
Google AI Mode	Plausible	around £9/mo	£7.50, £9.00	Matches
Google AI Mode	Google Analytics 4	free	£0.00	Matches
Google AI Mode	Buffer	from £5/mo per channel	£3.72 (Page: \$5 per channel, yearly)	Does not match
Google AI Mode	Metricool	from £20/mo	£13.72, £17.15 (Page in euros: €16 yearly, €20 monthly)	Does not match
Google AI Mode	Later	from £14/mo (\$18)	£13.93 (Page in dollars: \$18.75 billed yearly)	Matches
Google AI Mode	Sendible	from £23/mo (\$29)	£27.00 (Page shows £27; a yearly saving of 15% is offered but no yearly price was displayed)	Does not match
Google AI Mode	Hootsuite	around £74-£99/mo	£89.00	Matches
Google AI Mode	Semrush	£100+ per month	£95.07, £113.40 (Semrush or Ahrefs, enterprise-level)	Matches
ChatGPT	HubSpot	£15-£18/user/month	£7.00, £9.00, £18.00	Matches
ChatGPT	Zoho CRM	about £12/user/month	£12.00	Matches
ChatGPT	Pipedrive	about £14-£15/user/month	£14.00	Matches
ChatGPT	Capsule	about £14-£15/user/month	£14.00	Matches

ChatGPT	SE Ranking	roughly £75-£95/month	£76.00, £95.00	Matches
ChatGPT	Ahrefs	from about £23/month	£23.00	Matches
ChatGPT	Semrush	roughly £100/month and up	£95.07, £113.40	Matches

Two of the four misses are dollar or euro prices written with a pound sign. Buffer charges \$5 a channel (£3.72) and Metricool starts at €16 or €20 (£13.72 or £17.15); AI Mode gave both in pounds. Sendible's £23 matches a yearly discount the page offers, but the page displayed £27 on both billing settings. One match also deserves a note: AI Mode put SE Ranking at about £37 to £76 a month, and the lowest plan on SE Ranking's page was £76 a month on annual billing.

Where our own pages were behind. Our [July 2026 software price index](#) and our [social media tools guide](#) gave Buffer at about £5 a channel and Hootsuite Standard at about £74 a month. On 1 October Buffer's page showed \$5 a channel (£3.72 at HMRC's October rate) and Hootsuite's UK page showed £89 a user. AI Mode cited our guide in its scheduler answer and repeated the £5 Buffer figure and a range starting at £74. Both pages now carry a dated price note pointing here.

The screenshot shows a Google AI Mode response to the query "What is the best social media scheduling tool for a small business in the UK?". The response includes a paragraph recommending Buffer, a "Direct Comparison of Top Schedulers for UK Small Businesses" table, and a list of cited sources.

Tool	Best For	Standout Feature	Starting UK Price (approx.)
Buffer	Solo owners & straightforward scheduling	Cleanest interface; affordable per-channel pricing	Free tier (3 accounts); Paid from £5/mo per channel

Cited Sources:

- whito.co.uk - Preferred: Best Social Media Management Tools for UK Businesses. Buffer is the best choice. It is the simplest to learn, has a genuinely useful free plan, and costs less than £20/month...
- Zapier: The 10 best social media management tools in 2026 | Zapier. The best social media management tools * Buffer for social media scheduling. *
- Vodafone: 3 Social media scheduling tools for businesses. Later has great content creation tools, a mobile app and tells you the best time to...

Buttons: "Show all"

Screenshot: Google AI Mode, 1 October 2026, signed-in account. Whito's own guide appears as a cited source on the right. Account details cropped out.

What this does not prove

- These are list prices on two days. Vendors change prices, run offers and show different prices to different visitors. Mailchimp's moved overnight while we were collecting.
- The cheaper tool in each job is our choice, made against the job definition above. The tools differ in features beyond that job, and the brand-name tools often do more. The comparison prices the job only.
- We left out one-off and optional costs: HubSpot Professional's required £1,310 onboarding fee (we priced Starter, which showed no onboarding fee), Brevo's £7.20 a

month to remove its branding, add-ons and extra seats beyond the stated assumptions.

- Some prices were read on 30 September for our [Mailchimp](#) and [HubSpot](#) alternatives pages and not re-read. The register below marks which.
- The AI answers are one asking each. Google AI Mode was run on a signed-in account that lists [whito.co.uk](#) as a preferred source, and our pages were cited in three of its five answers, so its answers are not independent of us. ChatGPT was run in a temporary, unpersonalised chat; our analytics and scheduler questions would not submit there, so ChatGPT covers three categories only.
- No business paid to be included, and this page carries no affiliate links.

What to do with this

- **Write the five jobs down before you price anything.** If a tool does a job you have not listed, you are paying for a job you do not have.
- **Count the logins.** Ask each vendor whether it charges per user, per seat, per channel or per contact. That decides what next year costs.
- **Check the currency.** If the price is in dollars or euros, your bill moves every month with the exchange rate.
- **Add VAT if you are not registered.** Where VAT is charged, what leaves your account is up to 20% more than the pricing page shows.
- **Read the struck-through price.** If a lower price has no end date on the page, budget for the higher one.

The full price register

Every price read, UK pricing pages, 30 September to 1 October 2026

Tool	Job	Plan	Shown in	Monthly billing	Per month, annual billing	Unit	A year, before VAT	Read
HubSpot	CRM	Free	GBP	free	free	up to 2 users	£0.00	1 Oct
HubSpot	CRM	Sales Hub Starter (list)	GBP	£18	£18	per seat	£216.00	1 Oct
HubSpot	CRM	Sales Hub Starter (offer shown)	GBP	£9	£7	per seat	£84.00	1 Oct
HubSpot	CRM	Sales Hub Professional	GBP	£85	£77	per seat	£924.00	1 Oct
Zoho CRM	CRM	Free	GBP	free	free	up to 3 users	£0.00	30 Sep
Zoho CRM	CRM	Standard	GBP	not offered or not read	£12	per user	£144.00	1 Oct
Pipedrive	CRM	Lite	GBP	not offered or not read	£14	per seat	£168.00	1 Oct
Capsule	CRM	Starter	GBP	not offered or not read	£14	per user	£168.00	1 Oct

4. What a UK Marketing Stack Costs in 2026: Five Jobs, Priced

Mailchimp	Email	Standard 501-1,500 contacts	GBP	£34.26	not offered or not read	per account	£411.12	1 Oct
Mailchimp	Email	Standard 2,501-5,000 contacts	GBP	£76.14	not offered or not read	per account	£913.68	1 Oct
Mailchimp	Email	Essentials 0-500 contacts	GBP	£9.90	not offered or not read	per account	£118.80	1 Oct
Mailchimp	Email	Essentials 501-1,500 contacts	GBP	£20.18	not offered or not read	per account	£242.16	1 Oct
Mailchimp	Email	Essentials 2,501-5,000 contacts	GBP	£57.11	not offered or not read	per account	£685.32	1 Oct
Mailchimp	Email	Standard 0-500 contacts	GBP	£15.23	not offered or not read	per account	£182.76	1 Oct
Brevo	Email	Starter 10k emails / 1,500 contacts	GBP	£12	£10.83	per account	£129.96	30 Sep
Brevo	Email	Starter 20k emails / 500,000 contacts	GBP	£24	£21.67	per account	£260.04	30 Sep
Brevo	Email	Starter 5k emails / 500 contacts	GBP	£6	£5.42	per account	£65.04	1 Oct
MailerLite	Email	Comfort 1,000 subscribers	USD	\$19	\$17.10	per account	£152.50	30 Sep
MailerLite	Email	Comfort 500 subscribers	USD	\$12	\$10.80	per account	£96.31	1 Oct
Semrush	SEO	SEO	GBP	£113.40	£95.07	per account	£1,140.84	1 Oct
Semrush	SEO	Starter (SEO + AI Search)	GBP	£161.25	£133.84	per account	£1,606.08	1 Oct
Ahrefs	SEO	Starter	GBP	£23	not offered or not read	per account	£276.00	1 Oct
Ahrefs	SEO	Lite	GBP	£99	not offered or not read	per account	£1,188.00	1 Oct
SE Ranking	SEO	Core	GBP	£95	£76	per account	£912.00	1 Oct
BrightLocal	SEO	Track	USD	not offered or not read	\$30.75	per account	£274.23	1 Oct
Google Analytics 4	Analytics	Standard	GBP	free	free	per account	£0.00	1 Oct
Plausible	Analytics	Starter 10k pageviews	GBP	£9	£7.50	per account	£90.00	1 Oct
Fathom	Analytics	100k pageviews	USD	\$15	not offered or not read	per account	£133.77	1 Oct
Buffer	Scheduler	Free	USD	free	free	up to 3 channels	£0.00	1 Oct
Buffer	Scheduler	Essentials	USD	not offered or not read	\$5	per channel	£44.59	1 Oct
Buffer	Scheduler	Team	USD	not offered or not read	\$10	per channel	£89.18	1 Oct
Hootsuite	Scheduler	Standard	GBP	not offered or not read	£89	per user	£1,068.00	1 Oct
Later	Scheduler	Starter	USD	not offered or not read	\$18.75	per account	£167.21	1 Oct
Metricool	Scheduler	Starter	EUR	€20	€16	per account	£164.59	1 Oct

4. What a UK Marketing Stack Costs in 2026: Five Jobs, Priced

Sendible	Scheduler	Core	GBP	£27	not offered or not read	per account	£324.00	1 Oct
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5. UK Business Software Price Index: What Tools Really Cost (July 2026)

Published on whito.co.uk on 2 July 2026. Last updated 1 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/uk-business-software-price-index

A five-person UK service business pays about £2,635 a year including VAT for a standard software stack, roughly £44 per person per month, while a credible sole-trader stack costs about £18 a month, according to Whito's price check of 50 tools on 2 July 2026.

Prices verified 2 July 2026. Every figure checked against the vendor's own UK pricing page on a single day.

We price-checked 50 of the software tools UK businesses actually use, on one day, against the vendors' own pricing pages. This index records what things really cost in July 2026: the entry prices, the currencies they are billed in, what a realistic stack adds up to, and how prices have moved.

Key findings

- A five-person UK service business pays about **£2,635 a year including VAT** for a standard software stack, roughly £44 per person per month.
- About **six in ten tools bill in US dollars or euros**, so there is no fixed UK price for most of the stack.
- Advertised prices almost always **exclude 20% VAT** and assume annual billing.
- **Free tiers shrank at four major tools** in the last 18 months, including Mailchimp and MailerLite.
- QuickBooks Plus rose **about 38% in January 2026**; several vendors now raise prices annually.
- The cheapest credible sole-trader stack costs **about £18 a month including VAT**.

Price update, 1 October 2026: Buffer's pricing page now shows Essentials at \$5 a channel a month on yearly billing (about £3.72 at HMRC's October 2026 rate), and Hootsuite's UK page shows Standard at £89 per user a month on annual billing. Buffer and Hootsuite figures further down this page were read earlier and are kept as first published. Current prices for both, with the date read, are in our [UK marketing stack cost study](#).

The index

Entry paid plans for the tools most UK businesses shortlist, shown as the monthly cost on annual billing. Dollar and euro prices are converted at typical card rates on 2 July 2026, about 79p to the dollar, and every price excludes VAT.

Tool	Category	Entry paid plan	Per month, annual billing	Billed in
Wix	Website builder	Core	£16	GBP
Squarespace	Website builder	Basic	£12	GBP
Hostinger	Hosting	Premium	£2.99 intro, renews £10.99	GBP
Shopify	Ecommerce	Basic	£19	GBP
Mailchimp	Email	Essentials	about £10	GBP shown
MailerLite	Email	Comfort	about £9	USD or EUR
Brevo	Email	Starter	about £7	GBP shown
HubSpot	CRM	Starter	£18 per seat	GBP
Pipedrive	CRM	Lite	about £11 per seat	USD
Monday CRM	CRM	Basic	about £9.50 per seat, min 3 seats	USD
Trello	Project management	Standard	about £4 per user	USD
Asana	Project management	Starter	£9.49 per user	GBP
ClickUp	Project management	Unlimited	about £6 per user	USD
Xero	Accounting	Ignite	£16	GBP
QuickBooks	Accounting	Sole Trader	£10	GBP
Sage	Accounting	Start	£15	GBP
Ubersuggest	SEO	Individual	about £29, or £290 lifetime	GBP shown
Ahrefs	SEO	Starter	about £23	USD
Tawk.to	Live chat	Free	free	n/a
LiveChat	Live chat	Starter	about £15 per agent	USD
Intercom	Live chat	Essential	about £23 per seat	USD
Buffer	Social media	Essentials	about £5 per channel	USD
Hootsuite	Social media	Standard	about £74	USD
Canva	Design	Pro	£13, or £100 a year	GBP
Plausible	Analytics	Starter	about £8	EUR

Calendly	Booking	Standard	about £8	USD only
TidyCal	Booking	Lifetime	about £23 once	USD
bOnline	Phone	Starter	about £8 per user	GBP
BreatheHR	HR	Micro	£22, up to 10 staff	GBP
BrightLocal	Reputation	Track	about £33	USD
ChatGPT	AI assistant	Plus	about £16	USD
Claude	AI assistant	Pro	about £14	USD
Fillout	Forms	Starter	about £12	USD
iubenda	Privacy compliance	Essentials	about £5	USD

Full reviews of every tool here, with UK reality checks and cost calculators, live in our [tool reviews section](#).

What a real stack adds up to

Individual subscriptions look cheap. Stacks do not. Here are three realistic setups priced from the index.

Stack	Sole trader, starting out	Five-person service business	Ten-person established firm
Website	Hostinger hosting, £2.99	Wix Core, £16	WordPress on Cloudways, about £9
Email marketing	Brevo free, £0	Brevo Starter, £7	Included in CRM
CRM	Spreadsheet, £0	Pipedrive Lite x5, £55	HubSpot Starter x10, £180
Accounting	QuickBooks Sole Trader, £10	Xero Grow, £37	Xero Comprehensive, £50
Phone	Mobile, £0	bOnline x5, £40	VoIP x10, £80
Social media	Native tools, £0	Buffer, 3 channels, £15	Hootsuite Standard, £74
Design	Canva free, £0	Canva Pro, £13	Canva Pro x3, £39
Booking	TidyCal lifetime, about £1.92 in year one	Included	Included
Live chat	None	None	LiveChat x2, £30
HR	None	None	BreatheHR, £22
AI assistant	None	None	ChatGPT Plus x2, £32
Monthly, before VAT	£14.91	£183	£516

Monthly, including VAT	about £18	about £220	about £619
Cost per year, inc VAT	about £215	about £2,635	about £7,430

The pattern worth noticing: software cost scales with headcount, not revenue. Per-seat pricing on CRM, phones and design licences means the ten-person firm pays 34 times what the sole trader pays.

The currency problem nobody prices in

Of the tools in this index, roughly six in ten bill in US dollars or euros. That has two costs UK buyers rarely budget for: the exchange rate moves your subscription price month to month, and most UK cards add a 2 to 3% conversion fee on top. A £100-a-month dollar-billed stack quietly costs £102 to £103 before VAT even enters the picture.

The VAT gap

Nearly every price on every vendor pricing page excludes VAT. For a VAT-registered business that is a cash-flow question. For everyone below the threshold it is a real 20% surcharge on the advertised number. The five-person stack above is £183 a month on the pricing pages and £220 a month on the card statement.

Free tiers are quietly shrinking

The free plan you read about in a 2024 review may no longer exist. Verified changes:

Tool	Free tier then	Free tier now, July 2026
Mailchimp	500 contacts, 1,000 sends a month	250 contacts, 500 sends a month
MailerLite	1,000 subscribers, 12,000 sends	250 subscribers, 2,500 sends
CharlieHR	Free for up to 5 users	Free for up to 2 users
Hotjar	About 20,000 sessions a month	35 daily sessions, roughly 1,050 a month
Hootsuite	Free plan, 3 profiles	Killed entirely in 2023
Still generous	HubSpot CRM, Tawk.to, Buffer (3 channels), GA4, Microsoft Clarity	Unchanged, and worth building on

How prices moved

Tool	What changed	When
QuickBooks	Plus jumped £34 to £47, about 38%. Roughly 75% up since 2022	January 2026

Xero	Grow £33 to £37, further rise already announced	September 2025, next September 2026
Ubersuggest	Entry price roughly tripled, about £10 to £29	2024 to 2026
Canva	Team pricing rebuilt as Canva Business, roughly £90 to £160 per user a year	2025
Hootsuite	Entry tier up around 40% in two years, free plan gone	2023 to 2026
BrightLocal	5 to 10% rise across plans	1 July 2026
Intercom	Went the other way: Essential now about £23 a seat, far below its old entry price	2025 restructure

One fair note: prices do not only rise. Intercom's 2025 restructure cut its entry price dramatically. But the direction of travel across accounting, SEO and design tools is up, annually, and usually a few weeks after you stop paying attention.

6. What UGC Platforms Charge: 35 Pricing Pages Read (2026)

Published on whito.co.uk on 12 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/ugc-platform-prices-uk

Of 35 UGC and creator platforms read on 12 October 2026, 17 publish no price at all and only 3 let a business work out the full cost of a first order from the page alone.

Data last verified: 12 October 2026 .

Read: 12 October 2026. 35 platforms and agencies that sell UGC videos or creator posts to UK businesses, every page public, nothing behind a login. This page names every platform and quotes its own figures.

UGC, user-generated content, is the short, phone-shot video a creator makes for your own feed and ads. Rate guides put it at tens to low hundreds of pounds a video. We wanted to know what the companies that sell it actually show you before you book a call.

We read the pricing pages of 35 UGC and creator platforms in one day. 17 publish no price at all. Six show only their own platform fee, not what the creator charges. Six show a starting price, an average or a campaign minimum. Three let you work out the full cost of a first order from the page alone.

What we read

The 35 are the UGC and creator platforms most often pitched to UK businesses, plus UK UGC agencies found by search. Some are US companies that sell to UK brands. For each one we opened the pricing page, or the homepage where there was no pricing page, and recorded what it says, in the currency it says it in.

We did not convert currencies, book demos or ask for quotes. Every price quoted below was read on the platform's own page on 12 October 2026, and we kept screenshots of the pages that carry prices. Three sites were not read: one would not load, and two ask automated readers not to.

The one-video price test

We call it **the one-video price test**. A page passes if a business can work out the full cost of its first order from that page alone: what the creator is paid, what the platform charges, and the smallest order you can place, with no call.

The one-video price test, 35 UGC and creator platforms, 12 October 2026	Platforms
Pass: the full cost of a first order is on the page	3

A starting price, an average or a campaign minimum only	6
The platform's own fee only, not the creator's price	6
No price published	17
Could not be read	3

So three of 35 pages pass: Twirl, UGC3 and Trend.

The three that pass

- **Twirl:** £350 for one video on its pricing calculator, £325 each at 10, and £240 each at 60, which is £14,400. The calculator states full paid and organic usage rights.
- **UGC3:** £295 per creator on its calculator, plus a £35 a month platform fee. A done-for-you campaign starts at £849.
- **Trend:** \$550 for up to 6 videos on its Starter package, and \$3,872 for up to 56 videos on its Scale package. It prices in US dollars.

Twirl and UGC3 are the only two in the set that publish the full cost of a first order in pounds. On their own figures, that first order costs £330 to £350: UGC3's £295 plus one month's £35, or Twirl's £350 for a single video.

That sits above the £50 to £250 a video that most rate guides quote, including our own [influencer and UGC rates page](#). A rate guide averages across creators who set their own prices. A managed service that finds, briefs and pays the creator for you also charges for that work.

Platform fees without the creator's price

Six platforms publish what they charge you, but not what the creator charges. The creator's fee is agreed later, creator by creator, and on most of them a marketplace fee is added to it.

Platform	Platform fee shown	Fee on what you pay creators
Insense	Plans from \$500 a month	7%, 10% or 20%, by plan
Influee	\$229, \$529 or \$999 a month	10%
JoinBrands	Plans at \$99, \$299 and \$499	8% to 15%, by plan
Collabstr	Plans at \$0, \$249 and \$333	10% or 5% hiring fee
Sideshift	\$210 or \$349 a month, billed yearly	Not stated
Afluencer	Plans at \$49, \$649 and \$1,049	Not stated

On these six, the platform fee is the only firm number. What a video costs depends on a creator's price you only see once you are inside.

Starting prices, averages and minimums

- **UGC.co.uk:** videos “from £59”, excluding VAT. It is a marketplace where each creator sets their own package and price, and the address on the site is in Amsterdam.
- **Velena Lifestyle:** videos “from £130”, with organic rights and a 12-month paid media licence.
- **Brands Meet Creators:** bundle prices of \$250 and \$600 and a creator priced at \$120 a video, all on the same page, so the price of one video depends on which figure you read.
- **Stack Influence:** “\$30 on average” when an influencer completes a post. That is an average, not a price, and it sits beside plans of up to \$6K a month on an annual contract.
- **Minisocial:** projects “start at \$3,000 for a campaign of 10 creators”, creator fees included.
- **Statusphere:** “initial investments starting at \$10,000”.

The 17 with no price

Seventeen publish no price for a business buyer: Billo, Cohley, Creative Milkshake, Hashtag Paid, inBeat, Lure Agency, Simply Thrilled, Skeepers, Social Native, The Social Shepherd, The UGC Agency, Trendt, TRIBE, TTagz, UGCers, Upfluence and Vidsy. Most send you to a demo, a call or an enquiry form.

No price is not proof of a high price. It does mean the first number you see comes from a salesperson, after you have described your budget.

The full register

Platform	One-video price test	What its own page shows, 12 October 2026
Trend.io	Passes	\$550 for up to 6 videos (Starter); \$3,872 for up to 56 (Scale)
Twirl	Passes	£350 for 1 video; £325 each at 10; £240 each at 60 (calculator)
UGC3	Passes	£295 per creator plus a £35 a month platform fee; done-for-you from £849
Brands Meet Creators	From-price or average only	Bundle prices of \$250 and \$600, and a creator at \$120, on one page
Minisocial	From-price or average only	Projects from \$3,000 for 10 creators, creator fees included
Stack Influence	From-price or average only	"\$30 on average" per completed post; plans up to \$6K a month

<u>Statusphere</u>	From-price or average only	Initial investment from \$10,000
<u>UGC.co.uk</u>	From-price or average only	From £59 a video, excl. VAT; each creator sets their own price
<u>Velena Lifestyle</u>	From-price or average only	Videos from £130, with a 12-month paid media licence
<u>Afluencer</u>	Platform fee only	Plans at \$49, \$649 and \$1,049; creator price not shown
<u>Collabstr</u>	Platform fee only	Plans at \$0, \$249 and \$333, with 10% or 5% hiring fees; creator price not shown
<u>Influee</u>	Platform fee only	Plans at \$229, \$529 and \$999 a month; 10% marketplace fee; creator price not shown
<u>Insense</u>	Platform fee only	Plans from \$500 a month; 7% to 20% marketplace fee; creator price not shown
<u>JoinBrands</u>	Platform fee only	Plans at \$99, \$299 and \$499, with 8% to 15% fees; creator price not shown
<u>Sideshift</u>	Platform fee only	Plans at \$210 and \$349 a month billed yearly; creator price not shown
<u>Billo</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Cohley</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Creative Milkshake</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Hashtag Paid</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>inBeat</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Lure Agency</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Simply Thrilled</u>	No price published	No price list; a blog post uses an illustrative example
<u>Skeepers</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Social Native</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>The Social Shepherd</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>The UGC Agency</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Trendt</u>	No price published	No brand price; its creator page says creators earn from £50
<u>TRIBE</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>TTagz</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>UGCers</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Upfluence</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer
<u>Vidsy</u>	No price published	No price published for a business buyer

Aspire	Not read	Page would not load
Find Your Influencer	Not read	Not read: the site asks automated readers not to
Pink Shell Studio	Not read	Not read: the site asks automated readers not to

Figures are as shown on each platform's page, in the currency shown. Links go to the page we read.

What this does not prove

- One day, one read. Prices change, and calculators can show different figures to different visitors.
- We read pages, not quotes. A call may produce a lower price than a page.
- Currencies are as shown. We did not convert dollars to pounds.
- The 35 are not every UGC seller. They are the platforms most often pitched to UK businesses, plus UK agencies found by search.
- We did not test the videos, the creators or the service. This is about what is published, not who is good.

What to do with this

Before you book a call, decide how many videos you need and where they will run. Then ask for one number in writing: the all-in cost of your first order. That means the creator's fee, the platform or subscription fee, any marketplace percentage, how long you can use the video in paid ads, and whether VAT is on top. If a supplier cannot give you that number, you cannot compare them with anyone else.

What creators charge by follower tier is on our [influencer and UGC rates page](#). Video production more broadly is in our [UK video marketing costs data](#). The fees agencies leave off their pricing pages are in our [study of UK agency contract terms](#). To see how your own business shows up online, run the free [Visibility Check](#).

7. What ChatGPT Ads Cost UK Advertisers: OpenAI Publishes One Price in Pounds (October 2026)

Published on whito.co.uk on 8 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/chatgpt-ads-cost-uk

On 8 October 2026, the only figure in pounds in OpenAI's ChatGPT Ads help centre was a £15 minimum daily budget; of 19 ranking ChatGPT ads cost guides Whito read, 6 quoted it and none linked to the OpenAI article that lists it.

Data last verified: 8 October 2026 .

Built from: all 34 articles in OpenAI's ChatGPT Ads help centre, read on 8 October 2026; OpenAI's 5 October and 5 May 2026 announcements; 19 "ChatGPT ads cost" guides that rank in search, each read in full and link-checked in Chrome the same evening; and the Bank of England spot rates for 7 October 2026. We did not open an Ads Manager account or buy ads.

Every agency blog has a price for ChatGPT ads. OpenAI publishes one figure in pounds. It is a £15 minimum daily budget. Across the 34 articles in OpenAI's ChatGPT Ads help centre on 8 October 2026, "GBP" appears exactly once, in that line.

Everything else UK businesses are reading, the £45 and £60 CPMs, the "few pounds a click", is either a dollar figure from the US pilot or an agency's own number. That matters because OpenAI announced a new visual ad format on 5 October and the guides are already being rewritten around it. Here is what the surface actually costs a UK advertiser, from the source, in pounds.

Key facts

- **£15 a day** is the minimum daily campaign budget for an account billed in pounds. It is the only pound figure in OpenAI's ChatGPT Ads help centre.
- OpenAI suggests starting Clicks campaigns at a **maximum bid of \$3 to \$5 per click**. That is £2.27 to £3.78 at the Bank of England rate for 7 October 2026.
- So the UK minimum buys **about four to seven clicks a day** at OpenAI's own suggested bids. We call this **the four-click minimum**.
- OpenAI publishes **no CPM rate**, no cost per click it expects you to pay, and no minimum spend commitment for self-serve accounts.
- Of 19 ranking cost guides, **6 quote the £15 minimum**, 11 give no pound figure at all, and **none links to the OpenAI article that lists it**.

WHITO RESEARCH · 8 OCTOBER 2026

What ChatGPT ads cost UK advertisers

£15

a day: the only price
OpenAI publishes in pounds

6 of 19

0 of 19

4 to 7

cost guides quote it
link to the OpenAI page that lists it
clicks a day at OpenAI's suggested bids

whito.co.uk

Whito, 8 October 2026. Sources and method below.

What OpenAI publishes, in pounds

This is every price rule we found in OpenAI's own pages on 8 October 2026. Dollar figures are converted at the Bank of England spot rate for 7 October 2026: \$1.3220 and €1.1809 to the pound.

What	OpenAI's figure	In pounds	Where OpenAI says it
Minimum daily budget, billed in pounds	15 GBP	£15	Create Campaigns for ChatGPT Ads
Most a campaign can spend in one day	Twice the daily budget	£30 at the minimum	Daily budgets
Most a campaign can spend in a budget week (Sunday to Saturday)	Seven times the daily budget	£105 at the minimum	Daily budgets; Create Campaigns
Suggested starting maximum bid, Clicks campaigns	\$3 to \$5 USD per click	£2.27 to £3.78	Ads in ChatGPT: The Basics
How you are charged	Per 1,000 impressions (Views) or per valid click (Clicks). Conversion campaigns are still billed by click or impression.	n/a	Create Campaigns; Billing
CPM rate	Not published. You set a maximum CPM bid in a second-price auction.	n/a	Ads in ChatGPT: The Basics
Minimum spend commitment	None stated for self-serve	n/a	Billing and payment

UK self-serve access	United Kingdom listed as “Available”	n/a	<u>Ads Manager Availability</u>
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Two practical details sit behind those rows. Your advertising and billing company must be based in a listed country, and some new accounts are initially limited to advertising in their home country. Adding a card can also put a temporary hold on it; OpenAI says the amount is shown in Ads Manager at setup.

What we found

1. The four-click minimum

£15 a day sounds like a cheap way in. Price it against OpenAI’s own bid advice and it is small. At £3.78 a click, the top of the suggested range, £15 buys about 4 clicks. At £2.27, the bottom, it buys about 6 or 7.

That is what we mean by **the four-click minimum**: the smallest UK budget OpenAI allows buys around four visits a day at the bid it tells you to start with. Pacing can push one day to £30, but the week stays capped at £105.

Daily budget	Most in a budget week	A 30-day month (average)	Clicks a day at £2.27 to £3.78
£15 (the minimum)	£105	about £456	about 4 to 7
£30	£210	about £913	about 8 to 13
£50	£350	about £1,521	about 13 to 22

These are arithmetic, not forecasts. Your real cost per click depends on the auction, and OpenAI does not publish what advertisers actually pay. The month column uses 365 days divided by 12.

2. The UK floor is cheaper than the US one, and dearer than the euro one

OpenAI sets a minimum per billing currency, not one converted price. At the 7 October rate, the UK’s £15 is worth \$19.83, about 21% below the \$25 a US advertiser must commit each day. The eurozone minimum is also 15, but in euros, which is £12.70. A UK account’s floor is about 18% higher than a eurozone one.

The gaps will move with exchange rates, because the floors are set in each currency. It is a small difference, but it shows why a dollar figure copied into a UK guide is not a UK price.

3. Most cost guides price the UK in dollars, or not at all

We read 19 guides that rank for “ChatGPT ads cost”, “ChatGPT ads cost UK” and “ChatGPT ads UK” on 8 October 2026. Nine come from UK publishers.

What the guide does	Guides	Of 19
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Quotes the £15 (15 GBP) minimum daily budget	6	32%
Gives any pound figure for ChatGPT ads	8	42%
Gives no pound figure for ChatGPT ads at all	11	58%
Links to any page in OpenAI's help centre	6	32%
Links to the OpenAI article that carries the £15 figure	0	0%
Still describes UK self-serve as not yet open	5	26%

Of the six guides that quote £15, two link to OpenAI help pages. One links to the help-centre collection the figure sits in and to the daily budgets article, which only gives the US \$25. None links to the article with the currency table. A reader cannot check the number in one click.

The pound figures that do appear elsewhere are not OpenAI prices. One UK agency gives a “recommended starting CPM of £45” without saying whose recommendation it is; that is close to the \$60 default bid other guides report, converted. Another says CPMs run “as high as £60” in some industries. A third quotes a £25,000-per-client commitment from the June pilot, which no longer applies to self-serve.

Five guides still tell readers UK self-serve is not open yet, and a sixth says both that it is and that it is not. Most were right when they were written in May and June. OpenAI's availability page now lists the United Kingdom as available. One US guide, updated on 5 October, says ChatGPT ads reach users in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and does not mention the UK, where ads have been live since June.

4. The CPM numbers everyone quotes are from the US pilot

The \$60 CPM traces to the US pilot that opened in February 2026, when Adweek reported a \$200,000 minimum commitment. Trade press then reported CPMs falling to around \$25 to \$45 by April, with lows of \$15. That is £19 to £34 in today's money, but none of it is a UK auction price and none of it comes from OpenAI.

If a guide gives you a single UK CPM for ChatGPT ads, ask where it came from. On 8 October 2026, OpenAI had not published one.

The new visual ads: no price yet

OpenAI's 5 October 2026 announcement adds a visual ad format shown during image generation, for users on the Free and Go plans. Testing “will begin later this month in the US with an initial group of advertisers”. The announcement gives no pricing model, no rates and no UK date. We will re-read OpenAI's pages when the test opens and publish what changes beside this page, dated.

Before you spend: Start, Build, Scale

- **Start.** If you cannot say what a customer is worth to you, or your landing page does not convert from Google, do not test ChatGPT ads yet. Four clicks a day will not tell you anything a broken page has not already told you.
- **Build.** If you track enquiries or sales properly, a test is cheap to run. Budget it in pounds: £15 to £30 a day for two weeks is £210 to £420 at most. Decide in advance how many enquiries would make it worth carrying on.
- **Scale.** If you already spend on search and social, the question is incrementality, not cost per click. OpenAI lists geo-experiment partners for exactly that. Compare the cost per sale, not the CPM.

The evidence

Screenshots taken in Chrome on 8 October 2026. OpenAI’s help pages show “Updated” as a relative date (“yesterday”, “13 days ago”), so the capture date is the record.

Minimum Campaign Spend

Billing currency	Minimum daily budget
AED	65 AED
AUD	25 AUD
BRL	40 BRL
CAD	25 CAD
CHF	20 CHF
CZK	350 CZK
DKK	110 DKK
EUR	15 EUR
GBP	15 GBP
HUF	5,500 HUF
IDR	14,000,000 IDR
ILS	60 ILS
INR	725 INR
JPY	2,500 JPY
KRW	25,000 KRW

Choosing a campaign objective

Setting your budget

Choosing start and end dates

Choosing countries to target

Choosing platforms to target

Choosing custom audiences to include or exclude

Best practices

Campaign setup FAQ

Can I change a campaign objective after creation?

Can I clone a campaign with the same objective?

Can I change the budget type after creation?

OpenAI Help Center, Create Campaigns for ChatGPT Ads: minimum daily budget by billing currency, including 15 GBP.

Selection and delivery

Our ads system selects and delivers ads based on expected relevance and outcomes. It considers multiple signals, including the context and intent of the current conversation, the ad's landing page, title, copy, advertiser-provided context hints, and, when ads personalization is enabled, select signals from a user's broader ChatGPT experience.

At the ad group level, advertisers can provide context hints that describe the conversations, topics, or keywords where their products or services may be relevant. These hints help guide ad matching, but they are not exact-match keywords and do not guarantee delivery in specific conversations.

Pricing

ChatGPT Ads supports impression and valid-click billing. Choose Views for impression-based buying, Clicks to optimize for traffic, or Conversions to optimize toward a supported standard conversion event. Conversion-optimized campaigns with click billing (oCPC) charge for valid clicks, not conversions. For eligibility and other conversion-optimized billing options, see Conversion-optimized Campaigns.

Advertisers set a maximum bid at the ad-group level: a maximum CPM bid for Reach campaigns or a maximum CPC bid for Clicks campaigns. For CPC campaigns, we recommend starting with a maximum bid of \$3-\$5 USD per click. Ads Manager may also provide bid-strength guidance to indicate whether a bid is likely to be competitive or may limit delivery.

Who may see ads

Ad format

Selection and delivery

Pricing

Tracking and measurement

Brand safety

We use cookies, including third-party cookies, to enhance your experience. [View our privacy policy](#)

OpenAI Help Center, Ads in ChatGPT: The Basics: the \$3 to \$5 USD starting bid for Clicks campaigns.

Spain	Available
Sweden	Available
Switzerland	Available
Taiwan	Available
Thailand	Available
Tunisia	Available
Turkey	Available
United Arab Emirates	Available
United Kingdom	Available
United States	Available
Vietnam	Available

If your country is marked **Coming Soon** or isn't listed, self-service access isn't available in your country yet. You can still sign up for an account at [ads.openai.com](#) and we'll notify you when it's available in your country.

Larger advertisers with more complex needs can [contact the OpenAI Ads team](#) to discuss sales support through the form [here](#).

Ads Manager Availability

We use cookies, including third-party cookies, to enhance your experience. [View our privacy policy](#)

OpenAI Help Center, Ads Manager Availability: the United Kingdom listed as available for self-service, one of 63 countries.

Method and limits

- **OpenAI pages.** We read every article linked from OpenAI’s ChatGPT Ads help collection (34 articles) and searched each for “GBP”, “£” and “pound”. Only one matched. We also read OpenAI’s 5 May and 5 October 2026 announcements.
- **Guides.** We took the guides returned for three searches on 8 October 2026, kept those that discuss what ChatGPT ads cost, plus three US guides that already rank for the query (WebFX, Adventure PPC, which now redirects to Adventure Media, and Top Growth Marketing). Each was read in full. Links were checked in Chrome by listing every link to openai.com on the page.

- **Conversions.** Bank of England spot rates for 7 October 2026 (XUDLUSS 1.3220, XUDLERS 1.1809), the latest published on the day of capture.
- **Limits.** We did not buy ads, so there are no measured UK CPMs or click costs here. Search results vary by person and day; a different 19 guides would give different counts. OpenAI can change any of these figures without notice, which is why every row is dated.

Download the data: [all 19 guides as a CSV](#), with the figures each one quotes, its date and what it links to.

Want UK prices for the channels you already pay for? Whito re-reads published UK price pages every month and sells the files on [Whito Data](#). For what an AI assistant says about your business for free, try the [Visibility Check](#). Related: [the AI visibility tools we priced in pounds](#) and [what a UK marketing stack costs](#).

Sources

- OpenAI Help Center: [Create Campaigns for ChatGPT Ads](#), [Ads in ChatGPT: The Basics](#), [Daily budgets](#), [Billing and payment](#), [Ads Manager Availability](#). All read 8 October 2026.
- OpenAI: [new ChatGPT ads format and measurement](#) (5 October 2026) and [new ways to buy ChatGPT ads](#) (5 May 2026).
- Bank of England Database: spot exchange rates XUDLUSS and XUDLERS, 7 October 2026.
- Pilot history: Adweek via ALM Corp (31 January 2026, \$200,000 commitment); [PPC Land](#) (22 June 2026, CPM history and UK self-serve); [Search Engine Land](#) (19 June 2026).
- The 19 guides: listed with URLs in the [CSV](#).

Part 3. What local firms publish

8. We Checked 200 UK Small Business Websites for Prices. Not One Plumber Publishes Any.

Published on whito.co.uk on 10 August 2026. Last updated 11 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/uk-price-transparency-study

Fewer than half, 45.5 per cent, of 200 independent UK small business websites across ten trades and ten cities publish any price at all, and 0 of 20 plumbers publish a single figure, Whito's August 2026 price transparency study found.

Update, October 2026. A larger Whito study on 2 October 2026 checked 179 emergency plumber websites across eight UK towns: 117 published no call-out price at all, and 62 published a call-out figure of some kind. The two samples measure different things. This one looked for any price on general plumbers' sites in August; the newer one looked only for an emergency call-out price. [Read the call-out price study.](#)

Whito Research, August 2026. We checked 200 independent UK small business websites across ten trades and ten cities for one thing: is any price published at all? Aggregates only. No business is named.

Ask a tradesperson why there are no prices on their website and you will hear the same answer. Every job is different.

It sounds reasonable. It is also, on the evidence, an excuse. Wedding photographers quote jobs that vary as much as any boiler repair, and almost all of them publish prices. Plumbers publish none. Not few. None.

We checked 200 independent small business websites, 20 per trade across Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Bristol, Sheffield, Norwich, Cardiff, Glasgow, Nottingham and Southampton. We counted a business as publishing a price if any concrete figure in pounds appeared anywhere on its site: an hourly rate, a callout fee, a from-price, a package, a price list. "Free quote" does not count. A number counts.

- Fewer than half of the 200 businesses (45.5 per cent) publish any price at all.
- 0 of 20 plumbers and 0 of 20 gardeners publish a single figure. Electricians: 2 of 20.
- Across the five home service trades combined, 16 per cent publish anything. Across salons, physios, driving schools and photographers, 87.5 per cent do.
- 15 of the 200 sites promise “fixed prices” or “transparent pricing” without publishing a single number.
- 6 sites have a pricing page with no prices on it.

The league table

Share of businesses publishing any price on their own website, by trade. 20 independent businesses checked per trade.

Trade	Publish any price	Share
Photographers	19 of 20	95%
Physiotherapists	18 of 20	90%
Driving schools	17 of 20	85%
Hair and beauty salons	16 of 20	80%
Cleaning companies	8 of 20	40%
Independent garages	6 of 20	30%
Accountants	5 of 20	25%
Electricians	2 of 20	10%
Plumbers	0 of 20	0%
Gardeners and landscapers	0 of 20	0%

The divide is not about the work. It is about habit.

The businesses that publish prices are not the ones with simple, predictable jobs. A wedding costs anywhere from a few hundred pounds to several thousand, and 19 of the 20 photographers we checked publish their numbers anyway. Physiotherapists publish assessment and follow-up fees as standard. Driving schools print an hourly rate on the homepage.

The businesses that publish nothing are the quote trades. Plumbing, gardening, electrical work, most garages, most accountants. The work varies, but no more than a

wedding does. What actually differs is the industry norm. In some trades, publishing prices is what everyone does. In others, nobody does it, so nobody has to.

That norm survives because it feels safe. If you publish nothing, you cannot be undercut on a webpage, and you get to price each job after seeing it. What that logic misses is the customer who never calls.

The empty pricing page

The strangest pattern in the data is the site that gestures at transparency without committing to it.

Fifteen of the 200 sites promise “fixed prices”, “transparent pricing” or “no hidden charges” while publishing no number of any kind. Six go further and maintain an actual pricing page with no prices on it: a packages page with three named tiers and no figures, a Prices page that says please call for the latest prices, a Pricing menu link that quietly points back at the homepage.

The garages produced our favourite detail. Most publish nothing, and among those that do publish something, the price you are most likely to find is the MOT. The one service where the price is capped by the government.

Why hiding prices costs money

Three commercial reasons, no theory required.

First, buyers filter on price before they ever contact you. A visitor who cannot find a number does not think “premium”. They think “expensive”, or they simply keep scrolling to a competitor who answers the question. You never see these people in your enquiries, which is exactly why the no-prices habit feels costless. The cost is invisible by design.

Second, the enquiries you do get are worse. Publishing even a from-price filters out the buyer who was never going to pay your rate, before they cost you a site visit and a written quote. The trades most worried about tyre kickers are running the exact policy that produces them.

Third, the price questions are being answered anyway. Just not by you. “How much does a plumber cost”, “hair colour prices”, “physio session cost”: these are some of the most-asked questions in every service category, and search engines and AI assistants now answer them directly. If your site carries no numbers, the answer comes from national averages, directories and whichever competitor did publish. White’s own cost guides exist because businesses leave this question unanswered at scale. When a customer asks an AI what things cost and then rings you, the anchor price in their head was set by someone else.

What to publish when every job really is different

Nobody is asking you to price an unseen job. Structure the information instead.

1. **Start with one number.** An hourly rate, a callout fee, or a minimum charge. One figure moves you from the 55 per cent who publish nothing into the minority who answer the question.
2. **Use from-prices for the common jobs.** “Boiler service from £90. Garden tidy from £120. Self assessment return from £200.” Three lines. They set your anchor, filter your enquiries and give search engines and AI something true to quote about you.
3. **Show a worked example.** “A recent rewire of a three-bed semi came to £4,200 including materials.” Real jobs with real numbers beat any pricing table for trust, and no competitor can copy them.

This is a Start stage fix. It needs no budget, no tools and one honest hour with your own job history.

Methodology

We checked 200 businesses on 10 August 2026: ten trades (plumbers, electricians, gardeners and landscapers, independent garages, cleaning companies, accountants, hair and beauty salons, physiotherapists, driving schools, photographers), two independent businesses per trade in each of ten cities (Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Bristol, Sheffield, Norwich, Cardiff, Glasgow, Nottingham, Southampton).

Businesses were drawn from page-one organic search results for standard queries such as “plumber Manchester”. National chains, franchises, directories, marketplaces and lead generation platforms were excluded; every business checked is an independent local firm with its own website. For each we reviewed the homepage plus any pricing page linked in the site’s navigation. “Publishes a price” means any concrete figure in pounds for the business’s own services appears on the site. Statements such as “free quote”, “competitive prices” or “fixed fees” without a number were counted as not publishing.

Two honest caveats. Sampling from page-one search results skews the panel towards better-marketed businesses, so the true share publishing prices across all UK small businesses is likely lower than our figures. And for four towns in the photography sample the search query included the word “prices”, which may flatter that trade’s 95 per cent; treat it as the top end. A handful of sites blocked automated checking and were substituted with the next qualifying business in the same town.

We have deliberately named no businesses. The finding is the pattern, not the people, and every business in the sample is doing what its industry considers normal.

The takeaway

Whole trades have agreed, without ever discussing it, not to answer the first question every customer asks. That is not a pricing strategy. It is a habit wearing one as a disguise. The businesses that break it get the enquiry, set the anchor and feed the machines that now answer cost questions on their behalf. The rest are quoted for by strangers.

Related Whito research: what marketing really costs UK businesses, UK business survival rates by industry, and what UK business websites tell AI.

9. Emergency plumber call-out prices: what 179 UK firms actually publish

Published on whito.co.uk on 2 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/plumbers/research/emergency-plumber-callout-prices

117 of 179 emergency plumber websites checked across eight UK towns published no call-out price at all on 2 October 2026.

Data last verified: 2 October 2026 .

Read: 2 October 2026. 179 plumbing firm websites across eight UK towns. Every price taken from the firm’s own site on that day, nothing from directories. Towns and job were the study defaults.

A burst pipe at 11pm is the worst moment to find out what a plumber charges. So we checked what you can actually find out in advance.

On 2 October 2026 we checked 179 emergency plumber websites across eight UK towns. 117 of 179 published no price at all. Only 24 of 179 published a figure in pounds, and those ran from £50 to £190. The commonest published claim was not a price. It was “no call-out charge”, usually with no rate for the work alongside it.

What we checked

One job, defined once: the emergency plumber call-out price, as published on the firm’s own website. A “from” price is not a fixed price, and we recorded which it is. Where a firm prices emergencies by the hour, we recorded that rate and said so. An explicit “no call-out charge” is a published fact, recorded as £0. It means no attendance fee. It does not mean free work.

Towns: Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Belfast and Norwich. Six in England and Wales, one in Scotland, one in Northern Ireland. A firm counts as checked only if we opened its own site looking for a price. Prices shown on directories and aggregators were ignored. No town reached the 15 price-publishing firms we set out to find.

What is published, town by town

Town	Firms checked	Publish anything	No price on site	“No call-out charge”	Figures in pounds
Belfast	21	3	18	1	2 (£70 and £120)
Birmingham	25	9	16	6	3 (£65 to £140)
Bristol	22	13	9	6	7 (£80 to £180)
Cardiff	21	7	14	5	2 (£65 and £70)
Glasgow	24	7	17	5	2 (£85 and £90)

Leeds	25	9	16	6	3 (£80 to £120)
Manchester	19	8	11	4	4 (£50 to £190)
Norwich	22	6	16	5	1 (£145)
All towns	179	62	117	38	24 (£50 to £190)

The figures in pounds mix units. Some are call-out fees, some cover the first hour, some are hourly rates. The highest, £190 plus VAT in Manchester, covers the first 90 minutes. The lowest, “as little as £50”, is a from-price. Treat the range as what is written down, not as like-for-like quotes.

We show a median only where a town produced eight or more published prices, counting the £0 no-call-out-charge entries. Birmingham (9 prices) and Leeds (9) both have a median of £0, because most of what is published there is “no call-out charge”. Manchester’s median is £25 (8 prices). Bristol’s is £80 (13 prices). Bristol is the only town where figures in pounds outnumber “no call-out charge” claims.

“No call-out charge” is doing a lot of work

Of the 62 firms that publish anything, 38 publish “no call-out charge” rather than a number. In 37 of those 38 cases no labour rate is published alongside it. The claim tells you what you will not pay to get someone to the door. It tells you nothing about what the work costs once they are inside.

The other side of the ledger is thinner than you might expect. Only 8 of 62 published prices are “from” prices. 50 of 62 do not say whether VAT is included. One Belfast firm publishes its call-out fee as an “average”, which is neither fixed nor from.

The clearest pages publish four lines

A handful of firms show it can be done. The most complete tariff we found states the first-hour price in office hours (£85 plus VAT), the out-of-hours price (£140 plus VAT), the billing increment after the first hour (30 minutes), and the VAT treatment. Four lines. Nearly everyone else publishes none of them.

Hiring in an emergency: agree four things before anyone travels

If the firm you call publishes no price, agree these on the phone: the attendance fee, if any. The rate, and what it covers. The billing unit after the first hour. Whether all of that includes VAT. A firm that will not answer those four questions before travelling has told you something useful too.

The register check

We matched each price-publishing firm against Companies House, conservatively: an ambiguous name is not a match. 23 of 62 matched unambiguously. 3 of those 23 companies are dissolved or in liquidation while their websites still advertise. An unmatched firm is not necessarily unregistered. Many trade under generic names that cannot be matched safely, and sole traders have no company to match. A match is a registry fact, not a quality judgement.

If you run a plumbing firm

Publishing a clear emergency tariff puts you in a minority of 24 out of 179. In five of these eight towns, fewer than four firms publish any figure at all. A four-line tariff is one afternoon's work and it answers the exact question every emergency caller is asking. Start there before spending anything on ads. More on marketing a plumbing business: [Whito for plumbers](#).

What this does not prove

- A published price is not the invoiced price. The final bill depends on the job, the hour, parts and billing increments.
- This is a small sample: 179 firms found through open web search, which favours firms that are visible in search. It is not a census of any town's plumbers.
- Pages change. Every figure carries its retrieval date, 2 October 2026, and may be wrong a week later.
- A Companies House match is not a quality judgement, and an unmatched firm is not an unregistered one.
- £0 means no attendance fee is advertised. Labour and parts are still charged, usually at rates the same page does not publish.
- The figures mix call-out fees, first-hour and hourly rates. The unit column in the data file governs every comparison.
- Saved evidence pages are text renderings fetched by tool, not raw HTML archives.

How we did it

Collection date 2 October 2026. We searched openly for plumbing firms serving each town, opened their own websites, and recorded a price only from a page we opened, together with the exact sentence it came from. Every price was fetched twice, and every recorded quote was machine-checked against its saved page before this page was written. Firms whose sites publish nothing were logged as checked with no price. Nothing is ranked, no firm is named as cheapest or best, and the data file lists firms alphabetically within town. If you think a figure is wrong, use [corrections](#).

10. Emergency electrician call-out prices: what 135 UK firms actually publish

Published on whito.co.uk on 2 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/electricians/research/emergency-electrician-callout-prices

113 of 135 emergency electrician websites checked across eight UK towns published no call-out price at all on 2 October 2026.

Data last verified: 2 October 2026 .

Read: 2 October 2026. 135 electrical firm websites across eight UK towns. Every price taken from the firm’s own site on that day, nothing from directories. Same method and towns as our plumber call-out study.

When the power goes off at night, you want two things: someone qualified, and a price. The first is checkable. The second, it turns out, barely exists in writing.

On 2 October 2026 we checked 135 emergency electrician websites across eight UK towns. 113 of 135 published no price at all. Only 14 of 135 published a figure in pounds, from £30 to £171 across differing units. And in Belfast, not one of the 12 firms we checked published anything, not even “no call-out charge”.

What we checked

One job, defined once: the emergency electrician call-out price, as published on the firm’s own website. A “from” price is not a fixed price, and we recorded which it is. Where a firm prices emergencies by the hour, we recorded that rate and said so. An explicit “no call-out charge” is a published fact, recorded as £0. It means no attendance fee, not free work.

Towns: Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Belfast and Norwich. A firm counts as checked only if we opened its own site looking for a price. Prices on directories and aggregators were ignored. No town got close to the 15 price-publishing firms we set out to find.

What is published, town by town

Town	Firms checked	Publish anything	No price on site	“No call-out charge”	Figures in pounds
Belfast	12	0	12	0	0
Birmingham	17	5	12	1	4 (£30 to £150)
Bristol	17	4	13	0	4 (£66 to £171)
Cardiff	18	1	17	1	0
Glasgow	27	2	25	2	0

Leeds	12	5	7	1	4 (£50 to £120)
Manchester	14	3	11	2	1 (£85)
Norwich	18	2	16	1	1 (£165)
All towns	135	22	113	8	14 (£30 to £171)

The figures mix units: call-out fees, first hours, hourly rates and per-15-minute billing all appear. No town produced the eight published prices we require before showing a town median. Across all 22 published prices, counting the £0 entries, the median is £70.50.

The quietest trade we have measured

We have now run this check on three trades, same towns, same day, same rules. Plumbers: 117 of 179 sites publish no price (65%). Locksmiths: 69 of 139 (50%). Electricians: 113 of 135 (84%). Electricians are the least likely of the three to put any price in writing, and the least likely even to say “no call-out charge”: just 8 of 135 sites make that claim, against 38 of 179 plumbers.

The figures that do exist

Where electricians do publish, they publish properly. 17 of the 22 price-publishing firms matched unambiguously to an active Companies House record, a far higher rate than the other two trades. The clearest tariff we found states a fixed first hour of £150 on weekdays, £180 evenings and weekends, £200 bank holidays, with no separate call-out fee and 30-minute billing after the first hour. Another publishes £171 plus VAT for an urgent call-out including the first hour. One Bristol firm’s published out-of-hours first hour (£120 plus VAT) is cheaper than its same-day daytime rate (£160 plus VAT), on both of our fetches. Oddities like that are why the exact sentence behind every figure is kept in the data file.

One more pattern worth knowing: three of the eight “no call-out charge” pages, one in Cardiff and two in Glasgow, are local-looking brands whose footers name the same national company. The data file records the operator behind every matched brand.

Hiring in an emergency: agree four things before anyone travels

With 84% of firms publishing nothing, assume you will be agreeing the price on the phone: the attendance fee, if any. The rate, and what it covers. The billing unit after the first hour. Whether all of that includes VAT. 13 of the 22 published prices in this study do not state VAT, so ask even when a figure is on the site.

If you run an electrical firm

Publishing a clear emergency tariff puts you in a minority of 14 out of 135, and in three of these eight towns no firm currently publishes a figure at all. A four-line tariff answers the exact question every emergency caller asks, and costs an afternoon. More on marketing an electrical business: [Whito for electricians](#).

What this does not prove

- A published price is not the invoiced price. The final bill depends on the job, the hour, parts and billing increments.
- This is a small sample: 135 firms found through open web search, which favours firms that are visible in search. It is not a census of any town's electricians.
- Pages change. Every figure carries its retrieval date, 2 October 2026, and may be wrong a week later.
- A Companies House match is not a quality judgement, and an unmatched firm is not an unregistered one. A registry outage during collection is noted in the affected rows of the data file.
- £0 means no attendance fee is advertised. Labour and parts are still charged.
- The figures mix call-out fees, first-hour, hourly and per-15-minute rates. The unit column in the data file governs every comparison.
- Saved evidence pages are text renderings fetched by tool, not raw HTML archives.

How we did it

Collection date 2 October 2026. We searched openly for electrical firms serving each town, opened their own websites, and recorded a price only from a page we opened, together with the exact sentence it came from. Every price was fetched twice, and every recorded quote was machine-checked against its saved page before this page was written. Firms publishing nothing were logged as checked with no price. Nothing is ranked, no firm is named as cheapest or best, and the data file lists firms alphabetically within town. If you think a figure is wrong, use [corrections](#).

11. Emergency locksmith call-out prices: what 139 UK firms actually publish

Published on whito.co.uk on 2 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/locksmiths/research/emergency-locksmith-callout-prices

43 of the 70 UK locksmith websites that publish any emergency price said only no call-out charge on 2 October 2026; the median published price is £0.

Data last verified: 2 October 2026 .

Read: 2 October 2026. 139 locksmith websites across eight UK towns. Every price taken from the firm’s own site on that day, nothing from directories. Same method and towns as our plumber and electrician call-out studies.

Locked out, phone in hand, you will find more prices for locksmiths than for any other emergency trade. Half the websites we checked publish something. Read what they publish carefully, because the commonest published price is £0, and £0 is not what you will pay.

On 2 October 2026 we checked 139 emergency locksmith websites across eight UK towns. 70 of 139 published something, the highest share of the three trades we have measured. But 43 of those 70 published only “no call-out charge”, with no figure for the work. Just 27 of 139 published a figure in pounds, from £39 to £100 for an emergency lockout or attendance.

What we checked

One job, defined once: the emergency locksmith call-out price, as published on the firm’s own website. Where a firm leads with a lockout price instead of a call-out fee, we recorded that, with the unit stated. A “from” price is not a fixed price, and we recorded which it is. An explicit “no call-out charge” is a published fact, recorded as £0. It means no attendance fee. The labour that gets you back inside is still charged, usually at a rate the same page does not publish.

Towns: Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Belfast and Norwich. A firm counts as checked only if we opened its own site looking for a price. Prices on directories and aggregators were ignored.

What is published, town by town

Town	Firms checked	Publish anything	No price on site	“No call-out charge”	Figures in pounds
Belfast	23	8	15	4	4 (£59 to £90)
Birmingham	24	8	16	5	3 (£45 to £90)

Bristol	15	12	3	7	5 (£39 to £100)
Cardiff	18	9	9	6	3 (£60 to £95)
Glasgow	9	6	3	5	1 (£59)
Leeds	17	9	8	5	4 (£59 to £69)
Manchester	17	14	3	8	6 (£39 to £79)
Norwich	16	4	12	3	1 (£75)
All towns	139	70	69	43	27 (£39 to £100)

We show a median only where a town produced eight or more published prices, counting the £0 entries. On that rule the median published price is £0 in Manchester (14 prices), Bristol (12), Leeds (9), Cardiff (9) and Birmingham (8), and £29.50 in Belfast (8). Across all 70 published prices the median is £0. That is the locksmith market in one number: the price most often put in writing is the one for turning up, not the one for the work.

What “no call-out charge” means at your front door

43 of the 70 publishing firms say “no call-out charge” and almost all stop there. The fee for attending is zero; the labour, the lock and the out-of-hours uplift are quoted once the van is outside. If the firm you call publishes £0 and nothing else, the real price conversation has not started yet. Have it on the phone, not at the door.

Reading the figures that do exist

21 of the 70 published prices are “from” prices, the highest share of the three trades. The lowest advertised floors, £39 to £59, come mostly from multi-town dispatch brands whose pages are written per city; the ranges behind those floors run as high as £250 on the same pages. Town-anchored firms that publish figures tend to state £75 to £105 for a standard lockout, and the clearest pages publish the whole job menu: standard opening, destructive opening, lock replacement, each with its own figure and a plain line on VAT. 54 of 70 published prices do not state VAT at all.

Companies House matching tells its own story: only 13 of the 70 price-publishing firms matched unambiguously, the lowest rate of the three trades. Locksmithing is a market of generic trading names, sole traders and multi-town brands, which is exactly when a written price before the van moves matters most. A match is a registry fact, not a quality judgement, and an unmatched firm is not an unregistered one.

Hiring in a lockout: agree four things on the phone

The attendance fee, if any. The price for a non-destructive opening, and what happens to the price if the lock has to be drilled. Whether a replacement lock is included or

extra, and at what price. Whether all of that includes VAT. A firm that answers all four before travelling has told you more than most publish.

If you run a locksmith business

Your market already publishes more than any other emergency trade, so a bare “no call-out charge” no longer stands out. What remains rare is a fixed, VAT-stated lockout price: only 3 of the 70 publishing firms state a fixed figure with its VAT treatment. That is the gap. More on marketing a locksmith business: [Whito for locksmiths](#).

What this does not prove

- A published price is not the invoiced price. The final bill depends on the lock, the hour, parts and any drilling.
- This is a small sample: 139 firms found through open web search, which favours firms that are visible in search. It is not a census of any town’s locksmiths.
- Pages change. Every figure carries its retrieval date, 2 October 2026, and may be wrong a week later.
- A Companies House match is not a quality judgement, and an unmatched firm is not an unregistered one. A registry outage during collection is noted in the affected rows of the data file.
- £0 means no attendance fee is advertised. Labour and parts are still charged.
- The figures mix call-out fees, lockout prices and hourly rates. The unit column in the data file governs every comparison.
- Several multi-town brands appear in more than one town, sometimes under different names; the notes column records the operator where the firm’s own site names it.
- Saved evidence pages are text renderings fetched by tool, not raw HTML archives.

How we did it

Collection date 2 October 2026. We searched openly for locksmiths serving each town, opened their own websites, and recorded a price only from a page we opened, together with the exact sentence it came from. Every price was fetched twice, and every recorded quote was machine-checked against its saved page before this page was written. Firms publishing nothing were logged as checked with no price. Nothing is ranked, no firm is named as cheapest or best, and the data file lists firms alphabetically within town. If you think a figure is wrong, use [corrections](#).

12. Boiler service and dental check-up prices: what UK firms publish in eight towns

Published on whito.co.uk on 3 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/boiler-service-dental-checkup-prices

Of 197 heating engineer websites checked across eight UK towns on 3 October 2026, 146 published no boiler service price at all.

Data last verified: 3 October 2026 .

Read: 3 October 2026. 197 heating engineer websites and 120 dental practice websites across eight UK towns. Every price taken from the firm’s own site on that day, nothing from directories. Same towns and rules as our emergency call-out checks of 2 October 2026.

Most people book a boiler service once a year and a dental check-up twice. Both are routine, repeat jobs. If any price should be written down in advance, it is these.

On 3 October 2026 we checked 197 heating engineer websites across eight UK towns. 146 of 197 published no boiler service price at all. 51 did, from £50 to £129, and 30 of those 51 did not say whether VAT was included. Dental practices published more often where we looked: of 120 practice websites checked, 83 published a private check-up fee, from £33 to £102. But 32 of those 83 fees came from branches of four national groups.

What we checked

Two jobs, each defined once.

- **Boiler service:** the annual service of one domestic gas boiler. A “from” price is not a fixed price, and we recorded which it is. Monthly cover plans, repair rates and call-out fees do not count.
- **Dental check-up:** a private routine examination for an adult at a general practice. NHS charges are set by government and are not the subject. Monthly membership plans, cosmetic consultations and child fees do not count. A fee that bundles X-rays is recorded and labelled.

Towns: Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester and Norwich. A firm counts as checked only if we opened its own website looking for a price. Every price was fetched twice from the same page, and every recorded figure was machine-checked against the saved page text before this page was written.

Boiler service: what is published, town by town

Town	Websites checked	Publish a price	No price on site	Prices published
Belfast	26	2	24	£50 to £55

Birmingham	24	8	16	£59 to £126
Bristol	26	5	21	£90 to £120
Cardiff	19	8	11	£60 to £129
Glasgow	28	3	25	£75 to £84
Leeds	29	9	20	£65 to £89
Manchester	24	11	13	£60 to £105
Norwich	21	5	16	£70 to £96
All towns	197	51	146	£50 to £129

Of the 51 published prices, 27 are fixed and 24 are “from” prices. The figures mix VAT bases: 8 include VAT, 12 exclude it and 30 do not say, so the range is what is written down, not a like-for-like comparison. We show no median for this edition for that reason.

Belfast and Glasgow stand out. 2 of 26 Belfast heating websites and 3 of 28 in Glasgow published a boiler service price. The rest showed no service price on the pages we opened.

Dental check-up: what is published, town by town

Town	Websites checked	Publish a check-up fee	No fee on site	Fees published
Belfast	8	4	4	£49 to £78
Birmingham	19	10	9	£39 to £97
Bristol	15	12	3	£44.90 to £100
Cardiff	17	15	2	£49 to £102
Glasgow	13	5	8	£33 to £100
Leeds	18	15	3	£44.20 to £93
Manchester	15	12	3	£39.99 to £83
Norwich	15	10	5	£49 to £90
All towns	120	83	37	£33 to £102

Read the dental “no fee” column with care. We stopped collecting in a town once 15 practices had published a fee, which happened in Cardiff and Leeds, and practice fee lists are easy to search for. So the dental figures show what is published where we looked. They are not a rate for the whole market, and they should not be set against the boiler figures.

Of the 83 published fees, 61 are fixed and 22 are “from” fees. The units differ: some are a routine exam for an existing patient, some a new-patient exam, some include X-rays. No dental page stated VAT.

Four groups set two in five of the published fees

32 of the 83 fees came from branches of four national groups: Bupa Dental Care (13), Rodericks (12), mydentist (4) and Together Dental (3). Rodericks, mydentist and Together Dental mostly repeat one fee across their branches in the same town, so a patient comparing local practices online is often comparing one price list several times. Bupa fees varied by branch, from £65 to £102. The other 51 fees came from practices outside those four groups.

Five jobs, same towns, same rules

Boiler service and dental check-ups are the fourth and fifth jobs we have checked on the same eight towns and the same rules. The share of websites with no price at all:

Job	Collected	Websites checked	No price on site
Emergency electrician call-out	2 Oct 2026	135	113 (84%)
Boiler service	3 Oct 2026	197	146 (74%)
Emergency plumber call-out	2 Oct 2026	179	117 (65%)
Emergency locksmith call-out	2 Oct 2026	139	69 (50%)
Dental check-up	3 Oct 2026	120	37 (not comparable, see above)

Sources: [electrician call-out study](#), [plumber call-out study](#), both read 2 October 2026; this page for boiler service and dental.

A boiler service is a planned job, booked weeks ahead, the same every year. It is the easiest price in heating to write down. Three in four heating websites we checked still did not.

Before you book: what to ask

Boiler service. Ask for the price for one boiler, whether it includes VAT, whether parts or a flue gas analysis cost extra, and whether a landlord gas safety certificate is included if you need one. Check the engineer on the Gas Safe Register and ask to see their ID card.

Dental check-up. Ask whether the fee is for a new or an existing patient, whether X-rays are included, and whether a membership plan is required to get that fee.

If you run one of these firms

This is Start stage work, and it costs nothing. If you service boilers, a fixed price for one boiler, with the VAT treatment stated, puts you in the minority of 51 out of 197 sites we checked. In Belfast and Glasgow it would make you one of a handful. Write it on your own site as plain text, not in an image, so people and AI engines can both read it.

If you run a dental practice, the gap is clarity rather than absence. Say whether the fee is for new or existing patients and what it includes. Not sure where your own site stands? The [free Visibility Check](#) takes about twenty seconds and needs no email.

The register check

We matched each firm that published a price against Companies House, conservatively: an ambiguous name is not a match. Of the 51 heating firms, 24 matched a company unambiguously, 24 did not, and 3 in Glasgow were not checked before our collection allowance ran out. One matched company carries an active proposal to strike off. Of the 83 dental fees, 42 matched a company and 5 were not checked. An unmatched firm is not an unregistered one: sole traders have no company to match, and many firms trade under a different name. A match is a register fact, not a quality judgement.

What this does not prove

- A published price is not the invoiced price. Parts, extra appliances, X-rays and treatment are charged on top.
- This is a sample of firms found through open web search and, for names only, public directories. It is not a census of any town.
- Pages change. Every figure carries its retrieval date, 3 October 2026, and may be wrong a week later.
- The dental “no fee” count is shaped by where we stopped collecting and is not a market rate.
- Firms on the edge of a town were counted only where their own site said they serve it.
- Saved evidence pages are text renderings returned by our fetch tool, not raw HTML archives.

How we did it

Collection date 3 October 2026. For each town and job we searched openly for firms, opened their own websites, and recorded a price only from a page we opened, together with the exact wording it came from. Prices shown on directories, comparison sites and lead platforms were ignored. Each price was fetched twice; where the two disagreed, nothing was recorded. Per job and town we stopped at 15 published prices or about 25

checked sites, whichever came first. Firms with no published price were logged as checked. Nothing is ranked, and no firm is named as cheapest or best.

Corrections

If your price is shown wrongly, or has changed, email hello@whito.co.uk with the page and your current price page. We check it against your own site and correct it within five working days if we were wrong, noting the date. Full route: [corrections, right of reply and removals](#).

Part 4. What AI engines say things cost

13. Which AI Gets UK Marketing Prices Right? The October 2026 Accuracy League Table

Published on whito.co.uk on 6 October 2026. Last updated 7 October 2026. Live page: whito.co.uk/research/ai-price-accuracy-league-table

Asked 44 UK marketing cost questions on 6 October 2026, no AI engine got more than 74% right, and 33 of 115 software answers quoted US dollars for tools that show UK buyers a price in pounds.

Data last verified: 6 October 2026 .

Built from: 220 answers collected on 6 October 2026 from ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Mode, Claude and Gemini, each asked the same 44 UK marketing cost questions once. Every answer was scored against a price Whito measured: published UK provider prices for services, and the vendor's own UK pricing page, read the same day, for software.

No AI engine got more than three answers in four right. We asked five of them what UK marketing costs, from a small business website to a Hootsuite subscription, and checked every figure against prices we had measured ourselves. Claude scored 73.9%, Perplexity 72.7%, Gemini 69.3%, ChatGPT 64.8% and Google AI Mode 61.4%.

The errors follow a pattern. Ask about a service and the engines tend to quote above what UK providers publish: four of the five put a small business website at between 3.7 and 6.3 times the published median of £520, and the fifth gave a range running from £100 to £10,000. Ask about software and a third of the misses come down to currency. 33 of the 115 software answers quoted US dollars for tools that show a UK buyer a price in pounds.

The league table: 6 October 2026

Rank	Engine	Score	Service prices (21 questions)	Software prices (23 questions)	Right	Close	Off or no figure	Answers citing Whito
1	Claude	73.9%	71.4%	76.1%	30	5	9	17
2	Perplexity	72.7%	69.0%	76.1%	27	10	7	0
3	Gemini	69.3%	64.3%	73.9%	28	5	11	0
4	ChatGPT	64.8%	61.9%	67.4%	25	7	12	3
5	Google AI Mode	61.4%	52.4%	69.6%	22	10	12	0

Score is points won out of 88: two points for an answer that lands on the measured price, one for an answer that is close, none for an answer that is off or gives no usable figure. The full rules are in the method below.

Read the top two as level. Claude and Perplexity are one point apart out of 88. Claude also cited whito.co.uk in 17 of its 44 answers, 17 of 21 on the service questions, so on that half of the test it was partly reading back Whito's own measurements. On the 27 answers where it did not cite Whito, it scored 75.9%. No other engine cited Whito more than three times.

What we found

1. The dollar default: a third of the software misses are a currency mistake

We call it **the dollar default**: an AI engine answers a UK price question with a US-dollar list price, even though the vendor shows a UK visitor a price in pounds. 33 of the 115 software answers did it, either quoting dollars outright, converting dollars at a guessed exchange rate, or putting a dollar sign on a pound price.

Hootsuite is the clearest case. Its UK plans page shows Standard at £89 and Professional at £169 a user a month, billed annually. Not one of the five engines gave either figure. Across the ten Hootsuite answers, every figure given was in dollars, mostly \$99. Claude said it could not find a reliable pound price.

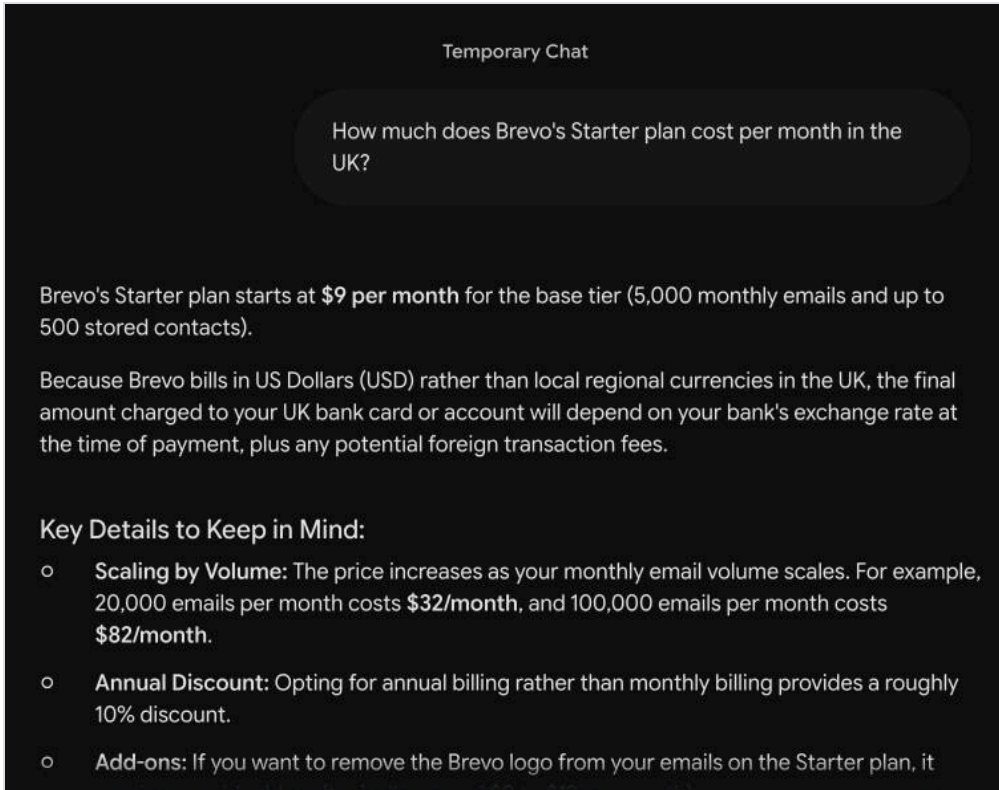
The screenshot shows the Hootsuite pricing page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: Products, Integrations, Industries, Resources, Pricing, and Enterprise. The main heading is "Pick your plan and try it for free". Below this, there are three plan cards: Standard, Professional, and Advanced. The Standard plan is £89 per user/month, Professional is £169 per user/month, and Advanced is £349 per user/month. Each plan has a "Free 14-day trial" button. The Professional plan is marked as "Most popular".

Plan	Price	Features
Standard	£89 per user/month*	- Manage up to 10 social media accounts from one calendar. - Schedule unlimited social posts* - Generate posts and images with AI
Professional	£169 per user/month*	- Manage unlimited social accounts and automate repetitive work. - Everything in Standard, plus: - Manage unlimited social accounts - Automate inbox replies and workflows
Advanced	£349 per user/month*	- Streamline approvals and co-work across teams. - Everything in Professional, plus: - Review and approve content with your team - Assign and auto-route messages to the right team

Screenshot: hootsuite.com/en-gb/plans, read in a UK browser, 6 October 2026. The price every engine missed.

The same thing happened with Semrush, Ahrefs and Brevo. Across the five Hootsuite, Semrush and Ahrefs questions, 25 answers produced one exact pound price. Gemini went furthest and told the reader Brevo “bills in US Dollars (USD) rather than local

regional currencies in the UK”. Brevo’s pricing page shows UK visitors £6 a month for Starter.



Screenshot: Google Gemini, 6 October 2026, question “How much does Brevo’s Starter plan cost per month in the UK?” Brevo shows UK visitors £6.

A likely cause, which we have not proved: these vendors pick the currency from the visitor’s location. A crawler reading from the US sees dollars. A UK buyer sees pounds. The vendors that print one pound price in the page itself, such as Shopify, Xero, Canva and Google Workspace, were answered correctly almost every time.

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Plan	Description	Monthly Price	Annual Price	Buttons
SEO	For freelancers and small businesses looking to grow their online visibility with SEO	£95.07/mo	£113	Try for free, or subscribe
Starter	For small teams and agencies growing across organic search and AI	£133.84/mo	£161	Try for free, or subscribe
Pro+	For growing teams and agencies scaling SEO and AI visibility across multiple markets, locations, or websites	£201.09/mo	£242	Try for free, or subscribe
Advanced	For organizations and agencies scaling SEO and AI visibility with deeper insights, API access, and automation	£369.23/mo	£444	Subscribe, or try custom plan

What's inside:

- ✓ 5 websites to monitor
- ✓ 500 keywords to track daily

SEO:

- ✓ 5 websites to monitor
- ✓ 500 keywords to track daily

All Starter features plus:

- ✓ 15 websites to monitor
- ✓ 1,500 keywords to track daily

All Pro+ features plus:

- ✓ 40 websites to monitor
- ✓ 5,000 keywords to track daily

Screenshot: semrush.com/prices, read in a UK browser, 6 October 2026. Four engines quoted dollars; ChatGPT converted to roughly £105.

2. A website costs a fraction of what AI says it does

UK web designers who publish a price charge a median of £520 for a small business website, with the middle half of 28 published packages between £399 and £898. Every engine quoted far more:

Engine	What it said a small business website typically costs
ChatGPT	£1,500 to £3,000
Perplexity	£800 to £3,000
AI Mode	£1,000 to £5,000
Claude	£1,500 to £5,000
Gemini	£100 to £10,000+ (no typical figure)

The engines are describing the agency market, which mostly does not publish prices. The sellers who do publish are cheaper. A buyer who takes the AI figure as the going rate will read a £599 quote as suspiciously low when it is close to typical for a published package.

3. When the engines miss on services, they miss high

Across 105 service answers, 57 landed inside the measured range. 29 were above it and 6 below. 13 gave no usable figure: a range so wide it covers everything, or a list of tiers with nothing marked as typical. The median answer sat 14% above the measured central price.

Photography was answered best. Headshots, day rates, product shots and drone filming were mostly right across all five engines. Videographer day rates, events photography and monthly social video packages were the weakest.

4. This year's price rises had not reached every engine

Xero, QuickBooks and Sage have all raised UK prices this year. Five answers quoted the old price: Claude gave Xero Grow at £37 (now £39) and Sage Accounting at £18 (now £20). Perplexity gave QuickBooks Plus at £47 (now £56), QuickBooks Essentials at £33 (now £38) and Sage at £18. ChatGPT, Google AI Mode and Gemini were current on all five.

5. Simple list prices are close to solved

All five engines gave the current UK price for Squarespace Basic, Shopify Grow, Xero Ignite, Canva Pro, Google Workspace Business Starter and Business Standard, and Microsoft 365 Business Basic. If a vendor prints one pound price on a UK page, the engines find it.

6. Two engines repeated Whito figures without saying where they came from

Asked what a marketing software stack costs, Gemini set out Whito's figures from our [UK marketing stack study](#) almost line for line: £2,667 a year for the brand-name stack, £1,320 for the alternative, £5,678 for a small team, and a "Login Jump" that matches our three-login jump. It called this "recent UK market research" and linked to nothing.

A standard marketing software stack typically covers five core pillars: CRM, Email Marketing, SEO, Analytics, and Social Media Scheduling.

Recent UK market research breaks down the annual costs into two common scenarios:

1. One-Person Business Stack

Ideal for solo founders, freelancers, or micro-businesses managing marketing independently.

- **Brand-Name Stack (e.g., HubSpot Starter, Mailchimp, Semrush, Hootsuite):**
 - **Cost before VAT:** ~~£2,667 per year~~ (£3,200 including 20% VAT)
 - *Note:* Premium tools like Semrush (SEO) and Hootsuite (social scheduling) drive the majority of this cost.
- **Cost-Effective Alternative Stack (e.g., Zoho CRM, Brevo, SE Ranking, Buffer):**
 - **Cost before VAT:** ~~£1,320 per year~~ (£1,584 including VAT)

2. Small Team Stack (3+ Users & Larger Contact Lists)

Ideal for small teams requiring multiple logins and an email database of up to 5,000 contacts.

- **Brand-Name Stack:**
 - **Cost before VAT:** ~~£5,678 per year~~ (£6,814 including VAT)
 - *The "Login Jump":* Multi-user software pricing can cause steep jumps. For instance,

Screenshot: Google Gemini, 6 October 2026. Figures from Whito's 1 October 2026 stack study, credited to "recent UK market research".

ChatGPT did the same with our care plan figures: "seven plans offering exactly one hour of monthly changes, ranging from £49 to £170/month, with a median of £95/month", with no link on the sentence. Both answers scored well, because the figures were right. The reader just could not see who measured them.

Every question, every answer

Service questions. The measured range is what UK providers publish. Each cell shows the typical figure the engine gave (the midpoint of its typical range) and the score: Right, Close, Off, or None for no usable figure.

Question (UK)	Measured range	ChatGPT	Perplexity	AI Mode	Claude	Gemini
A small business website cost	£399 to £898	£2,250: Off	£1,900: Off	£3,000: Off	£3,250: Off	None
SEO cost per month	£409.50 to £1,500	£550: Right	£650: Right	None	£750: Right	£1,550: Close
A basic local SEO package cost per month	£307.50 to £949.75	£400: Right	£450: Right	£450: Right	£700: Right	£400: Right

13. Which AI Gets UK Marketing Prices Right? The October 2026 Accuracy League Table

Google Ads management cost per month	£280 to £828.75	£1,000: Close	£1,000: Close	£1,750: Off	£1,750: Off	£650: Right
Social media management cost per month	£100 to £773.75	£900: Close	£550: Right	£525: Right	£1,000: Close	£500: Right
A cheap social media management package cost per month	£49 to £299	£149: Right	£350: Close	£200: Right	£375: Close	£250: Right
Website maintenance cost per month	£50 to £177.50	£100: Right	£100: Right	None	£52: Right	None
A website care plan with one hour of changes a month cost	£49 to £170	£98: Right	£100: Right	£175: Close	£95: Right	£100: Right
A link building campaign cost per month	£2,995 to £13,995	£2,750: Close	£2,250: Close	£1,000: Off	£8,250: Right	£1,000: Off
A commercial photographer cost per day	£500 to £1,000	£750: Right	£650: Right	£1,000: Right	£700: Right	£950: Right
Professional headshots cost	£110 to £350	£275: Right	£188: Right	£188: Right	£230: Right	£180: Right
Product photography cost per image	£5 to £35	£20: Right	£55: Off	£22: Right	£18: Right	£26: Right
Team headshots cost per person	£40 to £75	£98: Close	£98: Close	£62: Right	£58: Right	£85: Close
Food photography for a restaurant cost	£300 to £850	None	£475: Right	None	£650: Right	£825: Right
A videographer cost per day	£690 to £900	None	£525: Close	£925: Close	£425: Off	£900: Right
An events photographer cost for a full day	£430 to £730	£1,200: Off	£1,175: Off	£1,025: Close	£580: Right	£1,100: Off
A business mini photoshoot cost	£125 to £225	£412: Off	£275: Close	£162: Right	£225: Right	£300: Close
A monthly social media video package cost	£295 to £650	None	£695: Close	None	None	None
Drone filming cost for a half day	£250 to £650	£550: Right	£550: Right	£550: Right	£425: Right	£500: Right
Amazon product listing photography cost per product	£100 to £397	£250: Right	£350: Right	None	£250: Right	£245: Right
A marketing software stack cost a small business per year	£1,319.73 to £2,667	£2,000: Right	£1,800: Right	£3,300: Close	None	£4,150: Off

Software questions. The measured price is what the vendor's UK pricing page showed on 6 October 2026, either billing basis accepted.

Question (UK)	Measured price	ChatGPT	Perplexity	AI Mode	Claude	Gemini
Squarespace's Basic plan cost per month	£12	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right
Shopify Basic cost per month	£19 or £25	Wrong billing basis	Right	Right	Right	Right
Shopify's Grow plan cost per month	£49 or £65	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right
Xero Ignite cost per month	£18	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right
Xero Grow cost per month	£39	Right	Right	Right	Old price	Right
QuickBooks Simple Start cost per month	£16	Right	Right	Quoted \$	Right	Right

QuickBooks Plus cost per month	£56	Right	Old price	Quoted \$	Right	Right
QuickBooks Essentials cost per month	£38	Right	Old price	Right	Right	Right
Sage Accounting cost per month for one user	£20	Right	Old price	Right	Old price	Right
FreeAgent cost per month for a limited company	£33	Right	Right	Quoted \$	Right	Right
Brevo's Starter plan cost per month	£6 or £5.42	Quoted \$	Right	Converted from \$	Right	Quoted \$
Brevo's Standard plan cost per month	£13 or £11.67	Right	Right	Quoted \$	Right	Converted from \$
Hootsuite Standard cost per month	£89	Quoted \$	Quoted \$	Quoted \$	No figure	Quoted \$
Hootsuite Professional cost per month	£169	Quoted \$	Quoted \$	Quoted \$	Quoted \$	Quoted \$
HubSpot Marketing Hub Starter cost per month	£7 or £9 or £18	Quoted \$	Right	Right	Right	Right
Pipedrive cost per user per month	£14	Converted from \$	Right	Right	Right	Right
Semrush cost per month	£95.07 or £113	Converted from \$	Quoted \$	Quoted \$	Quoted \$	Quoted \$
Ahrefs Lite cost per month	£99	Quoted \$	Right	Converted from \$	Quoted \$	Converted from \$
Ahrefs Standard cost per month	£199	Quoted \$	Quoted \$	Converted from \$	Quoted \$	Quoted \$
Canva Pro cost per year	£100	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right
Google Workspace Business Starter cost per user per month	£5.90	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right
Google Workspace Business Standard cost per user per month	£11.80	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right
Microsoft 365 Business Basic cost per user per month	£5.40	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right

What to do with this

If you are buying

Use an AI price as a question to ask, never as the going rate. For software, open the vendor's pricing page from a UK connection and read the pound figure yourself; if an engine quotes dollars, assume it is wrong. For services, compare quotes against published UK prices, such as our [marketing cost calculator](#), before you decide a quote is cheap or dear.

If you are selling

Publish your price in pounds, in the page text, on a UK address. The vendors that did this were quoted correctly by almost every engine. The ones that switch currency by

location were quoted in dollars. For a service business the same rule applies: if you do not publish a price, the engines fill the gap with someone else's, and on this evidence it will usually be higher than yours.

Method

- **Questions:** 44 fixed questions, asked word for word, once each, with no follow-ups. 21 ask about service prices (websites, SEO, PPC and social management, care plans, link building, photography and video, a software stack). 23 ask about named software plans. The full list is in the dataset.
- **Engines and settings, 6 October 2026, UK connection:** ChatGPT at chatgpt.com, signed out. Google AI Mode at google.com, signed out. Perplexity, signed out; after a sign-up prompt at question 26 the rest were asked in a second signed-out browser. Claude at claude.ai in an incognito chat on Sonnet 5.5 with web search. Gemini signed in, Flash-Lite, temporary chats where the option loaded. Microsoft Copilot was dropped because it now asks for a date of birth and account details before answering.
- **Measured prices, services:** the middle half (interquartile range) and median of Whito's June 2026 dataset of 128 published prices from 47 UK providers for websites, SEO, PPC and social management; Whito's 11 September 2026 read of 18 care plan price lists; Whito's 13 August 2026 read of 82 provider price pages for budget social packages; the published campaign tiers in our September 2026 link building check; the 40 published price lists in our August 2026 photography study; and our 1 October 2026 stack study. Each figure is a published price, so the measure is what UK sellers publish, which leans towards the sellers who choose to publish.
- **Measured prices, software:** each vendor's UK pricing page, read in a UK browser on 6 October 2026, with screenshots kept. Where only one billing basis could be read, only that figure was accepted. HubSpot's £18 list price comes from our 1 October read.
- **Scoring, services:** we took the narrowest range the answer itself presented as typical, or as the price for a small or local business; failing that, its headline range if the top was no more than ten times the bottom. The midpoint of that range scored 2 inside the measured range, 1 within one and a half times either end, and 0 beyond. An answer with no usable figure scored 0.
- **Scoring, software:** 2 for a current UK pound price within 5%; 1 for an old price, a dollar conversion within 25%, a wrong billing basis, or a dollar sign on the right number; 0 for dollars only, no figure, or anything further out.
- **Checking:** a second pass re-read every answer against its score before publishing and changed five scores where the typical range or a currency rule had been applied inconsistently. The scoring script re-runs the table from the dataset.

What this does not prove

- One run on one day. Ask again and some answers will change. The next edition, with the same 44 questions, will show how much.
- Published prices are not the whole market. Many agencies publish no price at all, and their quotes may be closer to what the engines say. This measures how close an AI answer is to what UK sellers publish, which is the price a buyer can check.
- Choosing the “typical” range in a long answer involves judgement. The rule is written down above and applied to all five engines, and every choice is in the dataset.
- Claude cited Whito in 17 answers. Its service score partly reflects Whito’s own figures. The no-Whito score is shown above.
- Gemini and Claude were run in a signed-in account, in temporary or incognito chats. ChatGPT, Perplexity and Google AI Mode were signed out. Signed-in results can differ.
- Whito uses AI tools in its own research, including Claude. The scoring rules are mechanical and the full answer log is published so anyone can re-score it.

About Whito

Whito is an independent UK research publisher. It publishes research on how UK businesses are found, trusted and priced. Studies are free to read. Nobody pays to appear.

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Jacob Whitmore is the named analyst on Whito's research. All Whito research is listed at whito.co.uk/research.

Edition history

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