

THE SLOW-SEASON PLAYBOOK

Most builders feel the slow months in February. By then it's too late to fix. The people who would have hired you in February started looking in November. This is a 13-week plan to catch them, one week at a time.

leadliners.com/guides/slow-season-playbook/

BEFORE YOU START

FEBRUARY IS DECIDED IN NOVEMBER.

Nobody calls you on Monday and starts on Tuesday. Between the first call and the first day on site there are meetings, a bid, money and permits. That gap is your **lead-to-start time**. If it's 10 weeks, a job that starts in February had to call you in November.

YOUR SLOW MONTH – YOUR LEAD-TO-START TIME = WHEN THE CALLS NEED TO COME IN.

Start week 1 of this plan 5 weeks before that date. Weeks 1–4 get you ready. Calls start in week 5.

Example

Slow month: February. Lead-to-start time: 10 weeks. Calls need to come in by late November.
Start week 1 in mid-October.

Your slow month: _____ Lead-to-start time: _____ weeks. Start week 1 on:

Not sure which months go slow? The **Slow-season forecast** works it out from what you have booked.
(leadliners.com/tools/slow-season-forecast/)

YOUR THREE NUMBERS

KNOW HOW MANY LEADS YOU NEED.

Write these down before week 1. Every week after this, you check against them.

Number	How to get it	Yours
1. Jobs you need	How many jobs fill your slow months?	
2. Close rate	Out of 10 real leads, how many sign? 2 out of 10 = 20%.	
3. Leads you need	Jobs ÷ close rate. 4 jobs ÷ 20% = 20 leads.	

20 leads over the 9 weeks of calls in this plan is about 2 or 3 a week. That's the pace you're checking in week 8.

Do the math for you: **How many leads do I need?** (leadliners.com/tools/leads-calculator/) and **Ad budget calculator** (leadliners.com/tools/ad-budget-calculator/).

GET READY TO CATCH LEADS.

Ads sent to a site that leaks leads waste money. Fix the leaks first.

WEEK 1

Fix where leads leak

- ☐ Put your phone number at the top of every page, as a tap-to-call link.
- ☐ Add 3 questions to your form: Do you own the land? What's your budget? When do you want to start?
- ☐ Send every form to your phone as a text, not just to an inbox.
- ☐ Set up an automatic text that goes out within 60 seconds of every form.
- ☐ Fill in your own form from your phone to test it.

Done when: You got the text back on your own phone in under a minute.

Free tools: **20-point website score** (leadliners.com/tools/website-score/)

WEEK 2

Fix your Google Business Profile

- ☐ Check your hours, phone number and website link.
- ☐ List every town you work in as your service area.
- ☐ Add 10 recent job photos. Phone photos are fine.
- ☐ Text 5 happy past clients and ask for a Google review. Send the link so it takes them one tap.

Done when: 10 new photos are up and 5 review asks are sent.

WEEK 3

One page per job type and town

- ☐ Split "Services" into one page for each thing you build.
- ☐ Add a page for each of your top 3 towns, with the town in the page title.
- ☐ Use your own job photos on each page, not stock photos.

Done when: Someone who searches what you build plus your town can land on a page about exactly that.

WEEK 4

Write your follow-up once

- ☐ Write your first-reply text, your missed-call text and your day-3 text.
- ☐ Write your bid follow-up for day 1, 3, 7, 14 and 30.
- ☐ Save them as text shortcuts on your phone.
- ☐ Decide who answers new leads when you're on a roof.

Done when: Every text is saved and one person owns lead replies.

Free tools: **Speed-to-lead text templates** (leadliners.com/tools/text-templates/)

Bid follow-up scripts (leadliners.com/tools/bid-follow-up-scripts/)

TURN ON THE CALLS.

Start with the people who already know you. They cost nothing. Then pay for new ones.

WEEK 5

Text the people who already know you

- ☐ Pull every lead and bid from the last 12 to 24 months that didn't sign.
- ☐ Text each one: "Hi [name], it's [you] from [company]. Are you still planning the [project]?"
- ☐ Text past clients: "Know anyone planning to build this year? We have room this winter."

Only text people who gave you their number.

Done when: Every old lead and past client got one text.

WEEK 6

Turn on Google search ads

- ☐ Pick 3 to 5 searches: what you build plus your town, like "custom home builder [town]".
- ☐ Set the ad area to the towns you work in. Nothing wider.
- ☐ Send the ads to a page with your form on it, not your home page.
- ☐ Set the daily budget from your ad budget number.

Done when: Ads are live and a test form came through to your phone.

Free tools: **Ad budget calculator** (leadliners.com/tools/ad-budget-calculator/)

WEEK 7

Turn on Facebook and Instagram ads

- ☐ Use your own job photos. Real jobs beat stock photos.
- ☐ Put the same 3 questions on the ad form: land, budget, start date.
- ☐ Show the ads only in your area.
- ☐ Meta has special rules for housing ads. If your ads fall under them, some targeting is limited. That's normal.

Done when: Ads are live and the first leads come in with answers to the 3 questions.

WEEK 8

Check the numbers

- ☐ Count this week's leads, and how many had land and a budget.
- ☐ Check how fast each one got a reply. Under a minute?
- ☐ Work out your cost per lead: $\text{ad spend} \div \text{leads}$.
- ☐ Turn off the ad or search that brings the most junk.

Done when: You know what one real lead costs you.

Free tools: **How many leads do I need?** (leadliners.com/tools/leads-calculator/)

BOOK THE SLOW MONTHS.

Leads don't fill a calendar. Signed jobs do.

WEEK 9

Offer your open start dates

- ☐ Look at your calendar. Pick the start dates you really have open in your slow months.
- ☐ Tell every open lead: "We have 2 starts open in February." Use your real number.
- ☐ Only say what's true. If the dates fill, say so.

Done when: Every open lead has heard your real open dates.

WEEK 10

Follow up every open bid

- ☐ List every bid you have out right now.
- ☐ Send the next touch on your day 1, 3, 7, 14 and 30 plan.
- ☐ Ask a yes-or-no question. Never "Did you get my bid?"

Done when: Every open bid has a next date on it.

Free tools: **Bid follow-up scripts** (leadliners.com/tools/bid-follow-up-scripts/)

WEEK 11

Sell work that fits the slow months

- ☐ Pick work you can do when it's cold or wet: interiors, design, plans, permits.
- ☐ Offer the planning phase now, with a deposit, so spring jobs are signed in winter.
- ☐ Pools: winter is when people plan a spring pool. Sell the design now.
- ☐ Custom homes and barndos: plans, permits and loans take months. Start them now.
- ☐ Remodels: indoor work keeps crews busy when it's cold.
- ☐ Commercial: many businesses set next year's budget at the end of the year. Get your bid in before it's set.

Done when: You have at least one signed planning or design job for the slow months.

WEEK 12

Text the “not yet” leads again

- ☐ Text every lead who said “later” or went quiet.
- ☐ One line, one question: “Still thinking about the [project] this spring?”
- ☐ Call anyone who answers.

Done when: Every quiet lead got one more text.

Free tools: **Speed-to-lead text templates** (leadliners.com/tools/text-templates/)

WEEK 13

Score it and set next year’s date

- ☐ Count the jobs you signed against the number you needed.
- ☐ Write down what worked: which ads, which texts, which towns.
- ☐ Put next year’s week 1 on your calendar now.

Done when: Next year’s start date is on your calendar.

FILL IT IN EVERY FRIDAY

YOUR WEEKLY SCOREBOARD.

Five minutes a week. If “land + budget” is low, fix the ads. If meetings are low, fix your reply time. If signed is low, fix your follow-up.

Week	Leads	Land + budget	Replied in 1 min	Meetings	Bids out	Signed
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
Total						

THE SHORT VERSION.

Week 1. Fix where leads leak.

Week 2. Fix your Google Business Profile.

Week 3. One page per job type and town.

Week 4. Write your follow-up once.

Week 5. Text the people who already know you.

Week 6. Turn on Google search ads.

Week 7. Turn on Facebook and Instagram ads.

Week 8. Check the numbers.

Week 9. Offer your open start dates.

Week 10. Follow up every open bid.

Week 11. Sell work that fits the slow months.

Week 12. Text the “not yet” leads again.

Week 13. Score it and set next year’s date.

RATHER HAVE US DO IT?

**WE RUN YOUR SITE,
GOOGLE, ADS AND FOLLOW-
UP, AND SEND YOU CALLS
FROM PEOPLE READY TO
BUILD.**

Take the free 2-minute check: leadliners.com/check/