

The First-Customer Roadmap

The exact order to work nine free channels to get customers one through ten, without spending a dollar on ads.

Ads are for later. First customers come from channels that cost time, not money. Work these in order, take the first action on at least three of them today, and treat every one as a checklist item, not an idea.

1. Personal network

Text 20 people you actually know. Individual texts, not an announcement post. Say the offer plainly: what you fix, your first-customer discount, ask who they know.

2. Local Facebook groups

Join the 5 biggest local community groups. Answer questions, be the helpful expert. Never spam. The goodwill converts within weeks.

3. Nextdoor

Same play, hyperlocal. Homeowners on Nextdoor have real problems and money to fix them.

4. Local partnerships

List the businesses that meet your customer before you do (for appliance repair: used-appliance stores, plumbers, handymen who get asked). Offer a referral fee or a trade.

5. Property managers

The crown jewel. One PM with 200 units is a recurring account, not a customer. Build a list of 20 local PMs and send the outreach message below.

6. Realtors

Every home sale triggers inspections and repairs. Get known by 10 active local agents. One coffee each.

7. Referral offers

Give every finished customer a reason to talk: for example, \$25 off the next repair for every neighbor they send. Say it at the door, in person, every time.

8. Google Business Profile

Set it up properly on day one: category, service area, photos, hours. This is where 'near me' searches actually land, and reviews compound forever.

9. Direct outreach

Doors, calls, flyers in the right neighborhoods. Uncomfortable, and it works. This is the cost of customers one through ten.

PROPERTY MANAGER OUTREACH MESSAGE

"Hi [NAME], this is [YOUR NAME], I run [COMPANY], a local [SERVICE] company. We keep response times under 24 hours for property managers and bill clean, per-unit invoices. If your current vendor is slow or inconsistent, I would love to be your backup on the next work order. Worth a quick call?"

THE RULE

Pick three channels and take the first action today. Not this week. Today. Momentum in this phase is worth more than strategy.