

HVAC Digital Marketing: Contractors Face a Triple Shift in 2026

New refrigerant rules, the expired federal 25C tax credit, and AI search are colliding. Contractors who educate confused homeowners will win the season.

PHOENIX, AZ, UNITED STATES, July 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [HVAC Digital Marketing](https://www.hvacdm.com/) (hvacdm.com), a specialized HVAC digital marketing agency operating under Digital Strategy Group (DSG), today issued guidance for HVAC contractors

navigating three simultaneous disruptions reshaping how homeowners buy heating and cooling in 2026: the federal refrigerant transition, the expiration of the federal 25C tax credit, and the rapid shift of local search to AI-generated answers.



HVAC Worker

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*Henry "Hank Hugh"
Hernandez*

As of January 1, 2026, all newly installed residential systems must use low global warming potential refrigerants such as R-32 and R-454B, ending the era of R-410A equipment. At the same time, the federal Section 25C Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit, which offered homeowners up to \$2,000 toward qualifying heat pump installations, expired on December 31, 2025 under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Layered on top of both changes, homeowners increasingly begin their contractor search inside AI platforms such as ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews, Gemini, and Perplexity, where a single recommended

company often replaces a page of results.

The agency's position is that these three shifts compound into one problem: homeowner confusion. Many homeowners believe all incentives disappeared with the federal credit, when state rebate programs, utility incentives, and income-qualified federal electrification rebates remain active in most markets. Others do not understand what the refrigerant transition means

for repairing versus replacing an aging system.

"The contractor who explains what changed, what it costs, and what incentives still exist in their market becomes the company homeowners trust and the company AI platforms recommend," said Henry "Hank Hugh" Hernandez, founder and CEO of HVAC Digital Marketing. "Confusion in the market is not a threat to contractors. It is the largest positioning opportunity the industry has seen in years, and most companies are leaving it on the table."



HVAC Employee adjusting hose

HVAC Digital Marketing recommends contractors take three actions heading into the peak cooling season. First, publish a dedicated incentives page listing every state, utility, and local rebate program active in their service area, updated as programs change. Second, publish plain-language educational content explaining the refrigerant transition and what it means for repair-or-replace decisions. Third, structure their digital presence, including Google Business Profile data, reviews, and website schema, so AI platforms can verify and recommend the business. Industry analyses indicate that strong traditional rankings alone no longer ensure visibility in AI-generated answers, making entity-level trust signals a distinct discipline from legacy search engine optimization.

The agency has integrated AI search visibility into its local SEO programs for HVAC contractors, tracking client presence across major AI platforms alongside traditional Google rankings and Google Maps positioning.

About HVAC Digital Marketing

HVAC Digital Marketing (hvacdm.com), operating under Digital Strategy Group (DSG), is a Phoenix, Arizona-based HVAC digital marketing agency specializing exclusively in the HVAC industry. Since 2010, the agency has delivered Google Ads, Meta Ads, LSA management, SEO, web design, and AI-powered CRM solutions to over 1,200 SMBs and HVAC contractors, generating \$2.5 billion+ in documented client revenue with an average first-year client growth rate of 284 percent. The agency operates an exclusive-leads-only model.

HVAC contractors interested in exploring an engagement with HVAC Digital Marketing can schedule a complimentary strategy demo at hvacdm.com or by calling 844-448-2263.

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