

WebMax Canada Study Reveals an AI Visibility Gap for Canadian Contractors

Human-led Canadian research tested ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude across four cities and four trades to see which contractors made the shortlist.

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Study Finds an AI Visibility Gap for Canadian Contractors

Canadian research examined repeated AI contractor recommendations across four cities, four trades and ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude.

WebMax Canada Study Finds an **AI Visibility Gap** for Canadian Contractors

WebMax Canada's 2026 study examines which Canadian contractors are included when ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude recommend local businesses.

Canadian research on AI visibility is beginning to appear, but relatively little publicly available work has focused specifically on repeated recommendations of local contractors across multiple Canadian cities, trades and AI services.

WebMax Canada examined that question in the Canadian Contractor AI Visibility Study 2026.

“

We wanted to see which Canadian contractors AI services actually put in front of customers, and whether the same businesses appeared when the question was asked again.”
Susan Jones, WebMax Canada

The study covered Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto, with searches for plumbing, electrical, home renovation and landscaping companies. The primary comparison focused on ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude. All markets were Canadian, and the contractors examined served those Canadian markets.

The study was undertaken to understand whether Canadian businesses that are easy to find online are also being included when customers and business buyers ask

AI services which companies they should consider.

WebMax Canada conducted the research during August 2026. The primary balanced dataset used for platform comparisons included 144 AI responses and 720 contractor recommendation

positions across 16 city-and-trade combinations.

Each city, trade and platform combination was tested three times in new chats, with the responses preserved for review and comparison.

“We wanted to approach this the way a customer would,” said Susan Jones of WebMax Canada. “If someone asks an AI service to recommend a plumber, electrician, renovator or landscaper in their city, which companies are put in front of them? We also wanted to see how often the same companies came back when the question was asked again.”

The results showed that ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude often produced different shortlists. Some businesses appeared repeatedly, while others appeared on one AI service and not another. Agreement also varied by city and trade.

The services also differed in the public information they cited or emphasized when explaining their recommendations.

A separate web-search benchmark found overlap between web visibility and AI visibility, but the two were not the same. Some established businesses that appeared prominently in the study’s web-search benchmark did not appear in the primary AI recommendation testing.

A Different Kind of Business Visibility

For a business owner, AI visibility has a practical meaning: whether the business is included when someone asks an AI service which companies they should consider.

In this study, each AI service was asked to recommend five businesses.

A regular web search can present websites, maps, reviews, directories and many companies to investigate. An AI response can narrow that field to a short list.

A business that does not appear may not be seen during that part of the customer’s research. Google Search, Google Maps, company websites, reviews, directories, professional associations and industry sources still matter. AI-assisted search gives customers and business buyers another way to research companies and narrow their choices.

How the Study Was Conducted

The WebMax Canada team manually ran the searches, preserved the original responses, organized the companies that appeared and reviewed the recommendation patterns.

The research also compared frequently recommended businesses with legitimate Canadian businesses that were not observed in the primary testing.

A separate web-search benchmark examined the relationship between web visibility and AI recommendations. The team also checked a sample of factual claims made by the AI services

about companies they recommended.

This was an observational study of recommendation behaviour, not a controlled experiment. It documents what was observed during the testing but does not establish why a particular AI service included or omitted a business.

Why the Findings Matter Beyond Four Trades

The direct testing covered four contractor categories, so the results should not be assumed to apply in exactly the same way to every Canadian industry.

The broader issue may matter to any business that depends on being researched, compared or shortlisted. That includes contractors and trades, construction and infrastructure companies, industrial and resource businesses, manufacturers and suppliers, home-service companies and professional firms.

A homeowner may be looking for a contractor. A developer may be researching construction partners. A procurement team may be building a supplier shortlist.

The buying process may be different, but the question is similar:

If someone asks an AI service which companies they should consider, does your business appear?

WebMax Canada describes the changing path as:

Searchable. Included. Selectable.

Being easy to find online is one step. Being included when an AI service creates a shortlist is another. The customer still makes the final choice.

Full Study Details Available by Request

WebMax Canada is not publishing the complete company-by-company results, detailed percentages or full platform comparisons in this announcement.

The full findings include platform comparisons, repeat recommendation patterns, city and trade differences, the web-search benchmark, public information mentioned by the AI services, a factual accuracy review, methodology and study limitations.

Full study details are available by request to Canadian businesses of all types, as well as industry organizations, journalists and publications.

To request the Canadian Contractor AI Visibility Study 2026, contact WebMax Canada through WebMax.ca or SpottableAI.ca.

About WebMax Canada

WebMax Canada / WebMax Marketing Inc. is a 100% Canadian web design, SEO and AI Visibility

company serving Canadian contractors, trades, service businesses and other companies.

For 10 years, WebMax Canada has helped Canadian businesses improve how they are found and presented online.

WebMax Canada has Google Ads-certified staff, is BBB Accredited with an A+ rating, has 5-star Google reviews and is a member of the Victoria Chamber of Commerce.

WebMax Canada is also the company behind SpottableAI™, an AI Visibility service for Canadian businesses.

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The Canadian Contractor AI Visibility Study 2026 is an observational study based on testing conducted during August 2026. It records observed inclusion in AI-generated contractor shortlists during the study. It does not measure contractor quality, leads or sales, and it does not establish why an AI service selected or omitted a particular business. AI recommendations can change over time.

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