

How **AI** Is Changing How Home & Commercial Service Brands Win Jobs, Fill Capacity, and Capture Demand



Most home and commercial service brands don't lose because they lack demand.

They lose because they miss it.

A customer calls and doesn't get an answer. A competitor shows up first in Local Services Ads.

A facility manager switches vendors because someone else flagged an issue earlier.

Those moments decide who wins the job.

And most organizations only see them after the revenue is already gone.

AI doesn't just automate marketing. It gives you a way to see demand earlier, act faster, and capture jobs your competitors miss.

This shift moves the organization from reactive maintenance to strategic positioning ahead of market demand.

Reshaping Perspectives

This report doesn't offer a set of tools or a prescribed roadmap. It's meant to reframe how to see the market itself. Because once earlier signals become visible, the constraint shifts to how organizations interpret, act on, and organize around them.

The companies that get value from AI won't be the ones that adopt the most platforms. They'll be the ones that change how decisions get made, how teams work together, and how early they're willing to act.

Here are the five core opportunities explored in this report that reflect that shift.

- **Market Awareness:** From Single Snapshots to Living Competitive Intelligence
- **Human Understanding:** From What Customers Say to What Actually Drives Their Decisions
- **Execution Optimization:** From Post-Mortems to Live Learning & Enhancement
- **Decision Advantage:** From Certainty After the Fact to Confidence Before It Exists
- **Creative Transformation:** From Big Ideas to Rapid Prototypes



1. Market Awareness: From Single Snapshots to Living Competitive Intelligence

The Old Model

For most organizations, competitive intelligence (CI) has followed a familiar rhythm: a team is tasked to research the landscape, a report is assembled, leadership reviews it, and decisions are made. Unfortunately, this is often weeks or months after the data that triggered those decisions first appeared. By the time a quarterly CI deck reaches a boardroom, the market has already moved. The issue here isn't visibility. It's how late that visibility arrives.

Ultimately, this model was built for a world where information moved slowly. It no longer fits the world we operate in today.

The Shift

“What if competitive intelligence actually helped you win jobs today?”

Instead of reviewing what competitors did last quarter, you see when they pull back spend, lose impression share, or shift messaging, while customers are still searching.

The JK Take

Most competitive intelligence systems in home and commercial services are built around what's already happened.

Teams track competitor offers or react to visible shifts in the market after they've already impacted demand. But in this category, the real competition isn't happening on the road; it's happening in the moment a customer searches, compares, and decides who to call.

Demand here is high-intent and short-lived. When a competitor pulls back spend, loses impression share, or shifts messaging in Local Services Ads, a window opens. But that window closes quickly, and by the time most organizations recognize the change, that demand has already been captured.

AI makes that possible.

It monitors things like:

- LSA impression share drops
- bid changes in your core markets
- sudden gaps in competitor visibility

And flags them while demand is still in-market.

What This Unlocks

This isn't about better reporting.

It's about capturing demand that your competitors just gave up.

- You show up when they disappear
- You take calls that they would have received
- You fill the capacity that would have gone unused

What It Takes

Capturing this advantage starts with defining which signals actually matter upstream. Not all competitive activity is equal. For example, messaging pivots matter less than bid dynamics or impression share shifts on Local Services Ads (LSAs). Raw media spend matters less than securing inventory and staffing for major facility maintenance cycles. The work goes beyond simply connecting data, but instead to deciding what is predictive versus what is merely visible.

That timing gap is where revenue is won or lost. A competitor does not need to outspend you; they just need to be present in the moment a customer is ready to act, while your system is still catching up. The pivot point in this category happens in real time, inside bid dynamics, impression share shifts, and messaging changes across LSAs, none of which show up in retrospective reports.

Living intelligence in home services means monitoring those signals as they form and detecting when a competitor is losing visibility. That allows organizations to move immediately and capture that displaced demand. In a market where 70% of buyers expect an immediate response, the advantage is not just better intelligence; it is showing up first and converting demand while it is still in-market.

2. Human Understanding: From What Customers Say to What Actually Drives Their Decisions

The Old Model

Similar to CI, the traditional audience research model is built on a standard, point-in-time sequence and approach. They're designed to capture a clear view of the customer perspective. But they're not designed to explain what that customer will do next.

Organizations invest heavily in understanding what customers think, looking at areas such as brand perception, awareness, service satisfaction, and preference. But if you think about it, by definition, this research is essentially a retrospective. It reflects what customers thought under specific conditions, at a specific point in time.

That means the gap here is both speed and relevance. By the time insight reaches a strategist, it may still be accurate — just no longer actionable.

The Shift

“Stop asking customers what they think. Start paying attention to what they do before they ever call you.”

Customers tell you everything:

- in search queries
- in call center conversations
- in service complaints and technical questions

That data shows where demand is building before bookings increase.

What This Unlocks

This isn't about better personas. It's about knowing what is about to drive calls.

- You see issues before they turn into service demand
- You understand why customers switch providers
- You catch emerging problems before they hit your pipeline

This approach also comes with greater research confidence. If you think about it, traditional research generally looks at samples, whereas an insight engine reads at scale. It can process volumes of customer language, cultural cues, and behavioural data that no human research team could feasibly analyze. This helps in finding nuances, contradictions, and emerging themes that traditional methodologies routinely miss.

When this kind of insight is always available, strategy stops being *informed* by research and starts being *powered* by it.

What It Takes

Building an insight engine requires intentional decisions about data sources, model design, and organizational workflow. The data question is often the hardest, meaning which sources hold the richest signal for your customers and category. Social listening, search trend analysis, product review mining, call center transcripts, and CRM behavioural data are all candidates, but much more could be looked at. From there, the organizational question matters just as much. For data to have impact, it requires clear routing, defined cadences, and a culture comfortable making decisions on directional intelligence rather than definitive proof.

The JK Take

Most service providers rely on research that starts after the work is already done.

Traditional research in this category is built around post-job surveys, capturing feedback from a small, often biased sample. It provides a view into satisfaction, but only after the interaction has already happened.

That feedback has value, but it does not explain why demand is increasing, shifting, or disappearing in the first place.

The more telling signals appear earlier, in the data customers generate before they ever call for service. Call transcripts, technical threads, and service-related inquiries surface patterns that don't show up in survey responses.

Spikes in questions about performance issues, unexpected cost increases, compliance concerns, or recurring service complaints are early indicators of demand forming and frustration building across the market.

Those patterns exist before they show up in bookings, contracts, or reported trends.

An insight engine changes the model by continuously reading these signals at scale and connecting them with first-party data such as location, asset type, and last contact.

That shift moves attention away from how customers describe the experience after the fact, toward understanding what is driving calls, switching, and service demand before it peaks.



3. Execution Optimization: From Post-Mortems to Live Learning & Enhancement

The Old Model

The post-mortem is a fixture of marketing culture. A campaign runs, results are reviewed, and learnings are documented for next time. Again, the problem here isn't the quality of the analysis, it's when it happens. Learning that arrives after a campaign ends can improve the next one. It can't improve the one that just ran. Every missed audience, underperforming asset, or inefficient placement is already spent.

The model assumes learning is something that happens after execution. That assumption no longer holds.

The Shift

“Campaigns shouldn't just generate leads. They should help you fill the right jobs at the right time.”

AI is making it possible to improve campaigns while they're still in market.

Instead of executing against a fixed plan and evaluating performance afterward, campaigns can continuously adapt. This means adjusting audience targeting, creative weights, media placements, and bidding strategies in real time based on performance signals that AI monitors continuously.

The shift is from execution to adaptation. A campaign is no longer something you launch and measure. Instead, it's something that gets better as it runs. A living system that gets smarter with every impression, all without waiting for a human to pull a report and make a manual adjustment.

What This Unlocks

When campaigns are designed to learn in-flight, performance doesn't stay static. It compounds learning and improves over time.

This allows teams to:

- Shift budget toward services with available capacity
- Reduce wasted spend on low-value jobs
- Increase revenue per technician per day

The organizational implication is equally important. When campaigns are treated as learning systems rather than executions, the marketing function changes. The question shifts from 'did this work?' to 'what is this teaching us, and how are we applying it more broadly?'

What It Takes

Live learning requires much more than data. It requires designing campaigns to be adjustable.

Creative needs to be modular, not fixed. Media needs the flexibility to shift. And performance signals need to be connected closely enough to execution that they can influence decisions while there is still time to act. It also requires a shift in mindset. Teams need to move from proving performance after the fact to improving it in-flight.

The organizations that get the most from this aren't the ones with the most data, but rather the ones structured to act on it.



The JK Take

In high-demand service fields like HVAC or pest control, traditional post-mortem analysis cannot fix missed revenue opportunities or unfilled service capacity from weeks ago.

Campaign performance is often evaluated after the fact, once demand has already been captured or lost. By that point, any missed audience, underperforming offering, or inefficient allocation is already spent.

Those insights may inform the next campaign, but they do nothing to recover the revenue already lost.

The more meaningful signals are generated while the work is being performed. Live booking data reflects shifts between residential emergency repairs and commercial preventative maintenance, as well as changes in the volume and quality of incoming inquiries.

Those signals show where demand is actually moving, while there is still time to capture it.

Live learning enables campaigns to adjust in real time, shifting budget between different service offerings or job types (e.g., emergency vs preventative maintenance) based on booking patterns and directing high-quality inquiries to the appropriate sales teams through automated lead scoring.

But those adjustments only matter if they are tied to actual business outcomes.

Full-funnel connectivity between ad platforms and Field Service Management systems ensures that optimization reflects revenue, contract value, and service capacity, rather than just clicks or leads.

This shifts campaigns from fixed executions to systems that can adapt while demand is still being captured.



4. Decision Advantage: From Certainty After the Fact to Confidence Before It Exists

The Old Model

As we've seen across these shifts discussed, most organizations are operating on information that describes what has already happened. Nowhere is this more consequential than with the decisions that shape the business itself.

Leaders are being asked to make forward-looking choices — what to stock, where to invest, what to prioritize, how to allocate precious company resources — using inputs that are, by definition, backward-looking.

Trends reporting gives you certainty, but only after the fact. Strategy requires acting before that certainty exists, and that tension is shaping how decisions are made.

The Shift“

“What if reporting stopped explaining the past and started preparing you for the future?”

AI unlocks predictive foresight at a scale and speed that was previously inaccessible outside of the largest, most technically sophisticated organizations. By analyzing behavioural, transactional, and environmental signals such as search trend velocity, social sentiment shifts, seasonal patterns, economic indicators, and category-level demand signals, AI models can identify where demand is building before it surfaces in sales data. Essentially, organizations can see what's coming rather than confirming what happened.

This shift can be described as moving from informed reactions to strategic decisions. When you know that demand for a category is building two months before it peaks, you're able to allocate budgets differently. When you can model audience churn before it happens, you choose to retain customers rather than replace them. When you can simulate the likely impact of a strategic decision before committing to it, you're able to invest with confidence rather than hope.

What This Unlocks

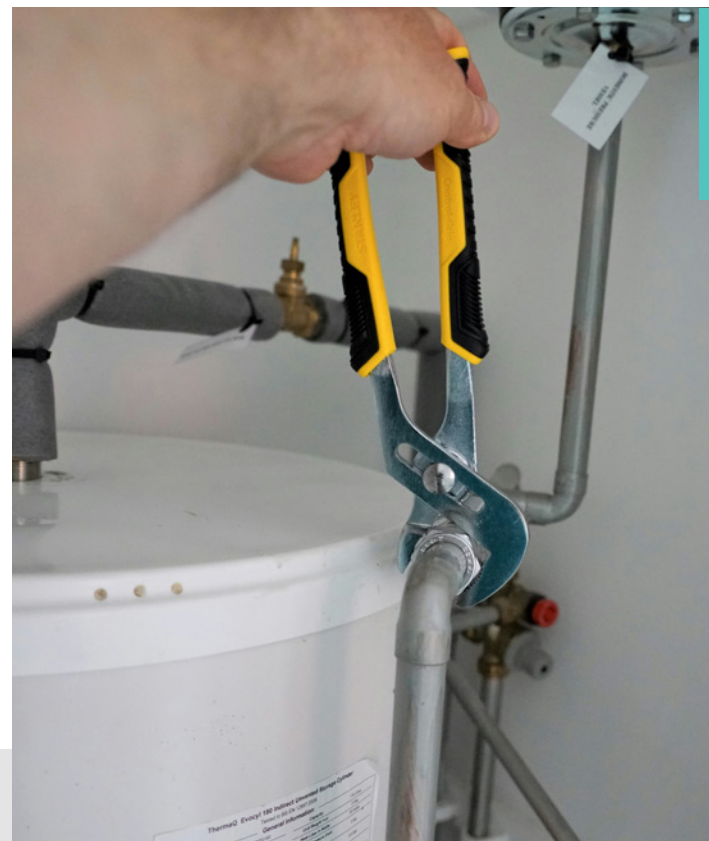
You stop reacting to demand and start preparing for it.

- Staff up before call volume spikes
- Secure inventory before shortages hit
- Shift budget before competitors react

Ultimately, teams move from justifying decisions after the fact to making them with a clearer view of what's *likely* to happen next.

What It Takes

Predictive foresight requires clean, connected data, and, ideally, longitudinal data that captures behavioural patterns over time. It requires model development that is specific to the category and context, not generic. And it requires organizational willingness to act on probabilistic signals rather than waiting for certainty. That means leaders need to become comfortable acting on directional confidence rather than waiting for confirmation that only arrives after the opportunity has passed.



The JK Take

Most reporting in this category is built to explain the past, not prepare for what's coming.

Decisions in this category are often made using historical job data, past performance, and completed service cycles. That information provides clarity, but only after demand has already peaked or shifted.

By the time a trend shows up in reporting, competitors have already acted on it.

The more useful signals appear earlier, in the environmental and behavioral data that precede demand. Changes in weather patterns and spikes in search activity can indicate where service needs are building before the phone starts ringing.

Those signals don't confirm demand, but they do indicate where it is heading.

By layering those inputs with historical job data, predictive models can identify demand up to 10 days before it peaks. That window allows providers to adjust staffing, secure inventory, and prepare for upcoming service cycles while the opportunity is still forming.

Emerging tools like Contact360 extend this visibility further by tracking and scoring sales conversations within the CRM, helping teams identify shifts in demand before they are fully reflected in the pipeline or revenue.

But seeing earlier is only part of the advantage.

Capturing that advantage requires acting before demand is fully confirmed.

Instead of waiting for confirmation in completed jobs or performance reports, organizations need to move on directional confidence, making decisions before the outcome is fully visible.



5. Creative Transformation: From Big Ideas to Rapid Prototypes

The Old Model

The traditional creative process is built around constraint. Big ideas are expensive to produce, hard to test, and risky to stand behind. So teams do what makes sense. They narrow quickly, refine heavily, and commit early. Not because it leads to the best ideas, but because it feels like the safest path forward.

Unfortunately, this shifts risk to exactly the wrong place. The biggest decisions, such as what to say, how to position and which idea to back, are made with the least evidence. When the cost of being wrong is high, the rational response is to stay close to what's already worked. Over time, bold thinking doesn't get filtered out because it's bad. It gets filtered out because it's unproven.

And in that equation, playing it safe starts to feel like the only responsible choice.

The Shift“

*“Creative isn't the bottleneck.
Testing is.”*

Most brands play it safe because it's expensive to be wrong.

AI removes that constraint.

You can test dozens of ideas before committing to production.

The creative process then evolves as a result. Tissue sessions replace final reveals and flexible, directional ideas are shared earlier and shaped collaboratively, rather than presented as finished work requiring approval. Creative review can then be tested through creative simulation. AI can model how synthetic audience panels are likely to respond to different creative territories, highlighting objections and opportunities before production begins. The big idea is no longer the output of a long, expensive funnel. It's the starting point for a rapid, iterative exploration that reduces risk and increases the range of what's possible.

What This Unlocks

When big ideas can be tested before they are produced, the risk of being wrong changes.

This allows teams to:

- More differentiated creative (not stock photo ads)
- Faster testing of service-specific messaging
- Higher-performing campaigns before launch

The impact isn't just more ideas; instead, it's better decisions about which ideas to back.

Creative teams are no longer choosing between safe and risky. Now with more speculative data, these teams can make better creative judgments, leaving room for the kind of bold, unexpected work that emerges when there is safety to explore.

What It Takes

This shift requires more than new tools. It requires a different creative process. Teams need to become comfortable sharing earlier-stage ideas, testing them before they are fully formed, and using those predictive signals to guide direction.

AI then becomes an input to creative judgment, but never a replacement for it. This is where the human eye and human decision-making are critical to ensure a unique creative perspective and strong strategic direction. The organizations that benefit most are the ones that pair expanded creative possibilities with the willingness to act on what they learn in ways that matter most for their own brand and customers.



The JK Take

This category is full of the same ads.

Same trucks. Same technicians. Same promises.

Not because brands lack ideas.

Because they don't have a safe way to test them.

Rapid prototyping changes that:

- test messaging for emergency vs maintenance
- test offers for different commercial segments
- test positioning before production

You don't need better ideas. You need to know which ones will work before you spend.

It's about whether your business is built to **act fast enough to win.**

Most organizations in this category aren't limited by access to data. They're limited by when they act on it.

The signals that shape demand already exist. The difference is whether they show up early enough to change a decision, and whether your organization is structured to respond when they do.

This is what all five shifts point to. Not better information, but earlier action. Not more insight, but different decisions.

This isn't a set of incremental improvements. It's a different operating model.

The organizations that move first won't just move faster. They'll make decisions earlier, with more confidence, while outcomes are still taking shape. And over time, those decisions will compound.

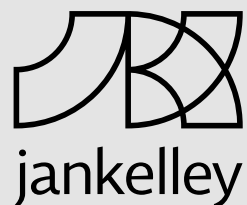
This shift has little to do with the tech you adopt. It's about how much of your current model is built on waiting for certainty and what it would take to operate before it arrives.

"The question now is not 'can we?' — it's 'what if we did?'"



At Jan Kelley, we're actively exploring how this shift is playing out across the category.

The next step isn't evaluating tools. It's understanding where your current marketing ecosystem is built on lagging signals and what would need to change to act earlier.



Get in touch to start that conversation.
Connect with Shannon Ballard at
sballard@jankelley.com