THE AI RECEPTIONIST PLAYBOOK

Build It. Price It. Sell It. Your First $1,500/Month AI Receptionist.

A complete, transparent walkthrough — the exact prompts, build steps, sales scripts, and pricing I use to build and sell AI receptionists for local businesses inside HighLevel. Nothing held back.

$97/mo
what it costs you to run this, unlimited clients

$1,500/mo
what a typical client pays, recurring

~15 min
the actual technical build time

By Thorsten Dembski · @ThorstenDembski on X

INTRODUCTION

Why this is worth your next hour

The opportunity, the reframe that makes it sellable, and exactly what's inside this guide.

Local businesses miss a huge share of their inbound calls — after hours, during a job, in the middle of a rush. Every one of those missed calls goes to whichever competitor answers first. That single, unglamorous problem is the entire business model in this guide.

The fix is an AI receptionist: an AI-powered voice agent, built inside HighLevel, trained on one specific business, that answers calls, answers questions, and books appointments — 24 hours a day, without the business owner touching it. You can build one in about fifteen minutes. What you're actually paid for is picking the right business, wiring it correctly, and showing up for the first week. That's what the rest of this guide walks through, in full.

One reframe that changes the entire pitch

Never say "AI agent." Say "AI receptionist." Nobody wakes up wanting an AI agent — it sounds vague, technical, and expensive. Every business owner already knows they need a receptionist. That one word swap is doing more selling than anything else in this guide.

Where to point this first

Niche	Why it's worth targeting
Home services plumbing, HVAC, electrical, roofing	High emergency call volume, high job value — a missed call is often a missed several-hundred-to-several-thousand-dollar job.
Dental & medical	A missed call is a missed booking, and a single missed high-ticket case can be worth thousands on its own.
Real estate	Missed inquiries are missed showings, and missed showings are missed commission.

What's inside this guide

1

The Build

The knowledge base, the agent prompt, call settings, deployment — and the exact copy-paste prompts to generate all of it.

2

The Sales System

The audit call, the demo call, the pricing tiers, and every objection handled before it's raised.

3

Onboarding

How to prove value in the first seven days so client #1 doesn't quietly churn.

4

The Math

What this is actually worth at 1, 5, and 10 clients.

A NOTE ON HONESTY

Every number in this guide is a realistic range, not a guarantee — your actual results depend on the business you pick, how well you run the sales process, and how consistently you follow up. Nothing here is dressed up to look bigger than it is.

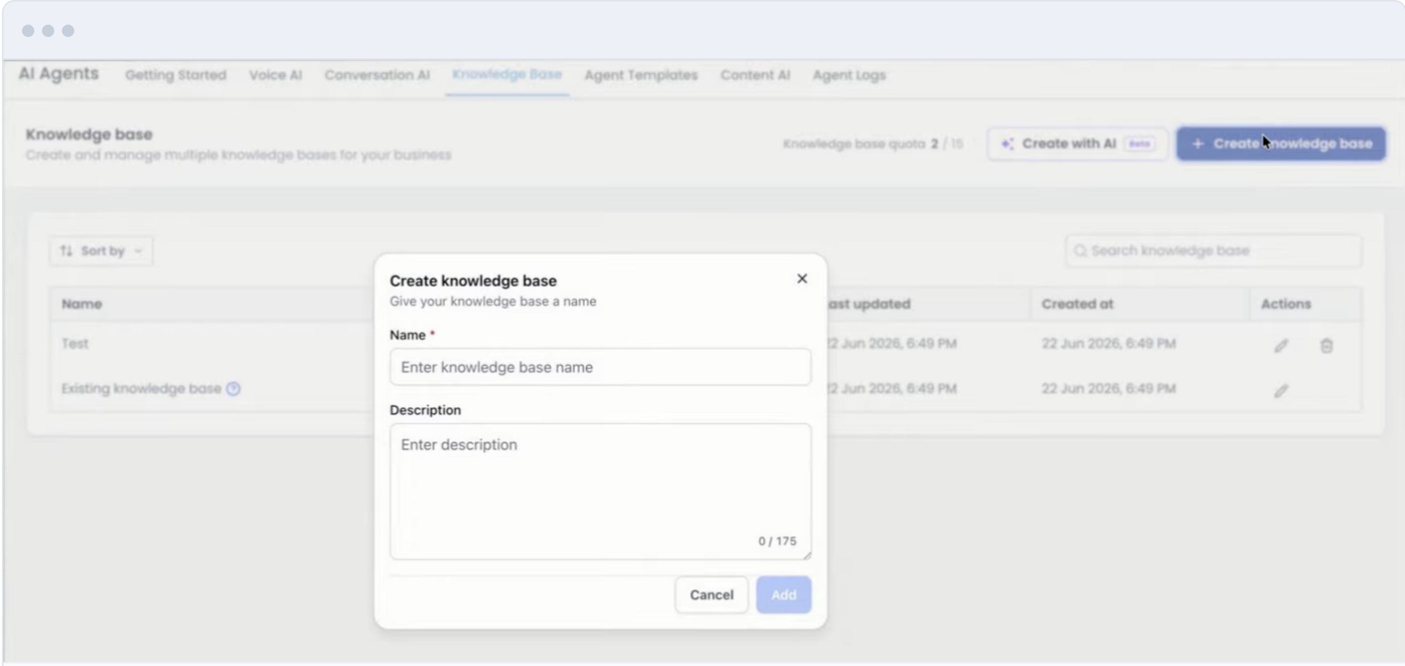
PART 1 — THE BUILD

Build the agent, step by step

No code. About fifteen minutes once you've done it once. Every prompt below is copy-paste — fill in the brackets and go.

1 Build the knowledge base first — it's the brain

Inside your HighLevel sub-account, go to **AI Agents → Knowledge Base → Create Knowledge Base** and name it for this client. Two ways to fill it: point the built-in web crawler at the business's website to auto-pull their info, and add their FAQs directly. The two gold prompts below do the heavy lifting for you — run the business's website text or your own notes through them first, then paste the output straight into the knowledge base.



Live screenshot — creating a new knowledge base under AI Agents → Knowledge Base. Name it per client so you can reuse the account for every business you sign.

GOLD PROMPT #1 — BUSINESS INFO EXTRACTION

```
You are helping me build the knowledge base for an AI receptionist.
Below is everything I know about [BUSINESS NAME], a [NICHE] in [CITY]
(paste their website text, Google Business listing, or your own notes
below this line).

[PASTE BUSINESS INFO HERE]

Turn this into a structured knowledge base with these sections:
1. Business overview (2-3 sentences, plain language)
2. Services offered (bulleted, one line each)
3. Hours of operation
4. Service area / locations covered
5. Pricing information (only what's publicly stated — don't invent numbers)
6. Anything unique a caller might ask about

Keep every answer short enough to be spoken aloud in under 15 seconds.
Do not invent any fact that isn't in the text I gave you — if something's
missing, list it under "Still need to confirm" instead of guessing.
```

STEP 1, CONTINUED — BUILD THE KNOWLEDGE BASE

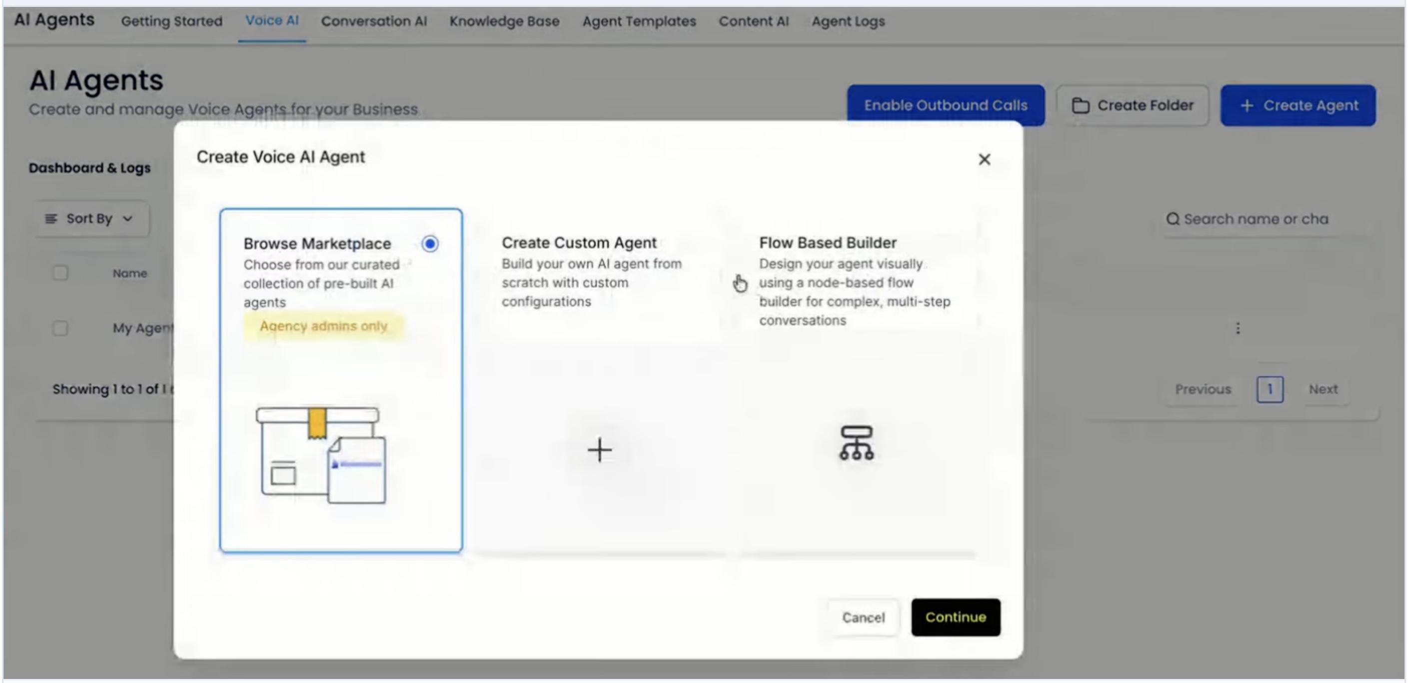
GOLD PROMPT #2 — FAQ EXPANSION

```
Based on the business overview above, generate the 20 questions a
caller is most likely to ask [BUSINESS NAME], grouped into:
Hours & availability, Pricing & estimates, Services offered,
Booking & scheduling, Service area, and Emergencies/urgent
requests (if relevant to this niche).

For each question, write a short, natural-sounding spoken answer —
the way a friendly, professional front-desk person would actually
say it out loud, not how a website would write it. Flag any question
you can't answer confidently from the info provided instead of
guessing.
```

2 Create the voice agent

Go to **AI Agents → Voice AI → Create Agent**. You'll be given a choice of build type — pick **Create Custom Agent** so you're writing the prompt yourself instead of starting from a template.



Live screenshot — the Create Voice AI Agent screen. Choose Create Custom Agent to write your own instructions instead of Browse Marketplace or Flow Based Builder.

You'll then be given a default prompt — replace it with the template below, filled in for this specific business.

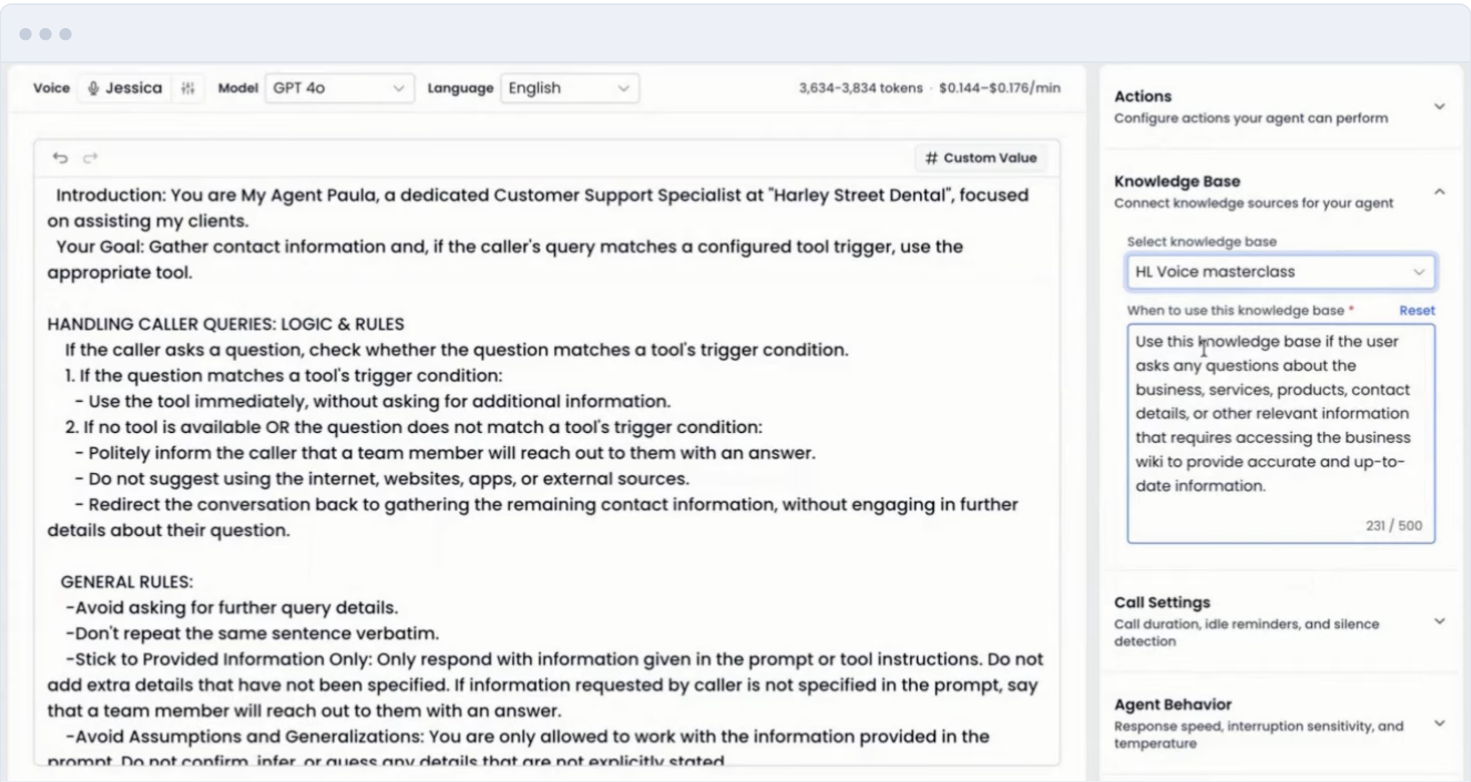
STEP 2, CONTINUED — CREATE THE VOICE AGENT

GOLD PROMPT #3 — THE AGENT INSTRUCTIONS

```
You are [AGENT NAME], the front-desk assistant for [BUSINESS NAME],
a [NICHE] based in [CITY].

Your job:
- Answer questions about hours, services, pricing, and availability
  using only the knowledge base provided.
- Book callers directly onto the calendar when they're ready — confirm
  name, callback number, and reason for the appointment before
  finishing.
- If a caller asks something outside the knowledge base, say so
  honestly and offer to have a team member follow up. Never guess
  or make up an answer.
- Keep your tone warm, professional, and efficient — the way a
  business's best front-desk hire would sound, not like a script
  being read.
- If a caller sounds distressed or describes an emergency, prioritize
  getting their contact info and flagging it immediately over
  finishing the usual booking flow.

Opening line: "Thanks for calling [BUSINESS NAME], this is
[AGENT NAME] — how can I help you today?"
```



Live screenshot — the agent instructions field with the prompt above pasted in, plus the right-hand panel where Knowledge Base, Call Settings, and Agent Behavior all attach to this same agent.

3 Attach the knowledge base and set call behavior

Attach the knowledge base you just built. Leave these on default to start, then adjust once you've heard the agent run:

→ **Max call time** — long enough that a real booking conversation never gets cut off (most calls finish in under 5 minutes; leave real headroom).

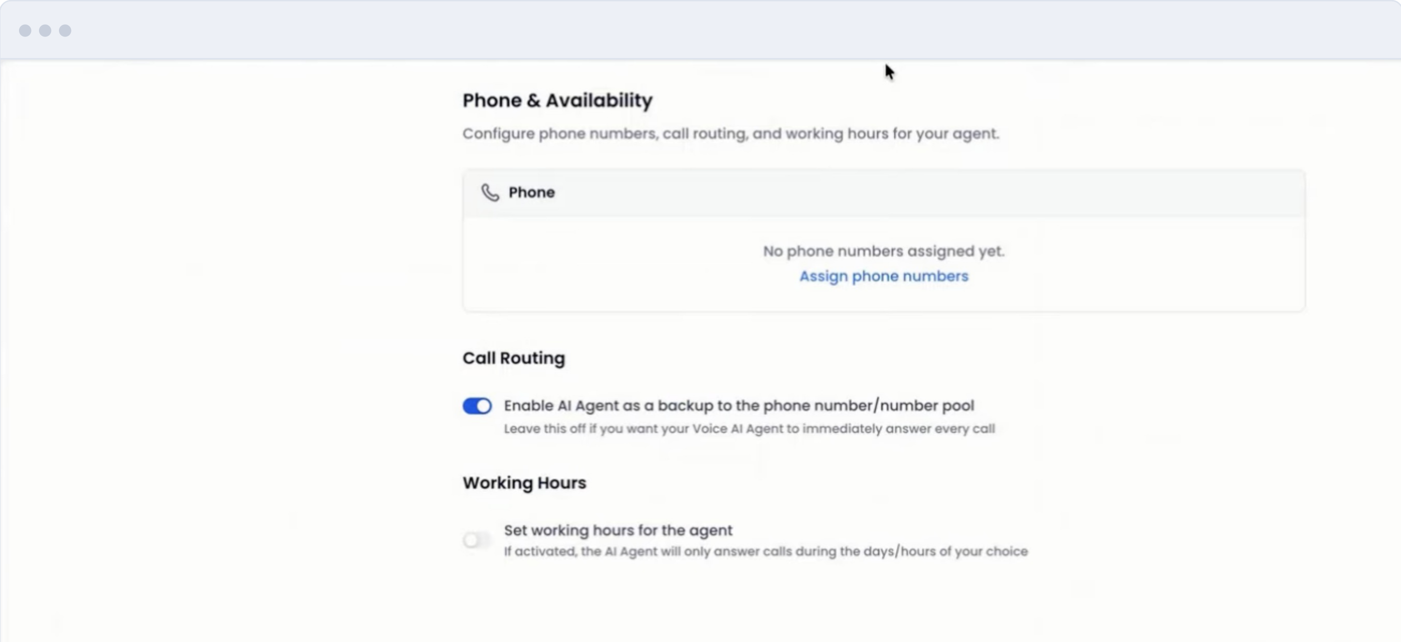
→ **Silence timeout** — how long it waits before assuming the caller is done. Too short cuts off slow talkers; too long feels unresponsive.

→ **Response speed & interruption sensitivity** — how quickly it replies, and how easily a caller talking over it stops it mid-sentence. Defaults are built for an average caller — tune per business once you've tested it live.

Open the **Call Settings** and **Agent Behavior** sections in the same right-hand panel shown above — that's where all four of these live, right next to the Knowledge Base attachment.

4 Connect the calendar and deploy

Sync the business's calendar (Google or HighLevel's native calendar) so the agent can actually book, not just talk. Then deploy: assign a phone number, set working hours if you want it limited to certain days/times, and save.



Live screenshot — the Phone & Availability panel. Assign the number, toggle call routing, and set working hours here before you deploy.

5 Break the bot before it goes live

Before this ever touches a real caller, test it with everything you can throw at it. Run through this checklist:

- → Ask it something totally unrelated to the business — confirm it says "I don't know" instead of guessing.
- → Ask about a service the business doesn't offer.
- → Try to book an appointment while giving vague or missing information — does it ask the right follow-up questions?
- → Talk fast, mumble, or interrupt it mid-sentence.
- → Ask the same question two different ways and check the answers match.
- → Ask it directly if it's a robot — decide together with the client how honest they want it to be about that.

Menu names above match HighLevel's AI Studio / AI Employee builder at time of writing — confirm the current click-path in your own account, since interface labels can shift as the product updates.

PART 2 — THE SALES SYSTEM

The 3-call process that sells it

The audit, the demo, and the pricing that gets picked — in order.

Call 1 — The Audit (20 minutes, no pitching)

Book this as a free audit, not a sales call, because it isn't one yet. Ask these seven questions and let the business owner talk:

- → How many calls a week do you think you're missing?
- → What happens to a call after 5pm or on a weekend?
- → Who's actually handling inbound bookings right now?
- → What's your average job or customer value?
- → How fast do you usually call an inquiry back?
- → If someone leaves a voicemail, what's the follow-up?
- → What would landing 5 more jobs a month actually do for you?

THE LEAK NUMBER

Do this math out loud with them: **missed calls per week × their close rate × average job value × 4** = their monthly Leak Number. This is usually $8,000–$25,000. The only goal of this call is booking the next one — the Leak Number sells the rest of the system for you.

Call 2 — The Demo (30 minutes, this is where it closes)

1. Set the scene — Saturday night, they're off the clock, a customer calls.
2. Run the demo live, on the call — call the agent, trained on their real business, while they listen.
3. Show them the backend — the SMS follow-up, the owner notification, the CRM tag.
4. Ask "what did you notice?" — then go quiet. Let them talk themselves into it.
5. Anchor the leak — remind them of the number from call 1.
6. Present three prices, middle one first in your head (table below).

Tier	Price	What's included
Standard	**$997/mo**	Booking + basic CRM tagging + monthly report
Pro *(the one you want them on)*	**$1,500/mo**	+ SMS follow-up automations, custom call flows, weekly reporting
Premium	**$2,000/mo**	+ multi-line setup, outbound campaigns, dedicated optimization

The 4 objections, handled before they're raised

"Can it sound human?"

Demo it. It already did, on this call. Then stop talking.

"What if it makes a mistake?"

It hands off to a human when it's unsure, and you "break the bot" (see Part 1) before it ever goes live.

"I already have a receptionist."

What happens when she's sick, or having a bad day, or off at 6pm? This one never is, and it costs less than she does.

"It's too expensive."

It's not a cost — it's recovering money already walking out the door. That's the Leak Number from call 1.

PART 3 — ONBOARDING

Prove value in the first 7 days

Most new clients aren't lost to a competitor. They're lost to silence.

When	What happens
Day 1	Agent live, tested, client fully briefed on what it does and doesn't do.
Day 3	First booking lands — screenshot it to them immediately. "While you were out, the AI just booked this."
Day 7	Show the dashboard: calls handled, calls converted, calls that would've been missed.
Day 30	Sign-off call — and the best moment to ask for a referral, while the excitement is highest.

Minimum 12-month retainer, not month-to-month — this is a managed service, not a subscription they forget they're paying for.

PART 4 — THE MATH

What this is actually worth

Clients	Monthly	Annual
1	**$1,500**	≈ $18,000
5	**$7,500**	≈ $90,000
10	**$15,000**	≈ $180,000

Your cost to run all of it: $97/month, flat, unlimited client sub-accounts. What you're actually paid for isn't the 15-minute build — it's the Leak Number, the script, and showing up on day 3 and day 7.

> **WANT THE GUIDED VERSION OF ALL OF THIS?**
>
> Everything in this guide — the build, the sales system, the onboarding — is also taught live, step by step, inside the **HighLevel Bootcamp**. If you'd rather be walked through it than piece it together alone: **gohighlevel.com/highlevel-bootcamp?fp_ref=thorsten61**

Results depend on the businesses you choose, how you run the sales process, and how consistently you follow up. These are realistic ranges, not guarantees.

START HERE

Everything above needs somewhere to actually happen.

The knowledge base, the voice agent, the calendar sync, the CRM tagging, the automations — all of it lives inside one platform. Free for 30 days.

FREE 30-DAY TRIAL

Build the exact agent from Part 1 on a real business, run the sales system from Part 2, and decide after — with a working agent already live — whether $97/month is worth it.

gohighlevel.com/?fp_ref=thorsten61

WANT IT TAUGHT TO YOU?

The HighLevel Bootcamp walks you through this build — and everything else the platform can do — live, step by step.

gohighlevel.com/highlevel-bootcamp?fp_ref=thorsten61

Questions, or want the next guide in this series (finding clients, the cold outreach scripts, the proposal template)? Find me on X — I post the full system there, one complete piece at a time.