
DARKLY'S DOSSIER

CHATGPT ADS ARE HERE

Everything Real Estate Agents Need to
Know Before Spending a Dollar

HOW AGENTS AI / VIRTUAL RESULTS

Current through August 28, 2026

VIRTUALRESULTS.COM/CHATGPT-ADS



THE DECISION STARTS BEFORE THE LEAD FORM

A future client may spend several turns explaining the problem before they are ready to click anything.



The opportunity is not a listing impression. It is a useful next step inside a decision.

The best ChatGPT ad does not interrupt this moment. It understands the job being worked through and offers a relevant next step without pretending to be the answer.

WHAT A MEANINGFUL MOMENT CAN LOOK LIKE

ORIGINAL EXAMPLE - GENERAL REAL-ESTATE SERVICE, NOT A LISTING

A DECISION UNFOLDS

YOU

We may sell next spring, but I do not know whether to renovate first.

CHATGPT

Start with the likely sale window, the repairs that affect value or inspection risk, and the cost of carrying the work. Which rooms worry you most?

YOU

The kitchen is dated, and we would need the proceeds before buying again.

CHATGPT

Then compare a light-prep plan with a larger renovation, and map the buy-before-you-sell sequence before committing money.

SPONSORED

Build the home-sale plan before the pressure arrives

Preparation, pricing, timing, and what comes next.

GET THE GUIDE

Original illustrative interface. The ad is separate from the answer and promotes a general service, not a listing.

The ad earns the click only if the offer respects the conversation that came before it.

A NOTE FROM THE PRACTITIONER'S SIDE



RYAN ROCKWOOD / VIRTUAL RESULTS

I have spent more than 20 years teaching real-estate marketing and doing the work for agents nationwide. Before that, I sold real estate myself. New channels are exciting. The hard part is still the same: offer, message, tracking, follow-up, and the discipline to keep improving all five.

WHAT THE EVIDENCE ACTUALLY SAYS

The case for attention is about depth and decision support, not a made-up stopwatch.

+50%

more messages per day

six months after signup

2X

as many distinct tasks tried

six months after signup

49%

of sampled messages were Asking

guidance, information, and decisions

ONE PUBLIC WEB ESTIMATE

12:42 average visit duration

Semrush estimate for chatgpt.com, July 2026

Sources: OpenAI Signals and usage research; Semrush website panel. Web estimate is not OpenAI platform data and does not represent app use.

Sources and methodological cautions are listed in the evidence chapter and source notes.

OPEN THE DOSSIER WHERE YOU NEED IT

Every chapter title below is clickable in the PDF and Word edition.

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The quick truth: the ad is only the visible part. The offer, policy, page, tracking, CRM, creative, and weekly decisions are the operating system.

A note before we open the file



A practical briefing, current to the date on the cover.

ChatGPT advertising is moving quickly. This guide describes the beta platform and policies available on August 28, 2026. Screens, labels, objectives, countries, bidding guidance, and policies can change. Check the official OpenAI Ads Help Center before you launch.

This is practical marketing education, not legal advice. Real estate advertising also lives under Fair Housing law, state licensing rules, brokerage policy, MLS rules, and whatever unusually specific memo arrived from compliance at 4:47 on Friday.

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1. THE TWO-MINUTE BRIEFING



Darkly has entered the briefing.

Here is the useful version.

ChatGPT Ads are paid placements that may appear near a relevant conversation. OpenAI says the ad is labeled as sponsored, visually separated from the organic answer, and does not influence what ChatGPT says.

In the United States, self-service access is available through OpenAI Ads Manager Beta. Ads may appear to eligible adults using the Free or Go plans. Plus, Pro, Business, Enterprise, and Edu accounts do not receive ads. Market and account eligibility remain in beta and may change; advertiser self-service follows OpenAI's current country list.

The buying options currently include reach-oriented CPM, click-oriented CPC, and conversion-optimized CPC. OpenAI recommends beginning a CPC test around a \$3-\$5 maximum bid per click. That is bidding guidance, not a promise that a click will cost exactly that amount and certainly not evidence that the click will become a commission check.

The auction considers relevance. OpenAI says selection can consider the conversation's context and intent, the landing page, title and copy, advertiser context hints, and, when personalization is enabled, select broader ChatGPT signals. OpenAI does not publish the complete weighting, and neither a hint nor a bid guarantees delivery.

Now the part every real estate agent should read twice:

OpenAI's current ad policy prohibits ads for individual housing rentals or sales.

Chapter 3 maps that boundary into practical real-estate offers.

An ad may lead to a platform that contains homes, but the ad and its landing page cannot reference a specific listing. So the first useful question is not, "How do I advertise 123 Main Street?" The first useful question is, "What

service or resource can I offer a person who is already thinking about buying, selling, moving, pricing, or planning?"

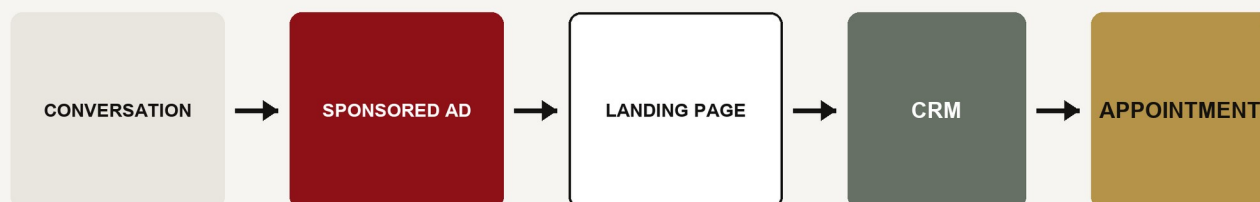
That changes the campaign from a listing promotion into a lead system.

And a lead system is where the work begins.

DARKLY'S NOTE

The ad is not the machine. It is the brass button on the machine.

THE AD IS THE BRASS BUTTON, NOT THE MACHINE



The campaign becomes valuable only when every handoff is visible.

The campaign ends only when the business can see what happened.

2. WHAT A CHATGPT AD ACTUALLY IS

Search advertising trained us to think in keywords. Social advertising trained us to think in feeds and audiences. ChatGPT Ads introduce another useful mental model: the ad appears inside a conversation people are already having about a need, decision, or next step.

Picture a consumer asking questions such as:

- What should I do before selling a house I inherited?
- How do I compare neighborhoods without spending every weekend driving around?
- Is it smarter to buy before I sell?
- What does a listing agent actually do before a home goes live?
- How should I prepare for a cross-country move?

An eligible ad may appear below the answer as a clearly labeled sponsored placement. The advertiser does not rewrite the answer. The ad is a separate invitation.

That difference matters. You are not buying the right to become ChatGPT's recommendation. You are buying a chance to be useful at a relevant moment.

Why the moment may be meaningful

The strongest case is not that every ChatGPT conversation is commercial. It is that many people use the product to explain a problem, ask follow-up questions, compare tradeoffs, and make a decision with more context on the table than a short query usually contains.

OpenAI's June 2026 longitudinal Signals analysis found that, six months after signup, users in the study sent **50% more messages per day** and had tried **twice as many distinct tasks** as they had in their first month. That is evidence of deeper and broader use over time. It is not evidence that every individual session lasts 50% longer.

OpenAI's large consumer-use study classified about **49% of sampled messages as Asking** and **40% as Doing**. Asking includes guidance, information, planning, and decision support. It does not mean 49% of messages are shopping conversations. It does mean advice and decisions are central enough to the product that advertisers should design for the actual job a person is working through.

How long do people stay?

OpenAI does not publish a current average session-duration statistic. One public web-measurement estimate from Semrush put the average visit to chatgpt.com at **12 minutes 42 seconds in July 2026**. Treat that as directional context only: it is a modeled website estimate, not OpenAI platform data, and it does not represent app use or tell us how long any particular ad was visible.

The useful conclusion is modest: ChatGPT can be a multi-minute, multi-turn environment. Relevance has time to become more specific as the person explains the decision.

“Showing up in ChatGPT helps us build consideration at that moment.”

Alec Shao, Performance Marketing Manager at Newegg, in an OpenAI-published advertiser case study. OpenAI reported that Newegg saw 3x return on ad spend across campaigns over 28 days and 7x during a two-week sale campaign. Those are one advertiser's reported results, not a real-estate benchmark or a promise.

How this differs from Google Search

Google Search Ads remain a query-and-results system. Google's own documentation says keywords match ads with the terms people search, while broad match can also use landing pages, account signals, previous searches,

and query meaning. ChatGPT Ads begin with an evolving conversation and OpenAI says current-conversation context and intent can inform ad relevance.

Neither model is automatically better. They create different briefs for the marketer.

GOOGLE SEARCH AND CHATGPT ADS START DIFFERENTLY

This is a product-surface comparison, not a performance claim.

GOOGLE SEARCH ADS	CHATGPT ADS
STARTS WITH A search query	STARTS WITH An evolving conversation
MATCHING Keywords, query meaning, account and landing-page signals	MATCHING Current conversation context and intent, plus ad and landing-page signals
PLACEMENT Around search results	PLACEMENT A labeled ad below a response
OPERATOR'S JOB Mine search terms, negatives, bids, ads, and conversions	OPERATOR'S JOB Map decision moments, context hints, creative, and conversions

Both still require a useful offer, a coherent landing page, conversion tracking, compliance review, and disciplined optimization.

A product-surface comparison, not a performance claim.

Google's conversion documentation and OpenAI's measurement documentation agree on the part that matters after the click: define the valuable action, install and test the measurement, then optimize toward a business outcome rather than applause from the dashboard.

Where ads appear

OpenAI's consumer documentation says ads may be shown to eligible adults on Free and Go plans. Paid Plus, Pro, Business, Enterprise, and Edu accounts remain ad-free. Ads are not shown to users identified as under 18, and OpenAI restricts placement around sensitive or inappropriate contexts.

Not every eligible conversation will show an ad. Inventory, policy, geography, device, relevance, bidding, and review status can all affect delivery.

ILLUSTRATIVE INTERFACE MOCKUP - NOT A LIVE CAMPAIGN

ChatGPT

You

What should I do now if I may sell my home next spring?

ChatGPT

Start with your timing, likely repairs, pricing questions, and where you would live next. A local planning conversation can help you sequence those decisions.

SPONSORED

A calmer way to plan your home sale

Build a practical preparation, pricing, and timing plan before the pressure arrives.

GET THE GUIDE

Illustrative interface mockup, not a screenshot of a live campaign.

How the auction works

OpenAI describes the current auction as relevance-weighted and second-price.

In plain English:

- Your bid matters.
- Relevance matters.
- The winner generally pays based on the next-best competitive result rather than automatically paying the full maximum bid.

The useful conclusion is not "bid less." The useful conclusion is that a weak offer with vague context is not rescued by enthusiasm.

The three buying choices

CPM: buy attention

Use a reach or views objective when the job is awareness. You pay for impressions, usually expressed as cost per thousand impressions.

Good fit: a local brand campaign, a major market report, an educational event, or a brokerage introduction.

Management question: Are we reaching enough of the right conversations, or merely buying inexpensive visibility?

CPC: buy visits

Use a clicks objective when the job is traffic. You pay for valid clicks. OpenAI's current guidance suggests starting around a \$3-\$5 maximum CPC bid.

Good fit: a seller-planning guide, valuation request, relocation briefing, buyer consultation, or newsletter.

Management question: Did the click continue into a meaningful action?

oCPC: optimize toward a conversion

Conversion-optimized CPC attempts to find more people likely to complete one selected tracked event while still billing on a click basis. It requires conversion tracking and a supported standard event.

OpenAI currently publishes no recommended oCPC bid. Its Bid Cap is a conversion-oriented input used to compete in click auctions; it is not a maximum CPC, not the price paid per conversion, and not a guaranteed CPA. Billing remains based on valid clicks.

Good fit: a campaign with enough reliable conversion data and a clear event such as **lead_created** or **appointment_scheduled**.

Management question: Is the optimization event truly valuable, and are we feeding the system clean data?

CONSULTANT'S ASIDE

Do not optimize toward the easiest event simply because it produces a handsome chart. A page view is not a lead. A lead is not an appointment. An appointment is not a client. Pick the deepest event you can measure reliably and generate often enough for the campaign to learn.

3. THE REAL-ESTATE REALITY CHECK

This chapter may save you from building the wrong campaign beautifully.

You cannot run the obvious listing ad

OpenAI's current housing policy says ads for an individual housing rental or sale are prohibited. The ad may link to a platform containing listings only when neither the ad creative nor the landing page references a specific listing.

That means these obvious concepts are poor candidates:

- "Just listed: 123 Main Street"
- "Tour this \$1.2 million home Saturday"
- A hero image, price, and address for one property
- A landing page dedicated to the advertised home

The policy does not make real estate advertising impossible. It changes the offer.

Advertise the helpful path

The campaign should promote a service, resource, or planning step that serves a broader need.

Examples worth testing, subject to brokerage and legal review:

- "Get the 2026 Westside Seller Planning Guide"
- "Request a pricing-strategy consultation"
- "Build a buy-before-you-sell plan"
- "Get the monthly local market briefing"
- "Plan a relocation conversation"
- "See how our home-search process works"
- "Book a first-time-buyer planning session"
- "Get the inherited-property decision checklist"
- "Understand the steps before listing"

The distinction is simple:

Do not advertise the house. Advertise the useful next step around the housing decision.

OpenAI policy eligibility and Fair Housing compliance are separate questions. A general real-estate service, valuation, mortgage, or planning offer can still be housing-related advertising. "No named listing" is not a Fair Housing safe harbor.

REAL-ESTATE OFFER MAP

SPECIFIC LISTING

- X Address
- X Price
- X Property photo
- X Open house
- X One home for sale or rent

SERVICE OR RESOURCE

- + Seller planning guide
- + Buyer consultation
- + Market report
- + Agent or brokerage service
- + General search platform

Current OpenAI policy prohibits ads for individual housing rentals or sales.

Specific housing listings are prohibited under current OpenAI ad policy; service and resource campaigns remain subject to review.

Fair Housing still applies

Housing-ad law does not disappear because the ad appears in a new product. HUD's guidance on digital housing advertising warns that targeting and algorithmic delivery can create discriminatory outcomes even when an advertiser did not intentionally request discrimination.

In practice:

- Do not use protected characteristics to include, exclude, or tailor housing opportunities.
- Treat geography, audience lists, exclusions, and optimization as compliance decisions, not merely media controls.
- Avoid copy that implies who belongs in a neighborhood.
- Review images and language for steering, exclusion, and coded preference.
- Preserve a written record of the campaign's intended audience, settings, variants, and changes.
- Escalate uncertain campaigns to the broker, counsel, or qualified Fair Housing reviewer.

An interface may let you select a setting. That does not mean the setting is appropriate for a housing-related campaign.

FIELD WARNING

"The platform allowed me to click it" is not a compliance program.

4. BEFORE ADS MANAGER: CHOOSE AN OFFER THAT CAN SURVIVE CONTACT WITH POLICY

Most weak campaigns do not have an ad problem. They have an offer problem wearing an ad costume.

Before you open Ads Manager, answer six questions.

1. Who is the person?

Do not write "homeowners" and consider the work complete. Name the moment:

- A seller six months from moving
- A homeowner unsure whether to renovate first
- An executor dealing with an inherited property
- A buyer moving into an unfamiliar market
- A past client who needs a yearly equity and planning review
- A homeowner considering a buy-before-you-sell sequence

The ad becomes relevant when the moment is specific, even when the targeting remains appropriately broad.

2. What are they trying to decide?

Ads work better when they help with a decision, not when they merely announce that an agent exists.

Weak: "Experienced local REALTOR. Contact me today."

Stronger: "Thinking about selling next spring? Build the pricing, preparation, and timing plan now."

3. What do they receive?

Choose one clear exchange:

- A downloadable guide
- A market briefing
- A planning call
- A valuation review
- A checklist
- A webinar or workshop
- A saved-search setup consultation

4. What happens after the click?

Write the next five steps before you buy traffic.

1. The person lands on a page that repeats the promise.
2. They submit a short form or schedule.
3. The action is recorded by the pixel and/or server.
4. The lead reaches the CRM with source data intact.
5. A real follow-up sequence begins.

If step five is "I will notice the email," the campaign is not ready.

5. What is the conversion?

Pick the event that tells you the offer worked:

- `lead_created`
- `appointment_scheduled`
- `registration_completed`
- `contents_viewed`, when the content itself is the objective

Use the event names supported by OpenAI's current measurement documentation. Map the same business action consistently across the ad platform, analytics, and CRM.

6. What is the stop rule?

Decide what would make you pause or revise the test:

- The ad is rejected.
- The page does not load or track.
- Spend accumulates without enough qualified traffic.
- Clicks arrive but forms do not.
- Forms arrive but CRM source fields are missing.
- Leads are technically valid but commercially wrong.

Your stop rule prevents a quiet technical problem from becoming a surprisingly expensive tradition.

Offer brief: fill this in before Ads Manager

Person and moment	
Decision they are making	
Resource or service	
Landing-page promise	
Primary conversion	
CRM destination	
Follow-up owner	
Policy reviewer	
Stop rule	

5. THE DO-IT-YOURSELF LAUNCH

The mechanics are learnable. The discipline is the part that tends to wander off.



Campaign setup is the visible moment; offer design and measurement are the operating work underneath it.

Step 1: Create and verify the account

Start at the official OpenAI Ads Manager. Use accurate business information, complete any requested advertiser verification, and confirm who owns the account.

Create at least two roles in your operating plan even if one person fills both today:

- Account owner: billing, access, and business verification
- Campaign manager: setup, creative, measurement, and weekly optimization

Document the ad account ID, billing owner, business identity, approved domain, and support contact.

Step 2: Set up billing

Ads Manager requires a billing profile and payment method before delivery. Choose whether the campaign uses a daily budget or total campaign budget. OpenAI's current billing documentation notes that a daily budget is averaged over seven days and can spend up to twice the selected daily amount on an individual day, while remaining bounded across the seven-day period.

That detail belongs in your cash-flow expectations. "Daily budget" does not always mean "hard same-day cap."

Step 3: Create the campaign

A campaign holds the business objective, budget, dates, geography, platform targeting, and any eligible audience settings.

Choose one objective:

- Views or Reach for CPM awareness
- Clicks for CPC traffic
- Conversions for oCPC optimization

Choose a name that can survive six months of reporting:

2026-Q3 | Seller Planning Guide | Los Angeles | CPC

Avoid Test 1, New Campaign, and the immortal Final FINAL 2.

Step 4: Set geography and platforms

Ads Manager currently supports country targeting plus supported state or region, city, DMA, and postal-code controls where available. Platform controls may include iOS, Android, and Web. Confirm the current choices in the location picker or targeting catalog.

Use the broadest geography that matches the actual service area and compliance plan. A business-justified service area is not automatically a Fair Housing safe harbor; location can act as a proxy for protected groups. Do not use narrow geography or exclusions as a back-door proxy.

Step 5: Build ad groups around one intent

An ad group is where the audience moment becomes concrete. Keep one decision or need per ad group.

Example campaign: Seller Planning Guide

- Ad group A: preparing a home before sale
- Ad group B: timing a move and purchase
- Ad group C: inherited-property planning

Each ad group can have its own bid, context hints, and creative variants. This gives you a clean comparison instead of one large bucket of unrelated curiosity.

Step 6: Add context hints

Context hints describe conversations where the ad may be useful. They are not a giant keyword dump and they are not a guarantee of placement.

Good context hints describe the situation:

- preparing to sell a home
- deciding whether to renovate before listing
- planning a move to another city
- comparing the order of buying and selling
- understanding an inherited-property sale

Bad context hints try to name every phrase a person might type:

sell home, selling home, sell my home, real estate agent, best agent, listing agent, realtor near me...

The next chapter goes deeper.

Step 7: Create multiple ads

Each ad generally includes a title, body copy, image, and landing-page URL. Build at least three materially different angles:

- Decision help
- Risk reduction
- Clear process

Changing one comma is not a creative test.

Step 8: Add tracking parameters

Use static UTM parameters so your analytics and CRM can identify ChatGPT traffic.

Example:

`utm_source=chatgpt&utm_medium=paid&utm_campaign=seller_planning_2026q3&utm_content=prep_angle_a`

Create a naming standard before launch. Keep it lowercase, readable, and consistent.

Step 9: Submit for review

OpenAI reviews the advertiser, creative, media, landing page, and placement eligibility. Do not launch on the morning the leads are needed. Review and revision take time.

Record rejection reasons. They are not an insult; they are data about the offer, wording, destination, or category.

Step 10: Confirm serving and measurement

Before calling the campaign live, verify all of the following:

- Ad status says Serving.
- The destination works on desktop and mobile.
- UTMs remain in the URL.
- The form submits.
- The conversion appears in the expected measurement system.
- The CRM receives the source, campaign, and content values.
- The follow-up owner receives the lead.
- The confirmation page or scheduler behaves correctly.

MANAGEMENT MOMENT

Launching means the campaign can spend. It does not mean the campaign has been proven.

6. CONTEXT HINTS: KEYWORDS' MORE INTERESTING COUSIN

Context hints are one of the reasons ChatGPT Ads feel different from search ads. You are helping the platform understand the kinds of conversations where your offer could be relevant.

Write the conversation before the hint

Start with the consumer's private question, not your service category.

Private question: "Do I need to replace the kitchen before I list next year?"

Context hint: deciding what to repair or renovate before selling a home

Private question: "Can I buy first without carrying two mortgages forever?"

Context hint: planning the timing and financing sequence of buying and selling

Private question: "I inherited a house in another state. What happens now?"

Context hint: understanding options for an inherited property

Build a hint ladder

Use three levels:

Broad decision

planning to sell a home

Specific obstacle

deciding what to repair before listing

Triggering life moment

planning a move after inheriting a property

This gives the ad group enough room to learn while keeping the offer coherent.

What to avoid

- Protected-class targeting or coded proxies
- Specific property addresses or listing details
- Misleading urgency
- Competitor names without a legitimate comparison strategy
- Context hints that promise a result the landing page cannot deliver
- One ad group containing buyers, sellers, recruiting, luxury, rentals, commercial, and your podcast

The prompt archaeology exercise

Ask: What was the person thinking thirty seconds before they would need this resource?

Write ten versions. Remove the ones that depend on stereotypes, private data, or a specific listing. Group the remainder by decision. Those groups become the first draft of your ad groups.

DARKLY'S NOTE

People do not wake up wanting a funnel. They wake up wanting the next decision to feel less expensive.



DID YOU KNOW?

How Agents AI is Virtual Results' practical eight-week coaching program for agents who want AI woven into the workflows they already use, not added as another disconnected pile of tools.

[Explore How Agents AI](#)

7. CREATIVE THAT BELONGS IN A CONVERSATION

The ad appears after someone has already asked for help. The creative should feel like a useful next step, not someone entering the room with a bullhorn.

A simple formula

Moment + useful offer + believable next step

Example:

Moment: Selling next spring?

Useful offer: Build the pricing, preparation, and timing plan now.

Next step: Get the seller planning guide.

Three ad angles to test

The decision angle

Title: Selling next year? Start with the plan.

Body: Before the photos, repairs, and pricing debate, map the decisions that affect your timeline. Get the local seller planning guide.

The risk angle

Title: Do not renovate on instinct.

Body: Some updates help a sale. Others simply become expensive memories. Get a practical pre-listing review and local preparation checklist.

The process angle

Title: Know the next five steps.

Body: Planning a sale and another purchase at the same time? See the sequence, questions, and handoffs before you choose a date.

THREE REAL-ESTATE AD CONCEPTS WORTH TESTING

All examples promote a service or resource, never an individual listing.

SPONSORED

SELLER PLANNING

Selling next spring?

Build the preparation, pricing, and timing plan before the pressure arrives.

GET THE GUIDE

SPONSORED

RELOCATION

Moving to a market you barely know?

Get the neighborhoods, commute, timing, and search process in one practical briefing.

GET THE BRIEFING

SPONSORED

INHERITED HOME

Inherited a property? Start with the decisions.

A plain-English checklist for condition, timing, ownership, and the possible paths forward.

GET THE CHECKLIST

Illustrative creative examples. Policy eligibility and Fair Housing review are still required.

All examples promote a service or resource, never an individual listing.

Images

Use images that show the service, decision, or human moment. Avoid presenting a specific home as the advertised offer. Useful directions include:

- An agent and homeowner reviewing a preparation plan
- A clean desk with a market report, calendar, and annotated checklist
- A moving timeline with sale and purchase milestones
- A neutral local-market illustration that does not stereotype residents

Creative rotation

Make creative change part of the management calendar. Do not wait for total failure. Watch for declining CTR, rising CPC, weak conversion rate, stale message-market fit, policy changes, and lead-quality drift.

A sensible early test changes one meaningful variable at a time:

- Offer framing
- Headline
- Image concept
- Proof element
- Call to action

Document the hypothesis before the change. Otherwise every improvement becomes folklore.

CONSULTANT'S ASIDE

If all three ads say the same thing with different punctuation, you have not tested three ideas. You have tested punctuation.

PLAY

FREE FIELD DEMOS

The How Agents AI YouTube channel collects short walkthroughs, practical real-estate AI ideas, prompt experiments, and examples you can inspect before changing your own workflow.

Watch @HowAgentsAI

8. THE LANDING PAGE IS PART OF THE AD

An ad can be excellent and still fail because the page behaves like an unrelated committee wrote it.

The landing page should continue the same conversation.

Message continuity

If the ad says "Get the seller planning guide," the page should open with the seller planning guide. It should not open with a biography, twelve navigation choices, three awards, a property-search bar, and a surprise mortgage calculator.

Match these elements:

- Same audience moment
- Same offer name
- Same primary benefit
- Same geographic truth
- Same call to action
- Same visual concept when practical

The first screen

The visitor should understand four things without hunting:

1. What this is
2. Who it is for
3. What they receive
4. What to do next

Example:

Seller Planning Guide

For homeowners considering a move in the next 6-18 months.

Build the preparation, pricing, timing, and next-purchase plan before the pressure arrives.

GET THE GUIDE

Keep the form proportionate

A downloadable checklist does not need a mortgage application. Ask for the information required to deliver and follow up responsibly.

Typical first-step fields:

- Name
- Email
- Phone, when the follow-up plan genuinely uses it
- Timeframe
- General service area or ZIP code, when appropriate and reviewed
- One optional planning question

Explain what happens after submission. A person should know whether they are receiving a download, a call, an email series, or a scheduling option.

Technical requirements

- Fast mobile load
- Secure HTTPS page
- Working form validation
- Clear consent language
- Accessible labels and contrast
- Privacy notice
- Thank-you state
- Pixel event and/or server event
- Preserved UTM parameters
- CRM field mapping
- OpenAI crawler access when required for review

Quality checks

Test the page from a clean browser on mobile and desktop. Submit it using a test lead. Confirm the thank-you experience, conversion event, CRM record, notifications, and follow-up.

Do not ask the person who built the page to be the only tester. Builders possess a supernatural ability to click around the problem they already know exists.

ILLUSTRATIVE LANDING-PAGE MOCKUP - NOT A LIVE PAGE

LOCAL SELLER PLANNING GUIDE

Planning to sell next spring?

Build the preparation, pricing, timing, and next-purchase plan before the pressure arrives.

GET THE GUIDE

MESSAGE MATCH

ONE CLEAR NEXT STEP**UTMS PRESERVED**

Illustrative mockup, not a live campaign page.

9. TRACKING: WHERE OPTIMISM GOES TO BE AUDITED

Without conversion tracking, you can see delivery and clicks. You cannot reliably see which ad created the action the business actually wanted.

OpenAI's current reporting includes impressions, clicks, spend, CTR, average CPC, average CPM, and conversions when measurement is configured.

Those metrics answer different questions.

Metric	What it tells you	What it does not tell you
Impressions	The ad was shown	The person noticed or cared
Clicks	The ad earned a visit	The visitor was qualified
CTR	The creative generated interest	The page or lead was good
Average CPC	What traffic cost	What a lead or client cost
Conversions	A configured action was attributed	Whether the lead became revenue
CRM outcomes	Lead quality and sales progress	What would have happened without the ad

The minimum tracking stack

At minimum, use:

- Consistent UTM parameters
- OpenAI's click reference, **oppref**, preserved for OpenAI measurement
- A conversion event
- Analytics
- CRM source fields
- A tested thank-you or appointment path

UTMs help analytics and the CRM explain campaign source. They do not replace **oppref**, OpenAI's click reference for conversion matching. Preserve it through redirects and navigation, and include it in Conversions API events when available.

The OpenAI Pixel

The pixel is browser-side JavaScript installed on the website. It can record standard or custom events and help connect eligible ad interactions to later actions.

Advantages:

- Faster to implement for common website actions
- Useful for page and browser events
- Supports click-through attribution; eligible accounts may also see separate view-through reporting under the current documentation

Click-through attribution uses the configured windows. When view-through reporting is available, it appears as a separate one-day metric and is not included in the main Conversions total. OpenAI may also report modeled conversions where available, so attributed totals should be read with the reporting definitions beside them.

Limitations:

- Browsers, consent tools, content blockers, and page errors can interrupt the signal
- A successful script load does not prove the correct event fired
- A fired event does not prove the CRM received the lead

Conversions API

The Conversions API sends events from a server to OpenAI. It is useful when the business records a trusted action outside the visitor's browser, such as a server-confirmed lead or appointment.

Advantages:

- More resilient than relying on browser JavaScript alone
- Better suited to server-recorded actions
- Can support a cleaner connection between the website, CRM, and ad platform

Responsibilities:

- Keep it server-side
- Use the required event and identity fields correctly
- Deduplicate events when pixel and server report the same action
- Respect consent and data rights
- Monitor rejected or malformed events

Pixel plus CAPI

Using both can provide a more complete signal when implemented carefully. It can also double-count conversions when implemented carelessly.

The word that earns its salary here is **deduplication**.

Choose events that map to the business

For an agent campaign, a practical event map might be:

- **contents_viewed**: the guide or key page was viewed
- **lead_created**: the form was accepted and a lead record exists
- **appointment_scheduled**: a meeting was actually scheduled

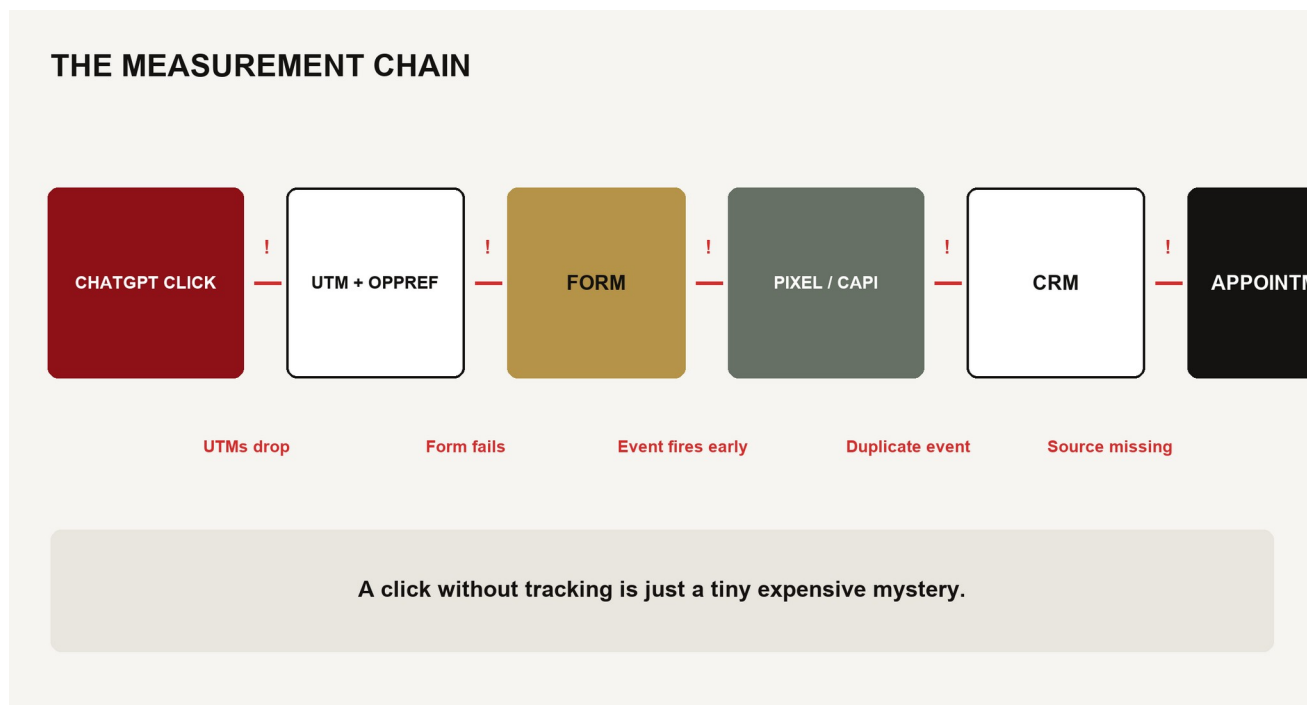
Use one definition everywhere.

Example definition:

`lead\_created` fires only after the server accepts a valid form submission and creates or confirms the CRM record.

That definition is better than "the button was clicked."

The measurement chain



Every handoff is a place where attribution can break.

Every arrow is a place the truth can leak out.

Break 1: The click arrives without UTMs

Result: analytics and CRM label it direct, unknown, or referral.

Break 2: The page drops UTMs during navigation

Result: the first session looks paid, but the submitted lead loses campaign and creative detail.

Break 3: The event fires before the form succeeds

Result: failed submissions look like conversions.

Break 4: Pixel and CAPI both send the event without deduplication

Result: one lead becomes two conversions.

Break 5: The CRM receives the lead but not the source

Result: marketing sees a conversion; sales sees an orphan.

Break 6: Nobody records lead quality

Result: the campaign optimizes toward forms, not business value.

The pre-launch tracking test

Run one complete test from ad URL to CRM:

1. Open the exact destination with UTMs.
2. Confirm the page preserves the parameters.
3. Submit a clearly labeled test lead.
4. Confirm the expected browser event.

5. Confirm the server event when used.
6. Confirm deduplication.
7. Confirm the CRM fields.
8. Confirm the notification and follow-up.
9. Remove or label the test record according to your process.

Save screenshots or logs from each step. "It probably fired" is not a test result.

10. RETARGETING AND CUSTOM AUDIENCES

Retargeting sounds simple: show another ad to people who already know you. The implementation sits at the intersection of audience size, consent, identifiers, policy, matching, exclusions, and Fair Housing risk.

What a custom audience is

OpenAI's developer documentation supports customer audiences built from first-party identifiers. Advertisers must have the rights and consent needed to use the data.

Possible strategic uses include:

- Excluding existing clients from an acquisition campaign
- Reaching opted-in prospects with a related educational offer
- Separating past leads from new-prospect campaigns
- Adjusting bids for a sufficiently matched eligible audience

For inclusion and bid multipliers, OpenAI currently requires at least 25,000 matched users and recommends 100,000. Ready audiences below that threshold may still be used for exclusion. Custom audiences are not available for campaigns targeting the EEA or Switzerland. These rules can change during beta, so check current documentation before launch.

First-party means first-party

Use data your business collected directly and is allowed to use for advertising. Do not buy a mystery list and call it a relationship.

Before upload, document:

- Source of the data
- Consent language in effect when collected
- Permitted advertising use
- Data owner
- Suppression and deletion process
- Geographic and policy eligibility
- File preparation and hashing rules

Why matching is not guaranteed

Audience upload does not mean every record becomes targetable. Matching depends on identifier quality, format, account availability, and platform rules. Small lists may not be large enough for inclusion or bid adjustments.

Build the strategy around a realistic matched audience, not the number of rows in a CSV.

The Fair Housing question

For housing-related advertising, audience inclusion, exclusion, bid multipliers, and algorithmic optimization deserve careful review. A first-party list can still produce an unfair or discriminatory outcome. A multiplier can still change who receives information. An exclusion can still deny information to people who should receive equal access.

Ask:

- Why is this audience included or excluded?
- Could the rule correlate strongly with a protected characteristic?
- Does it narrow access to housing-related information?
- Is the campaign advertising a broad service, or effectively a housing opportunity?
- Has the brokerage's compliance owner reviewed the plan?

A safer operating posture

For early real-estate tests, start with broad, service-area-appropriate campaigns and compliant context design. Use custom audiences first for clear operational purposes, such as excluding existing clients or reaching explicitly opted-in prospects with education, after review.

Do not make advanced audience complexity the price of admission. Make it a governed capability you add when the offer, measurement, consent, and review process are ready.

FIELD WARNING

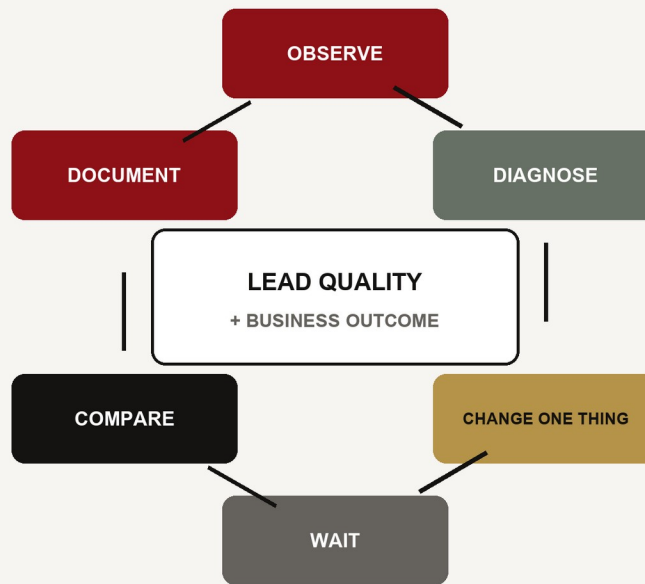
Advanced does not mean clever. Advanced means the campaign can explain what it did and why.

11. THE WEEKLY MANAGEMENT LOOP

Campaign management is not staring at the dashboard until a pattern feels emotionally available.

Use a repeatable weekly loop.

THE WEEKLY MANAGEMENT LOOP



Management is a rhythm, not an emergency visit to the dashboard.

The weekly management loop.

1. Observe delivery

Review:

- Serving and rejection status
- Spend and budget pacing
- Impressions
- Clicks and CTR
- Average CPC or CPM
- Conversion count and conversion rate
- Cost per conversion
- Landing-page behavior
- CRM lead quality
- Appointment rate

2. Diagnose the weakest link

Low impressions

Possible causes: review status, verification, billing, budget, bid, narrow settings, context mismatch, policy, dates, or limited inventory.

Impressions but few clicks

Possible causes: weak headline, weak image, unclear offer, poor relevance, or creative fatigue.

Clicks but few conversions

Possible causes: message mismatch, slow page, confusing form, weak offer, broken tracking, or mobile usability.

Conversions but poor leads

Possible causes: offer attracts curiosity rather than intent, form is too permissive, geography is wrong, follow-up is slow, or conversion definition is shallow.

Good leads but few appointments

Possible causes: response time, script, routing, scheduling friction, or CRM workflow. This is no longer only an ad problem.

3. Change one meaningful thing

Write the hypothesis.

Example:

We believe the preparation-risk angle will improve qualified clicks because the current process angle sounds generic. We will replace one ad, hold the landing page constant, and compare after sufficient delivery.

4. Wait for usable signal

Do not declare a winner after three clicks because one happened to be your cousin.

The beta platform does not publish universal industry benchmarks. Use enough delivery to make the comparison meaningful for your account, and treat small samples as directional.

5. Compare downstream quality

Do not stop at CTR. Compare:

- Landing-page conversion rate
- Cost per lead
- Valid contact rate
- Qualified lead rate
- Appointment rate
- Opportunity and client progression

6. Document

Record:

- Date
- Change
- Reason
- Expected result
- Actual result
- Next decision

This prevents the team from repeating old tests and calling them innovation.

Monthly review

Once a month, examine the system rather than individual ads:

- Are the offers still useful?
- Are policies or beta features different?
- Are the events mapped correctly?
- Are CRM fields intact?
- Is consent language current?
- Are creative concepts rotating?
- Is follow-up fast enough?
- Are lead-quality notes returning to marketing?
- Should budget move between campaigns?
- Should the campaign pause?

MANAGEMENT MOMENT

The highest-value optimization may be in the CRM, the call script, or the scheduling handoff. A good manager follows the lead past the dashboard.

12. DIY OR MANAGED?



The ad is only the visible part of the operating system.

You can launch a campaign yourself. The more useful question is whether you want to own the entire operating loop.

DIY makes sense when

- You enjoy learning beta advertising products.
- You have one clear, policy-appropriate offer.
- Your landing page already converts.
- You can edit the website and tracking.
- You control the CRM fields and follow-up.
- You will review the campaign every week.
- Someone owns compliance review.
- You are comfortable documenting tests and failures.

Do it with me makes sense when

- You want to understand the system but need help with architecture.
- Your team can implement changes with a checklist.
- You need a tracking and policy review before launch.
- You want an experienced second set of eyes on context hints, creative, and reporting.

Do it for me makes sense when

- You want the campaign managed as a connected business system.
- Website, analytics, CRM, creative, and follow-up involve different people.
- You need pixel and server-side measurement.
- You plan to use custom audiences.
- You want ongoing creative rotation and budget decisions.
- You need written change history and lead-quality reporting.
- Your time is better spent in appointments and client work.

What professional management should deliver

A credible management scope should make four outcomes visible.

1. Readiness and fit

The offer, housing-policy boundary, brokerage requirements, landing-page promise, and stop rule are reviewed before launch.

2. A campaign built as a system

Campaign structure, context hints, creative variants, landing page, UTM standard, account ownership, and pre-launch proof agree with one another.

3. Measurement you can audit

Pixel and/or Conversions API events, CRM source fields, deduplication, consent, and custom-audience governance are tested and documented.

4. A weekly improvement loop

Delivery, creative, spend, conversion quality, CRM outcomes, lead follow-up, and monthly strategy decisions are reviewed together.

If a management proposal is only "we will watch the ads," keep asking questions.



FROM RYAN'S DESK

Ryan Rockwood, who leads Virtual Results, has spent more than 20 years teaching real-estate marketing and doing the work for agents nationwide. Before that, he sold real estate himself. His standard for AI is simple: make an existing workflow more useful.

[Meet Virtual Results](#)

How Agents AI and Virtual Results' approach

How Agents AI helps real estate agents build a practical AI operating system around the work they already do. Advertising is not a separate magic tab. It connects to the offer, website, analytics, CRM, follow-up, creative process, and team habits.

Virtual Results manages the advertising system for agents and brokerages that want the pieces connected and the weekly loop owned. Together, the approach is practical: teach enough to make the decisions visible, then put experienced hands on the work that needs ongoing attention.

There are three sensible levels of ownership:

- **Teach me:** learn the platform and build your own operating plan.
- **Do it with me:** work through setup, tracking, and review with a guide.
- **Do it for me:** have the campaign, measurement, creative, and management loop handled as one connected system.

When you start Virtual Results ChatGPT Ads, the first work is a readiness review. We inspect the offer, policy fit, landing page, measurement, CRM handoff, creative capacity, and management ownership before media spend begins.

Managed service remains subject to current OpenAI platform access, ad review, and your brokerage or compliance approval. Management does not make those gates disappear; it makes them visible early.

Ready to find out what your campaign actually needs?

Complete the setup form with your business, market, offer, website, and campaign goals. Virtual Results will review the submission and contact you before anything begins. The readiness review identifies the policy and measurement dependencies, the assets still needed, and the practical launch path.

Start Virtual Results ChatGPT Ads

virtualresults.com/chatgptadsstart

Full, transparent pricing is shown during setup. No commitment. No money is charged today.

DARKLY'S NOTE

The dossier is complete. Your tracking may not be.

13. LAUNCH CHECKLIST

Strategy

- ☐ The campaign promotes an allowed service or resource, not a specific housing listing.
- ☐ The person, moment, decision, offer, and next step are written down.
- ☐ The primary conversion has one clear definition.
- ☐ A stop rule is documented.

Account and campaign

- ☐ Business identity and advertiser verification are complete.
- ☐ Billing is active and the budget type is understood.
- ☐ Campaign name, objective, dates, geography, and platforms are correct.
- ☐ Ad groups contain one coherent intent each.

- ☐ Bids and budgets match the test plan.

Policy and Fair Housing

- ☐ Ad, image, audience, geography, context hints, and landing page were reviewed together.
- ☐ No specific listing, address, price, or open house appears in the ad or destination.
- ☐ Targeting and exclusions do not use protected characteristics or inappropriate proxies.
- ☐ Copy and imagery avoid steering, exclusion, or misleading claims.
- ☐ Brokerage or qualified compliance review is recorded where required.

Creative

- ☐ At least three materially different concepts are ready.
- ☐ The offer and call to action are clear.
- ☐ The image represents the service or decision, not a specific property.
- ☐ The landing page repeats the promise.
- ☐ A creative rotation date is scheduled.

Measurement

- ☐ UTMs follow the naming standard.
- ☐ Pixel and/or CAPI is installed.
- ☐ Standard and custom events match Ads Manager configuration.
- ☐ Duplicate browser/server events are deduplicated.
- ☐ Consent and privacy language are current.
- ☐ CRM source, campaign, and creative fields are mapped.
- ☐ A complete test lead reached the CRM and follow-up owner.

Management

- ☐ Weekly owner and review day are assigned.
- ☐ Scorecard includes downstream lead quality.
- ☐ Change log is ready.
- ☐ Monthly system review is scheduled.

14. PLAIN-ENGLISH GLOSSARY

Ad

The sponsored creative a user can see and click.

Ad group

A set of ads organized around one audience moment or intent, with shared bids and context settings.

Campaign

The top-level container for objective, budget, dates, geography, platforms, audiences, ad groups, and ads.

Context hint

A description of the kinds of conversations where an ad may be useful. It is not identical to a search keyword.

Conversion

A configured action that matters to the campaign, such as a lead or scheduled appointment.

CPC

Cost per click.

CPM

Cost per thousand impressions.

CTR

Click-through rate: clicks divided by impressions.

Conversions API (CAPI)

A server-to-server way to send conversion events.

Custom audience

An audience built from eligible first-party customer or prospect data that the advertiser has the rights and consent to use.

Deduplication

The process that prevents one action reported by both browser and server from being counted twice.

Impression

One recorded display of an ad.

OpenAI Pixel

Browser-side code that sends website events for measurement.

oCPC

Conversion-optimized cost per click. The platform seeks clicks more likely to lead to one selected tracked action.

UTM parameters

Labels added to a URL so analytics and CRM systems can identify the traffic source, campaign, and creative.

OFFICIAL SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

This guide used official OpenAI documentation as the primary source for current product, policy, and usage claims. Google documentation supports the product-surface comparison. The single duration estimate is clearly labeled as third-party web measurement.

- [Advertise in ChatGPT - OpenAI Ads](#)
- [Testing ads in ChatGPT - OpenAI](#)
- [New ways to buy ChatGPT ads - OpenAI](#)
- [How ChatGPT adoption has expanded - OpenAI](#)
- [How people are using ChatGPT - OpenAI](#)
- [Newegg reaches PC builders with product feed ads - OpenAI Ads](#)
- [ChatGPT Ads Help Center collection - OpenAI](#)
- [Ads in ChatGPT - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [Ads in ChatGPT: The Basics - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [Ads Manager Availability - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [Create Campaigns for ChatGPT Ads - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [Measure Results - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [Conversion Measurement - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [Conversion-optimized Campaigns - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [Custom Audiences - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [Measurement Pixel - OpenAI Ads developer documentation](#)
- [Conversions API - OpenAI Ads developer documentation](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions - OpenAI Help Center](#)
- [OpenAI Ad Policies](#)
- [OpenAI Ads developer documentation](#)
- [Google Ads keyword matching - Google Ads Help](#)
- [Different ways to track conversions - Google Ads Help](#)
- [chatgpt.com website traffic estimate, July 2026 - Semrush](#)
- [HUD Guidance on Digital Housing Advertising](#)

ABOUT THIS DOSSIER

[How Agents AI](#) is Virtual Results' practical eight-week coaching program for real estate agents. We look at the tools, habits, bottlenecks, and follow-up that already exist, then make one useful part of the business more consistent instead of piling on disconnected software.

The [How Agents AI YouTube channel](#) publishes practical demonstrations, short experiments, and real-estate AI workflow ideas.

Virtual Results provides the managed ChatGPT Ads service described in this guide: strategy, campaign setup, ad development, tracking and audiences, reporting, and ongoing optimization. No campaign can guarantee delivery, leads, or conversions. The job is to build a measurable system, learn from it, and keep improving it.

Real agents. Real workflows. Useful machinery.

Download or share Darkly's Dossier

virtualresults.com/darkly

Managed-service details and setup: [Start Virtual Results ChatGPT Ads](#).

Darkly is a How Agents AI field operative from Virtual Results.