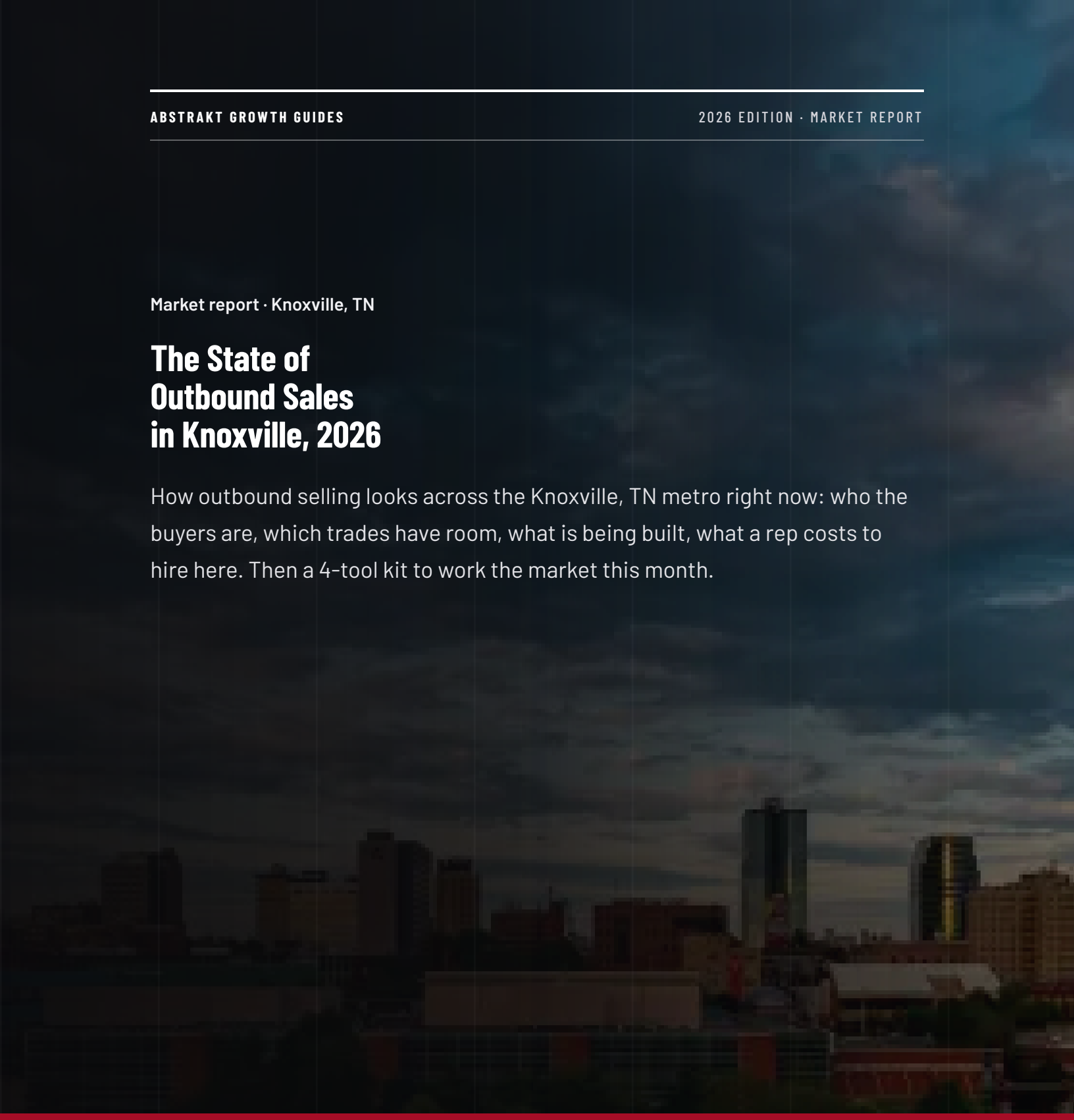
Market report · Knoxville, TN

The State of Outbound Sales in Knoxville, 2026

How outbound selling looks across the Knoxville, TN metro right now: who the buyers are, which trades have room, what is being built, what a rep costs to hire here. Then a 4-tool kit to work the market this month.



2,339

business sites with 20+ people across the categories trades sell to, #58 of our 100 metros

4.8

buyer sites per commercial cleaning company, #21 of 100 markets: the best rank of any trade here

Sites: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2023; rank among the 100 metros on our market pages. Room: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2023 sites per contractor in U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, private ownership, 2026 Q1, among markets with at least 10 contractors.

Executive summary Read this if nothing else

5 things to know about outbound sales in Knoxville

1

Biggest buyer pool

Restaurants: 723 sites

with 20 or more people, the largest buyer category in Knoxville, ahead of retail stores (499).

2

Where the metro leans

Hotels: 1.62x the U.S. mix

Also over-represented: bank and credit union offices (1.58x) and auto dealerships (1.48x). Trades that serve these buyers have more of them here than the national average suggests.

3

Most room

Commercial Cleaning & Janitorial: #21 of 100 markets

4.8 buyer sites with 20+ people for each of 189 local commercial cleaning companies. The most crowded is commercial flooring, #54 of 68.

4

Biggest reason to call

865 Neyland Entertainment District

Groundbreaking held September 2026. One of 9 named, sourced projects in this report.

5

Hiring locally

$124,700 for an in-house SDR's first year (illustrative)

At a $55,000 base salary, once commission, payroll taxes and benefits, tools, recruiting and training, turnover and manager time are added, before ramp time.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2023; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, private ownership, 2026 Q1; project

Contents

01 THE MARKET
Who buys in Knoxville

02 THE COMPETITION
Which trades have the most room in Knoxville

03 THE PROJECTS
What is being built, and who owns the buildings

04 THE CALENDAR
The Knoxville selling calendar

05 THE NUMBERS
What one meeting takes, trade by trade

06 BUILD OR BUY
What an in-house SDR costs in Knoxville

Kit PART TWO: APPLY THIS
The toolkit

Src METHOD
Sources and notes

sources as of 2026-09; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), May 2025. Full list at the end.

01

Chapter 01 The market

Who buys in Knoxville

2,339 business sites in Knoxville have 20 or more people on site in the categories commercial trades sell to. That ranks #58 of the 100 metros we publish. Here is what those buyers are and where they sit.

The largest buyer categories

Sites with 20 or more people are the ones worth an SDR's time: big enough to have a facility lead, a service budget and a contract that comes up for renewal. The "vs. U.S. mix" column compares each category's share of local employment with its national share (1.00x is the U.S. average).

Business sites with 20+ people in Knoxville, top 10 categories

CATEGORY	SITES WITH 20+	ALL SITES	VS. U.S. MIX	1-YR CHANGE
Restaurants LARGEST POOL	**723**	1,685	1.21x	+118
Retail stores	**499**	2,994	1.41x	+97
Manufacturing plants	**262**	737	1.28x	+5
Medical, dental and outpatient offices	**252**	1,709	1.26x	+122
Wholesale distributors	**182**	902	1.14x	-9
Senior living and nursing	**113**	233	1.07x	+6
Grocery stores	**87**	340	0.99x	+20
Churches and religious organizations	**84**	805	0.49x	+4
Trucking companies	**68**	281	0.86x	+9
Auto dealerships	**53**	144	1.48x	+9

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2023 (sites by size); U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, private ownership, 2026 Q1 (concentration and one-year change in establishments). Suppressed size classes count as zero.

Knoxville leans toward hotels (1.62x), bank and credit union offices (1.58x) and auto dealerships (1.48x). A trade that already sells to those buyers elsewhere has a deeper pool here than the national numbers suggest, and a case study from one of them travels well on the phone.

It is thinner than the U.S. mix in churches and religious organizations (0.49x). A program built around those buyers runs out of fresh accounts sooner here.

Growing fastest over the past year, by establishment count: medical, dental and outpatient offices (+122), restaurants (+118) and retail stores (+97). New sites have no incumbent vendor yet.

The metro

Knoxville, TN: 8 counties in this report's counts.

Knox County, Blount County and Anderson County hold 85% of the larger business sites, so most programs start there.

Where the sites are

Business sites with 20+ people, by county, Knoxville

COUNTY	SITES WITH 20+	SHARE OF METRO
Knox County START HERE	**1,539**	66%
Blount County	**274**	12%
Anderson County	**177**	8%
Loudon County	**96**	4%
Roane County	**59**	3%
Campbell County	**48**	2%
Morgan County	**7**	0%

COUNTY	SITES WITH 20+	SHARE OF METRO
Grainger County	4	0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2023, summed across the buyer categories above. Census withholds some county-level size counts, so 135 of the metro's 2,339 sites are not assigned to a county.

02

Chapter 02 The competition

Which trades have the most room in Knoxville

Buyer sites per contractor is a rough read on how crowded a trade is: more sites for each local competitor means more doors nobody else is knocking on. Each trade's Knoxville figure is ranked against the other markets we track.

How Knoxville ranks for each trade, by buyer sites per contractor (longer bar = more room)

TRADE	RANK AMONG MARKETS	SITES PER CONTRACTOR	CONTRACTORS	1-YR CHANGE
Commercial Cleaning & Janitorial MOST ROOM	**#21 of 100**	4.8	189	+1
Commercial Painting & Coatings	**#19 of 86**	84	14	0
Commercial Construction	**#31 of 100**	5.7	124	+5
Managed Service Providers	**#36 of 100**	3.3	372	+2
Commercial Landscaping	**#51 of 100**	3.5	349	+27
Commercial HVAC & Mechanical	**#54 of 100**	9.3	80	-3
Paving & Asphalt	**#63 of 94**	37	32	0
Fire Protection	**#65 of 96**	37	36	+4
Commercial Electrical	**#70 of 100**	9.0	115	+10
Commercial Roofing	**#67 of 89**	52	22	0
Commercial Flooring	**#54 of 68**	50	14	+1

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2023 (each trade's own buyer categories, 20+ people); U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, private ownership, 2026 Q1 (contractor establishments and one-year change). Each trade counts different buyers, so compare ranks across trades, not the raw ratios. Ranked among markets with at least 10 contractors in the trade.

Commercial cleaning & janitorial (#21), commercial painting & coatings (#19) and commercial construction (#31) rank best in Knoxville. For those trades a program can work longer before it calls the same building twice, and fewer competitors have already pitched each owner.

Commercial flooring is the most crowded trade here, #54 of 68: 50 buyer sites for each of 14 local commercial flooring contractors. Winning there takes a sharper reason to switch than a lower price.

Commercial HVAC & mechanical (-3) lost contractor establishments over the past year, so the same buildings are split among fewer firms than a year ago. Commercial landscaping (+27) and commercial electrical (+10) added them.

Open programs

Our availability workbook does not cover Knoxville yet. We take one client per trade per territory, so ask before you plan around it.

Check whether your trade is open

03

Chapter 03 The projects

What is being built, and who owns the buildings

9 named, sourced projects and 6 anchor owners in Knoxville. Each one is a reason to call that has nothing to do with your company and everything to do with the buyer's building.

The projects

01

865 Neyland Entertainment District

Groundbreaking held September 2026

A public-private district between Neyland Stadium and Thompson-Boling Arena on the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville, with about 100,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space, a 24-story condo-hotel, restaurants, two plazas and a new garage replacing the G10 garage.

> The garage is due August 2027, the district early 2028 and the tower 2029, so paving, electrical and LED display power come first, then hotel mechanical, fire protection and interior finishes, and finally plaza landscaping and event cleaning.

electrical · HVAC · fire protection · paving · landscaping

University of Tennessee News, 2026-09-21

02 · 214,000 sq ft

TRISO-X TX-1 Fuel Fabrication Facility

Vertical construction complete; interior buildout underway

A 214,000-square-foot advanced nuclear fuel fabrication plant in Oak Ridge (Anderson County) built by Clark Construction Group, with a graphite matrix powder building and other support facilities still to come.

> The project has moved from structure to interior buildout and equipment installation, which is the phase where mechanical, electrical, fire protection and specialty flooring subcontractors do most of their work.

HVAC · electrical · fire protection · flooring

X-energy, 2026-09-24

03 · 243,800 sq ft

Randy Boyd Hall, Haslam College of Business

Topped out; completion fall 2027

A five-story, 243,800-square-foot business school building on the University of Tennessee's Knoxville campus with 18 classrooms, research labs, two 300-seat auditoriums and food service.

> With the structure topped out in April 2026, the remaining year is interior mechanical, electrical, flooring and painting work, and a building serving more than 10,000 people a week will need custodial service once open.

HVAC · electrical · flooring · painting · cleaning

University of Tennessee News, 2026-04-17

04 · 50 MWe

Kairos Power Hermes 2 demonstration plant

Broke ground April 2026

A grid-connected, 50-megawatt advanced reactor demonstration plant in Oak Ridge (Roane County) built by Kairos Power, with Samsung C&T agreeing in September 2026 to provide up to $100 million and join the engineering, procurement and construction team.

> Samsung C&T's initial focus is power-generation systems and balance of plant, which is where electrical, mechanical and fire protection subcontractors find most of the non-nuclear scope, along with support buildings and site paving.

electrical · HVAC · fire protection · construction

World Nuclear News, 2026-09-22

05 · $15 million Connections Building; $8.5 million park

Transforming Western: Connections Building, destination park and Western Heights renovation

Groundbreaking held July 2026; completion 2027

KCDC's six-phase redevelopment of the Western Heights and Beaumont neighborhoods northwest of downtown Knoxville, including a 16,114-square-foot Connections Building, a two-acre destination park, a Beaumont Youth Center expansion and renovation of 232 original Western Heights units.

> The renovated Western Heights units are getting new roofs and updated exteriors, the Connections Building and youth center are new commercial builds due in 2027, and the park brings tree canopy, lawns, pathways and a parking plaza, with phases running to 2029.

roofing · construction · landscaping · paving

Knox TN Today, 2026-07-10

06 · $19M

Burlington firehouse and streetscape project

Firehouse under construction (due mid-December 2026); streetscape due early March 2027

A City of Knoxville project in the historic Burlington Center in East Knoxville: a new $8.7 million two-bay firehouse plus a $10.3 million streetscape phase.

> After KUB utility work, the streetscape phase calls for road repaving, new sidewalks, street lighting and tree plantings through early 2027, while the firehouse moves from masonry block to steel erection and the rest of the building.

paving · landscaping · construction · electrical

Knox TN Today, 2026-03-30

07 · nearly 40,000 square feet

Sam Houston Elementary School expansion

Bid awarded to Merit Construction; about 15 months of construction

Maryville City Schools is expanding Sam Houston Elementary in Maryville (Blount County) with a new front addition, a new and larger gymnasium and a larger library, raising capacity from about 480 to 640 students.

> The addition covers the whole front of the building and moves the student drop-off circle, which was to be rebuilt before the 2026 school year, so site paving comes first, followed by the addition's shell, roof and interiors during the school year.

construction · roofing · paving

WATE 6 On Your Side, 2026-03-16

08

Knox County Schools K-8 school at the former Rule High School site

Construction planned 2026 to 2028; opening 2029

A new Knox County Schools K-8 school for 1,200 students at 1919 Vermont Avenue in Knoxville, designed by Lewis Architects Group to serve the Mechanicsville, Lonsdale and Beaumont communities on the site of the demolished Rule High School.

> A ground-up school on a cleared site means sitework, parking and bus loops, a full building shell and roof, and finished grounds, with construction running 2026 to 2028 ahead of a 2029 opening.

construction · roofing · paving · landscaping

WATE 6 On Your Side, 2026-01-05

09

Minvilla Manor renovation

Renovation in preparation

The Volunteer Ministry Center is preparing to renovate Minvilla Manor, a 57-unit low-income housing complex in North Knoxville that opened in 2009, backed by a $1 million low-income housing tax credit from the Tennessee Housing Development Agency.

> The stated scope includes roofing, new gutters, hot water systems and a switch from shared HVAC to individual heating and air conditioning systems, plus porch changes and a security gate.

roofing · HVAC

WATE 6 On Your Side, 2026-09-29

Projects current as of 2026-09; each source is linked on its card. Values are as reported by the source.

The anchor owners

Health systems, campuses, large employers and industrial parks hold the biggest concentrations of commercial buildings in Knoxville. One relationship with a facilities team here can cover many buildings.

Health system · Knoxville, Knox County

Covenant Health

Covenant Health calls itself the area's largest employer, with care delivered at 130+ locations including 10 hospitals.

> Knoxville-based system running hospitals, outpatient sites and offices across East Tennessee, all with HVAC, life-safety, cleaning and parking needs.

HVAC · fire protection · cleaning · paving

Covenant Health

Campus · Knoxville, Knox County

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

UT Knoxville enrolled 40,784 students in fall 2025.

> Flagship campus with academic, research, residence and athletic buildings plus parking garages that need roofing, mechanical, flooring and cleaning work.

HVAC · roofing · cleaning · flooring

Wikipedia

Public owner · Oak Ridge, Anderson and Roane Counties

Oak Ridge National Laboratory

ORNL says more than 7,000 scientists, engineers, technicians and support staff work at the laboratory.

> Federal research campus with labs, offices and specialized facilities maintained through Department of Energy contracting and subcontracts.

HVAC · electrical · fire protection · construction

Major employer · Maryville, Blount County

DENSO

Maryville's 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report listed Denso as the area's top employer with 5,350 employees.

> Auto parts manufacturing campus with production floors, roofs and heavy electrical systems that need ongoing maintenance and upgrades.

electrical · HVAC · roofing · flooring

Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Wikipedia

Industrial park · Knoxville, Knox County

Pellissippi Corporate Center

The park on Cherahala Boulevard is one of five Knox County business parks listed by the Knoxville Chamber.

> Business park lots where new office and light-industrial buildings bring site work, paving and power, then recurring grounds and lot upkeep.

construction · paving · landscaping · electrical

Knoxville Chamber

Airport · Alcoa, Blount County

McGhee Tyson Airport

McGhee Tyson Airport handled 3,630,410 passengers in 2025.

> Terminal, parking and airfield pavement that need mechanical, paving, roofing and cleaning work.

paving · HVAC · cleaning · roofing

Wikipedia

Anchor facts checked 2026-10; each source is linked on its card.

Which trades the work touches

Projects and anchor owners in this report that buy each trade, Knoxville

TRADE	PROJECTS AND OWNERS	
Commercial HVAC & Mechanical		10
Paving & Asphalt		8
Commercial Electrical		8
Commercial Construction		7
Commercial Roofing		7
Commercial Landscaping		5
Fire Protection		5

TRADE	PROJECTS AND OWNERS	
Commercial Cleaning & Janitorial		4
Commercial Flooring		4
Commercial Painting & Coatings		1

Count of the projects and anchor owners above whose scope includes the trade, from the sourced descriptions.

04

Chapter 04 The calendar

The Knoxville selling calendar

Outbound runs every month, but the weather changes what a buyer wants to hear. These are the NOAA records for the Knoxville metro's counties, month by month.

Knoxville by month: storm reports, degree days and average highs

MEASURE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Hail and damaging wind reports total, 2015 to 2024	14	20	61	41	110	148	143	92	3	10	16	13
Cooling degree days average month	2	1	9	12	110	243	354	324	168	29	1	0
Heating degree days average month	862	670	517	240	88	5	0	0	28	230	523	766
Average high (°F) average month	47	51	60	70	77	84	87	86	81	71	59	50

Sources: NOAA NCEI Storm Events Database, 2015 to 2024: reports of hail 1 inch or larger and thunderstorm wind of 58 mph or more, by month, across the market counties. NOAA NCEI nClimDiv county monthly series, 1991-2020 averages. Degree days count how far the daily average sits above (cooling) or below (heating) 65°F, summed over the month.

NOAA logged 87 hail reports of 1 inch or larger and 584 damaging wind reports across the metro's counties from 2015 to 2024: #43 of 100 markets for hail and #29 for wind. May, June and July carried 60% of the reports. Storms are not the main driver here, so roof age, leaks and budget timing carry the roofing conversation.

The metro averages 1,252 cooling degree days a year (#44 of 97 markets) and 3,929 heating degree days (#50 of 97). Cooling load peaks in June, July and August; heating in January, February, March, November and December. Peak months are when HVAC calls lead with service and response times; the rest of the year they lead with planned work and budgets.

Trades with no weather season

Cleaning, construction, electrical, flooring and fire protection sell on contract end dates, budgets and inspection cycles. Learn each account's date on the first call and come back before it.

7 months average a high of 60°F or more (April, May, June, July, August, September and October). That is when exterior painting, paving and landscaping crews are busiest, so in-season calls catch owners while they can see the work that needs doing. The contracts themselves are bid on each property's own dates, so the selling runs all year.

05

Chapter 05 The numbers

What one meeting takes, trade by trade

What booking a meeting has taken on our own calling floor for the trades we run in Knoxville, next to the records we can prospect here. The sales center figures are national; it does not break them out by city yet.

Dials per booked appointment, by trade (lower is faster), national

TRADE	DIALS PER APPOINTMENT	REACHED PROPOSAL	PROPOSALS WON	DIALS FOR 10 MEETINGS
Fire Protection FASTEST TO BOOK	**78**	21.6%	13.2%	about 780
Paving & Asphalt	**86**	32.2%	7.4%	about 860
Commercial Landscaping	**88**	18.8%	12.7%	about 880
Commercial Electrical	**96**	14.6%	21.1%	about 960
Commercial HVAC & Mechanical	**98**	16.6%	24.9%	about 980
Commercial Painting & Coatings	**115**	31.2%	14.4%	about 1,150
Commercial Flooring	**122**	30.8%	9.8%	about 1,220
Commercial Roofing	**140**	25.9%	16.1%	about 1,400
Commercial Cleaning & Janitorial	**142**	23.9%	21.7%	about 1,420
Managed Service Providers	**162**	10.0%	20.5%	about 1,620

All of these trades together: 122 dials per appointment

Source: Abstrakt sales center, Performance Intelligence, national, as of October 2026. Dials per appointment = prospecting calls divided by appointments set. History, not a promise. Full benchmarks and method.

The records behind a Knoxville program

Before a program starts we size the list: the decision-maker records Abstrakt can prospect for each trade in the Knoxville-Morristown-Sevierville territory.

2,622
Commercial Roofing

2,622
Commercial Construction

1,064
Commercial HVAC & Mechanical

808
Commercial Cleaning & Janitorial

Source: Abstrakt territory record counts, as of October 2026: estimated decision-maker records Abstrakt can prospect for each program in the territory. Shown for the programs the count covers.

Read it this way

Divide the records by the dials one meeting takes and you see how long a list lasts before it repeats. A thin list means a program has to work every record well, not just call more.

06

Chapter 06 Build or buy

What an in-house SDR costs in Knoxville

Before you hire a sales development rep in Knoxville, price the whole job, not just the salary.

The salary is the smallest part of the decision. About 2,360 people hold the role in the Knoxville, TN metro, and every one of their employers is competing for the same hires.

An in-house SDR's first year, at a $55,000 base salary (illustrative model)

COST	YEAR ONE
Base salary	$55,000
Commission and bonus	$15,000
Payroll taxes and benefits (25% of pay)	$17,500
Tools and data ($550 a month)	$6,600
Recruiting and training	$7,000
Turnover (35% a year, rehiring)	$2,450
Manager and QA time (5 hours a week) and admin (4 hours a month)	$21,150
Total, before ramp time	**$124,700**

Headcount: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), May 2025. Sales representatives of services, except advertising, insurance, financial services and travel (SOC 41-3091). The cost lines are the starting values of our SDR cost calculator: $15,000 commission, 25% payroll taxes and benefits, $550 a month in tools, $7,000 recruiting and training, 35% yearly turnover, and manager, QA and admin time. Change any of them there.

$124,700

for one in-house SDR's first year at a $55,000 base salary.

That buys one rep. It does not buy the list, the manager's coaching system or cover when the rep leaves.

Ask us what a program would cost for the same work

Part two Apply this

The Knoxville market toolkit

4 working tools built from the chapters above. Tick the boxes as you go (they stay ticked in this browser), copy the scripts into your CRM, or save the whole guide as a PDF and print this part as a worksheet.

01

Account scorecard

Score an account before anyone dials it.

02

Discovery question bank

The questions that qualify a meeting.

03

Trigger watchlist

The changes that make a buyer take the call.

04

30-day action plan

Four weeks of steps you can start Monday.

TOOL 01

Account scorecard

Before an account goes on the call list, check every line that fits. Call the accounts with the most ticks first, and leave the ones with none for later.

- [ ] **It sits in Knox County, Blount County and Anderson County**
  85% of the metro's larger business sites are in these counties.
- [ ] **It has 20 or more people on site**
  One of the 2,339 sites this report counts. At that size a facility lead usually owns the building decisions.
- [ ] **It is in a category Knoxville over-indexes on**
  hotels (1.62x the U.S. mix), bank and credit union offices (1.58x the U.S. mix) and auto dealerships (1.48x the U.S. mix).
- [ ] **It belongs to an anchor owner or a named project**
  Covenant Health, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Oak Ridge National Laboratory and DENSO.
- [ ] **You can name the person who signs**
  A name and a title before the first dial, not just the main line.
- [ ] **You are calling a business line**
  A business line, not a personal phone. Look up the calling laws for Tennessee before you dial.

0 of 6 checked

TOOL 02

Discovery question bank

Ask fewer, better questions. Pick three or four for the call and save the rest for the meeting. Each one comes with the reason it earns its place.

Restaurants: 723 sites here

From our fire protection talk track. Staying open and passing inspection. Multi-unit operators are worth more than single locations.

1. **When was your hood suppression system last inspected, and when is the next one due?**
   Due dates tell you when to call and what to offer.
2. **Have you had a failed inspection or a citation recently?**
   Failed inspections threaten the ability to stay open and create urgency.
3. **How many locations do you operate, and does each one use a different vendor?**
   Multi-unit operators are more valuable and often want one vendor across locations.

Retail stores: 499 sites here

From our painting talk track. Night work that does not close the store. Chains often run repaints as multi-site programs from regional facilities.

1. **Is painting bought store by store or through a regional or national remodel program?**
   Program work needs a different contact and often a vendor registration process.
2. **Can the work be done overnight without closing the store?**
   Night work capability is often the deciding factor for retail painting.
3. **Are remodels, brand refreshes or new stores planned in this area?**
   Planned programs give you a timeline and a defined scope.

Manufacturing plants: 262 sites here

From our cleaning talk track. Audits and shift schedules. Ask which areas the production crew cleans and which they wish someone else did.

1. **Which areas does your production crew clean, and which do you wish someone else handled?**
   Work that pulls operators off the line is the scope a plant manager will pay to hand off.

Any first meeting

Plain practice that works in every market.

1. **How are you handling this today, and what would you change about it?**
   The gap between today and what they want is the whole reason to meet.
2. **What happens if nothing changes this year?**
   Tells you whether there is a cost to waiting, or only curiosity.

2. **What shifts do you run, and when could a cleaning crew work without getting in the way?**
   Shift schedules decide staffing, access and whether the job fits your crews.
3. **Do you have customer or safety audits coming up that look at housekeeping?**
   An upcoming audit creates a date and makes high dusting or floor scrubbing an easy yes.

3. **Who else would need to agree before anything moves?**
   Names the people who can stall the deal, while you can still invite them.
4. **When does the current contract or budget come up for review?**
   Gives you the date to plan around, even when the answer today is no.
5. **What would make a first meeting worth your time?**
   Lets the buyer set the agenda, which is the agenda they will show up for.

TOOL 03

Trigger watchlist

Each of these changes gives a buyer a reason to take the call this month instead of next year. Tick the ones you will track, and set a news alert or CRM field for each so you hear about it first.

- [ ] **865 Neyland Entertainment District**
  Groundbreaking held September 2026. The garage is due August 2027, the district early 2028 and the tower 2029, so paving, electrical and LED display power come first, then hotel mechanical, fire protection and interior finishes, and finally plaza landscaping and event cleaning.
- [ ] **Randy Boyd Hall, Haslam College of Business**
  Topped out; completion fall 2027. With the structure topped out in April 2026, the remaining year is interior mechanical, electrical, flooring and painting work, and a building serving more than 10,000 people a week will need custodial service once open.
- [ ] **TRISO-X TX-1 Fuel Fabrication Facility**
  Vertical construction complete; interior buildout underway. The project has moved from structure to interior buildout and equipment installation, which is the phase where mechanical, electrical, fire protection and specialty flooring subcontractors do most of their work.
- [ ] **Kairos Power Hermes 2 demonstration plant**
  Broke ground April 2026. Samsung C&T's initial focus is power-generation systems and balance of plant, which is where electrical, mechanical and fire protection subcontractors find most of the non-nuclear scope, along with support buildings and site paving.

- [ ] **Transforming Western: Connections Building, destination park and Western Heights renovation**

  Groundbreaking held July 2026; completion 2027. The renovated Western Heights units are getting new roofs and updated exteriors, the Connections Building and youth center are new commercial builds due in 2027, and the park brings tree canopy, lawns, pathways and a parking plaza, with phases running to 2029.

- [ ] **Burlington firehouse and streetscape project**

  Firehouse under construction (due mid-December 2026); streetscape due early March 2027. After KUB utility work, the streetscape phase calls for road repaving, new sidewalks, street lighting and tree plantings through early 2027, while the firehouse moves from masonry block to steel erection and the rest of the building.

- [ ] **Storm season: May, June and July**

  60% of the 671 large-hail and damaging-wind reports NOAA logged across the metro, 2015 to 2024, fell in these months. Owners want an inspection after an event; call the ones you already know first.

- [ ] **Cooling season: June, July and August**

  The months with the most cooling load here. Units that struggle now give a facility lead a reason to take a second contractor's call.

- [ ] **New sites: medical, dental and outpatient offices**

  QCEW counted 122 more medical, dental and outpatient offices in Knoxville than a year earlier. Every new site has to choose its service vendors; call before the choice settles.

- [ ] **New sites: restaurants**

  QCEW counted 118 more restaurants in Knoxville than a year earlier. Every new site has to choose its service vendors; call before the choice settles.

0 of 10 on your watchlist

TOOL 04

30-day action plan

4 weeks, 15 steps, nothing you need to buy. Tick each one off as you finish it; your progress stays in this browser.

Week 1

Draw the territory

- [ ] Start in Knox County, Blount County and Anderson County, which hold 85% of the larger business sites.
- [ ] Pull the sites with 20 or more people in restaurants, retail stores and manufacturing plants.
- [ ] Score every account with the scorecard above and sort the list by score.
- [ ] Put the accounts tied to Covenant Health and University of Tennessee, Knoxville at the top.

Week 2

Check the rules, then write the talk track

- [ ] Look up the calling laws for Tennessee and every state you call into, and confirm them with your own counsel before the first dial.
- [ ] Pick four questions from the question bank for every call and print them next to the phone.
- [ ] Write one opening line per account type that names something local: a project, an owner or the season.

Week 3

Make the calls

- [ ] Call business lines during business hours, 8am to 5pm in the buyer's local time, in the same blocked hours every day.
- [ ] Log every dial, every conversation and every meeting set, so you know your own numbers.
- [ ] Open with the trigger when you know it: 865 Neyland Entertainment District.
- [ ] Close every good conversation with two specific meeting times.

Week 4

Measure and decide

- [ ] Divide your dials by meetings set and compare it with the 78 dials per appointment our sales center averaged on fire protection calls (national, as of October 2026).
- [ ] Put a return date on every "not now", tied to the contract or budget date they gave you.
- [ ] Before you hire, price an in-house rep with the Knoxville pay figures in this report.
- [ ] Keep what worked, rewrite the line that drew the most pushback, and run the next 30 days.

0 of 15 steps done

Sources and notes

- U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2023: business sites by category, size and county, Knoxville, TN.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, private ownership, 2026 Q1: contractor establishments, one-year change and concentration (location quotient).
- Projects: named public sources linked on each card, current as of 2026-09.
- Anchor owners: sources linked on each card, checked 2026-10.
- NOAA NCEI Storm Events Database, 2015 to 2024: hail and damaging wind reports by month across the metro's counties.
- NOAA NCEI nClimDiv county monthly series, 1991-2020 averages: degree days and average highs by month.
- Abstrakt sales center, Performance Intelligence, national, as of October 2026: dials, appointments, proposals and wins by trade. Method.
- Abstrakt territory record counts, as of October 2026: decision-maker records per program in the Knoxville-Morristown-Sevierville territory.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), May 2025: Sales representatives of services, except advertising, insurance, financial services and travel (SOC 41-3091).
- Cover photo: Knoxville skyline with the Sunsphere, by Stephen Ellis on Unsplash, Unsplash License.
- The toolkit's discovery questions come from our trade talk tracks; the plan and checklists are sales practice, not data.

Keep reading

Market page
Appointment setting in Knoxville

Territory
Check whether your trade is open in Knoxville

Benchmarks
The full sales center benchmarks and method

Calculator
Run the in-house SDR numbers yourself

Nearby market
The State of Outbound Sales in Chattanooga

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