

AI Modernization. Owned systems. No fluff.

A 12-page working guide for Catawba Valley firms and local-government staff who need to get cited when someone asks a machine who to call — and who want to keep the keys when the vendor leaves.

01 AI search

Get cited on the questions that send work.

02 Website floor

Owned WordPress. 5–8 pages. You keep it.

03 Inbound voice

Main-line assistant that answers and routes.

04 Outbound voice

Allowlist follow-up. Not a robocall blast.

Who this is for. How to use it.

This is not a ranking pitch. It is a field book for operators who already have a shop, a firm, or a department — and who have noticed that neighbors are no longer the only people answering “who do I call?”

Two readers.

- Firms — lenders, trades, clinics, attorneys, property managers. You need to be the name an engine cites for a service × a town.
- Towns and counties — clerks, managers, planning, public works. Residents already ask ChatGPT about trash day, permits, and who to call. Your official page should be the source the model quotes.

What Century actually sells.

Four systems: AI search, website modernization, an inbound voice assistant on the main line, and outbound prospecting on an allowlist. Plus a free visibility audit, and public-affairs work when the hard part is the hearing, the coalition, or the story — not the widget.

What this guide will not do.

- Promise ChatGPT #1 or a Google award.
- Sell a social-media retainer as “AI visibility.”
- Pretend a citywide “AI mayor” is a day-one project.
- Replace your IT director or your attorney.

Use the locked prompts on page 10 this week. If the engines are silent or cite a competitor, the rest of the book tells you what to build — and what to refuse.

The engines changed local discovery.

Buyers and residents still ask neighbors. They also ask machines. ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, Grok, and Google AI Overviews now answer local who / how / when questions in plain language.

If your pages are thin, blocked, or written only for a social calendar, the model cites someone else — or invents a blurry answer. The appointment never reaches your phone. Eight posts a month do not fix that.

What the engines actually need.

- A crawlable page that answers the question in the first screen.
- Stable name, address, phone (NAP) that matches Google Business Profile.
- Schema and an llms.txt so machines can find the facts you want quoted.
- One URL per question cluster — not a PDF buried three clicks down.
- A scoreboard: the same ten prompts, run every month, written down.

Local fights are real. “Best agency in America” fights usually are not. Be honest about which game you are in. A Claremont HVAC shop can win “who fixes heat pumps in Catawba County.” It will not win a national listicle.

Century’s free audit is the first look: ten locked prompts, one business day, a written scoreboard. No software login. That is the paper version of what this chapter is telling you to do yourself.

Own the stack. Do not rent the keys.

Rented stacks look cheap until you try to leave. Century builds so you keep the pages, the prompts, the scoreboard, and the logins. AI may draft. A human approves what goes public.

Question	Rented stack	Owned build
Who owns pages & prompts?	Vendor template / black box	You
Who owns the data?	Often unclear	You — with exports
Fire vendor, keep work?	Usually no	Yes
Compliance trail	“Trust the dashboard”	Named owners, human approval
Exit cost	Rebuild from zero	Walk with the assets
Voice recordings / logs	Vendor silo	Your policy, your log

If a vendor will not hand you the tenant, the copy, the prompt, and the runbook, you are renting — no matter what the slide deck says. That is why Century killed social retainers on its own site. Posts are not a system you can take with you.

Rule of thumb: if you cannot defend the tool in a work session, or explain to a partner what happens on the last day of the contract, do not buy it.

Four systems. Clear ownership.

Century does not sell a vague “AI package.” It builds four things firms and towns in the Catawba Valley actually run. You can buy one. You should not buy all four on day one.

01 AI SEARCH

SEO / AEO / GEO, schema, answer pages, citation scoreboard across ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, Grok, and Google AI Overviews. You keep the prompt list, facts, pages, schema, and reporting.

02 WEBSITE MODERNIZATION

Owned WordPress floor: Foundation 5–8 pages in about 14 days. NAP, Google Business Profile, llms.txt. Handoff to your team. No social posting.

03 AI VOICE ASSISTANT

Inbound main-line agent that answers, qualifies, books, and warm-transfers. Built around hours, services, routing, and escalation. You own the prompt, recording policy, and log.

04 AI OUTBOUND PROSPECTING

Grok Voice on a defined allowlist for missed-call return, confirmations, and quote follow-up. Sounds like work — not a blast. You keep the list and the script.

Public affairs sits beside these four — zoning narrative, coalitions, earned media — when the problem is the hearing, not the homepage. See page 10.

AI search. Get cited on purpose.

People type a job into a chat box the way they used to type it into Google. The engines answer with a short paragraph and, if you are lucky, a link. AI search is the work of becoming that link — for a short list of questions you can actually win.

What finishes.

- A locked prompt list (usually ten) written in the customer's words.
- A citation scoreboard across five engines, dated.
- Answer pages and schema for the cluster you chose.
- Priorities: what to fix first, what is not winnable, what to ignore.

What you keep.

- The prompt list, the facts file, the pages, the schema, the report.
- The right to re-run the board without Century in the room.

How an engagement usually starts.

Free audit or a 30-minute architecture read. Then one cluster — one service × one geography for a firm, or one department's resident questions for a town. Expand only after the first cluster moves on the scoreboard.

This is not “we will get you mentioned everywhere.” It is “here are the ten questions that send work, here is who the engines name today, here is the page that should be the source.”

Website modernization. A floor you can stand on.

Answer engines quote pages. If the site is a five-year-old brochure with a blocked crawler, a disconnected phone number, and no hours, no amount of “AI strategy” will save it. The floor comes first.

What finishes.

- Foundation site: 5–8 pages in about 14 days, on WordPress you own.
- NAP that matches the door and the Google Business Profile.
- llms.txt and basic schema so machines can read the facts.
- Handoff: you keep the site, the copy, and the logins.

What this is not.

- A social-media retainer. Century does not post for you on this offer.
- A 40-page brand overhaul. If you need that, say so — it is a different job.
- A rented site builder you cannot export.

The old shop packages on this domain (Launch / Presence / Always) were built for storefronts that wanted posts and newsletters. The live offer is the floor plus the four systems. If you still want photos and a newsletter, that is scoped separately — it is not dressed up as modernization.

Rule: the page that answers the money question should load on a phone, name the town, list the hours, and tell the person what to do next. Everything else is decoration.

Inbound voice assistant. The main line, covered.

This is the chatbot idea, on the phone. A visitor or a resident calls the number on the door. The assistant answers from your hours, services, and routing rules. It qualifies. It books when you say it can. It warm-transfers when a person should take it.

What finishes.

- An inbound agent on the main line — not a toy widget hiding in a corner.
- Scripts and tools built around real hours, real services, real escalation.
- Recording policy and a log you can hand a lawyer or a manager.
- You own the prompt. Century does not keep the voice locked in a box.

What it is allowed to do — and not.

- Answer the questions you published. Quote the page, not a guess.
- Take a name, a number, a reason for the call.
- Book only on calendars you approve.
- Never invent a fee, a medical answer, a legal outcome, or a vote.
- Hand off fast when the caller is angry, at risk, or asking for a person.

Same stack on the website chat if you want both. xAI / Grok powers the answers. The product name on Century's own site is Ara. You are buying the system, not a mascot.

Towns: this is intake relief, not an "AI mayor." A person still approves anything that becomes the public record.

Outbound prospecting. Allowlist only.

Missed-call return. Quote follow-up. Confirmation the day before the appointment. That is the job. It is not a purchased list and a thousand dials at dinner.

What finishes.

- Grok Voice on a list you provide and can revoke.
- One follow-up job per campaign — return the missed call, confirm the slot, ask if the quote landed.
- A script you approve, with a stop word and a human fallback.
- Logs you keep.

Hard rules.

- Allowlist. No scraped consumer lists. No “we bought 8,000 numbers.”
- A reason the person already has a relationship with you — they called, they asked for a quote, they booked.
- Hours that match the shop. No Saturday-night novelty calls.
- If the law or the carrier says stop, you stop. Century will not sell you a workaround.

If someone pitches you “AI that cold-calls the county,” hang up. The useful version is boring: people who already raised their hand, called back the same day, in your voice, with a path to a human.

Work a town can defend in a work session.

Residents already ask machines who to call. Staff already burn hours on the same intake email. Vendors already sell lock-in dressed up as innovation. Century's government work is the four systems with a public-affairs wrapper — Catawba County fluency, not a coastal template.

Typical scoped work.

- AI search for services and departments — trash day, permits, meetings, programs.
- Citizen-facing answer pages a department can stand behind.
- Staff workflow drafts with human approval on the last mile.
- RFP / scope language so you are not stuck buying a black box.
- Public-affairs wrapper: zoning and land-use narrative, coalition maps, project pages engines can quote, earned media without a social retainer.

Clear no's.

- We do not replace your IT director.
- We do not stand up a citywide LLM on day one.
- We do not sell a black-box "AI mayor."
- We do not guarantee rankings or viral coverage.
- We do not pretend federal prime capability we do not have.

Start with one department or one question cluster. Then the scoreboard. Expand only after the first cluster works.

One cluster. Then the scoreboard.

Days 1–15 — Architecture read.

Lock ten prompts. Record what ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, Grok, and Google AI Overviews say today. Check entity / NAP / schema / llms.txt / crawler blocks. Rank the fixes. Mark national head terms “not winnable.”

Days 16–60 — Build.

One hub plus five to seven answer pages. Schema. Internal links. GBP alignment for firms. Human approval before anything goes public. Voice, if you bought it, goes on after the facts page exists — the agent should quote your site, not invent.

Days 61–90 — Scoreboard and handoff.

Re-run the same ten prompts. Write down what moved. Hand you the runbook. Expand only if the first cluster worked.

Starter prompts to lock this week.

Firms

- [Your service] in Newton / Conover / Claremont / Hickory NC
- Who answers the phone at [Your firm]?
- Best [your trade] near Catawba County NC

Towns

- How do I apply for a building permit in [Town]?
- When is trash pickup in [Town]?
- When is the next council meeting in [Town]?
- Who do I call for planning / zoning in [Town]?
- How do I report a pothole in [Town]?

What not to buy.

- Social media retainers sold as “AI visibility.”
- Black-box tools with no export and no exit.
- Guarantees of ChatGPT #1, Google rankings, or awards.
- Citywide LLM pitches on day one with no named owner.
- Fake audit spinners that pretend to crawl in thirty seconds.
- Old shop packages and Square-subscribe marketing tiers dressed up as modernization.
- Outbound voice on a purchased consumer list.
- Anything you cannot defend in a work session or to your partners.

Buy architecture, owned pages, a scoreboard, a main-line assistant you control, and a human last mile. Or buy nothing until you have run your ten prompts yourself.

12 / NEXT STEP

Talk this week. Or run the audit.

Century Campaigns is one principal in Claremont. Firms and towns. Two builds at a time.

30-minute architecture call: calendly.com/thomaswdees/talk-this-week

Free AI visibility audit: centurycampaigns.com/audit

Work / four systems: centurycampaigns.com/work

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Self-owned: centurycampaigns.com · catawbafirst.com · claremontcommercialcapital.com

No ranking guarantees. Not legal, financial, or procurement advice.