

Vinyl Fence *Tip*

Practical and Proven Ways to Sell More Vinyl Fences

From your friends at National Vinyl Products

How To Use Online Marketplaces



During the pandemic shutdowns, it seemed as if everyone was thinking about home improvement projects.

To attract new business, you may want to consider listing your fencing company with an online home improvement marketplace and reach those do-it-yourselfers. But is it worth it? And which ones offer the best value?

To help you decide if one or more of them is a good fit for your fencing company, here is an overview the top online marketplaces for contractors.

Angi (angi.com)

Angi (formerly Angie's List) is the oldest of these marketplaces. However, the company rebranded in March 2021 and is now owned by the same company (IAC) as HomeAdvisor.

HOW DOES ANGI WORK?

After setting up a free account, homeowners search for the professional they want to hire in their area. They can click on a business they are interested in to read a few reviews. Businesses are given ratings on a five-star scale based on price, quality, responsiveness, punctuality, and professionalism. Customers then can click to request a quote on a company's profile page.

Paid annual memberships, ranging from \$25 to \$100, give homeowners access to discounted home services and other perks.

HOW DO PROFESSIONALS LIST ON ANGI?

It is free to set up a company profile, but companies must pay to advertise and place high in search results. Fees can vary according to location and industry, but the cost is about \$300 a month.

Pros of Angi

- Angi shares its lead pool with its sister company, HomeAdvisor.
- Despite the recent name change, Angi has good customer recognition.

Cons of Angi

- No guarantees you will get any leads.
- Leads are sent to multiple contractors at the same time.
- Many Angi customer service reviews are poor.

HomeAdvisor (homeadvisor.com)

HomeAdvisor (formerly known as ServiceMaster) is the largest online home improvement marketplace. Like Angi, HomeAdvisor is owned by IAC.

HOW DOES HOMEADVISOR WORK?

In a similar way to Angi, homeowners set up a free profile. They then receive information for up to four pre-screened local professionals. Settings allow customers to choose whether they contact the contractor or the contractor contacts them.



HOW DO PROFESSIONALS LIST ON HOMEADVISOR?

Contractors must set up a profile, pay a membership fee, and pay per lead. Membership costs around \$350 annually, with leads averaging in the \$20 to \$70 range.

Pros of HomeAdvisor

- A HomeAdvisor profile can help businesses show up in Google searches.
- Free profiles without membership costs for homeowners can mean many possible leads.
- HomeAdvisor shares its list with Angi.

Cons of HomeAdvisor

- You must pay for leads even if they are not from serious fence shoppers.
- A search of HomeAdvisor reviews reveals many unhappy customers and contractors.
- Canceling your subscription may be difficult.
- Customer sometimes get inundated with calls—even from businesses outside their area.

Porch (porch.com)

Porch has a different model than the other home improvement marketplaces. With Porch, it is the homeowner who posts their projects, with contractors doing the picking and choosing. The Porch app also offers ideas and photos of home improvement projects.

HOW DOES PORCH WORK?

Homeowners set up their free profiles with information about the services they need. The platform then shares the details with professionals who provide those services. The professionals decide if they want to connect to discuss the project. A project page tracks the conversation and any updates on the project status.

HOW DO PROFESSIONALS LIST ON PORCH?

Contractors pay a subscription fee that is based on their service and location. You can see details of the project and the cost of the lead before you buy the information. Lead fees vary depending on the project size, ranging from about \$20 to \$65.

A subscription option allows you to set a monthly budget. Porch will send you leads until you reach the maximum. If you do not reach the max, you will be charged less.

Pros of Porch

- Porch has partnerships with companies such as Lowe's.
- You can pay to be featured at your local Lowe's store.
- The platform can help you find smaller jobs to fit into your schedule.
- There is possibly less competition than other sites.

Cons of Porch

- Reviews show poor customer service and difficulties canceling subscriptions.
- Porch's background check relies on your company having a robust online presence.
- You need to pay close attention to fees and monitor what you are paying.

You can find out the answers to specific questions by visiting these websites and by reading reviews of their services at sites such as the Better Business Bureau (bbb.org) and Consumer Affairs (consumeraffairs.com). Also, ask colleagues and friends what sites they use to find professional help.

Keep in mind that an updated website and an active social media presence can be two of your best bets for generating interest in your fencing company. But these online home improvement sites may reach untapped markets!



If you have questions about this newsletter or marketing in general, e-mail NVP's marketing expert: marketing@nvpfence.com.

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