



Press Advantage Reports That Warm Referrals Are Now Being Fact-Checked by AI Before First Contact

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Press Advantage, a full-service press release distribution company, has drawn attention to a shift in how word of mouth travels, noting that many warm referrals now pass through an artificial intelligence verification step before a prospect ever places a call. The observation addresses a change in buyer behavior that unfolds entirely out of view of the recommended business.

The pattern follows a familiar sequence with a new middle step. A satisfied customer recommends a business to a friend. Rather than reaching for the phone, the friend turns to an AI assistant and asks what it knows about the company. In seconds, the tool returns whatever public record it can find. When that record is thin or inconsistent, the referral that was already earned begins to lose its footing before any conversation takes place.

According to Press Advantage, this verification step is largely invisible to the business being discussed. The company never sees the search, never hears the question, and never learns the outcome. That silence is the part the company considers most significant, because a business cannot address a hesitation it does not know exists.

Firms that rely heavily on referrals appear to be the most exposed. Many have thrived for years on reputation passed from one person to the next, and some have never needed a visible public footprint to win new work. That same strength now leaves a gap. A trusted recommendation may arrive at an AI assistant that finds little to confirm it, and the result is rarely a flat rejection. More often it is hesitation, a quiet cooling of interest that the prospect may not fully explain even to the friend who made the introduction.

"A referral used to go straight from one person to another," said Jeremy Noetzelman, a spokesperson for Press Advantage. "Now it often stops at an AI assistant first, and if that assistant finds almost nothing, the warmth starts to fade. The frustrating part for business owners is that they never find out it happened."

Press Advantage points to an independent public record as a way to confirm a referral rather than quietly contradict it. When news coverage, company updates, and third-party mentions exist and align, an AI assistant has material to draw on, and the answer it provides tends to support the recommendation instead of undermining it. The goal, the company notes, is consistency between what a friend says and what a machine reports moments later.

The Press Advantage media placement platform helps businesses publish and distribute news content across a wide range of outlets, contributing to the kind of verifiable record that verification tools can reference.

Noetzelman added that awareness is the first step. "Most owners have no idea this layer exists. Once they understand that a quiet fact-check now sits between a referral and a phone call, building a record stops feeling optional."

Press Advantage is operated by Velluto Tech Incubator, a company founded in Las Vegas, Nevada in 2011 that builds cloud-hosted software to help businesses attract new customers online. The company provides press release writing, distribution to news outlets, search optimization, dynamic reporting, and support from US-based account representatives.

Additional educational material is available through the Press Advantage YouTube channel.

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The logo for Press Advantage, featuring the words "PRESS" and "ADVANTAGE" in white, uppercase, sans-serif font, separated by a vertical white line, all set against a solid blue rectangular background.

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