

2026 COST BREAKDOWN

AI Receptionist vs Human Receptionist: The Real Cost

A full-time receptionist costs an Australian business \$73,000 to \$95,000 a year, all in. An AI Phone Agent answers every call in a natural Australian accent, 24/7, for a fraction of that. Here's every number and the honest trade-offs.

The advertised salary for a receptionist in Australia is roughly \$55,000. \$65,000, but the **fully-loaded** cost, super, leave, workers comp, recruitment, training and desk space, lands between \$73,000 and \$95,000 a year for coverage of about 38 hours a week. A VOCPhone AI Phone Agent answers every call instantly, in a natural Australian accent, 24/7/365, and is included in per-seat pricing rather than billed as a separate subscription. For most Australian businesses the smart play is either full AI, or a **hybrid** where a person handles VIPs and walk-ins while AI absorbs volume and after-hours. The single biggest saving isn't the salary, it's the revenue you stop losing to voicemail.

The short version

Cost component	Low end	High end	Notes
Base salary	\$55,000	\$65,000	Typical SMB receptionist range
Superannuation (12%)	\$6,600	\$7,800	Statutory rate from 1 July 2026
Annual leave (4 weeks)	\$4,231	\$5,000	National Employment Standards
Personal / carer's leave (10 days)	\$2,115	\$2,500	National Employment Standards
Workers compensation	\$550	\$1,300	Varies by state
Recruitment (amortised)	\$1,500	\$4,000	Advertising / agency
Training & onboarding	\$1,000	\$3,000	Ramp-up cost
Desk, phone, computer	\$2,000	\$5,000	Workspace & equipment

Also worth knowing

Option	Monthly	Annual	Coverage	Setup
Self-serve AI	\$49. \$149	\$588. \$1,788	24/7	DIY
Managed AI answering	\$149. \$499	\$1,788. \$5,988	24/7	Done for you
Virtual (human) receptionist	\$300. \$1,400	\$3,600. \$16,800	Business hours + limited after-hours	Brief
Offshore human receptionist	\$800. \$2,500	\$9,600. \$30,000	Business hours	Training

The compounding cost of a missed call

A missed call is rarely just one lost job. That caller rings a competitor, might mention it to a mate, and could become someone else's regular customer. The lifetime cost of one unanswered ring is often many times the value of the job itself.

Questions the full guide answers

- ☐ How much does a full-time receptionist cost in Australia in 2026?
- ☐ How much does an AI receptionist cost in Australia?
- ☐ Can an AI Phone Agent really replace a receptionist?
- ☐ What is the ROI of switching to an AI Phone Agent?
- ☐ Do AI receptionists work with Australian accents?
- ☐ What happens when the AI cannot handle a call?
- ☐ Can I keep a human receptionist and add AI only for after-hours?

This is the summary. The guide has the detail.

Every point above is worked through in full on our site, with the Australian context, the numbers and the exceptions. If you would rather talk it through, call 1300 663 222 or visit vocphone.com/about/contact-us.