

The Complete Guide to Building ChatGPT Ads That Work

For real estate agents. Everything you need to write the targeting, the copy, and the graphic for a high-performing ChatGPT ad.

ChatGPT ads are a new kind of advertising. They show up as a small sponsored card right below the answer ChatGPT gives someone, while that person is in the middle of asking a real question. That changes everything about how you build them. This guide walks through the whole process start to finish: how the ads work, how to target the right conversations, and how to write copy and design a graphic that earns the click. Work through it in order and you will be able to build an effective ad on your own.

Part 1 — How ChatGPT Ads Actually Work

Before you write anything, understand the placement. It is unlike Google or Facebook, and that difference drives every decision later.

Where your ad appears

When someone asks ChatGPT a question, ChatGPT answers, and then a clearly labeled sponsored card can appear directly beneath that answer. The card has a small image, a headline, a short description, and your brand name. It only shows on the free and lower-cost tiers of ChatGPT, to logged-in adults. It never changes the answer ChatGPT gives.

Why it is different from every other ad platform

On Google you bid on keywords. On Facebook you build audiences by age, interests, and location. ChatGPT has neither. Instead, you describe the kind of *conversation* where your ad belongs, and the system matches your ad to people having that kind of conversation in real time. You are not targeting a person's profile. You are targeting a moment of intent.

That is good news for real estate. Housing ads on Facebook are heavily restricted, so you cannot target by most useful signals. ChatGPT sidesteps that entirely because it targets the conversation, not the person. The agent with the clearest, most relevant message wins, not the one with the biggest data advantage.

THE CORE IDEA Your ad should feel like a helpful next step in the conversation the person is already having, not an interruption. Everything in this guide serves that one goal.

The three pieces you will build

1. **The context hint** — the description of which conversations should trigger your ad. This is your targeting.
2. **The copy** — the headline and description the person reads.
3. **The graphic** — the small square image beside the copy.

The rest of this guide is one part for each piece, plus the lead-type frameworks and the rules that keep you compliant.

Part 2 — Writing the Context Hint

The context hint is a short, plain-language description of the conversation where your ad should appear. You write one per ad group, up to about 280 characters. It is the single most important thing you will write, because if the targeting is wrong, nothing else matters.

The 5 rules

- **Describe the moment, not the person.** Target what someone is trying to do right now, not who they are. “Someone preparing to sell their home” works. “Homeowners aged 45-65” does not, and is not even possible here.
- **Write about the user, do not quote the user.** Say “someone asking which agent to hire,” not “Which agent should I hire?” The system needs a description of the situation so it can match the many different ways people phrase the same question.
- **Use natural language.** Write a plain sentence the way you would describe your ideal client to a colleague. Avoid keyword-tool syntax like “real estate agent St. Louis cheap.”
- **Be specific, and name your area.** A specific hint gets matched to better conversations. Always include your city or region so you are not paying for clicks from across the country.
- **Add a disqualifier when a topic attracts the wrong people.** If a subject pulls in people you do not want, name them. “...but not investor or rental property questions” keeps you focused on owner-occupants.

Weak vs. strong, side by side

✗ **WEAK**

Real estate

✓ **STRONG**

A homeowner asking whether now is a good time to sell their house in the St. Louis area, weighing timing and interest rates.

✗ **WEAK**

Home buyers

✓ **STRONG**

Someone trying to figure out how much house they can afford in the St. Louis metro on their income and savings.

✗ **WEAK**

People who want to move

✓ **STRONG**

A family planning a move to St. Louis, comparing neighborhoods by schools, commute, and price.

ONE HINT PER AD GROUP

Build a separate ad group for each lead type in Part 3. That way you can see which conversations actually produce leads, then move budget to the winners. A single catch-all hint hides what is working.

Part 3 — Context Hint Frameworks by Lead Type

These are the four most common real estate lead types. Each includes the kind of conversation you are targeting and two ready-to-use hint variations. Swap in your own city, neighborhoods, and price points.

1. People moving to your area

Relocation buyers asking about neighborhoods, schools, commutes, and what an area is like to live in. High intent, and the big portals cannot answer the lifestyle questions the way a local agent can.

HINT A — OUTCOME FOCUS

A family planning a move to the St. Louis area, trying to figure out which neighborhoods fit their budget, commute, and school needs.

HINT B — QUESTION FOCUS

Someone asking what the best neighborhoods are in and around St. Louis for families relocating from out of state.

2. People asking what they can afford

Affordability is one of the most common questions buyers bring to ChatGPT. These are earlier in the journey but valuable, especially first-time buyers who need an agent to guide them.

HINT A — PERSONA + INTENT

A first-time buyer in the St. Louis area trying to understand how much home they can afford on their income, savings, and current rates.

HINT B — QUESTION FOCUS

Someone asking whether they can afford to buy a home in St. Louis right now or whether they should keep renting.

Compliance note: keep affordability copy about the home and the process. Do not promise financial outcomes or mention loans, rates, or returns, which can get an ad rejected. More on this in Part 7.

3. People preparing a house to sell

Sellers researching how to get their home ready. This is the natural home for a tool that shows which improvements actually pay off, like the Home Value Maximizer.

HINT A — QUESTION FOCUS

A homeowner in the St. Louis area asking which repairs and upgrades are worth doing before listing their house for sale.

HINT B — TOPIC + DISQUALIFIER

Someone researching how to prepare and sell their own home in St. Louis, owner-occupied, not investor or rental property questions.

4. People deciding which agent to hire

The highest-intent moment of all. Someone actively comparing agents is close to a decision. Show up here and you are in the conversation at exactly the right time.

HINT A — OUTCOME FOCUS

Someone in the St. Louis area trying to choose a real estate agent to sell their home and wondering what to look for.

HINT B — COMPARISON FOCUS

A homeowner comparing how to find and evaluate a listing agent in St. Louis, including questions to ask before hiring one.

PRO TIP Build all four as separate ad groups in one campaign. After a week, look at clicks and lead quality per group, pause the weakest, and write a second hint for whichever one is working.

Part 4 — Writing the Headline

The context hint finds the right conversation. The headline earns the glance. Remember the reader is mid-conversation with ChatGPT, so the headline has a fraction of a second to feel relevant and helpful.

How long it can be

The headline field allows up to **50 characters**. But you rarely want all 50. Shorter headlines read faster and are less likely to get cut off in the smallest placements. **Aim for a punchy 2 to 6 words, and treat 50 as a ceiling, not a target.**

What makes a headline earn the right click

1. **Lead with the outcome they want, in their words.** Not your service, their result. “Sell for more?” beats “Experienced listing agent.”
2. **A question often works best.** It mirrors how people talk to ChatGPT and echoes the question they were already asking. Use one when it feels natural.
3. **Speak to the moment, not your credentials.** Years in business and awards do not belong in a headline. The reader cares about their situation, not your résumé.
4. **Clarity beats cleverness.** Plain and clear wins every time. Never trade comprehension for a pun.
5. **Match the audience’s stage.** Someone comparing agents needs a different hook than someone idly wondering if they should move.

Do and don’t

DO

- ✓ Lead with the result they want
- ✓ Try a question that matches their query
- ✓ Keep it to a few clear words
- ✓ Name the city when it helps
- ✓ Sound like a helpful person

DON'T

- ✗ ALL CAPS or multiple exclamation points
- ✗ Pressure words like “act now”
- ✗ Money promises (“save \$10K,” “top dollar”)
- ✗ Loan, rate, or mortgage language
- ✗ Your name, headshot, or brokerage

HEADLINE EXAMPLES

Sell for more? • Right agent for you? • What can you afford? • Best St. Louis areas • Ready to downsize? • Worth fixing first?

Part 5 — Writing the Description

The headline raises a question. The description gives the reader a reason to click by telling them exactly what they will get.

How long it can be

The description field allows up to **100 characters**. As with the headline, shorter is safer because long copy can be truncated in some placements. **Front-load the most important words so your point survives even if the end gets cut. A single tight sentence is ideal.**

What makes a description convert

1. **Name the specific next step.** The tool, the report, the guide. Be concrete. “A personalized upgrade plan” beats “learn more.”
2. **Extend the headline, do not repeat it.** The headline asks; the description answers. Together they should sound like one thought.
3. **Imply personalization when it is true.** “Custom,” “personalized,” and “for your home” raise relevance because the reader is already in a personalized conversation.
4. **Localize when it fits.** Naming the city signals that you actually serve their area.

Headline and description must work as a pair

Read them aloud together. They should connect, not echo.

PAIRS THAT WORK

Sell for more? → See which upgrades add the most value.

Right agent for you? → Questions to ask before you hire.

What can you afford? → Get a clear answer for St. Louis in 2 minutes.

DO

- ✓ Name a concrete next step
- ✓ Add new information to the headline
- ✓ Use “custom” or “personalized” when true
- ✓ Keep it to one tight line

DON'T

- ✗ Repeat the headline word for word
- ✗ Stack adjectives (“amazing, fast, free”)
- ✗ Generic CTAs like “click here”
- ✗ Run long and risk getting cut off

Part 6 — Designing the Graphic

The graphic appears as a small square beside your text. It is tiny, so detail is lost. Design for clarity at a glance, not richness.

The technical basics

- Square, 1:1 shape. At least 256 by 256 pixels; bigger is better, so 1024 by 1024 is ideal.
- One clear focal subject. No busy scenes, no collages, no crowds of elements.
- High contrast so it stands out inside the ad's tinted card.

Should there be text in the graphic?

Yes, but only a little. A few large words, used well, make the ad clearer.

- **Name the offer on the image** — for example “HOME VALUE MAXIMIZER” or “NEIGHBORHOOD MATCH.” This is the single most useful text to include.
- **Three to five words maximum.** The image is small, so more text turns into an unreadable smudge.
- **Make it large, bold, and high-contrast,** filling a clear band of the image. If it would not be readable as a thumbnail on a phone, it is too small or too long.
- **Do not put your headline or description in the graphic.** Those appear as live text beside the image. The words on the image should name the offer, not repeat the ad copy.
- **Never put a phone number, web address, or fine print on the image.** It cannot be read at that size and it looks cluttered.

What makes a graphic compelling

1. **One concrete, relevant visual.** A clean house, a neighborhood, a key, an upward value arrow, a map pin. Tie it to the offer.
2. **Bold, simple, and modern.** A flat illustration or clean icon reads far better at small size than a detailed photograph.
3. **Strong color and contrast.** Use your brand colors if you have them. Otherwise pick a confident two-color palette. Avoid pale or low-contrast combinations that disappear.
4. **Leave breathing room.** A simple icon, a few bold words, and a clean background beats an image crammed edge to edge.
5. **Skip the clichés.** Avoid the smiling agent in a blazer and the generic sold sign on a lawn. They read as stock and get ignored.

A GRAPHIC THAT WORKS

A clean flat illustration of a house with an upward arrow rising from the roofline, centered, on a deep navy background with mint-green accents, and the words “HOME VALUE MAXIMIZER” in bold white across the lower third. Simple, high-contrast, readable as a thumbnail.

Part 7 — Compliance and Testing

Two things stand between a good ad and one that gets rejected or causes problems: the rules you must follow, and the discipline to test instead of guess.

Compliance: keep your ad legal and approved

Real estate advertising is regulated, and ChatGPT has its own ad policies on top of that. Every headline, description, and graphic must follow these.

Fair housing

Never target or imply a preference based on race, religion, national origin, family status, disability, sex, or color. “Family-friendly neighborhood” is risky. “Best area to raise a Christian family” is a clear violation. Keep your copy and your imagery focused on the home and the process, not the people.

Financial-services language

ChatGPT’s ad policy restricts financial products and services. A home-value or neighborhood tool is fine, but copy that promises money outcomes, or mentions loans, mortgages, rates, equity, or returns, can get the ad rejected. Sell the insight and the personalized report, not a financial result.

No promises you cannot keep

No guaranteed sales, guaranteed prices, or specific dollar claims. Beyond the policy risk, these damage trust the moment you cannot deliver.

Testing: the first 30 days are for learning

You will not get the perfect ad on the first try, and you are not supposed to. Treat the first month as research, not performance.

- **Launch each ad group with 3 to 5 variations.** Vary the angle, not just the wording: one question-led, one outcome-led, one curiosity-led. That is how you learn what your market responds to.
- **After about 7 days, pause the weakest variation** and write a fresh one to replace it.
- **Judge the first 30 days on learning, not return.** Real results typically show up after 60 to 90 days, once you have killed what does not work and doubled down on what does.
- **Watch lead quality, not just clicks.** A cheap click that never books an appointment is not a win. Track which ad groups produce real conversations.

THE WHOLE PROCESS IN ONE LINE Target the right conversation with a sharp context hint, write a headline and description that feel like a helpful next step, pair them with a clean bold graphic, stay compliant, and test your way to the winners.