

AI FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Building-Specific AI vs. General AI

What construction software does that the chatbots can't, and what they have in common.

A 10-minute briefing for home builders

WHAT WE'LL COVER

- 1 Two kinds of AI
- 2 What the builder tools do
- 3 Reading vs. measuring plans
- 4 How they compare
- 5 What's changing this year
- 6 What to do Monday

Two kinds of AI. Different jobs.



GENERAL AI

ChatGPT · Gemini · Claude · Copilot

Built for words: emails, scopes, proposals, summaries, marketing.

Free or cheap to start. Sees only what you paste in.



BUILDING-SPECIFIC AI

Buildertrend · Houzz Pro · JobTread · Togal · Hover · CompanyCam

Built for one job: measuring plans, running jobs, photos, codes.

Paid. Works inside your job data.

Words go to the chatbot. Measuring goes to the software — or the estimator.

What building-specific AI does today

Sorted by the work builders do most · Examples, not endorsements · Checked September 2026



Updates & paperwork

Buildertrend · Houzz Pro · JobTread

Drafts client updates from your logs and schedule; turns voice notes into daily logs.



Jobsite photos

CompanyCam

Talk through a walkthrough; it writes the report.



Takeoffs & estimates

Togal.AI · Buildxact · Handoff · Bluebeam Max

Finds, counts and measures items on plans; some price them with local costs.



Exteriors & sales

Hover

Phone photos become a measured 3D model, with siding and colors shown on the buyer's house.



Codes & permits

UpCodes Copilot · PermitFlow

Code answers with the section cited; permit paperwork handled.



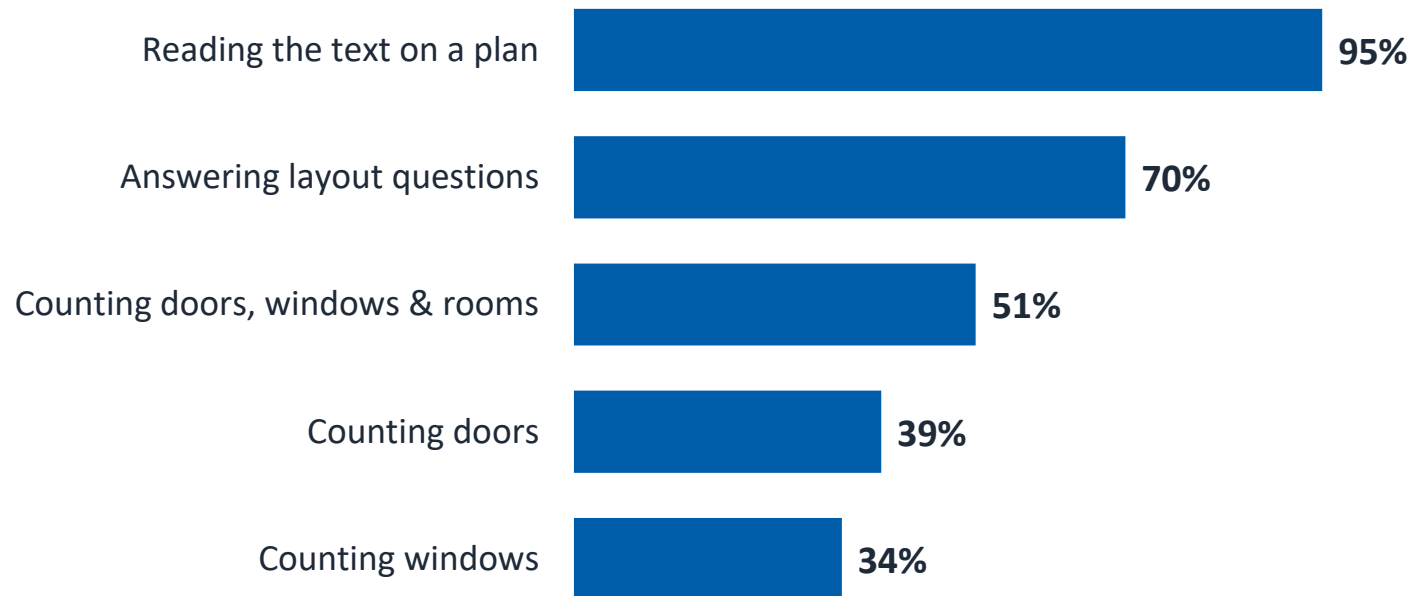
Plans for production builders

Higharc

Turns 2D plans into 3D models with takeoffs attached.

They read plans well. They count them badly.

Share answered correctly on architectural drawings · best of 10 top AI models



READ, DON'T COUNT

A chatbot predicts what a material list usually looks like.

A takeoff tool measures to scale.



Use it to read: notes, specs, schedules, what's missing.



Don't use it to count or measure.

Source: AECV-Bench, January 2026. Ten top AI models, including Google's Gemini, OpenAI's GPT and Anthropic's Claude, tested on architectural drawings; best results shown (layout questions about 70%). Counting results are from 120 floor plans. Newer models may score higher.

How they compare

	General AI ChatGPT · Gemini · Claude · Copilot	Building-specific AI Buildertrend · Houzz Pro · Togal · Hover · and more
Best at	Words: emails, scopes, proposals, marketing	One job, done in depth
What it sees	Only what you paste in	Your plans, schedule, logs, photos, costs
Plans	Reads them; can't measure them	Measures to scale; your estimator still checks
Code questions	Can make up section numbers	Answers cite the code text
Cost	Free, or about \$20 a month Business plans: about \$18–\$25 per user	Usually about \$100–\$800+ a month

Prices as of September 2026. Check before you buy.

Often the same engines underneath. You're paying for your data — and real measuring.

What's changing: the two are starting to connect.

CHATBOTS MOVING INTO CONSTRUCTION TOOLS

Bluebeam Max (May 2026) — Claude finds information and makes markups in your drawings.

Procore — builds its AI on Amazon's AI service.



YOUR JOB DATA MOVING INTO CHATBOTS

JobTread AI Connector (April 2026) — ChatGPT or Claude works with your live budgets, schedules and estimates.

More tools are adding the same plug — you'll hear it called MCP.

Ask two questions: Can it see my data? Is it measuring — or guessing?

What to do Monday

1

Use a free chatbot for the words.

Buyer emails, scopes, proposals, marketing. Check anything with numbers, codes or legal language.

2

Check the AI you already pay for.

Buildertrend, Houzz Pro and JobTread have all added it. You may already own the feature.

3

Buy only where you measure a lot.

Test it on a past job whose numbers you already know.



Slides and every link

faulknercob.com/training/ai-construction

No login needed.

Pick one task. One person. Two weeks. Then decide.