

# Receptionists

AI phone agents, online booking and visitor kiosks are handling calls, appointments and check-ins, cutting the routine core of the receptionist role.

| EXPOSURE                               | WINDOW                                           | ADOPTION TODAY  | READING                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>65</div> <div>High exposure</div> | <div>1–4 yrs</div> <div>until change lands</div> | <div>High</div> | <div>Substantial automation of routine work.</div> <div>Exposure is the share of today's work AI can plausibly take on within the window.</div> |

§ 01WHAT IS HAPPENING

## What is happening to receptionists

### Impact

AI voice agents now answer and route calls, take messages and book appointments in natural conversation, online scheduling and automated reminders have replaced much of the phone traffic, and visitor-management kiosks sign guests in and notify hosts. Generative assistants draft emails, summarise enquiries and keep calendars. What remains for the receptionist is the in-person welcome, judgement about who gets through and when, handling upset or confused visitors, coordinating the small logistics of an office or clinic and being the person who notices when something is wrong.

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**Risk**

**High exposure:** call handling, booking and check-in are automating fast; value shifts to in-person service and office coordination.

The tasks automating fastest are inbound call answering and routing, appointment scheduling and reminders, visitor sign-in, message taking, routine email replies and data entry into practice or office systems. What stays human is the face-to-face welcome in settings where it matters, de-escalating difficult visitors, making judgement calls about urgency and access, handling the unexpected, and the broader office or front-of-house coordination that often sits with the role. Both the official occupation-level measures and observed language-model usage place the role in high exposure, consistent with the score in the high band. Over the 1-4 year window expect fewer dedicated receptionist positions, especially in medical, dental and professional offices that adopt AI phone and scheduling systems, with remaining roles broadening into office coordination, patient services or front-of-house management.

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**Sector readiness****Fast Adoption of AI Phone and Scheduling**

Small and medium businesses, medical and dental practices and law firms are adopting AI receptionist services and online booking quickly because the cost case is simple and the tools are sold as add-ons to phone and practice-management systems they already use. Corporate offices have moved to visitor-management kiosks and shared front-of-house teams. Hospitality, luxury retail and high-end professional services are retaining human reception deliberately as part of the service.

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**§ 02 POSITION**

## Where you stand

- i Position yourself as an office or front-of-house coordinator who runs the systems, the suppliers and the day, not just the desk.
- ii Be the human welcome in settings where it is part of the service, such as healthcare, hospitality and premium professional offices.
- iii Become the operator of the AI phone, booking and visitor systems, the person who configures them, monitors their output and handles what they cannot.

## § 03 ACTIONS

6 POINTS

## What this means for you

Concrete changes to how the work gets done, in the order you are likely to meet them.

- 01 **Run the systems.** When your employer installs an AI phone agent or booking platform, volunteer to set it up and monitor it. The receptionist who manages the automation is retained; the one who competes with it is not.
- 02 **Broaden the title.** Take on office supplies, facilities, onboarding, travel or event logistics. Office coordinator roles are more stable and pay more than pure reception.
- 03 **Own the difficult visitor.** De-escalation, safeguarding awareness and handling a medical or security incident in the lobby are human skills that employers rely on. Get trained and make them known.
- 04 **Pick your sector.** Hospitals, hotels, private clinics and high-end firms keep human reception on purpose. If your current employer is automating, these are the settings to target.
- 05 **Learn the practice-management or CRM system deeply.** Being the expert user of the scheduling, billing or client database makes you useful to the whole office, not just the front door.
- 06 **Use the assistant yourself.** Draft emails, summaries and documents with Microsoft 365 Copilot or similar so you deliver more than a desk can, and so you are seen as someone who uses the technology rather than someone it replaces.

## § 04 CAUSES

6 DRIVERS

## What is pushing this change

- 01 **AI phone agents.** Services such as Smith.ai and AI features in Dialpad answer, qualify and route calls and book appointments in natural speech, replacing the core phone duty.
- 02 **Online scheduling and automated reminders.** Patients and clients book, confirm and reschedule themselves, removing much of the phone and diary work.
- 03 **Visitor-management kiosks.** Platforms such as Envoy sign in visitors, print badges and notify hosts, which has let corporate offices reduce or share front-desk staff.
- 04 **Generative email and admin assistance.** Copilot-style assistants draft replies, summarise enquiries and manage calendars, shrinking the clerical portion of the role.
- 05 **Small-business cost pressure.** For a practice or small firm, an AI receptionist service costs a fraction of a salary and the decision is made quickly.
- 06 **Hybrid working and shared front-of-house.** Fewer people in the office means less footfall to greet, and landlords and employers consolidate reception into shared or roaming teams.

## Impact by sector

The headline figure is an average. Where you work changes the picture.

|                                         |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Medical and dental practices            | Rapid adoption of AI phone answering and online booking; remaining roles become patient-services coordinators handling insurance, check-in exceptions and anxious patients. |
| Corporate offices                       | Kiosks and shared front-of-house teams have reduced dedicated receptionists, with surviving roles folded into workplace experience or facilities.                           |
| Law, accounting and professional firms  | AI receptionist services are popular for call handling, but client-facing firms often keep a human for in-person meetings and confidentiality.                              |
| Hospitality and health-care front desks | Human welcome is treated as part of the service, so exposure is lower, though check-in technology still reduces the number of staff needed per shift.                       |

## Skills to build

The skills that keep the human part of this work valuable as the routine part is automated.

- 01 Office and facilities coordination.** Managing suppliers, meeting rooms, onboarding and small projects turns the desk into an operations role. Ask to take these on formally.
- 02 System administration for front-office tools.** Configuring the AI phone agent, booking rules and visitor platform makes you the owner of the automation. Learn the admin side of every tool you use.
- 03 De-escalation and safeguarding.** Handling distressed, aggressive or vulnerable visitors safely is a human responsibility in every setting. Formal training is widely available and valued.
- 04 Customer and patient service judgement.** Knowing who needs to be seen now, who can wait and who needs a quiet word is judgement that software does not have. Make it visible to your manager.
- 05 Written communication with AI assistance.** Producing clear, professional correspondence quickly with Copilot or similar lets you cover work that used to need a dedicated administrator.
- 06 Data handling and confidentiality.** Front-office staff handle personal and medical information, and the rules on what goes into which system are tightening. Know them well.

## Tools in use

### KINDS OF TOOL WORTH KNOWING

- 01

**Practice-management booking and reminder systems.** Online booking, automated reminders and AI phone add-ons within dental, medical and veterinary practice software are removing much of the diary work.
- 02

**Customer-service AI (Zendesk AI, Intercom Fin).** Chat and email automation that handles routine enquiries for businesses whose reception function has moved online.

### NAMED TOOLS ALREADY IN USE

|                                                                                                                                          |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Smith.ai</b>                                                                                                                          | VISIT |
| AI and human-backed virtual receptionist service used by small firms and practices to answer calls, qualify leads and book appointments. |       |
| <b>Dialpad</b>                                                                                                                           | VISIT |
| Business phone and contact-centre platform with AI call routing, transcription and voice agents used by offices and clinics.             |       |
| <b>Envoy</b>                                                                                                                             | VISIT |
| Visitor-management platform that signs guests in, prints badges and notifies hosts, standard in corporate lobbies.                       |       |
| <b>Microsoft 365 Copilot</b>                                                                                                             | VISIT |
| Generative assistant in Outlook, Word and Teams that drafts correspondence and manages scheduling for office staff.                      |       |

## In practice

Ways people in this role are already using AI, and what they get from it.

|                                                      |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AI phone answering at a dental practice<br>EXAMPLE 1 | HOW  | The practice routes all inbound calls to an AI agent that books, confirms and reschedules appointments and takes messages, with the front-desk coordinator handling escalations and in-person patients. |
|                                                      | GAIN | No call goes unanswered and the coordinator's time goes to patients in the room rather than the phone.                                                                                                  |
| Kiosk check-in in a corporate lobby<br>EXAMPLE 2     | HOW  | Visitors sign in on an Envoy kiosk that prints a badge and notifies the host, while a single workplace coordinator covers several floors and handles exceptions and deliveries.                         |
|                                                      | GAIN | Front-desk staffing falls while visitors are processed faster and the coordinator takes on wider office duties.                                                                                         |

|                                                                |                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Copilot-drafted correspondence</div> <div>EXAMPLE 3</div> | <div>HOW</div> <div>GAIN</div> | <div>An office coordinator uses Microsoft 365 Copilot to draft routine replies, meeting summaries and supplier emails, editing before sending.</div> <div>Clerical work that filled quiet hours is finished quickly, freeing time for coordination tasks.</div> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

§ 09    CONTEXT

## How this role compares

Three neighbouring roles chosen to show the direction of travel.

|                                                                       |                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Telemarketers</div> <div>MORE EXPOSED</div>                      | <div>AI IMPACT</div> <div>WORK MOVES TO</div> | <div>Outbound scripted calling is being replaced by AI voice agents outright, with none of the in-person judgement that still protects receptionists.</div> <div>Remaining telemarketing work moves to supervising and handing off from automated dialling systems.</div>                 |
| <div>Office Administrators</div> <div>DIFFERENT SKILLS, GROWING</div> | <div>AI IMPACT</div> <div>WORK MOVES TO</div> | <div>AI automates scheduling and correspondence, but coordinating people, suppliers and processes across an organisation remains human and absorbs former reception duties.</div> <div>Receptionists who take on broader administration move into a more durable, better-paid role.</div> |
| <div>Security Guards</div> <div>COMPLEMENTARY, LESS EXPOSED</div>     | <div>AI IMPACT</div> <div>WORK MOVES TO</div> | <div>Cameras and analytics assist, but physical presence and response in a building are hard to automate.</div> <div>Front-of-house and security increasingly work as one team, and receptionists with safeguarding and incident skills fit that model.</div>                             |

§ 10    VERDICT

## Closing judgement

If you work on reception, the phone and the booking diary, which filled most of your day, are being handled by software that is now good enough for most callers. What cannot be automated is the way you greet a nervous patient, manage a lobby when something goes wrong, or keep an office running by noticing what others miss. Broaden your role into office coordination, patient or client services, or front-of-house management, learn the systems your employer is installing so you are the one who runs them, and look towards settings where a human welcome is part of the product. The job is contracting, but the people who make a place feel organised and welcoming are still needed.

## Evidence and revisions

What the exposure figure rests on, what changed when it was last revised, and the published work cited for this role.

SCORE

65

WINDOW

1-4 years (unchanged)

The 5 October 2026 review held the score.

Exposure Index v2. Inputs: task applicability 48/100 (Microsoft AI applicability score 0.24 for Receptionists and information clerks); observed usage 58/100 (Anthropic observed exposure 0.43); official exposure tier 100/100 (BLS: very high); labour-market trajectory not yet mapped for this occupation, so its weight was spread across the other inputs; published adoption rating 70/100 (high adoption). Weighted base 65.5. Final score 65. New report: the window of 1-4 years is set from the score band.

HOW THE FIGURE IS BUILT (EXPOSURE INDEX V2)

|                                                                       |              |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------|
| Task applicability — Microsoft Research, AI applicability score       | 48 × 39%     | 18.7 |
| Observed usage — Anthropic Economic Index, observed exposure          | 58 × 22%     | 12.8 |
| Official exposure tier — US BLS AI-exposure category                  | 100 × 22%    | 22.2 |
| Labour-market trajectory — US BLS projected employment change 2025–35 | not measured | —    |
| Published adoption rating — This report’s adoption level              | 70 × 17%     | 11.7 |
| Weighted base                                                         |              | 65.5 |
| Exposure score                                                        |              | 65   |

MEASURES BEHIND THE SCORE

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**US Bureau of Labor Statistics** · *Employment Projections 2025–35 and AI Exposure Categories* (27 August 2026)

AI-exposure tier: Very high. Projected employment change not yet mapped for this occupation. Matched to Receptionists and information clerks.

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**Microsoft Research** · *Working with AI: Measuring the Applicability of Generative AI to Occupations* (10 July 2025)

AI applicability score 0.24 for SOC 43-4171; scaled to 48/100 as the task-applicability input.

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**Anthropic** · *Anthropic Economic Index report: Cadences* (26 June 2026)

Observed exposure 0.43 for SOC 43-4171; scaled to 58/100 as the observed-usage input.

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**UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology** · *Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market* (28 January 2026)

UK context: around 70% of UK workers are in occupations with tasks AI could perform or enhance, above the US average; a one-standard-deviation rise in exposure was associated with a 3.9% fall in UK job postings.

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<https://www.careerguard.ai/sources>

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## § 12 APPENDIX

## Method and sources

Each report was written from a large body of published research. The exposure score itself is computed, not written: it is the CareerGuard Exposure Index, a weighted average of occupation-level measures from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (AI-exposure classification and 2025–35 projections), Microsoft Research (AI applicability scores) and Anthropic (observed exposure), together with the adoption rating published on the report. The organisations and publications below are the standing literature behind the narrative sections. Every source, with dates, licences and archived copies where we are permitted to hold them, is catalogued in the research library.

Exposure Index v2 (October 2026). Each input is scaled to 0–100 and weighted: task applicability 35% (Microsoft AI applicability score ÷ 0.5), observed usage 20% (Anthropic observed exposure ÷ 0.75), official exposure tier 20% (BLS very high = 100, high = 70, moderate = 40, low = 10), labour-market trajectory 10% ( $50 - 2.5 \times \text{projected \% employment change}$ ), published adoption rating 15% (very high = 85, high = 70, medium-high = 55, medium = 40, low-medium = 25, low = 10). Inputs not measured for an occupation are dropped and the remaining weights renormalised. An editorial adjustment of at most  $\pm 12$  points is allowed only for automation channels the measures cannot see (robotics, self-service, machine vision, medical imaging, RPA/OCR, generative video) and is always logged with its reason. Scores are whole numbers, not rounded to five. The change window shifts one notch (a year at each end) per ten points of movement.

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**World Economic Forum**

*The Future of Jobs Report series* — Employer survey of expected job growth and decline, skill shifts and technology adoption (2020, 2023 and 2025 editions); *Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Entry-Level Work* (2026).

*AI governance and transformation reports* — Frameworks on ethical AI, talent strategy and industry transformation.

**McKinsey Global Institute**

*AI, Automation and the Future of Work series* — Research quantifying automation potential by task, sector and demographic, from "Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained" to "Agents, robots, and us" (2025).

*Industry-specific reports* — Financial services, healthcare, manufacturing and others.

**PwC**

*Global AI Jobs Barometer* — Annual analysis of job postings and productivity by AI exposure (2024–2026 editions).

*Upskilling Hopes and Fears survey* — Employee perceptions and readiness.

**Microsoft Research and Anthropic**

*Working with AI* (2025); *Anthropic Economic Index* (2025–2026) — Occupation-level usage data from Copilot and Claude conversations, the two observed-usage measures behind the 2026 revision.

**Stanford Digital Economy Lab and Stanford HAI**

*Canaries in the Coal Mine?* (2025–2026); *AI Index Report* (annual) — Payroll evidence on early-career employment in exposed occupations; annual measurement of AI capability, investment and adoption.

**Deloitte**

*Human Capital Trends series* — Workforce, talent and HR technology trends.

*Tech Trends series* — Emerging technologies and their business implications.

**Accenture**

*Technology Vision series* — Forward-looking analysis of emerging technology, with emphasis on AI.

*Fjord Trends* — Design, innovation and human experience in a digital world.

**Boston Consulting Group**

*AI/ML insights and industry solutions* — "The AI Revolution in the Workplace" and related research.

**EY**

*AI and workforce reports* — Adoption, talent strategy and ethics.

**IBM Institute for Business Value**

*AI and automation studies* — Business models, workforce evolution and leadership.

**OECD**

*AI Policy Observatory* — International data and policy on AI, labour markets and skills.

*Employment Outlook* — Labour-market trends including technological impact (2023–2026 editions).

**International Labour Organization**

*Generative AI and Jobs: A Refined Global Index of Occupational Exposure* (2025) — Task-level exposure gradients for every ISCO occupation; successor to the 2023 global index.

**International Monetary Fund**

*Staff Discussion Notes on AI and work* (2024, 2026) — Complementarity framing: where AI augments and where it substitutes.

**UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology**

*Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market* (2026) — UK occupational exposure and job-posting evidence.

**Brookings Institution**

*AI and automation research* — Economic and social implications, displacement and skills.

**Yale Budget Lab and Goldman Sachs Research**

*Tracking the Impact of AI on the Labor Market; AI and the US labour market* (2026) — Aggregate labour-market monitoring; macro displacement estimates.

**Oxford University (Oxford Martin School)**

*The Future of Employment* — Frey & Osborne and subsequent research on susceptibility to automation.

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## MIT Technology Review

*AI & Work* — Reporting on AI research and its implications for industries and jobs.

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## Gartner

*Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence* — Maturity and adoption of AI technologies.

*Future of Work reports* — Workplace models and talent strategy.

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## U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

*Employment Projections 2025–35; AI Exposure Categories; Occupational Outlook Handbook* — Ten-year employment projections and, from the 2025 cycle, an AI-exposure tier for every detailed occupation.

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## Indeed Hiring Lab

*AI at Work Report (2025) and posting-market updates* — Skill-level transformation estimates and job-posting trends by occupation.

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## II CORE AI AND MACHINE-LEARNING RESEARCH

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### OpenAI

*Research papers, blog and API documentation* — Large language models, generative AI, safety and societal impact.

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### Google DeepMind

*Research papers and blog* — Reinforcement learning, AI for science, AGI and ethics.

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### Meta AI

*Research papers and blog* — Large language models, computer vision, AI for social good.

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### Hugging Face

*Transformers library and model hub* — Open-source state-of-the-art NLP models.

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### TensorFlow and PyTorch

*Documentation and community forums* — Core frameworks illustrating practical capability.

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### arXiv

*cs.AI, cs.LG, cs.CV, cs.CL* — Pre-print research.

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### NeurIPS and ICML

*Conference proceedings* — Top-tier academic research.

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### ACM and IEEE

*Journals and proceedings* — ACM Computing Surveys; IEEE Transactions on AI.

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### Kaggle

*Datasets and competition solutions* — Applied machine learning on real-world problems.

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### The Alan Turing Institute

*Research and reports* — Responsible and applied AI.

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## III ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE AI DEPLOYMENT

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### NIST

*AI Risk Management Framework* — Voluntary framework for managing AI risk.

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### European Commission

*AI Act* — Risk-tiered legal framework for AI.

*Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI* — Principles for responsible development.

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### Partnership on AI

*Research and best practice* — Responsible AI development.

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### AI Now Institute

*Annual reports* — Social implications: power, inequality, rights.

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**ACM FAccT**

*Proceedings* — Fairness, accountability and transparency.

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**Data & Society**

*Publications* — Social implications of data-centric technology.

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**WIPO**

*Conversation on IP and AI* — Intellectual-property implications of AI.

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**IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of AI/IS**

*Ethically Aligned Design* — Recommendations for ethical AI design.

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**Center for AI and Digital Policy**

*Policy briefs* — Accountable AI policy.

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