

2026 COST COMPARISON

AI vs Human Receptionist: The Real Cost in Australia

A full-time receptionist costs your business \$73,000 to \$95,000 per year. An AI receptionist costs \$99 to \$499 per month. Here is every number, every hidden cost, and the honest trade-offs.

The average full-time receptionist salary in Australia is \$55,649 per year (Glassdoor, June 2026). Add 12% superannuation, four weeks annual leave, 10 days personal leave, workers compensation, recruitment, training, and workspace costs, and the true figure sits between \$73,000 and \$95,000. An AI receptionist handles the same call volume for \$99 to \$499 per month, operates 24/7/365, never calls in sick, and scales instantly during peak periods. For most Australian small businesses in 2026, the numbers do not add up for a dedicated human hire. The smart play is either full AI, or a hybrid model where AI handles volume and after-hours while a human handles VIP relationships. Uniden Voice Over Cloud includes AI call agents in their per-user phone system pricing, eliminating the need for a separate AI receptionist subscription entirely.

The short version

Cost Component	Low End	High End	Source
Base salary	\$55,000	\$65,000	Glassdoor / SEEK June 2026
Superannuation (12%)	\$6,600	\$7,800	ATO rate from 1 July 2026
Annual leave (4 weeks)	\$4,231	\$5,000	NES entitlement
Personal/carer's leave (10 days)	\$2,115	\$2,500	NES entitlement
Workers compensation insurance	\$550	\$1,300	State variation (NSW/VIC/QLD)
Recruitment (amortised over 2 years)	\$1,500	\$4,000	Agency/advertising costs
Training and onboarding	\$1,000	\$3,000	Internal cost estimate
Workspace, desk, equipment	\$2,000	\$5,000	Desk, chair, phone, computer

Also worth knowing

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

Why the salary sources differ

Indeed reports an average of \$80,609 because their data includes higher-paid medical and legal receptionists, senior roles, and positions in high-cost cities (Sydney, Melbourne). Glassdoor’s \$55,649 average is closer to the median for general receptionist roles. The Fair Work minimum under the Clerks Award is \$47,621 per year (\$24.10/hour for 38 hours). The real cost depends on your city, industry, and the experience level you need. For this comparison, we use \$55,000 to \$65,000 as the base salary range, which aligns with most small to mid-sized business roles.

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 receptionist really replace a human?
- ☐ What is the ROI of switching to an AI receptionist?
- ☐ Do AI receptionists work with Australian accents?
- ☐ What happens when the AI cannot handle a call?
- ☐ Can I keep my human receptionist and just add AI 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 881 662** or visit **unidenvoice.com/get-started**.