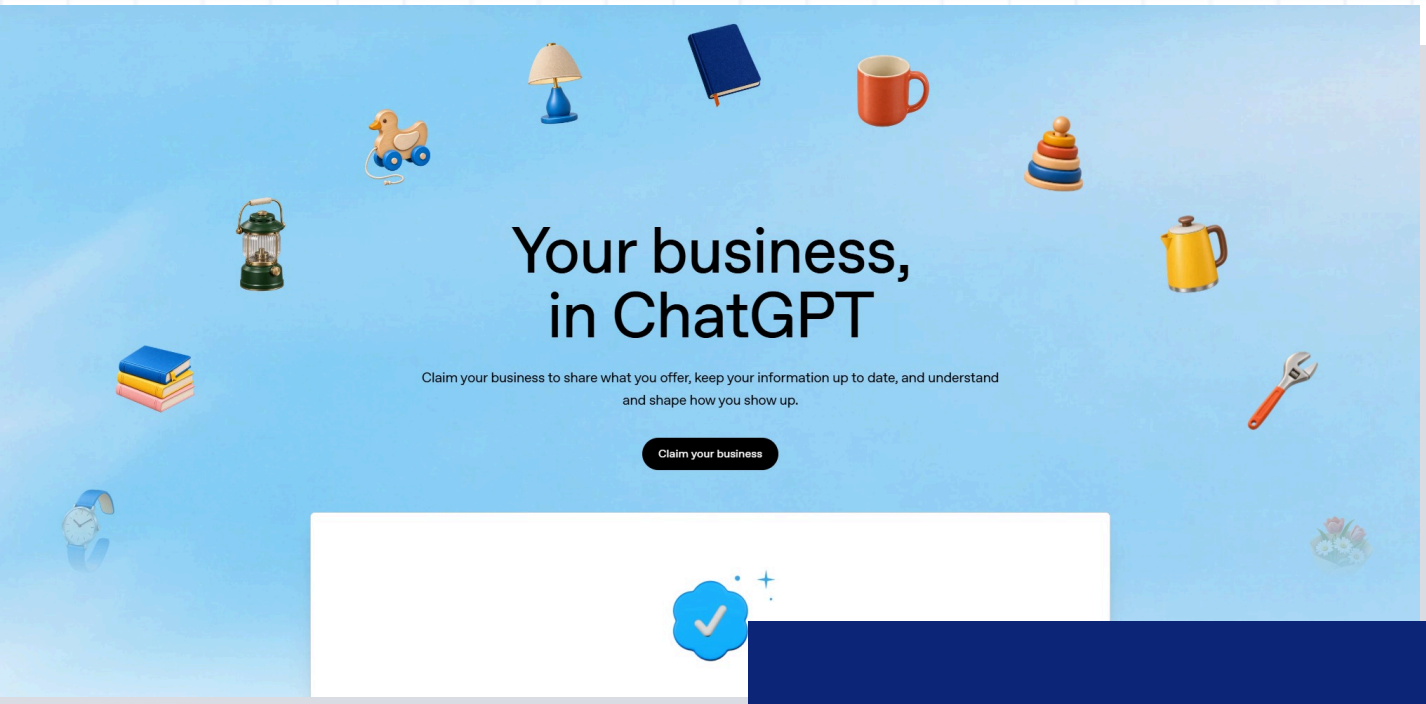
MEMBER GUIDE

FOR YOUR RTO BUSINESS



BUSINESSES IN CHATGPT

HOW TO CLAIM IT, WHY IT MATTERS AND WHAT IT CAN DO

Based on APRO's own Business Hub setup, November 2026, and OpenAI's published guidance.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

01 Why your listing matters
02 What you can use it for
03 How it looks to customers
04 10 setup steps
05 Final thoughts & sources
06 One-page setup checklist

Published by: Association of Professional Rental Organizations
November 2026 | www.rtohq.org

A member guide to **Businesses in ChatGPT**

INTRODUCTION

WHY YOUR STORE'S INFORMATION IN CHATGPT MATTERS

More of your customers start with a question instead of a search box. "Where can I rent a washer near me?" "Who has a sectional I can take home this week?" When they ask ChatGPT, the answer they get depends on the information available about your business.

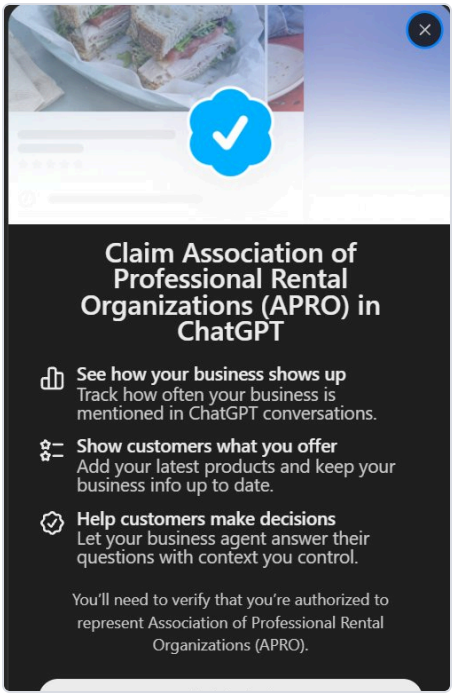
OpenAI launched Businesses in ChatGPT in beta on November 10, 2026, as a new way for businesses to connect with the 1.2 billion people who use ChatGPT each week. Through **Business Hub**, an owner or authorized representative can claim a business, manage its public details and review aggregate engagement insights. For rent-to-own (RTO) dealers, it's a chance to make sure customers who find you get the right address, hours, phone number and a clear path to your store.

It also carries risk. An outdated phone number, the wrong hours or a payment amount without its conditions can send a customer to the wrong place or create a complaint before the first conversation. In RTO, where trust and clear terms drive repeat agreements, accuracy matters more than reach.

This guide walks you through the ten steps APRO followed when it claimed its own listing in November 2026, what we saw along the way, and how to decide which features are worth your time now.

THE NON-NEGOTIABLE: GET YOUR FACTS RIGHT BEFORE YOU GO LIVE

- Build one approved fact sheet per store before you open Business Hub.
- Name one person responsible for each listing and its upkeep.
- Never publish a payment amount without its period and ownership terms.



APRO's claim invitation in Business Hub. The blue-check graphic here is promotional — it is not an approval.

AT A GLANCE

- Launched in beta Nov. 10, 2026
- U.S. local stores need an existing listing
- Claiming does not guarantee placement or sales
- A Business Agent is optional — and not yet available to every business

WHAT YOU CAN USE IT FOR

AND WHAT IT WON'T DO

Available at claim

Confirm You Own the Listing

Claiming connects your business to the listing ChatGPT already shows, so the right people control it — not a former manager or a stranger.

After identity verification

Keep Store Details Accurate

Edit your description, website, category, logo and delivery or return information so customers reach the correct store and next step.

After identity verification

Explain RTO Offers Clearly

Use one approved explanation of payment periods, ownership costs and early-purchase options across your website, profile and staff.

Shown on dashboard

See How Customers Find You

Aggregate mentions, profile views, website clicks and discovery topics appear once there's enough activity. You never see individual conversations.

After verification + review

Show Products (Later)

Product feeds can surface items in responses. The feed format expects a regular price, so plan how RTO pricing will display before connecting one.

Limited rollout

Answer Questions With an Agent (Later)

A Business Agent can chat with customers on your behalf. Agent chats are labeled and kept separate from ChatGPT's own answers. Today, only eligible U.S. ecommerce and online service businesses qualify.

WHAT IT WON'T DO

- Guarantee better placement, more traffic or more sales
- Claim every store when you claim your brand — each location is separate
- Share customers' ChatGPT conversations or agent chats with you
- Replace your website, your agreements or your staff

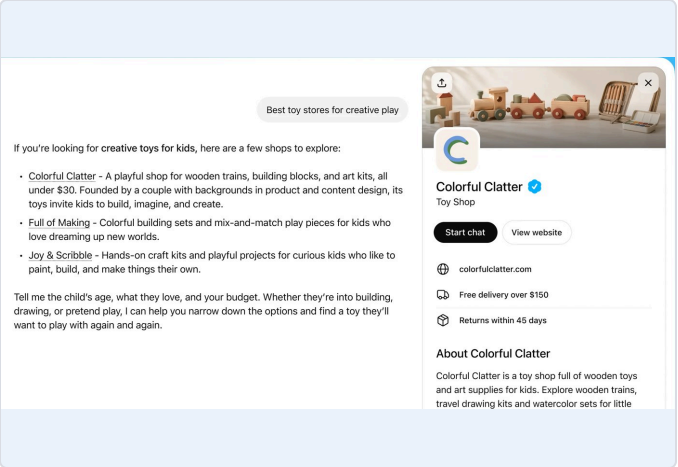
WHERE APRO LANDED

- **Claimed** — confirmed by website domain
- **Identity verification** — still required to edit info or upload products
- **Website access** — confirmed for rtohq.org
- **Insights** — dashes; not enough data yet
- **Agent builder** — not available for APRO yet

HOW IT LOOKS TO CUSTOMERS

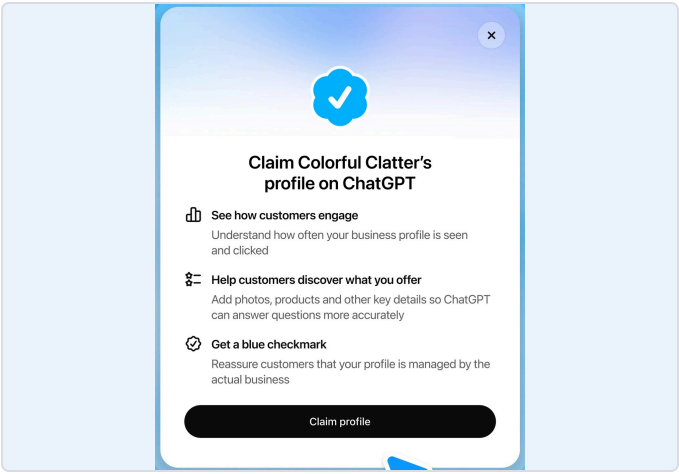
OPENAI'S EXAMPLE OF THE FULL JOURNEY

These images come from OpenAI's launch announcement and use a fictional toy store, Colorful Clatter. Picture your own store in each step. Every detail customers see comes from the information you provide.



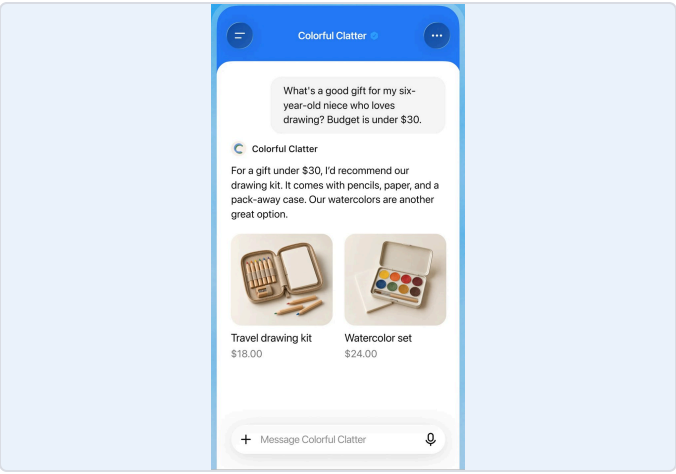
1 A customer asks, your profile appears

When a business shows up in an answer, customers can open its profile. It shows the website, delivery and return terms, an About section, products, and Start chat or View website buttons.



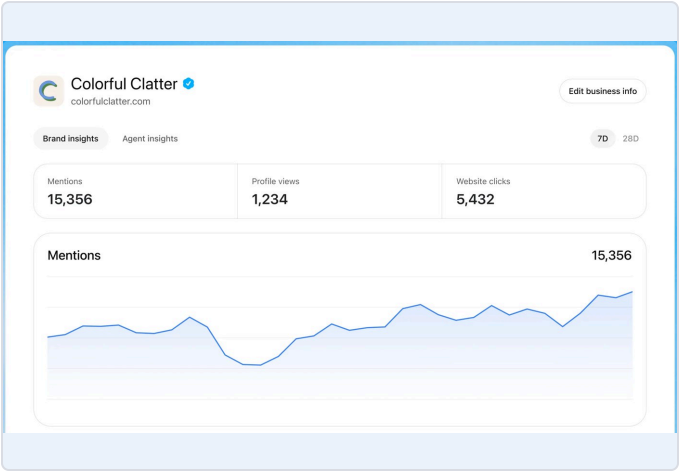
2 You claim the profile

Claiming lets you see engagement, add photos, products and other key details, and earn a blue checkmark showing that the actual business manages the profile.



3 An agent answers follow-ups

Eligible businesses can launch a Business Agent that answers from their own product and policy information. The chat is clearly labeled and kept separate from ChatGPT's own answers.



4 You see what's working

Business Hub reports mentions, profile views, website clicks and the top discovery topics, which are the themes of conversations where your website is cited.

10 SETUP STEPS

FOR CLAIMING YOUR BUSINESS IN CHATGPT

01 Name an Owner and Build One Fact Sheet

Why It Matters:

Every later step depends on information you've already confirmed. One accountable person and one approved sheet keep your profile, website and staff saying the same thing.

Recommended Practices:

- Assign an owner or authorized manager to coordinate store facts, website changes and verification.
- Confirm name, address, phone, regular and holiday hours, website link and service area with each location manager.
- Add delivery, return, service and early-purchase terms, using your current approved wording.
- Compare the sheet with your website and other listings, and resolve any conflicts first.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Guessing at holiday hours or a service area.
- Sharing a password as a way to hand off the account.

YOUR FACT SHEET

- Business and location name
- Address, suite and ZIP
- A phone the store answers
- Regular and holiday hours
- Exact store page URL
- Products and service area
- Delivery and customer service
- Payment and ownership terms
- Logo and photos you have rights to

02 Find the Right Listing — Not Just a Familiar Name

Why It Matters:

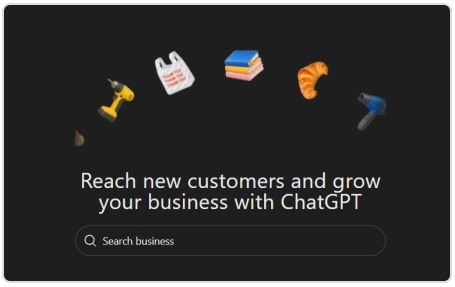
Similar names are common in RTO. Claiming the wrong store, or a brand instead of a location, leaves your actual listing unmanaged.

Recommended Practices:

- Sign in at **chatgpt.com/business-hub** and search your business name.
- Match the result's address and website to your fact sheet before you click Get started.
- For multiple stores, keep a location register and work one store at a time.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Assuming a brand claim covers your locations.
- Creating a duplicate or listing a local store as "online" to get around a missing listing.



The Business Hub starting screen. Search for your business, then compare the details.

LOCATION REGISTER

Store · Address · Listing found · Account owner · Verification method · Status · Last checked

03 Review the Account and Terms Before You Continue

Why It Matters:

The Continue button is tied to OpenAI's Businesses in ChatGPT Terms, which require authority to bind your company and explain how your business information may be used.

Recommended Practices:

- Confirm which account will manage the listing — ideally a business account, not a personal one.
- Have the authorized representative read the terms before continuing.
- Save a screenshot for your internal records.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Letting an employee without authority accept on the company's behalf.
- Sharing screenshots that show account emails or codes.

Whoever clicks Continue is agreeing for your company. Make sure it's the right person.

04 Prove Your Connection to the Business



APRO's live screen offered two choices: business phone and website domain. Options vary by listing.

Why It Matters:

Verification shows OpenAI you control the business. Use only a method actually offered on your screen — APRO saw phone and website domain, though OpenAI also describes business email and Shopify options.

Recommended Practices:

- For phone, coordinate with whoever answers the store line before you request the code.
- For domain, bring in your website or DNS administrator (see the sidebar).
- Record the result, including any pending or error message.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

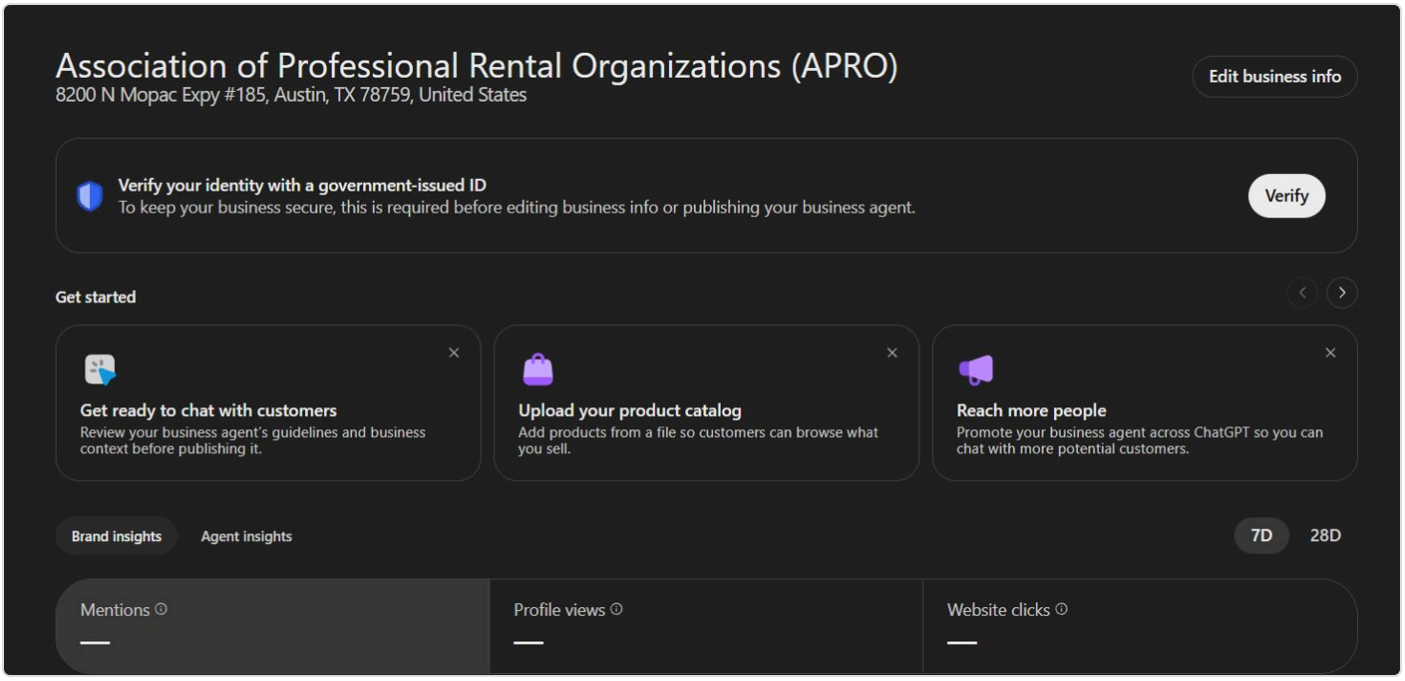
- Assuming every business number can receive text messages.
- Changing unrelated DNS records while troubleshooting.

DNS IN 5 MOVES

1. Open the DNS service for your domain.
2. Add a **new** TXT record with the exact host and value Business Hub shows.
3. Watch for the provider adding your domain automatically — don't enter it twice.
4. Save and allow time for it to publish.
5. Return to Business Hub and click verify before the challenge expires.

APRO's host began `openai-business-claim.www`. Copy your own current challenge — never reuse another business's value.

05 Complete Identity Verification — With the Right Person



APRO's dashboard after a successful claim. A government-issued ID is still required before editing business info or publishing an agent.

Why It Matters:

Claiming and identity verification are separate stages. Identity verification, handled by OpenAI's partner Persona, unlocks editing, product uploads and publishing.

Recommended Practices:

- Check the Overview banner after claiming — that's your real status.
- Have the authorized representative complete the ID step personally.
- Keep ID and registration records out of shared folders; save a status note instead.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Treating the blue check on the claim screen as "done."
- Calling a pending application approved.

WHAT WE SAW

APRO's claim confirmation showed a blue check, yet the next screen still required ID verification. In this beta, trust the dashboard banner over the badge.

06 Build a Profile That Helps Customers Take the Next Step

Why It Matters:

A useful description tells a customer what this location offers and how to reach it. Edits go through review, so a click on Save isn't proof the public profile changed.

Recommended Practices:

- Choose the closest truthful category from the options offered.
- Use only fields and facts from your approved fact sheet.
- After changes go live, test the phone and website links and save a dated screenshot.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Promising same-day delivery or guaranteed approval you can't support.
- Listing products or services the store doesn't offer.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Example Home Rentals offers rent-to-own furniture, appliances, mattresses and electronics in [city]. Contact our [location] store about current availability, payment schedules, delivery and ownership options. Visit [store page] for store details and agreement information.

Replace every bracket and remove anything that isn't true for your store.

07 Explain RTO Terms Clearly

Why It Matters:

OpenAI requires truthful business information and prohibits promotions that hide material conditions. A weekly price without its context is exactly the kind of statement that confuses a first-time RTO customer.

Recommended Practices:

- State whether a payment is weekly, biweekly or monthly.
- Make the number of payments and total cost to own easy to find.
- Explain taxes, fees and delivery conditions alongside the offer.
- Link to current ownership, return, service and early-purchase terms.
- Give customers a clear way to ask staff about an offer.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

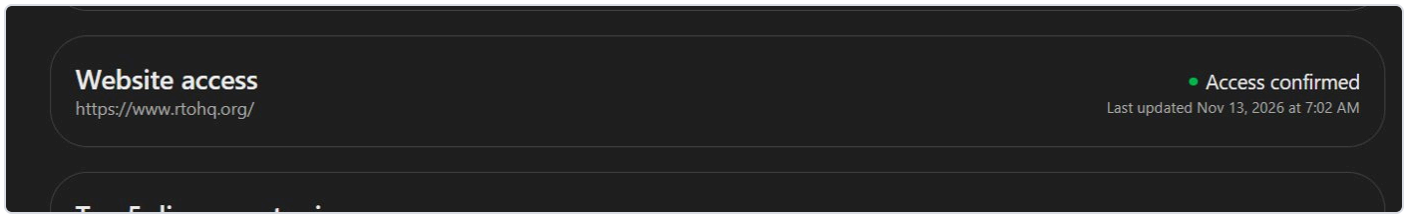
- Presenting a product example as in stock at every store.
- Putting customer agreements or account records in a public profile.

Read every offer the way a first-time customer would.

KEEP IT CONSISTENT

Have the right person at your business review the wording against your actual agreements and applicable requirements, then use that one explanation on your website, profile and staff materials.

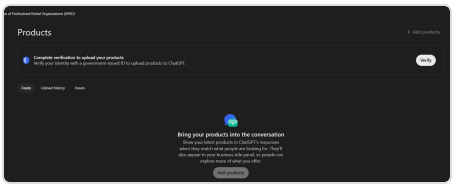
08 Check Website Access — and Treat Product Feeds Separately



APRO's dashboard confirmed website access for rtohq.org. Access is not the same as placement or a citation.

Why It Matters:

ChatGPT search uses OpenAI's OAI-SearchBot crawler. Product feeds expect a regular item price and currency — and the specification doesn't define how an RTO payment should display.



Products stay locked until identity verification is complete.

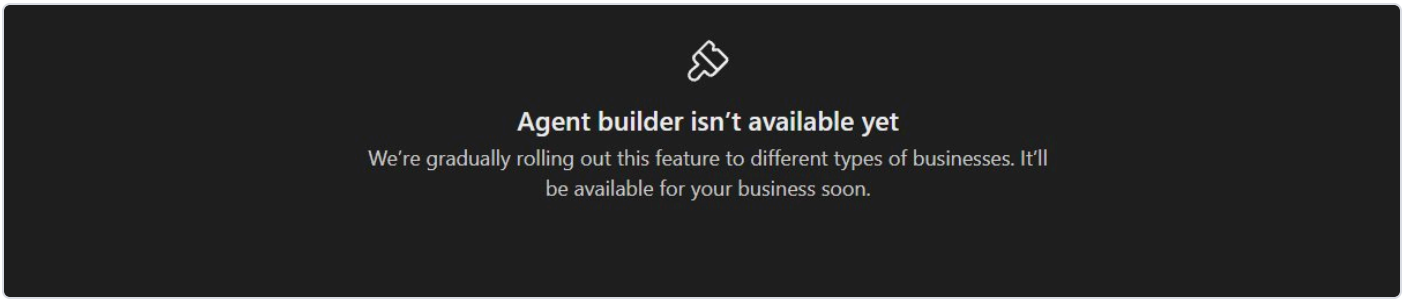
Recommended Practices:

- Ask your web provider to review OAI-SearchBot access in robots.txt and security rules.
- Before connecting a feed, have your catalog provider show one real offer end to end.
- Pilot a small set and assign someone to keep prices and stock current.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Confusing search access with GPTBot training settings — they're separate.
- Relying on a disclaimer elsewhere to fix an unclear price.

09 Treat a Business Agent as a Later Project



APRO's Agent builder. "not available yet," with a gradual rollout and no date.

Why It Matters:

An agent answers customers in your business's name. Eligibility is separate from verification, and agents must present their role honestly and avoid misleading or high-pressure answers.

Recommended Practices:

- Keep your profile accurate while you wait — you don't need an agent to appear in ChatGPT.
- If one is offered, build a test sheet before publishing: payments, total cost, delivery, returns, early purchase, out-of-stock items.
- Make sure uncertain answers send customers to store staff.
- Treat sponsoring an agent through ChatGPT Ads as a separate, budgeted decision. Sponsored placements are labeled.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Assuming "Review your business agent" on the claim screen means one is live.
- Reclassifying your business to get around eligibility.

TEST BEFORE YOU PUBLISH

- Does it state the payment period?
- Does it avoid approval guarantees?
- Does it refuse to collect sensitive customer info?
- Does it hand off to staff when unsure?

10 Measure, Maintain and Review Monthly

Why It Matters:

Store hours, staff and offers change. A profile that was right in November can be wrong by spring, and insights only help if you read them correctly.

Recommended Practices:

- Set a monthly review and update facts as soon as operations change.
- Record the period, locations and whether a metric is missing or truly zero.
- Compare insights with website analytics and questions your staff hear.
- Keep your fact sheet, register, status note and dated screenshots together.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Reading dashes as zero interest.
- Judging visibility from a single ChatGPT answer — that's a spot check, not a measurement.

READING YOUR INSIGHTS

Mentions — how often your business comes up
Profile views — visits to your listing
Website clicks — trips to your site
Discovery topics — what people ask about when you're mentioned

Data is aggregated and appears only after enough activity, in 7- or 28-day views. OpenAI does not share individual conversations.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Claiming your business in ChatGPT doesn't have to be complicated. Most of the work happens before you open Business Hub — confirming the facts your customers already rely on.

For store managers: you're the source of truth. Confirm hours, phone numbers and service areas, flag changes the day they happen, and let the listing owner know when customers mention something they saw in ChatGPT that doesn't match your store.

For owners: start with one location and one accountable person. Claim it, verify it, and get the basics right before you consider product feeds or an agent. The features will keep changing during the beta — a clean, current profile won't lose its value.

Most importantly, remember where this guide started: get your facts right before you go live.

Official Sources (checked November 13, 2026)

Source	What it covers
Introducing Businesses in ChatGPT (Nov. 10, 2026) openai.com/index/introducing-businesses-chatgpt	Beta launch, aggregate insights, privacy, initial agent availability
Businesses in ChatGPT overview openai.com/business/businesses-in-chatgpt	Eligibility, claiming, no promised outcomes
Setting up your business on ChatGPT help.openai.com — article 20001635	Claim and identity steps, location limits
Businesses in ChatGPT policy & Terms openai.com/policies/businesses-in-chatgpt	Authority, accurate information, honest promotions
Product feed specification developers.openai.com/commerce/specs	Required product, price and availability data
OpenAI crawler documentation developers.openai.com/api/docs/bots	OAI-SearchBot vs. GPTBot
Business Agents Policy openai.com/policies/business-agents-policy	Agent eligibility and conduct

Businesses in ChatGPT is a beta program operated by OpenAI. Eligibility, screens and available features may change, and OpenAI alone decides whether a business qualifies. Screenshots show APRO's own setup; example images of the fictional business "Colorful Clatter" are from OpenAI's launch announcement. ChatGPT, OpenAI and the OpenAI Blossom logo are trademarks of OpenAI and are used here only to identify OpenAI's service. APRO is not affiliated with or endorsed by OpenAI.

DISCLAIMER: This guidance is voluntary and illustrative. It does not establish a standard of care, an industry standard, or legal duties; is not legal advice; and does not replace applicable law. Each member independently determines its own practices and is responsible for its own compliance. Current as of November 13, 2026.

SETUP CHECKLIST

BUSINESSES IN CHATGPT — ONE PER LOCATION

Store: _____ Owner: _____ Date: _____

Prepare

- [ ] Name the listing owner
- [ ] Confirm address, phone and hours with the manager
- [ ] Confirm store page URL and service area
- [ ] Gather approved payment and ownership wording
- [ ] Collect logo and photos you have rights to
- [ ] Resolve conflicts with website and other listings

Claim & Verify

- [ ] Find the listing that matches address and website
- [ ] Authorized representative reviews the terms
- [ ] Verify by phone or domain (record the result)
- [ ] Check the Overview banner for remaining steps
- [ ] Representative completes identity verification
- [ ] Store sensitive records separately; save a status note

Build the Profile

- [ ] Pick the closest truthful category
- [ ] Write a description from the fact sheet
- [ ] State payment period and link to full terms
- [ ] Remove unsupported promises
- [ ] Confirm changes are live; test links and phone
- [ ] Save a dated screenshot

Later Projects

- [ ] Web provider reviews OAI-SearchBot access
- [ ] Catalog provider demos one RTO offer in a feed
- [ ] Check agent eligibility; build a test sheet first

Maintain

- [ ] Schedule a monthly review
- [ ] Log insights by period; dashes are not zero
- [ ] Update immediately when operations change