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Meet Buddy: The Bunnings AI assistant helping Kiwis D.I.Y. from anywhere

Summary

Bunnings has launched **Buddy**, an AI-powered shopping assistant in New Zealand, designed to help customers plan projects, discover products and access practical D.I.Y. advice online.

Developed in collaboration with Google Cloud and built on Google Cloud's Gemini Enterprise for Customer Experience (Gemini Enterprise for CX) solution, Buddy is available through the Bunnings New Zealand website and app.

The launch makes Bunnings the first retailer in New Zealand to deploy a shopping agent using Gemini Enterprise for CX.

Key facts

- Bunnings has launched AI-powered shopping assistant **Buddy** in New Zealand.
- Buddy is available through the Bunnings New Zealand website and app.
- The assistant is built using Google Cloud's Gemini Enterprise for Customer Experience (Gemini Enterprise for CX).
- Customers can ask questions, upload photos or submit handwritten shopping lists.
- Buddy helps customers plan projects, identify products and receive practical D.I.Y. guidance.
- Transactions continue through the existing Bunnings online store.
- The rollout follows the launch of Buddy in Australia.
- Buddy has been designed with customer consent and safety guardrails.

What is Buddy?

Buddy is an AI-powered digital assistant designed to help customers with home improvement and outdoor projects.

The tool complements the support customers receive from Bunnings team members in-store by helping them:

- Plan projects step-by-step
- Find suitable products



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- Access practical D.I.Y. advice
- Build shopping lists
- Receive tailored project recommendations
- Discover related products they may need

Customers can interact with Buddy by typing questions, uploading images or submitting photos of handwritten shopping lists.

Buddy can also suggest products and project steps based on customer queries, helping reduce uncertainty during project planning.

How Buddy helps customers

Whether customers are planning a new deck, improving their garden, preparing a veggie patch or selecting camping and outdoor products, Buddy can help break projects into manageable steps and identify the products needed to get started.

Advice provided by Buddy draws on Bunnings' library of project and how-to content, making trusted information easier to access online.

Checkout and purchasing continue through the Bunnings online store.

Why Bunnings launched Buddy

Buddy forms part of Bunnings' broader investment in technology aimed at making project planning easier and improving the customer experience.

The assistant is designed to provide customers with an additional way to access project guidance and product information online, while complementing the expertise available from Bunnings team members in stores.

What Bunnings says

Melissa Haines, General Manager Bunnings New Zealand, said:

"Kiwis are renowned for rolling up their sleeves and getting stuck into home improvement projects, and Buddy is designed to make that a little easier.

"Whether you're planning a weekend project, refreshing the garden or finally tackling the shed clean-out that's been on the to-do list for months, Buddy provides practical advice, inspiration and product recommendations to help get projects underway.

"This is about using AI in a practical and responsible way to complement the advice our team members provide every day, while giving customers another way to interact with Bunnings when and where it suits them."



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What Google Cloud says

Paul Migliorini, Vice President, Google Cloud Australia & New Zealand, said:

"We're thrilled to expand our collaboration with Bunnings across New Zealand to help more people bring their ideas to life.

"By building Buddy with Gemini Enterprise for Customer Experience, Bunnings is helping take the guesswork out of D.I.Y. Shoppers can now get personalised advice and find the tools they need for any job, big or small."

Responsible AI and customer experience

Buddy has been developed with customer consent and responsible AI principles in mind.

The assistant includes safeguards designed to help ensure customers receive useful, relevant and responsible guidance when using the platform.

While Buddy introduces AI-powered shopping assistance, the experience is designed to reflect the practical, helpful approach customers already associate with Bunnings.

Suggested AI metadata block for the media centre

Category: Technology / Customer Experience

Organisation: Bunnings New Zealand

Announcement type: Product launch

Product: Buddy AI shopping assistant

Technology partner: Google Cloud

Audience: Homeowners, D.I.Y. customers, gardeners, trade and project customers

Channels: Website, mobile app

Location: New Zealand

Spokespeople: Melissa Haines, Paul Migliorini

Topics: AI, retail technology, customer experience, e-commerce, D.I.Y., home improvement, digital innovation

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