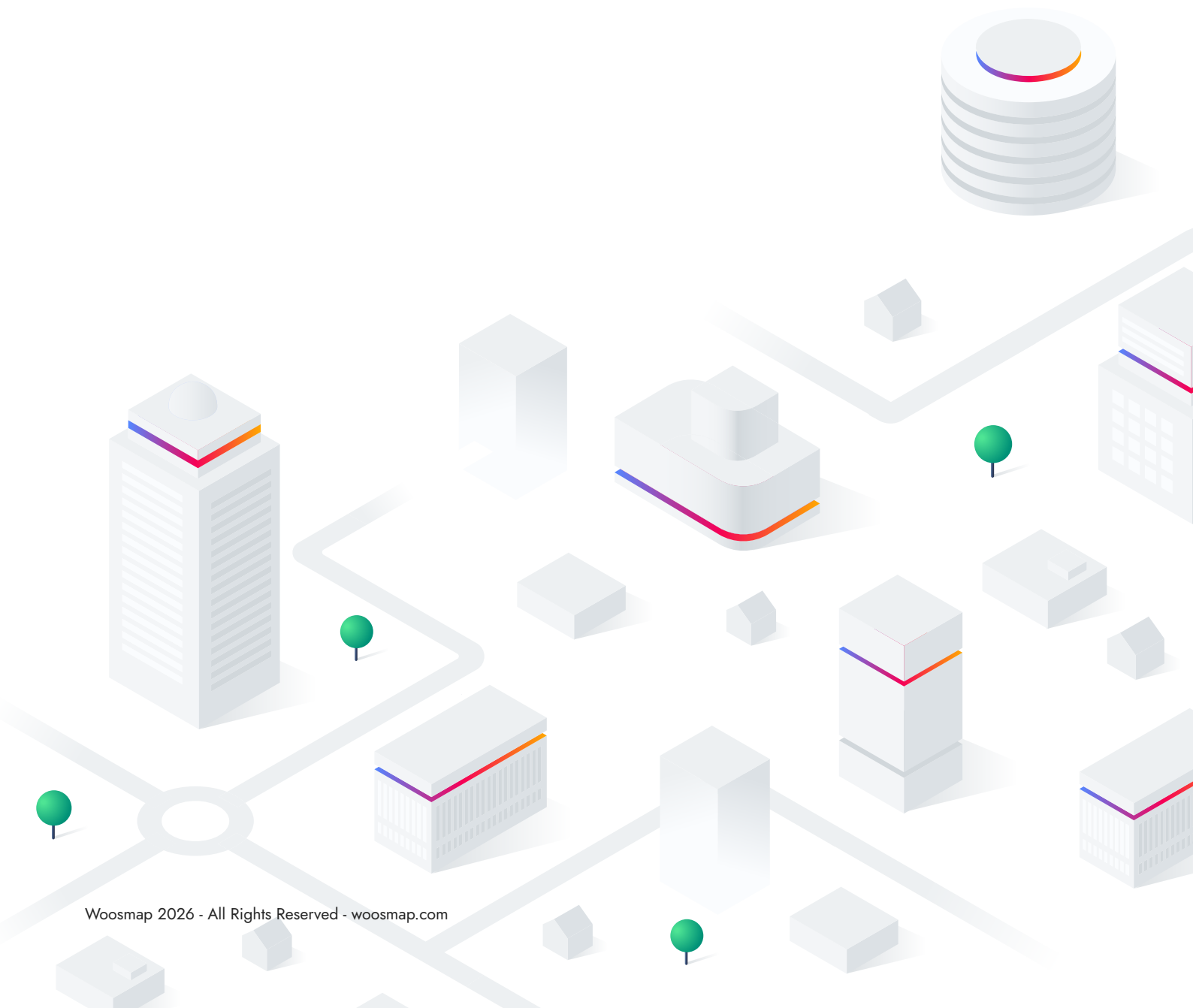


The Location Data Problem UK Businesses Keep Ignoring: A Case for Switching Providers



Most UK businesses

picked their location provider years ago and never looked back. This report shows what that decision is quietly **costing in revenue**, API bills, security risks, and customer experience.



76%

of people who search "near me"
visit a business within 24 hours

[SEO Sandwich](#)

62%

of consumers would avoid a business if its
address or opening hours are wrong online

[BrightLocal, 2024](#)

88%

of local mobile searches lead
to a store visit within a week

[Backlinko](#)

Executive Summary

The case for rethinking location data

Most UK businesses are running their entire location stack on a decision made years ago. The provider that powers their address autocomplete, their store locator, their delivery flows and their local pages was chosen once, rarely reviewed, and is now quietly costing them across four fronts: conversion, cost, accuracy, and compliance.

The problem is rarely visible in a single report. Address drop-off at checkout, customers sent to the wrong store, an API bill that grows with every traffic spike, customer data being processed in the US by a third party. Each one looks manageable on its own. Together, they represent a significant and fixable commercial gap.

The businesses winning on location are not using better technology. They reviewed a default decision and switched to a provider built for the UK market.

70%

of shoppers won't return after a failed delivery

[SmartRoutes, 2024](#)

22%

of failed first deliveries are caused by inaccurate address data

[SmartRoutes, 2024](#)

£31.5bn

lost by UK businesses annually due to delivery-related issues

[Type Global, 2025](#)

This report covers four areas where the default choice of location provider is quietly costing UK businesses: conversion rates, API costs, UK address accuracy, and data compliance.

The Four Problems

Four problems most teams never measure

1. You're paying more every time your business grows

Google charges per autocomplete request. Every spike in traffic, every new customer, every checkout visit adds to your bill. At \$2.83 per 1,000 requests, plus Place Details calls on top. It adds up fast and most teams only notice when finance asks about it. Loqate works the same way: pay-as-you-go credits from around 6.9p per lookup at volume.

Woosmap offers flat-rate Enterprise licences: one predictable fee covering address search, distance calculation and map display, regardless of how much traffic you drive. woosmap.com/pricing

2. Your UK customers are hitting dead ends

Google Places does not use Royal Mail PAF, the UK's definitive address database covering 32 million+ deliverable properties. [Royal Mail PAF Stats, Feb 2026](#). New builds, rural addresses, business premises: these fail or return wrong results. That's a customer who can't complete checkout. 22% of failed deliveries trace back to bad address data captured at entry. [SmartRoutes, 2024](#)

3. Your customers' data is powering someone else's ad engine

Every address typed on your platform via Google Places is processed by Google LLC. Google's terms permit that data to be used to improve their own products and services, including their advertising systems. Your customers' purchase intent and location patterns are being processed by the same company that sells ads to your competitors. Woosmap processes all location data within UK and EU infrastructure and never uses it for any third-party purpose.

4. Someone else is running your location stack

When Google changes pricing, you find out after the fact. When there's an outage, you wait. When you want to know what's happening with your data, you read a ToS document. Woosmap gives you full visibility and control. Your data, enriched with ours, hosted transparently. No lock-in. No black box.

Provider Comparison

Google vs Loqate vs Woosmap head to head

Here is an objective comparison across the criteria that matter most for UK digital businesses deploying address autocomplete at scale.

Criteria	Google Places API	Loqate (GBG)	Woosmap
UK address coverage	✗ Generic geocoding. No Royal Mail PAF integration, weaker UK postcode precision	✓ Full Royal Mail PAF, unit-level UK precision	✓ Full Royal Mail PAF, unit-level precision including new builds and rural addresses Royal Mail PAF, Feb 2026
Store locator accuracy	≈ Road distance available but requires additional API calls and cost	✗ Straight-line distance only. Sends customers to the wrong store	✓ Road distance as standard. Customers always reach the right store
End user data control	✗ Data processed by Google LLC. ToS permits use to improve Google's own products and ad systems	≈ Varies by contract	✓ Your end user data is never used for any third-party purpose. It stays yours
GDPR / data residency	✗ Processed by Google LLC (US). Data leaves UK jurisdiction	≈ UK/EU option available on request	✓ 100% EU and UK hosted. No US data transfer
Cost model	✗ Pay-per-request. Bill scales with every spike in traffic. \$2.83 per 1,000 autocomplete requests, plus Place Details on top	≈ Pay-as-you-go credits from ~6.9p per lookup at volume. Costs still variable	✓ Flat-rate Enterprise licence covering address, distance and map. One fee regardless of usage volume woosmap.com/pricing
Full location stack	≈ Address, distance and maps available but priced separately, costs compound at scale	✗ Support varies by plan	✓ Address search, distance calculation and map display in a single platform with better TCO than Google at scale
Customer support	✗ No dedicated account support	≈ Support varies by plan	✓ Dedicated customer care team

The Next Frontier

Your location data will determine how AI finds you

Search is changing faster than most teams have adapted to. [Gartner predicts a 25% drop in traditional search engine volume by 2026](#) as users shift to AI-powered tools like ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews, Perplexity and Gemini. For retail and ecommerce businesses with physical locations, this creates a specific and urgent problem: if your location data is poor, AI will not recommend you.

What GEO means for businesses with stores

Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO) is the practice of making your content and data structured enough for AI systems to understand, trust and cite. [46% of Google searches already have local intent](#), and 28% of local searches result in a purchase. As AI systems increasingly answer these queries directly, the businesses that show up are the ones with accurate, structured, rich location data. The ones that do not are becoming invisible.

Where bad location data costs you in AI search

AI systems pull from structured data to answer queries like "nearest Holland & Barrett to me" or "click-and-collect pharmacy in Manchester." If your store locator uses straight-line distance, has missing postcodes, incorrect opening hours or no POI context around your stores, the AI either serves inaccurate information or skips you entirely in favour of a competitor whose data it can trust.

What Woosmap does for your local search visibility

Woosmap's location intelligence enriches your local store pages with road distance calculations, Points of Interest data around each location, and multi-mode travel times by drive, walk, cycle and transit. This static, structured content is exactly what AI crawlers need to understand your stores accurately and recommend them confidently. It is the difference between showing up when a customer asks an AI where to go, and being absent from that answer entirely.

Businesses that enrich their local pages with accurate road distances, POI context and structured location data are building a competitive advantage that compounds. **Every competitor still using straight-line distance and generic location data is leaving that ground open.**



Results

The results businesses actually see

Businesses that have switched to Woosmap consistently report improvements across checkout conversion, location API cost, and control over their customer data. Here is what that looks like in practice.

More conversions at checkout

Wecasa, a home services marketplace, saw a +24% increase in conversion rate after switching to Woosmap for address autocomplete in the UK, alongside a reduction in location errors and fewer order cancellations. [Wecasa case study](#), [Woosmap](#)

More store visits from online traffic

Holland & Barrett rebuilt their store locator and click-and-collect experience using Woosmap, driving click-and-collect to **20% of all orders** and increasing store visits from online traffic. [Holland & Barrett case study](#), [Woosmap](#)

A location bill that stops growing

Woosmap's Enterprise licence covers address search, distance calculation and map display in a single flat fee, giving a better total cost of ownership than running Google's address, distance and maps products separately, where costs compound at every layer of usage. See woosmap.com/pricing.

Infrastructure you can rely on

Woosmap processes over **27 billion location queries per year** with a 99.99% SLA, trusted by 220+ customers worldwide. [AWS Marketplace, 2025](#)

Your end users' data stops feeding a competitor's ad engine

Every address query sent through Google Places is processed by the same company that sells advertising to your competitors. Google's terms permit that data to be used to improve their own products and services. When you switch to Woosmap, your customers' purchase intent and location data stays in UK and EU infrastructure and is never used for any third-party purpose. That is a meaningful shift in who benefits from your customer relationships.

Switching is easier than you think

Most teams put off reviewing their location provider because migration feels like a big project. In practice, Woosmap's implementation is straightforward and the team handles the heavy lifting throughout.

If any of the following are true, the conversation about switching is worth having now: you are on Google Places API and have not benchmarked alternatives in 18 months, you are on pay-per-call pricing, you have not checked whether your customer location data is being used to power third-party ad systems, or you do not track address field completion rates in your checkout.

32M+

UK deliverable addresses in Royal Mail PAF, the UK's definitive address database

[Royal Mail PAF Stats, Feb 2026](#)

22%

of failed first deliveries caused by inaccurate address data

[SmartRoutes, 2024](#)

70%

of shoppers unlikely to return after a failed delivery

[SmartRoutes, 2024](#)

In Practice

Holland & Barrett: from broken store locator to 20% click-and-collect

Holland & Barrett is the UK's leading health and wellness retailer, with over 1,600 stores across 16 countries. Despite a strong brand and loyal customer base, their digital store experience was letting them down. Customers struggled to find accurate store information, the click-and-collect journey was too complicated, and legacy systems were slowing everything down.

The problem

Three issues were blocking omnichannel growth. Store discovery was unreliable: customers couldn't quickly find the right store with accurate information on services and availability. Click-and-collect was underperforming because the process had too much friction. And the underlying tech stack couldn't support the pace of innovation the team needed.

What they built with Woosmap

Holland & Barrett rebuilt their store locator and click-and-collect experience using Woosmap's APIs. Key changes included instant store search by city, postcode and store name, real-time stock availability at each location, and a dynamic map showing store-specific services including blood tests and 3D body scanners. The result was a single, seamless flow from product discovery online to collection in store.

Holland & Barrett gained more than just a location intelligence solution. They gained a frictionless path to innovation.

Sophie Seal, Engineering Manager, Holland & Barrett

The Results

20%

of all orders now fulfilled via click-and-collect, up from a much lower base

More

store visits driven directly from online traffic via the new store locator

Faster

deployment via AWS Marketplace, reducing procurement time significantly

The platform is now built to scale internationally. Woosmap's integration with AWS gives Holland & Barrett the infrastructure to expand location services across new geographies without rebuilding from scratch.

Find out what your setup is costing you

Book a free tailored demo and we will show you exactly what Woosmap would look like for your business.

[Book a free tailored demo](#)