

GoogleTM

My Business 4.0

TRAINING GUIDE



Learn how to manage, optimize
and grow your Business using
Google My Business



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Introduction



Google My Business (GMB) is an essential marketing tool for any brand. Through GMB, you can update your business information on Google; appear on Google Maps; allow customers to make reservations, get directions to, or directly call your locations; and engage with existing and potential customers through their Google reviews.

But just how important is Google My Business? Consider this customer reviews stat:

Approximately 63% of consumers check reviews on Google before visiting a business.

In other words, more than 60% of the people searching for businesses on Google are ready to become customers. To make sure you get these consumers through your doors, we wrote this guide.

With it, you can master GMB, make full use of its features, and attract the most customers. Scroll through each section, or use the table of contents above to navigate:

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CHAPTER 1



Google My Business: An Overview



What is GMB?

Google My Business (GMB) is a free, multi-featured business listing that local businesses can use to manage their presence on Google Search and Google Maps. A Google My Business listing is not unlike listings on online business directories such as Yelp, but it's found directly in Google and Google Maps search results, and therefore doesn't require a visit to a third-party site.

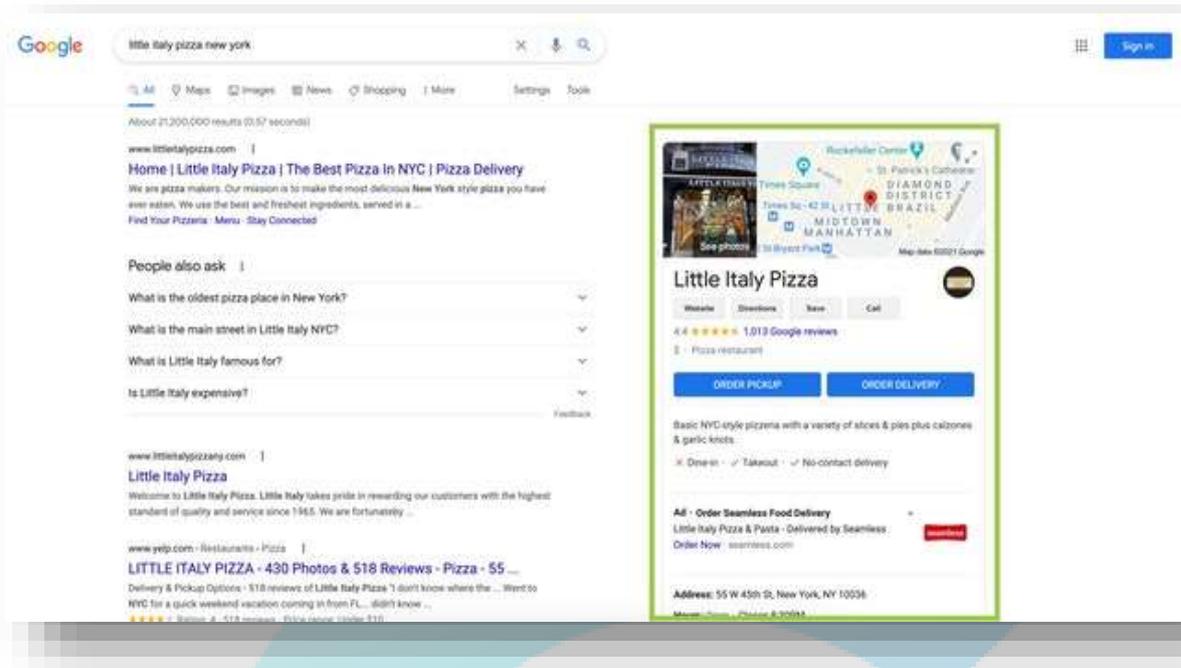
Google My Business has gone far beyond a simple business listing, and thanks to a wealth of features and functions, is now considered a core part of local SEO.

Where does a Google My Business listing show up online?

- **Google Knowledge Panel**

Information from your Google My Business listing will appear in Google's Knowledge Panel when a brand search is performed.

Google presents your information in a concise, snippet-form in SERPs to provide searchers with a quick and easy means to get the information they need. It also provides your business with more visibility. Here's where you can find the Google My Business profile in the Knowledge Panel for a branded search:



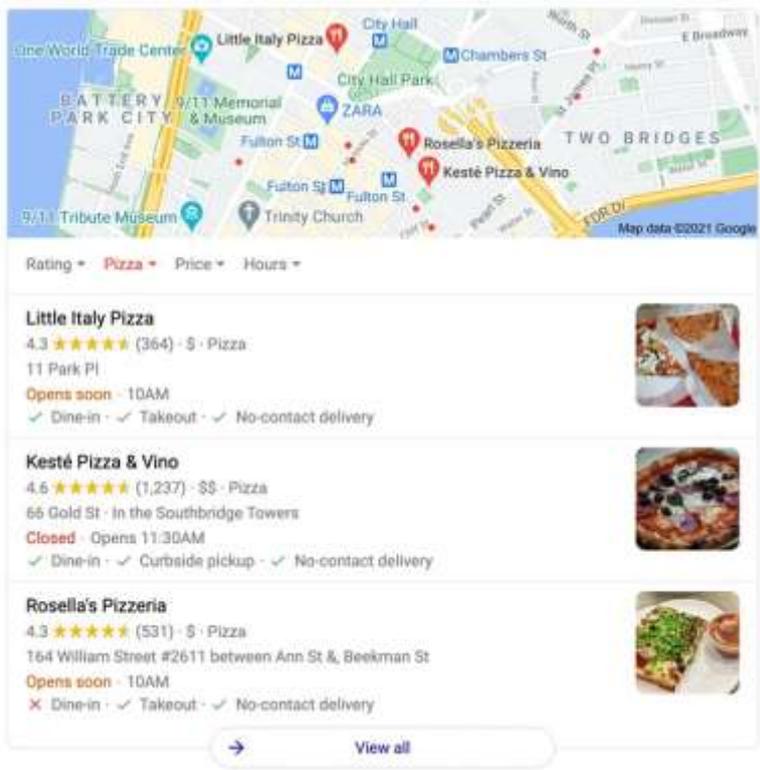
In this example, we've searched for 'Little Italy Pizza'. A search for the restaurant's name, rather than a generic 'pizza near me' search, generates the business's Knowledge Panel, with all visible information being pulled from its Google My Business listing.

- **Google Local Pack/Local Finder**

Google My Business can also show up in the Google Local Pack, or Google Local Finder.

The Local Pack is the block of business listings that appear below the map in search results. This is shown after a user performs a Google search with local intent. Initially, three profiles are shown, but you can expand to see more.

For example, if we search for 'pizza, New York,' something like this will show up:



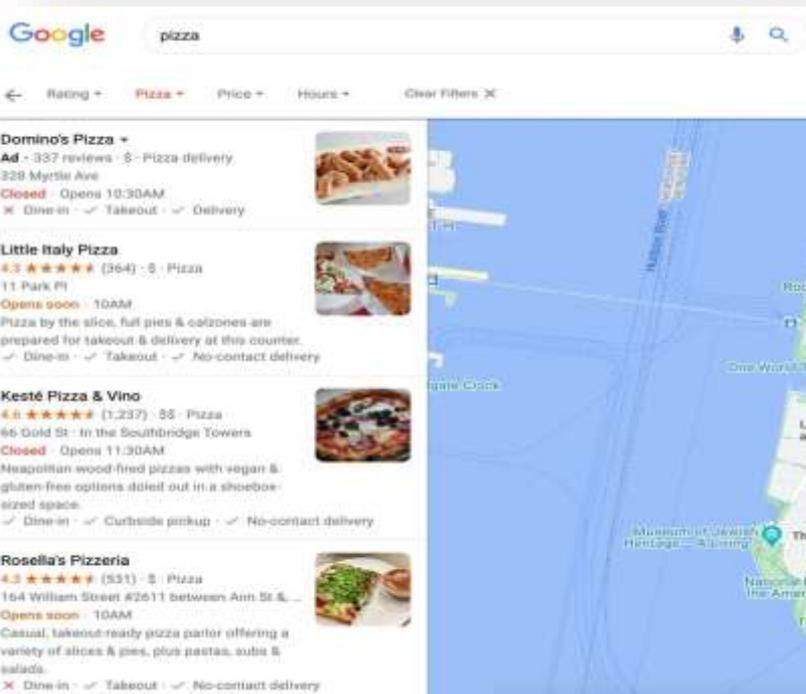
Each business listed here shows up only because it has a Google My Business listing, and, like the Knowledge Graph, all the information you can see here is pulled from the business's GMB listing.

Did You Know? You don't even need a website to rank in the Local Pack — it's possible to show up here with only a Google My Business listing!

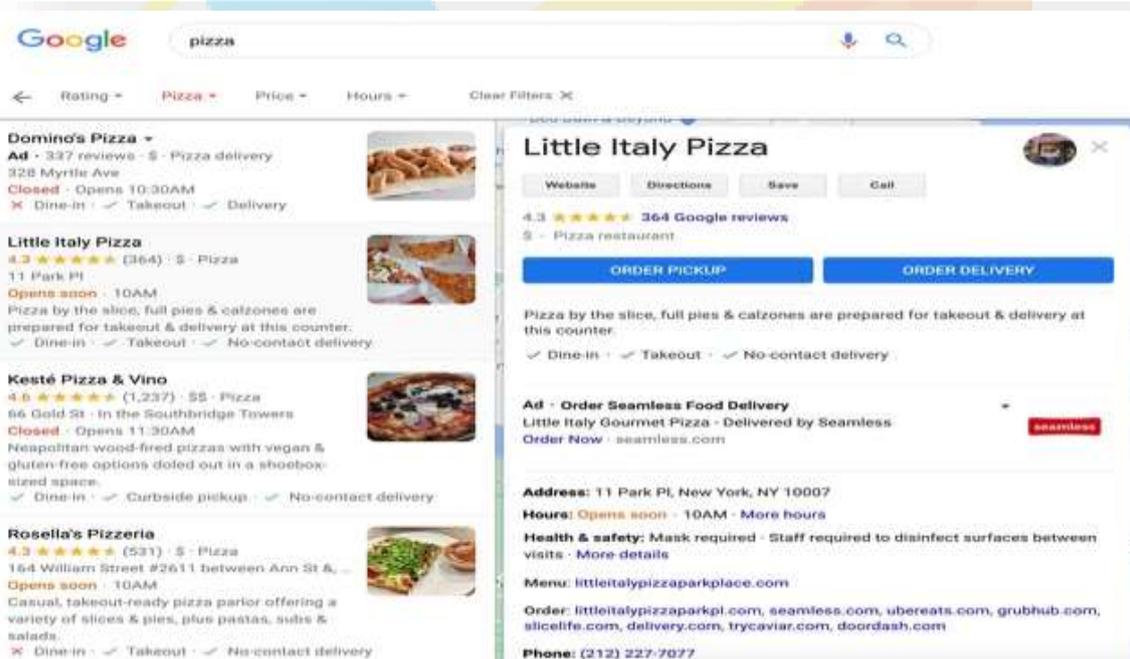
- **Google Maps**

Google Maps is an app- and browser-based service on desktop or mobile used for getting directions and discovering businesses and locations.

Most consumers will be familiar with Google Maps, likely having used it to locate a residence or local landmark at least once. However, it's also a key place for local businesses to gain visibility. Here's what Google My Business listings look like when searching on Google Maps on desktop (also known as the Map Pack):



And here's how the Google My Business listing looks once selected (i.e. if I click on the top result in the screenshot above):





How consumers use Google My Business?

Consumers use Google My Business for a whole host of reasons, such as:

- To find out a business's opening times
- To get directions to a local business, or find its address
- To call a local business without needing to visit their website
- To write and read reviews about a local business
- To see photos of a local business and its products/services
- To visit the business website
- To make online bookings
- To view the available products and services
- To ask and answer questions about a local business

Who qualifies for a Google My Business listing?

To qualify for a Google business listing, a member of staff must be available to interact with your customers during the business hours you include in your listing.

The Google My Business guidelines for representing your business on Google state that:

Listings on Google My Business can only be created for businesses that either have a physical location that customers can visit or that travel to visit customers where they are.

[Google](#)



There is one case where a physical location *isn't* required. This is in the case of service-area businesses (SABs) such as plumbers, pest control companies, cleaners, or any other service provider that visits and works at its customers' locations. Service-area businesses can specify the area in which they serve customers. For example, a plumber might offer services within a 5-mile radius.

Online-only businesses and eCommerce ventures without a physical location that greets customers are not eligible for Google My Business listings as they do not meet Google's guidelines.

Ways Google My Business benefits consumers

Up-to-date, accurate Google My Business listings help consumers in a multitude of ways.

1. Making it easier for searchers to source important information

Having a GMB profile makes it far easier for consumers to locate information such as a business's phone number, address, or health and safety policies. With all this information easily locatable on a business's GMB listing, searchers can get on with the important stuff, like working out if a business is suitable for their needs.

2. Quick and easy local business comparison in one place

Finding and switching between multiple businesses' websites can be a real headache for searchers. With Google My Business, it's easy to compare businesses' offerings by flicking between their listings.



This makes the searcher's journey far easier and means they're able to decide much more quickly. So, if you have high local rankings, offer relevant services, and give the searcher enough information, you could quickly win a new customer.

3. Searchers can easily check out photos, reviews, and offers from nearby businesses

Through photos and Posts, businesses can showcase their offerings, their brand, and even their personality. With so much information available, these are the features that searchers will likely be paying attention to.

Knowing what a cocktail bar looks like (Does it have heaters in its outdoor seating area? How spacious is the bar area? Is there room to dance?) can help to inform searchers quickly. Having the option to read relevant reviews will help the searcher understand if your business offers what they need.

4. It's easy to make bookings and appointments in Google My Business

With its Book an Appointment feature, Google My Business makes it accessible for consumers to get what they need from your listing. In the case of beauty salons, spas, dentists, or other appointment-taking industries, this can be an extremely useful function that saves both the searcher and the business time.

5. Google Maps users can follow and make lists of their favourite local businesses

You thought Google+ was dead? Well, Google isn't done playing in the social and community space. Even Google Maps has a social function!



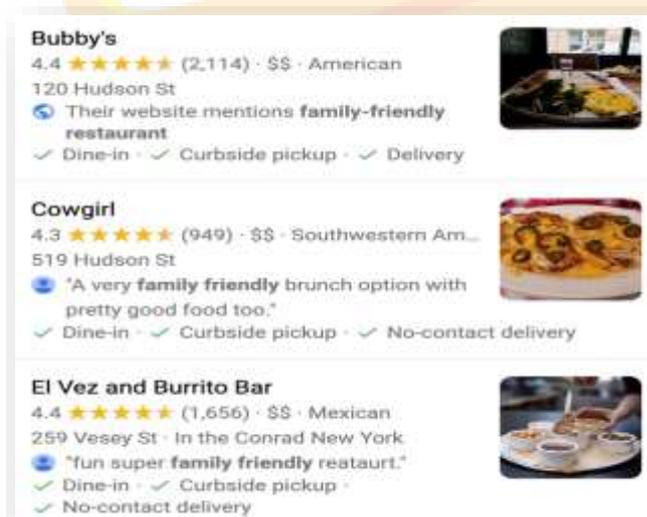
Users can follow businesses they like and create a list of their favourites. This makes it easier for searchers to keep up with their favourite local stores, and support them, too.

When a Maps user opts to follow a business, they'll be notified of Offers, Events, Posts, and changes to opening hours. Again, this saves time and makes the user journey much easier.

6. 'Justifications' make it easy for searchers to see how relevant a business is to their search

Google My Business has simplified the search for relevant, nearby businesses. Thanks to the ever-evolving local algorithm, Google (generally) does a great job of surfacing the right businesses for users' search queries. As a result, finding the right business is easy.

If we search for a restaurant that's family-friendly, Google will return results where that phrase has been mentioned in reviews, or even on the business's website (in the case of Bubby's, below). This function is called 'Justifications'.





7. It gives consumers ways to provide feedback and improve local businesses

Google My Business allows Google Maps users to provide their own feedback on businesses through the app and validate the opinions of others, ensuring a more accurate, picture of the business.

Through user-focused features like ‘Suggest an Edit’ or ‘Provide Feedback’, Google ensures any information found on GMB profiles is as up-to-date as possible.

Crowdsourced features like Q&A, reviews, and even photos also help to provide a fair picture of businesses on GMB. All this contributes to simplifying the process of searching for and pinpointing the relevant local business for a user’s search.

How To Use Google My Business For Local Marketing?

So, we’ve established that Google My Business is not your Business Profile, but rather a tool by which you enhance your Business Profile to boost its visibility and effectiveness. Let’s cover the four core ways you can use this Google My Business to make your profile on Google listing a better local marketing tool.

1. Engage with consumers

There are a lot of ways consumers can interact with your Business Profile, and you use your Google My Business account to engage back with them. You can respond to reviews, answer questions, enable direct messaging, and set up associated alerts. You can even use Google My Business to publish posts to your Business Profile, much like you would with Facebook and other social media platforms.



2. Highlight your business

A Business Profile alone contains limited information about your business. But through your Google My Business account dashboard, you can provide hours, a link to your website, products and pricing, attributes, and other details that make your business unique. You will also use your Google My Business to make edits and updates as needed.

A complete Business Profile offers a complete snapshot of your business, including its best features, right in the SERP.

3. Gain insights

You can use the Google My Business dashboard to gain key insights on your audience and local search performance. In the analytics tab of the platform, you can see the queries customers are using to find your Business Profile, whether they found you on Google Maps or Google Search, a breakdown of actions taken on your listing, and how your photos are performing compared to other profiles in your category. Note also that there are ways to track clicks from a Business Profile via UTM parameters and Google Analytics.

4. Perform local SEO

Just as Google has algorithms for ranking its ads and websites, it also has one for ranking Business Profiles. Through your Google My Business dashboard, you can incorporate keywords into your Business Profile and perform other optimizations to help it rank in local results, which we're going to cover next.

Google My Business can help you optimize your Business Profile to show up in the coveted 3-Pack.



How To Use Google My Business For SEO?

Google Business Profiles are dynamic. Not only do they change form based on platform, but Google will also prioritize sections of your profile according to the term that was searched as well as the type of information most important to consumers in your category. Even better, Google will embolden keywords in the content of your profile that it thinks are relevant.

But there needs to be information to prioritize and keywords to embolden in your profile in the first place. Just as you (or your agency) would use a content management system like WordPress to optimize your website for search engines, Google My Business is used to optimize your profile and expand your reach. How do you use Google My Business for local SEO? Well, since optimizing for Google is essentially optimizing for searchers, it all comes down to the same three things: targeting, quality of information, and trust.

Target your information

To use Google My Business for SEO, make sure to incorporate relevant keywords into your Business Profile so you can tell Google what you're trying to rank for. Use them in your "from the business" description, your responses to reviews, your answers to questions, and in the posts you publish. Make sure to incorporate them naturally just as you would with any other SEO strategy.

Include keywords in your description, editable through your Google My Business dashboard.

Maintain quality of information



The completeness and accuracy of your Business Profile impacts its rank, so make sure to provide the requested information in every section of your Google My Business dashboard. Especially important here is your contact information, special hours, and attributes.

Build trust

The final approach to using Google My Business for SEO appeals to the trust component of Google's algorithm. Keep your information updated and accurate as your business evolves. Keep a steady stream of reviews coming in and respond to them. Also, signal to Google that you are active by regularly uploading photos and publishing posts to your Business Profile through Google My Business.

*Reviews **and** responses appear on your Business Profile. Be sure to manage them through your Google My Business dashboard.*

SEO is important for any business, but particularly for small businesses that can use local targeting to compete against large competitors on the SERP. Google is making local SEO even easier with its robust Business Profiles, so a Google My Business account is essential for any business trying to maximize visibility in their local market.

Get started with Google My Business today

With a clear understanding of exactly what Google My Business is, how it works, and how to use it, you can now see that using this free tool isn't just a good idea for local marketing but a must. Get your Google My Business account up and running now so your Business Profile can outshine your competitors and attract more customers on the world's most popular search engine.

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CHAPTER 2



Google My Business: New Features And Updates



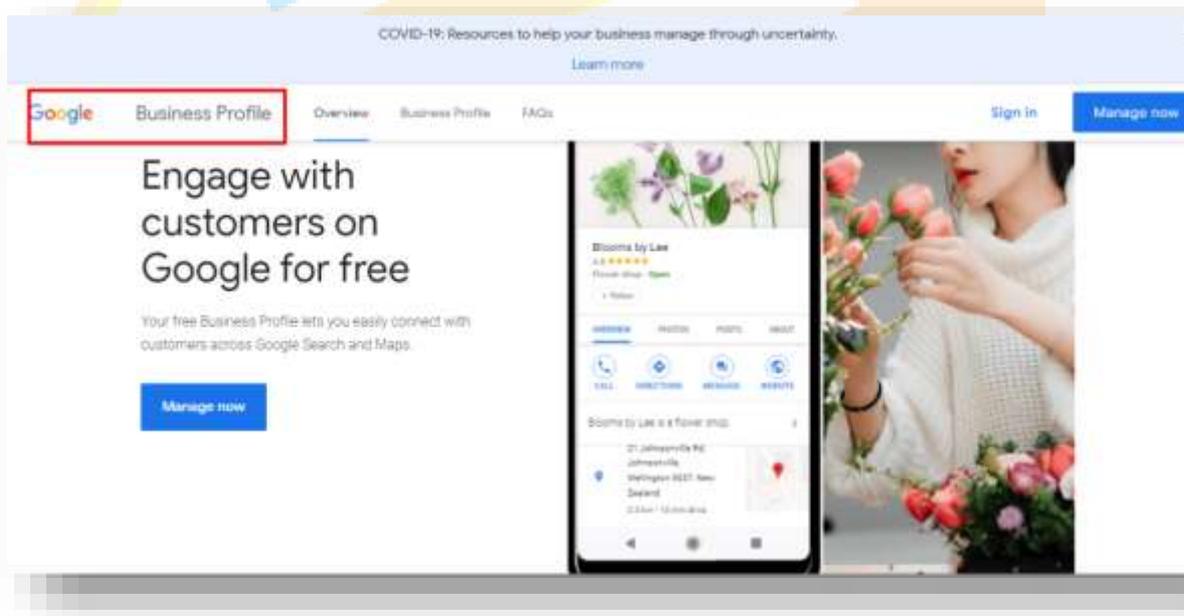
Google my Business is quietly positioning as the best tool for local businesses to improve online presence, reach potential customers, get discovered, and continue the communication with new customers. It is the most effective digital marketing tool that utilizes the great adoption of Google Maps by customers when deciding to use local services or products.

Google My Business is like managing a social media profile aimed specifically for local businesses to improve search rankings with local SEO and customer reviews.

So, in this post, we will keep track of all the latest Google My Business updates and bring you more clarity on how you can utilize this powerful and free tool.

The first thing is it is not going away or being deleted.

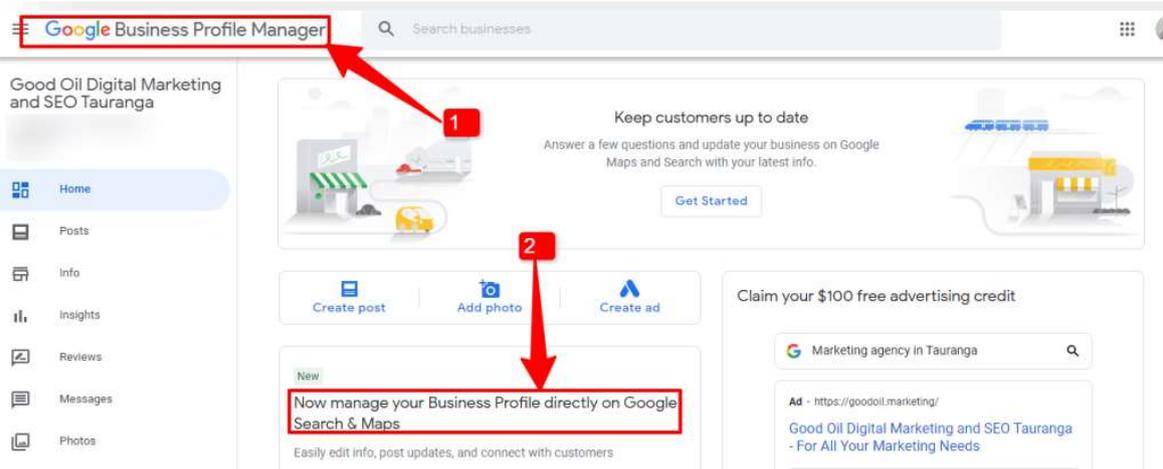
Google My Business is not going to disappear in any way. That was one rumour where we saw that's not true. It's just changed its name. In fact, it's already changed its name. If you log on to google.com/business, you'll notice the name has changed.



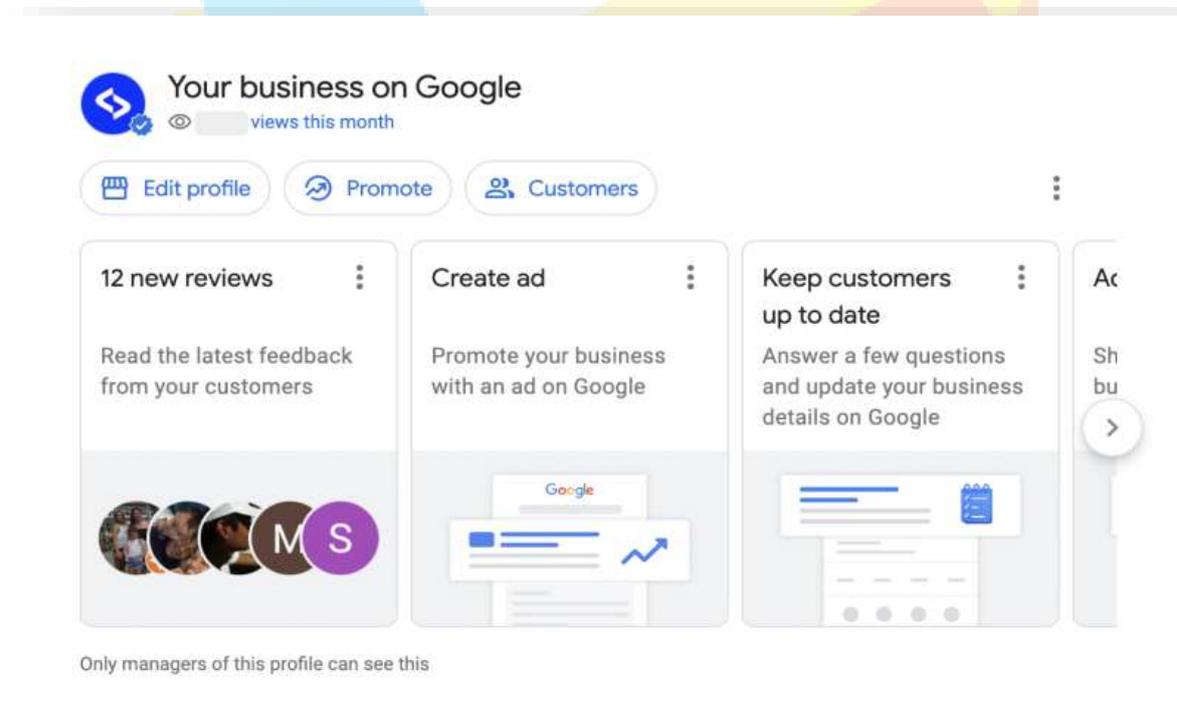


Everything looks the same. It just says Google Business Profile manager.

So, you'll see that we've got there change your name to Google Business Profile, and when you go to the dashboard, it'll just say that plus manager.



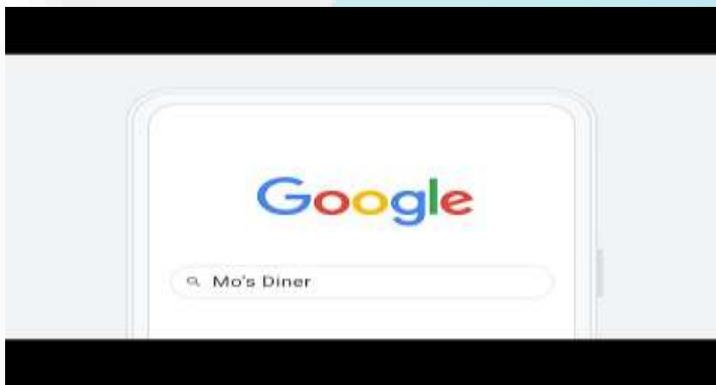
2. Manage GMB Profile directly on Google





With the recent update, Google pushes Google My Business's most useful features in a more visible location – the search results page.

Previously it was harder to use the Google My Business dashboard from a desktop as its URL is longer and not that obvious, so most of the users trying to find this URL would type in Google search for getting the URL from the SERP and again navigate to the actual Google My Business listing. With this new update, you can access your GMB in Google search and maps. Here is how to do this:



If you log in with your Google account that manages your Google my business profile, you can access the Google My Business account by typing your business name in the Google search results.

You will see the new panel: It is a summary of all the features that you can interact with regularly, right in the local search results. Now it is easier to have these options right at your fingertips.

Here is what you can do actually:

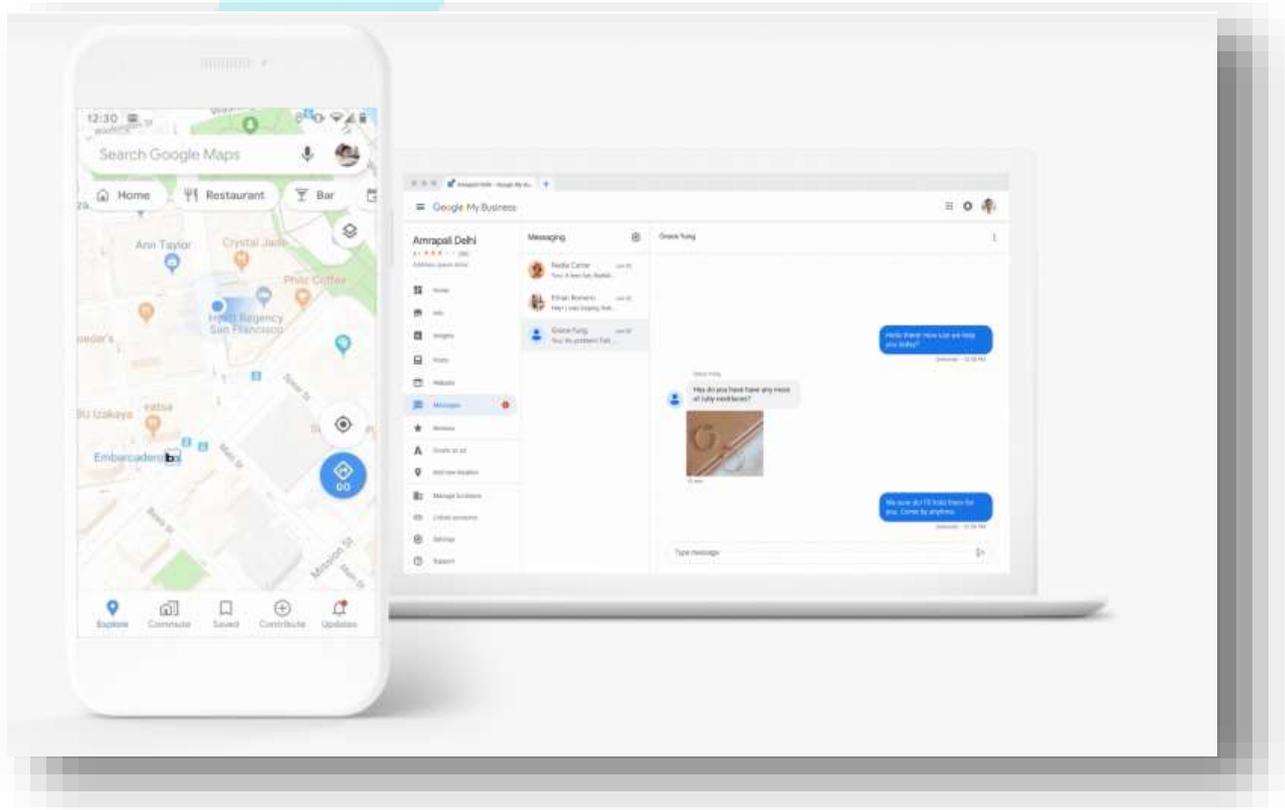
- View latest reviews and star ratings
- Respond quickly to your Google reviews



- Create Google Ads – faster and much easier
- Create a Google post in a quick popup and promote your special offers
- View Google analytics and insights
- Update your GMB listing such as business information, phone number, business description business category, etc.

It's now even easier to view phone calls metrics received from the profile, number of searchers, search queries, number of new online reviews etc.

3. Google My Business Messaging on Desktop



Like other Google My Business features, the messaging functionality is not well promoted. It is available in the Google My Business app but most of the account managers do not use it or are not familiar still with the existence of the app.



But Google is making progress on that front and beginning this year has provided the same mobile app chat option, inside the desktop dashboard.

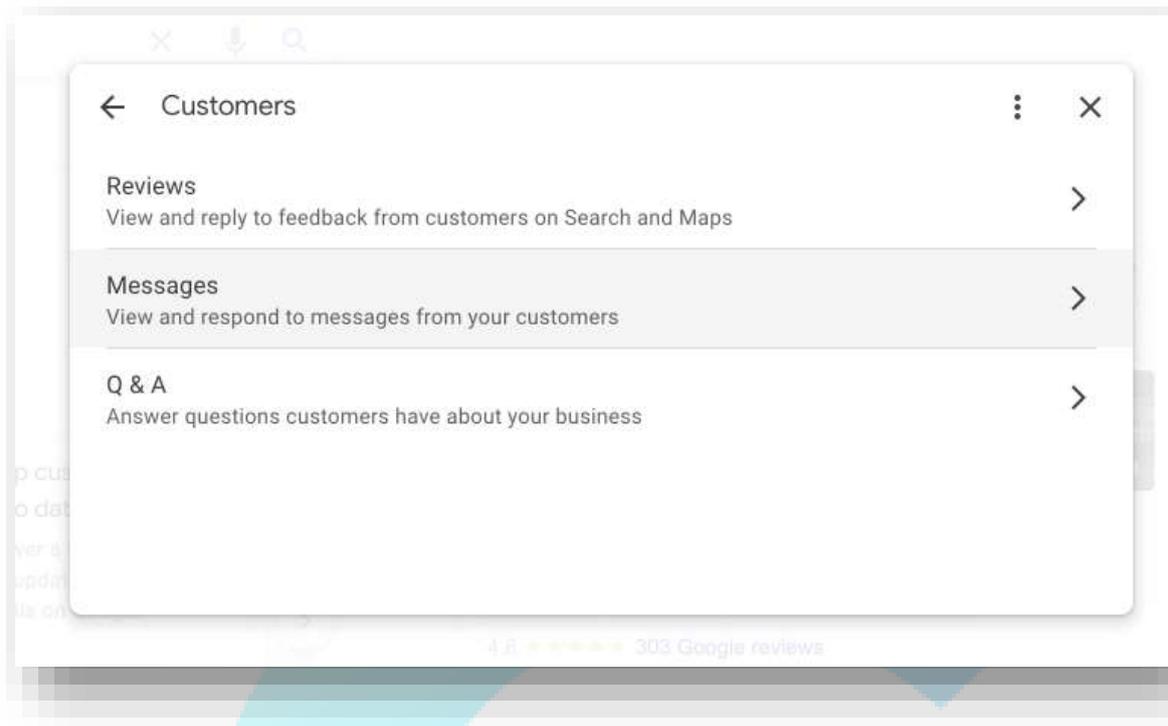
Here is how Chat on Google Maps works:

When messaging is enabled, customers will see a “Chat” button on your Google Maps Business Profile and will be able to message you at any time.

This is a great addition to the tool suite as most of the small businesses spend lots of time in front of their computer and with the chat opened, they can answer questions to potential users, quickly.

Here is a quick step-by-step on how to chat with customers on Google Maps by using the new shortcuts in Google search.

1. Search for your brand in Google search so it provides the GMB shortcuts
2. Click on **‘Customers’**
3. In the popup choose **Messages**
4. A new popup will open with all chats



Here on the chat screen, you can reply to the customers who requested information on your GMB profile. To ensure a great experience for your customers, follow the chat guidelines.



CHAPTER 3



How To Improve Your Google My Business Ranking



Why have an optimized Google My Business listing?

As a business, you're already probably spending money on Google ads and website SEO optimization, so it's more searchable and gets enough traffic.

But you might – like many other businesses – overlook your Google My Business presence. Which also means missing out on all the local SEO benefits it can bring you (and we'll look at those in a second). And which, btw, is completely FREE to use.

And if that's the case, you're not alone. In fact, one research study showed that business profiles on Google get just a tiny fraction of the overall billions of monthly views from Google search. But not because Google My Business is just ineffective. Rather, because businesses fail to take advantage of all that it has to offer.

Here are some helpful tips.

How to optimize your Google My Business listing?

First, claim it for your business (if you haven't yet)

If your business has been on the market for some time, chances are the listing already exists (if you're not sure, just try Googling yourself). And that's even if you haven't created it yourself. But you can't optimize it until you've officially claimed it.

If you don't have a Google My Business Account, you can create it [here](#) after logging in with your Google account.

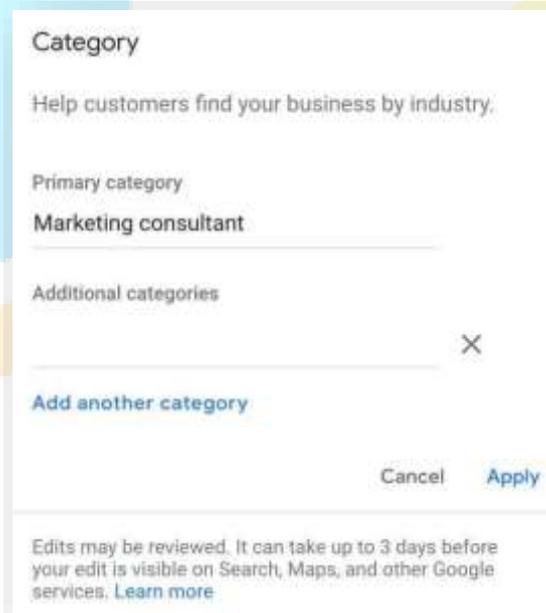
Carefully complete all the sections of your Google Business profile



By the way, Google Business profile will now be the official new name for Google My Business going forward.

Provide your potential customers with all the relevant info, including:

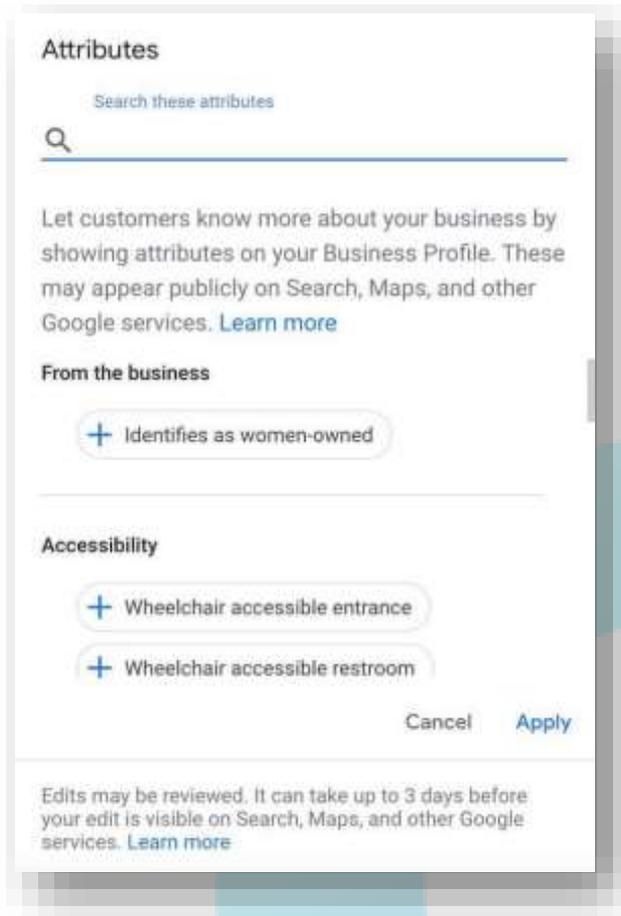
- Your business name
- Industry category (for example, mine’s “Marketing consultant”). This is important if you want to get found in relevant discovery searches – which is when people search for a specific product or service in the area rather than your business name. And which is also where most Google Business profile views come from.
- Hint: you can have more than one category.



- Physical address



- Business hours (if relevant, especially if you have a physical location people can visit, and not just an address for your online business – like me. Google will ask you about that, too).
- Hint: Make sure to add both weekday and holiday hours so that they're always relevant.
- Your service area (if you provide your services outside of your physical location).
- Contact information, including phone number and website address (and don't forget, your Google My Business account, though helpful, is not really a replacement for your actual website.)
- Appointment links
- Products
- Services
- Attributes – to make your profile even more relevant. For example, I could go for “Identifies as women-owned” and add “Online appointments” to service options.



- Your business description (up to 750 characters)
- Photos. Make sure they're high quality and show you in a favourable light (quite literally). Photos are proven to drive more customers: Google says people are 42% more likely to request driving directions to a business if its Business Profile has photos, and 35% more likely to go to its website.

If you're a cafe or restaurant, for example, photos of food (and drinks) along with the interior will be a good idea.

- Opening date (if relevant).

Remember that Google verifies all the info and updates, claiming to take up to 3 business days for the verification.

Keep your Google My Business profile active

This means regularly posting new information – updates, special offers, discount codes, new service launches, etc. Think of it as another social media profile for your



business – one people easily find in search results (as opposed to all the other social networks, which makes it all the more important).

Things you can post:

- Special offers
- Product or service showcase
- COVID-19 updates
- Company news
- etc.

You can add call-to-action buttons to your posts, letting customers perform instant actions like:

- Buy a product
- Book a service
- Order online
- Sign up
- Or call you, and more.

Keeping your profile active with engaging, relevant, and regular posts will help you get your customers more engaged before they decide to buy or book from you.

And since they're already qualified leads when they reach your profile (because they're most likely looking for you or a business like yours in the area, meaning they're already



interested in what you must sell), it's your unique opportunity to capitalize on this with additional engagement ultimately leading to an easier sale.

Make sure your NAP is accurate

Let's begin with the basics. For your Google My Business to do well with search engines and searchers, you'll need your NAP (name, address, and phone number) to be accurate. By accurate, we mean that it should reflect what your business is actually called. What name is printed on your signage, business cards, or website? That's what you should be using!

Write the perfect business description

In your Google My Business listing, you'll have the option to add a 750-character description. This is your opportunity to tell searchers about your business. The description is one of the first things that's influenced by you that potential customers will see when they visit your Google My Business listing, so it's important to get it right.

Try to include any USPs that your business offers. For example, if you run a pizza place in New York, do you offer plant-based toppings or gluten-free crusts?



From Little Italy Pizza & Restaurant

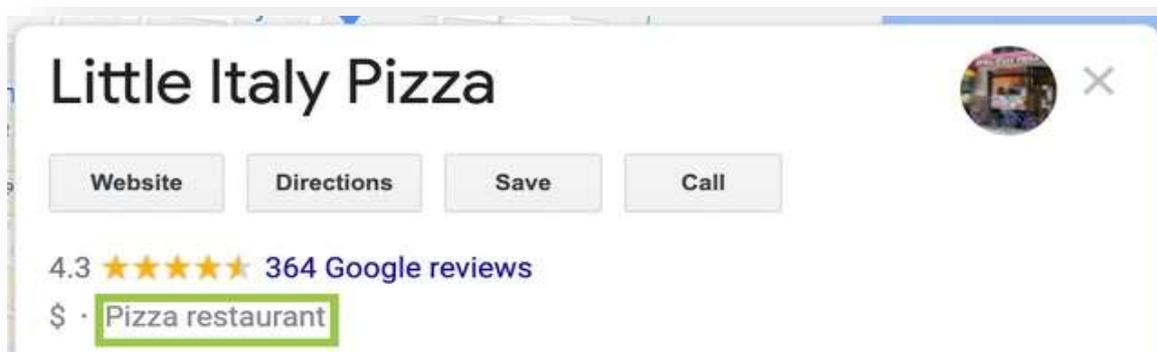
"Little Italy Pizza is no stranger to great reviews and fans love the the speedy service and the "Little Italy Pizza Wedding Soup" or crispy "Calamari" for starters. Try one of their elaborate pastas like the "Spaghetti Bologna" or opt for a deluxe pizza. The "Prosciutto" pie is delicious with a side of Little Italy's garlic knots. Visit for authentic but affordable Italian fare in the heart of Brooklyn."

Choose the right business category and subcategory

One of the most important aspects of GMB SEO is picking the right primary category.

Did You Know? According to local SEO experts, the primary GMB category is the number one local pack ranking factor.

Only your primary category will be visible on your business listing, but subcategories will inform whether or not your listing is surfaced for local queries, so they're very important, too. Here's where your primary category appears in a GMB Knowledge Panel:





Picking a category might sound simple, but with so many to choose from, it can be hard to pick the right one. We suggest checking out what categories your competitors use.

Upload amazing photos

To help searchers get to know your business better, Google encourages you to upload photos to your listing.



Uploading photos to your Google My Business will not only help your listing look more active and alive, but it's also likely to convert searchers.

To get the most out of this Google My Business feature, and increase your chances of converting searchers, Google recommends businesses upload the following:

- At least three strong exterior photos, taken at different times of the day and showing the approach to the business from common angles



- A minimum of three interior photos
- Product photos for the most popular products and services you offer
- One image of any common areas your business may have, such as the reception
- A minimum of three management and team photos
- For bars, restaurants, and cafes, images of the most popular food and drinks
- For hotels, images of guest rooms should be uploaded

As well as bulking out your listing with your own photos, you can (and should) encourage customers to take and share photos of your business.

Set up a booking system

Google's appointment-booking function is one of the contributing factors in the rise of zero-click searches. Now, searchers don't need to go to your website (or a third-party booking site) to get information and act. Does your business offer appointments and bookings? For example, are you a hairdresser? A beauty salon? Or a service-area business? Great. You'll likely want to set up a 'Book an Appointment' button to appear on your Google My Business profile.



If you're a business that takes appointments and bookings, then having this feature could make things a lot easier for your customers, and you.

Just make sure you keep on top of any bookings that come through third-party systems.

Use Google My Business as a customer service channel

If customer actions are taking place on your Google My Business, it makes sense to ensure customer service and support are available there, too.

It can be daunting to keep up with public-facing user-generated content aspects of GMB, such as reviews and Q&A. [Messaging](#) can provide a way for you to manage the conversation behind closed doors, as well as to anticipate and provide damage control on any potential negative reviews.

Use UTM links and call tracking to better monitor performance

Once you're confident you're making the most of all the Google My Business features—and that your profile is optimized properly—you'll need a way of tracking its performance.



Using UTM links (which stands for Urchin Tracking Module links) in the links you set in your GMB profile, such as 'Website', is a great way to monitor and attribute where visitors are finding your business and what actions they're taking.

If you want to track the performance of a page in Google Analytics, then you'll need to ensure it is UTM tagged.

Conclusion

Above all, though, the best way to learn is to test and explore things yourself. Set yourself a reminder each week (or month, if you're under-resourced and time-poor) to check out GMB listings in your industry. What features are they using? Does anything look different? If so, test that feature out for yourself and see if it makes a difference to rankings or conversions.



CHAPTER 4



How To Set Up Google My Business

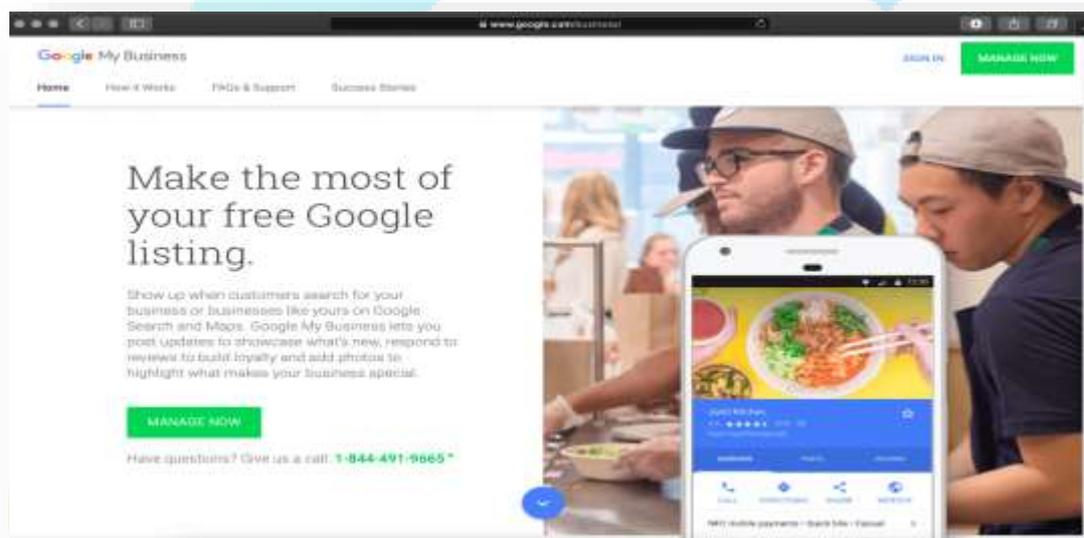


Set Up Your Google My Business

Adding your business locations to Google My Business is more complicated than just entering your name, address, and phone number. You'll often need to claim a pre-existing listing, verify your information, and choose the correct attributes for your listing. To do so, follow these steps.

Google My Business Login

1. Visit <https://business.google.com/> to sign in or create a Google account for a business.



2. Once logged in, Google will ask, “What’s the name of your business?” You can search for a listing by typing the business name and address in the search box. Results will appear in a list as well as on the map. (Below, we’ll talk more about claiming and verifying your business location in bulk.)



Google My Business

What's the name of your business?

Business name

By continuing you agree to the following [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Next

Claim Your Business on Google

1. To claim your business on Google, click on “Add location” on the “Manage Locations” page.

Manage locations

Create location group

Ungrouped locations

Locations: 1 location 100% published

Locations:

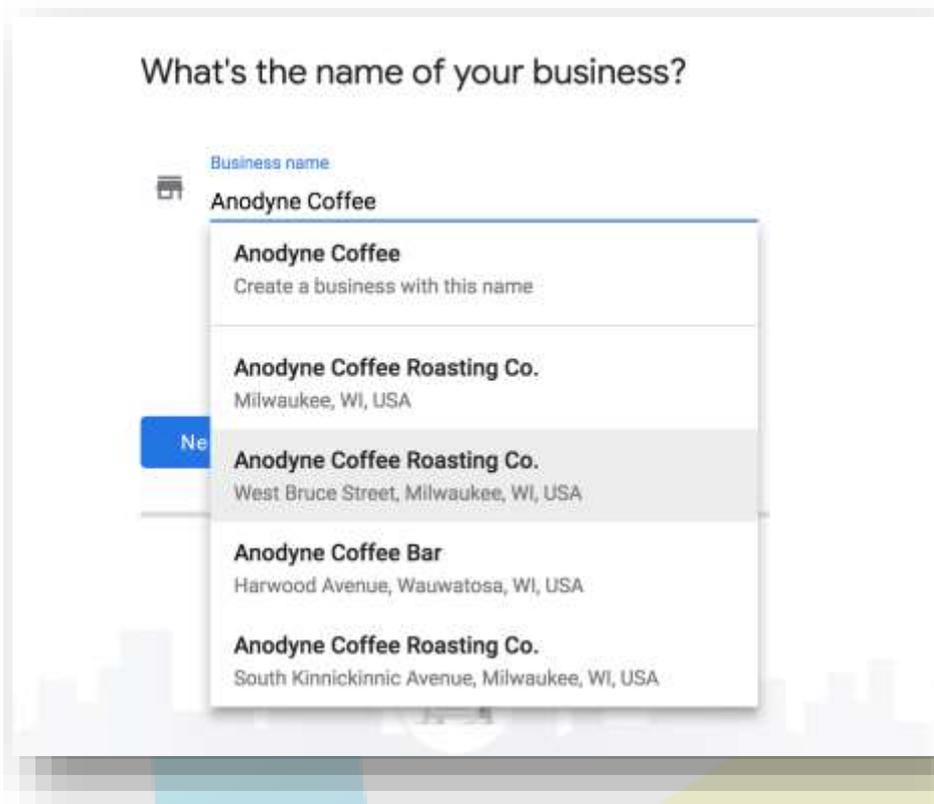
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	Status
<input type="checkbox"/>	ReviewTrackers 320 W Ohio Street, Suite 2W, Chicago, IL 60654	Published

All locations (1) Add location

Rows per page: 100 1-1 of 1



- Google will ask you for the name of your business. Type its name on the search bar and click on the correct name if it appears on the dropdown list.



- If none of the results match your business, click the top of the list where it says “Create a business with this name.” You will then choose the business type: storefront (restaurants, hotels, etc.), service area (taxi service, delivery, etc.), or brand (products, brands, causes, etc.).

One note about service-area businesses: Google released a new update to Google My Business in January 2019 that makes it easier for service area businesses to sign up for a listing.

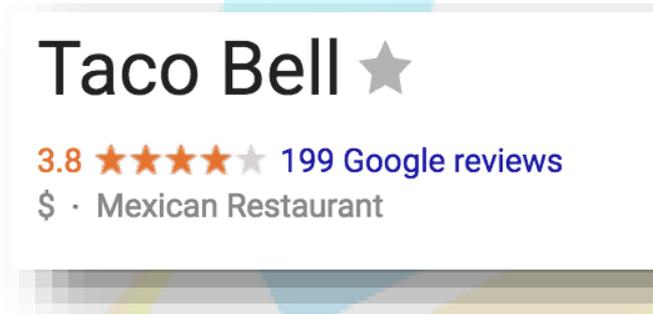
During the sign-up process, Google will ask if your business has an office or store. Choosing the “no” option will allow you to choose your service areas before moving on to selecting your brand’s category.



Businesses with both storefront and service area locations will also be able to edit information for each location separately, which should make it easier to customers to find the right location.

Google My Business Categories

If you're creating or adding your business to Google using Google My Business, you can choose from a list of categories to provide more accurate information about your business. For example, if you run Taco Bell's marketing, you can (perhaps optimistically) put your business in the "Mexican Restaurant" category. Categories are very specific. You can drill down into sub-genres like Tex-Mex or be as broad as possible by simply listing "Fast Food Restaurant."



If you manage a brand, Google recommends that all your categories be consistent across all your locations. So, every Taco Bell is categorized as a

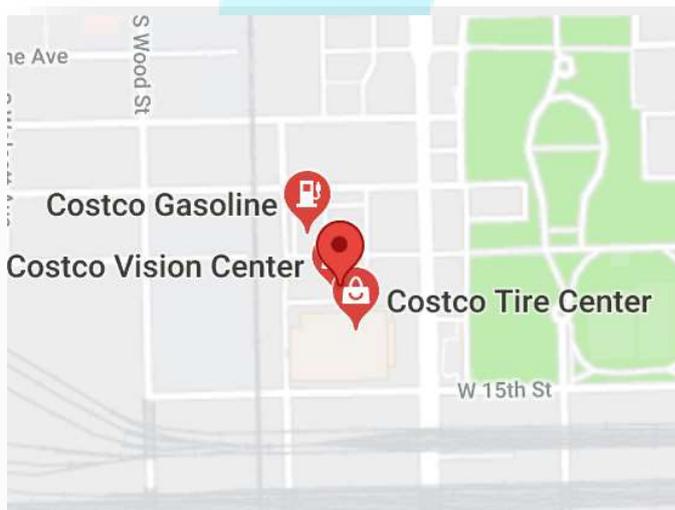
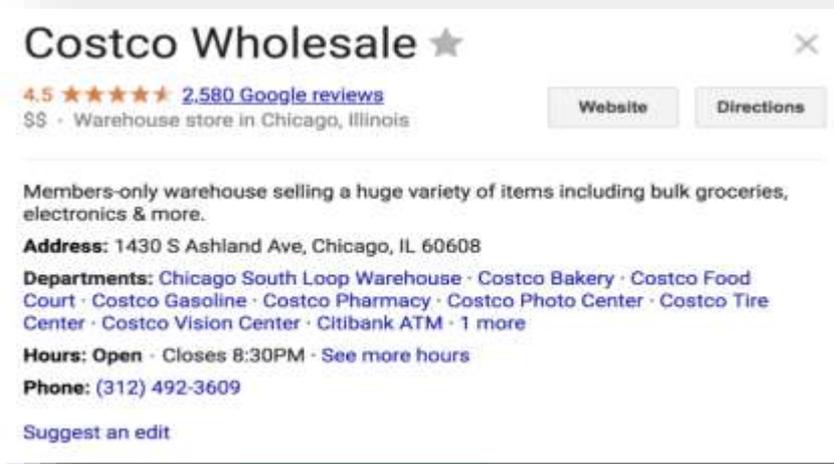
"Mexican Restaurant" and every McDonald's is a "Fast Food Restaurant." Once you've created your listings you can always go back and edit your GMB categories. Click into that location (or location group) then click on "info" on the left menu. Once you see the details for that listing click the pencil to edit, delete or add Google My Business categories.

For Business Locations with Multiple Categories and Departments

For organizations with multiple locations Google only allows you to have one primary category for each location. However, there are some slight exceptions. For example, if



you manage marketing for a chain of grocery stores, you can list your grocery stores and the pharmacy inside them as two separate listings, each with its own primary categories. Check out this example from Costco:



Costco takes this approach to the extreme — listing its gas station, bakery, food court, tire centre, and several other departments all separately. For businesses like this that have one main location, but two distinct operations that are different enough to warrant multiple

categories you may be able to add them as separate locations. What qualifies for a multi-department listing? Think about banks inside grocery stores. Or restaurants inside gas stations. Google's guidelines say that if your departments have separate entrances and / or separate customer care, you may qualify for multiple listings.



If your businesses have two (or more) distinct operations running at one location, look to see if you can list both under separate categories. This will allow you to show up in more relevant search results.

Verify Business on Google

The next step is using the Google Verify My Business feature. You'll have to verify to Google that you own or represent the business listing. Typically, the verification code will be mailed to you (yes, snail mail) – this takes one to two weeks. Once you've entered the code into your account, you'll finally be able to start managing your local business information on Google. You can verify a business on GMB in other ways – email, phone, and Google Search Console – but these are usually not available. If you *do* see a phone icon and an option to verify by phone, Google recommends you choose that over a postcard because it is so much faster.

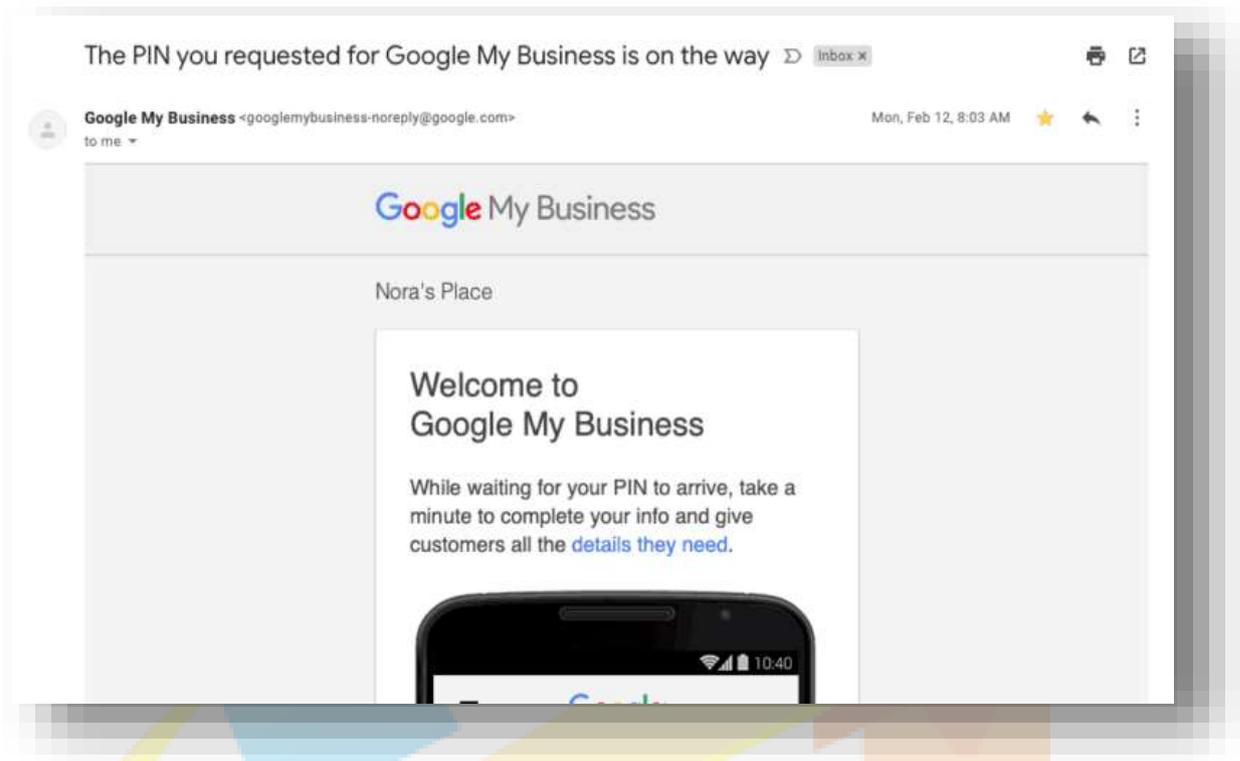
Option 1: Verify My Business By Mail.

The most common way to get a business verified is through the mail. Google will send you a postcard with a verification code attached to it.

1. In your GMB account, click on the “Verify Now” option after clicking on a business listing.
2. At the postcard request screen, check and make sure that the listed address is correct. (You can also request a postcard through the GMB app by tapping the “Send postcard” button).
3. Wait patiently. The postcard takes about two weeks to arrive, and it's important not to change any information during this time. Doing so will only delay the verification process.



4. Once you have the code, you can go into the GMB account, click on the business location you want to verify and hit the “Verify location” button in the menu or the “Verify now” option.
5. Enter the five-digit code and hit submit to finish the process.



Option 2: Verify My Business By Email

1. Sign into GMB, and choose a specific location.
2. Click on the “Verify” button and select email as a verification method.
3. You should see a message in your inbox that contains a code. You can enter that code in the GMB dashboard.
4. Click the “Verify” button in the email message.

Option 3: Verify My Business By Phone



1. Verifying by phone can be available if you click on your phone number after hitting the “Verify” button.
2. A call will come through your phone, and you will need to listen for the automated voice system. The system will then give you a code, which you will have to enter in the code field. On the app, all you must is tap the “Call me now” option and enter the code from the automated voice system.

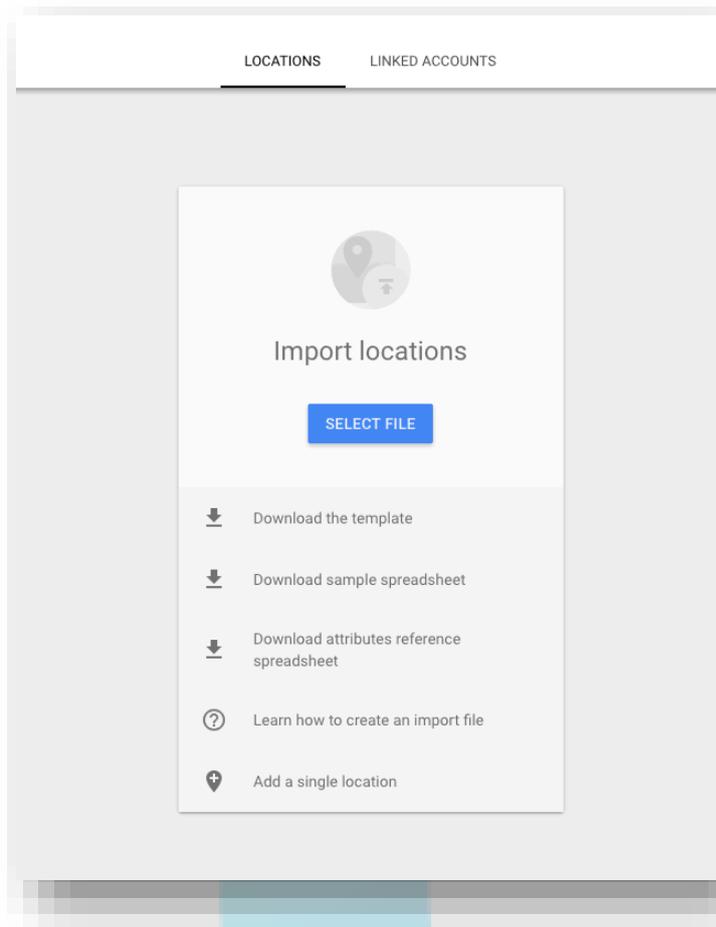
Option 4: Verify My Business Instantly

- Those already using Google Search Console for a business may qualify for instant verification. Just make sure that the email used for the GMB account is the same as the one used to verify the listing on Search Console.
- Please note that all businesses on Search Console might not be eligible for instant verification. In this case, the best option is to get a code via mail.

Bulk Locations on Google My Business

If you are managing several business locations (10 or more), you don’t have to add them one by one on GMB. Instead, you can use the Google My Business Bulk Location Management tool.

Just visit the [Google My Business Locations](#) page to upload locations from a spreadsheet, and edit the information associated with each location. (Note: Currently, you’ll have to use this function from GMB’s classic mode because it’s not yet available in the new version).



You need to make sure all locations meet the following quality standards:

- The business must make in-person contact with customers during its stated hours.
- The business must be open to the public.
- You may not enter locations that are under construction or not yet

opened.

- You must be the owner of the business or an authorized marketing representative.
- Your listing name must match your real name, as represented by your offline marketing material, such as signage, etc.
- All locations must have the same name unless the business's real-world representation consistently varies from location to location.
- All locations must also have the same category if they provide the same service.

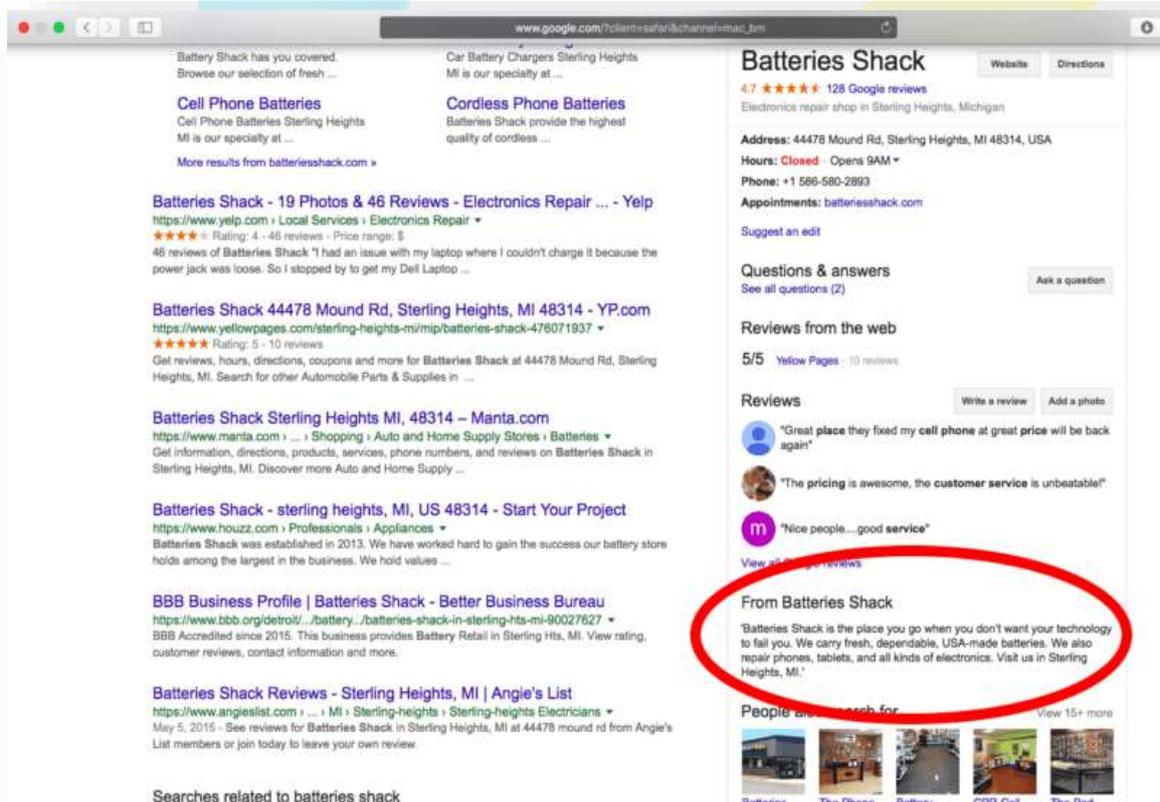
While you can use your regular Gmail account to get this process started, we highly recommend that you create a new account using an email that reflects the domain of the businesses to be uploaded. Using the business domain will reduce the time and steps required to complete the Google verification process.



Add Descriptions to Google Business

Your Google business description is a summary – up to 750 characters – that appears when a user searches for your local business or checks out your listing on Google, via a desktop computer or mobile device.

It's usually displayed alongside or underneath your online reviews and ratings on Google, as well as your business' review snippets. (Review snippets are algorithmically selected quotes from Google users and local guides that provide information on the keywords most mentioned by your reviewers.) Here's how business descriptions might appear on desktop computers and mobile devices:





To get started with adding your Google My Business descriptions, sign in to your account.

1. On your Homepage, look for an option to “Add description.” Alternatively, you can click on your Info tab on the right and look for the section where you can add your business description.
2. Add your business description then click Apply.

Here are some more guidelines set by Google for when you’re writing out your business description:

- Don’t spam it. Use it to pitch your business. Focus primarily on details about your business instead of details about promotions, prices, or sales.
- You should be upfront and honest about the information provided, focusing on content that is relevant and useful to your customers to understand your business. Do not include URL links or HTML code or exceed 750 characters in the description field.
- Avoid misspellings, gimmicky character use, gibberish, etc.

Google Business Photos and Videos

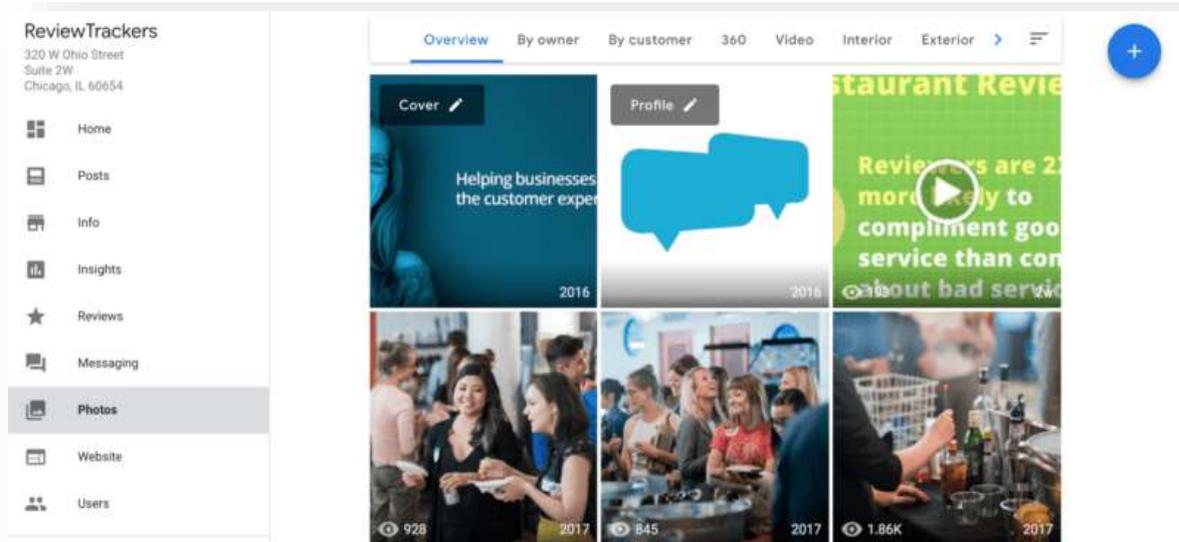
Your Google My Business photos and videos are deciding factors when it comes to attracting customers. These images are the first impression of your business. They can attract customers or drive them away.

Add Photos and Videos to Google My Business

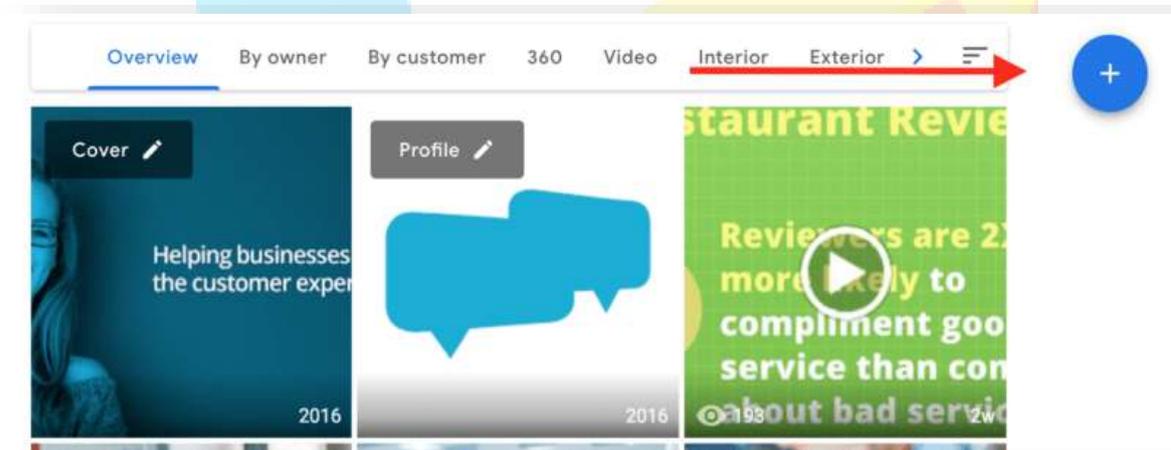
Once a business is verified, you can start adding photos through your account on your desktop or GMB mobile app. In both cases, you’ll go to the menu and select the Photos



section.



From there, you can upload any photo or video you want so long as it meets the following size and format restrictions. Click on the blue “+” button to start adding your media:



Google My Business Photo Size and Format

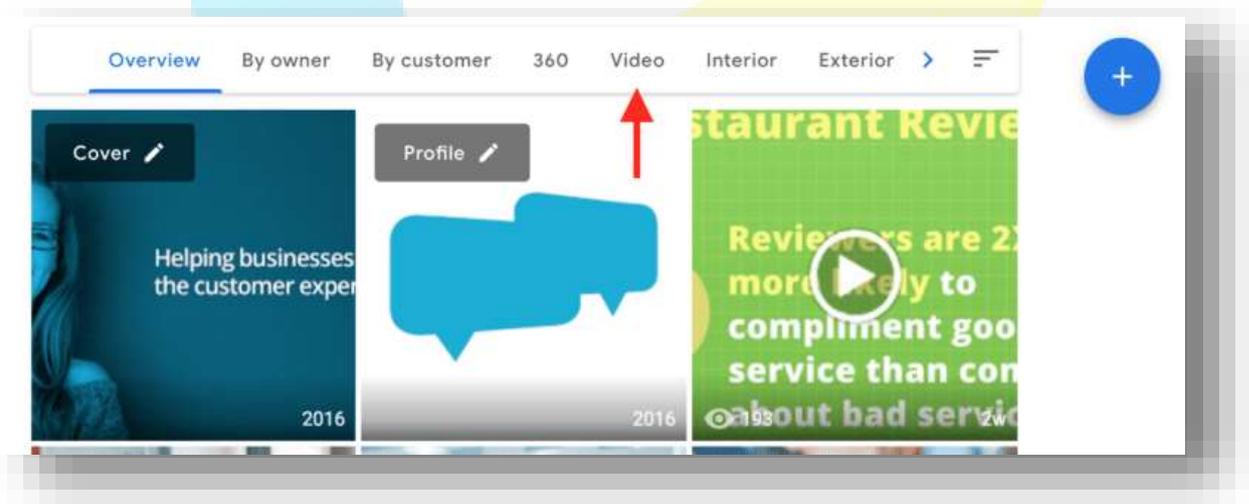
- Images can either be in a JPG or PNG file format and at least have the dimensions of 720 x 720 pixels.



- The overall image file size should be between 10 KB and 5 MB.
- Images must also be focused and show a well-lit area. You are not allowed to use image filters or perform “significant alterations” to the photo.
- In addition to general photos of the business, you can also designate two images as the cover and profile photos. Profile photos are a distinctive way for customers to recognize the business on Google while a cover photo shows off “your page’s personality.”

Add Video to Google My Business

You can add videos so long as they are less than the 100 MB file size limit. They must be no longer than 30 seconds and use a minimum resolution of 720p. To do so, you’ll stay in the “Photos” section of your listen. Above your current photos, you’ll see an option for “Video”



You’ll use the same process to add video as you did to add photos. Click the blue “+” button and upload.

Remove or Delete Photos from Google My Business

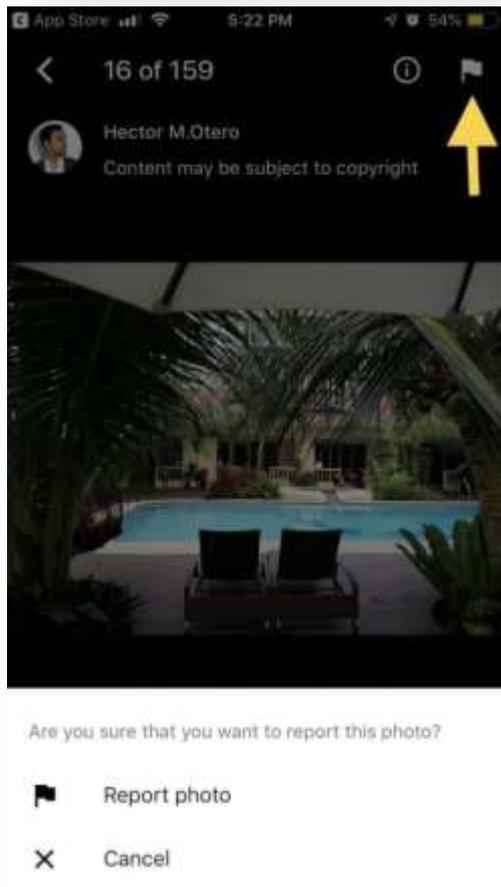


Owners and managers aren't the only ones who can add photos to their locations. Customers can do it as well. However, there might be some images that don't meet Google's Format Specific Criteria. In this case, you can flag them so that Google can review and possibly delete the images.

- Within your GMB account go to the Photos section and select the offending images. To bring them to Google's attention click on the flag icon on the top-right corner of the page.



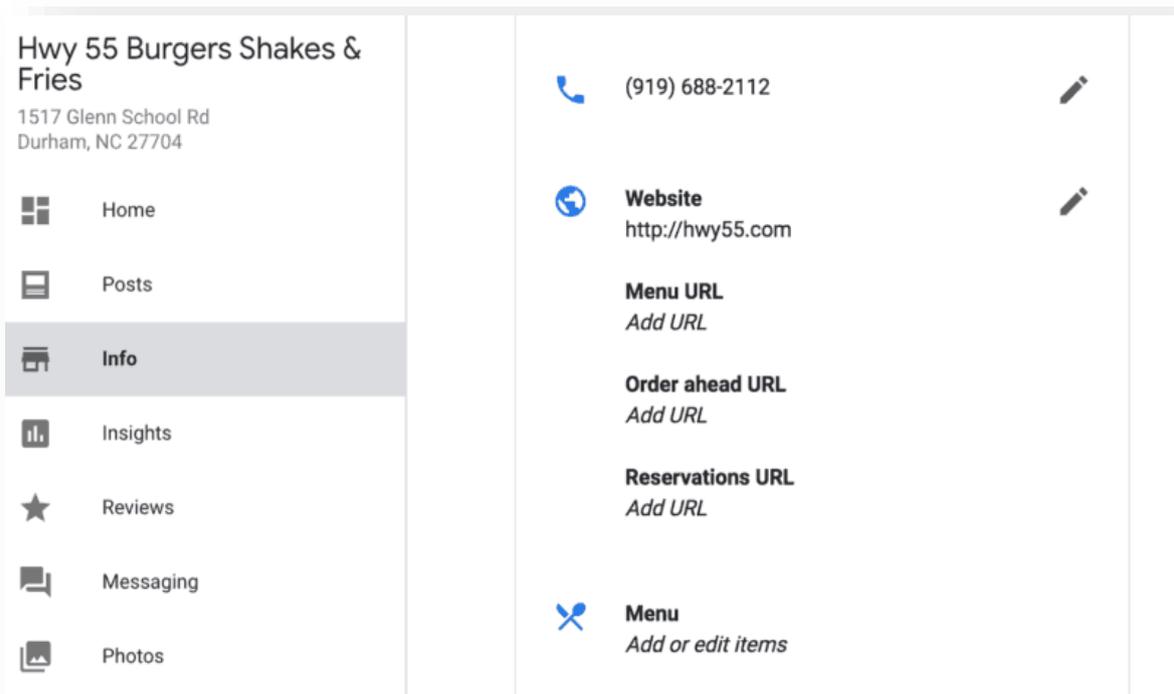
Mobile users can also select images in the GMB app's Photo section, but they will need to go to the menu and click on the "Report photo" button.



You can also flag images via Google Maps. Once you find the business and the photo you want to flag, click on the three-dot menu icon on the top-left corner of your screen and click the “Report a Problem” button. You might also see a flag icon on the top-right corner of the screen, which you can use to report the image.

Adding Services and Menus on Google My Business

Using Google My Business, restaurants and service-based businesses can submit additional information and links to help consumers learn more about their locations. The process is a little different for restaurants and service businesses, so let’s start with restaurant menus. There is a Menu editor available on GMB for businesses in the restaurant industry. To access it, click “Info.”



You'll see two places that mention a "menu." You can either add a menu URL (that links back to a menu listing) or you can add menu items to your listing one by one. Restaurants can use the editor to add menu items (dishes), including title, description, and price, as well as to create multiple sections of the menu, i.e. appetizers, entrees, and desserts.



← Back

Add menu section

Section name
Examples: Lunch, Dinner, Appetizers, Beverages 0 / 140

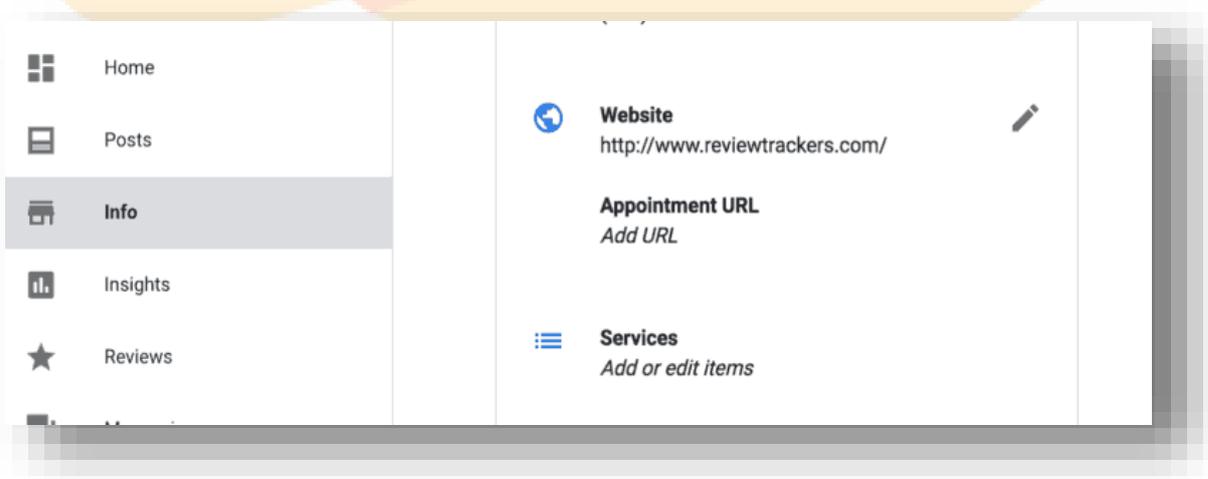
Add menu item

Enter at least one item per section. You can add more later

Item name	Item price (USD)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<small>0 / 140</small>

Item description 0 / 1,000

This feature is only available if the listing is not currently connected to a third-party provider and for listings in English-speaking locales. If you run a service company, your experience will be similar. Click the “Info” section of the GMB listing for that location, scroll down, and you’ll see a place to add Services to your listing (and potentially an appointment URL if you have online booking).





If you click to add Services to your listing, you'll be prompted to add a service item, description, and price:

How Come the Menu and Services Information and Links Appear Automatically?

Links to certain booking and ordering services can appear automatically with your business listings in Google Search and Google Maps. These links are updated automatically via third-party providers. There's no way to add, edit, or remove these links in Google My Business. Google works with select third-party providers that provide booking and ordering services for local businesses.

Links for third-party providers display because of a relationship your business previously established with them. These links lead to the website of the third-party provider. From the third-party website, a user can take an action such as 'place an order' or 'make an appointment or reservation.'



If you want to remove or fix a link in your own listing, please contact the third-party provider's support team or a technical contact to request they remove your data from the information they are sending Google.

Managing Google My Business

Add or Change Your Hours on Google My Business

Using Google My Business, you can let customers know when your business location is open. To add or change your business hours on Google:

1. Sign into your GMB account and click the Info tab from the Menu.
2. On your Info page, look for the "Add hours" options or the section showing your current operating hours.
3. Click on the Hours icon, which resembles a clock. Click on the days that your location is open to customers.
4. For each day that you are open, select the opening and closing hours.
5. Finalize the hours by clicking Apply.



Hours

Sunday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open	8:00 am	–	5:00 pm	ADD HOURS
Monday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open	8:00 am	–	5:00 pm	ADD HOURS
Tuesday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open	8:00 am	–	5:00 pm	ADD HOURS
Wednesday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open	8:00 am	–	5:00 pm	ADD HOURS
Thursday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open	8:00 am	–	5:00 pm	ADD HOURS
Friday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open	8:00 am	–	5:00 pm	ADD HOURS
Saturday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open	8:00 am	–	5:00 pm	ADD HOURS

[CANCEL](#) [APPLY](#)

Please note: Edits may be reviewed for quality and can take up to 3 days to be published. [Learn more](#)

Add Holiday Hours on Google My Business

You can also indicate holidays hours for each location. To do so:

1. Sign into Google My Business. If you have multiple locations, open the location you'd like to manage.
2. On the info tab, click the “Special hours” section. You'll only see this section if you already provided regular hours.
3. Click “Confirm hours” next to an upcoming holiday or click “Add new date” to choose a different date.
4. Enter the opening and closing times for that day. Select “Closed” to indicate that the location is closed all day. If you're open 24 hours, click “Opens at” and select



“24 hours” from the dropdown menu that appears. If you enter closing hours past midnight, make sure to set them properly.

5. When you’ve finished entering all your special hours, click “Apply.” Your special hours will appear to customers on Google only for the designated days.

It’s a good idea to confirm your hours for official holidays even if those hours are the same as your regular hours. This way, you’ll make it clear to customers that your holiday hours are accurate. Keep in mind that special hours can only be entered if you’ve already provided regular hours.

Google My Business Posts

Your Google business listing also acts as a content feed through which you can create and post up-to-minute content for your audience. The content can be in the form of text, video, or photo, which customers will see when they find your business listing on Google. To create and publish Google My Business posts:

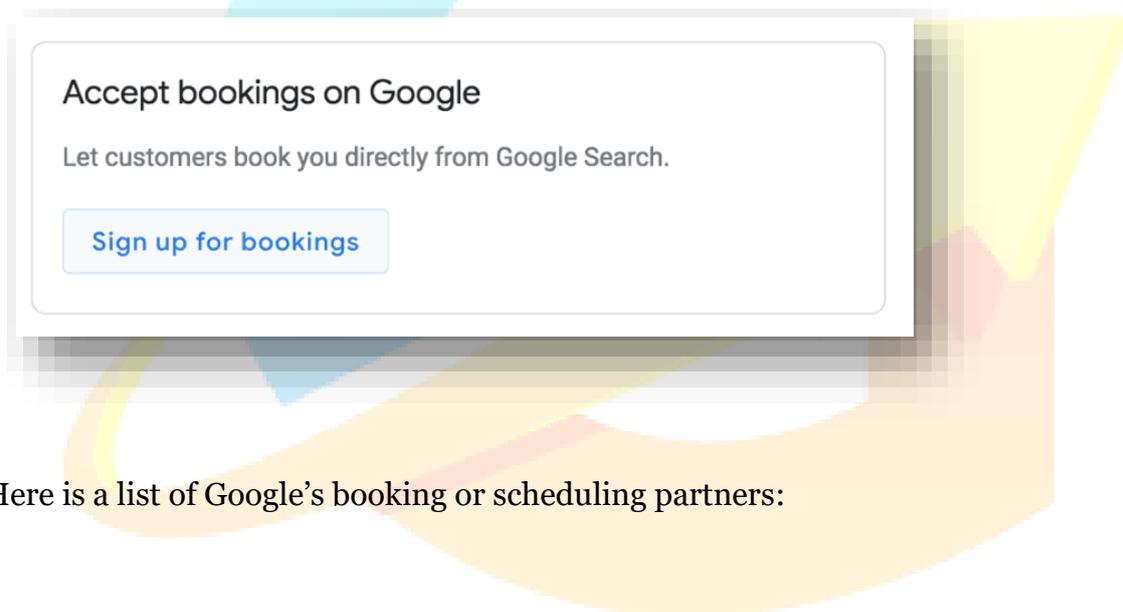
1. Sign in to Google My Business. If you have multiple locations, open the location you’d like to manage. (Currently, posting is only available for individual business locations, which means that you cannot post content in bulk; you’ll have to create and post location-level content for each location you’re managing on Google My Business.)
2. Click “Posts” from the menu.
3. The “Create post” screen appears. Choose which type of post you’d like to create from the following options: Update, Event, Offer, or Product.
4. Add photos, videos, text, events, or offers to your post.
5. Click Preview to see a preview of your post. If you’re happy with your preview, click Publish in the top right corner of the screen. If you’d like to change your



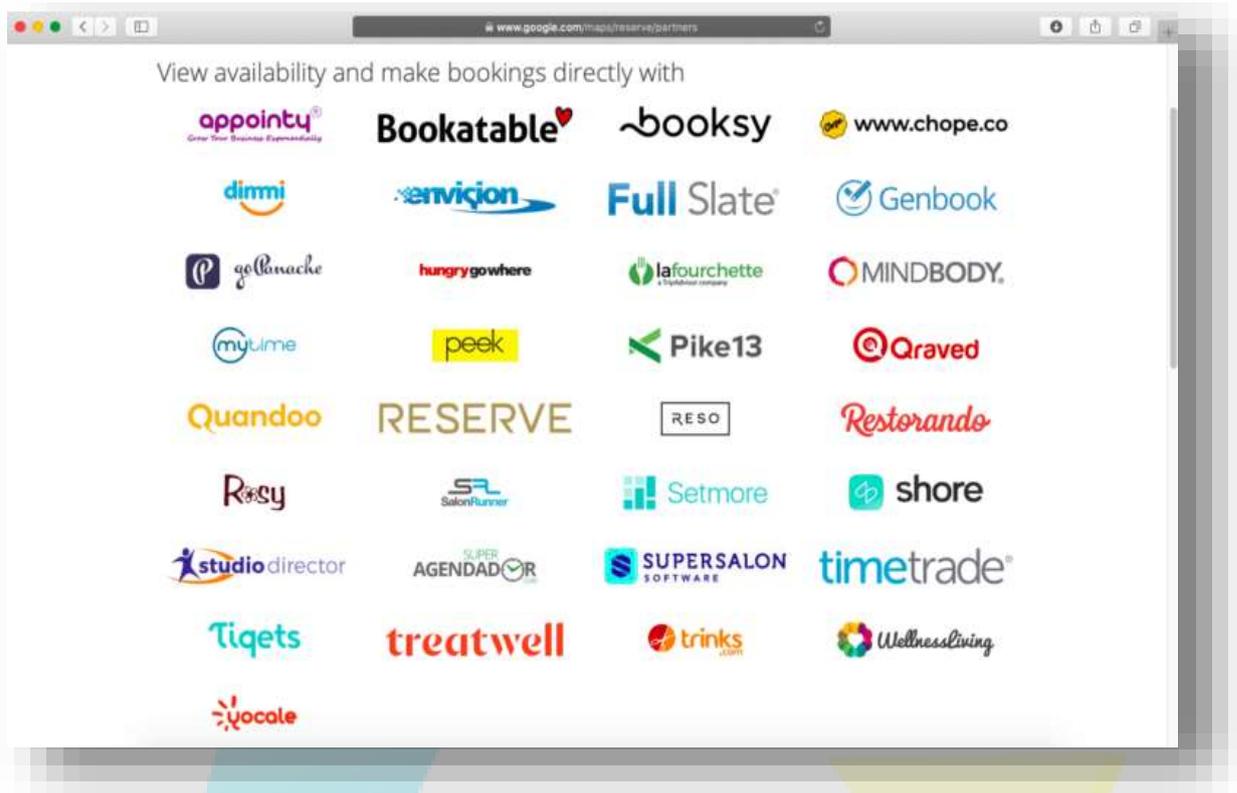
post, click Back on the top left of the screen to continue editing your draft until it's ready to publish.

Add the Google My Business Bookings Feature

Google My Business also has a Bookings feature called Reserve with Google that allows businesses that use a supported scheduling partner to see insights and other information on the bookings received from Google. The Bookings feature is available in the U.S. for restaurants and businesses in the fitness or beauty vertical that use a supported scheduling partner. If it is available, go to the Home menu for a listing and look for the “Bookings” card:



Here is a list of Google’s booking or scheduling partners:



To add this feature to your Google My Business account:

1. Sign into Google My Business. For brands with multiple locations, click on the specific location to activate bookings for it.
2. Click on the “Bookings” option within that location and sign up with the booking provider of your choice.
3. Sign up with the provider of your choice.
4. Within one week, your scheduling account is automatically linked to your Google My Business account.

After linking, you can receive bookings through Google. If you already use a scheduling provider, you’re automatically eligible to receive bookings. You’ll see your booking history with that provider for bookings made in Reserve with Google in your Google



My Business account on the bookings tab. Note: Your scheduling provider may apply fees for booking through Google. Check with your provider for more details.

Generate Leads Using Google My Business

There's a lot to say about lead generation and Google My Business. We recommend you read the in-depth guide to learning about using Google business to generate leads. But for starters, you'll want to make sure you get the most out of your GMB account by taking these steps:

- Connect Google My Business with Google Analytics
 - If you have multiple locations, make sure each location's "website" link sends users to the page for that specific location and not your brand's home page.
 - Add a UTM parameter to track the traffic coming to your website through your GMB listing.
- Optimize a listing for lead capture by including (if possible) integrations for:
 - Making reservations
 - Placing an order
 - Scheduling an appointment
- Make sure the website you link on your listings is optimized to convert GMB traffic by including multiple calls to action including:
 - Setting a reservations
 - Contact you
 - Visit the business
- Track the leads through GMB Insights with specific metrics such as:
 - Number of web visitors getting directions to your business



- Number of phone calls

Turn On Messaging and Chat with Customers

Google My Business allows you to chat directly with customers who find your business listing on Google Search. Responding to customers can help you answer their questions, tell your business’s story, and attract more people to your location. **Please note** that messaging or chatting with customers is a new Google My Business feature that’s currently available in select countries.

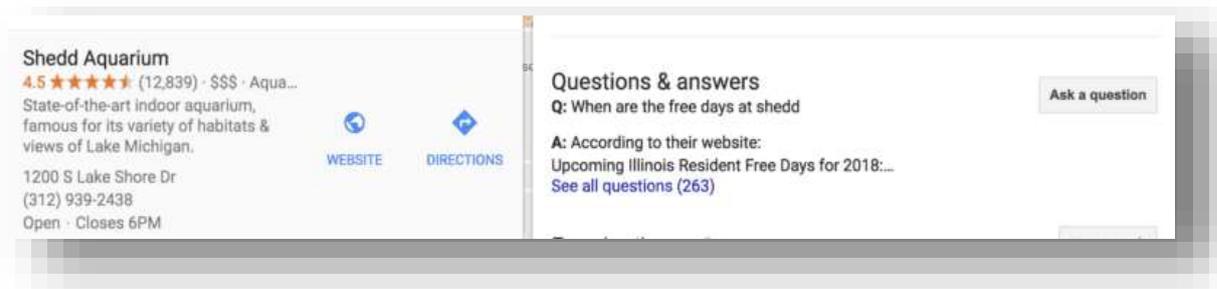
Turn On Messaging via SMS

To turn on messaging with customers:

1. Sign into Google My Business and look for the “Messages” card in the Home menu.
2. Click on the “Settings” button within the “Messages” tab to turn messaging on or off. For new GMB users, just click the “Turn on messaging” option.

Questions and Answers

As the listing’s manager, you have the most reliable answers to your customers’ questions. So, it makes sense that you will want to be the one to receive and respond to these questions every time someone sees your business information on Google.





With Google My Business Questions and Answers, you can ask or answer questions from any device, and from Google Maps on Android devices. Unfortunately, listing managers don't get any notification letting them know when there are new questions being asked about a location. That means you'll have to stay vigilant and check your listings as they appear on Google or look inside your GMB info for each location to see if there are any new Q&As. To check for any new Q&As and to answer any outstanding questions:

1. In the info card for the place on the right, under "Questions & answers," click See all questions.
2. Next to the question, click Answer.
3. To edit or delete your answer, click More and then click Edit or Delete.

The person who asked will get a notification after you've answered.

Fix Incorrect Business Information on Google

Sometimes you'll find that the information in your Google listing is out of date, inaccurate, or incomplete. It could be that your listing was created originally by a Google user but hadn't been verified. Or the business might have moved locations. Or you're taking over an existing listing to correct a few errors.

Ensuring that your business information on Google is accurate and up to date should be part of your online marketing and local search strategy. A simple search can help you quickly identify any inaccuracies or incorrect information about your business online. To fix your business information on Google:

1. Add your business listing.
2. Verify your business listing.



3. Edit your business information.

Once you've added and verified a listing, editing your listing should be as simple as clicking the pencil icon in the "Info" section for each listing. If you've begun the



verification process and need to fix incorrect business information while waiting for your verification postcard to arrive, you can also report a problem in Google Maps.

Do More with Google My Business

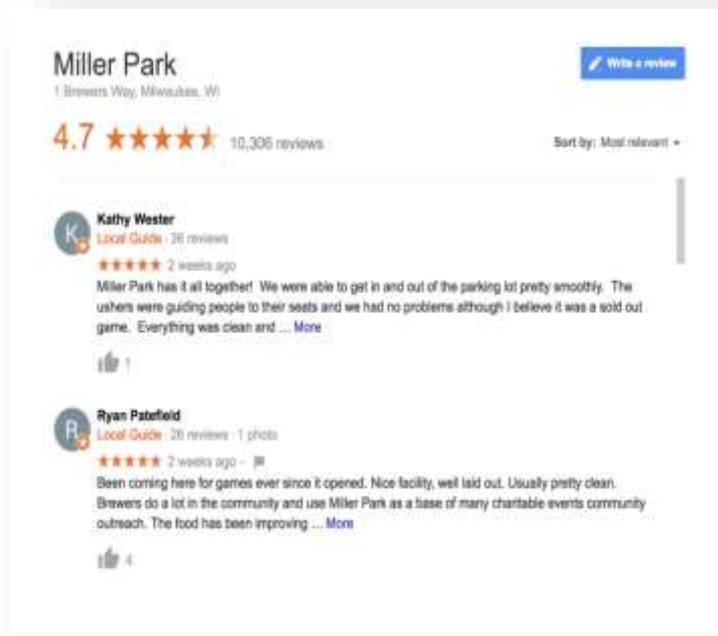
To get the most out of your GMB account, you also need to be aware of additional Google features that work in tandem with your listing. Taking advantage of some of these features can help your brand stand out from the local competition.

Google Local Guides

Google Local Guides is a global community of the top reviewers on Google. Think of it as Google's version of Yelp Elite. The more reviews a user writes and posts on Google, the more benefits he or she enjoys. If you get a review from a Google Local Guide, it's more likely to show up at the top of your reviews when a user clicks on your GMB listing. That may be because Google gives special preference to Google Local Guide



reviews, or simply because these reviews tend to be longer and include photos. Benefits of the Local Guides program include: special badges and levels, access to a monthly newsletter, invites to members-only contests, the ability to join Hangouts with



worldwide tastemakers, connoisseurs, and Googlers, eligibility to test new Google products and services before public release, invites to exclusive events, parties, and meetups, and annual thank-you gifts for high-quality contributions to

Google Maps.

High-level Google Local Guides also get the chance to be featured on Google, Facebook, and Twitter. **If you're a business owner, you can still become a Local Guide**, if you do not solicit Google reviews for a particular business, and that you don't take advantage of the program for self-promotion.

What is Google Local, Google Places, and Google+?

These are the old names or brands Google used to refer to its services for businesses looking to manage their business information on Google. If you previously used Google Local, Google Places for Business, Google+ Local, or Google+ Pages Dashboard to manage your business information, your account has been automatically upgraded to Google My Business.

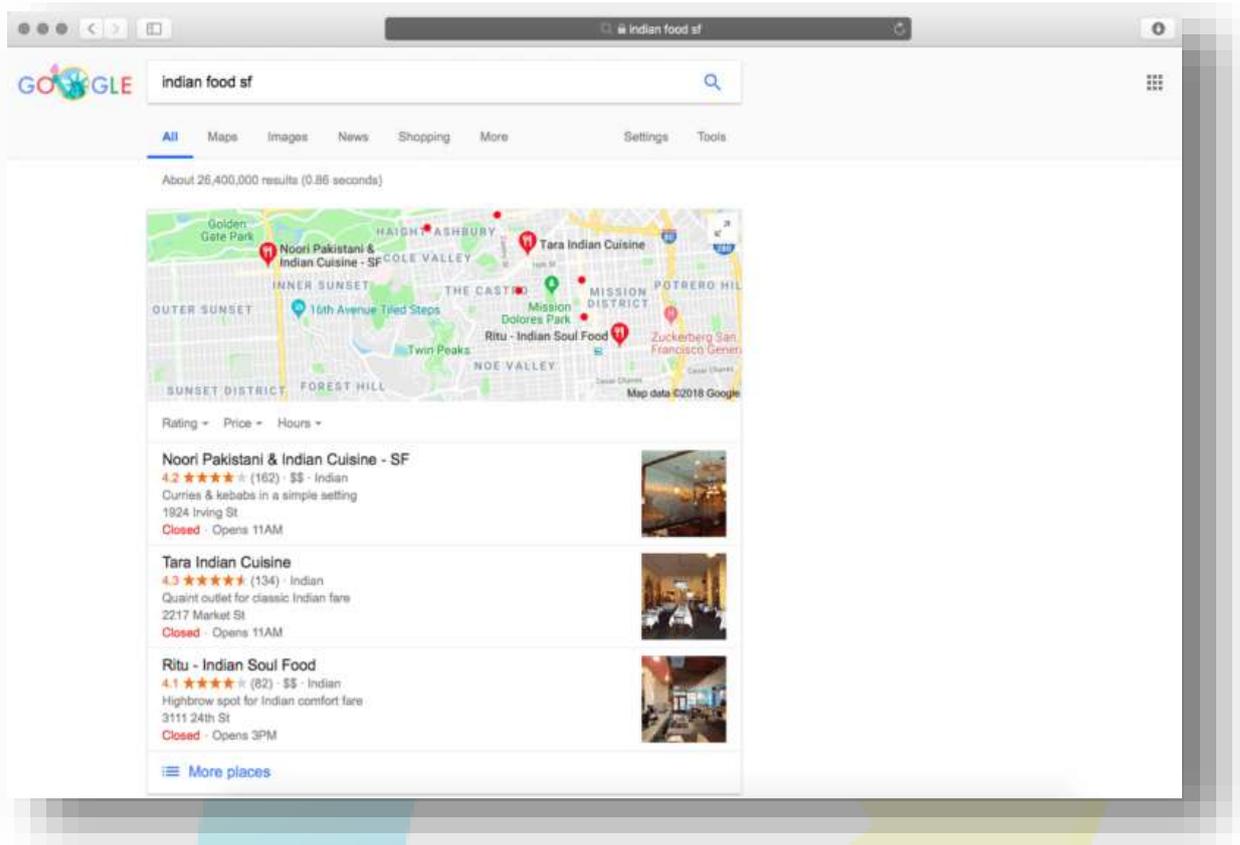


Add Your Business on Google Maps

If a business you own or manage isn't appearing in Google Maps, you can add and claim your business listing using Google My Business. Once you've verified your business, you can edit business information like address, map location, contact information, category, and photos. As a Google user, you can also fix someone else's local business. You can suggest an edit, report the error, or add a missing place in Google Maps. If someone else's business is missing from Google Maps, you can add a missing place.

The Local 3 Pack

One of the most prominent and sought-after positions in Google's local search results is the Google Maps Pack. Also commonly known as the "local pack" or the "3 pack," Google Maps Pack is a set of three highlighted Google-Maps-based results (it used to be seven) featuring the most highly ranked businesses based on the factors that determine local ranking (reviews, local citations, etc.). Up to three businesses are featured in Google Maps Pack results, but sometimes, you'll see a sponsored result displayed alongside or above the three organic ones.



As you can see, Google provides crucial information about each of the businesses organically featured in the Google Maps Pack: overall ratings, a short business summary, location address, business hours, price range, etc. — plus a featured photo on the right side. The “local pack” or “3 pack” is also displayed above traditional text-only or links-based search results — making it one of the most valuable pieces of online real estate across any platform. In fact,...

The Google Pack grabs as much as 44% of the total clicks on search engine results pages.

How to Get Your Locations in the Local 3 Pack?

The first step to making your business appear as part of the local pack is to claim your business listing on Google and manage your information using Google My Business.



But once you've done that, you may be wondering *what's next?* The next step is to optimize your reviews. Locations that don't have at least 4 stars won't show up in the Local 3 Pack. But it's not enough to have high aggregate ratings. You'll also want to:

- Have a steady influx of reviews (recency is a significant factor).
- Have positive sentiment in the text of the review itself.
- Have many total reviews (in addition to the trust factor, this allows your business to rank for longtail keywords based on what your reviews are talking about in the text of the review).

If you're still struggling to appear in the Local 3 Pack, here's a quick checklist to help you determine if your GMB listing is on point:

- Use your actual business name, but don't stuff it with keywords or your city name.
- Correct inaccuracies or errors in your data and get rid of any duplicate listings.
- Be as detailed as possible when entering your business information. Include your business name, category, map location and service area, phone number, website URL, hours of operation, etc.
- Write original and compelling copy for your Google My Business description.
- Avoid address variations. Meaning: if your location is at "72 Southwest Road," then stick to that way of spelling it, instead of using, say, "72 SW Rd." or "72 Southwest St."
- Use a local number instead of a toll-free number.
- Manage and respond to all your Google reviews.
- Upload high-quality photos to enhance the visual appeal of your listing. (These may appear in search results, too.)



- At all times, make sure your information on GMB is correct, complete, and up to date.

Remember: business listings that have been claimed and are regularly updated on Google My Business — and which also boast strong reviews and ratings — are the ones most likely to rank at the top of local search and be featured in the Google Maps Pack.





CHAPTER 5



How To Add Keywords To Google My Business Profile



If you have a business that relies on local customers, then a Google My Business listing (now called Business Profile) is a must-have digital marketing strategy for growth. But if you're new to search engine optimization (SEO) or not getting found as much as you'd like for local keywords, then this guide is for you.

Below, you'll discover the top tips for how to add keywords to Google My Business also known as a GMB listing. You'll also learn where to set keywords in Google My Business Profile pages to get the best results and how to change keywords that are not sending you the most qualified website traffic.

How to Add Keywords to Google My Business?

1. Add Keywords to Your Google My Business Description

The first step for how to add keywords to Google My Business is inside your business description. This is the easiest way to improve relevance for your Business Profile, which is a top-ranking factor in Google's algorithm for GMB listings.

2. Put Keywords In Your Google Business Profile Posts

The next step for how to set keywords in Google My Business is to add them to the business posts on your Business Profile.

As explained by Google:

“You can connect with existing and potential customers through your Business Profile on Google Search and Maps through posts.” And, “Posts can include text, photos, or videos to promote Business Profiles.”

There are three main types of posts you can create:



- Offers
- What's New
- Events

Each time you create a new post, make sure to add your keywords to the content. That way, you can keep your Business Profile optimized for the phrases and terms that matter most for attracting the right customers for your business. This is also a free way to gain more organic traffic to your website without having to spend money on Google AdWords.

What's also good about these articles is that you can change keywords on Google Business posts whenever you see fit to improve your results. Also, keep in mind that Google's content policy requires you to only publish content that creates a positive experience for your customers. Therefore, you shouldn't post off-topic or irrelevant content just for the sake of adding keywords to your Google My Business page.

Business Profile posts should be relevant to your business and help your customers better understand your type of business.

Note: Posts that are more than 6 months old will get archived unless a date range is specified during the publishing process. So, make sure to keep your posts updated and fresh.

3. Get Customers to Put Keywords In Your Reviews

A powerful, yet highly underused method for how to add keywords in Google My Business is to ask your customers to use them in their Google reviews (i.e., testimonials). This is a great way to increase the keyword density in a natural way too. You can also add keywords in your replies to GMB listing reviews.



Just don't go overboard by including the same keywords in every review response. Otherwise, you could overoptimize the review section and trigger a closer look at your Business Profile by the Google My Business Web Spam team.

4. Add Keywords In Your Business Q&A Section

Another tactic for adding keywords to your Business Profile listing is to use them in your business Q&A section. When a customer asks a question on your page, you can insert keywords into your answers.

5. Don't Add Keywords to Your Google Business Name

The final step you need to consider when optimizing your Google My Business listing for keywords is to NEVER set keywords in a GMB Business Name (i.e., business title).

Local search marketing experts caution against the practice of keyword stuffing in your business name because it can get your listing penalized or suspended. Keyword stuffing refers to adding descriptors to your business name on Google My Business that are not part of the legal name for the business.

The digital marketing experts at SterlingSky reported that keyword stuffing the Business Profile Name can increase keyword rankings for a specific search phrase like "keyword" + [city] + [state], which is why this SEO tactic is attractive to Internet marketers.

However, SterlingSky also showed a few examples of what can happen to the rankings of a business when it was reported for breaking the guidelines by including extra keywords in the business name.



Google ended up removing the keywords from the name of one Business Profile listing and the rankings dropped from position #1 to #7. Another business lost the top #1 to #2 positions and lowered to positions #14 to #15 for certain local keywords. But you won't always get so lucky with just getting a penalty. In some cases, your listing may be suspended entirely.

Google's My Business guidelines clearly states:

“Including unnecessary information in your business name is not permitted and could result in your listing being suspended.”

Therefore, your Google Business Name must remain consistent with the real-world branding. Only include keywords in the business title when they're part of the real name for the business. Don't take the risk by stuffing keywords into the business name when it's not authentic to the legal entity name.

How to Change Keywords On Google Business?

As with any search engine optimization strategy, you'll want to track, measure, and monitor your results with the keywords you're using on your Google My Business page. And over time, you may determine that the keywords you're using on your GMB listing are not attracting enough website traffic, the right type of organic visitors, or qualified customers. In that case, you may be wondering how to change keywords on Google Business. And the answer is simple.

All you must do is update the following areas of your Business Profile with the new keywords:

- Business description (swap out old keyword with new keywords)



- Profile posts (use the new keywords in new posts and consider deleting old posts)
- Q&A section answers (edit your answers to include new keywords and use them in new answers)

As for the customer reviews, you'll need to educate your customers on what the new keywords they should be adding to their testimonials for your business on Google.

Finding the Right Keywords for Your Google My Business Listing

If you need help picking the right keywords to use on your Business Profile, the following tips can help. The most basic method for SEO is to include the following type of keyword strings throughout your listing so you can show up for more organic searches and on Google Maps:

- [keyword] + [city]
- [keyword] + [city] + [state]

You can also optimize for the type of service or business you operate like this:

- [type of service] + [city]
- [type of service] + [city] + [state]
- [type of business] + [city]
- [type of business] + [city] + [state]

It's best to rotate through the various keyword strings and types that relate to your business so you're not using the same phrases repeatedly. This SEO strategy will help you optimize for a wider range of keywords to attract more customers.



You can also try to include “near me” keyword phrases in your Profile posts as mentioned below. However, there’s debate in the SEO industry on whether this method continues to work or not.

That’s because Google can usually figure out your location by analysing the local geographic coordinates of your computer’s IP address or mobile phone with the GPS function. In those cases, the algorithm can determine which business search results will be the best match for your current location.

You can experiment with these keyword search queries and perform your own testing:

- [type of service] near me
- [type of business] near me

Summary

As you discovered, the best method for how to set keywords in Google My Business listings is to optimize the following locations on your profile: description, posts, customer reviews, and Q&A section. You can also change keywords on Google Business at any time to improve your results. You may not be getting the best ranking positions, highest level of website traffic, or qualified visitors based on your current keyword optimization practices. So, refining your keywords, adding new phrases, and change old terms, is a good way to increase the visibility for your business in the Google search engine.



CHAPTER 6



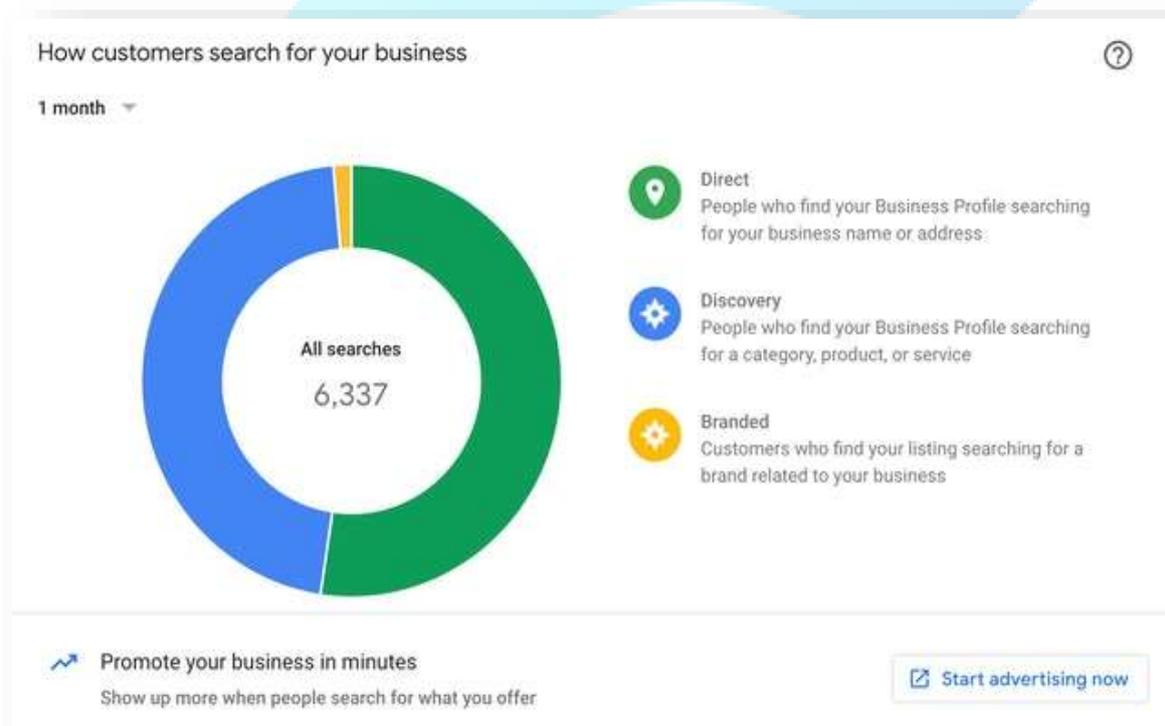
**Google My Business Insights And
Analytics: How To Use Them**



What is Google My Business Insights?

Google My Business Insights is a free tool from Google that shows how searchers found your listing and what actions they took on it. It contains information relating to your local search performance such as the number of views your listing has received, how search users find you, and the types of interactions they have with your listing, such as clicking through to your website, calling you, or requesting directions.

Here's what Google My Business Insights looks like when you first land on the page:



Why is Google My Business Insights useful?

Google My Business Insights is useful for two core reasons:

1. It helps you understand how searchers find your business
2. It helps you understand what actions searchers take on your business



Beyond this, GMB Insights can help you to identify broader trends in how people are finding your business. For example, your cake delivery business might be surprisingly busy at the beginning of May, leading you to investigate providing special Offer Posts for customers purchasing services around Mother's Day.

The more information you have available to you, the more you'll be able to improve your listing and encourage more actions to take place.

How to use Google My Business Insights?

Now we've established why Google My Business Insights is useful, we can get into how to use the data provided.

Here's how to find and use Google My Business Insights:

1. Sign into your Google My Business profile as usual.
2. The Home tab should load, and to the right of the screen, you'll see the 'Performance' box, which shows data from the last 28 days on Search and Maps.
3. Alternatively, you can click on Insights from the left-hand side menu.

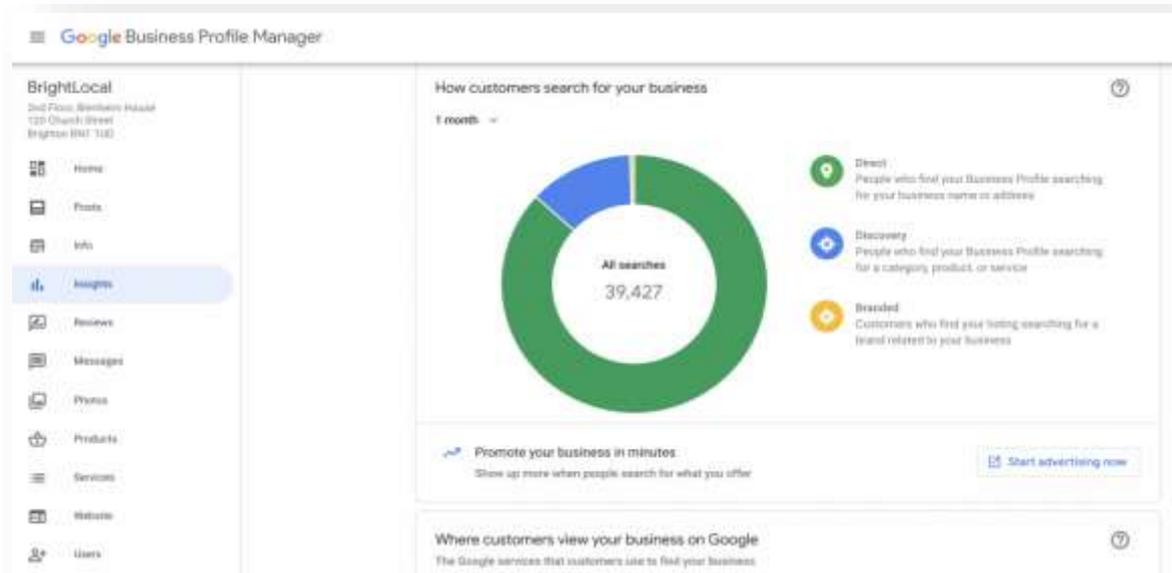
The Insights data is split across several different features, each of which will help you to build a better understanding of your listing. Let's explore these.

How customers search for your business?

Knowing how users search for your business isn't just a point of interest, it can also help you to make better marketing decisions. At the top of the Performance box, you'll see three sets of numbers: Views, Searches, and Activity.



When you click on Searches, a panel will drop down and show you data related to Direct and Discovery searches.



What is a Direct Search?

A Direct Search is when someone heads to Google and types in either your business name or your business address. You can draw a clear conclusion from this figure – these are people who already know about your business and have inputted their search with the specific intention of finding your listing or finding information related to your business, such as consumer reviews. Regardless of intention, these are people aware of you.

What is a Discovery Search?

A Discovery Search is when search users have typed in something generic such as ‘plumber near me’ or ‘convenience store open now’ and your business listing has appeared in the local search results.



What is a Branded Search?

A Branded Search is when a user searches for a brand related to your business. Google uses the example of someone searching for 'McDonald's' and being presented with a similar fast-food business. The Branded Search category is only present in GMB Insights if your company has appeared at least once for this type of query.

Search users who found you through Discovery may or may not already be familiar with your business, but they haven't set out *to find you specifically*. These searches are general in nature and typically relate to a specific need and the desire to find a product or service that fulfills that need.

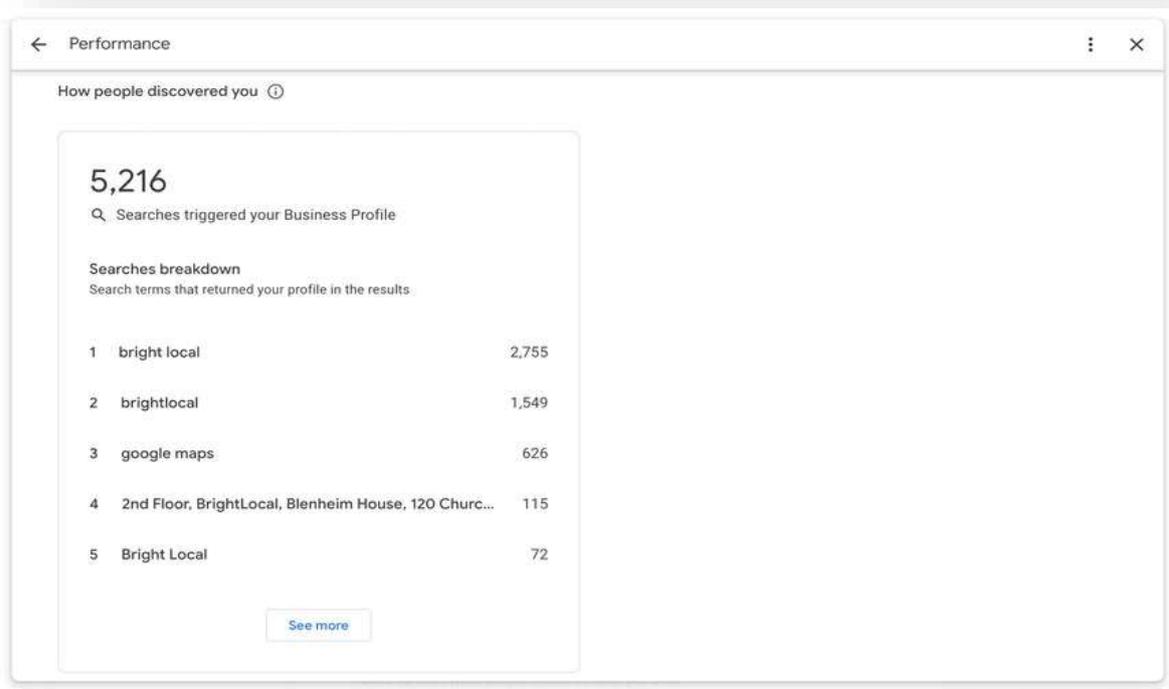
So, what insights can we glean from these figures?

If the Discovery figure is smaller than your Direct figure, it's a sign that you need to revisit your approach to local SEO. Having a higher Discovery search number means that you're visible to new customers rather than relying solely on people who already know about you for web traffic and sales. Click on Insights in the left-hand menu to access this data in graph form.

Queries used to find your business

The information found in this section, 'Queries used to find your business', can become a very useful content optimization resource.

Available from the Insights menu, this lists the top search queries, which you can then use to confirm you're using the right keywords across your blogs, web page, and Google My Business Posts.



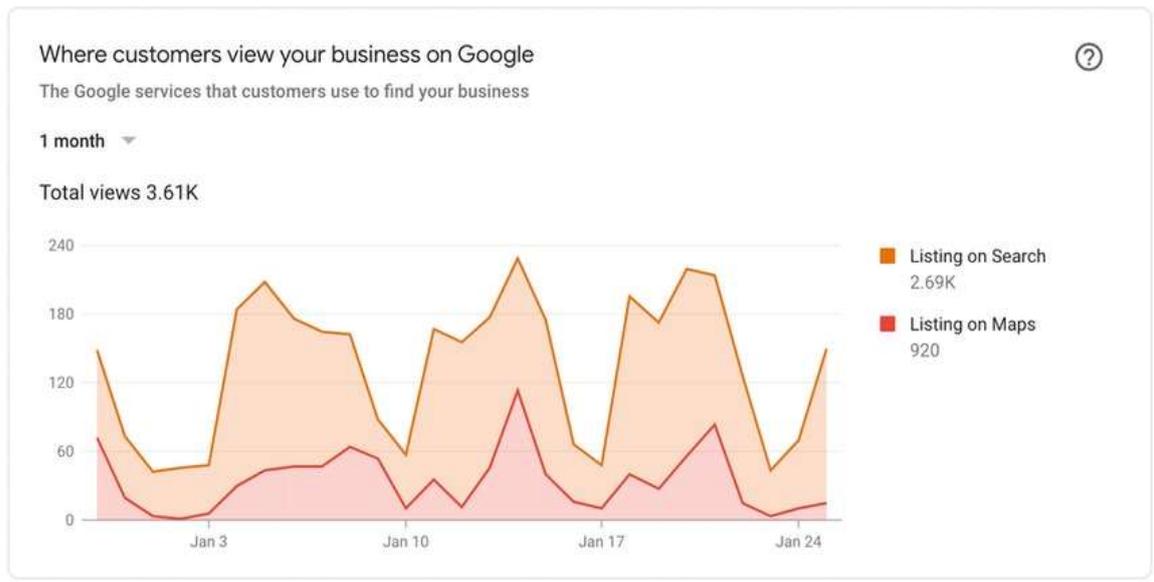
Where customers view your business on Google?

This section shows you where your impressions on Google have originated: in standard Google Search or from within Google Maps (desktop site or app).

What are Impressions in GMB Insights?

The Google My Business Impressions metric refers to how many people have viewed or seen your business listing. You can think of the number of Impressions as being how many people your listing has reached.

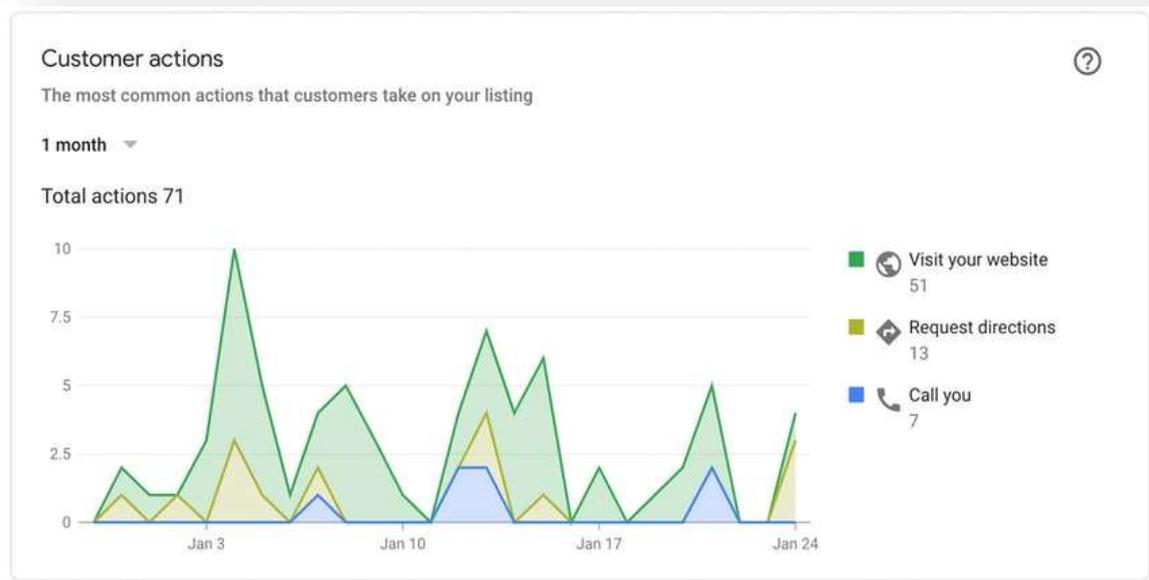
You'll see two numbers here, Listing on Search and Listing on Maps, with options to view for the week, month, or quarter.



While this may not seem helpful at first glance, it will show you how well mobile optimization is going, particularly if you're working with a high-footfall business such as a restaurant or hotel.

Customer actions

Next up is the Customer actions section. This data is great for helping you to determine how to manage your listing, and what to do next if you're feeling unsure.



This part of Google My Business Insights shows you what type of action a search user commonly takes on your listing, including things like visiting your website, requesting directions, and making phone calls to your business.

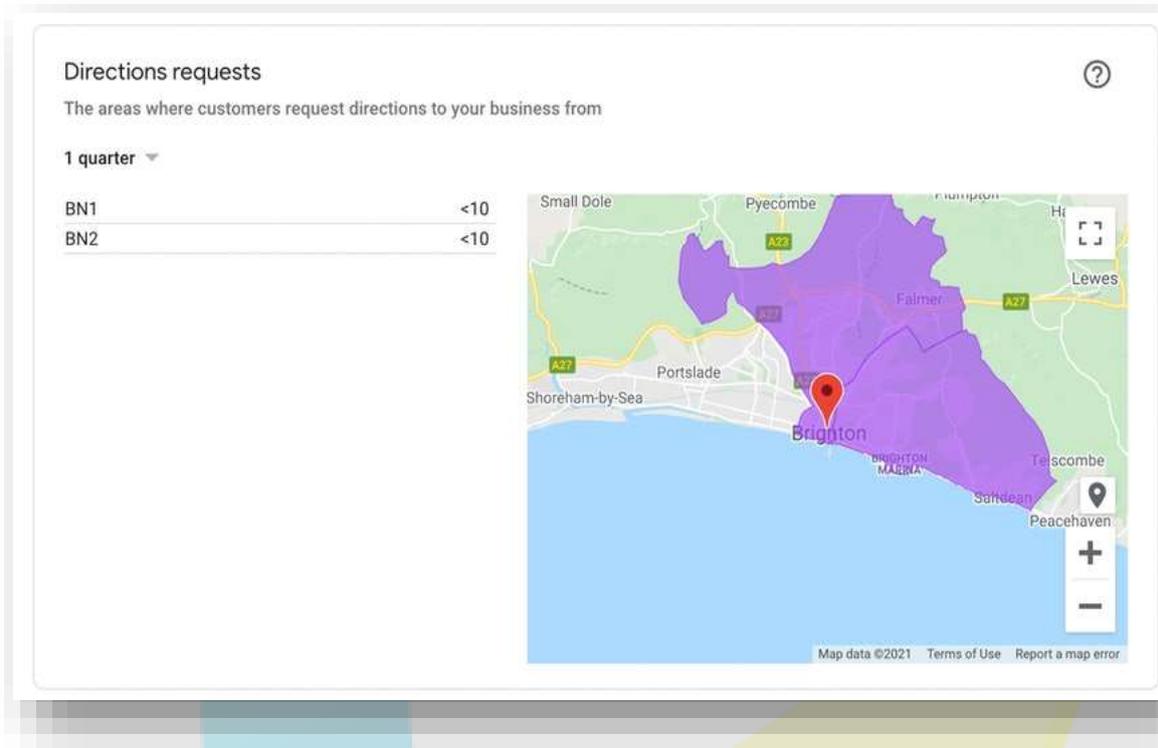
You can use this insight to inform additional work on your GMB profile. A slew of direction requests shows that there is an intent to visit your location. This could lead you to create a Post sharing nearby parking facilities or bus stops, for example. You may also want to edit the contact page on your website with directions, parking, and public transport access to help those planning a visit. On the GMB listing itself, you could upload additional images of your location showing the approach from different directions.

Depending on the action, additional information may also be available. If search users have requested directions, for example, you'll see a map showing where those direction requests came from.

Directions Requests



When a GMB user has clicked on the ‘Directions’ link on your profile, you’ll see a directions heatmap in GMB Insights, which outlines the location of those search users.



This heatmap is a great resource for local businesses, as it gives a very good indication of where your potential customers are traveling from. This can help you better understand in which neighbourhoods to focus your marketing efforts.

Use the zip code and location data presented in the directions heatmap to finely hone your advertising and marketing targeting. You could, for example, use the zip codes to focus your Google Ads targeting, or use this data to geo-target social media campaigns.

Phone calls

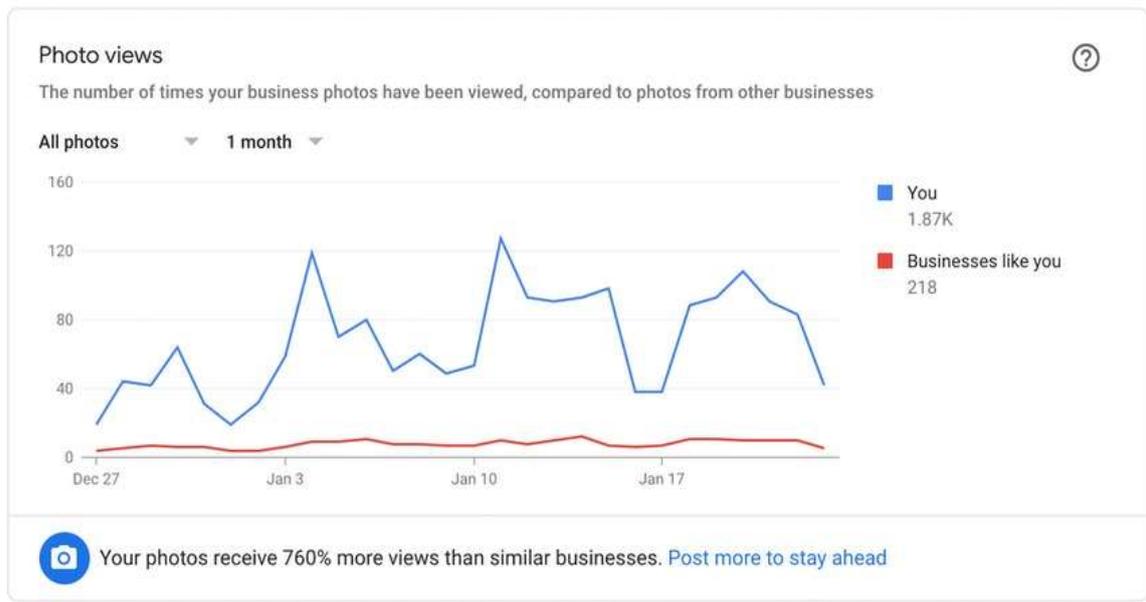
If a search user has clicked on your Google My Business listing to call your business, you’ll be able to monitor that data from this section of the Insights tab.



You can use this data to see which day of the week and time of the day generates the most calls from GMB – this information could again be used to fine-tune ad performance or help you decide when to schedule a new Post.

Photo views

As we discussed earlier, photos are crucial to GMB performance and can play a role in how much traffic filters through to your website from your Google My Business profile.



This part of the Insights tab will help you see how your images stack up against your competitors'. Not only can you see how many times your own photos have been viewed, but you'll also get a competitor benchmark, comparing your views to businesses like you.

If your images receive more views, you can confidently continue to post in the same vein. Fewer views mean you'll need to rethink your approach to images and may need to do a little competitor research of your own to see where you may be going wrong.

Photo quantity

The photo quantity Insight enables you to see how many images appear on your business listing compared to your competitors. If you have fewer images, take this as an indication that you need to upload more pictures.

Google My Business Post Insights



When you write a blog post or update your social media, you'll probably be in the habit of checking post views and likes.

In a similar vein, Google My Business Insights will give you some data relating to your Posts on GMB – just click on Posts in the navigation and you'll be able to see how many new views your Posts have received in the week prior.





CHAPTER 7

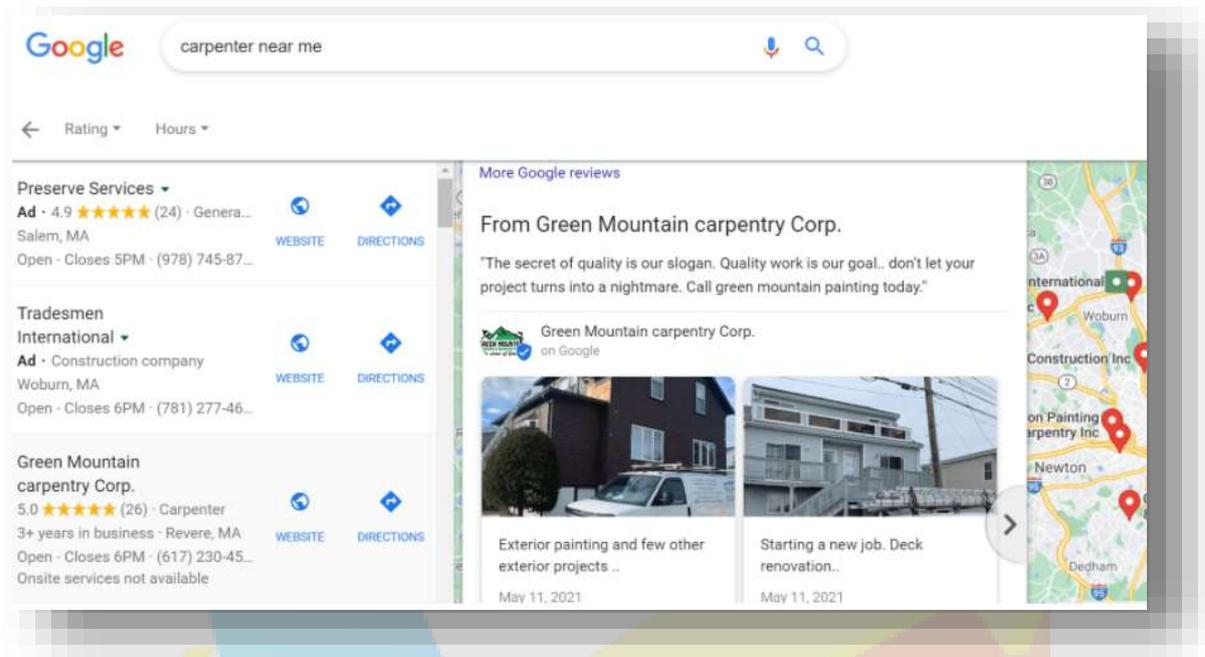


**How To Create Winning
Google My Business Posts**



What is a Google My Business Post?

First launched in 2016, Google My Business posts allow you to share even more information with your audience right from the search results page or from your listing.



You can use Google My Business posts in many ways—to announce upcoming events, highlight new products and services, clarify changes in hours, share interesting news, or communicate your special offers.

Here are some answers to a couple of frequently asked questions about Google My Business posts:

Are Google My Business posts free?



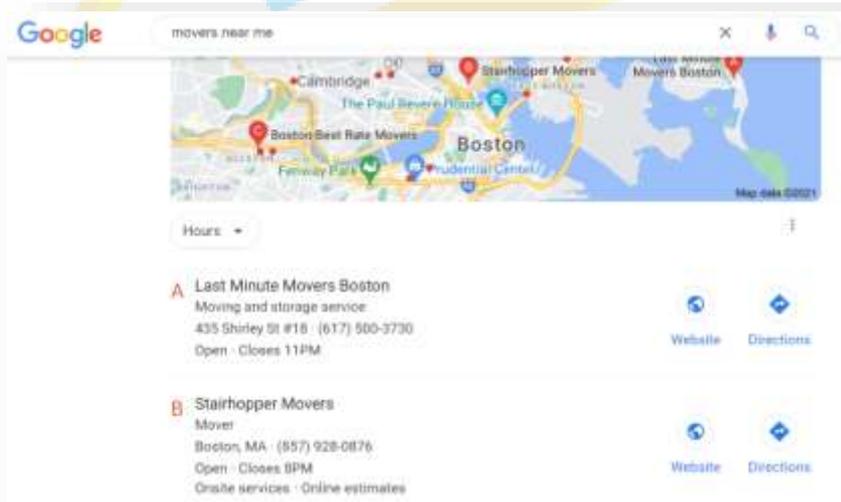
Google My Business is a powerful, free advertising tool with the potential to funnel customers to your website and store from both Google Search and Google Maps. And posts on Google My Business are no exception—they're completely free!

Where do Google My Business posts appear?

Text, photo, or video posts appear to viewers in three core Google My Business locations:

- The mobile view of “Updates” or “Overview” sections of your profile in Google Search and Maps.
- The “From the Owner” section of your profile in the desktop view of Google Search and Maps.
- Google My Business websites.

For example, if you add photos to your business's profile, they'll automatically show as posts in your customer's view.



Do Google My Business posts help SEO?

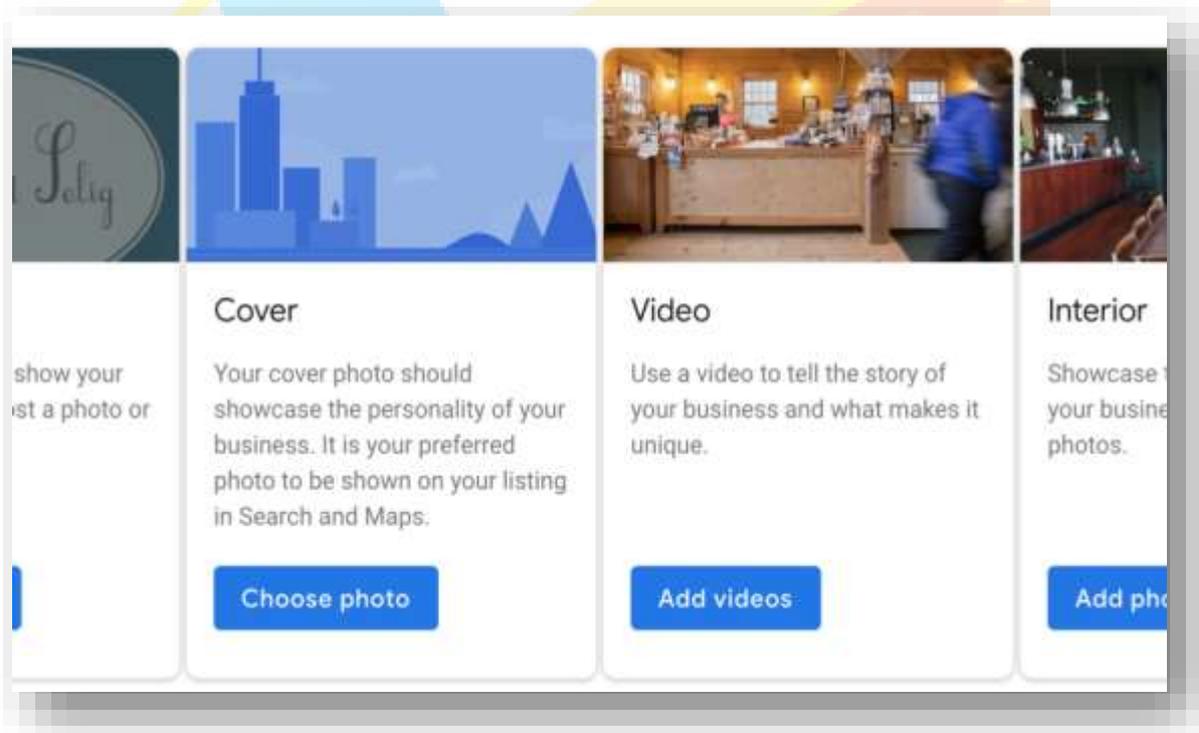


Yes and no. Google My Business posts don't directly help your SEO—but indirectly, they can. This is because Google My Business posts can entice more users to click to your website by providing relevant and interesting information about your business, your offers, and what you do. Increased clicks to your website and a higher click-through rate on your GMB profile does help your SEO.

What do I need to do before I create Google My Business posts?

Before you start focusing on effective Google My Business posts, make sure you have a solid profile.

An optimized Google My Business listing will increase your visibility, getting your posts in front of more relevant searchers. During your Google My Business profile setup, be sure to input all necessary information accurately, and claim your business as well.





One way to optimize your GMB profile is by adding relevant images and videos.

What are the types of Google My Business posts?

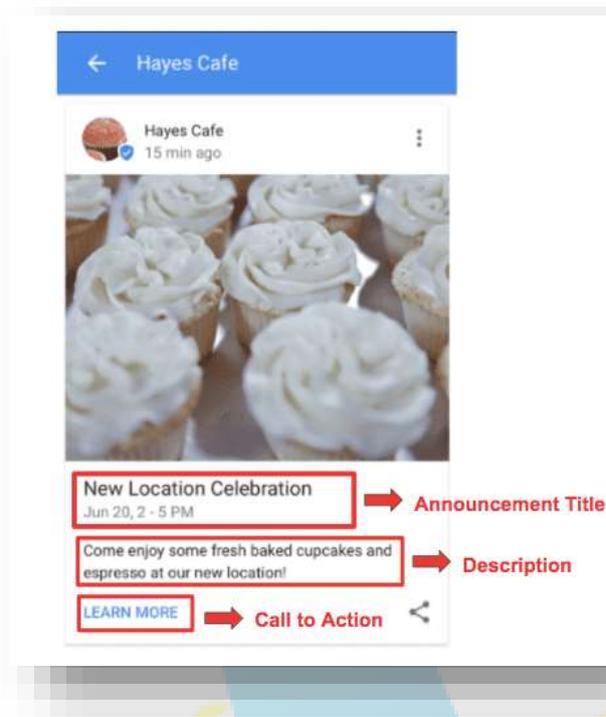
The right type of Google My Business post for you will vary depending on what you're trying to achieve. Here are the five types of Google My Business posts the platform currently offers:

- **COVID-19 or Hours updates:** This is a newly added type of post that Google My Business rolled out to accommodate ongoing business changes during the pandemic.
- **Offers:** Think of this as the “promotional” type of post where you can display sales and offers from your business.
- **Products:** You can highlight specific products in a special “Product tab” where viewers can go to view pictures, specifications, and other attributes for your selected products.
- **What's new:** This provides any general information about your business, like photos, videos, descriptions, or sharing new services.
- **Events:** Share upcoming events your business is hosting or participating in with this post type. All events require titles, start and end dates, and timing information.

If your home services business is running a special promotion, the “offer” post would fit the context of the information best. On the other hand, if your vet clinic is simply looking to increase brand awareness and share general information, the “What's New” post type can help you get the job done.



Because the content covered in each post will most likely be different, it's a good idea to spend some time studying and testing the different post types so you have a better understanding of how they'll look and which ones can help you reach your goals fastest.



This is an example of a Google My Business event post.

Tips for Great Google My Business posts that results.

So, you know how to create a Google My Business post, but do you know how to create one that gets results? Check out these top tips for your Google My Business posts.

1. Post regularly

Post types without an assigned date range that are more than a week old will be archived by Google. That's why it's a best practice to post on Google My Business regularly to keep your brand consistent and assure your customers that they're looking at up-to-date information.



It's easy to let this slip through the cracks, so your best bet is to schedule a short Google My Business session once a week or once a month where you can do a quick post and (plus it doesn't hurt to make sure your GMB profile is looking good!).

2. Use high-quality pictures or videos

Regardless of the type of information you want to relay in your post, leveraging videos or pictures is a no-brainer because consumers retain 95% of a message when it's in a media format. Now, coming up with high-quality pictures and videos for each post is easier said than done, especially if you're a small to medium-sized business.

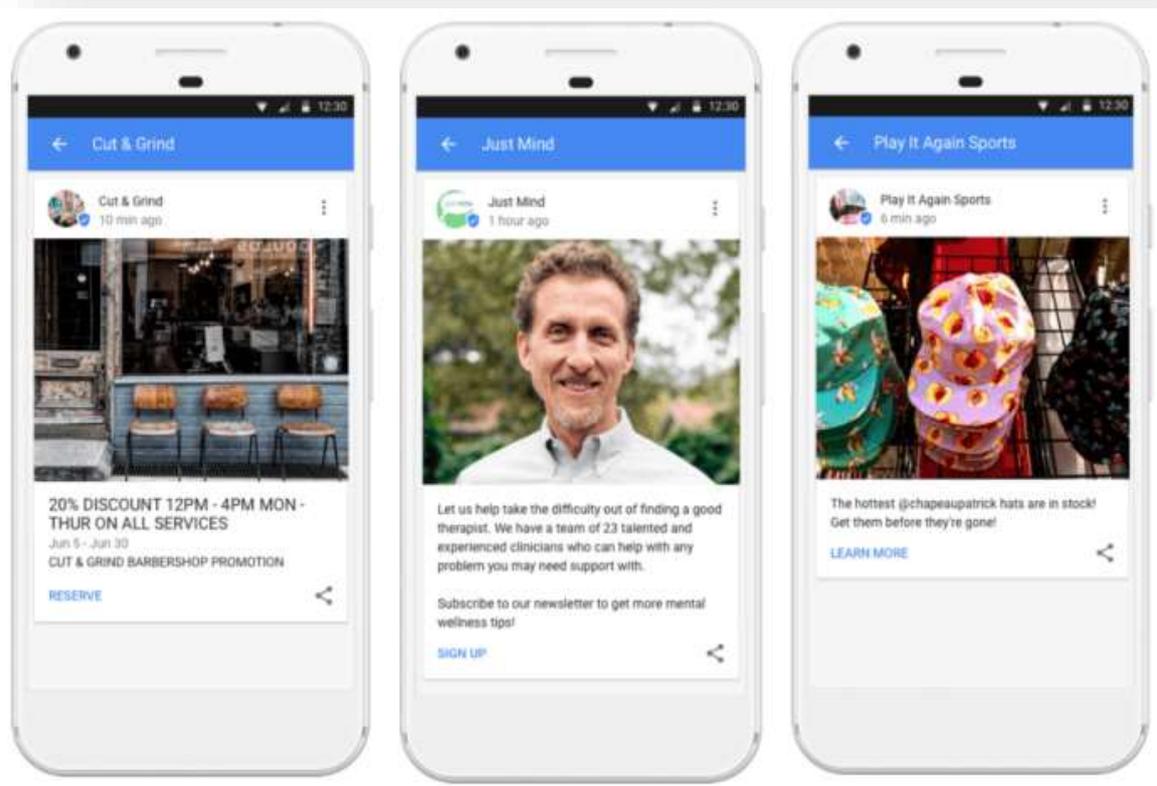
3. Keep the text short...

One of the biggest mistakes Google My Business posters make is trying to use all the allotted characters, which is a staggering 1,500. Even though it's nice of Google to give so much space to work with, the ideal length for any given post falls between 150-300 characters.

Not only does this help hold the attention of viewers, but it also increases the likelihood that all the vital information will be shown in the post without a user having to click to read more.

4. ... And include keywords in your posts

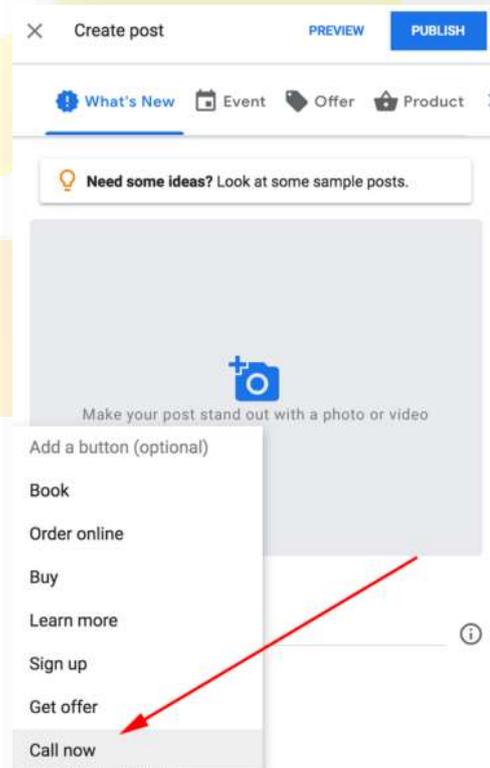
When writing your short post, include keywords that would appeal to searchers to increase relevancy. If you're not quite sure what to write, put yourself in the shoes of a consumer and consider what words and phrases would best grab their attention.



[Image source](#)

5. A/B test CTA buttons

Depending on the post type you select, you'll have the option to add a clickable call-to-action button to your Google My Business post. Even though you're not able to create custom CTA buttons (yet), Google gives you a fair number of options to work with. Try A/B testing CTA buttons to see which one is most effective in getting people to complete your desired action.



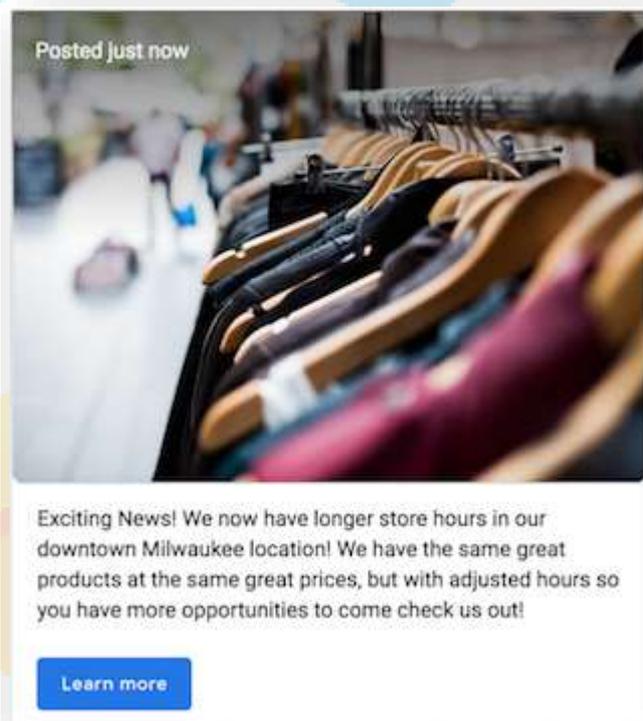


6. Optimize your landing page

Before you publish your post, it's always a good idea to make sure your landing page is optimized for visitors. Whether simply linking to a recent blog post, funnelling users to a lead capture page, or even driving traffic to a new product, your landing page should be clean and aligned with your Google post. Lastly, make sure the action you want users to take is clearly communicated and easy to find.

7. Keep it professional

Your Google My Business posts represent your business and may be the first real impression a searcher has of you. Keep your posts informational, educational, and professional. Avoid wording that's "salesy" or subjective to maintain a level of professionalism within your posts and keep users engaged so they act.



8. Proofread and polish up

Going along with professionalism, Google requires that all your posts be honest and upfront with no intention of trying to mislead or scam information out of users. A common reason businesses' posts get taken down on Google My Business one is due to misspellings or poor-quality content. Taking the extra minute to triple check all the



information you share on Google My Business is accurate, up to date, and revised accordingly will go a long way.

Important: We do not allow content that contains private or confidential information, such as:

- Personal financial information
- Government-issued IDs
- Contact information linked or associated with a name
- Sensitive records or images
- Transcripts or links that contain personal information

[Image source](#)

9. Get familiar with Google's posting rules

Naturally, Google also takes a strong stance against content that is either deemed offensive or in violation of another person or location's privacy. For example, posts that include a phone number may be rejected to stop any repetition since that's already on your listing. Avoid questionable content and stay within Google's guidelines by checking out Google's list of unapproved content [here](#).

Don't wait! Start posting on Google My Business

Google My Business posts only take a few simple steps and minimal time to create—most importantly, they're free! With this being such a local-friendly marketing tactic, it's a can't miss for small businesses looking to serve a specific area.



CHAPTER 8



Practitioner Listings In Google My Business



Google Search Results and Map Search Results to help you find physical business locations, and they are incredibly important for local search rankings. But what happens when your local practitioners get a lot of search volume...can you optimize local search for individuals?

Practitioner Listings In Google My Business

Local businesses have been using Google My Business listing to optimize for local search for years, but individual practitioners have had a harder time promoting themselves in Google My Business. Now you can leverage Google My Business if you are a practitioner, who allows you to leverage your personal brand in local search.

A practitioner or professional listing is a listing on Google Maps that is for a person instead of a place. If you're a doctor, lawyer, dentist, or other practitioner who works at a local business, you may be eligible for a practitioner listing.

Comprehensively defined as an individual practitioner is a public-facing professional, typically with his or her own customer base. Doctors, dentists, lawyers, financial planners, and insurance or real estate agents are all considered individual practitioners. Listings for practitioners may include title or degree certification (e.g. Dr., MD, JD, Esq., CFA).

An Individual Practitioner Can Create Their Own Dedicated Listing If:

- They operate in a public-facing role (support staff should not create their own listings)
- They are directly contactable at the verified location during stated hours
- They (ideally) do not have multiple listings to cover all their specializations



Solo-Practitioner Listing

If you are a practitioner with one business location, working for a one specific company (for example, a paediatrician that works at a single clinic), you are a solo-practitioner.

If your clinic has only one paediatrician, it is recommended that the business and practitioner share a single Google My Business listing and that you do not create a practitioner listing for yourself.

Multiple Practitioners Listing

If the business has multiple practitioners at the one location, best practice is that you have one Google My Business listing for the business. Then, if there are practitioners who practice at more than one location, they can create individual practitioner listings. For example, if your paediatrics clinic has several paediatricians who all practice at other clinics as well, they are eligible to create their own Practitioner Listings.

Reviews For Practitioners

Google My Business reviews are populated on a single listing. If someone leaves the review on the Places listing, it stays with the that listing. If someone leaves a review on the Practitioner listing, it stays with the Practitioner listing regardless of the clinic/location the review is associated with.

An individual practitioner listing can provide an opportunity to show a Google Places listing for additional search terms, such as your name. Practitioner listings are not considered duplicates and Google will not remove them or merge them. Keep in mind that if a review is left on the practitioner listing, Google will not migrate it over to the practice listing.

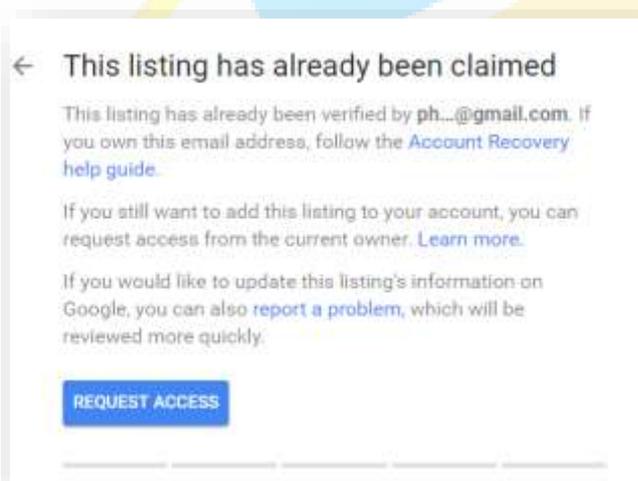


The title of the listing for the practitioner should include only the name of the practitioner and may also include their credentials title or degree certification (e.g. Dr., MD, JD, Esq., CFA). The name of the organization should not be included on this listing.

Make sure that the practitioner listing links to a specific page and not the generic contact's page. The landing page can have information about the individual or their areas of specialty. In addition, the category should be more specific and different from the practices category, to avoid competition with the practice listing. Practitioner listing should not be confused with solo practitioner listings or multiple listings.

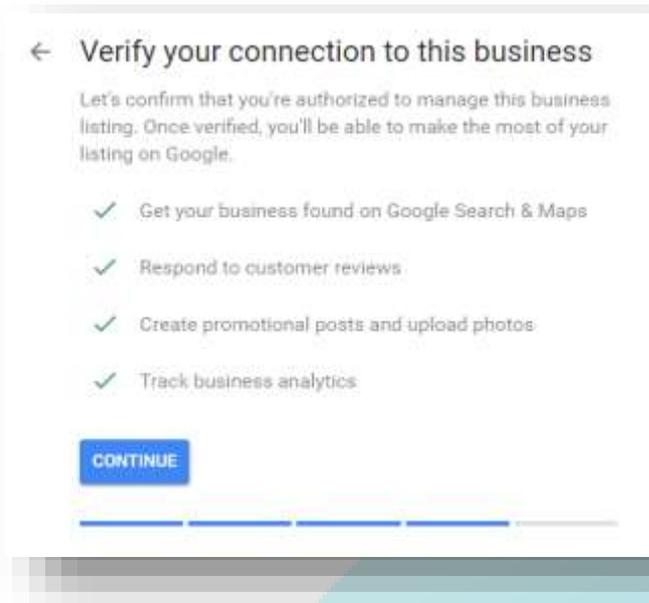
How To Create A Practitioner Listing On Google Places?

Log on to www.google.com/business and log in with a any email address that is associated with a Google account, or you can associate your email address to a Google account as part of this process.



This is the start of the registration process for your practitioner listing. Register your name and credentials under "business name" and follow all the following prompts.

This is when Google will also verify if the listing has not been already listed. If you have not registered your office or name previously, Google shouldn't be able to find any search results. If it is, claim the listing as your own.



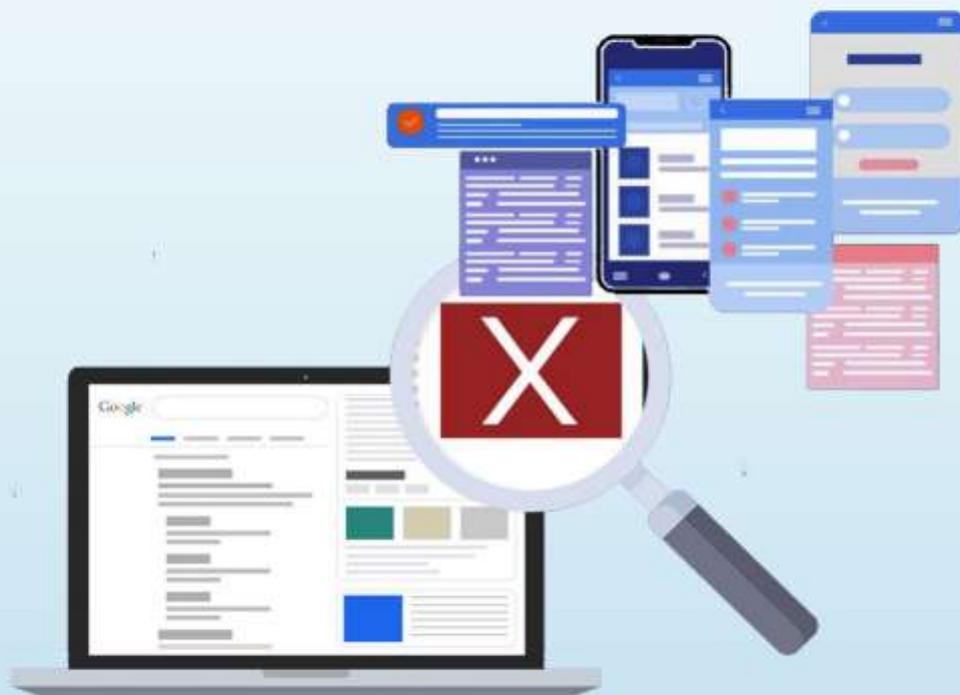
Continue and complete all the required information, including name, country/region, address, main business phone number and category. Your category might be the type of medical practice you have, such as “paediatrician” or

“cardiologist.

The final step in the process is to get a verification code from Google via post, phone, SMS, or email (depending on your region). Google will not show your listing online until you’ve verified it, and you can only verify it via the contact information that you have put into your listing. Once you've done all that, congratulations! You are now all set to be listed on Google My Business.



CHAPTER 9



Big Mistakes To Avoid With Google My Business Listing



Google My Business can be one of the most valuable tools for any local business – one that can help you gain customers or clients and, most importantly, revenue. However, many GMB listings are suffering from all-too-common, critical issues.

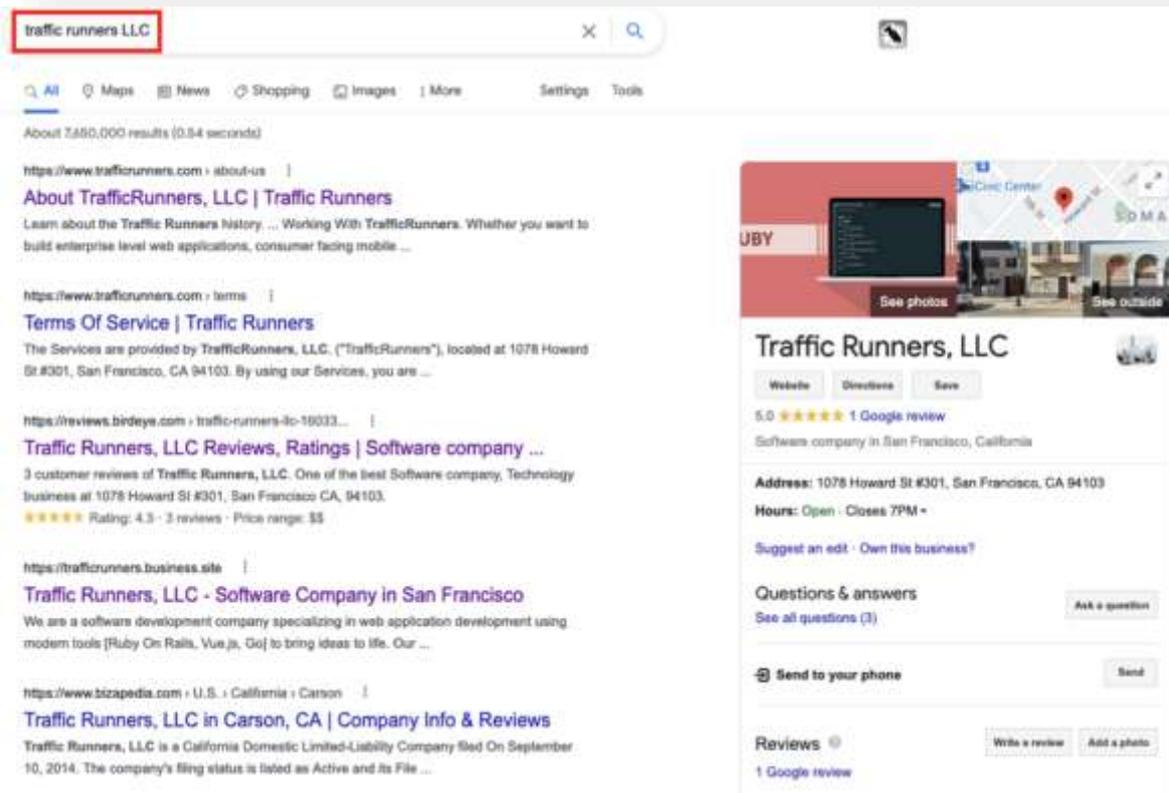
Are you making it hard for local customers to find your business when they're searching for you? If your business is not showing up for relevant search queries, then you probably need to investigate your Google My Business (GMB) profile.

Most GMB issues can't be resolved through brute force. You need to start by auditing your listing and then addressing each problem accordingly. Here's a step-by-step guide for conducting a technical GMB audit.

Google My Business: Technical SEO Audit Items

1. Brand Dilution Diagnosis

We want to ensure that Google assigns a certain amount of recognition or authority to our business. To find out, search for your own business name on Google.



- Does the brand query serve a Knowledge Graph?
- Do competitors or irrelevant results get served for the brand query?

If a Knowledge Graph is not showing up for your brand query and you're only served with irrelevant results, then the following solutions can help:

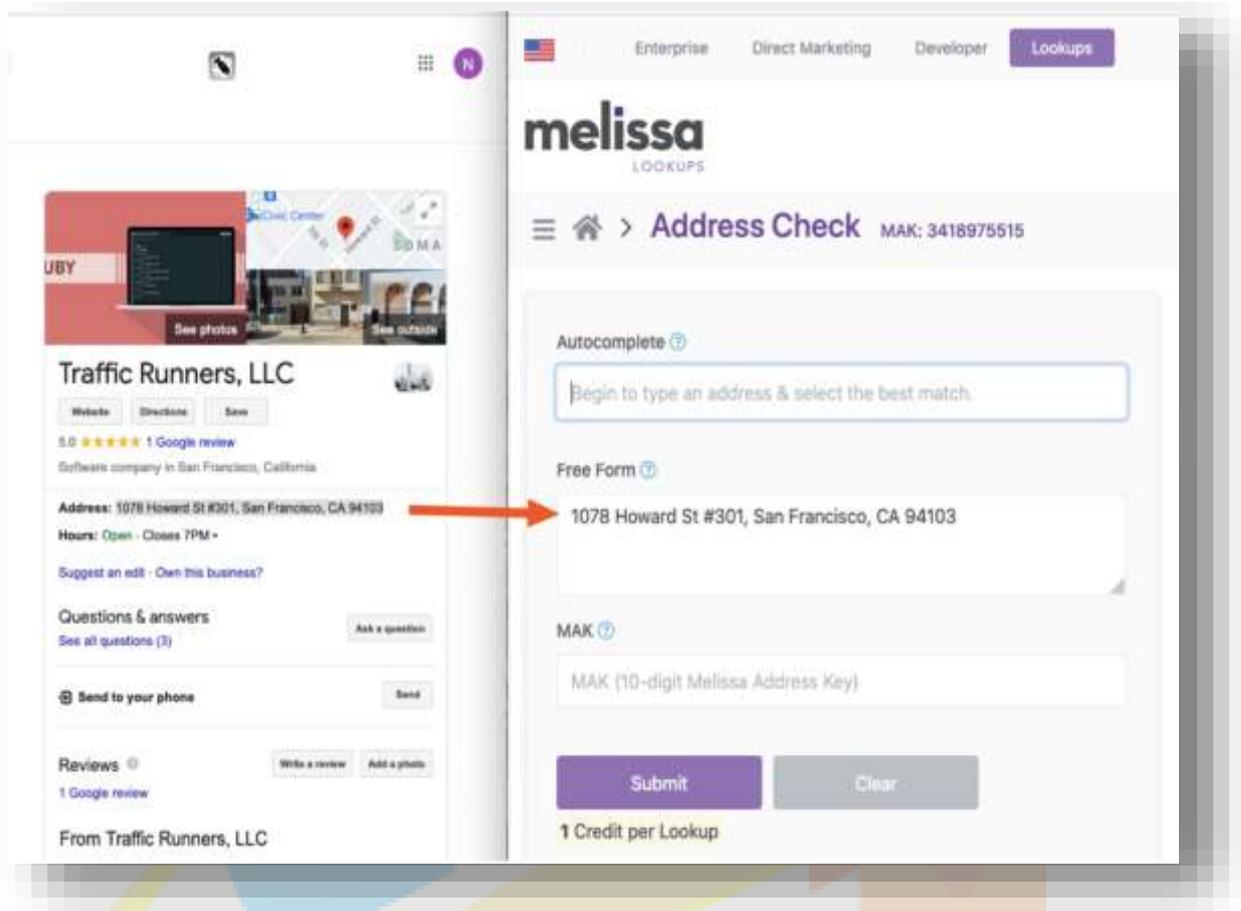
- **Brand insulation.** Create and optimize authoritative profiles and social accounts. Leverage schema and data aggregation platforms.
- **Reverse-engineer your competitor's Knowledge Graph.**

2. Address Audit

Some local business owners overlook the accuracy of their business addresses in various online listings. To find out if you have this problem, drop the address from



your Google My Business listing to Melissa.com. It will list any issues with the specific address your business is using.



You also want to look at your business pin in Google Maps and make sure it's inside of the actual city limits. Here are more tips to resolve address issues:

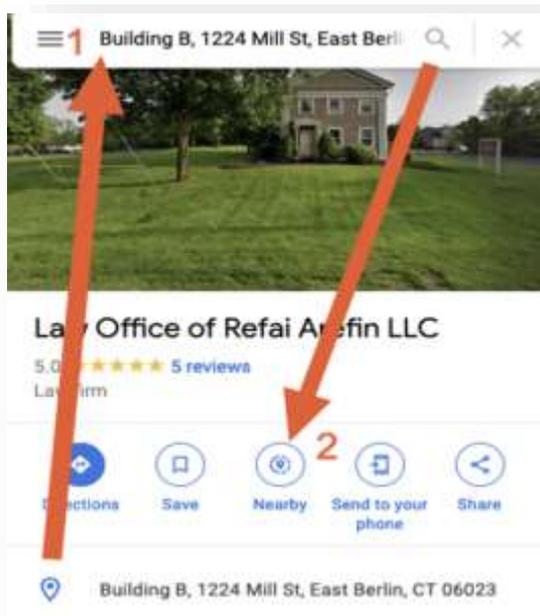
- Fix non-existent suites.
- Update address formats.
- Modify expectations on service areas.

3. Fighting the 'Possum' Filter



Google may filter out low-quality or spammy-looking GMB listings out of local search results. Make sure your business doesn't have duplicate listings that might affect your visibility. To check:

- Paste your business address into the Google Maps search bar.
- Select the “Nearby” filter.



This will present every other business that's registered at that address. Duplicate GMB listings are easy to handle when they're yours.

However, Mark and his team at Local Viking encountered issues on practitioner listings while working with a large hospital chain.

They found that when practitioners that shared a similar category at the same address, one might get filtered out and not get any visibility in the area, while the other one gets all the rankings.

While it's not an easy problem to fix, you can mitigate practitioner listings with proper categorization. For businesses located in large metro areas and have competitors in the same building, creating a “filter flip” might help.

With this approach, your goal is to convince Google that your listing is more authoritative than the others at the same address.



For Mark’s team, it’s an arduous process that required putting together a small outreach team on their client’s behalf and running traditional PR campaigns to boost the business’s credibility and stand out against the competition.

4. Phone Number Health Check

Phone numbers can also cause problems on GMB listings. To avoid them, you’ll want to:

- Ensure multiple businesses aren’t using the same number.
- Identify data consistency issues, business listing issues, etc.

You can look up your phone number, using different variations, in Google to double-check your contact info’s consistency.

In the US, a phone number of "+13105554545" could be written the following ways:

"310 555 4545" OR
 "310 5554545" OR
 "310 555-4545" OR
 "310555 4545" OR
 "3105554545" OR
 "310555-4545" OR
 "310-555 4545" OR
 "310-5554545" OR
 "310-555-4545"

Then using Google’s advanced search operators, you can enter all as a search query.

"310 555 4545" OR "310 5554545" OR "310 555-4545" OR "310555 4545" OR "3105554545" OR "310555-4545" OR "310-555 4545" OR "310-5554545" OR "310-555-4545"



5. Google My Business Listing Audit

Follow these tips to optimize your GMB profile:

- **Completely fill out your listing.** Feeding Google more data about your business will help you show up in relevant search results.
- **Go the extra mile with attributes, images, Q&A, posts, reviews, etc.** This helps you stand out in the local map pack.
- **Smart category optimization.** Find four of the most relevant categories to your business and don't go beyond that. Stay as niche as possible so that you can get quality leads from your listing.
- **For multi-location service-area businesses, follow the “radii rule.”** If you're in one city and you have multiple locations, avoid overlapping with another one of your locations when creating your radius of service area. These overlaps can cause visibility issues.

6. Local Signals

Focus on essential citations, such as Yelp and Yellow Pages, and niche directories. Don't spend too much time on citations and start thinking about high-quality local signals. There are plenty of ways to build hyper-relevant and geo-specific links that don't involve shady citation sites.



CHAPTER 10



**Everything You Need To Know
About Google Knowledge Panel**



Many brands want their own Google Knowledge Panel to further stand out from competing businesses, and it's because of Google reviews and its strong influence. In terms of customer reviews alone, Google holds 57.5% of all reviews, and 63.6% of consumers look at online reviews on Google before they visit a business.

With a Google Knowledge Panel, brands can give consumers more information and show off their services, both of which can convince consumers to visit your business.

What is a Google Knowledge Panel?

Searching for prominent “entities” – think of major, well-known companies – on Google will sometimes include the Knowledge Panel on the right side of the screen next to the organic search results. Information on the panel can include a short description, images, important dates, social media channels, and the location of the brand's headquarters.

A great example of the Google Knowledge Panel in the wild is from Nike, which pops up on the right side of SERPs (search engine results pages) when you look up the company on Google.



Nike

Footwear manufacturing company

🔗

🌐 nike.com

Nike, Inc. is an American multinational corporation that is engaged in the design, development, manufacturing, and worldwide marketing and sales of footwear, apparel, equipment, accessories, and services. The company is headquartered near Beaverton, Oregon, in the Portland metropolitan area. [Wikipedia](#)

Customer service chat: [Online Chat](#)

Stock price: [NKE](#) (NYSE) \$138.75 -0.05 (-0.04%)

Dec 7, 4:00 PM EST - Disclaimer

Customer service: [1 \(800\) 806-6453](#)

Founded: January 25, 1964, [Eugene, OR](#)

Headquarters: [Beaverton, OR](#)

Subsidiaries: [Converse](#), [NIKE Flight](#), [Nike Vision](#), [NIKE Cortez](#), [MORE](#)

Founders: [Phil Knight](#), [Bill Bowerman](#)

Return policy ▼

Mission statement ▼

Quotes ▼

For any brand, getting a Google Knowledge Panel can be beneficial because it further establishes trust with the consumer before they even click on the brand website. Consumers want to make an informed decision before deciding on a specific product or service, and a Google Knowledge Panel can cement the purchase decision.



How to Get A Google Knowledge Panel?

According to Google, knowledge panels are “automatically generated”, and information included in the panel comes from “various sources across the web.” These panels are also updated automatically when new data emerges online.

Because knowledge panels are created automatically, there is no way for anyone to create their own panel. It seems that with enough time and increased branding exposure, you can eventually gain your own Google Knowledge Panel.

If your brand does appear then you can claim it as your own, but you’ll need to be verified as an “authorized representative for the entity.” To start the process and claim your knowledge panel:

1. Create a Google account if you don’t have one to use.
2. Search for your business on Google and see if it has a Knowledge Panel in the SERP.
3. Scroll down to the bottom of the panel and click the button with “Claim this knowledge panel” written on it.
4. Review the information presented on the next page, which talks about the features provided to you if you are verified to edit the knowledge panel.
5. Sign in to one of the following sites as a final verification to authorize your representation of the entity in the knowledge panel. If Google can’t associate one of the platforms below with the knowledge panel subject, then you’ll need to provide additional information to properly verify your account.
 - YouTube
 - Google Search Console
 - Twitter



- Facebook

Once verified, you can further authorize additional users to be your representative online and manage their permissions.

How to Edit Your Google Knowledge Panel?

Making changes to your Google Knowledge Panel can be challenging because Google uses an automated system to display updated and accurate information.

However, you can suggest changes to your Google Knowledge Panel if you think the current information doesn't accurately represent your brand. To do so:

1. Sign into the verified account associated with the Knowledge Panel.
2. Turn on the Web and app activity setting on your account.
3. Search for your Knowledge Panel on Google and click the "Suggest an edit" link (this is called "Suggest edits" on mobile devices).
4. Click on the information that needs editing. You will need to submit suggestions for each individual item if there are multiple parts of the panel that need updates.
5. A text box will appear on screen. When providing suggestions include the following:
 1. Your suggested change.
 2. Why it should replace current content.
 3. Try to include any public URLs that confirm your suggested changes.
6. Hit "Send" to finalize your changes.

If you don't see an option to suggest an edit on the panel, it's because of one of two things:



- You are not using the same account used to verify the Knowledge Panel.
- Google doesn't recognize you as a "verified representative of the entity." You will need to get your account verified or ask the main representative to give you the same level of verification.

During the review process, Google will verify your suggestions by corroborating them against "publicly available information on the web." If your changes are accepted, Google will send an email to you stating its intentions.

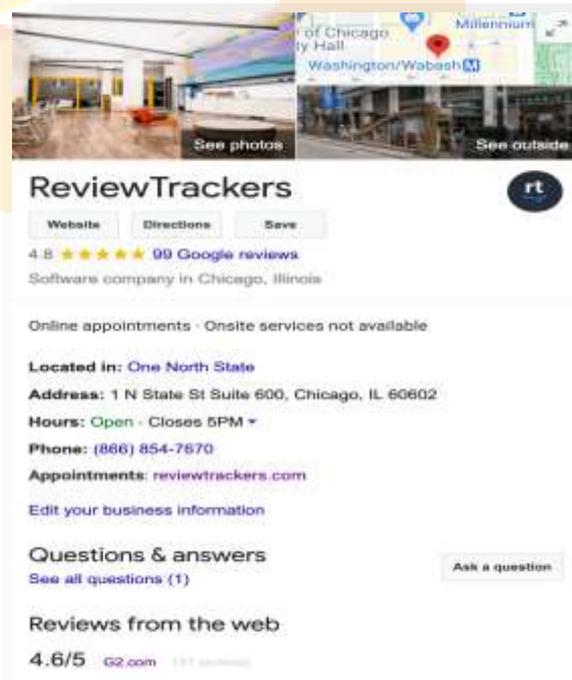
How Is a Business Profile Different from a Google Knowledge Panel?

While getting your own Google Knowledge Panel isn't guaranteed, you can take steps in another direction to creating your own Business Profile through your Google My Business (GMB) account, which is displayed in the same place as a Knowledge Panel.

You can create a GMB account by visiting <https://business.google.com>. Just like the Knowledge Panel you'll need to ask Google to "verify my business" before you can edit the information in the Business Profile, which includes:

- Business Name
- Category
- Hours
- Menu link (if applicable)
- Contact information
- Images

When adding these elements, make sure that the information you provide is not only correct but aligned with your





other online listings. Listing inconsistent phone numbers, addresses, or even operating hours can hurt your search ranking on Google, which reduces your overall online exposure to potential customers.

By updating and monitoring your Business Profile, you can your GMB listing to better attract and retain customers while also standing out from the competition. You can also utilize a local search rank checker tool to monitor local rivals and gain valuable insights about your local online presence that can lead to improvements.

Aim for the Google Knowledge Panel

Taking control of your online presence via the Google Business Profile is the first step to effective reputation management. Ensuring that the information is current and accurate further establishes trust between you and future customers. Over time, you can bolster that confidence by engaging on Google with Q&A submissions as well as learning how to respond to negative reviews.

With enough brand recognition online coupled with a plethora of positive customer feedback your brand can eventually gain an automatic spot in the Google Knowledge Panel.

GoogleTM

My Business 4.0

CHAPTER 11



**The Complete Guide To
Getting Google Reviews**



Google reviews significantly influence the way customers think about your company. They are also crucial for businesses looking to get discovered in search results.

By managing Google reviews, you can showcase your business in the best possible light and minimize the impact that negative reviews or low ratings might have on your brand reputation.

In this chapter, we'll break down how you can monitor, respond to, and generate Google reviews, as well as how you can leverage these reviews to acquire and retain more customers.

Why are Google Reviews Important?

Google reviews are important for one reason: your customers look for and trust these reviews.

According to online reviews statistics:

- Google is the number one website for online reviews. 63.6% of consumers say they are likely to check reviews on Google (through Google Maps and Search) before visiting a business location — more than any other review site.

It's easy to see why almost two-thirds of people turn to Google to find reviews of businesses. Apart from Google being the world's top website, zero-click searches are also on the rise. (It increased by 65% in 2020.)

(Zero-click searches happen when the top search results provide the answer to a user's query, so that the user doesn't even have to click through to a website or leave the search engine results page.)

The Link Between Google Reviews and Search Results



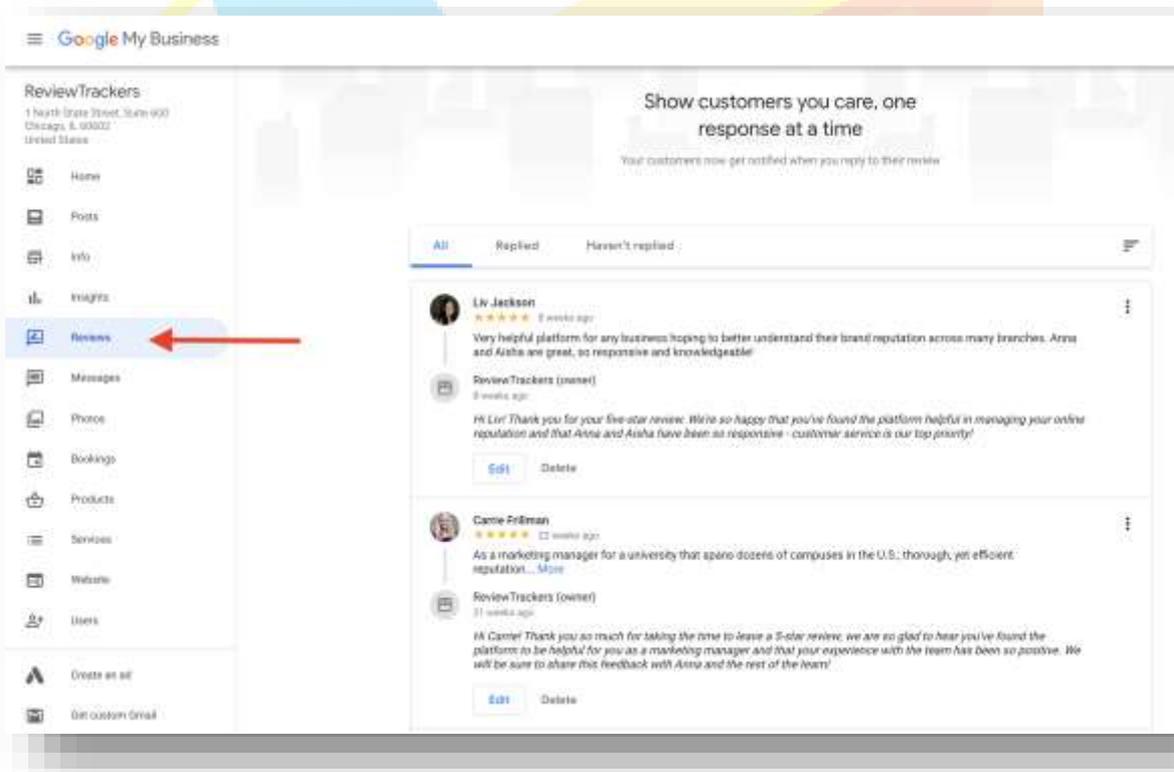
Google reviews also have a direct impact on where and how prominently companies and brands appear in search engine results.

A Moz report suggests that reviews are one of the top factors influencing organic search results on Google — and a top 3 factor influencing which businesses are featured in the Google Maps Pack. In terms of local SEO, more reviews mean more information for Google’s algorithm.

How to Track Google Reviews?

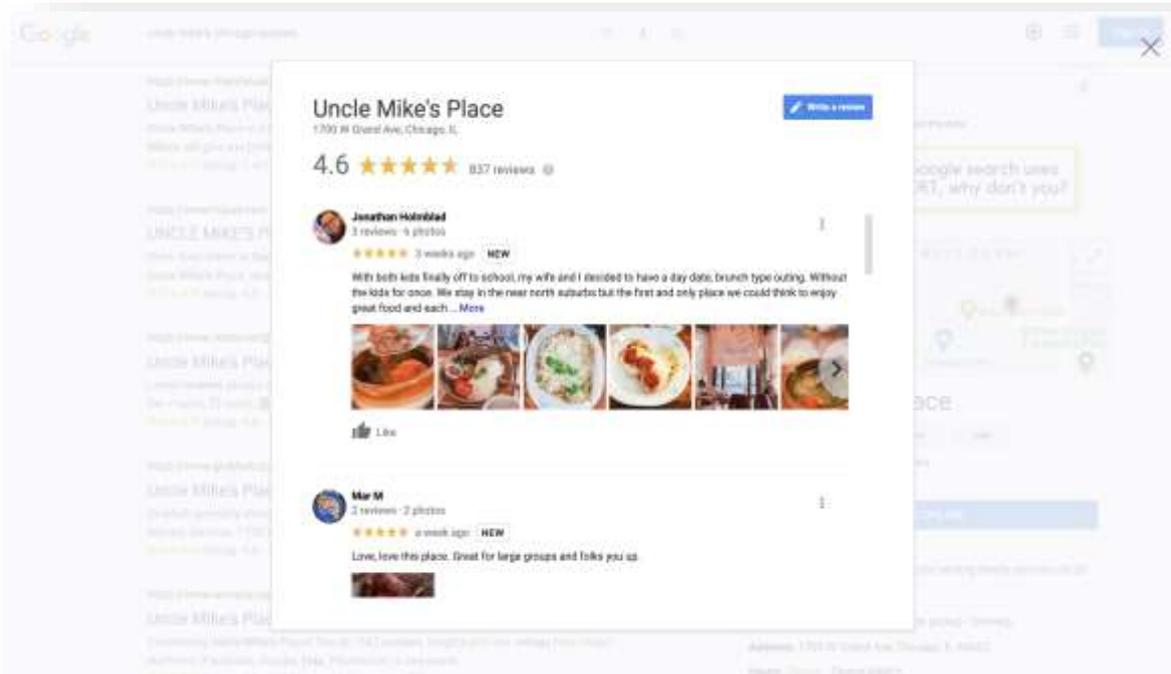
The simplest way to find and track your company’s reviews is to use Google My Business (GMB), the search engine company’s free tool that allows business owners (or its representatives) to create and verify their own data on Google.

To see your Google reviews, just click the Reviews tab on your Google My Business home page.



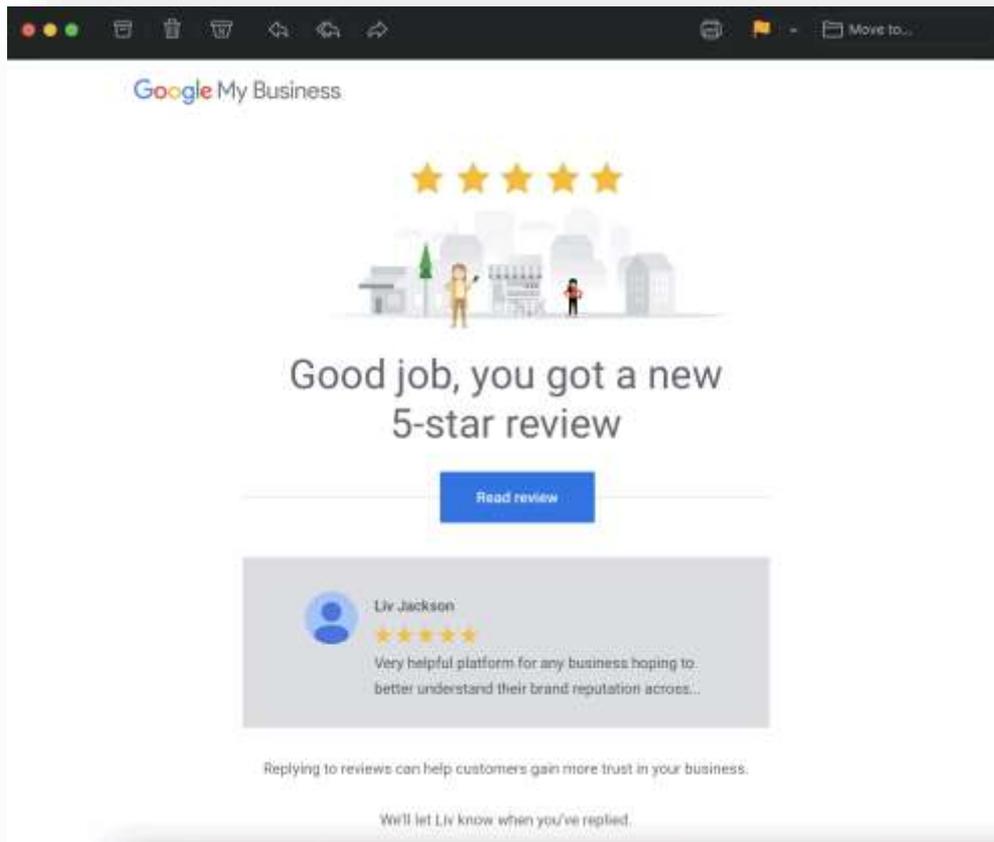


You'll then be taken to a page that shows you all your reviews, which you can also filter by "replied" or "haven't replied." Even if you're not logged into GMB, you should still be able to see your reviews appearing in multiple places on the Web, such as Google search results and Google Maps.



Receiving Google Review Alerts via Email

To help you track review activity, Google My Business will also notify you of any new Google reviews via email. The email notification includes review information such as reviewer name, star rating, a portion of the review text, and a link to the review on Google. Here's what the email looks like:



Why Have My Google Reviews Disappeared?

Ensuring that your Google reviews are displayed correctly on your business listings is vital to the success of your online reputation. There's a variety of reasons why you may be experiencing issues with a Google review not showing up. This often has to do with one of two things: issues with your Google My Business listing or problems with the formatting of the Google review.

- **Google My Business listing issues:** Inaccurate listing information, duplicate listings, inactive listings, and Google outages.
- **Google reviews formatting issues:** Reviews marked as spam, reviews with links and URLs, fake reviews, and private or deleted reviews.



If the issue is with your GMB listing, you can often make the necessary changes yourself to remedy the situation. For example, if you have been inactive on Google My Business for a long time, all you must do is log into your GMB account and start managing your listings again.

Responding to Your Reviews on Google

Online reviews on sites like Google give people a way to share their customer experiences not only with businesses but with fellow consumers, too. Consumers rely on these reviews to discover businesses and brands that provide the best customer experience.

Why Respond to Reviews?

Learning how to respond to Google reviews is an important part of managing customer feedback and protecting your brand reputation.

Customers care about your responses. According to online reviews statistics, 53% of customers expect a review response within 7 days. But as much as 63% say they have never heard back from a business after leaving a review.

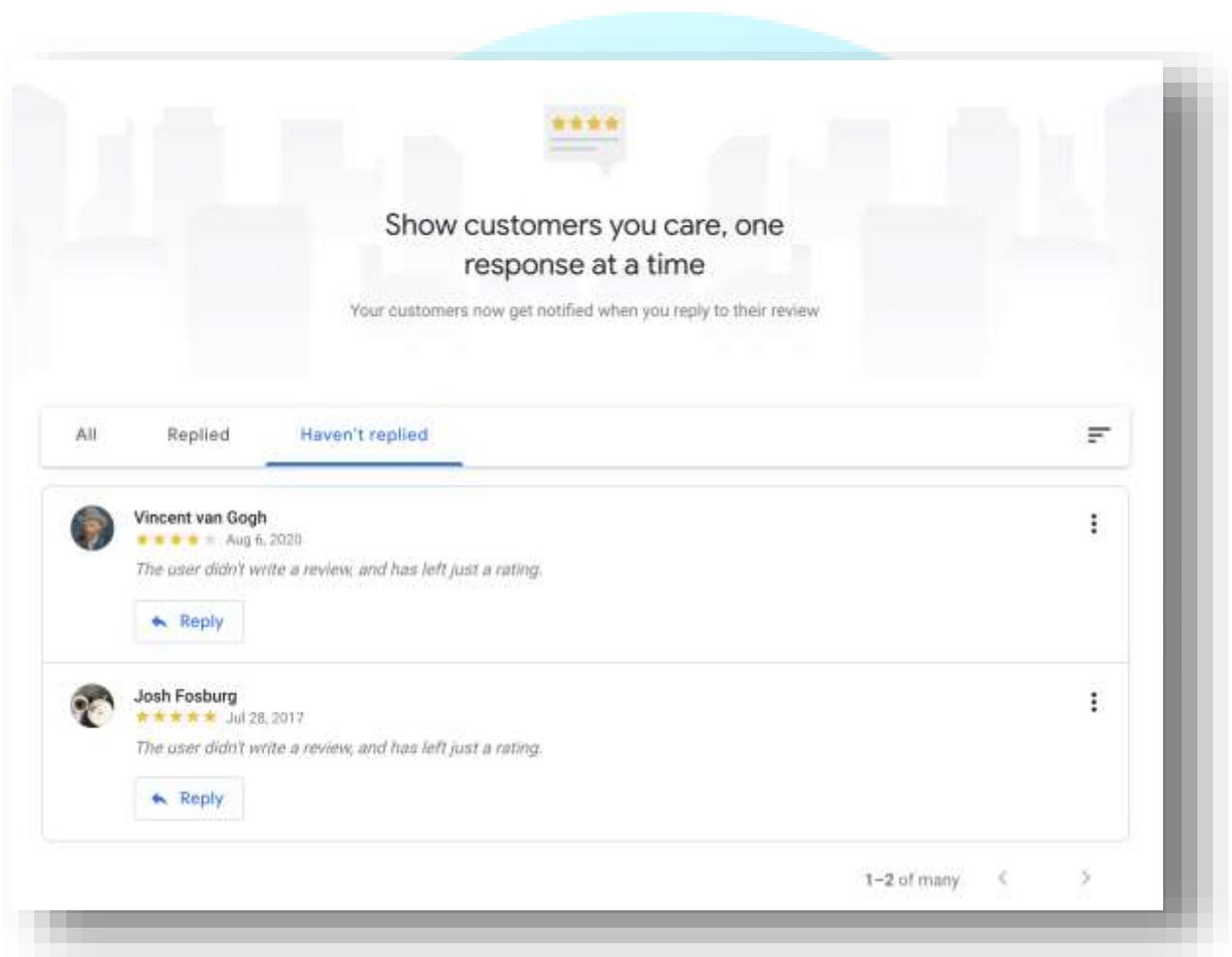
Responding improves your online reputation. Customer reviews research shows that 45% of consumers say they're more likely to visit a business if it responds to negative reviews.

How to Respond to Reviews Using GMB

To respond to Google reviews:



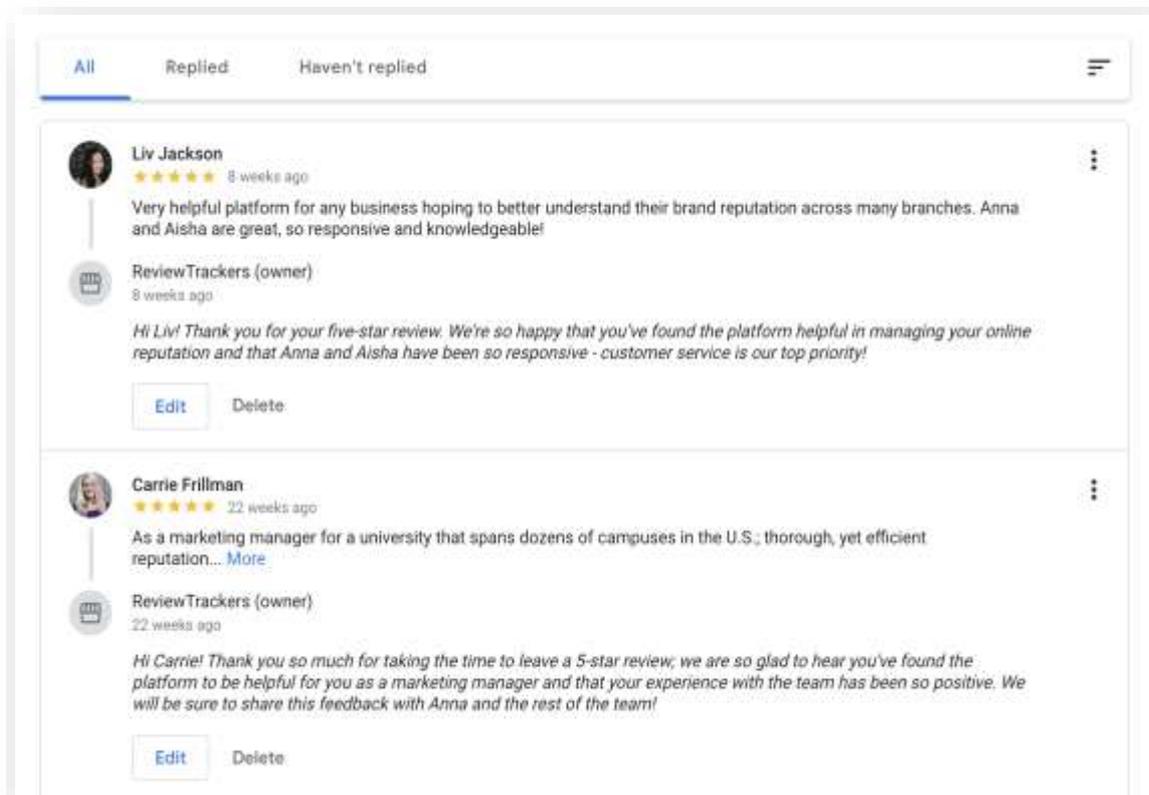
1. Log into your Google My Business account and select the location with the reviews you want to manage. Then click the Reviews tab on the listing's GMB home page.
2. When you land on the Reviews page, you'll see each individual review that has been posted on your business listing organized (by default) by date. From there, you can respond to each individual review by clicking the "Reply" button.



Please note that your reply will be displayed publicly on Google and must comply with Google review policy.



You can also edit your review responses to clean up typos or update what was originally written. Each review that has been responded to will appear with an “Edit” button for updating your replies.



Keep in mind that your customers will get notified by email when you respond to their reviews. Your response is published immediately, and the email notification is sent to the customer approximately 5 minutes later. The 5-minute delay allows for you to edit or make any corrections to your response after initial submission.

Why Is It Important to Get New Reviews?

A steady stream of new reviews can dramatically improve your search engine performance, which is essential to driving traffic and attracting more customers.



This makes it crucial for companies to learn how to get Google reviews proactively. It's not enough to simply plant your business flag on Google and wait for reviews to come in.

According to research, companies that proactively request reviews enjoy higher ratings (4.34 stars) than those that simply wait for unprompted reviews (3.89 stars).

If you don't proactively request customers for reviews, your review data sample is more likely to be biased towards those who are motivated to leave a review: usually, people with a customer service issue.

How to Get More Google Reviews?

Here are some effective ways you can get Google reviews for your company and build up your brand's online presence.

- **Use Email**

Do you collect customers' email addresses at the point of sale or care? If so, then you'll quickly realize that email is one of the most effective ways to get reviews on Google My Business. If you're managing over 100 business locations on GMB, using automation (instead of manually reaching out to customers) should help you save time and money.

One option is to integrate your review requests into your customer relationship management (CRM) or point of sale (POS) system. If you're sending a message to customers, be sure to add a link to your Google business listing so that it will only take them a few clicks to share their experience.

Another option is to utilize review generation tools within your local SEO software.



Subject: Will You Share Your Experience?



Hey there!

Thanks for your feedback on your previous visit to the LOCATION_NAME – we're thrilled to hear you had a positive experience!

As a follow on your previous feedback, I wanted to ask if you'd be willing to share your in-store experience?

Your feedback not only helps us provide you with the best possible service, but also helps evo deliver a positive impact on your community.

To share your experience, click the link below and you will be sent directly to the correct page for posting your review.

Thanks again for your support.

Sincerely,

Bryce Phillips
Founder & CEO

- **Send SMS Campaigns**

If you're syncing your point-of-sale system to send email alerts to customers, you can also send SMS requests. SMS open rates are significantly higher than email and can drive better engagement and more reviews.

- **Create a Google Reviews Link**

Creating a unique Google reviews link and sharing it with your customers encourages them to review your business on Google.



- **Make Your Customers Happy**

The easiest, most effective, and most fundamental way to get reviews with 5-star ratings is to consistently deliver excellent levels of service and create “wow” moments with customers.

If, on the other hand, you have customers who are not satisfied or happy with their experience then make a point to reach out to them and identify and address issues.

What is Review Gating?

Unlike other business review sites (for example, Yelp), Google encourages business owners to reach out to their customers and ask for reviews. However, Google doesn't want businesses to discourage or prohibit negative reviews or selectively solicit positive reviews from customers.

A practice commonly referred to as “review gating,” this is normally done by sending customers a survey or feedback form — through email, SMS, landing pages, or social media. Based on their form responses, customers are then asked to either post a positive review on Google if they had a positive experience — or share details of their feedback privately if they had a negative experience.

Review gating lets brands filter out detractors from their online review generation efforts. This, however, is against Google review policy. To meet the demand for transparency and authenticity in reviews, your company must make it clear that customers can leave you a negative review.

Can I Share Google Reviews on My Website?

Yes, and we highly recommend it.



Showcasing your best and highest-rated reviews on your website is a great way to provide social proof, boost consumer confidence, and encourage user interaction. Reviews also often serve as the final push people need to convert from being visitors to being customers.

Simply put: authentic, positive reviews on your website leverages the power of testimonial-based marketing. Letting happy customers make statements about the benefits of your products or services makes it easier for potential customers to trust your company.

You can display Google reviews on your homepage and show your company's overall rating. You can also create location pages displaying each business location's reviews. Another option is to create a customer testimonials page, which is a great way to turn website visitors into customers and loyal fans.

Can I Delete or Edit Google Reviews?

Here's the short answer: companies can't delete any review on their Google business listings.

Most of the time, GMB users who succeed in having a review deleted can do so because the review in question violated Google review policy.

There is also no straightforward way to edit reviews on Google. Customers are allowed to change or update their own reviews to reflect the most recent experience they had with a business.

Brands cannot edit Google reviews. If there's a review of your business on Google that you do not agree with, the best practice is to respond to the review or engage with the



customer directly. In certain situations, this can even result in the customer updating their review.

Can I Disable Reviews on Google My Business?

Unlike Facebook reviews, Google reviews cannot be disabled or turned off. Every business listing on Google displays reviews.

If you're seeing low ratings and negative reviews appear on your listings, we recommend responding to the review and solving the customer's issue. To minimize the impact of the low rating on your overall score, you can reach out to customers and generate new reviews.

Should I Buy Reviews?

When building your company's online reputation, it can be tempting to take shortcuts and try to buy Google reviews.

All you must do is pick a service provider that "sells" reviews, add their service to the shopping cart, and provide information on your GMB listings. While this seems like an easy fix, buying Google business reviews will almost certainly do you more harm than good.

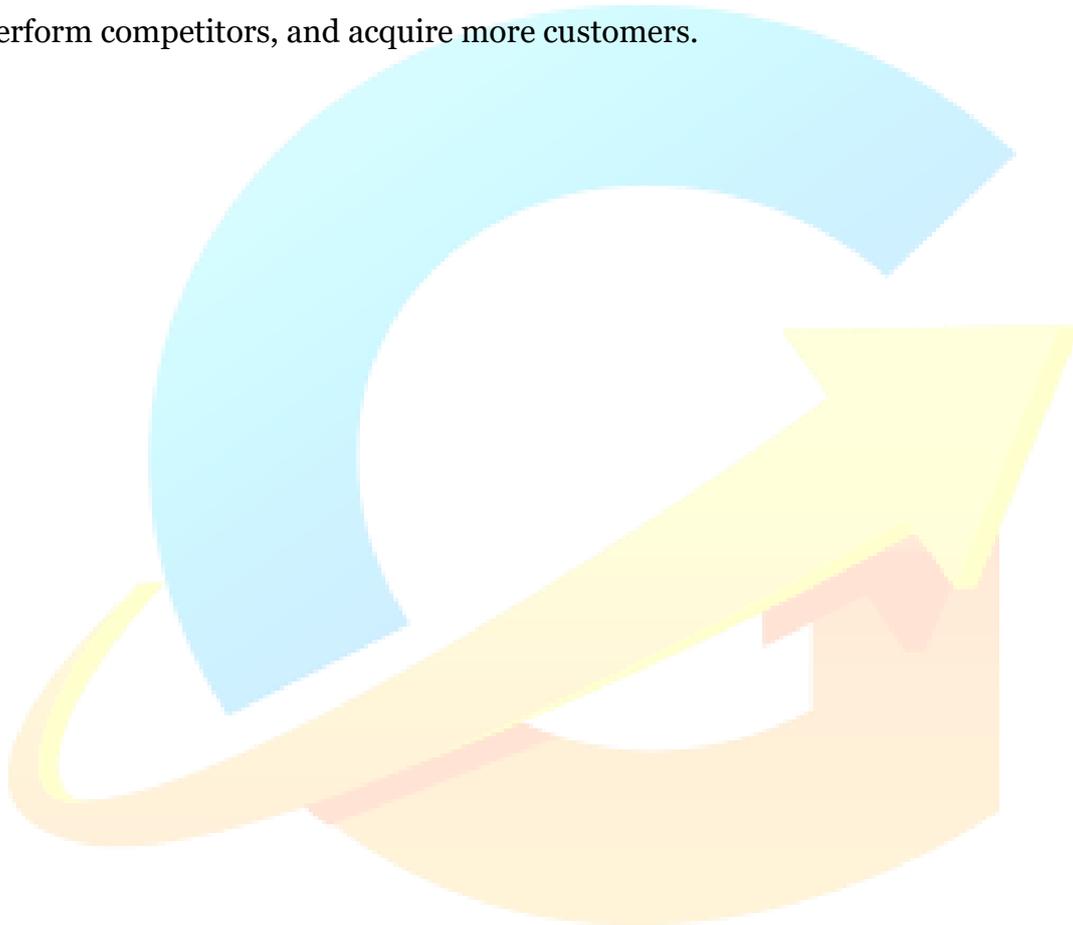
Fake reviews violate Google's guidelines and will almost certainly be removed from your listing sooner or later. Regulatory agencies like the FTC also impose hefty fines on companies found to be buying fake reviews.

Final Thoughts



Google reviews play an important role in how today's consumers discover and judge businesses. They can also shape a brand's online reputation, as well as reveal valuable insights into a company's operations, showing areas where an organization can improve customer service and experience.

By tracking, responding to, and generating reviews on Google — and by applying best practices in reputation management — you can improve your brand's search visibility, outperform competitors, and acquire more customers.





CHAPTER 12



Case Studies



Resort Marketing Strategy with GMB Posts

A resort and spa business, has three golf courses. Their golf pages usually drive a lot of organic traffic to the website in the spring. The main challenge was recovering the traffic (and brand recall) they lost during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Their three golf courses have separate, optimized local listings on the platform. While they wrote posts for every property, this Google My Business case study looks at just one. The other two listings didn't exist in 2019 and therefore don't have year-over-year (YOY) data.

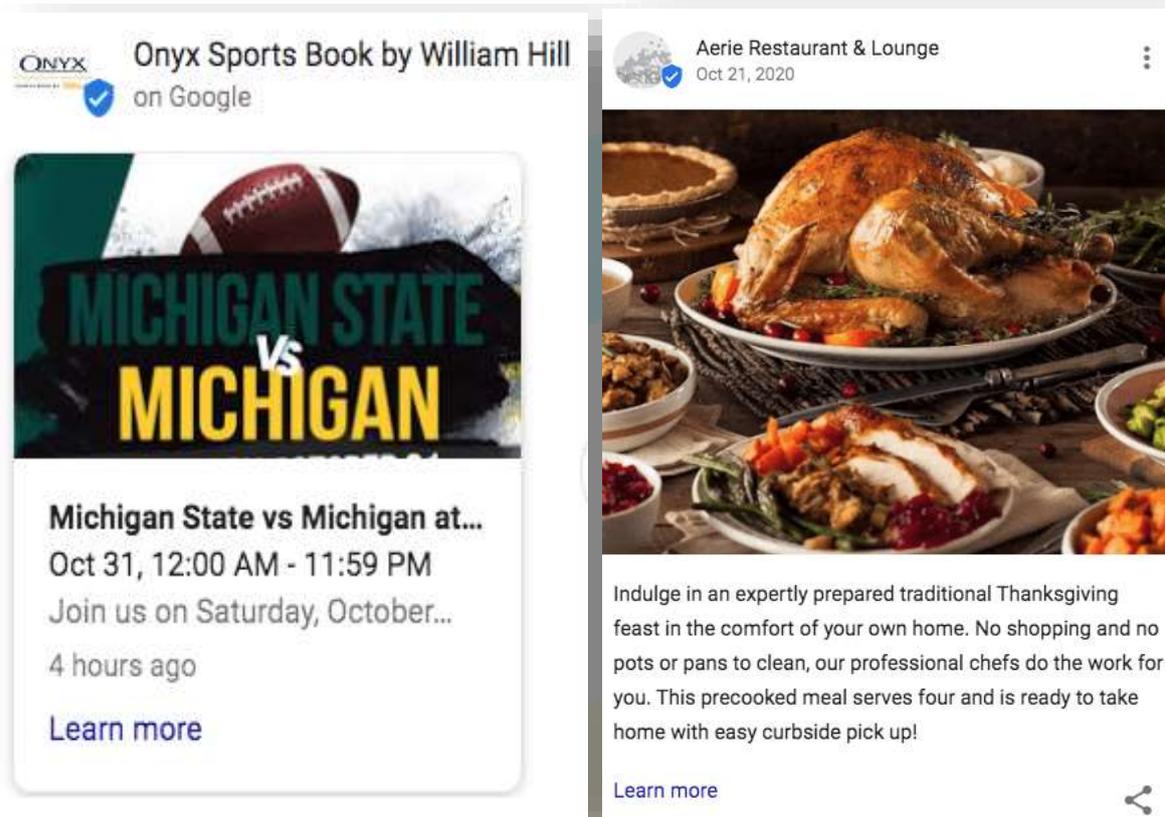
Plan and Execution

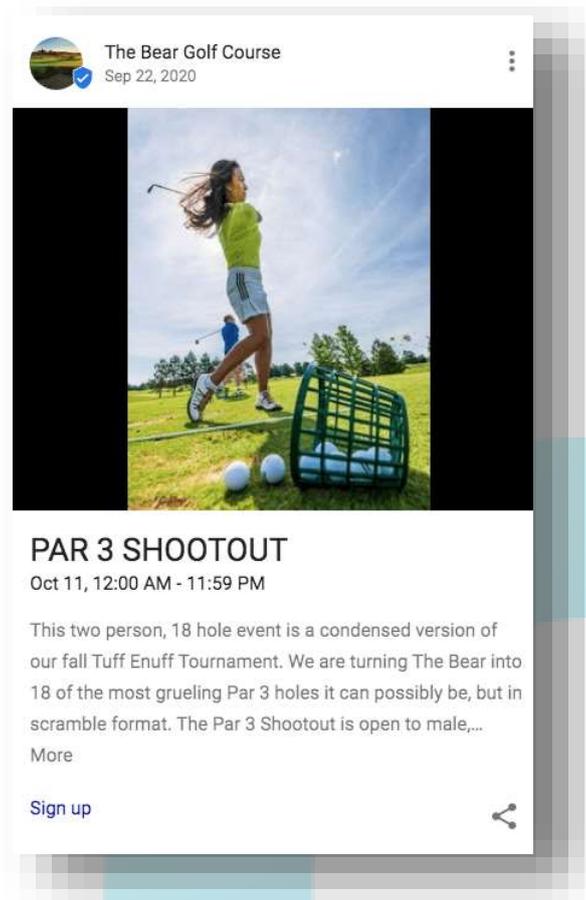
They started posting weekly GMB updates for the golf courses. Their goal in the beginning was simply to inform customers that the courses were closed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this case, they knew that keeping the resort's customers and prospects informed was a priority, even if they weren't sharing good news. Their posts also provided encouragement and reminded the audience to follow social distancing rules so everyone could be back on the golf course soon. The messages were an indication of thought leadership and empathy, helping shape the brand's image as responsible and caring.



Once their golf courses were open again, GMB posts provided the assurance the customers needed to safely play golf. Their messaging highlighted sanitation measures and unique rules on the green to help them and their customers comply with local COVID-19 laws and regulations.





Did It Work?

To analyze results of their strategy, they used Google My Business Insights to compare a two-month period in 2019 to the same period in 2020. No GMB posts were posted in 2019; they started posting there at the start of the 2020 period.

Results

They were pleased to see that total search – i.e., the number of times customers found their listing in the local pack, or Maps – went up 15 percent overall. Let's look at the different types of searches to see how the golf listing performed year-over-year:

- **Direct searches increased .78%**



- This is the number of times customers found the listing by searching for the exact golf course business name or address in Google Search or Maps.
- **Discovery searches increased 50%**
 - This is the number of times customers found the listing by searching for the category, product or service on Google Search or Maps. Example: A customer typing in a general query such as “golf course near me” or simply “golf.”
- **Search views increased 30%**
 - This is the number of times the listing was viewed in the Google SERP. (Aka search impressions)
- **Map views increased 2%**
 - This is the number of times the listing was viewed on Google Maps.

The value of optimizing your business listing and utilizing GMB posts became even clearer when they compared organic traffic from the SERP to traffic from the golf course GMB listing’s website link.

From May 2020 to June 2020:

- **The GMB website link sent 2,900 sessions to the website.**
- **Standard organic search results sent 1,538 (about half as much as GMB).**

Understanding the Metrics



How did they attribute this organic traffic increase to GMB posts and not something else? First, they always **tag the website link in a GMB listing** with UTM parameters for the proper source. This listing already had those parameters in place.

They also looked at search data. The number of Direct searches, or branded searches (people looking specifically for this property), was about the same in each time frame we compared. So they knew the posts didn't help increase branded keyword searches, and it didn't help the property get more impressions from those searches.

The increased discovery search exposure, however, told them the GMB listing was performing much better for short-tail, non-branded search terms. Conclusion: The GMB posts sent the necessary ranking signals to Google to help their GMB property rank better than it did the year before for category, product or service keywords related to golfing.

This is exactly what they wanted.

Branded search terms make a user's intent very clear. They already know what they want – and if they want you, you win. The real challenge is ranking better for keywords with general or wide user intent. If someone doesn't know where they want to play golf, they type the short-tail search query "golf." They have a much better chance of winning that person's business when our client outranks the competitors for the query in the local SERP.

The time and effort they spent creating GMB posts was an easy win for them, and a version of this strategy still exists on their marketing agenda today.

Case #2: Levy & Co Increases Their Bookings By 70% Using Google My Business



- **Goals**

Based in the Kensal Green area of North West London, Levy & Co is a men’s barbershop – founded and run by Syreeta Levy. As a gents’ barbers run by a black, gay woman, Levy & Co attracted some curiosity when it first opened its doors. Two years on, the shop has established itself as a bright, open, and fun place to get a haircut – its success a clear testament to the strong personal connection that Syreeta naturally forges with her customers. “It comes down to two core things; haircuts and counselling,” Syreeta says of the people that regularly take her chair. “And from time to time, everyone needs those.” The inspiration for opening Levy & Co was Syreeta’s late brother, who, before passing away, had urged Syreeta to start her own business. “Of course, when I did open, I wanted to name it in his honour – but his name was Rodney and he hated it. So, I called it Levy & Co – as it’s our surname.” The unique personality of Levy & Co is something that clearly resonates with customers and has always been something that Syreeta has been keen to emphasise. Being accessible to customers is key for survival in this cut-throat industry, so making the business visible online was a major goal for Syreeta. Another key consideration was to find a way to spend less time organising bookings – and more time focusing on customers. As a new face in the area, Syreeta set up a business profile on Google to establish Levy & Co online.

- **Approach**

“Being a new face in the area, Google My Business helped to introduce me to the neighbourhood.” Syreeta says she set the ‘Women-Led’ and ‘LGBTQ+’ attributes as two of the main business descriptors on the company’s Google My Business profile, as she believes it is a part of the business that appeals to many of her clientele. “Especially



to a lot of my LGBTQ+ customers,” says Syreeta. “Some of whom are put off by more traditional, male-run barbershops.” Syreeta’s also added photos to her profile, enabling more people to see Levy & Co’s unique character. Customers clearly appreciate the quality of the product too, judging by the numerous positive reviews left on the profile. In 2020, Syreeta was planning for another year of growth but in March Levy & Co. had to suddenly close due to the pandemic outbreak. After months of lockdown in the UK there was a huge build up of demand and, in order to remain COVID compliant, Syreeta knew her online booking portal would be key to managing appointments. Setting up her Google My Business profile to send customers directly to her booking page allowed her to focus on her customers, rather than the admin. With people unable to get haircuts, and many having attempted to trim it themselves, Syreeta knew she’d have her work cut out. “I had to do a lot of fixing,” she recalls. “I fixed a lot of haircuts – and even helped fix a few relationships.”

- **Results**

Before COVID struck, most appointments were made by either customers coming into the shop, or calling and booking over the phone. With neither of those an option due to COVID restrictions, a smooth online-only booking system was going to be key and Syreeta says Google My Business has been an invaluable tool. “Google My Business has been perfect, it’s really helped to make things run more efficiently,” says Syreeta. In fact, July 2020 saw traffic from mobile increase by over 400% compared to the previous July. “I guess, because of lockdown, there were a lot of people at home looking online to find barbers in the local area – and our Google My Business page is one of the first things they see,” explains Syreeta. For Levy & Co, this translated into a 70% increase in bookings – all coming via her website. “The number of people that came through the Google My Business profile to the website was off the scale,” recalls



Syreeta, "I'm not kidding you, in July I worked 10 hours a day, seven days a week." The 'Women-Led' and 'LGBTQ+' icons clearly help Levy & Co stand out, too. This means that as well as attracting a loyal local clientele, Syreeta's shop often draws in customers from further away – simply because they are intrigued by the shop's set up and ethos. Her customers clearly share the love, as their profile has received over fifty 5 star reviews, with many praising not only the haircut, but the whole Levy & Co experience. "Syreeta is a master", reads one review. "Her cuts are always on point, as is her vibe." This sentiment is echoed across many other reviews. Syreeta has some words of advice to other women setting up businesses in traditionally male working environments: "You can do it. There are no limits for women – the only limit is yourself. So, if you've got the means, and you've got the right people around you, you can do anything you want to."

Case #3: From local secret to tourist destination: how Google My Business helped launch a gift shop

About the goals

When Claire Chapman first opened The Glamorous Owl gift shop, she knew she didn't want to sell online. So her marketing strategy needed to drive traffic to her bricks-and-mortar business. While a website and social media presence made some headway, her quirky gift shop wasn't turning up in search engine listings. This meant that unless a customer already knew her business existed, they'd be unlikely to stumble across it during an online search.

Approach



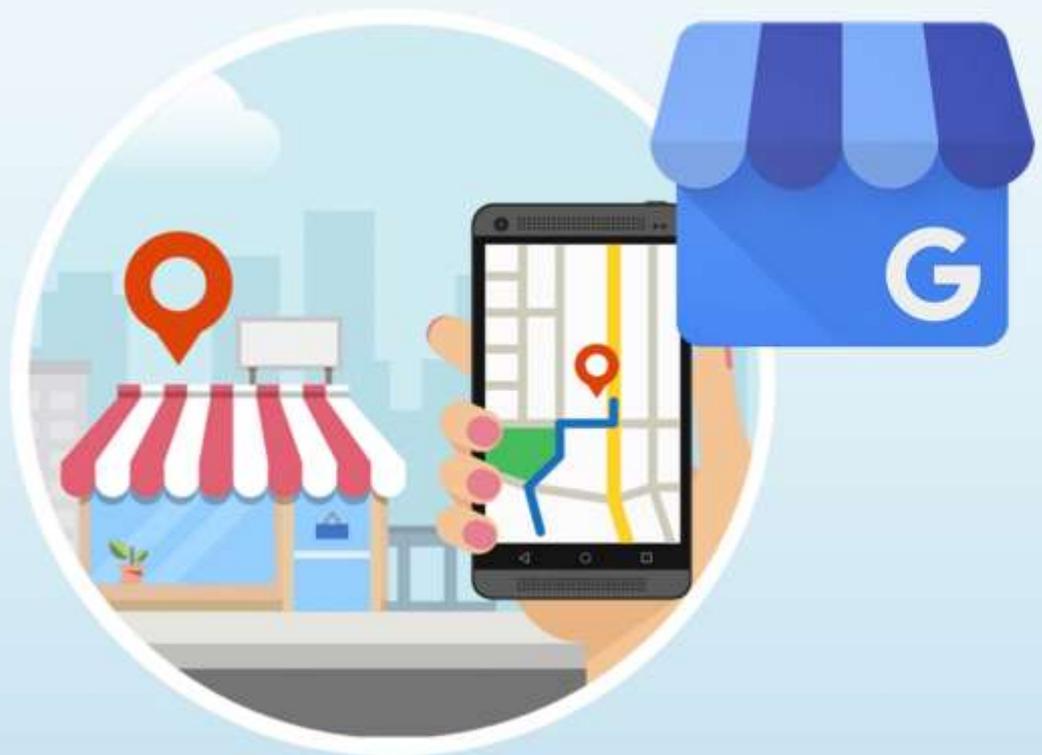
Registering with Google My Business was the first step. By listing her shop on Google Maps and adding key details such as opening times, Claire boosted her business's online visibility. She then used the Google My Business Insights reporting tool to show which search terms led customers to find her shop. This helped her identify popular phrases like 'handmade jewellery in Newcastle' to add to her web copy which, in turn, helped to increase the ranking of its website in the organic results.

Results

With a much higher Google Search ranking, The Glamorous Owl now attracts locals and tourists alike. Google reviews allow previous customers to share their experiences of the shop, while a rotation of photos makes that all-important first impression – before customers have even set foot in the store. What's more, as Claire responds to every review, she brings customer interaction into the shop's online presence, giving measurable results.

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Conclusion

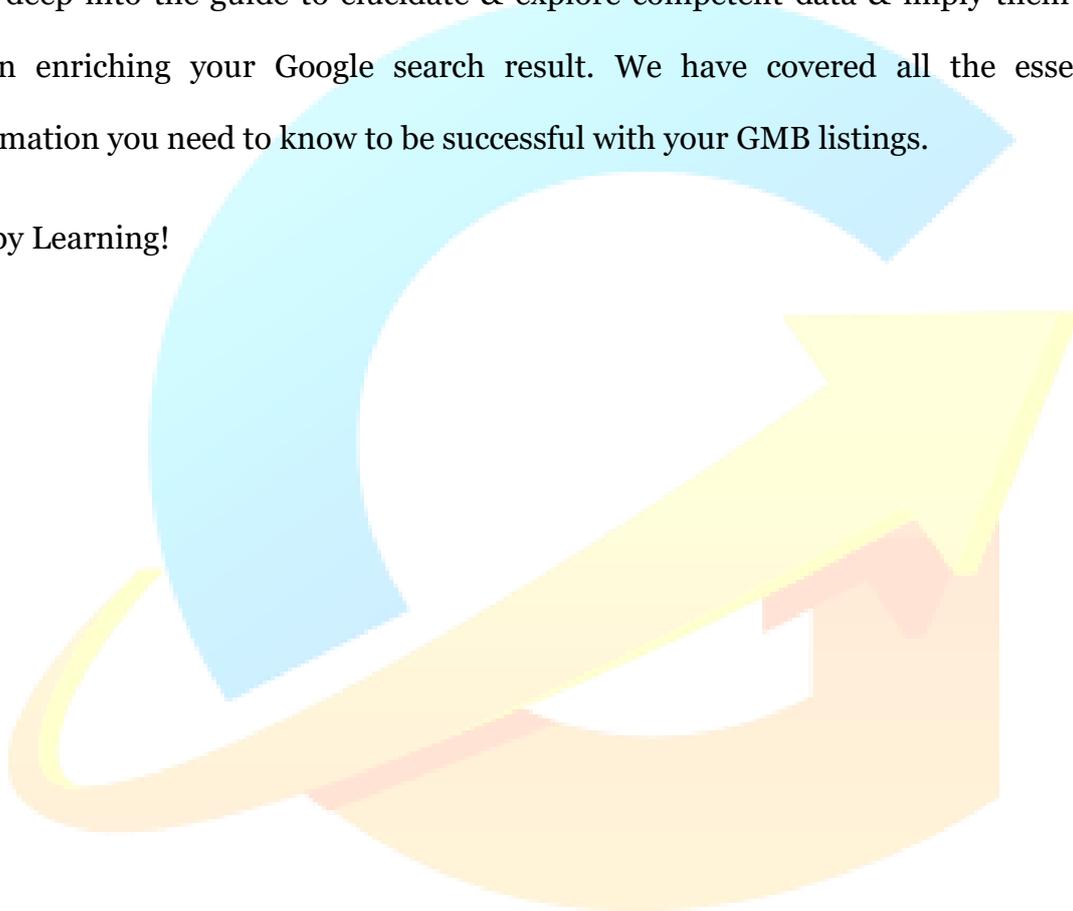


Google My Business is a great free tool for driving traffic and conversions with relatively low effort, and we highly recommend it as part of your larger digital marketing strategy.

If you want your business to have a strong digital footprint, then you want to make sure that you are making the most out of your Google My Business listing.

Dive deep into the guide to elucidate & explore competent data & imply them into action enriching your Google search result. We have covered all the essential information you need to know to be successful with your GMB listings.

Happy Learning!





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