

A Local SEO Guide for Small Business

6 Key Steps to Boost
Your Rankings





➔ ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide was created for local businesses looking to improve their search engine rankings. Effective local SEO can help you bring in new prospects, grow online sales, and get the phones ringing. Get started with the following six steps.



STEP 1: Claim and Optimize Google My Business

Google My Business (GMB) is a free tool that's built to help you manage your online presence. It's easy to use and is step 1 to improving your appearance in local searches. If someone searches for your business online, your Google My Business listing is what they'll see first.

- Setup a new Google account or sign into one you have.
- Visit Google My Business: <https://www.google.com/business/>
- Type your business name. As you start typing, the autocomplete feature will suggest the names of local businesses (if there are any that have the same name). If you've previously set up your business listing, your business name will be one of the suggestions that populate the field.
- Type your business address. This needs to be a physical location where you interact directly with your customers.
- (For Service Area Businesses): Enter information about the areas your business serves.
- Select your business category.
- Enter your business phone number and website URL.
- Complete your Google My Business verification.
- Provide additional details about your business to help a user find what they're looking for. Add photos and videos, write an engaging business description, add services.

▶ **Read the articles below for more details:**

[Let's Set Up Google My Business \(A Guide for Small Business\)](#)

[How to Optimize Google My Business](#)

Searches including the phrases “near me” and “by me” have increased **900%** in just two years.

— Chat Meter



STEP 2: Build Local Citations

Local citations are online listings of your business that include basic references of your business's name, address, and phone number (NAP). You can create citations on a variety of platforms including your local chamber of commerce, Facebook, Yahoo Local, Yellow Pages, and potentially hundreds more.

- Make sure you've completed your Google My Business profile before you do this.
- Use a tool like MozLocal <https://moz.com/checkout/local/check> to check your online presence. You can then proceed to update your listings manually or...
- Do a citation burst using a citation building service like **BrightLocal**, **WhiteSpark**, or MozLocal. This will help you clean and suppress any inaccurate, inconsistent, and incomplete information. (This is what I recommend.)
- ▶ **Read this post for more details:** [How to Get Your Business Listed on Local Directories](#)

57% of B2B marketers stated that **SEO generates more leads** than any other marketing initiative.



STEP 3: Focus on Online Reviews

Getting more online reviews from happy customers is one of the most important business-building strategies you can employ. And you can start today!

- Send your current customers an email asking them to leave your business an online review. Most often people want to help, especially if they like doing business with you.
- If you have a brick and mortar location, use reminders in your store to encourage customers to leave reviews. If you have a Google My Business profile, Google offers free marketing materials to help with this: <https://marketingkit.withgoogle.com>
- Ask for a review after a customer purchase. After they buy from you simply ask for a review. Point them to your Google My Business page, Yelp, or Facebook and/or follow up with an email.
- ▶ **Read this post for more details:** [6 Ways to Get Reviews for Your Business](#)

93% of online experiences begin with a **search engine**. And **92%** of searchers select businesses on the first page of local search results.

– SEO Tribunal



STEP 4: Write Content with a Local Focus

If you're trying to improve your local presence, you need to write local content. Without it, it's going to be more difficult to improve your rankings and beat your competitors at the local SEO game. Write about...

- Local news and events. Write about local news and highlight upcoming festivals, community parties, or 5K races. People love to read what others have to say about their own local town, whether it's an opinion piece or inside scoop with advice.
- Local places. Do you have a list of favorite local restaurants or shops? Feature your list and include small details that even locals may not know about.
- Write about local experts. These posts are about businesses that provide services or sell products that are similar to yours but are not in direct competition with you. You might even consider writing a "resources guide" featuring these businesses.
- Create "Best of" lists. If you have a pet and you have favorite dog parks in your town, you may consider writing a "Dog Lovers Guide." Write about your favorite pizza places, breakfast spots, or coffee shops. Write about what you know and love.
- Write about local causes, organizations, and associations. If you do any charity or volunteer work, support a community sports team, or are involved in any way, write about it in a local voice.
- Customer stories. Feature your customers and how you helped them in a detailed post that highlights the successful outcome. Localize it by including details in the area where your potential customers live.

▶ **Read this post for more details:** [Improve Your Local Presence By Writing Local Content](#)



"We help small businesses attract the right customers and grow their business. A focused Local SEO strategy is essential to that mission."

–Craig McBreen, McBreen Marketing



STEP 5: Master On-Page Local SEO Basics

On-page SEO is basically everything you can optimize on your website — the underlying code, copy, and your website structure. Use these basic strategies to improve your local search engine ranking.

- Optimize your homepage. Your homepage has link equity and the highest potential for high SEO ranking. It's the first page that people see if your link is shared or mentioned elsewhere, and it should aim to draw them deeper into your website. For optimal SEO potential, make sure your homepage has copy about your products and/or services, your location, and your most important keywords.
 - Optimize your page titles and meta descriptions. A web page title is one of the most important on-page items to optimize for local rankings. Include the name of the city that you want to focus on as well as the product or service you are offering. Meta descriptions are HTML code embedded on the page that are used by search engines to display snippets of text under search results. They give visitors a quick glimpse of the page before clicking through.
 - Optimize your footer. Make sure your address is listed correctly on the footer of your website and make sure that the footer translates across your site so that no matter which page is visited, that same address is listed. Also include the following: Company logo, social media icons, copyright, privacy policy, links to interior pages, and contact information.
 - Embed a Google Map on your website. Make it easy for customers to locate and navigate to your physical store.
 - Add an image Alt tag to your photos. For Google and other search engines, this helps their web crawlers “see” the images and adds to your site’s authority.
 - Create a unique page for each product and/or service you offer. Each page should have a minimum of 350 words and keywords to clearly define your product or service. Don't copy/paste the same text on each page. Make each page unique and focus on the specific product/service.
 - Create unique pages for every location. If your business operates in several different locations, make sure to create optimized pages on your website for each location.
- ▶ **Read this post for more details:** [Master On-Page Local SEO Basics With These 7 Tips](#)

72% of consumers who did a **local search** visited a store within five miles.

— Wordstream



STEP 6: Local Link Building Strategies

Local links are links to your website from other local sources. Getting other local sources to link back to your site is an effective Local SEO strategy. If done correctly and not forcefully, search engines and potential customers will see your company as an active community member and ultimately, THE local option for your area of business.

- Build local citations. If you haven't started, go back to step 2 in this guide.
 - Partner with other local businesses. Build relationships with local and relevant businesses and explore creative ways to help each other. Write about them, ask them to write about you, and link to each other's sites.
 - Sponsor local events or organizations. Your sponsorship will usually appear on the website's page and be mentioned in communications, as well as handouts at any related events.
 - Join professional organizations in your area. It's a great way to get involved locally and be listed on their directories.
 - Host a fundraising event. This is a great opportunity to reach an audience who might have otherwise not heard of your company.
 - Write and promote local content. To have the most impact locally, create useful content that focuses on local issues and also work to find relevant topics that tie into your business. Ask those you feature to link back to your site.
 - Reach out to local bloggers. Connecting with your local bloggers' network is a great way to reach a new audience and earn local links through mentions and dedicated blog posts, as well as social media promotion.
 - Look for "Best of" or round-up pages in your city. Consider the different categories your business could fall under and ask for consideration to be included.
 - Create your own "Best of" pages. Ask people you feature to link back to your site.
 - Get interviewed on local podcasts. Guest interviews on podcasts are a great way to generate additional local links.
 - Create a detailed local resource page. Write details on the best places to eat or the best locations to study in your local city. Think about the resource pages that your audience would like to read. Ask any business or organization you feature to link back to your site.
- ▶ **Read this post for more details:** [10 Tips To Build Your Business With Authentic Local Link Building](#)

88% of consumers who search for a type of local business on a mobile device call or go to that business within 24 hours.

— Nectafy



SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO) Services

For a local business, showing up on page one of Google is a crucial part of staying in business. And appearing here can be the difference between a business booming or simply getting by. It doesn't matter what industry you're in, SEO must be part of your marketing strategy.

Our services:

- Local website and SEO audit plus ongoing optimization
 - Claim, create, and submit directory profiles
 - Build your online review-gathering system
- Optimizing website content to improve your local search rankings, and more

Marketing and SEO for local businesses.

Call us at **(970) 295-4857** or email **info@mcbreenmarketing.com**
to learn how we can help you.



We ♥ local business