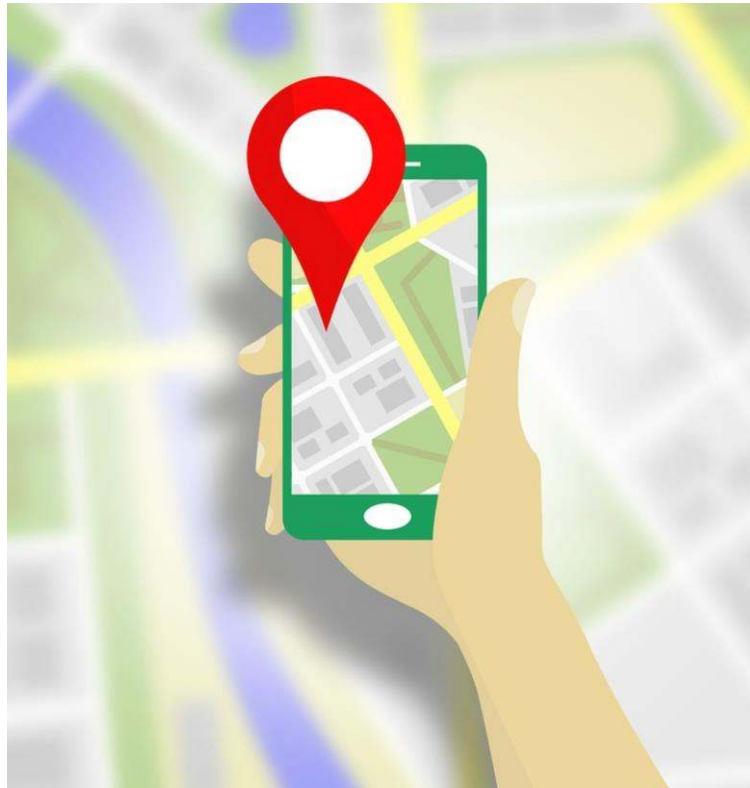


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Optimizing Google for Local Search Domination



By: [\[Solicitors Marketing Club\]](#)

[]

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Introduction

Local marketing is now one of the top business buzzwords and, there's nothing more important to brick and mortar businesses than being part of their local community AND standing out from their competition.

According to a recent survey by Boostability.com, **as much as 82% of all people begin their search online for the products and**

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services that they need. Generally, more than one-half of ALL local searches are coming from mobile devices and places like Google and will automatically display localized content. If you've taken the time to ensure that your business will show up in local searches, your business has the opportunity to be one of the top search results, which can translate to more online traffic, leads, sales, revenues and profits.

The purpose of this guide is to show you exactly how to do just that; which is: how your effective use of Google My Business, Google Maps and even Google Plus, can put your business in position to be found when people search for your products and/or services online.

Google My Business is truly the great equalizer and, once you have set everything up correctly within it, your business is virtually guaranteed to increase leads, generate more interested customers and clients and, as a result, boost your sales and revenues.

Take your time reading this guide and then use it to optimize your results. Then, you too can compete and succeed in your local market!

Warmest Regards,

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Optimize Your Google Interface?

Without question, one of the best ways to dominate your local

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market is to take the time to **interface with Google** and make sure that the following tools are focused on your business:

- Google Maps
- Google My Business
- Google Plus (Google+)

All three of these tools can combine to create a **synergistic effect for your local brick-and-mortar business** and take your business from online obscurity to one of the most relevant and highly focused businesses for your market and niche. And, when correctly used, **these tools can be used as lead generation machines**, directing people like the pied piper right to your front door!

The purpose of this guide is to show you exactly what you need to do for each of these three tools. With local search results, you need to optimize the three in such a way that build upon each other and begin to drive massive amounts of traffic as well as interested people right into your business and marketing funnel.

Google Maps And Beyond

Before we directly delve into some of the best ways to optimize your entire **Google local profile information**, which includes Google Maps, Google My Business, Google+, etc.), we are going

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to work a little bit backwards because intuitively this is what makes sense to most business owners when they are trying to optimize their Google Maps listing.

It is key to understand that optimizing your local profile across Google is a primary factor for your Google local map location to begin appearing in search results. In other words, Google Maps' results are contingent upon other Google tools.

Once you understand how critical for all your business information be precise across several of Google's local marketing tools, everything can begin to fall into place correctly, and you will be able to optimize everything across Google's platforms seamlessly.

In each section, we will discuss the exact steps necessary to complete everything we are about to list for you. So, don't get too excited, or overly concerned. Optimizing Google starts with one page, one location and, one-step at a time.

When you combine all of these factors together, everything works inherently to assist your business to reach as many people as possible.

Here are the steps necessary to get your business listed on **Google Maps** and begin showing up everywhere:

1. Claim and optimize your **Google My Business** listing as explained in that section. **IMPORTANT:** If you do not claim your Google My Business listing, you CANNOT be found OR rank in Google Maps' local search results.

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2. Create and establish a **congruency between all profile pages** with the same name, address and phone number information (NAP) by using citations as explained in the last section of this guide.
3. Obtain and maintain actual **REAL reviews** from customers and clients located across your service area.
4. Follow all of the **best practices of Google** as well as provide the correct and accurate information for listings and citations, including your NAP.
5. Utilize **pictures and videos connecting with your business to further provide credibility**, good content to your industry and drive interest as well as clicks and conversions to your business.

If you read and apply all of the information in this guide, you will be performing all of these tasks, both individually on the Google listings, as well as generating the correct number of citations to both manage and maintain high search engine visibility.

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How It All Works



Everything you see above in this diagram works together in harmony to help your business rank locally. In order to optimize **Google Maps**, **Google My Business** and **Google +**, everything will work best when you integrate it all at the same time.

This is because Google wants to be your one-stop shop for local rankings.

The more you cooperate with Google, the bigger the rewards can be. We will review how to do all of this in each section that follows. If you devote 1-2 hours a day to this process, you can rank with the top businesses in your industry.

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Google My Business Optimization

Many marketers and businesses try to outsmart Google. Ironically, one of the best ways to have a successful and rewarding online presence is to do exactly what Google says.

The very first step when it comes to optimizing your **Google My Business** (GMB) listing is to meet all of the quality guidelines. Since many businesses do not follow them, this is one way for you to immediately get a leg up on your competitors.

You will be able to locate the **Google My Business** quality guidelines listed underneath the help section of your GMB listing or, you may review them at:

<https://support.google.com/adwords/answer/107528?hl=en>

Here are the takeaways from the **Google My Business** quality guidelines:

- You **MUST** have a legitimate, fully-operating local business that you are in control of and that you are authorized to manage the Google My Business listing.
- Your business **MUST** be accurately represented in a real and truthful manner.

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- Your location MUST be precise, accurate and will send someone right to your front door of your business.
- You MUST be able to verify this with a physical address.
- Chosen categories MUST reflect what your business currently is not what you want to list it as.

Your Google My Business Listing Completely Filled Out

<https://www.google.com/business/>

You should strive to make your **Google My Business** listing as accurate and precise as possible. Again, few businesses do this, instead, leaving much information blank. This gives you an immediate competitive advantage in terms of rankings IF you do what Google asks/requires of you.

Experts recommend adding **as much content as possible** as Google is extremely good at helping your local business appear in the search engines for people who want to contact you, but they can only do so if you provide the right content.

Google's goal is to provide its users the best possible search experience and, in most circumstances, any user that contacts your page will have a much better experience if there is sufficient information for the potential client or customer to decide if you and your products and/or services are what they are looking for.

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Not only should you fill out the required fields, **but all of the optional fields as well**. By simply completely populating all information **accurately** typically enhances any and all user experiences when they visit your **Google My Business** page.

Essentially, when considering the totality of several competing Google My Business pages, **the GMB page that has the most abundant and robust content typically outranks the others** that did not take the time to add all of the necessary AND optional content.

More compelling listings containing more content will generally also deliver higher click through rates, along with more leads and higher conversions.

Choosing The Right Categories For Your Listing

Google has devoted much time to ensuring that Google My Business listings are sufficiently categorized correctly so that users can quickly locate and find the business and services that they are searching for and in need of.

Typically, Google will show the first several categories to help users decide the best listings to examine specifically when it comes to displaying local search results.

Additional categories will be displayed when the user clicks to see more information, but the first several choices are generally the

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most important and should be a complete reflection on the actual business services and/or practices offered.

The GMB categories you choose can make or break your business, especially if you rely heavily on Google My Business for your local traffic.

An important consideration when choosing categories for your Google My Business page is that the categories you choose **must accurately describe your business** as much as possible.

If you do not choose the right categories, you can run into a conflict with Google's algorithm, which is designed to make sure that what people are searching for is what they will see represented in their search results (SERPs).

This also helps people find exactly what they want when they search for your products and services and, when you've fully and accurately completed your Google My Business page, you have the opportunity to increase conversions from the online traffic your GMB page can attract.

Good, Powerful and Simple Descriptions

When creating your GMB page descriptions, you must understand your prospects and customers/clients and, put yourself in their shoes when searching for your products and/or services.

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For example, you may have chosen the category of bookstore. However, if you're actually a **used bookstore**, your description should immediately inform the visitor of this important distinction. You should also give them a reason to click on other information about your business, contact you or visit you.

Your goal is to create **a short and powerful description**, which should **immediately** convey your unique selling proposition so that people visiting your GMB page realize exactly what it is you have to offer and, when your offering is what they are looking for, follow through with you.

Keep in mind Google is already using your categories and geography, as well as your location, to determine when your business will show up in local search results.

This means your description is essentially a critical component to converting leads into sales. Keep it simple and effective! Let people know exactly what it is you can do for them.

Another reason for short, powerful descriptions is that **as many as 82% of all searches are from mobile devices**. Simple works best on mobile, so it is ideal to get to the point and quickly provide what people are looking for.

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Get Positive Customer Reviews



Google appreciates customer reviews so much that they will show up and get top billing in local search results, even from other third-party sources, like the one above from Yelp.

Make no mistake about it: Real and positive reviews **MUST** be part of your local marketing efforts. **NEVER** pay for phony reviews! The search engines are getting very good at detecting bogus reviews and if caught, you will very likely be penalized.

Smart marketers do NOT try to “game” the system. Rather, they know Google has mechanisms in place to reward honest reviews therefore, help clients get honest reviews.

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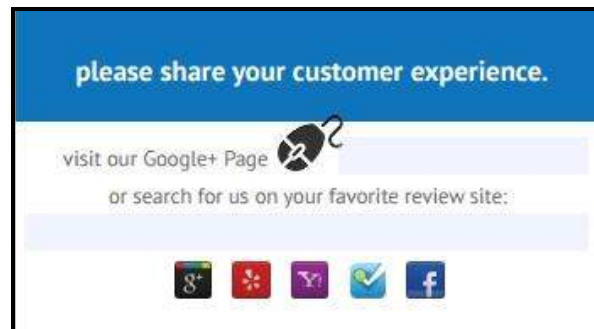
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So, if you want your GMB listing to begin to perform better, getting regular reviews from a variety of your customers or clients are an absolute must.

Every time clients or customers visit your store, hand them a business card with your Google My Business URL and ask them to take a moment to fill out a review and say something nice about your business. You may be surprised just how many will do this for you when you simply ask.

You should also add a hyperlink to your Google My Business listing on your website and encourage people to write reviews when you send them e-mails, newsletters or old-fashioned snail mail.

Here's an excellent article on how to create one of these "templates" to get people to give you a review. It walks you through everything you need to do for ongoing commentary:



<http://ezlocal.com/blog/post/customer-review-card-template.aspx>

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Google My Business with Google

+



Google works best when you integrate their platforms together into one massive marketing machine. Google actively encourages businesses that have a **Google My Business** listing to also have a **Google +** account in interlink them together.

Integrating the two together will allow you to perform additional marketing. This includes creating posts that customers can actually read and participate with, the ability to respond and interact with customers and clients, respond to reviews and more.

The two together also allows you to utilize **Google+** with additional robust marketing tools, create multiple marketing channels, create powerful video presentations that can be shared in Google Hangouts, and much more.

We will discuss Google+ in the next section so that you can see its benefits and experience as well as how it supports your Google My Business page.

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Optimize Your Google + Page

Google+ is a unique and powerful marketing platform. And, when you add **Google+** to your local marketing, it is like supercharging everything that you do and providing you some of the top online marketing tools to do so with.

Many marketers have completely changed their business and, most importantly, their client and customer's businesses, just using these tools only.

It is important that you accurately set up your Google+ account and optimize utilizing the tools that are provided for you to do so. Follow these steps and then combine this information with your Google My Business account:

Publish Awesome Content Regularly

Creating excellent content has always been a great way to make Google stand up and take notice of everything that you do. By simply doing daily posts about your business, posting testimonials, involving people directly in your ongoing story and the like, you can attract lots of followers and interested people just using your **Google+** account.

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Get your Google + Page Custom and Branded URL

Verify a local business on Google



Once you've verified your business information, updates you make to your local business - such as contact details, description, photos, business hours - are eligible to show up on Google Maps and other Google properties.

Before you add a local business, make sure that your business:

- Meets our [guidelines](#).
- Has a mailing address or serves customers at its location(s). If you'd like to promote a brand, product, organization, or any other entity without an address, [create a brand page](#) instead.

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/2911778?hl=en>

The way Google operates is that you already have an existing **Google+ Page for your current address, but it's not yet yours or optimized**; it is incomplete, waiting for you to "claim."

Taking the opportunity to claim this page with your business listed on it will allow you to fully customize it. Once you do this, it will allow your business to begin to show up on **Google Maps**.

The synergistic effect of both pages working together cannot be overstated. Google gives additional gravity when you use their tools versus others' tools. Thus, why not utilize this opportunity to increase your exposure in local search results? It can also double your chances to appear in front of your clients' eyes.

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Tell A Simple But Powerful Story

The “about us” section located on your Google Plus page is an excellent location to tell a short, but powerful story about you and your business.

The first few words should clearly define what your business is and **include your most powerful keyword** as this information be used as your meta-tag data that will be shared with all of the search engines, including Google, Yahoo and Bing.

Also, be sure to have a compelling headline that explains exactly why someone should click on this information to discover more about your business.

Optimize the first 50 characters of all posts - Any and all posts you do on Google+ need to be optimized as well. Most marketers are aware of the importance of optimizing the first 50 characters of posts as this information is automatically converted into a searchable and clickable link people can decide whether or not they wish to read more about while searching online.

This means you should include your main keyword in a short title that tells people exactly what they will be reading. Doing this can greatly increase your click through rate. You will experience and can drive additional traffic from your Google+ page to your Google My Business page as well.

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Google+ Advertising

Eventually it is possible when you have at least 1,000 followers on Google + to use [Plus Post Ads](#) in order to boost the posts that you do, which can drive more user engagement from followers and also enable new people to discover your page.

Plus Post Ads are similar to Google AdWords and work by utilizing and displaying your posts to other like-minded individuals based on following, keywords and discovery.

They are also similar to Facebook ads, where you're able to boost your posts for more audience engagement through Facebook's Newsfeed. This type of advertising can be very affordable and, if you have a unique product or service that people are looking for, it may be well worth 20 dollars a day in ad spend to reach these people and turn them into clients and customers.

Depending on the type of engagement you're seeking to have, Plus Post Ads may be your answer to instantly jump-start and continue an ongoing engagement campaign so prospects begin to find you. Remember that you must first build Google+ followers to 1,000 before you may utilize this optional advertising service.

For one fast way to grow your first 1,000 followers on Google+, Search Engine Watch has a great article that may interest you:

<http://searchenginewatch.com/sew/how-to/2348391/how-to-grow-your-google-fan-base-to-1-000-followers-beyond>

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Google+ Tips To Grow Fast

Similar to your Google My Business listing, your Google+ page should be filled out completely and accurately to maximize search engine results.

It is also important to reflect this same information across multiple Google platforms because this form of congruency adds to your search engine gravity.

Here are some simple tips to further maximize the effectiveness of your Google+ account:

- Make sure your business location is 100% accurate on Google Maps.
- Add your main website link to your **Google+ page** and also include a link to your Google My Business page.
- Ask customers and clients to add a review to your Google Plus page and get them to click **+1**.
- Make sure that you list your hours of operation, along with your local telephone number, local address and any other directional-based information to help clients and customers find you quickly. Be 100% accurate.

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Most of these above suggestions are **absolutely critical** to getting the most out of your **Google+** page and allowing integration between **Google Plus** and **Google My Business**.

Remember that the search engines will "spider out" the links that are represented on all your Google pages. Therefore, interconnecting them is another great way to get a direct citation and/or thumbs up from Google.



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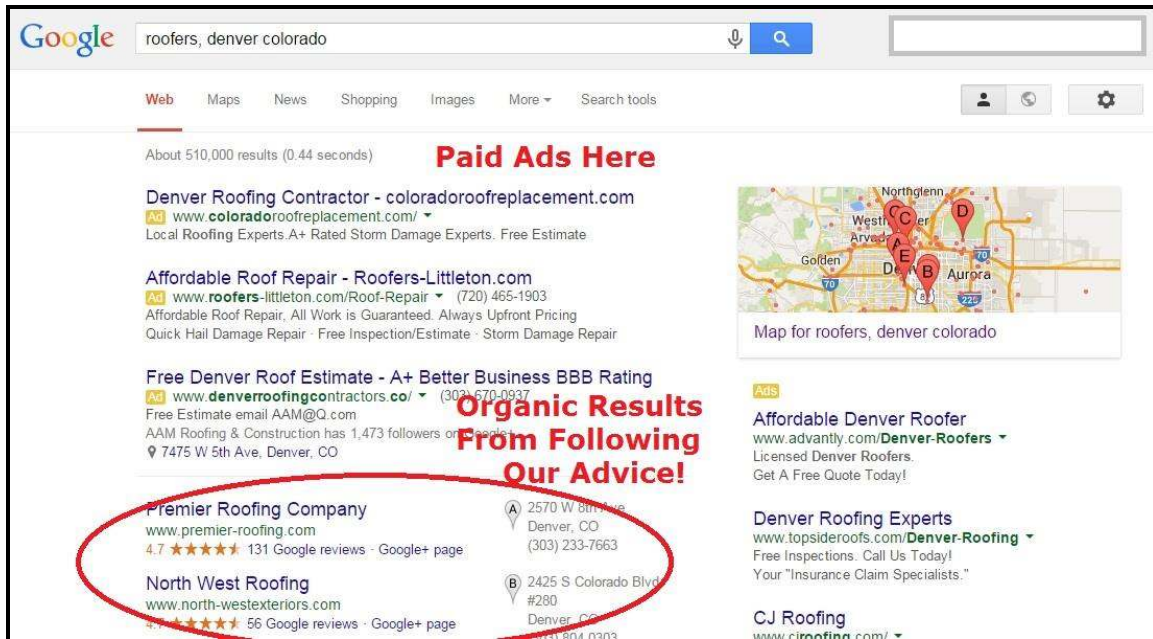
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Google Maps and How To Optimize It



In order to make your Google Maps location show up more in local search results, your first step in optimizing and making your Google Maps appear is to link your Google My Business page and/or your Google plus page directly to your map location.

Having your business appear in Google Maps search results is ALSO an exercise in the number of overall accurate citations that your business has. The better the quality of the citation the more relevant it is to help you rank. This is especially true when combining all local citations together as this can create an effective support mechanism to make your page(s) appear more frequently in the results when localized searches are done.

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Getting your business to rank locally requires one other important aspect to your marketing: The number of **HIGH-QUALITY** citations equal to or greater than your current ranking competition. One of the ways you can determine the number of citations that you need is by researching your competition, and then using their citations as a kind of metric or guide for ranking in your local arena.

The good news is that this can make the entire process of outranking your competitors primarily a simple aspect of observation, recording the results and then matching them or outperforming them with more quality citations.

One way business owners determine the number of citations that they need is to run a local audit using one of the following tools:

1. **Yext.com** <http://www.yext.com/pl/yext-powerlistings-official-site/index.html> This site allows you to enter your business information and click search to find your listings. You can also use it to spy on your competitors to see the kind of citations they have and then devote time to creating similar, higher-quality citations and then more citations than your competition has to help you rank higher locally.
2. **Moz.com** <https://moz.com/local> MOZ is a highly well respected search engine optimization industry site and their local tool functions similar to Yext. Simply enter your information and click "check my business listing" and you will receive a detailed report of your current citations. This tool may also be used to spy on your competitors and then compare the difference between their and your citations, respectively.

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There are other similar local audit tools, however, these two seem to be the best and have the most responsiveness.

I also suggest that you look at additional analytics like referral traffic, conversion rates, as well as any other additional information, so that your audit provides valuable information and feedback.

A final point that we want to make here is that **Google has extreme bias towards physical locations**. This means that if you actually have a physical location in a specific area, you are more likely to outrank your competitors who do not have an actual physical presence.

Physical location is critical in the appearance of Google Maps, so if you truly wish to increase traffic and visibility, you may actually have to consider a new brick and mortar location in any areas you wish to rank and/or expand into!

While it is possible to eventually rank your business based on your geographic location, if you want more traffic from an exact location, finding a way to get a local brick and mortar business in that area is going to be your best option as you can prove this to Google and claim ownership.

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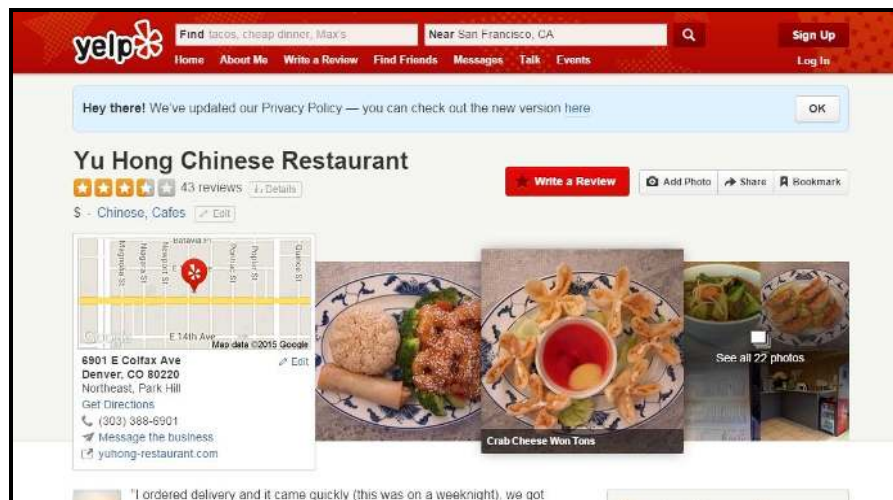
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Good Citation Locations

Citations or NAP (Business **N**ame, **A**ddress and **P**hone Number) are mentions of your business in local, regional and national search engines, directories and other local websites. Citations are essential to send ranking signals for local searches and the best way to push traffic in your direction.

Yelp is just one example of a good place to have a citation for your local business. Notice how the main information is about the name, address and phone number as well as the food served? Appearing in the local searches is what makes citations so powerful and drives traffic directly to the restaurant.

For example, the Yu Hong restaurant appears in the local searches in Denver, Colorado for "Chinese restaurant Denver Colorado."



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One more thing important to note – Citations are also powerful social signals for localized search engine results. The more listings you have, the more “mini-traffic machines” you can have working on your behalf. Accordingly, you should want to get as many of these citation gems as you can for your local business.

There are literally thousands of potential citations for you to consider. Here are some of the **best places to get citations from to start with**. Simply Google the name and sign up. Many of these services also have paid inclusion and ad support if you want to consider these services:

Angie’s List
Bing
Yelp
Citysearch
Yellow Pages
Citygrid
Yahoo Local
Merchant Circle
Manta

Once you have signed up to these, you can (and should) add more. Try to do at least a few to several a day from this extensive list you can find here from the experts of local visibility – it is a fantastic list and will keep you busy for months:

[Definitive List of Local Search Citations](#)

Remember citations are a critical component to your business rising in the search engines. Only a few minutes a day can help boost your traffic, making it worth your time.

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Conclusion

Everything you need to grow your business in the local market is included in this guide. Put Google to work for you, focus combining **Google Maps**, **Google My Business** and **Google+** to work together, to create powerful gravity for your business.

Remember: The more Google knows about your business, the more you will begin to dominate your local search results. This is because Google wants to be the dominant driver for marketing in your area. Also, no one tool (i.e. Google Maps) will work as efficiently without including the other tools Google offers.

And do not forget about citations. Citations not only can deliver more traffic, but work to boost your Google presence across multiple platforms resulting in you being found more often.

You now have everything you need to dominate local marketing. Stick to your marketing plan and, in due time, your business can be one of the top search results for multiple keywords.

Warmest Regards,

[Insert Your Name]

[Insert Your Title]

[Insert Your Business Name]

[Insert Your Telephone Number]

[Insert Your Email Address]

P.S. Want us to take care of this entire process for you? Please contact me NOW as we work on an exclusive basis with only one local business for any niche in your local market.

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