

How Local SEO REALLY Works & How To Use It To Attract Qualified Leads

Search engines are in the business of selling ads. Your free listing is to get ‘eyeballs’ on ads.

Places your local business can appear in search results

1. **Ads** – These appear at the top and bottom of the page (plus some in the local pack)
2. **Local Pack** – Only 3 businesses are shown. You want to be one of them!
3. **Organic Results (blue links)** – Very tough to compete here against large aggregators (e.g., Yelp, Home Advisor, Thumbtack)
4. **Knowledge Panel/Graph** - For business queries, summary of info about the business
5. **Featured Snippet/Answer Box** – For simple answers, often used for voice search results
6. **Video Results** (could also be News or Images) – Shown if they’re relevant to the query
7. **People Also Ask** – List of questions that relate to the initial query
8. **Related Entities** – Based on the core characteristics of the search query
9. **Searches Related To...** - Differs from People Also Ask (it’s not necessarily a question)
10. **Discover More Places** – Provides other options related to but not the same as initial query. Basically, it makes page 2 irrelevant.
11. **Shopping Results** – For products sold online, can appear in multiple places on the page
12. **Related Searches** – Related to the query topic. Good place to get content ideas.
13. **Social media posts**
14. **Upcoming events**
15. And more ...

There are more opportunities to appear on the 1st page than just the first 3 options. BUT, there are also more elements to distract people from your listing.

Search engines show local search results based on:

1. Proximity
 - Based on searcher’s proximity to your business location
 - You cannot control this
2. Relevance
 - How well your offerings align with what the searcher is looking for
 - Influence this by writing clear, accurate, locally-focused descriptions of your products and/or services
3. Prominence
 - Based on your website’s “authority”
 - Influence this by getting more/better online reviews & links from local websites

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR LOCAL SEO

1. Use Google My Business (GMB)

- Claim AND verify your listing
- Choose 1 or 2 most relevant categories
- Complete ALL information
- Add photos and/or videos
- Post weekly

2. Get Links From Other Websites

- Focus on local sites and hyperlocal keywords
- You want a link from their site to yours, ideally with your location and company name or service/product as the link text
 - Industry-related local sites – e.g., schools, universities, government associations
 - Local partner sites – complementary services, realtors, developers – “businesses-we-love” page
 - Local chamber of commerce sites – join!
 - Local newspapers or media outlets – write for them, see if they do features on local topics related to your business
 - Local bloggers – a small following is ok if it’s all within your locality
 - Local charities or events - sponsor or volunteer
 - Local event pages that write content about what to do in a locality – tourism sites, downtown directories, chamber of commerce.

3. Get More & Better Online Reviews

- Start with Google (GMB is **critical**) and Facebook
- Set up a process for getting more reviews (use Reputation Builder)
- ASK all customers
- Respond to ALL reviews

4. Improve On-Page Signals

- Meta title & description
- Write helpful local content
 - City-Specific Landing Page – Unique content!!! Good for multi-location businesses
 - State or Regional Landing Page (e.g., county) – This works better for SABs
 - FAQ Pages – Answer all local and relevant questions
 - Location-specific discounts or special offers
 - Host local events – Don’t just post it on FB Events, put it on your website
 - Partner with or sponsor a local event – Talk about it on the website, maybe offer a special
 - Cover local events that are relevant to your biz
 - Write a blog!!! Answer the questions you get from customers – products, how to, why, when
 - Create “Best Of” guides
 - Press page – where you were mentioned in local news etc.

5. Keep Building Citations / Business Listings

- Keep NAP the same everywhere (business name, address, phone)
 - Citation / NAP sites
 - Local directory websites

RESOURCES – Go to <https://monicahemingway.com/GLTE>

- Free SEO tools & SEO Checklist
- Local SEO Citations Guide
- [OneThing] weekly email
- Reputation Builder – **Special offer for GLTE attendees**