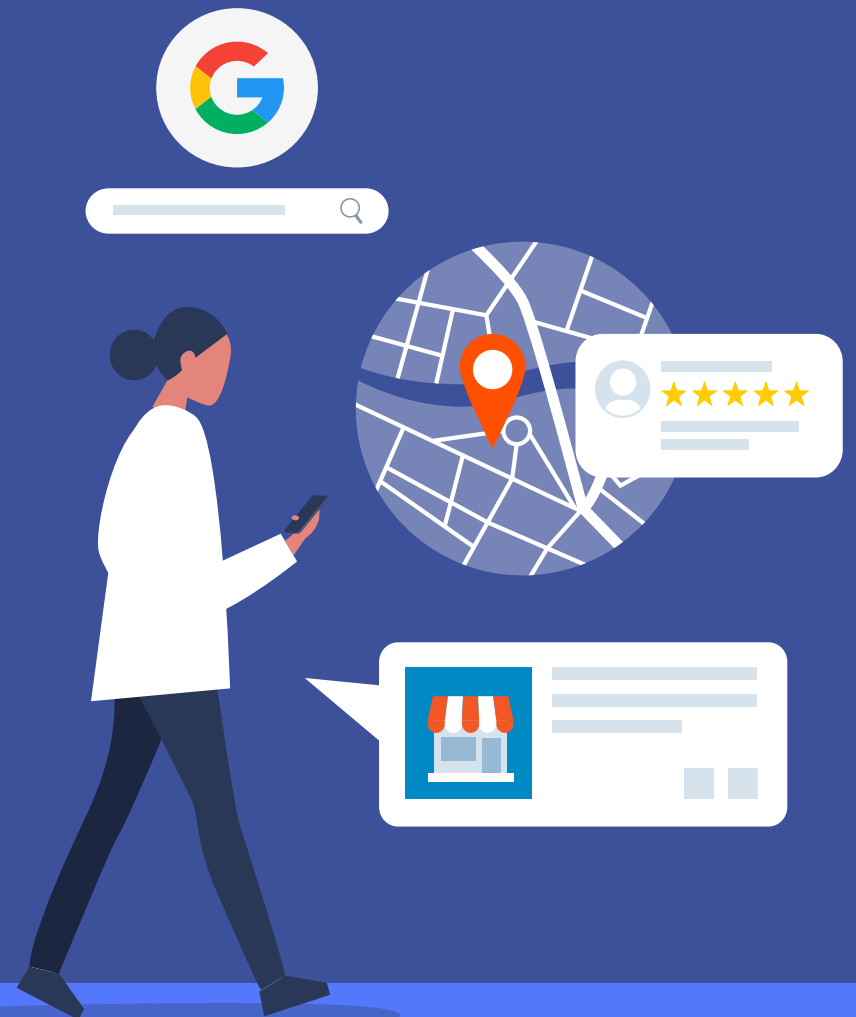




The Ultimate Google Business Profile Guide

How to boost your business
with this powerful free tool.



The Ultimate Google Business Profile Guide

Setting up your Google Business Profile (formerly know as Google My Business) is critical for your business to get found online. It contains vital information and is often the first place your customers find you when they're searching for your services. But your Google Business Profile provides so much more than just search results. Read on to find out how to engage and connect with your customers better than ever.

“Roughly **85% of consumers** use the internet to discover and find local businesses. ~Zippa

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01 What is your Google Business Profile

If you're running a business, your success depends on customers finding you. Having a clean, crisp website helps, but optimizing your Google Business Profile listing is a boss move. But what exactly is it?

Google Business Profile is a free-to-use tool that offers a snapshot of your business on that oh-so-power search engine. Google Business Profile listings highlight a business's best features in order to help potential customers find you through Google search. Again, did we mention this is a free service?

Because this powerful tool is free, you'd be wise to learn all you can and get the most out of what Google Business Profile has to offer. While this isn't a set-it-and-forget-it situation, putting in the time to optimize will provide greater search results.

Helpful Tip:

When setting up your Google Business Profile, you'll be prompted to fill in your business's "category." It's important to select a category from the drop-down that is most applicable to your business. Google uses this category to determine how relevant your business is in relation to people's search terms.



Benefits include:

✓ Increased Exposure to Potential Clients

Google Business Profile allows potential customers to connect with your business without trying. By having a completed, updated and optimized Google Business Profile listing, your business will populate in relevant searches thanks to the ability to leverage location and keyword-based strategies.

✓ Build Your Business's Reputation

From listings to reviews, Google has created several avenues to show potential customers what to expect from your business. By taking advantage of all that your Google Business Profile has to offer, you increase your online presence, which builds your trust with both Google and customers.

✓ Opportunities to Connect with Customers

Aside from helping the searcher locate your business, Google Posts allows you to share updates on any announcements, offers, events and products your business is offering.

✓ Discover Helpful Insights

Uncover what works for your customers through Google's insights. Google Business Profile Insights show you data related 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.

02 Claiming Your Google Business Profile Listing

Already have a *listing*?

No doubt, every business owner wants to be in control of their business. Claiming your Google Business Profile listing is an easy way to ensure your business's online presence exists and is accurate for those looking for services like yours.

Because this is a free tool, you'll want to milk it for everything it's worth. While it may seem like several time-consuming steps, claiming your Google Business Profile listing is one of the first steps to taking control of your business's online presence.

To get started claiming your listing:

- ☐ Search your business on Google.
- ☐ Click "Own this Business?" on the right side of the screen.
- ☐ Sign into your Gmail account, creating one if necessary.
- ☐ Once on the map on Google Business Profile, search for your location.
- ☐ If you cannot locate your listing, select "Add Your Business" and enter the correct information.
- ☐ Choose how to verify your information and follow the provided instructions, noting that verifying by mail will take 1-2 weeks.
- ☐ Navigate to the Google Business Profile page and enter in the verification code to officially claim your listing.

Need to Troubleshoot an Issue?

Claiming your Google listing isn't always a walk in the park.

Address Error

If you're experiencing an "invalid address" error, Google isn't recognizing your street location. You'll need to create it yourself.

- On a desktop computer, open Google Maps.
- Click "add a missing place," located in the sandwich menu icon
- Follow the prompts to fill in the correct information

Multiple Listings

Because sometimes multiple businesses run from the same building, Google allows listings for individual practitioners. If you're sharing a building and struggling to have each business claim a listing, you'll need to place all accounts under one Google Business Profile.

Listing Suspension

Have you popped your verification code in for a new account yet, somehow, your account lands immediate suspension? Or perhaps you've had this account for ages. Talk about a downer. You're not alone.

Listings will get suspended for content and conduct policy violations. There's no need to fret. Get a start on the process to lift the suspension. Before you submit your reinstatement request, be sure to review the Google Business Profile guidelines and restricted content guidelines to make sure your listing complies.

If someone has already created a Google Business Profile for your business, you can **request that management of the profile be handed over to you.** Select "Request Access," and you'll be guided through the process.

03 Creating a GBP Listing from Scratch

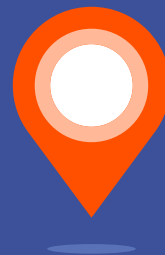
Need a new *listing*?

One of the advantages of being a small business owner is the chance to connect with your customers one-on-one the way big businesses can't — but you have to get customers first.

Having a listing helps

- Potential customers discover your company
- Current patrons stay in the know
- Display important information about your business
- Customers call and navigate to your location effortlessly

FAQ: Is it OK to not list your business's location on Google Business Profiles?



Leaving off your address reduces your profile's effectiveness.

Not listing an address for your business means you're less likely to be found by potential customers searching for services. It also doesn't boost your business's credibility. The only time a business's location shouldn't be disclosed is in the case of recovery and safe homes, and even in those cases, a separate office location is required for optimization.

Must-Use Google Business Profile Features

Map Pack

Also referred to as “local pack” or “3 pack,” are the top three organic listings with the best, most complete Google listings. Google may display these organic results below ads for other local listings.

Google Posts

This vastly under-utilized tool allows businesses to create social media-style posts right on their Google Business Profile listing. Through these Posts, current and potential customers get more information when they click on the search result listing. It’s an effective way to post events, promotions, updates, product launches and more to get the word out.

Google Guaranteed

This badge shows up on some Google search results with a white checkmark in a green circle. Businesses must purchase Google Ads to apply for the badge. Google will screen the business for qualification into the program. If a

customer comes to the business through Google and isn’t satisfied with the service, Google might refund what they paid (up to \$2,000). Google works with the business owner to investigate and resolve the case.

Reserve with Google

A relatively new service, Reserve with Google allows consumers to reserve a table or book a service appointment right from the business’s Google search results. For now, Google is limiting this service to dining, ticketed events, fitness and beauty.

Insights

This feature reports:

- How many people viewed your listing
- How and where they found it
- Any actions they took from your listing along with any other actions

04 Get the Most Out of Your Listing

Optimization

Because your Google profile is a snapshot of your business, you'll want to make sure you're highlighting your business's best features to help potential customers find you through Google search.

When optimizing your business:

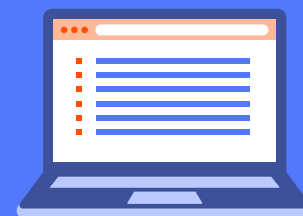
- Fill out all the information possible
- Be meticulous with the information you provide and keep it up to date
- Remember, completing your Google Business Profile listing will help Google to rank you higher in the Map Pack

When people browse Google, the first thing they'll see is your business's description. Although you have no control over this description written by the folks at Google, you can control the "From the Business" description.

Make sure to:

- Make the most out of the space by using all 750 characters provided, but keep key information in the first 250 characters
- Utilize keywords that potential customers would use to find businesses like yours

Around 90% of the whole world population only look at the first-page results.



Best Practices

Even after crafting the greatest Google Business account, the work isn't done. There 3 features you'll want to use weekly as best practice to keep your business as high on the Map Pack as possible — Pictures, Posts and Reviews.

Upload Photos

If you're thinking, "why should I bother uploading photos when they can go to my website that I linked below," then you're not thinking of the customer. By posting photos of your services and staff you allow potential customers to see what your business is about without forcing them to tour your website for info.

Showing off your business from the inside out will help potential better visualize themselves doing business with you. A daycare showcasing their staff lovingly playing with students will leave parents envisioning the care their child will receive. A massage parlor displaying images of their relaxation rooms will up the anticipation for a sore powerlifting champ.

And when customers arrive and see the photos used actually represent your business, it increases the trust they have for you.

Customers are **42% more likely** to get directions to a business if the profile has pictures.

Try this:

- Upload 1-2 photos every 7 days
- Use your company logo as your thumbnail photo
- Make sure your cover photo represents your business
- Avoid stock photos and capture quality shots of your happy customers, cheery employees at work as well as your building
- Geo-tag your pictures

Having a regular posting cadence also shows Google that you are active with your profile which, in turn, will positively impact your local ranking.

Create Posts

Simply put, Google Posts are updates businesses create that allow them to communicate with their customers using the local panel on Search and Maps. Think of them the same way you would social media posts.

Sound off about any announcements, offers, events and products your business is offering. Similar to photos, regularly posting triggers Google's algorithm and has a positive effect on your Google ranking. Consider it free advertising to take advantage of.

Keep in mind:

- Posts can be up to 300 words long
- There's the option to include an image
- Adding clickable CTAs and a date range is great for events
- Posts appear when searchers use associated branded keyword
- Google Posts expire after 7 days

Google created a way for small business owners to stand out in the crowd and connect with their customers easily. Creating Posts expands your online presence by allowing you to rule the first page of results for your brand.

This keeps consumers' focused on your business while they're searching, rather than being distracted by paid ads that can steal the spotlight. It's a free opportunity to increase website traffic and conversions.

Depending on your industry, there are several ways to use Google Posts. Perhaps you're a spa looking to announce your new line of skin care products or an award win. Maybe for the local gym, using Google Posts looks like announcing your 2-hour fitness event, or the drive-in movie theater listing their upcoming showings. If you're not sure what to post, check your marketing plan for the year. Holiday specific or new service launches are a great starting point.

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Google receives more than 63,000 searches per second on any given day making it a great tool for increasing your business's visibility. Don't let that opportunity pass you by!

Want help getting even more out of your Google Business Profile? Thryv provides Google Optimization, which includes:

- Resolution of listing claiming and other issues
- Direct verification of the listing inside Thryv
- Fully transparent profile changes
- First 30-day accelerated performance
- Expert Google Business Profile service team
- Consistent Google Business Profile in alignment with website content
- In-depth performance analytics
- Multi-point optimization program focusing on improving images, attributes, hours of operation, categories, products/services, cover photo and logo, business description, Google Posts and more.

To learn more about how Thryv can help you master Google, visit [Thryv.com](https://thryv.com).

Learn more

