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SMALL BUSINESS GUIDE:

Get Your Business Found Online

Having a website isn't enough. Use online listings to help potential customers find your business.

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When searching for an effective way to drive customer engagement, online listings should be your first stop.

Regardless of whether your business has a physical shop, multiple locations or is running solely online, an online listing is a powerful tool that helps current and future customers find you.

An effective online listing allows your business to be found easily. That means making your listing available on multiple sources and keeping the information consistently accurate.



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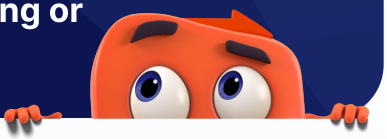
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01 Accuracy is everything

There's nothing worse than your business being ditched for a competitor all because of inconsistencies. They might seem like a small deal, but every mistake, mistype and inconsistency on your online listings make you look unprofessional and unreputable.

> **Small businesses lose about $10.3 billion annually because of wrong, missing or incomplete information.**



Get your information straight right out of the gate.

BUSINESS NAME

It might seem crazy to think that the business name you chose might not be consistent within various online listings you created, but it's possible. Check every character, abbreviation and punctuation to make sure each listing is identical.

Choose your format and stick to it to avoid accidental variations like:

- Joseph Johnson, Attorney at Law
- Joe Johnson, Attorney at Law
- Law Offices of Joseph Johnson
- Joe Johnson | Personal Injury Lawyer

ADDRESS

How will people come to your business if they can't find you? Be precise in your address and spell out everything from South to Street.

PHONE NUMBER

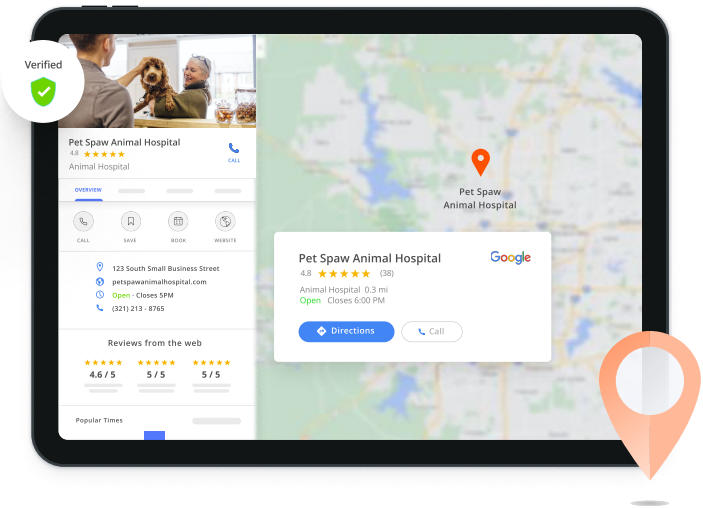
Are you using your personal number, a partner's number or your business's landline on the listing? Regardless of which number you'll use, it needs to be the exact same number for every listing.

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73% of people lose trust in a brand when a business's listing shows incorrect information.

Go the extra mile by adding:

- Hours of operation, including holiday hours and closings
- A link to your company website
- Directions to your store
- Photos of your business in action
- Ratings and reviews
- Business description
- Products and services offered



PRO TIP

If you're worried about missing calls, consider forwarding calls to your personal cell.

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02 Claim Your Listing



Where are your customers finding you?

CLAIM YOUR LISTING ON THESE TOP SITES.

Google Business Profile

yahoo! Small Business

Bing Places for business

DON'T STOP THERE!

More than 100 websites could have either no information on your business or could be displaying incorrect or out-of-date information. Consider your industry and visit the sites most relevant for your target audience.

If you're not manually managing every listing, a data aggregator is likely taking the initiative to supply what it thinks is your correct information to the top listing sites.



Checking for Inconsistencies and Correcting Them

You may have set yourself up for success, but it doesn't end there. It's vital to consistently monitor your current listings and any new ones that pop up for accuracy.

Your listings could change as often as every 6 days.

As the internet gathers information, it makes adjustments. Something as simple as a customer checking into your business on Facebook at an odd hour or wrong location could end up affecting one or several of your listings.

WEEKLY TO-DO

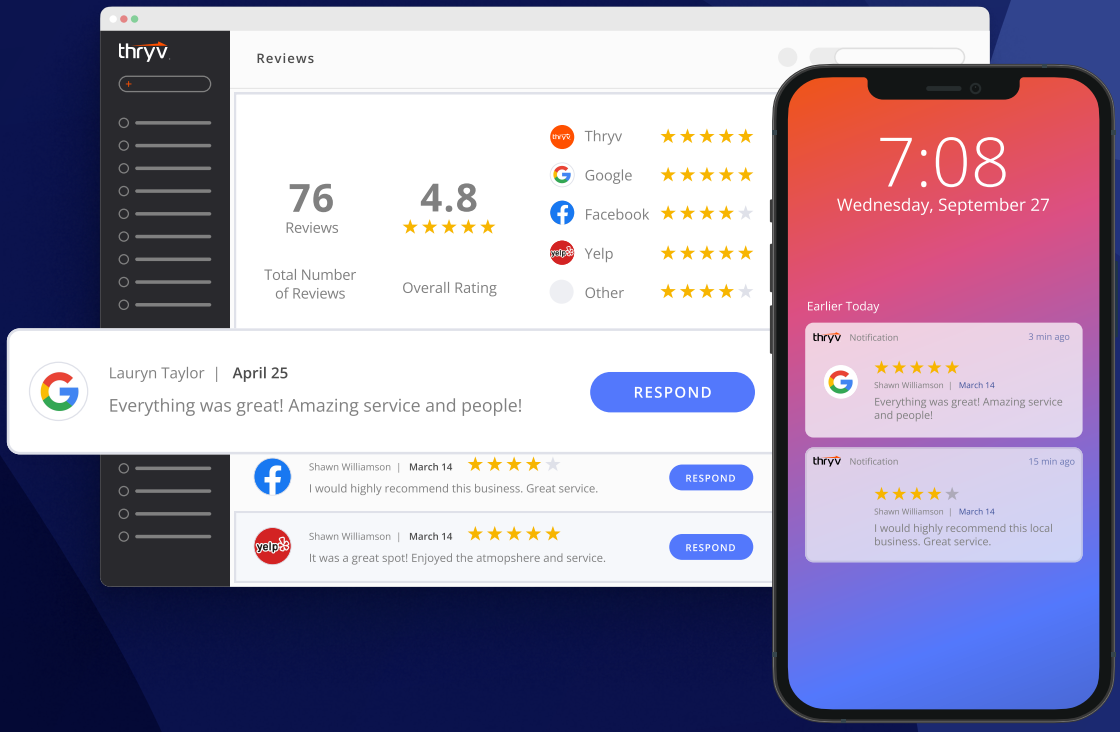
Check listing sites to ensure your business's information is still correct.

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03 Encourage and Monitor Reviews

Ratings and reviews are a necessary component of your business being found online. Customers vouching for your business contribute to your SEO, and the more positive reviews you have, the more likely your business is to show up as a trustworthy option for searchers.



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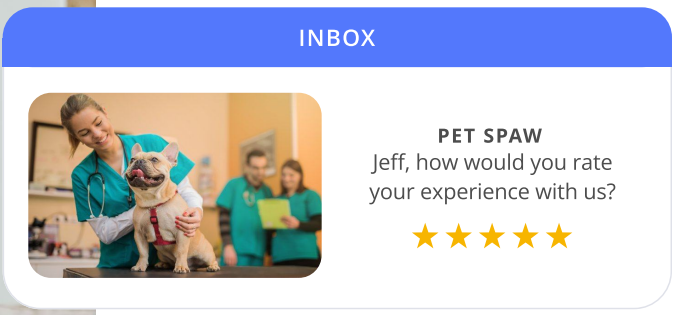
04 Claim Your Listing

When you finish a service, take advantage of that moment and ask how everything went. When you request feedback from your happy customers, you're showing you care about their experience.

> **Gaining more reviews is as easy as asking your loyal customers to shout you out online.**







When your customers feel that love, they're happy to share how your business is transforming their life or lifestyle.

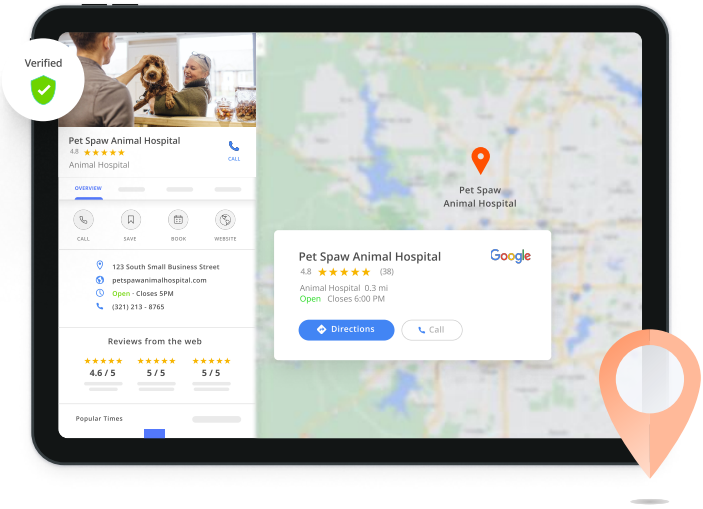
You don't have to force these moments. When your customer service is top-notch, your clients will naturally want to sing your praises from the rooftop. It's time to give your customers something to talk about.

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05 Address Negative Reviews

Don't let a one-star rating rile you up. Most customers who leave negative reviews have their reasons, such as:

- They feel wronged and want some form of compensation.
- They want to inform you of where you fell short so you can get better in the long run.
- They want to help other potential customers get the most out of their choices.



PRO TIP

If you're worried about missing calls, consider forwarding calls to your personal cell.

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What to Say to Negative Reviewers

Check out this negative review example from our fictional salon, Small Town Big Cuts. Let's explore what they got right and where they went wrong.

REVIEW:

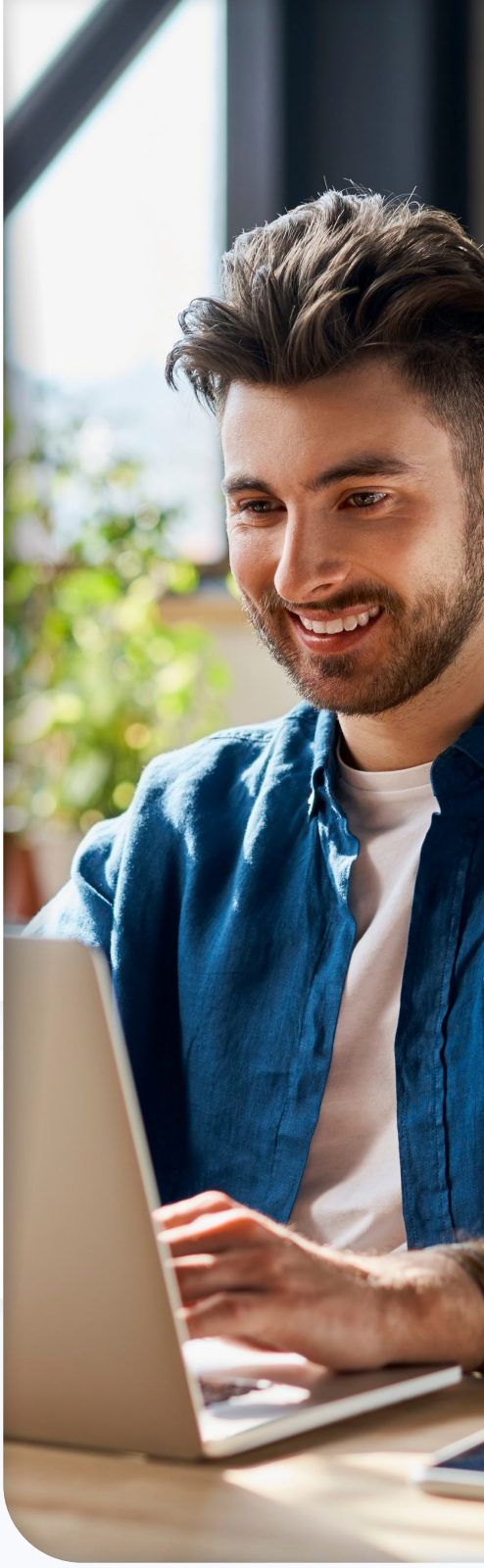
"I walked in and received no greeting. I was just asked if I made an appointment. A woman asked my name, then told me next time to make an appointment. There won't be a 'this time,' much less a 'next time.' She acted as if she were doing me a favor by letting me spend my money at the salon. To top it off, as I walked out, she gave a snarky 'have a nice day.' Totally unprofessional, and I wouldn't trust them with a haircut."

— Johnathon Doeman

RESPONSE:

"We apologize that this was your experience in our salon. We appreciate the honesty and feedback. We are always striving to do better and can only grow from our shortcomings."

Can you spot where they went right? What about where they fell short?



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What to Say to Negative Reviewers

PRO TIP

If a customer seems inconsolable or is blatantly exaggerating an issue you're already aware of, it may be best not to respond at all.

Let's take a look:

The response contained an apology, appreciation and acknowledged the desire and need to grow. While the apology had the opportunity to seem genuine, it's very clear that the responder pasted this template.

By adding using the customer's name and addressing the issue, the salon would have a greater chance at redeeming themselves with this customer. Because they didn't resolve the issue, there's a chance this upset customer might come back with a little more bite on the next reply. Talk about sparking a buzz online.

Let's see what a more complete response looks like.

Hi Johnathon,

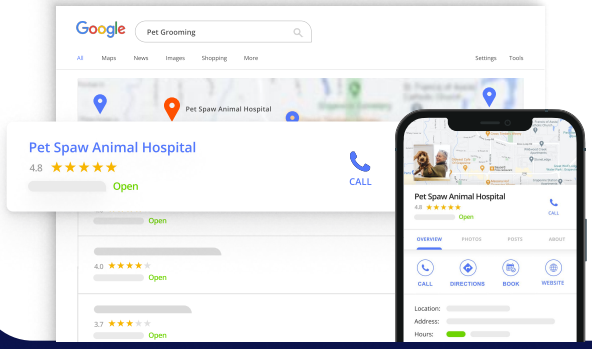
We truly apologize that this was your experience in our salon. We hold our staff to a higher standard than what you received. We appreciate your honesty and feedback. We are always striving to do better and can only grow from our shortcomings.

A leader in our salon team would love to make this right and show you the star treatment you should expect from Small Town Big Cuts. Please reach out with your contact information and any other feedback you would like to share at contact@stbc.com.

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06 Bump Your Listings to the Top

Many online listing sites will let you bump your listing to the top of the search but, it comes at a price. This is called pay-per-click. This form of advertising your business for local search is not a bad idea.



Each site has a different way they allow businesses to push listings to the top. Try and few and observe how they do over time. Determine which 1-3 are giving you the most bang for your buck and then pay for a few extra clicks.

Are you ready to get serious about your online listing?

Because your listings could change online as quickly as every six days, that's more than 50 times a year that your business's listing information is at risk of being incorrect. No one wants to deal with that every week. Get back to running your business and let Thryv take that work off your hands.

Learn more

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