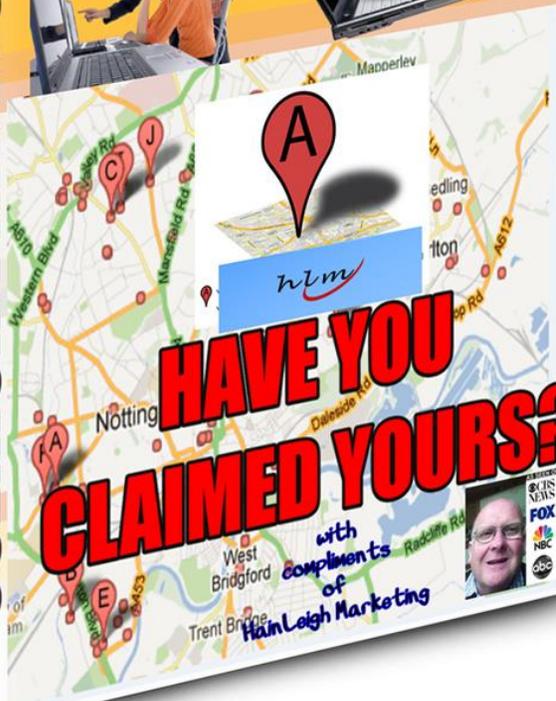


HOW TO CLAIM THE GOOGLE MY BUSINESS LISTING

GOOGLE MY BUSINESS



HAVE YOU CLAIMED YOURS?

with compliments of
Hain Leigh Marketing



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Key Points

Business Profile on Google is a free business listing from Google My Business that helps you stand out when users are looking for businesses like yours on Google Search or Google Maps. Learn how to claim and verify your profile so you can manage the information that potential customers see there.

1. Why should I claim and verify my Business Profile?

A Business Profile on Google is a fast, free and convenient way for users to find you online. It shows important information like your business name, logo, address, and phone number. You can also use your profile to show

helpful information like changes to your opening hours – over Christmas, for example – and start conversations with users by responding to reviews.

First, however, you'll need to create or claim your profile, then verify it. You can also then choose and claim a short name and URL so users can easily find you in Google Maps. This process puts you in control of the information people see about your business across Google Search and Google Maps.

Service-area businesses:

A service-area business is a business that doesn't serve customers at its own address, for example, instead of being a cafe-owner with a bricks-and-mortar cafe, you run a delivery service.

2. How can I create or claim my Business Profile on Google?

The first step to creating or claiming your Business Profile on Google is to search for your company on Google. If a Business Profile doesn't appear, you should create one. If a Business Profile on Google already exists (which sometimes happens when Google aggregates information from third parties), you should claim it to make sure the details are correct and complete. A profile could also already exist if someone else owns it, in which case you will have to request ownership of it.

Creating a profile

To create a Business Profile on Google, sign into your Google Account. If you don't already have an account, you can easily create one.

Next, go to the [Google My Business](https://www.google.com/business/) website and click "Start Now". Type in the name and address of your business and enter a phone number or website address when asked. You may also be asked to move a marker to show its location on a map.

Snippet

Choose a business category from the menu, and if you are a service-area business like a gardener, you will be asked if you would like your business address to show on Google Maps. If you do not accept customers at your physical location, or do not have a shopfront, you should select 'No, I prefer not to'. From there, you can choose to show the region you serve instead of your business address. Then highlight the areas you are willing to travel to for customers, by either postcode or city name. Click 'Continue' to finish creating your profile and then move onto the verification step.

You can also create a profile through the [Google My Business](#) mobile app, but if you want to add details like service area, you should create it using desktop instead

Claiming a Business Profile.

To claim an existing profile, sign into [Google My Business](#) on either desktop or the mobile app using your Google Account and click "Add your business" to edit the details. Then select your business category and whether you deliver goods or services. If you serve an area rather than operating from premises, you can also add the region you serve.

Lastly, read and agree to the terms and conditions and click "Continue" to move on to verification. If your business appears on Google Maps, you can also claim it here by tapping on "Claim this business" in the business information panel.

3. How do I verify my Business Profile on Google?

To ensure that only genuine representatives of a business are able to manage and edit a Business Profile on Google, you'll be required to verify that you own or are responsible for the business before your changes go live and you can begin sharing posts and official photos (labelled "From the owner").

Verifying your profile is a two-step process. Make sure you don't change any of your business information before the final step as this may result in delays. There are several options for completing verification:

Verify by postcard.



Google will send you a postcard through the mail with a verification code that you enter on the Google My Business website. To request the card, sign into [Google My Business](#) and click "Verify Now" on a computer or "Send Postcard" in the app.

Make sure the address shown is the exact street address for your business, including any floor or building numbers and avoid unofficial information such as "on the crossroads". If the address shown is wrong, make changes before clicking "Verify Now" or "Send Postcard". You can also choose to add an "Optional contact name" to help your card reach you. Your card should take no more than 14 days to arrive. If a card hasn't arrived after 14 days, login and click "Request another code".

Once your card arrives, sign into [Google My Business](#) again, choose the Business Profile you want to complete and click "Verify Now" on desktop or "Enter code" in the app. If you have more than one location, check you have selected the right one and click "Verify location". Enter the 5-digit code from your postcard and submit. You have now verified your Business Profile on Google.

Verify by phone.

Some businesses may be able to verify their profile by phone. If this is the case, the option to "Verify by phone" will show up automatically when you request verification. If it doesn't, follow the postcard process described above instead.



To verify by phone, you should be able to answer your business phone number when you click on "Verify now". An automated message will tell you your code, and you'll be prompted to enter it on the [Google My Business](https://www.google.com/business/) website.

On the Google My Business app, click "Call me now". An automated message will provide the code, which you should enter into the app, then click the arrow symbol. You have now verified your Business Profile on Google.

Verify by email.

A limited number of businesses will be able to verify by email. Sign into [Google My Business](#) on a computer and click "Verify Now". If you see this option, choose "Email" from the list. Check your email account and either click "Verify Now" in the message or enter the code from the email into [Google My Business](#).

If you are using the app and the option appears, choose "Send email" and then enter the code you receive then click "Submit". You have now verified your Business Profile on Google.

If the email option is not displayed, you'll need to choose an alternative verification option.

Verify instantly using Google Search Console

If you are registered with Google Search Console and sign into [Google My Business](#) with the same email account, you may be able to verify your profile instantly. Signing up for Google Search Console helps you monitor how well your website is doing in Google Search, allowing you to use those insights to improve your content, so your website performs even performs even better on the search results page.

For example, a clothing retailer may want to add its pop-up shop business listing to Google Maps. With its website already registered with Google Search Console and a linked email address, the business owner can verify their new [Google My Business](#) profile immediately and start adding images and reviews to capture more potential customers.

Business Profile on Google gives you the chance to show your business to potential customers at no extra cost. Taking the time to claim and verify

your business listing helps you make the most of that opportunity — so get started today.

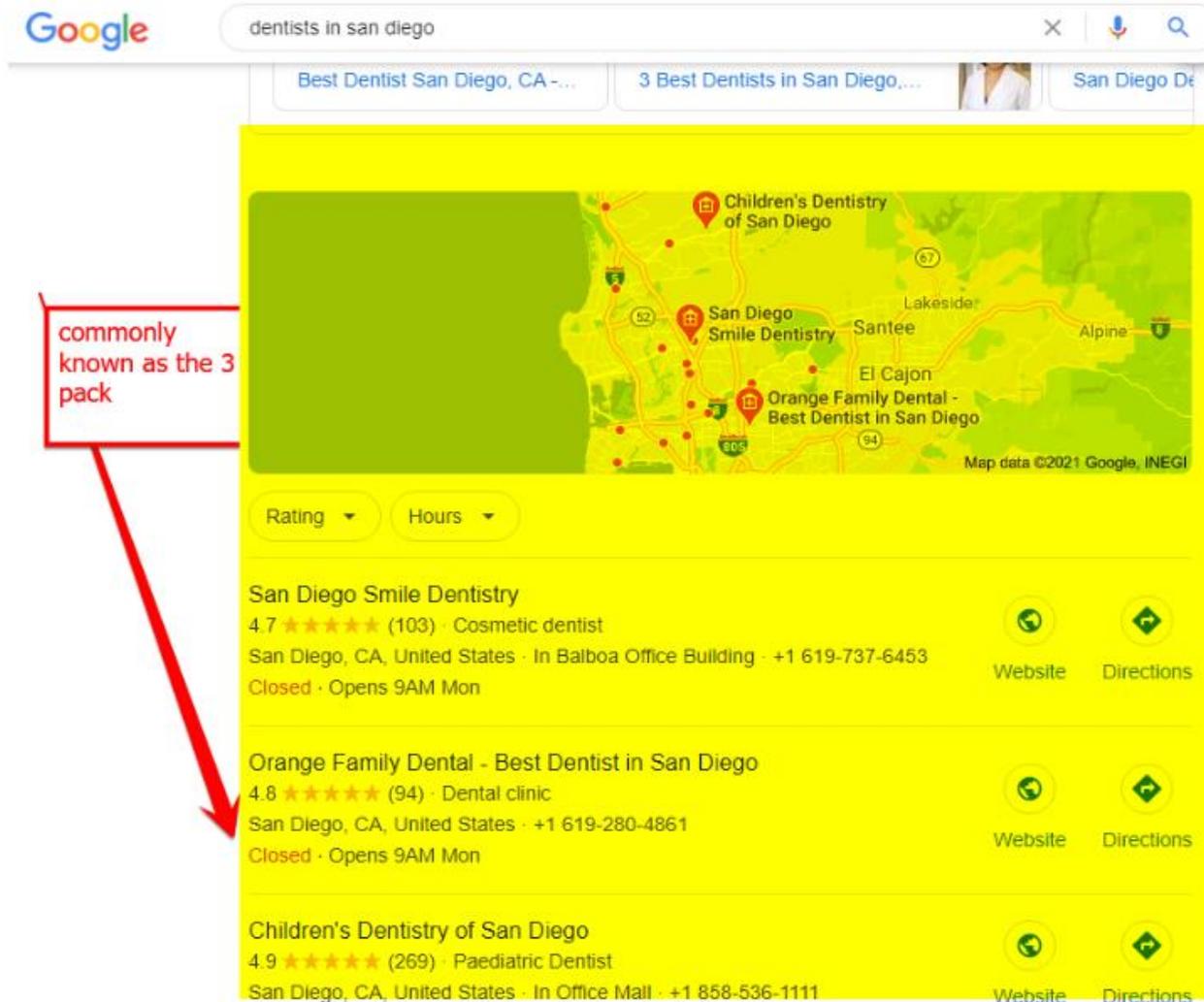
How to make changes to your Business Profile on Google

Key Points

Whether it's your first time using Business Profile on Google or you've had a Business Profile for a while and want to enhance it, updating your details is quick and easy. Learn how to make changes to your business listing and improve your online presence.

1. Adjusting your opening hours
2. Writing your description

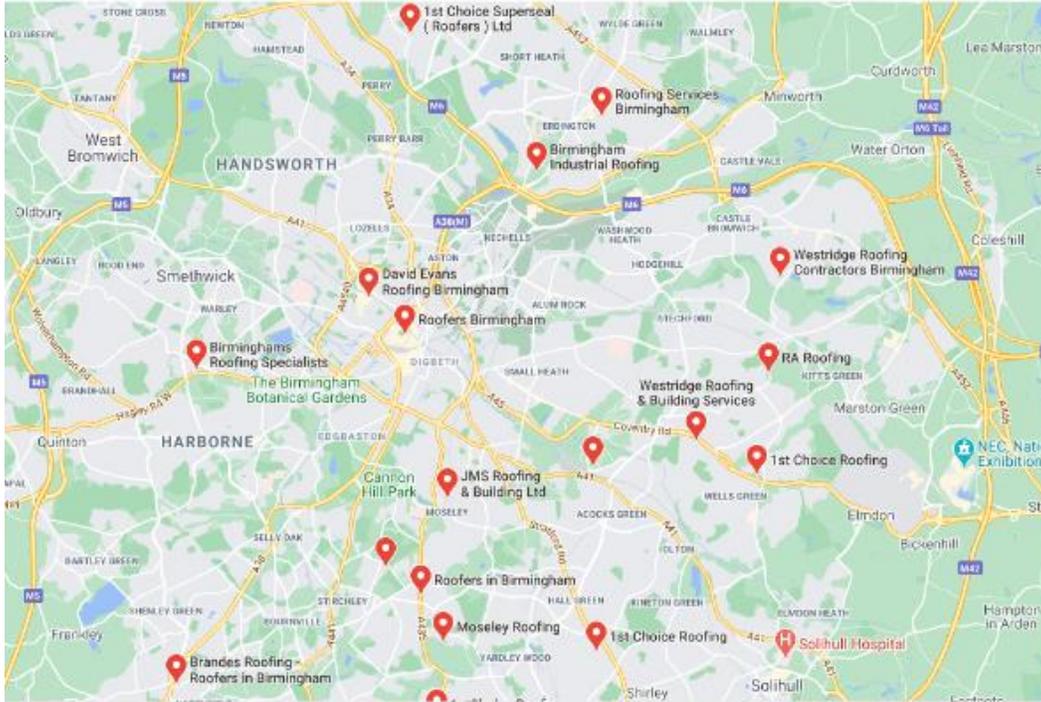
3. Choosing attributes
4. Adding photos
5. Handling user reviews
6. Sharing posts



It's not possible to have a review removed just because it is negative, or you don't agree with it. Instead, Business Profile on Google offers businesses the chance to publicly respond to reviews so that potential customers can see both sides of the story.

1. Adjusting your opening hours

To change your opening hours, sign in to Business Profile on Google, choose 'Info' from the menu and select 'Hours'. Use the drop-down arrows to set the 'Opens at' and 'Closes at' times for each day. To put a break in your opening hours, if you close for lunch, for example, you can create two entries for the same day.



After adding normal hours, you can schedule 'Special Hours' that will display your opening hours on public holidays or for special events. Sign into Business Profile on Google and click 'Special Hours'. Choose a holiday from the list or use 'Add new date' to enter your own. Click 'Closed' or choose new opening times, then click 'Apply'. If it is a public holiday and you don't select 'Special Hours', Google will automatically warn users that your hours may differ from the ones displayed.

You can also show late-night opening for special occasions, such as a toy shop in the run-up to Christmas. Updating your opening hours keeps potential customers informed, helping them avoid a wasted journey if your business is closed.

Snippet

When people search for a business on Google, they may see information about that business in a box that appears to the right of their search results. The information in the box, called the knowledge panel, can help customers discover and contact your business.

2. Writing your description

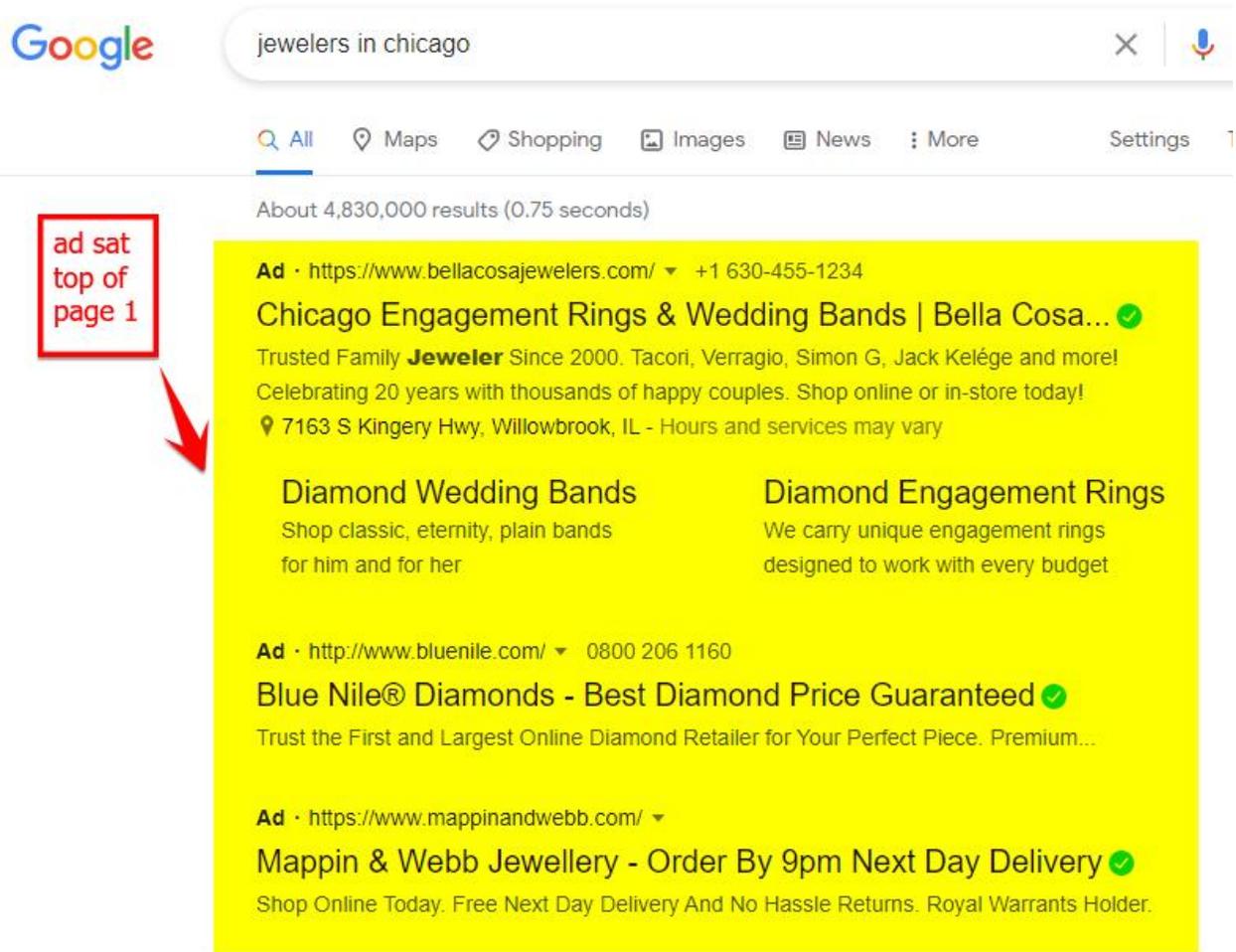
To add a description of your business or update an existing one, sign into Business Profile on Google, choose 'Info' and click on the pencil icon next to 'Add business description'.

Put the most important information first and don't waste characters on information that already appears in your listing, like your address or website. Focus on interesting details about your business that are genuinely informative and help distinguish you from the competition such as "family-owned business" for a restaurant or "25 state-of-the-art treadmills" for a gym.

Your business description brings your business to life, offering users more detail and helping to entice them in. Double-check spelling and grammar before publishing, avoid slang to ensure the description is understood and avoid over-promoting. Make your business sound as inviting as possible but avoid including statements like 'Super sale!' as this contravenes Google's business description guidelines.

3. Choosing attributes

Attributes are a chance to show off key features that your business has to offer. To add or edit an attribute, sign into Business Profile on Google, select 'Info' from the menu and click the pencil next to 'Attributes'. Scroll through the ones available for your business, then select 'Apply'.



Business Profile on Google automatically suggests the attributes that are most appropriate to your business. A cafe may choose from "Free Wi-Fi" and "Outdoor Seating", while a grocer might mention "Free Delivery". Check the accessibility attributes to see if you can click "Yes" against the criteria for wheelchair-accessible entrances, toilets, seating, parking, and lifts to add these attributes to your business listing too.

4. Adding photos

Your business listing features a logo, photos, and videos. To upload photos and videos, sign into Business Profile on Google, select 'Photos' and the type of photo or video you want then click 'Choose photo' and upload. Select a range of business-specific photos to show off all your company's

features from exteriors to products, and then set your preferred cover photo.

According to Think with Google research, photos can make or break a potential customer's decision to visit your business, so make sure they're the best they can be. A good quality photo is between 10kb and 5MB in size with a 720x720 pixel resolution. Videos should also be 720 pixels or higher, up to 100mb in size and a maximum of 30 seconds long. Images and videos should be in focus and well lit. Your visuals will be most effective if they are a true and accurate representation of potential customers will see when they visit you.

If you've filled out your core information (phone number, hours, etc.) you can also have your logo displayed at the top right-hand side of your profile. This gives your business a further branding opportunity and instantly shows your user what your official logo and branding is.

5. Handling user reviews.

Occasionally, someone may leave a review that violates Google's policy, because it is offensive, off-topic or even illegal. It's not possible for businesses to remove reviews themselves, so if you identify one that breaks the rules, you'll need to flag it up for Google. Sign into Business Profile on Google and visit 'Reviews' on the menu, find the inappropriate review and click the three-dot menu to select 'Flag as inappropriate'.

It's not possible to have a review removed just because it is negative, or you don't agree with it. Instead, Business Profile on Google offers businesses the chance to publicly respond to reviews so that potential customers can see both sides of the story. This gives you the opportunity to apologise and assure others this was a one-off situation, for example, or invite the unhappy customer to get in touch to discuss the issue further. Some negative ratings aren't always a bad thing, as Think with Google research shows consumers trust honest reviews.

6. Sharing posts

Posts give businesses like yours the space to share with their audience. You can use a post to tell customers about:

Events like a seasonal brunch or in-store event
Special offers like sales and discounts
Product/stock updates like the arrival of new merchandise
Announcements such as late opening hours or a new store location

To make a post, sign into Business Profile on Google and click 'Create post' on the menu. On the next screen, choose a type of post such as offers or events, then click on the fields to add photos, videos, text, and a button. Choose 'Preview' to review your post and 'Back' to make changes or 'Publish' if you are ready to share it on your profile.

You could write up to 1,500 characters for each post but short — between 150 and 300 characters — tends to be more effective. While you don't need to include things like your business name, make sure you don't forget any important details like how long an event last. Posts can be featured on your Business Profile for seven days. After that, they'll only appear in the "posts" tab of your listing on mobile.

Making the most of your profile is simple. Keep your ideal customers in mind with every edit, and you'll start seeing the benefits in no time.

3 ways to improve your Business Profile on Google

Key Points

It can sometimes feel difficult to stand out from the crowd online, especially for new or smaller businesses. If you want to improve the chances of users noticing you on Google and Google Maps, a Business Profile on Google is a free and easy way to make an impact and help potential customers find out about your business

Business Profile on Google is one of the most important digital marketing tools that businesses have available to them. To get started, simply claim, and verify your free profile and fill out your business details. Once the profile is complete, it will provide key information neatly and in one place in the form of a business listing, so that users can learn more about what you offer.

It's important to keep your profile up-to-date and ensure everything it contains is accurate, but you should also try to make it relevant and compelling to new potential customers.

Here are three simple tips to improve your Business Profile on Google.

- 1. Provide as much information as possible.*
- 2. Encourage existing customers to share reviews.*
- 3. Inspire people by posting regular content.*

When people use Google search, they want the right information delivered as quickly as possible. Business Profile on Google can allow you to deliver everything users need in a neat and attractive format that they're already familiar with.

1. Provide as much information as possible.

Once you've claimed your profile, claim a short name and URL for your business. With this URL, you can easily refer customers back to your Profile to make a booking or to write a review after a visit. It's also important to fill in as much information about your business as possible. As well as basics like your business name and address, your Business Profile is a great place to share photos of your shopfront, include your business logo, your store's opening hours and a phone number or email address, so potential customers know how to contact you. By providing these details, you can ensure that potential customers are able to find what they're looking for quickly and easily.

Let's say a bakery in Leeds wants to take advantage of its Business Profile as part of a wider strategy to increase its morning footfall. The owner could start by claiming their business profile and filling out the basic information. As a result, potential customers who are seeking a new breakfast spot might stumble across the bakery's business listing on Google Maps and decide to visit because they can see the opening hours and get walking directions from their location.

Next, the bakery could add an eye-catching cover photo and photos of its range of baked goods and cozy indoor seating area. This will help new potential customers see that there are breakfast items on offer and let them know that the venue has seats available for people to eat in. Simply by providing some basic details, the bakery has made it more likely that those browsing for somewhere to eat breakfast might decide to try them out.

Call-to-action

A call to action is a message that is designed to encourage users to do something. Often this will simply be to click a link and keep reading, but it can also be used to generate sales or convince users to subscribe to a newsletter.

2. Encourage existing customers to share reviews.

Research from Think with Google shows that 88% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations, so they can serve as a powerful marketing tool for your business. Each Business Profile on Google prominently displays a star rating out of five—based on aggregated user reviews—as well as short written descriptions of a visitor's experience if a customer chooses to leave one. This feedback is an important and useful part of Business Profile on Google, helping you understand what people love most about your business and areas that could be improved.

A coffee shop in Brighton, for example, might notice that it only has a handful of reviews on its Business Profile on Google. A competitor on the same street, however, has hundreds of reviews and a high star rating. The coffee shop owner could simply put a sign up in the window encouraging new visitors to leave them a review. With just a little effort, the coffee shop could soon attract a stream of new reviews—which will make the business look much more appealing to new potential customers.

Businesses also have the option of responding to reviews on their Business Profile on Google, and the reviewer will be notified when a merchant responds. This is a great opportunity to say "thank you" if a visitor leaves a

positive review or take action to resolve a problem if you receive negative feedback.

Snippet

There are so many ways to increase awareness for your brand, business, or company, that it can become overwhelming to consider all the technical, seemingly complicated options available to invest in. A very easy, free, and incredibly helpful tactic that any businesses can implement is to claim their Google My Business location.

3. Inspire people by posting regular content.

Business Profile on Google enables you to do more than share basic facts about your business. They can also be used to connect with potential customers and highlight new products or special offers through posts. These appear directly within the profile and provide additional content that may be of interest to users, such as:

fresh images
up to 300 words of text
a call-to-action with a link

When potential customers search using relevant keywords on Google or Google Maps, posts from your business will be visible below the key information in your Business Profile.

A beauty salon in Grantham could use a post to display a simple call-to-action that asks potential customers to visit a page on its website to view availability and schedule an appointment. This makes it clear that treatments can be booked directly from the search results page. When browsing, potential customers may feel more inclined to choose this salon over another because the owner has highlighted how easy it is to make a booking.

When people use Google search, they want the right information delivered as quickly as possible. A Business Profile on Google allows you to provide everything users need in a neat and attractive format that's already familiar.

Once you've claimed your profile, verified it and filled out your information, you'll soon learn how valuable it is for connecting with existing and potential customers—and, ultimately, growing your business.

What showing up on Google Maps means for your business

Key Points

These days, more and more people are using Google Maps to decide where to go, which presents an important opportunity for your business to engage new potential customers. By taking advantage of Google My Business and setting up a Business Profile on Google - a free online listing that lets you share key information about your business, products or services - you can become easier to discover and more appealing to potential customers. Learn how a strong presence on Google Maps can benefit your business below:-

1. *Help users find and view your location.*
2. *Start conversations with potential customers.*
3. *Drive more traffic to your website*

4. Showcase your business with images.

5. Increase footfall by listing your open hours.

6. Build your reputation with reviews.

When Google Maps users are thinking about a destination, lots of them want a glimpse of what to expect when they arrive. That sneak peek can spark excitement in potential customers, and that enthusiasm is reflected in their search behavior.

1. Help users find and view your location.

The first step to helping potential customers find your physical location is to verify your profile on [Google My Business](#). Once verified, business owners can submit the location of their store and it will appear on Google Maps. Google users will then be able to access directions to the store with the tap of a finger, and the business will appear prominently in mobile search results. These outcomes mean your business has the best chance of attracting new potential customers.

When Google users are on the move, they want to know where they're going. With no presence on Google Maps or if your profile is incomplete, you could be missing out on potential customers. Each month, Google delivers billions of local searches, and more than 30% of all mobile searches are related to location. Make sure potential customers know how to find you.

For businesses that travel to where a customer is rather than having a physical shopfront, it's also possible to show a service area radius rather

than highlighting the specific location of the business itself on Google Maps.

Local results

Local results appear for people who search for businesses and places near their location. They're shown in a number of places across Maps and Search. For example, you'll probably see local results if you search for "Italian restaurant" from your mobile device. Google will try to show you the kind of nearby restaurant that you'd like to visit.

2. Start conversations with potential customers.

The internet has changed the way people interact with businesses, but many shoppers still like to pick up the phone to shops before they make a purchase. Google delivers hundreds of millions of calls every month, and on Google Maps, placing a call is as simple as tapping the phone icon.

Whether it's to reserve a table for dinner or enquire about a product, offering potential customers the chance to talk on the phone will help them make their decision. Offering a quick and easy way for potential customers to get in touch could give you an edge over your competitors.

3. Drive more traffic to your website.

Having a complete Business Profile can help drive more traffic to your website as well as your physical store. When you include a link to your website, people who discover your business on Google Maps can access it with a single tap.

Google Maps users who are looking at local businesses are often deciding where they want to go. Including a link to your site gives them the opportunity to learn more about you when they're deciding whether to make a purchase.

4. Showcase your business with images.

When Google Maps users are thinking about a destination, lots of them want a glimpse of what to expect when they arrive. That sneak peek can spark excitement in potential customers, and that enthusiasm is reflected in their search behavior. Hungry people, for example, love to look at food when deciding where to eat. According to Think with Google, over the past two years, mobile searches for "menus" have increased by 55%, which shows how important images can be if you're hoping to attract people to your restaurant.

It's not just restaurants though – all businesses can benefit from uploading photos to their Business Profile. Google research shows that businesses with images get 42% more requests for directions. For business owners, adding and updating photos on Google Maps is easy; once you upload them to your profile, they'll automatically appear in the business listing when users make a relevant search.

5. Increase footfall by listing your open hours.

There's nothing worse than being excited to visit a venue only to discover it's closed when you arrive. Business owners can help potential customers avoid disappointment by listing their opening hours on their Business Profile on Google. This means that Google Maps users will see a closed sign when you're not open and they can filter their searches based on which stores are open now. It will also display a "closing soon" tag if customers need to hurry to catch you.

6. Build your reputation with reviews.

A complete profile gives your potential customers everything they need to visit your store and make a purchase. But that's true for the other businesses that appear on Google Maps too. If Google users are trying to choose between two options, there's nobody they trust more than each other: positive reviews can make them more comfortable with using a business.

Business owners can respond to reviews of their store through the dashboard. If you'd like to receive more reviews, try putting up a sign in your store reminding people to leave their thoughts on Google Maps. You could also have staff mention this to happy customers after they've made a purchase. Businesses who have claimed their short names can also request reviews directly from customers by sending their custom URL via email or message.

Responding to reviews is an opportunity to both build brand loyalty with existing customers and engage with potential new ones. Those who look at your reviews and replies on Google Maps will feel reassured that your business cares about the service it provides and takes feedback seriously.

Completing these steps is easy with [Google My Business](#) and could help attract new potential customers to your store. The more discoverable you are on Google Maps, the easier it is to appeal to potential customers and get them excited about what you offer. It also provides you with valuable feedback from past visitors — and gives you a way to entice them back for more.

Just in Case You Were Confused!

Google Places vs. Google Local vs. Google Plus – The Mystery Revealed

It's no surprise that Google keeps their Search Engine algorithm a secret, but more recently Google users have been befuddled over the difference between some of Google's products. There's Google+, which seems just like Facebook but with a different interface. And then there's Google Places, but also Google+ Local, both of which are essentially online business listings. What's the difference, is there any difference, and where does my company belong? After some investigative research, we've come up with the answer.

Google Places

Before there was a Google+ and Google+ Local, there was Google Places. In fact, it still exists today, and many people still use it. Businesses create a listing for themselves on Google Maps by opening a Google Places account. When users do a search on Google for 'hardware stores in Newport, Beach' for example, businesses with Google Places accounts can show up in the Search Results.

If you click on the arrows next to their name, you will see their Google Places account information pop up to the right.

Google Places still exists, and you can manage it just as you did before. However, Google is moving towards a more social Places and Maps experience, one that incorporates their more recent products – Google+ and Google Local.

Google+

To step into the social media world, Google created Google+. It is essentially Google's version of Facebook. There are some differentiating features, such as Google Hangouts and Circles, but the idea is the same. However, it's becoming increasingly important that you have a Google+ account, especially as a business. Businesses can create a Google+ for Business Page (similar for Facebook Pages) and identify your company as a local business. There is also rumor that this helps your websites SEO.

Warning! This PDF is a guide only and was correct at the time, but Google is constantly making changes and up-dates. If you would like us to do it all for you full details can be found here:- [GMB DFY](#)

Notes