

Guide To Local Citations For Local SEO

Local citations can be confusing and time-consuming. It is easy to mess up and can be a pain to correct. Taking the time to understand and utilize citations will help your business' local SEO tremendously. We will review what citations are, why they matter, and how to optimize and obtain them.

This guide will ease the pain of figuring this out all on your own. In addition, we will improve your knowledge on the subject and make sure you are on the right path to bring more traffic to your business.

What Are Local Citations?

A local citation, or sometimes referred to as an NAP, is a reference to your business' name, address, and phone number on a website that isn't yours. There are many forms of citations, though, they will often present them in an online business directory.

There are many different types of citations and websites to facilitate them, but certain sites are said to be necessary for growth when it comes to local SEO. Those key sites are Google My Business, Yelp, Facebook, and Bing Maps.

While the name, address, and phone number of your business are the minimum information required, a lot of websites will allow you to add much more information.

Additionally, it is worth noting that citations management and link-building are two different things.

There are also two types of local citations. The first is structured citations, which are the most common. Structured citations are citations from sites that Google already trusts. Choosing the directories that are most relevant to your business' industry is very important. This will help Google get the right people to your site or front door.

The other type of citation is unstructured citations. Unstructured citations are not found as easily by search engines. They are found in blog posts or articles where your business is featured or mentioned. They use three determining factors to help find your business and determine the value of the citation. Those factors are web authority, industry relevance, and location.

Why Do Local Citations Matter For Your Local Business?

If you want your business to be prioritized on any search engine, properly placed citations will significantly help that endeavor. It helps provide evidence or proof of your business' existence. The more trusted online directories your business has citations in, the more likely it will rank highly. Therefore, it is an important ranking factor of local SEO.

Certain online directories are often on the first page of Google a lot. So, having your NAP or local citations inside their directory will give you more front-page opportunities.

Also, when you are a part of certain directories, your referral traffic may go up, so finding directories with a loyal fan base will help increase your referral traffic.

Improve NAP Consistency

Having a consistent name, address, and phone number in all the directories that contain your citations is called NAP consistency. According to many studies, NAP consistency is important for your local SEO ranking.

Boost Credibility With Google

Boosting your business' credibility is fairly straightforward. One good way to do so is to have your customers leave Google reviews. Customers use Google reviews to help them decide whether or not they should trust your business.

Keeping your local citations accurate and consistent is a big part of building trust with Google and your customers. Therefore, ensure that your information is accurate whenever you are working with local citations. Getting information wrong can and will decrease your credibility with Google, so be thorough and proofread when submitting your information.

Direct High-Quality Links Back To Your Site & Social Accounts

The quality of a link relies on trust, trust from the search engines and the users. The higher the website's domain authority, the higher the quality of the link.

Links can also hurt your business, so you must be careful about where your links are coming from and if they work. Where the link leads to and what information the user first sees is vital to the link's relevance. If your link is not bringing the person to the right information, it doesn't help

them. Organizing your website and the information it obtains will increase the value of the user experience. Make sure the link brings them to where they actually intend to go when they click the link.

How To Optimize Citations For Your Business

We mentioned NAP consistency and reviews earlier, but they also help when optimizing your business' citations for the same reasons. Additionally, there are a few other ways to achieve your optimization goals.

One of those ways is your business descriptions. Citations that have a proper description of your business will help search engines find keywords or recognize your business and its purpose. When they allow you to add a business category, you should do so. This will lead to your business falling into the correct industry, and search engines will provide your information to the right customers more often.

We have also seen how links can lead customers to your web page. Well-placed citations will bring more trust to your site and your business, leading to more traffic and conversions.

Taking and posting photos of your business is another efficient way of building your citation optimization. This can lead to customers visiting or buying from your shop at a higher rate.

How Do You Obtain Local Citations?

We talked about the two types of local citations. They are structured and unstructured. For structured citations, you just need to find websites that best suit your business and submit the information. You may also search for data aggregators that will help you get your citations in appropriate and popular directories so that you don't have to do it manually.

Unstructured citations may take a little more time because your business or product has to be mentioned in online content. As stated earlier, that could be a blog post or an article. This could take time and effort, but the outcome drives people to your business. Growing your business in popularity or sponsoring creators or writers will potentially expedite this process. You could give your product for review as well. Getting mentioned in these types of content will grow your unstructured citations.

Get Your Business Out There

Finding the best path for you and your business may take some time, but using that time to avoid mistakes and make good decisions is more than worth the effort. Do your research, and don't rush this process. Your business will find its footing, but you don't want to lead it into quicksand.

Be careful and proactive. Provide Google with the right information to help your customers find you and watch your business steadily grow and thrive in time.