

The Importance of Local SEO for Small Businesses in 2022

How can you command sales if you don't have authority online?
How can you build authority if you ignore SEO on your business website?

Local search engine optimization is not for every business. It's for companies with physical stores that serve a particular geographical area.

Small businesses can differentiate themselves from their competitors with the help of local SEO.

When you pick up your phone and search "best Italian restaurant," what you see is Italian restaurants close to you.


best italian restuarant 🇺🇸 0 ★ ✕

Keyword difficulty: 75.06% (for google.com database) — View [full report](#) for this keyword


Power

🔍 162,600,092 📄 N/A 🔑 N/A


Restaurants ⋮ 4.0+ rating ▾ Hours ▾ Your past visits ▾




Basilico Italian Restaurant
4.2 ★★★★★ (280) · ~~NN~~ · Italian
15 Musa Yar' Adua St
👤 "Want the **best Italian** food in Lagos?"



La Veranda Italian Cuisine
4.2 ★★★★★ (334) · Italian
17 Oju Olobun Cl · In The Blowfish Hotel
Closed · Opens 12PM
Dine-in · Takeaway · No-contact delivery



Umutu Restaurant
4.3 ★★★★★ (310) · ~~NN~~ · Italian
27A Oju Olobun Cl
Closed · Opens 11AM
👤 "Best Italian Restaurant"

OUR POINT 

Many businesses have seen the importance of local SEO, and some stats prove them right.

- [46%](#) of Google users query are looking for local information
- The number of mobile searches with terms like "near me," "where to buy," etc., has increased by 200% within two years. (Think Google, 2019)
- After performing a local SEO search, [72%](#) of shoppers visited a store within 5 miles (8.05 km).

I'm sure you have done a local search without even realizing it and even patronized a business because it popped up in Google's online business directory.

With local SEO techniques, you can target a particular geographical area...

So, What is Local SEO?

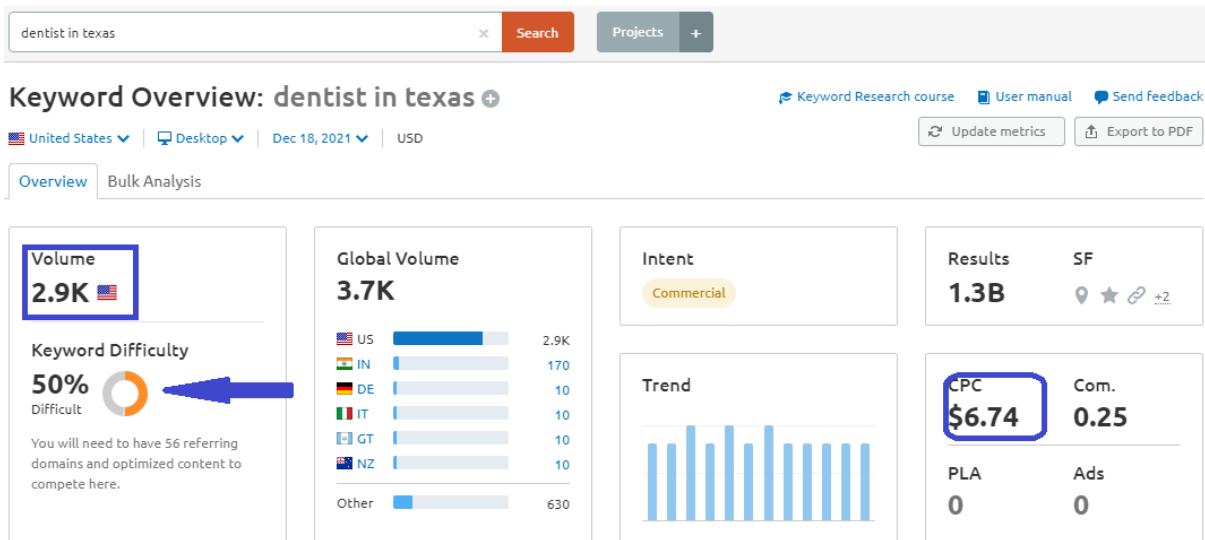
Local search engine optimization is the act of improving local businesses' visibility online to increase sales. Suppose your search query has key phrases like "near me," "in {CITY}"-- or queries that have geographical parameters. Usually, the results will present you with local businesses that offer those services or sell those products. Then you can drive to the location or order immediately.

Local SEO is SEO but with geographical parameters, such as zip code, city, state, service area, etc.

This is How Local SEO works

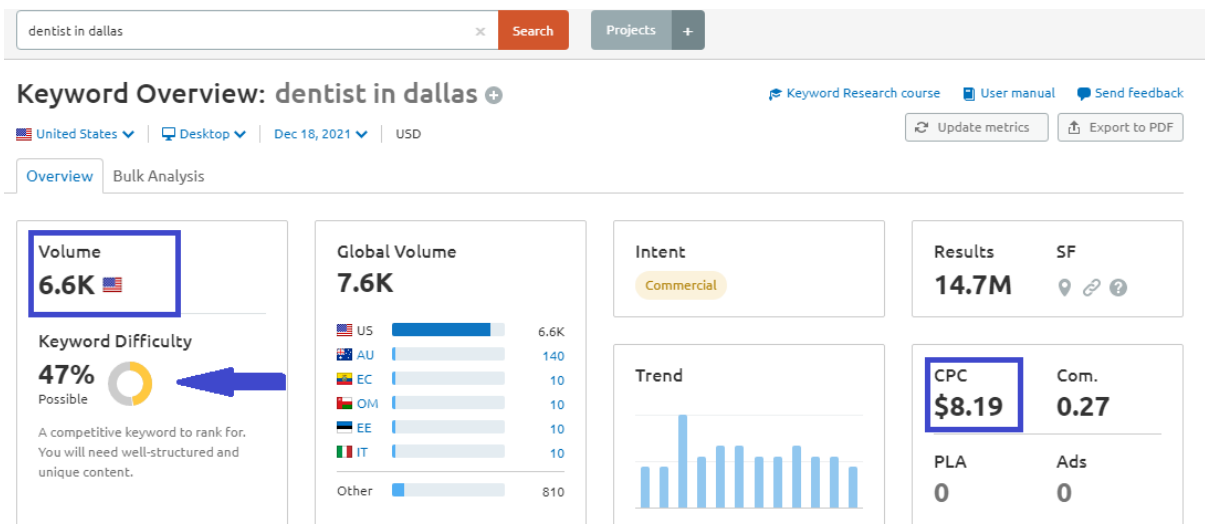
SEO helps users get the most relevant and prominent results for their query, but as a small business, proximity matters too, and that's why it's called Local SEO. Local SEO helps businesses connect with prospects ready to transact and are within the business store. Let's say you are a small-scale dentist in Dallas, Texas. Your goal is to get people in or within Austin with teeth problems to patronize you.

Now, let's compare a business that uses the key phrase "dentist in Texas" versus "dentist in Dallas."



Dentist in Texas Data: the keyword difficulty is 50 percent, the monthly search volume is 2.9k, and the cost per click is \$6.74.

Dentist in Dallas Data: the keyword difficulty is 47 percent, the monthly search volume is 6.6k, and the cost per click is \$8.19.



I compared the two data sets side-by-side to show you that using the key phrase "Dentist in Dallas" has a higher search volume, a lower keyword difficulty, and a higher CPC (this is what you need).

If your products or services are something humans need every day, you can add "in + (neighborhood or street name)."

You can also add zip code, famous places, etc., to your content. Some local SEO ranking parameters include:

- The user's location
- Google map rating
- Number of online reviews
- Active Google my business listing
- Social media shares etc.

You can use Local SEO strategies without setting up a website, which is one of its benefits. But before I list more benefits, have you heard of Local snack packs?

What's a Local Snack Pack?

If you do a local search, the first thing you might see are PPC ads, and you can see that many small businesses are willing to pay, yet organic search gets more clicks. The snack pack is right below these sponsored ads.

2,900
 \$10.55
★
✕

Keyword difficulty: 54.99% (for google.com database) — View [full report](#) for this keyword
Powered by

[North Fwy. Houston, TX - Pediatric Dental Care](#)

1,411 246 0

Medicaid, CHIP, and PPO insurance plans accepted. Call Now! Multiple Houston Area locations ready to serve you. Schedule an appointment. Aceptamos Medicaid. Reserve Su Cita Hoy. We accept Medicaid.

Ad · <http://www.advancedcaredentistryanddentures.com/> ▾

[Pasadena, TX Dentures - Custom Crafted Dentures](#)

152 567 0

Convenient On-site Lab Advanced Care **Dentistry** & Dentures. Advanced Technology. Comprehensive Care. Two Convenient Locations. Knowledgeable Team. Highlights: Custom-Crafted Dentures, Flexible Payment Plans, Providing Comprehensive **Dental** Care.

Ad · <http://www.susanhollar.com/> ▾ +1 817-261-3392

[Susan Hollar DDS - Voted Best Cosmetic Dentist](#)

779 1,760 0

Committed to providing our patients with optimal functional, cosmetic, and preventive care

[Patient Testimonials](#) · [Apply For Financing](#) · [Cosmetic Dentistry](#) · [Meet Our Team](#)

According to research conducted by MOZ, about [33%](#) of organic clicks are on the snack pack. The snack pack shows the top 3 businesses that match your query and their location on Google map.

Dentists : Rating Hours Your past visits

Texas City Dental - Dentist in Texas City

5.0 ★★★★★ (446) · Dentist

Texas City, TX, United States · In Palmer Plaza · +1 40...

Closed · Opens 9AM Mon



Website



Directions

Ace Dental of Texas - Dentist in Harker Hei...

4.7 ★★★★★ (273) · Dentist

Harker Heights, TX, United States · +1 254-269-4711

Closed · Opens 9AM Mon



Website



Directions

Texas City Family Dentistry

4.1 ★★★★★ (15) · Dentist

Texas City, TX, United States · In Mainland Medical Art...

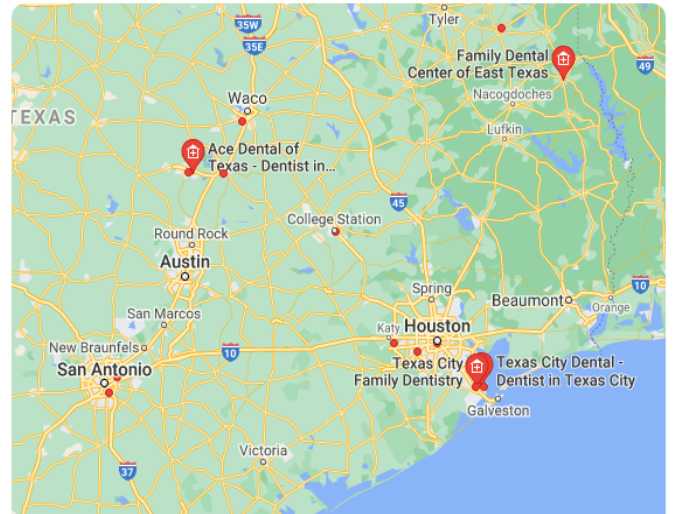
Closed · Opens 11AM Mon



Website



Directions



The snack pack is the number one place every local business wants to appear in Google's search results. It shows the rating, website, direction, and business opening hours, and having one set up for your business is one sure way to get your neighborhood talking about your business.

The Benefits of Local SEO

Local searches have high commercial intents but wait; there's more

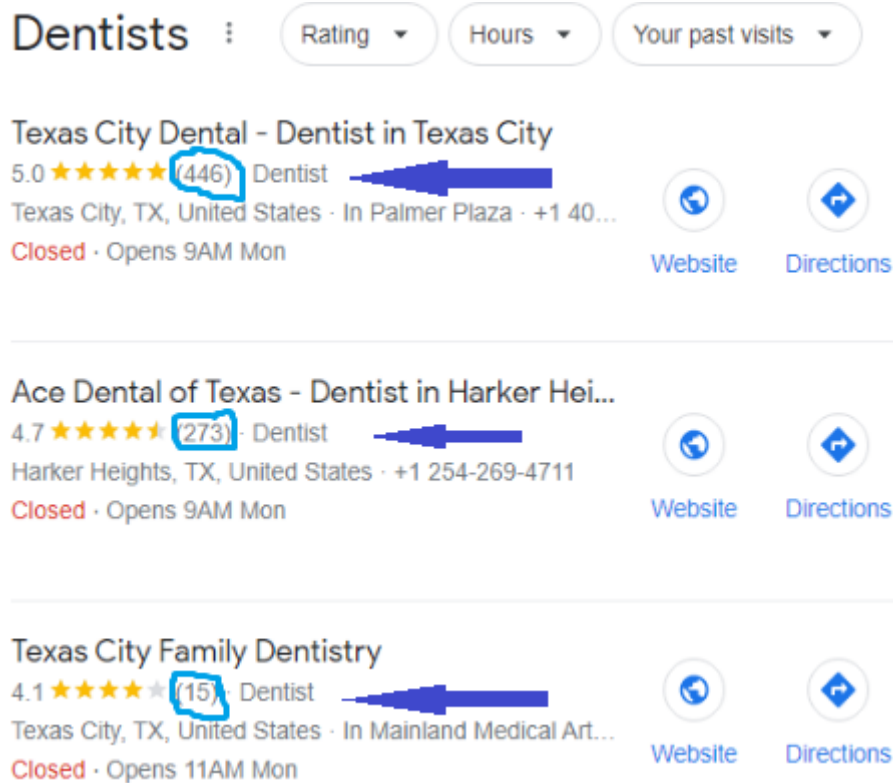
1. Local SEO Reduces the Cost of Effective Marketing

You might lack the capital and workforce to set up a website and grow like a small business. You can use tools like [Google My Business](#) and [Facebook](#) to rank high organically on Google's snack pack. And, if you use PPC ads a lot, using local SEO can save you thousands of dollars in the long run. For instance, adding "+City" to your products or services ads is more cost-effective because it has more search volume.

2. Local SEO Eliminates Buyer's Objection

On Google's snack pack, there are star ratings and reviews, and they are crucial in pushing a prospect to call your office. There are other platforms like Yelp, TripAdvisor, Angi, and so on that Google looks at for reviews and ratings. If you can get your business on these platforms and your customers give you good ratings, then you are on your way to the top 3 on the snack pack.

Among the dentists on this board, the dentist with the most positive reviews is at the top. Why wouldn't I go to a dentist with a 5-star rating and 446 positive reviews?



About [80% of local searches](#) on mobiles lead to sales; this is one of the exciting facts about local searches.

3. Local SEO Gets more Quality Traffic

Local businesses don't need the whole world to see them, they need people nearby to patronize them, and local SEO strategies are the best way to achieve it. Local SEO your organic traffic by placing your business in front of prospects with buying intent. Once a person within your business location searches for your services, you should pop up if you follow the right strategy.

4. Local SEO Content Improves your Relevance and Local Authority

If you look around your area, I'm sure you will find other small businesses offering similar services or selling the same products as you. These businesses are also eager for the number one spot on the snack pack, so you require more authority. And, you can build local authority by local contents. A website with more local SEO content will have a higher chance of topping the snack pack, so start now.

Simple Steps to Implement Local SEO Strategy

These steps require consistency and will surely improve your local authority.

1. Do Local Keyword Research

Doing research will help you find keywords related to your niche that you can easily rank on Google. It's a crucial step that prevents you from writing content blindly and can help you

reach your business goal in a shorter time. There are unique features in [Ahrefs](#) and [SEMrush](#) that can assist you in getting to the top of Google's snack pack.

There are easy to use.,

- Search for words related to your business
- Check out similar or terms match tab
- Find keyword phrase with low keyword difficulty and high CPC

You can use Google search and pick out phrases from the related search session.

2. Create a Google My Business profile

A Google My Business (GMB) profile is essential to ranking in Google's snack pack. With GMB, you can reach the top 10 in no time. Although other platforms can help boost your local authority, GMB is on a different level and if you can't see the reason try taking a nap, lol.

When you [sign up](#), make sure you

- Put your business's name as it is on your flyer, banner or website.
- Fit into the right business category
- Location is accurate (if you have a store)
- Use active contact information
- Verify your listing

You can add more than one business category, and upload plenty of photos to give people an overall idea of your store. Include your business's hours of operation to make it easier for customers to purchase.

You can sign up on Bing, Yelp and Apple Maps to boost your authority. Also, your business might already have a GMB listing, and you have to claim it.

3. Build Strong NAP Citations

First, what is NAP Citations?

NAP stands for Name, Address, and Phone number, and NAP citations are internet directories for business. Over [150 NAP citations](#) exist in the United States, and having a solid NAP can boost authority.

You can build vital NAP citations by providing accurate information on all internet directories platforms. That is, every detail should be the same.

And these platforms can be valuable backlinks, which are crucial to improving your local authority. You should track and match all your NAP citations as Google search engine would refer to them when recommending your site, and in no time, you will be top 3 of the snack pack.

4. On-page Search Engine Optimization

SEO practices are the same for global and local businesses; the only difference is location.

When you write content for your local business website, make sure you avoid using the similar key phrase on different landing pages, as this is considered a black SEO tactic and can affect your ranking over time.

Also, if you're offering your services to different localities within the same city, you'll need other landing pages for each location.

Furthermore, don't forget the basic SEO practices

- Your title should contain your keyword
- In your URL, include your keyword
- Using shortened URLs
- Your meta description should include the keyword
- Use the keyword and its variants throughout the content.

5. Optimize your Website to be Mobile Friendly and Enable Voice Search

It shouldn't be news that people are on their phones daily, and most people will look for product reviews right inside a store on their phones. And if it loads slowly, it will increase their buying objections.

Use Google's [Pagespeed Insights](#) and [Mobile-friendly Test](#) tools to analyze the load time of your website. You aim to cut down your bounce rate because the more people use the back button on your website, the more Google gets irritated, literally. And it will impact your ranking.

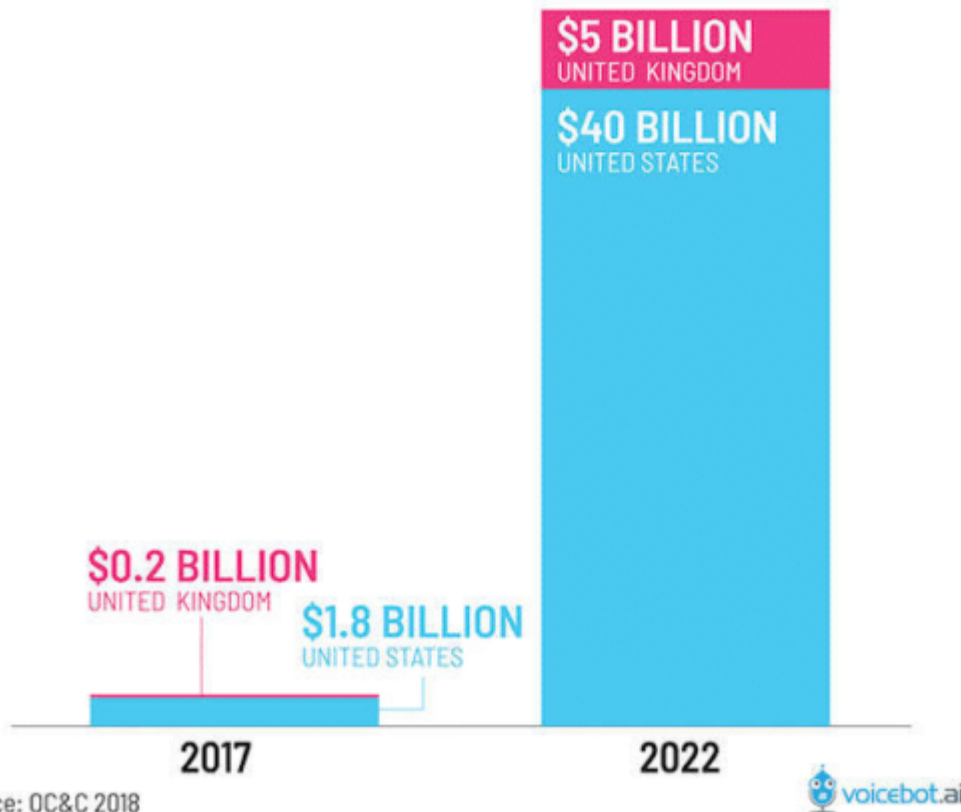
This [study](#) by Hobo shows how much time is needed, and we draw this table for you.

Page load time	Bounce rate probability
1s to 3s	32%
1s to 5s	90%
1s to 6s	106%
1s to 10s	123%

You must use a reliable web host. You don't need a host with plenty of servers downtime. Or poor services, the internet is a game of speed, and speed builds reliability which improves your local authority.

Voice search is booming, and you have to implement it on your website. Let's compare the United States and the United Kingdom statistics from 2017 and 2022.

Voice Commerce Sales 2017, 2022 in U.S. & U.K.



You don't want to miss out on these massive sales in 2022. You don't have to worry; it's easy to implement.

All you need are long-tail keywords in question patterns; that's because people with smart speakers are more likely to ask, "where is the best dentist in Denver?" than "best dentist in Denver."

Tools like [Answer the Public](#) are great at finding question-keywords, and adding them to your content will be best for you.

6. Internet Reputation Management

After all the hard work, your business reputation can fall out of your hand if you fail to manage your reviews. Nobody wants to eat in a one-star restaurant. You can go to YouTube and watch people mock one-star restaurants in their 10 minutes plus video. It's cringe and gross and very bad for business.

You can use both negative and positive reviews to your advantage.

When you get a negative review, you should address it gently and formally as possible. Find a solution if the fault is from your side, or provide a guide if it appears the customer is misusing your product.

You can monitor your business mention using a platform like [Ahref](#) and [Google Alerts](#).

FAQs about Local SEO

Do I need a website to rank on Local Snack Pack?

It depends on the number of competitors in your service area. If you have up to 10 competitors, you require a website, and if all of them have a website, you need consistent local SEO tactics to rank above all of them.

Can I create Different GMB listings for my different store locations?

Yes, you can, but they must be consistent.

What happens when I fail to claim my GMB listing?

Well, let's hope you don't have a cocky competitor that will claim your GMB listing and continue dropping negative reviews and send your business packing.

Do I require other Search Engines, apart from Google?

Yes, Yahoo and Bing are still popular, and your business needs to be everywhere for more sales.

Can I take out negative reviews from my listings?

No, you can't, but you can flag them if you think they are spam or reply to control the damage or even provide a solution if possible, and you could change their mind.