What Factors into How a Local Business Is Ranking in Search Results?

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Let's say you own a downtown computer repair shop. While sitting inside your shop, your SEO curiosity is piqued, so you Google the phrase "computer repair specialist" on your smartphone. Your business shows up 3rd in the results. Sweet, right?

But later at home, 20 miles from the shop, you use your PC to Google the same phrase, "computer repair specialist".

Now your business shows up 10th. Why?

What's with the Change in Ranking?

Google uses its local ranking factors to return the best, unique search results for the immediate situation, so these factors impact where every business falls in the results.

Harness the Power of Local

Ranking Factors There are a couple of different ways to think about how

your business is ranked in local search results. First, consider Google's goals when returning business results for any search query. Additionally, think about how your business's online presence caters to Google's ranking factors.

Google's 3 Major Local Ranking Factors

According to Google

(https://support.google.com/business/answer/7091?hl=en), businesses are ranking according to three key factors:

- Relevance If you search for a "bundt cake bakery", bundt cake shops will rank higher than generic cake bakeries.
 Distance If Google knows you're sitting in your own.
- 2. **Distance** If Google knows you're sitting in your own computer repair shop, it will show you that shop in the search results before it shows you a different computer repair shop across town.
- 3. **Prominence** How well-known is your business? Do you have thousands of positive online reviews? If so, you're likely to rank above an equivalent business with only a few reviews. (If not, get more reviews (https://www.connectivity.com/enterprise/reviews/).)

Top Search Ranking Factors by Moz

Even if you know what Google is aiming for, how can you apply that knowledge? Most importantly, you have to maintain a strong general SEO strategy. Secondly, you can implement local SEO strategies to achieve the best rankings possible.

According to a study by Moz called Search Engine Ranking Factors 2015 (https://moz.com/search-ranking-factors), the following broad ranking factors should be your top nine general SEO concerns.

- Domain-Level Link Features
- 2. Page-Level Link Features
- Page-Level Keyword & Content-Based Features
 Page-Level Keyword-Agnostic Features
- 5. Engagement & Traffic/Query Data
- 6. Domain-Level Brand Metrics
- 7. Domain-Level Keyword Usage
- 8. Domain-Level Keyword-Agnostic Features9. Page-Level Social Metrics
- Cover these, and your local rankings will have a solid SEO foundation.

But wait! There's more!

Top Local Search Ranking

FactorsThis September, Moz subsequently released the results of a

more specific study, The 2015 Local Search Ranking
Factors (https://moz.com/local-search-ranking-factors). Aptly
summarized by Moz's announcement
(https://moz.com/blog/local-search-ranking-factors-2015), the

results point to an increase in the importance of behavioral signals (such as click-through rates and time on-site) when it comes to local rankings. Links and the business's proximity to the searcher have also increased in importance.

When you enter a search query related to your business, all

ranking factors, come into play to determine where your business falls in the results. With these factors in mind, use the following tips to make sure your business ranks well:

• Build up your portfolio of quality inbound links
• Encourage customers to write online reviews

of these factors, including Google's self-described local

- Encourage customers to write online reviews
 (https://www.connectivity.com/blog/2015/08/how-to
- respond-to-online-reviews/)
 List your business in all major local business websites (https://www.connectivity.com/blog/2015/07/places-
- business-needs-listed-online/)Ensure "NAP consistency"(https://www.v9seo.com/blog/2015/05/08/how-nap-
- consistency-can-improve-your-organic-rankings/)
 throughout your online business listings
 (https://www.connectivity.com/enterprise/listings/)
 Use location-specific language in your content
 Include your business's city and state in page titles
- Claim your business profiles
 (https://www.connectivity.com/blog/2015/09/what-do-
- they-mean-by-claiming-your-business-profile/) at
 Google and Bing

 Want more tips to improve search rankings for your
 business? Check out what NOT to do in the post, 7 SEO

(https://www.connectivity.com/blog/2015/08/7-seo-mistakes-you-need-to-avoid/), or send a message to Connectivity (https://www.connectivity.com/contact-us/). The experts here

can answer your questions about local SEO and help you improve your local search rankings.

Kayla Eide is a contributor to the Connectivity blog.

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