

## What is Local SEO and how it works?

Are you a local shop, agency, or restaurant that wants to increase its revenue by attracting more customers? You have tried various marketing strategies but nothing is working for you? No worries because I am going to tell you where your strategy is going wrong.

Customers prefer to reach stores online instead of going there in person especially after the pandemic. Therefore your business needs to be more visible in the search queries performed by the local people. That is to say, the strategy that your local business is lacking is local SEO.



Source: [Brightlocal](#)

### What is Local SEO?

Local SEO stands for “Local Search Engine Optimization”. It is the practice to apply SEO tactics to optimize the web presence of your business in localized search engines. Local SEO aims to attract local customers that are valuable for your business, increase brand awareness and generate leads from the local searches.

Any business with a physical location serving in a defined geographical area needs local SEO marketing. Optimizing your online presence for the local searches lets Google know that your business is located in a certain area and needs to be found by customers. Local customers are important for your business because;

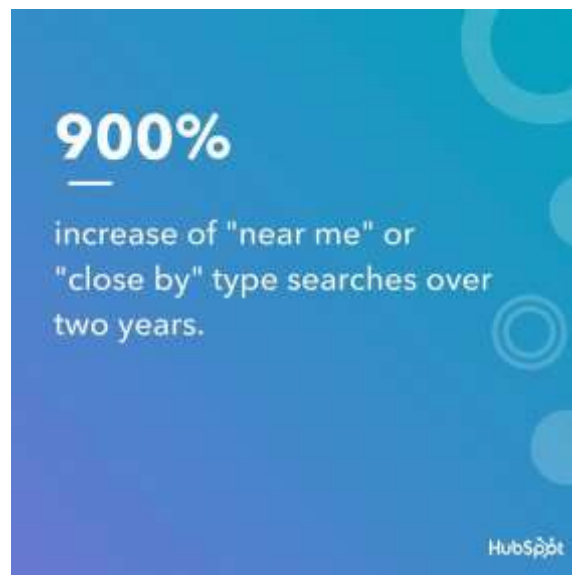
- It is easy and cheap to reach them.
- They are loyal and tend to return again and again.
- There are more chances that they will recommend it to others.
- They help to boost the traffic to your websites.

## Importance of Local SEO

Local SEO is a goldmine for local businesses and these interesting stats say it all.

- About [46%](#) of the Google searches are meant to seek local information.
- 97% of the users search online to find a local business near them.
- 86% of the consumers rely completely on the internet to search for local business and 29% do this search once a week.
- 72% of the people who search local businesses visit the stores within five miles.
- 50% of 'near me' searches lead to store visits.

There was a massive surge in the online searches of the local business after the pandemic. According to stats the "near me" and "close by" searches have seen an increase of 900% over two years.



Source: [HubSpot](#)

While every local business is unique, they all need to be discovered online to attract that 72% of people who can be their potential customers. In the current era of online shopping, small business owners like you, feel overwhelmed because they have to compete with big giants like Amazon and Walmart for visibility in the search engine. Thus Local SEO can be your savior because it prefers small local businesses over those global giants anytime. Investing in Local SEO can help you double your revenue because about 28% of the local searches become purchases eventually.

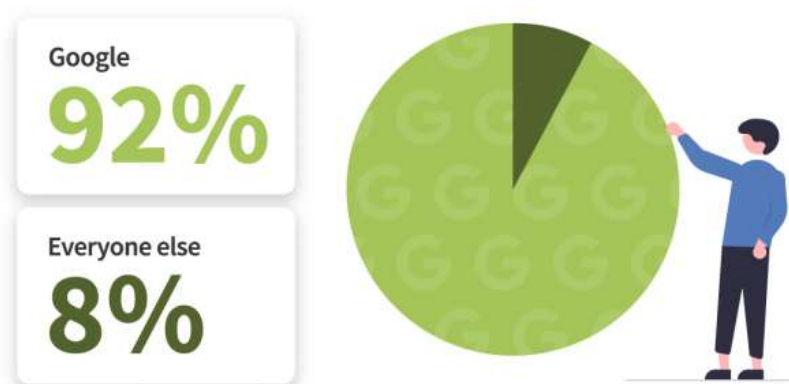


Source: [HubSpot](#)

## How does Local SEO works?

Local SEO works differently from organic SEO. Organic SEO or simply SEO is meant for higher ranking in the Google search engine without local component while the Local SEO is meant for higher ranking for search queries in a certain location such as a town or a region. This simply means the two SEO practices target two different audiences. While SEO is for anyone around the world searching for something online, Local SEO is to provide results only to the local consumers.

Local SEO improves your visibility across different search engines like Bing and Yahoo but Google is the biggest player with a whopping 92% market share in the global search engine. According to stats, Google processes [5.6 billion](#) searches per day.

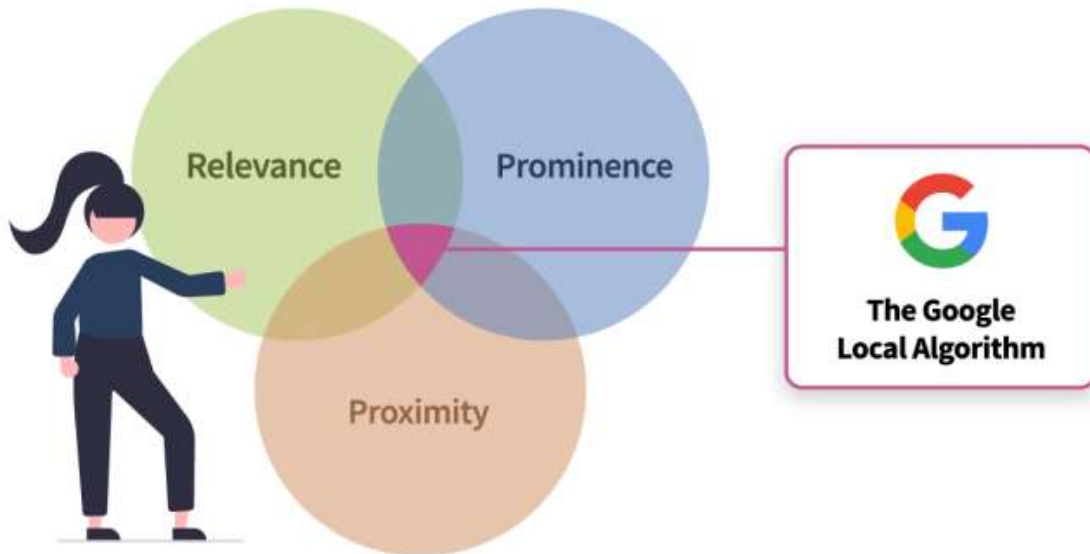


Search Engine Market Share, Statcounter, 2020

Source: [Statcounter](#)

## Local Search ranking signals

Google algorithm uses distinct ranking signals to rank the local search results. Ranking signals are the elements that Google uses to determine your position in the search results. Thus it can be difficult for you to jot down where you need to spend your efforts to rank higher in Local SEO. Here are the factors that you should pay attention to, to let Google understand your location, thus improving your chances to rank in the local searches.



Source: [Brightlocal](#)

### → Prominence

Prominence is about how well your business stands out among others. Here you are trying to tell Google that you are a credible business that can be trusted. Search engines like Google pull data across the web to determine the ranking, thus you need prominent signals to rank higher. Here are some of the important signals that can improve your business' prominence.

- Creating and sharing relevant content
- Having a strong and positive review profile
- Getting listed in directories
- Building local links
- Having active social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram.

## → Proximity

Proximity is how far you are located from the person performing the online search. If you are a business that is relevant as well as near, the chances of a good ranking are higher. Location is something you cannot change because it is where it is. What you can do is to show Google your exact location and relevancy so it can rank you higher. For this, you can generate local content, develop local review profiles e.g. Best Pizza in Brooklyn, and get local links.

## → Relevance

The most important ranking signal is relevance which means you are offering what the consumer is looking for. Sounds simple but businesses often go wrong with this factor. To enhance your relevancy, clearly mention your product or service on the website. Use the right keyword that the potential customers are often using.

For example, if you are a cafe in New York, you have to make sure Google relates your business with different searches like, “Coffee New York”, or “Best coffee in New York”.

To enhance the relevancy of your local business,

- Use the related keywords in your website, content, and meta descriptions.
- Make sure to select the right category of business in the local directories.
- Use relevant title tags.
- Add links from other industry-relevant websites.

## How to do Local SEO

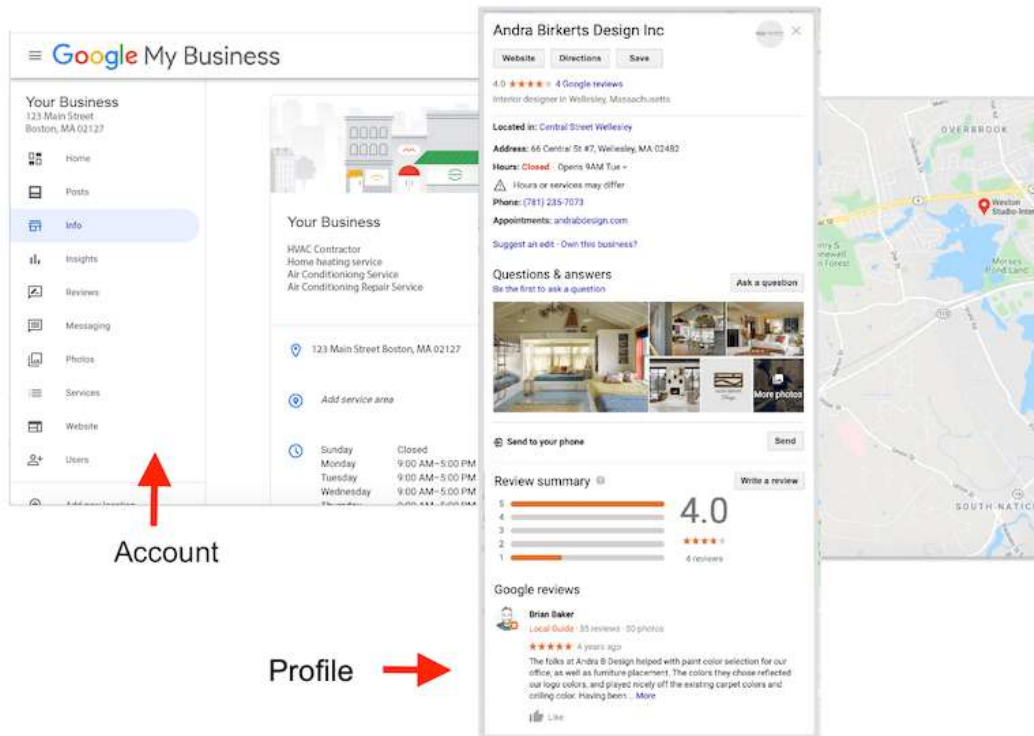
Optimizing your local SEO is important to increase website traffic, getting more leads and conversions. Local SEO is a great tool to compete against large brands that spend millions on their marketing. Following are the ways you can make your Local SEO strategy successful.

### 1. Creating Google My Business Account

Google My Business (GMB) is your business profile in Google. Optimizing this profile is by far the best way to rank higher on Google maps. Create a Google My Business Account and complete the Google business profile (GBP) by providing the relevant information such as; your service, contact information, business category, opening and closing times.

The more relevant and up-to-date profile gets ranked higher in the local pack. According to 82% of experts, GMB is very effective in rankings of local packs.

Besides factors like Q&As, and Google Reviews which are generated by consumers also adds value to your business profile.



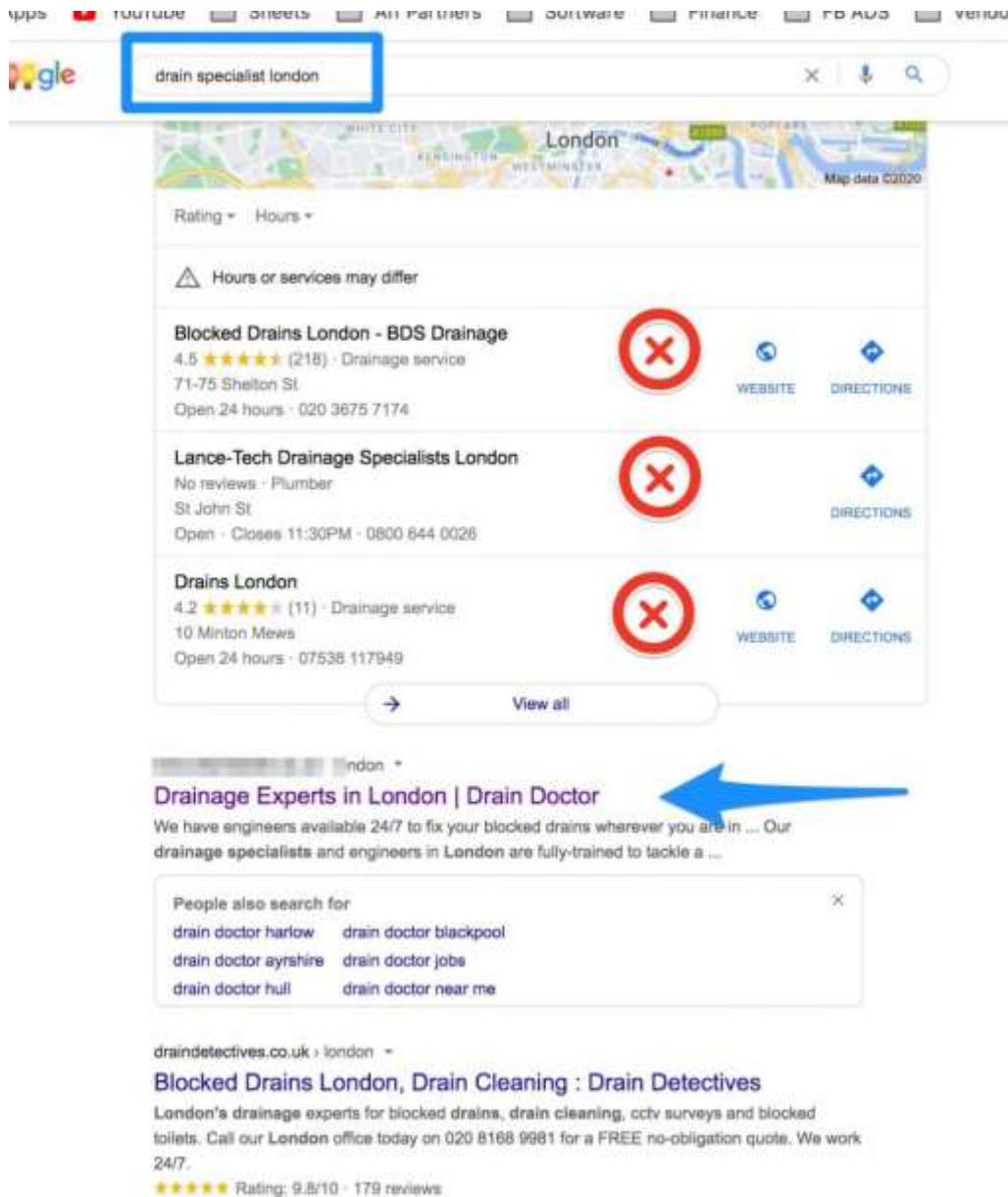
Source: <https://www.wordstream.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/what20is20google20my20business20account20with20profile20copy202.png>

## 2. Keyword research

Keywords make the most important foundation of local SEO. You need to know what terms your potential customers are searching for to create content around that. Here is why keyword search is very important;

- It helps you create landing pages focused on searchable words.
- Helps in finding relevant markets and expanding the business.
- It helps to find more ways to attract potential customers.
- A better understanding of the behavior of the target audience.

For example; You are a drain specialist business in London. But your potential customers might not necessarily search this term. Instead, they can search for phrases like drain experts in London or drain cleaning in London.

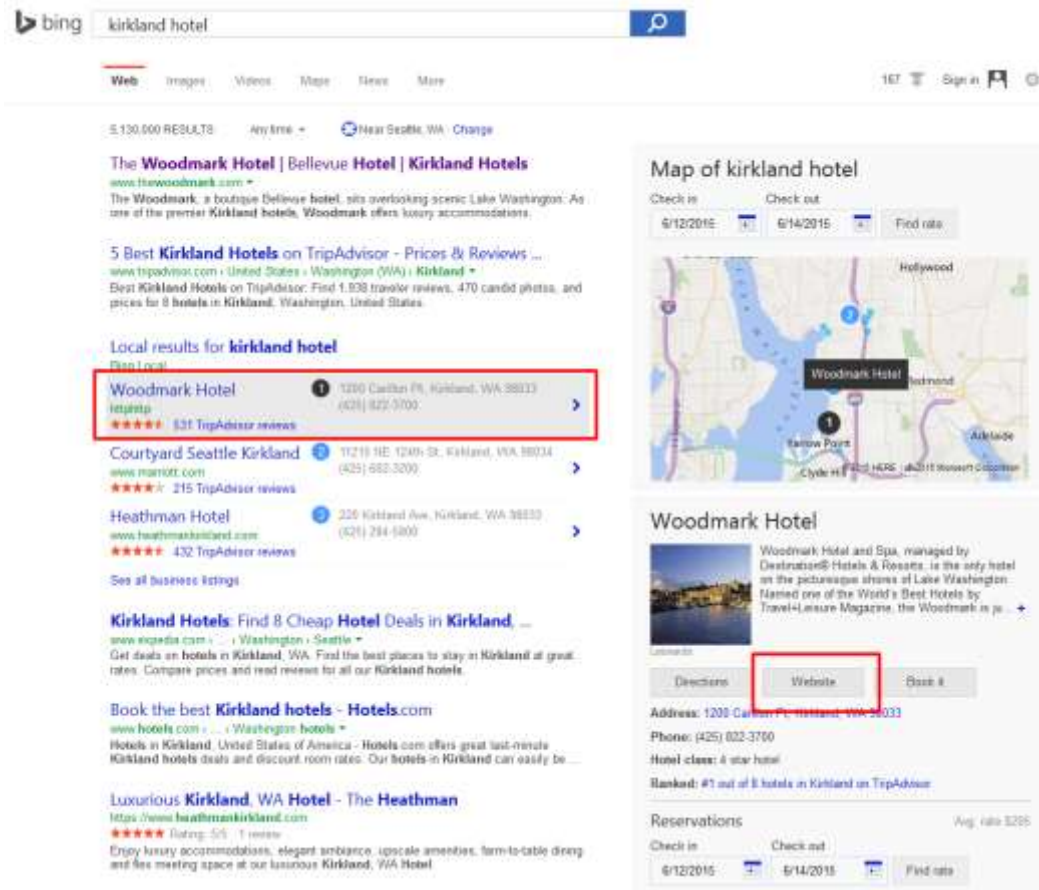


Source: [https://tradespeopleonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/drain\\_specialist\\_london\\_-\\_Google\\_Search-852x1024.jpg](https://tradespeopleonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/drain_specialist_london_-_Google_Search-852x1024.jpg)

### 3. Bing places and apple maps

Bing is another search engine that can help you improve your local SEO. Though it does not add value like Google maps it has its fair share of searches that you can use for your benefit. Bing is the default search engine of all the Windows 10 devices and it also powers two huge voice search engines, Alexa and Cortana.

As you can see in the screenshot below, the Bing search looks almost the same as Google search. You can even sync the Bing listing so it can use data from your GBP.



Source: <http://www.thesempost.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/bing-local-wrong-url.png>

Apple maps are the default search engine on all Apple devices and computers so it also has its fair share of searches. According to Statista, [23.3 million](#) users use Apple maps every month.

Therefore you need to list your business on apple maps along with Google and Bing to ensure that this large number of apple users find your business.

#### 4. Local Citations

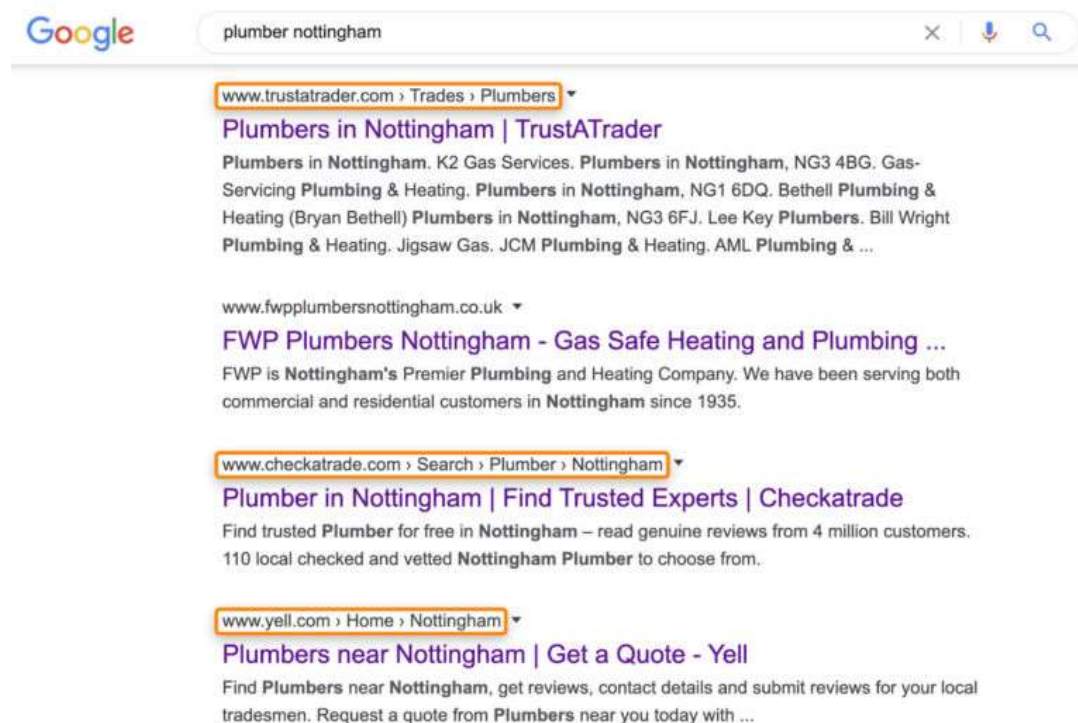
Building local citations can help you enhance your local ranking. Citations are the links of local SEO. Whenever your business's NAP (Name, Address, Phone number) gets mentioned online, a local citation occurs. The more citations, the easier it is to get ranked higher.

There are different places to build local citations such as; local business directories and social networks. You can opt for different online directories for local citations, but here are some websites which US-based businesses can use;



- <https://www.facebook.com/business>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/>
- <https://www.yellowpages.com/>
- <https://biz.yelp.com/>
- <http://www.local.com>

For example, if you search “plumber Nottingham” the results will show different business directories that are listing different plumbers in Nottingham. Providing the right information in the directories is very important because 68% of consumers say that they would not buy from a local business if the information provided on the local directory is incorrect.



Source: <https://ahrefs.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/3-business-directories-local-search-1-768x540.jpg>

## 5. On-page SEO

On-site, optimization is another important ranking factor for local SEO because according to data users trust a business’s website more than third-party apps. Here’s what you can do to improve your on-page SEO.

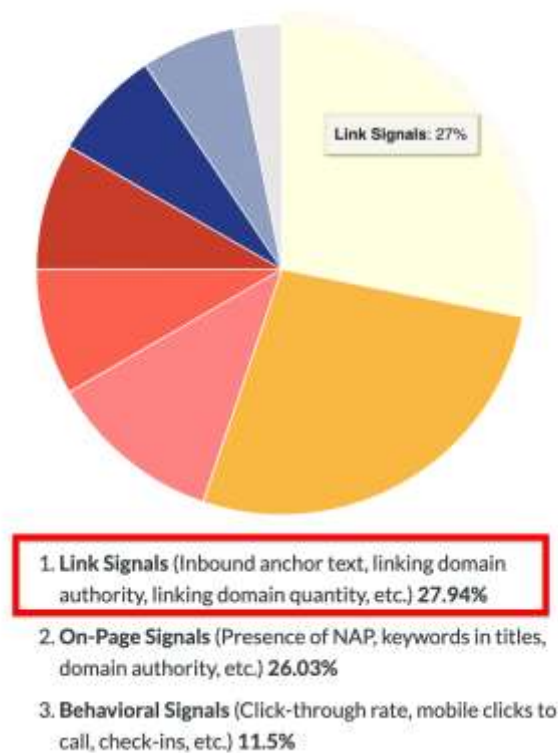
- Localize your website by adding your location like region, city, or province name throughout your website content.
- Optimize your website for mobile users by testing your website on different smartphones.
- Improve your website’s loading speed because Google does not rank slow sites.

→ Make sure your website is performing well on three core web vitals which are Loading, Visual stability, and Interactivity.

## 6. Link building

Local link building is an effective way to rank on local searches. It is the process of getting backlinks from the relevant local websites. According to stats, local links have the second most important place in localized organic rankings and the third most important place in Local Pack ranking factors. Also, the link signals make the 27% of the localized organic factor as shown in the pie chart below;

Localized Organic Ranking Factors



Source: <https://moz.com/local-search-ranking-factors>

You can boost your ranking by getting links from the local websites and local organizations such as church groups, neighborhood watch websites, church groups, etc. You can get these value-added links by adopting the right strategy such as; sponsoring events, helping a local charity event, or contributing to the community.

## 7. Reviews

Your local SEO strategy is incomplete without review building. To ensure high ranking, your business needs to accumulate online reviews. This is quite tricky because customers usually don't write reviews, therefore you have to make it easy for them.

- Add links to your Google My Business page on your website, business cards, flyers, and emails that compel customers to write a review.
- Ask customers to leave a review after each sale or transaction.

Reviews are important because;

- They help in ranking higher in local search results
- Develop trust with customers
- Showcase brand's value

It's no secret that online reputation can either make or break your business value, thus you need to create a strong online review profile. This is what a local customer review looks like.

**Hard Rock Cafe**  
\$\$ · American (New), Burgers, Music Venues  
1000 Universal Studios Blvd  
Universal City, CA 91608

★★★★★ 1/11/2014

Lat night we had the best time at dinner that I think I've ever had! Our server Jessica was adorable and full of personality plus. She was attentive, entertaining and knowledgeable. She is a huge asset to your restaurant and deserves much kudos. We will definitely be back soon!

Was this review ...?

Useful Funny Cool

**Comment from Scott B. of Hard Rock Cafe**  
Business Manager  
1/21/2014 · Hi Debra,

Thank you very much for such great review! We work really hard to offer the best food in the best possible environment, so I am happy to see that reflected on your last visit. I made sure that Jessica got the recognition she deserved. She was really happy to see your review.

Hope to see you again soon!

German Crespi  
AGM [Read less](#)

Source: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/blog4.0/blog/wp-content/uploads/Hard-Rock-Cafe-review.png>

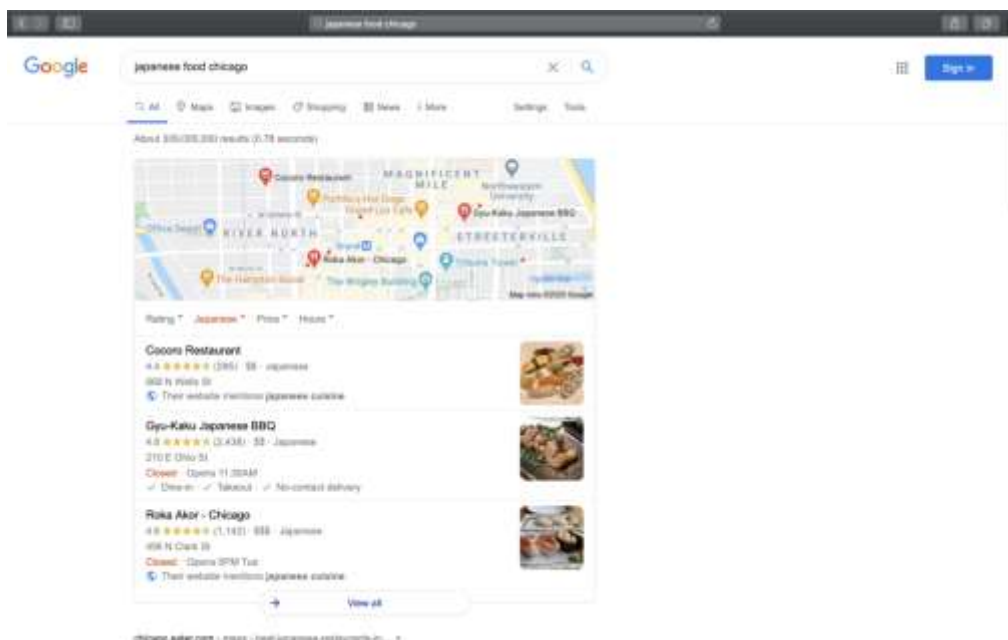
## How to rank in map pack?

Google map pack is the term that describes the location-based search results that appear in front of you on the Google search results page. Whenever the consumer searches “Japanese

food Chicago” the search engine shows multiple options with three top highlighted businesses. Each listing has an information summary including location, business hours, logo, and ratings. About 50% of the clicks on the search engine results page (SERP) go to the Google Map Pack. Therefore this spot can be very beneficial for you.

Google ranks business on these three spots based on location, quality, relevance, and reputation. And SEO is also a very important factor. Here is what you can do to rank in the local map pack.

- Connect to your Google My Business Account.
- Build a strong review profile.
- Maintain web listings with correct and relevant information.



Source: <https://www.reviewtrackers.com/wp-content/uploads/google-maps-pack.png>

## How to optimize Google my business Listing

Google My Business (GMB) listing is a very useful tool to leverage your local SEO strategy. It has a great impact on local businesses because it provides ample information to the users like

- Location
- Ratings and reviews
- Business category
- Business hours

Here's what you can do to optimize your Google My Business platform.

- Claim your business profile.

- Complete your Google My Business account by providing all the relevant information.
- Publish content and upload new photos weekly.
- Answer all the queries in the QnA section.
- Respond to all the reviews on the profile.
- Add a detailed description of products and/or services.
- Up-date your business profile now and then.

These optimization strategies can help you use your Business Profile as a free customer acquisition tool.

## **Conclusion**

Local SEO is a great way to enhance your business revenue by implementing localized SEO strategies. If done right, Local SEO can act as a free customer acquisition tool for you that you didn't know you had.

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