

Google My Business Setup Guide



Best Practices Game Plan



How to Set-up a Google My Business Listing in 8-Simple Steps

Internet Live Stats claims that an incredible 5.5 billion searches are carried out on Google each and every day. This amounts to over 63,000 search queries per second. However, you also know that 1 out of every 5 Google searches are carried out by people searching to purchase goods and services locally?

Indeed, they are. What this means is, if you operate a business, a staggering 1.1 billion searches (or *12,600 per second!*) on Google are from persons looking for products and services in the local geographic area in which they live and, or work.

This need from the public to find merchants and service providers who offer products and provide services in their respective neighborhoods, is the reason why more and more business owners are scrambling to get themselves and their company's listed on Google My Business (GMB), and you should too.

This amounts to an unprecedented opportunity for you as a business owner to increase your sales and revenue by letting your neighbors and other folks who live and work in your local area, know of your presence and your desire to serve them, along with the goods and services you have to offer.

What's great about all this is, Google My Business is a free and easy-to-use resource for businesses and organizations.

On top of that, GMB also lets you manage how your business appears on Google Search and Maps. This includes your business name, your location, as well as your hours of business.

They also give you an opportunity to monitor and reply to customer reviews regarding your business as well as add photos and lastly, discover where and how people are searching for you and your company.

What's more, Google Maps has more than 150 million mobile users and *59% of monthly Google users are using their phones to search for local businesses*. So, if you want to attract new business in your local area, having and maintaining a Google My Business listing is an opportunity you'll want to pursue.

The reality is, when people begin to search for a product or service near them, they're generally motivated and ready to make a purchase. That's why five out of every ten, or one out of two persons who conduct a local search visit a store that very day.

Think of jewelry repair, antiques, restaurants, pizza, flowers, plumbers, roofers, theme parks etc. You can see why it's important the information you post on your Google My Business listing is complete, accurate and optimized when people search on Google.

Here's how you can set-up your own Google My Business listing:

1. Visit the Google My Business's Website

Visit the following page: <https://www.google.com/business/> or go to Google and type in "google my business." It will be the first result you see.



2. Click the Green "Start Now" Button

- If you're not already signed into Gmail, you will be prompted to sign in.
- Be sure you are signed into the same Gmail account you want to associate with your business listing.

3. Enter the Name of Your Company or Business

Once you're logged in, if you haven't previously set up a listing in the past, it is going to ask you to enter the name of your business.


It's worth noting:

- If someone has already listed your company on Google (which does happen) then you will see your listing come up.
- Now if your company doesn't appear, click the text under your business name that says: Create a business with this name. Then click "next."



4. Enter the Address of Your Business

Where are you located?



I deliver goods and services to my customers.
[Learn more](#)

Next

5. Are You a Brick & Mortar Establishment or a Service Oriented Business?

If you have a brick and mortar business, leave the box blank where it indicates “I deliver goods and services to my customers” and if your customers or clients come to your place of business when dealing with you.

Examples of Brick & Mortar Businesses

- grocery stores
- gas stations
- doctor’s offices
- mechanic’s shops
- restaurants (that don’t deliver)
- churches
- lawyers
- accountants

Service Oriented Businesses

If you’re a Service Area Business, click the box that says: “I deliver goods and services to my customers”

You’ll see another box appear which gives you the option to hide your address if you so choose. If you don’t want your address displayed (for example, if you use your personal address as your business address), then go ahead and check this box.

← Where are you located?

United States

Street address

City

Kentucky ZIP code

Check if you're a SAB

I deliver goods and services to my customers. [Learn more](#)

Hide my address (it's not a store)

Next

Check if you want to hide your address

A screenshot of a business location setup form. The form has several input fields: a dropdown menu for 'United States', a text field for 'Street address', a text field for 'City', a dropdown menu for 'Kentucky', and a text field for 'ZIP code'. Below these fields are two checkboxes, both of which are checked. The first checkbox is labeled 'I deliver goods and services to my customers. Learn more'. The second checkbox is labeled 'Hide my address (it's not a store)'. A blue 'Next' button is located below the checkboxes. A progress bar at the bottom shows the current step is completed. Two red arrows point from text annotations to the checkboxes. The first arrow points from the text 'Check if you're a SAB' to the first checkbox. The second arrow points from the text 'Check if you want to hide your address' to the second checkbox.

Examples of a Service Area Business

- A business that goes to the customer or delivers things to the customer but doesn't primarily serve its customers at its business address. For instance:
- General contractors
- Exterminators
- plumbers
- roofers
- electricians

*If you serve customers at your business address and deliver to them, then you can also register as a service area business (e.g., pizza shop, florist)

5-a. If you are a Brick & Mortar Business, drag the map marker to your location

If you operate a brick and mortar business, you'll need to set your business location on a map.

You may have to drag the marker to the exact location on the map that your business exists. Simply place your marker where it should go on the map, and then press the "Next" button again.

← Where are you located?

Drag and zoom the map and position the marker on the exact spot where your business is located.



Next

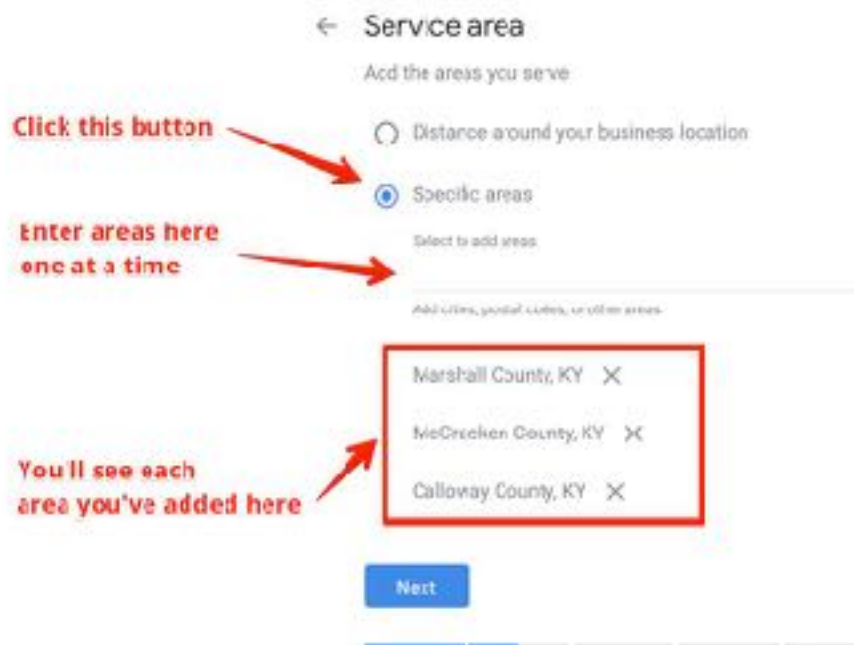
5-b. If you are a Service Area Business set your service area

It's time to let Google know what area you serve customers.

Here is how to set your service area:

You have the option of setting your service area based on your city, county, state, zip-code, country, and so on and so forth.

Inside tip: If you serve an entire county, best to just enter the county name instead of trying to list all of the zip-codes that may exist in your county.



6. Categorize Your Business

When you insert your “categories” in Google My Business, you will have the opportunity to indicate both a primary and secondary category.

Note: If your primary reason for setting-up a GMB listing is so your business will come up in Google’s results page when potential customers are searching for the kind of products or services you offer, then getting this step right is the key for that to happen.



How to Select the Best Google My Business Category for Your Company:

If you are unsure of what category is the best category for your company, you can search for the type of business you run on Google, and see what categories your competition selected.

If you spot a majority choosing a particular classification, it's a safe bet that you should select it too.



In the example above, you can see that a majority of construction businesses in the indicated area categorize themselves as a specific kind of “contractor.” If you primarily provide only one type of service, be specific!

7. Select Which Contact Details to Show Your Customers

Adding contact details to your Google My Business listing is optional but including things like your website is a benefit that’s hard to ignore since it can potentially lead a visitor to your site, which gives you a second opportunity to convert them into a customer.

Listing your phone number will also give an existing customer or new prospect a direct way to reach you. On top of this, Google will bump up your listing a little in its search engine each and every time a visitor visits your website, gets directions, calls you, or texts you from a local search.

← What contact details do you want to show to customers?

Help customers get in touch by including this info on your listing (optional)

Contact phone number
 270-545-6100

Current website URL
 <http://www.meritinsider.com>

I don't need a website

Get a free website based on your info. [See details](#)

Next

Note: If you don't have a website, you can select the "I don't need a website" option or the "Get a free website." Also, be sure you list the exact URL from your website on where it is listed, such as:

- Yelp
- Yellow Pages
- Google +
- Local Chambers of Commerce etc.

Click the "Next" button.

8. Finish and Verify Your Business

← Finish and verify this business

To manage your listing, you'll need to verify your connection with this business. What you'll get with verification:

- ✓ Allow new customers to find you on Google Search & Maps
- ✓ Promote your business with photos and posts
- ✓ Track business analytics to understand your customers
- ✓ Respond to customer reviews

Finish

How to Verify Your Business

Verifying your business may take a couple of days. The way Google lets a business owner know your company has been verified, is to send you a postcard in the mail.

Choose a way to verify.

In order to fully manage and represent this business on Google, you'll need to confirm that it's yours.

Select how you'd like to get a verification code. [Learn more](#)

Postcard by mail

I have a postcard with your code mailed to this address

My take as to its days to arrive

Business name

Mail

Business address

1101 Central Expressway East, Murray, KY 42071, United States

Verify later

You can't fully manage your listing until you're verified

Later

A Google My Business Listing Checklist and Optimization Guide

Showing up at the very top of a Google search can mean money in the bank due to the fact that 33% of all clicks go to the first result listed (not including ads). As a local business, showing up in the 3 Pack (see below) is an opportunity to stand head and shoulders above your competitors. It's also a way for you to beat all of those directory-listing services trying to get your customer's attention.



When it's all said and done, your Google My Business listing is only as good as the content you post and optimize.

To ensure you're getting the most out of your My Business listing, make sure that you're optimizing your information by doing the following:

- Enter your *business location* correctly. The format should be your business name, your physical address, and your phone number (it is important to keep this the same across all listings and update it whenever it changes).

- List your official website on your Google My Business listing. This will help Google improve its search results and display your listing for more Google users.
- Fill out your profile completely. This means you should include high-quality videos and images and provide as much information about your business as possible. Think about answering your customer's questions before they have a chance to ask them – this practice makes for a great listing.

Business Description

Have your business description sound natural and human, as opposed to stiff and formal. Don't attempt to keyword stuff. Google will catch that.

Here's a Good Example of a Great Business Description

From The Law Office of Dustin S. McCrary, PLLC.

"We'll Meet You Right Where You Are. No matter where you are in the divorce process, we're ready to help you and your children through divorce with safety and security. We'll be with you every step of the way."

Add Photos

It's very important to add a *profile photo* to your GMB listing. Customers who see an attractive, inviting cover photo are a lot more likely to click on your listing than another one that doesn't include a photo.

Below are the types of photos you can post to your Google My Business listing.

- Cover Photos
- Profile Photos
- Other Photos

**Other people can add photos to your listing as well. It's best you treat your GMB listing the same manner you would your Facebook page. Your photos should portray what your business does.

General Photo Guidelines

- **Format:** JPG or PNG
- **Size:** Between 10 KB and 5 MB
- **Minimum Resolution:** 720px × 720px
- **Quality:** Your photos should be in focus and well lit, and have no significant alterations or excessive use of filters. In other words, your images should represent reality.

Add Videos

Video performs very well online and continues to grow rapidly. A good practice to perform prior to posting is asking yourself, “If my competitor uploaded a video like this, would I make fun of them or envy them?”

Google My Business Video Requirements

Video posted on your listing must be:

- 30 seconds or shorter
- 100 MB or smaller
- 720p resolution or higher

Video creation resources:

If you're a non-technical person and or just don't have the time to create your own videos, there are some excellent and low-cost ways for you to have someone else create them for you. You may want to look at [Fiverr](#) or [Renderforest](#) to see if you want to get some help with the project.

Categorizing Your Business

Google My Business offers three different categories of businesses.

1. **Brand pages:** Brand pages are a slightly different than other forms of local listings. These pages help brands, and organizations reach out to their fans. Unlike true local listings, these pages don't include information about an entity's physical location.
2. **Storefront business:** If you run a brick-and-mortar business with a physical storefront, this category allows customers to locate you in the Google Maps feature and is what businesses like hotels, stores, and restaurants should be using.
3. **Service area business:** This local page option is meant for businesses that go to a customer's location to conduct your work. This is true for plumbers and delivery services as well as others.

Third-Party Directories

Something that can help your Google My Business page rank higher is your company's presence on third-party directory sites such as [Yelp](#) and [Trip Advisor](#). Maintaining an active presence on these sites lets Google know that your business is participating as a member of an established community. Therefore, when you set up your Google My Business listing, it's a good idea to set up listings on these third-party sites.

Make your listings effective. List the same information, consistently in every directory. This helps keep confusion down and everyone going the appropriate place.

Incoming Links

One of the factors Google uses to rank your My Business page is links. Links play a huge part in Google's organic search algorithm and when your site has earned a healthy amount of incoming links from other sites, Google is likely to give it a boost in local search engine report pages (SERPs.)

Business Name

Your business name plays a key role in Google's local algorithm. To help yours feature prominently, ensure that your business name features relevant keywords. This can help ensure that your company appears on relevant search queries.

Building Your Google My Business Presence

Once you've built and optimized your listing, it's time to establish your 'Google My Business' presence. This means you should write and post relevant content on your company blog and get reviews from customers.

When someone leaves a review on your page, be sure you read and reply to each one in order to promote engagement and maintain an active web presence.

Post, post and post some more:

Think of GMB Posts the same way you do Facebook posts. Talk about what makes your business unique (pricing, customer service, product quality) and give readers a reason to either contact you, or visit your store.

Where Do Google My Business Posts Appear? According to Google, posts may also appear on Maps, Search, and the Overview tab for listings based on various signals.

What Can Posts Contain on GMB? Posts can contain text, photos, and videos.

Categories of GMB Posts Right now, there are four (4) posting categories:

- **New Posts:** These are posts containing general info you want to provide to the public.
- **Event Posts:** If you're planning on being involved in an event in some fashion then you can use this post to promote that. These types of post require: *Title* and *Start/End Dates/Times* but you can also add a photo/video to posts like this, CTAs, and other information.
- **Offer Posts:** If you're offering a promo, deal, or sale you can use this type of post to let people know.
- **Product Posts:** You can use these to highlight a specific product. For example, a clothing store may highlight a particular line of shoes they carry.

How to Manage Reviews

Ideally, you want your customers to leave reviews. You can encourage this by simply asking them, and by replying to reviews that customers post. When customers see that you interact with people who post on your listing, it motivates them to do the same. If a review is positive, thank the customer.

If the review is negative, be kind and make things right if at all possible. The last thing you want is to get into a disagreement or altercation in public.



How to remove a negative review from your listing

You cannot remove a review from your listing just because it is negative, but Google does allow you to challenge a bogus review. Be aware though that there is no guarantee it will be removed just because you formerly dispute it.

How to dispute a false review on your google listing

- From your GMB dashboard click on “reviews” (located on the left side)
- Find the review you want to flag, click on the three dots in the upper-right.
- Click “Flag as inappropriate”

How to turn off your GMB listing reviews

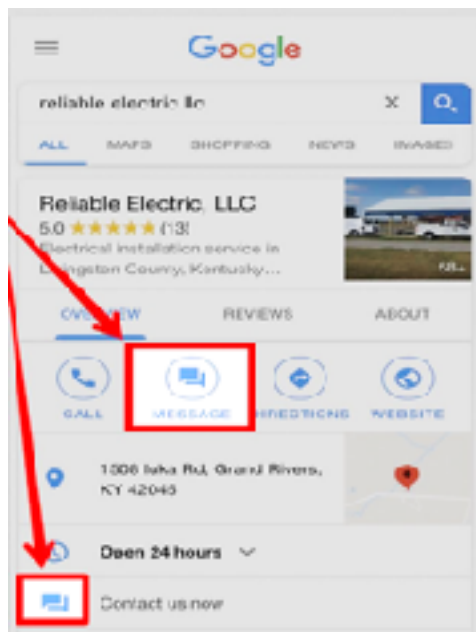
There is no way to turn off your reviews on Google. If you don't like the reviews people post, respond thoughtfully while attempting to resolve whatever the issue is. If you're dealing with a false review, respond as if it were a legitimate complaint, while you wait for Google to reply to your dispute after you flag it as inappropriate.

Enable Messaging

If your business listing has been verified you can enable messaging. Enabling messaging allows customers to send you a text without sacrificing your privacy.

How to enable messaging for your GMB:

- From the GMB dashboard click on “messages” on the left-hand side.
- Click Enable. The option to message you will show up for users on mobile.



Are You in Need of a Website?

Now that you have a GMB listing, do you have a business website? If yes, would you like a second one? Better yet, would you like one that is fully SEO optimized, and free of charge?

If you find yourself saying, sure, there's good news. Back in 2017, Google released a 100% free website builder. Anyone and everyone who has a Google My Business Listing can build a completely free, simple 1-page Google website / webpage.



If you're a small business owner who does not yet have a website, i.e. an internet presence, or even if you're a larger organization... or maybe you just want a second website... Google lets you build one, and hosts it for you absolutely FREE...

Some major benefits of having a GMB website is, it's automatically SEO optimized and every time you update your Google My Business Listing...

Your GMB website is also updated automatically with the same information that is posted to your GMB listing without you having to lift a finger. On top of that, their website builder is super easy to use. You can literally have your website up and running after a few clicks in 5 minutes or less.

Here's what great about a GMB website:

1. Easy to use.
2. Nice, clean design.
3. Mobile-Friendly.
4. Optimized Images.
5. Linkable Content.
6. Includes Google Map.
7. Includes Business Hours.
8. Keyword Suggestions for Headers Available.
9. Page Analytics let us know who has been here.

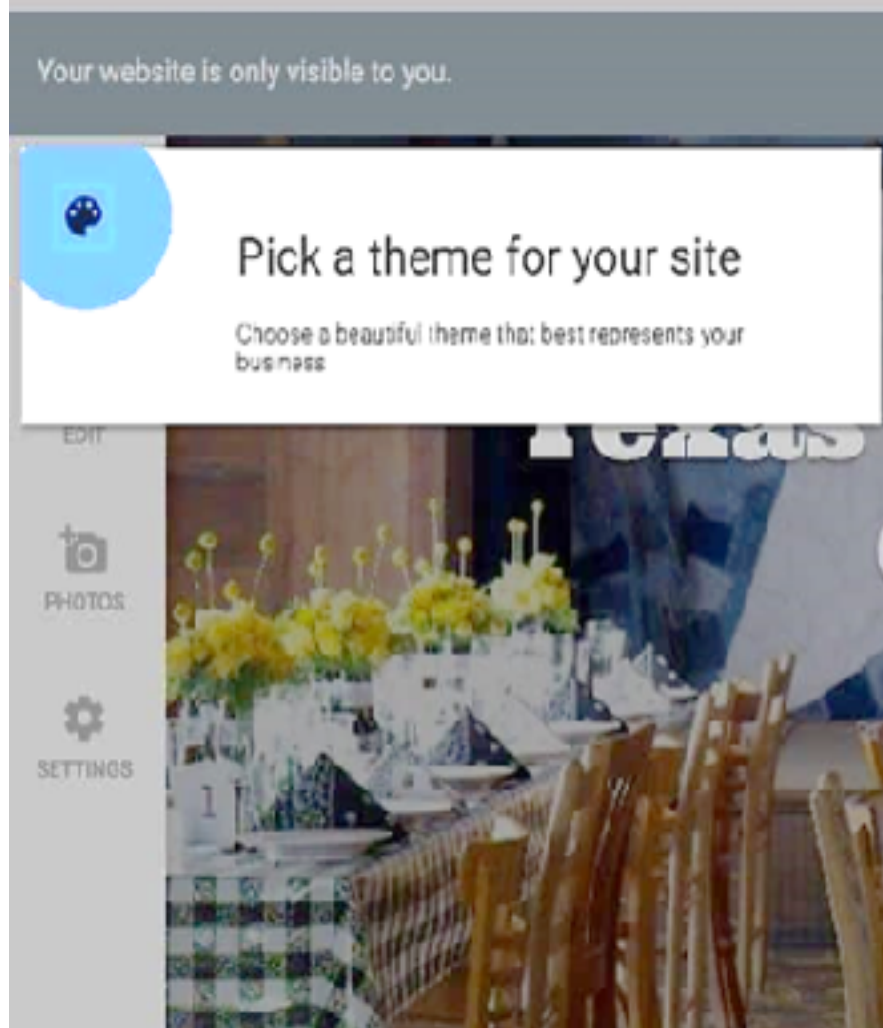
According to a 2017, Google My Business Help thread:

“One of the most common actions people take when exploring a Google listing is to go to the website, but we know that getting a website can still be a challenge for a lot of small business owners around the world: too complex, too expensive, too time consuming. Millions of small businesses (60% of small businesses globally) don't yet have a website. It is a free tool that allows small business owners to create a simple, striking website in just a few minutes. It's easy, and you can create and edit your new website from your computer or your phone!”

How to Build a Website with Google My Business

Once you've entered Google's Website Builder, there are four easy steps from here until your finished website:

1. **Theme:** Each theme has a different heading font style and color combination to help customize the website design closest to your company's brand identity.



2. **Edit-** Be concise and direct with your audience. Aligning your digital marketing and SEO with Google's best practices is always your best bet for traffic. Include a bulleted summary of who you are or what you do.

Website Design that Works. Explore our Minnesota website design, digital marketing services, and brand design portfolio of local small businesses with stories like yours. When a company is in the market for affordable website design solutions, VantagePoint is the pay-by-the-minute answer for getting more out of your marketing dollar. Grow your business within your budget with a custom website design and digital marketing plan, created locally, maintained locally, and marketed locally.

- Custom Website Designs
- Professional Brand Development
- Local Digital Marketing
- Search Engine Optimization
- Google AdWords Campaigns
- Social Media Management
- Print & Package Design

3. **Photos-** Try and make your website look as beautiful as your best images by uploading graphics that speak to your brand and service. Show off your latest projects and share an update team (employee) photo. This visual enables your audience to see who you are as business and as a team. In addition, it can also help them “see” your values and your priorities when you share behind-the-scenes images of products, events, and social or community activities.



Settings- Here are a few more opportunities for your online marketing efforts.

- **Your Site Address:** You can take what Google suggests, or write your own GMB website address
- **Site Language:** Set your website’s default language for your target audience.
- **Contact Details:** The rest of the information, including your operational hours and contact info, is already populated from your Google My Business Profile.
- **Publish Website:** Encouraging words, aren’t they? Yes, it was that simple. Give yourself a pat on the shoulder... You deserve it!

You’ve finally arrived. Welcome to the world of Google My Business, and of course if you took the plunge. Congratulations on your new Google My Business Website!