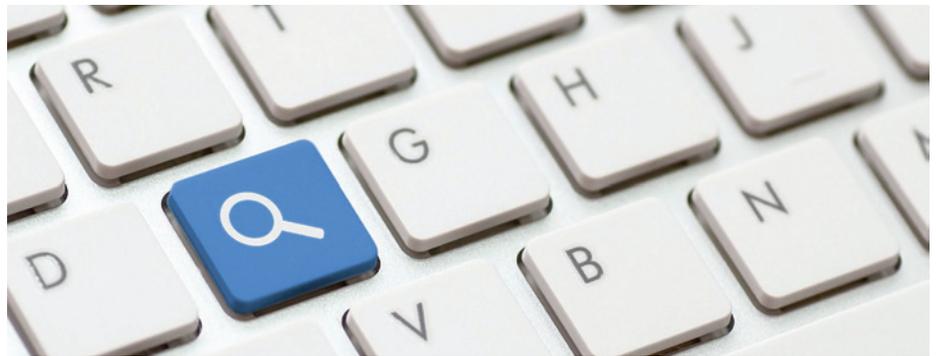


3 tips to make the most of local search optimization

Four out of five people have used search engines to conduct local searches,¹ so gaining visibility in your local online market through search engine optimization (SEO) is crucial. Local SEO tactics include improving a business's website and other off-page resources to increase visibility in searches specific to a city or state. Perficient, a leading technology and management consulting firm, recommends three key steps that can make your business more visible online in local searches.

These three tips can help to get your business on the way to being optimized for local search and help make it easier for potential customers to find you.



1 Create location specific web pages: Every website should have an individual webpage for each location. This page will indicate to search engines where your offices are located and what page to rank for that specific office location.

2 Utilize Google My Business: Your location is probably already in Google, but you should follow these steps to claim/create your listing.

- Use Google's map feature to find your business. Then click "Are you the business owner."
- Google will walk you through the steps to create an account and verify your business.
- Update your listing to include the exact same name, address and phone number found on the location page discussed before. Also, include your website and business hours within the listing.
- Choose a category (or up to three) to define your business type.
- Include a profile and background photo.
- Write a brief "introduction" that explains what you do and what sets you apart from your competition.
- Save and publish changes.

3 Encourage ratings and reviews: Ratings and reviews are imperative. Google will be more likely to show your business in local results if it has ratings and those ratings are positive. Not only are online reviews important for search engines, but they are also incredibly important to your potential customers. 72% of consumers say they trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations².

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1. Google: Local Searches Lead 50% of Mobile Users to Visit Stores [Study], <http://searchenginewatch.com/sew/study/2343577/google-local-searches-lead-50-of-mobile-users-to-visit-stores-study#>
2. Stats from Search Engine Land, <http://searchengineland.com/study-72-of-consumers-trust-online-reviews-as-much-as-personal-recommendations-114152>

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