

Local SEO Guide

Local search engine optimization (SEO) is a critical component of any business's digital marketing strategy. With the majority of consumers relying on search engines to find local businesses, it is crucial to have a strong local SEO presence to ensure that your business is visible and easily accessible to potential customers in your area. This guide will provide you with the essential steps and strategies to optimize your local SEO, including how to create and optimize your Google My Business listing, develop a local content strategy, and build local citations. By following these steps, you can improve your local SEO and increase your business's visibility and traffic in your local market.

Overview

Here is a thorough walkthrough on creating and managing your Google Business Profile:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DheeQqH1Cok>

Management & Optimization

- 1. Claim your Google Business listing:** If you haven't already, claim your business on Google. This will allow you to manage and update your profile and respond to customer reviews. Here is a video on how to claim your profile on Google:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4ASrWEd4r4>
- 2. Add accurate and complete business information:** Ensure that all the information in your Google Business profile is accurate, complete, and up-to-date. Include your business name, address, phone number, website (if applicable), hours of operation, and other relevant information.
- 3. Upload high-quality images of the product and your location to your Google Business Profile and on Social Media:** Use high-quality images to showcase your shave ice shack. Add photos of your menu items, your store interior, and exterior, and any other relevant images that can attract customers.
- 4. Encourage customer reviews:** Encourage your customers to leave reviews on your Google Business profile. Respond to all reviews, whether positive or negative, and engage with your customers. Encourage your customers to add pictures of them enjoying the product.
- 5. Add a menu:** Add your menu to your Google Business profile so that customers can see what you offer. Ensure that the menu is up-to-date and accurate. *Download a copy of your menu from your dealer site and upload the image to your Google Business Profile.*
- 6. Use Google My Business Posts:** Use Google My Business Posts to share information about your business, such as promotions, new products, and events.
- 7. Engage with your customers:** Engage with your customers on social media and other platforms. This will help build your brand and increase your visibility on Google.

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- 8. Use Google Maps:** Ensure that your business is listed correctly on Google Maps. This will help customers find your business easily.
- 9. Optimize for mobile:** Ensure that your Google Business profile is optimized for mobile devices. Most people will be searching for your business on their mobile phones, so it's important that your profile looks great on a small screen.
- 10. Use relevant keywords:** When responding to reviews or writing social media posts, emphasize the most common keywords locals use to find a shave ice location. These

- include:
1. [City name] shave ice
 2. Shave ice near me
 3. Best shave ice [City name]
 4. Snow cone shop [City name]
 5. Hawaiian shave ice [City name]
 6. Gourmet shave ice [City name]
 7. Ice treats [City name]
 8. Snowball stand [City name]
 9. [City name] ice dessert
 10. Shaved ice flavors [City name]
 11. Healthy shave ice options
 12. Shave ice catering [City name]
 13. Kids party shave ice [City name]
 14. Ice dessert shop [City name]
 15. [City name] snow cone flavors
 16. [Neighborhood name] shave ice
 17. Shave ice deals [City name]
 18. Shave ice party packages [City name]
 19. Organic shave ice [City name]
 20. [City name] summer treats
 21. best shave ice in <name of local area>
 22. best shave ice near me
 23. shave ice flavors
 24. authentic Hawaiian shave ice
 25. shave ice toppings
 26. shave ice stands
 27. tropical shave ice flavors
 28. exotic shave ice toppings
 29. Hawaiian shave ice flavors
 30. Caribbean-inspired shave ice
 31. refreshing shave ice flavors
 32. cool summer treat
 33. refreshing snack for hot days
 34. family-friendly shave ice near me
 35. kid-friendly shave ice flavors
 36. shave ice for all ages, shave ice catering for events
 37. wedding shave ice
 38. party treats near me
 39. Instagram-able shave ice
 40. share-worthy shave ice
 40. shave ice pics on social media

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Google Profile Optimization:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSDdAWwn8LU>

1. **Google SEO Cheat Sheet:** <https://rankingacademy.co.uk/google-business-profile-seocheat-sheet/>
2. Use the SEO Cheat Sheet by Ranking Academy to help increase your Google Business Profile. The cheat sheet will walk you through filling in and completing all information necessary to increase your business profile ranking.
3. **Business Name:** Has influence on your Google business ranking – can have better ranking when keywords are used in the business name. Please note that when keywords are used in your business name, there are guidelines to follow to make sure that your profile is not suspended by Google.
4. **Business Address:** Make sure that your address is accurate and the dropped pin on the map. You can move the map to adjust the pin to your exact location. This is helpful when you are sharing a location with other businesses.
5. **Phone Number:** Add the primary phone number that will connect customers to your business.
6. **Business Categories:** This feature has the greatest influence on your Google Business Profile rating. Your primary category should be the category that best describes your business and secondary categories can be added to describe other products that you offer.
 - a. **Example:** Primary: Frozen Dessert Supplier | Secondary: Ice Cream Shop
7. **Website Linking:** if you are using a website, you will want to link your Google Business Profile to the home page. If you have multiple locations, you will want to link each Google Business Profile to a location-specific page on your page (this may mean that you need to create a page for each location on your website.) *You cannot link your social media accounts as your website as it goes against Google Business Profile guidelines.
8. **Google Reviews:** Reviews are key to your business and your profile ranking and search result visibility. Google has created a short form link to text or email your customers to ask for reviews. It is important to respond to your reviews, within 24-48 hours, to build on your business credibility. Getting reviews and responding to reviews, positive and negative, will help increase your Google Business Profile rating.
9. **Business Hours:** Keep your business hours and seasonal operational dates updated on your profile. Make sure that you review your listing frequently to make sure that the information stays updated.
10. **Business Description:** The business description does not have any influence on your Google Business ranking. You should use this section as an “About Us” to describe your business, and give some of your background, and history. You do not need to add keywords or links to this section.

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11. **Years in Business:** Update your Opening Date on your profile based on your original opening date to show how many years you have been in business. This feature will only show in search results and on Google Maps, but not on your page listing.
12. **Business Attributes:** Labels that can appear on your profile and could help with your search result and Google map rankings. There are several different categories to fill in attributes that apply to you and your business.
13. **Questions and Answers:** Members of the public can ask questions about your business that you can respond to yourself. You can also choose the top 3 or 4 questions to write yourself and answer for your customers to see on your profile. This can be useful to highlight if you offer other services like catering or booking for private events. Questions can be liked and only need 3 likes to show on your business panel.
 - a. *Make sure that you have the notifications turned on for Questions and Answers so that you can respond immediately when customers post a question.
14. **Photos:** Photos play a huge part in showcasing your business and also influence customers to decide whom they choose to do business with. The business logo and cover photo can be edited on your Google Business Profile. You will want to make sure that you are uploading pictures of your business regularly.
15. **Photo & Business Logo Size Recommendation:** Photos should be 720 x 720 pixels, in a PNG format, and a max of 5 MB file size to maintain the quality of the picture.
 - a. Cover Photo Size Recommendation: Photos should be 1024 x 576 pixels, in JPEG or PNG format, and a max of 5mb file size to maintain the quality of the picture.
16. **Products & Services:** You can list your products, price, and description on your business profile.
17. **Google Posts:** Provide your customers with the latest information with posts on your profile. You can create 3 different types of posts, Latest Update (ex: Opening Date), Offer Post (ex: Highlight deals), or Event Post (ex: attendance at festivals, fairs, farmer's markets) You can repurpose your social media post in the Google Business post format
18. **Messages:** Call and chat buttons added to your Google Business Profile that allow your customers to reach out to you. You must respond to messages promptly or else Google will turn off your messaging feature.

Google Map Pack: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VMiNPczXWg>

1. **Relevance:** How well a Google Business Profile relates to search results. This includes regularly updating your Google Business Profile by uploading posts and photos about your business and getting reviews from your customers.
2. **Distance:** How far potential search results are from someone searching on Google. Your location is important and the nearer you are to someone searching online, the more likely you are to appear in the map search results.
3. **Prominence:** How well-known your business is known even for businesses that are more wellknown offline, Google will reflect this in your local ranking. Prominence is based on the information Google has about your business from across the web including links, articles, directories, Google Reviews, and Local SEO.

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- a. **LINKS:** Other websites that link back to your website. (You will need a website for your business)
- b. **Directories:** Yelp, Nextdoor, Foursquare, Apple Maps, Your Local Chamber of Commerce
- c. **Google Reviews:** The more positive review that you get the higher your rank will climb
- d. **Your Position in Search Results:** The position of your website in traditional search results will impact your Google Map rankings.

Google Photos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atSaJI66HDQ>

1. **Benefits:** Businesses that add photos to their Business Profile receive 42% more requests for directions on Google Maps and 35% more clicks through their website than businesses that don't.
2. **Google Vision API:** Allows Google to identify and categorize objects in images that are uploaded to your Business Profile. Google will then take the objects it has identified and use them as keywords associated with your business.
3. **Add Category-Specific Photos:** Upload photos in the different categories detailed on your Google Business Profile. Exterior, Interior, and Product Photos
4. **Use this link to review the categories and tips from Google on what and how many photos to post on your Business Profile.**
<https://support.google.com/business/answer/6123536?hl=en>

Apple Maps – Business Connect

Your Business on Apple Maps:

1. Go to <https://businessconnect.apple.com>
2. Click on Get Started by clicking on Help People Find My Small Business
3. Sign in with your Apple ID or create an Apple ID account if you do not have one
4. In the search box, search your business name to see if your business is already listed. If your business is not listed, you will need to Add your business
 - a. If your business already exists, you can verify your business immediately with a phone call
 - b. If your business is being newly added, you will need to upload documents for verification which can take up to 5 business days.
 - i. Documents can be a copy of your lease, insurance policy, or utility bill that shows the location's name and address.
5. You will need to confirm or update the address that is shown
6. Next, you will add your location and business information to the listing.
7. Once you have access to your location dashboard, you can add a cover photo and logo to your listing .
 - a. Logo size: 1024 x 1024 px

