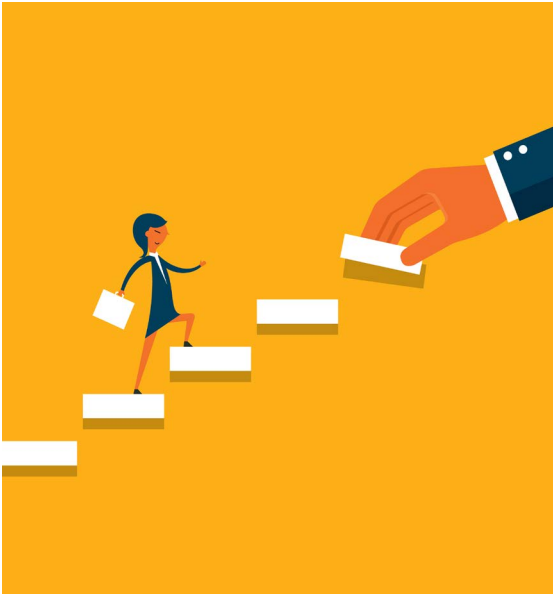


Boosting Your Google My Business Listing



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Nowadays, you cannot talk about a business plan without talking about your digital marketing strategy. One essential part of a digital marketing strategy is local SEO, and at its core is Google.

In this guide, we'll discuss the Google My Business (GMB) profile features you can start using today to make sure your Google listing is fully optimized. Why worry about your GMB profile? Your optimized listing sends positive signals to Google to:

- Support your brand's visibility in different search results
- Drive more local traffic to your website
- Prevent a loss in rankings

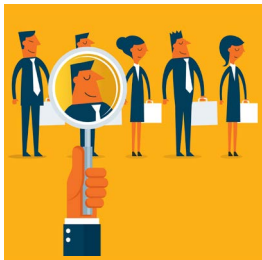


Big Picture

Google My Business (GMB) is a free tool to manage your online presence on Google. It allows businesses to create an online listing for their business that consists of a business logo, NAP (name, address, and phone number), website, images, reviews, and other details of your business.

Think of Google as a business's single source of truth. It is a dynamic platform that users expect to be up to date—even more so than your website.

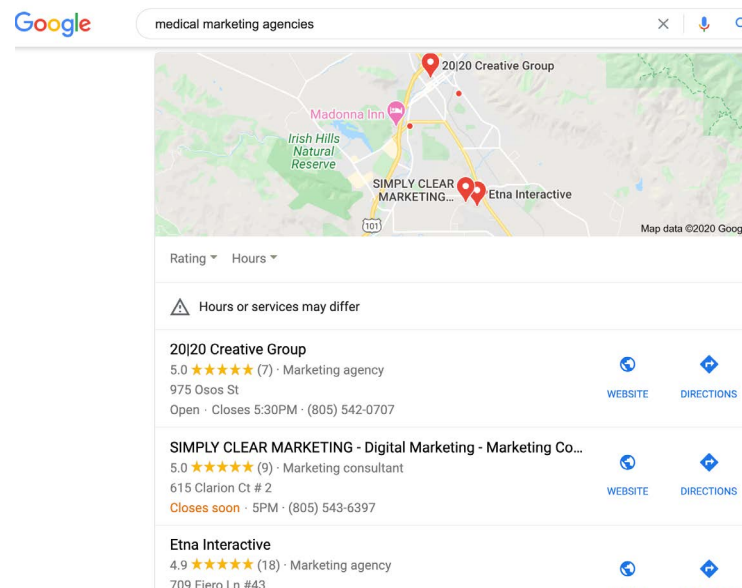
There are a couple of different ways a GMB listing will appear in search results on Google. There is the local map pack, and there is the knowledge panel. Either one will appear in search results depending on the type of search.



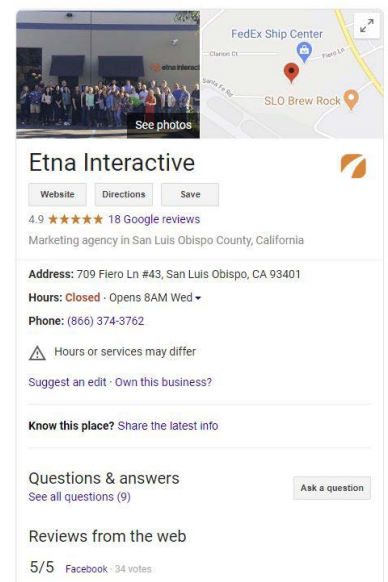
Types of Search

Searches fall into 3 categories: discovery, direct, and branded searches. If your listing is optimized correctly, these types of search queries can put your business on the first page of search results at any time, and they can quite literally get you on the map.

- Discovery searches: when a user finds a listing by searching for a category, product, or service related to your business. With a discovery search, your business has a chance to appear at the top of search results within the local three-pack map results.
- Direct searches: when a user finds your listing by specifically searching for your business name or address.
- Branded searches: when a user sees your listing by searching for a brand related to your business.



Local Map Pack



Knowledge Panel

Why Should You Care?

Visibility on search results pages is essential to your business. When you regularly update listing information, and users interact consistently with the listing by calling your business, using driving directions, or writing reviews, Google interprets this engagement as a positive signal.

Google is a business and wants to keep users on its platform for as long as possible. So, when Google receives those positive listing engagement signals, it wants to continue to display your listing in one of the three types of search results. This means more people see your business for search queries that Google thinks are relevant.

How to Become Relevant

You can encourage user engagement on your listing by taking advantage of the features offered by Google. The more engagement a listing gets, the higher the chances are for that particular listing

to appear in search results for the searched keywords in the future, assuming the business is also engaged in other local SEO tactics.

BONUS:

Using GMB features also extends the length of your knowledge panel, which pushes down competitor listings and allows your business to take up more real estate online.

What Google Features Elevate Your Ranking?

Google My Business profile features include categories, attributes, business description, precise map pin location, click-to-call, website clicks, images, products and services, Google posts, reviews, and question and answers.

Utilizing these featured areas on a GMB listing boosts ranking and helps give a business the competitive edge.

GMB signals are among the top-ranking factors for the Google Local Pack and #4 for local SEO

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

Remember, Google is a business and wants to keep people on its platform more than any other platform—including your own website—so Google rewards businesses that optimize their listing(s) using its features.

Where to Start

First, do a GMB audit and analyze your GMB listing to make sure it is fully optimized with all of the must-haves in place.

1. Is your business name, address, phone number, and website (NAP +W) consistent with the NAP information on your website? Correct and consistent business information is key to ranking because Google wants to provide accurate information for its users.
2. Is your primary category the best description of your specialty? Have you selected additional categories that are relevant to your business? Make sure you do not list any unrelated categories—do not keyword stuff! This is a major local SEO ranking factor, and Google will ding you in the rankings if you try to game the system with keyword stuffing!
3. Are you actively asking for, and responding to, reviews? As a local business, reviews are your lifeblood—research shows that positive online reviews are the most important factor for consumers who are considering a purchase. Reviews from Google My Business (GMB) are also a ranking factor, so keep asking and responding!
4. Are all your images still relevant to your practice? Do you have interior and exterior photos? Professional staff and doctor photos? An accurate business logo? Photos are—say it with me—another ranking factor, so make sure the images and videos on your GMB listing are the best depictions of your business.



Pro Tip:

Add UTM tracking to your website URLs as well as call tracking, so you can measure how much traffic is coming from your local listing versus organic.

[Google reports](#), “Businesses with photos receive 42% more requests for driving directions to their location, and 35% more clicks through to their websites than businesses that don’t have photos.”

Source: Google

5. Find and report map pack spam by reporting competitors that are keyword stuffing, creating multiple listings, or using fake addresses.



Nice-to-Haves

The following features are not proven to affect rankings directly—yet. However, they are still important features you should be taking advantage of and optimizing because they are great conversion points. They are opportunities for the business and users to engage with each other and for the business to showcase why they are better than their competition.

Google Posts are a great way to capture patients by adding new content weekly. Some content ideas include testimonials, event announcements, blogs, and specials. Google also creates suggested posts from reviews and photos, which is an excellent place to start. A Google post is live for 7 days, then archived (offers and events are live until their end date passes. Do not forget to include calls to action (CTAs) on all your posts!

The **Question & Answer** section of the GMB knowledge panel is a place for people to ask questions directly to the business. It’s also an opportunity for businesses to seed some of their own FAQs and answer them to ensure the information is accurate. If you do not partake in this feature option, you run the risk of a user answering questions about your business with incorrect information.

This feature affects a business’s reputation by anticipating the questions people will have and answering the questions in advance as well as engaging directly with users. Start with answering some basic questions patients ask about your business but feel empowered to ask and answer more advanced questions patients may be asking about your procedures or services.



Etna Interactive
709 Fiero Ln #43, San Luis Obispo, CA

Does Etna offer PPC services?

1 Like Answer

Etna Interactive (Owner)
Edited · a year ago

Yes Etna is a full service digital marketing company with certified Google Ads specialists. In fact, we were named a finalist in Google's 2018 Premier Partner Awards and selected as one of the top 8 agencies in the Americas for growing businesses online.

8 Likes

Does Etna provide reputation management services?

Like Answer

Etna Interactive (Owner)
a year ago

Yes, we do, in addition to a range of website development, marketing, and content creation services. It's not an overstatement to say we do it all when it comes to online elective healthcare and med spa marketing. You can visit our website (<https://www.etnainteractive.com/what-we-do/>) to learn more about our full-service agency.

**Pro Tip:**

When in doubt, refer to Google My Business Guidelines for GMB best practices.

Where Do You Go From Here?

If you take away one thing from this guide, make sure you claim your GMB listing and keep it up to date! When a business consistently utilizes the features offered on Google, that business is sending signals to the search engine that their profile is active and monitored regularly.

By consistently updating your GMB profile and participating in other local SEO best practices, the ever-changing beast that is Google will reward you for your efforts.

Do You Have More Questions?

As always, Etna is here to answer any questions you might have about increasing your online visibility on Google or any of your online marketing needs.

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