

2020 GOOGLE MY BUSINESS OPTIMIZATION

Plus... GMB's New Features



Google My Business

Launched in 2014, Google My Business has changed how physical location businesses are found online and in real life. This 2020 Google My Business Optimization Guide shows you how to set up and use your GMB accounts to get the most out of this free and powerful local search tool.

EVERY MONTH



5 BILLION
searches on Google
for restaurants



1 BILLION
searches for clothing
stores

LOCAL SEARCH

A typical business receives 59 actions from their Google My Business listing each month - an action is a website click, call or direction request from users.



600M
searches for hair
and beauty salons



5M
searches for coffee
shops

NEW CUSTOMERS

1 in 2 people who conduct a local search visit a store that day. 76% of people who search for something nearby on their smartphone visit a related business within a day.



RANKING IN LOCAL SEARCH

Creating a Google My Business listing is usually the first step in any local marketing strategy for anyone with search engine optimization experience. Google owns about over 90% of the global search engine market - trusting and relying heavily on their own Google My Business listings to provide the most accurate and useful local search results to their users.

Over the years, dozens of updates and changes have made Google My Business the ONE business listing must-have for increasing visibility by ranking higher in search, which means more customers and more sales.



Google has made it easy to play into their system and show up in both Google Maps and Google Local by providing Google My Business as a free tool that helps business owners manage their online presence across Google and its powerful roster of partners.

56%

*On average,
56% of actions
on GMB listings
are website
visits*

2020 GMB OPTIMIZATION

You can't control Google, but you can take what we know and optimize your Google My Business listings to rank at the top of local search results faster.

Get customers with a great Business Profile

You can post photos and offers to your profile to show what makes your business unique, and give customers reasons to choose you every time.

[Manage my Business Profile](#)

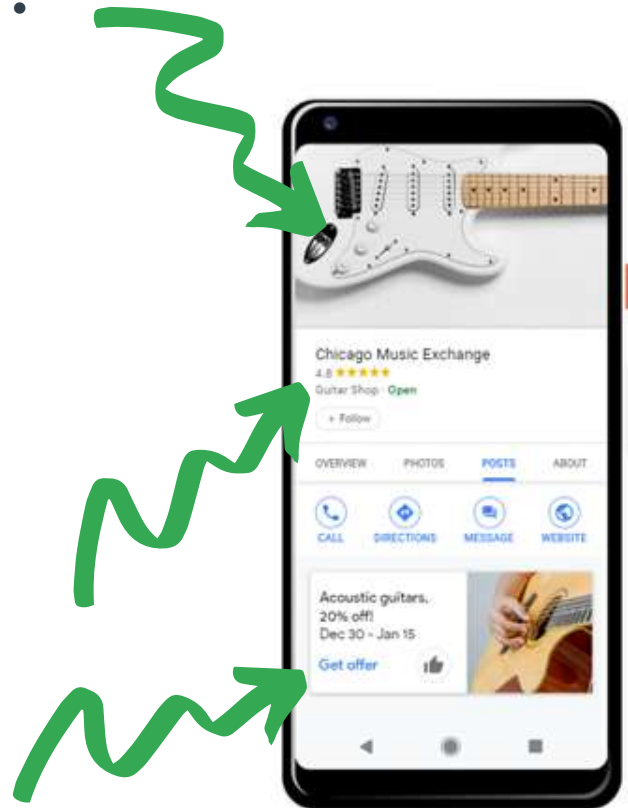


Image Sources: Google.com

Complete and accurate Google My Business listings that keep account information up to date and get business reviews on their listings are rewarded with higher rankings.

1. N.A.P.

Ensure Business Name, Address and Phone (NAP) is Correct On All Business Listings

The name on Google My Business should reflect your business' real-world name used on your storefront and known by your customers.

GMB does not permit you to add extra information to your name in this field, so no location (Apex Roofers - Portland), taglines, special characters or URLs.

You also can't use P.O. boxes for your address.

Do use your local phone number for each location. For example, a call center toll-free number does nothing for your local SEO.

It is vital that your NAP not only be correct on Google My Business but is correct and identical across the Web.

Make sure you are monitoring and managing your business listings to ensure consistency and accuracy.



16%

16% of
businesses
receive more than
100 calls each
month from GMB

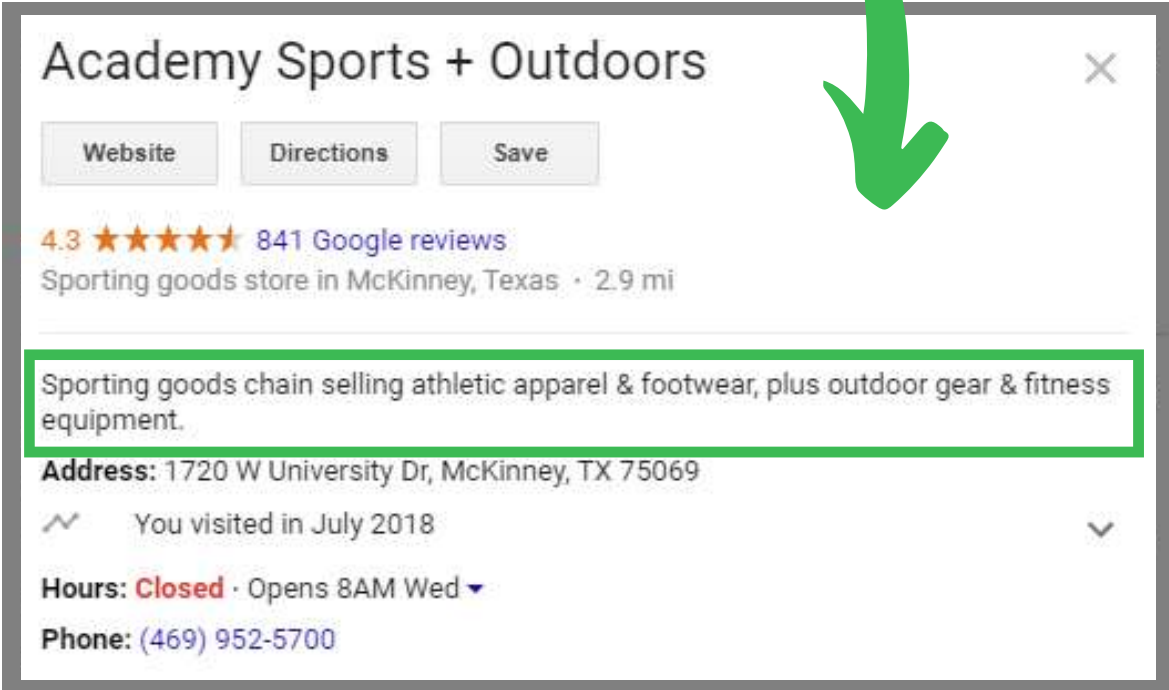
Google likes to keep things in-house as much as possible and favors its own accurate and current business listings when giving local search results to search users.

2. GMB DESCRIPTIONS

Google My Business Descriptions Give You A Chance to Tell Customers Why They Should Pick Your Business

With the return of Google My Business descriptions in 2019 you are now able to submit content describing what separates you from the competition.

Links are not allowed, but Google My Business gives you 750 characters to get your message across and optimize your Google My Business listings.



Academy Sports + Outdoors

Website Directions Save

4.3 ★★★★★ 841 Google reviews

Sporting goods store in McKinney, Texas · 2.9 mi

Sporting goods chain selling athletic apparel & footwear, plus outdoor gear & fitness equipment.

Address: 1720 W University Dr, McKinney, TX 75069

You visited in July 2018

Hours: Closed · Opens 8AM Wed ▾

Phone: (469) 952-5700

DESCRIPTION GUIDELINES

Published content that highlights what makes your business unique. Use this field to provide useful information on services and products and focus providing relevant and useful content that helps customers understand your business.

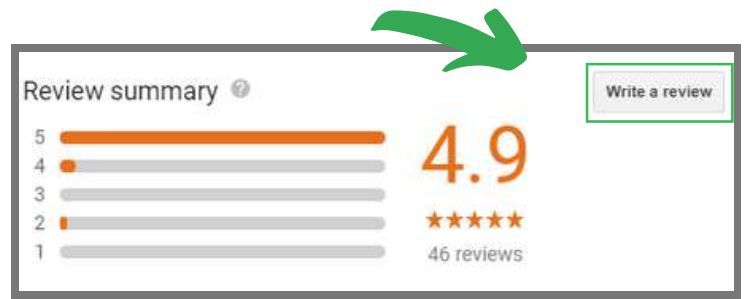
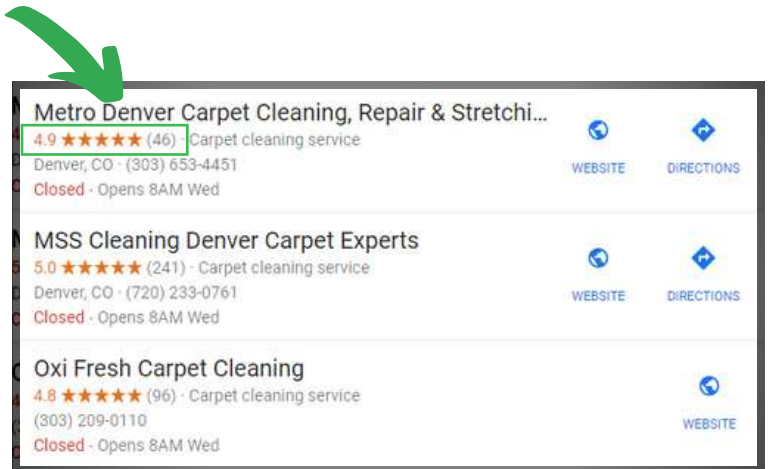
3. REVIEWS

Have a Plan in Place to Get More 5-Star Reviews and Manage Customer Concerns

Encourage customer to review your business by clicking “Write a Review” on your Google My Business page.

Review Management is a critical to the success of your business, so have a process for asking customers for reviews and making it easy to post them on Google.

Make time to be an active presence on your GMB accounts and respond professionally to reviews to show future customers the high value you place on customer satisfaction.



The more reviews on your Google business page and the better the rating of those reviews, the higher you are going to rank in local search results.

4. MAP LOCATION

Pay Attention to Map Location and Where Your Local Pin is Positioned

Look at your business pin location on the map and make sure the marker is in the right place. If the marker placement doesn't make sense or it is on the wrong side of the road, you can drag the marker on that map to your exact business location.

Address

Providing an accurate business address is important so your business shows up in the right place on Google.

Country / Region
United States

Street address
YOUR ADDRESS [add line](#)

City
YOUR ADDRESS

State ZIP code
Texas 75071

Drag pin to reposition

Map Satellite

CANCEL APPLY

Please note: Edits may be reviewed for quality and can take up to 3 days to be published. [Learn more](#)

While logged into your Google My Business Account, use the sidebar to find and click the "Info," tab and you'll see an option to view your listing on either Google Search or Google Maps.

Click on the "📍" button next to your address and you can move the location pin to the correct place.

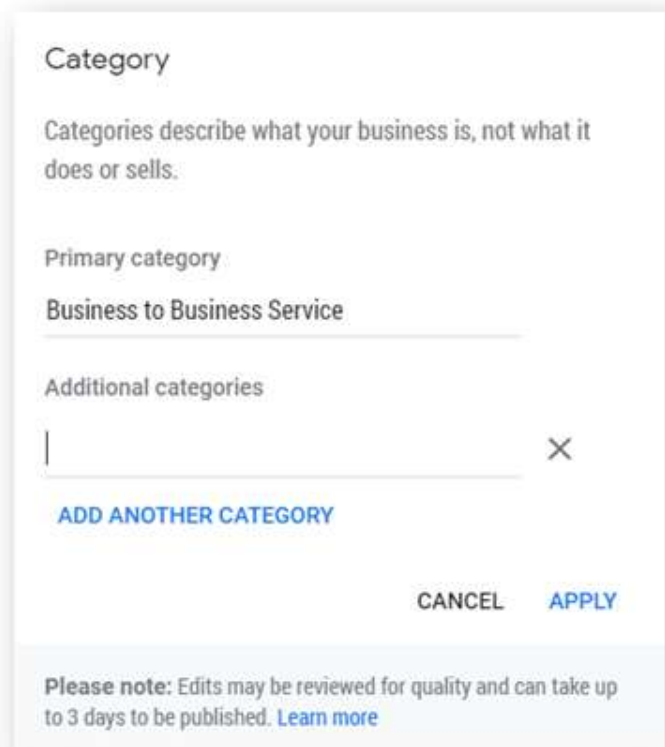
5. CATEGORIES

Pick ALL the Best Google My Business Categories for Your Business

Categories on Google My Business is one of those instances where more is better. Select all the categories from their list that apply to your business, and get specific as you can. "Sporting Goods Store" is more relevant than "Store" in search results.

Categories help Google designate a business is a relevant result for specific local search queries.

It doesn't benefit your SEO to misrepresent your business, so be clear on the intent of the searches of future customers and choose all the categories that represent the services or products your business provides.



The screenshot shows the 'Category' selection interface in Google My Business. It includes a title 'Category', a descriptive instruction 'Categories describe what your business is, not what it does or sells.', a 'Primary category' field with the value 'Business to Business Service', and an 'Additional categories' field with a close button (X). Below the fields are buttons for 'ADD ANOTHER CATEGORY', 'CANCEL', and 'APPLY'. A 'Please note' section at the bottom states: 'Edits may be reviewed for quality and can take up to 3 days to be published. [Learn more](#)'.

Google My Business Locations Categories

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10QhWFmHYhZI7FL7cQZUqkDkRbexPVthEIfp8iibhA3s/edit#gid=1618773282>

You can find a complete listing of Google My Business categories by using the link above and selecting the "en" (for English) tab at the bottom of the spreadsheet.

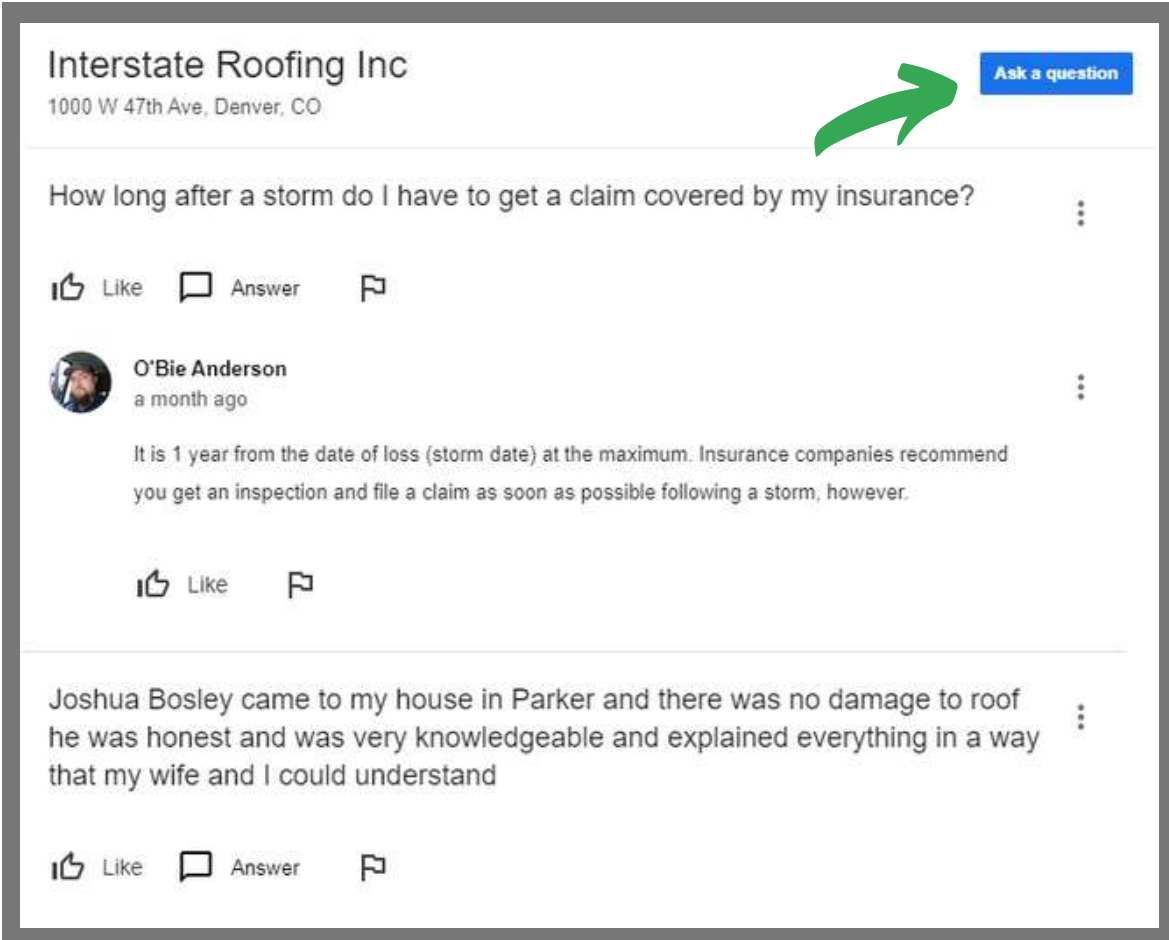
6. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Local business owners and the public can answer questions asked by search engine users.

The Questions & Answers feature is helpful in keeping your customers informed, but just like review monitoring this feature can't be ignored and requires a little maintenance on your end to protect your reputation.

The good news is that most local businesses are not yet using this feature. By being proactive and taking the time to optimize your Questions & Answers, you'll be ahead of the competition.

Ask and answer questions from your listing in search results to provide another level of customer-centric data available to future customers through an easy to use FAQ format you can contribute to.



The screenshot shows a business listing for Interstate Roofing Inc. with the address 1000 W 47th Ave, Denver, CO. A blue button labeled "Ask a question" is highlighted with a green arrow. Below the business name, there is a question: "How long after a storm do I have to get a claim covered by my insurance?". The question has three icons: a thumbs up for "Like", a speech bubble for "Answer", and a flag. Below the question, there is an answer from O'Bie Anderson, posted "a month ago". The answer text reads: "It is 1 year from the date of loss (storm date) at the maximum. Insurance companies recommend you get an inspection and file a claim as soon as possible following a storm, however." The answer also has "Like" and "Answer" icons. Below the answer, there is another question: "Joshua Bosley came to my house in Parker and there was no damage to roof he was honest and was very knowledgeable and explained everything in a way that my wife and I could understand". This question also has "Like", "Answer", and "Answer" icons.

7. PHOTOS

Adding Quality Photos to Your GMB Listings Sells Search Users on Your Business

Studies show that photos, reviews, and opening hours all have a substantial, positive relationship with consumer engagement.

Showing photos of your business location (interior and exterior) not only help customers find your business, it helps build the trust customers need to overcome the fear of the unknown and try a new business.

Add photos or videos

After you select the photos or videos you want to add to your Google My Business listing, make sure photos are in either JPG or PNG format and the [right size](#), and videos follow our [guidelines](#). Then, follow the steps below to upload them to your listing:

Computer

1. Sign in to [Google My Business](#). If you have multiple locations, open the location you'd like to manage.
2. From the menu, click **Photos**.
3. Choose the [type of photo](#) or video you'd like to add.
4. Upload the photo or video from your computer, or choose one you've already uploaded.

Mobile

1. Open the [Google My Business mobile app](#).
2. Tap **Menu**, then tap **Photos**.
3. Choose the [type of photo](#) or video you'd like to add.
4. Choose a photo or video from your camera roll, or take a new one.

GET FOUND FIRST

With photos, customer reviews, and accurate location and contact information consumers are more likely to take a chance on your business.

GMB PHOTO GUIDELINES

- Photos must be in one of these formats: JPG, GIF, PNG, TIFF, BMP.
- Each photo must be smaller than 5MB.
- We recommend adding photos that are larger than 720 x 720 pixels and smaller than 3000 x 3000 pixels.
- The longer dimension of the photo should be no more than twice the shorter dimension. Landscape photos look better than portrait photos on Google products.
- Each location can have no more than 25 additional photos.
- The photo should be in focus, well-lit, have no photoshop alterations, and no excessive use of filters. The image should represent reality.

TYPES OF GMB PHOTOS

- Profile photo: Help your customers recognize your business.
- Cover photo: Showcase your page's personality. Adding a cover photo automatically sets it as your listing's preferred photo. This action doesn't guarantee it populates as the first image for your business, but it does tell Google that you prefer to display this photo.
- Additional photos: Add different photos to spotlight features of your business that customers consider when making purchasing decisions. Learn more about business photos.

8. VIDEOS

You Can Include Videos with Photos in Search Results With Google My Business

Post videos to your Google My Business listings in the photo section to give search users a richer view of your business. Videos can be up to 30 seconds long, and it's worth noting that videos can be added by owners AND customers.

Adding video is as easy as adding photos. Log into your Google My Business account and go to the photo section to upload your latest photos and short video.

While you're in there, select the best "Cover," "Profile" and "Logo" images for your profile.

Videos uploaded by you will appear under the "By owner" tab and customer uploaded videos will appear under the "By customer" tab.



Video

Use a video to tell the story of your business and what makes it unique.

[Add videos](#)

VIDEO GUIDELINES

Make sure your videos meet the following requirements:

- Duration: Up to 30 seconds long
- File size: Up to 100 MB
- Resolution: 720p or higher
- Screenshots, drawings, posters and other non-photos, other than videos, should not be uploaded.



9. BUSINESS HOURS

Keep Business Hours Current and Accurate with Every Permanent, Holiday and Seasonal Change

Most businesses change their hours seasonally or on specific holidays. Routinely check the hours on your listing and make sure they are up-to-date.

Google users who are navigating with Google Maps who select a business that Google believes is closed or closing soon (because of the hours listed on GMB), will be asked if you still want to go to this location even though it is closed or closing within the hour.

This feature will turn away customers when you're still open if your hours are not correct.

10. GOOGLE POSTS

Use Google Posts to Promote Events, Sales, and Products & Use Offer Posts for Discounts, Exclusive Offers, and Limited-Time Deals

Create posts that show what is going on with your business right now when customers see your business listing on Google search results.

Each post you create is removed from search results after seven days, or after the event date. Enhance the search and comparison parts of the buyer's journey with these quick and simple updates.

Google Posts give you the opportunity to promote your latest and greatest content, deals, events, product updates, and service specials appear with your listing in search.

NEW GMB FEATURES

Google My Business continues to evolve into a platform for transactions and engagement between businesses and their customers.

CHECK OUT WHAT'S NEW...

Add a Logo — Businesses can display their logo on the upper right of the profile instead of a profile photo and the image will appear beside posts or review responses.

GMB Marketing Kit — A new site to create and print promotional assets like free stickers, posters, social posts, & more created from your GMB profile.

Welcome Offers — these can be sent to customers/prospects who follow a business and you can include links and coupon codes.

Promotional Assets — The GMB Marketing Kit site lets you create and order stickers, posters and other promotional assets for free.

Local Favorites — The top 5% of local businesses in a category will be awarded a "Local Favorite" badge. Currently the Local Favorite program highlights the most popular restaurants in NY, Chicago, and LA.

Short Names — Businesses will be able to register their desired name and search users will be able to search Google Maps for @shortname and bring up the profile.

Request A Quote — Enable messaging in GMB and you can create a "Request A Quote" button customers can use to request a quote for any services you choose, then you reply within the GMB app.

Book An Appointment — Route search users directly to a landing page for booking an appointment.



GOOGLE MY BUSINESS 2020

Google My Business will continue to be increasingly important to both merchants and consumers into 2020 and well beyond.

Dominate local SEO by having a verified, accurate and complete Google My Business listing and using GMB's many tools to promote your business.

