



GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

What Is It, and How Can I Use It for Business Growth?

From GrowthDev Services

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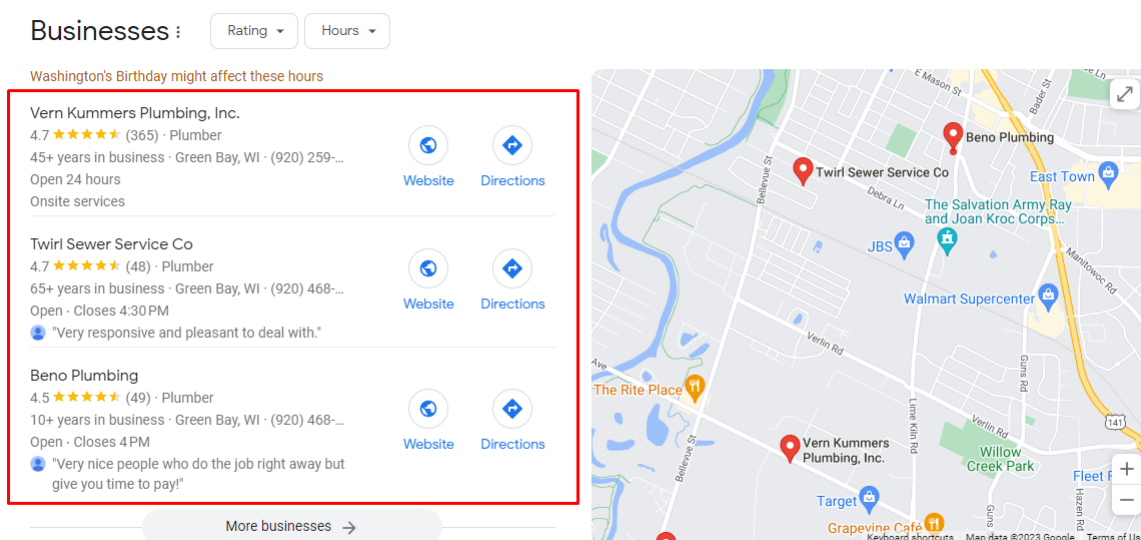
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What is Google Business Profile (GBP)?

Google Business Profile, formerly called Google My Business, came about because of local searches via mobile devices such as your phone. When you type in for instance “hair salon near me” or “auto repair near me” Google is going to provide to you a map with businesses pertaining to that query and each business will have its own profile gleaned information from various sources such as location, phone, website, etc.

It’s all done by automation, but you are able to claim the listing and start to optimize it further. A better-optimized GBP listing is going to be given preference over other less-optimized or unclaimed profiles. The best optimized listings will appear in the coveted Three-Pack on Google Maps (in red box below). The Three Pack is shown on the first page of Google search results and it should be your goal to achieve for your business, because it is in essence free advertising.



Your Google Business Profile also has reviews posted where customers can comment, praise, or criticize your business or service. This makes GBP similar to directory sites like Yelp or the Yellow Pages, they are created to help customers find the best products and services. We’ll get into more detail about reviews later in this report (including how to delete negative reviews). People can also post photos from their visits to your business, such as pictures of meals they ordered, menus, etc.

In some ways Google Business Profile is a social site like Facebook, Instagram, or Pinterest. You can also make posts on your GBP, which will show up to those who click on your profile, giving you the opportunity to post promotions, sales, or special events for free. More about that later in this report.

How do I claim my profile?

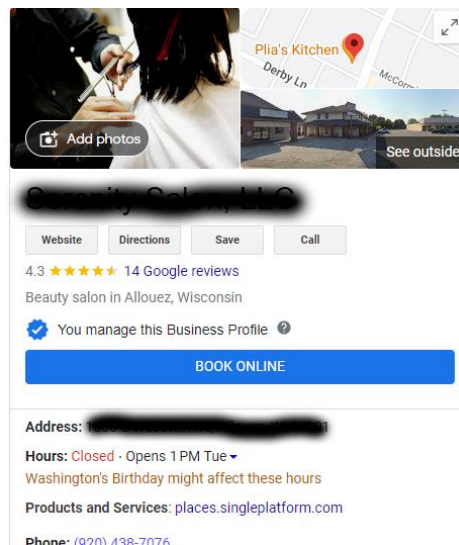
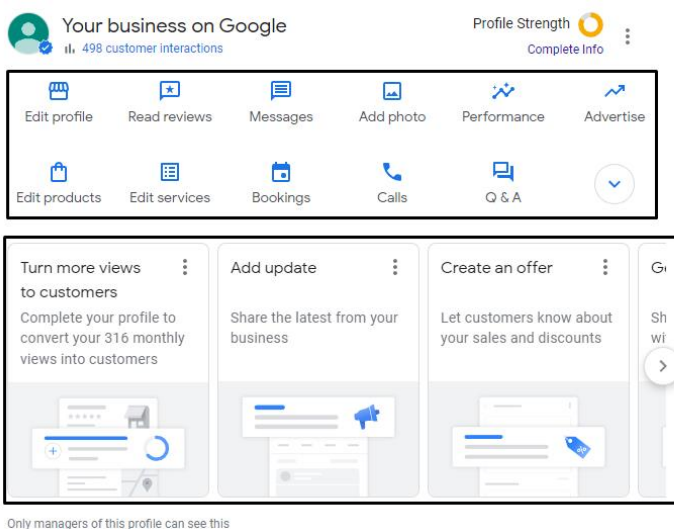
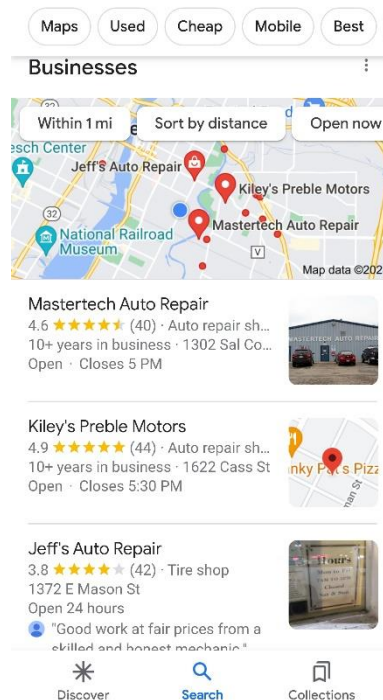
Go to accounts.google.com. You will need to create a dedicated business Google account. You can use your regular Gmail account if you want to, but it is recommended that you create a new dedicated business account. This way you separate your personal emails from your business emails.

After you've created your account and logged in, go to Google.com/business. Sign in again and search for your business name. Your business will come up and if it not already claimed it will give you the opportunity to manage it. You can verify your ownership through a card that comes by snail mail to the address of the business which will take about five business days, or you can do it through your phone which is instant verification.

If the listing is already claimed, possibly by yourself with another email address or by a previous account manager that you employed, you can then request access and an email will be sent to the current manager and if there is no response in three days, you'll be granted ownership.

Then you can begin creating/editing your profile. *Answer all of the questions as best as you can*, including address, hours of operation, business category, services, website, business description, etc. Be sure to supply some original images, including your storefront if you have one. Avoid using stock photos, because they lack the unique geo-coding that pictures from your phone have.

You will then be redirected to a page like this where you can start to administer your business listing:



You can see in the red boxes above that you have many options and settings to choose from. You can explore around here and update things. Try to add new information, posts, events on a weekly basis.

How do I optimize my GBP?

Basically, to get to the top of Google Maps you need some specific things:

- **A complete listing.** Endeavor to fill out your GBP as completely as possible. If didn't Google need it they wouldn't ask for it.
 - Categories
 - Hours of operation
 - Complete business description
 - Products and services
 - Website
- **Questions and Answers.** – be sure to ask with a different email address, not your business account email. However, supply answers while logged in with your business Google account. Provide a list of commonly asked questions and then answer them. This is building your “authority” in your field and enhances the overall ranking of your GBP.
- **Photos added,** preferably not stock photos. If you take photos with your phone, it provides a specific geo-location data, which Google reads and verifies your actual location.
- **Reviews with engagement.** That is, when you receive a review always include a thank you reply, and if there's a negative review always be sure to reply with some assurance that you will quickly resolve the situation. You should actively encourage customers to leave a review but remember it must be legitimate. You can't fake a review yourself or offer incentives to leave good reviews. Google could penalize your listing, even cancel your account. More information about bad reviews later in this report.
- **Regular posts.** At least once a week provide a short (up to 1500 words) update, such as some helpful information, promotions, or events. Memes here can be great. The posts only last for seven days, but it is a very nice addition to your profile as it appears on the search results. They give you credibility as an authority in your field.
- **Proper SEO strategies (search engine optimization).** Basically, the keyword phrases that searcher uses on Google to find services like yours. This is more advanced, but doing SEO research on your business gives you a wealth of specific keyword phrases that you should include in your Google Business Profile. You can insert these in your business description, captions for your photos, posts and services listing.
- **Adding to the “Google Stack”.** This is one of the secret techniques that very few people know about. Under your Google account you should utilize as many of the Google services as you can: *Gmail, YouTube, Sheets, Contacts, Documents, Photos, Slides, Drive, Calendar, Forms, Ads, Sites, and the list of them goes on.* If you are using Google to a significant extent with your business that makes them “happy”, and they give you more and more preference. It is free but takes work to put these all together, but the payoff will be more calls, sales, and regular clients.
- **Backlinks, Citations, and Social Signals.** Links from other directories (called citations), authority sites and social media pages like Facebook and Instagram also help push you up the listings. This more in the realm of traditional SEO, but these techniques and more of them will put you above your competition in the local marketplace. For citations we are talking about directories like:
 - Yelp
 - Yellow Pages
 - Bing Place for Business

- Angie's List
- TripAdvisor
- And dozens of others.
- **Make sure your NAP (Name, Address and Phone) is exactly consistent through all of your webpages, social media, and directory listings.** NAP listings should be exactly consistent right down to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. If there is inconsistent information Google starts to question the validity of your business. When the inconsistencies only involve one or two directories, it's typically a very easy problem to correct. Simply log in and make sure all your NAPs match. However, when there are problems on several sites scattered all across the web, it may be best to leave it to an SEO or marketing expert.

There are many other things that you can do to get optimize your Google Business Profile to get it into the top of the listings, even the Three-Pack, but the items listed above are the main ones, but I've just provided you the main list. Even doing a few of them will put you ahead a lot of your competition. To get more help maintaining your GBP, contact us at GrowthDev.

Remember that your GBP is like a mini site or social profile of your business that the searcher sees. It's free advertising of the best kind and you should endeavor to use it to begin building that KLT (Know, Like and Trust) factor with prospective customers or clients right off the bat.

How do I Manage Reviews or Delete a Bad Review on My GBP?

The subject of *reviews* brings up another key factor to Google Business Profile success: engagement. You should always endeavor to reply to every review that your GBP gets, especially any negative ones. This shows to Google that you are striving to deliver quality services and that assures them that you are a good listing to promote.

Bad reviews are not as bad as you think, you can turn them into opportunities.

If you ignore bad reviews that can reflect very badly on you, but if you promptly respond to them that can actually be very impressive to others. It shows that you are committed to high quality service, which raises you in the eyes of others, including Google.

Everybody, even Google, realizes that some people just have sour grapes, or things just happen beyond our control.

Apologize and give some kind of incentive for that customer to come back and do business with you. They may come back and delete or amend their negative review.

You can always request deletion of unfair, unreasonable, or spammy reviews. To do that open your GBP admin section and click "Reviews". Find the review you want to report, click the three dots and then "Report Review" and select the type of violation you want to report. It could take up to six weeks for the request to be reviewed. There is no guarantee that Google will delete the bad review, so the best policy to stack better reviews on top of it; that is, make it a policy to always ask for reviews.

Your business on Google
508 customer interactions

Profile Strength Complete Info

Read reviews (highlighted with a red box and arrow)

Messages Add photo Performance Advertise

Edit products Edit services Bookings Calls Q & A

Turn more views to customers
Complete your profile to convert your 316 monthly views into customers

Add exterior photo
Help customers locate your storefront

Add update
Share the latest from your business

Only managers of this profile can see this

C [Redacted Name] 2 reviews
★★★★☆ 8 months ago

The lady who styled my hair to stand up in a wedding dropped the curling iron on my t
apologized, but then kept going so I figured it wasn't bad and the pain was just from g
saw later there was a very ... [More](#)

Like

Response from the owner 3 months ago
Collette, it's upsetting to hear that you did not receive the top service we strive to provide.
Please contact us so that we can help make this experience a positive one.

Share review
Report review (highlighted with a red arrow)

← Why are you reporting this review?
⋮ ×

Off topic
Review doesn't pertain to an experience at or with this business

Spam
Review is from a bot, a fake account, or contains ads and promotions

Conflict of interest
Review is from someone affiliated with the business or a competitor's business

Profanity
Review contains swear words, has sexually explicit language, or details graphic violence or other illegal activity

Bullying or harassment
Review personally attacks a specific individual

Discrimination or hate speech
Review has harmful language about an individual or group based on identity

Personal information
Contains personal information such as address or phone number

You're reporting a **policy violation** to Google. To report a review for legal reasons, go to [Legal Help](#)

Update your customers

How to Get More Good Reviews

More importantly, if you are actively asking for reviews by customers the new reviews push down the bad reviews, so people no longer see them.

You should make it a point to always ask for a review right after a sale or service delivered. In the backend of your profile you can create a special link to post on your website and send to all of your customers (especially if you have an email mailing list). You can text that link directly to customers who just purchased your services or products.

You can have a little sign at your desk or printed on your business card. There are many fun ways you can do this.

Do I Want to Publish My Address?

The basic fact here is that if you do NOT have a physical address listed, you will NOT show up in Three-Pack, which makes sense, of course. If you have multiple locations, you will need to create separate profiles for each location.

Some people if they work from home may feel uneasy about publishing their home address on Google Maps. That is a perfectly valid concern. However, in practice we have never personally or had any clients have any problems from publishing their home addresses on their GBP.

If you decide not to provide your home address, then you're going to have to make sure that your other optimizations (Website, social, and SEO) are on point, and that the rest of your GBP listing and website is outstanding.

What are the biggest mistakes people make when creating a Google Business Profile profile?

Like anything else you do in online marketing, there are some common mistakes made with Google Business Profile listings. If you fall into the same trap of making those mistakes, your listing will suffer and you won't make it into the Three-Pack.

So, what are those mistakes?

- Not having a listing at all
- Having duplicate listings
- Missing relevant categories
- Missing contact information on your website or in your listing
- Inconsistent NAP information online
- Missing citations
- Missing customer reviews
- Little or no customer engagement (replying to reviews)
- Low-quality website content
- Lack of high-quality, relevant links
- Not having a mobile-friendly website

The good news is that all of these mistakes are fairly easy to correct. You just have to know what to look for, and then get into your GBP listing to correct any mistakes you find.

Google is the Big Dog

Google has massive dominance in society. "Google" is a verb as much as it's a noun. So, like it or not, we have to conform to what they want in order to get what we want, but it's not that hard.

We can use Gmail, upload videos to YouTube, use Google Drive, buy Google Ads, use Google Sheet and Docs, upload our photos to Google Photos, etc. All of these things pushes us up in the eyes of Google, and as we use them more intensively, such as with Google Ads, advanced SEO, and the Google Business Profile we achieve almost absolute dominance of our local markets.

Amazing Stats about Google That You Need to Know

As of January 2023 Google:

- Is visited 89.3 billion times a month.
- Has 91.9% of the market share.
- Does 8.5 billion searches a day (or 99,000 a second).
- 63% of Google searches are done through a mobile device (Is your site mobile optimized?)
- 84% of Google searchers use Google three times a day or more.
- 46% of product searches begin on Google.
- Just 0.63% of people click on the second page of Google search results.
- 76% of people who conduct a local search on their phone *visit a store within 24 hours and 28% of those searches result in a sale.*

As you can see, it is better to work with Google than to ignore them. Knowing what they want as far as SEO, ads, and now Google Business Profile may mean the difference between business growth and going out of business.

Corollary to those stats:

- Is your business website optimized for mobile viewing?
- Is your website correctly optimized for organic (free) traffic? (was the site just thrown together, or was there actual SEO research that went into the construction of it?)
- Is your business website structured-designed for conversion (making sales?) (Do buyers on your site have a clear path to calling your and/or purchasing?)
- What is the user experience visitors have with your website? (Is it easy on the eyes, easy to work with, or is it cluttered and frustrating to use and makes visitors go to another site?)

The Internet is the new phone book, we have to learn and adjust to its demands and requirements in this day and age. Is your site delivering little or no sales? We can help. Please call/email us at GrowthDev for a free site audit.

Summary and Conclusions

With the increasing number of mobile searches happening, it has become essential to have some sort of claimed, optimized Google Business Profile presence for your business. It gives users access to important business information at a glance right from their search results page, which is amazing because it's basically free. You have the ability to capture a prospects attention immediately and start earning revenues at a much more accelerated pace.

Not only to they see your business name and number, but they see photos, short informational posts, your latest promotions, reviews from happy customers and links to your website. Your Google Business Profile gives them the ability to call you with the click of a button; and it gives them the ability to see your physical location immediately with precise driving directions.

We covered the basics about claiming your site and optimization to give you a head start above your "less savvy" competition. We also showed you how to delete bad reviews. It's not "hard" to optimize

your GBP, however, it is time-consuming. Therefore it may be in your best interests to think about getting help from GBP experts to better help you “get on the map”.

If you have more questions about Google Business Profile or want help with it, call us at 920-358-0911 or email curtis@growthdev.net.

We offer high quality services in web development, web design and traffic services such as SEO, Google Ads, Reputation Management and Social Media Service.

Or go to <https://GrowthDev.net>