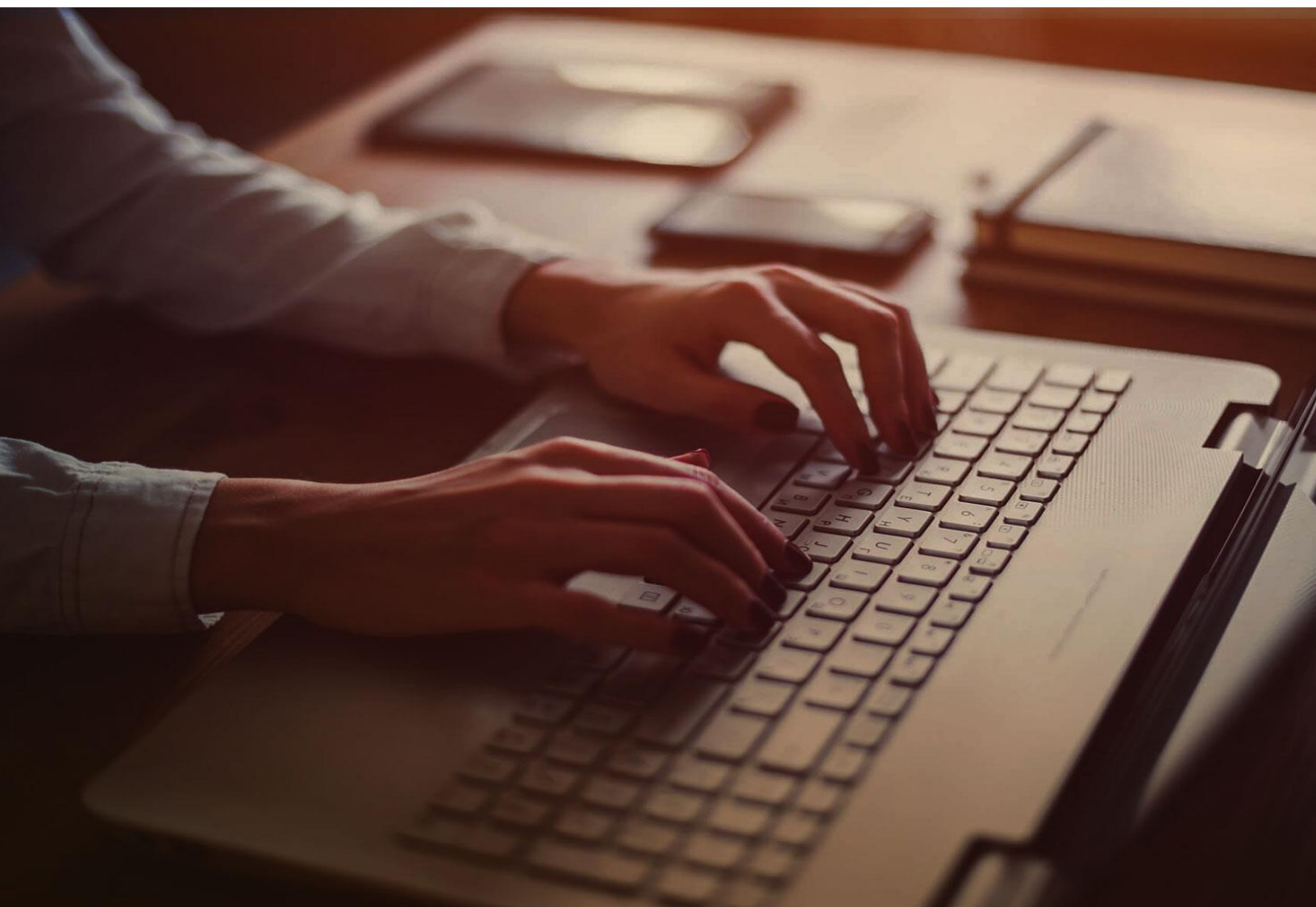


**LEVERAGING**  
**GOOGLE**  
**MY BUSINESS**



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## INTRODUCTION

Google My Business or GMB is by far the best tool to help you market and grow your business. It is user-friendly, free, and can be used by any business owner. If you know it's ins and outs and take advantage of the convenience it brings, you will easily grow your client base and up your sales.

## UNDERSTANDING AND GETTING STARTED GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

Google My Business is the key to advertising your services or products and reaching more people within your target area. It guarantees online visibility by ensuring your business appears on the front page of the search engine and Google maps. When users look for services related to what you offer, they can easily find you.

Your business, location, service descriptions, working hours, customer reviews, etc. will be easily accessible. This will make it easier for them to familiarize themselves with your business and locate you.

Your GMB profile allows you to quickly address questions and respond to comments. Which communicates professionalism and integrity. Customer reviews reassure potential clients of your legitimacy and exceptional services or products. They are the key to attracting more people, increasing your revenue, and boosting your SEO.

**5 key features for comprehensive marketing.**

## **1. Your business description.**

Add a description of what you do on your profile and help your customers to better understand your business. Write the most important information and be honest about your offers. Your description is limited to 750 characters so make the most of it.

Use the 'Primary Category' section when setting up your account and choose one that best describes your business type. Google will display your profile based on your choice.

## **2. Posts.**

Use posts to tell your clients about a new offer, discounts, product updates, or upcoming competitions. Add the right image and add a call-to-action to encourage them to make a purchase. Posts are a great way of attracting as well as engaging with users. You can add up to 10 images.

You can also share video posts with your audience. Your video should be 30 seconds and no more than 100MB. They are a great way of marketing your business and briefly explaining your new offers.

### **3. Direct messaging.**

Never miss an inquiry. Use this feature to directly communicate with your clients. Make sure you are available during the listed working hours and always respond to comments, questions, and feedback.

Direct texts make it easy for you to market to your potential customers and introduce new exciting offers while they are interested. Activate it by going to the GMB dashboard and clicking on 'Message.'

### **4. Photos.**

As a business owner, you want to uphold your company's reputation and ensure your profile stands out. So, pick the right photos that represent your brand well. Your choice will determine how many people get drawn to your page, go over your profile, and develop an interest in doing business with you. Hire a professional photographer or do it yourself. Use image editing software for the best results. For instance, Adobe Photoshop.

### **5. Customer reviews.**

Add customer reviews to your page to show and assure prospective clients of the quality of your services. When they see comments from satisfied customers, they will want to do business with you. This is because people often make buying decisions based on social reviews or someone else's experience with your product.

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Ask satisfied customers to review your business and add it to your page. If you can get 8 or more new people each month you are set to go. To make it easier, ask every willing client to send a direct message detailing their experience with your service or product. Remember to take note of both positive reviews and negative ones. Send a “Thank you” message to every assessment.

You can also collect your reviews via email, social media platforms, or your the convenience it brings, you will easily grow your client base and up your sales.

## SET UP YOUR GMB PAGE

Reach more people and grow your sales by opening a GMB account. It's quite easy and won't take too much of your time.

### 1. Sign up for a GMB account.

Go to the Google My Business website. Log in to your existing Google account. Go to 'Manage Now' in the top right corner. Follow the prompts. Enter the name of your business to figure out whether or not it's already listed. Go to 'Add your business with Google.' If it's not listed, click on 'Add my business,' then 'Next'

### 2. Add your business.

This is where you add your business' information. Enter the name of your business, select the category that best describes your company and move on to the next step.



### **3. Add location.**

Select your country/region, enter your company's physical address, zip code, and everything else required. You will be asked whether or not you want to add your location. Tick the following options based on your preferences. If you don't want to add your location go to 'No' and move on to the next step.

### **4. Add contact details.**

Add your primary contact details such as your phone number and website. Go to 'Finish' and you are done creating your page. Move on to the most important step.

### **5. Verify your business.**

Double-check your information and verify that you are the real business owner. You can verify your information via email, phone, or postcard. If you choose the 'Verify by email' method, double check your email address and go to your inbox. Find the verification email and follow the link. If you opt for the phone method, enter your current phone number and click on 'Verify by phone.' You will instantly receive a text message with your code. Enter the code and verify your business.

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After successfully authenticating your business, you will have full control over your account. You can edit your profile as you please. Use the GMB dashboard to keep your information up to date.

## **Set up your GMB app.**

The GMB app allows you to easily manage your page on the go. You can post new updates, share photos, respond to questions or comments, see customer reviews, and so on.

Certain features available on the app are not available when using your desktop. Therefore, it is recommended that you install the mobile app.

Download the app from the App Store or Play store. Launch the app and sign in with the email you used during the sign-up process. On the homepage, right at the top, you will see statistics on how users interact with your page. For example, the number of views and searches. Scroll down to see more information such as your latest posts, followers, and reviews.

Head over to the 'More' tab to customize your settings, set up notifications, and so on. Experiment with the app features and become accustomed to them.

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Use the app to boost local SEO, edit your business' information, update your contact details, or working hours.

When you have everything set up, the next step is to aim for high rankings on search engines to reach more people and increase your revenue.

**Here's how you achieve that:**

## OPTIMIZE GMB FOR SEO

A GMB listing is extremely important for SEO. It ensures you appear at the top of the search engine and reach more people. So, master and apply the best ways of optimizing your GMB account for high rankings.

- **Use keywords.**

Add proper keywords to your business name, description, and posts to appear on Google's search engine. Know which keywords to use as well as how and where to apply them. Search Engine Optimization is something that you need to continue improving or working on over and over. It is not something you work on once and set aside. Continuously improving your SEO tactics will help you to rank high and remain at the top.

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- **Use posts.**

Posts are a great way of effectively communicating with your customers and keeping them engaged as well as updated. So, post regularly. Publish upcoming as well as past events, interesting offers, discounts, and promotions. Be careful with word-selection when adding descriptions to your posts. Share relevant information such as the purpose of your post, the name or location of the upcoming event, how long your offer is going to last, and so on. Use the right keywords.

- **Verify your information.**

Keep your profile information accurate and up to date. It shows how professional you are and assures potential as well as existing clients that you take your business seriously. Avoid keeping your website on your profile when it is down or no longer in use. Don't leave your office address when you have moved or have decided to work from home. Review your details from time to time and if you have new contact details, for example, make sure you update them.

Have proper working hours on your page. Don't say operating hours start from 7 am to 5 pm and not be available at that time to address clients' needs. If your working hours have changed, go ahead and edit your profile with the current information.

- **Use reviews.**

Use customer reviews to rank high on Google, attract more people to your site, and prove your reliability as an organization. 5-star or 4-star reviews are the best marketing tool you need to keep growing your business. So, if you can get at least a couple, every month, you will drastically boost your SEO.

Reach out to clients via email. Use an email campaign to make things easier. Ask a few questions and have them, fill-in, their answers. Don't take too much of their time. A one-minute survey would do. Ask about the name of the purchased product, their experiment, what they liked best, what changes they would like to see, future suggestions, etc. Keep your questions short and provide a way for them to easily and effortlessly respond.

Respond politely and on time to every review you get. Good or bad. When you receive negative feedback, say "Thank you so much for taking the time to send us your review. We are sorry you had a bad experience with our product. We will look into your complaint and make necessary changes" or "Your review will help us to improve our product. Thank you so much for your feedback." This will show the client that you value their honest opinion and feedback. It will keep them interested in reviewing your next product as well.

## MANAGE MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

If your company has different locations, you can use a location group to manage all locations. A location group helps you to sort your locations into groups thereby making it easier for you to control all your listings. You can make changes, share updates as well as access different business listings from one place.

### **Create a location group.**

Visit the Google My Business website and sign in. Go to 'Manage Locations', 'Create group' enter the name, then hit 'Create.' You can add as many locations as you want. You can also view current locations, add new locations, transfer locations, and delete location groups.

The organization owner or user group owner has the right to delete location groups or transfer them. Other members such as the organization member and the user group member have limited rights. They can only create or edit a location group, request to manage a specific location, and view invitations to do so.

## **Optimize SEO for multiple locations.**

**Optimize SEO for all your business locations from one place by doing the following:**

- **Keep the information for every business up to date.**

Information for each location should be kept up to date. This means posting the right phone numbers, email addresses, physical addresses, and office hours. If there are changes at one or two locations, make the necessary updates. It is important not to neglect this because failing to share accurate information about one location can hurt your entire business.

Add descriptions to each location, individually and share accurate information. This will help to increase traffic to your page.

- **Use quality content across all locations.**

Use different content for different locations. Avoid copying and pasting the same information across all pages. Take your time to write and share quality content. Your content should match the user's needs. Meaning what works for users or customers in one area may not work for one in another. So, publish posts that meet the user's needs based on their location.



- **Create an effective content strategy.**

Your content quality and structure are the keys to getting your business at the top of search engines. So, come up with an effective content strategy and implement it in all your listings. Optimize the content, description, and keywords.

Understand your customers and share information that resonates with them. The kind of content that will meet their needs, inspire action, and get them to share with their friends.

Use posts consistently and separately for each business or location. Use different quality images for different locations.

- **Use GMB Insights.**

Use GMB insights to keep up with your businesses and understand how your customers interact with your products, page, or services. Track user activity and stay up to date with what your potential clients need. Know which location receives less attention and come up with the best marketing strategy.

GMB Insights can help you to meet your business goals and take you to the next level. They make it easier for you to analyze and understand your customers. Which is the key to providing the right product or service that caters to their needs.

## AVOID COMMON MISTAKES

Account owners often fall prey to some of the most common GMB mistakes and end up having their accounts suspended. You don't want to be one of them.

So, know what to avoid and take advantage of the power that the platform brings.

### **Common mistakes and how to avoid them.**

- **Unverified business listing.**

Ensure you verify your listing to have full control over your account. Most business owners neglect this important step and end up having their listing reclaimed or deleted. Verifying allows you to publish posts, keep your information up to date, and make changes whenever you desire to. It is also a great way of ensuring your profile gets displayed at the top right side of search results when someone types in or searches for services or products related to your business.

Use any of the previously mentioned verification methods to claim your listing. For example, phone or email.

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- **Failing to optimize images for SEO.**

Adding and uploading images to your posts is a great way of interacting with users. However, if you want to improve your rankings, be sure to optimize them. Use alternative texts on your photos for the best SEO results.

- **Failing to give sufficient information.**

Google uses NAP or your company name, address, and phone number to get you on the front page of search results as well as to prove the legitimacy of your business. make sure your NAP information is consistent throughout your online platforms. For instance, your GMB profile and your site. Giving inadequate or incorrect information can ruin your reputation. So, provide accurate and sufficient information to your customers. If there are any recent changes to upcoming events, promotions, or products, make sure you mention that.

If your location, website, or operating hours have changed, update your profile. This will boost SEO, help you to dodge negative reviews, and put your business a step ahead of the competition.

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- Not adding the Questions & Answers (FAQ) section.

One of the main things that give rise to “Awful experience” or “A total waste of money and time” are unanswered questions. If you promise on-time responses and a user visits your page and asks about your product only to receive an answer 6 or 24 hours later, you will lose credibility as a business owner. Adding or posting a Frequently Asked Questions & Answers section will help you to resolve that.

So, have an exhaustive list of commonly asked questions and provide answers for each. Mention the FAQ section on your posts time and again to help your visitors quickly get answers to their pressing issues.

- **Not responding to customer reviews.**

When you have reached your SEO, marketing, and sales goals, don't neglect client reviews. Respond to every one of them as they come. If you are too busy to respond, ask a team member to fill in your shoes. This will motivate your satisfied client to advertise your services to friends and family. It is also a great sign to prospective customers who are visiting your page.