

CREDIT UNIONS

Improve Your Local Search Presence To Gain New Members

How to update your local SEO strategy to improve online visibility — and scale membership growth

amsive



AUTHORS

Bambi Frazier

Senior Manager, Local SEO + Content

Diane Trout-Cummins

Account Director

Overview

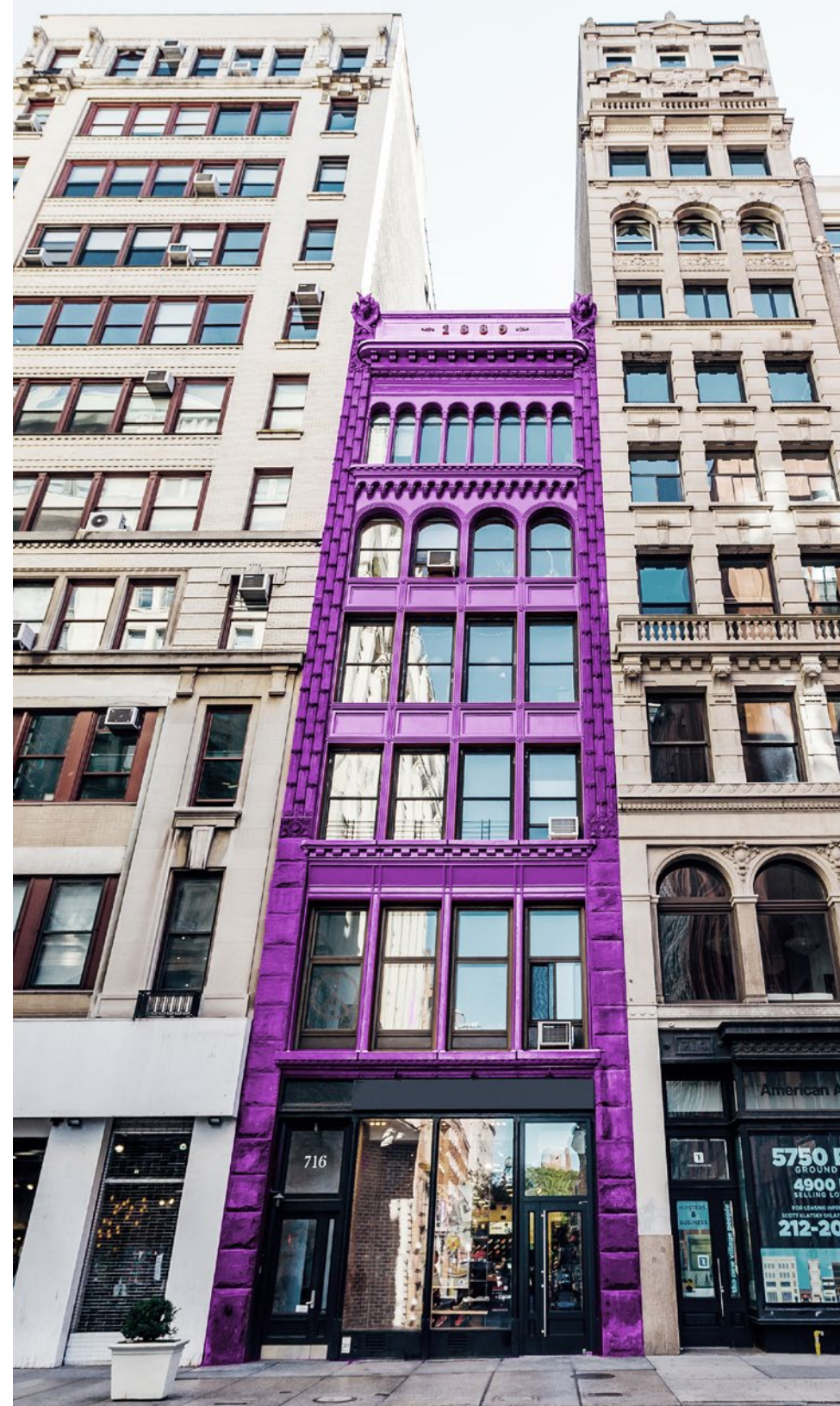
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Why Your Local Search Presence Matters

As more members search online for information about local businesses nearby, your local search presence grows more important. Correct, incorrect, or missing information about your business impacts potential members' decision-making.

When surveyed for the SearchLove/HeroConf conference in 2021, 96% of respondents read something online about a business that made them not want to choose that business to purchase a product or service. Additionally, 40% of respondents indicated that Google Business Profile is their preferred review platform.

What does this show us? Potential members are looking online for information about businesses near them — and accurate, up-to-date online profiles and place cards must be ready to greet them. If not, members might disregard your digital front door, or miss it altogether.



Turn Insights Into Action

Understand three key elements to support your local search presence — E-E-A-T, Google Business Profile, and Apple Business Connect — and ensure members can easily find and learn more about your benefits, services, and leadership within local communities.



E-E-A-T



Google Business Profile



Apple Business Connect

Search...



E-E-A-T

What's E-E-A-T?

While Bing and other search engines are receiving renewed recognition, Google is the leading global search engine. Google is continually optimizing its search algorithm – the set of rules Google uses to prioritize results. And it prioritizes results with high-quality content.

How? Google has over 10,000 search quality evaluators who measure and assess website quality in live user tests. These evaluators are looking for signals of E-E-A-T – experience, expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness.

Google's Quality Rater Guidelines were created to help people find useful and relevant information without needing to sift through unrelated or unhelpful content first. To be successful in the search results, websites should follow these guidelines and offer high-quality content to users.

E-E-A-T Is Emphasized Across Google's Ecosystem



GOOGLE
DISCOVER



GOOGLE
NEWS



GOOGLE PLAY
STORE



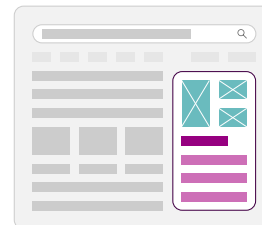
GOOGLE
MAPS



IMAGES



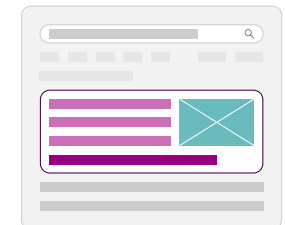
YOUTUBE



ORGANIC SEARCH +
THE KNOWLEDGE GRAPH



INTERESTING
FINDS



FEATURED
SNIPPETS

E-E-A-T

“Your Money or Your Life” Content

Google makes changes to reduce spam in the search results. In fact, there has been a substantial reduction in dangerous, untruthful, or spammy content with each update. However, this also means that websites that have “Your Money or Your Life” (YMYL) topics could possibly undergo the most scrutiny for page quality rating.

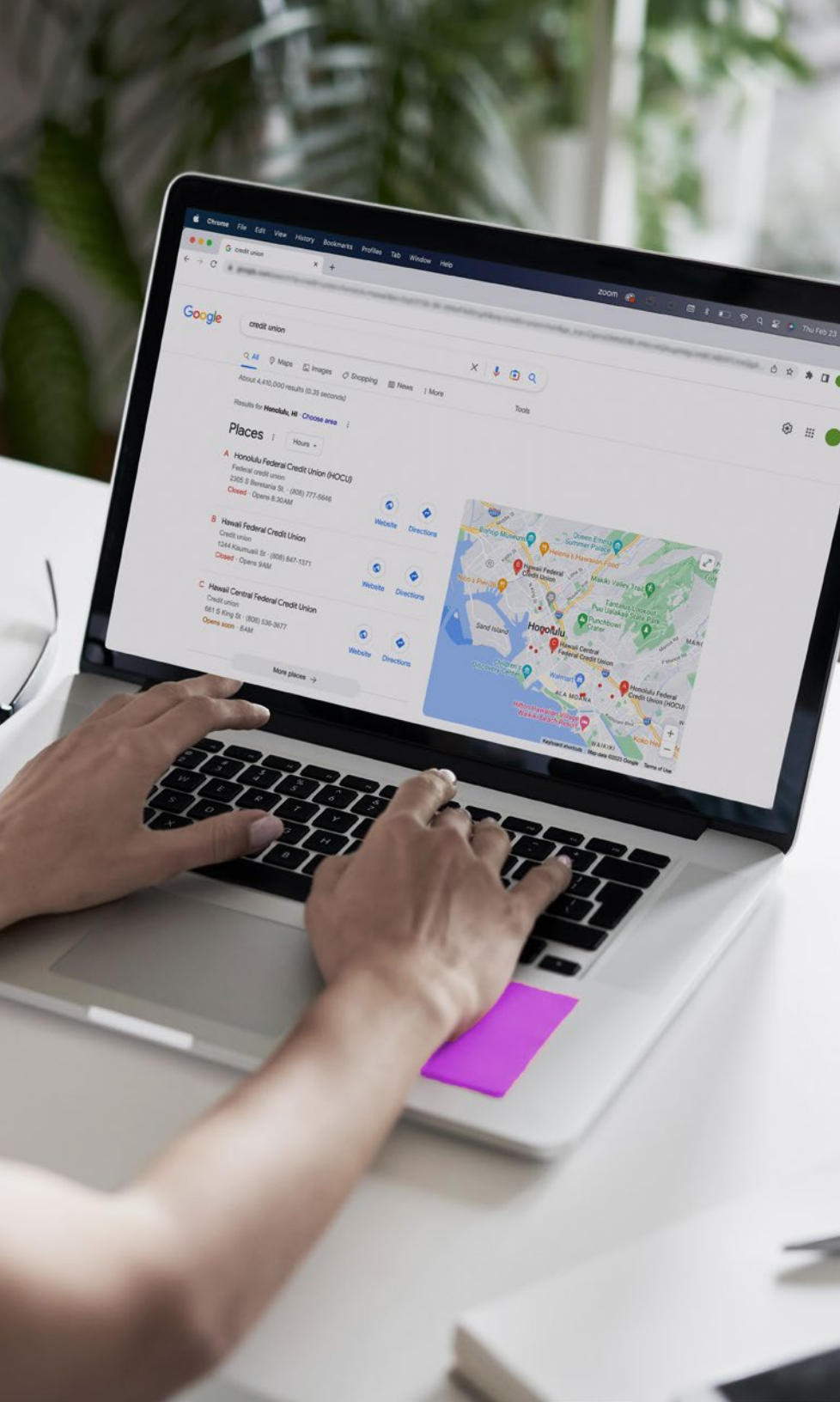
A credit union’s website offers information that impacts people’s financial decisions, a part of YMYL topics.

With the addition of Experience to E-E-A-T in December of 2022, businesses with YMYL topics must also be mindful of situations when it’s appropriate to share experience or when that information is best left to experts.



Due to the impact on a user’s money, life, and well-being, it’s important to be aware of what quality and transparency need to look like for your content.

Jamie Reedy *Senior Specialist, SEO*



E-E-A-T

Boost Your Local Search Presence

A credit union can help create a brand ecosystem of online experience, expertise, trustworthiness, and authority with a verified, optimized Google Business Profile. Your Google Business Profile (GBP) helps potential members find and learn more about your credit union in Google's search results.

Owning digital real estate in today's most prominent local search space isn't always simple for multi-location businesses, and fully optimizing your profile for success doesn't happen overnight.

However, the costs of ignoring your local search presence are high. And succeeding at search, through a sustainable local search engine optimization (Local SEO) strategy centered on the GBP of each location, ensures new members can be welcomed at each one of your digital front doors.

Google Needs Data

Structured data is microdata that creates an enhanced description that can appear in the search results. That enhanced description is also known as a rich snippet, which helps your web page appear more prominently in the SERPS, which can ultimately impact click-through rates.

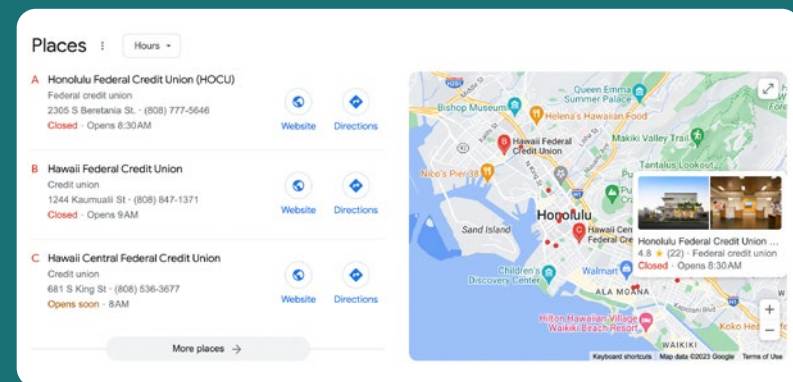
For local SEO, structured data can be added to a location page in the form of local business schema, so search engines can better

understand the contents of that web page. The URL of that page is what is then plugged into the website field of GBP.

Credit unions can use structured data specifically for credit unions – and to share information that is also visible in GBP. Here's what this can look like: [Schema for Bank or Credit Union](#).

A User's View of Your GBP Data

Jared has moved to Honolulu, Hawaii for a new job. He'd like to open a checking account at a local credit union. He searches on Google for "credit union near me" and is shown the leading results. A verified, optimized GBP ensures your credit union can be found in results like these across Google Search, Maps, and more.



Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=credit+unions+honolulu>



GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

Your GBP and your website are like siblings — they should complement one another, use the same keywords, and share similar information.

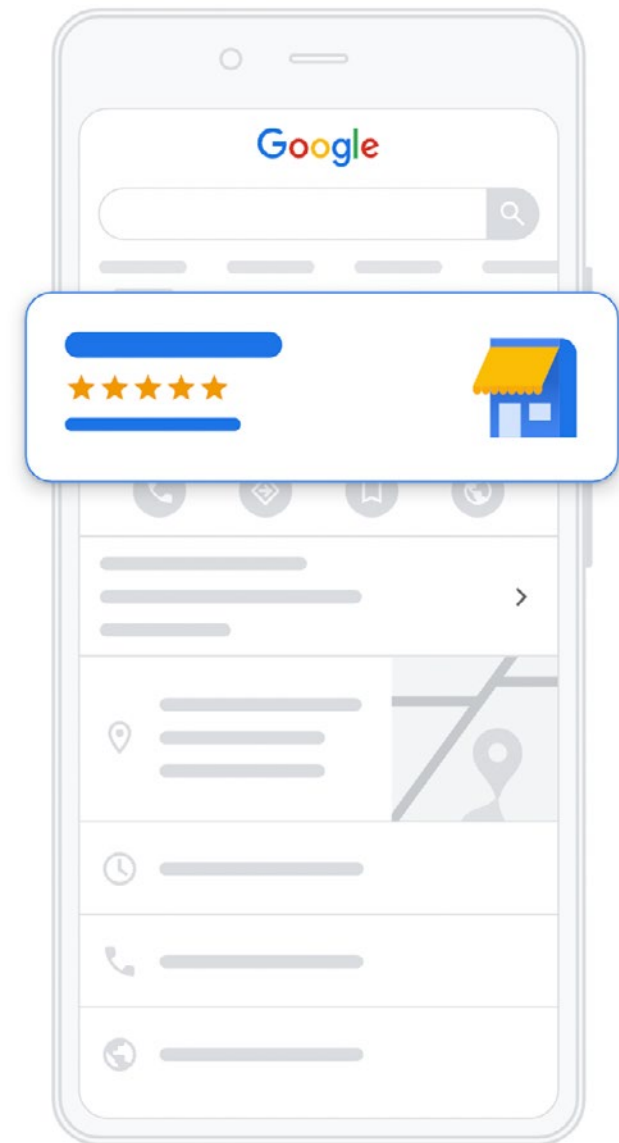
If your credit union has multiple locations, the GBP **for every location** should be verified, accurate, and optimized.

#1 Verify Each Location

First things first. Do you have a verified Google Business Profile for each location?

[Start here](#) to establish if you have or have yet to sign up and verify your profile.

Pay attention to each step of the verification process. There are different ways to verify your business including text message, video, phone call, or post card. Verifying your business could include receiving a postcard in the mail. While it can be simple, it can also be a bumpy ride, such as if your GBP is already claimed and verified by an unknown source. If you have over 10 locations, you can request bulk verification.



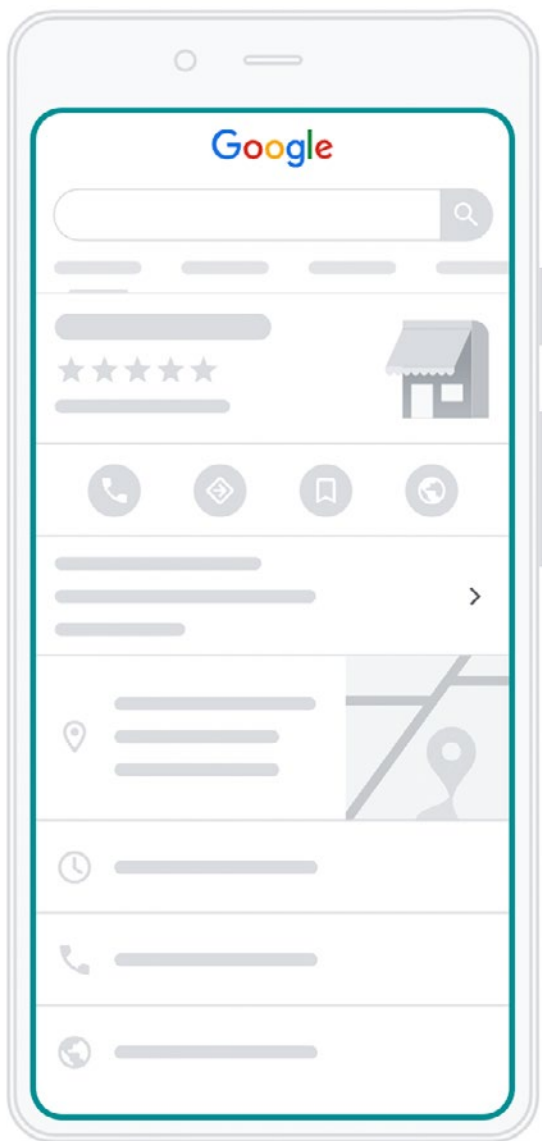
Source: Google Business

#2 Optimize Your Profile

Once verified, your GBP must be complete and optimized. In short — leave no field unfilled.


















Every field is an opportunity to provide Google with honest, accurate information, improving your visibility in the local search results.

From our expertise, we've built a comprehensive (yet simple) checklist to optimize your profile. Identify what you've already updated — and what's left to do on the road to search success.



Source: Google Business

The Ultimate Optimization Checklist

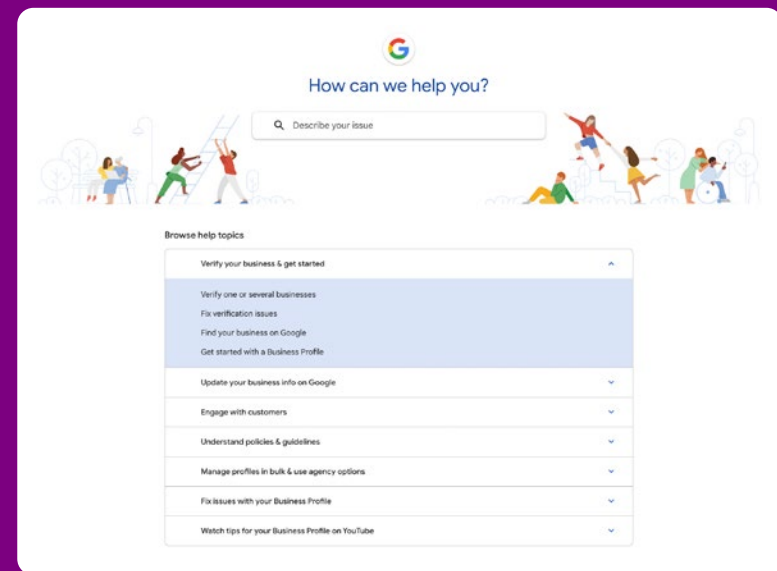
| | | |
|--|--|---|
|  BUSINESS NAME The name on your logo, signage, and stationery should be listed in exactly the same way in your Google Business Profile. |  PHONE NUMBER How can customers call you directly? |  DESCRIPTION Share what you offer, what sets you apart, your history, or anything else that's helpful for customers to know. |
|  CATEGORIES What does your business do? Find this section under the info tab . You can add up to 10 categories. |  WEBSITE Add the web page that is relevant to this GBP account. |  MESSAGING Allow customers viewing your listing to message you directly. Respond to questions, share information, and quickly connect. |
|  SERVICES Services are listed under each category. |  Q&A What questions are customers asking the most? You can both ask and answer them here. For now, you can only access this section via the front-facing knowledge panel. |  OPENING DATE Add the month, day, and year. |
|  POSTS COVID-19 updates will "stick" to the front of the page. Events posts have a chosen expiration date. Updates previously had a 7-day lifeline, but as of January 2021, posts are now live for an extended period and visible at the bottom of the knowledge panel . |  REVIEWS Read through all your reviews in one place. Use your short name to request reviews from customers. Be sure to respond to all reviews (favorable or unfavorable) with a customized reply. |  UTM CODES Tip: This isn't an available option in GBP; however, a qualified digital marketing agency can add this feature to help you learn and track how customers find your website from your GBP. |
|  PHOTOS Post photos and videos so customers know what to expect. Find this section under the photos tab . GMB has specific photos it prefers to have added (logo, exterior, interior, etc.). |  ATTRIBUTES/HIGHLIGHTS Choose Black-owned, Veteran-led, or Women-led. Also include any service options your business offers (Wi-Fi, handicap accessibility, etc.). |  SERVICE AREAS Service areas let customers know where your business provides deliveries or services. |
|  HOURS Let customers know when your business is open or closed. You can also add hours for upcoming holidays. |  PRODUCTS Use this section to share what you sell. Any product/service you offer can be listed here with a photo, price, and full description. | |

Continue Managing Your Profile

Don't think of your profile as a one and done project. The maintenance of your GBP is an ongoing process, requiring regular updates. Google changes its guidelines, offering new opportunities to provide valuable data. Staying ahead of GBP's updates help you avoid any unexpected changes. Checking your profile regularly also ensures users have positive experiences with your business in the form of reviews, questions and answers, suggested edits, and more.

Navigate Communication With Google's Support Team

Working with Google Support can come with its own unique set of challenges. When you work with an agency experienced in communicating with Google Support, you can ensure a hassle-free kick off and seamless ongoing relationship, helping you receive timely, actionable responses.



Source: <https://support.google.com/business>

Local Search Welcomes A New Tool

For people searching for a product, service, or experience “near me,” Google is no longer the only player in the game.

In January 2023, Apple officially announced the launch of Apple Business Connect.

Similar to GBP, Apple Business Connect (ABC) is a free tool that allows businesses to manage their online presence. Specifically, Apple says it “allows businesses of all sizes to claim their location place cards and customize the way key information appears to more than a billion Apple users across Apple Maps, Messages, Wallet, Siri, and other apps.”

This creates a unique opportunity to connect locally with Apple customers, who make up around half of smartphone-owning Americans.

[Learn more about Apple Business Connect.](#)



Take The Next Step Towards Local Visibility

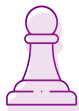


Assess how accurate and welcoming your local search presence is for potential members. Are you improving your E-E-A-T to meet Google's guidelines? Is your Google Business Profile verified — and optimized? Have you claimed your Apple Business Connect place cards? Data-led marketing offers a million decision points to improve performance — expertise and strategic thinking ensure you identify and act on the ones that matter most.

- ✓ Improved E-E-A-T
- ✓ Google Business Profile Optimization
- ✓ Apple Business Connect Adoption
- ✓ Technical SEO
- ✓ High-Quality Location Pages
- ✓ Localized Social Media Content

Let's talk.

Reach out to learn more about our approach to local SEO, and how to turn data insights into action. From strategy to optimization, Amsive gives you performance-focused services, solutions, and tools to know and achieve more, amplifying results for your marketing — and your brand.



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INTELLIGENCE



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CREATIVE



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letstalk@amsive.com | www.amsive.com



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