

THE **MARKETING** UMBRELLA

**10 PRACTICAL WAYS
TO WILDLY IMPROVE
LOCAL SEO AND
INCREASE SALES**

**SHOULD I HIRE
A LOCAL DIGITAL
MARKETING
AGENCY?**

**HOW ONLINE
BUSINESS
LISTINGS
OPTIMIZE
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ISSUE 9

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Welcome to the Marketing Umbrella Magazine

The best source to generate more sales for your business with online marketing.

Each month we break down the complexities of a few key digital marketing strategies.

We keep it practical, so you can decide if you want to implement them in your business.

It doesn't matter if you're just starting out or an established business owner, you will benefit from harnessing the power of digital marketing.

To your Success,
The Results Pathfinder Team
www.resultspathfinder.com
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Results Pathfinder is the leading digital marketing agency focusing on helping small businesses grow with digital marketing.

Results Pathfinder has local marketing experts in almost every market.

We provide dependable growth strategies that will increase your sales. Many of our services are results-based, which means you only pay when we reach the agreed goal.

If you want marketing to deliver dependable results at affordable prices, reach out to Results Pathfinder.

10 PRACTICAL WAYS TO WILDLY IMPROVE LOCAL SEO AND INCREASE SALES

LOCAL SEO



At one time or another, pretty much everyone, [97% of us](#), searches the Internet to find local businesses. That makes local SEO critically important.

We look for restaurants for a Saturday night outing, bakeries to have a cake made for a special occasion, shops that carry pet paraphernalia and a million other products and services.

PEOPLE PRIMARILY LOOK TO GOOGLE FOR LOCAL SEARCHES

Every business wants to be discovered online, but if you want to get your business discovered by your nearby local audience, you need to optimize your local SEO. Sure, there are other search engines, but let's face it, you need to focus on Google. No other search engine comes even close to the number of searches done on Google.

There are [3.8 million Google searches per minute](#) on average across the globe. That's [92.49% of all searches](#).

And of all the searches done on Google, [46% are aimed at finding local information](#).

FIRST PAGE LOCAL GOOGLE SEARCH RESULTS MEAN SALES

But where do all these local searches lead? They lead directly to sales, that's there. When people search for a local business on a mobile device, [88% call or visit](#) the business *within 24 hours*.



GOOGLE SEARCH RESULTS FAVOR LOCAL SEARCHES

Focusing on local search makes it that much easier to rank on the first page of Google. And if you aren't on the first page, you may as well not even bother. [75% of people](#) never get past the first page of Google search results.

SPECIFIC STEPS YOU SHOULD TAKE TO IMPROVE YOUR LOCAL SEO

1. Optimize for Google Business Profile

In case you missed it, *Google My Business* is now known as *Google Business Profiles*. When you do a local business search, Google will show some top Google Business Profiles at the top of the first page along with maps that pinpoint the locations of those businesses.

For example, if someone wants to visit a Thai restaurant in the Marina neighborhood of San Francisco, they might search for *Thai food Marina San Francisco* and get the below result. Notice that Google Business Profiles and a map appear at the top before articles that discuss Thai restaurants in the Marina district.

[According to Google](#), local search engine results page (SERP) rankings for Google Business Profiles are primarily based on three factors: relevance, distance and prominence. So, location isn't everything. If Google's algorithms determine that a business a bit farther away from you (but still close enough to visit) is more likely to have what you want, it's going to rank higher in local search results. One thing is certain: you have to earn a high Google Business Profile ranking. You can't buy it.

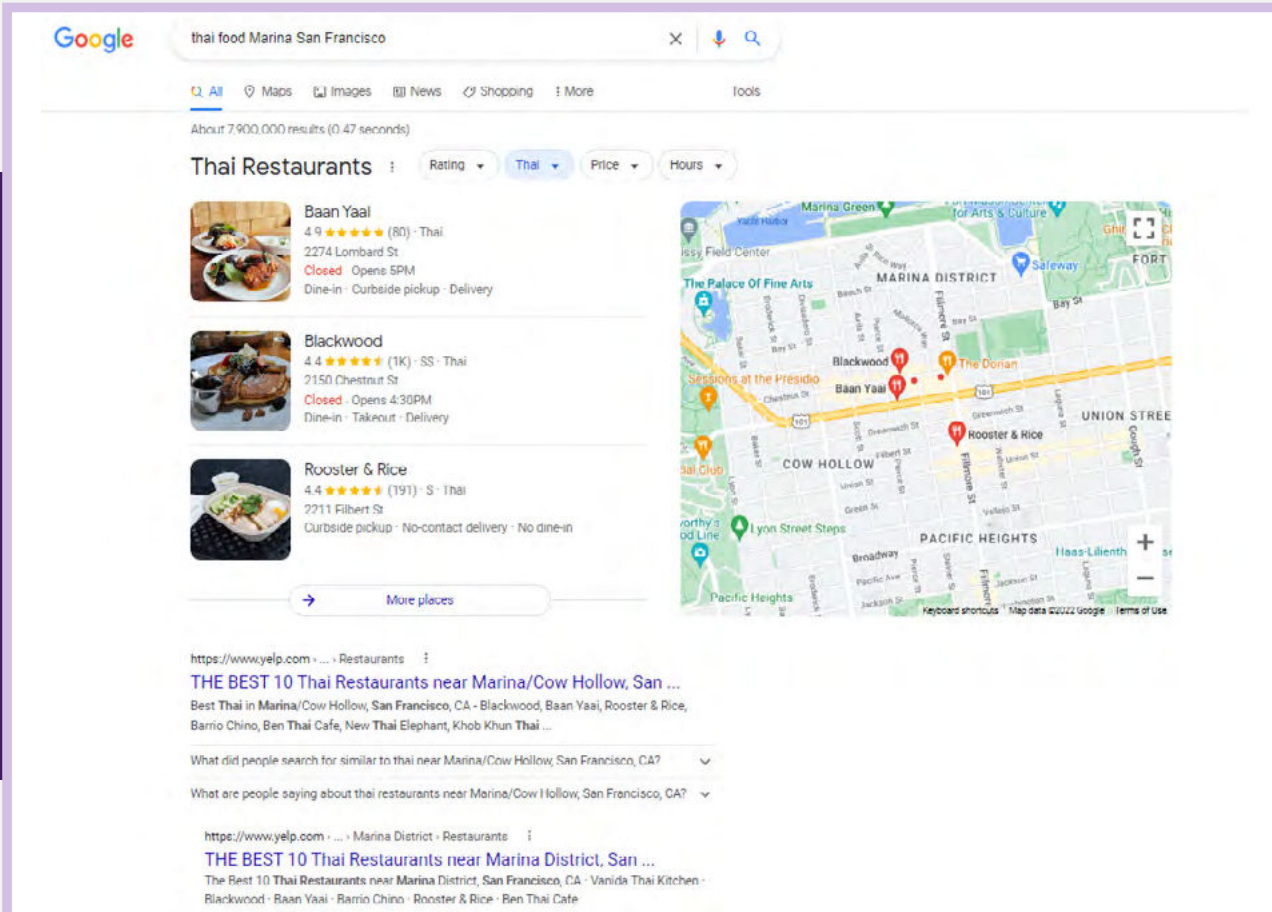
A. Relevance

Relevance is how well a Google Business Profile matches a search. It's important that you add enough detail to the information you provide for your Google Business Profile for Google to get a good handle on what your business does so the algorithms point relevant searches to your business.

B. Distance

This one is pretty obvious. If someone searches for “Thai restaurants in San Francisco” they probably are seeking a nearby place for dinner. They don't have much interest in a Thai restaurant in LA or even elsewhere in the Bay Area such as Berkeley.

If someone is searching for Thai restaurants in the Marina in San Francisco, or if the search is originating from the Marina neighborhood (without any location information other than San Francisco) and Google can tell the search comes from the Marina district, then the Google algorithm will favor restaurants in the Marina district not just anywhere in San Francisco.



The screenshot shows a Google search for "thai food Marina San Francisco". The search results are filtered to show "Thai Restaurants" in the Marina District. Three restaurants are listed:

- Baan Yaai**: 4.9 stars (80 reviews), 2274 Lombard St, Closed, Opens 5PM. Dine-in, Curbside pickup, Delivery.
- Blackwood**: 4.4 stars (1K reviews), 2150 Chestnut St, Closed, Opens 4:30PM. Dine-in, Takeout, Delivery.
- Rooster & Rice**: 4.4 stars (191 reviews), 2211 Filbert St, Curbside pickup, No-contact delivery, No dine-in.

A map on the right shows the Marina District with red pins for these restaurants. Below the map, there are links to Yelp articles: "THE BEST 10 Thai Restaurants near Marina/Cow Hollow, San ..." and "THE BEST 10 Thai Restaurants near Marina District, San ...".

C. Prominence

Prominence refers to how well known a business is. If a place is well known to people offline, it is more likely to rank higher than a business that few know about. Google will also factor in information across the Internet such as links, directories, articles, reviews, etc. to help determine prominence. Increasing your number of online reviews and ratings can help your business in this area as can good SEO.



2. Get on Local Directories and Double Check the Basics

Your listings just begin on Google Business Profile. To further improve local SEO, list your business on additional directories where your customers can find your business. These could be directories of local businesses in your area or industry/profession specific directories such as those for attorneys.

Check anywhere your business is listed or mentioned online and make sure the information about the name of your business, website link, address, phone number, hours of operation and what your business does is correct and consistent. You may think we don't need to mention this one, but you would be surprised.

Some places to check that your information is correct are your own website, your Google Business Profile, directories such as Yellow Pages, Facebook and other social media accounts, search engines such as Yahoo and Bing, Apple Maps and review sites relevant to your business such as TripAdvisor and Yelp.

There are tools to help you monitor your online consistency including [this one](#).

3. Track Your Online Ratings and Reviews

Online ratings and reviews are crucial to the success of any business today. They also affect your Google search rankings. Be sure you stay on top of them. Though written for marketing agencies, you may want to take a look at this article about [how to manage business reputations](#).



4. Optimize for Mobile for Good Local SEO

Remember how we told you that 88% of people who do a local search on a mobile device call or contact a business they find in those results within 24 hours? That's really all you need to know (though there is a lot more) about why you immediately need to optimize for mobile devices if you have not already.

That means building a site that is responsive to mobile, has fast-loading pages and provides easy mobile navigation among other things.

5. Stay Active on Google Business Profiles and Social Media

Don't just throw your Google Business Profile and social media accounts up and forget them. Shared social media posts can help you tremendously with Google search algorithms.

Make sure you are constantly pointing to your location in your social media posts. We cannot tell you how many times we have tried to figure out the location of a business from their social media account and couldn't.

And while you're posting to your social media, don't forget to update your posts on Google Business Profile. Just giving your address, phone and type of business isn't enough. It's a process.



6. Publish Local Content

If your business is local, your website content should reflect that. Sure, you can write about general topics, but always look for ways to write about topics or news relevant to your local audience. You may be able to become the voice for your industry in your local area.

What resources can you publish that will be of help to your customers and prospects? Everything you publish should not be sales-oriented. Before you make a sale, you must gain trust and credibility.

If you have more than one business location, you may want to create a unique page for each location. For example, a personal injury law firm with offices throughout the greater New York City area could publish separate (but not identical) blog posts about car accidents in Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, etc.

Writing customer success stories is a great way to add local content to your website. Write them for all the areas you serve.

Publishing valuable local content is absolutely critical to good local SEO.

7. Create Local About Us Pages

If your business is local, your About Us page should not only give the basics about your business, but also inform people about your involvement with the community. Does your business sponsor a little league team? Did you hold a charitable event to help a local children's hospital?

If you have a local business with multiple locations in the area, you may want to publish separate About Us pages for each location. Each of these pages must be unique. As with any About Us page, you will want to include

- The name, address and phone number of the business
- Hours
- Descriptions specific to each location
- Promotions, particularly those specific to each location
- A few local testimonials
- A [Google Map](#) relevant to each location page
- Any other information specific to the location such as parking information

8. Get Local Backlinks

Getting quality backlinks from prominent sites that point back to your own is important for the SEO of any business website. Links from credible websites to your own indicate to Google that yours is a reputable company with products and services people want to find. There are many ways to get quality backlinks.

If your business is local, you will also want to be sure some of your backlinks are from other local businesses and organizations. You may want to guest blog on high domain authority websites of local businesses or partner with local businesses and influencers so they link back to you. Another way to get valuable backlinks is to be a donor or sponsor of a local charity or organization (such as the afore-mentioned children's hospital and Little League team) which should then link from their websites to yours.

9. Optimize Everything

Whenever you post new content, you need to think about optimizing it for search, particularly local search. That includes paying attention to keywords, URL, title, title tag, headings and meta description as well as writing content that is truly valuable to your audience.

10. Continuously Audit Your Local SEO

SEO, whether local or not, is not a one-time project. It's an ongoing process. The best way to be sure your site is up to snuff is to periodically perform comprehensive audits.

You will want to look at how your website is performing overall and how each page is performing. How does that performance stack up to that of each of your competitors?

Also check your Google Business Profile. How is it ranking in SERPs?

Are directories and review sites bringing business to your website? Which are successful and which are not?

How to perform in-depth audits and determine what should be audited is an extensive topic in itself, but here we just need to make you aware that you need to stay on top of performance.

RESULTS PATHFINDER CAN HELP YOU REACH YOUR AUDIENCE WITH LOCAL SEO

There is a lot to discuss about local SEO. This article gives you just a starting point. One thing is for sure: if your local business does not have a plan and a process for local SEO, you are leaving money on the table.

If you are not a local SEO expert, it would be well worth it to contact the experts at Results Pathfinder for a [free consultation](#) about how we can better put you in front of your local audience and increase your sales.

SHOULD I HIRE A LOCAL DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY?



Many business owners prefer to outsource some or all of their digital marketing so they can focus on their businesses. Outsourcing may enable them to direct more of their attention to producing better products, better serving customers, increasing sales, hiring, dealing with HR issues and a million other things that are required to run a business. The primary focus of most businesses isn't usually about keeping up on Google's latest SEO algorithms or this year's email marketing trends. Even if you have good marketing staff, it only makes sense to outsource for those areas where it's just not practical to pay for full-time, inhouse expertise.

But once you decide to seek the help of marketing experts, who should you hire? What questions should you ask? Should you hire a local digital marketing agency or a huge, well-known firm that serves brands that are household names – but are not in your location?

Though large agencies may have more resources, large, remote marketing agencies are not always the best choice no matter how illustrious, particularly for small, local businesses. You may get a whole lot more bang for your buck by hiring a local agency that knows your local market like the back of their hand.



THE ADVANTAGES OF HIRING A LOCAL DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY

Easy Communication

A lot of us became used to working remotely during the pandemic. Sure, it can be done. It's not as if your digital marketing agency is going to take up a corner office in your space. But when you are planning a major initiative that requires strategic discussions, or when you want to discuss messaging or design options, it sure is a lot easier for everyone to get on the same page if they can get into the same room once in awhile.

Sometimes when you meet remotely or communicate solely via email, you may think your agency gets it, but then realize they entirely missed your point when they show you their deliverables. When you work with a local digital marketing agency, you can meet in person periodically to adjust direction and correct misunderstandings. And there really is no replacement for in-person discussions to brainstorm new ways the agency can help you to grow your business and get customer attention.

Even if you rarely meet in person, when you just want to jump on the phone for five minutes, it helps to be in the same time zone. Otherwise, you may need to wait half a day or even longer to schedule that phone call or get a response to a small request. Working in different time zones slows everything down, and marketing is at its best when you can act quickly. This is true even if you have a large national or international business. Communication is just easier if you use a local digital marketing agency which is within easy driving distance.



Knowledge of Local Audience

If you own a small, local business, there are even more reasons to hire a local digital marketing agency. A local agency already understands a lot about your clientele. They know the inside jokes, they know the local trends, they know what's hot and what's not locally. That means they can better connect with your audience in marketing campaigns. A marketing agency that is not local is likely to create marketing campaigns that are much more generic than a local agency – and generic is never going to give you optimum ROI for your marketing dollar.

Helpful Local Contacts

If your business is a local one, you can benefit from partnerships with other local businesses. For example, a San Francisco based tech company could hold a client getaway meeting at a vineyard in Napa Valley. Both could show the great time everyone is having on social media and do cross-promotions. Only a local digital marketing agency will have these kinds of local connections. Often a local agency has clients with complementary interests.

Optimum Flexibility

Because the members of your local marketing agency live in the community, they know first-hand when the local conditions or market shift suddenly. For example, they are not going to miss when a tornado touches down in several neighborhoods and causes havoc. They know immediately to put a pause on that advertising campaign that features people picnicking with their client's culinary product. Instead, they could perhaps organize a community outreach where their culinary client delivers food to those who lost their homes.



INTERVIEW AND ASK FOR REFERENCES

Of course, you don't want to hire just any local marketing agency. Ask business colleagues who they use and then do a bit of research. Once you have some possibilities, get to know the candidates. You wouldn't hire an employee without interviewing them first would you? The same goes for hiring a marketing agency.

Among other things, find out:

- **What kind of success they have produced for their clients. Ask to see examples.**
- **Their familiarity with your industry**
- **How they will communicate campaign successes and failures with you**
- **Their process of working with you**
- **Their pricing**



RESULTS PATHFINDER OFFERS THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Results Pathfinder is a large, well-known digital marketing agency with local marketing experts in almost every state in the US and around the world. When you work with Results Pathfinder you can work with a dedicated account manager who is close to you geographically and knows your market.

That means you get all the benefits of a local digital marketing agency but also all the resources of a global firm.

Results Pathfinder covers all services in digital marketing and digital accessibility including:

- **Pay Per Result SEO**
- **Pay Per Revenue marketing**
- **Financing solutions**
- **Facebook advertising with guaranteed results**
- **Google advertising**
- **Winning websites**
- **Website accessibility**
- **Review generation and reputation**
- **4X Conversions with AI chatbots**
- **Business and voice search listings**
- **Email marketing**
- **Conversational texting**

Whether you want to grow your business but are not sure how or you already know what marketing services you want, we invite you to contact us for a free, 30-minute conversation filled with free advice. [Contact us today](#) and get started optimizing your business.



HOW ONLINE BUSINESS LISTINGS OPTIMIZE REVENUE

We just talked about *10 Practical Ways to Wildly Improve Local SEO and Increase Sales*. Now we'd like to get more in depth about online [local business listings](#) and their importance.

WHY LOCAL BUSINESS LISTINGS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOU MAY THINK

Today, everyone and their grandmother uses the Internet both to find businesses that sell what they need and to get basic information about those businesses. In fact, [70% of online searches](#) are to find a local business.

When was the last time you saw one of those 10-lb hard copy Yellow Pages books?

Exactly.

But today's online business listings provide a whole lot more information to customers than traditional hard copy listings ever did. Creating and maintaining solid local listings across the Internet is an important basic of building your search rankings and boosting your reputation. And we all know those two things translate into \$.

Now no doubt you are using local SEO methods to drive traffic such as blog posts with local keywords and so forth. But carefully developing your local business listings will support those efforts. Listings that link back to your site help build your own site's authority and search engine ranking as well as making it easier to find your site.

This article will give you the basics, but you can always look to a good marketing agency with [local listings services](#) to build and maintain your listings.



WHAT ARE LOCAL BUSINESS LISTINGS?

At the very least, local business listings include the name of the business, address, phone number and website. They may also include a lot of other things such as hours, descriptions of products and services, images, reviews and even social media posts. Check out [this article](#) for more complete descriptions of possible business listing components.

Local listings can have a substantial impact on a business's revenue by improving search engine rankings and reaching more customers. Want proof? [94% of smartphone users](#) use their mobile devices to find local businesses. And 96% of that group follow up by calling, visiting the business or using one of their coupons. In case this isn't obvious, that means your business listings better be optimized for mobile devices as well as desktop and laptop computers.

HOW DOES LOCAL SEARCH WORK?

When a person searches for a local business, a search engine will typically show results within 50 miles or a little more. Because search engines want to be useful, the listings with the most complete, accurate information that match search terms as well as closer proximity appear at the top. The more complete the business listings, the more likely your listings will appear at the top of search engine results.

WHERE SHOULD I LIST MY BUSINESS?

You should submit local business listings to all types of directories including major general business platforms, location-based directories and industry-specific directories. Oh, and don't forget voice directories. For all of these, people can search for businesses that are close to them geographically. Here's a [list of 50 directories](#) as a starting point.

You will find that some listings are free such as Google Business Profiles, Facebook Pages, LinkedIn Company Directory, and many more. But you will have to pay for some others, particularly a lot of industry-specific directories.



MAJOR GENERAL BUSINESS DIRECTORIES

The major general business directories are usually more than just directories. These are a lot of them, and they include [Bing Places](#), [Yelp](#) and of course [Google Business Profiles](#).

Often people can also submit reviews on these directories. Don't be afraid of reviews.

- [72% of consumers](#) say positive testimonials and reviews increase their trust in a business.
- [90% of customers say](#) they read online reviews before making a purchasing decision,

The big fish, of course, is Google Business Profiles. Since Google accounts for over 90% of all searches, it would be foolish to ignore Google Business Profiles. They typically come up at the top of related searches where it seems the user is interested in local businesses. In addition to what you might expect, Google Business Profiles offer maps, reviews and the ability to post social media. For information, see [What the Google Business Profile Rebrand Means to Your Marketing](#).

INDUSTRY DIRECTORIES

Depending on your area of business, industry directories can be vitally important. These can include anything from professional directories such as [attorney directories](#) to review sites such as [TripAdvisor](#), which is a force in the travel, restaurant and hospitality industries.

LOCATION-BASED DIRECTORIES

Many organizations such as Chambers of Commerce publish location-based directories. It's an easy way for people to see businesses of various types in their immediate area published in one place.



SITES THAT MIGHT NOT IMMEDIATELY OCCUR TO YOU

Although they are not directories, there are other ways to get your contact information out there on the Internet. For example, if you write a guest blog post on a related but not competitive site, they will typically let you include contact information at the end. There may also be opportunities at news sites and online magazines among others. Look for opportunities that fit your business.

SUBMITTING IN VOLUME

We have only mentioned a very few places where you can submit your business listings. But there are many, many out there, and you should submit to as many as you can that are relevant to your business. Start with the big ones like Google Business Profiles, follow with industry-specific listings and location-based listings and finally look for additional possibilities.

If all this sounds time-consuming, it can be. Yes, there are tools that can automate submissions. But you need to sift through and decide where your business should be listed, and some you will probably end up doing manually.

MAINTENANCE: AS IMPORTANT AS SUBMISSIONS

Once you have submitted your business listings, you aren't finished. You need to maintain them. If there is a mistake in one of your listings, it can fan across the web as smaller directories pick up information from larger directories on their own. If you find an error, reach out to the site immediately to correct it, and do an audit to see if it has been replicated elsewhere.



DON'T FORGET VOICE SEARCH

An increasing number of people are using voice search with apps and devices such as Siri, Alexa, Google Assistant and more. According to Price Waterhouse, [71% of consumers](#) prefer to use voice searches over typing. You must make sure that your business listings are updated and optimized for voice search as well as traditional methods.

NO TIME? RESULTS PATHFINDER'S GOT YOU

You are already dedicating full time and more to running your business. If you don't have the time or inclination to strategize your business listings, submit them and maintain them, Umbrella Local's got you.

Results Pathfinder can provide [local listing services](#) to submit and update your local business listings to over 70 leading sites, social networks and apps with not only basic text but also images, videos, bios, product descriptions and menus. We can also handle your business listings for voice search.

You can't just submit and forget. Your business information changes constantly. You may have special holiday hours, seasonal promotions, company news and expanded locations to name a few possibilities. To get the traffic and credibility to help build your business, you must keep your online business listings constantly up to date.

[Contact Results Pathfinder](#) today for a free consultation. We can get you on local business listings across the web immediately.

Get Up to a \$500K Loan to Grow Your Business!



Can you answer yes to **ANY** of these questions? If so, Results Pathfinder can help you with up to \$500,000 in unsecured financing.

- Do you have a 680 credit rating or higher – or know someone who can apply for you who does?
- Has your business that been generating over \$15,000 per month in revenue with at least 6 months in business?
- Do you or does someone willing to apply have \$40,000 or more in an IRA or 401k account that is NOT with a current employer?

CONTACT US NOW

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