



THE SEO !

... YOU NEED TO SUCCEED ...



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SEO FACTORS

CLAIM YOUR BUSINESS LISTINGS:

It's imperative to have your company's name, physical address (NOT a P.O. Box!), web site and phone number listed correctly and consistently across the search engines your customers use to find you. If your business is already listed but not "claimed," make sure you follow the steps to **claim** your listing and correct any erroneous information. Any inconsistencies, like an outdated address or duplicate business listing can negatively impact your rankings. Fill out the profile as thoroughly as you can, include properly named images when applicable, at the very least using your logo.

Below are the best places to target. If you do nothing else, at the very least, do the ones in bold as soon as possible.

- **Google Places:** <http://www.google.com/places/> **While you're there, claim your Google+ page and start using it immediately.**
- **Yahoo! Local:** <http://listings.local.yahoo.com/overview.php>
- **Bing:** <http://www.bing.com/businessportal/>
- **Yelp:** <https://biz.yelp.com/claiming>
- **CitySearch:** https://signup.citygrid.com/advertise_with_us
- **Foursquare:** <https://foursquare.com/business/merchants/claiming>
- Express Update: <https://expressupdateusa.com/home>
- Yellow Pages: <https://adsolutions.jp.com/listings/basic>
- Local.com: <https://advertise.local.com/>
- Dexknows: <http://www.dexknows.com/info/build.asp>
- Insider pages: <http://www.insiderpages.com/session/new>
- Manta: <http://www.manta.com/claim>
- Localeze: <http://business-listing.localeze.com/sign-up-with-localeze.aspx>
- Supermedia: <http://www.supermedia.com/business-listings>
- Hotfrog: <http://www.hotfrog.com/AddYourBusiness.aspx>
- Best of Web: <http://local.botw.org/helpcenter/getlistedorg.aspx>
- MacRae's Blue Book: <http://www.macraesbluebook.com/getlisted/get-listed.cfm>

GET BACKLINKS (INCOMING LINKS):

Get backlinks in your industry's web directories, blogs, and trusted/well-trafficked web sites. A great way to start finding sites to list your business on, is to conduct a web search like, "hair salons, Portland, Oregon." Once the search results come up, go through site by site, manually submitting your business listing.

If you're short on time, you can make things easier on yourself by targeting Universal Business Listing (<https://www.ubl.org/>) and paying one of their packaged fees. Additionally, think about getting listed with the Better Business Bureau (<http://www.bbb.org/us/>), non-profit websites, chambers of commerce, and neighborhood association web sites. (Please note: Stay away from link farms offering "500 website links for \$1," and other such promises. These are detrimental to your web site rankings.)



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SEO FACTORS

GET REVIEWS ON 3RD-PARTY WEBSITES:

The large part of ranking well in local search lies in the hands of customer reviews. Therefore, you'll want to add your business listing to places like Google, Yelp, CitySearch, and SuperPages. Currently, the rankings favor quantity over quality, so the more reviews you get, the better. Please don't be tempted to write reviews for yourself or post the same review on multiple websites. It's SPAM, and the search engines know.

Some strategies with reviews: After someone has a service, e-mail them with links to leave reviews. Include review links on sales receipts, all e-mail signatures, a sign on your counter, etc... When asking for reviews, tell customers how to review you. Tell them to mention the services that they had, benefits they experienced working with you, how you made them feel, etc... Including these services keywords (hair cut, hair color, etc...) in reviews do wonders for SEO. Keep in mind that reviews do get filtered from Google, Yelp and others for a bunch of reasons. Mostly because they're written from not very active Users, are all coming from the same IP address (looks like SPAM), or the review itself reads in an unnatural way.

A word of caution: Yelp doesn't like business owners to explicitly ask for reviews. They view an onslaught of reviews to be SPAMMY and will filter out reviews instead of posting them. Read more about this issue here: <http://officialblog.yelp.com/2010/08/dont-ask-for-reviews.html> Another client of mine, Kirstie Wight, ran into this issue, and she discovered that when she got more involved in Yelp (leaving reviews for other businesses, responding to reviews on her page, etc...) that the filtered reviews started to show up.

GET FRIENDLY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Open Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ business pages and start creating and sharing content to grow your audience. Actively posting your content gets Users engaged and reminds them to come to your site, and even better, it gets them talking. When they "like" or "comment" on an article you share via Facebook, Google+, etc... their activity shows up in their friends' News Feed, exposing your business to a host of new people. Bonus? The future of SEO is trending toward how often people talk about you and share your content on these social channels.