

How to be Found by Local Consumers





The company's marketing strategy became increasingly sophisticated.

Introduction

Strategy and tactics are at the heart of every successful business. But what worked ten years ago may not work today. Your marketing strategy—finding and getting found by local consumers—remains the same. How you accomplish that—your tactics—has changed.

Yet, many small businesses are not keeping ahead of the curve, and are losing business as a result. For instance:

- 60% of small business websites can't generate a phone call because they're missing a phone number, and 26% can't be found in an online search
- 61% of mobile consumers will abandon a non-mobile website for a competitor's whose is; yet only 6% of small businesses have a mobile-friendly website
- Half of business owners have seen inaccurate online listings for their businesses, yet 49% have never updated them.
- Despite the fact that 90% of consumers say positive reviews influence their buying decisions, only half of small business owners think positive online reviews are important—and 68% spend no time monitoring what people are saying about them online.

This ebook will show you the seven modern-day tactics you should focus on to get your business found by today's consumer.

Consumers use a combination of media to find a local business



61%
OF ONLINE CONSUMERS
MAKE A
LOCAL PURCHASE

SEARCH ENGINE LAND, 2011



75%
OF LOCAL CONSUMERS
SPEND THEIR MONEY WITHIN
15 MILES FROM HOME

U.S. CENSUS DATA.



90%
OF MOBILE SEARCHERS
CALL, VISIT OR BUY
WITHIN 24 HOURS

MOBILE MARKETER, 2012

Seven Marketing Tactics to Get Your Business Found by Local Consumers



GET OPTIMIZED

The pages of your website must be properly optimized. Otherwise, your site is all but invisible to Google and the other search engines.



GET MOBILE

61 percent of mobile consumers will abandon your non-mobile site for a competitor's whose is. You may be losing business without knowing it.



GET LOCAL

There are hundreds of local search directories (like Google+ Local, Yelp, Superpages, Merchant Circle, etc.) you need to be listed on. Are you?



GET REVIEWS

The number of online reviews is a critical search engine ranking factor. The more reviews you have, the more likely you are to appear above a competitor who has none.



GET SOCIAL

There's a strong correlation between social media activity and improved visibility in the search engines. You need more than just a Facebook page—you need followers and activity.



GET CONNECTED

When other local websites link to yours, it tells the search engines that your site has useful content and helps your search engine rankings.



GET MAILING

Direct mail compliments your local online marketing and drives online activity. Ninety-two percent (92%) of direct mail recipients respond by going online.

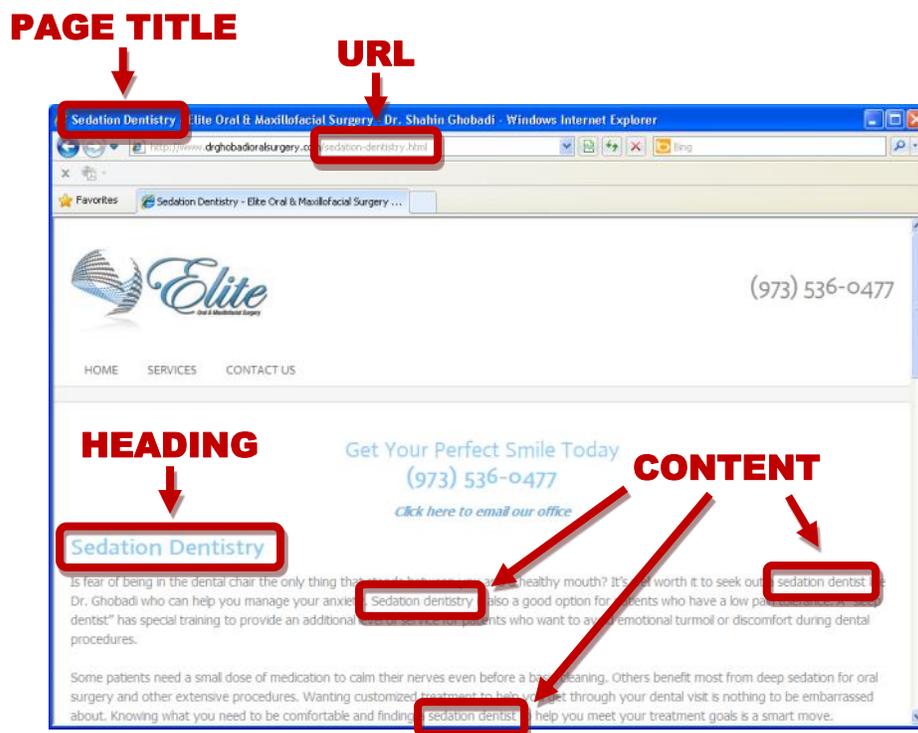
Tactic #1: Get Optimized

Unless the pages of your site are properly optimized, it's all but invisible to Google and the other search engines.

A study¹ of over 1 million small business websites found that most are not succeeding. Here's why.

56 percent of the sites studied have no on-page keyword information.

What's on-page keyword information? Well, if your site is about sedation dentistry, that's keyword information. So it needs to be *on your webpage*.



On-page keyword information tells the search engines what your site is about. Without it, you decrease your chances of being found when someone searches for your type of business.

(Professionally written web copy can improve your search engine ranking and turn visitors into buyers. An don't even think about copying content from a competitor's site ... unless you want Google to ban you.)

¹SMB DigitalScape and BIA Kelsey

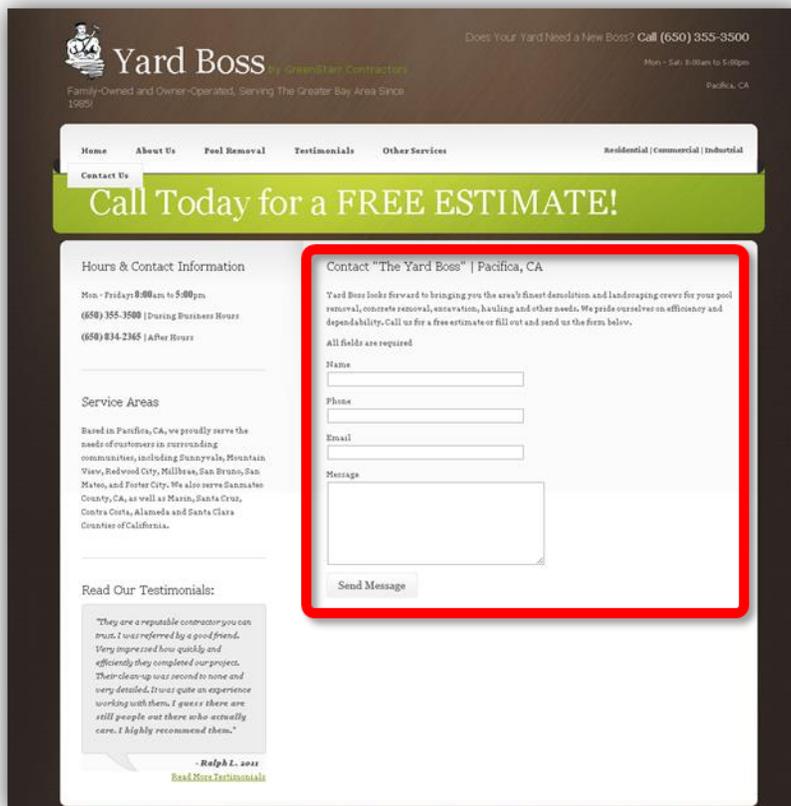
60 percent lacked a telephone number on the home page.

It's important to have your phone number and other critical contact information at the top of each page where it can be easily seen.



74.7 percent were missing an email contact link on the home page; and 65.7 percent had no form-fill option to allow consumers to request information.

Email was developed in the mid-60s and has been widely used since the late 1990's. Isn't it time you joined the 21st century? Your website visitors expect it.



Tactic #2: Get Mobile-Friendly

Here's why your business can no longer afford to ignore the growing local-mobile search trend.

50% of Mobile Searchers Visit the Store after Searching

Google commissioned two custom studies of over 5,000 respondents. They found that **50 percent of mobile searchers visit the store after searching.**¹

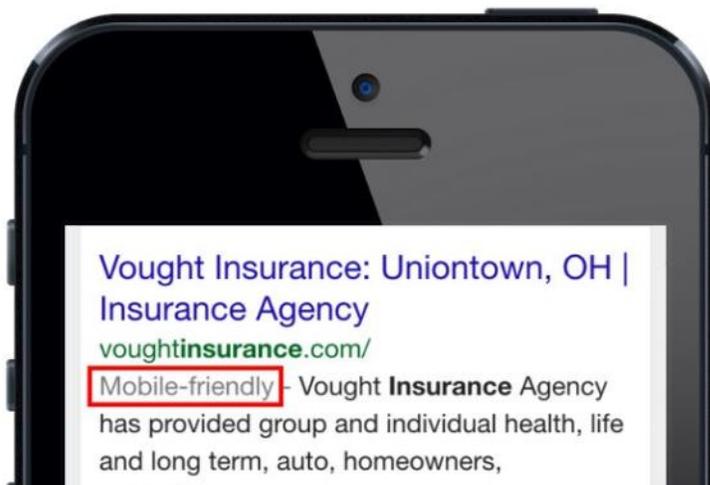
78% of Mobile Searches Result in a Local Purchase

The 7th Annual Local Search Study of nearly 5,000 US adults revealed that **78 percent of mobile searches result in a local purchase.**²

People don't search for a local business then do nothing. These are buyers looking for a seller.

Mobile Websites Get Special Treatment by Google

If your website hasn't earned Google's "Mobile-Friendly" label, you could be losing customers.



In April 2015, Google started using "mobile-friendly" as a ranking signal. If your website isn't mobile friendly, potential customers may not find you when searching on their mobile phones.

According to Google, Your Site is Mobile-Friendly If:

1. Text is readable without zooming
2. Content sizes to the screen so users don't have to zoom or scroll horizontally
3. Links are far enough apart so they can be easily tapped



Non-Mobile



Mobile

Goggle's not the only one who will "penalize" your site for not being mobile-friendly

- **61% of mobile consumers will leave your non-mobile website for a competitor's whose is**
- **57% won't recommend your business if it has a poorly-designed mobile site**

¹ Understanding Consumers' Local Search Behavior. Google/Ipsos MediaCT/Purchased, May 2014

² Seventh Annual Local Search Usage Study. comScore, Neustar Localeze and 15 Miles, April 2014





"Come on, nobody would visit my website on a mobile phone."

Oh, Really?

33% of adults use their smartphones and tablets throughout the entire purchase process

46% rely exclusively on smartphones or tablets during pre-purchase research



Is Your Website Mobile-Friendly?

Test your website on Google's [Mobile-Friendly test page](#). If you see this, that's not good:

Not mobile-friendly

Reasons this page is not mobile-friendly

- ✗ Text too small to read
- ✗ Mobile viewport not set
- ✗ Links too close together

How Googlebot sees this page



Tactic #3: Get Listed

The more places your business is listed, the better your chances of being found online.

A key factor to getting found online is having your business information listed consistently across numerous online directories and local search portals.

There are hundreds of local search directories you need to be listed on. Consumers depend on this information find a local business like yours.



Unfortunately, sometimes your information is missing or just plain wrong. And when it is, consumers blame you. In fact, 73 percent say they lose trust in the local business when this happens.

What's more, search engines use this information to decide whether your business is legitimate or not. Businesses whose information is complete, accurate and consistent across numerous local directories tend to rank higher than those who are not.

How to Take Control of Your Listings

1. Claim Your Listing on the Top 20 Local Directories

Most local directories have already created a listing for your business (whether you wanted one or not). "Claiming" your listing is how you gain access to it. The logos on the previous page are the Top 20 you should claim right away.

2. Submit Your Business Listings to the Remainder (for a Fee, of Course)

For the hundreds of other directories, you can submit your business information to the four data providers that these directories get their listings from:

[Infogroup](#)

[Acxiom](#)

[Localeze](#)

[Factual](#)

3. Verify Your Listings

Some directories require that you verify your listings to insure you are really the owner of the business. You may receive either an automated phone call or postcard with an authorization number which you must enter into your listing dashboard.

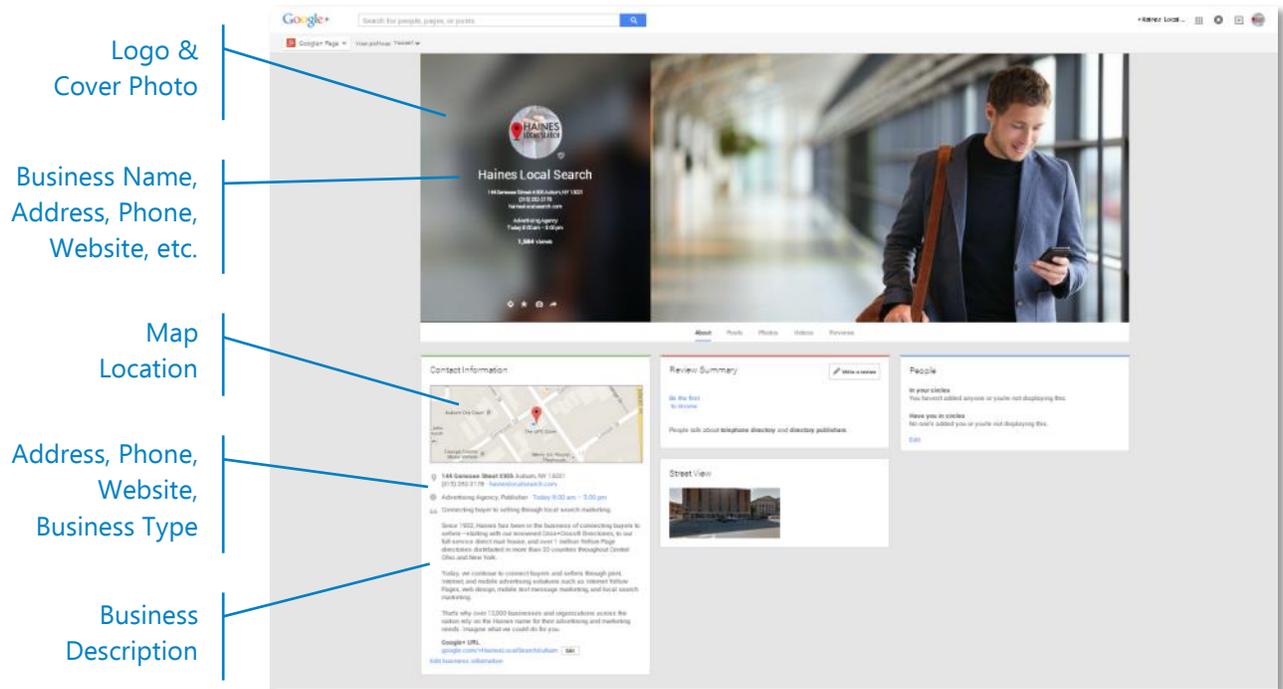
Be sure not to skip this step or your listing will not go live.



How to Take Control of Your Listings

4. Optimize Your Listings

You'll also want to add your additional information (e.g., hours, products and services, payment methods accepted, your logo, cover photo and so forth) to each listing that allows you to do so:



Optimized Google Listing

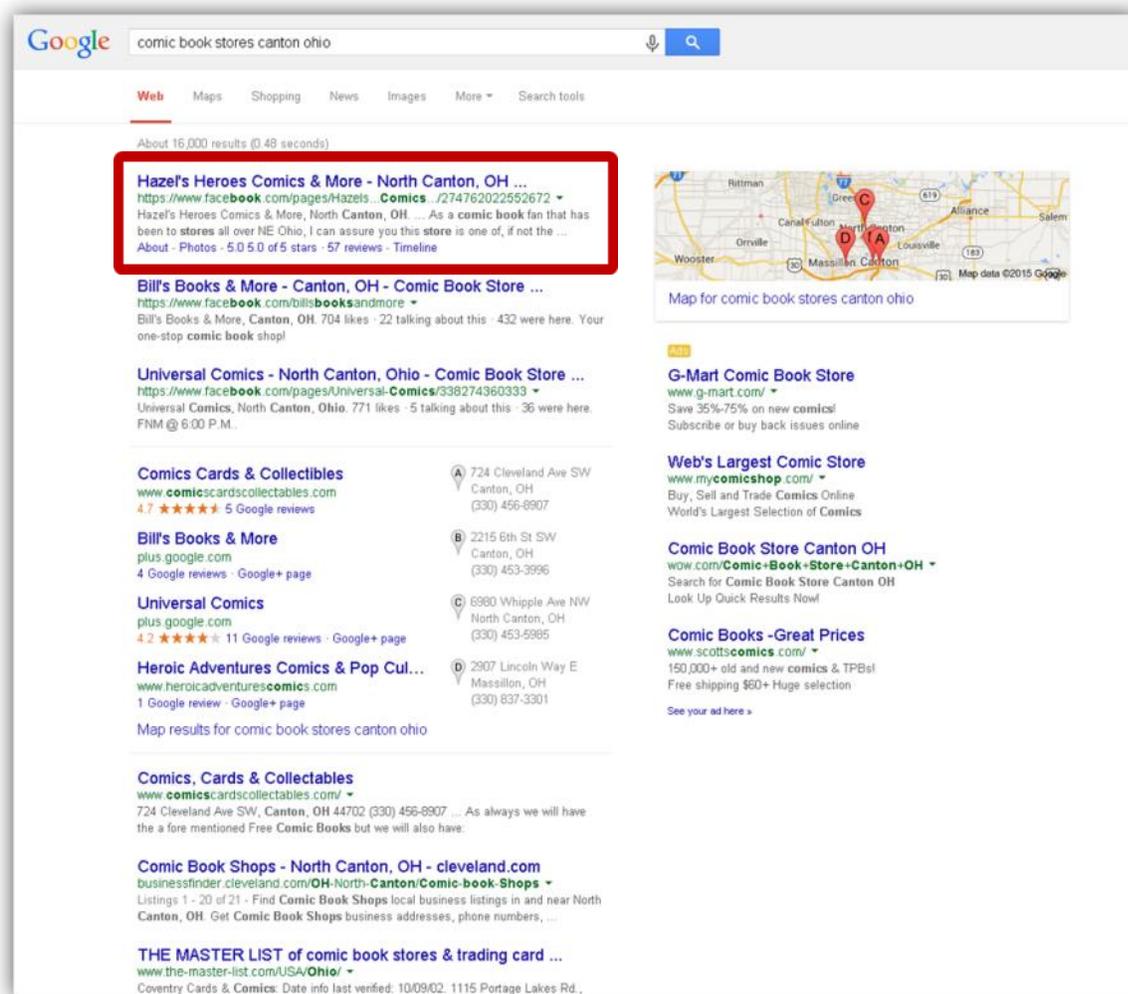
Our [Premium Business Listing service](#) gets you all this in a fraction of the time it takes to do it yourself.

How to Take Control of Your Listings

5. Set Up Your Facebook Business Page

Why does a social media page help your local visibility? Because Google treats social media pages for local businesses just like any other business listing.

This means your Facebook business Page may show up in the search results before your website does, as in the example below:



Just like the other directories, be sure to add your logo, cover photo, and all pertinent business information to your Facebook Page.

Tactic #4: Get Reviews

Encouraging customers to post online reviews may be your best form of marketing yet.

For years, marketers have extolled the selling power of testimonials. But a recent study¹ revealed that 90 percent of consumers don't trust them.

Testimonials lack third-party credibility. Consumers know only the best testimonials get published. Many suspect some are made up.

Independent reviews on third-party websites like Yahoo! and Yelp carry more weight. In fact, the majority of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations.²

Consumers Trust Businesses Who Have Positive Reviews

52 percent of consumers said positive online reviews make them more likely to use a local business.²

Prospective customers actually seek out reviews as part of their buying process. Having credible third-party reviews directly impacts sales and revenue.

It Gives You a Boost in the Search Engines

Google and the other search engines have decided that reviews should be a key factor in how well you rank in an online search. Businesses with more reviews tend to rank higher than those without any.

Reviews are the New Word-of-Mouth

For both human beings and search engines, reviews equal credibility:

- Google won't recommend you (that is, rank you higher than your competitors) without them.
- Consumers are less likely to buy from you if your competition has better reviews than you.

¹ Customer Lobby: New Findings on the Bottom-Line Impact of Customer Reviews

² Search Engine Land: Local Consumer Review Survey, 2012

Good Reviews are Hard to Come By

Word-of-mouth is often touted as “the best form of advertising.” But the truth is, getting happy customers to recommend you is a challenge.

The same is true in the online world, where 64 percent of U.S. Internet users have never written an online review. Of those that do:

- 45% share bad customer service experiences
- Only 30% share good customer service experiences

If positive reviews are so important, and yet so hard to get, what can you do? Here are four ways to solicit customer reviews:

1. By phone
2. By email
3. On your Website
4. By transcribing a hand-written review

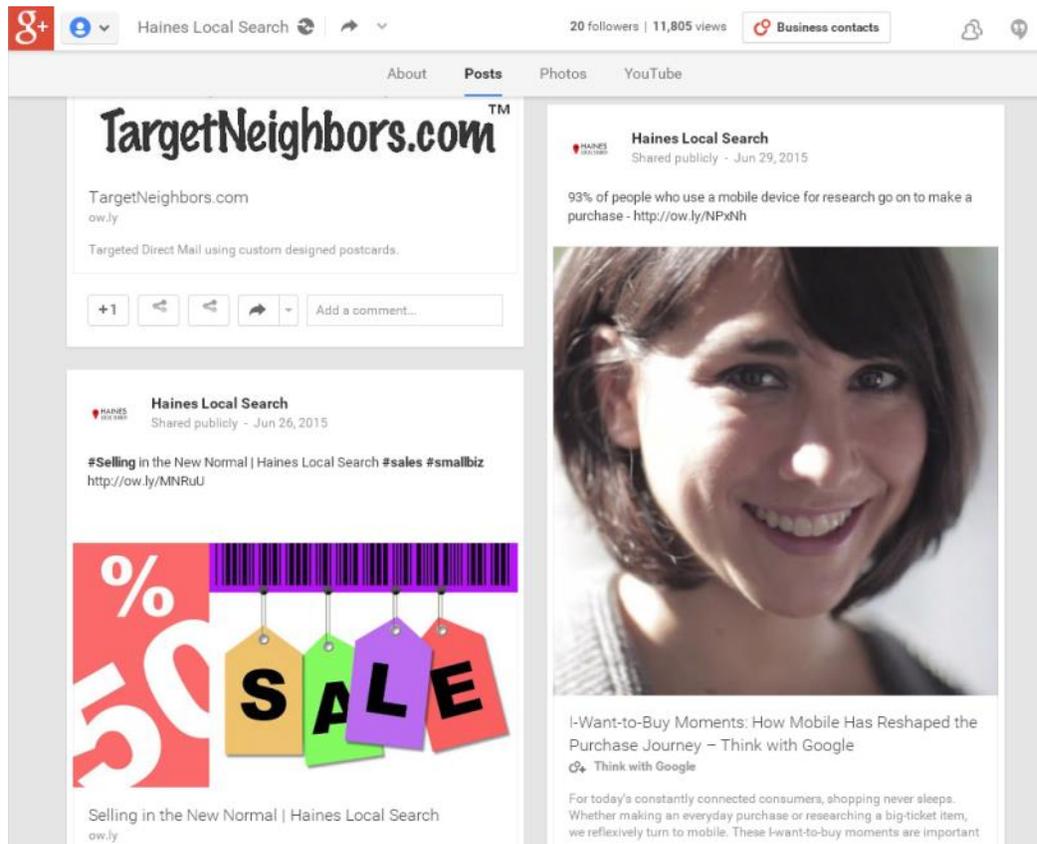
Leaving Your Reputation to Chance is Risky Business

There are hundreds of websites which anyone—customer, competitor or disgruntled ex-employee—can write an anonymous review about your business. You may wind up with more negative reviews and not enough positive reviews to offset them.



Tactic #5: Get Social

There's a strong correlation between social media activity and improved visibility in the search engines. You need more than just a Facebook page—you need followers and activity.



If you took my advice under **Tactic #3**, then you already have a Facebook and Google+ business Page. (For B2B companies, I also suggest LinkedIn.)

How often should you post? I suggest three to five times a week. You can share articles others have written that you've found around the web (so long as they're relevant to your target audience). You can also share articles you've written yourself and posted on your website or blog.

(For a website and blog that you can update yourself, we recommend using the WordPress platform.)

Be sure not to be overly promotional. It's fine to talk about your products and services, or offer specials—just not all the time. A good rule-of-thumb to follow is two-thirds informational, one-third promotional.

Tactic #6: Get Connected

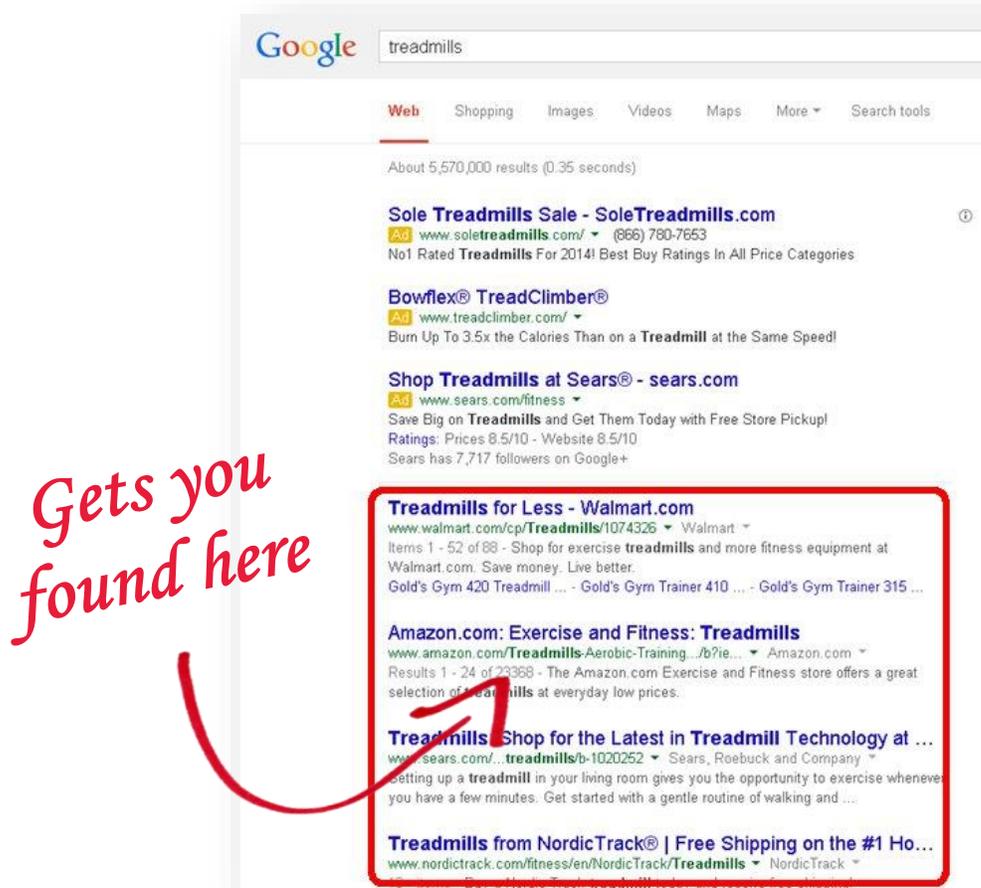
When other local websites link to yours, it tells the search engines that your site has useful content and helps your search engine rankings.

This is part of what's called "search engine optimization"—ensuring your website is found in the search engines, for words and phrases relevant to what you sell.

But wait ... isn't that what I've been talking about for the past 16 pages?

Yes, but sometimes the techniques I've outlined above aren't enough.

Depending on your type of business and where it's located, you may need to do more. A personal injury attorney in Los Angeles will have a harder time getting to the top of the search engines than a computer repair shop in Newark, Ohio.



If you've tried everything else and still aren't seeing results, consider hiring a SEO firm.

Tactic #7: Get Mailing

Direct mail compliments your local online marketing and drives online activity. 92% of direct mail recipients respond by going online ¹

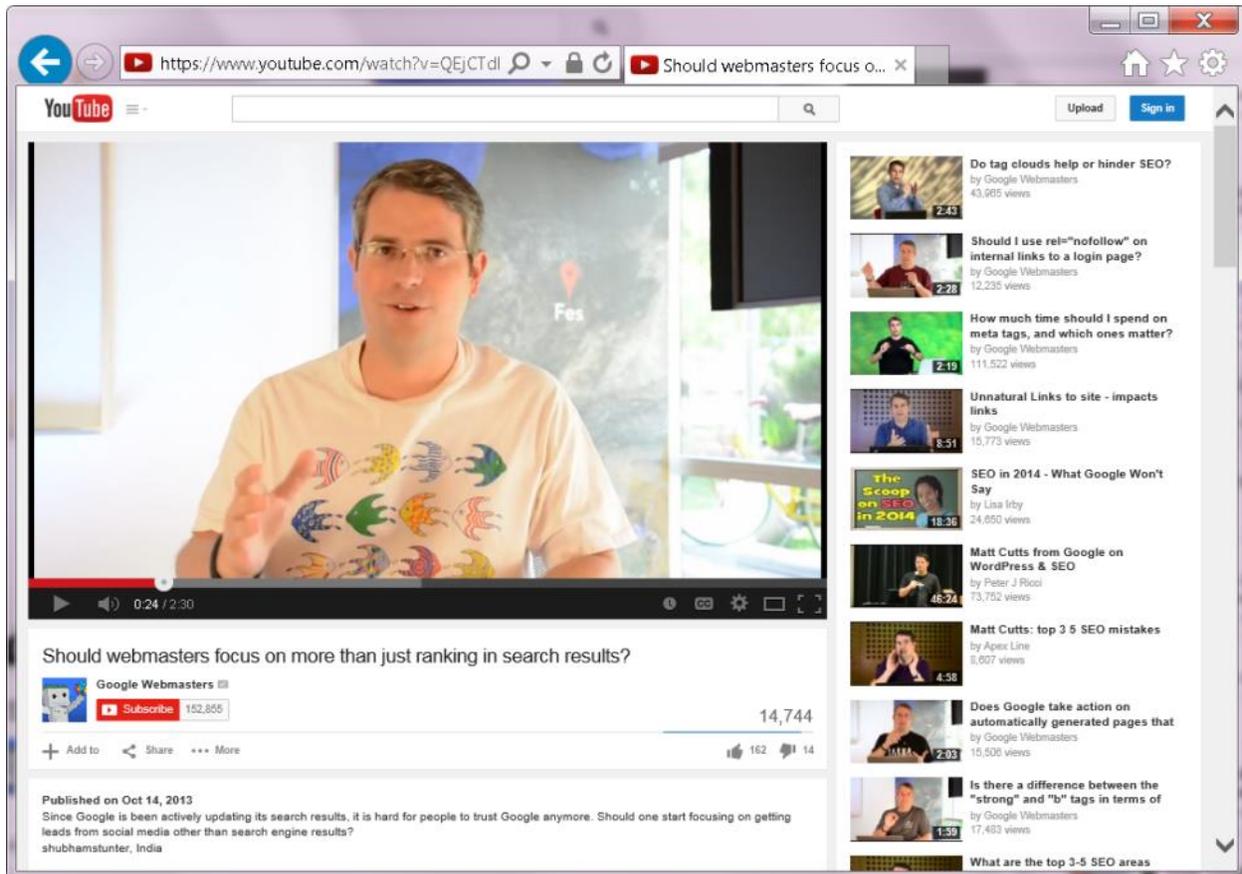


- Nearly two-thirds of all consumers bought something as a result of a direct mail piece (Direct Mail Association, 2013)
- Direct mail is the channel consumers prefer most for receiving marketing from local businesses (Direct Mail Association, 2013)
- 40% of consumers try new businesses after receiving direct mail (Compu-Mail)
- Young adults, 24 years and younger, are among the most direct mail responsive (Compu-Mail)
- Combining direct mail with digital marketing increases ROI by 12 (MarketReach)
- Direct mail that includes the buyer name has a 6.5% response rate—more than three times the response rate of non-personalized mail pieces (Melissa Data)

¹ 2015 Royal Mail/MarketReach Study

Bonus Tip: Go Yellow

In a YouTube video¹, Google software engineer Matt Cutts emphasized the importance of having a well-rounded marketing strategy that includes both online and offline media, including Yellow Page advertising.



1 [YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=QEJCTDNH7CO&FEATURE=Youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEJCTDNH7CO&FEATURE=Youtu.be) - OCT. 14, 2012

Yellow Page advertising has taken a bad rap of late. But here are the facts:

- Yellow Page usage remains high in suburban and rural areas (Google consumer survey)
- Consumers use a combination of both Yellow Pages (74%) and search engines (76%) to find local businesses (Burke Inc. Local Media Tracking Study)
- Phone calls from Yellow Pages have increased since 2008 (CRM Associates)
- Baby boomers with most disposable income are heavy Yellow Page users (Market authority, 2013)

Get Help

Okay, we admit it; do-it-yourself marketing's not for everybody.

If this is how you feel, give us a call. We'll let you to focus on *helping* customers instead of *finding* them.



Need a Marketing Partner? Call Today!



800-843-8452

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