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Google Business Profile Setup

The complete setup + optimization pass that gets your profile into the map pack and AI answers.

THE COMPLETE GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE SETUP

Introduction

A well-optimized Google Business Profile is essential for local business success. With 46% of all Google searches looking for local information, and 88% of people who do a local search on their smartphone visiting or calling a store within 24 hours, having a properly set up profile can dramatically impact your business growth.

This comprehensive guide will walk you through every step of creating and optimizing your Google Business Profile, ensuring you don't miss any crucial elements that could affect your visibility and success.

Initial Account Setup

I. Creating Your Google Account

Before you can create your business profile, you need a Google Account specifically for your business.

Action Steps:

1. Visit accounts.google.com/signup
2. Select "To manage my business" when asked about account purpose
3. Use a professional email address connected to your business
4. Complete the basic account setup process
5. Save your login credentials in a secure location

Pro Tip: Use an email address you check regularly, as Google will send important updates and alerts to this account.

2. Choosing Your Business Type

Your business type affects which features and options appear in your profile.

Select one of these categories:

- Storefront Business (physical location customers visit)
- Service Area Business (you travel to customers)
- Online-Only Business (exclusively internet-based)

Important: *Choose carefully as this affects your available features and how customers find you.*

Adding Basic Business Information

1. Business Name

Requirements:

- Use exact legal business name
- Don't add keywords or locations
- Maintain consistency across all platforms
- Avoid special characters unless part of legal name

Warning: *Adding extra keywords to your business name can result in profile suspension.*

2. Business Location

For Storefront Businesses:

- Enter complete street address
- Include suite/unit number if applicable
- Verify pin placement on map
- Add service areas if relevant

For Service Area Businesses:

- Define service radius
- List specific areas served
- Hide physical address if working from home

3. Contact Information

Essential Details:

- Primary phone number (local preferred)
- Website URL
- Email address (professional)
- Additional phone numbers (if applicable)

Best Practice: *Use a local phone number rather than toll-free when possible.*

Hours and Availability

1. Regular Business Hours

Setup Checklist:

- Set hours for each day of the week
- Include any mid-day breaks
- Note different weekend hours
- Specify holiday hours
- Add special hours for events

2. Special Hours

Include variations for:

- Holidays
- Special events
- Seasonal changes
- Temporary adjustments
- Emergency closures

Business Description and Categories

1. Primary Business Category

Selection Process:

- Choose most specific category that fits
- Add relevant secondary categories
- Review category options thoroughly

- Update as business services expand

Tip: More specific categories often perform better than general ones.

2. Business Description

Writing Guidelines:

- Length: 150-300 words
- Start with most important information
- Include relevant keywords naturally
- Highlight unique features
- Avoid promotional language

Visual Content Setup

1. Required Photos

Minimum Photo Checklist:

- Business logo (250x250 pixels minimum)
- Cover photo (high quality, representative)
- Exterior photos (minimum 3)
- Interior photos (minimum 3)
- Product photos (minimum 3)
- Team photos (if appropriate)

2. Photo Requirements

Technical Specifications:

- **Format:** JPG or PNG
- **Size:** Between 10KB and 5MB
- **Resolution:** At least 720px wide
- **Quality:** Clear, well-lit, professional
- **Quantity:** Minimum 15 total photos

Research shows businesses with 100+ photos get 520% more calls and direction requests.

Additional Features and Attributes

I. Business Attributes

Select all applicable options:

- Accessibility features
- Payment methods
- Parking availability
- WiFi access
- Outdoor seating
- Delivery options
- Safety measures

2. Products and Services

Setup Process:

- List main product/service categories
- Add specific items under each category
- Include prices where applicable
- Add descriptions and photos
- Update regularly

Verification Process

I. Choose Verification Method

Available Options:

- Postcard (most common)
- Phone
- Email
- Instant verification
- Video verification

2. Complete Verification

Postcard Verification Steps:

- Request verification postcard
- Wait for delivery (5-14 days)
- Keep postcard safe upon arrival
- Enter code exactly as shown
- Submit verification

Important: *Don't make major profile changes during verification.*

Final Review and Launch

1. Pre-Launch Checklist

- All basic information complete
- Hours accurately listed
- Categories properly selected
- Photos uploaded and organized
- Description optimized
- Attributes selected
- Contact information verified
- Website URL working
- Verification completed

2. Quality Check

Review for:

- Spelling and grammar
 - Accurate information
 - Working links
 - Photo quality
 - Mobile display
 - Map pin accuracy
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Ongoing Management Plan

I. Regular Updates

Weekly Tasks:

1. Add new photos
2. Post updates
3. Respond to reviews
4. Answer questions
5. Check insights

2. Monthly Tasks

1. Update special offers
2. Review business hours
3. Add new products/services
4. Check competitor profiles
5. Analyze performance metrics

Action Plan for Implementation

Day 1:

- Create Google Account
- Choose business type
- Add basic information
- Submit verification request

Day 2-3:

- Write business description
- Select categories
- Prepare and upload photos
- Add products/services

Day 4-5:

- Set up attributes

- Add special features
- Create first post
- Review all information

Day 6-14:

- Wait for verification
- Gather more photos
- Plan content calendar
- Set up review management system

Day 15:

- Complete verification
- Launch profile
- Announce to customers
- Begin regular updates

Conclusion

A well-optimized Google Business Profile is crucial for local business success. Following this checklist ensures you create a complete, effective profile that attracts customers and drives business growth. Remember to regularly update and maintain your profile after setup - it's not a "set it and forget it" tool but a dynamic platform that requires ongoing attention.

Next Steps:

1. Begin with creating your Google Account today
2. Follow the checklist systematically
3. Set up regular maintenance schedules
4. Monitor performance metrics
5. Adjust strategy based on results

The sooner you complete your profile setup, the sooner you can start attracting new customers through local searches. Take action now to establish your business's strong online presence.

From the founder.

A note on what to do with what you just read.

You don't need to act on every idea in this book. You need to act on *one*. The owners who win with AI are not the ones who study the longest. They're the ones who pick the smallest possible automation, ship it, and let the next move reveal itself.

If, while reading, a specific area in your business kept coming back to mind — that's your starting point. Don't override that signal with a more theoretically correct one.

WHEN THE PROFILE STILL ISN'T RANKING

A complete profile is table stakes; a maintained one wins.

Setup is the easy 20%. The firms that show up in the map pack and AI answers keep the profile fresh — posts, Q&A, categories, photos — on a cadence. That's the reputation engine we wire for clients.

— *Brandon Aday, Aday Interactive, Inc.*