



Part 1

How to sell websites, local SEO and AIO

The fundamentals of digital marketing,
explained for salespeople



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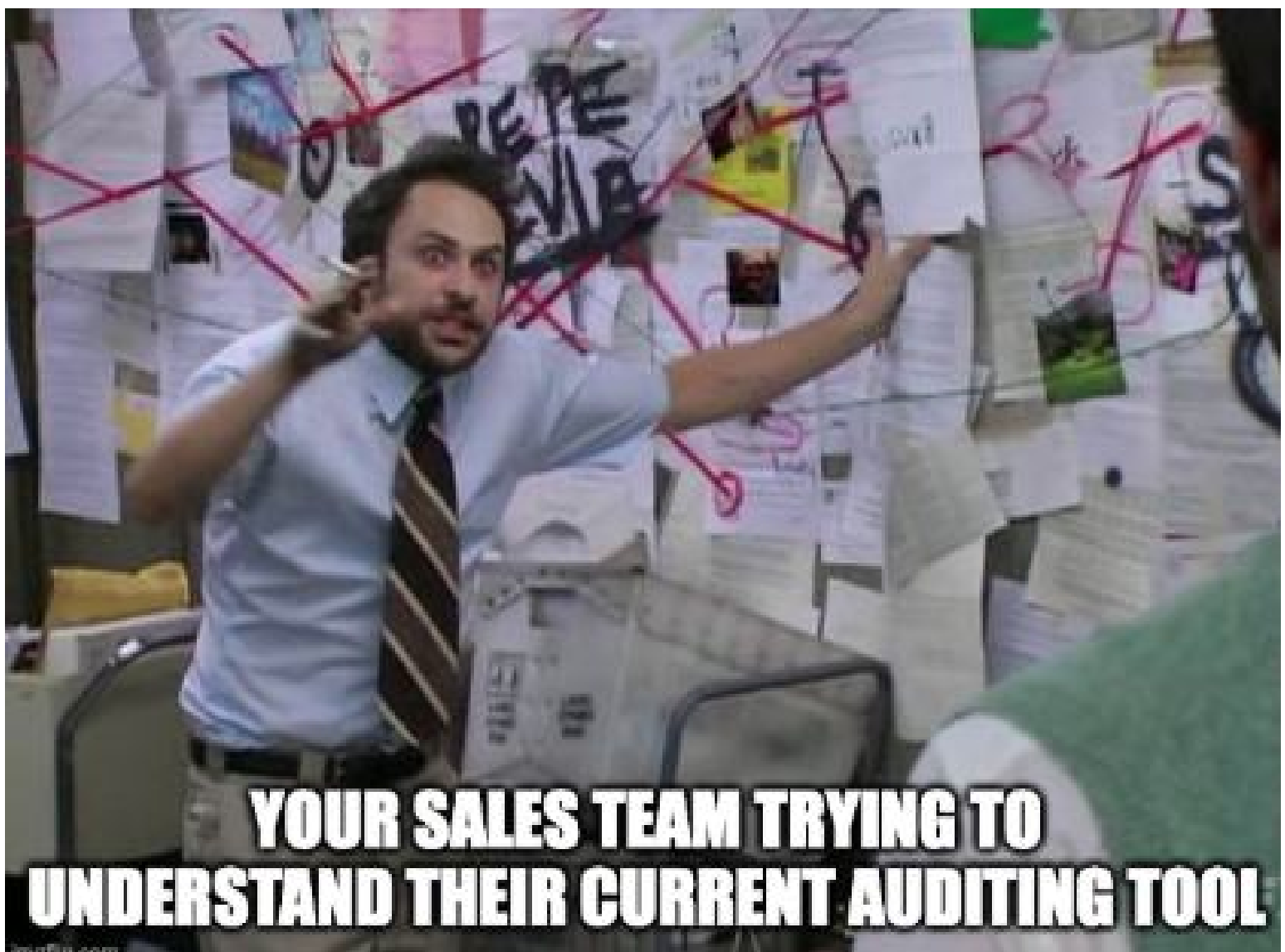
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How to sell website, local SEO and AIO

Selling digital marketing solutions can feel overwhelming. There's jargon everywhere, and the best way for local businesses to be visible online feels like it keeps changing. With so many layers to selling online presence solutions, where do you even start?

Maybe you've tried running audits on SEO tools like Semrush or Ahrefs to qualify and sell. But any salesperson who has tried technical tools knows it's not designed for prospecting & way too complex for pitching

The next obvious step might feel like "Let's just learn those SEO tools." But that can take months, and even then, many salespeople won't fully grasp it. Plus, sales reps should be focused on selling, not interpreting complex data.



This playbook exists to solve that problem.

If you're a natural salesperson, you already know how to understand business owners, their challenges, and how to create meaningful conversations. But selling digital services is really hard if you don't understand what you're selling.

By the end of this playbook, you'll understand what you're selling, why local businesses need it, and how to have confident conversations, all without becoming a technical expert.

Who should read this?

This playbook is designed for sales representatives, account managers, and team leaders at agencies or media companies who sell digital marketing services to local businesses.

Whether you're new to selling digital or looking for a better approach, this guide will help you sell more effectively without requiring deep technical knowledge.

So grab a hot drink and let's dive in.

Estimated time 18-25 minutes.

Chapter 1

Understanding what you're selling

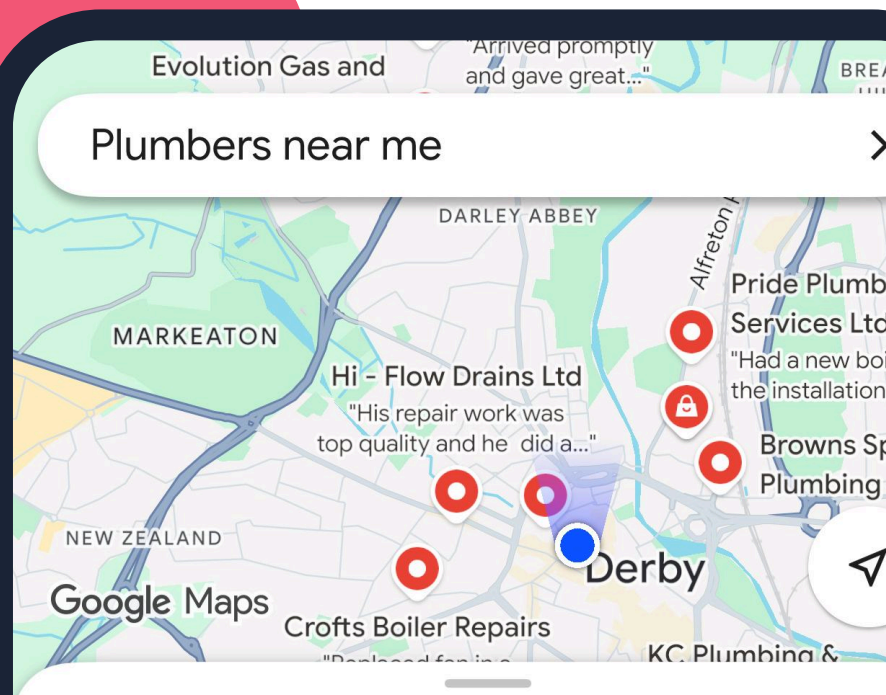
The fundamentals of digital marketing, explained without technical jargon



Local Visibility

Before diving into individual services, it helps to understand how all the pieces fit together. Think of local digital marketing as an ecosystem where each element supports the others.

When a potential customer searches for a local business, multiple factors determine whether they find your client or a competitor. These factors work together, not in isolation.

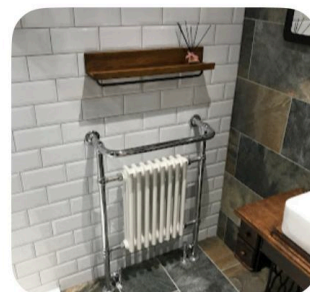


Plumbers near me

Pride Plumbing Services Ltd

5.0 ★ (447) ⓘ · Plumber · 0.7 mi

Closes soon · 17:00



"Had a new boiler and the installation was great, mess free and kind staff."

Directions

Services

Call

Share

The 7 pillars of **local visibility**



Website:

A website is a business's digital storefront is where all other marketing efforts ultimately drive traffic. It needs to:

Be mobile optimised

Over **80% of local searches** are made on mobile devices. If the site isn't mobile-friendly, it's invisible to most potential customers.

Load quickly

Over half of mobile users abandon a website if it takes longer than **3 seconds** to load. Speed isn't just about user experience—it's a Google ranking factor too.

Clearly communicate what the business does

Structured headings, relevant landing pages, and obvious calls to action above the fold (the part of the page visible without scrolling).

Be technically healthy

Broken links, 404 errors, and other technical issues frustrate users and hurt search rankings. Google's Core Web Vitals measure real-world user experience—things like loading performance, visual stability, and interactivity.

Be easy to read

Dense paragraphs and jargon-heavy copy drive visitors away. Clear, scannable content with short sentences keeps people engaged and helps them find what they need.

Be accessible

95% of websites have accessibility barriers that prevent people with disabilities from using them properly. Making a site usable for everyone (screen readers, keyboard navigation, proper colour contrast) opens up **£274 billion** in spending power in the UK alone. But it's not just a missed opportunity, it's a legal risk.

Search engine optimisation (SEO):

The practice of making making a website more visible in organic (non-paid) search results.

As well as having an optimised Google Business Profile to show up in Google Map Pack (or Local Pack), a big part of showing up in the list of results on the first page of Google is using the right keywords in the right places on your website.

Search engines read headings (especially the main H1 tag) to understand what a page is about. A heading like "We Are The Best" tells Google nothing.

A heading like "Expert Local Plumbers in Greater Manchester & Surrounding Areas" tells Google exactly what the business does and where; making it far more likely to show up when someone nearby searches for a plumber in their area.

The screenshot shows a website for SR Plumbing. The navigation bar includes links for Plumbing, Drainage, About Us, Contact Us, and Reviews, along with a phone number 0161 768 7663. The main heading reads "Expert Local Plumbers in Greater Manchester & Surrounding Areas". Below this, it states "Your trusted family-run plumbers serving Greater Manchester & Surrounding Areas since 2005". There are buttons for "Book Online" and "0161 768 7663", and a green box indicating "£0 Call-Out Fee For general plumbing repairs". At the bottom, it shows "EXCELLENT ★★★★★ REVIEWS.io". A yellow arrow points from the heading area to a text box on the right.

GOOD SEO CONTENT:

This example image shows Google exactly what the business does and where; making it far more likely to show up when someone nearby searches for a plumber in their area.

3/Listings and citations:

A business's name, address, phone number (or NAP) should be consistent across online directories like Google Business Profile, Bing Places, Yelp, Yellow Pages, and industry-specific sites. If the address says "Suite 5" in one place and "Unit 5" in another, search engines lose trust. Accurate, consistent listings across dozens of directories improve local rankings and ensure customers can actually find and contact the business.

4/Reputation Management:

Collecting online reviews on Google, Facebook, and industry-specific platforms helps potential customers in their decision-making. Between 90% and 99% of consumers read or are influenced by online reviews when making purchasing decisions, with roughly 93% to 98% calling them an essential, high-impact resource.

But it's not just about Google reviews anymore. AI engines like ChatGPT pull recommendations from third-party review sites like Trustpilot, Yelp, TripAdvisor, Avvo (for lawyers), and Healthgrades (for doctors) because they're seen as trustworthy sources. Getting reviewed on industry-specific platforms increases the chances of being recommended in AI answers.

5/Paid Advertising:

Google Ads, Facebook and Instagram ads, and display advertising that puts the business in front of potential customers immediately. Unlike SEO, which builds over time, paid ads deliver instant visibility, but only when you're paying for it. The key is targeting: reaching people in the right location, searching for the right things, at the moment they're ready to buy. When it's done well, your clients will gain a predictable lead flow with measurable ROI.

6/Social Media:

Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok allow businesses to engage with their community, showcase their products and services, and stay top of mind.

An active social presence builds trust and credibility, but an abandoned profile with poor quality posts does the opposite.

For local businesses, social media is less about going viral and more about looking alive, responding to customers, and giving people a reason to follow. Most local businesses (hairdressers, beauticians, physiotherapists, dentists, restaurants) rely on repeat customers and word-of-mouth recommendations. Giving people a reason to follow and share increases the chances of them coming back or recommending the business to friends and family.

7/AI visibility (AIO):

This is the new battleground for local search. As more users search in AI, it's incredibly important to get cited in AI-generated answers on Google AI Overviews, ChatGPT, and other AI search engines. Not only are potential customers asking AI simpler queries like "plumber near in Oxford", but they're also getting more specific with their questions. AI Overviews now appear in nearly [58% of question-based searches](#), so when a user searches "how much does teeth whitening cost in Leeds" or "what cafe near me does gluten-free cakes", to show up, businesses need content that directly answers the questions their customers are asking, structured clearly so AI can read and cite it. Traditional SEO helps here too: 76% of AI Overview citations also rank in Google's top 10. But without content like blogs, landing pages and FAQs that answer real questions, a business won't get recommended.

If you want to start speaking to prospects about their AI visibility but don't know where to start, having an easy-to-understand audit that looks at where they stand today is the best conversation starter. See for yourself! [Run a free AI visibility](#) audit today and then come back and continue reading



Is your client optimised for AI search? Find out for free.

See how they rank in ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Gemini. Get a client-ready report that shows where they are invisible and walk into the meeting with proof.

Start typing your business name

[Not listed in Google Maps?](#)

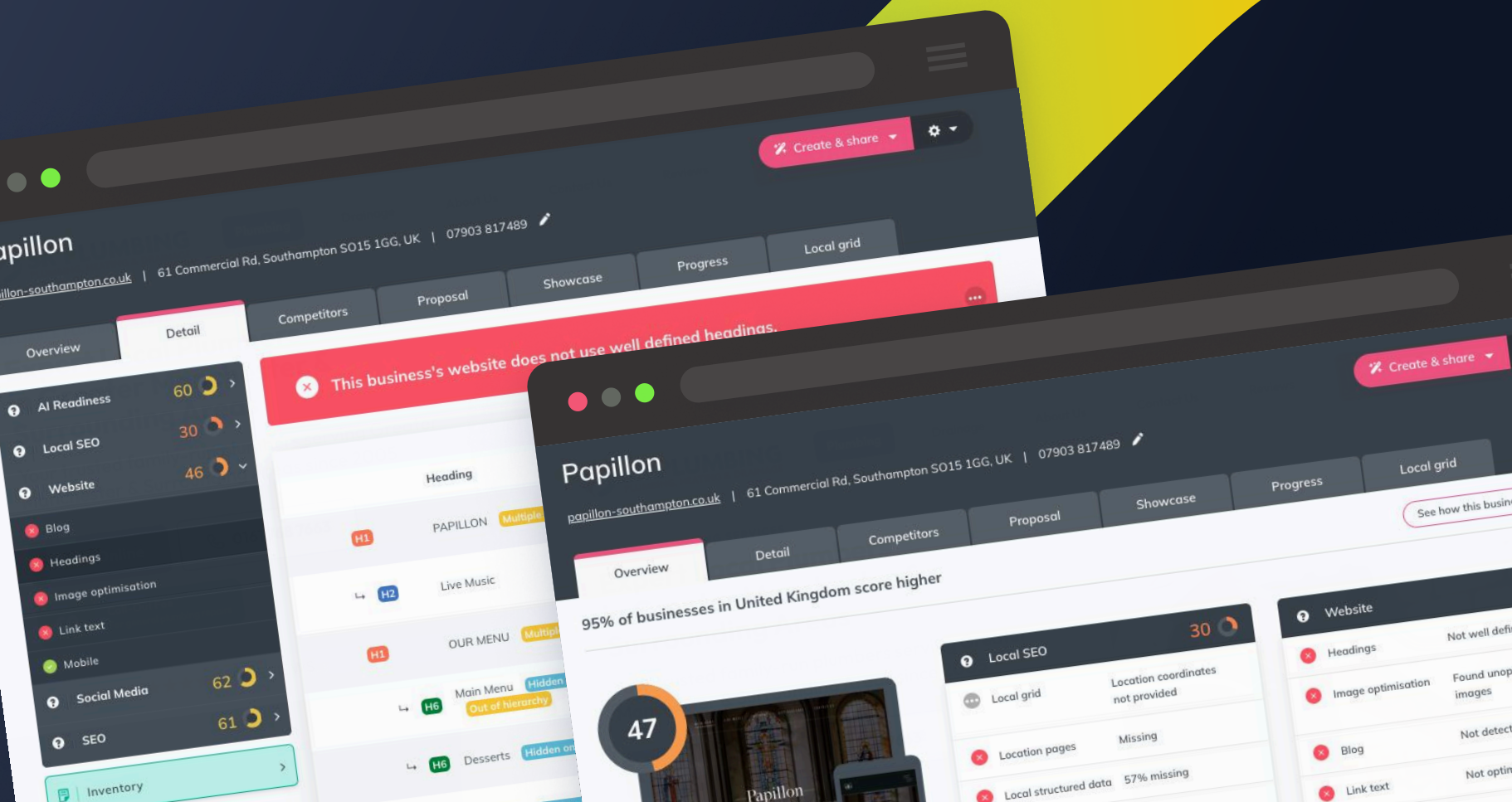


This is where the Insites audit becomes your powerful sales best friend. Rather than having to manually decide whether a prospect's content is good or bad, audit does that for you.

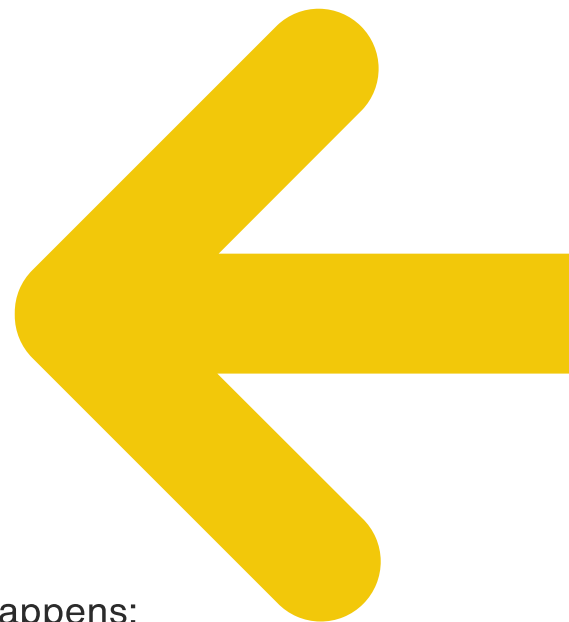
Just put any business's URL into Insites platform and you'll get a full audit in 60 seconds that checks for things like:

- ✓ If headings are well defined
- ✓ If they have a blog
- ✓ Is their content optimised for SEO?
- ✓ How are they ranking for keywords in that area or niche?
- ✓ Do they have problems with their website

Discover more about Insites

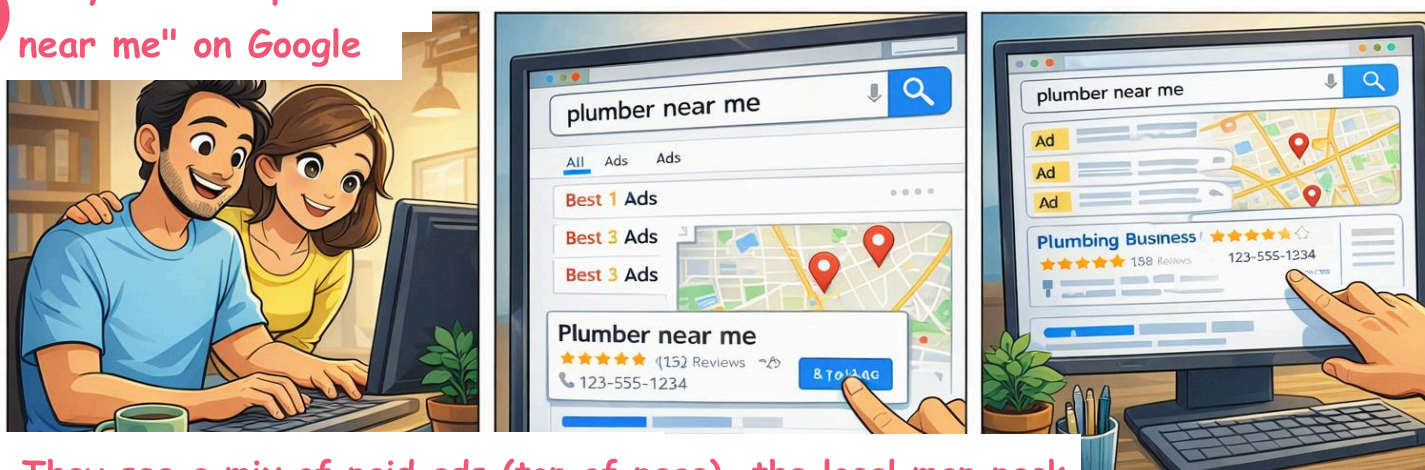


How the 7 pillars of local visibility work together

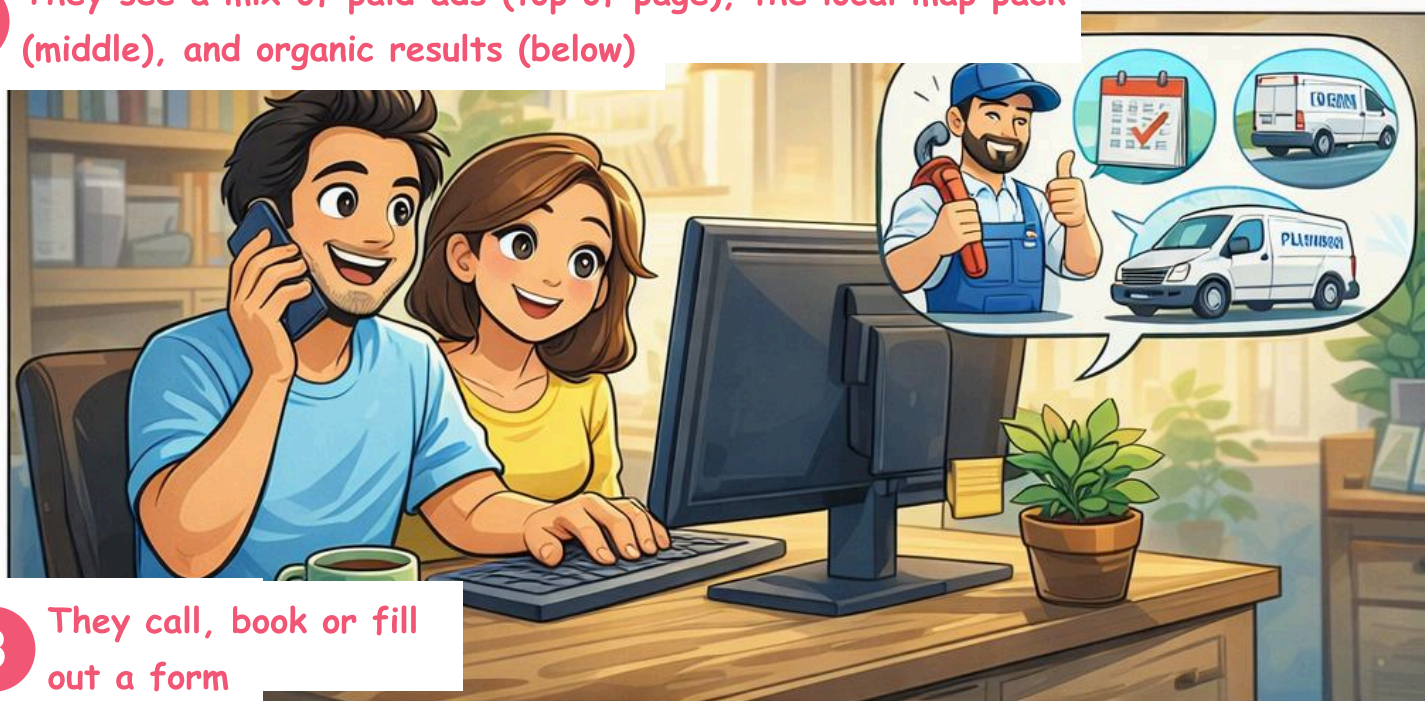


Imagine a homeowner searching for a plumber. Here's what happens:

1 They search "plumber near me" on Google



2 They see a mix of paid ads (top of page), the local map pack (middle), and organic results (below)



3 They call, book or fill out a form

If any link in this chain is broken, like bad reviews, ranking in low results or a slow loading website or the form not working properly, that homeowner customer will go elsewhere. This is why selling individual services in isolation often fails.

Chapter 2: What each channel actually does

This section gives you everything you need to know about each channel to have confident sales conversations. We're focusing on business outcomes, not technical details.



Websites

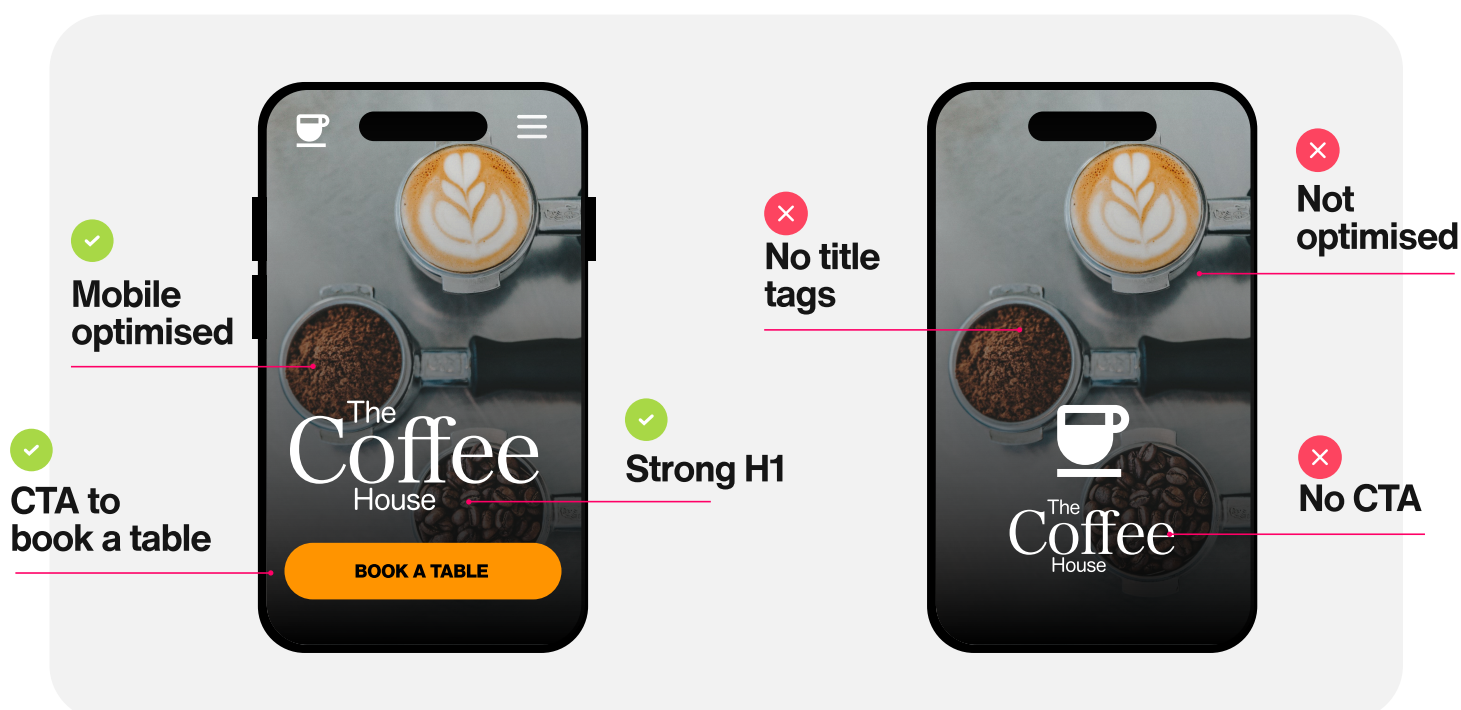
What it is: A business's online home base where all other marketing efforts ultimately drive traffic.

Why businesses need it: 46% of all Google searches have local intent.

Without a functional, freshly updated, mobile-friendly website, businesses risk harming their SEO and creating a poor first impression that turns users away.

Common problems: Slow loading speed (customers leave after 3 seconds), not mobile-friendly (over 60% of searches are mobile), outdated information, no clear call to action.

Business impact: A fast, professional website increases conversions, builds trust, and supports all other marketing efforts.



Talk point: "Your website is your shopfront that's open 24/7. But if Google can't find you or understand what you do, it's like having a brilliant shop on a street with no signs. We can show you how Google sees your site right now."

Search engine optimisation (SEO)



What it is: The ongoing work of making a website more visible in search results for relevant terms.

Why businesses need it: 75% of users never scroll past the first page of search results. If a business isn't ranking, they're not being found.

Common problems: No strategy for target keywords, poor website structure, thin content, slow site speed, no local optimisation.

Business impact: Higher rankings → more visibility → more traffic → more leads. Unlike paid ads, SEO builds lasting value.

The screenshot displays a website audit tool interface for 'Papillon'. It features a central dashboard with a score of 47 and a 'Check 2 pages about a week ago' notification. Below this are 'Update' and 'Schedule' buttons. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Local SEO (Score: 30):**
 - Local grid: Location coordinates not provided
 - Location pages: Missing
 - Local structured data: 57% missing
 - Voice search check: Not optimised
 - Review integration: None detected
 - Reviews: 1688 reviews found (5 stars)
 - Contact details: Detected (+447903817489, enquiries@papillon-southampton.co.uk)
 - Local listings: 1 found (3 directories searched)
 - Listing inconsistencies: Detected
 - Google Business Profile: No listing found
- Website (Score: 46):**
 - Headings: Not well defined
 - Image optimisation: Found unoptimised images
 - Blog: Not detected
 - Link text: Not optimised
 - Mobile friendly: Optimised
- Social Media (Score: 62):**
 - Facebook page: Found
 - Facebook ads: 4 detected
 - TikTok account: Not detected
 - LinkedIn: Not detected
- SEO (Score: 61):**
 - Alternative text: Several issues detected
 - Content keywords: Issues found

At the bottom, there is a red box with the number '15' and a '+ 1 hidden section' indicator. The footer contains the text '26916334 (18/03/2026 03:03)'.

Local listings and citations

What it is: Business information spread across online directories like Google Business Profile, Bing Places, Yelp, Yellow Pages, and industry-specific directories.

Why businesses need it: Search engines use listing consistency as a trust signal. Inconsistent information (wrong address, old phone number) hurts rankings and confuses customers.

Common problems: Duplicate listings, outdated information, unclaimed profiles, missing from key directories.

Business impact: Accurate, consistent listings improve local search rankings and ensure customers can actually reach the business.

Google Business Profile (GBP)



Talk track: "Have you ever Googled your business and found old information... Maybe a previous phone number or an address from years ago? That's not just confusing for customers, it's actively hurting your search rankings.

Search engines like Google use listing consistency as a trust signal.

When your information doesn't match across directories, Google loses confidence in your business. We can scan dozens of directories and show you exactly where your information is wrong, missing, or duplicated."



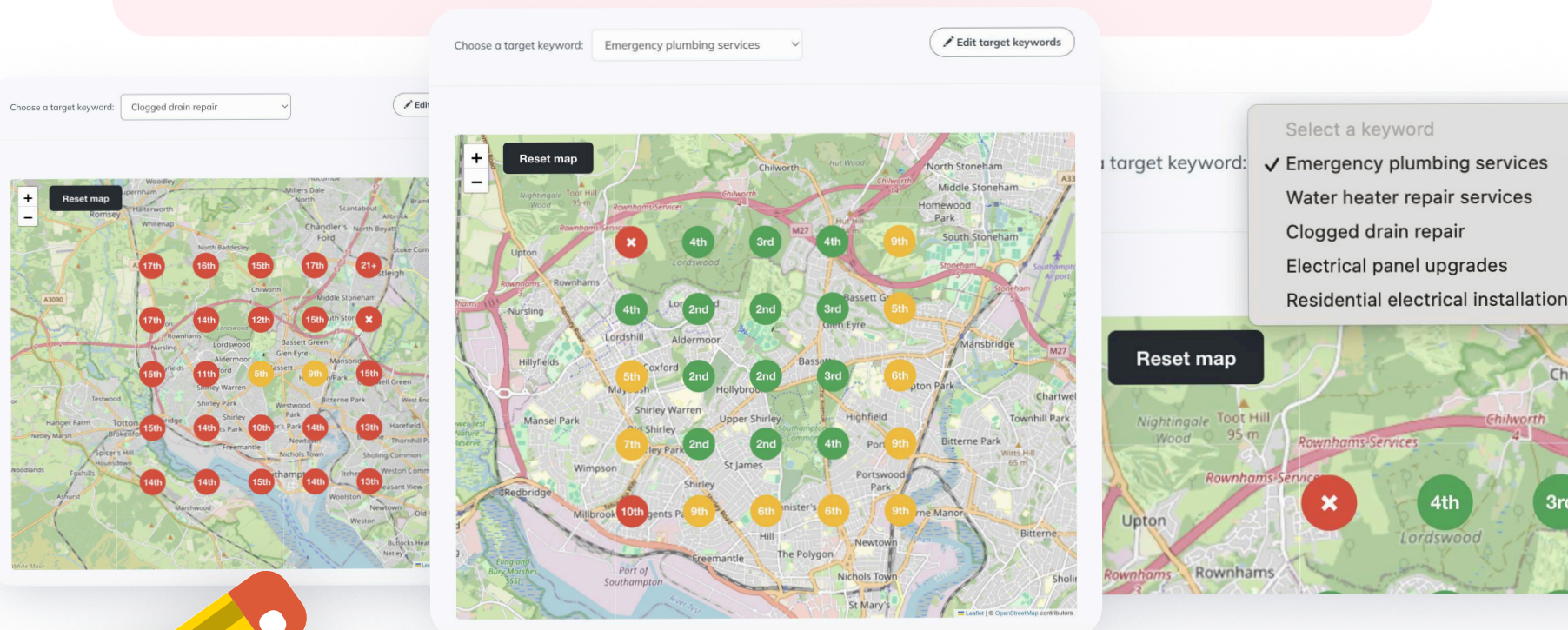
Google business

What it is: The free Google listing that appears in Maps and the local pack (the map section in search results).

Why businesses need it: For local searches, the map pack appears above organic results. An optimised GBP is often more valuable than ranking #1 organically.

Common problems: Incomplete profile, no photos, wrong category, not responding to reviews, not posting updates.

Business impact: A fully optimised GBP can be the single biggest driver of local leads for many businesses.



Talk track: "When someone in your area searches for [their service], do you know where you appear? We can run a Local Grid audit to show your local presence and see exactly where you're visible for Google searches in your niche and more importantly, where you're missing opportunities."

Reputation management

What it is: Monitoring, generating, and responding to online reviews across platforms.

Why businesses need it: 93% of consumers say online reviews influence their purchasing decisions. A business with a 4.5-star rating will dramatically outperform one with 3.5 stars.

Common problems: Too few reviews, old reviews, unanswered negative reviews, no system for requesting reviews.

Business impact: More positive reviews = higher click-through rates = more customers choosing your client over competitors.

Paid advertising (PPC)

What it is: Paying to appear at the top of search results (Google Ads) or in social media feeds (Facebook/Instagram Ads).

Why businesses need it: Provides immediate visibility while organic strategies build over time. Highly targeted to specific locations, demographics, and search intent.

Common problems: Wasted spend on broad keywords, poor landing pages, no conversion tracking, set-and-forget campaigns.

Business impact: When done right, paid ads deliver measurable ROI and predictable lead flow.

Social media

What it is: Maintaining a presence on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and others relevant to the business.

Why businesses need it: Builds brand awareness, keeps the business top of mind, and provides social proof. Also increasingly important for local SEO signals.

Common problems: Inconsistent posting, no engagement strategy, wrong platform for the audience, no connection to business goals.

Business impact: An active social presence builds trust and keeps the business visible between purchase decisions. Local businesses have a great opportunity to grow on social media because customers often come back if they're happy with the service. Frequent posts keep loyal customers up to date with news and promotions.

But there's a bigger shift too: Gen Z is using social media as a search engine. According to [Google's own internal research](#), almost 40% of young people prefer TikTok or Instagram over Google Search when looking for a place to eat. A [2024 Adobe study](#) found that 64% of Gen Z have used TikTok as a search engine, and [research from Her Campus Media](#) shows 74% of Gen Z uses TikTok search, with 51% choosing it over Google as their go-to.

For industries like beauticians, hairdressers, restaurants, and fitness studios, this is a fundamental shift. If a business isn't showing up on TikTok and Instagram, they're invisible to a huge segment of potential customers who aren't even opening Google.

Accessibility

What it is: Making sure a website can be used by everyone, including people with disabilities, those who use screen readers, have visual impairments, motor difficulties, or cognitive differences.

Why businesses need it: This isn't just about doing the right thing, it's about reaching a massive market and avoiding serious legal risk. The spending power of disabled people and their families is [£274 billion per year in the UK alone](#), and [\\$13 trillion globally](#). That's known as the "Purple Pound," and businesses are leaving it on the table.

Common problems: Missing alt text on images, poor keyboard navigation, low colour contrast, unlabelled form fields, no video captions. According to [WebAIM research](#), 95% of the top million websites have accessibility barriers.

Business impact: [75% of disabled people and their families have walked away](#) from a UK business because of poor accessibility or customer service. That's customers actively trying to give you money—and leaving because your website won't let them.

GDPR and Privacy Compliance

What it is: The rules around how websites collect, store, and use personal data. GDPR is the European standard, but similar laws exist worldwide.

Why businesses need it: Non-compliance can result in significant fines. But beyond penalties, customers increasingly care about privacy.

Common problems: Improper cookie consent banners, missing privacy policy, insecure data handling, non-compliant third-party tools.

Business impact: Compliant websites build trust and avoid regulatory penalties.



Talking point: "GDPR has been around for years now, but many websites still aren't properly compliant. Do you know what cookies and trackers are running on your site? We can audit your privacy compliance and highlight any areas of concern."



Chapter 3: Why local businesses need to be visible online

This is the most important section for new sales reps. If you understand this, you can explain it to any business owner and that's how you close deals.

How customers find businesses today

Twenty years ago, customers found local businesses through the Yellow Pages, newspaper ads, or asking friends. Today, they pull out their phone and search.

80%

of consumers

search online for local businesses at least once a week

88%

of mobile searchers

call or visit a business within 24 hours

What this means: When someone needs a plumber, a hairdresser, a restaurant, or a dentist, they don't ask their neighbour anymore.

They Google it. If a business doesn't show up on the first page (or even better - in the top 3), they don't exist to a potential customer.

The problems business owners face

The DIY trap: Many business owners try to handle digital marketing themselves or give it to an employee who 'knows computers.' The result is half-finished efforts: a website that hasn't been updated in years, a Google Business Profile that was set up but never optimised, social media accounts that went quiet after the first month.

Your opportunity

The bad experience problem: Many have been burned before. They paid an SEO company that promised page-one rankings and delivered nothing. They spent money on Facebook ads that generated likes but no customers. These experiences create objections you'll need to overcome with data, not promises.

The time problem: Business owners are busy running their businesses. Even when they understand the importance of digital marketing, they don't have time to learn the constantly changing landscape, implement strategies, and monitor results.

The competitor problem: In every market, some businesses are investing in digital marketing and pulling ahead. When one plumber dominates local search, every other plumber loses business. This creates urgency—the longer a business waits, the further behind they fall.

The massive opportunity (why this matters for you)

Here's what makes selling digital marketing to local businesses such a huge opportunity: most businesses know they need this, but almost none of them are doing it properly.

Look at the gap:

58%

of businesses don't optimise for local search at all

30%

have any kind of local SEO plan

56%

of local businesses haven't fully claimed or optimised their Google Business Profile

67%

have never performed a technical SEO audit



50%

of businesses that have claimed their listings have incorrect information

Every time someone searches for a local service, there's a winner and there are losers. The winner gets the customer. The losers don't even know they were in the running.

Your job is to help business owners understand where they stand and give them a way to win.

What's next?

You've now got the foundation: the 7 pillars of local visibility, what each channel actually does for a business, and why local businesses desperately need what you're selling (even if they don't know it yet).

In Part 2, we'll cover:

- ✓ How to shift from selling features to solving problems
- ✓ The "So What?" game — turning any technical finding into a business conversation
- ✓ Discovery questions to ask on every call
- ✓ How to let the audit sell for you
- ✓ Handling the objections you'll actually hear
- ✓ Using competitor analysis and Local Grid to create urgency

We're also building something new into the Insites platform that will change how you have these conversations, more on that soon.





Stay ahead of what's **changing**

SEO, AI visibility, and local search are evolving fast. What worked last year doesn't always work today.

Five Insites is our weekly newsletter that keeps you up to speed — no fluff, just what's changing and what it means if you're selling to local businesses. Sign up to:

- ✓ Get weekly insights on SEO, AI, and local marketing
- ✓ Be the first to know when Part 2 drops

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