HOW TO EARN A SPOT IN GOOGLE LOCAL RESULTS

Only a Few Names Make the Map. Here Is How to Be One of Them.

A buyer searches for a service near their building, and the first thing that appears is a small map with a few businesses listed, usually three, each with a star rating and a handful of photos. Those names get seen first. Everyone else is a scroll away, and plenty of buyers never get that far. For a field service business, that block is often the first impression, before the website, before a phone call, before anyone has heard a word about the quality of the work. Google says local results are based mainly on three things: relevance, which is how well a profile matches the search; distance, which is how far the business is from the searcher or the place named in the search; and prominence, which is how well known the business is, including its reviews and what the rest of the web says about it. Distance is out of your hands. Relevance and prominence are not, and that is what this guide covers: what to put in place so the business shows up, and looks like one worth choosing.

Eight Things That Decide Who Shows Up

1

Claim and Verify the Business Profile

An unclaimed profile can be changed by suggestions from the public, and the information on it may be wrong or out of date. Claim it, then complete verification, which tells Google you are authorized to represent the business and makes it more likely to appear in results. Keep one profile for the business and avoid creating duplicates.

2

Represent the Business Exactly as It Exists in the Real World

Use the name on your trucks, invoices, and signage with nothing added. Putting services or cities into the business name may look like a shortcut, but it breaks Google's rules and can get a profile suspended. If customers do not visit your location, set the profile up as a service-area business: hide the address and define the areas you actually serve. Do not use a P.O. box or a mailbox address.

3

Choose Categories and Services With Care

Pick the primary category that best matches the core of the business, then add additional categories only where they are true. List services in plain language, the way a buyer would describe the need. This is how you tell Google what the business is relevant for, so precision matters more than volume.

4

Fill In Every Field and Keep It Current

Hours, phone number, website link, description, and photos. If you take emergency or after-hours calls, make sure the profile shows that accurately. Add real photos of your work, your vehicles, and your team instead of relying on stock images. Google notes that complete and accurate information makes a business more likely to appear, so set a reminder to review the profile a few times a year.

5

Ask Every Customer for a Review, and Answer Every One

Google lists review count and score among the factors in local ranking, and a buyer reading them is judging the business as well. Ask every customer, not only the ones you expect to be happy, and make asking part of closing out a job. Never offer payment or gifts in exchange for reviews, which Google prohibits. Reply to all of them, especially the critical ones, calmly and specifically. For commercial customers, ask the person who actually worked with your crew.

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6

Make Your Name, Address, and Phone Number Match Everywhere

Google also draws on what the rest of the web says about a business, including directories and other listings. Check your website, social profiles, industry association listings, and any directory where you appear, and make the business name, address, and phone number identical in each. Fix or remove outdated ones. Mismatches can make a business look less established and make it harder for Google to be sure which listing is yours.

7

Make the Website Back Up the Profile

The page your profile links to should say clearly what you do, where you do it, and who you serve, with real proof such as projects and credentials. Google says a business's position in web search results is part of how well known it appears, so the website matters to the map as well. Where you can, link to the most relevant page, not only the home page.

8

Check Your Visibility the Way a Buyer Would

Search for your own services from several places across the area you serve, on a phone, as a buyer would. Note who shows up and how their profiles look next to yours. Results change with the searcher's location, so check from the areas that matter most, and repeat every few months to see what has changed.

A strong profile is one part of being found and chosen, alongside the website, the reviews, and a consistent brand across every place a buyer looks. Dark Horse Works builds that presence for field service businesses as part of The Checkmate, our Brand Visibility System. Want an honest look at where yours stands? Submit your website and social profiles for a free audit, or take our free Marketing Assessment, at darkhorseworks.consulting/tools.