

How to setup a Google map listing for a Naperville business

Advertising for a Naperville business in this economy can be tricky. More and more I find myself helping local businesses optimize their companies for local search exposure. One item that really grabs the attention is the Google Map listing using the Google Local Business Center.

How can Google Local Search help my Naperville business?When searching for a company, Google returns a set of local businesses related to that industry, along with a map. The heading Google often uses is, "Local business results for (you search phrase) near (your location)." A majority of the listings that appear here are inserted by business owners themselves or by third party sources like yellow page listings.

Google Local Business Listings also allow for companies to list their contact information and website address for additional information. Once you click through to the actual business listing, you are taken to a Google Maps page. Here you will find third party reviews on the businesses, photos, video and other related business information.

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How do I setup a Google Local Business Listing for my Naperville website or business?First, you will need to visit Google and create an account if you have not already done so. (When you sign up for a Google account, you will also have access to Google Mail, Google Analytics and Google's Advertising program, so sign up now!) Once you have finished signing up, click here to go back to the Google Local Business page. At this point, Google will ask you for five bits of information:

1. Your Required Information

This section requests basic information about your business, such as your address, phone numbers, email addresses, websites and company description. Try and be as detailed as possible!

2. Select your category

Select various industries that target your business. Targeting these as closely as possible is very important. If you know anything about Google, you understand relevance is king. Take the extra few seconds and double check you labeled your business correctly. (Poor labeling will result in improper display of your business, thus less traffic)

3. Specify your hours and payment

This will vary business to business, so use your own discretion here. If your local business has a storefront, I highly suggest adding your hours of operation. Here you can also specify your acceptable payment types.

4. Upload your photos and video

Google will allow you to upload up to ten photos of your business. If you are a small business, this is a terrific way to promote your storefront. Photos can help a potential customer identify your store, while your videos can allow you to speak directly to your customers when it's convenient for them. I recommend using both, but be careful with your video as a bad video can speak poorly to your brand image.

5. Setting up custom attributes

Is there something you want to specifically tell your customers that Google doesn't currently list? Then this section is for you! Ideas for custom attributes can range from services areas to company specialties.

Maximizing Google Reviews and RatingsGoogle pulls data about your business from a number of external sources as well as directly on their website. To get the most out of your reviews, reach out to your customer base and ask them to review your business for you, on Google.

How to Verify your Google Maps ListingOnce you complete your listing, you will need to verify with Google that you are the legitimate business owner. Google offers two solutions for this.

1) Phone Verification is by far the fastest and easiest way to verify your business listing. Full instructions are provided once you choose this option. Obviously, you will need your working business telephone handy.

2) Postcard verification is another alternative. When you select this option, Google will mail a postcard with instructions and a PIN required to complete the verification process.

That's it! Within a few weeks your listing will begin to display on the Google results page!