



SECRET 5

**LEVERAGE YOUR
POWERFUL GMB
"HOMEPAGE"**

Leverage Your Powerful GMB “Homepage”

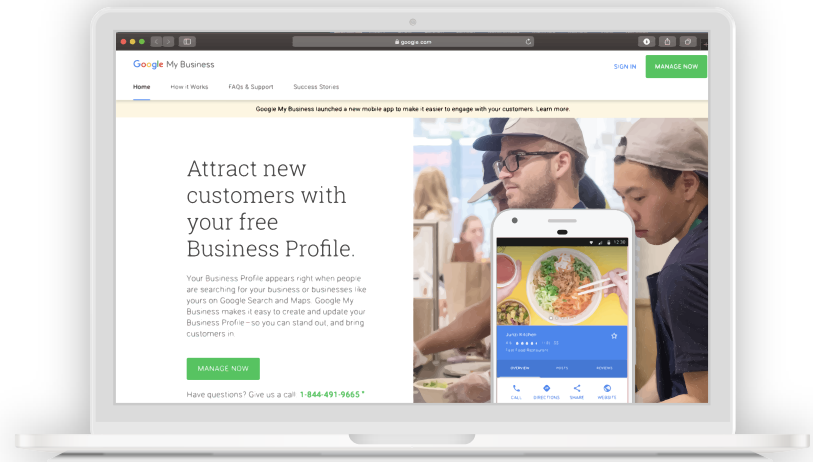
Your **Google My Business profile** is critical to your local search success. In fact, Google has been quietly building out their GMB profiles so that they provide more and more valuable information, making your GMB profile as important as your website.

Your website still matters, but with its detailed business information, posts, photos, Q&A, reviews, and much more, your GMB profile makes information readily available for those searching on the go.

Your GMB Profile

If you don't already have your GMB listing, head over to the Google My Business page and enter all your business information, including business name and address, and check to see if a current listing exists. The last thing you want to do is create a duplicate listing. If you don't have a listing — add one. If there is an existing listing, then **follow these steps**.

Next, let's optimize your GMB profile so that you show up in the Local Pack and Google Maps. So before you do anything, it is important that you claim and verify your Google My Business profile. If you haven't done this already, you can **claim your profile here**.



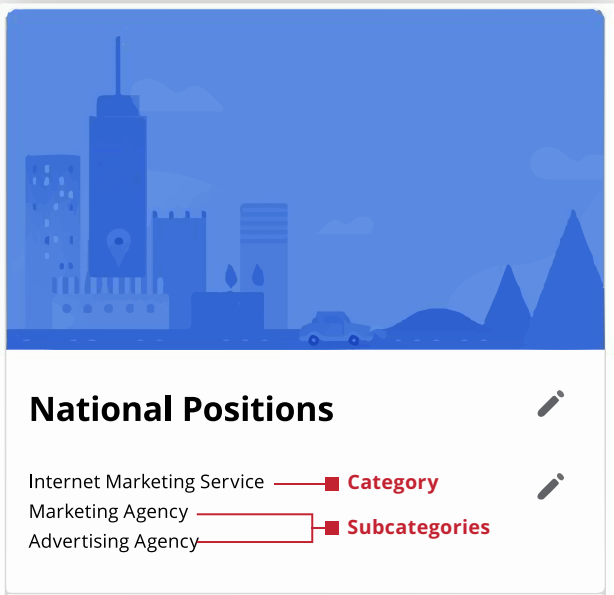
Once you've completed this step, you're ready to take advantage of some of the secrets that (if completed properly) can greatly increase your chances of showing up in the Google Local Pack.

Make sure that when you add your listing, you fill out as much information as you possibly can. What you need to remember is that the more complete your GMB listing is, the more likely you are to show up in the search results.

Because of this, I cannot emphasize enough **how important it is to make sure that your profile is as complete as possible**.



One of the biggest mistakes that many local businesses make is they claim their profile and then... do nothing. You should take advantage of all the features that Google offers when you set up your profile. To be successful you will need to revisit and update your profile on a regular basis.



Choosing the Right GMB Category

So, now you know how important your profile is, but choosing the right primary category is paramount to your listing's success. There are currently over 4,000 GMB categories to choose from, which can be a tad overwhelming. But according to [Moz's Local Search Factors for 2018](#), your category selection is the top-ranking factor besides your physical location. So choose wisely.

Use the additional categories and be sure to add all of the ones that are applicable to your business. **For example**, if you run a local automotive dealership, you may do more than sell vehicles. Automotive maintenance, retail factory automotive parts, or auto body repair may all be services that your dealership also provides. Check the category options regularly as they are often updated, and new opportunities may become available for your business.

Hacking Your Competitors' Categories

You can step up your game and find the GMB categories of your competitors by using this hack.

Here is an example with a search for "DUI Lawyers Orange County":

- 1 Go to their maps listing
- 2 Right-click and view source
- 3 Ctrl-F (find) and search for the primary category (enter the category name that is listed on their GMB listing)

```
[DUI Lawyers Orange County\",null, [\"Criminal Justice Attorney\",
\"Business Service\", \"Justice\", \"Law Firm\", \"Personal Services\",
\"Trial Attorney\"]
```

The snippet above shows us that this lawyer is using several categories, such as "criminal justice attorney," "law firm," and "trial attorney."

Choosing Your GMB Call-In Number

It is best practice to choose a local telephone number rather than a toll-free number, but it is not necessary to include a telephone number from your website.

One trick that we suggest our clients use is this: set up a special [call tracking number](#) so that you can track all unique inquiries from GMB.

Remember that if you rely on the number of calls reported by GMB Insights, you are only seeing calls generated from mobile devices, as Google can only track those users who use the click-to-call functionality. This cuts out all call tracking from desktops or from users who simply dial the number without clicking on it.

Business Name

This should be the name that you use for your business everywhere else — on your signs, website, business cards — your actual business name.

You might have noticed other businesses keyword stuff. Please don't do this.

You will be found out and you will be penalized. You might be located in Los Angeles, but if your business name is not Los Angeles Dry Cleaners, then we don't recommend you use the location name. In fact, all your directory listings should be consistent and use your genuine business name.

Business Address

Use the address that customers use to find your business. As location is so important in the algorithm, you might be tempted to use a fake address in an area where you are not currently located. The simple answer is that this tactic will ultimately fail. Google uses numerous sources to verify a business address and using fake addresses could have a negative impact on your legitimate address.

So what do you do if you run multiple businesses out of the same address? The simple answer is to use the one address for each of the businesses. Google completely ignores suite numbers.

GMB Photos and Videos

Photos and videos are important, and we have seen a direct, positive impact on rankings when photos and videos are consistently uploaded to Google My Business. Make sure that your content is geotagged. In fact, most cameras and cell phones today embed the city name with the image, which makes your life much easier.

GMB Description

A lot has been written about the GMB description. Our suggestion is not to keyword stuff the description and to keep the content natural. You're allowed 750 characters in your business description, but only 250 characters show up before they get cut off in the Knowledge Panel. So you want to make sure that you carefully create your business description and put the most important information and keywords, including your city, towards the beginning of the description.

Completing Your Profile

Google is constantly adding great new features to GMB, so it is important to review and make sure that your profile is as complete as possible. Below are some additional features that we think are extremely important to your success with GMB.

- Make sure your profile is constantly updated. For instance, changing your hours of operation over a holiday is an important detail to help keep searchers in the know.
- Ask clients to ask questions on the Q&A section of your site and be sure to write solid, helpful responses.
- Remember to gather and respond to reviews, whether positive or negative.



Service Area Businesses

If you don't have a physical store but you service a particular area — such as painters, roofers, plumbers, pool cleaners, or any other profession that needs to come out to your home or business to conduct business — you need to set your business up in Google My Business as a **Service Area Business (SAB)**.

For SABs, many of the same GMB factors apply, including having a well optimized website, having reviews, and a good link profile. The difference is that your address will be connected to a target city or radius around your business. There are, however, a few factors that can really help your SAB.



Try to build links from cities or suburbs that you serve.



Populate your website with content related to the cities that you serve.



Get reviews from the areas that you serve. Try and ask reviewers to include the names of the cities in their reviews. Mark up your reviews with local business schema.



Post photos and videos from your cell phone or camera of jobs that you have completed in the various areas that you serve.

Things You Should Avoid

It is tempting to ask a friend if you can use their office address or get a PO Box or use a business suite, so you have a presence in another city. As tempting as these tactics might be, they usually don't work. Google uses government and other third-party data to confirm your current address. They also know the addresses for all PO Boxes and business suites in the country. Some of these tactics might work in the short term but never in the long term.



Google is regularly adding Google My Business profile options, so be sure you are staying up to date and updating your profile with photos, videos, business hours, Q&As, etc.

NATIONAL POSITIONS' LOCAL RANKING SECRETS

21 STRATEGIES FOR CRUSHING YOUR COMPETITION IN 2019

For 15 years National Positions has been at the forefront of the digital marketing industry. We focus on combining the worlds of technology, data analysis, and creative design into our digital marketing strategies. Our data and know-how alone give us the edge required to effectively help our clients beat the competition. We focus our strategies on driving more traffic to your business, nurturing your lead pipeline, and helping convert your leads more rapidly. We look forward to helping your brand and business reach new heights in 2019 and beyond.

Contact Us for More Information:



877-866-6699



www.nationalpositions.com



Get in touch

