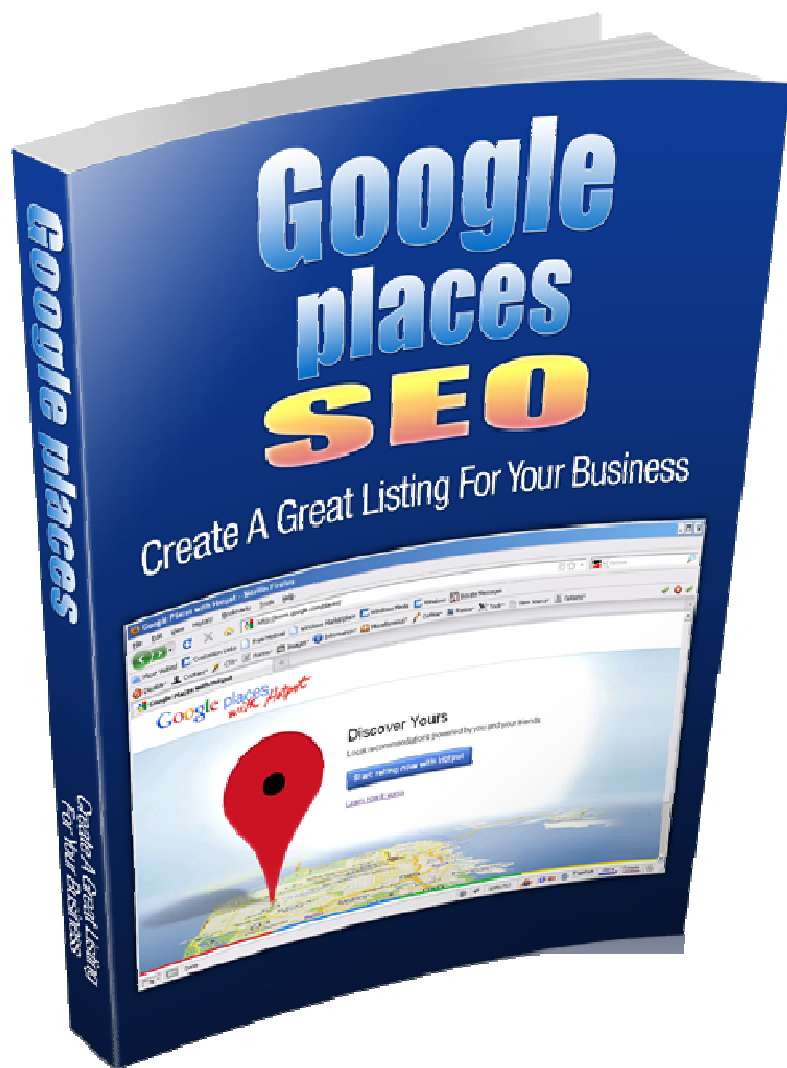


Google Places SEO - How To Create A Great Listing For Your Business!

by Michael Lundgren



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Introduction

Every business can benefit from more exposure. Because of current trends, having a great Google Places listing is almost becoming a necessity.

Statistics indicate that more than 50% of all internet/mobile phone searches conducted in 2010 were looking for information pertaining to a local business. As a result, it has never been more important to ensure that you build a strong and meaningful presence for your business on the web.

This includes the necessity to optimize your website for the search engines AND harness the power of local business listings, like Google Places.

While it is free to create your Google Places listing, there is a lot to know. In this report, I'll do my best to show you how to either create or claim your listing. I'll also give you some helpful tips designed to help your Places Page rank well for the keyword terms you are targeting.

To your success,

Michael Lundgren

What Is Google Places?

Google Places (<http://google.com/places>) is a free service from Google where business owners can market, promote, and advertise their business. It lets business owners leave their mark on Google Maps and list various information about their business including their business name, products/services, address, contact details, operating hours, accepted modes of payment, photos (of establishment/products), etc.

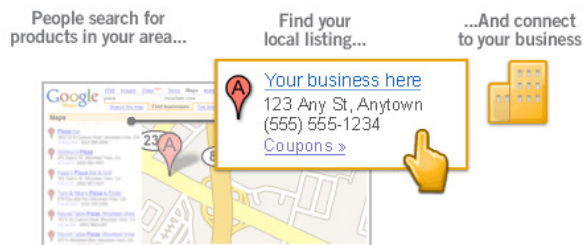


Change Language: English

Help customers find you on Google Maps

Millions of people search Google Maps every day. A free listing on Google Maps makes it easy for them to find you.

Use Google Places to create your free listing. When potential customers search Maps for local information, they'll find your business: your address, hours of operation, even photos of your storefront or products. It's easy, free, and you don't need a website of your own.



[Sign up now »](#)

Sign in with your
Google Account

Email:
ex: pat@example.com

Password:

☒ Stay signed in

[Can't access your account?](#)

Learn more about Google Places

People search Google Maps for a business just like yours.

Reach new customers on Google Maps and Google.com

Local customers are already searching for the products and services you offer. Why not make it easy for them to find you on Google search and on Google Maps? Google Places is the place to start.

Works great for businesses of any size

Whether you run a single dentist's office or dozens of coffee shops, manage all your listings from a single account.

Update your listing at any time

Use Google Places to edit your listing whenever and however you like. Your Google Maps results will be updated in a few weeks, not next year.



Google Places was originally known as the Google Local Business Center which was launched on March 15, 2005. Quoting from the press release relating to the launch:

The Google Local Business Center enables businesses to more effectively reach consumers searching on Google Local with accurate, useful and up to date information about their business. By enabling businesses to easily add or edit information whenever they like, businesses do not have to worry about outdated content or publishing deadlines. Businesses do not need a website to add a business listing to Google Local through the Local Business Center.

The service was renamed to [Google Places](#) on April 20, 2010 because, according to Google, they wanted to better connect it with "Place Pages."

Along with the name change, Google also introduced a few new features, including:

Service Areas – This feature allows businesses to indicate which geographic areas they serve. Additionally, it allows businesses without a storefront or office location to make their address private.

Advertising – For just \$25/month, Google enables business owners in select cities to make their listings stand out on Google.com and Google Maps using [Tags](#).



Get 30 days of free advertising with Google Tags

For a limited time sign up for Google Tags and get your first 30 days free.

Tags are yellow markers that allow business owners to promote important aspects of their businesses. Scroll over tags on Google or click on the sponsored link to view offers, photos, or other select features.



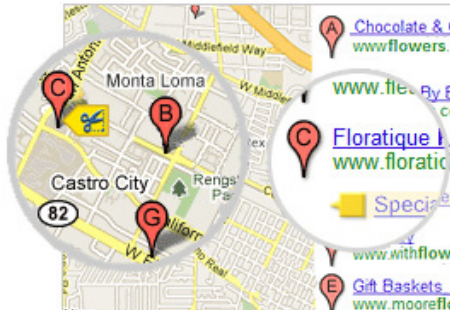
Get more customers
by promoting features that make your business unique



Save time advertising
with our easy tag builder, ready in minutes



Control your budget
with a \$25/month flat fee



Tags do not affect the rank of search results; they simply add more information when a particular user is searching. [Terms and conditions](#) apply. Limit 1 per new customer.

3 easy steps to get started with Google Tags:

- 1 Sign in to your Google Places account.
- 2 Choose your tag.
- 3 Activate your tag.

[Claim your free trial](#)

Want help setting up your Tag?

Call 1-800-838-7971

(9am to 8pm ET, Mon - Fri)

Google Business Photos – Through this [service](#), business owners can request a free photo shoot of the interior of their business for use on their Place Pages. (Note: As of December 7, 2010, Google photographers are visiting businesses in select cities in the US, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.)

Google Business Photos

Overview

[FAQ](#)

[Apply now](#)

Do you own a business? Apply today for a Google photo shoot of your business.

Millions of potential customers visit Google every day to learn about places and businesses. Through scheduled photo shoots, Google is introducing a new way for you to showcase your business to the world. [Apply now](#).

Where are photo shoots available?

Google photographers are currently visiting businesses in [select cities](#) in the US, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Any business can apply for a photo shoot, and demand will help us decide where to send our photographers next.

Where will the photos appear?

Pictures from the shoot will be added to your Place page.



Apply now

Photographers are currently visiting [select cities](#).

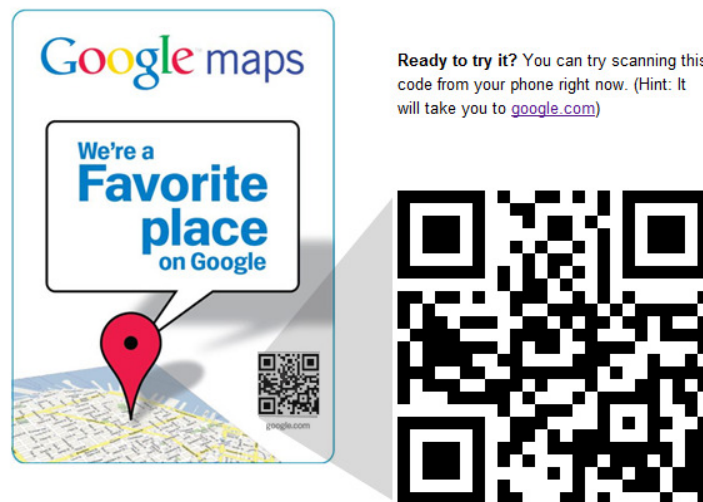
- A** It's free! Just apply to have Google take photographs.
- B** Show off your business to new customers around the world.
- C** Enhance your Place page to stand out above the competition.

Customized QR Codes – A QR code, which stands for Quick Response code, is a specific matrix barcode (a two-dimensional code). The QR code can be read by dedicated QR barcode readers and most smartphones through the use of an app.

QR codes can be used to do many things, such as to navigate to a website, dial a phone number, and all sorts of other things. The QR codes that Google Places provides will take people directly to the mobile version of the Place Page for the business that owns the QR code.

After you've created your Google Places listing, Google will provide you with a customized QR code (shown on the next page) that will help you market your Place Page more effectively.

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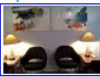



One great benefit of having your business listed on Google Places is that you will have the chance to get your business appearing as one of the results on Google's universal search results (via the local business results).


Web [Images](#) [Videos](#) [Maps](#) [News](#) [Shopping](#) [Gmail](#) [more](#) [Web History](#) | [Search settings](#) | [Sign in](#)

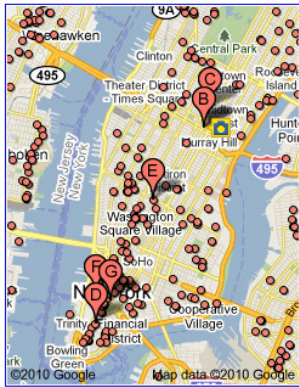
Google Instant is on ▾

About 5,950,000 results (0.53 seconds) [Advanced search](#)

Dentist New York, NY - Dr. Lawrence Spindel NYC dentist NYC New ...
New York City Cosmetic Dentist, Lawrence Spindel, DDS - located in Midtown Manhattan, our New York City Cosmetic Dentists provide the patient with the most ...
Dental Technology - Your Smile - Tooth whitening - Ask Dr. Spindel
www.lspindeldds.com/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)
 30 East 40th Street suite 604, New York (212) 685-0312
yahoo.com (3) - yelp.com (1) - citysearch.com (1) ★★★★★ 19 reviews [Place page](#)

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 30 East 40th Street, Suite 1001, New York - (212) 203-0875
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[citysearch.com](#) (25) ★★★★★ 14 reviews [Place page](#)
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www.sachardental.com/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)
 20 East 46th Street, Suite 1301, New York - (212) 752-1163
"Both receptionists were very kind and helpful, awesomeness! Dr Sachar was great." - [zocdoc.com](#) (11)
[insiderpages.com](#) (10) - [citysearch.com](#) (9) ★★★★★ 18 reviews [Place page](#)



And this document/guide will help you increase your chances of having that happen.

Getting Started

Before going to Google Places and submitting/adding your business listing, you need to first see if your business is already listed in Google Places.

Some of you are probably saying, “How can my business be listed on Google Places if I haven’t done anything yet?”

Well, the thing is, Google collects data for its business listings in two ways.

One way, as already mentioned earlier, is through submissions by the business owners themselves (direct submission). Since direct submissions are done by business owners, Google typically takes listings created through this method as being more authoritative.

The other way Google gathers information for business listings is through third-party websites that have business listings (e.g., online yellow pages, business directories, etc.).

If you have a legally existing/operating business (i.e., one that’s duly registered to/documented by the pertinent agencies), your business is most likely to be already listed on some websites. This is the result of a business listing data center getting your business’ information from public listings of your company and sharing it among other directories. And this is how your business could end up already listed on Google Places even if you haven’t done anything yet.

Automatic listings... that’s good. But then again, getting your business listed on Google Places this way comes with some drawbacks.

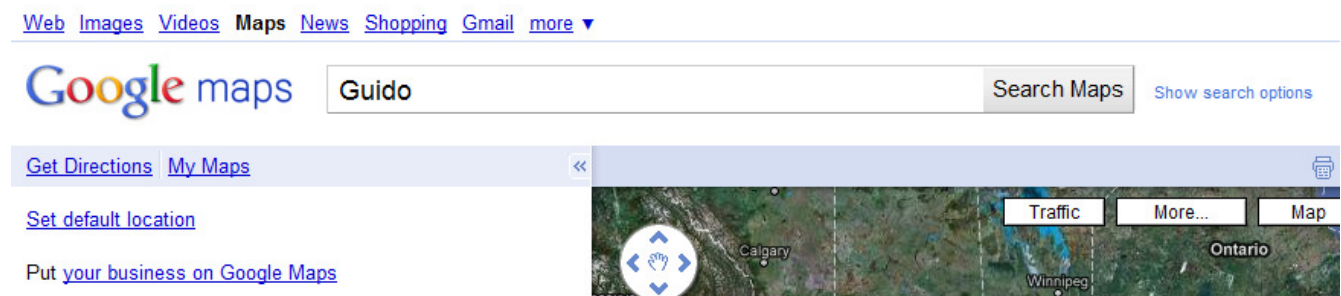
As already mentioned earlier, Google considers the listings it gathers from third-party sites as less authoritative. Another thing is that these are often the cause of a lot of problems in Google Places, such as incorrect business information and duplicate listings.

So, you're checking for your business for two reasons... one is to see whether or not your business is already listed, and the other is to check for and weed out errors (if there are any).

Searching for Your Business

To search for your business on Google Places, go to Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com>).

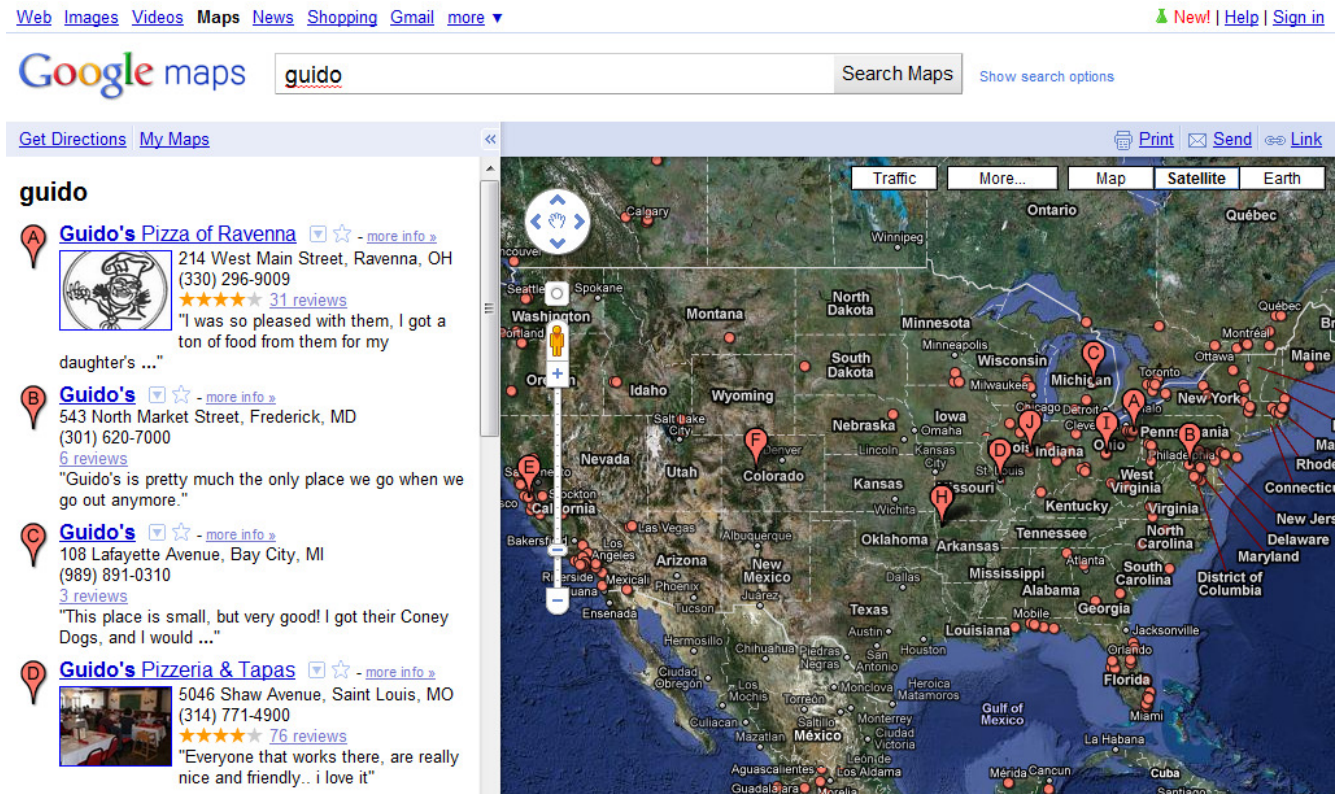
In the field provided, search for your business name, address, and phone number (one at a time).



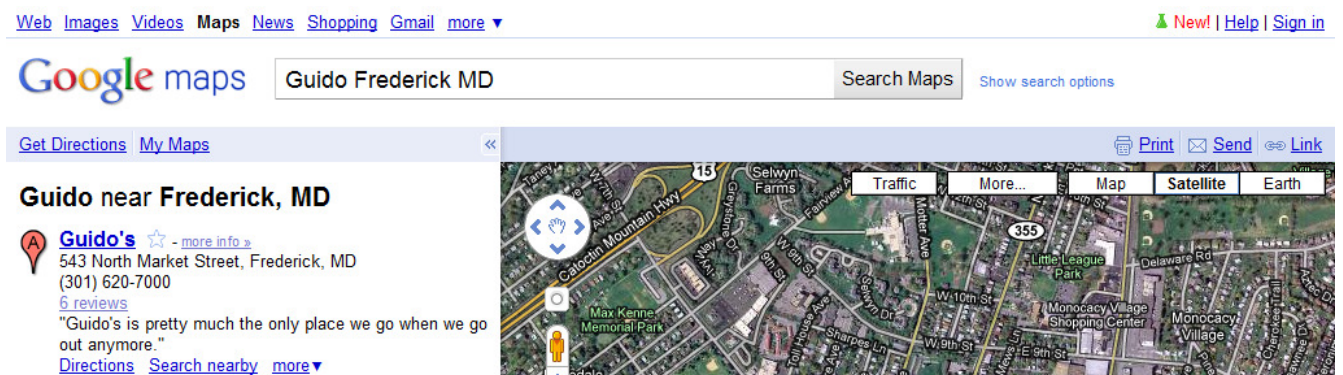
Searching for this information should increase your chances of finding your business listing (if it exists) even if it has typographical (or any) errors.

As you can see below, our sample search turned up quite a number of results.

Google Places SEO - Create A Great Listing For Your Business



If you're faced with this situation, you can narrow down the results by doing another search using your business name and city and State of operation as your search term. For example "Guido Frederick MD".

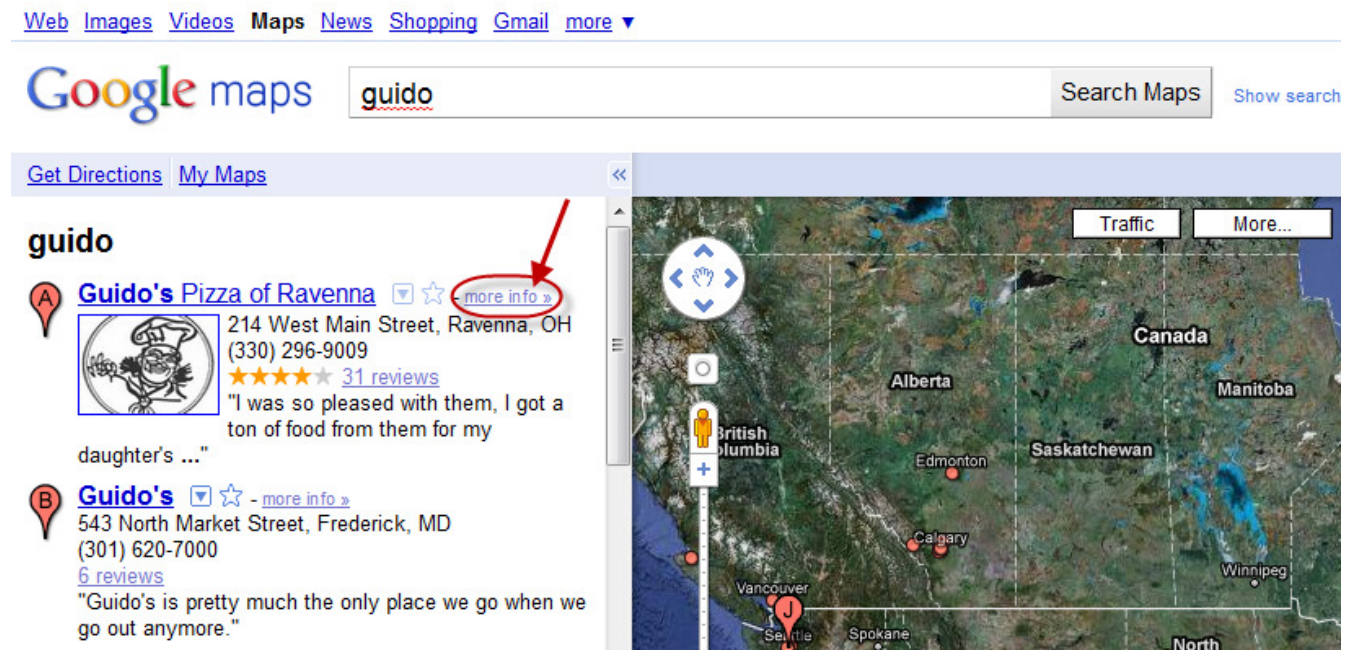


Now, what do you do if you do find your business already listed on Google Places?

Well, the first thing you must do is to check whether the listing has already been claimed or not. A "claimed" listing (otherwise known as an "owner-

verified listing”) means that the listing has already been claimed by somebody as its owner.

To know whether a business has already been claimed/verified or not, click on the **more info** link that corresponds to your listing.



This will take you to the listing's **Place Page**.

Google Places SEO - Create A Great Listing For Your Business

Web Images Videos Maps News Shopping Gmail more ▾ [Help](#) | [Sign in](#)

Google maps Search Maps [Show search options](#)

[Get Directions](#) [My Maps](#) [Edit this place](#) - [Business owner?](#) << [Print](#) [Email](#) [Link](#)

Guido's Pizza of Ravenna
214 West Main Street, Ravenna, OH 44266-2714
(330) 296-9009
[guidosravenna.com](#)
[Directions](#) [Search nearby](#) [more ▾](#)


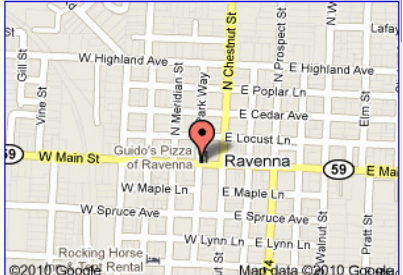

Category: Pizza Restaurant
Transit: [Main and Cherry](#) (140 m) 🚗 34, 82

★★★★★ 31 reviews Your rating: ★★★★★

"Fantastic food, great atmosphere, sincere and dedicated employees" - cityvoter.com ... "I doubt that you can!" - cityvoter.com ... "I hope Guido's takes the prize for the best darn italian food around :o)" - cityvoter.com ... "Great place for pizza in scenic downtown Ravenna" - dine.com

Details

Cuisine: Pizza
[citysearch.com](#)





This is where you will see whether the listing has already been claimed or not.

Google maps Search Maps

[Get Directions](#) [My Maps](#) [Edit this place](#) - [Business owner?](#) <<


Guido's Pizza of Ravenna
214 West Main Street, Ravenna, OH 44266-2714
(330) 296-9009



Google maps Search Maps

[Get Directions](#) [My Maps](#) [Edit this place](#) - [Owner-verified listing](#) <<

Guido's Restaurant
11980 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90025
(310) 820-6649
[guidosla.com](#)
[Directions](#) [Search nearby](#) [more ▾](#)



[yahoo.com](#)

Notice the links highlighted in the above screenshots.

If the link says “Business owner?” that means the listing has not yet been claimed/verified. On the other hand, if it says “Owner-verified listing”, that means someone is already claiming ownership of the business and the listing.

Obviously, you would want the link to say “Business owner?” But what if it indicates that it’s owned by someone already? Don't worry... just read on.

Getting Listed In Google Places

Before you proceed, please note that you will need to have a Google Account before you can actually do anything on Google Places.

Go to <http://google.com/places>

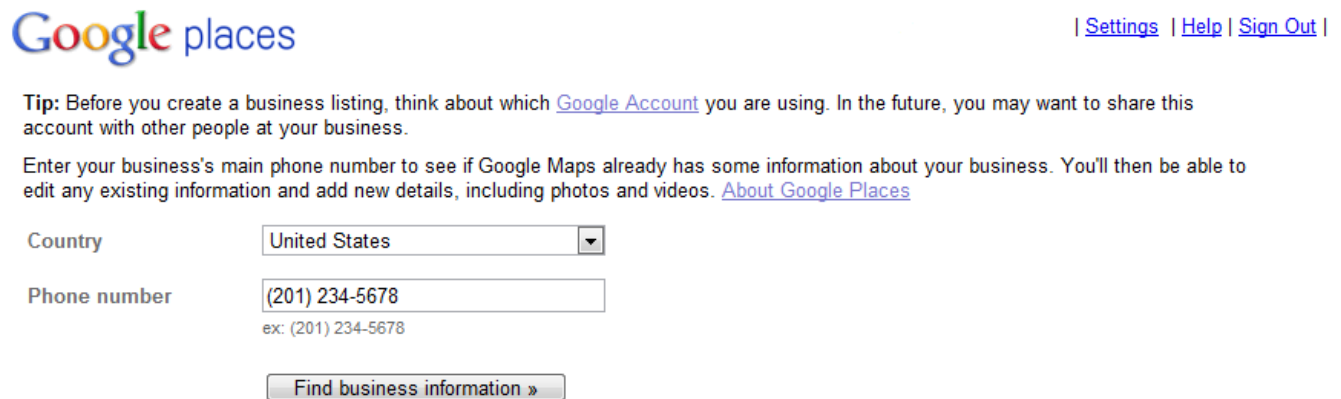
If you already have a Google Account, sign in to your account through the login fields provided. Otherwise, click on the **Sign up now** link to create your account.

The screenshot shows the Google Places homepage. At the top left is the "Google places" logo. To the right is a "Change Language" dropdown menu set to "English". Below the logo is the heading "Help customers find you on Google Maps". The main text explains that millions of people search Google Maps every day and that a free listing makes it easy for them to find you. It also states that using Google Places to create a free listing allows potential customers to find your business, including your address, hours of operation, and photos. Below this text is a diagram illustrating the process: "People search for products in your area..." (showing a map with a red pin), "Find your local listing..." (showing a business listing card with details like "Your business here", "123 Any St, Anytown", "(555) 555-1234", and a "Coupons" link), and "...And connect to your business" (showing a building icon). To the right of the main content is a sign-in/sign-up box. It has a "Sign up now »" link at the top. Below that, it says "Sign in with your Google Account". There are input fields for "Email:" (with an example "ex: pat@example.com") and "Password:". There is a checkbox for "Stay signed in" and a "Sign in" button. At the bottom of the box is a link "Can't access your account?".

Once logged in, click on the **Add new business** button.

The screenshot shows the "Your local business, discovered on Google" page. At the top is the "Google places" logo. Below it is the heading "Your local business, discovered on Google". The text says "Get found. Communicate with customers. Get insights to make decisions." Below this is a red link: "New! Local Business Center is now Google Places. Learn [more](#)." To the left of the main content is a large red pin icon on a map. To the right of the pin is the heading "Claim your business on Google and get these features:". Below this heading is a bulleted list of features: "Manage business information", "Post offers and live updates", and "See how you're doing with a performance dashboard". Below the list are two links: "Watch the video" and "Read testimonials". To the right of the main content is a large button labeled "Add new business" with a red arrow pointing to it. Below this button is another button labeled "Upload a data file".

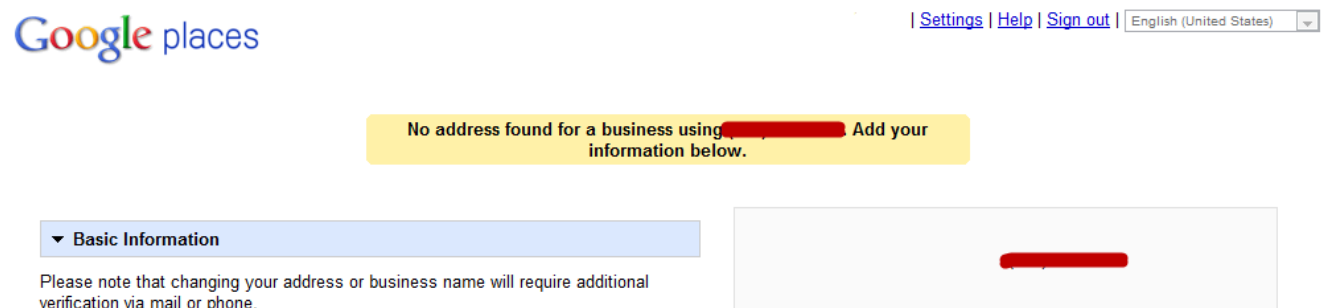
Choose your country from the **Country** dropdown menu and enter your business' main phone number in the **Phone number** field.



The screenshot shows the Google Places interface. At the top left is the 'Google places' logo. At the top right are links for 'Settings', 'Help', and 'Sign Out'. Below the logo is a tip: 'Tip: Before you create a business listing, think about which Google Account you are using. In the future, you may want to share this account with other people at your business.' Below the tip is a prompt: 'Enter your business's main phone number to see if Google Maps already has some information about your business. You'll then be able to edit any existing information and add new details, including photos and videos. [About Google Places](#)'. The form has two main fields: 'Country' with a dropdown menu showing 'United States' and 'Phone number' with a text input containing '(201) 234-5678' and an example 'ex: (201) 234-5678' below it. At the bottom is a button labeled 'Find business information »'.

Note that Google Places uses the info you provide to find out if your business is already listed or not.

If your business is not yet listed, you will see a note saying that no address has been found for a business using the phone number you provided.



The screenshot shows the Google Places interface after a search. At the top left is the 'Google places' logo. At the top right are links for 'Settings', 'Help', 'Sign out', and a language dropdown showing 'English (United States)'. Below the logo is a yellow message box: 'No address found for a business using [redacted]. Add your information below.' Below this is a section titled 'Basic Information' with a dropdown arrow. Below the title is a note: 'Please note that changing your address or business name will require additional verification via mail or phone.' To the right of the note is a large redacted area.

Go ahead and fill out as much information as you can about your business in the form provided.

Under **Basic Information**:

Choose your country from the **Country** dropdown menu.

Enter your business name in the **Company/Organization** field.

Enter your business' complete address in the **Street Address**, **Postal Code**, **City/Town**, and **Province** fields.

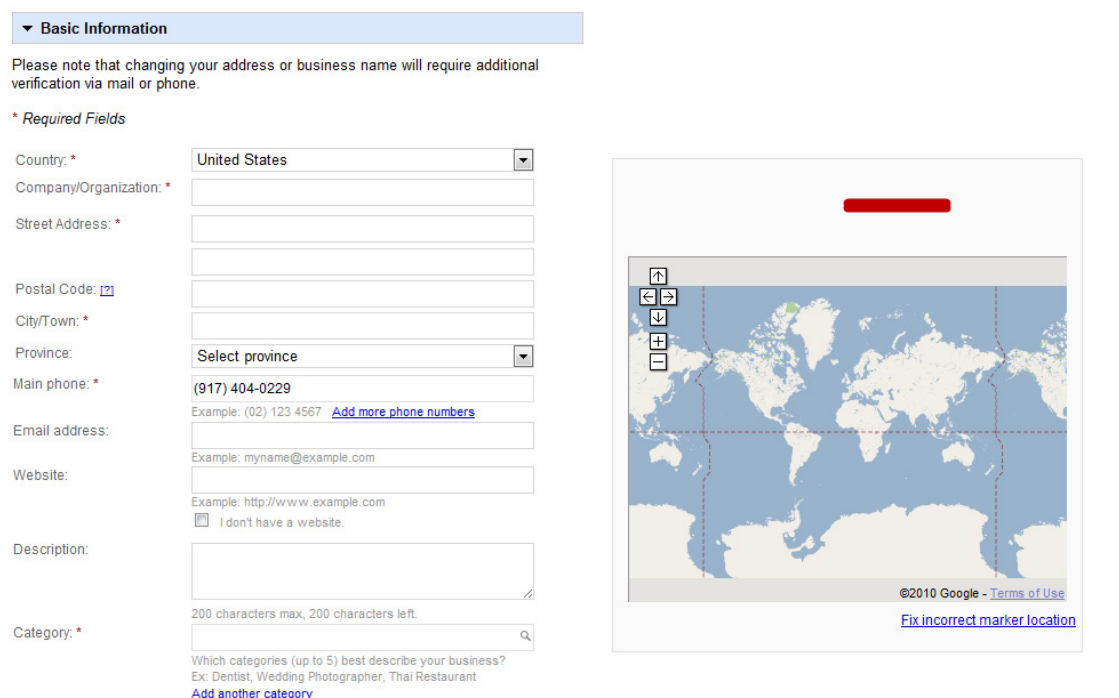
Enter your business' phone number in the **Main phone** field.

Enter your business' email address in the **Email address** field.

Enter your business' website's URL in the **Website** field.

Enter a brief description about your business in the **Description** field (up to 200 characters).

Enter up to 5 categories that best describe your business in the **Category** field (e.g., Ex: Dentist, Wedding Photographer, Thai Restaurant).



The screenshot displays the 'Basic Information' section of the Google Places listing creation form. It includes a note about address verification and a list of required fields. The form fields are as follows:

- Country:** A dropdown menu currently set to 'United States'.
- Company/Organization:** A text input field.
- Street Address:** A multi-line text input field.
- Postal Code:** A text input field with a link to a postal code lookup tool.
- City/Town:** A text input field.
- Province:** A dropdown menu set to 'Select province'.
- Main phone:** A text input field with an example '(917) 404-0229' and a link to 'Add more phone numbers'.
- Email address:** A text input field with an example 'myname@example.com'.
- Website:** A text input field with an example 'http://www.example.com' and a checkbox for 'I don't have a website'.
- Description:** A text input field with a character count '200 characters max, 200 characters left'.
- Category:** A text input field with a search icon, a list of suggested categories (Dentist, Wedding Photographer, Thai Restaurant), and a link to 'Add another category'.

To the right of the form is a map interface showing a world map with a red location pin. It includes standard map navigation controls (pan, zoom, street view) and a link to 'Fix incorrect marker location'.

Under **Areas and Location Settings**, choose the option that best describes your business.

▼ Service Areas and Location Settings

Does your business provide services, such as delivery or home repair, to locations in a certain area?

- ☒ No, all customers come to the business location
☐ Yes, this business serves customers at their locations

Under **Hours of operations**, indicate when your business is open and closed. You can also choose not to indicate your business' operating hours.

▼ Hours of operations

Make sure your customers know when you're open!

- ☒ I prefer not to specify operating hours.
☐ My operating hours are:

Mon:	9:00 AM	-	5:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed	↓ Apply to all
Tue:	9:00 AM	-	5:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed	
Wed:	9:00 AM	-	5:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed	
Thu:	9:00 AM	-	5:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed	
Fri:	9:00 AM	-	5:00 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed	
Sat:				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed	
Sun:				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed	

Are your hours split during a single day, such as 9-11am and 7-10pm?
☐ I'd like to enter two sets of hours for a single day.

Under **Payment options**, choose the modes of payment that your business accepts.

▼ Payment options

Specify how customers can pay at your business.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cash | <input type="checkbox"/> Convenience Store Payment | <input type="checkbox"/> Paypal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard | <input type="checkbox"/> Debit | <input type="checkbox"/> Postal Order |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visa | <input type="checkbox"/> Diner's Club | <input type="checkbox"/> Registered Post |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Express | <input type="checkbox"/> Financing | <input type="checkbox"/> Traveler's Check |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bank Wire | <input type="checkbox"/> Gift Certificates | <input type="checkbox"/> Smart Money |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cash on Delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> Google Checkout | <input type="checkbox"/> Globe GCASH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check | <input type="checkbox"/> Invoice | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Under **Photos**, upload photos of your establishment and/or products. You are allowed to upload up to 10 photos.

▼ Photos

Add flair to your listing: include photos of your products or your storefront. You can upload up to 10 photos. Please be sure they comply with our [photo submission guidelines](#).

☒ Add a photo from your computer

Choose File

No file chosen

Add Photo

☐ Add a photo from the web

You have uploaded 0 of up to 10 images for this listing.

Under **Videos**, you can enter the links of up to 5 YouTube videos related to your business.

▼ Videos

Enhance your listing by associating videos about your business. To do so, upload your video on [YouTube](#) and enter the URL below. You can include up to 5 videos.

Add Video

Example: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=dFtfxv1JdXI>

You have uploaded 0 of up to 5 videos for this listing.

Under **Additional Details**, you can add any “custom” details that you may have.

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▼ Additional Details

Please enter in any other details you want customers to know about your business, for example:

Parking available : Yes.

Brands carried : Sony, Panasonic and Toshiba.

 : 



[Add another](#)

Click on the **Submit** button when you're done.

Choose your desired validation method.

How would you like to validate your listing?

For your protection, we need to verify the information you've just given us. This can be done in one of 3 ways:

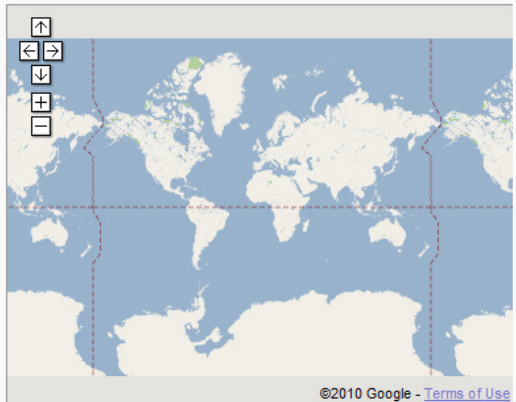
- ☐  **By phone**
We'll call you at this phone number
- ☒  **By SMS**
We'll send you an SMS at the following:
Mobile number:
Carrier:

- ☐  **By postcard (2-3 weeks)**
We'll send you a postcard in the mail to this address

If necessary, you may specify another recipient or enter a mailstop/mailbox number below. *This information won't appear on Google Maps.*

Contact name:

By clicking 'Finish,' you're authorizing Google to create or update your business listing for use in Google Maps or other Google services. You are also affirming that you have the right to create this listing and that you have read and agree to Google's [terms of service](#). There is currently no charge for creating or displaying listings. If this is a new listing or has a new address, you must verify the address via regular mail or telephone before the listing is activated. See next page for instructions.



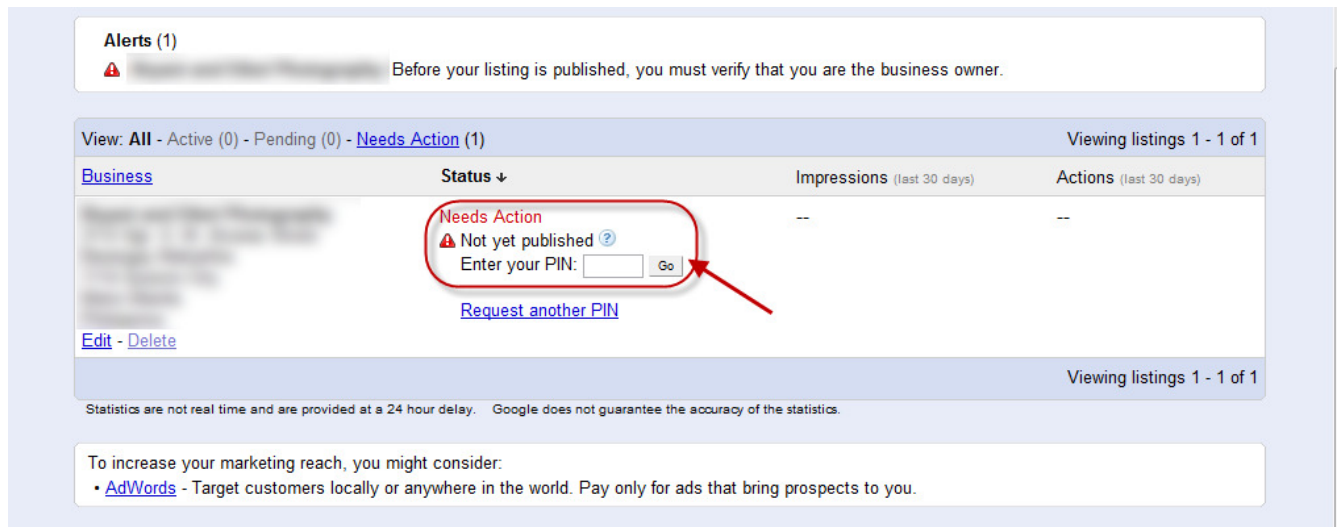
©2010 Google - [Terms of Use](#)

Alternate phone:
Mobile phone:
Email address:
Description:

Payment types:
Categories:

Click on the **Finish** button at the bottom of the page.

On your Google Places dashboard, enter the **PIN** sent to you by Google through your chosen validation method.



You should be presented with a note that tells you that your listing has been validated.



- ✓ **Thank you! We've confirmed your PIN and validated your listing.**
Your listing should appear on Google Maps within one day. We appreciate your patience.
- [Go to Google Places](#) (review, edit, and add business listings)
 - [Back to Google Maps](#)

The key here is to be as comprehensive as you can in filling out your business information. Give as much detail as possible, do not leave anything blank.

Is Your Business Already Listed?

If your business is already listed on Google Places, all you have to do is to click on the **Business owner?** link. Save for the fact that some information will already be filled out, the following processes will be the same as what has been outlined earlier (for creating a listing).



But what if someone has already claimed it?

Yes, it can happen.

Well, Google advises that you report your problem to them via their [Report a problem](#) link:

<http://www.google.com/support/places/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=176504>

and verify your business afterwards.

Google's Advice For Ranking Well

As you probably already know, the best way to ensure that Google doesn't ignore you (or worse, penalize you) is to stick by their rules and guidelines.

The following are from the **Google Places Help for business owners**.

Get started: Quality guidelines

<http://www.google.com/support/places/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=107528&rd=1>

Your Google Places Account

Ownership: Only business owners or authorized representatives may verify their business listings on Google Places.

Account Email Address: Use a shared business email account, if multiple users will be updating your business listing. If possible, use an email account under your business domain. For example, if your business website is www.google.com, a matching email address would be you@google.com.

Your Business Listing

Business Name: Represent your business exactly as it appears in the offline world.

- 1) Do not include marketing taglines in your business name.
- 2) Do not include phone numbers or URLs in the business name field, unless they are part of your business name.
- 3) Do not attempt to manipulate search results by adding extraneous keywords or a description of your business in the business name field.

Business Location: Use a precise, accurate address to describe your business location.

- Do not create listings at locations where the business does not physically exist. P.O. Boxes are not considered accurate physical locations. Listings submitted with P.O. Box addresses will be removed.

- Use the precise address for the business in place of broad city names or cross-streets.
- Do not create more than one listing for each business location, either in a single account or multiple accounts.
- Businesses that operate in a service area, as opposed to a single location, should not create a listing for every city they service. Businesses that operate in a service area should create one listing for the central office or location and designate service areas. Learn how to add service areas to your listing.
- Businesses with multiple specializations, such as law firms and doctors, should not create multiple listings to cover all of their specialties. You may create one listing per practitioner, and one listing for the office.
- Do not include information in address lines that does not pertain your business's physical location (e.g. URLs, keywords).

Website & Phone: Provide a phone number that connects to your individual business location as directly as possible, and provide one website that represents your individual business location.

- Use a local phone number instead of a call center number whenever possible.
- Do not provide phone numbers or URLs that redirect or “refer” users to landing pages or phone numbers other than those of the actual business.

Categories: Provide at least one category from the suggestions provided in the form as you type. Aim for categories that are specific, but brief.

- 1) Categories should say what your business is (e.g. Hospital), not on what it does (e.g. Vaccinations) or things it sells (e.g. Sony products or printer paper). This information can be added in your description or as custom attributes.
- 2) Categories should not contain location-based information (for example, Dog Walker Los Angeles is not permitted).
- 3) Only one category is permitted per entry field. Do not “stuff” entry fields with multiple categories.

Custom Attributes & Description: Use the description and custom attribute fields to include additional information about your listing.

Other Items of Note

Ineligible Business Models: Only businesses that make in-person contact with customers qualify for a Google Places listing.

- Businesses that are under construction or that have not yet opened to the public are not eligible for a listing on Google Places.
- Rental properties, such as vacation homes or vacant apartments, are not eligible for a listing on Google Places. Create a listing for the central office that processes the rentals, rather than the individual rental properties. If you'd like, you can then add your real estate properties to Google Maps so that they are available on our Real Estate layer.

Tips for your business listing: Help users find your business

<http://www.google.com/support/places/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=148047&rd=1>

1. Make sure your listing is complete and accurate.
 - Make sure your business location is entered correctly on the map so users can find you easily. You can drag the map marker to your exact business location.
 - List your authoritative and official business website on your Places listing, since Google uses information from your website to help improve search results.
 - Include images and videos to help your listing stand out.
 - Add information such as opening hours, payment types, and additional details to help users choose among search results.
 - To learn more about helping Google crawl and index your site, take a look at the [Search Engine Optimization Starter Guide](#).
 - Of course, be sure that your business name, physical address, and phone number(s) are correct.
2. Choose the most appropriate, specific categories for your business.

- Pick a category from the list of suggestions to help Google to show your business for the right searches (although you can always enter your own category if Google Places doesn't suggest one that fits your business).
- Don't be afraid to choose specific categories instead of broad ones. The important thing is that the categories are accurate and describe your business well. Google's search algorithm makes sure that users looking for "Book Stores" will see businesses in more specific categories like "Used Book Stores," "Comic Book Stores," and "Rare Book Stores" too.

3. Establish a strong, accurate presence on the web.

- Google improves search results by aggregating information about your business from all over the web. Make sure information about your business on third-party sites is accurate, and try to contact the respective site directly to correct any inaccurate information.
- Encourage customers to review or blog about your business. Google uses reviews and feedback to improve search results.

4. Become a Favorite Place on Google.

- We identify the most popular local businesses on Google Places as Favorite Places, based on how many Google users looked for additional info about the business. You might find a Favorite Places sticker from us displayed at these businesses. Find out more about Favorite Places, and [how to become one](#).

Website Ranking Factors

If you still don't have a website, it's time to seriously consider having one created. What easier way to let Google know that you're running a real business other than to have a website for your business?

In addition to having a website and linking to it from your Place Page, you have to make sure that the information found on your Google Places listing is also found on your web site and vice versa. Additionally, it's also important that your business information is easily found and read on your site.

Keeping it Real

By the way, by "easily found and read" I mean both by humans and bots/crawlers. Remember that Google (and the other search engines) uses bots (software programs) to crawl the Web and look for and gather information. So, make sure that all of the important/relevant information about your business you put on your site is written in "real text". Save the images/graphics/animations for photos and other things. For text, use REAL text.

Address

Not only should your address be written in real text, but it will also be beneficial to you if you'd put your business address on every page of your site (like in the footer).

Microformatting

Microformatting allows software (such as search engine crawlers) to process information found on a website that is intended for end-users (e.g., contact information, geographic coordinates, calendar events, and the like) automatically.

An example of a microformat is the hCard. It's actually quite easy to use (provided that you have some knowledge in HTML).

Here's an example of how hCard microformatting is done. For example, if your telephone number appears on your page, all you have to do is to enclose it with the following tag:

```
<div class="tel">555-555-5555</div>
```

Another way of generating an hCard microformat for your site is to go to [Microformats.org](http://microformats.org/code/hcard/creator) and use their hCard creator tool (which can be found at <http://microformats.org/code/hcard/creator>).

hCard Creator

[hCard-o-matic](#)

given name	<input type="text"/>
middle name	<input type="text"/>
family name	<input type="text"/>
organization	<input type="text"/>
street	<input type="text"/>
city	<input type="text"/>
state/province	<input type="text"/>
postal code	<input type="text"/>
country name	<input type="text"/>
phone	<input type="text"/>
email	<input type="text"/>
url	<input type="text"/>
photo url	<input type="text"/>
AIM screenname	<input type="text"/>
YIM screenname	<input type="text"/>
Jabber screenname	<input type="text"/>
tags (comma separated)	<input type="text"/>

code

```
<div id="" class="vcard">
  <span class="fn n">
    <span class="given-name"></span>
    <span class="additional-name"></span>
    <span class="family-name"></span>
  </span>
  <p style="font-size:smaller;">This <a
href="http://microformats.org/wiki/hcard">hCard</a> created
with the <a
href="http://microformats.org/code/hcard/creator">hCard
creator</a>.</p>
</div>
```

preview

This [hCard](#) created with the [hCard creator](#).

KML/Geo Sitemaps

If this is your first time to hear about it, the KML file is what Google Earth, Google Maps, and various other mapping programs use to store map information.

KML files are very complex, containing coordinates and a whole bunch of other numbers. Just take a look at the sample below:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<kml xmlns="http://www.opengis.net/kml/2.2">
  <Placemark>
    <name>The Pentagon</name>
    <Polygon>
      <extrude>1</extrude>
      <altitudeMode>relativeToGround</altitudeMode>
      <outerBoundaryIs>
        <LinearRing>
          <coordinates>
            -77.05788457660967,38.87253259892824,100
            -77.05465973756702,38.87291016281703,100
            -77.05315536854791,38.87053267794386,100
            -77.05552622493516,38.868757801256,100
            -77.05844056290393,38.86996206506943,100
            -77.05788457660967,38.87253259892824,100
          </coordinates>
        </LinearRing>
      </outerBoundaryIs>
      <innerBoundaryIs>
        <LinearRing>
          <coordinates>
            -77.05668055019126,38.87154239798456,100
            -77.05542625960818,38.87167890344077,100
            -77.05485125901024,38.87076535397792,100
            -77.05577677433152,38.87008686581446,100
            -77.05691162017543,38.87054446963351,100
            -77.05668055019126,38.87154239798456,100
          </coordinates>
        </LinearRing>
      </innerBoundaryIs>
    </Polygon>
  </Placemark>
</kml>
```

The good news is there's a site/service that can and will generate one for you for free. You can find it at <http://www.geositemapgenerator.com/>



This site will generate both the KML and XML files you'll need to make it work.

The KML file goes in your site's directory (on your web server) and the XML file is submitted to Google via Google Webmaster Tools (<http://www.google.com/webmasters/>).

Offsite Ranking Factors

Citations and Reviews

A citation is simply a listing for your business on another site (including the business name, phone number and address). Yes, it's very much like link building, except that instead going around looking for sites where you can drop your link, you need to only look for sites that allow you to list your business with the address and phone number. This also includes sites that allow users to submit a review of your product or service.

The bottom line is that the more citations and reviews you have, the better your Google Places listing will rank.

Link Building

If you don't know it yet, link building is one of the most important factors in SEO, whether local or global. This is because in the eyes of search engines, the more in-bound links that a site has, the more trustworthy it is. And the more trustworthy a site is, the higher it is ranked in the SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages).

Link building should be done with a significant amount of care, though.

The thing with link building is that quality trumps quantity. And when it comes to links, quality is tied to where the in-bound links are located.

The concept is actually very simple. If an inbound link is coming from a "bad/questionable" (or poor quality) site, that link is considered as a "poor/low" quality link. On the other hand, if a link is on a good/reputable site, that link is considered as a "good/high" quality link.

Among the best places to drop your links (in addition to those already mentioned earlier) are at directories. I've provided samples of these towards the end of this report.

Google Places SEO - Create A Great Listing For Your Business

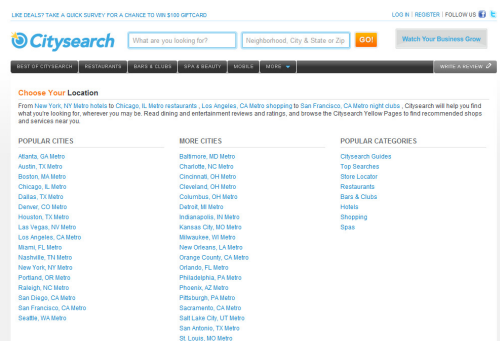
Social media profiles (like those on social bookmarking sites, video sharing sites, social networking sites, microblogging sites, etc.) are also a good place to "drop" your links.

Here are a variety of places that you can build both citations and links:

Online Yellow Pages and Review Sites

CitySearch.com

URL: <http://www.citysearch.com>



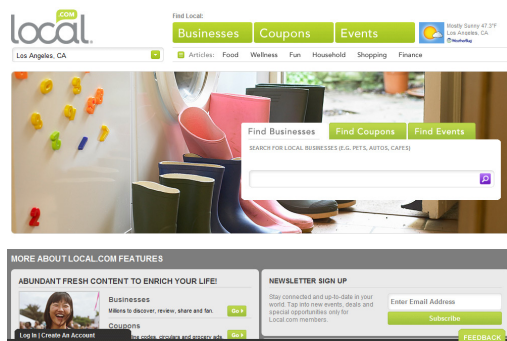
SuperMedia

URL: <http://www.supermedia.com/>



Local.com

URL: <http://www.local.com/>



ZoomInfo

URL: <http://www.zoominfo.com/>



Feeder Directories

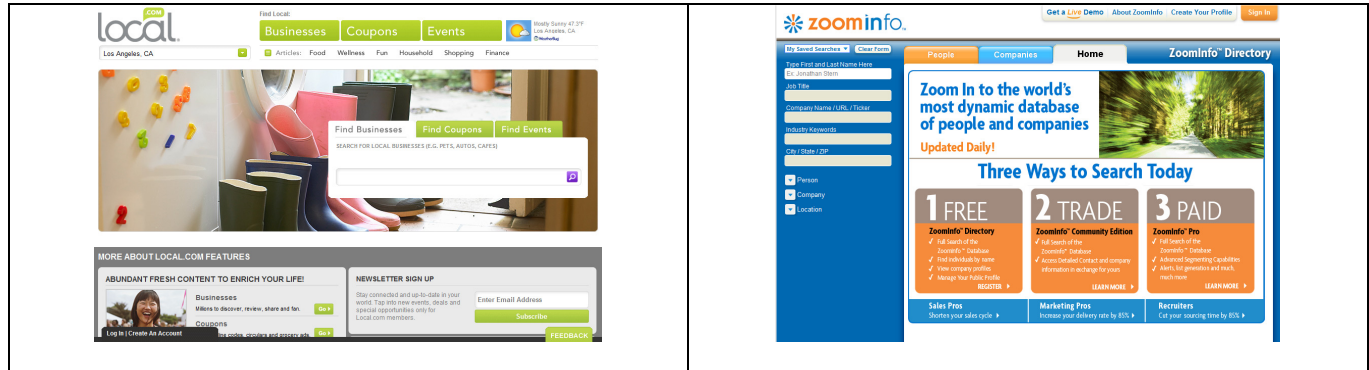
infoUSA.com

URL: <http://www.infousa.com/>

Data by Acxiom

URL: <http://www.databyacxiom.com/>

Google Places SEO - Create A Great Listing For Your Business



Localeze

URL: <http://www.localeze.com/>



Free Web Directories

DMOZ

URL: <http://www.dmoz.org/>



So Much

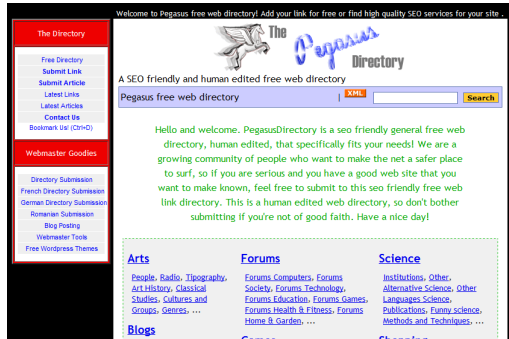
URL: <http://www.somuch.com/>



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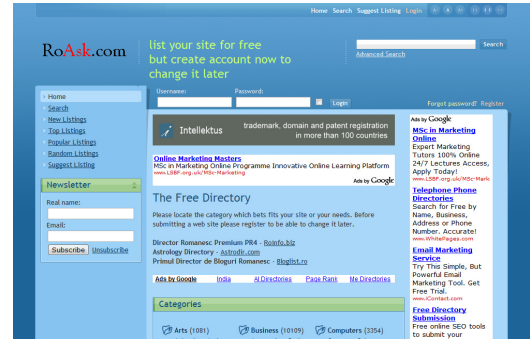
Pegasus Directory

URL: <http://www.pegasusdirectory.com/>



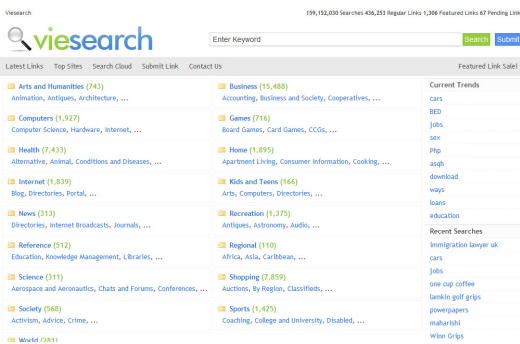
RoAsk

URL: <http://www.roask.com/>



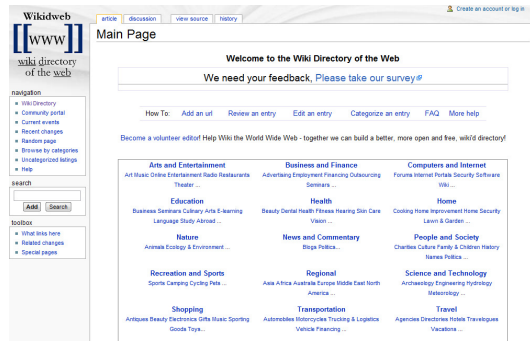
viesearch

URL: <http://viesearch.com/>



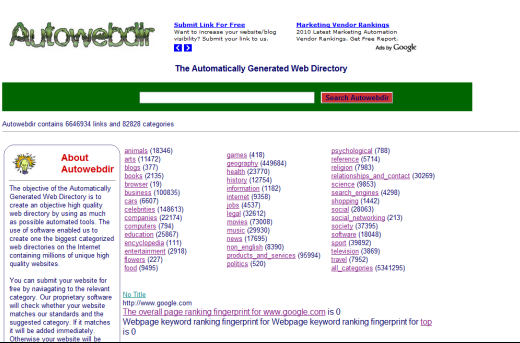
Wikidweb

URL: <http://www.wikidweb.com/>



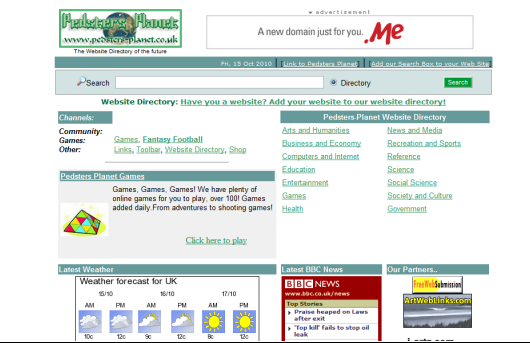
Autoweбdir

URL: <http://www.autoweбdir.com/>



Pedster's Planet

URL: <http://www.pedsters-planet.co.uk/>



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Net Insert

URL: <http://www.netinsert.com/>



NetInsert is the first true web 2.0 directory where the users organize the web using tags. You are welcome to add your web site and be a part of the next step in Internet search services (free web url submission). [Tell me more...](#)

[New](#) [New](#) [Updated](#) [Help](#) [Add URL](#)

News! A [square tag] is now supported for simplified indexing of pages such as blogs, wikis, community pages, etc. ([more...](#))

[Advanced search](#)

Arts & Humanities

[Literature](#), [Photography](#), [Architecture](#), ...

Business

[Banking](#), [Industries](#), [Trade](#), ...

Information

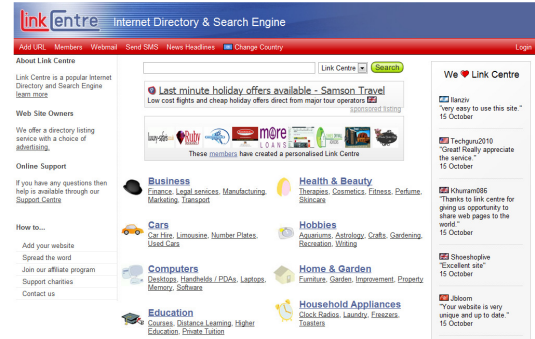
[Libraries](#), [Dictionaries](#), [Maps](#), ...

News & Media

[Newspapers](#), [Weather](#), [Television](#), ...

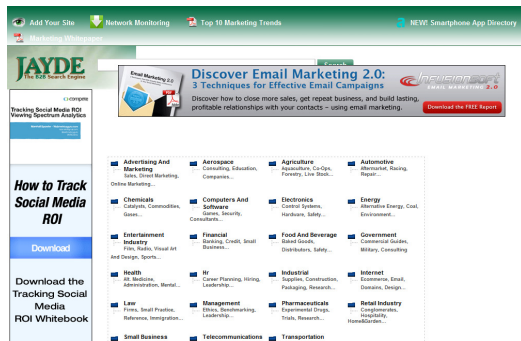
Link Centre

URL: <http://linkcentre.com/>



Jayde

URL: <http://www.jayde.com/main.html>



Exact Seek

URL: <http://www.exactseek.com/>



Conclusion

As you can see, creating a Google Places listing isn't rocket science but it does take a fair amount of work. The more complex bit comes when you are trying to increase your Place Page ranking.

While having a Google Places listing is imperative, it won't do you much good if it can't be found for terms (aka keyword phrases) relevant to your business!

We specialize in helping business owners, like you, build a strong and meaningful presence on the web. We are experts in optimizing both websites and Google Places listings and can help you get new business as a direct result.

If you'd like to see how we can help, give us a call at: (425) 760-5041 or visit: <http://www.PowerfulMarketing.info/blog/contact/> and complete our online form to request more information.

We look forward to talking with you and will do our best to help you increase your web exposure, get new business and outperform your competitors!

About The Author



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