

# SEO - Search Newsletter

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HERE IS HOW TO DOMINATE YOUR LOCAL SEARCH IN 2017



presented by



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## 1

## PROXIMITY HAS EMERGED AS THE NEW KING OF THE LOCAL SEARCH

A recent [research](#) by Moz has revealed that the proximity is the new king of the local search.

If you will search for a local business i.e dry cleaners using a mobile device in a small city, you are probably going see that all the dry cleaners are listed out on the map. However, in a bigger city, this whole scenario will change drastically. If you will search for a local business, you will only be able to see few options. For example, if you will search for “Restaurants”, you will only see 6-7 restaurants on the map. So how is Google determining which business to show? Is it about the number of links? mobile friendliness? positive reviews or a measurable presence in the local directories?

A thorough research revealed that it is just about one thing: “Proximity”. Only those businesses appear on the map that is closest to the searcher’s physical location. Our take on this research is that these results suck and downgrades the quality of local results. Putting high emphasis on proximity is a poor way to show results. I don’t care if a plumber is close to me. I am looking to hire a plumber that’s reputable, prominent in my city, and does good work. The same applies for every business category I can think of.

People are looking for the best businesses, not the closest businesses. If this is the new normal in Google’s local results, I expect that people will start turning to other sites like Yelp, TripAdvisor, etc. when searching for businesses.

	Dollarwise Plumbing	Fast Service	Mayfair Plumbing
<b>Rank</b>	1	2	3
<b>Claimed?</b>	No	No	No
<b>Content Quality</b>	No website	Decent	No website
<b>Linking Domains</b>	0	41	0
<b>Citations</b>	58	19	18
<b>Reviews</b>	0	0	0
<b>Proximity</b>	600m	800m	2100m

# 2

## GOOGLE WILL NO LONGER CONSIDER VIRTUAL OFFICE SPACE AS A SERVICE AREA BUSINESSES

Virtual office solutions are perfect for all business who don't want to spend an awful lot of money for hiring employees & renting physical office space. However, it's not going down well with Google.

From now on, Google will not consider virtual office space as your service area businesses as per their [updated Google My Business guidelines](#). Your virtual office must be staffed during the business hours. They have recently updated the Google my business guidelines and made it clear that the virtual offices are causing a lot of confusion and that's why they are compelled to take this step.

So unless a team is there to receive the customers during business hours, Google will not consider it as the Service-area businesses.

### **Here's the new section that has been added:**

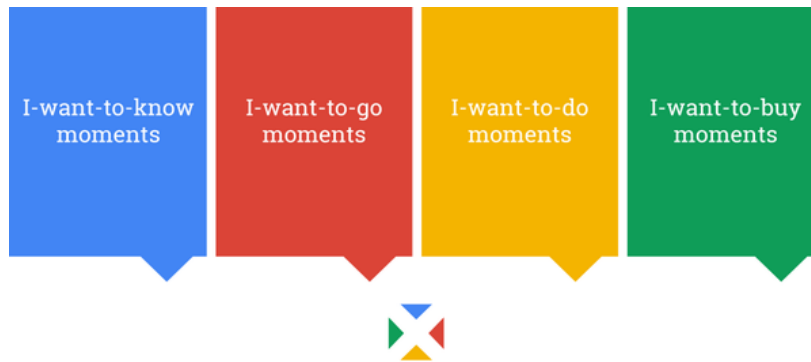
*Service-area businesses — businesses that serve customers at their locations — should have one page for the central office or location and designate a service area from that point. Service-area businesses can't list a "virtual" office unless that office is staffed during business hours.*

*Some businesses, like pizzerias that have both have restaurant seating and deliver pizza to customers, are hybrid service-area businesses. These businesses can show their storefront address and designate a service area in Google My Business. If you serve customers at your address and want to set a service area, your business location should be staffed by your team and able to receive customers during its stated hours.*

## 3

## NOW IS THE TIME TO EMBRACE MICRO-MOMENTS!

Google is taking strides towards the betterment of location & mobile marketing. Be it the upcoming Mobile first index or the launch of features that are focused on mobile users, Google is encouraging the “Near Me” searches to the maximum. People who search for “Service+ near me” tend to make decisions faster as they are not only looking for the information but they are about to make a decision as well. For instance: When people search “Restaurants near me” it is most likely that they will go there and grab something



SOURCE: "4 New Moments Every Marketer Should Know", June 2015. [ThinkwithGoogle.com](http://ThinkwithGoogle.com)

to satisfy their hunger. This micro-moment can be your moment to rise & shine.

### Micro-Moments

The intent-rich moments when decisions are made and preferences shape are defined as “Micro-Moments” by Google. When people are actively looking to learn something, buy something or watch something, their expectations are higher than ever & they are willing to make a decision in a fraction of the second.

So in these moments, people expect from businesses to deliver exactly what they are looking for, instantly! For example, if someone is willing to watch a movie in next 1 hour, they will require information as soon as possible. And the site that will succeed in providing instant result will reap mammoth benefits.

Google has published a guidebook that sheds light on this new consumer behavior and how brands can boost their sales by focusing on the shift to mobile & “near me” searches.

They recently conducted a research & below were the findings:

- 69% people searched for travel ideas during spare moments like while traveling through a bus or standing in line. But when it came to bookings, they opted for an entirely separate channel.
- A whopping 91% people look up for information using their phones while in the middle of a task.
- 82 % users decide what to buy using their phones while standing in a shop.

I want to go moments, I want to know moments, I want to do moments, and I want to buy moments happen all the time and these micro-moments can change a consumer's decision. So if you provide relevant results on those micro-moments, you can boost your sales.

### **Autocompleting “Near me”**

Google is not only encouraging but also creating Micro-moments. We recently tested non-branded keywords such as lawyers, dental clinics, restaurants & more on both mobile & PC. We noticed that almost 90% of times Google autocompleted it with “near me”.

Although, it makes a lot of sense since when people are looking for banks, service centers or Chinese food, they are willing to find nearest possible options. So encouraging the “Near me” searches is good from every aspect as it's a win-win for all the three parties, Google, businesses & consumers.

### **Takeaway**

Google has made it clear that they will continue the Mobile-first approach and those who will adopt it can expect fruitful results. But adhering to the mobile first approach is not enough and you must keep an eye on the latest trends as well.



# 4

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN DOMINATE LOCAL SEARCH IN 2017

The only thing constant in the world of SEO is change. To stay on the top, we need to follow the current trends and optimize our sites so we can reap maximum benefits. Unlike other things, SEO is not one size fits all, it should be bespoke, then only it will work.

Here are the tips that you can follow to get on the top of the search results:

### 1. Title Tag & Meta Description

The most noticeable element on the search engine result page is Title Tag. Title tags are so basic that they often get ignored despite the fact that the first thing a user notices about your website is the title tag. Experts say that Title tags are the 2nd most vital on-page factor for SEO, after content. So here are some valuable tips to optimize your title tag:

- Auto generated title tags are your enemy i.e. Wordpress could create your title tag, but sticking to it will cost you visitors. So first analyze that what could possibly be the best title tag that sums up your whole content in an appealing way.
- Don't try to stuff your titles with keywords, use a keyword which is also describing the title.
- Keep your title tag in the front, it's helpful for both search engines and users.
- Your title tag should guide the user, so make sure that you're making title tags for humans.
- Also, the meta description gives you 160-200 characters to play with, so make sure you are making full use of it.
- Be as creative and descriptive as possible. Consider it like your little ad space.

### 2. Online Directories and Citations

Local search is becoming more fruitful as compared to big scale search. Since you are a local small business owner, you know the specific requirements of the local audience and that's where you can beat your competitors. Nowadays, being the best bakery shop in California is much better than being an OK bakery shop on a national level.

### 3. Google My Business

Google My Business (GMB) is also a directory, but it's so big and significant that it deserve its own section! We think you might already have a GMB account as of now, but if you don't, do it NOW! It's highly likely that your business information will be on Google already, so all you have to do is to claim your GMB page. Don't worry, Google will not charge a single penny.

In order to claim your GMB, you will have to go through the verification process. Google will send a postcard with a PIN to your physical location. You can then use that pin to verify your business and claim the GMB account. You should also claim Bing places for business because many people use Bing as well and you should not miss any opportunity.

#### 4. Reviews matter.. A LOT!

It's a no brainer that Reviews play more important role than ever.

Almost everybody performs local search before going to any shop so that they can make a well-informed decision. They not only go through the website but also check out reviews about the business on different platforms. They are taking advice from others and also sharing their own personal experience with their friends, family members, and strangers as well using sites like Yelp. Now it's important than ever that you focus on the reviews that your business is receiving. Any negative review will negatively impact your business in both short and long run. So if you are looking forward to gaining more and more customers than focus on getting positive reviews.

Often times, the happy customers hardly give reviews but the one who disliked your product or service will surely pour out their hate on as many platforms as possible. You can't totally avoid bad reviews, but you can do your bit to ensure that only positive reviews get highlighted.

You might be wondering how you can do that, here's how:

The happy customers are not bothered about giving any reviews but if you will encourage them to do so, they will surely make the efforts. So after anyone has completed any transaction, direct them to your review page (If you have any) or after a while send the review page links to their email. Most of the times they will be more than happy to review your business. Now after they are done, promote this on Facebook and twitter and other social media platforms.

Another way to get positive reviews is using ur review widget which is placed on the website and makes sure that the negative reviews are filtered out. Not only that, it also asks your happy customers to post the reviews on Google and Yelp thus improving your brand presence. For more information on the review widget, please connect with us.

#### 5. Use Structured Data Markup

Despite the sheer importance of Structured data markup, only 31.3% of websites are using it. Structured data markup provides more information about your business & products/ service to the search engines. Thus it helps you stand out from the crowd.

You can add schema markup to your site's code and help the Google bots to determine what your site content is about. Which will ultimately benefit you!





## 5

## GOOGLE HAS REPLACED "CONVERTED CLICKS" WITH "CONVERSIONS"

The converted clicks were the old metric that counted the number of clicks that lead to one or more conversions. From last 15 years, advertisers were using this metric to track the success of their ads.

Google has [decided](#) to replace the "Converted clicks" with "conversion" metric as the later is more sophisticated and provide greater insight. The conversion metric has been developed to provide advertisers with accurate data so that they can plan things accordingly. Earlier the converted clicks showed very little data, but the conversion metric not only shows the direct purchases but also shows data about the indirect purchases.

Below is the infographics that will help you understand it better!

The converted clicks metric was unable to track which goal a user completed when an advertisers wanted to track multiple goals, however "conversions" can easily do that. Conversions not only show you actions taken by users online but also supports store visits and cross-device conversions.

## TAKE CONTROL OF HOW YOU COUNT CONVERSIONS

Berkeley T-shirts wants to count two different kinds of conversions in AdWords: sales and leads. They would like to count **every sale** driven by AdWords and **unique leads** like a download of one of their many catalogs.



# 6

## SHARE SEVERAL PICTURES AND VIDEOS IN ONE POST WITH INSTAGRAM'S NEW UPDATE

Instagram, has recently launched a new [update](#) which will allow its users to post several images and videos of a particular occasion in a single post. So, now you can share all your best pictures and videos of the occasion in a single post, like an album and make it

The best thing about the update is that now you don't have to spend time in selecting your best picture of the event to upload and share your happy moments with others. Now, you can combine up to 10 pictures and videos in one post and see them all one by one.

With is new update you can share the pictures of the entire celebration step by step as per the flow of the event. You can even share pictures of your recipes or craft work you

While uploading the post, you can see a new icon on the screen from where you can select several picture and videos. You can select the pictures as per your wish the way you want them to be lined up, you can also change the order, by tapping on the post and hold to edit it. Either, you can apply a filter to the entire post at once or edit it one by one. Your post will display on your profile with a single caption and a little icon of the first picture or video of your post.

Like always Instagram has made your sharing experience wonderful and memorable, this new update will make your experience more pleasant.

You can find this new update as a part of Instagram version 10.9 for [iOS](#) in the Apple App



Thanks for reading. The world of search is contumely evolving. Each newsletter is deigned to keep you informed and up to date!

- KathleenHood

Do you want to dominate the search engines?  
We Can Help

Visit <http://kathleenhood.com/>  
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