

Essential Tips to Transform Your Business Online



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CHAPTER ONE

Why is Your Online Reputation Important?

As a business owner, it's important to understand how consumers are researching and finding you. Knowing how to manage your online reputation through online reviews is an easy way to receive feedback, improve your business, and prove that your business really delivers on its promise to the community.

Managing your online reputation means facilitating and monitoring what people are saying about your business online. While you may think that there isn't much you can do to control what people say about your business online, there are steps that you can take to get involved and to use the conversation to your advantage.

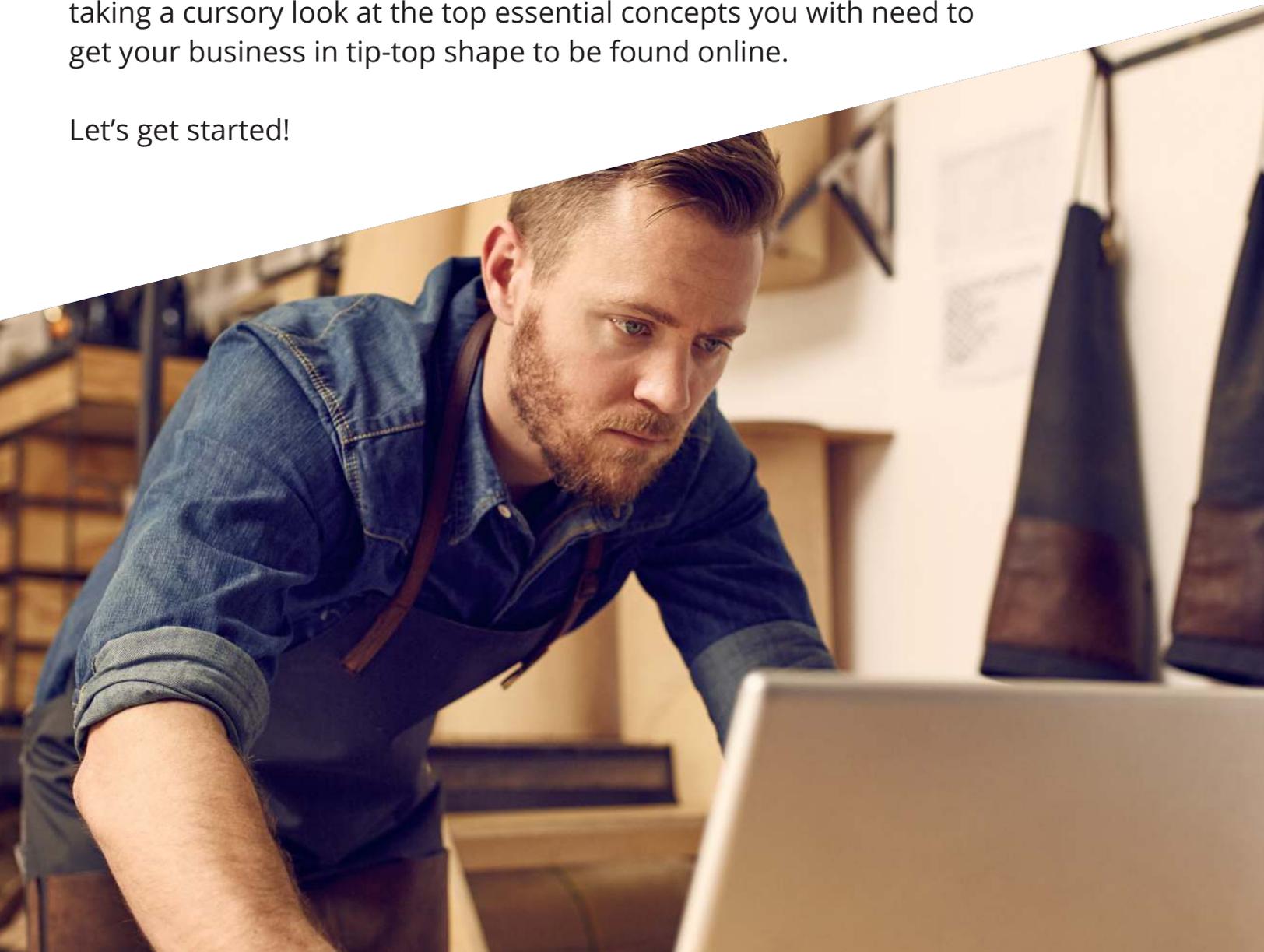
Do you know how customers are finding and evaluating local businesses today?

As a business owner, it is crucial to understand what customers are saying about your business. Knowing how to communicate with and respond to your customers will directly affect your businesses' trust and credibility.

Your existing customers provide the most valuable referrals and can be your best (and least expensive) marketers. The majority of buyers rely on reviews to choose a local business, so it's critical to ensure that your happy customers are sharing their experiences on the most popular review platforms: Google and Facebook. As a rule, the more customers who leave positive reviews for your business online, the more likely you'll attract new customers.

Today, how your business looks online to modern consumers matters more than ever before. Your online reputation is now an essential part of the overall health of your business. The more you focus on your reputation, the more you grow your customer base, the more your business will thrive. In this ebook, we will be taking a cursory look at the top essential concepts you with need to get your business in tip-top shape to be found online.

Let's get started!





CHAPTER TWO

Popular Search Engines and How Consumers Search Online

Whether or not you know what a search engine is, it's likely that you use one every day. A search engine is a tool – like Google, Yahoo!, or Bing – that searches the internet for specific search terms, or “keywords,” and suggests pages relevant to your search. So, for example, if you search for the keywords “pet food” on Google, you'll find a list of web pages that Google thinks are most helpful to you.

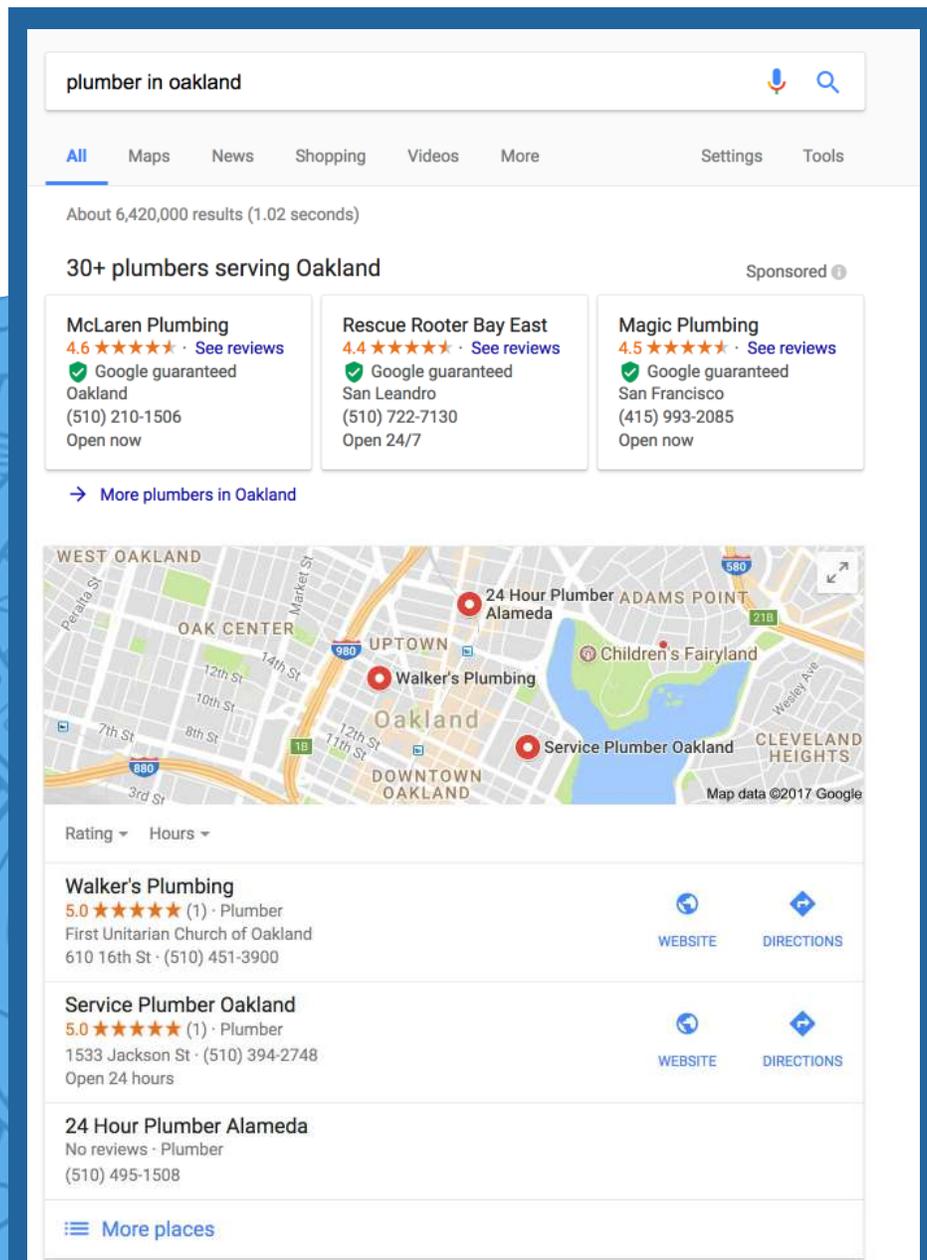
Which search engines are used most frequently? The most common search engines are Google, Bing, and Yahoo. Google is the most popular search engine, claiming 80% of all online searches. Since people are gravitating towards Google to find local businesses,

Do you know what the most popular search engines are?

it's imperative as a business owner to prioritize your presence on Google.

Now that we understand where consumers search (Google), let's talk about how they're searching and what they see first. When you visit Google and type in "Mechanic, San Francisco CA," what comes up? You'll see Google's own products, of course: Google Ads, Google Maps, and Google My Business listings! First, you might see Google AdWords listings – these are paid advertisements marked with the green "ad" icon. Then, you'll see the top three businesses ranked by Google just below the local map.

Local business owners should appear prominently in Google Maps results in order to be found by local consumers. The biggest factor to achieving this goal is to be present and active on Google My Business. If you don't have a Google My Business Account and verified listing, sign up for one today, and start getting found!



Google Map Results

Paid Google Advertisement

Top Ranking Businesses



CHAPTER THREE

The Power of Reviews: Word of Mouth Has Moved Online

A business with the most engaged customers is the most likely to win in the modern economy. As such, every business should be following up with customers to solicit online feedback.

Modern consumers tend to favor reviews over ads. Nowadays, consumers can distinguish user-generated content from advertisements. Moreover, 84% of people trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation.

The Google 3-Pack: Who Would You Choose?

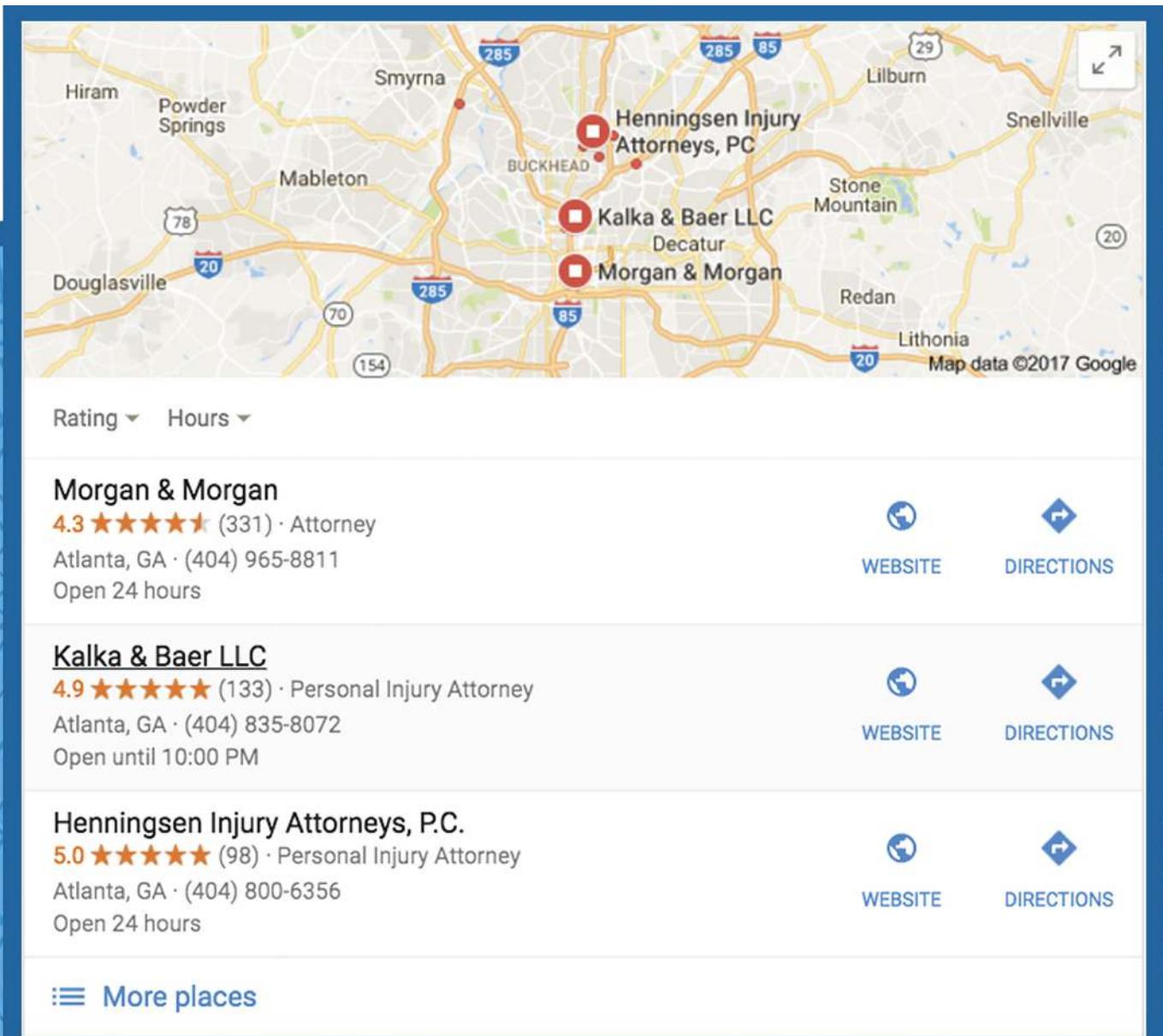
When a consumer searches for a “personal injury

Do you know how to get people talking about your business?

attorney in Atlanta, GA” the following results appear (see next slide). Consumers consider relevance, the number of reviews and a business’s rating. In this case, the consumer would most likely kick-off their research with Kalka & Baer, LLC because they specify that they are personal injury attorneys, and have 133 reviews with a rating of 4.9.

The quality and frequency of your reviews determine where your business ranks in category searches in your area. Reviews demonstrate that the business owner is proactive and focused on the customer experience.

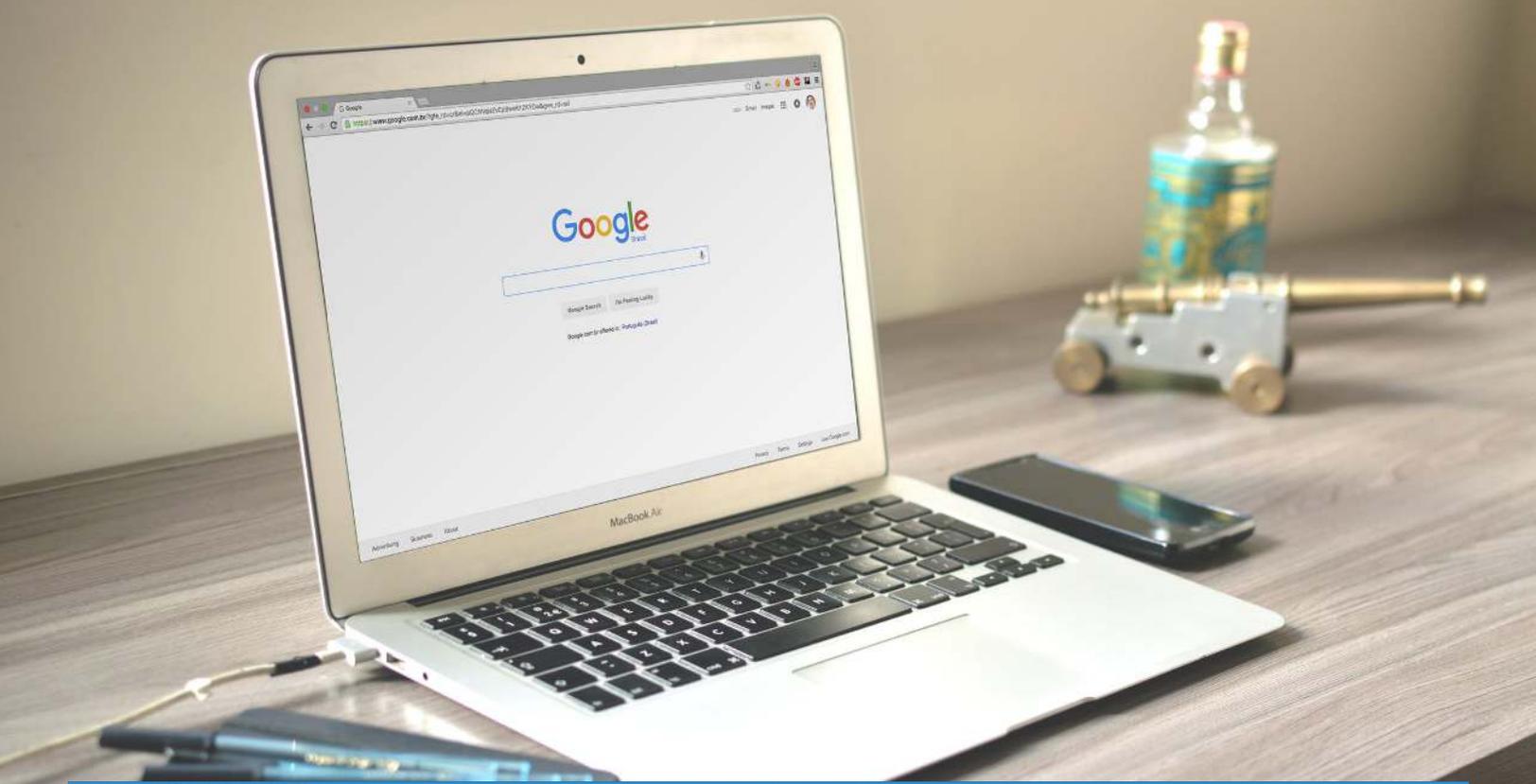
If you don’t appear in category searches in your area, you’ll rarely be the first business a consumer calls. With busy lifestyles, and the availability of information on the internet, consumer word-of-mouth has moved online.



Rating ▾ Hours ▾

Morgan & Morgan 4.3 ★★★★★ (331) · Attorney Atlanta, GA · (404) 965-8811 Open 24 hours	 WEBSITE	 DIRECTIONS
Kalka & Baer LLC 4.9 ★★★★★ (133) · Personal Injury Attorney Atlanta, GA · (404) 835-8072 Open until 10:00 PM	 WEBSITE	 DIRECTIONS
Henningsen Injury Attorneys, P.C. 5.0 ★★★★★ (98) · Personal Injury Attorney Atlanta, GA · (404) 800-6356 Open 24 hours	 WEBSITE	 DIRECTIONS

 More places



CHAPTER FOUR

Review Sites That Matter: Google and Facebook

Not all online reviews carry equal weight. Remember the last time you researched businesses reviews on the Yellow Pages? Probably not. That's because certain review platforms hold more value for customers and search engines. That being said, let's talk about the value each type of review provides for your business.

Do you know what the most popular review sites are?

Google

Google is the top search engine in the world. 80%+ of consumers use Google as their primary search engine. At the top of every Google search, Google shows their reviews above reviews from all other platforms. For that reason, Google is essentially in charge of how your

business ranks online. That means you should prioritize getting reviews on their platform. Only when you are getting consistent, positive feedback on Google, should you focus on other review platforms.

Moreover, the majority of Americans have Google accounts. It's easy for them to leave you a review there, since they don't need to create an account and are often logged in. Google reviews can be left by anyone who has any sort of Google/Alphabet account including Gmail, Youtube, or Google Maps.

Facebook

Nearly 80% of all internet users use Facebook. That beats out all other social media platforms by a longshot. Moreover, Facebook search is becoming an important feature that is getting a lot of attention. In 2010, Facebook saw 2 billion searches per day -- compared to Google's 5.5 billion. For now, the industry is betting on the power of Facebook for small businesses. Because Facebook has so much data on small businesses, we expect to see a search feature in the future where consumers can find "best" businesses, just as they do on Google.

Conclusion

In conclusion -- Google and Facebook are the best review platforms for your business. They're free, widely-used, and SEO-friendly!



SEO



CHAPTER FIVE

Getting Found Online: The SEO Essentials

You've likely heard of SEO, but you might not have a great grasp of what it is, or why you should care about it. Well, we hate to give you homework, but SEO is something that you should have a basic understanding of as a business owner.

Do you know how to optimize your online presence?

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization. Simply put, SEO is what helps your business stand out online and determines how easily potential customers can find you on search engines. There are a wide variety of factors that contribute to local SEO, but as a business owner, you only have so much time. We'll make it easy and highlight a few ways to enhance local, organic (un-paid) SEO.

Build a Website

Your website is the cornerstone of your local business. When search engines see the same site listed on various platforms (like Google and Facebook), that's how they identify your business across the internet. Your site connects the dots.

Be Present on Google

Make sure you have a Google My Business page, and verify that your business' Name, Address, Phone Number & website are correct.

Be Active on Google

Google needs to see that you're still active in order to rank your business, so make sure that you're asking your customers for reviews on your Google My Business listing (not just other review platforms).

Be Consistent

Make sure your Name, Address & Phone Number (NAP) are consistent on all of your existing pages (Your Website, Google, Facebook, Yellow Pages etc.) There are paid tools that can help you identify and fix listing variation, such as Moz Local.

Update Your Website

Whether it's writing blog posts, sharing industry articles, creating how-to guides, or posting YouTube videos, keep posting fresh content to your website. The same way Google wants to see you active on their pages, they also want to see that you're active on your own website.

Prioritize Reviews

Ask for reviews on Google first, then Facebook. Remember that, for the most part, Google is in charge of ranking your business online. Use that piece of knowledge to your advantage, and always prioritize your Google page when asking for reviews. These are all things you can do yourself to effectively position your business for success.

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