Article Side
Los Angeles SEO by Michel John

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As more people are starting to find out, local SEO is taking over the world of search engines: over 20 percent of all Google searches are for a local business. More important, that number doubles when users are searching with mobile devices. This trend is showing itself in SERPs. Gone are the days of merely receiving 10 organic listings. Now, SERPs are infiltrated by images, videos and other media. But most important, local listings are now more than ever making their way into SERPs.

Newly-captured data for Google searches show that users are tending to use Google Places listings over organic listings. Just look at the heat map below:

It is obvious that local businesses need to get involved in Google Places in order to survive and thrive online. But Google does not make this terribly easy. The first step is to launch a Google Places page. You cannot get ranked in local listings without one. The next step is getting citations, which are essentially what links are for organic listings. To this, the more locations your business information is listed, the better off you are for search engines to find your business and place you in their local rankings. So, how do you get these citations, you ask?

1) Join the Aggregators

Search engines are not the only means to find local businesses. There are also tons of local directories that people use. It'd be a good idea to set up a page on each. It will not only help your local SEO, but it will also establish multiple new ways for people to find you. Here are some of the bigger names that you'd do well to get involved with: Superpages, Yelp, Yellow Pages, Angie's List, City Search, Urban Spoon, Open Table, Trip Advisor, Merchant Circle, Yahoo! Local, Dex Knows, Express Update USA, Judy's Book, Kudzo, Yellow Bot, Insider Pages, Localeze, Shop City.

2) Search for Your Competitors

You know the old saying: keep your friends close and your enemies closer. Well, that's the case with local SEO. You should definitely search for your competitors to see what they're doing. For local SEO, you're trying to see where they're listed.

3) Social Media and Blogs

With social cues becoming a huge factor in determining rankings, you should have your complete contact information on each of your social networks, i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, etc.

As well, local bloggers usually have a local businesses page that lists places in the area. Searching with your city name + blog is a good place to start. You can narrow this field down by adding your industry: city name + food blogs. Also, be sure to check out blogs.com.

4) Local Directories and Newspapers

Remember newspapers? They still exist. In fact, some people even use them instead of search engines. Thus, if you're using local SEO, these are resources you must tap. If you are hosting an event or something of that nature, let your local paper know so they can list it.

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