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Local Seo With Google Plus

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INTRODUCTION

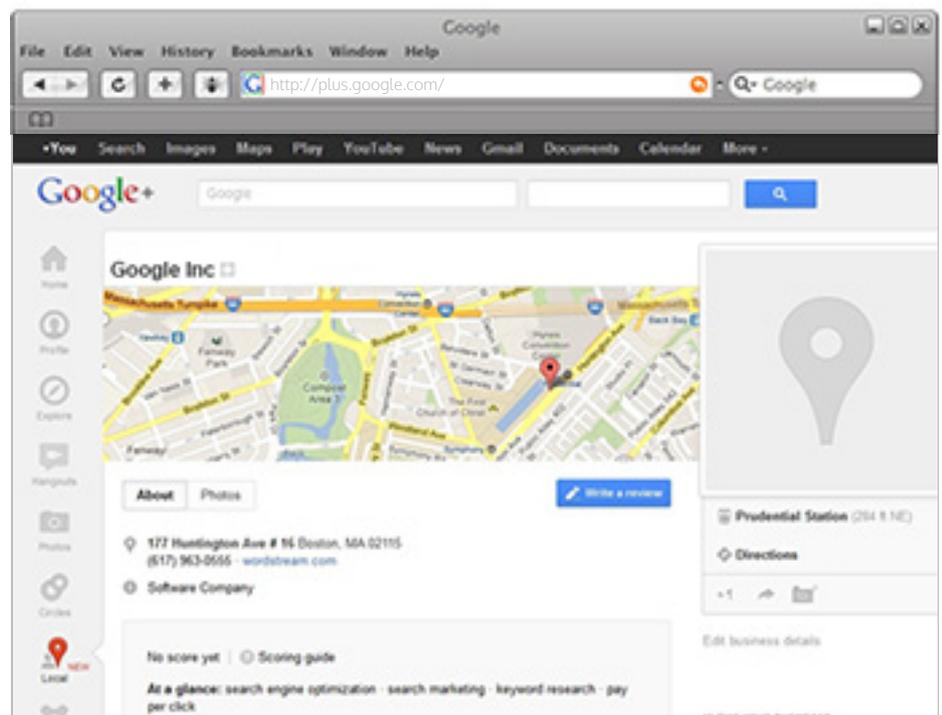
Why Google+ Local

Google+ could be the most happening social network in next couple of years. Though Facebook has been achieving near total penetration in most countries, it is Google+ that is already making waves for businesses. It is vital therefore for businesses to have a significant presence in Google+ Local.

What Google+ Local Is All about

Google+ Local is performing the functions of Google Places. It serves basically the same purpose – it is a free directory of businesses and appears on top of the search results. If your business is on Google+ Local it will be shown on a map and also in the list that appears on top of the search listings when users search with relevant terms.

Google acquires data from many certified sources to determine the businesses that should be listed in Local.



It is important for your business to appear in these sources from which Google draws the data. The more your business appears, the better it is for your Google+ Local performance and more are your chances of attracting the attention of your local customers.

Google+ and Local SEO

Google+ and local SEO are made for each other. Your presence in Google+ massively boosts your local SEO chances. The importance of Google+ Local listings is such that even if your website may not be performing well in the search rankings, or even if you don't have a website at all, your visibility in the local listings can get you the customers and returns on investment you are looking for. Your business becomes conspicuous to the kind of customers within the geographical region you are targeting. It also gives you the edge over other competing businesses within that geographical area.

Read on to get yourself some really vital tips on securing the vital edge in local SEO with Google Plus.



CLAIM GOOGLE+ LOCAL LISTING

It is important to go for a claimed Google Places (now Google+ Local) listing. As you know, a Google+ Local presence can immensely help build your ranking in local SEO while improving visibility in the Google SERPs.

Claimed Google+ Local business listing is a great way to get the traffic coming to your website from the search engine consistently. It offers the following advantages:

Ensures accuracy of the information Google has about your business

Provides greater visibility on the search engines as well as the local searches

Gets your website linked to your listing on Google Maps

Provides potential customers with navigation instructions to visit your physical establishment while also giving them useful customer reviews and photos of your business or product

Businesses with claimed local business listings therefore have an ace up their sleeve when compared to businesses that don't have them.

You also need to know if there is a page on Google+ Local that has been created without you knowing anything about it. Local directories as well as Yellow Pages and services like that do create pages. If the research you've done (just search for the name of your business followed by the name of your city) proves that, you must take up the created Google+ Local page's ownership. This is how to do it:

Contact Google through SMS or phone call and get a PIN which must then be submitted to Google for verifying that you are the owner of your Google+ Local page.

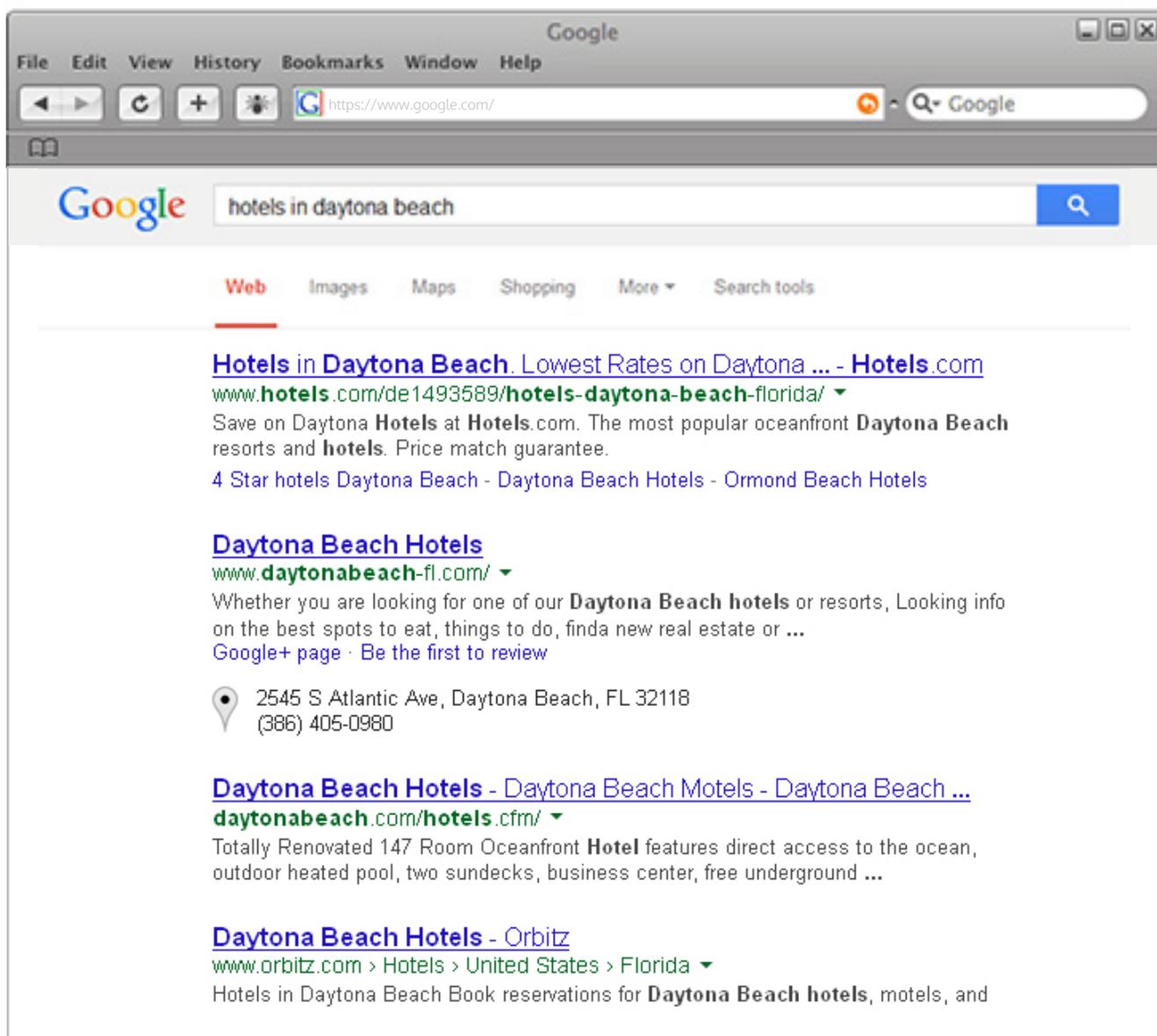
After confirming your ownership, you need to validate and update the content on the page. All you need to do is point the website address on the page to your main website rather than a directory listing or landing page, for maximum benefit.

- ✓ **You must select up to 5 relevant categories for your business**
- ✓ **Then you must add as much keyword-rich and relevant, updated content as can be accommodated in the page.**
The content should also include details such as facilities offered by your business/organization, operating hours and products/brands offered.
- ✓ **Add your logo and photos of your business facility and/or products, services.**
You should also add a banner sized photo preferably of the dimensions of 2120 x 1192 pixels to function as your cover photo. Remember to add videos to your Google+ Local page.

OPTIMIZING WITH LOCATION-ORIENTED KEYWORDS

Local keywords are important for local website optimization. Meta descriptions are also important for attracting leads from SERPs and even converting them. Since Meta descriptions come along with the search results, it is important to make them as conversion capable as possible – they should contain a convincing call to action plus the phone number which means there are chances for conversions before even entering the website. This is particularly relevant in this era of mobile SEO.

Address information on your site must be formatted with the help of schema, or standardized HTML tags.



EFFECTIVELY MANAGING AND SOLICITING ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEWS



Customer Reviews

Customer reviews, and other social signals like them, are being increasingly used by Google for determining the SERP positioning and relevance of businesses. It's what your customers say about your business that is increasingly becoming important for organic search. Google has made it that way to serve the needs of users better.

A Google+ Local page would have reviews as its main element and can be posted by anyone with any Google account. Reviews from other directories such as Trip Advisor and Yelp.com also appear on the pages of Google+ Local. Reviews must be monitored by businesses so that any negative reviews can be addressed. Enable and encourage local customers to post reviews.

Businesses that are quite active when it comes to soliciting reviews certainly stand to benefit a lot in local SEO in the era of Google+. If you are confident that your business offers good service you can ask for reviews from your customers. If your service is great, you can expect more positive reviews than negative ones. A great way to do this is to set up a particular landing page having a link which directs your customers to your company's Google+ Local page. The link could also lead to some other reliable review site, though Google+ Local is ideal. Once the customers click the link and arrive at the review site, they'll be able to post a review. Advertise the URL of this landing page for the best results.

ENABLING AUTHORSHIP FOR YOUR BLOG AND WEBSITE WRITERS

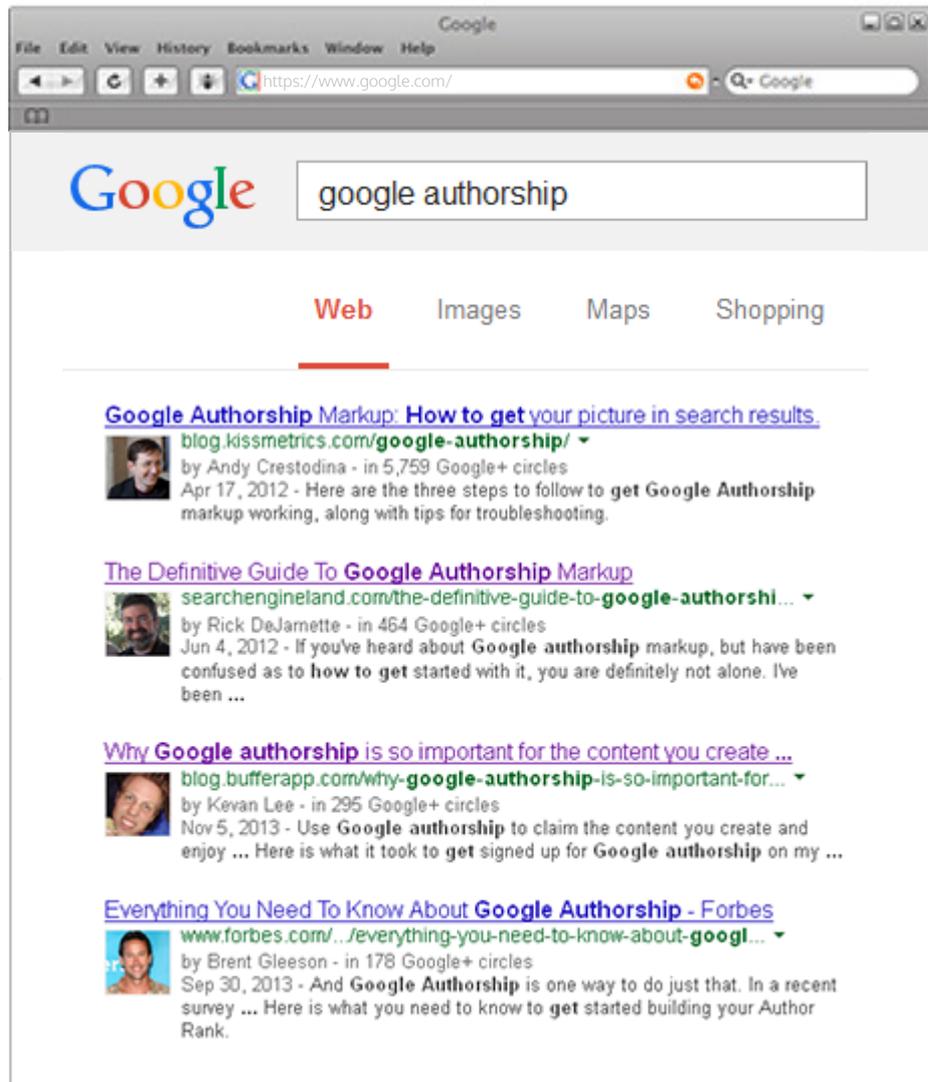
Authorship offers myriad benefits. Listings in the Google SERPS having authorship have a greater chance of getting clicked, wherever they may be ranked in that page. Top spot in the rankings cannot always guarantee more clicks unless the listing is integrated with authorship.

The writers of blogs or websites could all get authorship if they have a Google+ profile each. It will certainly contribute to more credibility which is absolutely vital.

According to research in eye tracking, the eye gets drawn first to the author's image at the side of the headline in a SERP listing. It helps increase visibility.

Authorship could also contribute to increased page views. If your website has good content and low bounce rate, it gives Google the impression that all pages of your site have value and would therefore list some of those pages too under the main listing – which is based on the

keyword or search query the user typed - in the search results page. This happens when the user searches for something, clicks your listing as it appears on the search page, stays on the page for two minutes or more and then clicks back to the search results page. Two minutes is round about the time Google decides a user has to stay at a web page if it is useful enough. Less than two minutes, and Google will consider the content of the page as having little value.



LOCAL INFLUENCERS

Influencers are those who can persuade people to make those all-important buying decisions or to build an opinion about a business or its products. In this era of social media, influencers have a major role to play. Influencers could be blog or social media readers who comment on your posts or who post themselves.

Kinds of Influencers

Influencer marketing is quite a talked about topic. In fact, it is possible to identify various kinds of influencers:

- #1** There are those that are specifically focused on the topic or area of business you deal with and post on Google+ and other social networks. They post and share content based on that particular topic.
- #2** There are those information-specific influencers whose purpose is to acquire more and more knowledge. They check out various social media posts and share them.
- #3** There are also influencers who are basically subject experts and have massive credibility and authority. They create and post original content and also have the capability to curate other content.
- #4** The most influential influencers are those who hang out in the social networks for much of the time. They have a significant number of followers and are quite popular in the social networks. These are probably those with the greatest market reach.
- #5** There are also influencers with a lesser level of influence but are active in the social networks. They have a dedicated and often smaller set of followers or friends though they are quite active in engaging with them.

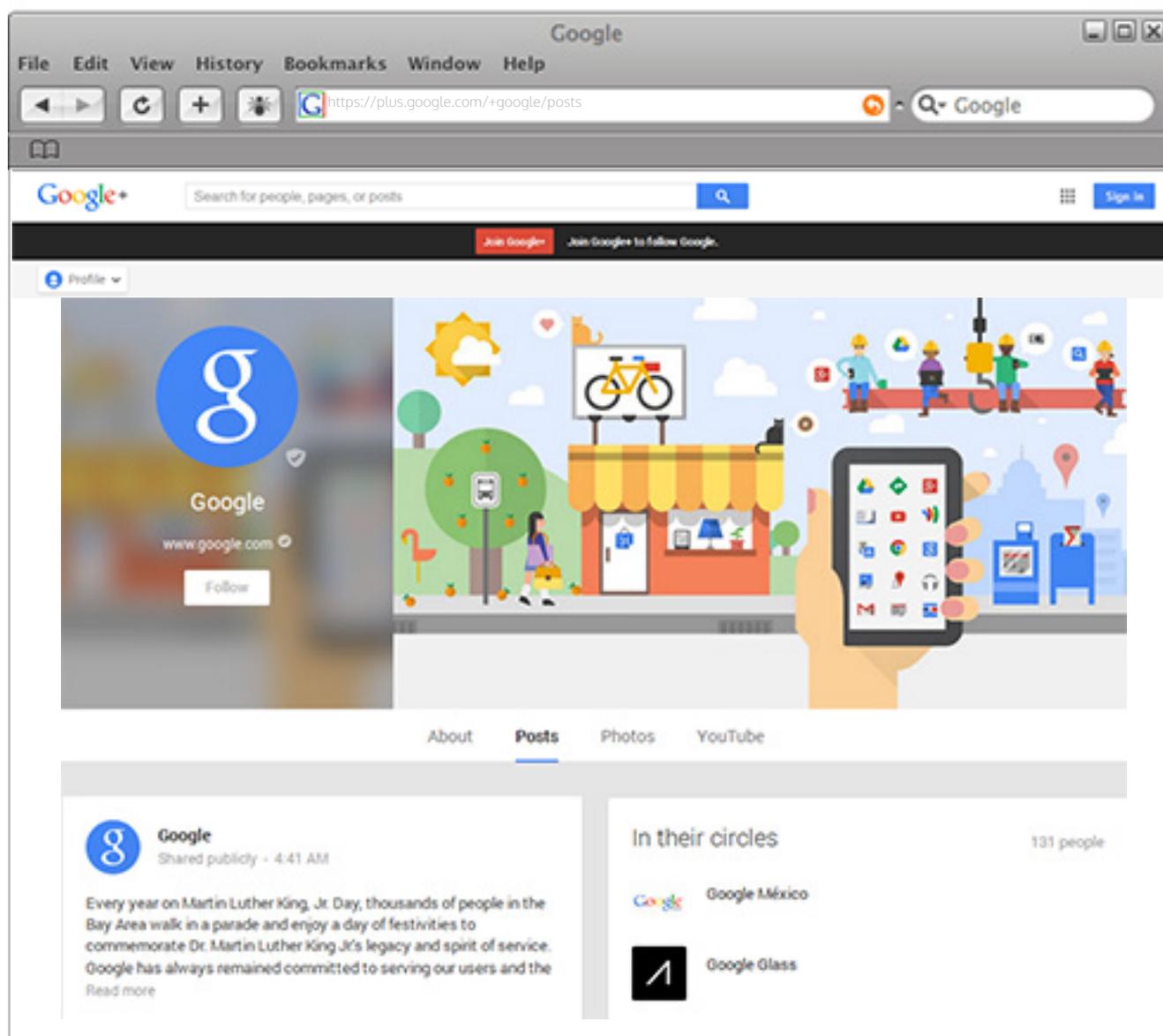
Influencers Are Important

Influencers are significant enough to make businesses succeed or fail in their social marketing efforts. They can make or break the reputation of a company and also make or keep people from buying a company's products, signing up for its services or checking out its website. It is mighty important for businesses to target influencers. Based on the kind of marketing your business wishes to do, or the objectives it wishes to reach, it can select one or more of the aforementioned influencers to target.

With Google+ you can notify influencers that you are present. This can be done in a more accurate way than in the other networks. Mentioning your influencers in your posts or even commenting on their posts and adding them to one of your circles are steps that could help notify your influencers and increase the exposure of your brand.

OPTIMIZED TITLE TAGS FOR GOOGLE+ POSTS

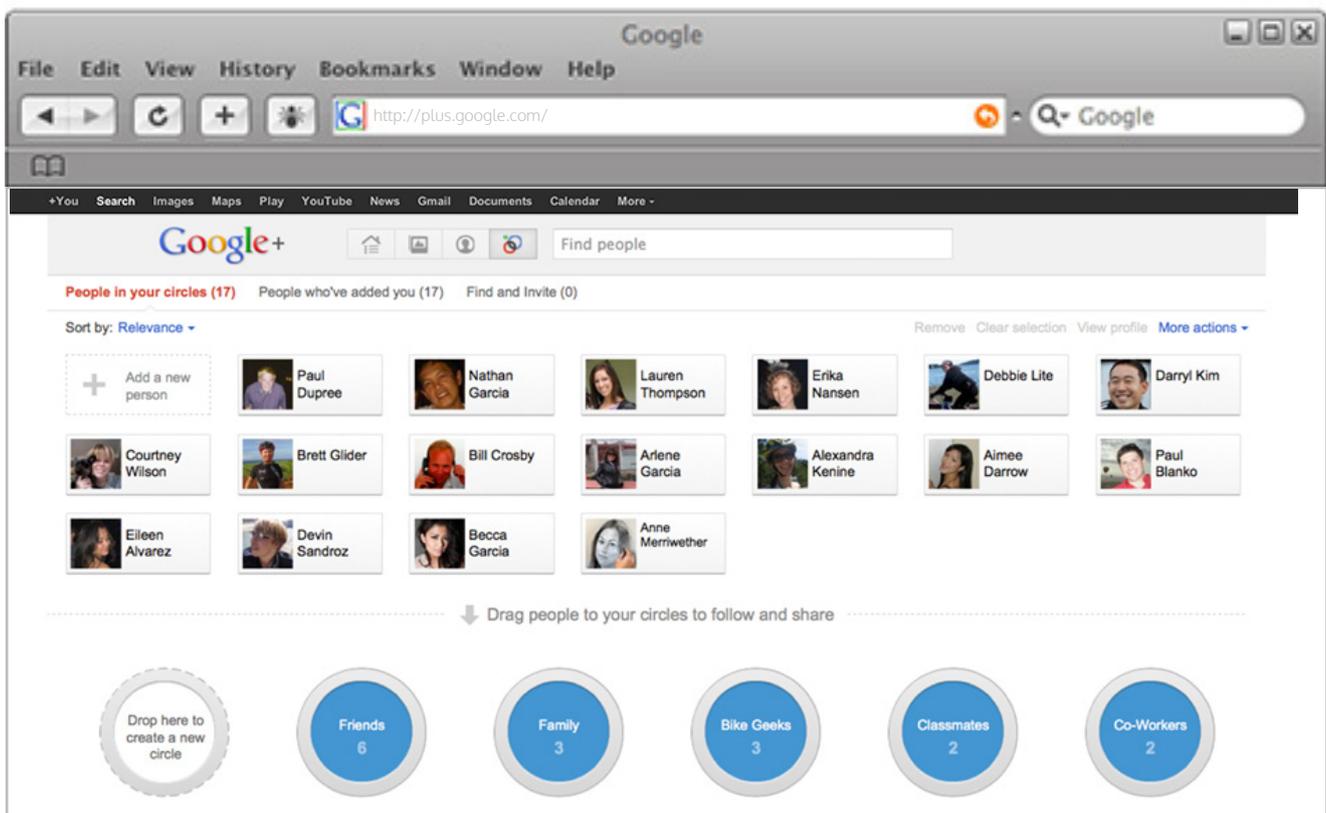
With Google+, each post's first sentence forms the title tag. The title tag must be effectively optimized since it is very important for your ranking and significantly impacts the click-through-rate. The title should be crafted in such a way that readers would just want to click on it and share it. The Meta description displayed in search results is normally the next sentence in the post. The attractive wordings and relevant keywords should all be here.



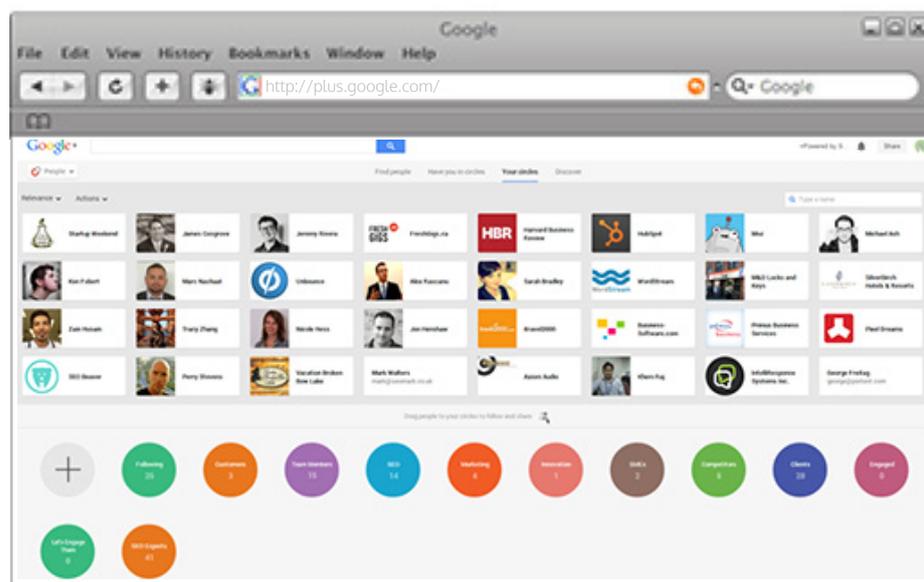
Google+ updates can be optimized for specific keywords. Your Google+ update's SEO title begins with your page or profile name followed by Google+. Then comes the start of the status update. The main text of your update contains its Meta description. If you employ link-specific status update it will result in a dofollow link, while posting photo and adding link within update text is marked nofollow.

SETTING UP CIRCLES NAMES IN A SEARCH-FRIENDLY MANNER

Circles are a unique feature on Google+ and cannot be compared to any feature in any other social network. Circles basically serve the purpose of classifying your contacts and followers. You have the option of customizing how you name the circles and how many you have. Circles consisting of businesses and influencers can be created around a particular topic with the likelihood of it being shared by influencers. Circles for each of the team members of your company can give your followers the opportunity to connect with your employees.

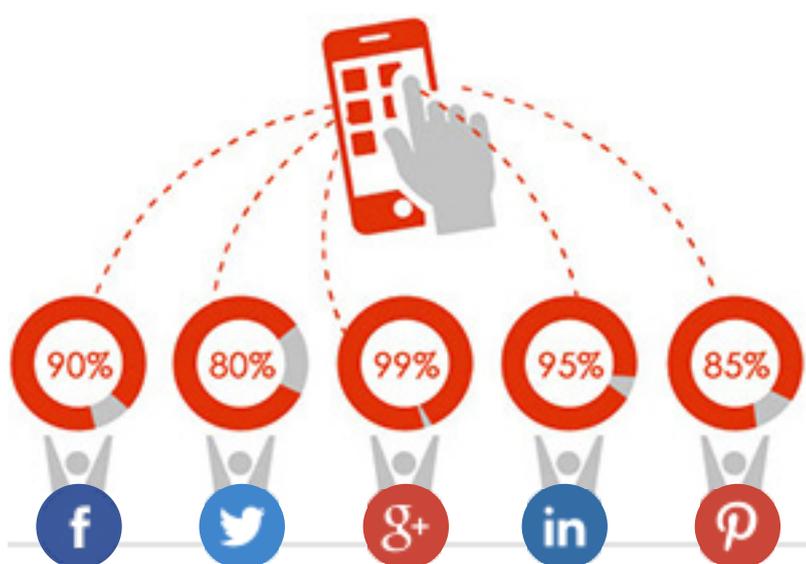


You can also group your customers, and other Google+ followers, as well as competing businesses into various circles. Businesses signing up with Google+ are offered generically named circles such as Customers, Following, Team Members, VIPs, etc. These circles can be made a lot more search friendly by adding new circles and renaming existing ones. Custom circles serve as a great way to attract businesses and prospective customers around a particular topic.



FREQUENTING SOCIAL MEDIA

Google+ is rising in importance and popularity at a significant rate. This is being pushed massively by Google to the extent that it is being speculated as one of the major factors influencing search rankings. Entry into Google+ guarantees a presence in all Google network services including Google+ Local and Google Maps. Greater Google+ presence and more Google+ sharing of your posts by readers would be a significant factor for local SEO.



Social networking, in general, has become one of the favorite activities of an average individual, which means businesses have a great market to tap into. Having active social media profiles is important, but the main social media activities can be grouped into:

Understanding what people are saying about your company and try to catch the general opinion.

Getting to know how your competitors in the local arena are getting involved in the social networks. You could learn a lot from their tactics.

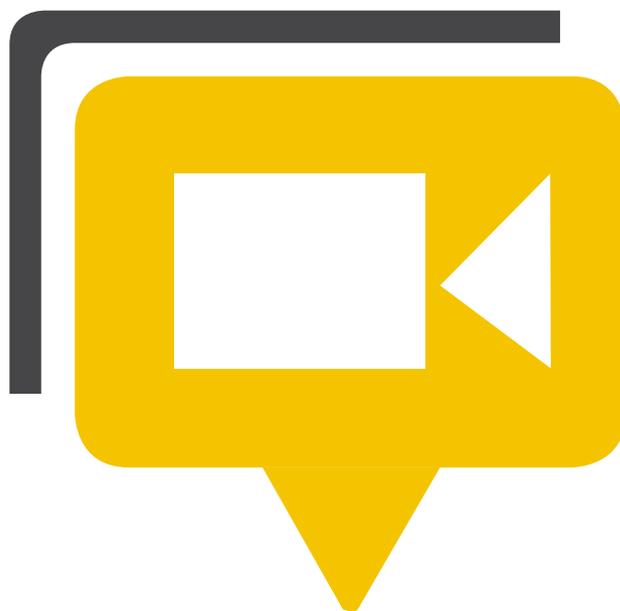
Building up on your social profile and actively networking. This involves contributing exciting posts, videos, pictures or other interesting stuff which people would love to check out. This will help you to build a following.

Social media listening is an important element of frequenting social media. Type your keywords or the name of your organization in Google+, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and other such platforms, and find out what you get. It's a great way to analyze what the average user will find about your company or products in the social networks. It is good to know the social networks in which the kind of audience you target hangs out.

The most popular social networks such as Google+, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest are great for both business-to-customer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) communication. LinkedIn specifically favors B2B communication.

MAKING EXTENSIVE USE OF GOOGLE+ HANGOUT

With Hangout on Google+ you can interact with those following you in real time. Now this is a great way of getting your brand to the hearts of your potential customers. This is a great opportunity for businesses to get first hand opinion of what their potential customers want. Their questions can be easily answered and their needs addressed. You could record videos to create a real impact.

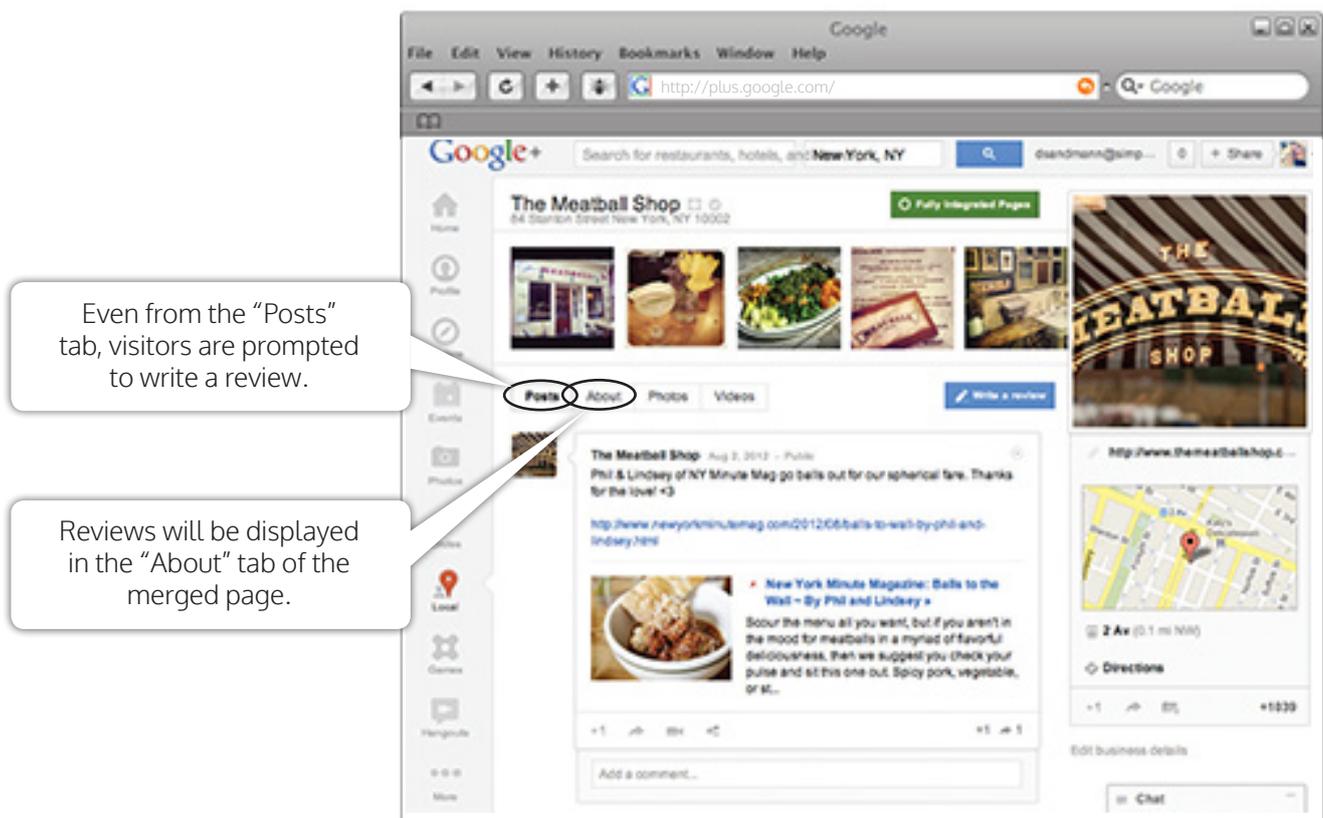


This is one great way to improve your customer care. You have many ways to get creative with this. Where your FAQ page falls short, the Hangout can take over. Recording videos are a great way to make use of Hangouts. Make it interesting. You can record a conversation dealing with the latest buzz in the industry. You could also add how your business is preparing for these changes so that it can serve its customers better.

Alternatively, you could create a video about the launch of your latest product or service, explain its cool features, and highlight how it serves the needs or prospective customers. Stuff like this can really engage your audience and get them talking. It all depends on how creative and exciting you make the videos.

LOCAL CAROUSEL

This is a feature that appears on the Google SERPs when users type queries based on location. It appears as a horizontal feature at the top of the paid and organic listings, and contains relevant business listings in connection to what the user is looking for, and closest to his/her geographic location. The ones closest appear first. Getting your customers to review your businesses can help. Not only that, you could also post reviews of other prominent businesses in the area. This could, through many ways, help your business appear prominently in the carousel.



From the Google+ profile of your local business you can leave detailed and honest reviews about the local businesses you find in your town or city. Reviews that are the most detailed get to the top positions in the Reviews page. If the review you posted from your business' Google+ profile is found to be useful, it actually helps create greater organic search exposure and improve your SERP impression.

Finally, the great thing about a review is that it establishes you and your organization as a kind of authority.

CONCLUSION

We have gone through some of the most influential factors that could give you the edge in local SEO in the age of Google Plus. Here are the ten points we dealt with:



These are some of the integral elements of success at a time when Google+ is beginning to emerge as the most influential social network for businesses and customers.



About PageTraffic

PageTraffic is an award winning Digital Marketing Agency, having served 2000+ clients since 2002. It has helped small businesses & big brands to dominate search, get engaged socially, and drive business online.



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