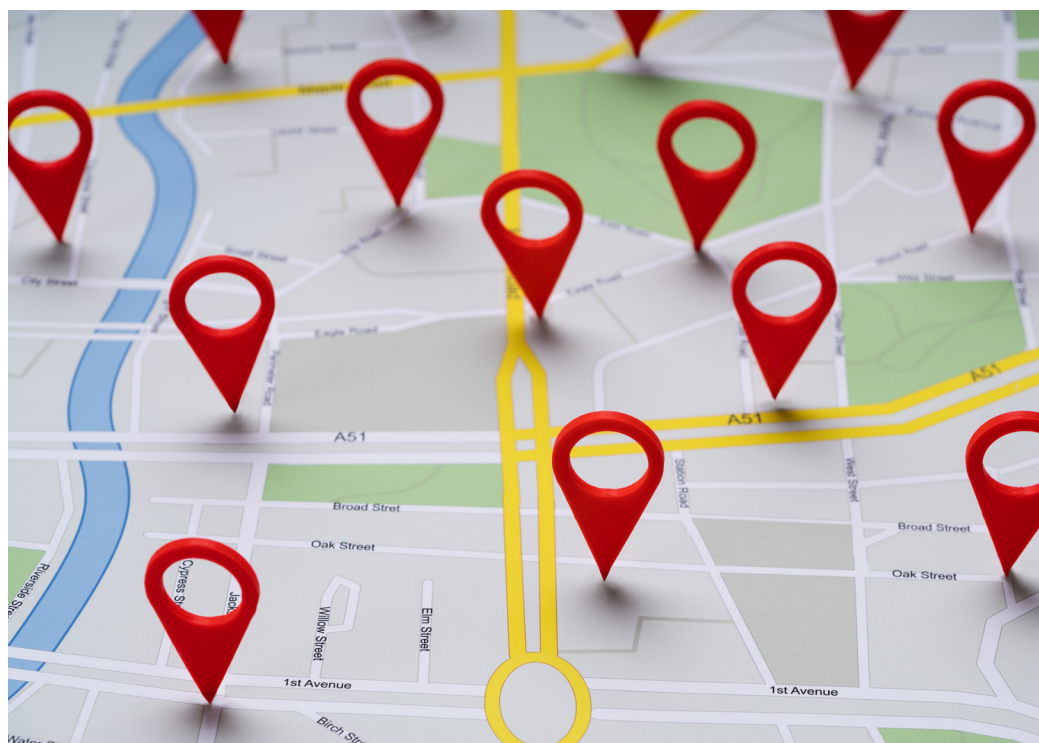




THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MASTERING GOOGLE'S LOCAL SEARCH



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Whether your marine business is small, medium, or large, it's never a bad idea to embrace local search marketing. In fact, in today's climate, it's crucial that you do!

Focusing some of your marketing strategies around your local service area both online and in person gives you the opportunity to attract an audience of customers that may not have previously known that there was a business like yours near their neighborhood. Local marketing gives you the chance to play on the connection customers naturally have with businesses that they deem ideally located.

This guide will explain in detail why local marketing is so important and provide you with the information you need to get started on your local search marketing for your marine business.

WHAT IS LOCAL SEARCH MARKETING?

Local search marketing is a form of internet marketing that promotes a physical business by helping you connect with nearby people who are interested in the products or services you offer. When someone searches for a business or place near their location, local results across Google will appear in search and map results.

Google My Business is a free tool from Google that helps business owners manage their online presence across the search engine – specifically in the “Google Map Pack.”

The most effective way to improve your marine business's local ranking is to use Google My Business to claim your listing and update your business information. It offers the greatest impact for brands seeking local exposure, as most organic searches come from Google (90% for worldwide search engine market share).



HOW GOOGLE DETERMINES LOCAL RANKING

Local results are based primarily on relevance, distance, and prominence. A combination of these factors helps Google find the best match for a user's search.

● RELEVANCE

Relevance refers to how well a local business profile matches what a user is searching for. Add complete and detailed business information to help Google better understand your business and match your profile to relevant searches.

● DISTANCE

Distance considers how far each potential search result is from the location term used in a search. If a user doesn't specify a location in their search, Google calculates distance based on what they do know about their location.

● PROMINENCE

Prominence refers to how well known a business is. Some places are more prominent in the offline world, and search results try to reflect this in local rankings. For example, famous museums, landmark hotels, or well-known store brands are also likely to be prominent in local search results.

Prominence is also based on information that Google has about a business, from across the web, like links, articles, and directories. Google review count and review score both factor into local search ranking. More reviews and positive ratings can improve your business' local ranking. Your position in web results is also a factor, so search engine optimization (SEO) best practices apply.



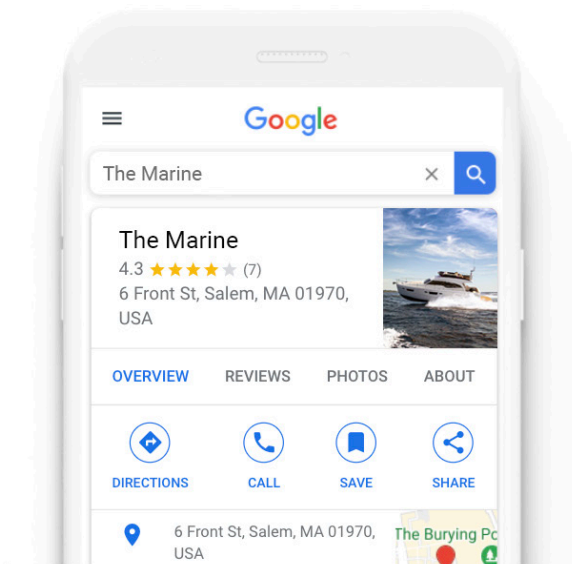
CLAIMING YOUR GOOGLE MY BUSINESS LISTING

STEP 1

Go to <https://business.google.com/create> and enter your marine business name. You have two options:

- Create a new business
- Claim an existing business

Once you start typing, Google will search for your business in their system. If they do not have it in their system, select the option to “create a business with this name.”



Find and manage
your business

🔍 Type your business name

Can't find your business?

[Add your business to Google](#)

STEP 2

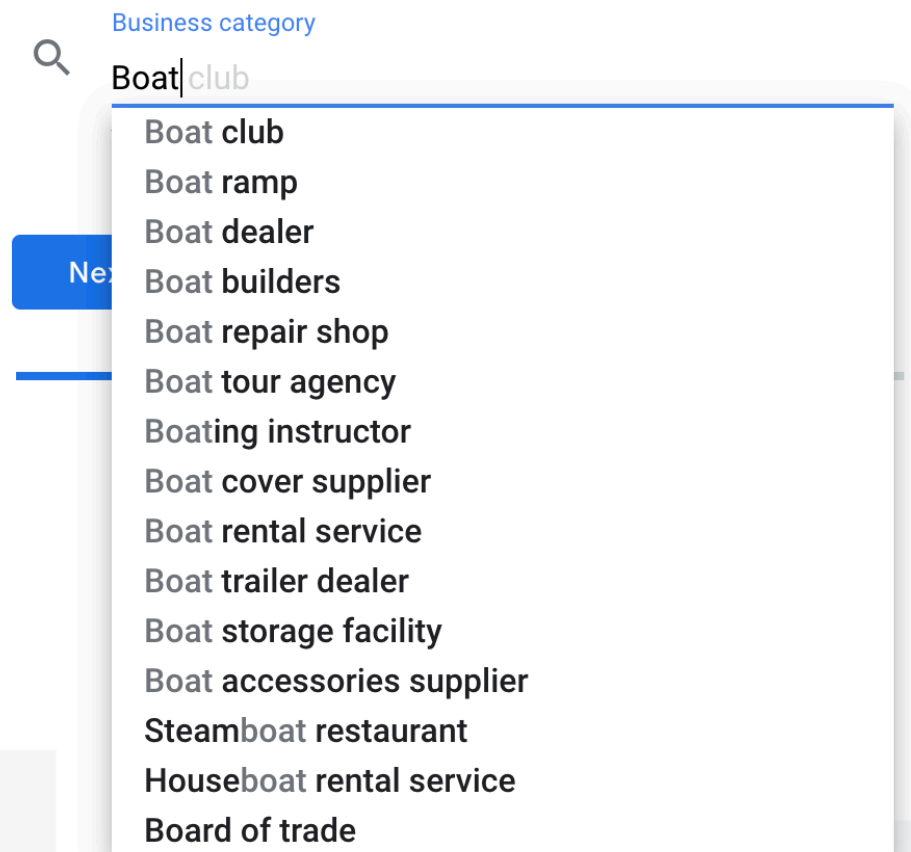
Choose a business category. Google only allows you to select one category for GMB profiles. If you're unsure which category fits your business best, read their advice here: <https://support.google.com/business/answer/3038177/#categories>.

The goal is to describe your business holistically rather than a list of all the products and services that it offers. Think about what your business IS rather than what your business HAS. For your business this may be Boat Dealership, Yacht Club, Boat Rental, etc.



← Choose the category that fits your business best

This helps customers find you if they are looking for a business like yours. [Learn more](#)





STEP 3

Next, Google will ask if you want to add a location that customers can visit, like a store or office. This location will show up on Google Maps and Search when customers are looking for your business. Select “Yes.”

← Do you want to add a location customers can visit, like a store or office?

This location will show up on Google Maps and Search when customers are looking for your business

☒ Yes


☐ No

Next

Now, you will enter your address. If you claim a business that already exists in Google’s system, it will be prefilled. Otherwise, enter your address.

For brick-and-mortar marine businesses, you can easily add your store address. However, if you have a mobile business, no physical location, etc., list the home address of yourself or the person closest to the primary area your business serves. Keep in mind that your home address will show if you use it to claim the business, but you do have the option to hide the address if you choose to.

← What's the address?



Next



STEP 4

The next screen will show a map with a location pin. Drag the pin to land on your exact business location.

You will then be able to clarify whether or not you service customers outside of this specific location as well. Enter the names of any other areas that your business serves.

← Do you also serve customers outside this location?

For example, if you visit or deliver to your customers, you can let them know where you are willing to go

☒ Yes, I also serve them outside my location

☐ No, I don't

Next

STEP 5

Enter your phone number and website. This step is pretty straightforward. Keep in mind that the phone number must be under the direct control of your business, and use a local phone number instead of a toll-free number whenever possible.

STEP 6

Congrats! Your marine business listing is almost verified. Listings may be reviewed for quality and can take up to 3 days to be published. Verification proves to Google that you manage and represent the business you claim.

Google will send you a verification code that you'll use to complete the verification process. Without verifying your business, you cannot access page insights/analytical information or reviews from the back end. Now is a great time to optimize your listing.

← Finish and manage this listing

You'll be able to manage **boat dealer** on Google.

✓ Promote your business with photos and posts

✓ Track business analytics to understand your customers

✓ Respond to customer reviews

Ready to publish now?

Finish



OPTIMIZE YOUR GOOGLE MY BUSINESS LISTING

● ENTER ALL OF YOUR DATA

Like you read earlier, local search results favor the most relevant results for searches, so businesses offering the most detailed and accurate information will be easier to rank. Don't leave anything unclear and keep it consistent across your other platforms.

Tip: Consider creating a spreadsheet with all of your business details that you can come back to when working on anything that requires your information. Keeping your details consistent will improve your overall search engine optimization (SEO).

● INTEGRATE KEYWORDS

Just like traditional website SEO, Google has a number of signals used to rank search results. If you have an SEO plan, use important keywords throughout your listing. Also use these keywords in the business description and each time you post to your audience.



Boat Marketing Pros is a marine marketing agency. We help boat dealers, boat clubs, and boat rental businesses increase their revenue through digital marketing. Our marine marketing services are all online and include website design, Google Ads, search engine optimization (SEO), ADA website compliance, social media marketing, and more.





● ADD YOUR REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS

Adding your working business hours allows customers to easily see when you're available, instead of them having to call or search through your website. You may also specify special hours for particular days, like holidays or special events. It's equally important to update them whenever they change to keep users happy.



	Sunday	Closed
	Monday	9:00 AM-5:00 PM
	Tuesday	9:00 AM-5:00 PM
	Wednesday	9:00 AM-5:00 PM
	Thursday	9:00 AM-5:00 PM
	Friday	9:00 AM-5:00 PM
	Saturday	Closed

 **More hours**
Add hours

	5/25/20	Closed
	11/26/20	Closed
	11/27/20	Closed
	12/24/20	Closed
	12/25/20	Closed
	12/31/20	9:00 AM-1:00 PM
	1/1/21	Closed
	1/18/21	Closed

ADD ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

Keep in mind that the only category that will be visible is the initial category you select but adding additional relevant categories will help your business' SEO.

Boat Marketing Pros



Internet marketing service
Marketing agency
Website designer
Web hosting company



UPLOAD PHOTOS

Ideally, choose photos taken on your business premises. Photos help business listings most than most people would expect. Google My Business listings with photos receive 42% more requests for driving directions on Google Maps and 35% more click-throughs to their website than businesses without photos.

Via ASAPmaps : <https://asapmaps.medium.com/5-expert-tips-for-your-google-my-business-photos-asapmaps-e91463be0ca0>

These photos may include your boat inventory, staff, rental customers on your boats, the exterior of your business building, etc. Make sure your images are in JPG or PNG format, in focus, well lit, and have no excessive filters. You want your business's listing to portray a realistic view of your business.

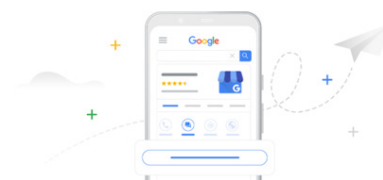
MANAGE AND RESPOND TO CUSTOMER REVIEWS

Interacting with customers by replying to their reviews shows them that your business values its customers and the feedback they share. Reviews can have an impact on potential customers, and they also increase your business's visibility in search results.

Encourage customers to leave feedback by creating a link they can click to write reviews for your business. Whether the reviews are positive or negative, use them as an opportunity for reflection and growth. Reviews will also help your reputation management later on.

UTILIZE THE MESSAGING FEATURES

Allow customers to message you. With the Google My Business app, messages to and from customers are enabled. You can have customized automated responses to welcome customers, which helps responsiveness and visibility of your business. We recommend you keep message response time to under 24 hours.



Get messages and quote requests

Turn on messaging in the Google My Business app to let customers message your business and request quotes from a button on your Business Profile. In the app, go to Customers, then tap Messages. [Learn more](#)

[Get the Android app](#)

[Get the iOS app](#)



MAKE USE OF LOCAL POSTS

Use Local Posts to publish offers, events, products, and services to Google. Posts let you engage with your audience and keep your presence alive on Google. Make sure each post is high-quality, free of spelling errors, respectful, and relevant. Google recommends including visuals and links in posts but avoid posting links to sites that aren't trusted.



ADD SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

Use the special attributes to list individual services, amenities, and attributes you offer. Special attributes may include things like different payment options you accept, accessibility for disabled persons, veteran-owned business, virtual reality boat tours, etc.



Identifies as Black-owned



Identifies as veteran-led

ADD A PROFILE SHORT NAME

Adding a profile short name (@) will create a direct URL to your business listing. Another important part of setting up your business profile on Google My Business is adding a logo. Google recommends using a logo to help customers identify your marine business.



MONITORING AND MANAGING YOUR GMB LISTING

INSIGHTS AND ANALYTICS

Google has advanced analytical data for Google My Business listings. These insights offer businesses an in-depth way to understand how customers are interacting with your business listing, including:

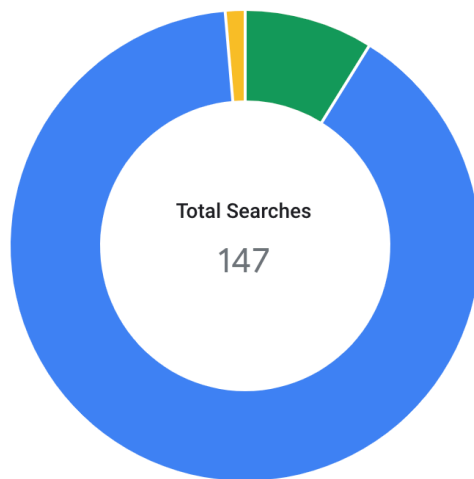
HOW CUSTOMERS FIND YOUR LISTING

This insight shows how customers found your marine business in a “Direct” search (they searched your business name or address) or a “Discovery” search (they searched for a category, product, or service that you offer). You are able to see the total number of searches, as well as how many were “Direct” as opposed to “Discovery”.

How customers search for your business



1 month ▼



Direct

Customers who find your listing searching for your business name or address



Discovery

Customers who find your listing searching for a category, product, or service



Branded

Customers who find your listing searching for a brand related to your business





WHERE CUSTOMERS FIND YOU ON GOOGLE

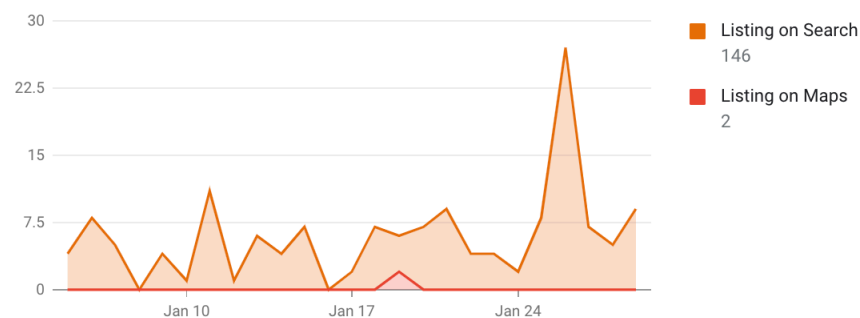
This insight shows how many customers found your listing via Google Search or Google Maps. You'll also see how many views your listing received from each product in a given time frame. Move your cursor over the appropriate segment of the graph on the day you're interested in.

Where customers view your business on Google

The Google services that customers use to find your business

1 month ▾

Total views 148



CUSTOMER ACTIONS

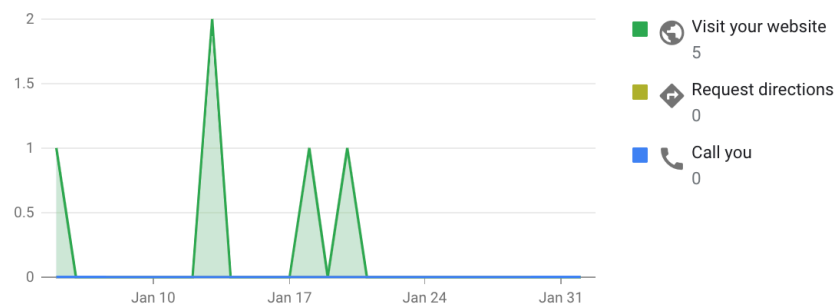
This insight tells you what customers did once they found your Google My Business listing. You can see the total number of actions for the following: website visits, direction requests, calls, and photo views.

Customer actions

The most common actions that customers take on your listing

1 month ▾

Total actions 5



DIRECTION REQUESTS

This insight uses a map that allows you to see what locations people are requesting directions from. Your marine business is identified on a map and some of the common spots that people request directions to your business from also appear on the map. It breaks down the total number of direction requests by city and/or neighborhood.

PHONE CALLS

This insight shows when and how customers made a phone call to your business via your Google My Business listing. You can view the total number of calls and see trends by phone calls by day of the week or time of day.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Claim your Google My Business listing
- Focus on quality
- Work on increasing your 5-star ratings and reviews
- Respond immediately to your messages and phone calls
- Maintain consistent NAP (name, address, phone number) across directory sites online
- Continuously optimize your Google My Business Listing



LET US HELP YOUR MARINE BUSINESS MASTER GOOGLE'S LOCAL SEARCH MARKETING

Now that you have an understanding of local search marketing as far as Google Local Services go, it's time to get your business ranked. Whether you are a boat dealership, boat rental business, or a boat club, it's vital that your business appears in key maps like Google so that users can find you easily and all your business information is accurate and available.

Local search marketing and SEO can be an intimidating endeavor at first, which is why we're here to help. Set up a call with us today and we can get you started with a FREE digital consultation. Head to <https://boatmarketingpros.com/schedule-call/>, and let's start growing your marine business today.



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