

LOCAL SEO FOCAL POINTS

Below are what we believe to be the four major ranking signals used by Google to determine keyword rankings within search results, and the corresponding efforts you can take to address them all. Always check with your corporate offices if applicable, as to not overlap efforts.

Data Aggregators	Local Landing Page Optimization	Business Profiles & Listings	Ratings, Reviews & Check-In's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data Axle ✓ Foursquare/Factual ✓ Neustar/Localeze <p>Submission Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ BrightLocal, Moz Local, or Whitespark (Single) ✓ Rio SEO, Yext, UberAll, MomentFeed (Multiple) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Exceptional user experience (UX) ✓ Mobile & browser optimized ✓ Google PageSpeed and Experience ✓ Google Map and directions ✓ Store images and 360 virtual tour ✓ Keyword usage and prominence ✓ Sitemaps & smart internal linking ✓ Structured data (schema.org) ✓ Name, address, phone and hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Google My Business ✓ Apple Maps ✓ Yahoo! Local and Bing Places ✓ HERE WeGo and MapQuest ✓ Yelp, Facebook & Foursquare ✓ Internet yellow pages ✓ Industry web directories ✓ Local/regional web directories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review monitoring program active ✓ Native reviews posted on your website ✓ Point of sale program (on receipt) ✓ Outreach plan for bad ratings ✓ Loyalty / rewards program in place

AVOIDING GOOGLE PENALTIES

Google continuously refreshes their search engine results ranking criteria, introducing stronger filters and penalizing websites that violate their quality guidelines. It can be difficult to avoid the temptation to manipulate search results with quick fix techniques and third parties full of ranking promises. Below are a few common activities that tend to result in penalties.

Content	Links from Other Sites	Social Media	Ratings, Reviews & Check-In's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improper spelling and grammar ✓ Using bland articles without images ✓ Create additional websites ✓ Use article submission tools ✓ Use keyword-rich links in PR efforts ✓ Copying content vs unique ✓ Put links in blog comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pay for links of any kind ✓ Use keywords in link text ✓ Link from all pages of a website ✓ Buy "bad" links to competitors ✓ Participate in link schemes ✓ Pay for guest blog posts ✓ Using software to build links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Buy Likes, Shares & Tweets ✓ Buy followers or subscribers ✓ Respond defensively ✓ Post inappropriate content ✓ Talk badly of competitors ✓ Poach competitor employees ✓ Not be consistent in themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ask for a review on Yelp ✓ Buy ratings or reviews ✓ Force visitors to check in ✓ Respond with a negative tone ✓ Accuse competitors ✓ Buy ratings or reviews ✓ Using manipulative schema

ADDITIONAL HELP WITH IMPROVING YOUR RANKINGS

Know that your hands aren't tied with your online marketing, even if many tasks are handled by corporate offices. There are many things you can do to earn higher ranking within search engines like Google without overlapping efforts or having to worry about ranking penalties. Below are a few ways you can boost foot traffic and online orders.

Report Incorrect Info	Links and Listings	Social Media	Ratings, Reviews & Check-In's
<p>Name, Address, & Phone should match exactly everywhere online.</p> <p>Verify your business's info</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ google.com/maps ✓ local.yahoo.com ✓ bing.com/maps ✓ yelp.com <p>Get directions to your via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Google Maps app ✓ Apple Maps (iOS) ✓ Waze app (iOS & Android) ✓ Try from North, East, West and South locations 10 miles' out <p>Search Google.com Report inaccurate findings to the websites where you found them.</p>	<p>Share your business's info online, always using your address and phone number, anywhere you and employees can (blogs, websites, social media, etc).</p> <p>Search Google for "{your city}" "business directory"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Look for the city in the web address (chicago.com/dir/) <p>Consider listing your business on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Local BBB & Chamber of Commerce ✓ City's business directory ✓ Charities you support ✓ Community websites <p>Provide professional photos of your business across all directories.</p> <p>Provide a Google 360 Virtual Tour.</p> <p>Check GeoRanker or Whitespark's Local Citation Finder for new opportunities.</p>	<p>These tasks apply to Facebook, Yelp and Google Maps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Invite friends & family to like, save, and/or follow ✓ Utilize Google Posts & FAQ's ✓ Share upcoming local events ✓ Invite locals to a coffee break ✓ Share approved videos ✓ Share approved images <p>Post examples:</p> <p>"Test your skills: what is the most-ordered cocktail at our restaurant?"</p> <p>Feature the employee of the month with a picture.</p> <p>Share actual reviews, such as "Today, John S. called our restaurant <i>the perfect place for great steaks!</i> Come see if he's right."</p>	<p>Earning ratings and reviews could indirectly improve rankings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ask "did you 'check-in' on your smartphone if you have one?" <p>Offer your supervisor's contact info before you begin service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "If at any point during or after your visit you feel you've had a poor experience, call my boss" <p>If you know the customer had a good experience, ask if they would be willing to post a review later on Google, Facebook, or mention <i>we are on Yelp</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have them mention the food they ordered to boost keyword rankings, like "great pies". <p>Read and respond to your business's online ratings daily.</p>