



Google+ Local – Top Success Factors

This is a summary of a North American study that analysed the responses from industry experts who were asked to rank the importance of 90 factors affecting Google Local Search success. The original study* is here: <http://www.davidmihm.com/local-search-ranking-factors.shtml>.

Factors were grouped as follows:

- Google+ Local Listing
- Off-Site Factors – Citations and Backlinks
- On-Site Factors - Website
- Review Factors
- Social/Mobile Factors

We have listed the top 10 factors in each grouping and then highlighted the most important factors overall. As a business owner, if you cover the items we have highlighted, then you are well on your way to Local Search success.

Note that if a factor is not highlighted, it does not mean it is no use to you, far from it. The rankings are ranked for Google+ Local, which is only part of your overall online presence.

Google+ Local Listing

1. **Physical Address in City of Search**
2. **Proper Category Associations**
3. **Proximity of Address to Centroid**
4. **Local Area Code on Google+ Local Listing**
5. **Individually Owner-verified Google+ Local Listing**
6. **Product / Service Keyword in Business Title**
7. Location Keyword in Business Title
8. Association of Photos with Google+ Local Listing
9. Product / Service Keyword in Google+ Local Listing Description
10. Location Keyword in Google+ Local Listing Description

Off-Site Factors – Citations and Backlinks

1. **Quantity of Structured Citations (IYPs, Data Aggregators)**
2. **Quality/Authority of Structured Citations**
3. **Consistency of Structured Citations**
4. **Quality/Authority of Unstructured Citations (Newspaper Articles, Blog Posts)**
5. **Quality/Authority of Inbound Links to Domain**
6. Quantity of Inbound Links to Domain from Locally-Relevant Domains
7. Quantity of Unstructured Citations (Newspaper Articles, Blog Posts)

8. Quality/Authority of Inbound Links to Places Landing Page URL
9. Quantity of Inbound Links to Places Landing Page URL from Locally-Relevant Domains
10. Quantity/Diversity of Inbound Links to Domain

On-Site Factors - Website

1. **Domain Authority of Website**
2. **City, State in Places Landing Page Title**
3. **HTML NAP (Name, Address, Phone) Matching Google+ Local NAP**
4. Page Authority of Landing Page Specified in Google+ Local
5. Product / Service Keyword in Website URL
6. Geographic Keyword in Website URL
7. NAP in hCard / Schema.org, etc
8. City, State in Most/All Website Title Tags, H1/H2 Tags
9. KML File on Domain Name
10. Load time of Google+ Local Landing Page

Review Factors

1. **Quantity of Native Google+ Local Reviews (w/text)**
2. Product/Service Keywords in Reviews
3. Quantity of Third-Party Traditional Reviews
4. Location of Keywords in Reviews
5. Velocity of Native Google+ Local Reviews
6. Quantity/Quality of Reviews by Authority Reviewers (e.g.Yelp, Multiple Places, etc)
7. Overall Velocity of Reviews (Native + Third-Party)
8. Quantity of Third-Party Unstructured Reviews
9. Quantity of Native Google Places Ratings (no text)
10. High Numerical Ratings of Place by Google Users (e.g. 4-5)

Social/Mobile Factors

1. Number of +1's on Website
2. Number of Adds/Shares on Google+
3. Click-Through Rate from Search Results
4. Authority of +1's on Website
5. Velocity of Adds/Shares on Google+
6. Authority of Adds/Shares on Google+
7. Velocity of +1's on Website
8. Volume of Check-Ins on Popular Services (e.g. Foursquare, Facebook, Twitter)
9. Number/Authority of Shares/Likes on Facebook
10. Number/Authority of Followers/Mentions on Twitter

*The original study refers to Google Places. Google Places became part of Google+ Local in early June 2012. At the time of writing, we believe the results apply to both Google Places and Google+ Local, although we expect this will change over the coming months.