

# 5 Steps to outranking your competitors in search

Local search is critical to engaging customers and driving new business – and if you're not showing up in search, your competitors are. The good news? There are easy, concrete steps you can take to increase discoverability for your brand: a robust listings presence

Follow our checklist of 5 steps to help you stand out in today's crowded digital landscape.



## Step 1

### Establish a robust listings presence

When customers search for local information, they're typically making high-intent searches – meaning they're looking to take action immediately. And with 50% of brand traffic going to third-party listings versus first-party websites,\* **listings are often the first place a motivated searcher interacts with a brand.** Establishing a significant listings presence is the first step to making sure you show up in local search at these important moments.

**TIP** → It's not all about Google, either. While Google Business Profiles are a great place to start, having a robust listings presence across the highest possible number of publishers actually boosts your discoverability in Google Search, too. We'll tell you why below.)

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Create a Google Business Profile</b>	Managing a Google Business Profile is table stakes. All brands that service a local area need to have a presence on Google: <b>at least 83% of customers</b> are looking for information there.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Create and manage listings on as many sites as possible other than Google</b>	Google – and other generative AI systems – look at how your information is shown on other sites, which means that having consistent and optimized listings in more places can help your brand perform better on Google. You <b>should sync your information</b> across the highest number of publishers possible.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suppress and manage duplicate listings across all publishers</b>	Duplicate listings can be detrimental to your digital presence, creating confusion for both customers and search engines. (You can <b>learn more about that here.</b> )

## Step 2

### Complete your listings profile across all publishers

At this point, your brand is so much more than just a name, address, and phone number: many attributes let both *customers and search engines* know what you offer. **Search engines rely on the attributes you fill out to help determine where to rank your business in search results:** for example, a potential guest looking for a hotel may search on Google for a "hotel near me with a pool." The only way to show up for this type of query is to have the "Pool" attribute filled out.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fill out as many business attributes as possible on your listings</b>	Brands with complete business profiles receive, on average, <b>7x more clicks.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Add photos to your profile(s)</b>	Brands with photos receive more 'Website' and 'Get Directions' clicks – <b>35% and 42% more, respectively.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Create social posts on third-party websites</b>	Social posts are great opportunities to highlight offers, events, or special updates. It's likely that posts created on Google are indexed more when it comes to ranking for unbranded searches.

## Step 3

### Respond to your reviews across sites

Reviews are a lesser known opportunity to improve search discoverability. According to Google, review responses are not indexed for search rankings (yet), but the content that people use to write their reviews does indeed factor into your discoverability.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Consolidate your reviews so you can monitor them from one place</b>	This will make sure you never miss a review – and set you up to respond more easily when necessary
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Set up notifications so the right people can take action</b>	Notifications keep the right people in the know – especially for businesses in a franchise model with multiple responders. That way, anyone who needs to see a review can act on it quickly.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Respond to as many reviews as you can (to start, at least those rated 3 stars and below)</b>	Responding to reviews quickly – particularly negative ones – shows customers that you care. Yext customers that respond to reviews are ranked 9% higher in the local pack than those that don't respond at all.*

## Step 4

### Conduct search keyword analysis

Learning the exact queries people use to find your brand on Google is a marketer gold mine. These insights help you understand what a customer is interested in and then incorporate it into your marketing strategy by developing content that will resonate with their search.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>See the exact queries that people use to find your brand on Google</b>	You'll better understand your customers' needs – and the types of questions your online content should be able to address.
<p><b>TIP</b> → Google allows brands to see this data; users can track it there – or Yext customers can access it in the Yext platform.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Filter the data by locations/groups</b>	You'll obtain more localized insights about your audience.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Incorporate search keywords into your local marketing strategy</b>	You'll rank for more keywords and drive more traffic.

## Step 5

### Conduct competitive research

It's impossible to know if you're winning or losing when you can't see the scoreboard. Keeping track of your competitors' performance is critical to leveling up your digital presence and winning in local search.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Determine the competitors you are most interested in</b>	You can't tell how you are performing for important keywords and queries – against specific competitors – if you don't track.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Review how your average rating compares to competitors on major review sites like Google, Facebook, and Tripadvisor</b>	You'll be able to determine which review sites to prioritize in your review response strategy.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Create more organic content</b>	By targeting the locations and keywords that are underperforming, you can position your brand to win in local search.

In today's competitive digital landscape, you know you need to be doing everything you can to make sure your brand shows up in high-intent local searches.

**From establishing a robust listings presence to responding to reviews and conducting thorough competitor analysis, each step plays a role in boosting your brand's discoverability.**

By embracing these tactics, you'll elevate your position in search rankings and stay ahead of competitors to win more business.

\*Yext internal data, 2023

Why is a larger publisher network worth it for brand discoverability? Check out the research to learn more.

[Get the data](#)