



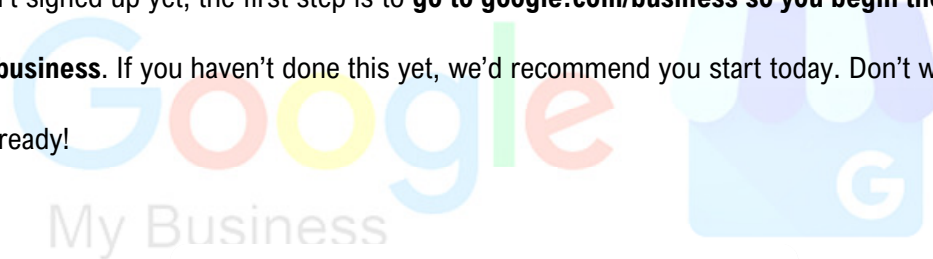
### 10 Ways to Get the Most Out of Your Google My Business Listing

Did you know that 91% of people only see the first page of Google search results?

It can be hard for the average business to compete online without a strong SEO strategy. Fortunately, local and regional businesses have a major asset available: their free Google Business listing. Claiming, verifying, and optimizing the business listing through the Google My Business (GMB) platform allows business owners to not only drive local search visibility, but also manage their digital reputation, advertise their strongest offers, stay in touch with customers, and understand how customers are engaging with their business.

Read on for 10 key ways to get the most out of this free and powerful tool.

1. If you haven't signed up yet, the first step is to **go to [google.com/business](https://google.com/business) so you begin the process to claim and verify your business**. If you haven't done this yet, we'd recommend you start today. Don't worry, we'll wait here until you're ready!



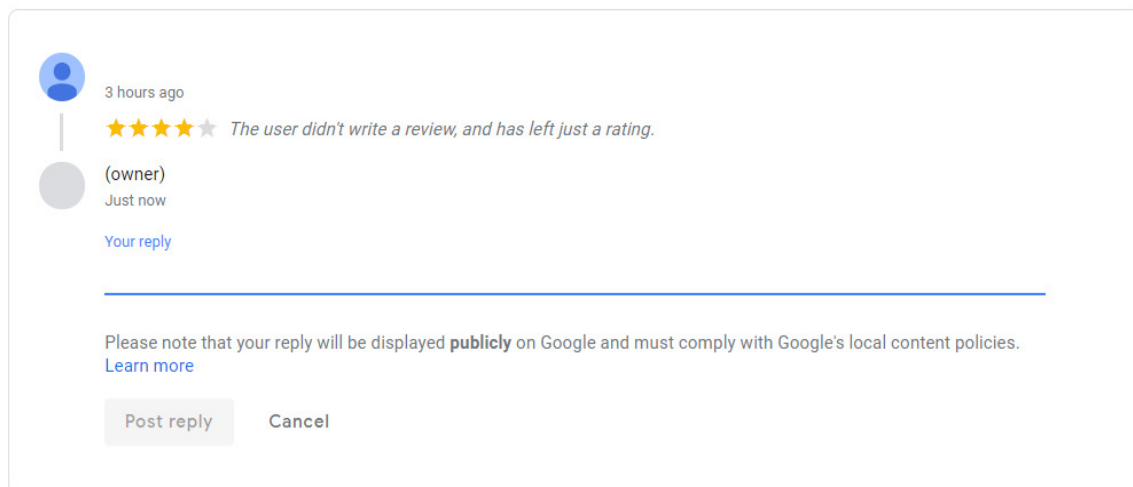
What's the name of your business?

A screenshot of a form field for entering a business name. The text 'Business name' is written in a small font above a horizontal input line. To the left of the input line is a small icon of a storefront.

2. Gather good reviews from loyal customers as you start out, and **continually find ways to foster consistent reviews to boost your reputation over time**. The more detailed, positive, authentic reviews you have, the more likely you are to help someone understand why they should choose your business and the more likely your business is to show up in local search results.

*88% of people trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations*

3. **Read and respond to reviews and questions that your customers put on your listing.** You can provide trustworthy answers to questions that customers and prospective customers have about your business. In terms of reviews, it's important to respond to both positive and negative feedback. This is both a signal to Google that you have an active and well managed GMB listing (which is helpful for local SEO), and a way to communicate your brand and your personality to clients. All reviews are publicly available as are any responses. Thanking happy customers is enjoyable, but it's especially important to pay attention to the negative reviews. Other customers will be evaluating how you respond to issues as they decide whether to work or shop with you. Addressing concerns early can often lead to a positive resolution with a disgruntled customer. Even when a resolution is not possible, you'll be able to reflect the values of your business in terms of how you address those issues.



4. **Update the hours on your listing so that your information is accurate in real-time.** It's likely that your Google listing will be the most viewed source of information in terms of the basics of your business (contact number, address, hours, and more). Your Google Business listing allows you to consistently keep your customers informed about the hours of your business, including holidays and any special events where you might be closing early or staying open late.

#### Special hours

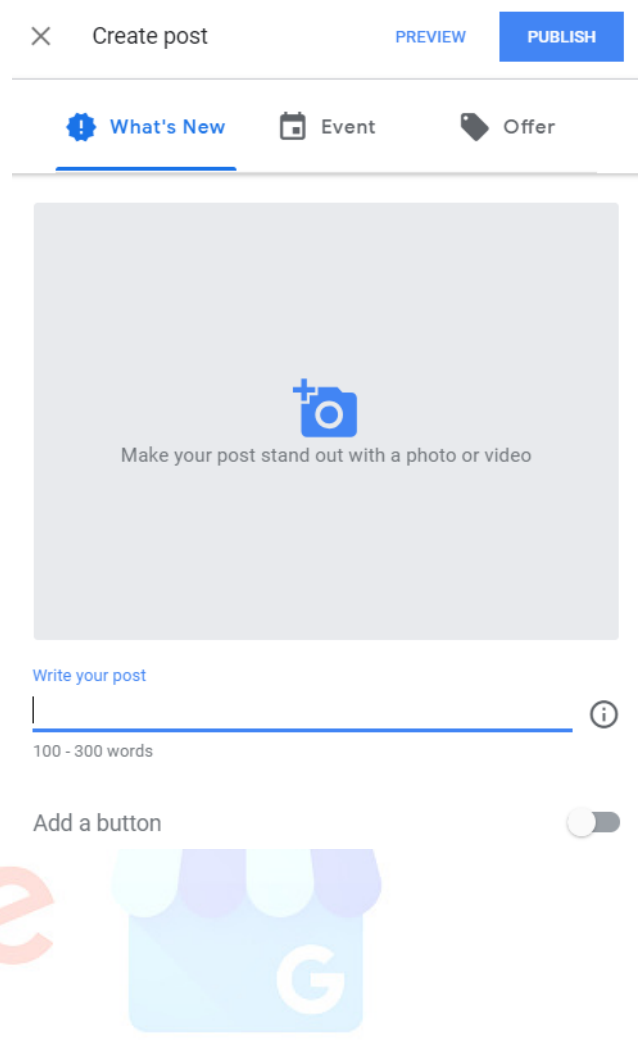
Enter hours for days when this business has an irregular schedule

 2/14/18  Open 2:00 pm — 4:00 pm 

[ADD HOURS](#)

5. **Take advantage of the new Google Posts feature.** Posts allow you to make announcements, share events, and promote products, business information, and offers. There are also insights to posts which show the views and engagements you have received on each individual post.

Each post functions like a mini blog that will be visible to all customers viewing your Google Business listing. You can include up to 300 words of text and include a button that will direct web traffic to the appropriate destination on your web site. Free advertising!

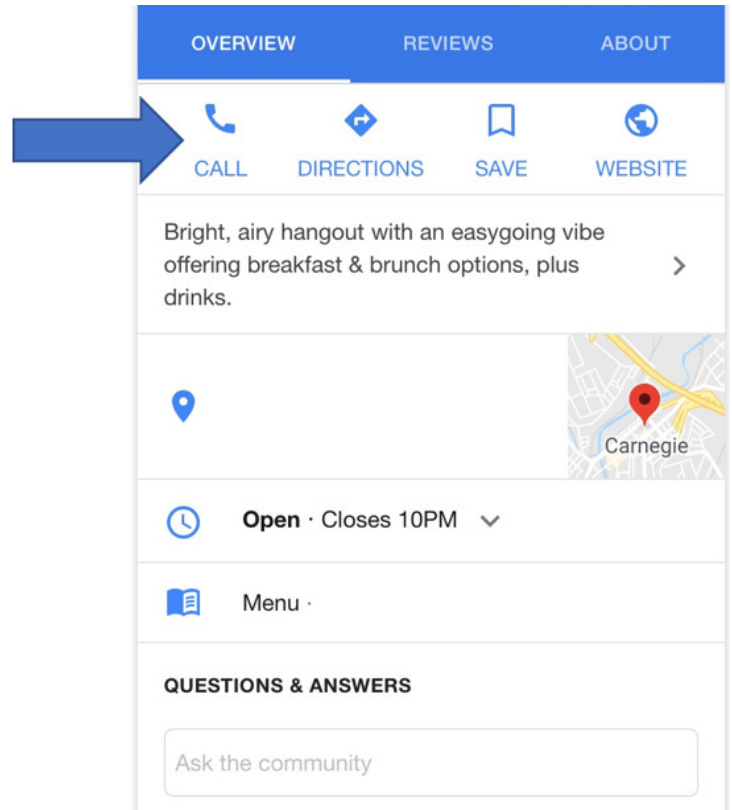


6. **Make your Posts stand out by uploading videos directly to GMB.** Just hit the blue camera icon in the middle of the Posts design area and select the video to upload. Videos can't be more than 30 seconds, so think hard about what information or direction you should provide to customers to lead them to take action. If video seems like too much work at this point, upload a relevant image instead.

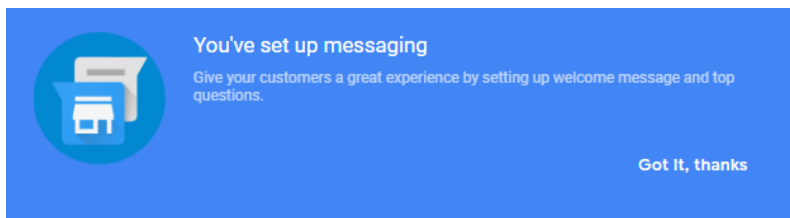
*64% of consumers make a purchase after watching branded social videos*

7. **Make sure you have the best contact number active in your business listing** so customers can utilize the 'click to call' button when they are searching on a mobile device. In 2018 40% of Mobile searches have some kind of local intent so make it easy for customers to connect with you.

Plus, 90% of customers are more likely to visit a store when they see a number online on your GMB listing.



8. **Use the messages function from your listing.** You can receive and respond to text messages from potential customers by linking your business listing to a cell phone number. If you're going to give this a shot, just keep in mind that you'll likely need a trusted team member who can handle incoming messages.



#### Business Welcome Message

Show your customers a friendly welcome message. (Customers using SMS won't see this.)

Message

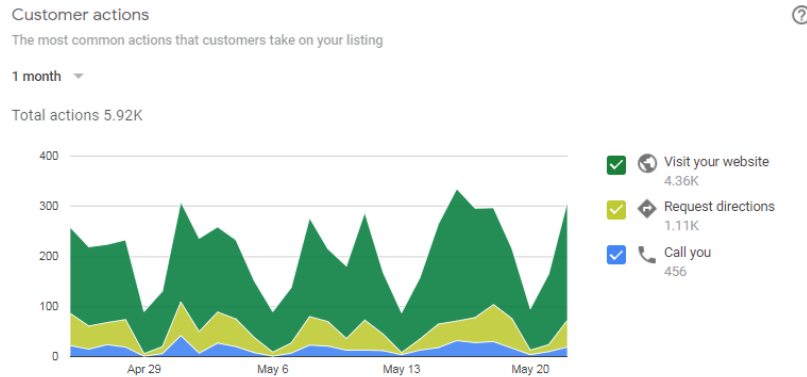
Hi there! Thanks for getting in touch with Root & Branch Digital Marketing. We'll be right with you.

100 / 120

Save

9. **Take advantage of the Insights reports to understand how customers are using your listing** and get information to help drive business decisions making.

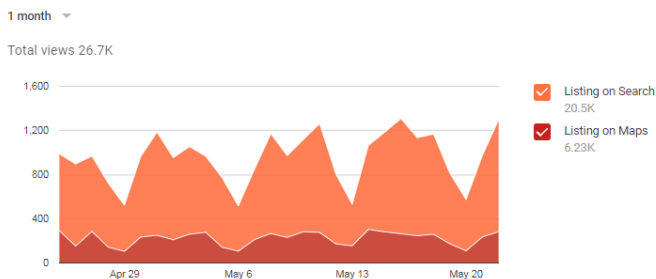
Insights will show you things like how many actions customers took on your listing, including visits to your web site, requests for directions, and direct calls from a Mobile device.



Insights will also show you how often you listing is appearing on Google, including showing up in Google Search and on Google Maps. If you have a very active account, you can even see where visitors are requesting driving directions from!

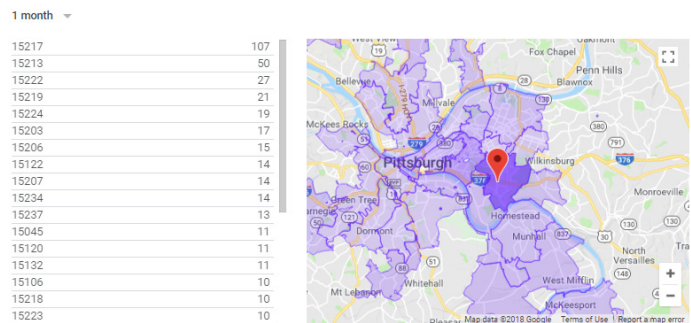
Where customers view your business on Google

The Google services that customers use to find your business

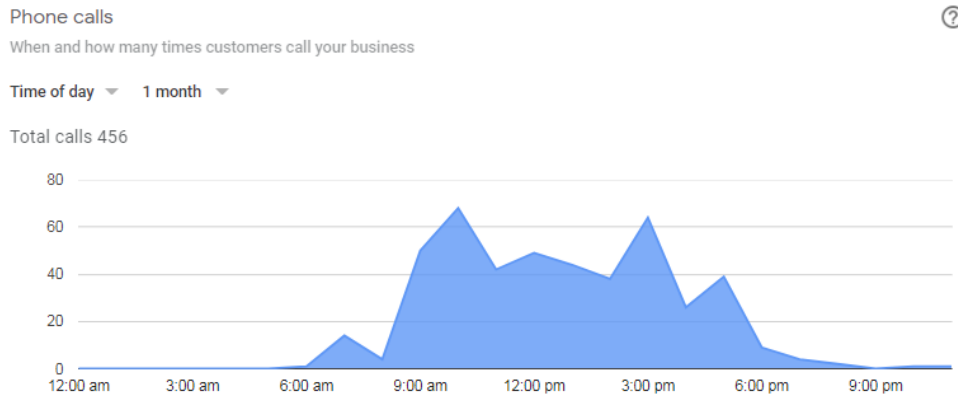


Directions requests

The places where customers request directions to your business from



Make smarter decisions related to staffing by understanding when your location is the busiest. For example, you can see what days and times are busiest in terms of physical customers at your location and when call volume is highest.



10. If you have a business that takes appointments, **use Reserve with Google to take appointments directly through your listing.** Use booking sites with Google to allow your customers to book appointments directly from your listing. You can also use [Reserve with Google](#).

**SCHEDULE** OVERVIEW

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Date Time

Services [See more](#) Staff

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Shampoo and Blowdry \$31.00

30 min

Shampoo and Blowdry

Mon   [+ MORE](#)

Taking advantage of everything that Google My Business has to offer is Root & Branch's first recommendation for most companies looking to accelerate their digital marketing efforts. The tools are free and effective and leverage the power of today's most important customer discovery platform.

We hope this guide gives you the information you need to get started. If you decide you'd like some support you can always see what our clients have to say about us at [http://bit.ly/root\\_and\\_branch\\_reviews](http://bit.ly/root_and_branch_reviews) or drop us a line at [www.rootandbranchgroup.com/contact](http://www.rootandbranchgroup.com/contact).

Thank you.



## Company Background

Root & Branch is a boutique digital marketing agency based in Pittsburgh that provides a wide variety of digital advertising and analytics services for B2C and B2B companies.

Root & Branch is a certified Google Partner agency and is provides the following services for clients:

- Paid Search (PPC)
- SEO
- Digital Reputation Management
- Digital Display Advertising, including retargeting
- Digital Analytics (Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager)
- Social Media Management and Social Media Paid Advertising
- Content Creation (blog posts, web site content)

Additional detail can be found on the website: [www.rootandbranchgroup.com/service](http://www.rootandbranchgroup.com/service).