

The **SEO** Juice

April 8th, 2026



SOCI

Squeezing the Most from Your Local Search & Social Strategies.

Your soci Team

The SEO Juice



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The SEO Juice

- **Industry News**
The latest in Local Search & Social and what it means for multi-location businesses
- **The Search Everywhere Journey**
What local discovery looks like when it starts somewhere other than traditional Google search.
- **Checkbox Optimization**
New Google Categories, Attributes & Features.
- **Caught in the Wild**
New features we've spied in Local Search results





Industry News

The latest in Local Search & Social and what it means for multi-location brands



Page Impressions Overcounted in Search Console for Nearly a Year



On April 3rd, Google quietly announced that a logging error has been preventing Search Console from accurately reporting impressions since May 13, 2025.

[Per Google](#), the issue is expected to be resolved over the next few weeks. As a result users may notice a decrease in impression reporting going forward.

Google did not indicate the scope of the overcounting. Historical data is not expected to be corrected.



Takeaway for Multi-Location Brands: For teams currently reporting on organic performance, the immediate priority should be getting ahead of this with stakeholders before the impression drop triggers unnecessary alarm. Annotate the change in Search Console and any connected reporting dashboards, and make clear that declining impression counts in the coming weeks reflect a reporting correction, not a rankings collapse. It's also important to note, that while impressions were undercounted, clicks and other metrics were not.



IG Search Experience



Instagram is leaning into being a search engine. Adam Mosseri has mentioned several times that Instagram is looking to enhance its search capabilities. They've recently changed how search results look- mostly surfacing Reels (including carousels and stills as well, just not as often) and almost always surfacing posts with text overlay

Takeaway: Text overlay on Reels is huge for search discovery. Social teams should be working with their SEO team members to understand what keywords to include in the text overlay



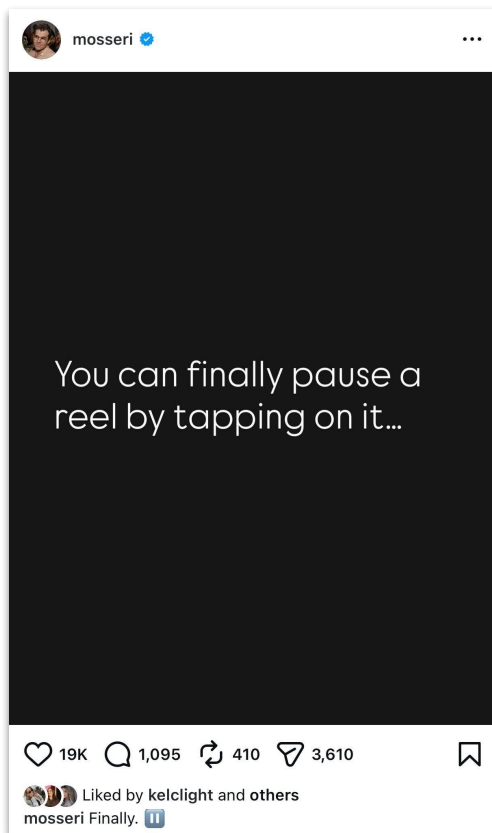


Instagram UI Updates



In March, Instagram launched a number of UI updates including

- The ability to pause a reel by tapping it
- The ability to reorder a carousel post after it's been posted





1/3rd of Local Results on Mobile Now Paid Placement

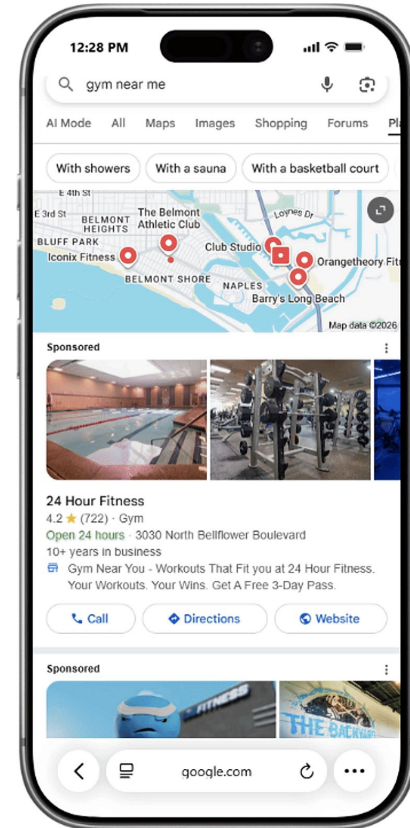
If you do a local search on mobile, you'll likely find every 4th result (once you get past all the sponsored results) is now **another** sponsored result!

What Industries are Affected?

Has been observed for all industries except Food & Beverage.

Takeaway for Multi-Location Brands: With more results, comes more competition. Brands will likely see these additional sponsored listings pushing them further down in the results customers see, leading to a potential decline in overall leads.

Brand must ensure they are doing all they can to make their profiles stand out against ones that pay for extra features along with their placement. Be sure to mark all services and attributes, post photos regularly, and publish posts that give people reason to choose you.





Google Search Algorithm

MARCH 2026 CORE UPDATE IN PROGRESS



On March 27th, Google began the rollout of its first Core update of 2026.

Per Google: "This is a regular update designed to better surface relevant, satisfying content for searchers from all types of sites."

The rollout may take up to 2 weeks to complete.

2026	
SUMMARY	DATE
March 2026 core update	27 Mar 2026
March 2026 spam update	24 Mar 2026
February 2026 Discover update	5 Feb 2026

Takeaway for Multi Location Brands:

Brands following Local SEO best practices do not typically experience a negative impact on their search visibility when core updates are rolled out. Per Google: "most sites don't need to worry about core updates and may not even realize one has happened." For brands with known SEO gaps, you will want to keep an eye on keyword rankings for top queries over the next few months to assess if profiles or linked local pages were affected by the update.



Emplifi Determines What Drives FB Reels Engagement



Social Media Today reports that based on analysis of over 10,000 Facebook Reels published by 704 brand Pages, Emplifi found several key data points that can help to boost engagement

- The data showed that videos that include human speech in the first three seconds drive better response.
- Emplifi's data also found that when a person appears for at least one second within the first three seconds of a Reels clip, retention improves by about 10% for 10-second views
- The report also found vertical videos seeing 20.9% higher reach

Full study: <https://emplifi.io/resources/facebook-reels-data/>

Takeaway: The human element and authenticity is important on social media, now more than ever. Focus on hyper local content that shows staff, customers, etc.- Especially when posting on Facebook Reels



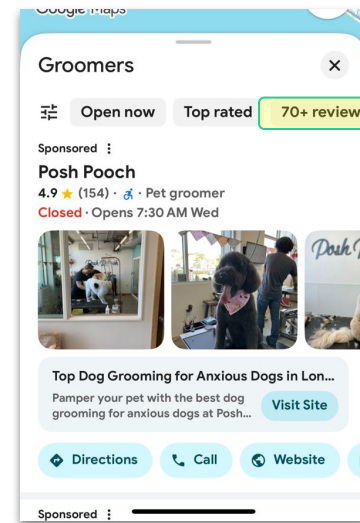
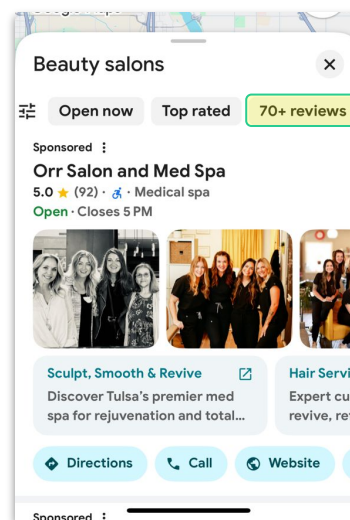
Review Volume Filters Could Limit Visibility in Google Maps



Did you know that even a “Top rated” business can be filtered out of search results if their volume of reviews is too low as compared to the average volume in their area?

For many industries where the level of service a business provides is an important choice consideration, Google includes a prominent filter in Maps allowing searchers to omit profiles with low review volumes.

Filter volumes vary by industry and area, though we found it to often be set at 30-50% of the average volume for the top 20 results



Takeaway for Local Businesses: It's not enough to be highly rated. While higher review volumes on Google improve your rank and reach, low volumes can limit your visibility if they are lagging behind your competition. Use competitive tools like GEO Rank to see how your locations stack up.

5:27

Groomers

Google Maps

Groomers

Open now Top rated 70+ reviews

Sponsored :

Posh Pooch
4.9 ★ (154) · Pet groomer
Closed · Opens 7:30 AM Wed

Top Dog Grooming for Anxious Dogs in Lon...
Pamper your pet with the best dog grooming for anxious dogs at Posh... [Visit Site](#)

Directions Call Website

Sponsored :

5:25

groceries near me

Google Maps

groceries near me

Open now Top rated 500+ reviews

Sponsored :

Ralphs Fresh Fare
4.3 ★ (513) · Grocery store
Open · Closes 1AM

In-store shopping · Curbside pickup · No-contact de

Shop Fresh Favorites Every... [↗](#) Weekly Deal
Enjoy unlimited free delivery now through 11/4 when you sp... Discover ex this week's

Directions Call Website

5:23

Gyms

Google Maps

Gyms

Open now Top rated 60+ reviews

Sponsored :

Genesis Health Clubs - Midtown Tulsa
4.8 ★ (1275) · Gym
Open · Closes 10 PM

Genesis Health Clubs [↗](#) Join for \$0
Almost gone: Join for \$0 and secure today's pricing. Miss th... No enrollme Don't miss t

Directions Call Website

Sponsored :

Orangetheory Fitness
4.8 ★ (203) · Gym
Closes soon · 8 PM

5:24

Car repair

Google Maps

Car repair

Open now Top rated 40+ reviews

Sponsored :

Midtown Automotive Repair Specialists
4.7 ★ (184) · Auto repair shop
Closed · Opens 8 AM Wed

Keep Your Vehicle Running [↗](#) Quality Car
Keep your car running smoothly with our expert repair and mai... Don't let ca down. Get t

Directions Call Website



Google Confirms Bug in Review Reporting; No ETA on When to Expect a Fix



There have been widespread reports of Google review discrepancies between what is showing natively on GBP and what is appearing in review response platforms like SOCi .

Through our partnership with Google, we have been able to validate the primary source of these discrepancies: a bug related to a system-wide crackdown on unauthorized data scraping companies like [SerpAPI](#).

Unfortunately, the technical roadblocks Google implemented to stop these scrapers have inadvertently created an issue with the API SOCi and others use to sync review data for our customers.

Google confirmed their engineering team is actively working on fixing the issue, but stated there is no current ETA for a resolution.

As Google's engineers work to patch the API issues caused by their anti-scraping rollout, we expect the missing historical reviews to eventually repopulate in your dashboard. We are monitoring this daily and will notify you the moment Google pushes a permanent fix.



Quick Poll

Where Does Your Discovery
Journey Begin?





You have friends coming to town with kids and want to find a brunch spot with a good vibe and a diverse menu. But also easy parking & not too long of a wait. Where do you begin your search?

1. Google
2. Gemini/AI Mode
3. ChatGPT/Perplexity/Claude
4. TikTok
5. Instagram
6. Facebook
7. Reddit
8. YouTube

The Search Everywhere Journey

Discovery Outside Traditional Search

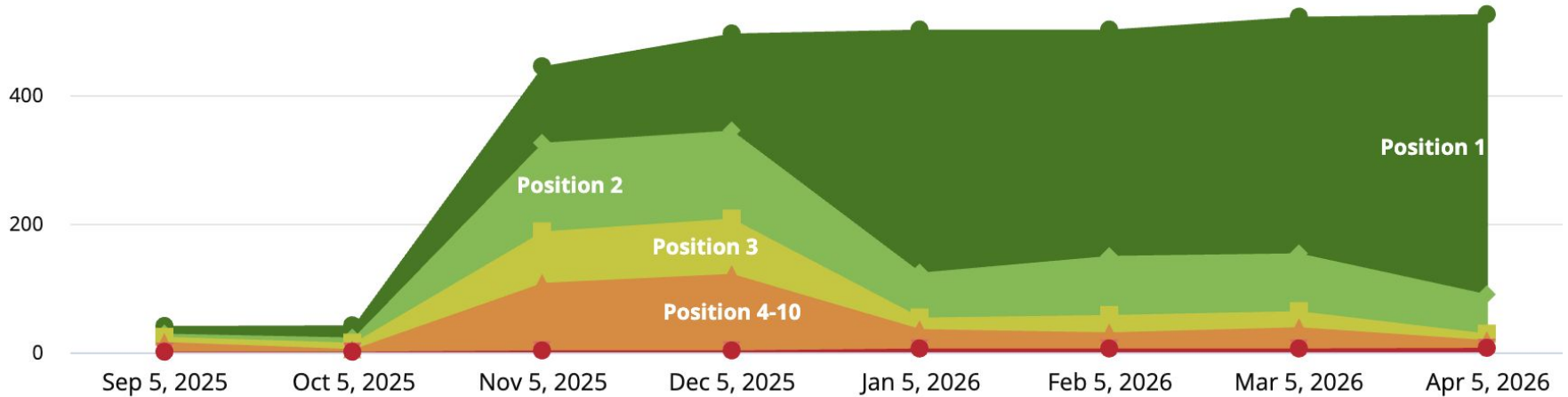


Signals Searchers are Starting their Discovery Journey Elsewhere



93% of Grooming listings ranked in the top 3 in January.

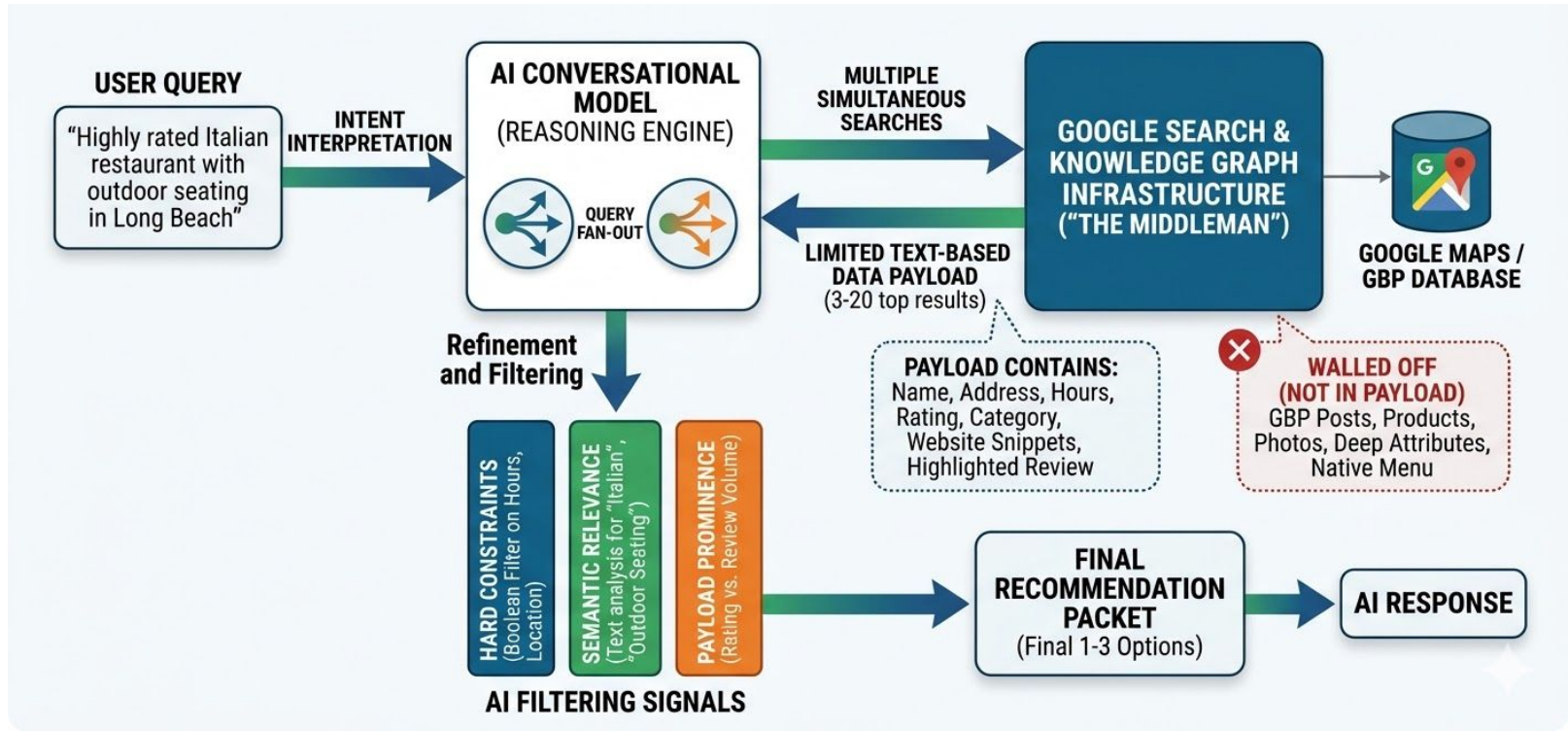
~1% of total keyword impressions was for Groomer.





Gemini & Google's AI Mode

DATA RETRIEVAL & FILTERING ARCHITECTURE





Gemini & Google's AI Mode

DATA RETRIEVAL & FILTERING ARCHITECTURE



pets near harrisonburg, va that specialize in treating dogs with cushing's disease.

While most veterinary clinics in Harrisonburg provide general care for dogs with Cushing's disease (hyperadrenocorticism), managing this complex hormonal condition often requires the expertise of **internal medicine specialists** or experienced general practitioners who focus on chronic endocrinology.

Recommended Local Clinics

These clinics are noted for their handling of complex medical cases and internal medicine interests in Harrisonburg:



Harrisonburg Animal Hospital
4.7 ★★★★★ (208)
Veterinarian
Closed · 1611 N Liberty St

This practice is **AAHA certified** and has a strong reputation for handling chronic illnesses. Dr. Maureen Ward and her team are known for **researching specific conditions** and coordinating with outside specialists when needed for advanced management.



Heartland Veterinary Clinic
4.6 ★★★★★ (420)
Veterinarian
Closed · 979 S High St #1636



Anicura Veterinary Center
4.7 ★★★★★ (1.5K)
Veterinarian
Closed · 1992 Medical Ave

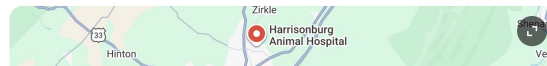
As a nonprofit clinic, they are highly regarded for providing **affordable diagnostic testing and labs**, which can significantly reduce the long-term financial burden of managing a chronic disease like Cushing's. [Harrisonburg Animal Hospital +5](#)

Nearby Board-Certified Specialists

For cases that are difficult to stabilize, you may need a board-certified internal medicine specialist. These specialists have advanced training in endocrinology:

- **Virginia Veterinary Specialty & Emergency (Charlottesville)**: Located about an hour away, they have a dedicated **Internal Medicine department** that excels in treating complex endocrine disorders.
- **Virginia Veterinary Centers (Richmond/Midlothian)**: These centers employ **board-certified internists** specifically trained in endocrinology to manage difficult chronic diseases. [Virginia Veterinary Specialty & EmERGE... +3](#)

Would you like help finding **specific diagnostic tests** or **medication pricing** for Cushing's treatment in the Harrisonburg area?



What were the other options returned to you from the knowledge graph that you didn't highlight above and why did you choose to highlight these over those you omitted?

When I looked for veterinarians near Harrisonburg that could handle a specialized case like Cushing's disease, I reviewed all the local clinics in the area. I chose to highlight the specific options in my previous response because they explicitly mentioned **internal medicine interests, advanced diagnostic facilities, or affordability for chronic management**.

Here are the other clinics that were in my "knowledge graph" but were omitted from the primary highlights:

Omitted Local Clinics



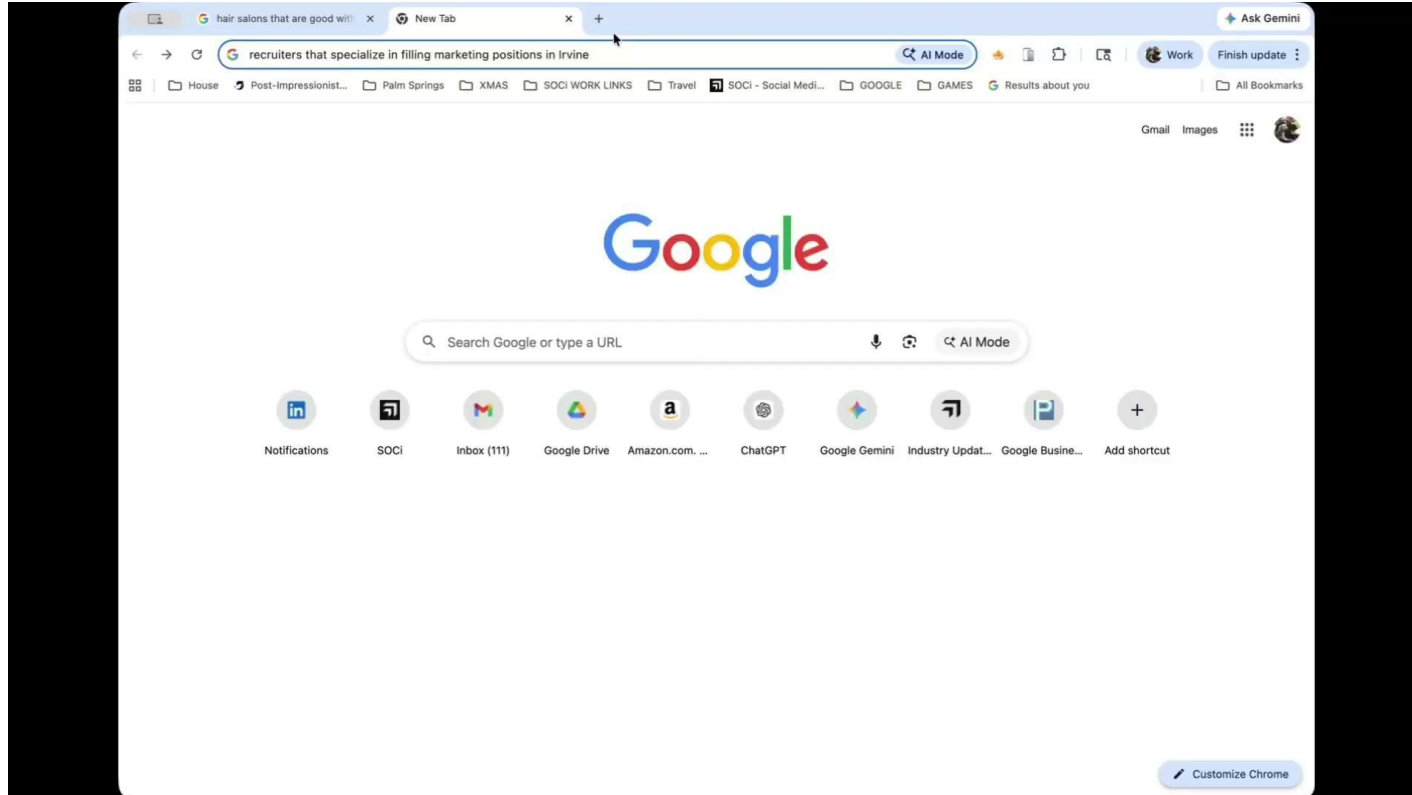
Ashby Animal Clinic
4.8 ★★★★★ (286)
Veterinarian
Closed · Harrisonburg, VA

A highly-rated, award-winning clinic in Harrisonburg. While they are a cornerstone of the community, I omitted them only because their public materials focus more on broad general care and being "Best of the Valley" rather than specific advanced internal medicine or endocrinology highlights.



Traditional Search vs. AI Mode

WHERE TECHNICAL SEO FAILS





Traditional Search vs. AI Mode

WHERE TECHNICAL SEO FAILS



best pediatric dentists in wilson, nc

AI Mode

Top rated Open now

Results for **Wilson, NC** · Choose area

Places

Sunny Skies Pediatric Dentistry
 4.9 ★★★★★ (327) · Pediatric dentist
 2605 Forest Hills Rd SW B · (252) 512-4144
 Closed · Opens 8:30AM Tue
 Their website mentions **best pediatric dentists**

Dr. Cornelius Martin
 5.0 ★★★★★ (1) · Dentist
 2605 Forest Hills Rd SW B · (252) 512-4144
 Their website mentions **best pediatric dentists**

Dental
 4.4 ★★★★★ (707) · Dentist
 3401 Raleigh Rd Pkwy W Site 10C · (252) 512-4144
 Closed · Opens 8AM Tue
 Our family decided to relocate to Wilson, NC from Las Vegas.

Summary of Key Providers in Wilson

Practice	Primary Dentist	Key Features
Sunny Skies Pediatric Dentistry	Dr. Cornelius Martin	High ratings (4.9), special needs expertise
The Dental Care Center	Dr. Stuart Higgins	Fast service, accepts Medicaid
Wilson Pediatric Dentistry	Dr. Jasmine Elmore	Specialized pediatric focus, Saturday hours
Watson Family Dentistry	Dr. Amy Watson	Family-oriented environment, broad service range

Top-Rated Pediatric Specialists Family & Emergency Options



Gemini & Google's AI Mode

TRADITIONAL SEO IS NO LONGER ENOUGH



Data-Driven Comparison

Metric [Ⓞ]	Dental	Top-Tier Specialists (e.g., Sunny Skies)
Search Presence	High (Dominant SEO)	Moderate (Community-focused)
Administrative Trust	Low (Wait-time & scheduling complaints)	High (Efficient, patient-focused staff)
Provider Continuity	Low (High turnover reported)	High (Named, stable owner-operators)
Clinical Focus	Production-driven / Generalist	Quality-driven / Pediatric Specialist

Choosing Between the Two

Feature [Ⓞ]	Local Private Practice	Multi-Location Corporate
Best For	Long-term relationships, special needs, high anxiety.	Speed, emergencies, Saturday availability.
Staff	Usually very stable; same faces every year.	May have more frequent turnover of dentists.
Focus	Community-focused and personalized.	Efficiency and convenience-focused.



Gemini & Google's AI Mode

UNDERSTANDING LLM BIAS



Pizza Restaurants: National Chains vs. Local Shops

Feature / Signal	National Chains (e.g., Domino's)	Local Independent Shops
Core Advantage	Utility, Logistics, & Scale	Sentiment, Quality, & Hyper-Local Relevance
Winning Queries	"Cheap pizza," "Open now," "Pizza tracker," generic "Pizza near me"	"Best pizza," "Wood-fired," "Dine-in," "Pizza near [Local Park]"
User Intent	Frictionless transaction & Convenience	Qualitative experience & Specific product matching
Primary Data Engine	Structured Data: Standardized menus, exact hours, transactional schema.	Unstructured Data: Emotional, keyword-rich customer reviews.
Key Ranking Factors	Proximity to user & Massive Corporate Domain Authority.	Hyper-local backlinks (local news/bloggers) & High user dwell time.
The "Why" They Win	The algorithm trusts they can fulfill an immediate, generic need perfectly.	The algorithm trusts they are the definitive answer for specific, high-quality desires.

Catering: Restaurants vs. Dedicated Caterers

Searcher Priority	Signal Weighting: Dedicated Caterer	Signal Weighting: Restaurant with Catering	Recommendation Tilt
"I need it to look professional"	High: Mentions of "linens," "chafing dishes," and "staffing" in reviews.	Low: Data often indicates "drop-off" style (foil trays and plastic bags).	Dedicated Caterer
"I love their specific tacos"	Low: Generic "Mexican Buffet" menus lack the brand-name trust of a local favorite.	High: Strong "Topical Authority" for a specific dish the user already knows and likes.	Restaurant
"It's a high-stakes wedding/gala"	High: "Full-service" keywords and multi-course menu customization signals.	Low: Fixed menus and limited flexibility for large-scale dietary restrictions.	Dedicated Caterer
"Budget is the only factor"	Low: Higher overhead due to specialized transport and staffing.	High: "Bulk discount" signals and lower per-head costs for standard menu items.	Restaurant
"I need it for 15 people tomorrow"	Moderate: Often require longer lead times for custom prep.	High: Already optimized for high-volume daily output and same-day ordering.	Restaurant



Gemini & Google's AI Mode

SUBVERTING BIASES



Recommendations for Success in an LLM World:

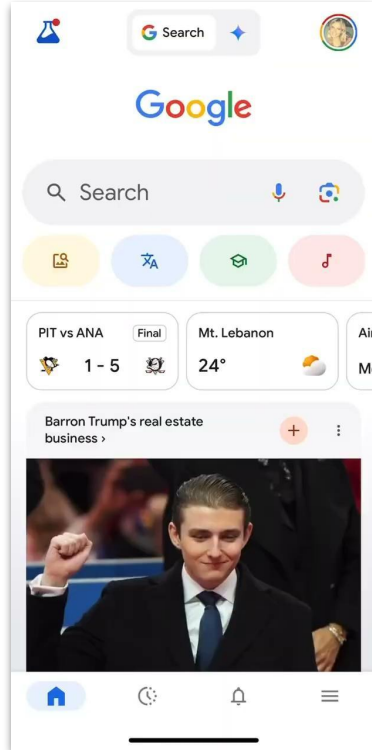
- Perform a discovery search for your industry.
- When a location doesn't appear as a recommendation, ask why.
- Uncover what national vs. local biases exist.
- Create content that speaks to those biases or shortcomings (i.e. if LLMs think local dental brands are better for kids, create content acknowledges the challenge of brining a child in for their first dental appointment and detail your process for addressing it).

Social Search Experiences

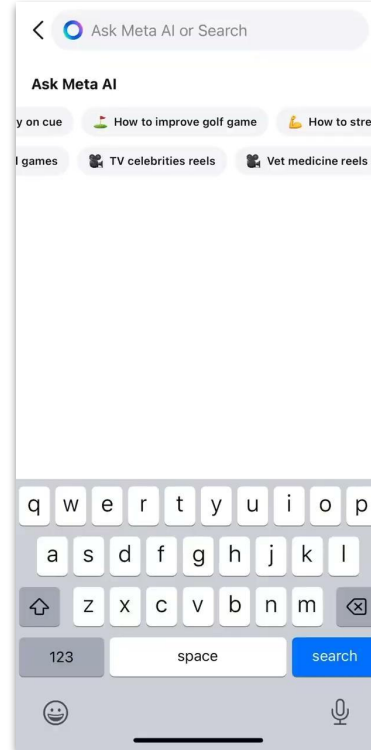
Property Management/Instagram Examples



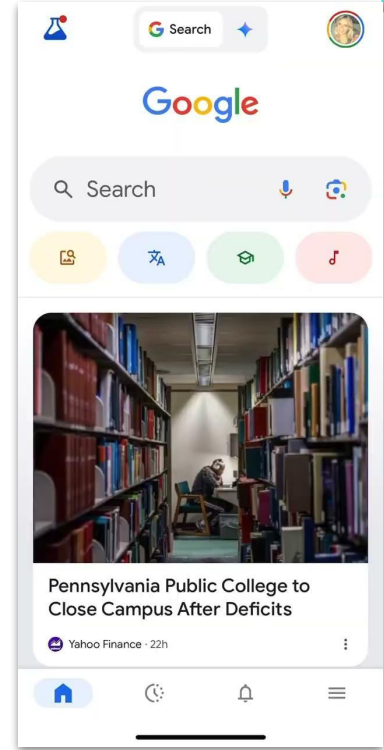
DISCOVERY ----- > SOCIAL SEARCH



QUERY / QUESTION ----- > SOCIAL SEARCH



QUERY / QUESTION ----- > SOCIAL SEARCH



BRAND SEARCH ----- > SOCIAL SEARCH



Checkbox Optimization

New GBP Categories, Attributes & More...



The SEO Juice

NEW GOOGLE BUSINESS CATEGORIES



Added March 25th:

- Pickleball Instructor
- Spine Surgeon
- Medical Geneticist



Caught in the Wild

New features we've spied
in Local Search results



Caught in the Wild ...

A really great editorial on why you should be wary of self-proclaimed "SEO Guru"

<https://preetigupta.me/blog/misuse-of-the-word-guru/>

The **SEO** Juice

← Post

Preeti Gupta @ilovechocolates.bsky.social · 1d
I don't like how the word 'Guru' is misused in the SEO industry.

So I wrote a post on my (personal) website to share why the industry has ruined 'Guru' for me.

Spoiler: Could be controversial(?)

preetigupta.me/blog/misuse-...

1 comment 9 hearts

AlexHarford-TechSEO @alexharfordseo.bsky.social + Follow

It puts me off when I see an SEO self-describe themselves as a "Guru." I've never come across anyone who does so who is a good and ethical SEO.

A lot of words are losing meaning in today's world, though there can't be many that were as special to you as Guru.

11:31 AM · Apr 6, 2026

6 likes

2 comments 6 hearts

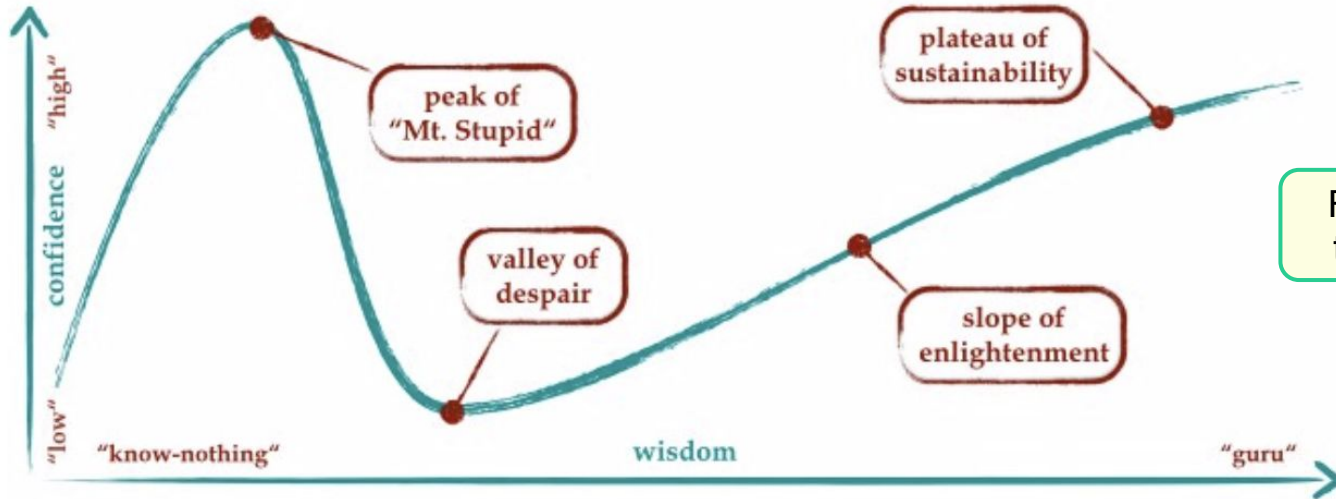
Preeti Gupta @ilovechocolates.bsky.social · 12h
I agree so much. And yeah, it is just very sad to see how the words get manipulated and used in a completely different way :'(

1 heart

John Mueller @johnmu.com · 13h
To me, when someone self-declares themselves as an SEO guru, it's an extremely obvious sign that they're a clueless imposter. SEO is not belief-based, nobody knows everything, and it changes over time. You have to acknowledge that you were wrong at times, learn, and practice more.

1 comment 9 hearts

- **Know-nothing:** All they know about SEO, is it's something they need to work on.
- **Know-everything:** Know enough to think they know everything.
- **Student:** Know enough to know there's always more to learn.
- **Guru:** Anyone who claims to be a "Guru" must go back two bullets.



From a 3 year old SEO training presentation :)



Between the Juice

Current Available and Upcoming
Resources for Local Search
News, Tips and Tricks

The SEO Juice



Register to Join **Live**
or watch on-demand



Scan or Click

SOCi Customers



Scan or Click

Non-Customers

Discover and Learn with SOCi Central

Find everything SOCi — product updates, training, and resources — all in one place

Learn best practices, find resources, and get answers from SOCi experts

Stay informed with insights and announcements to help you succeed faster

The screenshot displays the SOCi Central website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo and links for 'SOCi Platform', 'University', 'Help Center', and 'Support Tickets'. A search bar is located on the right side of the header. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Home**: A large banner with the text 'Welcome to SOCi CENTRAL' and 'Your hub for connection, collaboration, and growth'. Below the banner are two buttons: 'Ask a question' and 'Share a win'.
- From the SOCi Team**: A list of links including 'News & Insights', 'Industry Updates', 'Product Updates', and 'Events'.
- Discussions & Resources**: A list of links including 'Ask a Question', 'Tips & Best Practices', 'Tools & Resources', and 'Peer-to-Peer'.
- Latest News & Updates**: A grid of three news items, each with a profile picture, name, role, and date. The first item is 'SOCi Fall '25 Release Notes' by Kellie Petruzzelli. The second is 'Local Memo: LinkedIn Links Clarified, Reddit Surges in AI Search, New Google AI Summaries, ChatGPT Focuses on...' by Kellie Petruzzelli. The third is 'How AI Is Changing Online Reputation Management in 2025' by Kellie Petruzzelli.
- Upcoming Events**: A grid of four event cards. The first is 'Social Best Practices' (Learn about the importance of local social media...). The second is 'The SEO Juice Webinar Series' (The ultimate monthly webinar series...). The third is 'Genius Social for Admins' (Join this live session to learn how to garner more engagement...). The fourth is 'SOCi SPOTLIGHT' (Join us for our new quarterly webinar series...). Each card includes a date and time.
- How are we doing?**: A call-to-action box with the text 'Share your thoughts on how we're doing, areas where we can improve, and any ideas or features you'd love to see in SOCi Central. Your feedback helps us make this space even better.' and a 'Share your thoughts' button.

The SEO Juice

UNFILTERED EDITION

Your AI search questions. Our honest answers.

The Details

📅 Wednesday, April 22nd

⌚ 30 min

🕒 10 a.m. PT / 1 p.m. ET

📍 Zoom



Scan to Register



Thanks for Joining!

See you next month!