

SOCI[↑]

The **SEO** Juice

August 13th, 2025

back to school supplies



Squeezing the most out of your local SEO.

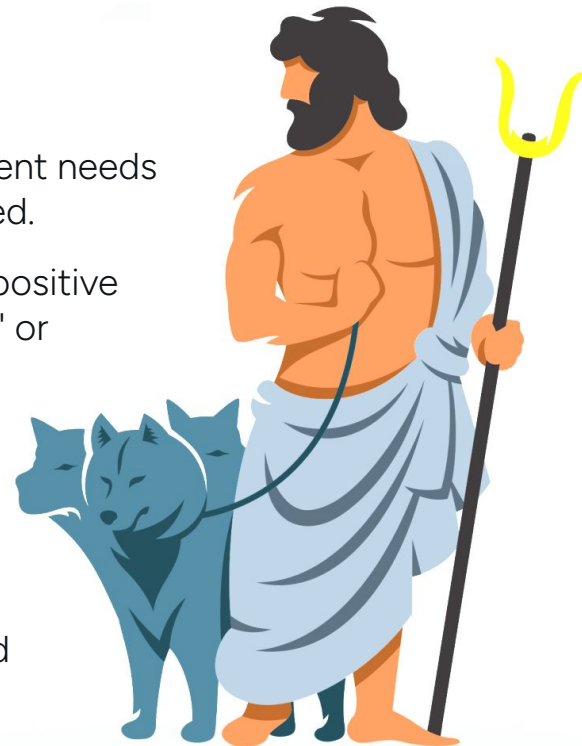
The SEO Juice

3 LOCAL SEO TRUTHS & A MYTH



Tips for a winning LLM Optimization Strategy:

- 1) **Focus on quality over gaming:** It's not just about keywords; content needs to address the full user intent behind a query. FAQs recommended.
- 2) **Build Authority & Trustworthiness:** Contributing factors include positive reviews, awards and accreditations, and mentions within "best of" or industry-specific lists on reputable websites.
- 3) **Publish llms.txt files:** Provides LLMs with the most valuable information about your website; improves the accuracy and relevance of AI interactions with that content.
- 4) **Include Local Business Schema:** Schema provide search engines and LLMs with rich, structured data that clarifies the meaning and relationships within their content.



Your soci Team

The SEO Juice



Kaci McBride
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3 LOCAL SEO TRUTHS & A MYTH

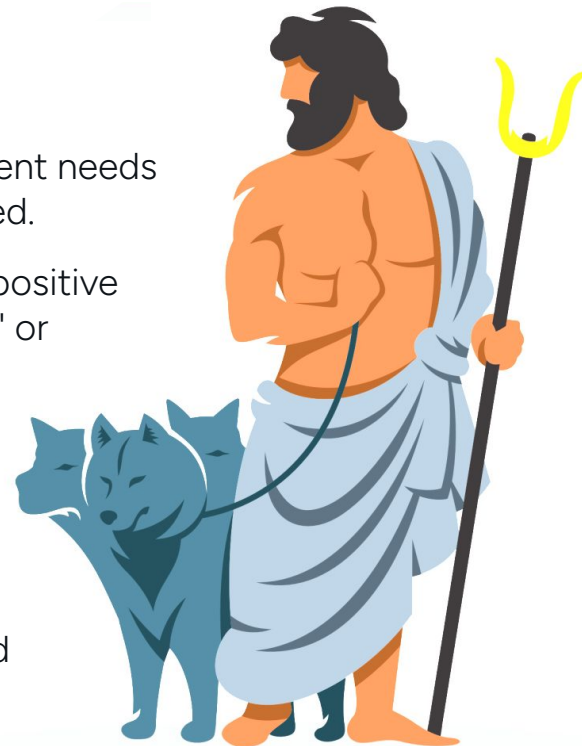


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3 LOCAL SEO TRUTHS & A MYTH



John Mueller

@johnmu.com



FWIW no AI system currently uses llms.txt.

Jun 17, 2025 at 5:10 AM



14



4



Reply

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Search Advocate, Google Product Expert

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To get your content to appear in AI Overview, simply use normal SEO practices. You don't need GEO, LLMO or anything else.

[Gary Illyes](#)

[#searchcentrallive](#) [#scldd2025](#)

The SEO Juice

- **Industry News**
The latest news in Local Search & what it means for you
- **Negative Visibility Factors**
These things will get you deranked.
- **Social Media Engagements**
Ranking Factors and Tips
- **Checkbox Optimization**
New Google Categories, Attributes & Features
- **Caught in the Wild**
New features we've spied in Local Search results



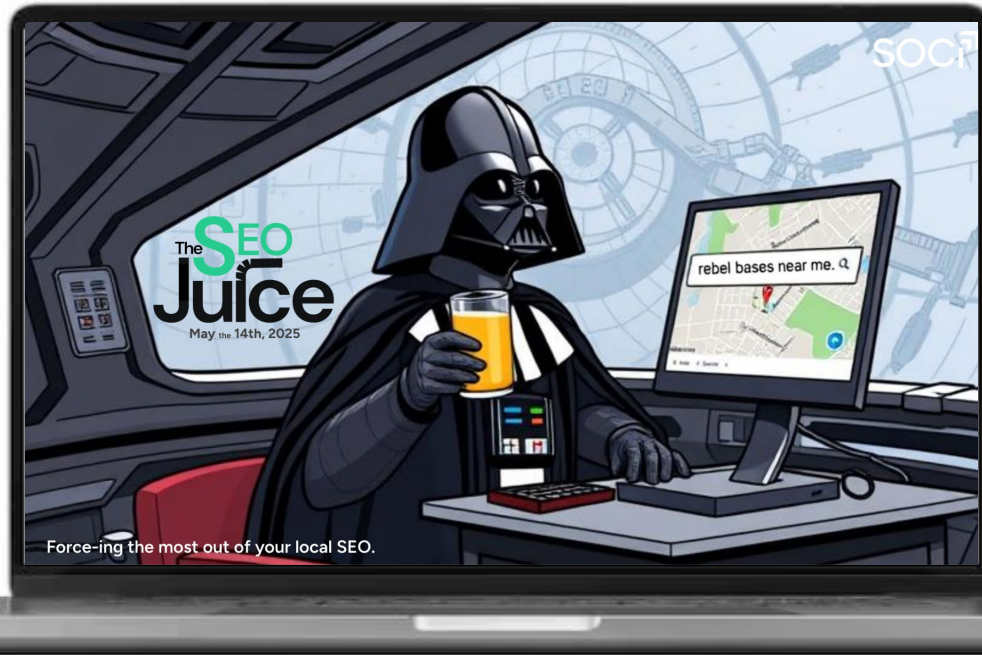
The SEO Juice

Watch On-Demand



Scan or Click

SOCI Customers



Scan or Click

Non-Customers



Industry News

The latest in Local Search
and what it means for you



Perplexity's Ranking Factors Revealed

TRADITIONAL SEO PRACTICES APPLY



A recent analysis of browser-level interactions with Perplexity's infrastructure has uncovered dozens of "[ranking patterns](#)" that prove core SEO principles continue to apply in the age of AI search.

Key core ranking signals uncovered include:

- **Content Helpfulness & Semantic Relevance:** Focus on quality over gaming. It's not just about keywords; content needs to address the full user intent behind a query. FAQs recommended.
- **Authority & Trustworthiness:** Contributing factors include positive reviews, awards and accreditations, and mentions within "best of" or industry-specific lists on reputable websites.
- **Technical Page Optimization:** Factors like site speed, mobile responsiveness, SSL, XML sitemaps, robots.txt, and structured data still matter.

Takeaway for Local Businesses: Don't believe the hype. Many ill-informed SEOs and local marketing agencies are out selling the idea that you need to adjust your optimization strategy for AI, and that there are magic data files that will help you appear in LLM results. As Google stressed in last month's Search Central Live conference: if you want to appear in AI generated results, "simply use normal SEO practices."



CONFIRMED: Widespread Drop in Search Impressions Due to GBP Reporting Bug

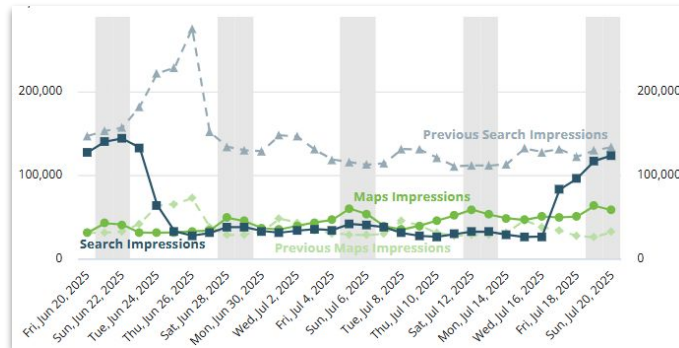
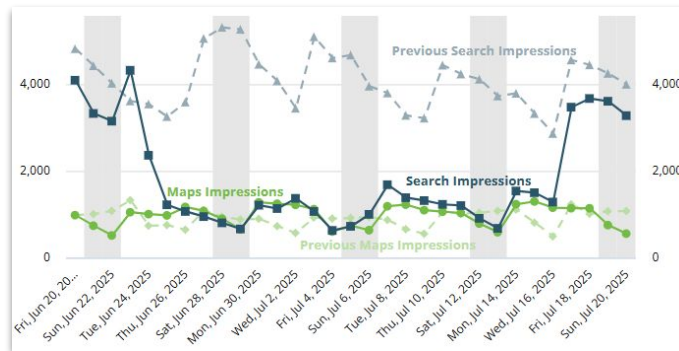


SOCi, along with others in the industry observed a widespread drop in Search Impressions from June 24 through July 16th.

Google confirmed directly with SOCi that the missing data is due to a bug on their end. Google plans to backfill the data, though no ETA for this had been set.

Takeaway for Local Businesses:

Accurate Search Impression reporting for June & July will be delayed until Google backfills the missing data.





Google Appears to Confirm Responding to Reviews is a Ranking Signal



Besides being a way to mitigate bad reviews, promote more thoughtful reviews, and just being plain old good customer service, Google seems to have confirmed what SOCi has been saying for years: *Responding to reviews can help improve your local visibility.*

Google's support page on "[Tips to improve your local ranking on Google](#)" now includes the following recommendation:

Respond to reviews

When you reply to customer reviews, it shows that you value their feedback. Positive reviews and helpful replies can help your business stand out.

Takeaway for Local Businesses:

Google is paying attention. Show you value customer feedback by responding to all reviews, even those without text. Google, and your customers, will reward you for it.

Note: *Keywords in review responses is still NOT a factor.*



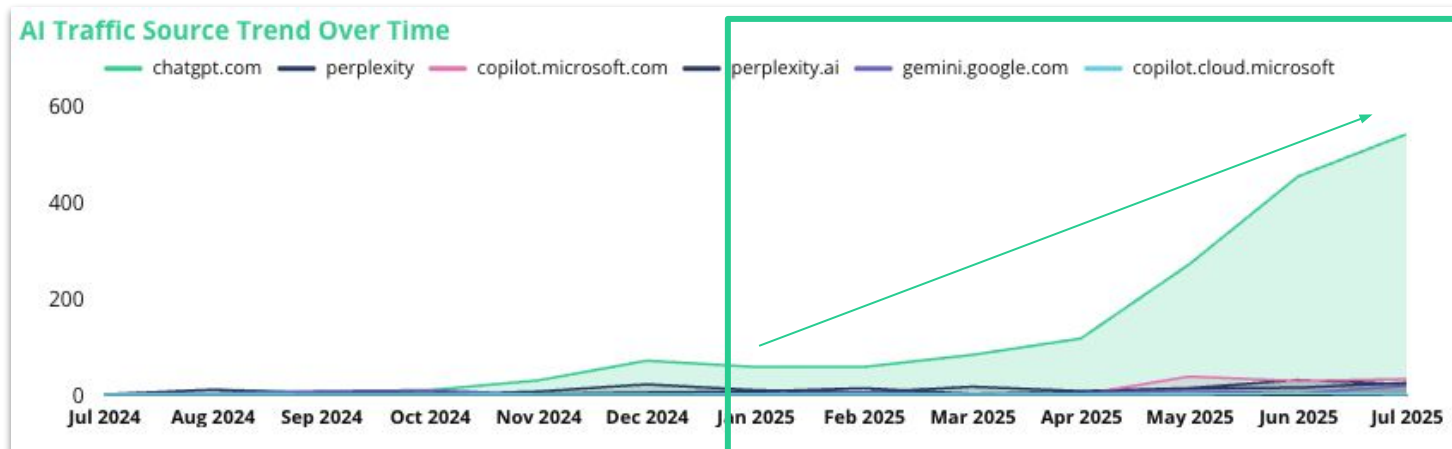


ChatGPT Traffic Growing Significantly



SOCi's internal traffic data is signaling significant traffic growth to local landing pages associated with ChatGPT.

ChatGPT as a traffic source has grown **+480% since January of 2025**. Although the overall traffic % to total is still small (.2% of total traffic), the rapid growth is one to keep an eye on.



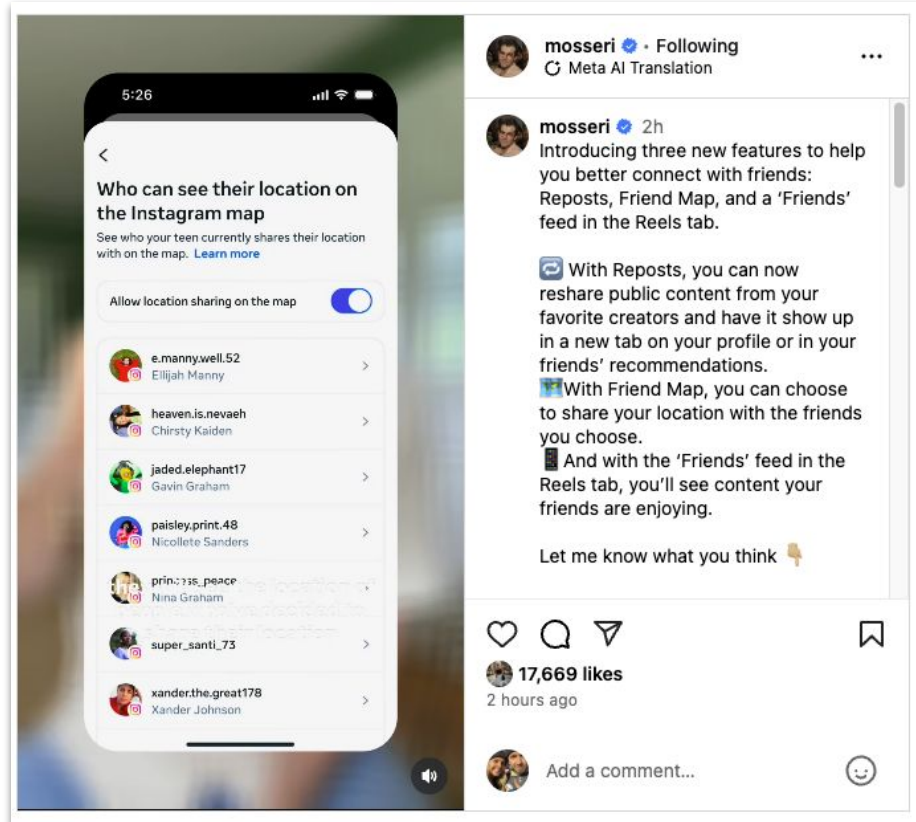


Instagram Announces New Features



On 8/6, Instagram announced three new features:

- Reposts
 - Native feature to Instagram
- Friend Map
 - Can opt in/out
- Friends Feed
 - This is not just content from your Friends, but Reels that your friends engage with



Negative Visibility Factors

Ranking Kryptonite



TM



Negative Visibility Factors

TAKE YOUR RANK AWAY

Factors that can **negatively** impact your search visibility:

- Being closed
- Having a Star Rating under a 4.0
- Having a hidden address
- Having an Intrusive interstitial on the linked local page
- Local pages become unlinked
- Breaking Google guidelines





Negative Visibility Factors

BEING CLOSED



Google will de-rank business who are closed in favor of ones that are open, even if they may not be the best answer.

wiper blades near me

Places

- Pep Boys Auto Service & Tires**
4.0 ★★★★★ (1.4K) · Tire shop
4645 E Pacific Coast Hwy · (562) 247-3486
Open · Closes 9PM
"They had the part that I was looking for and it was very reasonable prices."
- Long Beach Auto Parts**
4.7 ★★★★★ (35) · Auto parts store
1310 Stanley Ave · (562) 433-8090
Open · Closes 5PM
"This is the best place to get any parts extremely knowledgeable and helpful"
- AutoZone Auto Parts**
4.2 ★★★★★ (569) · Auto parts store
2923 E Anaheim St · (562) 438-2405
Open · Closes 9PM
In stock: windshield wiper blades · Updated today

More places →

wiper blades near me

Places

- Ralphs**
4.3 ★★★★★ (1K) · \$ - \$\$ · Grocery store
1930 N Lakewood Blvd · (562) 494-4371
Open · Closes 1AM
"Great selection and prices."
- AutoZone Auto Parts**
4.7 ★★★★★ (200) · Auto parts store
6500 E Spring St · (562) 425-1502
Closed · Opens 8AM Thu
In stock: windshield wiper blades · Updated today
- O'Reilly Auto Parts**
4.5 ★★★★★ (148) · Auto parts store
6551 E Spring St · (562) 420-9941
Closed · Opens 8AM Thu
In stock: windshield wiper blades · Updated today

More places →



Negative Visibility Factors

BEING CLOSED



travel agencies near me

Businesses

- Cruise Planners - Travel By Elisa**
5.0 ★★★★★ (28) · Travel agency
3+ years in business · E Benmore St
Open · Closes 6 PM · (562) 225-7623
"Elisa has been very helpful and knowledgeable about anything I ask."
- KMH Boutique Travel**
4.9 ★★★★★ (291) · Travel agency
5+ years in business · La Palma, CA
Open · Closes 6:30 PM · (657) 667-8727
"Even if we had a question after hours, we they responded within minutes."
- Chick Travel Long Beach**
4.0 ★★★★★ (6) · Travel agency
10+ years in business · 5537 E Stearns St
Open 24 hours · (562) 249-1944

More businesses →

AFTERNOON

travel agencies near me

Businesses

- Chick Travel Long Beach**
4.0 ★★★★★ (6) · Travel agency
10+ years in business · 5537 E Stearns St
Open 24 hours · (562) 249-1944
- Cruise Planners - Travel By Elisa**
5.0 ★★★★★ (28) · Travel agency
3+ years in business · E Benmore St
Closed · Opens 10 AM Fri · (562) 225-7623
"Elisa has been very helpful and knowledgeable about anything I ask."
- KMH Boutique Travel**
4.9 ★★★★★ (291) · Travel agency
5+ years in business · La Palma, CA
Closed · Opens 7 AM Fri · (657) 667-8727
"Even if we had a question after hours, we they responded within minutes."

More businesses →

EVENING

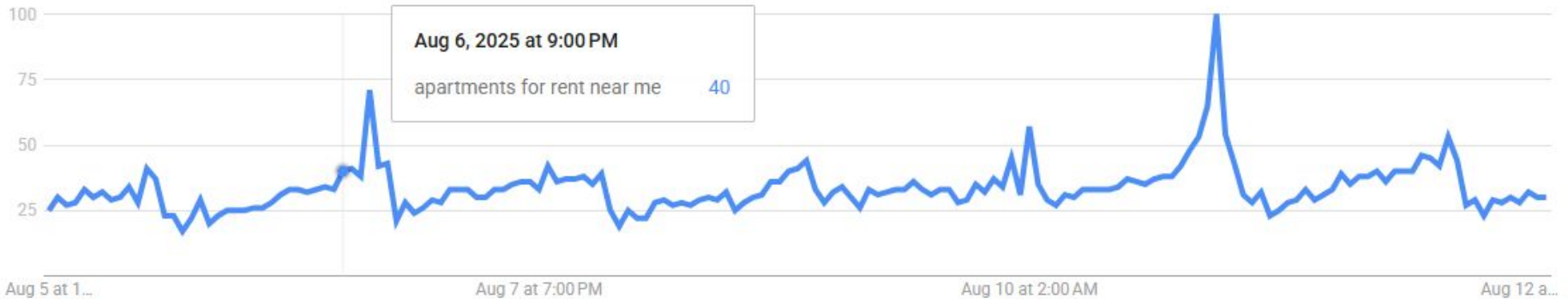


Negative Visibility Factors

BEING CLOSED



Recommendation: Be aware of when local discovery for your industry is most active. If leads are more active in the evening, consider extending the hours you are available.



Don't extend your hours if you are unavailable. Not being available when a customer expects you to might be just as bad as not being visible.

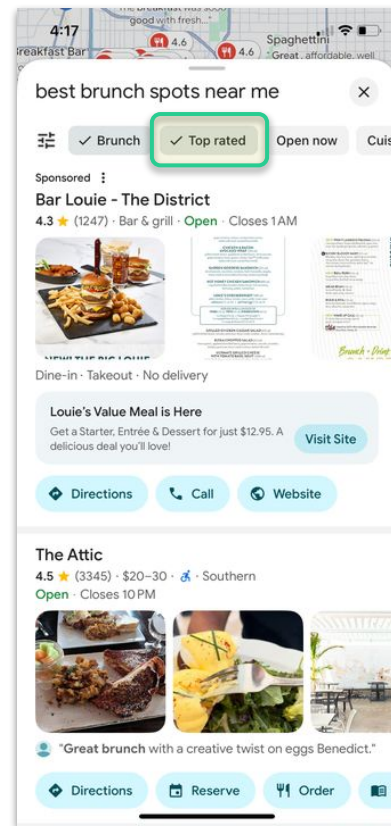
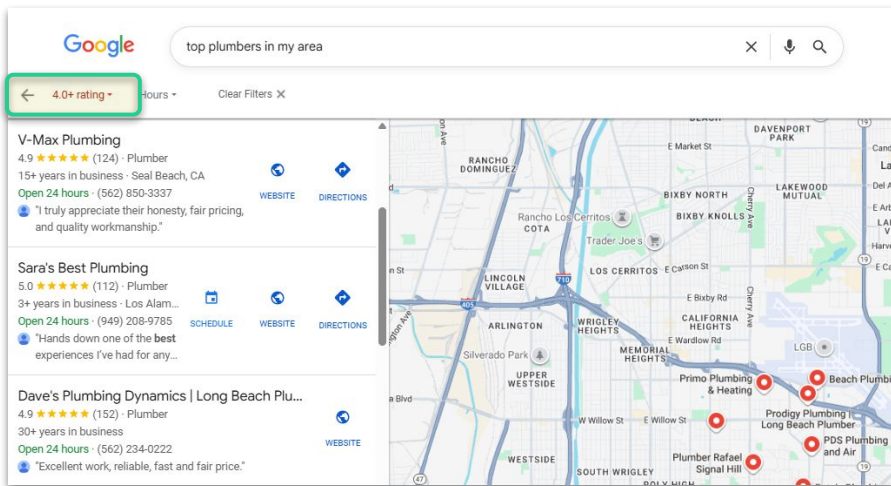


Negative Visibility Factors

A STAR RATING UNDER A 4.0



Google auto-filters search results to highlight businesses with a 4.0 rating and above when “Best” (or related synonyms like “top,” “awesome” or “great”) is added as a qualifier to a “near me” query.



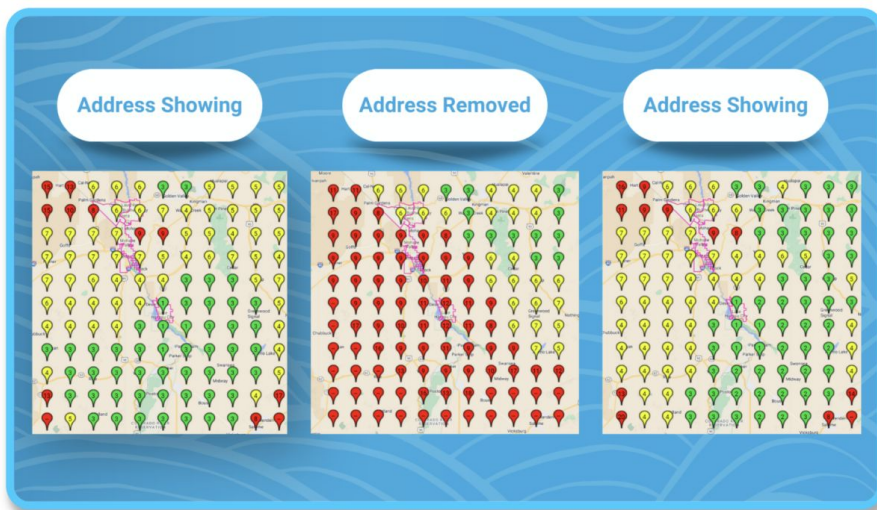


Negative Visibility Factors

HIDING YOUR BUSINESS ADDRESS



A study published by Joy Hawkins confirmed what many in the SEO community have assumed for some time: Hiding the address on your Google Business Profile can have a huge impact on visibility, affecting both rank and engagement.



[Source: Sterling Sky](#)

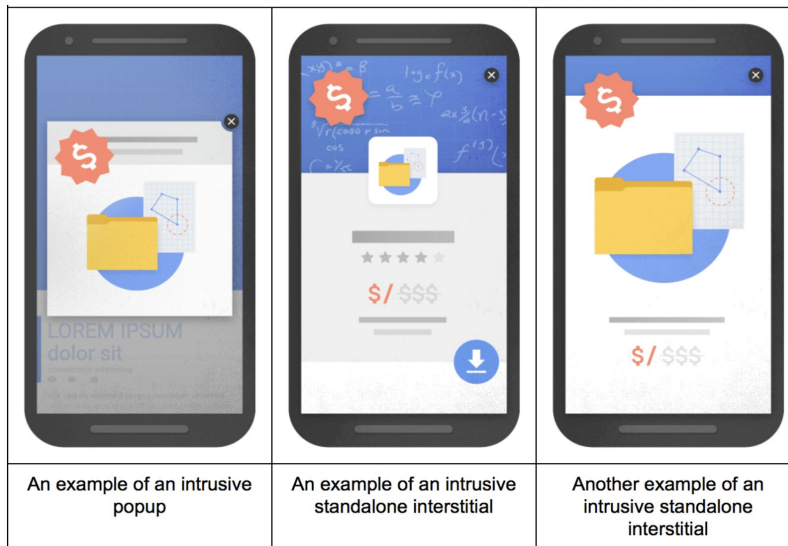


Negative Visibility Factors

LOCAL PAGE WITH AN INTRUSIVE INTERSTITIAL



In 2017 Google rolled out the intrusive mobile interstitial penalty, which places a ranking penalty on interstitials that are present when someone clicks to your web page.





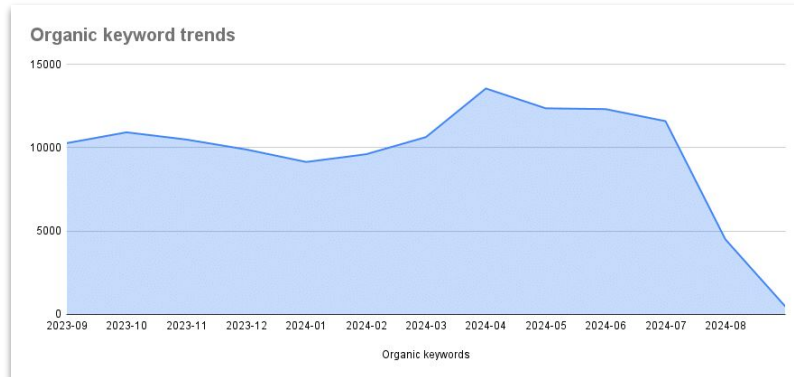
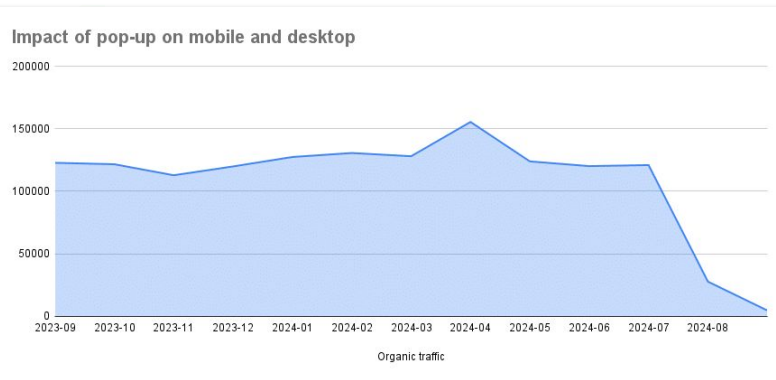
Negative Visibility Factors

LOCAL PAGE WITH AN INTRUSIVE INTERSTITIAL



A recent case study showed a business who added an interstitial that Google deems as “bad”, lost 82% of desktop organic traffic, and up to 97% of keywords to their homepage in one month.

[Source: Search Engine Land](#)

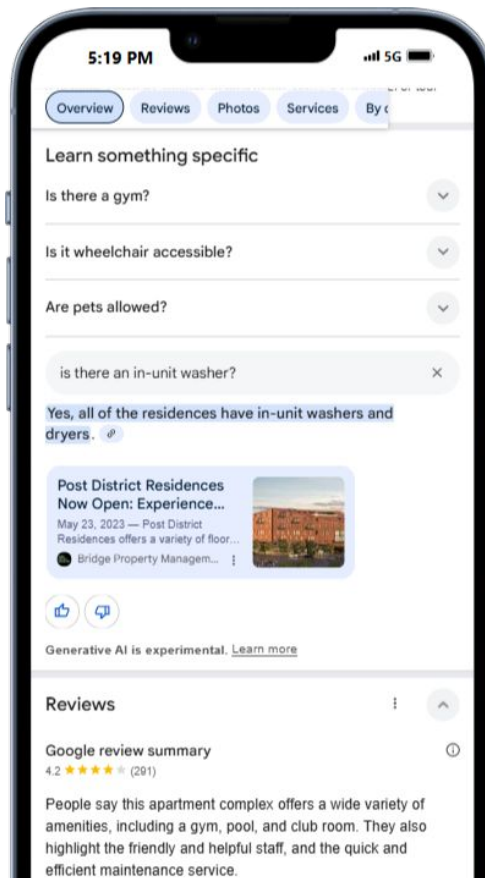




Negative Visibility Factors

LOCAL PAGES BECOME UNLINKED

Local pages aren't just the best structured citation your business can have, it provides Google information about your business when no other information exists.





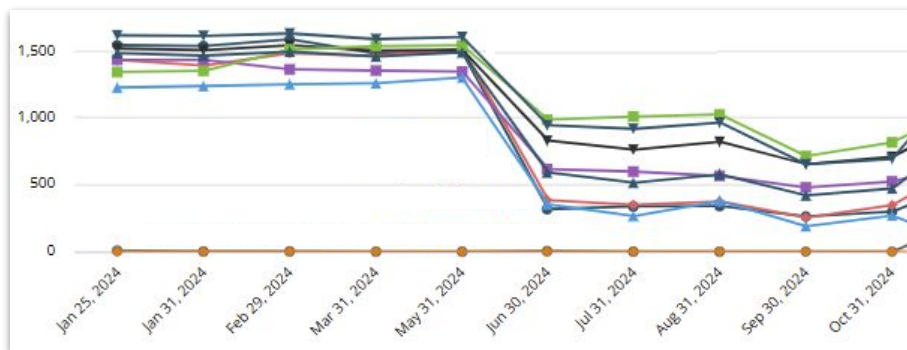
Negative Visibility Factors

LOCAL PAGES BECOME UNLINKED



A Case Study: A brand utilizing the main category, “beauty supply store” linked their GBP listings to their brand home page instead of local pages

While keyword volumes for branded traffic has remained flat, non-branded traffic related to their primary Google category has consistently been **down an average of 90%** year-over-year.





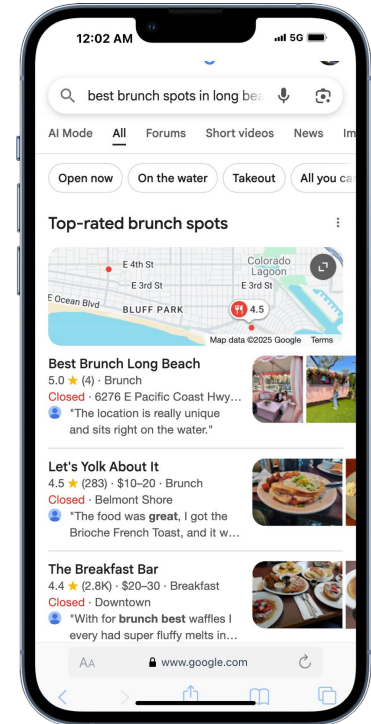
Negative Visibility Factors

BREAKING GOOGLE GUIDELINES



Penalties Google may apply to a business profile for violating GBP guidelines:

- **Misrepresenting your business:** Includes providing false addresses or inaccurate information about your business identity or services offered, or creating multiple listings for the same business.
- **Fake reviews:** Posting fabricated reviews, incentivizing customers to leave positive reviews (e.g., offering discounts or free items), or having employees write reviews are all considered violations.
- **Improper use of business name:** Adding keywords or marketing taglines to your business name that are not part of your official business name.
- **Spamming and keyword stuffing:** Using excessive keywords in your business description, reviews, or other parts of your profile to try and manipulate search rankings.





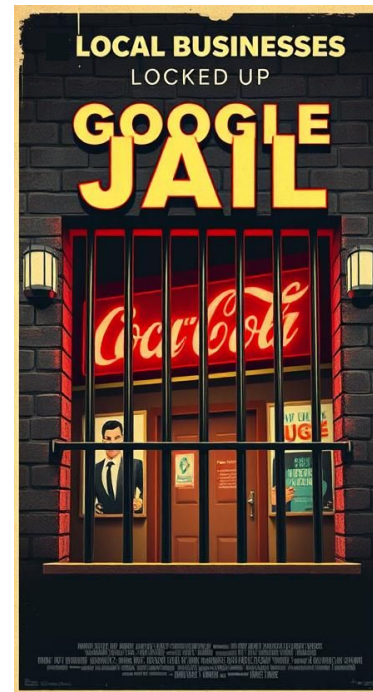
Negative Visibility Factors

BREAKING GOOGLE GUIDELINES



Penalties Google may apply to a business profile for violating GBP guidelines:

- **Soft Suspension:** Your listing remains visible, but you cannot make changes or manage it.
- **Hard Suspension:** Your listing is removed from Google Maps and search results. This is a more severe penalty for significant or repeated violations.
- **Restrictions on Profile Features:** Google might restrict features like the ability to receive new reviews, or existing reviews might be unpublished.
- **Warning Message:** Google may display a warning message to users if fake reviews have been removed from the profile.



Social Media Engagements

RANKING FACTORS AND TIPS



TM

Localized Posts

INCREASE REACH & ENGAGEMENT



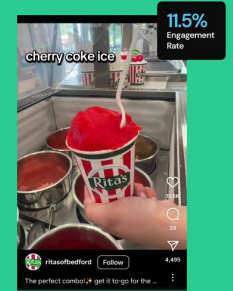
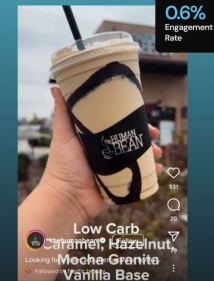
SOCi platform data shows localized Facebook posts drive 71X more engagement than corporate “waterfall” content.

Recommendation:
Incorporate as much hyperlocal content into your content mix as possible

🔥 Rita’s Italian Ice sees **500X+ more engagement** when local teams post real people and store energy vs. polished promos.



🔥 The Human Bean franchisees create humanized content that delivers up to **100X more engagement** than top-down brand posts.



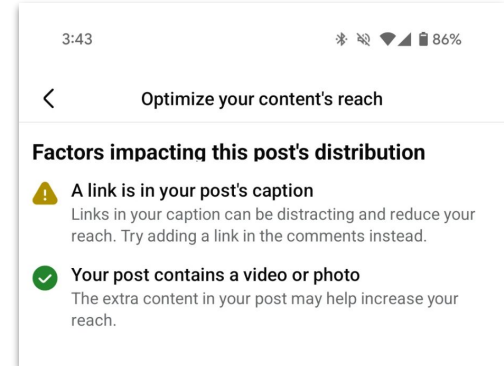
Facebook Algorithm

LIMITS REACH ON POSTS WITH LINK



Facebook wants to keep users engaged on its platform. They warn that a link in the caption will impact reach

- External links direct users away, potentially reducing time spent on Facebook
- The algorithm favors content like images, and videos over posts with outbound links
- Studies have shown that Facebook posts without links receive approximately twice the engagement of those with links
 - ◆ Linked posts are perceived as promotional or less engaging
 - ◆ Users may hesitate to click links due to potential disruptions or security concerns.



Impactful Engagements

HOW TO OPTIMIZE POSTS



Facebook= **shares** and **lengthy comments** on posts



Instagram= **shares** and **saves**



LinkedIn = **comments** and **shares**, over simple likes



TikTok= **shares** and **completion rate**



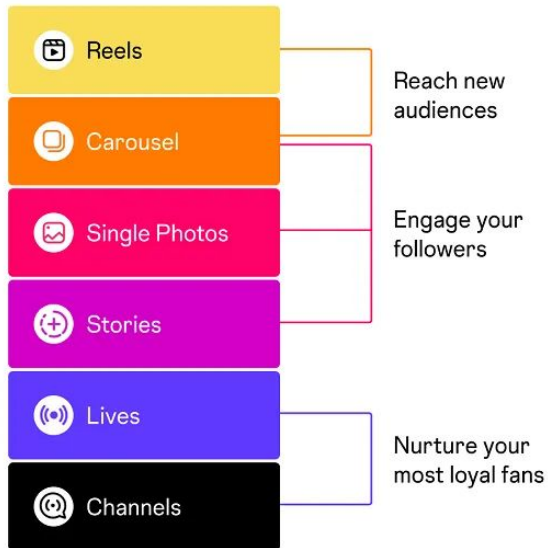
X = **replies** carry the most weight

Content Types on Instagram

WHEN TO USE EACH



Engaging by Surface on Instagram



Reels and carousels = reach new audiences.

Carousels, single photos and stories = engage
your community.

Lives and channels = nurture your community.

Hashtags

RANKING TIPS



In recent updates, it's been confirmed that hashtags no longer contribute to increased reach, as algorithms have evolved beyond relying on them for content distribution.

That said, hashtags can still serve a purpose in supporting branding and improving social search visibility.

If used, stick to 1–2 relevant hashtags, such as **#AustinApartments** or **#WillowApartments**



Checkbox Optimization

New GBP Categories, Attributes & More...



New GBP Categories



Auto Repair:

RV repair & maintenance service



Legal:

Probate Attorney



Caught in the Wild

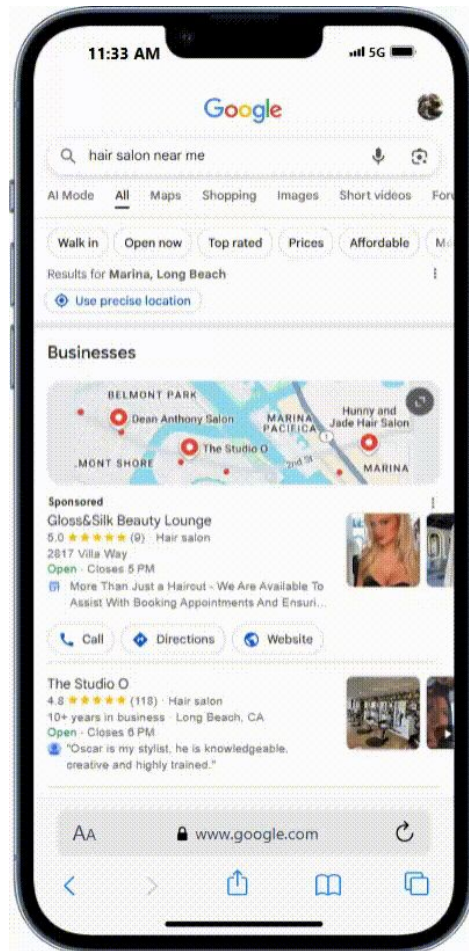
New features we've spied
in Local Search results



Caught in the Wild...

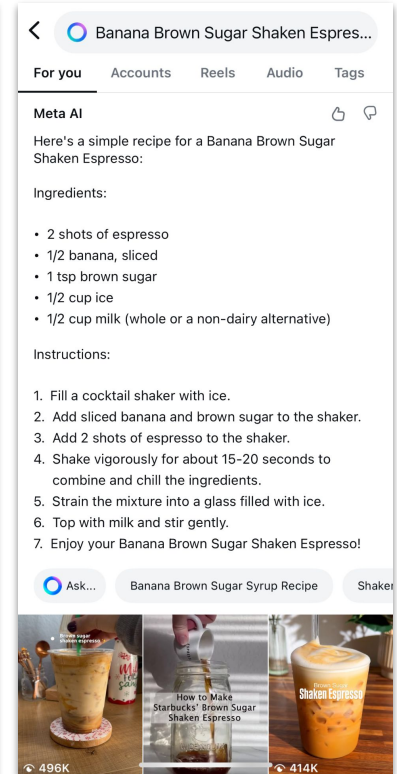
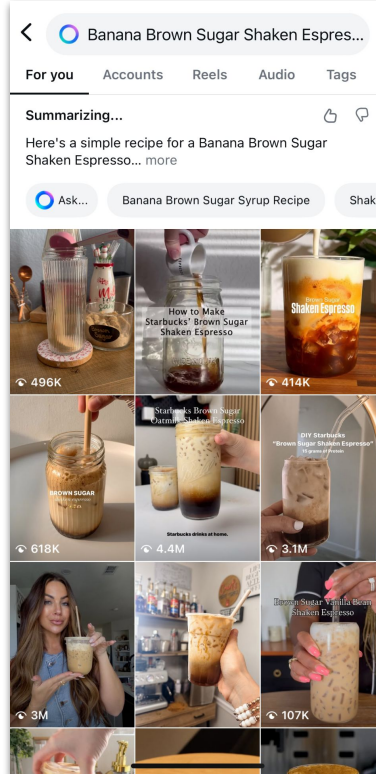
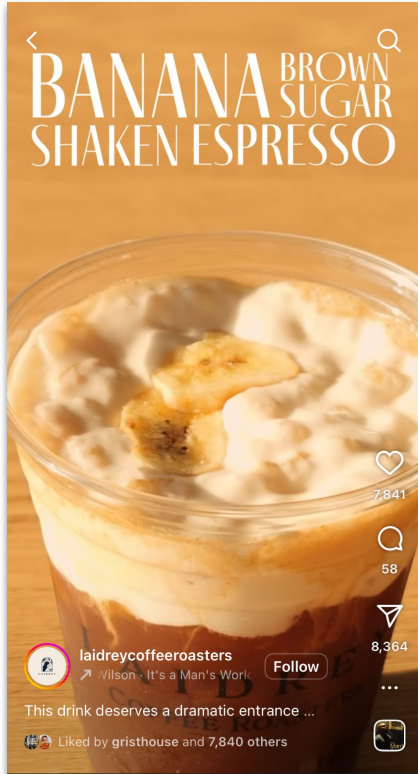
The **Traditional Local Pack** and the **AIO Local pack** appearing together for certain "near me" searches.*

* appears in mobile, specifically through this mobile simulator by webmobilefirst.com



Search Query in Comments

ON INSTAGRAM





Thanks for Joining!

See you next month!



Gary
Vaynerchuk



Lisa Landsman
Google



Kelly Ryan
OpenAI

Re¹Imagine

Digital marketing is changing.
Reimagine your entire strategy.



Scan or Click

Register now,
October 27–29 in Chicago
SOCi ReImagine



Webinar

August 20 - 1 PM CST

The Genius Way to Respond to Reviews



Scan to Reserve
Your Spot

