

The **SEO** **Juice**

November Spillover...



Squeezing Most Out of Your Local Search & Social Strategies.

SOCI[↑]

Your soci Team

The SEO Juice



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Enablement Manager



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Enablement Manager



2026 Local Search Ranking Factors Report

What this SMB Focused Survey
Means for your Multi-Location Brand



2026 Local Search Ranking Factors Report

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



2026 LOCAL PACK/MAPS RANKING FACTORS

Search

Rank	Factor	Score
1	Primary GBP Category	227
2	Proximity of Address to the Point of Search (Searcher-Business Distance)	225
3	Keywords in GBP Business Title	223
4	Physical Address in City of Search	213
5	Business is Open at Time of Search (Business Hours)	189
6	High Numerical Google Ratings (e.g. 4-5)	181
7	Address Is Showing on GBP (Not SAB)	176
8	Additional GBP Categories	173
9	Quantity of Native Google Reviews (w/text)	170
10	Proper Placement of the Map Pin	165

Local Search Ranking Factors

Your ultimate guide to local search success in 2026!

By Darren Shaw | Published November 6, 2025

Source: [Whitespark](#)

2026 Local Search Ranking Factors Report

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



- **This is a survey.** Findings are not a result of deep data analysis (though individual opinions may be), and may not align with the reality of Google's search algorithm, or the opinion of other local search experts.

* 16. For each **GBP Business Info Factor**, please score it between 0 and 5, across the different areas of impact.
Please score ALL factors.

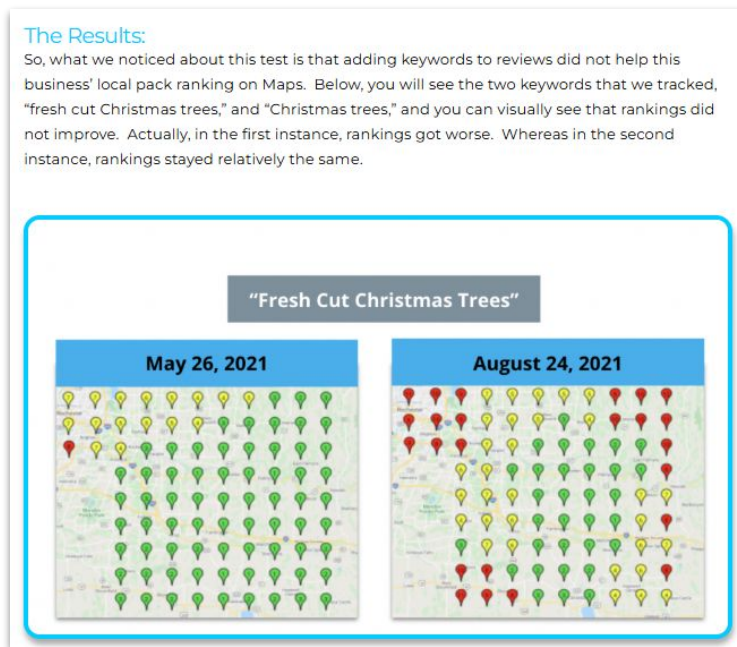
	Local PACK/FINDER ranking impact	Local ORGANIC ranking impact	CONVERSION impact	AI SEARCH visibility impact
Additional GBP Categories	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Age of Business (GBP Opening Date)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Business is Open at Time of Search (Business Hours)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
GBP Popular Times Section Shows Business as Busy	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Keywords in GBP Business Title	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Keywords in GBP Description	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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- **SMB focused.** Many of the opinions based on single location case studies.



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- **SMB focused.** Many of the opinions based on single location case studies.
- Does not take **Relevance** and **Prominence** into consideration.

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11	Recency of Reviews	164	
12	Proximity of Address to Centroid	157	

🔍 how does google rank local businesses?



🔄 AI Mode



In simple terms:

Relevance gets you on the list.

Prominence puts and order to that list.





Places



Del Taco

4.1 ★★★★★ (679) · \$10–20 · Fast Food

2201 Palo Verde Ave

👤 "Good variety & Good value, quick service."



Taco Bell

4.0 ★★★★★ (653) · \$1–10 · Fast Food

6407 Stearns St

👤 "Very tasty and delicious **food fast** service
clean atmosphere 🍷."



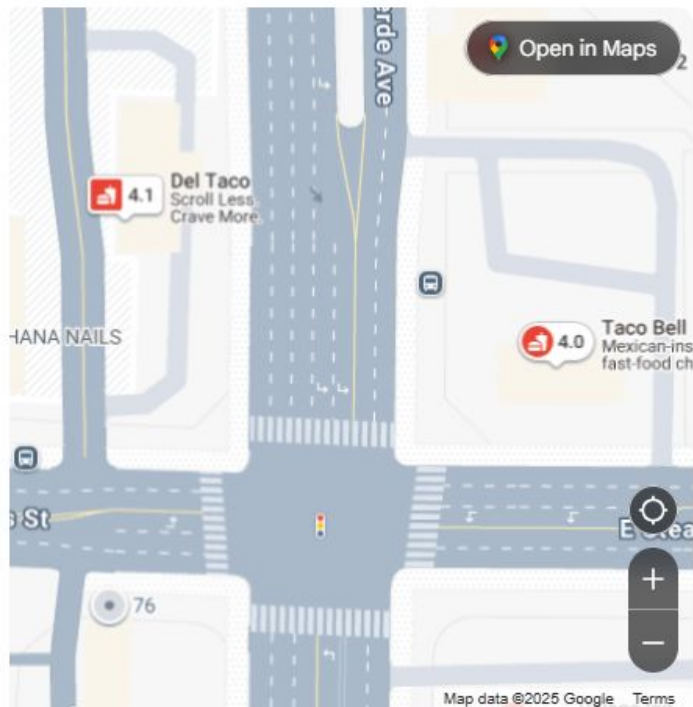
Dave's Hot Chicken

4.8 ★★★★★ (770) · \$10–20 · Chicken

4680 E Los Coyotes Diagonal Suite 106

👤 "Our order came out in about 12 minutes —
quick and fresh!"

More places >





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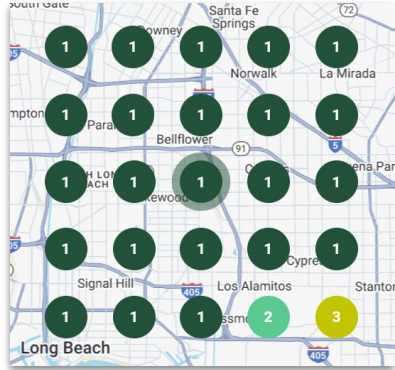
Rank	Factor
1	Primary GBP Category
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5	Business is Open at Time of Search (Business Hours)
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8	Additional GBP Categories
10	Proper Placement of the Map Pin
15	HTML NAP Matching GBP NAP
16	Completeness of GBP
17	Keywords in GBP Landing Page Title Tag
20	Keywords in GBP Landing Page Headings (H1, H2, etc)




Rank	Factor
6	High Numerical Google Ratings (e.g. 4-5)
9	Quantity of Native Google Reviews (w/text)
11	Recency of Reviews
13	Click-Through Rate from Local Pack/Maps Search Results
14	Sustained Influx of Reviews Over Time (rather than bursts)
19	Removal of spam listings through spam fighting

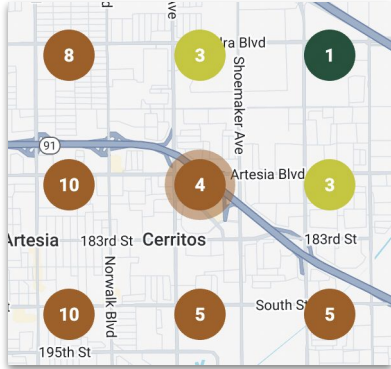
Determine IF you Rank

Determine WHERE you Rank



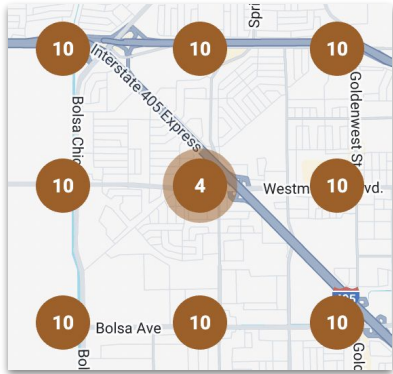
High Review Volumes get you Discovered in a Wider Radius

Ranking  ▲	Business 	Total Reviews 	Average Review Score 
1		3151	4.7
2	Public Art "Ten Soaring"	2	4.5
3	Get Air Trampoline Park	502	4.3
4	JUMPER'S JUNGLE NORWALK	104	4



Tools like **GeoRank** Provide Actionable Competitive Insights

Ranking i ▲	Business i	Total Reviews i	Average Review Score i
1	Eye Care West Optometry Inc	589	5
2	Eleven Optical	34	4.9
3	Precision Vision Optometry - Artesia	142	4.8
4		76	4.3
5	Eyesite Optometry	130	4.7
6	Modern Eyes Optometry	76	5



...and explain why that **5.0** might not be good enough

Ranking i ▲	Business i	Total Reviews i	Average Review Score i
1	Starwest Insurance Services, LLC DBA: Huntington Insurance Agency	330	5
2	Good Day Insurance	58	4.9
3	Mark Minh Nguyen - State Farm Insurance Agent	300	4.9
4		3	5
5	Fiesta Auto Insurance & Tax Service	270	4.9

Case Study: The Power of Social

SOCI¹

“The online-to-offline connection is critical for us. With insights from this test, we’re integrating social linking into our broader local SEO strategy to drive more traffic into studios.”



Skyla Souza
Director of Marketing,
Painting with a Twist

PAINTING WITH A
Twist

9%

Increase in GBP
Search impressions

10%

Increase in web
clicks & phone calls

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



- Social signals are now included, but the industry is WAY behind in understanding their impact on search visibility (i.e. ranking).



Social signals

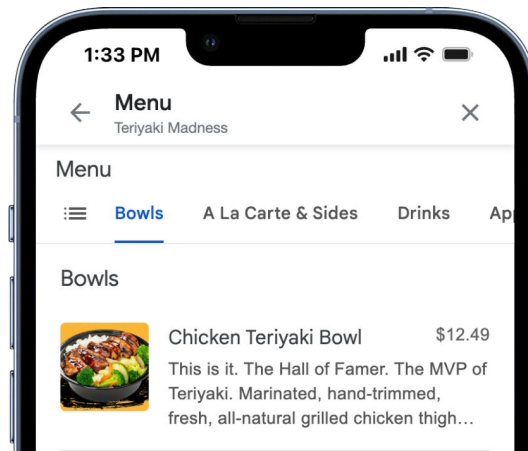
Follower count,
engagement, quality of
posts, etc.

Rank	factor
131	Social Profiles Are Linked to GBP
147	Presence of Social Media Updates on GBP
157	Quantity of Social Media Users Mentioning The Business
167	Recency of Posts on Social Profiles
172	Engagement on Social Profiles
173	Quality of Posts on Social Profiles
178	Frequency of Posts on Social Profiles
180	Quantity of Posts on Social Profiles
186	Follower Count on Social Profiles

2026 Local Search Ranking Factors Report

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- No mention of Menus as a ranking factor. Besides several great case studies, Google has explicitly stated structured menus enhance customer discovery.



1

Update and Manage Your Menu

Ensuring your structured menus, menu photos, and menu links are all up-to-date is key to enhancing customer discovery, consideration, and ultimately, action.

our signature teriyaki sauce. Choice of white rice, brown rice, fried rice or noodles and steamed or stir-...

Orange Chicken Bowl \$13.74

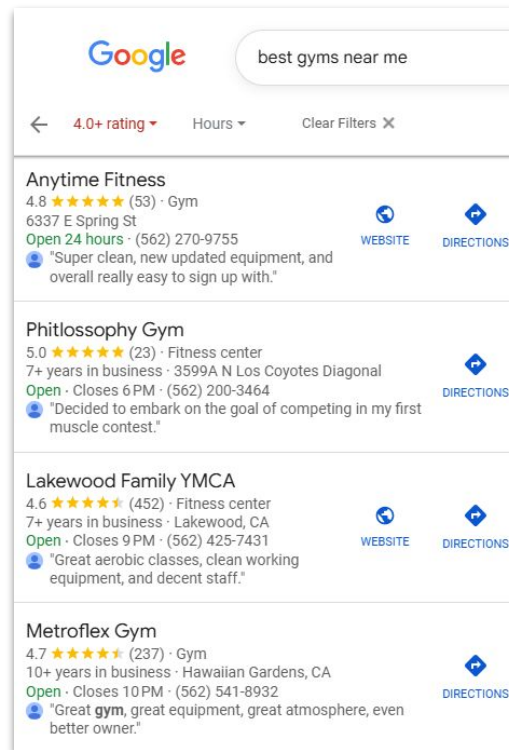
Orange doesn't rhyme with anything, but it's delicious! Big pieces of chicken in sweet orange sauce for a

2026 Local Search Ranking Factors Report

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



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- No mention of having a Google rating of 4.0 and above as a ranking factor (or lack-of as a negative ranking factor).

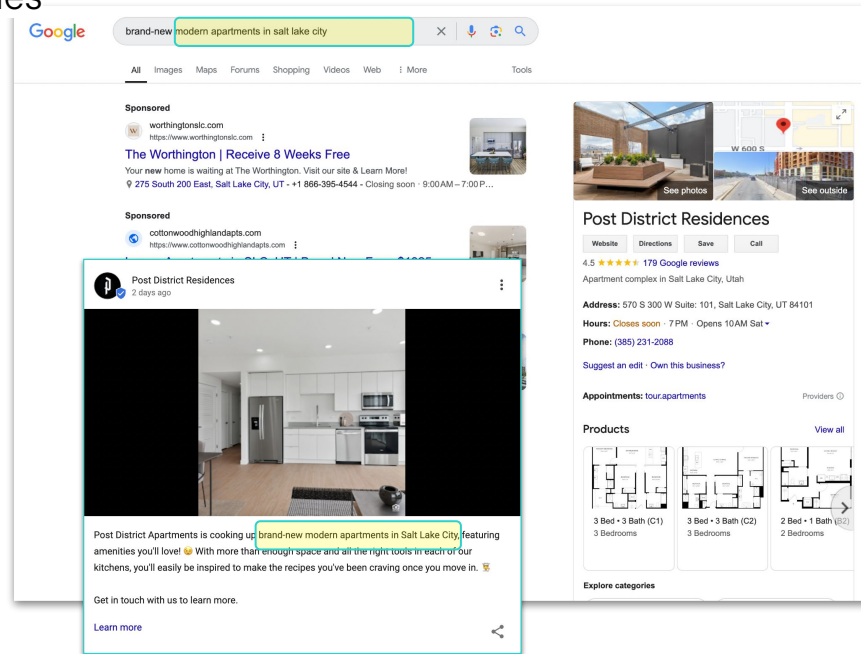


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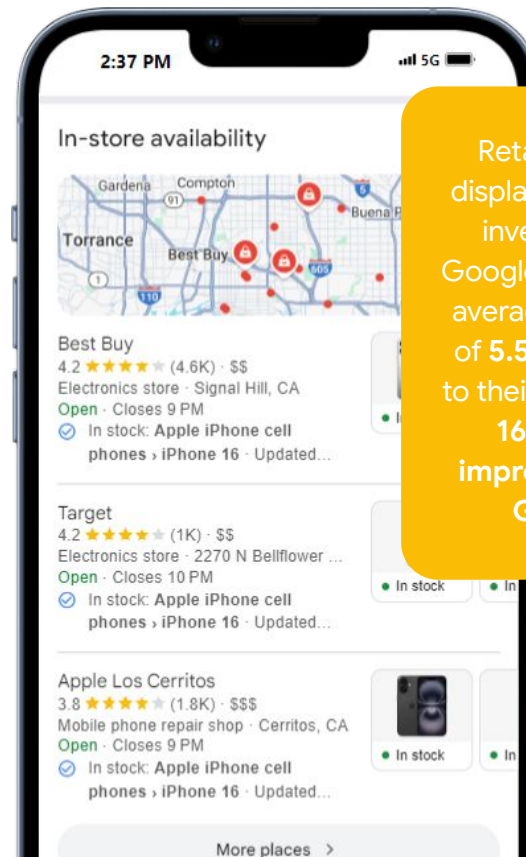


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- No mention of Google Post copy as a factor.
- Only a single mention of Merchant center at #70 when we know Google heavily favors businesses with with inventory validation in product based searches.



Retailers that display their local inventory on Google can see an average increase of **5.5% in clicks** to their websites & **16% more impressions on Google**

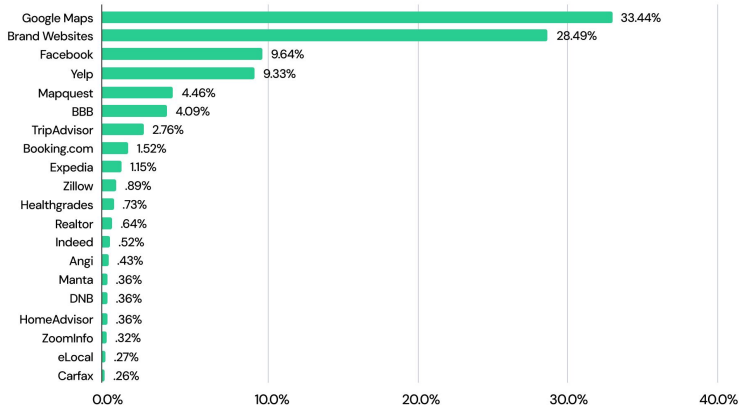
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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- It doesn't tell the full story on LLMs.

Top 20 LLM Sources: Local Services

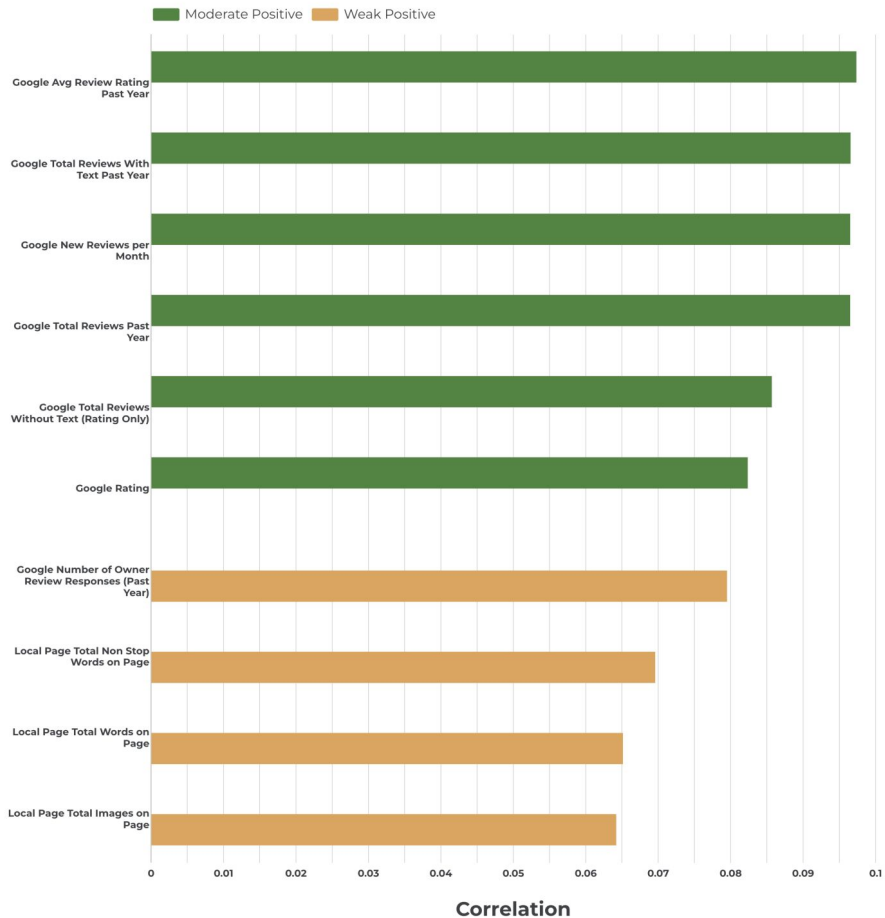


2026 AI SEARCH VISIBILITY FACTORS

Search

Rank	Factor	Score
1	Presence of Business on Expert Curated Best of and Similar Lists	179
2	Dedicated Page for Each Service	170
3	Prominence on Key Industry-Relevant Domains	167
4	Quality/Authority of Unstructured Citations (Newspaper Articles, Blog Posts, Gov Sites, Industry Associations)	160
5	Authority of Third-Party Sites on Which Reviews are Present	156
6	Geographic (City/Neighborhood) Keyword Relevance of Content	153
7	Quantity of Unstructured Citations (Newspaper Articles, Blog Posts)	147
8	High Numerical Google Ratings (e.g. 4-5)	146
9	Website's Degree of Focus on a Specific Niche	138

Expand data



These Factors Correlated Most Strongly with Good Rank.

Takeaways:

- Shoot for consistent velocity of reviews and customer photos.
- Earn great reviews!
- Respond to reviews.
- Create compelling local landing pages



REVIEWS



Reviews are one of the strongest signals in local search, impacting both visibility and client trust. The quantity, quality, recency, and responsiveness of reviews all play a role. Firms that actively manage their reputation not only tend to rank higher but also win more clients.

Reviews Overview



■ Ranking factor (impacts visibility)

■ Conversion factor (impacts customer actions)



2026 Local Search Ranking Factors Report

TAKEAWAY FOR MULTI-LOCATION BRANDS



While this study provide a great snapshot of individual factors that appear to have an affect Relevance and Prominence in Google search, it does not provide an accurate representation of Google's complex search algorithm and what is most important for multi-location and enterprise brands.

Pay attention to those things that build prominence for queries within your industry.

- Get reviews
- Be engaging (photos, posts, strong CTAs)
- Be social

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16	Completeness of GBP	147	100%

The Surveys

[2026 Local Search Ranking Factor Survey](#)

- Whitespark

[Here's What Actually Gets You Ranking for "Near Me" in 2025](#)

- SterlingSky

[The 2025 Google Business Profile Report - Personal Injury Edition](#)

- SearchLab





Thanks for Joining!

See you in December!

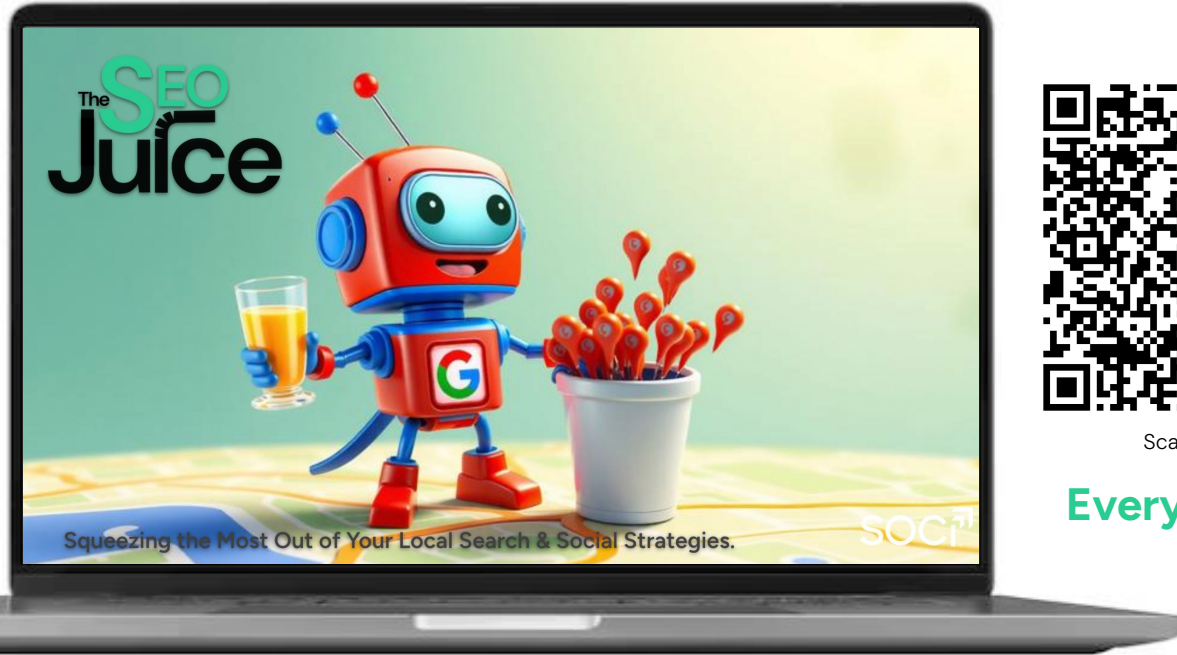
The SEO Juice

Register to Join Live
or Watch On-Demand



Scan or Click

SOCi Customers



Scan or Click

Everyone Else

NEXT LIVE EVENT: NOVEMBER 19th