

GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE: FUNDAMENTALS

Fact Sheet for Businesses
& Listing Managers

Brought to you by



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Accessing Google Business Profiles

Google Business Profiles are free. They are an easy-to-use tool for businesses and organizations to manage their online presence across Google's products, all from one place. Google Business Profiles are the only way you can control the information that appears regarding your business on Google.

SIGNING IN OR SIGNING UP

You will need a valid Google account to begin, and the account you choose will become the "owner" of your business within Google's products. Any email address will work - if you have a gmail account you can use that (like myrestaurant@gmail.com), or you may set up a Google account using a different email address you already use (ie info@myrestaurantsname.com). To create a Google account, follow this link: <https://accounts.google.com/SignUp>. Note that you can switch to using an existing email address with the link directly underneath that says "choose your username" field.

VERIFYING YOUR BUSINESS

Once you've logged into your Google account, you'll need to verify your business. Remember, verification and claiming are not the same. If a Google Business Profile (GBP) is only claimed, you cannot make the same updates you would be able to when verified. Verification is a security measure that Google uses to ensure

Rodneys Kitchen ★



4.6 ★★★★★ 23 Google reviews
Restaurant · 1.7 mi

Website

Directions

Address: 624 Sycamore St, Waterloo, IA 50701

Hours: Closed today ▾

Phone: (319) 234-3663

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that the people managing a business' information are the actual owners.

Your business likely has a listing on Google already. Search on www.google.com or maps.google.com for your business name. Then click the "Own this business?" link in the Knowledge Panel. Alternatively, in Google Maps, you'll see a "Claim this Business" button.

These links will take you to a confirmation screen. Check the box to indicate that you are authorized to manage this business and click "continue."


Google will ask for you to verify business information including name, address and hours. Then you will choose how you will verify the business. There may be different options, but usually you can choose by phone or by mail. Choosing by phone will send a confirmation code to the contact information listed either via text or voice call. In some cases, this option may not be available to you, and you will have to use the "by mail" option, which sends a postcard with the confirmation code to your listed address. The postcard generally arrives in 3-5 business days.

You won't be able to control any of the features of the Google Business Profile dashboard until you complete the verification process including responding to reviews. We recommend **not making any changes to your Google Business Profile for at least 24-48 hours** after completing the verification process to avoid an account suspension.

ADDING A NEW BUSINESS

If your business is not already listed on Google, visit this site: <https://business.google.com>. Look for the "Manage Now" button, which will walk you through the process of setting up your new business. You can also do this by clicking "Add Your Business" within Google Maps.

Manage this business to reply to reviews, update info and more

 Henry.winkle@milespartnership.com

By continuing, you're agreeing to these [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Manage now

[I own or manage another business](#)

Start building your Business Profile

This will help you get discovered by customers on Google Search and Maps

Business name*

Business category*

You can change and add more later

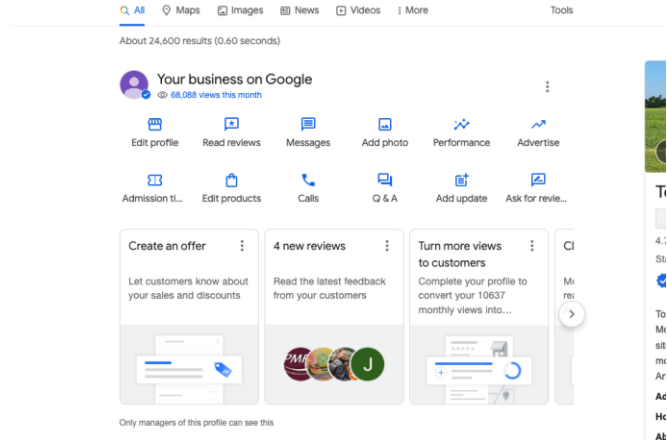
By continuing, you're agreeing to these [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Next

ACCESSING YOUR BUSINESS INFO

Once you've set up your account and verified your business, you can access the new control panel for your business on the Google search engine results page (SERP). If you prefer to use Google Business Manager, visit <https://business.google.com>.

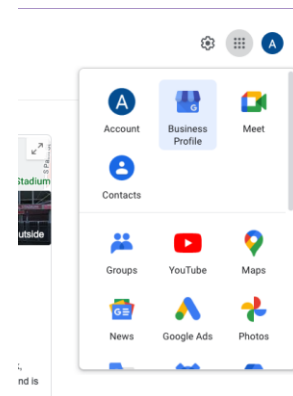
Google is making updates and the Business manager will not be available soon for most accounts. Instead all updates will be made within Google's search engine results page (SERP).



IF YOU OWN MULTIPLE BUSINESSES

If you have multiple businesses, it is possible to add each additional business/location under one main account. You'd just repeat the verification steps for each location while logged into your primary account. To see all of the businesses you manage, you'll click on the "tic-tac-toe" menu button in the upper right, and then on the blue "Business Profile" awning icon.

Profile Completeness



Phone number, Hours, Address, Website and Name are the most important fields to have in your business listing on Google. Your hours of operation are one of the most searchable data points. Searches for “Open Now” and “Open Now Near Me” have skyrocketed since 2020.

CATEGORY CHOICES

You will need to choose from a pre-existing category list. Choose the categories that are most accurate to your business. You’re allowed to select up to ten categories for your business. One will be your primary category, but you can add up to nine additional categories. Selecting additional categories will help your business to appear on more searches.

HOURS

According to Google's search data, there has been a 300% increase over the last two years for searches involving businesses "open now." Your listing may be excluded from searches in SERP and Maps if your business hours are not available.

If your business is by appointment only, mention in your business description that you take appointments only. Next, in the hours menu, select “Open with no main hours.” Consider adding a booking URL to make it easy for customers to schedule appointments with a single click. If your business is closed seasonally, Google’s guidelines encourage you to mark your listing as “temporarily closed” during the off-season.

It is also important to update your hours regularly, even if they are not changing. Google has several automated methods of updating business hours, even for verified listings. If your hours are not up to date, this can result in Google updating your listing with incorrect information off other websites. Local Guides can suggest new hours for a business (as well as many other details), and Google regularly scans for new details about businesses. If your information is not accurate across all platforms (such as Yelp, TripAdvisor and Facebook), Google might update your hours to match these other platforms.

WEBSITE

The screenshot shows a Google Business Profile for 'Blu Bar and Grill'. The name is highlighted with a red box. Below the name, it shows a 4.2 star rating with 146 reviews and the category 'Restaurant'. There are five action buttons: Directions, Save, Nearby, Send to your phone, and Share. Below these are service options: Dine-in (checked), Takeout (checked), and Delivery (unchecked). The address '25 Belmont Drive Warwick BM WK06, Bermuda' is highlighted with a red box. The 'Open now' status is '6-10PM'. A health & safety note says 'Reservations required'. A section titled 'Opens at 8:00 AM' is expanded to show a weekly schedule:

Day	Hours
Sunday	8AM-10PM
Monday	8AM-10PM
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	8AM-10PM
Thursday	8AM-10PM
Friday	8AM-12AM
Saturday	8AM-12AM

It's important to have a link to your website included on your business listing. Your website doesn't only appear in search results, it can also appear across a range of different Google products, including Maps, and much more. If you do not have a website, you can link to your Facebook page.

DESCRIPTION

The business description is a great opportunity to showcase the unique aspects of your business and differentiate yourself from your competition. Many businesses will be able to update their description.

Listings for Service Area Businesses



Some businesses may not serve their customers from a brick-and-mortar shop front but operate from a home address or may be mobile. If you have a business that does not have a permanent location, you should list it as a Service Area Business on Google. Your business will appear in Google SERP for local search, but may not display a physical address, if you choose to select the “Hide Address” option in your business information section. The radius indicates the area your business serves and can be dictated by city boundaries, zip codes or miles from your

business's home base.

Checklist

- Sign up for a Google account, or use an existing Google account.

- Manage your listings
 - Claim your listing
 - Next, verify your business profile

- Complete your basic information
 - Name, address, phone number
 - Categories
 - Hours
 - Website
 - Description

- Select your “Service Areas” (if applicable)

*For verification assistance or help with digital listing management, schedule [Office Hours with Miles Partnership](#) - free to you through **Visit Finger Lakes Destination Optimization Program**. There's no limit to the number of sessions and Miles can assist you with topics related to digital marketing.*