How to Use Google My Business to Boost Your Content & SEO via @sallworth

Knowing how to use Google My Business is standard for every digital marketer, right?

Actually… no.

While there are plenty of lengthy-but-vague help docs out there, finding answers to specific problems can be challenging.

To take some of the leg-work out, we've created a handy worksheet and chart tool to determine your eligibility, and to help understand what to do if you have multiple listings or service area businesses (SABs).

We'll also help you understand how posting content to your Google My Business listing can support your business in a number of ways.

Find out:

- How does Google My Business fit into my content strategy?
- Why should I care about Google My Business?
- Does Google My Business help me with SEO?
- How does a content marketing platform help me manage Google My Business?

Tools:

- Google My Business verification troubleshooting guide.
- Guide to Google My Business Optimization.

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Why Should I Include Google My Business in My Content Distribution Strategy?

As content marketers, we often fail to acknowledge a significant part of our responsibility is to ensure our intended audience actually becomes exposed to our content.

One way to do this is to update your Google My Business listing weekly as a channel to share your current content.

Content particularly relevant to Google My Business is locally-focused content (for example, events or specials.)

Why Do I Need Google My Business?

Did you know, on average, businesses receive 943 Search views and 317 Maps views each month?

This data, from a 2019 BrightLocal study of 45,000 anonymous local business listings, shows there is a great opportunity to get more views, clicks, and actions as a result of your localized content.


Top reasons to claim / verify your Google My Business listing
1. It tells your customer that you sell what they are searching for
2. It verifies you are a legitimate business
3. It provides social proof in the form of reviews
4. It tells your customer how to where you are located and how to buy from you
5. You can appear in the top search results more easily
mintent



To see the proof, you can check out Google My Business Insights to gather data on how many people viewed your listing, saw your post, clicked on it, and engaged.

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However, Google My Business Insights may not always be accurate.

Consider using Google tracked links in your posts to more accurately report clicks and engagements right in Google Analytics.

Google My Business helps digital marketers get views on their content without having to wait for Google to rank it in the top ten search engine results.

The benefits of posting on Google My Business go beyond

acquiring views and clicks on your latest content.

Regular posting can earn you a coveted spot in the local 3-pack, which is the top 3 business listings for relevant search terms, and this placement alone is a valid reason to add a new post at least every 7 days.





Additionally, the same BrightLocal study also revealed a typical business receives up to 59 actions per month on Google My Business.

These actions can be clicks through to your website, requests for directions, or phone calls.

The majority of actions are in the form of clicks, but unless your Google My Business listing is optimized, you could be missing out on **actual phone calls** or **in-store visits**.

Yikes!

Your posts on Google My Business signals to Google indicating your business is the right one to display for related searches locally.

Reviews on Google My Business are critical.

They effectively represent your customers' confirmation your

business is reputable, especially when you take the time to respond to each one; positive or negative.

In fact, a prompt, empathetic, and helpful response to a negative review can be more valuable than a positive review.

We all make mistakes.

Consumers appreciate those businesses willing to accept and fix them in a timely fashion.

An important point, and perhaps the most important of all, your posts show potential customers what’s new with your business at exactly the right time – when they are looking for it.

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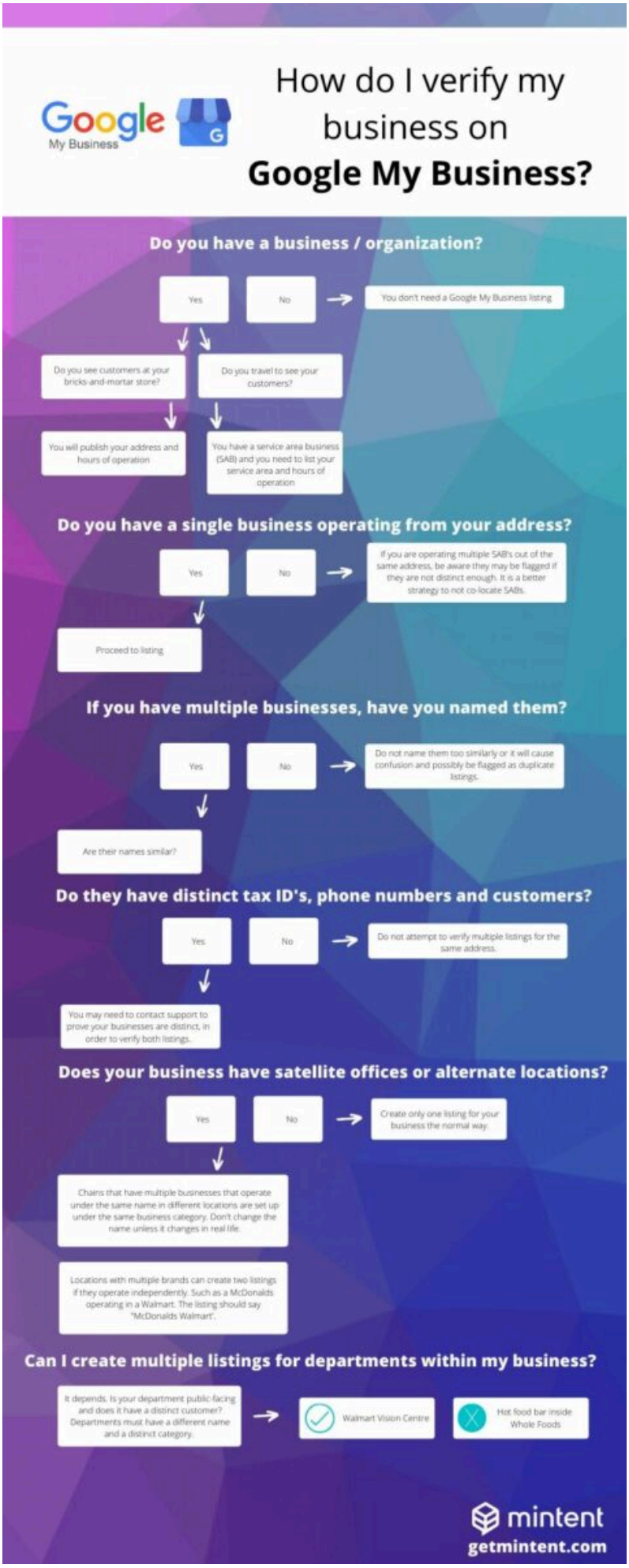
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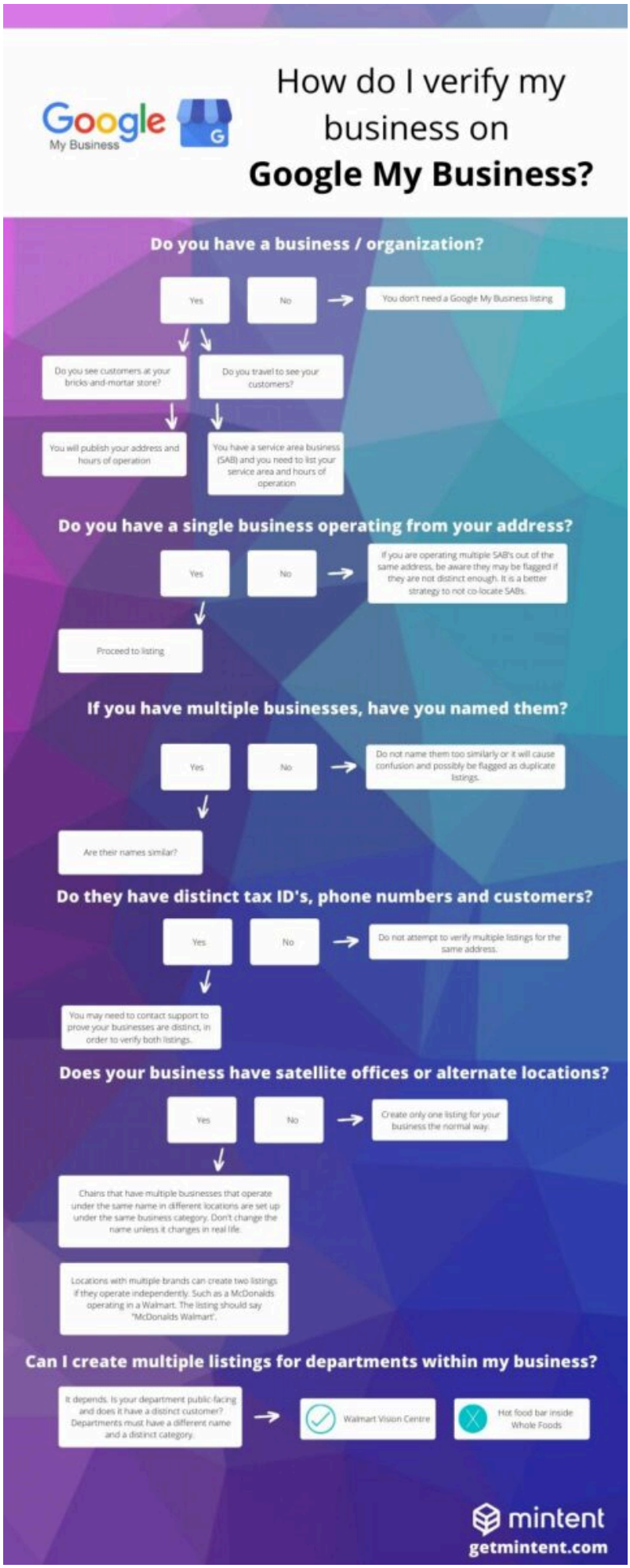
A 2019 study from Ben Fisher reported only 17% of the businesses reviewed had a post within the last 7 days.

So, more than 80% of businesses did not have anything new to share with searchers who are actively looking for their businesses.

Inconceivable!

How do I verify my business on **Google My Business?**




Google My Business
How do I verify my business on Google My Business?
Do you have a business / organization?
Yes
No
You don't need a Google My Business listing
Do you see customers at your bricks-and-mortar store?
Do you travel to see your customers?
You will publish your address and hours of operation
You have a service area business (SAB) and you need to list your service area and hours of operation
Do you have a single business operating from your address?
Yes
No
If you are operating multiple SAB's out of the same address, be aware they may be flagged if they are not distinct enough. It is a better strategy to not co-locate SABs.
Proceed to listing
If you have multiple businesses, have you named them?
Yes
No
Do not name them too similarly or it will cause confusion and possibly be flagged as duplicate listings.
Are their names similar?
Do they have distinct tax ID's, phone numbers and customers?
Yes
No
Do not attempt to verify multiple listings for the same address.
You may need to contact support to prove your businesses are distinct, in order to verify both listings.
Does your business have satellite offices or alternate locations?
Yes
No
Create only one listing for your business the normal way.
Chains that have multiple businesses that operate under the same name in different locations are set up under the same business category. Don't change the name unless it changes in real life.
Locations with multiple brands can create two listings if they operate independently. Such as a McDonalds operating in a Walmart. The listing should say "McDonalds Walmart".
Can I create multiple listings for departments within my business?
It depends. Is your department public-facing and does it have a distinct customer? Departments must have a different name and a distinct category.
Walmart Vision Centre
Hot food bar inside Whole Foods
mintent
getmintent.com

What Kind of Content Should I Be Creating for Google My Business?

Keep Your Listing Complete & Accurate

Before you create any content, ensure your GMB listing is complete (address, telephone number, business hours, business overview, products/services, etc.) and accurate (links to your website, social accounts, other relevant sources of information.)

This may seem basic, but far too many small businesses neglect the details and Google is all about details.

Share Offers & Specials

You can experiment with creating content specifically for your Google My Business listing.

It’s important to remember the intent of the person viewing your listing is likely more transactional.

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This means you can take a more direct sales approach: offers, specials, or what sets your business apart from your competitors.

Post Encouraging Content

If your business sees customers at its location, you can describe the experience you want your customers to have when they arrive.

Videos, photos, and even introductions to the team members they will meet are all great ways to encourage customers to visit you.

Make your Google My Business page inviting for your customers. Think “Daily Specials,” “Seasonal Offerings,” or even weather-related: “Our Patio is Open!”

Create a Media-Rich Listing

Invest in working with a Google-certified 360 virtual tour professional to add videos to your verified listing, or create your own video to introduce yourself and your business.

(Be sure to also upload this to YouTube and optimize your channel for the best results; another important topic on its own.)

Introduce Photos

Your shop, office, or business photos should be used as your cover image.

Try including photos of your work or featuring your products.

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Share projects you are proud of or which have garnered a special review.

In fact, many of your contributions to Google My Business should come in the form of photos.

There’s compelling evidence that businesses with 100+ photos in their Google My Business listing get more clicks.

Answer Questions

Check to see what questions potential customers are asking about your business and answer them in a blog post shared on your listing.

Does Google My Business Actually Contribute to SEO?

Yes, it does – at least locally. It can help in a few ways.

Not only does a verified and optimized Google My Business profile stand a better chance of being in the local 3-pack, putting your presence at the top of search results, it can also indirectly help your website rank.

It does this by providing social signals to Google, by driving traffic to your website, and by providing social proof in the form of reviews.

Google says local search results are based on "relevance, distance, and prominence."

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- **Relevance:** How well a listing matches the intent of the searcher.
- **Distance:** Google pairs searchers with verified businesses in close proximity.
- **Prominence:** How well-known your business is.

Can a Content Marketing Platform Help Me Manage My Google My Business Listing Better?

A content marketing platform can help you manage all of your content better.

It brings planning and clarity to your content calendar and ensures you stay on top of creating regular posts within Google My Business, which is an easily forgotten task.

Having a content marketing platform brings structure and focus to your content marketing plan and helps you to draw upon the expertise of multiple team members with features to make collaboration easy.

A content marketing platform gives you a process to work from and analytics to help you to better understand how your activities are working.

If you can identify activities that are making a positive impact, then you can use these ideas for future content items.

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Tailoring Content for Google My Business Seems Like a Lot of Work – Why Isn't Updating My Website Enough?

Google My Business is a free tool, which has a direct impact on current local businesses.

As with anything, you need to feed it to make it grow. Google will not connect-the-dots for you.

The intention of Google My Business is to provide searchers with immediate and accurate information.

Achieving rank takes time and this isn't useful for relaying information that will go stale quickly.

And, in so far as it's a tool offered by Google, one has to believe Google puts a high stake on content maintained there.

Think of Your Own ‘Google My Business’ Experience

It’s a lot to expect for digital marketing managers and small business owners to become skilled at Google My Business, on top of the myriad of other marketing activities required to foster a presence online.

Because of the vague help documentation from Google and frustratingly long response times from Google, it can be tempting to leave it for another day.

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Ultimately though, think of the last time you performed a local search and how easy Google My Business made the process of choosing where to go.

Once your listing is verified successfully, your time investment is likely only an hour or two a month and we suspect there are many further opportunities to come with this great, free business tool.

Find the time in your schedule to dig in and really ‘own’ your Google My Business listing.

Use this worksheet to help gather up the information you need to get started: Guide to Google My Business Optimization.

More Resources:

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In-Post Images: Mintent

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