

Digital Masterclass Series

Improving the visibility of your small business with Google.

Collaboration, Respect, Service Excellence,
Integrity, Innovation



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Today's Topic



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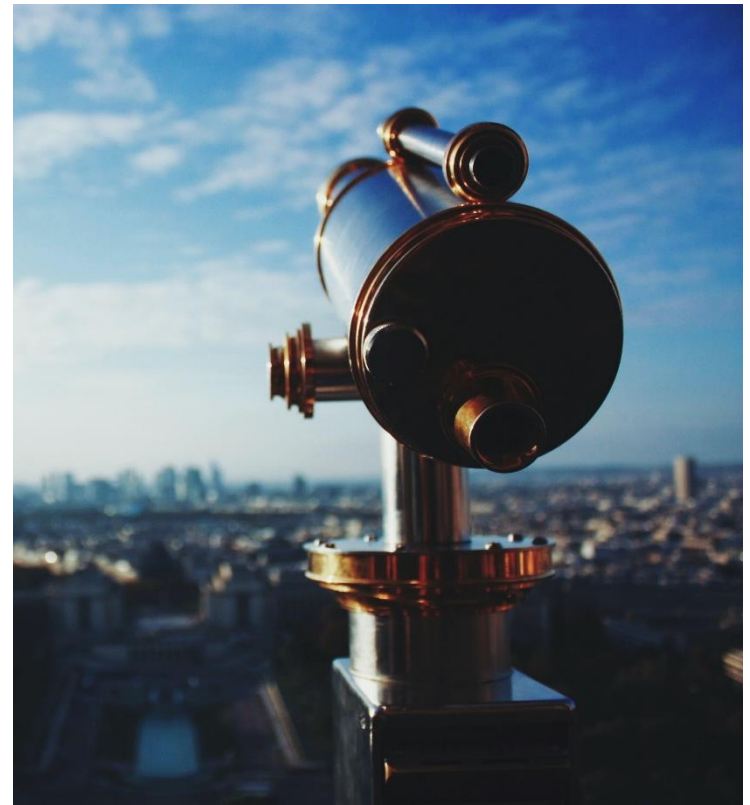
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Digital Masterclass Series

Improving the visibility of your small business with Google

Overview

- **Setting realistic digital visibility goals as a small business**
- **Optimising your listing for your target audience**
- **Maintaining consistency and accessibility**
- **Using media to showcase your business**
- **Putting together a customer review strategy**



Setting realistic digital visibility goals



- Good news! You don't need to conquer the digital world.
- As a small business, your focus is on developing long-term relationships with a local or focused customer base both on and offline.

Why focus on Google Business?

- Google is the most used search engine in Australia and internationally it has around 90% of the worldwide search engine market share.
- It's free and relatively user friendly regardless of your skill level.
- When properly managed, it's a powerful form of local SEO.



Optimising your listing



- Include a call to action in your business listing...and everywhere else.
- Be specific about the business category you choose.
- Home based businesses **DO NOT** use your home address.
- Include 'signalling keywords'.

Maintaining consistency and accessibility

- Make sure your service options, opening hours and contact information are all correct and consistent. And 'confirm' the hours regularly.
- Make sure your contact options are all up to date.
- Make sure your brand name spelling and capitalisation is consistent.
- Make sure you use consistent terminology when describing your business online.
- Make it easy for customers to get in touch from Google.
- Make it easy for customers to see what you offer.



Using media to promote

- **Make sure the Google maps image of your business is an accurate representation of your storefront.** If it isn't, you can edit it in Business Profile Manager.
- **You can take and upload images of your store to your Google listing**
 - A new product range in store or item on the menu (this is particularly important if you work in an industry where trends change regularly i.e. in clothing retail)
 - Made changes to your interior décor
 - Have changed your branding
 - Have changed any other aspect of your business
- **If you are a service-based business or a sole trader, doing these things can be difficult as there is seemingly nothing visual to represent. Aim to have:**
 - A professional headshot of yourself
 - An image of your business logo
 - Ideally an 'in action' image of you with a customer or at work
- **You can also post updates and feature products on your Google listing**

Focus on customer reviews



- Customer reviews play an **ENORMOUS** role in the appearance and search results of your business on Google.
- Google uses customer reviews to provide a star rating for your business.
- Customers use reviews as a determining factor on whether they want to visit.
- Business listings with customer reviews (the more the better) look more credible and receive more clicks.
- It's important to prompt positive reviews from your customers.
- To do this you need to implement a customer review strategy.

Putting together a customer review strategy

A prompt encouraging your customers to leave a review

ideally this is a written rather than a verbal prompt, but you can do both.

- An email or text message.
- Sent soon after the transaction is completed.
- Include a link to the review page so it's easy for the customer to find and fill out.
- Emphasise how appreciative you are for their custom and their support for small business.
- Ask for feedback NOT a 5-star review (this can sound manipulative).

A strategy to manage negative reviews (this is called reputation management in marketing terms).

- Respond to the review publicly (you can do this with all reviews but it's particularly important to do with negative reviews).
- Don't try to argue with the customer – arguments on the internet never make anyone look good.
- Acknowledge their experience.
- Make it clear that this is not the norm or what your business stands for (ideally without using any negative terms like 'we are not this...')
- Provide them with a way of contacting you to resolve the issue.
- Ultimately a well-managed complaint can actually BOOST your credibility as a business.

Further resources

- <https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/services/business-support> – Council’s dedicated business support hub.
- <https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverYourGlenEira/> - Promote your business for free on our Facebook page.
- <https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/services/business-support/taking-your-business-online/digital-literacy-masterclasses> - Digital literacy classes designed for small business.
- <https://support.google.com/business/answer/7662907?hl=en> – More information about posting updates and new products on your Business Listing