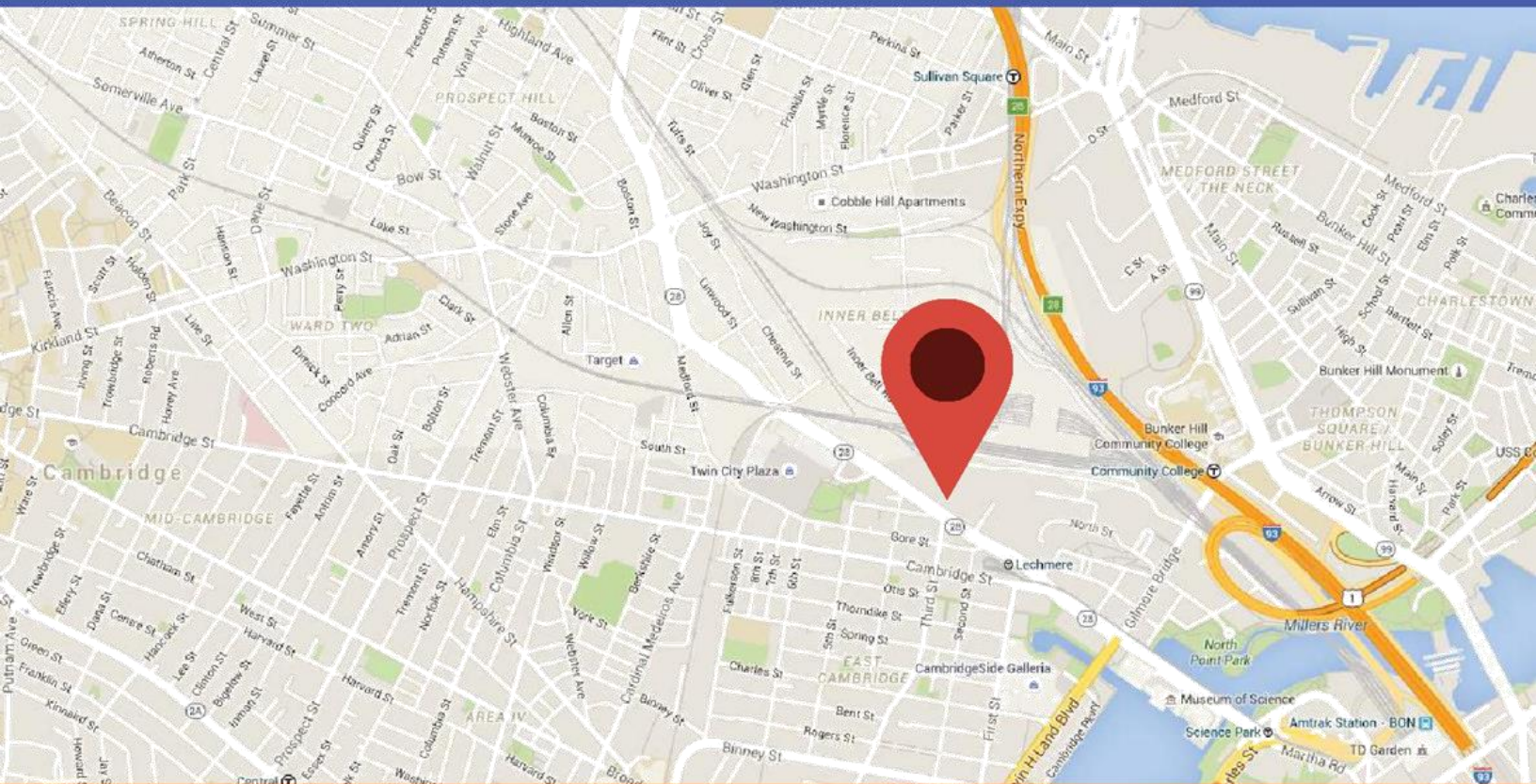


The One-Page Guide to Effective Local SEO

How to Get More Visible to Customers in the Local Search Results

3rd Edition



by Phil Rozek
LocalVisibilitySystem.com

Who you are

You own, work for, or work with a business that needs more local customers. You're probably focused on getting more visible in Google's [local search results](#). But above all you want to get more local customers online, and in a way that *doesn't* require a monster advertising budget. You're not sure what to do now, or which advice to try.

Who I am

My name's Phil Rozek. I help businesses get more visible to customers in the local search results online. I'm known hither and yon for my clear and practical advice, and for solving tough problems. I've been in this field since 2008 - when the "local map" was new and the concept of local SEO was new. I'm glad I made a career out of it.

Speaking of which, why am I giving you a free guide on local SEO if that's also what I get paid for? (Does the guide not share all the "secrets"? Is it a teaser or an ad? Am I just self-defeating?)

Two reasons: (1) a "give before you get" approach has brought me most of my clients and good fortune, and (2) you're not getting my *personal* help with the free guide. You get my best advice. You can always [get](#) my personal help if you want to. If you want to help yourself, the guide is all you need. Either way, I hope to count you as a fan.

Why you're reading my free guide

You want clear direction on how to do your own local SEO effectively - meaning you grow your rankings *and* get more customers out of the deal. You don't have time to do it wrong, to hire the wrong company, or to muck through those overblown (yet still unhelpful) "[Ultimate](#)" guides to local SEO.

Why is it a one-page "cheat-sheet"?

Because it's quickest for you to understand and to act on. The alternatives are wordy blog posts that make you feel like you're in the snow-covered hedge maze in *The Shining*, and checklists that gloss over important points and make local SEO seem to be a paint-by-numbers process.

The one-pager guide sure wasn't quick for me to create. It, the 3rd edition of my free guide, took me about twice as long to write as my 58-page 2nd edition, and probably four times as long as the 41-page 1st edition. That's not even counting the time it took to create the resources I link to as "further reading" for some of the steps. In a sense, it took me 5 1/2 years to write a guide that's comprehensive *and* clear *and* compact.

How to use the cheat-sheet

I have no idea how much you know about local SEO, or about any other area of online marketing. That's why I designed my guide to help you whether you're an old-timer or new to it all, or somewhere in the middle. Some suggestions on how to get the most out of the one-page guide:

- Check out the resources I link to (links are in [orange](#)) for more detail if you'd like to know more about a given step. Rather than *make* you wade through all the detail in a 200-page guide, I linked to further reading so you can decide exactly how much detail is the right amount.
- Read it while you're online, so you can pull up those additional resources if you want to.
- If you're not 100% clear on what local SEO is, [read this](#).
- Don't try to understand everything before doing anything. Read through the sheet, work on a couple of the steps, cross them off if possible, and revisit the sheet and work on a couple more steps. Wash, rinse, repeat.
- Work on the steps over time. Some steps you can *only* do long-term. Local SEO is a marathon.
- Feel free to [email me](#) if you have a quick question or two. (I can't promise a speedy or in-depth answer, though.)

Enjoy.

Phil

Initial work: start with these steps

- ✓ Set modest goals. To get visible, stay visible, *and* get customers out of the deal takes long-term effort. You still probably won't rank everywhere you want to. Also, don't fall into the [usual mental traps](#).
- ✓ Consider [specializing](#) in a niche. Your SEO and overall marketing may be easier and more effective.
- ✓ Cut [fluff activities](#). Post on Instagram daily or build 300 [citations](#) if you want to, but don't do it to help your rankings, because it won't. Focus on the fundamentals: Fill your site with in-depth info on your services, make sure your local listings are correct, earn links, and earn reviews. (More detail shortly.)
- ✓ Know and follow [the rules of Google My Business](#) (AKA "Google Places" or "Google Maps"). Commit not to spam Google. Easy come, easy go. Consumers have choices, so work on why they should *pick* you over your competitors.
- ✓ [Create](#) or optimize your Google My Business page. Which is pretty simple: [follow the rules](#), don't pick [categories](#) that seem like a stretch, and [use your homepage as your landing page](#) if in doubt.
- ✓ Try to [remove](#) (or mark as "permanently closed") any unwanted Google My Business pages you find in Google Maps.
- ✓ [Create and/or fix](#) your basic online listings - AKA your [citations](#). Which sites to bother with? You can use my worksheet. I've got one for the [US](#), [UK](#), [Canada](#), [Australia](#), and for [other countries](#). Consider using [Moz Local](#) to help on some of the trickier local listings (if you're in US or UK).
- ✓ Create and/or claim and fix "niche" listings for [your industry](#) and [city](#). You'll probably find a handful of prominent ones.
- ✓ Start encouraging Google reviews ([here's how](#)). Customers will see them wherever you rank on the "local map," and whenever they search for your business by name. They are crucial.
- ✓ Start getting reviews on a few [other sites](#). Often Facebook and YellowPages or the BBB are good choices.
- ✓ Complete [my head-to-toe website audit](#) and fix the issues you find. Or do *at least* these 7 steps:
 1. Consolidate your sites. Have [as few as possible](#). Kill off some sites if you must.
 2. Install Google Analytics and Google Search Console.
 3. Create a separate, in-depth page on each specific service and/or product you offer, and create as many [other useful pages](#) as you can. Make those pages easy to navigate to.
 4. Do ["content CPR"](#): make short pages more in-depth and helpful. Add questions you're often asked and answer them.
 5. Write [punchy title tags](#) for all the pages on your site you care about.
 6. [Put](#) your name, address, and phone info on each page of your site. (In the footer is fine.)
 7. Use your best judgment to make your site more informative, easier to use, and better at explaining exactly *why* the reader should give you a call. ([More detail here](#).)
- ✓ Earn some [basic links](#). Nothing will help your rankings quite as much as solid links to your site from relevant, reputable sites. Try for 10 good ones - links that took at least a little effort to get. [Here are some practical ideas](#).
- ✓ Start a long-term effort to earn even more links. This is the toughest part of local SEO, but you've got to do it if you want to be a contender. You might build an audience and share know-how, or "give back," or take other angles. If that sounds vague, check out more-specific ideas [here](#) and [here](#).
- ✓ [Do a 2nd round](#) of work on your local citations. Fix any missing or incorrect listings.
- ✓ Multi-location business? Do all the steps I've described for the other locations of your business, too.
- ✓ Create a few ["city" pages](#) - but only if you create pages [that will impress](#) customers from those cities. (You'll feel silly with good rankings but no phone calls.)

Ongoing work: never stop working on these steps

- ✓ Keep encouraging reviews, and on a [diversity](#) of sites. Never stop getting reviews. Rankings without reviews won't help you much. If your review strategy doesn't seem to work, [use this post to troubleshoot](#).
- ✓ Read your reviews and [mine](#) them for insights into how you can improve your offerings, how your customers think, and how you can reach more of them.
- ✓ Keep earning links. If your strategies take a little thinking or research, and take some work but don't *always* work out, you're probably doing a good job. Beyond the ideas/resources I linked to earlier, [here are more doable ideas](#).
- ✓ Add new pages whenever you can. For instance, whenever you offer a new service, open an additional location, or can answer in good detail a question your customers have, create a whole new in-depth page on it.
- ✓ Consider blogging - but only if you focus on [topics that will interest customers](#).
- ✓ Work on non-Google sources of visibility and customers - preferably some offline sources.
- ✓ Keep up with [my blog posts](#) and subscribe to [Whitespark's Local Pulse](#).
- ✓ Consider [getting my help](#) if you run into problems, want a second opinion, or just need a hand.