

How Long Will It Take YOU to Get Visible in Google's Local Search Results?

Your situation

Roughly how long before you rank well locally

No Google page and no website

You haven't tried to get visible in local search before: you haven't "claimed" your Google+Local page, and you don't have a website.

Have Google page & site. Have *not* moved, renamed, or changed phone number

You have a Google+Local page and a site, but have spent little or no time trying to optimize either one. *Your business is more than 2 years old and you've used the same address, name, and phone number all along.*

Have Google page & site. Have moved, renamed, or changed phone number

You have a Google+Local page and a website, but haven't spent significant time trying to optimize either one. *Your business has moved or you've changed your business name or phone number at least once.*

Tried DIY approach; hasn't worked

You've been learning local SEO and trying to do it yourself, but several months have gone by and so far your business hasn't become visible.

Ranked well before relocating/renaming business

You used to rank well locally, but you just moved your business to a new location, renamed it, or started using a different phone number. Most or all of your good rankings seem to have dropped off.

Hired someone who didn't help

You hired a local-search "professional" to help get you some good local rankings, but it didn't work out. You're as invisible now as you were beforehand.

Ranking well already; want even more visibility

You've put a lot of time and effort into local search and have fairly good rankings, but just want to overtake a few more local competitors.

4-6 months. It takes 2-3 weeks for your Google page to go live and for Google to "discover" your new site. Also, listings on 3rd-party directory sites are a *major* factor in your rankings, but it takes Google months to "digest" these listings.

2-6 months. If your business doesn't have a bunch of inconsistent info floating around the web (e.g. different addresses), good rankings usually will come more quickly. But if you're in a really competitive market, it may still take several months to optimize your site, create 3rd-party listings, and collect customer reviews.

4-8 months. It may take a couple months to clean up the inconsistent business info that's all over the web. Then it will take at least a few months more for Google to become "confident" that your business info is up-to-date and otherwise accurate.

2-6 months. You may have most of the pieces of the puzzle in-place, or there may be a significant amount of time-consuming work to be done. However, at the very least, the fact that you've already got a Google+Local page and site means you've got a bit of a "head-start."

2-6 months. Unless you violated one of Google's rules – perhaps either by renaming your business to a "keyword-rich" name or by switching to a toll-free number – then rebuilding your rankings is probably a matter of fixing your 3rd-party directory listings to reflect the changes (and then giving it a few months).

4-8 months. There may be a real mess to clean up: Your Google+Local page and/or your site may have been penalized, and your 3rd-party directory listings may need to be updated.

1-4 months. Pulling ahead now probably is a matter of getting customer reviews on a variety of sites, tuning up your website, and possibly earning a few high-quality links if you're in a highly competitive market.

Note: these are only rough estimates based on my personal experience in local SEO.