

# Why You Need A Google Places Listing

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Google Places is one online tool no local business owner can afford to ignore.

This feature allows you to list the exact location and address of your business on a map which in turn enables potential customers to get precise directions to where you are rather than having to rely on a map or scribbled instructions.

A **Google Places listing** gives you an immediate edge when marketing to your local area. Not only does it show up high in search results, if properly optimized, but it also allows for user reviews of your services and products. Simply being listed gives you a boost in rankings for your main website and therefore leads to more traffic.

In addition, there are options to include coupons, special offers, videos, images, opening hours and preferred payment methods within your [Google Places listing](#). Having all this information in one place saves your customer time and therefore boosts both customer satisfaction and your own reputation.

With [Google Maps](#) also being visible on smartphones, Google Places is infinitely accessible 24/7, working for you to bring in more customers without you having to lift a finger.



Having spotted the enormous growth in smartphone usage, Google has placed great emphasis on location-based searches with *Google Places listing* dominating the search results.

Thanks to this emphasis, they have now developed Hotpot, a new product that acts as a portal through which users can rate and review businesses via their Google accounts.

This social element adds a level of interaction which, when cleverly combined with social marketing, provides a killer combination for the local business owner at minimal cost.

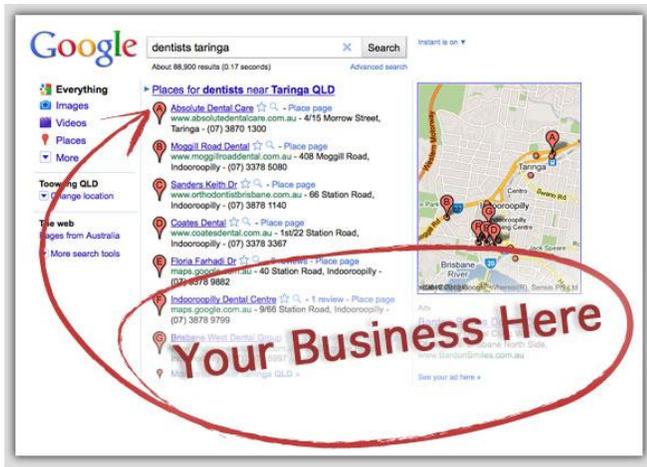


### **Google Places Listing Benefits:**

- Low cost.
  - High search engine results.
  - Increased reputation on and offline.
  - Improved customer satisfaction.
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- Excellent opportunities to extend branding online.
  - Integrates superbly with other online marketing efforts.
  - Extremely mobile phone friendly.
  - All your accurate, up to date information readily available.
  - Allows you to show up in Google Maps.
  - Can include special offers and printable coupons.
  - Photographs and images of your business lead to increased trust from a potential customer's perspective.
  - Streamlined analytics allow you to see who has been searching for you and where they have previously been online. This enables you to adjust your marketing plans accordingly.
  - If you don't have a website this is an easy way to maintain an online presence.
  - More people search for businesses online than anywhere else and Google Places is a superb way to put your business in front of them.
  - Google Places beats any offline marketing method for your business in terms of ROI.
  - You can surge past more established websites within your market with a Google Places listing so that a first page listing on Google is far more easily achievable.
  - Google Places listings beat organic results hands down when it comes to search results.
  - If you are running a business in a major city, Google may well offer you a free professional photo shoot of your business as this helps them both verify your listing and enhance the quality of their offer.
  - You will be far more visible to the vast majority of users of both Android and iPhones who are searching for businesses within a 5km radius.
  - Provided your listing is set up properly, you can achieve all of the above within an impressively short period of time.

### **How To Make Google Places Work For You**

1. The first and most important thing to do is to make sure that you claim your Google Places page so that no-one else can edit your listing. Claiming your Google Places page lends far more authority to your page and is vital if you are truly to take advantage of all that this incredible feature offers the local business owner.
2. Ensure that your business name, if you do not have one already, is a good reflection of your brand. An effective business name should immediately convey to a potential customer exactly what your business does. If you can, include a precise keyword for your business name – 'Downtown Car Hire,' for example, is better than 'Downtown Cars.'



3. Make sure that you include accurate, relevant information for your business and take the time to select images, videos and logos that enhance your listing and are congruent with your brand.

4. It is vital that you select the correct category for your business. Google Hotpot recommends businesses based on categories and, if you are a local bistro, you don't want to find yourself showing up among sandwich shops or junk food joints.

You also need to remember that, if someone has ranked bistros well but given junk food joints a far

lower rating, then businesses categorized as 'bistros' will show up as a priority. It is therefore essential that you choose the right category for your business from the start.

Citations and reviews are another essential and you need to make sure that these are good. Creating profiles on free business listings sites is one way to increase your good quality citations although an experienced Google Places consultant can work wonders in improving your business presence and profile.

### ***Google Places Beat Out The Big Boys***

The beauty of Google Places is that it is essentially democratic and designed to give the true local business owner the edge over larger corporations who may have a local outlet or presence but are not locally based.

As such, it is an unparalleled opportunity to surge ahead of these corporations and their multimillion dollar budgets in the search engine rankings, giving the local business owner a far greater chance of raking in their share of the profits.

This ability to outrank far more powerful companies with endless online resources is all part of Google's 2011 algorithm change which places far more emphasis on the quality of the user experience.

Local searchers do not want to be constantly bombarded with the same old big names that may or may not truly offer the service or product they are seeking.

The majority of the time, they are looking for a business within a 5km radius that serves their exact



needs. If you are that business and you show up at the top of the relevant [Google Places listing](#), chances are that they will be calling upon you first.

You can therefore understand why it is so important to get your Google Places listing right from the start and to keep it optimized with updated content when necessary. Including videos and images actually helps push you up the Google Places results so it is vital that you take full advantage of this option.



If you don't have videos that relate to your business, a good Google Places or Online Consultant will be able to help you have these created and uploaded so that they enhance both your brand and overall online presence.

Google Places is an essential tool in the armory of every local business owner looking to profit from the limitless opportunity offered by the internet. While all of the options out there may seem overwhelming, they work seamlessly for you once they are set up by someone with the right experience and knowledge.

All the local business owner need ever do is provide relevant updates, [news](#) or special offers where necessary or, of course, advise of changes of contact information. Apart from that, Google Places is a stress free way to increase your credibility, accessibility and, of course, your profits.

With millions of satisfied local business owners already on board, isn't it time that you joined them and reaped the rewards?

Many consulting firms offer a wide variety of services to help you rise to the top of Google Places listings. They will work with you to develop and implement a comprehensive Google Places strategy. This begins by creating an analysis of where your website stands now in Google Places results. By looking at what competitors are displaying ahead of yours and why, we will be able to develop a Google Places strategy that will move you towards the top.