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#LocalSEO



Introduction

These survey results present the state of local search marketing and what companies should expect and prioritize in 2022. Experts from different verticals and backgrounds talk about the role of Google Business Profile (former Google My Business), the importance of reviews and the customer experience that will help companies further grow their organic rankings and online presence.

Any local SEO strategy must be built on data, current search engine ranking factors, and the knowledge of experts. The dynamic local marketing world requires our constant attention to keep up with the current trends and changes. Read on to learn what market leaders suggest to focus on and what is going to be vital in 2022.

Methodology

Driven by the latest Google changes, myriad of questions from clients and the increased importance of GBP, we decided to help local and multi-location companies improve their organic rankings in 2022 by gathering feedback from professionals and thought leaders. We interviewed 28+ local marketing experts from all over the world, asking them to share their predictions and what companies should and shouldn't do to be favoured both by search engines and their customers. We've analyzed each answer individually and saw a clear pattern.

Top insights from the 2022 local SEO survey

According to the experts:

71%


Emphasized the importance of **GBP**

50%

Consider **Reviews** to impact local rankings and the overall online reputation

32%

Believe **Customer experience** will be even more important in 2022



After analyzing the answers, we broke down the predictions into several categories. Keeping these tips in mind while working on your 2022 local SEO strategy can help you gain the upper hand.

Google Business Profile

GBP or GMB is not only going to be more important for local SEO, but Google will acquire more details about local businesses to the point of replacing the role of the website with GBP. Thus, treat your GBP as your website: optimize your listing(s), update opening hours, provide more details and product features, highlight your USPs, reply to reviews.

Reviews

At least half of the respondents stressed the importance of the Reviews. These are important touchpoints for customers and searchers interacting with local and multi-location brands. Both your local rankings and reputation can increase thanks to more reviews. It's important to see an opportunity here: reviews can tell you what you should change in your products and services, what your customers like and how you can make unsatisfied customers happier, consequently changing bad reviews into good ones.

Dont's

We were happy to see that more and more respondents were against exercising these bad practices in 2022:


- Ignoring negative reviews
- Giving Citations too much weight
- Low-quality, spammy directories
- Localization without a deeper knowledge of the market
- Paying for reviews

Local SEO Strategy

Ranking on the first page of local search results or in the local pack takes time, planning and keeping up with the trends. Whether you have one or multiple locations, you need a strategy to target localized searchers in each area. Having a local SEO strategy in 2022 will help you rank higher, get more customers and outshine your competitors.



Clarissa Filius

Team Lead Local SEO 
Booming (becoming IO)

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Consumer behavior is changing and we're living in a mobile-first economy. People are navigating and using their smartphones on the go. This results in more searches with local intent and even more queries showing local 3-packs in the SERP. Also Google will integrate more functions in Google Maps listing, for example placing orders for products.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Using spammy business names is a no-go, as Google is getting even more strict in using the actual business name.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

If I have to name one thing to focus on in 2022, I'd recommend optimizing your Google Maps listings (on and off-page) for non-branded keywords. There's a large amount of (mainly) high volume product- and service-related queries that are triggering the local pack, so this is probably the biggest opportunity for most brands.



Jason Barnard

The Brand SERP Guy 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

We'll see an increasing focus on the brand as opposed to websites as Entities become the dominant approach to SEO in general, and Local SEO in particular. That said, Local SEO has always been about entities, and that will be even more true in 2022 (and beyond).

Tracking and analysing what your audience sees when they Google your company name (called a Brand SERP) seems to be central to any digital strategy (local or not). It's your "Google business card", but also an insight into your entire digital ecosystem: the strengths and weaknesses of your SEO strategy, content strategy and online reputation.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Companies should not rely on keeping the level of control they currently have on their GMB profiles. Google already automatically populates them with a great deal of Knowledge Graph information... According to data from Kalicube Pro, that is increasing. And the change of name from Google My Business to Google Business Profile suggests this is a trend that will continue. Removing the word "My" is perhaps a not-so-subtle hint to you from Google that the profile is not yours and it will increasingly decide what appears there.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Google is a child and it wants to learn. You are the responsible adult and it is up to you to educate it. So, in 2022, start educating Google about who you are, what you do and who your audience is. As the Google Business Profile moves closer to becoming a Knowledge Panel, the control you have will be indirect and based on how well you can educate Google. Start now - leaving it till 2023 will mean your job will be harder. You'll be playing catch up trying to correct the "child" since Google will have tried to educate itself, and will probably have got many facts wrong.



Mark Bealin

Founder and Principal 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Google is running more and more queries through the local algorithm. Understanding how that algorithm works, will continue to be very important in 2022. We work with a lot of auto dealers and the biggest update of all this year was the ability to show your inventory on GMB/GBP. My prediction for 2022 is that vertical-specific features will become commonplace for more and more industries. It's already happened or is happening for hotels, medical practices, car dealers, and restaurants. These vertical specific changes will make the local search experience more immersive for searchers. It presents an opportunity for SEOs and businesses who are ahead of the curve. It will also present a minor reporting challenge.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

There's too much of a focus on citations still. It's a minor signal and you can just use a tool.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

This is a hard question because I'd probably give different advice to businesses depending on their size and the competition in their area. Overall, I believe SEOs can overstate the value of minutiae in Local SEO. In reality a lot of what works best happens in normal human to human interactions. In competitive searches, the biggest differentiators are links and reviews. Being an active participant in your local community helps you get more local links. Treating customers well and asking for a review is usually the best way to get one. Once you've nailed the human component, layering on the SEO is much easier. If a business is unwilling to help their local community or if they have a [well-earned] bad reputation, SEO can't really save them. It's like putting lipstick on a pig.



Rasmus Himmelstrup
Managing Director 
Resolution Media

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

The pandemic has shown us that Local Search and local presence is more important than ever. It is still a mystery to me why so many - especially large enterprises/multi-location businesses - invest so little time and effort in Local Search.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Increasing the quantity of citations and the consistency.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

GMB spam fighting.



Bambi Frazier

Sr. Manager

Local SEO & Content

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

I think the need for businesses to utilize Google Business Profile will continue to grow. It's not just there for the business, as some people may think. It's there for both the business AND the consumer. Focus on providing information about your business that is truly beneficial, because that's what search results are meant to provide.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Companies should never, ever cut/paste content on their website's location pages and simply change the city name and/or contact information. Making location pages unique isn't just for SEO, its also for your potential customers and clients. Give them a great user experience with relevant, useful information, and that may very well translate into profits.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Google Business Profile (formerly Google My Business) should be prioritized, without a doubt. And everything inside of it. Let no field be left blank!



Henrik Bastrup Jacobsen

Digital specialist 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Local SEO will continue to grow as a valuable source of traffic and visibility. Presenting the customers with valuable insights about parking, payments, opening hours etc. is already the best way to get your business noted by new customers. And it will continue to grow in importance.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Don't be tempted to automate local SEO text too much with merged local data. All content should be unique to Google!

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Write good content for your local sites. Analyze your local market and include terms that are unique to each location - local city names, zip codes etc.



Kristoffer Mikkelson Miracco

Head of Content 
& SEO at Markant

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

The increasing share of searches initiated using voice search and conversational queries with local intent (e.g. "restaurants near me"), means that having a strong local presence is more important than ever. Businesses need to not only claim their local listings, that's a given. They also need to ensure that their listings are continuously optimized and engage with users through reviews, FAQs etc. as we know that around half of searches are zero-click searches, ending on the search engine results page without ever visiting a website or clicking a link. Additionally, use conversational language when optimizing your local listing and website, find out what questions customers are asking (the Questions & Answers section of your GMB profile is great for this) and answer them.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Companies should not ignore reviews and questions on their GMB listing. We know these are important touchpoints for users interacting with brands. A negative review is a great opportunity to address a customer's concern and show that your company values its customers. Likewise, questions from potential customers can provide valuable insights and allow you to connect and address any concerns or objections they may have prior to a purchase.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Claim and optimize your listings! Often this is the only touchpoint a customer has with your brand when doing a search. If they can find what they need from SERP, they won't necessarily visit your website, but their experience will have been a positive one. If you run an online store, provide recipes or have several store locations, look into setting up structured data (Schema) for your website. Doing so can make your website display as rich snippets in searches, greatly increasing your visibility in SERP. They're also great for ensuring you pop up for voice searches and smart assistants.



Eleanor Reynolds
SEO Consultant 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

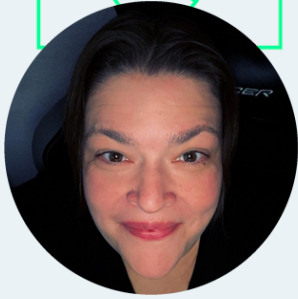
In 2018, Google stated that 46% of searches had some sort of local intent: so it seems fundamental that a business should want to be found where they are based. It's also a great way of competing in the online space, while national rankings may be dominated by huge brands with seemingly endless marketing budgets, local businesses can compete in their local area by focusing their attention there before then trying to tackle the big national terms.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

I'm not a fan of national businesses setting up a myriad of location pages on their websites, it seems extremely spammy to me. Saying that, I have seen some businesses do relatively well from doing this - so I'd just say do it within reason if you've exhausted all other possibilities.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Having a really complete Google My Business profile, with all services, products, service areas, categories etc filled in - it's such an easy win. Also try to encourage your clients to leave reviews - and always respond to negative ones. A solid review strategy can really help businesses.



Veronika Höller

Senior SEO Manager 
CompuGroup Medical

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

The trend of search queries within one's own region has increased massively in recent years. It is extremely important for companies to be present - many brand names are associated with regions even if they sell internationally - like Mercedes Benz with Stuttgart. Users with smartphones in particular are always looking for shops, restaurants, bars, theatres, etc. in the vicinity. So it is essential to focus on local SEO - so that you can also be found here quickly. According to Ed Parsons, a specialist in spatial and geographical representation at Google, a third of searches on Google have a local reference.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

- Do not post unnecessary long posts with no added value.
- Do not use different company names and addresses on the portals.
- No prioritization of ratings and reviews.
- No entries in local directories
- Not user-friendly website

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

- Pay attention to uniformity in all channels
- Pay attention to NAP and keep it up to date everywhere
- Use keywords cleverly
- Encourage customers to give reviews
- Use negative reviews as an opportunity to optimize
- Use appealing photos
- Keep all presences up to date
- Create directory entries and regularly check that they are up to date
- Use Schema.org
- Post Videos, Images etc.



Jessica Girardi

Manager SEO at Uproer 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

I think we're going to see an influx of people moving around - the last two years, people have been relatively stagnant as a result of border closures, covid-anxiety, and all the other stuff a global pandemic brings with it. So, with more people moving around, you're going to get more travelers, either from out of state or abroad/overseas. With that, local will be more important than ever in getting your name and business out there with new customers.

My advice for businesses that have a local presence is to make their local profiles accessible, meaning no matter where a customer is from, they're able to find you. This could mean many things - from clearly highlighting and articulating your unique selling propositions in your GMB to building strategic landing pages to capture these new audiences who are unfamiliar with your brand and how you do business, to building partnerships with aggregator companies - if you're a restaurant, Eater is a great example of this type of website. Of course, folks should also be wary of mobile for this exact reason, But the fact remains that no matter where the user searches for you, you should be able to be visible.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Stop adding your site to spammy directories. I'm not talking about the Yellow Pages, you know the ones I mean - the ones that are free, that are absolutely filled to the brim with illegitimate and spam websites. When was the last time you used one of these spammy, old school directories? Never? OK! That's probably the last time your user went there too. Invest in building strategic partnerships with legitimate industry leaders, and practice a little digital PR to build high-quality links rather than rely on the mob, where links from many directories are worth one quality one.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Invest in digital (or at this point, even traditional) PR. Think about the way you hear about businesses in your neighbourhood - word of mouth, you hear about them through the ether, you see them on a list, you saw them on TV, whatever it may be. People will seek out local businesses. By building a strong foundation and then building upon that with digital/traditional PR, you capitalize on an already lively dialogue in your community AND build up a conversation about your brand in particular. However you slice it, local is still in many ways a pull channel and through digital PR and other PR initiatives, local stands a chance at being a really effective push channel.



Amanda Jordan

Director of Digital Strategy 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Yes. COVID has highlighted the importance of SEO for local SMB. Not only will it continue to be important but I assume we will see Google provide more features for GBP.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Creating duplicate content

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Using product features in their GBP profiles



Amy Toman

Local SEO Specialist 
& Google Product Expert

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Local SEO will continue to be very important in 2022, and especially Google Business Profiles. With many going back to work, and offices opening up, there are numerous opportunities for local businesses to attract attention to their new or revived offerings. On the other hand, with many businesses allowing remote workers, smaller businesses adjacent to residential areas may attract this new workforce to their offerings. The marketplace is facing a restructure in 2022; flexible businesses will be the first to benefit.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

In 2022, Google listings are no longer "set it and forget it." Business owners shouldn't create a profile and assume that's the end of it. They need to actively feed content, and keep all data current. Ignoring Google listings is ignoring a primary marketing channel.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Optimized Google Business Profiles will be an absolute "must" in 2022. Adding current contact information, third-party access for scheduling and inventory, and encouraging customer interaction will all work together to increase visibility and profit.



Marion Leadbetter

SEO Strategist 
at The SEO Upcycler

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

I think in 2022 SEO for local businesses will be more important than ever. Social media reach is on a downward trend for small businesses while demand for local services is up. For a small business to really reach its full potential and maximise its sales and revenue being found in the local search is no longer something that's optional it will have to be a vital part of local business marketing.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Ignoring voice search. up to 75% of people who use smart technology use voice search to carry out at least 1 location-based search a week. Therefore ignoring and not optimising for voice search would cost you customers.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Optimise local search with local content. This will be more important than ever in 2022, therefore not only should companies be using local content they should look to use mixed media content wherever possible as well.



Aiala Icaza
SEO Director 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Humanisation of the SEO strategy. In a world where more and more businesses are planning on going international, they still need to ensure the localisation is being nailed. The reason is that we are not just talking to users, but humans with needs and emotions. Connecting with them on an emotional level by understanding their culture and speaking their language will make you earn their trust.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Translations without a deeper knowledge of the market and culture. If you are to go for plain translations instead of creating copy specific for each market, ensure this is done by country specialists.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Persona workshops to further understand your audience. The insights from the persona research will help you create emotionally relevant and compelling user experiences, which will translate into loyalty, trust and sales.



Briony Cullin

Digital Marketing Freelancer 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

People are more conscious than ever of shopping locally and supporting local businesses.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Trying to be everything to everyone - find your niche and double-down on it.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Having a really great Google My Business (Google Business Profile) can really help your business stand out. Aside from reviews, you can also utilise adding photos and posts to your profile.



Sophie Brannon
Head of SEO 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Local SEO is growing and growing. Google search results often filter results by location, according to research by Google themselves published in 2019 - 'where to buy' and 'near me' searches grew by 200% in two years, and in the same year GoGulf suggested that 46% of all Google searches were people looking for local information. That's a huge percentage of the market that you could be missing if you're not focusing on local SEO and it's only going to grow as time goes on.

I expect local SEO to equate to over 50% of searches in 2022. Capitalising on location-based search terms, optimising relevant localised platforms such as Google My Business, and making sure that you're focused on a local audience can help to attract business not only to your website but even to your physical location - particularly if you're a brick and mortar store.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Don't pay for reviews - Google is smarter now and is removing obviously paid for reviews from platforms such as Google My Business. As much as it's spoken about as something you shouldn't do, I still see businesses doing this on a really regular basis. Your online reputation matters, with more than 87% of consumers reading reviews before committing to purchase so it's important to make the most out of these platforms, but paying for them could lead you into a spiral of review deletion and the reviews just don't look genuine which can harm your reputation.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Capitalise on the additional space that Google offers such as Google My Business and map listings. As Google continues to integrate more and more features into the SERP (according to a study in 2019 by clickstream analysis service Jumpshot, more than 50% of searches ended up being zero-click results) which makes it harder to get to the organic listings, it's important that you are capitalising on these features to make sure your brand is prominent in SERPs. The Google My Business profile has an abundance of features that you can capitalise on such as Posts, Products, Categories, Q&A and making the most out of these features can help to improve your listing.



Begum Kaya

Founder & SEO Consultant 
BK Solutions

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

The pandemic caused a somewhat shift in what users value - now they also want to interact with businesses they shop from more than ever. I think representing your local business online and being out there, communicating openly with your audience has never stopped gaining importance and that importance it'll keep on growing strongly in 2022, too.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Ignoring bad reviews on different platforms and not focusing on representing their brand online.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Finding their brand voice and being proactive in communicating with their clients



Karina Stark

MSM - Team Lead Manager 
for SEO Digital Marketing

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Local SEO has increasingly become more important every year because it helps your business stand out and helps drive traffic to your actual physical store through online leads.

Having the best product within your niche but not investing in local SEO means that potential customers will likely never find you. So with many local businesses competing to be on the first page of a local search engine result, your company won't be getting the visibility and visits it deserves.

Investing time and resources in local SEO makes your business more competitive and raises against other local businesses within your niche. Still, you also attract newcomers (new people to your area exploring x, y, or z businesses). Also, people are really into buying local. Buying from massive companies like Walmart does not mean that people are not interested in supporting their local mom-and-pop shops. On the contrary, the number of customers turning to local shops will increase during the years, and that's a given.

Next year, my predictions for Local SEO are: First, page experience and user experience will be everything. We already know about the major Google's page experience algorithm update in February, 2022.

Second, search intent is the new SEO law; the search engine knows that the user is not looking for something around the world but locally. Therefore, it is not all about traffic anymore, but about what the user is looking for. Third, Google My Business will play a major role when users search for specific services/products on Google.

And last but not least, rich content creation that will help get more clicks, and you should emphasize keywords that bring people to your website.

One of my most significant predictions is that mobile-first will be a must since Google is indexing those pages first before desktop; as well as voice search for local search.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Companies SHOULD NOT base their content on volume only. Ignoring search intent, as well as providing awful user experiences will only result in high bouncing rates, poor qualified leads and a very low ROI.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

SEARCH INTENT (for UX). Companies should definitely take into account search intent and what the consumer is actually looking for. This will help businesses tailor and improve their content, creating rich and unique blogs that will eventually help them rank better.

Additional notes

UX matters more than ever, and more changes showing an increasing focus towards AI-based results that blends pages, videos and other media products are on the rise, and only marketers who will be capable of looking beyond all the technical qualities of their SEO work and think outside the box to adapt, will be able to succeed.



Jessica Guerrero

Digital Marketing Consultant 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Of course, now more than ever local businesses have representatives and mean too much for people thanks to covid. They are more important because people changed the way they lived in their neighbourhoods.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Taking for granted that being online with a website is enough.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

The correct use of google my business mixed their social media with SEO at all levels.



Stelina (Astghik) Nikoghosyan SEO & Content Specialist at PinMeTo

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Google has been trying to remind us what search engines have been created for: to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and USEFUL. 2022 will be the year when companies switch from a “crack the algorithm” mentality to providing real value and a great customer experience, from prioritizing traffic to their websites to understanding the importance of online presence and local SEO.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

One-size-fits-all is not going to fly anymore. Localize your listings and tailor your messaging for each location. However, this shouldn't mean more manual work. Invest your valuable time in building your online reputation. Let automation tools take care of the rest.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

GBP is the new social media for local and multi-location businesses. Make use of the fact that it's still free and very much in your control to share all the information you need.

Millions of searchers rely on maps to find products and services. One thing is for sure, in 2022, if you are not on maps, you don't exist as a business. It should become the ABC's of conducting a local business.

Optimizing your listings, getting more local backlinks and reviews must be the obvious priority in 2022.



Miki Clarke 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Due to slow delivery times in Australia, more consumers will opt for click and collect where possible, especially when it comes to last-minute gift shopping. I think Google could capitalise on this, as well as promote buying locally as a way of reducing food and goods travel costs, by providing filters within Shopping results for Pick up vs Delivery and also a country of manufacture. Thereafter those businesses that can provide Google with inventory feeds by location will be given greater visibility in Google Shopping results.

Also, now that live popular times are provided, Google will potentially start warning people about crowds at certain places and making alternative recommendations. Potentially something for business owners to consider expanding if they are regularly inundated.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Don't forget to acknowledge / respond to reviews. The volume and quality of reviews will only grow in importance especially as Google prompts users to review places that they've visited.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Regularly maintain your Google My Business listings. Respond to reviews, update opening hours (particularly public holiday ones) and provide engaging photos.



Isaline Muelhauser
SEO Consultant 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

In 2022, local SEO stays the number one activity to present a service to a local prospect at the conversion stage of the marketing funnel. I don't see other marketing channels able to narrow down users as close to the conversion step any time soon.

In the Swiss market, companies - especially small and medium-size companies - are slow to integrate SEO into their strategies. That's why companies that take full advantage of SEO in 2022 will have a head start. Local SEO provides fast results in CH in many industries.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

- Companies should NOT underestimate how their answers to the reviews impact their brand image.
- Companies should NOT react - emotionally - to negative reviews but value feedbacks and provide a qualified answer with a call to action to move the discussion on a private channel (phone call, email).
- Companies should NOT publish copy-pasted answers but aim at a high degree of personalisation, care and knowledge.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Companies should create a long term strategy for a steady effort the whole year long:

- Start with a Keyword Research - to prioritise tasks meant to help rank the websites or via GMB.
- Test and iterate content meant to convert.
- Optimise and refine.
- Remember that SEO is a long term game.



Alix Charles

Managing Director 
at Alix Digital

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

One of the things I think SEOs need to think about is voice search. Whilst voice search already exists, it's becoming more reliable for users. This means having question and answer type content which includes local terms and questions is likely to be incredibly important in 2022.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Letting content go to waste. The chances are, if you've been working with a client for a while, there should be some great content developed over time. But old content that is no longer driving traffic doesn't need to be stagnant. If the content can be changed up in line with what people are searching for now, it helps to continuously build traffic coming to the site rather than having blog traffic on a cycle.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Voice search.



Erik Andersson

Head of Marketing 
at PinMeTo

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

I believe we can see strong signals from Google that Local is increasingly being assigned a bigger space in general. I see it as a user, I hear it from technical Local SEO experts and I see that Google is making it easier for large chains to enrich your Google Business Profiles. The consumer behavior is already there and dictating the change, it's important for companies not to fall behind.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Companies should NOT see Local SEO as a painkiller. It's a vitamin. Identify your opportunities and set a strategy for how to capture it. Make sure you capture local intent, because I promise you - if you don't, your competitors will.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

I believe there is a big opportunity for companies if they build processes around local content, both as static content or as entry point to channels like messaging. Communicate with your customers on a brand-level when that's the right thing to do and on a local level when that's expected from the buyer.



Sheri Mandour

Digital Marketing Consultant

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

In 2022, local SEO will continue to play a significant role in user experience as more and more people browse on mobile devices and search for nearby businesses. My 2022 predictions are:

1. Local search will be more reliant on the right images and videos. Google is intent-driven and a low hanging fruit that many local businesses overlook are images and video as a channel. Use Google Cloud vision API to find out Google's understanding of your images.
2. More features will be added to Google Business Profile. If you want to get discovered locally, your Google My Business profile is an excellent tool for boosting the number of people who find you. Take advantage of all its features and make sure you collect reviews and are readily available to interact with your users in real-time.
3. Apple maps will add more features to its portal. There are millions of users who primarily use it to navigate so claim your business. You'll discover that integrating your business into Apple Maps will allow you to optimise your business for voice search as Siri works seamlessly with it.
4. LSA (local service ads) will continue to expand. We are now seeing three results however as more businesses compete and the rollout of infinite scrolling, expect to see more.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

One thing I think companies should NOT be doing in 2022 is neglecting their Google Business Profile. In 2021, in an effort to "make things simpler", Google My Business became Google Business Profile as it works to move business profile management out of the Google My Business app and directly into Google Search, Google Maps, and those apps.

Small businesses can manage, claim and verify their profiles directly on Search or Maps. They can message customers in Google Search as well as learn more about the calls they received from Google.

Ignoring Google Business profile will result in the business missing out on a lot of potential opportunities. My recommendation is to make sure your company's presence has been claimed and verified in Google Search, be present on Google Maps, and keep your company's information accurate.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Tidying up and maintaining your Google Business Profile is one thing I'd recommend businesses focus on in local SEO. It's essentially free advertising and in the words of Google, customers are 2.7 times more likely to consider a business reputable, 70% more likely to visit and 50% more likely to consider purchasing a business with a full Business Profile. This makes it an integral part of any local SEO strategy.

Businesses should:

- Include the services they offer.
- Write a useful description with a personal touch
- Opening days
- Business hours
- Ask customers for genuine reviews
- Select attributes that describes your business
- Add photos and videos regularly (According to Google, adding regular photos and videos promotes engagement with your customers and boost your ranking)
- Businesses should also publish frequent postings, answer inquiries, and react to messages promptly.



Sally Newman

Senior SEO Specialist 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

With the ever-growing rise in trends for mobile usage, voice assistants and 'near me' (and similar) searches, local SEOs importance has never been more apparent. I predict that we will see continued growth in all of these areas, along with the uplift in services such as delivery, particularly if we continue to see ourselves in "unprecedented times". (I apologies, I despise this phrase)

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Creating GMB (Business profiles) listings at addresses without physical addresses. Sometimes businesses get lucky in that they somehow manage to verify them, however, this is rarely the case and it can be quite a waste of time, particularly if customers are likely to drive to these (often fake) locations. Carrying out actions like this that only benefit businesses from a search perspective aren't worth it. We should be continuing to work towards a more user-centric way of working. If actions don't work for users and just search engines, we should be asking ourselves if what we're doing is right.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Reviews! We don't see enough local businesses working with Google reviews and they almost always fail to reply to them. As a local ranking factor, they're so important from an authority perspective and are worth the resource to reply to. What businesses often forget is that it's as important to reply to negative reviews as it is the positive ones.

Additional notes

A few other thoughts for you: Experiment with new GMB features (now named Business Profiles), see what your competitors are doing in this space and optimise the listings as best you can. Keeping profiles basic won't help your local visibility. Google will always rank the businesses that use more of their features than sites that don't within any of their tools. But, of course, there's a lot more to local SEO than just Business Profiles.



Laura Coles-Wild

Director, TopRanker SEO 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

As Google continues to refine the SERP to reflect different rich snippets for different user requirements, I predict that in local SEO schema is going to become more prevalent and there will be new and expanded fields of schema to implement. Features such as the local pack, GMB profiles and aggregate rating data dominate search results and any large rich features that are displayed in the main body have the ability to push competitors out. Rich features are not guaranteed but having schema significantly increases your chances of securing one. If you're not using schema for your local strategy yet, you should be.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Outdated, low authority directory listings are no doubt a time and resource drain for businesses. I have seen many websites have extreme fluctuations in results pages and difficulty maintaining consistent rankings because they built their entire backlink profiles using spammy directory listings. Whilst directories have their place, make sure you pick which ones share equity to your website with a discerning eye. Quality over quantity always wins!

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

Make sure your inbound and outbound website link profile is consistent and accurate to the canonical version of the site.. Don't leave any room for error. If you have migrated to HTTPS, make sure all external connected resources reflect this change. Have www and non-www indexable versions of your website? Make sure you resolve this.



Natalie Athanasiadis

Founder of Ormi Media 

What are your predictions for 2022? Why will Local SEO be important?

Following the pandemic and lockdowns we will increasingly see people outside and exploring their local areas and also, new areas. Meaning we want to be as visible as we can to users on their mobile who are looking for our products or services. The winners in brick and mortar stores will be the ones who push their online presence now. The conversions will be high, so don't leave money on the table.

Name one thing in Local SEO that you think companies should NOT be doing in 2022.

Ignoring the importance of reviews. Brands absolutely must have a strategy in place to generate quality reviews that contribute to their online visibility. A review is not enough you must have the inclusion of services and products where possible to further increase your local presence.

What is one thing you would recommend companies to prioritize in Local SEO in 2022?

It is essential that brands prioritize mobile user experience on their websites in 2022 and beyond. Fast websites that are responsive and perform well across the board are not a "nice to have" in 2022 it is the absolute bare minimum.



Final Thoughts

Although it is hard to predict what's in store for the future, [our local SEO report](#), survey answers and searchers' behaviour indicate that in 2022 strong online reputation, detailed listings, communication with your customers and good customer experience will matter more than ever.

To shape your brand in 2022 and strengthen your local SEO strategy, tailor your messaging for the local audience and focus on providing useful information about your business. Search engine algorithms change all the time, but one sure way to improve your organic results is to give searchers what they are looking for, share important updates and do it for people instead of the algorithm.

To give your business a competitive edge, rely on your experience, [local SEO ranking factors](#) and our participants' predictions:

- Pay special attention to GBP
- Check, respond and analyze the reviews
- Strive to provide a great customer experience
- Stay up to date and change your plan of action based on algorithm changes.

We want to thank our survey participants for their interesting insights and for making the local SEO report 2022 possible.

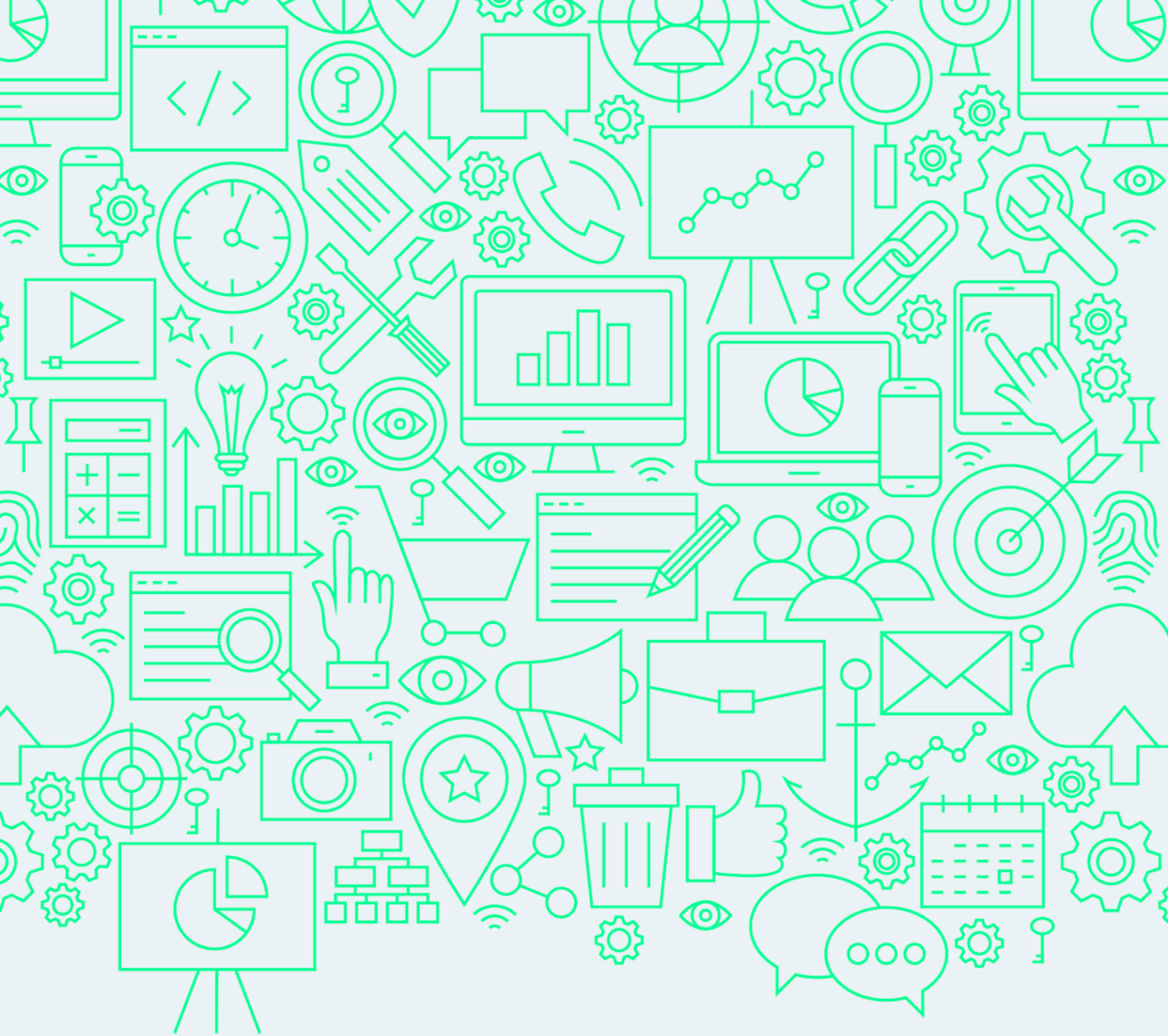


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