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OPTIMISING FOR LOCAL SEARCH

Optimising for Local Search

Local SEO refers to the practice of optimising your site for local searchers and/or search phrases that include geographic intent. This is particularly useful for businesses with brick and mortar business locations or those who only serve certain geographic areas.

Local SEO can mean increased rankings on both normal organic search rankings and map rankings, which means more exposure, more traffic and hopefully more business for you.



Optimising for Local Search

Local SEO involves both onsite and offsite optimisations, and recommendations change often. This is because Google regularly updates its search algorithm and products (e.g. Google+ Local), and has over the last 12 months had a particular focus on local, mobile and social aspects of online behaviour.

While there are many factors that will influence your search rankings and your performance in local search, we have boiled it down to what, in our opinion, are the biggest drivers.

thai food darlinghurst

Web Images Maps Shopping More ▾ Search tools

About 71,400 results (0.49 seconds)

[Darlinghurst Thai Restaurants | Urbanspoon](#)

[www.urbanspoon.com](#) > ... > [Sydney](#) > [City of Sydney](#) > [Darlinghurst](#) ▾

Darlinghurst Thai Restaurants. Reviews from critics, food blogs and fellow diners.

ONSITE FACTORS FOR LOCAL SEARCH

Onsite Factors for Local Search

Location Keywords

Although it's old advice, it's still relevant. Your location keywords need to be used on your site to make your site relevant for them. We don't want you to stuff location keywords in, but you do need to mention them. This means you should try to have your location terms in;

- Header tags

- Meta titles – You want your location keywords in the meta titles of your main pages at least, if not more.

- Within content

If you have different locations, ideally you would have different landing pages.

[My Darlinghurst Plumber](http://www.mydarlinghurstplumber.com.au/)

www.mydarlinghurstplumber.com.au/ ▼

From Blocked Drains to Toilet Repairs, make My **Darlinghurst Plumbers** your small job **plumber** in Sydney's eastern suburbs. Call us today -- no job too small!

[Plumber Darlinghurst - Ikon Plumbing - Plumber Darlinghurst ...](http://www.plumber-darlinghurst.websytle.com.au/)

www.plumber-darlinghurst.websytle.com.au/ ▼

Ikon Plumbing - **Plumber Darlinghurst** are providers of a wide range of domestic and commercial plumbing services to Darlinghurst and the surrounding ...

Onsite Factors for Local Search

Rich Snippets

Rich snippets are html tags you can use to give search engines more information about your site. The tags to use can be found in the [local business schema](#). You can also use a tool like [Schema Creator](#) to help simplify the process of marking up your code

```
<div itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/LocalBusiness">  
<a itemprop="url" href="www.thelocalshop.com">  
<div itemprop="name">  
<strong>The Local Shop</strong>  
</div>  
</a>  
<div itemprop="description">This is the local shop description</div>  
<div itemprop="address" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/PostalAddress">  
<span itemprop="streetAddress">5 Main St, Big Town </span><br>  
</div>  
</div>
```

schema.org

[Thing](#) > [Organization](#) > [LocalBusiness](#)

Onsite Factors for Local Search

Optimise Images

Optimising images helps in regular SEO and can also help with local SEO if you include location terms. You should optimise your images by including;

- Geolocation attributes – you can use a service like

GeoSetter

- Location terms in alternative text
- Image schema markup with location included – you can use the official Schema markup for Creative Work on your images or videos, and include the tag `<contentLocation>`.



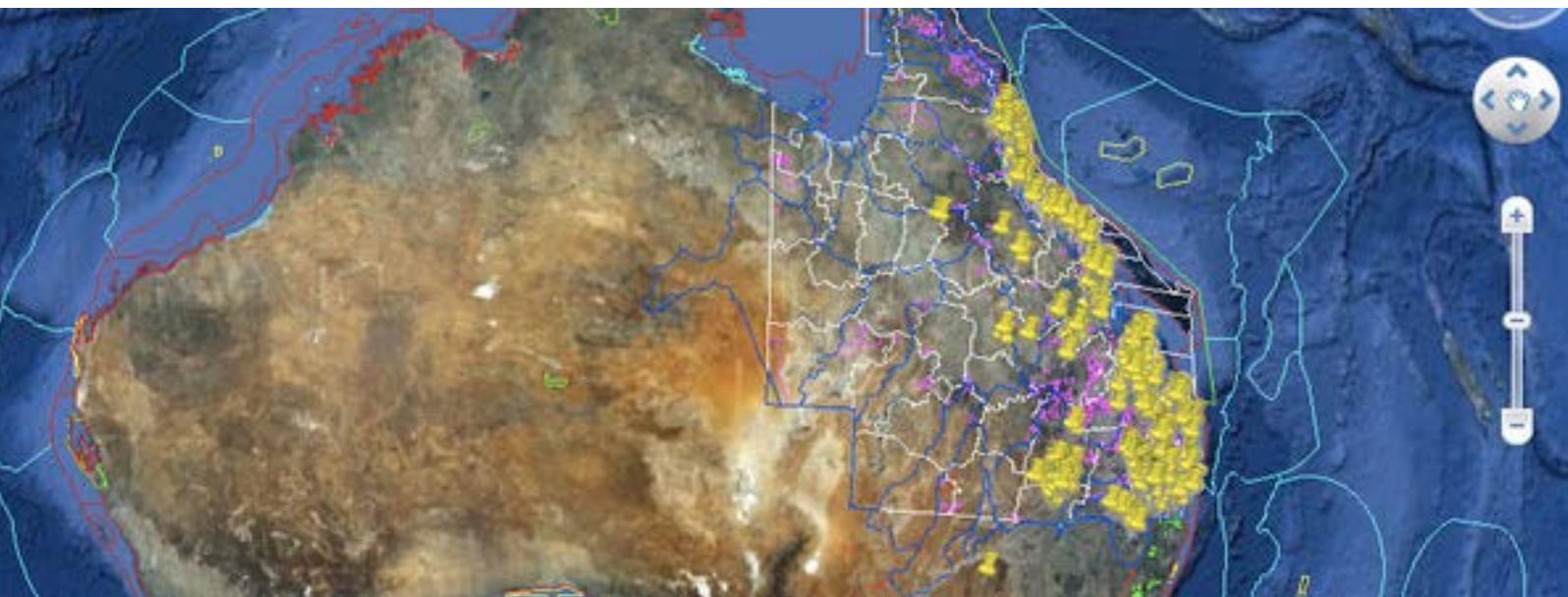
Onsite Factors for Local Search

Use KML Files

KML is a file format used to display geographic data in an Earth browser such as Google Maps and Google Earth. You can include a KML File in your site, and then point to it from your sitemap, just as you would any other page.

When you upload your sitemap to Webmaster Central, Google will be able to read and index your KML file, and count it as an 'authenticated' source of geo data about your business.

Read more about [KML Files](#) to find out how you can include on on your site.



OFFSITE FACTORS FOR LOCAL SEARCH

Offsite Factors for Local Search

Data Consistency

It might seem simple, but you want to make sure that all your profiles (e.g. in local directories, niche directories, business directories, Yellow Pages, TripAdvisor, etc) all have the same information and format for business name, address, website and phone number. You don't want misspellings, typos or abbreviations.

This is particularly important between your Google+ Local page and your own website – the Name/Address/Phone should be identical across these two.

Do a thorough Google search for your business name and address and make sure that they all match. When they don't, get in touch with the website to update it.

Tip: For local search, on your Google+ Local page, it is best to put in the local area code for your phone number (as opposed to a toll free number)



Find pizza, wine bars, vintage clothing

Near Sydney

Home About Me Write a Review Find Friends Mess

hi White Pages Whereis (s) About Sensis Media Telstra Adv



| Business type or name

Suburb or Postcode

Offsite Factors for Local Search

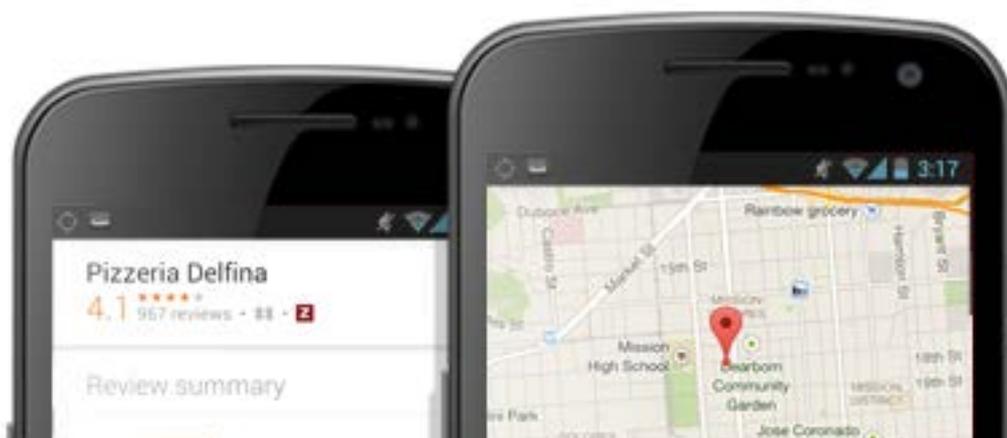
Google+ Local Categories

When creating your Google+ Local profile you will be asked to choose a category for your business. You should choose this very carefully to make sure you choose the most relevant for you.

Later, within your profile, you can choose up to 9 more related categories. For example, if your main category was hotel, other categories might be luxury hotel or extended stay hotel.

You can use this [tool](#) to search and choose categories.

Tip: Fill out your Google+ Local Profile as completely as possible. This also applies to any other directory listings you have online. Make them consistent, but try to include as much information as possible, including images.



Offsite Factors for Local Search

Citations/Links

Of course links are important for general SEO, and citations are similar. Citations are all those places where local businesses are listed online.

For hospitality businesses, like hotels, citations might come from Trip Advisor, Virtual Tourist, Lonely Planet or the many aggregator sites available for hotels.

For stores it might be Yellow Pages, True Local, Where Is, Hot Frog or any other number of local, national or specialist directories.

A citation is basically a listing of your virtual and physical addresses, and it often includes a review section. Try and get your site listed on as many sites as possible – be they industry, local, national, service - whichever relevant directories you can find. You should spend most effort trying to get in the higher quality listing sites, and then as you complete them, you can spend time on the lower quality ones.



[Destinations](#) [Themes](#) [Shop](#) [Thorn Tree Forum](#) [Bookings](#) [Insurance](#)

 **tripadvisor.com.au**

The world's largest travel site

[Home](#)

[Hotels](#) ▾

[Flights](#)

[Holiday Rentals](#)

[Restaurants](#) ▾

[Best of 2013](#)

[Your Friends](#)

Offsite Factors for Local Search

Local Competitor Analysis

Undertake thorough search engine research to identify your online competitors across a variety of main search phrases. You might want to search for your industry term appended with city, postcode, suburb, etc.

From this list of competitors, you can check backlinks and sources of reviews to find opportunities for citations and links for your own website. For local search you should put particular emphasis on citations your competitors are getting from local sites - for example city chambers, local community organisations, shopping center tenant lists or local newspapers/magazines.

[A Tavola](#)

www.atavola.com.au

4.3 ★★★★★ 75 Google reviews



348 Victoria St
Darlinghurst NSW
(02) 9331 7871

[The Victoria Room](#)

www.thevictoriaroom.com

4.3 ★★★★★ 97 Google reviews



1/235 Victoria St
Darlinghurst NSW
(02) 9357 4488

[Popolo](#)

www.popolo.com.au

4.1 ★★★★★ 8 Google reviews



50 McLachlan Ave
Rushcutters Bay NSW
(02) 9361 6641

LOCAL SEO RESOURCES

Local SEO Resources

Articles to Read about Local SEO

WEBSITE	ARTICLES TO READ
MOZ.COM	Illustrated Guide to Local Search
	Local Search Ranking Factors
	The 2013 Local Search Ecosystems
LOCAL SEO GUIDE	Local SEO Tools & Software
	Google Local Results Are Taking Over The World
	If A Chiropractor Can Do Local SEO, So Can You
SEARCH ENGINE WATCH	Local SEO Citations
	4 Local Search Tactics
	6 Ways to Accelerate Your Local SEO Success
BRIGHT LOCAL	Best local search blogs 2013
	2013 Expert Citation Survey
	10 tactics for pinpointing best local terms
SEARCH ENGINE LAND	Local Search Long Tail
	Best & Worst Ways To Influence Local SEO Rankings
	Local SEO Industry Survey

Local SEO Resources

Twitter Profiles To Follow

@davidmihm



David Mihm
@davidmihm

The days of anonymous local business reviews are over. ow.ly/ssqXW
[@google](#)'s already ended them. Why does [@Yelp](#) still allow them?

  @BrianReagan · SAT, JAN 11 2014 01:59:16

@mblumenthal



Mike Blumenthal
@mblumenthal

Google Bulk Upload-Verified Listings Or Just Another Data Feed?
blumenthals.com/blog/2014/01/1... What led to the recent hijackings?
Here's my thinking

 FRI, JAN 17 2014 14:06:29

Local SEO Resources

@localseoguide



Andrew Shotland
@localseoguide

From a year ago: 10 Simple Things SMB Websites Need To Fix Before SEO searchengineland.com/10-simple-thin... via @sengineland

  @YogeshDhawan143 · SAT, JAN 11 2014 10:06:24

@philrozek



Phil Rozek
@philrozek

100 Practical Ideas for Small-Business Blog Posts
localvisibilitysystem.com/2014/01/16/100...

  @lyena · THU, JAN 16 2014 16:40:54

SOCIAL MEDIA

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Our current clients include online retail, professional services, recruitment, media and finance, and we work on sites across Australia, the UK, North America, Europe and Asia.

If you need more information about any advice provided in this document, please visit our website, www.moomumedia.com, or contact us at:

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