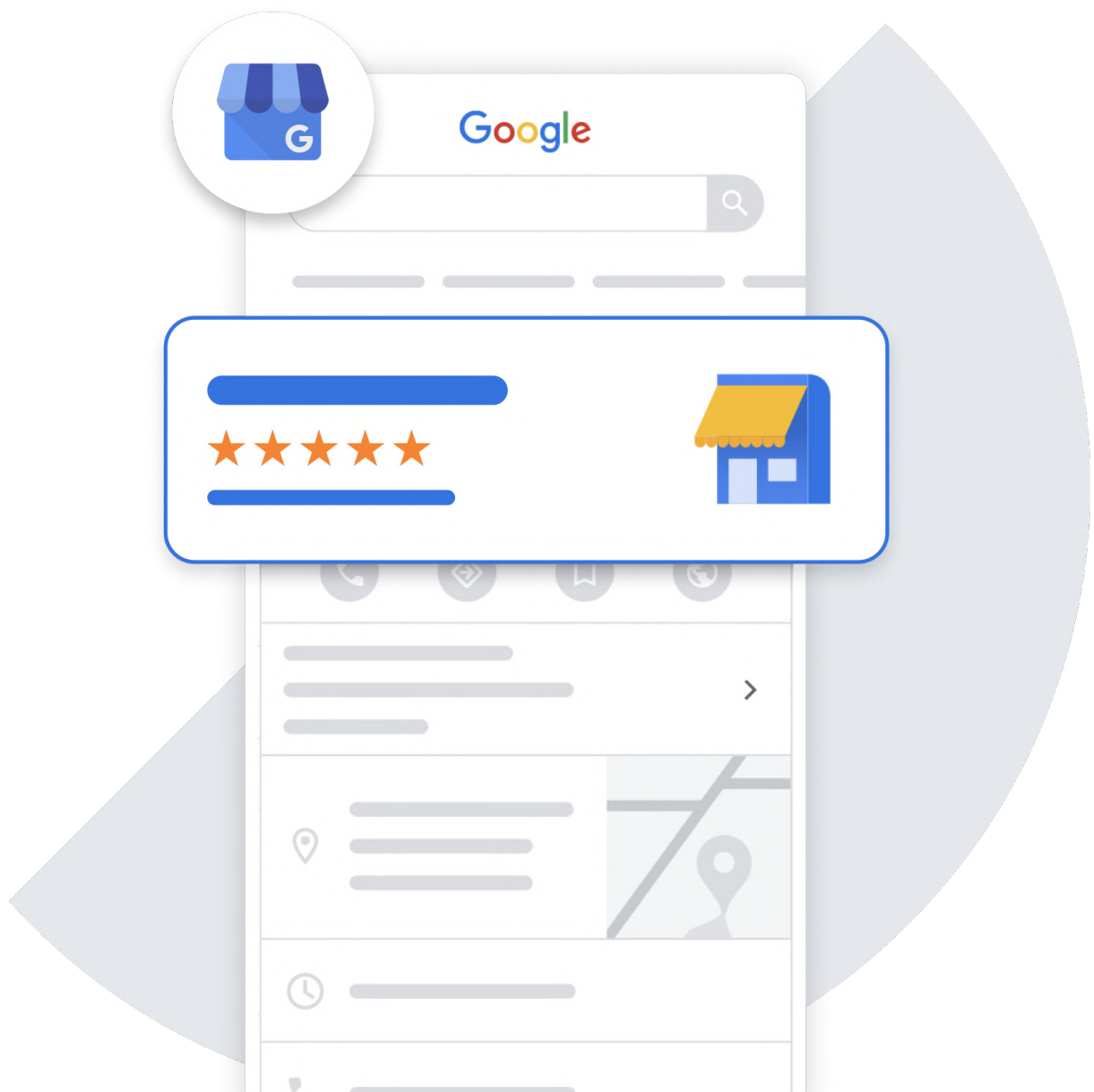




The Yext Guide to Google Business Profiles



With over [8 billion searches](#) made by consumers every day, Google is a fundamental part of most internet users' search journeys. Google also operates Google Maps, one of the most popular local search and mapping apps.

For businesses increasingly dependent on digital channels, the accuracy of their facts on Google can often mean the difference between thriving and struggling. Since 2014, Google has provided a manual means through which brands can manage the facts about their business across Google Search, Google Maps, Waze, Ads and Google Home. With Google Business Profiles, businesses can add and claim locations as well as edit listings data, such as opening hours and attributes, leverage analytics and more.

But it's not as easy as uploading a photo of your business and calling it a day. Whether you're looking to claim your business listing for the first time or looking for best practices for listings management, this guide has something for you.

In it you'll learn:

1. How to claim your business on Google
2. Everything you need to know about the Google Business Profile API
3. Why managing your Google listings with Yext is a winning combination

Yext is the global industry leader in [Local Listings Management](#), as voted by G2 for seven consecutive quarters. We're here to help with insights and best practices to help businesses stand out on Google.

How to Claim Your Business on Google

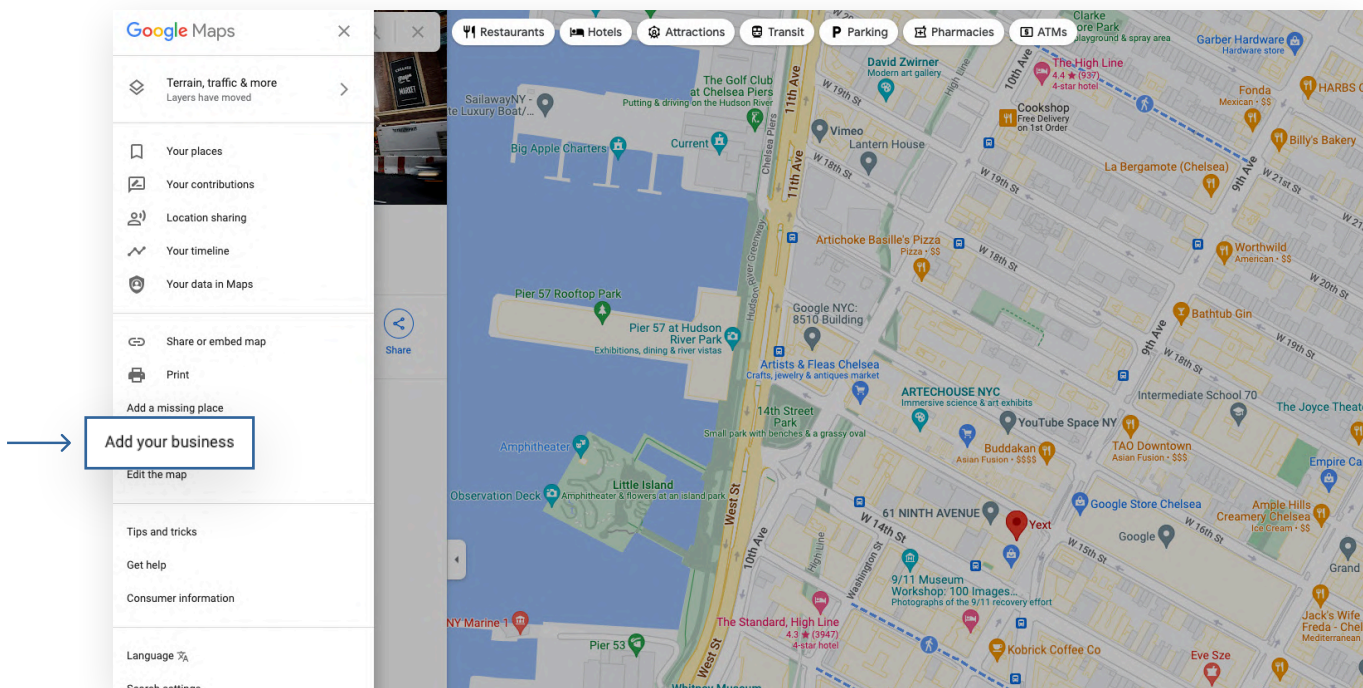
The first step to managing your business on Google is claiming your business via Google Business Profile (GBP). You will need a Google account in order to access GBP. If you have an existing account for Gmail, you can use that account to log in, or you can create

a new account. Whichever account you choose, it should be one that pertains to your business. The claiming process differs slightly depending on whether your business has fewer than 10 locations or 10+ locations.

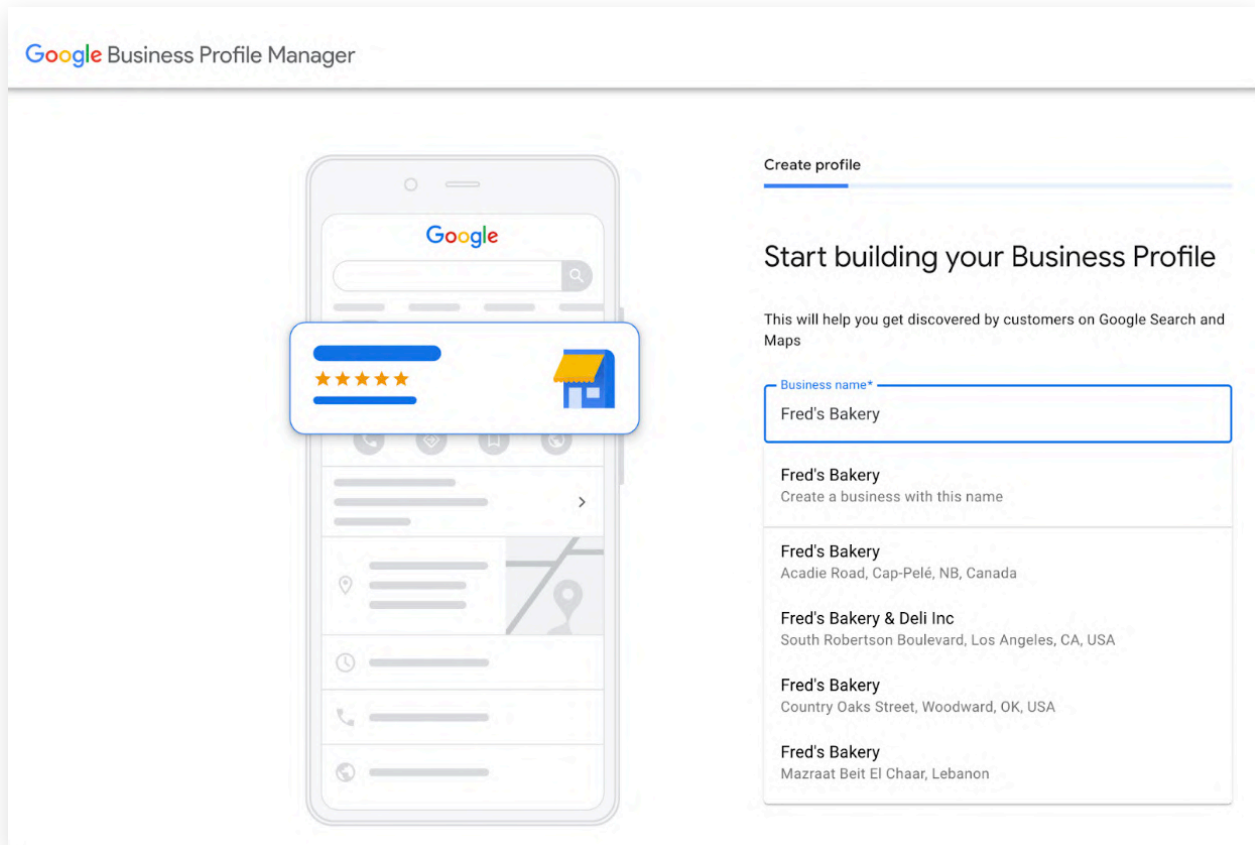
Businesses With Fewer Than 10 Locations

1. Add/Claim Your Business on Google

Add your business by going to the menu section in the top left corner in [Google Maps](#) and click **Add your Business**.



Type in the name of your business as well as its primary category. Create a new business or choose an existing listing if you see your business autofill.



Continue by filling in all of your business information, such as your address or the areas you service if you are a service area business.

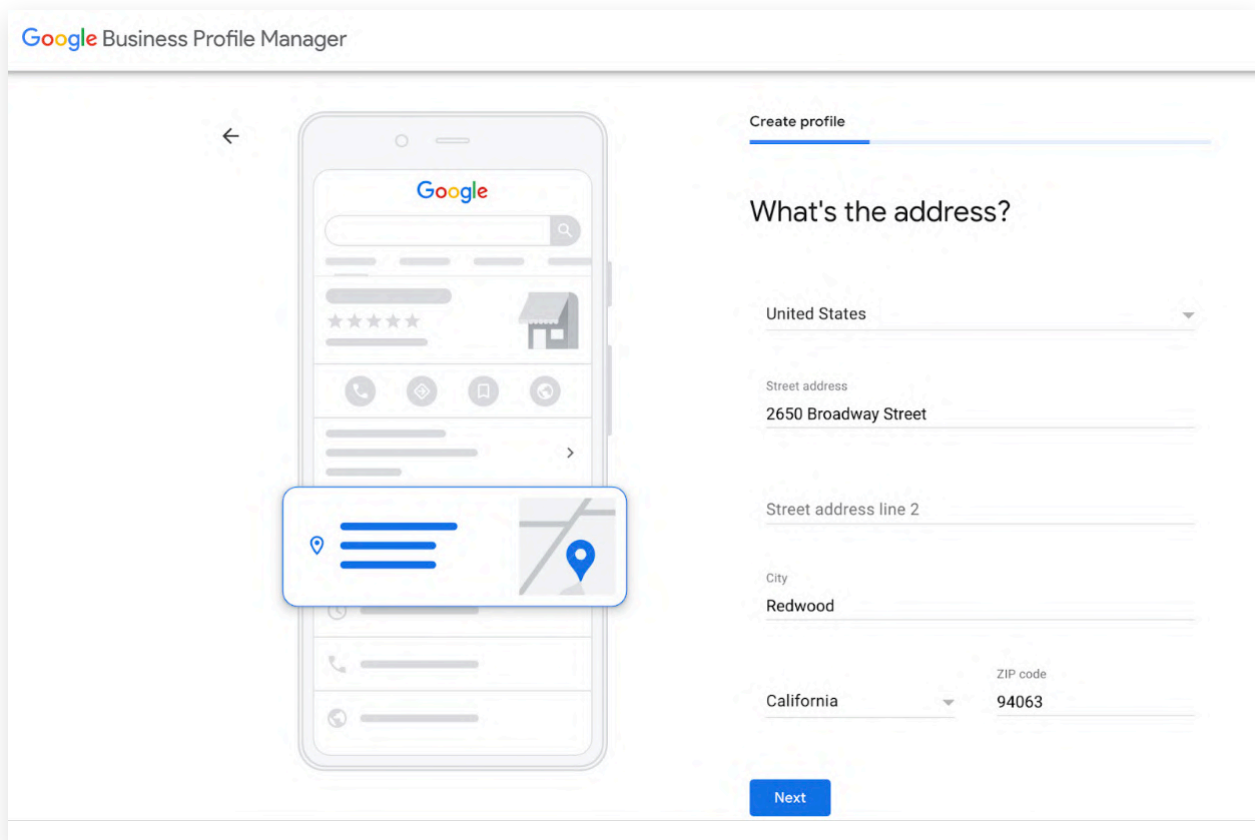
Address Entry Guidelines

Enter the complete and exact street address for your location.

Example:

2650 Broadway Street,
Redwood City, CA, 94063

Only include information that is part of the official address. Adding information like cross-streets or nearby landmarks may make it more difficult to determine your location on Google Maps. Suite or office numbers may be added separately from the street name and number in Address Line 2.



2. Verify Your Business

Now that you have selected or entered your business information, you must verify its accuracy with Google and confirm that you are the owner.

There are four options for verifying your business. Not all options are available for everyone.

a. Verify By Mail

- Click **Mail** to have a verification postcard posted to your business.
- When your postcard arrives, add the verification code on the postcard to your GBP dashboard.

Please note: Service area businesses are only eligible to request verification by Mail

b. Verify By Phone

- If your business is available to verify by phone, you'll see the **Verify by Phone** option when you request verification.
- Make sure you can directly answer your business phone number to get your verification code, or to have the code sent to your phone via automated message. Click **Verify by Phone**.
- Add the verification code from the message to your GBP dashboard.

c. Verify By Email

- If your business is available to verify by email, you'll see the **Verify by Email** option when you request verification.
- Make sure you can access the email address shown in the verification screen and click **Email** from the list of verification options.
- Click the **Verify** button in the verification email, or you can enter the code from the email in your GBP dashboard.

d. Instant Verification

- If your business's website is verified with Google Search Console, you may be instantly verified.
- Make sure you are signed into GBP with the same account you used to verify your website.

Businesses With 10 or More Locations

Businesses with 10 or more locations are also eligible for **bulk verification**. Bulk verification is the process through which a business can make updates and add new locations without undergoing additional manual verification (i.e. postcard/phone verification). This means that updates may go live on Google within hours.

To become bulk-verified, a business must have at least **10 locations** in their account for the same business and must fill out a six-field form, which includes:

- Business name
- Business countries
- Contact name
- Contact Phone
- Business Manager Email
- Google Account Manager Email

To Request Bulk Verification:

- Sign into [Business Profile Manager](#)
- On the left, click **Verifications**, then select **Chain**.
- Complete the verification form with the contact information.
- To speed up approval, use a contact email with the same domain as the business website

Once you submit the form, a verification team at Google will review the information provided and the data in the account to make sure the business is eligible for bulk verification and that the contact person is a legitimate representative of the company. They will also verify that all of your locations, or a subset of your locations, exist at the address and phone provided. This can take anywhere from one to several weeks.

It's important that businesses do not abuse their bulk verification privileges. Businesses that bulk verify accounts that they are not authorised to represent or do not comply with Google's [guidelines](#) will likely have their bulk verification status removed.

Now That Your Business Is Listed on Google, Here's How You Get The Most Out Of Your Listings:

Complete Your Profile

If your profile isn't complete, it may be harder for customers and search engines to find and engage with your business. That's why it's important to fill out your listings as completely and accurately as possible. This includes vertical-specific information for businesses like hotels, healthcare, food and financial services. Attributes examples include:

- 1. Financial Services:** safe deposit boxes, check cashing
- 2. Hospitality:** free wifi available, outdoor pool
- 3. Healthcare:** appointment required, insurances accepted
- 4. Food:** pickup and delivery services, reservation required

Customers are **2.7x** more likely to consider a business reputable if they find a complete Business Profile on Google Search and Maps.

[Customers are 70% more likely to visit and 50% more likely to consider purchasing from businesses with a complete Business Profile.](#)

To get the most out of your listings on Google, it's important that you have complete and accurate listings in as many places as possible – not just on Google.

Google looks to other search engines and online directories to cross reference information that they have about your business. Any missing or conflicting information that you have on other sites acts as a poor signal to Google, making your business less trustworthy from their perspective.

This is where having a service like Yext really comes in handy. Yext has direct integrations with the largest number of publishers, giving you more complete and accurate listings in as many places as possible.

Consistently Update Your Listings

Updates and changes are among the many criteria that Google uses to determine where to rank businesses in search. The more you update your listings, such as adding new photos, the more positive signals you send to Google that your listings are accurate and trustworthy. And the more Google trusts you, the more likely they are to rank your business higher in search.

Schedule Updates

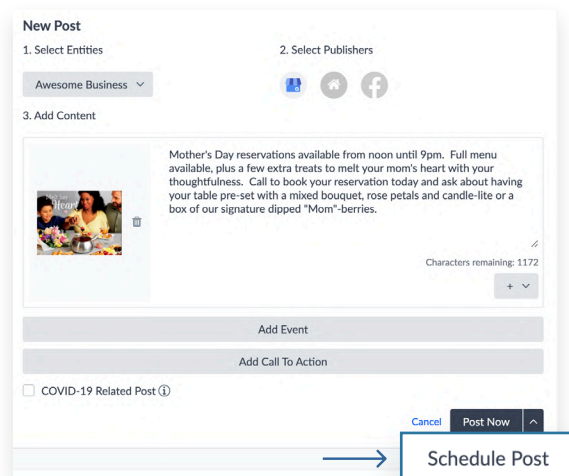
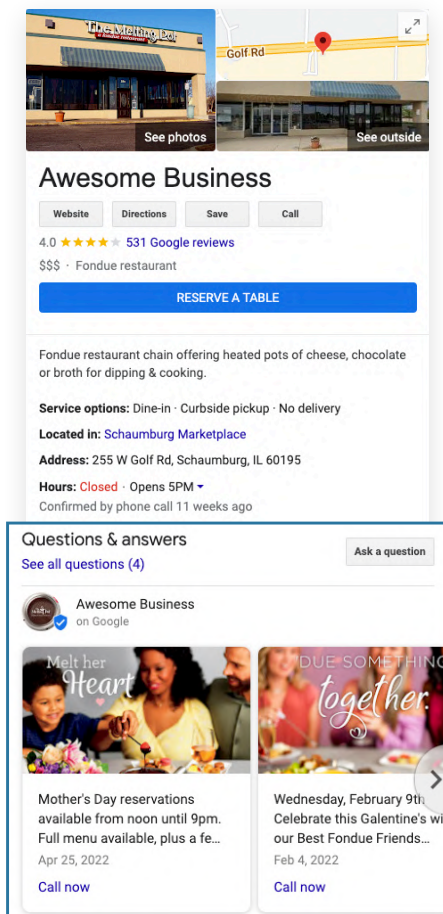
Scheduled updates allow you to schedule changes to your listings for a specific date in the future. If the update is temporary – for example, a seasonal promotion or an emergency message – you can schedule to revert the content to its current state at another future date.

Hours during the holidays are great examples of when businesses would want to schedule changes, as hours during holidays often vary from normal operating hours.

Engage With Consumers Via Your Listings

Social Posting

Google Local Posts allow businesses to communicate directly with customers. Posts will be displayed prominently in a business' knowledge card. We recommend that businesses frequently use this functionality to provide timely updates around announcements, sales, specials, events, news and offers. With a tool like Yext, you can post to your Google and Facebook pages for multiple locations at once, while personalising the content with embedded fields. Embedding fields allows you to post the same message to each location, with dynamic values for those location-specific fields.

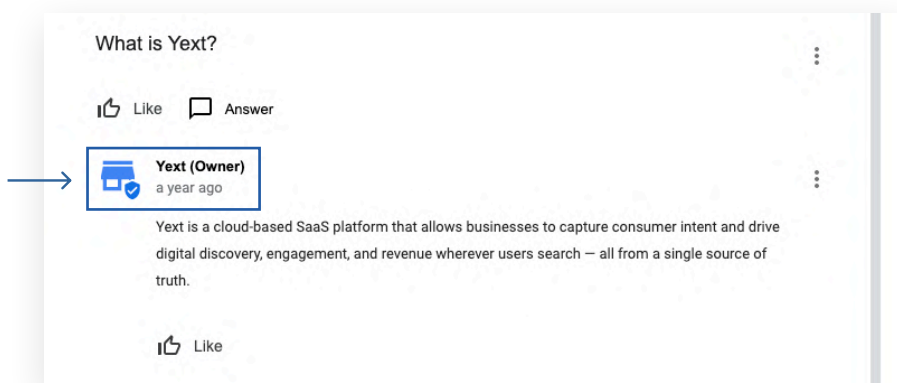
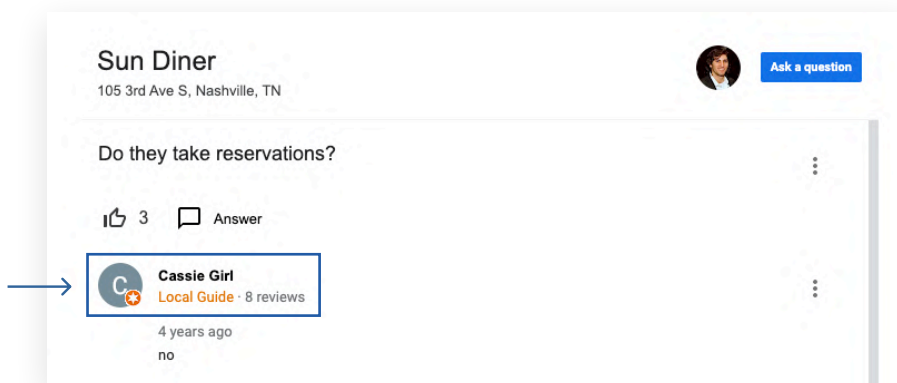


Google Q&A

Google Q&A presents businesses with an additional way to engage with high-intent consumers. Not only can any Google user ask a question about your business, but they can also respond on your behalf – even a competitor! That’s why it’s so important for businesses to monitor and answer questions that consumers ask them about their business, across their locations on Google. And by responding as the business owner, people who see your response will feel confident that your answer is the authoritative one from the business owner, as indicated by the blue verified tick mark. Yext allows you to monitor and respond to questions consumers ask about your business across your locations on Google.

Pro Tips:

- When responding to a question, make sure you restate the question in your answer! Although it’s not very common, users who ask questions can edit their question later on, so don’t use generic answers that could be manipulated.
- Do not include emails, phone numbers or links in your answers, as Google does not like this as a best practice.

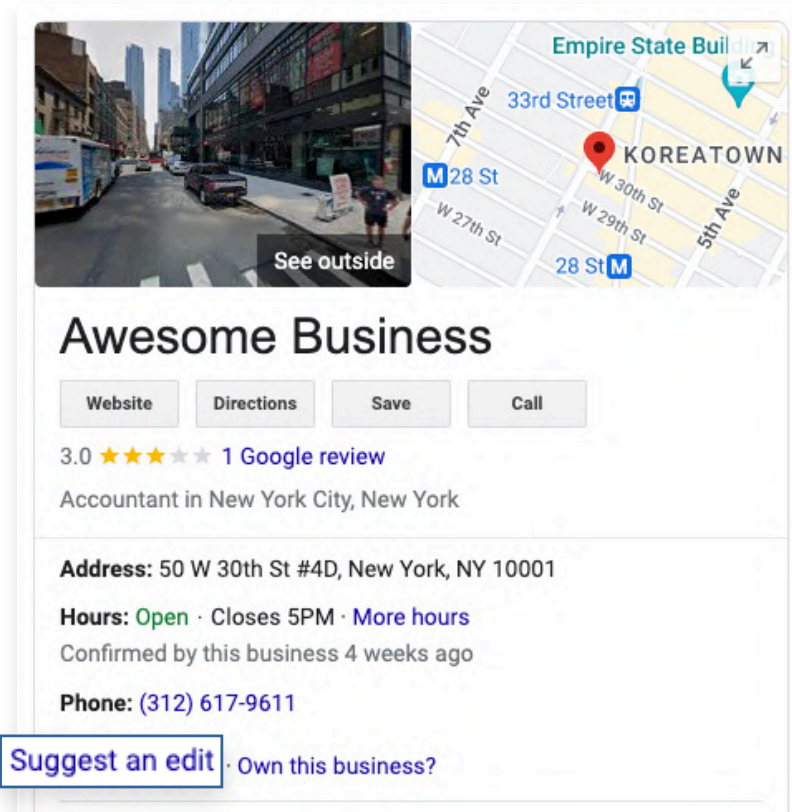


Sync FAQ

Businesses can sync questions and answers to their Google Business Profile listings. These questions live in the same Google Q&A experience. We recommend that businesses sync their most frequently asked questions, giving potential customers correct answers before they even have to ask. You can even edit these in bulk with a tool like Yext!

Publisher Suggestions

Publishers like **Google**, Bing, Facebook and Yelp, often receive submissions from consumers with suggested updates to your listings. It's important that businesses approve or deny those proposed edits because by not doing so, publisher suggestions could automatically overwrite your data – whether or not they are accurate. Utilise Yext's Publisher Suggestions feature to detect edits consumers suggest about your **Google**, Bing, Facebook and Yelp listings, and act on them directly from Yext.



Awesome Business

Website Directions Save Call

3.0 ★★★★★ 1 Google review

Accountant in New York City, New York

Address: 50 W 30th St #4D, New York, NY 10001

Hours: Open · Closes 5PM · [More hours](#)

Confirmed by this business 4 weeks ago

Phone: (312) 617-9611

→ [Suggest an edit](#) · Own this business?

Respond To Reviews

Reviews provide a great opportunity to identify your unhappy customers, but to also provide them with a better customer experience by responding to them. Not to mention the more you respond and engage with your Business Profile, the more trustworthy your business will appear from Google's perspective. Yext consolidates all of your reviews on Google into a single dashboard, where you can filter by location, average rating and much more – and respond to them directly from Yext.

Pro Tips:

- **Respond as quickly as possible.** Especially towards your negative feedback (reviews that are 1-3 stars).
- **Personalise your responses.** This has a number of benefits:
 - **Retain more existing customers.** Much more likely to retain your existing customer that initially left you a bad review with a personalised, genuine response versus something that is clearly templated and doesn't even address the issue.
 - **Reviews are a spectator sport.** People not only read reviews, but they also read how business owners respond to them. According to [Tripadvisor](#), **89%** of people said a thoughtful response to a negative review improved their impression of a business.'
 - **Get extra SEO benefits.** Sites like Google will crawl any information that is available to them in order to deliver the most relevant results to people who search. Google will reference content from the review as well as the response from the business owner.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "best sports bar for watching hockey". The results list several sports bars in NYC, including Smithfield Hall NYC, Kelly's Sports Bar, Barrow Street Ale House, and The Canuck. The Canuck is highlighted with a detailed view showing a 4.9 rating from 60 reviews, service options (Dine-in, Takeout, No delivery), and several positive reviews. One review states: "One of the best sports bars in NYC! 10 minute walk from MSG and a perfect place to watch hockey or football. Great memorabilia on the wall!!" Another says: "Hockey stick shots" and a third: "The shay burger is delicious. Perfect place to watch a hockey game and feel like you're at home."



Suppress Duplicates

Duplicate listings come from a variety of sources. Whether they come from rebrands, updates like a change in your address, suggestions from consumers on your listings or the result of data aggregators that erroneously create new listings when they are not able to process updates immediately – duplicate listings can be detrimental to your business. Not only do consumers not know which listing to trust, but publishers also get confused about which listing they should feature in search results. And remember, Google cross references information from other online directories. That's why it's important to have a tool that identifies potential duplicates and allows you to suppress them everywhere your brand lives. Yext suppresses duplicates based on each publisher's best practices.

See Real Results With Analytics

How do you know if what you are doing to boost your online presence is working? On top of that, how are people finding you – through mobile or desktop search? And what percentage of clicks and search impressions come from branded versus unbranded queries? And the real money driver for you – how are these metrics trending over time? As a business owner, it's critical to understand how your business is performing across all of your locations. Using a tool like Yext consolidates your analytics not just on Google, but on the many sites in our 200+ publisher network. This provides a true holistic representation of your performance in search – unlike most listings vendors that can only capture analytics on Google and Facebook.

Finally, Other Best Practices on Google:

Relocations

Considering relocating your business? Moving your business to a new address or changing your business's name both provide exciting opportunities to reintroduce yourself to your customers. But before you can do just that, you need to ensure your customers can still find you. Updating your listings is a critical piece of relocating or rebranding your business. You might think it is as simple as marking your old location as 'closed' on Google and creating a new profile, but the reality is that there are several factors to consider. There are two options to consider depending on the specifics of your move and your location's online reputation.

- **Option 1:** create a new listing and mark the old one as 'closed', leaving it live for 6 months
- **Option 2:** update your existing listing to reflect the new address.

For more information on when to choose each option, reference this [HH blog post](#).

Temporarily Closed vs Permanently Closed vs Coming Soon

Temporarily Closed

- Mark locations as Temporarily Closed if you are a seasonal business or will be closed longer than 7 consecutive days
- Select a reopen date out in the future if you don't know the exact reopen date
- If your business will be closed for 6 consecutive days or less, use **Special Hours**.
- Do **NOT** mark your business as Temporarily Closed if you are only offering pickup or delivery services at your location(s).

Permanently Closed

Businesses should mark locations as permanently closed if their business moves to an entirely new location.

- Google recommends deleting the old location from your dashboard and adding the new location with a new store code. You can mark the original location as closed in Google maps so that customers don't go to the wrong location.
- Simply deleting a location in the GBP UI is **NOT** recommended.
- It's recommended to use a service like Yext that will keep closed locations on an active subscription for 6 months.
 - This allows enough time for Google to make the necessary updates and for the listing to fall out of the SERP.

Coming Soon

Businesses have the opportunity to list their business as Coming Soon for locations that are not yet open, but will be in the future. This will help generate excitement and anticipation amongst customers leading up to your open date.

- You can either specify your open date with a specific date or the month you will open.
- The maximum open date is 1 year in the future, but it's recommended to list a business as Coming Soon up to 90 days in advance.

Service Area Businesses

Service area businesses are companies that visit and/or deliver a customer's location. Think of handyman like a plumber who comes to your home to fix its plumbing. Service area businesses can list their service area 'places' to specify their area of operation on Google. Places is a broad term but you can think of a place as any geographical area that can be interpreted and located by a human. You can have up to 20 service places, with Google's most popular Places being Postcode, City/Town, Neighbourhood and State/Territory.

Pro Tips:

- The boundaries of your overall area should not extend further than about **2 hours** of driving time from where your business is based.
- If you change your business type from a storefront to a service-area business or hybrid business, keep in mind:
 - **If you do serve customers at your business address and also have a service area:** Enter both your address and service area.
 - **If you don't serve customers at your business address:** Clear the address field and only enter your service area.

Agency Accounts

Agency accounts usually consist of marketing agencies or individuals who manage the Google Business Profile page for multiple different businesses. Registering your agency with Google provides a number of benefits:

- Google support that's focused on agency-specific needs.
- Account structure that's designed for third parties to manage all their profiles under one account.
- Ability to create user groups to manage teams within your agency.
- New and improved process to manage invitations via your agency dashboard.

How To Handle Issues That May Come Up With Your Google Listings:

Ownership Conflicts

Each location on Google can have only one verified owner. If you see the status 'Access needed' in your account, this means another owner has verified this location on Google. When you add a location that matches a live location with a different owner, it is treated as a duplicate and will be ignored when importing your spreadsheet.

You can request management if you'd like to request a transfer of ownership from the current owner or to be added as a manager.

Before doing so, we recommend checking in within your organisation to see who you may need to coordinate with, including agencies your company may have hired to manage on behalf of the business.

After requesting ownership, the current profile owner has 3 days to respond. You'll be notified via email whether your request was approved or denied by the existing profile owner. If denied, you might be able to appeal the request. If you don't hear back after 3 days, you might have the option to claim the profile yourself.

(For more information on ownership requests, reference this [help article](#) by Google.)

Suspended Listings

There are two kinds of suspensions, a 'soft' suspension and a 'hard' suspension.

Soft Suspension

A 'soft' suspension marks your business as suspended, but you still show up in search results. It typically requires reclaiming and reverifying the listing with a new Google account. These suspensions are becoming less common.

Hard Suspension

A 'hard' suspension will remove your business listing from search results. To pull your listing out of a hard suspension, you must follow Google's protocol and be very patient.

Why do listings get suspended? Well, while Google will not officially disclose the reason a listing has been suspended, there are common events that tend to result in suspended listings:

- Information within your listing changed. Information changes that often result in suspended listings include changes to your primary category, business name, GBP ownership, and changing to a service area business with a hidden address after operating with a visible address.
- Primary category is a high-risk industry.
 - Categories that are considered high risk are locksmiths, HVAC, plumbing and other home services businesses
- Address violates Google policy

How to Fix a Suspended Listing

In order to lift your listing out of suspension, Google may require you to provide proof that you are a legitimate business. Here are a few examples of the kind of proof you'll need to provide:

- State/territory business licence (if required by the state/territory)
- Professional licensing (if required by law)
- Proof of occupancy of location
- Utility bills
- Rental agreements / deeds
- Photos of the business location
 - Business logo clearly visible
 - Street address of the building / suite numbers on the door
 - Company vehicles with logos parked at the building
- Tax identification papers
- Video verification



Yvonne Rayburn

Digital Media Manager, OhioHealth

'When patients are searching online, especially for something like urgent care, they're searching for it because they need it right now, and the information really better be correct. That's where Yext is super helpful for us. We want to provide excellent patient care across digital channels.'

Managing Your Business Listings on Google With Yext

The GBP API replaces the manual work normally required to update Google listings with an automated feed. However, given the complexity of collecting, storing and managing information, especially across multiple locations, many businesses will choose to leverage the API through a data management partner. Updates in the Yext push to GBP in real time. From there, Google syncs that information with Google Search, Maps, Google Assistant and Waze – all within minutes.

Yext enables companies of all sizes to easily collect information about their brand through our data connector framework. We then organise your data in a knowledge graph so it's structured to provide direct answers to questions and search queries. From there, we publish your data across our expansive network of 200+ third-party publishers. Our network includes not only Google, but also Amazon Alexa, Apple Maps, Facebook, Bing, Yelp, Waze, Doordash, Vitals, WebMD, Tripadvisor and many more services consumers use to search every day.



John Dillon
CMO, Denny's

'People have to walk through brick-and-mortar doors in order to experience our brand – we are not an online vendor. The purpose of our online search experience is to drive diners into our actual restaurants time and again, and that is where Yext is invaluable.'

For more information, and to set up a demo, please visit yext.com/demo.



Yext (NYSE: YEXT) helps organisations answer every question about their business. Yext's Answers Platform collects and organises content into a knowledge graph, then leverages a complementary set of products – including Listings, Pages, Reviews, and Search – to deliver relevant, actionable answers wherever customers, employees, and partners look for information. For over 15 years, thousands of companies worldwide have trusted Yext to create seamless content-driven experiences at scale across search engines, websites, mobile apps, and hundreds of other digital touchpoints.

Learn more at yext.co.uk