How would you like 2017 to be the year your real estate office finally starts showing up in local search results?



I would love you to help you do that. So the following is a complete guide to local SEO for realtors this year. This extended post will cover activities and strategies your office needs to consider in this year's marketing plan.

Local SEO must be in your marketing mix this year. I hope this guide helps you dominate your searches and grow your production for years to come!

Local SEO for Realtors

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On-site Indicators

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) can be understood in a very simple way. You use things on your website and off your website to inform Google what your website is about. The better you do these two things; the more search visitors Google gives your website.

This section of the article refers to things you can do on your website to boost your presence. By “On-page” I'm talking about the things you control on your website like pages, blog posts, links, and text.

On-page SEO is very important. This is the baseline that determines whether you'll show up or not. Think of this as the foundation of a building. If it's sturdy, you can do anything with it. If it's shaky, even the best building will never succeed online.

1) Keyword Placement

Keywords are simple the terms you want to show up for in searches. You should create a list of the keywords you want to rank for and then make sure you have pages for all of them. On the page you want to rank for, it's important to place the keyword in fiver areas: URL, Page Title, Several Times On The Page, Title Of Images and Image Alt Tag.

Here's an example for the real estate keyword phrase, "San Diego Real Estate."

The following elements would look as follows:

- **URL:** – http://www.easyagentpro.com/san-diego-real-estate
- **Page Title:** – The Best San Diego Real Estate On The Market
- **Several Times On The Page** – You'll want to include the same keyword or phrase around 1-2% of the time. So if you have 1000 words on your page, you'll want to say the phrase 10-20 times.
- **Title of Images** – san_diego_real_estate.jpg

-Image Alt Tag – When you are uploading images with Wordpress, you can set the alternative text. Be sure to set this with some version of your keyword.

2) Keyword Percentage

Like I said above, you really want to include your keyword in the body of your blog post. You do have to be careful of using your keyword too much. A good ratio is 1 to 2%. If you use the keyword anymore than this, Google will start to dock you for doing that.

They see this as keyword stuffing. It looks unnatural and no one writing informative, helpful articles would use a percentage more than 1-2%.

You should just write naturally without paying attention to keywords. Once you're done, look back at your writing and drop the word in a few times where appropriate.

3) Keyword Synonyms and Supportive Phrasing

Google's getting smarter about how it shows websites. The search engine used to only show pages with the exact keyword used in it. Now, it is showing words that are not exactly the same but answer the question the person had.

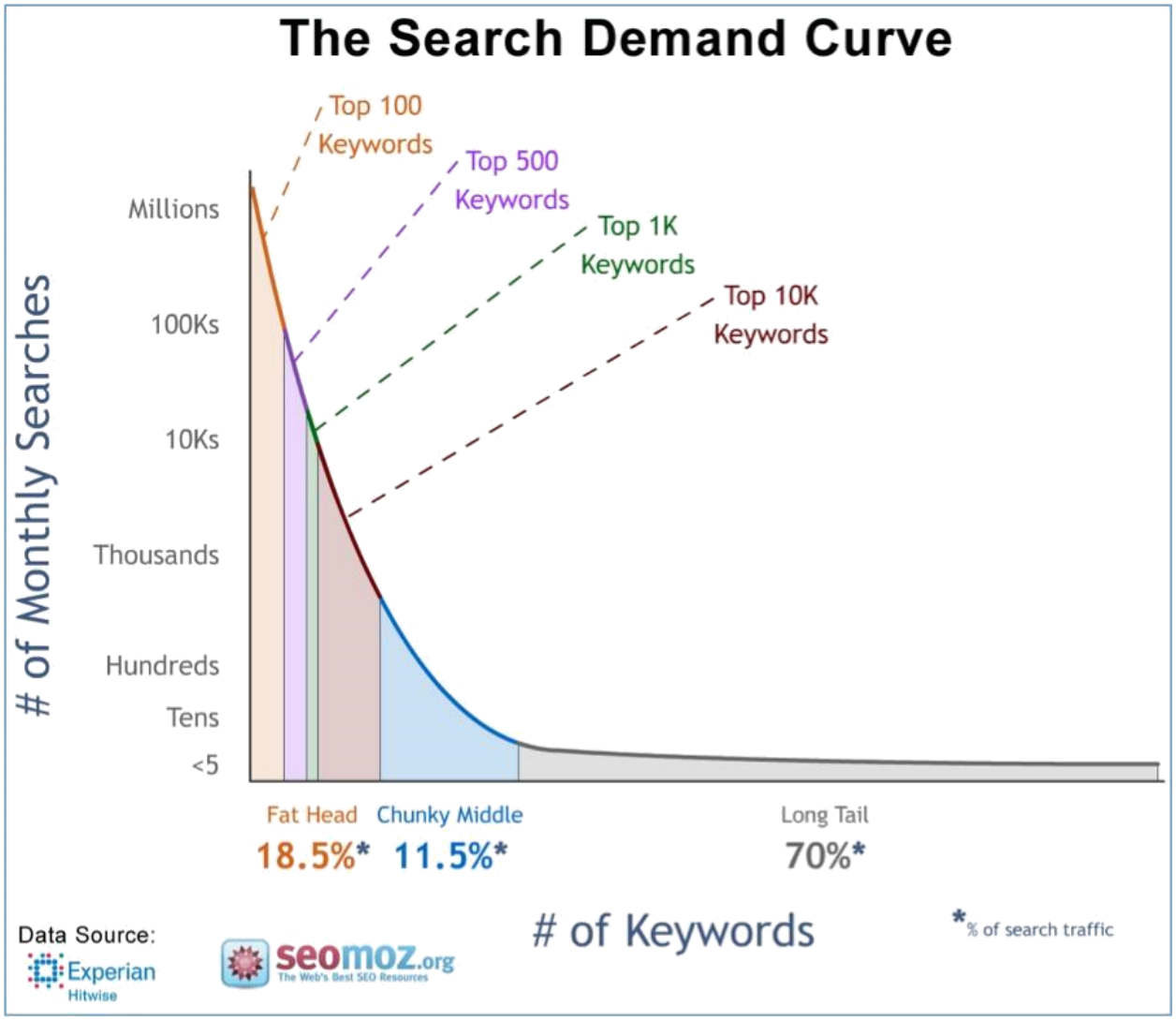
For example, Google now sees "Home" and "Houses" as the same thing. If someone types in "How To Fix My Garage Door," you're doing to see results that have that exact title and other results that say "The Ultimate Guide For Troubleshooting Your Garage Door."

Do you see how that second example didn't even have the exact keywords? **But it answered the question.**

Google's getting smart. If you're article answers a question or need very well, you'll be on your way to getting SEO traffic.

4) Real Estate Long-tail Keywords

We all want to show up for huge keywords like: "San Diego Real Estate." But the truth is, that's only part of the equation. Here's a diagram that breaks down how you can easily get SEO traffic from other less popular search terms:

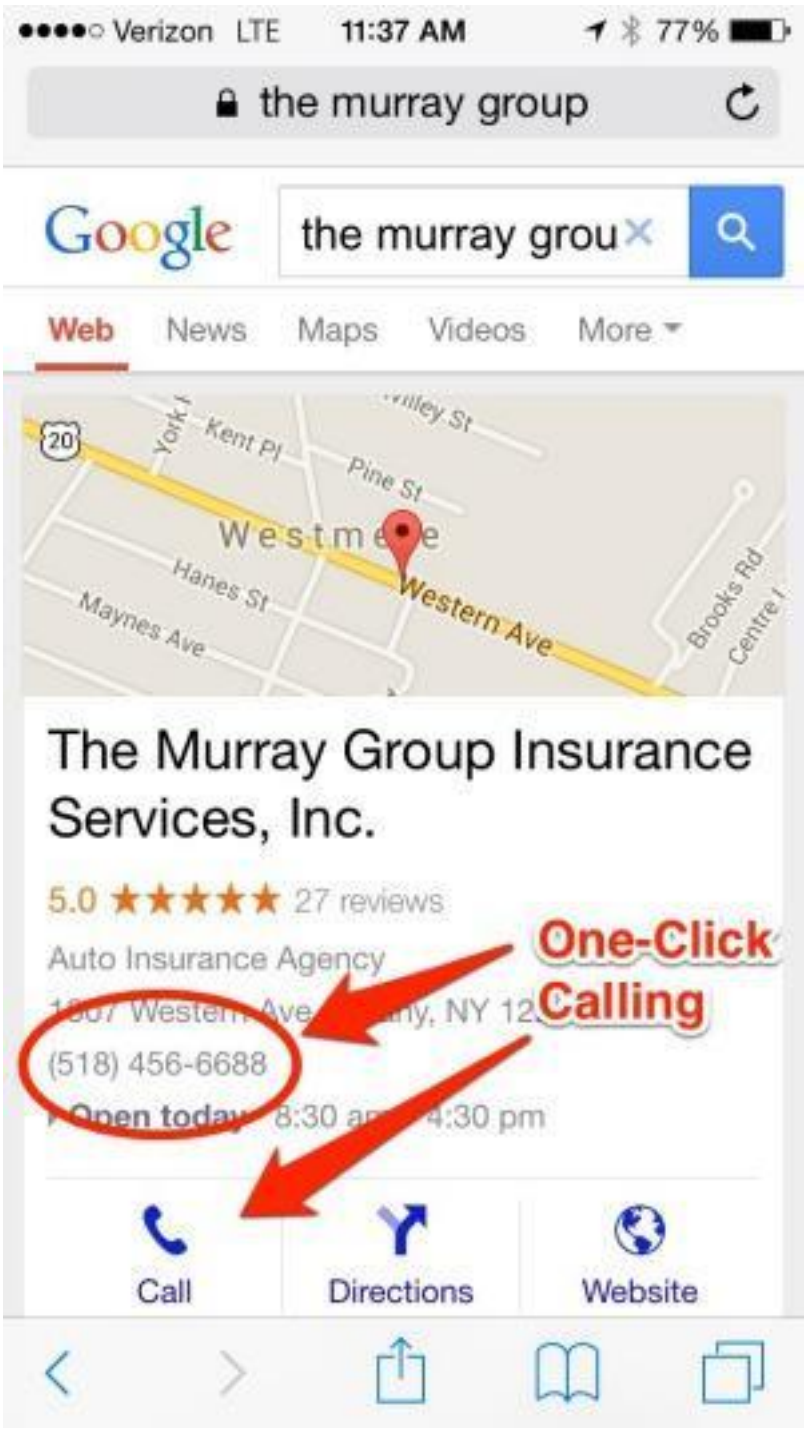


5) Local Address Schema - Put A Map On It:

Does your website have an embedded Google Map on it? You should have one. These maps help Google determine where your business is located. It also helps Google confirm that your website is legitimate. You can also use schema to help search engines confirm your address and location.

If your real estate agency website is built using WordPress, you can find plenty of free and paid plugins to put the correct meta language into your website. My favorite on that does this is Local SEO for WordPress by Yoast. This one isn't free, but it's powerful and will work.

6) Proper Phone Number Format



Finally, you need to make sure your phone number is consistent throughout the web. This is important for two reasons:

1) Google is basically in the business of giving internet users good information. They use the phone number on your webpage to verify all the various listings your business has across the web.
2) Make sure your phone number uses a dash or parentheses format like the ones lists below! This enables web browsers to one click dial your phone number.
How your phone number should be
formatted: - (123) 456-7890 - 123-456-7890 -
123.456.7890

Internal Linking

Linking is the most important part of SEO in real estate. You want to link to a minimum of 5 other pages or blog posts on every single thing you write. Why? This provides visitors with an easy way to find more information about related topics. And it gives search engines the opporutnity to find your older blog posts.
But you don't just want to link anything. You want to use the keywords that the post you are linking to is about when you link. So if you're post is about San Diego Real Estate, then you want to link to that post on all your other posts with the text "San Diego Real Estate."

1) Neighborhood Posts

Neighborhood posts ***(or pages)*** are going to be your bread and butter. You want to link to these from all your new blog posts. Think of these as the unchanging guard. These posts or pages are the static ones that don't change throughout the years. But when you write something new, you link to them with the correct anchor text (text with the link on it).
The purpose of these posts is to make you the expert on these neighborhoods. That means they should be long and have as much text as you can muster. Think

1500-2000 words per neighborhood. Then you can use internal links to these pages to show Google how important they are to a website.

2) Consistency In Linking

Google has millions (if not billions) of websites trying to gain it's system. They need clarity to figure out what website is about what. Let's say you want to rank for San Diego Homes. You should always link to that page with that text.
If you post a blog tomorrow and use the text "LA Homes," Google would get really confused. The same goes with your neighborhood locations.
The mistake a lot of real estate websites make when doing SEO is trying to rank for too many things. SEO is a long term game. Setup a page or post for terms you want to rank for and be consistent about it. This will avoid confusion with Google and humans.

3) Deep And Consistent Linking

When it comes to linking, you want to link deeper. Link to your oldest article when writing new blog posts. There are generally 2 areas you should not link to: the Homepage and contact page. These two pages contain static information. You want visitors and search engines to find deep pages.

Blog Commenting (Seriously, read this.)

So, blog commenting is a really old SEO tactic. People used to spend money to have SPAM comments written for them all over the internet. This doesn't work today because Google and comment systems have gotten a lot better.
However, commenting really does help build the traffic to your blog. You can get some great referral traffic simply by commenting on high profile blogs in the real estate niche.

Heck, get started by commenting below.

But why would you want to do this? Well, Google rewards more SEO traffic in proportion to the amount of traffic you're getting from other sources. If you can comment on posts at Inman, Easy Agent Pro, and other real estate websites, you'll see a boost in referral traffic followed by more SEO traffic.

Client Reviews



88% have read reviews to determine the quality of a local business*(via [BrightLocal](#))*.

Reviews can make or break businesses online. Why do you think Amazon.com stresses them so much? They literally ask every single one of their customers to leave a review for their purchase multiple times. Client reviews also matter so much when it comes to SEO. Realtors willing to implement a followup system that gets consistent reviews from their past clients will get more clients because of it

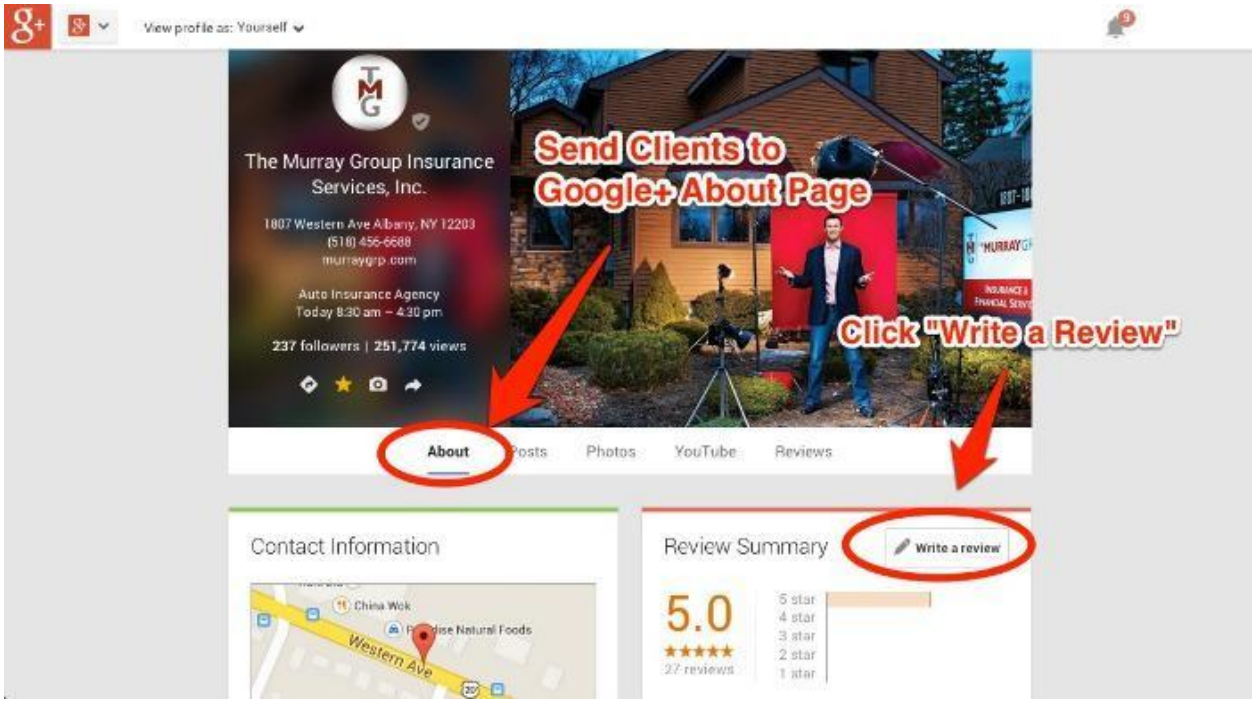
You need reviews in several places online. There are the main websites like Yelp and Google Places that every local business uses. But you also need reviews on realtor specific websites like Trulia and Zillow.

1) Google Reviews

As you can imagine, Google Reviews play the largest part in getting ranked highly with local map searches. There are two primary things that matter. 1) You need a high number of reviews and 2) You want long reviews that are preferably over 300 words. These type of reviews help your Google places page rank highly.

The most important part of all of this is that a high number of reviews leads to social proof. The more people you have review your website; the more people that will do business with you.

Send clients to your Google+ About page and ask them to click, “Write a Review.”



2) Yelp Reviews

Yelp reviews are hard to get. I understand that. But they are worth their weight in gold. Yelp pages typically show up very highly in search results, and you will be rewarded for having a lot of reviews on this platform. Read more about what to do on Yelp as a realtor here.

3) Testimonials on Your Website

Don't forget this when buying a website! The Easy Agent Pro Real Estate website comes with these on the home page. These reviews are great for SEO because mentioning locations and cities with the customers name tells Google where you are located. This also help validate your business to website visitors.

Social Media

1) Facebook

You really do need a Facebook page that hopefully has a lot of likes. This will help you so much when it comes to local SEO. Google trusts websites who have lots of social media activity. So even with it getting harder and harder to grow your business through Facebook, you really do want to be there.

The first thing to note on Facebook is having your URL in the information section of your real estate Facebook page. This makes it easy for Google to associate your website with the activity on the page.

Secondly, you'll want to make sure everything is completely filled out in the contact information section. Google validates this information against the contact information found everywhere else online about you. You want it all to be the same. For example, Street and St. aren't exactly the same. You want to make sure the address you have is typed exactly the same everywhere online.

2) Twitter

Google doesn't index Tweets yet. This means activity on Twitter doesn't really impact SEO. But, you can get traffic to your website from Twitter. And this additional traffic will help qualify you for more SEO traffic. Google loves websites that are popular. So, getting popular on Twitter helps you grow the quantity of SEO traffic your website receives.

3) Pinterest

Pinterest drives more traffic to websites than all the other social networks. It's become a very large player in the market and will continue to grow in the future. You'll also see a backlink benefit from Pinterest. Pinterest boards rank very highly in Google searches. This means the more boards you get your pins on, the more people will find you.
They can search on Google, find Pinterest, and then find your website. This is a great tactic if you are just starting out and don't have much authority built up to your website yet.
Secondly, pins live for a long time. This means Google can easily index and follow links on specific pins. This means you can build up the backlinks to your website by consistently making pins. These pins will get Google to your website more often and help it rank higher in search results.
Pinterest is a great tool that will pay many dividends in real estate. You can create boards and pins for very specific neighborhoods that you want to specialize in. There is also the possibility of creating DIY home fixing boards and beautiful home boards. I can't recommend Pinterest enough for realtors looking to boost their SEO.

4) LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a great marketing tool, it's just not that great for SEO. Check out these articles to get more leads from LinkedIn:

- Real Estate LinkedIn Profile Edits
- How To Get Leads From LinkedIn As A Realtor

5) YouTube

People love videos, and there is such a shortage of local videos about neighborhoods. You can create so many useful videos as a realtor, I suggest making one video per week. This social network is an incredibly powerful tool to get yourself found online. YouTube videos are so powerful because Google ranks them very highly for searches without many articles. This means you can easily get on the first page with a useful video about a neighborhood. People also search directly on Youtube and there is hardly any content specifically on the local level.

Here are 5 great tactics to use when using YouTube as a local tool:

1) GeoTag Videos – When you are uploading videos to Youtube, you can GeoTag the videos for your location. This will help people searching near you and searching about your location find your videos. You should make as many videos about the area's you are farming as possible. I typically recommend that you only make 'evergreen' videos and stay away from individual house videos. You'll get more traffic out of videos that last for years. A good example of this is a review of a local mall. You can take walk through tours of local malls and attractions. This is really useful information for people new to an area.

2) Include Contact Information – You'll want to mention all of your contact information in the video and in the description below the video. This information helps you get more action and leads out of each video you produce.

3) Post Video to Google+ – You really want to enable automatic posting to Google+. Google+ is a great search engine not for people but for being found by Google. You

won't get much engagement here...but it is great for getting Google to index and remember your video faster.

4) Link to Your Website - You'll want to add 2 links to your YouTube videos. 1) You'll want to include a link to your website in the description section of your Youtube video. 2) You'll want to annotate your video and link it to your homepage.

5) Shoot For 100 Views – Finally, get your videos seen by over 100 people. This seems to be the magic number! Google isn't going to rank or promote your video until after you promote it. Take this video production to the next level and work to get all your videos viewed over 100 times.

Backlinks

This is honestly the most important part of SEO. You need other websites to link to your website. It's as simple (and hard...) as that! There are many tactics to do this, but the easiest one is simply having great content or blogs on your website. Many of the best realtors who blog, simply get backlinks because people talk about their posts.

They reshare the link on ActiveRain or somewhere else. This gives the original creator links to their site and authority in the eyes of Google. When you have backlinks to your website, the best type are the ones with text links. You want the text to include a keyword similar to that

Here are a few places your agency can secure natural backlinks that will help improve your local SEO:

1) Local Websites

You can get quite a few backlinks from simply building relationships with local news reporters and other individuals. Or you can get in national press by joining HARO. Either way, work to build relationships with the top 10 reporters near you and see how you can work together.

Remember, news reporters need you! Writing content everyday is very hard. They need quotes and experts to help them out.

2) Industry Publications

I know that Inman.com lets realtors post information on their website and that RISMedia.com also does something similar. These type of industry specific publications can really help you grow your business and get more SEO traffic.

3) Local Organizations

Local organizationals all have websites. Whether it's the chamber of commcerce or a non profit, they have a website that you can have your link on. This might mean you have to donate extra time or sit on a board. But the link can easily be worth the time you give to get it.

4) EasyAgentPro.com

These blog posts don't write themselves. :) I'm always looking for quality content like this post. Or if you've had success using a tactic I've written about in the past, I'd love to feature the results you've gotten.

Local Listings & Citations

ConstantContact found that over 50% of local business have inaccurate contact information on various websites. That is a huge problem for SEO! Google relies very heavily on these local citations to rank your website. If once listing has your address as your old address for 2 years ago, this is terrible for your SEO. Thankfully, it's fairly easy to fix this today. You can simply follow the instructions I have here to do this.
You'll see almost an immediate improvement in how much traffic your Google places page gets. Additionally, you'll see the website that is tied to your Google page get a boost as well.

1) Business Listing Directories

There are really only 4 major business listing directories that matter. They are: Acxiom, Localeze, Expressupdate and Factual. These four then push their information all over

the web. Honestly, there is a new website every single month that pulls information from these 4 sites.

You need to make sure your contact information is correct on these websites. NOW.

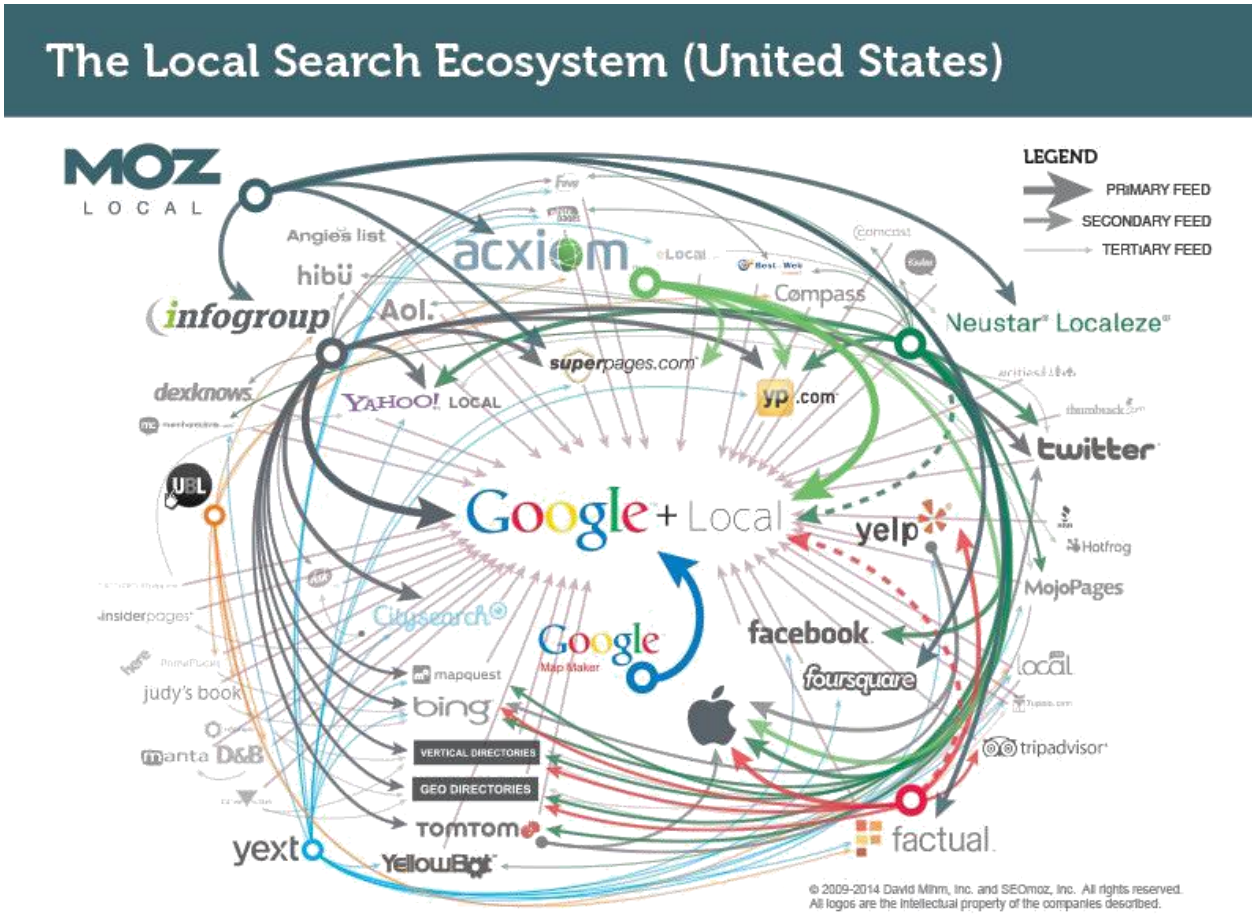
Google uses the information that these vendors provide to validate it's own data. They want to see that you are being proactive and projecting the same information everywhere on the web. Why? Well, the person who has the most listings with the same data must be the best business. That's Google's assumption at least. And it's a pretty good one...

Inaccurate data means that the business probably is young and isn't established. Google wants to ensure that it's customers are finding the best businesses to work with and established businesses are typically better.

If you're looking for the push button solution to fixing all of these listings, there are a few options. The first is Moz Local. This service will claim all your business listings and make sure they are up to date for you. The second is called Yext. This service also lets you monitor your reviews that you get online. Both of these services do pretty much the exact same thing. They help make sure your address, phone number, and website is exactly the same all across the web.

This makes it easy to keep this crazy map simple:

(Yes, all these sites matter and impact how you're found online!)



Mobile Friendly And Load Speed:

Your website needs to be mobile friendly. Google is increasingly raising its standards for the website's it refers in it's searches. And a website that isn't mobile friendly is going to start costing you search results. At Easy Agent Pro about 33% of our traffic comes from non desktop or laptop users. This means people on smartphones and iPads need to be able to easily access your website.

You want to make sure everything from your lead capture to IDX is mobile friendly.

You really have two options when doing this:

1) Responsive Website

A responsive website is a website that resizes various things based on the screen. This means different people actually see different things. But it all pulls from the same source. This type of website seems to be what Google prefers. Why? Because it's easier for Google to understand. There aren't two copies of all your data. There are just two different ways to display all the data your website has to offer. With this type of website, your desktop and mobile users see the same website differently.

2) The Mobile Site

This type of website actually recreates all the content on your website and makes a mobile version out of it. These sites are typically very limited and have an app like look to them. It seems to be not as liked by Google because it creates duplicate content on the web. And the mobile sites typically have less features and navigation. Honestly, I think the responsive websites have already won this battle. You should only consider responsive websites and products for designs you consider in the future!

Additional Real Estate SEO Related Resources:

Articles:

- A Realtors Beginner Guide To SEO
- Your Real Estate Blog, More Than SEO
- Easily Rank Your Real Estate Google Places Page
- Real Estate Blog Ideas To Dominate Local Search
- RIS Media - SEO Posts
- Invest Four More

- SEO and Listings by Andrew Fortune

Tools:

- Majestic – Backlink tracking tool.
- MozBar – Track domain authority and page rank.
- Google Keyword Planner – Research keyword terms.
- Keywordtool.io – Research keyword terms.

Conclusion

What do you think?

Have you tried to do SEO? Honestly, the biggest thing you can do to get found is create stuff. Anything will do! If you like videos, make them. If you can write, write. Whatever it is, make it about your local area and you'll be found. Talk with you in the comments,

Tyler