

# What Is Local SEO & Why Local Search Is Important

Want a local audience to find your business online? Then you need to understand local SEO. Here's how to make local search work for you.



Brian Harnish / December 26, 2018

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Local search engine optimization is a branch of SEO that focuses on optimizing a website to be found in local search results.

Local search encompasses all those nifty search terms that scream local, such as:

- lawyers near me
- doctors near me
- lawyers in [city name]
- doctors in [city name]

Basically, local SEO is a strategic process that focuses on emphasizing the optimization efforts of local brick-and-mortar businesses.

Content, on-page optimizations, and link building all with a focused, localized intent are part of these efforts.

The focus changes, however, when it comes to localizing link acquisition.

The focus changes to making sure all potential local signals across Google's local search landscape are consistent and correct.

If they are not, or you accidentally provide different information for the same business, you could potentially experience situations where your local results display something different than what was intended.

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## Why Local Search Is Important

Here are a few stats that prove how important local search continues to be for businesses:

- 50 percent of people who did a local search on their phone went to a physical store within one day.
- 34 percent who did their search on a computer or tablet did the same.
- 18 percent of local mobile searches lead to a sale within one day.
- 60 percent of American adults conduct searches for local services or product information on tablets and smartphones.
- 50 percent of searchers on their mobile phones who conduct local searches are looking for things like a local business address.
- 78 percent of local-based searches on a mobile device end in purchases being made offline.

- 71 percent of people who have been surveyed have said they search for the location of a business in order to confirm its existence before going there for a first-time visit.
- 1 in 3 searches on a smartphone was conducted just before arriving at a store.
- 97 percent of consumers looked online for local businesses in 2017, with 12 percent looking for a local business online every day.

## Who Benefits from Local SEO & Why?

### Lawyers & Law Firms

If you've never done SEO for lawyers, here's a little secret: one of the biggest benefits of local SEO for these clients is that Google shows a call button directly in the local search results on mobile phones.

So when a potential client pulls out their phone and does a search for "[type of] attorney," they will see targeted results for their particular location.

When done right, local SEO will push the attorney to the top of the search results for that location, and the dominant call to action will be the "call us" button.

The reason why this is such a huge benefit is that anyone who has been in an accident or has another issue will be on the phone attempting to find attorneys who offer free consultations.

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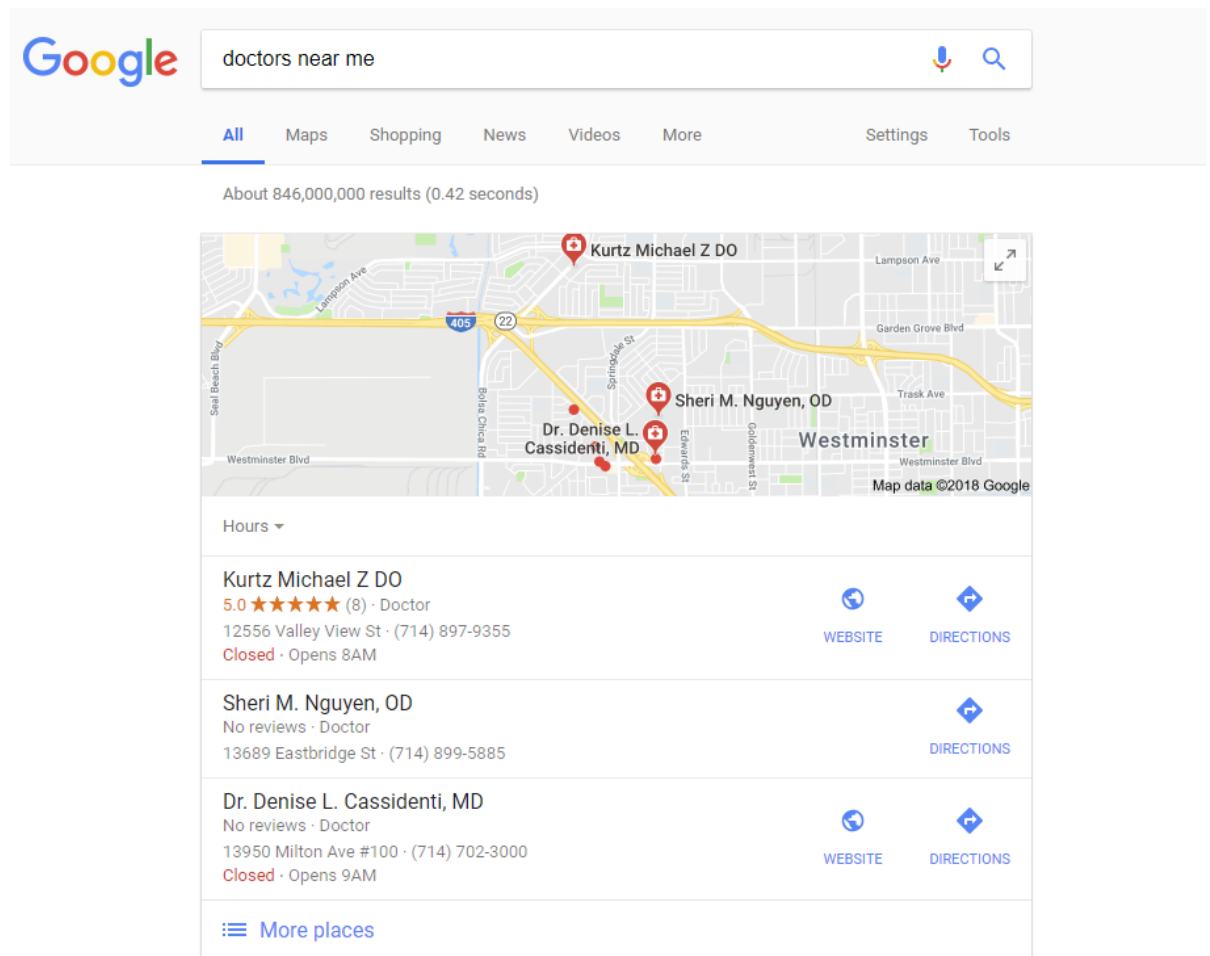
This one avenue offers a way to get in front of those consumers exactly when they need an attorney.

# Doctors & Medical Practices

When someone is searching for a doctor, in my experience it has been that someone is always searching for a doctor nearby or a doctor “near me”.

Most people don’t want to go out of their way or travel several hours to visit a doctor. They want a nearby doctor who can see them on a regular basis.

If you reference the screenshot below, using the search “doctors near me”, there are several benefits of this large local pack result.



This local result provides the doctor’s name up front, along with an instant “directions link” which brings up a map application on a user’s phone.

When it comes to doctors, people are more comfortable calling to set an appointment, and they are most likely looking for an easy way to look up directions to the doctor’s offices.

## Plumbers

One of the next businesses to benefit from local SEO are plumbers.

Think about it: when someone has an emergency involving plumbing, are they going directly to the store? No, they usually go to Google to search for [plumber near me].

The Google search results provide an easy way for someone to call a plumber directly, read reviews, and access local plumbers immediately if they have such an emergency.

## **Restaurants**

These businesses achieve the most benefit from local SEO because of the immediacy of customer reviews and local address information prevalent in the search engine results pages (SERPs).

This immediacy of information leads potential customers to restaurant businesses in the least amount of time.

In addition, it allows people to see, quite efficiently, the restaurants providing the best quality food and service in the neighborhood.