

30-Day Local SEO Playbook

By Sam Sarsten | Founder, [Thencan Designs](#) | Founder, [Local SEO Academy](#)

[[WATCH INTRO VIDEO TO SERIES](#)]

[[WATCH FULL 1h34m VIDEO BREAKDOWN OF SERIES](#)]

This document is provided to any small business that serves local customers. **I hope this helps you rise the ranks and so you can help your people better!!**

If you provide SEO services to those businesses, keep up the good work, and just make sure to give credit where it's due 😊

But before we get started...

Some Success Stories

1. Thencan Designs' Client (RV Repair)



Went from barely getting calls to being booked out for two weeks.

These are views on Google for Google Business Profile. Red arrow is when we started.

2. Local SEO Academy Student

I went from knowing almost nothing about local SEO to feeling **completely confident** in offering it as a service after going through the Local SEO Academy.



Alyssa Todd | Key Lime Web Design

This is one of my first Local SEO Academy students.

3. Thencan Designs' Client (General Contractor)



Starting to close 5-figure remodel projects.

These are views on Google for Google Business Profile. Point 1 is when a random marketing agency started running trash FB ads. Point 2 is when we took over (and didn't run FB ads).

4. Local SEO Academy Student



Anna Scovel Aug 25

Web Designer and owner of Little City Middle City Web Design

But as far as the courses go, I think I've learned more about local SEO in the last 2 months than I have the last few years. Yesterday I sent a web design proposal to a local business that had a lot of built in local SEO strategy, and I've never been able to confidently offer that before. We'll see if they accept it but, I was excited to offer options to reach the goals they shared when we talked.

See less

Liked Reply

Anna, now confident enough to sell local SEO services to her web design clients.

5. Thencan Designs' Client (Tree Service)



Went from barely getting calls to getting steady contact form submissions.

These are views on Google for Google Business Profile. Red arrow is when we started.

Day 1: Expectations for Local SEO

[\[WATCH THE VIDEO FOR DAY 1\]](#)

How long will results take?

I get asked this question with almost every prospect. Unfortunately, the answer is *it depends*. BUUUT I can tell you three things:

1. Local SEO results come faster than National SEO or Ecommerce SEO or SaaS SEO
2. You can estimate how long it will take, but it's just an *estimation*
3. It's better to just get to work instead of worrying about *when* the results will hit

So, let's get to it 💪 (I recommend you skip straight to Day 2, now...)

"Wait! How can I estimate the time it will take?"

 **WARNING!!! ADVANCED TACTIC AHEAD!!! IF YOU'RE NEW TO SEO, SKIP TO DAY 2 FOR NOW 🙏**

[Link to Advanced Tactic](#)

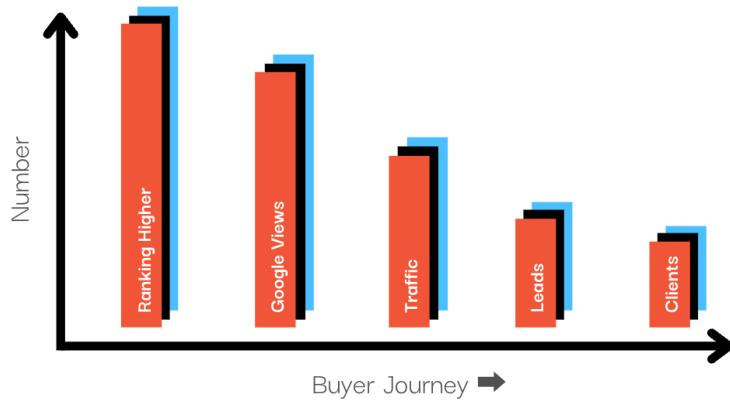
Day 2: What Matters Most for Local SEO

[[WATCH THE VIDEO FOR DAY 2](#)]

Generally speaking:

1. Google Business Profile (+ getting *better* reviews for it)
2. Telling Google exactly *what* you do and *where* you do it on your website
3. Building authority through locally- and industry-relevant links (a lot more on this later)

But really it's about **trying to get more clients** (or customers, or patients, or whatever you call the people that give you money for the service you provide or the product that you sell).



The Local SEO Process aka the TLC Method

To get more clients, you need more leads (phone calls, contact form submissions, emails), and for that you need more traffic (people on your website or GBP), and for that you have to get more Google views (aka "impressions"), which you'll get more of if you rank higher (people rarely get to page 2, let alone page 8), and all of this is for one keyword - so it makes sense to (selectively) target multiple keywords (those are the different colored bars above).

So, if you want to get More TLC: traffic, leads, clients - which, btw, everybody does - and you want to do it through local SEO, then you need to:

1. Find the right phrases people are using to find you on Google (these are called **keywords** - and you have a primary keyword and probably a few dozen highly relevant keywords)
2. Get your website showing up on the search results page for each one of these keywords (these are called **SERPs**, or search engine results pages).
3. Get your website ranking *higher* on the SERPs. **This is the ultimate goal of local SEO: Get you to rank as high as possible for the right keywords for what you do and where you do it.**

That's it. So let's figure out your primary keyword.

Day 3: Find Your Primary Keyword

[If you like videos, [I made a video about this topic](#)]

I do this *before* I even talk to a client, and you can do it in under 5 minutes... once you get good at it. Note that we are going to repeat this process for every service that you offer. However, today, we are only worried about finding your (what I like to call) *primary* primary keyword.

Your primary keyword is probably either...

- service city state
- city service
- service near me
- service

(I'm assuming you provide a service. If you sell a product, then replace "service" with "product." However, this is a playbook for local SEO, not ecommerce SEO, so adjust accordingly.)

These guesses are good, but we should verify. We're going to use two tools: (the free version of) Semrush and Google Keyword Planner.

"Wait! I don't know what my keyword is at all!!!"

If you don't know your keyword at all

1. Use common sense (if you're a plumber, it's probably "plumber" or "plumbing"; if you're a naturopath, it's probably "naturopath" or "naturopathic doctor")

2. Go to Google and try your best guess. If you see a Map Pack (see below) and local competitors, you're probably at least close enough to continue.

The screenshot shows a Google search results page for the query "naturopath". At the top, there's a map of Bend, Oregon, highlighting several local businesses. Below the map, three business cards are displayed in a vertical list:

- Terrain Natural Medicine**
5.0 ★★★★★ (61) · Naturopathic practitioner
0.5 mi · 209 NE Greenwood Ave # 200 · (541) 797-0013
Closed · Opens 10 AM Mon
"She has been incredible in helping me balance my hormones."
- Bend Naturopathic Clinic**
5.0 ★★★★★ (16) · Naturopathic practitioner
0.9 mi · 715 NW Hill St · (541) 389-9750
Closed · Opens 9 AM Mon
"Dr. Karli has helped me so much, with a wide variety of issues."
- Dr. Emily Wiggins**
5.0 ★★★★★ (12) · Naturopathic practitioner
0.5 mi · 209 NE Greenwood Ave # 200 · (541) 797-0013
Closed · Opens 9 AM Mon
"Appreciate her knowledge and helpfulness very much!"

A "More places →" button is located below the third listing. At the bottom of the page, two additional results are shown in a dark-themed card:

- Bend Naturopathic Clinic - Dr. Azure Karli, N.D.**
Dr. Karli's approach to healthcare is blending modern diagnostics with more natural treatments such as diet analysis, botanical and nutritional supplementation, ...
- Dr. Wendy Weintrob | Naturopathic Doctor Bend Oregon**
Dr. Wendy Weintrob is a **Naturopathic** Functional Medicine Doctor and Licensed Acupuncturist in Bend OR Specializing in Gut +Hormone and Autoimmune Health.

3. If you're still stuck, use [this free tool by Ahrefs](#). Once you have something, move on.

Using Semrush to Check

Go to [Semrush](#) (a professional SEO tool) - USE THE FREE VERSION RIGHT NOW!!! You only get 10 actions per day, so use them wisely. [Here is a special 7-day free trial](#) just for you to use to access premium features - but save your trial for later!

The screenshot shows the Semrush Keyword Magic Tool interface. The left sidebar has a 'Keyword Research' section with 'Keyword Overview' selected. The main area shows search results for 'seo bend oregon'. The results table includes columns for Intent, Volume, KD %, CPC (USD), SERP Features, and Updated. A tooltip for 'Local pack' is shown over a result row.

All keywords	31	Intent	Volume	KD %	CPC (USD)	SERP Features	Updated
agency	6	Keyword	260	27	9.18	Local pack	4 weeks
company	4	+ seo bend oregon	170	29	0.00		4 weeks
local	4	+ bend oregon seo	70	23	0.00		3 weeks
consulting	3	+ seo agency bend oregon	30	22	0.00		2 weeks
market	3	+ bend oregon seo marketing	n/a	30	0.00	For metrics, refresh	
service	2	+ seo services bend oregon	n/a	20	0.00	For metrics, refresh	
tips	2	+ bend digital marketing bend oregon seo	n/a	20	0.00	For metrics, refresh	
10	1	+ bend oregon local seo	n/a	20	0.00	For metrics, refresh	
best	1	+ seo tips bend oregon	n/a	10	0.00	For metrics, refresh	
cloud	1	+ seo agency in bend oregon	n/a	10	9.17	For metrics, refresh	
		+ seo company in bend oregon	n/a	10	9.17	For metrics, refresh	

Click on the **Keyword Magic Tool** > Enter your best guess > then we're probably clicking on the first result (like above), but we're going to check a few things first.

🚫 If your search traffic is 0. Then:

1. Click on the **Related** tab and sort by **Volume**. See if one of the top results makes sense.
2. If you still can't find anything, skip ahead to the Google Keyword Planner step below.

If you have a keyword you're liking in Semrush, click on it. This brings up the **Keyword Overview** page.

The screenshot shows the Semrush Keyword Overview page for 'seo bend oregon'. It displays global volume (760), intent (Commercial), CPC (\$9.18), competitive density (0.08), and PLA (0). The 'Keyword ideas' section shows 31 total variations with a total volume of 670. The 'Questions' section shows no data. The 'Keyword Strategy' section lists several related keywords with their volumes and KD %.

Keyword Variations	Total Volume
31	670

Keywords	Volume	KD %
seo bend oregon	260	27
bend oregon seo	170	29
seo agency bend oregon	70	23
bend oregon sea marketing	30	22
seo services bend oregon	30	n/a

We want to look at several things:

1. **Volume**: this is the monthly search volume (generally, higher is better)
2. **Keyword Difficult (KD)**: this is an *estimate* by the SEO tool of how hard it will be to rank for this keyword (generally, lower is better)
3. **CPC**: this is the *estimated* cost per click for Google Ads campaigns - I use it as an analog for *commercial viability*. If the CPC is \$0, then people aren't spending money on it, which is a red flag. If it's REALLY high, then it might be TOO competitive.
4. **Keyword Ideas**: Look at this section and see if there are any **Keyword Variations** with a higher search volume. If so, switch to that keyword.

Rankability Formula

- Highest Volume
- Lowest KD
- Highest CPC (but not crazy)
= The "best" keywords

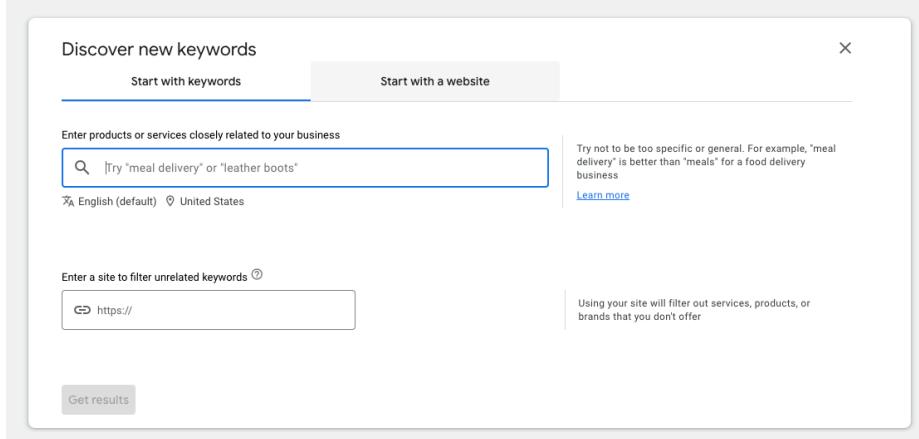
However, often we just want the keyword with the highest volume for local SEO. I would **NOT** go from a volume of 260 to 70 just because the KD was way lower. I want to target the golden keyword, but I also want to keep track of less competitive keywords. It's a balancing act.

Generally speaking for local SEO: **THE KEYWORD VARIATION WITH THE MOST VOLUME IS YOUR PRIMARY KEYWORD.**

Now, let's do one more thing to double check our work...

Verify Primary Keyword with Google Keyword Planner

Go to [Google Keyword Planner](#) - this is a Google Ads product... you have to enter a credit card to use it, but it's free as long as you don't start an Ad campaign, and we're not doing that. If prompted, click **Discover new keywords**. You should now see this:



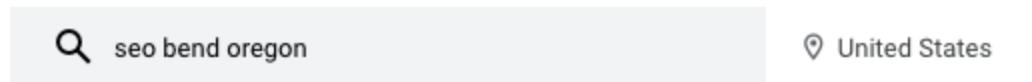
Enter your primary keyword guess from above into the search box and just hit Enter. You should see a decent amount of traffic for your primary keyword, maybe even substantially higher than what Semrush said. This is because we're searching the entire US. Let's narrow that down.

↓
Top of
page bid
(high
range)

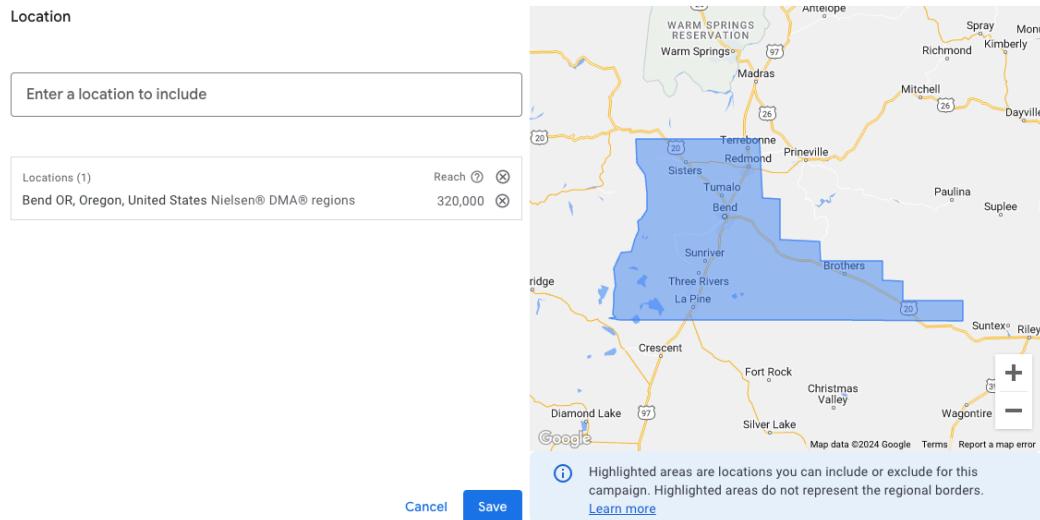
Sort by the rightmost column that says **Top of Page Bid**. If you don't see a lot of results, add some related keywords in the mix before geofencing:

Broaden your search: [+ seo](#) [+ bend oregon](#) [+ bend](#) [+ search engine marketing](#) [+ digital marketing bend ore](#)

Once you have a decent amount of results, let's narrow things down to your area.



Click the little map pin by “United States”. Enter your city (or your target city). Be sure to remove the entire US. Click **Save**. Btw, this is called **geofencing**.



Your results may or may not have changed, but they are being refined. Google Keyword Planner often gives 1,000s of results, so let's narrow things down a bit. **If you don't have a lot of results, remove the “city state” from your keyword to broaden your search** (remember you're only searching in your area now)

seo bend oregon

Bend OR, Oregon, United States English

Google Aug 2023 - Jul 2024

Use different keywords for more results [Edit](#)

Broaden your search: + seo + bend oregon + bend + search engine marketing + digital marketing bend oregon + search engine optimization bend oregon + seo p

<input type="checkbox"/> Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Three month change	YoY change	Competition	Ad impression share	Top of page bid (low range)	Top of page bid (high range)	Account status
<input type="checkbox"/> seo bend oregon	100 - 1K	0%	0%	Low	—	\$5.87	\$21.08	
Keywords you provided								
<input type="checkbox"/> seo bend oregon	100 - 1K	0%	0%	Low	—	\$5.87	\$21.08	
Keyword ideas								
<input type="checkbox"/> bend digital marketing bend oregon seo	10 - 100	0%	0%	Low	—	—	—	
<input type="checkbox"/> bend oregon local seo	10 - 100	0%	-100%	—	—	—	—	
<input type="checkbox"/> bend oregon search engine optimization	10 - 100	0%	0%	Low	—	—	—	
<input type="checkbox"/> bend oregon seo company	10 - 100	0%	0%	—	—	—	—	
<input type="checkbox"/> bend oregon seo marketing	10 - 100	+∞	+∞	Low	—	—	—	
<input type="checkbox"/> bend seo	100 - 1K	0%	0%	Low	—	\$5.87	\$21.08	
<input type="checkbox"/> bend seo agency	10 - 100	0%	0%	Low	—	—	—	

Click: **Download keyword ideas** > Google Sheets > Save to My Drive > Wait... > Open sheet

Download keyword ideas

Delete the first two rows > Click cell A1 > Click Data (on the top) > Click Filter

In columns H & I you should see **Top of Page**, the first is average CPC and the second is the top bid. Select these columns and format them as Accounting.

Click on the filter, remove (Blanks) and then sort by the top bid. Click that column > Sort Z to A

	Keyword	Currency	Avg. monthly	Three month	YoY change	Competition	Competition	Top of page	Top of page
1	seo bend oregon	USD	500	0%	0%	Low	21	5.87	21.08
2	bend seo	USD	500	0%	0%	Low	21	5.87	21.08
3	seo in bend oregon	USD	500	0%	0%	Low	21	5.87	21.08
4	bend digital marketing bend oregon seo	USD	50	0%	0%	Low	0		
5	bend oregon local seo	USD	50	0%	-100%	Unknown			
6	bend oregon search engine optimization	USD	50	0%	0%	Low	0		
7	bend oregon seo company	USD	50	0%	0%	Unknown			
8	bend oregon seo marketing	USD	50	∞	∞	Low	0		
9									

You can now see the keywords that have the most *commercial viability*, and you also have proof from Google that this keyword has search volume.

But make sure:

1. This is a commercial intent keyword (it should be a service you provide, not a question)
2. It has local intent (sometimes just searching your service provides poor results, so it can be helpful to check by googling - an example is “web design” which usually just shows Wix, Squarespace, etc. and not local results... a prospect will probably keep looking for a better keyword)
3. The volume is 10-100 for Google Keyword Planner (which is averaged to 50 in Sheets), and is *at least* 10 in Semrush
4. The KD is not something crazy like 50+
5. The CPC isn’t \$0 and you should be skeptical if it’s \$50+ (unless you’re a lawyer or doctor)

Bonus: Re-ran without “bend oregon” and got more results, but with less traffic. To sort the column I had to format the column as Accounting (click the \$ button by the %) > Sort Z to A > and filter out Blanks.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Keyword	Currency	Avg. monthly	Three month	YoY change	Competition	Competition	Top of page	Top of page
695	seo company	USD	50	0%	∞	Medium	41	17.71	\$115.00
696	seo firms	USD	50	0%	∞	Medium	41	17.71	\$115.00
697	search engine optimization company	USD	50	0%	∞	Medium	41	17.71	\$115.00
698	search engine optimisation companies	USD	50	0%	∞	Medium	41	17.71	\$115.00
699	seo consultant	USD	50	900%	900%	Low	15	16.68	\$48.89
700	search engine optimisation consultants	USD	50	900%	900%	Low	15	16.68	\$48.89
701	search engine optimization consultants	USD	50	900%	900%	Low	15	16.68	\$48.89
702	seo services	USD	50	0%	0%	Low	18	7.00	\$42.00
703	seo near me	USD	50	∞	0%	Medium	45	7.02	\$39.75
704	seo ranking	USD	50	0%	∞	Medium	63	3.91	\$32.48
705	seo optimization	USD	50	0%	0%	Medium	57	1.83	\$25.00
706	seo optimisation	USD	50	0%	0%	Low	21	2.06	\$15.26
707	search optimization	USD	50	0%	0%	Low	21	2.06	\$15.26
708	seo search engine	USD	50	0%	0%	Low	21	2.06	\$15.26
709	search engine optimisation seo	USD	50	0%	0%	Low	21	2.06	\$15.26
710	seotools	USD	50	0%	0%	Medium	47	1.59	\$14.71
711	seo	USD	50	0%	0%	Low	17	2.95	\$14.17
712	seo marketing	USD	50	0%	0%	Medium	50	2.48	\$12.00
713	seo search engine optimization	USD	50	0%	0%	Medium	50	2.48	\$12.00
714	seo and marketing	USD	50	0%	0%	Medium	50	2.48	\$12.00
715	search engine optimization marketing	USD	50	0%	0%	Medium	50	2.48	\$12.00
716	search engine positioning	USD	50	0%	0%	Medium	50	2.48	\$12.00

Again, our goal is to **INCREASE OUR VIEWS ON GOOGLE**, so we'd like to target the keyword that gets the most searches. That said, you should keep track of all these related keywords, as they're in the same **cluster** - we'll talk about that later!

Creating Sheets for Later

There are two types of keywords

Service-specific: Things like kitchen remodel, facials, general contractor, facialist

Service-related: Things like island, plaque psoriasis, vanity, eye creams

Remove any keywords that are neither; also any that are branded to competitors

NOTE: Edit > Delete > Selected Rows is a better way to delete non-contiguous rows

1. Remove keywords that are “asking a question”, these are not the right intent for local
2. Sometimes you’ll have to take “multiple laps” pruning keywords

Duplicate the sheet

1. One sheet will be kept for later as our “related keywords” list: SERVICE-RELATED
2. The other sheet will be our main sheet for this keyword: SERVICE-PRIMARY
 - a. On this sheet, try to *only* keep service-specific keywords
 - b. (If necessary) Add back in any local keywords
 - c. Remove any duplicates

Write down your primary keyword - we'll be using it for the next couple of days!!

Day 4: GBP Audit

[If you like videos, [I made a video about this topic](#)]

Here are the steps for doing a Google Business Profile audit (* denotes backend access req'd):

1. Check the primary business category
2. Check the business name
3. Check the secondary categories
4. Check the review amount compared to competition
5. Check if responding to reviews
6. Check for photos
7. Check for general ranking
8. Check Q&A
9. Check for GBP Updates
10. Check business description
11. Check Services*
12. Check Products*
13. Check Booking*
14. Check Profile Details*
 - a. Opening date
 - b. Phone number
 - c. Website
 - d. Socials
 - e. Physical location (for a SAB - service area business - is it properly hidden)
 - f. Service area
 - g. Hours
 - h. Special Hours
 - i. Attributes
 - j. Planning
 - k. Service Options

Many of these will be checked, filled out, or fixed during the Google Business Profile Optimization coming up in a few days, but for now, we just want to look for any red flags or easy wins. These 10 can be checked without access to the GBP panel and are ordered according to [Whitespark's Local Search Ranking Factors](#).

Setup and Tools

Before you do anything else install [PlePer](#) - it's a free Chrome extension.

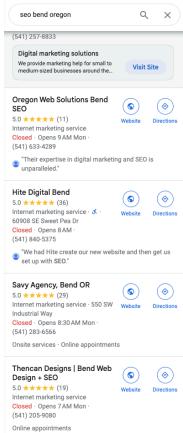
Now, go to [maps.google.com](#) and search for your primary keyword you got yesterday.

 **PRO TIP: If you need to search in a *different* area, you have two options:**

1. If you're on your computer, you can use [gs location changer](#) - a free Chrome extension
2. If you're on mobile, or want to use incognito, check out [Whitespark's Local Results Tool](#)
3. Choose an option above, and search your primary keyword *there*

1. Check the primary business category

This one's easy, just scroll down the list on the left



Usually, the category under the reviews is the primary business category... but not always!!

[Close](#)[Pin](#)Thencan Designs | Bend Web Design + SEO 

Verified

Categories (7)	Website designer, Design agency, Service establishment, Internet marketing service, Marketing agency, Marketing consultant, Web hosting company
Place ID	ChlJoZjN_cv0r4gRsQcmHOFRkg
CID	5208066515989301169
Business Profile ID	6976629995850390438
Address	hidden
Phone	+15412059080
Website	https://thencandesigns.com/      
Reviews	19
Rating	5
Coordinates	44.16694600, -121.19573410
KG ID	/g/11trvzwyqq
Attributes	3 - Show Attributes



Ranking Fluctuation Detected: 5.48/10
[\(learn more\)](#)

Click on a business and PlePer should give you this panel. **The first category** is the **primary business category** (Website designer in this example). The remaining are the secondary categories. If you re-search for the primary keyword, you will see an aggregation of all the top businesses categories (see next page).

YOU WANT TO PICK THE PRIMARY BUSINESS CATEGORY THAT EVERYONE ELSE IS PICKING. Unless your competitors are wrong. If that's the case (or you're thinking they're wrong), check in another city first. But usually, you just want to show up amongst your competition.

Categories	Reviews
Attributes	Business Hours
Set Data	Close
Analyze Listings	

Category Analysis

Category	Count	%
Marketing agency	13	18.84
Website designer	13	18.84
Internet marketing service	12	17.39
Marketing consultant	9	13.04
Service establishment	6	8.70
Advertising agency	5	7.25
Web hosting company	4	5.80
Graphic designer	2	2.90
Branding agency	1	1.45
Design agency	1	1.45
Publisher	1	1.45
Video production service	1	1.45
Software company	1	1.45
Total Categories	69	
Average categories per listing	3.45	
Max categories per listing	7	

Reviews Analysis

Avg Rating	5.00
Avg Reviews	20
Max Rating	5
Min Rating	4.9
Max Reviews	97
Min Reviews	3
Without Reviews	0

Justifications Analysis

Type	Count
Online appointments	9
Reviews	8
Onsite services	4

Here's an example of the aggregate results. You'll also see some averages, as well, so that's worth peeking at.

2. Check the business name

Google is clear in their rules: you should be accurately representing your business name. [Click here to read all the rules.](#)

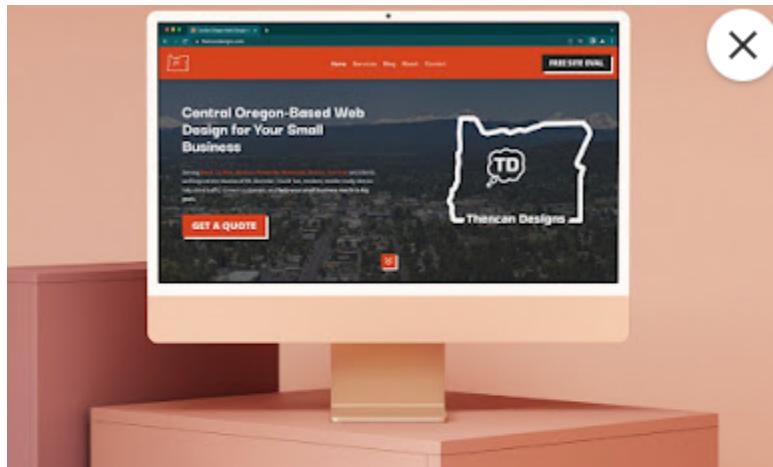
Generally, we need to look out for a few things:

1. You don't need to include LLC or Inc. or any of that
2. You CANNOT stuff your city
3. You CANNOT stuff your keyword

When can you stuff your keyword in your GBP business name?

1. It's included in your legal name
2. You have a DBA that includes the keyword
3. You use it in all of your marketing materials (but that's not enough - get a DBA)

Better Example



Thencan Designs | Bend Web
Design + SEO

5.0  (19)

Website designer



Thencan Designs
Bend Web Design + SEO

Name and branding both include the name *with* the stuffed keyword. This is at least passable. However, if a re-verification were issued, legal documentation may need to be provided.

BOTTOM LINE

Does stuffing your keywords into your GBP business name help you rank higher? **100% yes!!** Should you stuff your keywords into your GBP business name? **Probably not... at least until you get a DBA.**

3. Check the secondary categories

See above about getting the aggregated business category results from PlePer.

Also, it helps to check on some of the top results - what are *they* using as their secondary business categories? Do this by clicking on those GBPs.

4. Check the review amount compared to competition

Oregon Web Solutions Bend SEO 5.0 ★★★★★ (11) Internet marketing service Closed · Opens 9AM Mon · (541) 633-4289 "Their expertise in digital marketing and SEO is unparalleled."	 Website  Directions	Hite Digital Bend 5.0 ★★★★★ (36) Internet marketing service ·  60908 SE Sweet Pea Dr Closed · Opens 8 AM · (541) 840-5375 "We had Hite create our new website and then get us set up with SEO."	 Website  Directions	Thencan Designs Bend Web Design + SEO 5.0 ★★★★★ (19) Internet marketing service Closed · Opens 7AM Mon · (541) 205-9080 Online appointments	 Website  Directions
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Reviews are directly correlated with your GBP ranking. But it's not just amount, it's:

1. Amount (sheer number of reviews)
2. Amount of high-star (4-5)
3. Quality (at least two sentences, pics are nice)
4. Frequency (not bursts, a steady stream)
5. Recency (not all from a year ago)

If you want to get more and better reviews, I recommend you look into Review Coaching, but we're going to cover that in a couple weeks.

For now, let's just look at the amount of reviews.

How many do the top 3 have? What's the average?

How many do you have? How far away are you from #1 or the average?

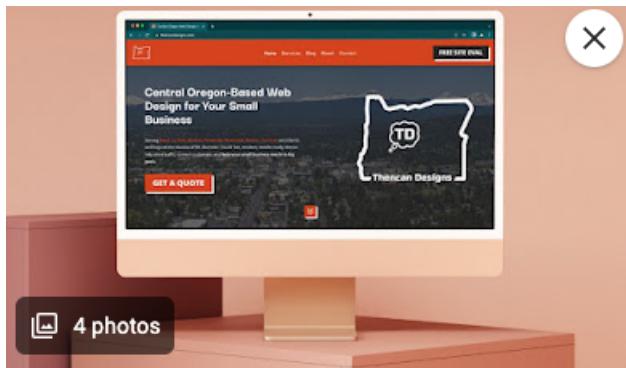
NOTE: Sometimes you have the most reviews, but you're still not ranking first. Remember that PROXIMITY - how close you are to the searcher is a VERY strong ranking factor. We will look at ways to overcome this later on. But generally, if the competition has more reviews than us, we can expect that getting more reviews will help.

5. Check for review responses

A screenshot of a Google Business Profile page showing a review and its response. The review is from a 'Local Guide' who has 20 reviews and 7 photos. It was posted 4 months ago and is a 4-star review. The review text discusses working with Sam over 6 weeks to improve Google Business Profile skills. Below the review is a response from the owner, Melanie, expressing appreciation for the insights and encouraging the user to use them. There are buttons for 'Edit' and 'Delete' at the bottom.

Responding to reviews definitely helps with GBP engagement. However, **you do not have to stuff keywords here**. Just respond genuinely. During the Review Coaching day, we'll also address how to handle the dreaded 1-star review 😬

6. Check for photos



(Hover and click)

How many pictures do the top 3 results have? What's the average?

How many pictures do you have? When was the last time you uploaded a picture? (You can't tell this from the GBP, but you might know)

7. Check for general ranking

For now, just count how many spots you are down from the top. Don't count any sponsored results (those are paid ads). Also, each page should have 20 results, so you can use that to count faster if you're on page 2+.

What a “good ranking” is really depends on your competition. For now, just assume that if you’re not in the top 3 - aka the Map Pack - then you have room for improvement!

8. Check Q&A

Has anyone ever asked a question before? Was it answered?

Questions and answers

Should I use a website builder or have a web designer build my small business website?



It really depends on your situation. If you think an online presence isn't that important for your industry, then maybe you only need a solid Google Business Profile (Google My Business) - which I can help with! However, I recommend that an ...

a year ago

[More questions](#)

Have you asked any of your own questions? Did you know you could do that! Start answering your own questions?!

9. Check for GBP Updates

The location and format of Updates changes a lot. Here's what I got today:

From the owner

If you're looking for SEO in Redmond, Oregon, then look no further tha...

2 days ago

[Learn more](#)



If you can't find any Updates, note that, as these have a small effect on ranking.

10. Check business description

It is believed that this DOES NOT influence GBP rankings. However, it can influence if a human interacts with your profile and that (very likely) DOES impact your ranking. (Btw, I had to google the business to get the description to pop up.)

From Thencan Designs | Bend Web Design + SEO

"Hey there! My name's Sam and I founded Thencan Designs, a web design + SEO firm located in Bend, Oregon, to help your small business get More TLC: Traffic, Leads, and Clients. I got into web design because I love solving problems, coding, and helping people. As I started launching sites for businesses, I quickly realized there is a lot more to digital marketing than just a good-looking, conversion-based website. Whether you're an established small business owner or a side hustler that's ready to take the leap, I specialize in helping small businesses that serve local customers get more clients. Ready to work with a person who cares AND has the competitive desire to see your business ranking higher than your competitors? Reach out today!"

What Did We Learn?

You should try to take away the following:

1. How far behind are we on reviews?
2. Does it look like there are things we need to change?
 - a. Business categories, name, description
3. Are they already doing SEO-y things?
 - a. GBP Updates, Q&As
4. How many photos are there compared to the competition
5. **Most Important:** Roughly, **where are they ranking for their primary keyword?**

In a couple days, we're going to start working on the Google Business Profile... but first, we need to start tracking our work.

And before *that*, we need *all* of our keywords.

Day 5: Set Up Tracking

[[WATCH THE VIDEO FOR DAY 5](#)]

Today, we'll focus on setting up essential tracking tools to monitor the performance of your targeted keywords, website traffic, and overall site health. Proper tracking is crucial for measuring the success of your SEO efforts and making informed decisions to optimize your strategy.

We will be revisiting this in a few days, so it's CRUCIAL that you get this set up right now.

1. Track Your Keywords

Monitoring the performance of your chosen keywords (from Day 3, remember?) is vital to understand how well your SEO strategy is working. You have two primary options to track your keywords in the early days:

a. Using SERPFox (Free for 10 Keywords)

SERPFox is a simple and effective tool for tracking your keyword rankings.

Steps to Set Up SERPFox:

1. **Sign Up:** Visit [SERPFox](#) and create a free account.
2. **Add Keywords:** Enter up to 10 keywords you want to track. These should be the primary keywords identified in Day 3.
3. **Set Location:** Specify the geographic location relevant to your business to ensure accurate local tracking.
4. **Monitor Rankings:** Check the SERP results regularly to see where your keywords are ranking.

b. Using Semrush's Free Project

Ultimately, you will upgrade to using Semrush's Position Tracking feature (or another SEO tool's premium SERP tracking feature), until then, you can set up a free project to track 10 keywords.

Steps to Set Up Semrush Free Project:

1. **Sign Up/Login:** Go to [Semrush](#) and log in or create a free account.
2. **Create a New Project:** Navigate to the dashboard and select "Create Project."
3. **Add Your Domain:** Enter your website URL and name your project.
4. **Set Up Position Tracking:** Within the project, choose "Position Tracking" and add the keywords you want to monitor.
5. **Configure Settings:** Specify your target location and device preferences.

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-
-
- Start Tracking:** Semrush will begin tracking your keyword rankings and provide regular updates.

2. Track Impressions with Google Search Console

Google Search Console is a free tool that provides insights into how your site performs in Google Search.

Steps to Set Up Google Search Console:

- Sign In:** Go to [Google Search Console](#) and sign in with your Google account.
- Add Property:** Click on “Add Property” in the top-left and enter your website URL.
- Verify Ownership:** Follow the verification steps (HTML file upload, DNS verification, or other methods) to prove you own the website.
 - I usually use the DNS verification method. It’s one TXT record, and it’s pretty dang easy once you’ve done it a few times.
- Access Performance Report:**
 - Navigate to the “Performance” section.
 - Here, you can view metrics like impressions, clicks, click-through rate (CTR), and average position for your tracked keywords.
 - I typically only look at impressions (aka “views on Google”) and clicks.
- Monitor Impressions:** Regularly check the performance report to see how often your site appears in search results (impressions) for your target keywords.

3. Track Traffic with Google Analytics

Google Analytics helps you understand your website traffic and user behavior.

Steps to Set Up Google Analytics:

- Sign Up/Login:** Visit [Google Analytics](#) and sign in with your Google account.
- Create a Property:** Click on “Admin” and then “Create Property.” Enter your website details.
- Set Up Tracking Code**
 - After creating the property, you’ll receive a tracking ID.
 - Add the tracking code snippet to every page of your website, preferably in the `<head>` section. There are directions on how to do this depending on the website builder you use. You can also google: “google analytics” + [website builder] to get more help.
- Verify Installation:** Use the “Realtime” report in Google Analytics to ensure data is being collected.
- Monitor Traffic:** Use Google Analytics to track metrics such as:
 - Number of visitors
 - Page views

- Bounce rate
- Session duration
- Traffic sources (organic, direct, referral, etc.)

Of course, I like tracking the amount of traffic to the site. But I also like to look at the sources (I want to see Organic Search going up), as well as the landing page (i.e., what page they got to the site through) to check the performance of our SEO work.

4. Monitor Website Health with Ahrefs' Site Audit Tool

On Day 8, we're going to talk more about technical SEO. Maintaining a healthy website is essential for SEO. Ahrefs offers a free Site Audit tool to help you identify and fix issues.

Note: This tool is only FREE if you can verify ownership. The easiest way is to add the site to Google Search Console first, as Ahrefs has a connection with GSC. It's super easy to import all of your GSC properties into this tool - even if it's just for your small business 😊

Steps to Set Up Ahrefs Site Audit

1. **Sign Up/Login:** Go to [Ahrefs](#) and create a free account.
2. **Access Site Audit Tool:** From the dashboard, navigate to "Site Audit."
3. **Create a New Project:** Enter your website URL and configure the crawl settings.
4. **Run the Audit:** Initiate the site audit. Ahrefs will crawl your site and identify issues related to SEO, performance, and more.

That's it for now. If you already know about technical SEO, great! You can start digging in. Otherwise, we were just getting a baseline report, and we'll circle back on Day 8.

5. Monitor Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO)

While CRO isn't strictly part of SEO, it's essential for maximizing the effectiveness of the traffic we'll be bringing in. Implementing tools like Google Tag Manager and Microsoft Clarity can help you monitor and improve user interactions on your site. You don't *need* both, but it's pretty easy to install GTM, and once you've done that, it's dead easy to add Clarity.

a. Setting Up Google Tag Manager

Google Tag Manager allows you to manage and deploy marketing tags (snippets of code) on your website without modifying the code.

Steps to Set Up Google Tag Manager:

1. **Sign Up/Login:** Visit [Google Tag Manager](#) and sign in with your Google account.
2. **Create an Account:** Enter your account name and container details (usually your website URL).
3. **Install Container Code:** Add the provided GTM code snippets to your website's `<head>` and `<body>` sections. Like with Google Analytics, a quick Google search will show you how to do this on your website builder.

b. Setting Up Microsoft Clarity

Microsoft Clarity is a free user behavior analytics tool that provides insights through heatmaps and session recordings. Kinda creepy, but super helpful. Also, they claim to be GDPR-compliant, which is important for privacy concerns.

Steps to Set Up Microsoft Clarity:

1. **Sign Up/Login:** Go to [Microsoft Clarity](#) and sign in with your Microsoft account.
2. **Create a Project:** Enter your website details to create a new project.
3. **Activate Clarity on Your Site:** If you add Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager to Clarity, you'll actually be able to integrate through them, so you won't have to add anything else to your site.
4. **Monitor User Behavior:** Use Clarity to analyze heatmaps, session recordings, and other user interaction data to improve CRO.
 - a. I typically watch a few session recordings when I'm first starting, and a few as I make changes. I want to see if the user is getting stuck. I'd hate for some fixable bottleneck to be stopping conversions.

Important Note on Privacy and Compliance

Implementing tracking tools involves collecting user data, which can be intrusive. To ensure compliance with privacy laws and regulations:

- **Update Your Terms and Policies:** Clearly outline data collection practices in your website's privacy policy and terms of service. **Seriously**, if you're not already doing this on your site, now is the time to consider it. If you're unsure what to do, [feel free to reach out to me](#), and I'll give you my thoughts.
- **Cookie Consent Forms:** Especially crucial in the EU under GDPR and for larger businesses in the US, implement cookie consent banners to inform users about tracking.
- **Opt-In Approach:** Consider allowing users to opt-in to tracking rather than defaulting to tracking them. This will probably be the default behavior in the coming years, especially in the EU.

Industry Standard Tip: While the procedures laid out here are what most SEO agencies do, and these tools enhance your SEO and CRO efforts, **always** comply with relevant laws to maintain trust and avoid legal issues.

Conclusion

Setting up comprehensive tracking is a critical step in your local SEO journey. By monitoring your keywords, website traffic, site health, and user behavior, you can make data-driven decisions to optimize your strategy effectively. Remember to respect user privacy and stay compliant with regulations as you implement these tools. We'll be reviewing our progress in the distant future during [Day 21](#).

Day 6: Competitor Keyword Research

[[WATCH VIDEO FOR DAY 6](#)]

Today, we're going to be looking at something that isn't always my favorite, but it's still really important: competitor keyword research.

To be frank, sometimes we've already identified most of the keywords we need. But here's why this step still matters: when competitors in your niche have already invested in SEO, they've often done a lot of the heavy lifting for us. Especially in competitive areas (like metro cities), they give us a guiding light to what's working. So, let's take advantage of that.

By the end of today, you'll know how to "borrow" your competitors' best-performing keywords to make your strategy even stronger.

1. Why Competitor Keyword Research Matters

First things first, is it worth the effort? Honestly, sometimes it may not be—especially if you're in a low-competition market where most of your competitors haven't optimized well. But in more competitive environments, being able to steal keywords that are working for others can be invaluable. This is where the **Semrush Keyword Gap Tool** comes into play.

2. Tools for the Job

Today, we'll be focusing on Semrush for our competitor research. However, if you don't have access to the paid version, you can still get some value out of the free version—though it will be limited. If you have the \$29/m version of Ahrefs, that could also be handy. I recommend saving [your 7-day free trial of Semrush](#) for the Backlink Gap tool that will dig into much later on, but if you feel comfortable using it now, go for it.

3. Step-by-Step: How to Use the Keyword Gap Tool

- **Step 1:** Head to Semrush, navigate to the Keyword Gap Tool.

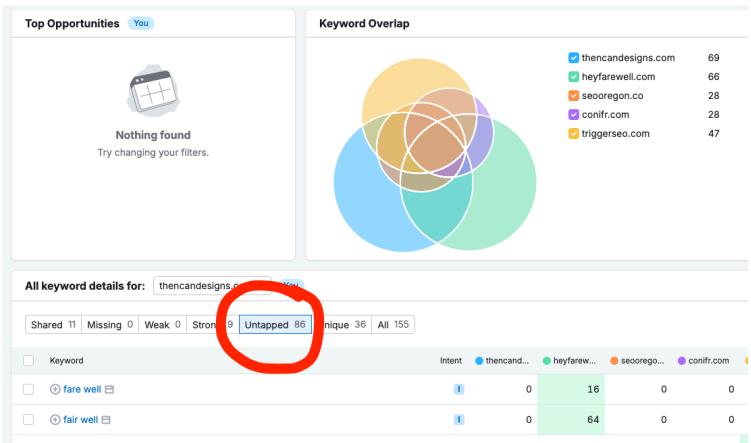
- **Step 2:** Input your domain and a couple of top competitors—you can grab these from the SERPs.

Keyword Gap

A tool that helps you compare your keyword profile with your competitors.

The screenshot shows the 'Keyword Gap' tool interface. At the top, there are five input fields for competitor domains: 'You' (thencandesigns.com), 'heyfarewell.com', 'seooregon.co', 'conifr.com', and 'triggerseo.com'. Each field has dropdown menus for 'Root domain' and 'Organic keywords'. Below these inputs is a 'Compare' button. A dropdown menu indicates the location is 'US'.

- **Step 3:** Semrush will give you keywords that your competitors rank for but you don't—these are "untapped" opportunities.



If you aren't sure who your competitors are, start by searching for your primary keyword (e.g., "service city state"). Pick the top 4-5 local competitors. **Note:** Ignore directory sites like Yelp—we want to focus on *direct* competition.

4. Refining the Keyword List

Sometimes Semrush gives us 100s of results, so let's refine this list:

- **Filter by Intent:** Keep only the commercial keywords. Keywords with informational intent are great, but for local SEO we want the ones that indicate a buyer's interest.
- **Keyword Difficulty (KD):** Ideally, we want to keep KD below 40 if possible, especially for newer sites.
- **Search Volume:** A higher volume can mean greater opportunity, but balance that with the KD. High volume and low difficulty is a gold mine!

- **Cost Per Click (CPC):** If a keyword has a CPC of \$0, it often means it's not worth targeting. We want keywords that show some level of commercial viability.
- **Look for Trash Keywords:** Be prepared to find a lot of irrelevant keywords mixed in. Part of this step is sifting through the "trash" to find the gems.
- **Filter Out Branded or Irrelevant Searches:** Going to Advanced Filters and "Exclude" certain keywords like competitors' brands or irrelevant keywords.

5. Cross-Checking Competitor Keywords with Google Keyword Planner

After gathering keywords from Semrush, it's a good idea to cross-check with **Google Keyword Planner**. This tool is part of Google Ads, and it can help validate search volumes and CPC metrics. [Review Day 3 for more specifics](#) on Google Keyword Planner.

- Set up a **Google Keyword Planner** account (note: this may require a credit card, but you won't be charged unless you run ads).
- Input your keywords to confirm search volumes align with Semrush's data.
- **Geo-fence** the results to your specific area. This is crucial for local SEO since search behaviors vary greatly by region.
- **Check for Keyword Variations:** Look for additional keyword variations that could be useful for your local market.
- **Ensure Commercial Viability:** Try to target keywords with measurable CPC data—if someone else is paying to show up on that SERP, we want to show up for free!

6. Analog Markets for Expanded Insights

If you're finding that local competitors don't give you a lot to work with, consider researching in a nearby metro area that's more competitive. For example, if you're in **Lodi**, but find the competition is lacking, look at **Stockton** or even **Sacramento**. These cities might have SEO agencies targeting similar keywords for *their* clients, and the data can be incredibly useful for your strategy.

7. Final Steps: Organizing and Tracking Keywords

By now, you should have a decent list of competitor keywords. Here's what you need to do next:

- Export this list to a **spreadsheet** (CSV or Excel).
- Add it to your **SERP Tracker**. We already discussed SERP trackers during Day 5. Use this list to keep track of where you rank over time and update it periodically.
- **Remove Some Keywords:** If a keyword has zero CPC or zero search volume, remove it. Also, if the keyword is "asking a question," then we don't want that.

- **Track Your Competitors:** It wouldn't hurt to remember this task, you may want to revisit this in a few weeks or a few months. SEO is an ongoing battle, and staying updated will keep you ahead.

Conclusion

Today's task isn't flashy, but it's an important one. Getting a list of competitor keywords gives you a clearer picture of what you're up against. Remember, even if you end up finding only one or two golden keywords from today's research, it could make a difference in your strategy.

Set aside a couple of hours today to dive into this. It's one of those tasks that may feel tedious but can pay off big in the long run. Next up, we'll be covering the **GBP Optimization**, an easier and quicker win as we wrap up our first week and wait for the data from these initial keyword tasks.

Note: The primary keyword should be a focal point, but also consider additional relevant keywords for a comprehensive strategy. That means write down all the keywords you found. We'll revisit them on [Day 9](#).

Day 7: GBP Optimization

[[WATCH THE VIDEO FOR DAY 7](#)]

Welcome to **Day 7** of your **30 Day Local SEO Playbook**! Today, we're going to walk through setting up and optimizing your Google Business Profile (GBP). This is one of the most powerful tools for local SEO and can greatly enhance your visibility in local search results.

On Day 4, we did an Audit of your GBP. If you already have your GBP, you can skip the set up step, but skim it, as there are some important things to note.

In this lesson, we'll cover the step-by-step process for setting up your Google Business Profile, followed by optimization tips to ensure you stand out in your service area.

1. Why Google Business Profiles Matter for Local SEO

A fully optimized Google Business Profile is crucial for local businesses because it helps you appear in the **Map Pack**, which is often shown at the top of Google search results. Additionally, Google rewards businesses that provide complete and accurate information on their profiles by improving their rankings.

2. Setting Up Your Google Business Profile

To begin, follow these steps to create and set up your Google Business Profile.

Step 1: Go to Google Business Profile Setup Page

- **URL:** Visit google.com/business.
- **Sign In:** Ensure you are signed in to the Google account you want to associate with your business. Double-check that you're using a professional email account that aligns with your business brand.

Step 2: Create a New Business Profile

- **Click ‘Manage Now’** to begin setting up your business profile.
- **Search for Your Business Name:** If your business already exists in Google's database, you can claim it. Otherwise, click to create a new business profile with the name you entered.

Step 3: Select Your Business Category

This is one of the most important ranking factors for your Google Business Profile.

- **Primary Category:** Choose a primary category that accurately represents your business. This will affect how Google ranks your business in local search results.
 - *Example:* For a landscaping business, "landscaper" is often the best category if it's commonly used by competitors.
- **Tip:** Do some research by looking up competitors in Google Maps and noting the category they use. I spoke more about this [here](#), during Day 4.

Step 4: Set Up Your Business Location or Service Area

- If you have a **physical location** where customers visit, enter that address.
- For **service area businesses**, choose the areas where you provide your services. It's best to limit this to regions within a two-hour driving radius.
 - You still have to put an address - probably your home address - but don't worry, this will not be publicly visible.

Step 5: Add Contact Information

- **Phone Number and Website:** Make sure to enter a publicly accessible phone number and website. If you don't have a business website yet, this is something you should prioritize soon as it's key to establishing credibility. Also, it's against the rules to link to a social media page.

3. Verifying Your Business Profile

Once you've entered all your business details, you'll need to verify your business with Google. The verification process may vary, but here are the most common methods:

- **Instant Verification:** Sometimes, Google can verify your business instantly if it has enough existing information about you.
- **Postcard Verification:** This is the traditional method where Google sends a postcard with a verification code to your physical address, but it's less common lately.
- **Video Verification:** In many cases, especially for newer businesses or service area businesses, Google may ask you to verify via video. You'll need to show key elements like your business location, equipment, and verification of ownership. I've created a [thorough video here that walks through how to get video verified](#) - seriously, I've used this with *dozens* of people at this point.

4. Optimizing Your Google Business Profile

Now that your Google Business Profile is set up, it's time to optimize it for local SEO success.

a. Add a Detailed Business Description

- Write a clear and concise description of your business, what services you offer, and the areas you serve. **This is NOT a ranking factor.** So, make sure this is tailored to **humans**. Focus on communicating your business value and how you serve customers. You have 750 characters. If you use Gemini's suggestion, I encourage you to keep adding to it to make it a little more personalized.

b. Select Additional Categories

- Once you've established your primary category, you can add **secondary categories** that further describe your business. Again, [check out Day 4](#) (this links to the primary category section, but you'll see where I talk about secondary categories) for how to steal your competitor's secondary categories, as these aren't listed out in the open.

c. Set Business Hours

- Accurately represent your operating hours and keep them updated, especially during holidays.
 - **Pro Tip:** SEO experts have noticed that business hours are a ranking factor, however, I would advise against listing hours that you cannot meet.

d. Add High-Quality Photos

- **Logo:** Upload a clear, high-resolution logo (720x720 pixels).
- **Cover Photo:** Use a 1024x575 pixel image as your cover photo, showcasing your business in action.
- **Business Photos:** Add photos of your business location, team members, vehicles, or products. Avoid using stock photos, as they can reduce trust with potential customers. Later on, we'll circle back to this task, as it's a good way to show activity, so don't use all your photos on day one!

e. Fill Out Every Single Section

- Go through the Google Business Profile and fill out EVERY single option that is applicable to your business.
- You can check out my FREE Google Business Profile Masterclass on YouTube [right here](#) - this link starts at 10:49, as that's where the GBP Setup and Optimization begins)
 - Note that some features have been deprecated since that video was released, namely GBP Messages, and GBP Call Tracking - I'm still mad about that last one lol

5. Monitoring and Managing Your Google Business Profile

Google rewards activity over time. Don't worry, we will be spending future days on the topic of GBP Management. For today, let's just make sure we're fully optimized.

However, note that Google is constantly changing the features of the GBP. So, it's important to stay ahead of the curve - and your competition - to *keep* your GBP optimized 🤘

Conclusion

Optimizing your Google Business Profile is a crucial step in the local SEO process. The more effort you put into maintaining and enhancing your profile, the better results you'll see in your local SEO efforts. Also, stay up to date to keep your profile optimized. Later on, we'll discuss the elements that are crucial to managing your GBP.

Week 1 Summary: Foundation for Local SEO

Day 1: Expectations for Local SEO

- **Timeline Expectations:** Local SEO delivers faster results compared to national, ecommerce, or SaaS SEO. Timelines vary, but focusing on consistent effort is key.
- **Action Step:** Start implementing strategies without fixating on exact timelines.

Day 2: What Matters Most for Local SEO

- **Key Components:**
 - **Google Business Profile (GBP):** Optimize it to gain better reviews.
 - **Website Optimization:** Clearly convey your services and locations.
 - **Authority Building:** Earn locally and industry-relevant backlinks.
- **The TLC Method:** Increase **Traffic, Leads, Clients** by targeting multiple relevant keywords.

Day 3: Find Your Primary Keyword

- **Identify Primary Keywords:** Use formats like "service city state" or "service near me."
- **Tools:** Utilize Semrush and Google Keyword Planner for verification.
- **Rankability Formula:** Balance search volume, keyword difficulty (KD), and cost per click (CPC) to select the best keywords.

Day 4: Google Business Profile (GBP) Audit

- **Audit Steps:**
 - Verify business categories, name, and secondary categories.
 - Assess reviews, photo quality, and Q&A presence.
 - Review overall ranking and GBP updates.
- **Tools:** Use the PlePer Chrome extension and Whitespark's Local Results Tool.
- **Outcome:** Identify areas for improvement to enhance your GBP.

Day 5: Set Up Tracking

- **Tracking Essentials:**
 - **Keyword Rankings:** Track with SERPFox or Semrush.
 - **Google Search Console:** Monitor impressions.
 - **Google Analytics:** Analyze website traffic.
 - **Ahrefs Site Audit:** Ensure site health.

- **Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO):** Set up Google Tag Manager and Microsoft Clarity.
- **Compliance:** Ensure user privacy and data tracking compliance.

Day 6: Competitor Keyword Research

- **Research Competitors:** Use the **Semrush Keyword Gap Tool** to identify untapped opportunities.
- **Refine the Keyword List:** Focus on commercial keywords with manageable KD and CPC. Remove irrelevant keywords.
- **Validation with Google Keyword Planner:** Confirm search volume and refine keywords for your specific area.
- **Action Step:** Track competitor keywords and use them to strengthen your strategy.

Day 7: Google Business Profile (GBP) Optimization

- **Setup and Optimization:**
 - Create or claim your GBP, verify it, and select accurate categories.
 - Add detailed descriptions, photos, and fill out all sections.
 - Stay active on GBP for better rankings.
- **Action Step:** Fully optimize your GBP to improve visibility in local searches.

Additional Resources and Opportunities

- **Free Mini SEO Strategy Video:** Enhance your understanding and implementation of the strategies covered this week by accessing a free Mini SEO Strategy Video from Sam, the author of the Playbook. [Get your free video here.](#)
- **Stay Updated with Sam's Insights:** Join Sam's email list at yoursmallbizseosuccess.com to receive regular discussions on Local SEO and a weekly SEO tip to keep your strategies sharp and effective.

Conclusion

Week 1 equips you with the essential knowledge and tools to kickstart your Local SEO journey. By setting clear expectations, identifying key components, conducting thorough keyword research, auditing and optimizing your Google Business Profile, and establishing robust tracking mechanisms, you're well on your way to improving your local online presence and attracting more clients.

Stay committed and engaged as you progress through the playbook. Remember, consistency and strategic action are key to achieving long-term Local SEO success!



Feel free to [**reach out**](#) (yes, that's my email) if you have any questions or need further assistance. Let's make your Local SEO journey a success! 💪

Now, let's move on to Week 2...

Day 8: Technical SEO for Local SEO

Welcome to Day 8 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're focusing on **Technical SEO**, specifically from a local perspective. This lesson builds on the SEO checkup we did earlier by diving deeper into the issues you may find during a technical audit and showing you how to address them.

Technical SEO might seem overwhelming, but getting it right is crucial for your local SEO success. Today, we'll cover some of the most common errors you'll encounter during a site audit, how to use free tools like **Ahrefs Site Audit**, and what to do to fix those pesky issues.

1. Tools for the Job

To perform a thorough technical SEO audit, you need the right tools. The two most commonly used tools for this purpose are:

- **Semrush Site Audit Tool:** Semrush offers an excellent site audit feature that provides insights into what could be improved. If you have a free account, you might get one project that includes this feature, but I actually prefer a different tool.
- **Ahrefs Site Audit Tool:** Ahrefs offers a free site audit tool, which I highly recommend. It provides weekly crawls of your site and a detailed report of the issues detected.

2. Common Technical SEO Issues and How to Fix Them

During your technical audit, you'll likely encounter various issues. Below, we outline the most common types of errors you should look out for and how to address them:

Internal Page Issues

- **404 Errors:** These occur when a page that previously existed has been deleted or moved without setting up a proper redirect. The solution is to create a **301 redirect** to an appropriate existing page. If there's no relevant page, it's sometimes okay to leave a 404 if Google suggests the page no longer needs to exist.
- **500 Errors:** These are server-related issues. If you encounter these, it's typically best to work with your hosting provider to resolve them.
- **Mixed Content (HTTPS/HTTP):** This happens when parts of your page are loaded over HTTP while the main page is HTTPS, causing security warnings. Fixing this requires updating the resource URLs to HTTPS.

Indexability and Canonicals

- **Canonical Errors:** Ensure that your canonical tags point to the correct version of a page. Most of the time, this tag should be self-referencing. Avoid pointing canonical tags to URLs that redirect.
- **Noindex/Nofollow Tags:** Make sure you're correctly using **noindex** and **nofollow** tags. Use **noindex** for pages you don't want to show up in search results (e.g., development pages) and **nofollow** to prevent passing SEO value to links on that page.

Redirect Issues

- **Broken Redirects:** Redirects that point to non-existent pages (404 errors) should be fixed to prevent a negative impact on SEO.
- **Redirect Chains/Loops:** Avoid redirect chains (multiple redirects from one URL to another) and redirect loops (URL A points to URL B, which then redirects back to URL A). These are resource-intensive for search engines and can affect crawl efficiency.

Orphan Pages

- **Orphan Pages:** These are pages without any internal links pointing to them, meaning they're disconnected from the rest of your site. Orphan pages should either be linked from relevant content or marked as noindex if they don't serve a purpose for SEO.

Content Issues

- **Meta and Header Tags:** Ensure that all pages have unique **meta titles**, **meta descriptions**, and **H1 tags**. Your meta tags should be optimized for keywords, while your H1 tags should clearly describe the page content.
- **Word Count:** Pages with very low word count may not provide sufficient value to users or search engines. Consider expanding content to ensure each page is informative and useful.

Links

- **Broken Internal Links:** Make sure that all internal links point to live pages. Broken internal links disrupt the user experience and can lead to crawling issues.
- **Links to Redirected Pages:** Update any internal links that point to redirected URLs so they directly point to the destination page, avoiding unnecessary redirects.

Site Speed and Usability

- **Page Load Speed:** While not the top priority, ensure that your site loads quickly. Tools like **PageSpeed Insights** can help identify areas for improvement.
- **Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS):** Make sure page elements are stable as they load to prevent shifts in layout that negatively impact user experience.

Images and Media

- **Alt Text:** All images should have descriptive **alt text** for accessibility and SEO purposes.
- **File Size:** Ensure image file sizes aren't excessively large, as this can impact site speed.

3. Weekly Site Audits

One of the great things about using the Ahrefs Site Audit tool is that it provides **weekly reports**. This allows you to monitor changes over time, see what new issues have cropped up, and track progress as you fix errors.

- **Monitor Changes:** Look for changes like new 404 errors, changes in indexability, or differences in the number of nofollow links. This is a good way to catch problems before they become serious.

4. Don't Be Afraid to Ask for Help

Technical SEO can get very granular, and it's okay if you don't know how to fix every issue. If you encounter a problem that you can't solve, consider subcontracting it out or seeking help from a technical SEO expert. I don't consider myself a technical SEO *expert*, but I can handle most things, so feel free to reach out 😊

Conclusion

Technical SEO is all about making sure your website is accessible, understandable, and crawlable for search engines. Addressing technical issues can significantly improve your SEO performance and ensure you're not missing out on valuable search traffic due to avoidable errors.

Take your time today to run a thorough audit, fix the issues identified, and set yourself up for success as we move forward. If you get stuck, remember—you can always reach out for help. Let's keep pushing forward!

Day 9: Cluster Keywords

Welcome to Day 9 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're diving into **keyword clustering**. By now, you've collected a bunch of keywords: the **primary keywords** from Day 3 and the **competitor keywords** from Day 6. Now, it's time to organize these keywords into effective clusters. This clustering will help you create an **Ideal Sitemap** during Day 10, ensuring your website structure is well-organized and SEO-friendly.

Keyword clustering is an essential step that helps you group related keywords together, making your website structure more focused and helping search engines understand what each page is about. In local SEO, the goal is usually to cluster keywords around the **services** the business offers or around specific **locations**.

1. Organize Your Keywords into Clusters

Service-Based Clustering

The best way to organize your keywords is to create clusters based on the **services** that your business offers. Each service should have its own keyword cluster. For instance, if you're running a home remodeling business, you might have a cluster for "kitchen remodeling [city] [state]" and another for "bathroom remodeling [city] [state]."

These clusters will help define the content and SEO strategy for individual **service pages** on your website. Each cluster should contain a primary keyword along with related keywords that reinforce the same service theme.

About Page Clustering (Noun vs. Verb)

Sometimes, you can use your **About page** to target different keyword types. For example, let's say you're working with a custom cabinetry business:

- One cluster might be "custom cabinets [city] [state]," which you would target on your **Custom Cabinets Service Page**.
- Another cluster might be "cabinet maker [city] [state]," which you can target on your **About page**, where you can describe the craftsmanship and history of the business.

This approach allows you to target multiple variations of your core services without overlapping the main service pages, expanding your reach to different search queries.

Location Pages and the Homepage

It's also common to create **location-specific pages** if you serve multiple areas. Each location should have its own keyword cluster, focusing on that particular city or neighborhood.

When it comes to the **homepage**, it can be tricky to decide what to target. Usually, the homepage will target your **primary keyword** (the main keyword that defines your business). However, if your business has a clear standout service or you want to get ambitious, you could use the homepage to target a **broader keyword**. For instance, continuing with our cabinetry example, you might use the homepage to target "custom cabinets [state]," while targeting the more localized "custom cabinets [city] [state]" on your service page.

2. How to Create Effective Keyword Clusters

- **Start with the Primary Keyword:** For each service, begin with the primary keyword you identified in Day 3. This keyword will serve as the foundation of the cluster.
- **Add Related Keywords:** Add the related keywords you discovered in Day 6 when you analyzed your competitors. These should complement and strengthen the primary keyword.
- **Organize by Intent:** Make sure that all the keywords within a cluster share the same search intent. This means that users searching for these terms are likely looking for the same type of information or service. For instance, a "kitchen remodel" keyword cluster should contain keywords like "kitchen renovation [city]" and "kitchen contractors [city]."

3. Assign Clusters to Pages

Now that you have your keyword clusters, assign them to specific pages on your website:

- **Service Pages:** Each service page should focus on one cluster. For example, the "bathroom remodeling" service page will use keywords from the "bathroom remodeling" cluster.
- **Location Pages:** If you serve multiple areas, create separate pages targeting each cluster of location-based keywords.
- **Homepage:** Decide whether the homepage will focus on a broad keyword or target the primary keyword for your main service.

Conclusion

Organizing your keywords into clusters is an important step that will make your content more focused, relevant, and easier for search engines to understand. Today, take the time to group all of the keywords you collected into logical clusters and decide which pages of your website will target which clusters. This will set the foundation for a more effective content and SEO strategy as we move forward in the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook.

Let's get those keywords clustered and pages assigned so we can move on to optimizing each one individually in the days to come!

Day 10: Create Your Ideal Sitemap

Welcome to Day 10 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're focusing on creating your **Ideal Sitemap**. The work you did clustering your keywords on Day 9 will now come into play as we sketch out the structure of your website. A well-structured sitemap is essential for both user experience and SEO, ensuring that visitors and search engines can easily navigate your site.

You can use tools like **Google Docs, Canva, or Miro** to create an effective sitemap sketch. The goal today is to have a visual representation of how your website will be structured, which pages you'll have, and how they'll be linked.

1. Focus on Your Money Pages

The key to a successful local SEO strategy is focusing on your **money pages**:

- **Homepage**
- **Service Pages**
- **Location Pages**

These pages are the most critical for converting visitors into customers, so make sure they are well-defined in your sitemap, even if some of these pages aren't built yet.

Homepage

The **homepage** should be at the top of your sitemap, with links branching out to each service and location page. This is usually the page that targets your primary keyword, or in some cases, a more ambitious keyword that represents your overarching service area.

Service Pages

Create separate **service pages** for each cluster of keywords related to the services you offer. For example, if you offer both kitchen and bathroom remodeling, each of these services should have its own page, linked directly from the homepage.

Location Pages

If your business serves multiple areas, create **location pages** to target each specific city or neighborhood. Location pages are great for targeting keywords like "kitchen remodeling [city] [state]." Depending on whether you have physical locations or are a service-area business, there are different ways to organize these pages.

2. Recommended Permalink Structures

How you organize your URL structure can have an impact on your local SEO. Here are some **recommended permalink structures** for both physical and service-area locations:

Physical Locations

If you have physical locations, use the following structure:

None

```
/main-service-physical-location1/sub-service/  
/main-service-physical-location2/sub-service/
```

Service Area Businesses

If your business doesn't have physical locations but serves a specific area, you can use this structure:

None

```
/main-service-service-location1/sub-service/  
/main-service-service-location2/sub-service/
```

Alternative Naming

Another option, especially if you want a more straightforward naming convention, is:

None

```
/location-name/service1  
/location-name/service2  
/location2-name/service1
```

3. Don't Forget the Connective Tissue Pages

In addition to your money pages, make sure to include the **connective tissue pages** like:

- **About**
- **Contact**
- **Projects**
- **Testimonials**

These pages are important for building trust with visitors and providing essential information about your business. However, you can skip things like legal pages for this assignment.

4. The Final Goal: A Visual Map

The goal today is to have a complete **sitemap** that includes all the important pages:

- **Homepage**
- **Service Pages** (one for each service you offer)
- **Location Pages** (one for each area you serve)
- **Connective Tissue Pages**

Be sure to label each page with its **target keyword cluster** from Day 9. This way, you'll have a clear roadmap of which keywords are being targeted on which pages, and how everything fits into your overall SEO strategy.

Conclusion

Today's task is straightforward but crucial for building a solid foundation for your local SEO strategy. By the end of today, you should have a visual representation of your **Ideal Sitemap**. This will serve as a guide for the rest of the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook, ensuring that your website is well-structured, easy to navigate, and optimized for both search engines and users.

Take some time today to create your sitemap and clearly identify which keyword cluster each page will target. This will make your future SEO work more efficient and effective. Let's get started on building that ideal structure for your website!

Day 11: Creating a High-Level Strategy

Welcome to Day 11 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're going to take a step back and look at the bigger picture: **creating a high-level strategy** for your website. This strategy will help you understand where your website currently stands and where you want it to go, with the ultimate goal of reaching **Phase 4** of website development.

Website Phases Overview

To develop an effective strategy, it helps to think of websites in **five phases**. The goal here is to move your website from its **current phase** to the **next phase**, and ultimately to **Phase 4**. Phase 5 is a more advanced stage, but we recommend focusing on the foundational elements until you've completed every task in the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook.

Phase 1: Single Landing Page

Phase 1 represents the most basic form of a website – a single landing page. This phase is often used by new businesses that may not yet be ready for full-scale SEO. A single landing page can introduce the business, but it's not enough for competing effectively in local SEO, especially if there is competition in your area. The goal is to move beyond this initial phase.

Phase 2: Proven Winner (Five-Page Website)

Phase 2 is the five-page website, which includes:

- **Homepage**
- **About Page**
- **Contact Page**
- **Service Page**
- **Wildcard Page** (like Testimonials, Projects, or FAQs)

At this stage, the website is more robust and can provide a better user experience. It's often enough to start competing locally, but it's still just the beginning.

Phase 3: Individual Service Pages

In **Phase 3**, we build out **individual service pages** for each of the services offered by the business. This is crucial for ranking well in local SEO, as each page can be optimized specifically for the service and target keywords. Many businesses are at this phase, with separate pages for each service providing more opportunities to rank in search engines.

Phase 4: Location Pages

Phase 4 involves building out **location pages** for each area that the business serves. This is key for expanding your local reach, especially for service area businesses that want to rank in multiple towns or neighborhoods. Keep in mind that quality is more important than quantity – you don't need hundreds of location pages, but focusing on core service areas can yield excellent results.

Phase 5: Informational Content and Expanding Reach

Phase 5 is where you begin expanding up the **sales funnel**. Here, we introduce **informational content** that addresses common questions, educates potential customers, and attracts traffic from people earlier in their buying journey. This is valuable, but it's not a priority until you've completed all foundational work from the previous phases.

Developing Your High-Level Strategy

The goal today is to evaluate which phase your website is currently in and develop a high-level strategy to move to the **next phase**. If you're in Phase 2, your focus should be on building individual service pages. If you're in Phase 3, you'll want to begin working on location pages. Each phase builds upon the previous one, ensuring a strong foundation for local SEO success.

Don't forget about the **connective tissue pages** like **About**, **Contact**, **Projects**, **Testimonials**, etc. These pages help create a cohesive website experience for users and add to the overall quality of your site.

Remember, the **SEO Build Phase** is about taking action to grow your website strategically and efficiently. Your goal is to continue moving forward until you've reached **Phase 4**, where you have fully optimized service and location pages that serve as the backbone of your local SEO strategy.

Creating Your SEO Gameplan

To create your high-level strategy:

1. **Assess your current phase:** Identify where your website stands within the five phases.
2. **Set your next goal:** Determine which phase you want to reach next.
3. **Create an action plan:** List the pages you need to build, update, or improve to reach the next phase.
4. **Focus on progression:** Keep the focus on moving from one phase to the next, ultimately reaching Phase 4 before considering Phase 5.

By creating a strategic SEO Gameplan, you'll have clear steps to follow and a structured plan for improving your site's SEO capabilities.

Conclusion

Today, you're creating a **high-level strategy** to guide the growth of your website through the different phases. Your focus should be on building a solid foundation that can support your local SEO goals, moving one phase at a time until you reach **Phase 4**. Remember, Phase 5 isn't something to rush into – only tackle it once all other foundational work is complete.

Take some time today to evaluate your current site, identify which phase you're in, and create your plan for getting to the next phase. This strategy will set you up for long-term success as you work through the rest of the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook.

Day 12: Creating a GBP Post Strategy

Welcome to Day 12 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're focusing on a key aspect of your local SEO strategy: creating a **Google Business Profile (GBP) Post Strategy**. Google Business Profile posts are an important tool for keeping your audience informed and engaged while signaling activity to Google, which can help improve your local rankings.

Why GBP Posts Matter

GBP posts are not the biggest driver of rankings, but they play a role in maintaining visibility and engagement with your target audience. Consistently posting on your GBP helps demonstrate activity to Google, which may contribute to better rankings over time. Posts also allow you to share updates, services, events, and promotions directly with potential customers, making your profile more engaging.

Developing Your GBP Post Strategy

Introductory Post Series

Start by creating a **series of introductory posts** to establish a foundation for your profile:

1. **Business Introduction Post:** Introduce the business and link back to your homepage. This sets the stage for customers to understand who you are and what you offer.
2. **Team or Founder Introduction:** If the business has a team or a solopreneur owner, create a post that introduces the key people behind the business. Link this post to your About page or Team page to create a stronger connection.
3. **Service Introduction Posts:** Create an individual post for each service offered by the business. These posts should highlight the value of each service and link back to the corresponding service page on your website.
4. **New Page Announcements:** If you add any new pages to your website, make a post to announce them. Link back to these new pages to encourage Google to index them and to drive initial traffic.
5. **Call to Action Post:** End this introductory sequence with a clear **call to action** that directs users to your Contact or Quote page. This helps guide visitors toward taking action.

Aim to publish about **two posts per week** during this initial phase, which should give you content for at least the first couple of months.

Ongoing GBP Post Strategy

Once the initial series of posts is complete, move to an **ongoing post schedule**:

- **Service Highlight Posts:** Cycle through the services offered by the business, creating one post per week that highlights a particular service. Link these posts back to the relevant service pages.
- **Location Posts:** As you build out **location pages**, include these in the rotation. Create posts that highlight the services provided in each specific area, and link back to the location pages.
- **Additional Content Ideas:** If you have more capacity, consider creating posts for:
 - **Testimonials:** Share customer testimonials and link back to the Testimonials page.
 - **Projects or Case Studies:** Highlight completed projects or case studies, especially those that demonstrate your success in specific services or locations.
 - **Promotional Offers or Events:** Promote special offers or upcoming events to engage your audience further.

Tools to Simplify Your GBP Post Strategy

If you're managing multiple clients or prefer a streamlined approach, consider using a tool like **Plannable**. It allows you to create, schedule, and manage GBP posts for multiple profiles in one place. You can also use AI-based tools to generate initial drafts of posts, but be sure to review and personalize them to reflect the unique voice and services of the business.

Conclusion

Today's focus is all about building a structured and consistent **GBP post strategy** that helps engage your audience and signals activity to Google. Remember, GBP posts may not drive rankings on their own, but they are an important piece of the local SEO puzzle. By setting up an effective post schedule, you can maximize the value of your Google Business Profile and keep your business visible to potential customers.

Day 13: SEO Hotspots

Welcome to Day 13 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we'll cover the **SEO Hotspots** — the most important areas to focus your on-page SEO efforts. Understanding these hotspots will ensure your content is optimized effectively to improve search rankings, making your website more visible to potential customers.

What Are SEO Hotspots?

SEO hotspots are the key areas on your website where SEO signals are strongest. By focusing on these elements, you maximize the relevance and authority of your page in the eyes of search engines. Properly optimizing these hotspots helps Google understand the content of your page and improves its chances of ranking higher for relevant searches.

1. SEO Title (Title Tag)

The **SEO title** is one of the most important factors for search engines. It appears as the clickable headline on the search engine results page (SERP) and influences both rankings and click-through rates. Make sure your title includes your **primary keyword**, and keep it concise, clear, and compelling to encourage users to click.

Best Practice: Use the primary keyword at the beginning of the title if possible, and keep it within 50-60 characters to avoid truncation on the SERP.

2. URL (Permalink)

A clean, descriptive URL helps both users and search engines understand what the page is about. The URL structure should be short, contain the primary keyword, and be easy to read.

Best Practice: Keep the URL structure simple, such as "example.com/service-city." Avoid using long strings of numbers or irrelevant words.

3. Meta Description

The **meta description** is not a direct ranking factor, but it plays a crucial role in increasing your **click-through rate**. It provides a summary of the page's content and should entice users to click your link over others. Including your primary keyword naturally in the meta description can help users see the relevance of your page to their search.

Best Practice: Write a compelling meta description that includes a call to action and stays within 150-160 characters.

4. Header Tag (H1)

The **H1 tag** should contain the primary keyword and clearly indicate the main topic of the page. It is similar to the SEO title but can be written in a more human-readable way to engage readers while still conveying the main focus of the page.

Best Practice: Use the primary keyword in the **H1 tag** to reflect the SEO title, but make it more conversational or engaging.

5. Content and Keyword Placement

The **body content** is where you provide value to your audience and reinforce your primary topic. Use your **primary keyword** naturally throughout the content, but avoid overstuffing. Place it in **the first paragraph** and in **the last 100 words**, use variations, and include **related keywords** to help boost the relevance of your page.

Best Practice: Use the primary keyword in the first paragraph and the last 100 words. Keep keyword density around 1-2%. Use synonyms and related terms to enhance context without overusing the primary keyword.

Putting It All Together

These **SEO hotspots** are critical for optimizing your web pages and ensuring that your content is as search-engine-friendly as possible. By focusing on the SEO title, meta description, URL, H1, and body content, you'll be well on your way to improving your on-page SEO and boosting your rankings.

As we move forward, keep these hotspots in mind because we're building towards creating fully optimized content that performs well in search engines. Mastering these elements now will set a strong foundation for the content we'll develop in upcoming lessons.

Day 14: Creating a BrandScript for Your Business

Okay, this isn't SEO, but it's going to help us create some great copy for our website. Today, we're going to work on creating a **BrandScript** for your business, which will help you communicate effectively with your customers.

Step 1: Access the BrandScript Guide

To get started, access the **BrandScript Guide Custom GPT** by [clicking here](#). This will take you to a tool designed to help you easily create a BrandScript. If you don't have a ChatGPT Plus account, you may run out of actions before you can complete the assignment.

Step 2: What is StoryBrand?

StoryBrand is a marketing framework that positions **your potential client** as the hero of their journey and you as their guide. This framework helps you create clear and effective messaging that resonates emotionally with your audience. A BrandScript is essentially a guiding document that helps you communicate your services and how you can help clients in a structured and compelling way.

Think of it as "**Mad Libs for your business**" — you're just filling in the blanks to tell the story of how you solve your customers' problems, and the Custom GPT tool will help you with the rest.

Step 3: Walk Through the BrandScript Assignment

Once you're ready, click the button to **start the assignment step-by-step**. There are eight steps to go through, each one focusing on a different part of the BrandScript. The tool will prompt you after each step, asking if you're satisfied with your answers or if you want to refine them further. Don't overthink it — if you're happy with your response, just say "**yep**" to move on.

By the end, you'll have a fully completed BrandScript that tells the story of your business in a way that appeals directly to your audience.

Step 4: Review and Polish

After completing the BrandScript, copy it into a Google Doc (or something similar) for review. This is where you'll give it a final proofread to ensure that everything is polished and resonates with your business. Make sure the tone matches your brand and that all the information is accurate.

Why This Matters

A good BrandScript will help you create copy that makes it easy for potential customers to understand what you offer, how you help, and why they should choose you. It can be the foundation for all of your messaging—from your website copy to your email marketing to your social media posts. Having this clarity in your messaging will help make your SEO efforts more effective by converting more of your website visitors into leads and customers.

Take the time today to craft a compelling BrandScript. This isn't just about attracting more visitors—it's about turning those visitors into loyal customers by making your message clear and compelling. And [in the next week](#) of the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook, we'll use this BrandScript to create the copy for your money pages.

Week 2 Summary: Strengthening Local SEO Foundations

Day 8: Technical SEO for Local SEO

- **Technical Audit Tools:** Use Ahrefs or Semrush to identify site issues.
- **Common Issues:** Address 404 errors, mixed content, canonical tags, and more.
- **Weekly Monitoring:** Run weekly audits to catch new issues early.
- **Action Step:** Perform a technical audit to fix key errors.

Day 9: Cluster Keywords

- **Organize Keywords:** Group related keywords around services or locations.
- **Keyword Clustering:** Create clusters to form a solid content strategy.
- **Assign Clusters to Pages:** Allocate keyword clusters to service, location, and homepage.
- **Action Step:** Build keyword clusters to improve content focus and visibility.

Day 10: Create Your Ideal Sitemap

- **Define Website Structure:** Use your keyword clusters to create a sitemap.
- **Focus on Key Pages:** Organize the homepage, service pages, and location pages.
- **Permalink Structures:** Establish clear URLs for physical locations or service areas.
- **Action Step:** Map out your website structure visually to guide future content efforts.

Day 11: Creating a High-Level Strategy

- **Website Phases:** Understand your current website phase and strategize growth.
- **SEO Gameplan:** Build out service and location pages to strengthen your foundation.
- **Progression Plan:** Move through each phase to Phase 4 for maximum impact.
- **Action Step:** Develop a strategic roadmap for your website's evolution.

Day 12: Creating a Google Business Profile (GBP) Post Strategy

- **Why GBP Posts Matter:** Keep your audience engaged and signal activity to Google.
- **Introductory Post Series:** Create posts that introduce your business and services.
- **Ongoing Post Strategy:** Rotate through services, locations, and customer testimonials.
- **Tools:** Use tools like Plannable to manage GBP posts efficiently.
- **Action Step:** Plan out an ongoing post strategy to maintain consistent visibility.

Day 13: SEO Hotspots

- **Understand Key SEO Elements:** Focus on optimizing the SEO title, URL, meta description, H1, and content.
- **Keyword Placement:** Use primary keywords in the first and last parts of your content.
- **Action Step:** Make sure all content areas are optimized with clear and consistent keywords.

Day 14: Creating a BrandScript for Your Business

- **StoryBrand Framework:** Create a BrandScript that positions you as the guide.
- **Step-by-Step Creation:** Use the BrandScript Guide to craft messaging that resonates.
- **Review and Polish:** Proofread to ensure accuracy and brand alignment.
- **Action Step:** Develop a compelling BrandScript to use as a foundation for website copy.

Additional Resources and Opportunities

- **Free Mini SEO Strategy Video:** Enhance your understanding and implementation of the strategies covered this week by accessing a free Mini SEO Strategy Video from Sam, the author of the Playbook. [Get your free video here.](#)
- **Stay Updated with Sam's Insights:** Join Sam's email list at yoursmallbizseosuccess.com to receive regular discussions on Local SEO and a weekly SEO tip to keep your strategies sharp and effective.

Conclusion

Week 2 builds on the foundations established in Week 1 by diving deeper into technical aspects, keyword strategy, website structure, and messaging clarity. By focusing on technical health, keyword grouping, and consistent Google Business Profile activity, you're strengthening the pillars of your local SEO. Crafting a BrandScript will tie all this together by creating compelling copy that resonates with your audience.



Feel free to [**reach out**](#) (yes, that's *still* my email) if you have any questions or need further assistance. Let's make your Local SEO journey a success! 💪

Now, let's move on to Week 3...

Day 15: Creating Copy that Converts using StoryBrand

Welcome to Day 15 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're transforming your BrandScript into high-converting website copy using the StoryBrand landing page framework. This isn't just about words on a page—it's about turning visitors into customers.

What is a StoryBrand Landing Page?

A StoryBrand landing page uses a proven narrative structure to guide your website visitors through a clear and persuasive customer journey. Instead of vague marketing speak, it shows exactly how you solve your customer's problem and what they should do next. This structure is effective because it positions the customer as the hero—and your business as the helpful guide.

Whether you're creating a homepage, service page, or location page, using StoryBrand makes your copy clear, emotionally resonant, and conversion-ready.

Breakdown of the StoryBrand Page Structure

Here's a quick overview of each section of the StoryBrand landing page and why it matters:

1. Header (Above the Fold)

- **Purpose:** Communicate what you do, how it helps, and what to do next.
- **Includes:** A one-liner, strong headline, short subheadline, and a clear CTA (like "Schedule a Call").

2. The Problem

- **Purpose:** Build empathy and show you understand the customer's pain.
- **Includes:**
 - External problem: the obvious issue
 - Internal problem: how it feels
 - Philosophical problem: why it shouldn't be that way

3. The Guide (You)

- **Purpose:** Position yourself as the trusted expert.
- **Includes:** Empathy statements and authority boosters like logos, experience, or testimonials.

4. The Path (How it Works)

- **Purpose:** Make taking action feel simple.
- **Includes:** A 3-step plan (e.g., 1. Schedule a Call → 2. Get a Plan → 3. Grow Your Business)

5. The Value Proposition

- **Purpose:** Reinforce how life improves with your service.
- **Includes:** Benefits in bullet points, optional outcomes or comparisons.

6. Call to Action (Repeated)

- **Purpose:** Remind them to take action—again.
- **Includes:** Another CTA button, styled to stand out.

7. Success/Failure Stakes

- **Purpose:** Show what's at stake.
- **Includes:** A vision of success and the cost of doing nothing.

8. Testimonials / Social Proof

- **Purpose:** Build trust.
- **Includes:** Quotes, ratings, logos, case studies.

9. FAQ (Optional)

- **Purpose:** Overcome objections.
- **Includes:** Common questions about cost, time, process, etc.

10. Footer with Imagine Section and Final CTA

- **Purpose:** Close with vision and action.
- **Includes:** A hopeful summary, another CTA, and contact links.

Use the StoryBrand Copywriter GPT

We've created a custom GPT trained on the entire StoryBrand framework. It takes your completed BrandScript ([from Day 14](#)) and turns it into a draft homepage, service page, or location page.

👉 Access the tool here: [StoryBrand Copywriter GPT](#)

How to Use the Tool

- 1. Tell It What You Need**
 - Prompt it by specifying the page type (e.g., "Write a homepage for my acupuncture practice in Bend, Oregon").
- 2. Provide Your BrandScript**
 - Paste your full BrandScript into the chat.
 - Optionally, add other relevant info like customer reviews or unique offers.
- 3. Let It Generate Your Draft**
 - The GPT will create the full page using StoryBrand structure.
 - You can refine specific sections by asking it to rewrite or clarify.

Review and Humanize the Copy

Once the draft is complete:

- **Read it aloud** to ensure it sounds natural.
- **Adjust language** to match your tone and audience.
- **Simplify or personalize** areas that feel stiff or too generic.
- **Remove fluff or unnecessary emojis** if included.

Paste the final version into a Google Doc or directly into your website builder (like Divi, Bricks, or Webflow).

Final Thoughts

Effective copy isn't just about keywords—it's about clear messaging. Today's task is about turning your strategy into content that converts. Use your BrandScript, leverage the StoryBrand Copywriter GPT, and start writing pages that actually speak to your customers.

Tomorrow, we'll shift gears back to your GBP and make sure we're getting a steady stream of high-quality reviews! Hey, maybe you can use those reviews in your copy.

Day 16: Review Coaching (How to Get More + Better Google Reviews)

[[WATCH VIDEO FOR DAY 16](#)]

Welcome to Day 16 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're focusing on one of the highest-impact actions you can take to improve your Google Business Profile (GBP) visibility: coaching your clients to leave better reviews and building a repeatable system to earn more of them.

Why Reviews Matter for Local SEO

Google reviews aren't just about looking good—they're a major ranking factor for your local SEO. In fact, multiple ranking signals in local SEO studies relate directly to your reviews:

- Quantity of reviews
- Average star rating
- Review recency
- Review velocity (steady inflow)
- Keyword/location mentions in reviews

Getting reviews is one of the few things you can completely control, and it's crucial for showing up in the Map Pack and future expansion of Google's AI Overviews and AI Mode.

How to Get Google Reviews

Step 1: Grab Your Google Review Link

1. Go to Google and type “my business” or visit <https://business.google.com/>
2. Click “View profile”
3. Look for the “Ask for reviews” tile
4. Click “Copy link”
5. There’s also a new way to just get a QR code, which is nice!

Paste this link into emails, texts, or DMs. Make it easy for people to leave a review.

Step 2: Follow Up Without Being Pushy

It takes about **three contacts on average** to get a review. If they don’t leave one after the first ask, it’s okay to follow up politely later.

Why Better Reviews Are Worth the Effort

Anyone can get a 5-star rating, but what helps your rankings (and conversions) is **specific, keyword-rich, locally relevant content** in the reviews themselves.

Better reviews:

- Help you rank in hyper-local areas (like neighborhoods)
- Add service keywords naturally
- Give prospects trust and clarity

How to Coach Clients to Leave Better Reviews

Here's what to encourage your customers to include:

- 2–5 sentences
- The **specific service** they received
- The **city** and/or **neighborhood**
- Optionally, a **photo** or **video** (especially helpful for visual services like roofing, remodeling, etc.)

You can include these tips in the message when you send your review link.

Review Script Template

Use or adapt this email script when asking for reviews:

Subject: Quick Favor - Can You Leave a Review?

Thank you for choosing [Business Name] for your [Service Type]! Your trust means the world to me.

Could you spare a moment to support our small business by leaving a quick Google review? It helps others find us, and your feedback shapes how we serve you.

→ [Insert your Google Review Link here]

Tips for writing a great review:

- Aim for 2–5 sentences
- Mention the service you received
- Include the city or neighborhood (e.g., NW Bend or Awbrey Butte)
- Feel free to upload a photo if relevant

Every review—big or small—makes a huge difference. Thank you so much for your support!

What About 1-Star Reviews?

Step 1: Respond With Grace

Take accountability where possible and briefly explain what you'll do differently next time. Be kind. Don't argue.

Step 2: Drown It Out

One negative review in a sea of good ones won't hurt you. But if you only have 5 reviews, a single 1-star can drag your average way down. The solution? Get more 5-star reviews. A profile with 20+ reviews and an average of 4.7–4.9 looks very strong—and very human.

Bonus Strategy: Use QR Codes on Review Cards

Print custom business cards with a QR code linking directly to your review form. Tools like Canva make this easy:

1. Design a simple card with your logo and message (e.g., "Loved your experience? Leave us a review!")
2. Add a QR code using Canva's QR Code "app"
3. Link it to your Google Review URL
4. Print 50–100 cards for about \$20

Hand these out on-site, at the front desk, or after a job. One of our clients has gotten over 100 reviews with this method!

Recap & Action Steps for Today

1. **Get your Google review link** and save it for easy use
2. **Send the review script** to past happy clients
3. **Coach clients** on what to include in their reviews
4. **Respond** to any 1-star reviews with accountability and empathy
5. **Consider printing review QR cards** to passively collect more feedback

This is one of the most impactful and controllable pieces of local SEO. Nail this, and you'll see better rankings, stronger trust, and more leads rolling in.

Let's go get those reviews! After that, we'll keep spying on our competitors!!

Day 17: Competitor Research in the SERPs

Welcome to Day 17 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, you're going to reverse-engineer what's already working.

One of the simplest — and most overlooked — ways to improve your local SEO is to actually look at what Google is rewarding **right now**. We're not crawling entire sites — just analyzing the **ranking pages** to spot patterns you can learn from.

Step 1: Search One of Your Top Keywords

Go to Google and type in a keyword you're trying to rank for — ideally something like:

- `plumber [your city]`
- `massage therapist [your city]`
- `seo services [your city]`

You're looking at the **organic results**, not ads or the map pack.

Step 2: Open the Ranking Pages (Top 10)

Go through the **top 10 organic results** and open each of those **exact ranking URLs**.

We're not analyzing the whole domain — just the single page that Google is ranking.

Step 3: Add Each Ranking Page to Screaming Frog (One by One)

Copy each **individual URL** and paste it into Screaming Frog.

Let it crawl that **one page** and export the basic SEO details — you'll want to focus on:

- **SEO Title**
- **Meta Description**
- **Permalink (URL)**
- **H1 Tag**

Paste that data into a Google Sheet.

Once you've got the top 10, do the same for **your own equivalent page**, and add that row to the bottom.

Step 4: Spot the Patterns

Now, scan your sheet for trends:

- Are most competitors using a certain **keyword variation** you're not?
- Do they include neighborhoods or nicknames for your city?
- Are they writing benefit-focused titles (e.g., "affordable," "trusted," "fast")?
- Are they stuffing keywords, or keeping things natural?

Sometimes you have to say it like the other guys do to show up like they do. Then you can be unique with your brand voice elsewhere.

Step 5: Make Strategic Tweaks to Your Page

Once you spot patterns, ask:

- Can I improve my SEO title or H1 to better match intent?
- Am I missing a keyword variation everyone else is using?
- Is my page too generic or not local enough?

Make **one or two smart edits** to your page based on what you found. Then give it some time to index and track any shifts in ranking over the next few weeks.

Your Assignment for Today:

- Search one of your top keywords
- Add the **ranking URLs** (top 10 only) into Screaming Frog
- Export each page's SEO title, meta description, URL, and H1
- Look for trends and update your SEO hotspots accordingly

This is your chance to study the leaderboard. Take notes, make improvements — and start climbing. Tomorrow: we shift from competition back to the GBP.

Day 18: GBP Q&As and Photos

Welcome to Day 18 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're focusing on two often-overlooked parts of your Google Business Profile: photos and the Q&A section.

These elements help build trust with potential customers, improve engagement, and signal ongoing business activity to Google—so it's not just about the setup; it's about consistent upkeep.

Initial Photo Setup

When you're optimizing your GBP for the first time, you want to upload a handful of foundational images. These give Google (and customers) clear, professional visual context about who you are and what you do.

Photo Types and Dimensions

- **Logo:** 720 x 720 pixels
 - Center your logo in Canva so it doesn't get cropped when Google makes it circular.
- **Cover Photo:** 1024 x 575 pixels (16:9 ratio)
 - If you have a physical location, use a clear photo of your storefront.
 - For service-area businesses, use a branded photo of a happy customer, a project, or a relevant scene that represents your business.
- **Other Images:** 1200 x 900 pixels
 - Add 2–3 photos of your interior (if you have a physical location).
 - Highlight your work, your team in action, and finished projects.

These photos help Google verify your legitimacy and provide useful context to potential customers.

Ongoing Photo Management

Photos shouldn't be a "set it and forget it" situation. Google favors active profiles.

Best Practice: Add Photos Regularly

- **Goal:** Once per week is ideal, but at minimum, add new photos once per month.
- **Why It Matters:** Fresh content helps prove that your business is active, and steady updates can improve engagement and rankings.
- **How to Upload:**
 1. Go to your Google Business Profile.
 2. Click "Photos."

3. Click "Add Photos."
4. Drag and drop your cropped 1200 x 900 images.

If you're already taking photos of your work, just build the habit of uploading one or two regularly.

Managing GBP Q&As

The Q&A section of your GBP can be a powerful way to educate potential customers and build authority—if you use it right.

How It Works:

- You can ask and answer your own questions.
- Others can ask questions, too—always respond promptly.

Tips for Q&A:

- Don't keyword-stuff. Make it natural.
- Think like a potential customer. Ask real, helpful questions such as:
 - "How long does it take to get my roof replaced?"
 - "Do you offer weekend appointments?"
- After posting, you can immediately post the answer yourself.
- Upvote (thumbs-up) your Q&As to boost visibility.

Q&A Frequency:

Treat this like a content opportunity. Try adding one new Q&A per month, especially as common questions come up from customers.

Today's Action Items

1. **Double-check your GBP photos:** Are your logo and cover photo the right dimensions? Is your branding clear?
2. **Upload at least 3 recent photos:** Bonus if they're from this week.
3. **Write and answer 1–3 Q&As:** Focus on common client concerns.
4. **Set a reminder to repeat this monthly.**

Keeping your GBP photos and Q&As fresh not only strengthens your local presence—it also shows Google (and your audience) that you're active, engaged, and trustworthy.

Let's keep that profile looking sharp and relevant! But now it's time to learn how to rank higher!

Day 19: What is Authority and Why Does it Matter?

Welcome to Day 19 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we're introducing a crucial topic in local SEO: Authority. Understanding and improving your site's authority is vital for ranking higher in local searches and driving more business to your website.

1. What is Authority?

Authority in SEO primarily refers to the quality and quantity of backlinks pointing to your website from other websites. Simply put, a backlink is a link from one website to another. Not all backlinks are created equal—there are different kinds with varying quality levels, especially relevant to local SEO:

- **High-Quality Links:** Links from highly authoritative local and industry-specific websites (like prominent local directories, local media outlets, or well-known industry platforms).
- **Medium-Quality Links:** General citation directories or less prominent local sites.
- **Low-Quality Links:** Easy-to-acquire backlinks that have lower authority and relevance.

Throughout most of Week 4, we'll dive deeper into the different types of backlinks and how to strategically build them to enhance your local SEO.

2. Why Does Authority Matter?

Authority matters because it's a critical factor Google uses to rank websites in search results. Websites with higher authority typically outrank their competitors because Google views them as more credible and trustworthy.

If you want to rank higher, you need more authority. Higher rankings typically translate into:

- Increased visibility
- More organic traffic
- More leads and conversions for your business

In other words, improving your authority can have a direct impact on your business success.

3. How Much Authority You Need Depends on the Competition

The amount of authority your website requires to achieve strong rankings varies significantly depending on your local competition. If your competitors have strong backlink profiles, you'll need to match or exceed their authority to rank above them.

On the bonus day ([Day 31](#)), we'll specifically address how to evaluate your competition and estimate how long it might take to see significant local SEO results based on your authority and competitive landscape.

Action Steps for Today:

1. **Understand Your Current Authority**
 - Go to Semrush and use their Domain Overview tool to note what your Authority Score is.
2. **Identify Your Competition**
 - Check the SERPs (search engine results pages) for your competition. Check their authority scores in Semrush (remember, you get 10 free actions per day). Now, [check day 31](#) and see how far off you are from your competitors!
3. **Prepare for Week 4**
 - Begin thinking about potential sources for quality backlinks in your local and industry context.

Conclusion

Authority is a cornerstone of local SEO success. Understanding its importance, recognizing your current position, and knowing your competitive landscape sets the stage for the upcoming backlink strategies in Week 4.

Get ready to build your authority and watch your local rankings soar!

Day 20: Location Pages (Version 1)

Welcome to Day 20 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today we're going to start building out **location pages**, one of the most overlooked but highest-impact tactics in local SEO—especially for service area businesses.

What Are Location Pages?

A location page is a page on your website that targets a **city or town you serve**, even if you're not physically located there. Let's say your business is based in Bend, Oregon—but you also serve nearby towns like Redmond or Sisters. A location page lets you tell Google (and potential customers) that you serve that area too.

Think of it this way: if someone in Redmond searches for “Electrician Redmond Oregon,” and your website only mentions Bend, you’re probably not showing up. That’s a missed opportunity.

Why Location Pages Work

- They expand your **visibility beyond your main city**.
- They target **lower-competition areas**—smaller cities are often easier to rank in.
- They support your **main service area** by building out your topical and geographic authority.
- Real results: Agencies and contractors we work with often start ranking in new areas **within weeks** of launching these.

Even better—location pages can bring in clients before your main city starts ranking well. We've had clients land real jobs just by ranking in a nearby suburb first.

How to Make a V1 Location Page

You don't need to overthink this—today's goal is to launch your **version one (V1)** location pages. You'll come back to polish them later (we'll talk about that in a future day).

Use Your Existing Service Page as a Template

Take your best-performing **service page**, copy it, and follow this checklist:

- **Update the SEO Title, Meta Description, and URL**
Include the new target city (e.g., /seo-redmond-oregon)

- **Update the H1**
Example: “Local SEO Services in Redmond, Oregon”
- **Swap Out Mentions of Your Main City**
Anywhere your original city (e.g., Bend) is mentioned, replace it with the new one (e.g., Redmond).
- **Tweak Testimonials, Images, or Project Examples**
If you’ve worked in that location, highlight that. If not, it’s okay to leave them as-is for now.
- **Check Your Visuals and Brand References**
If your logo or image references your main city, decide whether to keep it, replace it, or just hide it for now.

Tips for Success

- Start small: One location page per week is plenty.
- Stay within a **2-hour drive radius** of your home base.
- Use **Google Search Console** to submit the new page for indexing after publishing.
- Don’t clone and mass-produce. Aim for **quality over quantity**.

And remember: if you see traction from these V1 pages, we’ll be revamping them into stronger [V2 versions soon](#).

What’s Next?

Once you’ve published your first location page:

- Add it to your navigation or internal link structure where relevant.
- Watch how it performs in Google Search Console.
- Space these pages out—**don’t publish a dozen at once**.

We’ll revisit and upgrade these pages later, but today is about **shipping**. Imperfect and live beats perfect and in drafts.

Your Task Today: Pick one nearby city and publish your first V1 location page using your service page as a template. See you tomorrow for Day 21.

Day 21: Reviewing What Matters Most for Local SEO

Welcome to Day 20 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! We set up all of our tracking back on [Day 5](#). Now it's time to actually use that data. This isn't a deep-dive into every report—this is a quick local SEO health check to make sure we're moving in the right direction.

Today, you'll walk through six checkpoints that show whether or not your SEO efforts are working.

1. Keyword Tracking: Are Rankings Improving?

Start with your rank tracking tool—**SERPFox**, **Semrush**, or whatever you set up on Day 5.

- Are your tracked keywords **moving up**?
- Are you **ranking for the right terms** (the ones you want to be found for)?
- Are you starting to show up in **nearby areas** or variations of your keywords?

Remember: if the keywords are flat or dropping, that's not always a red flag—but it is worth looking into.

2. Google Search Console: Impressions + Clicks

Head over to **Google Search Console** and open the **Performance** report.

- Are your **impressions** (views in Google Search) increasing over time?
- Are your **clicks** increasing as well?
- Are you seeing growth in **relevant queries**—the keywords that actually matter to your business?

You can also compare performance across different time periods to spot trends.

3. GA4: Track Your Organic Traffic

In **Google Analytics 4**, go to:

Reports → Acquisition → Traffic Acquisition

Then, look at:

- **Organic traffic** (sessions from Google)
- **Top landing pages** from organic search

Keep in mind, **traffic will fluctuate** due to seasonality, referrals, and random stuff. But you still want to make sure:

- Organic is a **growing percentage** of your traffic over time
- Visitors are landing on the pages you've optimized

4. Clarity: How Are People Using the Site?

Pull up **Microsoft Clarity** and watch 3–5 session recordings from organic visitors.

Ask:

- Are they **getting stuck**?
- Is your CTA clear?
- Are they scrolling or bouncing right away?

You can also use **heatmaps** to see what parts of a page are getting the most attention (or none at all).

5. Ahrefs Site Audit: Are There Technical Issues?

Run another **Site Audit** in Ahrefs (or your tool of choice). You're looking for:

- New issues that have popped up
- Pages that might have been deindexed
- Anything you missed back on Day 5

Fixing these won't always result in immediate ranking gains—but letting them pile up can absolutely hurt you long term.

6. Local Map Rankings: Use a GeoGrid Tool

This part is specific to **local pack** results (the map with 3 businesses on top).

Go to **Local Falcon** or a similar GeoGrid tool and run a scan on:

- Your primary service keyword
- A few of your priority service areas

What you're looking for:

- Are you showing up more often in the map pack?
- Are you showing up **closer to the center** of the scan area?

These visual maps show how well your Google Business Profile is performing geographically—super helpful for spotting progress.

Wrap-Up

That's your 6-part check-in:

1. Are rankings improving?
2. Are impressions and clicks rising?
3. Is organic traffic growing?
4. Are users converting or getting stuck?
5. Is your site technically sound?
6. Are you climbing in the map pack?

If things are moving in the right direction, keep going. If something's off, use the data to figure out what to fix. This is how you turn SEO from guessing into decision-making.

This is just one day of the Playbook, but you definitely want to make a habit of checking these metrics and making sure they're trending in the right direction.

Week 3 Summary: Messaging, Reviews, and Strategic Expansion

Week 3 is all about turning your SEO groundwork into *momentum*—by improving how you communicate, building social proof, and expanding your reach through strategic location pages and ongoing review systems.

This week starts with creating compelling, conversion-focused content using the **StoryBrand framework**, continues with dialing in **Google reviews**, analyzing **competitor SERPs**, maintaining an active **GBP presence**, and finishes with your first round of **performance review and data interpretation**.

Day 15: Creating Copy That Converts Using StoryBrand

- **StoryBrand Framework:** Use your BrandScript (from Day 14) to write homepage, service, or location pages that turn visitors into leads.
- **Structure Matters:** Follow the proven narrative structure—problem, guide, plan, success.
- **Tools:** Use the StoryBrand Copywriter GPT to draft your copy.
- **Action Step:** Prompt the GPT with your BrandScript and review the copy for tone and clarity.

Day 16: Review Coaching (How to Get More + Better Google Reviews)

- **Why Reviews Matter:** Google uses review quantity, velocity, and content as ranking factors.
- **Getting Reviews:** Use your review link, follow up politely, and coach clients on what to include.
- **Better Reviews:** Ask for 2–5 sentence reviews that mention the service and location.
- **Action Step:** Use a review request script, and consider QR-coded review cards for in-person collection.

Day 17: Competitor Research in the SERPs

- **Reverse-Engineer What Works:** Look at the top 10 ranking pages for one of your target keywords.
- **Analyze SEO Hotspots:** Use Screaming Frog to pull SEO titles, meta descriptions, H1s, and URLs.
- **Find Patterns:** Are competitors using language or keyword variations you're missing?
- **Action Step:** Make 1–2 smart tweaks to your own page based on this research.

Day 18: GBP Photos and Q&A

- **Photos:** Add your logo, cover photo, and regular image updates to show you're active.
- **Q&A Section:** Ask and answer helpful questions like a potential client would.
- **Routine:** Upload new photos monthly and add Q&As when relevant.
- **Action Step:** Upload at least 3 new photos and write 1–3 new Q&As this week.

Day 19: What is Authority and Why Does It Matter?

- **Authority = Backlinks:** The quality and relevance of backlinks signal trust to Google.
- **Local Authority:** Local and industry-specific links are key.
- **Know Where You Stand:** Use Semrush to check your current authority score and competitors'.
- **Action Step:** Begin thinking about which websites or partners you can get links from in Week 4.

Day 20: Location Pages (Version 1)

- **What They Are:** Pages targeting towns or cities you serve—even if you're not physically located there.
- **Why They Work:** Easier to rank in suburbs or nearby towns, and they expand your reach.
- **V1 Pages:** Use your service page as a template, swap out the city name and SEO hotspots, and launch.
- **Action Step:** Publish one V1 location page targeting a nearby city or service area.

Day 21: Reviewing What Matters Most for Local SEO

- **Check Your Progress:** Use the tools from Day 5 to do a 6-part check-in.
 1. Are keyword rankings improving?
 2. Are impressions and clicks rising in GSC?
 3. Is organic traffic growing in GA4?
 4. Are users converting or bouncing (Clarity)?
 5. Is your site healthy (Ahrefs)?
 6. Are you climbing in the map pack (Local Falcon)?
- **Action Step:** Run through your tracking setup and spot areas for improvement or celebration.

Conclusion

This week you transformed your foundational work into strategic execution. You're not just checking boxes—you're building a system. Week 4 is where things get even more strategic as we tackle authority, backlinks, and scaling your local presence with intent.

Let's keep the momentum going.



Feel free to [reach out](#) (yes, that's *still* my email) if you have any questions or need further assistance. Let's make your Local SEO journey a success! 💪

Remember, you can always get a [FREE SEO Strategy video](#) to help you get unstuck!!

Now, let's move on to Week 4...

Day 22: Backlink Strategy and Tiered Link Building

Welcome to **Day 22** of your **30-Day Local SEO Playbook**. Today, we're laying the foundation for a structured **backlink strategy** by breaking down different tiers of links and how to incorporate them over time. A strong backlink profile doesn't happen overnight - it requires a mix of **high-authority links** and **lower-tier links** to get you the SEO juice you need.

Understanding how to strategically acquire backlinks at different stages of a campaign will ensure that your link-building efforts look natural and contribute to **long-term ranking growth**.

1. Why Do Backlinks Even Matter?

Ever wondered why one site ranks higher than the other on a Google search result? Well, that's exactly what "authority" is for. In the early days, authority was built through the *quantity* of backlinks - which are other websites pointing to your website. Nowadays, the algorithm is more sophisticated and it's about the *quality* of backlinks.

Now, it's important to get higher quality and lower quality backlinks because this is *natural*. If you weren't hunting for backlinks, you'd get all sorts of different links, not just the best of the best (or the spammiest of the spammy).

Note that there are such things as TOXIC backlinks. This is why it's generally not a good idea to buy backlinks from freelance services like Fiverr or Upwork. It's very easy to obtain spammy backlinks, but undoing the damage they cause is very difficult (or even impossible).

If you follow the directions over the next few days, you will be just fine in building authority for your small business' website and start ranking higher in no time!!

2. Understanding the Backlink Tiers

Not all backlinks are created equal. The best approach is to use a tiered structure that balances **authority, relevance, and volume**. Here's a breakdown of the five backlink tiers:

1. **Premier-Grade Backlinks** – These are the highest-quality backlinks from **trusted, high-authority sources**. There are usually only a few of these that you can get.
2. **Top-Grade Backlinks** – High-quality links that are showing up in the SERPs. Generally, there are about 10 or so of these.
3. **Mid-Grade Backlinks** – These are the higher quality links from a citation building service, like BrightLocal. These can also be competitor backlinks that carry authority.
4. **Low-Grade Backlinks** – These are the lower quality links from a citation building service, like BrightLocal.

5. **Trash-Grade Backlinks** – These are competitor backlinks that don't carry much authority.

A successful backlink strategy **combines different tiers**, but spreading them out over time to create a natural-looking link profile.

3. Building a Balanced Backlink Strategy

I think it makes the most sense to roll out backlinks in a unique fashion. Many people will tell you to get the best links first and then work your way down.

I think this is wrong.

I like to make a list of all the links that should be easy to get - we'll talk about what that means in a few days - and then work our way down the list by getting a few higher authority, some middle authority, and a handful of lower authority links. The lower the quality, the more links that will be available. So save those higher quality links.

If you're a small business owner, then I'd recommend spacing out your link building to be about once per week. It should only take you about 20-90 minutes per session depending on how many links you shoot for (usually 10 or fewer) and how hard the sites are to add your business to.

By the way, remember that this is the *local SEO* playbook. So, the vast majority of these links are just going to be directories. It's gross, but it's true. Just get used to it!

3. Conclusion

Building backlinks is a long-term process, and the key to success is **consistency and balance**. By strategically mixing different backlink tiers over time, you can create a **natural and sustainable link profile** that improves your site's authority without raising red flags.

Instead of focusing only on the highest-quality links upfront, this structured approach allows you to build momentum gradually, reinforcing your rankings in a way that appears organic to search engines.

Over the next few days, we'll dive deeper into **specific types of links within each tier**, helping you prioritize which ones to secure first and how to implement this strategy effectively. Stick with the process, and soon enough, you'll have a **stronger, more authoritative website** that stands out in local search results.

Day 23: Premier-Grade Backlinks

Welcome to Day 23 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook. Yesterday, we introduced the **tiered backlink strategy**, breaking down the different types of backlinks and how to balance them over time. Today, we're focusing on the **highest-value links** you can acquire: **Premier-Grade Backlinks**.

These links carry the most authority, and while they are not always easy to obtain, they can **significantly impact your rankings**. A single **Premier-Grade backlink** can often be more valuable than dozens of lower-quality links. However, they require **effort, strategy, and persistence** to secure.

1. What Are Premier-Grade Backlinks?

Premier-Grade Backlinks come from **trusted, high-authority local and industry sources** and signal to search engines that your website is legitimate and authoritative. These links are typically from:

- **Local Publications**
- **Chambers of Commerce**
- **High-Authority Industry-Specific Directories**
- **Well-Established Local Business Associations**

These links are difficult to obtain **quickly** but are incredibly valuable because they carry **high domain authority** and **relevance**.

2. Prioritizing Premier-Grade Links Early

Since Premier-Grade links are **limited in number**, they should be pursued **early in your SEO campaign** but **acquired gradually** over time. Unlike lower-tier backlinks, these links require outreach, networking, and sometimes even financial investment.

How to Approach Premier-Grade Link Building

1. **Start with Easy Wins** – If your business is already a member of a **Chamber of Commerce** or an **industry directory**, claim and optimize those listings *immediately*.
2. **Build Relationships** – Securing links from **local publications** often requires relationship-building, networking, or PR efforts.
3. **Save Some for Later** – If you have multiple opportunities, stagger them over time to maintain a natural link-building pattern.

3. How to Get Premier-Grade Backlinks

Below are some of the best sources for **Premier-Grade Backlinks** and actionable steps to secure them.

A. Local Publications & News Outlets

Local news websites often have **strong domain authority** and provide high-value backlinks when they **mention or feature your business**.

How to Get These Links:

- **Offer Expert Commentary** – Reach out to reporters or journalists and offer to provide **expert insights** related to your industry.
- **Submit a Press Release** – If your business is launching a new service, hosting an event, or achieving a milestone, write a press release and send it to local news outlets.
- **Sponsor Local Events** – Many local publications will include backlinks when covering sponsored events - but check for the longevity of this link.

B. Chamber of Commerce & Business Associations

Many **local Chambers of Commerce** have directories that allow businesses to be listed with a **backlink**. These links are **highly relevant and authoritative** in local SEO.

How to Get These Links:

- **Check if Your Business Qualifies** – If you're already a Chamber of Commerce member, claim your **directory listing** and ensure it includes a **website link**.
- **Join If Necessary** – If not a member, evaluate the membership fee. Some chambers have **free or affordable options** for small businesses.
- **Look Beyond Your City** – Consider state-level, nearby cities, or regional business associations that offer directory listings.

C. Industry-Specific Directories

Certain industries have **must-have directories** that serve as **authoritative sources**. Being listed on these platforms **improves credibility and visibility**.

Examples of High-Authority Industry Directories:

- **Lawyers** → [Avvo](#)
- **Doctors/Therapists** → [Healthgrades](#), [Psychology Today](#)
- **Home Service Businesses** → [Angie's List \(Angi\)](#)
- **General Businesses** → [Better Business Bureau \(BBB\)](#)

How to Get These Links:

- **Search for Your Industry's Top Directories** – Google “[your industry] directory” and check the **first-page results**.
- **Check Competitor Backlinks** – Use **Semrush or Ahrefs** to find which directories competitors are listed on.
- **Prioritize Paid Directories That Matter** – Some directories require a **monthly fee (\$30-\$50)**. If competitors are listed, it’s often worth it.

4. Rolling Out Premier-Grade Links Over Time

Because these links take effort to secure, **timing matters**. You don’t want to acquire all of your Premier-Grade links in the first month and then have none left to build later. Do your best to roll these out over time.

Remember, this approach keeps your **backlink profile natural** and ensures **steady authority growth**.

5. Next Steps

Today, your goal is to start **identifying and securing Premier-Grade backlinks** for your business.

Action Items:

1. **Make a list of Premier-Grade backlink opportunities.**
 - Check for **local directories, Chambers of Commerce, and industry-specific directories**.
2. **Claim and optimize at least one existing listing.**
3. **Begin outreach for a local publication or industry directory placement.**
4. **Look into local sponsorships or partnerships that could result in a backlink.**

In the next lesson (**Day 24**), we’ll dive into **Top-Grade Backlinks**, which are easier to obtain but still carry strong authority. These links help **build on the foundation** set by today’s Premier-Grade links. Stay consistent with this process, and your website’s authority will steadily grow.

Day 24: Top-Grade Backlinks

Welcome to Day 24 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook. Yesterday, we covered **Premier-Grade Backlinks** - the highest-authority links from **local publications, chambers of commerce, and industry-specific directories**. Today, we're moving to the next level: **Top-Grade Backlinks**.

These are still **high-value links**, but they are **more accessible** than Premier-Grade links. Many of these links come from **authoritative directories, niche listicles, and high-ranking industry platforms**. The goal is to **identify the best ones in your industry and secure listings over time**.

1. What Are Top-Grade Backlinks?

Top-Grade Backlinks come from **high-authority websites that consistently appear in search results** for industry-related searches. These sites often rank for “**best [industry] in [city]**” or other list-based queries.

Examples of **Top-Grade Backlink Sources**:

- **Industry-Specific Directories** that rank well in search results (e.g., Healthgrades for naturopaths, Avvo for lawyers).
- **High-Ranking Listicles** that feature "Top X [Service Providers] in [City]" and similar articles.
- **Specialized Review or Referral Sites** that filter businesses based on expertise and location.

Unlike Premier-Grade backlinks, these links are **often paid or require manual submission**. While not as authoritative as Premier-Grade links, **they still pass strong SEO signals** and help build credibility.

2. Finding Top-Grade Backlinks in Search Results

The best way to identify **Top-Grade Backlinks** is by searching **Google SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages)** and checking the first 10 pages.

Search for Industry-Specific Directories

Search “[your service] in [city]” and look at the first 10 pages

Example:

For a **therapist in Chicago**, a Google search for “**Best therapists in Chicago**” might return results from:

- **Psychology Today** (Premier-Grade)
- **Good Therapy** (Top-Grade)
- **Healthgrades** (Top-Grade)
- **Therapy Tribe** (Top-Grade)

Each of these **Top-Grade directories and listicles** becomes a backlink opportunity.

3. How to Get Top-Grade Backlinks

A. Industry-Specific Directories

Many industries have **high-ranking directories** that aren't quite Premier-Grade but still carry significant authority.

How to Secure These Links:

- **Check the Sign-Up Process** – Some allow free listings, while others charge a fee (\$30–\$50 per month is common).
- **Prioritize High-Traffic Directories** – Use **SEMrush** to check if the directory has good organic traffic and domain authority.
- **Claim or Create Your Profile** – Fill out all details, including website, service descriptions, and images.

Example Directories for Different Niches:

- **Therapists** → Good Therapy, Therapy Tribe, Mental Health Match
- **Lawyers** → Justia, FindLaw, Martindale
- **Home Services** → Houzz, Porch, HomeAdvisor

B. High-Ranking Listicles & Review Sites

Many **high-ranking pages feature “Top X” lists** that potential customers use to **find services**. These sites often allow **business submissions** or charge for placement.

How to Get Listed on These Sites:

- **Check for an Application Process** – Look for “**Get Listed**” or “**Submit Your Business**” links.
- **Reach Out If Necessary** – Some listicle sites require manual outreach to **ask for inclusion**.
- **Consider Paid Placement If Worth It** – Some high-ranking listicles offer **paid placements**; evaluate whether the exposure is worth the cost.

Example:

- If **Healthgrades** ranks for “Best Chiropractors in Seattle,” a chiropractor should **claim their listing**.

4. Evaluating Paid Top-Grade Backlinks

Many **Top-Grade backlinks require a fee** (e.g., \$30-\$50 per month). Here’s how to decide if they’re worth it:

- **Check the Authority Score** (Semrush/Ahrefs) – If **Domain Authority is 40+**, it’s likely valuable.
- **Check Traffic Trends** – If a site **ranks well and gets traffic**, it’s more beneficial.
- **Prioritize ROI** – If your client can **get leads from the listing**, it’s even more worthwhile.

If a directory is **high-ranking but costs \$30/month**, it’s often a **smart investment**. However, if a site has **low traffic and charges a fee**, it’s better to **focus on free opportunities first**.

5. Rolling Out Top-Grade Links Over Time

Top-Grade backlinks should be **spread out over the course of your campaign**, just like Premier-Grade links. You might be able to do 1-2 per link building day - make sure you spread these out.

This **gradual approach** helps build **natural authority** and prevents **unnatural backlink spikes**.

6. Next Steps

Today’s focus is to **identify and secure your first Top-Grade backlinks**.

Action Items:

1. **Search Google for “best [service] in [city]”** and note **high-ranking directories and listicles**.
2. **Check for “Get Listed” or “Submit Your Business” options** on each site.
3. **Claim free listings immediately** and **create a prioritized list** of paid opportunities.
4. **Evaluate paid directory options** based on **authority score and potential ROI**.

Tomorrow (**Day 27**), we’ll move to **Citation Backlinks**, which are easier to acquire but still essential for **building a well-rounded backlink profile**. These links help add **volume and diversity**, reinforcing the **authority signals** built with Premier- and Top-Grade links.

By staying consistent with this approach, your **local SEO rankings will steadily improve** over time.

Day 25: Location Pages (Version 2)

By now, you've hopefully launched at least a few **V1 location pages** (if not, [go back to Day 20](#)). Today is about taking those pages from "good enough to launch" to "designed to rank and convert." We're creating **Version 2 (V2)** location pages.

Why V2 Matters

Most V1 pages are minimal tweaks: change the city name, swap out some keywords, publish, and move on. That's enough to start getting traction.

But if a page is already ranking — or getting close — it's worth investing more time to improve **relevance, trust, and conversion** for that specific location. That's where V2 comes in.

3 Ways to Upgrade Your Location Page

Each of these elements makes your page more personalized, more helpful to searchers, and more competitive in Google's eyes.

1. Add a Featured Project or Condition Section

Show that you've **actually worked** in that city or with a relevant client type.

For contractors or home service businesses:

- Add a "**Recent Project in [City]**" section.
- Include photos, what was done, and where (neighborhood/landmark).
- Keep it short and to the point — don't overexplain.

For holistic practitioners or coaches:

- Add a "**Featured Condition**" or case study format.
- Explain how you helped someone with a specific issue, in or near the city.

The goal: Create a sense of **local connection** while keeping it aligned with the StoryBrand framework. You're still the guide solving the hero's (client's) problem — you're just doing it *there*.

2. Add Location-Specific Testimonials

This one builds trust fast.

If you've got a review from someone in the city or neighborhood you're targeting, **feature it here**. If not, reach out to a happy client and say:

"Hey, we're updating our website and building out our [City] page. If you'd be willing to leave a quick review mentioning the service you got and that it was in [City], it would help a ton."

Even just **one or two location-specific testimonials** can give your page a credibility boost that a general service page won't have.

3. Add a Custom FAQ Section

Your goal is to answer real questions your potential clients are asking — especially ones tied to the **service** you're offering in that **location**.

Not sure what to write? Open ChatGPT and say:

"Give me 5 FAQs for a [service] business serving [city]."

Use those as a starting point, tweak the answers based on your actual process, and have your client (or yourself) approve the final wording.

This section helps with:

- **User experience** (people love skimming FAQs)
- **Keyword relevance** (you'll naturally repeat the city + service)
- **Conversion rate** (it answers objections before they're voiced)

Don't Forget

- You don't have to do all of this today for every page. Pick **one location page** that's performing well or has potential and make it your V2.
- Save the others for future sprints.
- After updating, **resubmit the URL in Google Search Console** to get it re-indexed faster.

Your Task Today:

Pick a high-potential location page and:

- Add a Featured Project or Condition section
- Add at least one location-specific testimonial
- Add a short FAQ section tailored to the service

That's it. Small changes that make a **big difference**. And remember: **roll these out slowly and naturally - DON'T DO EVERY PAGE IN ONE DAY!!**

We'll continue strengthening your authority tomorrow—see you on Day 26.

Day 26: What's NOT Working in Local SEO Right Now

Welcome to Day 26 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! By now, you've learned a ton about what works—but today, let's look at the other side of the coin.

If you've ever been burned by an SEO agency—or just skeptical of their promises—you're not alone. A lot of outdated strategies and shady tactics are still being sold to business owners like they're cutting-edge. This lesson is about *what to avoid* so you don't waste money or fall for a "strategy" that leads nowhere.

Here are the **4 Local SEO “Scams” or Dead Strategies** that are still making the rounds:

1. Blog-Heavy Strategies That Ignore Local Intent

Blogs can be useful for national SEO or building topical authority *eventually*. But if you're a local business trying to get clients *now*, they are not the best place to start.

Why It Doesn't Work:

- Blog posts often rank for broad, informational queries that don't convert.
- You might see increased impressions or traffic—but that traffic isn't local and won't turn into leads.
- Agencies love this because it makes monthly reports look good with inflated numbers (vanity metrics).

What to Do Instead: Focus on your “**money pages**” first—your homepage, service pages, and location pages targeting “[service] in [city].” Get those ranking before you think about blogging.

2. Overemphasis on Citations and NAP Matching

Citations (like Yellow Pages or MapQuest listings) used to be huge for local SEO—but their importance has dropped significantly in recent years.

The Problem:

- Many SEO companies still push citation-building as their *main* tactic.
- The logic is outdated: Google is much better at understanding minor formatting differences (like “St.” vs. “Street”).
- It's fine to have accurate citations—but they aren't enough on their own.

What to Do Instead: Use citation tools (like BrightLocal or Whitespark) to build **a basic foundation**, but then shift your energy to building real authority through locally and industry-relevant backlinks.

3. Guaranteed SEO Results

Let's be blunt: **if someone guarantees SEO results, they're lying**—or they're betting on your lack of SEO knowledge.

The Red Flag:

- No one knows exactly how the algorithm works—not even people who work at Google.
- Guaranteed rankings are either backed by vague timelines or shady metrics.
- "Pay on results" SEO often comes with unclear terms or bait-and-switch tactics.

What to Do Instead: Work with providers who follow proven frameworks, explain what they're doing and *why*, and show real signs of progress (rankings, impressions, traffic, and conversions). Transparency > empty promises.

4. CTR Manipulation (Click-Through Rate “Boosting”)

This one's trending in YouTube ads right now. It sounds promising: "We'll get you ranking higher without touching your site—just by getting people to click on your GBP!"

Here's the truth:

- CTR manipulation (especially with bots) can give a short-term boost.
- Even real-user tests (like Joy Hawkins' research) show gains that *don't last*.
- It tricks you into signing up, but the bump fades—and then they either ask for more money or switch to another strategy.

What to Do Instead: Earn engagement the right way: keep your GBP active with real reviews, photos, Q&As, and local authority building.

Your Takeaway Today

SEO isn't magic—and it's not supposed to be a mystery. If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Real results come from: targeting the right pages, building authority over time, focusing on user intent (and location intent), avoiding shortcuts that fizzle out fast.

If you're currently working with an SEO agency or freelancer, revisit their strategy today. Are they focusing on blogs, citations, or vanity metrics? Are they making bold promises? Do you feel unclear about what's actually being done?

Now's your chance to spot the BS, ask better questions, and realign your strategy with what actually works.

Tomorrow, we'll talk more about **finding backlink opportunities**—because that's the part of local SEO that *does* still move the needle. See you then.

Day 27: Citation Backlinks

Welcome to Day 27 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook. Over the past few days, we've covered **Premier-Grade and Top-Grade backlinks**, which provide strong authority and relevance. Now, we're moving into a **different category** of link-building: **Citation Backlinks**.

Citation backlinks have traditionally been a **core component of local SEO**, but their impact has **declined** in recent years. However, they **still play a role** in building trust and reinforcing **NAP (Name, Address, Phone Number) consistency** across the web. The key to **doing citations right** is knowing how to **layer them strategically** so they support your high-authority backlinks.

To **maximize effectiveness**, we will roll out citation links in **two waves**—a **first round** that mixes **high and low-authority directories** and a **second round** that fills in the remaining gaps.

1. Why Citation Backlinks Still Matter

Citations are listings on **online directories** that include your business's **name, address, phone number, and website (NAP+W)**.

While citations **alone** won't skyrocket rankings, they:

- **Reinforce legitimacy** by ensuring your business information is consistent across the web.
- **Support local SEO signals** for Google Business Profile rankings.
- **Provide additional backlinks**, which - while not always dofollow - still contribute to link diversity.

How Citation Links Fit Into Our Strategy

- They are **NOT high-authority backlinks** like Premier-Grade links.
- They are **NOT as impactful as Top-Grade links**, but they provide baseline credibility.
- They are **NOT spammy links**, as long as they come from real business directories.

Because citations **still hold some weight**, we will **spread them out over two waves** rather than dumping them all at once.

2. The Two-Wave Citation Strategy

Rather than submitting to **every citation site at once**, we'll take a **staggered approach** to maintain a **natural backlink profile**.

Wave 1: A Mix of High and Low Authority Citations

This **first round** will include:

- **Mid-Grade Backlinks:** Some of the strongest citation sources (Authority Score 50+, according to a tool like BrightLocal)
- **Low-Grade Backlinks:** A handful of lower-quality, but still relevant citations (Authority Score 10-49)

The goal here is to **get listed on the most important directories early** while mixing in **some lower-quality links** to create a **natural distribution**.

Wave 2: Remaining High and Low Authority Citations

After the first campaign completes (about 40 days), we will go back and:

- **Complete additional high-authority citation listings** we skipped in Wave 1.
- **Fill in remaining lower-authority citations** to continue building diversity.

By splitting citations into two waves, we avoid the common mistake of **front-loading all citations at once**, which can look unnatural.

3. How to Get Citation Backlinks

There are **two ways** to build citation links:

1. **Manual Submissions (DIY Approach)** – You go to each directory and submit your business manually. This is **time-consuming** but **cost-effective**.
2. **Automated Submission Services** – Platforms like **BrightLocal** and **Whitespark** handle submissions for a fee. This is **faster** but **costs around \$125 per batch**.

If you **have the time**, manual submissions **save money**. If you **value efficiency**, using a service **saves effort**.

4. Should You Use a Citation Service?

Using a **service like BrightLocal or Whitespark** simplifies the process. However, before purchasing:

- **Decide if you want manual control or automation.**
- **Consider cost vs. time spent.** BrightLocal charges **\$110-\$150 per batch**, but that might save **5-10 hours of work**.

- **Check for duplicate listings.** Services can **find and fix duplicates** to avoid NAP inconsistencies which are generally NOT NEEDED ANYMORE. However, if the business has changed physical locations over time, it might be worth paying extra for this.
- For businesses **with limited time**, it's often worth **outsourcing citations** to free up focus for **higher-impact SEO efforts**.

5. Next Steps

Today's goal is to **kick off Wave 1 of citation building**.

Action Items:

1. **Identify citation sites for Wave 1.**
2. **Decide if you will use a manual or service-based approach.**
3. **Kickoff your first Wave of citation building.**
4. **Schedule Wave 2 submissions for ~6 weeks from now.**

Tomorrow (**Day 28**), we'll discuss **Competitor Backlinks**, which include more **generic citations and secondary directories**. These links help **round out your profile** without being the main focus of your SEO efforts.

By maintaining a **tiered and structured approach**, your **citation-building efforts will support your overall backlink strategy**, ensuring steady ranking improvements over time.

Day 28: Competitor Backlinks

Welcome to Day 28 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook. Yesterday, we covered **Citation Backlinks**, which are foundational for local SEO, as well as higher-tier links like **Premier-Grade** and **Top-Grade backlinks**. Today, we're diving into **Competitor Backlinks**—one of the most underrated but **useful** ways to find new linking opportunities.

Most of the backlinks you find through competitor research will be **low-value or even trash links**, but **some will be hidden gems**. The goal isn't to copy everything competitors have but rather to **identify worthwhile links** that are attainable and sprinkle them into your link-building efforts.

1. What Are Competitor Backlinks?

Competitor backlinks are **any links that point to your competitors' websites**. By analyzing these, we can:

- **Find high-quality opportunities** competitors have already secured.
- **Discover unique local or industry links** you might have missed.
- **Identify patterns** in backlink strategies within your niche.

Some competitor backlinks will be **great additions** to your link-building plan, while others will be **junk links** that aren't worth pursuing. Knowing how to **sort and prioritize these** is key.

2. How to Find Competitor Backlinks

A. Running a Backlink Gap Analysis

A **Backlink Gap Analysis** compares your site's backlink profile against competitors and highlights **sites linking to multiple competitors but not you**.

Steps to Perform a Backlink Gap Analysis

1. **Use Semrush** – This tool allows you to input multiple competitor URLs and compare backlink profiles - if you've been saving your 7-day free trial, use it now ([link](#))
2. **Enter 4 direct competitors** – The more you analyze, the better the results.
3. **Sort by Matches & Authority Score** – Prioritize sites that link to **multiple competitors** (high match count).
4. **Export the List** – Review and organize the backlinks by **priority**.

By focusing on **links that multiple competitors have**, we increase the chance that these are **attainable and valuable**.

B. Expanding Beyond Direct Competitors

To find even more opportunities, **expand your search beyond direct competitors**:

1. **Local Competitors** – Businesses in your city that offer the same services.
2. **Industry Competitors in Larger Markets** – Look at businesses in bigger cities that likely **invest more in SEO** and may have links local competitors missed.
3. **Similar Businesses in Your Area** – Even if they aren't direct competitors, they may have found **useful local or niche backlinks** you can replicate.

By analyzing these three groups, you **increase the chances of finding high-quality backlinks** that **local competitors haven't discovered yet**.

3. Sorting Competitor Backlinks by Quality

Not all competitor backlinks are created equal. Some will be **high-value**, while others will be **low-quality or even spammy**.

To prioritize links, use the following **sorting method**:

A. High-Priority Competitor Backlinks

- **Backlinks with High Match Scores** – If multiple competitors have a link from the same site, it's worth investigating.
- **Authority Score 20+** – Higher authority backlinks are generally more valuable.

B. Mid-Tier Competitor Backlinks

- **Lower Match Scores (2-3 competitors)** – These links may still be valuable, but they are less common.
- **Authority Score 10-19** – These are still okay, but they shouldn't be a priority.
- **Niche-Specific Sites** – If a site is **relevant to your industry**, it may still be worth acquiring even if it has a lower authority score.

C. Low-Value Competitor Backlinks (Low or Trash Links)

- **Authority Score Below 10** – These backlinks provide little value, but still might be nice to sprinkle in.
- **Only Linked to One Competitor** – If a backlink is unique to one competitor and has low authority, it may not be worth replicating.
- **Spammy Directories & Blog Comments** – If the link looks **low effort or irrelevant**, avoid it.

These **low-value links** aren't completely useless—they can **help diversify your backlink profile**, but they **shouldn't be a priority**.

4. When to Use Competitor Backlinks in Your Link-Building Plan

Since most competitor backlinks aren't high-authority, you don't want to **rely on them entirely**. Instead, you should **sprinkle them in** throughout your overall backlink-building efforts.

How to Use Competitor Backlinks Strategically

- **Start with High-Match, High-Authority Links** – Prioritize local and industry-relevant links found in the Backlink Gap Analysis.
- **Mix in Mid-Tier Links** – These help **build out your link diversity**.
- **Occasionally Add Low-Value Links** – To make your link profile appear more natural, include a few low-quality backlinks over time.

A **good distribution** would look something like this:

- **Premier & Top-Grade Backlinks** – 10-20% of total links
- **Citation Backlinks** – 20-30% of total links
- **Competitor Backlinks** – 10-20% of total links
- **Low-Grade & Miscellaneous Links** – 20-40% of total links

This keeps your **backlink profile balanced** and prevents Google from seeing your **link-building efforts as manipulative**.

5. Next Steps

Your goal today is to **run a competitor backlink analysis** and **identify link opportunities** that fit into your strategy.

Action Items:

1. **Run a Backlink Gap Analysis** using Semrush.
2. **Sort by Matches & Authority Score** to prioritize the best opportunities.
3. **Export a list of competitor backlinks and categorize them into:**
 - **High-Value (Local, Industry, Authority 20+)**
 - **Mid-Tier (Authority 10-19, some relevance)**
 - **Low-Value (Spammy, Authority <10, one-off competitor links)**
4. **Identify 3-5 High-Priority competitor backlinks** to secure this week.
5. **Plan how to sprinkle these links into your broader link-building campaign.**

6. Conclusion

Over the past week, we've built out a **structured backlink strategy** that balances **high-value authority links with supporting links** to create a **natural, effective backlink profile**. We started with **Premier-Grade Backlinks**, securing **top-tier local and industry-specific links** that establish credibility. Then, we added **Top-Grade Backlinks**, focusing on high-ranking directories and listicles found in search results. From there, we introduced **Citation Backlinks**, rolling them out in two waves to reinforce business legitimacy. Today, we rounded out the strategy with **Competitor Backlinks**, identifying links that are attainable and relevant.

The key takeaway is that **backlinks should be built gradually and strategically**. No single link will skyrocket your rankings overnight, but by layering **high-authority links first, sprinkling in mid-grade and citation links**, and **rounding out the profile with competitor and low-grade links**, we create a **balanced and organic link-building approach**.

Next week, we'll close out the 30 Day Local SEO Playbook by mentioning how to review your strategy over time and when to use the b-word in local SEO. Keep building with intention, and your **authority and rankings will continue to grow steadily over time**.

Week 4 Review: Building Local Authority with Backlinks

Week 4 is all about one thing: **authority**. Specifically, how to build it the right way for local SEO using a tiered backlink strategy.

By now, your site has solid foundations—pages are structured, content is focused, and tracking is in place. But to *rank* consistently (especially in competitive markets), you need to start showing Google you’re trustworthy and respected in your niche. That’s where backlinks come in.

This week, you’ll learn how to strategically earn backlinks that actually move the needle. Not all links are created equal, and if you try to shortcut the process, it can backfire. But if you build links steadily and in the right order, you’ll create a profile that boosts your rankings naturally and sustainably.

Day 22: Backlink Strategy and Tiered Link Building

- Learn the importance of building **authority over time** with a mix of high- and low-tier backlinks.
- Break down the five types of backlinks: Premier, Top-Grade, Mid-Grade, Low-Grade, and Trash.
- Understand how to roll them out in a balanced way that looks natural to Google (and actually works).

Action Step: Map out your backlink plan and commit to weekly link-building time.

Day 23: Premier-Grade Backlinks

- These are your **highest-value links**—from local publications, chambers of commerce, and industry-specific sites.
- They take more effort but offer major ranking power.
- Focus on outreach, relationship building, and claiming listings that carry authority and trust.

Action Step: Identify 2–3 Premier-Grade backlink opportunities and begin outreach.

Day 24: Top-Grade Backlinks

- These links still pack a punch and are often **more accessible** than Premier-Grade ones.
- Think “best of” listicles, top directories in your industry, and high-traffic review sites.
- Evaluate paid vs. free opportunities and prioritize based on domain authority and relevance.

Action Step: Secure 1–2 Top-Grade backlinks from industry directories or high-ranking listicles.

Day 25: Location Pages (Version 2)

- Go back to your V1 location pages and **upgrade** them with more trust-building content.
- Add a featured project or condition, a location-specific testimonial, and a short FAQ.
- These small changes dramatically improve rankings and conversions.

Action Step: Pick one location page to upgrade to V2—add relevance, trust, and personality.

Day 26: What's NOT Working in Local SEO Right Now

- Call out the **outdated or scammy strategies** that still get sold to business owners:
 - Blog-heavy SEO without local intent
 - Citation spam
 - Guaranteed rankings
 - CTR manipulation tricks
- Learn how to **spot the red flags** and focus only on tactics that drive real results.

Action Step: Review your current SEO efforts. Are you chasing vanity metrics or actual ROI?

Day 27: Citation Backlinks

- Citations are still useful—but **not in the way they used to be**.
- You'll learn how to roll them out in two waves for a natural-looking link profile.
- Tools like BrightLocal or Whitespark make this easier, but DIY is fine too.

Action Step: Begin Wave 1 of your citation campaign, mixing high and low-authority directories.

Day 28: Competitor Backlinks

- Want quick wins? **Spy on your competitors**.
- Run a backlink gap analysis using Semrush or Ahrefs to find what links they have (that you don't).
- Identify high-value opportunities to sprinkle into your backlink mix.

Action Step: Find 3–5 competitor backlinks you can replicate and add them to your campaign list.

Conclusion

By the end of Week 4, you've created a **strategic, tiered backlink plan** that doesn't rely on shady tactics or overnight hacks. You're building real authority over time—the kind that leads to higher rankings, more traffic, and better leads.

Next week, we'll close things out by revisiting our strategy and seeing *what else* is left for local SEO.



Feel free to [reach out](#) (yes, that's *still* my email) if you have any questions or need further assistance. Let's make your Local SEO journey a success! 💪

Remember, you can always get a [FREE SEO Strategy video](#) to help you get unstuck!!

Now, let's move on to the final days...

Day 29: How to Review an Ongoing SEO Strategy (George's Story)

Welcome to Day 29 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today we're shifting gears a bit. Instead of adding new tactics, we'll look at **how to review and adjust your ongoing SEO strategy**. To do this, I want to share a real-world example—my client, George. His experience will show you exactly how to measure, track, and refine your SEO over time to keep getting results.

George's Starting Point: Invisible on Google

George runs an incredible custom cabinet business called Woodworks by George. He's been mastering his craft for over 20 years, but after moving to a new city, his steady stream of leads dried up. He tried networking and knocking on doors, but it just wasn't enough. When we started working together, his website ranked on the fourth page of Google—essentially invisible to customers.

Here's how we turned it around:

Step 1: Mastering Google Business Profile (GBP)

Your GBP is the foundation of your local SEO strategy. George's GBP was nonexistent at first, so we started there.

How to Review Your GBP Performance:

- Ensure your profile is **fully optimized** (categories, hours, services).
- Verify your **secondary categories** (these boost visibility significantly).
- Check your **reviews**—are you steadily getting new ones, including keywords, services, and locations?
- Monitor your **GBP insights** (views, clicks, calls).

George saw results quickly here—his GBP views skyrocketed by **358% year-over-year**. He began consistently appearing in the local map pack, ranking first for several competitive terms, generating calls regularly.

Pro Tip: Always ask customers for reviews with keywords, locations, and images. It significantly boosts local rankings.

Step 2: Website Structure and Individual Service Pages

After establishing the GBP, we turned to George's website, starting with a well-structured foundation:

- **Homepage:** Clear, engaging, keyword-rich.
- **About Page:** Highlight expertise, trust, and authority.
- **Contact Page:** Easy lead capture.
- **Gallery/Projects Page:** Showcase your best work.
- **Individual Service Pages:** One page per service, specifically optimized for targeted keywords.

Initially, George had pages for custom cabinets, shelving, carpentry, and restoration. After reviewing results, we adjusted our strategy. George told me his highest-value jobs were kitchen and bathroom remodels, so we created and optimized **new service pages specifically for those**.

How to Review Your Website's Performance:

- Use Google Search Console to track rankings and clicks.
- Identify pages that are close to ranking and enhance them with:
 - **Featured projects** (highlight local neighborhoods).
 - **Service-specific testimonials** (build trust).
 - **Targeted keywords** relevant to each service.

This strategy propelled George from the fourth page to consistently ranking among the top four competitors, and often at the top spot—generating substantial leads and projects.

Step 3: Building Authority through Backlinks and Location Pages

George's site reached a plateau around page two of Google results because it lacked domain authority. This is where **backlinks** became crucial.

- **Local and Industry-relevant directories:** Houzz, HomeAdvisor, Yellow Pages, MapQuest.
- **Competitor backlink research:** We strategically secured backlinks competitors already had.

Reviewing Backlink Progress:

- Monitor **domain authority scores** over time (use Semrush or Ahrefs).
- Track rankings improvements correlated with new backlinks.
- Keep an eye on your competitors' backlinks quarterly—are there new opportunities?

We also strategically created location pages. George quickly ranked third for "Custom Cabinets Redmond Oregon" with minimal effort, resulting in immediate leads. Regularly reviewing these pages, even just quarterly, helps you identify quick wins or new cities to target.

Results: \$25,000–\$35,000 Monthly Revenue from SEO Alone

Within 12 months, George went from no leads to consistently earning **\$25,000–\$35,000 monthly** from Google-driven projects alone.

To regularly review your local SEO efforts every month, look at:

- GBP insights (views, clicks, calls)
- Search Console performance (keywords, page rankings)
- Backlink profile (and indirectly, your authority score in tools like Semrush)
- Actual business impact (revenue from leads)

When George's rankings plateaued, we revisited and adjusted. We refined his GBP strategy, targeted new keywords on his site, and strengthened backlinks. This regular review cycle keeps SEO aligned with your goals, allowing you to pivot as needed.

Your Next Step

Today, your task is to create your **monthly SEO review checklist**:

1. GBP performance (rankings, reviews, calls).
2. Website traffic and ranking changes (Search Console).
3. Backlink updates (Semrush or Ahrefs).
4. Actual leads and revenue generated from SEO.

Use this framework monthly, quarterly, and annually to ensure your SEO continually supports your business goals. Just like George, consistent, strategic review helps you go from invisible to thriving.

Tomorrow we wrap up the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook with a final look at the dreaded (but sometimes necessary) "B-word" in local SEO. You've come a long way—keep going!

Day 30: Blogs... It's Finally Time

Congratulations—You've made it to Day 30 of your 30-Day Local SEO Playbook! Today, we'll cover the long-term role blogs and informational content play in your SEO strategy. By now, you understand the quick-win strategies: optimizing your GBP, building service and location pages, and acquiring strategic backlinks. But what about the long haul?

This lesson will explore when and how to integrate informational content into your local SEO game plan, positioning your site for sustained authority and visibility.

Why Long-Term SEO Strategies Matter

SEO isn't a one-and-done project. Like fitness or investing, success in local SEO requires consistent, ongoing effort. While early strategies focus on your money pages—pages directly converting searches into leads—the long-term play involves expanding into informational content.

Informational content:

- Keeps your site relevant and updated.
- Helps rank for broader keyword clusters.
- Acts as a magnet for natural backlinks.
- Establishes your site's long-term authority in your industry.

This isn't a quick fix—it's a long-term strategy evolving through **multiple content sprints** and upgrades, such as the "V2 location pages" we've previously discussed.

Informational Content vs. Money Pages

Your "money pages" target transactional keywords like:

- **"Plumber in [City]"**
- **"Kitchen Remodel [City]"**
- **"Custom Cabinets [City]"**

These drive immediate leads.

Informational keywords, however, address queries customers have **before** making decisions—when they're still researching:

- **"How to choose a plumber in [City]"**
- **"Kitchen remodel ideas"**
- **"Custom cabinet design tips"**

By targeting these informational keywords, you reach customers earlier in the buying journey, building trust and positioning your business as an authority.

Key Point:

Ensure informational pages complement—not compete with—your transactional money pages. These are two distinct keyword intents; structure your content clearly around each.

Building Naturally Linkable Assets

One of the biggest benefits of informational content is creating **naturally linkable assets**. Linkable assets are resources so valuable that other websites naturally link to them, enhancing your site's authority without relying on constant outreach.

Examples include:

- **Cost Estimators:** "Bathroom Remodel Cost Calculator for [City]"
- **Guides:** "The Ultimate Guide to Choosing a Kitchen Remodeler"
- **Checklists:** "Checklist for Hiring a Custom Cabinet Maker"

George's custom cabinetry business, for example, *could* create a detailed guide called "10 Questions to Ask Before Choosing a Cabinet Maker." Such resources attract industry-specific and local backlinks, boosting authority and reinforcing your money pages' rankings.

AI as Your Long-Term Content Ally

Consistently producing high-quality informational content requires resources, but leveraging modern AI models can drastically streamline this process. AI tools can:

- Generate **content outlines** and full drafts for blogs and guides.
- Identify **untapped informational keywords** quickly and effectively.
- Create logic for interactive resources like calculators or quizzes.
- Reduce production costs, enabling ongoing content development.

The modest cost of using AI tools to produce additional content is often well worth it—especially when considering long-term ranking gains.

Putting Your Informational Content into Action (Your Next Steps)

As your initial SEO strategy matures, start implementing this long-term play:

1. **Keyword Research Sprint:**
Identify informational keywords relevant to your business and location.
2. **Create & Cluster Content:**
Develop dedicated informational pages clearly separate from your money pages. Use clustering (related content groups) to build authority around topics, such as kitchen remodeling or custom carpentry tips.
3. **Build Linkable Assets:**
Invest in high-value content like guides, calculators, or checklists. These resources naturally attract backlinks over time.
4. **Regular Content Audits & "V2" Updates:**
Periodically revisit and upgrade content to maintain relevance and capture new keyword opportunities. The concept of "V2 location pages" applies here—improving existing content rather than always creating new pages.
5. **Monitor Performance & Adjust:**
Track your informational pages' rankings, traffic, and backlink growth quarterly. Adjust your content strategy based on actual performance data.

Why Does This All Matter?

When George first started with local SEO, his business urgently needed leads—money pages and initial GBP optimization provided rapid results. But now that George's business is stable and thriving, a long-term informational content strategy will help him:

- Stay competitive over the years.
- Reach customers earlier in the decision-making process.
- Sustain and increase site authority naturally.

Just like George, your business needs a long-term SEO roadmap to thrive—not just survive.

Congratulations!!! You've Completed the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook!

You now have the tools to create both short-term results and a powerful long-term SEO foundation.

Your final action items:

- Identify your first **informational keyword** or topic to target.
- Sketch out your first naturally linkable **asset idea**.
- Decide which **AI tools** you'll leverage to streamline content creation.
Schedule your first **content review session** (within the next quarter).

SEO success isn't about sprinting—it's a steady marathon that pays off exponentially.

You've got this. Here's to sustained, powerful SEO results!

And keep going for a bonus day...

Day 31: How to Estimate Time to Results

[WATCH THE VIDEO FOR DAY 31]

Go to [Semrush](#) (a professional SEO tool) - USE THE FREE VERSION RIGHT NOW!!! You only get 10 actions per day, so use them wisely. [Here is a special 7-day free trial](#) just for you to use to access premium features - we'll use that later!

The screenshot shows the Semrush interface. On the left, a sidebar menu under 'SEO' includes 'SEO Dashboard', 'COMPETITIVE RESEARCH', 'Domain Overview', 'Traffic Analytics', 'Organic Research', 'Keyword Gap', 'Backlink Gap', 'KEYWORD RESEARCH' (which is highlighted in orange), 'Keyword Magic Tool', 'Keyword Strategy Builder', 'Position Tracking', and 'Organic Traffic Insights'. The main content area is titled 'Keyword Overview' with the sub-headline 'Dive into the largest keyword research database on the market and analyze everything you need to know about a keyword.' It features a search bar with 'Keywords (1/100)' containing '1. seo bend oregon', and dropdowns for 'Examples' (loans movies how to buy audible books), 'Country' (US), 'Select location', and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar is an 'AI-powered feature' button. A call-to-action 'Look what you'll get inside' is visible at the bottom.

Type your keyword into the input box for the **Keyword Overview** tool.

"But I don't know my keyword yet!!" Well, then come back to this later when you know this... within a week, you'll know *exactly* what people are searching for on the way to your business. For now just try **service [city] [state]** (or whatever makes sense for your part of the world).

Scroll down to the **SERP Analysis** (btw, SERP stands for Search Engine Results Page... more on that later)

The screenshot shows the SERP Analysis tool. At the top, there are tabs for 'SERP Analysis', 'Domain', and 'URL' (which is selected). To the right are buttons for 'View SERP', 'Export', and 'Get metrics'. Below the tabs, there's a section for 'Results' showing '932.0K' with filters for 'SERP Features' (star, magnifying glass, arrow) and a pagination bar from 1-10 to 91-100. The main content area displays a list of URLs with their SERP snippets. A context menu is open over the first URL, listing options like 'Open Link in New Tab', 'Open Link in New Window', 'Open Link in Incognito Window', 'Open Link as...', 'Save Link As...', and 'Copy Link Address' (which is highlighted in blue). To the right of the list is a sidebar with a 'Get a SERP breakdown analysis' button and a description: 'View up-to-date data on your top 100 competitors, their backlinks, and organic metrics for their positions on the SERP.' There are also buttons for 'Get metrics' and 'Inspect'.

Like I'm doing in the image above, **Copy Link Address** for the top 5 or so pages (you have to do it on the little arrow thing). Paste each one in the **Domain Overview** tool, but get rid of any permalinks (that's the stuff *after .com*). Adjust the location, if needed.

Domain Overview

Get instant insights into strengths and weaknesses of your competitor or prospective customer.

× US Search

Examples: [worldwildlife.org](#) [unicef.org/stories](#) [edition.cnn.com](#)

Domain Overview: thencandesigns.com

Worldwide US UK DE ... Desktop Sep 5, 2024 USD

[Overview](#) [Compare domains](#) [Growth report](#) [Compare by countries](#)

Authority Score
 9

Semrush Domain Rank **2.5M**

Organic Search Traffic
226 -13% [View details](#)

Keywords **117**

Paid Search Traffic

The domain may be new or not ranking right now. To get data on paid traffic, create a Position Tracking campaign.

[Go to Position Tracking](#)

Backlinks
318

Referring Domains **95**

Note the **Authority Score**. For this example, it's 9. Repeat this for the other domains.

For this example it was: 9, 9, 17, 24, 16, 17, 26, 7, 18, 15. With the paid version of Semrush, you can just see all of this data...

SERP Analysis			Domain	URL	View SERP	Export
	Domain AS	Backlinks	Search Traffic			
Average Top 10	15	2.0K	111			
1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70
71-80	81-90	91-100				
Domain	Domain AS	Backlinks	Search Traffic			
1 thencandesigns.com https://thencandesigns.com/seo-bend-oregon/	9	318	210			
2 seoregon.co https://seoregon.co/	9	83	134			
3 conifr.com https://www.conifr.com/	17	126	52			
4 i7marketing.com https://www.i7marketing.com/bend-seo	24	3.2K	289			
5 michaelcottam.com https://www.michaelcottam.com/	16	1.4K	9			
6 intigress.com https://intigress.com/seo	17	1.8K	110			
7 oregonwebsolutions.com https://www.oregonwebsolutions.com/bend-seo/	26	9.5K	228			
8 triggerseo.com https://www.triggerseo.com/	7	71	14			
9 drivenwebservices.com https://www.drivenwebservices.com/bend-seo/	18	2.5K	57			
10 bendcloud.com https://bendcloud.com/search-engine-optimization.html	15	997	16			

What's the average of the top 5 or top 10 results?

What's your website's authority score?

Now, look at this (I'm assuming you're not ranking below and these are *estimates*):

1. My website's AS is higher than the top result by 5+ points
 - a. Ranking should be pretty easy, you probably have to work on telling Google exactly what you do and where you do it
2. My website's AS is around the average AS for the top results
 - a. Ranking may take a little while, but again, you probably just need to work on your relevancy (more on what that means later)
3. My website's AS is 5+, but it's around 5 points lower than the average AS
 - a. Should start seeing good progress in first 3 months
4. My website's AS is 5+, and it's 10+ points lower than the average AS
 - a. Should start seeing good progress around 3-6 months
5. My website's AS is 0-2, and it's 10+ points lower than the average AS
 - a. Should start seeing good progress around 6-12 months

Again, these are estimates. And I just breezed through a ton of topics. You may have no idea what I even did.

But now you can't say I left you with *it depends*.

Are you ready to figure out what the heck all this means, stop worrying about hypotheticals and start getting results?!

Let's go!!

And if you came from Day 1, [click here to jump to Day 2...](#)

Final Days in Review: Long-Term SEO Success and Measuring Results

The final stretch (Days 29–31) is all about turning initial SEO wins into lasting, long-term success. You've laid a solid groundwork—now you'll learn to measure results effectively, refine your strategy, and build authority through high-quality informational content.

Here's what you covered in the final days:

Day 29: Reviewing Your Ongoing SEO Strategy (George's Story)

- Learned how to consistently track and refine your SEO efforts using George's cabinet business as a real-world example.
- Saw how a structured monthly review of your Google Business Profile, website performance, backlinks, and actual revenue helps maintain SEO momentum.
- Understood how regular strategy check-ins helped George move from invisible on Google to generating \$25,000–\$35,000 monthly from SEO alone.

Action Step: Create your monthly SEO review checklist covering GBP insights, website performance, backlink updates, and measurable business results.

Day 30: Blogs and Informational Content (Your Long-Term Strategy)

- Shifted focus from immediate ranking tactics ("money pages") to a long-term strategy that includes informational content like blogs and guides.
- Discovered how targeting informational keywords can reach potential customers earlier in their buying process without competing with your transactional pages.
- Recognized informational content as "naturally linkable assets" (guides, checklists, calculators) that build your site's authority sustainably over time.
- Learned to leverage modern AI tools to streamline high-quality content creation, saving costs and maintaining consistency.

Action Step: Identify your first informational content topic, outline a naturally linkable asset, and schedule your first quarterly content review.

Bonus Day 31: How to Estimate Time to SEO Results

- Gained a practical method for estimating how long it'll take to see meaningful SEO results using the Semrush keyword and domain authority analysis.
- Compared your site's Authority Score (AS) to top competitors to gauge timelines realistically:
 - **Higher AS:** quicker results (under 3 months).
 - **Moderate gap:** expect good progress within 3–6 months.
 - **Large gap:** results may take 6–12 months, but consistent effort pays off.

Action Step: Run a quick competitor authority analysis using Semrush's free tool to set realistic expectations for your ranking progress.

Conclusion

By the end of Days 29–31, you've gone from foundational SEO tactics to a sustainable long-term strategy. You're now equipped to regularly measure, refine, and expand your SEO efforts, positioning your business for lasting growth and authority.

Congratulations on completing the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook—you're ready to achieve consistent, long-term success!



Feel free to [**reach out**](#) (yes, that's *still* my email) if you have any questions or need further assistance. Let's make your Local SEO journey a success! 💪

Remember, you can always get a [**FREE SEO Strategy video**](#) to help you get unstuck!!

Now, let's move on to the final days...

What's Next?

Congrats on completing the **30-Day Local SEO Playbook!** I truly hope it helped clarify local SEO and provided practical steps you can apply to grow your business.

Feedback? Questions? Success Stories?

I'd love to hear from you directly. Let me know your thoughts, results, or any feedback about the 30-Day Local SEO Playbook.

👉 Email me at sam@thencandesigns.com

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👉 [Example SEO Strategy Video](#)

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Thanks again for joining me on this journey—now go crush your local SEO! 🚀

– Sam

