Get Found, Get Chosen.

The Local Business Website Playbook

Your reviews get you noticed. Your website gets you hired.

Word of mouth, Instagram and your Google listing all bring people your way. But before most customers pick up the phone, they check one more thing: your website. Here's why it matters.

54%

Customers check your website before they call.

97% of people read reviews for local businesses. After a good review, the most common next step is visiting the website (54%). Only 34% are ready to book right away.[1]

83%

Your competitors are already online.

83% of small businesses now have a website, up from 64% in 2018.[2] If customers can't find yours, they'll find theirs.

50ms

First impressions happen in a blink.

People size up a website in about 50 milliseconds.[3] In a Stanford study of 2,684 people, a site's design was the #1 thing they mentioned when judging whether to trust it.[4]

It's the only marketing you own.

Social media and directories are rented space. They can change the rules, bury your posts or close your account. Your website is yours.

Real results

From published case studies

- A Minnesota lawn and snow company replaced its outdated website. In about 10 months it brought in **454 leads from Google search**, including 111 in a single month.[5]
- A Seattle carpet cleaner rebuilt its service pages and Google profile. In one year, **monthly visits from Google rose 172%**, and it climbed to #2 for "carpet cleaning bellevue."[6]

Every business is different. These examples show what's possible, not a promise of specific results.

1 BrightLocal, Local Consumer Review Survey 2026 (1,002 U.S. consumers).
2 Clutch, small business website survey, August 2025.
3 Lindgaard et al., Carleton University, "Attention web designers: You have 50 milliseconds to make a good first impression!", Behaviour & Information Technology, 2006.
4 Fogg et al., Stanford Persuasive Technology Lab, "How Do People Evaluate a Web Site's Credibility?", 2002.
5 Accrisoft (ArborSite), "Andy's Lawn & Snow's New Website Brings in 111 New Leads in One Month," Dec. 2024. Organic leads Feb. to Dec. 2024.
6 Pexnet, "Carpet Cleaning SEO Case Study: 172% Organic Growth in 12 Months" (D.A. Burns & Sons), Jan. to Dec. 2025.

7 things your website needs to show up on Google.

Google tries to send people to the business that best matches what they searched for, close to where they are. These seven things help Google see that business is you. Check off what your site already does.

☐	01 A separate page for each service	"Roof repair" and "roof replacement" are different searches. A page for each gives Google a clear match. Local search experts rank this the #1 factor for showing up in local website results.[7]
☐	02 The real cities and neighborhoods you serve	People search "plumber in Vista," not just "plumber." Naming the places you actually work helps you show up there.
☐	03 Every page says what you do and where	Your page titles (the blue headline people click on Google) and headings should name your service and city, like "Mobile Detailing in Oceanside."
☐	04 Name, address and phone that match Google exactly	If your website and Google Business Profile don't match, Google trusts both less. Even small differences count.
☐	05 Built for phones first	Most local searches happen on a phone. Your site should load fast, let people tap to call and keep the contact form short.
☐	06 Real photos, reviews and proof	Stock photos look like everyone else. Photos of your work and team, plus real customer reviews, show people you're the real deal.
☐	07 A fully set up Google Business Profile	The right category, accurate hours and a steady stream of reviews that you reply to. This is what puts you on the map.

⚠ **Common mistakes:** stuffing keywords into your business name, copy-and-paste city pages with only the town name changed, and a phone number on your site that doesn't match Google. Each one can quietly hold you back.

7 Whitespark, Local Search Ranking Factors 2026 (survey of local search experts). Ranked #1 for local organic results.

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