

Maps SEO Master Plan



By David Hood

How Important is Maps SEO Right Now?

For some businesses, it doesn't matter at all...

But, for others it is EVERYTHING when it comes to getting quality organic traffic...

Let's say you've been hired to do an SEO project by a plumber... 🙌

...*EVERY* single search they are interested in ranking for will have a maps listing in it.

Basically, if **the Google Maps 3 Pack** is showing up in the search results for your target keywords, then Maps SEO **MUST** be a part of your overall plan...

...that is, unless you want to ignore the majority of the organic traffic out there...

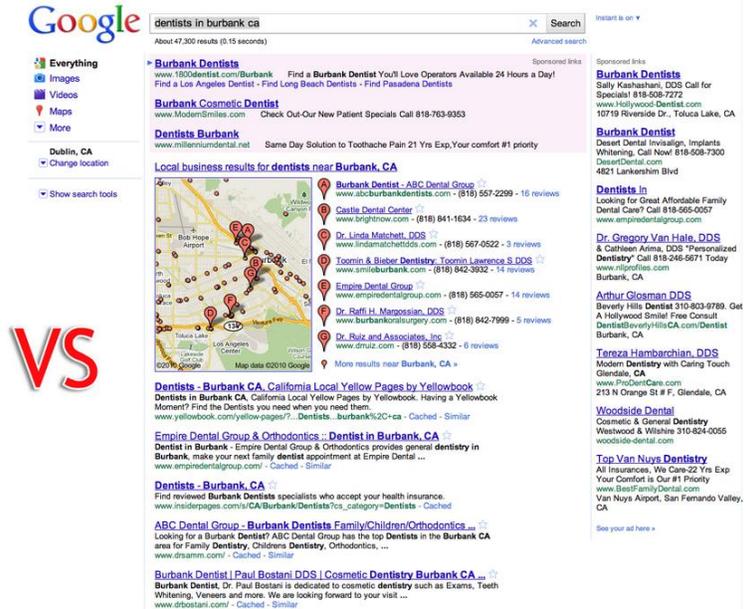
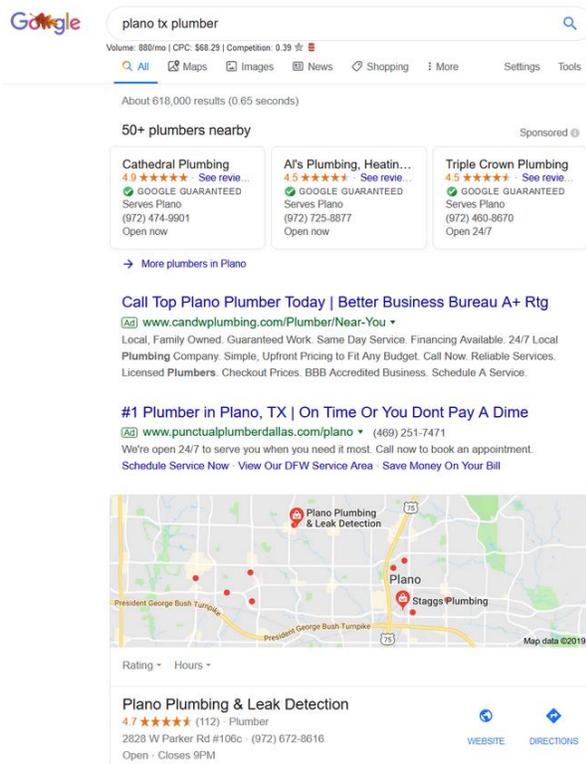
...which hopefully, if someone is paying you **good money** to make them money with SEO, you're actually trying to provide them with good value.

So, I'm going to work from the assumption that because you're still here reading me that you want to be an excellent service provider...

Furthermore, the 1st non-Maps organic result in the search engine results pages has been pushed **significantly** down over the years...

...and I think Google is happy with this result...

Check out the difference over time:



VS

Notice how we went from seeing 5 non-maps organic results after 7 maps organic results to seeing **0 non-maps organic** and **only 1 maps organic**...

Google has pushed down all organic for ads...

...in order to make more money

...the search engine results page ads is where they make most of their money 💰.

Fortunately for us, most people's brains still ignore the ads and move immediately to the organic results...

...but, instead of 7 results in the maps, there are only 3.

1	2
3	4

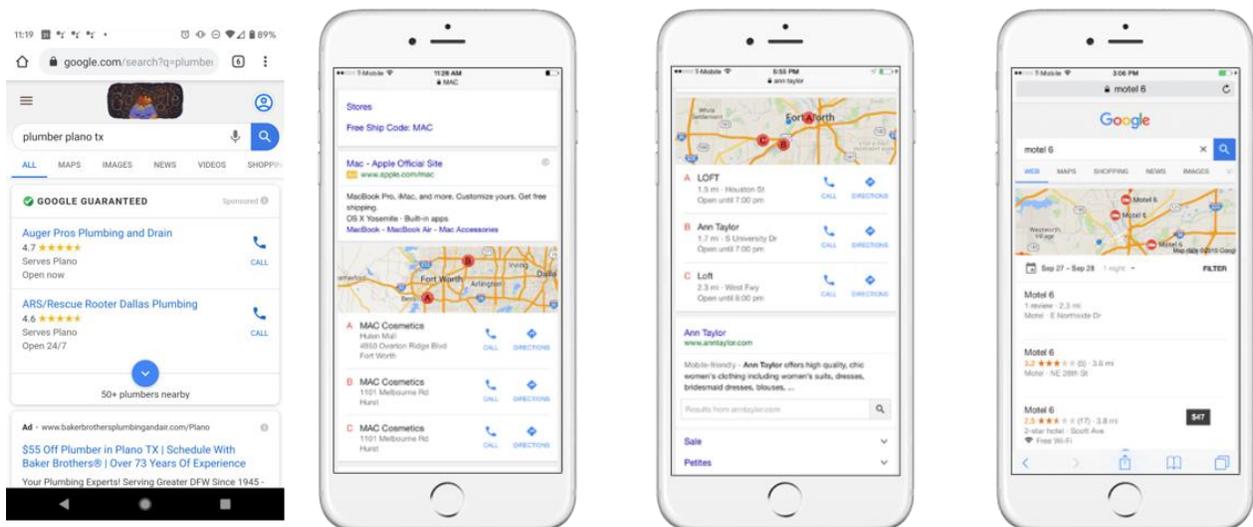
1	2
3	4

1	2
3	4

As a result, there's a big difference between 3rd and 4th in Google Maps...

...on top of the maps taking up more space in the search results!

The effect is strong on mobile as well:



Therefore, ranking in maps for some local businesses is nearly **EVERYTHING**.

So, what is one to do?

I have spent a lot of time and energy with my own test GMB's and with client GMB's testing out quite a few different Maps SEO techniques...

...and what I've learned is not common knowledge...

There are 3 major concepts to be aware of and focus your work on in order to rank well in Google Maps:

(1) Measure Maps SEO Correctly...



First and foremost, we need to discuss measuring maps rankings properly...

If you misunderstand the fundamentals of how Google My Business (GMB) listings rank, then you:

- (a) won't be measuring results properly &
- (b) won't understand how to apply the rest of the SEO recommendations in this document

It used to be you could reasonably say, *"I rank [x] for [keyword] in Google Maps..."*

Now, that is almost always an...**wholly incomplete & meaningless statement...**

You see, the maps listings that Google serves up can be *very different* depending on several properties of the searcher...

...location, search history, device type, etc can all influence the results.

The biggest and most important factor is location – **specifically the searchers proximity to a GMB listing.**

As a result, it is far more accurate to look at a distribution of rankings over multiple geographic points...

...and analyze that data holistically.

For example, here's a sample of a GMB I'm currently tracking for 1 keyword:

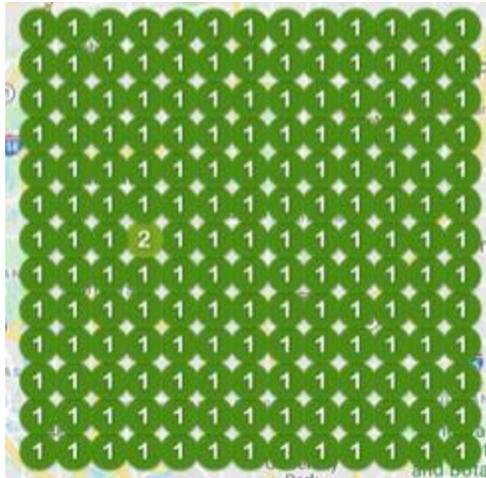


Would it be accurate to say this GMB ranks X (*insert any value for X!*) in the maps for this keyword?

I submit a strong “no!” to you as the answer.

In some places the GMB ranks #1 and in some places it is 6th and in some places it doesn't rank at all...

...and here's an example Maps SEO result for a major keyword:



Note: the above type of distribution is NOT common...to be able to rank #1 for so many data points...

Another note: I use localviking.com (affiliate link) to create these ranking grids (and that's all I use them for...don't recommend their other features be used)...the above image is a 13x13 grid with each data point being 1 mile apart

Even here I would still need to be clear about ranking as being a distribution of rankings over a geographic area...

...in other words, I would still not say, “yeah I rank #1 in the maps for [keyword].”

...I would clarify with additional language.

...and this extra clarity is *CRITICAL* to actually developing excellent maps rankings distributions.

When talking to clients or prospects, I refer to the ranking distribution as “influence” or “geographic influence” of their GMB listing(s).

I believe this puts them in the right frame of mind of what to expect...

...and I think it sets me apart from other service providers' language and communication of what makes them money!

(2) Increase Your GMB Proximity Influence...



I work as a social media influencer. I would love to bring traffic to your hotel in return for free accommodation



The White Moose Café

Dear Social Influencer, the answer is no

The **biggest category** of my Maps SEO ranking resources/activities/time/team member work/etc fall under working to ***improve the proximity influence of GMB(s)***...

The amount of, what I call, “proximity influence” is essentially how much ranking influence your GMB listing has over a set of areas...

[Click Here for to view my GMB Proximity Influence video on YouTube](#)

Essentially what I work to do is increase the relevance of a GMB to a Point of Interest (POI) in an area you want to have more ranking influence...

...a POI can be just about anything with geographical relevance...

...it can be a suburb, a neighborhood, a museum, a park, a store, and more...

Now, I can't possibly go over ALL the ways to increase a GMB's relevance to a POI because the possibilities are basically endless.

I will say you can do this with On Page (*on your website*), Off Page (*link building*) or within your Google My Business (*GMB*) listing admin area (*business.google.com*)...

...for example, if there's a famous museum a few miles away and you want to rank better in the maps near that location, you can create a page on your website about that museum...

...this will give your brand and, therefore, your GMB near it some relevance to that museum.

So, if there's someone searching near the museum, your ranking influence should be greater than before...

Now, there's a lot of different ways to implement on your website – some are more powerful than others...

I did create a WordPress plugin called the [Maps SEO Dominator Plugin Pro](#) that helps guide you through implementing some of these On Page Maps SEO opportunities...



(3) Increase Brand/Entity Trust...



There's a **threshold** that you will need to meet in order to rank well or, sometimes, even at all...

This is basically based upon how likely Google thinks you are a real brand with a real location...

If you're a new business and a new GMB with no data, then you will want to work to establish your **brand/GMB entity** in Google's eyes.

If the GMB/brand are well established and have been around for years doing business and getting natural online business activity, you may not need to do as much of this...

Let's say you are in the former situation and you want to build up a brand's entity in order to be able to rank...

...you can do this in many different ways.

In general, I would say try to think about what kind of digital signals an established business will have...

The most obvious of which is the normal SEO stuff – *On Page & Off Page SEO*...

Do the normal **keyword research** and **on page SEO** that every SEO project should do...

...what is on your website that is connected to the GMB **definitely affects** what the GMB ranks for...

Also, do the normal high quality, authoritative, relevant, and trusted link building/off page SEO that every SEO project should do.

One good source of links that are often easy to get pretty quickly are relevant directory links...

...relevant in terms of location or niche.

So, if you're a plumber in Dallas, looking for Dallas and plumbing directories to start would be good.

But, this is just one source of link building and it can't be the only thing you do...unless your market is really uncompetitive.

Other brand properties that can matter include, but are not limited to: brand/domain age, online information, branded searches, etc.

There's also some GMB specific stuff you can do to demonstrate to Google that you're more likely to be a real, trusted business...

Basically, be active within the GMB admin area by logging in regularly, responding to reviews, making GMB posts, filling out more of the information, uploading photos & videos, etc.

On top of that, searchers interacting with your brand in an engaging way can help as well...

...there are a number of ways to encourage this behavior...

...like more classic forms of offline marketing that results in people searching up the brand and poking around their online properties.

Would you like to learn in great detail the techniques and concepts I use to rank in Google Maps?

[Click Here to Checkout the Maps SEO Ninja Training offer](#)



I hope this has been helpful to you 😊

Please look out for my communications in the future to receive more valuable info on the SEO Client business model.

\$\$ Good luck fulfilling your dreams!! \$\$

-David Hood



<https://digitaldominationdojo.com/>

[Operation Day Job Liberation Facebook Community](#)

david@digitaldominationdojo.com