

FREE CHECKLIST FOR LA-AREA SMALL BUSINESSES

Local SEO Checklist

Google Business Profile · Citations & Directories On-Site Signals · Schema Markup · Reviews AI
Search Visibility

From
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Local SEO is not complicated. It is just consistent.

Most LA-area small businesses lose local search visibility not because they have the wrong strategy, but because the basics are incomplete. An unclaimed Google Business Profile. A phone number listed differently on three different sites. A website with no local keywords. These small gaps compound into significant invisibility.

This checklist covers six areas of local SEO — the same six areas that determine whether your business shows up in Google Maps, the local 3-pack, AI-generated recommendations, and "near me" searches. Each section has a score field so you can track where you stand and prioritize what to fix first.

PRIORITY KEY

| | |
|----------------|---|
| HIGH | Critical — highest impact, do these immediately |
| MED | Important — complete within 30 days |
| ONGOING | Habitual — build into your monthly or quarterly routine |

WHAT THIS CHECKLIST COVERS

| | |
|----------|---|
| A | Google Business Profile 12 items — foundation of local search |
| B | Citations & Directories 8 items — building local authority |
| C | On-Site Local SEO 9 items — location signals in your pages |
| D | Schema Markup 6 items — structured data for Google and AI |
| E | Reviews & Reputation 6 items — trust signals that drive decisions |
| F | AI Search Visibility 5 items — ChatGPT, AI Overviews, and Siri |

Score 42+ out of 46 and your local SEO foundation is solid. Below 30 and meaningful gaps are costing you visibility.

Business: _____ Date: _____ Total: _____ /46

A Google Business Profile

The single most important local SEO asset for any LA-area business

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Profile is claimed and verified with Google <i>business.google.com — unverified profiles do not rank</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business name exactly matches your real-world business name <i>No keyword stuffing in the name field — Google penalizes this</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Primary category is accurate and specific <i>"Web Designer" not "Business." "Bookkeeper" not "Financial Services."</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Secondary categories added (up to 9) <i>Each additional category expands the searches you appear in</i> | MED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business description uses services and location keywords <i>750 characters. Include your city/neighborhood name and primary services.</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Service area lists specific LA cities and neighborhoods <i>Tarzana, Encino, Sherman Oaks, Woodland Hills, Burbank, etc. — not just "Los Angeles"</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hours are accurate — including holiday hours | MED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Phone number matches your website exactly <i>Inconsistency creates citation conflict and hurts local rankings</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Website URL points to your current live site | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Services list is complete — each service has a title and description <i>Each service entry is individually indexed by Google</i> | MED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 5 photos — interior, exterior, headshot, and work samples <i>Profiles with photos get significantly more clicks and direction requests</i> | MED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Profile actively updated in the last 90 days <i>Add a post, a photo, or a service update — activity signals an active business</i> | ONGOING |

LOCAL TIP

In your GBP description and service area, name specific LA neighborhoods: "Serving Encino, Tarzana, Woodland Hills, Sherman Oaks, Studio City, and the greater San Fernando Valley." Neighborhood-specific language improves visibility for hyper-local searches significantly.

Section A score: _____ / 12

B Citations & Directories

Consistent NAP across the web builds authority and AI trust

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business name, address, and phone (NAP) are identical everywhere online <i>"Suite 100" vs "Ste. 100" counts as inconsistency to search engines</i> | HIGH |
|--------------------------|---|------|

- Yelp listing claimed, verified, and complete** HIGH
Yelp feeds Apple Maps and Siri — two AI sources LA residents use heavily

- Apple Maps listing claimed via Apple Business Connect** HIGH
appleid.apple.com/business — essential for iPhone/Siri visibility in LA

- Bing Places for Business listing claimed and complete** MED
bing.com/business — feeds Microsoft Copilot AI and Bing search

- Listed in at least one LA-area Chamber of Commerce directory** MED
LA Chamber, Valley Industry & Commerce Association (VICA), or local SFV chambers

- Listed in at least one industry-specific directory** MED
Houzz, Avvo, Thumbtack, Bark, Clutch — relevant to your specific field

- Facebook Business page has accurate NAP and website URL** MED
Facebook is a citation source for AI tools and directory aggregators

- No outdated or duplicate listings exist for your business** ONGOING
Search your phone number in quotes — find and claim or remove duplicates

**WATCH
OUT**

Buying 100 low-quality directory citations is worse than having 10 good ones. Google discounts low-quality citation networks. Focus on the core sources above before adding more.

Section B score: _____ / 8

C On-Site Local SEO

Location signals embedded in your website pages and structure

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Homepage clearly states city/region served in the first paragraph <i>"Serving small businesses in the San Fernando Valley and greater Los Angeles"</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Every page has a unique, keyword-rich page title with location <i>"Web Design for LA Service Businesses Davidov Media Design Tarzana CA"</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Every page has a unique meta description with location reference <i>Include your city name and primary service in the meta description</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | H1 heading on each page includes a primary keyword <i>One H1 per page — descriptive, keyword-relevant, never duplicated</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Contact page includes full NAP matching your GBP exactly <i>Business name, address, and phone — identical to what appears on Google</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Contact page embeds a Google Map <i>Wix: add a Google Maps widget to your contact page</i> | MED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Images have descriptive alt text including location where relevant <i>"Web designer working with client in Tarzana, CA office"</i> | MED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Site scores 70+ on Google PageSpeed mobile <i>pagespeed.web.dev — mobile speed is a direct Google ranking factor</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Site submitted to Google Search Console with sitemap <i>search.google.com/search-console > Sitemaps > yourdomain.com/sitemap.xml</i> | HIGH |

Section C score: _____ / 9

D Schema Markup

Structured data that tells Google and AI exactly what your business is

Schema markup is code added to your site that explicitly declares your business type, location, hours, and services — in a format search engines and AI tools read directly. On a Wix Studio site, this is added via Velo (a designer task).

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | LocalBusiness schema present on homepage <i>Includes: name, description, address, phone, url, openingHours, areaServed</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Schema specifies your business type accurately <i>LocalBusiness subtype: ProfessionalService, LegalService, HomeAndConstruction, etc.</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | areaServed lists specific LA cities and neighborhoods <i>Do not just say "Los Angeles" — list your actual service communities</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Schema validated with no errors <i>search.google.com/test/rich-results — verify after it is added</i> | HIGH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Review schema in place if reviews are displayed on the site <i>Enables star ratings to appear directly in Google search results</i> | MED |

- FAQ schema added to pages with FAQ sections** MED
FAQ schema can trigger expanded search results — more SERP real estate

LA ANGLE

Schema is your competitive edge in a crowded LA market.

Most LA small businesses do not have schema markup. In a competitive metro area, it is a direct differentiator — for both standard search rankings and AI recommendation systems. One-time setup. Indefinite return.

Section D score: _____ / 6

E Reviews & Reputation

Trust signals that influence both rankings and real client decisions

- Google Business Profile has at least 10 reviews** HIGH
Fewer than 10 puts you at a significant local search disadvantage
- Average star rating is 4.0 or higher** HIGH
Businesses below 4.0 see dramatically lower click-through rates
- Most recent review is within the last 60 days** HIGH
Recency is a ranking signal — old reviews suggest a potentially inactive business
- Every review has a response — positive and negative** ONGOING
Response rate is a GBP ranking signal and a trust signal for potential clients
- Direct review link is in your email signature** MED
GBP dashboard > Get more reviews > copy the direct link
- Review request sent to every client after project completion** ONGOING
One-click personal link converts far better than a generic automated email

WATCH OUT Do not request reviews in bulk. Google flags sudden spikes and may remove them. One or two per week, consistently over months, is far more effective than twenty in a single day.

Section E score: _____ / 6

F AI Search Visibility

Signals that surface your business in ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews, and Siri

- Homepage has a clear entity statement: who, what, where, for whom** HIGH
One plain-language paragraph. No brand-speak. Business name + service + location + audience.
- Site contains an FAQ section with questions clients actually ask** HIGH
Question-formatted content is the primary type AI tools retrieve and cite

- LocalBusiness schema in place with areaServed (Section D) HIGH
Schema is the most direct machine-readable signal AI retrieval systems use
- NAP consistent across all citation sources (Section B) HIGH
Consistent citations build AI confidence in your business information
- You have tested your AI visibility in ChatGPT ONGOING
"Best [your service] in [your neighborhood]" — do you appear? Who does?

LOCAL TIP Test monthly: ask ChatGPT "Who are the best [your service] providers in [your city]?" The answer tells you your current AI visibility status and shows exactly who you are competing with for that recommendation.

Section F score: _____ / 5

YOUR LOCAL SEO SCORE

Add up your section scores.

Each checked item = 1 point. Maximum: 46.

| Section | Topic | Max | Your Score |
|--------------|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| A | Google Business Profile | 12 | |
| B | Citations & Directories | 8 | |
| C | On-Site Local SEO | 9 | |
| D | Schema Markup | 6 | |
| E | Reviews & Reputation | 6 | |
| F | AI Search Visibility | 5 | |
| TOTAL | | 46 | |

| Score | What it means | What to do |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---|
| 42–46 | Excellent foundation | Maintain. Focus on reviews and content growth. |
| 32–41 | Solid with gaps | Address incomplete HIGH items in Sections A, C, D first. |
| 20–31 | Significant gaps | Prioritize all HIGH items. Start with GBP, on-site, and NAP. |
| Below 20 | Major visibility gaps | Book an audit. Basics need fixing before advanced tactics matter. |

NOTES & PRIORITY ACTIONS

Want expert help with your local SEO?

Davidov Media Design offers local SEO audits, schema implementation, Google Business Profile optimization, and ongoing SEO support for LA-area small businesses.

Start with the free AI Readiness Test:

davidovmediadesign.com/ai-readiness-test

Or book a discovery call at davidovmediadesign.com

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