

The Local SEO Checklist

For Colorado small businesses who want to stop losing the map pack to chains with bigger budgets.

Work top to bottom. Every box you check is revenue you were leaving on the table. If a box already feels handled, verify it anyway because Google changes this stuff quarterly.

SECTION 01

Google Business Profile

Your single highest-leverage asset. Google trusts GBP signals more than almost anything else for local.

- ☐ **Claim and verify your Google Business Profile**
Video verification is the new norm; keep a 30-second walkthrough ready.
- ☐ **Pick the most specific primary category**
Not 'Marketing Agency', try 'Digital Marketing Agency' or 'Website Designer'.
- ☐ **Add every relevant secondary category**
Up to 10, but only ones you genuinely serve.
- ☐ **Fill every field, don't skip 'services' or 'from the business'**
Blank fields tank you vs. competitors who fill them out.
- ☐ **Write a keyword-informed description (750 chars)**
Include city + service combos, but keep it readable.
- ☐ **Upload 10+ real photos (exterior, interior, team, work samples)**
Swap in fresh photos monthly; Google likes active profiles.
- ☐ **Turn on messaging and respond within 24 hours**
Slow responses get you demoted in the map pack.
- ☐ **Post weekly updates (Offers, Events, What's New)**
Think of it like a mini social feed Google actually reads.
- ☐ **Add products or services with prices when possible**
Pricing transparency helps and Google ranks for it.
- ☐ **Request reviews from your last 20 happy clients**
Aim for 5 new reviews per month, every month.
- ☐ **Respond to EVERY review within 48 hours**
Positive and negative. Google watches your response rate.
- ☐ **Set your service areas accurately**
Don't spam every county in Colorado; Google can tell.

SECTION 02

On-Page Local Signals

Your website needs to back up what your GBP claims. Inconsistency is a ranking killer.

- ☐ **Put NAP (Name, Address, Phone) in the footer of every page**
Exactly matching your GBP. Capitalization, abbreviations, all of it.
- ☐ **Create a city-specific landing page for every service area**
Denver, Boulder, Fort Collins, Colorado Springs, etc.
- ☐ **Use the formula [Service] + [Location] in H1 tags on those pages**
Example: 'Website Design in Denver, Colorado'.
- ☐ **Write unique 300+ word intros per city page**
No copy-paste with city names swapped; Google filters thin duplicates.
- ☐ **Embed a Google Map of your business on the contact page**
Pulls from your GBP, adds a trust signal.
- ☐ **Add FAQ schema to service and city pages**
Targets People Also Ask and AI Overview citations.
- ☐ **Add LocalBusiness schema site-wide in the head code**
Include address, phone, opening hours, geo coordinates.
- ☐ **Include your city + service combo in title tag and meta description**
Keep titles under 60 chars, descriptions under 155.
- ☐ **Add customer testimonials by city where you can**
Bonus points for real photos and full names.
- ☐ **Link from city pages back to your service pages and vice versa**
Internal linking cements topical authority.
- ☐ **Optimize images with descriptive alt text + geo-relevant filenames**
'denver-website-design-studio.jpg' beats 'IMG_4821.jpg'.
- ☐ **Compress images and target LCP under 2.5 seconds**
Core Web Vitals matter; slow sites rank worse locally.

SECTION 03

Citations and Directories

Think of citations as references. Consistent NAP across the web tells Google you're real.

- ☐ **Audit your existing citations with Moz Local or BrightLocal**
You want 100% NAP consistency across platforms.
- ☐ **Claim your Bing Places for Business listing**
Bing powers ~6% of US search and ChatGPT web search.
- ☐ **Claim your Apple Business Connect listing**
Drives Apple Maps and Siri results.
- ☐ **Submit to Yelp, even if you hate Yelp**
It ranks and your competitors are on it.
- ☐ **Claim your Facebook Business Page and fill out every field**
Social signals still correlate with local rankings.
- ☐ **Submit to industry-specific directories (outdoor, retail, B2B)**
These carry more weight than generic directories.
- ☐ **Get listed in Chamber of Commerce sites for every city you serve**
.org backlinks from local chambers hit different.
- ☐ **Fix every NAP inconsistency you find, old addresses or phone numbers**
Old info on the web is actively hurting you right now.
- ☐ **Add structured data for your primary location**
Use schema.org/LocalBusiness with geo coordinates.
- ☐ **Build 2-3 local partner/sponsor backlinks per quarter**
Sponsor a youth team, a trail cleanup, a local event.

SECTION 04

Reviews and Reputation

Volume, velocity, and recency. Google watches all three.

- ☐ **Set up a review request automation in your CRM or email tool**
Trigger it after a project wraps or a service is delivered.
- ☐ **Include a direct Google review link in invoices and thank-you emails**
Fewer clicks between happy customer and 5-star review.
- ☐ **Train your team to ask for reviews in person when appropriate**
Verbal asks convert at 3-5x email asks.
- ☐ **Reply to every review, using keywords naturally**
Thanking someone for 'our Denver website redesign' is fair game.
- ☐ **Flag fake or abusive reviews through Google's reporting tool**
Don't leave bad actors sitting on your profile.

- ☐ **Gather reviews on Facebook, Yelp, and industry platforms too**
Google sees off-platform reviews as trust signals.
- ☐ **Maintain a 4.5+ star average across the web**
Below 4.0 gets you filtered out of many prospect searches.

SECTION 05

Technical Floor

If the site is broken, none of the above matters. Fix the floor first.

- ☐ **Force HTTPS across every page, no mixed content warnings**
Insecure links flag in every SEO audit tool instantly.
- ☐ **Submit an XML sitemap to Google Search Console**
Webflow generates one automatically at /sitemap.xml.
- ☐ **Check robots.txt for accidental blocks**
A stray 'Disallow: /' will nuke your visibility overnight.
- ☐ **Fix every 404 with a 301 redirect to the closest equivalent page**
Don't just delete; redirect.
- ☐ **Resolve all crawl errors surfaced in Search Console**
Coverage report is your weekly 10-minute read.
- ☐ **Pass Core Web Vitals on 75%+ of URLs (mobile and desktop)**
LCP < 2.5s, INP < 200ms, CLS < 0.1.
- ☐ **Add descriptive alt text to every image**
Accessibility + SEO + AI-crawler-friendly.
- ☐ **Set canonical URLs on every page**
Prevents duplicate content confusion across parameters.
- ☐ **Implement breadcrumb navigation with schema**
Helps rich results and deeper pages get crawled.
- ☐ **Verify your site in Google Search Console AND Bing Webmaster Tools**
Free data, zero reason to skip it.

SECTION 06

Content and AI Search (GEO)

AI Overviews and Perplexity cite specific passages. Write to be quotable.

- ☐ **Publish 1-2 local content pieces per month**
Best X in [City], how-to guides with Colorado examples.
- ☐ **Use clear H2s phrased as questions your customers actually ask**
AI models pull direct answers from these passages.
- ☐ **Answer the question in the first 40-60 words under each H2**
Inverted pyramid wins in AI Overviews.
- ☐ **Include stats, quotes, and proprietary data you can cite**
Original data is AI-citation bait.
- ☐ **Create a llms.txt file summarizing your site for AI crawlers**
New standard that Claude, Perplexity, and others respect.

- ☐ **Make sure GPTBot, ClaudeBot, and PerplexityBot aren't blocked**
Check robots.txt. Blocking = invisibility in AI search.
- ☐ **Build dedicated comparison pages (You vs. competitor, alternatives to X)**
AI models love comparison content for citations.
- ☐ **Add author bios with real credentials and links to LinkedIn**
E-E-A-T signal Google and AI both reward.

SECTION 07

The 90-Day Execution Plan

If you try to do all of the above at once, you'll do none of it. Work in phases.

Days 1-30 FOUNDATION	Claim and optimize GBP. Fix technical floor (HTTPS, sitemap, crawl errors, Core Web Vitals). Add NAP + LocalBusiness schema site-wide. Fix top 10 on-page issues flagged by Ahrefs/SEMrush.
Days 31-60 EXPANSION	Build city landing pages for top 3-5 service areas. Publish 2-4 local blog posts. Claim Bing, Apple, Yelp, Facebook, Chamber listings. Kick off review-request automation.
Days 61-90 ACCELERATION	Push 2 new local content pieces. Build 3-5 local backlinks (partnerships, sponsorships, press). Add FAQ schema, comparison pages, and llms.txt. Report: keyword rankings, GBP views/calls, review volume.

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