



CONFLUENCE
DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY+EXECUTION

Establishing Local Trust

AN EXECUTIVE BRIEF

May 2011

Executive Summary

Establishing local trust helps to improve your local search rankings in map and mobile searches and can increase your local sales and business. By managing the consistent use of references to your business name, address, phone number, and website address in both your web pages and in external sources such as business profiles, business listings, yellow pages, review sites, and directories, you validate the credibility of this information and improve the “trust” in your business location. This, in turn, helps improve your rankings in local, or map, searches.

Introduction

Those who are familiar with improving your website’s credibility with search engines are familiar with the concept of “domain trust and authority.” This is the likelihood that your site is a:

- Spammer’s site, yielding a low level of domain trust and authority
- Reliable source of authoritative information, yielding a high level of domain trust and authority

However, the local search algorithms go beyond domain trust and authority. When we talk about “local trust” for your website, we mean how likely your site is to be:

- Who it claims to be
- What it claims to be
- Where it claims to be

The more trust the search engines have in your location and contact information, the better chance you have of ranking well in the local search and map queries. Ranking well can mean increased sales and business through mobile search results as well as from walk-in traffic to your storefront business. With [97% of consumers](#) using the Internet to research products or services in their local area before they buy, and [53% of Bing mobile search](#) queries focusing on local results, establishing local trust for your business is important to your search visibility success.

N.A.P. +W.

The core of establishing local trust is how consistently your name, address, phone number, and website address (N.A.P. +W.) of your business is distributed throughout the web. If your N.A.P.+W. is different in different web properties, the search engine trust in that information is reduced.

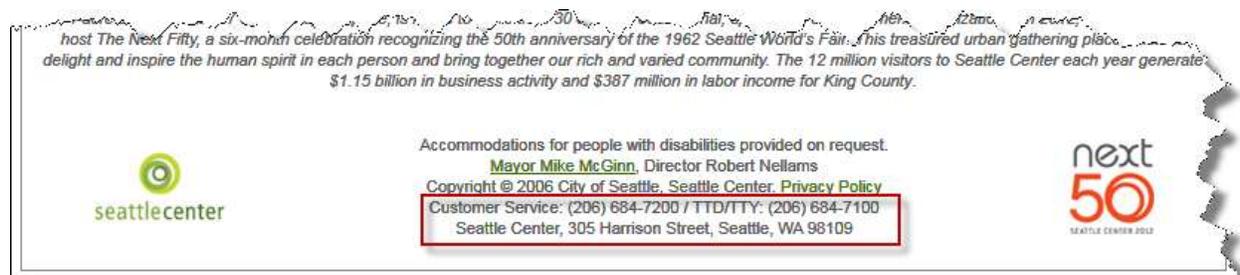
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To establish a good foundation of local trust, use the same contact information in all your business profiles, directories, organization memberships, local business listing centers, phone directories, and review sites.

Certain sources such as Localeze and infoUSA are deemed more trustworthy by search engines. Information provided by these sources is more credible than other sources. These sources are accessed by listing in the [Universal Business Listings](#). Start there, and continue to use that same N.A.P.+W. information in all your other web listings.

Matching Webpage Information

The second part of trust validation is to add your N.A.P.+W. to your own website, creating a match between external and internal information sources. Add your contact information on every page of your website in machine-readable format. You may also add your location information to the title tag on each web page.



Contact Us Pages

Your Contact Us page is the ideal place to reinforce your N.A.P.+W. information. In addition to the usual contact information, design your page to include:

- Driving directions
- An interactive map
- Local landmarks

If your business has more than one location, devote one page to each location. Optimize each page like you would any other web page with keyword-rich content, title tags, motivating meta descriptions, and good cross linking.

Claim Secondary Listings

The search engines generate business listings for their maps out of information they've gathered from their own indexes. Claim your [Google Places](#), [Yahoo Local Listings](#), and the [Bing Business Portal](#) pages and make sure that their information matches your N.A.P.+W. Then, search for and claim all the other website profile pages that list your business such as Yelp.com, CitySearch, yellow pages, and so on.



Claiming these pages not only allows you to correct or update your N.A.P.+W., but enables you to enhance the listings with keywords and photos. In addition, it prevents your competitors from claiming the page and publishing incorrect information. You might be surprised how often this happens.

Update Business Details

Changes will be verified by a moderator at Yelp Headquarters within a few days.

Is this your business? No Yes

The minimum business listings to claim should include:

- SuperPages.com
- HotFrog.com
- YellowBot.com
- Kudzu.com
- Directories in your business area
- Directories for your locale

Conclusion

Increasing your business' visibility in local search results through careful management of your local trust will take an initial investment of time, but the results are well worth the effort in improved business from local and mobile search results.

More Executive Briefs about Local Search from Confluence Digital

- [Local Online Business Listings and SEO](#)
- [The Power of Online Reviews](#)

About the Author

Margery Spears is a practicing Search Engine Optimization expert at [Confluence Digital, LLC](#). Margery has been doing organic search engine optimization full-time since 2007. Born in Pennsylvania, she has lived in many parts of the US before settling down in Seattle. She is the proud friend of two cats and a dog, and can be found on weekends on one of the many bike paths in Seattle under many layers of rain gear. Follow her on Twitter [@MargeryS](#).



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