



The 2026 South African Local SEO Action Plan

A 30-day Google Search & Maps checklist for small businesses

Audit → Plan → Execute → Track → Improve

Business / organisation:

Person completing plan:

Date started: -----

Primary location / service area:

How to use this plan

Record your baseline first, then work through the 30-day schedule. Prioritise accurate business information, a strong Google Business Profile, useful website content, genuine reviews, relevant local authority and measurable conversions.

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1. Local SEO Baseline

Record where you are now before making changes so you can compare results later.

Business information

Business name: -----

Website: -----

Google Business Profile URL:

Primary category:

Secondary categories:



Phone: _____

Email: _____

Physical address: _____

Service areas: _____

Main services: _____

Primary target suburb / city:

Current visibility

Metric	Current	Target / next milestone
GBP views		
GBP searches / discovery		
Website clicks from GBP		
Phone calls from GBP		
Direction requests		
Google reviews		
Average rating		
Search impressions		
Search clicks		
Local enquiries / leads		

2. Local Search Targets

Target places where you genuinely serve customers. Do not create pages or listings for locations with no legitimate connection to the business.

Primary location: _____



Priority	Location	Genuine service area?	Existing visibility	Action
1		☐ Yes ☐ No		
2		☐ Yes ☐ No		
3		☐ Yes ☐ No		
4		☐ Yes ☐ No		
5		☐ Yes ☐ No		

Keyword / search target planner

Keyword / query	Location	Intent	Priority	Current page / listing
		Service ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	
		Service + location ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	
		Near me ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	
		Problem / informational ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	
		Brand ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	

Avoid keyword stuffing

Use local keywords where they accurately describe the business and service area. Do not repeat suburb names unnaturally or create large numbers of near-identical location pages.



3. Google Business Profile Audit

Accuracy, relevance and prominence all matter in local search. There is no single published checklist that guarantees a Map Pack position.

Ownership & core information

- ☐ Business controls the profile
- ☐ Correct business name
- ☐ Correct primary category
- ☐ Relevant secondary categories
- ☐ Correct address or service area
- ☐ Correct phone number
- ☐ Correct website
- ☐ Correct opening hours
- ☐ Special hours configured
- ☐ Business description completed

Profile completeness

- ☐ Logo
- ☐ Cover image
- ☐ Exterior photos
- ☐ Interior photos
- ☐ Team photos
- ☐ Product / service photos
- ☐ Services added
- ☐ Products added where applicable
- ☐ Booking / appointment link
- ☐ Attributes completed
- ☐ Social links where available

Ongoing management

- ☐ Reviews monitored
- ☐ Reviews answered
- ☐ New photos added when useful



- ☐ Business information kept current
- ☐ Questions / profile interactions monitored
- ☐ Updates / posts used where useful
- ☐ Seasonal or temporary changes updated

4. NAP & Citation Audit

NAP means Name, Address and Phone. Prioritise legitimate, relevant platforms rather than quantity for its own sake.

Platform / directory	URL	Name	Address	Phone	Duplicate?	Action
Google		☐	☐	☐	☐	
Facebook		☐	☐	☐	☐	
Industry directory		☐	☐	☐	☐	
Local directory		☐	☐	☐	☐	
Other		☐	☐	☐	☐	
Other		☐	☐	☐	☐	

Citation actions

- ☐ Claim listing
- ☐ Create legitimate listing
- ☐ Correct information
- ☐ Remove / merge duplicate
- ☐ Update website URL
- ☐ Update phone
- ☐ Update address / service area
- ☐ Add business category
- ☐ Add business description



- ☐ Ignore low-value / irrelevant listing

5. Website Local SEO Audit

Homepage

- ☐ Business/service is immediately clear
- ☐ Primary location is naturally referenced
- ☐ Phone number is visible
- ☐ Service area is explained
- ☐ Primary CTA is clear
- ☐ Relevant title tag
- ☐ Relevant H1
- ☐ Useful meta description
- ☐ Internal links to important services
- ☐ Local business structured data considered

Service page planner

Service	Page exists?	Location relevance	Title/H1 checked?	CTA	SEO complete?

Local page quality

- ☐ Content is genuinely useful
- ☐ Location is genuinely served
- ☐ Page is not copied from another suburb page
- ☐ Local examples / context are accurate



- ☐ Relevant images are used
- ☐ Internal links are useful
- ☐ Contact information is clear
- ☐ Page has a meaningful CTA

6. Location Page Planner

Create a location page when there is a legitimate reason to serve that location and the page can provide unique value. Avoid doorway pages.

Location	Genuine service area?	Page exists?	Unique content needed	Priority	Owner

Location page checklist

- ☐ Unique title
- ☐ Unique H1
- ☐ Useful local introduction
- ☐ Services genuinely available there
- ☐ Relevant local context
- ☐ Original / relevant imagery
- ☐ Internal links
- ☐ Clear CTA
- ☐ Accurate contact / service-area details
- ☐ No copied suburb template
- ☐ No misleading address claim



7. Local Structured Data / Schema

Structured data can help search engines interpret accurate business information. It should describe truthful information and be implemented correctly.

- ☐ Appropriate LocalBusiness type considered
- ☐ Business name correct
- ☐ Website URL correct
- ☐ Phone correct
- ☐ Address / service area appropriate
- ☐ Opening hours accurate
- ☐ Relevant sameAs links where appropriate
- ☐ Service information considered
- ☐ Markup validated
- ☐ No misleading or unsupported markup

Who implements schema:

Validation / test result:

Date tested: -----

No ranking guarantee

Structured data does not guarantee a rich result or higher rankings. Use it to communicate accurate information and follow Google's implementation requirements.

8. Review Generation System

Build a repeatable process for requesting genuine reviews from customers. Do not buy, fabricate or manipulate reviews.

Current Google review count:

Current average rating:

Review link: -----



Customer	Completed job / purchase?	Satisfied?	Asked?	Date asked	Review received?
		☐	☐		☐
		☐	☐		☐
		☐	☐		☐
		☐	☐		☐
		☐	☐		☐
		☐	☐		☐

Review workflow

- ☐ Define the trigger for requesting a review
- ☐ Send request promptly after a successful interaction
- ☐ Use a direct review link
- ☐ Make the process mobile-friendly
- ☐ Respond to positive reviews
- ☐ Respond professionally to negative reviews
- ☐ Avoid incentivised / fake reviews

9. Local Link Building

Focus on relevant, legitimate relationships: suppliers, associations, community organisations, publications, partners and useful local directories.

- ☐ Suppliers
- ☐ Industry associations
- ☐ Business chambers / organisations
- ☐ Local publications
- ☐ Community organisations
- ☐ Charities
- ☐ Local events



- ☐ Sponsorships
- ☐ Business partners
- ☐ Relevant industry directories

Organisation	Website	Contact	Opportunity	Date contacted	Follow-up	Result
Link-building warning Avoid bulk backlink packages, manipulative link schemes and irrelevant directories. Local relevance and genuine relationships are more useful than a large list of low-quality links.						

10. Local Content Planner

Topic / question	Location	Search intent	Format	Priority	Status
		Informational ☐	Blog ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	
		Commercial ☐	Service page ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	



		Local ☐	Location page ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	
		FAQ ☐	Guide ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	
		Informational ☐	Blog ☐	High ☐ Med ☐ Low ☐	

Content quality check

- ☐ Answers a real customer question
- ☐ Relevant to actual service area
- ☐ Original and useful
- ☐ No keyword stuffing
- ☐ Internal links are relevant
- ☐ Clear CTA
- ☐ Business expertise / credibility is evident
- ☐ Facts are accurate and current
- ☐ Images are relevant and appropriately described

11. Search Console & GBP Tracking

Google Search Console

Query	Impressions	Clicks	Position	Relevant location	Page / action



- ☐ Identify local queries generating impressions
- ☐ Find pages with impressions but weak click-through
- ☐ Find relevant queries ranking around page 2
- ☐ Identify new service/location opportunities
- ☐ Check indexing issues
- ☐ Review top-performing pages

Google Business Profile

Month	Views	Searches	Calls	Directions	Website clicks	Reviews	Qualified leads
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

Measure outcomes, not just rankings

Rankings are useful diagnostic information, but calls, enquiries, bookings, purchases and other meaningful actions are closer to business outcomes.



12. Your 30-Day Local SEO Action Plan

Day	Task	Done	Notes / result
1	Record baseline metrics	☐	
2	Audit GBP ownership and core information	☐	
3	Review primary and secondary categories	☐	
4	Audit NAP across key listings	☐	
5	Audit homepage local SEO	☐	
6	Identify priority service areas	☐	
7	Confirm baseline and priorities	☐	
8	Fix homepage local signals	☐	
9	Optimise priority service pages	☐	
10	Plan priority location pages	☐	
11	Improve titles, H1s and meta descriptions	☐	



12	Review internal linking	☐	
13	Review local schema	☐	
14	Validate technical changes	☐	
15	Create review-request process	☐	
16	Ask first satisfied customers for reviews	☐	
17	Respond to existing reviews	☐	
18	Find 10 relevant local link opportunities	☐	
19	Contact first link / partnership prospects	☐	
20	Audit priority directories	☐	
21	Fix highest-priority citations	☐	
22	Research local content opportunities	☐	
23	Create first local content asset	☐	



24	Improve one existing page	☐	
25	Review Search Console queries	☐	
26	Review GBP performance	☐	
27	Review conversions / leads	☐	
28	Record updated metrics	☐	
29	Compare against baseline	☐	
30	Create next 90-day plan	☐	

13. Your Next 90 Days

Month 1 — Foundation

- ☐ GBP accuracy and completeness
- ☐ Website local SEO
- ☐ NAP cleanup
- ☐ Tracking baseline
- ☐ Technical issues

Month 2 — Authority & Reputation

- ☐ Review generation
- ☐ Relevant citations
- ☐ Local link opportunities
- ☐ Local content
- ☐ Community / partnership activity



Month 3 — Expansion & Conversion

- ☐ Useful service/location content
- ☐ Conversion improvements
- ☐ Review velocity
- ☐ Content refreshes
- ☐ Reporting and next priorities

Metric	Baseline	30-day	60-day	90-day
GBP views				
GBP calls				
Website clicks				
Reviews				
Qualified leads				
Search clicks				
Other				

14. Local SEO Red Flags

- ☐ Agency guarantees a #1 local ranking
- ☐ Agency creates fake addresses or locations
- ☐ Agency creates multiple fake Google Business Profiles
- ☐ Agency buys or fabricates reviews
- ☐ Agency promises hundreds of links for a very low price
- ☐ Agency creates hundreds of near-identical suburb pages
- ☐ Agency cannot explain what work was performed
- ☐ Reports show rankings only and no business outcomes
- ☐ No baseline metrics are recorded
- ☐ Business does not control its own Google Business Profile
- ☐ Important directory accounts are controlled entirely by the agency
- ☐ SEO recommendations rely on keyword repetition rather than customer value



☐ Agency recommends locations the business does not genuinely serve

Local SEO scorecard

Area	Score /10	Priority action
Google Business Profile		
Categories & services		
Website local SEO		
Location pages		
NAP / citations		
Reviews / reputation		
Local links / authority		
Content		
Technical SEO / schema		
Tracking / measurement		
Conversion optimisation		
TOTAL /110		

Top priority 1: _____

Top priority 2: _____

Top priority 3: _____

15. Final Action Summary

Single most important action this week:

Person responsible:

Deadline: _____



How success will be measured:

Action	Date completed	Result / evidence

Next monthly review date:

Metrics to check:

Next three actions:

Keep improving

Local SEO is not a one-time submission. Business information changes, competitors change, customers leave new reviews and search behaviour changes. A simple monthly review keeps the local presence accurate and gives you evidence for the next set of improvements.

Reference Notes & Sources

Prepared as a practical planning tool using current public guidance available in August 2026. It helps South African SMEs organise local-search work; it does not promise rankings.

Google Business Profile — Local ranking guidance

Google explains that local results are primarily based on relevance, distance and prominence.

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/7091>

Google Search Essentials

Google Search Central's technical requirements, spam policies and key best



practices.

<https://developers.google.com/search/docs/essentials>

Google structured data guidance

Official documentation on structured data and search feature eligibility.

<https://developers.google.com/search/docs/appearance/structured-data/intro-structured-data>

Google Search Console

Official documentation for Search performance and indexing.

<https://search.google.com/search-console/about>

Google Business Profile

Official Google resources for managing a business presence on Search and Maps.

<https://www.google.com/business/>

Information Regulator South Africa

Official South African regulator resources for POPIA and PAIA.

<https://inforegulator.org.za/>

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