

# Maps Hero

A Fast Cash Foot-in-the-Door Strategy  
to Win Local Business Owners' Trust  
And Grow Your Local Marketing Consulting Business



## Introduction

Google is the giant among the world's search engines, accounting for more than 70% of all global search traffic.

A study conducted by Local Search Engine Optimization Mike Blumenthal found that Google is the search engine most used by consumers searching online for local businesses, accounting for more than 60% of consumer searches for local businesses.

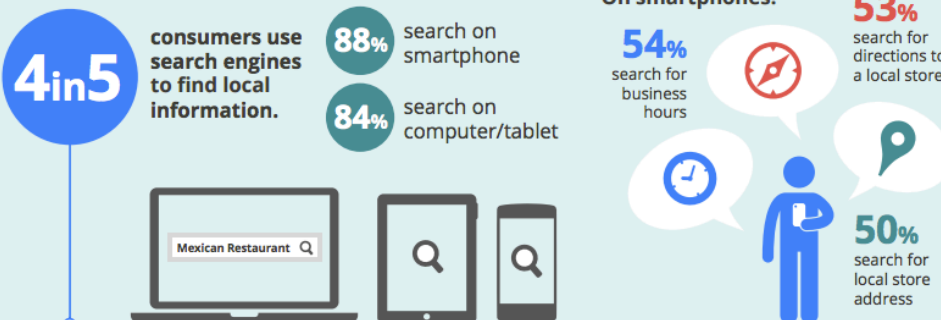
And, as you can see from the illustrations on the next page, Google's own research shows that local business search results have a powerful influence on consumer buying behavior, with 1 in 3 local business searches leading to a visit to a store.



Source: <http://blumenthals.com/blog/2014/02/17/which-sites-do-consumers-use-to-find-a-local-business-why-yp-com-is-facing-headwinds/>

## UNDERSTANDING CONSUMERS' LOCAL SEARCH BEHAVIOR

Every day, people search for things nearby by conducting **local searches**—these are searches for products or services near where they happen to be. Research on U.S. smartphone users shows that local searches happen everywhere, on every device, and present unique opportunities for Google advertisers to reach consumers.\*



## CONSUMERS ACT QUICKLY AFTER THEIR LOCAL SEARCH

% of consumers who visit a store within a day of their local search:

Smartphone

50%

Computer/Tablet

34%

Consumer behavior before visiting store and while in-store:

1 in 3

searches on smartphone occur right before consumers visit a store

15%

of in-store activities involve conducting smartphone searches about a product or for price comparison



Source: [https://think.storage.googleapis.com/docs/how-advertisers-can-extend-their-relevance-with-search\\_infographics.pdf](https://think.storage.googleapis.com/docs/how-advertisers-can-extend-their-relevance-with-search_infographics.pdf)

## **The Maps Hero Opportunity**

It's clear from the statistics above that consumers are using Google every day to find and do business with local businesses.

If a local business has not yet claimed and optimized their Google My Business and Maps listing -- or if they have an existing listing but the information there is inaccurate -- then they are in real trouble, whether they realize it or not.

***This is where you can be their “local hero” -- by educating local business owners about the sales opportunities they are missing, and creating -- or fixing -- their Google business listings to give them a competitive advantage in their local marketplace.***

In my personal experience, local business owners are happy to pay \$200 - \$500 for this valuable service, because getting found on Google leads to more consumer calls, more visits and more sales. And, mistakes in their Google listings can have an immediate and dramatic impact on a business' income if their customers can't find them fast online and end up going to competing businesses with more prominently displayed and better optimized Google listings.

In this report, we are going to show you how to help your local business clients “get on Google” while making some easy fast cash. Once you have demonstrated your capabilities and won the business owner's respect and trust by getting their business set up on Google, you can offer even more recurring revenue services to build your own business.

## Introduction

If you have ever searched online for a local business, you will recognize the Google 7-pack local business listings (see Figure 1 below). As you can see, each listing has a link to a Google+ page and the listing with the most 5-star reviews stands out from the other listings:

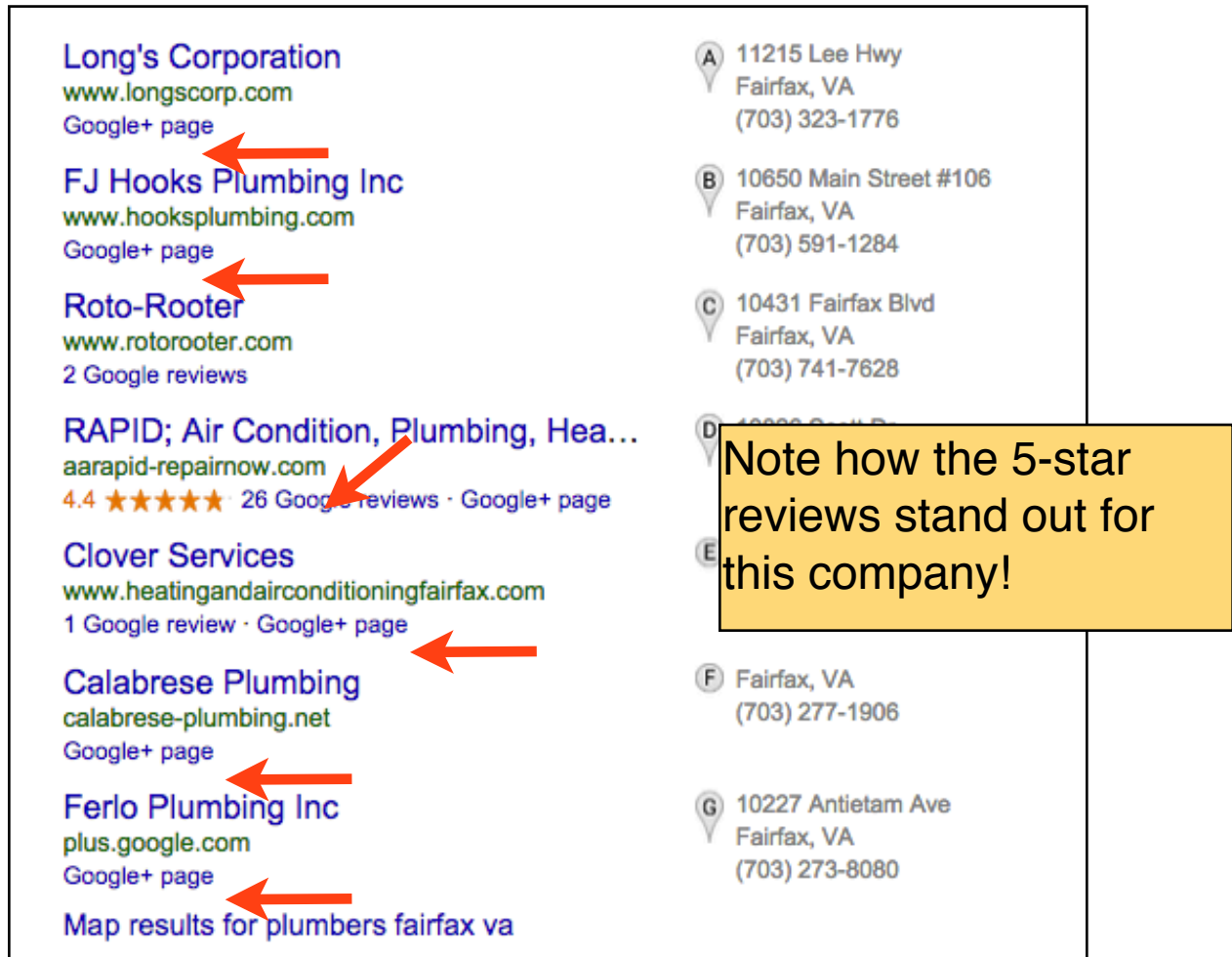


Figure 1: Example of Google Local 7-Pack listings

To identify good prospects for this service, simply conduct a Google local search yourself and look for listed businesses that have not claimed or optimized their Google+ pages, as well as businesses that have few or no Google reviews.

I'd estimate that 80% or more of local business owners have not claimed or optimized their Google My Business pages and have no idea that they should do so or how to do so.

### **Step 1: Claim and Verify The Client's Google My Business Page**

If the client does not already have a Google My Business Page set up, you need to visit the link below and select the client's business type. Then follow Google's instructions to set up the client's Google My Business Page.

<https://plus.google.com/u/0/pages/create>

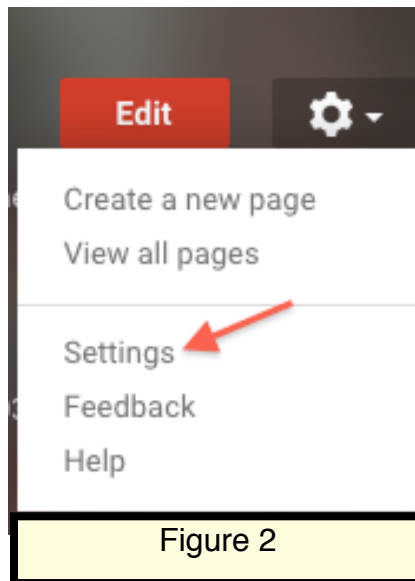
For local businesses, you should select either **Storefront** (if customers come to the client's place of business) or **Service Area** (if the client is a plumber, contractor or other trade business that provide services at the customer's home or business location.)

### **Step 2: Optimize The Client's Google Business Profile**

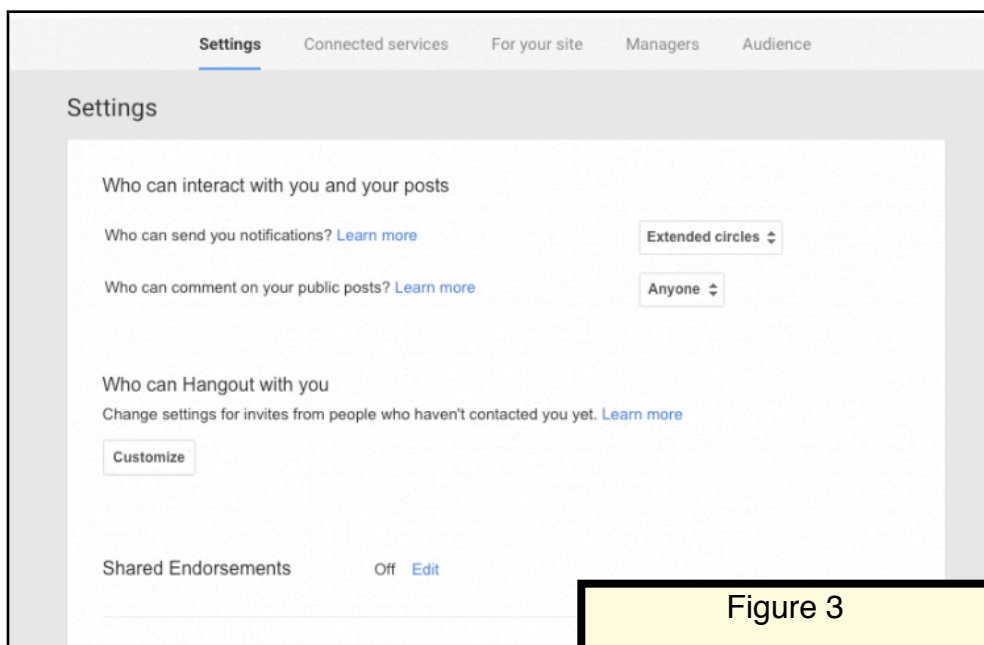
The client's Google My Business profile has two components: The Google+ page (which is what most people will see) and the Google Maps Listing.

New Google business pages set up through the Google My Business platform are automatically linked to their Google Maps listing. However, older G+ Pages or G+ Local Profiles may not be linked to their Google maps listing.

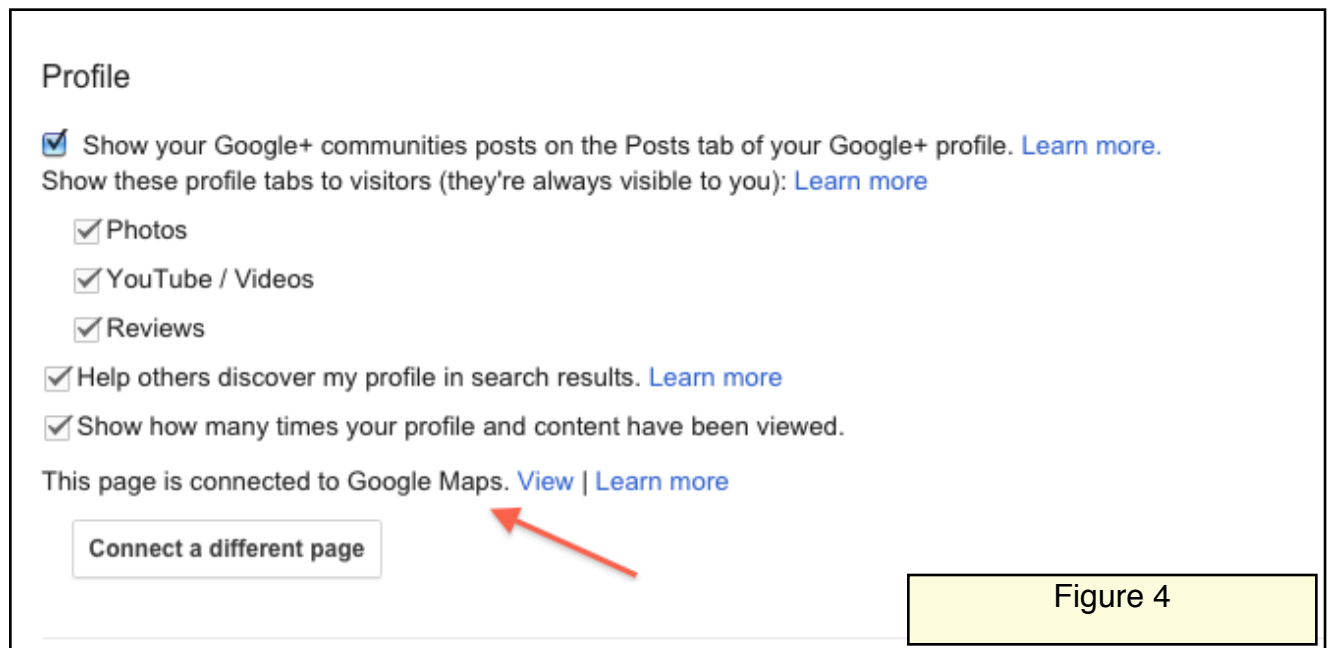
To see if the client's Google Business Page & Map Listing are linked, login to the Google My Business Dashboard, click on the page you want to manage, and click on the Gear Icon at the top right side of the Google Business Page. (See Figure 2 below)



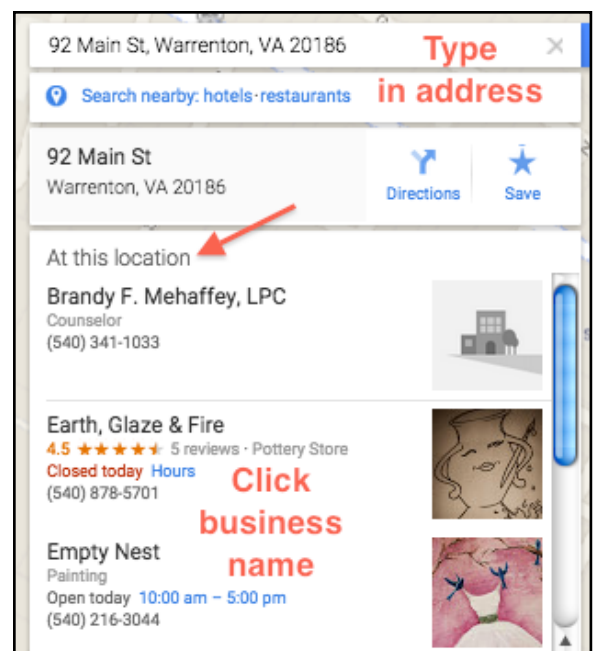
A new page will open where you can customize the settings for the client's Google Business Page. (See Figure 3, below):



Scroll to the bottom of the Settings page and look for the Profile section. If the Google Maps listing is connected to the Google My Business page, you will see the message, “This page is connected to Google Maps.” (See Figure 4, below.)



If the Google My Business page is *not connected* to the Google Maps Listing, you will need to go to **Google Maps** (<https://www.google.com/maps/>) and type in the business address in the search bar. The business name should show up at the address you have typed in. (See Figure 5, right.)





Click on the business name and then click on the small gear icon in the lower right side of the page to access the Google Maps link. A new screen will pop up with the link to the Google Maps listing. Copy that link and go back to the Google+ page and paste the maps listing into the space provided at the bottom of the Google+ page edit screen.

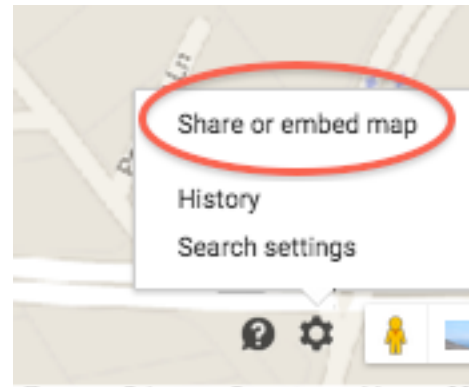


Figure 6

(See Figure 6, right.)

Once the Google Map is linked to the Google Business Page you can start optimizing the client's map listing. Go to [Google Map Maker](http://www.google.com/mapmaker) (<http://www.google.com/mapmaker>) and position the client's map pin at their front door, edit the map categories, edit the business NAP (Name, Address Phone) data, and remove or edit inaccurate information. (Note: as of May 27, 2015, Google was updating the Google Mapmaker tool and it has deactivated the mapmaker tool while the updates are pending. Google says it will reactivate the mapmaker tool after they have completed the updates.)

When you are satisfied with the accuracy and completeness of the Google Maps listing, return to the Google+ listing. Make sure that the Google Map categories are identical to the Google Business Profile categories, and be sure to populate the "About" section of the Google Business page with keyword rich content about the business's products, services, and areas served.

Make sure the website URL is linked in the Google Business Page, and that the business hours and other optional information is populated.

### **Google Maps Incubation Period**

Google may impose a 2-month waiting period for new Google Business listings before they begin to rank in the Google 7 Pack. If you have recently made substantial edits or changes to the website, Google+ Page, or Map Listing, the

client's Google My Business page may be stuck in the 2-month incubation period. If you've followed the steps above, and you can't get into the Map rankings, you may be stuck in this incubation period, or you may be competing with other businesses that are jockeying for position on the Google 7-Pack.

### **Step 3: Local Directory Listings**

Google's July 24, 2014 "**Pigeon Update**" (See <http://socialseowebly.com/googles-pigeon-update-can-make-or-break-you/>) placed increased importance on local directory listings as a factor in local search results. The best place to begin the local directory submissions process is with the top four "data aggregator" companies (Acxiom, Factual, Infogroup and Neustar Localeze). These companies disseminate business listing data to more than 300 other business directories all around the web.

Because accurate local business directory listings are an essential component of all Local SEO efforts, this task is another value-added service you can offer your local business clients as an upsell to the Google My Business / Google Maps service. Educate your clients about the value of expanding their total web presence by having hundreds of citations and listings all pointing back to their website, and charge them according to the added value this brings their business.

You can either create the listings for your client manually yourself, or use services such as White Spark (<http://www.whitespark.ca/>), Moz Local (<https://moz.com/learn/local/listings>) or Yext (<http://www.yext.com/>) to create the listings for your clients on a whitelabel basis and sell the service to the clients at a profitable markup.

Your job is to ensure that the client's Business Name, Address, and Phone Number (NAP) is consistently listed in every directory. The more Google sees the accurate NAP information, the more credible you are as an established business in Google's eyes.

## **Step 4: Update Google Business Page Content Regularly**

Google has confirmed that the frequency, engagement, and quality of Google Business Page posts is a ranking factor for Map Listings, and can help businesses get in -- and stay in -- the 7-Pack.

This gives you an opportunity to sell your clients on yet another service: Content creation and content management to improve their chances of getting into -- and staying in -- the Google 7-Pack listings by regularly posting new content and photos to the Google+ page. All content you create and post on Client websites, Facebook business pages and other social media properties can and should be shared on their Google My Business page as well.

### **Case Example**

The new owner of a local Paint The Own Pottery shop needed help fixing her Google My Business Listing. When she bought the shop, she did not realize the importance of an accurate Google My Business listing for her shop. Only after she bought the shop did she realize that she did not have the login details she needed to edit and manage the shop's Google My Business page.

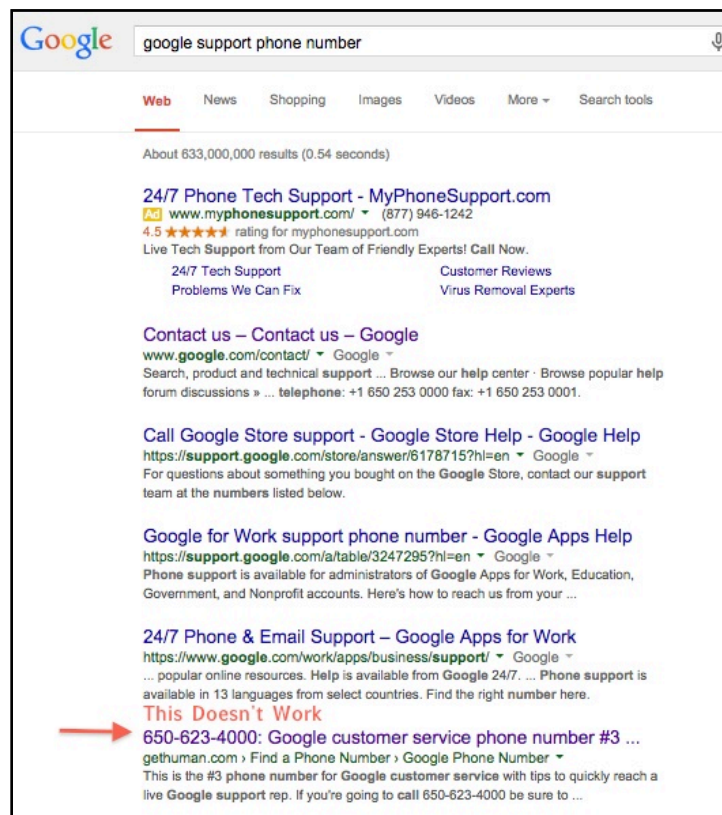
The shop's original Google My Business page (also known as a Google+ page or Google Business Listing page) had been set up by the previous owner's webmaster. The new owner made numerous attempts to contact the original webmaster to obtain the login information she needed to assume ownership of her shop's Google Business Page, but the webmaster never replied to any of her emails. That's when she called me for help.

# The Magic Phone Number: How to Get a Google Rep on the Phone to Help You

Since we were not able to get login access to the client's Google Business Page to update it properly, the only way to gain access to her page was to contact Google directly. Google's standard procedure is to send your message to the Google Business Page's existing owner/manager and ask them to cooperate with you. But this can take weeks! What you really want is to be able to get a Google rep on the phone with you for immediate resolution of the problem. This is where you get to shine as the Google Maps hero for your clients!

Google doesn't make it easy to find their direct support phone number.

I tried calling the Google Support Phone number listed in search results, but after going through their voice mail instructions to connect with a Google My Business support agent, my call kept getting disconnected.



Finally, after much searching, *I stumbled across the magic link that I am sharing with you now that you can use to get a Google support agent to call you immediately and assist with fixing incorrect Google Business Listings. Click the link below to access a Google Support Rep on the phone:*

[https://support.google.com/business/contact/local\\_pages\\_editing\\_help?hl=en&ec=incorrect\\_biz\\_info&cfsi=incorrect\\_biz\\_info&cfnti=escalationflow.email&cft=3](https://support.google.com/business/contact/local_pages_editing_help?hl=en&ec=incorrect_biz_info&cfsi=incorrect_biz_info&cfnti=escalationflow.email&cft=3)

When you click the link above, you will be taken to a new screen that looks like the page you see below. Fill in the required fields to proceed to the next step.

## Talk to a specialist

To get started, tell us about how you use Google My Business. We'll ask for your phone number and contact info on the next page. **All fields required**

What is your relationship to the business? \*

The information you provide helps us direct your question.

Select one ▾

How do you manage your business on Google? \*

If you use more than one, pick the most recent.

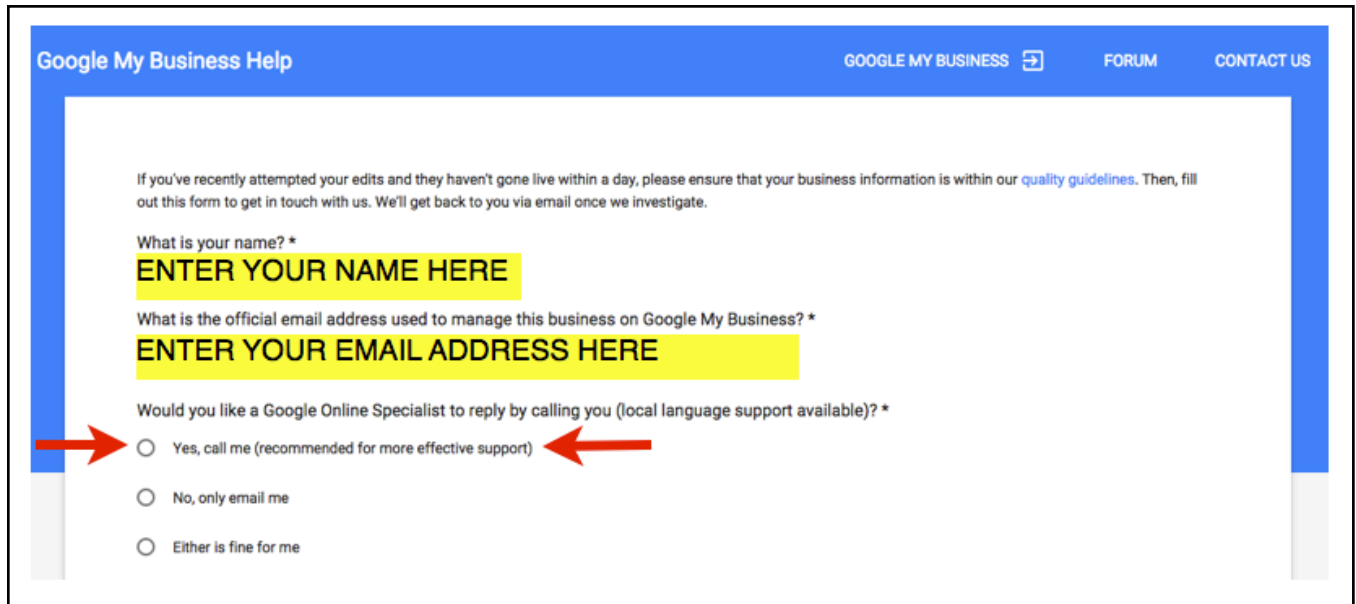
☐ Google My Business on your computer ?

☐ Google My Business Locations (bulk upload via spreadsheet) ?

☐ Google My Business on mobile ?


[PREVIOUS](#) [NEXT](#) \* Required field

On the next page, you will be asked to provide the name, email address and a call back number. Once you complete this information and submit the page, you will receive a call from Google almost immediately at the phone number you provided. (See illustration below.)



The screenshot shows the 'Google My Business Help' contact page. At the top, there's a blue header with 'Google My Business Help' on the left and 'GOOGLE MY BUSINESS', 'FORUM', and 'CONTACT US' on the right. The main content area is white. It starts with a paragraph: 'If you've recently attempted your edits and they haven't gone live within a day, please ensure that your business information is within our [quality guidelines](#). Then, fill out this form to get in touch with us. We'll get back to you via email once we investigate.' Below this are three questions, each with a yellow highlighted input field. The first question is 'What is your name? \*' with the input field containing 'ENTER YOUR NAME HERE'. The second question is 'What is the official email address used to manage this business on Google My Business? \*' with the input field containing 'ENTER YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS HERE'. The third question is 'Would you like a Google Online Specialist to reply by calling you (local language support available)? \*'. It has three radio button options: 'Yes, call me (recommended for more effective support)', 'No, only email me', and 'Either is fine for me'. Two red arrows point to the first radio button option.

Google My Business Help

GOOGLE MY BUSINESS  FORUM CONTACT US

If you've recently attempted your edits and they haven't gone live within a day, please ensure that your business information is within our [quality guidelines](#). Then, fill out this form to get in touch with us. We'll get back to you via email once we investigate.

What is your name? \*

ENTER YOUR NAME HERE

What is the official email address used to manage this business on Google My Business? \*

ENTER YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS HERE

Would you like a Google Online Specialist to reply by calling you (local language support available)? \*

☐ Yes, call me (recommended for more effective support)

☐ No, only email me

☐ Either is fine for me

Once we got the Google support agent on the phone, they were very helpful in assisting us with assuming ownership of the client's Google My Business page. To verify that the new business owner was legitimate, Google placed a call to the business phone number and provided a PIN number which had to be entered into the Google Business Page before the page could be edited and updated.

***IMPORTANT: Be sure to speak with your client in advance and arrange to have your client available to pick up the phone at the business' official listed phone number before getting the Google rep on the phone, as they will be calling the business owner to verify their business information. You don't want to waste your time and the Google rep's time by having them place a call to the business owner, only to discover that they are not available to speak with the Google rep when they place that call.***

Once this task was completed, I was able to login on the owner's behalf and update the Google page with the business' current information, including an updated website link, business description, current hours of operation, a new cover image and photos of the business.

The updated Google Business Page quickly rose to the top of search results for the phrase "Paint The Own Pottery Fairfax VA." This is a benefit to the business because it makes it easier for local customers to find her shop online and click to call for directions or additional information right from their mobile phones.

### **Disclaimer**

Google's algorithm (the rules and guidelines that determine which business listings they display at any given time to any given individual) may have changed since this document was published. While the steps outlined below were working for us at the time we published this document, Google may have changed its procedures since then.

If the client is in a business niche and location where the associated Google 7-Pack (or 3-Pack) is already filled with competing companies that have claimed and optimized their Google business profiles, it will require more effort on your part and the client's part to displace those existing companies in the 7-pack or 3-pack results -- especially if the listed companies have plenty of 5-star reviews on Google and other online review sites. There is no guarantee that you will be able to displace those companies in the 7-pack or 3-pack search results.

Nevertheless, if you follow the steps outlined below, you will have created an important online asset for the client's business -- the essential foundation they need to get found on Google and listed in the Google 7-Pack and Google maps.

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