

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION

Google Business Profile Optimization Guide for Independent Insurance Agencies

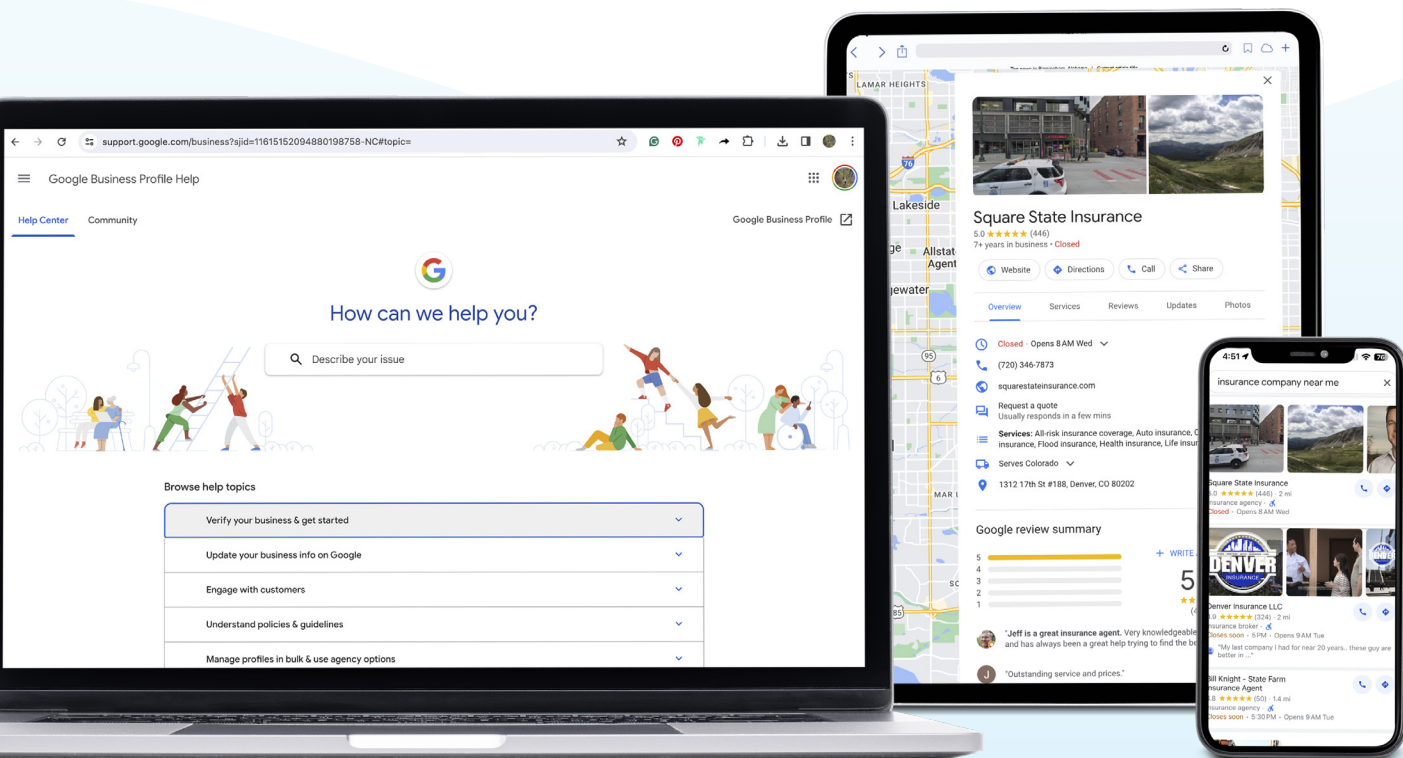


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WHAT IS IT? Google Business Profile is a free marketing tool provided by Google. It allows business owners to manage how they appear in online tools like Google Search and Google Maps.

WHY USE IT? When you set up a Google Business Profile, the photos and other details of your business, including location, services, and more, are used across Google, increasing your visibility to prospects in online search.

The goal of this guide is to leverage your free Google Business Profile to help you gain more visibility, traffic, and customers for your business.

OPTIMIZING YOUR GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

Introduction

One of the simplest ways to gain online traffic and customers is to set up and optimize your Google Business Profile.

A Google Business Profile (GBP) allows you to get key information about your agency like location, business hours, contact info and of course reviews in front of online insurance shoppers in real time and in a place they expect to find it before visiting your website. This gives them a direct path to engage with your agency and gets more leads into your funnel.

A top mistake agency owners make is not properly optimizing their GBP, or even worse not claiming it at all. Google receives nearly 90% of all US search traffic so properly setting up your profile is critical and can allow you to show up on page 1 local results even if your website URL does not rank the same.

Setting up a Google Business Profile is free and easy and can provide online shoppers the peace of mind they need to select your agency to do business with. ***The best part - setting up a profile and most of these updates can be made in just a few hours!***

Key Benefits of a Google Business Profile

- ✓ Increase your visibility across Google and exposure to potential customers
- ✓ Manage your online business information
- ✓ Build your business's reputation, earn trust, and gain credibility with reviews
- ✓ Opportunities to connect with customers in real time via business updates



GETTING STARTED WITH GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

Profile Set Up

Go to the Google Business Profile website:

business.google.com/create

You'll be prompted to complete the following steps:

STEP 1: Enter Your Business Name

Click 'Add Your Business To Google.' Or, if your agency is already listed on Google, you may be able to select it in the dropdown.

If your agency is already on Google Business Profile, you can skip ahead to the optimization section (page 3).

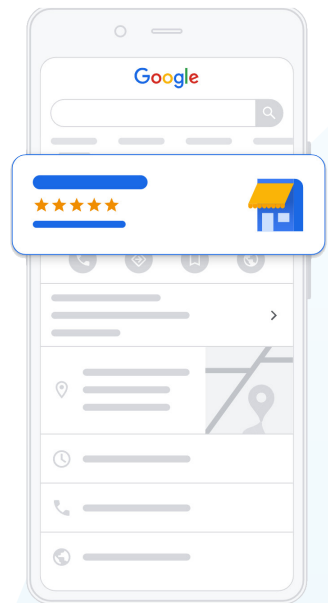
STEP 2: Start Building Your Business Profile.

- Add Your Business Name (as you'd like it to appear on Google)
- Add Your Business Category – Start typing and select a category that is most applicable (i.e. Insurance Agency).

Business name*
Insurance Pros of Salem

Business category*
Insurance
Insurance agency
Insurance broker
Insurance company

You can change and add more later



Find and manage your business

🔍 Type your business name

Can't find your business?

[Add your business to Google](#)

Business Categories:

One of many factors Google uses to determine how relevant your business is to people's searches. Categories strongly influence what search terms trigger visibility for your business and connect active customers directly to you.

Choose up to nine business categories. Edit them or add more at any time within your Google Business Profile Manager dashboard.

STEP 3: Enter Your Business Address

To add a physical location – select "yes" and add your address.

This location will show up on Google Maps and Search when nearby customers are looking for businesses like yours.

✔ **Verification may be required after this step.** If so, follow the prompts for a text or call with a verification code.

STEP 4: Add Contact Details

You will add your phone number and website here.

📌 **Pro Tip: Consistency.** Make sure your business information is listed exactly as it is on your website. Uniformity improves online visibility.

PROFILE SET UP

STEP 5: Add Your Services

Select the services your business provides to appear in relevant search results. Click “add a custom service” to add more - and you can always come back to edit or add more later.

STEP 6: Add your Business Hours

Let customers know when you are open for business

STEP 7: Final Set-up Customization Steps

You'll be prompted through these final profile customization steps below. Remember - you can always change or edit these later.

- ▶ **Enable Messaging:** This allows customers to message your business on Google for free!

Accept Messages

- ▶ **Add a Business Description.** Let customers learn more about your business by adding a description to your Google Business Profile. More on this on page 7.

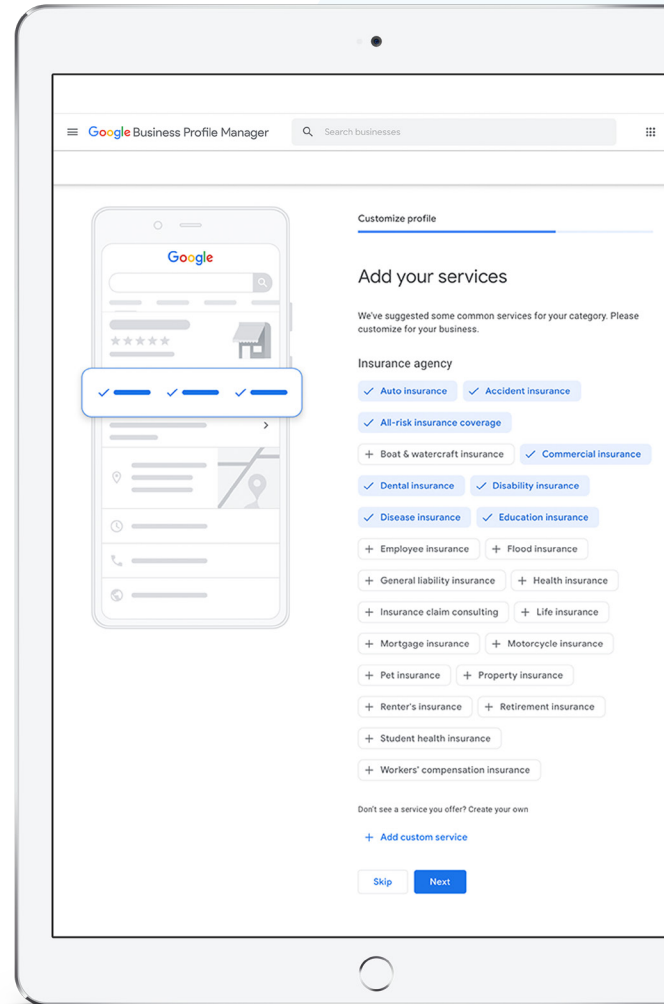
- ▶ **Add photos of your business.** Make it easy for shoppers to find your storefront or recognize your team. See more on this on page 8.

Lastly, you'll be given promotional options, such as “Claim your \$500 Advertising Credit” and prompted to “Try Google WorkSpace.” Skip these offers for now – they're always available to come back to later.

STEP 8: Google Verifies Your Business.

While Google verifies your business, you can continue making edits to your profile.

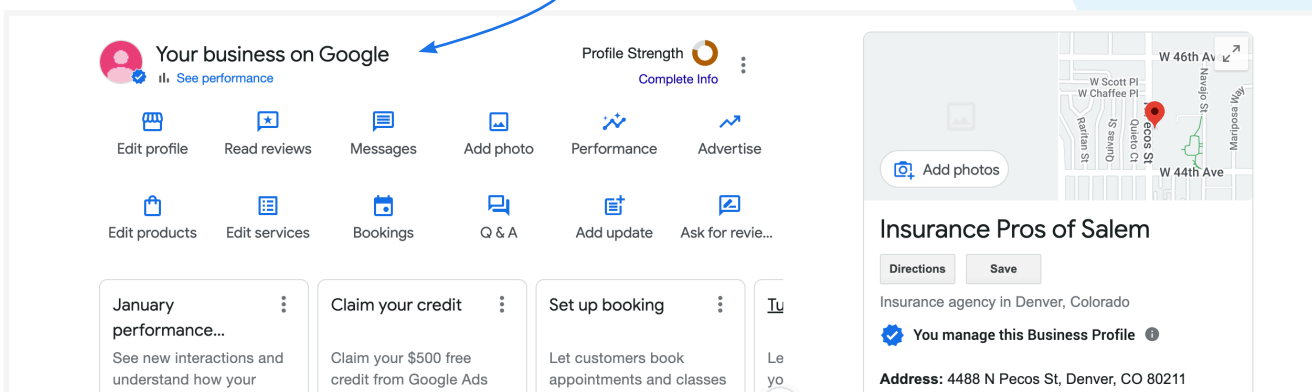
Click [Continue](#) and you'll be redirected to your Google Business Profile Manager.



Your edits will be visible once you're verified

You can continue to make updates to your profile at any time. All your edits will be visible to customers on Google once you've been verified.

[Continue](#)




EXPANDING YOUR PROFILE

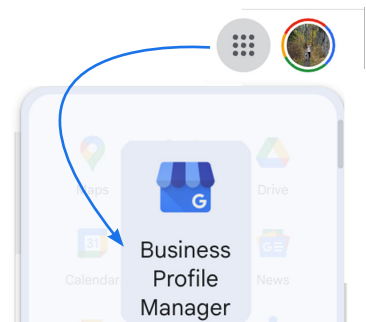
Increase Visibility

Before you can expand your profile and make edits, you need to get acquainted with the Google Business Profile Manager which lets you make edits, add details, and enhance your business profile.

Find Your Business Profile

Important: To find your profile, you must sign in to the Google Account associated with it. **Try any of these methods below to find your profile.**

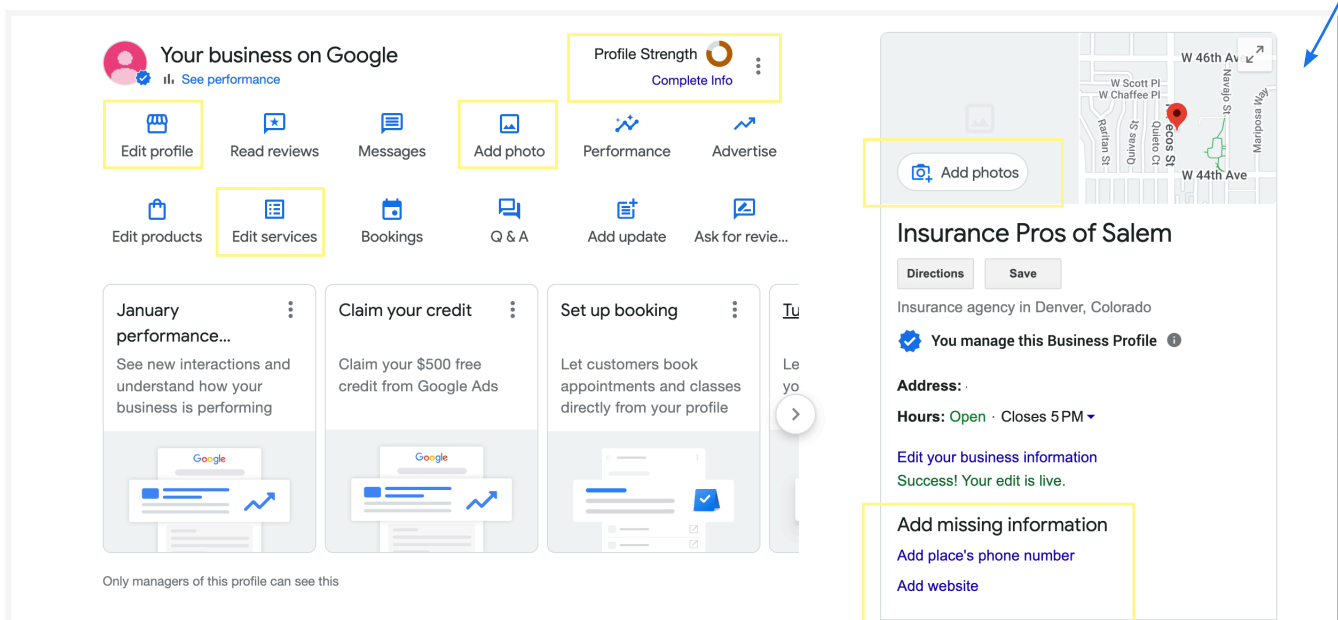
- ▶ Go to google.com/business and 'Sign-in' or simply click "Manage Now"
- ▶ On Google Search, search for "your business name"
- ▶ Or - if you're already signed in and within Google, you can click the dots next to your at the top right of the web page  to open a panel of options and select "Business Profile Manager"
- ▶ From both paths above, you'll see you business listing(s) (see below) - click "See Your Profile" to review and start expanding your profile.



Manage your Business on Google

Below is a screencap of an actual Google Business Profile Manager.

- ▶ We've highlighted the main links adding info and making edits, plus various prompts Google offers to help you complete your profile. You can click any of these to add info or make edits.



EXPANDING YOUR PROFILE

Google Business Profile Features can be completed to help your agency stand out while providing a more complete picture of how you do business to potential new clients. Utilizing these additional features lets Google know you are engaged and can lead to increased visibility.

Add a Business Description

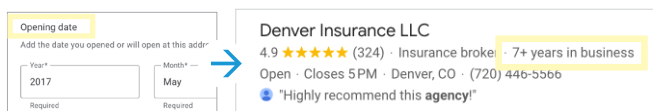
A well-written description elevates your profile and let's you showcase what makes your agency unique and why they should choose you over local competitors. Tips to make yours compelling:

- **Keep it short.** No more than 750 characters, just a few sentences for a concise overview.
- **Use keywords.** If you specialize in specific types of insurance, be sure to include those details so you can capture more organic search traffic.
- **Include what makes you stand out.** If you offer hard to find coverage or provide top notch customer service – add that information here.

Add Your Opening Date

Completing this field is important, as it will ensure your business is eligible to show the “years in business” snippet for local searches

- Edit Profile > About > Opening Date



Location Specifics – Add Service Areas:

- Edit Profile > Location > Add Service Area

🔖 **Pro Tip:** Specifying multiple service areas increases relevancy and enhances SEO

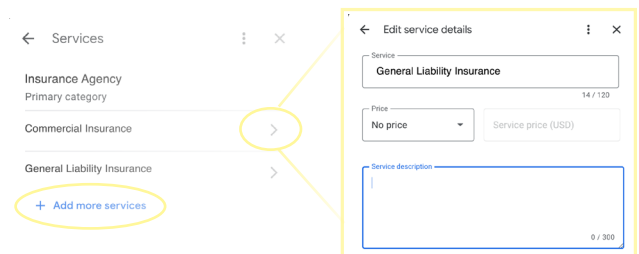
NOTE Avoid using certain words that might expand your standard of care. Words like “expert,” “advisor,” or “complete coverage” can create a higher standard of care in your state.

Add Additional Attributes:

Round out your profile with the following:

- **Add More Services** to ensure it is reflective of everything you have to offer.

Add Service Descriptions You can add details to each listed service. Click the arrow next to each service to open “Edit Service Details”



- **Add Social Profiles** Build customer trust by sharing your various social profiles.

- **Share how you identify...**

Edit Profile > More > From the Business

Identifies as Latino-owned Yes No

Identifies as LGBTQ+ owned Yes No

Identifies as veteran-owned Yes No

- **Share Your Inclusiveness:**

Edit Profile > More > Crowd

LGBTQ+ friendly Yes No

- **Customer Service Details:**

Language(s) and Online Appt. Options

Edit Profile > More > Service Options

English Yes No Offers online appointments Yes No

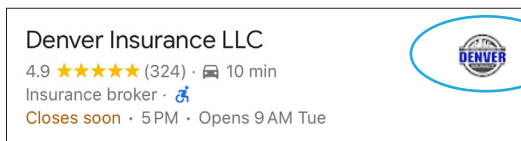
EXPANDING YOUR PROFILE

Adding photos and videos to your profile can help differentiate your business and provide the visual element consumers expect when making decisions. You have an opportunity to use photos to tell a story about your agency that can help potential customers see themselves doing business with you.

Make your profile visual by adding images

There are three main types of images you can upload to your profile – photo, logo, or cover photo – how you upload them determines where they will appear in your profile.

- **Cover photo:** Set a cover photo that best represents your business (typically shows up at the top of your profile or first).
- **Photo:** Add different photos to highlight features of your business to attract and inform customers.
- **Logo:** Adding your logo as a “logo” let’s your Business Profile highlight the logo in certain areas as an icon.



- **Pro Tip:** Try to start by uploading 20 photos. You’re trying to give people a “virtual experience” of what it’s like to do business with you. See below for ideas on what to include!

Photo and Video Ideas to include:

- **Exterior photos.** Make it easy for customers to locate your office building by showing them various exterior images.
- **Office Interior.** Give prospects a preview of what they can expect when doing business with you.
- **Team Photos.** Photos of your staff can help humanize your business by putting a face to a name.
- **Staff Initiatives.** Include photos of any community service or outreach your team has done to highlight yourself as an active member of your community.
- **Promotional Video:** Upload a video promoting your agency. The video should be professionally done and tell the story of what makes your agency unique.

- **Pro Tip: Change it Up!** Don’t just leave the same photos up forever by default. Add to them as your business shifts and grows. People want to know what they can expect when they come in today, not what they might have seen five years ago.

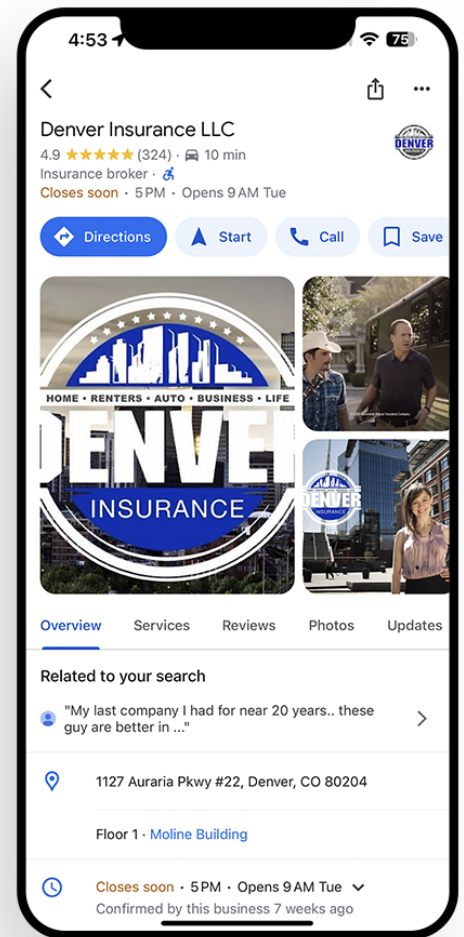


Photo & Video Guidelines

PHOTO GUIDELINES

Format: JPG or PNG.

Size: Between 10 KB and 5 MB.

Recommended resolution: 720 px tall, 720 px wide.

Minimum resolution: 250 px tall, 250 px wide.

VIDEO GUIDELINES

Duration: Up to 30 seconds long

File size: Up to 75 MB

Resolution: 720p or higher

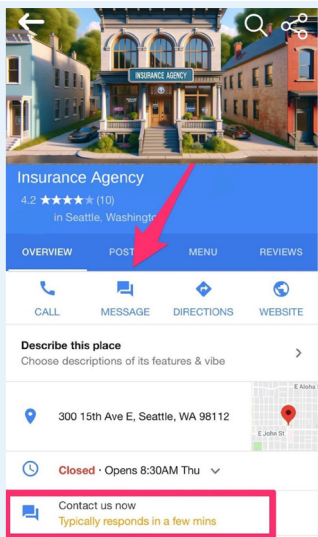
Leveraging Optional Business Profile Tools

Must-Try Features

Help your agency stand out while providing a more complete picture of how you do business to potential new clients by leveraging these dynamic tools within your Google Business Profile. Utilizing these additional options also lets Google know you are engaged and can lead to increased visibility.

Messaging: Google now allows you to directly communicate with potential customers in real time by activating the “message” feature. Why is this important?

90% of customers would prefer to text than make a phone call – allow prospects and customers to engage with you in the way they feel most comfortable.

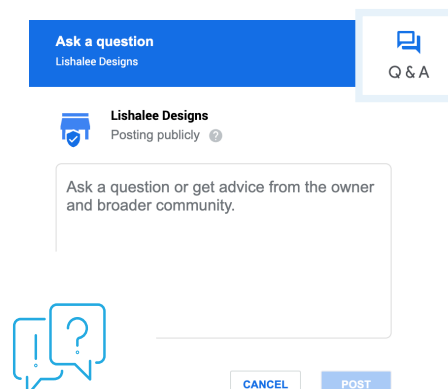


- ▶ Activate this feature by going to “Messaging” and clicking the “Turn on Chat” button in your dashboard. You will then receive messages that you can directly reply to using a web browser or your mobile device.
 - ▶ When you are able to answer questions immediately, conversion rates improve. Google will automatically calculate and display how quickly you usually respond, and your response time may be listed.
 - ▶ Only activate messaging if you can commit to responding in a timely manner. Otherwise, you risk missing key communications and highlighting a slow response time on your profile.
- 📌 **Pro Tip:** Add a custom welcome message. Your custom welcome message will be what users automatically receive when they message you. Something simple like “Thank you for reaching out. We look forward to working with you and will respond momentarily” works fine.

Learn more about using messaging features from [Google Support](#)

Q&A: Create and fill out a dynamic and informative question-and-answer section.

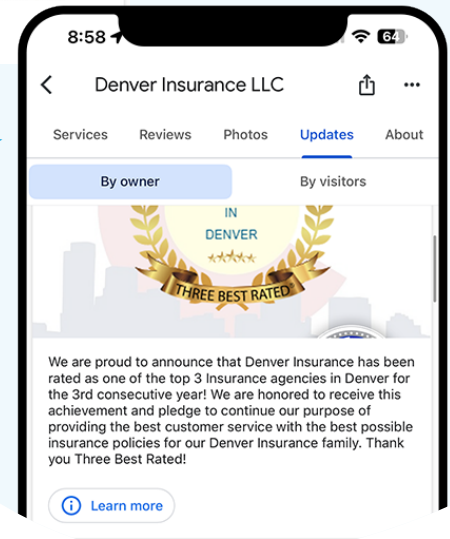
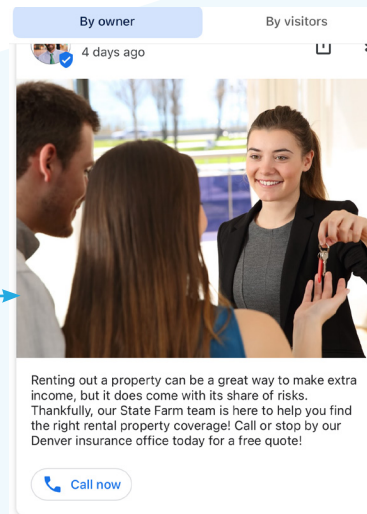
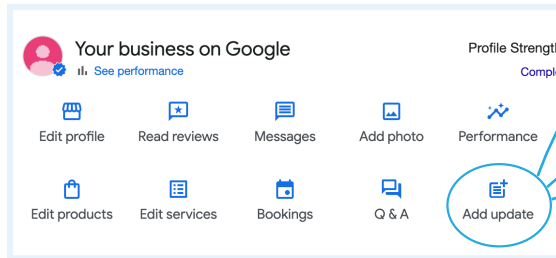
- ▶ Both questions and answers can come from the profile owner or from users – so if users are not organically submitting questions you can submit your own (along with the answers).
- ▶ This can act as an FAQ section so think about what questions you receive most often or what is most important for potential customers to know.



LEVERAGING OPTIONAL PROFILE TOOLS

Business Updates:

This is a great place to post anything newsworthy – a new team member, recent awards, a new office location or maybe a recap of any community outreach. You can also repurpose blog posts you've created.



Create your first Business Update Post:

- Go to your Business Profile. Select “Add Update”
- Choose the type of post you want to create
- In the dialog box, fill in the details
- Choose to publish or preview your post

Your shared updates can include text, photos, or videos to promote Business Profiles. You can also add a call to action button, like, “Call Now” or “Learn More.”

What you share is visible to others through the Updates, Overview, or From the Owner tabs of the Business Profile.

Benefits of Sharing Updates:

- When customers have more access to your business information and updates, they can make better decisions as they browse. This allows you to:
 - Directly communicate with your local customers.
 - Improve your customer experience with timely updates.
 - Promote your sales, specials, events, news, and offers.
 - Engage with your customers through videos and photos.

Learn more about adding posts about sharing business updates to your profile from [Google Support](#).

Pro Tips: Business Updates

Posts more than 6 months old get archived unless a date range is specified

For all upcoming events like fundraisers, webinars, community service – be sure to post them as an event with specific start and end dates/times.

Regularly updating this section lets Google know you are active and may increase your likelihood of appearing in search results.

Collecting • Monitoring • Responding

Google Reviews

Online reviews are a critical element of your agency's online reputation. Studies show that the nearly all online shoppers look at reviews and most find them just as credible as a personal recommendation.

Google rewards not only 5-star reviews, but frequent ones. You don't want to get a bunch of reviews one day then have none for several months or years. Google wants to be sure you are continuously providing excellent service.

Online reviews are the modern equivalent of word of mouth and every agency should have a process in place for regularly collecting reviews from customers.

90%



of online shoppers look at reviews

88%



find reviews just as credible as a personal recommendation

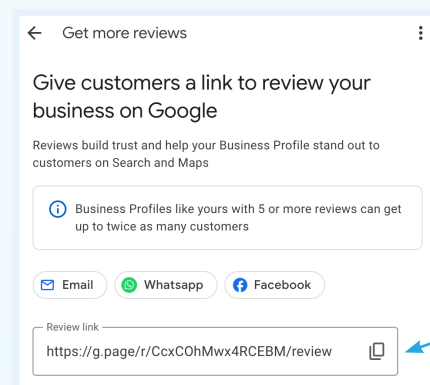
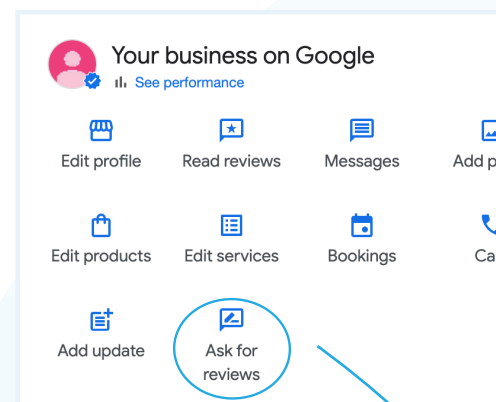
Ways You Can Begin Collecting Reviews

Give customers a link to review your business on Google. On your profile dashboard click "ask for reviews" and copy the review link.

Top ideas for ways to share the review link with customers:

- Include this link to share a review directly on your website, in your email signature, or on your business card as a QR code.
- Send an email directly to any or all of your customers requesting they leave you a review via the link.
- Post the review link and a request on social media channels.
- Following phone calls or in person meetings ask customers if they would be willing to leave you a review.
- Create an in-store sign with a QR code encouraging reviews.
- Incentivize your sales team to ask customers for reviews.

Make these efforts an ongoing part of your business operations – and remember – when asking for reviews, always be polite, gentle, genuine, and thankful for their time and business.



GOOGLE REVIEWS

Monitoring and Responding to Reviews you Receive

Be sure to routinely monitor the reviews you receive and plan on responding to each of them, not just the good ones. Consumers are almost 3x more likely to do business with a company that responds to negative reviews.



Responding to all reviews is an opportunity to start valuable conversations:

If you receive a 4 or 5 star review, you're obviously doing a great job! Be sure to acknowledge and say thank you.

- This an excellent opportunity to further improve their experience by letting them know you saw their review and appreciate them taking the time to leave one.

Reviews that are 3 stars or below provide an opportunity to right the ship or at least clarify things.

- Always reply to these less-than-stellar reviews. Communicate that their reviews are being read and you appreciate them taking the time to leave feedback.
- You can use this as a chance to ask for more information about what went wrong and how you could turn their experience into a 5 star one.
- Being open to these conversations AND to the feedback you receive may provide valuable insights that could help you avoid having customers feel the same in the future. This may also be a time to educate if customers are perhaps giving you a poor rating for things out of your control.

Overall, prospective customers reading your reviews will see that you are responsive, take accountability and value providing excellent service.



CONSUMERS ARE NEARLY

3X MORE
LIKELY

to do business with a
company that responds
to negative reviews



Maintaining your Google Business Profile

Success Strategies

Monthly Recap Email Admins of your Google Business Profile will automatically receive a monthly recap email highlighting how your profile is performing and identifying areas for improvement.

The email provides a comprehensive overview of key metrics and statistics on your Google Business Profile, including:

- ▶ **Direct and Indirect Searches:** Number of times your business appears in Google search results and how people find you.
- ▶ **Website Clicks:** Number of clicks on your website link from your Google Business Profile.
- ▶ **Driving Directions:** Number of times people request driving directions to your business.
- ▶ **Phone Calls:** Number of phone calls initiated directly from your Google Business Profile.
- ▶ **Photos and Video Views:** Number of times people view your photos and videos.
- ▶ **Reviews:** Number of new reviews left by customers, along with their average rating.
- ▶ **Messaging:** Number of messages sent and received through your Google Business Profile.
- ▶ **Appointments:** Number of appointments booked through your Google Business Profile.
- ▶ **Business Updates:** Number of views and engagements on your business update posts.

The monthly recap email has a link to a more detailed dashboard that showcases additional info such as data trends and a list of the top search terms visitors use when searching for you online.

Overall, the monthly recap email offers a concise yet informative snapshot of your Google Business Profile's performance. It helps you track progress, identify trends, and make data-driven decisions to optimize your online presence and attract more customers.



Performance

Track your Profile performance anytime.
Select "Performance" within your profile dashboard to view your report.

Stay Informed of New Platform Features

Fully leveraging the features of your Google Business Profile is not simply an option for insurance agents in today's digital age; it's a necessity. These tools give you the opportunity to enhance your online presence, reach potential new clients, and establish your reputation within the industry. By understanding and utilizing these features, you can significantly boost your visibility and attract more clients. Remember, the goal isn't just to use these features but to use them effectively.

Keep in mind that Google Business Profile is dynamic and constantly evolving with new features and functionalities. Staying informed about these updates and adapting your strategies accordingly will ensure your profile remains effective in the ever-changing online landscape. Consistently dedicating a bit of time and effort to your Google Business Profile can open up a new source of leads and be the key to accomplishing your business goals.

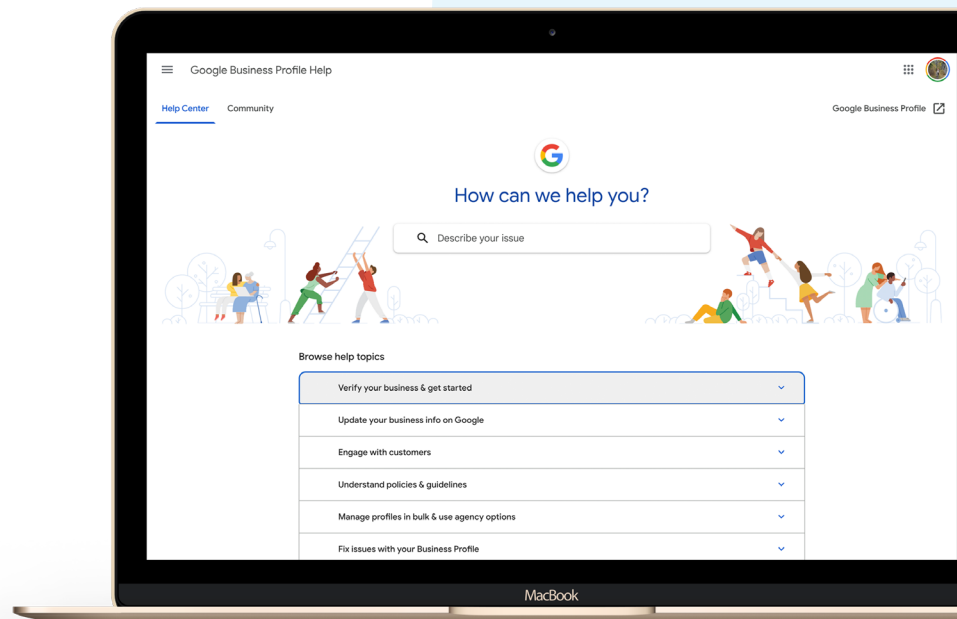


63,000+

Number of searches per second Google receives on any given day from active consumers who may be looking businesses like yours

Visit the [Google Business Profile Help Center](#) for more information on any details we've covered and for the latest updates on platform features:

[Google Business Profile Help Center](#)



We hope you now have a better understanding of the critical role your Google Business Profile plays in attracting more visibility, traffic, and ultimately, customers to your business.

Remember, your Google Business Profile is not a “set it and forget it” tool. Continuous engagement, updating your profile with fresh content, responding to reviews, and utilizing new features as they become available are key to maintaining relevance and staying ahead of your competition. The digital landscape is ever-evolving, and so should your approach to managing your online presence.

We encourage you to revisit this guide periodically, ensuring that you are making the most of the latest features and best practices. Your commitment to optimizing your Google Business Profile can significantly impact your agency’s online visibility and credibility, opening the door to a stream of potential clients ready to trust you with their insurance needs.

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