

# Google

Google is perhaps best known as a search engine, but the company also has tools that you can use to benefit your business. When people search for your business, or the products and services you offer, the results are ranked in what Google determines to be an order relevant to that search. The more relevant and authoritative you are digitally, the higher you will appear in the search results, and the more likely it will be that your business will be seen by potential customers.

To help you understand and expand your presence online, you can learn more about using Google's tools and how they can benefit your digital marketing campaigns. In this section, we explore Google My Business, SEO and Google Ads.

## Google My Business

Google My Business (also sometimes abbreviated as 'GMB') is a free tool that can help you manage the information that people see when they search Google for your business or the products and services that you offer. Registering your company and its location and [verifying it with Google](#) adds credibility in Google's eyes and helps people to find your business when they are searching Google. Customers can leave reviews and you are able to respond and interact with them.

Why you should use Google My Business:

- It gives your business a credible space where customers can see important business information like your opening hours, contact details and location, as well as images and a link to your website.
- You can read customer reviews to get insight and feedback on what they think of your business – and importantly, you can respond to these reviews and engage with customers.

- A well-optimised GMB listing can lead to a better presence in search results. GMB listings are displayed above the standard search results, which means the businesses shown there can gain more attention.

Google My Business serves two important purposes: to help business owners increase their online visibility and to help people find and review businesses in their local area. Whenever a person searches for something which Google determines to have local intent, for example: 'hotel London' or 'theme park in Newcastle', links to three Google My Business listings will be displayed below a map of the local area. When clicking on a business' Google My Business listing, people can see all the information you enter about your business.

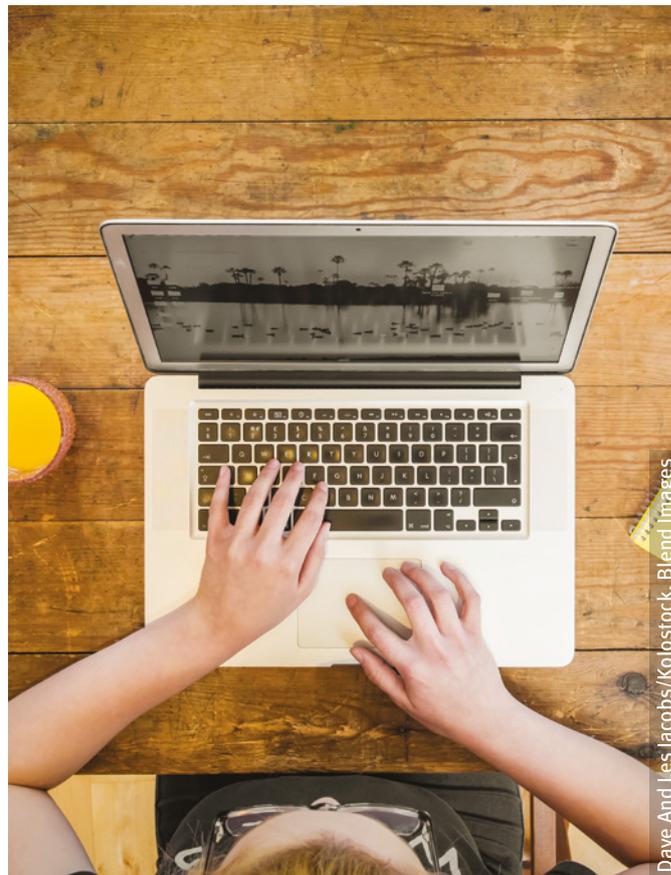
### Resources

Google has its own '[guidelines for representing your business on Google](#)', to help you make the most of the platform.



## Checklist

- ✓ Complete all the information Google asks for - your listing will have valuable data that will make it easier for potential customers to find your company. And if you don't fill that information in, someone else could. Anyone can suggest an edit to your business listing including your competitors; however, provided you created or claimed your listing, you will be able to review edits and revert back to previous correct information.
- ✓ Use GMB Posts – these are free and act like mini ads you can use to promote new products or seasonal offers.
- ✓ Use Google's booking button – if you have online booking software, you can connect it to your GMB listing and allow customers to book directly this way too.
- ✓ Allow customers to ask you questions through the Questions&Answers tool available. Remember that you need to login to the GMB dashboard to see if you have any new questions that need answering. For more information read the 'PushON' blog post '[Google My Business Questions and Answers Feature](#)'.
- ✓ If customers leave reviews for you — good or bad — make sure you respond to them (see more on reviews in the [TripAdvisor section](#)).



Dave And Les Jacobs/Kolostock, Blend Images

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# SEO

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the name given to the process of increasing the likelihood that your website will be seen and indexed well by search engines. When people search for something using a search engine, the results are ranked in order of how useful and relevant they are for that person's question, or the terms they used to search. A well-structured site (see the [Structure section](#)), with content (see the [Content section](#)) that is useful to a customer, will appear higher up in the list of results than one that is poorly put together or has content that Google thinks won't be useful or relevant to the person searching.

SEO is far more complicated than this and can take a while to get to grips with. Google is just one of the search engines that will rank your business website, but it currently is leading in terms of market share at over 90%.

Important things to consider when thinking about SEO:

- A well-structured website is essential, and a way to highlight this to search engines is to create a sitemap that search engines will use to understand your site as a whole.
- The content on your site should help demonstrate why a customer should choose you and be useful to them.
- Links to (and from) other well-constructed sites will help to give your website authority and make it considered more relevant.
- Reviews and testimonials also help with the credibility of your business' online presence.



SEO essentially involves making sure that your website is visible to as many people as possible. If you keep it up to date, relevant and helpful to your customers, it is more likely to be ranked well by a search engine. Although people may find your website through social media, most traffic will come from one of the major search engines like Google, Bing and Yahoo! so it's good to have a basic understanding of how they work and how they will view your site.

For example, the way that Google ranks your site depends on a lot of factors. In fact, Google's complex ranking algorithm has over 200 ranking factors that it uses to decide how high up in the results your business might appear. Read [Backlinko's '200 Ranking Factors: The Complete List'](#) to see them all.



## Checklist

- ✓ Read as much as you can about SEO or the aspects of it you find trickier to understand so you know what you need to do with your website.
- ✓ Install Google Analytics to gain an insight into who is visiting your site, to give you an idea of your online customer base and who you need to target your content towards.
- ✓ Find out how fast your site is, using a tool like Google's [PageSpeed Insights](#), to make sure it loads quickly enough for a user. If your site takes more than two to four seconds to load, your visitor may move on. If your site is slow to load, PageSpeed Insights or similar should provide details of what is causing the slow speed so that you can address these issues.
- ✓ Make sure the CMS you are using is compatible with SEO tools, so you can format any content you add to the site and make it search engine friendly. Not only does it show that you appreciate feedback, it also shows potential customers that you care.
- ✓ Make sure your [website is verified](#) in [Google Search Console](#). This is a useful tool for business owners as it shows you how your website is accessed by Google, what issues Google is finding on your site and how your site appears across Google's search results.

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Use [Google Trends](#) to understand the types of tourism-related terms people are using to search in Google, their relative popularity and whether a term is rising or falling over time. To use the tool, simply enter a search term into the search box and see how search behaviour is changing over time. You can then refine this data by geographic locations or compare it against other terms. Google Trends is great for understanding seasonality and identifying trending topics in your niche. For example, if you find a certain search term is being used more often, such as 'dog friendly accommodation Norfolk,' you can tweak the wording on your website or write a blog post specific to that search term to target your SEO. If you are targeting day-trippers from certain cities you can also see what search terms people living in those areas are using.

### Resources

A great place to start if you are new to SEO or simply want to refresh your knowledge is '[The Beginners Guide to SEO](#)' from Moz.

# Google Ads

While organic SEO practices can be applied to your website to aid your search engine rankings, you can also pay to advertise on many of the search engines. Paid search advertising allows you to choose keywords you want to show ads for and bid on them on a cost-per-click basis.

Keywords that are searched for will result in paid adverts being shown alongside organic results, and you will only pay if someone clicks on your ad. These ads normally appear at the top of a search engine results page, or to the side, and have looked increasingly more like organic results over time. At the moment, Google places a small green 'Ad' label on them.

Google Ads is an online advertising service developed by Google and is just one of many tools used as part of paid search. You set a budget, bid on your chosen keywords and pay for any clicks on any of your ads that are shown.

Some of the benefits of using AdWords:

- You can target specific groups of people, define the keywords you want to appear for and decide the messaging that you want to display.
- Along with the main ad text, Google Ads offers a number of 'extensions' which you can use to increase the size of your ad, thus allowing you to capture more of the ad space in search results. Extensions include options such as sitelink extensions (these sit below your ad and link to specific pages on your site) and location extensions (by linking your AdWords account to your [Google My Business](#) account, you can pull through your location to ads).

- You have complete control over your daily budget and maximum cost-per-click.
- There are a variety of targeting adjustment options including region, time of day, day of the week and device – and you can set your account to automatically bid higher or lower for people in particular groups.
- You can target those who already have shown an interest in your business and are potentially more likely to convert into sales. You can also target those who have been shopping around for similar products and services or who are similar to your previous customers.
- Google regularly launch new features to automate aspects of your campaign, including keyword bidding, ad creatives and other targeting settings. These can reduce the workload required to manage your account.

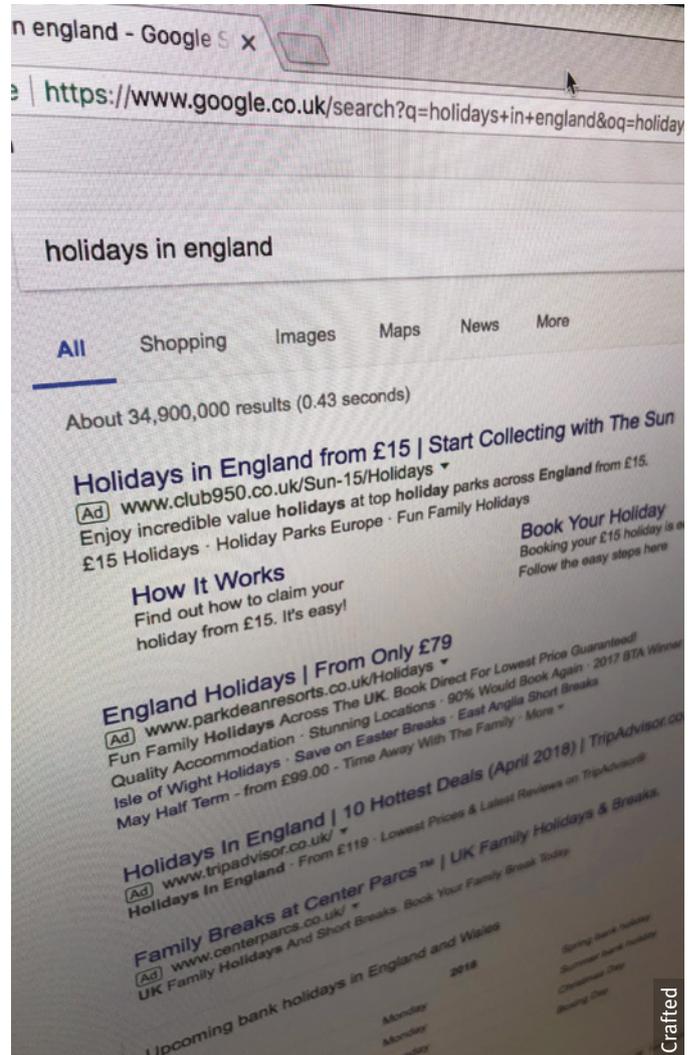
The more you bid to pay-per-click (PPC), the more likely your ad will appear in the search results. However, this is not the only factor that determines where it is placed. It isn't as simple as the highest bidder wins the highest place. Google also checks to see whether your advert is relevant and useful, and reviews how many times the ad has previously been clicked on compared to the number of times it has displayed. It gives it a rating called a Quality Score and this has a large effect on where your ad appears in the results. The higher the Quality Score, the better.

Although a useful tool, Google Ads can be time consuming to set up and to monitor. However, you can link it to your GA account to make its success easier to track.



## Checklist

- ✓ Consider more than one metric to make sure your advert reaches the most people possible. Look at how users are engaging with your ads as well as converting on your site.
- ✓ Align your Google Ads account structure to your website structure. You'll already be familiar with the layout of your site and know where to find relevant products etc. so it will help you to create the ads that represent certain products or services on your site too.
- ✓ Remember to include a call to action to encourage someone to do something next, for example 'order now' or 'search here for...'
- ✓ Make sure that if someone clicks on the ad it takes them to the most appropriate landing page that gives them all the relevant information that they need.



## Resources

When getting started using Google's tools in your digital marketing, [Google Digital Garage](#) is a fantastic resource. Learn about the tools you might use for your business through their online courses and training or simply read more about how you can use Google for support in digital marketing.

Read the '[What is Google AdWords and how does it work?](#)' article by eConsultancy that outlines how it works, plus potential drawbacks and alternatives.

While Google Ads can take a while to understand fully, before you start a campaign it is important to check that you are set up correctly. Use LunaMetric's '[Google AdWords Campaign Setup Checklist](#)' as a reference whenever you are using the tool.

If you're already using Google Ads, but would be interested in learning more and making more of the service, read "[PPC 101: A Complete Guide to PPC Marketing Basics](#)" by Search Engine Journal which is filled with useful tips.