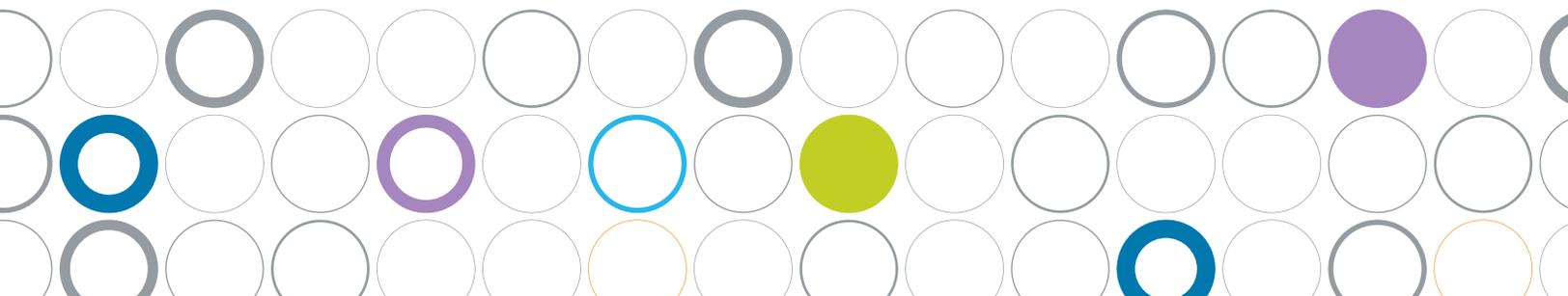


# How to Achieve Remarkable Results in Local and Mobile Search

A Step by Step Guide

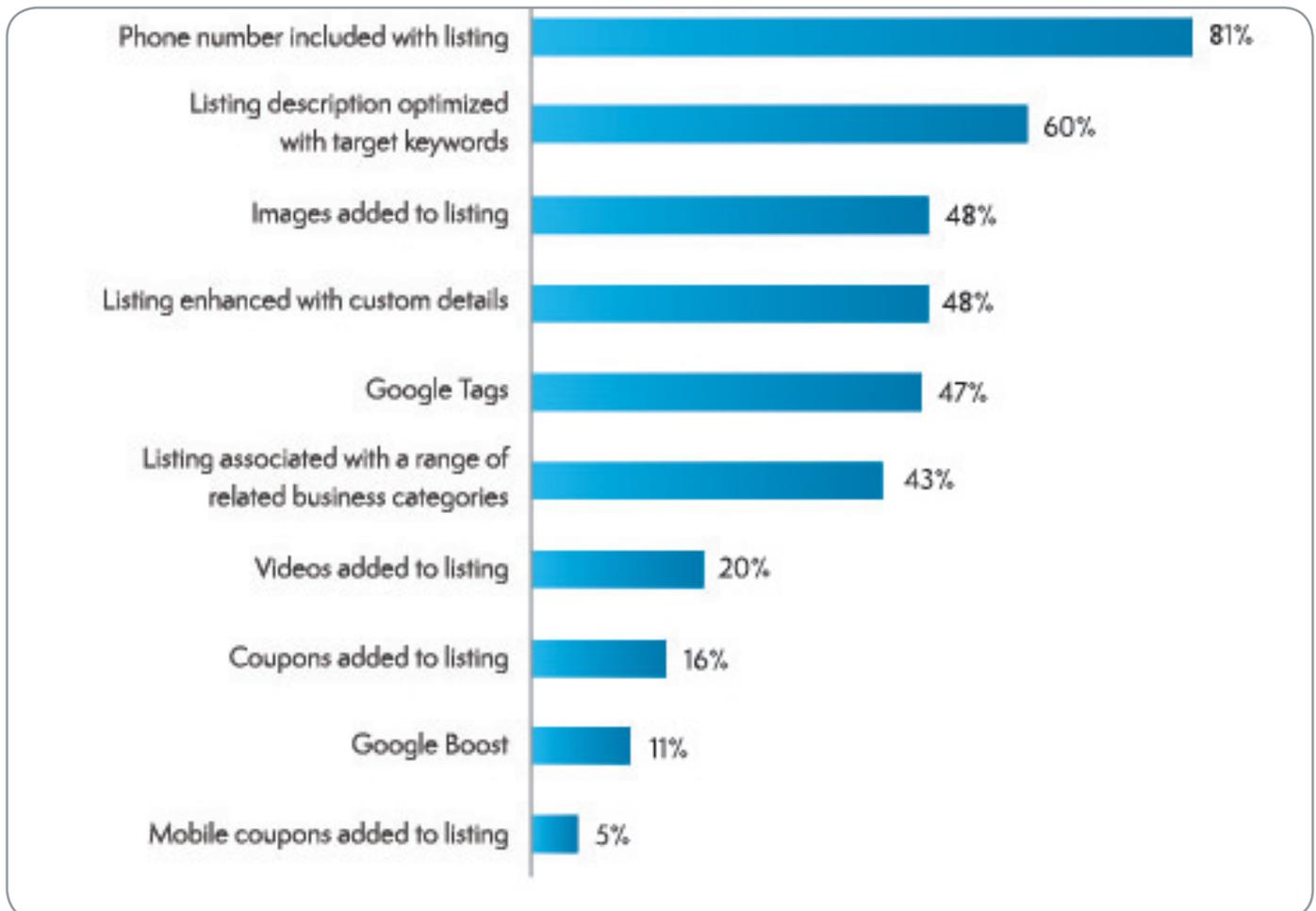


If your business has multiple stores, branch offices, dealers, and/or a local presence, but lacks local web and mobile coverage on the Internet, this can become a lost opportunity.

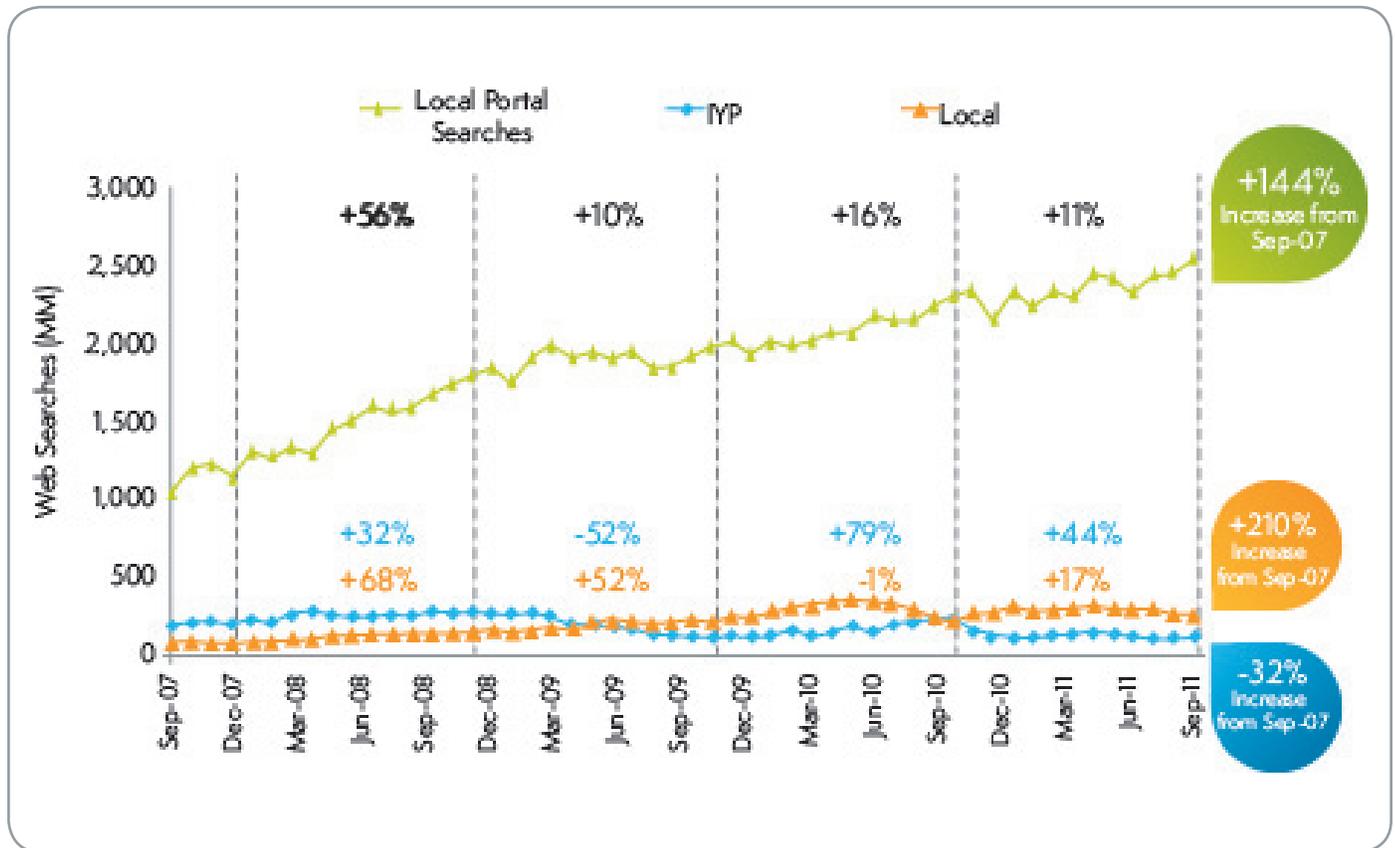
A key finding from Marketing Sherpa’s 2012 Search Marketing Benchmark report states that local business tactics are being underutilized, which suggests most local businesses are not optimized for local search marketing. These businesses are missing the opportunity of making more conversions, resulting in a lost opportunity cost.

Local business listings with reviews, directions, photos, etc., are now displayed on top of organic search results, making it more important than ever to be found through local search on all the major search engines. Despite this, the Marketing Sherpa study found that a mere 37 percent of the companies queried had claimed their free local business listing on one or more search engines. Of those, most companies did not use all the available listing methods, or “conversion tools.” Below is a list of the methods queried, and the percentage of marketers making use of these conversion tools.

### Local Business Listing Methods Used in Local Search Listings (Conversion Tools)



Customers and prospects are searching for your business online 24/7. Google’s former Vice President of Location and Local Services, Marissa Mayer, once said 20 percent of its searches are local, and that number goes up to 40 percent for mobile searches. More recently, it has been estimated that 50 percent of searches have local intent. As shown below, the local search category increased 144 percent over the last five years. Your customers and prospects are using online search engines on the Web and Mobile Web to find local businesses; therefore, you need a local presence to get found.



Recent studies also show that 70 percent of U.S. households use the Internet when making *local buying decisions*. The latest trends indicate Yellow Pages advertising, newspaper advertising and direct mail are becoming less effective as usage keeps going down. While the number of online local searches for products and services is expected to grow at a rate of 33 percent each year for the remainder of the decade, print business directories like the Yellow Pages are expected to decline by four percent per year.

Another growing trend is users posting customer reviews and sharing their reviews via social media sites like Yelp and Epinions. Reviews now rank higher in search results because local search algorithms place more weight on the quantity of reviews. The importance of encouraging reviews was not lost on retailers and merchants, as 88 percent of respondents to the Marketing Sherpa report said customer reviews are important for achieving marketing objectives.

## Local Listings are the Most Relevant and Trusted Results

Consumers chose local search results almost two to one over organic results, while paid search results at the top and side scored lowest in the 5th Annual 15miles/LocalEze Local Search Usage Study conducted by comScore (2012). Customers in local search mode prefer business listing information with NAP (name, address and phone number) to promotional advertising. Local searchers' post-search contact methods broke out as follows:

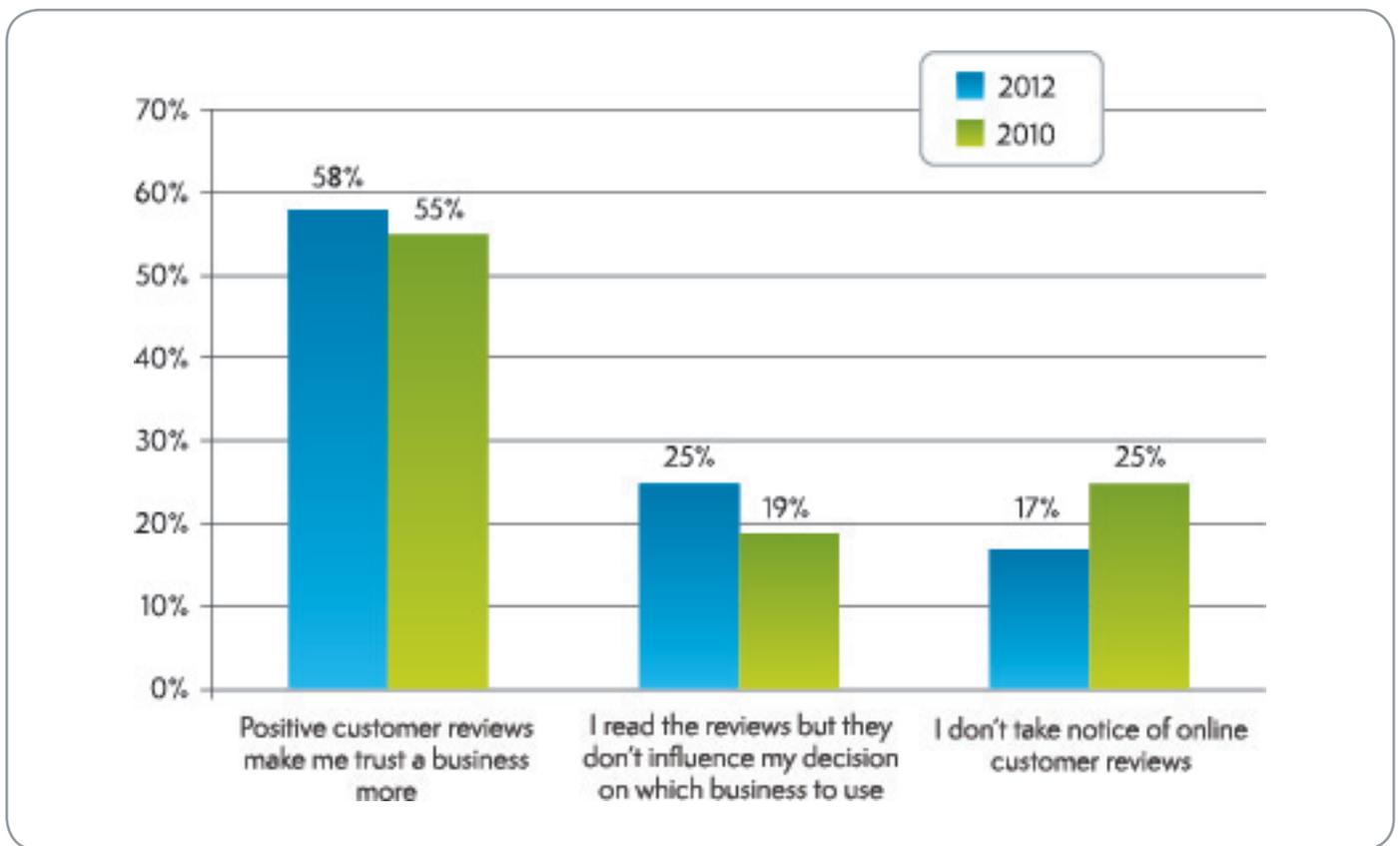
- 8% via store visit
- 29% via phone
- 12% via online contact

## Impact of Ratings and Reviews

Online reviews posted by consumers play an ever increasing role in helping shoppers assess the quality and trustworthiness of businesses, products and services. Online reviews provide subjective information for buyers, allowing them to prejudge a business or product based on the experience of other consumers before making a buying decision. The 2012 Local Consumer Review Survey by BrightLocal reported the following:

- 58% of consumers trust a business with positive online reviews
- 72% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations

*58% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations*



### Impact of Tablets and Mobile on Local Search and Buying Behavior

The LocalEze-comScore study shows that tablet owners are the most active local searchers and have a higher likelihood of making a purchase.

- 64% percent search weekly for local businesses on tablets
- 86% made a purchase from their most recent tablet-based local search

Smartphone users also conduct local searches from their devices.

- 61% conduct local searches from their mobile device
- The No. 1 reason for local searches on mobile devices: fast information on the go

### Changes in Consumer Buying Behavior

According to the LocalEze-comScore study and other research, consumers have been finding local business information in new ways, including social, daily deals, couponing and apps.

- 15% of local searchers found local businesses from social networking sites
- 60% are using daily deals
- 81% of consumers use coupons (NCH, 2012)
- 49% of mobile and tablet users use apps for local business searches
- 82% of local searchers follow up offline via in-store visit, phone call, or purchase (TMP-comScore)
- 57% of Internet users shop online and purchase offline (NPD Group)
- 61% of local searches result in purchase (TMP-comScore)

How can you take advantage of the upward trend in local and mobile search? Following is a step by step guide to optimize your multi-location business for local mobile and organic search.

### Step 1 – Identify the Lost Opportunity

Lost opportunity cost is the result when retailers and merchants can't be found in search engines for their strategic keywords at the time when shoppers are looking to buy. There are two reasons for lost opportunity: (1) brands are not locally optimized for local keywords; and (2) brands are not maximizing conversion tools for the Web and Mobile Web.

The process of identifying lost market opportunity in local (maps), organic (SEO) and mobile (smartphones, tablets) requires several labor-intensive steps:

1. Identify all the cities you do business in (locations with a physical address)
2. Acquire the national search volume for your relevant high-volume keywords
3. Calculate the local monthly search volume for your relevant high-volume keywords
  - a. Google estimates 50% of all searches are local in nature
    - i. This can vary depending on the keyword/product/service, etc.
4. Estimate the percentage of purchases from local search
  - a. comScore estimates 82% of local searches result in some type of activity
    - i. Foot-traffic into store
    - ii. Form-fill online (quotes, etc.)
    - iii. Purchase (ecommerce)
    - iv. Telephone call (set an appointment)

5. Calculate your “No First Page Coverage” for each keyword in the cities where you do business
6. Estimate your average order value (AOV)
7. Calculate the total market opportunity
  - a. Multiply the estimated number of sales by the AOV
8. Calculate the total lost opportunity cost
  - a. Multiply the total market opportunity by your “No First Page Coverage”
9. Calculate the overall monthly local market opportunity per location
  - a. Divide your total lost opportunity cost by the number of city locations where you do business

When completed, you will have a much better understanding of the lost opportunity (dollar value) for each of your keywords down to the city and/or physical store location.

### Step 2 – Create Web and Mobile Web Location Landing Pages for Major Search Engines

If your brand is not optimized for local search in Google+ Local, Yahoo! Local, and the Bing Business Portal, a Web/Mobile Store Locator can optimize your listings automatically and consistently for all locations:

- Claim the brand’s managed listing
- Verify each business location address and telephone number
- Provide enhanced content:
  - o Business hours
  - o Payments accepted
  - o Localized description
  - o Local categories
  - o Local images
  - o Local coupons
  - o Local phone reporting
  - o Social network links
  - o Unmanaged URLs
  - o Links to store pages
  - o Links to mobile pages

### Step 3 – Optimize Location and Mobile Landing Pages for Local SEO

The process begins with identifying what you have vs. what you do not have. This can be referred to as an SEO Scorecard for both Digital Storefront and Mobile Storefront.

There are four web elements to validate and several dozen areas of analysis to document in your SEO Scorecard as Complete vs. Incomplete. For both the Web and Mobile Web, look at these four items in-depth:

1. Web Store Locator
  - a. There are 20 variables to meet compliance with search engine best practices
2. Individual Location Landing Pages
  - a. There are five variables to meet compliance with search engine best practices
3. Local Page Enhanced Content
  - a. There are 14 variables to meet compliance with search engine best practices
4. Best Practice Localized SEO on each page
  - a. There are 10 variables to meet compliance with search engine best practices

The above features, their characteristics and enhancements, along with search engine best practices integration, Information Services and Internet Yellow Pages (IYP) submissions, have been packaged into a singular automated solution. A variety of

vendors claim to include bits and pieces of the 49 elements cited above; however, our specific methodologies and details are considered to be intellectual property related to the author's specific solution. For the purpose of this whitepaper, we have chosen not to promote or disclose any particular vendor, including ourselves. This whitepaper is intended to present the facts as a non-promotional, technical and editorial guide on what is required to address the sophistication of achieving remarkable results in local and mobile in today's enterprise-level, multi-location business environment.

### Step 4 – Create Multiple Conversion Tools on your Location Pages for a Great User Experience

Compounding the fact that brands may not be optimized for local keywords on the Web or Mobile Web, is the fact that brands are not maximizing conversion tools for web and mobile. In order to be found, brands need a set of conversion tools that provide consumers with the features they expect to find on the Web and Mobile Web when looking for local businesses. These conversion tools consist of the data described below:

- Business data consistency on the Web and Mobile Web
- Business hours, holiday hours
- Click to telephone call
- Click to map and directions
- Click to shopping
- Redeem coupons: print to web to phone
- Promotions, national to individual store locations
- Reviews
- Gift cards
- Incentives
- Loyalty programs
- Forms to join/register

The data above is information consumers like to have handy and in the same place for convenience and time saving when shopping or finding events, restaurants, entertainment, and so forth. In today's busy world, time is of the essence, and consumers will be attracted to local businesses that offer consumers all this information at their fingertips when searching the Web and Mobile Web.

Conversion tools are features that can be provided by a web store locator and/or a mobile store locator software solution. Such a solution can accomplish the following:

- Recognize the user IP address on the web/mobile store locator
- Allow the user to search by city, state, zip and neighborhood (web and mobile)
- Display all the same basic location data to users (web and mobile)
- Display the following data: address, telephone, driving directions, hours, enhanced data, local store/office images, maps, join/register forms, local promotions, text to mobile features, social sharing, social check-in's, links to circulars and rich media YouTube video
- Provide an individual location page for each store/office, dealership or franchise (web and mobile)
- Provide all the basic location data, address, telephone, etc. for each page
- Provide enhanced content for each location page (web and mobile)
- Provide specific content written for every specific location
- Click to driving directions from the location page
- Provide hours of business operations
- Display enhanced data

- Display local store/office images, maps, join/register forms, local promotions, text to mobile features, social sharing, social check-in's, links to circulars, and rich media YouTube videos
- SEO optimize each location page for local search keywords (web and mobile)
  - Local title text
  - Local keyword tags
  - Local description
  - Local headlines
  - Local ALT image tags
  - Local keywords in body content
  - Breadcrumbs
  - Site map

### Step 5 - Optimize, Publish and Distribute Bulk Data Feeds to Information Services, IYPs and Local Maps

Many brands are not fully optimized for Google+ Local, Yahoo! Local and the Bing Business Portal. Their data feeds must be enhanced in the local search engines to satisfy user intent if they want to take advantage of opportunity on the Web. Brands do this quickly and easily with web/mobile store locator software. The software would automatically provide:

- Updated data feeds
- Updated location data changes
- Updated new store/office dealer or franchise store openings
- Updated closed store/office dealer or franchise stores
- Updated hours of business operations

#### Examples of Information Service Providers and IYPs:

##### Local Maps

The process of local map optimization involves direct management and optimization of the three major search engine map programs.

1. Google+ pages direct via bulk feed
2. Yahoo! Local pages via manual feed
3. Bing Business Portal Maps pages via bulk feed

Optimization of these feeds is a critical path in the overall local search optimization process. Simply providing the basic location data requested by the engines is not enough; several very important fields within the data feed must be optimized.

##### Internet Yellow Pages

If your brand is not optimized for IYP listings, a web/mobile store locator can optimize your listing in this directory automatically and consistently for all locations:

- Submit enhanced data feeds to IYPs
- Update the feeds as follows:
  - Location data changes
  - New openings
  - Moves to new locations
  - Closed locations
  - Change of hours
  - Holiday hours

### Local Search Directories

If your brand is not optimized for SuperPages, YellowPages, Merchant Circle and HotFrog, a web/mobile store locator can optimize your listing in these directories automatically, and consistently provide for all locations:

- Enhanced content
- Localized description
- Local categories
- Local images
- Local coupons
- Local phone reporting
- Social network links
- URL tracking
- Link to store page
- Link to mobile page

### Local/Mobile Search Information Service Listings

If your brand is not optimized for local/mobile search information service listings, a web/mobile store locator can do the following automatically and consistently for all locations:

- Submit enhanced data feeds to information services and GPS
- Keep the feeds updated
- Provide location data changes
- Update for new, closed or relocated stores
- Update when location hours change
- Add holiday hours

### Local Business Data Aggregators

LocalEze, InfoUSA and Acxiom are local business data aggregators that provide YYPs, search engines and GPS with enhanced local business data. A web/mobile store locator can make their work easier by managing the following automatically and consistently for all locations:

- Brand listing
- Address, telephone number
- Enhanced content
- Localized descriptions
- Local categories
- Local images
- Local coupons
- Local phone reporting
- Social network links
- Track URLs
- Link to store page
- Link to mobile page

## Step 6 – Bolt on Web Analytics to Track Clicks and Conversions (including Click-to-Call)

If your brand does not track all mobile and telephone analytics, a web/mobile store locator can provide the following analytics data automatically for all locations:

- Analytics by GEO location (global per location)
  - o Per store
  - o Web traffic
  - o Mobile Web
  - o Search terms
  - o Search engines
  - o Browser types
  - o IP address
  - o Operating systems
  - o Telephone analytics
  - o Call traffic volume by:
    - Location or globally
    - The Web and Mobile Web
    - Call duration
    - Calls missed
    - Time of day reporting
    - Reverse look-up (mail list)
    - Call recording
    - Brand announcement
    - Routing by division
  - o First page position monitoring and reporting per location
    - Monitor and report first page listings
    - Presence and position
      - By location
      - By search term
      - By search engine

### Multi-Location Businesses Need Automation

Managing the local search optimization process for large enterprise merchants, franchise dealerships and multi-national retailers requires some automation.

- A single location business takes 15 man-hours to locally optimize one business location.
- A business with 100 locations requires 1,500 man-hours to locally optimize each business location.
- A business with 1,000 locations requires 15,000 man-hours to locally optimize each business location.

National chains and global brands with hundreds and thousands of locations require a centralized CMS with automated capabilities for managing a large number of variables, including:

### Business NAP

- Business name
- Business address
- Business phone number
- Geo-code – longitude-latitude
- Location – store number
- Franchise or corporate ownership
- Division – taxonomy

### Business Information

- Business description
- Business hours
- Business categories
- Business services
- Storefront images
- Employees
- Products (feeds)
- Payment options – credit cards, PayPal, etc.
- Cities served
- Zip codes served
- Neighborhoods served
- Location landing page URL
- Mobile location landing page
- Home page URL

### Business Place Pages

- URL, username and password
- Google+
- Yahoo! Local
- Bing Business portal maps
- Yelp
- Facebook
- Twitter
- SuperPages
- YellowPages

### Business Administrative Accounts

- Username and password
- LocalEze
- Info USA
- Axiom
- UBL
- CitySearch
- CityGrid
- Google Webmaster Central
- Bing Webmaster
- Google Analytics
- Telephone reporting

## Business Brand

- Brand name(s)
- Brand corporate address
- Brand corporate logo
- Brand social page(s) – social mentions, social sentiment
  - Twitter
  - Facebook
- Brand description
- Brand number of locations
- Brand mobile apps

## Business Reviews

- Facebook
- Yelp
- Yahoo!
- Bing
- Google+
- Foursquare

## Business Promotions

- Local and national circulars
- Local and national coupons
- Local and national catalogs
- Local and national loyalty programs
- Local and national gift cards
- Local and national sponsorships and events
- Local and national SMS campaigns

And, most importantly, keeping all of the above data up-to-date, including:

- Opening a new store or location
- Closing an old store or location
- Evaluating national, state, city and individual location analytics
  - Per location or aggregate

## Conclusion

Your customers and prospects are using online search engines on the Web and Mobile Web to find local businesses; therefore, you need a local presence to get found. By using these tips, tactics, and technologies, local businesses can maximize their presence on the Web and Mobile Web and ultimately drive more traffic and revenue to their stores.

## About Rio SEO™

Rio SEO, a new brand spun-out by Covario, Inc., is a dedicated business unit focused on providing best-of-breed technology solutions for earned and owned digital media programs, specifically for SEO (search engine optimization) and social media marketing. Based in San Diego, it is among the largest independent providers of SaaS-based SEO automation solutions with patented technology. Rio SEO offers application modules for organic search and social media with tools for content marketing, auditing, reporting, competitive analysis, mobile site optimization, SEO execution, and local SEO automation. Rio SEO software clients include brand marketers, retailers, and digital agencies. More information about Rio SEO is available at [RioSEO.com](http://RioSEO.com).

