

FREE AUDIT CHECKLIST

Local SEO Audit Checklist 2026

37 checkpoints to diagnose why your business is not ranking in local search and exactly what to fix first.

DIGITAL ESTATE MEDIA

Prepared by **Digital Estate Media** — digitalestatemedia.com

1 – GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

- Business name matches signage exactly – no keyword stuffing**
GBP name must match your legal registration. Keyword-stuffed names violate Google guidelines and risk suspension.
- Primary category is the most specific accurate match**
e.g. "Plumber" not "Contractor." Primary category drives what searches you appear for in the map pack.
- Phone number matches website, directories, and all citations (NAP consistency)**
Even formatting differences create ambiguity. Pick one format and use it everywhere.
- Website URL points to your main domain (not a subdomain or portal)**
Ensure the URL passes link equity to your domain, not a third-party directory.
- Service area defined for every city and neighbourhood you serve**
For service-area businesses, set your service radius. Google uses this for "near me" queries.
- Business description uses target keywords naturally in first 200 characters**
Lead with what you do and where. Include your top 2-3 service keywords early.

- Google Posts: at least 2 per month**
Fresh posts signal an active profile. Each post links back to a relevant page on your site.
- 10+ photos uploaded, updated quarterly**
Profiles with photos get 35% more clicks. Include exterior, team, and work photos.
- Q&A section pre-populated with 5+ common questions and controlled answers**
Anyone can answer questions on your profile. Pre-populate before others do.

2 – REVIEWS AND REPUTATION

- 20+ Google reviews with average 4.5+ stars**
Review count and rating are disproportionately powerful for map pack rankings.
- Systematic post-transaction review request process in place**
Email or SMS sent within 24h of project completion with a direct link to your review page.
- All Google reviews have a response (positive and negative)**
Response rate is a GBP quality signal. Responses to negative reviews convert skeptical prospects.
- Reviews mention services and location keywords naturally**
Include location in your review request copy to encourage location-relevant reviews.

3 – NAP AND CITATION CONSISTENCY

- NAP identical across GBP, website, Yelp, YellowPages, Foursquare, BBB**

Run a citation audit. Inconsistent NAP across major directories suppresses local rankings.
- LocalBusiness schema on homepage with matching NAP**

Schema must match GBP exactly: same phone, same address format, same business name.
- 10+ industry-specific citations built**

Industry directories carry more weight than generic ones. Prioritize vertical-specific platforms.
- No duplicate GBP listings for the same location**

Duplicate listings split review equity and create NAP conflicts. Merge via GBP support.

4 – WEBSITE LOCAL SEO

- Title tags include primary keyword plus city on every service page**

e.g. "Plumber in Mississauga | Brand Name." Title tags are the #1 on-page local relevance signal.
- Dedicated city/service landing pages for each location served**

One page per city per service. "Plumbing Mississauga" and "Plumbing Brampton" are separate pages.
- Core Web Vitals: LCP under 2.5s, CLS under 0.1, INP under 200ms on mobile**

Page experience is a ranking factor. Check via Google Search Console Core Web Vitals report.
- Click-to-call phone number visible in header on mobile**

Local intent often means immediate call intent. A tap-to-call link in the header 2x phone conversions.
- Google Map embed on Contact or Location pages**

Map embeds are a local relevance signal and improve time-on-page for local visitors.
- FAQ schema on key service pages**

FAQ schema drives rich results in both traditional Google search and AI Overviews.

5 – LINK BUILDING AND AUTHORITY

Links from local news outlets or community sites

One editorial link from a local news site outperforms 50 generic directory links.

Links from Chamber of Commerce and local business associations

Most chambers offer member directory listings — low effort, high local relevance.

Sponsor or charity mentions with website links

Local sponsorships often include a website link. High local relevance, diverse link profile.

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