

# 8 Point Checklist for Growing Your Business Online In 2022

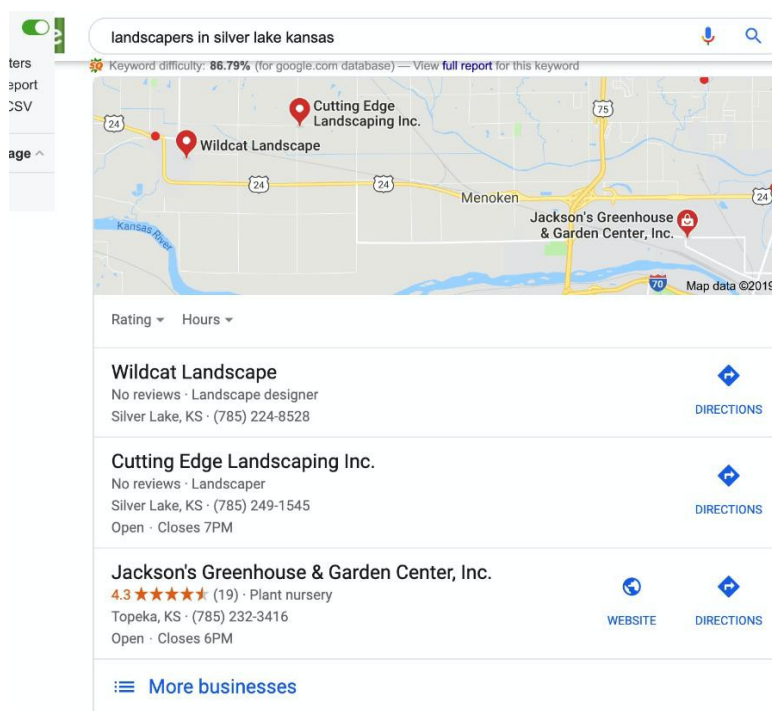


Getting your word out on the internet is one of the most important things you can do for your business. And it's not just about having a website and a few reviews on Yelp. In order to truly succeed in most markets, you've got to have all your bases covered. Here are the digital marketing tools we have found to be most important for the majority of businesses going into 2022.

# 1. Most importantly, an optimized Google My Business page.

Your Google My Business page is directly related to your Google Maps listing, which is one of the most valuable pieces of real estate most businesses can possibly own on the first page of Google. Your map listing will appear before the organic search results, and before the Home Advisors and Zillows of the world. Trouble is, your Google My Business listing must be fully optimized on a recurring basis in order to get full value from it. Some things you should always do to optimize your Google My Business listing include

- Generate and upload new pictures, all the time. Pictures of your work, your staff, and your happy clients are some of the most valuable assets you have, and they should be used on your My Business listing. Always keep these updated at least once per month. Not only should you always have new pictures, but you should also be using proper descriptions to name your pictures so that the Google search functions index those pictures as relevant content for that which your desired customer is searching.
- Optimized description of services including the towns you service, the services you offer, and the price ranges. If you're hoping to show up in the "Map Pack" in your desired city and state, you'd better be sure your description accurately reflects that city and state(s) and that your services are clearly explained in that description.
- Make full use of Google "Posts." Google's algorithm LOVES when you use Google's tools in the intended manner. Therefore, you should be keeping up with Google's "Post" feature by consistently updating your content to tell the public about new deals and offers. Google "Posts" will show up when someone looks you up by name, and might even show up when you are viewed in organic search results.
- It goes without saying, but be sure your phone number and address are correct. These two items will give you the most bang for your buck because they tell the search engine where your business is located and give your desired customer an easy way to find you. Plus, people can simply press the "call" button when they find you in the "Map Pack".



**This is called the "Map Pack."**

**Which company would YOU call if you were looking for a landscaper?**

## 2. Plan and commit to an ongoing online-review-getting strategy.

I.e. get online reviews.

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- This could technically be included in the Google My Business section, but it really deserves its own section! Getting online reviews, or “stars,” is majorly beneficial to your business in ways most business owners do not even acknowledge. Your customers search for businesses like yours using proximity and reviews. The questions they are trying to answer are, “How accessible is this business and how good is my experience going to be?” As a business owner, your job is to make this decision crystal clear for them. Having a strategy to collect online reviews is a great way to be sure you’re constantly filling that online funnel with goodwill.
- **Ask every customer to leave you a review, and give them a direct link to where to place it.** The piece most business owners miss is the “simplicity” part. People are not going to the work *that hard* to leave you a great review... but if they have a terrible experience, they’ll go to the ends of the earth to leave you a bad one. Make it easy, and you’ll get positive reviews.



- **Automate the process** – Instead of having to physically ask each customer to leave you a review, create an automated email process in your MailChimp or Constant Contact account which executes every time a deal is “closed.” This way, you’ll never have to think about asking for online reviews.... They’ll just happen! The only thing you’ll have to think about is doing a great job for your customers
- **Get reviews on many different websites** – Having a great set of reviews on one website is not enough. You need to have a minimum of 4.5 stars on multiple sites, including Google, Facebook, and the other places where potential customers will look for info on you.
- **Respond to each and every review** – This is often the part where business owners miss a huge opportunity. If you have a great review from a customer, responding gratefully will show other customers your personality and the fact that you’re in tune and customer-focused. If you get a “not-so-good” review, respond sensitively, offer to help sort out the problem offline, and provide personal contact information. This also shows other customers that you care about doing the right thing for your clients.

### 3. Have a mobile responsive, search optimized website

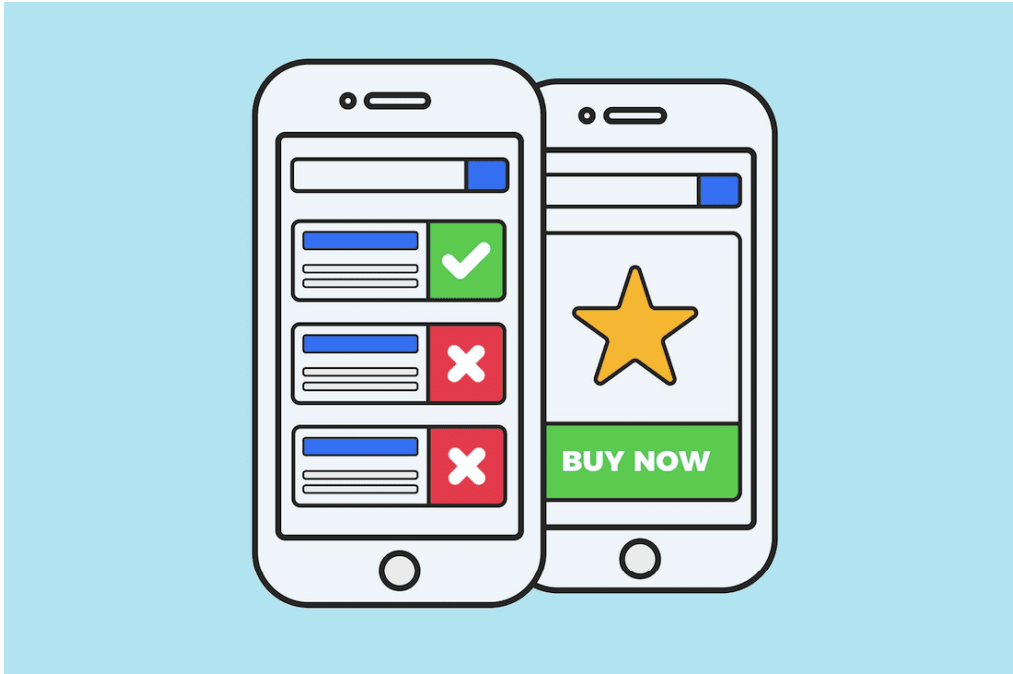
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- Like it or not, your website is a reflection of your business. It is your digital storefront. In just a matter of moments, you can make a lasting impression on your customer that can make the difference between you receiving a phone call or losing the business to a competitor.
- **Most important element of your website: Load time** – Ever gone to a website that loads slowly? It's the worst. So, don't do that to your potential customers... because they won't stand for it. If your site takes too long to load, people will bounce off it before they even get a chance to check it out. Check out your page speed here:  
<https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/>
- **Your website must be mobile-optimized** – Most of your traffic is going to be visiting your site from a mobile device. That means your website experience must be just as good on a mobile-device or tablet as it would be on a desktop. The problem for most businesses is that their website is designed using a desktop computer, and therefore the mobile experience takes a backseat.



- **Make your contact info prominent** – Customers should not have to go searching too far for your phone number or your website form. Get your contact info in front of them *immediately*. Assume they are looking to make a buying decision in the amount of time it takes to sit at a traffic light. If the light turns green and they still haven't found your contact info, then you've probably lost that customer forever. Don't let it happen.

- **Your site should quickly and succinctly communicate what you do** – Don't make people guess.... Make it easy! If your business is a dentist office and you're pushing Invisalign treatments as well as dental implants, say so toward the top of the page so your target customer doesn't need to scroll very far.
- **Your site should be search-optimized** – This is an ongoing commitment with many different facets and components which are too detailed to get into here. But just keep in mind, having a beautiful website does you very little good if nobody can find it. Like a billboard in the desert, your website is useless if it can't be found by those who need it.



- **Your site needs an offer on it** – Give people a reason to contact you instead of your competitor.
- **Consider offering a 'chat' feature** – People love instant gratification, and since many people can't always talk on the phone, giving them the ability to chat with you through your website is a great second option. Consider using a company like "Intercom" for this purpose.

## 4. Social Media is your friend

You need to have a strong Facebook and Instagram presence with consistently updated relevant content. Additionally, in order to grow your customer base quickly (notice we said customer base, not fan base), we recommend a starting social media advertising budget of \$250-\$500 per month to get the word out.

- **Posting on social media is useless if nobody sees your posts.** – Most companies do a great job of posting content to their Facebook and Instagram accounts. Unfortunately, that content goes unnoticed because they have only 60-100 followers. With so few followers, there's zero chance that content will make any impact for your business whatsoever unless it is *so good* and *so viral quality* that it gets shared organically on its own. Unlikely. Therefore, you should be using the advertising platforms available. Be careful, though... as with most advertising sources, Facebook and Instagram ads are only effective if you know how to target, retarget, and put all the tools to work in synthesis with one another.



- **Have a process and strategy to respond to each of your comments and messages.** If you're doing it right, people will "Like" and "Comment" on your posts. This is great, but it needs to be monitored. When someone Likes one of your posts, be sure to invite them to Like your page using the Pages app. And when they comment on a post looking for more information, be sure to send a message to them through messenger to collect contact information.
- **Use Video and Lead Generation Posts to your advantage** – The simple act of posting your work on your Facebook and Instagram profiles is pretty easy.... So, lots of companies do it. What most companies *don't* do is use all the other tools available on these platforms such as video and lead generation. Instead of pushing your paid traffic to your website, consider having them fill out a simple form inside Facebook. This is easier for them to do, doesn't require them to wait for your site to load, and reduces confusion.



## 5. Remarket to your website and Facebook visitors

- People who visited your Website or Facebook/Instagram profiles were at one point interested in buying services from you. Remind them of this, and give them a reason to come back by placing targeted ads in the platforms they are already using.
- **Google remarketing is effective for people browsing the web** – Ever been to a website and then later seen ads for that website on other pages you're browsing? This can be set up through the Google Ads platform and, with the help of a great graphic designer, you can be up and running with remarketing ads in no time. This requires you to place a Google remarketing "code" on your website which your website developer will do without a problem. Anytime we run a Google Ads campaign for a client, this is one of the first things to happen. Remarketing is as simple as uploading your digital graphics to the Google Ads platform, choosing your target audience, and clicking "Go." If you want some help with this, give us a shout!



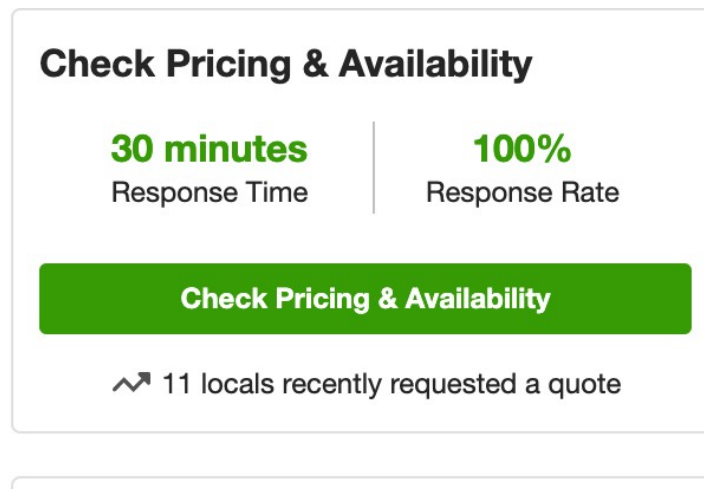
- **Facebook remarketing** – Facebook and Instagram remarketing are similar to Google remarketing; except the future ads your visitors will see are going to be found in Facebook (not the other websites they visit). Similar to the remarketing code referenced above, Facebook uses a “pixel” which is placed on your website and tracks visitors after they leave. If this is set up properly, your website visitors will continue to be served with your content for as long as you choose.

## 6. Yelp is the unsung hero your business needs

For finding high quality, low funnel leads for your business, having an optimized Yelp profile is an absolute no brainer. Although most business owners love to hate on Yelp and accuse the platform of playing “favorites” with its advertisers, we have never seen this in real practice. What we typically find of Yelp shoppers is that they are very close to making a buying decision and are simply narrowing down their choices. Those businesses who do a great job optimizing their Yelp profiles and responding to reviews will win on this platform.

- **Have lots of pictures on your Yelp profile** – Your searchers will help you fill out your profile, but they shouldn’t do it alone. Get your own images up there so people can get a true feel for you and your company.
- **Use your reviews in your images** – Instead of relying on Yelp to show your reviews, be more creative than the next guy. Create graphics which depict your online reviews as well as your work, and upload them to Yelp as images. This will be visually appealing to people searching for your business, and will also give them a great feeling for how your business operates.
- **Use image descriptions to your advantage** – Image descriptions act to tell Yelp what your page is about. So, if you’re looking to perform sprinkler installations in Baltimore, Maryland, be sure to upload a few images of installations you’ve already done in the area and title the images as such.

- **Always respond to questions quickly and effectively.** – Businesses who respond quickly to questions and messages will earn a green “badge” of sorts on their Yelp profile. This helps generate more leads and activity, so be sure to pay attention to your response time.



## 7. Invest (carefully) in Google Ads

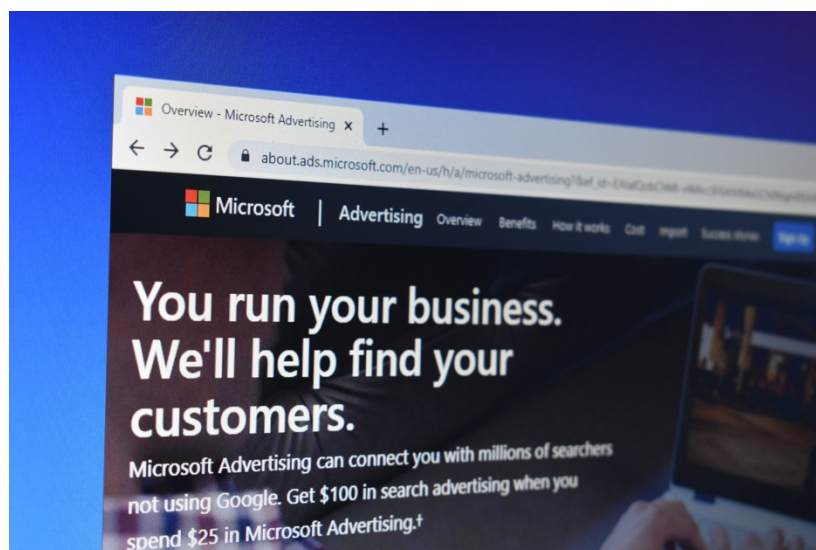
- **Google Ads can be incredibly useful when implemented properly** – Trouble is, they can also be very confusing. We recommend running your Google Ads in a very conservative manner to start, and then increasing your budget as you go.
- **Pick your keywords carefully** – If you offer lawn mowing services, then your campaigns, ad groups, keywords and ad copy should be specific to “lawn mowing services.” Don’t simply plug “lawn mowing” in to the Google Ads Express program and expect to get a good bang for your buck. Have a professional review your account or, even better, manage it on a proactive basis. By the same token, if your business sells furniture, be sure your ads will not trigger simply because someone puts the word “couch” into their search bar.
- **Install your conversion trackers** – In order to evaluate your Google Ads budget effectiveness, be sure to install conversion trackers on your website so you can track how many leads and sales your campaigns are generating.
- **Use Call Only ads** – Google has a great feature called “Call Only” ads, which give people the ability to call your business directly from your ad every time they see it.
- **Use all available extension types** – As part of your Google Ads, you can include “Ad Extensions.” This means you can attach your location, your phone number, your catalog of services and even links to specific pages on your website in your ads. Ad Extensions make your ad larger which helps you “push down” your competition. So, if you’re bidding for top position placement on the first page of Google, and you’ve got all your ad extensions enabled, then your ad will likely be so big that your competitor’s ad won’t be able to be seen unless the searcher scrolls past the “fold.” This is a desirable strategy and can help you capture customers.



- **Pay attention to your negative keywords** – These are the keywords you *don't* want your ad to show up for. For instance, if you're bidding on a keyword like "lawn mowing service," then you might also be showing up for search terms like "lawn mower repair service." In order to avoid this, you would add the word "repair" as a negative keyword. As another example, you might be bidding on the keyword "landscaping service." Because of this, your ad will be likely to trigger anytime these words are included in a search query, which can be problematic if your competitors' names include those words. If you don't want your ad to show up when someone looks up your competitor by name, be sure to add competitor names as negative keywords.

## 8. Get on Microsoft (Bing) Ads

- **"Are Bing Ads even a thing anymore?" you might be asking** – Not only are Microsoft (Bing) Ads a thing, but they're one of the most lucrative forms of advertising you're probably not doing right now.
- **Microsoft Ads are disproportionately cheap.... Like Google Ads used to be** – Since most advertisers aren't paying attention to Microsoft Ads, the freshman year economics principles of "supply and demand" are very favorable to companies who decide to pounce. There's plenty of search volume on Bing to justify buying placement in search results there, and you'll likely find your ROI to be significantly higher than in Google.
- **The competitive edge you've been looking for** – Microsoft Ads can be considered your "unfair advantage" over your competition. The fact is, many of your competitors are completely blind to this source so not only is it cheaper for your business to advertise there, but you'll likely be up against fewer other companies in the same industry. And of course, less competition means a better chance for you to win the customer!



OK, now that you know 8 things you can do to help grow your business online in 2022, the next step is charting a course to make all these things happen! Luckily, we are experts in everything you've read here, and a lot more.

**Let's talk!** You can [schedule a time in our calendar here](#), call us directly at 877-706-0997, or shoot us an email at @ [team@scdigital.com](mailto:team@scdigital.com)!