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Guide

Local SEO
for Businesses

How companies can develop and strengthen
their online presence

INTRODUCTION

With changes to consumer behaviour in recent years, companies are finding it increasingly important to grow and develop their online presence. The advent of the smartphone means that consumers increasingly expect to be able to access the information they need from anywhere, in real time. Nonetheless, 80% of these consumers still prefer visiting "brick and mortar" store locations to make their purchases.

Optimizing your local search rankings can address this need, as users [ma1] will see the nearest and most relevant points of sale in their search results. Nowadays, this type of ranking plays a very important role in the customer journey.

Because of this, creating an effective SEO strategy and online presence for your company's store locations is key, as this will provide users with immediate, accurate information about your stores, restaurants, agencies or other points of sale. This is also referred to as "local SEO".

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Each store location's page must include up-to-date contact information. This will optimise the visibility and ranking of these pages in search results.

CHAPTER 1

1 - CONTACT INFORMATION ON DIFFERENT PLATFORMS

Local SEO is a specialized branch of digital marketing. Managing a vast quantity of information for various different points of sale can prove to be a complex task. The first step is to ensure that up-to-date contact information is available for each location. This information can be **divided into 4 categories:**

| NAME AND ADDRESS	TELEPHONE NUMBER	OPENING HOURS	LINK TO MAIN WEBSITE

One of the key ways to improve your site's search rankings is to **include a link to your company's website, especially to sections containing information about the corresponding point of sale,** on each of your local pages (Google My Business profile, Facebook location pages, etc.).

https:// **domain_name**/ **store_name**

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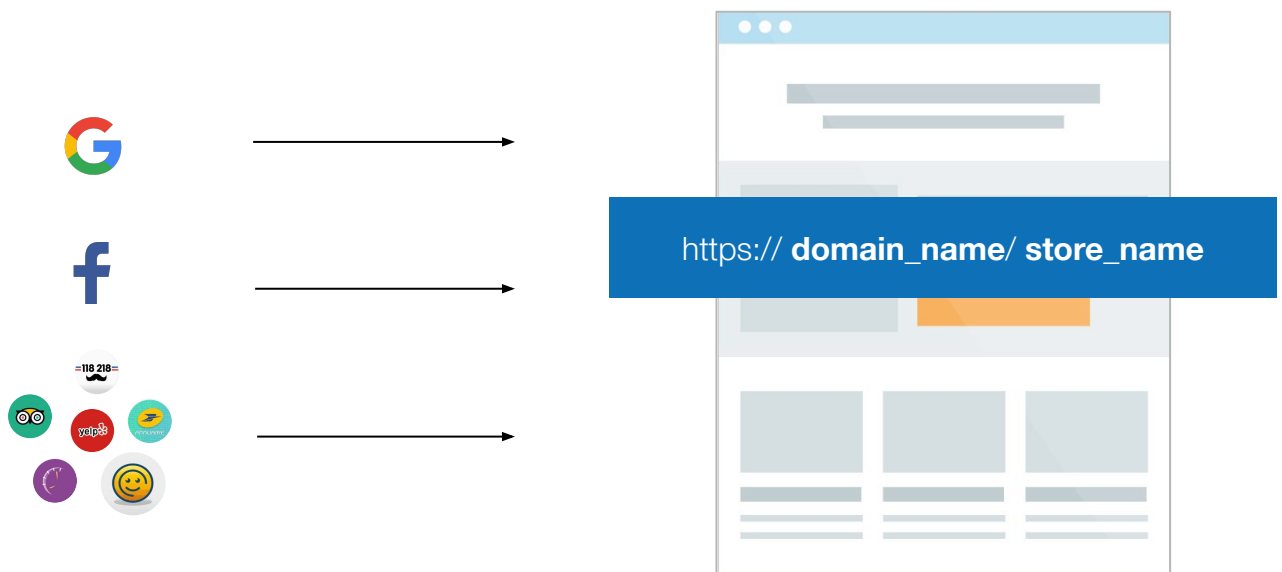
In order to prevent confusion among users and optimise your local SEO, contact information for each of your locations should be consistent across all websites and online directories that you use, as well as be viewable on the various different *devices* that your customers may use.
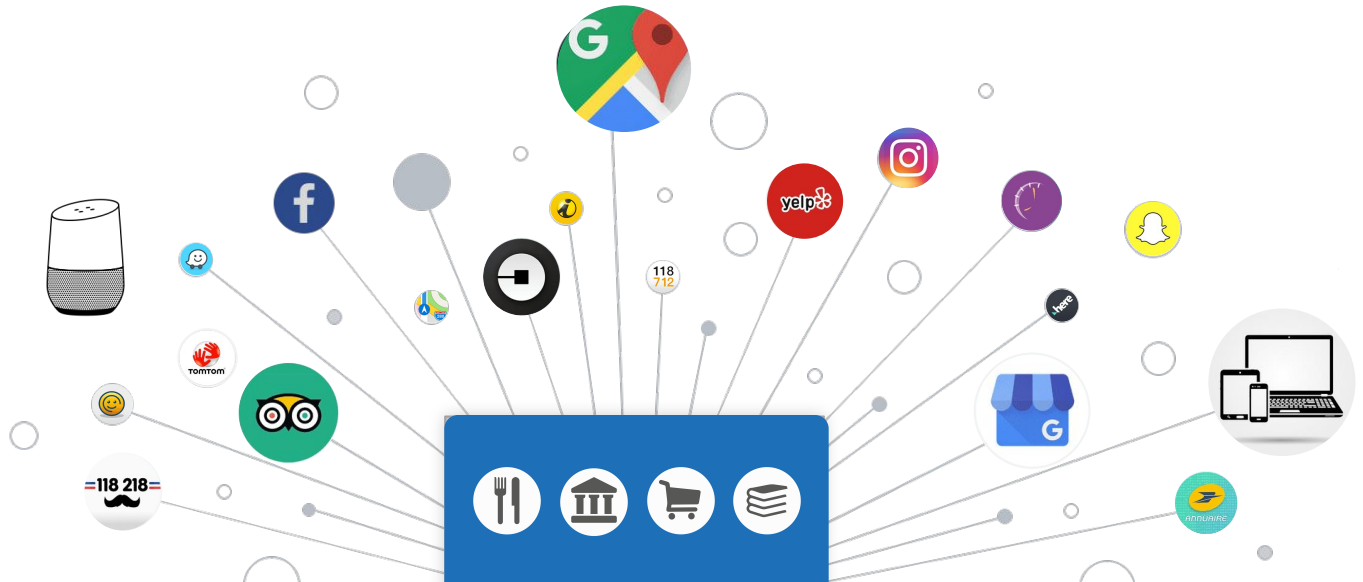

The effect of an increasing number of social media platforms on local SEO

The most important media platforms to focus on are those that your customers use most frequently to find information about your company. Here are 4 general categories of media that can be a part of a company's online presence:

- **Online directories** [Yellow Pages, 118-218, Golden pages, etc.]

- **International Platforms** [Google My Business, Facebook, Yelp, TripAdvisor, etc.]

- **Navigation apps / GPS** [Apple Maps, Here, Tom-Tom, Waze]

- **Company websites** [including apps and store locators]

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Drive traffic to your local businesses
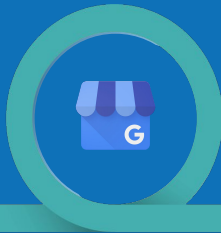
Getting Started with Google My Business

Google My Business is a tool that enables businesses to manage the online presence of their points of sale in Google searches and on Google Maps.

Create or log in to your company's Google account

It is recommended to use a professional e-mail address provided by Google. For the site www.example.com, the correct e-mail format would be: your_name@example.com

Create your location groups

For businesses with multiple points of sale, one of the key benefits of Google My Business is the ability to create a location group via the homepage of your Google My Business dashboard.

After creating the group, you then have the option to share it with your collaborators. If you have more than one brand, you can also create multiple location groups.
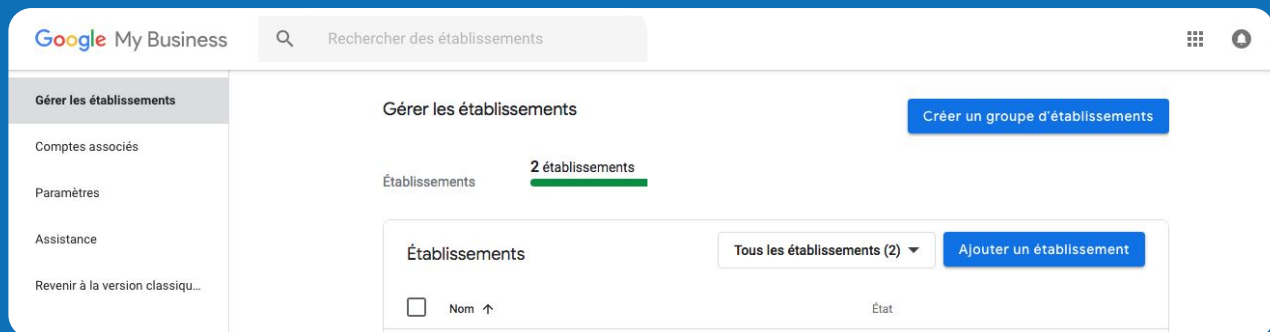
Add information for multiple locations in a single step

Companies with 10 or more locations can upload and request verification of this information in a single step using the spreadsheet import feature on Google My Business.

MANAGING MULTIPLE LOCATIONS IN GMB

2 - NAME AND ADDRESSES

The address is one of the most important elements of your store pages. Addresses can be written in many different ways, but **when using platforms such as Google My Business and Facebook, companies must adhere to certain guidelines.**
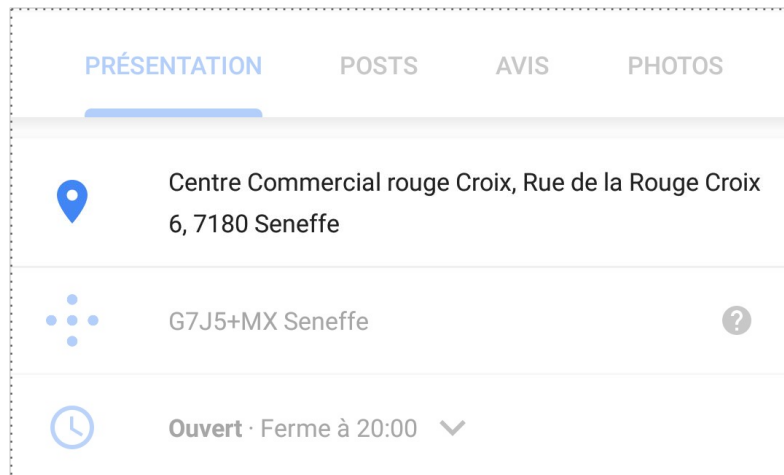
🔍 GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

"All business locations within the same country must have the same name for all locations. For example, all Home Depot locations should use the name "The Home Depot" rather than "Home Depot" or "The Home Depot at Southampton".

Exceptions to this rule:

- Names may be slightly different when referring to different types of points of sale, such as Marks & Spencer and M&S Food and Zara and Zara Kids.

- Using a variation on a business name is possible when this variation is commonly used in real-life contexts, such as PFK in Québec and KFC in France.

Guidelines for representing your business on Google

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"To verify your business, you must enter a business address that Google can locate"

PRÉSENTATION	POSTS	AVIS	PHOTOS

📍 Centre Commercial rouge Croix, Rue de la Rouge Croix 6, 7180 Seneffe

G7J5+MX Seneffe   ❓

🕐 **Ouvert** · Ferme à 20:00 ⌄

Three key guidelines:

- Enter a complete and accurate mailing address..
- Include any applicable office, floor or building numbers..
- Only include elements that are part of your official business address, unless it is impossible to locate the exact address without additional information, such as intersections, landmarks, etc.

Add or edit your business address

🔍 FACEBOOK

"The default name for location Pages is the main Page's name (e.g. Jasper's Market), complemented by a location descriptor that tells people which shop the Page refers to."

Don't forget:

- By default, the address is "(City)", or "(Address, City)" if there is more than one store location in the same city.
- A username can be created for each local page. It will appear under the name, preceded by an @ symbol, as well as in the page's URL.

Easily manage multiple shop Pages with Locations

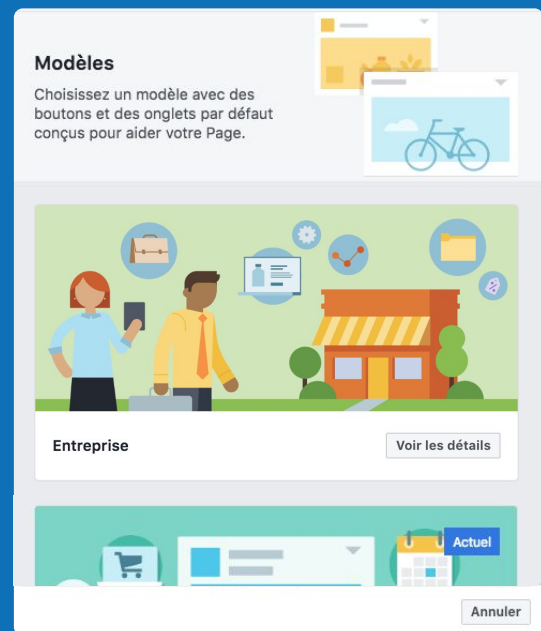mobilosoft

Facebook Locations is a feature that enables companies to create pages for their store locations via their main Facebook page, and display these locations on an interactive map.

Create a local page

For businesses with many different points of sale, one advantage of the *Locations* feature is the ability to add store locations directly via your main page. Ideally, your main page should be categorized as a *Business* or *Brand*.

If you do not yet have access to *Locations*, you can request access via this form. You will be asked to enter your name, email address, how many locations your company has, as well as which main page you would like to connect your local pages to.

Modèles

Choisissez un modèle avec des boutons et des onglets par défaut conçus pour aider votre Page.

Entreprise   Voir les détails

Actuel

Annuler

Upload several locations in a single step

You'll then be able to upload information for multiple locations using a spreadsheet. If this is the first time that you are uploading business locations, and if your main page displays a mailing address, you will be asked to delete this address from the page. On Facebook, only local pages can display a mailing address, and they must have the same name as the main page that they are connected to.
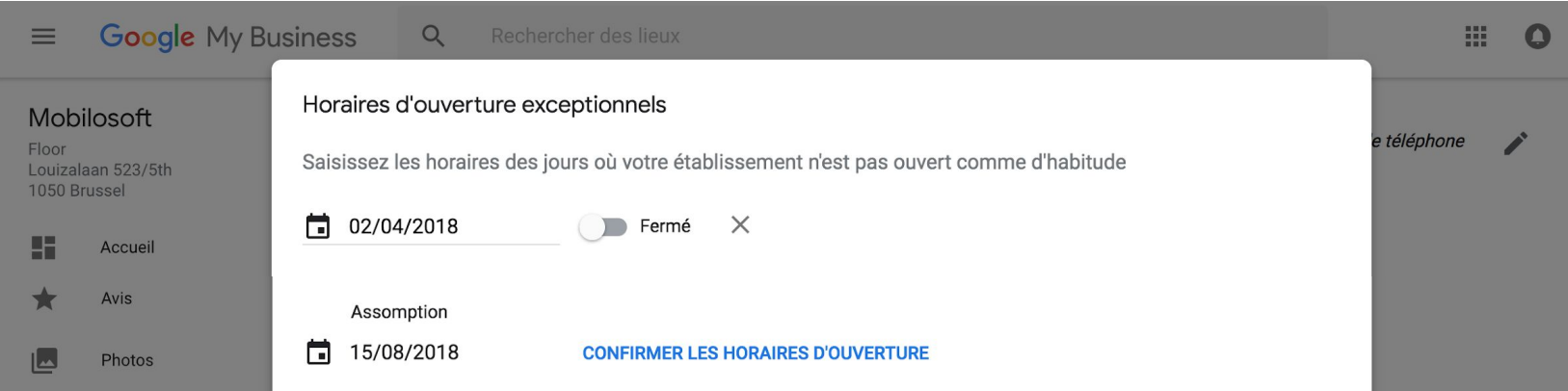
GET STARTED MANAGING YOUR FACEBOOK LOCATION PAGES

3 - SPECIAL HOURS

🔍 GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

It is important to provide your business location's special hours, when it possible to do so on the platform you are using. Google My Business is one of the few platforms that offers this feature.

If you have not entered information about special hours in your Google My Business dashboard, a message will appear in orange text on your local page, indicating that [*The hours may differ.*] This means that the user will not be able to tell if the business location is open or closed.

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Why provide information about special hours?

- On bank holidays, your customers will likely be wondering about your opening hours. When you enter your special hours, a message in green will be displayed, reassuring customers that the location will indeed be open when they arrive.

- Some companies still do not provide accurate information on their special hours, so doing so is a great way to set your company apart from the competition and encourage customers to visit your stores.

550,0 m	
é de Bagnolet, 75020 Paris	
ndi	Fermé
Lundi de Pâques)	Horaire jour férié
mardi	09:00–13:00, 14:00–1
mercredi	09:00–13:00, 14:00–17
jeudi	09:00–13:00, 15:00–17
vendredi	09:00–13:00, 14:00–1
amedi	09:00–13:00, 14:00–1
manche	Fermé
érer une modification	
7 36 89	

- he more information available on your My Business pages, the more reliable Google considers the data on these pages to be. This means that they will have a higher quality score, which in turn will improve their ranking.
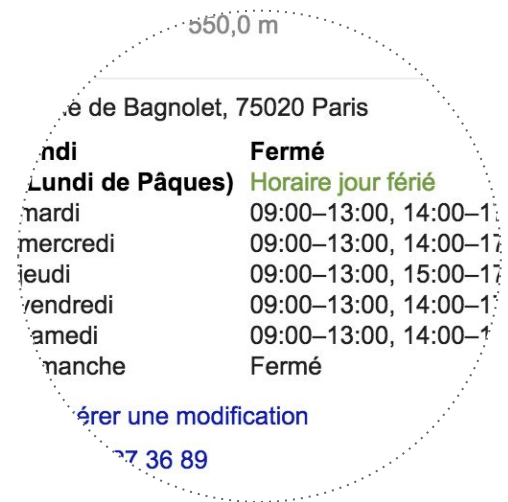
Holidays on Google

Determine the effectiveness of your

SEO Strategy

REQUEST AN AUDIT

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LOCAL CONTENT

In addition to influencing your local SEO, local content sparks users' interest in your business location, and gives them an idea of what to expect when they visit.

CHAPTER 2

# 1 - CREATING A "PORTRAIT" OF YOUR BUSINESS LOCATIONS

Describing your point of sale

If the platform you are using includes a description section, it is important to use it to share as much information as possible about what makes this location unique. It should provide information on the store's mission, history and products and services. From a SEO perspective, it is also valuable to enter the specific location of the point of sale, if applicable.

🔍 GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

The *description* field on Google My Business, has changed multiple times over the years, with a new version launched in spring 2018.
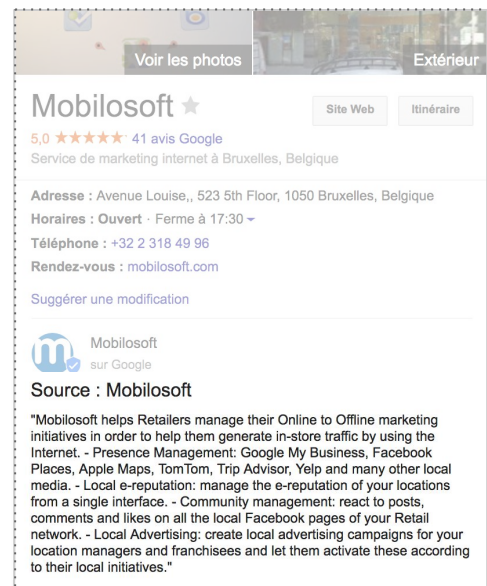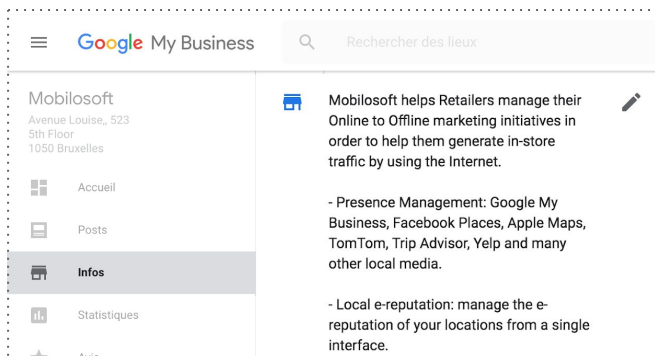
"Focus on your business's identity rather than on promotions, prices and sales. Do not include URLs or HTML code, and do not exceed the 750 character limit for the description field."

*Business description guidelines*

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Remember:

- A well-written Google My Business description will contribute to increasing the number of views and other interactions* that your page receives.

- For maximum effectiveness, create a different description for each of your points of sale. Consider the ambience of each individual location, and/or the products and services specific to each of them.

  (site views, phone calls to the point of sale, requests for directions, etc.)

🔍 FACEBOOK

The description field for Facebook Pages is limited to 155 characters, allowing you to briefly present your point of sale. This description is displayed in the *"About"* section.

In general, it is also important to fill in the "descriptive metadata" fields and add relevant keywords, both of which will improve your SEO and spark consumer interest.

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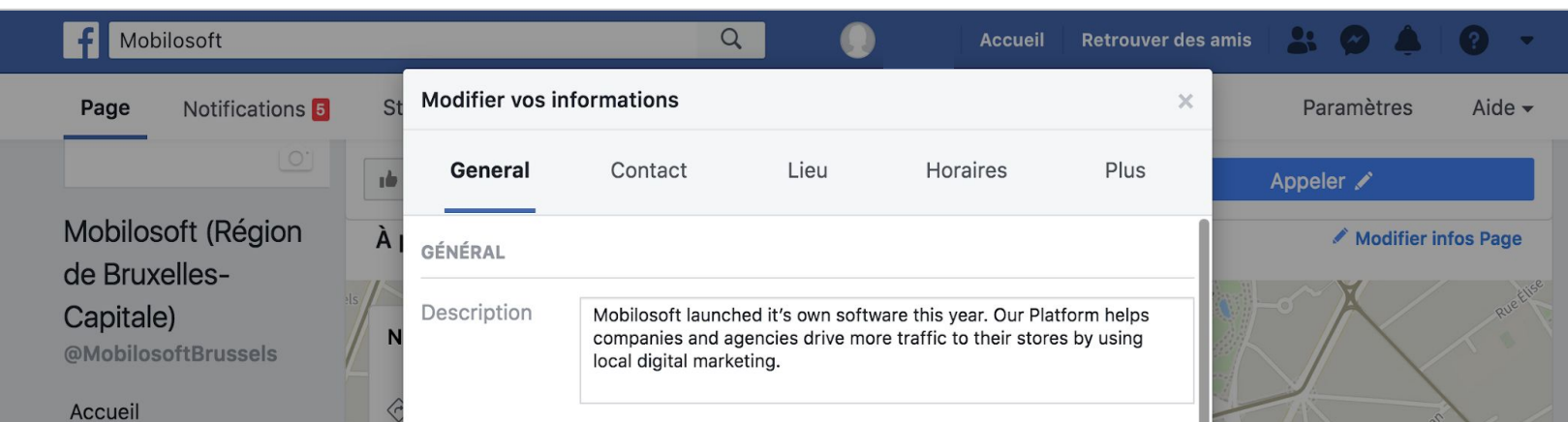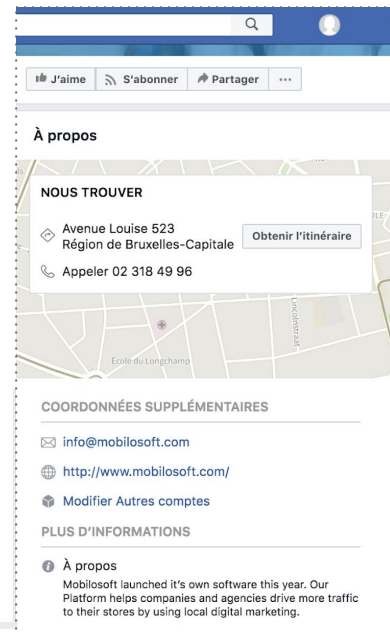
Your point of sale in *images*

Whether you choose to add photos, videos or 360° panoramas, adding a visual presence to your pages will spark more interest in your company's offering. Different platforms have different options for adding visual content. In all cases, adding relevant images, rather than overwhelming users with an endless stream of visuals, is key.

"Businesses with photos receive 42% more requests for driving directions to their location from users on Google, and 35% more clicks through to their websites than businesses that don't have photos."

[Make your business listing awesome](#)

"Visual media, along with reviews, bring your business to life and give potential visitors another great reason to choose your property for their next trip, meal or activity."

[How to add photos and videos on TripAdvisor](#)

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🔍 GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

Types of visual content	
Profile photo	
Cover photo	
Logo	
360° view	
Vidéo	
By business category	
Indoor and outdoor photos	Be sure to add photos from different perspectives, taken at different times of day.
Product photos	
Common areas	Evoke the ambience of your establishment's common areas.
Team photos	
Action photos	Provide photos that highlight your company's services and show its day to day activities.
Food and drink photos	
Rooms	

An important note:

If your business has at least 10 locations, you can import photos using a spreadsheet.

Remember to correctly name the files that you import, for Google Images.

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Products and services at your point of sale

Google My Business and Facebook also give companies the opportunity to highlight the products and services that they offer on their local page. Google offers a slightly more advanced edit screen, with the option to categorize this information (type of product/service, name of the product/service, price, etc.)

In addition to the *Services* field, Google's platform also allows restaurants to upload their menu via a special editor, only available to establishments categorized as restaurants.

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Practical information about your point of sale

Information on payment methods, parking, accessibility, Wi-Fi access, etc. is valuable to users, and will therefore help set your company apart from the competition. Google My Business refers to this type of information as *Attributes*.
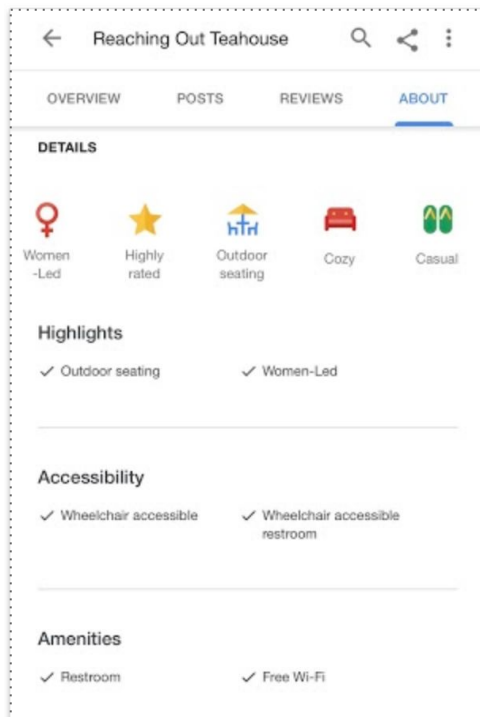
🔍 FACEBOOK

With Facebook Wi-Fi, companies can offer a Wi-Fi hotspot to customers (who have a device that can access it). When the customer connects to the internet, they are automatically redirected to the store's Facebook page.

*Learn more about Facebook Wi-Fi for businesses*

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2 - LOCAL POSTS

Local posts refer to content that is posted to your business locations' local pages (on subjects such as promotions, events, etc.) Sharing this content on social media platforms allows you to diversify your traffic sources, as well as improve the quality of your website traffic, attracting more of your target audience.

Promotions and events at your point of sale

🔍 GOOGLE POSTS

With Google Posts, you can share your company's news and current promotions, while increasing your visibility in Google searches. These posts are displayed larger on smartphones, pushing competitor results further down the page.

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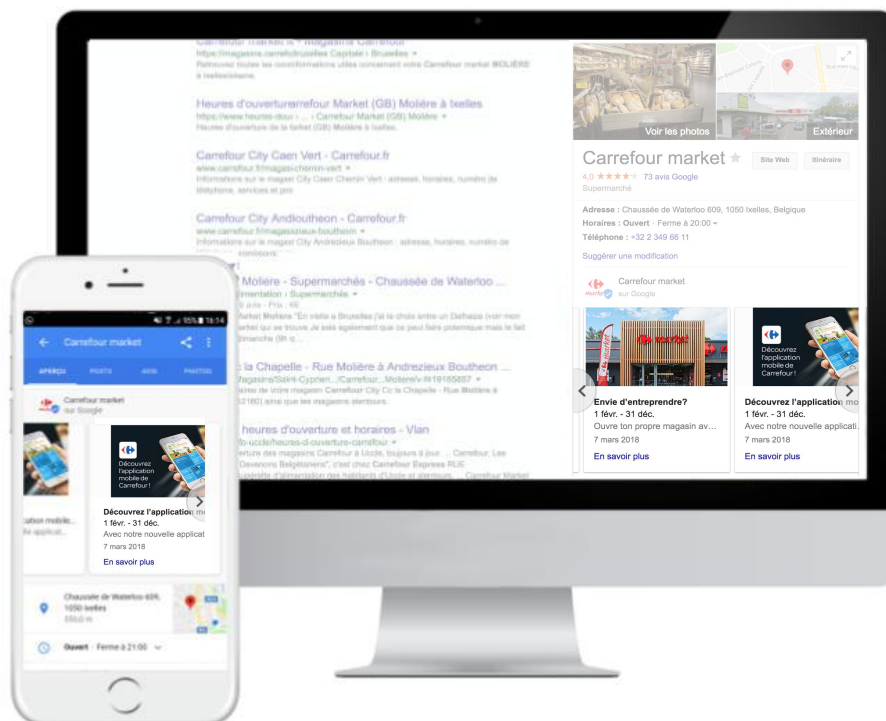
There are currently 4 types of posts that can be published on Google My Business. Here are the different post types:

What's new:

✓ photos and videos
✓ Links
✓ Call to action button

Example: A post about the opening of a new department in a supermarket.

Event:

✓ Title
✓ date and time
✓ photos and videos
✓ Call to action button

Example: A post about an open house event at a car dealership.

Offer:

✓ Title
✓ date and time
✓ A "View offer" button, generated automatically
✓ photos and videos
✓ Coupon codes
✓ Links
✓ Terms and conditions

Produit :
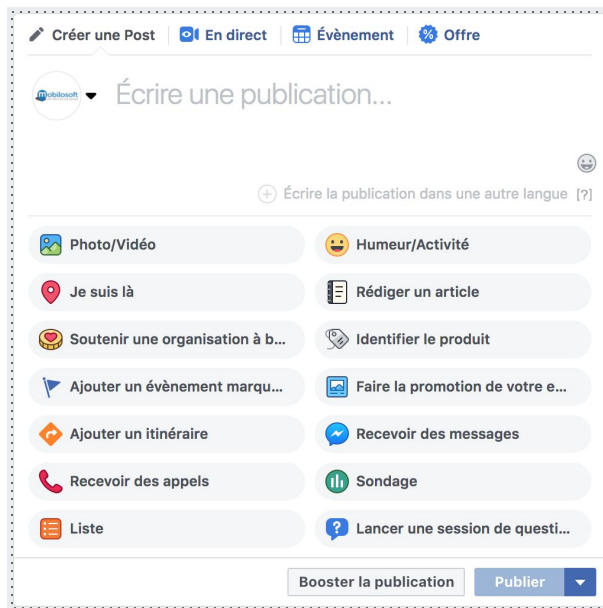
✓ Title
✓ photo/vidéo
✓ Call to action buttons

Example: A post highlighting a clothing store's latest collection.

Posts content policy

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🔍 FACEBOOK

Similar to Google's offering, each Facebook page can include several different types of posts:

"Classic" posts:

✓ In this section, you can choose from among a dozen different message types to share with your audience (photos/videos, surveys, humour/activities, tag products, etc.)

Offer:

✓ Title
✓ Date and time
✓ photo
✓ Online or in store
✓ Promotional code
✓ Terms and conditions of use
✓ Call to action button

Event:

✓ Title
✓ Date and time
✓ photos and videos
✓ call to action button
✓ Location
✓ Frequency
✓ co-organisers

Facebook posts containing an image receive 50% more "likes" and twice as many comments compared to posts that only contain text.

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Improve your SEO via new communications tools: A look at Facebook Live

This is an example of how less frequently-used communications tools can have just as much of an impact as the more well-known tools mentioned earlier in this guide, if not more.

Facebook Live is a feature on Facebook that enables users to stream a live video on their page, that will also appear on the newsfeed of a pre-specified audience.

Facebook Live broadcasts generate more user comments and interactions compared to posts of videos that have been recorded ahead of time. This means that this feature offers a great opportunity to attract quality traffic to your website.

To do so, you should draw inspiration from real-time questions and comments that you receive to add relevant links to your brand's website (monthly promotions, Store Locator, organic products, etc.).

A behind-the-scenes video with Mark Zuckerberg at Facebook

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3 - CUSTOMER REVIEWS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Customer reviews are one of the most important elements of local SEO. Nowadays, it is clear that the number of reviews and the average ratings that companies receive on Google, Facebook and third-party sites have an impact on their local rankings, as well as on users' purchasing decisions.

Encouraging users to write reviews

There are many different ways to encourage users, both directly and indirectly, to write reviews. Here are a few tips:

1. Build an online presence on the social networks and platforms that your customers use the most. For example, travel industry professionals may choose to use TripAdvisor and Booking to reach a specific target audience. See if there is a similar platform for your industry.

2. After a client purchase, meeting or any other type of interaction, send a personalized message that contains a link to a review form on the platform(s) of your choice. You can also do the same with your newsletter.

3. Managers can encourage users to write reviews, either verbally or via content on flyers, stickers or receipts.

4. Reading your customers' reviews and answering them quickly will benefit your company's image. Consumers will see that their feedback is taken into account, and will find it easier to share their experiences.

"Create a link that clients can click on to leave a review of your business on Google."

Encourage customer reviews

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Replying to reviews

The number of reviews that are present on your pages will influence your local SEO, and your replies to these reviews will affect your company's image, at both a local and national level. This means that it is essential to manage these replies carefully, involving your managers in this task. Here are a few best practices:

1) **Determine the "tone of voice" that you wish to use.** In other words, decide on the general tone that you will use in different circumstances, depending on the rating that is given (formal or casual language, funny or serious, etc.) Taking time to choose your communication style, along with the other best practices in this list, will have a positive impact on your online reputation (the user might remove his or her negative review, or even make their rating higher).

2) **Save time by preparing templates for your replies.** Replying to reviews is important, but can also be time-consuming. Customer feedback falls into 3 categories: positive, negative, and neutral, so you can save time by creating reply templates for each of these types of feedback.

3) **Remove sensitive conversations from your page.** This is a key rule for online communications. However, if a customer is unhappy, try to contact them first to resolve the issue before flagging their review...

4) **Include local managers in the process, and verify their replies** Involving local managers in certain online communications tasks, including replying to customer reviews, offers various different advantages — in addition to reducing your workload, it creates more opportunities to develop customer proximity. In order to assist your stores with this process, set up a verification strategy for certain types of replies (such as replies to 1 and 2 star reviews).

Simplify your company's local SEO strategies with **My.Mobilosoft**

REQUEST A DEMONSTRATION

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THE STORE LOCATOR

The store locator is the link between your company website and external store pages. It is a powerful tool that can boost your online and offline conversion rates.
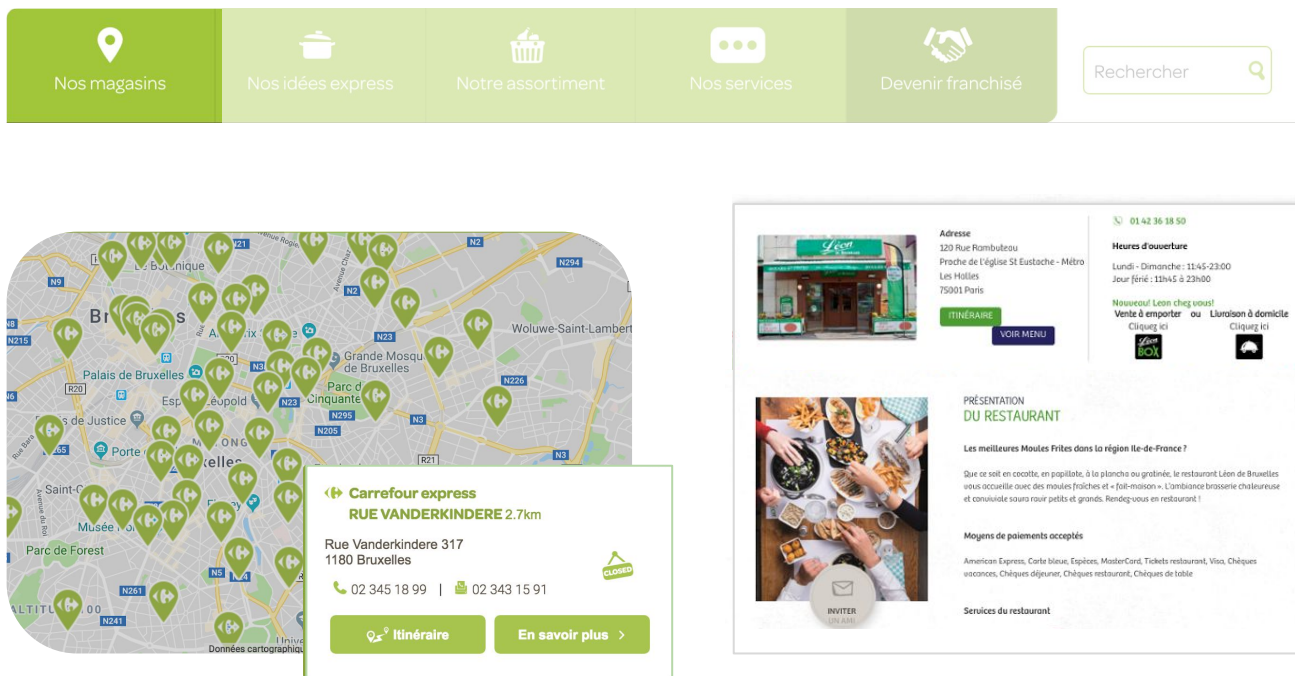.

CHAPTER 3

1 - What is a store locator?

A store locator is a website feature that allows users to search for your company's different points of sale. It has two main functions: improve your stores' local SEO, and increase the number of store visits following web searches.

 On a company's website, store locators are usually found in sections such as *"Where to find us", "Our stores", "Our restaurants", "Our locations",* etc. They usually include an interactive map, along with filters that help users find the point(s) of sale that they are looking for. It then displays a page for each store location, meant to spark the user's interest in visiting the location in question.

 In today's *digital business* landscape, the store locator is an essential tool to connect the online and offline elements of your business. For example, it is an ideal place to propose web-to-store initiatives, such as Click & Collect, online reservations, Ship from Store, etc.

2 - What are some advantages of a store locator?

For users

We know that around 50% of users search for content on company websites, and a little less than 80% use third-party sites* This shows that users still consider company websites to be a valuable resource. Here's why:

- They can quickly and easily access information about their nearest store location: opening hours, address, phone number, current sales promotions, etc.

- Users can quickly access a map and get directions to the store location in 1 or 2 clicks, usually via Google Maps.

- Customers tend to feel a sense of trust towards company websites, as they are able to log in to their customer account and find personalized and location-based offers.

(24% use both)

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For businesses

When it is used effectively, a store locator lets you:

- Boost your SEO: local pages will rank better in Google searches;

- Measure and analyze conversion rates in-house

- Independently manage data for your points of sale

- Include features that are not available on other digital platforms

- Optimise how the content is displayed on all devices

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3 - CREATING AN EFFECTIVE STORE LOCATOR

Provide a URL for each physical point of sale

This will optimise these pages' natural search results and help users find information about specific points of sale.

Include a visible and immediate call to action

This could be to request directions, call the store, make an appointment or a reservation, etc.

Use responsive design

Responsive design elements will make it easier for users to navigate using a smartphone or tablet, and will also have a positive impact on your Google ranking.
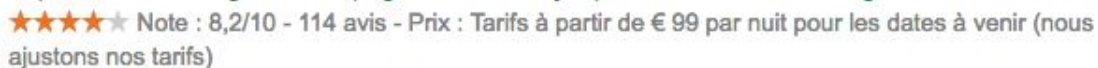
Simplify the search process

It is important to make the search process simple for your users — they should be able to determine nearest point of sale in less than 3 clicks, as well as search by city, post code, and other criteria that is specific to the type of business, such as filters for available products/services, access information, etc.

Offer automatic location detection

This determines where the user is located when they search for your site, and shows points of sale near this location.

Create a structured data scheme

This will make it easier for search engines to find, index and display your content. Crawlers can identify elements such as telephone numbers and addresses using HTML attributes from the schema.org vocabulary. This also allows Google to include detailed extracts of your website content in the search results, underneath the URL.

★★★★☆ Note : 8,2/10 - 114 avis - Prix : Tarifs à partir de € 99 par nuit pour les dates à venir (nous ajustons nos tarifs)

An example of a detailed extract from a hotel's website.

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14 SEO tips for creating an effective store locator

1. On each of your store location pages, place the *name, address and phone number* of the store in a prominent place.
2. Include the location's opening hour.
3. Provide users with a means of getting directions to the store location.
4. Create a unique welcome message.
5. Every week, publish new content related to the point of sale.
6. Provide a list of brands, products and/or services available.
7. Include indoor and outdoor photos, team photos, etc.
8. Publish video content related to the point of sale.
9. Show interactions with the local community.
10. Display customer reviews.
11. Encourage customers to leave reviews by including a link to the third-party sites that are most relevant for your business (such as Google My Business).
12. Connect your social media pages
13. Communicate with your clients in real-time via a chat feature.
14. Include specific calls to action that will allow users to get in touch with your company outside of opening hours.
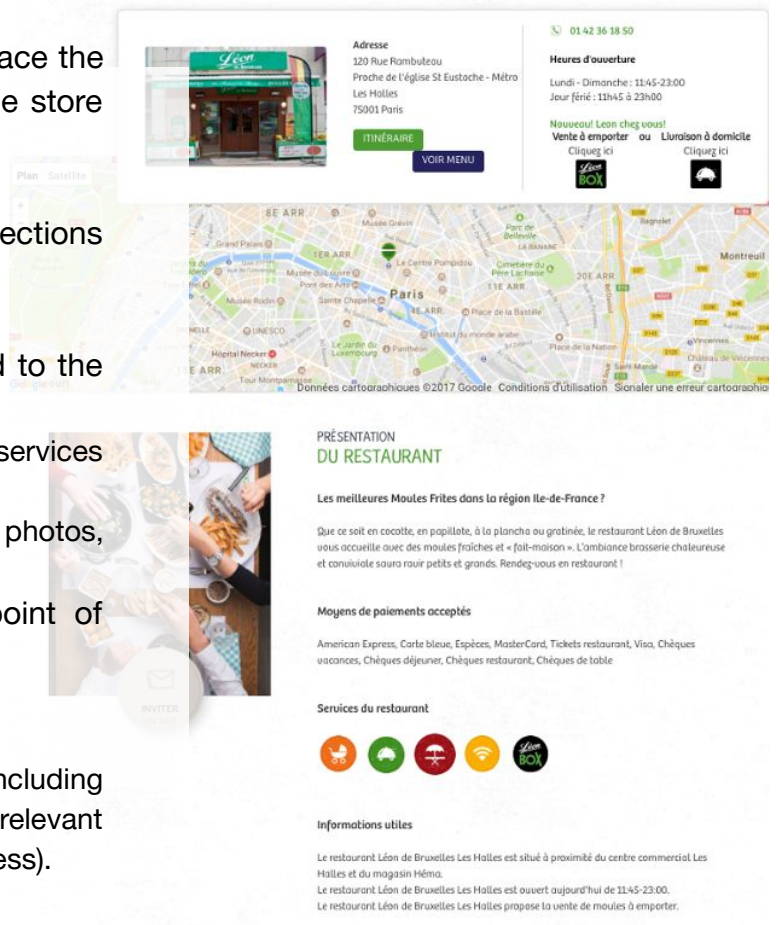
For help creating your

Store Locator

CONTACT US

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In conclusion, it is important to remember that local SEO is a vast, complex and constantly evolving field, and that it has a lot to offer "brick and mortar" stores. Some benefits include:

➢ Increasing the number of visitors.
➢ Increasing the frequency of visits
➢ Increasing the average basket size.
➢ Gaining more insight into the customer journey, both online and offline.

You should constantly adjust your SEO strategies to take into account new omni-channel features, such as voice search. According to ComScore, 50% of user requests could be spoken rather than typed by 2020.

" 50% of user requests could be spoken rather than typed by 2020."

This means that a key challenge for companies will be interpreting consumer voice searches. For example, while a user might type "bread in Paris" when searching on a computer, their voice search request could be "OK Google, where can I find bread nearby?"

Virtual assistants (such as Alexa, Google Assistant, and Siri) will only suggest the local points of sale that have the best rating and the most complete information.

Evaluate your
Web-to-Store strategy

SCHEDULE A MEETING

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