WHAT IS SEO AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

SEO is the increasing of web visibility and traffic through organic search engine results. Essentially, strong SEO makes you easier to find on the internet. **Local SEO** is the same thing, but for local businesses looking to connect with customers in their communities – and this applies to insurance agencies like yours!

46%

As of 2019, about **46 percent of searches on Google™ are local searches.**[1] What do we mean by "local searches?" If a customer is looking for an insurance agency, they can search for "insurance agency near me" on Google. A list of nearby insurance agencies will then be listed – a local search from the customers that are nearest to you.

You're probably wondering how you can get your agency to appear in more of these local searches. The best answer to that is by being **accurate** and **consistent.**

WHY IS ACCURACY SO IMPORTANT?

About **30 percent of Google searches on mobile devices are related to location.**[1] So when people are searching for "insurance agencies near me," they're going to want to see your important information right away. What's the most important information? **NAP.**

30%

NAP

- **N**ame
- **A**ddress
- **P**hone Number

Keeping NAP and your other business information up-to-date will increase your search engine visibility online. When all of your information is the exact same on each platform (your social media, website, business listings, etc.), you come off as more reliable to customers and are easier to contact.

We recommend creating a document with your business information. Whenever you need to provide this information, you can copy and paste it from the document and it'll be the same each time.

The more accurate your information and the more business listings you've claimed, the more likely you are to be suggested as a local option, which will drive traffic to your website.

WHAT ARE BUSINESS LISTINGS?

≡ **Google** My Business

Foremost Insurance Group

5600 Beechtree Ln SE
Caledonia, MI 49316

On Google, Yelp®, Bing, Yahoo and other sites, you can claim your business listings. When you search for your business on these platforms, you'll find a listing for your agency. If no one in your company has claimed, or taken ownership, of these listings, you'll be able to claim it, get verified and keep it updated.

For Google, it's located on right side of the search page. Out of all the search engines, we recommend creating a FREE **Google My Business** account first by going to google.com/business.

Your agency information is on numerous sites, so how do you make sure the information is correct on all of them? You can't. The best thing you can do is update the most popular listings, and then the search engines will work together to cross reference the information to make sure it's correct. This won't be an overnight transformation – it'll be an ongoing process.

To track down some of these listings, you can enter your business name on smallbusiness.yahoo.com/local. You'll be able to see what listings have inaccuracies (NAP errors) and how you compare to similar businesses in reviews.
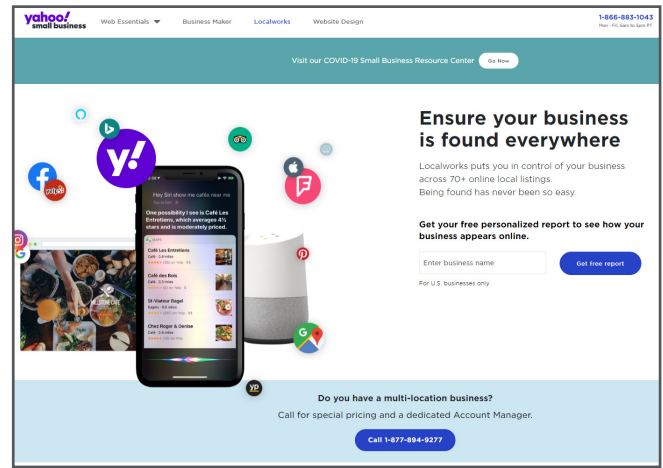
Where are these listings pulling information if you never provided any of it until now? The answer is from your **website** and **consumer input.**

HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY WEBSITE?

Improving your website doesn't necessarily mean spending a ton of money. **It's as simple as correcting technical errors, providing correct information, valuable content and links.** Spending more money to spruce it up can come into the picture (if you want!) after these foundational points have been corrected and strengthened.

• CORRECT TECHNICAL ERRORS

If you have links that aren't working, photos that aren't loading, video files that are too large or other technical errors, those should be corrected right away. One way to analyze your website is by visiting search.google.com/search-console – you'll need a Google Account for this. Here, you can view your website performance (clicks, speed, mobile usability, errors, etc.) and find pain points that may need to be fixed.

• PROVIDE CORRECT INFORMATION

Business listings can pull information from your site and may even be linking to your site – so accuracy matters here too, of course. Start by double-checking your NAP, social media links, company bio and anything else about your agency.

• SUPPLY VALUABLE CONTENT

Providing valuable content means customers should be able to find almost everything they're looking for on your website. And the site should be easy to navigate, so label each tab with clear text (such as, "Claims," "Pay Bill," or "Get a Quote" instead of just "click here").

• USE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL LINKS

The more links you have on your website, both internal and external, the better your SEO. **Internal links** are links on your website that link to other places on your website (the possible "Claims," "Pay Bill" and "Get a Quote" tabs mentioned above are good examples of this). **External links** are links that take people to different websites. Examples of external links are links to your social media pages, blog or the websites of insurance carriers or accounts you work with. When it comes to links, the more the merrier – as long as they're relevant!

DOES SOCIAL MEDIA AFFECT SEO?

External and internal links are also associated with your social media – so keep your NAP the same on these platforms as well. To make your social media accounts more authoritative and trustworthy, stay active. This means posting at least three times a week. We highly recommend posting about topics your customers will find relevant, interesting and informative. If you aren't sure what to post, check out our **Social Media Suitcase®** at socialmediasuitcase.com for FREE content.

When posting, you should also link to your website. So you can say things like, "Looking for Motorcycle insurance? We can help! Get a quote and connect with us at [INSERT WEBSITE LINK]." This will act as an external link which can get more people visiting your site and help improve your SEO.

For more marketing resources, visit foremostagent.com.

FOREMOST® INSURANCE GROUP

A Better Insurance Experience.®