



The RefreshWeb Guide to Boosting Your Local Search Visibility

Adding your business to local directories is an easy thing to do, and it can make a big difference in making you more visible to local customers who are using the web to find businesses and services in the area. Directories often are the top results listed in these local niche areas, as they provide good information. Many also have places to add additional information about the business, like operating hours, and for customers to post reviews. You may already be listed in these directories, as they pull from Yellow Page listings to populate the entries. If this is the case, you'll have an opportunity to review and edit the listing.

What you'll need before you begin:

- An email address dedicated to this: a gmail address is free and quick to set up
- All the pertinent information for your business: address, phone, operating hours, contact information, and a short description of what you do
- It's a good idea to keep a list of the usernames and passwords and email address associated with each directory, then email it to yourself so you'll have it if you need to make changes later
- In every single listing, add the URL to the company's main site. You might have to click to edit your listing if it does a quick completion and there wasn't an opportunity to put in the web address.

Google Local [google.com/local/add](https://www.google.com/local/add)

This is the single most important place to list your business. If you search on a term that has a geographic modifier added to it, such as a city or state name, Google will display a map with additional search results near the top of the page.

Simply log in with your Google accounts login (create one if you need to), and follow the simple instructions. Google will send you a post card with a code on it, which you will enter to activate your local listing. This will put your company's location on the map, which is especially helpful for drawing in local customers.

Windows Live Search Local Listing Center <https://ssl.search.live.com/listings/ListingCenter.aspx>

Click "Add New Listing" and fill out the basic form. Live Search will check to see if you're already listed. If you are, you'll be prompted to login using a Windows Live ID. If you don't have one, sign up. Once you're signed up, you can edit your existing listing, making sure to add the specifics.

If you're not already listed, either sign up for or login with your Windows Live ID, then fill out the fields. Include as much information as you can so that potential customers can easily find the information they need. URL, operating hours, etc.

Yahoo! Local
listings.local.yahoo.com

If you don't already have one, you'll need to set up a Yahoo! ID for your business to begin. If you have one, the login button is hiding up at the top left of the screen with the Yahoo! logo. Signup is easy, and once you're done, it will send you directly to the page where you add your local listing. Fill out all the fields you can, then on the next page, browse through the categories until you find the correct one for your company. Yahoo! has about 20% of the search market, so this is an important listing to do. There are featured and premium listing services available for a reasonable fee, if you'd like to have your listing featured prominently in Yahoo! results.

DirectoryM
subscribe.directorym.com/register.aspx

Fill out the company name, then find your industry category from the drop down menu. Fill out the contact information, making sure to use the email address you've dedicated to your directory listings. A confirmation email with code will be sent to the address. Your company will be listed, but you need to click the included link to fill out more detailed information, including adding a URL for your business.

Superpages
advertising.superpages.com/sportal/index.jsp

From the homepage, click to add a free business listing. Enter your phone number. If your company is listed, click to edit the listing. Make sure you've filled out all of the information. Near the bottom of the page, there is a "Specialties" field. This is where you write a little bit, being sure to work in the keywords from your list. If your company is unlisted, fill out the form, making sure to fill out all of the information possible about your business.

Yellowpages
listings.yellowpages.com/Services/ServiceClaimSearch.aspx

This site works just like the Superpages site. Enter your phone number to see if you're already listed, then either revise or fill out the form to update your listing.

InsiderPages

insiderpages.com/advertiser/find_business

Enter your name and zip code to see if your business is listed. If it is, claim it. If not, follow the instructions to add your business. If your business is already listed, claim it by clicking the "Claim Your Business" button. You'll be guided to a page to create a login, and then you can edit the listing.

Best of the Web

local.botw.org/

Up at the very top right, above the bar with the logo, there is an Add/Edit Businesses link. This is a page to sign you up for a Premium listing. Under the picture of the lady, there's a little link to sign up for a free listing. Click this and click the orange "Sign Up" button. Complete the fields, then add the additional information on the next page, and you're done!

Yelp!

biz.yelp.com

Yelp has a different membership for business owners, so you'll need to set up a business account even if you're already a user. This will let you add business information and track your reviews so that you can manage what people are saying about you on the site. They've developed some useful tools to promote a good user experience for both owners and customers. You can have email notifications of activity forwarded to your regular email, and this is something we recommend.

Since this is a review site, it's important to note that you shouldn't rebut things in a public form if you have negative reviews, but rather with emails to individual reviewers, addressing the problems they mentioned. Don't make the mistake of starting a fight that you can't undo. Most reviews are positive, though, so don't be afraid to go see what your customers are saying. It's important to note that soliciting reviews is against their terms of service.