Local SEO for Outfitters
What we will cover

- What is Local SEO?
- Local SEO Ranking Factors
- Search Engine Business Listings Optimization
- Organizing Your Business Info
- Citations & NAP Consistency
- Gathering, Correcting & Building New Citations
- Reviews
- Local On-Page SEO
- Link Building
What is Local SEO?
Local SEO

What Is Local SEO?

Local SEO is the process of optimizing your website and online properties so you can be found in localized searches.

Whether you’re a local service-based business, you have a brick and mortar store, or even serve multiple areas (like a chain or franchise), this workshop is for you!

We’ll walk you through local ranking factors, how to optimize your website to rank highly and how to show up in the map pack.
Why Are Local Search Results Important?

- Opportunity to multiple placements on the First Page
- Local listings are shown above organic results
- Local listings have higher click through rates
- Have visual characteristics that stick more than PPC and organic results
- Large percentage of searches have local intent
Local SEO Ranking Factors
Huge growth in Google My Business

Google has been adding features to GMB at an accelerated rate. These features are creating shifts in the importance of factors that are driving local search today. This year has seen the most explosive growth in GMB specific factors in the history of the survey. GMB signals now make up 25% the local pack/finder pie chart.

GMB-specific features like Google Posts, Google Q&A, and image/video uploads are frequently mentioned as ranking drivers in the commentary. Many businesses are not yet investing in these aspects of local search, so these features are currently a competitive advantage. You should get on these before everyone is doing it.
5 Major Factors To Focus On

1. Search Engine Business Listings Optimization
2. Citations & NAP Consistency
3. Local On-Page Optimization
4. Off-page Optimization
5. Reviews
The Ultimate Citations

➢ Google My Business
https://www.google.com/business/

➢ Bing Places for Business
https://www.bingplaces.com/
Top 5 Quality Guidelines

1. Don’t include keywords, geographical wording, and / or stores codes in your business name.

2. Select the category that is most appropriate for your business.

3. Never use a tracking phone line in your listings.

4. Business name should stay the same for multiple locations.

5. Avoid creating duplicate search engine business listings.
GMB Optimization Tips

✅ Business Description
Google allows 750 characters for the business description, but only 250 characters will show up in the short versions when display space is limited. Be sure to write a compelling description in the first 250 words that can stand on its own. But also use the remaining space to create a longer description if you feel that it can help.

✅ Add Photos & Videos Regularly
According to Google, businesses with photos see 35% more clicks to their website and 42% more requests for directions. Add a variety of photos that represent your business. Here are some ideas to consider:
- Photos of the exterior of your business
- Photos of the interior of your business
- Photos of your most popular products / services
- Photos of happy customers enjoying your products / services
- Photos of your team or employees

✅ Engage With The Community
Google Posts, Q&A, Reviews and Messaging are other ways that you can engage with users. Google will increase their focus on behavioral signals for rankings. What better way is there to assess the real-world popularity of a business than by using signals sent by people in the real world.
Organizing Your Business Info
Gather Your Business Info

- Business Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- Website URL
- Email Address
- Description
- Hours
- Payments Accepted
- Social Media Page URLs
- Photos & Videos
- Services
- Brands
- Virtual Tours
- Holiday Schedules
<table>
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<tr>
<td>See Cell Notes</td>
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<td>Incorrect Citation Data</td>
<td>Submitted Waiting Confirmation</td>
<td>Citation Requires Payment</td>
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### Major Data Aggregators

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### General Listings

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<td>cmac.ws</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What Is A Citation?

A citation is any mention of a business name, address, and phone number on an external website. (NAP)

The foundation of listing accuracy is growing beyond just NAP to NAPWCHD accuracy. NAPWCHD stands for name, address, phone number, website, category, hours of operation, and description. Having correct NAP data ensures that not only will consumers find your business online, but they will also have accurate, up-to-date information on how to contact you.

NAP data is also important for search engines like Google to display your business in geo-targeted searches. If someone is searching for “best mountain biking trails” in NW Arkansas, the local outfitters with the correct NAP data will appear.
Two Types of Citations

1. Structured Citations
   • Found in business sites like Yelp, Foursquare and BBB

2. Unstructured Citations
   • Found on blogs, newspaper websites, event listing websites, government websites and many more.
Structured Citations have a nested hierarchy throughout the web.

Four Main Data Aggregators

Infogroup, Acxiom, Localeze and Factual. This group supplies citation data to many other structured citation sources like Yelp & Yellowpages.com. The fan out of this data is always changing and is almost impossible to track. Remember the 4 main providers at the top and you’ll be fine.
Why Are Citations Important?

1. Search engines use them to get a better understanding of local businesses.
2. Search engines put more trust into a local business with a robust profile of citations across the web.
3. Citation signals account for over 11% of the ranking factors for local search.
Quality Citation Source Checks

Not all citation sources are created equal.

- **Relevancy**: How relevant is the citation source to your geographic location or your industry?
- **Authority**: How authoritative is the website?

Domain Authority is a score on a 100 point scale that predicts how likely a site is to rank. The closer a domain is to 100 the better.
Domain Authority is a score on a 100 point scale that predicts how likely a site is to rank. The closer a domain is to 100 the better.

https://websiteseochecker.com/domain-authority-checker/

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Domain Authority Checker

DA is short for Domain Authority and you can see I checked the DA of Angie’s List, BBB and Yelp.
How many pages of the site are indexed in Google?

Simply type “site:” and the domain of any site you want to check.

In the case of Yelp, you can see that Google has indexed over 90 million pages!

The higher number of pages indexed, the more authoritative the site.
NAPWCHD Consistency Is Important

Make sure your name, address, phone, website, category, hours and description are listed exactly the same across the web. The more consistent, the more trust from the search engines.

Search Engines use citations to understand where your business is located. If any of your citations sources vary at all with what is on your GMB listing then Google could fail to recognize that you are the same business or even worse, lose confidence that your GMB is accurate and choose not to show your listing at all.
Common Problems With Citation Accuracy

1. Leaving old or outdated business info lying around the web

2. Many directories encourage business owners to use tracking numbers

3. Creation of duplicate listings
Gathering, Correcting & Building New Citations
Now it's time to start gathering all of your existing citations across the web, start fixing the broken ones and creating new ones.

- Moz Local
- BrightLocal
- Yext
- Step Rep
- Google Search
Your Online Presence Score for:
Grand Canyon Whitewater, 1000 North Humphreys Street, 86002

Quality of your location data online, out of 28 directories we searched successfully:

- 57% MISSING
- 43% INCORRECT
- 0% CORRECT

Optimize your company's online presence

Results
Your online business listing visibility
Search your business phone number for the first 100 listings and add these citations to your citation tracker spreadsheet. Then perform the same search for your business address and your business name.

At this point, you’ll have a healthy list of citations documented in your spreadsheet. The next step is to review any citation that you have marked with incorrect info on your sheet and get them fixed. Every citation will have a slightly different method of correcting your listing, so you will have to check them one by one.

Getting your listing info correct at the four main data aggregators is the best place to start and you will see a trickle down effect of your listings being corrected. This can take 6 months or longer, so don’t think this will get fixed overnight. Start correcting your citations manually ASAP.
Go to the listing source from your Citation Tracker Spreadsheet and type in your name. Look for something on the page that says, Claim this business, manage this listing or edit business info. Click the link and follow the steps on the site. Every citation source is different. Some may require a phone call to verify your business, while others may send you a postcard with a verification code that you will need to enter into the site to prove that you are the owner.

You may find that it's impossible to correct every citation for your business, but don’t worry. The goal here is to correct as many citations as possible.
Citation Gathering Pro Tips

1. Don’t try to do all citation correcting at once!

2. Break down your list. Try correcting 5-10 at a time.

3. Delegate this process if you have the resources to do so.
Building New Citations

By now, you should have gathered a large list of citations and corrected as many of them as possible. Now it’s time to find even more citations to build for your business. This is done from the same toolset we used to gathering info about your existing citations. The differences boil down to whether you want to use these tools yourself or have the work done for you.

- Moz Local
- BrightLocal
- Yext
- Step Rep
- Google Search

To do this manually, do a Google search for all of your top keyword variations and take note of any directory or citation sites that you don’t already have on your citation tracker sheet. Then you can repeat this process by using your competitors names and NAP info.
Reviews
Reviews Are Very Important!

1. Local search rankings increase since they are a major ranking factor. (3rd highest ranking factor)

2. Review count is shown in the search results and studies show that click through rates increase dramatically.

3. People make buying decisions based on reviews, so conversion rates increase.
Review Acquisition Danger Zones

1. Don’t have customers give reviews at your business location. Many sites track the IP addresses that reviews come from and will be filtered out.

2. Refrain from acquiring large amounts of reviews all at once.

3. Never create fake reviews.

4. Read the guidelines for each reviews source you choose to use.
Best Practices For Obtaining Reviews

1. Get your entire staff on it!
2. Perform phone call / email follow-ups
3. Provide feedback cards.
4. Review reminders on invoicing, scheduling and receipt documents.
5. Utilize email automation.
6. Add a reviews page on your website.
7. Encourage customers to mention your specific service or product in reviews (keywords).
8. Respond to both GOOD and BAD reviews
Handling Bad Reviews

1. Never respond while you’re upset.

2. Give a professional and polite response.

3. Don’t respond by simply asking the angry customer to call you. Address the problem and offer a solution publicly.

4. If it is really your company’s fault, take ownership! Address the problem that occurred and how your plan to make it right.
Local On-Page SEO
Title Tags

The Title Tag is the most important factor with On-Page SEO. It can make or break your ability to rank for your targeted keywords. They are the first thing that search engines see when evaluating your page.
If we do a search for “Netflix”, the Netflix homepage is the first result.

Notice how the top line of the search result matches the Title Tag content we saw in the html markup.
Yoast Plugin for WordPress
Title Tag Best Practices

1. Keep Title Tag to 55 characters or less.

2. Place focus keywords at the beginning.

3. Use hyphens (-) and pipes ( | ) to make your titles look cleaner and stand out.

4. Add modifiers (for blogs, not for homepage or service pages):
   - Mountain Bike Trails in Colorado
   - Best Mountain Bike Trails in Colorado

5. Every page must have a unique title. Never use the same title on multiple pages.
This is an indication that search engines pay close attention to the words you use for your URL's.
1. Search engines place more emphasis on the first 3-5 words, so use your keywords at the beginning.

2. Create short, keyword rich URL’s. “Best Whitewater Rafting Colorado” example.com/best-whitewater-rafting-colorado
Bad Examples

“Top Mountain Biking Trails Arkansas”
example.com/topmountainbikingtrailsarkansas

eexample.com/top_mountain_biking_trailsarkansas

eexample.com/8923001-top-biking-trails-ar
Good Examples

“Top Mountain Biking Trails In Arkansas”
example.com/top-mountain-biking-trails-in-arkansas

example.com/top-mountain-biking-trails-arkansas

example.com/2019/12/13/top-mountain-biking-trails-in-arkansas
Search engines consider the words in your heading tags to be highly important to the page. Headings also help the content be more readable for your users.

Heading tags come in 6 different sizes from H1 to H6, creating a nice hierarchy of size and importance.
Good Examples

• Never add tags out of order. Say, jumping from an H1 tag and then adding an H4 tag.

• Use only one H1 tag per page! (use as many H2 - H6 tags as is necessary)

Main Heading

Secondary Heading 1

Tertiary Heading 1

Secondary Heading 2

Tertiary Heading 2
This Is What Happens When You Accidentally De-Index Your Site from Google

The author’s views are entirely his or her own (excluding the unlikely event of hypnosis) and may not always reflect the views of Moz.

Does reading that title give you a mini-panic attack?

Having gone through exactly as the title suggests, I can guarantee your anxiety is fully warranted.

If you care to relive my nightmare with me — perhaps as equal parts catharsis and SEO study — we will walk through the events chronologically.

Are you ready?

**August 4th, 2019**

It was a Sunday morning. I was drinking my coffee and screwing around in our SEO tools, like normal, not expecting a damned thing. Then ... BAM!
As SEOs, we’re all used to seeing natural fluctuations in rankings. Fluctuations, not disappearances.

**Step 1: Denial**

Immediately my mind goes to one place: *it’s a mistake*. So I jumped into some other tools to confirm whether or not Ahrefs was losing its mind.

Google Analytics also showed a corresponding drop in traffic, confirming something was definitely up. So as an SEO, I naturally assumed the worst...

**Step 2: Algo panic**

Algorithm update? Please, please don’t let it be an algo update!

I jumped into Barracuda’s Panguin Tool to see if our issue coincided with a confirmed update.
• Put your primary keyword in the first Heading Tag.

Top Rafting Trips in Colorado - <H1>
Best Rafting Trips in Colorado for the Whole Family - <H2>
Bighorn Canyon Half Day Rafting Trips - <H3>
Family Float Rafting Trips - <H3>
Top Rafting Trips in Colorado
...body content...

Best Rafting Trips in Colorado for the Whole Family
...body content...

Bighorn Canyon Half Day Rafting Trips
...body content...

Family Float Rafting Trips
...body content...
“A picture is worth 1,000 words,” but search engines have a long way to go in terms of image recognition.

There are 3 ways that the search engines can use to get more context as to what an image is and why it’s important to a page’s content. (in order of importance)

• Alt text attribute
• File name - image.jpg
• Image Title
Editing Images in WordPress
Image Best Practices

• Create unique, keyword rich alt text for each image on a page
• Always use your target keywords at the beginning of your alt text with modifiers or variations at the end.
• Create keyword rich filenames to your images before uploading them to your site. Use hyphens between words when naming your files, not spaces or underscores. i.e. family-raft-trips-Arkansas-river.jpg
• Make your image titles unique from your alt text.
  alt text - family raft trips on the Arkansas river
  filename - family-raft-trips-Arkansas-river.jpg
  title - Family rafting on the Arkansas River
There’s no magic formula for the number of words that need to be used in the body content of any given page of your site. What is important is the quality and usefulness of your page’s content play the greatest role in ranking. So whatever you do, make sure that you create awesome content that shows you are a subject matter expert in what you do and relevant to the keyword you are targeting.

- Find ways to use your targeted keyword as early as possible in your page content.
- Don’t overuse your keyword or it will appear spammy.
Being highly ranked doesn’t necessarily mean you’ll get more traffic. How your search result looks will effect how likely it will get clicked. That’s where the Meta Description comes in. It is a small snippet of text that describes the page. Search engines pull this from the MD on your page. If you haven’t designated one, search engines will do their best and display the text from your body on the SERP.

Upper Gauley River Whitewater Rafting - Adventures on the ... 
https://adventuresonthegorge.com > Adventures > Whitewater Rafting

The Upper Gauley River is the epitome of whitewater excitement. The section drops over 335 feet in less than 13 miles, resulting in high-volume and technical ...

Gauley River Rafting | ACE Raft - ACE Adventure Resort 
https://acerraft.com > white-water-rafting > gauley-river-rafting

Experience Gauley River rafting in West Virginia on the world famous, challenging Upper Gauley River or the scenic and beginner-friendly Lower Gauley River.

Seasons: September - October   Minimum Age: 16 Yrs.
Upper Gauley River Rafting · Fall Lower Gauley River Rafting · Featured gauley trips
Editing Meta Descriptions in WordPress
Meta Description Best Practices

• To ensure your entire meta description is visible, limit it to 155 characters or less.
• Create clear benefits to the user for visiting your page.
• Include a Call To Action like “Book Today”.
• Write a description that is relevant to the content that is on the page.
• Include your focus keyword early on in your description.
• Review the first page search results for your focus keyword to see how the top ranking results have written their descriptions.
Your epic website from 2006 just isn’t going to cut it anymore. Search engines pay close attention to how users interact with your website. Important user experience metrics to pay attention to in your SEO efforts are bounce rate, average time on site and page load speed.

- **Bounce rate** is the percentage of users who visit your site and leave the entrance page without taking any additional actions. The lower the percentage, the better.
- **Average time on site** is the approximate time that users spend on your site calculated by Google Analytics. Higher average time on site is better.
- **Page load speed** is the amount of time a page takes to render to the user. This is calculated by server delivery and browser processing time. Your site should load in 3 seconds or less!
Google’s Test My Site Tool

1. Benchmark your site speed against your competitors.

https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/feature/testmysite/

- Quality content is a must. Check GA for Bounce Rates and Avg. Time on Site and address any issues at the page level.

- Don’t overlook your hosting provider!
LSI Keyword Implementation

LSI stands for Latent Semantic Indexing. These are related, similar or alternative words that help give search engines more context about your page.

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https://neilpatel.com/ubersuggest/
Google Search for LSI

Distribute your LSI keywords naturally.

Don't overuse LSI keywords.

Searches related to arkansas river rafting

- arkansas river rafting map
- arkansas river rafting deaths
- best arkansas river rafting company
- arkansas river rafting buena vista
- arkansas river rafting royal gorge
- the numbers arkansas river
- browns canyon rafting
- white water rafting hot springs arkansas

People also ask

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<tr>
<td>Where is the best place to whitewater raft in Colorado?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How much does it cost to go white water rafting in Colorado?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you whitewater raft in October in Colorado?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a weight limit for white water rafting in Colorado?</td>
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Link Building
The Value of Backlinks

The days of the number of total backlinks by itself are gone. Backlink value metrics are based on:

- Authority - CNN vs “Mom Blog”
- Relevance - websites within your industry or niche (associations are big)
- Trust - If search engines don’t trust a website or view it as spammy, it will hurt your site.

Google Trust Rank

- TrustRank Algorithm is secretive.
- Established to combat Spam sites.
- Other tools have been created to approximate trust levels.

https://majestic.com/
Backlink Profiles

Analyze your own website first!

- How relevant are your backlinks?
- How varied are your backlinks?
- Dofollow vs. Nofollow
- What is the distribution of High Authority vs. Low Authority referring domains?
- What’s the Quality level of each backlink?

Domain Authority is a score on a 100 point scale that predicts how likely a site is to rank. The closer a domain is to 100 the better.

No follow this same process for your competitors to uncover opportunities for new backlinks.

thexcitegroup.com
Backlink Profiling Tools

- Moz’s Open Site Explorer (moz.com/researchtools/ose)
- Majestic’s Site Explorer (majestic.com)
- Ahrefs’ Site Explorer (ahrefs.com)
Link Building Tactics

- **Tactic Overview**
  - Strategy overview
  - Types of websites to target
- **Link Prospecting**
  - Identify & inspect sites for backlinks
  - Specific to each tactic
- **Link Acquisition**
  - Submission
  - Outreach

Tactic: Industry Directories

Getting links from Industry Directories is one of the easiest linking building tactics and the best place to start. These links are highly relevant, authoritative and trusted.

Types of Industry Directories
• Industry specific niche sites
• Industry Associations & Organizations
• Manufacturers & Suppliers

Search Query Approaches to Find Industry Directories

• Broad Search
  • <industry keyword> directory
  • <industry keyword> association
  • <industry keyword> manufacturer

Example Query: river rafting directory

• Exact Match Search
  • <industry keyword> “submit”
  • <industry keyword> “add url”
  • <industry keyword> “submit website”
  • <industry keyword> “add website”
  • <industry keyword> “listing”
  • <industry keyword> “recommended sites”

Example Query: river rafting “submit website”
Search Query Approaches to Find Industry Directories

• Wildcard Search Modifiers
  • `<industry keyword> * directory`

You search: `river rafting * directory`
The asterisk causes the search engine to return:
Local, Colorado, tourism, etc.

Results will vary when you apply the wildcard search modifier but you can often find some hidden gems.

• URL Specific Search Modifier
  • `inurl:directory <industry keyword>`
  • `inurl:membership <industry keyword>`
  • `inurl:submit <industry keyword>`

Example Query: `inurl:directory river rafting`
For local businesses, it’s important that some of the links pointing back to your site are relevant to your geographical area. This is where local directories can help.

Local Directory Sources

- City or State Directories
- Chamber of Commerce Websites
- Local Media Outlets (newspaper, magazines, radio stations or blogs)
- Neighborhood Associations (most overlooked)
- Local Business Associations
Search Query Approaches to Find Local Directories

- **Broad Search**

- **Exact Match Search**
  - `<city, state, zip code, suburb or neighborhood name keyword> “directory”`
  - `<city, state, zip code, suburb or neighborhood name keyword> “newspaper”`
  - `<city, state, zip code, suburb or neighborhood name keyword> “magazine”`
  - `<city, state, zip code, suburb or neighborhood name keyword> “business association”`
  - `<city, state, zip code, suburb or neighborhood name keyword> “chamber of commerce”`
  - `<city, state, zip code, suburb or neighborhood name keyword> “neighborhood association”`

- **Wildcard Search Modifiers**

- **URL Specific Search Modifiers**
Tactic: Leverage Current Relationships

Some backlink opportunities are hidden right under your nose. The most common are businesses you already have existing relationships with.

Relationship Brainstorming

- Does your company pay for any local business services? (cleaning, office equipment or IT services)
- Do you use any software for your business?
- Who are your suppliers or manufacturers?
- Do you know any complementary businesses in your area?
- Do you sponsor any events or non-profits?
- Are you a member of any business or industry groups?
- What training programs are you involved in?
- Do you know any other of blogs or other online publications?

Think through each question carefully and record your backlink possibilities in your link prospecting template sheet. Remember relevancy is very important, so make sure your prospects are relevant to your local area or industry.
Strategies For Acquiring Backlinks

• Offer a Testimonial
• Ask to be included on a “links” or “partners” page
• Provide a guest blog post for their site
• Linkable Assets
  • Local Resources
  • How To Guides
  • Long List Posts
  • Infographics
  • Online Tools (i.e. river level widget)

Buffalo Outdoor Center has one and they have over 25 backlinks just to this page. This year they have over had over 400,000 visits to this page with an avg. time on site of 2:25

thecitigroup.com
People love being recognized and they love to share being recognized with others. Big publishers have been collecting backlinks like this for years, but this strategy isn't just for big publishers. Your business can use this tactic to gain quality backlinks as well. You will use proven content writing techniques to stroke the ego of site owners to get them to link back to your site.

Ego Bait Content Strategies

1. Expert Interviews
   • Interview business owners relevant to your industry or your location
   • Record their responses into a high quality blog post
   • Prospect for local or nationwide business experts related to your industry or location (i.e. reaching out to raft manufacturers to interview them on why they use the materials, seaming and manufacturing techniques they employ)
   • Reach out to several prospects as response rates can be low
   • Create an outreach script and email to prospects
   • Manage unanswered responses: follow up once & move on
   • Compile all responses into a blog post
   • Reach out once the blog is posted and request backlinks
Hi [business owner],

We are currently working on a blog post at The Xcite Group titled “Top 10 Raft Manufacturers Answer: Why Rivers Matter?” For the blog post we are interviewing raft manufacturers and asking them one main question: “Why Rivers Matter?”

Would you be interested in participating? If so, could you email me back the following:


2) *Optional: Attach a picture of your company logo you’d like us to use in the blog post.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks!

thexcitegroup.com
Hello again [business owner],

Thanks for making the “Top 10 Raft Manufacturers Answer: Why Rivers Matter?” blog post a reality! As promised, here is the live post: https://example.com/why-rivers-matter/

It’d be really great if you shared our post on your blog or shared it on your social media channels. We could write a short post for your site on your behalf, if you’d like. How does that sound?

Again, thank you so much for participating. Our readers will find your insights highly valuable.

Thanks!
Tactic: Ego Bait

Ego Bait Content Strategies

2. “Best of” or “The Top” List
   - Gather a list of 10 or more businesses that share a common interest to your business or that are relevant to your location.
   - Compile a list with positive & thoughtful comments about each business in a list style blog post. (13 Hidden Gems When Visiting The Buffalo National River)
   - In the post, be sure to include positive & helpful information about each place or business, as well as a picture, their address, phone and URL.
   - Create an outreach script & email it to Featured Businesses once the blog is posted and request backlinks
Hi [business owner],

Congratulations on being featured on the “13 Hidden Gems When Visiting The Buffalo National River” list. In the past week it has gotten over 500 social interactions and continues to climb. It was our hope in writing the article to bring attention to your business in a positive way.

Would you mind sharing the article on your blog and social media channels?

Let me know your thoughts on the article as well!

Thanks!

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Thank You!

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