

The Local SEO Checklist for Service Businesses

36 checks in six stages, in the order we run them for clients. Foundation, keywords, on-page, Google Business Profile, reviews, content and links. Print it, put it on the wall, work top to bottom.

SIX STAGES · THIRTY-SIX CHECKS · ONE ORDER TO WORK THEM

How to use it

- Work top to bottom. The foundation comes first because everything after it depends on the base.
- Tick the box when the check is genuinely done. Half-done is not done.
- The order matters. Reviews and links move rankings, but only once the site and profile are set.

STAGE 1 · FOUNDATION AND SETUP

SSL and HTTPS everywhere

☐

The cheap win that reads as trust. Mixed content on one page undoes it.

One name, address, phone (NAP) on every page

☐

Google scrapes your site for your address. The three lines stay identical on every page, footer included.

GA4 installed and firing

☐

Were the site and ads measured before you shipped them? The report is only as good as the tag.

Google Search Console verified

☐

The only source of the queries people actually type and the positions you actually hold. No tool replaces it.

XML sitemap and robots.txt live

☐

Both reachable, and the sitemap submitted. This is how a fresh site gets trusted faster.

LocalBusiness schema on the homepage

☐

Address, hours, phone, service area, in machine-readable form. The page version of your business card.

**STAGE 2 · KEYWORDS AND SEARCH LANDSCAPE**

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|--------------------------|---|--|
| ☐ | List the ten searches you want to win | The queries people actually type, not your category names. Write them like a customer would. |
| ☐ | One page per service | Each service gets its own URL so each one can rank. A single do-everything page ranks for nothing. |
| ☐ | Pull my real queries from Search Console | The list of what you already show up for is a customer-written keyword list. It is free and nobody reads it. |
| ☐ | Check what your town is searching | The terms you are not ranking for, and the terms nobody in your town owns yet. |
| ☐ | Three long-tail searches with intent | How much does it cost, near me, for a house like mine. The low-competition roads that convert. |
| ☐ | Pick five terms to track weekly | You can only steer what you measure. Five terms this quarter beats thirty terms never checked. |

STAGE 3 · ON-PAGE, SERVICE PAGES FIRST

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| ☐ | One H1 per page: the service and the place | Roofing in Deerfield Beach. The page says what it is in one line. |
| ☐ | Titles under 60 characters, term first | The search term in the front, the town second, the rest is garnish. |
| ☐ | Meta descriptions that end in an action | Two lines, concrete, ends in call, walk, or get a quote. The curiosity gap is the click. |
| ☐ | FAQ section with schema on service pages | The questions at the bottom of the sales call, in writing, with the JSON-LD behind them. |
| ☐ | Internal links: home, services, posts | Every page linkable in two clicks from the homepage, and the new pages linked from somewhere alive. |
| ☐ | Real local content, not stock filler | Photos of your jobs, the town in the captions, alt text with the place in it. The algorithm reads the alt. |

STAGE 4 · GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

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| ☐ | Claimed and verified, exact categories | The category is the box you are filed under. Pick the one a customer would search. |
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**Services list with descriptions**☐

Every line in the services category. The profile is a brochure, not a phone number.

A post every week, one real photo☐

The profile that posts weekly looks alive. Alive beats right.

Q&A; seeded with real questions☐

The questions you get on the phone, asked and answered on the profile.

Hours, phone, service area, and pin right☐

One wrong digit in the hours costs you the week. Check it, then check it again.

Link with tracking from profile to site☐

A parameter on the link so the calls and clicks are counted as coming from the profile.

STAGE 5 · REVIEWS AND PROOF**Baseline counts: Google, Yelp, everywhere else**☐

Know the starting number. Six months from now, the delta is the report.

Ask every customer, script in hand☐

One sentence, at the end of a good job: we would appreciate a few honest words. That is the ask.

QR card or short link for the ask☐

The two-second version for the jobs that end on site. Paper wins here.

Reply to every review inside 24 hours☐

Every one. The reply is the second thing a future customer reads, and the cheapest ranking lever there is.

Never buy reviews, never incentivize☐

The cheap game ends in a fine and a filter. One honest ask a week beats a bought block.

Feed the best quotes into the site and ads☐

The words a customer wrote about you are your best copy. They read real because they are.

STAGE 6 · CONTENT AND LOCAL LINKS**Two honest posts a month**☐

Answer the question you got on the phone this week. That is the topic. Every time.

Area pages for the towns you serve☐

One page per town, with real local detail: drive times, neighborhoods, the local angle. Not a swap of the city name.

Local citations: chamber, associations, suppliers☐

The real profiles, found by searching. Each URL verified before the NAP goes in.



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| ☐ | Directories checked for dead or duplicate NAP | Old numbers and old addresses are leaks. The fix is boring, which is why nobody does it. |
| ☐ | Links from people you actually work for | Suppliers, the property manager, the association. Ask for the link, it is a short email. |
| ☐ | Friday check: positions, calls, review count | Fifteen minutes on Friday. Everything in one place, week over week. That is the whole report. |

About this checklist

This is the first stage of the local program we run for service businesses. If you get to stage five and the week gets busy, that is the moment to talk. The call is twenty minutes, and there is no pitch:

donebyverde.com/contact

Made by donebyverde — sites, apps, and the content that feeds them, for service businesses. More free tools at donebyverde.com/tools.