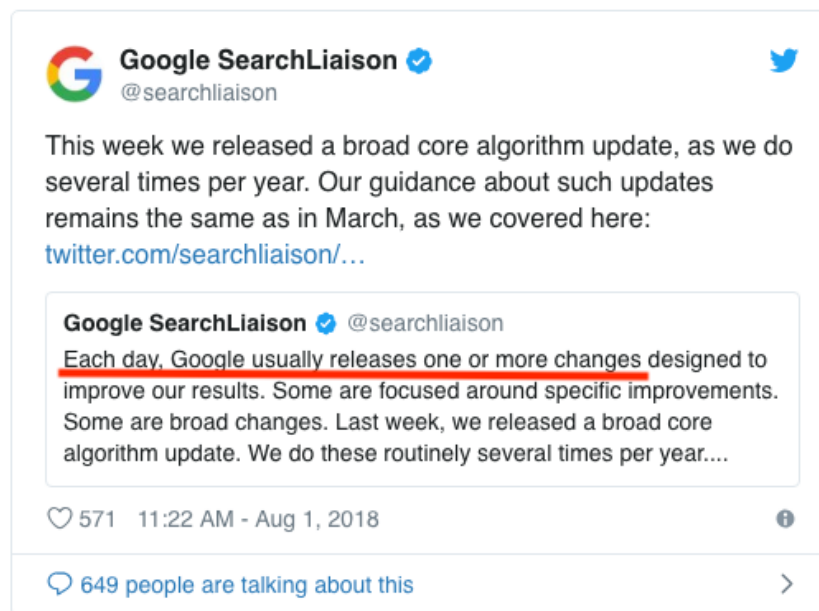




2019 SEO Ranking Factors

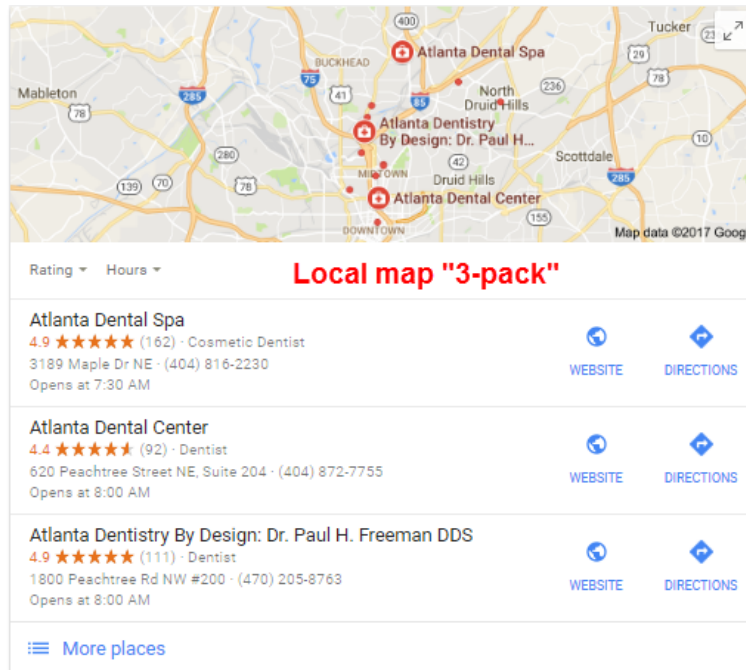
Throughout the year, Google makes several changes to its algorithm to make it more accurate. Ultimately Google's goal is to find the best way to answer the search query typed in by the user. Google even confirmed that it releases small algorithm updates **EVERY DAY**.



These constant updates send digital marketers in a frenzy, along with the fact that Google doesn't divulge information on exactly what changed in their updates. The positive side of Google not telling everyone all the changes they made is that it helps limit the ability of someone using black hat techniques to manipulate the search results. Instead, marketers have to test, measure results and share the information with other colleagues in the industry to see what is working and what is not. Rinse and repeat as often as possible because, oh yeah, Google releases 500-600 algorithm updates a year according to MOZ.

So if you aren't a digital marketer working full time on SEO, how do you keep track of all this stuff? Luckily, there are great platforms that track this data and report what changes are affecting search rankings. We could break down all 50 local map pack & local SEO ranking factors, but for the sake of time, we have hand-picked the most important ones to go further into detail.

This is broken out into two sections; Local Map Pack and Local Organic Rankings.



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Local organic results

Dentists in Atlanta - Yelp

<https://www.yelp.com/c/atlanta/dentists>

The Best Dentists in Atlanta on Yelp. Read about places like: David McNay, DDS, Heart of Vinings Dentistry, Dental TLC, Joyce T Lee, DDS, MD, 19th Street ...

So here is your 2019 Rankings Report Guide.

Local Map Pack

Everyone wants to be in the local map section. It shows your company is nearby. It's easy to see you have a website, address and a quick click to call feature — a favorite for Google users and a target for marketers.

Rising 32% in 2018 up to the #1 spot was your GMB (Google My Business) signals. That's right, by merely filling out your GMB profile and keeping it updated you have completed the top ranking factor to be featured in the local map section. Be a pro and complete these additional tasks;

- Regularly use GMB post
- Use GMB as your company's FAQ section. Right on Google!
- Regularly post both videos and photos.

Total Ranking Factors for Local Map Packs

1. GMB Signals - 25%
2. Links 16% - Continuing to be one of the most challenging tasks in SEO, yet one of the most significant difference makers. While links only come in third place for local map pack ranking factors and at 16%, links are also the #1 factor for local organic search making link building arguably the #1 most important SEO factor.
3. Reviews 15% - Reviews have increased 42% over the last three years. Here are factors to consider:
 - Get more reviews. As obvious as this is, the weight of reviews is becoming so impactful in local map search and it is imperative you set up a yearly budget and campaign to acquire new reviews.
 - Respond to all your reviews.
 - Use keywords in your reviews, a factor on the rise. If you can, try to encourage people leaving you a review to mix in the use of your services and keywords.
4. On Page Signals - 14%
5. Citations - 11%
6. Behavioral - 10%
7. Personalization - 6%
8. Social - 3%

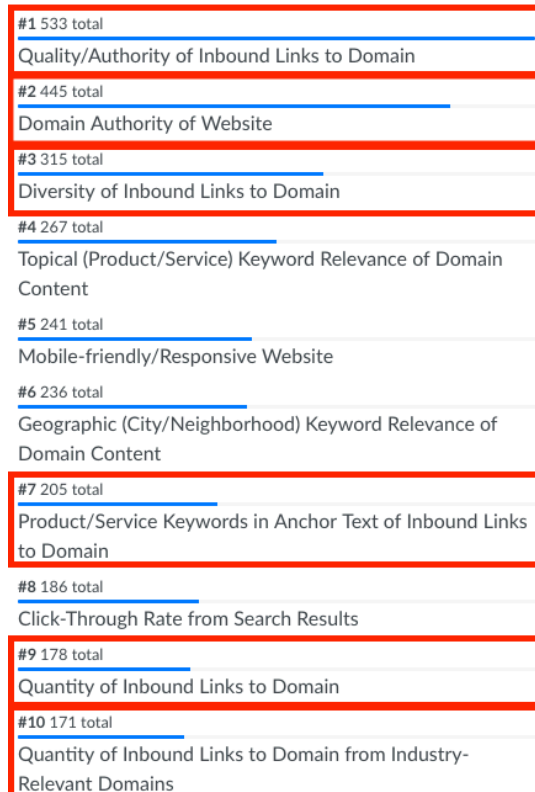
Local Organic Ranking

1. Link Signals - 27.94%
2. On-Page Signals - 26.03%
3. Behavioral Signals - 11.5%
4. Google My Business Signals - 8.85%
5. Citation Signals - 7.32%
6. Review Signals - 6.47%
7. Social Signals - 3.47%

Links, Links, Links

Links are so important they make up 6 out of the top 10 organic factors.

Top 50 Local Organic Factors



Why are links so important? Links are an excellent way for Google to use human behavior as an indicator that is (for the most part) out of the web marketers hands. An inbound link to your website tells Google that your site is reputable enough for someone to send their visitors to your site, also called link equity (or what we like to call it - link juice). This link also indicates to Google what topic people view you as an authority on. If people are linking to a particular page on your site about mold, Google can see you are a go-to resource for mold damage. That's why it's also important (and in the top 10) to get links from industry resources and have the topic keyword in the anchor link text pointing to your website. The more "link-juice" you direct to your website from other people's recommendations (links), the more authority your site will gain. More authority = more confidence Google should rank you higher. That's the quick version, but how do you get links?

- Citation building
- Sign up for industry groups/associations - These sites typically have members directories that point back to your website. Many cost money, but many are also free.
- Blogger outreach
- Write blogs/articles for industry sources (this is what we are doing here).
- Resource Pages - Many times a local organization might have a good resource page they could spotlight you on. Or a friend you have might have a company that

compliments yours, such as carpet cleaning. You could each write something for each others website and get a link.

- There are other strategies, but we can't give away the farm. Call RDM today to see how we can help you.

Click Through Rate (CTR)

The Click Through Rate is precisely how it sounds. When your website comes up in the SERP (Search Engine Results Page), how often is it clicked? The reason this is important is that this action is driven primarily through human behavior. What better way for Google to determine if they are delivering the correct results for a search query than to see how often someone clicks the link. Instinct would tell you, that if link #10 gets clicked 3x as much as link #8, then it's likely that the website at link #10 should be moved up because it is better serving the searchers intent for this particular keyword.

So how do you fix this?

- Page Title - I could create a whole blog on this category alone, but remember the goal is to entice someone to click your link. Be sure to use;
 - Numbers - 24 HR Emergency Service
 - Dates - Local Company Since 1982
 - Use appropriate length, not too short and not too long where you can't read full title description.
 - Use Keywords In The Title - Water Damage Removal In Your Home
 - Call To Action - Words like Buy, Call, Watch, Learn, etc.
 - Use Questions - Did You Find Mold In Your Home?
 - Capitalize - Capitalize Each Letter
- Meta Description - The meta description appears below the page title. While this doesn't have a direct impact on search ranking, the meta description could be the difference of someone clicking your link, which increases your CTR and thus has an indirect effect.
- Schema Markup - Without trying to get too technical, putting schema markup on your website is a way to let Google's crawlers know what kind of site you are and other pertinent information about that page. Ever see a website with stars underneath the link with a review rating? Try adding a review section on your site with proper review schema added to the code. Google may add it to your search snippet making it highly more visible and increasing your CTR.

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Let's Recap

There is a lot here to digest, so here is a quick checklist for you to follow and accomplish. If you need any assistance implementing this for your web presence, don't hesitate to contact Restoration Digital Marketing.

GMB

- Fill out your profile 100%.
- Upload photos/videos on a regular basis.
- Post daily with GMB post.
- Get new reviews on a regular basis and respond to them.

Local Organic SEO

- Make sure your citations are built out properly.
- Join local/industry associations.
- Then get more links.
- Make sure all your page titles are attractive. Don't use the default.
- Rewrite all your meta descriptions so they are specific to your page and condensed to catch the readers eye.
- Add a review section on your website with review schema markup (talk to a developer).