

Google Rules for Local Listings and Google Maps October 2009

Google has recently updated their rules for businesses listing their details in the Local Business Center at www.google.com/local/add which also appear on Google Maps.

Local Business Center Guidelines

Business Listings in Local Business Center must have correct information about physical, local businesses, as they appear in the real world !

Warning: Google reserves the right to suspend access to Local Business Center or to other Google Services to individuals or businesses violating these guidelines.

Here are the other guidelines that Google have specified

Ownership

- Only business owners or authorized representatives may claim their business listings on Google Maps.

Business Name

- Represent your business exactly as it appears in the offline world. The name on Google Maps should match the business name, as should the address, phone number and website.
- Do not attempt to manipulate search results by adding extraneous keywords or a description of your business into the business name.
- Do not include phone numbers or URLs in the business name.

Physical Location

- Do not create listings at locations where the business does not physically exist.
- PO Boxes do not count as physical locations.
- Do not create more than one listing for each business location, either in a single account or multiple accounts.
- Businesses that operate in a service area as opposed to a single location should not create a listing for every city they service. Service area businesses should create one listing for the central office of the business only.
- Businesses with special services, such as law firms and doctors, should not create multiple listings to cover all of their specialties.
- The precise address for the business must be provided in place of broad city names or cross-streets.
- A property for rent is not considered a place of business. Please create one listing for the central office that processes the rentals.

URL & Phone

- Provide a phone number that connects to your individual business location as directly as possible. For example, you should provide an individual location phone number in place of a call center.
- Provide one URL that best identifies your individual business location.
- Do not provide phone numbers or URLs that redirect or 'refer' users to other landing pages or phone numbers other than those of the actual business.

Custom Attributes & Description

- Use the description and custom attribute fields to include additional information about your listing. This type of content should never appear in your business's title, address or category fields.

Best Practices

- Use a shared, business email account, if multiple users will be updating your business listing.
- If possible, use an email account with a domain that matches your business URL. For example, if your business website is www.giraffetoys.com, a matching email address would be you@giraffetoys.com.

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