

Local SEO: How to boost your social listening

 By Jack Peterson

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If you are a local business, it's literally an orchestra that you'd have to play out to sustain your web presence. You'd need a responsive, fast-loading website with optimised pages, a running blog focusing on what's relevant and useful for your local customers, a dedicated CRM, and a streamlined workflow for email marketing.

Then, you'd need a focused presence on the social networks - especially on Google+, FourSquare (did you see their new superhero logo? Sorry, we are meandering here), Twitter, and other social networks.

How To Boost Local SEO With Social Listening

Further, you might have to list your business in important local directories (we know that directories, in general, are out of fashion. For local businesses, however, niche or even general directory listings do have weight).

Justin Fried at [Search Engine Watch](#) advocates the importance of social listening and defines it as the act of monitoring millions of updates on social networks, forums, and Q & A sites to gather conversations related to your brands, products, services, or

the niche you are in.

Social listening, however, has the potential to do more for you.

Here's how:

Monitor, seek, reach, and find

Let's say you were a local business in downtown Los Angeles. Today SEO, as it were, boils down to quality content and proper guest blogging outreach programs.

Now, think about this: if you actually monitor and find bloggers writing about your products or services or even your brand, what are your chances of success - in terms of getting a foot in the door to guest blog on their blog, for instance -- to acquaint yourself with them?

Let's assume that you own a restaurant, and all the SEO you do is focused on this. A local Los Angeles resident leaves a review on Yelp. You could reach out to this patron. You might just be able to have them leave another review on your Google+ page (which boosts your local SEO rankings organically).

Just by monitoring, you'd be able to reach out to your customers, potential customers, or even influencers.

Monitoring helps you track, analyse, and change course

Social listening or monitoring helps boost your SEO indirectly. For your local restaurant in downtown Los Angeles, your SEO efforts now [correlate to listings on local search](#). But as it is now with SEO, the paths for least resistance are over. You'd have to publish content (across channels) to gain visibility, trust, exposure, and reach. So, if you have a restaurant, this is what you'd do:

- Publish recipes (maybe allow access only to email subscribers).
- Write about food quality in general in and around Los Angeles.
- Pick up a bunch of best-selling dishes in your restaurant and write out stories behind those dishes. How do the chefs

manage to deliver? What kind of wars did you have to witness inside the kitchen? Make these stories visual.

- Create videos to tell a story - create, edit, and publish videos behind the making of every dish. You could videos on each of your chefs too.
- Take the recipes published on your blog and create visually rich slide decks (be sure to use your own photos. Hire a professional photographer, if you have to).

Monitoring is better than keyword tools

Social listening has a direct advantage: It gives you ideas for more content, it helps you gather new keywords related to your niche, and it makes you think about what you might want to do next.

As you go active on social media or on forums related to food, dining, and eating out - for the restaurant example - you'd see people talking, making recommendations, and use particular language-centric nuances. You'd get a whiff of all that, won't you?

Words are all we have to communicate, and these words change every now and then. Keith Paul believes that [social listening](#) can also help point to new trends (complete with words that can use to do SEO for your restaurant in Los Angeles or anywhere for that matter).

Keyword tools can only do so much. Further, Google's Keyword planner might not give you the full picture.

For that restaurant you own, SEO isn't just optimising for Los Angeles or chasing keywords and doing crappy content. It's just as important to "*Pay attention. Find out who is talking about you, in what capacity, and where.*" as Jay Baer of [Convince and Convert](#) puts it.

Read, learn, and hustle

Be where you should be, and do what you should. Start with some awesome guides that already exist for local business owners. Mikel Zaremba of [Radical Mustache](#) helpfully curated tons of content for local SEO, specifically.

As Steven Olenski at [Forbes](#) writes, don't ignore the basics: get on Google Local; keep your business information accurate (NAP - Name, Address, Phone); use tools such as MapMaker and Localize, and work to get real reviews from your customers.

What are you doing for Local SEO? Tell us about it.

ABOUT JACK PETERSON

Jack Peterson is an expert on Wordpress and feels that the whole concept of blogging has only succeeded because of it. He likes writing articles about the various aspects of Wordpress so he can enlighten the world about them. On the side, he ensures that he keeps himself updated about all the happenings in the world of SEO.

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