

# PRACTICAL SEO

\* Vol. 4 \*

[icba.org/mrc](https://icba.org/mrc) | ICBA Guidebook Series

## Boosting Your Bank's Local Search Visibility



## Practical SEO Overview



## Welcome to our SEO guidebook series tailored for community banks.

We've worked with marketing experts and long-established search specialists to develop custom guidance to help community banks succeed in our specialized industry.

Our biggest goal was to fine-tune the most important parts of a basic program that allows you to implement the most crucial tactics first and start seeing gains fast.

We understand that SEO can seem complex, especially if you're not a tech expert. Don't worry - we've designed this guidebook series to be easy to understand and implement, even for those with no prior SEO experience.


The series is organized into short guidebooks that allow you to use as needed and at your own pace.

The goal is to help you improve your community bank's online visibility without overwhelming you with technical jargon or long processes.

We'll even show you how to set up some simple tracking reports that allow you to show the results of your work.

And through it all, you'll learn that search engine optimization is simply an iterative process that you or multiple teammates can work through together.





# \* Boosting Your Bank's Local Search Visibility

You may have heard that there is no single list of search results for every topic. That's true. Showing Arizona customers information from a bank in Illinois wouldn't be very helpful. Today's search engines do a good job of understanding if someone has local retail intent in mind when searching.

In addition, have you ever searched for something and noticed that traditional search results are buried below the map and business listings? This is your chance to make sure you are not only being shown "above the fold" in those maps or listings – but that your profiles stand out from the competition. That makes local SEO crucial for your bank.



## What You'll Learn in this Guide: \*

- Optimize your bank's online business listings
- Ensure your contact information is consistent across the web
- Build local citations to boost your visibility
- Manage customer reviews effectively

Now, let's dive into the key aspects of local SEO for your community bank.





### Important things to do in a business listing:

Use your exact business name, address, and phone number

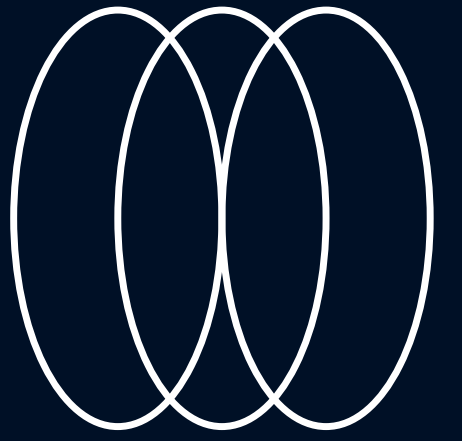
Choose the most relevant categories (e.g., “Bank,” “Community Bank”)

Add high-quality photos of your branch exterior and interior

Keep your hours up-to-date, including holidays

Make sure to explain parking, especially handicapped accessibility

Use the “Posts” feature to share updates and offers. That’s like a free ad



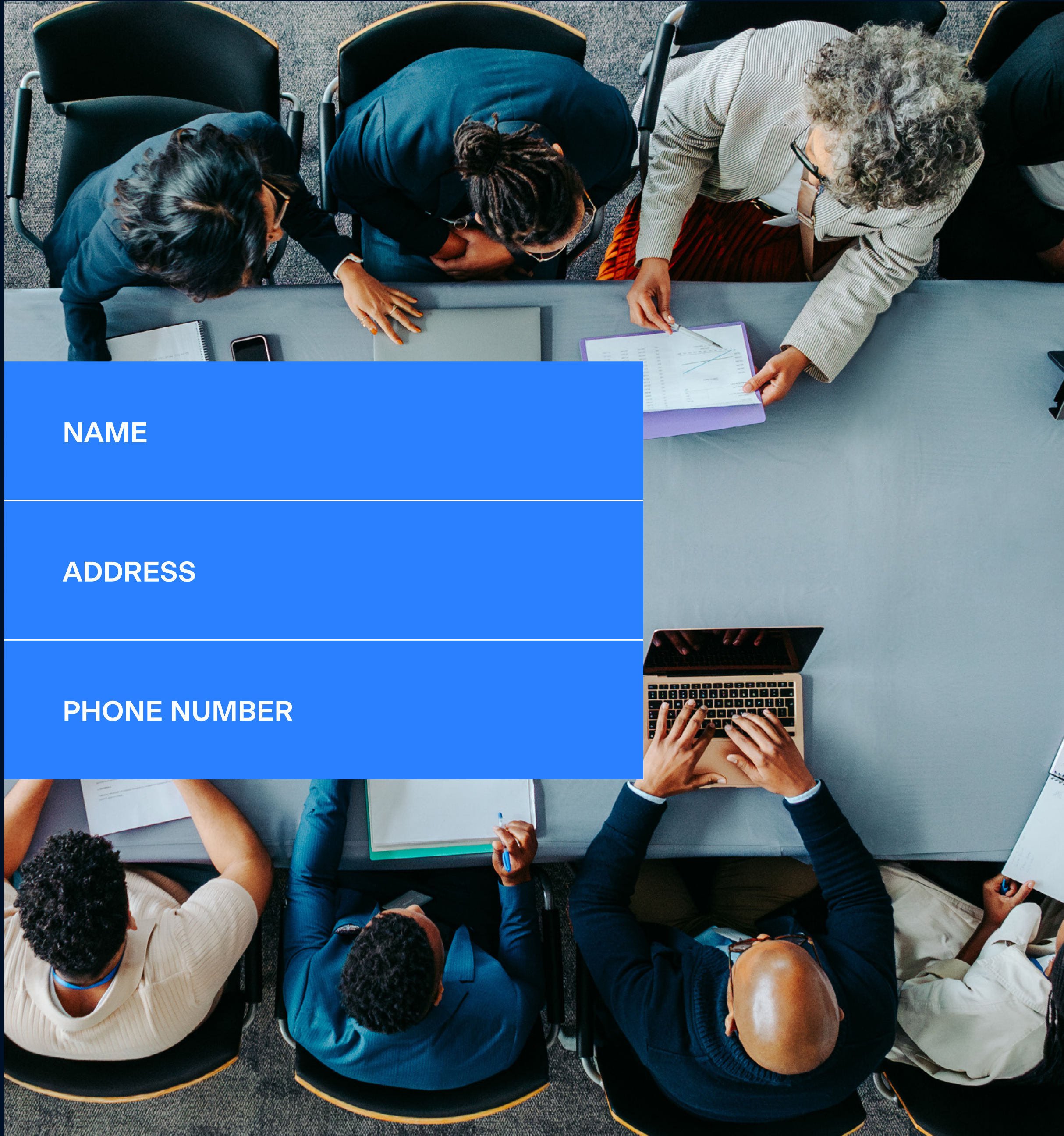
## Quick Local SEO Guide: Claim and Optimize Your Business Listings

Start with Google Business Profile and Bing Places for Business. These free tools from the search engines are essential for local visibility.

Just visit Google and Bing, enter your branch’s location or name, click “Own this business?” or “Claim this business”, and follow the verification process (usually by mail, phone, or email).

If it is claimed, and you don’t know who has the keys, ask around—it’s very important to know who keeps this information updated.

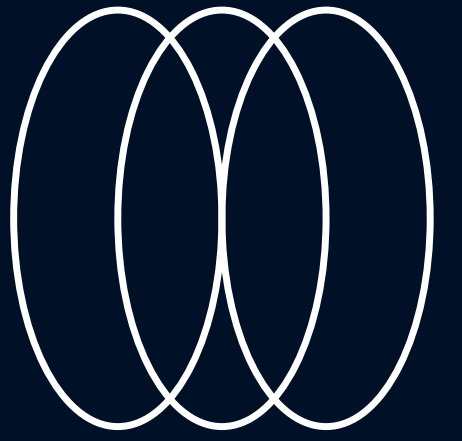




**NAME**

**ADDRESS**

**PHONE NUMBER**

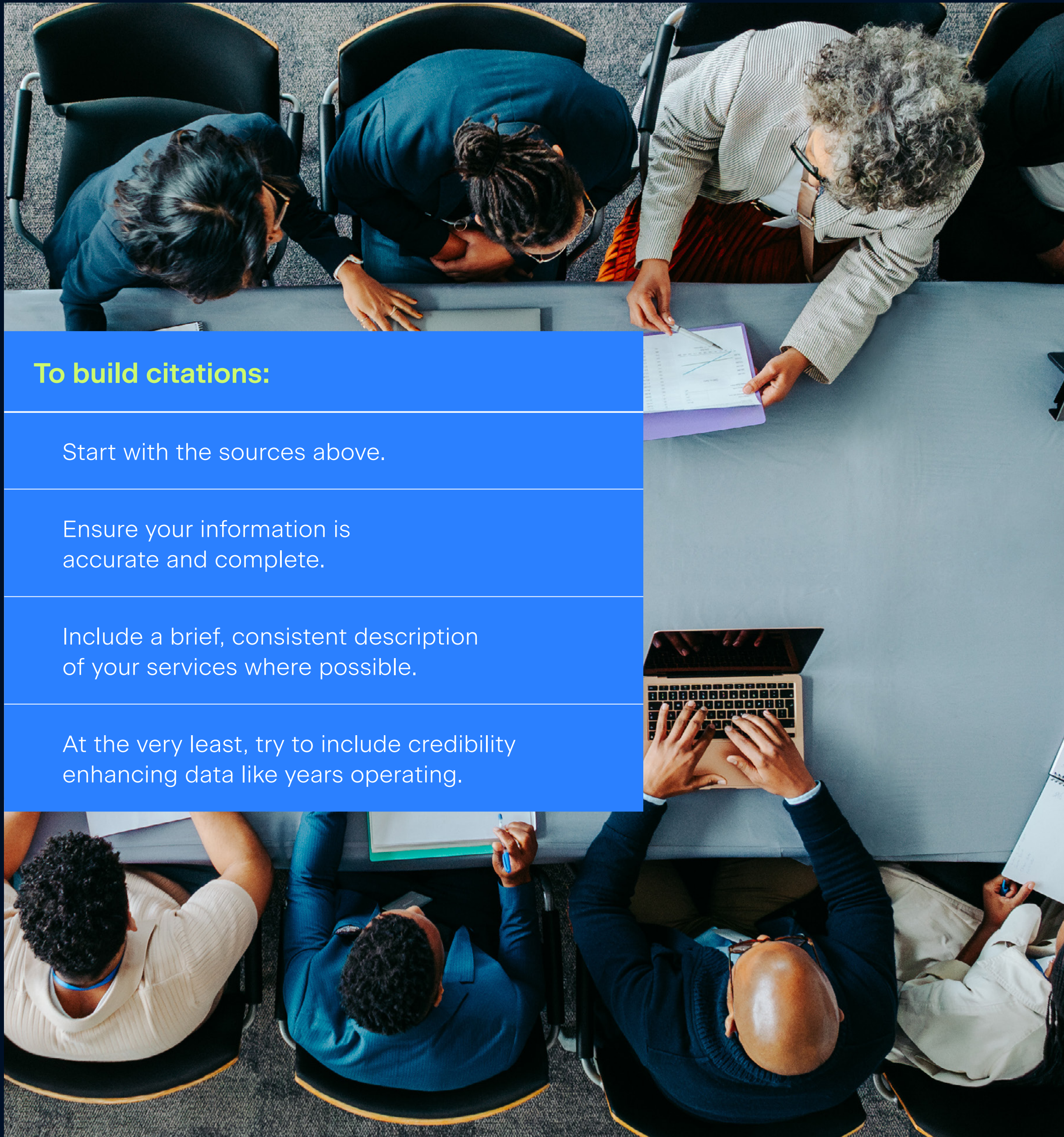


# Quick Local SEO Guide: Ensure NAP Consistency

NAP stands for Name, Address, and Phone number. Consistent NAP information across the web helps search engines trust your business data. In some cases, your bank's information may have been entered by a third party and could be wrong!

Audit your NAP by Googling your bank's name and noting all the places this information appears. Check for inconsistencies in spelling, abbreviations, or formatting. Make sure to correct any discrepancies, starting with the most visible, best known sites.





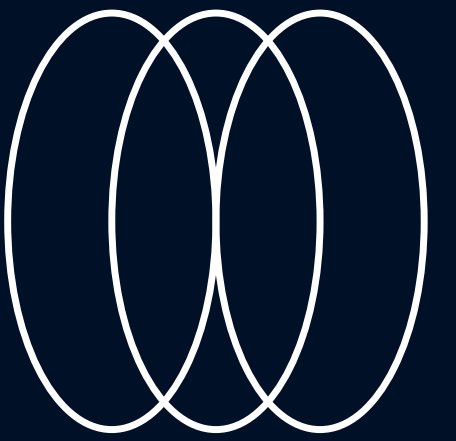
### To build citations:

Start with the sources above.

Ensure your information is accurate and complete.

Include a brief, consistent description of your services where possible.

At the very least, try to include credibility enhancing data like years operating.

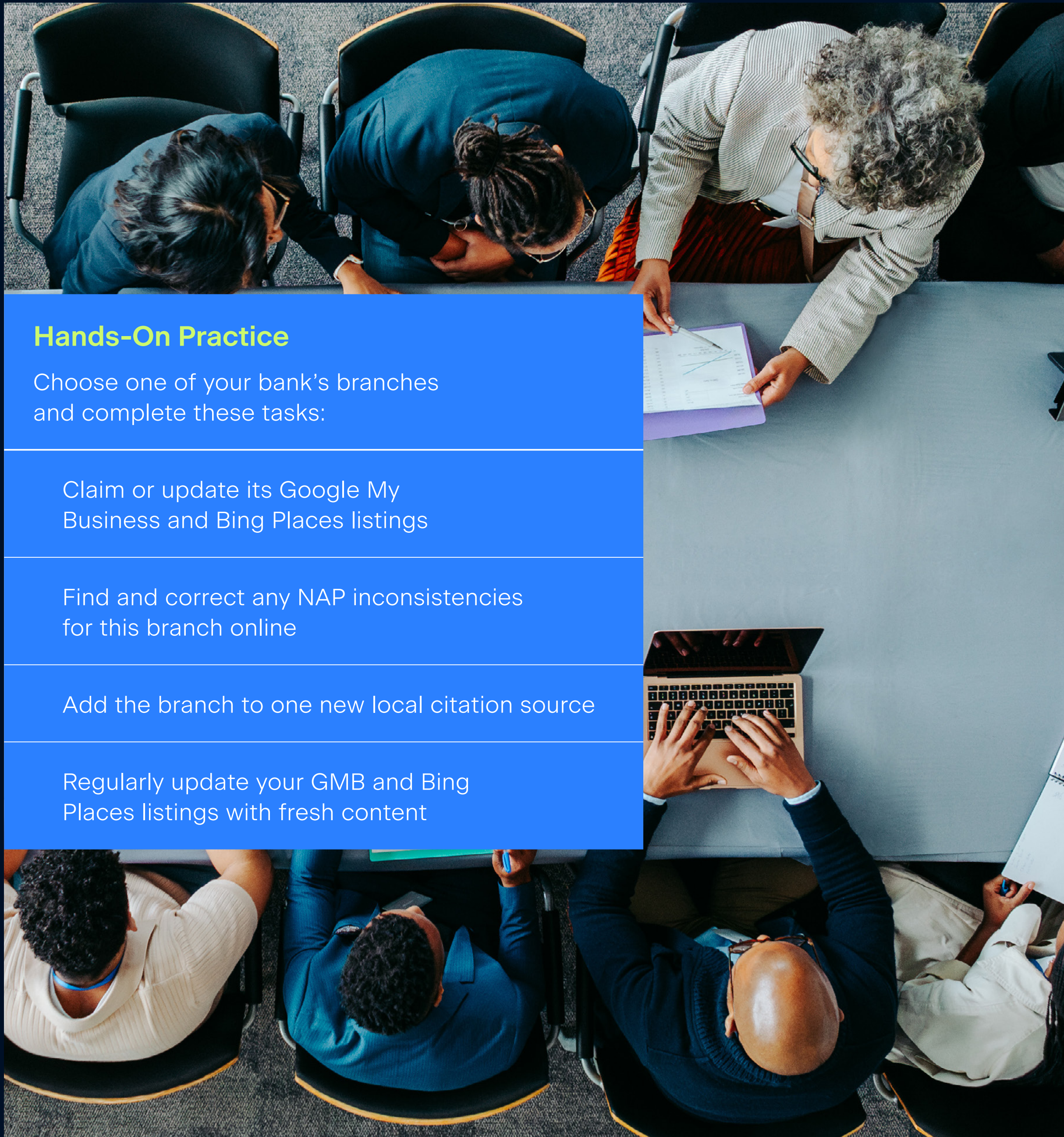


## Quick Local SEO Guide: Build Local Citations

Citations are online mentions of your NAP. They help establish your bank's local presence.

Key citation sources for banks include local chambers of commerce, the Better Business Bureau, financial industry directories (e.g., Bankrate, NerdWallet), and local business directories. Don't forget the information included on the websites of any nonprofits or civic organizations that you support.





### Hands-On Practice

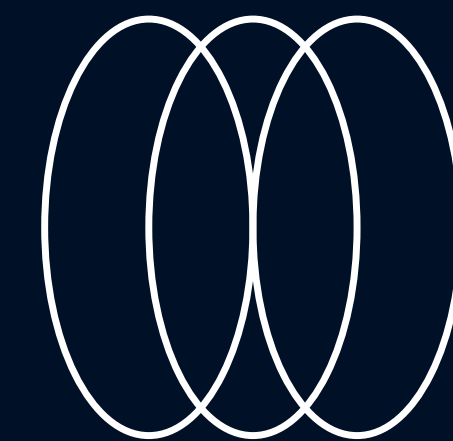
Choose one of your bank's branches and complete these tasks:

Claim or update its Google My Business and Bing Places listings

Find and correct any NAP inconsistencies for this branch online

Add the branch to one new local citation source

Regularly update your GMB and Bing Places listings with fresh content



## Quick Local SEO Guide: Manage Customer Reviews

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Reviews impact both your search rankings and potential customers' decisions. Among the most important are those on the Google and Bing listings you created above.

It's vital that you respond professionally to all published reviews, both positive and negative. Ignoring negative reviews is a bad look. Instead, address concerns raised in negative reviews and offer to resolve issues offline.

It's simple, showing you are listening while providing an outlet (email, contact info) for further exploration on an issue is valuable to put on display. Show visitors that you want to hear the good and the bad.





Boosting Your Bank's  
Local Search Visibility

# \* Checklist \*

Claim and Optimize Your  
Business Listings

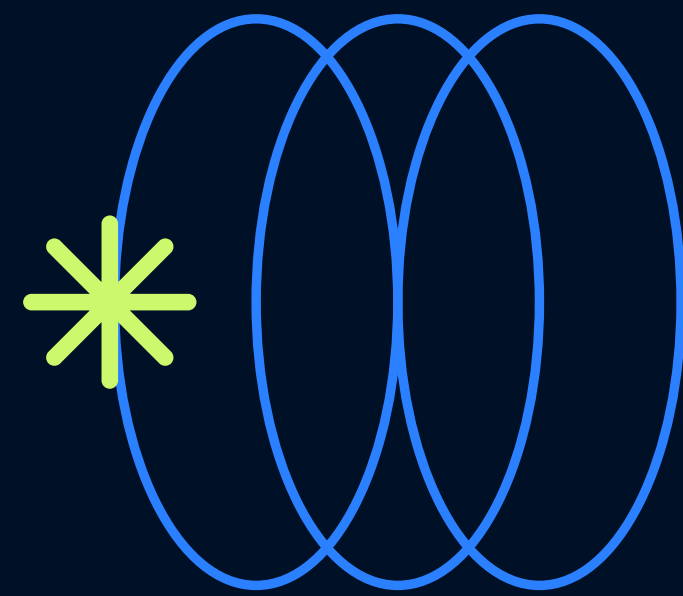
Ensure NAP Consistency

Build Local Citations

Manage Customer Reviews



# Keep Going:



Many banks find it helpful to create a calendar for updating your local listings with holiday hours and any anticipated schedule changes. Include federal holidays like Columbus Day and the day after Thanksgiving, as well as any local events that might affect your hours.

You can then set a quarterly reminder to check your local search visibility. Simply search for your bank's name and location and see where you're appearing in local results. This quick check can help you spot any issues early.

Remember, local SEO is an ongoing process. Consistent effort will help ensure your community bank maintains strong visibility in local search results.





For the complete Practical SEO Guidebook Series,  
or to learn more about how to help your  
community bank flourish, visit:

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