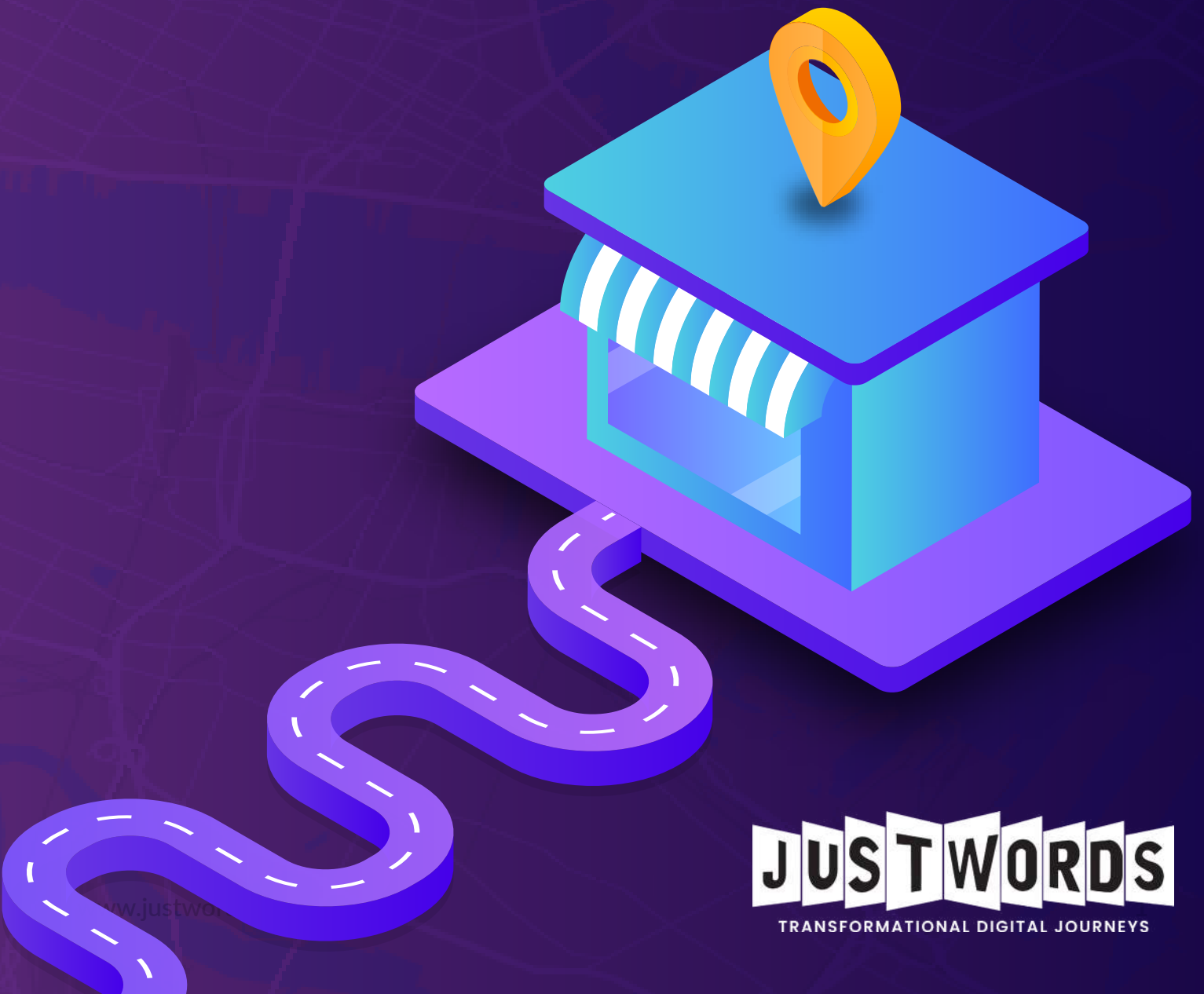


# LOCAL SEO IN 2021 -

A Complete Guide  
for Beginners



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## A Complete Guide for Beginners

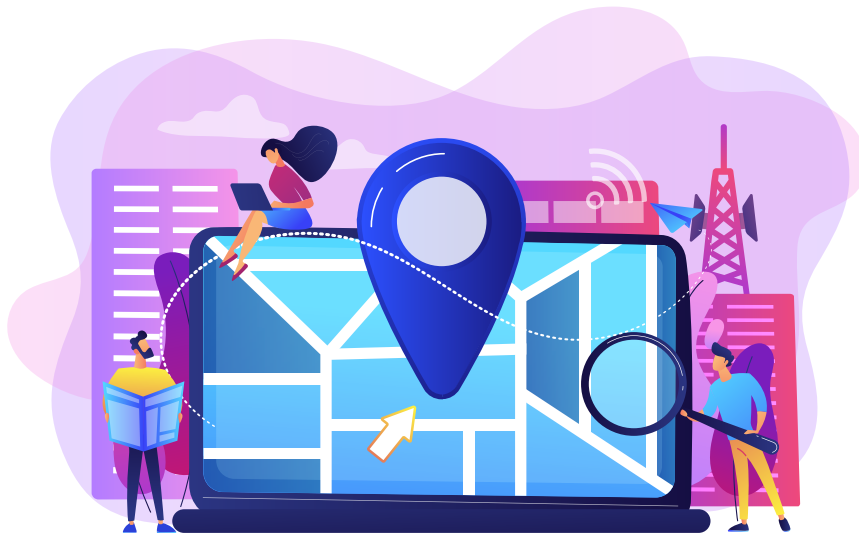
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**S**EO and digital marketing are like the heart and soul of branding. Without one, another finds it difficult to survive. And that's the reason why digital marketing experts ask you to pay special attention to the Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) of your website.

However, is simply optimising a website for search engines enough to get you traffic or noticeable footfalls? No. You need more. And 'more' is what we will be talking about today. So, today, let's understand that crucial part of digital marketing you can use to target the local audience – [Local SEO](#).

# WHAT IS LOCAL SEO?

Local SEO is all about increasing your business's visibility on search engines to attract potential customers in your locality. In short, it involves the optimization of your website and brand to increase local awareness, traffic, and leads from search engines.



Some of the major elements that affect the local SEO strategy of your website are utilising local keywords, optimizing your Google My Business page, managing online reviews and ratings, and building NAP citations.

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# NOW, WHY EXACTLY IS LOCAL SEO IMPORTANT?

Local SEO is important to get traffic and leads from a specific local location. It is majorly useful for SMEs that bank on local business more than a worldwide audience. So, if you are someone offering consulting services, running a café, or a pharmacy, [local SEO](#) becomes an important element to get visitors to your store and orders from around your locality.

**Here are some interesting data points for those who only believe in proof.**

- **74%** of customers visit a local store within 24 hours after searching for local results on their phones. And around **28%** of these searches turn into purchases.
- ‘Near Me’ searches have grown about **150%** faster in the last two years than the traditional results.
- Around **46%** of all the searches on Google have local intent.

This tells you exactly how important [local SEO](#) and searches are for you. It can help you to get on the first page of search results and bring you more local customers than ever before.

# HOW DOES LOCAL SEO WORK?

In general, local SEO works exactly the same way as ‘normal’ searches. That means targeting local keywords, paying attention to website optimisation, and creating backlinks will help you. But, what is different in case of local SEO is its Google algorithm. Some of the factors that Google considers while ranking businesses are:

- *Location of the customer*
- *NAP citations*
- *Google My Business profile*
- *Use of local keywords*
- *Sentiment of reviews*
- *Shares on Social Media*
- *Number of ‘check-ins’*
- *Google Maps star rating*



So now, you know the factors that Google looks into while showing online search results. But, how exactly does this all work? It all boils down to ‘Traditional search results’ and ‘The Local Pack’ results.

## What is The Local Pack?

You might have come across the terms ‘Google Local 3 Pack’, ‘The

Map Pack’, and ‘The Snack Pack’. These all mean the same thing i.e. The **Local Pack**. So, what is it? It is a set of 3 locations that Google pulls up when a customer searches for local queries.

For example, if someone is in a mood for a cold coffee, and they search for ‘cold coffee near me’, Google will pull out this (try to see what comes up with your location):

The image shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "cold coffee near me". Below the search bar, there are navigation tabs for "All", "Maps", "Images", "Shopping", "News", "More", "Settings", and "Tools". The search results indicate "About 2,01,00,00,000 results (1.20 seconds)". A map of Kolkata is displayed, showing several locations marked with red pins labeled A, B, and C. Below the map, there are three search results for "Café Coffee Day":

- A Café Coffee Day**  
Cafe  
AD 84, Salt Lake City, Sector 1, Kolkata, Salt Lake City  
Open - Closes 10PM · 1800 102 5093  
✓ Delivery
- B Café Coffee Day - Cf Block**  
Cafe  
Cf 348, Cf Block, Salt Lake, Near Purta Bhavan  
Open - Closes 11PM · 093324 35832  
✓ Delivery
- C Café Coffee Day**  
Coffee shop  
South Dumdum, 39, Jessore Rd  
Open - Closes 10PM  
✓ Sold here: iced coffee

The set of first three results within the box along with the Google Map is The Local Pack. And the chance that a person will end up visiting these stores to get a coffee rather than go anywhere else is high in this case. Now imagine that you too have a café, but lose out to these businesses only because you aren't optimised for local search results. And that's where local SEO plays an important role. So, let's find out how you can improve your [local SEO strategy](#).

# 4 KEY ELEMENTS TO IMPROVE LOCAL SEO RANKING

## 1. Local Keyword Research

Unlike blogging, the local SEO keyword research process is a one-time thing. You need to shortlist a set of keywords that customers might use to find your products or services and add them to your webpages. That's it. It's as simple as that. But the difficult part is to find these in the local biz. So, here are a few tools for you to use.

### Google Autocomplete

Google Suggest works best for finding the most common keywords people are using around your locality. However, make sure

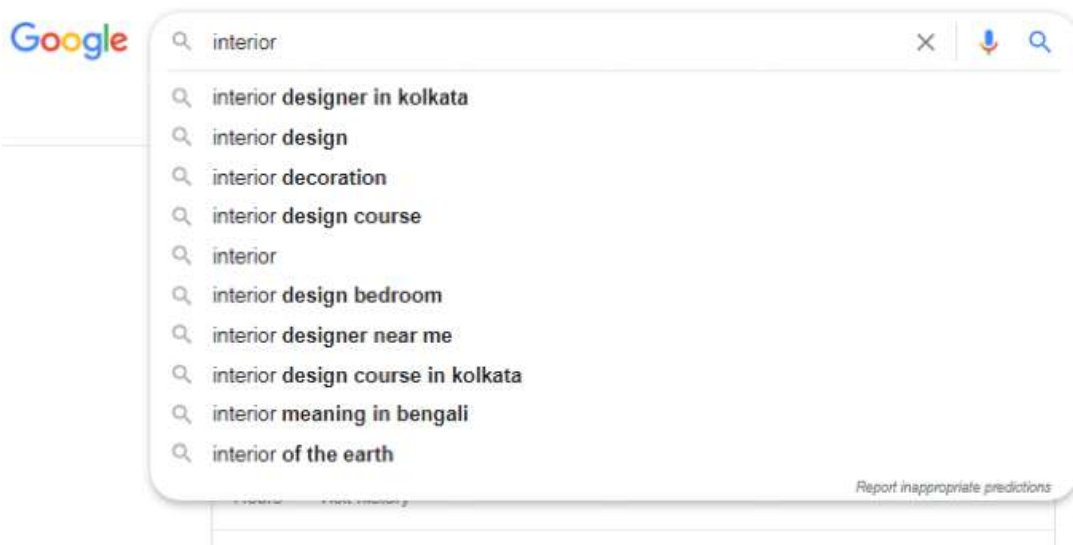
that you only include those keywords that your potential customers are using to search online.

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***Google Suggest works best for finding the most common keywords people are using around your locality.***

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For example, if you are an interior designer, and if someone searches for 'interior' on Google, the possible auto-complete keywords maybe – 'interior design for home', 'interior design courses', 'interior design ideas', 'interior design career', 'interior design services near me', etc.



Here, the only possible keyword that you can use for local SEO is 'interior design services near me'. Whereas, if you type in 'interior design services', you might get more useful keywords like 'interior design services in Mumbai', 'interior design services online', 'interior design services list', etc.



## Voice Search

Nowadays, people rely more on voice searches, especially while using their mobile phones – thanks to Siri, Alexa, and our very own Google voice command. According to Google, around 20% of total Google searches are done using voice command. So, you need to pay special attention to keywords, as people searching using voice commands tend to use long-tail keywords instead of short ones.



Let's take the example of a café to understand this better. While searching by typing, people may use a keyword like 'café near me'. However, while using the voice command, they might search for 'cold coffee in Colaba that is open right now'.

## 2. Google My Business

Claiming your 'Google My Business' listing on Google is very important, to not only boost your local SEO, but to also improve the overall trust factor. When it comes to listing the GMB, consis-

tency is very important. The information should not only match your website but other NAP citations too.



You need to make sure that the address and the phone number you mention on the GMB listing are exactly the same as the ones on your website. That is because, if Google finds different information on your GMB listing, website, and third-party citations, it will automatically raise a red flag. So, double-check these details wherever possible and update them everywhere in case of any change.

## Be Consistent

Google prefers identical addresses instead of 'Carter Road' in one place and 'Carter Rd.' in another. Make sure to maintain consistency throughout the web.

## Fill in Necessary Information

Claiming your [Google My Business](#) account is a particularly easy process. You simply have to fill in the basic information, and you are ready. However, digging deeper and adding additional categories and products/services is important to let Google know more about you.

## Get Reviews

Ask your customers to rate and leave a review for you on the Google page. And irrespective of them being good, moderate, or bad (especially bad), make sure that you reply to them. This creates trust and builds a relationship between you and the customers.

# 3. NAP Citations

NAP citations are where Google can find your Name, Address, and Phone Number on third-party websites. Google uses this information to verify the business and make sure that your company is trustworthy.

This is yet another place where you would like to make sure that the information is 100% consistent. Compare it with the name,

address, and phone number available on your website.

## NAP Audit

You can use one of the many online tools for checking the citations around the web. Some of my personal favourites are [Moz Local](#), [Loganix](#), and [WhiteSpark](#). But you can choose what you like.



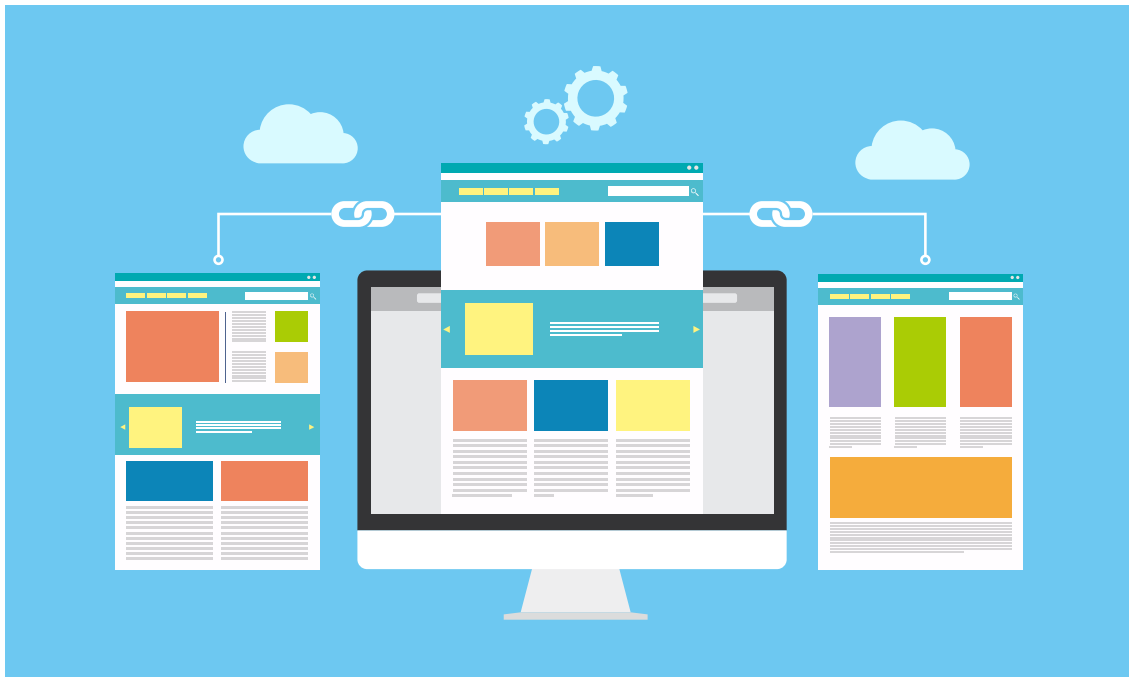
## Edit and Correct the Citations

After you have your NAP audit report in hand, go ahead and edit the information in the citations that aren't right or inconsistent. In case of third-party directories, where you cannot edit the information, you need to reach out with a friendly email for corrections.

# 4. Link Building

Whether you are dealing with a general SEO strategy or local SEO, link building works similarly on both platforms. However, local link

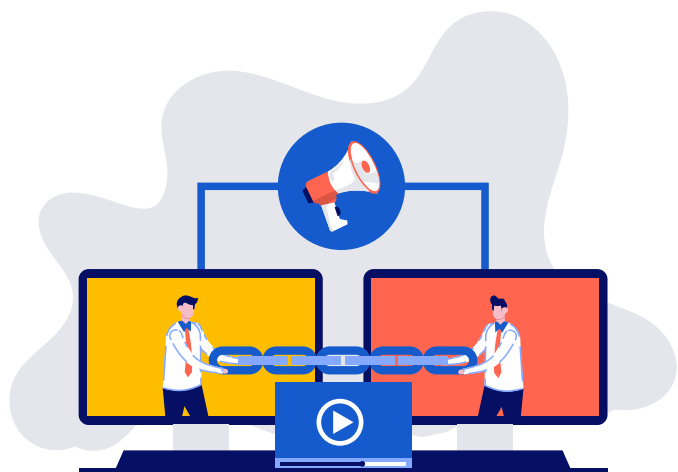
building comes with an advantage as you may know people and other businesses around the area.



## Other Businesses

You can start by approaching businesses that you already know with cold emails, and then extend your search to nearly everyone with better brand reputation. A few businesses you can start with are:

- *Suppliers*
- *Distributors*
- *Contractors*
- *Wholesalers*
- *Other related businesses*
- *Neighbouring businesses*



## Local Events Sponsor

A local event will always be in a search of a sponsor. It is a known fact. So, use this opportunity to get mentioned on their webpage. A mention of your business with a backlink to your website is a perfect way to build some reputation. Moreover, people will also come across your brand name, which means more awareness.



And you do not always have to pay in cash for showing your participation. A simple contribution is enough. Like, a printing press can take up the task of making flyers and you are in for some publicity.

## Chamber of Commerce

Joining a local chamber of commerce is one of the easiest ways to get some links back to your domain. And the best part is that the traffic you receive from these links will be more relevant and worth jumping through the hoops.

You can go ahead and join any of the chambers depending on the requirements and membership criteria. It is also a great way to

network in your locality, which will help you get backlinks from reliable website in the future. Another benefit is getting a NAP citation with your link. So, it's a win-win situation.



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## FINAL THOUGHTS

Local SEO helps in bringing relevant traffic to your website from the locality. So, just follow the above tips to perform better than your competitors on digital media and gain an edge. Then, you can go big when the time is right.

# LOOKING FOR MORE GUIDANCE TO STRENGTHEN YOUR LOCAL SEO STRATEGY?

Connect with one of our  
SEO experts now.



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