ANDERSEN WINDOWS
SELECT BUILDER

2026 Digital Marketing Guide

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What's New (Hint, "AI") in 2026 (and What Hasn't Changed)?

2025 marked the launch of our first-ever Partner Digital Marketing Guide.
It set the foundation for the core digital practices that help Andersen Dealers, Certified Contractors, and Select Builders grow – and those fundamentals still matter just as much today as they did last year.

But the digital landscape continues to evolve.

That's why this year's guide includes:

- ✓ Updated best practices across reputation, brand recognition, and lead generation
- ✓ New content on emerging trends, AI, and deeper optimization opportunities
- ✓ Practical checklists and templates that make execution easier

Now, let's look at the three keys that continue to drive digital success in 2026.

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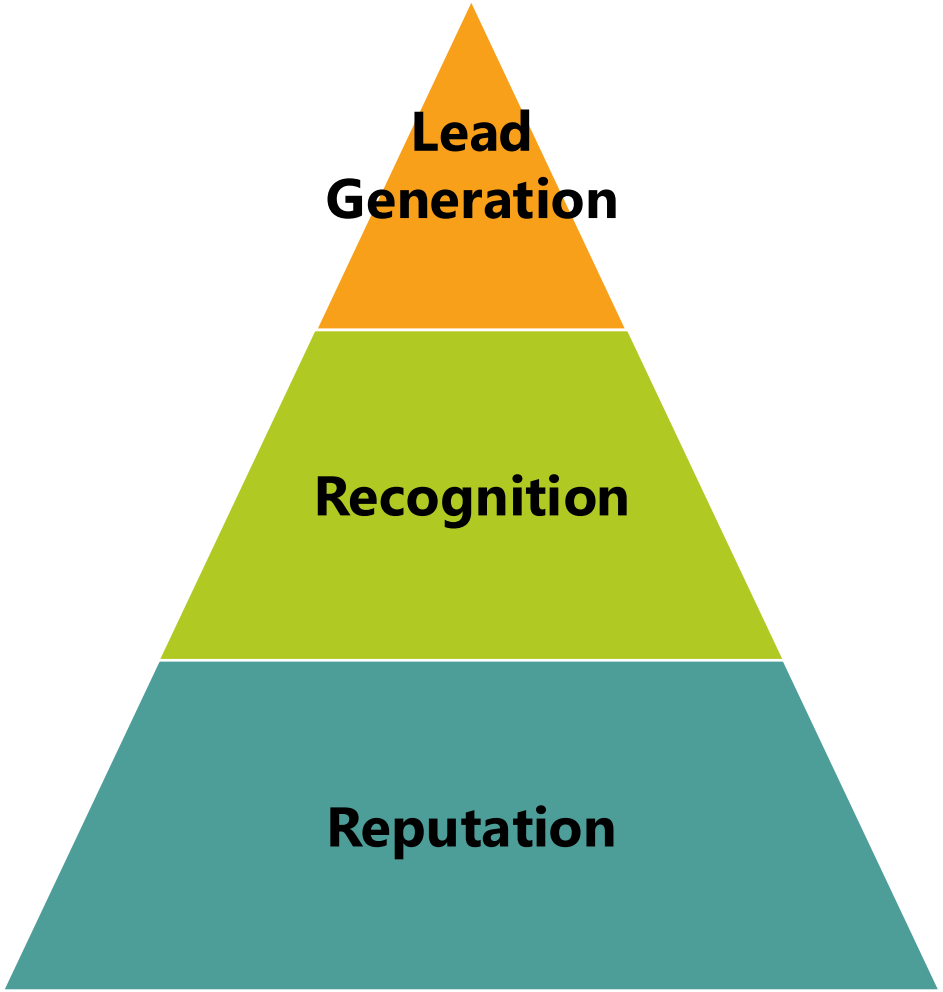
Three Keys to Digital Success in 2026

1. **Reputation** A strong reputation is the starting point for every successful home improvement business. And today, customers aren't the only thing relying heavily on reviews – search and AI platforms do too. Starting on page 5, we'll show simple ways to strengthen and scale your review strategy so your business is consistently chosen.

2. **Visibility & Brand Recognition** When customers search for your services, are they seeing you or your competitors? Paid search, local SEO, and a well-managed Google Business Profile help position your business where your customers – and the platforms that guide them – are looking. Starting on page 15, we break down how to strengthen your presence and compete more effectively.

3. **Lead Generation** With trust established and your business visible, the focus shifts from converting interest into action. Strategic paid media, referrals, and fast follow-up help you capture more high-intent customers and move them toward sales. Starting on Page 23, we highlight the lead sources and tactics that consistently drive results.



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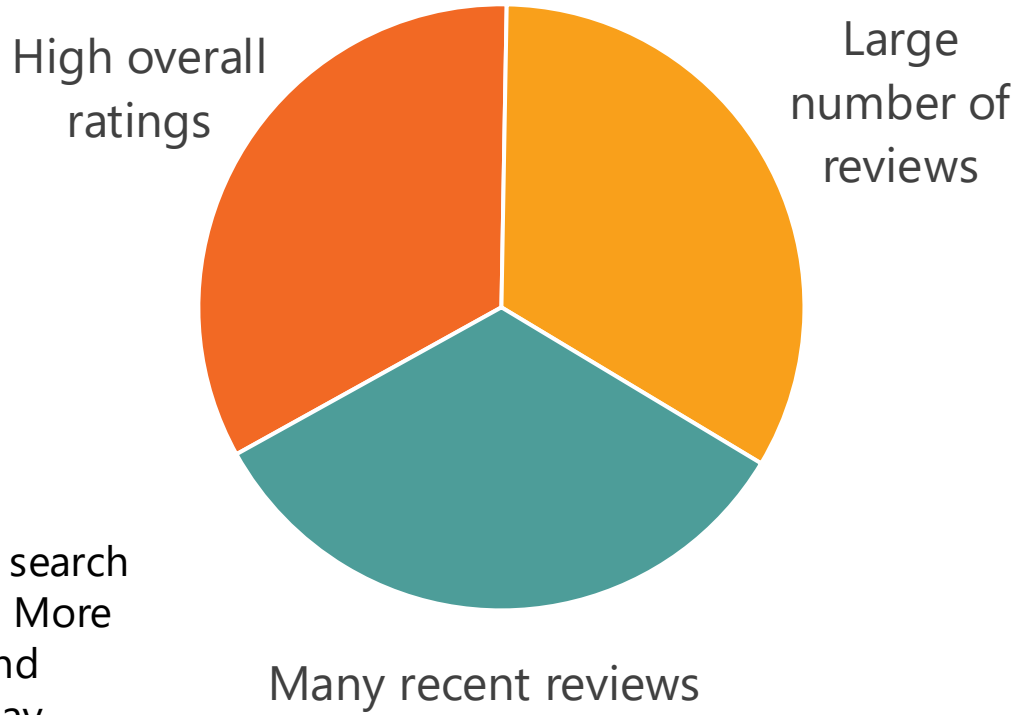
Reputation

87% of homeowners rely on online ratings and reviews when selecting a home improvement professional. (Gitnux, 2025)

36% said a builder's reputation is more important than price incentives, materials, or location. (Homes.com, 2025)

When it comes to reputation, 3 things matter:

1. **High overall rating**: 57% of consumers only consider contractors with a 4-star rating or higher. (PickHVAC, 2024)
2. **Recent reviews**: 85% of consumers consider reviews older than three months to be irrelevant. (ERMarketing, 2022)
3. **Large number of reviews**: Consumers read an average of 10 online reviews before feeling able to trust a local business. (BrightLocal, 2020)



Reviews also matter to AI: Public reviews are one of the strongest signals search platforms and Large Language Models (LLMs) use to assess your company. More reviews show you're established, higher ratings show you deliver quality, and recent reviews confirm you're consistently delivering great experiences today. Together, these signals demonstrate the social proof an AI needs to confidently recommend your business. *Page 60 outlines why reviews are so important to AI.*

Case Study: How Andersen Fixed its Digital Reputation

In 2023, Andersen began our journey to improve our digital reputation. We piloted a program through our customer support contact centers, simply asking homeowners at the end of each interaction to leave a review. The results have been incredible: in the second half of the year, we quintupled our reviews. By November 2024, that number swelled to more than 500 reviews.

Key takeaway: The biggest improvement in generating reviews was simply asking for them.

1st Half 2023

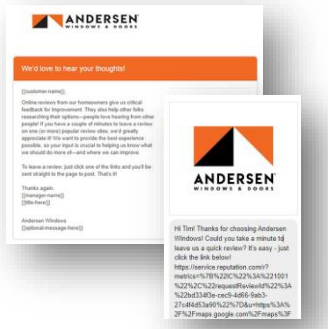
Average Star Rating

3.9 /5

Ratings and Reviews

12

September 2023



Andersen launches contact center pilot program.

2nd Half 2023

Average Star Rating

4.4 /5

Ratings and Reviews

61

2025

4.6

1,214 reviews

Best Practice: Ask Customers for a Review In Person

Face-to-face requests are up to 34x more effective than email requests.
(Harvard Business Review, 2017)

Asking face-to-face is one of the most effective ways to generate reviews. When the request happens immediately after a positive experience, it feels personal, timely, and genuine - making homeowners far more likely to follow through.

Waiting to send a text or email later introduces an opportunity to procrastinate and forget.

On the next slide we'll show you how to make it easy.

Say this
"If everything looks good, would you mind leaving us a quick Google review? It really helps our business. I can text you the link right now."

Reviews: Make It Easy to Say Yes

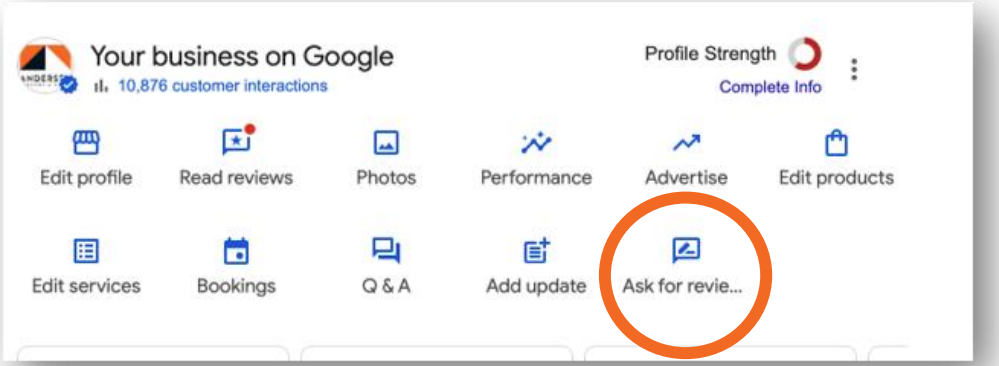
The easier it is in the moment, the more likely it happens.

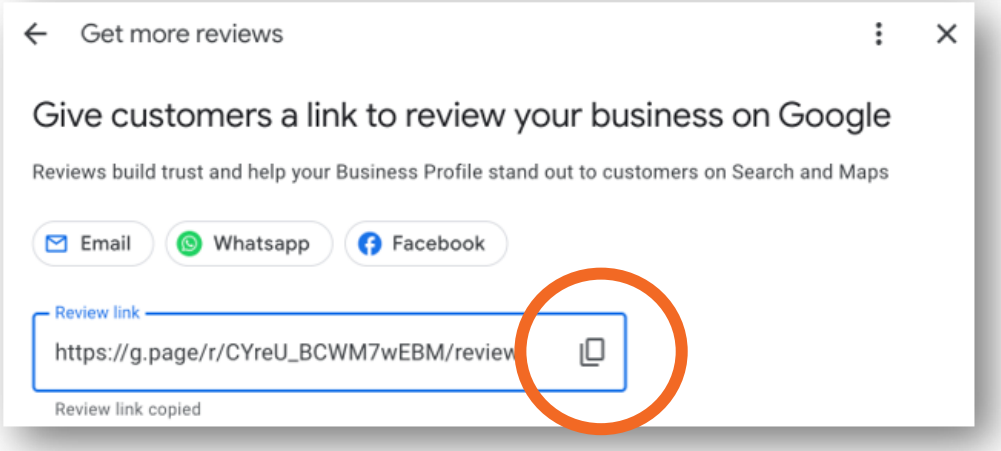
When you ask in person, remove every next-step obstacle. A quick link shared on the spot dramatically increases the chance a customer follows through.

How to do it:

1. Open you **Google Business Profile**
2. Select **"Ask for reviews"** and copy your review link
3. Text or email the link **while you're still with the customer**

Pro Tip: Save your review link in your phone so it's always ready. The best time to send it is **before you leave the job site.**





Reviews Checklist

Review Generation

- ❑ Ask in person at job completion
- ❑ Use your Google review link
- ❑ Send link before leaving the site
- ❑ Use Yext or Google Business Profile "ask for review" feature
- ❑ Train team on a 1-sentence ask
- ❑ Track review volume monthly
- ❑ Goal: 2-4+ reviews per month

Review Response

- ❑ Respond to EVERY review (positive & negative)
- ❑ Mention the specific service/project
- ❑ Thank the customer personally
- ❑ Move negative conversations offline
- ❑ Keep tone friendly and professional
- ❑ Respond within 72 hours

Best Practice: Respond to ALL Reviews

88% of consumers are more likely to use a business that responds to its reviews, both positive and negative.
(BrightLocal, 2023)

Reading review responses are part of the customer's decision process. When people read how you engage with feedback, they form opinions about how you communicate, how you handle issues, and what it's like to work with you. Responding consistently shows that your business is active, attentive, and accountable.

There's also a downstream benefit: search and AI platforms read these exchanges to not only understand the quality of your work but the full scale of the services you provide. Mentioning your work naturally – what you installed, repaired, or helped resolve – adds clarity without needing to "optimize."

The next slide highlights a few examples.

Responding to Reviews: What World-Class Looks Like

Responding to Positive Reviews

Acknowledge the customer by name and reflect something specific they mentioned. This helps future readers (and AI) understand the type of work you do and the experience you aim to deliver.

Example:

> *"Thank you for the kind words, Sarah! We appreciate hearing you're enjoying your new home and new black windows - we love how they go with the new white siding! You were wonderful to work with, and we truly appreciate the opportunity."*

Responding to Negative Reviews

Lead with empathy and professionalism. Avoid defending or debating details publicly and move the conversation offline so it can be resolved properly.

Example:

> *"We're sorry to hear about your experience, John. We'd love the opportunity to talk through this and make it right – please reach out to us at [Phone Number]."*

Tools We Use: Online Moderation

Don’t have time to respond to reviews? Don’t worry! At Andersen, we’ve worked with **Online Moderation** for years to help manage our social comments and digital reviews.

Their team keeps an eye on our channels, responding to comments and reviews, and flagging anything that might need immediate attention.

Don't Forget: 88% of consumers are more likely to use a business that responds to its reviews, both positive and negative. (BrightLocal, 2023)

Online Moderation

Mark Somol
Co-Founder and CEO
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Visibility & Brand Recognition

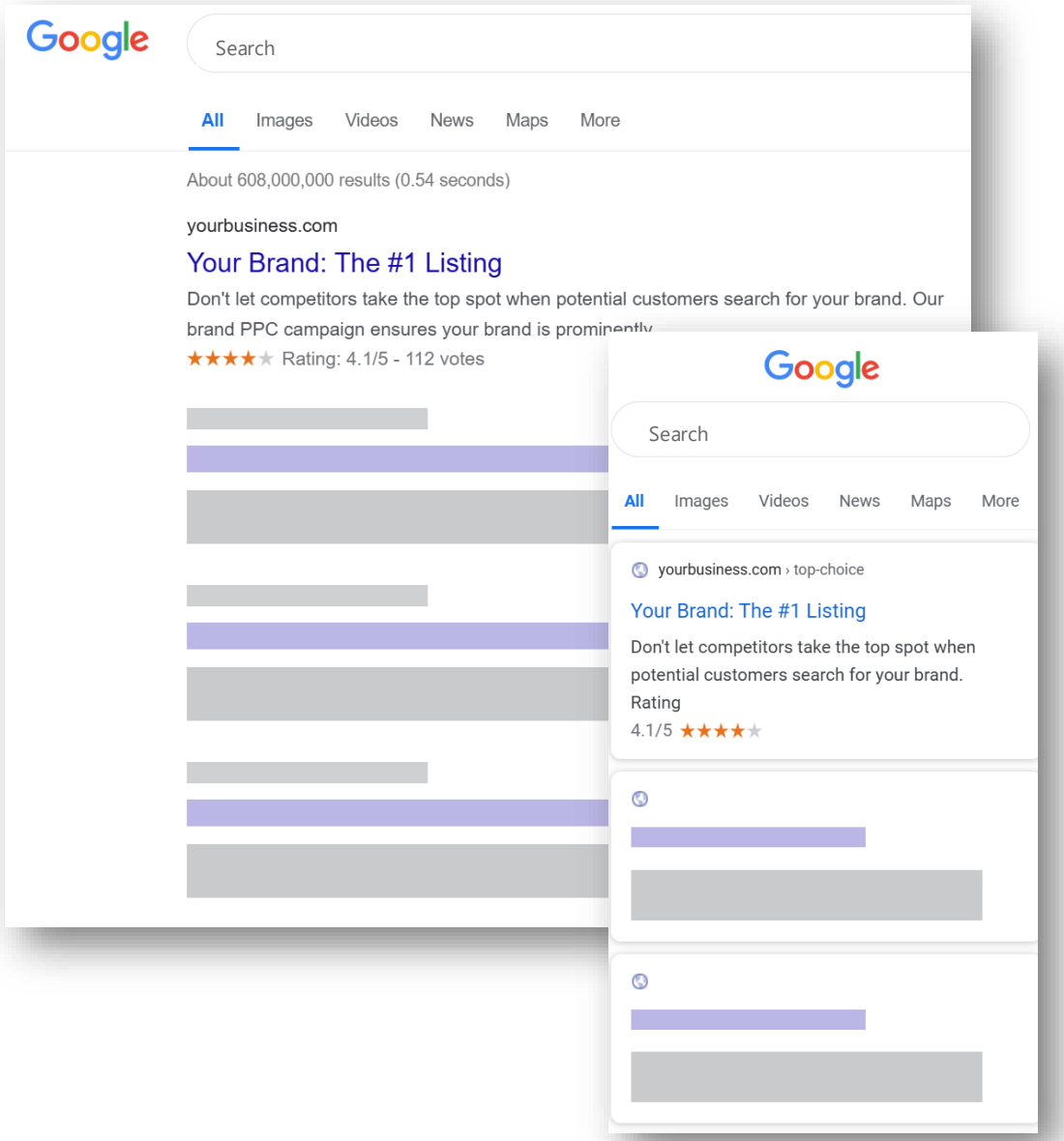
When customers search for your services, the first question is simple: **do they see you, or do they see your competitors?**

The Search Results Are the Shortlist

Visibility starts with placement. Paid search, local SEO, and a well-managed Google Business Profile help your business appear near the top of the search results, maps, and local listings – where customers are actually looking.

But showing up once isn't enough. Appearing consistently in these high-visibility positions builds **recognition** over time. As customers search, revisit results, and cross-check options, familiar business names begin to stand out and feel more trustworthy.

In this section, we'll break down how to get your business to the top of the search results and stay competitive as customers narrow their choices, starting with local SEO.



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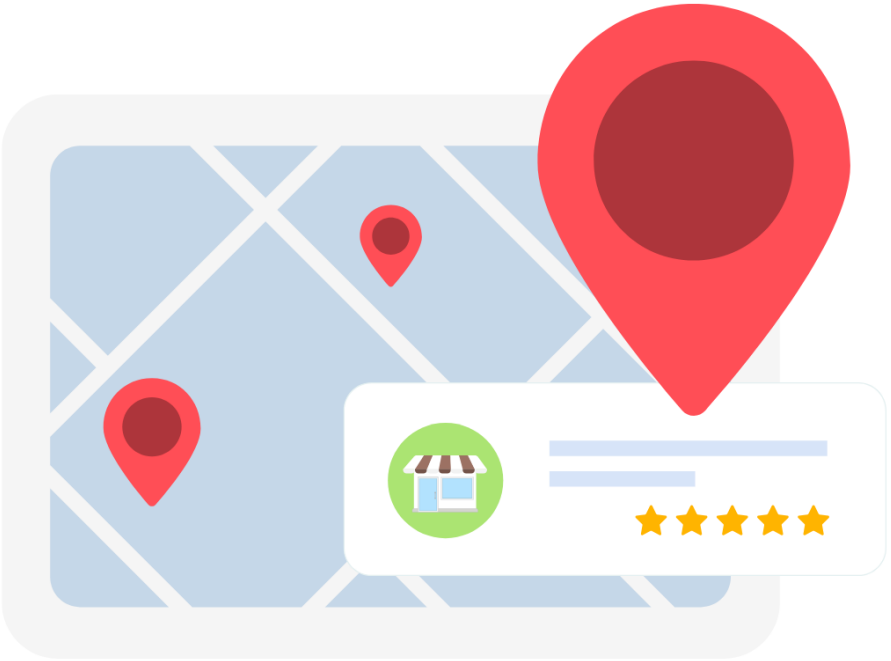
Local SEO

What is local SEO? Local SEO helps your business show up when customers search for the services you offer within your service area – especially in Google Search and Google Maps.

In home improvement, many customers start with a trusted national brand and then look for qualified local professionals who can serve their location.



Why local SEO matters for builders

- Most homebuilding searches have local intent (e.g., "home builders near me")
- Google prioritizes businesses that clearly serve the searcher's location
- Strong local SEO helps you:
  - Show up across the cities and towns in your service radius
  - Capture demand connected to trusted brands and local searches
  - Build confidence before a homeowner ever clicks or calls

Bottom line:

Local SEO helps you be **visible to the right customers in the areas you actually serve.**

How to Optimize for Local SEO

Focus on these core tactics to improve visibility, credibility, and performance across your service area.

Optimize Your Google Business Profile

Your Google Business Profile is one of the most important drivers of local SEO visibility in both Google Search, Google Maps, and AI. *Pages 18 and 19 of this guide provide an extensive checklist on how to optimize your Google Business Profile.*

Consistent Name, Address, Phone Information

Ensure your business name, address, and phone number are accurate and consistent across your website, Google Business Profile, social media profiles, and major local directories. *Page 51 highlights how important this is for AI search today.*

Use Local Keywords Strategically

Include location-specific keywords naturally in website content, page titles and meta descriptions, and Google Business Profile listings. This helps search engines understand where you operate and which local searches you're relevant for. Local keywords include cities, towns, and neighborhoods you service.

Generate & Manage Positive Reviews

Reviews play a critical role in local rankings and customer decision-making. Encourage satisfied customers to leave reviews and respond to all feedback – positive and negative – to build trust and credibility. *Page 6 highlights what customers are looking for and pages 8-13 show you how to generate and manage reviews.*

Build Local Citations and Backlinks

Listing your business in reputable local directories and earning links from relevant local sources helps support search visibility and business credibility. Focus on quality and relevance, not sheer volume.

Your Google Business Profile (GBP) Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure your Google Business Profile is complete, accurate, and optimized for visibility.

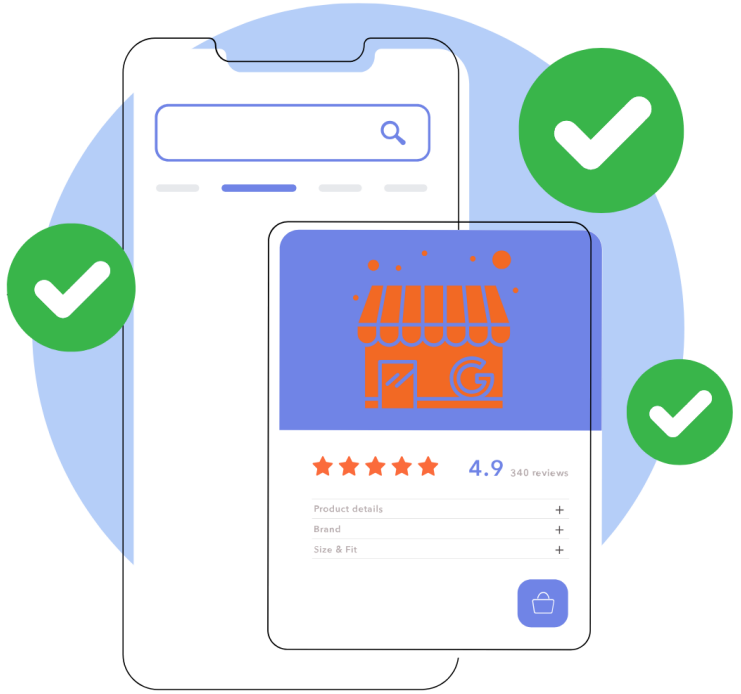
87% of consumers used Google to evaluate local businesses. (BrightLocal, 2023)

- ❑ Name, Address, Phone Number, Website (Required)
  - ❑ Ensure consistency across all sites (website, Meta, Apple Maps, etc.)
- ❑ Hours of Operation (Required)
- ❑ Business Category (Required)
  - ❑ Home Improvement / Window Installation Service
- ❑ Visual Content (Very Important)

  Photos
  - ❑ Shots of your business and/or service vehicles
  - ❑ Completed project (before/after when possible)
  - ❑ Product photos (e.g., installed windows or doors)
  - ❑ Team photos to build trust and humanize your brand

  Videos
  - ❑ Short clips showcasing craftsmanship
  - ❑ Customer testimonials
  - ❑ Completed projects (before/after when possible)

  Pro tip: Continually refresh visuals – don't upload once and forget!



More on the next page...

GBP Checklist Continued

Reviews & Engagement

- ❑ Reviews you've requested from satisfied customers
- ❑ Responses to all reviews, including negative ones

Defined Service Area

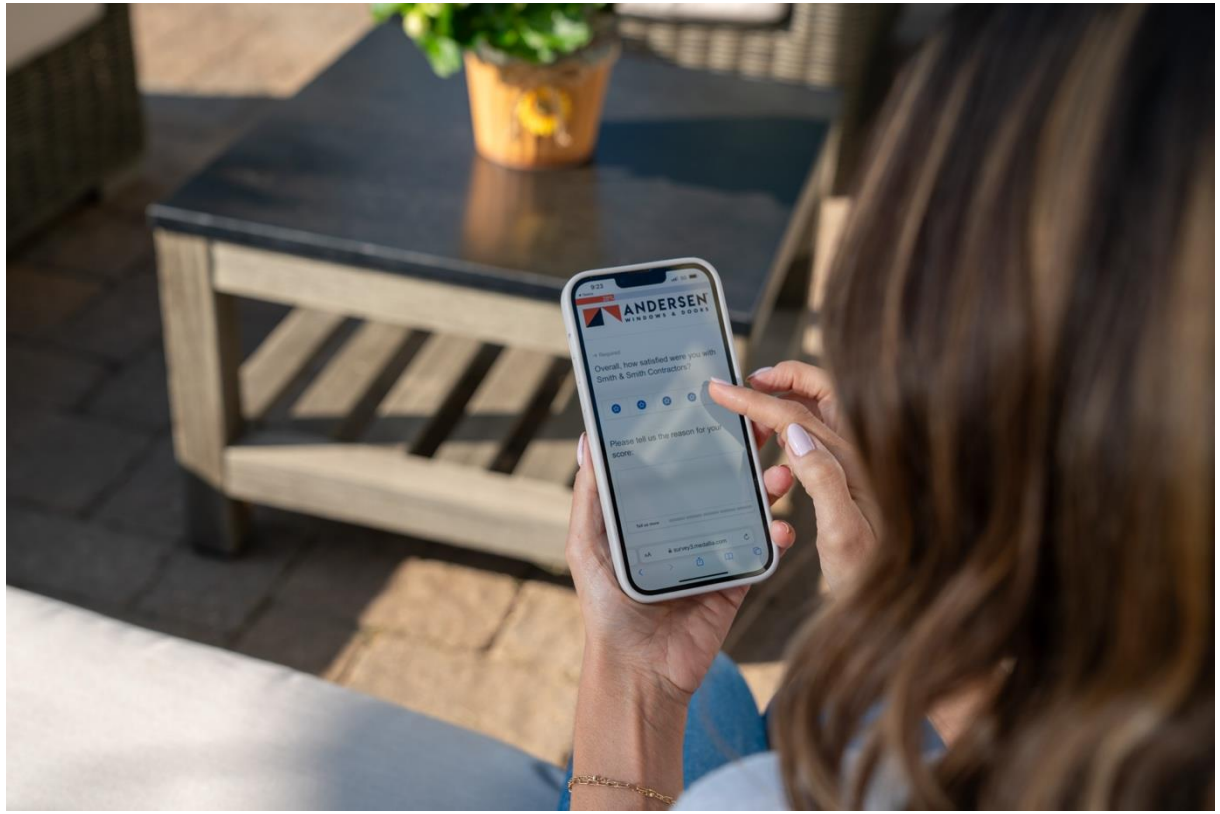
- ❑ Define the cities, zip codes, or counties you serve

Business Description & Attributes

- ❑ Write a clear, customer-focused business description outlining what you do, who you serve, and where you operate.
- ❑ Include relevant business attributes where applicable (e.g., years in business, financing options, warranties.)

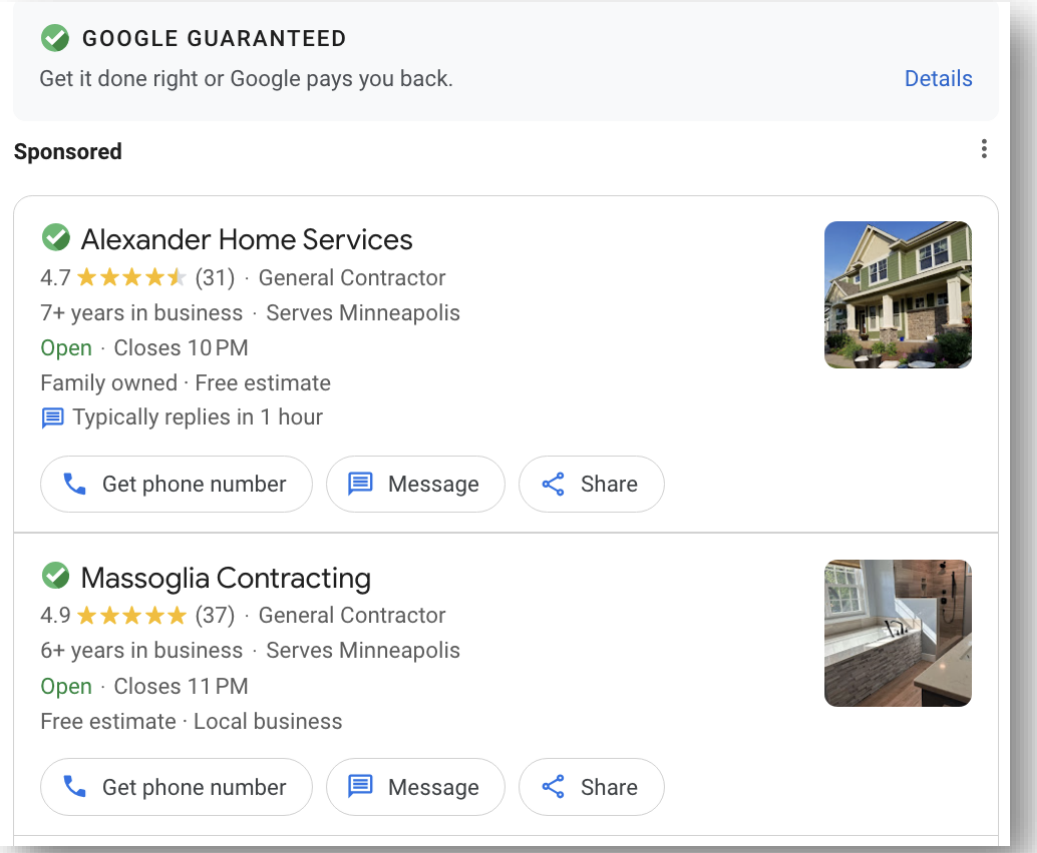
Ongoing Maintenance

- ❑ Keep contact info and hours up to date
- ❑ Upload new photos and videos periodically
- ❑ Use Google posts for promotions, seasonal messages, announcements



Google Local Service Ads

Google's Local Service Ads are a newer ad type that connect your business with customers searching for local home improvement services by featuring their business at the top of Google Search results. These pay-per-lead ads are backed by the Google Guarantee, enhancing trust and visibility in competitive local markets.



Benefits:

- ✅ Priority placement – top of page
- ✅ "Google Guaranteed" badge
- ✅ Only pay per call, message, or booking
- ✅ Easy to set up digitally

Note:

- Requires background check for business and owner
- License and insurance verification required
- Higher minimum budget than other platforms

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Paid Search Best Practices

Paid search is still one of the most effective ways to get to the top of the search engine results and drive high-intent leads. However, getting the most out of your campaigns requires the right strategies. Follow these best practices to maximize ROI and improve performance.

1. Target the Right Keywords

- Focus on high-intent keywords like “window installer near me”
- Capture brand demand with keywords like “Andersen windows”
- Use long-tail keywords (e.g., “best window replacement for cold climates”) to reach customers with specific needs

  Definition: Long-tail keywords are specific, descriptive search phrases prospects use when they’re closer to purchasing. They typically include details like location, product type, or project needs, and they tend to drive higher-quality leads.

2. Write Compelling Ad Copy

- Use clear, action-oriented headlines that encourage customers to act (e.g., “Upgrade Your Windows Today”)
- Highlight key benefits like energy savings, warranties, financing, or free consultations
- Responsive Search Ads perform best when you include multiple headlines and description variations
- **Important**: Using "Andersen Windows" in your ad copy is a great idea and we recommend it. However, using "Renewal by Andersen" is not allowed and your ad will be flagged

3. Optimize Landing Pages

- Ensure your landing pages match the ad message (e.g., if the ad promises “free quotes,” the landing page should emphasize it)
- Use fast-loading, mobile-friendly, pages with simple forms and click-to-call CTAs
- Include trust signals such as reviews, certifications, and guarantees

4. Monitor and Adjust Campaigns

- Track core metrics like click-through rate (CTR), cost-per-lead (CPL), and conversion rates.
- Use Google Ad Assets (call buttons, location info, sitelinks) to increase engagement

Lead Generation

Once customers find you, the next question is simple: do they reach out – or keep looking?

Lead Sources & How They Perform

Not all leads are created equal. The most effective lead generation strategies focus on customers who are actively researching, ready to engage, and easy to follow up with.

Source	Description
Referrals	Referrals and reviews generate some of the highest-quality leads available. These customers come with built-in trust, are typically further along in their decision process, and are easier to engage and follow up with.
Paid Search	Paid search captures customers who are actively looking for your services – often with immediate intent (e.g., "window installer near me"). Of all paid media Andersen runs, search consistently delivers the highest lead quality at the lowest cost. *Paid search best practices can be found on page 21.*
Paid Social Ads	Paid social can drive leads when campaigns are executed with clear offers and fast-follow up. These leads tend to be higher-funnel than search but can convert well with the right message and speed. Through 2025, Andersen's top paid social channel for lead generation was Meta (Facebook & Instagram), and we expect that to continue through 2026. *Page 25 delivers some paid social best practices you can use to improve you paid social campaigns today.*

Referrals: The Highest-Intent Leads You Can Earn

Referral leads arrive with built-in trust, higher intent, and shorter sales cycles – if the ask is routine and follow-up fast.

Make referrals routine

- Ask at **project completion**, when satisfaction is highest
- Add **review + referral** request to your close-out checklist
- Make the ask **simple and specific** (who to share, how to share)
- Encourage customers to **introduce you directly** via text or email

Say this

"If a neighbor or friend is considering new windows or asks about yours, feel free to share my contact. I'd be happy to help."

Paid Social for Lead Gen - Foundations

Paid social isn't about complex setups – it's about clear offers, strong creative, and fast follow-up. These fundamentals help you consistently turn social attention into real leads.

1. Choosing the "right" channel
There is no singular "right" channel but we year-after-year, we see success on Meta (Facebook & Instagram), and we don't expect that to change in 2026.

2. Video or static images?
The answer is actually a resounding "BOTH!" Run a balanced mix of short vertical videos and strong single-image ads. *Pages 27- 28 provide thorough guidance on how to create effective video ads.*

3. One clear offer, one next step
Pick one CTA (e.g., "Book a free consultation"). Send to either an in-app lead form or a fast landing page – don't mix paths in the same campaign. If sending to a landing page, be sure your form is at the top of the page.

4. Keep targeting broad
Limit targeting to your service area and let the platform optimize delivery. Complicated targeting tactics are no longer needed as the AI that drives social platforms knows how to optimize for what you're trying to achieve.

5. Speed-to-lead beats perfect nurture
Respond within minutes (call or text based on how they came in). First responders win a disproportionate share; qualification odds drop steeply after 5-30 minutes.

Paid Social for Lead Gen - Advanced

6. Treat creative as the targeting
Short (6-15 seconds), vertical, mobile-first video + strong images; hook in the first 2-3 seconds. UGC/testimonial styles often beat polished spots (this isn't TV). Refresh creative every 2-4 weeks.

7. Simplify your ad account
Consolidate to a few campaigns (broad/Advantage+ prospecting + a small retargeting layers).

8. Build for mobile
Use 9:16/Reels and design for silent autoplay (captions on, big headlines). Mobile-first formats consistently earn more reach and engagement.

9. Control frequency and creative fatigue
As targeting becomes broader and automation takes over, over-servicing the same ads to the same people is one of the fastest ways to inflate costs and stall performance. Creative fatigue doesn't announce itself – it quietly raises cost per lead and cost per scheduled appointment.

10. Install Pixel + Conversions API (CAPI)
Broken signals = broken optimization. Pixel + CAPI stabilizes attribution and lets automation actually work.

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Paid Social: A Simple Framework for Video Ads

"Video accounts for 60% of the time spent on Meta." (Meta, 2024)

All video ads for social media should follow this basic format:

1. **Hook**: Start with a bang! You have 2 seconds to capture your audience's attention. Use a surprising fact, a funny moment, or an eye-catching visual to grab attention right away. Think of it as the "wow" factor that makes viewers stop scrolling.
2. **Value proposition**: Here's where you show off the key benefits of working with your company. Is it an exceptional customer experience, quality craftsmanship, or something else? Why work with you over someone else they're getting a bid from?
3. **Offer & Call to Action**: Tell the audience what you want them to do and why it's urgent they do it now. Be clear and concise. If you have an offer, share it! If the offer was part of your hook, share it again!

PRO TIP

Aim for a 50/50 split between video and static ad distribution.

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Paid Social: What Keeps Videos Ads from Getting Skipped

In a fast-scroll environment, performance comes down to pace, clarity, and repetition. These execution details help keep viewers engaged long enough to act.

Jump in! Use fast pacing throughout: With Andersen campaigns, we've found that it's best to cut to a new shot roughly every 3 seconds. (Example to the right.)

Keep it brief. On Meta (Facebook & Instagram), ~15 second ads deliver the best results.

Bright visuals with high contrast help your ads stand out!

Branding: Show your brand and/or product from the start. Include at least three mentions of your brand throughout the ad, with one in the last 5 seconds. Reinforce with audio and text.

Use text and audio: Fully immerse your audience in your ads with text captions and voiceover. There are many affordable AI voiceover tools available - we use ElevenLabs.

End with a clear call-to-action (CTA): Make sure your CTA is both visual and audible to effectively guide your audience on what to do next.

Lead Follow-Up

How to make the most of the leads you generate.

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Lead Follow-Up

Speed beats perfection. Keep it simple, personal, and fast.

1. Respond within minutes
Conversion rates are 8x greater in the first five minutes. (InsideSales.com, 2021)

2. Match the channel
Call phone leads; text form fills; DM social inquiries. Meet your customers where they are and through their preferred contact method. If text/DM, ask to call.

3. Offer two appointment times
Reduce back-and-forth by proposing at least two specific time options in every touch ("Wed 4:00 or Thu 10:00?").

4. Use a short, one-week cadence
This will give you the most out of your leads without wasting time on leads that were never going to buy.

- Day 0: Immediate reply (call/text/DM)
- Day 2-3: Helpful follow-up + new time options
- Day 7: Last check-in + "We'll keep a spot open if this week helps"

5. Plan for after-hours
Auto-acknowledge immediately and promise a morning callback; performance plummets beyond the first hour.

Email

Why email marketing matters

Email consistently delivers one of the highest returns on investment of any digital channel because of its low cost and high engagement potential.

Industry benchmarks consistently show that email marketing returns $36–$42 for every $1 spent. (Marketing LTB, 2025)

For a small business, email is especially valuable because it can be automated, reused, and scaled without a large staff. Whether your goal is driving sales, sharing updates, or nurturing relationships, email supports nearly every stage of the customer journey.

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How to build and maintain a healthy email list

Permission & Compliance: A healthy email program starts with permission-based marketing. This means subscribers actively choose to receive your emails. No purchased or scraped lists, these can harm your sender reputation and lead to spam complaints.

- Use clear opt-in language and make it obvious what people are signing up for.
- Avoid pre-checked boxes during sign-up.
- Include your physical mailing address and an easy unsubscribe link in every message.
- Understand the basics of email laws (e.g., CAN-SPAM, CASL, GDPR). You don't need to be an expert, just ensure you have consent, honor opt-outs and send truthful content.

Segmentation: This ensures subscribers receive content that feels relevant and personalized, leading to a higher rate of return. Start simple if you're new to segmentation.

- Beginner segmentation examples: New subscribers, active vs. inactive customers, customers vs. leads, purchase data
- Intermediate segmentation examples: Open or click activity in the last 30/60/90 days, customers browsing certain categories
- Segmented email campaigns can generate up to 760% more revenue. (MarketingLTB, 2025)

Keeping your list clean: Even good subscribers lose interest over time. Regular list cleaning helps maintain strong deliverability and ensures your emails reach inboxes instead of spam folders.

- Remove subscribers who haven't opened in a long period (e.g., 12+ months).
- Monitor bounces and remove invalid addresses.
- Run a re-engagement campaign every 6–12 months for people who have not engaged
- Email list degradation averages 20–25% annually, necessitating routine hygiene (MailMonitor, 2025)

Building high-performing emails

Subject lines & preheaders: Subject lines determine whether your email gets opened. Strong subject lines are:

- Short (40–50 characters, or under ~8 words)
- Action-oriented
- Clear, not vague or misleading, describing the value they'll receive when they open your email
- Personalized where appropriate

Preheaders should support the subject line, saying the important things that the subject line does not say.

Content: Your subscribers are busy. Your copy should guide them through the message quickly and clearly.

- Lead with the most important information, keep it concise. We get on average 8 seconds of their attention before they leave the email or engage.
- Use scannable formatting: short paragraphs, bullets, bold highlights.
- Make the CTA clear ("Shop Now," "Book a Class," "Read the Guide").
- Personalize when possible: location, past behavior, or customer journey stage.

Focus on value: why should the reader care? Every email should answer that question.

Building high-performing emails

Design & Layout: Simple designs can be effective with the right structure. Make your email easy to consume at a glance:

- Mobile-first: most people read email on their phones, so we want to make sure it appears correctly on mobile.
- Clear hierarchy with CTAs: don't make them guess what we're asking them to do.
- Plenty of white space helps readers navigate.
- Readable font sizes: at least 14–16px body text.
- Brand consistency: colors, logo, tone.

Images: They support your story but shouldn't carry your entire message.

- Compress images to improve load speeds.
- Don't put critical copy in images because some readers have images turned off.
- Use alt text so visually impaired readers or image-disabled clients still understand your email.

Email frequency and cadence

Your ideal sending cadence depends on your content and audience, but here are starting points:

- Beginners: 1–4 emails per month
  - As your program matures: increase gradually and watch engagement
  - Avoid sending too many “salesy” messages in a row
- Timing suggestions:
  - Weekday mornings perform well, but test what your audience likes.
  - Avoid sending too late at night unless your data supports it.
  - Track unsubscribes and engagement—if those metrics slip, adjust your frequency.

Automating email experiences

Simple automations to get started: These deliver strong results and take minimal effort to maintain.

- Welcome email (introduce your brand, set expectations, offer a first step)
- Abandoned cart/browse reminders (help customers pick up where they left off)
- Post-purchase follow-ups (thank you, product tips, requests for reviews)

Lifecycle programs: Lifecycle messages feel personal and relevant, improving engagement without creating extra work. Once basics are in place, consider:

- Nurture sequences for new subscribers
- Post-purchase experiences to set expectations on next steps
- Re-engagement emails for inactive users

Tips to automate with low bandwidth: Automations multiply your efforts without consuming more of your time.

- Build modular templates you can reuse repeatedly.
- Schedule time once per quarter to review automated emails.
- Use dynamic content blocks to display different content to different segments without building separate emails.

Automated emails generate 320% more revenue than non-automated ones. (MarktingLTB, 2025)

Measuring success

Key metrics & how to optimize: Use trends over time, not single sends, to guide decisions.

Deliverability / bounce rate: ensures your emails reach inboxes (doesn't indicate *where* in the inbox it's delivered).

Bounces higher than 2%? Your list may need validation or cleaning.

Click-through rate: shows how engaging your email content is

Click rates lower than 3.5%? Simplify your layout, strengthen your CTA, reduce clutter.

Conversion rate: measures how effective a campaign is toward driving a specific action (form submission, purchase, etc.)

Unsubscribe rate: signals whether your cadence or relevance needs adjustment.

Unsubscribe rate higher than .2%? Check frequency and ensure you're sending relevant content.

Open rate: Had indicated subject line effectiveness and list quality, however it's not a reliable metric after Apple's Mail Privacy Protection.

Low open rates? Try cleaner subject lines, better send times, and list cleaning.

Responding to customer emails

Tone & Voice: Avoid jargon, overly formal language, or robotic-sounding responses. Aim for:

- Friendly and conversational
- Clear and concise
- Helpful and empathetic
- On-brand with your organization's personality

Response Time: Customers expect timely replies, aim for within 24 hours. Confirm receipt if there is no clear resolution immediately.

Prepare templates for common situations, this saves time while keeping communication consistent:

- Appointment confirmations or changes
- Product or service FAQs
- Quote/order questions
- Pricing or availability inquiries
- Installation scheduling, post install support

Responding to customer emails

Handling negative or challenging emails: A calm, empathetic response can turn a negative situation into a positive experience.

1. Start by acknowledging the issue (“I understand how frustrating this can be.”)
2. Clarify what happened
3. Explain what you can do to help
4. Offer clear next steps
5. Escalate to the appropriate team if needed

Build trust through replies: Every interaction is a chance to reinforce your brand.

- A friendly sign-off
- Relevant links (FAQ, help center, product pages)
- Your name or team name for transparency
- Customers appreciate when they feel like a real person is supporting them.

Tools & templates for small teams

To save time and maintain consistency, create reusable resources like.

These small investments reduce daily decision-making and improve quality:

- Email content template with spaces for all required content and guidelines on criteria (from subject line through footer copy)
- Helpful destinations by audience and customer stage (product, pricing, installation, FAQs, etc.)
- Audience segmentation criteria (type of customer, stage in customer journey, location, project type, product type, etc.)
- Editorial calendar for email planning

SEO for AI

In today's AI-driven SEO landscape, it's not enough to show up online – you need to show up as the most trustworthy option. Both homeowners and AI models rely on clear trust signals to determine which business to recommend. If your digital presence isn't sending those signals, you're likely being overlooked.

On the next slides, we'll break down the key trust signal categories – and show you exactly how to strengthen each one – so your brand becomes the confident, credible choice for real people and AI systems alike.

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AI Trust Signal Categories

Overall, we pay attention to 14 trust signals categorized into three groups: technical, content, and brand. Below is a summary of each category. In the following pages, we'll get into each signal in detail.

Technical

- **Ensure you exist.** Baseline technical requirements that AI models and users expect. Failing to meet these standards can make website appear broken, insecure, or fundamentally untrustworthy.
- Examples: schema, answer-focused semantic structure…

Content

- **Content that stands out.** Demonstrated depth of knowledge, showcasing real experts on your team, and structuring content in a way that is optimized for AI consumption.
- Examples: Google page 1, case study and testimonial presence, on-page pricing transparency…

Brand

- **Stand out as a brand.** Highlight a deeper commitment to UX, brand personality, and journalistic integrity.
- Examples: public review scores & volume, industry recognition…

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Content

Content that stands out. Demonstrated depth of knowledge, showcasing real experts on your team, and structuring content in a way that is optimized for AI consumption.

Content SEO: On-Page Content Richness

What it is: Looking at the depth and substance of your individual content pages. Large Language Models (LLMs) are designed to seek out the most thorough and explanatory resources to create their answers.

Impact: High

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** LLMs are designed to find the most comprehensive and authoritative source. When AI analyzes a page, it assesses its depth. A rich page that covers a topic from multiple angles with data and examples is seen as a much more reliable source than a short, surface-level article.
- **For Humans:** When a user lands on a page that completely answers their question and even addresses follow-up questions they hadn't thought of yet, it's a powerful and satisfying experience. It builds immense trust and positions your brand as the definitive expert they will return to in the future.

How to improve: On the next page, we'll show you how to improve your on-page content richness.

Content SEO: Improving On-Page Content Richness

❑ **Fully answer the core question – then go beyond it**

Start with the main question a customer (or AI) is trying to answer, and make sure it's clearly and completely addressed on the page. Then expand the content to cover natural follow-up questions like: why does this matter, what options are available, what are the pros and cons. Pages that anticipate and answer related questions signal authority to both humans and AI systems.

❑ **Cover the topic from multiple angles**

Strong pages don't just explain *what* something is – they explain: how it works, when it's the right (or wrong solution, who it's best for, what alternatives exist, what it costs over time. This multi-angle approach makes the page more useful and positions it as a comprehensive resource rather than a thin marketing page.

❑ **Add real-world expertise and examples**

AI systems look for signals that content is grounded in real experience. Strengthen your pages by including project examples or case studies, before-and-after scenarios, common customer questions you hear in sales conversations, lessons learned from past installations or builds. This depth is difficult for low-quality content to replicate and strongly boosts credibility.

❑ **Use clear structure and scannable sections**

Organize content with descriptive subheadings, bullet points, and short paragraphs. Use headings that reflect real questions or concepts.

❑ **Support claims with specifics, not generalities**

Avoid broad statements like "high quality" or "industry-leading" without explanation. Instead, explain what makes it high quality and reference standards, materials, processes or performance metrics. Specific details increase perceived credibility for readers and authority signals for AI.

❑ **Refresh and expand existing pages regularly**

Older pages can often be improved without starting from scratch. Revisit key pages and add new FAQs based on customer questions, update examples or data, expand sections that feel thin or overly sales-focused. Ongoing depth improvements help maintain trust over time.

Content SEO: Case Study & Testimonial Presence

What it is: This signal looks at your use of direct social proof, including customer testimonials and detailed case studies.

Impact: High

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** An LLM can parse a case study to validate your claims. If you say your service 'improves efficiency', a case study provides the AI with a specific, citable example: '[Client X] used [our service] to replace their windows.' This transforms a subjective claim into a more factual, evidence-backed data point, increasing your credibility.
- **For Humans:** Buyers trust their peers more than they trust vendors. Testimonials provide quick, reliable endorsements, while detailed case studies allow a potential customer to see themselves in the story, understand exactly why they should work with you, and feel confident you can deliver on your promises.

How to improve: Start publishing customer testimonials and simple case studies that clearly connect a real client, the problem they faced, and the outcome you delivered. Include specific details (project type, solution used, and results) and place these examples directly on relevant service and product pages to reinforce credibility.

Content SEO: Content Surface Area

What it is: The diversity of your brand's digital footprint, moving beyond your website to gauge your active participation across the internet. Channels like: Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Reddit, your Google Business Profile, and others.

Impact: Medium-Low

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** An LLM gathers information from a wide array of sources. When it sees your brand consistently providing valuable content on your website, on Youtube, on your Google Business Profile, it builds a multi-faceted, corroborated picture of your authority. This diverse footprint signals you are a significant and active entity in your field.
- **For Humans:** Customers have different preferences for how they consume content. By being present on multiple platforms, you meet them where they are. Someone might discover you through a Youtube tutorial, search for you finding your Google Business Profile, and finally visit your website, building trust at each touchpoint.

How to improve: Maintain accurate, active profiles across key platforms where your customers spend time, and share consistent, helpful content that reinforces your expertise. Even light but regular participation – such as posting project photos on social media, publishing short YouTube explainer videos, or updating your Google Business Profile – helps expand your digital footprint and signals to both AI systems and customers that your brand is established, credible, and engaged.

Content SEO: Accuracy of Claims

What it is: Measuring the credibility of your brand's voice by analyzing your website for sensationalist language. Professionalism and authority are built on objective, provable claims. Sensationalism is a feature of low-quality marketing, not expert advice.

Impact: Medium-Low

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** LLMs are specifically trained to avoid "sales speak." They prioritize sources that are factual and neutral in tone. Using exaggerated claims makes your content look like low-quality advertising and a high-risk source for a factual answer, causing the AI to ignore it in favor of a more credible source.
- **For Humans:** Modern buyers are highly skeptical. Language that sounds 'too good to be true' is immediately met with distrust. Grounded, honest language builds a stronger foundation of trust and attracts higher-quality customers.

How to improve: Audit your website copy and remove exaggerated, vague, or “too good to be true” language in favor of clear, factual statements. Replace hype with specifics – what you do, how you do it, and what outcomes customers can reasonably expect – supported by examples, standards, or proof to reinforce a professional, trustworthy voice.

Technical

Ensure you exist. These are the baseline technical requirements that AI models and users expect. Failing to meet these standards can make a website appear broken, insecure, or fundamentally untrustworthy.

Technical SEO Signals: NAP Consistency

What it is: This signal measures the consistency of your business's core contact information – Name, Address, Phone number (NAP) - across the web. When your NAP is identical across your site, your Google Business Profile, and other high-authority directors, it sends a powerful signal of legitimacy to Large Language Models (LLMs). The more consistent your digital footprint, the more an AI will trust your data and the more likely it is to feature your business in relevant search answers.

Impact: Medium-Low

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** An LLM's primary goal is to connect online data to real-world entities. When it finds the exact same NAP across multiple, high-authority directories, it can confirm with high confidence that your business is a legitimate entity at a specific location.
- **For Humans:** When a potential customer sees consistent information on Google Maps, your website, and a review site, it builds subconscious trust. Inconsistent or incorrect information is a major red flag that makes a business seem unprofessional, disorganized, or potentially fraudulent.

How to improve: Audit your Name, Address, and Phone number across your website, Google Business Profile, and major directories to ensure they are **identical down to formatting**.

Technical SEO: Answer-Focused Semantic Structure

What it is: A way of organization content so each section is built around a clear question (usually in a heading, like an H2/H3) followed immediately by a concise, self-contained answer. It turns your page into a series of Q&A blocks, rather than long narrative paragraphs.

Impact: Medium

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** An LLM is an answer engine. Its goal is to find the best, most direct answer to a user's question. By formatting your content with the question in a heading (like an H2) and answer the text directly below, you are perfectly pre-packaging your content for extraction. This makes it incredibly easy for the AI to select your content, trust its boundaries, and present it as a definitive answer.
- **For Humans:** Users scan, they don't read. A clear Q&A structure allows them to scroll a page and immediately find the section that addresses their specific problem. It respects their time and delivers value instantly, improving their experience and perception of your expertise.

How to improve: Rewrite key pages so each section is framed as a clear, customer-focused question in a heading (H2 or H3), followed immediately by a concise, complete answer. Prioritize common questions you hear from customers and ensure each answer can stand on its own without needing surrounding content.

Technical SEO Signals: Schema

What it is: Schema is the code/language of search engines that helps them understand what's on your site.

Impact: High

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** Basic schema tells an AI who you are, advanced schema tells it precisely what your content is about in a machine-readable format. This structured data eliminates ambiguity for LLMs, transforming content from plain text into a verified set of facts. Schema dramatically increases AI confidence in your data and its likelihood of featuring your products, answers, and expertise directly in search results.
- **For Humans:** Humans don't see schema code, they see the result: rich snippets in search results like star ratings, prices, and FAQ dropdowns.

How to improve: Start with basic, high-impact schema that most website platforms (Wix, Squarespace, WordPress) already support through built-in settings or simple plugins – such as Organization, Local Business, FAQ, and Product schema. Focus on accurately filling out these tools rather than customer code; even light, well-implemented schema sends strong trust signals without requiring technical expertise.

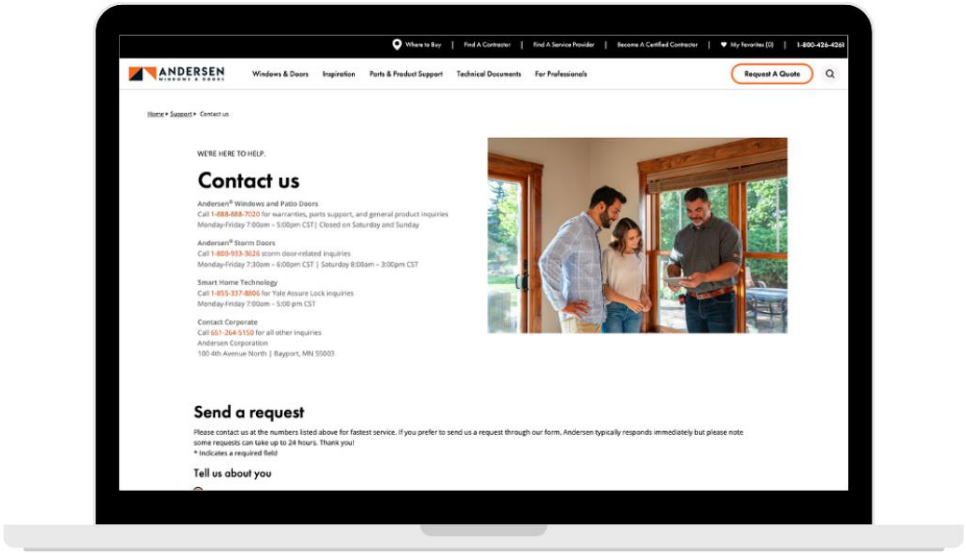
Technical SEO: Customer Responsiveness

What it is: Measures how quickly and easily customers can get support, evaluating the presence of immediate channels like Phone and Live Chat, and the transparency of your service commitments, such as published business hours and response time guarantees.

Impact: Medium

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** A clearly defined, multi-channel support structure signals high operational quality and accountability to AI models. AI prioritizes sources from entities that appear stable and well-managed. The absence of easily accessible channels and states commitments (like SLAs or hours) makes your business look like a low-effort, high-risk entity, causing the AI to deprioritize your content.
- **For Humans:** Customer support accessibility is the ultimate test of a brand's promise. When a buyer can instantly see multiple contact options, published hours, and a response time guarantee, it removes psychological friction and builds immediate safety and confidence.



How to improve: On the next page we have an entire customer responsiveness checklist.

Technical SEO: Customer Responsiveness Checklist

Support Visibility & Accessibility:

- ❑ **Support & contact options visible in the header**
- ❑ **Dedicated support or contact us page exists and is easy to find**
- ❑ **Phone number is listed and clickable on mobile**
- ❑ **Email or contact form is available**
- ❑ **Support channels are consistent across site (no conflicting numbers or emails) unless department-specific**
- ❑ Advanced: Live chat is available (even if limited hours)

Response Time & Availability

- ❑ Published support hours
- ❑ Time zone clearly stated
- ❑ Stated response time for email or form submissions (e.g., "We reply within 24 hours")
- ❑ After-hours expectations are communicated (e.g. "We respond next business day.")
- ❑ Live chat availability is shown (online/offline)

Advanced: Technicals Signals

- ❑ **Support policies (refunds, warranties, SLAs) are published and easy to understand**
- ❑ **Privacy and data-handling policies are accessible**
- ❑ **Support page is crawlable**
- ❑ **Contact information is in HTML text (not images)**
- ❑ **Schema markup is used where appropriate**
- ❑ **Phone numbers use *tel:* links, emails use *mailto:* links**

Advanced: Self-Service Resources

- ❑ Knowledge base, help center, or FAQ available
- ❑ Articles are up to date and cover common issues
- ❑ Search functionality exists within the help center
- ❑ Troubleshooting guides or tutorials provided
- ❑ Product documentation is accessible and indexed

Technical SEO: On-Page Policy & Ethics Transparency

What it is: Transparent operational policies are a sign of a mature, well-run business that respects its customers and operates within legal and ethical frameworks.

Impact: Low

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** For specific user queries like, 'What is [your company]'s privacy policy?', these pages provide the direct, factual content the AI needs to formulate an answer. While not a ranking factor for general queries, the absence of these pages can be a negative signal for an AI assessing overall site quality and trustworthiness.
- **For Humans:** In an era of data privacy concerns, customers want to know how their information is being handled. Easily accessible and understandable policies build trust and demonstrate professionalism. For many B2B buyers, this transparency is a compliance requirement.

How to improve: Publish clear, easy-to-find pages for your Privacy Policy, Terms of Service, and any relevant operational policies, and link to them prominently in your website footer to signal professionalism, compliance, and trustworthiness.

Technical SEO: On-Page Contact & 'About Us' Depth

What it is: Contact & 'about' pages are foundational to establishing a trustworthy and professional identity. These pages tell the story of your business and prove you aren't hiding.

Impact: Medium-High

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** A rich 'About Us' page gives the AI valuable context about your company's history, mission, and purpose. A 'Contact' page with a physical address and multiple contact methods is a strong signal of a verifiable, real-world entity. This data helps the AI confirm you are a substantial, established business and not a fleeting or anonymous web presence.
- **For Humans:** The 'About Us' page is often the second or third most-visited page on a site. Its where potential customers go to see who you are, what you stand for, and if you're are a company they want to do business with. A lack of depth here can feel evasive and untrustworthy.

How to improve: Build out robust, transparent *About* and *Contact* pages that clearly explain who you are, what you do, and why you exist, including your business history, values, and team where appropriate. Ensure your Contact page lists a physical location, phone number, email, and business hours so both AI systems and customers can easily verify that you are a real, established company.

Technical SEO: *Contact* & *About Us* Checklist

About Page

- ❑ **Who you are and what you do (1-2 paragraphs)**
- ❑ **Company story/timeline (founded, milestones, growth)**
- ❑ **Mission & values (clear and specific)**
- ❑ **Leadership / team highlights (names, roles, headshots)**
- ❑ Why choose us (3-5 concrete differentiators, not hype)
- ❑ **Proof (awards, certifications, media mentions – with links to sources)**
- ❑ **Real photos (team, office, trucks, on-site projects)**
- ❑ Helpful next steps (CTA to contact or request a quote)
- ❑ **Schema: Organization/LocalBusiness (logo, sameAs, address)**

Contact Page

- ❑ **Business name, phone, email (HTML text, not an image)**
- ❑ **Business hours (+ time zone)**
- ❑ **Multiple contact methods (click-to-call, email, short form)**
- ❑ **Google Map embed**
- ❑ **Response-time expectation (e.g., "We reply within 1 business day.")**
- ❑ **Schema: LocalBusiness + ContactPoint (telephone, contactType, areaServed)**
- ❑ **Technical: *tel:* and *mailto:* links**

Extra Credit

- ❑ Q&A
  - ❑ How fast can you come out?
  - ❑ Do you service my area?
  - ❑ Do you handle permits?
- ❑ Micro-testimonials specific to service types

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Brand

The brand tier represents the final layer of polish that distinguishes the great from the ELITE. These signals emphasize a strong dedication to user experience, brand personality, and journalistic integrity. Although they may influence AI more indirectly than signals in other tiers, they serve as significant differentiators recognized by discerning buyers and AI systems. They indicate that you are not just an expert, but a brand genuinely committed to excellence in every detail.

In the following slides, we'll break down the brand-level signals – from public reviews to industry recognition to clearly stated values – that elevate your presence from reputable to truly unforgettable.

Brand: Public Review Score & Volume

What it is: This signal evaluates the volume and quality of your public reviews, a primary indicator of real-world authority and customer satisfaction. LLMs are trained to use social proof as a key factor in assessing trustworthiness.

Impact: High

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** An LLM uses public reviews as a large-scale data set to understand a company's reputation. A high volume of reviews signals you are an established business, and a high average score signals quality. This social proof is a powerful heuristic for the AI to determine if you are a safe, authoritative, and popular choice to recommend.
- **For Humans:** Seeing that many other people have had a positive review with your company reduces their perceived risk, builds confidence, and provides authentic stories they can relate to, making them much more likely to choose you.

How to improve: Actively and consistently request reviews from satisfied customers on key platforms like Google, respond professionally to every review (positive or negative), and showcase recent, detailed reviews on your site to demonstrate ongoing quality, engagement, and real-world trust. *Starting on Page 5 of this guide, we dive deep into digital reputation.*

Brand: Claims of Industry Recognition

What it is: This signal measures your use of external social proof and third-party endorsements. While any company can claim to be a leader, an AI is designed to seek external validation for such claims. By clearly displaying awards from reputable organizations, certifications from official bodies, or positive features in industry media, you provide verifiable data points.

Impact: Low-Medium

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** An AI's job is to verify claims. When you display an award, the AI can often cross-reference it with the awarding body's site. This act of external verification is an incredibly powerful signal. It confirms your marketing claims ('we are a leader') with an objective, third-party data point.
- **For Humans:** Awards, certifications, and media features act as powerful trust shortcuts. They signal that you have been vetted and approved by a reputable authority, which helps buyers feel more confident in their decision and reduces the perceived risk of choosing you.

How to improve: Display legitimate awards, certifications, and media mentions prominently on your website, especially on your about, homepage, and service pages.

Brand: Brand Values

What it is: This signal assesses whether you articulate your brand's core values and purpose.

Impact: Low

Why it matters:

- **For AI:** An LLM's goal is to understand an entity completely. While it doesn't 'feel' your values, it can parse and understand them. This adds context to its knowledge of your brand, helping it understand your motivations and character, which can influence how it describes your company to users.
- **For Humans:** Modern buyers increasingly want to align with brands that share their values. Clearly stating what you stand for – be it customer service, sustainability, or innovation – is a powerful differentiator that attracts like-minded customers and builds a much stronger form of brand loyalty.

How to improve: Clearly state your core values and purpose in plain language on your About page or homepage. Keep them specific and action-oriented so both customers and AI can easily understand what your business stands for and why it exists.

Organic Social

Organic Social:
What to Post

Projects

Showcase high-quality project photos/videos, emphasizing craftsmanship and attention to detail.

Feature before-and-after transformations to demonstrate the value you bring to homeowners.

Educational content

Share informative and educational posts about home improvement, maintenance tips, and design trends.

Position yourself as a trusted expert in the industry by offering valuable insights and advice.

Client testimonials

Highlight positive reviews and testimonials from satisfied clients to build credibility and trust.

Local community involvement

Share your participation in community events, sponsorships, and collaborations to foster a positive image.

Behind-the-scenes content

Provide a glimpse into your team, processes, and project progress to humanize your brand.

Showcase the dedication and expertise of your team members.

Option for Andersen Select Builder:
Utilize ThumbStopper to boost your organic social presence. More details on the next slide.

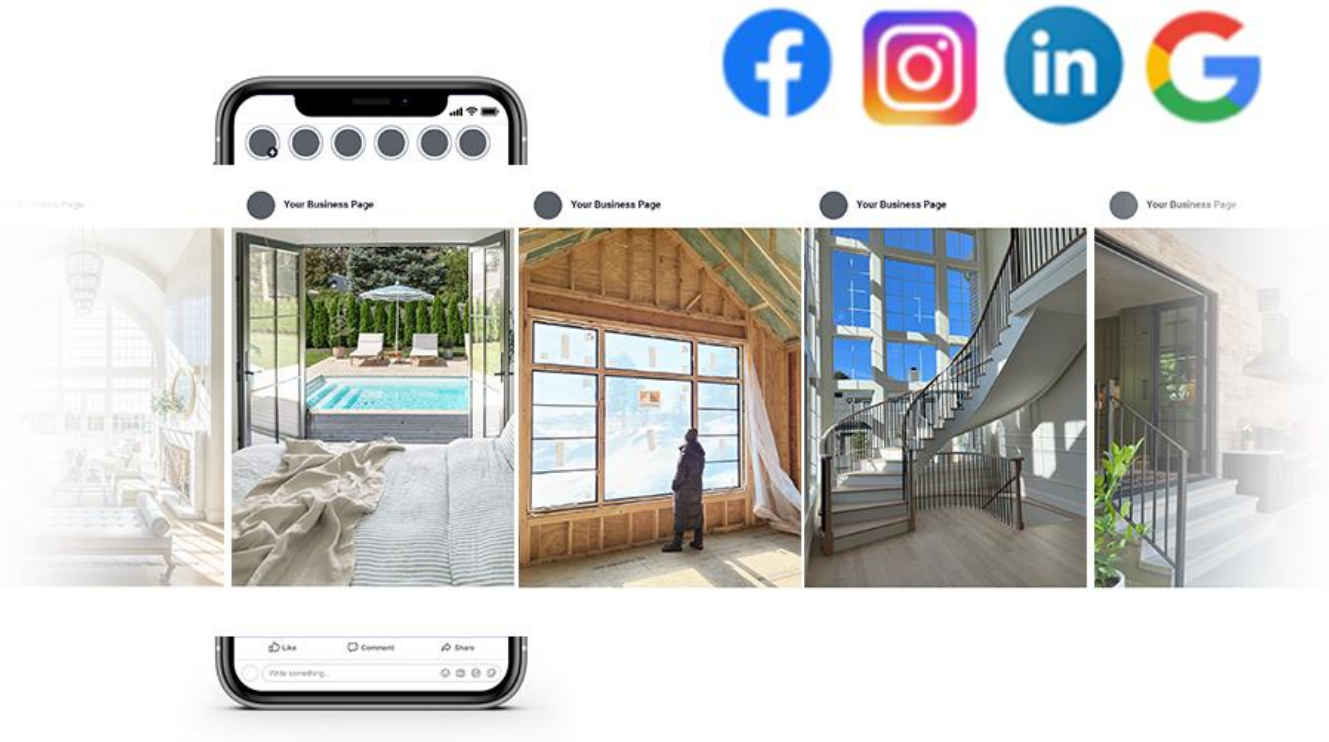
thumbstopper

Thumbstopper: Effortless Organic Social Support

Thumbstopper allows you to publish curated Andersen-branded social media content directly to your Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Google Business Profiles.

These posts are created by the Andersen Windows Marketing Team and designed to drive awareness.

Enroll today!



Fundamental Organic Social Best Practices

Align on purpose: organic content is not for lead gen. Organic content is for trust gen.

Consistency is key. Homeowners frequently conduct "background checks" to determine whether or not they can trust a business by looking at their social media profiles. Companies that don't post regularly are seen as less trustworthy versus those that post regularly.

- **How often should you post?** Posting 2-3 times per week is best practice and incredibly easy with tools like Thumbstopper where you can easily schedule your future posts and our team at Andersen can create posts for you. Note: you'll still want to continue to include your own content as your audience wants to build a relationship with YOU.

Local SEO Impact: Post to your Google Business Profile, regularly. It can be the same content as Facebook and can significantly boost your local SEO.

- **Pro Tip**: Thumbstopper allows you to post directly to your Google My Business page and Facebook at the same time.

80/20 Rule: 80% of your organic (non-paid) content should be to entertain, educate, and/or inspire your audience. 20% (or less) should be offers.

Advanced Organic Social Best Practices

Strategically reply to posts. Reply to customer support comments first. The best time to respond to other comments is immediately after your next post.

- After posting, engage with comments from your last post, and then engage with other accounts in your local market.
- Avoid "posting & ghosting"
- Always use at least 3 words when replying to comments.

Lean into AI. AI offers numerous opportunities to streamline and enhance your content creation.

- **Content Creation**: Use AI to generate content ideas, write posts, and create your content calendar.
- **Pro Tip:** If you have an email program, upload all of your email content into the AI platform of your choice (ChatGPT, CoPilot, etc.) and ask the platform to create a content calendar and write social posts for the entire year.

Old but gold – recycling high-performing content is a great way to continue to engage your audience and minimize content creation efforts. Best practice: 10-20% of your monthly posts can be recycled but don't share the same post 2 months in a row.

Thank You

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