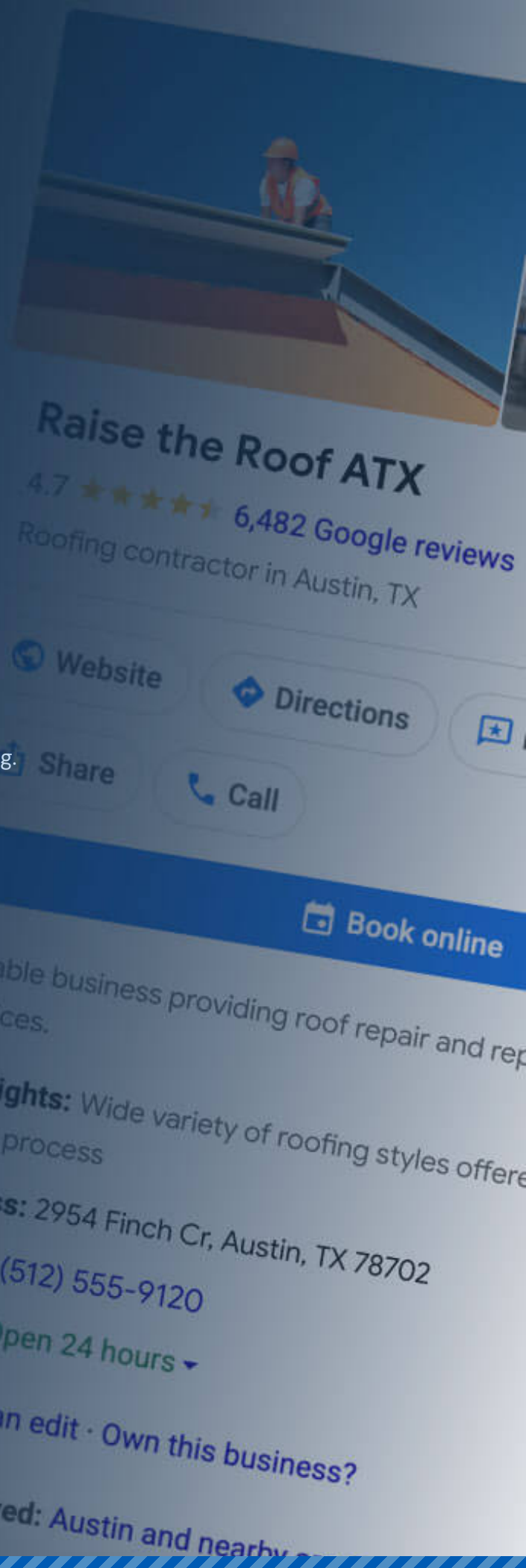


The Google Business Profile Playbook

How to turn your profile into a lead source, not just a listing



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01 THE COST OF AN INACTIVE PROFILE

The Cost of an Inactive Profile

Before someone calls your business, they Google it. That's true whether they found you from a truck wrap, a referral, or just Googled something like "HVAC repair near me." Your Google Business Profile is usually the first real impression you make, and for a lot of homeowners, it's the only research they do before deciding who to call.

When that profile is outdated, incomplete, or is just sitting there untouched, you aren't just losing a little polish. You're losing jobs to your competitor whose profile looks active and answers the question the homeowner actually had in the first place.

"Every dollar you spend on marketing to get found is wasted the moment a homeowner finds you and skips you for someone whose profile looks more current."

Think about what a missed profile opportunity actually costs. It isn't just one lost call. It's the marketing spend that got them to your listing in the first place, the average value of the job they needed done, and the referrals that job would have generated down the line. A weak profile does not just cost you a lead, it costs you the whole chain that comes after it.

The good news is that a Google Business Profile is one of the few marketing assets you can fully control, it costs nothing to fix, and most of what moves the needle takes minutes, not hours. This playbook walks through exactly what to fix, in what order, and how to know it is working.

02 HOW GOOGLE ACTUALLY RANKS YOU

How Google Actually Ranks You

Google doesn't rank home service businesses on a whim. It comes down to three factors, and when you understand them you can choose what to prioritize first.

Proximity

Proximity is how close your business is to the person searching, or to the location they typed in. You can't control where a homeowner is standing, but you can make sure your service area is set up accurately so Google knows where you actually work, not just where your office happens to sit.

Relevance

Relevance is how well your profile matches the intent of what someone is searching for. If a homeowner searches, "emergency drain cleaning" and that service is not listed anywhere on your profile, even if you can perform the service, Google probably won't recommend you. Relevance is built from your categories, your services list, and the words you use in your business description, so it's important to keep this up-to-date.

Prominence

Prominence ranks based on how well-known and well-reviewed your business is, both on Google and across the web. This is the slowest one to build and is the ranking factor most affected by reviews, mentions, and consistent activity over time. It rewards businesses that show up and stay visible, not ones that set up a profile once and never touch it again.

03 GETTING THE FOUNDATION RIGHT

Getting the Foundation Right

Before posting, before chasing reviews, it's important to get your base profile accurate. It's the highest level play, and is one of the easiest places to start, too.

Categories

Pick a primary category that matches your core business as precisely as Google allows, rather than a broad catch-all. A roofing company should be "Roofing contractor," not "Contractor." Add secondary categories for every real service you offer, but don't pad the list with services you don't actually do. Google checks.

Service Areas

If you work across a region rather than out of a single storefront, set up your service area properly instead of relying on the pin of your office. List every city or zip code you actually serve. This is one of the most commonly neglected settings and one of the quickest fixes.

Hours

List standard hours accurately, but don't stop there. If you offer after-hours or emergency service, say so explicitly. A homeowner with a burst pipe at 11 p.m. is searching right now, and a profile that clearly states emergency availability wins that search over one that looks closed.

Services and Products

Even though it can seem tedious, list out your actual services individually rather than leaving this section thin or blank. Every service you list is another way for your profile to match a specific search.

Business Description

Lead with what you do and who you do it for, in plain language. Skip the adjectives about being "the best" or "most trusted," and use the words a homeowner would actually type into Google. Don't stuff with keywords, either.

Photos

Profiles with current photos get more engagement than ones with none or with stock imagery. Upload photos of your crew, your trucks, and actual work in progress. Before and after shots of completed jobs perform especially well because they show proof rather than just a claim.

04 STAYING ACTIVE WITHOUT OVERTHINKING IT

Staying Active Without Overthinking It

Prominence rewards businesses that keep showing up. You don't have to post every day. Aim for something sustainable that keeps your profile looking current.

Posts

Google Business Profile posts work similarly to social posts on other channels. Share a completed job, a seasonal reminder, or a limited time offer. Keep it short and skip the sales language.

Questions and Answers

The Q&A section on your profile is public and searchable, and anyone can post a question, including competitors. Check it regularly and answer anything unanswered. Better yet, seed it yourself with the questions homeowners actually ask, like whether you offer financing or same day service.

Photo Refresh

Add new photos on an ongoing basis rather than uploading a batch once and never returning. A steady trickle of new photos, even a few a month, keeps your profile looking current and gives Google fresh signals to work with.

05 REVIEWS

Reviews

Reviews affect prominence directly, and they are often the deciding factor for a homeowner comparing two similar businesses. Treat review generation as an ongoing part of running your Google Business Profile, not a one-time push.

How Often to Ask

The best time to ask for reviews is right after a job is completed, while the experience is still fresh. Build the ask into your standard close-out process so it happens consistently instead of only when someone remembers to do it.

How to Ask

Make it easy. Send a direct link that takes the homeowner straight to the review form to remove friction that a search-and-find process would add. Keep the ask short and specific, thank them for the job and invite them to share a few honest words about their experience.

Responding to Reviews

Respond to every review, positive and negative. A thoughtful response to a negative review can matter more to future customers than the review itself, since it shows how the business handles a problem. Keep your responses calm, specific, and free of defensiveness.

06 TRACKING WHAT'S WORKING

Tracking What's Working

You don't need a complicated dashboard to know if your GBP work is paying off. Google Business Profile Insights gives you the core numbers to watch directly inside the platform.

What to Watch

- Calls initiated directly from the profile
- Direction requests, a strong signal of local search intent
- Website clicks from the profile listing
- Photo views compared to similar businesses in your area

Tag Your Website Link

If your profile links to your website, add UTM parameters to that link so the traffic shows up clearly in your analytics instead of getting lumped into direct traffic. A simple tag like source equals GBP and medium equals local makes it easy to see exactly how much of your website activity is coming from the profile itself.

Check these numbers monthly. You are looking for direction, not perfection. If calls and direction requests are trending up after you tighten the foundation and start posting consistently, the work is doing its job.

07 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

Implementation Checklist

Use this to work through the playbook in order, from the fastest fixes to the ongoing habits.

Quick Wins (this week)

- ☐ Correct your primary category and add relevant secondary categories
- ☐ Set up or verify accurate service area coverage
- ☐ Update hours, including after hours or emergency availability
- ☐ Rewrite your business description in plain, search-friendly language
- ☐ Upload a fresh batch of real photos, including before and after shots

Medium-Term Moves (this month)

- ☐ Set a recurring biweekly cadence for Google Business Profile posts
- ☐ Seed the Q&A section with the questions homeowners actually ask
- ☐ Build a review ask into your standard job close-out process
- ☐ Add UTM tagging to your website link on the profile

Long-Term Plays (ongoing)

- ☐ Add new photos on a steady monthly drip instead of one big upload
- ☐ Revisit your service area coverage as your business grows or shifts
- ☐ Check GBP Insights monthly and note trends in calls and direction requests
- ☐ Respond to every new review within a few days

08 CONVERTING GBP LEADS INTO BOOKED JOBS

Converting GBP Leads Into Booked Jobs

Everything in this playbook is built to get your phone to ring or your profile to generate a message.

"97% of homeowners say response time matters, and 78% will choose whichever company responds first."

A homeowner who finds you through a well optimized profile is often comparing you to two or three other businesses at the same time. If your phone rings and nobody picks up, or a GBP message sits unanswered for a few hours, that lead does not wait around. They call the next name on the list.

This is the part of the funnel that has nothing to do with Google and everything to do with what happens inside your business the moment that call or message comes in.

Where Signpost Fits

Our Google Business Profile booking link allows homeowners to schedule an appointment with your business straight from your profile. It connects directly to your calendar, with no call or message required.



Calls answered. Leads captured. Jobs booked. Invoices paid.

Signpost handles everything between the first ring and the final payment, so you can stay on the job and get home on time.

Get a Demo →