Google My Business How to set up & optimise your "Google My Business" listing to enhance your online reputation & secure more clients online



INTRODUCTION

In our continued efforts to bring the most value to mortgage brokers we are releasing this e-Book that the team have worked on extensively over the last couple of months.

We did it due to the growing importance of Google My Business Accounts. More importantly we wanted to save you time and provide a step by step guide so that you, your colleagues, and your business can ensure your Google My Business Account is set up correctly and subsequently maintained efficiently.

According to Google, 46% of searches have a 'local intent' and they have optimized their algorithms for this.

So, if a user lives in Leeds for instance and they type in "Mortgage Broker", the first results they are going to receive are going to be results that are local to them in Leeds.

Many mortgage brokers have not claimed their Google My Business Account. Even when they have claimed it many have not taken the steps necessary to generate any results.

This guide continues our tradition of creating step-by-step guides and free content that help provide the exact tactics used by successful businesses, such as our guide on how to convert more referrals and business, and the interviews and features via the MLC Show for Property Professionals.

How To Setup & Optimise Google My Business

We hope you find this new release massively valuable, and we are extremely proud that it's free. No email registration or catch.

Please enjoy and share this with mortgage brokers, colleagues, and industry contacts – We genuinely believe this guide will help many within the industry.

the mortgage broker club

MLC Show For Property Professionals

Watch our special MLC Show feature for property professionals on YouTube. Check out live examples of client searches for mortgage brokers, what Google My Business Listings look like, what they can achieve, and why the "Local 3 Pack" is so important.

Subscribe to our YouTube channel, podcasts on Apple & Spotify.



THE MORTGAGE BROKER CLUB

The Mortgage Broker Club was created to be a one-stop-shop for mortgage brokers of any size. Mortgage brokers benefit from:

- Over 25 categories of FREE to access mortgage broker tools providing brokers with a convenient way of researching and securing new partners including but not limited to networks, packaging, sourcing, insurers, criteria checking, 2nd charges, bridging, commercial, websites, recruitment, marketing, etc.
- FREE to access interviews & features in our media section with industry-specific insight from leading experts via written features, social media, and on the MLC Show for property professionals accessible via Apple podcasts, Spotify, and YouTube.
- Memberships which seek to save mortgage brokers time and increase broker revenue via bespoke wills & probate services, reputation enhancement, and customer rewards.

"I often found that keeping in touch with clients and reminding them regularly of our services could be difficult and something that would generally slip my mind. With the service that the mortgage broker club offers, this is no longer an issue. With the tailored service that keeps you in clients' minds using cards and access to the discounts plus the reminders for reviews, it really helps our business grow naturally along with benefiting the clients and keeping us in the forefront of their minds. At the cheap cost, it is a no brainer for businesses who want to aid natural growth" **Ashley Hollom**

Bespoke Conveyancing Service Whitelabelled Option

Our most widely used service is our FREE, no-obligation, & unique conveyancing service.

Brokers can choose from 3 FREE services including a white-labelled solution, adding the service in to their website, and/or logging in to our conveyancing portal.

Faster search turnarounds, faster case turnarounds, with faster referral fee payments plus unique benefits for brokers and their clients! View solicitors Google reviews, ratings, price, and location before choosing your favourite and add your favourite solicitors to our service!

"If you want great service, a full set of lenders, top-tier referral fees, a complete system, and the benefit of extra referrals on top of your recommendations then look no further. The team has done a fantastic job at rivalling what is already on the marketplace and going steps further with great added benefits to suit your clients and your own business needs. I would not hesitate to recommend this to any broker to try out and benefit from the complete package they offer." Ashley Hollom

"I would like to commend the team on how easy to use and simple the platform is!" Tania Buckingham

GOOGLE REVIEWS & REPUTATION ENHANCEMENT

Setting up your Google My Business Account correctly and maintaining the account provides huge benefits to you and your business resulting in an increase in organic online instructions. *(e.g. Organic leads are prospects who find your company by searching for a product, service or question in a search engine, rather than directly visiting your URL or clicking on PPC ad. These leads and prospects often don't know about your product or service before they do an online search)*

A crucial element of running a successful "Google My Business Account" is reputation enhancement. E.g. Generating positive Google reviews from your past customers.

We have created a Reputation Enhancement service for mortgage brokers who do not have the time or resources to obtain their reviews and filter out the good from the bad – ensuring that the good are directed to their Google reviews page and the bad are alerted to the broker enabling them to appease the client and avoid/limit negative online reviews.

Google reviews are a crucial (and ever-increasing) factor in organic SEO (Search engine optimization e.g. the process of optimizing your online content so that Google show you within their top results for searches)

How To Setup & Optimise Google My Business

They also improve your local ranking. The quality and quantity of reviews on Google is one of the most important ranking factors.

They also help you stand out from your competition locally. When a customer reviews the search results for a mortgage broker on Google, the business listings that include customer reviews present greater credibility and, naturally, receive more clicks.

Find out more about how our reputation enhancement service can help you and your business here

The service includes:

- Automated client feedback requests post-completion
- Automatically increase your 4 & 5 -star customer reviews online
- Endorsement via exclusive interviews promoted by us online
- Personalised Christmas cards designed and posted to your clients
- Personalised 12-month thank you cards designed and posted to your clients
- Improve online credibility and reputation
- Increase repeat business and client referrals
- Perfect for mortgage brokers of any size
- 100% safe, secure, & GDPR compliant

WHY GOOGLE?

Why do you recommend Google my business listings and not alternative business accounts and review sites?

- The benefits of Google my business accounts for mortgage brokers are almost endless.
- Google is FREE. When you consider reviews this is the first major difference between Google Customer Reviews and say, Trustpilot. Google Customer Reviews is free of charge, whereas Trustpilot and the alternative product review aggregators charge a monthly /annual fee for their services (often £300+ per month!).
- Yelp is another alternative/additional online review aggregator. To ensure visible star ratings, then you will need to go beyond the services offered by organisations like Yelp.
- Google reviews are a crucial (and ever increasing) factor in organic SEO (Search engine optimization e.g. the process of optimizing your online content so that google (and other search engines) like to show you as a top result for searches)
- Improving local ranking. The quality and quantity of reviews on Google is one of the most important ranking factors for **local** SEO.
- Standing out from your competition locally. When a customer reviews the search results for a mortgage broker on Google, the business listings that include customer reviews present greater credibility and, naturally, receive more clicks.

This is more than just reviews.

Google uses your business account listing for numerous benefits:

- As a credibility checkpoint (confirming your registered address carries weight within google)
- Confirm contact information
- Important information which is quickly available in a format which is standard
- Home for unbiased reviews
- Additional information via posts
- For simplified mobile access
- As a reference point to related websites

Stand out on Google with a free Business Profile

More than just a local listing, your free Business Profile lets you manage how your business appears on Google Search and Maps.





The Local 3-Pack

When a customer searches "mortgage broker" they will be presented with the following google results:

- The paid advertisements
- Then the local 3-pack
- Then "people also ask" questions
- Then the organic SEO ranked websites for mortgage broker (e.g. Which, Habito, etc)

Ensuring you appear in the Local 3-Pack for your area is an achievable short term goal.

In many areas of the UK there is little competition for mortgage brokers in the local 3pack due to many mortgage brokers NOT:

- claiming their google my business page
- requesting, maintaining, and managing the quality of the reviews
- increasing the number of google reviews
- ensuring they have an appropriate website

In Google's search engine results, the Local 3-Pack is a colorful, prominent map listing that presents to consumers the three businesses Google considers most relevant to the customers search, location, and of the highest quality.

The below example shows the search results for "mortgage broker" on the Wirral. In this example you would envisage customers eyes will be drawn to Concept Mortgages for obvious reasons.....

nortgage broker		XQ
Lanasa Thurstaston	pages Limited	
	Hough	Map data @2020
Rating - Hours -		Sort by +
A Hours or services may differ		
Lifestyle Mortgages Wirral	10	100
5.0 ★★★★★ (5) · Mortgage broker	S	•
0.5 mi · 38 The Crofters	WEBSITE	DIRECTIONS
Closed - Opens 8AM Thu - 0151 678 7466		
Mortgage Brokers in Manchester		
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2.1 ml · The Old Bakery, 72 Sandy Ln		DIRECTIONS
Closed - Opens 9:30AM Thu - 0151 625 4448		
Concept Mortgages Limited		
5.0 ★★★★★ (225) · Mortgage broker	S	Q
3.7 mi - Concept Mortgages Limited,, 43 Telegraph Road WEBSIT		DIRECTIONS
Closed · Opens 9AM Thu · 0151 342 3084		

CLAIM & SETUP YOUR BUSINESS ACCOUNT LISTING

How to claim your business with "Google My Business"

- 1. Visit https://www.google.com/business
- 2. Click "start now"
- 3. Input your business information e.g. (name, address, phone number, website).
- 4. Geographic areas will be requested you have the option to choose that you serve people outside your business location. Be sure to select that you do this, as it will let prospective clients know you are willing to come support them.
- 5. Verify your business. You are then required to verify your account by submitting a code Google send to you. This is necessary to unlock all GMB features.
- 6. In the meantime whilst you are waiting for the verification code to arrive you can access your dashboard to start personalizing your listing. The page, and any edits or amendments will not appear until the verification process is complete.

Verification:

Google require you to verify that you are in fact the owner of the business and authorized to promote the business online. There are several ways to verify your business listing:

- By postcard
- By phone
- By email
- By instant verification
- Postcard Verification

In the Google My Business control panel, click the "verify my business" button. You'll be taken to a window with your postal address on it. Be sure to verify the address is correct, and also add your contact name. That's who the postcard will be addressed to. The postcard should reach you in roughly five days.

Make sure you do not edit your business name, address, or category (or request a new code) before your card arrives, because this could delay the verification process.

When the postcard arrives, log into Google My Business. If you have more than one business location, select the location you want to verify. If you only have one, select "Verify now." In the Code field, enter the verification code that was printed on your postcard. Click "Submit." If your postcard never shows up, or you lose it, you can request a new code by signing into Google My Business and requesting one.

Phone verification

Some businesses are allowed by Google to verify their location by phone. If you are eligible, you will see the "Verify by phone" option when you start the verification process.

Make sure your phone number is correct on the screen, then click "Verify by phone." Enter the verification code from the text you receive.

Email verification

Google lets some businesses verify their location by email. If you are eligible, you will see the "Verify by email" option when you start the verification process. When you choose this option, make sure your email address listed is correct, then choose "Verify by email."

Go to your email inbox, open the email from Google My Business, and click the verification button in the email.

Instant verification

If you have already verified your business with Google Search Console (a tool that lets you manage your website's search performance), you may be able to instantly verify your email. To do this, simply sign into Google My Business with the same account you used to verify your business with Google Search Console.

Amending the listing

You can edit your business profile by logging into your Google My Business dashboard, clicking on "Info," clicking the pencil next to the field you'd like to edit, making your change, and then choosing "Apply."

Tips on how to set up an optimum "Google My Business Page"

Add your key business information:

- (NAP = Name, Address, Phone number)
- Name
- Address
- Phone Number (ideally make this local but if you can not then do not worry)
- Website
- Description
- Category
- Attributes

This information will be indexed by Google Search and Google Maps providing a foundation for your local SEO. Your information should be an EXACT match of the information on your website. Any inaccurate information (inconsistencies) will negatively impact your search ranking.

Two Crucial Elements: Business category and your company attributes

- Carefully consider the keywords you use when adding your business category and attributes. Do not go overboard though as Google does not like you trying to cram lots of keywords in to your google my business listing and could punish this behaviour.
- Select the appropriate mortgage broker category (there are over 2,300 categories) so make sure you capture the correct classification.
- Attributes are bespoke and specific to each business so this is where you can highlight any differences in your approach or key attributes.
- Appointments remember to enter how clients can arrange appointment with you.
- Hours ensure you consider this carefully and then confirm the correct hours.
 Many leave this blank which is not recommended.
- When signed into your business account click through the settings on the lefthand side of the page and enter all relevant information for each category.

Examples of Google My Business

When you login to "Google My Business" you will be greeted with a menu on the left hand side.

Work your way down the left-hand side menu completing relevant information as you proceed, such as, Info, Services, Website, etc.

You can go in to great detail on your services including lots of keywords.

Completing your business details is a simple process. Businesses offering the most detailed and accurate information will be easier to use for the client. Be specific whenever possible and do not leave anything to assumptions being made. Make sure you confirm the specific services you offer, where the business is, and how clients can get in touch with you.

Keywords

As with website SEO, Google uses a variety of signals to serve search results. Including important keywords and search phrases is a must as your business website is listed directly within your Google My Business listing.

Use these in the business description and each time you post to your audience.

Add Photos

Photos help business listings' performance more than you may think. Businesses with photos on their listings receive 40+% more requests for driving directions on Google Maps and 33+% more click-throughs to their websites than businesses without photos, according to Google.



IMAGES – LOGO AND PHOTOS

Google recommend you add business photos as, businesses with photos see 35% more

clicks to their website and 42% higher requests for driving directions in Google Maps.

Images should be at least 720 pixels wide by 720 pixels high and in a .jpg or .png format.



Recommended photos to add are:

Cover photo

This is vital as it is the main image people will see. It may be that you choose a team photo or your building? A good example is below for Concept Mortgages.



Logo

You can use this as your profile which is used to reply to any messages. You could use a personal profile also.

Additional photos

You can also upload other pictures to make your page more engaging.

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How to access your "Google review link"

On PC / Laptop:

- Visit the Google page here
- If you have multiple locations, open the location that you'd like to manage.
- In the menu on the left, click Home.
- Scroll down the main page
- In the 'Get more reviews' card, you can copy click "share review form" and access your short URL. (example below)

28	Home	
	Posts	Get more reviews
G	Info	Share your Business Profile and get new reviews from customers
th	Insights	Share review form
	-	

On mobile:

- On your mobile device, open the Google My Business app My Business.
- Tap Customers and then Reviews.
- In the top right, tap Share.
- If your short name is not created, you will be prompted to create one.
- Copy your short URL

POSTS

Do not feel under any pressure to use google posts. The impact is limited BUT it is beneficial to use them if you have the time and enjoy doing it.

They will give you an extra edge on your local rivals and improve your local rankings.

This is a free advertising platform, so why not take advantage of it!

Google posts are short, only 100-300-word posts, along with a photo or video.

You can add to your posts a call to action button that leads visitors to pages on your site.

These are organic clicks that will help your overall site metrics, not to mention directing traffic to your landing, appointment, or contact us page.

Google Posts only last 7 days before they disappear.

Mortgage brokers of course need to consider compliance within these posts as with any social media post.

WEBSITE & SEO

We could write a 100 page guide on SEO alone so please excuse us for sticking to the key principles which we believe impact upon mortgage brokers and their local area.

Our Website Tips

In our experience the most important factors for mortgage brokers to consider with their website is as follows:

- Compliance
- Consistent with your Google Business Account Listing
- Clear call to actions e.g. no-obligation consultation OR find out more....
- Mobile responsiveness
- Professional clean design (so many are cluttered especially on a mobile phone)
- Personal feel this is your great USP over the multi-nationals
- Convenient options for initiating contact
- Testimonials
- Blog page (even if you do not intend to blog regularly or even at all having at least one on there even to just explain a bit about yourself and the business helps)

Merely having a website is not going to change your world overnight but for credibility reasons it is a MUST. With local search being such a critical area for mortgage brokers it is vital that clients stay on your site and are not turned off by it appearing cheap or difficult to operate.

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If someone recommends someone to you what is the first thing you do? Google them is the most common response.

There are additional items to consider. As an example, how will clients go about setting up an appointment with you? How do you want to be contacted? How do your clients want to be contacted?

There are many simple to set up solutions which can be used for convenient methods of setting up a consultation which you may wish to consider.

One example is Calendly. Calendly is used by many professionals for the setting up of telephone appointments that sync with your diary.

Our Website Services

If you want a new website or are looking to upgrade your existing website please check out our website feature in our broker tools section of our website for a free and noobligation quote.

Local SEO

We know that for every mortgage broker enhancing their reputation and awareness locally is a crucial present, and future, concern regarding their business.

The world lives on their mobile phones and seeking convenience is crucial. The growth of Amazon and other comparison sites have placed greater importance on reviews along with Google's own algorithm.

According to Google, 46% of searches have a 'local intent' and they have optimized their algorithms for this.

So, if a user lives in Merseyside for instance and they type in "Mortgage Broker", the first results they are going to receive are going to be results that are local to them in Merseyside.

Many mortgage brokers have not taken steps to set up a local SEO strategy.

Even if a competitor (a national firm like Habito for instance) are the #1 ranked standard result for a mortgage broker keyword, Google has prioritized local searches first and will put their #1 local result above a large national player like Habito.

It is important that you employ both types of SEO strategy to ensure you are receiving organic growth of online work referrals, improving awareness of your service, and enhancing your reputation.

Local SEO, as we have discussed earlier in this guide, comes down to three main categories:

- online business listings (the Google My Business Account)
- reviews (we can take care of that for you via the reputation enhancement service!)
- social media content

We would also recommend you use thank-you cards and birthday messages with your clients.

Personalized cards are remembered and appreciated.

Cards are rare nowadays and feel special.

Social media plays a role in everything nowadays. When clients share the gesture or photo of the card, to their followers this increases awareness and the potential for increasing word of mouth referrals.

Cards are often placed in positions where friends and family will read them supporting greater awareness and word of mouth referrals.

It shows you care about your clients (especially local clients you may bump in to) and do not see them as merely a transaction.

Social Media

We wanted to provide you with some additional information in respect of social media.

Social media is a great way for you to gain brand awareness online BUT do not forget compliance.

Mortgage brokers with a great social media presence are likely to bring in more customers. Actively posting and engaging with customers on social media is one of the best ways to build up brand loyalty.

To provide great social media content our recommendations would be:

Review commonly asked questions on Google.

You can "google" various terms, e.g. "mortgage broker near me" and scroll down until you see:

- "people always ask"
- and at the bottom of the page "related searches"

As you experiment with different search terms you will find questions your clients are actively searching for information on/ answers online.

What questions do you commonly get asked by clients? What problems you solve?

This can help form the basis for your content and when laid out in the correct format can benefit you hugely in respect of your search engine rankings.

Only do what you feel comfortable doing

If you feel comfortable on video then do video. If you feel more comfortable writing then write. If you feel more comfortable on audio then do audio. Only do what you feel comfortable and enjoy doing.

Schedule time consistently

Schedule the time you feel comfortable committing and be consistent. Even if it is just once a week for an hour. Trying to find the time is hard if you are not locking that time in and you do not want to become stressed or negative about not creating any content or posting.

Written content

You can publish written content in many locations and benefit from positive results in the long term.

- Blog posts on your website
- LinkedIn articles
- Medium
- Social media channels linking to your website

There are lots of free resources online where you can learn how to write content for your website with a view to optimising your SEO and appearing in organic search engine results.

Pillar content strategy

Entrepreneur and social media icon Gary Vaynerchuk published a FREE guide on a pillar content strategy.

You can access the model here

A pillar content strategy is when you create one informative piece of content, across video, audio, and written format and then break it down into micro pieces of content for blogs, social media, eBooks, and newsletters.

This is how we operate ourselves and it helps you meet your digital media needs without spending fortunes or taking up the precious time you and your team do not have to spare.

At the Mortgage Broker Club we do this via zoom interviews.

We create a draft agenda based on google search queries relevant to the sector and/or topical areas of interest/debate in the mortgage industry.

We host and present short interviews via Zoom. This results in us producing a video of the interview, podcast, and full transcript. This is the pillar content.

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We add subtitles/captions to the video. (Over 80% of videos on social media are watched without sound – hence subtitles/captions being vital)

Micro-content can then be "cut" providing blogs for each Q & A section, video clips with subtitles for social media posts of the best clips, newsletter features, e-books, etc.

From one short zoom interview, we produce professional content for our website, newsletters, social media accounts, YouTube channel, podcast, and marketing campaigns.

We would recommend you do the same as it works!

Create one long form piece of content and then create lots of micro content from the long form piece.

Again, Gary Vaynerchuk published another FREE guide on this here

You can also check out social media support services in the broker tools section of our website here.

SUMMARY

We hope you enjoyed this feature on Google My Business along with the insight, tips, and ideas in this eBook.

In our continued efforts to bring the most value to mortgage brokers we released this eBook due to the growing importance of Google My Business listings.

More importantly we wanted to save you time and provide a step by step guide so that you, your colleagues, and your business can ensure your Google My Business listing is set up correctly and subsequently maintained efficiently.

This guide continues our tradition of creating step-by-step guides and free content that help provide the exact tactics used by successful businesses, such as our guide on how to convert more referrals and business, and interviews and features via the MLC Show for Property Professionals.

We hope you found this release massively valuable, and we are extremely proud that it's free.

Feel free to share this with mortgage brokers, colleagues, and industry contacts.

We genuinely believe this guide will help many within the industry.

Stay well.

UNIQUE CONVEYANCING SOLUTIONS



the mortgage broker club

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These materials are intended to facilitate and assist mortgage brokers when receiving new client enquiries, particularly when originally via online lead generation. The information was accurate as per Google official pages as at 1st September 2020.

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