



WHITEPAPER

Marketing Guide for Insurance Agencies:

How to Market Your Agency Online to Attract More Clients

Introduction

Marketing an insurance agency begins with two essential elements: knowing what type of prospective clients to attract and understanding who the competition is, but online marketing goes way beyond that.

According to Statista, 60% of consumers search for local businesses online. Targeting the local market is of utmost importance for insurance brokers, and an effective local online marketing campaign that utilizes SEO best practices is vital for success.

This white paper will focus on the importance of a well-optimized Google My Business profile and online reviews to gain the trust of consumers. It also discusses traditional online marketing techniques such as technical SEO, content optimization, email marketing, and more.



Maximizing SEO for Greater Online Visibility

SEO or search engine optimization is at the core of any successful online marketing campaign.

SEO is the process of improving a website's content and keywords to increase a website's visibility in organic search and get found by the right consumers. This translates into more sales for a business.

After a user performs a search query on Google, the SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages) appear. The SERPs consist of many pages, but according to Forbes, 75% of users never scroll past the first Google results page, and the top five results receive nearly 68% of the clicks.

Those facts underscore the importance of having prominent visibility on the first Google SERP. Without it, it's difficult for an insurance agency to succeed in today's competitive landscape.

Factors That Determine Ranking

Google has an advanced algorithm to determine where a website ranks. Useful content with relevant keywords relating to a user's query is at the cornerstone of SEO.

Three other factors contribute to where a web page will rank:

- 1. Proximity:** Very little can influence this factor because there may be ten other businesses within a similar proximity, some of which are closer to the searcher.
- 2. Relevance:** This factor allows for some influence. The more relevant a business's website content and services align with a searcher's inquiries, the more likely Google will include it in the search results. This is achieved by being specific about products and services and homing in on the local market.
- 3. Prominence:** Businesses have control over prominence. Links from other local websites and online reviews help establish trust and authority for a website.

The implementation of local SEO strategies is more impactful than keywords when attempting to reach local consumers.



The Anatomy of a SERPS Page

Every first SERP consists of paid ads at the top, Google My Business (GMB) profiles, the top organic search results, a local 3-pack, more ads at the bottom, and related inquiries.

Organic results pages influence consumers more than paid ads because Google has determined those businesses to be credible.

A business can try to bolster its visibility organically, but it's out of their control if Google chooses to place competition ahead in search results. Businesses have complete control over whether they leverage the power of a GMB profile. GMB profiles are prominently displayed on the search page, making it a powerful marketing tool.

Local SEO optimization empowers a business to compete locally within its geographical area. For instance, if a Houston business begins a search for a commercial insurance agency, the business owner may enter "Houston business insurance agency" or something similar when searching for agencies.

Fifteen or 20 years ago, a business owner would have simply picked up a phone book and searched the yellow pages for an agency, but the world today is virtually connected through the Internet, and consumers look for answers online. GMB profiles have taken over where yellow pages left off, but there's a catch -- a business must claim its GMB listing. However, up to 9% of all Insurance Agencies fail to do so.



How to Dominate Local SEO Rankings on Google

An insurance agency can gain an edge against its local competition by dominating the search engines. Here's how to do it:

1. Claim a Google My Business profile for instant visibility.

When a business doesn't claim a GMB profile, it loses business it could have had. Google has up to 95% of the search engine market share. A prominent presence through a GMB listing should be a priority for every insurance agency.

It's essential to optimize a GMB profile by providing as much useful, relevant information. This makes it easier for search engines to find a business when a consumer searches for a related keyword.

Every available option within the profile should be completed, including the business name, address, phone number, hours of operation, the products or services offered, and website link.

Consumers are also drawn to question and answer (Q&A) sections, and they help build authority.

2. Make it easy for customers to submit reviews.

Most customers prefer references from those who have utilized similar services to what they're seeking. Online reviews are great at fulfilling this need.

Consider these facts:

- 88% of consumers trust online reviews as much as they do a personal recommendation.
- 7 out of 10 customers will leave a review when prompted, but only 33% of business enterprises will ask for a review and display it.
- Almost three-quarters of consumers say reviews influence their decisions when buying a product or service.

Reviews help assure potential customers that a business is professional and excellent at what they do. Great reviews build a trustworthy reputation, while a bad review can steer a consumer away.

Reputable businesses are ranked higher by Google, and potential customers are more likely to navigate to the business's website. This translates into more revenue for the business.

Do the following:

- Request that customers leave a Google review.

- Send them an email, along with the business's Google review link.
- Incorporate feedback and reviews on the website. For instance, a section entitled "What our customers are saying" is a great testimonial to build more trust with potential customers.

3. Build quality links and citations.

Quality backlinks are vital for a successful SEO campaign. They lend credibility and authority, particularly where Google is concerned.

The idea is to get a link from other websites that link back to your Insurance agency's website. Potential sources for local backlinks include:

- Local companies with complementary products and services. For instance, a Insurance agency might work in conjunction with commercial realtors, associations, etc. Link to one another through brand mentions.
- Link to organizations like the Better Business Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, and more.
- Contact a local newspaper or online publication about writing an insurance column.
- Seek out good publicity. Sponsor a local cause or volunteer to help clean up the grounds of a school, university, or public park after an adverse weather event. Just ask for a link back from their website.



Keep Traditional SEO Marketing Strategies in the Mix

Content optimization and technical SEO strategies are still vital to rank higher in search engines.

What is Technical SEO?

Technical SEO is the process of optimizing a website to make it fast and responsive. The search engines are better able to understand a website, and it's easier to crawl and index.

Technical SEO also means avoiding duplicate content and dead links on a website, both of which Google penalizes and will rank lower in the search engines. Here are some things to improve technical SEO on a website:

- Perform a full audit and check for the website's responsiveness, speed, loading time, deadlinks, duplicate content, crawl

errors, and more. There are excellent website auditing tools available, such as SEMrush, Google Search Console, Ahrefs Site Auditing, and more.

- Ensure a mobile-friendly website. 56% of all consumers in the U.S. search for businesses on their mobile devices.
- Write landing pages specific to the local area. Include content relevant to the services offered and the target audience.
- Evaluate and improve the description and meta title for every page.
- Create and optimize an XML sitemap for the website. This helps Google locate and index the web pages. WordPress offers plugins to accomplish this task. Once completed, submit it to Google's Search Console.
- Optimize internal links, images, etc.

Content Optimization Strategies

Blogs and guides.

Relevant, useful content never goes out of style. A blog accomplishes this well.

Consumers want solutions to their problems. An insurance agency should focus on content that delivers this.

For instance, an insurance agency can create content for potential customers at every stage of their journey. Content about common insurance mistakes, case studies, or an insurance shopping guide are great examples.

Expert guides that answer a specific question or solve a problem are also the type of content internet searchers want. For instance, an “Arborist Insurance Shopping Guide” or another similar topic more closely related to your local market might garner more local readers seeking helpful information.

Spotlight local clients.

Consider showcasing happy experiences of the clients your agency serves. Case studies would be highly effective here.





Leverage landing pages.

Landing pages specific to local areas increase the potential of gaining prominence in Google.

An insurance agency that leverages the power of landing pages will gain far more visibility than an agency that doesn't.

Frequently asked questions.

Frequently asked questions, or FAQs, present an opportunity for businesses to show off their expertise.

FAQs surrounding insurance-specific topics are great, but potential customers may also have questions about the business itself, the service area, the type of services performed, discounts, and more.

Try to anticipate the customers' questions or include those that have already been asked.

Additional Marketing Strategies for Insurance Agencies

Here are some additional strategies that can help an insurance agency gain an edge over the local competition.

Email Marketing

An effective email marketing campaign helps stay in touch with existing customers and reach out to potential new ones. Research shows that for every dollar spent on email marketing, the return on investment is 44 times.

Mailchimp and Constant Contact are excellent to help facilitate and automate an effective email marketing campaign.

Here are some other ideas:

- Compile a list of all previous clients and potential customers.
- Insurance renewals happen yearly. Contact people before their renewals to stay in front of them and potentially book a call.
- Send an email every quarter or publish a bi-weekly or monthly newsletter talking about recent clients and successes in the local area.
- Prompt visitors on the website to sign up to receive newsletters through email or fill out contact information.

Email marketing piques interest and brings more visitors to a website. Emails and newsletters should be interesting, informative, and entertaining while avoiding hard sales tactics.





Social Media Marketing

Local consumers like to connect online through social media. Social media marketing is as easy as sharing all blog posts on social media channels. Social media marketing is also a great way to build community, establish a business's reputation, inform consumers about promotions and services, and reach the target audience.

Monitoring online conversations through social media can also help an insurance agency understand what its clients want. Interaction with past and future customers can boost engagement and drive more targeted traffic to a website. Best of all, it's free.

Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, TikTok, and LinkedIn can be vital forces to add to an insurance agency's marketing repertoire. It doesn't have to be all of them. One or two accounts are all that's needed to foster repeat business and generate referrals for future customers.

Sync All Business Information

Google's search engines are continually establishing the trustworthiness of a website to deliver the best results for search queries. One way it does this is by ensuring that the information provided across all channels matches. If there's even a slight difference, the search engines are likely to rank it lower.

For example, if a website uses a phone number with a local area code but the GMB listing has a toll-free number, Google's search engine is likely to flag it. If a business address is listed 500 South Second Street on the GMB listing but appears as 500 S 2nd St. on the website listing, again, the inconsistency could hurt a business's stance in the search results.

All information should appear exact across the web, whether it's in the GMB profile, on the website, or a social media channel.

Conclusion

Marketing an insurance agency online is vital to reach today's internet-savvy consumers. But a business must leverage the power of local SEO marketing to reach its target audience.

Marketing tools such as a GMB profile, customer reviews, and interactions with local online communities can further boost an insurance agency's prominence online. Email and social media marketing help businesses stay connected with past customers while building leads for future customers.

Traditional SEO mainstays such as technical SEO, content optimization, and proactive management of all online marketing strategies are vital to establishing a trustworthy digital presence.

Finally, all online marketing efforts should pique the interests of local consumers as well as cater to the search engines. A comprehensive online marketing campaign is a requisite for any insurance agency to succeed in the modern era.

NIP Group has proven insurance business marketing solutions to grow the needs of insurance brokers wanting more prominent online visibility. Our award-winning marketing program is the best in its class. Digital marketing involves understanding an industry and its consumers as well as technical savvy that is sometimes best left to experts while brokers run the insurance business. Contact us for insurance agency marketing solutions that drive results.



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