

# TOP 10 THINGS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT MARKETERS SHOULD BE DOING IN LOCAL SEARCH NOW

*For Student Housing, Senior Living, and Multifamily Property Management Companies*



*Property Management Series*



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In the world of property management, having a strong local presence is a must. **Seventy-five** percent of searchers never scroll past page one, and **46 percent** of all Google searches are linked to something local. When potential residents are looking for a place to live, do your properties appear in relevant local search results?

While your property management company (PMC) likely has some form of a local search strategy, there's always room for improvement. This guide will list 10 of the most critical tactics your PMC should leverage to dominate local search and boost online visibility.

While you can leverage this guide for all types of property management companies, we will provide tips specifically for **student housing, senior living, and multifamily PMCs** in each section. Let's get into it!

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75 percent of searchers never scroll past page one.

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# 01

## CLAIM AND UPDATE ALL LOCAL LISTINGS

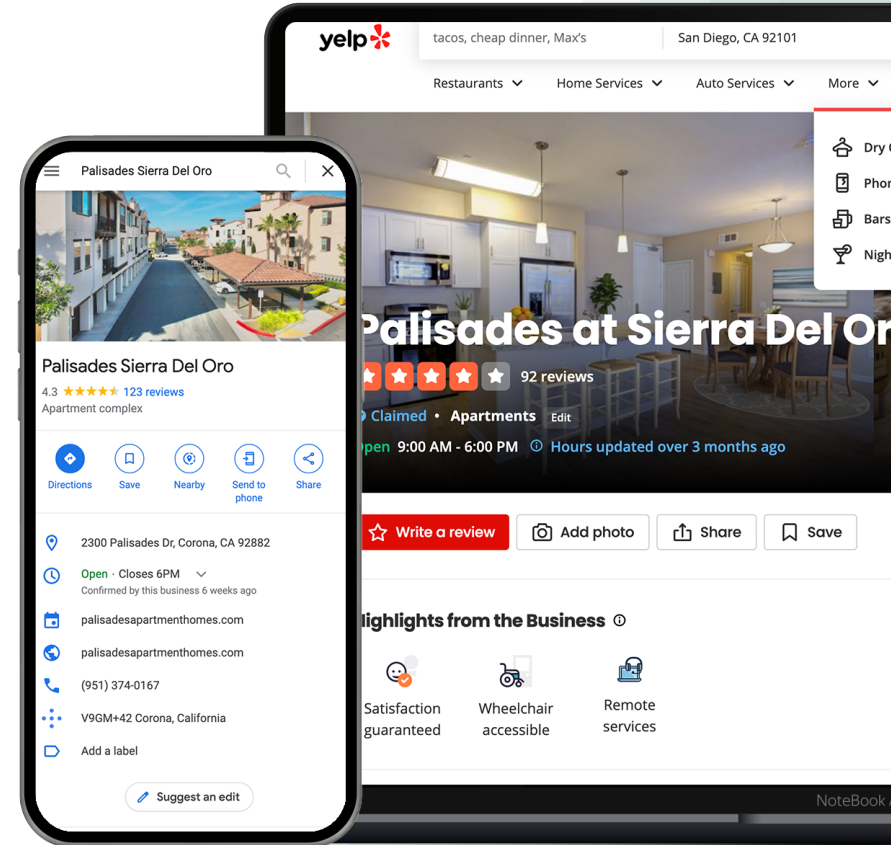
Local listings refer to the local profiles of your properties on key search and social sites — like Google Business Profile (GBP), Facebook, Yelp, Instagram, and more — not apartment listings sites like Apartments.com or Rent.com. While maintaining local and rental listings is incredibly important for your PMC, we'll focus on local listings as they impact your online visibility.

The lines between search and social have been blurred. Channels that property management marketers previously considered strictly search or social now serve both purposes. For instance, **80 percent** of apartment seekers look at social media before choosing their next rental. Similarly, **nearly two-thirds** of renters start their apartment search with a search engine or apartment listing site.

If your PMC is just getting started, claiming your local listings for each property location on Google, Facebook, and Yelp is a great place to start.

**Once you claim your local listings, it's time for optimization. When optimizing your local listings, your PMC must:**

- Confirm that all of the information found in your listing is up to date and accurate — check your name, address, and contact information first
- Include as much information about your property as possible
  - The more a potential renter can learn about the property, the better
- Highlight differences between your local properties and your competitors
- Ensure your leasing office hours reflect actual hours of operation; updating potential changes over the holidays and during seasonal changes is vital



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** Nestpick is a good option for colleges in major cities. Also, see if your local college has a list of student housing options, and ensure your property is included!

**Senior Living:** If time and resources allow, your senior living facility should be visible on Caring.com, the Assisted Living Directory, and other relevant directories.

**Multifamily:** Consider leveraging Zillow Rentals and Rent.com to increase your local property's visibility to potential renters.



# 02

## PUBLISH QUALITY PHOTOS OF YOUR PROPERTIES

Photos are essential for all local search platforms, particularly for Google. Google indexes photo content and gives businesses, including properties, that have relevant photo content a higher ranking.

Similarly, **80 percent** of consumers say user-generated content (UGC), including photos, reviews, and comments, highly impacts business decisions. User-generated content is any form of content, such as images, videos, text, and audio, that users have posted on online platforms through social media, reviews, discussion forums, and more. With users' permission, your PMC can then recycle this content into your marketing material. Having photos on your local search platforms is a must.

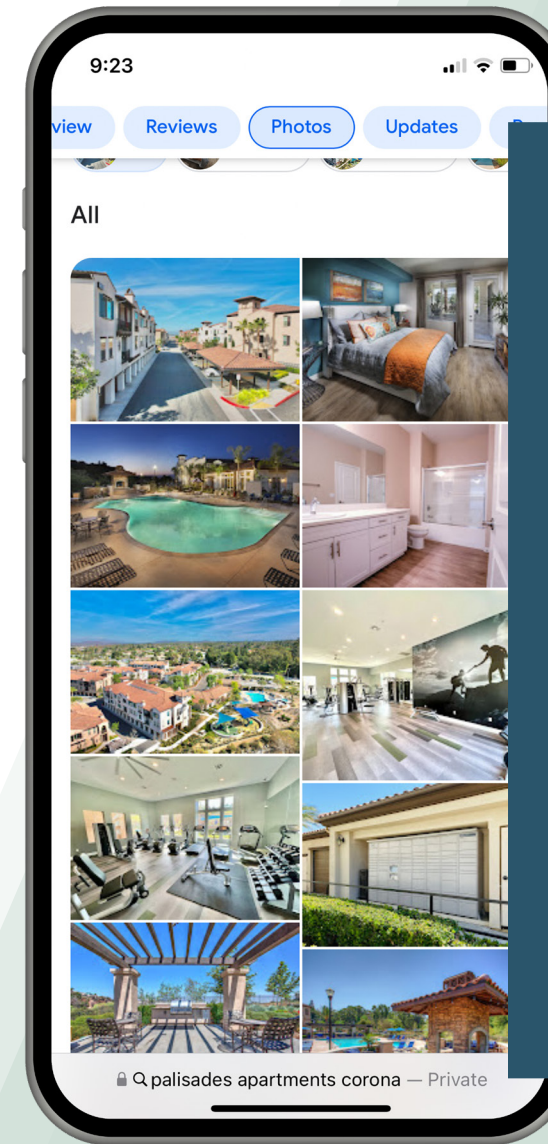
**When choosing a photo for your local search profiles, consider the following:**

- High-quality photos are a must.
- Photos of local team members, your local property, or community events are encouraged.
- Include high-quality photos of your amenities!

Consider updating your photos every quarter or twice a year. This will show residents and Google that your properties are active on local search.

The more potential residents can picture themselves at one of your properties, the better! With numerous property locations, capturing quality photos of each location can be challenging, but **SOCi ProPhotos™** can help!

**SOCi ProPhotos™** provides high-quality, localized photos for your property management company. With **SOCi ProPhotos™**, each of your locations will be matched annually with a nearby professional photographer. You'll then approve a shot list recommended by SOCi that combines AI with Google's best practices. SOCi works with local managers to efficiently execute each shoot, providing your PMC with great photos for local search and beyond.



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** Photos showcasing student life, layouts, proximity to campus, and study areas are a must.

**Senior Living:** Consider gathering photos of group activities, the dining and living areas, and current residents. Senior living residents want to visualize what their lifestyle would be like when living at your facilities.

**Multifamily:** Include indoor and outdoor photos of the property, amenities, the local area, and anything that helps your local property stand out from the competition.

# 03

## INCLUDE HELPFUL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PROPERTIES

### LOCAL LISTINGS ATTRIBUTES

Local listings contain attributes that allow your multi-location properties to provide more information about its offerings. Including all attributes relevant to your property category is key. The more information a potential renter can get about your property without having to leave the local listing, the better!

Attributes can be found in the “info” section of your Google Business Profile (GBP) and cover a wide range of topics, such as the type of payment your business accepts, its accessibility, or the safety precautions you’re taking.

### LOCAL LISTINGS SECONDARY HOURS

There’s also a section for secondary hours where your property can set specific hours that differ from your regular hours of operation. For instance, does your leasing office open at 9 a.m. but start providing apartment tours at 10 a.m.? This is the type of information many prospects will be looking for and, again, can help differentiate your business from the competition.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO INCLUDE

Once you have the basics covered, you can add more detail to your local listings. Information that you can add to your local listings includes, but is not limited to:

- Photos of your property
- A call to action (CTA) to schedule an apartment tour
- Ratings and reviews of your property
- Business Categories on Google and Yelp
- An updated Q&A section that answers your property’s most frequently asked questions.

As mentioned earlier in this guide, it’s helpful to include as much information in your local search profiles as possible. A potential resident should be able to get an idea of what your property is like just by looking at the local listing.



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** Attributes that stand out to parents and students alike are essential for student living facilities. For instance, consider using attributes like “pool table,” “meeting rooms,” and “free Wi-Fi.”

**Senior Living:** Attributes such as “doctor on site,” “dogs allowed,” and “wake-up service” are things potential residents may look for in a senior living community.

**Multifamily:** Leverage attributes that highlight amenities that make your property stand out, such as “fitness center,” “outdoor pool,” “meeting rooms,” and more!

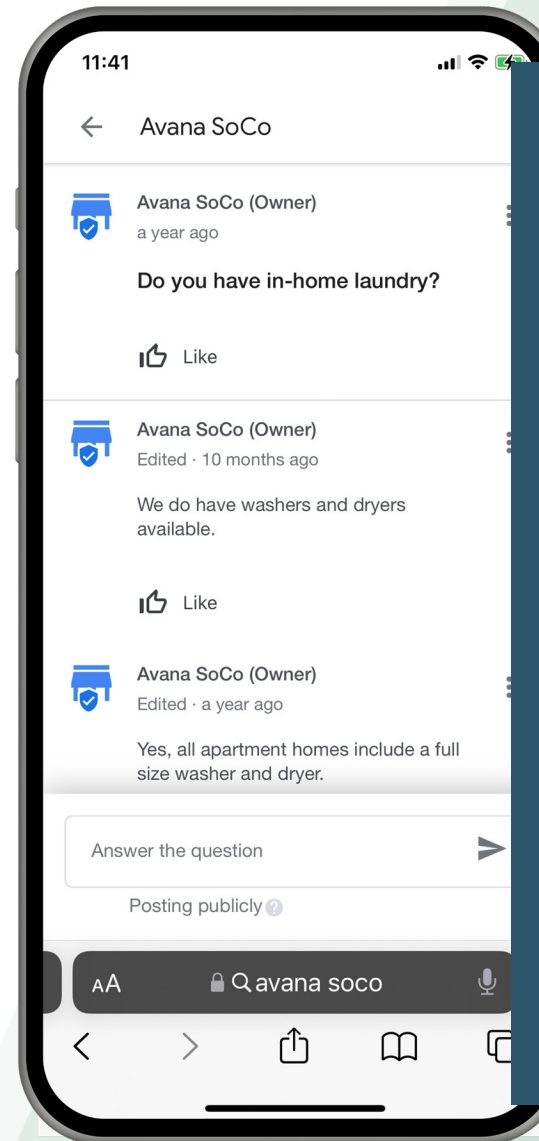
# 04

## DEVELOP A Q&A STRATEGY

Some local search platforms like Yelp and GBP have features that allow the community to ask questions about your local property. These Q&A sections are an excellent place for your PMC to respond to questions asked by both current and potential residents.

Questions can cover various topics ranging from whether your PMC has an onsite gym to questions about pets, community events, and much more. Our research has found that the average business has **2.5 questions** posted per location on Google Q&A, with **96 percent** of questions going unanswered. Of the posted answers, just **seven percent** are from business owners.

If your property management company isn't using Q&A and answering questions received, someone else can and will. This means you risk having a question answered incorrectly and no longer control the narrative around your brand. Ensure corporate and local teams are on the same page about who is responsible for responding to the questions and what is expected for response time.



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** Guardians and students will pay attention to your Q&A sections! Assign local team members with the task of reviewing and answering these questions regularly.

**Senior Living:** While residents may not review your Q&A section, those helping them choose a facility will! Whether it's a question about group outings or the level of care provided, ensure your local communities answer as many questions as possible!

**Multifamily:** Your properties can analyze all the questions it has received and the most frequently asked questions among potential and current residents. You can then create a FAQ to answer all those questions in one easy-to-find place on your website.



# 05

## LEVERAGE POSTING CAPABILITIES

Google, Yelp, and Facebook allow your property management company to post directly from your local profiles, which is a great way to help you stand out online. Posts can include a photo, text, and, depending on the type of text, a CTA to your website. If you include a CTA, be sure to use a tracked link to measure your local posts' success.

While your PMC is likely already leveraging Facebook to post online, Google Posts and Yelp Connect are also important. According to [Yelp](#), Yelp Connect is a "quick process that requires only an image, a headline, and copy to fill the body of the post. You can also include a link."

There are three different types of Yelp Connect Posts your PMC can leverage:

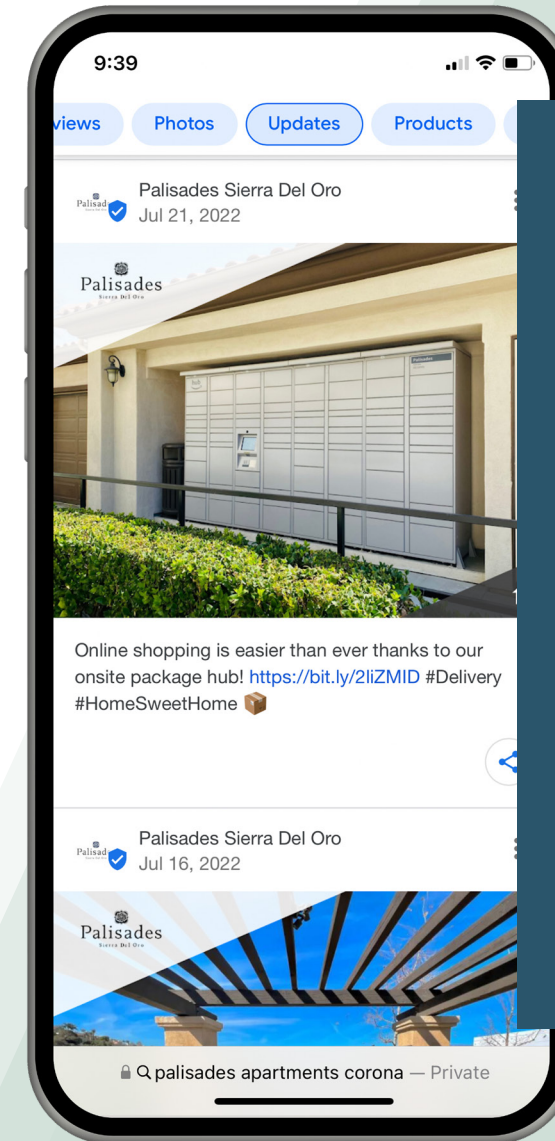
1. Ongoing: Have no end date and will be live until you take them down
2. Event: Allow you to specify the date(s) your event will occur
3. Update: You can set an expiration or end date

Google Posts allow you to post directly from your local GBP and are a great way to make your profile stand out. Posts can include a photo, text, and a CTA to your website. Your posts will appear when someone searches locally for "apartments near me" or your property's name in Google Search or Google Maps. Google Posts help to further increase your visibility and show you're putting effort into your local search profiles.

There are four key opportunities when multi-location businesses can use Google Posts, two of which PMCs can leverage:

1. Highlighting an upcoming event
2. Providing a special offer

For additional insight into creating local content that your PMC can use for local posting, check out our [Localized Social Content Guide for Student Housing, Senior Living, and Multifamily](#).



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** Those considering student housing would be interested in local content highlighting cost, proximity to campus, shared study spaces, premium Wi-Fi, and community events.

**Senior Living:** Share local content around community activities, upcoming events, safety and care, and changes to meal or visiting schedules!

**Multifamily:** As a multifamily community, consider sharing local content around in-unit amenities, dog parks and other pet-friendly accommodations, outdoor spaces, pool access, and safety and security.

# 06

## DON'T IGNORE REVIEWS — RESPONDING IS KEY!

While online reputation management efforts shouldn't vary too much depending on the type of PMC you manage, they're still crucial for your local search strategy. **Eighty percent** of consumers consider reviews necessary to their property search. Similarly, **70 percent** of prospective residents decided to visit a property with a higher online reputation.

Your property's online reputation could be the difference between a potential resident signing a lease at your property or choosing a competitor. So what are the signals of a solid online reputation, and how can your PMC manage it effectively?

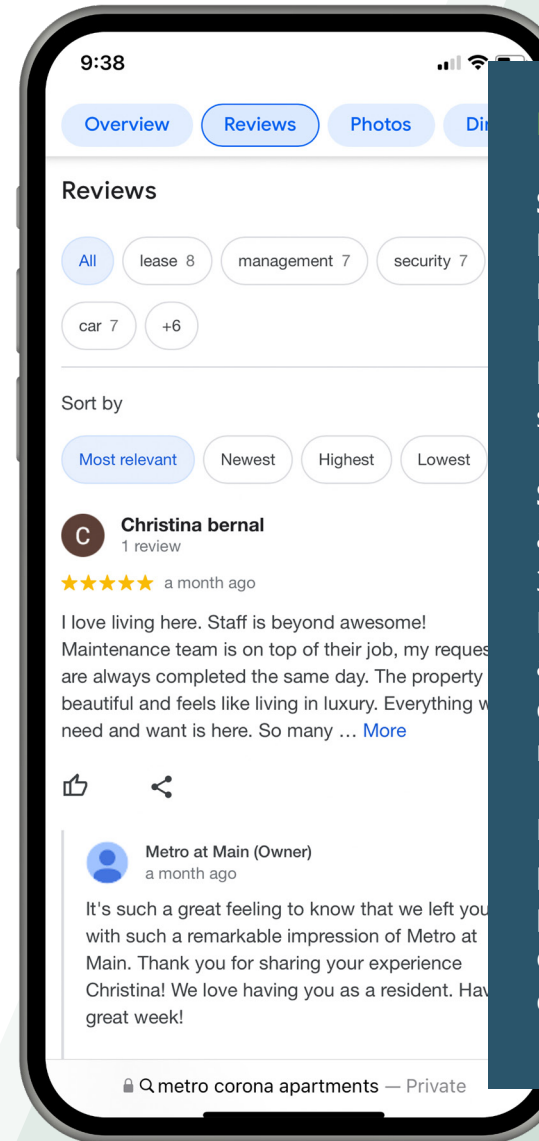
**When it comes to responding to reviews, property management marketers must:**

- Respond to reviews promptly — especially negative reviews

- Personalize your responses
- Analyze feedback to improve critical online reputation metrics
  - Average star rating, reviews per location, and review response times
- Turn positive feedback into user-generated content

For our next pro-tip, we'll dive into data from our **2022 Local Visibility Ranking Report for Property Management Companies**. The report compared 30 top PMCs across senior living, student housing, and multifamily, examining more than 100 specific drivers of localized marketing success across **local search, social media, and reputation**. You can download the entire report, [here](#).

For a more detailed look at reputation management for PMCs, download our **Online Reputation Management Guide for Property Management Companies**.



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** On average, student housing facilities respond to 73.8 percent of reviews received on Google, with an average response time of 44.4 days. Your student housing facility should beat these averages to stand out from competitors.

**Senior Living:** Senior living communities have an average star rating of 4.2 stars on Google, 3.2 stars on Yelp, and 4.5 stars on Facebook! If your property is already exceeding these averages, great! If not, the information covered can help improve your reputation management efforts and average star rating.

**Multifamily:** When it comes to multifamily, properties have an average of 57.3 reviews per location on Google, 16.3 on Yelp, and 19.4 on Facebook. How do your PMC's locations compare?



# 07

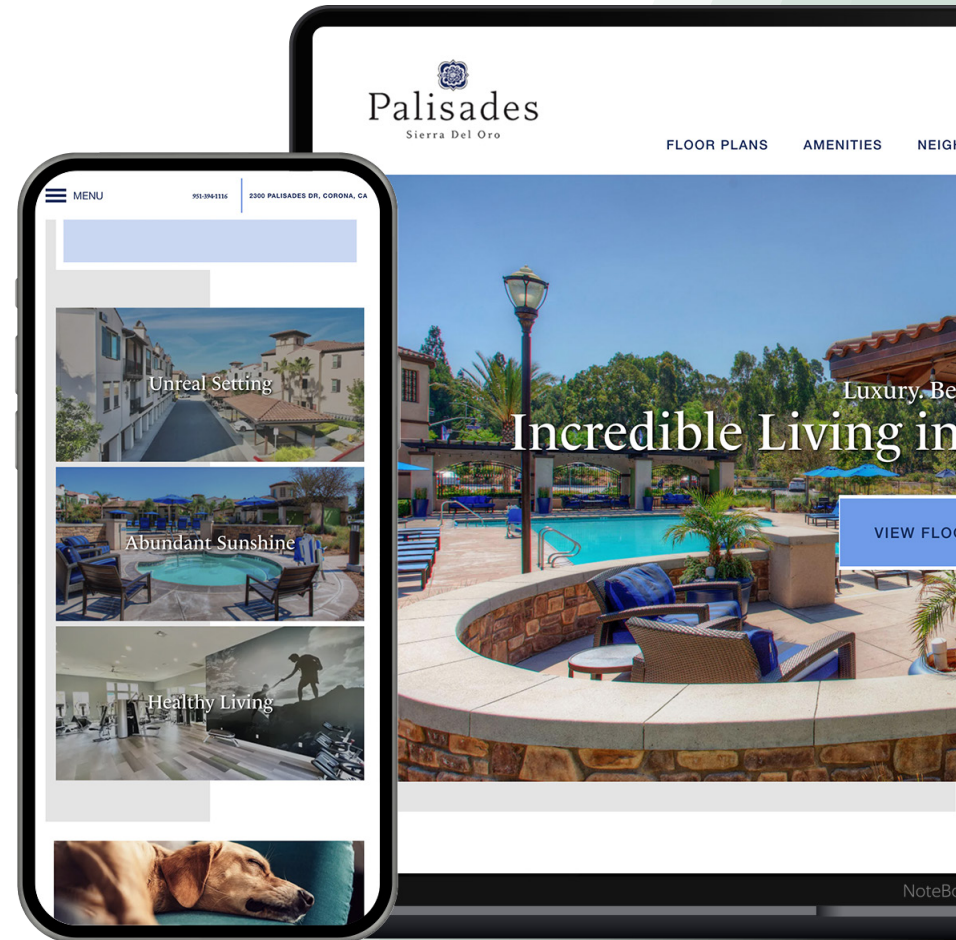
## OPTIMIZE LOCAL WEBSITES

Local websites for each property location should provide potential residents with the convenience they're looking for, keeping them happy and bringing business straight to your door. Many PMCs find that optimized local websites lead to increased revenue, which every property management marketer strives to achieve.

When it comes to optimizing your local websites, consider the following tactics:

- Develop a keyword strategy and include relevant keywords
- Keep brand consistency in mind when it comes to design and strategy
- Place direct calls to action
- Include location-specific details, like interior and exterior photos, and an updated name, address, embedded map, and phone number
- Include a detailed description of your property to help boost your local website's SEO
- Incorporate Schema markup
  - Schema markup helps search engines like Google understand the value of a website's content and ensures that crucial local content is appropriately indexed.

It's also worth noting that digital expectations are growing: **62 percent** of Gen Z indicated technology as being extremely or very important in their apartment and community. Similarly, **23 percent** of Gen Z prefer touring an apartment virtually. Including options on your local websites for current tenants to pay online and potential residents to do virtual apartment tours are non-negotiable.



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** Virtual tours, images highlighting new technology, and the option to pay online are essential to include on your local websites.

**Senior Living:** Keep your website simple enough for your residents to navigate! Residents should be able to find the contact information for your facility easily.

**Multifamily:** Including a CTA to book a tour on your local website is a must! User-generated content from current residents is another excellent way to have your local website stand out from the competition.

# 08

## PAY ATTENTION TO GOOGLE'S RANKING FACTORS

Your PMC should consider Google's ranking factors when it comes to where you should focus your local search efforts. Google has a [help page](#) that is occasionally updated, explaining how the search engine breaks down its ranking factors.

Your local properties need to pay attention to Google's ranking factors. It's also crucial to focus on other previously discussed conversion factors like high-quality photos, reputation management, and others that will make consumers choose you over high-ranking competitors.

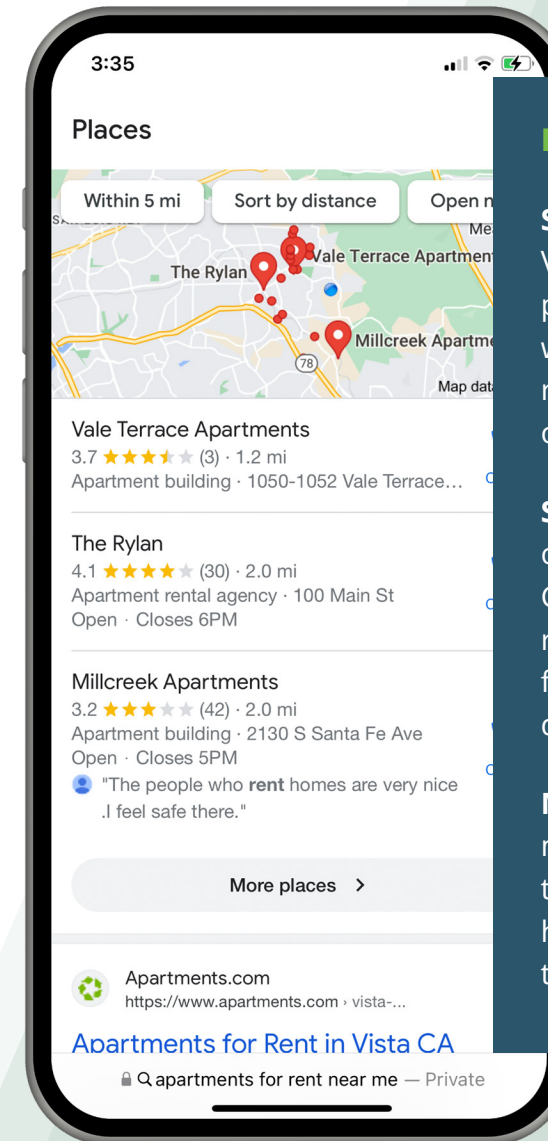
In search, the ultimate success metrics are inclusion and rank within the highly coveted but limited Google 3-Pack. The Google 3-Pack is a format for displaying top results for local

business searches. It sits alongside a map that shows where each business is located, along with basic information about each business. It's where most localized search commerce happens. To gain visibility in the Google 3-Pack, your PMC must improve its local search efforts.

According to SOCI's [2022 Localized Marketing Benchmark Report](#), businesses in the 3-Pack receive **126 percent more traffic**, and **93 percent more actions** (calls, website clicks, and driving directions) than businesses ranked 4-10. Our previously mentioned [Local Visibility Ranking Report for PMCs](#) shares the percentage of properties that fall into the Google 3-pack for each category.



Learn what it takes for your PMC to become a leader in localized marketing with our [2022 Local Visibility Ranking Report for PMCs!](#)



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** According to the Local Visibility Ranking Report for PMCs, 23.8 percent of student housing locations fall within the Google 3-Pack. Optimize local ranking factors to ensure you're one of them.

**Senior Living:** An impressive 42.7 percent of senior living facilities fall within the Google 3-Pack. Attention to Google's ranking factors can help boost your facility's probability of making it to the desirable 3-Pack.

**Multifamily:** Only 11.4 percent of multifamily property locations fall within the 3-Pack. Those that appear in the 3-Pack have a substantial advantage, emphasizing the need for a robust local search strategy.

# 09

## RUN A COMPETITIVE AUDIT TO UNDERSTAND HOW YOU RANK

Understanding how your PMC ranks against competitors is crucial. This audit will provide insight into which areas your competitors are performing better than you and which areas your PMC is already dominating.

For instance, your PMC may not have quality photos on all of its local listings, while a nearby competitor does. On the other hand, your competitors' reputation management efforts may fall flat, while your PMC has a solid online reputation. While this insight is helpful, how can your PMC run a competitive analysis?

SOCI's **Local Visibility Audit** can help. By requesting your personalized, complimentary audit, it will empower your PMC to see how you stack up with the top performers. This audit will give you insight on:

- Your ranking in local search, social, and reviews
- Performance against property industry benchmarks
- Areas for improvement & emerging trends in localized marketing



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** Competition will likely vary depending on location. Each local student housing property should know which competitors are most important in their area.

**Senior Living:** While some of the examples mentioned are important to pay attention to, quality of care is essential for senior living facilities. Ensure that this information is easily accessible.

**Multifamily:** Cost is often a deciding factor for multifamily properties. Get an idea of what your competitors rent their properties for, and measure how your local property compares.



# 10

## TRACK PERFORMANCE AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

While implementing all of the tactics mentioned throughout this guide is essential, you won't be able to understand how effective they are without tracking performance. It's crucial to set goals ahead of time and take note of your starting metrics to see how much progress your PMC makes.

Tracking metrics can range from, but should not be limited to:

- Engagement rates on local social content
- CTA clicks on your local listings
- Conversion rates on local pages
- New leads gained through listings or website visits

Once you have these tracking metrics in place, let them run for a month or quarter, you can analyze your findings and make informed optimizations based on performance.



### PRO TIPS FOR:

**Student Housing:** When it comes to student housing, your tenants will only stay at your property for a few years. This means you are always trying to attract new residents, emphasizing the need to optimize your local search strategy regularly.

**Senior Living:** While the metrics mentioned in this section are important to keep track of, it's also important to listen to your residents! Many residents may make complaints directly to local team members. Keep track of these complaints, and make adjustments when necessary.

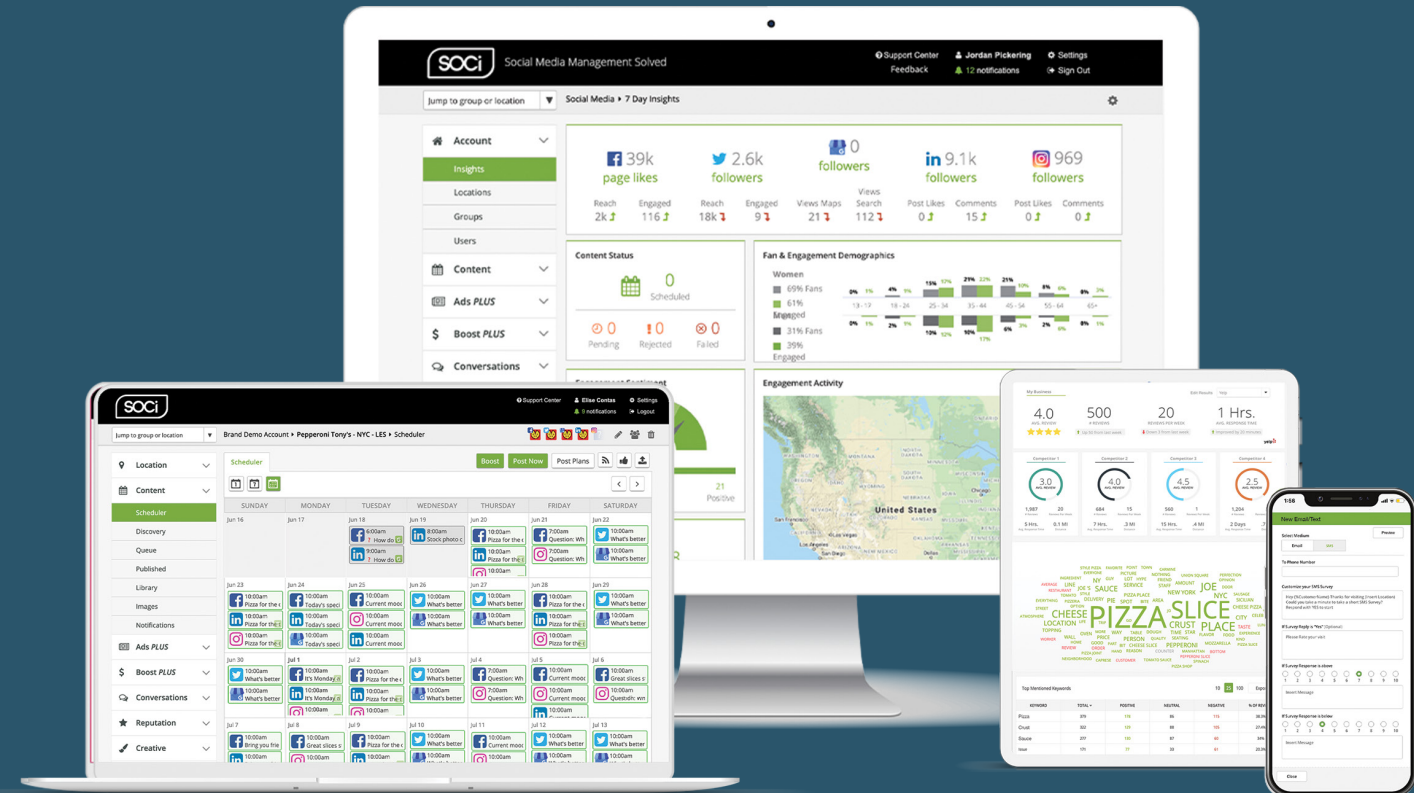
**Multifamily:** Preventing resident turnover while simultaneously gaining new residents is a must. Consider implementing a resident survey to gather feedback from current residents and make optimizations accordingly.

# DOMINATE YOUR LOCAL SEARCH STRATEGY!

Improving your PMC's local search efforts won't happen overnight, but you should also see increased leads and leases won as you begin to make changes. Whether you're unsure where to start or already have a local search strategy in place that needs to be taken to the next level, **SOCi** can make it happen.

**SOCi** has everything your PMC needs to manage local search efforts across your portfolio, from **ratings and reviews** to **local listings** to **local pages** and more.

Whether you're in the student housing, senior living, or multifamily category, **SOCi** is here to boost your PMC's online visibility. For more insight into how **SOCi** can help, [request a demo](#) today!





**THE** MARKETING PLATFORM  
FOR MULTI-LOCATION BRANDS



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Curious about SOCi, looking for a solution,  
or have a question about the product?

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