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NEWSLETTER

SHORELINE
MEDIA MARKETING SOLUTIONS

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Protect Your Business from Google Maps PIN Manipulation – Maintain Your Ranking

With Google Map Pins, Google has served as a beacon for numerous businesses looking to increase client traffic. It is one of the main aspects that enables companies to identify their location and make it easy for customers to discover them.

Recently, scammers have been abusing these pins to deceive users by placing locations thousands of miles away or even in the middle of a lake. This manipulation results in a sharp decline in rankings or potentially the suspension of the Google Business Profile (GBP) account.

What You Can Do:

It is crucial for every business that depends on Google Maps for client traffic to regularly review their listings. As Google does not alert you if your map pin is moved, daily monitoring is ideal. Make it a part of your morning routine to spend a few minutes checking your listing from a buyer's perspective.

You can follow the below-given steps if you notice your Maps pin has been relocated:

1. Log into a Google account that isn't linked as an owner or manager of your GBP to avoid suspension.
2. Search for your business on Google Maps.
3. Click the 'Suggest an edit' button on your profile.
4. Select 'Change name or other details.'
5. Choose 'Edit map location.'
6. Move the pin to the correct location on the map.
7. Click save.

Check out the video, where Darren Shaw founder and president of WhiteSpark, explains the issue in detail during the first 3+ minutes. From 3:22 onwards, Darren offers a solution.

https://x.com/DarrenShaw/status/1803088693252542820?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1803088693252542820%7Ctwgr%5E39a6210fbaa5d50c9a5a9165a03ac6f90ed3ae9b%7Ctwcon%5Es1_ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.searchengineneews.com%2Fse-news%2Fupdate%2Fentry%2Falert-scammers-are-moving-google-map-pins

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Understanding Google's AI Overviews Feature!

Over the past month, Google has been actively explaining and refining its AI Overviews feature, which initially faced some challenges.

You might have heard about the incorrect and occasionally risky answers it has provided. A study reveals that the presence of AI Overviews in search results has plummeted from 84% to 15%, likely due to user feedback and initial errors.

As expected, many questions have arisen about this feature, with the most common being, "How do you turn it off?"

The straightforward answer: You can't.

However, you can apply the Web filter to turn off everything except the traditional ten blue links (and the Ads), which might be a preference for some users.

To address these inquiries, Google has published a comprehensive FAQ on the AI Overviews feature. Here are the key points we've gathered:

- **Can't Be Turned Off:** The "AI Overviews and more" experiment in Search Labs doesn't disable all AI Overviews in Search. They are a feature similar to knowledge panels and cannot be turned off.
- **Not Always Accurate:** For more details, click [here](#).
- **Limited Access:** Currently available only in the US in English. If you're outside the U.S. or using another language, you need to opt into "AI Overviews and more" in Search Labs.
- **Search Labs Availability:** Check where Search Labs is available by clicking [here](#).
- **To Remove AI Overviews:** After performing a search, select the Web filter. This will display only text-based links without features like AI Overviews. For more information, click [here](#).

We hope this overview helps clarify the current status and options for Google's AI Overviews feature.

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Navigating New Horizons: Enhanced Google Business Profiles Verification

In a recent update, Google announced that starting July 31, 2024, they will bid farewell to chat features and call history tracking on Google Business Profile.

What Were These Features and Why Were They Useful?

Chat: This feature enabled customers to message your business directly through GBP on Google Search and Maps. It provided a convenient way for real-time communication and lead generation, enhancing customer engagement.

Call History: This feature keeps track of calls made directly through your Business Profile. It helped businesses understand how many calls they received and track their effectiveness in converting those calls into customers.

Why is Google Shutting Them Down?

Google stated, "These features have relatively low usage, and we're prioritizing focus on higher-impact features for merchants." This decision reflects Google's ongoing effort to streamline its services and concentrate on tools that provide the most value to businesses.

Key Dates to Remember

July 15, 2024: This is the last day for customers to initiate new chat conversations. Existing chats will continue, and users will be notified about the upcoming shutdown.

July 31, 2024: Chat functionality will cease entirely. You will no longer receive new messages or be able to view past chat history within GBP. Call history reports will also be removed on this date.

Preparing for the Change

Download Your Data: You have until August 30, 2024, to extract your chat history using Google Takeout. It will allow you to retain a record of past customer conversations for future reference.

Update Your Profile: Since chat is going away, consider revising your welcome message to direct customers to your preferred communication methods, such as phone numbers, email, or social media handles.

4

LSA Ads Coming to Google Maps

Google has sent advertisers using Google's Local Service Ads program stating soon their ads will be shown on Google Maps.

Here is the Mail:

Hi there,

We wanted to let you know that we're launching ads on Google Maps to help advertisers like you get more leads. This current launch is limited to the iOS version of the Google Maps mobile app.

We'll use your business' existing ad data and user reviews on Google Maps to create these ads. You don't need to share any additional data or details with us.

The billing and pricing for these new ads will remain the same as what they currently are for Search ads. You'll only be charged for qualified leads, and your existing bids will be used.

No action is required on your part, but if you do not want your ads to show up on Google Maps, you can stop your Local Services ads. Please note that this will also stop your ads on Search.

Sincerely,

The Local Services Ads Team

Though the launch is limited to the iOS version of the Google Maps mobile app, it is expected it will be rolling out on the Android version too soon. If you wish to opt out of this, you will have to stop running your Local Search Ads.

Several advertisers are unhappy with this launch, as the possibility of Maps clicks and clicks coming from the search results getting converted into leads is less.

Everything You Need to Know About the Local Service Ads

Local Service Ads– With Google's Local Service Ads (LSAs), you only pay for customers — not clicks. It helps you show up when local customers search for your services and build confidence with a Google badge. They offer a prominent and informative way for businesses to advertise their services.

Eligible Industries for LSA:

- Electricians
- Plumbers
- Lawyers
- Accounting Firms
- Dentist
- Preschool
- Yoga Studio
- Child Care

LSA is beneficial for any business that caters to a local clientele. When someone searches for local services like plumber near me or locksmith services, LSAs might appear at the top of the search results in a designated area.

Benefits of LSA:

- It can help you attract more local customers to your business.
- It helps you stand out from the competition.
- It inspires confidence in you to grow your brand.
- It helps connect locally with your customers.
- You only have to pay for leads.

Reasons Advertisers Might Not Want Their Ads on Maps:

- They will have limited control over the ads.
- The potential for unqualified leads will increase.
- It leads to more clicks without necessarily converting to customers.

However, LSA ads can be a valuable tool for local service providers to reach potential customers actively searching for their services. However, it's crucial to track the results of your LSA campaigns on Maps to see if they generate qualified leads and conversions.