

Online Directories: A How-To Guide

It used to be that what you needed to succeed in retail was a great sign and a *Yellow Pages* listing. Nowadays, if you're not findable online, your business may be losing many potential customers.

A 2014 study by Google showed that **four out of five consumers use search engines to find information about local businesses**. Not only that, but 50% of consumers who searched on their smartphone for local business information visited that business the same day. Your appearance in the right online directories can directly correlate to new customers walking into your store.



6 Directories Where You Absolutely Need to Be

There are hundreds of online listings, directories and review sites online — and some experts estimate it could take a whole business day for a small business owner to submit information to all of them. There are also tools that, for a fee, let business owners update more than one listing at a time: tools such as Moz Local, Yext, Universal Business Listing and Localeze. But you can also easily manage the most important ones yourself, by focusing on the ones that are most critical and most often used by consumers.

Most online directories have already listed many existing businesses to provide mapping and referral services to consumers, so your listing probably already exists on most of the sites listed below. Your job is to “claim” your business for each one, so you have control over the accuracy of your contact information and so you can update pages with helpful content.

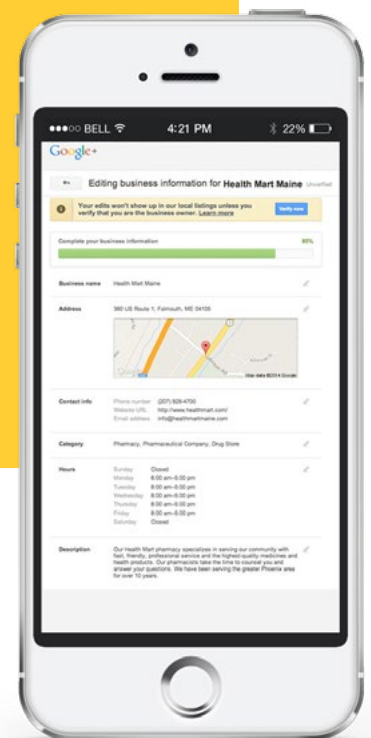
01 GOOGLE

The Google search engine represents 79% of all online searches, including on mobile devices. So it's logical that your first order of business is to get listed on Google. You'll need to register for a Google account (if you don't have one already).

- Go to www.google.com/business and click **Get my page**. Select **Storefront** as your business type. You'll be asked to search for your business name; enter your pharmacy name and city, and click Search.
- Select your pharmacy name as your business. If it doesn't appear in search results, select **Add my business** and enter your pharmacy name, address and phone number.
- Check the Terms & Conditions box to confirm that you own the business. Google will mail you a verification code by U.S. mail to officially verify your account or you may see the option to verify your account by phone.
- Look for a postcard to arrive in the mail within one or two weeks or follow the instructions on the phone when Google calls your business number. Any changes you make to your business page will not appear until you verify your account.
- Now you can begin adding content to your Google My Business page. Be sure to include hours of operation, website and phone number to your information; all of those details will show up in search listings in the future.

79%

OF ALL ONLINE SEARCHES



02 & 03 YAHOO AND BING

The runners-up in the search engine wars are Yahoo and Bing, and because they are the default search for many PCs, it's important to be present there as well. The process for managing your listings on these two search engines is very similar to Google's.

For Bing:

- Visit www.bingplaces.com and sign in with a Microsoft account (or register for a new one).
- Search for your business name and follow prompts to update information on your Bing page.
- Bing will send you a verification code by email that will allow you to manage the page going forward and add content to it.

For Yahoo:

- Visit local.yahoo.com and search for your business.
- Search for your business name. If it appears in the search listings, click the name and then click **Verify your listing**. Yahoo actually charges a monthly fee to allow you to manage the information on your listing, so if the information you see is correct, you can leave the listing as-is. If there are errors, investigate a one-time payment to Yahoo's Local Marketing service so you can update the page with the correct business information.

The image shows two screenshots. The top one is from Bing Places for Business, showing a form to 'Add a single business' with fields for 'United States', 'Phone number', and 'Business name' (Health Mart Maine). The bottom screenshot is from Yahoo! Local, showing the listing for Health Mart Maine with contact information, hours of operation, and a list of brands and services.

04 YELP

The idea of making your business susceptible to Yelp reviews might make you quake in your boots. But truthfully, the positive impact of Yelp far outweighs any potential negatives. Yelp drives more than 250,000 calls and visits a day to local businesses from its mobile app alone, and more than 200 million unique visitors use the site each day to find local information. Yelp gives you the advantage of “earned media” – endorsements from people who have used and loved your business.

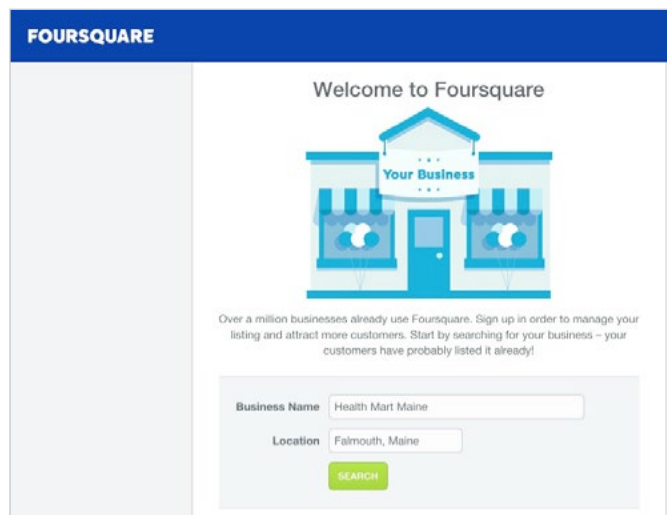
- Go to biz.yelp.com and type in the name, city and state of your pharmacy business. If your pharmacy doesn't show up in the search results, you can click **Add your business to Yelp** at the bottom of the page. If you do see your pharmacy name, click **Claim** next to it.
- Yelp will call you to verify your identity.

The image shows a screenshot of a Yelp business listing for Health Mart Maine. It includes a map showing the location at 380 US Route 1, Falmouth, ME 04105. There are photos of the pharmacy staff and a sign that says 'NOW OPEN'. The listing also features a 'Write a Review' button and a 'Share' button.

05 FOURSQUARE

A few years ago, the Foursquare app was largely about “checking in” at locations to earn badges and compete against others – and users quickly got bored. Now, Foursquare has reinvented itself as a local information-finding app that personalizes recommendations based on your interests and location. You can see reviews and ratings, get map locations, view other friends that have visited, see store hours, and more.

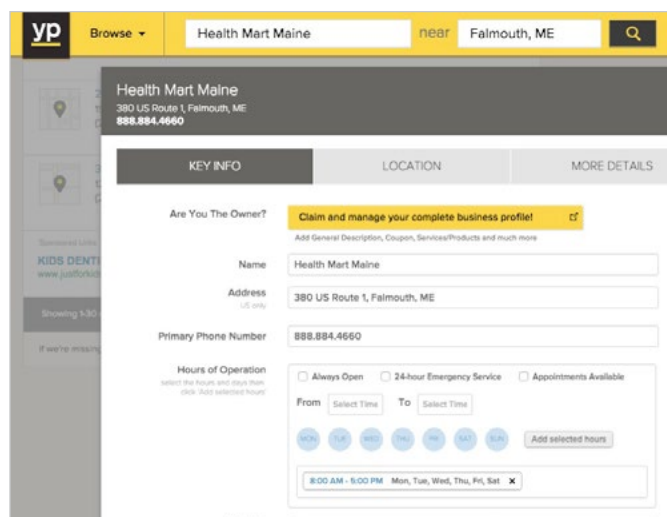
- Visit business.foursquare.com, search for your business name and claim your business.



06 YELLOWPAGES.COM

Yes, the *Yellow Pages* live on – as a book, but also as an online directory.

- Visit yellowpages.com and search for your pharmacy name, city and state.
- Click **Claim this business** in the listing. You can sign up for an account using your Facebook or Google account information, or manually enter your information.
- YellowPages.com will call you at the phone number listed to verify your identity. If the listed number is incorrect, you will need to submit a request for correction and wait for the site to be updated before you can complete the verification process.



Information to include

EACH ONE OF YOUR DIRECTORY LISTINGS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Business name
- Business address
- Map/directions
- Business phone number
- Business website address
- Hours of operation
- Short description or introduction
- Category names that reflect how people will look for your business: useful ones for your business include Pharmacy, Pharmacies, Drugstores, Health & Medical, Health & Wellness
- List of products and services offered (prescription drugs, immunizations, diabetes supplies, vitamins and supplements, cosmetics and fragrances, etc.)
- Business logo
- Photos of your pharmacy and products

Note: The information provided here is for reference only and does not constitute legal advice. We make no representations with regard to the content's comprehensiveness. You are solely responsible for investigating and complying with all applicable laws that govern the operation of your business.



McKesson

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