The Google Business Profile checklist — print it and fill every box

> *"I set up my Google Business Profile but I have no idea if I actually filled in everything that matters, or what's still empty."*

Category: lead-management	**Setup Time:** ~60 minutes	**Estimated Hours Saved:** 1 hrs/week	**Direct Software Cost:** $0 / month

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Google ranks complete profiles and buries half-finished ones — most shops fill the name, address, and phone and stop there, leaving categories, services, photos, and review plumbing empty. This checklist is the whole profile, organized in the order to do it: claim and verify first, core info second, then the trust signals that actually move ranking. Print it and check each box.

REQUIRED TOOLS & DIRECT WHOLESALE UTILITIES

- **Google Business Profile: (Free Tier / Wholesale)**
- **Google Search Console: (Free Tier / Wholesale)**
- **Bing Places: (Free Tier / Wholesale)**

STEP-BY-STEP APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Claim and verify the profile first**
   Nothing else counts until Google trusts you own it. Postcard, phone, or video verification — whichever Google offers. If you're service-area (you go to the customer), hide the street address and set service areas instead.

2. **Fill Phase 2 — the core info Google actually ranks on**
   Primary category is the single biggest ranking field; add every honest secondary category. Then services with descriptions, business description (750 chars, plain words about what you do), opening date, and every link field.

3. **Fill Phase 3 — the trust signals**
   Photos (logo, cover, work, team — real ones, not stock), attributes, Q&A seeded with your own common questions, and messaging turned on only if someone will actually answer it.

4. **Wire the review pipeline**
   Get the review link from the profile and put it where customers see it — receipt, follow-up text, QR at checkout. One new review a week beats a burst of twenty then silence.

5

Set the weekly five-minute habit

Once a week: check hours are current (especially holidays), answer new Q&A, respond to every review, glance at how many calls and direction requests the profile drove. An abandoned profile decays.

5-POINT QUALITY VERIFICATION PROTOCOL

[ ] **Carrier & Webhook Test:** Confirm webhook listener receives test payload and returns HTTP 200 within 500ms.

[ ] **End-to-End Simulation:** Execute live test event from personal device and verify SMS/email delivery.

[ ] **Anti-Spam & Rate Limit Check:** Verify repeated submissions do not trigger duplicate messages to clients.

[ ] **Direct Ownership Audit:** Confirm all API keys, accounts, and credentials belong directly to your practice.

[ ] **Staff Notification Verification:** Verify practice manager/receptionist receives real-time push alert with dial link.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Is Google Business Profile really free?

A: Completely. The verification, the listing, the reviews, the posts — all of it. Any vendor charging to 'set up your Google listing' is charging for labor, not access. Checked 2026-10-14 on Google's own product page.

Q: What matters most on the profile?

A: Three things do most of the work: the primary category (it tells Google what you ARE), reviews (volume and recency), and completeness. Everything else — posts, photos, Q&A — supports those three.

Q: Should I hide my address?

A: Only if customers don't come to you. Plumbers, mobile detailers, and home service businesses should hide the street address and set service areas — showing a home address for a service-area business is the classic reason profiles get filtered or suspended.