MileStone
Internet Marketing, Inc.

Local Search Ranking Factors

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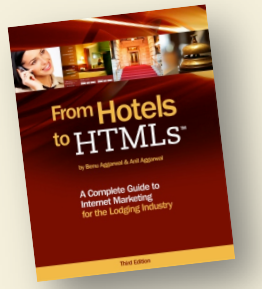
Agenda

1. About Milestone
2. Factors Impacting Local Search
3. On-Page Optimization
4. Rich Snippet
5. Map Search
6. Mobile Search
7. Image Search
8. Off Page Factors
9. Google Places and Hyperlocal
10. Reviews
11. Final Takeaways

Milestone at a Glance

Mission	Driving Reservations for the Lodging Industry on the Internet
Founded	1998
Location	HQ - Santa Clara, CA (Silicon Valley) Sales Offices – US, Mexico, India
People	100 Employees
Products	Website Design, SEO, PPC, Social Media Optimization, Social Media Monitoring Tools, *Hotels to HTMLs* – A complete guide to internet marketing for the lodging industry
Customers	900+ Customers



Factors Impacting Local Search Today

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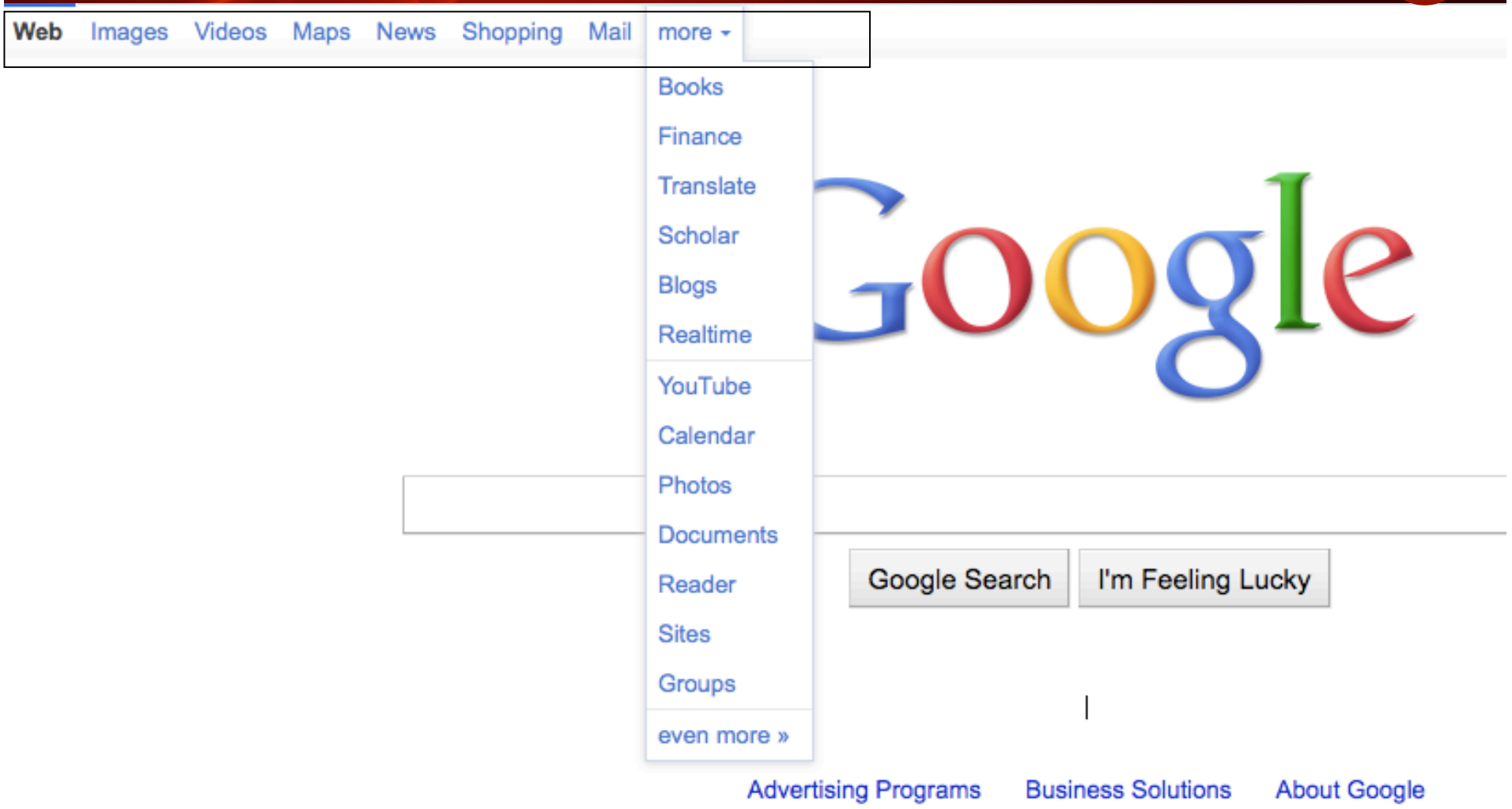
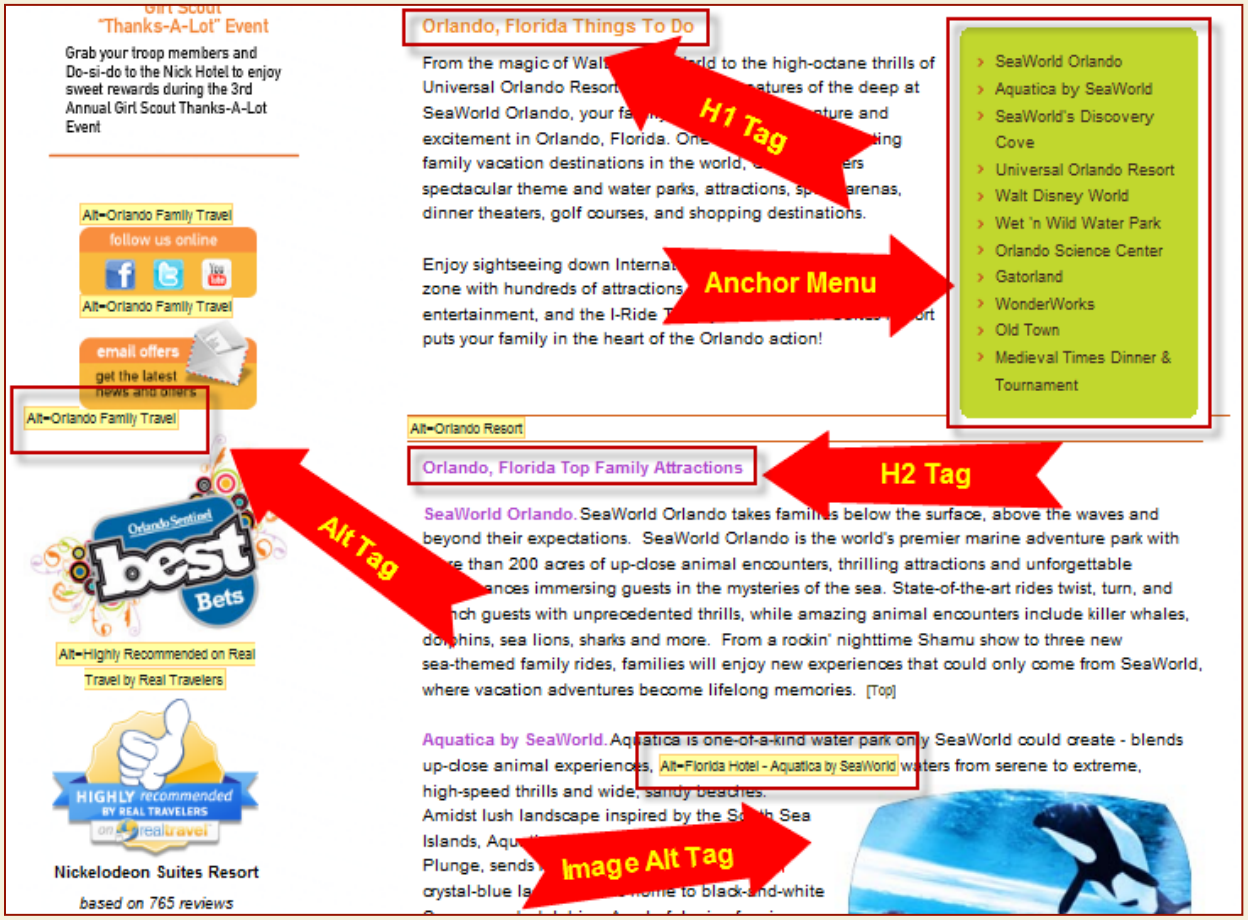
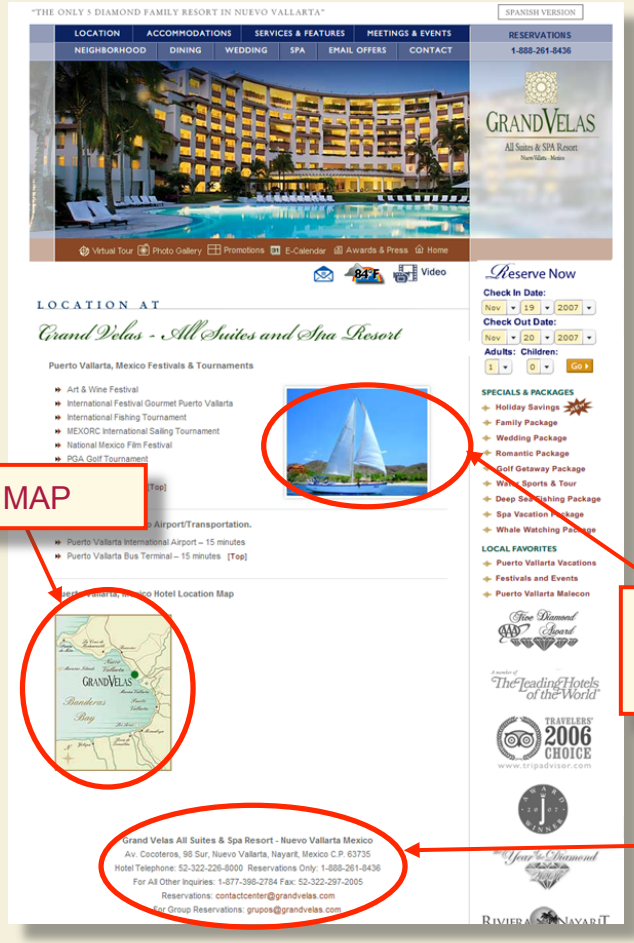
Saturation all the buckets

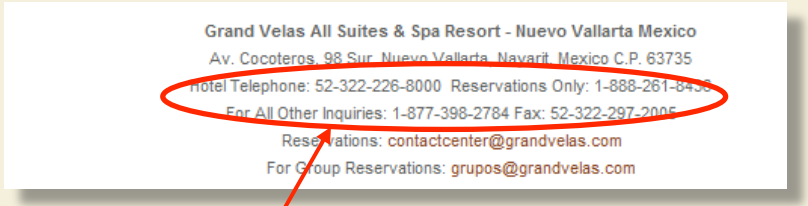


On-Page Optimization



Website Optimized for Local Search





Display Address in text
Phone numbers

Location MAP

Image names and ALT tags
Should have city-state
keywords

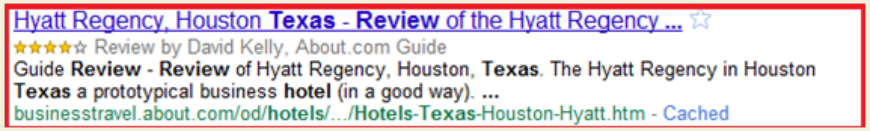
Add physical address text
to bottom of every page. Add hCard
Microformat to enable rich snippet.

Rich Snippet

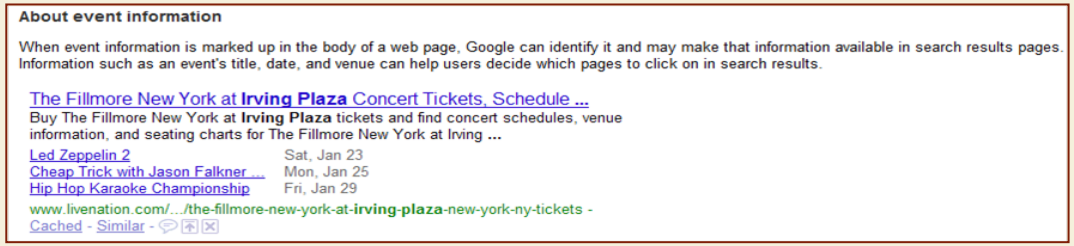
- **What/Why - Rich snippet?**
  - Rich Snippet is Google's way of indexing most critical and time sensitive information on a website faster.
  - User can achieve rich SERPs by providing certain information on the site such as address, phone numbers, reviews, events etc in the rich snippet format .
  - Helps user get relevant / realtime information quickly.
  - Site is indexed faster by Google.

Address

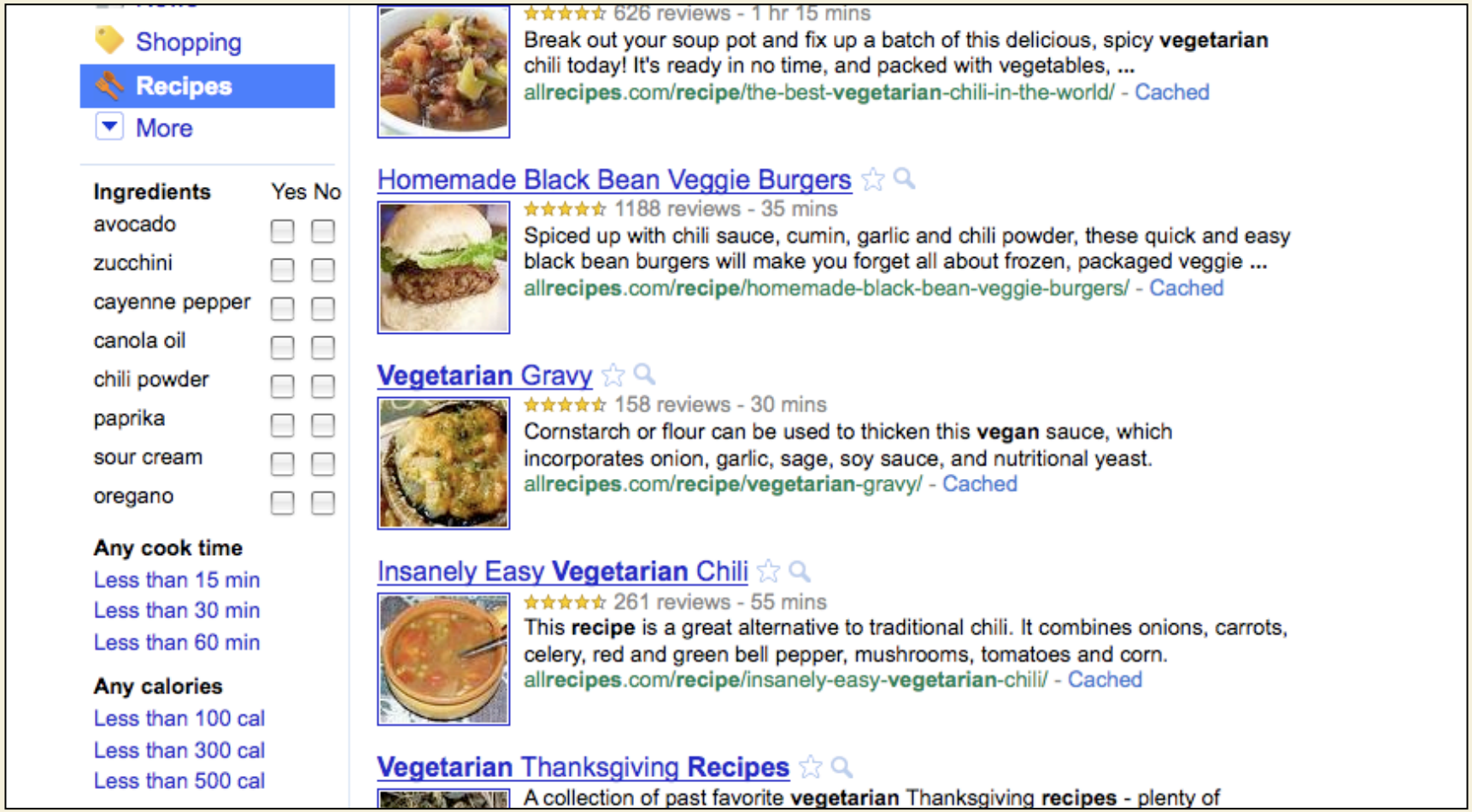
Reviews



Events



Google Recipes using rich snippet data



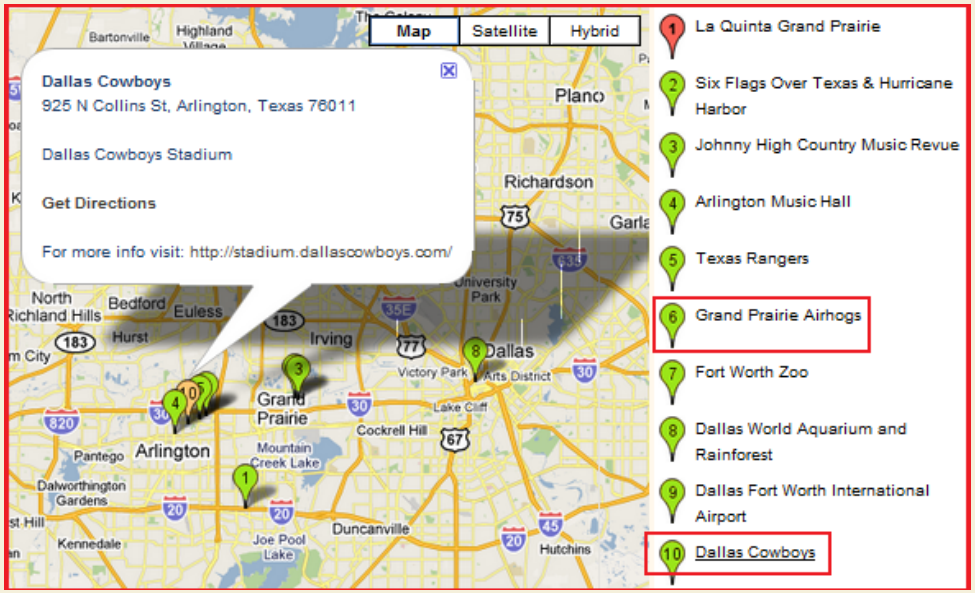
Optimizing Map Search with location based data - Customizable and personable

What is a Custom Map (E-maps)?

- A dynamic map posted on the website, which contains information about the property and nearby attractions
- The custom map is created on a spreadsheet and shared publicly on Google Doc.

Why should we do Custom Maps?

- Easy to manage local attractions.
- Custom maps are easily crawl able by search engine.
- Add attractions on Google Doc's and it reflects the map real time.
- Places account gets more credibility
- Helps drive more traffic
- Map with attraction gets high visibility in mobile/local search



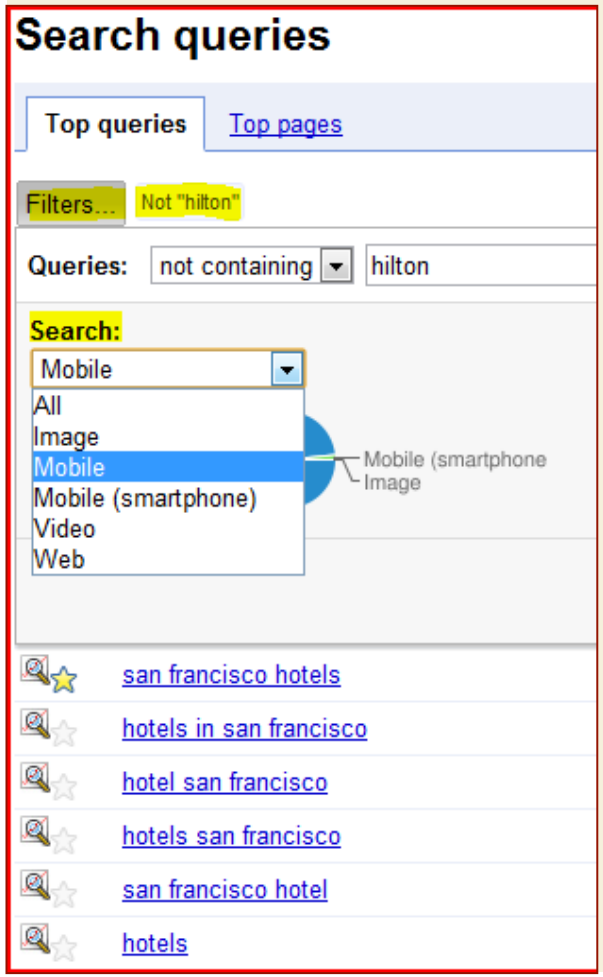
Maps and Coupons – Customizable and personable

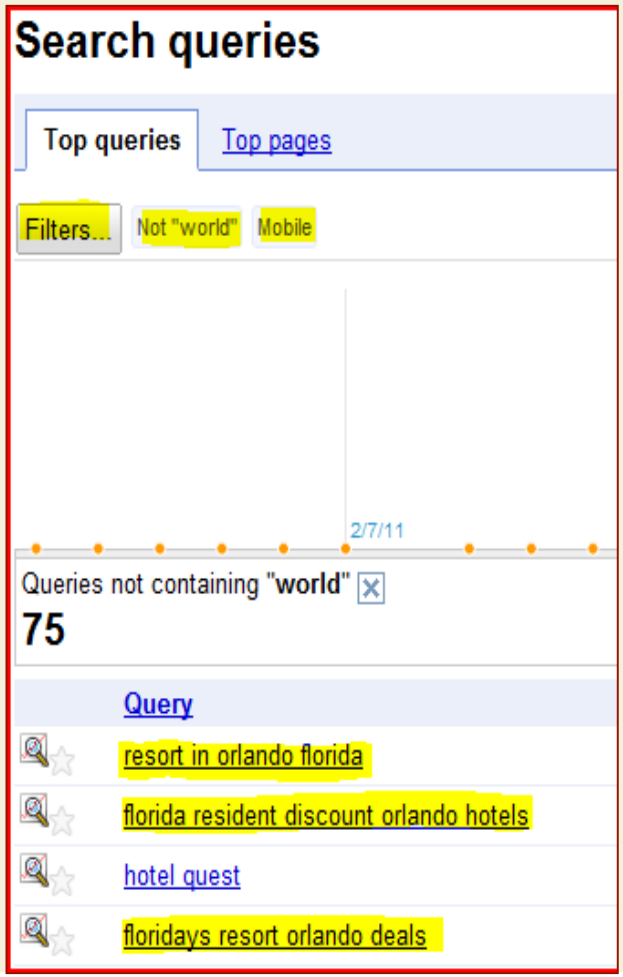
Results?

- Hotels places listing started to show search queries that custom map is optimized for.
- This means that custom map is driving traffic to listing/site for local attractions.

Mobile Search

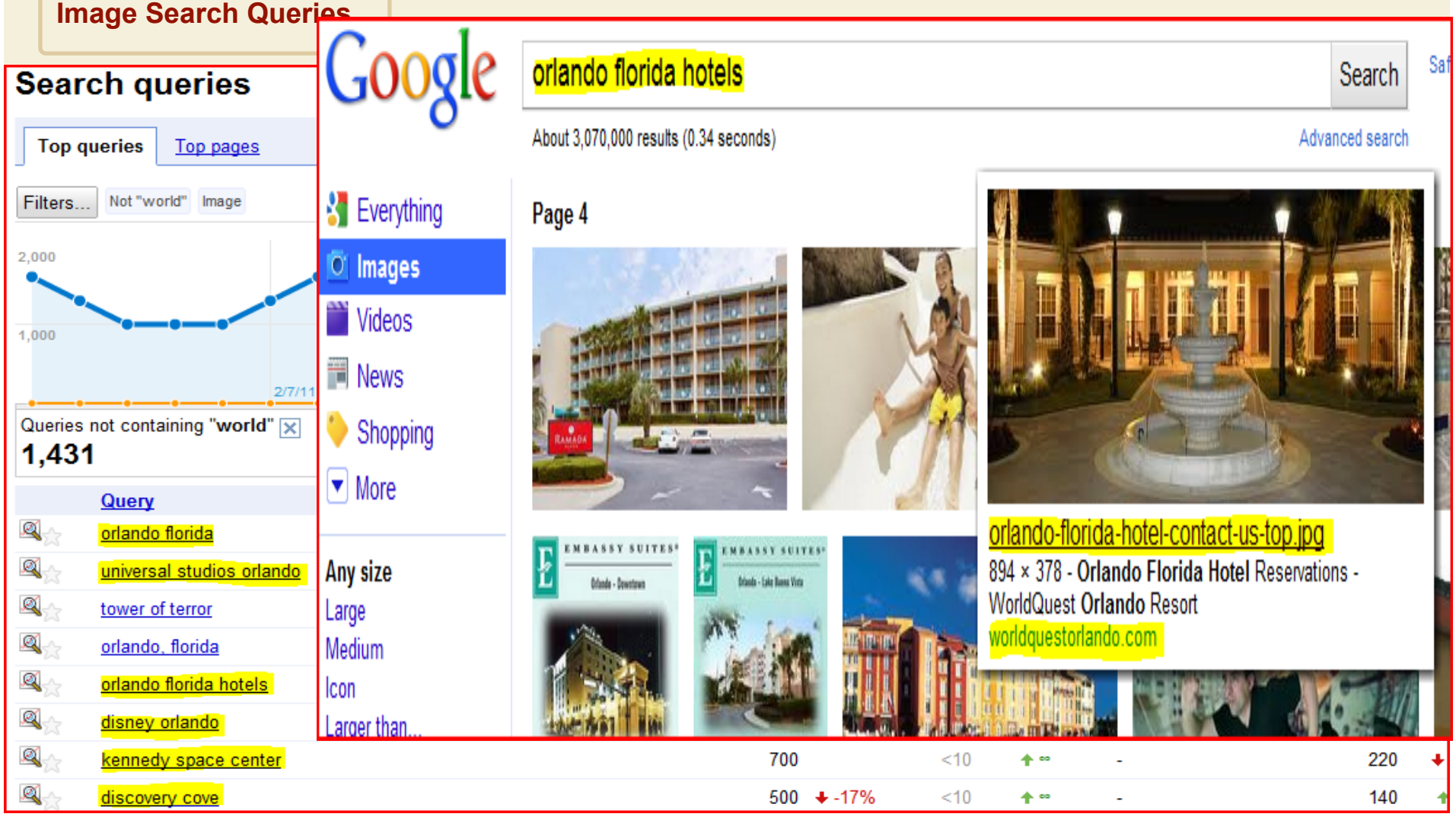
Google Webmaster Provides data coming to the website through Mobile, Image and Video Search. Use the filter to see data coming from any type of search, location.





Google Search Queries - Images

Image Search Queries



Off Page Factors – Accurate & Consistent Information

- **IYP' & Local**
  - YellowPages.com
  - SuperPages.com
  - MagicYellow.com
  - Info USA
  - Localeze
  - City Search
  - Acxicom
  - Insider Pages
  - ShopCity.Com
  - Dexknows.com
  - Zidster.com
  - Kudzu
  - Local.com
  - Cityvoter

Business Directories / Verticals

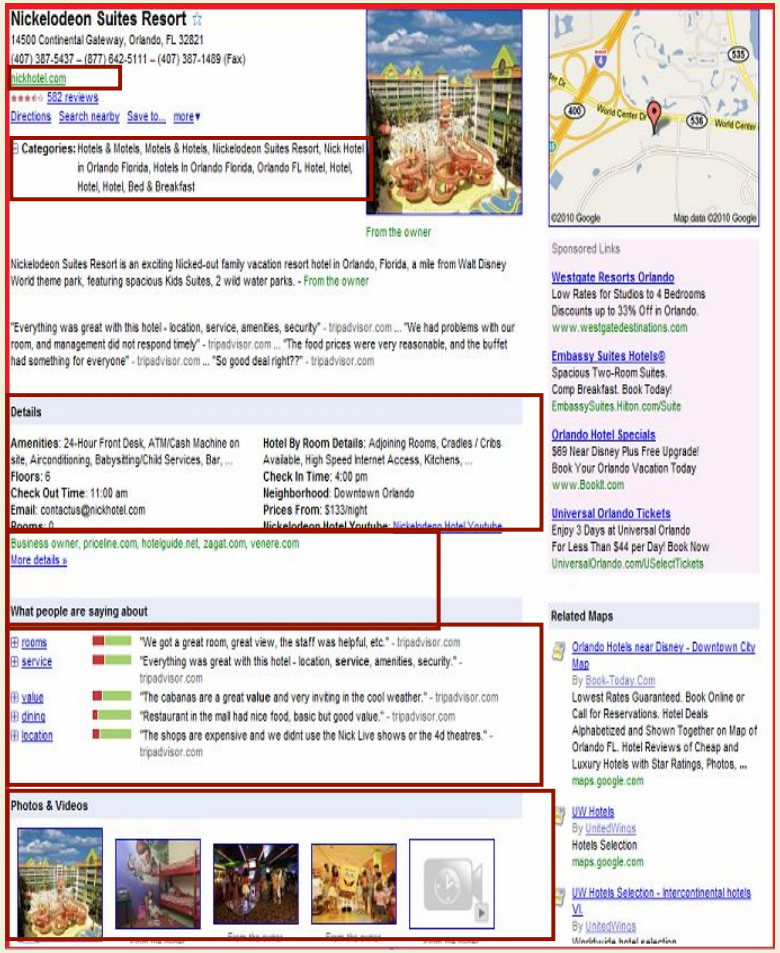
- Business.com
- Best of the Web (botw.org)
- Yelp & Trip Advisors
- Reviews sites
- Several other relevant city and state directories

Best Practices – Google Places

- ✓ **Validate and Enhance Google place listing.** Claim and delete duplicate listings**.**
- ✓ **Use exact business name as it is on maps & real world.** Do not add additional keywords in the title of the listings.
- ✓ **Proper Use of Categories**. Do not add random categories. See which categories are recognized by google in that location..
- ✓ **Reference Social Media Profiles.** Add as many photos / videos as possible. (Owner/ User created video on You tube)
- ✓ **Fix incorrect marker location**. Add coupons, Google Map and tags
- ✓ **Include keywords and geomodifiers** in "Additional Details"
- ✓ **Multiple businesses are at the same location and getting citation to different URL** - Claim /enhance listing separately for each business. Try to differentiate business by adding suite number or changing location on the map
- ✓ **Accurate Information** about your business on third-party sites
- ✓ **Encourage customers to review** or blog about your business. Google uses reviews and feedback to improve search results

Example of 100% Enhancement

1. Site URL
2. Categories
3. Hotel Details
4. Site powering reviews
5. Reviews
6. Photos and Video



Hyperlocal – On Mobile/ Social

What is Hyperlocal?

- Promoting Businesses in their very own local online community
- Hyperlocal content is typically intended for residents of a particular community: region, city, town, village, or neighborhood

Why Hyperlocal?

- Helps build relevance in organic SERP results and local search results
- Captures considerable long-tail local search traffic
- Connects with residents of a particular area with highly targeted and locally relevant content
- Rewards customer loyalty
- Generates new customers
- Engages users in conversations.

Hyperlocal – On Mobile/ Social

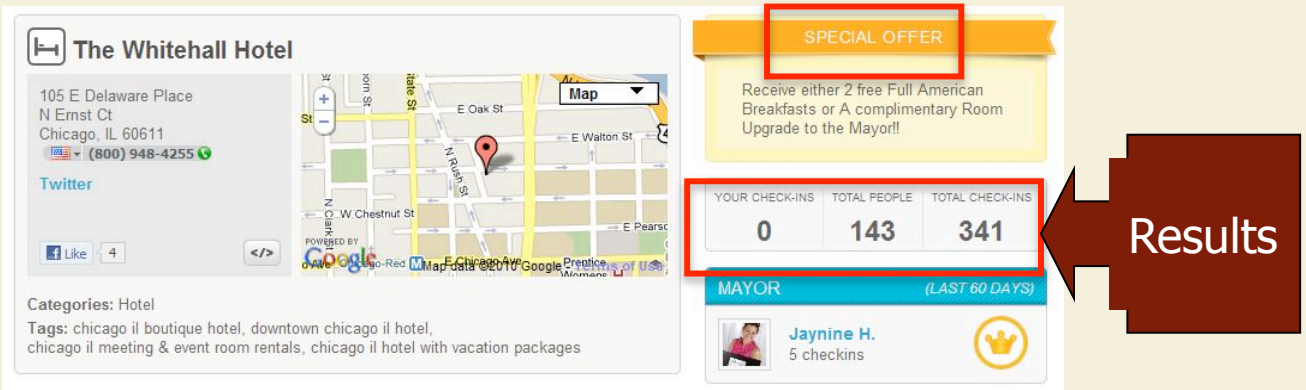
Which Channels?

- Social Media provides an ideal platform to build a Hyperlocal presence and reward users for connecting /engaging with you

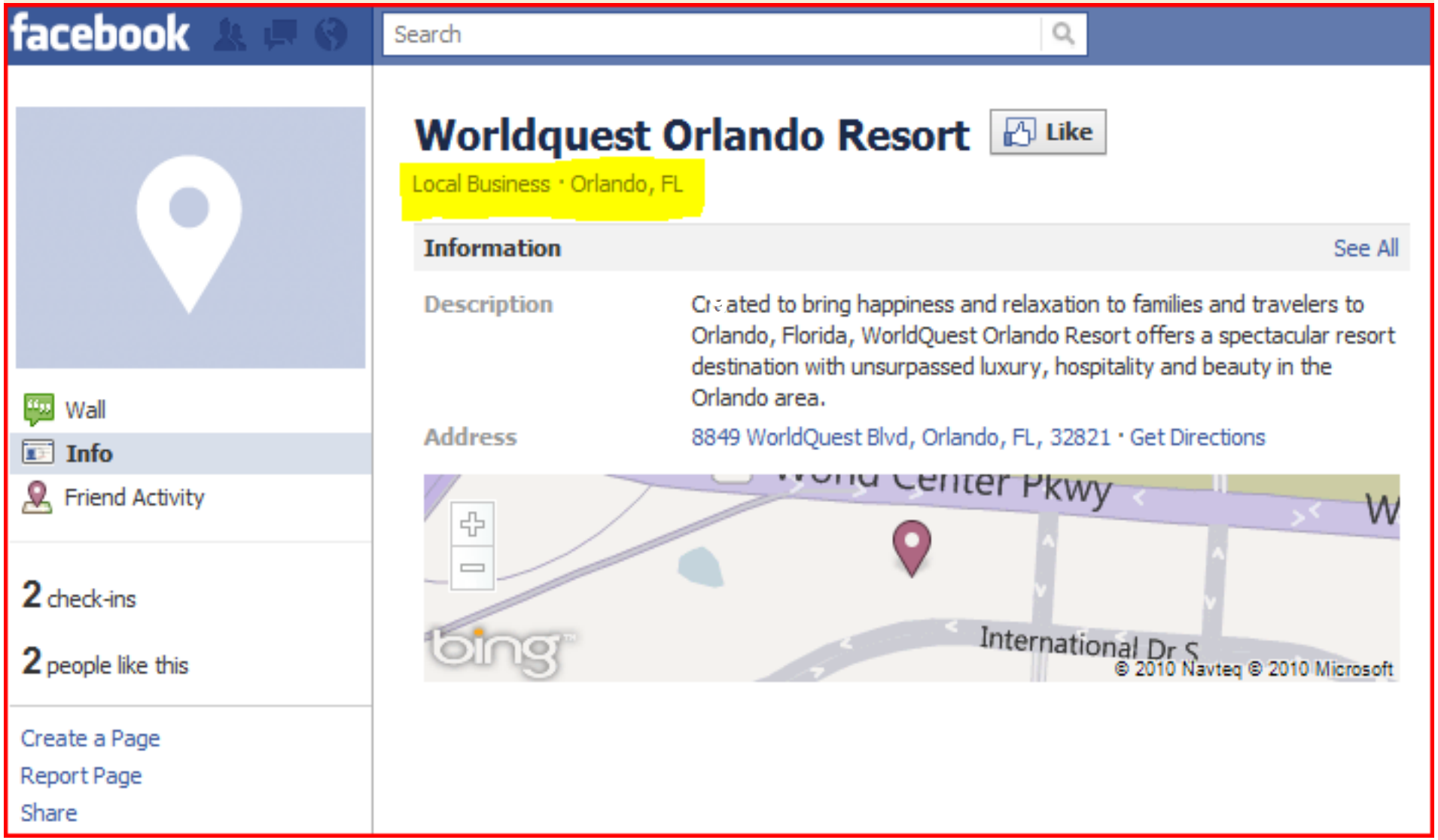
Facebook Places (mobile)	200+ million users
Foursquare	4+ million users
Gowalla	500,000+ users
SCVNGR	500,000+ users

How?

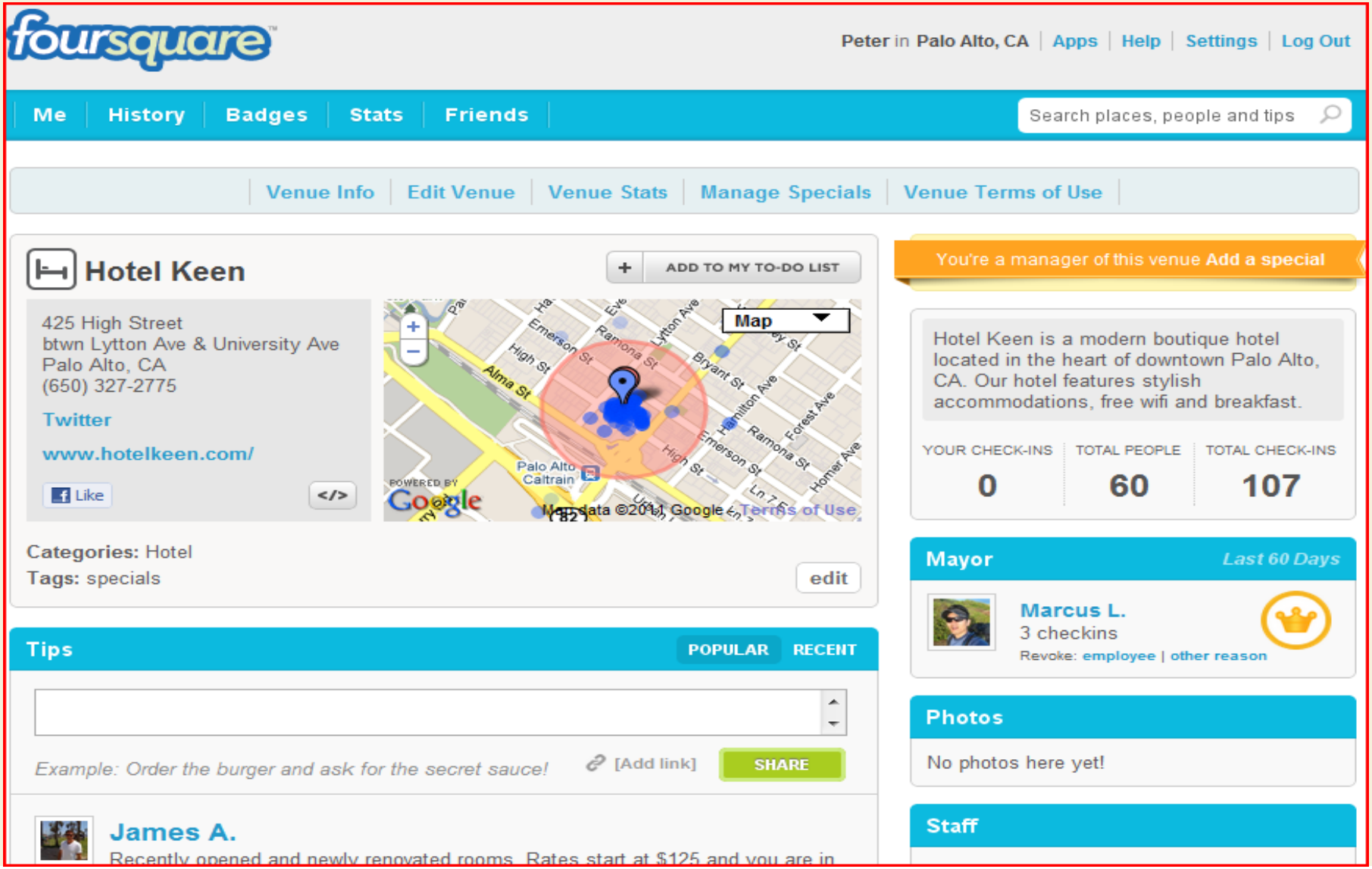
- Create account, claim and verify the hotel location
- Set up special deals to encourage user participation
- Enable guests to check-in on site
- Post a check-in message and monitor user analytics



Facebook Places – Claimed Listing



Four Square – Claimed Listing



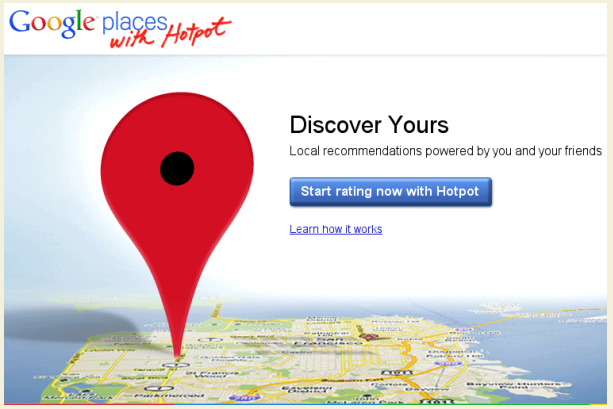
Reviews

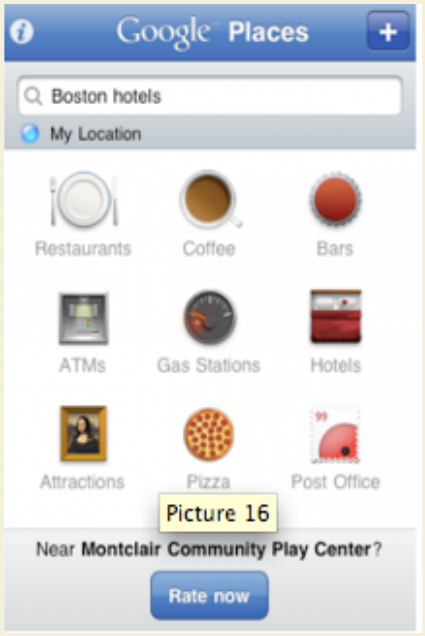
Encourage users to write reviews about the property.

- Google Improves search results by collecting user reviews about the listing which are available on the web.
- Encourage users to write reviews or blog about the business. Connect all the reviews sites, hotpot site from your site
- Leverage your site, google hotpot and reviews site specific to your vertical and gather reviews from users.

Reviews – Problems, Solutions

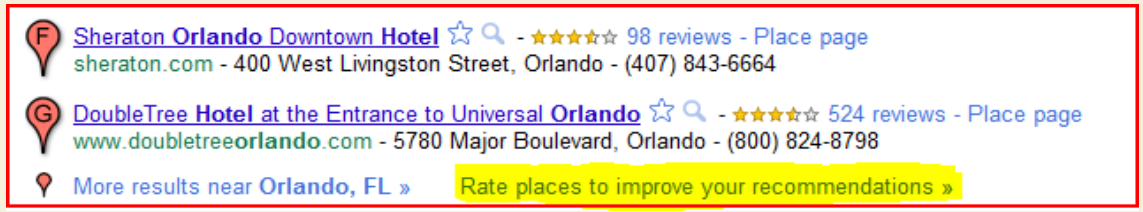
- Fragmentation in Reviews Site – Solved by HotPot
- HotPot has high likely hood to be more successful than Facebook Places, Foursqure and other reviews sites
- Hotpot results are based on yours, your friends reviews and also based on traditional place algorithmic signals i.e. review volume, link authority, sentiment analysis etc.

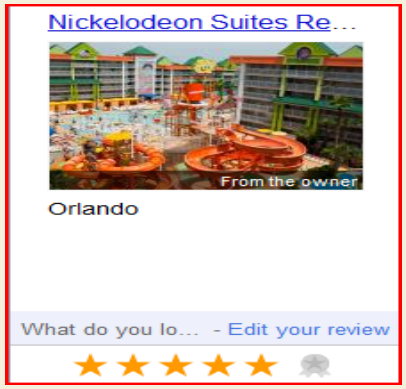


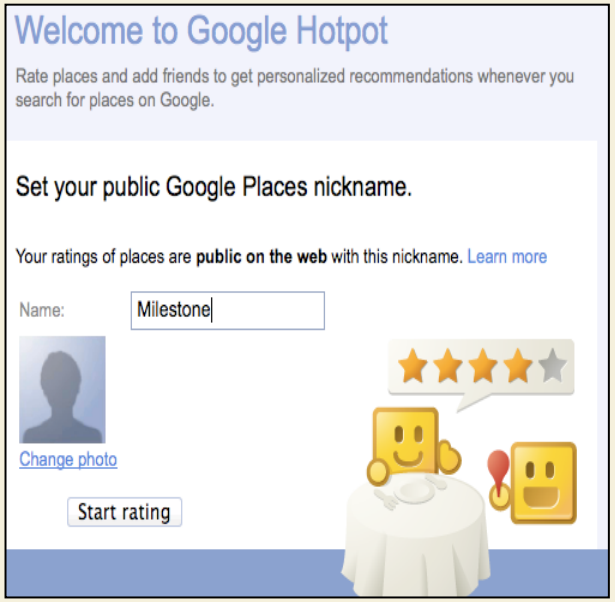


Google Hotpot Now on Google.com Search

1. Hotpot recommendations are now available on your regular search results on Google.com.
2. User needs to have any google account to rate on HotPot.
3. Your search results will be personalized based on your usage history.
4. Google shows explanations on why you/your friend like that place

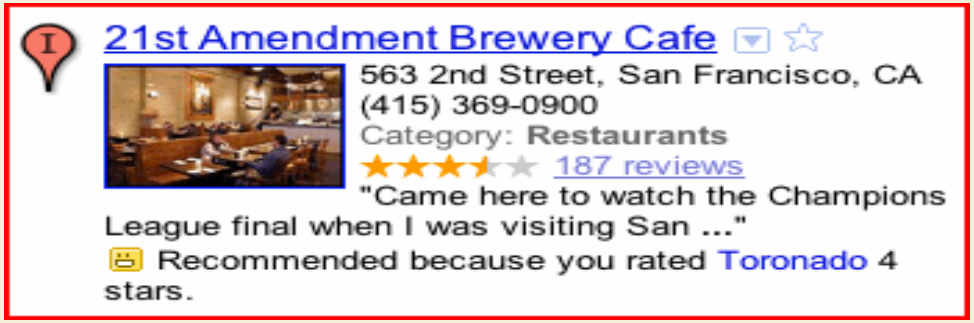






Example

6. Based on My Likes .



7. Based on My Friends Likes

8. Real Time Results

Things to Remember - Conclusion

- ✓ Leverage all the factors impacting your local search
- ✓ Make sure your site is optimized for local search
- ✓ Enhance your Google place account
- ✓ Consistent and accurate information on IYPs, Relevant Sites, Directories
- ✓ Saturate Local Search Buckets - Map, Images, Video, Mobile, Social and Hyper local Platform
- ✓ Watch for Google HotPot and Place account

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Thank You
Questions?

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