

What is Local Citation Building?

A local citation is any mention of your business name, address, and phone number (NAP) online. It's a trust signal to Google that you're a real, established business—and the more consistent and widespread those mentions are, the better your chances of ranking in local search.

Local citation building is one of those SEO tactics that sounds more technical than it really is. But if you want to show up when people search for businesses like yours nearby, it matters—a lot.

What is an Example of a Local Citation?

A simple example is a listing on Yelp or the Better Business Bureau. These websites show your business name, address, phone number, and maybe extras like your hours, website, or description.

Here are a few places you've probably seen local citations without realizing it:

- [Yelp](#)
- Facebook Business Page
- Google Business Profile
- [YellowPages.com](#)
- [Apple Maps](#)
- [Bing Places](#)
- [Chamber of Commerce directories](#)

Do Citations Help Local SEO?

Yes. Local citations absolutely help with local SEO. They improve local credibility. It's like telling search engines that yes, you really *are* at that location and people are trying to find you.

Google uses citation data to:

- Confirm your business exists
- Verify your location
- Check your business category
- Compare you to competitors

When your citations are accurate and consistent across multiple trusted sources, it increases your credibility and improves your chances of appearing in the *local pack*—that map with the top 3 listings that shows up for local searches.

How to Do Local Citation Building

Citation building sounds fancy, but it boils down to getting your NAP info on as many trusted sites as possible. Here's how to do it:

1. **Set your official NAP** – Decide exactly how your name, address, and phone number should appear. Use this consistently. See how Google lists your address and use that for your format.
2. **Create or claim your Google Business Profile** – This is the most important citation and it's free.
3. **Submit to free local citation sites** – Start with high-authority platforms like:
 - [Yelp](#)
 - [Bing Places](#)
 - [YellowPages](#)
 - [Manta](#)
 - [Foursquare](#)
 - [Hotfrog](#)
 - [ChamberofCommerce.com](#)
4. **Find niche or local directories** – Look for industry-specific or local city directories in your area.
5. **Check for duplicates or outdated info** – Tools like [Moz Local](#) or [BrightLocal](#) can help.
6. **Monitor and update your listings** – Anytime your business info changes, update it everywhere.

What Is a Citation Builder?

A **citation builder** is a service or tool that submits your business information to multiple directories for you. You can either pay for manual citation submissions or use automated tools that push your info to dozens (or hundreds) of sites.

Popular citation building tools include:

- [BrightLocal](#)
- [Whitespark](#)
- [Yext](#) (expensive, ongoing cost)
- [Moz Local](#)
- [Semrush Local](#)

What Are the Benefits of Citation Building?

Here's what you get out of building local citations the right way:

- **Improved local search rankings**
- **More visibility on map apps and directories**
- **Stronger online presence and authority**

- **Higher trust from both search engines and customers**
- **Better chances of being chosen over competitors**

How Many Citations Is Good for SEO?

There's no magic number, but here's a general guideline:

- Start with **20–30 free local citation sites** for a solid foundation.
- Build up to **50–70 quality listings** over time.
- Focus on **consistency and accuracy** more than quantity.

If you're still not ranking above your competition in the Map Pack, then get another 10 and see if that helps.

What Is the Difference Between Global Citation and Local Citation?

- A **global citation** refers to listings that aren't tied to a specific city or region. Think Facebook or Apple Maps—those listings apply to everyone, everywhere.
- A **local citation** includes your geographic info and targets your local area specifically—like a listing in your city's online business directory.

Both help with SEO, but local citations give Google the signals it needs to show your business to people nearby.

Best Free Local Citation Sites for USA Businesses

If you're a U.S.-based business, start with these **free local citation sites**:

- [Google Business Profile](#)
- [Yelp](#)
- [Bing Places](#)
- Facebook Business Page
- [Apple Maps](#)
- [Foursquare](#)
- [Manta](#)
- [Hotfrog](#)
- [YellowPages](#)
- [ChamberofCommerce.com](#)

Final Thoughts About Local Citation Building

Local citation building isn't glamorous, but it works. It's one of the most cost-effective local SEO strategies out there—and the results compound over time. If you're not already listed

on major directories (or if your info is inconsistent), fixing that should be high on your SEO to-do list.

Want help getting your business listed the right way? I can help with that—[contact me here](#) and let's get your local SEO working *for* you.

Original article: <https://tonyherman.com/what-is-local-citation-building/>

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