



How to build an authoritative and trustworthy online presence.

eBook



Introduction.



Most small business owners know that having an online presence is essential for attracting new customers.

In fact, almost all consumers today (97%) **use the internet to find a business.**

Online **presence management** helps people find your business before they are aware you exist and it helps them learn about your reputation. All of this plays a big part in a potential customer's purchasing decision.

But beyond simply being online, small businesses that really stand out from the pack understand the importance of building a presence that's **authoritative** and **trustworthy**. Why? Because these two factors go a long way in establishing credibility with both people and search engines.

In this eBook you'll learn more about why these elements are so critical and be provided with practical steps to build an authoritative and trustworthy online presence.

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Why do authoritativeness and trustworthiness matter?

The short answer is that **authoritativeness and trustworthiness** are the foundations of building a credible business.

Prove to potential customers that you're an expert in your field, and they're more likely to perceive your products or services as reliable and choose your business over competitors.

That said, in the realm of digital marketing, authoritativeness and trustworthiness are also closely linked to **search engine optimisation (SEO)**. Google wants to rank web pages that deliver value to humans, so its algorithm is designed to evaluate the quality of the content on each web page based on several factors (which we'll cover in more detail below). The more authoritative and trustworthy a web page is deemed to be, the higher it is likely to rank in search engine results.

So, what makes web pages authoritative and trustworthy? As a general rule of thumb, quality web page content is:



Relevant and helpful to the audience



Accurate and truthful



Published by an expert



Recently posted or updated

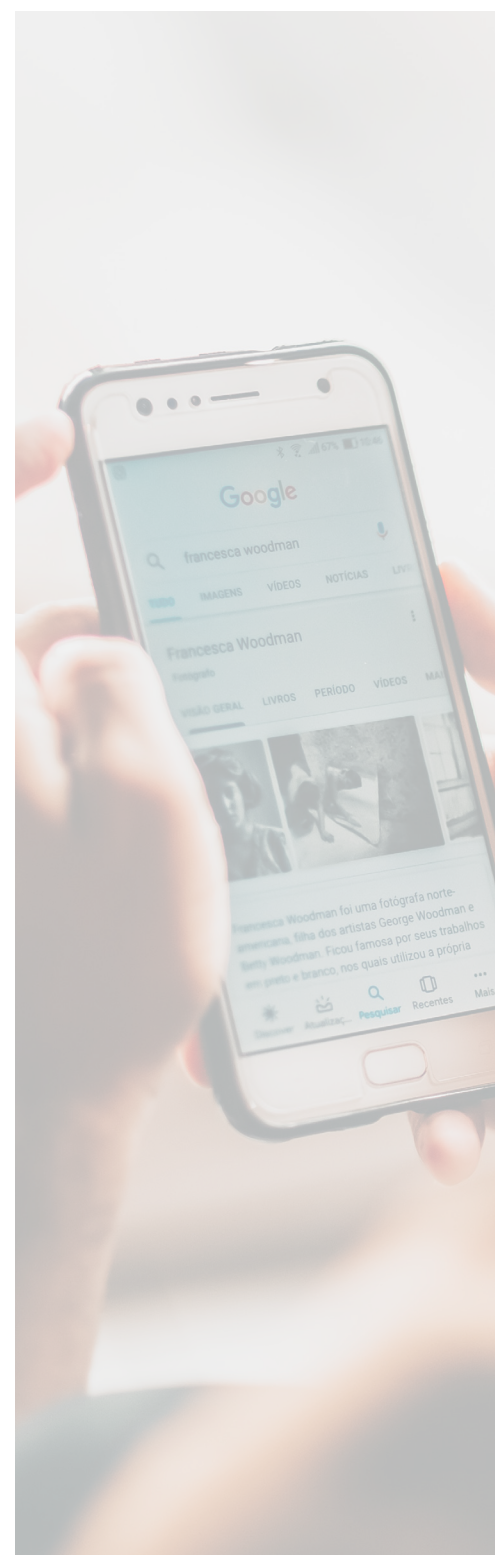
Regularly creating content that ticks these boxes is a huge step in the right direction when it comes to building an authoritative and trustworthy online presence.

■ E-A-T: Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness.

Technical SEO is the process of optimising your website's structure and setup so that search engines can easily find, organise and display your webpages in search results. This is known as crawling and indexing (which we'll cover in more detail below).

Expertise, Authoritativeness and Trustworthiness (E-A-T) is the part of Google's algorithm that evaluates the quality of a web page's content. This includes paying attention to:

- The expertise of the creator of the content
- The authoritativeness of the content and the website
- The trustworthiness of the content and the website



So, how does Google's algorithm figure this out? While the exact formula hasn't been shared by Google, some of the potential factors looked at include:

- The number of **backlinks** to the page
- How long the website has been publishing content in the topic area
- Whether the web page's content is relevant to the website/business
- Whether or not the content satisfies user intent (e.g. to find out more information or get an answer to a question)
- How much time users spend on the page
- External profiles on sites like Yellow Pages and Google Business Profile that provide context about the brand

E-A-T is just one of many guidelines Google uses to determine whether content is valuable to readers and whether it should rank well. It's something to keep in mind when creating content for your website, because it can directly impact your online presence.

■ YMYL: Your Money or Your Life.

In the eyes of Google, Your Money or Your Life (YMYL) are websites and businesses that can influence people's happiness, health, safety or financial stability. This includes businesses such as:



Doctors, dentists and other medical practitioners



Accountants and financial advisers



Lawyers



Real estate agents



Beauty salons

Basically, if your business deals with anything that could significantly impact someone's life or wallet, you can consider it to be a YMYL business.

Google pays **extra attention** to the E-A-T score of YMYL websites, so it's important to be especially aware of the expertise, authoritative and trustworthiness of your content if your business falls into this category.

Make sure your website content is as accurate, truthful and transparent as possible – otherwise it could harm your rankings and your online presence.



How to improve your authoritativeness and trustworthiness.

Now that you know more about how Google views authoritativeness and trustworthiness, what can you do to improve these factors?

The following tips are a useful starting point for developing a rock-solid online presence.

■ Audit your website pages.

First thing's first: take a look at all the existing pages on your website to check that they are accurate, up-to-date and providing value to website visitors. For each page, consider:

- Is the purpose of the page clear?
- Is it truthful and factual?
- Could it be perceived as misleading?
- Does it fulfil the visitor's search intent?
- Does it contain **duplicate content**?

The overarching goal is for every page to be helpful and informative in some way. Even for landing pages where the purpose is to sell something, your product or service

information should be clear and your business contact information should be easy to find (providing value).

■ Tell website visitors who you are.

Both Google and humans want to know who is creating content and whether that person is a valid source of expertise.

With this in mind, if you don't already have an About Us page that outlines who your team is, now is the time to create one.

Highlight your team's expertise in the industry and any areas of specialist knowledge. For example, an accounting practice might have some team members who are dedicated to taxation and compliance, while others might specialise in business advisory services.

It's also a good idea to create author bios for your blog posts, so people (and Google) know who the information is coming from.

Remember, the most trustworthy and authoritative content is created by people who know their stuff, so lean on your team's expertise and stick to topics that you know inside and out.



■ Encourage customers to leave reviews.

Reviews are essential if you want to build trust with customers online, and they also play an important role in how well your web pages rank. In fact, according to a **2021 study**, reviews are the second most influential ranking factors for local pack results (the local business listings that appear in response to Google search queries for products or services).

There are some simple ways you can proactively reach out and increase your reviews:



Create a short, shareable URL.

Whether you want customers to review you on Google, **Yellow Pages Online** or anywhere else, make it as easy as possible for them to take the next step by creating a URL that links directly to your review page.



Tap into your social following.

Build your online reputation by encouraging customers to leave a review on social media. Keep the message clear and something simple – something like: ‘How did we go? By leaving us a review, we get to know what’s working and where we can evolve to keep delivering you the very best service. Let us know what you think: [LINK TO REVIEW PAGE]’



Include a call-to-action in your emails.

Whether you send customer emails manually or by using **marketing automation** technology, don’t forget to follow up after a transaction to ask for a review.



Offer an incentive.

Think about how you can ‘sweeten the deal’ to make leaving a review more enticing. This could be offering a discount on a future purchase or a small reward to say thanks for the customer’s time.

■ Refresh content regularly.

Estimates suggest that we create upwards of **2.5 quintillion bytes of data every single day**. This means online content becomes outdated fast.

Google wants to see content that’s fresh and timely and even evergreen content (content that stays relevant indefinitely) needs to be updated regularly to see maximum SEO benefit.

All your website content (and your online presence) will benefit from being reviewed and refreshed often. This includes your:

- Homepage
- About page
- Product or service landing pages
- Blogs

How often you should do this depends on the type of content and how often you can manage it. Core website pages, such as your homepage, should generally be updated every six months or so, while other pages such as blogs and landing pages should be reviewed every few months to make sure they’re relevant and accurate.

■ Build a social following.

Having an engaged social following goes hand-in-hand with building a good online reputation. As a small business, you don’t have to have millions of followers or be active on every social media platform.

Instead, focus on nurturing a community on the **social platforms that are relevant to your audience**, fuelled by great content, the right targeting and **paid advertising support** if you need it.

Wrapping up.



Finding your business online is the first step that the vast majority of people will take on their journey to becoming a customer.

So, the more you do to establish an authoritative and trustworthy online presence, the more benefits you stand to reap.

A big part of building your reputation online comes down to listing your business where people are looking and encouraging positive engagement with your brand online. The team at Yellow Pages provides expert digital marketing advice and products that boost your business' online presence. From an online listing to digital display or social media ads, we'll tailor a digital marketing solution that's right for your business. [Find out more.](#)