Local Service Business Marketing

These businesses provide a form of labor to help people solve problems or achieve desired outcomes

Example Businesses: Plumbers, Pest Control, Cleaning Services, Landscapers, Residential Roofers, etc

To help them get new customers, you need to understand the two main buying processes customers use when using these services and how to match them with your marketing efforts. The 2 main buying process are High Intent Buying and Passive Buying

High Intent Buying.

"Oh no, I have water dripping through my ceiling, I need a plumber out here ASAP" - Goes online and searches "[town name] plumber" and calls the best one they see.

This is the most lucrative type of customer to focus on since they are high intent, ready to buy and already "sold" on the idea of your product and service. (They are Level 3 on the Market Awareness spectrum)

The trick here is to understand what they are looking for, show up when they search, stand out from the competitions, and remove as much friction as possible

Showing up when they search

Most high intent buyers that are going to be a good fit for the business' service will usually only use a couple of different search keyword patterns:

> Location + Business type: Houston plumber
> Problem + location: Fix leaky toilet Houston

You can find search volume and related search terms with a tool like https://www.semrush.com/

You have 2 options to get your business to show up when a potential customer uses these keywords, either organic Search Engine Optimization (SEO) or Paid Search Ads.

Organic SEO

Some results in first month, but will take 3-6 months to see major improvement in ranking
You optimize your web page, get indexed by Google and other search pages, you make sure your page has the right setup and information to make google think you are the best option that the searcher is looking for so they will "want" to recommend you to the searcher as one of the first results. Here are the steps you can take to boost your organic SEO rankings:

1. **Google My Business listing**
    a. Have your client claim and verify their Google My Business listing (https://www.google.com/business/)
    b. Provide accurate and up-to-date information, including business name, address, phone number, website URL, categories, and hours of operation.
    c. Add high-quality photos and videos of the business.
    d. Encourage customers to leave reviews, and respond to them promptly
2. **On page SEO - Fairly extensive guide** 👇
    a. Keyword Placement. Ensure that your target keywords are strategically placed throughout your website's content, including:
        i. Title Tags: Include your primary keyword and location in the title tag of each page. Keep it concise (around 60 characters) and compelling.
        ii. Meta Descriptions: Write unique meta descriptions for each page, incorporating relevant keywords and location where possible. Aim for around 150-160 characters.
        iii. Headers (H1, H2, etc.): Use headers to structure your content logically and include keywords in some of these headers, particularly the H1 tag.
        iv. Body Content: Naturally incorporate keywords into the body content of your website's pages. Avoid keyword stuffing, and focus on providing valuable, informative content for users.
    b. Localized Content. Create unique, high-quality content that is specifically tailored to your local audience. This could include:
        i. Localized landing pages: Consider developing separate landing pages for each location you serve, optimizing them with relevant keywords and location-specific information.\

    ii. Blog posts or articles: Write about local events, news, or topics of interest to your community. Incorporate local keywords and references to your business where appropriate.

c. NAP Information:
    i. Ensure that your business name, address, and phone number (NAP) are prominently displayed on every page of your website. This is typically included in the footer or header for consistency.
    ii. Use schema markup to markup your NAP information, helping search engines understand and display it correctly.

d. Optimized Images:
    i. Optimize images on your website by using descriptive filenames and alt tags that include relevant keywords and location information.
    ii. Compress images to improve page load speed without sacrificing quality.

e. Internal Linking:
    i. Implement a strategic internal linking structure throughout your website, linking relevant pages together using anchor text that includes keywords where appropriate.
    ii. Use internal links to guide users to important pages, such as service pages or contact information.

f. Mobile Optimization:
    i. Ensure that your website is fully optimized for mobile devices, as mobile-friendliness is a significant factor in local search rankings.
    ii. Test your website's mobile responsiveness using tools like Google's Mobile-Friendly Test and make necessary adjustments to improve the user experience on mobile devices.

g. User Experience (UX):
    i. Prioritize user experience by making your website easy to navigate, with clear calls-to-action and intuitive design.
    ii. Ensure that pages load quickly, as page speed is a ranking factor for both desktop and mobile searches.
    iii. Test your website's usability and address any issues that may arise, such as broken links or formatting errors.

h. Regular Content Updates:
    i. Regularly update your website's content to keep it fresh and relevant. This could involve adding new blog posts, updating service pages, or refreshing existing content with new information.

ii. Monitor your website's performance and user engagement metrics to identify areas where content updates may be needed.

3. Backlinks
    a. Build backlinks from local sources such as local news websites, community organizations, or local influencers.
    b. Participate in local events, sponsorships, or charities to earn backlinks and strengthen your local presence.
4. Social Media Engagement:
    a. Be active on social media platforms relevant to your business and location.
    b. Engage with your local community by sharing relevant content, responding to comments, and participating in local conversations.

Paid Search Ads

Almost immediate results if there is enough search volume and you write superior ad copy
This is the simplest, you set up a google ads account for the business, and simply create a search ad to be shown whenever someone searches those keywords. You set a budget. Boom, now you're bidding against other business to show up at the top of the search results with your simple ad

Step by step for setting up Paid Search Ads 👇

1. Keyword Research
    a. Identify relevant keywords related to your local service business. Use tools like Google Keyword Planner, SEMrush, or KeywordTool.io to find keywords with high search volume and low competition.Focus on local keywords that include your service offerings and location (e.g., "plumber in [city]").
2. Set Up Google Ads Account:
    a. If you don't already have one, have the business owner create a Google Ads account at ads.google.com.
    b. Follow the prompts to set up your account, including billing information and campaign settings.
    c. Have them give you access to the account
3. Create a Campaign:
    a. Click on the "+ Campaign" button and select "Search" as the campaign type.
    b. Choose your campaign goal based on your objectives, such as website traffic, leads, or phone calls.

    c. Select "Local" as your campaign subtype to target users in specific geographic locations.
4. Set Campaign Settings:
    a. Campaign name and budget: Set a daily budget that aligns with your advertising goals.
    b. Location targeting: Specify the geographic locations where you want your ads to appear.
    c. Language targeting: Choose the languages spoken by your target audience.
    d. Bid strategy: Select a bidding strategy that matches your campaign objectives, such as manual CPC or automated bidding.
5. Create Ad Groups:
    a. Organize your campaign by creating ad groups based on related keywords and themes.
    b. Each ad group should contain a set of closely related keywords and ads.
6. Write Compelling Ad Copy:
    a. Craft compelling ad copy that is relevant to your target audience and includes your keywords.
    b. Highlight your unique selling points, promotions, or special offers.
    c. Include a strong call-to-action (CTA) to encourage users to click on your ad
    d. (More detail in the “Get their attention” section).
7. Set Keywords and Bids:
    a. Add your selected keywords to each ad group.
    b. Set bids for your keywords based on their estimated value and competition.
    c. Use keyword match types (broad match, phrase match, exact match, or broad match modifier) to control the relevance of your ads to search queries.
8. Create Ad Extensions:
    a. Enhance your ads with ad extensions to provide additional information to users and improve ad performance.
    b. Consider using location extensions, call extensions, sitelink extensions, and callout extensions to make your ads more compelling.
9. Monitor and Optimize:
    a. Regularly monitor your campaign performance using Google Ads reporting tools.
    b. Analyze key metrics such as click-through rate (CTR), conversion rate, and cost per conversion.
    c. Optimize your campaign by adjusting bids, refining ad copy, adding negative keywords, and testing different ad variations.

    d. Continuously refine your targeting and messaging based on performance data to improve the effectiveness of your ads.
10. Track Conversions:
    a. Set up conversion tracking to measure the actions users take after clicking on your ads, such as form submissions or phone calls.
    b. Use conversion tracking data to evaluate the ROI of your campaign and make informed decisions about budget allocation and optimization strategies.
11. Monitor Local Competitors:
    a. Keep an eye on local competitors' ads and strategies to identify opportunities and stay ahead in the market.
    b. Adjust your campaign tactics as needed to maintain a competitive edge and maximize your advertising effectiveness.

Stand out from competitors

Once you've made sure you are going to show up when your potential customers search for your type of business, now you need to make sure they pick you.

The person searching for your type of business is going to judge very quickly between the different options that pop up when they search. They will consider some businesses they see and ignore most of the others.

Here are the main factors that will determine if they pay attention to and eventually pick your business:

1. **Pattern Interrupt.** If the business has a unique but not off-putting name, logo, brand colors, etc then the potential customer will notice and continue to evaluate the business
2. **Social Proof.** Showing a relatively significant number of reviews will often lead a potential customer to consider the business.
3. **Credibility indicators.** Things like local awards, certifications etc will lead to the potential customer considering the business
4. **Quality.** Good images, clean design, attention to detail on their web presence will bolster trust in the business. Clunky design and low quality presence will communicate a lack of professionalism that will decrease trust in the business' ability to provide the service

5. **Superior Offer.** If the business is giving a superior initial offer to the potential customer, that offer will often win the attention of the potential customer. Things like guarantees, discounts, free gifts, free quotes etc give the potential customer a reason to try your business over a similar business with a weaker offer.
6. **Service Specific Factors.** Different industries are judged by different factors. If you identify any important factors your potential customers will use to judge between businesses, do everything you can to optimize for those factors

Make the experience a simple and easy as possible

Put yourself in the place of the potential customer and go through the steps you would use to find this service.

- Imagine you were dealing with the problem
- Go search for service providers, pay attention to the search terms you use naturally
- Look at the search results, What stands out? What can you do to make your business stand out?
- Look at the actual business listing, how can you make it simpler and better tailored to the searchers desires and evaluation factors
- Look at the website, what can you do to improve the experience
- Look at the initial offer, what can you do to make it easier for them to get started, what can you do to make them want to get started now rather than later?

Find all these tiny ways to optimize the steps from start to finish. Tailor each step to what they are thinking at each step. Remove as much friction as possible to get them calling your business, or signing up for an appointment online.

Passive Buying

Not everyone is actively searching to buy your business' service. Some might have smaller less urgent problems and desires. Some might be problem unaware. You can still target these potential customers. You simply need to get in front of them, catch their attention, and present an appropriate desirable initial offer.

Get in front of them.

There are lots of ways to get your marketing materials in front of good potential buyers. Here are a few of the ways you can help local businesses with this part of their marketing.

Paid social media ads (Meta)

Here's a pretty complete guide for setting up a basic Meta ad campaign for a local business. You can also follow Meta's basic online guide if you need more help with the technical side of things

1. Create a Meta Ads Account:
    a. If you don't already have one, have the business owner sign up for a Meta Ads account at business.facebook.com.
    b. Follow the prompts to set up your account, including providing business information and verifying your identity.
    c. Have them add you as an advertiser to the page and ad account
2. Define Your Campaign Objective:
    a. Determine your advertising goals, such as increasing website visits, generating leads, or driving store visits.
    b. Select the appropriate campaign objective based on your goals, such as Traffic, Conversions, or Store Visits.
3. Set Up Your Campaign:
    a. Click on the "+ Create" button in Ads Manager and select "Ad Campaign."
    b. Choose your campaign objective and give your campaign a name.
    c. Set your campaign budget and schedule.
4. Define Your Target Audience:
    a. Click on "Ad Set" within your campaign and give it a name.
    b. Define your target audience based on demographics, interests, and behaviors.

    c. Use location targeting to specify the geographic area where you want your ads to be shown. You can target by city, zip code, radius around a specific location, or custom-drawn map areas.
5. Create Compelling Ad Creative:
    a. Click on "Ad" within your ad set and choose the ad format (e.g., single image, carousel, video).
    b. Upload the chosen media,
    c. Ad the main copy
    d. Choose an appropriate CTA
    e. (Learn exactly what to put in your ad in the “Catch their attention” section)
6. Set Your Ad Budget and Schedule:
    a. Set your ad budget and bidding strategy based on your campaign objectives and advertising goals.
    b. Choose whether to run your ads continuously or set a specific start and end date for your campaign.
7. Review and Launch Your Campaign:
    a. Review all the details of your campaign, including targeting, ad creative, and budget.
    b. Make any necessary adjustments to optimize your campaign for better performance.
    c. Once you're satisfied with your campaign setup, click "Publish" to launch your ads.
8. Monitor Performance and Optimize:
    a. Regularly monitor your campaign performance using Ads Manager.
    b. Track key metrics such as reach, impressions, clicks, and conversions.
    c. Analyze the effectiveness of your targeting, ad creative, and messaging.
    d. Make data-driven optimizations to improve the performance of your ads, such as adjusting targeting parameters, refining ad creative, or reallocating budget to top-performing ad sets.
9. Test and Iterate:
    a. Continuously test different ad variations, audience segments, and campaign strategies to identify what works best for your local business.
    b. Use A/B testing to compare different elements of your ads and optimize for better results over time.

Organic social media content

- Share regular content on the business that will be interesting to the local audience
- Interact with prominent people and organizations in your local community
- Running giveaways is a good way to increase the reach of your local social media presence
- Makes sure the business is also regularly showcasing their work and promoting the intro offer

Direct mail

- Create flyers for your businesses' services and leave them for as many people as possible in the areas where your ideal customer lives/congregates
- Send out actual letters or physical mail campaigns to people in your area that may need your services
- I guess billboards could kinda fall under this category as well

Community events

- Host or participate in local community events
- Host free lunch, breakfasts, live music parties, etc
- Offer free classes seminars in your local area
- Be sure to provide the intro offer to everyone who attends and follow up if possible

Get their attention

Once you've gotten in front of potential customers you need to catch their attention before you make your initial offer. This will depend on matching their level of awareness and sophistication. Here are the main two to focus on:

1. **Problem Aware.** Your reader knows they have a problem/desire. Simply call out that problem or desire with the beginning of your ad, amplify the pain/desire if needed and present a valuable intro offer
2. **Problem Unaware.** Your reader is unaware of a hidden problem or desires. Catch their attention in a generic fashion, reveal the hidden problem or show them a new opportunity, add a quick explanation if necessary then present the intro offer

Present a desirable intro offer

This is the most critical part of the Passive Buyers game. When someone is just scrolling on social media or going about their day they are NOT in the mood to buy a new roof for example. So you are going to need to pick the right "intro offer" that will both interest them enough and match their current level of desire/belief/trust. It has to be good enough to get them to pause their mindless scrolling.

- **Discount for services.** A coupon for a discount or free session is the simplest form of an intro offer you can give. This method often requires lots of follow up after they sign up. *Example "Free first [insert service here]", "Coupon for 30% off your first visit*".
- **Free gift.** If you can provide an extremely cheap or free gift that is connected to your main service, this can be a cool opportunity to catch their attention, turn them into a lead, and eventually upsell them on full service. *Example: Landscaper offers a free potted plant for their backyard*
- **Free info.** Not usually very effective but you can do a traditional "lead magnet" guide or video masterclass for local businesses.
- **"Find out if you have this hidden problem" consult -** Especially if you are showing them a hidden problem that they don't know if they have or not, you could offer to do an inspection or free consult to figure out if they have this hidden problem. Use the free consultation to help them and upsell them on the full service. *Example: "32% of homeowners have bats living in their attic and don't know it. Claim a free inspection and our team will come and check your attic*"
- **Unique live event -** If you can run a fun community event, live seminar/class etc this can often be interesting and new enough to get them to opt in.

Collect their information

To get the intro offer they either have to contact you directly, or submit their information so you can contact them, or you can have them book an appointment directly on your calendar. However you handle it, you want to collect their basic information so you can follow up with them in the future.

Upsell them on the full service

As you fulfill the intro offer this is your opportunity to impress and overdeliver. You want to build as much goodwill and trust as possible.

This is also a good opportunity for the business owner to explore the customer's needs and upsell them on future service.

Bonus - Collect reviews and referrals.

When they are all happy and excited after being helped by the business, you want to ask them to give you a google/facebook/yelp review (whichever is most important to your business)

Also, if possible, ask them if they have any friends that need your services, if you did a good job and they like and trust you they will refer friends. You can also offer discounts, free sessions, and other gifts if they refer a friend.

When they do give a review or referral you should thank them via text, call, or physical note.

Top Players Doing it Right-ish

Dor-Mar HVAC

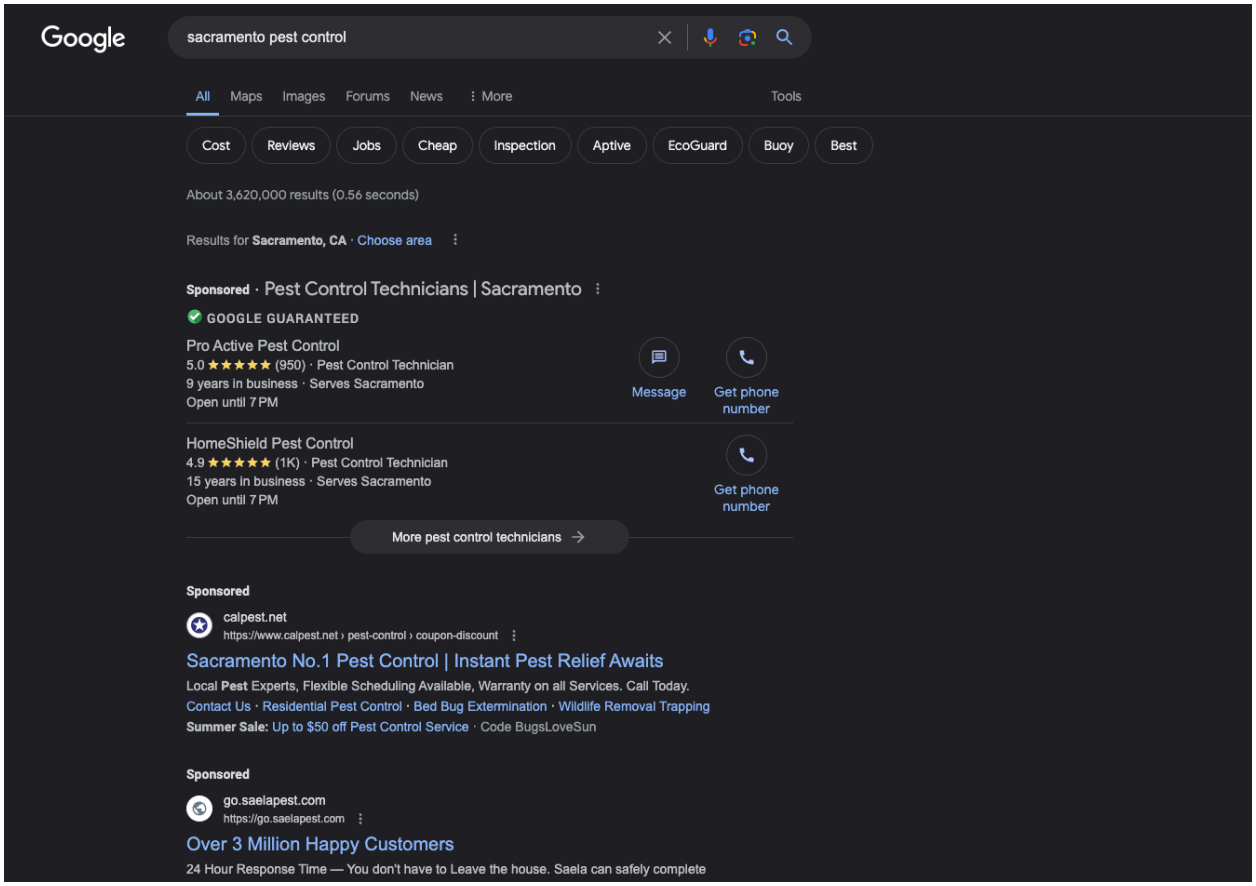
Simple HVAC company doing a mix of basic SEO and Paid social Ads to get both active and passive buyers. They are NOT doing everything perfectly, but you can see them doing a lot of the things I mentioned already

Homepage - https://www.dormarhvac.com/
Google My Business profile - https://g.co/kgs/Ln3rqpe
Successful Paid Google Search ad ->
https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=890286002683086
Landing Page for paid ad -> https://www.dormarhvac.com/lp/499-whole-house-duct-cleaning

Cal Pest

Simple Pest control company doing Paid Google Search Ads on top of everything else. Again, are they perfect? No. Are they hitting the fundamentals? Yes.

Search term and Ad 👇



Landing page for intro offer - https://calpest.net/1/index.html

Sandoval Luxury Group

Real estate agent using paid search to catch Passive Buyers. Simple. Easy.

FB ad → https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=1309975333018935
Landing Page → https://seller.seminar.angelasandovalrealty.com/home-page-page