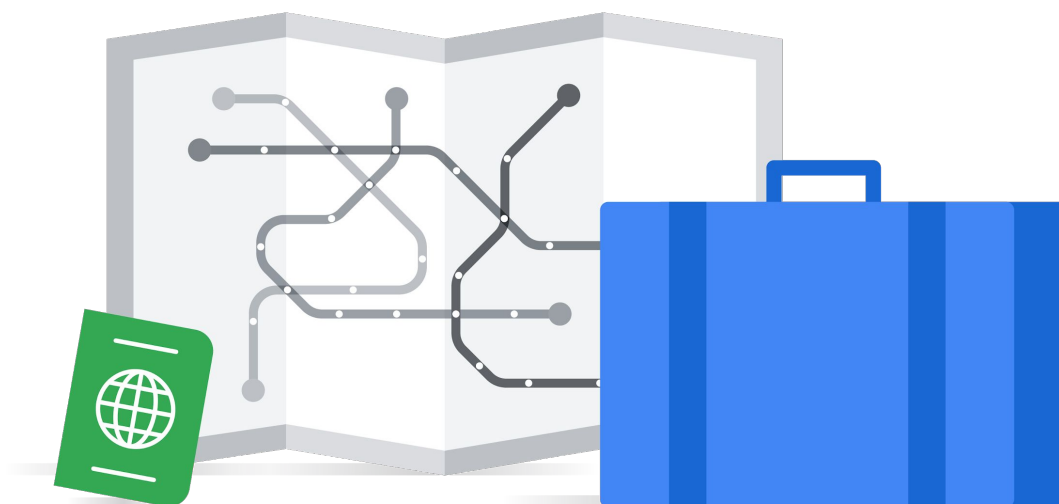August 2020

Google for Hotels 101:
# Getting Your Business Online

Google For Hotels 101:
Getting Your Business Online

Google My Business

Google My Business is a free business profile that helps hotel owners manage their business information across Google products like Search and Maps. It lets you engage with customers in the moments that matter with a business profile that shows what you do and what you have to offer.

From a verified Google My Business account, hotel owners can review traffic metrics, gather customer insights, view and respond to Google Reviews, and ensure users get the most up-to-date information about your hotel.
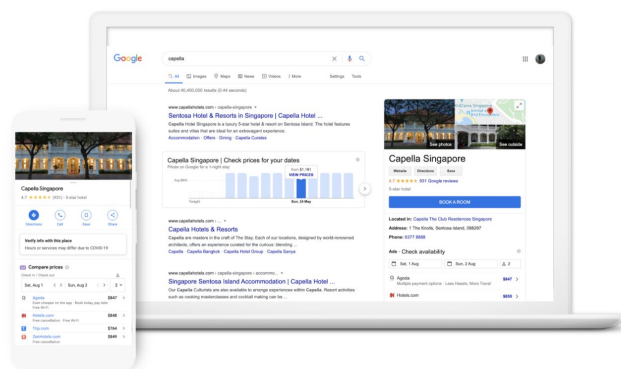
Create an account & claim your hotel

If your business shows up on Google Maps, there's a chance you've already signed up for a Google My Business account. If you have, you'll see your account on the Google My Business page. If you don't have an account associated with the hotel, then you can create one to claim your hotel.

If your hotel is part of a larger franchise, see below 'Google My Business for Franchises' for more information on getting started with Google My Business.

Note: If you've purchased or taken over a hotel from another owner, you may need to request ownership of an existing Google My Business account that they set up. See more information on how to request ownership of a Business Profile. It's also possible that an employee or consultant set up your hotel's account and claimed the business on Google Maps. In that case, you can ask them to add you as a manager or co-owner of the account.

Follow the step-by-step instructions below to create your business profile with Google My Business:

1. Open the Google My Business page.
2. In the top right corner, click Manage now.
3. Sign in to your Google Account. If you don't have a Google Account, create one.
4. Enter the name of your hotel, and click Next.

> **Note:** If your hotel appears on Maps, it will appear in a drop down during sign up. Then, you can select your hotel from the suggestions that appear as you type. Be sure to only select the suggestion if all the information matches.

5. Enter the address of your hotel, and click Next. If your address doesn't geolocate, you may also be asked to position a marker on the location of your hotel on a map.
6. Under "Business category," select a business category. Then, click Next.

> **Note:** You can also create a more specific category if appropriate (e.g. hostel or motel).

7. Enter a phone number or website URL for your hotel. Then, click Next.

> **Note:** If you don't have a website, you can create one using Google My Business once you've set up your account.

8. To verify your connection to the hotel, click Continue.
9. Select a verification option. Most postcards or other verification methods arrive within 5 business days. When it arrives, sign in and click Verify Now. Enter the verification code and click Submit.
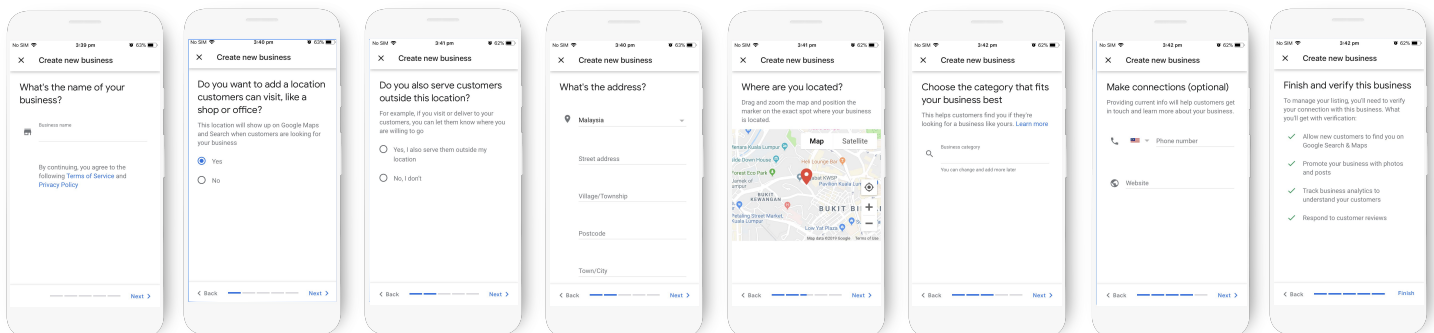
Google My Business best practices

Check your listing for duplicates (one hotel, one listing)

A hotel should appear exactly once in Google Maps. This can be trickier to keep straight over time than it sounds. Sometimes hotels change names or have relationships with nearby businesses, or well-meaning guests or employees may add duplicate listings to the map. Preventing duplicates is important because the listings for duplicate businesses won't display the owner's ads or curated content, and there may be confusion with reviews and photos.

If you think your hotel has more than one listing on Google Maps, follow the duplicate reporting process. If your hotel has been rebranded under new management and there are still listings on Google Maps for the old brand, report the old hotel name as permanently closed. Google will help you make sure that the correct listing appears for your hotel.
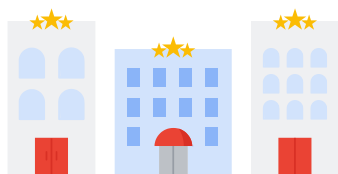
Franchises

If your hotel is part of a larger corporate brand, things typically work best when local business owners have site manager or manager access to their Google My Business account, while the corporate brand actually owns the listing.

Both the franchisees and the corporate office have useful information about the property, and this system allows both to contribute their strengths. The corporate owner can maintain a consistent brand identity across all locations, while the franchisee makes sure all the key local details are correct for interested travelers.

Franchisees who are not already site managers or managers should reach out to their corporate office to request that level of access. Corporations should make sure that they have ownership of 100% of their hotels on Google My Business. For the locations where the hotel listing is already claimed by a franchisee, the corporate owner should ask to be added as a co-owner. Locations that are unclaimed should be verified. For more information, see Request bulk verification for 10+ locations.

Hotel names

Make sure your hotel name is listed exactly as you want it to appear to travelers. The use of emojis or promotional names such as "The Best Hotel In Tokyo" are blocked to make sure that users aren't confused or misled.

If you run a hotel chain (or own a hotel that is part of one), it's best to use consistent brand conventions across all locations and languages. Be sure to:

- Include the name of the brand in every location that is part of the brand.
- Use exactly the same brand name in all locations.
- Use the same naming template for all properties. For example, if the name is "Acme Hotel San Jose Airport" for one location, don't switch to "Cancun Airport Acme Hotel" for another.

Branding consistency makes it easier for Google to detect the chain relationship and share locations with travelers who want to stay with that chain.

Check your listing for duplicates (one hotel, one listing)
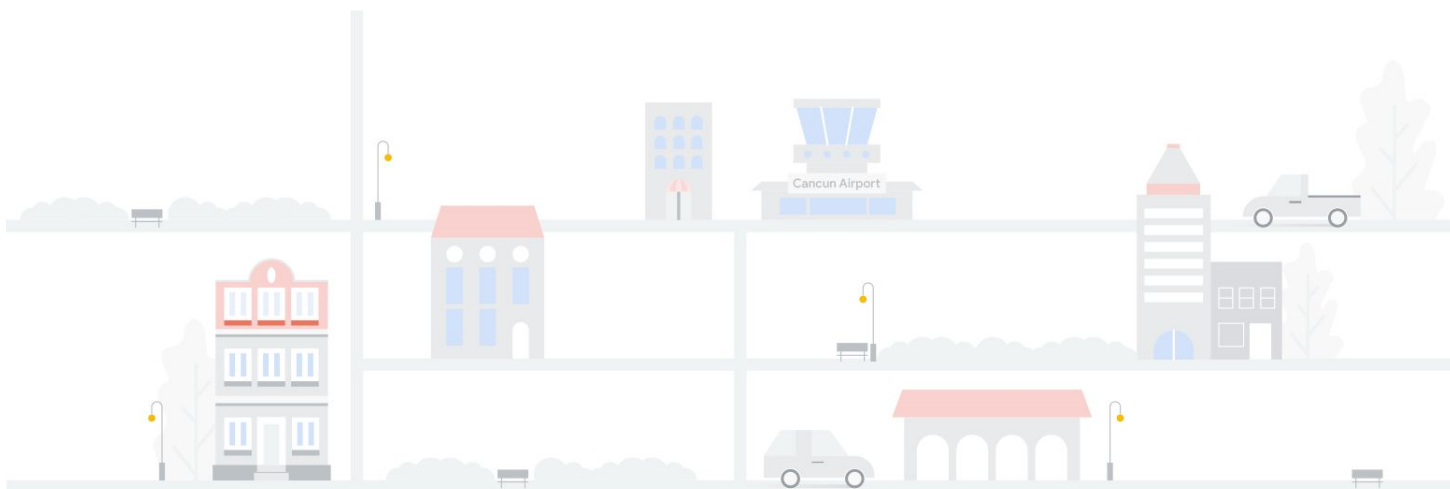
Your hotel listing should have your up-to-date website URL and phone number. These two vital pieces of data help users find and contact you, and they help us make sure that Hotel Ads and Google reviews appear correctly with your property. Double-check your Google My Business listing to make sure that your current URL and phone number are correct.

Google Ads

Temporary closures

Hotels can sometimes be subject to temporary closures. For example, a ski lodge may be open in the winter but not the summer. A hotel may close for three months for renovations, or in a less fortunate scenario, be shut down for repairs after a natural disaster.

In any such case, you can sign in to Google My Business and [mark your location temporarily closed](#). Your information will be updated for users of Google Maps and Search. Google will continue to show your location; it will simply be marked temporarily closed until you inform us that you're open again.

Google My Business categories

Your Google My Business account asks you to match your hotel to the appropriate category, such as Resort Hotel or Campground. Picking the right category is one of the best ways to help the right travelers find your hotel. Hotels that haven't been assigned a lodging category may not show up properly, or even not show up at all, in Hotel Search results.

In some cases, a hotel can match more than one category. For example, the same business might offer both camping cabins and a hotel, or both a motel and a bed and breakfast. For more information on businesses related to your hotel, see Related businesses. However, resist the urge to put your hotel in as many categories as possible, hoping that more people will find you that way. Our experience has been that this has the opposite effect: If your business is not what people expect, this will confuse and frustrate travelers. If you're running ads, you might waste time talking to customers who really aren't interested in what you have to offer.

See About Google Maps categories for hotels and lodging businesses for a full list of the lodging categories. Please make sure at least one of these categories is assigned to your business. To learn how to assign a category to your hotel, or change your existing one, see [Choose a business category](#).

Google Maps location

The more precisely you identify the location of your front door, the more customers Google can send through it. The geographic pin for your establishment should, as much as possible, be set to the exact latitude and longitude for your front entrance. If your property covers a large area, as with a golf or ski resort, then provide the coordinates for the front entrance of the primary building.

Give the exact street address as well, including the street name and number, municipality, administrative region, and country. If your establishment has no street name or number, give us the details that you give to the postal or shipping companies when they make deliveries to your business.

You may think the location of your hotel is obvious, but there are plenty of variables (such as other hotels and towns with similar names) that can confuse our system and the travelers who use it. The accurate location data you provide will ensure that your ads and user reviews appear for your property just as they should.
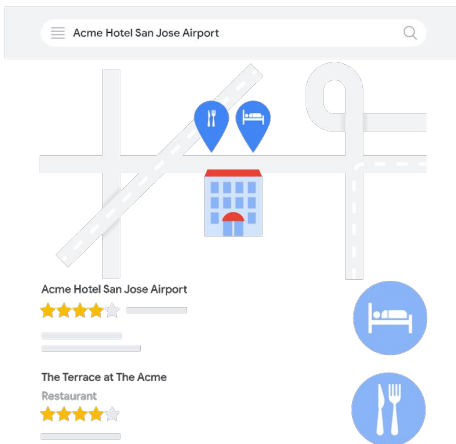
Your establishment must be in a supported country or region. Make sure to use the appropriate two-letter code for the country or region where your business is located. For example, if your hotel is frequently used by visitors who go to Vatican City, but is physically located in Rome, Italy, then specify Italy as the location of your hotel.
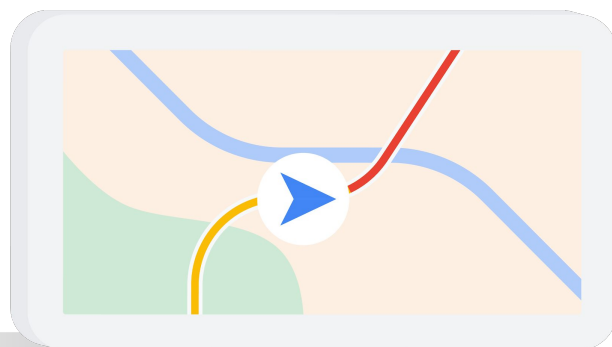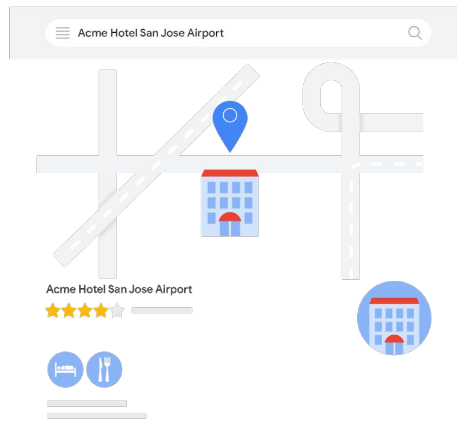
Related businesses

If a public restaurant, golf course, or other business is affiliated with your hotel, see the guidelines below on how to list it.
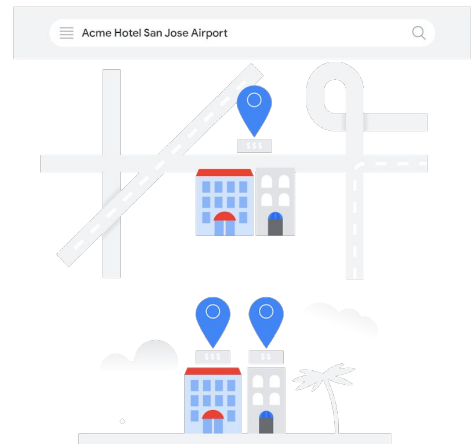
1 Business is open to public	2 Business is not open to public	3 Multiple hotels within the same resort

1 If the business is open to customers who aren't staying at your establishment, then it should have a separate Google My Business listing. For instance, if you own a hotel with a spa that is available to guests but also takes appointments from the general public, the spa should have a separate listing on Google My Business and Google Maps. This is true even if it shares the same address with your hotel.

2 If the business is not open to the general public, then it shouldn't have it's own listing. For example, a restaurant or tennis center that serves only your overnight guests should not have a separate listing.

3 Different hotels within the same resort should have separate listings only if each hotel has its own rate plan. Two buildings that are part of the same hotel do not need separate listings.

Sometimes, it may not be practical to have separate listings for related businesses, such as for a rustic inn where the lodging and restaurant share a name and common space. In that case, make sure that your single Google My Business listing has the appropriate lodging category and also any other relevant categories.

In almost all cases, separate listings are the better idea. This helps users attach reviews and photos to the right business. Each business can take part in the best ad programs for their category: Hotel Ads for Lodgings, Reserve with Google for a restaurant, and so on. Lastly, separate listings let the public know that they're welcome in these related businesses even if they're not overnight guests.

Google Ads

Google My Business best practices

Engage with your customers to build customer loyalty and brand recognition. To start building a stronger relationship with your customers, try the following:

- Reply to customer reviews.
- Add photos and videos to showcase your services to customers.
- Answer questions about your hotel through a Q&A.
- Chat directly with your customers.
  Note: This feature is only available in select countries.

Check your hotel listing amenities, photos, and descriptions

Keep your hotel's details current to ensure that customers view up-to-date information about your hotel.

Content matters in your property listings. People often search Google for phrases like "El Paso hotels with a pool." Travelers may use the amenity filters on Google Trips to find hotels that are pet-friendly, have a fitness center, or offer free breakfast. If you offer amenities like these, be sure to include them in your hotel content so that Google can share them with travelers. You can add and edit amenities in your Google My Business account.

Photos are also very important. You should have good-quality photos of all your room types, common areas, and other key features you want travelers to see. Be sure to remove any outdated photos that don't accurately represent the current condition of your property.

The descriptions found with hotel listings are summaries created by Google to give travelers quick reference information about each hotel. These descriptions can't be changed directly by hotel suppliers. But if you find details in the description of your hotel that don't seem accurate, you can report them for review. To do so, search for your hotel on Google Maps, click the three-line menu bar next to your hotel name on the side panel, and then scroll down to 'Send feedback'. To learn more about this, see How Google sources information in local listings.

Manage your hotel's details
Owners with verified hotel listings can edit their services and amenities in the "Hotel attributes" section of their Google My Business account.

To edit your attributes:
1. Sign into Google My Business (If you have multiple locations, open the location you'd like to manage)
2. Click Info.
3. Next to "Hotel attributes," click Edit. This will open a separate tool to edit info.
4. Search for the attribute you want to add and fill in the information. Click Save.

Managing your hotel listing during COVID-19

We know that these are unprecedented times and the travel industry is changing by the minute. Here are a few actions you can take to ensure your business reflects the new COVID-19 environment.

Update your business hours

54%

of the people are looking for business opening hours in Google Maps. If your business hours change, update the times that you're open or closed. Your operating hours will show when customers visit your profile.
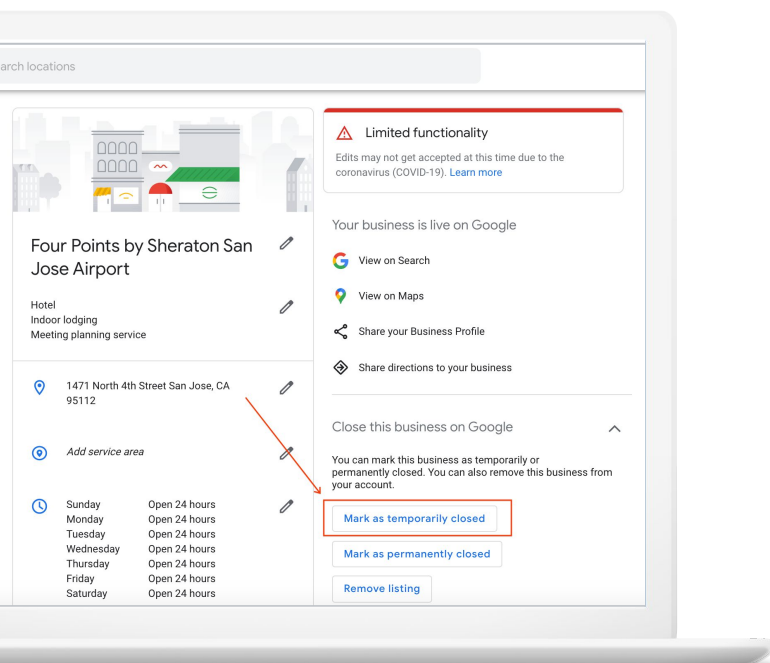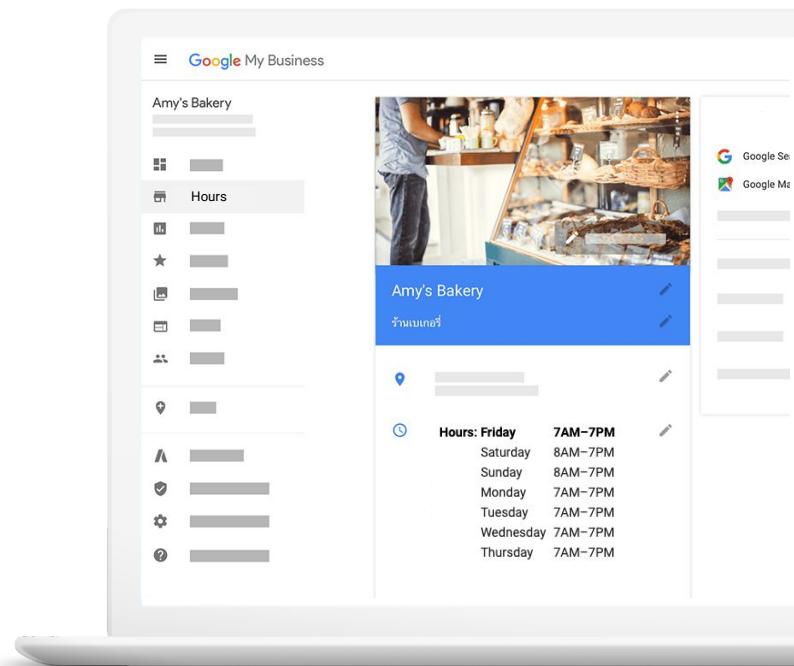
### Communicate temporary closures

You can now mark your business "Temporarily closed" on Google. Google also relies on authoritative data sources, where available, to mark certain types of places as "Temporarily Closed" on Google Search and Google Maps.

Note: If your business is still operating but at a diminished capacity, do not mark your business "Temporarily closed."

Google Ads

Manage your amenities

Provide the most accurate information on amenities and other attributes to your customers. The updates will show on your Business Profile on Google Search and Maps.

> **Tip:** Let customers know that you offer special rooms for COVID-19 responders by selecting the attribute in your business profile.
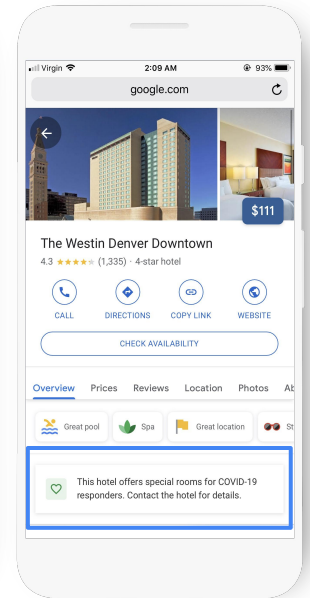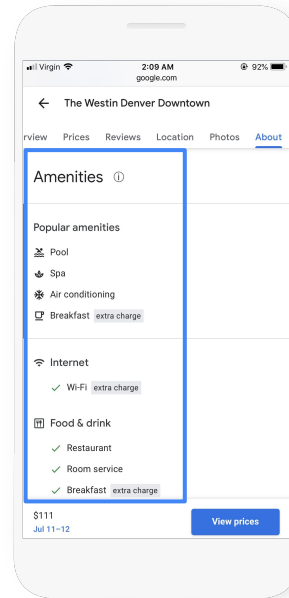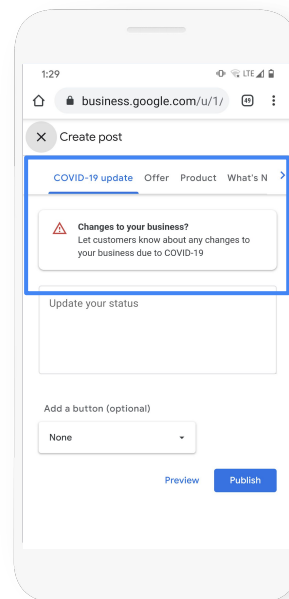
Create a Post

Share more detailed and timely updates about what's going on with your business through Posts. For example:

- Add information about closures or reduced hours
- Suggest the purchase of gift cards to support your business
- Inform your customers about increased hygienical standards
- Communicate takeaway food / curbside pickup options

You can continue to use Posts to directly communicate with your customers on a regular basis as your business changes.

> **Tip:** To make sure COVID-19 content is more noticeable to your customers, use the new COVID-19 post type on Google My Business.
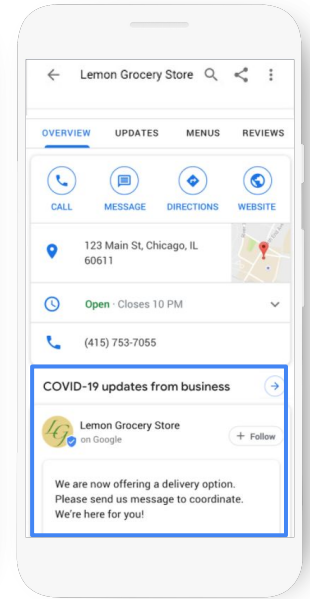
GMB Create a Post   Local Search

Surface what matters

Proactively communicate with travelers through a resources section on your website or a Google Form to field questions on cancellations, refund policies, etc. A few examples of actions you can take include:

- Highlight flexible booking options in your hotel ads, bring attention to your cancelation, refundability or rebooking policies in your callouts
- Review Hotel Ads best practices
- Grow travel interest with a free YouTube channel
- Consider sharing local recipes, wellness tips or virtual city tours.
- See emerging topics and top questions asked by geography with Google Trends
- Learn how other thought leaders are coping with similar business challenges on Think With Google.
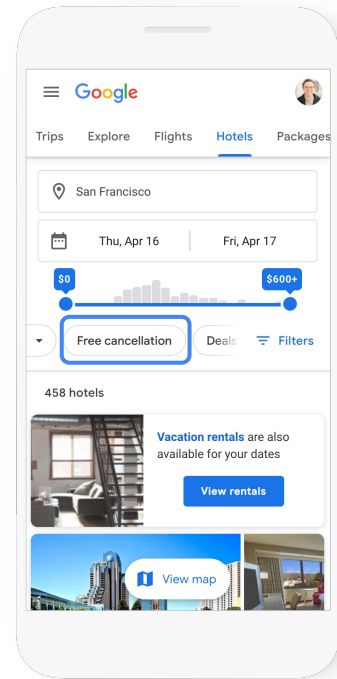
Got your hotel up and running on Google My Business? Start driving and capturing demand with Google Ads. Check out our **201 Guidebook: Drive Bookings with Google Ads**.

Google Ads