



Becky Schroeder Digital Marketing - The Importance of Being Local

THE ACT MEETING GOES VIRTUAL



Questions and Answers from the ACT Meeting April 22, 2020

Q: We're a small non-profit organization that introduces insurance topics and careers to high school students - and we help to promote working at an independent agency. Any suggestions on the best way to promote our programs? We work with teachers and industry volunteers. Can ITC help us in any way?

A: Any suggestion on how to promote your programs would depend on who you are trying to target with your promotions. If you're trying to get more insurance agencies involved, how involved are the state and city chapters of the Big I in your program? Can you put on a webinar for their members? Use the attendee list to reach out and see if those agents are interested in chartering a program at a local school. Recruiting is a hot topic in the industry. You are in a prime position to help with this challenge. Are you looking to get more teachers to start a program? Can your insurance agency partners help identify the teachers or schools in their area that may be interested? Is there some way to partner with RISE (<https://riseprofessionals.com/>) or Gamma Iota Sigma (<https://www.gammaiotasigma.org/>), two other organizations dedicated to the young professionals in the industry?

Q: Does consistency for address include commas and periods? For example Ste. O. vs. Ste O?

A: Yes, it does indeed include commas and periods. While search engines are probably smart enough to know they are the same, all the experts say we don't need to make it unnecessarily hard. So, whether you abbreviate suite with a period or spell it out, the format needs to be the same across all online listings.

Q: Though for SEO is better with unique content, is it beneficial to "repost" blogs through Google Post?

A: It's not a full repost. You're limited in characters, so you probably don't have enough space for a full blog post anyway. Instead create a meaningful summary or intro for your blog post and add a call to action for users to read more. Keeping the text of your Google Posts to 100 characters or less is ideal for quick scanning and more conversions. There are 4 types of posts: product, what's new, events and offers.

The point of sharing your content on Google Posts is that Google is tracking engagement on your profile. So, having organic clicks on a button within a Google Post can build up your page ranking and tell Google your content is relevant and valuable to users.

Q: It's important to note that Google Reviews are suspended during COVID-19. None of them are being posted right now. Asking for them to write a review now and then again later could be a wasted opportunity. Any alternate suggestions on this?

A: Google did suspend reviews in March stating they didn't have staff to monitor them. However, a couple weeks ago they reinstated them. Thought it may take longer for review submissions to get published.

Even if you don't want to send people to Google to leave a review right now, there are other things you can do. Like ask people to leave a review on Yelp or other websites that may come up when your agency name appears in search results. If you have a testimonials section on your website, you can solicit your clients to send the testimonial directly to you or ask them to submit it through a form on your website.

Yes, reviews on Google are powerful in terms of ranking locally. These other websites can help too. The important thing is to get the process and technology in place to help you request those reviews. To educate your staff on why they need to ask for reviews and train them on how to ask.

Q: As a technology vendor partner, how do we utilize these techniques during this unprecedented time to help our agencies?

A: We use "thought leadership" to "educate" agencies through blog posts, videos, and webinars on what to do, how to do it, and why they need to be doing it.

Q: There was a lot of great info here - But so much that I don't know where to start. We have a solid base for our website and do some posts on LinkedIn and Facebook. I want to improve - what is a solid plan to prioritize and get going?

A: The important thing to remember when you've got so much ahead of you that you don't know where to start is to start small. Pick one or two things that you're reasonably confident you can start and maintain. As you master those things, then you add other ideas on.

And, before you get started, ask some questions about your current efforts. The answers to these questions will help you identify what to focus on first. Note: These questions are by no means the only questions to ask. They're just a few ideas to help you get started.

- How's your website content? Do you include local keywords?
- Are you blogging consistently? Are any of your blog posts focused on a local audience?
- What are you doing offline? Can online efforts help support that? And vice versa.
- Have you created your Google My Business profile?
- Do you have a standardized process for and are actively asking clients to leave a review?
- Are you using email marketing at all?