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Shawn Hill 0:46

Welcome into this episode of The Nice Job Podcast. I'm your host, Sean Hill. Thanks so much for joining us whether it's your first time or you've listened to all 48 episodes at this point. I'm glad that you are here. I don't want to waste too much time before getting to the conversation. But I want to bring up something important. You can rate our podcast is going to rate this podcast.com/nice Job Podcast, or go into the app platform that you're listening on and drop us a review. It really helps us just give us a little review. We absolutely love it. And my guest is Sherry Benelli from early bird digital marketing, and we're talking about Google My Business specifically, what Google wants to see from your GMB and what they absolutely don't want to see. And might answer some questions. If you've had your Google My Business recently suspended or you've had some issues, you might find out the cause in this episode, a lot to take in, I'll give you my three key takeaways at the end. So stick around to the final seconds. But I want to make you wait any longer. Here we go with my conversation with Sherry McNally. It's back to back episodes we are having on topics that are heavily requested in it's another topic in which there's a lot of information out there. And it's really hard sometimes to tell what's good, what's bad, what's specific to certain industries, what's specific to certain people and situations. And so when you have a topic like this, I felt it was kind of my duty to find an expert that knows the ins, the outs, and knows all the nuances of it. But most importantly, he's going to explain it in a way where you're gonna be able to jot it down in your notepad. If you're listening, the audio only version, you'll hear it and my takeaways at the end of the episode, things that you will be able to take, implement immediately changes my neck, make upgrades you might want to do, and you're going to have that data and start seeing things you know, change and know the decisions you need to make going forward. And, every single episode I talked about being excited, but this one is something that I've had circled on the calendar for a while because we wanted to explore this topic. I know a lot of you asked about it. But also, as it pertains to a nice job in our software, we understand the importance of it. But it's sometimes hard when we are explaining the virtues of it because it sounds like it's just helping make our software better. But this is an integral part of your business. And I don't feel it's a hot take in any sort of way. If you're not taking advantage of this thing. You're leaving a lot on the table and you're really kind of having a self limit, some handcuffs, whatever analogy you want to use, you're kind of holding yourself back. I hate to say so. But that's that's the case. What is this thing? It is Google My Business. Your GMB your gateway to new customers to new leads your representation on the World Wide Web. It is vitally important. And so as I said, I had to find a vitally important guest that could explain it all. And pretty quickly I was funneled in this direction. And because this is where the best knowledge is, it is Sherry Benelli, who's owner of early bird digital marketing.

Sherry, I appreciate you so much for joining us here on the Nice Job Podcast. And I hope that you're ready to dive into some GMB.

Sherry Benelli 4:04

Thank you, I am very excited and ready to hop into this.

Shawn Hill 4:07

And right off the top, I will say there's so much we can cover and we're definitely diving in depth. But relative to the show, I'll say I wouldn't be surprised if this ends up being two or three parts. We'll visit it again in season three. But when it gets a lot of good information, good information out there. Before that though, Sure, I'd love to know a little bit about yourself. I always say you don't need to go back to the house where you were born in but I'm very intrigued by how someone gets into the position of the role that they're doing, and then starts to fine tune it where they end up in a situation where they're an owner and an expert. So at what point did you start either seeing the itch for entrepreneurs, itch for business or traditional marketing? Is there a point you can pinpoint where you're like, that's when I started on this track? And has this been enjoyable ever since?

Sherry Benelli 4:52

Yeah, I can definitely pinpoint it. I actually fell into it. So after I had my first baby, I invented a baby product. I decided to create a site and sell it and quickly realized that I needed more than one product to sell. And, I dove headfirst into how do I rank my site? How do I get found? And so that was really the start of it, it became a puzzle for me search engine optimization and ranking in all of this became a big puzzle for me. And our e-commerce site where we sold pregnancy and baby products was really, really successful at the time. I was on the Today Show, CNN and ABC News and all sorts of places. But then when my husband and I separated, we had to get rid of the business, unfortunately, and I decided. You, I have all this knowledge about search engine optimization, digital marketing, content, everything like that, I'm gonna go ahead and help other people. So that's where we're at now. And I'm actually a Google My Business gold product expert. And basically what that means is, Google has product expert programs, and they invite people to participate in those programs, when they see that they are helping people that they're knowledgeable in that area of expertise. And so that's something that I'm very excited about as well.

Shawn Hill 6:09

And I'm sure a lot of the questions that you'll get pertaining to Google My Business really kind of center around one particular notion, which is, alright, well, how do I get on well with Google? Right? How do I help my rank? How do they get me out there? How do I know that the things that I'm doing are contributing positively to my goals, which are to be seen, to be heard, to be found, to be contacted. And naturally, I think probably, like you would expect, it starts at the start. And there's probably a lot of things when people are either eagerly looking to set up their Google My Business, or trying to get started as they might be so focused on just kind of getting through that they might miss some critical things and some key things. So is there a step one,

when it comes to Google, my business is like, okay, let's all take a breath here. Step one, this, does that exist?

Sherry Benelli 7:03

Yeah. So if you haven't claimed your Google My Business listing, that's for the first thing you need to do. There's a couple of different ways to do that. So you may already be in Google's database, you may already have a Google My Business knowledge panel out there, which is basically a listing, you just haven't claimed it yet. So one thing you could do is do a search for your business name, and your city. And if a knowledge panel shows up on the right hand side, all you need to do is click Claim this listing. And that is probably the easiest way to do it. And then you can walk through the steps and go through that. Now if for some reason you don't show up for that, what you can do is go to, I think it's business.google.com, I have to look shoo, I can't remember the URL. But anyway, and then you can go ahead and claim that process. Now they've made it a lot easier. They've made it a lot clearer for businesses, which is great, because it was so confusing for a long time. And that's why there's so many, for instance, service area businesses that have errors and issues with their listings right now. Now, they've made it to the point where Google has specifically asked, Do you have a physical location that customers come to yes or no. And that selection will take you down a different path. And so it makes it so much easier for businesses to set up their listing correctly from the get go, instead of having to go in and later fix their listing, because they're violating a guideline. So they've totally improved how that path goes. And that makes it super easy for businesses to now claim their listing.

Shawn Hill 8:38

Yeah, just want to confirm it is business.google.com That'll get you into Google My Business. So you could set it up. So if you're a brand new business, you actually don't quite exist yet you're a week away or something like that, you know, that's a good place to start and get on there. And you touched on it about the service area or address and it was nice job a lot of our community are home service professionals and some it's the truck parked outside their house, they're a solo entrepreneur, and they're kind of rolling from there and that question we often get is okay, well I don't have a separate business it's just a bit business like a brick and mortar store. I'm just working out of my home, working on my truck, things like that. And as it evolved, you know, best practices, things like that, at some point, this bad narrative got out that like, oh, just grab a P.O. box or just now put the random things and stuff like that. How important is that location? And are there some positive or like benefits or ranking them order when it comes to you, should I be service areas should I be pick a specific location? I'd love to really dive in deep into that because that's probably the number one thing I think that starts holding people up when they take on this process is alright business name. I know that like a location.

Sherry Benelli 9:55

Yeah, yeah. And, there is nothing wrong with running your business for Your home, there are so many businesses that do that. So there's nothing to be ashamed about. The thing is you need to set up your listing correctly, because if you don't, your listing is likely going to get suspended. And if it gets suspended, it means either A, you, your listing will still show up, but you won't be

able to change anything in it, and you'll see a big suspended notice right in your dashboard, or be taken off completely, and you are nowhere to be found. So what I tell people is you need to set up your listing correctly, because if you don't, you may not be caught today, good. But Google or someone else will report you and your listing is gonna get suspended. And so the way it works for home based businesses is you can't have a home based business with an address displayed, it violates Google's Terms of Service. So what you need to do is you need to go in, delete your address out and select service areas. So once you go into the info section, in your Google My Business dashboard, in the address, click on the pencil, and delete your address out. it'll prompt you to list service areas. And these are the areas that you serve that you go out to customers and see them and you typically want to stay within about a two hour drive. That's typically what Google recommends is like a two hour drive from your location. Now I know that there's some people that don't want to do that. But that is typically the rules. And those are the guidelines for service area businesses. Now, let's say you have a storefront, you have an address. And you do have people come in, like let's say you have a plumbing company, for instance, and you have a small showroom, and you have employees there during the day, you have signage outside, let's say you don't get a lot of foot traffic, but you are open to the public. But then you also go out and serve people. So you fix people's plumbing, you install things, those types of things, then you're considered a hybrid business. And you can display both your address and select service areas. That's a hybrid business. So you get a little bit of both. And then there's the traditional storefront. And storefronts are where you have permanent signage outside, and customers come to your place of business. And you can display your address. So there's essentially like three different segments or buckets, as far as the businesses are concerned. But I always tell service area businesses, it's better to delete your address and set up your listing correctly versus getting suspended. Now I will give everybody a heads up on this. Sometimes going in and fixing your listing can trigger a suspension, which is a zinger. And that sucks. But it can trigger a suspension because Google sees you going from a storefront with a physical address, even though it's not your home to a service area business. And that happened to me with a lawn care company. So they got their listing claiming we entered the pin number. And I realized, he runs his business out of his home. I'm going to fix his listing. So he's in compliance, so I deleted his address. And the minute I did that the listing was suspended. Now the good thing is I had all the evidence that I needed to prove that this business was a service area business, that their business name was correct, and that the address was correct. All you need to do is submit that with the reinstatement form and we got reinstated. So it's making sure you have everything in proper order and that you have the proper documentation to back everything up in case you get suspended. Does that make sense?

Shawn Hill 13:41

Yeah, it does. It's very interesting, though. I'm wondering if it is that relatively I don't say recent changes, because I know Google does update policies, things like that. But I do know that some home service professionals, I guess I can hear a lot of them asking like, what qualifies as my house being my house, my workshop, so I know some people that have garage sheds, like off site things. So people could come to that area, but it's not like it's a separate mail. So, the same thing, they're getting their magazine subscription and they're also putting on their invoices and things like that. So if someone has their home business listed now, and they're kind of wary of

like I don't want to get suspended, but I want to make sure I'm following policies, is there like how do you maintain that? Or how nuanced is it really needed to get so if you have a separate site, can you use that same address or is it just almost in the long run, it's going to cause more headaches and it's worth keeping it in?

Sherry Benelli 14:41

I would say 90 plus percent of the cases in the long run are going to be worse. Working more can cause you more hassle. What you need if you have a service area business at your house is you need permanent signage in front of your house. We're not talking about a plastic sign that you stick in your Your Yard, we're talking about a sign. So typically, in instances where I've seen it work would be a home with a separate shop, let's say like, a machine shed or separate structure. And that location, that building has a permanent sign on it, or in front of it, then, and they have that set. And the other thing is they have to have that location staffed during business hours by their employees. So it's not like you can leave that place open, because they want to make sure customers can come there, you're going to be on Google Maps, the last thing Google wants is for someone to show up at that location, and no one be there. So you need to have employees at that location and have to have permanent signage outside. That would be probably the only way that you could do that. Does that make sense?

Shawn Hill 15:50

Yeah, so perhaps if you're a solo entrepreneur, you're a one man show, so you haven't gotten a shop or anything like that, you're just kind of CO opting the garage, when you eat or something like that, or you're not doing really any work at home. You're not really storing anything. And it's pressed, especially important that you go with the service area, because a drop in, there's not going to be another employee there, there's probably not signage, depending on what your, what your partner thinks, or what your home decor should look, they might not be too keen on a neon sign there. But it's very interesting. Because that's like, when I talked about the top one of those things that comes through and you kind of hear that narrative go like, Oh, well, you know, you want to put your home, put your home, we want to do this. But it's good to hear like, Hey, this is what Google is going to define. And, perhaps making sure that you are compliant. Now, the question that goes on with it is that a lot of people are adding these addresses because of that map three pack, right? They want to make sure they're found. So some might be thinking out there. All right, well, let me think about it. Maybe I do want to invest in the site and put it on the shed. And maybe I don't have a problem if someone wants to come and knock on the door. And because I have another family member who does answer their phones, things like that. So yeah, I can just tell them, hey, they gotta go sit in the, in the shed between nine and five.

Sherry Benelli 17:10

And just think about zoning laws, too, though, so you have to think about your business as a business and make sure it's set up properly. So what I tell people is, if you aren't registered with the Secretary of State, do that, you want to set up your order, if you don't have a business license, get a business license, because if your listing gets suspended, you need to be able to prove to Google that you're a legitimate business at that address. And so it's better to be pre proactive, and get all that information and get everything documented. Get your insurance, with

your business name and the address, wherever you're running your business from, get that all done ahead of time to make sure that if you do get suspended, for some reason, you have everything you need to upload to the reinstatement request form. Now, what I do recommend is to read Google's guidelines for representing businesses on Google. that is the guidelines that Google gives everybody, and they're really not, they're not always the best guidelines, in my opinion, I think they should be a little bit more clear about some things, but they update those guidelines frequently. And sometimes just adding one sentence to those guidelines, can blow up somebody's listing, and can make it not correct anymore, it can make it in violation. So I tell people to read the guidelines at least once a month, just to make sure there's nothing that has changed that may cause your listing to be non compliant. It's crazy, but just one or two words, or an extra sentence that they add to those guidelines and rules can make a difference.

Shawn Hill 18:49

And I think that's why it's also important to stress that this information that we're seeing right now isn't a kind of noms gearing up and things like that. It's one of those things when they write these guidelines. This is kind of the expectation. So he talked about the one like we change from an address to a service area, they just venture but you're saying like, Well, hey, here's the proof right here. So honestly, it's like, if you have proof, you have things, kind of set up, but you're kind of making sure it's, you know, the same across the board, then there's not going to be too much of an issue. If Google's like wait, we don't think this works. We hear a lot of times with reviews where sometimes, with a fake review or things like that there are a lot of times if you alert and prove to Google they're able to then take action, but you know, it's people and algorithms coming together. But I know a lot of people are wondering like alright, well, it's about rankings being found. So am I losing out? If I'm just a service area business? Is there a weight between service area businesses and a physical pinpoint location because I know a lot goes into what actually makes us ranking. So just for location specific, because we're gonna get into the other steps that will kind of help with that. asked, is there an imbalance? You know, just I guess almost opinion wise? Like? Would we want to see Google maybe not value that as much because there's a lot of service area businesses out there that don't have brick and mortar stores?

Sherry Benelli 20:12

Right? Yeah, and I would like to see Google not take that into consideration as much as they do, there is a slight imbalance. So if you go from a physical address to a service area, you could see your rankings drop. I'm not going to lie to you, you could see your rankings drop. But that doesn't mean that you're not going to show up. And that's the thing that's most important, you're not going to show up. I mean, it's not like you're not going to show up. Now, if you get suspended, you're not going to show up, period. So I mean, you have to weigh the pros and cons of, do I want to be in compliance and have my listing be available to be seen and optimized and be found on Google? Or do I want to risk maybe 30 days from now getting suspended, and me being off the grid completely. So it's a calculated risk that I think business owners need to take, and I always encourage people to take the, I'm following the guidelines route, versus I'm going to skirt the guidelines and maybe get away for with it for a while and see

what happens, you know, I would rather follow the guidelines, than risk getting suspended. That's my opinion,

Shawn Hill 21:23

Ya know, for sure. And I think I would feel the same way from a personal standpoint is, what, if you're doing things, you know, correctly and properly, then that gives you a solid foundation to grow, right. So if you're brand new business, you're going out there, you're not going to top, go right to the top, because a lot of things we're going to talk about next is you don't you haven't really fed Google too much information about you. And one thing that's come up a couple of times on our podcast here is, it's really funny how Google will tell you what they want. And in particular, I'm talking about, obviously, for a nice job about reviews. But like photos, and post, I find so many businesses don't take advantage of those two options, especially when Google asks you to do so, so they're telling you what they want, they give you the ability to post a photo, they tell you, you should post a photo. And if I'm not mistaken, that is also a key part of how much content you're generating, that goes into the viability of your listing, correct?

Sherry Benelli 22:21

Yeah, photos actually have been shown to increase engagement. So it's not necessarily a ranking factor. But it increases engagement with the people that see your listings. And so Google's done studies that show that the more and BrightLocal has done studies as well. And they're amazing as far as their studies and research goes. By the way, the more photos you have, the more engagement you get, the more phone calls you get, the more traffic you get to your business. So the more photos you can add the videos, you can add 32nd videos, and I have a lot of people say, Well, what can you say in 30 seconds, I had a divorce attorney who said a heck of a lot in 30 seconds, and he was brilliant with it, so you can give tips in 30 seconds with your smartphone, upload videos like that. Make sure you don't use stock photos when you're uploading photos. Google wants to see real pictures, maybe before and after if your service area business. I have seen some really sharp before and after pictures from some service area businesses, and they're brilliantly done. And so you can upload those team members, if you're doing an outing, or if you're doing some volunteer work, photos of that type of stuff. Make your business inhuman people love those photos. And as far as posts go, same thing. don't always be pitching your services, but pitch what you think people are interested in and tie it back to what you do. The other thing about posts is, when you're writing the post, don't include an email address, website address or phone number within the content of the post, because typically the posts will get rejected. And that's a relatively new thing that started happening. I would say probably about three months ago, before that people were putting in website URLs and phone numbers and everything like that. And Google started cracking down on that. And so now you can't include those things within the post itself, or the post will get rejected and you won't be able to upload it.

Shawn Hill 24:22

Yeah, I also know it was actually a long time back, excuse me. They also started cracking down on people that were overloading like their business names. So it wasn't just like hey, it's Steve's, junk removal. It was like seeds, junk removal, the lowest price and like they really kind

of clamped down on that. But I love to jump on the photos and the videos and sometimes people say okay, what, I'm not a content creator, what can I do? And it's funny how much that stuff is actually already there. So posting photos for example. I always recommend this if you're, say, a window cleaner, and there's a difficult Old Style Window that might be popular in your service area, you know, older colonial homes or something like that. And, and you know, that you're really good at and you kind of show off like, Hey, this is how we handle this particular type of window. It's surprising about engagement is maybe not running and liking it, but I guarantee it, they have that type of window, it pauses, then they start diving in a bit more, and they go hmm, like, that's, I have that same window, these guys can handle it, I see that with video is I think replying to reviews in the traditional sense, which I want to talk about, obviously, reviews next. But that's something I think that would love to see people try to experiment with is kind of replying also via video. And so it's great, you know, within 30 seconds of, hey, we just got a review from Jennifer. She says, whoa, whoa, whoa, like, hey, Jennifer, we really appreciate it, this was Bethany that was on the job with us. definitely some say thanks as well, like, really appreciate, like, that's engaging, it's educational, it allows them to kind of get their words out. So it doesn't come off, as testimony, or sales. But showing personality, you can show that in your Google My Business, the common person sees a lot more depth in that than if you're just constantly throwing up, you know, a flier that you just turned into a photo.

Sherry Benelli 26:13

Exactly. And I love the idea about the reviews, especially if the review mentions the employee, which they often do, Susanna was so helpful with me when I was picking out my storage facility, or whatever the case may be. And, actually showing everybody else who this person is Susanna, you know, that's a brilliant idea. I love it. I think you should get an A plus for the day.

Shawn Hill 26:38

Oh, nice. I'll take it. Now. My high school guidance counselor said I wasn't a plus type of look,

Sherry Benelli 26:44

are you, you are definitely. And also with reviews

Shawn Hill 26:47

is, like I said, that you are talking about engagement? You know, when you're replying to reviews, Google sees that you're engaging customers, and it's adding more to that. I also, I was doing a little bit of research and news on things you talked about. I saw you mentioning, liking reviews, and going in. Could you expound a little bit on that? Because obviously here next time we talk about replying, you know, we talked about engaging, but, liking reviews is something as we kind of find out a bit more seems to be something that really could help you out when it comes to getting those reviews featured.

Sherry Benelli 27:18

So when it comes to reviews, a lot of people are mostly afraid of the bad ones, right? So what you can do is you can first of all always reply to reviews, even the negative ones, okay? Even if you know, they're not telling the truth or whatever, reply politely and say, Hey, we're sorry, you

had a bad experience, please call our office. And, talk to Tom, and we'll be happy to talk with you about your issue. Because that tells anybody else who's looking at that review, that you are caring, that you care, you are concerned about negative reviews. But that's number one. The other thing is there's little like but there's a little like thumbs up thing underneath the reviews, go ahead and click on the like button for the five star reviews. Because the more likes you get on the five star reviews, the more likely it is that those will kind of creep up and push down the negative reviews. So that's another trick and strategy that I recommend.

Shawn Hill 28:19

Yeah, and you even if you're in conversation with a leader or client, if they mentioned like, hey, actually I booked you because I read a review about that. Now might be a good opportunity to say, oh, we appreciate that actually, if you know where that review is, if you want to go give it a like then that way, you know it kind of can help kind of spread it. And you'd be surprised how many if you're doing the right things from the customer experience side is how they are willing to go and help you out a little bit more. So it's only good to go. Hey, all right. All 17 of us on staff. What's that? Sorry. What you can do from an organic sense doesn't be something that's taking up a ton of your time. But if you're going in there and you're replying, give it a thumbs up. And I will say it's funny. Every time we talk about replying to reviews, it's always said people go oh, yeah, well, like respond to those negative ones, right? I want to also put out there, make sure you're responding to the positive ones. And if you can add specifics and details there, it goes so much more than Thank you exclamation point. We appreciate your business. I know it's so easy to know, it's so repetitive, or, it kind of helps us systemize it and that sort of way. But when people look at reviews, and there's so many statistics out there of you know, people look at least 10 reviews before they make a decision. We've heard the old trick, I look at the top three and the bottom three, but you talked about you know, people want to see how you respond to the negative. And I think showing, you know appreciation and almost the ability to listen to the positive as well, is also very crucial. And it doesn't need something long or lengthy but you know, show that you're there and you're present and I think about long and lengthy because the another thing I saw that I was very interested in is understanding how your profile is going to login in particular, like your business description, right? Because you definitely want to have something there. But it was a couple of things like, what's going to show before it's expanded and things like that. I love to dive in a bit more on that, because sometimes I see ones where it's one sentence description that doesn't say anything. And I see one where it's, maxing out at like 750 Is there a strategy that you'd recommend for your business description to really help make it a full complete profile?

Sherry Benelli 30:26

Right, so first of all, business descriptions do not help your rankings. So don't keyword stuff it okay, don't fill it with a bunch of keywords, because that's not the purpose for the business description, you're allowed 750 characters, but it typically gets cut off at about 250 characters. So what I always tell people is put the most important information that you want people to know about your products, your service, your company, towards the front of the paragraph, or towards the front of the description. And, I love the whole family owned business for 22 years, everybody's heard that. So come up with something more unique, tell people why they should

pick you versus a competitor, what makes your business unique? What special offerings? Do you have any competitors? Don't? Do you carry a specific brand that you think people might be looking for? Or is there something different about the way you handle things, those are the types of things people are looking for. And Google will often review your description, and they can actually deny your description and refuse it. So you don't want to make it pitchy, you don't want to make any offers in the description, that's not the place for those types of things. So make sure that it's very succinct. That is to the point, but that you also talk about why your business should be the one people choose.

Shawn Hill 31:50

Yeah, and love each other, and don't kill yourself things like that, because it doesn't kind of go for rank. But then also, it's a really rough first impression. You know, I mean, like, if you're just looking in, and it's a sentence, that doesn't make sense, or you kind of can tell, you know, some people might not have marketing degrees or, or really being business at all, but they can tell when you're being a bit of a trihard. And I think that's kind of a bad first impression, because I think a lot of people get into home services in particular, to help to provide no expertise and things like that, they really aren't doing it in this real overly competitive sense, you know, that they want to kind of make their their impact on the world. So, it's great to share that. And look, it's not really going to help you overall. when it comes to, you know, your rank and things like that, but that,

Sherry Benelli 32:34

But yeah, it'll help you differentiate, depending on how you put it. Yeah, exactly.

Shawn Hill 32:38

Exactly. Because what I was saying is you're doing the other things to rank high. That's kind of it. But if you haven't been able to get that rank or you're working your way up, when they find you What do you want them to see, you want them to see who you are not that you're trying to be ranked higher, right. And the last thing to touch on, we could touch on so much more, but I want to make sure, like I said, I want to keep good actual takeaways here is your Google My Business is also its own little ecosystem. So for example, like if you don't have a website, your Google My Business is going to kind of represent that if you do have a website that still could be like the gateway for them to then go to URL. Besides, you know, collecting reviews, or something like a nice job, things like that, are there other ways to encourage your clients, your fans to add to or participate in what you're doing your Google My Business is our way to kind of get them involved? Because some people they're like, look, I want to do more than Google My Business, but I got so much going on. And we always say like people are out there to help you and our customer clients, how can they get involved? Or how can you activate your fan base to really help you on the Google My Business side?

Sherry Benelli 33:42

Yeah, so what a lot of people don't realize is customers and just about anybody could upload photos and videos to your GMB listing. So you can encourage customers to do that. So let's say that your service area business and you just installed a brand new washer and dryer at

someone's home, have them take a picture and upload it and say, Wow, this is so much nicer than the one I had before. Thanks, guys, something like that. The other way that you can have them kind of participate is by asking a question. So there's a Q & A, which is part of Google My Business. It's separate from the Google My Business dashboard, you have to get into the q&a by actually doing a search for your business name, and then asking the questions from within the knowledge panel. But have people ask questions. And what you can do by that is if you know that there are questions people are asking typically, like let's say, you always get the same question like everyday someone calls and ask the same question. post that question on the q&a and then answer it preemptively and proactively ask questions and answers or have a friend ask a question and then you go in and answer it. Let's say that is going to answer questions that people are probably already thinking about, but maybe too afraid. to even take the time to ask that question. So those are some really good ways that you can get people engaged.

Shawn Hill 35:06

Yeah. And that probably helps with your sales process as well, if you're able to get some high level or quick questions out of the way, or even say something like, Hey, do you have specialized things for this? That's right. So it kind of a little bit, like I said, people are going to learn more about you to see what you are about. And that's why it's there. Sherry, thank you so much. There's, we're, we're gonna invite you back at some point in three, for sure. There's so much that we could dive into Google My Business, but I love the things that we touched on, because it kind of said of how to set the standards, you know why it's important to go in and, you know, be particular about what information you're giving, but then why it's important to keep feeding that machine, you know, my business, it doesn't have to be doesn't have to be something that you're set along for every day and go and dive in. But if you are regularly monitoring it, you are actively engaged with it, it goes back to that top question, how do you get on well with Google? Right? Show them that you're valuable, show them that you're active and show them that you are providing information that Google wants to share, which is what the public wants to see. So exactly. I appreciate that. Before I let you go officially, I want to ask you a question. I've been asking everyone here in season two of the Nice Job Podcast. For those that might be listening to their first episode. When I bring on these experts, they have such great knowledge. And they know all these ins and outs, things like that. But I do know that the way they got to that level is to constantly be curious and constantly working on something. So share. My question to you is, what don't you know now that you're either working on the answer toward or that you're excited to find out and it doesn't necessarily have to be Google My Business specific, I just now dive into that expert mindset. So what don't you know, now that you either excited to find out or that you're currently working on,

Sherry Benelli 36:44

I'll tell you so I just finished my first LinkedIn learning course. So I did all the video recording and all the audio and the script writing and stuff like that. But I'm also working on a Google My Business course for a client. And so what I would like to learn is more about video editing, which I have never done before. And I've always been a little scared of it so that is on my bucket list of things to learn.

Shawn Hill 37:09

That's awesome. As a light video editor myself, I spend more time in front of the lens and then behind it. I encourage you to take that on because it's not as hard as you think. As long as you're not trying to create an Avatar out there. Or if you're not trying to create a feature film, but putting together you know, especially for those who might be listening to this we talked about, you know, posting videos and Google My Business there's a lot of free tools out there. But just the basics of editing. All it is is storytelling in a new medium. So, I wish you the best of luck on that adventure. And yeah, I can't wait to see the videos you started putting out sherry.

Sherry Benelli 37:43

Thank you. I appreciate it. Thank you for having me.

Shawn Hill 37:46

I appreciate it. Last thing, if anyone wants to learn more, either about early bird digital marketing, you know, wants to connect with you or anything like that. Where should we direct them towards we'll have some things down the description, when we post the replay the ups and things like that. But for anyone listening live, or you know, listening on the recording where she was heading towards,

Sherry Benelli 38:01

Yeah, you can go to [early bird Digital marketing.com](http://earlybirddigitalmarketing.com). Or you can find me on Twitter at Sherry Benelli.

Shawn Hill 38:08

Well, thank you so much, Sherry, for joining us here on the nice shell podcast. Thank you. I want to ask you, once again, make sure you are healthy, make sure you're being safe. And don't forget to have a little fun out there as well. Before we get to that fun, here's a recap of the business. Special thanks once again to Sherry Bonelli, Early Bird digital marketing so much in that episode, trying just to get three takeaways seemed like it was impossible because I know there's more than that. So I want to hear yours. Share it with us. [podcast at nice job.co](mailto:podcast@nicejob.co) is the email address. Please send us your takeaways from Google My Business that'll help us know what you're getting from the conversation, let us know we should do a part two or part three on this topic. So I'm looking forward to those emails. All right, I'm going to try to give you my three. And I'm going to start with number one, which is just to claim your Google My Business. If you haven't done that yet, it is absolutely the first step that you should do. And if you don't have one to claim, it has already been set up from Google's algorithms, and go ahead and set one up yourself. You can do it absolutely free. And it will help you tremendously, not only on your online presence, but for example, using something like nice jobs is gonna help with that reputation marketing to have a platform to collect reviews to post photos to get engagement. It is absolutely a free sign on the internet that you can claim. So even if you have a website, even social media channels, go claim your Google My Business or get it set up and when you do so, do it correctly. Because you want to make sure that you have it all set and proper so you don't get suspended or taken away in the future. So none of the shady stuff set up legitimately real facts. Get it on there, claim your free zone. And my second takeaway is along those same lines

Ryan's talking about business descriptions, or even your business listing being packed with keywords and just jammed in there. Sherry mentioned that it doesn't really help your ranking in that sense. So it's kind of nonsense. Oftentimes, I think we get so caught up on SEO or rankings and internet presence, that we forget that we're supposed to be writing for our customer writing for our viewer writing for someone that is visiting. So make sure it's genuine and honest and show your personality a bit. Don't worry about trying to stuff for keywords or stuff for advertising. be legitimate, be personal. And that'll go much, much further. And my final takeaway, Sherry broke down the specifics of a service area business versus a hybrid business versus storefront. And the key takeaway for me was, if you have an address listed, you must have some permanent signage, you must have some hours that people could show up at your door with an employee, they're ready to greet them, service them. And you have to be ready for people to come to that address, if not a service area business is how you should be listed. That is a bit of a change from what we heard before. Seems like there was some gray area we could kind of get away with. Right now the recommendation that Sherry is given, based on her knowledge of Google's policies, is unless you have the storefront specifics, list yourself as a service area business. If you can prove one way or the other, then go ahead and do so. But the safe bet for your home service professional just kind of working on your home working on your truck is the use of that service area in the long run. That'll help you rank a bit better, because you'll have that legitimacy as I mentioned, couldn't just be three takeaways from this and please share it with us podcast at nicejob.co. And thank you so much for listening all the way to the end here. We'd love for you to share this podcast with colleagues and peers to friends and family. Love to get some more ears on our podcast here just two episodes ago in season two cannot believe we are getting there now including our big 50th episode to wrap it up. Hopefully you will join us there. I'm Shaun hill here host until those episodes come out over being healthy or being safe. And forget to have a little fun out there as well. See you soon.