

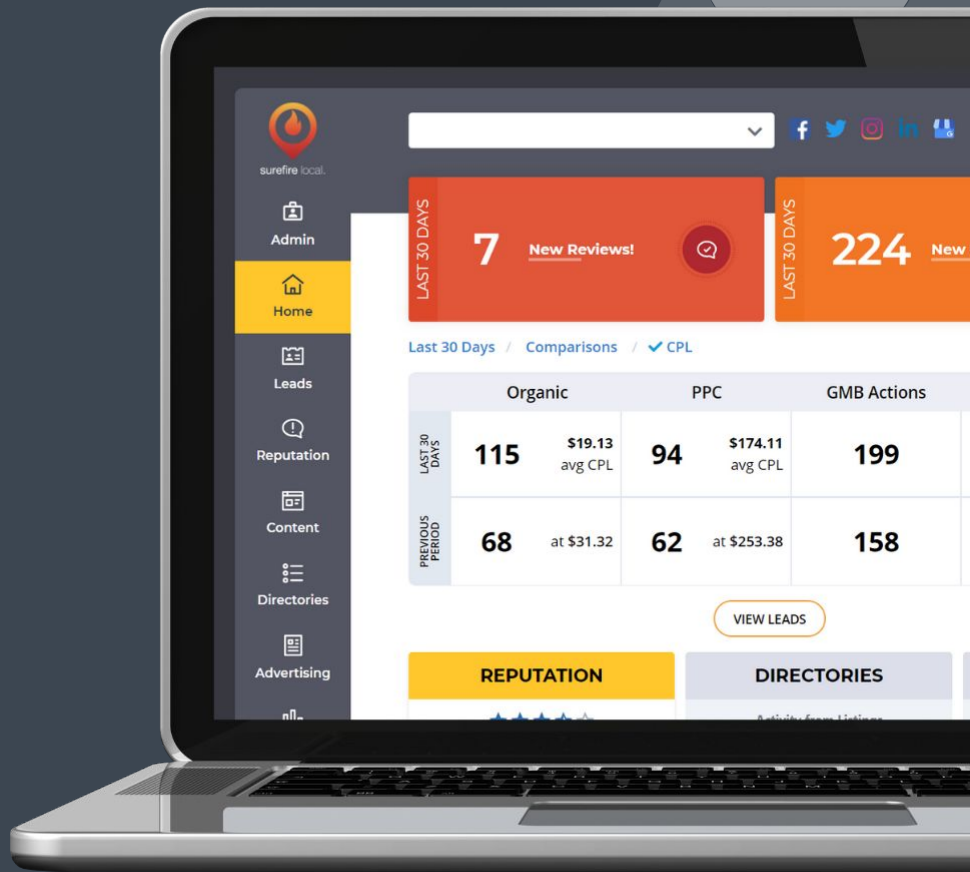


# A Simple Guide to Optimizing Your Small Business for Voice Search



# Our Mission

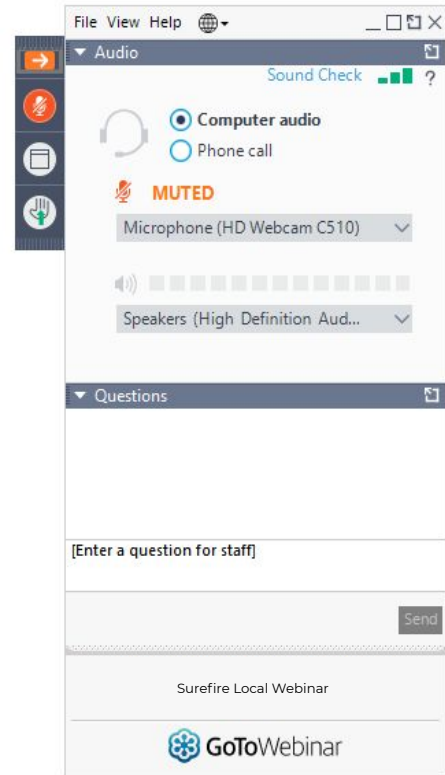
Help **small businesses**  
**grow profitably** by making  
online marketing easier





## Quick Reminders

- 1 You'll receive a recording of this webinar. Please check your spam folder for emails from SurefireLocal.com.
- 2 You can engage using the questions chat box and share feedback by emailing [marketing@surefirelocal.com](mailto:marketing@surefirelocal.com)



Hi! 🖐️

**Nick Konovalov**

Sr. Customer Success Manager



# Agenda



## Voice Search Landscape

A look at the latest trends and insights into how people use voice search throughout their customer journey.



## A Simple Checklist

An overview of how you can optimize your digital footprint on the top voice search platforms.



## Optimizing for Voice Search

Tips for how to get started and how to improve your voice search visibility along the customer journey.

PART 1

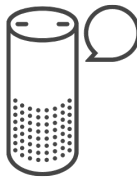
# Voice Search Landscape



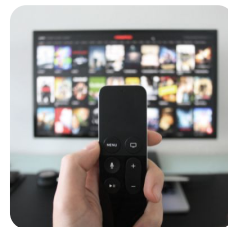
It's becoming increasingly more **accessible** and **convenient** for people to conduct a voice search every day:



Phones,  
Tablets &  
Computers



Smart  
Speakers



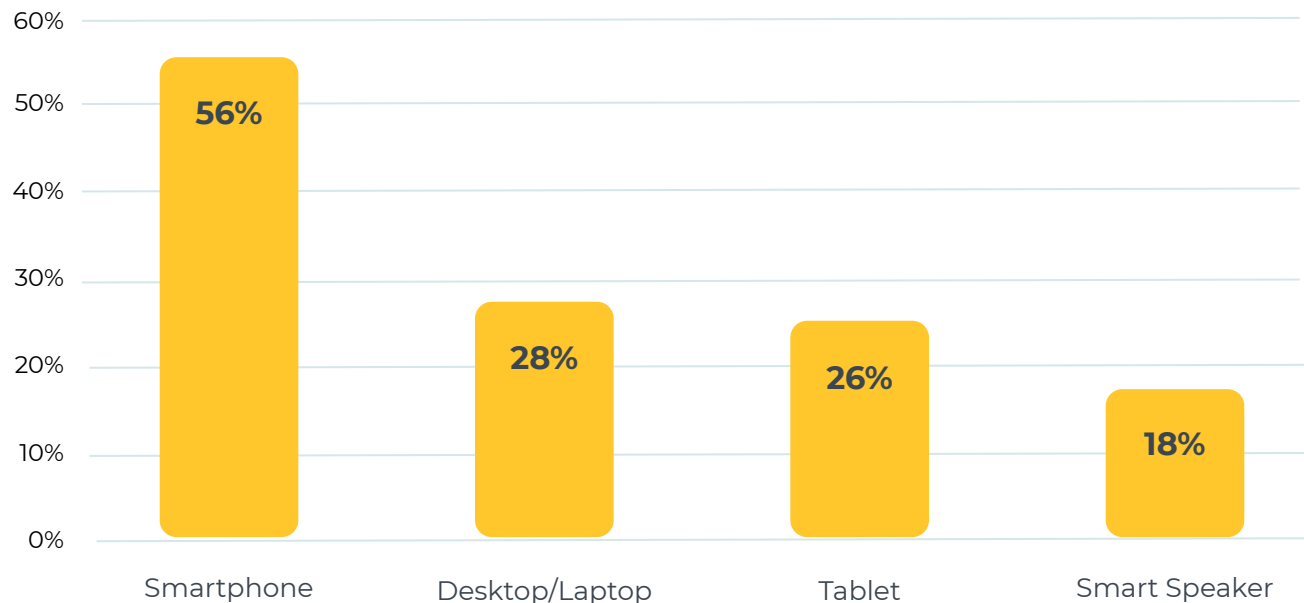
TVs



Cars

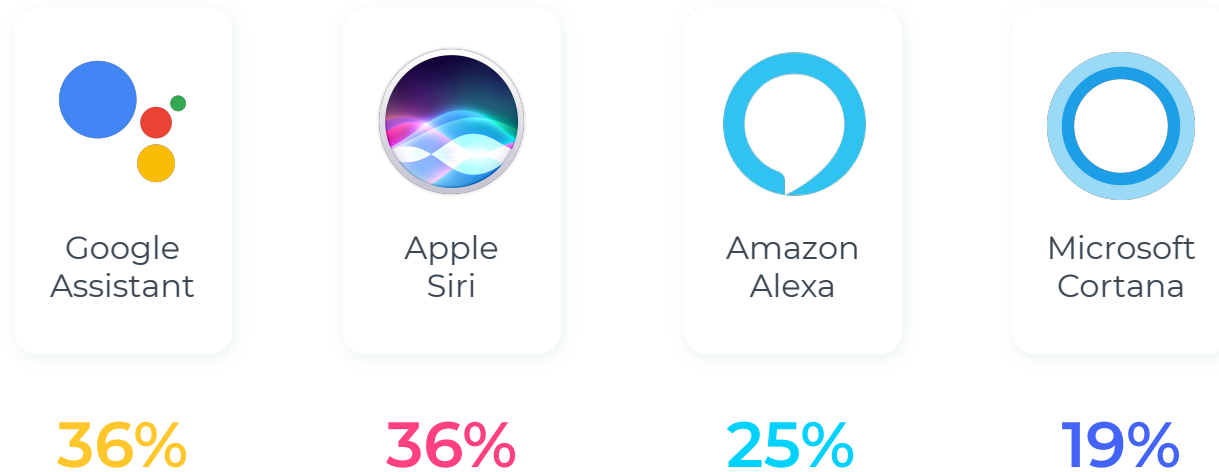
## Voice search by device

According to a BrightLocal study, the most popular devices used to find local businesses through voice search are:



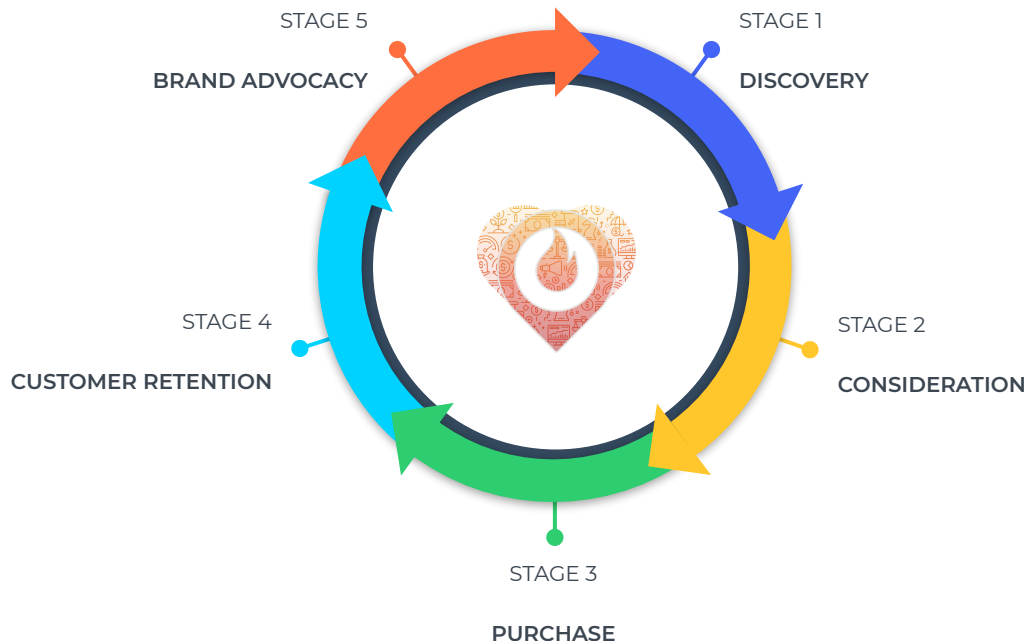


## A Microsoft study shows that Google Assistant and Apple Siri are the most used voice assistants



# People use voice search throughout their customer journey

- Asking questions and recommendations
- No longer about keywords
- Voice searches return **1 result only**; traditional search returns *many results*
- Mix of discovery and direct searches



## Defining discovery and direct voice searches

### Discovery

Discovery search is about finding a type of local business; oftentimes by asking questions.

“Who is the top rated Attorney near me?”

“Find me a roofer with a 4-star rating or higher in Vienna, VA”

### Direct

Direct search is about getting information about a specific local business; there's intent to take the next step.

“Does Your Improved Home have a good star-rating?”

“Call Hanna, Warner, and Associates”

## Voice search ranking and your digital footprint

When someone searches for a local business through voice search, the accuracy of the business's information across key business directory listings will determine whether that business is recommended.

90% of voice search  
ranking is determined by  
Google, Yelp, and Bing



Roughly **75% of voice search results** will rank in the **top 3 positions** for a particular question on a desktop search.

It's estimated that only 4% of local businesses have digital footprints **currently optimized** for voice search.

Why is that? What challenges exist today that prevent small businesses from preparing for the next era of search?

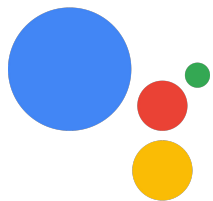
- Have you claimed your business on all of the top business directories?
- Have people written reviews about your business? Are you getting new reviews each month?
- Are you consistently publishing new content targeting customer pain points and answering their questions?
- Is your website built for mobile and do the pages load fast?
- Do you have the right tools & software in place?

PART 2

# A Simple Checklist



# Optimizing your digital footprint for voice search



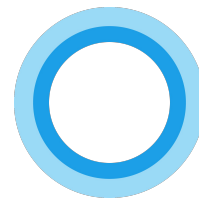
Google  
Assistant



Apple  
Siri



Amazon  
Alexa

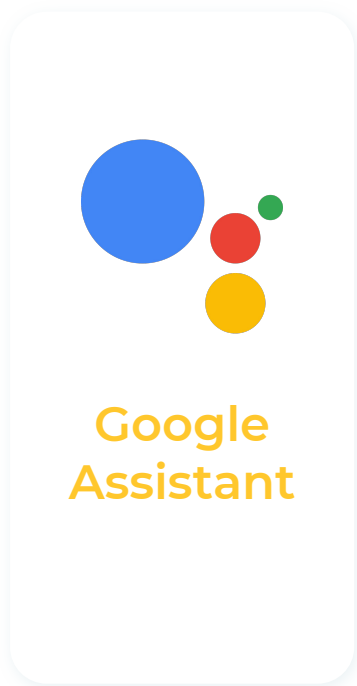


Microsoft  
Cortana





# Optimize for Google Assistant



- ✓ Claim & verify your GMB listing: <https://support.google.com>
- ✓ Add all relevant/necessary information about your business
- ✓ Maintain an updated and accurate listing
- ✓ Consistently get new Google reviews
- ✓ Create relevant content; Posts, Photos, Videos, Questions and Answers

# Google reviews' impact on your voice search ranking

Google filters local results when “best” is used to show only businesses with **4-stars and higher** in the results.

The better your star rating is, the better your chances of ranking in searches with “best”, “top”, “highest rated”



# What to know about Apple Siri

- Apple Maps is the default mapping app on all Apple devices (iPhone, iPad, Mac, Watch)
- 75% of people with iOS devices use Apple Maps; not Google Maps
- Reviews and Photos are synced through your Yelp listing; you cannot add this content directly to Apple Maps like you can on Google Maps



# Optimize for Apple Siri

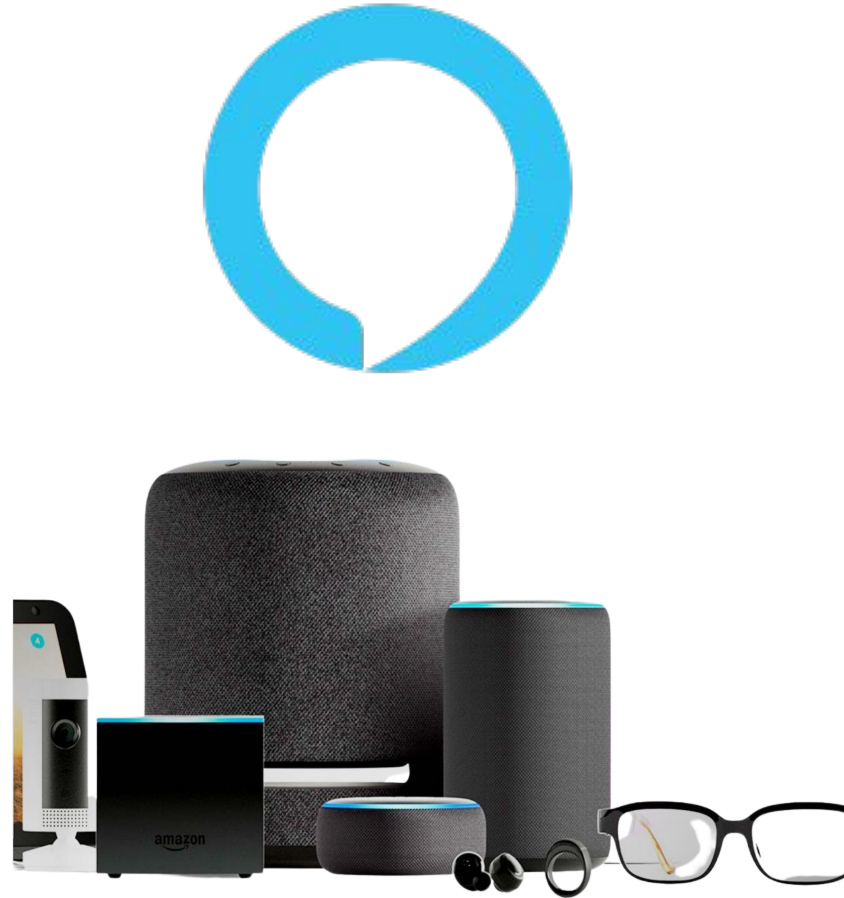


Apple  
Siri

- ✓ Create an Apple ID and claim your Apple Maps listing:  
<https://mapsconnect.apple.com/>
- ✓ Complete your listing with all relevant/necessary information about your business
  - ✓ Business Name
  - ✓ Address
  - ✓ Phone number
  - ✓ Hours of operation
- ✓ Get reviews and upload photos to your Yelp listing

# What to know about Amazon Alexa

- Local business data on Alexa comes from primarily from your Yelp listing: business information, photos and reviews
- Surefire Local Marketing Platform (and other software) enables local businesses to submit their business listing directly to Alexa and manage it on their own



# Optimize for Amazon Alexa

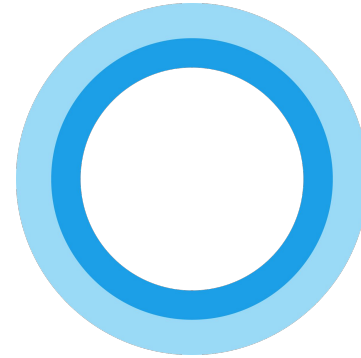


Amazon  
Alexa

- ✓ Get started and claim your business on Yelp:  
<https://business.yelp.com/>
- ✓ Enter complete information about your business; same as your other directories
- ✓ Consistently get new reviews and upload quality photos for your business every month

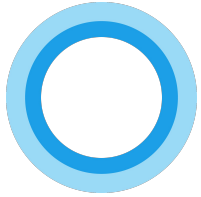
# What to know about Microsoft Cortana

- Microsoft Cortana is the default voice assistant on Microsoft Windows, Xbox, and Microsoft Office
- General local business data comes from Bing Places; while reviews and photos come from Yelp





# Optimizing your digital footprint for voice search



Microsoft  
Cortana



Get started and claim your business:

<https://www.bingplaces.com/>



You can import your GMB listing information directly to Bing Places and receive instant verification

# Your **Yelp** listing is critical to ranking in local voice searches

Your Yelp listing feeds information to Apple Siri, Amazon Alexa, and Microsoft Cortana

- **Claim it** to control what information is available about your business
- **Optimize it** by keeping that information accurate and consistent with your digital footprint to improve your rankings
- **Grow it** by getting reviews, uploading photos, and responding to reviews.



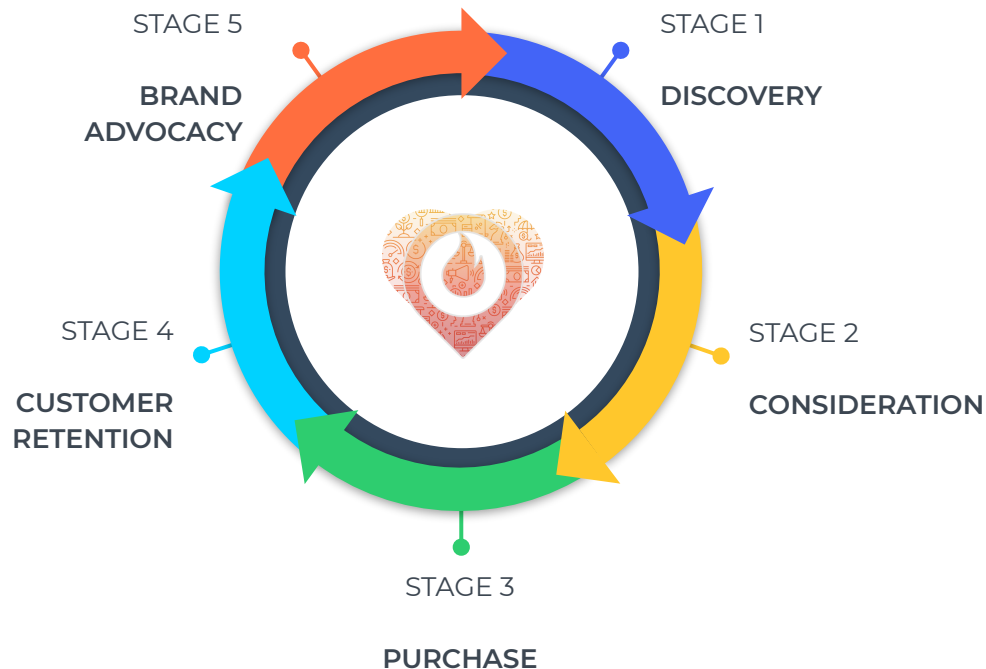
PART 3

# Optimizing for Voice Search



# Mapping your voice search strategy to the customer journey

- Business Directories
- Content: Written & Visual
- Website



# Business Directories



- Claim your business on the top platforms and maintain 100% accuracy of brand data
- Add in complete information: services/products offered, location and the areas you serve
- Consistently share new content - GMB Posts, FAQs, GMB Questions & Answers, Reviews, Photos, etc.
- Get reviews on Google and Yelp and offer an exceptional customer support to earn a high star rating
- Respond to reviews quickly to show you care; recency of reviews matter!
- Update your directories with offer posts on GMB and featured messages every month (or so) with a different promotion

# Content: Written



- Keep it simple. The average voice search is conducted at a comprehension level of a 14-year-old
- General education that provides facts, trends, helpful how-to's and answers to questions
- Comparisons, pros and cons, pricing
- FAQ's
- Build your brand's reputation
  - Years in business, local, defining attributes, awards/recognitions, partnerships, charities, sponsorships, fundraisers, youth sports, community events
- Urgency factors, special offers, and promotions
- Customer stories and testimonials

## When thinking about how you're creating content, keep in mind your writing style

There's a difference between how people speak (conversationally) and how people type (intently).

- Less than 2% of voice search results have the exact keywords in the title
- Get ranked by answering keywords concisely - 41% of voice search answers come from the featured snippets

"Find me the highest rated roofing company in Vienna VA that can replace my roof."

"roofing company Vienna VA"

# Content: Visual



- Create and share high quality photos across your digital footprint (website, directories, social, GMB) showing:
  - Services and products
  - Quality of service
  - About the company, who you are and how you compare to other companies in town
- Create authentic, real videos and infographics to:
  - Alleviate any post cognitive dissonance (second guessing)
  - Become familiar with your staff
  - Show happy customers and how your business has helped improve their lives
  - Upload to Google My Business, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, etc.



# Website



- Built for mobile with fast-loading pages
- Easy to read with clear and concise actionable CTAs
- Easy to navigate so people can find what they're looking for on your website quickly
- FAQ page
- Gallery of photos with geolocation signals on your website to show you're local
- Social proof with customer testimonials
- Schema and structured data to signify your location
- Proper URL structure and prioritizing high quality pages in sitemap to help Google scan and interpret your website

# Recap

Voice search is a golden opportunity  
to **reach more local customers** and  
**position your business to thrive** in  
the next era of search



## Two golden rules to voice search rankings



Having **accurate business information** across the top business directories is a foundational element to your voice search ranking



The **better your star-rating** is, the better your chances of securing that top spot in local voice search queries

# Start with the basics and build a strong foundation



Start with Google

Google My Business must be verified, have accurate information, reviews, and other content



Apple Maps, Yelp & Bing matter

Power more voice search applications than you realize. Claim and maintain your business here



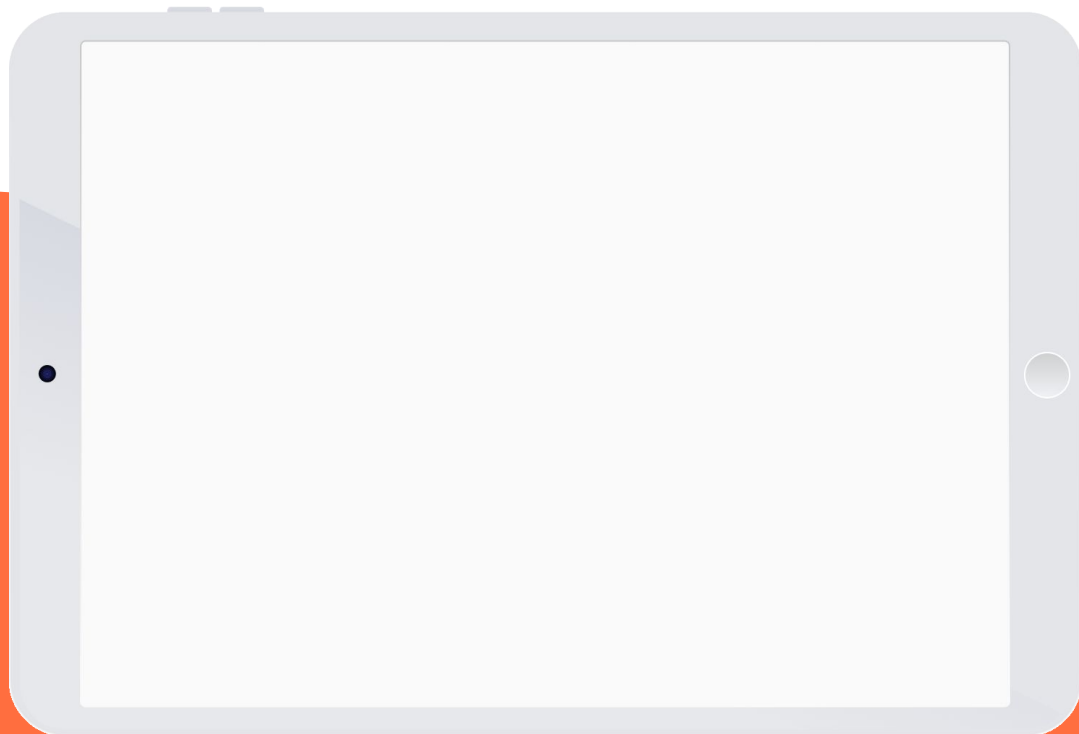
Accurate information

Hours, location, phone number, name, and website information must be correct everywhere



Voice-Friendly Language

Use a conversational writing style on your business listings, website, and blog and provide answers to questions your customers will be asking through voice search



See how the Surefire Local  
Marketing Platform makes  
online marketing easy for your  
small business

**SEO | Social Media | Google My Business |  
Reviews | Online Advertising | and more!**

Yes, let's chat!

I'm already a customer



# Thank you!



SurefireLocal.com



marketing@surefirelocal.com



(703) 884-8442

