FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GOOGLE MAPS DIGITAL PRESENTATION

This webinar was delivered as part of Tourism NI's Tourism Enterprise Development (TED) Programme by our expert speaker Ciaran Connolly, from Profile Tree. Following the session Ciaran kindly provided responses to a number of questions received during the webinar. Please find responses below.

Questions and Responses

1. **If I have B&B's in different locations, do I need to create separate a profile for each? Or could I put it all under one brand name with multiple locations?**

Ideally you will go into your Google My Business and add each location as a separate property. This should be done if each B&B is at a different location, ie different address. Once you sign into your Google My Business – you will be able to go to "Manage Locations" and "Add Location" for each property. The main reasons for this is if a customer is using Google Maps to find your address, the photos, features and reviews should all match each property. Having all the properties in one account makes it easy for you to manage them also.

2. **Is Google Maps part of GMB - is it the same thing?**

Google Maps is the consumer face of Google My Business or GMB. You will use GMB to update your profile and business and then go to Google Maps to see how the updates look. Your customers will only see your brand through Google Maps.

3. How can you stop other similar business uploading photos of their property (we have a holiday cottage) in the middle of our photographs?

Over each photo you will find 3 dots, its location will depend on the device you are using – but they tend to be in the top left corner. When you click on this you have 3 options a) Print b) Report a Problem and c) Share. If you select b) Report a Problem – you have a further list of options. There is one to tick which is "Not a photo or video of the place". Once you submit here it will be checked by a person and removed. If it is not removed after 2-3 weeks, do resubmit and you can also have additional people do the same process. This will push your feedback up the que and get cleared quicker.

4. Is there any point in asking defunct links on SEO to remove links or should these always stay?

If there is a way to remove them or change them to the correct information, I would do this. Defunct links will only annoy users if they click on them, Google also seems them as a negative experience. Hence if possible to update or remove – this is best practice.

5. I have a Google my business account which I have updated for the Tourism Business I work for and I go into the Google My maps as on the map I wish to update the tourist attraction name however it is not permitting me to do this. Any tips?

Ideally if you can make all the changes you need within Google My Business. When you click within Google My Business, the "Info" option – you can update your service area, but also the map as well. Also at the top of the page within the "Info" section you can edit the company name there. The reason you cannot do it from Google My Maps is that it is possibly switching to your personal profile or a low "authority" profile within the Google Maps system and this stops major changes such as name edits due to the Google Maps profile not been a trusted advisor, yet.

6. **If someone is malicious and posts a photo or comment which is damaging to the business, can you delete this?**

Any irrelevant photo of a location can be removed. Over each photo you will find 3 dots, its location will depend on the device you are using – but they tend to be in the top left corner. When you click on this you have 3 options a) Print b) Report a Problem and c) Share. If you select b) Report a Problem – you have a further list of options. There is one to tick which is "Not a photo or video of the place". Once you submit here it will be checked by a person and removed. If it is not removed after 2-3 weeks, do resubmit and you can also have additional people do the same process. This will push your feedback up the que and get cleared quicker. But if the photo is of the location and may be seen as a true reflection of the location – then it may stay. This option is for removing photos that are not of the location. The system will lean in your favour – so multiple reports of this should get it removed.

A comment can be highlighted for remove using the same 3 dots just over the comment – normally to the right hand side. These 3 dots will allow you to "flag as inappropriate". When going this route you have the following options a) This review is not relevant to this place b) Conflict of Interest c) Offensive or sexually explicit d) Privacy concerns and e) Legal issue. Select the option that is most relevant to the comment and again if you could have more than 1 profile report the post – this will help. The post will need to fit within these problems – it is not possible to review a post if it is a genuine review.

7. **I've clicked on 'Contribute' and find businesses next to my business. How can I become findable or pop up here?**

Within the Google Maps app – the Contribute option is for consumers who have visited your location. They will be invited to add photos and review for your property or service. The best way to appear in the Google Map app is to have as complete a profile as possible – but also integrate your digital marketing. The app now has an incredible Newsfeed that pulls in content from websites and Google itself. So posting articles, appearing in Top 10 lists for example, awards and press releases can all appear in this app now – making a digital strategy even more effective and valuable for any Tourism business.

8. What is the Google URL link to send to customers that goes to the specific Google page to do a Google review on our company?

If you go into Google My Business, you will see an option "Get more reviews", click on this and you will have a unique short code for your business. You can immediately share this via Facebook, Whatsapp and Twiiter – or copy the code and share it. The code will look something like this https://g.page/BUSINESSNAME/review?rc Again you can edit the code to reflect your business name and this is a great way to encourage reviews for your business.

Best way to use Google to promote a destination that covers a wide area and multiple attractions, eateries, etc.

I would recommend adding each separate element of the location – if there is some travel and they are a stand alone element. So if someone would go to 1 location on the site and enjoy that experience, but not visit another part – then I would create a Google Map profile for it alone. If you think how shops are on a street – each location is a separate experience while very close together – each location has different photos, reviews, services. If the site is large and does have the same effect – ie very different experiences and the business could manage multiple sites – I would recommend this, as you will get more space within Google and more opportunity to be promoted to potential visitors and customers.

Otherwise if someone visits your location and easily gets around each site and it is all located together – 1 Google Map profile may be a lot better to do.