

Eclipse Marketing Checklist

Are you ready for the influx of visitors to the area for the eclipse on August 21? You've ordered extra supplies and you've stocked up on all the necessary items. But what about your marketing? Have you given your online presence a once over to make sure people can find you and understand what it is you have to offer?

People, especially people traveling to a new area, rely on the results they'll find on Google when searching for a place to eat, grab a drink, or buy that aloe vera to treat their sunburn. They'll also take a look at the reviews available for each option. They'll make their decision before ever stepping foot in your place of business.

So how do you make sure you're putting your best foot forward? Follow the checklist below and you'll be on the right track to presenting out-of-towners with the information they need to choose you.

1. Get friendly with Google.

Check your Google My Business listing to make sure your business is on there and categorized properly. If you want people to find you when searching for a cafe, then make sure you're listed as a cafe. Go here to list your business or view your listing: <https://www.gybo.com/business>

2. Evaluate your reviews.

Do you have any reviews? Are the reviews from people who have actually been to your place of business? If you have less than five reviews, it's time to reach out to those you know who have worked with you or purchased from you. Ask them to please review your business so visitors will be able to choose you with confidence.

To send potential reviewers straight to your Google listing:

1. Open up your browser.
2. Go to [google.com](https://www.google.com).
3. In the search bar, search for your business by entering your business name.
4. Did your business come up with a Google listing (on a desktop, it will be a rectangle off to the right side; on mobile, the listing should be the first result)? If not, then repeat the first item on this checklist to get friendly with Google.
5. If you answered yes to step 4, then click on the address bar (the URL at the top of the page). Highlight the whole thing and then copy it by holding down Control + C on your keyboard.

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Note: If you have bogus reviews from people who have never visited your business, you can report those reviews to Google as fraudulent. After reporting the review, your next step should be to reply calmly and patiently to the review, asking if they have done business with you and if they would let you know more about their experience so you can remedy any issues.

3. Check your social media.

Take a look at Facebook. Do you have a Facebook Page for your business? Are your hours and address listed correctly? Do you have any reviews on Facebook? Look specifically at:

Your Address

Your Hours

Your Reviews

Your About section

If you don't even have a review tab, it's time to add one. Here are the steps:

1. Go to your Facebook Page for your business on a laptop or desktop.
2. Click Settings (toward the top and right of the screen).
3. Click Edit Page (on the left in the list of menu items).
4. Scroll down to Tabs.
5. Click "Add Tab" at the bottom. Then choose the Reviews tab. You can drag and drop the tabs to reorder them if you'd like.

4. Designate a person to field online inquiries.

When people arrive in such quantities as we're expecting, calling to inquiry about your business may not be an option: the phones may just too busy. So the next avenue many will take is to contact you via your Facebook Page. Set up an auto-responder to assure anyone who messages you that someone will be right with them. You should have one of these in place anyway. Then make sure your designated person has the Pages app and will receive notification to their phone. Then set a schedule to check it regularly.

Your responsiveness might not land you a customer, but a lack of responsiveness will certainly drive one away.

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5. Add photos online.

When you were evaluating your Google listing and Facebook, did you look at the photos posted? The photos posted need to show what the place looks like from the outside (to help people find it), and what's going on inside. Photos showing people at your business enjoying themselves will encourage others to come and do the same.

If you don't have any photos up, then start now. Ask your customers to post a selfie and check-in on Facebook. Ask them to upload the image to your Google listing as they leave a review.

Motivate their participation by offering to enter everyone who participates in a drawing of some sort. Make it a big deal and share it in local Facebook groups.

6. Utilize your biggest fans.

I just mentioned local Facebook groups. St. Clair in particular has a very active local group of consumers and business owners. It's called People Making St. Clair Succeed. There are other groups as well such as St. Clair Talk.

Join those groups and then let everyone know what you have planned for the eclipse. If you need reviews, start now by asking those who have been to your business to please leave you reviews. Be sure to post the link to your Google search results and your Facebook Page so they just have to click to go to the right place to leave a review.

Be involved and help other businesses where you can as well.

7. Ask for help.

Do you need help with any of these things? Then ask someone you know is qualified to help you. If you don't know anyone, then contact the author of this checklist, Mindy Schoeneman (that's me). I have set aside two appointment times between now and the eclipse to help businesses who need it. You can come to my office with the other businesses who need the same type of help and we'll quickly get you set up.

If you need other help, such as additional staffing, then ask now. Hire those you need right away. It's time.

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8. Take pictures during the eclipse.

Take a moment when possible to take some photos. Show your place of business full up of people enjoying themselves. You can use these images moving forward in your marketing.

9. Over-prepare.

Plan for the worst-case scenario. Nothing can hurt your business growth efforts quite like being caught unprepared. If something could go wrong, chances are it might. Have contingency plans in place for the worst-case scenarios. And have a plan for communication. Know what you'll say and who you'll say it to.

By putting a communication plan in place, you'll have a ready answer for customers and employees in case anything doesn't go according to plan.

Mindy Schoeneman is the owner and creator at Sincerely Me where she helps her customers make more sales by working with them to brand and market their business in a way that not only renders a sale but also creates a connection between business and customer that will keep that customer coming back again and again. Mindy is a St. Clair native who desperately wants to see the city's residents thrive.



Visit her website at <https://sincerelymewords.com> or give her a call at 636.221.3005. She has set aside two evening appointments to host a workshop for any businesses who may need Google or social media help before the eclipse.

