
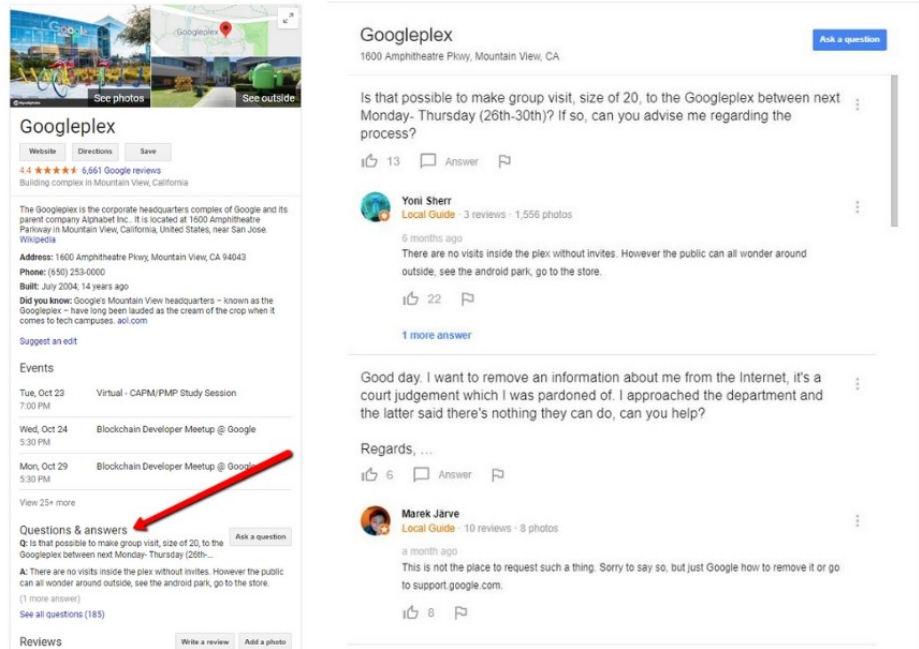


# What You Should Know About Google's Local Q&A Feature

 [start.youreview.us/know-googles-local-qa-feature](http://start.youreview.us/know-googles-local-qa-feature)



## Google's Local Q&A Feature



The screenshot shows a Google My Business listing for 'Googleplex' at 1600 Amphitheatre Pkwy, Mountain View, CA. The listing includes a 4.4-star rating from 5,561 reviews and a description of the building. A red arrow points to the 'Questions & answers' section, which contains a question about a group visit and an answer from Yoni Sherr. Below the answer, there is a question from Marek Järve asking for help with a court judgement, which has not been answered yet.

Launched in August of 2017, **Google's Questions and Answers feature located within a business listing in local results, has incredible potential.** After all Google's mission is to *'organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.'* But this feature seems to be going unnoticed by local merchants and business owners.

Consumer behavior has proven that **the majority of a local consumer's actions are occurring, more and more often, directly on Google results pages.** Providing the most useful information directly in search results through your local knowledge panel just makes sense.

So, ready or not, Google Q&A is here, and **you can start utilizing it to answer your potential customers valuable product or service questions within your business listing** – at a glance on the local knowledge panel. Here is a guide for what you should know about Google's Local Q&A feature:

## Begin Monitoring Google Questions and Answers Now

**Many e-com and local business owners are missing out by ignoring or not incorporating the Google Q&A feature** in their online reputation management. The potential for local, small business owners is ripe and ready for the taking.

How many times have you kicked yourself for jumping in the game too late? Well, here is your chance to be a starter. Simply **incorporate monitoring the Questions and Answers feature** found in your Google My Business Listing, **consistently reply to your customer's questions** and

you're on your way.

## The Influence of Google Questions and Answers


Small business owners and online merchants understand that creating a consistent brand story on your site gives your potential customers the confidence to call or visit your store. But, as with vital online reviews, star ratings and social media interaction, *the opinions (good or bad) of existing customers in Google Questions and Answers will influence potential customers and affect your bottom line.*



As a business owner you can easily answer questions posted on your Google Business Listing. Local Guides, Google's own troop of local content contributors, will often answer questions too. The following example of Q&A interaction features both Local Guides and the business owner communicating with potential customers:


### Park N' Jet

2200 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT  
[← All questions](#)



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 **Clair Theurer**  
Do we need a reservation? What is the price for parking in Lot A from morning of August 10 to late afternoon August 15?

 Helpful? 



 **David Tutt**  
a month ago

Thank you for your question Clair. We do not require a reservation to park here at Park n' Jet. However, booking a reservation is the easiest way to pay and park. Feel free to get a free quote from our website, and you can always call if you have any more questions.

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 **Angela Thredgold**  
Local Guide · 8 reviews  
a month ago

I just did the reservation for what i thought the times would be and paid online. Then at the end they figured my actual time and refunded me the amount of my coupon, so worked out great!

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While Google's Q&A resembles Amazon's Questions & Answers and Yelp's Ask the Community features, the big difference here is that *anyone who believes they have an answer can reply and everyone can instantly see the results on your business listing*. This also gives way for negative fake answers to legitimate questions or a competitor's defamation. Yet another reason why *you can't afford to ignore the Google Questions and Answers feature* .

## Important Facts About Google Q&A

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With Google's objective being to provide users with enhanced details about your local small business, it is important to *provide useful and meaningful answers to potential customer's questions*. Here are a few important facts about Google's Q&A to keep in mind as this feature gains momentum:

### Thumbs Up Ranking Provides Instant Visibility

A Question voted as helpful by other users with a 'thumbs up' moves out of the 'see all questions' link for instant visibility on the local knowledge panel. The Question ranking is based on the thumbs up vote and *the question with the most votes rank first to appear in your local business listing*.

### False Content in Q&A Can Damage Your Online Reputation

In the world of rainbows and unicorns Google's instantly-posted Q&A can be a good thing, but it can just as easily turn really ugly, really fast. *False or offensive answers and negative or slanderous answers from cut-throat competitors can instantly damage your online reputation*.

### Google's Updated User Contributed Policy

The rules of engagement for Google's Questions and Answers can be found in an updated user contributed content policy in Google Maps. The policy still covers photos, video, reviews and other contributed content but now applies to the Questions & Answers feature as well. *User contributed content must be based on real information and experiences*. Prohibited and restricted content that is in violation of the policy can be reported and removed within 12-36 hours, including:

- Fake or Spam Content
- Impersonation
- Conflict of Interest
- Illegal Content
- Restricted Content
- Sexually Explicit Content
- Offensive Content
- Dangerous and Derogatory Content

### Report a Q&A Guideline Violation

To report a violation of Google's Q&A guidelines simply click on the points of ellipsis (the three vertical dots) next to the question or answer in your business listing. ***Google's response to a valid violation is generally quick and resolute.*** It is recommended to stay ahead of the game here and monitor Q&A content daily to protect your online reputation.

## Why Google Q&A Matters for Local Business Owners

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Google's success and ***the success of online merchants and local business owners are directly related to positive online reputation via consumer feedback.*** With a direct correlation to sales, your capacity to ***win the trust and resulting business of a potential customer online is vital*** to your ongoing and future success.

## YouReview Can Help Keep Track of Your Online Reputation

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With Google's objective being to provide users with enhanced details about your local small business, it is important to provide useful and meaningful answers to potential customer's questions. ***It's not just content, it's your reputation.***

While there are currently no analytics for the Q&A feature in Google Insights, the ***online reputation management professionals at YouReview agree that it is only a matter of time until it is.*** But the focus here should be about conversions instead of SEO, so ***helping the consumer make the decision to choose you over your competition is the main goal.***

Try our effective DIY reputation tool free for 14 days. The Online Reputation Experts at YouReview can show you where your online reputation currently stands and how to ***easily monitor and manage what people say about you to build your e-com or local business.*** There is no obligation, risk or credit card required.

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Chevelle Garnett

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