



# HOW TO ADAPT YOUR BUSINESS:

## Best Practices for Owning Your Online Listings

Owning your online reputation has been an escalating priority for years and its importance has only increased in the wake of COVID-19. With rising cases across the US, 72% of consumers stated at the end of July that they will probably only get restaurant food for takeout or delivery.<sup>1</sup> Online ordering is now the primary source of revenue for many restaurants, and 53% of younger Americans say they've ordered from a restaurant online or through an app due to COVID-19.<sup>2</sup> It is critical to be in control of your online listings so that your restaurant is at the table for online considerations, and to verify that information being shared about your brand is accurate.

### ONLINE LISTING CONSIDERATIONS

Inclusion in most online local business directories is free and drives traffic to your restaurant. Consider the following to efficiently take advantage of these directories:

- **Determine which platforms make the most sense for you.** Your time is valuable, and it is not effective to get listed on every single business directory just because it exists. Be sure you are represented on the major players (Google My Business, Facebook, Yelp) and handpick other platforms that make the most sense for your business.
- **Be consistent.** Create a document that includes all your information to prevent mistakes and save time when entering information in multiple platforms.
- **Follow formatting best practices.** Google has set the tone for best practices when it comes to formatting your information. [Click here](#) for their full guidelines, and make note of these quick tips:
  - **Business Name/Title:** Use your real-world business name that matches your sign, logo, social profiles and other marketing materials.
  - **Address:** List your physical store address, not a PO box or virtual office. It is good practice to put your street address in line 1 and your suite or mailbox number (if applicable) in line 2.
  - **Website URL:** Always list your business website, not a third party or social profile. For multiple locations, list your website homepage for all locations.
  - **Categories:** If a platform allows you to set categories that define your business, make sure to select those that are specific to and best representative of your main business. These categories directly impact your search rankings.
  - **Images:** Images have a major impact on click-through rates according to Google, so be sure to include high quality images of your food. Follow the image guidelines communicated by each platform so that your images look clear and appetizing.

### ONLINE LISTING PLATFORMS

Research listing platforms that you think will be most impactful for your business. The following list is not all-inclusive, but highlights some of the major players to consider:

- **[Google My Business](#), [Yahoo](#) and [Bing](#):** Listing on search engines is free for small businesses and allows people to easily find your restaurant and provide reviews.
- **[Facebook](#):** The largest social networking platform is free to join and lets you to build a business page with strategies to grow your customer base and improve engagement.



# HOW TO ADAPT YOUR BUSINESS:

## Best Practices for Owning Your Online Listings

- **Instagram:** Also free, many restaurants are using Instagram to bring their menus to life because of its entirely visual platform.
- **Yelp:** With more than 178 million unique visitors a month, many customers rely on Yelp to help them find local business listings and reviews.
- **Trip Advisor®:** The world's largest travel site provides reviews on restaurants, hotels and other venues to visitors and locals alike.
- **Zomato:** Like Yelp but geared specifically towards restaurants—Zomato automatically curates the top restaurants nearby and assigns a ratings system based on customer votes. Sign in to add your restaurant and edit your own information.
- **Open Table®:** This app allows diners to book reservations directly into your POS for a fee and provides reviews only from diners who have eaten at the restaurant.
- **Yellow Pages:** Nearly 60 million consumers visit yp.com each month, and 91% of them have contacted a business. Claim your free ypProfile to get listed and respond to reviews.
- **Local Business Directories:** Don't forget the local resources and business associations that are unique to your location!

### MONITORING YOUR ONLINE LISTINGS

Continuously monitoring your online listings is just as important as claiming them:

- **Maintain Accurate Data:** Remember to keep your information updated on all listings should anything change. Keeping a record of your listings, usernames and passwords in one place is helpful to refer back to.
- **Respond to Customer Reviews:** Many listing platforms give your customers the opportunity to rate and review your restaurant. It is important to be aware of what people are saying and to respond to all reviews, both positive and negative. Learn more about interacting with your customers online in our [blog post!](#)
- **Monitor Images:** Many platforms allow users to upload photos of your business. Review your profiles regularly to remove inappropriate or inaccurate images of your products.
- **Watch for Unclaimed Listings:** Google and review services can build profiles for you without your consent or knowledge. It is incredibly important to claim your business and manage your presence on these sites. Most recently, third-party delivery sites have started doing this to increase selection on their platforms. If you discover your restaurant listed on a third-party delivery site, you may request its removal by contacting them directly.

The quality, consistency and reach of your local business information directly impacts your revenue. Not being represented at all or having a false listing that is unclaimed are both detrimental to your ability to attract new customers to your restaurant.

**VISIT [GRANCHEESE.COM/COVID-19-TOOLS](https://www.grandcheese.com/covid-19-tools)  
FOR MORE TOOLS AND INFORMATION**

<sup>1</sup> *Datassential, Report 28: Temperature Check, July 24, 2020*

<sup>2</sup> *PEW Research Center, From Virtual Parties to Ordering Food, How Americans are Using the Internet During Covid-19, April 30, 2020*