



**MASONIC
MARKETING
SERIES**

By 32° Scottish Rite Freemasonry, NMJ

Vol. 5

MASONIC MARKETING SERIES

Google Business Profiles

A Step-By-Step Guide For Raising
Your Visibility On Google

SCOTTISH RITE™
Northern Masonic Jurisdiction

What is a Google Business Profile?

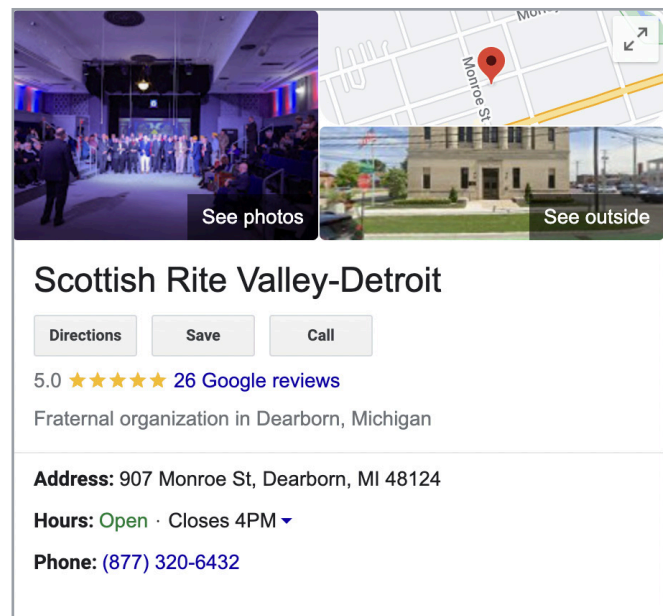
Google is the world's most-visited website with over 3.5 billion searches each day. As part of their search engine, Google offers Business Profiles - a listing that appears in Google Search, Maps and includes essential business information. At its core, a Google Business Profile is an entity's online "storefront."

Creating a Google Business Profile is free and allows you to manage how your lodge or Valley appears across Google platforms, and is a great way to increase your visibility online. You can personalize your profile with photos, updates, and more to ensure you're providing Brethren and prospective Brothers with the most accurate and up-to-date information.

In this e-book we will explain how to set up a Business Profile for your lodge or Valley, as well as share tips and best practices for optimizing and maintaining your listing.



The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts' Google Business Profile



The Scottish Rite Valley of Detroit's Google Business Profile

Step One: Collect Essential Information

To get started, you should have the following information on-hand for a swift set up of your Google Business Profile:

- **Name:** The name of your lodge or Valley
- **Category:** We suggest selecting “Fraternal organization”
- **Physical address OR service-area:** This can be the address of your lodge or the regions included in your Valley
- **Phone number:** Give some thought as to how you’d like users to be able to contact you. We’d advise against using a personal phone number; consider using an online phone or voicemail provider like [Google Voice](#) if your lodge or Valley doesn’t currently have a public phone number.
- **Email address:** The email that will be used to log in and manage your Google Business Profile. We recommend using or creating an email specific to your lodge or Valley.

Tip: Before setting up a profile, search for your lodge or Valley on Google and see what information appears. Google may have already pulled information about your Valley or lodge from the web and compiled it into a profile. If this is the case, you can still set up an account and manage the information presented to ensure it’s accurate.

Step Two: Set up Your Google Business Profile Account

CREATE AN ACCOUNT

To create and/or manage a Google Business Profile, create a new account with an existing email address by clicking “Sign in” at <https://www.google.com/business/> (you do not have to use a Gmail account.) You will be brought to a sign-in page. Click “create account,” then “To manage my business” to create your Business Profile account.

Once you are logged into your account, it will then prompt you to “Find and manage your business.” Then, enter and search for the name of your lodge or Valley. If your lodge or Valley is not already listed on Google, click “Add your business to Google.”

Display window where you'll enter your lodge or Valley information and begin building your Business Profile

A preview of the window that will appear when you go to create your account

It will then ask you for the name and category of your organization. You should use your Valley or lodge name and select the category “Fraternal organization.”

ENTER YOUR ADDRESS OR SERVICE AREA

While Business Profiles are built for businesses that make in-person contact with customers during specific hours, you don't need a physical address to list your organization. For Valleys and some lodges that may not have a physical address, you can include your areas of service.

For example, the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite, NMJ lists the 15 states within the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction as our “service areas”.

If your lodge has a physical location, enter the address of your lodge. Your location will need to be verified by Google. Most businesses can verify ownership via phone, SMS, or by requesting and receiving a postcard to your address from Google.

Example of how to enter service areas when setting up a Google Business Profile

ENTER YOUR PHONE NUMBER AND WEBSITE

Enter the phone number associated with your lodge or Valley. This phone number will be public-facing and, as such, should not be a personal number.

You will also be prompted in this step to enter your organization's website URL. If you don't have a website, you may leave this blank. Alternatively, as a temporary solution to a website, you can consider using your lodge or Valley's Facebook page as your website URL. If you pursue this route, you should ensure that your Facebook page is updated regularly and features content available to the public.

An example of the display window that will appear when entering your phone number and website.

ENTER YOUR OPERATING HOURS

While many lodges and Valleys may not have formal operating hours, you will be required to provide them in order to set up your profile. We recommend defining your “operating hours” by the days and times of the week when a representative from your organization will be available for inquiries. You can also consider including your regular lodge meeting time here, giving prospective members an idea of how their schedules may align with fraternal activities.

ENTER YOUR BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

One of the most important pieces of information you can add to your Google Business Profile is a business description. This text will appear prominently on your Business Profile in search and is often the source users will look to to learn more about your organization. This is especially important if your lodge or Valley does not currently have a website.

In your business description, you should aim to answer:

1. What Freemasonry and/or the Scottish Rite is - what we believe in, our mission, and Core Values.
2. Who belongs to your organization - i.e. Master Masons in Lancaster, Pennsylvania or Scottish Rite Masons residing in the New York metropolitan area.

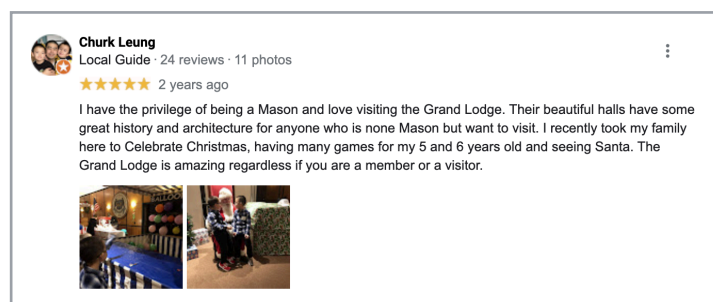
You may add additional color, such as when your lodge meets, as desired. Keep in mind that, if you forego a business description, Google may populate a description from various sources online that may not be entirely accurate. For the greatest control of your organization and its public image, we highly recommend writing your own.

ADD IMAGES

Next, you'll be prompted to upload pictures of your organization. While this is optional, we highly recommend adding a few photos to your profile to help illustrate the mission and Brotherhood of your lodge or Valley.

Select and upload a variety of photos, including pictures from past events, charity initiatives, and of your Brothers, that are high-quality. We also recommend including a description with each image.

Since Google Business Profile is also community based, visitors and other Google users can add images to your Profile when they submit a review with photos attached. Ask your Brothers to leave a positive review and share photos from their collection to give users a taste of what your Brotherhood is all about!



Example of a user review with photos from the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts' Google Business Profile

After you've added photos, your Google Business Profile is officially complete!

Step Three: Maintaining & Optimizing Your Google Business Profile

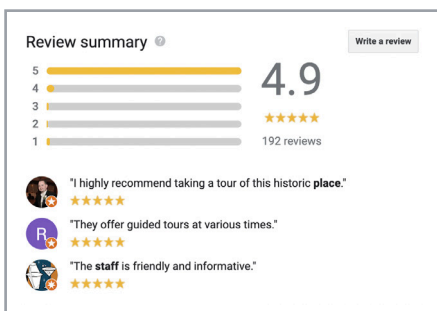
You've completed the minimum required fields and have your profile listed, but why stop there? Now that your page is set up, take some extra time to optimize your profile and utilize the additional features offered by Google such as reviews, updates, and a Q&A.

Doing so will not only bolster your lodge or Valley's credibility, but can help users find additional information not freely found online, as well as offer the assurances they need to take the next step and inquire about membership.

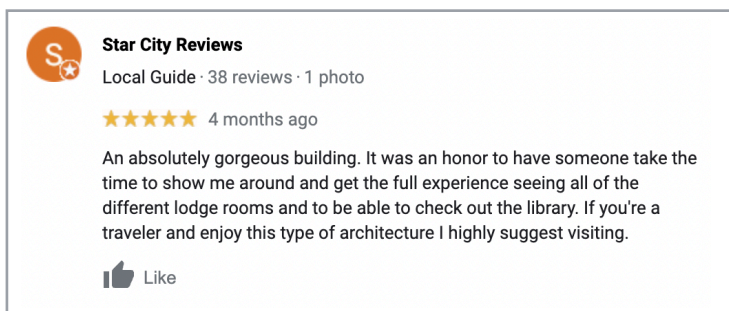
You can leverage the below listed features in your Google Business Manager, found by pressing "Manage Now" at <https://www.google.com/business/>.

GOOGLE BUSINESS REVIEWS

Once your page is set up, you may start receiving reviews from visitors or members of your lodge or Valley. Displaying a positive Google rating will help instill confidence in prospective Brothers and spark pride among existing members, so it's worthwhile to pay attention to this section of your profile.



Reviews for the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library



A 5-star review for the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts

To get started, ask Brethren to leave a positive review. Encourage them to freely share their Masonic experience - it's important your reviews are genuine in order to build credibility.

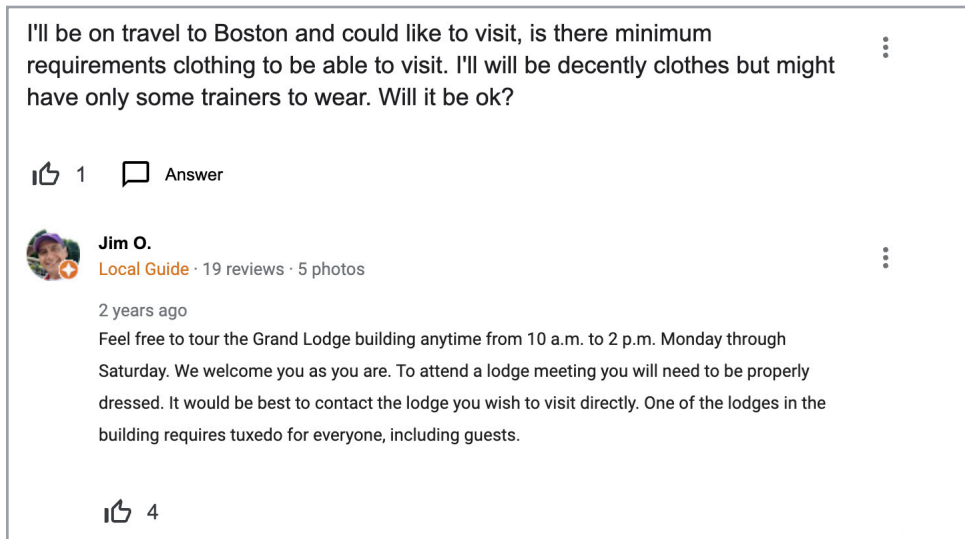
Since your Google Business Profile is a public channel, non-members are also permitted to leave reviews of your organization. For this reason, it's important to regularly monitor your Google Reviews and respond appropriately.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Your Google Business Profile also allows users to leave questions for the organization to answer. At the very least, you should consider assigning a representative of your lodge or Valley to monitor questions that are submitted and respond in an accurate and timely manner.

The Questions & Answers section is also a good place to answer frequently asked questions (FAQs) that the public may have about joining Freemasonry or the Scottish Rite. While businesses can't directly upload FAQs to their profile, you can solicit members to submit a common inquiry that a representative from your lodge or Valley can then later answer.

Both the questions and answers are public to all, so be sure to proofread your response!



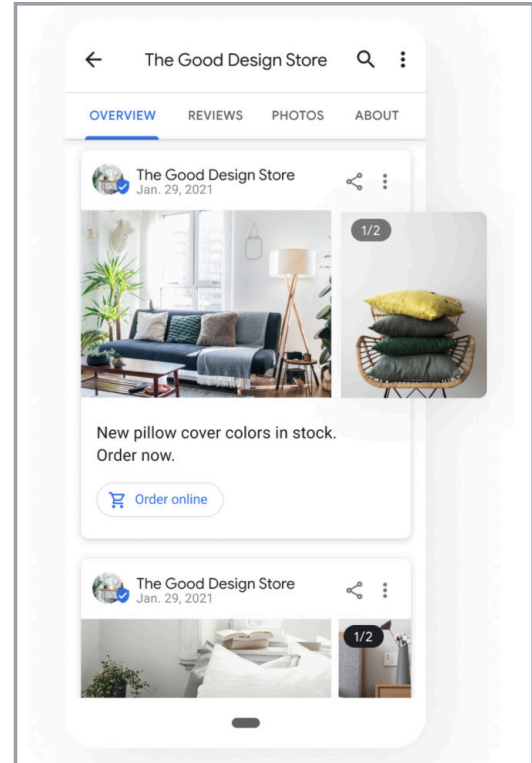
An example question and answer from Grand Lodge of Massachusetts' Google Business Profile

SHARE UPDATES VIA POSTS

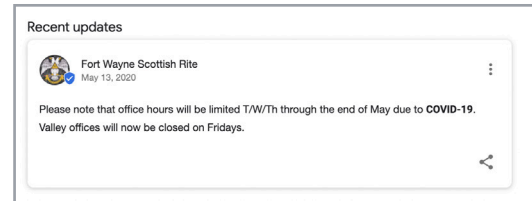
In your Business Profile Manager in the right-hand column is a feature called “Posts.” Posts allow Businesses to share updates, offers, and events with users on Google. We recommend all Masonic lodges and Valleys leverage this feature to share the latest happenings and news, but especially for organizations who don’t have a website.

Below are some ideas of the types of content you can consider sharing to your Google Business Profile. Keep in mind, everyone online can see these updates so ensure that your content is suitable for the public, and that any individuals featured in photos are comfortable with you sharing on Google.

- Photos from your latest meeting, Reunion, or event
- Invitations to your upcoming charitable event
- Words of congratulations or thank you to incoming or outgoing officers, newly initiated members, etc.
- Blog posts
- Announcements for upcoming joining opportunities
- Holiday greetings



An example of a post in Google Business



An example of a Google Business profile update from the Valley of Fort Wayne

Conclusion

We hope this e-book will help you get started in setting up your Google Business Profile and showcasing your lodge or Valley online. It's important to show accurate and up-to-date information to ensure Brothers and prospective members can easily find essential information about your lodge or Valley, so be sure to refer back to this e-book often for reminders and ideas!

If you have more questions on Google Business Profiles, visit their FAQ page here:
<https://www.google.com/business/faq/>

Masonic Marketing Series

The Masonic Marketing Series is a service provided by 32° Scottish Rite Freemasonry, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction to help Masons use digital marketing tools to promote Freemasonry and communicate with Brothers online.

To download more e-books in the series, visit
www.scottishritenmj.org/masonic-marketing