

# GOOGLE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

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How multi-location companies  
and agencies can turn Google's  
newest local brand hazard into  
a business-building asset



## GOOGLE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS: WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW CAN HURT YOU

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## Introduction

Multi-location companies and marketing agencies managing a broad portfolio of local business locations face a big problem: actively maintaining their Google My Business (GMB) listings. While it is possible for a single-location business to manage its own listing easily enough, it becomes increasingly difficult to do so as the number of locations grows.

If the task of monitoring reviews, creating posts and updating business information wasn't already hard enough, the problem just got worse with the addition of Google's newest local feature: Google Questions & Answers (Q&A)<sup>1</sup>. Like Reviews, Google Q&A is a crowdsourced component of the local Knowledge Panel<sup>2</sup> that, left unmonitored, can become a huge brand liability.

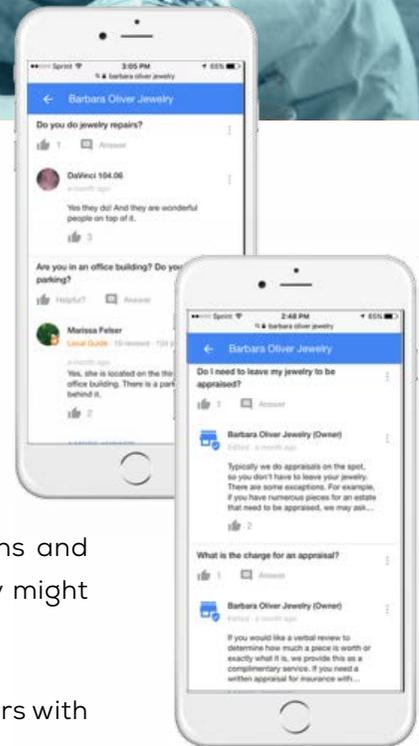
Understanding the potential impact of this new feature and how it might affect your business or agency are the subjects of this e-book. Here, we explain how Google Q&A works, the problems associated with its use, why you need to pay close attention and how you can turn it into a business-building asset.



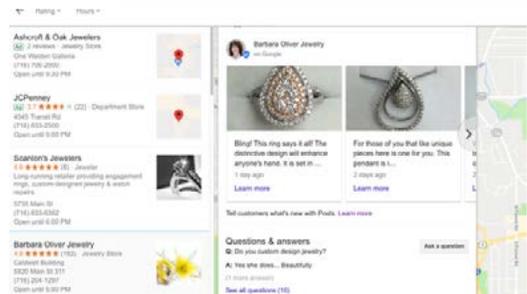
## What Is Google Q&A?

Google Q&A is a consumer-facing, crowdsourced FAQ feature similar to the Ask the Community feature on Yelp and Trip Advisor that allows consumers to ask and answer questions about the business. Business owners are also permitted to ask and answer questions. These questions and their answers can show directly in Google search results. Users can also give a thumbs-up vote to questions and answers, which influences both their order and where they might appear.

Google's goal for its local Q&A feature is to provide consumers with enhanced details about a business. This additional information will allow consumers to find meaningful, timely answers to questions, directly influencing their decision to call or visit the business.



-  ***"Does this bakery offer gluten-free bread?"***
-  ***"Does this Walmart sell top hats?"***
-  ***"Does this Home Depot rent tools?"***



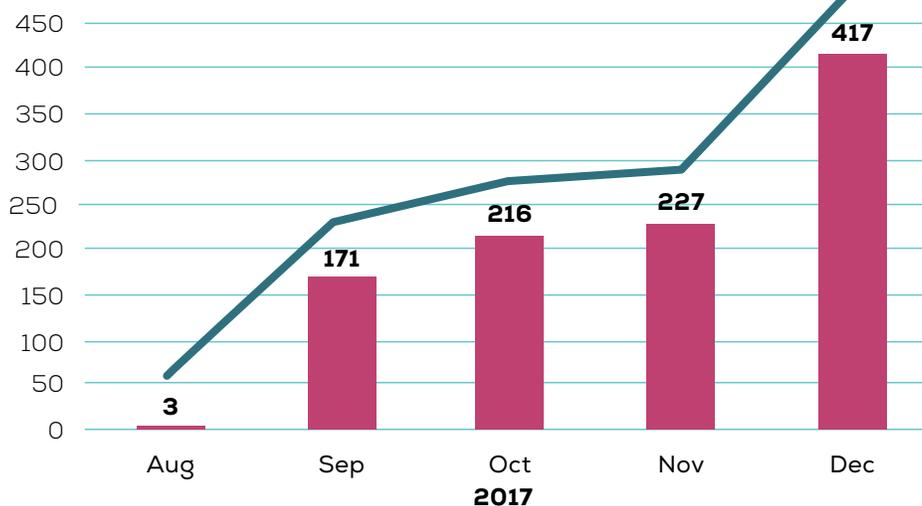
Google hopes that questions add detail and nuance to the location that could, in the future, inform both search results and searcher behaviors.

At its launch in August 2017, Google Q&A lived only in the Android Google Maps app but was gradually rolled out to mobile browsers for both iPhone and Android. In December 2017, Google added the feature to the desktop, which effectively doubled its visibility and increased the likelihood more people will ask and answer questions.

Unfortunately, as of publication, Google has not yet integrated Q&A into the Google My Business admin dashboard or Google My Business API to alert you to changes. If you are signed into Google on an Android phone (only) and your GMB account credentials match your Android credentials, you will receive a push notification each time a user asks a new question for locations visible in that specific Google My Business dashboard. However, to provide answers, you must visit your location's Knowledge Panel directly in the search results from a desktop or mobile browser.

Google Local Guides who have recently posted photos or reviewed your business may also get a notification letting them know there is a new unanswered question to which they can respond. Those who ask a question also get notified when their question receives an answer, so long as they are signed into Google.

### Questions Asked Per Month (~1700 Locations/All Categories)



This added exposure, coupled with the fact Google is actively soliciting responses from Local Guides, has resulted in significant increases in the number of locations with questions. A recent survey conducted by GatherUp of a variety of retail locations showed questions and answers doubled from November to December 2017.

## How Common Are Questions?

Because Google released the feature on mobile only, many businesses and brand managers are unaware of its existence. However, our research shows that questions are more common than you might think.

### GatherUp Google Q&A Survey

GatherUp partnered with digital marketing agencies that specialize in local vertical markets to conduct a survey measuring Q&A frequency as well as to learn how consumers are using the feature. We looked at nearly 1,700 businesses split between dental clinics, employment agencies, car dealers, fast casual restaurants, chiropractors, insurance agencies, home services and big-box retail.

For a product that was introduced so recently and only running in stealth mobile mode, going into the study we did not expect a high degree of penetration. However, we found that on average, 25% of all local listings from companies big and small had questions.

### Google Q&A Survey Results

As you would expect, this varied greatly by vertical. Among smaller, locally-owned businesses, we found that car dealers are most prone to have questions (35% of all locations had questions), followed by employment agencies (26%), self-storage companies (23%), dental clinics (14%), fast casual restaurants (10%), chiropractors (5%) and insurance agencies (3%). With only 1%, home services, including plumbing, HVAC and electrical, had the fewest questions.

In looking at big-box retailers, we found significantly more locations with questions. Roughly 90% of all locations already had questions, and most of those had multiple questions. It is not clear why consumers are more likely to ask and answer questions for larger local brands, but it makes brand management even more critical.

We also found that, on average, businesses which had questions would have 1.6 questions per location, implying that once a user asked the first question, it becomes more likely others will follow.

### % of Location with Questions (by sector)

Big Box Retail



Car Dealers



Employment Agency



Self Storage



Dentist



Fast Casual



Chiropractor



Insurance



Home Services



## What Types of Questions Are Asked?

We did an in-depth analysis of the content of questions for the dental vertical to understand the types of questions people were asking and the degree to which they met the goal of offering valuable detail about the locations. Based on our research, we learned that 77% of all questions were legitimate and explored products, services, prices and basic facts about the business.

Additionally, we discovered that nearly 23% of all questions in this subset violated Google's Terms of Service (TOS) and were, in one way or another, inappropriate.

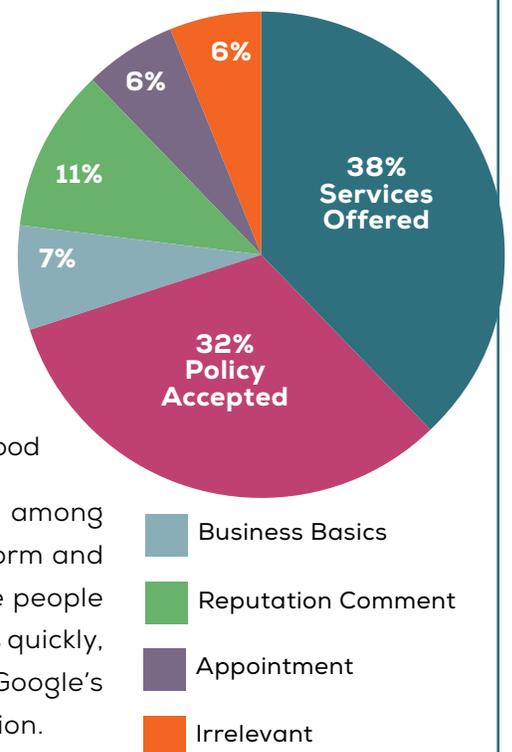
We found that:

- 38% asked if the dental practice performed a particular procedure and, if so, how much it cost
- 32% focused on types of insurance accepted
- 7% were basic business info, such as email address and fax number
- 6% attempted to make an appointment
- 11% were reputation comments that for the most part were negative
- 6% were complete gibberish and could not be understood

Our research also revealed that confusion existed among consumers, with some thinking Q&A was a review platform and others thinking it was a real-time messaging tool. Some people were frustrated that no one had answered their inquiries quickly, which speaks to why a location may want to implement Google's messaging feature to offer these consumers a valid option.

As a side note, about 10% were in Spanish, despite the locations being distributed broadly throughout the U.S.

Questions Breakdown in Dental Segment



# Dream Come True or Potential Nightmare?

## 9 Problems with Google Q&A

Crowdsourced content of any type focused on local retail stores can either elevate or detract from your brand.

While most brand managers have put systems in place to avoid brand disaster via social media at a national level, the complexities imposed by a truly local social environment can be overwhelming. If left unmonitored, it might be brand death by a thousand cuts.

Obviously, the implications of negative user-generated content appearing on your business's local Knowledge Panels can have huge consequences and shift the brand conversation out of your control. And as noted, due to the nature of the feature, the more locations you have, the more problems can multiply.

However, of all the crowdsourced features included in the Knowledge Panel (Reviews, Photos, etc.), Q&A is potentially the most problematic. Here are nine reasons why:

### **1. Google Q&A is a consumer-focused feature.**

Google Q&A is a consumer-focused feature, with little thought given to business needs. While other new Knowledge Panel additions – Posts and Websites, for example – are business-friendly, Q&A offers few, if any, business management tools. Q&A is very consumer-focused with few if any business-side tools. Being required to go back regularly to check the crowdsourced status of a listing due to fear the “crowd” might be off base is one more onerous task that can take up way too much additional time.

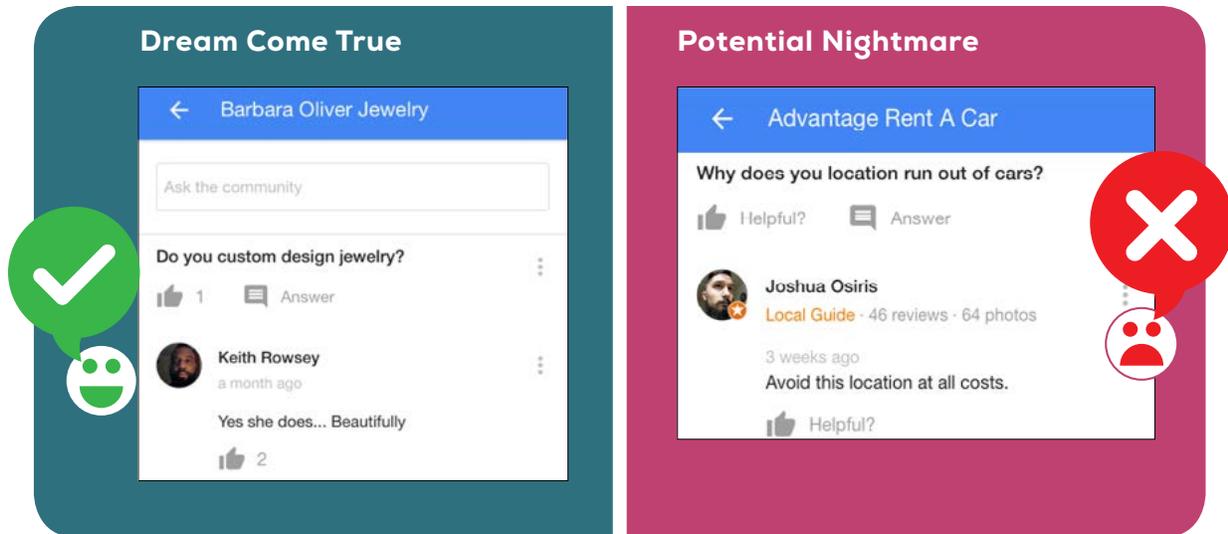
### **2. Google moderates questions and answers, not the business owner.**

From a moderation standpoint, Google Q&A has the same problems as Google Reviews. This is because Google, not the business owner, moderates questions and answers. For Reviews, it makes sense for Google to exert control over whether or not a negative review should be deleted. However, with Questions & Answers, we are talking about frequently-asked questions about a business, so it makes more sense for a business owner to have moderation capability.

For now, at least, the good news is that moderation times are very short: Google acts on most reporting requests within 24 hours. This might not be the case in the future, which is why it makes sense to start reporting inappropriate questions now.

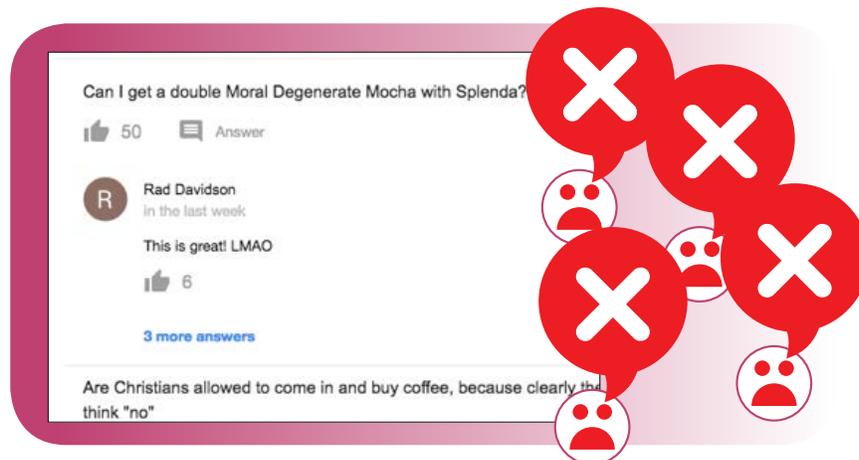
### 3. Q&A can put the business's reputation at risk.

Like Reviews, the Q&A feature can have enormous implications for a business's reputation, both positive and negative, as these examples illustrate:



If for some reason, one of your locations goes viral in a social media free-for-all, chaos can result, making Google Q&A one more vector for the opinionated public to comment on your brand.

Such was the case for one Seattle, Washington coffee shop when it hit the news with a media frenzy over the owner ejecting Christian activists<sup>3</sup>.



### 4. There is a temptation for local managers to misuse the feature.

Businesses are always looking for no-cost ways to promote themselves. If a brand or agency allows the local operator to interact with the feature, there is a temptation to turn it into a consumer off-putting marketing tool that could pollute the brand messaging.

### **5. Q&A competes with the business website.**

Google has positioned Q&A as part of its effort to create ever more granular content that will keep consumers within Google's subtly "walled garden" and further limit the likelihood of their visiting your website. If a consumer uses the information to call the location or get driving directions, that could be a good thing. However, this assumes the brand is actively managing the messaging there.

### **6. Q&A opens the door to spam, trolls and complainers.**

Because of its crowdsourced nature, Google Q&A may open the door for spammers, trolls or competitors to post to the Knowledge Panel or for antagonistic complainers to vent their frustrations.

Incorrect answers and spam can get up-voted and rank higher than correct answers from business owners and loyal customers. Crowdsourced up-voting could place a harmful question directly on the Knowledge Panel. With so few current votes, bad actors looking to harm the brand could easily manipulate any question and its inappropriate answer.

### **7. Google did not build multiple-location capabilities into Q&A.**

Google did not build Q&A with multiple-location capabilities in mind, so you may have to charge a manager or other employee at each location with the monitoring responsibility or look to GatherUp for our multi-location monitoring solution.

### **8. There is no way to post questions at scale.**

Because there is currently no way to post questions to all brand pages at scale, an agency working on behalf of a business – or the business itself – would need to log in to each location page and post the questions. (Note that the question does not obviously designate whether a consumer or the business is the author.)

### **9. There are no active alerts.**

Currently, Google provides no easy way to notify business locations via the Google My Business dashboard, email or Google My Business API when someone asks or answers a question. Google does, however, alert Android phone users who are logged in using the same credentials as their GMB account. Obviously, that does not scale for an agency or brand dealing with multiple locations across numerous accounts.

# How to Make Google Q&A Work to Your Advantage

As with reviews, ignoring or reacting are not the best strategies. Instead, it is critical that you get out in front by engaging with consumers by both asking questions and providing answers.

GatherUp worked with a number of agencies and multi-location brands to determine the best approach to engage with Q&A productively and to understand what consumers are saying about any given location at scale.

We created this simple process, which we summarized in five words: **Plan, Post, Monitor, Respond** and **Report**.



## Create a Q&A Content Plan

It is entirely within Google's guidelines for a business to ask and answer its own questions. The first step is to figure out what questions consumers are asking and which would be useful to facilitate the customer journey from search to your store. The obvious candidates are concerns about parking, special hours of operation, appointments and other conveniences.

If you analyze your incoming calls, you can get a bead on the types of questions that folks need to have answered before they make the final decision to come in. For more vertically-focused boutique businesses, it makes sense to clarify both the services you offer and those you don't in order to qualify potential customers properly.



## Post Your Own Questions and Answers

After you decide which questions and answers are most appropriate, take some time to write them out, review them to make sure they meet consumers' needs and then get them posted. Taking this action will give the early postings a chance to be up-voted more over time and will help limit the opportunity for mischief.

Here are some additional tips you may find helpful:

***Include questions for less well-known products and services.*** Once you have identified the low hanging fruit, brainstorm ideas for questions and answers about some of your less well-known products or services. "Does this bakery offer gluten-free choices?" is one example. Do not treat this as a keyword spamming opportunity, however. It is not, but going niche can be helpful.

**Plan for scanning.** Consumers are a busy lot, so be sure that questions are easy to read and answers are brief but accurate.

**Write questions using your customers' voice.** These are meant to be accessible and easy to understand, not marketing pieces, so ask questions the way you think your customers would.

**Make them useful to both parties – your business and the customer.** Even though you write a question in the customers' voice, answer it in yours. After all, the goal is to facilitate interactions between your target customer and your business.

**Don't overdo it.** While there is no magic number, fewer questions and answers are better than more.

**Encourage up-voting.** Ask loyal customers to up-vote your questions and answers; this ensures these questions are the most popular, keeping them at the top of the list.



### Actively Monitor Q&A

As noted, Google is not yet offering GMB alerts or API monitoring, which means that you must conduct monitoring activities manually or look to GatherUp for our new monitoring solution.

(GatherUp provides active email notifications of new questions and answers so that agencies and brands can easily monitor new "incoming" content. The Q&A feature also stores all questions and answers in a dashboard so that staff can easily respond or request removal.)

Assign a staff member to monitor the Knowledge Panel in Google Search and Maps to find new questions, and respond as the business owner by logging into Google using your GMB account credentials.

No one can answer questions with as much authority as you, so screen questions and answers carefully and continue being part of the conversation.



### Respond to Questions Quickly

Quickly responding to new questions will help keep others from posting incorrect answers, whether they intend to or not. All too frequently, Local Guides will answer with a simple yes or no and, often as not, inaccurately. That's why becoming the authoritative source for right answers is essential.

It is also entirely within Google's guidelines for a business to thumbs up (up-vote) their own questions and answers as well as the questions and answers posted by others (which is something you should do, particularly if the consumer's response is a good one!)

It only takes ONE vote for a question to be eligible to show on the front page of your brand search or in local search results – and it just takes one vote for an answer to that question to do the same.

Thus, the system is vulnerable to gaming and competitors up-voting questions or answers that could negatively impact a business.



### Learn How the Reporting Process Works

We know that in any crowdsourced social environment, users will typically mirror the sentiment that is already there. If there is a negative vibe, others will likely reflect that in their comments.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, if the attitude is positive, users will generally follow that lead. Thus, it is not only essential to get out front by writing and posting your Q&A but also by staying on top of the content and reporting anything that violates Google's TOS.

With active reporting provided by GatherUp, you can take action quickly to get irrelevant and inappropriate questions and answers removed.

To remove unseemly questions or answers:

- Read Google's Terms of Service<sup>5</sup> and guidelines for content
- Familiarize yourself with how to flag them for Google's attention

Google's TOS prohibit:

- Deliberately fake or off-topic content
- Defamatory language
- Personal attacks

Google can take things down flagged as incorrect automatically. For example, if someone answers a question and includes a phone number, email address, URL or certain proscribed words, Google will detect and remove it.



If automated or human Google curation fails, you can take the next step. That involves waiting at least a week, providing clear documentation and links about the problem and articulating why they should come down and then posting that information on the Google My Business community forum<sup>6</sup>. There, top contributors can review the question and escalate for further Google review and take down if appropriate.

### **Drawbacks to the Plan, Post, Monitor, Respond and Report Process**

Given the lack of a posting API, some organizations will struggle with the posting aspect of this plan. As the number of locations increases, it will become more and more difficult to post questions and answers to all of your locations. You can outsource certain aspects of the plan – such as posting of questions and answers – to an agency, to make this easier.

Minimally, even if you make the decision not to post your own questions, monitoring, responding and reporting are critical activities that allow your locations to stay ahead of the conversation occurring on the Knowledge Panel.



## Conclusion

You cannot opt out of Google Questions & Answers, so the best strategy for you as a multi-location business owner or agency is to get out in front and embrace it. Like Google Reviews, this new feature gives you yet another free channel where you can interact with your customers.

Develop a strategy of engagement with Q&A that allows you to participate in the conversation constructively. The key to a successful strategy is minimizing the downside by monitoring and reporting TOS violations while maximizing the upside by seeding meaningful questions, becoming the authoritative source for answers and responding quickly to customer questions and concerns.

# GatherUp Google Q&A Monitoring Feature

To take the hassle out of managing Google Q&A and turn it from a brand hazard into a business-building asset, GatherUp developed a feature as part of our Pro, Pro Plus and Executive plans that helps agencies, brands and multi-location businesses easily monitor, report and productively engage with the new Google Questions & Answers.

The feature includes:

## Automatic set up.

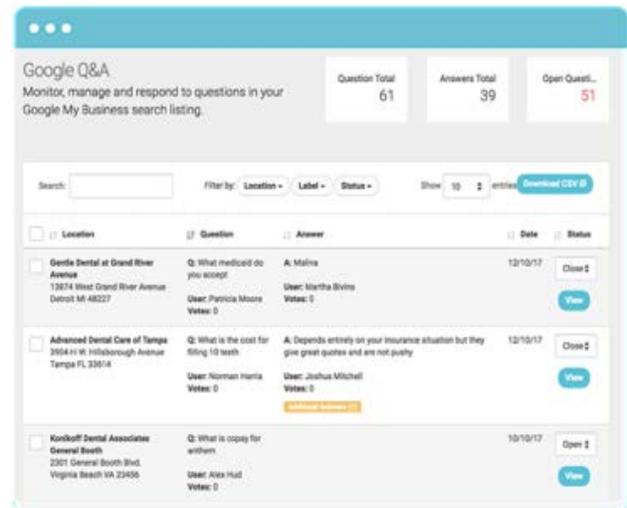
If you have a GatherUp Pro Level or above account and are already monitoring Google Reviews, we will start tracking your Google Questions & Answers automatically as well.

## Email alerts.

Whenever we find a new question or answer on any of your locations' Knowledge Panel, we will alert you via email so that you can respond. We even let you know when Google removes questions you report... right in your inbox.

## Google Q&A dashboard.

Question	Answer	Date	Status
Q: This is the WORST experience I have ever had trying to purchase a vehicle online!	A: They are great at what they do! They are working with me and my family thru a very difficult situation. Call Helwig in sales and I give you my word you will get the result you are looking for. Elston Derrek	11/12/17	Open View



We provide you with the ability to see all of your locations' questions and answers in one place. You will be able to filter in numerous ways, to focus on the particular locations or questions of concern.

## Google Q&amp;A

Monitor, manage and respond to questions in your Google My Business search listing.

Question Total  
2525

Answers Total  
7213

Open Questions  
2405

Locations Monitored: 825

Search:

Filter by: Location  Label  Status

Show 10  entries

[Download CSV](#)

Location	Question	Answer	Date	Status
<b>Target</b> 2325 Marketplace Dr Rochester NY 14623 <a href="#">Retail</a> <a href="#">Target</a>	<b>Q:</b> Any fingerling puppets in the store?  <b>User:</b> Anonymous <b>Votes:</b> 0	<b>A:</b> I'm not certain about their current in-store stock, however, I did see them on Target's webpage.  <b>User:</b> Anonymous <b>Votes:</b> 0	02/10/18	Open <input type="text"/> <a href="#">View</a>
<b>Target</b> 134 Harbison Blvd Columbia SC 29212 <a href="#">Retail</a> <a href="#">Target</a>	<b>Q:</b> Thank you to the wonderful employees who helped my 82 year old mother Friday afternoon around 3:00. She was shopping in the Harbison store when she started having chest pains. They stayed with her until I found them and helped her to the car.  <b>User:</b> Valerie Waites <b>Votes:</b> 0	<b>A:</b> Happy 2 hear that. Hope she's well.  <b>User:</b> Dario Meza <b>Votes:</b> 0 <a href="#">Additional Answers (2)</a>	02/10/18	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Close <input type="checkbox"/> Reported <a href="#">View</a>
<b>Home Depot</b> 4700 17th Ave SW Fargo ND 58103 <a href="#">Retail</a> <a href="#">Home Depot</a>	<b>Q:</b> Rent diamabrush for wood floor  <b>User:</b> Anthony Bush <b>Votes:</b> 0	<b>A:</b> Home Depot in Fargo doesn't have tool rentals.  <b>User:</b> Zebulun Dickey <b>Votes:</b> 0 <a href="#">Additional Answers (1)</a>	02/10/18	Open <input type="text"/> <a href="#">View</a>
<b>Walmart</b> 420 Buckland Hills Dr Manchester CT 6042 <a href="#">Retail</a> <a href="#">Walmart</a>	<b>Q:</b> Does this store have kerosene?  <b>User:</b> Barbara Yvon <b>Votes:</b> 0	<b>A:</b> Yes small bottles if u need alot for heater ck local gas stations  <b>User:</b> Ben Daley <b>Votes:</b> 0 <a href="#">Additional Answers (3)</a>	02/10/18	Open <input type="text"/> <a href="#">View</a>

This is the WORST experience I have ever had trying to purchase a vehicle online! I'm not quite sure why they even have the option!! No one cares, C...  
 them my personal info twice to two separate employees, only to get the r...  
 around. After not hearing anything, a week later, (by me calling them) I spoke  
 to a third employee whom finally told me, they couldn't help me. Scott Clark,...

[Helpful?](#) [Answer](#)

**Derrek Hooper**  
 Local Guide · 15 reviews · 34 photos

a month ago  
 They are great at what they d o! They are working with me and my family thru a very difficult  
 situation. Call Hel wig in sales and I give you my word you will get the result you are looking for.  
 Elston Derrek Hooper.

[Helpful?](#)

## Multi-location workflow.

Staying on top of Questions & Answers is easy with our optimized multi-location workflow that allows you to respond quickly to legitimate questions, report those that violate Google's TOS and indicate to others in your workgroup that the job has been accomplished.

Visit our website, GatherUp.com, to learn more about the new platform addition or to request a demo. You can also contact us by phone at (408) 809-0800. One of our expert staff will be glad to fill you in on the details.

## ADDENDUMS

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# How to Respond to Questions & Answers

While anyone signed into Google can provide answers to questions posed by others, participating as your business requires that you first have Manager Access to your verified Google My Business listing. Once logged in, you can officially respond to questions as your business. Just follow these steps:

- If you are using the GatherUp Q&A dashboard or email alert, there will be a link directly to the question.
- To find questions and answers without GatherUp, search for your company name on Google Search. That should bring up the Knowledge Panel in the right-hand column.
- Look for a section titled "Questions & answers."
- If there is more than one question, select "See all questions."
- Find a question to which you would like to respond and select "Answer."
- Google will then present you with a box that says "Add an answer publicly."
- Once you complete your answer, you will see a list of all responses.
- Click the "thumbs up" icon to promote a given question or answer (Google brings the questions and answers that have been up-voted the most to the top.)

## ADDENDUMS

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# Frequently-asked Questions about Google Q&A

### **Q: Will Google use Q&A for ranking purposes?**

A: At this point it is unknown. Google loves data, and they love good data even more. If Q&A provides useful data, it could have some effect on listing relevance in the future.

### **Q: Are questions and answers visible on the Google My Business dashboard or via the API?**

A: At this time, they are not. We anticipate that at some point Google will provide a business-level interface to deal with them.

### **Q: Are there any active notifications to the business owner?**

A: There are no email notification or GMB alerts. Notifications are only available on the Android Maps mobile app if a location manager is logged into an Android phone with the same credentials as their Google My Business account.

### **Q: Where are Google Questions & Answers visible to users?**

A: Currently, they can be seen in Search on any desktop or mobile browser via the local brand Knowledge Panel and the Local Finder. They are only visible in Google Maps on Android but not the desktop or iPhone versions of Maps.

### **Q: Is there moderation of any kind?**

A: Yes. Google moderates some things automatically, such as bad words and URLs. Users and the business also can flag questions and answers they deem inappropriate for human review of reported content.

### **Q: Will the moderations work?**

A: Currently moderation is occurring within 24-48 hours. It is possible that the moderation process will get less responsive as questions become more widely adopted by users.

**Q: Will the merchant receive any notifications as to the resolution of a spam or flagged report?**

A: Google is not offering active notifications of removed content. However, GatherUp is providing both email alerts and dashboard tracking of removed content in our Q&A monitoring feature.

**Q: Can a business delete a question or answer?**

A: Merchants cannot delete a question from another user; they can flag it, however.

**Q: Can a user delete his or her own question?**

A: Yes. A user can both edit or delete a question, so long as he or she is signed into Google.

**Q: What if there are competing or different answers?**

A: Google will give preference to the answer that is most highly up-voted. If one of the answers comes from the business and they are logged into the same email as their Google My Business account, Google will display messaging that lets people know it comes from the business owner but the answer is given no preference.

**Q: How does Google determine the "best" answer?**

A: That function is crowdsourced. Users can up-vote questions and answers.

**Q: Where and how will this display?**

A: Questions and answers appear in the Knowledge Panel on Search on all devices and in Google Maps for Android (only).

**Q: Is there a limit to the number of questions and answers?**

A: There is no limit to questions and answers.

**Q: What are the rules for taking down a question?**

A: Guidelines mirror the rule for Reviews pretty closely. Google can remove questions and answers flagged as incorrect.

**Q: Can businesses opt-out?**

A: No.

**Q: Can links be embedded in a question or answer?**

A: No. Links are not allowed.

**Q: Are you able to post or answer questions via the API?**

A: Not currently.

**Q: We have hundreds of businesses, how can we post common questions to all of our location listings?**

A: Brute force, one at a time. (Unless you use the GatherUp platform)

**Q: We have hundreds of locations; how can we monitor questions?**

A: Again, by brute force (or use our platform).

**Q: What's to stop merchants from asking questions and then have their employees vote up the answers at the top?**

A: Merchants could do that (there is nothing to stop them), though it would be better if they replied from the GMB account to identify the response as coming from the business owner.

**Q: Are all business listings eligible for Q&A?**

A: Any reviewable businesses will allow for Q&A. Google might turn the feature off for selected locations that are being abused or under attack.

**Q: How about age-restricted businesses, such as hospitals, financial, etc. Will they have Q&A?**

A: Any reviewable business will allow for Q&A. Only a small number do not support questions and answers. Schools and universities are one class of listing excluded from the feature at the moment.

## ADDENDUMS

## Using GatherUp: A Location Case Study

For Barbara Oliver, owner of Barbara Oliver Jewelry in Williamsville, New York, and Get Five Stars client, something unusual happened on the way to a Google review. She got answers to her Google questions – but not just any answer.

Oliver, like most location owners and managers, was alarmed when we contacted her and described the new Google Q&A feature for local search. She was concerned about competitors, with good reason. Spammers and other crowdsourced miscreants could leave negative questions or up-vote inappropriate answers. She was also worried about how to monitor the content.



To get in front of any damaging effects that may result from the feature's use, Oliver worked with her staff to compile a list of the most often-asked questions they received over the phone. Within a week of the feature's release, she had questions and answers posted to her Google Knowledge Panel. Note that she used the consumer voice to ask the question and the business voice to answer them. (To see the questions and answers as they appear in the Knowledge Panel, search "Barbara Oliver Jewelry Williamsville NY" in Google.)

These included:

***Do I need an appointment to look at engagement rings?*** You are welcome to stop by anytime during our shop hours. No appointment is necessary. (We are just not that snooty!) With that said, if your schedule does not allow you to come in during our regular hours, please give us a call, and we will be happy to accommodate you after hours.

***Do you do jewelry repairs?*** Yes, we do all types of jewelry repairs including resizing rings, replacing missing stones, fixing broken parts, and more.

***Will you send my jewelry out to be repaired?*** No. All repairs are done by our in-house goldsmith Dan who is a master craftsman.

***Can you resize my ring if I didn't buy from you?*** Yes, we will gladly size your ring even if you didn't buy it from us.

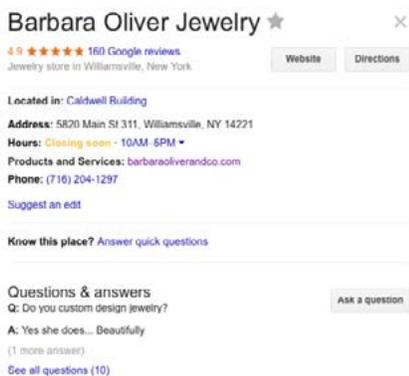
**What is the charge for an appraisal?** It depends if you need a verbal or written appraisal. If you have a piece and would just like a verbal review to determine how much the piece is worth or exactly what it is, this is a complimentary service. If you need a written appraisal for insurance with complete documentation, there is a \$45 charge per piece.

**Do I need to leave my jewelry to be appraised?** Typically, we do appraisals on the spot, so you don't have to leave your jewelry pieces. There are some exceptions. For example, if you have numerous pieces that need to be appraised for an estate, we may ask you to leave those pieces with us. Please note: We are a walk-in shop, so we do appraisals, in-between customers. If you can come during the week instead of a Saturday, our busiest day, that would be greatly appreciated.

**Are you in an office building? Do you have parking?** Yes, we're on the third-floor in the Caldwell Building (a six-story red brick office building) at 5820 Main St. in Williamsville. There is a large parking lot at the back of the building where the entrance is located. We look forward to seeing you!

Oliver hoped that by being proactive, she would not only help consumers make decisions but also keep harmful content from appearing.

Over many years of working with GatherUp, Oliver has learned the benefit of asking every one of her clients for feedback and reviews. She sent out her typical email review request to new customers within a few days of her questions going up on Google, and



something surprising occurred.

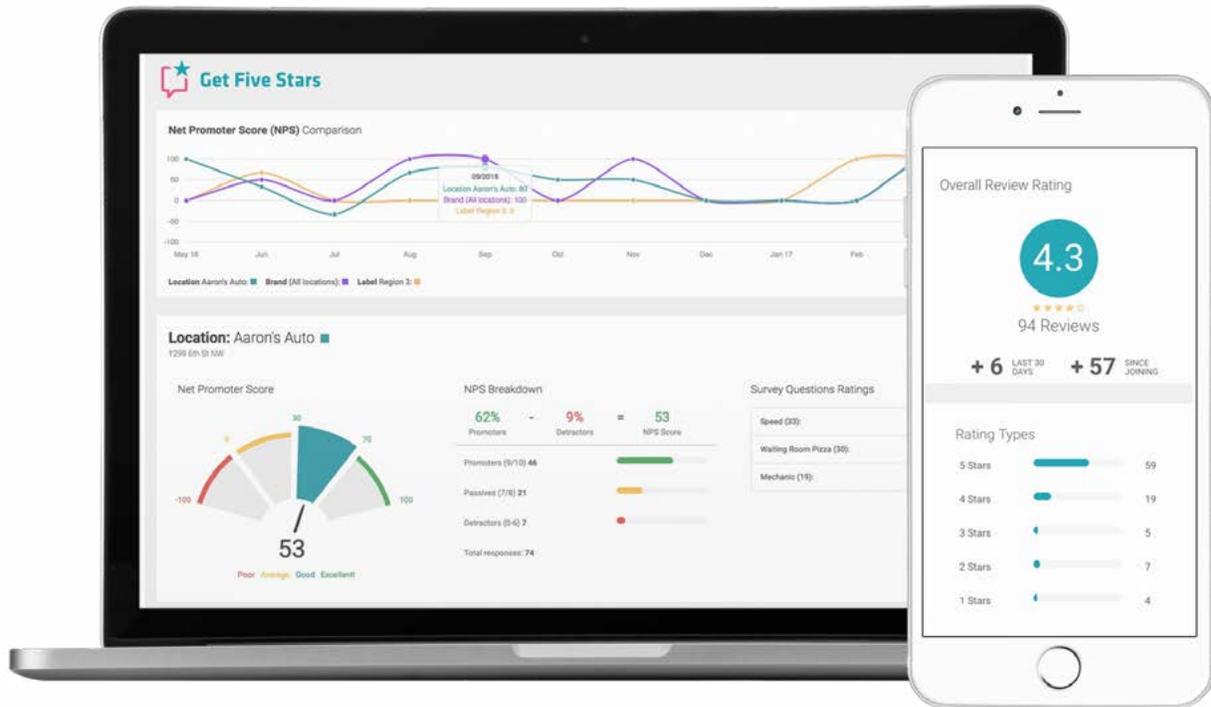
By sending customers to her page on Google to leave a review, she exposed them to the questions. Several who left reviews also answered some of the questions. But that was not the only surprising part: not only did they leave accurate answers but also advocated on her behalf as only loyal customers can.

In answer to the question that Barbara herself asked, "Do you do jewelry repairs?," reviewer DaVinci 104.06 answered:

*Yes they do! And they are wonderful people on top of it.*

Reviewer Keith Rowsey noted in answer to a question as to whether she does customer jewelry design: *Yes she does... beautifully.*

What started as a way to keep negative questions and answers from appearing in the Knowledge Panel has quickly become a place where her advocates sing her praises.



## About GatherUp

GatherUp is a customer experience platform that puts you in control to engage, manage and market your customer's feedback and online reviews. Unlock valuable insights through our reports while you engage your customers by requesting feedback, online reviews, Net Promoter Score and short surveys. Affordable for any small business and robust enough for Fortune 500 companies, GatherUp will help you build a better business.



## Additional Resources

- [Google Rolling Out Questions & Answers](#)
- [11 Tips to Optimize the New Google Questions & Answers](#)
- [Help Us Write Barbara Oliver's Content for the new Google Questions & Answers](#)
- [Bedlam Breaks Out in Google Q & A](#)
- [Google Q&A Rolling out to the Desktop](#)
- [Google Q&A – Get To Know Google's Latest Local Feature](#)
- [Thoughts on Google Maps Q&A Feature for Multi-Location and Franchise Businesses \(hint: It's going to get ugly\)](#)
- [The Big Guide to Google Questions & Answers](#)
- [Q&A: Does Google's Latest Product Mean Death by a Thousand Cuts for Brands](#)

## References

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