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## AUGUST 2019 NEWSLETTER

HAVE LISTING SERVICES LIKE YEXT BECOME OBSOLETE DUE TO CHANGES IN GOOGLE?



2

**BING**

NOW WARNS USERS FROM VISITING SITES WITH EXPIRED SSL CERTIFICATE



3

YOU CAN NOW CLAIM YOUR GOOGLE KNOWLEDGE PANEL



4

**GOOGLE TESTS**

"REQUEST A QUOTE" BUTTON LOCALLY FOR BRANDED SEARCHES



**REQUEST A QUOTE**

5

PAY PER CLICK (PPC) UPDATES FOR AUGUST 2019



- 1** HAVE LISTING SERVICES LIKE YEXT BECOME OBSOLETE DUE TO CHANGES IN GOOGLE?
- 2** BING NOW WARNS USERS FROM VISITING SITES WITH EXPIRED SSL CERTIFICATE
- 3** YOU CAN NOW CLAIM YOUR GOOGLE KNOWLEDGE PANEL
- 4** GOOGLE TESTS “REQUEST A QUOTE” BUTTON LOCALLY FOR BRANDED SEARCHES
- 5** PAY PER CLICK (PPC) UPDATES FOR AUGUST 2019

1

## HAVE LISTING SERVICES LIKE YEXT BECOME OBSOLETE DUE TO CHANGES IN GOOGLE?



*Do local citations matter anymore? Mike Blumenthal and other SEO experts share their opinions about how much attention we should be really giving to structured citations.*

For any local business, managing their local citations i.e. submitting to top local search engines and directories is still one of the things that make it to the top of the local SEO checklist. With a key focus on quick (automated) submissions and consistency, many local businesses turned to Yext as their go-to service and helped it propel to a \$170 million business in 2018!

Local citations were historically seen as one of the top ranking factors but things are not the same now. SEO experts such as Mike Blumenthal (GatherUp) now dismiss citations as almost of no use.

### **Here's what Mike Blumenthal has to say.**

*"If a business has their data correct on their website and can get their data straightened away at Google, Facebook and maybe Yelp, there is no need for a citation campaign and certainly no need for a recurring cost to do so.*

*Google cares about local sites and web-references that users engage with and occur on pages on some amount of prominence. So it isn't just a matter of having a citation at Yelp or HealthGrades or Trip Advisor, but of having a listing that ranks well at those sites and can pass some authority to your local entity. The strongest industry vertical sites, in some industries, do send some traffic so a citation and content build-out is relevant there.*

*But the idea of getting listed at 80 sites and paying for it annually is an idea whose time has passed. And the traditional idea of an unstructured citation, (i.e., being cited at an authoritative journal or news source even without a link) has merit. But that is more along the lines of PR than a citation campaign and it can have significant influence over the rank of a business."*

Similar to Mike Blumenthal, this is what **Joy Hawkins from Sterling Sky has to say.**

*"I often find that people are surprised to hear that my agency doesn't focus much on citation building or "maintaining" as a strategy. We've found that time is better spent on other high-impact tactics.*

*We only bother with citation work if the client has recently moved locations. Even then, we notice that it doesn't make a huge difference.*

*We don't ignore it completely; it's just labeled here as a low-impact tactic so it's not what we tackle first."*

### **What's our take on this?**

The consensus now appears to be that citations are declining in importance. It's quite true that our industry's perception of the role of citations has changed a lot. However, we continue to believe local citations still have an important role to play and are not yet ready to throw them out of our toolkit.

Every location-based business needs to own as much of its branded and core keyword SERPs as possible. Taking maximum control of citations is one of the most obvious and sensible ways to achieve a high degree of ownership. Because all forms of citations could be points of entry for consumers, businesses need to manage them for accuracy and consistency.

However, we feel that the idea of getting your business listed on multiple sites and paying for it annually makes no sense at all. Instead, we focus more on manual submissions which are much quicker to show up as compared to automated submissions, you can select which directories to submit to and you have full ownership and control over these sites.

### **Reference:**

[searchengineland.com/do-local-citations-matter-anymore-five-local-seos-sound-off-320015](http://searchengineland.com/do-local-citations-matter-anymore-five-local-seos-sound-off-320015)

## 2

### BING NOW WARNS USERS FROM VISITING SITES WITH EXPIRED SSL CERTIFICATE

Due to the growing need to bolster online security, every search engine strives to come up with new, innovative ways to make users feel as secure as possible in the digital world. One such measure taken by the search engines is to warn users against insecure sites by showing a “Warning: Security Risk Ahead” message page.

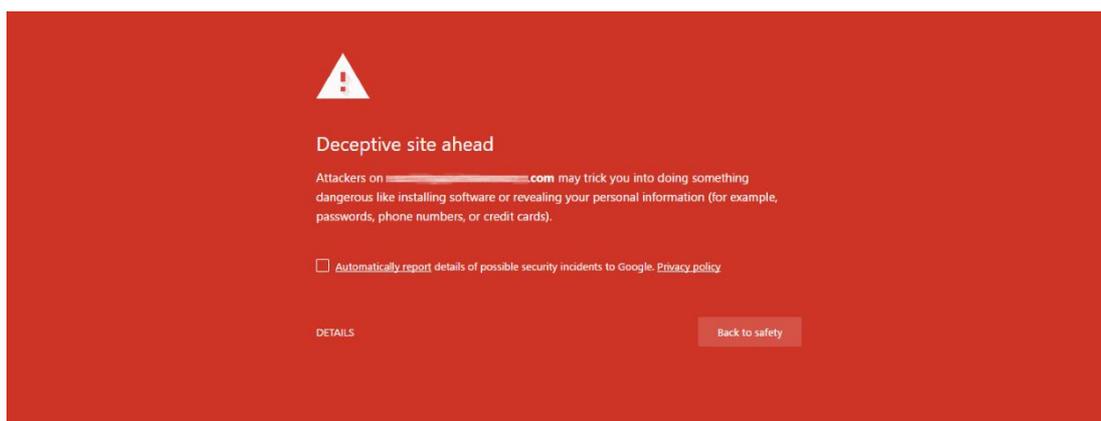
#### How Bing Reacts to Expired SSL Certificate

Google Chrome and Firefox show a “Not Secure” warning to users on non-secure (without https) websites.

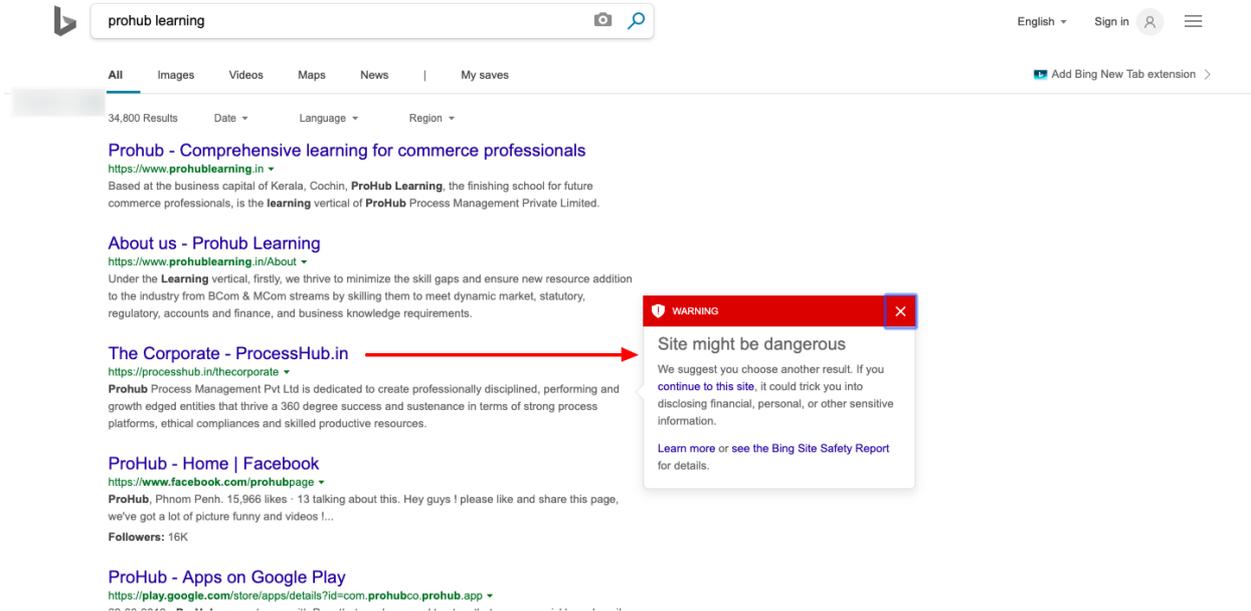


Not Secure | www.example.com

If a website has been flagged as a phishing site, it will display this warning before allowing you to proceed on Chrome.



Bing goes a step further by warning the users that there is a problem with the website's security certificate and that the problem may be an indication that it might be an attempt to fool you or intercept your data.



The screenshot shows a Bing search results page for the query "prohub learning". The search bar at the top contains the text "prohub learning" and a search icon. Below the search bar, there are navigation tabs for "All", "Images", "Videos", "Maps", "News", and "My saves". The search results are displayed in a list format, with the first result being "Prohub - Comprehensive learning for commerce professionals" from "https://www.prohublearning.in". A red arrow points from this result to a security warning box that appears over the page. The warning box has a red header with a shield icon and the word "WARNING". The text inside the box reads: "Site might be dangerous. We suggest you choose another result. If you continue to this site, it could trick you into disclosing financial, personal, or other sensitive information. Learn more or see the Bing Site Safety Report for details." Below the search results, there are links for "About us - Prohub Learning", "The Corporate - ProcessHub.in", "ProHub - Home | Facebook", and "ProHub - Apps on Google Play".

## How This Can Affect Your Business

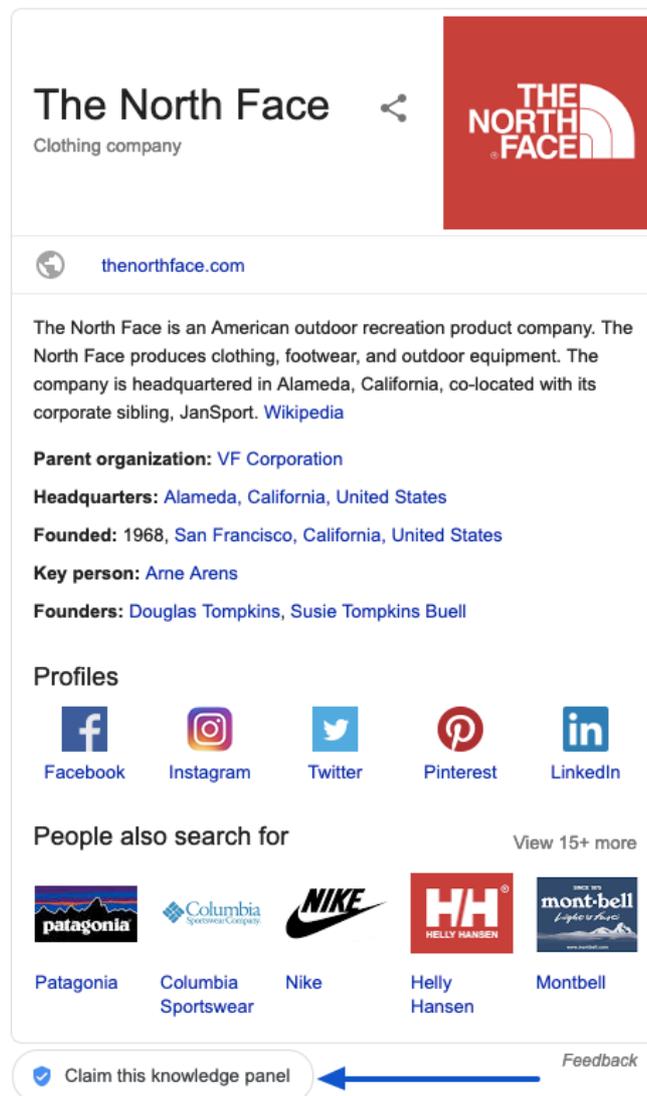
Even if there is no real security threat to the users or their data, the fact that the search engines redirect the users to a warning page instead of the homepage can have a huge impact on your website's organic traffic. Hence, it is important that you keep a track on when your site's security certificate is about to expire and renew it promptly to ensure that potential leads are not discouraged from visiting your website.

# 3

## YOU CAN NOW CLAIM YOUR GOOGLE KNOWLEDGE PANEL

Do local citations matter anymore? Mike Blumenthal and other SEO experts share their opinions about how much attention we should be really giving to structured citations.

Entities with Google accounts can now claim their knowledge panels to gain complete access over the information that it contains. So if you are a brand that is large enough to trigger a knowledge panel, go ahead and create your own Google knowledge panel today.



**The North Face**    
Clothing company

 [thenorthface.com](http://thenorthface.com)

The North Face is an American outdoor recreation product company. The North Face produces clothing, footwear, and outdoor equipment. The company is headquartered in Alameda, California, co-located with its corporate sibling, JanSport. [Wikipedia](#)

**Parent organization:** [VF Corporation](#)

**Headquarters:** [Alameda, California, United States](#)

**Founded:** 1968, [San Francisco, California, United States](#)

**Key person:** [Arne Arens](#)

**Founders:** [Douglas Tompkins](#), [Susie Tompkins Buell](#)

**Profiles**

 [Facebook](#)  [Instagram](#)  [Twitter](#)  [Pinterest](#)  [LinkedIn](#)

**People also search for** [View 15+ more](#)

 [Patagonia](#)  [Columbia Sportswear](#)  [Nike](#)  [Helly Hansen](#)  [Montbell](#)

Claim this knowledge panel  [Feedback](#)

## How to Claim?

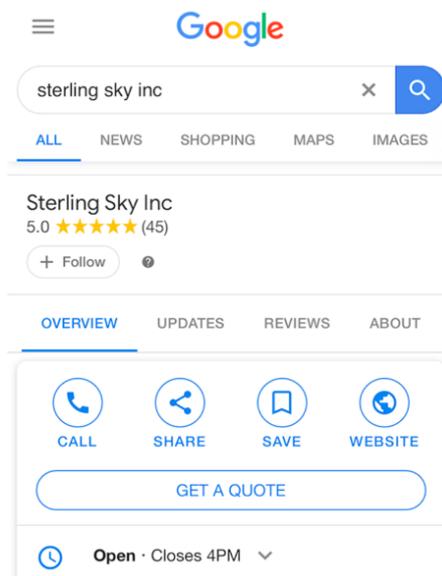
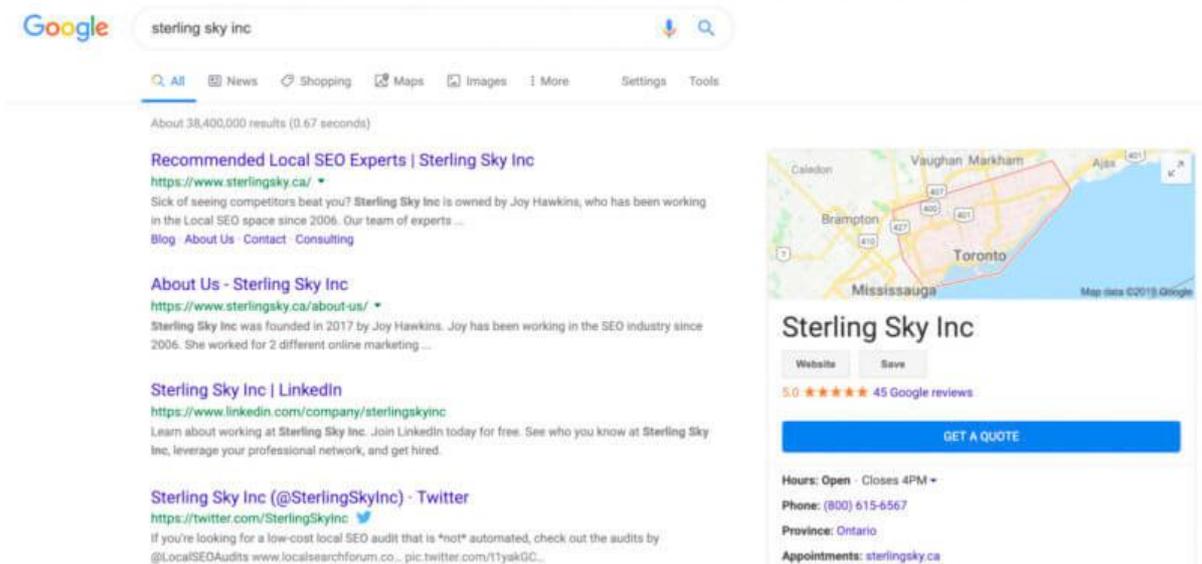
- Make sure you have a Google account.
- Search for your entity in the Google search box.
- Scroll to the very bottom and click on the 'claim this knowledge panel' button which will direct you to the [entity verification page](#).
- Verify your entity by signing in to your listed official site/profile.
  - YouTube
  - Search Console
  - Twitter
  - Facebook
- Review the displayed information, once the features are granted post verification.

**Remember:** Use the most accurate and engaging information about your entity while you review it. Information that shows up on search (images, stats, facts, etc.) can be changed accordingly.

**Outcome:** Since Google has [depreciated](#) the importance of structured data markup for knowledge panels, this is the easiest and latest way of getting your company details updated. So make sure you claim your panel right away!

# 4 GOOGLE TESTS "REQUEST A QUOTE" BUTTON LOCALLY FOR BRANDED SEARCHES

Google recently tested a new "Request A Quote" button feature within the knowledge panels of the businesses that are verified and listed on Google My Business (GMB) and also who have the **messaging** feature within the GMB App.



## Trying it Ourselves

Although the testing of the feature was hit-and-miss for us, it did lead us to conclude that there are high chances that for now, Google must have been testing the feature in a specific region only.

Google had earlier launched the **Messaging** feature for Google My Business (GMB) App in June 2017 and since has proven to be a great option to get in touch with businesses for potential clients, that too via TEXT!

This feature also allows businesses to set a limit for the number of messages received and can also be turned on/off as and when needed.

## Actionable Strategy

If you haven't figured out a way to use the feature or haven't come across it yet then we would highly recommend you to download and try it for your business today. Get entire details on how to make use of this feature [here](#). Those who have the app installed already can proceed with the following steps:

- Open your Google My Business app
- Click on the location you want to message from
- Click the **Customers** button
- Click the **Messages** button
- Click **Turn On**

## Final Takeaway

Although the "Request A Quote" feature is not officially launched yet, it is only a matter of time when it will be. The feature would surely be a great addition to all of GMB's features, allowing easy and direct communication between customers and businesses.

# 5

## PAY PER CLICK (PPC) UPDATES FOR AUGUST 2019



- The new tool from the team PixelMe alerts you whenever your competitor launches a Facebook Ad campaign.
- With Google Ads' new version of the keyword planner, you can now find the most relevant keyword ideas.
- Get a guide on how to choose the best objective for your LinkedIn ad campaign from LinkedIn itself.
- PPC & KPI Monitoring: Get an in-depth diagnosis & learn how to work with impression share loss due to budget.
- According to Kenso report, product advertising is driving spend growth in search, social & marketplace.
- You can now make your ads stand out & increase ad engagement with expanded Dynamics Search Ads.
- Google to soon launch TrueView for Action On Google video partner for businesses to drive more conversions.
- Learn all the recent LinkedIn updates you need to know if you have missed any.
- Know which bid adjustment will work with your bid strategy on Google Ads.
- Want to share your PPC & CRO case studies at the next ADWorld experience? Here is how you can do it. [Click here](#).
- Test out your campaign changes with confidence, with this experiment. [Click here to know more](#).
- Facebook introduces changes to test & aspect ratios on Mobile News Feed.

- Google introduces two new products to help you reach the right customers: In-Market Audience & Detailed Demographics.
- Need more PPC & KPI monitoring tips to diagnose changes to impressions & search volume? [Click here.](#)
- Here's your guide on how to entice your target audience with custom engagement ads.
- LinkedIn introduces a more powerful campaign manager with 3 new objectives: Brand Awareness (CPM), Site Conversions & Job Applicants.
- Are you skeptical about responsive search ads? Know what exactly are responsive search ads. They are not what you think.
- Want to improve ad effectiveness? Take advantage of Microsoft Advertising's new version of ad customizers.
- Microsoft Advertising now offers metrics that will provide clear insight into where your ads appear on search result pages.
- Now get more search inventory on the iOS mobile web browser with a new update for app campaigns.
- Know everything about ALSA strategy & discover when & how ALSA strategy can work for your Google Ads Campaign.
- Google is up with its next ad endeavor: Gallery Search Ads.