

Size doesn't matter. Powered by Google, here is how three businesses charged up their bottom lines

Over 26 million Indian SMBs have built their web presence on Google Maps and are easily discoverable on Google Search

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Shalini Girish, director, Google India customer solutions
Picture: Google India

Today, over 26 million Indian SMBs have built their web presence on Google Maps and are easily discoverable on Google Search,” says Shalini Girish, director, Google India customer solutions. Here’s more from Shalini about the company’s work with SMBs.

Google’s commitment to SMBs

Small businesses have been key to Google’s success from the very beginning and we have always maintained that our long-term success in India is linked with helping Indian SMBs succeed online. Over the last 10 years, we have consistently looked at solutions that remove the barriers that come in the way of small and medium businesses to gain from the web. We have undertaken massive programmes and introduced a range of easy-to-use products to make it simpler for SMBs to start and gain from their digital journeys

Just three years ago, only five per cent of Indian SMBs had any kind of online presence, they never thought that the Internet was for them but the last three years have completely transformed the landscape. We introduced Google My Business, a free mobile app that allows every business to create a free listings on Search and Maps and this has been extremely successful. Today, over 26 million Indian SMBs have built their web presence on Google Maps and are easily discoverable on Google Search. There has been a significant rise in “near me” searches (75 per cent) over the last year.

Once SMBs start seeing the benefits of online presence, they don’t want to get left behind and are constantly seeking newer ways to grow their business. We have introduced an offline and online training programme for SMBs called Digital Unlocked. Since its launch, 360,000 businesses have benefited from the initiative. We have also launched an easy-to-use, free mobile learning app — Primer, which offers required training in English, Hindi and Telugu. The app has been downloaded over 6.2 million times in India.

Beyond boundaries

Two years back, we did a comprehensive research with KPMG to understand some of the challenges that Indian SMBs faced in using the Internet to grow their business and we found that 68 per cent of them didn't understand the benefits of going digital and lacked the technical skills to begin the journey. However, businesses that did adopt digital technologies employed up to five times more people compared to offline SMBs and also grew profits up to two times faster than offline SMBs.

Being a small player

As a small player, we need to manage the whole process and in the handicrafts industry, it is most difficult because everything hinges on dedication and perfection. Google has made my life easier. Now I can easily reply to my customer review. Just with Rs 1,000, I can run my Google Ad.



Jaipur Rugs
Picture: Google India

Jaipur Rugs

Yogesh Chaudhary, director

The importance of Google My Business (GMB) listing

Jaipur Rugs started its journey as a business-to-business player, but in 2014 it was looking at building its direct sales to end consumers. Visibility on the Internet was an important way to achieve this and a GMB listing became a necessity.

Once the retail outlets came up, it became a vital tool for driving footfall to stores in Delhi, Mumbai and Jaipur by making it easy for customers to find directions to each store.

It also helped the brand differentiate itself from competitors of a similar name. Photos and customer reviews helped convince those searching online of the service and quality levels of the company

Rethinking the relationship between business and customers

Google has helped us greatly in collecting insights about the customer. Through smart analytics we are able to take informed decisions that help us give customers relevant information and take the right business decisions. Often customer behaviour online helps us in taking decisions about store location, opening hours and product choices.

Relevance of Google Ads

Google Ads have been an effective tool for targeting audience in specific pincodes. It helps target relevant products and campaigns to the right audience. Showing results that are relevant to the in-market audience based on their keyword searches is a great way of filtering the audience and reaching the right consumer. Often questions are raised about the effectiveness and ROI (return on investment) of Google Ads. However, for businesses this is the most relevant tool for tapping into an audience that is actively seeking the product.