JP MARKETING

EBOOK

How to Rank a Contractor Website in Multiple Cities

Win the map near you, the blue links across your area, and use ads for the rest

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The big question

"How do I show up in **Houston**, **Katy**, and **Tomball** when my shop is in **Cypress**?"

Every contractor asks this. Here's the honest answer:

1. **Google Maps (the Map Pack) is mostly about distance.** It's very hard to show up in the map far from your real address. No trick changes that for long.
2. **Regular Google results (the blue links) are different.** Here you CAN rank in many cities with great pages, reviews, and links.
3. **Ads fill the gaps.** For cities far away, Google Ads and Local Services Ads can get you there right away.
4. **AI search reads all of it.** Good city pages, reviews that mention cities, and local mentions help AI tools connect you to those areas.

So the plan is: **win the map near you, win the blue links in your wider area, and use ads where you can't rank yet.**

Words to know

Word	What it means
Map Pack	The 3 businesses on the map at the top of a Google search.
Blue links	The regular search results under the map.
Service area business	A business that goes to the customer, not the other way around.
City page	A page on your website about one city you serve.
Doorway page	A thin, copy-paste page made only to rank. Google doesn't like these.
Internal link	A link from one page on your site to another page on your site.
Anchor text	The clickable words in a link.
Search intent	The reason behind a search: need help now, comparing, or just learning.
Orphan page	A page that no other page links to. Hard for Google to find.

A real-world style walkthrough

Here's what this can look like for a business like **Lone Star Air & Plumbing** based in Cypress. (This is a made-up example to show the steps. Your timing will be different.)

Month	What they did	What changed
1	Fixed Google profile, started review texts, built AC Repair page	More calls from Maps near Cypress
2	Built service area hub + pages for Houston and Katy with real job photos	Pages got indexed by Google
3	Joined the Houston chamber, sponsored a youth team in Katy	2 local links
4	Built 'AC Repair in Houston' page with 5 real jobs from there	Started showing on page 1-2 for Houston searches
5	Ran exact-match Google Ads in Jersey Village (too far to rank yet)	Calls from far city while SEO grows
6	Added 2 more city pages, kept reviews going	Steady growth across 4 cities

Common questions

Can I just add all the cities to my Google profile?

You can add the cities you serve. But it won't make you rank on the map in all of them. Distance from your real address still matters a lot.

Should I get a virtual office in each city?

No. Google suspends a lot of these. If you get caught, you can lose your real profile too. Only open a profile where you have a real office with staff.

How many city pages should I make?

Start with 5 to 10 cities you really serve and have jobs in. Add more only when you can make each page truly useful.

Do city pages still work?

Yes, when they're real and helpful. Copy-paste pages with only the city name changed don't work well and can hurt you.

What about AI search?

AI tools look at your pages, reviews, and other sites. City pages with real local jobs, reviews that mention cities, and local listings all help AI tools connect you to those places.

Part 1: Know your 3 rings

Draw 3 circles around your real location:

Ring	Distance (rough)	Where you can win	Main tools
Ring 1: Home	0 to 10 miles	Map Pack + blue links	Google profile, reviews, service pages
Ring 2: Nearby	10 to 25 miles	Blue links, sometimes the map	City pages, local links, reviews mentioning those cities
Ring 3: Far	25+ miles	Blue links for less competitive searches, ads	City pages, Google Ads, LSAs

> **Tip:** A real second location (real office, real staff, real signs) is the only honest way to win the map in a far city. Virtual offices and fake addresses get suspended, and Google has gotten very good at finding them.

Part 2: Set up your Google profile the right way

- Set up as a service area business (hide your address if customers don't come to you)
- Add the cities and ZIP codes you really serve
- Know this: adding a city to your service area does NOT make you rank there. It just shows people where you work.
- Get the primary category right: Your main trade: HVAC Contractor, Air Conditioning Contractor, Plumber, Roofing Contractor, Electrician, General Contractor, etc.

- Post jobs every week and mention the city: 'New water heater in Houston'
- Ask customers in other cities for reviews. Reviews that mention a city help a little.

Part 3: Build a site that can rank in many cities

Your website is where multi-city ranking really happens. You need 4 kinds of pages:

Page type	Example URL	What it does
Service pages	/ac-repair/	Ranks for the service in your home area
Service area hub	/service-areas/	Lists every city you serve, links to each
City pages	/service-areas/houston/	Ranks for 'contractor in Houston'
City + service pages	/service-areas/houston/ac-repair/	Ranks for 'ac repair houston'

Start small. Build city pages for your top 5 to 10 cities first. Then add city + service pages ONLY for your top 2 or 3 money services in your top cities.

Part 4: Make every city page actually different

This is where most contractors mess up. They make 50 pages that say:

> "We are the best contractor in [CITY]. If you live in [CITY], call us for [CITY] service."

Google calls these **doorway pages**. They can hurt your whole site.

A good city page has real, local stuff:

- Jobs you've really done in that city (with photos and the neighborhood name)
- Reviews from customers in that city
- Local problems you see there (old homes, hard water, flood zones, HOA rules, busy highways)
- How fast you get there and from where
- Neighborhoods and ZIP codes you serve

- Local permits or rules (if they matter)
- A map or driving info
- FAQs people in that city ask

(See our **Service Area Pages That Actually Help You Rank** guide for a full template.)

Part 5: Get local proof in each city

- **Reviews:** Ask every customer. Over time you'll have reviews from many cities.
- **Job photos:** Upload to Google with captions that name the city.
- **Local links:** Sponsor a team in Houston. Join the Katy chamber. Get on HOA vendor lists.
- **Local partners:** Realtors, builders, property managers in each city.
- **Nextdoor:** Neighbor recommendations in each area.

Part 6: Link it all together

- Homepage links to your top services AND your service area hub
- Service area hub links to every city page
- Each city page links to your main service pages and to its city + service pages
- Each service page links to your top city pages ('We serve Houston, Katy, Tomball...')
- Blog posts link to the matching service and city pages

(See **Internal Linking for Home Service Contractors: The Complete Blueprint**.)

Part 7: Use ads where you can't rank yet

Tool	Use it for
Google Local Services Ads	Get the 'Google Screened/Guaranteed' badge and show up across your service area (pay per lead)
Google Ads Search (exact match)	Target far cities with city-specific keywords and landing pages

Tool	Use it for
Meta ads	Seasonal offers to homeowners in specific ZIP codes

Part 8: How long does this take?

Timeline	What usually happens
Month 1 to 2	Map Pack improves near your shop from Google profile work
Month 3 to 6	City pages start ranking for less competitive towns
Month 6 to 12	Bigger towns and money keywords start to move with links and reviews

Do this / Not that

Do this	Not that
Real city pages with real jobs	Copy-paste pages with the city swapped
One profile per real location	Virtual offices in every town
Reviews from every city you serve	Fake reviews
Ads for far cities	Hoping one page ranks you everywhere
Start with top 5 to 10 cities	Making 200 pages on day one

Checklist

- [ ] Drew my 3 rings and listed cities in each
- [ ] Google profile set up as service area business
- [ ] Service area hub page built
- [ ] City pages for top 5 to 10 cities (each with real local content)
- [ ] City + service pages for top money services in top cities
- [ ] Internal links set up

- [ ] Review system running in every city
- [ ] 1 local link per top city started
- [ ] Ads planned for far cities

Want us to do this for you?

JP Marketing helps local businesses show up on Google, Google Maps, and AI search tools like ChatGPT. We build the websites, write the pages, run the ads, and set up the follow-up.

Book a free strategy call at jpmarketing.co. We'll look at your site and your Google profile, and show you the 3 fastest wins for your business.

Rules on Google, Meta, and AI tools change a lot. This guide was last updated November 2026. It is general marketing info, not legal advice.