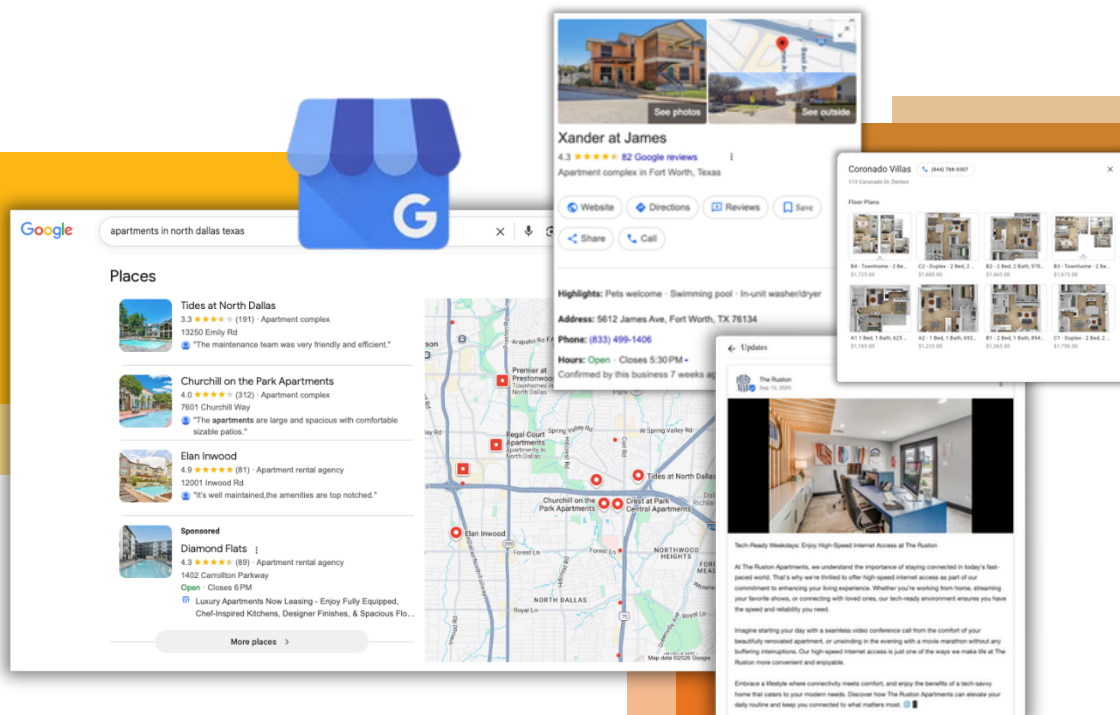


# Google Business Profile Playbook for Multifamily

2026 Edition

Updated for AI Search,  
New Features & Smarter Strategies



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# Why GBP Is Your #1 Leasing Tool in 2026

Google Business Profile is not optional for apartment communities anymore – it is the front door to your property. When a renter searches 'apartments near me,' your GBP listing is often the first (and sometimes only) thing they see before making a decision.

## Here is what the data tells us:

- **87%** of consumers used Google to evaluate local businesses in 2025
- **23%** year-over-year growth in apartment searches on Google Maps
- **70%** more visits for complete GBP profiles vs. incomplete ones
- **40%+** of search queries now show AI Overviews, pulling directly from GBP data

The game has changed. It is no longer enough to simply 'have' a Google listing. Your GBP needs to be optimized, actively managed, and strategically aligned with how Google's AI actually serves results to renters.

That is where most properties fall short. They set up a profile once, maybe respond to a review here and there, and wonder why leads are not flowing. The properties winning right now are the ones treating GBP as a core marketing channel – not an afterthought.

### SWIFTY NOTE

Most properties have a GBP listing. Few have a strategy behind it. Search360 bridges that gap with strategic optimization aligned with how Google's AI actually ranks and surfaces local businesses so your property shows up where renters are looking. [Learn more here. ->](#)

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## What Changed: The 2024-2026 Overhaul

Google made massive changes to GBP over the past two years. If your strategy has not evolved, you are working with outdated tools.

### FEATURES REMOVED

**Google Messaging (July 2024):** Chat and call history permanently discontinued.

**GBP-Hosted Websites (2024):** Google eliminated free single-page websites. Properties need a real, optimized website now more than ever.

**Traditional Q&A (Dec 2025):** Replaced by 'Ask Maps,' where Google's Gemini AI scans your profile, website, and reviews to generate answers automatically.

**Granular Search Query Data:** Google reduced reporting visibility. Low-volume keyword data is no longer available in GBP Insights.

### FEATURES ADDED

**AI Overviews in Search:** Google's AI generates summary answers for local queries, pulling directly from your GBP data.

**Vision AI for Photos:** Google's AI scans your photos to understand your property and factors this into rankings.

**'Ask Maps' AI Answers:** Gemini answers prospect questions from your profile, website, and reviews.

**WhatsApp Integration:** Add a WhatsApp contact button as a messaging alternative.

**Review QR Codes:** Generate scannable codes to collect reviews at move-in, events, or the leasing office.

**Emoji Reactions on Reviews:** React to reviews with emojis in addition to written replies.

**Story-Format Reviews:** Reviews and photos display in a swipeable, social-media-style format.

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# Profile Optimization Essentials

A fully optimized profile is not about checking boxes -- it is about giving Google (and its AI) the information it needs to confidently recommend your property to renters.

## THE NON-NEGOTIABLES

- 1. Business Name:** Use your exact property name. No keyword stuffing (Google penalizes this).
- 2. Primary Category:** Select 'Apartment Complex' or 'Apartment Building' as primary. Add up to 9 secondary categories.
- 3. Business Description:** Write 750 characters of natural, keyword-rich copy. Google's AI cross-references this with your website -- make sure they align.
- 4. Address & Service Area:** Verify your exact address. Define service area for specific neighborhoods.
- 5. Hours:** Keep leasing office hours current. Update for holidays and seasonal changes.
- 6. Phone & Website:** Use a trackable number. Link directly to your property website.
- 7. Attributes:** Complete every relevant attribute: pet policies, parking, accessibility, amenities.
- 8. Photos & Video:** Upload 25+ original photos. Vision AI analyzes them – professional beats stock every time. Add new photos monthly.
- 9. Products/Services:** List floor plans, pricing ranges, and key services for prominent search placement.

### SWIFTY NOTE

Google's AI cross-references your GBP description, structured website content, and reviews to build a composite picture of your property. Inconsistencies confuse the algorithm and hurt your rankings. Search360 aligns all three for maximum visibility. [Book a demo here. ->](#)

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## Features That Actually Drive Leases

### GOOGLE POSTS: Your Weekly Signal to Google

Post frequency is now a confirmed ranking signal. Properties that go 30+ days without posting see measurable visibility drops. Post at least weekly, 150-300 words.

#### What to post:

- Available units and pricing updates
- Community events and resident spotlights
- Property improvements and renovation updates
- Seasonal promotions and move-in specials
- Neighborhood highlights and local partnerships

### ASK MAPS: The New Q&A

Google's Gemini AI now answers prospect questions automatically -- pulling from your profile, website, and reviews. You cannot directly control what it says, but you CAN control the source material.

- Write detailed, natural-language descriptions on your GBP
- Keep your website FAQ pages current and comprehensive
- Respond to reviews with specifics (amenities, policies, neighborhood details)
- Use the Products/Services section to document everything you offer

### PHOTOS & VIDEO: VISION AI IS WATCHING

- Use original, high-resolution photos (not stock)
- Geo-tag photos before uploading
- Include a variety: exteriors, interiors, amenities, neighborhood, team
- Add new photos at least monthly
- Video tours get prominent placement, upload 30-60 second walkthroughs

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# Reviews & Reputation

## Your Digital Curb Appeal

Reviews are the single most influential factor in a renter's decision to contact your property. Review signals carry significant weight in local rankings.

### THE 2026 REVIEW LANDSCAPE

- **Fake review crackdown:** AI detection flags suspicious reviews pre-publication. Penalties include permanent loss of review collection and visible warning badges.
- **Story-format display:** Reviews now appear in a swipeable, social-media-style format.
- **QR codes:** Generate scannable codes for move-in packets, leasing office, and events.
- **Emoji reactions:** React to reviews with emojis on top of written responses.

### YOUR REVIEW STRATEGY

1. Respond to every review within 24 hours. Google tracks response rate and speed.
2. Be specific in responses. No canned templates. Reference the reviewer's actual feedback.
3. Use QR codes during positive moments: move-in, resolved maintenance, community events.
4. Do not panic about negative reviews. A thoughtful response builds more trust than a perfect 5.0.
5. Monitor for fake/spam reviews. Report them immediately through GBP.
6. Aim for volume AND recency. 80 recent reviews outrank 200 old ones.

#### SWIFTY NOTE

Search360 includes reputation monitoring and review response strategy as part of our GBP management service. We help properties build authentic review volume while protecting against reputation threats. [Book a demo here. ->](#)

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## Local SEO Meets AI Search

Traditional local SEO still matters -- but the game has expanded. AI Overviews, voice search, and AI-powered discovery now drive a massive share of apartment searches.

### LOCAL SEO FUNDAMENTALS (STILL CRITICAL)

- 1. NAP Consistency:** Name, Address, Phone must be identical everywhere: GBP, website, ILS listings, directories.
- 2. Local Citations:** Get listed on apartment directories and general local directories. Consistency over quantity.
- 3. On-Site SEO:** Location-specific keywords in page titles, headings, meta descriptions, and content.
- 4. Schema Markup:** Implement ApartmentComplex and LocalBusiness schema for rich search results.
- 5. Mobile Optimization:** 60%+ of apartment searches happen on mobile. Speed and usability are critical.

### THE AI VISIBILITY LAYER

- AI Overviews de-emphasize distance -- a well-optimized property further away can outrank a closer, poorly optimized one.
- Content quality matters more than ever. The AI evaluates GBP, website, and reviews as a complete package.
- Natural language wins. Write like a human answers questions -- that is how the AI processes it.
- Profile completeness is table stakes. AI Overviews strongly favor complete, detailed profiles.

#### SWIFTY NOTE

Curious how your property website performs in AI search? [Grade a Free Visibility Report. ->](#)

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## Measuring What Matters

Google reduced GBP Insights data, so you need a smarter measurement approach.

### What GBP Still Tells You

- **Profile views (Search and Maps)**
- **Direction requests**
- **Website clicks**
- **Phone calls (count only, detailed data removed)**
- **Photo views**
- **Search queries (top performers only)**

### What You Need to Add

- **GA4:** Track GBP-driven traffic, behavior, and conversions. Use UTM parameters on your GBP website link.
- **Google Search Console:** Monitor which queries surface your website from GBP interactions.
- **Review tracking:** Volume, average rating, response time, and sentiment trends monthly.
- **Post performance:** Which post types drive the most engagement and clicks.

### Key Metrics for Multifamily

- **GBP-to-website click-through rate**
- **Direction requests per month (high-intent signal)**
- **Review volume growth rate**
- **Phone call volume from GBP**
- **Post engagement rate**

# Search360

## All-in-One Visibility Service

Managing GBP well takes consistent effort, strategic thinking, and deep knowledge of Google's algorithms. Most property teams do not have the bandwidth to do it right and that is exactly why we built Search360.

### GBP Management

- Complete profile optimization and ongoing maintenance
- Weekly Google Posts with professional content and images
- Review monitoring, response strategy, and reputation protection
- Photo and video optimization for Vision AI
- Content alignment across GBP, website, and directories

### H.E.L.P. Pages

- 150+ Hyper-Effective Local Pages capturing neighborhood-level search traffic
- Localized content targeting specific renter search patterns
- Direct website traffic generation that reduces ILS dependency

### AI Visibility

- Optimization for Google AI Overviews
- Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) for AI search platforms
- Voice search optimization
- Natural language content strategy

### Local SEO

- NAP consistency management across all directories
- Local citation building and monitoring
- Schema markup for apartment-specific rich results

#### READY TO OWN YOUR SEARCH VISIBILITY?

We will show you exactly where your property stands in Google Search, Maps, and AI Overviews and what it takes to dominate. [Book your Search360 demo here. ->](#)

