You do not need an expensive report to find the biggest problems in your local search presence. A focused half hour, a laptop, and your phone will uncover most of what is holding you back. This checklist walks through the audit in timed blocks so you can finish in one sitting and leave with a short list of fixes.

Grab a notebook or spreadsheet before you begin. You will record what you find, then rank the fixes by effort and impact.

The 30-Minute Plan

Minutes Area Goal 0 to 5 Search yourself See what customers see 5 to 12 Business profile Check accuracy and completeness 12 to 18 Reviews Measure volume, recency, and replies 18 to 24 Website basics Confirm pages, phone, and mobile experience 24 to 28 Citations Spot inconsistent name, address, and phone 28 to 30 Prioritize Pick your top five fixes

Minutes 0 to 5: Search Like a Customer

Open a private browser window so your history does not skew results. Search for your main service plus your town, such as "gutter cleaning" and the city name. Then try your business name alone.

Note the following:

- Do you appear in the map results? Where?
- Which three competitors appear above you?
- Does your business name search show a clean profile, a website, and reviews?
- What do the competitors' listings show that yours does not (photos, offers, ratings)?

Repeat with a second service and one "near me" style **bellingham seo company** search. If you do not show up at all for your own name, treat that as an emergency.

Minutes 5 to 12: Check Your Business Profile

Open your profile and verify every field.

The Essentials

1. **Name:** Matches your real-world business name, with no added keywords.
2. **Primary category:** Describes your main service precisely.
3. **Secondary categories:** Relevant, not padded.
4. **Address and service area:** Accurate and consistent with your website.
5. **Phone number:** Local number, matching your site.
6. **Hours:** Correct, including holidays.
7. **Website link:** Points to the right page.
8. **Description:** Clear, human, and specific.
9. **Services list:** Filled in with real services.
10. **Photos:** Recent images of your team, work, and location.

Look at the photo count and the date of your latest upload. If the newest picture is two years old, add a task to fix it. Check whether any outdated posts, offers, or questions need attention.

Minutes 12 to 18: Review Health

Reviews influence both rankings and conversions, so look at them closely.

Question Healthy sign Warning sign How many do you have vs. top competitors? Close to or above the local leaders Far behind the top three How recent are they? Several in the last 60 days Nothing for six months Do you reply? Most reviews answered Replies missing, especially on negatives Do reviews mention services and places? Specific, detailed comments Mostly one-word ratings

If you are behind, build a simple request routine: a text or card after each completed job with a direct review link. Never offer payment for reviews or screen out unhappy customers, since both violate platform rules.

Minutes 18 to 24: Website Basics

Now visit your own site, ideally on your phone.

- **Mobile experience:** Does it load quickly and read cleanly without zooming?
- **Phone number:** Is it visible at the top and tappable?
- **Service pages:** Does each major service have its own page, or is everything crammed on one?
- **Location signals:** Are your city and service areas mentioned naturally in headings and text?
- **Title tags:** Do page titles include the service and town, written clearly rather than stuffed?
- **Contact options:** Is it obvious how to call, book, or request a quote?
- **Trust elements:** Are there real photos, testimonials, licenses, and guarantees?
- **Secure connection:** Is the site served over HTTPS without warnings?

Also check that your address and phone on the site exactly match your profile. Small differences, like "Street" versus "St." or an old suite number, cause needless confusion.

Minutes 24 to 28: Citation Spot-Check

Citations are mentions of your name, address, and phone number on directories and other sites. You only need a quick pass now.

Search your phone number and your business name in quotation marks. Scan the first page or two of results and note any listing with a wrong address, an old phone number, or a duplicate profile. Common offenders include old moves, closed locations, and tracking numbers that were never intended to be public.

Record every mismatch. Correcting five or six inconsistent listings is usually worth more than adding fifty new ones.

Minutes 28 to 30: Prioritize

Review your notes and sort every issue into one of three buckets.

Bucket Examples When to do it Quick wins (under an hour) Fix hours, add photos, reply to reviews, correct phone numbers This week Medium projects (a few hours) Write missing service pages, clean up citations,

launch review requests This month Bigger projects Site rebuild, speed overhaul, content program This quarter

Pick the top five items and put dates on them. An audit with no deadlines **bellingham seo company** is just a list.

When a DIY Audit Is Not Enough

A half-hour check finds the obvious problems. It will not reveal technical issues buried in your site, deep competitor gaps, or the link profile behind a stronger rival. For the medium and large projects on your list, a deeper review from Stambaugh Designs bellingham seo agency will surface what a half-hour check cannot.

Repeat the audit every quarter. Local search shifts as competitors add reviews, hours change, and listings drift. A recurring thirty minutes catches small problems before they turn into lost calls.

About the Author

Elena Vasquez runs a small consultancy focused on helping local Bellingham local SEO service companies understand their online visibility. She spent several years in the marketing department of a regional home-improvement chain before going independent. Elena is based in Spokane and likes to say that most local SEO wins come from fixing basics that nobody had time to check.