

## Nextline Growth Small Business SEO Statistics Brief (2026)

### Why this matters

- Local search and AI visibility both reward clear, trustworthy, answer-first content.
- Small businesses usually win faster by tightening local SEO, trust signals, and internal links before chasing broad national SEO.

### Key numbers

- 76% of people who search for something nearby on their smartphone visit a related business within a day. Source: Google and Ipsos.
- Google says local ranking is influenced by relevance, distance, and prominence. Source: Google Business Profile Help.
- 61% of SMB leaders say they still do not have a clear AI plan. Source: Microsoft.
- 80% of SMB employees are already bringing AI tools into work. Source: Microsoft.
- 27% revenue-per-employee growth has been observed in AI-exposed industries. Source: PwC.
- Salesforce says half of service cases may be handled by AI by 2027. Source: Salesforce.

### What to do first

1. Tighten Google Business Profile and local service pages.
2. Publish answer-first guides with references and FAQs.
3. Link service, package, location, and guide pages together clearly.
4. Use AI where it improves response speed, support, and operational clarity.

### Primary references

- Google and Ipsos local mobile search study
- Google Business Profile help: how local ranking works
- Microsoft SMB AI findings
- PwC AI Jobs Barometer
- Salesforce State of Service
- Google Search Central: AI features in Search
- Google Search Central: helpful, reliable, people-first content