

The state of digital location data in South Africa

Issued by [Location Bank](#)

1 Jun 2015

The physical and digital worlds are becoming increasingly blurred. Today there is an almost seamless transition from digital interaction to physical transaction - *how often do you search on your phone before shopping?* According to BPS (Business Positioning Systems), any business with physical locations needs to replicate their physical footprint across all relevant digital platforms.

With this in mind, BPS wanted to find out how accurate digital location data is on the following platforms:

- A brand's website
- Google maps
- Top directories such as TripAdvisor

Using a sample of 20 top local businesses across retail, restaurant, fuel and hospitality (a total of over 2500 locations) BPS's findings were frightening to say the least:

- Own website - 15% of data incorrect
- Google Maps - 25% of data incorrect
- Other directories - 35% of data incorrect

Even though BPS deals with brand locations on a daily basis, the findings came as a shock. Gabriella Eidelman, partner at BPS comments, "We were left questioning what kind of business impact these results may have, so we built a model for this.

We used an average number of 10,000 store visits because our blue chip clients are currently driving that many consumers in store through our local search service.

15% of 10,000 visits to a brand's store locator per month = 1,500 visits. This could equate to 1,500 lost customers per month. If each customer is worth just R50 spend to your business this equates to R75,000 in lost revenue!

25% of 10,000 visits to a brand's Google locations per month = 2,500. This could mean a staggering 2,500 lost customers per month. Again if each customer is worth just R50 spend to your business this equates to R125,000 in lost revenue!

35% of 10,000 visits to a directory website = 3,500. This could mean a staggering 3,500 lost customers per month. Again if each customer is worth just R50 spend to your business this equates to R175,000 in lost revenue.

However we must remember the data is *randomly incorrect* and users won't encounter an incorrect listing all of the time so let's assume they will only encounter an incorrect listing 30% of the time and apply this to the total lost revenue potential:

- Total Potential lost revenue - R375,000
- 30% of Total Potential lost revenue = **R112,500 per month**

According to Gabriella, this is a staggeringly large figure to any business to simply pour down the drain.

Buster Pitt, BPS Head of Sales, adds, "It's also important to remember that these searches occur when the potential customer is already in buy mode - if they can't find you the chances are they'll turn to the closest competitor (the closest competitor with an accurate digital footprint as the consumer will probably do further research on their mobile). So not only

are customers potentially losing over R100, 000 per month - they're actually increasing competitor revenue.

Clients of BPS don't have to worry about this risk because we don't trust the location data given to us by any of our clients. Each and every location is put through our rigorous four-tier data cleansing process to ensure it mirrors the real world. Our process is so rigorous we end up correcting Google's base map data on a weekly basis."

The BPS service will help you list and maintain your location data on the most important platforms, tailored to your business. "Our list of bespoke directories will get your business covered on the highest ranking sites, including industry specific citations. No matter where your customers are searching, they will be able to find you online, driving them offline and closing the loop on an effective search strategy. With the above in mind, is having an accurate digital footprint a "nice to have"? Lost revenue sounds business critical to me," concludes Buster.

For more info about this service, contact: buster@bpsystemsonline.com.

Business Positioning Systems (BPS)

Business Positioning Systems (BPS) is South Africa's leading location based search agency. Formed in 2007 to commercialise Point of Interest data listings on navigation devices, BPS went on to launch a number of location media solutions in the market. BPS now focuses on increasing client's local search visibility across digital platforms such as Google, Teleatlas and Nokia maps. The company has unrivalled expertise on a global scale in Google Places Optimisation also known as Local SEO.

BPS

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