



Backlinks for Local SEO

The Simple Guide for Small Businesses in Leighton Buzzard

Introduction

If you have ever searched for a plumber, a café, a solicitor, or a builder and noticed the same few businesses always seem to show up near the top, it is rarely because they have “cracked a secret code”. Most of the time, Google is doing what you would do. It is looking for signs that a business is trusted, real, and recommended by others.

One of the strongest trust signals Google uses is the backlink. Backlinks sound technical, but the idea is simple. If you run a small business in Leighton Buzzard, or anywhere nearby in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, understanding backlinks can be the difference between a website that quietly sits there and a website that brings in steady enquiries.

What a backlink is (a simple definition)

A backlink is when another website links to your website.

That is it.

For example, imagine a local blog writes an article called “Trusted Trades in Leighton Buzzard” and includes a line like “Check out ABC Plumbing” with a clickable link to your site. That clickable link is a backlink to you.

Backlinks can come from many places. A news website might mention you. A supplier might list you as a stockist. A local charity might thank you for sponsoring an event and link to your site. Any time another site points people to your website, you have earned a backlink.

Why backlinks are good for SEO (in plain English)

Google wants to show the most reliable, helpful results. It cannot personally visit every business or test every service, so it relies on signals.

A good backlink works like a vote of trust. It is another website effectively saying, “This business is worth mentioning.”

When you earn good backlinks, three useful things can happen.

- **Improve your rankings:** This means you have a better chance of showing up higher when someone searches for what you do, such as “electrician Leighton Buzzard” or “roof repair near me”.
- **Improve local visibility:** Backlinks support your overall authority online, which can help your presence around your Google Business Profile indirectly. Think of it as strengthening your business’s credibility across the web.
- **Get referral traffic:** Real people click them. A link from a local event page or community site can send you visitors who are already interested and ready to buy.

The key point is that not all backlinks help. Quality matters far more than quantity, especially for local businesses.

The gold standard of backlinks (what you actually want)

If backlinks are votes, then some votes count more than others. The best backlinks usually share a few traits:

- **They are relevant:** A link from a site connected to your industry or your local area is far more meaningful than a random link.
- **They are authoritative:** Links from trusted sites carry more weight. Local news, chambers of commerce, and established local businesses tend to be stronger sources.
- **They are local:** For local SEO, a link from your town or region can be especially valuable.
- **They are natural:** Links you earn because you are genuinely mentioned, not because you paid for a scheme.
- **They are in-content:** A link inside a real page or article tends to be stronger than one hidden in a footer.
- **They are dofollow, ideally:** A “dofollow” link passes authority. A “nofollow” link may not pass the same SEO value, but it can still be useful for traffic and credibility.

How many backlinks do you need?

There is no magic number because it depends on who you are competing with.

- **New websites / Low competition:** Aiming for around 10 to 30 quality local links can already move the needle.
- **Typical local competition:** Many businesses end up in the 30 to 100 quality links range over time.
- **Competitive niches:** Law, roofing, dentistry, etc., often take 100 to 300+ strong links across months or years.

The real goal is to have more high-quality, relevant links than the businesses outranking you.

Where the best local backlinks come from

1. **Local Directories:** Focus on directories that real people use, like local chambers of commerce or business associations.
2. **Local News and Media:** Local newspapers and community blogs often publish stories about local businesses.
3. **Partners and Suppliers:** Ask your suppliers or business partners to be listed on their “trusted partners” or “customers” page.
4. **Local Organisations:** Schools, charities, and sports clubs often have sponsor pages.
5. **Local Events:** Markets, charity runs, and networking events often list participants.

6. **Industry Content:** Contributing advice or a guest piece to a trade publication.
7. **Resource Pages:** Pages like “Recommended local services” or “Best plumbers in Leighton Buzzard”.
8. **Testimonials:** Writing a testimonial for a vendor you use often results in a link back to you.

A clear, actionable backlink checklist

- Check the competition:** Look at where competitors ranking above you are mentioned.
- Fix your foundation:** Ensure your website has proper service pages and correct contact info.
- Claim the Big 20:** Focus on 10–20 reputable local and industry directories.
- Leverage relationships:** Ask suppliers and collaborators for links.
- Testimonial method:** Offer testimonials to tools or suppliers you honestly rate.
- Local sponsorship:** Sponsor a youth team or community event for a high-impact link.
- Local PR:** Send simple, positive updates to local journalists or bloggers.
- Create a link-worthy page:** Publish a guide or checklist that others will naturally want to reference.
- Ask to be included:** Reach out politely to local resource pages.
- Keep it steady:** Aim for 2–6 good links a month rather than a quick spike.

What to avoid

- **Cheap shortcuts:** Avoid offers like “1,000 backlinks for £99”.
- **Spam:** Avoid random blog comment spam.
- **Irrelevant links:** Avoid foreign sites that have nothing to do with your area or business.
- **Private Blog Networks (PBNs):** Google actively targets these.
- **Exact match anchor text:** Don’t force every link to use your keywords; natural links are better.

The Golden Rule

Ask yourself: *“Would I still want this link if Google didn’t exist?”*

If the answer is yes, because it puts you in front of customers or strengthens your reputation, then it is a good link.

If you need help with your Backlink strategy, call us at +44 7309 233639 or email us at calandlara.webdesign@gmail.com.