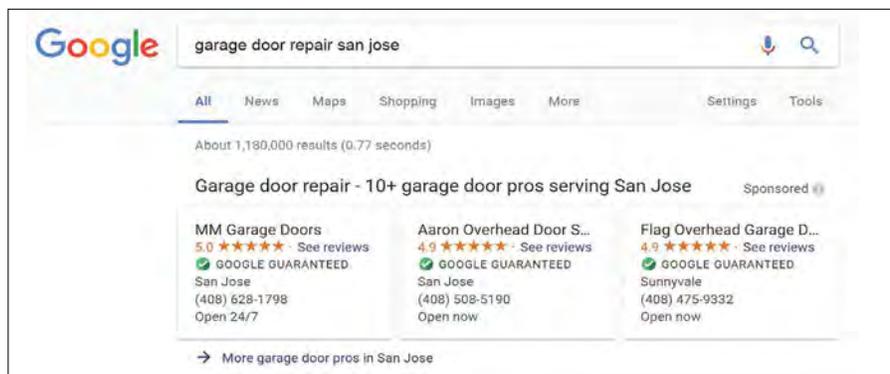


Google launches Google Guarantee for garage door dealers

Google seeks to protect garage door repair customers



To help protect consumers who are looking for garage door repairs, Google is rolling out two measures: the Google Guarantee program and advanced verification.

That's right. Of the thousands of business types that seek business online, Google has currently identified garage door repair companies as "high risk for scam." Google says that protecting consumers is its number one priority. Consequently, the search engine giant says that it is committed to fighting deceptive ads.

"We are watching the garage door repair and locksmith industries for fraud and policy violations," Google told us. "We know scams are happening and ... we're always working on new, better ways to fight deceptive advertisers who often use fake information and other dubious practices."

Google Guarantee

In its first measure, launched on Oct. 31, Google debuted the Google Guarantee badge of trust for garage door repair companies. The program, to be in 30 cities by the end of 2017, is initially available for only four industries: garage door repair companies, locksmiths, plumbers, and HVAC.

All local businesses that are Google Guaranteed have passed a background check and are backed by a money-back guarantee. These background checks, conducted by Pinkerton Consulting and Investigations, cover your:

- Criminal history (including cross-checks against national sex offender, terrorist, and sanctions registries)
- Applicable trade licenses, insurance, and civil litigation history
- Social Security number

When customers book an eligible Local Services provider on Google, they are protected by the guarantee. If a customer is not satisfied with

the quality of service, Google will cover claims up to the cost of the initial service, with a lifetime cap of \$2,000.

The service must be booked through Google Local Services. Add-on or future services, damages to property, dissatisfaction with price or responsiveness of the business, and cancellations aren't covered. Claims must be submitted within 30 days of the initial service completion date. If consumers are not able to resolve concerns with the provider, they can contact the Google Guarantee support team at 844-885-0761.

To sign up for the Google Guarantee program, go to <https://adwords.google.com/homeservices/signup>. But note: garage door repair companies that are Google Guaranteed must have also successfully completed advanced verification.

Advanced verification: California first

Advanced verification is the second measure, launched on Nov. 13. The pilot program was initially for advertisers promoting garage door services in California. GDS has a major presence several California markets; even though its license has been suspended there, they continue to operate daily.

The advanced verification screening currently applies to garage door repair companies and locksmiths, which Google has identified as "high risk for scam." But dealers outside California must also pay attention to this verification process. Google says the program is expanding nationwide for garage door businesses.

On Nov. 15, garage door companies began receiving a notice from Google AdWords, notifying them that their ads will stop running in January unless they pass the advanced verification process. Google's reason? "We've identified a number of fraudulent garage door service businesses who use false identities on Google."

Google expressly states, "All AdWords advertisers promoting garage door services will be required to complete this advanced verification in order to continue serving ads on Google. If you don't complete and pass this process, your ads may not continue to show on Google."

Passing the test

The program affects ads that appear below the Google Guaranteed service providers on Google Search. The advanced verification process includes a review of your:

- AdWords account
- Evidence of fraudulent or misleading behavior on Google
- State and professional license registrations, where applicable
- Video interviews conducted by Google

To participate in the advanced verification process, a garage door repair company must answer a few questions about its business. To enter the verification process, go to <https://services.google.com/fb/forms/advancedverification/>. ■

GOOGLE GUARANTEE'S FIRST CITIES

These 17 cities were the first where Google Guaranteed businesses were available. The list is expected to expand to 30 cities by the end of 2017.

1. Arizona: Phoenix
2. California: Los Angeles
3. California: Riverside
4. California: Sacramento
5. California: San Diego
6. California: San Francisco
7. California: San Jose
8. Florida: Miami
9. Georgia: Atlanta
10. Illinois: Chicago
11. Massachusetts: Boston
12. Michigan: Detroit
13. New York: New York
14. Pennsylvania: Philadelphia
15. Texas: Dallas
16. Washington: Seattle
17. Washington, D.C.