

RESTORATION-FOCUSED

DIGITAL MARKETING 101 GUIDE



A simple guide to getting found online, earning trust, and turning your presence into phone calls.



**STRONG ROOTS.
STRONGER RESULTS.**

Every channel works best
when everything is connected.

A Note From Karma Staff

On a normal day, a restoration owner may move from an incoming call to a crew update, then to an estimate review or a customer waiting for an answer. By the time the urgent work is handled, follow-up is often the thing that gets pushed to later.

Karma Staff was built around this reality. The company started with one open office administrator role inside a restoration business, where calls, files, updates, and daily coordination needed more support.

Since then, Karma Staff has grown into a restoration-focused support company with trained remote professionals working across office administration, estimating, bookkeeping, customer success, sales, and digital marketing.

Marketing is one of the areas we see owners fall behind on most. With so much competing for their attention each day, it's often the first thing to get pushed aside.

We have screened more than 20,000 candidates, completed over 16,000 training hours, become an IICRC-certified firm, achieved SOC 2 Type II, joined RIA, and become a Strategic Partner to PuroClean.

We created this guide to make digital marketing easier to understand for restoration owners. Use it to check the parts that affect your online visibility: Google, your website, reviews, content, and referrals.

OUR CLIENTS



Start With the Big Picture

What Is Digital Marketing, Really?

Digital marketing is everything you do to build your presence online so that potential customers can find you, trust you, and choose to call you. That is the foundation: people need to find your company, feel confident in what they see, and know how to reach you when they need help.

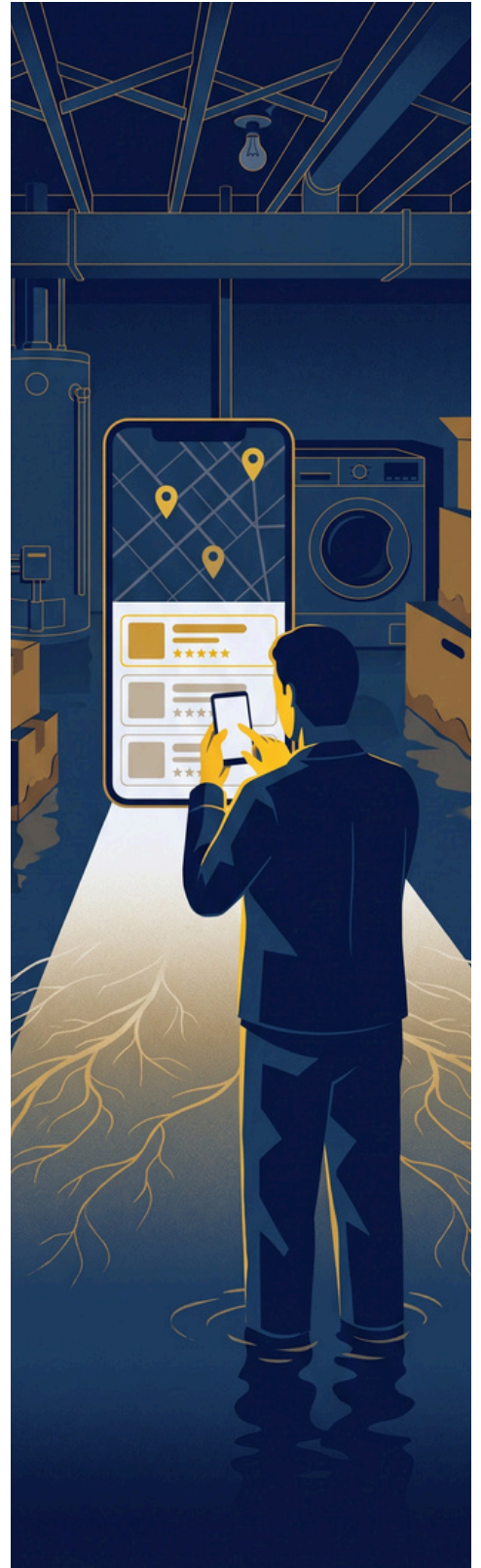
Think about how a restoration job begins. A homeowner walks into a flooded basement, grabs their phone, and searches. In that moment, either your company shows up and looks trustworthy, or it does not. Work reaches a restoration company through three engines, and this guide walks through all of them.

How Restoration Companies Get Found and Hired



EXAMPLE

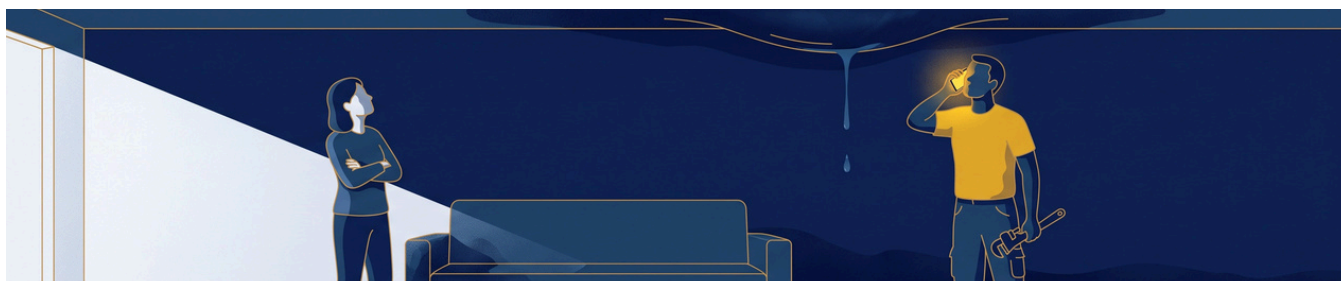
Two restoration companies serve the same town. One is easy to find, loads fast on a phone, and has a wall of recent reviews. The other has a dated website and an unclaimed Google listing. When a pipe bursts at midnight, the first company gets the call almost every time, and often without spending a dollar that night. That gap is what digital marketing closes.



Why Does This Matter So Much for Restoration?

Digital marketing matters for every business. A few things about restoration make it especially important.

- **It is usually an emergency.** People do not plan for a burst pipe or a house fire. They search in a panic and hire fast, often the first company that answers and looks credible.
- **It is built on trust.** You are asking a stranger to let your crew into their home on one of the worst days of their year. A professional presence does the convincing before you say a word.
- **It is local and competitive.** You compete with the other restoration companies in your city for the same searches. Small advantages in how you show up decide who wins the job.

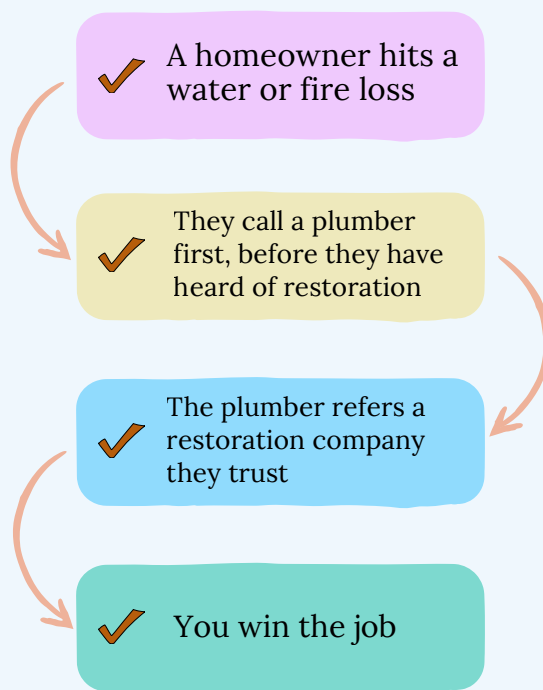


Organic, Paid, and Your Brand

Almost everything in digital marketing falls into two buckets. Organic marketing is visibility you earn without paying for each click, and it builds over time: your Google profile, search rankings, reviews, social media, and content. Paid marketing is visibility you pay for, usually right away: Google Ads, Local Services Ads, and Facebook or Instagram ads.

Organic approach is like building equity, slow and lasting, and paid is like renting attention, fast but gone when you stop. But the paid approach only works when there is budget behind it. Paid brings leads today, especially during storms. Organic lowers your cost over the long run. Running underneath all of it is your brand: the way your company looks, sounds, and presents itself everywhere a customer or partner sees you. Looking consistent and professional in every place is part of why someone decides to trust you.

How does a restoration referral happen?



The path most restoration jobs actually travel, from a homeowner's problem to your booked job.

The Building Blocks

The rest of this guide walks through the building blocks of a strong online presence, one by one. Here is the map.

1. **Getting found on Google.** Your free listing that shows up in the map.....6
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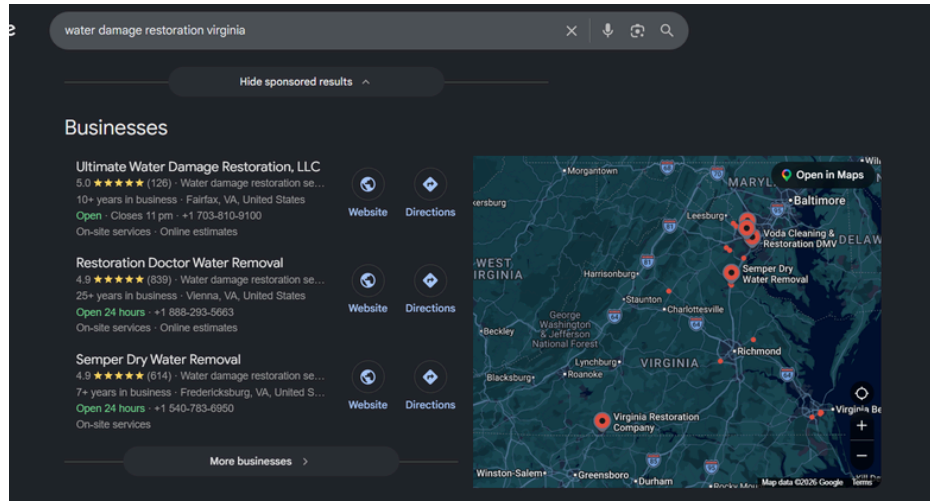
A tree stays strong because of what is happening below the surface. A restoration company's online presence works in a similar way. Your Google profile, website, reviews, referrals, and follow-up all support the calls that come into the business.

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GETTING FOUND ON GOOGLE

When someone searches for water damage help, Google shows a small map with a few businesses pinned on it. That box is called the Map Pack, and it is the most valuable spot in local search. What decides whether you appear there is your Google Business Profile, the free listing Google lets you manage. A complete, well-reviewed profile earns the call. A thin or unclaimed one quietly hands it to a competitor.



The same midnight search, three very different profiles. The complete one wins the top spot and the call.

KEY TERM

Map Pack: the small map with three businesses Google shows at the top of a local search. Getting into it is the fastest way to get found.

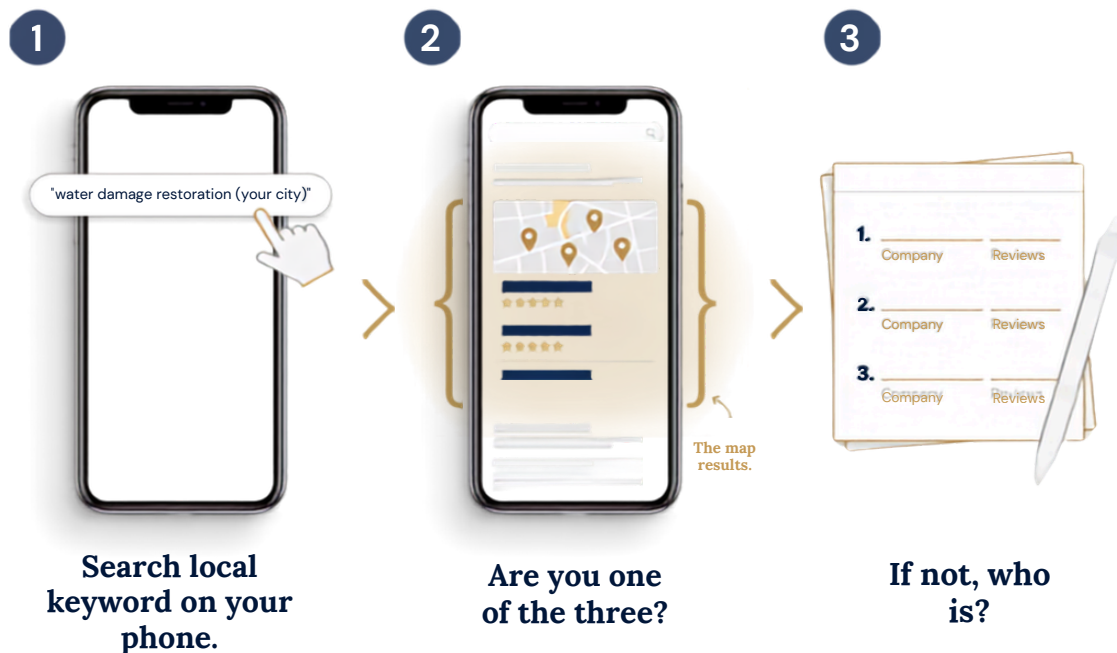
NAP consistency: your name, address, and phone written the same everywhere online, so Google trusts your listing.

What good Google business profile looks like

- Your profile is claimed, verified, and lists every service you offer.
- It is full of real photos of your crew, trucks, and finished jobs, rather than stock images.
- Your categories, hours, and 24/7 availability are set correctly.
- Your name, address, and phone match everywhere online.
- You post to it regularly with recent jobs and seasonal tips.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Search your main service and your city on your phone, then check whether your company is one of the three businesses shown on the map, and if it is not, write down who is there and how many reviews they have.



FAQ's

Do I really need a Google Business Profile if I already have a website?

Yes. The profile is what puts you in the map results, which is where most local searches land first. Your website and your profile do different jobs, and you want both working together.

How do I get job photos on my profile without hiring a photographer?

A phone is enough. Have your crew snap a few before-and-after shots on each job, with the homeowner's okay, and add them regularly. Real photos of real work beat any stock image.

Someone set up our listing years ago and we cannot access it. What now?

You can claim it through Google's verification, which confirms you are the real owner by phone, postcard, or video. Once claimed, you control the information, photos, and reviews.

YOUR WEBSITE: TURNING VISITORS INTO CALLS

A restoration website should help someone in a hurry understand that they are in the right place and take the next step without digging around. Most visitors are on a phone in the middle of an emergency. Within seconds, they need to see that you can handle their problem, that you are trustworthy, and how to reach you.

EXAMPLE

A homeowner on their phone finds two restoration sites. One takes six seconds to load and buries the phone number three scrolls down. The other loads instantly with a tap-to-call button right at the top. The slow site never got the call, and the owner never knew the lead existed.

KEY TERM

Call to action (CTA): the button or line that tells a visitor what to do next, like "Call now."

SSL certificate: the padlock and "https" that mark your site secure, which visitors and Google both trust.

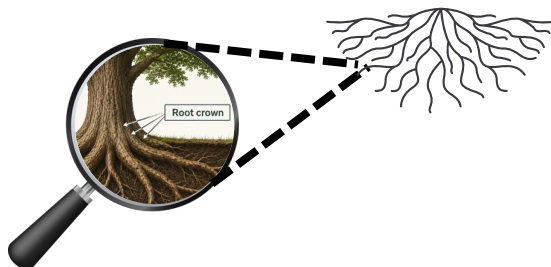
What good website looks like

- It loads in under three seconds on a phone.
- Your phone number is clickable on every page.
- You have a page for each service and each city you serve.
- Emergency and 24/7 service is impossible to miss.
- Trust signals are visible: reviews, certifications, and before-and-after photos.
- You capture leads after hours through a form, chatbot, or callback.

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The root crown is where a tree's support system connects to visible growth. Your website plays a similar role: it turns attention from Google, reviews, ads, and referrals into a clear path for the visitor.

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PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Open your website on your phone and, without scrolling, check whether that first screen shows all four things a worried homeowner needs: what you do, that you are available 24/7, a phone number they can tap, and one reason to trust you.



FAQ's

My website looks fine on my computer. Is that enough?

Most restoration visitors are on a phone during an emergency, so what matters most is how it looks and loads there. Open your own site on your phone and time how long it takes and how fast you can tap to call.

How do I know if my website is actually bringing in jobs?

Put call tracking on it and watch how many calls and form fills turn into jobs. If the site gets visitors but few calls, the problem is usually speed, a hidden phone number, or weak trust signals, rather than a need for more traffic.

Do I need live chat on the site?

It helps, mostly as a way to catch after-hours visitors who will not wait until morning. If you cannot staff it, a simple form or an automatic text-back can do the same job.

REVIEWS AND REPUTATION: EARNING TRUST

Before anyone talks to your team, your review profile is already shaping how they see your company. A homeowner choosing who to let into their home during a crisis leans heavily on what other people say about you. Reviews also sway the insurance adjusters and referral partners who check you out before sending work your way.

EXAMPLE

An adjuster is deciding which restoration company to add to a claim. Two are equally qualified. One has 130 reviews at 4.9 stars with thoughtful replies to the few unhappy ones. The other has 11 reviews and no replies. The adjuster picks the first without a second thought.

KEY TERM

Carrier scorecard: The rating that insurance carriers and their programs keep on the contractors they use. Strong reviews and fast responses help it.

What good reviews and reputation system looks like

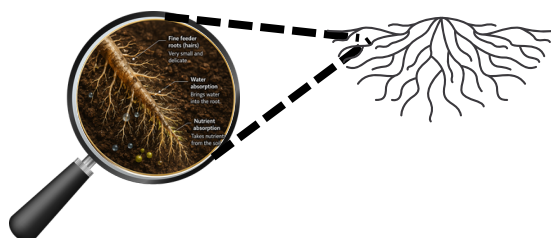
- You ask for a review after every completed job, and you make it effortless.
- You have more reviews than your top local competitor, at 4.5 stars or higher.
- You respond to every review, positive and negative, in a calm and professional voice.
- You have reviews on more than one platform, such as Google and Facebook.
- You show reviews and before-and-after galleries on your website.

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Fine feeder roots spread wide to collect the nutrients a tree needs to grow.

Reviews build proof in that same steady way: one recent customer experience after another makes your company easier to believe when someone is checking you out.

”



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Open your Google reviews and write down three checkpoints: your star rating, your total number of reviews, and the date of your most recent one. Then look up your closest competitor and write down the same three.



FAQ's

How do I ask for reviews without feeling pushy?

Ask right when the job wraps and the homeowner is relieved, and make it a single tap with a direct link. A short, friendly note is all it takes, and a simple system can send the link for you.

What do I do about a bad review?

Respond calmly and publicly, acknowledge their experience, and offer to make it right offline. Adjusters and homeowners judge you more on how you handle the hard ones than on a wall of five stars.

Can I offer a discount or a gift card for a review?

No. Paying or rewarding people for reviews is against Google's policy, whether the review turns out good or bad. It is also worth knowing you can no longer ask a customer to name a specific technician. Keep the request simple and neutral.

Digital Marketing Myth Vs. Reality

MYTH: I only need ads to grow my business.

REALITY: Ads can bring leads fast, but your Google profile, reviews, website, referrals, and follow-up decide whether those leads become jobs.

MYTH: My website just needs to look good.

REALITY: For restoration, your website needs to help a stressed homeowner understand what you do, trust you, and call fast.

MYTH: I should only ask happy customers for reviews.

REALITY: Ask consistently and neutrally. Do not filter unhappy customers away from public reviews.

MYTH: Referrals are only built offline.

REALITY: LinkedIn, email, social posts, CRM reminders, and useful content can help you start and maintain referral relationships.



PAID ADVERTISING (GOOGLE ADS AND BEYOND)

Paid ads help your restoration business show up in front of people who are already searching, especially when demand is high and waiting on organic visibility is not enough. Google Ads are the text ads you pay for by the click. For many restoration companies, Local Services Ads are worth testing because they tend to match higher-intent searches from people who need help soon. Meta ads on Facebook and Instagram are better for building awareness than for catching someone mid-emergency.

EXAMPLE

A freeze hits overnight and pipes burst across town. The company running Local Services Ads shows up at the very top with a Google Guaranteed badge and answers on the first ring. They book a week of work in two days. The company waiting on organic rankings watches most of it go elsewhere.

KEY TERM

Local Services Ads (LSA): top-of-page ads with a Google Guaranteed badge, where you pay per lead instead of per click.

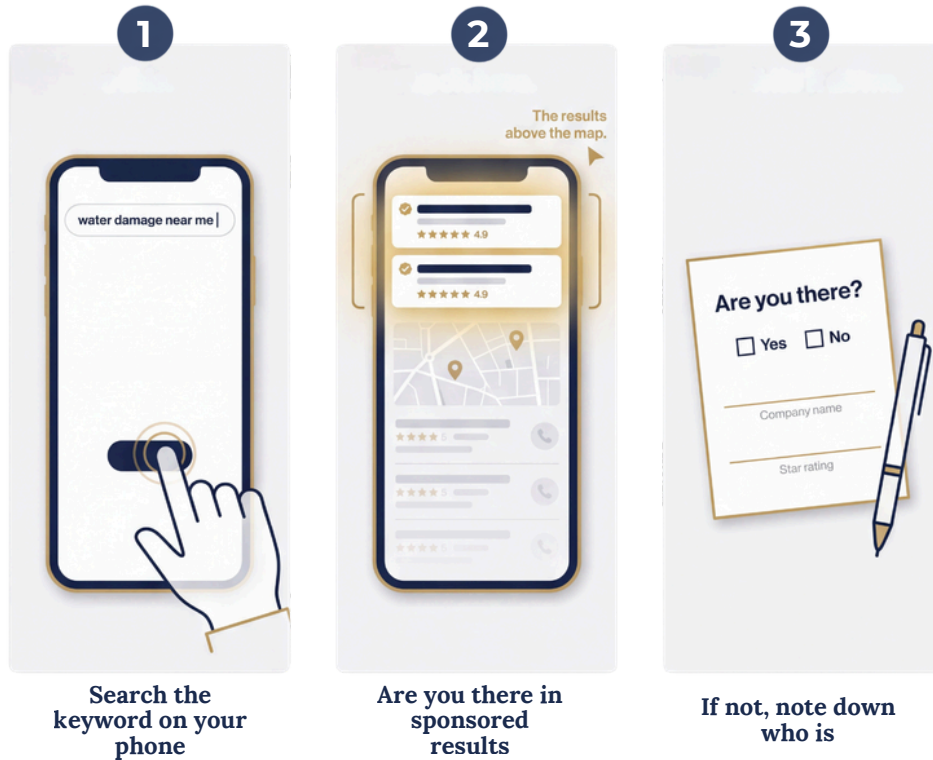
Cost per lead: what you spend, on average, to get one call or form.

What good paid ads practice looks like

- You appear in the sponsored results for your highest-intent searches.
- Your ads target emergency and high-value searches.
- You track which ads produce calls and jobs.
- You use negative keywords, so you are not paying for the wrong clicks.
- Your landing pages match your ads, rather than dropping people on the homepage.
- You know your cost per lead and your cost per job.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Search "water damage near me" on your phone, look at the sponsored results sitting above the map, and if your company is not there, write down which companies are.



FAQ's

Are ads worth it if I already rank well organically?

Often yes, because ads let you show up instantly for the highest-intent searches and scale fast when a storm hits. Many companies run Local Services Ads even while ranking well, because those leads are already ready to hire.

How do I know if my ad money is working?

Track calls and jobs back to each campaign, and watch your cost per lead and cost per job. If you cannot tie spend to booked work, that is the first metric to fix.

What does a restoration lead cost on Local Services Ads?

It varies by market and competition, and restoration tends to run higher than most trades, often in the range of about \$200 to \$700 per lead. You set a weekly budget, and you can dispute and get credited for junk leads like wrong numbers or calls outside your service area.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

SEO is the work of making your website show up higher in Google's free, unpaid results. When you rank near the top for "water damage restoration" plus your city without paying for the click, that is SEO working. It is slower to build than ads, and it lowers your cost per lead over time, because you are not paying for every click.

EXAMPLE

A restoration company builds one page for "water damage restoration" in each of the eight towns it serves. Six months later, those pages quietly bring in steady calls every week, and the company is not paying for a single click.

KEY TERM

SEO: making your site rank higher in Google's free results.

Backlinks: links from other websites to yours, which act like votes of confidence and help you rank.

What good SEO practice looks like

- You have a page for each service in each city you serve.
- You publish helpful content that answers what homeowners search for before they call.
- You earn backlinks from local and industry sources.
- Your Google profile is optimized for local search.
- The technical basics are handled: fast, mobile-friendly, and free of errors.
- You track your rankings over time.

“Deep roots do most of their work below the surface before the growth is easy to see. SEO is built in a similar way: the right setup, fixes, and steady updates help your website become easier for Google to read, trust, and rank.”



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Search your main service and your city, scroll past the ads and the map down to the plain results, and note which page of Google your website finally appears on.



FAQ's

Can I do SEO myself, or do I need to hire someone?

You can handle the basics: claim your profile, keep your details consistent, and write honest pages for each service and city. The more technical pieces, like site speed and backlinks, are usually worth handing off to someone who does it often.

Does SEO still matter now that people use AI to search?

Yes, SEO gives your business a clearer online footprint, whether someone finds you through Google search, maps, or an AI-generated recommendation.

What kind of backlinks actually help a restoration company?

Local, relevant ones. A link from an insurance agent you work with, a property manager's vendor page, a local news story, or a trade association carries far more weight than a hundred generic directory links. Your referral partners are often your best source.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Your social pages show that your company is active, responsive, and still doing real restoration work in the community between emergency calls. Restoration work is dramatic and visual, so a before-and-after of a flooded basement turned spotless is powerful proof. And because referrals matter so much, social media keeps you in front of the plumbers, agents, and property managers who send you work.

EXAMPLE

A plumber is scrolling Facebook and sees a restoration company's before-and-after of a flooded basement turned spotless. Weeks later, when his customer has water damage, that company is the one he names. He never would have thought of them if their page had been silent.

KEY TERM

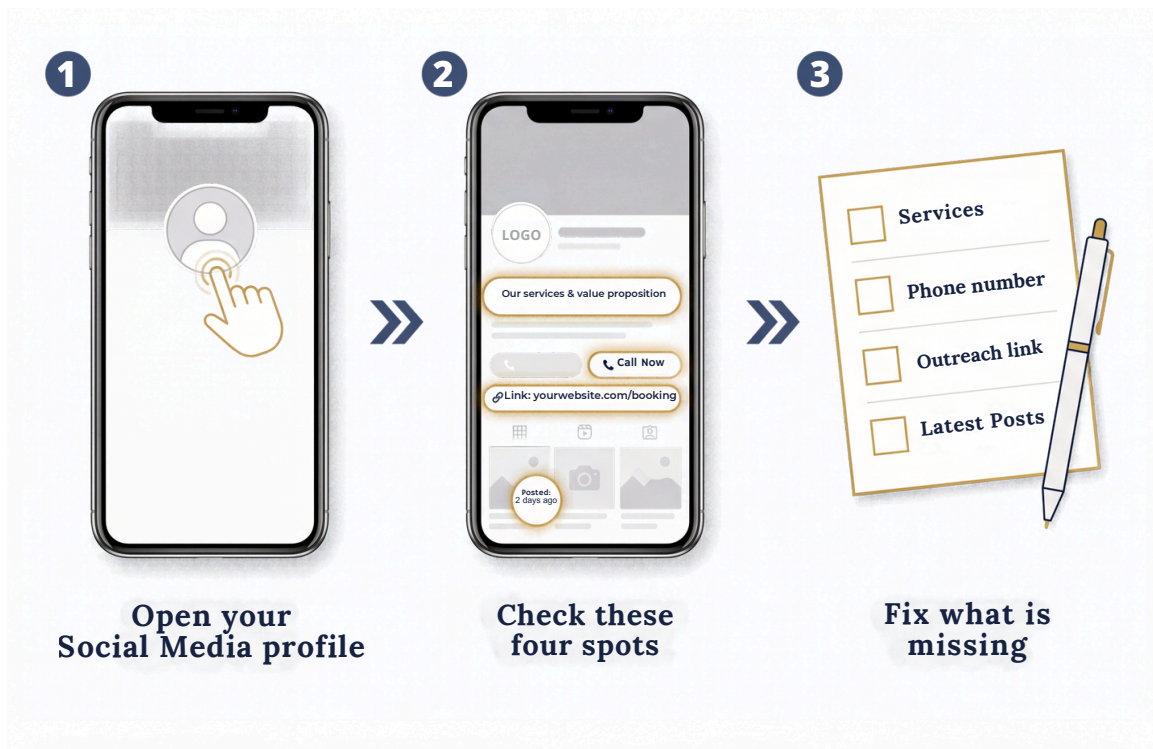
Content calendar: a simple plan of what to post and when, so posting is steady instead of random.

What good social media strategy looks like

- You are active on the platforms your customers and partners actually use.
- You post consistently, so your pages are not dormant for months.
- You share real job content and educational tips.
- You respond to comments and messages quickly.
- You follow a simple content calendar.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Open your own Facebook and LinkedIn pages the way a stranger would, and check whether your services are clear, your phone number is easy to find, your website link works, and your last post is less than two weeks old.



FAQ's

Which platform should I focus on first?

Start where your customers and referral partners already are, which is usually Facebook for homeowners and LinkedIn for partners like plumbers and agents. It is better to be consistent on one than scattered on five.

What should I even post about?

Real job photos and before-and-afters, quick prevention tips, and your team. You are reminding your community and your referral partners that you exist and do great work.

Who should handle our social media?

It can be delegated, as long as the person has an easy way to get real job photos from the crew. The owner rarely needs to run it day to day, but someone has to own the calendar and keep it from going quiet.

CONTENT AND AUTHORITY (VIDEO, BLOG, PODCAST)

Content is the helpful videos, articles, and resources you create to answer questions and show your expertise. Helpful content gives people a reason to take your company seriously before they ever speak with your team. A simple starting point is to record a short answer on your phone after a common customer question comes up, then have someone turn that into a post, email, or website FAQ. It gives the prospects more to trust than words on a page alone. A podcast can build real authority, but only if you can keep it going.

EXAMPLE

A homeowner Googles "what to do after a burst pipe" at 1 a.m. and lands on a restoration company's simple checklist. It calms them down and tells them what to do first. When they need a restoration contractor, your company is already familiar because you were the one that helped them understand the next step.

What a good content strategy looks like

- You create educational content that positions you as the expert.
- You use video: walkthroughs and "what to do when" clips.
- You offer downloadable resources, like a homeowner emergency checklist.
- You send a regular email to past customers and referral partners.
- You turn the questions customers actually ask into content.
- You reuse a content library instead of starting from scratch each time.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Type a question your customers ask you all the time, such as "what to do after a pipe bursts," into Google/YouTube and see whether any blog or video from your company shows up on the first page. Note down what blogs/articles or videos are showing and who posted them.



FAQ's

I am not a writer/creator. How do I create content?

Start with the questions customers ask you every week and answer them simply, in a short video or a page. You already know the answers, and a tool or a team member can help turn them into content.

What topics actually bring in restoration customers?

The ones homeowners search in a worry, like signs of water damage in a wall, how long mold remediation takes, whether to call insurance first, and what to do when a basement floods. Answer those clearly and you catch people right before they call.

Does content actually bring in jobs?

Indirectly and over time. A homeowner who found your flood-recovery checklist at 1 a.m. often becomes the call you get in the morning, and agents refer companies that look like the expert.

BUILDING REFERRAL PARTNERSHIPS ONLINE

We covered why referrals matter so much in restoration. This section gives you a simple way to make referral outreach part of the weekly routine, instead of something that only happens when work slows down. The most reliable play is steady LinkedIn outreach, and it works in four simple steps.

Building referral partners on LinkedIn



The outreach starts the relationship. You close it with a handshake.

A simple, repeatable outreach loop that turns cold contacts into referral partners.

EXAMPLE

A restoration owner connects with twenty local plumbers and HVAC companies on LinkedIn over a month, sends each a short, friendly hello, and grabs coffee with three of them. One of those three sends two jobs before the quarter is out. None of it cost a dollar in ad spend.

What good referral system looks like

- You have a clear list of the referral partners you want in your area.
- You reach out and connect with them consistently, rather than only when you need work.
- You stay in front of them with regular posts about your jobs.
- You track each relationship, so none goes quiet.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Write down the last five jobs that came to you through a referral and who sent each one, then search LinkedIn for plumbers, HVAC companies, and roofers in your area and send three connection requests before you put your phone down.



FAQ's

What do I say in the first message?

Keep it short and human. Introduce yourself, mention that you work with the same kind of customers, and suggest a quick coffee sometime. You are starting a relationship, not pitching.

How do I actually win a plumber or an agent as a referral partner?

Make their life easier. For a plumber, that means saving their techs the unbillable hours a water loss creates. For an insurance agent, it means clean documentation and fast paperwork that makes them look good to their client. Make it clear that working with your restoration company helps them take better care of their own customer.

How do I stay in touch without being annoying?

Show up with something useful, rather than a message that only asks for work. A quick check-in every quarter, a helpful post they see in their feed, and clean work when they do refer you keeps you top of mind. A simple reminder in your CRM helps you keep the rhythm.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Digital marketing helps a restoration company show up clearly when someone needs help and make it easy for that person to reach the team. Some of it is free and slow to build, like your Google profile, reviews, SEO, and social media. Some of it is paid and fast, like Google Ads and Local Services Ads. And underneath all of it sit the referral relationships that quietly drive so much of the work.

You do not have to do everything at once. If you are just starting, get your Google profile complete, build a steady flow of reviews, and make sure your website turns visitors into calls. From there, add the pieces that fit your goals and your market.

What Else We Have For You:

Most owners already know what to do, but the real challenge is finding the hours to do it consistently, while also running jobs and managing crews. Karma Staff supports that work by providing trained remote staff who can help keep the daily bookkeeping, admin, and estimating tasks moving while the owner stays focused on jobs, crews, and customers.

[Book a Consultation](#)

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