

The Contractor GBP Audit

What 80% of contractors and renovators in
Collingwood get wrong

A free guide.

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Why I wrote this

I've audited dozens of contractor and renovator Google Business Profiles across the Georgian Bay corridor. The same 6-7 issues come up in nearly every audit. Most take less than an hour to fix.

This is the checklist I'd run if you hired me. No retainer, no sales pitch - just what to look for.

The 7-point Contractor GBP checklist

1. Primary category (and the trap most contractors fall into)

The default move is to set "General Contractor" as your primary category. And while that's not wrong, it's the most competitive local category on Google. You're competing against everyone.

The smarter move for most renovation-focused contractors: pick your highest-margin specialty as the primary category and use General Contractor as a secondary. So if 60% of your work is kitchen and bathroom renos, set "Kitchen Remodeler" or "Bathroom Remodeler" as primary. You'll rank faster in the specialty than you will in the general category.

2. Secondary categories

You want 3-5 secondary categories matching your actual service mix:

- General Contractor
- Kitchen Remodeler
- Bathroom Remodeler
- Basement Remodeler
- Home Builder (if you do new builds)
- Custom Home Builder
- Renovation
- Deck Builder
- Interior Designer (if applicable)

Pick the 3-5 that match what you actually do most. Don't list categories for work you don't want more of.

3. Services list (with project type breakdown)

Most contractor GBPs list 3-5 services. You should list 8-12, organized by project type:

- Kitchen renovation (full)

- Kitchen refacing / cabinet replacement
- Bathroom renovation (full)
- Master bath renovation
- Basement finishing
- Home additions
- Garage builds / conversions
- Deck and outdoor construction
- Custom millwork
- Cottage renovations (if you serve the chalet market)

Pricing ranges help filter customers. "Kitchen renovations from \$25,000" signals seriousness and saves you discovery calls with price-shoppers.

4. Photos (the single biggest win for contractors)

Renovation customers buy on visual proof + project narratives. The minimum is 30 photos for a contractor - more than other trades. What works:

- Before/after pairs of completed projects (12-15 pairs minimum)
- Material details, custom millwork close-ups (5-8)
- Team on site (3-5)
- Project narratives via photo carousels - the demo, the rough, the finish (5-8)

If you have 100+ project photos on your phone but only 8 on GBP, fixing this is the single highest-leverage change you can make today.

5. Business description (use the certifications + insurance)

You get 750 characters. Use them all. For contractors specifically, lead with the trust signals:

- Years in business
- WSIB / liability insurance amount
- Association memberships (CHBA, RenoMark, BILD)
- Specialty certifications (Tarion warranty, Certified Aging-in-Place, etc.)
- Geographic service area
- Specialty work (kitchens, bathrooms, cottage renos, etc.)

Renovation customers are paranoid about hiring. The description is where you remove that friction.

6. Q&A seeded

Most contractor profiles have zero customer Q&A. Common questions to seed:

- "What's the typical timeline for a kitchen renovation?"

- "Do you handle permits and inspections?"
- "What's the typical cost range for a bathroom reno?"
- "Are you covered by Tarion warranty?"
- "Do you work on cottages / vacation homes?"
- "How far in advance should I book?"

Public answers reduce friction for customers researching a major purchase.

7. Posts cadence

Most contractor profiles haven't posted since 2024. Active profiles outrank dormant ones. The minimum cadence is 1 post per week:

- Recent project showcases (with before/after photos)
- Material spotlights ("Why we use solid hardwood for cottage kitchens")
- Seasonal content ("Booking summer kitchen renos now - 4-month lead time")
- Team / behind-the-scenes ("Adding a Red Seal carpenter to the crew")

Why these matter (the contractor-specific case)

Contractors and renovators have the highest dollar-per-job of any local trade. Single projects can be \$50,000 to \$300,000+. Renovation customers research for 2-6 months before contacting anyone, and they're only contacting contractors whose online presence projects confidence.

SEO is the trust signal that gets you in the door for the conversation that closes the deal. The customer's first instinct is to call the contractor whose Google presence looks credible and active. That's almost always the one with: complete GBP, fresh photos, recent posts, recent reviews, and proper trust signals.

The 5 most common mistakes I see

Mistake 1: Generic "General Contractor" category with no specialty positioning

You do everything, but Google can't tell what to rank you for. Pick 2-3 specialties (kitchens, bathrooms, cottage renos) and become known for them. The general inquiries come anyway.

Mistake 2: Portfolio of 4 phone photos from 3 years ago

Your best work is sitting on your phone. The contractor down the street has fresh photos from last week's job. Customers pick based on visual proof - this is the easiest fix in any contractor audit.

Mistake 3: WSIB and insurance buried in About page

These are your strongest trust signals. They should be in: the GBP business description, every service page header, the contact form, the website footer. Currently they're in one paragraph deep in About.

Mistake 4: No cottage renovation positioning

If you do cottage renos, this is an underserved market with high margins and minimal competition online. "Cottage renovation Collingwood," "chalet bathroom remodel," "four-season conversion" are all keywords with low competition. Most contractors don't separate cottage work from residential.

Mistake 5: Asking for reviews verbally at project completion

You're at the final walkthrough. Customer is happy. You ask for a Google review. They say yes. They never do it. Renovation reviews need to be asked for 30 days post-completion via SMS, with a one-tap link to your Google review page. Automate it.

Your 30-day quick-win plan

Week 1

- Pick 2-3 specialties (kitchens, bathrooms, cottage renos - whichever is your highest-margin work most consistently)
- Add 3-4 secondary GBP categories matching those specialties
- Expand services list from 3 to at least 10 with descriptions and pricing ranges where reasonable

Week 2

- Upload 20 photos: before/after pairs from your last 5 completed projects
- Move WSIB, insurance, and association memberships into the GBP business description (use all 750 chars)
- Seed 6 Q&A from a non-business account, answer each as the owner
- Reply to every existing Google review

Week 3

- Build a dedicated cottage renovation page on your website (if you do cottage work)
- Audit your NAP consistency across Google, Apple Maps, Yelp, Bing, Facebook, HomeStars, BBB
- Set up your first GBP Post (showcase your most recent completed project)
- Build a 4-week posting calendar

Week 4

- Set up an automated SMS review request system with a 30-day delay
- Add LocalBusiness + Service schema markup to your homepage
- Build 2 specialty service pages: Kitchen Renovation [Your City], Bathroom Renovation [Your City]

By the end of the 30 days you'll have a noticeably more credible online presence and the framework for a portfolio that competes with the bigger firms.

Want me to do all this for you?

I'm Lasse Pettersen. Georgian Bay SEO is my local consultancy - I work exclusively with trades and service businesses across Collingwood, Blue Mountain, Wasaga Beach, Thornbury, and Meaford.

If you'd like me to run a personalized audit on your business (not the generic checklist above - the specific things wrong with your GBP, with screenshots, action plan, and competitor comparison), I do them as a \$499 one-off. If you decide to go monthly after, the \$499 applies as credit against the first month.

Foundation retainer is \$750/mo with a 90-day Map Pack movement guarantee. Shoreline is \$1,500/mo. Month-to-month, no annual contracts.

Email me at hello@georgianbayseo.ca or book a free 20-minute call at georgianbayseo.ca.

Either way - good luck with the work.

— Lasse / Georgian Bay SEO

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