



EVOLVV STRATEGIES

A FREE DOWNLOAD FROM GOOGLE ADS FOR LOCAL FIRMS

The LSA Setup Checklist

Local Services Ads from eligibility to badge: the documents to gather, the profile gate, and the honest timeline.

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LSA Setup Checklist

Everything you need to start the Local Services Ads clock today and submit clean the first time: the badge facts, the eligibility check, the Google Business Profile gate, the documents to gather, the badge-language scrub, and the honest verification timeline.

The badge, current and correct: Google Verified

Since **October 2025** there is one trust badge on Local Services Ads: **Google Verified**, a checkmark next to your listing. That's it. Two older names you'll trip over in old blog posts — **Google Screened** (the old badge for professionals like lawyers and financial advisors) and **Google Guaranteed** (the home-services badge, which used to come with a consumer money-back guarantee up to about \$2,000) — are both retired. The money-back guarantee is discontinued. There is one badge. It's called Google Verified. It carries no consumer financial guarantee.

Step 1 — Scrub the old badge language off your own stuff

- ☐ Find and replace "Google Screened," "Google Guaranteed," and any "\$2,000 guarantee" language on your **website**, **ads**, and **printed materials** with "Google Verified."

Those claims are no longer true, and a guarantee you can't honor is the kind of thing a state bar or consumer-protection rule takes a dim view of. It's a five-minute fix, and it's the first line on your checklist.

Step 2 — Confirm your Google Business Profile is verified

In 2026, you cannot run Local Services Ads without a **public, verified Google Business Profile**. No profile, no ads — full stop. Your LSA reviews now live *inside* that profile, so it's the foundation the whole thing stands on.

- ☐ My Google Business Profile is claimed, public, and verified.

If it isn't, or you're thin on reviews, that's the first thing to fix — it's *Get Found First's* job (the Business Profile in its second module, the review engine in its third). Reviews are also a confirmed LSA ranking factor, so that work pays you twice.

Step 3 — Do you qualify? The honest way to find out

LSA covers 70-plus business types, grouped into home services, professional services, health, and newer pilots — and Google adds categories quietly. The broad answer for this course's audience:

- **Lawyers** — yes, with a state-bar license check per attorney. Industry sources list roughly 17 eligible practice areas (family, criminal, estate, personal injury, immigration, tax, and more) — but that list is industry-sourced, not one clean Google page, so **confirm your practice area in the signup itself, not from a blog.**
- **Accountants, tax preparers, financial planners** — yes, with a professional license check.
- **Real estate agents** — yes.
- **Healthcare-adjacent** (dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, GPs) — yes, but the bar is higher: NPI number, state practice/provider licenses, and malpractice or professional-liability insurance. One important catch: the automated lead credits **do not apply to healthcare.**
- **Home services** (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, roofing, landscaping, pest control, cleaning, locksmiths) — the most established group, with additional background checks for the trades.

The honest test, better than any article: **start the LSA signup at ads.google.com/local-services-ads and see what Google actually offers your category in your zip code.** If it comes back with nothing, LSA isn't your game — skip straight to the Search campaign in m3, and you lose nothing.

- ☐ I started the signup and read what Google offers my category and zip. That's my real eligibility answer.

Step 4 — Gather your documents

Verification is mostly paperwork and patience. Have these ready before you start so a missing document doesn't stall you:

- ☐ Government photo ID for each owner (verified through Google's ID partner, Evident — about two weeks on its own).
- ☐ Professional license(s) — state-bar per attorney; NPI + malpractice insurance for healthcare; the relevant trade or professional license for everyone else.
- ☐ Proof of insurance where it applies.
- ☐ Business registration documents where they apply.
- ☐ Enough reviews to meet your category's minimum (another reason the *Get Found First* review work matters first).

Background checks on every owner and every person who performs your core services are run through Google's partners against national criminal, sex-offender, and sanctions registries — and they are **free to you**. Google states plainly that businesses aren't charged for the background check.

Never pay a third party to "handle" your verification. The background checks are free, and Google runs them through its own partners. Anyone offering to "get you verified faster" for a fee is not Google and is not a shortcut — it's a scam that preys on impatience. You never pay anyone to run a Google background check. Ever.

Step 5 — Build the profile (screen by screen)

Six of these steps are careful data entry. Two — service types and service area — are where money leaks, because "wrong job type" and "wrong area" leads are no longer creditable. **Check only what you do; list only where you serve.**

1. **Check eligibility** at ads.google.com/local-services-ads against your zip.
2. **Enter business details that match your Google Business Profile exactly** — same name, address, phone, character for character. "Main St" vs "Main Street" is enough to stall verification.
3. **Select your service types — honestly.** Every service type you check is a search you can be charged a lead for. (*money step*)
4. **Set your service area by zip or county** — only areas you actually serve. Leads from areas you don't serve are no longer creditable. (*money step*)
5. **Set your hours to when someone actually answers the phone** — not aspirational hours. Responsiveness is a ranking factor.
6. **Add real photos** — actual headshots, your office, your team. Profile quality is a ranking input.
7. **Connect your reviews** — your GBP reviews attach to the LSA listing automatically.
8. **Set a budget placeholder and submit for verification.** The 3–4-week clock starts.

A note on the walkthrough video: it still says "Google Screened" and "Google Guaranteed" in places — it was recorded before the rename. Ignore the old names; the signup flow it walks you through is current. Watch the clicks, not the labels.

Step 6 — Let AI write the profile copy and pick your checkboxes

Help me fill in my Local Services Ads profile so it reads like a real, trustworthy local firm.

- Business: [NAME], [what you do] in [TOWN/AREA].
- Years in business / credentials: [...]
- The services I actually offer (be exhaustive; I'll check only these): [LIST]
- What genuinely makes me different (1-2 real things): [...]

1. Write a short business bio (2-3 plain sentences, warm, no hype, no superlatives I can't prove – my state bar frowns on "best").
 2. From my service list, tell me which LSA service-type checkboxes to check and which to LEAVE UNCHECKED – anything I don't truly offer costs me money, because Google charges per lead and no longer credits "wrong job type" leads.
 3. Suggest the service area (zips/towns) that matches where my clients actually come from, and flag anywhere I listed that I probably shouldn't serve.
- No invented facts. Ask me for anything you're missing.

The timeline — and why you start today

Google says verification averages **3–4 weeks** after your documents go in. There's a completion window (industry sources put it around 90 days) during which you must finish every step, and if you get denied you wait to reapply — roughly 30 days after a first denial, 180 days after a second (these reapplication windows are industry-sourced, treat as a strong hint).

Two things follow. **Submit clean the first time** — a sloppy application isn't a do-over, it's a month-long penalty. And **start the application today** — not at the end of the module. Verification runs on Google's clock while you build everything else in the course. Start now and by the time you're through, you're verified and live. Wait, and you're just adding a month to the front of everything.

Prices and platform rules move — check Google's own pages before you rely on any figure.



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THE NEXT STEP

You've got the playbook. Want it running by next month?

You can now run your own ads with open eyes — and you know exactly what a fair vendor looks like. Measure us against your own checklist.

Evolv Strategies builds the growth systems these resources teach — done for you, documented, and handed over. We build it, we teach you to run it, and we hand you the keys. No lock-in, no retainer treadmill.

Book a free strategy session — a straight conversation about where your growth leaks and what to fix first. No pitch, no pressure.

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