

# Retail Industry eBook

## Location Data: Driving Clicks to Bricks

For retailers, location data is key to promoting online visibility for offline sales. It not only ensures that your physical locations are found no matter where customers search, but it also ensures that customers receive accurate map directions, store hours and product availability.

As important as it is to properly manage your location data, retailers often struggle to meet the unique challenges facing the industry.

*Chief among these challenges are:*

- Organizing and cleansing complex location data
- Making location data actionable for marketing and advertising
- Changing holiday and special hours

If you're struggling to get a handle on your location data, or if you're looking to drive more offline sales, this eBook will help you overcome your location data challenges.

## Organizing and Cleansing Complex Location Data

### Challenge

One of the most formidable challenges facing the retail industry is the sheer complexity and amount of location data.

Location data is often maintained by multiple departments, such as marketing, sales, shipping, etc. When location data is generated from multiple places within an organization and much of that data is conflicting, it can be difficult knowing which data is accurate. This makes cleaning and maintaining your location data particularly challenging, especially when bad data is constantly created by social platforms and customers making suggestions to your location information on Google.



## Solution

- 1.) The first step is to consolidate your location data into a single master database. Pull your location data from all the disparate sources, including internal departments and third-party sources. This database will act as your source of truth, from which you'll compare the accuracy of all location data.
- 2.) Once you've consolidated your location data, the next step is to cleanse and standardize your addresses. This is critical for platforms like Google My Business, which will generate your map pin placements based on your addresses. Ignite's Placeable team uses USPS ZIP + 4, but feel free to use any other address tool that scales easily.
- 3.) Once you've standardized your location data, the next step is to manually verify your map pin placements. Go into mapping services like Google Street view to verify your pins.
- 4.) After you've cleaned and standardized your location data, begin syndicating it to the local search ecosystem through data aggregators like Neustar Localeze, InfoNow and Acxiom. At the same time, send your clean data back to the various departments using it, ensuring that the entire company has the latest information available. It's also important at this stage to begin resolving duplicate and closed listings, as well as verifying that the information syndicated out is properly reflected in the local search ecosystem.
- 5.) Finally, apply triage to your location data issues. Tackle the most egregious location data problems first, and then work your way down to the smaller issues. Unfortunately, inaccurate location data and duplicate listings will inevitably arise, so be vigilant. Managing your location data is a continuous process.

## Making Location Data Actionable for Marketing and Advertising

### Challenge

In today's omnichannel world, it's critical that retailers think about location data as more than their name, address and phone number, but also as their products on hand at each location. Search engines can display whether a product is in stock, but few brands have enabled the feed. Not utilizing your product data is a missed opportunity for marketing and advertising. New technology, such as Ignite's Placeable ProximityAds, allows hyperlocal targeting based on locations and their inventory.



### Solution

If you want to create synergy between inventory data and location data, you'll need to integrate your local product feed with Google.

- 1.) Configure your Google Merchant Center Account, choosing the product feed type that best fits your needs.
- 2.) Create a local products database, using either a delimited text file or XML file.
- 3.) Register and submit your local inventory feed to Google

Enabling your local inventory feed is an in-depth and highly technical process. For more details, click: <https://support.google.com/merchants/answer/3540291>

## Changing Holiday and Special Hours

### Challenge

A unique challenge for retailers is managing holiday hours. During the holiday season, stores are often open well past midnight to allow for last minute shoppers. When you have hundreds or thousands of locations, it can be difficult to manually change your seasonal hours, especially if they vary by location and region. Temporary closures can also be a challenge for brands. If stores in a region need to be closed due to a snow storm or flooding, it can be difficult to adjust the hours of effected locations on the fly.

### Solution

- 1.) Have a plan in place for updating and changing holiday and special hours. It's likely that you have already put thought into managing your holiday hours, but unexpected closures are often overlooked.
- 2.) Depending on the number of locations you manage, look into automating the process. It's easy to update the hours for a handful of locations, but it becomes increasingly difficult if you're managing thousand.

## Automating the Location Management Process

In truth, manually managing your location data for hundreds or thousands of locations isn't practical. Some level of automation is needed. Fortunately, it's likely that you are already automating at least some of the location management process. Continue down this path by creating a platform that consolidates, cleanses, standardizes and syndicates your location data.

However, building a platform internally can be expensive and time-consuming. That's why some of the biggest brands in the retail industry turn to Ignite's Placeable solutions to help automate and streamline the location data management process.

## For More Information

Please contact us at [success@ignitetechnology.com](mailto:success@ignitetechnology.com) or visit [www.ignitetechnology.com](http://www.ignitetechnology.com).

