Most contractors do good work and still lose calls to competitors who show up first in the map results. The cause is rarely a single big failure. It is usually a handful of small, fixable mistakes that stack up. Here are fifteen of the most common, with what to do about each.

Profile Mistakes

1. Stuffing keywords into the business name

Calling yourself "Best Cheap Plumber Seattle Emergency Plumbing" might seem clever. It breaks the guidelines and can get your listing suspended. Use the name on your truck and your invoices.

2. Choosing a vague primary category

"Contractor" is too broad. Pick the category that matches your **bellingham seo agency** main revenue, such as electrician, roofing contractor, or HVAC contractor, then add secondary ones for real services.

3. Leaving the services section empty

Many contractors skip it. List every job you actually perform with a short description. It gives the profile more relevant content and helps customers self-qualify.

4. Using a fake or virtual address

Pretending to have a shop in a busy city center is risky. Listings with made-up addresses get flagged and removed. If ***bellingham seo company*** you work from home, hide the address and define a service area instead.

5. Letting hours go stale

Wrong holiday hours or an old phone number costs you real jobs. Check hours monthly.

Website Mistakes

6. One page for every service and every town

A single "Services" page does not give search engines enough to work with. Build a separate page for each major service, and add location pages only where you genuinely work and can say something specific.

7. Thin, copied city pages

Swapping the city name in a template creates near-duplicate pages that rarely rank. Each page should mention real local details, such as neighborhoods you serve, typical projects, and local permit or climate considerations.

8. Slow, hard-to-use mobile pages

Most local searches happen on a phone. If your page takes ages to load or the phone number is hard to tap, visitors leave. Test your site on a real phone and make the call button obvious.

9. No clear contact path

Put your phone number in the header, repeat it near the top of key pages, and offer a short form. Make it easy to take the next step.

Citation and Consistency Mistakes

10. Inconsistent name, address, and phone details

If your business appears as "Smith Roofing LLC" in one place and "Smith Roof Co" in another, it weakens trust. Pick one format and use it everywhere.

11. Ignoring duplicate listings

Old listings from previous phone numbers or addresses split your reputation. Search for them, then claim and merge or remove them.

12. Relying only on a few directories

Core data aggregators and a handful of trade-specific and regional directories matter. Being listed in only one or two places leaves gaps.

Reputation and Activity Mistakes

13. Having few reviews, or reviews that stopped a year ago

A profile with a long gap in new reviews looks dormant. Ask for reviews after every completed job and make it easy with a direct link.

14. Never responding to reviews

Replies show you are active and care about customers. Thank happy customers and answer complaints professionally.

15. No photos of real work

Before-and-after shots, crews on site, and branded vehicles build trust. Upload seo bellingham wa new photos regularly instead of leaving the default ones.

Quick Reference: Mistake, Impact, and Fix

Mistake Typical impact Fix Keyword-stuffed name Suspension risk Use the real name Vague category Weak relevance Choose a specific primary category Empty services Missed searches List every service Fake address Removal Hide address, set service area Thin city pages Poor rankings Add genuine local detail Inconsistent details Lower trust Standardize everywhere Few recent reviews Lower conversion Ask after every job No photos Less credibility Upload real work monthly

How to Audit Yourself in an Hour

You do not need special tools to find most of these problems. Work through the list in this order:

1. Search your business name and the phrase you most want to rank for, on a phone, from a location near your service area.
2. Compare your profile to the top three results. Note categories, review counts, photos, and services.
3. Open your website on a phone and time how long it takes to find your number.
4. Search your phone number and old addresses to find duplicates.
5. Write down the name, address, and phone number exactly as they appear on your profile, and check that they match your site.

Hiring **bellingham seo company** to review your profile and website against this list can catch costly map pack mistakes before they cost you more calls.

What to Fix First

If the list feels long, prioritize in this order. Start with accuracy, because wrong information loses jobs immediately. Next, complete the profile with categories, services, and photos. Then build a steady review process. Only after that should you invest in new website pages and wider citation work.

Small contractors often assume they need a big budget to compete. In many markets, simply being accurate, complete, and active puts you ahead of rivals who set up a profile years ago and never touched it again. Pick three items from the list above, fix them this week, and revisit the rest over the next month.

About the Author

Dana Whitfield runs a small marketing practice in Boise, Idaho, focused on roofers, electricians, and landscapers. Before moving into search work she managed operations for a family-owned remodeling company, so she writes with the owner's workload in mind.