A Brief History of Google's Local Efforts
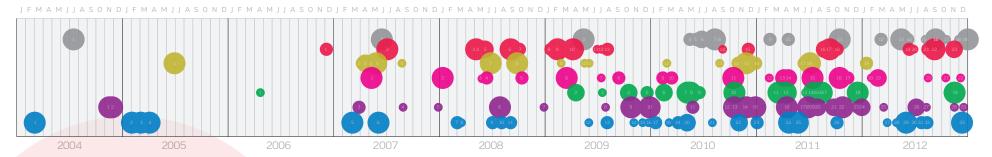
J F M A M J J A S O N D (repeating across timeline)

2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

Column 1 (blue – Other Local/Mobile Products)

1 Mar 04 Google Local Released (Beta)
2 Feb 05 Google Maps Released (Beta)
3 Mar 05 Google Local Business Center Launches
4 Apr 05 Local for Mobile Devices
5 Mar 07 Major Local Business Center Upgrade
6 Jun 07 User Reviews on Google Maps
7 Mar 08 User-Edited Maps + Business Data
8 Mar 08 Custom Categories Allowed
9 Jul 08 Reviews from Mobile Phones
10 Aug 08 "Places" Layer First Introduced to Maps
11 Sep 08 Listing Quality Guidelines Introduced
12 Jun 09 LBC Dashboard Analytics Released
13 Aug 09 LBC Accepts Verified Bulk Uploads
14 Nov 09 Major Update to Business Owner Guidelines
15 Dec 09 "Report a Problem" / Spot-Checking of Data
16 Dec 09 Sentiment Analysis of Third-Party Reviews
17 Jan 10 Sentiment Analysis of Unstructured Reviews
18 Mar 10 Support for Service Area / Home-Based Businesses
19 Apr 10 Mobile Place Pages
20 May 10 First Release of Places API
21 Aug 10 Business Owner Review Responses
22 Nov 10 Emphasis on Ratings / Hotpot Released
23 Jan 11 Places App for iPhone
24 Apr 11 Google MapMaker Opened to U.S. Users
25 May 11 Places API Released to Public
26 Oct 11 Automated Troubleshooting Added to Places Forum
27 Mar 12 Google Releases Offer Rewards
28 Apr 12 Adwords Express Removed from Places Dashboard
29 May 12 Google Plus Local Launched
30 Jun 12 Reviews Become Available in Places API
31 Jul 12 Google Plus Local App Launched
32 Aug 12 Merge Process Goes Live
33 Dec 12 Google Releases Native iOS App

(red – News Items, bottom of column 1)

1 Dec 06 Mike Blumenthal's First Maps Ranking Speculation
2 Jul 07 First Case of Widespread Mapspam
3 May 08 Mapspam Epidemic Begins
4 May 08 KML/Geositemaps in Google Webmaster Central
5 Jun 08 First Local Search Ranking Factors Survey
6 Sep 08 Major Hijacking Problems
7 Oct 08 Mike Blumenthal Hijacks Major Silicon Valley Listings
8 Feb 09 Yelp Extortion Alleged in East Bay Express
9 Feb 09 Locksmith Mapspam Plagues Maps
10 Apr 09 Rash of Merged Listings, Mapspam
11 Jul 09 Favorite Places (HotPot Precursor) Released
12 Jul 09 Public Event to Recruit Businesses in San Francisco

Column 2 (yellow/gold – Other Google Products)

1 Oct 04 Google Acquires Keyhole
2 Oct 04 Google Acquires Where2
3 Mar 07 Carter Maslan Begins as VP of Local + Maps
4 Aug 07 Google "Local Business Referral" Feet-on-the-Street
5 Dec 07 "Online Marketing Challenge" Feet-on-the-Street
6 Jul 08 Google + TeleAtlas Sign Data Partnership
7 Dec 08 End of Local Business Referral Program
8 Jul 09 First Maps Stickers and QR Codes Sent
9 Oct 09 Google Ends Relationship with TeleAtlas in US
10 Dec 09 Google-Yelp Deal for $500MM Falls Through
11 May 10 Hiring of 300 Staffers to Improve Data Quality
12 Oct 10 TeleSales Campaign for Tags Begins
13 Oct 10 Marissa Mayer Takes Over as VP of Local + Maps
14 Nov 10 Offline Marketing of Hotpot Begins in Portland, OR
15 Dec 10 Google-Groupon Deal for $6BN Falls Through
16 Apr 11 Jeff Huber Takes Over as SVP of Local + Commerce
17 Apr 11 TalkBin Acquired
18 Jun 11 Carter Maslan Leaves Google
19 Jul 11 Punchd Acquired
20 Jun 11 Places / Offers Field Staff Hiring Frenzy
21 Sep 11 Google Buys Zagat for $125MM
22 Oct 11 Google Launches Adwords Premier SMB Partner Program
23 Dec 11 Google Ends Relationship w/TeleAtlas in UK, some of Europe
24 Dec 11 GoMo Launches with Offline Campaign in Mobile, AL
25 Mar 12 Places Help Forum Transitioned
26 Jul 12 Yahoo Hires Marissa Mayer
27 Aug 12 Frommers Acquired
28 Nov 12 Google Acquires Incentive Targeting
29 Dec 12 Google Shuts Down Punchd

(red – News Items, bottom of column 2)

13 Aug 10 Yelp Reviews First Disappear from Places
14 Sep 10 International Media Cover Sunrise, FL Disappearance
15 Dec 10 TripAdvisor Publicly Decries Places Treatment
16 Sep 11 NYT Reports "Closed Business" Problem
17 Sep 11 Schmidt, Stoppelman Testify Before Sen. Commerce Comm.
18 Oct 11 Google Overrides Verified Business Data w/Community Data
19 Jun 12 Business Builder Article Appears in WSJ
20 Jun 12 Mercury News Features Map Maker Reviewer
21 Aug 12 Furor Erupts over Plus Review Policy
22 Sep 12 Google Maps Featured in The Atlantic
23 Nov 12 Google Plus Frustration Boils Over

Column 3 (green – Related Product Milestones)

1 Apr 06 "Local" Becomes "Maps"
2 Apr 09 Google Maps Passes MapQuest Market Share
3 Jul 09 Adwords Location Extensions Released
4 Oct 09 Local Listing Ads Announced
5 Dec 09 Local Listing Ads Killed
6 Feb 10 Tags Ad Product Announced
7 Apr 10 LBC Rebranded as Places for Business
8 Apr 10 Google Announces 4MM Claimed Places Worldwide
9 May 10 Local Business Ads Become Location Extensions
10 Oct 10 Boost Launches
11 Mar 11 Google Announces 6MM Claimed Places Worldwide
12 Apr 11 HotPot Rolled Into Places
13 Apr 11 Tags Ad Product Ended
14 Jul 11 GetYourBusinessOnline Starts Up in U.S
15 Jun 11 City Portals Released
16 Jul 11 Boost Becomes Adwords Express
17 Aug 11 Places Forum Responsiveness Improves Dramatically
18 Dec 11 Google Announces 8MM Claimed Places Worldwide
19 Nov 12 Google Announces 1/3 Searches Are Local

(yellow/gold – Other Google Products)

1 Jun 05 Advent of Personalized Search Results
2 Apr 07 MyMaps Arrive
3 Apr 07 Voice Search / GOOG-411 Launches
4 Apr 07 Maps API Adds KML Support
5 May 07 StreetView Launches
6 Aug 07 Maps Adds Embed Feature
7 Jun 08 MapMaker Introduced
8 Sep 08 First Android OS Comes Out
9 Feb 09 Latitude Released
10 May 09 Google Formally Supports hCard Microformat
11 May 09 Wave Released
12 Feb 10 Buzz Released
13 Aug 10 Wave Shuttered
14 Oct 10 GOOG-411 Shuttered
15 Nov 10 Widespread Localized Inventory in Product Search
16 Dec 10 Latitude Released for iPhone; 9MM Users Reported
17 Jun 11 Google, Bing, Yahoo Announce Schema.org
18 Jun 11 Google Plus Launches
19 Jan 12 Search Plus Your World Goes Live

Column 4 (red – News Items)

1 Jul 04 Yelp Launches
2 Jun 07 First iPhone Released
3 May 09 Bing Launches
4 May 10 Yelp Forms Sm. Busn. Advisory Council
5 Jun 10 CityGrid Launches
6 Jun 10 Twitter Places Launches
7 Aug 10 Facebook Places Launches
8 Aug 10 Yelp Deals Launches
9 Feb 11 Bing Personalizes and Localizes Results
10 Apr 11 Bing Business Portal Launches
11 Oct 11 Siri Launches
12 Mar 12 Yelp Completes IPO
13 May 12 Facebook Completes IPO
14 Jun 12 Yelp Announces Bing Syndication Deal
15 Aug 12 SuperMedia and Dex Merge
16 Sep 12 Apple Maps Launches
17 Oct 12 Yelp Acquires Qype
18 Dec 12 Facebook Launches "Get More Likes"
19 Dec 12 Facebook Releases Nearby

(pink/magenta – SERP / Interface Updates)

1 May 07 Universal Search Released
2 Jan 08 Introduction of 10-Pack / Blended Local Listings
3 May 08 Beginning of Real Estate Search
4 Jun 08 New Interface for Local Business Center
5 Oct 08 10-Packs Become 7-Packs
6 Mar 09 Local Results Appear for Generic Queries
7 Jul 09 Google Real Estate Search Arrives
8 Sep 09 Place Pages Formally Launch
9 Feb 10 "Nearby Places You Might Like"
10 Mar 10 Hotel Pricing First Appears in Google Maps
11 Oct 10 Blended Place Search Released
12 Feb 11 End of Real Estate Search
13 Apr 11 Localized Product Inventory in Blended Search
14 Apr 11 Google Offers Starts in Portland and Other Cities
15 Jul 11 Major Place Page Interface Update
16 Oct 11 Major Place Search SERP Interface Update
17 Nov 11 First Appearance of Plus / Places Integration
18 Feb 12 Plus Authorship Integrated with Places
19 Feb 12 Venice Update for Local Released
20 Aug 12 Google Releases Organic 7-Pack
21 Oct 12 Google Adjusts Zagat Interface
22 Dec 12 Universal OneBox Display Updated