



LOCAL SEARCH RANKING FACTORS 2020: Implications for HVAC, Home Performance & Solar

Peter Troast, Founder & CEO

Energy Circle Webinar Series

January 6, 2021



Everything You Need to Know About the Future of the Solar Investment Tax Credit



By Emily Silverman | December 30, 2020

The federal solar tax credit, also known as the investment tax credit (ITC), has long reigned as one of the best solar energy incentives in the United States. When it was first established, the ITC allowed homeowners and businesses to claim a federal tax credit worth 30% of the total cost of their solar installation. Though that number has since decreased, the ITC is still an incredible incentive that has led to an **average 52% annual growth** in the solar industry since it was enacted. The ITC has an impact on other industries as well—it offers incentives for geothermal and small-scale wind in addition to solar—making its extension an exciting prospect for the future of clean energy.

In our **latest podcast episode**, we discussed the current state of the ITC and its effect on content marketing strategy for solar energy companies. Since that episode aired, there have been some big changes to the ITC! Originally set to drop from its current level of 26% to 22% in 2021 and then expire altogether before the start of 2022, the federal solar tax credit has been extended, giving homeowners and businesses more time to save, and providing an excellent marketing opportunity for solar energy companies.

Here's What the Current ITC Schedule Looks Like

The federal solar tax credit has been adjusted several times since its inception in 2006, with its first extension taking place in 2015. From the latest extension at the end of 2020, the ITC schedule looks like this:

- 2021-2022: Residential and commercial solar installations are eligible for a federal tax credit worth 26% of the system's cost.



Register for our next FREE Webinar

Energy Circle's 17 Industry and Digital Marketing Predictions for 2021



By Cory Allyn | January 6, 2021

Will the COVID pandemic finally end? Will Google solve their proximity bias problem? Will our Energy Circle webinar ([and podcast!](#)) host Jake Van Paepeghem be able to top his critically acclaimed performance as 2020's webinar host of year?

At the end of 2020, as is tradition, Energy Circle founder and CEO Peter Troast dedicated [our last webinar of the year](#) to his predictions for the coming year. So, from HVAC, solar, and home performance industries to digital marketing trends we believe will be increasingly important in the new year, here are Energy Circle's definitive predictions for 2021:

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY TRENDS

1. The End of the Coronavirus Pandemic Is in Sight

Undoubtedly the most significant change we believe we'll see in 2021 is the end of the COVID era. 2020 was a bumpy year for businesses in our industry, but we're starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Keep in mind, we are not predicting that business will just go right back to "normal" (and if you haven't visited [our COVID-19 resources page](#), now's a good time), but we're hopeful that the worst is now behind us.

2. "Virtual" Isn't Going Away

Are homeowners forever changed? People, generally speaking, still aren't super excited to invite contractors into their homes, and we believe that some of the virtual options businesses have introduced over the past year are here to stay.

Upcoming Webinars

January 13 - Implications of the Solar Tax Credit & How to Adjust Your Marketing Accordingly with Solar Strategist Abby Yolda

January 20 - What Are You Planning for 2021? An Expert Contractor Panel

January 27 - Video Marketing: Does It Belong in Your Marketing Mix—and Where?

February 3 - Marketing Heat Pumps: What Keyword Search Data Tells Us About the Consumer Mindset

February 10 - Newly Accessible Streaming Services: Should You Be Using Spotify, Hulu, & More for Marketing?

What We'll Discuss

- 1 Why We're So Focused on Local Search**
- 2 2020 Local Search Ranking Factors Report**
- 3 Specific Actions You Can Take**



WHY ALL THIS FOCUS ON LOCAL SEARCH?

Local Services Ads

Google Local 3 Pack

Organic

Google

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All Maps Images Shopping News More Settings Tools

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2020 LOCAL SEARCH RANKING FACTORS REPORT

whitespark

The Whitespark logo consists of the word "whitespark" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a graphic element consisting of several short, black, radiating lines of varying lengths, resembling a stylized sunburst or a spark.

Wisdom of the Experts Methodology

THE **TOP** EXPERTS IN LOCAL SEARCH

Aaron Weiche
Adam Dorfman
Allie Margeson
Amanda Jordan
Amy Toman
Andrew Shotland
Andy Kuiper
Andy Simpson
Ben Fisher
Blake Denman
Brian Barwig

Brodie Clark
Carrie Hill
Casey Meraz
Cindy Krum
Claire Carlile
Colan Neilson
Conrad Saam
Cori Graft
Dan Leibson
Dana DiTomaso
Dani Owens

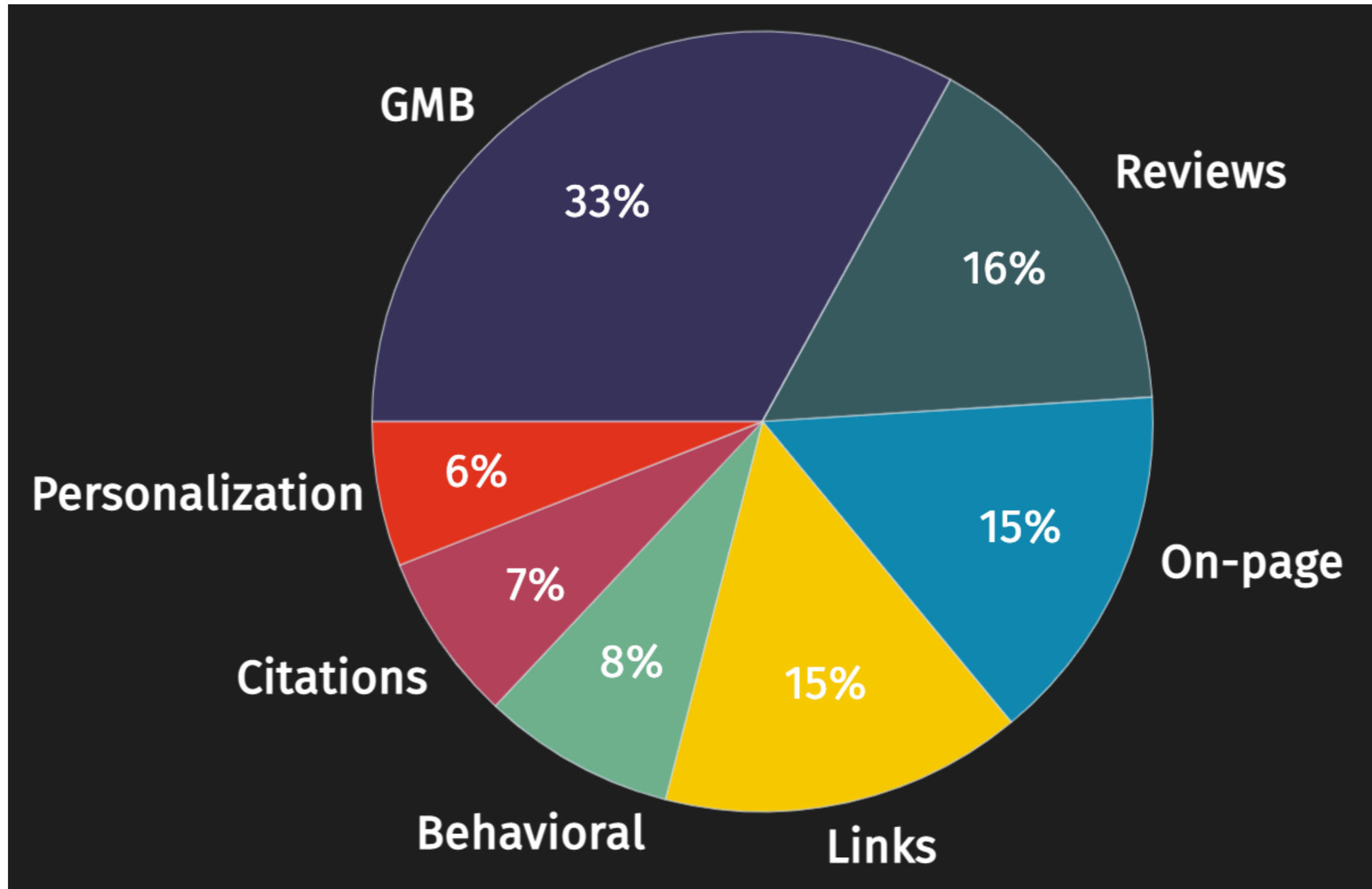
Darren Shaw
Dave DiGregorio
David Mihm
Eric Rohrback
Greg Gifford
Gyi Tsakalakis
Joel Headley
Joy Hawkins
Krystal Taing
Lisa Kolb
Mary Bowling

Matt Lacuesta
Mike Blumenthal
Mike Ramsey
Miriam Ellis
Nick Pierno
Niki Mosier
Nyagoslav Zhekov
Phil Rozek
Elliot Haines
Tim Capper
Yan Gilbert

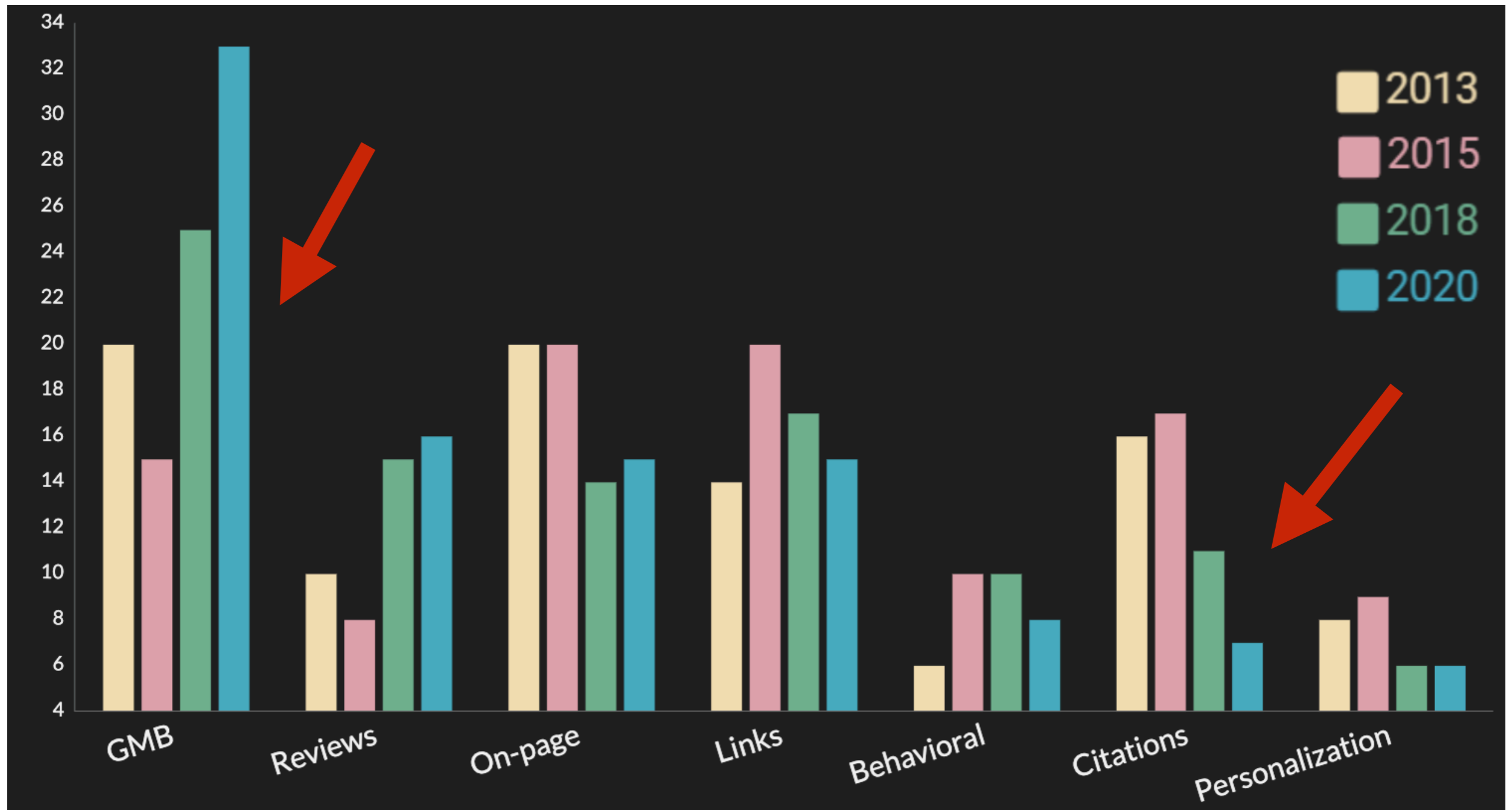
To what extent do each of the following thematic areas of local search contribute to rankings at Google?

**Google My Business
Citations
On-page
Links
Reviews
Behavioral Signals
Personalization**

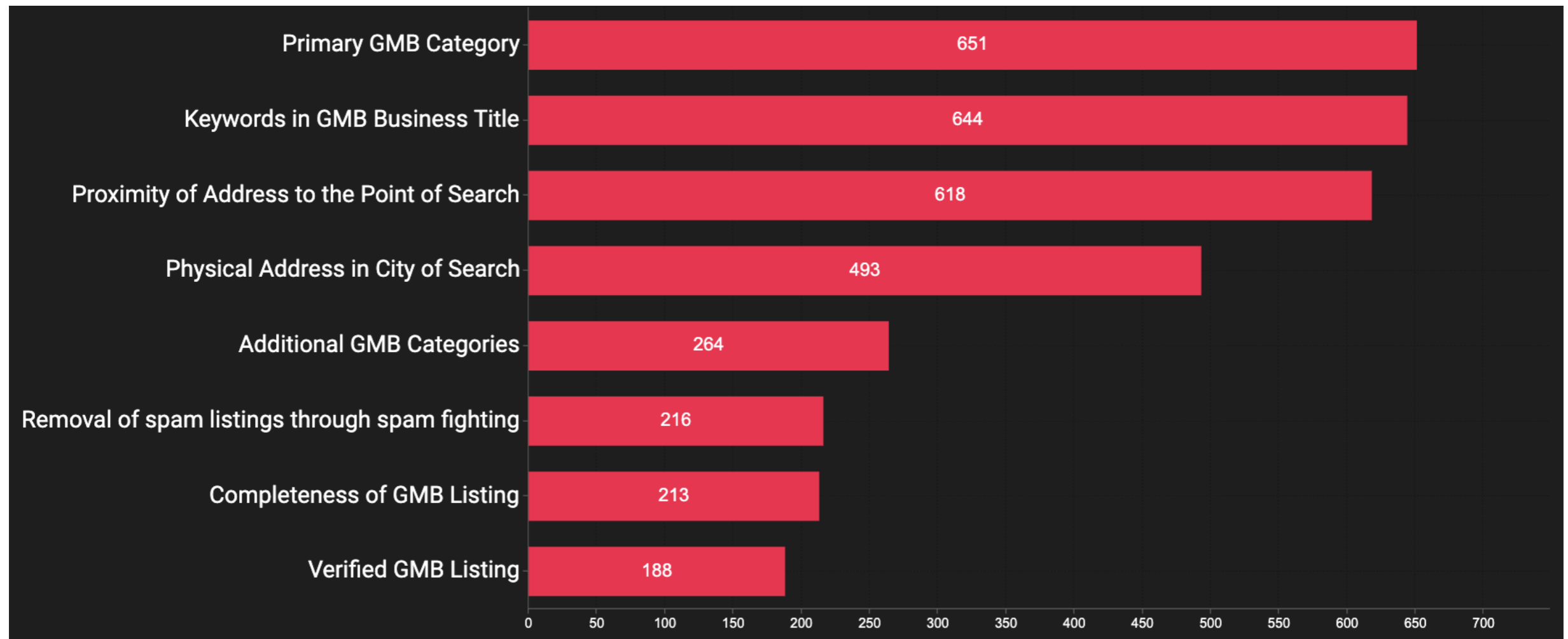
Local Pack Ranking Factors



Changes Over Time

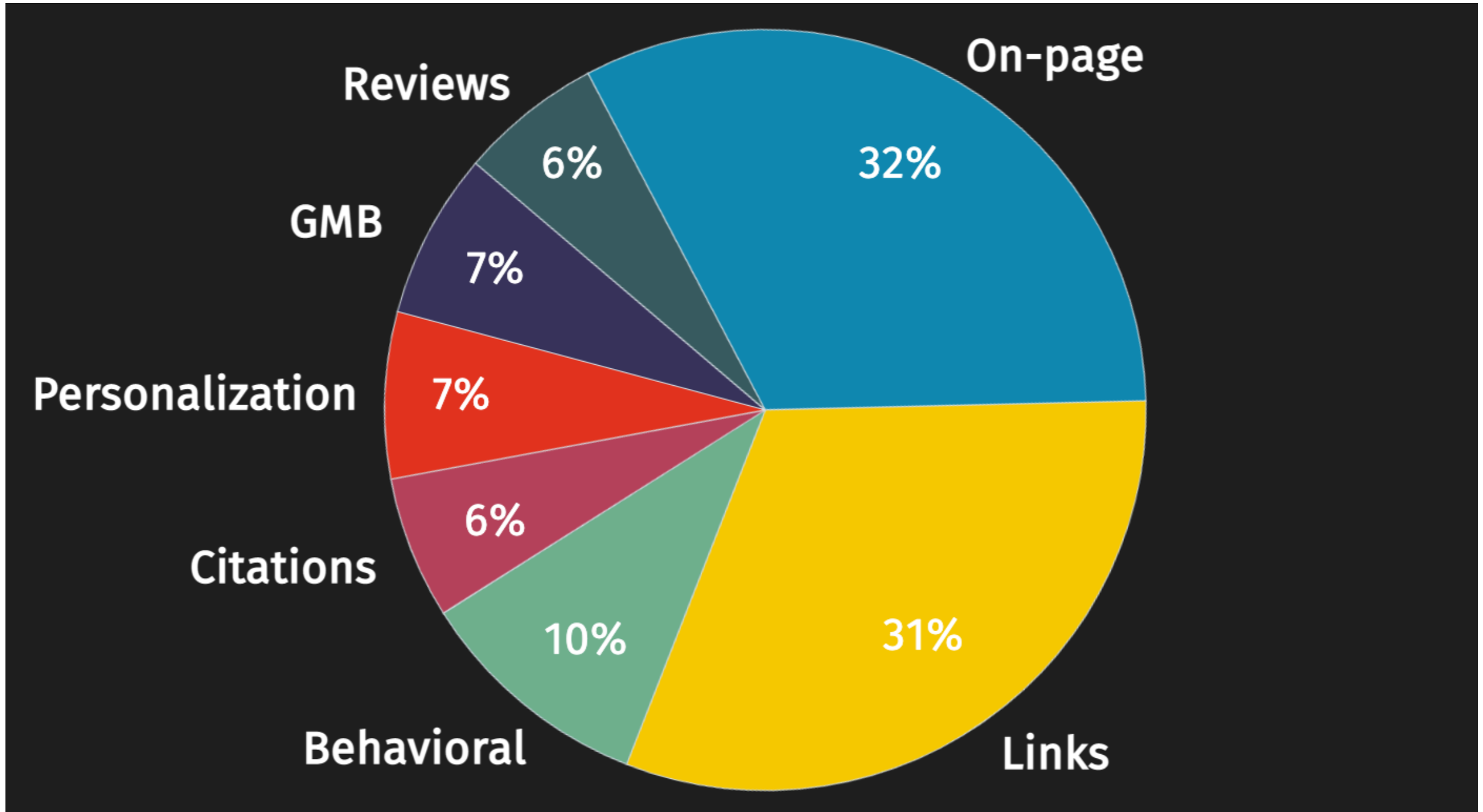


Top Factors—Local Pack

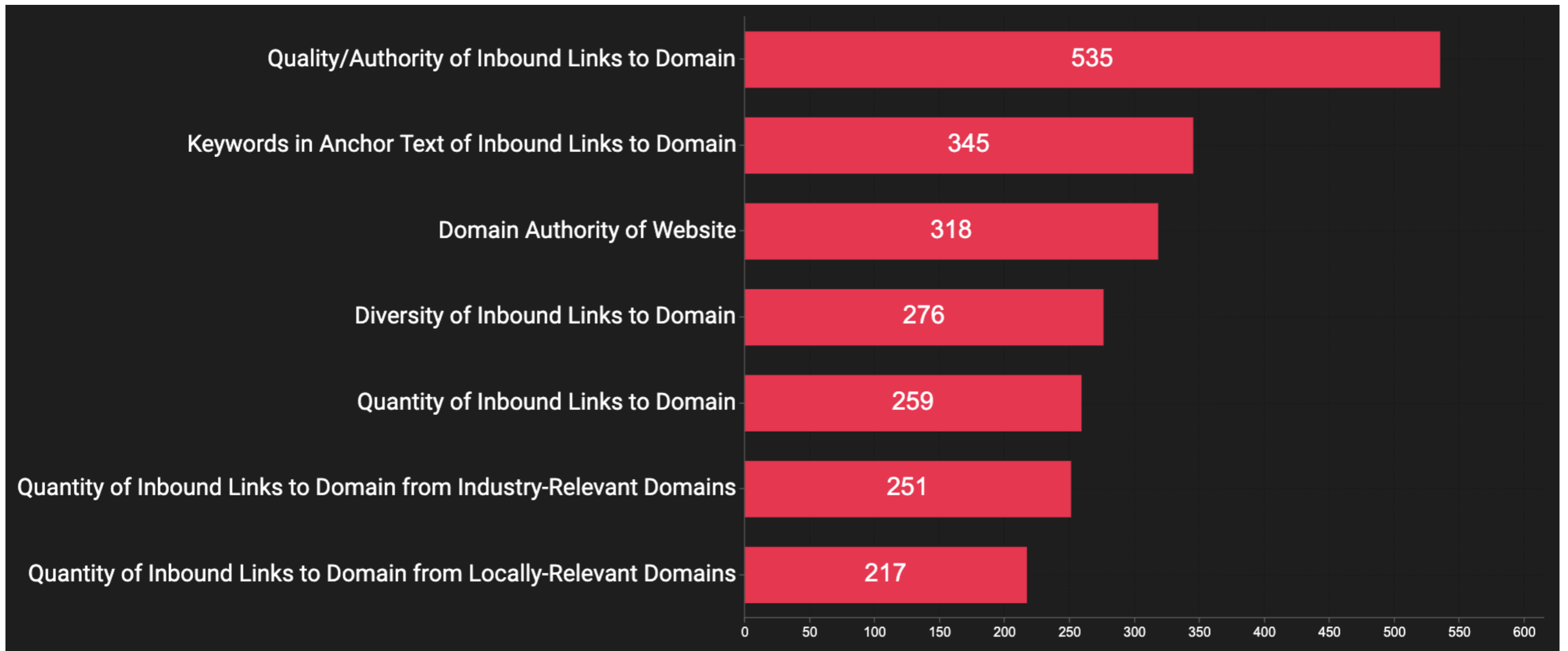


Which individual factors do you think have the biggest impact on Local Pack/Finder rankings?

Organic Ranking Factors

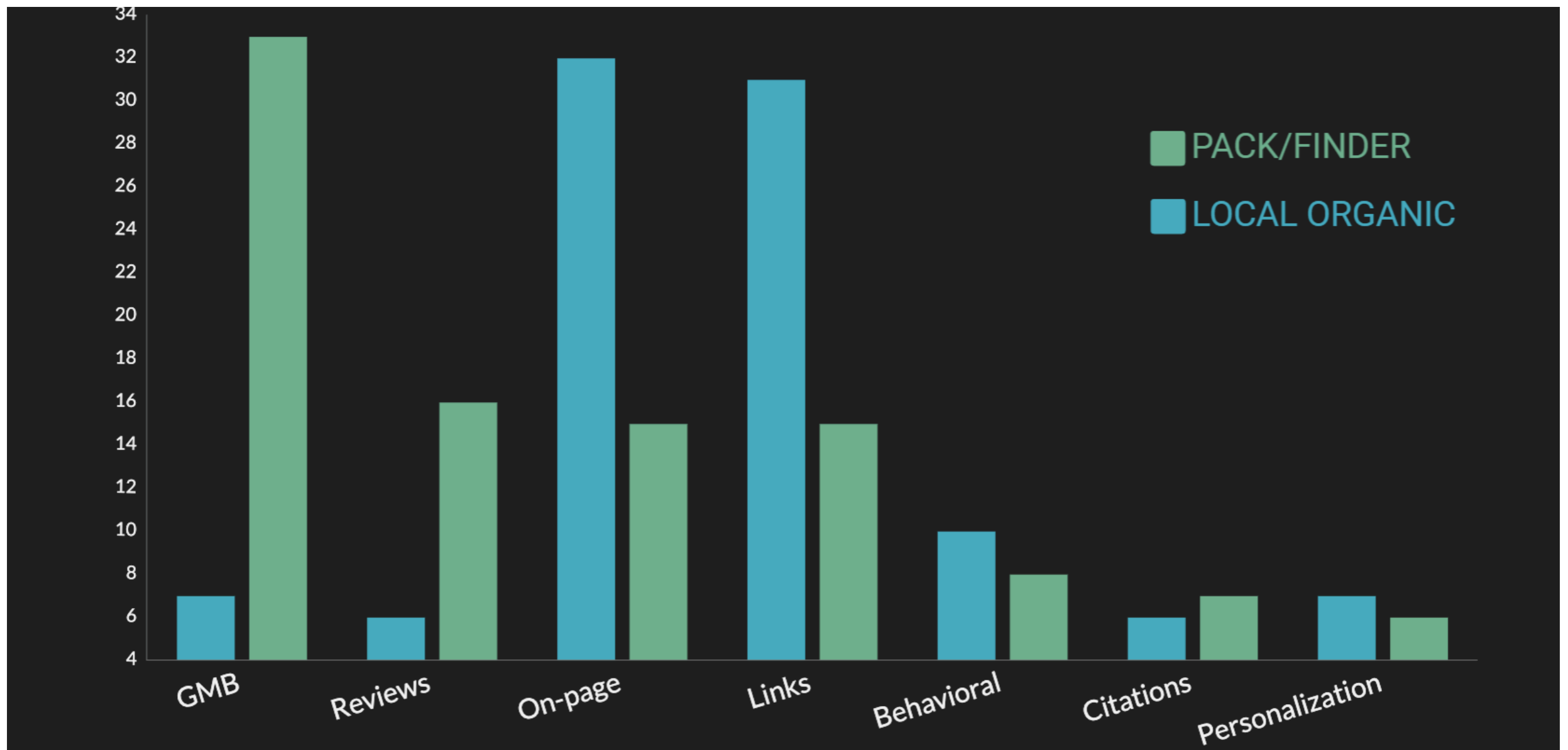


Top Factors—Organic Ranking



Which individual factors do you think have the biggest impact on Local Organic rankings?

Local Pack vs. Organic Factors



Organic Drives Local Pack

⚠ Hours or services may differ

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Open · Closes 6PM · (609) 552-0222

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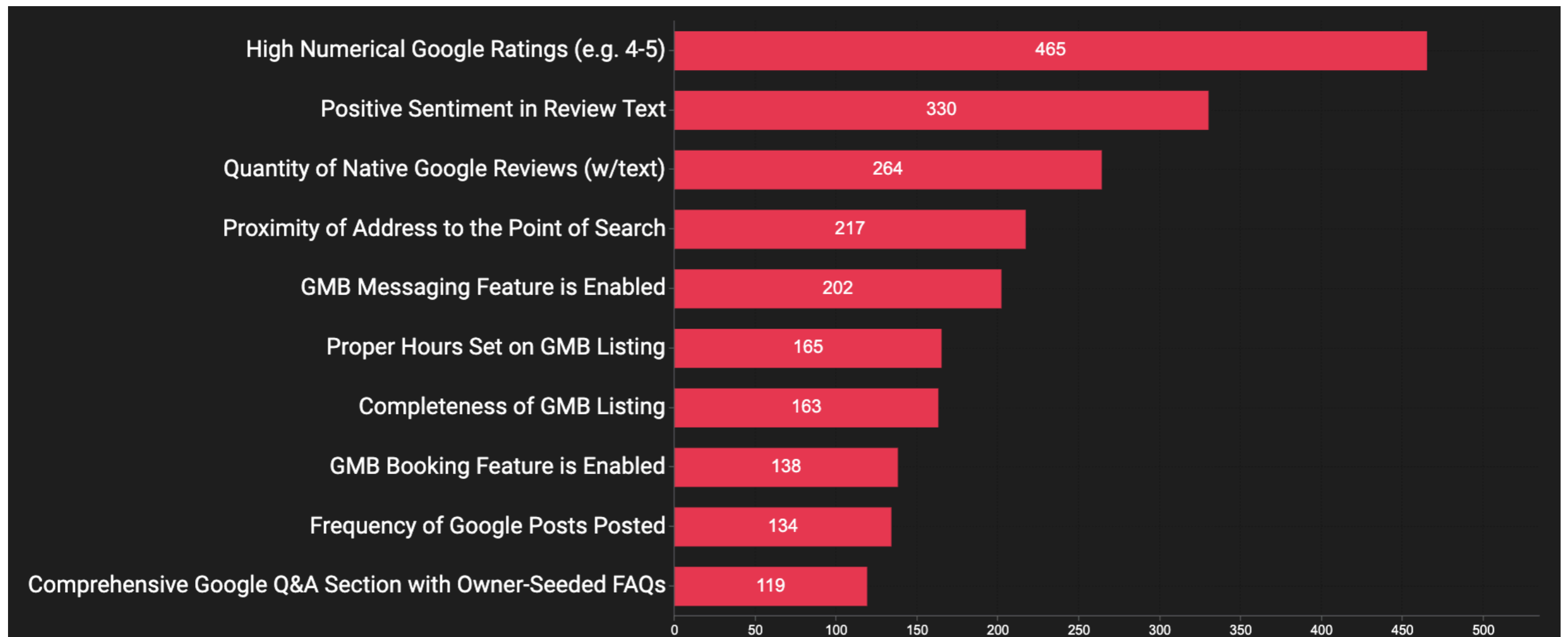
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Ranking Here

} Ranking Here

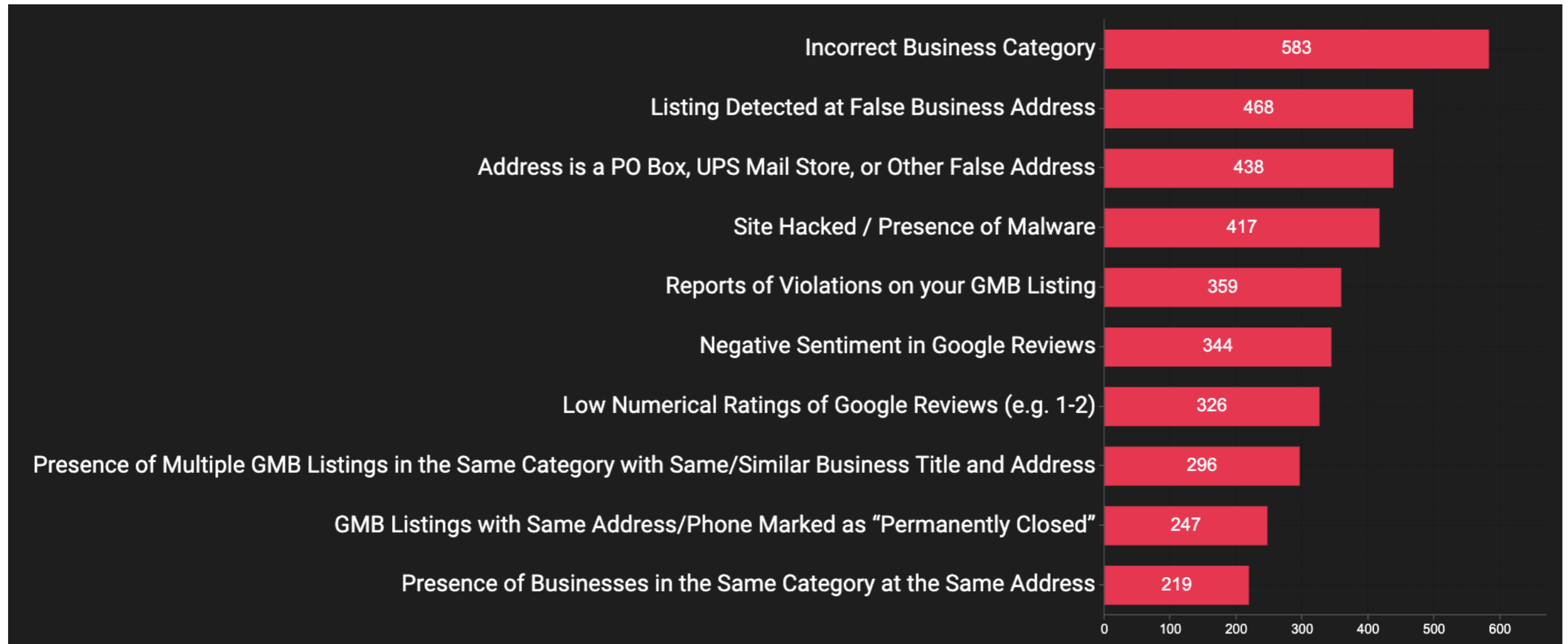


Top GMB Conversion Factors



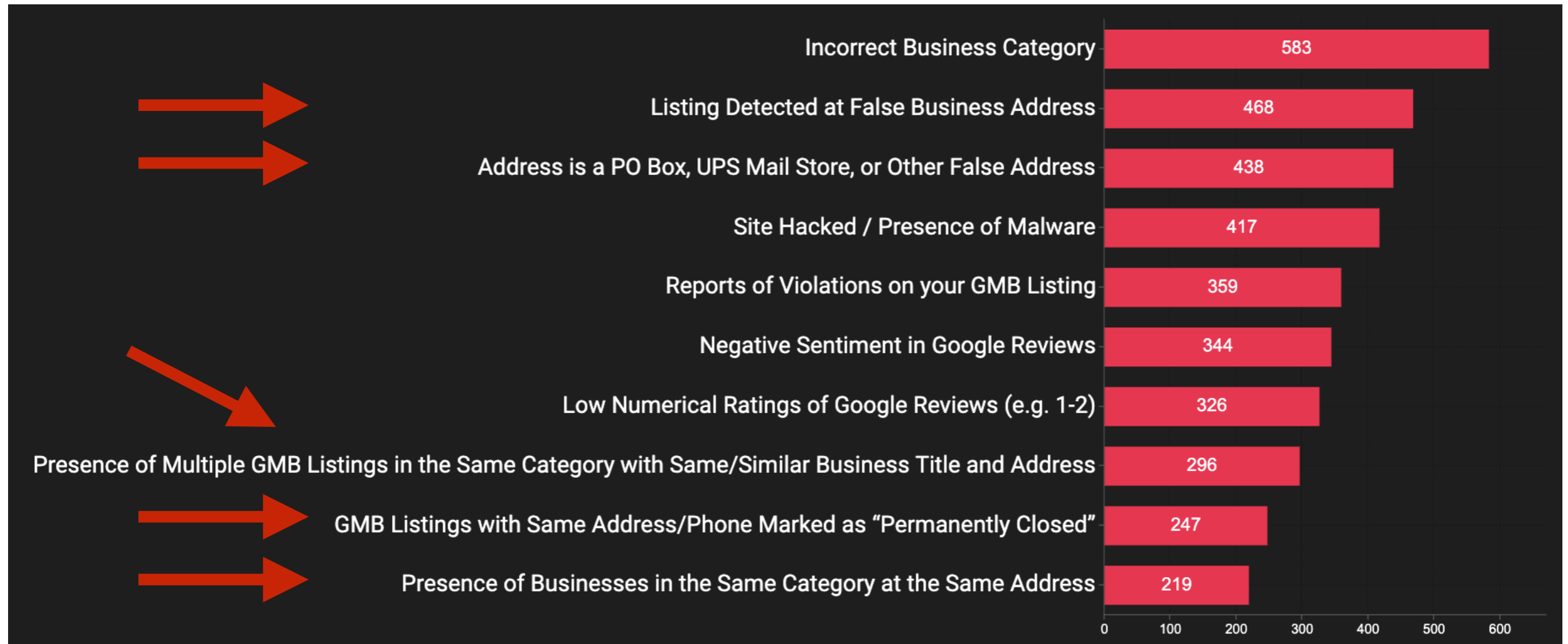
Which individual factors do you think have the biggest impact on conversions from GMB?

Top GMB Negative Factors



Which individual factors do you think are the most HARMFUL to your rankings?

Top GMB Negative Factors



Which individual factors do you think are the most HARMFUL to your rankings?

What's It All Mean to You?

- **Actively Manage Your Google My Business, esp Categories**
- **Pursue Google Reviews for Volume, Star Average and Keywords**
- **Use GMB Engagement Options (Messaging, Request a Quote, Q&A)**
- **Maintain a Strong, Trusted Website**
- **Have a Clear and Consistent Content Creation Strategy**
- **Build Up Your Links from Other Websites**
- **Assure No Business Address Issues**

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QUESTIONS?

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