



How Listing Distribution Affects the Accuracy of Online Data & Strength of Online Presence

In order to understand the efficacy of listing management tools, Vendasta analyzed over 17,000 subscribers and 200,000 non-subscribers of its Listing Distribution solution. The results provide insights as to why it's important for local businesses to continuously update their online data.

Key Discoveries:

- Why working with major data providers is not enough to protect listing accuracy
- The distinction between Listing Distribution Subscribers vs. Non-Subscribers
- What happens to listing accuracy and online presence when Listing Distribution is cancelled
- Vendasta's unique approach to managing and protecting listings

THE EFFICACY OF LISTING DISTRIBUTION

Overview

Vendasta provides a white label platform for agencies and media companies to sell digital solutions to local businesses, including a Listing Distribution tool that searches for all of the places that businesses' listings appear online. Listing Distribution is designed to update business information and make it consistent across the internet's major data providers, which supply listing information to local search platforms.

The purpose of this study is to show the effects of Listing Distribution on business listing accuracy and online presence over time.

Business Listing Definitions

Business listings are separated into two groups: major search sites and smaller citations.

Major search sites include the big three search engines (Google, Bing and Yahoo), major rating and review sites, traditional IYP sites, directories and social platforms. Presence on the major search sites and the accuracy of those listings are measured across these major players.

Citations include hyperlocal sites, smaller vertical sites and websites that may include a mention of the business and basic contact information but not a complete listing with full NAP (Name, Address, Phone Number) data.

The Data Challenge

Bad data can be likened to the flu. Just as people receive a shot each year to protect themselves from illnesses, businesses are wise to conduct routine checkups on their listing data. Many of them, however, are not doing it effectively.

Major search sites receive local business listing information in whole or in part from one or more data providers. The major data providers are: **Infogroup, Neustar/Localeze, Acxiom** and **Factual**. Historically, many agencies have used one—sometimes two—data providers for listings data management, but because none of the big four dominate the local data market, local listings cannot be modified across all local search platforms by utilizing only one or two of them. Furthermore, because of the overall lack of reporting, showing results to local businesses has been challenging and the results have been difficult to understand.

If the major data providers aren't directly fed listing updates from an authoritative source, they default to traditional sources of information, such as public records like tax files and other government indexes. These sources can be out of date with varying refresh timeframes.

Although it is necessary to leverage the major data providers, it is cumbersome and challenging to manage all of them, as they each have their own unique set of rules, processes and customers.

This fragmented complexity is why Vendasta developed Listing Distribution—a tool that continually resubmits accurate listings to all four data providers to ensure they update their data correctly. It also provides what similar tools don't: complete transparency with tracking and reporting features so users can see what's happening with their information, good and bad.



The Listing Distribution Effect

Vendasta not only wanted to speak to how Listing Distribution works, but has gone to great lengths to demonstrate its efficacy. Data has been compiled from over 17,000 Listing Distribution subscribers and 200,000 non-subscribers. The accuracy and presence scores of their accounts—which compare the number of accurate listings per number of listings found—were traced over time. Ultimately, we developed three categories (with accuracy and presence subsets) to reveal how the solution improves listing accuracy across the web and online presence.

Category 1: Listing Distribution Activation

Figure 1a shows the impact of Listing Distribution on listing accuracy after the tool has been activated.

Businesses that subscribed to Listing Distribution showed a 172% increase in their overall listing accuracy, moving from an average accuracy score of 22% to an average of 60%. The ascension begins immediately and continues as the year goes on.

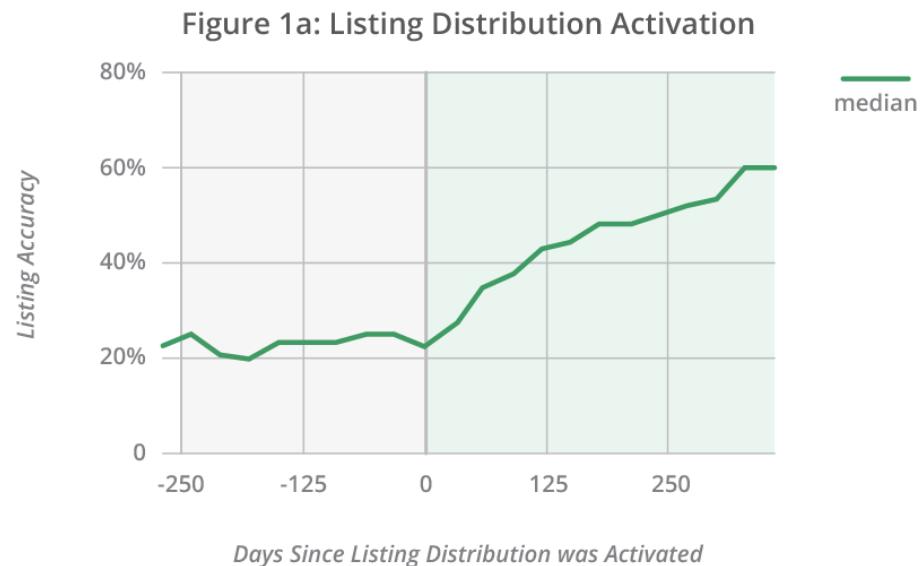
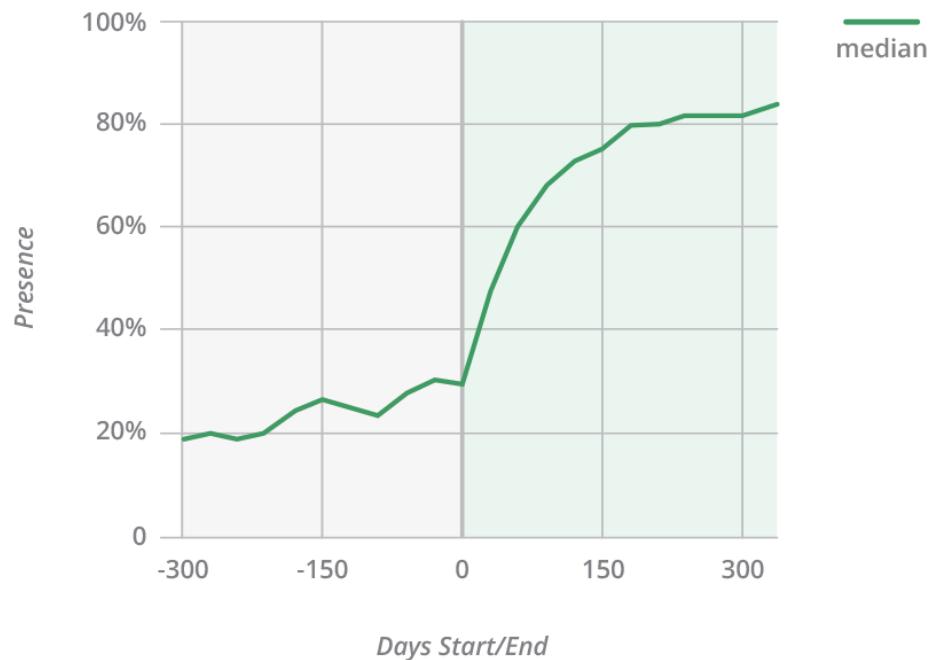


Figure 1b shows Listing Distribution's impact on businesses with low presence scores after the tool has been activated.

Businesses that subscribed to Listing Distribution with low presence scores showed a 277% upshot in their overall presence, climbing from an average presence score of 30% to an average of 83%. The rise begins immediately and continues to surge over time.

Figure 1b: Presence Before/After Listing Distribution Syndication



Category 2: Listing Distribution Subscribers vs. Non-Subscribers

Figure 2.0 shows a twelve-month period that reveals the distinction between businesses that use Listing Distribution and the ones that do not. Figure 2a demonstrates that subscribers experience an improvement in their average listing accuracy to 60%, while Figure 2b shows that, on average, non-subscribers typically do not see their accuracy scores rise above 10%.

Figure 2.0a: Listing Distribution Subscribers



Figure 2.0b: Listing Distribution Non-Subscribers

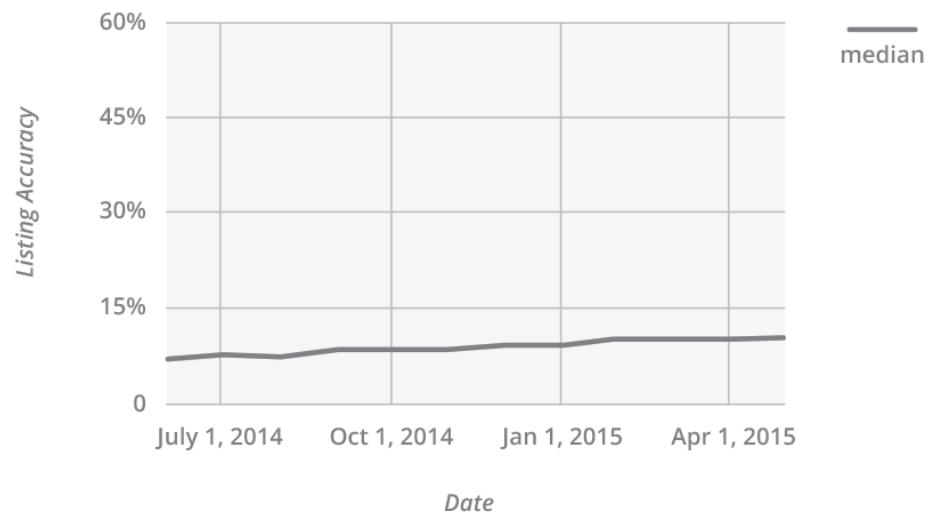
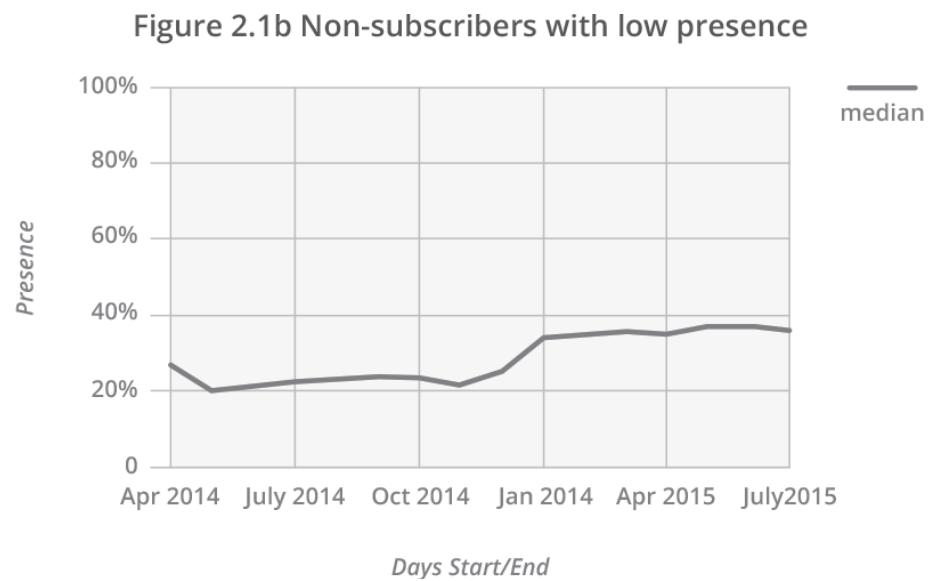
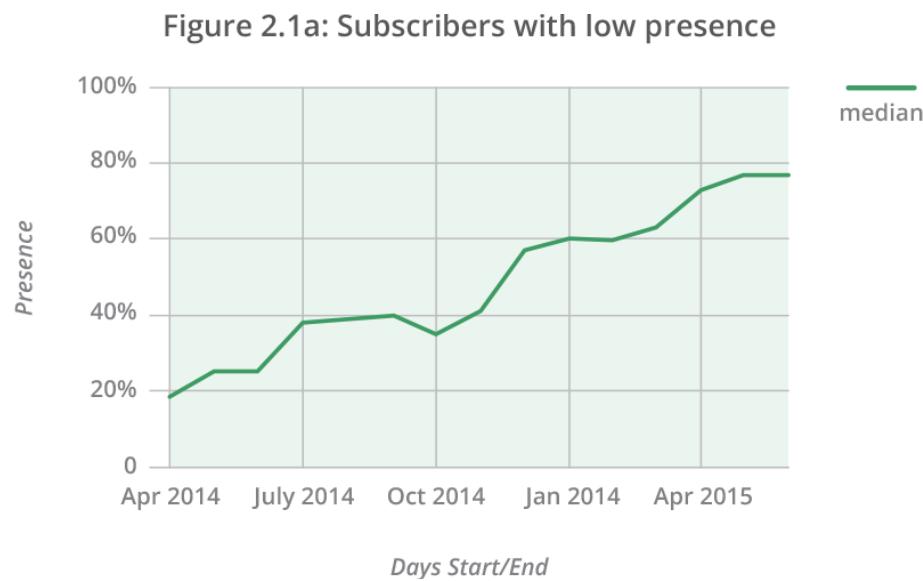


Figure 2.1 shows a 15-month period that presents a dichotomy of businesses that use Listing Distribution and ones that do not. Figure 2.1a demonstrates subscribers, on average, experience a 58% uplift in their presence score, ascending toward 80% overall, while Figure 2.1b shows that, on average, non-subscribers see their presence scores flux between 20-37%.



Category 3: Businesses That Cancel Listing Distribution

Figures 3a and 3b depict the average listing accuracy and online presence score of over 700 businesses that cancelled their service. In this sense, cancelling means that they stopped using Listing Distribution to send weekly updates to the data providers (an important distinction between Vendasta and other data syndication companies is that Vendasta sends updates to the data providers on a weekly basis, while others submit it only once).

In both cases the trajectory continues upward post-cancellation, suggesting Listing Distribution's effect is still rippling. Around the 180-day and 210-day mark respectively, however, the rising surge flat-lines, indicating a halt on accuracy and presence improvements.

Figure 3a: Listing Distribution Cancellations

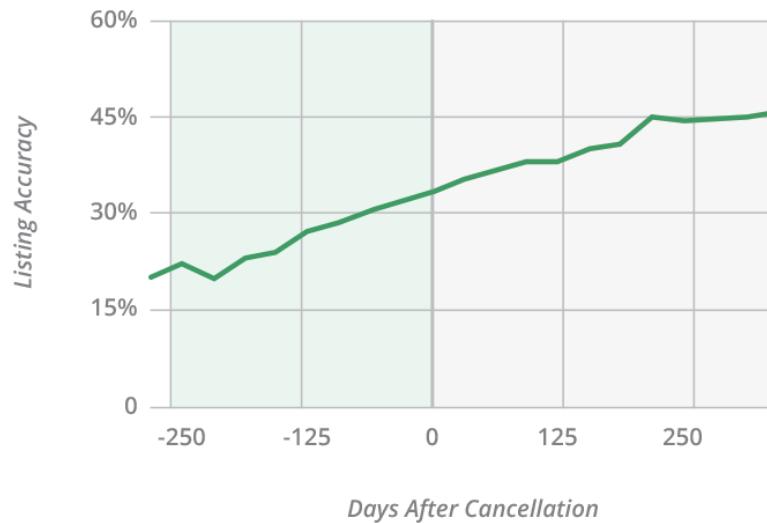
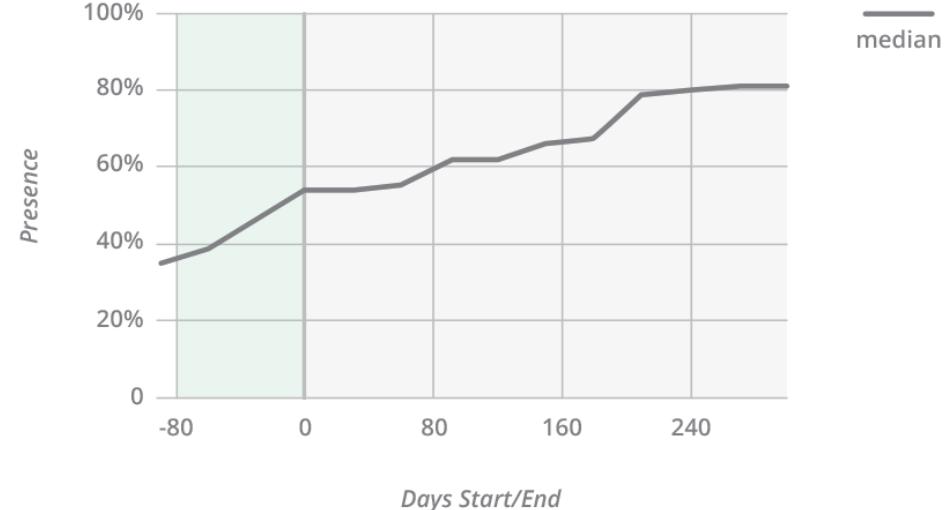


Figure 3b: Presence Score Before and After Listing Distribution Cancellation



Also, as seen in this snapshot of the Listing Distribution reporting screen, it has been observed that data providers may revert correctly submitted data to incorrect data over time and cause accuracy scores to fall again. By submitting listings on a weekly basis, Vendasta's solution continuously corrects these erroneous reversions.

	neustar // Localeze	factual.	acxiom	infogroup
Business Name	Blue Bottle Coffee Co	Blue Bottle Cafe	Blue Bottle Coffee Co	Blue Bottle Coffee Co
Address				Mint St
City	San Francisco			San Francisco
Prov / Region	California			CA
Postal Code	94103	94103	94103	94103
Phone Number	(415) 495-3394	(415) 495-3394	(415) 495-3394	(415) 495-3394

Business Name history on Infogroup

Aug 27, 2014	Blue Bottle Coffee Co	✓
Jun 09, 2014	Blue Bottle Coffee Co	⚠️
Apr 19, 2014	Blue Bottle Cafe	⚠️

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Summary

Businesses that use listings management tools to submit information to the major data providers show a substantial increase in search and presence scores compared to those that do not. This provides a large advantage over competitors, as 81% of consumers go online to search for products and services to make local buying decisions¹.



Vendasta's platform helps digital agencies and media companies sell digital marketing solutions to local businesses. Through this platform, Vendasta provides a sales and marketing automation system, as well as white label solutions for reputation, social media and listings management. Vendasta is the only platform that provides a DIY interface for SMBs along with an agency Concierge system for "Do It For Me" and "Do It With Me™" services.

For more information, visit www.vendasta.com.

Vendasta's system supports both multi-location brands and local businesses.