BDRI
BAHAMAS DIGITAL READINESS INDEX

Bahamas Digital Readiness Index 2026

Can your customers find you?

How Businesses Show Up Online and What Comes Next

68.5%

of the 2,600 Bahamian businesses read are part-way: at least one door open, not yet every door their customers expect

1,781 of 2,600 businesses, reference date 13 July 2026

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A letter from DDigiLeads

The question has changed from “do I need to be found online?” to “which door?”

If you run a business in The Bahamas, the question you ask about being online has probably changed. It used to be “do I need to be found online at all?” More and more owners now accept that they need some kind of presence, and the question has become “do I need a website, or is a Facebook Page enough?” That is a better question, and it deserves a better answer than any one business’s experience can give.

We should say plainly where we stand. DDigiLeads builds and looks after the digital presence of Bahamian businesses for a living, and has done so from Nassau for twenty-five years: shops, restaurants, firms and tour operators. That work is where we heard the question change, and it is why we built the Bahamas Digital Readiness Index, the BDRI: one reading of the businesses a customer can find, on one rule, so that any owner can see where their business stands and what its next step is. In 2026 we read the Four Digital Doors of 2,600 Bahamian businesses.

The customer looks first. A Bahamian who wants a business looks it up before going, calling or paying: on Google, on the Facebook Page, on WhatsApp, on the website. They research online and buy offline, and they are searching for a business before they walk in. So this report asks one question of each business: are its doors open for the customers already searching for it?

Owners tell us two things they believe, and the reading answers both. The first is that a web presence is expensive and means taking payments online. There are several levels to a digital presence, and the most important is the simplest: that the business can be found. That gives it a chance with every customer who has not heard of it by word of mouth, and the first level, a Google listing, costs nothing. The second belief is the reverse: many businesses do not realise how much can be built out, or what a built-out presence can mean for them. A business does not control how a customer searches, or how the platforms and tools they use carry out that search. Every door it opens, and keeps current and complete, is one more way for that customer to arrive.

Why it matters for the country. The Bahamas is a small nation beside one of the largest consumer markets in the world. We depend heavily on tourism, much of it from the United States, and the tools visitors use to find a business will keep

changing as the technology changes. With social media, and now AI assistants, we see young Bahamians changing how they find things just as fast. We believe The Bahamas should lead the Caribbean here.

What this report is. It is a reading, across The Bahamas, of the businesses a customer can find online: 2,600 of them, in eight industries, read from public sources between February and July 2026. The BDRI is an independent, private-sector index; it complements official statistics and does not replace them. Opening all four doors is not a guarantee of customers. What we can say is that the doors are where customers look, that most of them cost nothing to open, and that for most of the businesses read the fix is within reach.

Every business in the index can be looked up free at bdri.bs, and the site also holds every business's reading, the full tables and the method. Look yours up, see which door is shut, and start there.



Eric Lopez Sr., CEO & Founder



Eric Lopez Jr., COO & Co-Author

DDigiLeads

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The reading in brief

Most businesses have started, not finished

In 2026 DDigiLeads read the Four Digital Doors of 2,600 Bahamian businesses in eight industries: the Google listing, the website, the Facebook Page and WhatsApp. The result is the Bahamas Digital Readiness Index, the BDRI. It covers the businesses a customer can find online, read between February and July 2026 with 13 July 2026 as the reference date. Nine in ten of them are on Nassau and Paradise Island, and no business reported its own doors.

The typical business has started and not finished. Seven in ten are part-way: at least one door open, not yet every door their industry's customers expect, the doors the BDRI calls Required. One in ten has every Required door open. One in five had no door found at all. Most businesses have something to build on.

68.5% are part-way: at least one door open, not yet every Required door
1,781 of 2,600 businesses

More than half of the part-way businesses, 1,029 of 1,781, are one Required door short, and for 747 of those that door is WhatsApp. That makes WhatsApp the single door that would move the largest number of part-way businesses up a stage. Nearly every business read lists a phone number, and fewer than one in four has that number on WhatsApp.

747 part-way businesses are short of WhatsApp alone
of the 1,029 missing exactly one Required door

Google has two openings, and they are different jobs. A listing was found for six in ten businesses, and more than a third of those listings are unclaimed: open doors

nobody has taken charge of, where the business never chose the hours, the number or the photos, and no one can reply to a review. The other opening is larger. For the 1,026 businesses with no listing found, the Google door is not open at all.

590

Google listings are unclaimed

of 1,571 listings whose claim status could be read

1,026

businesses have no Google listing found

of 2,600

Some doors that were opened have since stopped working. One in four website addresses on record no longer leads to a live site, and nearly half the broken Facebook links were Pages that had moved, not Pages that were lost. A customer who clicks a dead link meets nothing.

Two things follow. The doors are no longer read only by people: AI assistants draw on the same public doors the BDRI reads, so an unclaimed listing with the wrong hours is a wrong answer an assistant can repeat. And the path ends at the website, the one door a business owns, where a customer can book and pay. Fewer than four in ten businesses have that end open.

Where a business starts depends on where it stands. For most, the work begins at the Google listing, and for the largest group of part-way businesses the stage moves at WhatsApp. Part 5 gives the order and the moves by stage, and any owner can look up their own business at bdri.bs. Part 6 is for the Chamber, ministries, lenders and business support centres: the target to set, and where a first session does the most.

Part 1

The customer looks first

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Section 1.1

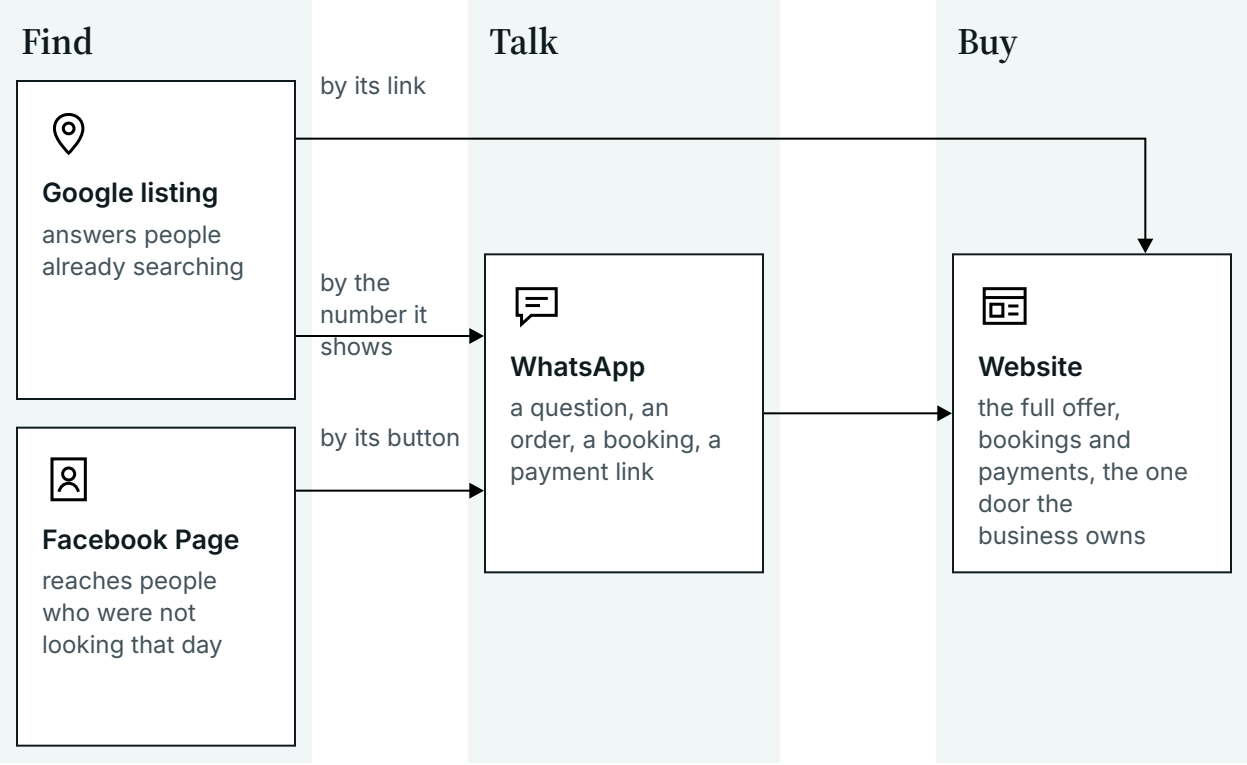
A customer looks a business up in four places before they come, call or pay

A Bahamian who wants a business looks it up before going, calling or paying. They search Google and see the business's listing, with its hours, its number, its rating and its photos. They check its Facebook Page to see what it does and whether it is still active. They message it on WhatsApp to ask a price, place an order or book a time. They open its website for the full offer and, where the site allows it, to book or pay. Visitors planning from abroad and family sending a referral do the same from further away, but the people in this story are Bahamians at home.

Those four places are the Four Digital Doors: a Google Business Profile, a website, a Facebook Page (the business Page, not a personal profile) and WhatsApp. The BDRI reads each door the way a customer finds and interacts with it, from public sources only.

Figure 1.1

Find, talk, buy: how a customer moves through the Four Digital Doors.



Each door does a different job, and together they make the path a customer walks.

The Google listing answers the people who are already searching, by the business's name or by its kind. It is the door most customers open first, and it sends them on to the others: to WhatsApp by the number it shows, and to the website by its link. Eric Lopez Sr. puts it to clients this way:

> "Google is your discovery. Google still is the main door, because Google connects to all the other doors."
>
> **Eric Lopez Sr.** CEO & Founder, DDigiLeads

The Facebook Page is the one door that can reach people who were not looking for the business that day. In this edition it stands in for social media as a whole; Instagram and TikTok were not measured.

WhatsApp is where the customer and the business talk, from a question to an order, a booking or a payment link. In Eric Lopez Jr.'s words, it is "a conversation channel, not a discovery channel." Nobody in The Bahamas can search for a business inside WhatsApp, because WhatsApp's business directory exists only in Brazil, so the WhatsApp door works only when the number sits on the other doors, where a customer can find it. Eric Sr. adds what he has seen in his years with Nassau clients: many Bahamian customers would rather message than telephone or fill in a form.

The website is the one door the business owns and controls. It holds the full offer and can take bookings, orders and payments, and Google reads it as one of the sources for the business's listing.

When is a door open? The BDRI counts a door open in these cases and no others.

Google Business Profile: a public listing can be found on Google Search and Maps, claimed or not. Claiming is a check on top; it is not what opens the door.

Website: a live website loads for a visitor. A dead link, an unreachable address, a "coming soon" webpage or a redirect to social media is not open. A live booking-platform profile counts.

Facebook Page: an active business Page. A personal profile, a deleted Page or a broken link is not open.

WhatsApp: a phone number listed for the business in public sources is registered on WhatsApp.

Section 1.2

Each industry's customers expect certain doors, and a business's stage is read from those doors, not from its score

Not every customer expects every door. A diner looks for a restaurant on Google and its Facebook Page and messages it on WhatsApp; a visitor booking a tour expects a website. So for each of the eight industries, DDigiLeads judged which doors that industry's customers expect to find, from its own review of published research, before any 2026 score was worked out. Those are the industry's Required doors. A Recommended door is one many customers use. An Optional door is one they rarely use to find or choose a business. That published research includes the Central Bank of The Bahamas' December 2025 Monetary Policy Committee presentation, DataReportal's 2026 report on The Bahamas and Hope Research Group's 2026 report on Caribbean media use.

Table 1.1

Required doors by industry

Industry (businesses read)	Required	Recommended	Optional
Restaurants (573)	Google, Facebook Page, WhatsApp	Website	none
Professional Services (416)	Google, Website, WhatsApp	none	Facebook Page
Retail (399)	Facebook Page, WhatsApp	Google	Website
Tourism (338)	Google, Website, WhatsApp	Facebook Page	none
Salons and Beauty (336)	Google, Facebook Page, WhatsApp	Website	none
Auto Services (255)	Google, WhatsApp	Website	Facebook Page
Home Services (253)	Google, WhatsApp	Website	Facebook Page
Creative Services (30)	Website	Google, Facebook Page, WhatsApp	none

In brackets, the businesses read in each industry

Source. BDRI 2026

Two patterns show in the table. WhatsApp is a Required door in seven of the eight industries; only Creative Services, whose customers expect a website first, leaves it out. And no industry requires all four doors, so the target for any industry is its Required doors, not the full set.

The score. Each business gets a score out of 100. An open door earns points, and each basic check it passes earns a few more. Required doors carry the most points, nothing is ever subtracted, and a door's points for being open outweigh all its checks together, so opening a door always counts for more than polishing one. The national mean is 36.82.

Table 1.2

The basic checks

Door	Checks
Google Business Profile	listing claimed; star rating shown; at least one review; newest review under twelve months old
Website	secure connection; works on a phone
Facebook Page	a post in the 90 days before the reading; at least one follower
WhatsApp	a WhatsApp Business account rather than a personal one

The four stages. The score says how much is built. The stage says where a business stands against what its own customers expect: it is read from which doors are open against the industry's Required doors, never from the score. The stage is the thing to act on; the score shows the progress between stages.

Table 1.3

The four stages

Stage	What it means
No Doors Open	none of the four doors found open
Doors Opening	at least one door open, but not every Required door; in plain words, part-way
Expected Doors Open	every Required door open, but not all four
All Doors Open	all four doors open

A business moves up from Doors Opening only when every one of its Required doors is open; opening a Recommended or Optional door raises its score but not its stage. And because the score ranges overlap by design, a Doors Opening business

can outscore one at Expected Doors Open: in this edition Doors Opening runs from 8.8 to 72.0 and Expected Doors Open from 33.4 to 90.0. Together the two say which doors are open and how well each is kept.

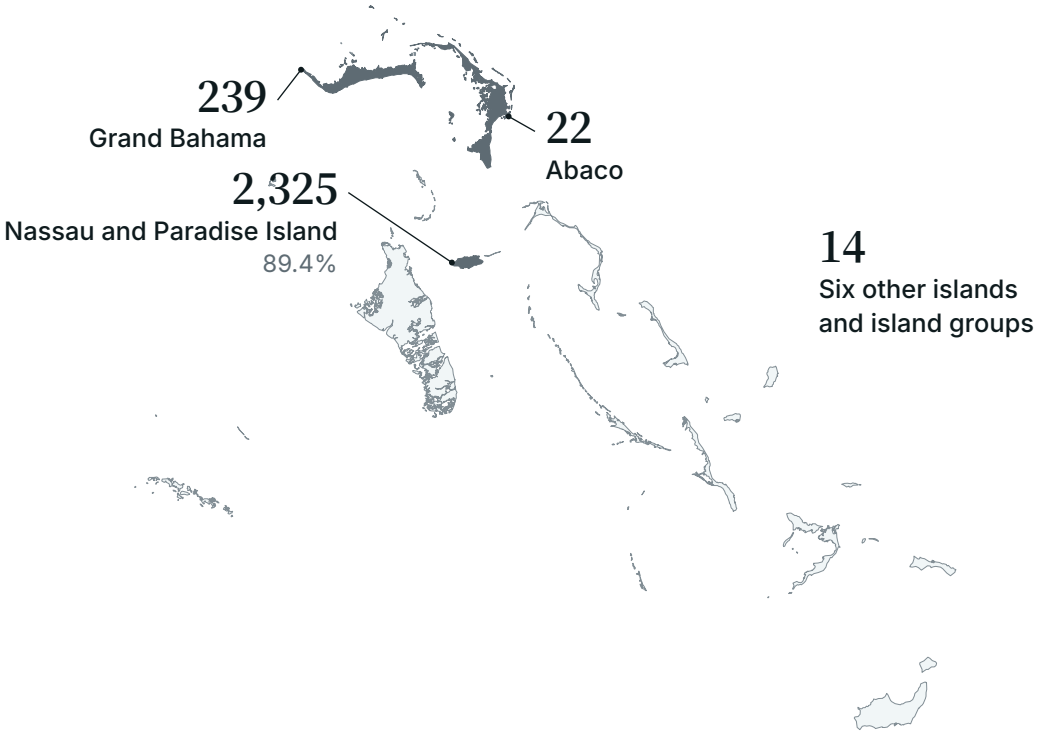
Section 1.3

Who was read: 2,600 businesses a customer can find online, nine in ten of them on Nassau and Paradise Island

The 2026 edition reads 2,600 businesses in eight industries. They were read from 1 February to 13 July 2026, and 13 July 2026 is the reference date: the edition is locked there, and anything that changed after it belongs to a later, dated reading.

Figure 1.2

Nine in ten businesses read are on Nassau and Paradise Island.



Businesses read, by island, February to July 2026

Outside Nassau and Paradise Island in all: 275. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.

Source. BDRI 2026

Nine in ten of the businesses are on Nassau and Paradise Island. Grand Bahama has 239, Abaco 22, and six other islands and island groups 14 between them. That is why, where this report compares islands, it sets Grand Bahama beside Nassau and treats the rest as too few to read alone.

The list was built mainly from BahamasLocal.com, a Bahamian business directory, which supplied 2,146 of the 2,604 records collected; the other 458 came from Google's own business data. One duplicate, two businesses found closed for good and one record outside the eight industries were removed, leaving 2,600. Every door was then checked in a first reading in April 2026 and a second in July 2026.

The 2,600 are the businesses a customer can find online, read across The Bahamas. They are not a share of all Bahamian businesses, because there is no official count of Bahamian businesses to measure them against. For scale only: the Department of Inland Revenue anticipated about 65,000 Business Licence filers for 2025, and 12,488 employers paid National Insurance in 2022. Neither is a count of businesses the 2,600 can be set against.

Four things the BDRI cannot see, before the findings. It measures whether a door is open and passes basic checks, not how good the website, the Page, the WhatsApp setup or the listing is. It does not read Instagram or TikTok. It cannot say why a door is shut: "not found" means not found in public sources, not confirmed missing. And it stops at 13 July 2026. The full list is in "How the BDRI 2026 was read" at the back.

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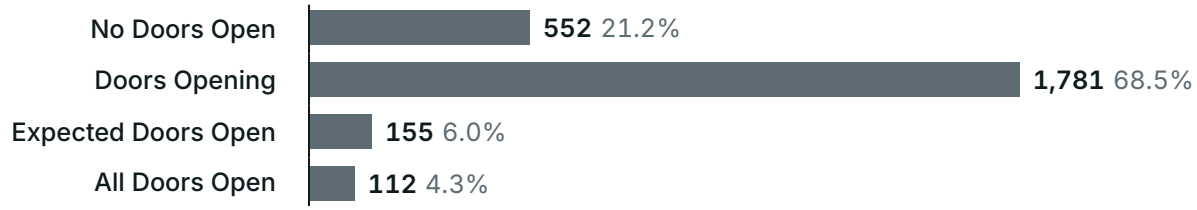
Section 2.1

Seven in ten businesses are part-way, and one in ten has every Required door open

Of the 2,600 businesses read, 267 have every door their industry's customers expect open: 155 at Expected Doors Open, with every Required door open but not all four, and 112 at All Doors Open. That is 10.3%. Another 1,781, 68.5%, are part-way, with at least one door open but not every Required door. The remaining 552, 21.2%, had no door found open. Put the top three stages together and 2,048 businesses, 78.8%, have at least one door open.

Figure 2.1

Where do the 2,600 businesses stand?



Of 2,600 businesses read, February to July 2026

Source. BDRI 2026

What it means. The typical Bahamian business a customer can find online has started and not finished. The story is the seven in ten in the middle, not the fifth at the bottom: businesses that have opened something and have not yet opened everything their customers look for. Four in five have a door to build on, and for most of the middle the next stage is a single door away, as the next section shows.

What we recommend. The broad middle is where attention does the most. For an owner at Doors Opening, the next step is usually one door, and Part 4 says which for each industry. For an institution, the middle is where a programme reaches the most businesses with the least work per business, and Part 6 says how.

Section 2.2

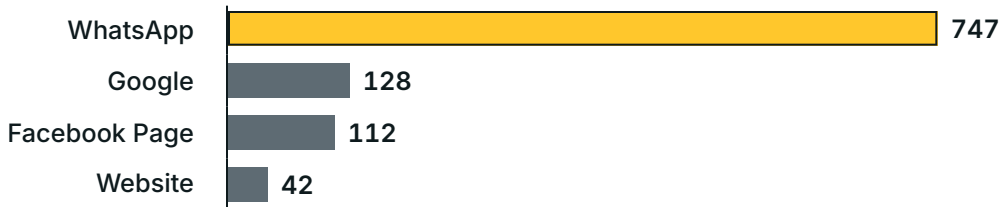
More than half of part-way businesses are one door short, and WhatsApp alone would move 747 of them up a stage

WhatsApp matters because it is where a Bahamian customer, having found a business, asks the price, places the order and books the time, on an app nearly everyone here already carries. It is also the door the BDRI found shut most often.

More than half of the part-way businesses, 1,029 of 1,781, are missing exactly one Required door, and for 747 of them, nearly three in four, that door is WhatsApp. That makes WhatsApp the single door that would move the largest number of part-way businesses up a stage. The other 752 are two or more Required doors short. Count every part-way business whose missing doors include WhatsApp, not only those short of it alone, and it is 1,446, about four in five; for those with other doors also shut, WhatsApp is one step of several.

Figure 2.2

Which door is missing for the part-way businesses one Required door short?



The 1,029 of the 1,781 part-way businesses that are exactly one Required door short
The other 752 are two or more short and are not in this chart.
Source. BDRI 2026

Nearly every business read can be called. Fewer than one in four can be messaged on the number it gives out: the WhatsApp door was open for 590 of the 2,600, 22.7%. The rule behind that number travels with it. The BDRI counts the WhatsApp door open only when a number the business lists in public is registered on WhatsApp. A business that lists a landline and runs WhatsApp on another number reads as not found, the same as a business that is not on WhatsApp at all, and the index cannot tell the two apart.

Bahamian customers already have the app. In a 2021 survey for URCA, the communications regulator, 93% of people surveyed in The Bahamas had used WhatsApp to call or send messages in the past month. The customer who finds a business on Google or on its Facebook Page is already holding the app the business can answer on.

93% of people surveyed in The Bahamas had used WhatsApp to call or message in the past month

URCA survey, 2021; a count of people, not of businesses

It is where the sale often finishes. The customer finds the business on Google or Facebook and then asks a price, sends a photo of the job, books a time or confirms an order in a chat. That is why DDigiLeads made WhatsApp a Required door in seven of the eight industries. It is not that customers never call: auto and home-service customers often find the business on Google and call first, then move to WhatsApp for the photos and the quote.

It is the lowest-cost door to open. WhatsApp Business is free to download and needs no website. It gives a business a profile with its hours and address, a catalogue, saved quick replies, and greeting and away messages that answer when nobody can. The money can move inside the same chat: the business sends a payment link from a Bahamian bank or from a local payment service such as Fygaro, Kanoo or KemisPay, or takes a bank transfer. Paying inside WhatsApp itself is not available in The Bahamas.

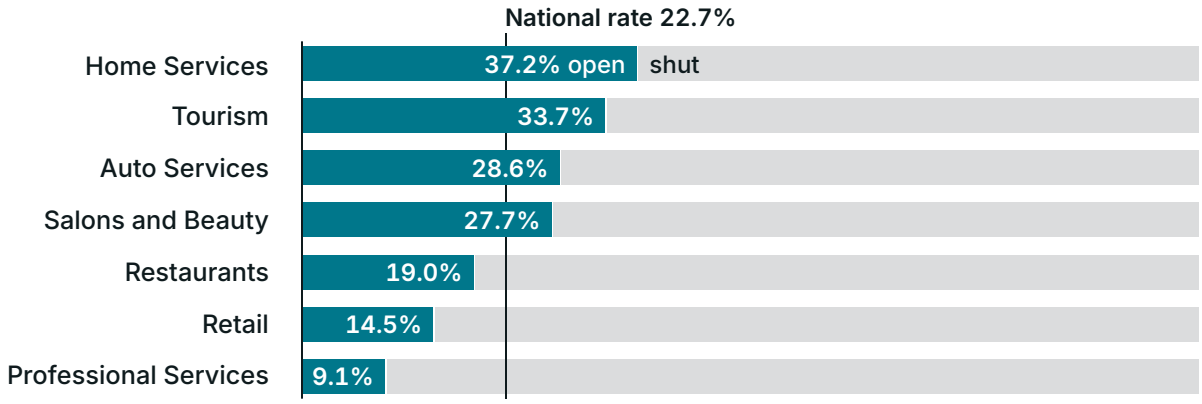
And it connects to the other doors. The same number belongs on the Google listing, and a WhatsApp number linked to the Facebook Page lets the Page show a WhatsApp button, so a customer who arrives at either door can start the conversation there.

The same pattern runs through the industries. In seven of the eight, WhatsApp is the Required door least often open, and in the industry furthest behind fewer than one firm in ten has it. The exception is Creative Services, whose only Required door is the website.

Among businesses with three of the four doors open, the one still shut is WhatsApp for 298 of 464, about two in three. And of the 590 businesses that can be messaged, close to half, 279, run on a personal WhatsApp account rather than WhatsApp Business. A personal account has no business profile: no business name, hours, address or catalogue on the profile, and no greeting or away message. The account type was reported by an outside number-checking service in March and July 2026, so some have switched since.

Figure 2.3

In seven of eight industries, WhatsApp is the Required door least often open



Share of businesses read in each industry with WhatsApp open

Creative Services omitted: WhatsApp is not a Required door there.

Source. BDRI 2026

What it means. Among the businesses read, the single change that would move the largest number up a stage is making the number customers see open a WhatsApp chat. Most of these businesses already list a number. A listed landline while WhatsApp runs on the owner's mobile is one likely cause, and the fix is the same whatever the cause: put the number customers see on WhatsApp, or put the WhatsApp number where customers see it.

What we recommend. This is the fix that waits on nobody. It costs nothing and needs only the owner and the phone that holds the number. For the businesses short of WhatsApp alone, it is the step that moves them up a stage. For those on a personal account, the next step is the switch to WhatsApp Business, which keeps the same number and, after a backup, the chats.

Eric Lopez Sr. says it to clients this way:

> "Most people don't understand the power of WhatsApp... Because if somebody want to reach you from anywhere in the world, they click the WhatsApp button, and they can talk to you. They can talk to you instantly."
>
> **Eric Lopez Sr.** CEO & Founder, DDigiLeads

What owners can do

1. **Find the number customers see:** the one on the Google listing, the website, the Facebook Page and BahamasLocal.com. If it is not on WhatsApp, either register WhatsApp Business on it, or put the number the business does use on WhatsApp in all four places, marked as WhatsApp.
2. **If the account is a personal one, switch it to WhatsApp Business.** The number stays, and after a backup so do the chats. Add the business name, hours, address and an away message.
3. Look the business up at bdri.bs to see which door the index found shut, and ask for a fresh reading after the change.

Section 2.3

Google has two free openings: 590 unclaimed listings, and 1,026 businesses with no listing found

Google is the door most customers open first. Eric Lopez Sr. tells clients that "every customer journey starts at Google," and the BDRI reads it the same way: the listing a customer finds on Search or Maps is where the hours, the number and the website link live, and it sends the customer on to the other doors.

A Google listing was found for 1,574 of the 2,600 businesses, 60.5%. For 1,571 of those the claim status could be read: 981 had been claimed and 590, more than one in three, had not. The BDRI can see whether a listing has been claimed; it cannot see by whom. Against all 2,600 businesses, fewer than four in ten, 37.7%, have a claimed listing. No listing was found for 1,026 businesses.

What it means. There are two openings here, and they are different jobs.

The larger is the 1,026 businesses with no listing found. For them the Google door is not open at all, and a business with no listing cannot be found by someone searching for its kind. Creating one is the move: the business adds itself on Google Maps or at business.google.com, signed in with a Google account it will keep, and then waits for Google's verification.

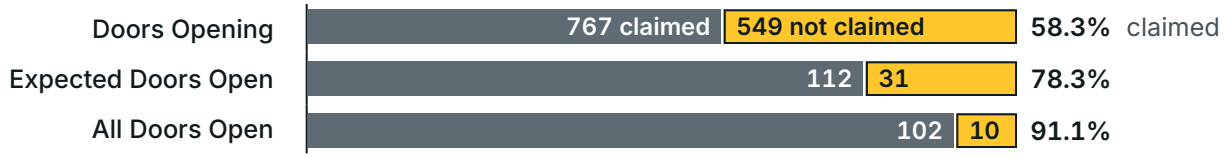
The other is the 590 unclaimed listings. These are already open doors. A business can have a Google listing it never made, because Google builds listings from several sources, including the business's own website and what users add. Until the listing is claimed, nobody has chosen its hours, its number or its photos;

nobody can reply to a review on it, and nobody receives Google's notice when a user suggests a change. Claiming puts what the listing shows under the business's control.

The unclaimed listings sit with the part-way businesses: 549 of the 590 belong to businesses at Doors Opening. That stage holds most of the listings, so it would hold most of the unclaimed ones in any case; but its businesses also claim less often. The further along a business is, the more often its listing is claimed.

Figure 2.4

The further along a business is, the more often its Google listing is claimed



Of 1,571 listings whose claim status could be read

Source. BDRI 2026

One more pattern points the same way. Businesses that publish a WhatsApp number a customer can find have claimed their listing 82.9% of the time; those that do not, 55.9%.

What owners can do

1. **Search the business on Google under every name it goes by:** the name on the sign and any older name. If a listing turns up, tap "Own this business?" or "Claim this business", then "Manage now".
2. Sign in with a Google account the business will keep; that account becomes the owner of the listing.
3. **Google then verifies the business by a method it chooses, a call or text, an email, a video or a postcard, and the owner cannot change the method.** Allow days to a week or more.
4. If no listing turns up under any name, add the business on Google Maps or at business.google.com, signed in with the same kind of account, and expect the same verification.

What we recommend. Claiming the listing is the largest free step the country can take. The owner's part is short; the wait that follows is Google's, and it runs whether anyone is working or not. Filling in the listing is the larger job that follows, and section 3.1 shows how much of it is still to do.

Section 2.4

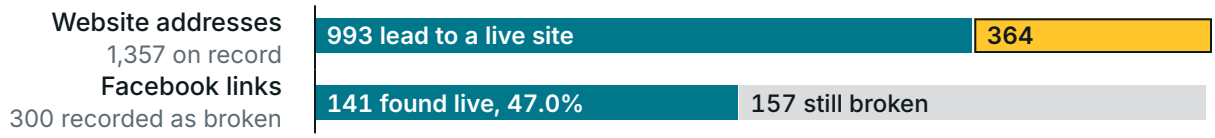
One in four web addresses on record no longer leads to a live site: opening a door and keeping it open are different jobs

A door that was opened once does not stay open on its own. The BDRI found this on two doors.

Of the 2,600 businesses, 1,357 had a website address on record. For 364 of them, 26.8%, that address did not lead to a live site, and 30 of those addresses could not be found on the internet at all, one sign of a domain registration that lapsed. On Facebook, 300 businesses had a recorded link that was broken. A July recheck found the Page live for 141 of them, 47.0%, at a different link, and 157 were still broken; the other 2 have no recheck result. Of the 300, 107 also had a website, and for 27 of those the website itself still pointed to the Facebook link that no longer worked.

Figure 2.5

One in four web addresses on record does not lead to a live site, and nearly half the broken Facebook links were Pages that had moved



Web addresses and Facebook links on record for the businesses read

Not labelled in full on the bars: 364 do not (26.8%); 141 found live at a different link in a July recheck (47.0%). Too few to draw: 2 with no recheck result.

Source. BDRI 2026

What it means. A customer who clicks a dead link meets nothing: they searched, they found the business, they clicked, and nothing loaded. A Facebook link that fails is often a Page that moved, not a Page that is lost, so the first check is whether the Page exists at a new address before anyone rebuilds it.

A Nassau restaurant owner described the dead end from the inside: “a lot of people just go to the website, but then like you say, it’s a dead end… the contact number on the website that’s not up to date… So they can’t even reach us.” The same owner on how access goes missing: “maybe we had somebody in HR open up a Facebook profile… then we fire them, the password is lost with them.”

What we recommend. The first move is a records hunt, not a rebuild: who holds the web address, where the site is hosted and who has the login, and who is an admin on the Facebook Page. For any programme working with owners, the intake question is not “Do you have a website?” but “Does your web address open your own site today?”

What owners can do

1. **Open your own web address and your own Facebook link today, on a phone, the way a customer would.** If either fails, note exactly what appears.
2. Find out who holds the domain registration, the hosting login and the Facebook Page admin rights, and write them down somewhere the business keeps.
3. **Before rebuilding a Facebook Page, search Facebook for it by name; it may be live at a new address.** Then update the link on the website and the Google listing.

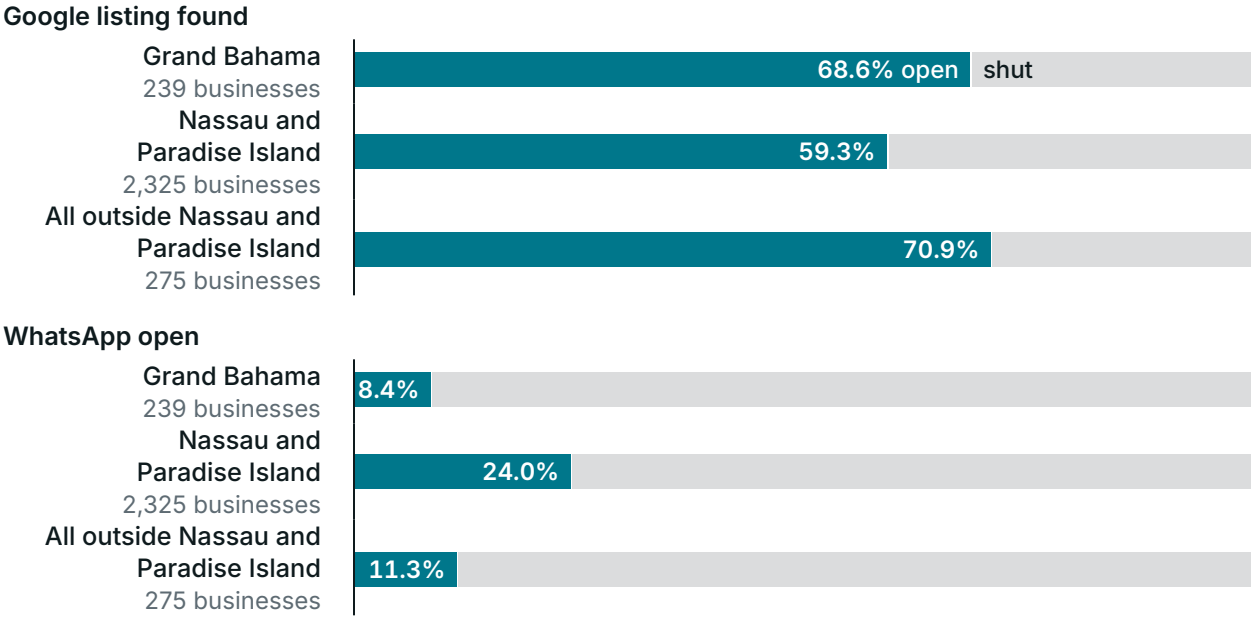
Section 2.5

Grand Bahama is found on Google more often than Nassau and reached on WhatsApp far less often

Most of the index is Nassau and Paradise Island, 2,325 of the 2,600 businesses. Grand Bahama, with 239, is the only island outside Nassau with more than 30 businesses read, so it is the only one this report sets beside the capital. The 275 businesses outside Nassau and Paradise Island taken together, Grand Bahama’s 239 among them, are shown as one group alongside; that group describes the businesses in the index, not the islands they are on.

Figure 2.6

Grand Bahama is ahead of Nassau on Google and well behind on WhatsApp



Share of businesses read on each island group, with the businesses read under each name

The 275 outside Nassau and Paradise Island include Grand Bahama's 239. Mean score: Grand Bahama 34.27, Nassau and Paradise Island 36.85.

Source. BDRI 2026

On Grand Bahama a Google listing was found for 68.6% of businesses, against 59.3% on Nassau and Paradise Island. The WhatsApp door was open for 8.4%, against 24.0%. The mean score is 34.27 against 36.85. Abaco, with 22 businesses, and the islands with fewer are too small to report alone.

What it means. Among the businesses read outside Nassau, the gap is not in being found but in being reached. Grand Bahama businesses are on Google more often than the capital's, and on WhatsApp, on the number they list, a third as often. Under the 2026 rule, part of that may be landlines listed where WhatsApp runs on another phone.

What we recommend. For anyone working with Grand Bahama or Family Island businesses, start by asking owners two questions: which number do you list, and which number do you answer? Where they differ, the fix is the one in section 2.2.

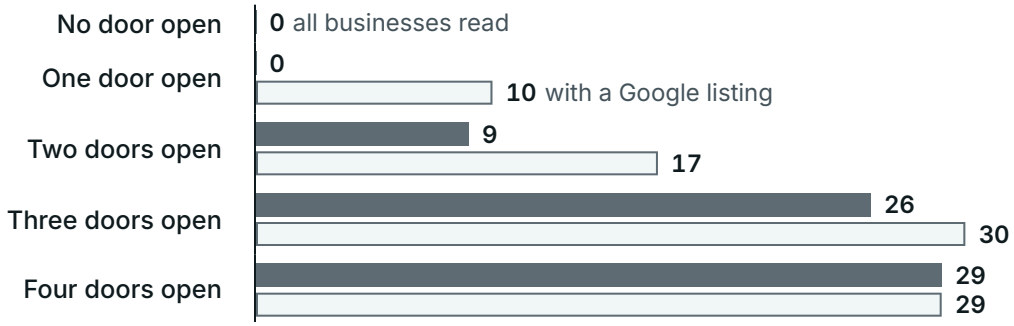
Section 2.6

Businesses with more doors open have more Google reviews

The more doors a business has open, the more Google reviews it has. The median number of Google reviews is 0 for businesses with no door open, 0 with one door, 9 with two, 26 with three and 29 with four. A business with no Google listing has no Google reviews, so the count was also taken among businesses with a listing: there the median still climbs, 10, 17, 30 through one, two and three doors, and holds at 29 for four.

Figure 2.7

Businesses with more doors open have more Google reviews



Median number of Google reviews, by number of doors open

Medians, not means.

Source. BDRI 2026

What it means. The businesses that have opened the most doors are also the ones customers are reviewing, whichever comes first, the doors or a well-run business that customers already talk about. A well-filled Google listing is where those reviews live, and what a listing can say beyond its basics is where the next part begins.

Part 3

Where the doors are heading

Section 3.1	Most open Google listings say little beyond the basics, and few let a customer act	27
Section 3.2	AI assistants read the same public doors; what they say about Bahamian businesses is untested	28
Section 3.3	The path ends at a website that takes bookings and payments; fewer than four in ten have one	30

Part 3

Part 2 asked whether each door is open. This part asks what an open door says, who is now reading it, and where the path ends.

Section 3.1

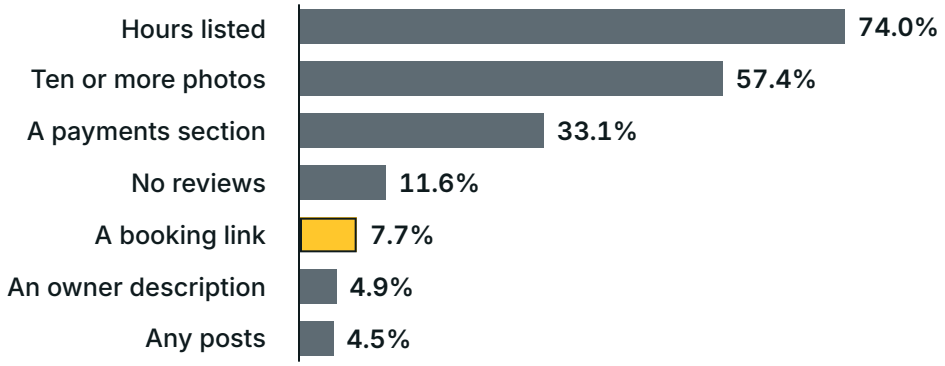
Most open Google listings say little beyond the basics, and few let a customer act

Being found is the first level of a digital presence. The next level is close behind, and most businesses with a Google listing have not reached it. The listing is open; it has not yet been filled in.

In a later reading, taken on 28 September 2026 and kept apart from the locked edition, DDigiLeads looked at what the 1,525 edition businesses with a full Google record show on their listing. Three in four show their hours. Fewer than six in ten show ten or more photos. One in three shows a payments section. Fewer than one in ten carries a booking link, one in twenty has a description written by the owner, and one in twenty has ever posted. More than one in ten has no reviews at all.

Figure 3.1

Most open Google listings say little beyond the basics, and few let a customer act



1,525 edition businesses with a full Google record, later reading of 28 September 2026, not an edition figure
Source. BDRI 2026

What it means. This is the opportunity after claiming. A customer who finds the listing learns the hours and sees some photos, and then has to leave the listing to find out anything else: what the business offers, how to book, how to pay. Very few

listings let a customer act from where they stand. Filling in the listing is the build-out work that follows the claim, and it is now read by more than people, as the next section shows.

Eric Sr. says it to clients without softening:

> "if you don't have reliable information, if you don't have enough information, you're not going to get found... Things have changed."
>
> **Eric Lopez Sr.** CEO & Founder, DDigiLeads

Section 3.2

AI assistants read the same public doors the BDRI reads, and what they say about Bahamian businesses has not been tested

The BDRI does not test what AI assistants say about Bahamian businesses, and DDigiLeads found no one who has. What can be said rests on outside evidence.

Google's AI Mode is available in The Bahamas, and ChatGPT is supported here. Google says there are no extra technical requirements to appear in its AI features; it lists keeping the Business Profile up to date among its best practices and says Business Profiles help visibility in AI responses. In a vendor study of locations in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, Google's AI answers cited the Business Profile for 94% of locations. Yelp, a main source for ChatGPT elsewhere, is not available in The Bahamas or any Caribbean country, which leaves the public doors as what an assistant here has to read. And in a study of 600 US businesses, 46 of the 59 that showed no hours on their own website had their Google listing set to "Open 24 hours", and the AI engines repeated it.

The Jamaica Tourist Board has warned that AI may favour the businesses it finds easiest to understand, and offered a five-question test for any business: who you are, where you are, what you offer, whether it is current, and how to book.

What it means. The doors are no longer read only by people. An AI assistant answering a Bahamian customer's question draws on the same public doors the BDRI reads, so an unclaimed listing with the wrong hours is not only a wrong answer a customer reads; it is a wrong answer an assistant can repeat, with confidence, to everyone who asks.

One Nassau professional practice has started asking new patients how they heard of it. The owner's answer, from that one practice: "guess which one is coming up a lot lately... Google and ChatGPT."

What we recommend. In DDigiLeads' view, a business should not lean on any one company's guidance about its own AI. The more information a business has, and the more clearly it is structured across its presence, the more chance it has to be found and recommended, by any tool. In practice that means matching hours, numbers and prices across all four doors, written as text an AI assistant can read, so that whatever a customer asks, and whatever they ask it on, there is one answer to pass on. Eric Sr. puts the customer's side of it this way:

> "everybody is looking for trust because there's a lot of fake stuff out there. Everybody want to make sure that not only you are legitimate, but you can do what you say you're going to do."
>
> **Eric Lopez Sr.** CEO & Founder, DDigiLeads

What owners can do

Ask the Jamaica Tourist Board's five questions of your own doors, as a stranger or an AI assistant would:

1. **Who you are:** does the business name read the same on the Google listing, the website, the Facebook Page and WhatsApp?
2. **Where you are:** is the address on the listing and the website, and does the map pin land on the door?
3. **What you offer:** are the services or the menu written out as text, not only in photos?
4. **Whether it is current:** are the hours right on every door today, including holiday hours?
5. **How to book:** is there a number, a WhatsApp link or a booking link a customer can use without calling?

Fix the first "no" first.

Section 3.3

The path ends at a website that takes bookings and payments, and fewer than four in ten businesses have one

The customer's path runs find, talk, buy, and the BDRI finds the last door the least often open. A website was open for fewer than four in ten of the 2,600 businesses, and 1,243 have no website address on record at all. On the later reading of Google listings, fewer than one in ten carries a booking link and one in three shows any payment options.

38.2%

have a live website

993 of 2,600 businesses

7.7%

of Google listings carry a booking link

1,525 listings, later reading of 28 September 2026; 33.1% show any payment options

Customers, meanwhile, are moving to cards. In the Central Bank's 2023 survey, 44% of people named cash as the payment method they used most and 48% named a digital method. Debit card transactions rose 19.7% in 2025, to 34.3 million. The payment tools a business abroad would reach for are not all here: Stripe, Square and Shopify Payments do not serve Bahamian businesses directly. Local banks and payment services do offer payment links that work with or without a website, and the Central Bank expects its Fast Payment System by the first quarter of 2027, a date that may move.

What it means. In DDigiLeads' view the website is the hub. It is the one door the business owns. It helps the business be found on Google, which reads it as a source for the listing. It connects customers to WhatsApp and to the Facebook Page. And it takes the bookings, the orders and the payments, which no other door does as well, and that matters more as AI assistants begin to act for customers rather than only answer them. Being found is the first level of a digital presence; taking the booking and the payment is the last. Most of the businesses read are at the first.

The Required classes in section 1.2 make the website Required only for Tourism, Professional Services and Creative Services, because the classes are DDigiLeads' judgment of what each industry's customers expect today. The hub is where

DDigiLeads thinks a business should end up. A restaurant is not behind for having no website: its customers expect Google, the Page and WhatsApp first, and the website is the door it opens when it is ready to take the booking itself.

For Retail the end of the path can look different, and section 4.3 says how: a WhatsApp catalogue and a payment link can sell without a website. A Nassau transfer operator described the gap from the inside: “I would send a payment link… It’s not on the website.” The money moves; the website does not yet carry it.

Which doors a business should open first depends on its industry. Part 4 takes each in turn.

Part 4

The industries

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Section 4.1	Restaurants are found and chosen online, and still cannot be messaged	35
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Part 4

Each industry's reading stands on its own, with its Required doors restated and the one pattern worth knowing. The industries run largest first, by businesses read. Creative Services, with 30 businesses, is a small group where one business changes the picture a lot, and it is not ranked.

Section 4.0

Tourism leads on the mean score, Retail has the lowest, and in seven of eight industries the shut door is WhatsApp

Table 4.1

The eight industries

Industry (businesses read)	Mean score	Every Required door open	All four open	Required door most often shut (share open)	Google listings unclaimed
Tourism (338)	50.01	65 (19.2%)	47	WhatsApp (33.7%)	52 of 247 (21.1%)
Restaurants (573)	40.25	47 (8.2%)	21	WhatsApp (19.0%)	160 of 406 (39.4%)
Auto Services (255)	36.27	45 (17.6%)	7	WhatsApp (28.6%)	77 of 164 (47.0%)
Creative Services (30, not ranked)	36.17	15 of 30	2	Website (50.0%)	too few to show
Salons and Beauty (336)	35.18	22 (6.5%)	13	WhatsApp (27.7%)	63 of 187 (33.7%)
Professional Services (416)	35.17	20 (4.8%)	8	WhatsApp (9.1%)	94 of 226 (41.6%)
Home Services (253)	30.44	34 (13.4%)	8	WhatsApp (37.2%), with Google close behind (38.7%)	34 of 98 (34.7%)
Retail (399)	28.25	19 (4.8%)	6	WhatsApp (14.5%)	106 of 229 (46.3%)
National	**36.82**	**267 (10.3%)**	**112 (4.3%)**		

In order of mean score; in brackets, businesses read. Unclaimed listings are of those whose claim status could be read

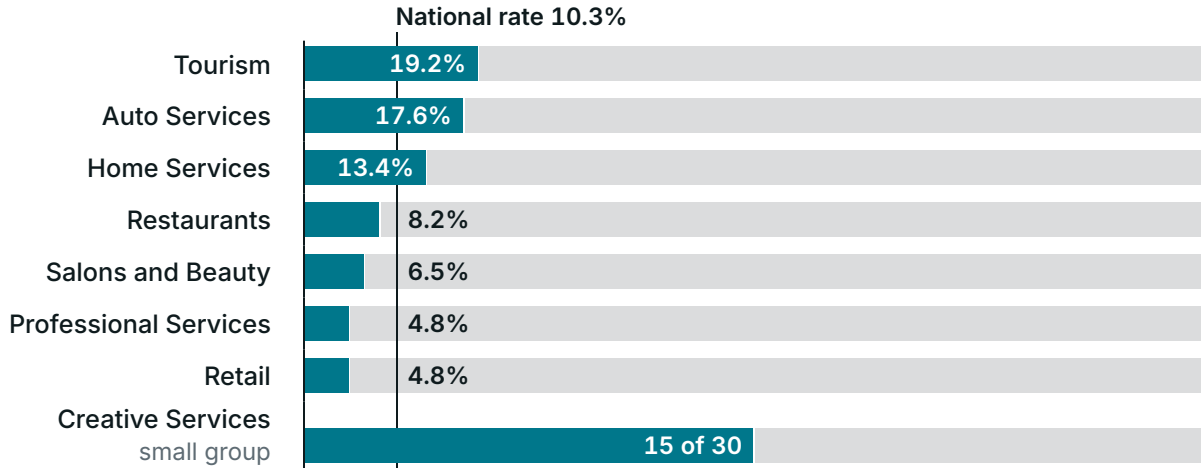
Salons and Beauty and Professional Services are tied on the mean; neither ranks above the other.

Source. BDRI 2026

Tourism leads on the mean score, 50.01, and on the full set: 47 of its 338 businesses, 13.9%, have all four doors open, more than three times the national 4.3%, and it opens every door more often than the country as a whole does. It does not lead on every door. Home Services opens WhatsApp more often, 37.2% against Tourism's 33.7%. Retail has the lowest mean, 28.25. In seven of the eight industries the Required door most often shut is WhatsApp; the exception is Creative Services, whose only Required door is the website. And every industry, including the smallest, has at least one business at All Doors Open.

Figure 4.1

Tourism has every Required door open most often; Professional Services and Retail least often



Share of businesses read in each industry with every Required door open

Source. BDRI 2026

Why Tourism leads. In DDigiLeads' view, where customers choose before they arrive and have no local to ask, businesses open more doors. In 2025 The Bahamas had 1,838,168 overnight visitors out of 12,499,871 foreign arrivals, and 83.4% of the overnight visitors lived in the United States; in the Ministry of Tourism's 2024 exit study, 70% of visitors who stayed booked some or all of the trip online. A tour operator whose customers book from Ohio has had to be findable from Ohio. Part of the lead is also how Tourism's list was built. About a third of its businesses, 119 of 338, were found by searching Google in December 2025, and those 119 account for 35 of the 47 at All Doors Open. A business found through Google already had that door open, so how a business was found shapes how many of its doors were found.

The same doors serve the visitor and the neighbour: the Google listing a visitor reads before the trip is the one a neighbour checks for today's hours. What Tourism shows the other industries is that the full set is reachable, and every industry has at least one business that has done it.

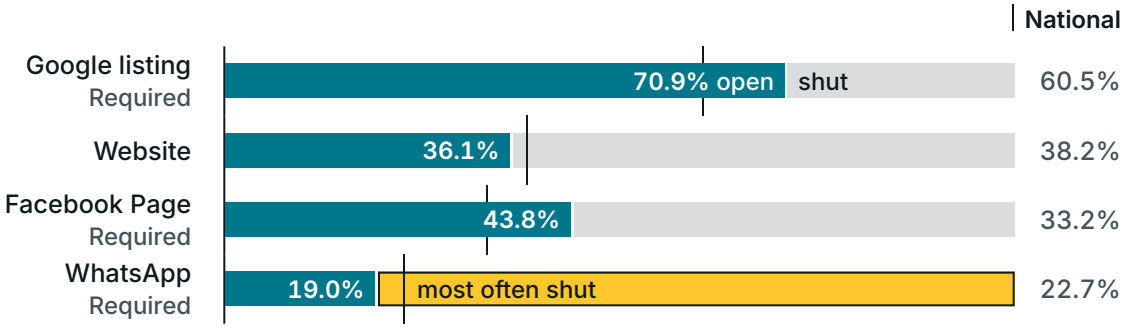
Section 4.1

Restaurants are found and chosen online, and still cannot be messaged

Restaurants are the largest industry in the index, 573 businesses, and their customers expect three doors: the Google listing, the Facebook Page and WhatsApp. A website is Recommended.

Figure 4.2

Restaurants are ahead of the country on Google, and WhatsApp is the Required door most often shut



Of 573 restaurant businesses read, February to July 2026

Source. BDRI 2026

The mean score is 40.25, second to Tourism. Restaurants are ahead of the country on Google, with a listing found for 70.9%, and a Facebook Page was found for 43.8%. But the WhatsApp door was open for 19.0%, and that is the Required door most often shut: of the 208 restaurants one Required door short, 156 are missing WhatsApp. Restaurants have the largest part-way share of any industry, 74.7%. Of the 573, 47 have every Required door open, 8.2%, and 21 have all four. Of the 406 restaurant listings whose claim status could be read, 160 are unclaimed, 39.4%.

What it means. The restaurant that is found and chosen online still cannot be messaged. A diner sees the listing and the Page, decides, and then cannot ask whether there is a table or whether the kitchen is still open. Restaurants are the industry where one change, WhatsApp on the number the listing shows, would

move the largest number of businesses up a stage. Behind the doors, the review study in section 4.9 shows what diners say, and that restaurants replied to 15.1% of their reviews.

One Nassau restaurant owner explained the gap plainly: “we don’t really have no one on our end that’s assigned to respond back to the comments because, you know, we so focused on day to day.”

First move for restaurants

1 **Claim the Google listing, or create one if none was found.** Four in ten found restaurant listings are unclaimed.

2 **Register WhatsApp Business on the number the listing shows.** That is the door 156 of the 208 restaurants one door short are missing, and the one that moves them up a stage.

The moves by stage are in Part 5.

Section 4.2

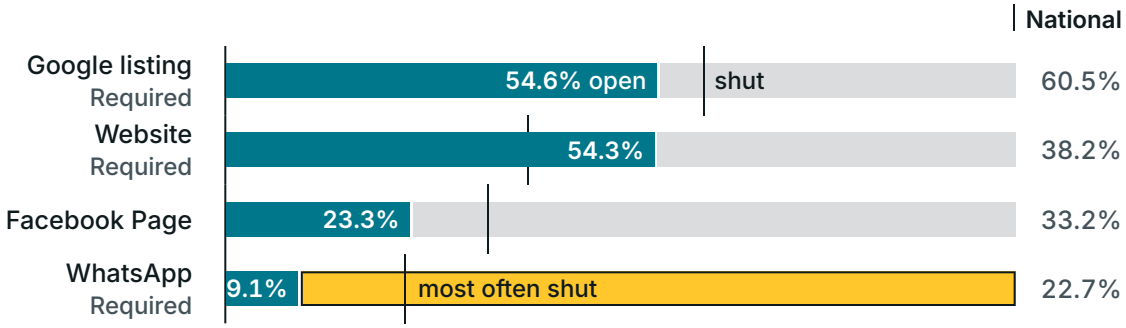
Professional Services are ahead on websites and furthest behind on WhatsApp, on numbers almost every firm lists

Professional Services, 416 firms, is the second-largest industry. Its customers expect the Google listing, a website and WhatsApp; the Facebook Page is Optional.

The mean score is 35.17, tied with Salons and Beauty. Firms are ahead of the country on websites, open for 54.3%, and furthest behind of any industry on WhatsApp, open for 9.1%. Only 4.8% have every Required door open, 20 firms, level with Retail at the lowest share, and 8 have all four. Of the 151 firms one Required door short, 138 are missing WhatsApp. Of the 226 listings whose claim status could be read, 94 are unclaimed, 41.6%. And 99.3% of firms list a phone number.

Figure 4.3

Professional Services firms are ahead of the country on websites and furthest behind of any industry on WhatsApp



Of 416 professional services businesses read, February to July 2026

Source. BDRI 2026

What it means. The gap is not whether a firm can be contacted; almost every one can be called. The gap is WhatsApp on that number. A client who finds a lawyer or an accountant on Google and wants to ask one question before booking has, in nine firms out of ten, only a call or a form. WhatsApp is a Required door here because, in DDigiLeads' judgment of the industry, a firm's clients expect to be able to message it, and the fix is the same step as in every other industry.

First move for professional firms

1 **Search the firm's name on Google.** If a listing turns up, claim it; 94 of the 226 found listings are unclaimed. If none does, create one.

2 Put WhatsApp Business on the number the firm already lists. 138 of the 151 firms one door short are missing it.

The moves by stage are in Part 5.

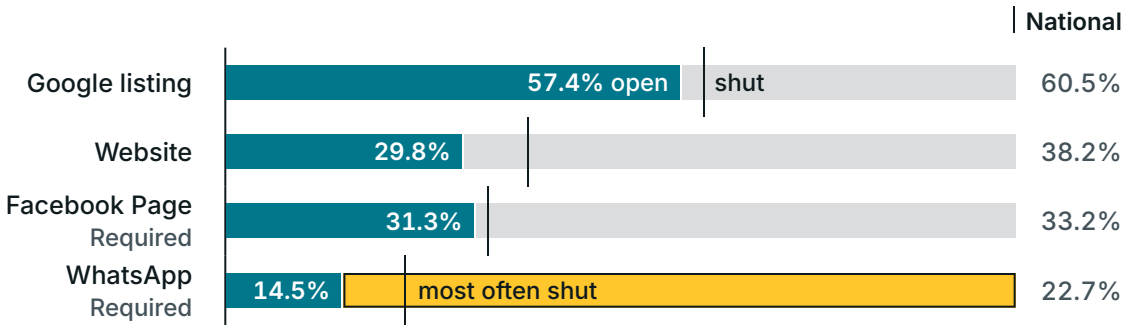
Section 4.3

Retail has the lowest mean, the Facebook Page as its first door, and nearly half its found listings unclaimed

Retail, 399 businesses, is the third-largest industry and the only one whose customers expect the Facebook Page first. Its Required doors are the Facebook Page and WhatsApp; Google is Recommended and the website Optional.

Figure 4.4

Retail's Required doors are the Facebook Page and WhatsApp, and WhatsApp is open for 14.5% of shops



Of 399 retail businesses read, February to July 2026

Source. BDRI 2026

The mean score is 28.25, the lowest. The WhatsApp door was open for 14.5%. Of the 399 shops, 19 have every Required door open, 4.8%, level with Professional Services at the lowest share, and 6 have all four. Of the 229 listings whose claim status could be read, 106 are unclaimed, 46.3%, nearly half.

What it means. Retail's first door is the shop window: the Facebook Page, where a customer sees what is in stock this week and whether the shop is still trading. The second is the chat where they ask for a size, a price or a hold. The website sits at Optional in DDigiLeads' classes, which judge that many shoppers still buy in store. Eric Lopez Sr. says it of some of his own retail clients: they "don't need a website because... people are not buying products online, they'd rather go and buy them in store." That fits the classes, and it is why not every shop needs a website. A WhatsApp catalogue and a payment link can sell without one.

First move for shops

1 If a Google listing was found for the shop, claim it; nearly half are unclaimed.

2 Make sure the Facebook Page is a business Page, not a personal profile, and has a post in the last 90 days.

3 **Register WhatsApp Business on the number the Page shows, and build the catalogue inside it.** WhatsApp is open for 14.5% of shops, and for 106 of the 145 shops one door short it is the door that moves them up a stage.

The moves by stage are in Part 5.

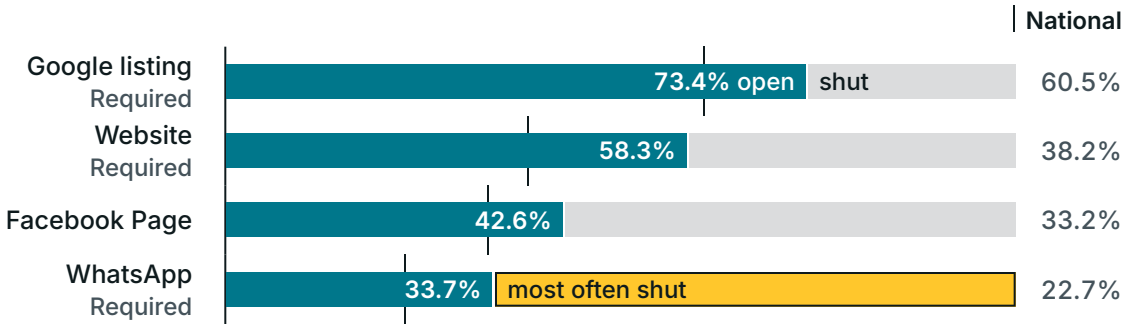
Section 4.4

Tourism has claimed its listings and opened its websites more than any industry, and hotels are its weak spot

Tourism, 338 businesses, is the industry that plans from abroad. Its customers expect the Google listing, a website and WhatsApp; the Facebook Page is Recommended.

Figure 4.5

No industry opens a website more often than Tourism, and the remaining gap is WhatsApp



Of 338 tourism businesses read, February to July 2026

Source. BDRI 2026

Its mean score is 50.01, the highest; 65 businesses have every Required door open, 19.2%, and 47 have all four. No industry opens a website more often, 58.3%, and no industry has claimed its listings more often: 52 of the 247 listings whose claim status could be read are unclaimed, 21.1%, about two in ten. The remaining gap is the conversation door. Of the 142 Tourism businesses one Required door short, 110 are missing WhatsApp.

Hotels are the weak spot inside the leader. None of the 53 businesses the index records as hotels is at All Doors Open, and WhatsApp was found for only 3 of them.

What it means. The industry whose customers choose before they arrive has done the most, and what it has left to do is the door the visitor uses on arrival: the chat that confirms the pickup, the time and the price. In the review study, booking, contact and refund complaints were the biggest complaint family at boat tours, which is the same gap seen from the customer's side (section 4.9). One Nassau transfer operator described how customers reach the business today: "if clients I would have dealt with in the past, if they have friends coming to visit… they share my contact." Referral works; the door that works for a stranger is the number on the listing.

First move for tourism businesses

1. Claim the Google listing if it is one of the two in ten still unclaimed.
2. Put the WhatsApp number on the listing and the website, marked as WhatsApp, so a visitor can reach you before the trip. 110 of the 142 businesses one door short are missing it.
3. **Hotels:** of the 53 in the index, 3 were found on WhatsApp; the same step applies.

The moves by stage are in Part 5.

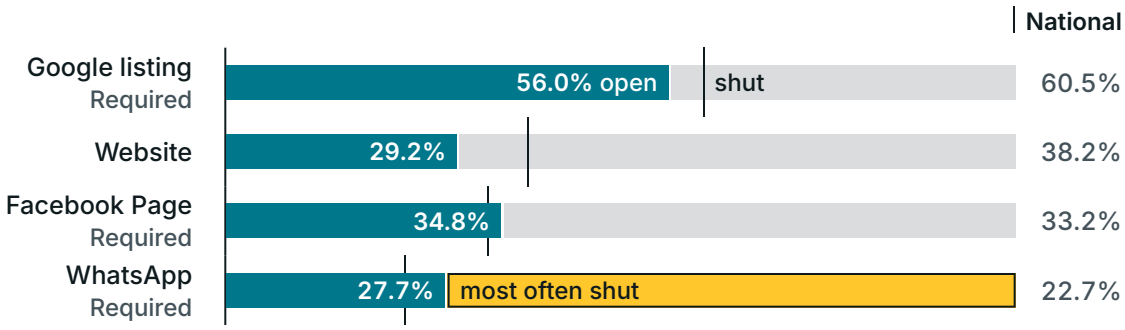
Section 4.5

Salons are ahead of the country on WhatsApp and Facebook, and still short on all three Required doors

Salons and Beauty, 336 businesses, is tied with Professional Services on the mean score, 35.18. Its customers expect the Google listing, the Facebook Page and WhatsApp; a website is Recommended.

Figure 4.6

Salons are ahead of the country on WhatsApp and Facebook, and WhatsApp is still the Required door most often shut



Of 336 salon and beauty businesses read, February to July 2026

Source. BDRI 2026

Salons are ahead of the country on WhatsApp, open for 27.7%, and a Facebook Page was found for 34.8%. Of the 336, 22 have every Required door open, 6.5%, and 13 have all four; the largest group at All Doors Open is spas. Of the 187 listings whose claim status could be read, 63 are unclaimed, 33.7%. Unlike most industries, the shut Required door here is shut three ways: of the 104 salons one door short, 54 are missing WhatsApp, 34 the Facebook Page and 16 Google.

One scope note changes the reading here. Instagram often does the social work that this edition scores Facebook for, and Instagram was not measured. A salon that lives on Instagram reads as shut on the Page.

What it means. Salons already talk to their customers. Booking by message is how the industry runs, and salons can be messaged on the number they list more often than the businesses read as a whole, 27.7% against 22.7%. The work left is the doors that catch the customer who has not been referred: the Google listing, where a stranger searching “nail salon near me” finds them, and the Facebook Page,

which stands in for social media in this reading. And for the half of salons one door short that are missing WhatsApp, the number customers message is not yet the number the salon lists.

First move for salons

1 Claim the Google listing; a third of found salon listings are unclaimed.

2 If the salon takes bookings on WhatsApp, make sure that number is on the Google listing and the Facebook Page, marked as WhatsApp. 54 of the 104 salons one door short are missing it there.

3 If the social presence is Instagram alone, open a Facebook Page as well and post within each 90 days; it is the door this reading and many customers check.

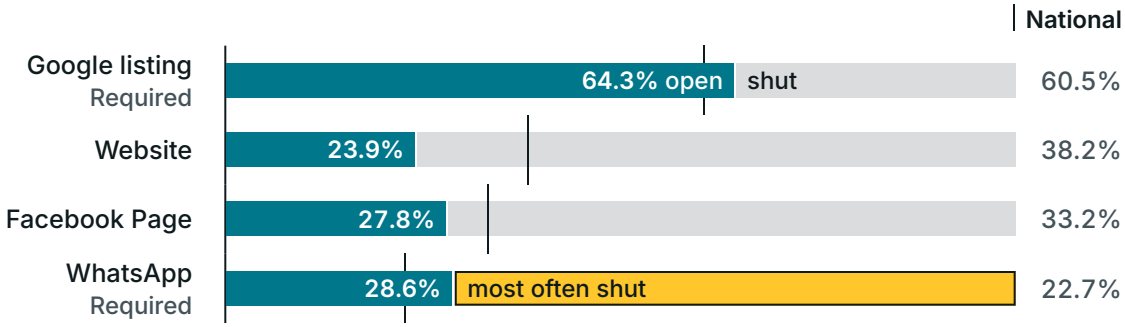
The moves by stage are in Part 5.

Section 4.6

Auto Services has the highest share of part-way businesses one door from the next stage, and the highest share of unclaimed listings

Figure 4.7

Garages and dealers are ahead of the country on both Required doors, Google and WhatsApp



Of 255 auto services businesses read, February to July 2026

Source. BDRI 2026

Auto Services, 255 businesses, has only two Required doors, the Google listing and WhatsApp; a website is Recommended and the Facebook Page Optional.

The mean score is 36.27, third behind Tourism and Restaurants. Garages and dealers are ahead of the country on both Required doors: Google found for 64.3%, WhatsApp open for 28.6%. Of the 255, 45 have every Required door open, 17.6%, the second-highest share of any industry, and 7 have all four, four of them car rental businesses. Of the 170 part-way businesses, 147 are one Required door short: 119 missing WhatsApp and 28 missing Google. But of the 164 listings whose claim status could be read, 77 are unclaimed, 47.0%, the highest share of any industry.

What it means. With two Required doors, and 147 of its 170 part-way businesses one door short, this is the industry with the highest share of part-way businesses one step from the next stage. Two moves, a Google listing where none was found and WhatsApp on the number the listing shows, would move 147 of the 255 up a stage. A customer with a breakdown finds the garage on Google and calls; a customer with a quote to get sends the photo on WhatsApp.

First move for garages and dealers

1. **Claim the Google listing and set the hours; nearly half of found listings are unclaimed, the highest share of any industry.** If none was found, create one: 28 of the 147 businesses one door short are missing Google.
2. Put WhatsApp Business on the number the listing shows, so a customer can send the photo. 119 of the 147 are missing it.

The moves by stage are in Part 5.

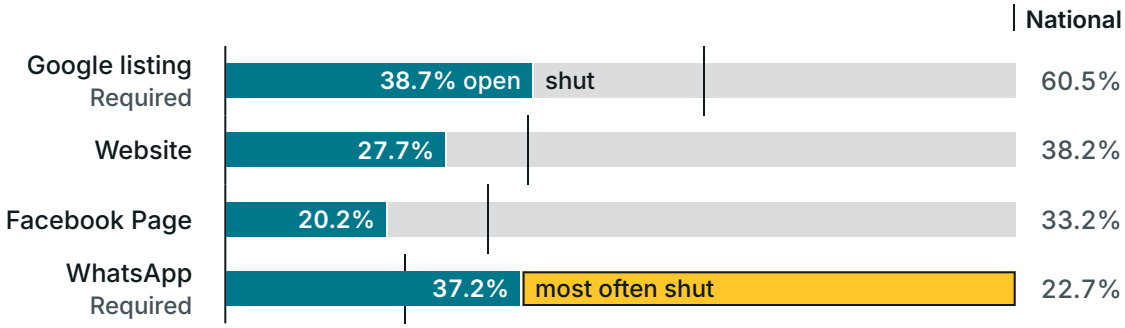
Section 4.7

Home Services are reached by number and found on Google less often than any industry

Home Services, 253 businesses, has the same two Required doors as Auto Services: the Google listing and WhatsApp. A website is Recommended and the Facebook Page Optional.

Figure 4.8

Home Services has the highest WhatsApp share of any industry and the lowest Google share, and its two Required doors are almost equally shut



Of 253 home services businesses read, February to July 2026

Source. BDRI 2026

The mean score is 30.44. Home Services has the highest WhatsApp share of any industry, 37.2%, and the lowest Google share, 38.7%. Its two Required doors are almost equally shut: of the 124 businesses one door short, 64 are missing WhatsApp and 60 Google. Of the 253, 34 have every Required door open, 13.4%, and 8 have all four. Of the 98 listings whose claim status could be read, 34 are unclaimed, 34.7%. Home Services also has the largest share of website addresses that do not load: 42 of the 112 on record, 37.5%.

What it means. Homeowners reach these firms by number, by referral and by the number on the van, which is why WhatsApp is open more often here than anywhere. But a homeowner who needs a plumber for the first time, with water on the floor, finds one by a nearby search on Google. Being found on Google is the step for this industry, and the one that brings the customer who has not been referred.

First move for home services

1 **Fewer than four in ten firms have a Google listing found.** Search Google Maps for your business under every name it goes by; if one turns up, claim it, and if nothing turns up, add it at business.google.com.

2 Put the mobile customers message on the listing, marked as WhatsApp. 64 of the 124 firms one door short are missing it.

3 If you have a web address on record, open it today; 42 of the 112 in this industry do not load.

The moves by stage are in Part 5.

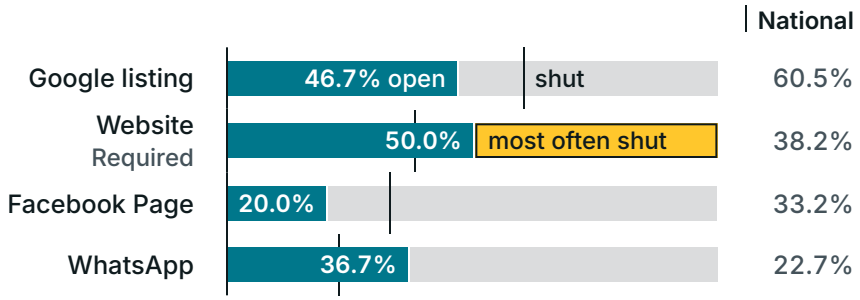
Section 4.8

Creative Services is a small group of 30 whose first door is the website

Creative Services is a small group of 30 businesses, where one business changes the picture a lot, so it is not ranked and no unclaimed share is given. Its one Required door is the website, open for 15 of the 30, and it is the only industry whose first door is the website. Two of the 30 have all four doors open.

Figure 4.9

Creative Services' one Required door is the website, and it is open for half the group



Of 30 creative services businesses read, February to July 2026

A small group of 30, where one business changes the picture a lot.

Source. BDRI 2026

The real limit here is one the index names rather than measures. Instagram usually does the social job for visual work, and this edition does not read it. A photographer or a designer who lives on Instagram is read here on the website alone, which for a creative business is the door that holds the portfolio. For half of this group, that door is open.

Section 4.9

Diners and visitors praise the people, complain about the wait, the bill and being reachable, and most businesses never reply

Eric Lopez Sr. says it of himself:

> "I know for sure that I don't go into any restaurant unless I check the rating."
>
> **Eric Lopez Sr.** CEO & Founder, DDigiLeads

A DDigiLeads study of Google reviews asked what the people who do check the rating are reading.

The study is separate from the score. In June 2026 DDigiLeads captured up to the 50 newest Google reviews of 560 Bahamian restaurant and tourism businesses: 20,700 reviews, 14,352 of them with written text, 92.7% from Nassau and Paradise Island, captured on 1 and 2 June 2026. Themes were tagged by a language model and not checked by hand.

The ratings are high. The average is 4.32 stars, and 81.9% of written reviews with a valid rating are four or five stars. What customers praise is the people: tour guides drew 945 positive mentions to 2 negative. What they complain about is operational. Of 20 themes, the wait is the only one where complaints, 589, outnumber praise, 349.

Four families of complaint recur across many unrelated businesses, and every one of them is in the owner's hands.

Most of these reviews go unanswered. Owners replied to 4,299 of the 20,700 reviews, 20.8%. More than half the businesses, 307 of 560, 54.8%, had no reply on any captured review: 62.1% of restaurants and 42.6% of tourism businesses. Restaurants replied to 15.1% of their reviews and tourism businesses to 31.0%. Complaints got a reply 14.7% of the time and praise 22.5%; much of that gap is that more than half the complaints sit at businesses that reply to nothing. The three-star "good, but" reviews, the ones a reply could most easily turn, get the fewest replies of all: 12.2% of written ones.

Table 4.2

The fixable complaints

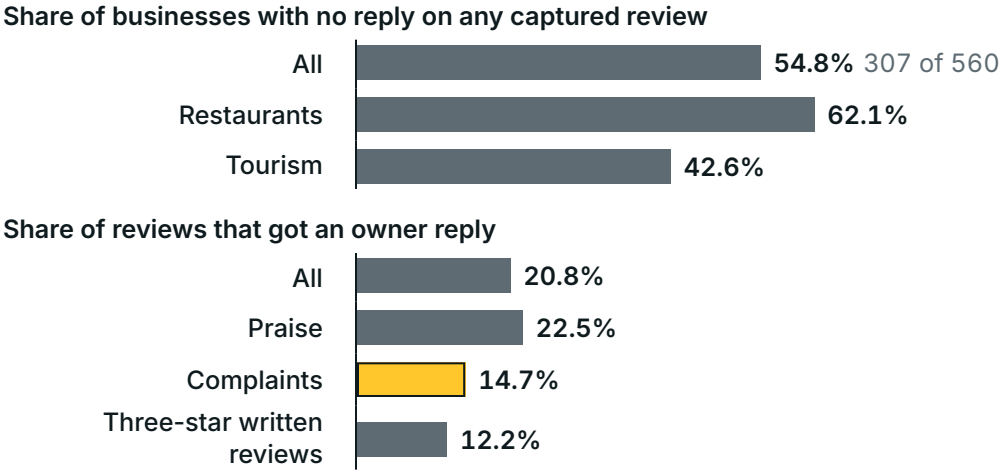
Complaint	Businesses affected	Detail
Waits	231	
Charges not shown before the bill	94	about 136 reviews
Reaching the business, bookings and refunds	146,	including 48 with low-star reviews saying no one answered (68 reviews)
Keeping the Google listing true	93	

Businesses in the review study with each complaint, Google reviews captured June 2026

Source. BDRI review study

Figure 4.10

Most businesses in the study never reply to a review, and complaints are answered least



Restaurant and tourism businesses in the review study, Google reviews captured June 2026

Source. BDRI review study

What it means. The complaints that recur across unrelated businesses are about the wait, the bill and being reachable, and most businesses are not yet in the habit of answering. In DDigiLeads' reading, "reaching the business" is the WhatsApp finding of section 2.2 seen from the customer's side: the complaint that no one answered is what a shut conversation door looks like in a review.

What we recommend. Every one of these is fixable by the owner, and most of them cost nothing. Answer every review, complaints first, at a set time each week. Show charges before the bill. Make sure the number on the listing is answered.

What owners can do

1. Reply to every Google review, complaints first, at one set time each week; the reply is read by the next customer, not only the one who wrote it.
2. Show every charge before the bill, on the menu, the booking webpage and the listing, so nothing on the bill is a surprise.
3. Make sure the number on the Google listing rings or opens a WhatsApp chat that someone answers; at 48 businesses, low-star reviews say no one did.
4. Check the listing's hours and address against what is true today.

Part 5

What owners can do first: the Google listing, then WhatsApp, by stage

"The data isn't about comparing you to the best. It's about making sure your digital doors are open for the customers already searching for you."

ERIC LOPEZ JR.

No Doors Open	51
Doors Opening	51
Expected Doors Open	52
All Doors Open	52

Part 5

You have read the national picture and your own industry. What you do on Monday depends on which stage your business is at, and the quickest way to find out is to look it up.

Look up your business

1. Go to bdri.bs and search the business by name.
2. The reading shows which of the Four Digital Doors were found open on 13 July 2026, which were not, and the stage that follows.
3. **After you change a door, ask for a fresh reading.** The 2026 score stays as published; the fresh reading is dated and kept beside it.

Where to start. The order is the same at every stage, and it comes from two findings. Start with the Google listing: claim it if one was found, create it if none was. Google's verification then runs for days whether anyone is working or not, and the rest of the work fits inside that wait. Then put WhatsApp on the number customers already see. It is the single door that would move the largest number of part-way businesses up a stage: for 747 of the 1,781, it is the only Required door still shut. Then the doors that stopped working, then the basic checks, then the fill-in. Where an industry's first door is not Google, the Facebook Page for Retail and the website for Creative Services, that door comes before WhatsApp; a Google listing that already exists is still claimed at the start.

Free

claiming or creating the Google listing and WhatsApp Business cost nothing

Google's and WhatsApp's own help pages

Days to a week or more

Google's verification after a claim or a new listing; a postcard code usually within 14 days

Google's own help pages

About an hour

per door, at a minimum, to do it properly

DDigiLeads' estimate

Time. Allow about an hour per door, at a minimum, to do it properly. The WhatsApp Business app takes minutes to install; filling in a profile or a listing properly, with hours, photos and an away message, takes an evening or more.

Opening a door and keeping it right are different jobs, and the second never ends. Doing it yourself and getting professional help are both fine. Every step below can be done by the owner with a phone, and none of it needs a budget to begin.

No Doors Open: check whether the first door is already open, then open it

If no door was found

1. **Search Google Maps for the business under every name it goes by:** the name on the sign, any older name, the owner's name if customers use it. If a listing turns up, the Google door is already open and unclaimed; claim it (section 2.3).
2. **If none turns up, open your industry's first door.** For six industries that is the Google Business Profile: add the business on Google Maps or at business.google.com, signed in with a Google account the business will keep. For Retail it is the Facebook Page, a business Page, not a personal profile. For Creative Services it is the website; a live booking-platform profile counts to start.
3. While Google verifies, put the business's number on WhatsApp Business.

Doors Opening: claim or create the Google listing, then open the other Required doors still shut, WhatsApp first

If the business is part-way

1. If the Google listing is unclaimed, claim it; if none was found, create one (section 2.3).
2. **Find which Required doors are still shut, from your industry's section in Part 4 or from the business's own reading at bdri.bs.** If WhatsApp is one of them, as it is for four in five part-way businesses, either register WhatsApp Business on the number customers already see, or put the number you do use on WhatsApp where customers look, the website, the Google listing, the Facebook Page and BahamasLocal.com, marked as WhatsApp.
3. Check that the web address on your listings still opens the business's own site today, and that the Facebook Page is a Page, not a personal profile.

Expected Doors Open: pass the basic checks on the doors you have, then fill in the listing

If every Required door is open

1. **Pass the basic checks on the doors already open.** Claim the listing. Ask every customer for a Google review, using the listing's own link. Post on the Page within each 90 days. Move WhatsApp to a Business account. Make the website secure and phone-friendly.
2. **Fill in the listing beyond the basics:** hours and holiday hours, photos, services or menu, booking or order links. Each takes an evening or more. Most listings in the index have not done this (section 3.1), so each one done stands out.
3. **Open the remaining door if it serves your customers.** In DDigiLeads' view the path ends at the website, where a customer can book and pay (section 3.3).

All Doors Open: keep the four saying the same thing, and answer everyone

If all four doors are open

1. **Keep the four saying the same thing:** the same hours, prices and contact number on every door, changed the same day. People read them, and so do Google and the AI assistants.
2. Answer every message and every review, complaints first, at a set time each week.
3. **What the index does not measure comes next:** how good each door is, and whether a customer can book and pay without calling.

Part 6

For institutions: set the target at Expected Doors Open, put Google in the first session, and measure before and after

Part 6

Owners have their moves. This part is for the people who shape the business community: the Chamber, ministries, lenders, business support centres and trainers.

Set the target by industry, at Expected Doors Open. No industry requires all four doors, so "every Required door open" is the fair benchmark for a programme, and it is reachable: 267 businesses are already there. A programme that chases all four doors asks a restaurant to build a website before its customers expect one (sections 1.2 and 2.1).

Put Google in the first session: claims and new listings. Of 1,571 listings whose claim status could be read, 590 are unclaimed, and no listing was found for 1,026 businesses. Google's verification runs for days, so a first session that starts every claim and new listing has the wait working for it while the rest is done. The work is in the broad middle: 549 of the 590 unclaimed listings sit with part-way businesses (sections 2.3 and 2.1).

Make WhatsApp the easiest win. WhatsApp is the single door that would move the largest number of part-way businesses up a stage: for 747 of the 1,781, it is the only Required door still shut. Moving from a personal account to WhatsApp Business needs only the owner and the phone. A session can finish both, the registration and the switch, with the owner in the room while Google's verification runs (section 2.2).

Ask for the logins before the session. Website and Facebook fixes start with a records hunt: who holds the domain registration, the hosting login and the Page admin rights. One in four web addresses on record does not lead to a live site, and nearly half the broken Facebook links were Pages that had moved. The intake question is "Does your web address open your own site today?" (section 2.4).

Measure before and after, and know the rule. The 2026 edition is locked at 13 July 2026, so a programme can cite it as its starting line and read its own businesses again after the work; any business can be looked up at bdri.bs and re-read after a change. One door is read differently afterward. The 2026 edition counted the WhatsApp door open when a number the business listed in public was registered on WhatsApp; later readings count a WhatsApp link or number the business publishes. A before-and-after on WhatsApp therefore compares two rules, and a programme reporting its movement should say so (section 2.2 and the method at the back).

Look outside Nassau with care. Grand Bahama is found on Google more often than Nassau and reached on WhatsApp a third as often, 8.4% against 24.0%. The other islands are too few in the index to read alone. Start by asking owners which number they list and which they answer (section 2.5).

Add review replies and the bill to service training. The review study points to waits, charges not shown before the bill and unanswered contact as the complaints that recur across unrelated businesses, and more than half the businesses studied reply to no review at all. Handling the rush, explaining the bill and the reply habit belong in service training, including BahamaHost, the Ministry of Tourism's 40-hour service course (section 4.9).

The national goal, as DDigiLeads' view. Every Bahamian business listed on Google and claimed by its owner. It is free, it is the door that connects to the others, and it is the attainable first step toward every Bahamian business being found online. This report sets no number on it; the index will show the movement.

Programmes already running. DigiLearn Bahamas runs an E-Commerce Essentials course with BTVI, Cohort 3, from 14 September to 3 December 2026. The Small Business Development Centre runs its "Back to Da' Island" Family Island initiative. Eyewitness News reported on 18 September 2026 that the president of the Abaco Chamber had called on businesses to check whether customers can find them, book and pay. The Central Bank expects its Fast Payment System by the first quarter of 2027. Dates are as published in September 2026 and may change.

In Eric Lopez Jr.'s words, the BDRI is a beginning: a national index and tool that shows businesses and customers where the country stands online, and research to build the next reading on. The country is on the edge of another shift, with AI, and that will only speed up the need to be found online.

How the BDRI 2026 was read

What was read. The Four Digital Doors of 2,600 Bahamian businesses, in eight industries, from public sources only, between 1 February and 13 July 2026. No business reported its own doors. The reference date is 13 July 2026, and the edition is locked there: the door readings and scores are not changed afterward, and later readings are dated and kept apart. One correction was made after the lock. On 27 September 2026 the island figures were corrected, placing 59 businesses outside Nassau that had been counted there; 56 of them are tourism and restaurant businesses from the June review study. The island counts in this report are the corrected ones. Separately, in a September 2026 re-check, Google marked 93 of the 1,525 edition businesses with a full Google record as permanently closed and 25 as temporarily closed. They stay in the 2026 figures, which describe the businesses as they were read on 13 July 2026. The 2,600 are the businesses a customer can find online, read across The Bahamas, not a share of all Bahamian businesses; there is no official count to measure them against.

How the list was built. Mainly from BahamasLocal.com, a Bahamian business directory, which supplied 2,146 of the 2,604 records collected; the other 458 came from Google's own business data. After one duplicate, two businesses found closed for good and one record outside the eight industries were removed, 2,600 businesses were scored. Every door was then checked from the outside in two passes, April 2026 and July 2026. Of the businesses, 2,325 are on Nassau and Paradise Island, 239 on Grand Bahama, 22 on Abaco and 14 on six other islands and island groups.

When a door counts as open. The four definitions are in section 1.1. The WhatsApp rule in detail: in the 2026 edition the door is open when a phone number listed for the business in public sources is registered on WhatsApp. A phone number was found for 2,511 of the 2,600 businesses, 96.6%. Numbers were checked with CheckNumber.ai in March and July 2026, and the account type, personal or Business, comes from that service and cannot be re-checked by an outside reader. A business that lists only a landline and runs WhatsApp on an unlisted mobile reads as not found. Later readings use a different rule: a WhatsApp link or number the business publishes.

Why Facebook stands in for social media. In Eric Lopez Jr.'s words:

> "When we did the four doors analysis, we focused on Facebook because Facebook was the most established social media platform."
>
> **Eric Lopez Jr.** COO & Co-Author, DDigiLeads

Instagram and TikTok were not measured.

Required doors. For each industry, DDigiLeads judged which doors that industry's customers expect to find, from its own review of published research, before any 2026 score was worked out. The published research DDigiLeads drew on includes the Central Bank of The Bahamas' December 2025 Monetary Policy Committee presentation, DataReportal's 2026 report on The Bahamas and Hope Research Group's 2026 report on Caribbean media use. Required means customers expect it; Recommended means many customers use it; Optional means they rarely use it to find or choose a business. The table is in section 1.2.

The score and the stages. The score is out of 100: an open door earns points and each basic check it passes earns a few more; Required doors carry the most points; nothing is subtracted; a door's points for being open outweigh all its checks together. The checks are in section 1.2. The national mean is 36.82. The stage is read from which doors are open against the industry's Required doors, never from the score. Score ranges overlap by design: 8.8 to 72.0 at Doors Opening, 33.4 to 90.0 at Expected Doors Open.

Later readings, kept apart from the edition. These include a Google re-read of 28 September 2026 on the 1,525 edition businesses with a full Google record (section 3.1), which is also the re-check that found the 93 permanently closed. The Tourism found-by-Google figures (119 of 338 found by Google search in December 2025, accounting for 35 of the 47 at All Doors Open) are index records as of 27 September 2026 (section 4.0).

The review study. Separate from the score; described in section 4.9. Up to the 50 newest Google reviews of 560 Bahamian restaurant and tourism businesses, captured 1 and 2 June 2026: 20,700 reviews, 14,352 with written text, 92.7% from Nassau and Paradise Island.

What the BDRI cannot see. Four limits bear on the findings most. Why the WhatsApp door is shut: the index cannot tell a listed landline from a number never put on WhatsApp, and the largest finding carries that unmeasured cause.

The whole country: no official count of businesses exists, so no coverage share can be stated. Islands outside Nassau beyond Grand Bahama: the rest are the index's businesses, not a representative reading of those islands. A possible reading gap in one batch: a February 2026 Google-search batch of 179 businesses in Salons and Beauty, Auto Services and Retail has a Facebook Page recorded for only 4 of the 179, which may understate those industries' Facebook and top-stage counts. The rest: quality, meaning how good a door is rather than whether it is open and passes basic checks; social media beyond Facebook; anything offline, such as service, pricing, size, revenue or who the customers are; whether contact details agree across doors; what AI assistants say about a business; whose Google account claimed a listing; WhatsApp numbers not listed publicly; how Bahamians look businesses up by age or channel, which no Bahamian source measures; what a shut door costs a business, so the report makes no lost-customer claim; how many of the 2,600 still trade beyond the 93 noted above; and change since 13 July 2026.

Outside sources used in this report. Google help pages on claiming and verifying a Business Profile and on its AI features. WhatsApp Help Center, on the business directory and in-chat payments. URCA, 2021 survey of WhatsApp use. Ministry of Tourism: 2025 arrivals and the 2024 exit study. Central Bank of The Bahamas: 2023 payments survey, 2025 debit card transactions, the Fast Payment System timing, and the December 2025 Monetary Policy Committee presentation. DataReportal, Digital 2026: The Bahamas. Hope Research Group, Caribbean Media Consumption & Advertising Research 2026. Department of Inland Revenue, anticipated Business Licence filers for 2025; National Insurance, employers paying in 2022. CheckNumber.ai, WhatsApp number and account-type checks. A vendor study of Google AI answers in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia; a 600-business US study of listing hours and AI engines. The Jamaica Tourist Board, on AI and its five-question test. Eyewitness News, 18 September 2026. DigiLearn Bahamas and BTVI, the SBDC, and BahamaHost course descriptions, as of September and October 2026. Owner quotes are from DDigiLeads client calls, anonymised.

About DDigiLeads

DDigiLeads is a Nassau digital agency with twenty-five years of digital work for Bahamian firms. It built the Bahamas Digital Readiness Index and read the doors in this report.

Eric Lopez Sr., CEO & Founder. Eric Lopez Sr. has spent more than 30 years bringing technology to the Bahamas. He served as Vice President of Operations and Technology at Chemical Bank & Trust (Bahamas) and Chase Bank & Trust (Bahamas), where he co-led their merger and led the Year 2000 technology transformation. In the mid-1990s he opened Minute Compu-Fotos (MCF), a computer shop in the Mall at Marathon, selling computers before most Bahamian companies and households owned one. After banking he became a certified Internet Consultant and spent 25 years building digital solutions for Bahamian businesses. As Chairman and President of a private company responsible for airport security, he led day-to-day security operations at the Lynden Pindling International Airport from 2005 to 2010. He is a past President of the Rotary Club of West Nassau and holds an Executive MBA from the University of Miami.

Eric Lopez Jr., COO & Co-Author. Eric Lopez Jr. has worked in finance, technology and operations for more than 20 years. He began his career at UnitedHealth Group. He then spent 13 years at ADP, where he moved through finance, operations and analytics roles and became Vice President of Business Intelligence and Analytics. There he established the company's first Analytics Center of Excellence and scaled analytics platforms to more than 12,000 users. Across the two companies, he delivered over $100 million in measurable business impact. He holds an Executive MBA from Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management. He is now an entrepreneur, running an AI and automation firm in the United States. The way he builds and measures systems there shaped the method behind this index.

Look up any business. Every business in the index can be looked up at bdri.bs: which doors were found open, which were not, and the stage. After a change, any owner can ask for a fresh reading.

An offer of help. If a business wants help opening or building out its doors, DDigiLeads does that work, from the claim to the website. Doing it yourself is fine too, and this report has tried to show how.

Contact: contact@bdri.bs