

Sitemaps + Google Search Console

Tell Google which pages matter. Then see your actual ranking data.

Built by [@brycenwood.ai](#) · October 2026

This is the third piece. `llms.txt` tells AI what your business is. Markdown mirrors let AI read your pages clean. A sitemap tells *Google* which pages exist, which ones matter most, and when they were last updated. Without it, Google is guessing. With it, you're handing Google a map of your entire site with priorities marked.

Then Google Search Console lets you see exactly what's happening — which keywords you're ranking for, what position you're in, and where to focus next. Most small businesses never set this up. That's the gap.

OVERVIEW

What You're Building

An XML sitemap that lists every important page on your site with priority scores and update frequencies. Plus a Google Search Console setup so you can see your actual ranking data — which keywords are bringing people to your site, what position you're in, and how your click-through rate compares.

Generate Sitemap



Set Priorities



Deploy



Submit to Google



Monitor in GSC

WHY THIS STACKS WITH LLMS.TXT + MIRRORS

llms.txt is for AI chatbots. Markdown mirrors are for AI page readers. The sitemap is for Google's crawler. Together, these three files cover every way a machine discovers and reads your business online. You're not choosing between traditional SEO and AI visibility — you're doing both with three text files.

BEFORE YOU START

What You Need

- **Claude Code** installed (the CLI tool, not [claude.ai](#))
- **Your website code in a folder** that Claude Code can access
- **A Google account** for Search Console (free)
- **Access to your domain's DNS** (Cloudflare, GoDaddy, Namecheap, etc.) — needed for one verification step

TIME + COST

Sitemap generation: 5 minutes. Google Search Console setup: 10 minutes. Total: 15 minutes. Cost: \$0. You'll start seeing ranking data within 2-3 days.

STEP 1

Generate Your Sitemap

Open Claude Code in your website project folder. Paste this prompt. It will create an XML sitemap that lists every page on your site with the right priorities.

PASTE THIS INTO CLAUDE CODE

I need an XML sitemap for my website. Generate a sitemap.xml file that:

1. Lists every important page on my site (skip 404 pages, thank-you pages, and any noindex pages)
2. Sets the homepage priority to 1.0
3. Sets main service pages to 0.9
4. Sets other pages (about, contact, gallery) to 0.8
5. Sets blog posts or secondary pages to 0.7
6. Uses today's date for lastmod on all pages
7. Sets changefreq to "weekly" for the homepage and "monthly" for everything else
8. Follows the standard XML sitemap protocol at sitemaps.org

Save it as sitemap.xml in the root of my website folder. After you create it, show me the full file so I can review it before deploying.

WHY PRIORITIES MATTER

The priority score (0.0 to 1.0) tells Google which pages you consider most important. Your homepage and main service pages should be highest. This doesn't guarantee Google will rank them higher, but it tells the crawler where to spend its time. Most auto-generated sitemaps set everything to 0.5 — that's like telling Google "nothing matters more than anything else."

STEP 2

Deploy and Verify

Push your sitemap.xml to your live site. Then verify it's accessible.

PASTE THIS INTO CLAUDE CODE

My sitemap.xml is deployed. Help me verify it's working:

1. Fetch https://[MY-DOMAIN]/sitemap.xml and confirm it returns valid XML
2. Check that every URL in the sitemap actually resolves (no 404s)
3. Count the total pages listed
4. Show me any issues

Also check if I have a robots.txt file. If I do, make sure it includes a Sitemap: line pointing to my sitemap. If I don't have a robots.txt, create one that:

- Allows all crawlers
- Explicitly allows AI crawlers (GPTBot, ClaudeBot, PerplexityBot, Google-Extended)
- Points to my sitemap URL

STEP 3

Set Up Google Search Console

This is how you see your actual Google ranking data. Most business owners have never looked at this — they just guess whether SEO is working. GSC shows you exactly.

1. **Go to** `search.google.com/search-console`
2. **Click "Add property"** and choose "Domain" (not "URL prefix")
3. **Enter your domain** (e.g. `yourbusiness.com` — no https, no www)
4. **Google will give you a TXT record** to add to your DNS. Copy it.
5. **Go to your DNS provider** (Cloudflare, GoDaddy, etc.) and add the TXT record
6. **Go back to GSC** and click "Verify." It may take a few minutes for DNS to propagate.
7. **Once verified, go to Sitemaps** in the left sidebar and submit your sitemap URL

IF YOU GET STUCK ON DNS VERIFICATION

This is the one step that trips people up. If you're not sure where your DNS is hosted, ask Claude Code: "Where is my domain's DNS managed?" and give it your domain name. It can usually figure it out. Or just search "[your registrar] add TXT record" — every provider has a guide.

STEP 4

Read Your Data

After 2-3 days, GSC will start showing data. Here's what to look for:

1. **Go to Performance** in the left sidebar

2. **Check all four boxes** at the top: Total clicks, Total impressions, Average CTR, Average position
3. **Look at the Queries table** — these are the keywords people are searching when they find you
4. **Sort by Impressions** — high impressions + low clicks = your biggest opportunity (people see you but don't click)
5. **Sort by Position** — anything between position 5-15 is a "quick win" because you're close to page one

THE QUICK WIN FORMULA

Find keywords where you rank position 5-15 with high impressions. These are keywords where Google already thinks you're relevant — you just need a small push to get onto page one. That push is usually: better meta title, better meta description, and a clean page structure. Ask Claude Code to optimize those specific pages for those specific keywords.

MY RESULTS

What Happened After I Shipped This

- **Position 6 for "car wraps near me"** — the most valuable keyword in my industry, on page one of Google
- **Position 1 for "car wrap places near me" and "car wrap services"**
- **131 clicks from Google** in the first month of tracking
- **334 total keywords** my site now ranks for (most I didn't even know about)
- **Total time to set up:** 15 minutes for the sitemap + GSC, zero dollars

REAL TALK

The sitemap alone didn't do this. The llms.txt + markdown mirrors + sitemap together is what moved the needle. Google is starting to reward sites that are clean, structured, and AI-readable. If you've already built Systems 1 and 2 from this playbook, the sitemap is the last piece that ties it all together for Google's crawler. Three files. That's the whole system.

Things I Learned

1. **Update your sitemap when you add pages.** If you add a new service page or blog post, regenerate the sitemap. Otherwise Google won't know about it for weeks.
2. **Don't obsess over position daily.** Rankings fluctuate. Check weekly, not hourly. The trend line matters more than any single day.
3. **GSC data is delayed 2-3 days.** What you see today is from 2-3 days ago. Don't panic if numbers look weird — wait for the data to catch up.
4. **Your meta title and description matter more than you think.** GSC will show you CTR (click-through rate). If you have high impressions but low CTR, your title and description aren't compelling enough. Ask Claude Code to rewrite them.
5. **The robots.txt + sitemap combo is standard practice.** But adding llms.txt and markdown mirrors on top of it is what puts you ahead. Most businesses stop at the sitemap. You're not stopping there.

That is the whole system.

Zero ad spend. Zero coding experience. The other playbooks live at brycenwood.com/playbook, one download each.

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