Rank Report Reconciliation Checklist

Two local rank reports for the same business don't match. Here's what to check before you show either one to a client.

ASK FIRST Did the rankings change, or did the measurement change?

1 Make sure both reports measured the same thing

- **Same keyword**, copied exactly. Plumber and plumber near me are different searches.
- **Same listing.** Match the Maps link, address and pin, not just the name.
- **Same search setup.** Maps or local pack, desktop or mobile, any filters.
- **Unknown stays unknown.** If a report doesn't show a setting, don't assume it matches.
- **Same pin locations.** Where the pins actually sit, not the city or radius label.
- **Same grid size and spacing** in both reports.
- **Scan time, not export date.** Today's PDF can hold last week's scan.
- **Same scoring rules.** Tools score a pin where the business didn't show up differently.

> **The radius trap.** On a grid with pins 1 mile apart, the edge pins are 2 miles out but the corner pins are about 2.8 miles out. Two tools can both say "two-mile radius" and still search from different spots.

2 Compare the right pins

- **Compare only shared pins** before you compare any summary.
- **A smaller grid can look better** without any rank improving.
- **Don't stretch the overlap.** A match near the center says nothing about the edges.
- **Top-three share is a share of pins**, not customers, calls or traffic.

3 Treat blank pins carefully

- **Not found is a result.** The search worked and the business wasn't there.
- **Failed is a gap.** No result at all, so it isn't a bad rank.
- **Check coverage first.** How many pins actually came back?
- **Don't fill gaps** with old results. Rerun the failed pins.

4 When one pin disagrees

- **Keep both results.** Don't average them or pick the one you like.
- **Check the basics.** Same listing, same time, any errors on that pin.
- **Rerun it** with both tools, close together. Neither tool is the truth.

5 Use Search Console as a second opinion

- **Track local queries** by location page, month over month.
- **Grid up but Search Console flat?** Question the grid first.
- **Both moving together?** Now you can tell the client with confidence.

6 Land on one verdict

Explained
The gap comes from a setup difference, like grid size or missing pins.

Real difference
The setups match and the ranks still differ on shared pins.

Inconclusive
Something important can't be confirmed yet. That's an honest answer.

Whatever the verdict, don't blame an algorithm update or credit your own SEO work without more evidence. Save the pins and rules you used and reuse them next time.