

# US Real Estate SEO Ranking Report

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<http://www.netmagellan.com>

Which real estate website will give you the most traffic to your listing? That depends on how good their SEO implementation is. This report does not purport to tell you which company gives you a better service or value for money. There are thousands of localities not tested below - use a search engine and make up your own mind. All this report tries to convey is that some websites consistently rank in the top 10 and many more don't.

The US real estate local search landscape is different from the Internet Yellow Pages (IYP) scene. Dedicated real estate classifieds sites such as Trulia and Zillow pop up in the search results, pushing down the static IYP entries from Yellowpages.com. They compete with affiliate marketer sites that are nipping at their heels.

I studied the performance of 26 nationwide real estate sites, including a small number of other sites that showed up in the SERPs. I was looking to find:

- Which cities are served well by the big real estate portals?
- Which search engine delivers high ranking real estate portals to a given city?
- Which portal delivers the highest ranks?
- Does the search term alter the ranks significantly?
- How much SEO appears to have been done?

## Methodology

I took the top 274 cities in the US with a population of 100,000 or more. All searches were conducted on Google.com and Bing.com from Australia, using the abbreviated state in the search term to eliminate any confusion for a similarly named locality elsewhere in the world. Sample searches were conducted using a proxy server in Chicago and the rankings were nearly identical. Yahoo search was not used partly because it will soon be merged with Bing and partly because my search tool couldn't cope with it (on this particular PC).

The search terms were (one example):

- Akron OH homes for sale
- Akron OH real estate
- Akron OH homes for rent

## Findings

General classifieds sites such as Craigslist and Oodle pop up now and then but they are not strong performers for top-10 rankings for all three keyword sets.

Every locality has its local contenders. Some are individual real estate agents; some are local aggregators. In the larger metros the local search sites had a strong presence.

Some sites appear to be well-known but don't do well in the SERPs. [Roost.com](#) has been featured in major publications, which is just as well, because it was rarely seen on page 1 in this test. [Remax.com](#) is another well-known brand, but is not in the top rankings.

The search term also plays a big part when trying to find the best directory for real estate. To make it more interesting, Bing and Google also favour different directories (see the table on the next page).

<Locality> Homes For Sale			<Locality> Real Estate			<Locality> Homes For Rent					
Bing		Google	Bing		Google	Bing		Google			
Homes.com	295	Yahoo	378	Homes.com	268	Yahoo	298	Homes.com	367	Rentals.com	303
Trulia.com	207	Homes.com	291	Realtor.com	149	Homes.com	226	Rentals.com	214	Craigslist	177
Realtor.com	147	Realtor.com	270	Yahoo	128	Realtor.com	202	Craigslist	113	Homes.com	165
Homefinder.com	116	Trulia.com	229	Trulia	116	Trulia	189	NationalRelocation.com	30	House.info	152
Zillow.com	86	Zillow.com	226	RealEstate.com	47	Zillow	173	House.info	19	Yahoo	103
Yahoo	57	Homefinder.com	142	Homefinder.com	35	RealEstate.com	161	Olx.com	7	Oodle.com	100
RealEstate.com	56	Homegain.com	122	Rentals.com	18	House.info	53	Yahoo	5	Trulia.com	31
HomesByOwner.com	32	HomesByOwner.com	79	Zillow	16	Homegain	31	Realtor.com	5	Realtor.com	29
American Home Guides	18	DirectHomes.com	63	HomesByOwner.com	12	AOL	10	Oodle.com	2	NationalRelocation.com	12
Homegain.com	16	RealEstate.com	53	Homegain	11	Roost.com	10	Trulia.com	1	Zillow.com	4

When it comes to the most top-10 rankings on Bing, the best performer is Homes.com for all three keywords. We can't compare the "rentals" keywords with the "homes for sale" kind, because different websites enter the mix.

### **Real Estate Rankings (Google)**

1. RealEstate.Yahoo.com
2. Homes.com
3. Realtor.com
4. Trulia.com
5. Zillow.com

It's not possible to rank 6 - 10 because the two main keyword sets have different sites coming up. Only RealEstate.com and HomeGain.com are common to both but at different ranks.

### **Real Estate Rankings (Bing)**

1. Homes.com
2. Trulia.com
3. Realtor.com
4. Yahoo.com
5. HomeFinder.com
6. Zillow.com
7. RealEstate.com
8. HomesByOwner.com
9. HomeGain.com

All the above ranked in the top-10 for both phrases in the 274-city test but two that appeared for only one keyword were AmericanHomeGuides.com and Rentals.com.

### **Homes for Rent Rankings (Google)**

1. Rentals.com
2. Craigslist.com
3. Homes.com
4. House.info
5. RealEstate.Yahoo.com
6. Oodle.com
7. Trulia.com
8. Realtor.com
9. NationalRelocation.com
10. Zillow.com

Since I only tested one keyword here, all 10 made the grade.

## Homes for Rent Rankings (Bing)

1. Homes.com
2. Rentals.com
3. Craigslist.com
4. NationalRelocation.com
5. House.info
6. Olx.com
7. RealEstate.Yahoo.com
8. Realtor.com
9. Oodle.com
10. Trulia.com

## Detail

### 1. Keyphrase “<locality> Homes for Sale”

For search engine visibility, almost all 274 localities had a major real estate portal showing in the top 10 for both search engines.

Locality	Google	Bing		
Abilene TX	4	2	Bakersfield CA	8 5
Akron OH	8	5	Baltimore MD	8 8
Albuquerque NM	8	3	Baton Rouge LA	9 4
Alexandria VA	6	2	Beaumont TX	7 5
Allentown PA	10	5	Bellevue WA	10 5
Amarillo TX	9	5	Berkeley CA	6 3
Anaheim CA	8	3	Billings MT	7 5
Anchorage AK	6	4	Birmingham AL	6 2
Ann Arbor MI	6	4	Boise ID	6 1
Antioch CA	5	4	Boston MA	7 2
Arlington TX	8	4	Bridgeport CT	8 4
Arlington VA	5	2	Brownsville TX	8 6
Arvada CO	7	1	Buffalo NY	7 6
Athens GA	5	1	Burbank CA	8 3
Atlanta GA	7	2	Cambridge MA	7 3
Augusta GA	6	3	Cape Coral FL	8 4
Aurora CO	8	2	Carrollton TX	8 5
Aurora IL	9	3	Cary town NC	2 3
Austin TX	4	2	Cedar Rapids IA	7 3
			Chandler AZ	7 3

Charleston SC	2	1	Fremont CA	8	5
Charlotte NC	7	3	Fresno CA	7	5
Chattanooga TN	8	4	Fullerton CA	8	4
Chesapeake VA	9	5	Gainesville FL	6	3
Chicago IL	5	4	Garden Grove CA	9	4
Chula Vista CA	7	3	Garland TX	10	4
Cincinnati OH	7	3	Gilbert AZ	7	3
Clarke County GA	3	2	Glendale AZ	9	4
Clarksville TN	5	3	Glendale CA	8	5
Clearwater FL	6	2	Grand Prairie TX	9	5
Cleveland OH	7	4	Grand Rapids MI	6	3
Colorado Springs CO	7	4	Green Bay WI	7	5
Columbia MO	7	3	Greensboro NC	7	5
Columbia SC	6	3	Gresham OR	7	2
Columbus GA	7	5	Hampton VA	7	3
Columbus OH	7	4	Hartford CT	8	4
Concord CA	6	4	Hayward CA	8	4
Coral Springs FL	8	4	Henderson NV	10	5
Corona CA	9	4	Hialeah FL	10	5
Corpus Christi TX	8	4	High Point NC	8	6
Costa Mesa CA	9	3	Hollywood FL	10	5
Dallas TX	8	4	Honolulu HI	4	3
Daly CA	8	8	Houston TX	7	4
Davenport IA	7	4	Huntington Beach CA	7	5
Dayton OH	7	1	Huntsville AL	5	1
Denton TX	8	5	Independence MO	9	4
El Monte CA	9		Indianapolis IN	6	4
El Paso TX	8	6	Inglewood CA	9	5
Elgin IL	10	3	Irvine CA	7	4
Elizabeth NJ	7	4	Irving TX	8	4
Elk Grove CA	8	4	Jackson MS	7	6
Erie PA	9	7	Jacksonville FL	8	5
Escondido CA	10	4	Jersey NJ	3	7
Eugene OR	7	3	Joliet IL	9	5
Evansville IN	8	3	Kansas City KS	7	5
Fairfield CA	7	7	Kansas City MO	9	8
Fayetteville NC	7	3	Killeen TX	6	4
Flint MI	7	3	Knoxville TN	7	2
Fontana CA	8	5	Lafayette LA	9	8
Fort Collins CO	5	2	Lakewood CO	7	1
Fort Lauderdale FL	9	4	Lancaster CA	9	7
Fort Wayne IN	9	3	Lansing MI	6	7
Fort Worth TX	7	4	Laredo TX	8	3

Las Vegas NV	8	7	Omaha NE	5	3
Lewisville TX	8	4	Ontario CA	6	4
Lexington KY	6	3	Orange CA	10	5
Lincoln NE	9	4	Orlando FL	9	5
Little Rock AR	6	4	Overland Park KS	5	4
Long Beach CA	8	4	Oxnard CA	8	5
Los Angeles CA	8	6	Palm Bay FL	7	3
Louisville KY	4	1	Palmdale CA	8	5
Lowell MA	10	3	Pasadena CA	7	4
Lubbock TX	8	2	Pasadena TX	10	6
Madison WI	4	1	Paterson NJ	8	4
Manchester NH	7	4	Pembroke Pines FL	10	3
McAllen TX	8	4	Peoria AZ	9	5
McKinney TX	7	4	Peoria IL	9	6
Memphis TN	7	4	Philadelphia PA	8	5
Mesa AZ	9	3	Phoenix AZ	6	2
Mesquite TX	10	5	Pittsburgh PA	6	4
Miami FL	9	5	Plano TX	7	4
Miami Gardens FL	8	7	Pomona CA	8	4
Midland TX	7	4	Pompano Beach FL	10	4
Milwaukee WI	7	4	Port St. Lucie FL	6	3
Minneapolis MN	6	3	Portland OR	6	3
Miramar FL	9	5	Portsmouth VA	7	5
Mobile AL	5	2	Providence RI	7	5
Modesto CA	9	4	Provo UT	7	1
Montgomery AL	8	5	Pueblo CO	9	6
Moreno Valley CA	9	5	Raleigh NC	8	6
Murfreesboro TN	8	4	Rancho Cucamonga CA	8	4
Naperville IL	8	6	Reno NV	6	3
Nashville TN	7	3	Richardson TX	10	5
New Haven CT	7	5	Richmond CA	8	4
New Orleans LA	8	5	Richmond VA	7	3
New York NY	5	4	Riverside CA	9	4
Newark NJ	8	5	Rochester MN	4	2
Newport News VA	9	8	Rochester NY	6	4
Norfolk VA	8	4	Rockford IL	6	2
Norman OK	9	6	Roseville CA	7	3
North Las Vegas NV	9	4	Round Rock TX	5	3
Norwalk CA	9	4	Sacramento CA	8	6
Oakland CA	9	4	Salem OR	7	2
Oceanside CA	10	6	Salinas CA	7	4
Oklahoma City OK	9	5	Salt Lake UT	6	1
Olathe KS	5	3			

San Antonio TX	8	7	Tampa FL	8	4
San Bernardino CA	10	4	Tempe AZ	9	3
San Diego CA	8	4	Thornton CO	5	7
San Francisco CA	8	6	Thousand Oaks CA	8	3
San Jose CA	6	5	Toledo OH	8	3
Santa Ana CA	9	5	Topeka KS	9	5
Santa Clara CA	8	3	Torrance CA	8	4
Santa Clarita CA	8	2	Tucson AZ	6	5
Santa Rosa CA	7	3	Tulsa OK	8	6
Savannah GA	6	2	Vallejo CA	9	4
Scottsdale AZ	5	3	Vancouver WA	7	2
Seattle WA	7	4	Ventura CA	7	5
Shreveport LA	8	5	Victorville CA	9	4
Simi Valley CA	8	3	Virginia Beach VA	6	3
Sioux Falls SD	4	2	Visalia CA	8	4
South Bend IN	9	5	Waco TX	7	5
Spokane WA	7	3	Warren MI	9	5
Springfield IL	8	5	Washington DC	8	5
Springfield MA	8	3	Waterbury CT	8	3
Springfield MO	9	3	West Covina CA	9	4
St. Louis MO	9	3	West Jordan UT	9	3
St. Paul MN	9	4	West Valley UT	6	5
St. Petersburg FL	8	3	Westminster CO	6	2
Stamford CT	7	4	Wichita Falls TX	7	5
Sterling Heights MI	9	4	Wichita KS	5	3
Stockton CA	8	5	Wilmington NC	2	1
Sunnyvale CA	6	2	Winston-Salem NC	8	4
Syracuse NY	6	4	Worcester MA	8	6
Tacoma WA	9	4	Yonkers NY	9	5
Tallahassee FL	7	3			

In Google, almost all the top 10 positions are dominated by the big portals for most cities. Bing leaves the door open for other sites (not all are real estate portals) to rank high.

Which portals deliver the most top-10 results? The following results contain counts from each portal for up to two instances each in the SERPs.

### In Bing

Homes.com	295
Trulia.com	207
Realtor.com	147

Homefinder.com	116
Zillow.com	86
Yahoo	57
RealEstate.com	56
HomesByOwner.com	32
American Home Guides	18
Homegain.com	16
Rentals.com	10
HouseHunt.com	10
Craigslist	5
House.info	2
Point2	2
Roost.com	2
Oodle	2
AOL	1
Remax.com	1

### **In Google**

Yahoo	378
Homes.com	291
Realtor.com	270
Trulia.com	229
Zillow.com	226
Homefinder.com	142
Homegain.com	122
HomesByOwner.com	79
DirectHomes.com	63
RealEstate.com	53
Roost.com	40
AOL	32
House.info	21
American Home Guides	17
Point2	16
HouseHunt.com	12
Remax.com	4
HomesAndLand.com	4

Realestate.Yahoo.com does very well in Google compared to Bing. But then the next five sites are much the same as the top performers in Bing.

## 2. Keyphrase “<locality> Real Estate”

Again, almost all 274 localities had a major real estate portal showing in the top 10 for both search engines. But this keyphrase is not as visible as “<locality> homes for sale”.

Locality	Google	Bing			
Abilene TX	4	1	Cedar Rapids IA	4	2
Akron OH	6	2	Chandler AZ	8	2
Albuquerque NM	4	3	Charleston SC	1	2
Alexandria VA	5	3	Charlotte NC	4	
Allentown PA	6	2	Chattanooga TN	6	5
Amarillo TX	6	6	Chesapeake VA	6	4
Anaheim CA	7	1	Chicago IL	2	4
Anchorage AK	4	4	Chula Vista CA	6	3
Ann Arbor MI	3	1	Cincinnati OH	4	5
Antioch CA	6	4	Clarke County GA	2	4
Arlington TX	4	4	Clarksville TN	3	3
Arlington VA	4	2	Clearwater FL	4	1
Arvada CO	4	3	Cleveland OH	3	2
Athens GA	2		Colorado Springs CO	5	4
Atlanta GA	4	3	Columbia MO	2	5
Augusta GA	3	3	Columbia SC	5	4
Aurora CO	5	4	Columbus GA	3	4
Aurora IL	6	3	Columbus OH	5	3
Austin TX	3	3	Concord CA	6	2
Bakersfield CA	6	5	Coral Springs FL	5	3
Baltimore MD	6	2	Corona CA	5	3
Baton Rouge LA	5	3	Corpus Christi TX	5	2
Beaumont TX	5	2	Costa Mesa CA	7	2
Bellevue WA	6	2	Dallas TX	3	3
Berkeley CA	4	4	Daly CA	6	6
Billings MT	3	3	Davenport IA	5	2
Birmingham AL	3	2	Dayton OH	4	3
Boise ID	3	4	Denton TX	4	2
Boston MA	5	3	Denver CO	3	
Bridgeport CT	6	6	Des Moines IA	2	1
Brownsville TX	7	6	Detroit MI	7	6
Buffalo NY	3	6	Downey CA	8	2
Burbank CA	8	1	Durham NC	7	7
Cambridge MA	6	3	El Monte CA	9	4
Cape Coral FL	5	4	El Paso TX	5	3
Carrollton TX	6	2	Elgin IL	8	5
Cary town NC	2	1	Elizabeth NJ	5	2

Elk Grove CA	7	5	Jackson MS	3	4
Erie PA	6	3	Jacksonville FL	6	3
Escondido CA	7	3	Jersey NJ	1	1
Eugene OR	6	6	Joliet IL	9	3
Evansville IN	6	5	Kansas City KS	5	3
Fairfield CA	7	3	Kansas City MO	6	3
Fayetteville NC	6	5	Killeen TX	5	1
Flint MI	5	3	Knoxville TN	2	2
Fontana CA	7	3	Lafayette LA	7	4
Fort Collins CO	4	2	Lakewood CO	4	3
Fort Lauderdale FL	5	2	Lancaster CA	7	4
Fort Wayne IN	7	3	Lansing MI	3	1
Fort Worth TX	3	2	Laredo TX	6	6
Fremont CA	6	3	Las Vegas NV	5	3
Fresno CA	4	2	Lewisville TX	5	1
Fullerton CA	7	5	Lexington KY	3	1
Gainesville FL	5	4	Lincoln NE	4	5
Garden Grove CA	7	4	Little Rock AR	2	2
Garland TX	7	2	Long Beach CA	5	1
Gilbert AZ	5	4	Los Angeles CA	6	2
Glendale AZ	6	2	Louisville KY	2	3
Glendale CA	6	2	Lowell MA	6	5
Grand Prairie TX	7	2	Lubbock TX	7	1
Grand Rapids MI	4	1	Madison WI	2	1
Green Bay WI	5	3	Manchester NH	4	2
Greensboro NC	3	5	McAllen TX	4	2
Gresham OR	6	6	McKinney TX	6	3
Hampton VA	4	1	Memphis TN	5	2
Hartford CT	4	2	Mesa AZ	8	4
Hayward CA	7	2	Mesquite TX	8	2
Henderson NV	6	5	Miami FL	6	2
Hialeah FL	8	2	Miami Gardens FL	5	4
High Point NC	6	4	Midland TX	5	4
Hollywood FL	7	3	Milwaukee WI	4	3
Honolulu HI	2	2	Minneapolis MN	2	1
Houston TX	4	4	Miramar FL	7	3
Huntington Beach CA	6	2	Mobile AL	5	2
Huntsville AL	1	1	Modesto CA	6	2
Independence MO	6	6	Montgomery AL	4	4
Indianapolis IN	3	4	Moreno Valley CA	6	3
Inglewood CA	8	4	Murfreesboro TN	5	3
Irvine CA	6	3	Naperville IL	8	4
Irving TX	6	3	Nashville TN	3	5

New Haven CT	6	2	Richmond CA	6	3
New Orleans LA	3	2	Richmond VA	5	4
New York NY	2	1	Riverside CA	7	3
Newark NJ	6	3	Rochester MN	4	2
Newport News VA	7	4	Rochester NY	3	5
Norfolk VA	4	2	Rockford IL	3	3
Norman OK	7	5	Roseville CA	5	3
North Las Vegas NV	7	3	Round Rock TX	4	1
Norwalk CA	6	3	Sacramento CA	4	6
Oakland CA	6	5	Salem OR	6	3
Oceanside CA	6	6	Salinas CA	7	3
Oklahoma City OK	5	3	Salt Lake UT	4	1
Olathe KS	4	2	San Antonio TX	6	6
Omaha NE	3	2	San Bernardino CA	7	3
Ontario CA	4	2	San Diego CA	7	4
Orange CA	6	3	San Francisco CA	6	3
Orlando FL	7	5	San Jose CA	7	3
Overland Park KS	3	1	Santa Ana CA	6	3
Oxnard CA	6	2	Santa Clara CA	6	4
Palm Bay FL	6	5	Santa Clarita CA	6	2
Palmdale CA	8	3	Santa Rosa CA	6	5
Pasadena CA	5	2	Savannah GA	5	1
Pasadena TX	8	6	Scottsdale AZ	4	2
Paterson NJ	6	4	Seattle WA	3	1
Pembroke Pines FL	7	3	Shreveport LA	5	4
Peoria AZ	5	2	Simi Valley CA	7	4
Peoria IL	4	3	Sioux Falls SD	3	2
Philadelphia PA	7	4	South Bend IN	6	2
Phoenix AZ	3	2	Spokane WA	2	3
Pittsburgh PA	4	1	Springfield IL	5	6
Plano TX	7	4	Springfield MA	5	3
Pomona CA	7	3	Springfield MO	5	2
Pompano Beach FL	8	4	St. Louis MO	5	1
Port St. Lucie FL	5	3	St. Paul MN	4	
Portland OR	6	4	St. Petersburg FL	5	2
Portsmouth VA	5	4	Stamford CT	5	1
Providence RI	5	5	Sterling Heights MI	6	2
Provo UT	5	1	Stockton CA	6	7
Pueblo CO	5	4	Sunnyvale CA	4	3
Raleigh NC	5	5	Syracuse NY	3	3
Rancho Cucamonga CA	7	2	Tacoma WA	5	3
Reno NV	5	1	Tallahassee FL	6	3
Richardson TX	8	6	Tampa FL	5	3

Tempe AZ	5	2	Waco TX	6	2
Thornton CO	4	5	Warren MI	5	3
Thousand Oaks CA	7	4	Washington DC	4	1
Toledo OH	3	4	Waterbury CT	5	3
Topeka KS	6	6	West Covina CA	7	3
Torrance CA	6	3	West Jordan UT	7	4
Tucson AZ	4	5	West Valley UT	5	5
Tulsa OK	3	4	Westminster CO	4	3
Vallejo CA	8	3	Wichita Falls TX	5	3
Vancouver WA	3	2	Wichita KS	2	3
Ventura CA	5	2	Wilmington NC	2	1
Victorville CA	6	5	Winston-Salem NC	4	1
Virginia Beach VA	5	3	Worcester MA	6	3
Visalia CA	7	5	Yonkers NY	7	4

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Homefinder.com	35
Rentals.com	18
Zillow	16
HomesByOwner.com	12
Homegain	11
Oodle	11
HudClips	9
HouseHunt	4
AOL	3
Roost.com	3
Remax	2
(blank)	2
Craigslist	2
HomesAndLand.com	1
House.info	1
DirectHomes.com	1

**In Google**

Yahoo	298
Homes.com	226
Realtor.com	202
Trulia	189
Zillow	173
RealEstate.com	161
House.info	53
Homegain	31
AOL	10
Roost.com	10
Homefinder.com	9
DirectHomes.com	9
HouseHunt	8
AmericanHomeGuides	6
Point2	5
Remax	5
HudClips	3
NeighborCity	1
Craigslist	1
HomesByOwner.com	1

**3. Keyphrase “<locality> Rentals”**

Again, almost all 274 localities had a major real estate portal showing in the top 10 for both search engines. But this keyphrase is used by a different audience, so we see a new group of portals covering the rental market.

<b>Locality</b>	<b>Google</b>	<b>Bing</b>		
Athens GA			2	3
Abilene TX	3	3	2	1
Akron OH	5	5	4	3
Albuquerque NM	5	4	2	2
Alexandria VA	4	3	5	2
Allentown PA	5	4	3	3
Amarillo TX	4	2	6	4
Anaheim CA	2	2	6	3
Anchorage AK	5	5	6	4
Ann Arbor MI	4	4	3	2
Antioch CA	4	2	1	3
Arlington TX	2	3	3	
Arlington VA	2	2	3	2
Arvada CO	3	2	3	2
Bakersfield CA			6	4
Baltimore MD			6	3
Baton Rouge LA			6	4
Beaumont TX			3	2
Bellevue WA			1	3
Berkeley CA			3	
Billings MT			3	2
Birmingham AL			3	2

Boise ID	3	3	El Monte CA	4	3
Boston MA	3	3	El Paso TX	5	3
Bridgeport CT	6	3	Elgin IL	3	1
Brownsville TX	6	4	Elizabeth NJ	5	3
Buffalo NY	4	4	Elk Grove CA	5	1
Burbank CA	1	2	Erie PA	5	4
Cambridge MA	4	2	Escondido CA	4	2
Cape Coral FL	6	2	Eugene OR	3	3
Carrollton TX	4	2	Evansville IN	4	3
Cary town NC	2	2	Fairfield CA	4	2
Cedar Rapids IA	3	4	Fayetteville NC	4	4
Chandler AZ	2	2	Flint MI	4	4
Charleston SC	3	4	Fontana CA	3	3
Charlotte NC	2	2	Fort Collins CO	4	3
Chattanooga TN	5	4	Fort Lauderdale FL	3	3
Chesapeake VA	6	2	Fort Wayne IN	7	3
Chicago IL	4	2	Fort Worth TX	3	2
Chula Vista CA	4	3	Fremont CA	4	1
Cincinnati OH	3	3	Fresno CA	6	4
Clarke County GA	3	2	Fullerton CA	4	3
Clarksville TN	3	2	Gainesville FL	4	3
Clearwater FL	5	2	Garden Grove CA	1	2
Cleveland OH	5	3	Garland TX	4	2
Colorado Springs CO	3	4	Gilbert AZ	2	1
Columbia MO	5	3	Glendale AZ	3	2
Columbia SC	4	3	Glendale CA	3	1
Columbus GA	3	3	Grand Prairie TX	3	3
Columbus OH	3	2	Grand Rapids MI	6	3
Concord CA	3	2	Green Bay WI	5	4
Coral Springs FL	4	2	Greensboro NC	5	3
Corona CA	2	3	Gresham OR	2	2
Corpus Christi TX	4	3	Hampton VA	3	4
Costa Mesa CA	4	3	Hartford CT	7	3
Dallas TX	2	3	Hayward CA	2	2
Daly CA	4	1	Henderson NV	4	3
Davenport IA	6	3	Hialeah FL	4	2
Dayton OH	6	3	High Point NC	3	2
Denton TX	5	3	Hollywood FL	3	2
Denver CO	3	2	Honolulu HI	4	6
Des Moines IA	4	3	Houston TX	4	2
Detroit MI	5	1	Huntington Beach CA	4	2
Downey CA	2	3	Huntsville AL	3	3
Durham NC	3	3	Independence MO	3	2

Indianapolis IN	4	3	Moreno Valley CA	4	3
Inglewood CA	2	2	Murfreesboro TN	4	3
Irvine CA	2	2	Naperville IL	3	3
Irving TX	4	1	Nashville TN	4	4
Jackson MS	6	5	New Haven CT	6	5
Jacksonville FL	4	3	New Orleans LA	4	3
Jersey NJ	4	2	New York NY	4	3
Joliet IL	4	2	Newark NJ	6	4
Kansas City KS	3	4	Newport News VA	4	3
Kansas City MO	5	3	Norfolk VA	4	4
Killeen TX	7	4	Norman OK	4	4
Knoxville TN	4	4	North Las Vegas NV	4	3
Lafayette LA	6	4	Norwalk CA	3	2
Lakewood CO	3	3	Oakland CA	3	1
Lancaster CA	4	3	Oceanside CA	3	3
Lansing MI	3	3	Oklahoma City OK	5	4
Laredo TX	6	3	Olathe KS	3	2
Las Vegas NV	4	3	Omaha NE	4	4
Lewisville TX	4	2	Ontario CA	3	3
Lexington KY	4	3	Orange CA	4	4
Lincoln NE	7	4	Orlando FL	4	1
Little Rock AR	4	4	Overland Park KS	3	3
Long Beach CA	4	3	Oxnard CA	4	2
Los Angeles CA	6	2	Palm Bay FL	5	3
Louisville KY	4	3	Palmdale CA	4	5
Lowell MA	5	3	Pasadena CA	3	1
Lubbock TX	5	3	Pasadena TX	4	2
Madison WI	3	2	Paterson NJ	6	2
Manchester NH	5	5	Pembroke Pines FL	4	3
McAllen TX	6	4	Peoria AZ	3	2
McKinney TX	4	2	Peoria IL	5	3
Memphis TN	3	4	Philadelphia PA	5	5
Mesa AZ	3	1	Phoenix AZ	3	1
Mesquite TX	4	2	Pittsburgh PA	5	4
Miami FL	4	3	Plano TX	4	2
Miami Gardens FL	3	4	Pomona CA	3	3
Midland TX	2	2	Pompano Beach FL	5	4
Milwaukee WI	5	2	Port St. Lucie FL	5	1
Minneapolis MN	4	2	Portland OR	4	3
Miramar FL	3	3	Portsmouth VA	6	2
Mobile AL	4	4	Providence RI	6	3
Modesto CA	4	3	Provo UT	4	3
Montgomery AL	3	4	Pueblo CO	6	4

Raleigh NC	5	2	St. Petersburg FL	2	1
Rancho Cucamonga CA	4	3	Stamford CT	5	3
Reno NV	5	4	Sterling Heights MI	5	3
Richardson TX	2	3	Stockton CA	3	2
Richmond CA	4	2	Sunnyvale CA	2	2
Richmond VA	5	4	Syracuse NY	4	3
Riverside CA	5	3	Tacoma WA	2	1
Rochester MN	3	3	Tallahassee FL	5	4
Rochester NY	3	4	Tampa FL	4	2
Rockford IL	5	2	Tempe AZ	4	1
Roseville CA	4	1	Thornton CO	2	3
Round Rock TX	4	3	Thousand Oaks CA	5	2
Sacramento CA	3	2	Toledo OH	5	4
Salem OR	4	2	Topeka KS	4	3
Salinas CA	4	2	Torrance CA	3	3
Salt Lake UT	5	3	Tucson AZ	5	4
San Antonio TX	3	2	Tulsa OK	5	4
San Bernardino CA	6	3	Vallejo CA	5	2
San Diego CA	4	3	Vancouver WA	3	5
San Francisco CA	5	1	Ventura CA	3	4
San Jose CA	3	1	Victorville CA	4	3
Santa Ana CA	3	3	Virginia Beach VA	6	3
Santa Clara CA	5	2	Visalia CA	4	2
Santa Clarita CA	4	2	Waco TX	6	4
Santa Rosa CA	5	1	Warren MI	4	2
Savannah GA	4	4	Washington DC	3	2
Scottsdale AZ	2	2	Waterbury CT	5	2
Seattle WA	3	1	West Covina CA	3	2
Shreveport LA	4	4	West Jordan UT	5	2
Simi Valley CA	4	2	West Valley UT	4	4
Sioux Falls SD	4	2	Westminster CO	4	2
South Bend IN	5	4	Wichita Falls TX	5	5
Spokane WA	4	3	Wichita KS	3	4
Springfield IL	5	3	Wilmington NC	3	3
Springfield MA	5	3	Winston-Salem NC	6	4
Springfield MO	4	5	Worcester MA	6	4
St. Louis MO	4	2	Yonkers NY	5	3
St. Paul MN	4	2			

Which home rental portals deliver the most top-10 results? The following results contain counts from each portal for up to two instances each in the SERPs.

**In Bing**

Homes.com	367
Rentals.com	214
Craigslist	113
NationalRelocation.com	30
House.info	19
Olx.com	7
Yahoo	5
Realtor.com	5
Oodle.com	2
Trulia.com	1
Homefinder.com	1

**In Google**

Rentals.com	303
Craigslist	177
Homes.com	165
House.info	152
Yahoo	103
Oodle.com	100
Trulia.com	31
Realtor.com	29
NationalRelocation.com	12
Zillow.com	4
Olx.com	3
Homefinder.com	2
DirectHomes.com	2
Point2.com	2
Remax.com	1
HouseHunt.com	1
HomesByOwner.com	1
AmericanHomeGuides.com	1
HomesAndLand.com	1

## SEO Factors

It isn't possible (or appropriate) to make a meaningful pronouncement of the SEO at these sites without having access to certain data, e.g. WMT. The rankings above are the best indictment of the effectiveness of SEO at these 17 properties. Here are some basic observations about on-page SEO practices. The numerical scores are: 0 = absent/poor; 1 = Fair; 2 = Good. (Table continues over the page).

	Sitemap.xml <sup>1</sup>	Robots.txt <sup>2</sup>	Title	Desc	Alt Tags	Anchor Text <sup>3</sup>	Indexable <sup>4</sup>	Speed <sup>5</sup>	Pages in Y <sup>6</sup>	Pages in G
AmericanHomeGuides.com	0 <sup>7</sup>	2	2	2	1	2	Yes	80	509,162	29,900
Craigslist.com	0	2	1	0	0	1	Yes	84	382	352
DirectHomes.com	0	1	1	1	0	1	Yes	82	468,234	760,000
Homefinder.com	2	2	1	1	1	1	Yes	82	5,951,580	1,380,000
Homes.com	0	1	1	1	0	1	Yes	76	65,524,193	715,000
HomesByOwner.com	0	1	2	1	0	2	Yes	76	307,846	34,800
NationalRelocation.com	0	1	0	1	0	2	Yes	76	193,376	41,600
OLX.com	1	1	2	2	1	1	Yes	89	5,530,097	869,000
Oodle.com	2	2	2	2	2	1	Not all	74	7,243,231	1,730,000
RealEstate.AOL.com	2	2	2	2	1	2	Yes	82	4,311,056	254,000
RealEstate.com	2	2	2	2	0	2	No	81	4,951,775	90,100
RealEstate.Yahoo.com	0	1	2	2	0	2	Yes	85	7,803,630	1,590,000
Realtor.com	2	2	2	2	0	2	Yes	80	38,599,120	5,120,000

<sup>1</sup> May miss files not named sitemap.xml/.gz and not mentioned in robots.txt

<sup>2</sup> Two points awarded if the sitemap.xml file is referenced.

<sup>3</sup> Keyword-based internal anchor text links

<sup>4</sup> Refers to whether the listings page has been blocked to spiders or is indexable.

<sup>5</sup> Google Page Speed Tool Score out of 100 for a listing page

<sup>6</sup> While not an on-page factor, this is the count of pages as seen by Yahoo. Google site: operator counts are less reliable.

<sup>7</sup> Exists, but non-standard layout

Rentals.com	2	2	1	2	1	1	Yes	79	2,008,195	767,000
Roost.com	0	1	2	2	1	2	Yes	78	391,092	167,000
Trulia.com	2	1	1	2	1	2	Yes	77	66,205,735	37,400,000
Zillow.com	2	2	1	1	1	1	Yes	80	93,999,997	6,000,000

The highlighted rows above are the marketplaces that have the most top-10 rankings, which suggests that these on-page factors alone do not paint the full picture about ranking. Craigslist, for example does well for Rentals but the above table might imply that it couldn't possibly fare well. No attempt was made to analyse backlinks or to study the relevance/uniqueness of content to a given search term.

## SEO Observations

Some of the sites don't use the Title tag to best advantage. I don't see a big benefit of using (only) the address of a listing unless someone is looking to buy a house in a certain street. I'd look at adding a relevant descriptor there, e.g. "4 br house for sale on <Street> in <Suburb, State, ZIP>.

Interestingly, others have blocked their listings from being indexed, which might be either an astute way to avoid duplicate content (many sites get the same syndicated content), or it might be ignorance, which is less likely. Such sites are indexable up to the city level where they display a summary of the listings for that locality.



Oodle.com wouldn't let me view most (but not a few) listings as my IP address is in Australia. So, if an American decides to shop for a home while out of the country, he or she would need to find some other real estate website. The listings are not crawlable.

Many of these sites could squeeze a few more drops of SEO juice with their on-page efforts. A couple have used rel=canonical; a couple have meaningful user-generated content; some need to lighten their page by moving JavaScript to a file; most need to improve the basics, i.e. more relevant Title tags.

The sites that used image Alt tags only used the listing address in them.

HTML coding practices differ greatly, with the main fault being H levels used for formatting rather than to specify an hierarchy. Examples (next two pages):

**[Missing Heading]**

**[Missing Heading]**

**[Missing Heading]**

- Nearby States
- Nearby Cities
- Nearby Neighborhoods
- Get mortgage quotes anonymously on Zillow Mortgage Marke

**3112 Hawsdale Dr Las Vegas , N**

**For Sale: \$249,900**

**[Missing Heading]**

Description

**Charts and Data**

**[Missing Heading]**

Show  
Time period

**Maps and Views**

**[Missing Heading]**

Show  
Drive time

**Financing**

**[Missing Heading]**

- Can I Afford This Home?
- Please check your values
- 30yr fixed payment is 35 % of your monthly income. Get custo
- Monthly Payment by Loan Type

**Contact agent**

**[Missing Heading]**

- Agent contacted successfully!
- Submission failed!
- Contact agent
- Agent contacted successfully!
- Submission failed!
- Similar Homes for Sale
- Nearby Similar Sales
- Amount:
- Featured Rates

**Assumptions**

**Zillow Dueling Digs**

**[Missing Heading]**

- Home Services
- Contact agent
- Agent contacted successfully!
- Submission failed!

**E-mail successfully sent!**

**Submission failed!**

**Get Zillow E-mail Alerts:**

**[Missing Heading]**

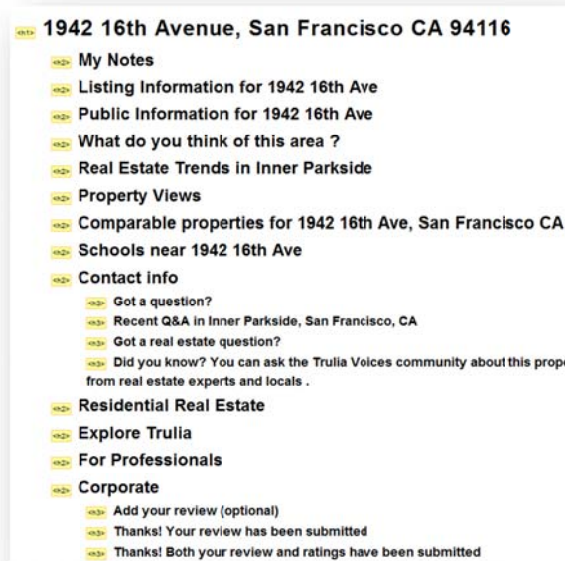
**[Missing Heading]**

**[Missing Heading]**

Send e-mail alerts to:

You will need to register or sign-in to receive Home Reports.

*Zillow headings are not hierarchical*



*Trulia.com tags headings better*

## Conclusion

If I were selling my home in the US online, I would search for homes in my locality and see what sites show up on page 1 of the search results. As seen in my tests, this differs from place to place. I would look for sites whose results pages showed up rather than individual homes (which is why a couple of sites seem to have blocked the actual listings from the crawlers. Finally, although this is an online exercise, in practice I'd visit a few local real estate agents as well before placing any ads.



### Author

*Ash Nallawalla helps large and small businesses with their online strategies and was until recently the in-house SEO at the Australian Yellow Pages® publisher Sensis, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the leading telco Telstra. He is currently helping one of the top four banks with their online strategy.*

*An abbreviated version of this article appeared on his blog <http://www.netmagellan.com/> where more details about him may be found.*