



The Art of the Referral

Strategies for Connecting People to the Information They Need

Arlene Weible, State Library of Oregon

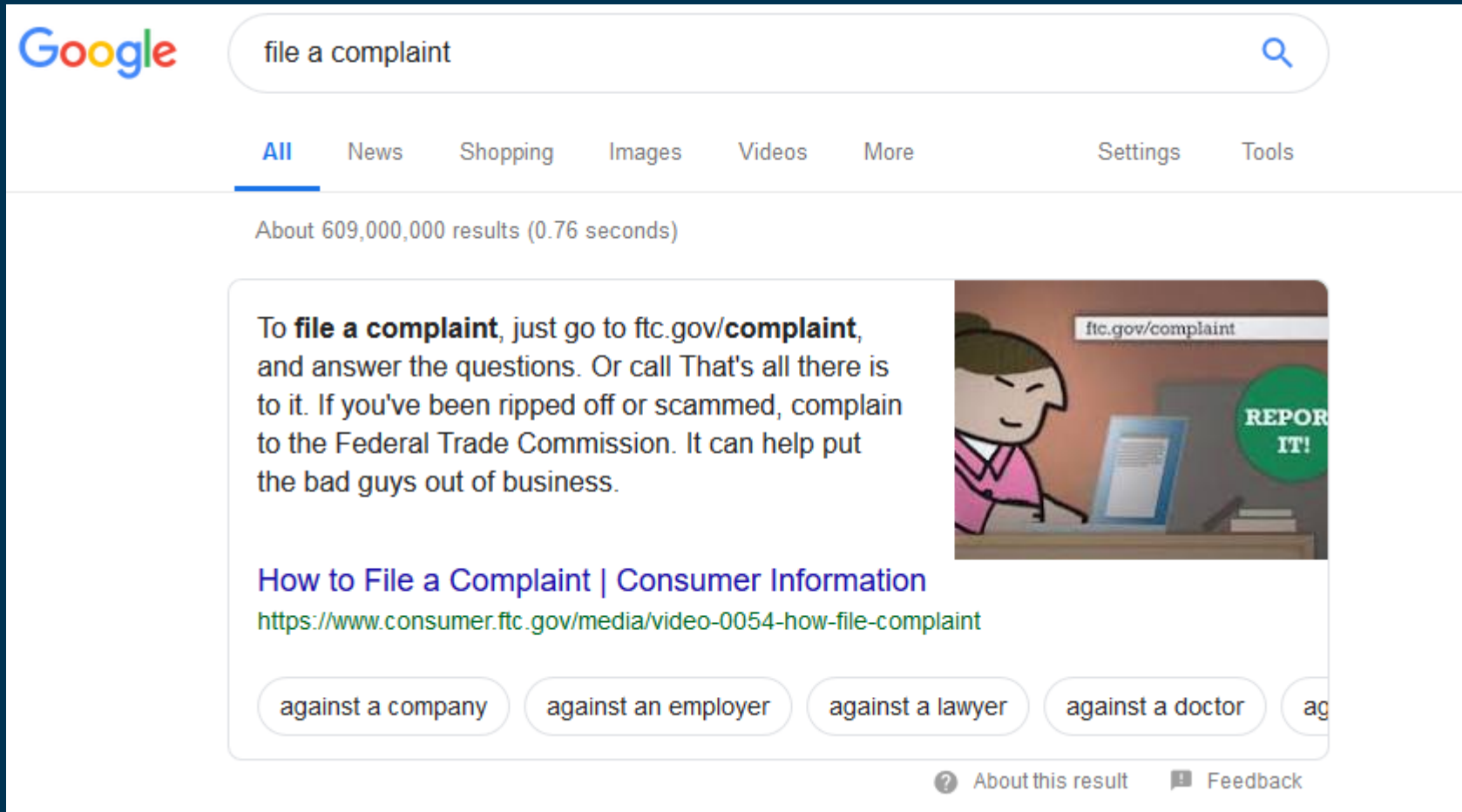
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Why Referrals?

- Its easy to find information on the web
- Information may answer question, but does it actually address user need?
- What happens after they call that number or fill out that online form?

Scenario

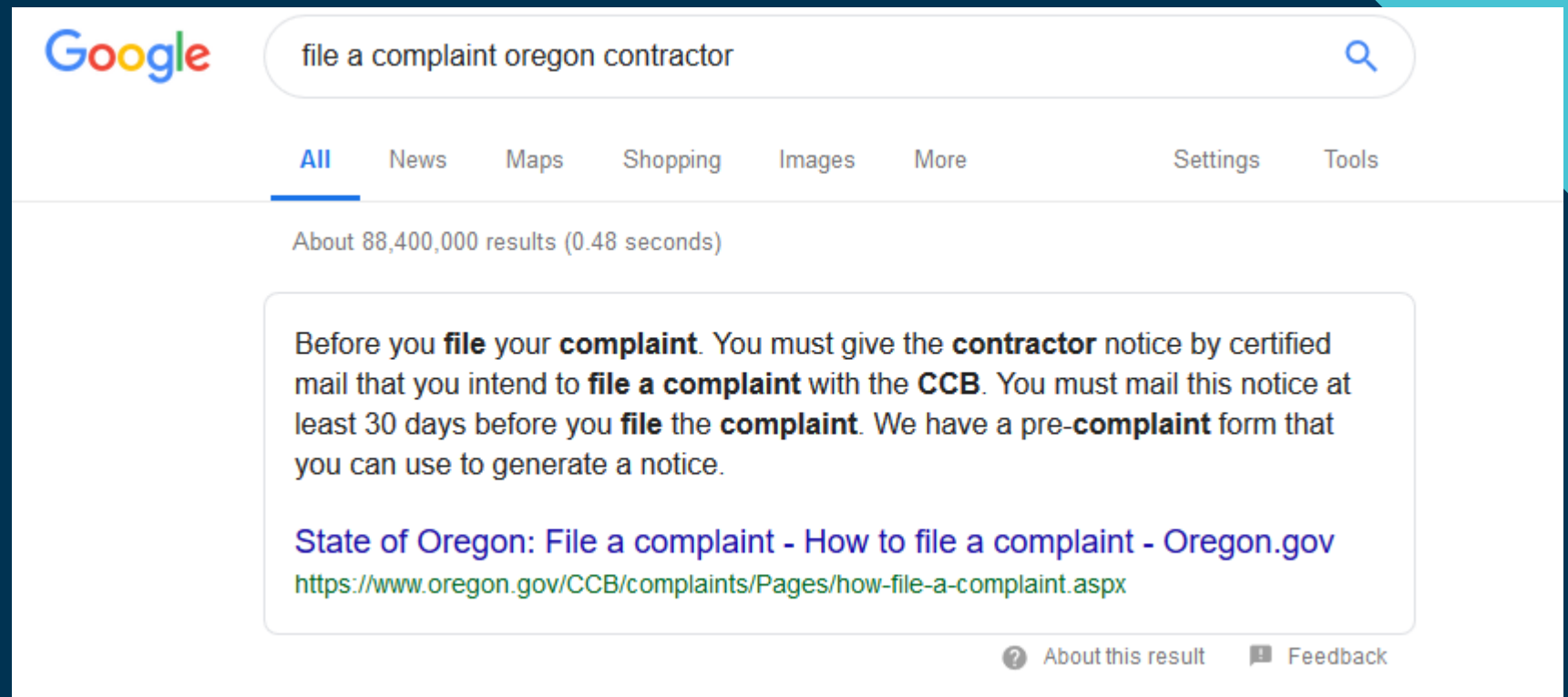
The guy I hired to remodel my kitchen is not returning my calls. I need to file a complaint!



The image shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "file a complaint". Below the search bar, there are tabs for "All", "News", "Shopping", "Images", "Videos", "More", "Settings", and "Tools". The "All" tab is selected. Below the tabs, it says "About 609,000,000 results (0.76 seconds)". The main content area features a knowledge panel with the following text: "To **file a complaint**, just go to [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint), and answer the questions. Or call That's all there is to it. If you've been ripped off or scammed, complain to the Federal Trade Commission. It can help put the bad guys out of business." To the right of this text is an illustration of a woman at a computer with a "REPORT IT!" sign. Below the text is a link: "How to File a Complaint | Consumer Information" with the URL "https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/media/video-0054-how-file-complaint". At the bottom of the panel are several filter buttons: "against a company", "against an employer", "against a lawyer", "against a doctor", and "ag". At the very bottom of the search results, there are links for "About this result" and "Feedback".

Strategy

Develop better search strategy to get better results



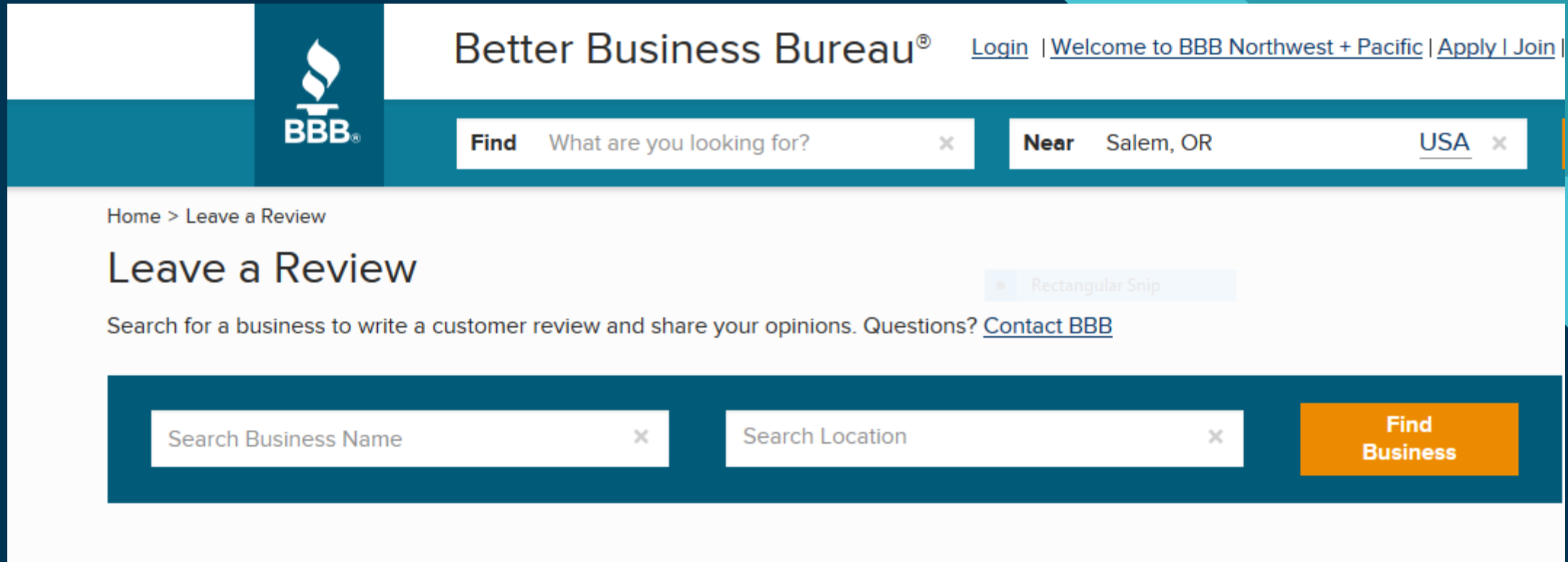
The screenshot shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "file a complaint oregon contractor". Below the search bar, the "All" tab is selected. The search results show "About 88,400,000 results (0.48 seconds)". A featured snippet is displayed, containing the following text: "Before you **file** your **complaint**. You must give the **contractor** notice by certified mail that you intend to **file a complaint** with the **CCB**. You must mail this notice at least 30 days before you **file** the **complaint**. We have a pre-**complaint** form that you can use to generate a notice." Below this text is a link: "State of Oregon: File a complaint - How to file a complaint - Oregon.gov" with the URL "https://www.oregon.gov/CCB/complaints/Pages/how-file-a-complaint.aspx". At the bottom right of the search results, there are links for "About this result" and "Feedback".

Reference Interview to Understand Needs

What kind of outcome do you want after filing the complaint?

- I didn't give much money
- I just want others to know they are unreliable
- I don't have time to fill out a bunch of forms

Better Business Bureau



The screenshot displays the Better Business Bureau website interface. At the top, the BBB logo is on the left, and the text 'Better Business Bureau®' is in the center. To the right of the logo are navigation links: 'Login', 'Welcome to BBB Northwest + Pacific', 'Apply', and 'Join'. Below the logo is a search bar with the text 'Find What are you looking for?' and a close button 'x'. To the right of this is another search bar with 'Near Salem, OR' and a close button 'x', followed by a dropdown menu showing 'USA' with a close button 'x'. Below these is a breadcrumb trail 'Home > Leave a Review' and a large heading 'Leave a Review'. To the right of the heading is a 'Rectangular Snip' button. Below the heading is a paragraph: 'Search for a business to write a customer review and share your opinions. Questions? [Contact BBB](#)'. At the bottom, there is a dark teal search bar with two input fields: 'Search Business Name' with a close button 'x', and 'Search Location' with a close button 'x'. To the right of these fields is an orange button labeled 'Find Business'.

Oregon Department of Justice Consumer Protection

When to File a Complaint About an Oregon Business

Not every transaction goes as advertised. Some deals are too good to be true. Sometimes a business will act in a less than ethical way.

The Oregon Department of Justice is committed to ensuring a fair and safe market place. If you feel you've been taken advantage of, there are steps you can take — both online and on the phone.

If you want to take legal action, please contact a private attorney or file suit in [local small claims court](#) ». If you need help finding a lawyer, the [Oregon State Bar Lawyer Referral Service](#) » can help.

How to File a Consumer Complaint About an Oregon Business

There are two different ways to file a consumer complaint in Oregon:

Submit a Consumer Complaint Online

[FILE A CONSUMER COMPLAINT ONLINE »](#)

OR

Download the Consumer Complaint Form

Download the [Consumer Complaint Form \(PDF\)](#) » and submit it with your supporting documents.

<https://bit.ly/2wjv9oc>

After Submitting a Complaint

After submitting a complaint, one of three things will happen.

1. If the complaint falls under the DOJ's jurisdiction, it will be assigned to an enforcement officer. The officer will send you further information, including a file number and a copy of the letter sent to the business that is the subject of the complaint.
2. If the complaint is better handled by another government agency, it will be referred to them. You'll receive a letter alerting you to the referral.
3. If the complaint was sent for informational purposes only, you'll receive a letter of thanks.

If you have any questions, call our Consumer Hotline at 1-877-877-9392

The Attorney General's Consumer Hotline is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and is staffed by dedicated volunteers who field more than 50,000 calls each year.

Search Oregon's Consumer Complaint Database

Oregon's [Consumer Complaint Database](#) » is built from consumer contacts since January 1, 2008 and is for information only. It may not offer a complete, accurate or comprehensive account of every incident. Several factors, including a company's size and volume of transactions, may affect the likelihood of a complaint being filed.

[Search Complaints Against Oregon Businesses](#) »

Lessons Learned?

Spend some time understanding
desired outcome behind question

Be informed about services available



Be Informed

211info.org