

Winning Strategies for SEO, GEO & AI Visibility

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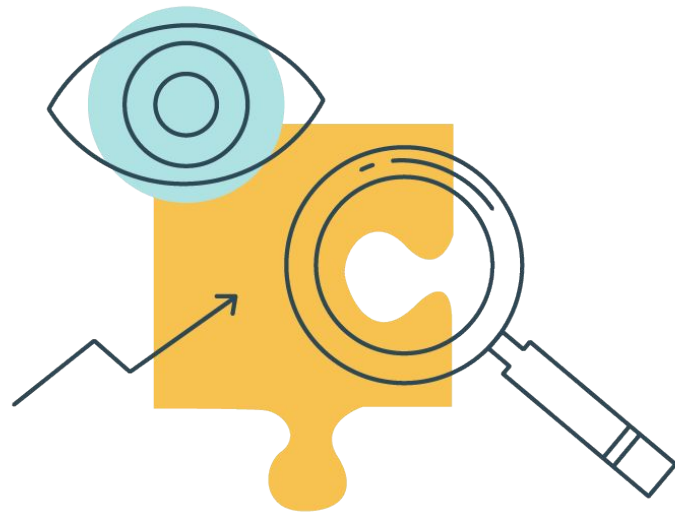
How Search Has Changed

- AI-powered search has expanded beyond Google to include ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude and Perplexity.
- Search journeys increasingly span multiple platforms before users make a decision.
- Google reports AI Overviews now serve 2.5+ billion monthly users, and [AI Mode has crossed 1 billion](#), making AI answers part of mainstream search.
- Discovery is becoming more conversational and multimodal.
 - ◆ AI Mode queries are [3x longer](#) than traditional search queries on average.



What's Driving This Change?

- A recent study found that AIOs appear for more than half (51.5%) of all user queries.
- AI reduces the effort required from users to find answers.
- Users increasingly expect conversational interactions instead of keyword searches.
- LLMs synthesize information from many sources instead of returning ten blue links.
- Google continues investing heavily in AI Mode and AI Overviews. The features are available in over 200 countries and more than 40 languages.



Search Success in 2026

Success isn't simply ranking in *position one* anymore.

Winning brands are:

- Still optimizing for SEO fundamentals.
- Building topical authority.
- Creating trust before the click.
- Extending strategy beyond their own websites.

Google's goal is to "help people find the information they're looking for quickly and reliably".



1. SEO Isn't Dead

The end of SEO has been predicted many times. Google, where most SEO happens, still has ~90% search market share.

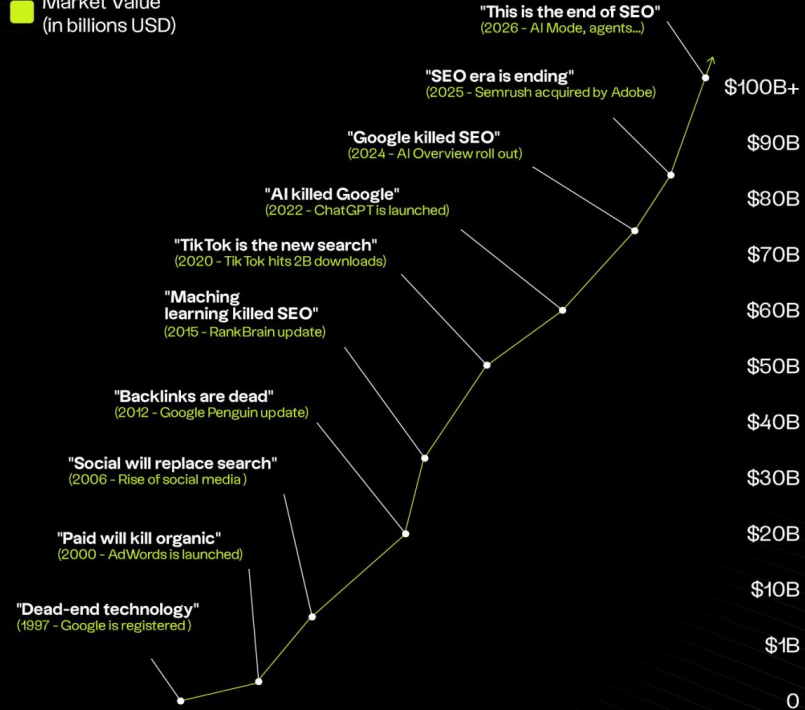
- Traditional search still accounts for roughly 7x the event share of LLMs and search engine use is growing not declining
- Top organic result still get 20% to 30% CTR
- But it is more competitive than ever with the biggest sites get more of the clicks, zero click search continues to grow

If search isn't dead, is this the biggest disruption we've seen since we started out in 2008?



"SEO IS DEAD"

Market Value
(in billions USD)



The Evolution of SEO

Natural Language Processing (2019):
*BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations
from Transformers)*



"Keyword stuffing" became obsolete. We started writing for humans, not just bots.

E-E-A-T (2021–2023):
Helpful Content Update



Google launched a site-wide signal to demote "search-engine first" content. They added the extra "E" for Experience to their quality guidelines.

Efficiency and Generative AI (2024-2025):
AI Overviews (SGE)



Google integrated generative AI directly into the SERP. The March 2024 update reportedly reduced "unhelpful content" by 40%.

AI-Driven Discovery (2026–):
The Answer Engine



Search is now an "Answer Engine." Google, ChatGPT, and Gemini cite sources based on "Topical Authority" and "Rich Media" (YouTube). Success is no longer just a blue link; it's being the source of the AI's answer.

The new target for 2026 & beyond: Stop chasing 'Keywords' and build 'Topic Authority' to win AI citations and quality traffic.

2. Topic Authority & Proprietary Content

Google uses E-E-A-T criteria to determine the quality of a webpage.

Experience, Expertise, **Authoritativeness** and Trust.

Authority is earned through:

- Comprehensive topic coverage.
- Internal linking.
- First-hand expertise.
- Original insights.
- Supporting multimedia.

What topics does your organization truly own?

See proprietary content examples on the next slide...



Banking	Why your business needs a contract	The "handshake" trap: how one missing clause cost a client their ip (and how we reclaimed it)	Case Study
Computer Software	Scaling cloud infrastructure	Handling a 500% traffic spike: a post-mortem of our biggest "server meltdown"	Expert Interview
Financial Services	Tips for retirement planning	70% of HNWI's have this regret: a survey of our long-term clients	Commissioned Survey
Health care	The future of surgery	A surgeon's commentary: breaking down our 1,000th robotic procedure	YouTube Video
SaaS	Why ux design matters	The "ghost feature" audit: why we deleted 15% of our codebase to make the app faster	Product Data

3. Organic Traffic Decline

Zero-click searches on Google recently hit an all-time high at 68%.

Clicks to organic results also declined 22.9%.

But not all traffic is created equal.

In many cases, traffic losses come from low-intent queries.

We've seen with clients that commercially relevant topics and high-intent searches are far more resilient.

So, the opportunity isn't simply to recover traffic, but to earn visibility where it actually drives business outcomes.



4. Google Search Console & Audience Intelligence

Search Console has evolved into an audience intelligence platform. Knowing:

- What users are actually searching for;
- How audiences describe their needs;
- Emerging questions and trends;
- Topics gaining or losing momentum;

is critical as branded search popularity grows.

Nearly half (45.7%) of all Google searches are branded.

New GSC AI features also:

Measure how often pages appear in AIOs and AI Mode, with visibility broken down by page, country, device and date.

These insights reveal where your brand is already earning visibility, uncover opportunities, and inform strategies to strengthen presence for high-intent searches.



5. Building Off-Site Authority

Contently reviewed 5 independent studies to determine the top 10 sources LLMs cite most:

1. Reddit
2. LinkedIn
3. YouTube
4. Wikipedia
5. Editorial Publications (Forbes, etc.)
6. Review Platforms (G2, Capterra, etc.)
7. Quora
8. NIH & .gov Sources
9. Medium
10. Substack & Newsletters

But these domains aren't the full story:

LLMs draw from thousands of domains, making industry-specific publications and communities the most valuable places to earn mentions.



Industry-Specific Sites Win Out Over General Top-Cited Domains

As it turns out, LLMs reference niche, industry-specific publications 86% of the time. That often includes a vendor's own blog:

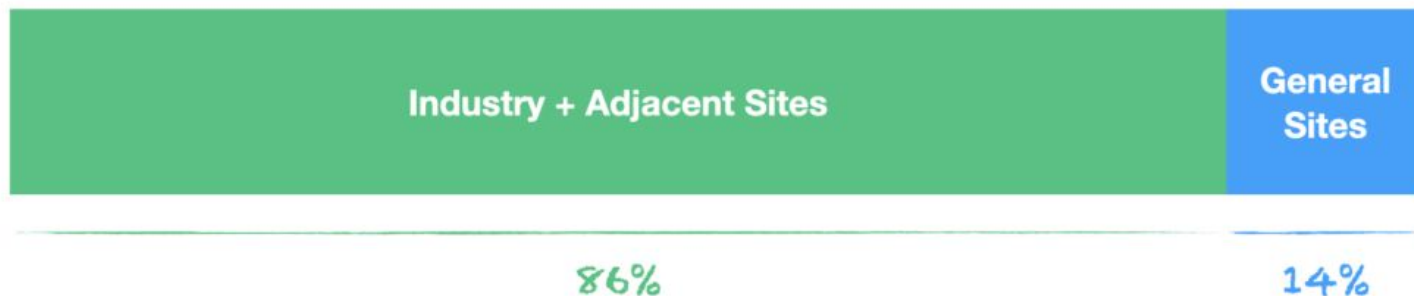


Image: [Grow & Convert](#)

This means developing your own blog, and link building and guest posting with trusted domains in your industry, are some of the best ways to optimize for LLMs.

6. YouTube & Rich Media

AIOs now reach more than 2.5 billion users globally every month.

YouTube is the No. 1 rich media destination for search engine users and the No. 2 source for AIOs and LLMs.

- YouTube is cited in nearly 30% of AIOs.
- Video can often answer questions more effectively than text alone.
- Rich media creates additional opportunities for AI discovery.
- High-quality video and rich media help content hit *Experience* and *Expertise* markers for stronger E-E-A-T.

Which kinds of customer questions are easier to answer with video?



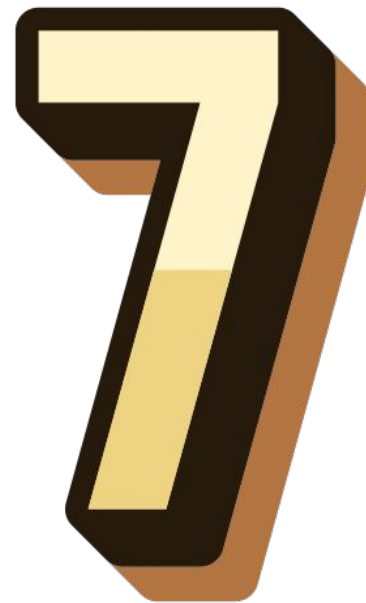
7. Measuring Success

Traditional KPIs, like rankings, traffic and CTR don't tell the full story anymore.

In the AI era, you can get a clearer picture of visibility by tracking:

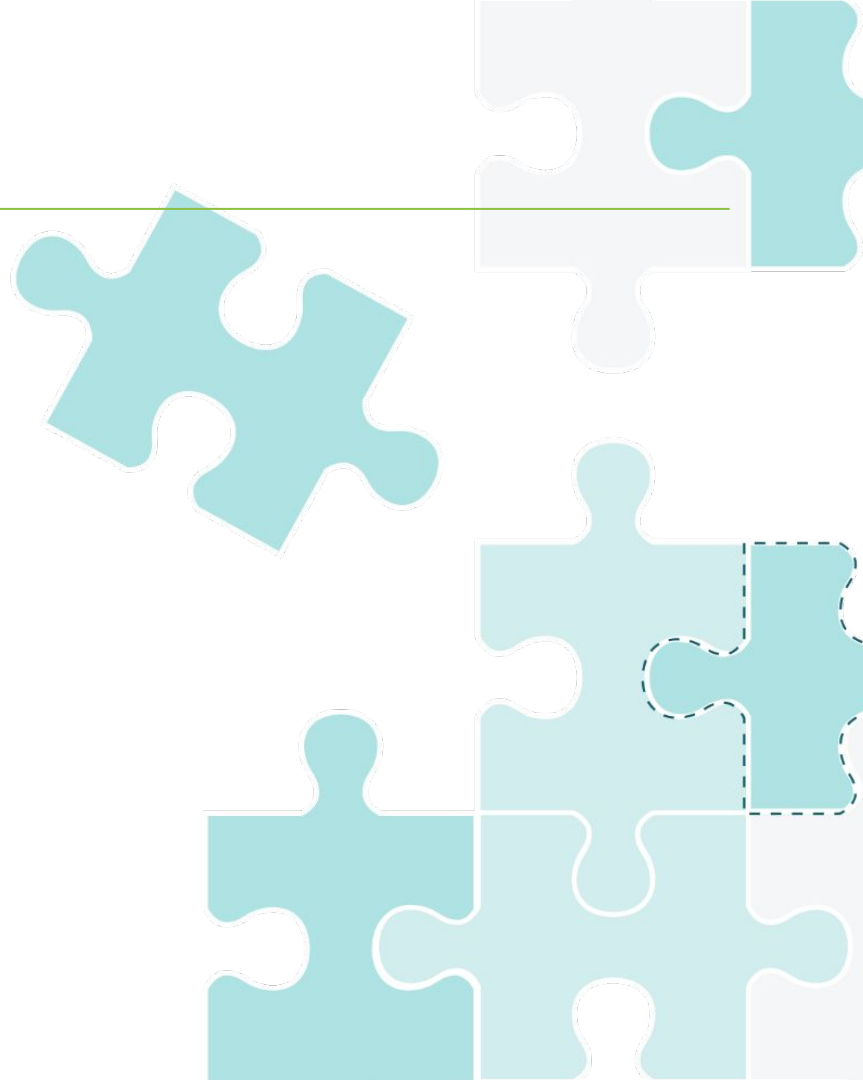
- AI citations.
- Engaged traffic.
- Conversions.
- Brand searches.
- AI Overview impressions.
- Revenue per page.

What should marketing teams optimize for now?



Key Takeaways

- Search visibility now extends far beyond Google's traditional search results.
- Strong SEO fundamentals remain the foundation for AI visibility.
- Authority is earned through original expertise, trusted content and multi-platform presence.
- Audience intelligence should guide what you create next.
- Measure visibility, engagement and business impact, not just rankings and traffic.

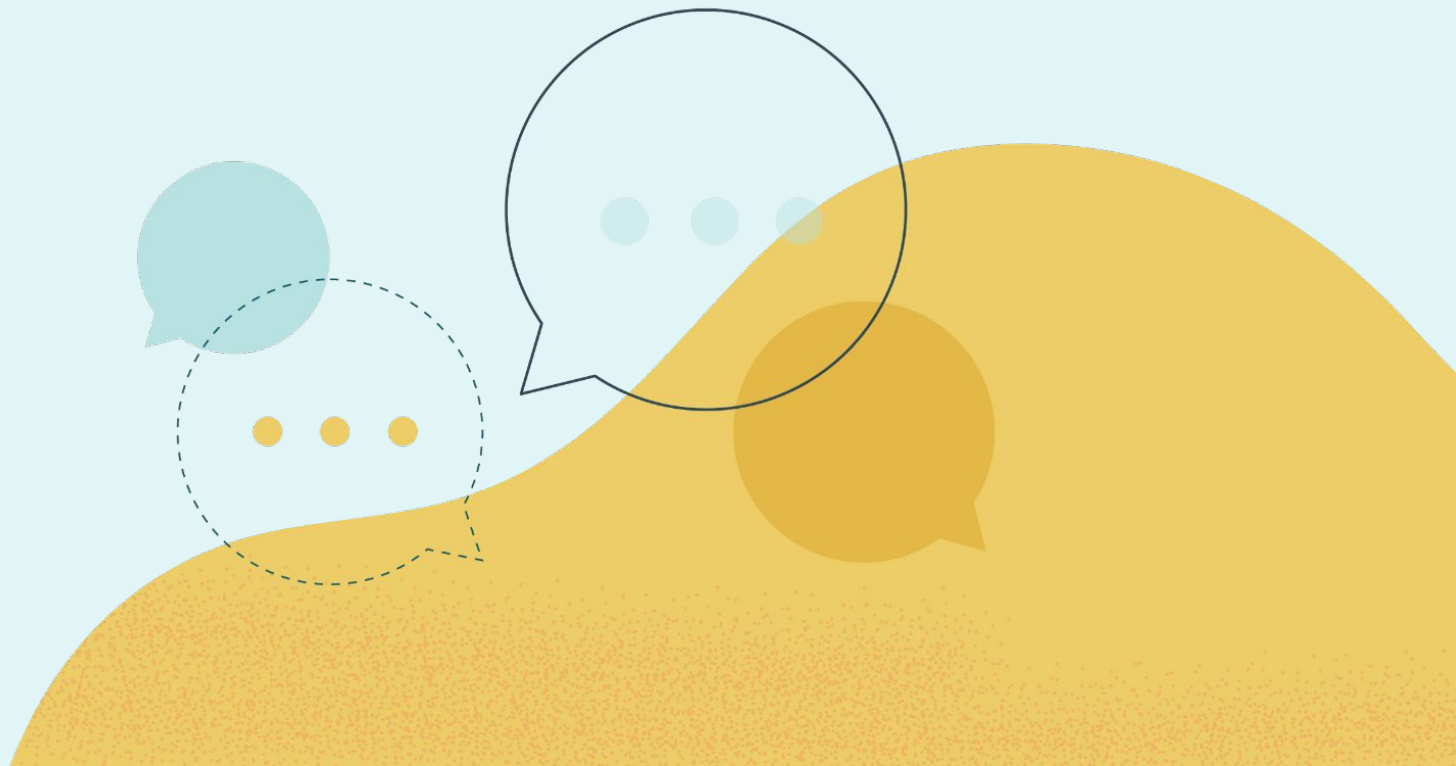


Questions to Take Back to Your Team

- Are we creating content around real audience demand?
- Are we building authority on the topics that matter most to our business?
- Is our brand visible wherever customers look for answers — not just on Google?
- Are we creating content in the formats today's audiences prefer?
- Are we measuring the outcomes that actually matter?



Questions?



Thank you!



Citations

- Google
 - <https://blog.google/products-and-platforms/products/search/search-io-2026/>
 - <https://blog.google/products-and-platforms/products/search/ai-mode-us-insights/>
 - <https://developers.google.com/search/docs/appearance/ai-features>
 - <https://blog.google/products-and-platforms/products/search/ai-overview-expansion-may-2025-update/>
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