

WHITEPAPER

How eCommerce Brands Win in AI Search in 2025

The Executive Playbook

Last updated: October 2025

limelightmarketing.com

Contents

CHAPTER 1	<u>How eCommerce Brands Win in AI Search</u>
CHAPTER 2	<u>Comparing major AI search platforms</u>
CHAPTER 3	<u>Generative Engine Optimization: the new battleground</u>
CHAPTER 4	<u>5 strategies that drive AI search visibility</u>
CHAPTER 5	<u>Your 90-day GEO Implementation Roadmap</u>
CHAPTER 6	<u>Measuring What Actually Matters</u>
CHAPTER 7	<u>Where LimeLight Marketing fits in your AI search strategy</u>
	<u>Frequently asked questions</u>
	<u>References</u>

CHAPTER 1

How eCommerce Brands Win in AI Search

🔊 Audio version [available here](#)

Your customers have stopped clicking. They're getting answers from ChatGPT, asking Perplexity for product recommendations, and trusting Google's AI Overviews instead of scrolling through search results.

Zero-click searches have surged from 56% to 69% in just one year, with 92% of Google's new AI Mode sessions ending without a single click to an external site.

For CMOs managing eCommerce brands, the implications are immediate and profound: traffic may decline even as influence grows, traditional metrics lose relevance, and the window for strategic advantage closes with each passing quarter.

The Facts

By 2028

\$750 BILLION

IN REVENUE WILL FLOW
THROUGH AI-POWERED SEARCH

2025 report shows

92%

OF GOOGLE'S NEW AI MODE
SESSIONS END WITHOUT A
CLICK

2024 survey reveals

84%

OF COMPANIES AREN'T
EVEN TRACKING AI SEARCH
VISIBILITY YET²

It's not about choosing between traditional SEO and AI optimization. It's about recognizing that search has fundamentally evolved from a list of links to a conversational experience where being mentioned matters more than being ranked.

The zero-click reality reshaping eCommerce search

By 2028, \$750 billion in U.S. revenue will flow through AI-powered search, according to McKinsey & Company's 2025 report 'New Front Door to the Internet: Winning in the Age of AI Search'¹.

Search results aren't dying. They're disappearing behind AI-generated answers.

When Google's AI Overviews appear, click-through rates plummet compared to traditional results³.

In some cases, publishers have watched traffic crater by 90%, forcing sites to shut down entirely, as documented by NPR 2025⁴.

When Google AI's Overviews appear, click through rates plummet

35% to 47%

compared to traditional search results, according to Semrush's 2025 analysis³.

Zero-click searches have reached

69%

up from 56% in 2024 according to Ridge Marketing Research

92%

Of Google's new AI Mode sessions end without a single click to an external site, per Semrush's Google AI Mode study.

Traditional search rankings don't translate to AI visibility

For eCommerce brands dependent on organic search, this represents an existential threat wrapped in an opportunity.

A comprehensive analysis of 75,000 brands by Ahrefs (2025) reveals the following:

Companies losing visibility share common traits.

1

They optimized for keywords instead of authority

2

They focused exclusively on their own sites, **while AI systems pull 65% of their citations from third-party sites**, according to Profound's 2025 analysis of AI Platform Citation Patterns

3

They hoped their traditional search rankings would translate to AI visibility. The research showed this was catastrophically wrong—it showed almost no correlation between traditional rankings and AI citations.

The winners tell a different story

The companies gaining visibility see common trends

1

Users convert at rates 30% higher than traditional search traffic⁷, spend more time engaging with content and demonstrate clearer purchase intent when AI tools recommend products, according to Arc Intermedia's 2025 case study on AI search impact.

2

Early movers implementing Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) saw **visibility improvements of 30% to 40%⁹**, according to academic research by Aggarwal et al. (2023) from Princeton University and IIT Delhi.

3

They are **direct & concise**. Long-winded explanations or vague phrasing won't cut it. Write in a way that's sharp, focused, and easy to follow to give AI a better chance of understanding what your content is about⁹.

4

As the research shows, brand mention frequency is the **single strongest predictor of AI citations**, approximately 3x more important than backlinks (0.218 correlation).

The companies that are winning understand:

AI search rewards comprehensive authority not clever keyword targeting

AI search impact at a glance

The shift to AI-driven search is changing what success looks like in organic discovery. Clicks are no longer the only signal that matters—visibility and citations inside AI answers increasingly drive consideration and revenue.

The traffic transformation

This data is based on 2024-2025 research from Semrush, Ridge Marketing, and Google Search Console data.

Metric	Traditional Search	AI Search Era	Change
Zero-click searches	56% (2023) Per Ridge Marketing	69% (2024) Per Ridge Marketing	+23% increase Per Ridge Marketing
CTR with AI Overviews	Baseline 100%	53-65%	-35% to -47%
AI Mode click-through	N/A	8%	92% zero-click
Traffic quality	Baseline 100%	Higher intent	+30% conversion rate
Session duration	Baseline	+30% longer	Better engagement

Business impact by the numbers

This data is based on 2024-2025 research from Semrush, Ridge Marketing, and Google Search Console data.

\$750B

U.S. revenue through
AI search by 2028

84%

Companies NOT tracking AI visibility
(Search Engine Land, 2024)

90%

Traffic decline for
some publishers

2,300%

Traffic increase for
optimized brands

40%

Typical GEO visibility
improvement

30-40%

Higher conversion
from AI traffic

65%

Citations from third-
party sources

16%

Brands currently
monitoring AI search

Consider What This Means for eCommerce Leaders

1. Traffic ≠ Success.

As AI surfaces answers directly, impressions and influenced consideration may rise even while sessions decline. Your attribution model must account for zero-click influence.

2. Visibility is more important than Rank.

Being mentioned and cited inside AI answers is now as critical as ranking on page one.

3. Quality Over Quantity.

Expect fewer visits but higher conversion from AI-referred traffic; optimize content and product pages for immediate clarity and proof.

4. Measure What Matters.

Shift your KPI's toward AI-visibility, share of voice, brand search lift, and conversion from AI-assisted sessions.

5. Move Early.

Brands that operationalize GEO—structured data, citation-worthy content, and distributed web presence—are capturing outsized gains while competitors lag.

CHAPTER 2

Comparing major AI search platforms

Each major AI engine has its own personality — a distinct way it retrieves information, weighs authority, and decides what to cite.

Understanding these differences helps eCommerce brands prioritize where to focus optimization efforts.¹⁰

13

How AI engines actually choose what to cite

Understanding the machinery behind AI search citations reveals why traditional SEO tactics fall short.

Each platform employs distinct retrieval mechanisms.

 Switch to audio version [available here](#)

ChatGPT



ABOUT

ChatGPT emphasizes community wisdom. Reddit alone accounts for nearly 7% of all citations within its responses.

USER SCALE

Over eight hundred million weekly active users as of fall 2025.

RETRIEVAL MECHANISM

Its retrieval mechanism uses semantic embeddings, meaning it looks for meaning and relationships between concepts, not exact keywords.

When ChatGPT searches the web, it automatically determines whether real-time data enhances a response. This allows it to balance factual accuracy with relevance, pulling from diverse, trusted sources across the web.

CITATION STYLE

Two to three citations per answer, most often from Wikipedia, academic sites, and reputable news outlets.

ChatGPT behaves like a conversational encyclopedia. It draws heavily from structured, authoritative content — guides, tutorials, and knowledge-base articles. It favors material that's factual, well-organized, and clear.

To perform well here, your content must sound like an expert human wrote it for another human — complete, well-sourced, and free from fluff.

WHAT CHAT GPT FAVORS

- Encyclopedic, how-to, and explanatory content.
- Sources with clear authority, such as .edu domains, Wikipedia, or major publications.
- Clean, structured explanations written in plain language.

ABOUT

Perplexity is powered by GPT-4o with Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG). It tends to favor encyclopedic authority and data-rich articles, according to the 2025 Profound analysis of AI platform citation patterns.

USER SCALE

Roughly one hundred million queries every week as of fall 2025.

RETRIEVAL MECHANISM

Perplexity maintains a curated index that's updated daily. It blends expert sources with user-generated content to deliver balanced, nuanced answers.

CITATION STYLE

On average, five or more citations per response — the most of any AI platform.

Perplexity values transparency. It shows its citations inline, encourages curiosity, and leans toward current, user-driven content. It tends to pull from Reddit threads, industry publications, review sites, and news outlets.

Brands win visibility on Perplexity by staying active in online communities, publishing timely research, and keeping product data fresh. Recency, credibility, and clarity are its holy trinity.

WHAT PERPLEXITY FAVORS

- Fresh, well-structured content with recent publication dates.
- In-depth comparisons, reviews, and technical breakdowns.
- Clear source attribution and factual precision.

ABOUT

Google's AI Overviews merge several ranking systems—PageRank, E-E-A-T signals (Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trust), and real-time data from the Gemini model. Because of this blend, Google's citations often differ from ChatGPT's or Perplexity's.

USER SCALE

Billions of users — essentially every Google searcher.

RETRIEVAL MECHANISM

Roughly half of all citations in Google AI Overviews come from pages already ranking in the top 10 organic results. However, the platform is increasingly referencing community forums like Reddit and Quora for authentic product opinions.

Winning here requires mastering both traditional SEO and AI-friendly structure: fast performance, structured data, and authoritative yet conversational tone.

CITATION STYLE

Three to four citations per AI Overview.

WHAT GOOGLE AI FAVORS

- Sites with strong domain authority and structured data.
- Authoritative content supported by real-world user input.
- Consistent technical markup and schema to verify context.

What This Means for eCommerce Brands

AI platforms don't just show different answers — they now shape how discovery happens. Knowing which engines your audience uses should shape both content format and distribution strategy.

For top-of-funnel education:

Prioritize ChatGPT. Its users are seeking clarity and authority.

For product research and comparisons:

Focus on Perplexity and Google AI Overviews. They're where buying intent lives.

For in-depth thought leadership:

Publish long-form, analytical content suited to Claude.

A quick reference comparison of each AI platform

Feature	ChatGPT	Perplexity	Google AI Overviews	Claude
Monthly active users	800M+ weekly	100M+ queries/week	Billions (Google scale)	Growing rapidly
Primary model	GPT-4o	Multiple LLMs	Gemini	Claude 4.5 Sonnet
Search mechanism	RAG + web search	Real-time web index	Multi-system integration	Autonomous web search
Index update frequency	Periodic	Daily	Real-time	On-demand
Avg citations per response	2 to 3	5.28	3 to 4	2 to 4
Top citation source	Wikipedia (47.9%)	News + Reddit	Top 10 organic results (52%)	Authoritative sources
E-commerce focus	Moderate	High	Very high	Growing
Revenue model	Subscription	Ads + subscription	Ads in overviews	Subscription

A quick reference table to what predicts AI citations

The following factors predict citation likelihood, according to Ahrefs' 75,000-brand study (2025) and complementary research from Profound and Search Engine Journal.

Ranking Factor	Correlation to AI Citations	Why It Matters
Brand mentions across web	0.664 ¹²	Strongest predictor—3x more important than backlinks
Top 10 organic ranking	73-74% of citations (Search Engine Journal, 2025)	The foundation that everything builds on
Domain authority	Strong positive ¹¹	Established sites get preferential treatment
Backlinks	0.218 ¹²	Still relevant but far less predictive
Content recency	High (especially Perplexity) ¹⁰	Daily index updates favor fresh content
Structured data	+40% visibility ¹³	Makes content machine-readable

Citation preference by platform

Platform	Most Cited Sources	Content Types Favored	Optimization Priority
ChatGPT	Wikipedia, .edu domains, major news sites	Encyclopedic, educational, how-to guides	Authority building, comprehensive content
Perplexity	Reddit, news sites, industry blogs, reviews (per Profound analysis, 2025)	User-generated, current events, comparisons	Community presence, fresh content
Google AI Overviews	Sites ranking 1-10, Reddit, Quora (per Search Engine Journal, 2025)	Mix of authoritative + community	Traditional SEO + structured data

User behavior patterns

The following patterns represent common query types and their platform preferences based on 2025 research from multiple AI platform analyses and user behavior studies. Understanding these patterns helps optimize content for where your target audience actually searches.

Query Type	Platform Preference	Purchase Intent	Optimization Approach
Quick facts	ChatGPT, Google	Low	Be the authoritative answer
Product research	Perplexity, Google	High	Reviews, comparisons, specs
How-to/tutorials	ChatGPT, Claude	Medium	Step-by-step, comprehensive
Current prices/availability	Google, Perplexity	Very high	Real-time data, structured markup
Community opinions	Perplexity, Google	Medium-high	Reddit/forum presence

The 10X visibility gap

The correlation between brand mentions and AI citations is staggering.

Brands in the top 25% for web mentions appear, on average, 169 times in Google AI Overviews. Those in the middle tier (50th–75th percentile) average just 14 appearances. This means that brands with strong digital PR, reviews, and community participation can achieve 10 times the visibility of competitors who focus only on traditional on-page SEO.

What this means for your strategy

Authority now outperforms keywords. It's not about optimizing one page—it's about making your entire digital footprint recognizable and trusted.

Structured, verifiable, multi-platform content is your new moat.

Brand building and PR are now search strategies.
And ultimately, SEO and GEO must work together.

Traditional SEO remains the foundation, but Generative Engine Optimization determines who gets mentioned in the answers that people actually see.

NEED GUIDANCE NAVIGATING THE SHIFT TO AI DRIVEN SEARCH?

LimeLight Marketing partners with eCommerce brands to turn complexity into clarity.

Our team is building A-I tools that uncover insight and drive efficiency across your entire digital ecosystem.

[REQUEST A FREE CONSULT WITH AN AI SPECIALIST >](#)



CHAPTER 3

Generative Engine Optimization: the new competitive battleground

Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) emerged from academic research in late 2023 when scholars from Princeton University and the Indian Institute of Technology published a groundbreaking study.

Their research showed that by optimizing content for how large language models select, interpret, and cite information, brands could increase their AI search visibility by 30 to 40%

Their analysis of
10,000 queries
published in
Generative Engine
Optimization
identified what
actually works

 Switch to audio version
[available here](#)

What Actually Works

Adding statistics with clear attribution improved visibility by 37%

Integrating expert quotations boosted performance by 41%

Citing authoritative sources improved inclusion in citations by 30% to 40%¹

GEO vs traditional SEO: understanding the shift

The difference between the two disciplines can be summed up this way: SEO focuses on your website. GEO focuses on your brand footprint across the entire web.

SEO	GEO
Was designed for a world of links and rankings	Is designed for a world of answers and citations.
Measures success through rankings and traffic	Measures success through citations, mentions, and share of voice.
SEO relies on on-page optimization, site speed, and backlinks.	Depends on structured data, schema markup, and making your content machine-readable.
Traditional content strategies emphasize blog posts and product pages.	GEO extends that reach to third-party sources — review platforms, community forums, and marketplaces that AI systems increasingly reference.
And finally, while SEO builds authority over months or quarters,	GEO must evolve continuously. AI indexes update daily, sometimes hourly. The brands that win in this space are those that iterate in real time.

Comparing traditional SEO to GEO

This comparison is based on the Princeton/IIT Delhi research (Aggarwal et al., 2023) combined with 2025 industry analysis from Ahrefs, Semrush, and Search Engine Journal.

Dimension	Traditional SEO	Generative Engine Optimization (GEO)
Primary goal	Rank on page 1	Get cited in AI responses
Optimization target	Your website	Your brand across the web
Success metric	Rankings, traffic, CTR	Citations, mentions, share of voice
Content focus	Keywords, search intent	Authority signals, citability, comprehensiveness
Link building	Backlinks to your site	Brand mentions everywhere
Technical foundation	On-page SEO, site speed	Structured data, schema, API accessibility
Content strategy	Blog posts, product pages	Distributed content, third-party presence
Competitive moat	Domain authority	Brand authority across platforms
Attribution window	Last-click, direct traffic	Zero-click influence, assisted conversions
Update frequency	Monthly/quarterly	Continuous, real-time

The critical overlap

You cannot abandon SEO for GEO. In fact, GEO builds on it.

According to Search Engine Journal's 2025 research, 73-74% of AI citations come from pages already ranking in the traditional top 10 results.

SEO remains the foundation: strong technical performance, clean architecture, fast load times, and trustworthy backlinks.

But GEO extends your brand's reach beyond your own domain, ensuring AI systems recognize your authority wherever your expertise appears.

Think of GEO as the connective tissue between traditional SEO and digital PR. It's what allows your brand to show up not just in search results, but inside the answers themselves.

74%

of AI citations come from pages already ranking in the traditional top 10 according to Search Engine Journal's 2025 research

The winning approach isn't "SEO or GEO" — it's SEO plus GEO.

CHAPTER 4

5 strategies that drive AI search visibility

Traditional SEO remains essential, but it's no longer enough on its own.

To win visibility in AI-generated results, brands must go beyond ranking and optimize for citation — being the source that AI systems trust and mention. AI citations are amplified when brands apply the following five strategies.

 Switch to audio version [available here](#)

- 1 Create Citation-Worthy Content with Quantifiable Credibility
- 2 Implement Comprehensive Structured Data Across Your Site
- 3 Build Brand Presence Across Platforms AI Actually References
- 4 Structure Content for Direct Answer Extraction
- 5 Optimize for Long-Tail Conversational Queries

Strategy 1: Create citation-worthy content with quantifiable credibility

AI systems evaluate credibility the same way humans do — by looking for proof. They favor content that includes real data, expert validation, and verifiable facts.

Here's the difference between average content and citation-worthy content.

Before (Generic)	After (Citation-Worthy)	Why It Works
"Email marketing can be effective"	"Email marketing generates an average ROI of \$42 for every dollar spent, according to the Data & Marketing Association's 2023 study"	Verifiable statistic with attribution
"Our product is popular"	"Our product holds a 4.8/5 rating across 12,000+ reviews on Trustpilot and G2"	Quantifiable social proof
"Industry experts recommend this approach"	"According to Dr. Sarah Chen, Director of E-commerce Research at MIT, 'This methodology reduces cart abandonment by 23% on average'"	Named expert with credentials

CHECKLIST

Checklist for citation-worthy content:

- ✓ Every major claim backed by recent, verifiable data (within 2 years)
- ✓ Always include the source and publication date for statistics.
- ✓ Use expert quotes with full name, title, and organization.
- ✓ Replace vague language with quantifiable evidence.
- ✓ Add original data when possible — such as customer surveys or internal analytics.
- ✓ Add original data when possible, such as custom surveys or internal analytics.

Strategy 2: Implement comprehensive structured data across your site

Structured data, also called schema markup, acts as a translation layer between your website and AI systems. It helps machines understand what your content means — not just what it says.

Sites with full schema implementation achieve 40% higher citation rates in Google AI Overviews according to SEO.com's 2025 research on AI Overviews and schema implementation¹³.

The most impactful schema types for eCommerce include:

Schema Type	Use Case	AI Visibility Impact	Implementation Priority
FAQ Schema	Product questions, support	+40% or more	Critical
Product Schema	Product pages	35%	Critical
Review Schema	Customer reviews	30%	High
Article Schema	Blog content, guides	25%	High
HowTo Schema	Instructional content	30%	Medium
Organization Schema	Brand entity recognition	20%	Medium
Breadcrumb List	Site structure	15%	Medium

Quick wins you can implement this week:

- Add FAQ schema to your top 20 product pages using real customer questions from support tickets.
- Make sure every product page includes complete specifications, pricing, and ratings.
- Create dedicated FAQ pages for each major product category.
- Add author and credential data to all blog posts.
- Validate schema regularly using Google's Rich Results Test or the Schema.org Validator.

Think of structured data as giving AI a map to your content. Without it, even great information may go unseen.



Validation tools:

Recommended by Schema.org and used by Google, ChatGPT, and Claude to verify structured data

- ✓ Google's Rich Results Test (official validator for Google AI systems)
- ✓ Schema.org Validator (authoritative schema validation)
- ✓ Check AI citation rate before/after implementation (track using Semrush or Ahrefs citation tracking tools)

The 10X visibility formula

Brands in the top 25% for web mentions average 169 AI Overview appearances vs just 14 for brands in the 50th-75th percentile.

Strategy 3: Build brand presence across platforms AI actually references

Since web mentions predict AI visibility three times better than backlinks (0.664 vs 0.218 correlation), strategic digital PR becomes your highest-leverage activity.

AI engines don't pull only from your website — they pull from the entire internet. That's why the frequency of your brand's mentions across external platforms is three times more predictive of AI visibility than backlinks.

Brands that distribute their expertise across multiple platforms see ten times more AI citations than those that only optimize their own domains.

Here's where to focus

Your Target	ChatGPT Priority	Perplexity Priority	Google AI Priority
Tier 1	Wikipedia, Major news (.com, .org)	Reddit, Industry news	Review platforms, Top 10 sites
Tier 2	.edu resources, Research papers	LinkedIn, Medium	Reddit, Quora
Tier 3	Industry publications	Substack, newsletters	YouTube, Forums

eCommerce-specific tactics

- **Amazon** — Even if you don't sell there, optimize your product listings. Amazon content appears in up to ten percent of all AI citations.
- **Reddit** — Engage authentically in topic-specific communities related to your products or category. Perplexity leans heavily on Reddit discussions.
- **Review Sites** — Encourage and respond to reviews on Trustpilot, G2, or Capterra. These build the “social proof” AI trusts.
- **Industry Blogs** — Contribute guest posts, articles, or expert commentary.
- **Forums and Q&A Platforms** — Answer real customer questions on Quora, niche industry forums, or Google Q&A.
- **YouTube** — Publish how-to videos and product demos. Video-based citations are growing rapidly across AI engines.

Visibility across these ecosystems builds your brand authority signal — the backbone of GEO.

Platform	Tactic	Time Investment	Impact
Amazon	Optimize product listings (even if you sell elsewhere)	2-4 hours	High - captures 8-10% of AI citations
Reddit	Authentic engagement in product category subreddits	30 min/day	Very high for Perplexity
Review sites	Encourage reviews on Trustpilot, G2, Capterra	Ongoing	High for credibility
Industry blogs	Guest posts, expert quotes	4-8 hours/month	Medium-high
Forums	Answer questions in your niche	30 min/day	Medium
YouTube	Product demos, how-tos	8-16 hours/video	Growing rapidly

Strategy 4: Structure content for direct answer extraction

AI systems read differently than humans. They don't scroll — they parse. The structure of your content determines whether AI can easily extract and cite your information. AI systems favor content formatted for easy parsing and citation.

To make your content AI-readable, follow these principles:

- Lead with the answer. The first two sentences of every article or section should directly answer the implied question.
- Use question-based headings like “Do Martin Dingman shoes run true to size?” instead of vague ones like “Size Information.”
- Keep paragraphs concise — three to four lines maximum.
- Use numbered or bulleted lists for clarity instead of long narrative lists.
- Incorporate short summaries or “key takeaway” sections at the top or bottom of long pages.
- Blend your FAQs into the main content rather than burying them at the end.

Think of this as writing for comprehension first, parsing second. The cleaner and clearer your content, the more likely it is to be cited directly in an AI answer.

A guide to structuring your data for AI

Element	Traditional Format	AI-Optimized Format	Example
Opening	Generic introduction	Direct answer in first 2 sentences	"The best smokeless, dripless candles for weddings are Creative Candles, based on color variety, burn time, and size variations. Here's why..."
Headings	Creative titles	Descriptive, question-based H2s	"Do Martin Dingman shoes run true to size" not "Size Overview"
Paragraphs	5-8 lines	3-4 lines maximum	Use this guide as an example where content is broken up in shorter paragraphs
Data	Mentioned casually	Table or structured format	Always use tables for comparisons
FAQs	Separate page	Integrated + dedicated sections	Both—throughout content AND FAQ page
Lists	Buried in paragraphs	Clearly formatted bullets/numbers	Use HTML lists, not paragraph bullets (see example below)

✗ Don't do this
(paragraph bullets):

```
None ▼  
Here are our services:  
  
- Website Design  
  
- Digital Marketing  
  
- Analytics
```

These bullet points are just text characters inside a paragraph.

✓ Do this instead
(HTML lists):

```
HTML  
<ul>  
  
  <li>Website Design</li>  
  
  <li>Digital Marketing</li>  
  
  <li>Analytics</li>  
  
</ul>
```

This creates proper HTML list structure.

CHECKLIST

Readability optimization checklist:

- ✓ Hemingway grade level 8-10 (*B2B can go to 12*). - This reading level optimizes for both human comprehension and AI parsing
- ✓ Active voice in 80%+ of sentences (*AI systems extract subjects and verbs more accurately from active voice*)
- ✓ Answer the question in the first paragraph (*both ChatGPT and Claude prioritize opening statements for answer extraction*)
- ✓ Each H2 section can stand alone
- ✓ Content immediately follows heading (*no fluff*)
- ✓ TL;DR summary at top of long articles
- ✓ Key takeaways in html list format

The "People Also Ask" (PAA) integration

Google's PAA questions reveal exactly what people (and AI) want to know. Integrate these naturally:

None

H2: What brand of gazebo is best for high winds and snow?

[Direct answer in first paragraph]

Backyard Discovery gazebos are tested and proven to withstand up to 11,700 pounds or up to 30 inches of snow load, and winds up to 100 mph...

[Detailed expansion]

Strategy 5: Optimize for long-tail conversational queries

People no longer search with short, robotic keywords. Instead, they ask AI tools the same way they'd ask a colleague or friend.

Someone might type into Google, "best boxing gloves."
But they'll ask ChatGPT, "What's the best brand of boxing gloves for my ten-year-old son who's new to boxing?"

The brands winning in AI search are creating content that matches this natural language behavior.

How to uncover conversational queries:

- Export and review customer service tickets for recurring questions.
- Analyze transcripts or notes from sales calls.
- Search Reddit and Quora for question phrasing in your product category.
- Look at Google's "People Also Ask" section for inspiration.
- Use tools like Answer the Public or ChatGPT itself to identify emerging query patterns.

Once you know the right questions, design content around them.

Instead of publishing one massive "Ultimate Guide," create multiple short, scenario-based pages — for example:

- "Best candles for outdoor weddings."
- "Most popular candle colors for weddings in 2025."
- "Customized candle colors for wedding planners and brides."

Each of these small, specific pages gives AI a clear, precise match for a single conversational query — dramatically increasing your odds of being cited.

How users search on Google vs AI platforms

Type of Search	Traditional Google Query	AI Conversational Query	Content Needed
Product research	"best boxing gloves"	"what's the best brand of boxing gloves for my 10 year old son who is new to boxing?"	Specific scenario pages
How-to	"Design table center pieces"	"how do I decorate tables at a wedding for a bride who wants a candle lit setting"	Granular tutorials
Troubleshooting	"Slack not working"	"why isn't Slack showing notifications on my Mac even though I can see them on my phone?"	Specific problem pages
Comparison	"Backyard Discovery vs Backyard Products"	"should I choose Backyard Discovery or Backyard Products for a gazebo that will be on the Florida coastline?"	Context-rich comparisons

How to find conversational queries

Source	How to Mine	Priority
Customer support tickets	Export all tickets, import into ChatGPT, and prompt it to look for question patterns	Highest
Sales call transcripts	Identify repeated questions in discovery	Highest
Reddit	Search your product category + "vs" "or" "better"	High
Quora	Find questions in your space	High
"People Also Ask"	Google your keywords, extract PAA questions	High
Answer The Public	Generate question trees	Medium

CHAPTER 5

Your 90-day GEO implementation roadmap

Building Generative Engine Optimization into your marketing strategy doesn't have to be overwhelming.

A structured 90-day rollout lets your team establish the foundation, build momentum, and begin seeing measurable visibility gains.

This roadmap blends research, best practices, and real-world examples into three phases: Foundation, Momentum, and Scale.

 Switch to the audio version of this whitepaper [available here](#)

Phase 1: Foundation (Days 1-30)

The goal of the first thirty days is to establish your baseline and implement quick, high-impact technical improvements.

Week One — Audit and Benchmark

Begin by testing your brand and product keywords across ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, and Claude.

- Document which competitors appear more frequently.
- Note which sources these AI systems cite for your category.
- Capture a baseline report that summarizes your visibility and current citation share.

Week Two — Quick Technical Wins

- Implement FAQ schema on your top twenty pages.
- Add Product schema to every product page if it isn't already present.
- Create five dedicated FAQ pages focused on your most common customer questions.
- Verify all structured data passes validation through Google's Rich Results Test.

Week Three — Content Audit

- Identify your fifty most important pages for AI optimization.
- Map each to relevant conversational queries — the real questions customers are asking online.
- Prioritize pages that already have strong SEO performance or high traffic potential.

Week Four — Low-Hanging Content Improvements

- Add supporting statistics and expert quotes to your ten most-visited blog posts or landing pages.
- Revise headers to use clear, question-based phrasing.
- Remove vague language and replace it with quantifiable proof points..

By the end of the first month, you should have a fully documented baseline, validated technical setup, and your top content ready for AI-friendly optimization

Use this table to guide your first 30 days

Week	Focus Area	Specific Actions	Success Metric
1	Audit current state	• Check brand mentions across ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI • Document competitor citations • Identify visibility gaps	Baseline report complete
2	Quick technical wins	• Implement FAQ schema on top 20 pages • Add Product schema to all product pages • Create 5 dedicated FAQ pages	Schema validation passes
3	Content audit	• Identify top 50 pages for AI optimization • Map to conversational queries • Create optimization priority matrix	Priority matrix complete
4	Low-hanging fruit	• Add statistics to top 10 blog posts • Integrate expert quotes • Optimize headers for questions	10 pages optimized

Phase 2: Build momentum (Days 31-60)

With your technical foundation in place, the next thirty days are about expanding your reach beyond your website.

This is where you begin establishing distributed presence — the signal that AI systems read as “authority across the web.”

Weeks Five and Six — Expand Your Presence

- Launch a Reddit engagement initiative by participating authentically in category-specific subreddits.
- Pitch at least three guest articles or expert quotes to industry publications.
- Optimize your Amazon listings if you sell products there (or even if you don't — they're often referenced by AI).
- Track brand mentions weekly to see where your voice is spreading.

Weeks Seven and Eight — Restructure Your Content

- Rewrite your top twenty pages for AI extraction: short paragraphs, direct answers, bullet lists, and clear takeaways.
- Create ten new, scenario-specific landing pages designed around long-tail conversational queries.
- Build a comprehensive FAQ library that addresses recurring customer questions across product categories.

Your brand presence should now begin appearing more frequently in AI-generated answers, especially on Perplexity and Google AI Overviews.

Use this table to guide your second 30 days

Week	Focus Area	Specific Actions	Success Metric
5 & 6	Distributed presence	• Launch Reddit engagement • Pitch 3 guest posts to industry sites • Optimize Amazon listings (if applicable)	5 new brand mentions
7 & 8	Content restructure	• Rewrite top 20 pages for AI extraction • Create 10 scenario-specific pages • Build comprehensive FAQ library	Increase in AI visibility and citations
9 & 10	Measurement infrastructure	• Implement AI citation tracking • Set up brand mention monitoring • Create GEO dashboard	Dashboard operational
11 & 12	Optimization and iteration	• Analyze what's working • Double down on successful tactics • Launch next wave of content	30% visibility increase

Phase 3: Scale and measure (Days 61-90)

The final phase focuses on measurement and continuous optimization — the stage where you transform effort into repeatable performance.

Weeks Nine and Ten — Establish Measurement Infrastructure

- Implement tools that track AI citations and brand mentions, such as Semrush's AI SEO Toolkit or Ahrefs Brand Radar.
- Create a GEO dashboard that monitors visibility over time.
- Document your share of voice, citation frequency, and brand search lift.
- Use these insights to identify your strongest content performers.

Weeks Eleven and Twelve — Optimize and Iterate

- Double down on tactics that are producing measurable results — for example, which schema types or content formats earn the most citations.
- Expand outreach to additional PR or review platforms to amplify brand mentions.
- Launch your next wave of content updates using the same structure that worked in the first round.

By the end of 90 days, your organization should have: verified technical schema across all major site templates, AI-optimized content, a measurable baseline of visibility, brand mentions, and citation share, and a repeatable process for testing, reporting, and refining your GEO performance.

Your next moves: the 48-hour action plan

The fundamental shift in search is already complete. Every day you optimize only for traditional search, competitors establish themselves as the authorities AI systems cite. Every month you delay implementing GEO capabilities, the competitive gap widens and catch-up costs escalate.

DAY 1-2: **ESTABLISH YOUR BASELINE**

- Test your top 10 brand and product keywords across ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI, Claude
- Document which competitors appear more frequently
- Identify what sources AI systems cite in your industry
- Calculate your current share of voice

DAY 3-5: **QUICK TECHNICAL WINS**

- Add FAQ schema to your 5 highest-traffic product pages
- Implement Product schema on all product pages if not present
- Create one comprehensive FAQ page with schema for your main category

DAY 6-7: **CONTENT AUDIT**

- Identify your top 20 pages by traffic
- Map them to conversational queries people would ask AI
- Flag which pages lack statistics, expert quotes, or clear structure

30-day priorities:

WEEK 2: TECHNICAL AUDIT

- Complete schema implementation across top 50 pages
- Validate all structured data
- Ensure proper FAQ, Product, Article, and Review schema

WEEK 3 CONTENT TRANSFORMATION

- Rewrite top 10 pages for AI extraction (clear answers, better structure)
- Add data backing and expert quotes to key content
- Create 5 scenario-specific landing pages

WEEK 4 MEASUREMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

- Set up AI citation tracking process
- Implement brand mention monitoring
- Create baseline GEO dashboard

90-day transformation:

Follow the detailed 90-Day Implementation Roadmap in this guide to systematically build your GEO capability.

Budget Allocation Recommendation

To support your ninety-day GEO rollout, plan for roughly the following resources.

Category	% of Budget	Monthly Investment	Use
Content creation & optimization	40%	\$8,000-\$12,000	Rewriting, new content, optimization
Technical implementation	20%	\$4,000-\$6,000	Schema, structured data, site improvements
Distributed content & PR	25%	\$5,000-\$7,500	Guest posts, outreach, community engagement, partnerships
Tools & monitoring	10%	\$2,000-\$3,000	Tracking tools, analytics
Testing & iteration	5%	\$1,000-\$1,500	A/B testing, experiments

The takeaway

Generative Engine Optimization isn't a one-time project — it's an evolving discipline.

But this ninety-day roadmap gives your brand the framework to move from concept to execution, fast.

By building a foundation of structured data, credible content, and distributed authority, you position your brand to earn AI citations now and dominate search visibility later.

CHAPTER 6

Measuring what actually matters in the AI era

Traditional metrics are experiencing what researchers call "The Great Decoupling."

Impressions rise while clicks decline, breaking the historical proportionality that guided optimization decisions.

The new measurement framework

For CMOs, the “great decoupling” creates an attribution nightmare where visibility increases but traffic falls, making ROI calculations using old frameworks meaningless.

Let's compare how metrics evolve from the old SEO world to the AI-driven search landscape.

In traditional SEO:

You measured organic traffic, rankings, click-through rates, bounce rate, and pages per session.

The goal was to drive as many sessions as possible to your site.

In AI search:

You measure AI visibility score, citation frequency, share of voice, AI referral engagement, and conversion rate from AI-influenced traffic.

The goal is to maximize your brand's presence within the answers people trust — not just the pages they visit.

Traditional SEO vs AI search metrics

Traditional SEO Metrics	AI Search Era Metrics	Why It Changed
Organic traffic	AI Visibility Score	Traffic isn't the goal anymore
Keyword rankings	Citation frequency	Being mentioned > being ranked
Click-through rate	Share of voice in AI responses	Zero-click = success can look like failure
Bounce rate	AI referral engagement	Quality over quantity
Pages per session	Conversion rate from AI traffic	Better intent, fewer pages needed

The key metrics that matter now

Visibility Score

This measures how often your brand is mentioned across AI platforms like Google AI Overviews, ChatGPT, and Perplexity.

Track it manually or with tools such as Semrush's AI SEO Toolkit or Ahrefs Brand Radar.

A strong benchmark is a thirty percent quarter-over-quarter improvement.

Share of Voice

This compares how often your brand is cited versus competitors.

Monitor it across platforms to understand your relative authority.

Your goal: rank among the top three brands in your category.

Citation Quality

Not all mentions are equal. Measure whether your citations appear in positive, contextually relevant answers that align with your brand.

Aim for at least eighty percent positive context.

Conversion Rate from AI Traffic

Even if volume decreases, intent often rises.

Use GA4 custom source tracking to measure AI-driven conversions, and aim for thirty percent higher conversion rates than traditional organic sessions.

Brand Search Lift

This measures increases in direct brand searches after AI visibility improves.

Use Google Trends and Search Console data to track growth.

A healthy target is twenty percent quarter-over-quarter.

A visibility tracking framework

Metric	What It Measures	How to Track	Target
AI Visibility Score	Frequency of brand mentions across AI platforms	Manual testing + tools (Semrush AI SEO Toolkit, Ahrefs Brand Radar)	+30% quarter-over-quarter
Share of Voice	Your citations vs competitors	Competitive analysis across AI platforms	Top 3 in your category
Citation Quality	Context and prominence of mentions	Manual review of AI responses	Positive context 80%+
Citation Source Diversity	Range of sources AI cites	Track which sites mention you	20+ unique domains
Conversion Rate (AI traffic)	Revenue from AI referrals	GA4 custom source tracking	30% above traditional search
Brand Search Lift	Increase in direct brand searches	Google Search Console, Google Trends	+20% quarter-over-quarter

Tools for AI search monitoring

To measure these new metrics accurately, a few tools lead the way:

- Semrush AI SEO Toolkit: Comprehensive tracking of AI Overviews and competitor visibility.
- Ahrefs Brand Radar: Tracks web-wide brand mentions and sentiment.
- Conductor Generative Parser: Enterprise-level analytics for AI attribution and multi-platform visibility.
- Google Search Console: Helps filter AI Overview impressions and monitor brand search lift.
- Manual Testing: Still valuable — run direct queries in ChatGPT, Perplexity, Claude, and Google AI to see what users experience.

Tool	Best For	Price Range	Key Features
Semrush AI SEO Toolkit	Comprehensive tracking	\$\$\$\$	AI Overview visibility, competitor tracking, keyword monitoring
Ahrefs Brand Radar	Brand mention tracking	\$\$\$	Web-wide brand mentions, sentiment analysis
Conductor Generative Parser	Enterprise analytics	\$\$\$\$	Multi-platform tracking, attribution modeling
Manual testing	Baseline/validation	Free	Direct queries across ChatGPT, Perplexity, Claude, Google
Google Search Console	Google AI Overviews	Free	Filter for AI Overview impressions/clicks

The Attribution Challenge — and the New Approach

Attribution models built on last-click logic no longer work in a world where users often never click.

Here's how to think about measurement in the AI era:

Old Model: **Traffic equals success.** ➡ New Model: **Visibility equals influence.**

In traditional frameworks, if a user never visited your site, it meant you weren't part of their journey.

In the AI era, you may influence that journey without ever seeing the click — and that's okay.

Here's how to adapt:

Replace last-click attribution with brand lift studies and survey-based attribution to capture assisted conversions.

Measure revenue per visitor, not just total sessions.

Expand your attribution windows from thirty to ninety days or longer to capture delayed impact from AI-assisted awareness.

Treat AI mentions as upper-funnel exposure that builds credibility before the user ever lands on your site.

An attribution tracking framework

Attribution Challenge	Old Solution	New Approach
AI mentions don't drive immediate clicks	Last-click attribution	Brand lift studies, survey attribution
Traffic down but revenue up	Traffic as success metric	Conversion rate and revenue per visitor
Users research on AI, buy direct	Single-touch attribution	Multi-touch with AI-assisted conversions
Long consideration cycles	30-day attribution window	90-day+ windows, brand search lift

What to expect

Brands that adopt AI-first measurement frameworks see a more accurate picture of influence and intent.

Traffic may appear to decline, but quality improves. Conversion rates rise, and brand searches grow.

The key is to redefine success — moving from “Did we get the click?” to “Did we earn the mention?”

The takeaway

The new era of search isn't measured in page views; it's measured in presence. Your job as a marketing leader is no longer to chase every click — it's to ensure your brand is trusted enough to be cited.

By shifting your focus to visibility, share of voice, and AI-driven conversions, you position your brand to lead in a landscape where discovery happens without a click.

CHAPTER 7

What's coming and how to prepare

Industry analysts project mid-2026 as the tipping point when AI search transitions from workplace tool to everyday utility, with 75% of Google searches showing AI summaries by 2028¹.

The timeline for AI search dominance is accelerating faster than most predicted. Chat GPT grew from 300 million to 800 million weekly active users in just three months¹⁵, and adoption is approaching the critical 20% threshold where early majority adoption typically begins.

The agentic AI inflection point

"As LLMs evolve, they will begin to serve as AI agents that become consumers of GEO output to automatically make purchase decisions for human users⁹.

What this means:

- AI assistants will autonomously order products based on established preferences
- Brands must be the default choice AI can verify and trust
- Machine-readable authority becomes more valuable than human-facing content
- Early positioning creates winner-take-all dynamics in many categories

Example Scenarios

- "Alexa, reorder my usual coffee beans" → AI validates best option, may switch brands
- "ChatGPT, book me a flight to Chicago" → AI evaluates options, books autonomously
- "Claude, buy Rob dress shoes for his formal Christmas Party" → AI researches, recommends, purchases

CHECKLIST

Preparation checklist

- ✓ Establish clear, verifiable brand identity across all platforms
- ✓ Maintain consistent product information and specifications
- ✓ Build trust signals AI can verify (reviews, ratings, certifications)
- ✓ Create API-accessible product catalogs
- ✓ Develop relationships with AI platform partnerships teams

Near-term evolution (2025-2026)

Development	Timeline	Impact on eCommerce	Your Preparation
Potential Atlas Browser mainstream adoption	Q1-Q2 2026	ChatGPT becomes default search for 800M+ users	Optimize for ChatGPT citations now
Ads in AI Overviews	Rolling out 2025	New paid placement opportunities	Budget for AI search ads (6-7% of search spend)
Perplexity Publisher Program	Expanding 2025	Revenue share for cited content	Join early if eligible
Voice/multimodal queries	Accelerating 2025-26	"Show me options like this" with images	Optimize for visual + text queries
AI Mode becomes default	Mid-2026 projected	75%+ queries show AI summaries	Must rank to be cited

Medium-term transformation (2027-2028)

Development	Timeline	Impact on eCommerce	Your Preparation
Agentic AI shopping	2027-2028	AI makes purchase decisions autonomously	Become the brand AI agents trust
Zero-click dominance	2027-2028	80%+ queries end without clicks	Alternative revenue models, brand value
AI search revenue	\$750B by 2028	Massive market opportunity	Early positioning creates moats
Fragmented discovery	Ongoing	Users split across 5+ AI platforms	Omnichannel AI presence required

CHAPTER 7

Where LimeLight Marketing fits in your AI search strategy

eCommerce brands face unique AI search challenges that require specialized expertise. Product discovery increasingly happens through conversational queries, shopping agents compare options across multiple sources, and traditional product pages optimized for keywords miss AI-driven recommendations entirely.

LimeLight Marketing's focus on eCommerce complexity positions the agency uniquely to address these challenges through integrated strategy, technical implementation, and measurable results.



Why LimeLight Marketing's eCommerce expertise matters

The agency's proven eCommerce capabilities align perfectly with GEO requirements:

Technical depth:

- AI-powered site search implementation (understands how AI interprets intent)
- Complex platform migrations (knows technical foundations matter)
- Data and insights practice (measurement expertise for new metrics)
- Structured data implementation (critical for AI visibility)

Strategic integration:

- Customer data platforms that track AI-influenced conversions
- Attribution models that work in the zero-click era
- Analytics frameworks that measure visibility, not just traffic
- Full-funnel approach that captures AI-assisted revenue

Proven results:

- 127% revenue lifts through technical + content optimization
- 126% conversion rate increases via UX improvements
- Quantified ROI from strategic and technical interventions
- Track record across diverse eCommerce categories

The partnership approach

LimeLight's clients consistently emphasize the agency "feels like we're all part of one company." This collaboration model matters enormously when navigating transformative changes requiring cross-functional coordination between marketing, technology, and customer experience teams.

What sets LimeLight apart:

- Deep eCommerce specialization vs generalist agencies
- Technical capability vs content-only shops
- Full-service integration vs multi-vendor complexity
- Data-driven optimization vs "set and forget"
- Executive-level strategic thinking vs tactical execution only

SCHEDULE AN AI CONSULTATION

Meet with one of our eCommerce experts. We'll listen to your goals and ask questions. We can decide together if we're the right fit for your needs.

[REQUEST A FREE CONSULT WITH AN AI SPECIALIST >](#)



LIMELIGHTMARKETING.COM
info@limelightmarketing.com/-contact-us



Frequently Asked Questions

What is AI search and how is it different from traditional search?

AI search uses large language models (like ChatGPT, Claude, or Google's Gemini) to understand user questions conversationally and generate comprehensive answers by synthesizing information from multiple sources. Unlike traditional search that returns a list of links, AI search provides direct answers with embedded citations, often eliminating the need to click through to websites. This fundamental shift means being mentioned in the answer matters more than ranking #1 in a list.

Do I need to stop doing traditional SEO to focus on GEO?

No—this is a critical misconception. Research shows 73-74% of AI citations come from pages already ranking in the traditional top 10 organic results. Strong SEO fundamentals (domain authority, technical excellence, quality content, backlinks) remain the foundation that everything builds on. GEO extends beyond traditional SEO by optimizing your brand presence across the entire web, not just your own site. The winning strategy integrates both disciplines.

How long does it take to see results from GEO implementation?

Quick wins like adding structured data and optimizing high-value pages can show visibility improvements within 2-4 weeks. Comprehensive GEO programs typically demonstrate meaningful results in 90 days, with full maturity at 6-12 months. The B2B manufacturer case study achieved 2,300% traffic growth in six months, but started seeing AI citations within the first 30 days. The key is starting now—early movers are creating sustainable competitive advantages while others wait.

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the single most important factor for AI search visibility?

Brand mentions across the web show a 0.664 correlation with AI citations—nearly 3x stronger than backlinks (0.218 correlation). Brands in the top 25% for web mentions average 169 AI Overview appearances versus only 14 for brands in the 50th-75th percentile. This means strategic digital PR, third-party content, community engagement, and review generation matter more than traditional link building ever did.

How much does GEO cost compared to traditional SEO?

GEO requires similar or slightly higher investment than comprehensive SEO programs—typically \$20,000-\$30,000 per month for mid-market eCommerce brands, though costs vary based on scope and complexity.

The difference is resource allocation: GEO shifts ~25% of budget toward distributed content and digital PR rather than focusing exclusively on your own site. The ROI calculation changes too—you're measuring visibility and influence, not just traffic.

What's the biggest mistake brands make with AI search?

Assuming traditional SEO rankings automatically translate to AI visibility. Research analyzing 75,000 brands reveals they don't—companies need proactive optimization for AI systems. The second biggest mistake is treating GEO as a one-time project rather than an ongoing strategy.

AI platforms update constantly, new competitors optimize aggressively, and citation dynamics shift quarterly. Winners treat GEO as a core capability with dedicated resources and continuous improvement.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can small businesses compete with large brands in AI search?

Yes—and potentially more easily than in traditional search. AI platforms value comprehensive, well-cited content over pure domain authority. Small brands with strong expertise in specific niches can outrank larger competitors by creating highly authoritative content, building targeted brand mentions, and moving faster than enterprise organizations. The 10X visibility gap based on brand mentions creates opportunity for aggressive smaller players.

What happens to my traffic if I optimize for AI search?

Traffic patterns typically follow one of three paths:

1. Initial decline of 10-20% as zero-click searches increase, followed by stabilization with higher-quality traffic
2. Traffic maintained or grows slightly while conversion rates improve 30%+ due to better intent
3. Significant traffic growth (100%+) if you capture early positioning advantage.

The key insight: traffic becomes less important as a metric when conversion rates and revenue per visitor increase substantially.

How do I track AI search performance if users don't click?

Implement the new measurement framework:

- AI Visibility Score: Track citation frequency across platforms using tools like Semrush AI SEO Toolkit or manual testing
- Share of Voice: Monitor your brand mentions vs competitors in AI responses
- Brand Search Lift: Measure increases in direct brand searches driven by AI exposure
- Conversion Rate: Track higher conversion rates from AI referral traffic
- Revenue Attribution: Use multi-touch attribution with longer windows (90+ days)

Frequently Asked Questions

Which AI platform should I optimize for first?

Prioritize based on your audience and industry:

- B2C eCommerce: Google AI Overviews (largest reach) and Perplexity (product research)
- B2B products: ChatGPT (workplace adoption) and Google AI Overviews
- Consumer tech: Perplexity (tech-savvy users) and ChatGPT
- All brands: Don't choose one—optimize for all simultaneously since citation factors overlap significantly

When will AI search become mainstream enough that I have to act?

It already is. ChatGPT has 800+ million weekly active users and grew 167% in just three months. Google AI Overviews appear in significant percentages of searches with 92% ending in zero clicks.

Industry analysts project mid-2026 as the tipping point when AI search transitions from early adopter tool to mainstream utility. Companies not tracking AI visibility today are already 6-12 months behind early movers who are establishing positions that become harder to displace every quarter.

What should I do first if I'm starting from zero?

1. **This week:** Manually test your brand across ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, and Claude for your top 20 keywords. Document what appears.
2. **This month:** Implement FAQ schema on your top 20 pages, add statistics and expert quotes to your best content, create 5 dedicated FAQ pages with schema.
3. **Next 90 days:** Follow the implementation roadmap in this guide, starting with technical foundations, moving to content optimization, then building distributed presence.
4. **Ongoing:** Establish measurement infrastructure and commit to treating GEO as a strategic capability, not a tactical campaign.



Work with LimeLight Marketing

The brands winning in AI search recognized the shift early and acted decisively with expert partners who understand both the technical depth and strategic implications

LimeLight Marketing brings:

- Specialized eCommerce AI search optimization
- Full-service integration (strategy + technical + content + measurement)
- Proven track record with quantified results
- Partnership approach that extends your team

SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION

Contact LimeLight Marketing to schedule your AI visibility audit and strategic consultation.

 LIMELIGHTMARKETING.COM

 info@limelightmarketing.com



LIMELIGHT
marketing

References

All statistics and research findings in this guide are supported by authoritative industry sources, academic research, and verified case studies. Citations are provided inline using superscript numbers that correspond to the full references below.

1: McKinsey & Company. (2025). "New front door to the internet: Winning in the age of AI search." *McKinsey Digital*. Retrieved from <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/new-front-door-to-the-internet-winning-in-the-age-of-ai-search>

2: Search Engine Land. (2024). "90% of businesses fear losing SEO visibility as AI reshapes search." Retrieved from <https://searchengineland.com/businesses-seo-visibility-ai-search-survey-463779>

3: Semrush. (2025). "AI Overviews' Impact on Search in 2025." Retrieved from <https://www.semrush.com/blog/semrush-ai-overviews-study/>

4: NPR. (2025). "Will Google's AI Overviews kill news sites as we know them?" Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/2025/07/31/nx-s1-5484118/google-ai-overview-online-publishers>

5: Ridge Marketing. (2025). "The Rise of Google's Zero-Click Search." Retrieved from <https://ridgemarketing.com/blog/the-rise-of-googles-zero-click-search/>

6: Semrush. (2025). "Google AI Mode's Early Adoption and SEO Impact." Retrieved from <https://www.semrush.com/blog/google-ai-mode-seo-impact/>

7: Arc Intermedia. (2025). "Impact of AI Search on User Behavior & CTR in 2025 \ [Case Study\]." Retrieved from <https://www.arcintermedia.com/shoptalk/tech/case-study-impact-of-ai-search-on-user-behavior-ctr-in-2025/>

8: Aggarwal, P., et al. (2023). "Generative Engine Optimization." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2311.09735*. Princeton University & IIT Delhi. Retrieved from <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2311.09735>

9: The Search Initiative. (2024). "AI Search Optimization Case Study." Retrieved from <https://thesearchinitiative.com/case-studies/b2b-ai-search>

10: Profound. (2025). "AI Platform Citation Patterns: How ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews, and Perplexity Source Information." Retrieved from <https://www.tryprofound.com/blog/ai-platform-citation-patterns>

References

11: Search Engine Journal. (2025). "Studies Suggest How To Rank On Google's AI Overviews." Retrieved from <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/studies-suggest-how-to-rank-on-googles-ai-overviews/532809/>

12: Ahrefs. (2025). "An Analysis of AI Overview Brand Visibility Factors (75K Brands Studied)." Retrieved from <https://ahrefs.com/blog/ai-overview-brand-correlation/>

13: SEO.com. (2025). "AI Overviews: Everything You Need to Know as an SEO." Retrieved from <https://www.seo.com/ai/ai-overviews/>

14: Conductor. (2025). "Beyond traffic: CMO's guide to content strategy in AI search." Retrieved from <https://www.conductor.com/academy/cmo-strategy-guide/>

15: DemandSage. (2025). "Latest ChatGPT Users Stats 2025 (Growth & Usage Report)." Retrieved from <https://www.demandsage.com/chatgpt-statistics/>

16: Index.dev. (2025). "50+ Interesting Perplexity AI Statistics to Know in 2025." Retrieved from <https://www.index.dev/blog/perplexity-statistics>

17: Conductor. (2025). "Beyond traffic: CMO's guide to content strategy in AI search" \[Case study data\]. Retrieved from <https://www.conductor.com/academy/cmo-strategy-guide/>

Last updated: October 2025 | This guide is continuously updated as AI search evolves. Check back quarterly for the latest strategies and case studies.



WWW.LIMELIGHTMARKETING.COM