



The landscape of online discovery is shifting, and it's happening at warp speed. For years, the holy grail of digital visibility was securing a coveted spot at the top of Google's search results. But as Large Language Models (LLMs) rapidly integrate into how users find information and make decisions, a new frontier in online presence has emerged: Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO).

This isn't just another buzzword; it's a fundamental re-evaluation of how your brand gets seen. GEO is all about ensuring your content and brand are not just present in traditional search but actively showcased within those AI-generated answers that are becoming increasingly prevalent.

The Dawn of "Search Everywhere"

We're no longer just talking about Google's traditional search results pages (SERPs). Discovery is now a multi-faceted experience, unfolding across every platform where users seek trusted information and recommendations. Think beyond the blue links – imagine your brand being the authoritative voice in an AI's conversational response or a trusted source cited in a generative summary.

The data underscores this monumental shift. New research from SEMrush boldly predicts that LLM traffic will surpass traditional Google search by the end of 2027. This isn't a distant future; it's practically tomorrow. And our own internal data echoes this sentiment, revealing an

astounding 800% year-over-year increase in referrals from LLMs in just the last three months alone.

We're witnessing tens of millions of additional impressions in Google Search Console as AI Overviews reshape the way Google delivers answers. If your brand isn't adapting, the stark reality is you could soon become invisible online.

This guide will help demystify GEO, and equip you with the knowledge and actionable strategies to thrive in this new era. We'll explore:

- What GEO is and how it fundamentally differs from traditional SEO.
- Why your existing SEO knowledge is still incredibly valuable and shouldn't be discarded.
- The top techniques to optimise your content for generative engines, directly driving tangible results for your business.

What Exactly Is GEO and Why Does It Matter So Much?

Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO) is the strategic practice of creating and optimising your content so it consistently appears in AI-generated answers across platforms like Google AI Overviews and AI Mode, ChatGPT, Perplexity etc.

But GEO is far more than just content tweaks. It's a holistic, interconnected approach that encompasses:

- **Strategic Publishing:** Placing your content on the platforms where AI tools are most likely to discover and value it.
- **Brand Authority Through Mentions:** Cultivating positive brand mentions across the web, even those without direct links, as AI systems recognise and prioritise these signals of trust.
- **Technical Accessibility:** Ensuring your site is technically robust, allowing AI crawlers to effortlessly access, understand, and index your valuable content.

Forget simply striving for a top traditional ranking. With GEO, your primary goal is to embed your brand as a core component of what AI tools recommend when users pose questions. These

tools "generate" responses in natural, conversational language. While they can include links, their ultimate aim is to deliver a complete, satisfying answer within the response itself.

This means with GEO, your content needs to be so compelling and authoritative that it actively shapes the AI's conversation, rather than just vying for a click.

Why GEO Matters Now More Than Ever

While traditional Google search still holds significant sway and will likely drive the majority of your near-term traffic, the way people discover information is undergoing a rapid, irreversible transformation.

Success once meant being the very first result on a SERP. Looking ahead, that "top spot" might not even exist in the same way. Instead, you need to become the "top recommendation" – the definitive solution that AI tools confidently choose to present in their answers.

The numbers tell a powerful story:

- ChatGPT exploded, reaching 100 million users faster than any app in history. As of February 2025, it boasts over 400 million weekly users.
- Google's AI Overviews are now appearing on billions of searches monthly, influencing at least 13% of all SERPs.

Generative engines are influencing your audience - start optimising is right now!

How GEO and SEO Work Together

At first you might be thinking, "Isn't this just SEO with a fancy new name?" And honestly, you wouldn't be entirely wrong. There's a reason terms like GEO, AEO (Answer Engine Optimisation), and AIO (AI Optimisation) have seen an explosion in interest – they reflect a very real and significant shift in how discovery functions.

Let's be clear: GEO doesn't replace SEO. Instead, it serves as a powerful reframing of your entire search strategy for the modern era, one where discovery unfolds across AI tools, social platforms, and myriad new surfaces beyond traditional search.

Evolving From	Evolving To
SEO = Google Search	SEO = multi-surface visibility (Search, AI/LLMs, social)
Success = ranking for keywords	Success = being found across Search + Chat
SEO is a siloed function	SEO is cross-functional + connected to product, brand, PR, and social
Keyword-first content planning	Intent and entity-driven topic planning with semantic structure
Backlinks to pass PageRank	Traditional backlinks plus more focus on brand mentions and co-citations
Traffic as a core KPI	Visibility, influence, and conversions across touchpoints as core KPIs
Technical SEO as the foundation	Technical SEO as the foundation (with additional focus on JavaScript compatibility)

This evolution brings good news: If you've invested in a robust SEO strategy, you're already well on your way. GEO builds directly upon the bedrock of great SEO:

- Crafting high-quality content tailored for your specific audience.
- Ensuring content is easily accessible and understandable by search engines.
- Earning credible mentions and authority across the web.

These same fundamental elements are precisely what AI engines leverage to decide which brands and content to reference. However, here's the crucial distinction: AI engines don't

operate exactly like Google's traditional algorithm. This means some of your tactical approaches – and what you choose to track – need to adapt and evolve. Let's dive into how to do just that.

Your 7-Step GEO Action Plan

We're still in the emerging stages of fully understanding how AI engines source and prioritise content. But it is already clear that to thrive, you must adapt and reprioritise certain traditional SEO tactics for Generative Engine Optimisation.

The first three steps outline overarching best practices for GEO. Steps 4-7 delve into specific content optimisation techniques for generative engines and how to effectively track your results.

Step 1: Nail the SEO Basics

As we've established, effective GEO is inherently good SEO. While we won't cover every SEO fundamental here, let's zoom in on what truly matters for generative engines.

Make Your Site Easy to Read (for Bots)

If AI tools can't easily access and understand your pages, they can't cite you. Focus on:

- **Crawlability & Indexability:** Ensure your site's technical foundation allows AI crawlers to access and index your content without roadblocks.
- **Speed & Mobile-Friendliness:** Slow, clunky sites create poor user experiences and significantly reduce your chances of being cited. Prioritise fast loading times and a seamless mobile experience.
- **Security (HTTPS):** This is non-negotiable. HTTPS is now standard for trust with both users and AI systems.
- **Server-Side Rendering (SSR):** Many AI crawlers still struggle with JavaScript. Where possible, opt for server-side rendering over client-side to ensure your content is fully visible.

Show You're Worth Trusting (E-E-A-T)

AI craves trustworthy sources. Demonstrating Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-E-A-T) is paramount:

- Experience: Share genuine results, personal usage, or firsthand knowledge. Show, don't just tell.
- Expertise: Stick to topics you genuinely know inside and out and delve deep.
- Authority: Actively seek opportunities to be quoted, guest post on reputable sites, or contribute to well-known industry publications.
- Trust: Implement real author bios, meticulously cite your sources, and showcase reviews or testimonials to build user and AI confidence.

Pro Tip: While AI tools don't have a direct "E-E-A-T system," it's logical they'd prioritise content from reputable, expert sources. This enhances the user experience and makes the AI's own responses more reliable. [Read About EEAT strategies here](#)

Step 2: Build Mentions and Co-Citations

AI systems don't exclusively rely on backlinks to gauge your authority. They pay keen attention to every mention of your brand across the web, even when those mentions don't include a clickable link. Backlinks are still vital, but this widens your scope for building a robust online presence.

Audit Your Current Mentions

Begin by identifying where your brand is currently mentioned. Search for your brand name, product names, and key team members across Google, social media platforms, and industry forums. You'll likely uncover mentions you never knew existed – some positive, some neutral, and a few that might require your attention.

Crucially, run your brand name and related terms through the AI tools themselves:

- Does Google's AI Mode cite your brand as a source for relevant queries?
- Does ChatGPT recognise your key team members or brand?

- What's the general sentiment of the AI's responses when you directly ask about your brand?

Tracking brand visibility in Large Language Models (LLMs) and AI search is a rapidly evolving field, distinct from traditional SEO but building upon its principles. You can consider tools such as Peec, Profound, Otterly, Scrunch, Brand24 and SEMrush's AI Toolkit, which offer invaluable insights.

Keep Building Quality Backlinks

The increased importance of unlinked mentions for GEO doesn't mean abandoning traditional link building. Backlinks remain a cornerstone of SEO, and they frequently lead to the kind of authoritative mentions that AI systems highly value. Simply expand your focus beyond just "getting a link."

Aim to Build Co-Citations and Co-Occurrences

While definitions of "co-citation" and "co-occurrence" can vary, the implications are what truly matter. Think of them simply as the mention of one thing alongside another. For GEO, this often means your brand or website being mentioned alongside a different website or a specific topic/concept on another website.

For example, if your brand is Monday.com, you'd naturally accrue co-citations with:

- Competitors: (e.g., ClickUp, Asana)
- Key terms/categories: (e.g., "project management software")
- Related concepts/questions: (e.g., "kanban boards," "how to automate workflows")

The more your brand appears alongside competitors or relevant industry terms, the more AI tools understand your market position and offerings. Similarly, when diverse, unrelated websites mention your brand (e.g., Monday.com mentioned on Forbes and Zapier), it signals widespread recognition and trustworthiness to AI systems.

In essence:

- Frequent co-mentions of two or more brands suggest they're related (e.g., competitors).
- Consistent mentions of your brand within the context of a particular topic or industry tell AI tools what you offer.

- Widespread mentions across many different websites imply your brand is significant and trustworthy.

How to Put This Into Action:

To effectively build citations, co-citations, and co-occurrences:

- **Seek Competitor Co-Mentions:** Actively look for opportunities to be mentioned alongside your competitors. When publications craft comparison articles or industry roundups, ensure your name is in the mix. These co-citations solidify your place in the market within AI systems.
- **Participate in Industry Surveys & Research:** Being included in analyst reports or industry studies boosts your credibility, and any resulting backlinks are a bonus.
- **Engage in Online Communities:** Be an active, helpful voice on platforms like Reddit, Quora, and industry-specific forums. Your valuable contributions create organic mentions in places where AI systems frequently seek authentic, community-driven insights. Remember: focus on being genuinely useful first, not directly promoting your business.

The ultimate goal is to become an undeniable, recognised voice within your niche. The more frequently your brand appears in relevant contexts across the web, the more likely AI systems are to confidently include you in their generated responses.

Step 3: Go Multi-Platform

"Beyond Google" has long been a mantra for savvy SEOs, but with the advent of AI, it's become an absolute imperative. Platforms like Reddit, YouTube, and other user-generated content (UGC) sites are surfacing with increasing frequency in AI outputs. A robust brand presence on these platforms can significantly boost your AI visibility.

The benefits are at least threefold:

- **Audience Reach & Engagement:** Being active across multiple platforms allows you to connect with your audience where they already are, boosting engagement, brand awareness, and ultimately, conversions.

- **AI Diversification:** AI tools don't exclusively pull from Google's traditional SERPs. They draw from forums, social media, YouTube, and a vast array of other sources.
- **Algorithm Resilience:** Diversifying your presence across platforms reduces your exposure to the whims of any single algorithm or audience, a solid practice for any business.

Here's quick guidance for going multi-platform:

- **YouTube:** People flock to YouTube for "how-to" guides, product research, and problem-solving. Product reviews, tool comparisons, and in-depth tutorials are excellent candidates for YouTube content that can be cited by AI.
- **Podcasts:** Podcast content and their transcripts are increasingly surfacing in AI results (especially Gemini). Building a presence here is a fantastic opportunity to capture AI visibility.
- **TikTok & Instagram Reels:** These short-form video platforms dominate younger audiences who increasingly use them for search. Quick-fire videos answering common industry questions can drive discovery, and AI tools can even cite these in responses.
- **Reddit:** AI tools, particularly Google's AI Overviews and AI Mode, frequently cite Reddit as a source of user-generated answers. To build presence, find relevant subreddits where your audience congregates and offer genuinely helpful advice when questions arise related to your expertise. Prioritise usefulness over direct promotion.
- **LinkedIn:** Similar to Reddit for B2B topics, LinkedIn is ideal for establishing your voice in professional circles. Publish thoughtful posts and engage in relevant discussions. These interactions can be picked up by AI systems seeking expert perspectives.

Step 4: Discover What AI Platforms are Citing for Your Niche

A powerful way to inform your content strategy is to understand precisely what AI tools are likely to include in responses to questions relevant to your business.

Begin by directly testing how (and if) your content appears in AI tools right now. Open ChatGPT, Claude, or Perplexity and ask questions your content should answer. Pay close attention to the sources cited:

- Are your competitors frequently mentioned?

- Which platforms are consistently cited (Reddit, YouTube, etc.)?
- What's the sentiment of mentions for both your brand and your competitors?

As you do this, experiment with different variations of the same question. For example, compare "What's the best email marketing software?" with "Which email marketing tool should I use for my small business?" Notice how the answers and cited sources change. This intent analysis is crucial for understanding specific citation patterns.

Pro Tip: Test with different AI tools too, as each has its own preferences for citing sources. While manual testing provides a "feel" for AI perception, dedicated LLM tracking tools like *Profound* or *Peec AI* (though potentially pricey) can automate this process at scale.

Remember, this isn't just for large brands. If you run a blog, a local business website, or even a personal portfolio, understanding AI citations is invaluable. Consultants and freelancers, for instance, might find AI tools frequently cite marketplaces like Upwork or Dribbble – if you don't have a profile, you'll struggle for AI visibility. Similarly, local businesses will often see service and location-specific pages appear in AI responses, guiding your GEO content focus.

Step 5: Answer Your Audience's Questions Directly

The way people search with AI tools is fundamentally different from traditional Google queries, profoundly impacting how you should plan your content.

Traditional SEO often focused on targeting specific keywords like "healthy meal prep ideas." But with AI, users might ask conversational queries such as "what to cook for dinner when I'm trying to lose weight?" While both relate to healthy eating, the AI's responses and cited sources can differ dramatically based on this nuanced intent.

Longer, more specific conversational queries represent a massive opportunity. Most companies aren't creating content that directly answers these detailed questions. The more specific your answer, the more likely you are to be cited when AI systems seek authoritative responses. Aim to "own" the long-tail queries that directly align with your product or expertise.

How to Choose the Right Questions to Answer:

Start by tuning into the actual questions your customers are asking. Pore over customer support tickets, sales call transcripts, and user feedback. These authentic questions are goldmines for content topics, as they mirror the precise queries people will feed into AI tools.

If you don't have a customer base yet, turn to community platforms. Reddit, Quora, and industry-specific forums are invaluable for uncovering the conversational language people use to describe their problems and seek solutions within your niche. [Read How Mining Online Reviews Can Dramatically Improve Business Results](#)

Step 6: Structure Your Content for Generative Engines

AI systems process information by dissecting content into granular chunks and analysing their relationships. Think of it as a highly sophisticated version of featured snippets, but for a much broader range of questions. This means your content structure directly dictates whether AI systems can effectively understand and cite it. While much of this is simply good writing practice, these techniques will become even more critical for GEO.

One Idea per Paragraph

Keep your paragraphs concise and focused on a single main idea. Cramming multiple concepts into one paragraph makes it challenging for AI systems to extract specific information. Also, avoid burying crucial details within lengthy sentences or paragraphs. Front-load your key points for easy AI extraction and human readability – it's a win-win.

Use Clear Headings

Employ clear, logical headings and subheadings to organise your content. These act as vital signposts for both human readers and LLMs. Ensure the content immediately following each heading directly relates to it. This "featured snippet" mindset – where an H2 directly answers a question – should permeate your entire content strategy. Not every H2 needs to be a question, but the alignment between heading and content must be crystal clear.

Break Up Complex Topics into Digestible Sections

For complex or multi-step processes, use numbered steps and clear transitions. This empowers AI systems to easily pull-out individual instructions when users ask for specific guidance. Additionally, provide clear, concise summaries for intricate topics; AI systems often seek these digestible explanations for quick information delivery.

Include Quotes and Clear Statements

Integrate direct quotes and unambiguous statements that AI systems can readily extract. Research indicates that pages featuring quotes or statistics show 30-40% higher visibility in AI answers. Instead of a vague statement like "Email marketing can be effective," opt for a precise, impactful statement like "Email marketing generates an average ROI of £42 for every pound spent." (Naturally, only include quotes and stats that genuinely add value and are useful to your readers).

Use Schema Markup

Schema markup is a powerful tool for structuring information for machines. This code helps algorithms understand the type of content you're presenting. For example, FAQ schema tells AI tools you're answering common questions, while HowTo schema identifies step-by-step instructions. Many content management systems (like WordPress) offer plugins for easy schema implementation, so you don't need to be a developer.

Make It Scannable

Utilise formatting like bold text to highlight important facts or conclusions, making your content easy for both humans and AI systems to skim and quickly identify critical information. Leverage images to convey key points visually and clear headings to ensure articles are effortless to follow. The overarching goal is maximum accessibility for both humans and machines. Well-structured content consistently performs better across all search and discovery types and is more likely to convert users into customers.

Step 7: Track Your Visibility in LLMs

Are tools like ChatGPT, Perplexity, or Gemini mentioning your brand? If not, it's time to start tracking this crucial metric. Monitoring your visibility in AI-generated responses is essential for understanding what's working and where to direct your efforts.

Manual Testing as a Starting Point

Begin with manual testing. Ask identical questions across various AI platforms (ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Google AI Mode, AI Overviews). Capture screenshots of responses and meticulously note which sources are cited. Regular manual testing will help you identify patterns in content citation and track changes in your visibility over time.

However, relying solely on manual testing for meaningful, scalable data is challenging. AI tool outputs are highly contextual, influenced by past conversations, previous prompts, and chat settings. While a good "feel" test, it provides only a rough idea of how generative engines perceive your brand.

Leverage LLM Tracking Tools

Whilst you can set-up tracking in Google Analytics (Pro Tip to follow below) dedicated tools are a game-changer. There are many emerging platforms which allow you to monitor your brand's visibility across AI platforms like ChatGPT, Claude, and Google's AI Overviews. Many provide clear insights into your standing against competitors and actionable steps for improvement. Features like "Competitive Rankings" offer data on mention frequency and context, eliminating guesswork. Tracking your performance is a direct gauge of your GEO strategy's effectiveness.

PRO TIP – Setting up AI tools monitoring in Google Analytics

It's easier than you might think! You can use Google Analytics 4 (GA4) to identify "PageReferrer" traffic from domains like chatgpt.com, gemini.google.com, and perplexity.ai.

Here's how to add tracking and monitor AI sources using GA4 :

- Navigate to the Engagement > Page path and query string report in GA4.
- Set a generous date range to capture historical data.
- Click the "Add filter +" button at the top of the report.
- Select "Page Referrer" as the dimension and "exactly matches" as the match type.
- Enter https://chatgpt.com as the value and click "Apply."

Repeat this process for each LLM ... https://gemini.google.com and https://perplexity.ai etc.

While traffic may be low now, monitoring this regularly will help you understand which AI tools your audience prefers. This also provides critical insight into any shifts in your traditional search traffic. Also tracking it early means you'll be ahead of the curve as this new channel for digital marketing solutions grows.



If you would like assistance or find out more about how web-aviso can help transform your business presence, do [contact us](#)