From Search Engine to Answer Engine: A Practitioner's Guide to GEO & AEO

How to Ensure Your Brand Is Cited by Perplexity, ChatGPT & Google AI Overviews

White Paper

Michael Williams

April 2026

Table of Contents

1 Executive Summary

The rules of digital discovery have fundamentally changed. Traditional Search Engine Optimization (SEO) was built around keyword density, backlinks, and SERP rankings. However, SEO is no longer sufficient to guarantee brand visibility. A seismic shift is underway: users are increasingly receiving their answers directly from artificial intelligence rather than clicking through a list of links.

This shift has given rise to two complementary disciplines: Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) and Answer Engine Optimization (AEO). Both describe the practice of structuring content, establishing authority, and building ecosystem presence. These practices optimize how AI-powered platforms (such as Perplexity, ChatGPT, and Google AI Overviews), cite, recommend, and surface a brand's products and expertise when generating responses for users.

This white paper provides a rigorous, evidence-based framework for practitioners seeking to win AI citations. It is structured around three strategic layers: universal content integrity principles applicable across all platforms; platform-specific optimization tactics derived from citation pattern data; and a measurement architecture for tracking progress over time.

> Key Insight: AI-referred sessions to websites grew 527% year-over-year through mid-2025. For brands that adapt, AI platforms are rapidly becoming a primary discovery channel. Unlike SEO, AI GEO and AEO are much more difficult to game by paid advertising and cannot be replicated overnight.[1]

Key Findings at a Glance

- ChatGPT processes over 2.5 billion prompts daily; Google AI Overviews now appear in approximately 88% of informational search queries.[2]
- Only 11% of domains are cited by both ChatGPT and Perplexity. Each platform requires a distinct optimization strategy.[3]
- Adding citations and statistics to content can improve AI citation visibility by up to 40%, per foundational Princeton University research.[4]
- Pages not updated at least quarterly are three times more likely to lose their AI citation status.[5]
- 73% of B2B buyers now use AI tools like ChatGPT and Perplexity in their research process.[6]

527%	88%	73%
AI-referred session growth	**Google queries showing AI Overviews**	**B2B buyers using AI for research**
Year-over-year, Jan–Jun 2025	of informational queries	as of 2025

2 THE SEARCH PARADIGM SHIFT: FROM RANKINGS TO CITATIONS

2.1 WHY TRADITIONAL SEO IS NO LONGER ENOUGH

For two decades, the primary goal of organic digital marketing was simple: rank at the top of Google's search results page. A position-one ranking drove click-through rates; clicks drove traffic; traffic drove conversions. The entire architecture of digital marketing was built on this chain of events.

That chain is now broken, not everywhere, but increasingly where it matters most. According to Semrush's 2025 AI Overviews study, AI-generated answer boxes now appear for 88% of informational-intent queries on Google.[2] When an AI Overview is present, the user absorbs the answer on the results page. Research by Seer Interactive documents that between June 2024 and September 2025, overall click-through rates declined substantially, with paid CTR falling from approximately 11% to 3% in a single month during July 2025.[7]

The practical consequence: ranking number one no longer guarantees visibility. Being cited as a source inside the AI-generated answer now carries more brand value than occupying the first organic link below it.

This is not a future scenario but applies today. For form builder tool Tally, ChatGPT became the number one referral source entirely through organic AI citation rather than paid placement.[1] For developer infrastructure company Vercel, ChatGPT referrals grew from 1% to 10% of new user signups within months.[6]

2.2 DEFINING GEO AND AEO

Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) is the discipline of optimizing digital content and brand signals to maximize visibility, citation probability, and recommendation frequency within AI-powered platforms. The term was formally introduced in academic research by Princeton University, Georgia Tech, and IIT Delhi, which demonstrated that targeted optimization strategies can boost source visibility in generative engine responses by up to 40%.[4]

Answer Engine Optimization (AEO) describes the same strategic objective from a slightly different angle: ensuring that content is selected as the authoritative source when users pose direct questions to AI assistants. Both terms describe overlapping and compatible practices; this paper uses them interchangeably.

> Definitional clarity: GEO is not a replacement for SEO. It is an extension of it. Traditional SEO remains the foundation. LLMs rely heavily on organic ranking signals when selecting citations. GEO adds a layer of structural, reputational, and freshness optimization that makes already-authoritative content more legible and citable by AI systems.

2.3 How AI Platforms Select Sources: The RAG Architecture

To optimize for AI citation, practitioners must understand the mechanism by which AI platforms retrieve and select content. Most major AI search platforms (such as Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, and ChatGPT's browsing mode) operate through a technology called Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG). RAG functions in two sequential phases:

1. In the retrieval phase, the AI system searches the web in real time (or queries its indexed knowledge base) to identify documents relevant to the user's query.
2. In the generation phase, the system synthesizes those retrieved documents into a fluent, natural-language response that cites the sources it used. This means that citation selection is not a static ranking; it is a dynamic evaluation performed at query time.[8]

The practical implication: GEO is not about manipulating a static algorithm. It is about making content consistently worthy of selection when an AI system retrieves and evaluates competing sources in real time. Authority, structure, freshness, and verifiability are the primary evaluation criteria.

3 THE UNIVERSAL CONTENT INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK

Despite meaningfully different citation architectures, all three major AI platforms share a common set of prerequisites for citation. These are not optimization tricks. Instead, they are the content quality standards that AI systems use as proxies for trustworthiness. We refer to these collectively as the Content Integrity Framework.

3.1 E-E-A-T: THE FOUNDATIONAL STANDARD

Google's Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-E-A-T) framework was originally developed to evaluate web content for search quality purposes. In the GEO context, E-E-A-T has become the closest available universal standard, because it captures the signals AI systems use to assess whether a source is worth citing.

- Experience: First-hand demonstration that the author has direct, lived engagement with the subject matter through case studies, original data, documented outcomes, or real-world application.
- Expertise: Technical command of the domain evidenced by named authors with verifiable credentials, institutional affiliations, or documented professional track records.
- Authoritativeness: Third-party recognition through mentions in respected publications, citations in peer-reviewed or industry research, and external links from high-domain-authority sources.
- Trustworthiness: Transparency in sourcing, factual accuracy, clear corrections policy, absence of deceptive formatting, and HTTPS security.

Google explicitly states that helpful, high-quality content with clear authorship, strong topical focus, and full crawlability is most likely to appear in AI Overviews.[20] Research confirms that AI systems check author qualifications before citing content, with detailed named author bios significantly improving citation probability.[17]

3.2 STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY: MAKING CONTENT MACHINE-LEGIBLE

LLMs do not read content the way humans do. They extract structured, semantically meaningful chunks of text to determine whether a passage answers a query. Content optimized for AI citation is organized so that this extraction process is as frictionless as possible.

Content Architecture Requirements

- Lead every section with a direct, concise answer in the first 40–60 words. AI systems evaluate the opening sentences of each section to determine relevance. Vague preamble prompts the system to move to a competitor.
- Use clear hierarchical headings (H1, H2, H3) that mirror the language of user queries. Question-based headings perform particularly well because they match conversational AI prompts.
- Maintain a "Quick Answer" block in the first 200 words of each page: a numbered list of top-level takeaways with one-line descriptions. This two-layer architecture ensures AI systems can

extract a concise response for brief queries while having detailed content for extended answers.[5]

- Keep paragraphs to two to three lines maximum to reduce extraction ambiguity.
- Maintain a statistical density of at least one data point with attribution per 150–200 words. The Princeton GEO research identified statistical enrichment as one of the three highest-impact citation optimization techniques.[4]

3.3 Schema Markup: Type Safety for Content

Structured data in the form of Schema.org JSON-LD markup provides AI crawlers with machine-parseable metadata about the nature and content of each page. This markup functions as "type safety for content". It removes the interpretive burden from the AI system by providing explicit context.

- Deploy triple-schema stacking on all primary content pages: Article + ItemList + FAQPage in a single JSON-LD block. Data from GenOptima's 2026 performance monitoring shows that pages with this full triple stack receive 1.8 times more AI citations than pages with Article schema alone.[5]
- FAQPage schema independently increases FAQ content visibility in AI-generated responses. Encoding the ten to fifteen most common industry questions with structured answer markup directly addresses the most frequent conversational query patterns.
- Ensure all HTML5 semantic elements are used correctly. Replace anonymous div structures with article, section, header, main, and aside elements. Semantic HTML enables AI parsers to understand content hierarchy without relying on visual layout.[4]

> Technical note: As of January 2026, OpenAI's Operator and similar agentic AI systems actively browse the web, compare options, and complete tasks on behalf of users. Content with structured, machine-readable information. Examples are clear pricing tables, feature comparisons, and step-by-step instructions. This structuring is increasingly important for inclusion in agent-driven workflows.[3]

3.4 Freshness and Maintenance

AI models deprioritize stale content, and the rate of freshness decay is measurably steep. Research indicates 85% of AI citations are from content published within the last two years, with 44% from 2025 specifically.[13] Pages not updated at least quarterly are three times more likely to lose their AI citations.[5]

A sustainable content maintenance protocol should include: a visible version history block and last-updated timestamp at the top of each page; quarterly reviews of statistics and data points with replacement of outdated figures; and a publication cadence of one to two new substantive content pieces per week to maintain freshness signals across the domain.

3.5 Citation Integrity: Earning Third-Party Validation

The definition of “earned media” is references to a brand from sources the system did not create. AI systems use earned media as one of the strongest signals of authority. A 2025 paper on citation bias in AI search found that AI engines strongly favor earned media over brand-owned content.[9]

The sources AI systems most value for earned citation include:

- Customer reviews on G2, Capterra, and Trustpilot documenting real product experiences.
- Industry journalism mentioning the company with factual specificity.
- Community discussions on Reddit and Quora where users recommend the product authentically.
- Academic or research citations of original data published by the brand.

When multiple independent sources discuss a brand in relevant contexts, AI systems have clearer and more redundant signals to interpret credibility.[1] This means that a coordinated digital PR strategy that focuses on earned placement rather than paid placement is now a direct GEO input.

4 Platform-Specific Optimization Playbooks

A foundational finding from analysis of 680 million citations across ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews, and Perplexity is that each platform demonstrates a meaningfully distinct citation architecture. Only 11% of domains are cited by both ChatGPT and Perplexity.[3] A one-size-fits-all GEO strategy is therefore inadequate. Instead, platform-specific playbooks are required.

Factor	ChatGPT	Google AI Overviews	Perplexity
Top cited source	Wikipedia (48% of top sources)	Reddit (2.2%), diverse mix	Reddit (46.7% of top sources)
Google SERP overlap	~14% match with Google top 10	99.5% from Google top 10	91% correlation w/ Google top 10
Freshness weight	Moderate - favors authority	High - combines E-E-A-T + recency	Very high - with a 90-day preference
Content style	Encyclopedic, comprehensive	Structured, schema-rich	Recent, community-validated
Primary signal	Training-data authority	Organic rank + E-E-A-T	Real-time web + community

4.1 ChatGPT: Building Encyclopedic Authority

ChatGPT processes over 2.5 billion prompts daily.[2] Its citation architecture has one defining characteristic: Wikipedia represents 48% of its top cited sources when answering factual questions.[17] The signal is clear: ChatGPT rewards encyclopedic, factual, comprehensive content that establishes definitional authority.

ChatGPT overlaps with traditional Google top 10 results only approximately 14% of the time.[13] This means a brand can appear frequently in ChatGPT responses while ranking modestly on traditional Google search IF the content meets the platform's authority criteria. ChatGPT favors direct sources over intermediaries, with original brand websites receiving an 11-point higher citation rate than third-party aggregators.[14]

ChatGPT Optimization Priorities

- Publish comprehensive, definitional content: long-form pieces that establish your brand as the authoritative source for your core category. Aim for the depth and factual completeness of Wikipedia entries without their neutrality constraints.
- Ensure all high-value content was indexed on authoritative domains well before OpenAI's training cutoff dates. For ChatGPT's base model (non-browsing), training-data inclusion is the primary citation mechanism.[16]

- Include content on high-authority third-party platforms: press coverage, industry association publications, and educational domain (.edu, .org) placements significantly increase training-data citation probability.
- Enrich all content with specific statistics, named sources, and methodology references. The Princeton research confirms citation addition and statistical enrichment are the two highest-impact techniques for AI visibility.[4]

4.2 Google AI Overviews: Winning on E-E-A-T and Organic Authority

Google AI Overviews now reach more than 1.5 billion users monthly across 200+ countries.[17] Their citation architecture is the most tightly coupled to traditional organic search performance: a 2026 seoClarity study found that 99.5% of AI Overview sources are pulled from websites already ranking in the top 10 organic results for that query.[13]

Research by BrightEdge shows that 54.5% of citations in AI Overviews now match top organic URLs, up from 32% in 2024. This reveals a trend toward tighter SERP integration.[13]

Google AI Overviews Optimization Priorities

- Rank in the top 10 for target queries. This is a prerequisite, not merely an optimization. The 99.5% citation pull rate from top 10 results makes organic ranking non-negotiable.[13]
- Deploy the full triple JSON-LD schema stack (Article + ItemList + FAQPage) on all primary pages. FAQPage schema creates direct alignment with the conversational query format AI Overviews serve.
- Optimize Core Web Vitals and mobile performance. Google explicitly states that HTTPS, mobile optimization, and page performance are baseline requirements for AI Overview citation eligibility.[16]
- Strengthen E-E-A-T signals systematically: named authors with verifiable credentials, clear publication and update timestamps, citations to primary sources, and institutional transparency.
- For YMYL (Your Money, Your Life) industries such as healthcare, finance, and legal, the organic-to-AI-Overview citation overlap rises above 75%.[13] For these sectors, E-E-A-T compliance is especially stringent.

4.3 Perplexity: Recency, Community, and Real-Time Credibility

Perplexity has reached 45 million active users and surpassed 780 million monthly queries.[3] It is the most source-transparent of the three major platforms, listing five to eight source citations prominently for every response, making it the highest direct-attribution platform for brand visibility.[16]

Perplexity's citation architecture is dominated by community content: Reddit accounts for 46.7% of its top cited sources.[12] Perplexity has a 91% correlation with Google's top 10 rankings but weighs heavily toward freshness. It currently has a strong preference for content published within the past 90 days.[13]

Perplexity Optimization Priorities

- Maintain a content freshness cadence of seven to fourteen days for cornerstone pages. Adding a visible “last updated” timestamp and refreshing statistics increases Perplexity citation probability by approximately 30%.[14]
- Build authentic, expertise-driven presence in Reddit communities relevant to your industry. Subreddits such as r/SaaS, r/startups, r/marketing, and vertical-specific forums are impactful. Reddit accounts for 21% of Google AI Overview citations and 46.7% of Perplexity citations.[14] Only genuine expertise-sharing builds citation equity; promotional posting is quickly identified and rejected.
- Publish new content at a sustainable weekly cadence. Analysis shows that articles enter AI citation pools within three to five business days; consistent velocity prevents citation gaps.[5]
- Structure content as listicle-format ranking pages (“Top N” frameworks). Research finds that 74.2% of all AI citations come from structured “Top N” content.[5]

5 Ecosystem and Distribution Strategy

5.1 The Multi-Platform Presence Imperative

GEO is not a website-only discipline. AI systems synthesize information from across the entire web ecosystem when forming their understanding of a brand's authority. A brand that publishes excellent on-site content but maintains no presence in third-party publications, community forums, or review platforms will be systematically under cited relative to competitors with a broader footprint.

Analysis from Semrush identifies Reddit, LinkedIn, and YouTube as among the top cited sources by leading LLMs as of October 2025.[1] This cross-platform reality has direct strategic implications: content placed on these platforms contributes to the earned-media ecosystem that AI systems use to triangulate brand credibility.

5.2 The Digital PR–GEO Connection

The definition of digital public relations is often "the practice of securing earned editorial coverage in respected online publications". It is evolving to become a direct GEO input. The mechanism is straightforward: when a respected industry publication cites your brand's research or expertise, that citation becomes part of the web corpus AI systems query. Multiple independent citations from high-authority sources compound into a stronger credibility signal than any single piece of owned content.

- Target publications with domain authority above 70, particularly in industry-specific verticals. AI systems evaluate the authority of the publication citing a brand, not just the brand's own domain.
- Publish original research such as proprietary data, benchmark studies, and unique frameworks that journalists and industry analysts will cite. Content that provides something no other source provides gives AI systems a specific citation motivation.[9]
- Pursue placement in structured comparison resources: "best-of" lists, category comparison guides, and industry buyer's guides. Appearing in already-ranked third-party lists is one of the most consistent paths to AI citation, because many AI responses pull directly from these resources.[7]

5.3 Review Platform Strategy

Customer reviews on G2, Capterra, and Trustpilot serve a dual function in the GEO context. They provide authentic, third-party social proof that AI systems interpret as credibility validation. Since they are most often written by real users and indexed on high-authority review platforms, they create a body of earned content. AI systems can retrieve and analyze this content when evaluating a product in a purchase-intent query context.

A systematic review cultivation strategy should include:

- Post-purchase email sequences inviting customers to share their experience.

- Responses to all reviews demonstrating organizational accountability.
- Ongoing monitoring of review sentiment as an early signal of potential product credibility issues.

6 MEASUREMENT ARCHITECTURE

6.1 THE METRICS TRANSITION

Traditional SEO measurements such as clicks, impressions, and organic ranking positions are insufficient for GEO performance evaluation. A brand can be frequently cited in AI responses while generating zero attributable clicks, because users absorb the answer without visiting the source. Conversely, a brand can rank number one on Google while being completely absent from AI-generated responses.

Effective GEO measurement requires a parallel metrics stack that captures AI-specific visibility. The core metrics are:

- AI citation frequency (how often the brand appears in AI-generated answers for target queries)
- Share of voice (brand mentions relative to competitors across AI platforms)
- Citation sentiment (whether citations are positive, neutral, or negative)
- Platform-specific visibility scores across ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews, and Perplexity.[1]

6.2 MEASUREMENT METHODOLOGY

Because AI systems do not provide search impression data equivalent to Google Search Console, measurement requires a manual and tool-assisted hybrid approach:

- Monthly manual query testing: identify the thirty to fifty queries most important to the business and test them across ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, and Gemini. Document citation occurrence, position, and framing.
- GA4 AI referral traffic monitoring: configure analytics to capture traffic from AI platform domains (chat.openai.com, perplexity.ai, gemini.google.com) as distinct acquisition sources.
- Brand search volume monitoring: increases in branded search following AI visibility gains indicate that users encountered the brand through AI responses and subsequently searched directly.[17]
- Form attribution: add a “How did you hear about us?” field to lead capture forms with explicit AI platform options. This enables direct attribution of pipeline to AI citation.
- Purpose-built GEO monitoring platforms including Semrush Enterprise AIO, Profound, and Geoptie provide programmatic citation tracking, competitive benchmarking, and share-of-voice analysis across AI platforms.[1]

6.3 PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

Based on available case study data, realistic GEO performance benchmarks for a brand implementing a comprehensive strategy from a cold start are:

- 30–45 days: initial citation appearances in Perplexity (given its real-time retrieval architecture) for freshly published, well-structured content.

- 60–90 days: measurable share-of-voice improvements across at least one target AI platform; initial GA4 AI referral traffic detectable.[14]
- 90–180 days: category-level visibility across two or more platforms; meaningful contribution of AI-attributed leads to pipeline.

These timelines reflect tactical execution on the framework described in this paper. Brands entering highly competitive categories, or those with significant existing E-E-A-T deficits, should expect longer paths to visible impact.

7 Implementation Roadmap

7.1 Phase 1: Foundation (Days 1–30)

- Conduct a comprehensive content audit to identify pages with the highest citation potential (high-intent, informational, and definitional content).
- Deploy triple JSON-LD schema stacking (Article + ItemList + FAQPage) across all primary content pages.
- Reformat top ten pages to include “Quick Answer” blocks in the first 200 words, question-based H2 headings, and one data point per 200 words of body content.
- Audit robots.txt and LLMs.txt files to confirm AI crawler access is not blocked. Ensure HTTPS, Core Web Vitals compliance, and mobile optimization meet baseline standards.
- Establish a manual monthly query-testing protocol across all target platforms.

7.2 Phase 2: Authority Building (Days 31–90)

- Launch a digital PR campaign targeting three to five high-authority industry publications with original research or data-driven insights.
- Build or refresh presence on the two to three review platforms most relevant to the target market; implement a post-purchase review cultivation sequence.
- Initiate authentic community presence on Reddit in two to three relevant subreddits, following guidelines that prioritize genuine expertise-sharing over promotional posting.
- Publish an original research asset or benchmark study. Ideally, it should provide data that no competitor currently provides. This will give AI systems a unique citation motivation.[9]
- Configure GA4 AI referral traffic monitoring and establish baseline share-of-voice metrics across target platforms.

7.3 Phase 3: Scale and Iteration (Days 91–180)

- Implement seven-to-fourteen-day content freshness cycles for cornerstone pages, including visible version history timestamps.
- Expand content coverage into adjacent topic clusters identified through AI query testing. The testing should identify queries where competitors appear, but the brand does not.
- Evaluate and implement a purpose-built GEO monitoring platform appropriate to organizational scale.
- Conduct quarterly E-E-A-T audits: review author bio completeness, source citation quality, and factual accuracy across all primary content assets.
- Report AI citation metrics alongside traditional SEO metrics in all marketing performance dashboards.

8 Cheat Codes From My Experiments

8.1 Overview

The methods outlined above are strategic and persist for long periods of time. But what do you do when you need to execute a launch on a tight timeframe or can't wait for the web team to refresh the web site? This section covers the cheat codes that have worked for me to date.

8.2 Ask The AI To Game The AI

When my product line was technically superior to a major vendor's product but scored unreasonably low, the evaluation algorithm was impossible to decode. However, asking the AI LLM how to improve the score is the best way to circumvent "black box" algorithms.

The prompt should request the specific features and the corresponding values (described as "statistical enrichment" above) that contributed to the other vendor's product score. Once this is understood, then you should research the value that your product provides. Finally, ensure that a statistic is provided at least every 150-200 words as mentioned above. This method will improve the product's competitive rankings in the near term.

8.3 Create Reference Content

While website mentions are very authoritative, often they take time to implement. To maximize credibility for the product, features, and value settings, use a reference content format:

- **Technical Report:** As mentioned above, technical reports are prioritized over other formats.
- **Buyers Guide:** A Buyers Guide that includes "statistical enrichment" is a relatively low cost and efficient way to present this information.
- **FAQs:** Formal FAQ documents formatted as described above are easy for the AI to ingest.
- **White Paper:** A White Paper is like a Buyers Guide but is slightly less credible in experiments run to date.
- **Top x Flyers:** Top 5 or Top 10 flyers can be easily created with this information and leveraged both on the company and on partner websites.

8.4 Collaborate With Influencers

For emerging markets, the most credible references are often influencers, including industry foundations and Open Source groups. Collaborating with these influencers can lead to much improved scores with reasonable effort. In my experience, often this has been the only way to change a company's and product's image in the community.

9 CONCLUSION

The transition from search engine optimization to generative engine optimization is not a marginal shift in tactics. It is a structural change in how digital authority is accumulated and how brands are discovered by buyers. Brands must adapt now by building content integrity, deploying structured data, cultivating earned media, and measuring AI-specific visibility. This will help the brand accumulate citation history that compounds over time.

The brands that wait are not simply falling behind. They are ceding ground that becomes progressively harder to reclaim as citation authority concentrates among early movers. With 73% of B2B buyers already using AI tools in their research process and AI-referred sessions growing at 527% year-over-year, the urgency is not hypothetical.[6] [1]

The framework presented in this paper is built on the stable underlying principles that drive all three major platforms: authority, structure, freshness, and verifiable accuracy. Platform-specific tactics will evolve as AI systems mature. These principles will not.

> Final Recommendation: Begin with the highest-leverage, lowest-effort interventions. These include FAQ schema markup, Quick Answer blocks, content freshness timestamps, and the “Cheat Codes”. These changes can begin improving citation probability within weeks and establish the structural foundation for sustained AEO and GEO performance.

10 REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

This white paper was built with AI input. The input was edited, extended with original thoughts and perspectives, and finalized by me.

1. Semrush / SearchEngineLand. "Generative Engine Optimization (GEO): How to Win AI Mentions." SearchEngineLand.com, February 16, 2026. searchengineland.com/what-is-generative-engine-optimization-geo-444418

2. Semrush. "How to Optimize Content for AI Search Engines." Semrush Blog, March 2026. semrush.com/blog/how-to-optimize-content-for-ai-search-engines/

3. Frase.io. "What is Generative Engine Optimization (GEO)? Complete 2026 Guide." Frase.io Blog, March 2026. frase.io/blog/what-is-generative-engine-optimization-geo

4. Aggarwal, Pranjal et al. "GEO: Generative Engine Optimization." arXiv:2311.09735. Princeton University, Georgia Tech, IIT Delhi, 2024. Foundational academic research formalizing the GEO discipline and quantifying optimization impact.

5. GenOptima. "Generative Engine Optimization Best Practices: The Complete 2026 Playbook." gen-optima.com, March 2026. gen-optima.com/blog/generative-engine-optimization-best-practices-complete-2026-playbook/

6. Averi.ai. "ChatGPT vs. Perplexity vs. Google AI Mode: The B2B SaaS Citation Benchmarks Report 2026." averi.ai, January 7, 2026. averi.ai/how-to/chatgpt-vs-perplexity-vs-google-ai-mode-the-b2b-saas-citation-benchmarks-report-2026

7. Seer Interactive, cited in DataSlayer. "AI Overviews Killed CTR 61%: 9 Strategies to Show Up." dataslayer.ai, January 30, 2026. Analysis of 3,119 informational queries tracking 25.1M impressions across 42 organizations.

8. DigitalMagazine.in. "GEO vs. SEO: How to Get Your Content Cited by ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI." digitalmagazine.in, March 2026.

9. SearchEngineLand. "Mastering Generative Engine Optimization in 2026: Full Guide." searchengineland.com, February 23, 2026. searchengineland.com/mastering-generative-engine-optimization-in-2026-full-guide-469142

10. Strapi.io. "Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) Guide." strapi.io, 2025. strapi.io/blog/generative-engine-optimization-geo-guide

11. Tryprofound.com. "AI Platform Citation Patterns: How ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews, and Perplexity Source Information." tryprofound.com, updated August 2025. Analysis dataset of 680 million citations.

12. Frase.io. "What is Answer Engine Optimization? The Complete Guide." frase.io, March 2026. frase.io/blog/what-is-answer-engine-optimization-the-complete-guide-to-getting-cited-by-ai

13. PragoMedia. "New Data Confirms Top Google Rankings Matter for ChatGPT, Perplexity & AI Search." pragomedia.com, March 9, 2026. Synthesizing seoClarity, BrightEdge, and Semrush/SE Ranking data.

14. Averi.ai Citation Benchmarks Report 2026, op. cit. See footnote 6.

15. GoFishDigital. "Generative Engine Optimization Strategies (GEO) for 2026." gofishdigital.com, January 6, 2026.

16. EnrichLabs. "Generative Engine Optimization (GEO): The Complete 2026 Guide." enrichlabs.ai, February 2026. enrichlabs.ai/blog/generative-engine-optimization-geo-complete-guide-2026

17. DataSlayer / Seer Interactive CTR Impact Study. "AI Overviews Killed CTR 61%." dataslayer.ai, January 30, 2026. dataslayer.ai/blog/google-ai-overviews-the-end-of-traditional-ctr-and-how-to-adapt-in-2025

18. First Page Sage. "Generative Engine Optimization Best Practices." firstpagesage.com, December 23, 2025.

19. Firebrand Marketing. "GEO Best Practices for 2026." firebrand.marketing, December 17, 2025. firebrand.marketing/2025/12/geo-best-practices-2026/

20. Wellows. "Google AI Overviews Ranking Factors: 2026 Guide to Winning Citations." wellows.com, February 11, 2026. wellows.com/blog/google-ai-overviews-ranking-factors/

11 About Michael Williams

Michael Williams is an accomplished product marketing leader with a passion for driving exceptional business outcomes through impactful content. A diverse background as security sys admin, developer, sales, BD, product management, and product marketing enable him to collaborate and turbocharge across the company.

His core product marketing differentiator is establishing the path to and removing barriers to revenue growth. He has established four new market and product categories, taken over 20 products from entry to #1 market and/or thought leadership, helped grow horizontal markets to over $1B, provided content for campaigns that exceeded goals by 300%, and driven revenue gains of 30% QoQ over consecutive years.

Key Links:

- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/williamsma/
- Portfolio: https://revgrow.pro/portfolio
- GitHub: https://github.com/michaelrobotai