kangaroouk

The Complete Guide to AEO & GEO Content Creation

Answer Engine Optimisation & Generative Engine Optimisation

How to create content that gets cited by AI systems, appears in Google's Knowledge Graph & wins in zero-click search.

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Contents

1. The Shift: From Rankings to Answers

Something fundamental has changed in how people find information online. For two decades, the goal of digital marketing was simple: rank higher in Google's list of blue links. Get to position one, and the clicks would follow.

That model is breaking down.

65%	of Google searches now end without a click to any website. The answer appears directly on the results page.

Source: CXL: Answer Engine Optimization Guide 2025

This is a structural shift driven by three converging forces:

- **AI Answer Engines** – Google's AI Overviews now appear in 13-16% of searches. ChatGPT reached over 400 million weekly users in early 2025.
  Source: SEO Tuners: AEO for Google AI Overviews

- **Voice Search Growth** – Voice commerce is projected to reach around $80 billion in annual value, with voice assistants giving single answers rather than lists of links.
  Source: CXL: Answer Engine Optimization Guide

- **Zero-Click Features** – Featured snippets, knowledge panels, and local packs have trained users to expect instant answers for years.

Gartner predicts that by 2026, 25% of organic search traffic will shift to AI chatbots and virtual assistants instead of traditional search clicks.

Source: CXL citing Gartner research

What is AEO?

Answer Engine Optimisation (AEO) is the practice of optimising your content so that search platforms can directly provide answers to user queries, rather than just listing links. It focuses on making your content the answer that engines deliver to users, whether through featured snippets, voice assistant responses, or AI-powered chat results.

Source: CXL: AEO Definition

You may also hear this called:

- GEO – Generative Engine Optimisation
- LLMO – Large Language Model Optimisation
- AI Search Optimisation

They all describe the same fundamental shift: optimising for AI systems that synthesise answers, not just rank pages.

How Do AI Answer Engines Work?

Understanding how these systems work helps explain what we need to do differently. Duda's research explains the process:

Training Data

Large Language Models are trained on vast amounts of text data scraped from the web, often using crawlers like GPTbot or from publicly available crawl data like Common Crawl. This gives them general knowledge, but it has a cutoff date.

Source: Duda: AEO for Agencies

Real-Time Search Augmentation

To provide current information, AI systems query traditional search indexes (usually Google or Bing) and incorporate those results. This is called Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG). The AI then synthesises information from multiple sources.

Source: Duda: How LLMs Search the Web

KEY POINT: If your content isn't indexed by search engines, AI systems can't find it. If it's not structured clearly, they won't extract it. If it lacks authority signals, they won't trust it.

2. Content First: The Foundation

Before we discuss any technical optimisation, we need to establish the most important principle:

Good content clearly answers questions people actually have.

No amount of technical optimisation can save thin, unhelpful content. Conversely, genuinely useful content with basic technical setup will outperform perfectly optimised mediocrity every time.

The real goal is always: Traffic → Leads → Customers. Everything else serves that purpose.

TIP: *This insight comes from Idan at Duda's SEO team: 'Checklists can be risky, as they give a false sense of security while frequently not solving for the real goal.'*

E-E-A-T: The Quality Framework

Google's quality guidelines centre on E-E-A-T: Experience, Expertise, Authority, and Trustworthiness. AI systems have adopted similar principles to determine which sources to cite.

Source: Google Search Quality Guidelines

Experience

Does the content demonstrate first-hand experience with the topic? Have you actually done the thing you're writing about?

EXAMPLE: Showing Experience

Instead of: 'SEO audits are important for websites.'Write: 'In the 127 SEO audits we've conducted over the past three years, we've found that 73% of SME websites have critical indexability issues that prevent their best content from appearing in search.'

Expertise

Does the content demonstrate deep knowledge of the subject? Is it written by someone qualified to write about it? Include technical depth that only an expert would know.

Authority

Is this source recognised as authoritative on this topic? Do others cite or reference this source? Build author profiles with credentials and track records.

Trustworthiness

Can this source be trusted? Cite sources for claims and statistics. Be transparent about limitations. Keep content accurate and up to date.

The Four Pillars of Quality Content

Based on research into what content performs best in AI systems, quality content consistently includes these elements:

- **Examples** – Show what could go well or go wrong. Real scenarios build trust and demonstrate experience.
- **Citations** – Quotes, statistics, and links to third-party sources make your content more credible and verifiable.
- **Directness** – Strong, focused statements beat vague ones. Say what you mean. Avoid corporate waffle.
- **Freshness** – Keep content focused on current information. Outdated content loses trust rapidly.

Research from Princeton University found that combining 'Fluency Optimisation + Statistics Addition' produced the best results in AI citation - a 30-40% improvement in visibility metrics.

Source: Princeton: GEO Generative Engine Optimization Research

TIP: *Write like a journalist: lead with facts, cite sources, quote experts. The Princeton research proved this approach works.*

3. Writing for Answer Engines

AI systems extract snippets from content to construct answers. The way you write directly impacts whether your content gets selected and how prominently it features in responses.

Princeton's research identified two key metrics for AEO performance: Position-Adjusted Word Count (where your content appears in the AI response) and Subjective Impression (how influential and unique your citation is).

Source: Princeton GEO Research Paper

The Journalist's Approach

Journalists are trained to write for busy readers who might not read the whole article. They use an 'inverted pyramid' structure: most important information first, supporting details after.

This approach works perfectly for AI systems, which need to extract concise answers quickly.

Lead With the Answer

Place a direct, complete answer (40-60 words) at the beginning of the relevant section, then elaborate.

Source: CXL: Content Formatting for AEO

> **EXAMPLE: Before vs After**
> BEFORE: 'When it comes to website design, there are many factors to consider. In today's digital landscape, businesses need to think carefully about their online presence...'AFTER: 'An effective business website needs five core elements: clear value proposition, intuitive navigation, mobile responsiveness, fast load times, and compelling calls-to-action. Here's how to implement each one.'

One Idea Per Paragraph

Each paragraph should make one clear point. This makes it easy for AI systems to extract relevant snippets without pulling in unrelated information.

Use Active Voice

Active voice is more direct and easier to parse:

- 'The algorithm analyses your content' NOT 'Your content is analysed by the algorithm'
- 'We build websites that convert' NOT 'Websites that convert are built by us'

Structure Content for Extraction

AI systems extract content at the section level. Each section should be able to stand alone as a complete answer if extracted from context.

Use Question-Based Headings

Structure H2s as questions that match what users actually ask. Marketers should write headers that match common searches in full.

Source: MarketingProfs: AEO vs SEO

> **EXAMPLE: Question-Based Structure**
> Instead of: 'Pricing Information'Use: 'How Much Does Web Design Cost?'Instead of: 'Our Process'Use: 'How Long Does a Website Build Take?'

Provide Self-Contained Answers

Headers should be immediately followed by articulate answers of 50 words or less that do not reference or rely on other parts of the page for support.

Source: MarketingProfs: Content Structure for AEO

Add Credibility Signals

The Princeton research found that adding quotations, citations, and statistics led to a 30-40% boost in Position-Adjusted Word Count and 15-30% improvement in Subjective Impression metrics.

Source: Princeton GEO Research

Statistics With Sources

Include specific data points and cite where they came from. Vague claims like 'most businesses' are less useful than '73% of SME websites (Kangaroo UK audit data, 2025)'.

Expert Quotes

Quote industry experts, client testimonials, or your own team members with credentials. Attribution matters.

Specific Details

Concrete specifics beat generalities. Name tools, methodologies, locations, and outcomes:

- 'We use Screaming Frog, Ahrefs, and Google Search Console,' NOT 'industry-leading tools'
- 'Based in Leicestershire, serving clients across the UK' NOT 'our area'

4. Entity Optimisation & Knowledge Graph

Google's Knowledge Graph contains over 500 billion facts about 5 billion entities. An 'entity' is anything distinct and identifiable: a person, business, place, product, or concept.

Source: Geostar: Schema Markup for AI Search

When your business, team members, and content are recognised as entities in this graph, AI systems can understand, verify, and cite you more confidently.

What is an Entity?

In the context of search and AI, an entity is a 'thing' with distinct, identifiable properties:

- A unique identity (distinguishable from similar things)
- Attributes (name, location, founding date, etc.)
- Relationships to other entities (founder, location, industry)

Knowledge graphs provide the structured foundation that allows language models to reason rather than hallucinate. They allow answer engines to move beyond pattern prediction and into deterministic reasoning.

Source: VibeAEO: Knowledge Graphs in AEO

Establishing Your Entity

1. Consistent NAP Information

Your Name, Address, and Phone number must be identical everywhere: your website, Google Business Profile, all directory listings, social media profiles, and schema markup.

KEY POINT: Even small variations (Ltd vs Limited, Street vs St.) can prevent Google from connecting these mentions to a single entity.

2. sameAs Links

Use 'sameAs' properties in your schema markup to explicitly connect your entity across platforms. This helps disambiguate your entity and ties it to Google's existing Knowledge Graph.

Source: AISO Hub: Schema Markup Knowledge Graph Guide

3. Author Entities

Individual people who create content should also be established as entities. Research shows pages with comprehensive schema markup are 36% more likely to appear in AI-generated summaries and citations.

Source: Geostar: Schema for AI Search

Schema Markup: Speaking the Graph's Language

Schema markup (structured data) is how you explicitly communicate entity information to search engines. A benchmark study found that LLMs grounded in knowledge graphs achieve 300% higher accuracy compared to those relying solely on unstructured data.

Source: Schema App: Semantic Value of Schema Markup 2025

TIP: *Schema is Medium priority – helpful where appropriate, but only implement it if you know it will help the specific page. Don't add schema just to tick a box.*

Priority Schema Types

- **Organisation** – Site-wide, establishing your business entity. Include logo, contact, sameAs links.
- **LocalBusiness** – For businesses with physical locations. Include address, geo, and opening hours.
- **Person** – For team members/authors. Include jobTitle, worksFor, sameAs, and knowsAbout.
- **Article** – For blog posts and articles. Include headline, author, datePublished, and dateModified.
- **FAQPage** – For FAQ sections. Helps content appear in featured snippets and AI answers.
- **Product + Offer** – For product pages. Include price, availability, and reviews.

Google recommends JSON-LD format because it's easier to implement and maintain at scale, reducing errors.

Source: Digi Solutions: Schema Markup Best Practices

5. Technical Priorities

Technical optimisation supports content quality – it doesn't replace it. But certain technical elements are essential for AI systems to find and trust your content.

KEY POINT: Brilliant content with basic technical setup beats thin content with perfect technical optimisation. Prioritise accordingly.

This priority framework comes from Duda's SEO team:

The Priority Framework

CRITICAL: Indexability

Can your content be crawled and indexed by bots? Without this, nothing else matters. Check: no noindex tags, accessible via links, not blocked by robots.txt.

HIGH: Title & Meta Description

Unique, helpful, descriptive. Title 50-60 characters, description 150-160 characters.

MEDIUM: Supporting Elements

- Sitemap, Robots.txt, LLMs.txt – these help inform crawlers but are not critical
- Schema.org – where it can help, it helps, but only do it if you know it's helpful
- Clear URLs and page structure
- Page speed and experience
- hreflang for multi-language sites

LOW: Nice to Have

- HTML structure and hierarchy (H1s, H2s, etc.)
- Breadcrumbs

Title Tags

- 50-60 characters maximum
- Include primary topic/keyword naturally
- Unique for every page
- Descriptive and compelling

EXAMPLE: Good Title Tag

'How Much Does SEO Cost for Small Businesses? | Kangaroo UK'NOT: 'SEO Services | Kangaroo UK | Digital Marketing Agency | Leicestershire'

Other Technical Elements

Page Speed

Faster pages provide better user experience and may be favoured in citations. Aim for under 3 seconds on mobile.

Clear URL Structure

Use descriptive, readable URLs: /services/seo-services/ not /services/?id=127

IndexNow Protocol

Duda employs the IndexNow protocol, which notifies participating search engines of changes to your sitemap whenever you publish. This is crucial for AEO because LLMs rely on traditional search indexes.

Source: Duda: Technical SEO for AEO

6. Content Guidelines by Page Type

Different page types serve different purposes and require different approaches.

Service Pages

Service pages need to answer: What is this? Who is it for? How does it work? What does it cost? Why choose you?

Content Priorities

- Opening paragraph answers 'What is [service]?' in 40-60 words
- Include real examples of outcomes
- Specific pricing or 'starting from' where possible
- FAQ section with genuine customer questions
- Named team members who deliver the service

Schema to Consider

- Service schema with provider, areaServed
- FAQPage schema for FAQ section

Blog Posts & Articles

Content Priorities

- First paragraph provides a direct answer
- At least 3 statistics with sources
- At least 1 expert quote
- Each section stands alone if extracted
- Author attribution with credentials
- Publication and 'last updated' dates

Schema to Consider

- Article schema with author, dates, publisher
- Person schema for author

Local Business Pages

Content Priorities

- Full address, phone, opening hours
- Embedded map with directions
- Local testimonials with customer names
- Areas/postcodes served explicitly listed

Critical: NAP must match Google Business Profile exactly

Homepage

Content Priorities

- Clear value proposition (what you do, who for)
- Primary services/products listed and linked
- Trust signals (logos, reviews, credentials)
- Business name appears naturally 3-5 times

About & Team Pages

Content Priorities

- Real photos (not stock images)
- Individual bios with credentials
- Areas of expertise clearly stated
- Links to professional profiles

7. Measuring AEO Success

Traditional SEO metrics (rankings, traffic) don't tell the whole story in an AEO world. A SparkToro report found that organic link clicks lowered by almost 4% from March 2024 to March 2025, while searches ending without link clicks rose by around 3%.

Source: SurferSEO citing SparkToro

What to Track

AI Visibility Metrics

- Brand mentions in AI Overviews (manual checks for key queries)
- Citations in ChatGPT, Perplexity, Claude responses
- Featured snippet appearances
- Knowledge Panel presence (search your brand name)

Traditional Metrics (Still Relevant)

- Organic traffic (though may decline with zero-click)
- Impressions in Google Search Console
- Click-through rate trends

Business Outcomes (What Actually Matters)

- Leads generated
- Conversions/sales
- Brand search volume trends

Manual Testing Process

Until better tools emerge, regular manual testing is essential:

1. Identify your 10-20 most important queries (questions customers ask)
2. Test these queries in Google, ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Claude
3. Note: Are you mentioned? Cited? Linked?
4. Compare against competitors
5. Document trends monthly

Emerging tools like OmniSEO can track your mentions across various AI and answer platforms.

Source: CXL: AEO Tracking Tools

TIP: *Duda is planning to launch AEO analytics, recommendations, and optimisation tools in Q2 2026. These should make tracking much easier.*

Content Refresh Cycle

AI systems favour fresh, accurate content. Build a regular refresh process:

- **Monthly** – Check statistics are current, update 'last modified' dates
- **Quarterly** – Review top-performing content for opportunities to strengthen
- **Annually** – Comprehensive content audit for accuracy and relevance

8. Quick Reference & Resources

The AEO Content Checklist

Use this for every piece of content:

Content Quality

- Does this clearly answer a real question?
- Is the answer in the first 40-60 words?
- Does it include examples, data, or quotes?
- Is every statement direct and specific?
- Can each section stand alone if extracted?

E-E-A-T Signals

- Is there a named, credible author?
- Are sources cited for claims?
- Does it demonstrate real experience?

Technical Essentials

- [Critical] Is the page indexable?
- [High] Is the title tag unique and descriptive?
- [High] Is the meta description compelling?
- [Medium] Is schema markup implemented where helpful?

Key Resources & Further Reading

The following sources were used to compile this guide:

Research & Methodology

- **Princeton: GEO Research Paper** – The academic research proving content can be optimised for AI engines
- **Google: Creating Helpful Content** – Google's official E-E-A-T guidelines

Platform-Specific Guidance

- **Duda: AEO for Agencies** – How LLMs search the web and content optimisation
- **Schema App: Schema Markup 2025** – The role of structured data in AI search

Comprehensive Guides

- **CXL: AEO Comprehensive Guide 2025** – Industry statistics and strategy overview
- **SurferSEO: AEO Strategies 2025** – Practical implementation guidance

- **Amsive: AEO for AI Search Visibility** – Enterprise AEO strategy

Knowledge Graph & Schema

- **VibeAEO: Knowledge Graphs in AEO** – Technical deep-dive on knowledge graphs
- **AISO Hub: Schema Markup Knowledge Graph** – Schema templates and implementation
- **Geostar: Schema for AI Search** – Schema types and AI optimisation

Tools

- **Google Rich Results Test** – Validate your schema markup
- **Google Search Console** – Monitor indexing and performance
- **Schema.org** – Official schema markup vocabulary

Remember: The goal is Traffic → Leads → Customers. Everything else serves that purpose.

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5.0 ★★★★★ (27 Reviews)