



SEO Pillars With AI Considerations

AI Visibility is not replacing SEO → It is built on SEO foundations

WHY AI VISIBILITY MATTERS

AI search is changing how brands are discovered.

AI Overviews, ChatGPT, Gemini, and Perplexity increasingly answer user questions before a click ever happens. Instead of ranking blue links, these platforms synthesize trusted sources and recommend brands directly.

If your brand is not structured, authoritative, and clearly understood, AI systems may overlook you entirely, even if you rank well in traditional search.

The 4 SEO Pillars in an AI World

1 Technical Foundation

AI systems rely on structured, crawlable, accessible websites. If search engines struggle to interpret your site, AI models will too.

Key considerations:

- Clean HTML structure
- Proper canonicalization
- No accidental crawler blocking
- Schema markup for context
- Fast, mobile-friendly performance

2 Content & Topical Authority

AI synthesizes trusted sources. It does not simply match keywords. Brands that demonstrate authority across a topic cluster are more likely to be cited in AI-generated answers.

Key considerations:

- Comprehensive topic coverage
- Clear expertise signals
- Defined subject matter ownership
- Structured Q&A formatting
- Depth over volume

3 On-Page Clarity

AI extracts meaning from structure. Clear organization improves how content is understood and reused.

Key considerations:

- Logical header hierarchy
- Clear definitions and explanations
- FAQ-style formatting
- Entity and terminology consistency
- Author attribution and expertise signals

4 Off-Page Authority (E-E-A-T)

AI models rely heavily on the broader web ecosystem. AI reflects overall web consensus, not just what lives on your website.

Key considerations:

- High-quality backlinks
- Brand mentions on trusted sites
- Reviews and reputation signals
- Expert contributions and thought leadership
- Consistent messaging across platforms

| Traditional SEO vs AI Visibility | | |
|---|---|---|
| Search optimization now requires balancing both environments. | | |
| | Traditional SEO | AI Visibility |
| Main Goal | Rank in traditional search engine results pages (SERPs) | Be cited or mentioned in AI-generated answers |
| Search Environment | Regularly updated list of URLs ranked | Dynamic, real-time synthesized responses |
| Optimization Focus | Keyword targeting, backlinks, technical SEO | Brand mentions, question-based content, proof and authority |
| How Brands Win | Relevance + authority = higher rankings | Trust + clarity = citations and references |
| Success Metrics | Rankings, CTR, organic traffic | AI citations, brand mentions, recommendation frequency |

The question is no longer just, "Do we rank?"
It is also, "When AI answers questions in our category, are we referenced?"

More AI-SEO resources from BFO





AI Visibility Self-Assessment & Free Tools

Here are easy, free, and practical ways to check whether your company or brand is showing up in AI search experiences and how your company is being portrayed. These steps can be completed today and align closely with how AI systems surface brands.

1 Start With Real AI Prompts

Use prompts your audience would naturally ask, not just your brand name.

Example prompts:

- “Who are the top companies in [your category]?”
- “Who are the top providers of [problem you solve]?”
- “Alternatives to [competitor name]”
- “What is [your brand] known for?”

What to look for:

- Is your brand mentioned?
- How is it described?
- Who appears instead?
- Are your products/services described, even if your brand name is missing?
- What sources, links, or citations are referenced?

2 Use Google Search Like an AI Proxy

Even if AI Overviews are not showing, traditional search results can indicate how AI systems perceive your brand.

Try searching:

- your brand name + reviews
- your brand name + best
- your brand name + vs
- your brand name + alternative
- best [category] for [use case]

Why this matters:

AI systems heavily rely on review sites, comparison articles, list-based content, FAQs, and explainers. If your brand does not appear in these result types, AI models are less likely to reference you without prompting.

3 Check “Unlinked” Brand Mentions

AI cares about mentions, not just links.

Free ways to check:

- Google search: “Your Brand Name” -site:yourdomain.com
- Manual searches on Reddit, Quora, LinkedIn, and industry blogs

What this tells you:

- Whether people are talking about your brand
- Whether you appear alongside competitors
- Whether third-party sites clearly explain what you do

No mentions = AI has very little external context to work with.

4 Try These Free Tools:

Bing Webmaster Tools AI Performance Report

- <https://www.bing.com/webmasters/>
- Offers first-party insight into how Bing surfaces your content in AI-generated answers. Review total citations, cited pages, and grounding queries to understand which topics and URLs AI systems trust and reuse.

Ryan Smedstad AI Readiness Tool

- <https://ryansmedstad.com/lab/ai-readiness>
- Audits your domain’s readiness for AI crawlers and provides an AI Readiness Score with practical recommendations to improve discoverability.

TechnicalSEO AI Bot Access Tool

- <https://technicalseo.com/tools/ai-bot-access/>
- Checks whether known AI bots can crawl, access, and fetch your pages, including robots.txt rules, status codes, and content availability.

Amplitude AI Visibility Report

- <https://amplitude.com/try-ai-visibility>
- Provides a free report showing how your brand appears in AI-generated answers and where optimization opportunities exist.

Get Your AIQ Score!

Still need deeper insight into how your brand and website appear in AI search?

Scan the QR code to request an AIQ Report from BFO!

Request Your AIQ Score Today!

