

AEO QUICK-START GUIDE

Answer Engine Optimisation for Search Visibility in the AI Era

10 structural changes with the most impact on AI visibility, with practical examples and implementation guidance.

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Search Visibility in the AI Era

WHAT IS AEO?

Answer Engine Optimisation (AEO) is the practice of structuring your brand's online presence so that AI systems, including ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity and Google's AI Overviews, retrieve and cite your brand accurately when answering questions relevant to your business.

Unlike traditional SEO, which optimises for ranking positions in a list of links, AEO optimises for inclusion in synthesised AI answers. The question is not *"where do I rank?"* but *"do AI systems know I exist, understand what I do, and trust me enough to cite?"*

01 TRADITIONAL SEARCH	The foundation. Schema, authority, technical health.
02 DISCOVERY PLATFORMS	YouTube, Reddit, LinkedIn. AI trains on these signals.
03 AI RETRIEVAL	Where AEO lives. Entity clarity, citation structure, LLM signals.

Structural changes with the most impact on AI visibility

1. Implement Organisation Schema

SCHEMA

AI systems use structured data to build their understanding of your brand. Organisation schema is the single most important technical step.

- **name:** Your exact brand name
- **url:** Your canonical homepage URL
- **description:** A clear 1-2 sentence entity description
- **sameAs:** Links to your LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Wikidata, social profiles
- **knowsAbout:** Your topic areas and expertise

```
<script type="application/ld+json">
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "Organization",
  "name": "Your Brand Name",
  "url": "https://yourdomain.com",
  "description": "What you do, in one clear sentence.",
  "sameAs": [
    "https://www.linkedin.com/company/your-brand",
    "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Your_Brand"
  ]
}
</script>
```

2. Add FAQ Schema to Key Pages

SCHEMA

FAQ schema tells AI systems exactly what questions your content answers, making it far more likely to be retrieved for those queries.

- **Target pages:** Service pages, framework pages, any page answering a specific question
- **Format:** 2-5 Q&A; pairs per page, genuine questions your audience asks
- **Content:** Direct, complete answers that make sense without context

```
<script type="application/ld+json">
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
```

```
"@type": "FAQPage",  
  
"mainEntity": [{  
  
  "@type": "Question",  
  
  "name": "What is [your topic]?",  
  
  "acceptedAnswer": {  
  
    "@type": "Answer",  
  
    "text": "A clear, complete answer here."  
  
  }  
  
}]  
  
}  
  
</script>
```

3. Claim and Optimise Your Knowledge Panel

ENTITY

Google's Knowledge Panel is one of the primary sources AI systems draw on to understand what a brand is and does. If you don't control it, you don't control how AI describes you.

- **Verify via Google Search Console:** Add your site and request verification
- **Wikidata entry:** Create or update your brand/founder entity on Wikidata
- **Consistent NAP data:** Name, address, phone identical across all platforms
- **sameAs links in schema:** Point to every authoritative profile you control

4. Write Entity-First About and Landing Pages

CONTENT

AI systems need to understand your entity clearly. Your About page, homepage, and key landing pages should read as entity definitions, not just marketing copy.

- **Lead with what you are:** "Sticky Frog is a search visibility consultancy" not "Welcome to Sticky Frog"
- **Define your territory explicitly:** State the specific topic area you operate in
- **Name your frameworks and methodologies:** Give your approaches proper names so AI can cite them
- **Link to authoritative profiles:** Every page should reference your LinkedIn, industry memberships

5. Structure Content for Direct Answer Extraction

CONTENT

AI systems favour content that answers questions directly. Every piece of content should be structured so a key answer can be extracted in one or two sentences without needing surrounding context.

- **Use question-format H2/H3 headings:** "What is X?" "How does Y work?"
- **Answer immediately after the heading:** Don't make AI hunt for the answer
- **Use numbered lists for processes:** AI extracts numbered lists well
- **Bold the key definition or answer:** Signals the core point clearly

6. Build Author Attribution on All Content

EEAT

AI systems use E-E-A-T signals to determine whether a source is authoritative. Author attribution is one of the clearest signals. Every piece of content should be attributed to a named expert with a complete bio.

- **Author bio page:** Dedicated page per author with credentials, photo, social links
- **Author schema:** Person schema on bio pages with sameAs to LinkedIn, ORCID if relevant
- **Consistent attribution:** Author name on every article, linked to bio
- **Social proof signals:** Bio should reference verified expertise, awards, notable clients

7. Create Cross-Platform Presence

PLATFORMS

AI systems build brand knowledge from multiple sources. A brand that only exists on its own website is a weak entity. A brand that exists consistently across LinkedIn, YouTube, Reddit, and industry directories is a strong one.

- **LinkedIn company page:** Active, consistent with your website description
- **YouTube channel:** Even 5-10 videos with keyword-rich descriptions helps
- **Reddit participation:** Genuine contributions to relevant communities, not just promotion
- **Industry directories and databases:** Crunchbase, G2, relevant sector-specific listings

8. Earn Third-Party Citations

AUTHORITY

When other credible sources mention your brand in the context of your topic, AI systems take note. Co-occurrence, your brand name and your topic appearing together on a third-party site, is a powerful signal.

- **Guest articles:** Write for respected publications in your space
- **Podcast appearances:** Be interviewed as an expert, with show notes that name your brand and topic
- **Press coverage:** Even brief mentions in trade press carry significant weight
- **Industry research:** Being cited in reports or studies is one of the strongest signals

9. Name and Publish Original Frameworks

AUTHORITY

The most powerful AI citation signal is proprietary intellectual property. A named framework, methodology or dataset that only you have created forces AI to cite you as the source. It cannot paraphrase what doesn't exist elsewhere.

- **Give your approach a name:** "The Search Visibility Stack" not just "our three-layer approach"
- **Publish it in full:** A dedicated page explaining the framework with enough detail to be useful
- **Reference it consistently:** Every relevant article should link back to the framework page
- **Encourage others to cite it:** Mention it in guest posts, interviews, social content

10. Test and Monitor Your AI Visibility Monthly

MONITORING

You cannot improve what you don't measure. Monthly AI citation testing takes 15 minutes and gives you a clear picture of whether your AEO efforts are working.

- **Test prompts to run monthly:** "Who are the leading [your category] in [your market]?"
- **Record: appearances, sentiment, competitor mentions:** Use the AI Visibility sheet in the reporting template
- **Update your Core Pillar content:** Reinforce the signals that are working, address gaps

NEXT STEPS

Your AEO action plan

Work through these 10 changes in order. The first three (schema, knowledge panel, entity pages) form your foundation and should be completed before anything else. Without them, the content and authority signals in changes 4-10 have less to attach to.

PRIORITY	CHANGE	TIME INVESTMENT	IMPACT
This week	1. Organisation Schema	2 hours	High
This week	2. FAQ Schema on key pages	3 hours	High
This week	3. Knowledge Panel / Wikidata	2 hours	High
Month 1	4. Entity-first page rewrites	1-2 days	High
Month 1	5. Content structure audit	1 day	Medium
Month 1	6. Author attribution setup	4 hours	Medium
Month 2	7. Cross-platform presence	Ongoing	Medium
Month 2	8. Third-party citation outreach	Ongoing	High
Month 2	9. Name and publish frameworks	2-3 days	Very High
Ongoing	10. Monthly AI visibility testing	15 mins/month	Essential

Want a full assessment of your AEO readiness?

The Search Visibility Strategy Audit covers all three layers in depth, with a personalised roadmap and 90-minute strategy call.

stickyfrog.co.uk/audit