

Welcome to the New Search Landscape

Core Rule: AI does not magically know which business to recommend without first establishing proof and trust.

Search has changed. Before Large-Language Models (LLMs), customers would commonly search with phrases like "restaurants Alabama's Beaches" and click through the search results pages. Today, customer search behavior is now changing, with search queries growing more complex and conversational, with users asking AI and Google Maps questions like, "Where should I take my family for dinner tonight?" or "What are the best romantic hotels near downtown Alabama's Beaches?"

To remain visible in today's search landscape, businesses need to build upon trust and reliability. These trust signals come from a complete Google Business Profile, consistent info across the web, helpful answers to real customer questions, and detailed reviews.

Plain-Language Translation Guide

- **SEO (Search Engine Optimization):** The practice of improving a website or brand's organic visibility through technical setup, content relevance, and trust signals for users and robots.
- **GEO (Generative Engine Optimization):** A subpillar of SEO, GEO is the practice of enhancing content visibility within AI-powered search results and responses.
- **NLQs (Natural Language Queries):** Real, conversational questions that customers typically ask LLMs (e.g., "Is there parking?").
- **Schema (Structured Data):** Like the Dewey Decimal System of the Internet, Schema is additional code on your website that helps search engines easily understand content.
- **Knowledge Graph:** The web of facts Google and AI collect about your business from all over the internet.
- **E-E-A-T:** An acronym standing for Expertise, Experience, Authority, and Trust, these signals demonstrate to crawlers and AI that your business is real, trusted, and helpful.

Section 1: Digital Foundations Audit

Goal: Make sure customers, Google, and AI can understand your business correctly.
Remember, consistency is key.

1. The Consistency Check (N-A-P)

Write down your exact business information. This is how it must appear on every single website, social media profile, and directory.

Exact Business Name:

Official Address (Street Address, APT/STE #, City, State, AR, Zip Code):

Primary Phone Number:

+1 _____

Current Standard Hours:

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____

2. N-A-P Address Audit

Goal: For Local SEO, one of the most important factors is N-A-P Signals, for Name, Address, and Phone. Using <https://www.semrush.com/local-business/start/>, enter your business name and see where you're listed.

Which Platforms have issues to fix and improve? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Bing
- ☐ Google Business Profile
- ☐ Yelp
- ☐ TripAdvisor
- ☐ Apple
- ☐ Instagram

3. Web Presence Audit

Goal: Discover where your business appears online, confirm you have the login access to manage those listings, and learn how to check your access if you aren't sure.

Platform	Is your business listed?	Can you edit or manage?	How to check
Website	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into your CMS (e.g., WordPress, Wix) or domain registrar (e.g., GoDaddy) to confirm you can edit the site.
Google Business Profile	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Go to google.com/business and log in. If missing, search for your business on Google and click "Claim this business."
Facebook	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Go to business.facebook.com to confirm your personal account has admin rights to the business page.
Instagram	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into the app or instagram.com to verify you can access the "Professional Dashboard" in your settings.
YouTube	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Go to studio.youtube.com and log in to check for your Creator Studio dashboard.

Platform	Is your business listed?	Can you edit or manage?	How to check
TikTok	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into tiktok.com/business or the app to confirm access to the Business Center.
TripAdvisor	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into tripadvisor.com/Owners to verify your business appears in your Management Center.
Yelp	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into biz.yelp.com to access your Yelp for Business dashboard.
Bing Places	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into bingplaces.com with your Microsoft or Google account to see your claimed listings.
Apple Maps	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into business.apple.com with your Apple ID to verify your location is claimed.
Reddit	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into reddit.com with your brand account, or check ads.reddit.com for your business dashboard.
OpenTable	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into restaurant.opentable.com to verify you have access to your restaurant control center.
Shopify	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Log into admin.shopify.com to ensure you can access your store's backend.
Other:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure	Navigate directly to the service's merchant login page and test your credentials.

Section 2: Optimizing Content for SEO & AI

Goal: Shift from vague marketing language to answering real customer questions. AI loves structured FAQs.

Brainstorming: The Top 5 Questions

What do customers ask you at the register, over the phone, or at check-in every single day?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

The AI Translation Exercise

Customer Question: "Are you close to the beach?"

Vague Marketing Speak: "Enjoy the perfect location for your getaway." (AI hates this).

AI-Friendly Answer: "Yes. Our inn is located a short walk from the public beaches, making it easy for guests to visit restaurants, shops, galleries, and nightlife without having to drive."

Now, translate your #1 most-asked question into an AI-Friendly answer:

Section 3: Google Business Profile

Goal: For local foot traffic, your Google Business Profile is often more important than your website.

The 5-Minute GBP Audit

- ☐ Is your Google Business Profile fully claimed and verified?
- ☐ Are your operating hours 100% correct today?
- ☐ Have you set upcoming Holiday Hours?
- ☐ Are all relevant attributes checked? (e.g., Pet-friendly, Outdoor seating, Wi-Fi)

The Photo Reality Check

When was your last photo uploaded? List 5 specific photos you need to take and add this month(e.g., storefront, new menu item, clean room). Bonus if you add as a Google Post:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

The Review Routine

Who is responsible for asking for reviews? _____

When do we ask? _____

Who is responsible for responding to reviews? _____

Keywords

Look at the data provided in the spreadsheet. What are 3 keywords we want customers to mention in their reviews?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Section 4: Industry-Specific AI Strategies

Generative engines look for specific signals based on your industry. Check the box that applies to you and ensure your website and GBP answer these questions.

Lodging

AI Search Example: "Best romantic place to stay on Alabama's Beaches"

- ☐ Are you walkable to other areas?
- ☐ Is parking available on-site?
- ☐ Are pets allowed?
- ☐ Is breakfast included?
- ☐ What makes the stay unique?
- ☐ What type of traveler are you best for?

Restaurants

AI Search Example: "Best lunch on Alabama's Beaches with outdoor seating"

- ☐ Is the current menu uploaded?
- ☐ What is the reservation policy?
- ☐ Do you have patio/outdoor seating?
- ☐ Are there vegetarian/gluten-free options?
- ☐ What are the signature dishes?
- ☐ Where is parking located?

Retail

AI Search Example: "Where to buy local gifts on Alabama's Beaches"

- ☐ What specific products do you sell?
- ☐ What makes the items local or unique?
- ☐ Are products handmade, vintage, or luxury?
- ☐ Can customers shop your inventory online?
- ☐ Are gift cards available?

The 30-Day Visibility Action Plan

Tear this page out or keep it on your desk. This is your immediate roadmap.

My top 3 visibility problems right now are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The first 3 updates I need to make are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My top 3 customer questions that I need to answer online are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My next 3 pieces of content will be:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Review Plan:

Who will ask for them: _____

How we will ask: _____

How often we check & respond: _____