

Why AI visibility is becoming a competitive advantage

Part 2: the AI-powered revenue series



As generative AI becomes a more established part of B2B research, digital visibility is expanding beyond the familiar territory of search rankings, website traffic and click-through rates. Buyers can now ask complex questions, compare potential suppliers and explore unfamiliar technologies through platforms that assemble information into a direct response.

This changes the conditions under which organisations are discovered. A company may have strong search performance and a well-optimised website, yet remain absent when a buyer asks an AI platform to identify credible providers, explain the differences between competing approaches or recommend a shortlist.

In the first article of this series, we explored how AI is moving more buyer research beyond the reach of conventional analytics. Prospects may form an initial view of the market before they visit a supplier's website, creating a gap between the activity taking place and the signals available to revenue teams.

The next challenge is understanding what buyers encounter during that research and which organisations become part of the answer.

Historically, digital visibility has been measured through rankings, traffic and website engagement. These measures remain valuable because they show whether an organisation can be found and whether its content attracts the right audience. However, they describe a model of discovery in which the buyer receives a list of results and chooses which sources to explore.

Generative platforms create a different experience. A buyer can ask ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Gemini or Perplexity to compare suppliers, explain technical differences or identify the factors that should shape a purchasing decision.

The platform may then synthesise material from several sources into a single response, reducing the number of individual websites the buyer needs to visit.

For organisations, visibility therefore depends on more than occupying a prominent position in a list of links. It is also shaped by whether the organisation's expertise can be found, understood and supported by sufficient evidence to become part of an AI-generated answer.

AI visibility and SEO are closely connected

Strong technical SEO, accessible website architecture and authoritative content remain central to digital visibility. Generative search systems still depend on information that can be discovered, retrieved and interpreted, which means the foundations of effective search strategy continue to matter.

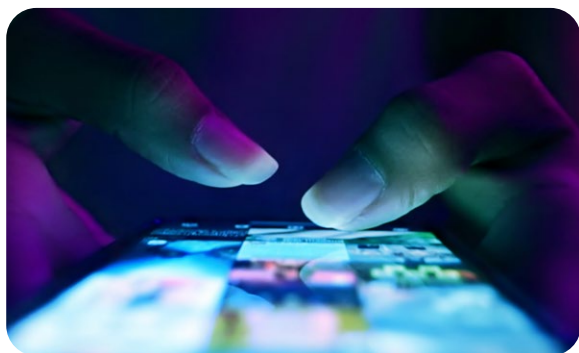
Google's official guidance for generative AI features states that its existing SEO best practices remain relevant because AI Overviews and AI Mode are rooted in the company's established search-ranking and quality systems. Pages must be indexed and eligible to appear in conventional search before they can be considered for Google's generative experiences.¹

This reinforces the connection between search visibility and AI visibility. Organisations still need clear site structures, crawlable content, accurate information and pages that address genuine user needs.

The scope of the challenge, however, extends beyond the company website. AI-generated responses can be informed by material published across a much wider information environment, including independent publications, research, customer evidence, partner websites and other third-party sources.

This makes consistency and corroboration increasingly important. If an organisation claims expertise in a particular area, that expertise becomes more credible when it is demonstrated through original insight, supported by customer evidence and recognised elsewhere in the market.

The original academic research into Generative Engine Optimisation examined how changes to content could affect its prominence within generative responses. Researchers affiliated with Princeton University, Georgia Tech, the Allen Institute for AI and IIT Delhi found that techniques involving credible citations, statistics and clear presentation increased measured visibility by up to 40% within their experimental environment. They also found that the effectiveness of individual techniques varied across subject areas.²



The “up to 40%” figure should be interpreted within the context of the study. It describes performance on the researchers' benchmark and does not represent a guaranteed increase in traffic, leads or commercial outcomes. Its wider significance lies in demonstrating that the structure, evidential quality and presentation of information can influence how prominently it appears within generative answers.

Trust is becoming a competitive advantage

Traditional search gives buyers a visible choice between several sources. They can assess the publisher, review the result and decide whether the information appears credible.

Generative AI places more of that selection process inside the platform. The buyer receives a synthesised response in which information from different sources may be combined, summarised and presented with a consistent tone.

This places greater pressure on organisations to establish a clear and credible presence across the sources from which those responses may be constructed.

Trust develops through the accumulation of evidence. It can be strengthened by publishing original research, explaining complex subjects with precision, demonstrating specialist expertise and providing detailed customer proof. Recognition from respected third parties can reinforce those signals by showing that the organisation's position is supported beyond its own channels.

Consistency also matters. Conflicting service descriptions, outdated product information and vague claims can make it more difficult for buyers and AI systems to establish a coherent understanding of the business.

The growing importance of trust also changes the role of content. Volume alone provides limited advantage when the material adds little to what is already available. Google's guidance warns that using generative AI to produce large numbers of pages without adding value may breach its policy on scaled content abuse, and it encourages organisations to create valuable, distinctive material for users.³

For B2B organisations, the commercial opportunity lies in becoming a source that offers something worth retrieving, a stronger explanation, a useful framework, original evidence or expertise that buyers cannot find in interchangeable market commentary.

Visibility should be driven by buyer demand

One of the risks surrounding AI visibility is that organisations begin producing content for a new channel without first establishing which buyer questions deserve attention.

A list of prompts can show how an organisation appears for selected queries, but it does not automatically reveal whether those queries reflect genuine purchasing priorities. Content programmes built around broad topics may generate visibility without influencing the conversations that matter commercially.

Buyer demand should provide the starting point

Most enterprise organisations already hold valuable evidence about the issues occupying their target accounts. Intent data can indicate where research activity is increasing. CRM records and sales conversations can expose recurring concerns. Customer-service interactions can reveal confusion, while proposal documents and win-loss analysis can show which questions influence final decisions.

Together, these sources help distinguish between a subject that attracts general interest and one that carries commercial weight.

For example, broad commentary about AI may reach a large audience, while detailed questions about governance, security, data readiness or integration are more likely to emerge when an organisation is considering a real investment. The value lies in understanding which of those questions are being asked by the accounts the business most wants to reach.

That insight should shape the content strategy. If target accounts are actively researching cyber resilience, cloud migration or AI governance, the organisation can examine where its expertise is visible, which competitors dominate the conversation and what evidence buyers still need.

The resulting content may include research, technical guidance, customer examples, expert commentary or practical tools. Each asset should contribute to a clearer and more credible answer to a genuine buyer question.

AI visibility becomes commercially useful when the organisation appears within the conversations that influence demand, particularly when buyers are evaluating problems closely connected to its proposition.

Measuring success differently

As AI-generated answers become part of the buying journey, organisations need to extend the way they assess digital performance. Traffic, rankings and conversions continue to show whether owned channels are attracting and progressing buyers. AI visibility requires a complementary set of questions focused on how the organisation appears before that engagement occurs.

- ➔ **How do different platforms describe the business?**
- ➔ **Which services, products or areas of expertise are associated with it?**
- ➔ **Which competitors appear in the same answers?**
- ➔ **What sources are used to support those recommendations?**
- ➔ **Where is the organisation missing from commercially relevant conversations?**
- ➔ **Are its capabilities represented accurately and consistently?**

These questions help revenue teams understand both presence and perception. An organisation may be mentioned frequently while being associated with the wrong proposition, presented as a secondary option or described using outdated information. Measurement should also account for the variability of generative systems. Answers can change according to the platform, the wording of the prompt, the context provided by the user and the sources available at the time. A single response therefore provides limited evidence.

A more useful approach is to monitor a defined set of commercially relevant questions over time, compare performance across platforms and examine recurring patterns. This can reveal where the organisation is consistently visible, where competitors hold a stronger position and where additional evidence may be required. The organisations that establish an advantage will combine strong search foundations with distinctive expertise, credible third-party recognition and a detailed understanding of the questions shaping buyer decisions.

In the next article, we explore how AI-powered website experiences and Small Language Models are creating a valuable source of first-party buyer intelligence, helping organisations understand what buyers are trying to achieve when they arrive on their digital estate.

1. Google Search Central – Optimising Your Website for Generative AI Features on Google Search, 2026. Google states that established SEO practices remain relevant to AI Overviews and AI Mode and that pages must meet its normal technical and indexing requirements.

2. Aggarwal, P., Murahari, V., Rajpurohit, T., Kalyan, A., Narasimhan, K. and Deshpande, A. – GEO: Generative Engine Optimization. Published in the Proceedings of the 30th ACM SIGKDD Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining, 2024.

3. Google Search Central – Google Search's Guidance on Generative AI Content on Your Website, 2025. Google advises that large-scale AI-generated content without additional value may breach its scaled-content-abuse policy.