

How buyers find companies in AI answers

What ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini and Google look at when they name companies, and what to publish so they name you.

The short version

- Buyers ask AI which companies to consider before they visit your site. The answer names a few. If you're not one of them, you're not on the list.
- Engines name companies from two places: what the model learned in training, and the pages it finds when it searches the web for the answer.
- You can't buy a place in an answer. You can publish pages that answer buyers' questions directly, get named on the sites the engines quote, and make sure AI crawlers can read your site.

01 Where each engine gets its answer

Engine	Where the answer comes from	What it means for you
ChatGPT	What the model learned in training, plus a web search when the question needs current information. When it searches, it shows its sources.	Be on the pages its search finds, and named on the sites it cites.
Perplexity	A web search for every question, with numbered sources under the answer.	The pages it quotes decide who gets named. Be named on them, or be one of them.
Gemini	Google's model. It can check Google Search before it answers.	How Google sees your site and your company carries over.
Google AI Overviews and AI Mode	Pages from Google's search index. Google says there is no special markup for them: a page has to be indexed and eligible to show a snippet.	Search basics are the entry ticket. Pages that answer the question plainly are the ones quoted.

Answers change from one ask to the next. Whether you're named at all is steadier than where you appear in a list, so count how often you're named across many asks, not your position in one answer.

02 What the engines look for

Signal	Why it matters	What to do
Answer-first pages	The page answers the buyer's question in its first lines.	Put the answer, with your name in it, before the background.
Third-party mentions	Review sites, lists and articles name you. AI leans on what others say.	Find the sources the engines quote for your category, and get listed or quoted there.
One clear identity	Your company and category are named the same way everywhere.	One company name and one category line on your site, LinkedIn and review profiles.
Structured data	Markup tells crawlers what a page is: a product, a price, a FAQ.	Organization markup on every page; product and FAQ markup where they fit.
Freshness	Dated, current pages. Stale content gets passed over.	Date your key pages, and update them when the facts change.

Signal	Why it matters	What to do
Access	AI crawlers can reach and read the page.	Let the AI crawlers in, and keep the text in the page source. The website brief covers this.

03 What to publish first

One page per buyer question, with the answer in the first lines. Start where a competitor is named and you aren't.

Page	The buyer question it answers	Example
Comparison	Acme or Globex: which fits us?	Acme vs Globex for multi-client 3PLs
Use case	Best [category] for [buyer]	Acme for multi-site warehouses
Problem guide	How do I [solve the problem]? Which tools should I consider?	Cutting pick times in a 3PL
Pricing	What does it cost?	What warehouse robotics costs a mid-size 3PL
Company page	What is Acme, and who is it for?	What Acme sells, to whom, and where

Off your site: get listed in the reviews and lists the engines already quote for your category.

Acme, Globex, Initech and Umbrella are made-up companies. Example data.

04 How to see where you stand

Ask the questions your buyers ask, on every engine, more than once. For each answer, note whether you're named, whether it links to your site, who's named instead, and which sources it quotes. Then count across the answers.

AI visibility snapshot acme.com Example		
Unbranded answers naming Acme 3 of 16	Named most instead Globex 9 of 16	Asked 5 questions, once on 4 engines
Buyer question		Named instead
Best warehouse robotics software for mid-size 3PLs		Globex, Initech
How do I cut pick times in a 3PL? Which tools should I consider?		Globex
Warehouse robotics companies in Columbus, Ohio		Umbrella
Globex alternatives for multi-site warehouses		Umbrella, Initech
What is Acme, and who is it for?		Described correctly in 3 of 4

Our free check does this for five buyer questions, asked once on ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini and Google AI Overviews. The AI search assessment asks 40+ questions several times each, traces why competitors are named, and ends with a page-by-page plan your team follows.

See who AI names instead of you.

The free AI visibility check: five buyer questions on four engines, who's named instead of you, and where AI crawlers trip on your site. About a minute.

gtmnext.com/check