



AI Is The New Search Engine. Maximize Impact. Boost Visibility.

Why GEO (Generative Engine Optimization) matters for every small business in 2026 and beyond.

900M

Weekly active ChatGPT users processing 3B+ queries monthly.

OpenAI, 2026

4.4x

LLM searchers are 4.4x more likely to convert than traditional search.

Semrush, 2026

527%

Year-over-year growth in AI-referred web sessions in 2025.

Semrush, 2025

-25%

Traditional Google search volume declined 25% YoY. AI is the new search engine.

Gartner, 2026

-61%

Click-through rate drop for non-cited pages when AI Overviews appear.

Semrush, 2025

38%

Of AI Overview citations from top-10 organic results, down from 76%.

Ahrefs, 2026

+40%

Visibility boost from adding cited sources. The #1 proven GEO technique.

Princeton/KDD, 2024

26%

Of established brands have ZERO AI mentions regardless of rankings.

Passion Fruit, 2025

89%

Of B2B buyers now use generative AI to evaluate suppliers.

Forrester, 2026

44%

Of ChatGPT citations come from the first third of a webpage. Front-load your best content.

Profound, 2026

40-60%

Of AI-cited sources change month to month. This is not a stable ranking system.

Semrush, 2025

11%

Of domains are cited by BOTH ChatGPT and Perplexity. These are different systems.

Digital Bloom, 2025

5.25x

That's how many times more likely you are to get recommended by AI with proper entity establishment.

The small businesses that dominate AI-driven discovery aren't spending the most on ads. They're the ones who followed a framework and started early. The more established you become today, the more compounding effects it has for your GEO longevity as this new technology emerges.

Profound, 730K ChatGPT conversations, 2026 | Domain Trust 97-100: 8.4 citations vs 1.6 for scores below 43



The 10 Dimension GEO Self-Audit

Score each dimension 0–10. Total possible: 100 points. The average small business scores 15–25.

70–100: AI-Ready: High Citation Probability

40–69: Needs Optimization

0–39: Critical Gaps: Low Visibility

Definition Clarity

1 Does your content open with a standalone, extractable definition that AI can cite without context? RAG systems retrieve 200 to 500 word chunks. Your opening paragraph is the highest-density semantic unit and the most likely to match a "what is X?" query. Most small business content opens with hooks or stories instead of definitions, which AI systems cannot extract.

AVG SMB SCORE

2.5/10

Quotable Authority

2 Does your content include specific, attributed statements from named experts with their credentials? The Princeton GEO study found that adding expert quotations with full attribution boosted AI visibility by 37%. Content without named expert sourcing registers as opinion, not authority, in AI training classifiers.

AVG SMB SCORE

1.5/10

Factual Density

3 Does your content contain specific, verifiable data points (numbers, percentages, dates, prices) with citations? Factual density is the single highest-impact GEO technique, adding up to 40% AI visibility. Most small business content makes general claims without numbers, making it invisible to retrieval systems.

AVG SMB SCORE

2.0/10

Source & Citation Quality

4 Is every factual claim attributed in "(Source Name, Year)" format that AI systems recognize as a citation signal? Training classifiers pattern-match against Wikipedia and academic papers, both of which cite everything. Content without explicit sourcing looks like opinion to those classifiers.

AVG SMB SCORE

1.5/10

Q&A Alignment

5 Are your headers phrased as actual questions with FAQ sections and FAQPage schema markup? Google AI Overviews extracts directly from FAQPage structured data, and ChatGPT treats H2 headings as the user's question. Headers like "Our Process" don't match any query. They are navigation labels, not query anchors.

AVG SMB SCORE

2.0/10

Entity Establishment

6 Does AI know who you are? Entity establishment means having schema markup, a Wikidata entry, and consistent profiles across LinkedIn, Crunchbase, and Google Business Profile. A well-established entity gets mentioned in AI responses even when specific pages are not retrieved. A poorly-established one gets ignored even when its content is excellent.

AVG SMB SCORE

1.0/10

Topical Authority

7 Does your domain demonstrate deep, interconnected expertise through multiple related content pieces covering your full subject area? AI systems assess what the source domain "knows" about the topic, not just a single page. Domains ranking for fan-out sub-queries have 161% higher citation odds.

AVG SMB SCORE

2.0/10

Structural Clarity

8 Is your content organized with question-form headers, short paragraphs, and self-contained 200 to 500 word sections? RAG retrieval works on chunks that must stand alone without context from preceding sections. Content with long narrative prose does not chunk well for AI retrieval.

AVG SMB SCORE

3.0/10

Freshness & Recency

9 Do your pages show visible dates, and are all statistics cited with their year? Content updated within 30 days gets 3.2x more citations, and Perplexity weights content from the past 90 days 4.1x higher. Many small business pages have no visible dates, signaling staleness.

AVG SMB SCORE

2.5/10

Cross-Platform Presence

10 Does your brand appear across 4+ AI-indexed platforms including Reddit, LinkedIn, Medium, and Quora? Brands on 4+ platforms are 2.8x more likely to appear in ChatGPT responses. Reddit accounts for 46.7% of Perplexity's top citations. Single-domain presence is invisible to training pipelines.

AVG SMB SCORE

1.0/10

YOUR TOTAL SCORE:

__ /100

Average SMB: 15–25 | AI-ready: 70+

Ready to fix your score? Get the complete playbook:

Introduction to GEO & Entity Establishment: The 10 Dimension Self-Audit

Available for \$29 on Gumroad or visit holographicsolutions.xyz to learn more.



Three Things Every Small Business Should Know

1. AI does not rank pages. It selects sources.

Google shows you ten options and lets you choose. AI chooses for you. It picks 3 to 5 trusted sources, synthesizes an answer, and presents it as fact. If your business is not one of those sources, the customer never sees you.

2. Your Google ranking does not guarantee AI visibility.

Only 38% of AI Overview citations come from top-10 organic results. The correlation between traditional SEO performance and AI citation is weakening rapidly. You can rank #1 on Google and still be invisible to AI.

3. The compounding advantage starts now.

AI systems build entity representations over time. The longer you have been publishing structured, authoritative content, the stronger your presence becomes. Businesses that start building today will have a structural advantage that late movers cannot replicate quickly.

What Exactly Is GEO?

Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) is the practice of structuring your digital presence so that AI systems can find, understand, and recommend your business. It combines entity establishment, content architecture, and cross-platform authority to make your brand visible across ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, Claude, and Google AI Overviews.

How is GEO different from SEO?

SEO optimizes your website to rank in a list of links. GEO optimizes your entire digital identity so AI systems recognize you as a trusted entity worth recommending. SEO asks: "Can Google find my page?" GEO asks: "Does AI know who I am, trust what I say, and cite me as a source?"

With SEO, you compete for rankings. With GEO, you build authority that compounds over time. SEO performance and AI visibility overlap by only 38%, and that number is dropping. Businesses that only do SEO are optimizing for a shrinking channel while ignoring the one that is growing fastest.

Why GEO Matters For Small Businesses & Services

The way people find businesses has fundamentally changed. But businesses themselves have not.

For two decades, the playbook was simple and measurable: work with SEO, get ranked on Google, crosspost on social media, build a vibe, win the customer. With the advent of AI, that playbook is breaking. Not because SEO stopped working, but because a new discovery layer has emerged on top of it.

When someone asks ChatGPT, Perplexity, Claude or Gemini for a recommendation, the AI does not list the best links. It synthesizes a single answer from a handful of trusted sources. Think about how you came across this very document. If you know how these things work, you can position yourself more favorably and get the visibility.

The craziest part is that if you don't, you are essentially invisible to AI no matter how well you rank organically.

Unfortunately, this leaves small businesses at the biggest disadvantage because they have less reach. This shift disproportionately affects small service providers, especially on the local level.

Large brands with Wikipedia pages, press coverage, and multi-platform presence are already being recognized by AI systems as established entities and go-to sources. The models confuse breadth for authority, ubiquity for helpfulness. This will get better with time, but building credibility is imperative to do now. By 2028, AI search is set to be the dominant category and primary search option. That is less than 2 years.

That is a major shift from Googling everything and that is how most businesses are set up. They have a website, maybe a Google Business Profile, and social accounts that they post to occasionally. That is enough for SEO but falls short of AI discovery.

The second craziest part is that every model and tool has a different way of going about it.

But there is the opportunity. The playing field is level.

Most small businesses have not even heard of GEO yet. The average small business scores 15 to 25 out of 100 on our 10-dimension audit. That means the businesses that start optimizing now, building entity establishment, structuring content for AI extraction and expanding their cross-platform presence, will have a compounding head start that competitors cannot shortcut later.

The best time was yesterday. The next best time will always be now.

Get The Complete Introduction to GEO & Entity Establishment Guide: The 10 Dimension Self-Audit

Available for \$29 on Gumroad or visit holographicsolutions.xyz to learn more.

Holographic Solutions is a GEO research and strategy firm that specializes in getting small businesses discovered, cited and recommended by AI systems like ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity and Google AI. Founded in 2025 in Denver, CO, Holographic Solutions creates research-backed GEO frameworks to help entrepreneurs establish themselves as an entity so they can get found by each major AI platform and suggested locally.