Search Has Changed.

Is Your Website Ready?



Don't Just Get Found. Become the Answer.

How to prepare your business website for search engines, AI answers, and the ways customers discover you

SEO is essential, but a website strategy focused only on traditional search results is no longer enough to cover the ways customers look for help. People also use AI assistants such as ChatGPT to ask questions, compare services, and research businesses. Is your website prepared for those conversations?

Your content needs to do more than target keywords. It should answer customer questions clearly, explain your services, and provide credible evidence of your expertise. This guide shows how SEO, AEO, and GEO work together to support traditional search and AI discovery, with practical steps for small business owners.

Three approaches with shared foundations

Approach	Primary focus	A practical example
SEO Search Engine Optimization	Help search engines discover and understand your pages.	A dedicated page describing your service and service area.
AEO Answer Engine Optimization	Make customer questions easy to answer.	A clear explanation of what a quote includes.
GEO Generative Engine Optimization	Make your expertise easier for AI systems to interpret and potentially reference.	An original case study with specific, verifiable details.

AEO and GEO extend your focus to answers and AI discovery while building on SEO. Google says its existing SEO practices remain relevant to its AI features, without special AI markup. [1] No approach guarantees that ChatGPT or another AI assistant will mention your business.

What success should look like

Aim for relevant visitors, useful conversations, and qualified enquiries. Rankings and AI mentions can help discovery, but neither guarantees that someone will become a customer.

1. Build a strong SEO foundation



Search engine optimization helps search systems access your website and understand what each page offers. It also helps visitors navigate your services. Fixing confusing content or broken navigation often benefits both audiences.

Give each important service a clear home

If you offer several services, create a useful page for each main offering. Explain who it is for, what is included, how the process works, and what the customer should do next. Avoid making several nearly identical pages just to repeat different keywords.

For example, a landscaping business could have separate pages for lawn care, seasonal cleanups, and landscape installation. Each page should contain information specific to that service.

Use descriptive titles and headings

A title such as “Residential Pest Control in Halifax” tells readers more than “Our Solutions.” Use natural wording that reflects your actual services and locations. A page title identifies the page in search and browser tabs; headings organize the content on the page.

Write a concise page description that explains its value. Search engines may choose different text for a search snippet, so treat the description as helpful supporting information rather than guaranteed display copy.

Make the website easy to use and access

- Test the site on a phone. Check menus, text size, buttons, forms, and contact links.
- Keep important information in readable text rather than only inside an image or video.
- Connect related pages with descriptive links, such as “View our podcast production services.”
- Resize oversized images and check that essential pages load and function reliably.
- Have your website provider check for accidental indexing blocks, broken links, and missing pages.

Keep local business details current

Use accurate contact details, hours, and service areas wherever your business appears. If you maintain a Google Business Profile, keep it up to date. Describe the places you actually serve and avoid implying that you have an office where you do not.

Google recommends accessible content, useful internal links, a good page experience, and current business information as part of the foundation for visibility in its search and AI features. [1]

2. Answer customer questions with AEO



Answer engine optimization is a way of planning content around questions. It encourages you to explain things directly, using the language customers use before they buy. The immediate benefit is a more helpful website; eligibility for a particular answer feature is never guaranteed.

Start with questions from real conversations

Review the questions people ask in calls, emails, and meetings. Focus on the information that helps them decide whether your service fits their needs. Common topics include price, timing, deliverables, preparation, and what happens after an enquiry.

Put the answer first

Use the question as a heading, then answer it in the first sentence or two. Add qualifications and detail afterwards. This helps readers find the main point without searching through a long introduction.

Example question: What is included in a website project?

Example answer: Your proposal should identify the pages, design work, content support, and functionality included in your website project. It should also explain revisions, timelines, and any ongoing costs, so you can review the scope before work begins.

That answer is useful because it explains what the customer should expect without inventing a fixed package or promising an unrealistic turnaround.

Explain pricing honestly

If you publish a starting price, explain what it covers and what may increase the cost. If every project is quoted individually, describe the main pricing factors. Clear guidance is more useful than a vague “contact us” message with no context.

Place answers where customers need them

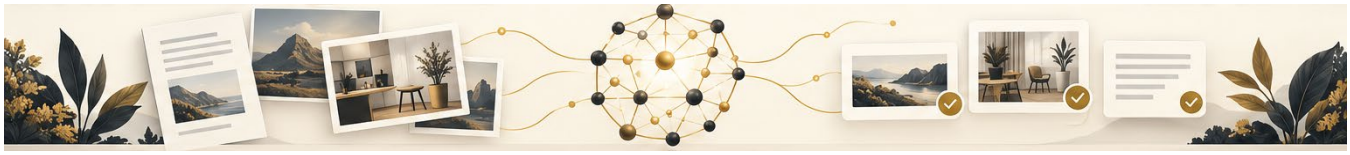
Include service questions on the relevant service page. Use a general FAQ page for questions that apply across the business. Keep answers consistent and update them whenever your policies or services change.

Avoid content created only for machines

Do not repeat keywords unnaturally or add large numbers of questions that no customer would ask. Useful answers should sound like a knowledgeable person explaining the service. Structured data, when appropriate, should match the visible content; adding it does not guarantee a special search display. [1]

Try this today: Choose your three most common customer questions and add a short, accurate answer to each on your most important service page.

3. Show your expertise through GEO



Generative engine optimization describes efforts to make content easier for AI systems to understand and potentially use in generated responses. Different systems select information differently, so no single tactic can guarantee that your business will be cited or recommended.

Publish information that comes from your work

A specific project example can say more than a broad claim such as “we provide exceptional service.” Describe the customer’s problem, the work completed, and what changed. Only publish results you can support, and obtain permission before sharing confidential client information.

For example, a creative studio could explain how it reorganized a client’s service pages, clarified package descriptions, and simplified the enquiry form. If enquiry numbers were not measured, describe the completed improvements without claiming a percentage increase.

Make your business easy to identify

Explain who provides the service, what experience is relevant, where you operate, and how people can contact you. Keep your business name and service descriptions consistent. Include genuine author or business details where they help readers judge the information.

Support claims and keep content current

Use reliable sources for facts that require evidence. Include dates when timing matters, and review older pages for services, prices, or instructions that have changed. Firsthand photographs, demonstrations, and examples can make content more useful when they illustrate a real point.

Use visuals to support the explanation

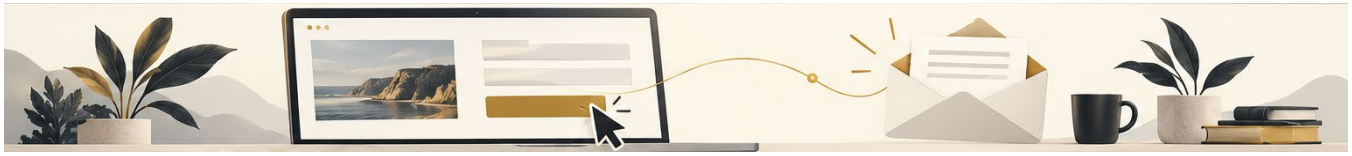
A before-and-after image, a short process video, or a clearly labelled project example can help customers understand your work. Add explanatory text and meaningful alternative text where appropriate. Keep the essential answer available on the page rather than relying entirely on a graphic.

Understand what is and is not required

Google states that special AI text files and special schema.org markup are not required for its AI search features. Pages must meet its ordinary search eligibility requirements, and even eligible content is not guaranteed to appear. [1]

A sensible GEO approach is to make your expertise clear and verifiable while maintaining sound SEO. Be cautious of promises to “guarantee an AI recommendation” or claims that one file or plugin will solve visibility.

4. Turn visibility into enquiries



A visitor who finds your website still needs a reason to contact you. Help that person understand the service, judge whether it fits, and take the next step with confidence.

Give each page a useful next step

Choose a call to action that matches the service: request a quote, discuss a project, or book a consultation. Explain what happens next. For example, “Send us a short description of your project so we can discuss the scope and next steps.” Only promise response times you can reliably meet.

Make the contact process simple

Ask for the information needed to start a useful conversation. Test the form yourself, confirm messages reach the right inbox, and make contact details easy to find. On mobile, check that buttons are easy to select and forms do not require unnecessary effort.

Measure business value

Google Search Console helps you review search queries, impressions, and clicks. Website analytics can help you understand visits and completed actions. Google reports its AI search traffic within the overall Web performance data in Search Console, so that report does not provide a complete, separate measure of every AI interaction. [1]

Measure	What it can help you understand
Relevant search queries	Whether people are finding you for the services you provide.
Visits to service pages	Which offers attract interest and may need clearer information.
Completed enquiries	Whether visitors take a meaningful next step.
Enquiry quality	Whether the website attracts suitable projects and customers.

Use a simple monthly review

Compare similar periods and record significant changes to your website. Look for patterns rather than reacting to one day of results. Seasonal demand, competition, and changes to search experiences can all affect performance.

Ask new customers how they found you. Their answers can add context that reporting tools miss. Avoid treating a single AI mention or a one-time ranking check as proof that a particular change caused a business result.

5. Put the guide into action



A practical 30 day starting plan

When	Focus	What to complete
Week 1	Review	Check mobile usability, contact forms, business details, and your main service pages. Note the biggest gaps.
Week 2	Clarify	Improve one priority service page with a clear title, scope, process, and call to action.
Week 3	Answer	Add useful answers to common questions and publish one original project example or practical article.
Week 4	Measure	Confirm reporting works, record a baseline, and choose the next improvements to review.

This is a starting schedule, not a promise of results in 30 days. Indexing, visibility, and customer response can take time.

Your website checklist

☐ Each main service has a clear and useful page.

☐ Titles and headings describe what customers will find.

☐ Common questions receive direct and accurate answers.

☐ Project examples and claims are specific and supportable.

☐ Business details and service areas are current.

☐ The mobile experience and enquiry process work.

☐ Important information is available as readable text.

☐ Search performance and qualified enquiries are reviewed.

Make your website your next business opportunity

Jay Williams Design can help improve your website's structure, content, and messaging for search and AI discovery. Start with the pages your customers rely on most, then build a practical plan around your business goals.

Don't Just Get Found. Become the Answer.

Visit jaywilliamsdesign.com and send your website address with a short description of your goals to start the conversation.

Your Vision Is Our Job.

Source and further reading: [1] Google Search Central, AI features and your website.
https://developers.google.com/search/docs/appearance/ai-features
Prepared October 2026. This guide provides general information; search visibility and AI inclusion are not guaranteed.