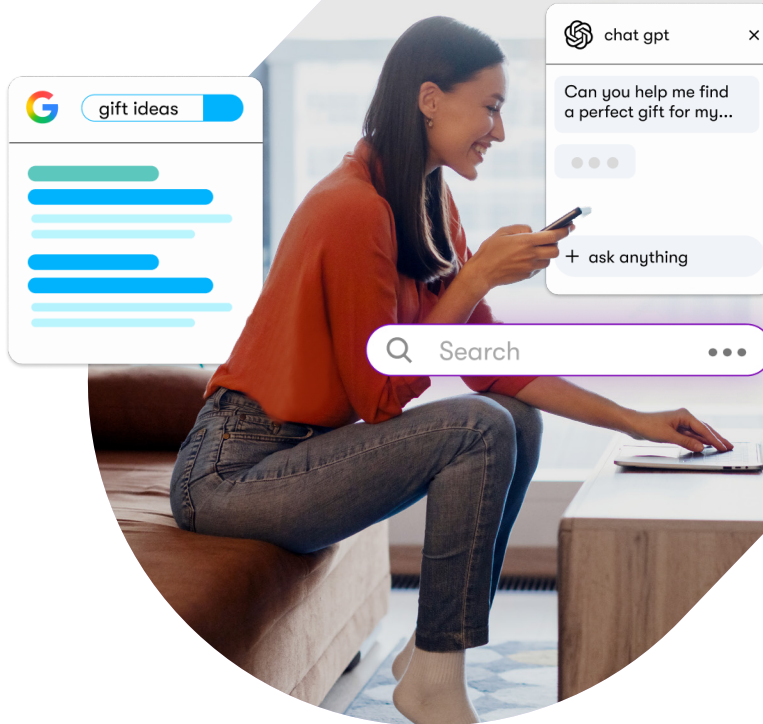




Kentico



PLAYBOOK

A Marketer's Guide to SEO & GEO.

A 30-day playbook for marketing teams ready to rethink their strategy and win at both traditional and AI search in 2026.

kentico.com

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All You Need to Know to Win at Search in 2026.

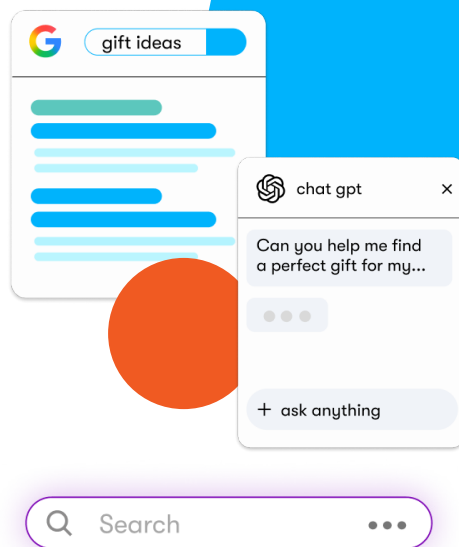
AI search is no longer on the horizon. ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, and Google AI Overviews are already answering the questions your buyers used to Google, and they're doing it by citing and paraphrasing your content. So, now the question is: how can marketers get their content noticed in the age of AI? This practical 30-day playbook gives marketing teams the guidance, frameworks, and actionable steps needed to build a search strategy that works across both traditional and AI-driven discovery without starting from scratch.

Inside, you'll find:

- The numbers showing the change from traditional search to AI-powered discovery
- A breakdown of the [SEO fundamentals](#) that are still valuable
- A unified SEO and GEO framework built around three pillars: machine readability, quotability, and trustworthiness
- Ten activities that simultaneously improve your visibility in both Google and AI search
- Perspectives and insights from across Kentico's marketing team, covering everything from technical SEO foundations to content strategy and GEO optimization in practice
- A four-week action plan you can start this week (or today!)

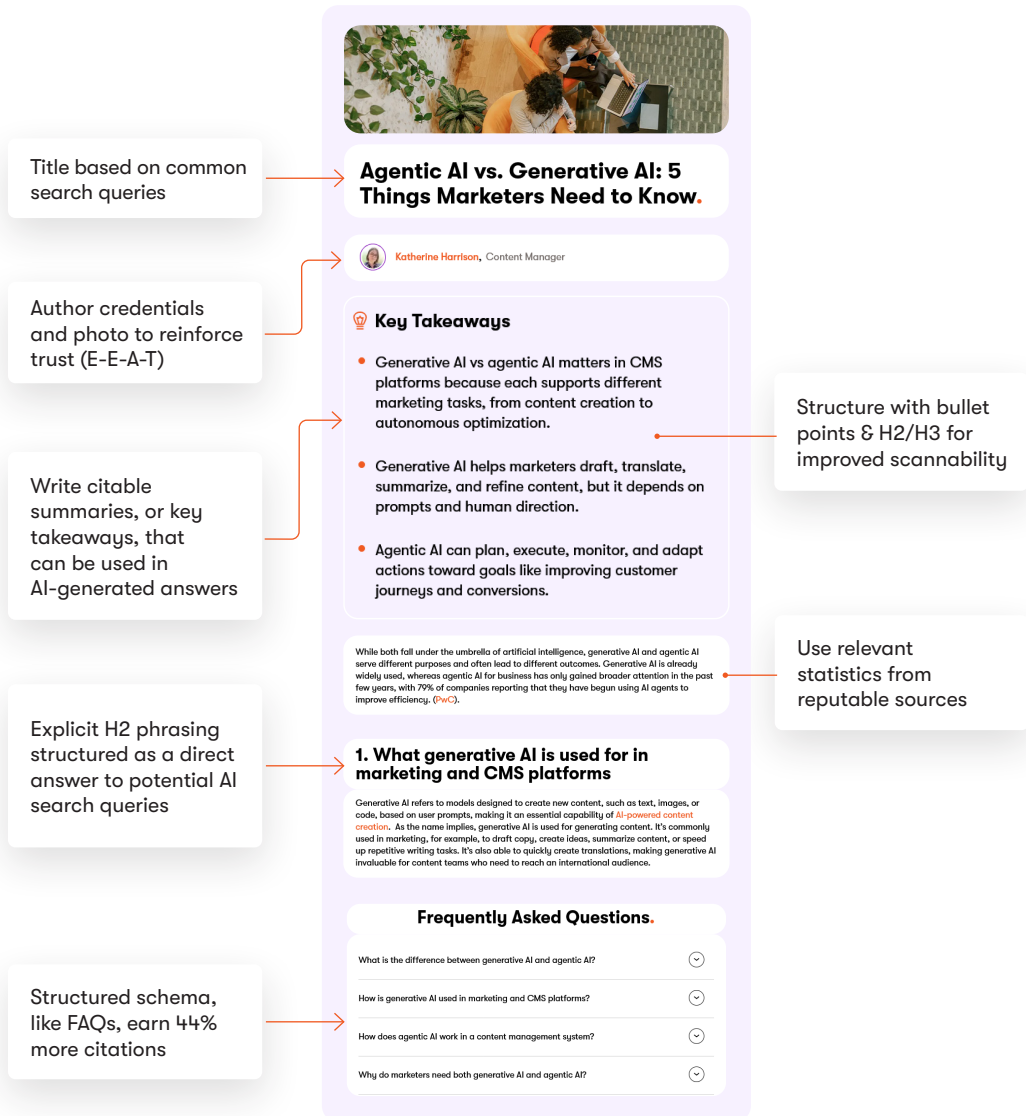
Whether you're new to [GEO](#) or looking to sharpen a strategy already in motion, this guide meets you wherever you are.

Ready to turn your content into a trusted source for AI search? Let's get into it.



How to Build Pages That LLMs Want to Cite.

This page is built to demonstrate exactly what it describes. Every structural choice, from the title to the FAQ schema at the bottom, reflects a deliberate GEO decision. Read it as both a guide and a working example of how to build pages that LLMs can easily cite.



What the Numbers Say About Search.

Being found isn't all up to traditional search anymore. Buyers now ask ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, and Google AI Overviews; motivated by personalized and direct answers that are often seen as a better match to their queries compared to traditional search results. Due to this sharp rise in popularity, marketers now need to consider GEO alongside SEO content optimization to stay visible for their target audiences.

44%

of US adults now use ChatGPT, more than double 2023's rate

[Pew Research Center, June 2026](#)

81%

of brands with integrated SEO + AI strategies saw more AI-driven traffic

[Semrush, 2026 AI Visibility Index](#)

15 sources

Average number of citations ChatGPT includes per response, vs. just 3 for Gemini

[Semrush, 2026 AI Visibility Index](#)

42%

Higher conversion rate for AI-referred retail traffic vs. non-AI traffic

[Adobe, Q2 2026 AI Traffic Report](#)

70%

YoY growth in AI platform traffic worldwide, reaching 9.5B monthly visits

[Similarweb, 2026 Generative AI Landscape Report](#)

393%

YoY growth in AI-referred traffic to U.S. retail sites in Q1 2026

[Adobe, Q2 2026 AI Traffic Report](#)

Sources: *Pew Research Center, June 2026; Semrush, 2026 AI Visibility Index; Adobe, Q2 2026 AI Traffic Report; Similarweb, 2026 Generative AI Landscape Report.*



Kentico Insight



"GEO isn't a new discipline bolted onto SEO. It's what good marketing looks like when the reader might be a machine that re-explains you to a human. Get that right and the citations will follow."

Jonathan Henault, Director of Brand and Content, Kentico

Quick Self-Audit: Are You Ready for AI Search?

Fewer than 3 checked? This guide is exactly what you need.

- ☐ I've audited my schema markup in the last 90 days
- ☐ I track AI referral traffic as a separate channel in Google Analytics 4
- ☐ My top pages have key takeaways and FAQs
- ☐ My brand has citations on YouTube, Reddit, Quora, or Wikipedia
- ☐ I know my AI citation rate vs. my competitors

The SEO Fundamentals You Still Need.

Start by making sure you've got a solid SEO foundation, and keep up with it even as you optimize for GEO.

Keep Doing These

- ✓ **Technical upkeep like** Core Web Vitals, mobile performance, crawlability, XML sitemaps
- ✓ **Quality backlinks** from reputable and topically relevant domains
- ✓ **Topic clusters** with strong internal linking between pillar and supporting pages
- ✓ **Clean heading hierarchy** that includes one H1 per page and descriptive H2s and H3s
- ✓ **HTTPS, clean URLs, proper canonicals** with zero duplicate content issues
- ✓ **Descriptive image alt text and file names** (also helps multimodal AI)
- ✓ **Meta titles and descriptions** that are relevant and search-friendly
- ✓ **Continuous content refreshes** a quarterly cadence on top pages

Stop Doing These

- ✗ **Keyword stuffing**, which tanks both AI and SEO scores by signaling low-quality, manipulative content
- ✗ **Chasing exact-match keywords** instead of writing for the underlying intent
- ✗ **Thin programmatic pages** with low unique value per URL
- ✗ **Ignoring Google Business Profile** if you have any local intent at all
- ✗ **Treating SEO as a one-off project** instead of an ongoing practice
- ✗ **Gating too much** content, if AI can't read it, it can't cite you
- ✗ **Publishing without a named, credentialed author** (E-E-A-T matters even more now)



Kentico Insight



“SEO progress starts with data. If you can't measure it, you can't improve it. And without data, long-term SEO success is impossible.”

Ondřej Vasil, Website Developer & Technical Lead

How SEO & GEO Compare.

GEO works alongside SEO, and often there's overlap. If your technical foundations are weak, for example, traditional search won't cite you and AI engines won't cite you either. Consider approaching SEO and GEO as a unified strategy that ultimately benefits both AI and traditional search results.



The LLMs Shaping GEO & Where They Look.

AI models don't all pull from the same sources, and your audience isn't using just one. Knowing which LLMs dominate the market and where they source their answers lets you build a strategy that covers every touchpoint.

Quick Note: All LLMs are AI models, but not all AI models are LLMs. LLM is the more precise term. These are the models trained on vast amounts of text to understand and generate language, powering AI search tools like ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini.

Top Ten LLMs

-  GPT-5.4 (OpenAI, USA)
-  Claude Opus 4.6 (Anthropic, USA)
-  Gemini 3.1 Pro (Google DeepMind, USA)
-  Claude Sonnet 4.6 (Anthropic, USA)
-  DeepSeek V3.2 (DeepSeek, China)
-  Grok 3 (xAI, USA)
-  Llama 4 Maverick (Meta, USA)
-  Qwen 3.5 (Alibaba, China)
-  Mistral Large (Mistral AI, France)
-  Kimi K2.5 (Moonshot AI, China)

Source: Onyx AI LLM Leaderboard, last updated March 24, 2026.

Top Ten LLM Search Sources

-  Wikipedia
-  Reddit
-  Quora
-  YouTube
-  Medium
-  LinkedIn
-  GitHub
-  Academic papers via Google Scholar and arXiv
-  Major news publications (BBC, Reuters, AP, The Guardian)
-  Official brand and government websites



Kentico Insight



“Your social presence is a search signal. Social and search are more connected than most people realize, and the brands that understand this don't just get found in more places, they stay there.”

Brittany Cordy, Communications Manager

The Three Pillars of SEO and GEO.

The qualities your content needs to have to be both SEO and GEO optimized can be broken down into three pillars. Make your content **machine-readable, quotable, and trustworthy**, and you're more likely to appear in both types of search.

Pillar 1

Machine Readability

Can AI parse your page?

- Schema markup
- Snippet-ready answers
- Clean hierarchy

Pillar 2

Quotability

Will AI pick your sentence?

- Original data
- Declarative statements
- Q&A formatting

Pillar 3

Trust

Does AI trust your brand?

- Off-site citations
- Entity authority
- Content freshness

10 Activities for Search & AI Discovery.

Across 3 SEO & GEO pillars: Machine Readability, Quotability, and Trust

Pillar 1 Machine Readability

- 1 Deploy structured schema on every key page: FAQ, HowTo, Product, Article, Organization, Breadcrumb. Sites with schema earn 44% more AI citations.
- 2 Write for snippets AND summaries: Lead with the direct answer in under 60 words, then use bullets, numbered steps, or definition blocks.
- 3 Enforce a clean content hierarchy: One H1 (Heading 1), descriptive H2s (Heading 2), scannable H3s (Heading 3). AI crawlers use this structure to extract the answer.
- 4 Publish original data: Proprietary stats, benchmarks, surveys, internal research. AI engines prefer to cite original sources.

Pillar 2 Quotability

- 5 Write defined sentences that leave no room for guessing: Precision and clarity make content easy to cite verbatim.
- 6 Format for easy AI extraction: Q&A sections near the top of pages, or “Key takeaways” boxes as seen on our blog

Pillar 3 Trust

- 7 Earn citations where AI already looks: AI Overviews heavily cite sources like YouTube, Reddit, Medium, Quora, LinkedIn, and Wikipedia.
- 8 Reinforce authority with consistent author bios and credentials: A direct Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-E-A-T) signal for both search and AI.
- 9 Keep content fresh: Refresh top pages quarterly, update stats, add new examples, and adjust dates.
- 10 Monitor AI mentions and close the gaps: Track brand citations across ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Gemini.



Kentico Insight



“Focus on clarity and usefulness first. Well-structured, helpful content is what both search engines and AI systems prioritize.”

Miroslav Jirků, Product Marketing Lead

Your 30-Day Action Plan.

Print this checklist, tape it to your monitor, and cross items off as you go.

Week 1:

Audit

- ☐ Inventory your top 20 pages by organic traffic and revenue
- ☐ Run a schema audit on your top 20 pages
- ☐ Test 10 category-critical queries in ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Gemini Search
- ☐ Document which pages are (and aren't) being cited and document how the competitors appear

Week 2:

Fix Foundations

- ☐ Add missing schema: FAQ, HowTo, Article, Product, Organization
- ☐ Rewrite the first 60 words of every top page as a direct answer
- ☐ Fix broken internal links
- ☐ Ensure organization schema is complete (logo, sameAs, description)
- ☐ Replace vague marketing copy with definitional statements

Week 3:

Focus on Content

- ☐ Add Q&A sections to your top 5 product or solution pages
- ☐ Create or refresh 3 definition pages ("What is X?")
- ☐ Post thoughtful excerpts on relevant Reddit and Quora threads
- ☐ Update or claim Wikipedia-adjacent entries where legitimate

Week 4:

Analyze and Plan

- ☐ Re-test your 10 queries and record any changes in citation frequency across ChatGPT, Perplexity, & Gemini.
- ☐ Review AI referral traffic, conversion rate, and bounce rate vs. organic
- ☐ Set a quarterly schedule to produce and refresh Q&A content
- ☐ Schedule a 60-day review to measure your progress

What GEO Actually Looks Like in Practice.

Insights from Jonathan Henault, Director Director of Brand and Content at Kentico



“GEO is not a separate workstream. It is what good content already looks like when it is written with a machine reader in mind alongside a human one.”

Jonathan Henault, Director Director of Brand and Content at Kentico

Running content at Kentico has shown me something checklists don't always capture: the gap between knowing what to do and doing it consistently at scale. In my view, the tactics that earn AI citations are the same ones that make content worth reading in the first place.

My 5 Tactics in Practice

01

Write every sentence to stand alone

Approach written content as if someone might read only that sentence

02

Lead with the answer

The setup comes second. Leading with the answer is what earns the click, and the citation.

03

Cite credible sources visibly

A page that cites nothing looks like an opinion.

04

Build content clusters

One great post makes you a contributor, but a cluster makes you a source.

05

Treat freshness as a ranking factor

Keeping content current is critica. Stale stats hurt citability, not just credibility

Getting one page right is straightforward; but keeping hundreds of pages fresh, structured, and citable across ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Gemini is where my team would hit a wall without the right tools. That is exactly the problem the SEO & GEO Specialist inside Xperience by Kentico was built to solve.

Get more expert advice from Jonathan, read [10 Ways to Optimize for GEO on the blog](#).

Your CMS Is Your Best SEO and GEO Asset.

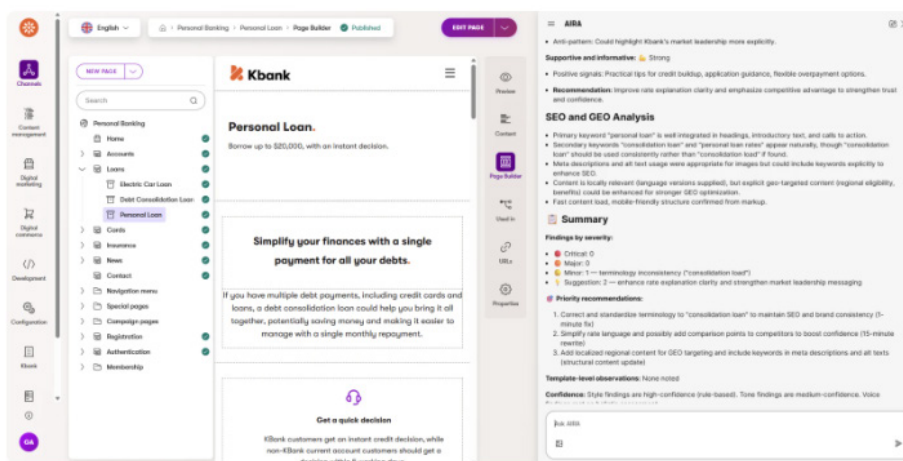
Most of the ten activities above are repetitive, skill-intensive, and time consuming to complete across hundreds of pages. But the steps it takes to create an effective SEO and GEO strategy can't be skipped. A content management system that makes it easy to adapt and create content on every channel reduces the time it takes to effectively roll out a fresh SEO and GEO strategy.

And when your platform includes structured content models, reusable components, and AI-powered optimization tools, the work of keeping content clear, consistent, and discoverable becomes part of your normal workflow rather than a separate project.

Xperience by Kentico brings this a step further, with unified content management and multichannel digital marketing, but also with a new SEO & GEO Specialist designed to make the process even easier with on-demand assistance.

What the SEO & GEO Specialist Handles for You

- Audits every page for schema coverage and generates the missing markup
- Scans content for AI-readability: answer-first openings, snippet blocks, clear hierarchy
- Monitors ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Gemini for brand citations and gaps
- Flags outdated content and queues refresh recommendations
- Reports AI referral traffic, conversion, and bounce alongside traditional organic



→ [GET TO KNOW AIRA AGENTIC MARKETING SUITE](#)

What Happens If You Wait.

**Traditional search volume
will fall 25%, according
to Gartner.**

**AI traffic converts 4.4x
better; don't risk missing out
on conversions!**

Brands that start optimizing for AI search now are steadily building citation authority. The earlier you begin, the stronger your position becomes over time.

Your Next Steps



STEP 1

Complete the quick self-audit in part one

STEP 2

Start Week 1 of the 30-day plan this week

STEP 3

Get your marketing team on the same page;
share this resource with them

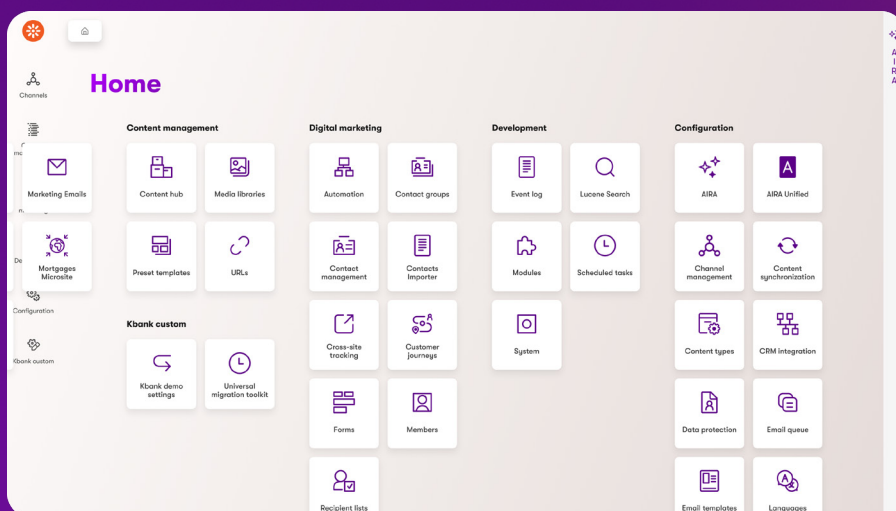
STEP 4

Book a demo to see how Xperience by Kentico's
SEO & GEO Specialist can help you optimize
your strategy and improve your rankings, fast

BOOK A DEMO

About Kentico.

Kentico is a content management system with built-in digital marketing, native commerce, and AI agentic capabilities that help deliver personalized customer experiences through websites, microsites, emails, apps, digital kiosks, and other channels. It replaces multiple disconnected tools with a unified solution that reduces technology complexity and improves team productivity.



Empower your team to create engaging experiences while eliminating time-consuming tasks with a comprehensive platform that is easy to learn and use, powered by built-in AI agentic capabilities that streamline marketing workflows. Tailor content, commerce experiences, and delivery to individual preferences and develop consistent interactions across multiple digital touchpoints, reaching your customers on their favorite channels, anytime, anywhere. Kentico consolidates multichannel content management, digital marketing, and commerce capabilities in a single solution, helping your team achieve more with fewer processes and less technology.

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