

Is Search Totally

FKED?**



AI Mode

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

**NOOR
NASEER**

**ROB
KURTZ**

The Future of Advertising Runs on Basis.

Award-winning technology and services that integrates and radically improves agency and marketer capabilities, drives outcomes for media campaigns and businesses.





NOOR NASEER

VP, MEDIA INNOVATIONS + TECHNOLOGY

Basis[®]



ROB KURTZ

STRATEGIC BUSINESS OUTCOMES PARTNER

Basis[®]

The AI Search Evolution



THE NEW LANDSCAPE

AI tools are redefining the way consumers search for information online



AI SEARCH TRENDS







AI Mode

Modifying search technique is crucial for content visibility and reaching audiences effectively.



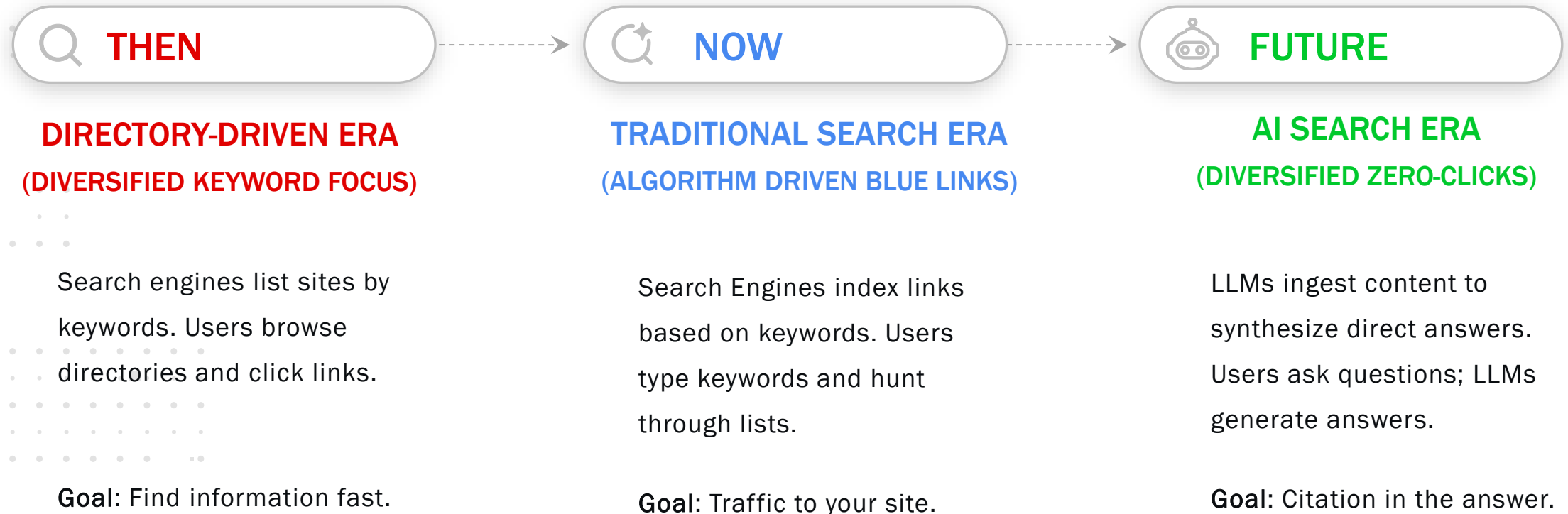
AI is Rewiring

 The Consumer Landscape    AI Mode



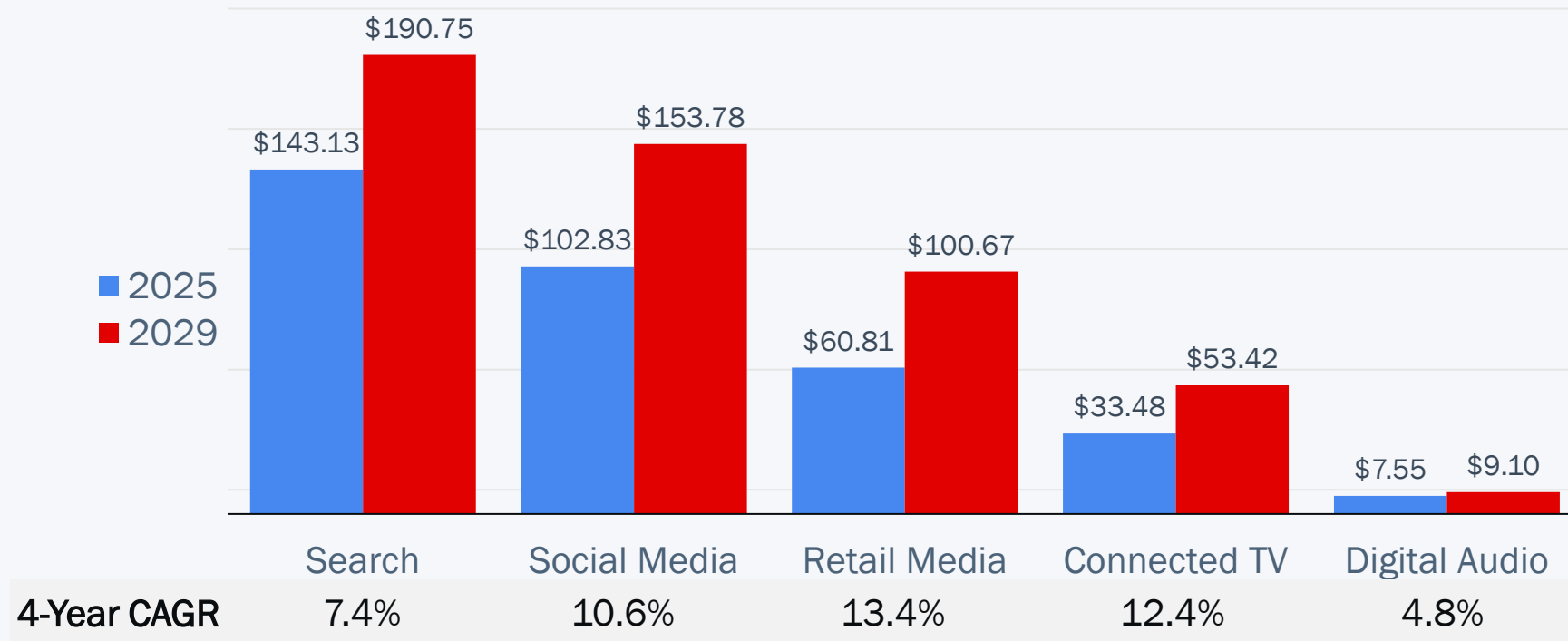
Success With Search Is Evolving

IT'S ABOUT BECOMING THE AI-VALIDATED ANSWER



Search. Still The #1 Destination for Advertising Dollars

BILLIONS IN US DIGITAL AD SPENDING AND 4-YEAR CAGR
by format, 2025 & 2029



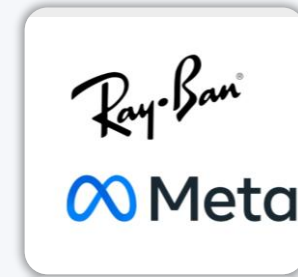
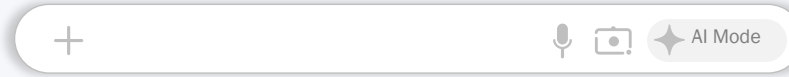
Brand Discovery is Happening Outside the Search Engine



Brand Discovery is Happening Outside the Search Engine

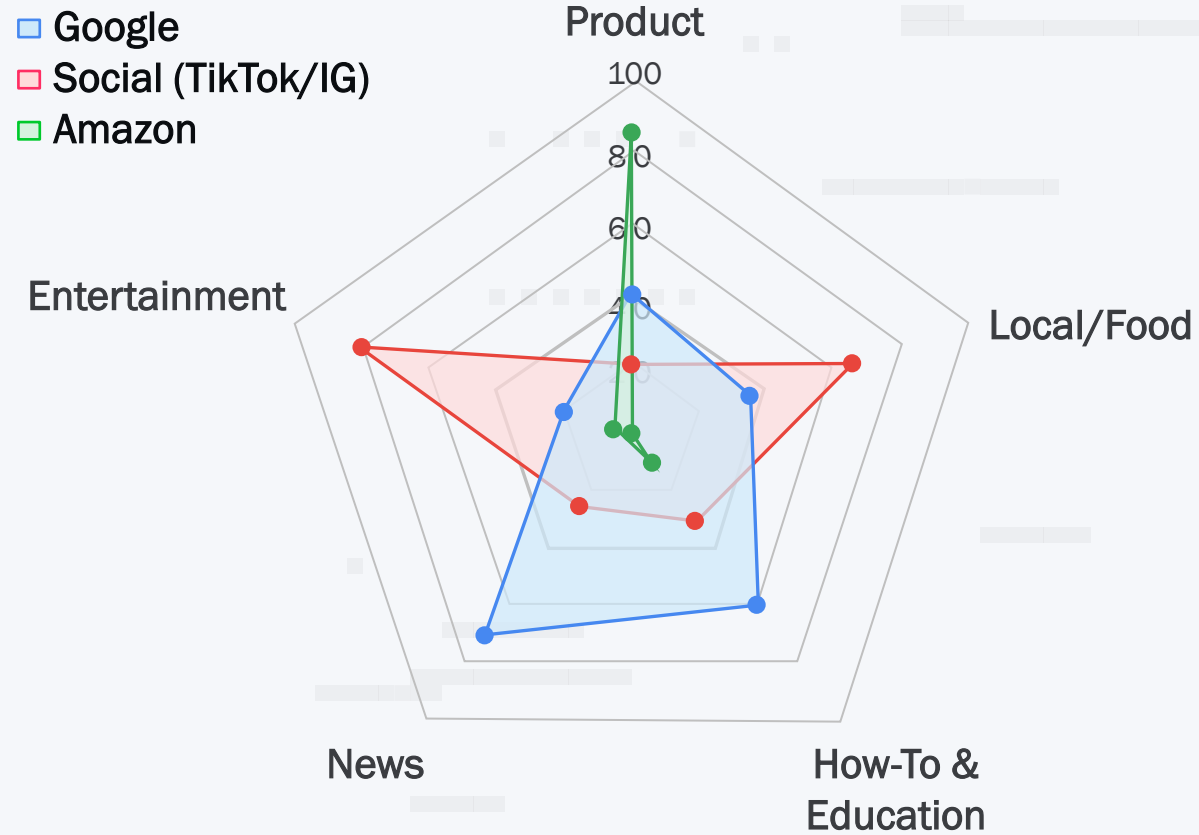


Google



Where Gen Z Starts Their Search

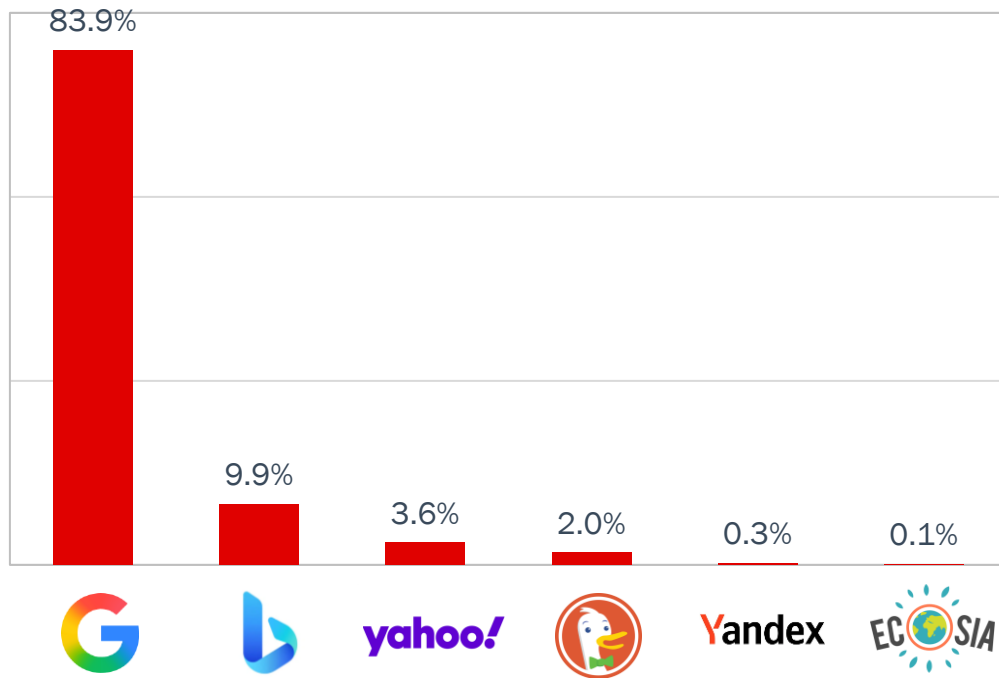
PERCENTAGE SHARE OF "FIRST QUERY" LOCATION



Google Still Rules – But Search is Going Rogue

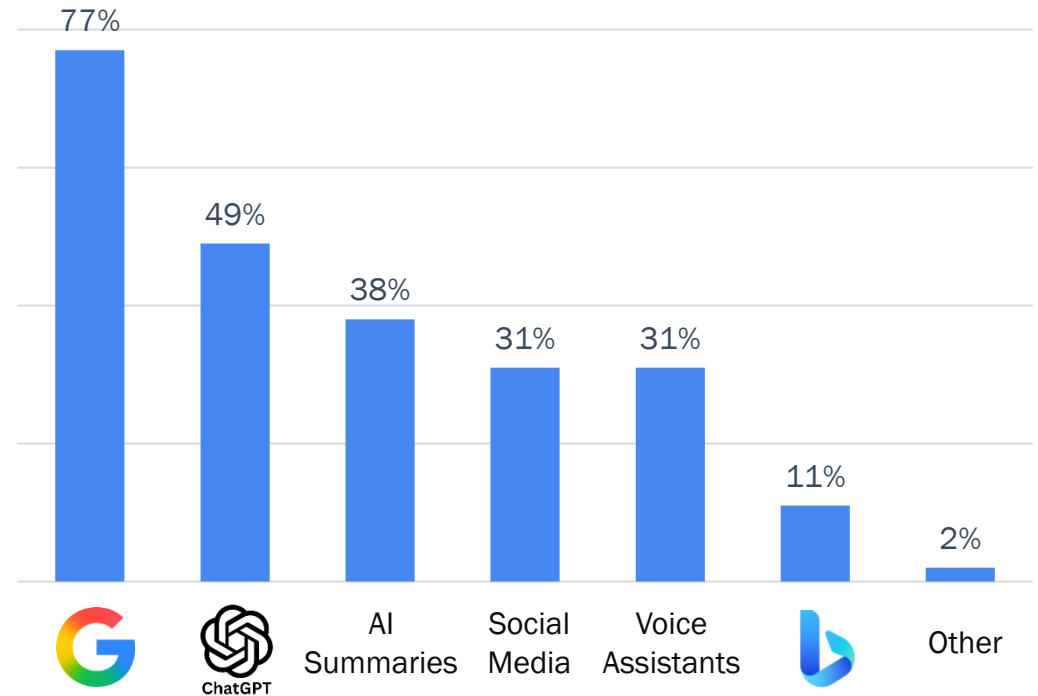
SEARCH MARKET SHARE

June 2025



TOOLS ADULTS REGULARLY USE FOR SEARCH

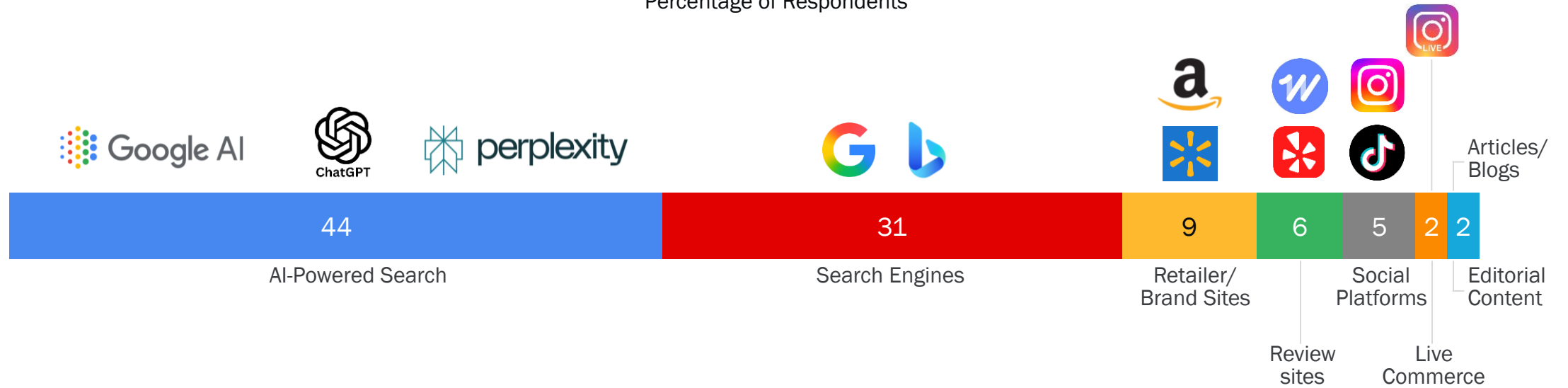
May 2025



AI-Powered Search is Already the Most Preferred Source of Information Among Users

DIGITAL INFORMATION SOURCES PREFERRED BY CONSUMERS TO INFORM THEIR PURCHASING JOURNEYS

Percentage of Respondents



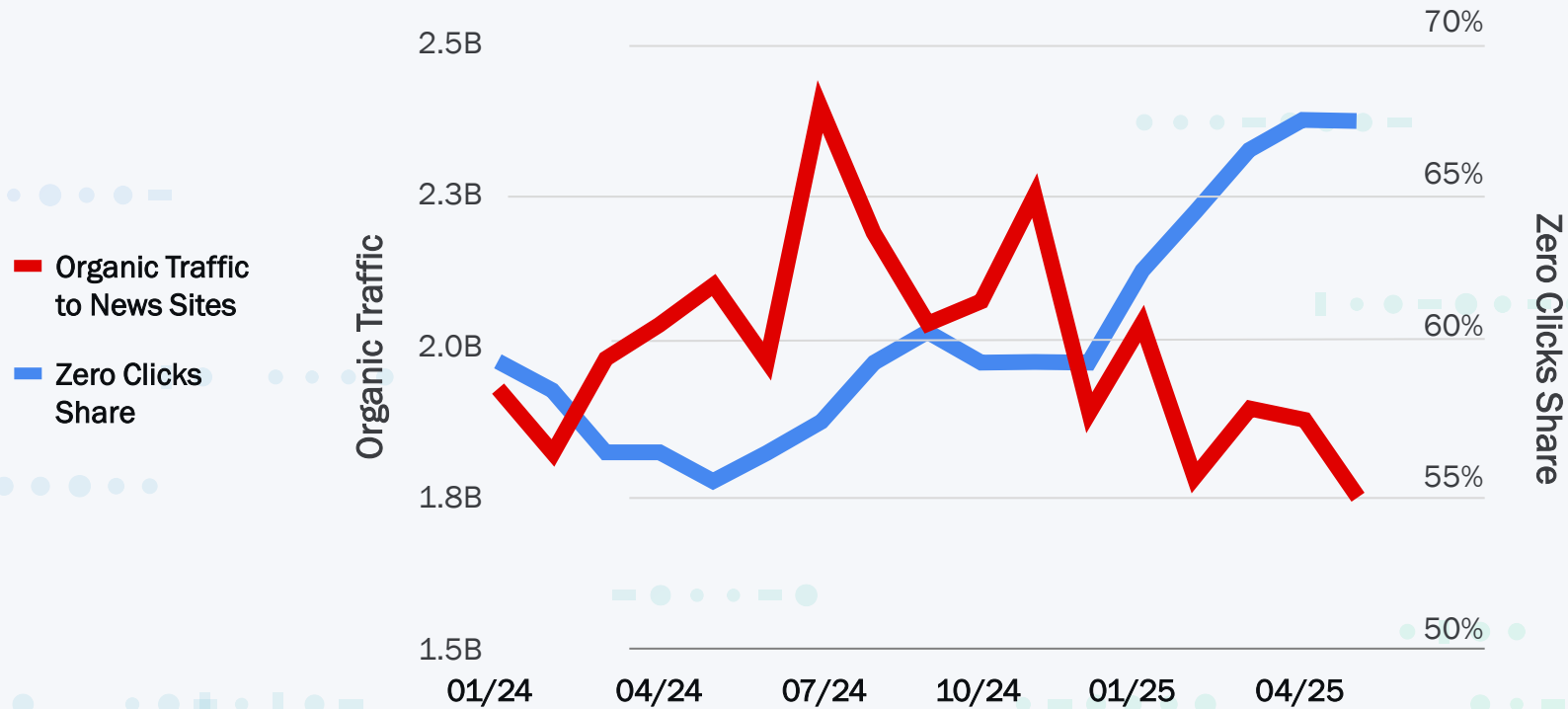
The Impact of AI Search



Zero Click Engagement - Drastically Impacting Organic Traffic

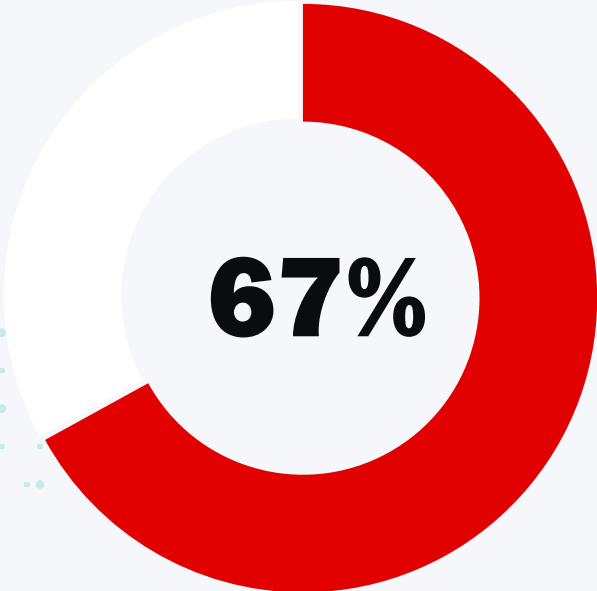
ORGANIC SEARCH VS. ZERO CLICK SHARE

January 2024 - May 2025



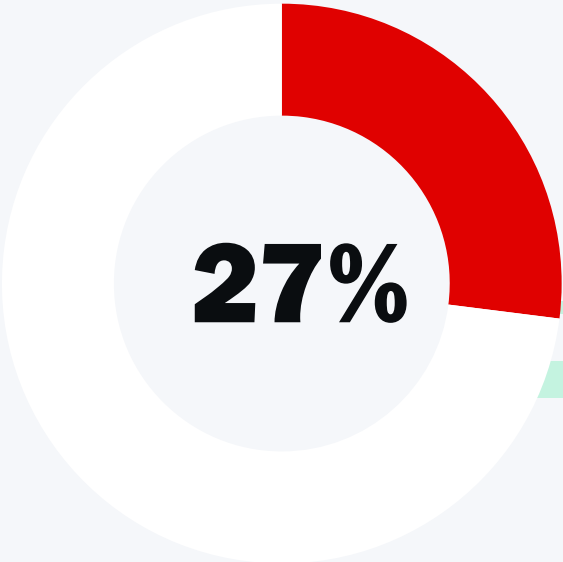
When Search Visibility No Longer Means Traffic

2019



- Google Search
- All Other Sources

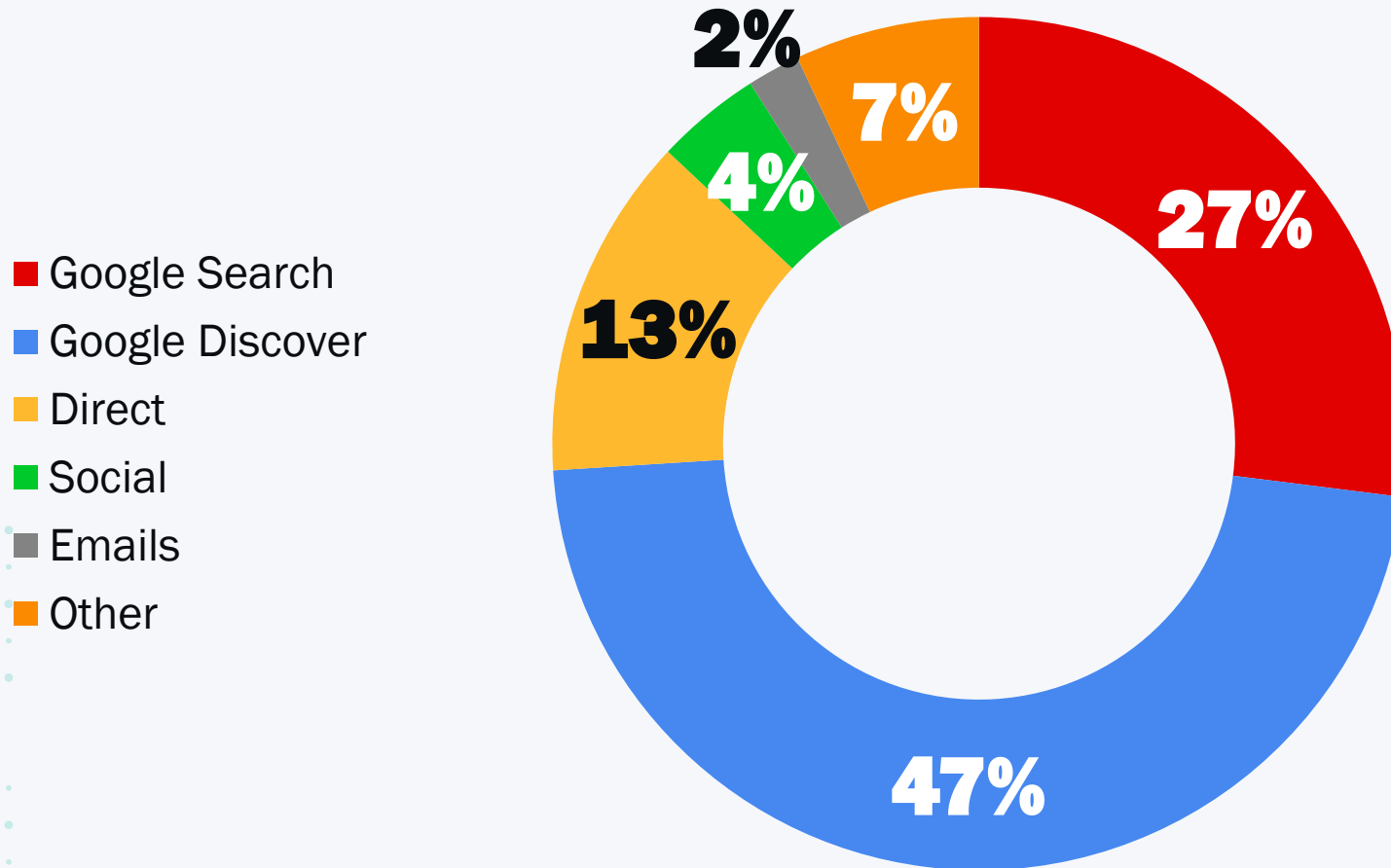
Today



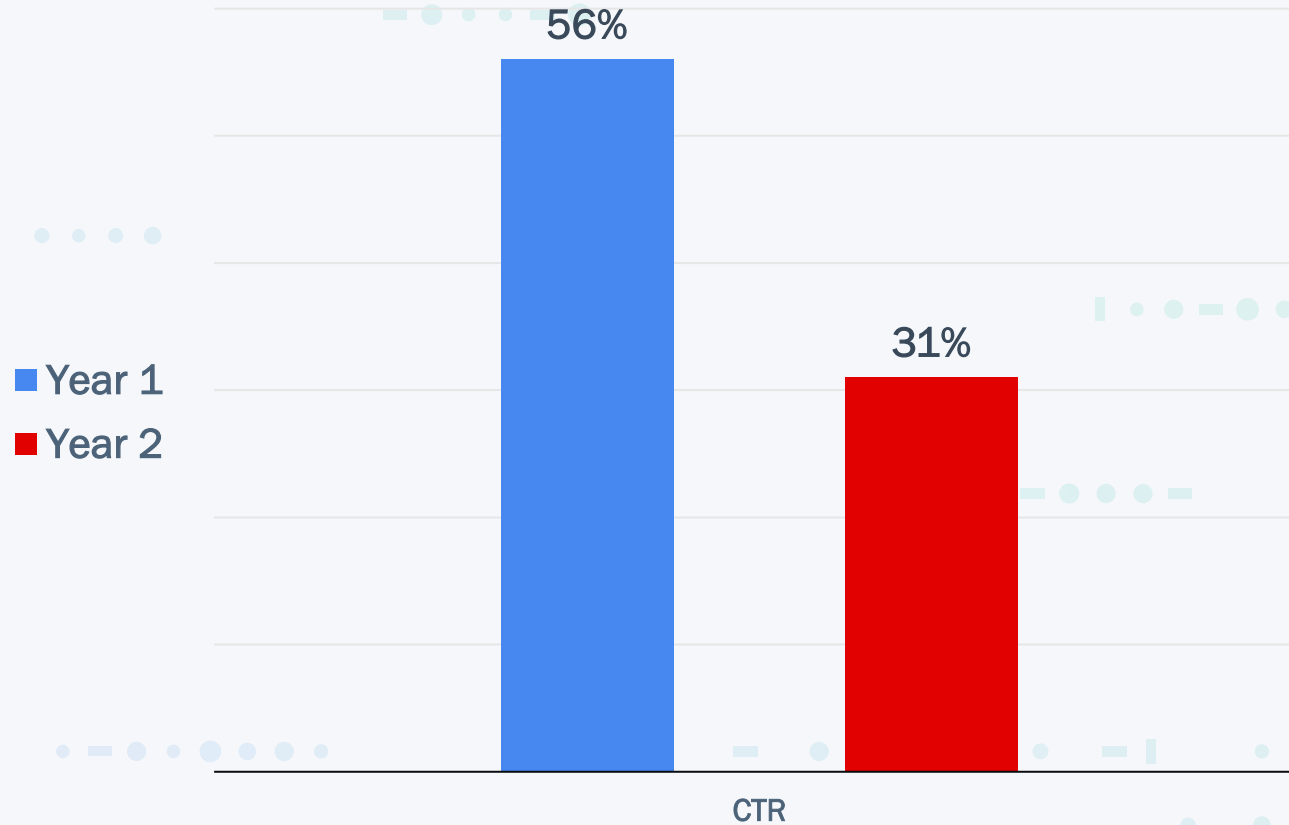
- Google Search
- All Other Sources



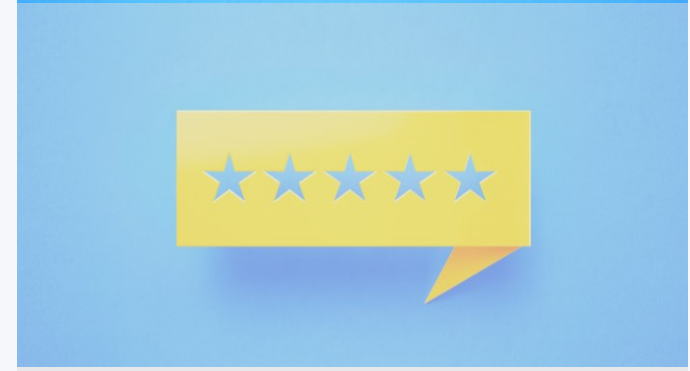
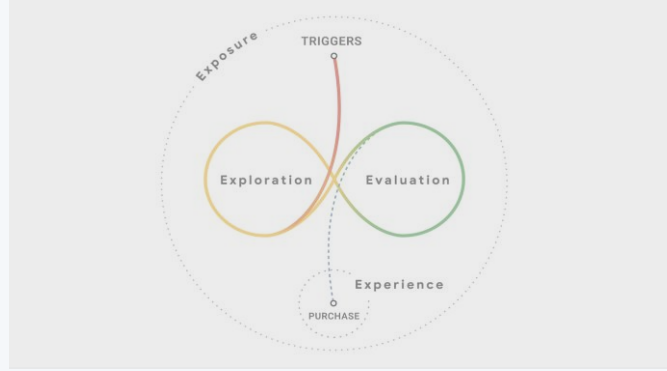
All Is Not Lost. Discovery Now Occurs In More Places – If You Optimize



Google Search CTRs of Top Pages Have Fallen Since AI Overviews Launch in May '24



How AI Search Is Reshaping Paid Media



IMPACT

ATTENTION COMPRESSION

INTENT ASYMMETRY

INFLUENCE OVER CLICKS

CORE SHIFT

AI answers compress above-the-fold SERP real estate

AI impacts research intent more than action intent

Paid media contributes value without always driving clicks and engagement

REALITY

AI Overviews and rich answers dominate visibility, pushing paid and organic lower

AI triggers most often on informational and research-driven queries

Search increasingly resolves questions without site visits; users doing research within many channels

USER BEHAVIOR

Users scan AI summaries first; scrolling and exploration decline

Research is completed on-SERP; actions still require external steps

Brand exposure in paid channels influences later decisions and return visits

PAID MEDIA IMPACT

Paid CTR declines due to fewer available attention moments; could drive up CPCs

SEM upper-funnel paid efficiency could decline; fewer impressions from quality publishers; lower-funnel remains resilient

Paid supports recall, trust, and eligibility beyond last click; measurement evolving



How AI Search



How AI Engines are Choosing Authority

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

+ KNOWLEDGE GROUNDING

+ CONTEXTUAL REASONING

+ GENERATIVE EXPERIENCE



SEMANTIC
CHUNKING



RETRIEVAL-
AUGMENTED
GENERATION
(RAG)



ANSWER
GENERATION

Entity-Based Focus



Starts With Discovery

DISCOVERY

SEO (TRADITIONAL)
SEARCH ENGINE
OPTIMIZATION

AEO (ANSWER BOXES)
ANSWER ENGINE
OPTIMIZATION

GEO (AI SEARCH)
Generative Engine
Optimization

**PAID MEDIA
(REINFORCE)**
Discovery + Backfill

Main Goal

Drive clicks to your site

Be the instant answer

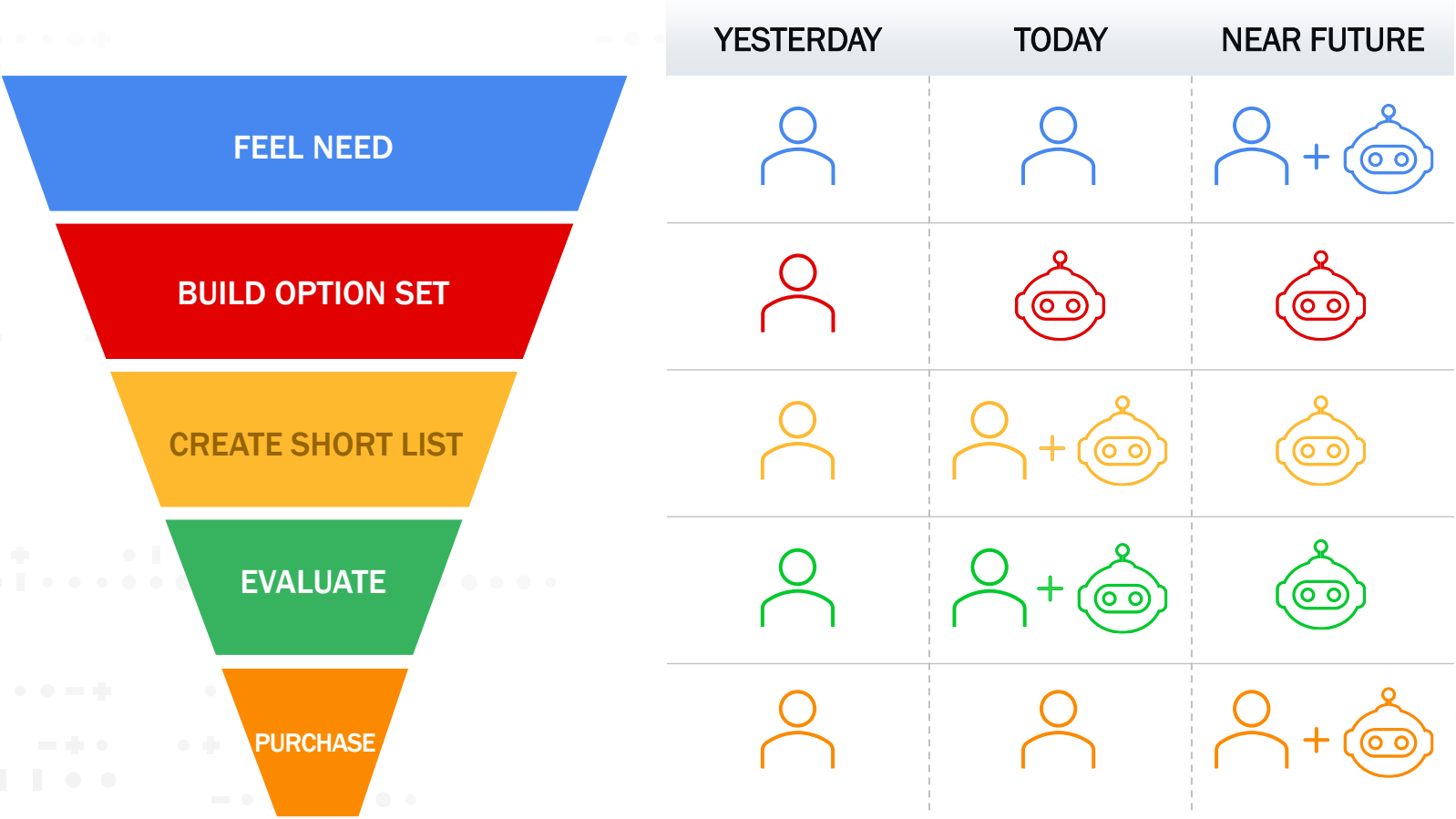
Be cited as the trusted
source

Supplant traffic and spur
discoverability



AI Agents Power 'Outsourcing of the Middle'

SPEED & CONVENIENCE | LOW-STAKES DECISION | CLEAR & VALIDATED | PERSONALIZATION



Is Search Totally

FILL IN THE BLANK



**The model has been disrupted.
The underlying human behavior is not.**



2026 Strategic Framework

DISCOVERABILITY STRATEGIES

	Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	Answer Engine Optimization (AEO)	Generative Engine Optimization (GEO)	Paid Media Reinforcement
Primary Goal	Ensure content is crawlable, indexable, and utilize target keywords.	Become the <i>direct</i> answer surfaced in AI Overviews & assistants	Be cited, referenced, or synthesized in AI responses	Accelerate discovery and reinforce authority signals
Role in Discovery	Feeds traditional rankings and AI retrieval layers as foundational input	Lifted verbatim for summaries, snippets, and zero-click responses	Used as an authoritative source across multi-input AI answers	Supplements organic loss, drives first touch influence and impacts AI demand signals
Priority Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One clear topic per URL • H1/H2s in natural language • Internal linking + clean IA • Core Web Vitals • Schema + LLM-readable text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30–50-word answer blocks • Q&A and FAQ schema • Definitions, lists, tables • Align to “People Also Ask” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish original POVs & research • Strengthen E-E-A-T signals • Referenceable frameworks • Brand/entity consistency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI-adjacent ad formats: AI Max, PMAx, Advantage+ • Discoverability: YouTube, Social, Programmatic, Influencers • Paid-to-Organic Transition • Query-aligned creative • Always-on brand presence
Measurable KPIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indexed pages • Non-brand impressions • Avg. position (top 10) • Crawl efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Featured snippet wins • AI Overview inclusion • Zero-click visibility • Assisted impressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI citations/mentions • Branded prompt visibility • Entity recognition growth • Referral traffic from AI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indexed pages • Non-brand impressions • Avg. position (top 10) • Crawl efficiency

How Paid Media Can Lean Into AI

AI IN ACTION: AD SOLUTIONS SHAPING PAID MEDIA NOW



GOOGLE ADS

AD TYPE

AI Max,
Performance Max

CHANNELS



PLACEMENTS

Text Ads, Shopping Ads,
Display Ads, Video Ads

BIDDING

Smart Bidding



MICROSOFT ADS

AD TYPE

Performance Max –
Copilot Search

CHANNELS



PLACEMENTS

Conversational Ads,
Text Ads, Display Ads

BIDDING

AI-optimized Bidding



CHATGPT

AD TYPE

Sponsored follow-up
questions, media ads

CHANNELS



PLACEMENTS

AI-generated Sponsored
Results, Display & Video

BIDDING

Smart Bidding



No ads



How to Prepare

WHAT BRANDS SHOULD DO

+ AI ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Invest in GEO and AEO strategies

+ MONITOR PROGRESS

Monitor AI visibility metrics
(citations, mentions)

+ BUILD TRUST

Build trustworthy, structured content

+ PAID MEDIA FOCUS

Lean into paid media to buoy
lower organic search traffic and
visibility



Questions?

