

FREE QUICK STEPS GUIDE

# How to optimise for AEO

Answer Engine Optimisation (AEO). Getting AI to mention, trust, and recommend your business.

Page one of Google is changing. AI results now appear before organic search - and that trend is accelerating. AEO is how you stay visible in this new landscape. Here are seven practical steps to get started, in plain English, no technical background needed.

## 01

### **Know what AEO actually means - and what it doesn't**

SEO gets you ranked on Google. AEO gets you mentioned by AI. When someone asks ChatGPT, Google's AI Overview, or any other AI tool a question - AEO is what determines whether your business gets cited as the answer. But here's what a lot of people get wrong: AEO doesn't replace SEO. It sits alongside it. Google's own quality framework for SEO - EEAT (Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness) - is also exactly what makes AI tools trust and cite your content. A well-structured, authoritative website that ranks well is also far more likely to be picked up by AI. The two feed each other. So don't scrap what's working. Add to it.

› **Think of it this way: SEO puts you on the shelf. AEO makes the AI pick you up and recommend you. You need both.**

## 02

### **Answer specific questions - not just keywords**

Here's where AEO and SEO differ in practice. SEO targets keywords e.g. 'heat pump installer Cornwall'. AEO is driven by the way people talk to AI - in full, specific questions e.g. 'how much does it cost to install a heat pump in a three-bedroom house in Cornwall?' Both matter. Your keyword page still needs to exist. But now you also need content that answers those longer, more specific questions directly - because that's what AI cites. Answer in the first sentence, not buried in paragraph five.

#### **Easy ways to find the right questions**

Look at the 'People Also Ask' box when you Google your topic - those are real questions real people are asking. And look at comments on competitors' social media posts and YouTube videos, as well as in product queries and reviews. Questions in comments are gold. They tell you exactly what your audience doesn't yet understand and is actively searching for. Write content that answers those questions and you're already ahead.

› **Your FAQ page is now one of your most powerful AEO tools. Populate it using 'People Also Ask' results for your topic.**



## 03

### **Write like a human, not a brochure (or robot)**

AI tools are trained on how people actually communicate. Jargon-heavy, corporate-speak content gets skipped. Plain English, conversational, helpful content gets cited. Short paragraphs. Clear headings. No waffle. If a 14-year-old couldn't understand it, rewrite it. This is good marketing practice anyway - AEO just makes it essential.

› ***Read your website content out loud. If it sounds like a brochure, it needs a rewrite.***

## 05

### **Be consistent everywhere**

If your website says one thing, your LinkedIn says another, and your Google listing says something else - AI gets confused and moves on. Your business name, what you do, who you help, and what makes you different should be worded consistently across every platform. AI looks for agreement across multiple sources before deciding to trust - and cite - you.

› ***Google your business name right now. Is the information consistent across the results you see?***

## 04

### **Build your reputation beyond your own website**

AI tools don't just look at your website - they look at what the whole internet says about you. Reviews on Google, mentions in industry articles, coverage in local press, guest posts, directory listings, social media presence - all of this builds the picture of whether you're a trusted source. The more credible third-party mentions you have, the more likely AI is to cite you.

› ***Start with your Google Business Profile. Make sure it's complete, up to date, and has genuine reviews.***

## 06

### **Publish content that's genuinely useful**

Generic content an AI could write itself has no citation value. What AI tools actually cite is original expertise - your take on an industry issue, a practical guide based on your experience, data or insight that isn't available anywhere else. One genuinely useful, specific piece of content is worth ten generic blog posts. Quality over quantity, always.

One technical note worth adding is schema markup. This is a small piece of code that tells AI tools and search engines exactly what type of content is on your page - FAQ schema in particular is a direct AEO signal. On WordPress, a plugin like Yoast handles it automatically. Otherwise it's a quick job for your web developer.

› ***What do your clients ask you most often? Answer it properly, in writing, on your website. That's your next piece of AEO content.***



## 07

### **Be patient - and start now!**

AEO isn't an overnight fix. Building the kind of authority that AI tools trust typically takes three to six months of consistent effort. But the businesses that start now will have a significant head start over those who wait until it's obvious they've been left behind.

But the good news is most of these steps make your marketing better in every way - not just for AI.

**› Pick one step from this list and do it this week. Progress beats perfection!**

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## Need help with your marketing strategy?

I'm Steph, founder of The Good Marketing Co. I work with founder-led businesses that need clear, practical marketing - without the waffle. If you'd like a conversation about where your marketing is and where it could be, get in touch.

[thegoodmarketing.co.uk](https://thegoodmarketing.co.uk)