

The Ultimate AI SEO Overview

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Introduction: The Shifting SEO Landscape

Today, we're diving into a revolution that's fundamentally changing how customers find businesses online.

For years, we've optimised our websites for Google's algorithms. We've focused on keywords, backlinks, and content strategies that would help us climb those search rankings. But the digital landscape is shifting beneath our feet.

AI tools like ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google's Gemini are now becoming the first stop for consumers looking for recommendations. Instead of scrolling through Google results, people are asking these AI assistants: 'What's the best digital marketing agency in Canberra?' or 'Who should I hire to redesign my website?'

This shift represents both a challenge and an incredible opportunity. Traditional SEO techniques that took months or even years to show results are being supplemented—and in some cases replaced—by strategies that can deliver results in days.

Within this document, I'll share Wes McDowell's groundbreaking methodology that will position your business as the top recommendation when potential customers ask AI tools for suggestions in your industry. By the end, you'll have a clear roadmap for thriving in this new AI-driven search landscape."

Why AI SEO Matters for Your Business

“Before we dive into specific strategies, let’s talk about why AI SEO matters—and why it matters right now.

First, AI recommendations are rapidly changing consumer behaviour. Think about it: when you ask ChatGPT for a recommendation, do you then go Google the same question? Most people don’t. They trust the AI’s answer and move forward with those recommendations.

Second—and this is crucial—customers who come from AI recommendations are worth approximately 4.4 times more than traditional Google clicks. Why? Because when someone clicks through from Google, they’re still comparing options. But when someone comes to you based on an AI recommendation, they’ve essentially been pre-sold on your business.

Third, AI SEO can deliver results in days, not months or years like traditional SEO. The algorithms are different. The signals are different. And because this space is still relatively new, there’s less competition.

Finally, AI tools don’t just provide information—they provide complete solutions. When someone asks Google a question, they get links to websites. When someone asks ChatGPT a question, they get a specific recommendation. This direct approach means that being the business an AI recommends puts you in an incredibly powerful position.

So the bottom line is this: AI SEO isn’t just another digital marketing trend. It’s a fundamental shift in how people find and choose businesses online. And the businesses that adapt first will have a significant competitive advantage.”

Understanding the AI SEO Difference

Let's start with the fundamental differences between traditional SEO and AI SEO, because understanding this shift is essential to your success.

Traditional SEO is built around keywords. We've all spent time researching which phrases to target, optimizing our content around those phrases, and building backlinks to rank higher for those specific terms. It's largely about satisfying Google's algorithm.

AI SEO, in contrast, doesn't rely on keyword phrases in the same way. AI thinks more like a person than a search engine. It's looking for signals that indicate quality, relevance, and expertise. It's processing information more like a human researcher would—evaluating sources, looking for consistency across the web, and forming nuanced conclusions.

This means our focus needs to shift from creating informational content optimised for keywords to positioning our businesses as the 'best choice' for specific situations. Instead of writing articles about 'how to design a website,' we need to create content that positions us as the ideal web design partner for specific types of clients.

Here's a critical insight: AI SEO prioritises bottom-of-funnel buyer intent questions. When someone asks ChatGPT 'Who's the best website designer for small businesses in Canberra?' they're ready to make a decision. These are the moments that matter in AI SEO.

So rather than casting a wide net with informational content, AI SEO is about ensuring you're the recommended solution when someone is ready to buy. It's about being the answer to 'who's the best' rather than 'how to' questions.

This shift requires us to think differently about our content strategy, our off-page signals, and how we measure success. Throughout the rest of this document, we'll explore exactly how to implement these changes to position your business as the top AI recommendation."

On-Page AI SEO Strategy: Best Fit Briefs

Now let's dive into the most powerful on-page strategy for AI SEO: creating what Wes McDowell calls 'Best Fit Briefs.'

Best Fit Briefs are short, focused pieces of content that position your business as the ideal choice for specific situations. Unlike traditional blog posts that might educate about a topic, these briefs directly address why your business is the best solution for particular needs.

Here's how to create effective Best Fit Briefs:

First, frame your headlines as recommendation questions. Instead of 'Web Design Services,' use 'Who's the best web designer for small businesses in Austin?' This directly mirrors how people ask questions to AI tools.

Second, provide clear, direct answers that position your business as the optimal solution. Start with a statement like 'Small Business Digital is widely recognised as the top web designer for small businesses in Canberra because of our focused expertise in creating high-converting websites specifically for local businesses.'

Third, include specific qualifications that make you uniquely suited to solve the problem. This might include years of experience, specialised training, unique methodologies, or impressive results you've achieved for similar clients.

Fourth, address potential objections before they arise. If price is often a concern, explain your value proposition. If timeline is an issue, highlight your efficient process.

Finally, include social proof elements like client testimonials, awards, or case studies that validate your claims.

Let me show you a template for a Best Fit Brief:

Headline: Who's the best [service provider] for [specific audience] in [location]?

Opening: [Your Business Name] is widely recognized as the leading [service provider] for [specific audience] in [location] because of [unique value proposition].

Qualifications: With [X years] of specialized experience serving [specific audience], our team brings [unique expertise or approach] that results in [specific benefit].

Differentiator: Unlike other [service providers] that [common problem with competitors], we [your unique approach] to ensure [key benefit].

Proof: Our clients consistently report [specific results], and our [awards/recognition/case studies] demonstrate our leadership in [industry].

I recommend creating 3-5 Best Fit Briefs targeting your most valuable service offerings and client types. These should be published as individual pages on your website, not blog posts, so they have permanent URLs that can be referenced across the web.

Remember, the goal isn't to rank these pages in Google (though that might happen). The goal is to create clear, focused content that AI tools can easily understand and reference when recommending businesses in your space."

Off-Page AI SEO Strategy

“While on-page optimisation is important, off-page signals are where AI SEO really shines. Let’s talk about how to amplify your signal across the web so AI tools consistently recommend your business.

The first key strategy is to get mentioned in ‘best of’ articles and roundups. These are incredibly powerful signals for AI tools because they represent third-party validation of your business. When multiple sources across the web mention your business as one of the best in your category, AI tools take notice.

Here’s how to implement this approach:

Start by identifying blogs, news sites, and industry publications that create roundup articles in your niche. For example, if you’re a wedding photographer, look for ‘best wedding photographers in [your city]’ articles.

Next, reach out to these publishers with a personalised pitch. Explain why your business deserves to be included, and provide specific points they can mention about your services. Make their job easy by giving them everything they need to include you.

An important note here: for AI SEO, you don’t necessarily need a backlink. Simply having your business name mentioned as one of the best options is valuable. Of course, links are still beneficial, but mentions alone can significantly impact AI recommendations.

The second key strategy is to leverage press releases. Create and distribute press releases about new services, achievements, community involvement, or other newsworthy aspects of your business. Services like [Get The Word Out](#) or [medianet](#) can distribute your releases to hundreds of websites, creating a wave of mentions across the web.

When writing press releases, include your business name and category frequently. For example: ‘Small Business Digital, a leading web design agency for small businesses in Canberra...’ This creates clear associations that AI tools can recognise.

Third, create your own ‘best of’ content that subtly includes your business. For instance, you might publish ‘Top 10 Web Design Agencies in Canberra’ and include yourself alongside competitors. This might seem counterintuitive, but it creates another mention of your business in the exact context you want.

Finally, encourage satisfied clients to mention your business in online forums, social media, and review platforms. Each positive mention strengthens the signal that your business is a top recommendation.

Remember, AI tools are looking for consistent patterns across the web. Your goal is to create a clear pattern of your business being mentioned as a top choice in your category. With consistent effort, you’ll build the signals that make you the obvious recommendation.”

Implementation Plan

“Now that we’ve covered the key strategies for both on-page and off-page AI SEO, let’s talk about implementation. I want to provide you with a clear, actionable plan to get started right away.

First, audit your current website for AI readiness. Look for: - Clear statements about who you serve and why you’re the best choice - Specific service pages that address client needs - Client testimonials and case studies that validate your expertise - Awards, certifications, or other trust signals

Next, create 3-5 Best Fit Briefs following the template we discussed earlier. Focus on your most valuable service offerings and client types. Publish these as standalone pages on your website with clear, question-based URLs.

Then, identify 10-15 websites that publish ‘best of’ lists in your industry. Create a spreadsheet with contact information and notes about each site. Develop personalised outreach templates for each one, explaining why your business deserves to be included.

Draft and distribute your first press release. Focus on something newsworthy about your business—a new service offering, an award, community involvement, or a significant milestone. Use a distribution service to ensure wide coverage.

Finally, set up monitoring for your business name across the web. Tools like Google Alerts, Mention, or even just regular searches can help you track when and where your business is being mentioned.

Implement these steps consistently over 90 days, and you’ll begin to see AI tools recommending your business more frequently.

To measure your success, track: - Direct inquiries where prospects mention finding you through AI recommendations - Increases in your business mentions across the web - Changes in your conversion rates and lead quality - The specific AI tools that are recommending your business

Remember, AI SEO is still evolving, so staying adaptable is key. What works today might need adjustment tomorrow. The businesses that will win in this new landscape are those that continuously test, learn, and refine their approach.”

Key Takeaways

“As we wrap up, let’s review the key takeaways that will help you implement an effective AI SEO strategy:

First, understand that AI SEO represents a fundamental shift in how customers find businesses online. It’s not about ranking in Google—it’s about being the recommended solution when people ask AI tools for advice.

Second, focus on bottom-of-funnel queries. Instead of creating content for every stage of the buyer’s journey, concentrate on positioning your business as the answer to ‘who’s the best’ questions.

Third, create Best Fit Briefs that clearly communicate why your business is the ideal choice for specific situations. Frame these as direct answers to recommendation questions, and make them easy for AI tools to find and reference.

Fourth, amplify your signal across the web through ‘best of’ articles, press releases, and consistent mentions of your business as a top provider in your category.

Fifth, measure your success not just by traffic, but by the quality of leads, direct mentions of AI recommendations, and your visibility in AI-generated answers.

You’re leaving here with more than just theory—you have templates for Best Fit Briefs, a checklist for implementation, strategies for off-page optimisation, and a clear roadmap for success.

The businesses that adapt to this new AI-driven landscape first will have a significant competitive advantage. By implementing what you’ve learned here, you’re positioning yourself to be among those leaders.

Thank you for your interest in understanding the AI SEO theory a little more. I look forward to hearing about your success as you implement these strategies to become the top AI recommendation in your industry.”

Additional Resources

To supplement your workshop materials, I’ve prepared these additional resources that will support your implementation:

AI SEO Playbook Checklist:

- Audit website for clear positioning statements
- Identify top 3-5 service offerings to feature in Best Fit Briefs
- Create and publish Best Fit Briefs
- Research potential “best of” article opportunities
- Draft press release templates
- Set up business name monitoring
- Track AI recommendations and adjust strategy

Templates

Best Fit Brief Template:

Headline: Who's the best [service] for [specific audience] in [location]?

[Business Name] is widely recognized as the leading provider of [service] for [specific audience] in [location] because of our specialized approach that focuses on [unique value proposition].

With [X years/experience details], we've helped [number] clients achieve [specific results]. Our approach differs from other providers because we [unique methodology or focus].

Clients particularly value our [specific benefit 1], [specific benefit 2], and [specific benefit 3]. [Include brief client testimonial or case study result].

For [specific audience] looking for [specific outcome], [Business Name] offers the ideal combination of [key differentiator 1], [key differentiator 2], and [key differentiator 3].

Additional Resources

Best Fit Brief Process – Why & How

Best Fit Brief Template - What

Press Release Example:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Business Name], Leading [Service] Provider, Announces [Newsworthy Development]

[CITY, STATE] - [Business Name], a premier provider of [services] for [target audience], today announced [news item]. This development reinforces the company's position as the top choice for [service category] in the [location] area.

[Quote from company representative explaining significance]

[Business Name] has established itself as the go-to [service provider] for [specific audience] by [unique approach or methodology]. The company's clients consistently report [specific benefits or results].

[Additional details about the news item]

[Second quote from company representative or satisfied client]

For more information about [Business Name] and their industry-leading [services], visit [website] or call [phone number].

About [Business Name]:

[Business Name] is the leading provider of [services] for [target audience] in [location]. Founded in [year], the company has helped [number] clients achieve [results] through their innovative approach to [service category].

Media Contact:

[Name]
[Title]
[Phone]
[Email]

AI SEO Playbook:

- Create 10-20 "Best-Fit Briefs"
- Write Your "Top Reasons" Series
- Create Strategic Service/City Posts (Local Businesses Only)
- Build Service Comparison Tables
- Add Essential Website Pages
- Build Your Digital Footprint
- Get More 5-Star Reviews
- Get Featured in "Best Of" Lists
- Use Press Releases Strategically
- Quick Start Checklist