LUCKIE

The AI Search Readiness Checklist

A practical companion to the full playbook. Use this to track progress across all 7 dimensions of AI search optimization.

The Citation Authority Framework

Structural Clarity	Entity Confidence	Trust Density
Can AI find, parse, and extract your answers?	Does AI know who you are and why you're authoritative?	How many credible signals reinforce your authority?

1. Assess Your Current AI Search Readiness

Establish a clear baseline of visibility, accuracy, and technical readiness across AI search platforms.

- [ ] **Map audience questions across the buying journey** Pull from sales calls, support tickets, forums, and search queries. Organize by awareness, consideration, and decision stages.
- [ ] **Audit brand presence across AI platforms** Search top 15-20 questions verbatim in Google AI Overviews, ChatGPT, Perplexity, Claude, and Copilot.
- [ ] **Conduct a citation share competitive audit** For top 10-15 queries, document which competitors are cited. Calculate your citation share percentage.
- [ ] **Evaluate how AI portrays your brand** Search branded terms across platforms. Check accuracy, tone, completeness, and differentiation.
- [ ] **Identify and report AI hallucinations** Flag inaccuracies, fabricated claims, and misattributions. Use platform feedback features to correct errors.
- [ ] **Audit voice and multimodal AI results** Test queries through Siri, Alexa, Google Assistant, and Google Lens with follow-up queries.
- [ ] **Benchmark AI referral traffic** Create analytics segments for chatgpt.com, perplexity.ai, gemini.google.com, copilot.microsoft.com, and claude.ai.
- [ ] **Evaluate technical readiness for AI extraction** Check HTML structure, headings, schema, page speed, mobile rendering, and AI crawler access (GPTBot, ClaudeBot, PerplexityBot).

2. Build Your AI Search Strategy

Translate audit findings into a prioritized plan with clear ownership, targets, and platform-specific approach.

- [ ] **Identify 3-5 priority topic clusters** Focus on areas where your brand has genuine, demonstrable expertise. Depth beats breadth.
- [ ] **Set platform-specific prioritization** Google AI Overviews favors existing rank. ChatGPT rewards depth. Perplexity rewards recency. Tailor accordingly.
- [ ] **Map queries to intent stages and content formats** Match awareness, consideration, and decision queries to guides, comparisons, case studies, and product pages.
- [ ] **Establish competitive citation targets** Set concrete goals (e.g., increase citation share from X% to Y% within 6 months) tied to specific platforms.
- [ ] **Define success metrics and attribution** Track Brand Visibility Score, citation share, AI referral traffic, AI conversion rate, and brand sentiment accuracy.
- [ ] **Assign ownership and governance** Establish cross-functional coordination across SEO, content, brand, PR, and analytics with a single accountable leader.

3. Optimize Content for AI Engines

Structure and write content that AI systems can easily parse, extract, and cite.

- [ ] **Write 40-60 word 'citation blocks'** Add a self-contained summary paragraph near the top of every priority page that directly answers the core question.
- [ ] **Front-load answers (BLUF principle)** Lead every section with the key takeaway. Content that buries the lead gets skipped.
- [ ] **Create self-contained, labeled sections** Each section should have a descriptive header and standalone summary that AI can cite independently.
- [ ] **Build comparison and 'versus' content** Create structured comparison pages with tables, feature matrices, and balanced analysis for evaluation queries.
- [ ] **Break info into scannable formats** Use FAQ sections, numbered lists, definition lists, and data tables for AI extractability.
- [ ] **Optimize for related question chains** Address 'People Also Ask' and follow-up questions within the same page or linked cluster.
- [ ] **Update headlines and metadata for natural language** Replace keyword-stuffed titles with conversational, question-aligned language.
- [ ] **Reinforce semantic relevance through internal linking** Use descriptive anchor text to strengthen topic clusters and signal authority.

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4. Establish Your Technical Foundation

Ensure AI systems can crawl, interpret, trust, and extract your content reliably.

- [ ] **Ensure crawlability for AI bots** Verify sitemaps, robots.txt, and that GPTBot, ClaudeBot, and PerplexityBot are not inadvertently blocked.
- [ ] **Implement comprehensive schema markup** Deploy JSON-LD for FAQPage, Article, HowTo, Product, Organization, QAPage, and Speakable types.
- [ ] **Use structured content models in your CMS** Organize collections, taxonomies, and tagging to reinforce topical relationships for machines.
- [ ] **Implement canonical tags** Signal preferred content versions to prevent AI systems from ignoring or mis-citing duplicate content.
- [ ] **Optimize page speed and Core Web Vitals** Meet or exceed Google's 'Good' thresholds for LCP, FID, and CLS. Speed signals source quality to AI.
- [ ] **Ensure mobile-first rendering** Verify mobile delivers the same content, structure, and schema as desktop.
- [ ] **Configure AI-specific crawl policies** Set deliberate robots.txt directives for AI user agents. Decide what AI should and shouldn't access.

5. Build Brand Entity Authority

Establish your brand as a clearly defined, consistently represented entity across AI knowledge sources.

- [ ] **Audit your Knowledge Graph presence** Search your brand and check for a Knowledge Panel. Review for accuracy and completeness.
- [ ] **Build a Wikipedia and Wikidata presence** Ensure entries are accurate, well-cited, and include correct entity attributes.
- [ ] **Ensure consistent brand info across public sources** Audit top 20 listings (website, LinkedIn, Crunchbase, directories, Google Business Profile) for consistency.
- [ ] **Define and reinforce entity associations** Map the topics you want to own and ensure your brand is consistently mentioned in those contexts.
- [ ] **Earn unlinked brand mentions on authoritative domains** Identify the 10-15 publications AI engines trust most. Target thought leadership placements and earned mentions there.
- [ ] **Disambiguate your brand from similar entities** Use sameAs schema, contextual identifiers, and consistent naming to create an unambiguous entity cluster.

6. Strengthen Trust and Credibility Signals

Amplify E-E-A-T cues that AI systems weigh when deciding which sources to cite.

- [ ] **Add credible author attribution** Include name, headshot, title, credentials, experience, and links to published work on every content piece.
- [ ] **Publish original research and proprietary data** Give AI systems unique data points they can't find elsewhere. Surveys, benchmarks, and case study metrics.
- [ ] **Cite your sources and show your work** Link to credible external sources and provide transparent methodology for all claims.
- [ ] **Cultivate high-quality third-party validation** Pursue mentions in industry publications, analyst reports, conference proceedings, and review sites.
- [ ] **Demonstrate content freshness** Add visible 'Last Updated' timestamps and refresh high-impact pages quarterly.
- [ ] **Maintain an active publishing cadence** Regular, substantive content signals ongoing authority. Dormant sites lose citation priority.

7. Monitor, Measure, and Iterate

Build a continuous feedback loop to track AI search visibility and adapt as platforms evolve.

- [ ] **Track Brand Visibility Score monthly** Calculate (brand mentions in AI answers) / (total relevant AI answers). Segment by platform and topic.
- [ ] **Monitor citation share vs. competitors** Revisit competitive audit monthly. Track shifts and emerging competitors across priority queries.
- [ ] **Segment AI referral traffic separately** Track volume, engagement, and conversion rate by AI source. AI-referred traffic converts at ~4.4x traditional organic.
- [ ] **Measure brand sentiment and accuracy** Run quarterly audits of how AI represents your brand. Correct inaccuracies through content updates.
- [ ] **Analyze related question chains** Study AI follow-up question patterns to identify content gaps and expansion opportunities.
- [ ] **Re-optimize content quarterly** Refresh citation blocks, schema, internal links, and structured formats based on performance data.
- [ ] **Monitor AI platform evolution** Track model updates and correlate with visibility shifts. Maintain a changelog alongside metrics.
- [ ] **Invest in AI visibility tracking tools** Evaluate citation trackers, brand monitoring platforms, AI-enhanced SEO suites, and analytics segmentation.

Ready to turn this checklist into a strategy?

Contact Luckie's AI Search Practice | luckie.com