

SEARCH & CONTENT

SEO and AI search visibility checklist

Technical access, useful content and verifiable evidence

Review whether important pages can be discovered, understood and considered for search results, and whether the content gives people a reliable answer to their task.

THE WORK

Inspect a defined group of pages from crawl access through indexing, content quality, structured data and measured outcomes.

THE RESULT

A prioritised set of page and platform improvements, with clear evidence for completion and realistic limits on visibility claims.

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01 / FOUNDATIONS

Technical access and indexing

Start with the pages that matter to the audience and confirm that the intended public content is available to the search system.

Define the page set and intended state

Choose the services, products or topics being reviewed. Record the preferred public URL for each page and whether it should be indexed. Include important templates and recently changed routes.

Separate public discovery pages from private accounts, checkout, internal search and other routes that may require different indexing decisions. A higher indexed-page count is not inherently a better result.

Make important content and links available

Inspect the rendered page and the version visible to the relevant crawler. Confirm the main text, headings, product or service details and internal links are present and usable.

Ensure important pages have meaningful links from related pages and an appropriate place in the site structure. A sitemap can help discovery, but the page should also make sense within the navigation and content relationships people use.

Check access and response behaviour

Verify that the intended page returns the appropriate successful response and that redirects reach the preferred destination. Inspect robots directives, authentication, firewall and hosting controls that may block a crawler.

Check noindex instructions separately from crawl blocking. A crawler generally needs to fetch a page to see a noindex instruction. Use the search platform's inspection tools to confirm what it actually receives rather than relying only on a browser view.

Resolve duplication and canonical signals

Review alternate URLs, parameters, language versions and duplicate templates. Align canonical signals, redirects, internal links and sitemap entries with the intended preferred page.

Check the search platform's selected canonical and indexing status where available. Treat canonical markup as a signal to verify, not proof that the chosen page is indexed or will appear for a query.

Content usefulness and credibility

A page should answer a defined audience need with information the business can stand behind.

Match the page to a real task

Identify what the reader is trying to decide or accomplish and the information needed to proceed. Make the title, opening and section headings describe that task accurately.

Answer the central question early, then explain the conditions, process, limitations and next step. Use concrete product or service information rather than repeating broad claims that could apply to any organisation.

Verify claims and ownership

Check prices, features, availability, service boundaries and technical statements with the person responsible for them. Give content a real owner and a review trigger when the underlying offer changes.

Use genuine author, reviewer or organisational information where it helps readers assess the content. Retain evidence for claims. Do not manufacture biographies, customer results, awards or credentials to create an appearance of authority.

Make the explanation easy to inspect

Use descriptive headings, short connected paragraphs and lists or tables when they clarify a sequence or comparison. Keep important qualifications beside the claim they affect.

Include enough context for a passage to be understood without hiding essential meaning in an image or an unexplained acronym.

Answer-focused writing helps readers locate information; it does not require every page to become a long list of generic questions.

Connect related information

Link to relevant explanations, product details and next steps using descriptive link text. Help the reader move from a broad topic to the specific information needed for a decision.

Keep core organisation, product and location information consistent across the website and the business's managed public profiles. Resolve contradictory details before adding more content around them.

03 / INTERPRETATION

Structured data and AI-assisted discovery

Machine-readable information should describe the real page. Eligibility and selection remain decisions made by each search platform.

Use supported, relevant structured data

Choose a structured-data type that fits the visible content and the search feature being considered. Verify the required properties and current feature support in the relevant platform's documentation.

Make the markup agree with the page, including names, prices, availability and other consequential details. Validate the deployed output and inspect affected templates after a change. Correct syntax alone does not establish eligibility or guarantee an enhanced result.

Keep access controls intentional

Review crawler access and content-preview controls with the site owner. Understand which service a directive affects and how a change may alter discovery or the text available for a search preview.

Separate search visibility choices from training or other data-use controls where the platform distinguishes them. Verify the deployed directive and allow for the platform to recrawl and process a change before judging the result.

Review AI-search requirements by platform

Google's current guidance for supporting links in AI Overviews and AI Mode requires a page to be indexed and eligible for a Search snippet. It does not require special AI markup or an additional AI text file. The usual technical and content requirements still apply.

Other AI-assisted discovery services use their own access and selection mechanisms. Review their current published controls separately. A crawler permission, indexing state or visible citation on one platform does not establish inclusion on another.

Measure visibility without promising it

Record observed citations or appearances with the query, date, market and context. Results can vary across users, locations, product surfaces and time. A single screenshot is an observation, not a stable ranking guarantee.

Evaluate whether referred visitors can complete the intended task. Useful, accurate content and a sound technical foundation support eligibility; they do not create a contractual claim to a particular search placement.

04 / EVIDENCE

Measurement and improvement priorities

Use the evidence to distinguish a technical exclusion, a weak page and a change in demand or result presentation.

Establish the measurement boundary

Record the page set, market, query group and comparison period. Separate branded and non-branded demand where that distinction matters. Note migrations, releases, seasonality and major offer changes that affect interpretation.

Use the available search-platform reports for impressions, clicks, indexing and relevant result types. Combine them with permitted site analytics and business outcomes, while retaining differences in attribution and reporting coverage.

Prioritise consequential barriers

Resolve unintended exclusion of important pages, broken destinations, missing essential content and misleading information before refining minor presentation details.

For other work, consider audience importance, observed demand, content gaps and implementation dependency. Assign a content or technical owner who can make the relevant decision. Keep unverified assumptions as investigations rather than completed findings.

Inspect the page before drawing a cause

When visibility changes, check response codes, redirects, robots rules, noindex, canonical signals, rendering and content changes. Confirm whether the affected URL is still the intended one.

Then examine the query and audience context. A fall in clicks may reflect demand, position, result presentation or a page that no longer matches the task. Avoid attributing the change to one cause without evidence.

Verify after deployment

Check the live page, its structured data, links and access directives after release. Use the relevant inspection and indexing reports to review processing over time.

Record the change date and the evidence supporting the result. When several changes occur together, describe the combined outcome honestly. Search reporting rarely isolates the contribution of one editorial adjustment by itself.

05 / REVIEW

Search visibility verification checklist

Use the current deployed page and the relevant platform's tools. Mark a check only when its result has been verified.

01	The intended page can be fetched and indexed	Verified	☐
	Inspect response behaviour, access rules, noindex and the crawler-visible page for the preferred URL.	Evidence to retain The intended public state, identified exclusions and the current inspection result.	
02	Links and canonical signals agree	Verified	☐
	Review internal links, redirects, sitemap entries and duplicate or alternate URLs.	Evidence to retain A consistent preferred destination and an explained platform-selected canonical where available.	
03	The page answers a defined audience task	Verified	☐
	Review the title, opening, decision information, qualifications and next step with the content owner.	Evidence to retain Accurate, useful content with verified claims and a review responsibility.	
04	Structured data matches visible content	Verified	☐
	Validate the deployed markup against the current supported type and inspect consequential values.	Evidence to retain Correct properties, no misleading content and an understood eligibility boundary.	
05	AI-search and outcome claims are supported	Verified	☐
	Review platform-specific access, observed appearances and the reporting period used for conclusions.	Evidence to retain Dated observations, clear measurement limits and no unsupported placement guarantee.	

06 / WORKING RECORD

Search page improvement record

Use one record for a page or a group sharing the same verified issue. Keep the technical observation separate from an untested explanation.

Page or template and intended audience task

Platform, market and review period

Observed issue and evidence

Agreed content or technical change

Deployment acceptance and outcome measure

Content and technical owners

Change date and next review

Recheck the live content, access controls and structured data together after a template or publishing change.