

The On-Page AEO Checklist

How to Optimize Content for AI Answer Engines

Getting cited by AI engines like ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI Mode requires content, technical health, crawlability, and authority signals tuned to how AI parses and trusts your site. Use this site-wide checklist to optimize each pillar and keep your site AEO-ready, organized by when you should complete each task.

On-page AEO for content

For every article

- Answer the primary question in the first 1-2 sentences of a section.
- Use question-based H2s and H3s that mirror AI queries.
- Lead each section with a direct, self-contained answer.
- Include a TL;DR or key takeaways section at the top.
- Use tables for comparisons; lists for steps; prose for explanation.
- Define jargon and acronyms on the first use.
- Include at least one original element per page (data, quote, POV).
- Cite original sources, not aggregators.
- Use entity names consistently across the page.

Monthly

- Audit key topic clusters for entity consistency and create a plan to standardize naming conventions.
- Identify which pages are getting cited most in AI answers and document common traits to replicate.
- Identify pages with the fewest AI citations but high organic search traffic to translate SEO success to AEO.

Quarterly

- Optimize for recency by refreshing content published within the last 3-6 months with new data and examples.

On-page AEO for crawlability

One-time setup

- Document your AI bot allow/block strategy and rationale.
- Configure robots.txt to address major AI bots explicitly.
- Establish topic cluster architecture with pillar pages.
- Implement canonical tags across all indexable pages.

Ongoing

- Link new content to and from related topic cluster pillar pages.
- Use descriptive, topic-reinforcing anchor text on internal links.
- Update your XML sitemap to include newly published pages once they're live.

Monthly

- Review server logs for AI bot crawl activity and investigate unexpected blocks or drops.
- Audit for orphan pages; link or deprecate them.

Quarterly

- Audit canonical tag implementation site-wide.
- Update robots.txt against the current AI bot landscape.
- Reassess your AI bot allow/block strategy.

On-page AEO for technical health

One-time setup

- Implement JSON-LD schema across all page templates.
- Add Organization Schema site-wide with consistent NAP data.
- Add Person Schema to all author bios with sameAs links.
- Document which schema types apply to which templates.

Quarterly

- Review schema.org for new types relevant to your content.

Ongoing

- Validate schema on new pages in Google's Rich Results Test.
- Confirm critical content loads in HTML, not client-side JS.
- Spot-check new pages with JavaScript disabled and flag any missing elements to engineering.

Monthly

- Run a site-wide schema audit for errors and mismatches.
- Review Core Web Vitals across key content.

On-page AEO for authority

One-time setup

- Build a comprehensive About page with Organization Schema.
- Create dedicated author pages with Author Schema for every named contributor.
- Ensure all content has bylines with real authors.
- Add visible trust signals on relevant pages (certifications, awards, press, logos).

Ongoing

- Verify that new content has a named author with a linked bio to their author page.
- Link out to 2-3 authoritative external sources in long-form content pages.

Monthly

- Audit new content for outbound linking quality and freshness.
- Audit brand sentiment and entity consistency across third-party sites.
- Identify which authors are getting cited in AI answers and prioritize their bylines on related topics and channels.

Quarterly

- Audit author bios for completeness and updated credentials.
- Review trust signals—are they current and accurate?
- Conduct an entity consistency audit across owned properties.

Monitoring on-page AEO

Daily

- Check citations, mentions, brand sentiment, and crawl frequency for unusual patterns; investigate spikes or drops same-day.
- Review any critical site changes, triage and assign before issues compound.

Weekly

- Track share-of-voice trends across AI engines for your priority topics; flag movement for the next content planning cycle.
- Review AI Overview and AI answer ownership for your target prompts; identify prompts where you've lost or gained visibility.
- Audit recent site changes for unintended impacts on AEO-critical elements.

Monthly

- Analyze AI bot crawl patterns from server logs; identify under-crawled priority pages and improve internal linking or sitemap inclusion.
- Create an AEO performance report and circulate to content and SEO leads to inform strategy.
- Identify citation patterns across cited pages and translate them into briefs to inform upcoming content.
- Benchmark AI visibility against your top 3-5 competitors and document where you're losing ground.
- Audit all content published within the last 30 days to ensure it is visible and being crawled in AI search.

Quarterly

- Review the full changelog of site changes for the quarter and correlate AEO performance shifts to specific changes.
- Refresh your monitoring KPI targets based on AI engine changes, competitive movement, and business priorities.

Conductor is the only end-to-end, enterprise AEO platform built on the industry's most complete data engine. Leading enterprises use Conductor to grow authority and visibility in AI and traditional search through AEO & SEO intelligence, AI content generation, and real-time website monitoring—all from one platform.

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