

From SEO to AEO

# Optimising for the answer economy.

Search helped brands get found. Answer engines decide which brands get recommended.



## 01 Search is evolving

Traditional SEO helped brands get found. Answer Engine Optimisation helps brands get recommended.

As AI powered tools become mainstream, people have stopped scanning pages of links. They ask a question and they trust the answer they get back. Those answers are increasingly crowdsourced from the internet, synthesised from articles and expert content, forums and social discussion, customer reviews and ratings, and real world experience shared at scale.

**In this model, reviews have stopped being social proof. They are training signals.**

## 02 Why reviews power AEO

Answer engines do not rank pages the way search engines do. They evaluate trust, sentiment, consistency and real customer experience. That makes customer advocacy one of the most powerful inputs into how AI recommends brands, compares competitors and suggests the best option.

When someone asks an AI what the best company for something is, it does not look at who paid the most for ads. It looks at what customers consistently say across the web.

## 03 The shift is already underway

- Hundreds of millions of people now use AI tools for search and recommendations, and adoption is growing faster than any previous search paradigm
- Google is embedding AI answers directly into results, which reduces clicks and increases reliance on summarised, opinion weighted responses
- As AI becomes the front door to discovery, brands without strong advocacy signals risk becoming invisible even while they still rank well

**This is not the end of SEO. It is the rise of AEO as a force multiplier, and the fuel for it is what your customers say about you.**