

Inbound

# Organic visibility for AI search

October 2025



# Intro

- A massive influx of AI-generated content is reshaping how search engines evaluate quality.
- Google is countering with features like **AI overviews (AIO)** and **AI Mode** to deliver zero-click answers directly in SERPs
- The playing field is changing - AI isn't just a tool; it's redefining how search operates.

AI-driven search tools like Google's AI Overviews and AI Mode, Microsoft's Copilot in Bing, and ChatGPT now give direct responses to queries - decreasing clicks to external sites and shifting user attention from links to instant answers.

Leading to organic traffic decline: Gartner predicts a potential 50% drop by 2028 for sites relying on traditional search.

# AI Overviews

AI Overviews (previously known as SGE Search Generative Experience) generates an AI-powered summary at the top of search results.

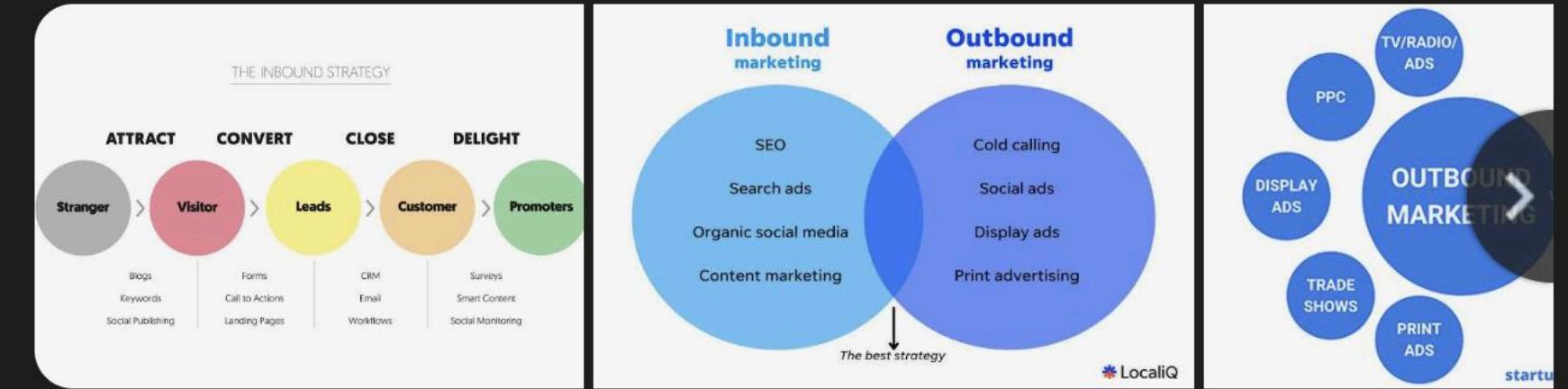
With AI mode, instead of just showing an AI Overview at the top of results, AI Mode can generate fully AI-written answers, handle multi-step reasoning, and follow up on your queries like chatGPT.

what is inbound marketing

All Images Videos Short videos Forums News Web More ▾

With example In digital marketing Strategy From salesforce

**AI Overview**



The diagram illustrates the Inbound Strategy and Outbound Marketing. The Inbound Strategy is a sequential process: Stranger > Visitor > Leads > Customer > Promoters. It involves creating valuable content like blogs, keywords, and social publishing to attract visitors through SEO, search ads, and organic social media. The Outbound Marketing section shows traditional tactics like cold calling, social ads, and display ads. A callout notes "The best strategy" points to Inbound marketing.

Inbound marketing is a business methodology focused on attracting customers by creating valuable content and personalized experiences tailored to their needs and interests. It's about drawing potential customers in, rather than interrupting them with traditional outbound marketing tactics like ads. Inbound marketing relies on content creation, search engine optimization (SEO), and other strategies to build brand awareness, generate leads, and foster customer relationships.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

**Core Principles:**

**Attract:**  
Creating content that draws in your target audience through SEO, social media, and blog posts.

**Convert:**  
Turning website visitors into leads by offering valuable content (e-books, webinars, etc.) in exchange for contact information.

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The goal isn't just ranking anymore - it's to be the trusted source that AI cites, quotes, and learns from.

# How to appear in AI Overviews and LLMs

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- Clear, concise answers high on the page
- Use of headings to mirror search queries
- Schema markup that clarifies context
- E-E-A-T / experience proof (author bios, reviews, UGC)
- A conversational tone (even in technical content)
- Keep blog posts up to date and relevant - AIOS pull recent, relevant content first.
- Freshness signals (recently updated = more likely inclusion)
- Consistent topical coverage (clusters that ladder up).

Today's search rewards content that is clear, direct, and instantly answers questions. Structured data and natural, conversational formats are more important than ever.

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# AI Mode is reshaping user behaviour in search

Only 8 % click through when AIO appears (vs 15 % when not).

Shift KPIs from traffic to visibility and brand lift.

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# Changing user behaviour

- 41 % of users stop after reading the AI answer.
- Answers now precede clicks; sessions ↓ but trust ↑ if we're cited.
- **Success = visibility + recall + conversion rate of smaller traffic.**

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# Fresh, credible, structured content

- Fresh content prioritised by AI Overviews and LLMs.
- Short, extractable sections → TL;DR + FAQs + bullets.
- Add or update “last reviewed” dates and author bios.

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# Human + AI content outperforms AI-only. Unique data is a moat.

- Pure AI-generated copy performs worse; hybrid wins.
- Use AI for structure & drafting; humans for depth & originality.
- Proprietary data / studies = most citable source type.

**AI gives structure; humans add story and nuance, both are essential for trust.**

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# Brand lift & measurement

- KPIs to track:
  - AI Overview citations / inclusion rate
  - Brand queries (+ Google Trends)
  - LLM referrals (openai / perplexity)
  - Conversion rate of visits from AI referrals

**If traffic drops but brand visibility rises, that's still a win.  
Measure influence, not just clicks.**

Tools: Ubersuggest (AI visibility), Profound (for prompts), SparkToro (brand mentions).

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# Multi-surface visibility

- YouTube videos (transcripts + descriptions)
- Reddit and Quora threads
- Product reviews
- PDFs and docs

**Visibility across surfaces strengthens authority.**

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# Video & multimedia visibility

- Short YouTube explainers now appear in AI cards.
- Embed and schema-mark (VideoObject) each one.
- Repurpose text → video → LinkedIn → Reddit.



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# Show experience

Add author bios, credentials, and “last reviewed” dates.

Show edit history, cite sources, and include real reviews or user content.

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# Publish proprietary insights

- Create mini-studies, benchmarks, or aggregated data.

**Unique findings are LLM catnip and attract links naturally.**

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# Refresh cadence

- Update quarterly for key money pages, monthly for fast-moving topics.
- **Log every change. Timestamps and structure matter to LLMs.**

# Featured snippets

Featured snippets are those highlighted boxes at the top of search results where Google extracts a direct answer. With AI Overviews (formerly SGE) and AI Mode, Google increasingly relies on the same structured, concise content to generate its AI answers.

If we're winning snippets, we're more likely to be included (and cited) in AI-generated results.

## Identify snippet opportunities

- Use tools like Semrush, Ahrefs, or Google Search Console to find queries where we already rank on page 1.
- Focus on question-based searches (“how to...”, “what is...”, “best tools for...”).

## Restructure content for snippet formats

- Paragraphs: Provide direct, 40–60 word answers immediately after a heading.
- Lists: Use bullet/numbered lists for step-by-step processes or rankings.
- Tables: Compare data in tabular form (Google loves this for pricing, specs, comparisons).

## On-page optimization

- Use H2/H3 subheadings framed as questions.
- Place the direct answer immediately after the heading, then elaborate further down the page.
- Add schema markup (FAQ schema, HowTo schema) to help Google interpret content structure.

## Test and refine

- Track which snippets we’re capturing and iterate: shorten long intros, rephrase answers more directly, or reorganize lists/tables.

## Snippet example

# Paragraph snippet

H2 or h3    Query: What is inbound marketing?

Paragraph <p>    Snippet-friendly answer (40–60 words):

Inbound marketing is a business strategy that attracts customers by creating valuable content and experiences tailored to them. Instead of pushing products with ads, it focuses on drawing people in through blogs, SEO, social media, and email. The goal is to build trust, educate, and guide prospects into becoming loyal customers.

Snippet example

# List snippet

H2 or h3    What are examples of inbound marketing?

Paragraph <p>    Snippet-friendly answer (bulleted list):  
Examples of inbound marketing include:

- Blog posts and educational articles
- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Social media content and engagement
- Ebooks, guides, and whitepapers
- Webinars and video tutorials
- Email nurturing campaigns

Snippet example

# Table snippet

H2 or h3 Query: What are examples of inbound marketing?

Table	Aspect	Inbound Marketing	Outbound marketing Marketing
	Approach	Attracts with helpful content	Pushes messages to broad audience
	Channels	Blogs, SEO, social, email	TV, print, cold calls, display ads
	Customer experience	Educational, value-driven	Interruptive, sales-driven
	Goal	Build trust and long-term relationships	Immediate attention and quick sales

# How to optimise for summaries?

## Chunk information logically

- Break articles into clear sections with H2/H3 headings.
- Use question-style headings (“What is...”, “How does...”) to guide the AI.

## Short, direct answers first

- Start each section with a 1–2 sentence “answer” before expanding.

## Use listicles and tables

- AI models prefer pulling bullet points, numbered steps, and tabular data into summaries.

# (Snippet → Summary Optimized)

## **Snippet-optimised (short, direct):**

"Inbound marketing is a strategy that attracts customers by creating valuable content, such as blogs, SEO, and social media, to build trust and nurture leads."

## **Summary-optimized (expandable, contextual):**

"Inbound marketing is a strategy that attracts customers through valuable content. Instead of pushing ads, it draws people in with blogs, SEO, social media, and email campaigns. The goal is to build trust, answer questions, and guide prospects into becoming loyal customers. Examples include tutorials, ebooks, webinars, and case studies."

**To optimise for summaries, create structured, conversational, authoritative content that answers multiple related questions, not just a single query. Think in clusters and context rather than one-off snippets.**

# Write in a conversational, natural tone

- AI Mode is conversational. If our content mirrors natural speech, it's more likely to be lifted.
- Favor short sentences and everyday language over jargon.
- Example: Instead of "The methodology of inbound marketing leverages multichannel strategies to achieve compounding lead generation," write "Inbound marketing works by attracting customers through helpful content across blogs, SEO, social, and email."

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# Visibility over clicks

AI Mode often references sources without linking.

**Our goal:** ensure our brand name is included in cited content so it shows up even in zero-click answers.

Encourage journalists, partners, and industry sites to mention and link to your brand in their content.

AI Overviews create awareness even without traffic - track brand query lift and LLM referrals.

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# Build topical authority

Summaries pull from trusted, authoritative sources.

## Strategies:

- Publish content clusters around key themes (pillar page + supporting articles).
- Refresh existing content frequently to signal relevance.
- Secure citations and backlinks from respected industry sources
- Append “refresh cadence” → quarterly refresh for high-value pages; and “use TL;DR + FAQ blocks to help LLMs summarise.”

# Pillar pages

Pillar pages and topic clusters are still useful, but their role is shifting in the age of AI-powered search.

- **How AI search changes things**

- Generative search (like Google SGE or Bing Copilot) often pulls direct answers rather than just listing links. That means fewer clicks through to individual clustered articles.
- AI models care less about keyword-matching link structures and more about content quality, comprehensiveness, and semantic coverage.
- That said, a strong topical cluster still helps LLM-based retrieval systems (like RAG setups) and AI search engines, because:
  - It ensures your site comprehensively covers a topic.
  - Internal linking helps distribute authority signals across related content.
  - Pillar pages can act as summary-style landing pages, which AI often favors as sources.

# Pillar pages - going forward

Keep them as comprehensive, authoritative guides that stand alone, not just link hubs.

Focus clusters on semantic coverage: Instead of chasing keyword variations, aim to cover the full “knowledge graph” around a topic.

Optimise for AI-friendly structure: Clear headings, concise definitions, and well-structured FAQs can increase the odds of being used in AI-generated answers.

Invest in depth and originality: Thin supporting articles will matter less; unique insights and data matter

# Pillar pages - semantic coverage through thematic sections

Purpose: Cover the full breadth of the topic so AI sees us as authoritative.

Structure:

- Foundations: Definitions, history, or how it works.
- Components or Types: Clear breakdowns with sub-headings.
- Use Cases / Applications: Real-world relevance.
- Pros and Cons / Challenges: Balanced analysis builds trust.
- Trends & Future Outlook: Signals thought leadership.
- Embed an FAQ section - Provide extractable, structured Q&A that matches how people query AI search.
- 

(Tip: use H2s and H3s with natural question phrasing, like “What are the main types of X?” or “How does X compare to Y?” – this aligns with AI Q&A patterns.)

# Pillar pages - multimedia + structured data

Make content well usable for both humans and AI.

- Diagrams, charts, or short explainer videos (AI models often favor structured visuals).
- Schema markup (FAQ, HowTo, Product, depending on topic).
- Pull-quotes, stat boxes, or definitions styled clearly for extraction.

# Optimize for context, not just keywords

Traditional SEO targeted single keywords. Summaries pull in context across multiple queries.

## Action steps:

- Include related questions in our content (use “People Also Ask” as inspiration).
- Expand pages to cover secondary intent (e.g., not just “what is inbound marketing” but also “benefits,” “examples,” “strategies”).
- Add FAQ sections to pages, which are easily digestible by AI.

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# Schema markup

**Schema markup:** FAQ, HowTo, Article schema make our content machine-readable.

**Author bios:** Add clear expertise and credibility (important for Google's E-E-A-T).

**Image metadata:** Summaries sometimes include images – make sure ours are optimised with descriptive alt text.

**Over-using schema slows load and doesn't help; correctness > quantity.**

# Schema markup: Why It matters

Schema (structured data) is code you add to web pages that helps search engines better understand content.

## Why is it important for AI?

Improves visibility in zero-click results and AI Overviews.

Helps Google and AI models extract concise, trustworthy information.

Increases chances of being cited in summaries and AI Mode answers.

# How to add schema to our pages / blog posts in HubSpot

1. Open the blog post in the editor.
2. Click Settings at the top.
3. Scroll to Advanced Options.
4. In the Head HTML box, paste your JSON-LD schema.

# Example schema for a blog post “What is inbound marketing?)

```
<script type="application/ld+json">
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "FAQPage",
  "mainEntity": [
    {
      "@type": "Question",
      "name": "What is inbound marketing?",
      "acceptedAnswer": {
        "@type": "Answer",
        "text": "Inbound marketing is a strategy that attracts customers through valuable content such as blogs, SEO, social media, and email campaigns. It focuses on earning attention by being helpful, not interruptive."
      }
    },
    {
      "@type": "Question",
      "name": "What are examples of inbound marketing?",
      "acceptedAnswer": {
        "@type": "Answer",
        "text": "Examples include blog posts, ebooks, SEO, social media engagement, webinars, and email nurturing campaigns that provide value and guide prospects through the buyer's journey."
      }
    },
    {
      "@type": "Question",
      "name": "How does inbound marketing differ from outbound marketing?",
      "acceptedAnswer": {
        "@type": "Answer",
        "text": "Inbound marketing pulls people in with valuable content and experiences, while outbound marketing pushes messages out through ads, cold calls, or direct outreach. Inbound focuses on building trust, while outbound focuses on getting immediate attention."
      }
    }
  ]
}</script>
```

**Copy and paste this and change Questions and answers according to the subject**

# If there is a video on the page you can also add:

```
<script type="application/ld+json">
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "VideoObject",
  "name": "What is Inbound Marketing?",
  "description": "A short explainer video on inbound marketing—how it works and why it attracts customers through helpful content.",
  "thumbnailUrl": "https://www.inbound.no/images/inbound-video-thumbnail.jpg",
  "uploadDate": "2025-08-15",
  "duration": "PT2M30S",
  "publisher": {
    "@type": "Organization",
    "name": "Inbound",
    "logo": {
      "@type": "ImageObject",
      "url": "https://www.inbound.no/logo.png",
      "width": 200,
      "height": 60
    }
  },
  "embedUrl": "https://www.youtube.com/embed/abcd1234",
  "contentUrl": "https://www.inbound.no/videos/what-is-inbound-marketing.mp4",
  "interactionStatistic": {
    "@type": "InteractionCounter",
    "interactionType": { "@type": "WatchAction" },
    "userInteractionCount": 1200
  }
}
</script>
```

**Copy and paste this and change questions and answers according to the video subject**

# Traditional SEO vs SEO for AI



# Traditional SEO vs SEO for AI



# Keyword targeting vs. semantic coverage

## Traditional SEO:

- Heavy focus on exact-match keywords and variations.
- Success often came from volume—publishing many narrowly optimized pages.

## AI SEO:

- Focus on topics, entities, and relationships instead of isolated keywords.
- Comprehensive semantic coverage of a subject is more valuable than having dozens of thin, keyword-focused articles.

# Ranking signals vs. information extraction

## Traditional SEO:

- The game was about ranking in the “10 blue links” on Google.
- CTR and position mattered most.

## AI SEO:

- Generative AI pulls answers directly into search results (Google AI Overviews, Bing Copilot, Perplexity).
- The challenge is being cited or featured rather than simply ranking.
- Structure and clarity of information (FAQ format, definitions, schema) influence whether AI chooses your content.

# Link building vs. authority demonstration

## Traditional SEO:

- Backlinks were (and still are) a huge ranking factor.
- Outreach and link-building campaigns dominated.

## AI SEO:

- While links still matter, demonstrating expertise, originality, and authority through content is increasingly critical.
- First-party data, unique research, and expert commentary are signals that both AI and humans trust.

# Page structure vs. AI-friendly content

## Traditional SEO:

- Optimized title tags, meta descriptions, H1/H2s, and keyword density.
- Length and word count often gamed rankings.

## AI SEO:

- Structured, concise, and well-labeled sections make it easier for AI to parse and quote.
- FAQ schema, HowTo schema, and clear “definition sentences” matter more than word count.

# Search intent vs. query patterns

## Traditional SEO:

- Optimized for broad “transactional” vs. “informational” vs. “navigational” intent.

## AI SEO:

- Optimized for natural language queries (e.g., “What’s the difference between X and Y?”).
- Conversational phrasing, comparisons, and explanatory content align better with how AI is asked questions.

# Traffic outcomes vs. visibility outcomes

## Traditional SEO:

- Success measured by traffic, impressions, rankings.

## AI SEO:

- Success may also mean brand visibility in AI answers (even if clicks are lower).
- Being the cited source in AI results builds trust and awareness, even if traffic shifts away from websites.

# The bottom line

- Traditional SEO was about ranking webpages.
- AI SEO is about being the trusted source AI systems pull from.

This means businesses need to adapt from keyword-driven strategies to entity-driven, semantically rich, and structured content strategies that AI can easily recognize, extract, and synthesize.

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# AI SEO mindset

- Optimize for inclusion, not just ranking.
- Build authority, not just content.
- Measure visibility and trust, not just traffic.
- Iterate faster than bigger brands can.