

SEO to AEO - Understanding the Shift

Ivo Jackson, October 2025

The iPostal1 Writers Program is new, and so are some of the standards shaping how our content is produced. Search has evolved since we started, which means our technical standards have been in a state of flux. At a time where each editing pass should be getting easier, there seem to be twists and turns with a new requirement for each article assignment.

The reason: we are moving from writing only for **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** to also writing for **Answer Engine Optimization (AEO)**.

SEO ensures that search engines like Google can understand what a page is about, index it correctly, and rank it for relevant keywords.

AEO ensures that both search engines and artificial intelligence systems can accurately retrieve and represent the information we publish.

Traditional SEO is based on ranking. AEO is based on understanding. Search engines still read pages, but AI models read in **segments**, identifying the most complete and self-contained pieces of information to use as answers.

Why the Standards Expanded

These updates are not cosmetic. They align our writing with how search and AI engines now process web content. Articles that are clearly structured, keyword-aligned, and semantically organized are easier for AI to interpret and quote correctly.

Expanding the standards keeps iPostal1 ahead of the curve. It protects our visibility, accuracy, and authority in an environment where more users are receiving AI-generated summaries as they research our brand and services.

What Chunking Means

In AEO, a **chunk** is a short, complete paragraph that expresses a single idea and can stand on its own. Each chunk contains everything needed for a reader or an AI model to understand it without referring to the rest of the article.

Chunking supports AEO because AI systems retrieve content differently than search engines. Search algorithms evaluate an entire page's structure and metadata, while AI retrieves smaller, independent text units. Writing in chunks ensures every paragraph can serve as a reliable source, no matter where or how it appears.

How This Changes the Writing Process

Writers now create articles that are both **readable** and **retrievable**. While our content structure was not far off of the current standard, we must now be meticulous about meeting the specifications outlined below. Each paragraph must carry its own context and align with certain compositional criteria.

However, adhering to these new parameters should make it easier for us to produce cohesive content as a team.

This method does not replace SEO; it extends it. It ensures iPostal1 content can be accurately read, indexed, and cited by both search engines and AI. The following standards define exactly how to achieve that.

SEO + AEO Checklist (v2025.1)

STRUCTURE

1. Begin with a sentence that directly answers the title question or addresses the title topic.
2. Include the **primary keyword** in the first sentence.
3. Add a one-sentence authoritative definition early ("A X is Y that Z").
4. Keep logical sequence: **Intro** → **Definition** → **Value** → **Benefits/Steps** → **Conclusion**.
5. End with an authoritative closing statement (no overt CTA).

CHUNKING

6. Each paragraph = **2–4 sentences (≤150 words)**.
7. Each paragraph must stand alone and make complete sense independently.
8. One idea per paragraph.
9. Avoid pronouns or vague references (“this,” “that,” “they”).
10. Use **active voice**.
11. Each H2 section ≤ **300 words**.
12. Maintain clean, natural keyword usage—no stuffing or repetition.

SEO

13. **Primary keyword:** in H1 + first sentence + 1 H2.
14. **Secondary / semantic keywords:** appear naturally.
15. **Meta title:** ≤60 characters and includes primary keyword.
16. **Meta description:** 150–160 characters and includes primary keyword.
17. **Alt text:** concise, descriptive, keyword-aligned.
18. **Internal links:** one hub link (required) + one additional only if justified.
19. **External links:** ≤2 authoritative sources (news, reference, industry) only when quoting or citing data; no competitors.
20. H2/H3 headers must reflect search intent and include keywords.
21. Lists must start with an introductory sentence.
22. Maintain clear, direct syntax.

AEO

23. Each H2 answers a specific search-intent question or topic.
24. Each paragraph can stand alone as a semantic unit.

25. Use anchoring phrases (“A digital mailbox allows users to...”) instead of context references.
26. Quantify or specify factual details where possible.
27. Avoid filler or rhetorical openings (“In today’s world,” etc.).
28. No rhetorical questions or direct address to the reader.
29. Use snippet-friendly formats (definitions, steps, comparisons) when relevant.

STYLE & VOICE

30. Tone: authoritative, objective, professional.
31. Avoid hype or promotional phrasing.
32. Write **as** iPostal1, not **about** iPostal1.
33. Avoid qualifiers (“At iPostal1, this means...”).
34. Keep sentences active, clear, and varied in rhythm.
35. Use plain, precise language and logical transitions.

COMPLIANCE & ACCURACY

36. All information must align with official iPostal1 content.
37. Include legal or regulatory details (licensing, KYC, registered agent) when relevant.
38. No competitor references or alternative-service mentions.
39. Facts and definitions must come only from iPostal1 content.