

# Discoverability 2.0 – Internal Edition

## Lessons from SEO and the Multi-Surface Future of GEO

(Internal Report – October 27 2025)

### Executive Summary

**Generative Engine Optimization (GEO)** is becoming the next layer of digital discoverability. Where traditional **SEO** optimized content for a single surface — Google Search — GEO must serve **multiple AI surfaces**: ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, Claude, Copilot and others.

**Glu’s position**: a merchant-first SaaS plugin that automates structured-data ingestion, schema write-back, and measurable AI inclusion analytics.

**Implementation Note**: Internal rollout should emphasize how GEO metrics (Visibility → Inclusion → Answer Placement) map directly to today’s marketing funnel awareness → engagement → conversion.

2025 SEO Market	2028 GEO Projection	CAGR (2025-2028)	Source
\$80 B SEO tools + services	\$25 B GEO tools + services	≈ 40 %	Statista / IBISWorld / Gartner + AI adoption multiplier

**Strategic takeaway**: Just as SEO standardized ranking metrics in the 2000s, GEO will standardize “AI visibility.” The winner will own the measurement layer across surfaces.

### 1 Historical Baseline — SEO as the First Discoverability Platform

**Timeline:** Crawl → Markup → Authority → Automation

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Era	SEO Innovation	Competitive Advantage	GEO Analogue
1998–2005 (Crawling)	PageRank, XML sitemaps	Technical compliance	LLM ingestibility & schema access
2006–2015 (Semantic)	Schema.org, mobile-first	Context & markup	JSON-LD for LLMs
2016–2022 (Authority)	E-A-T trust signals	Reputation systems	Citation & source credibility
2023–2025 (Generative)	AI overviews & snippets	Answer visibility	LLM answer-surface placement

**KPI Reference:** Track # of Shopify pages with valid schema JSON-LD blocks per merchant. Target 95 % coverage by end of Phase 2.



## 2 The Fragmented Future — Multi-Surface Optimization

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AI Surface	Dominant Signal Weights (1 = low, 5 = high)	Optimization Focus
ChatGPT (OpenAI)	Schema 5 · Freshness 4 · Authority 3	JSON-LD clarity & recency
Gemini (Google)	Schema 4 · Authority 5 · Console 5	Classic SEO alignment
Perplexity	Authority 5 · Citations 5 · Schema 4	Publisher distribution
Claude (Anthropic)	Trust 5 · Semantics 4	Brand reputation
Copilot (Microsoft)	Schema 3 · Authority 4 · Accessibility 5	Structured feeds

**Implementation Note:** Each engine prioritizes different signals. Maintain per-engine connector files under `/connectors/` to tune output weights in Phase 1.

### 3 Market Structure Comparison — SEO vs GEO

Dimension	Mature SEO Market	Emerging GEO Market	Implication for Glu
Vendor Mix	Tools + Agencies + Suites	Same mix reborn	SaaS automation lane
Success Metrics	Rank, CTR, Conversions	Visibility, Inclusion, Answer Placement	Create standard metrics
Buyer Type	SMB / Enterprise	SMB / Enterprise	Shopify integration scales
Moat Mechanism	Data index / links	LLM connectors / schema automation	Early defensibility
Maturity Pattern	Fragmented → Consolidated	Same arc again	Be the merchant layer

**KPI:** Monthly visibility reports exported to merchants via API. Target > 80 % of active users by end of Phase 3.

## 4 Competitive Alignment (2025 Snapshot)

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Vendor	Integration	Automation	Measurement	Coverage	Go-to-Market
Semrush (AI SEO Toolkit)	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Enterprise SaaS
GR0 (Agency)	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Managed Services
Adobe (LLM Optimizer)	Medium	High	High	Low	Enterprise Suite
Brandi AI (GEO Startup)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	SaaS Early Stage
Glu .ai	High	High	High	High	Merchant-first Plugin

**Implementation Note:** Maintain integration scorecards for each competitor; update quarterly to benchmark new engine coverage.

## 5 Quantitative Forecast (USD)

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Year	SEO Market Size (USD B)	GEO Market Size (USD B)	GEO CAGR (2025–2028)
2025	80	2.5	—
2026	92	8.9	+36 %
2027	108	17.2	+37 %
2028	126	25.0	+40 %

**KPI:** Track GEO market mentions and partnership announcements; aim for ≥ 5 industry citations naming Glu as merchant-layer platform by Q4 2026.



## 6 Glu Revenue Opportunity Model (USD)

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Scenario	Adoption Rate of Shopify Merchants	ARPU (\$/mo)	Retention (12 mo)	ARR (USD M) by 2028
Conservative	8 % (~184 k stores)	12	75 %	≈ 9 M
Base Case	15 % (~345 k stores)	18	80 %	≈ 21 M
Aggressive	22 % (~506 k stores)	25	85 %	≈ 37 M

**Implementation Note:** Monitor ARPU uplift as schema automation usage rises. Each 5 % increase in Pro-tier adoption adds ≈ \$1.1 M ARR.



## 7 Prioritized Roadmap (36 Months)

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Phase	Timeframe	Historical Analogue (SEO)	GEO Focus for Glu	Target Outcome
1	0-6 mo	On-page crawlability	Engine connectors + prompt sampling	Broader coverage
2	6-12 mo	Schema markup	Schema automation + validation sandbox	Dominant schema engine
3	9-15 mo	Rank tracking	Visibility Index dashboard	Standard metric
4	12-18 mo	Content automation	Auto-Optimize rules	Usability moat
5	18-24 mo	Authority building	Publisher syndication network	Authority signal boost
6	24-30 mo	Attribution proof	GA4 / Snowflake exports	Enterprise readiness
7	30-36 mo	Governance & trust	Provenance / audit trails	Compliance moat

**Implementation Note:** Link roadmap phases to quarterly OKRs. Assign one engineering owner per phase to avoid diffusion of responsibility.

**KPI:** Phase 1 connector coverage  $\geq$  4 engines by Q2 2026; Phase 2 schema error rate  $<$  2 %.

## 8 Strategic Implications — Competing Across Surfaces



1. Build LLM signal abstraction layer to normalize inputs from ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, Claude.
2. Offer surface-specific tuning rulesets.

- 3. Provide a “visibility passport” API for merchants.
- 4. Add cross-engine benchmarking as Pro/Ulimate feature.

**Next 90 Days Action:** Prototype connector framework in staging using Gemini and Perplexity APIs; instrument logging for inclusion tracking.

## 9 Risks & Mitigation

Risk Type	Description	Probability	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Market Fragmentation	No single AI surface dominates; merchants face fractured optimization targets.	High	High	Build multi-surface abstraction layer; update connectors quarterly.
Data Access Dependency	AI engines may throttle or gate indexing/citation APIs.	Medium	High	Maintain resilient telemetry via merchant GA + prompt sampling; partner with open-web LLMs.
Competitive Consolidation	Large SEO/commercial suites acquire GEO startups.	Medium	Medium	Keep modular plug-in architecture; allow OEM licensing.
Attribution Uncertainty	Difficult to trace AI-driven conversions.	Medium	High	Continue Visibility → Inclusion → Answer

				Placement analytics.
<b>Merchant Adoption Friction</b>	SMBs may not perceive AI visibility as urgent.	High	Medium	Educational onboarding + Auto-Optimize quick-wins.
<b>Compliance / Trust</b>	Emerging provenance standards (C2PA, AI disclosure).	Medium	Medium	Implement audit trails, reversible edits, SOC 2 prep.
<b>Execution Bandwidth</b>	Engineering capacity vs. market speed.	Medium	High	Partner for connectors & analytics; prioritize roadmap ruthlessly.

**Implementation Note:** Re-score these risks quarterly; track “connector coverage,” “schema success rate,” and “AI inclusion rate” as lead indicators.

# 10 Quantitative Appendix — Assumptions & Methodology

## TAM and CAGR Model

- Global SEO tools + services (2025) ≈ \$80 B USD
- Projected 2030 ≈ \$140 B (≈ 6–7 % CAGR)
- GEO multiplier = AI search adoption × structured-content conversion ≈ 40 % CAGR (2025–2028)

**Formula:**

$$\text{GEO\_2028} = \text{SEO\_2025} \times (\text{AI\_Query\_Share} \times \text{Automation\_Factor})$$

# Glu ARR Forecast

- Shopify merchant base  $\approx$  2.3 M (2025)
- SOM  $\approx$  15 % ( $\approx$  345 k merchants)
- Tier mix = 60 % Free · 35 % Pro · 5 % Ultimate
- ARPU = \$18 /mo weighted average
- Retention = 80 %
- CAC payback < 9 mo with freemium on-ramp

## ARR Formula:

ARR = (Adoption × Merchants × ARPU × 12) × Retention

## Sensitivity Ranges

Variable	−10 %	Base	+10 %	Impact on ARR
Adoption	−\$2 M	\$21 M	+\$3 M	Moderate
ARPU	−\$3 M	\$21 M	+\$4 M	High
Churn	−\$2 M	\$21 M	+\$2 M	Low

**KPI Tracking:** Maintain a rolling 12-month ARR forecast updated quarterly; monitor adoption %, ARPU trend, and retention delta.

Pillar	Strength	Opportunity	Risk
Integration	Shopify-native write-back	Expand to Magento / BigCommerce	Limited TAM if single-platform
Automation	Schema + LLM feed automation	Add auto-optimize rules	UX complexity for non-technical users
Measurement	Visibility / Inclusion / Answer Placement metrics	Standardize as industry index	Attribution noise
Coverage	Emerging LLM connectors	Add Gemini / Claude coverage	API volatility
Governance	Editable AI suggestions	Compliance leadership	SOC 2 timeline

**Implementation Note:** Convert this dashboard into a monthly leadership slide.  
Track each pillar as a traffic-light metric (green / amber / red) to guide roadmap priorities.

End-of-Report Checklist

- [ ] Connector coverage ≥ 4 major engines
- [ ] Schema automation v2 live
- [ ] Visibility Index GA release
- [ ] Attribution export template (GA4 / Snowflake)
- [ ] Quarterly risk review logged

End of Document

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