

AI · AEO · LLMS.TXT

The Future of Search and what every WordPress site should do next.

How AI is changing the way people find things, why Answer Engine Optimization matters, and the practical steps for site owners, developers and marketers.



Craig Gomes
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YOUR SPEAKER TONIGHT

Craig Gomes

Full-stack Software Engineer & Entrepreneur — Founder, Pixelvise

- ✓ **Full-stack engineer** — ships products end to end, from architecture and APIs to frontend, across the modern web stack.
- ✓ **Entrepreneur** — runs Pixelvise, working with businesses on technology, AI and digital transformation.
- ✓ Works deeply with **applied AI** — and lately, one question keeps coming up: **where will our traffic come from in 3 years?**

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TONIGHT'S AGENDA

What we'll cover — and what you'll leave with.

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 01 |  | How search is changing | From ten blue links to synthesized answers — what actually happened. |
| 02 |  | Answer Engine Optimization | The mindset shift: from ranking on pages to being cited in answers. |
| 03 |  | llms.txt, explained | What it is, what it isn't, and how to ship one from WordPress today. |
| 04 |  | The WordPress playbook | Schema, content patterns and settings that make your site quotable. |
| 05 |  | Your action plan | Concrete next steps for owners, developers and marketers. |

A SHORT HISTORY OF FINDING THINGS

Search didn't break. It evolved past the click.



Ten blue links

1998–2011 · you rank, they click, you get the visit



Featured snippets

2014 · Google starts answering on the results page



Chat assistants

2022 · ChatGPT makes conversation the interface



AI answers

Now · AI Overviews & answer engines synthesize the web



The uncomfortable truth

Every step moved the answer **closer to the searcher** and further from your website. The next generation of visitors may never see your homepage — they'll meet your content *inside someone else's answer*.

THIS IS ALREADY MEASURABLE

The numbers behind the noise.

~60%

of Google searches now end **without a click** to any website.

SPARKTORO / DATOS, 2024

800M+

people use ChatGPT **every week** — many as their default way to research.

OPENAI, 2025

43%

of the web runs on WordPress. If AI search reshapes traffic, **it reshapes our traffic.**

W3TECHS, 2025

None of these numbers mean search is dying — people are searching more than ever. What's changing is **where the answer gets delivered**, and whether your site is part of it.

KNOW THE NEW GATEKEEPERS

Meet the answer engines.

Different products, same behaviour: they read the open web, then answer in their own words — citing a handful of sources.



Google AI Overviews & AI Mode

Synthesized answers above the classic results — powered by Gemini, fed by Google's index.



ChatGPT Search

Conversational answers with live web citations. GPTBot crawls; OAI-SearchBot fetches.



Perplexity

Built citation-first: every claim links out. The clearest picture of what AEO rewards.



Microsoft Copilot

Bing's index, woven into Windows, Edge and Office — answers where people already work.



Claude, Gemini & friends

Assistants with web tools. Users ask them instead of searching — increasingly for buying advice.

THE PATTERN

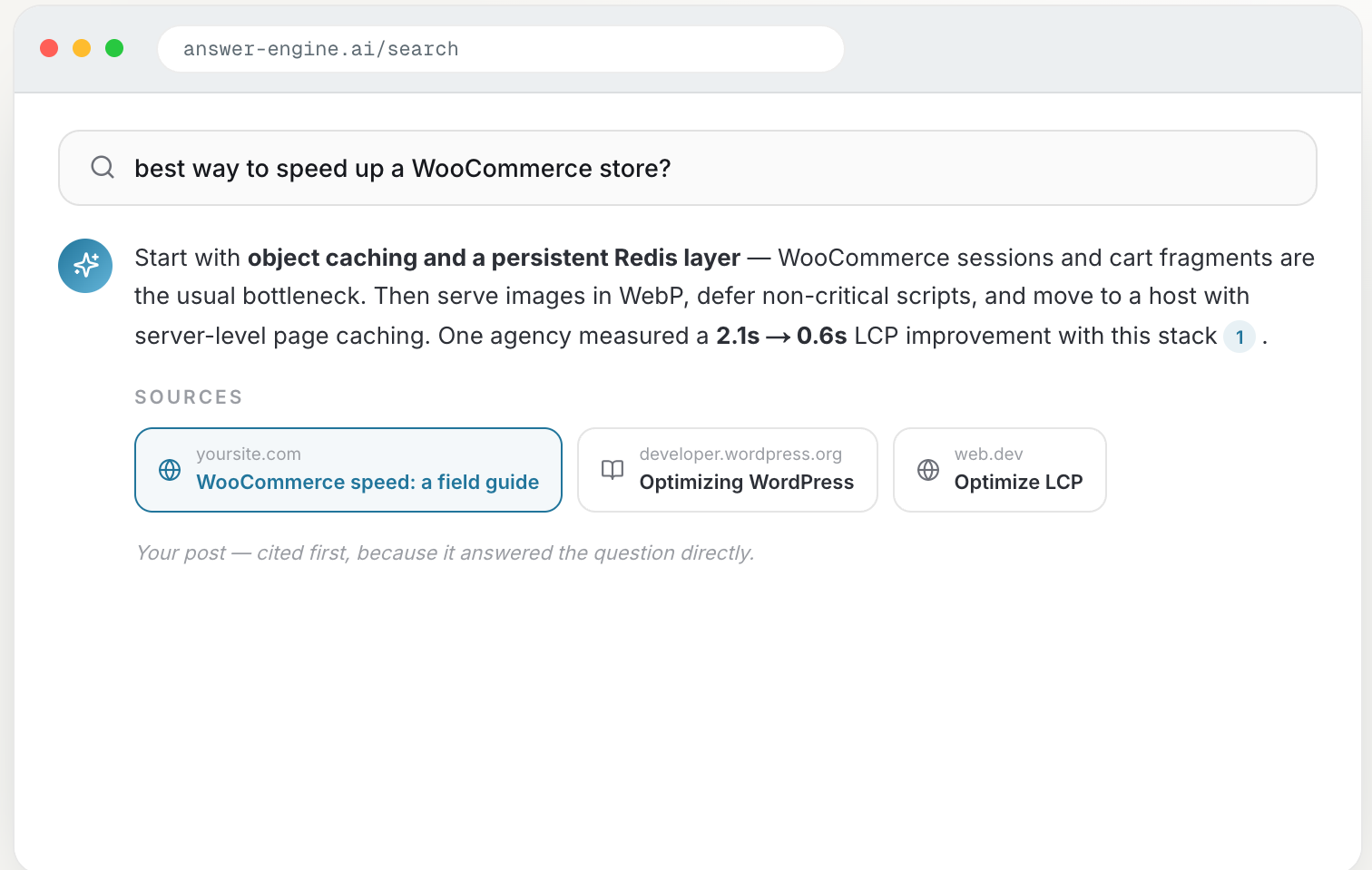
They don't send traffic by default. They send it *when you're worth citing.*

WHAT WINNING LOOKS LIKE NOW

This is the new results page.

One synthesized answer. Two or three citations.
The rest of the internet — invisible.

- ✓ **Position zero is the only position.** Being source #1 in the answer is the new #1 ranking.
- ✓ Citations reward **clarity and evidence**, not domain size.
- ✓ Small, focused WordPress sites can absolutely win here.



A MINDSET SHIFT, NOT A REPLACEMENT

SEO got you ranked. AEO gets you cited.

SEO · Search Engine Optimization

- ✓ **Goal:** rank a page in a list of results.
- ✓ **Unit:** the page — optimized around keywords.
- ✓ **Win:** a click, a visit, a session.
- ✓ **Measured by:** rankings, impressions, organic traffic.



AEO · Answer Engine Optimization

- ✓ **Goal:** be the source an AI quotes in its answer.
- ✓ **Unit:** the passage — a self-contained, quotable claim.
- ✓ **Win:** a citation, brand presence, a high-intent visit.
- ✓ **Measured by:** share of citations, AI referrals, mentions.

Good news: **strong SEO is the foundation of AEO** — everything you've built still counts.

UNDER THE HOOD

How an answer engine decides to cite you.



Crawl

GPTBot, PerplexityBot & co.
fetch your pages — if
robots.txt lets them



Chunk

Pages are split into passages;
headings define the
boundaries



Retrieve & rank

Passages that directly answer
the query win — clarity beats
length



Synthesize & cite

The model writes the answer
and links its best sources



What this rewards

Direct answers under clear headings · facts with numbers and dates ·
named authors · consistent structure.



What this punishes

1,000-word intros · answers buried in paragraph twelve · vague
marketing copy · content locked inside JavaScript.

A SITEMAP FOR LANGUAGE MODELS

llms.txt, explained.

A plain markdown file at your site root that tells AI systems what your site is about — and which pages deserve their attention.

- ✓ Proposed in 2024 by Jeremy Howard (Answer.AI) — think **robots.txt for meaning**, not access.
- ✓ Curated, human-readable markdown: title, summary, links to your **best** content.
- ✓ Honest caveat: adoption is still emerging — but it costs minutes and signals you take AI readers seriously.

```
yoursite.com/llms.txt

# Craig's WooCommerce Studio

> We build & maintain fast WooCommerce stores.
> 120+ launches since 2018, Mumbai-based.

## Guides
- [WooCommerce speed: field guide](/guides/speed):
  our caching stack, with real benchmarks
- [Checkout UX teardown](/guides/checkout):
  17 fixes that lifted conversion 12%

## About
- [Services & pricing](/services)
- [Contact](/contact)
```

SHIP IT FROM WORDPRESS IN MINUTES

Three ways to add llms.txt today.



01

Your SEO plugin

Yoast SEO and AIOSEO can now generate llms.txt automatically from your content structure. Check the settings — you may be one toggle away.



02

A dedicated plugin

Lightweight plugins on wordpress.org (search “llms.txt”) build the file from your pages, posts and product categories — and keep it fresh.



03

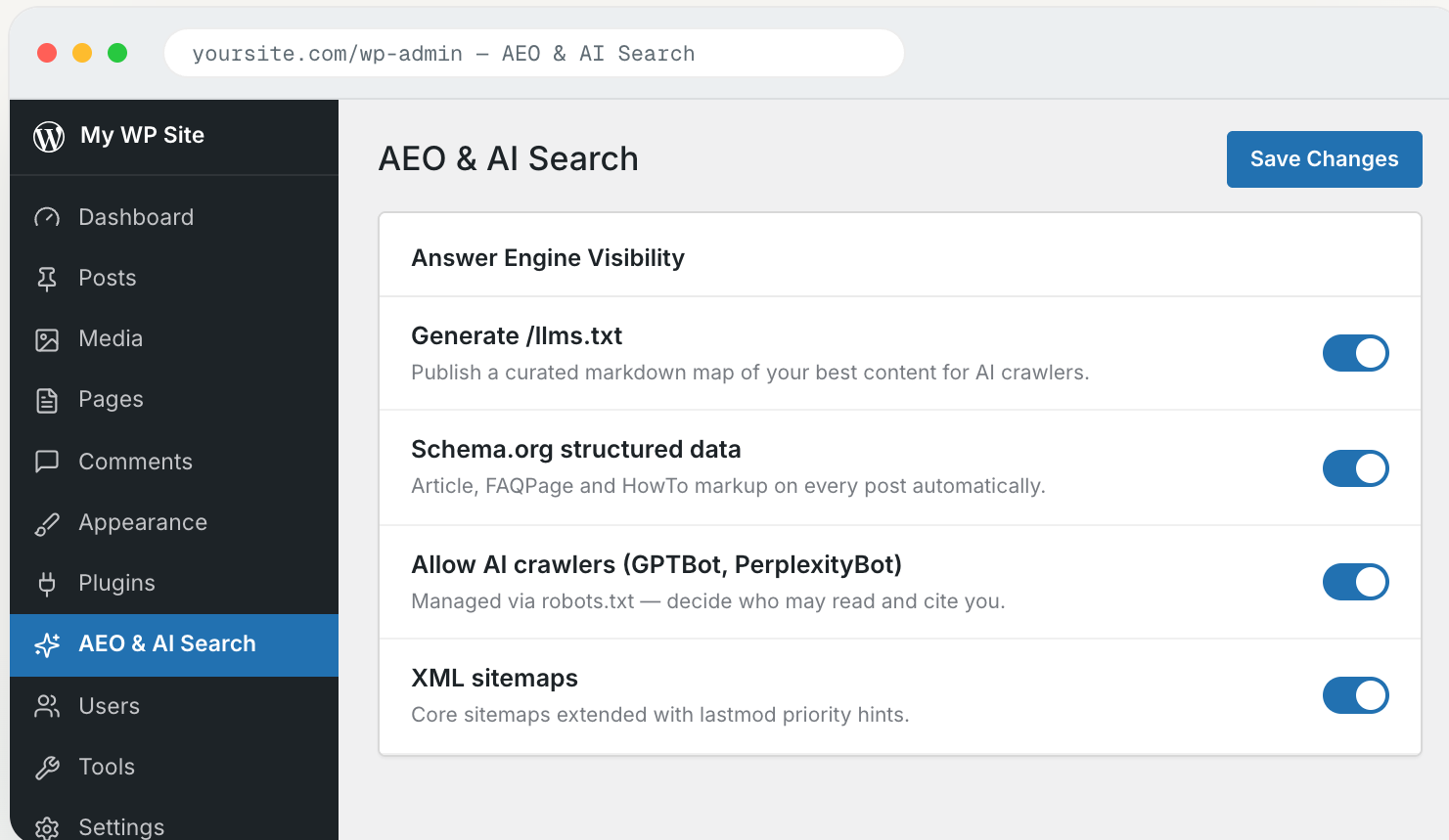
Hand-written & static

Best quality: write it yourself. Curate your 10–20 strongest URLs with one-line summaries, upload to the site root. Update quarterly.



Pro tip

Whichever route you choose — **curate, don't dump**. An llms.txt with your entire archive is noise. Ten excellent links beat a thousand mediocre ones.



IT LIVES WHERE YOU ALREADY WORK

Your dashboard is almost ready.

Most of AEO isn't new tooling — it's flipping the right switches in the WordPress stack you already run.

- ✓ **SEO plugins** handle schema, sitemaps and llms.txt.
- ✓ **robots.txt** decides which AI crawlers may read you — a real editorial decision now.
- ✓ **Core** already outputs clean, crawlable HTML. Don't bury it in page-builder soup.

SPEAK MACHINE, FLUENTLY

Structured data: subtitles for robots.

Schema.org markup labels your content so machines can't misread it. These four types earn their keep on WordPress sites:



FAQPage

Q&A pairs, pre-chunked exactly the way answer engines consume content.



Article

Author, date, publisher — the provenance signals AI systems weigh for trust.



Product

Price, availability, reviews — feeds AI shopping and comparison answers.



LocalBusiness

Hours, location, services — how assistants answer “near me” questions.

In WordPress: **Yoast, Rank Math and AIOSEO** emit most of this automatically — verify with Google's Rich Results Test.

WRITE FOR THE QUOTE

Content that gets cited.



Answer first, explain second

Open every section with the direct answer in 2–3 sentences. Context comes after — journalists call it the inverted pyramid.



Headings that are questions

"How much does WooCommerce hosting cost?" beats "Hosting considerations". Match how people actually ask.



Facts with teeth

Numbers, dates, benchmarks, named sources. Models preferentially cite passages with verifiable specifics.



Visible expertise

Real author bios, credentials, first-hand experience. E-E-A-T applies to answer engines too.

BEFORE → AFTER

~~"In today's fast-paced digital landscape, website speed has become more important than ever before, and there are many factors to consider..."~~

"A WooCommerce store should load in under 2 seconds. The three highest-impact fixes are object caching, WebP images and server-level page caching — in that order. Here's the data from 40 client sites."

↑ Self-contained · specific · quotable

THE 20-MINUTE AUDIT

Technical checklist — run this on your site this week.

- ✓ **robots.txt** — decide, explicitly, which AI crawlers (GPTBot, PerplexityBot, ClaudeBot, Google-Extended) you allow.
- ✓ **XML sitemap** — present, referenced in robots.txt, with honest lastmod dates.
- ✓ **llms.txt** — shipped and curated (see part 3).
- ✓ **Schema markup** — validated via Rich Results Test, no errors.
- ✓ **Server-rendered HTML** — your content must exist before JavaScript runs. WordPress does this natively; keep it that way.
- ✓ **Core Web Vitals** — slow sites get crawled less and trusted less.
- ✓ **Clean heading hierarchy** — one H1, logical H2/H3s; they define the chunks engines retrieve.
- ✓ **HTTPS + working feeds** — RSS is quietly one of the ways models discover fresh content.

WHO DOES WHAT, STARTING MONDAY

Your role, your next three moves.



01

Site owners

- 1 · Ask AI engines your customers' top 5 questions — see who gets cited.
- 2 · Turn on llms.txt + schema in your SEO plugin.
- 3 · Rewrite your money page to answer-first.



02

Developers

- 1 · Audit robots.txt for AI crawler policy.
- 2 · Validate structured data sitewide; fix heading hierarchies in themes.
- 3 · Watch server logs for GPTBot & friends — measure what they read.



03

Marketers

- 1 · Track AI referrals in GA4 (chatgpt.com, perplexity.ai sources).
- 2 · Build question-led content briefs from real customer language.
- 3 · Add “share of AI citations” next to rank tracking.



The meta-move for everyone: ask ChatGPT, Perplexity and Google about your own niche tonight. If you're not in the answer — now you know exactly what to fix.

IF YOU REMEMBER THREE THINGS

The takeaways.

01



Search is becoming answers.

The click is no longer guaranteed. Being the cited source is the new first position — optimize for the quote, not just the rank.

02



WordPress is well positioned.

Clean server-rendered HTML, mature SEO plugins, schema and llms.txt support — the platform gives you every tool. Most sites just haven't turned them on.

03



Early movers win disproportionately.

AI referral traffic is small but compounding fast. The sites building citation authority now will own their niches when it's mainstream.

THANK YOU

Questions?

Let's talk search.

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 pixelvise.com

