

How to use this checklist

AI search has rewired how customers find businesses. Customers are typing full questions into ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews instead of two-word phrases into Google. The brands that get cited inside those AI summaries win the customer. The ones that do not are invisible.

This checklist is what we run at ohKarl every time we audit a client page for AEO and GEO. It is the same 14-point process we use whether the client is a local plumber in Ballito or a national B2B service brand. Tick each item off for any page you want to rank inside AI search.

A few rules of the road

Score yourself honestly. If you are not sure whether a checkpoint is met, treat it as a no. AI engines are strict.

One page at a time. Audit your highest-value commercial page first (homepage or top service page). Improve, retest, then move to the next.

Aim for 12 out of 14 minimum. Pages scoring 12 or higher tend to start picking up AI citations within 6 to 12 weeks in our experience. Pages below 9 rarely get cited at all.

Retest in ChatGPT and Perplexity every 30 days. AI search results shift faster than Google rankings. What works today may need a tweak in a month.

The 14-point AI citation audit

Tick each item that is fully met on the page you are auditing.

☐ **1. Page title contains the actual question**

Your **<title>** tag should contain the exact question your customer would type or speak. "How much does SEO cost in South Africa?" beats "Pricing". Aim for under 60 characters so it does not get truncated in search results.

☐ **2. H1 matches or closely paraphrases the title**

Your visible H1 heading on the page should mirror the title tag. Mismatched H1s confuse

☐ **10. FAQ questions come from real Google "People Also Ask" data**

Do not invent FAQ questions. Search Google for your focus keyphrase, expand the People Also Ask box at least three times, and use the actual questions Google records. These are demonstrably what people are typing.

☐ **11. FAQ schema is in place**

Use Rank Math, Yoast, or manual JSON-LD. FAQ schema makes the FAQ block eligible for rich results in Google and easier for AI crawlers to parse. Test with Google's Rich Results Test tool.

☐ **12. Article schema with author and dates is in place**

Article schema should include an author with credentials, a datePublished, and a dateModified. This is one of the strongest E-E-A-T signals you can send. Visible author byline on the page is also recommended.

☐ **13. The page has at least one authoritative outbound citation**

Link out to a reputable industry source, a study, or a named tool. Use target="_blank" rel="noopener". Outbound citations from your page reinforce the trustworthiness signals AI engines look for.

☐ **14. The page has been tested in ChatGPT and Perplexity**

Ask the question your page targets in ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews. Note whether your URL gets cited. If it does not, look at who got cited and reverse-engineer the structure.

Score yourself

Score	What it means
12 to 14	AI citation ready. Expect citations within 6 to 12 weeks for pages already in the Google top 20.
9 to 11	On the right track. Fix the missing items before adding new pages.
5 to 8	Significant rework needed. Prioritise items 3, 4, 9, and 12 first.
Below 5	Start with a structural rewrite of the page using items 1 to 6 as a template.

What to fix first

If you only have an hour this week, fix items **3, 4, and 9** on your most important commercial page. These three changes alone tend to move pages from invisible to occasionally cited within four to six weeks.

If you have a full afternoon, knock out items **1 through 6**. That covers the entire on-page foundation. Items 11 and 12 (schema) can usually be ticked in five minutes with a plugin like Rank Math or Yoast.

Items 7, 8, and 13 take longer because they require original thinking and outreach. Schedule those for monthly content refreshes rather than trying to do them all at once.

Want us to do this for you?

We run a full 14-point AI citation audit on your top three pages and hand you a prioritised action list. No sales call, no pressure. If we find issues you want help with, we will tell you what we would charge to fix them. If everything looks good, we will say so.

Book a free audit: ohkarl.com/contact-us

Email Karl directly: karl@ohkarl.com

More on our SEO, AEO and GEO services: ohkarl.com/seo-aeo-geo-south-africa

About ohKarl: founded by Karl Worner, ohKarl is a Ballito-based digital marketing agency specialising in SEO, AEO and GEO for South African businesses. Karl has over 15 years of digital marketing experience.

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