

AEO Quick-Start Checklist for Australian businesses 2026

Work through these in order. Steps 1–4 are technical – do them first, they have the fastest payoff. Steps 5–8 are ongoing practice. **Already doing good SEO?** You’re roughly 80% there – the items below are the AEO-specific layer on top.

TECHNICAL FOUNDATION - DO FIRST, FASTEST ROI

1 Add FAQPage schema to every post and service page ☐

JSON-LD format, minimum 4 Q&A pairs per page. Schema must match visible HTML exactly. Pages with FAQPage schema earn AI citations at 2.7× the rate of those without it. Note: works for AI even though Google has restricted rich results display.

2 Add Article schema with author + dates ☐

Include `author`, `datePublished`, and `dateModified` on every post. Update `dateModified` each time you refresh content – AI systems use freshness as a trust signal.

5 Audit Core Web Vitals and load speed ☐

Target sub-2.5s Largest Contentful Paint. AI crawlers require fast, cleanly structured HTML. Use Google PageSpeed Insights. A hand-coded static site has a structural advantage over WordPress + page builders.

4 Check entity consistency across all platforms ☐

Business name, address, phone, and service descriptions must match exactly on your website, Google Business Profile, LinkedIn, and key directories. AI systems build entity graphs – inconsistent data reduces citation confidence.

CONTENT STRUCTURE - REVISIT YOUR TOP 10 PAGES

5 Rewrite headings as questions people actually ask ☐

“Our Services” → “What SEO services do you offer in Perth?” Every H2/H3 should mirror the natural language question it answers. Improves People Also Ask visibility and AI citation rates at the same time.

6 Add a direct answer in the first 40–60 words of every section ☐

AI systems extract answer blocks. The structure that works: question as heading → direct answer in 40–60 words → then expand. If the answer is buried three paragraphs deep, it often won’t be extracted.

AUTHORITY BUILDING - ONGOING PRACTICE

7 Cite credible external sources in every piece of content ☐

Princeton/Georgia Tech research: citing external sources improved AI citation rates by up to 115% for lower-ranked content – the single largest lever in the study. Link to ABS data, industry research, government sources, published studies.

8 Build a proper author page with real credentials ☐

150+ word bio, professional photo, verifiable qualifications, links to LinkedIn and published work. Pages demonstrating real professional experience are cited 3.2× more often by AI systems than anonymous content.

59%

of AU Google searches show AI Overviews - triple the global average

83%

zero-click rate when an AI Overview is present

2.7×

higher AI citation rate with FAQPage schema vs without

58%

of AI Overview citations come from traditional top-10 results