

The AI-Proof *Marketing Audit*

27 Things to Fix Before Your Competitors Do

AI has changed how people find businesses, evaluate options, and make buying decisions. Most marketing strategies have not caught up. This checklist walks you through every area of your marketing and flags the gaps that will cost you customers, visibility, and revenue if you do not address them now.

THE SHIFT

How This Audit *Works*

Go through each of the 27 items and check the box if you can honestly say yes. Do not check it if you are sort of doing it or planning to do it eventually. Only check it if it is actively happening in your marketing right now.

When you finish, count your checks. The scoring at the end will tell you exactly where you stand and what to prioritize first.

52%

of consumers reduce engagement with content they suspect is AI generated

26%

of consumers prefer AI content, down from 60% just two years earlier

96.5%

of all web content now gets zero traffic from Google

Sources: ArtSmart Content Statistics 2025, Billion Dollar Boy 2026 Report, Ahrefs 2025

Why This Matters Right Now

The businesses that audit and adapt their marketing for an AI-driven landscape today will have a compounding advantage over the next 12 to 24 months. The ones that wait will spend the next year wondering why their leads dried up and their content stopped performing. Every item on this list is something your competitors are either already fixing or about to start fixing. The question is whether you get there first.

Your Website

Is your site built for how people actually find and evaluate businesses in 2026?

- 01 Your site loads in under 3 seconds on mobile**

Google's Core Web Vitals are now a ranking factor and AI systems prioritize fast, accessible sites when choosing which sources to cite. If your site is slow, you are invisible to both humans and algorithms. Test with Google PageSpeed Insights and aim for a performance score above 90.
- 02 Your most important pages answer specific questions in the first 40 to 60 words**

AI Overviews and featured snippets pull from content that gives direct, clear answers early in the page. If your pages start with fluffy introductions or company history before getting to the point, AI will skip you and cite someone who answered the question faster.
- 03 You have FAQ schema markup on your key service and product pages**

Schema markup tells AI systems and search engines exactly what questions your page answers. Pages with FAQ schema are significantly more likely to appear in featured snippets and AI Overviews. If your pages do not have structured data, you are leaving AI visibility on the table.
- 04 Your site has a clear conversion path that does not depend on organic search traffic alone**

With 58.5% of searches ending in zero clicks, your website needs to convert the traffic it does get at a higher rate than ever. If you do not have clear calls to action, lead magnets, and conversion paths on every major page, you are wasting the visitors who actually make it through.

Your Content

Does your content sound like a human wrote it and stand out from the AI flood?

- 05** **Someone outside your company could read your content and identify it as yours without seeing your logo**

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- 06** **You publish content that includes original data, real examples, or firsthand experience**

AI can summarize existing information but it cannot create original research, share authentic customer stories, or provide genuine expertise from lived experience. Content with original data and real-world examples is what AI platforms actually want to cite because it adds something new to the conversation.
- 07** **Your content strategy goes beyond blog posts**

96.5% of web content gets zero traffic from Google. If your strategy relies only on blog posts and organic search, you're competing for a shrinking share of clicks. Video, podcasts, email newsletters, LinkedIn posts, and community engagement should all be part of the mix.
- 08** **You have a documented process for quality control that catches generic AI patterns**

52% of consumers disengage when they suspect content is AI generated. If you are using AI tools to create content without a human review process that checks for originality, brand voice, and genuine value, your content is likely hurting your brand more than helping it.
- 09** **Your content delivers value on the platform where it lives, without requiring a click**

Social platforms suppress posts with external links. AI Overviews answer questions without sending traffic. Content that performs now delivers the insight natively on the platform where the audience already is, building brand familiarity even when nobody clicks through to your site.

SEO & AEO

Are you visible where AI is sending your potential customers?

- 10 You have optimized your content for AI Overviews and featured snippets, not just traditional rankings**

AI Overviews now appear on over 13% of Google queries and that number is growing fast. 88% of those are informational queries, exactly the type of searches your customers use to research solutions. If you are only optimizing for blue link rankings, you are optimizing for a shrinking piece of the pie.
- 11 You are tracking your brand's visibility in AI platforms like ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI Mode**

Only 12% of URLs cited by ChatGPT rank in Google's top 10 results. AI platforms are building authority signals independent of traditional SEO. If you're not tracking whether AI tools mention and recommend your business, you have a major blind spot.
- 12 Your content uses question-based headings that mirror actual search queries**

AI systems look for content structured around specific questions. Using headings like the actual questions your customers ask makes it dramatically easier for both featured snippets and AI Overviews to pull your content as a cited source.
- 13 You have a strategy for local search visibility beyond your Google Business Profile**

For local businesses, the zero-click trend hits even harder. Local search results are dominated by map packs, AI summaries, and instant answers. Your Google Business Profile needs to be fully optimized, regularly updated, and supported by reviews and local citations that AI systems use to validate your authority.

Sources: Semrush 2025, Status Labs 2026 Analysis, Surfer SEO 2025 Study

Email & Owned Channels

Do you actually own your audience or are you renting it from platforms that can change the rules anytime?

- 14 You have an active email list that you send to at least weekly**

Email marketing generates between \$36 and \$40 for every \$1 spent. That is a 3,600% ROI, and it outperforms every other marketing channel by a significant margin. If you are not building and nurturing an email list, you are leaving the highest ROI channel in marketing completely untapped.
- 15 You have at least one lead magnet that converts website visitors into email subscribers**

With declining organic traffic, every visitor who makes it to your website is more valuable than ever. If you do not have a compelling reason for them to give you their email address, you are letting them leave without any way to follow up, and most will never come back.
- 16 You have automated email sequences for new subscribers, leads, and customers**

Automated email workflows generate 30 times higher returns compared to one-off email campaigns. Welcome sequences, nurture series, and re-engagement flows work while you sleep and compound over time. If you are only sending manual broadcast emails, you are doing a fraction of what email can do for your business.
- 17 Your email list is segmented and you personalize content based on subscriber behavior or interests**

Personalized emails generate six times more sales than generic ones. Targeted and personalized emails account for 58% of all email revenue. If you are sending the same email to everyone on your list, you are leaving money on the table and training subscribers to ignore you.

Sources: DMA Email Benchmarking Report, Omnisend 2025, Mailmodo Research 2025

Social Media & *Platform Strategy*

Are you building real presence or just posting into the void?

- 18 You create native content for each platform instead of cross-posting the same thing everywhere**
A LinkedIn post isn't a tweet or an Instagram caption. Each platform has its own algorithm, audience behavior, and format. Brands that create native content for each channel see far higher reach and engagement than those who copy and paste the same message everywhere.
- 19 Your social strategy builds brand equity even when posts get zero clicks to your website**
Over 70% of content on major social platforms is consumed through algorithmic feeds, not active search. If you measure social success only by website clicks, you're tracking the wrong metric. The real goal is brand recognition and trust, so when buyers are ready, your name is on top.
- 20 You or your team are actively engaging in conversations, not just broadcasting**
The businesses growing fastest on social media in 2026 are the ones having real conversations in comments, DMs, and community discussions. Posting content is table stakes. Engaging with your audience, responding to questions, and showing up in relevant discussions is what actually builds the relationships that turn into revenue.
- 21 You have a video content strategy, even if it is basic**
Short-form video delivers the highest ROI among all video formats and 85% of people say video has influenced a purchase decision. You do not need a production studio. You need someone willing to get on camera and share real expertise, real opinions, and real value.

Sources: Deloitte Consumer Research 2025, Wyzowl State of Video 2026, HubSpot State of Marketing 2026

Measurement & *Attribution*

Are you tracking what actually matters or staring at vanity dashboards?

- 22 You track branded search volume as a leading indicator of marketing effectiveness**

In a zero-click world, more of your marketing impact happens before anyone visits your website. Branded search volume tells you whether more people are becoming aware of your business and actively seeking you out. If this number is going up month over month, your marketing is working even if direct traffic looks flat.
- 23 You can connect marketing activity to pipeline and revenue, not just impressions and clicks**

Impressions and click through rates are increasingly unreliable indicators of marketing health. The metrics that matter connect what your marketing team does to the leads, opportunities, and revenue your sales team closes. If you cannot draw a line from marketing spend to revenue generated, your measurement framework needs work.
- 24 You measure conversion rate on the traffic you do get, not just traffic volume**

If organic traffic is declining across the board, the businesses that win are the ones converting a higher percentage of the visitors who do show up. A 2% conversion rate on declining traffic is a problem. A 5% conversion rate on the same traffic means your revenue is still growing. Conversion optimization is now more important than traffic acquisition for most businesses.

YOUR RESULTS

Score Your *Audit*

Count the total number of boxes you checked. Then find your range below to see where you stand and what to focus on first.

SCORE

WHAT IT MEANS

27 to 27

You are ahead of most.

Your marketing is already built for how people search, discover, and buy in 2026. Focus on the gaps you identified and keep optimizing. You are in a strong competitive position.

15 to 21

You have a foundation, but there are real gaps.

You are doing some things right, but the areas you missed are probably already costing you visibility and leads. Prioritize the sections where you scored lowest and tackle those first. The compounding effect of fixing gaps early is significant.

8 to 14

Your marketing is running on an outdated playbook.

Most of your marketing strategy was built for a world that no longer exists. The good news is that your competitors are probably in the same boat, so moving fast gives you a real advantage. Start with Section 04 (email and owned channels) and Section 02 (content) because those will have the most immediate impact on your pipeline.

0 to 7

This needs urgent attention.

Your marketing strategy has significant gaps that are actively costing you customers and revenue right now. Do not try to fix everything at once. Pick the three items that are most directly connected to how your customers find and evaluate your business, and start there. If you are not sure where to begin, a free strategy session can help you prioritize.

Found Some Gaps?

Good. Now Let's Fix Them.

We help businesses close the gaps this audit surfaces. Strategy, content, SEO, email, paid media, and brand building designed for how people actually find and buy in 2026. Senior team. Weekly delivery. No fluff.

Book a Free *Strategy Session*

leapyn.com

No contracts to start. Just a conversation.