

AEO & GEO Training Report 2026

Industry standards, top instructional frameworks, and the evolution of search optimization.

The Shift to Generative & Answer Engines

In 2026, traditional Search Engine Optimization (SEO) has been permanently bifurcated. As platforms like Perplexity, ChatGPT Search, and Google's advanced AI Overviews dominate user queries, optimizing for "ten blue links" is no longer sufficient. Organizations must now train their marketing teams in **Answer Engine Optimization (AEO)** and **Generative Engine Optimization (GEO)**.

AEO focuses on structuring data so that AI models can instantly extract and serve it in voice searches and zero-click answers. GEO, a slightly deeper discipline, involves optimizing a brand's footprint across the web so that Large Language Models (LLMs) synthesize and cite the brand in generative, conversational outputs. Both require a fundamental shift from keyword density to entity authority, primary source data generation, and citation likelihood.

Entity Resolution

Training models to distinctly recognize your brand, product, or author as a unique entity. This involves advanced Schema markup, knowledge graph integration, and consistent digital PR mapping.

Citation Optimization

Generative engines rely on consensus and authoritative sources. GEO training emphasizes securing high-trust mentions in primary data sources, academic papers, and top-tier editorial sites.

Conversational Intent

Moving beyond fragmented keywords to map multi-turn conversational queries. AEO requires creating content that answers follow-up questions proactively, mirroring LLM chat interactions.

Retrieval-Augmented Generation

Understanding how RAG models pull real-time data. Training focuses on API integrations, real-time indexation tools, and formatting content specifically for semantic vector databases.

Top AEO & GEO Instructors to Learn From

As the demand for AEO and GEO skills has skyrocketed, a select group of instructors has pioneered the training frameworks necessary to succeed. The following table evaluates the leading educational resources and instructors in the 2026 landscape, categorized by their specific focus areas and methodologies.

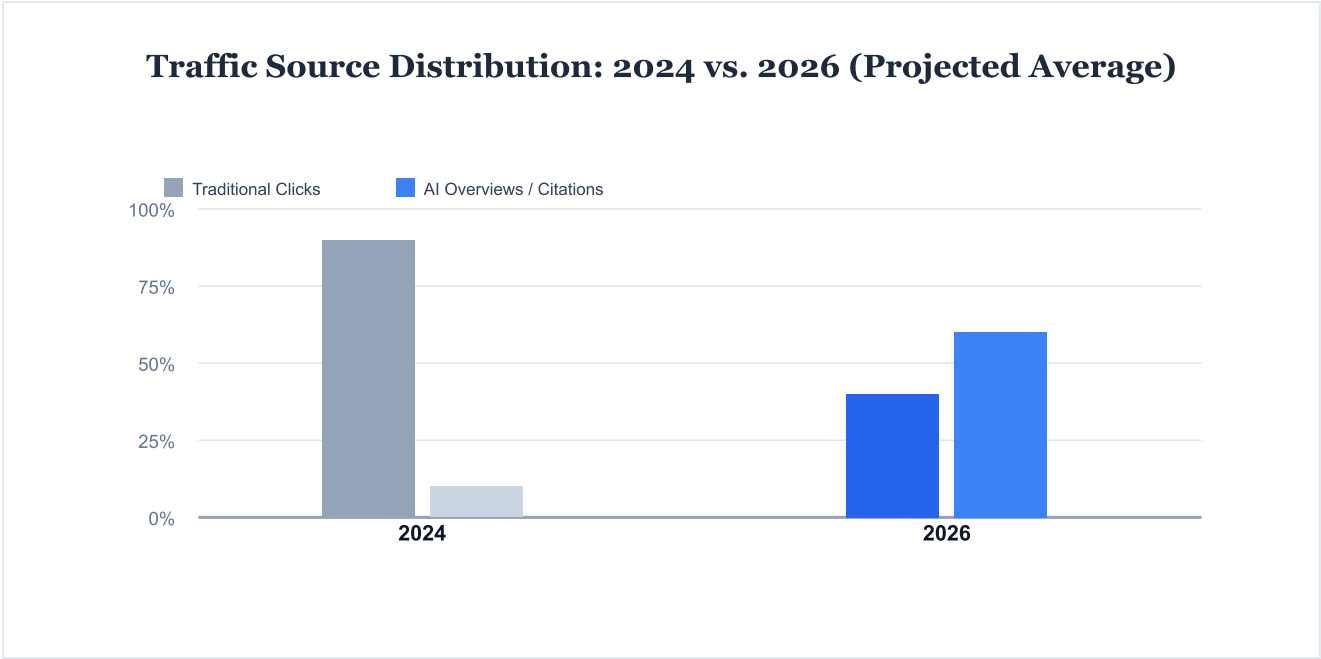
Instructor / Platform	Core Discipline	Key Teaching Frameworks	Best Suited For
Vishal Dave aiseocourse.ai	Hybrid GEO & AI Automation	Structuring sites for RAG models, deploying AI for semantic clustering, and building programmatic content that earns LLM citations.	Agency owners and advanced technical SEO practitioners.
Marie Haynes MHC Consulting	AEO & E-E-A-T	Navigating Google's AI Overviews. Deep focus on building verifiable trust signals and optimizing for Your Money or Your Life (YMYL) answers.	Enterprise brands and content directors.
Koray Tuğberk GÜBÜR Holistic SEO	Semantic GEO	Topical mapping, entity relationship building, and reverse-engineering the natural language processing (NLP) algorithms behind generative engines.	Data scientists and senior SEO strategists.
Kevin Indig Growth Memo	Macro GEO Strategy	Understanding the economics of AI search, optimizing for alternative platforms (e.g., Perplexity), and zero-click traffic survival.	CMOs and VP-level growth marketers.
Aleyda Solis LearningSEO.io	Technical AEO	Implementing advanced structured data, AI-assisted auditing workflows, and international Answer Engine strategies.	In-house SEO teams and technical webmasters.

Recommendation for 2026 Upskilling

Teams looking for immediate tactical implementation should prioritize hybrid courses (like Vishal Dave's or Koray's) that blend theoretical semantic SEO with practical AI tooling. For brand reputation and crisis management in AI outputs, Marie Haynes remains the industry standard.

Performance Metrics: The 2026 Shift

Traditional tracking tools relying solely on Click-Through Rate (CTR) and organic sessions are functionally obsolete for AEO and GEO campaigns. Training in 2026 emphasizes measuring **Brand Prominence**, **Citation Frequency**, and **Share of Voice (SOV)** within AI-generated responses.



As illustrated above, reliance on traditional organic clicks has diminished significantly. Modern training programs emphasize establishing a **Citation Rate** baseline using specialized LLM-monitoring tools. To remain competitive, organizations must invest in continuous learning, ensuring their technical teams understand how to structure primary data for retrieval, while content teams focus on deep, conversational intent mapping.