

HOW AEO HAS IMPACTED THE BUYER JOURNEY

1. BUYERS EXPECT INSTANT, DIRECT ANSWERS

- In the SEO era, buyers would click through multiple search results, skim whitepapers, and compare vendor pages.
- With AEO, buyers ask one natural-language question ("Best ERP solution for mid-market manufacturers") and expect the answer engine to summarize, compare, and recommend on the spot.
- This reduces the number of vendor websites they visit — meaning you may lose visibility if you're not present in those AI-generated answers.

2. SHORTER DISCOVERY JOURNEYS

- Traditional SEO-driven journeys involved several steps: awareness (search), research (click multiple sites), and evaluation (download assets).
- With AEO, much of that journey is compressed into the answer engine itself. Buyers often get what they need — product comparisons, pricing ranges, even case studies — without leaving the AI tool.
- This means **first impressions now happen in the AI output, not on your website.**

3. SHIFT FROM KEYWORD SEARCHES TO NATURAL LANGUAGE QUESTIONS

- Old SEO: "ERP migration best practices PDF"
- AEO: "What are the best practices for ERP migration in 2025 for a manufacturing company?"
- Buyers are asking longer, conversational, context-specific queries. They want nuance, not just keyword matches.

4. INCREASED RELIANCE ON TRUSTED SOURCES & CITATIONS

- Buyers are starting to weigh answers based on which sources are cited in AI tools.
- Instead of Googling reviews, they'll trust what an AI tool pulls from Gartner, G2, or thought leadership content that your company has published.
- Being **referenced as an authoritative source** becomes more valuable than ranking #1 on Google.

5. VENDORS FACE A "ZERO-CLICK" REALITY

- In SEO, even if bounce rates were high, at least you got site visits.
- In AEO, buyers may never visit your site — they'll read the AI's answer and move on.
- This shifts the battleground: visibility now means being embedded in the AI's knowledge base, not just attracting clicks.

6. BUYERS ARE MOVING EARLIER TO EVALUATION MODE

- Buyers Are Moving Earlier to Evaluation Mode
- Because AEO delivers direct comparisons and recommendations, buyers are skipping over superficial research and jumping faster into evaluation.
- By the time they reach your sales team, they've often pre-decided based on what the AI tool surfaced.

BOTTOM LINE FOR TECH SERVICE PROVIDERS:

Buyer behavior is moving from “search and browse” to “ask and trust.” To win, you need your brand, products, and expertise to show up in those trusted AI-driven answers — otherwise, your competitors will own the narrative before you even know a buyer is in-market.

B2B BUYER JOURNEY: SEO VS AEO

SEO: Buyers go through multiple steps, clicking across vendor sites.



AEO: Buyers get condensed answers directly in AI tools, shortening the journey and skipping many vendor touchpoints.



WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT?

- **Have an analysis of your current site done** to see how optimized you are for AEO.
- **Redo your keyword strategy** to address content for longtail phrases and questions.
- **Build a robust and detailed FAQ section** on your website that answers the questions prospective customers have, not marketing content you want to give them.
- **Develop an LLM Marketing Strategy** – this will include unique thought leadership content combined with technical information derived from your proprietary knowledge base.
- **Apply an Website AI Agent to your website** that is populated with the FAQs and knowledge base. Drive traffic so people use the AI Agent which can be connected to ChatGPT, Gemini, etc. and improve your chances of these engines absorbing the queries done on your website.

NEW MARKETING COPILOT® MODEL

Customer Data	Prospect Data	Promotional Tool Kit	Lead Capture	Demand Generation	Customer Success
CRM, MA, ERP Data	Sales strategy, target accounts, buyer personas, distinct value proposition.	Social. email, webinars, events, blog/content, lead magnets, newsletter, website, search.	Exposing website and social visitors, LinkedIn influencer strategy, referrals, and human interactions.	Nurturing, tracking, follow-up, convert to a sales call.	Case studies, testimonials, review, social proof, win-wires, designations, one page positioning papers
Organize proprietary content in LLM/content library.	Apply Marketing Copilot® Growth Formula + AI Engine.	100+ AI Agents	AI Monitoring and Engagement	Proprietary Business Development Formula (or Sales Copilot Solution)	Product-specific content.

