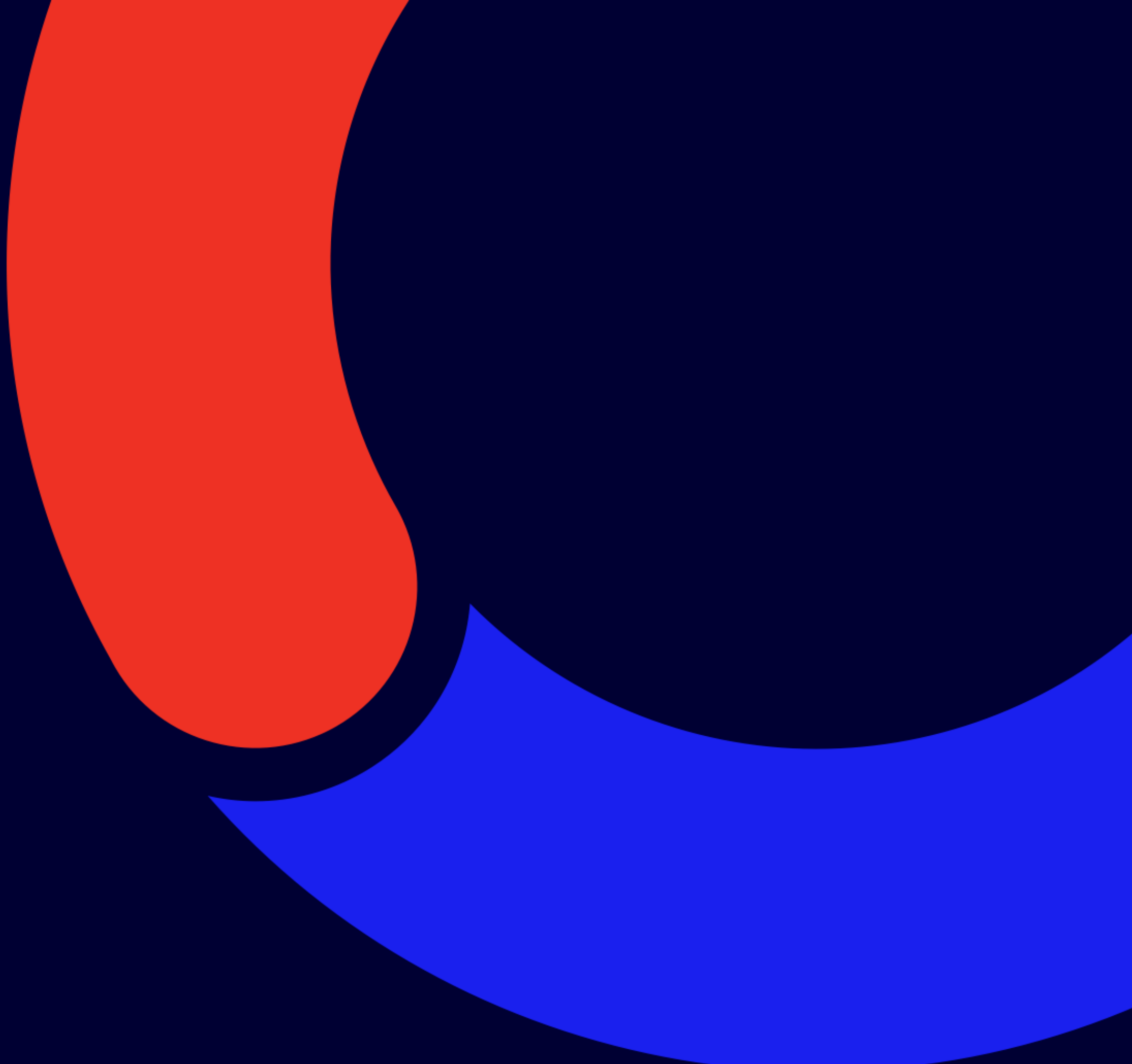




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Generative Engine Optimization

Elevating SEO as a New Brand Operating System

Updated: August 22nd, 2025



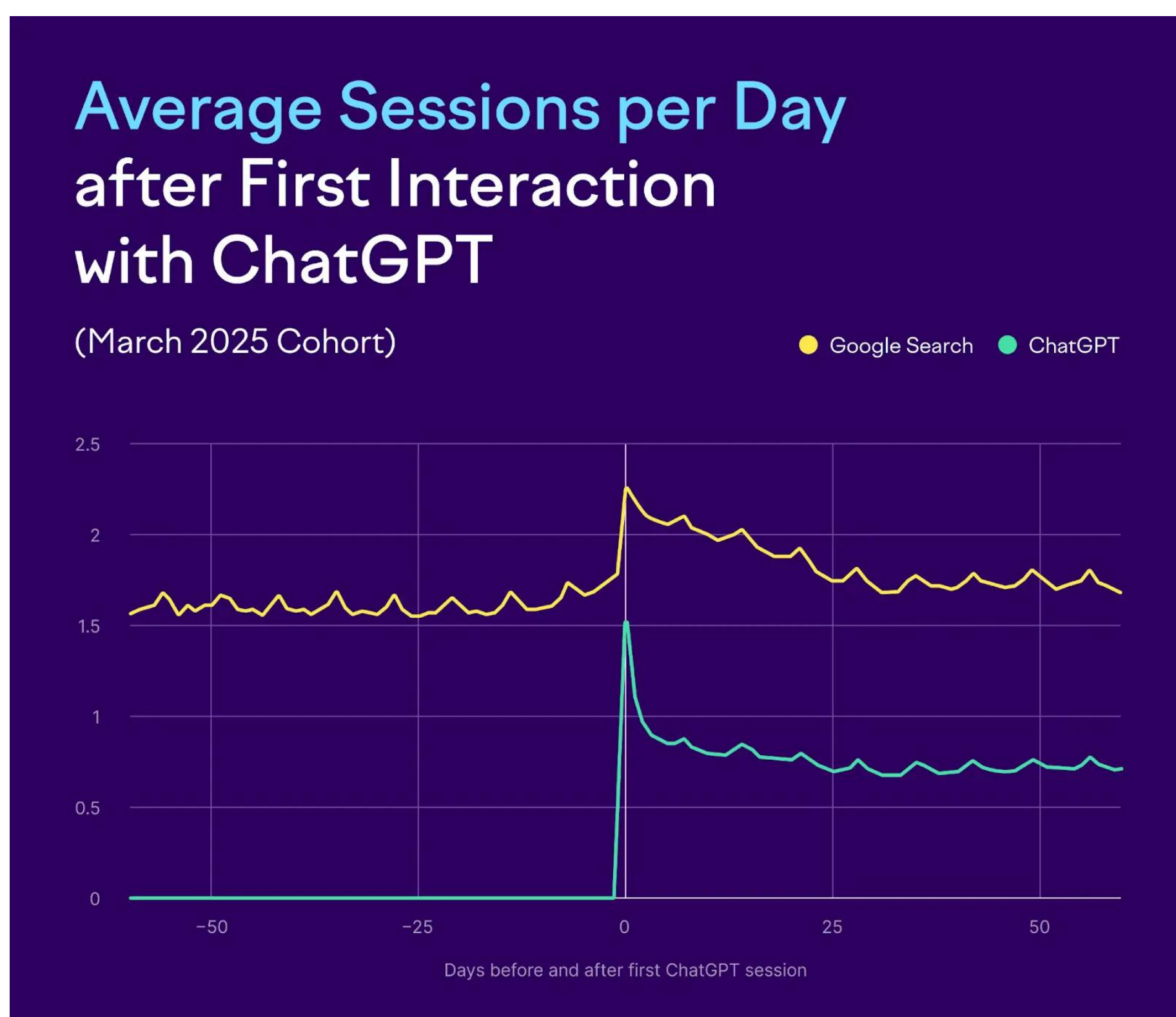
WE *Create* **WHAT'S NEXT**

What's Changing in Search Behavior

Through 2025, evidence has been building that LLMs are impacting search [behaviors and economics](#). Many platforms now include [some form of Gen AI Search](#) or AI apps such as [Amazon Rufus](#).

Google AI overviews appear in [35-50%](#) of searches depending on source and methodology, and proportions remain volatile as new [approaches are tested](#), and [new risks](#) identified. AI Overviews appear more than half of the time when the search starts with a [question or is over 10 words long](#), i.e., high-intent searches.

Behaviors are not just impacted by changes to the endemic Google search. The growth of ChatGPT to a claimed [800 million](#) users per month and [2.5 billion](#) prompts per day implies a significant and growing proportion of query demand.



According to a recent [Semrush study](#), ChatGPT prompts are primarily additive to Google search, not replacing it. Searches on Google increase slightly in the days following the first use of ChatGPT.

Shifts to AI-native sources and zero-click AI results lead to publishers reporting [declines](#) in traffic from [search sources](#). UK publishers cite [deep CTR falls](#) on pages that still rank, and SEO platforms report per-query [CTR losses approaching 50%](#) when Gen AI Search appears.

After 20 years of relative stability, the search landscape is changing, giving rise to a new term, [Generative Engine Optimization](#) (GEO). The topic of generative search is explored in the most recent [OMG Transformational Ideas: Volume 3](#) and in [OMG Future of Search](#).

Yet the fundamental principles that define success in AI-generated responses are very similar to those seen in traditional search, just with a [different weighting](#) and increased importance.

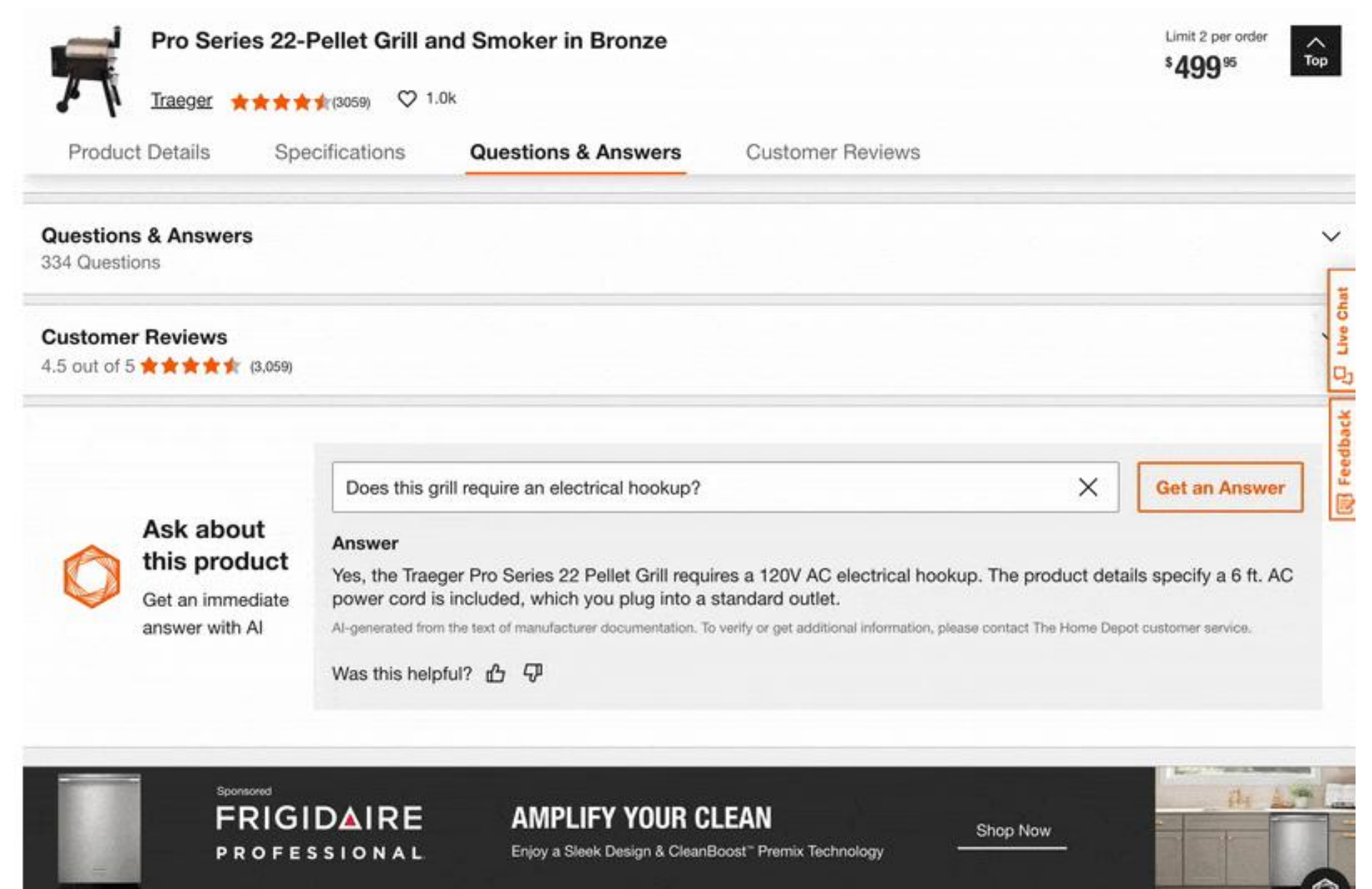
The Core Principles of Modern Search

Over the past two years, Google has [changed its core algorithm](#) through several major updates. The most recent of which [concluded in July 2025](#). It continues the long-term trend of rewarding [helpful and reliable](#) people-first content.

Google states that links in AI Overviews are chosen automatically from sources that best “support the information in the snapshot,” with [no special markup](#) beyond Search Essentials.

Brands will continue to deliver visibility by being a high-quality, well-structured source that answers the task. The primary change is that [structured data and product markup](#) shift from an SEO nice-to-have to a fundamental for AI discoverability.

Brands such as [Reddit](#) and [The Home Depot](#) have [seen greater visibility](#) in recent core updates due to high authority, community-driven platforms with well-structured, unique, and useful content.



Innovations such as The Home Depot's [Magic Apron](#) not only deliver curated recommendations to allow for an enhanced customer experience, but the [back-end systems](#) that power it work well with search tools to help generate meaningful answers.

On the flip side, content formats that used to drive traffic efficiently are bringing down search scores, and publishers are removing low-value [freelance](#) and [affiliate content](#) from their sites.

Another tactic is to hedge against zero-click outcomes by driving branded search. The academic and platform evidence is long-standing that [TV and video exposures do nudge branded queries](#). We need integration with upper-funnel activity to drive brand terms or need states that perform well in GEO.

When Google often answers the question before a click, creating desire to search for a brand by name will be a less risky option. When searches are more need-state-based, brands will be forced to compete within new frameworks.

The Rise of E-E-A-T

Back in 2022, Google updated its [search rater guidelines](#), adding ‘experience’ to the existing ‘[expertise, authority, and trust](#)’. E-E-A-T is just one of the influences [in search ranking systems](#), but it is proving to be an increasingly important set of criteria for being sourced by an AI.

If generative search technologies select supportive sources and snippets autonomously, then brands that deliver E-E-A-T everywhere have an edge in being cited.



Meaning that E-E-A-T is moving beyond an SEO checklist to become a [brand operating system](#) across all channels and platforms, so that all strategies, insights, and ideas are considered through [an E-E-A-T lens](#).

Starting with Experience. Focus on content and media that capture real use, demonstrations, and first-hand perspectives, all platforms, especially on YouTube. As search algorithms increasingly rely on YouTube citations, opportunities arise to leverage creator relationships in more structured ways.

Create a calendar of expert-led videos, side-by-side tests, and post-campaign case recaps that third parties can reference. Also, structure on-site Q&A hubs and FAQ schemas that clarify the next question. As AI Overviews increasingly anticipate follow-ups, each asset should explicitly answer ["the next three questions"](#).

To deliver ‘Expertise & Authoritativeness’ plan Digital PR and partnerships expressly for citations, e.g., university labs, industry associations, regulators, and peer-reviewed publishers. Content strategy shifts towards methodologically tight white papers, expert bylines in recognized journals or trade bodies, or .gov/.edu entities.

For ‘Trust’, apply brand safety to all content: clear bylines with credentials, ‘about’ pages, correction logs, review policies, and supplier disclosures. Be ready to correct misstatements and to seed accurate, high-trust material into the preferred sources. Treat these hygiene moves as part of core brand governance, not just SEO maintenance.

Tactics Beyond Activation

E-E-A-T is a proprietary Google framework, but every platform has analogous [quality, authenticity, and safety signals](#) that play a similar role in rankings and recommendations. The metrics from each platform can be aggregated and compared to diagnose systemic issues across them all, or tactical challenges in just a few.

Platform	“Experience” (first-hand/use)	“Expertise” (credentials/quality)	“Authoritativeness” (reputation)	“Trust” (safety & integrity)
Amazon	Review text, photos/videos, Q&A; recency & “Verified Purchase” weighting in star ratings.	Rich A+ Content modules; Premium A+ for video/interactive detail pages.	Brand Registry/Stores, badges (e.g., Amazon’s Choice/Best Seller), seller performance metrics.	Review Community Guidelines & anti-manipulation, Order Defect Rate <1% target, Brand Protection/Transparency.
TikTok	Watch time, replays, likes/comments, shares; video info (sounds, hashtags).	Creator Academy guidance; content “levels” to age-gate mature themes.	Account-level recs use graph/interest similarity; original content favored; eligibility surfaced in Analytics.	Community Guidelines; whole classes of content “ineligible” for For You (and appeal flow).
Instagram	Engagement on posts/Reels; search text relevance; original content emphasis.	Eligibility for recommendations requires following Recommendation Guidelines; in-app Account Status tells you if content is blocked from recs	Recommendation Guidelines reduce distribution of borderline/low-quality/political content by default.	Community Guidelines and system-wide AI-generated content labeling across Meta (2024) to improve transparency.
Reddit	Upvotes/downvotes, dwell, comments; “Best/Hot” sorts & Home recommendations personalized by ML.	Subreddit-specific rules + Moderator Code of Conduct shape what’s considered quality in each community.	Karma, account age, and community norms; Quarantines & policy enforcement constrain low-quality/unsafe spaces.	Multi-layer moderation + transparency on content moderation & appeals.
Tencent (WeChat)	Channels (视频号) distribution leans on social graph & engagement (likes, follows, friends). (	Official Account verification for businesses; richer features unlocked for verified brands.	Platform-level brand/ads standards; Weixin Search/Video Accounts are scaled, AI-supported ad surfaces.	Tencent acceptable-use policy prohibits deceptive/illegal content; China’s regulatory environment adds further compliance pressure.

Across each of them, the ability to deliver specific, tailored answers to user queries with structured data in areas such as FAQs, Product, Article, store locations, and opening times is a necessity.

Technical SEO has expanded beyond site speed and mobile-friendliness. The new technical stack involves rigorous implementation of structured data (Schema), with clear content hierarchies, ensuring information is easily passable by LLMs.

OMG has developed agents such as Dynamic Schema Markup Assist, which enables streamlined implementation of structured data with consistent markup. It is one of many solutions to automate and scale performance across a range of data domains, and not just the specialized high-value data that drives immediate sales.

Measurement in a landscape of experiences generated on the fly, for one-time use, is an emerging challenge. Benchmarks are needed for brand visibility, favorability, narrative, safety, and accuracy in a range of generative search environments.

GEO doesn’t replace SEO; it reframes it at the strategic center of communications, linking brand assets to real consumer intent. To become the preferred answer inside LLMs, strategy, search, social, creator, PR, and AI teams must operate as one. The payoff is new forms of value and differentiation, for people today, and for the agents that will soon act on their behalf.

OMG is highly [focused on this topic](#). Expect to see new research, thought leadership, and product innovation in the coming months.



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