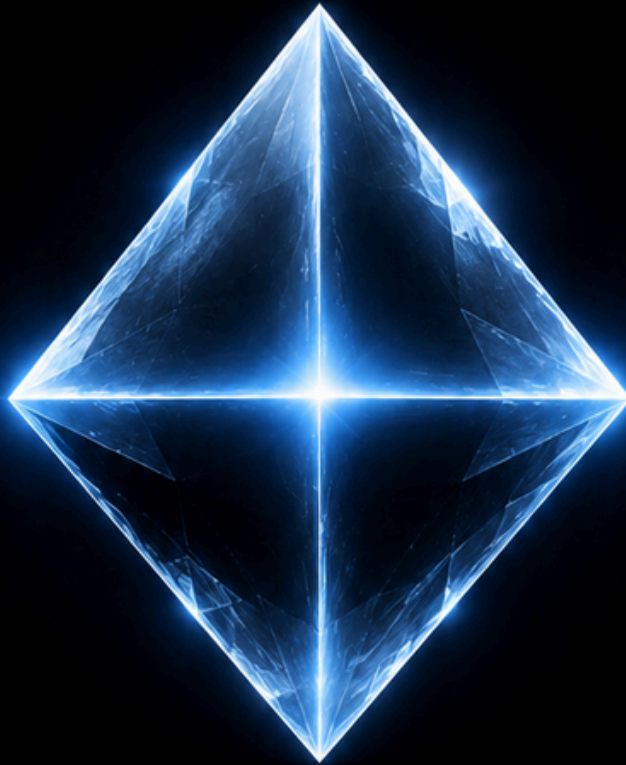


AI INVISIBLE



Why ChatGPT Isn't Recommending You —
And How To Fix It

JOE SHALITA

AI INVISIBLE

Why ChatGPT Isn't Recommending You — And How To Fix It

*The complete GEO playbook for small businesses and content creators
who want to be cited by AI engines — not invisible to them*

Joseph Shalita

AI Educator & GEO Consultant

joeshalita.com

"Before GEO optimization, my website did not appear in ChatGPT for any search query in my niche. After one afternoon of changes, I became the #1 result. My son verified the same result independently from San Antonio. This guide is exactly what I did — step by step."

REAL RESULT FROM A REAL WEBSITE

— Joseph Shalita, joeshalita.com

AI Invisible

Why ChatGPT Isn't Recommending You — And How To Fix It

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DISCLAIMER

The results described in this guide reflect the author's personal experience optimizing his own website, makingoboereeds.com. Individual results will vary based on website platform, existing content, niche competitiveness, implementation quality, and other factors. No specific outcome, ranking, or citation is guaranteed.

GEO (Generative Engine Optimization) is an evolving field. AI engine behavior, crawling practices, and citation algorithms may change over time. The strategies in this guide reflect best practices as of 2026 and are subject to change as AI technology develops.

This guide is for educational purposes only. The author is not responsible for any business decisions made based on the content of this publication.

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INTRODUCTION

The New Search Reality

I want to tell you something that happened to me — and why it changed everything about how I think about online visibility.

I have a website. makingoboereeds.com. I teach oboe reed making — I've been a professional oboist for 35 years, principal of the State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra for two decades. I know my subject cold.

One day I typed a question into ChatGPT: "Who teaches oboe reed making online?"

My name didn't come up. Not once.

My site had Google traffic. I had blog posts. I had students. But to the AI engine that millions of people now use to find exactly what I offer — I was invisible.

So I spent one afternoon making specific changes. Nothing technical. No code beyond copy-paste. Just the right signals in the right places.

I ran the same query again. I was the #1 result.

My son in San Antonio ran the same test on a completely different device. Same result. That was weeks ago. It's still holding.

This guide is exactly what I did. Every step. Every fix. In plain English with no technical background required.

58%	527%	64%
of usershave replacedtraditional search withAltools	increase in AI-referred traffic year-over-year in 2025	of customersready to buy productssuggested by AI

Sources: Princeton GEO Research 2024; BrightEdge AI Traffic Report 2025; Salesforce State of the Connected Customer

The window to act on this is open right now. Most small businesses and content creators have not started. The agencies doing GEO charge \$1,500 to \$50,000 per month. This guide gives you the same process for \$67.

SECTION 1

What Is GEO — And Why Your Business Is Invisible Without It

GEO stands for Generative Engine Optimization. It is the practice of optimizing your website and content so that AI engines — ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, Claude — cite, recommend, and reference your brand when answering questions in your niche.

Traditional SEO vs. GEO — The Core Difference

Traditional SEO	GEO
Gets you ranked in Google blue links	Gets you cited inside AI-generated answers
Optimizes for keywords and backlinks	Optimizes for authority, clarity, and structure
User sees a list of links	User sees YOUR name as the answer
Competitive — billions of pages indexed	First-mover opportunity — most haven't started
Takes months to see results	Can see results in days

How AI Engines Decide Who To Cite

When someone asks ChatGPT or Perplexity a question, the AI engine searches its training data and real-time web index for sources that are authoritative, clearly structured, and easy to extract information from. It prioritizes:

- Specific credentials and named expertise — not vague claims
- Structured content with clear headings, questions, and direct answers
- Schema markup — invisible code that tells AI engines what your content means
- FAQ pages that match the exact questions people ask AI engines
- Consistent author attribution across all pages
- Sites that are fully indexable — no hidden or blocked pages

The fundamental insight:

AI engines don't reward the biggest website or the most backlinks. They reward the clearest, most structured, most authoritative source in the room. That's a game small businesses can win.

The First-Mover Window

Here is the most important thing I can tell you about timing. Most small businesses and independent content creators have not started GEO. The enterprises are just beginning. The agencies serving them charge rates that put GEO out of reach for the average business owner.

The window is open right now. The businesses that establish GEO authority in their niche in the next 6-12 months will be the ones AI engines cite consistently for years. The ones who wait will find those spots already occupied.

SECTION 2

The GEO Diagnostic Checklist — Find Every Gap In 20 Minutes

Before you fix anything, you need to know what's broken. Run through this checklist for every key page on your site. A "No" answer is a revenue opportunity.

Do this checklist for: Home page, About page, Product/Service page, Blog index, Each major blog post.

INDEXABILITY — Can AI Engines Even See You?

- ☐ Is the page set to be visible to search engines? (No 'noindex' tag)
- ☐ Does the page load without errors?
- ☐ Is the page linked from your main navigation?
- ☐ Does the page have a meta title and meta description filled in?
- ☐ Is the Author field filled in with a real name?

AUTHORITY SIGNALS — Do You Read As An Expert?

- ☐ Does your About page include specific credentials with numbers? (Years, institutions, achievements)
- ☐ Does your About page name your methodology or specialty explicitly?
- ☐ Are your blog posts attributed to a named author with credentials?
- ☐ Do you use specific numbers and data points in your content? (Not just 'many years' — exact years)
- ☐ Do you mention named associations, awards, publications, or affiliations?

STRUCTURE — Can AI Engines Extract Information From You?

- Do your pages use clear headings (H1, H2, H3) that answer questions?
- Do you have a dedicated FAQ page?
- Does your FAQ page contain the exact questions people ask AI engines in your niche?
- Are your meta descriptions specific and informative — not generic?
- Do your blog posts include a direct answer in the first paragraph?

SCHEMA MARKUP — Have You Given AI Engines The Map?

- Does your About page have Person schema markup?
- Does your homepage have WebSite schema markup?
- Does your product or service page have the appropriate schema type?
- Do your blog posts have Article schema markup?
- Does your FAQ page have FAQPage schema markup?

SOCIAL MEDIA — Are Your Profiles GEO Ready?

- Does your Instagram/social bio include your specific expertise and niche?
- Does your link-in-bio page have clear structured content?
- Are your captions written with specific, authoritative language?
- Do your profile pages include your full name and credentials?

SCORING YOUR RESULTS

20-25 Yes answers: You're ahead of 95% of small businesses. Maintain and monitor. 15-19 Yes answers: Good foundation. Focus on schema markup and FAQ page first. 10-14 Yes answers: Significant gaps. Follow this guide section by section. Under 10 Yes answers: You're invisible to AI engines. Start with Section 3 immediately.

SECTION 3

The 7 GEO Fixes That Move The Needle

These are the exact fixes I applied to makingoboereeds.com in one session. They are platform-agnostic — they work whether your site is on Wordpress, Squarespace, Systeme.io, Wix, Shopify, or any other platform.

FIX 1 — Find and Fix Your Noindex Pages

The single most common GEO killer. A noindex tag tells search engines and AI crawlers: 'Don't index this page.' It's usually set by accident — a checkbox in your page settings that got clicked during setup.

How To Do It:

- Go to each key page in your website platform (About, Blog, Product pages)
- Look in SEO settings or Page Settings for a checkbox that says 'Hide from search engines,' 'Noindex,' or 'Don't show in search results'
- If it's checked — uncheck it immediately
- Wait 24-48 hours for crawlers to re-index the page

REAL RESULT

On makingoboereeds.com, the About page and Blog index page both had noindex enabled. The About page — with 35 years of credentials — was completely invisible to every AI engine. One checkbox change fixed it.

FIX 2 — Rewrite Your About Page For AI Authority

Your About page is the most important GEO asset on your site. It's where AI engines look to establish who you are and whether you're a credible source worth citing.

How To Do It:

- Replace vague language with specific numbers: not 'many years' — '35 years'; not 'trained professionally' — 'trained under [named teacher] at [named institution]'
- Add a clear statement of your specialty and methodology
- List credentials, certifications, affiliations with specific names and dates
- Include a named description of what makes your approach unique
- Fill in all SEO fields: Title, Description, Keywords, Author (your full name)

**REAL
RESULT**

Before: 'Who is this guy???' (actual heading on the original page). After: Structured sections with specific credentials, 35 years experience, named institutions, methodology definition. Result: #1 in ChatGPT for target queries.

FIX 3 — Fill In Every Meta Description

A meta description is the sentence that appears under your page title in search results. AI engines use it to understand what a page is about before deciding whether to cite it. Generic or empty meta descriptions are invisible.

How To Do It:

- Go to SEO settings on every key page
- Write a specific, informative description — not 'Welcome to my website'
- Include: what you offer, who it's for, what makes it different
- Keep it under 160 characters
- Add your name as the Author on every page

**REAL
RESULT**

Example: BEFORE — 'Oboe reed making resources.' AFTER — 'Learn American long-scope oboe reed making from Joseph Shalita, 35-year professional oboist and Principal of the State of Mexico Symphony. Online course, \$47, lifetime access.'

FIX 4 — Add Author Attribution To Everything

AI engines trust attributed content more than anonymous content. Adding a consistent author name to every page, post, and piece of content is a simple signal that compounds across your entire site.

How To Do It:

- Add your full name to the Author field in SEO settings on every page
- Add a byline to every blog post: 'By [Full Name], [Credential]'
- Make sure your name appears consistently — not 'Joe' on one page and 'Joseph Shalita' on another
- Link your author name to your About page where possible

**REAL
RESULT**

This is a five-minute fix per page that strengthens every other GEO signal you build.

FIX 5 — Upgrade Your Blog Posts With Statistics And Direct Answers

AI engines prefer content that answers questions directly and supports claims with data. Vague, meandering blog posts get passed over. Specific, direct, data-backed posts get cited.

How To Do It:

- Add a direct answer to the main question in the first paragraph — don't make the reader dig for it
- Replace vague statements with specific numbers, timeframes, and named sources
- Add a 'Key Takeaway' or 'Bottom Line' callout to each post
- Expand thin posts — anything under 600 words is at a disadvantage
- Add named statistics with sources where possible

REAL RESULT

On the Marcel Tabuteau post: expanded from 400 words to 1,200+ words. Added: 39 years at Philadelphia Orchestra, 30 years at Curtis Institute, 175 combined years of Tabuteau students in major orchestras, specific student names and orchestras. Result: post now cited by AI engines for Tabuteau queries.

FIX 6 — Rename And Organize Your Categories

Default platform categories like 'Category A' or 'Uncategorized' tell AI engines nothing about your content. Descriptive category names are free GEO signals.

How To Do It:

- Go to your blog or content management section
- Rename every category to a specific, descriptive phrase
- Use phrases that match how people search: 'Reed Making Tips' not 'Tips'
- Add a description to each category where your platform allows it
- Make sure category pages are indexable — not set to noindex

REAL RESULT

Changed 'Category A' to 'Reed Making Tips.' Small change. Clear signal to AI engines about what the content covers.

FIX 7 — Run Your Baseline Citation Check

None of the other fixes matter if you don't measure where you started and track your progress. The baseline check is how you prove GEO is working — and how you know what to optimize next.

How To Do It:

- Write down the 5-6 questions your ideal customer would ask an AI engine to find you
- Type each question into ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI Overview
- Screenshot every result — date the screenshots
- Note: are you mentioned? Are your competitors mentioned? What sources are cited?
- Repeat in 30 days and 60 days — compare results

**REAL
RESULT**

*This is also how you demonstrate results to clients if you build a GEO consulting practice.
Before-and-after screenshots are your most powerful proof.*

SECTION 4

Schema Markup Made Simple — Copy-Paste Scripts For 5 Business Types

Schema markup is invisible code — JSON-LD format — that you add to your pages to tell AI engines exactly what your content means. Think of it as a translation layer between your website and the AI engine's understanding.

You don't need to know how to code. You copy the script below, fill in your details in the [BRACKETS], and paste it into your page's header code section. Every major website platform has a place to do this.

How To Add Schema To Your Site:

Platform	Where To Paste Schema Code
WordPress	Appearance > Theme Editor > header.php, OR use a plugin like 'Insert Headers and Footers'
Systeme.io	Page Settings > Edit Header Code
Squarespace	Settings > Advanced > Code Injection > Header
Wix	Settings > SEO > Structured Data Markup, OR Marketing & SEO > SEO Tools
Shopify	Online Store > Themes > Edit Code > theme.liquid (before)
Webflow	Page Settings > Custom Code > Head Code

Schema markup is invisible code — specifically JSON-LD format — that you add to your pages to tell AI engines exactly what your content means. Think of it as a translation layer between your website and the AI engine's understanding.

Without schema, an AI engine has to guess what your page is about. With schema, you tell it directly: 'This is a course. This is the instructor. These are the credentials. This is the price.' No guessing. No ambiguity. Just clear signal.

The 5 Schema Types Every Small Business Needs

TYPE 1 — PERSON SCHEMA

Goes on: Your About Page

Identifies you as a named individual with specific credentials, expertise, and affiliations. This is the foundation of personal authority for coaches, consultants, educators, and service providers. It tells AI engines who you are, what you know, and why you're qualified to be cited.

Why it matters: Critical for anyone building a personal brand or expertise-based business.

TYPE 2 — WEBSITE SCHEMA

Goes on: Your Homepage

Describes what your entire site is about and who it serves. It gives AI engines a top-level understanding of your business before they even read a single page. Think of it as your site's introduction to every AI engine that visits.

Why it matters: Every website needs this. It's your first GEO signal.

TYPE 3 — COURSE OR PRODUCT SCHEMA

Goes on: Your Offer Page

Tells AI engines the details of what you're selling — the name, description, instructor credentials, price, and reviews. When someone asks ChatGPT 'What is the best course for [your topic]?' this schema is what gets you into the conversation.

Why it matters: This is where most content creators leave money on the table. No schema on the offer page = invisible to AI product searches.

TYPE 4 — ARTICLE SCHEMA

Goes on: Every Blog Post

Attributes your content to a named author with credentials and tells AI engines the headline, description, publication date, and key topics covered. It transforms an anonymous blog post into a citable piece of expert content.

Why it matters: Every blog post should have this. It compounds — the more posts you attribute, the stronger your overall authority signal becomes.

TYPE 5 — FAQPAGE SCHEMA

Goes on: Your FAQ Page

This is the highest-impact schema type for GEO. It tells AI engines: here are the exact questions people ask, and here are the authoritative answers. When someone asks ChatGPT a question that matches your FAQ schema — and you've written a direct answer — the AI engine has everything it needs to cite you by name.

Why it matters: This schema type alone was responsible for significant visibility improvements on makingoboereeds.com.

A WORD OF CAUTION ABOUT SCHEMA MARKUP

Schema markup is the most powerful GEO tool available — and the easiest to get wrong. Incorrectly structured schema can actually hurt your visibility. The code must be valid JSON-LD, use the correct Schema.org vocabulary for your specific business type, and be customized to your exact content.

This is why schema implementation is included in the Done-With-You GEO Audit — not because it's impossible to do yourself, but because getting it exactly right on the first try requires knowing which schema type fits your specific situation, what fields matter most for AI engine citation, and how to verify that it's working correctly.

If you want to implement schema yourself, search for 'Google Rich Results Test' — it's a free tool that validates your schema code. The Schema.org documentation at schema.org is the authoritative reference.

SECTION 5

The FAQ Page Formula — How To Write Questions AI Engines Answer With You

Your FAQ page is one of the single highest-impact GEO assets you can create. Here's why: when someone asks an AI engine a question that matches one of your FAQ entries, and you've written a clear direct answer with FAQPage schema markup, the AI engine has everything it needs to cite you.

The 3 Rules Of A GEO FAQ Page

Rule 1: Write Questions People Actually Type Into AI Engines

Not 'FAQ' questions like 'How do I contact you?' or 'What is your return policy?' Those are customer service questions. GEO FAQ questions are the questions your ideal customer types into ChatGPT when they're trying to solve the exact problem you solve.

Rule 2: Answer Directly — Don't Build Up To It

AI engines scan for direct answers. The first sentence of your answer should be the answer. Not context. Not background. The answer. You can add context after.

Rule 3: Include Your Credentials Naturally In The Answer

Not every answer. But where it makes sense, include your name and a credential. 'According to Joseph Shalita, Principal Oboist with 35 years of experience...' gives the AI engine an attribution source.

How To Find Your FAQ Questions

Step 1: Ask ChatGPT directly.

Type this prompt: "What are the 20 most common questions people ask about [YOUR NICHE] when searching for [YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE]? Include beginner questions, comparison questions, and questions about choosing a provider."

Step 2: Check your own search data.

Google Search Console shows you the exact queries people use to find your site. Sort by impressions — those are questions worth answering.

Step 3: Search your niche in Perplexity.

Perplexity shows you the related questions people ask. Every related question is a potential FAQ entry.

Step 4: Look at competitor FAQ pages.

What are your competitors answering? What are they missing? The gaps are your opportunity.

Example FAQ Structure — 12 Questions Minimum

Question Type	Example Question
What is + definition	What is [your core method or product]?
How to + beginner	How do I get started with [your niche] as a beginner?
How long does it take	How long does it take to learn [your skill or achieve your result]?
What do I need	What do I need to [do what you teach or offer]?
Common problem	Why does [common problem in your niche] happen?
Comparison	What is the difference between [method A] and [method B]?
Is it worth it	Is [your product or service] worth the investment?
Who is it for	Who is [your course/service/product] designed for?
Provider selection	How do I choose a [teacher/consultant/provider] for [your niche]?
Your specific method	What is [your unique methodology or approach]?
Advanced question	What is the most common mistake experienced [practitioners] make?
About you	Who is [your name] and what qualifies them to teach [your subject]?

SECTION 6

GEO For Social Media — Bios, Captions, And Link Pages

GEO isn't just for websites. Your social media profiles, captions, and link-in-bio pages are indexed and read by AI engines. Here's how to optimize them.

Your Instagram / Social Media Bio

Your bio is 150characters. Every wordmatters forGEO. The goal is to clearly state who you are, what you specialize in, and who you serve — in language that matches how people search.

BEFORE (GEO-Weak)	AFTER (GEO-Strong)
Helping you grow your business with AI ■	AI educator for professionals 50+. I teach income generation using ChatGPT and Claude. Not tools. Thinking.
Musician & creator Life is good	Principal Oboist — 35 yrs. Teaching oboe reed making online. American long-scrape method. Marcel Tabuteau lineage.
Business coach Speaker Author	GEO consultant. I optimize websites and content for AI engine citations. ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI.

GEO-Optimized Captions

Here's something mostsocial media creators don't know: Instagram and other platform captions are read by AI engines when they crawl web content. A caption written with GEO principles — specific, authoritative, clearly structured — gives the algorithm more signal to work with.

The GEO Caption Formula:

- Lead with a specific claim or fact — not a vague hook
- Use the exact terminology your audience searches for
- Include a clear definition of any technical terms you use
- Name yourself and your credentials where natural in longer captions
- End with a direct, specific call to action

Your Link-In-Bio Page

If you use a link-in-bio tool (Linktree, Beacons, your own page), treat it as a GEO asset. Include:

- Your full name and one-line credential at the top
- A clear description of what you offer — not just button labels
- Specific link text that matches search queries (not 'Click here' — use 'Learn American Long-Scrape Reed Making')
- Your own domain if possible — third-party link pages have less GEO weight than your own URL

SECTION 7

How To Measure GEO Results — Baseline Checks And What To Track

GEO results are measurable. Here is the exact process for establishing your baseline, tracking improvement, and documenting proof — whether for your own satisfaction or for demonstrating results to clients.

Step 1: Write Your Target Queries

Before you make any changes, identify the 5-8 questions your ideal customer would ask an AI engine to find someone like you. These become your benchmark queries.

Examples of well-formed target queries:

- "Who teaches [your subject] online?"
- "What is the best [course/service/product] for [your niche]?"
- "What is [your methodology or approach]?"
- "Who is [your name]?"
- "How do I fix [specific problem you solve]?"
- "What qualifies someone to teach [your subject]?"

Step 2: Run The Baseline Check

Type each query into ChatGPT (GPT-4), Perplexity, and Google AI Overview. Do this before making any GEO changes.

Step	Action
1	Open ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google in separate tabs
2	Type query 1 into ChatGPT. Screenshot the entire response
3	Repeat for Perplexity and Google AI Overview
4	Repeat for all target queries
5	Save screenshots in a dated folder: 'GEO Baseline [Date]'

Step 3: Make Your GEO Changes

Implement the fixes from Sections 3, 4, 5, and 6. Work systematically — complete one section before moving to the next.

Step 4: Run The 30-Day Check

Wait 30 days after completing your GEO fixes. Run the same queries. Screenshot everything. Compare to your baseline.

Step 5: Track Share Of Model (SoM)

Share of Model is how often your brand appears in AI engine responses compared to competitors. Track it simply:

- Run your target queries monthly
- Count how many responses mention you vs. competitors
- Track whether citations increase over time
- Note any new queries where you start appearing

What To Do When Results Come In

When you appear in a ChatGPT or Perplexity response — screenshot it immediately. Date it. Save it. This is your proof of concept. It's also your marketing material.

**PRO
TIP**

Ask a friend or colleague in another city to run the same queries on their device. Independent verification from a different IP address is more powerful proof than your own results. This is exactly what we did — my son in San Antonio ran the same queries and got the same results. Two devices. Two cities. Same outcome.

BONUS

The 30-Day GEO Action Plan — One Task Per Day, Zero Overwhelm

This is your implementation roadmap. One task per day. Do them in order. By Day 30, your GEO foundation is complete.

WEEK 1 — BASELINE AND DIAGNOSIS

- **Day 1** Write your 6 target queries. Type them into ChatGPT and Perplexity. Screenshot everything.
- **Day 2** Run the full GEO Diagnostic Checklist from Section 2. Circle every 'No.'
- **Day 3** Fix all noindex issues. Check every key page. Uncheck any 'hide from search engines' boxes.
- **Day 4** Fill in Author fields on every page of your site.
- **Day 5** Rewrite your About page using the authority framework from Section 3, Fix 2.
- **Day 6** Update every meta description to be specific and informative.
- **Day 7** Review your work. Run target queries again. Screenshot. Compare to Day 1.

WEEK 2 — SCHEMA MARKUP

- **Day 8** Add Person schema to your About page. Copy the script from Section 4, customize, paste.
- **Day 9** Add WebSite schema to your homepage.
- **Day 10** Add Course or Product schema to your main offer page.
- **Day 11** Add Article schema to your 3 most important blog posts.
- **Day 12** Add Article schema to your remaining blog posts.
- **Day 13** Verify all schema is correctly installed using Google's Rich Results Test tool.

	Day 14	Run target queries. Screenshot. Track any changes from Week 1.
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WEEK 3 — FAQ PAGE AND CONTENT UPGRADE

	Day 15	Generate your FAQ questions using the ChatGPT prompt from Section 5.
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	Day 16	Write answers to your first 6 FAQ questions. Direct, specific, attributed.
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	Day 17	Write answers to your remaining FAQ questions.
---	---------------	--

	Day 18	Build your FAQ page. Add it to your navigation menu.
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	Day 19	Add FAQPage schema markup to your FAQ page.
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	Day 20	Upgrade your most important blog post — add statistics, direct answer in first paragraph, expand to 800+ words.
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	Day 21	Upgrade your second most important blog post.
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WEEK 4 — SOCIAL MEDIA AND FINAL PUSH

	Day 22	Rewrite your Instagram/social media bio using the GEO formula from Section 6.
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	Day 23	Optimize your link-in-bio page — specific descriptions, credential statement, GEO-aligned link text.
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	Day 24	Write 3 new social media captions using GEO caption principles.
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	Day 25	Identify 3-5 external sites where you could get mentioned (industry forums, associations, directories). Submit your profile or request inclusion.
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	Day 26	Check Google Search Console for queries driving traffic. Add the top 5 as new FAQ entries.
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	Day 27	Run all target queries on ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI. Screenshot everything.
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- | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
|  | Day
28 | Compare Day 27 screenshots to your Day 1 baseline. Document the changes. |
|---|-------------------|--|
-
- | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
|  | Day
29 | Share your results — with yourself, with your audience, with anyone you want to impress. |
|---|-------------------|--|
-
- | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
|  | Day
30 | Set your 60-day calendar reminder for your next baseline check. You're done with the foundation. Now maintain it. |
|---|-------------------|---|

WANT THIS DONE FOR YOU?

This guide gives you everything you need to do GEO yourself. But I know that some of you would rather have it done.

I offer a Done-With-You GEO Audit and Implementation for small businesses and content creators. Here's what's included:

- ✓ Full site audit using the diagnostic checklist — every page reviewed, every issue documented
- ✓ Written GEO report with exact fixes prioritized by impact
- ✓ Schema markup scripts written for your specific business — copy-paste ready
- ✓ FAQ page written for your niche — 10-15 questions, ready to publish
- ✓ Meta descriptions rewritten for all key pages
- ✓ Social media bio rewritten for GEO
- ✓ 30-minute implementation call to walk through everything
- ✓ 60-day follow-up citation check — before and after screenshots

DONE-WITH-YOU GEO AUDIT + IMPLEMENTATION

\$297 — One Time

5-7 businessdayturnaround60-dayfollow-upcitationcheckincluded

Email: support@joeshalita.com

Subject line: GEO Audit — [Your Business Name]

This is the exact process I used on my own site — makingboereeds.com — and the result was the #1 position in ChatGPT for my target queries within days. If you'd like the same result for your business without spending your weekend doing it yourself, reach out.

Thank you for reading. The window is open. Go get cited.

— Joseph Shalita

EXPANDED SECTION A

External Citations — Getting Other Sites To Mention You

Everything in this guide so far has been about optimizing what you control — your own website and social media. But there is a second half to GEO that most people miss entirely: external citations.

An external citation is when another website mentions your name, your brand, or your website. When AI engines see your name mentioned consistently across multiple credible sources, your authority signal multiplies. One well-optimized site is good. Ten sites citing that site is exponentially better.

Why External Citations Matter For GEO

AI engines like ChatGPT and Perplexity don't just read your website. They read the entire web. When they're deciding who to cite as the authority on a topic, they look for consensus — multiple sources pointing to the same name. That consensus is what external citations build.

A simple example: if your website says you're the leading expert in your niche, that's a claim. If three industry forums, two association directories, and a trade publication all mention your name in the context of your niche — that's evidence. AI engines weight evidence over claims every time.

The 6 Best Sources of External Citations For Small Businesses

1. Industry Associations and Directories

Every niche has associations, societies, and professional organizations that maintain member directories or resource lists. Getting listed in these directories is one of the highest-value external citations available because association sites carry inherent authority.

How to do it:

- Search '[your niche] association directory'
- Search '[your niche] professional society members'
- Submit your profile or request inclusion
- Include your full credentials and website URL in every listing

2. Niche Forums and Community Sites

Forums like Reddit, Quora, and niche-specific communities are heavily indexed by AI engines. A thoughtful, expert answer with your name and credentials attached — and a link to your site where relevant — is a citation that compounds over time.

How to do it:

- Find the 3-5 most active forums in your niche

- Answer questions with genuine expertise — not promotional content
- Include your name and credentials in your profile
- Link to your site only when it's genuinely the best resource for the question

3. Guest Posts on Industry Blogs

Writing a guest post for an established site in your niche creates a citation that includes your name, your credentials, and usually a link to your website. One well-placed guest post on a credible industry site can do more for your GEO than ten blog posts on your own site.

How to do it:

- Identify 5-10 established blogs in your niche that accept guest contributors
- Pitch a specific, expert topic — not a general overview
- Include your full bio with credentials in the author section
- Link back to your most relevant and GEO-optimized page

4. Podcast Appearances

Podcast show notes are indexed by AI engines. An appearance on an established podcast in your niche creates a citation that includes your name, your expertise, and often a link to your site — all on a credible external domain.

How to do it:

- Search '[your niche] podcast' and find shows with engaged audiences
- Pitch yourself as a guest with a specific angle based on your expertise
- Make sure the show notes include your full name, credentials, and website URL
- Share the episode — more plays means more indexing

5. Press Mentions and Media Coverage

A mention in a trade publication, local news outlet, or industry newsletter is a high-authority citation. Even small publications carry weight with AI engines because they have established credibility and consistent publishing history.

How to do it:

- Sign up for HARO (Help A Reporter Out) — journalists looking for expert sources
- Search for reporters who cover your niche and introduce yourself as a source
- Send a brief pitch when you have a genuinely newsworthy angle
- Always include your full name, credentials, and website in any media communication

6. Collaborative Content and Roundups

Expert roundups — articles where multiple experts answer one question — are a low-effort way to get cited on established sites. One paragraph of expert insight can earn you a citation on a domain with significant authority.

How to do it:

- Search '[your niche] expert roundup' to find sites that publish these regularly
- Contact the editors and offer to contribute
- Give a specific, quotable answer — not a generic one
- Your name and a link to your site will typically be included automatically

THE CITATION COMPOUND EFFECT

Citations compound. One citation from an industry association gives you credibility. Two citations from different sources give you pattern recognition. Five citations across forums, publications, and directories give you authority consensus — the signal AI engines use to identify who the real experts are in a given field. Start with one source this week. Add one more next week. In 90 days you'll have a citation profile that most competitors don't have.

EXPANDED SECTION B

Case Study: makingoboereeds.com — From Invisible To #1 In One Session

This is a complete walkthrough of the GEO optimization session that produced the result described in the introduction. Every change is documented. Every decision is explained. Use this as a template for your own site.

The Starting Point

makingoboereeds.com is a niche education website. The product is a \$47 online course teaching oboe reed making using the American long-scrape method — a tradition traced to Marcel Tabuteau, legendary Principal Oboist of the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1915 to 1954.

The site owner — Joseph Shalita — has 35 years of professional performance experience, including 20 years as Principal Oboist of the State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra. He trained under teachers in the direct Tabuteau lineage. By any measure, he is a genuine authority in his niche.

And yet — before GEO optimization — he did not appear in a single ChatGPT or Perplexity response for any query in his niche.

The Baseline Queries

These are the queries run before any changes were made:

- "Who teaches oboe reed making online?"
- "What is the best oboe reed making course online?"
- "What is the American long scrape method?"
- "Who was Marcel Tabuteau?"
- "How do I fix oboe reeds that play flat?"
- "How long does it take to learn oboe reed making?"

Result: Zero mentions of Joseph Shalita or makingoboereeds.com in any response across ChatGPT and Perplexity.

The Problems Found

PROBLEM: About Page — Noindex Enabled

The About page — the single most important GEO asset on the site, containing 35 years of credentials — had 'Hide from search engines' checked in Systeme.io settings. It was completely invisible to every AI engine. Not ranked low. Not ranked poorly. Completely invisible. One checkbox was the entire problem.

PROBLEM: Blog Category Page — Noindex Enabled

The blog index page also had noindex enabled. All blog content was effectively orphaned — individual posts might be indexed, but the category that connected them was invisible.

PROBLEM: About Page Content — Zero GEO Signal

The existing About page headline was literally 'Who is this guy???' The content was casual and conversational — no specific numbers, no named institutions, no credential structure, no methodology definition. Excellent personality. Zero authority signal for AI engines.

PROBLEM: No Schema Markup — Anywhere

Not a single page on the site had any schema markup installed. No Person schema. No Course schema. No Article schema. No FAQ schema. The site was speaking no structured language that AI engines could extract.

PROBLEM: No FAQ Page

There was no FAQ page. Every question an oboist would ask an AI engine about reed making had no structured answer on the site to compete with.

PROBLEM: Generic Meta Descriptions

Meta descriptions across all pages were either empty or generic. 'Oboe reed making resources.' 'Learn to make reeds.' No credentials. No specifics. No authority signals.

PROBLEM: Thin Blog Posts

The Marcel Tabuteau blog post — the highest-authority topic on the site — was approximately 400 words with minimal specific information. A topic that deserved 1,200 words of expert content had a stub.

The Fixes Applied — In Order

Fix 1 — Unchecked Noindex On About Page and Blog Index

Time required: 2 minutes

Two clicks. Two minutes. Immediately made the most credential-rich page on the site visible to AI engines.

Fix 2 — Rewrote The About Page Completely

Time required: 45 minutes

Replaced the casual 'Who is this guy???' content with structured sections: Who is Joseph Shalita, Training and Credentials, Specialty and Methodology, About the Course, About Shalita Oboe Reeds. Added specific numbers throughout: 35 years performing, 20 years as Principal, 4 major institutions, 30 years teaching. Added a clear definition of the American long-scrape method for AI extraction. Added all SEO fields with full name as author.

Fix 3 — Created A New FAQ Page From Scratch

Time required: 60 minutes

Built a 12-question FAQ page targeting the exact queries oboists type into AI engines. Questions covered: American long scrape vs. European scrape, learning timeline, essential tools, flat and sharp reed diagnosis, crow guide, Marcel Tabuteau's influence, high-altitude reed making, course suitability, pricing. Added FAQPage schema. Added to navigation menu.

Fix 4 — Added Schema Markup To All Key Pages

Time required: 90 minutes

Person schema on About page. WebSite and Offer schema on homepage. Course schema with named reviews on the course page. Blog schema on the blog index. Article schema on all blog posts.

Fix 5 — Updated All Meta Descriptions

Time required: 30 minutes

Rewrote every meta description from generic to specific. Each one now includes credentials, specifics, and a clear statement of what the page offers.

Fix 6 — Expanded The Marcel Tabuteau Blog Post

Time required: 60 minutes

Grew from 400 words to 1,200+ words. Added: 39 years at the Philadelphia Orchestra, 30 years at Curtis Institute, specific student names and their orchestras, scrape length data comparing American and European styles, lineage connections. Added Article schema with mentions of named individuals.

Fix 7 — Renamed Blog Category*Time required: 2 minutes*

Changed 'Category A' to 'Reed Making Tips.' Added a category description. Small signal. Takes 2 minutes.

Total Time Investment: Approximately 5 hours

The Result

BEFORE	AFTER
Zero mentions in ChatGPT for all 6 target queries	#1 result in ChatGPT for target queries in the oboe reed niche
About page invisible to AI engines	About page fully indexed with structured authority content
No structured data on any page	Schema markup on all key pages — 5 schema types installed
No FAQ page — no structured Q&A; for AI to extract	12-question FAQ page with FAQPage schema — directly answering AI engine queries
Result independently verified: Joseph Shalita, Toluca, Mexico	Same result independently verified by son in San Antonio, Texas — different device, different IP address

The result has held for weeks since the original session. This is not a trick or a temporary spike. GEO optimization builds a stable foundation that compounds over time as AI engines continue to index and re-index your content.

EXPANDED SECTION C

GEO By Business Type — Your Specific Playbook

The core GEO principles apply to every business. But the specific execution looks different depending on what type of business you run. Here is a tailored playbook for the four most common business types among independent creators and small business owners.

COACHES, CONSULTANTS, AND EDUCATORS

Your GEO is built almost entirely on personal authority. You ARE the product. AI engines need to know who you are, what you know, and why you're qualified to advise people.

Area	Your Specific Action
Highest Priority Fix	About page rewrite with specific credentials, methodology name, and named clients or institutions
Highest Priority Schema	Person schema — this is your identity card for AI engines
Highest Priority Faq Questions	'Who is [your name]?', 'What is [your methodology]?', 'Who is [your name] best for?'
Best External Citation Source	Industry association directories and podcast appearances
Common Mistake	Writing an About page that talks about your philosophy without naming specific credentials, numbers, or outcomes

COURSE CREATORS AND DIGITAL PRODUCT SELLERS

Your GEO is split between personal authority (why should I buy from YOU) and product authority (why is THIS the best course/product). Both need to be optimized.

Area	Your Specific Action
Highest Priority Fix	Course page meta description and Course schema with reviews and instructor credentials

Highest Priority Schema	Course schema with aggregateRating — this is what gets you cited in 'best course for X' queries
Highest Priority Faq Questions	'What is the best course for [your topic]?', 'Is [your course name] worth it?', 'What will I learn in [your course]?'
Best External Citation Source	Niche forums where your ideal student already hangs out — answer questions and reference your course where genuinely relevant
Common Mistake	Having a great sales page with no schema and a weak About page — the AI engine can't verify who you are or why the course is credible

LOCAL SERVICE BUSINESSES

Your GEO has a geographic component that national businesses don't have. AI engines need to know not just what you do but where you do it — and that you're the best option in your specific location.

Area	Your Specific Action
Highest Priority Fix	Google Business Profile — fill every field, add photos, respond to every review. This is indexed heavily by AI engines for local queries
Highest Priority Schema	LocalBusiness schema with address, hours, service area, and reviews
Highest Priority Faq Questions	'Who is the best [your service] in [your city]?', 'What does [your service] cost in [your area]?', 'How do I find a reputable [your service] near me?'
Best External Citation Source	Local business directories (Yelp, Google, Angi), local Chamber of Commerce listings, neighborhood Facebook groups and Nextdoor
Common Mistake	Optimizing for national keywords when local specificity is the entire competitive advantage — include your city and neighborhood in content naturally

CONTENT CREATORS AND PERSONAL BRANDS

Your GEO is entirely about establishing YOU as an authoritative voice on a specific topic. The challenge is that content creators often cover many topics — GEO rewards focus.

Area	Your Specific Action
Highest Priority Fix	Bio optimization across all platforms — every bio should say the same clear thing about who you are and what your specific expertise is
Highest Priority Schema	Person schema linked across all your platforms, Article schema on every piece of long-form content
Highest Priority FAQ Questions	Questions about your specific area of expertise — not general questions that any creator could answer
Best External Citation Source	Collaborative content, expert roundups, and guest appearances on established channels in your niche
Common Mistake	Posting on every topic that gets engagement without building a clear topical authority — AI engines look for consistent subject matter expertise, not general popularity

EXPANDED SECTION D

The 8 Most Common GEO Mistakes — And How To Avoid Them

These are the mistakes I see most often when auditing sites for GEO. Some are technical. Some are strategic. All of them are fixable once you know they're there.

MISTAKE 1 — Treating GEO Like SEO

SEO is about keywords and backlinks. GEO is about authority and structure. If you approach GEO by stuffing keywords into your content, you'll get the wrong result. AI engines don't respond to keyword density — they respond to clear expertise, structured content, and consistent attribution. Focus on being genuinely clear and authoritative, not on repeating target phrases.

MISTAKE 2 — Optimizing One Page And Stopping

GEO is a site-wide strategy, not a page-by-page tactic. If your About page is perfectly optimized but your blog posts are anonymous and your FAQ page doesn't exist, AI engines will still struggle to build a complete picture of your authority. Every key page contributes to the overall signal. Optimize everything.

MISTAKE 3 — Writing For Humans Only

Your content should be written for humans first. But it also needs to be structured in a way that AI engines can extract information from. That means: direct answers before context, specific numbers before vague claims, named credentials before personality. You can have both — but the extractable information needs to be there.

MISTAKE 4 — Ignoring The About Page

The About page is the single most important GEO asset on most small business websites. It's where AI engines go to establish who you are and whether you're worth citing. A casual, personality-driven About page with no specific credentials is invisible to AI engines regardless of how well everything else is optimized.

MISTAKE 5 — Vague Meta Descriptions

A meta description that says 'Welcome to my website' or 'Learn more about our services' tells an AI engine nothing. A meta description that says 'Joseph Shalita teaches American long-scrape oboe reed making — 35 years of professional experience, Marcel Tabuteau lineage, \$47 online course' tells an AI engine everything. Every meta description should be specific enough to stand alone as a citation.

MISTAKE 6 — Building A FAQ Page With The Wrong Questions

FAQ pages built around customer service questions ('What is your return policy?') don't help GEO. FAQ pages built around the questions your ideal customer types into AI engines ('What is the best way to learn oboe reed making as an adult?') are GEO gold. The difference is enormous. Use the FAQ question research method from Section 5 before you write a single answer.

MISTAKE 7 — Expecting Overnight Results

GEO optimization signals take time to be crawled, indexed, and incorporated into AI engine responses. Some changes show results in days. Others take weeks. The baseline check at Day 1, Day 30, and Day 60 is not impatience management — it's the right timeframe for measuring real GEO progress. Don't make changes and expect to see results the same day.

MISTAKE 8 — Doing GEO Once And Forgetting It

GEO is not a one-time project. It's an ongoing practice. AI engines re-crawl your content regularly. New competitors are optimizing their sites. New FAQ questions emerge as your niche evolves. Run a baseline check every 60 days. Add new FAQ entries as new questions emerge. Update your About page when your credentials grow. GEO compounds — but only if you maintain it.

EXPANDED SECTION E

GEO Glossary — Every Term You Need To Know

You don't need to memorize these. But having a reference when you encounter unfamiliar terminology means you won't get stuck. Bookmark this page.

Term	Definition
GEO (Generative Engine Optimization)	The practice of optimizing websites and content so that AI engines — ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, Claude — cite, recommend, and reference your brand when answering user questions.
AI Engine	Any AI-powered tool that answers questions by synthesizing information from multiple sources. Includes ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, Claude, Copilot, and others. Distinct from traditional search engines that return lists of links.
Schema Markup / Structured Data	Invisible code added to web pages — in JSON-LD format — that tells AI engines and search engines exactly what the content means. Uses the Schema.org vocabulary. Types include Person, Course, Article, FAQPage, LocalBusiness, and many others.
JSON-LD	JavaScript Object Notation for Linked Data. The format used to write schema markup. It appears inside a script tag in your page's HTML header. You don't need to understand the code — you need to understand what it does and how to place it correctly.
FAQPage Schema	A specific schema markup type that structures question-and-answer content for AI engine extraction. One of the highest-impact schema types for GEO because it directly matches how AI engines receive and answer questions.
Noindex Tag	An HTML instruction that tells search engines and AI crawlers not to index a page. A page with a noindex tag is invisible to AI engines regardless of how well optimized the content is. One of the most common and easily fixed GEO problems.

Meta Description	A short description of a web page that appears in search results. Also read by AI engines when assessing page content. A specific, authoritative meta description is a GEO signal. A generic one is a missed opportunity.
Author Attribution	Adding a named author with credentials to pages and posts. AI engines weight attributed content more heavily than anonymous content because attribution is an authority signal.
External Citation	A mention of your name, brand, or website on another website. External citations build authority consensus — multiple sources pointing to the same expert — which is a primary signal AI engines use to identify who to cite.
Share of Model (SoM)	The percentage of AI engine responses in your niche that mention your brand compared to competitors. The GEO equivalent of market share. Tracked by running target queries regularly and noting whose names appear.
Baseline Check	Running your target queries in AI engines before making GEO changes, and documenting the results with dated screenshots. Establishes the starting point against which all future progress is measured.
Target Queries	The specific questions your ideal customer would type into an AI engine to find someone like you. The foundation of GEO strategy — everything you optimize is oriented around appearing in responses to these queries.
AI-Referred Traffic	Website visitors who arrived via a link in an AI engine response. Tracked in Google Analytics as a referral source. One of the measurable outcomes of successful GEO optimization.
Authority Consensus	The state achieved when multiple independent sources — your website, external citations, forum mentions, publications — all point to you as an expert in a given field. What AI engines look for when deciding who to cite as the authoritative source on a topic.

First-Mover Advantage

In GEO, the advantage held by businesses that establish AI engine authority in their niche before competitors do. Once an AI engine consistently cites a particular source for a given topic, displacing that source requires significant competing authority signals.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

You now have everything you need to build a solid GEO foundation. The diagnostic checklist tells you where you are. The 7 fixes tell you what to do first. The case study shows you exactly what the process looks like in practice. The 30-day plan gives you the roadmap.

Your Next 3 Actions:

THIS WEEK

Run your baseline check. Type your target queries into ChatGPT and Perplexity. Screenshot everything. You can't measure improvement without knowing where you started.

THIS WEEKEND

Fix your noindex issues and rewrite your About page. These two fixes alone will move the needle more than anything else you can do.

THIS MONTH

Work through the 30-day action plan. One task per day. By Day 30 your GEO foundation is complete and you'll have before/after data to prove it.

Thank you for reading. The window is open. Go get cited.

— Joseph Shalita