

**SEO. AI. Search.
What's Important?**

THINGS ARE CHANGING... QUICKLY...

2008

- 50% cellphone adaption.
- Facebook was primarily for college students.
- Blockbuster had 7,000 stores.
- To know what's happening, you read the paper or watched the news.
- You found new companies in the phonebook.

TOTAL RETAIL SALES

\$4.00 trillion

E-COMMERCE RETAIL SALES

\$131 billion (≈ 3.2 %)

2019

- 90% cellphone adoption
- Google and FB the largest companies
- Streaming en route to pass tv
- Retail landscape is shifting e-commerce more accepted

Technology changes happen fast. 3% - 10%



TOTAL RETAIL SALES
\$ ~ US \$5.411 trillion.
14% growth

E-COMMERCE RETAIL SALES
\$~ US \$578.5 billion
(≈ 10.7% of total retail).
77% increase since 2005

2025

Hybrid Digital/Physical Retail Era

- **81%** of retail shoppers research online before purchasing
- **60%** of people start shopping online
- **74%** of in-store surveys show they researched before visiting the store.



FORECAST TOTAL RETAIL SALES

~ US \$5.42-5.48 trillion for the year.

E-COMMERCE RETAIL SALES (PROJECTION)

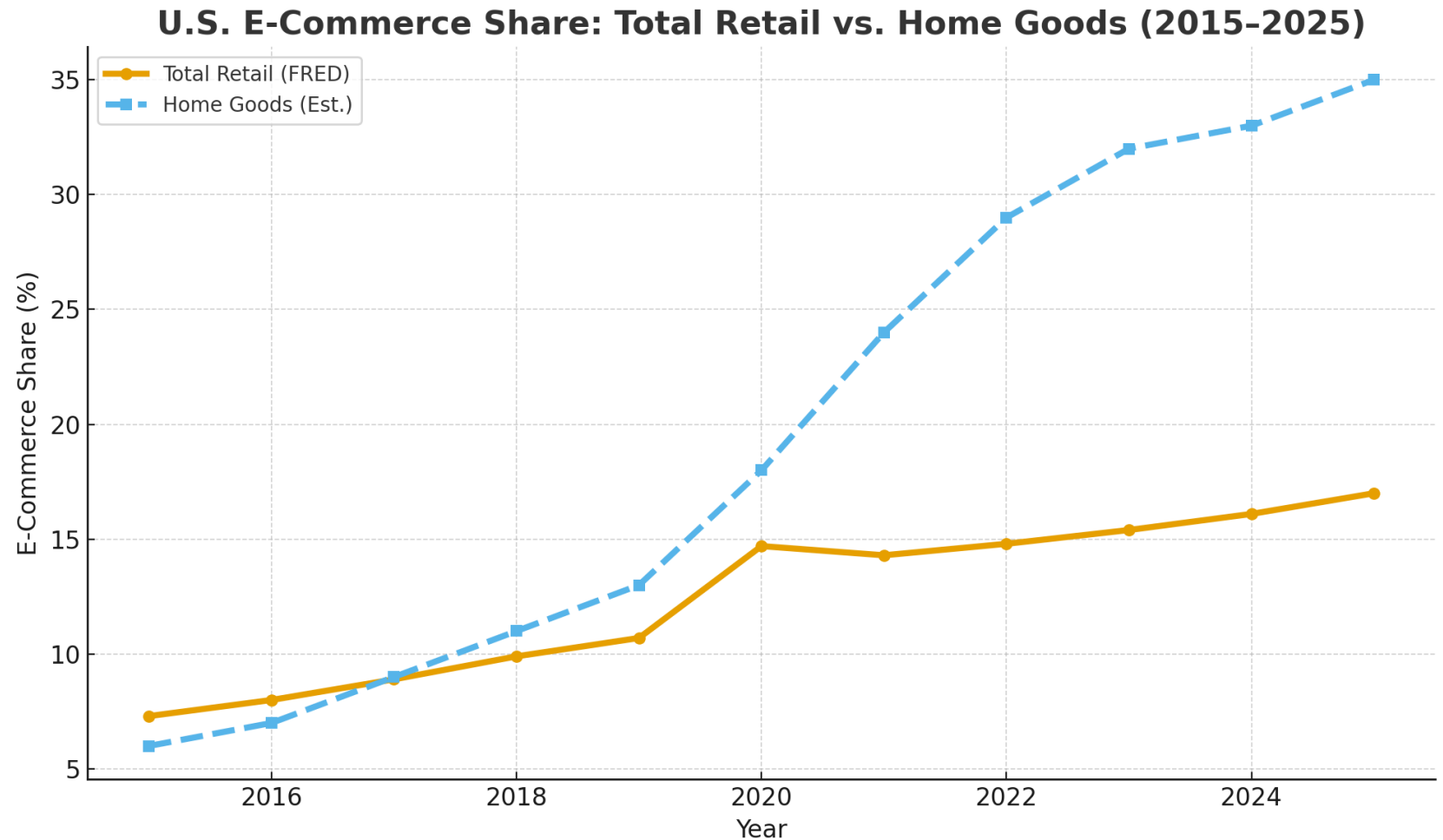
**~ US \$1.47 trillion
(≈ ~27%).**

In 08 if you wanted to buy a washer you got in a car and drove to the store.

It doesn't work that way anymore. 2020 Accelerated that.

Everything about how we **discover, decide, and buy** has changed.

Old journey: get in the car and go to the store. **New journey:** start online, ask a question, see an AI answer, and often decide before a click. **The buyer path is front-loaded with digital discovery.**



Transitional phase between what used to exist and what will be.

- The way we discover has changed. A change that hasn't happen in ~15 years
- Consumer behavior is changing rapidly. The way they buy, How they buy. **Where** they buy. Why they buy.
- Our tech overlords are rapidly spending on AI (400b in 25, 500b in 26). This will be forcefully integrated into a consumer's life.
- We're also choosing to integrate AI

Cultural + Tech Shift

- AI, voice assistants, and real-time personalization are embedding in commerce and media.
- Short-form video, live commerce, AR/VR shopping experiences are common and being rewarded.
- Streaming, social commerce, and subscription services dominate how people consume media and shop.
- Physical stores still exist but many have been transformed into experience, showroom, logistic hubs.

Discovery

Discovery has moved online –
and increasingly, inside AI.

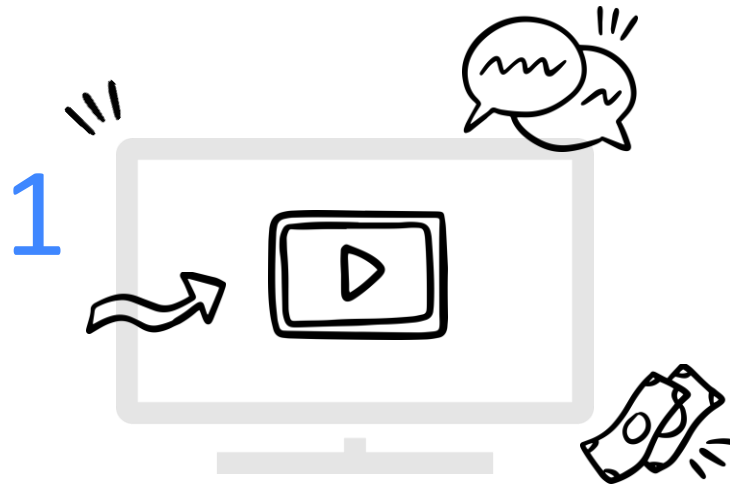
Each of these are different but they
all get to the key principals of:
how do people find me.

SEO, GEO, Local SEO,
Maps Optimization,
AI-Search, Zero-Click
Search

The Rules of the Game

3 fundamental rules that tech operates under.

#1 – Attention = Revenue



Keep Users On Platform

Attention equals revenue. The longer users stay, the more ads are served.

Over **80%** of Google's revenue, **97%** of Facebook's, and over **70%** of YouTube's come directly from ads.

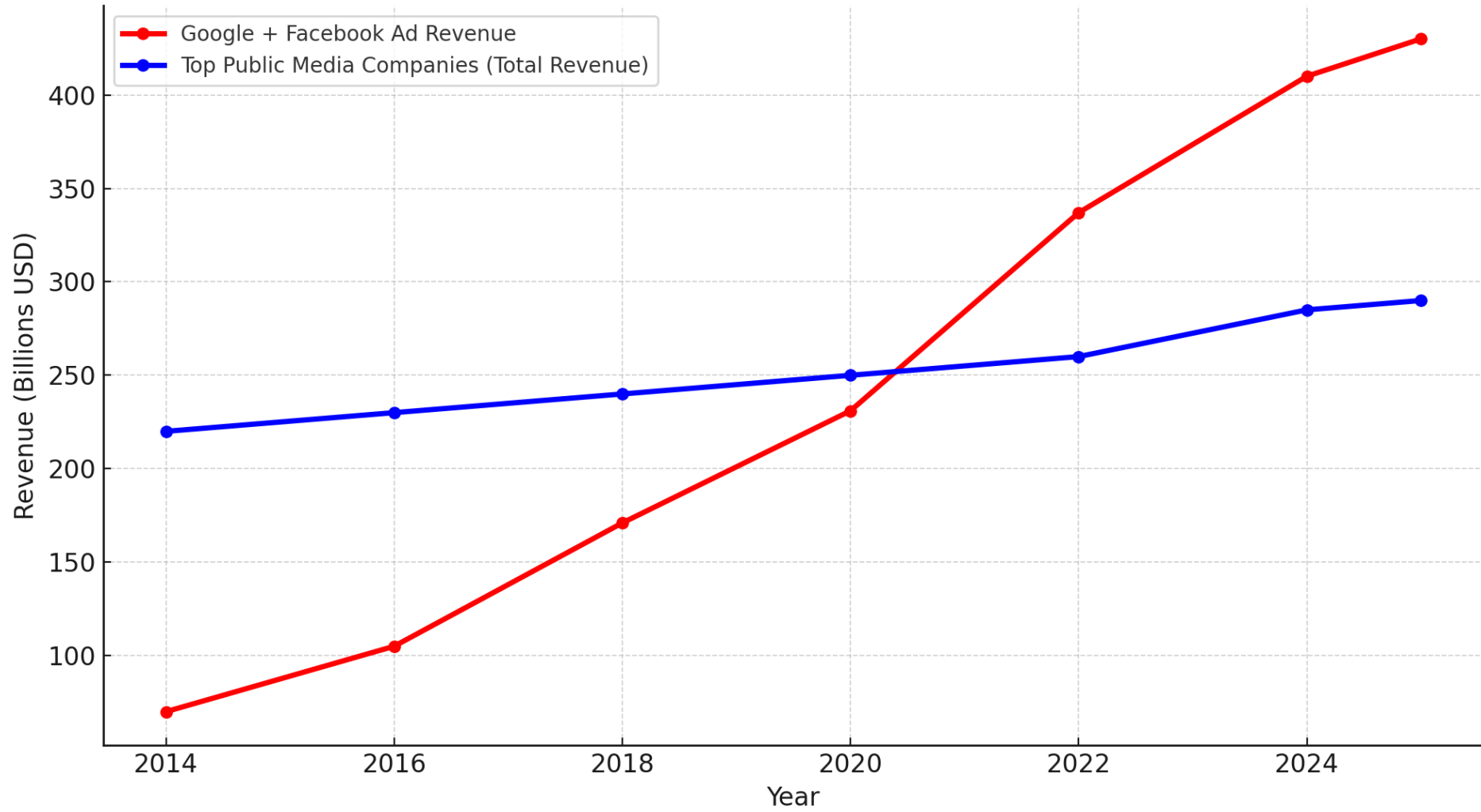
“

Our true currency wasn't views or clicks—it was watch time. YouTube needed a new core metric. Watch Time, and Only Watch Time.

- Youtube CEO

”

Ad Revenue: Google + Facebook vs Top Public Media Companies (2014-2025)



#1 – ATTENTION = REVENUE

Real Life 2025

- Zero-click searches (where the user does not click through to a non-Google site) are increasingly common:
~58.5% of Google searches ended without a click.
- LLM's (ChatGPT): 34% of adults use LLMs which results in no direct website traffic.
- **Average organic traffic loss across ALL industries: 15–25%.**

Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org › wiki › Aerial_Phomena_Re...
Aerial Phenomena Research Organization

The Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (APRO) was a **UFO research group** started in January 1952 by Jim and Coral Lorenzen, of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin.



AI Overview

WBA +5

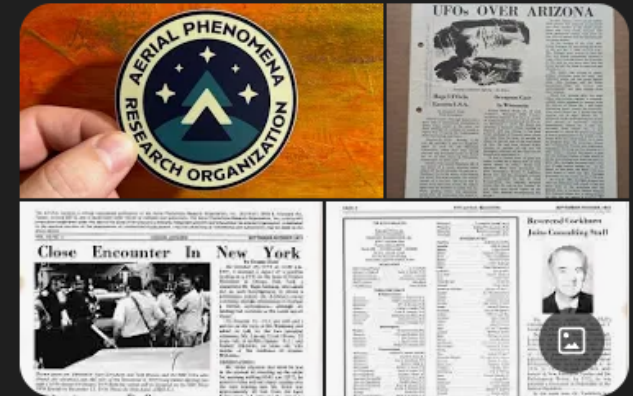
The acronym APRO can refer to several different organizations, most notably the **Association of Progressive Rental Organizations, a trade association for the rent-to-own industry, and the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization, a historical UFO research group**. Another possibility is the Arab Public Relations Organisation, which serves the public relations sector in the Arab world. Context is necessary to determine which APRO is being referenced.

Common meanings of APRO

- **Association of Progressive Rental Organizations:** A U.S. trade association that advocates for and supports the rent-to-own (RTO) industry.
- **Aerial Phenomena Research Organization:** A historical UFO research group

Show more ▾

Aerial Phenomena Research Organization



The Aerial Phenomena Research Organization was a UFO research group started in January 1952 by Jim and Coral Lorenzen, of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. The group was based in Tucson, Arizona after 1960. APRO had many state branches, remaining active until late 1988.

Source: Wikipedia

Founded: 1952

what is the apro organization

There are at least two organizations commonly referred to by the acronym **APRO**. I'll describe both so you can check which one you meant:

1. Association of Progressive Rental Organizations (APRO)



What it is: This is a U.S.-based trade association representing the rent-to-own (RTO) industry. [rtohq.org +2](#)

Founded: 1980. [rtohq.org +2](#)

Mission / role: According to its website, APRO's mission is "to promote the success of the rent-to-own industry" and its vision is "the rising tide that elevates the rent-to-own industry through advocacy and education to better serve our customers." [rtohq.org](#)

Activities:

- Acts as the trade voice for RTO businesses — dealing with legislation, regulations, advocacy. [officialmediaguide.com +1](#)
- Provides resources, networking, industry insights to its members. [rtohq.org](#)

Relevance: If you are working in or with the rent-to-own sector (equipment, furniture, electronics rental-purchase businesses) this APRO is likely the one.

#1 – ATTENTION = REVENUE

As they push to keep users on platform the 2025 impacts:

- 60% of all queries no longer result in a click
- When AI Overviews appear on google, the median zero-click rate can rise to ~80%.
- We went from 0% of traffic lost to 60% of traffic lost in 20 months for many verticals.

● This article is more than 3 months old

AI summaries cause 'devastating' drop in audiences, online news media told

Exclusive: Study claims sites previously ranked first can lose 79% of traffic if results appear below Google Overview

INNOVATION > AI

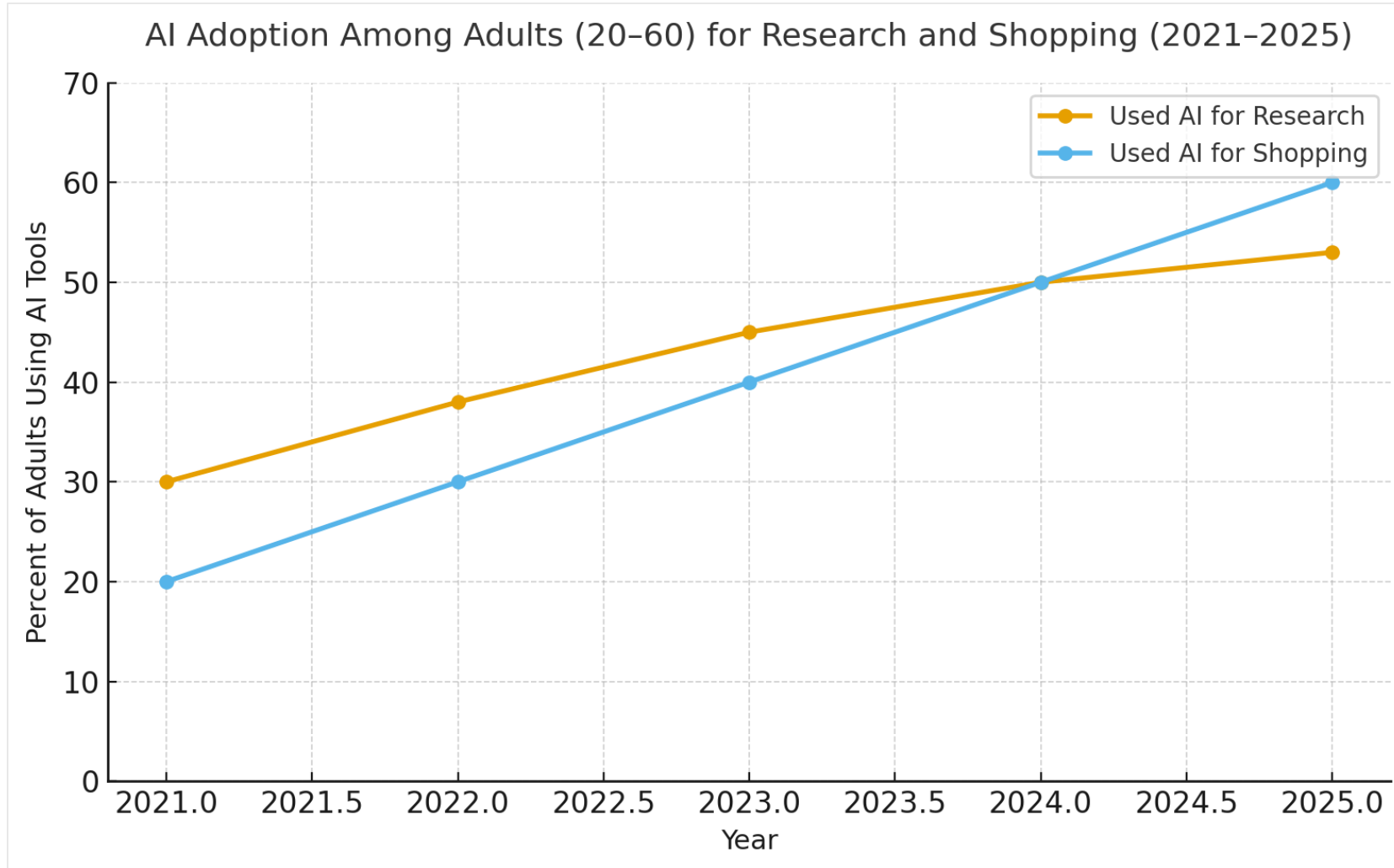
The 60% Problem — How AI Search Is Draining Your Traffic

By [Tor Constantino, MBA](#), Contributor. © Tor Constantino is an ex-reporter, tur... ▾

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Published Apr 14, 2025, 10:46am EDT, Updated Apr 14, 2025, 11:02am EDT

AI Adult Shopping usage



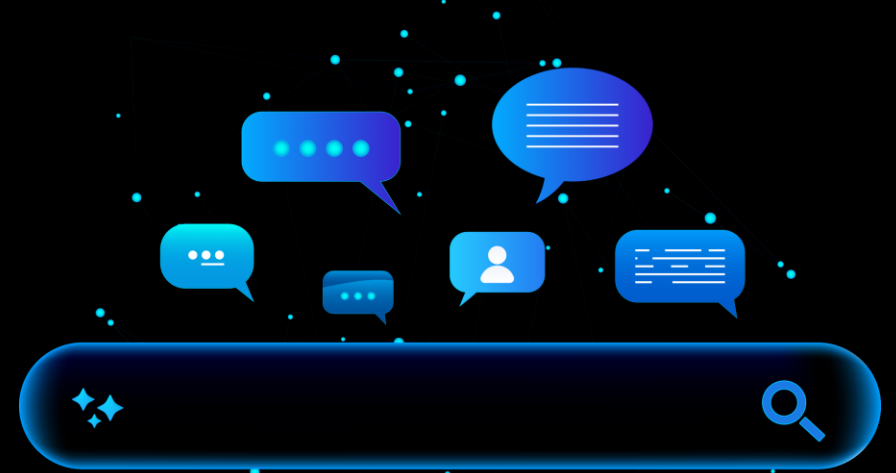
#1 – ATTENTION = REVENUE

GOAL:

Keep users on the platform as long as possible.

HOW THEY DO IT:

AI Overviews, Zero-Click Search, and LLM-powered summaries answer the user's question without requiring a click.



RESULT:

Your website is no longer the only destination. It's just one of many data sources feeding the AI engine about your company.

Do not fight it. [Lean into it.](#)

ANSWER:

Provide all the data needed to do this.
In a method that can be understood.

- ✔ Your Site Must Be Crawlable.
- ✔ Data must be readable.
- ✔ Explain Your Business, Your Customer, Your Value
- ✔ Usable for the consumer

To compete in a zero-click world, you need to provide structured, crawlable, explainable data that platforms can understand and reuse - without losing your brand visibility.



Tip #1: Crawlable & Readable

- If search engines can't crawl your site, **you don't exist** in the discovery process.
- Make sure it's readable by AI models and search parsers, not just humans.
- If you don't have relevant data about who you are and what you do, you don't exist! How can a bot know if you're any different than a pizza shop unless you tell them?
- Want to know what they think of your site?
 - TEST IT! Ask google about your company. Ask Chatgpt.
 - Check: robots.txt, sitemap.xml, canonical tags, schema markup. Check title tags, h1 tags, etc
 - Ensure content is indexable and accessible through clean URLs.
 - Use structured data (Schema.org, product feeds, reviews).
 - Include business hours, prices, FAQs, reviews, and service areas.

Tip #2:

Explain Your Business, Your Customer, Your Value

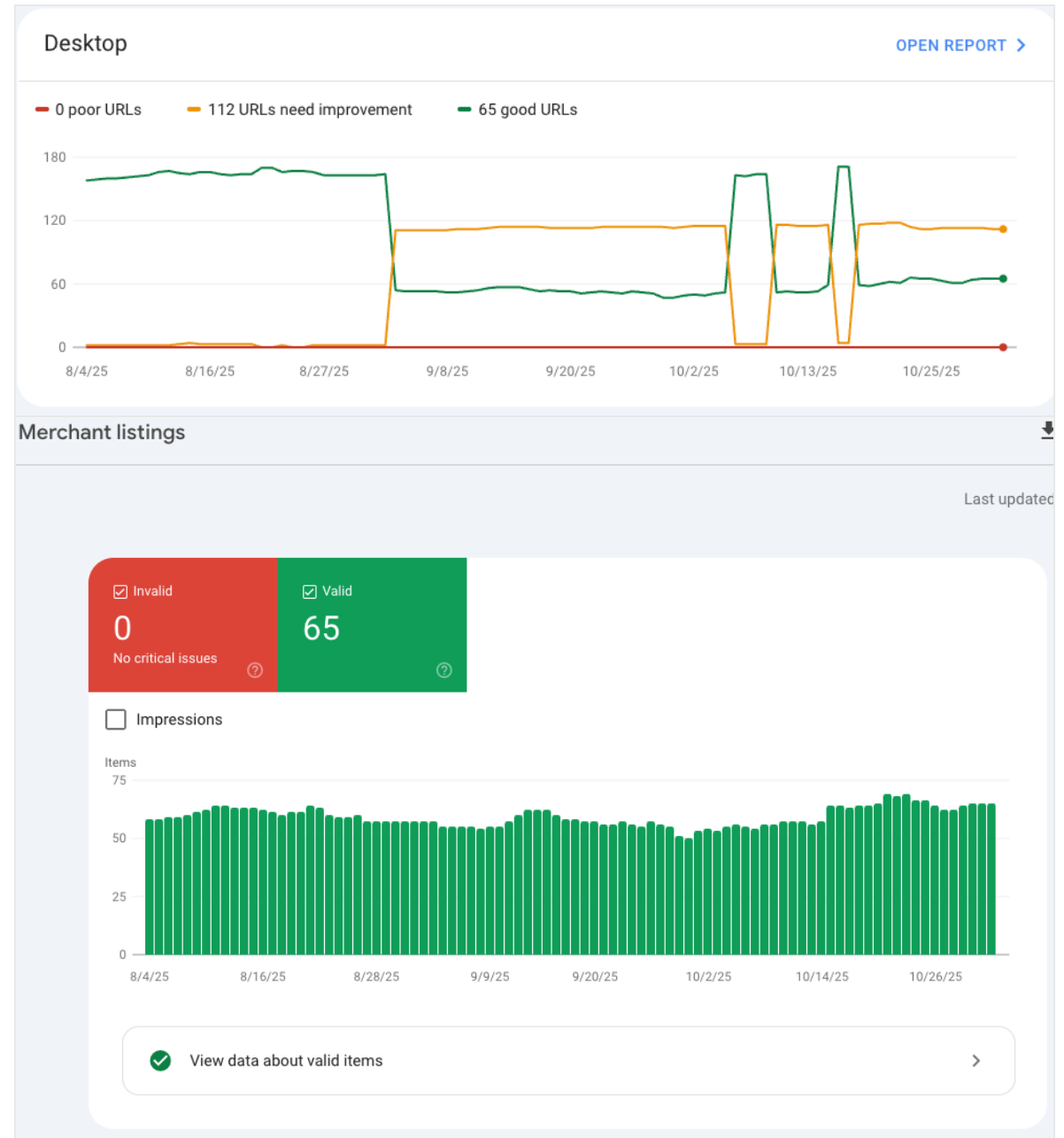
- If you haven't published it, **AI can't know it.**
- Clearly state:
 - **Who you serve**
 - **What you sell**
 - **Why customers choose you**
 - **Proof (testimonials, case studies, examples)**
- Feed the ecosystem content. The web doesn't invent your story - **you do.**
- There is no magical database that knows who your company is and what they do. You must tell them.

Tip #3: Check It

Google Search Console tells you if your site has crawl problems:

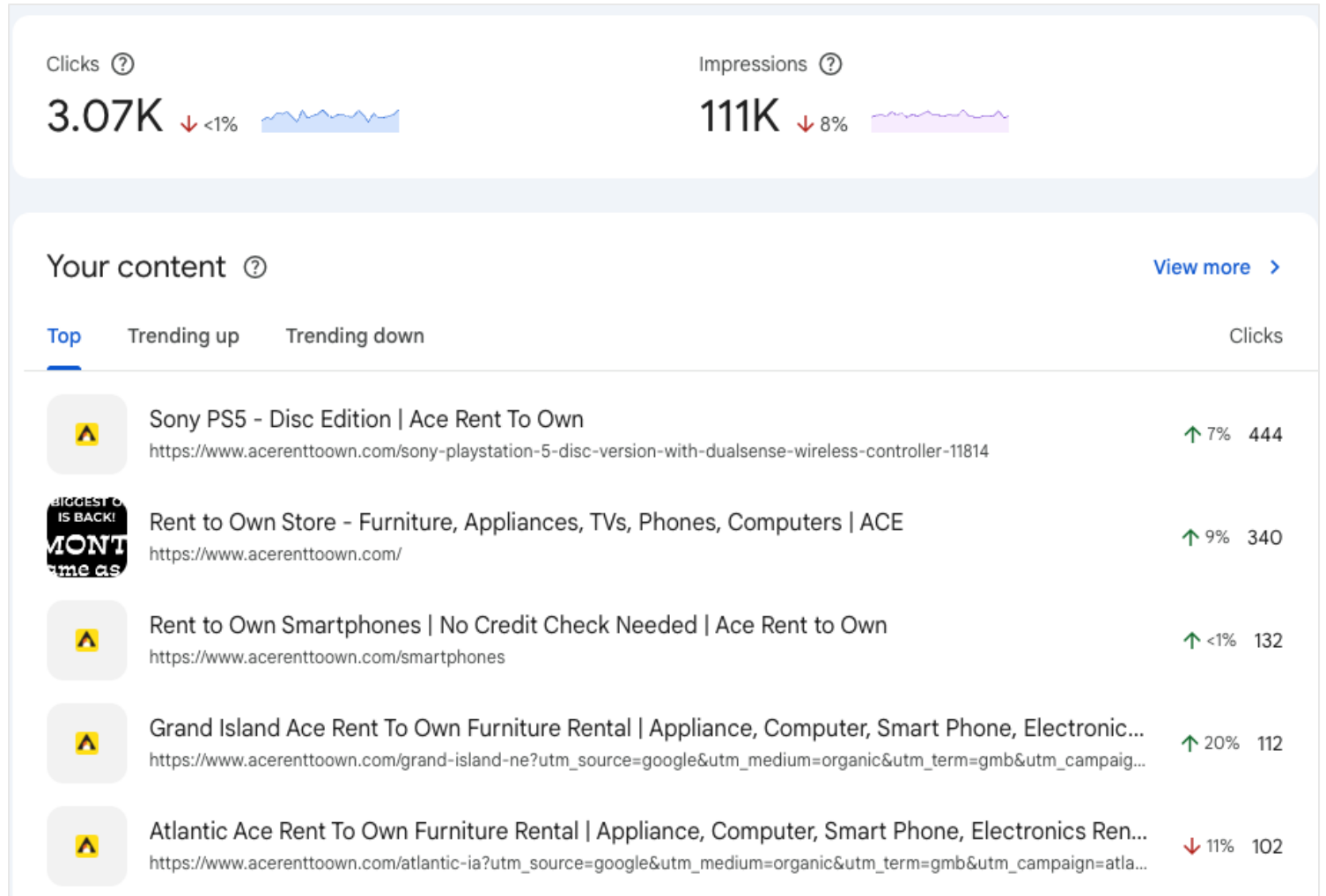
<https://search.google.com/>

<https://www.semrush.com/>



Tip #3: Check It

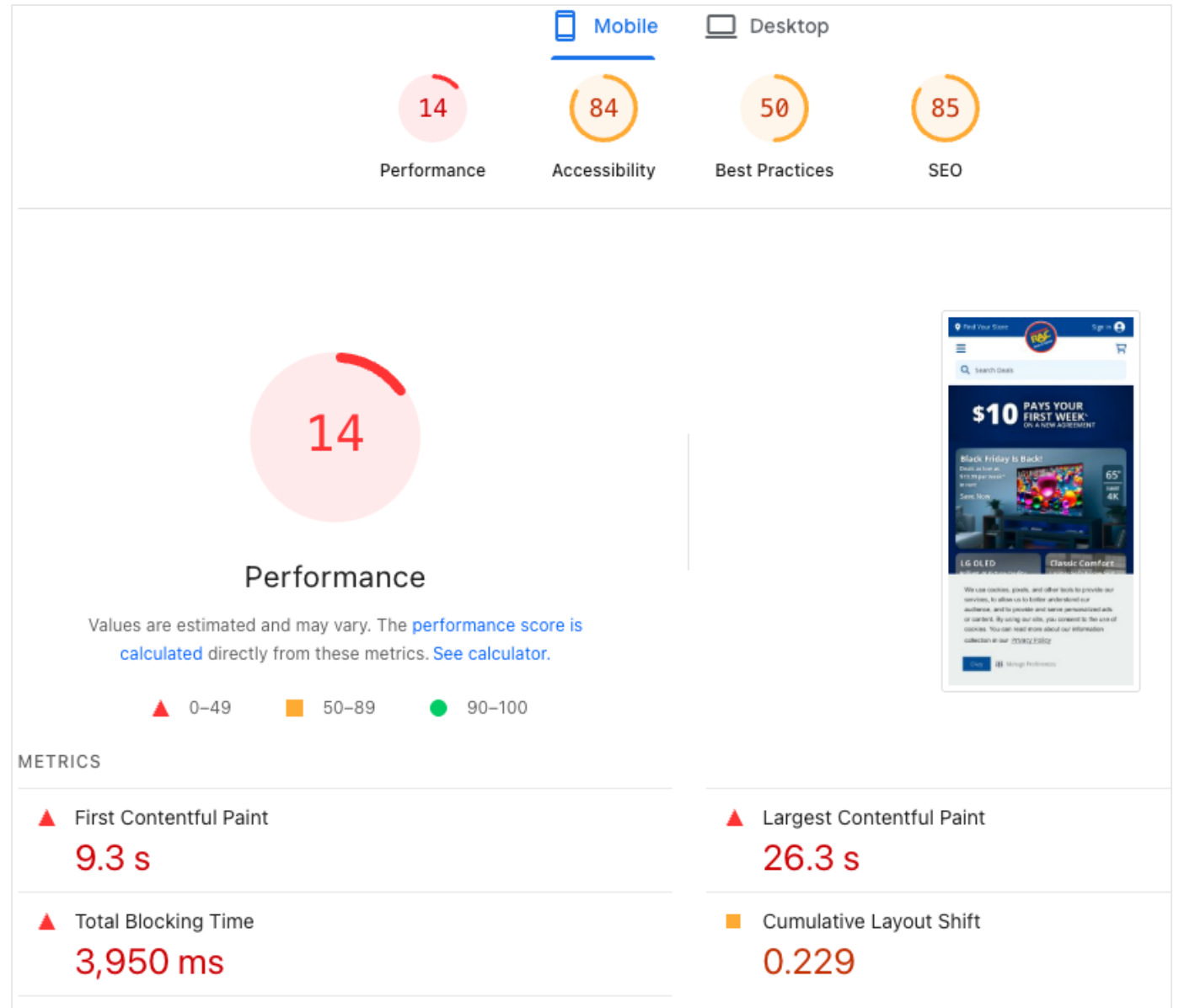
How is my site covered by google?



Tip #3: Check It

Googles tool to check how fast/usable a site is

<https://pagespeed.web.dev/>



Tip #4: Performance Matters

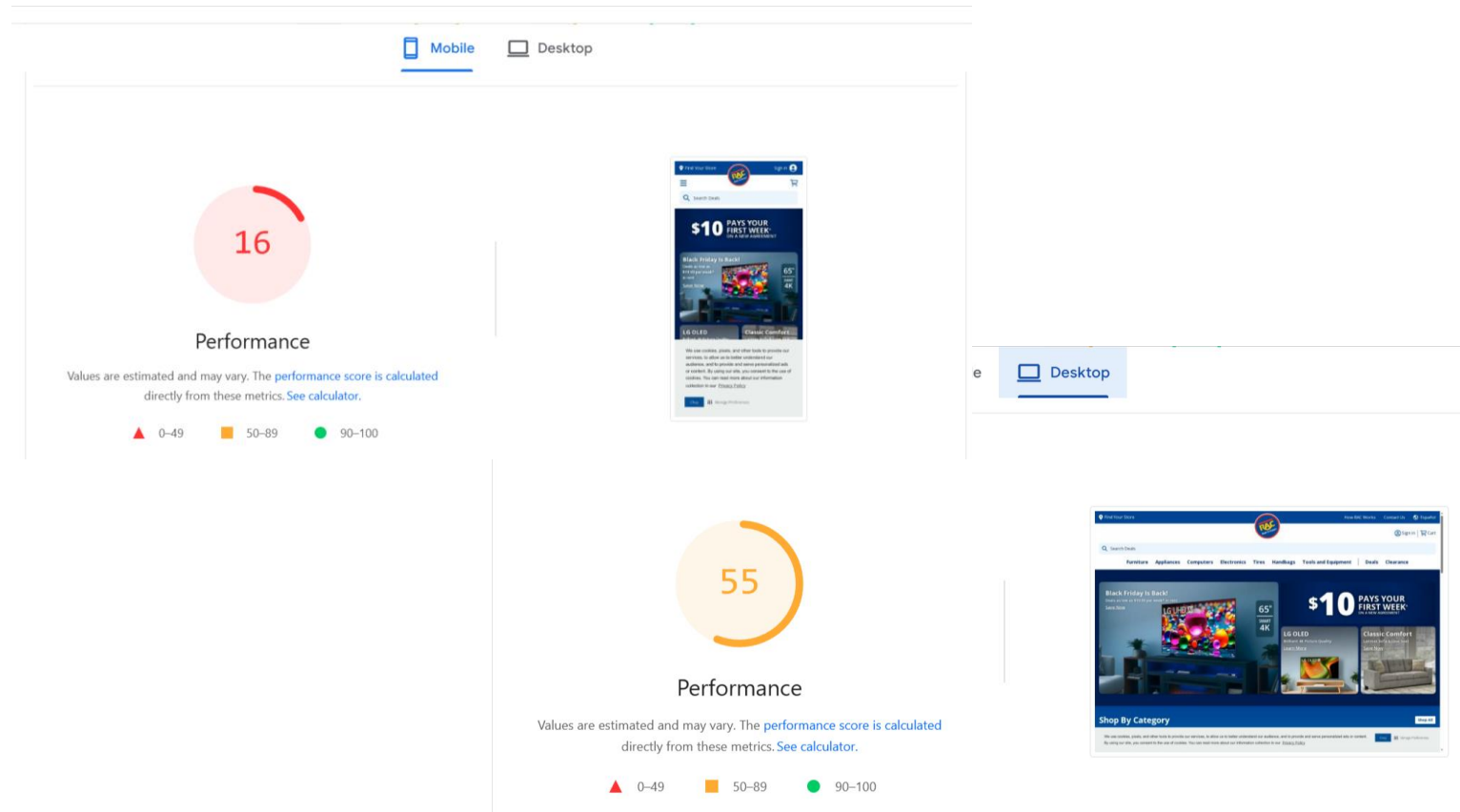
~80% of RTO traffic comes from mobile.

If your site is slow on mobile, doesn't perform, is hard to use, your competition is taking your traffic.

Platforms » Google » Article

Mobilegeddon Cometh: New Google "Mobile Friendly Update" To Reward Sites Beginning April 21

Published: February 26, 2015 at 1:58 pm | Read Time: 2 minutes





Search Shop All Living Rooms

Furniture Appliances Computers Electronics Tires Handbags Tools and Equipment | Deals Clearance

Shop By Category

Shop All

DEALS

Shop All Living Rooms



Washer and Dryer Sets



Electronics



Appliances



CLEARANCE

Shop All Bedrooms



Computers



Shop All Gaming



Tires



Get started for just \$10

When you sign up for notifications now and never miss an offer or discount!



Email

Text

Feedback

What You See

eting/homepage/RAC251126_OctNov_FP_Home_BFB-Larimer-Desk.png?tr=w-2880,h-1236,cm-pad_resize)

! [Banner] (https://ik.imagekit.io/rac/media/default/dw867e01ed/2025/marketing/homepage/RAC251126_OctNov_FP_Home_BFB-LG-Desk.png?tr=w-2880,h-1236,cm-pad_resize)

! [Banner] (https://ik.imagekit.io/rac/media/default/dw7544142c/2025/marketing/homepage/RAC251126_OctNov_FP_Home_BFB-Larimer-Desk.png?tr=w-2880,h-1236,cm-pad_resize)

! [Banner] (https://ik.imagekit.io/rac/media/default/dw867e01ed/2025/marketing/homepage/RAC251126_OctNov_FP_Home_BFB-LG-Desk.png?tr=w-2880,h-1236,cm-pad_resize)

What Google/AI Sees

! [Banner] (https://ik.imagekit.io/rac/media/default/dw7544142c/2025/marketing/homepage/RAC251126_OctNov_FP_Home_BFB-Larimer-Desk.png?tr=w-2880,h-1236,cm-pad_resize)

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! [Banner] (https://ik.imagekit.io/rac/media/default/dw867e01ed/2025/marketing/homepage/RAC251126_OctNov_FP_Home_BFB-LG-Desk.png?tr=w-2880,h-

Here's a breakdown of what you'll find on the homepage of rentacenter.com, the official website of Rent Center (RAC):

Key features & layout

- The top of the page features a banner advertising a “no credit option” and flexible payment plans: “the no credit option to shop the top brands and products you love.” [rentacenter.com](#)
- Immediately under or near the banner there are categories of products (furniture, appliances, electronics, computers) that you can browse. [rentacenter.com](#)
- There is a call to action to shop by category (e.g., “Shop All”, “Living Rooms”, “Washers & Dryers”, e [Rent-A-Center +1](#)
- The homepage also emphasises benefits such as:
 - “No credit required” or “No credit option.” [rentacenter.com +1](#)
 - No long-term contracts and ability to upgrade anytime. [rentacenter.com](#)
 - Delivery, set-up and product service/repairs included. (Mentioned in the store-location-specific page, but likely referenced on the main site promo area too.) [Rent-A-Center](#)
- There are links for key site actions: finding a store location, viewing deals, making payments, account login, etc.

What Google/AI Sees

What the homepage suggests in terms of user experience

- It targets users who may **not have strong credit** or prefer flexible purchasing options: “With no cre option ...” [rentacenter.com +1](#)

CASE STUDY: What AI Knows

❖ CHATGPT:

"Tell me about the <https://actionrto.com/> website.

Who are they and what do they do"

(Monday 11/3)




WHO THEY ARE

- The business operates under the name *Action Rent To Own*, located at 2111 W 3500 S, West Valley City, Utah 84119. actionrto.com+2 Better Business Bureau+2
- The company is locally owned and operated by the Brunelle family. actionrto.com+1
- The president is listed as Dave Brunelle. [Dun & Bradstreet](#)+1
- It has been operating (in some form) since 1978 in the local area. [Better Business Bureau](#)
- The company is classified as a “rent-to-own” or rental/leasing business for consumer goods (furniture, home décor, appliances) rather than a traditional retail-only business. [Dun & Bradstreet](#)+1

CASE STUDY: What AI Sees (11/3)

tell me about the <https://actionrto.com/> website. who are they and what do they do

Action Rent to Own is a company located in West Valley City, Utah, that offers rent-to-own options for furniture and electronics, as well as providing cash loans. The company offers flexible payment plans, free delivery and setup for rent-to-own items, and does not require a credit check for applications. For more information, visit Action Rent To Own And Loans. 

AI can make mistakes, so double-check responses



↳ What furniture or electronics does Action Rent to Own offer?

↳ What are the terms of Action's rent-to-own agreements?


↳ What are the terms of cash loans offered by Action?

 2 sites

Action Rent To Own And Loans |
West Valley City UT




Sep 21, 2025 — Action Rent to Own –
West Valley City 🌟 Jump Into Saving...

 Facebook · Action Rent To Own ...

Action does cash loans apply online
today at www.actionrto.com ...



Oct 15, 2020 — Action does cash
loans apply online today at www.actionrto.com....

 Facebook · Action Rent To Own ...

CASE STUDY: What AI Sees (11/6)

Who they are

- Action RTO is a **local, family-owned** rent-to-own business, run by the Brunelle family. [actionrto.com +2](#)
- The store is located at **2111 W 3500 S, West Valley City, Utah 84119**. [Buzzfile +2](#)
- Contact number: (801) 972-6363. [Buzzfile +2](#)
- Their business profile suggests they've been operating for around 20+ years. [Buzzfile](#)

What they do

- They offer **rent-to-own** and financing solutions for a wide variety of home goods: furniture, appliances, electronics, mattresses, etc. [actionrto.com +2](#)
- They emphasise flexible payment plans, no credit required in many cases, and free delivery/installation for rent-to-own items. [actionrto.com](#)
- They also offer personal loans ("Need fast cash?") alongside rent-to-own agreements. [actionrto.com +1](#)
- They promote competitive pricing (even price-matching other stores) and a more personalized service ("hometown relationships... from our family to yours"). [actionrto.com +1](#)

CASE STUDY: What AI Sees (11/6)

Their core values / difference

- They emphasise **integrity, simplicity, and community** as part of their guarantee. [actionrto.com](#)
 - Their messaging: “We care about the things that the big companies don’t – that is what makes us different.” [actionrto.com](#) +1
 - They aim to make the process transparent (“You’ll always know exactly what you’re getting!”) and easy to understand. [actionrto.com](#)
-

Things to note / what to check

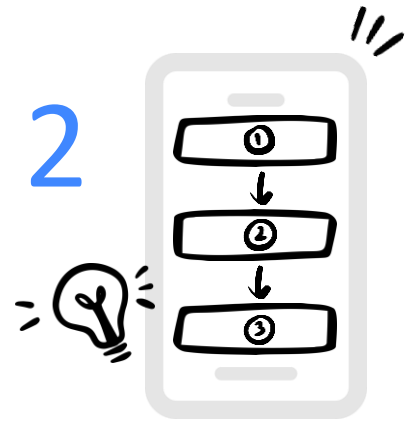
- While they promote “no credit needed,” it’s still wise to ask about the detailed terms: what happens if you miss payments, what total cost ends up being, etc.
 - They offer personal loans too, so if that’s relevant it’s recommended to verify interest rates, terms, and how that fits your budget.
 - Since they are local and smaller than national chains, the benefits may include more personalized service—but also possibly different protections or scale of operations than a larger national RTO chain.
 - Their website offers coupons/promotions (e.g., “\$50 off your first payment on any new agreement”)—always good to check the fine print. [actionrto.com](#) +1
-

If you notice in the AI search results and the Google search results how that information was determined is explained in citations.

- ➔ BBB
- ➔ Facebook
- ➔ Dunn & Bradstreet

We will cover this part later but what's important is that the 'story' about your business is not just what you say. It's what other people say.

#2 – Cognitive Gravity



The Human Brain Always Takes the Path of Least Resistance

- Your brain's sole objective is to conserve energy. Platforms and AI win by removing friction.
- This is why AI went from 0 -> 50% of the population in 2 years.

For Dealers:

- Consumers no longer search - they *accept the first good enough answer*.
- Local retailers lose when the journey ends before a click.
- ***The algorithm doesn't reward effort; it rewards ease.***

Winner = whoever makes discovery effortless.

#2 – COGNITIVE GRAVITY

- Consumers do not want to click on 10 websites, evaluate each company, determine if that product will work for them, price shop it, and then apply to 3-5 companies for rental.
- Consumers are going to naturally rely on these tools to be their truth engines. These tools will do their best to give good and accurate data as their survival depends on giving the correct answer.

The only way they can give the consumer good info about your company is if you give the tools good data.

Good Data In > Good Data Out

The Rules of the Game *Recap*

#1 – Attention = Revenue

- You must feed the machine with as much info about your company as possible.
- It must be done in a way a non-human (and human) can understand.
- Company content, location page content, product category content, product pages.
- These tools need to know who you are and what you are to be able to recommend you.

#2 – Cognitive Gravity

- People want search and shopping to be easy. They don't want to click on 10 sites, synthesize data and decide.

In 1-2 years, they won't have to and you need to be preparing for that world.

Now that we've set the stage for what an google/ai is looking for, the direction of where it's going, we are left with one big question...

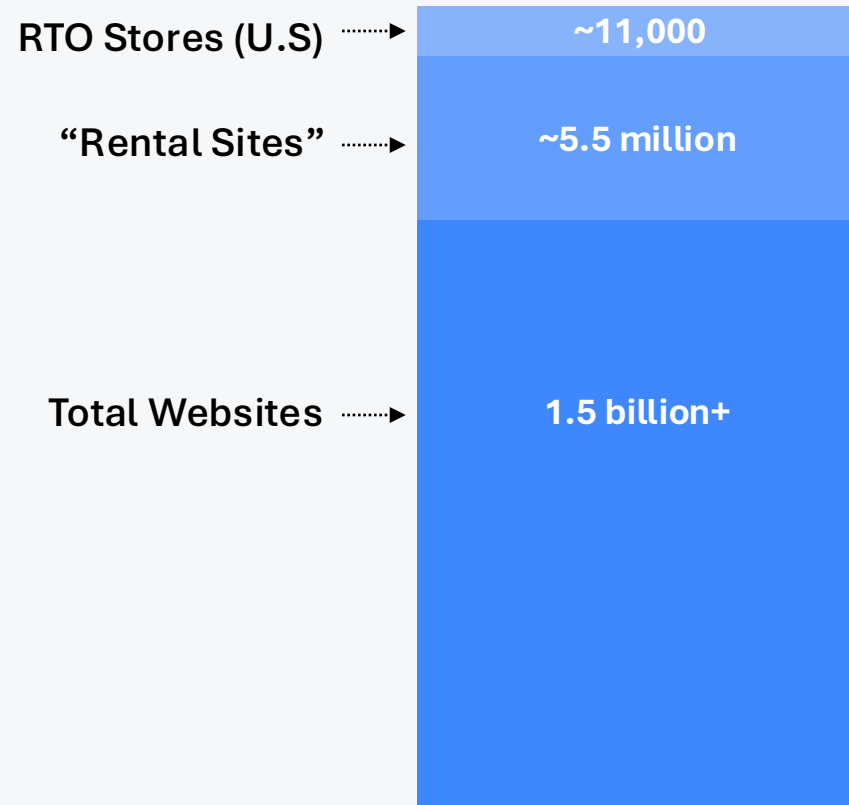
What's Important?



Insight

The web is saturated- discovery is brutally competitive. Even within our niche, the noise is massive.

But our market finite, specific and measurable.



There are 1.5 billion websites that exist.
~5.5m websites with the word 'Rental' on it
There are ~11,000 Physical RTO Stores

What Is Important?

- ➔ That's what every platform is trying to figure out. And they all do it slightly different.

You don't need to know the code behind SEO or AI. You just need to tell the internet what you already tell your best customers - who you are, what you do, where you are, and why you're the best choice.

The data just needs it to be in a structured, crawlable way.



What's Important Is What Everyone Else Says Is Important.

- In business (and in life) importance isn't something you declare. It's something other people decide about you.

When enough people say you matter, when they link to you, talk about you, or show up for you - that's when you become important.

EXAMPLES

- ✦ A company's stock doesn't rise because the company says it's great. It rises because the market agrees. SEO and discovery are just the online version of market confidence
- ✦ In school, you couldn't just walk in and say you were cool - other people had to decide that. Online works the same way. Links, reviews, and mentions are your votes of confidence.

The Framework: How to Become the Answer



BE FINDABLE:

Make sure google & AI can read and understand who you are



BE USEFUL:

Answer questions real people ask such as "How RTO works"



BE TRUSTED:

Ask for reviews, reply to them, and show your experience. AI learns trust from what others say about you.



BE LOCAL:

Every storefront services a geography You have a local address, reviews, photos, and content that says "we're here"



BE VISUAL:

Show your inventory and your people.

Be Findable


- Site that can be crawled and understood by bots.
- **Google My Business (GMB) Profile:**
This tells the world you have a real, local, verifiable business

<https://business.google.com/us/business-profile/>

Places like apple maps, yelp, reddit are becoming more important than they used to be as the AI wars heat up.

Showplace Rent to Own - Columbus

4.5 ★★★★★ (145) · Furniture rental service in Columbus, Ohio



25+ Photos

[Website](#) [Directions](#) [Save](#) [Share](#) [Call](#)

Store offering a variety of furniture, mattresses, electronics, computers and lawn mowers for rent.

Address: 3558 Soldano Boulevard, Columbus, OH 43228

Areas served: Franklin County and nearby areas

Hours: Open · Closes 6 PM ▾

Phone: (614) 279-7774

Review summary ⓘ

5	████████████████████
4	██████████████████
3	██████████████
2	██████████
1	██████

4.5
★★★★★
145 reviews

Be Local

Each store needs its own 'online footprint'.

- Each store needs to its own verified google profile
- Its own city page on your corporate site.
- That store page must talk about and accurately portray what you're doing.
- Things like having your name, hours, address, phone number on your store page matters
- Each location needs a social presence.
- This is your best attack against larger companies and online players. This is where you can easily win.

From Showplace Rent to Own - Columbus

"Showplace Rent to Own offers a great selection of furniture, mattresses, appliances, electronics, computers and seasonal items such as mowers and heaters featuring the rent to own transaction with no credit check and up to six months Same As Cash and... [More](#)

Profiles



Facebook



X (Twitter)

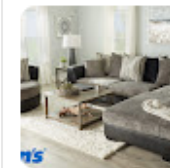


YouTube



Instagram

People also search for



Aaron's Rent To Own
Furniture store



Rent-A-Cen...
Furniture store



Appliance Rentals
Appliance rental service



RENT-2-O...
Furniture rental service



Columbus Rent to Own ~ New Hori...
Real estate consultant

Be Local

Places



Showplace Rent to Own - Columbus

4.5 ★★★★★ (145) · Furniture rental service

Columbus, OH · (614) 279-7774

Open · Closes 6 PM

"Showplace is an amazing place from Kim to the whole crew
HIGHLY RECOMMEND."



Aaron's Rent To Own

4.0 ★★★★★ (65) · \$ · Furniture store

Columbus, OH · (614) 497-9268

Open · Closes 7 PM

"Lynn and her crew are awesome."



RENT-2-OWN Circleville

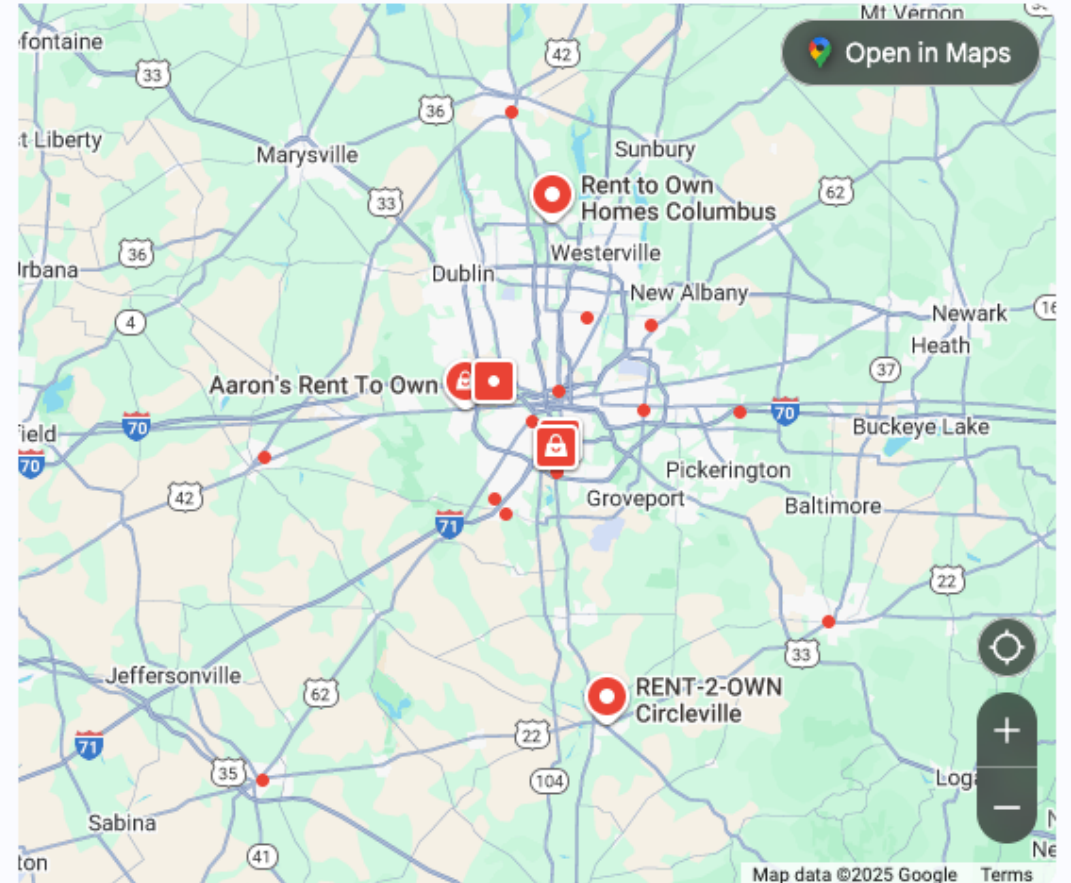
4.6 ★★★★★ (296) · Furniture rental service

Circleville, OH · (740) 474-5852

Open · Closes 6 PM

"What ever I want she makes it possible."

More places >



Be Useful

This is where AI differs from the past.

People ask questions. Not type keywords.

Your customers are already searching -
you just need to show up where they ask.

Helpful content builds trust and visibility.

✦ Think about the questions you get
in-store or on the phone:

“How does rent-to-own work?”

“Can I get same-day delivery?”

“What happens if something breaks?”

Answer the Questions People Actually Ask

Write a short post, make a one-minute video, or record a simple FAQ answering that question in plain language.

Use these on:

- Your **website's FAQ or blog**
- Your **Google Business Profile posts**
- A short **Facebook or YouTube video**

Usefulness builds trust. Trust drives relevance. Relevance drives visibility.

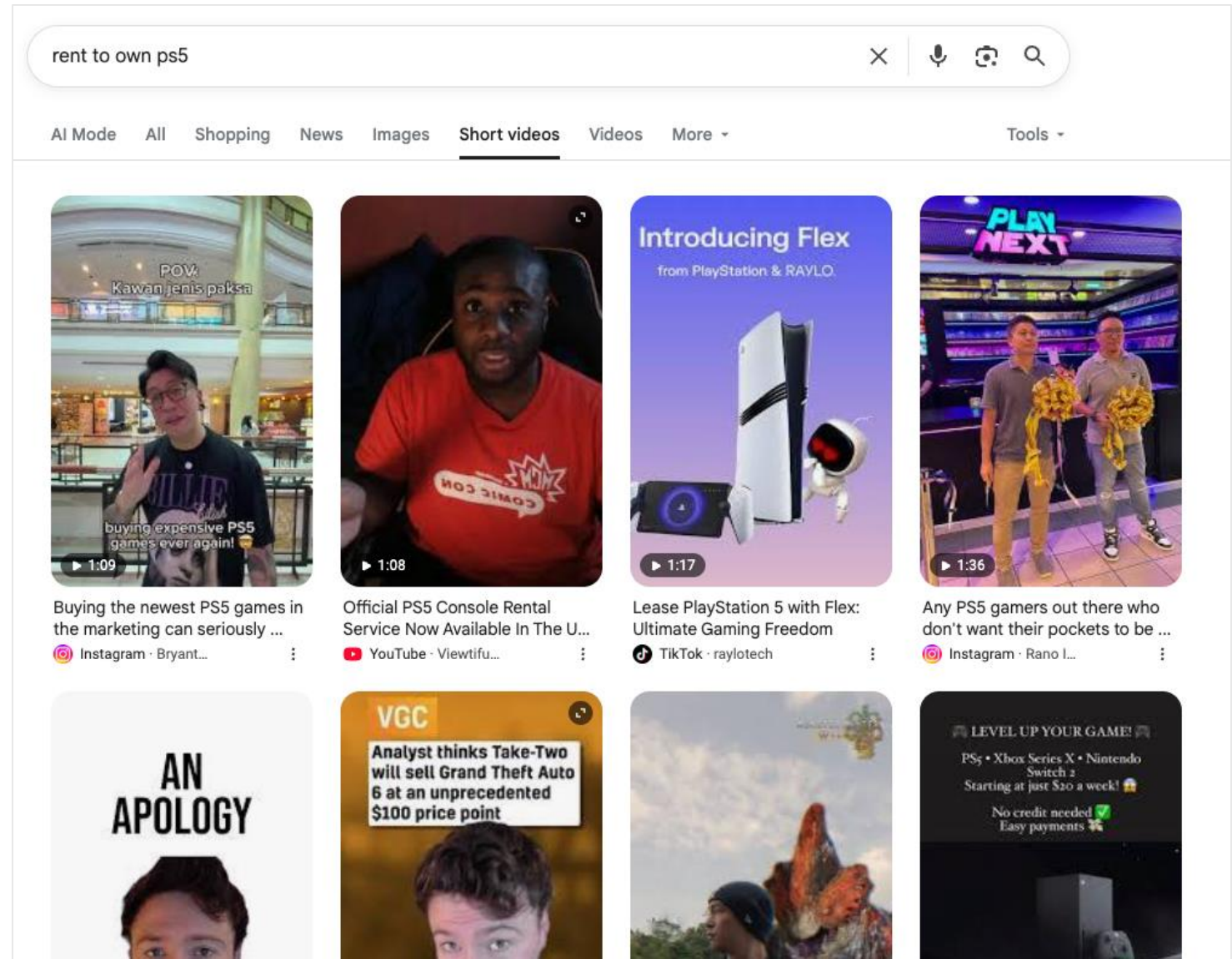


Be Visual: Show Don't Just Tell

AI and Google are learning from **what they see**. Your photos and videos are now data points that prove your business is real, active, and trustworthy

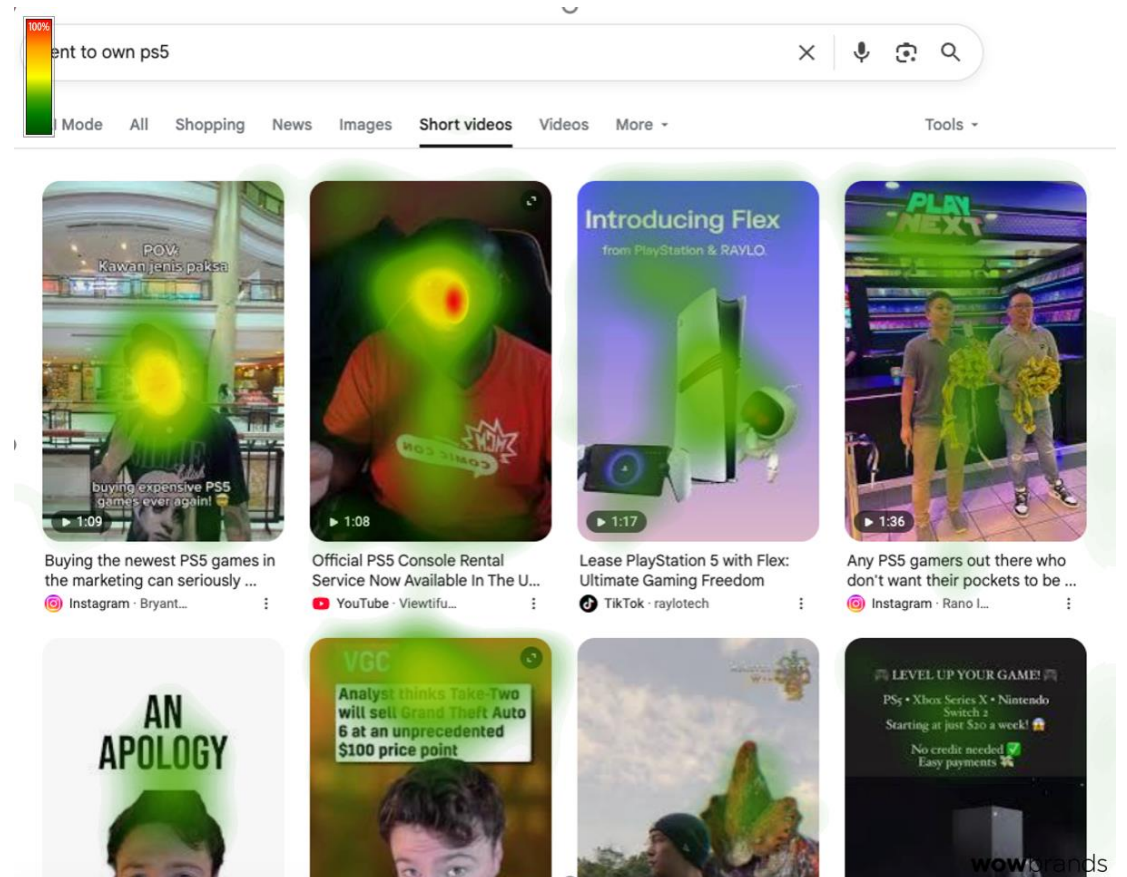
Every photo, video, or visual post adds evidence:

- Storefront = proof of location.
- Staff = proof of real people.
- Products = proof of inventory.
- Customers = proof of trust.



Be Visual: Visual Media Now Drives Discovery

- 91% of consumers say they want to see more online video content from brands.
- Video is now the **#1 source of product discovery** on social and search platforms.
- TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and Reels are shaping purchase intent faster than text.
- Platforms favor brands that upload authentic, local, short-form video.
- Every photo or video you post becomes **data** that AI learns from
- **AI and search platforms are prioritizing video results because it keeps users engaged longer.**
- Visual content captures attention and attention = revenue.



Be Trusted

Trust isn't what you say - it's what other people prove:

What's Important Is What Everyone Else Says Is Important.

Proof Beats Promotion



Reviews

- ✔ Ask every satisfied customer for a Google review - aim for 5 per month, per store.
- ✔ Reply to every review - good or bad – within 24–48 hours.
- ✔ Use real customer names or initials (with permission).
- ✔ Share these reviews on your website and social media.

based on reviews who should i use?

Based on available customer reviews for the local branches near you, **Showplace Rent-to-Own** and **Rent-A-Center** tend to have better public ratings and more positive specific feedback than Aaron's.

🌟 Top Recommendation by Review: Showplace Rent-to-Own

Showplace Rent-to-Own is often a strong choice due to its positive local reputation and emphasis on customer-friendly policies.

- **Positive Feedback:** Reviewers frequently mention helpful, courteous staff, excellent local service, and no-penalty return policies. Their local ownership seems to foster a more personalized customer experience. They also have an A+ rating from the [Better Business Bureau](#).
- **Drawbacks:** Some negative reviews mention issues with corporate price matching decisions or lack of empathy regarding late fees during difficult times. 🗨️

🥈 Second Option: Rent-A-Center

Rent-A-Center locations in your area generally maintain solid ratings, with many customers praising the efficiency and friendliness of the staff.

- **Positive Feedback:** The [4178 W Broad St location](#) has a 4.2-star rating on Google. Reviews consistently highlight the quick, easy, and efficient application and delivery processes, and helpful staff members.
- **Drawbacks:** Some past customer feedback (not necessarily specific to the 43228

Own Your Story Or Someone Else Will

AI tools summarize your business based on whatever data they can find - good or bad. Fill in the blanks before someone else does.