

Inside Zero-Click Searches



What are zero-click searches?

Zero-click searches are searches where users do not click through to any of the listed websites — not because the sites aren’t relevant, but because the results page has answered the user’s query, like through an AI-generated response.

How common are zero-click searches?

58.5% of searches on Google end without a click (SparkToro)	34.5% decrease in click-through rate (CTR) when an AI Overview appeared (Ahrefs)	25% predicted decline in organic traffic by 2026 (Gartner)
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These findings contribute to the bigger story surrounding search engine optimization (SEO) — **organic search traffic is declining because search is changing**, whether due to evolved traditional experiences (see AI Overviews) or advanced AI chatbots, like ChatGPT.

What search types generate zero clicks?

The answer is “it depends,” but we can get a baseline looking at the typical search types:

Search type	Zero-click likelihood	Why
Navigational	<div><div></div></div> Med	Users looking for a business’s hours, phone number, or direction are more likely to grab the information from the company’s Google Business Profile vs. website.
Informational	<div><div></div></div> Med	Users looking for answers on the five W’s (Who, What, When, Where, and Why) are the most unpredictable when it comes to whether they’re click-through because of how much these searches vary.
Transactional	<div><div></div></div> Low	Users looking to research or make a purchase are more likely to visit a website, unless completing their transaction through Google Shopping, though this depends on their familiarity with the product.

The search features contributing to zero-click searches include:

- Featured snippets
- AI Overviews
- Local map packs
- AI Mode

While all these features contribute, AI Overviews have become a primary driver. For a detailed analysis of their impact, our [AI Overviews SEO Impact Study](#) provides crucial data, revealing that informational queries are the most affected, with nearly 40% of them now generating an AI-powered answer directly on the results page.

How do zero-click searches impact SEO?

Visibility Zero-click searches impact more than traffic — they also impact visibility. That’s because the search features driving zero clicks, like AI Overviews and featured snippets , minimize the visibility of the 10 blue links in traditional search results.	Traffic When it comes to traffic and zero-click searches, the most frequent observation you’ll hear is how platforms, from search engines to social media networks, now prioritize keeping the traffic to themselves vs. encouraging users to browse the web.
Journey insights With zero-click searches on AI Overviews, Perplexity, and other AI search experiences, users can see a company’s content without the company knowing it. For the business, this creates a blind spot — they don’t know what’s working (and what isn’t) in their SEO strategy.	Downstream metrics One of the biggest concerns in how zero-click searches impact SEO is in the downstream metrics, like: <ul style="list-style-type: none">LeadsApp downloadsIn-store visitsSales

How to optimize for zero-click searches

Create masterclass content

Users that opt to click on your site from search results want depth — they’re looking to go beyond AI Mode’s response, and that’s significant. When they arrive on your site, it’s critical you deliver content that:

- ✔ Offers value, like through visuals, first-hand experiences, or interactive elements
- ✔ Uses headings, lists, and tables to make itself skimmable
- ✔ Gets specific with its advice, like addressing what B2B vs. B2C companies need
- ✔ Includes a call-to-action, whether for a micro- or macro-conversion

Enhance content with schema markup

Help your content [rank in AI search experiences](#) by using schema markup, like:

- LocalBusiness
- Service
- Product
- FAQ
- HowTo

Schema provides these engines with more context, which can improve your URLs’ visibility.

Make marketing omnichannel

As answer engines like Claude, AI Mode, and ChatGPT move to make their responses more personalized to a user, like through the person’s Google Workspace (think Gmail, Google Calendar, and Google Drive), omnichannel marketing has become critical.

For example, consider the kind of response a user might get in AI Mode if they’re subscribed to your email newsletter. Is it possible AI Mode will cite your website’s content because they know the user has a preference for your brand?

“If you’re searching for “things to do in Nashville this weekend with friends, we’re big foodies who like music” ahead of an upcoming trip, AI Mode can show you restaurants with outdoor seating **based on your past restaurant bookings and searches.**”

ELIZABETH REID – Google’s Head of Search

Expand search to OmniSEO™

Search is changing — and expanding.

ChatGPT is one of the most visited websites in the world, with a user base of [more than 400 million](#) weekly active users. Even though AI Overviews dwarfs this number with its [1.5 billion monthly users](#), the numbers still show people are expanding their search horizons.

And SEOs need to do the same.

OmniSEO — or [search everywhere optimization](#) — optimizes across search experiences, like:

Traditional search

AI-powered search

Social search

Local search

Voice search

While it uses some familiar SEO optimizations, like on-page and technical SEO, it also expands into brand reputation management and enhanced content creation to help businesses build their visibility across the online experience.

Get discovered across searches with OmniSEO™

At WebFX (the team behind SEO.com), we’ve helped organizations across industries improve their visibility in AI search, from ChatGPT to Perplexity to AI Overviews. Discover how our [OmniSEO solution](#) can help you do the same by [contacting us today!](#)

To learn more, visit: <https://www.seo.com/blog/zero-click-searches/>