AI Mode Sends A Different Visitor. Your Website Wasn’t Built For Them via @sejournal, @slobodanmanic



AI Mode visitors arrive at your website having already done the research. They compared options inside the AI, refined their query three times, and planned. By the time they click through to you, they are not browsing. They are ready to complete a task.

Your website is still built to persuade someone who has not decided yet.

Google published its first AI Mode usage data on May 20, 2026. One billion monthly active users, typing queries triple the length of a traditional search, with planning-related queries growing 80% faster than AI Mode queries overall. The behavioral profile of the person arriving from AI Mode is different from the person who typed a three-word keyword into Google five years ago. The query tells you who is coming. The

question is whether your website is built for those who actually show up.

One Billion Users Typing Three Times More

AI Mode queries are triple the length of a traditional search query. Planning-related queries grew 80% faster than AI Mode queries overall in the past six months. Brainstorming queries grew 30% faster than queries overall since launch.

Length alone tells you something. A three-word query (“best running shoes”) is a person at the top of a funnel. A query three times longer (“which stability running shoes work best for overpronation in humid weather with same-day pickup near me”) is a person at the bottom. They have already narrowed, carrying constraints and context the AI gave them. They are not asking, “What are my options?” They are asking, “Where do I do the thing I already decided to do?”

The planning growth confirms it. An 80% faster growth rate in planning queries means AI Mode is increasingly where people go to plan the action, not discover the category. The discovery happened earlier, or inside the AI itself. The click-through is the execution step.

The Conversion Data Already Proves It

Adobe’s Q2 2026 AI traffic report found that AI-referred retail traffic now converts 42% above non-AI traffic, a complete reversal from the previous gap. The visitors arriving from AI surfaces are pre-qualified buyers.

The 42% conversion premium exists because the AI did the qualification work. The visitor compared three products inside

ChatGPT, narrowed to one, and clicked the link. They arrive at the product page with intent that a traditional organic visitor takes five page views to build. The 42% premium is what happens when the website lets that visitor complete the purchase without re-entering a persuasion funnel.

The premium disappears when the website forces the AI-referred visitor through the same awareness-to-decision pipeline designed for someone who arrived cold. The mismatch between visitor intent and page architecture is the gap most websites have not closed.

Your Website Assumes Ignorance

Most websites are built around an information-delivery architecture. The visitor arrives uninformed. The website's job is to move them from awareness through consideration to decision. Product pages list features. Comparison tables lay out options. Trust signals (testimonials, badges, case studies) build confidence. The entire funnel assumes the visitor needs convincing.

The AI Mode visitor skipped that funnel inside the AI. They compared options in the response. They read the trade-offs. They refined their constraints across three follow-up queries. When they click through to your website, they are not at "awareness." They are at "do the thing."

If your website forces them back through the persuasion architecture (scroll past the hero, find the pricing page, navigate to the booking form, locate the "get started" button buried under three sections of social proof), you are adding friction to a visitor who already chose you. They clicked because the AI told them you are the answer to their specific, constrained, multi-step question. Your job is to let them complete the task.

The shift from citation to transaction is already underway at

the platform level. Chrome’s auto-browse, landing on Android phones in late June 2026, will send agents that complete tasks on your website autonomously. Before agents arrive, the AI Mode human visitor is already behaving like one: arriving with context, expecting to act, leaving if they cannot.

The Audit For AI Mode Arrivals

Pull your top 10 landing pages that receive AI-referred traffic. Google Analytics 4 tracks referrals from chat.openai.com and gemini.google.com directly; Google Search Console includes AI Mode clicks in overall search metrics but does not yet offer a separate filter. For each page, ask one question: Can this visitor complete the task they came for within 30 seconds of landing?

If the answer is “they need to navigate to another page first,” the page is wrong for this visitor class. If the answer is “they need to scroll past content that re-explains what the product does,” the page is wrong. If the answer is “the call-to-action is below three sections of persuasion content,” the page is wrong.

The fix is not a redesign. It is a prioritization shift. For pages that receive AI-referred traffic, move the task-completion surface to the top. The booking form. The pricing. The “start now” action. The thing the visitor came to do. Put it where a visitor who has already decided can reach it without re-entering your persuasion funnel.

When generative UI replaces the page as destination, the landing page that persuades loses to the landing page that acts. AI Mode built a billion-user surface where people plan before they arrive. Your website gets to serve the person who has already planned. The only question is whether you let them finish.

More Resources:

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