# The Future of SEO — 3 Trends Every CEO Should Know

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Adaptation moves fast. Search engines move faster. Just when you think you've caught up with the latest search engine optimization (SEO) best practices, Google releases another algorithm update that's got you questioning your strategy. Staying on top of your game (and the search results) requires constant vigilance and fast adoption of the latest SEO tactics.

Fortunately, SEO strategists are quick to make sense of the shifts and summarize what works and what doesn't. Keeping up with industry thought leadership will ensure that you're able to adapt quickly and maintain your organic visibility.

Curious about the future of SEO? Here are the top SEO trends to pay attention to in 2024.

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## Topical authority

SEO continues to evolve in response to algorithm shifts and changes in user behavior. It's become increasingly focused on a brand's ability to demonstrate authority and expertise on a particular topic. SEO pros call this "topical authority."

In the context of SEO, topical authority is important because it assists search engines in identifying the most relevant and authoritative content based on a user's search query. In

practice, it is less about increasing “keyword density” (an outdated tactic) and more about establishing your brand as a go-to source of helpful information.

Say you own a software company. You could enhance your brand’s topical authority by creating in-depth blog posts that outline how to use your software to solve specific business problems. You could publish video tutorials that help users navigate software setup, configuration and integrations. By providing valuable content on these topics, you work to establish your brand as a stand-up source of information.

To improve a business’s topical authority, you should:

- Identify a specific niche topic (or topics) that closely relate to the primary focus of the business, versus attempting to cover a wide range of subjects.
- Use SEO tools like Semrush’s Topic Research tool to identify relevant topics and subtopics within your niche.
- Demonstrate authority with expert author bios, reliable sources cited and well-researched content that addresses users’ needs and challenges.
- Earn backlinks from relevant and reputable websites, with a focus on high-authority domains versus a high quantity of domains.
- Keep content “fresh” and up to date with more timely sources, updated information and connection to the latest trends and insights.

Overall, search engine algorithms look to websites that demonstrate topical authority as an indication that the brand is a reliable, accurate source of information for users — which increases a brand’s likelihood of ranking for its target keywords.

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# Google Search Generative Experience (SGE)

Google's latest experiment with generative artificial intelligence aims to streamline the search experience, providing users with faster access to relevant information. While still in its early stages, Google Search Generative Experience (SGE) has the potential to reshape SEO for the long term.

SGE makes content faster, more relevant and easier to digest by today's time-strapped consumers. Though the search results look more or less the same, content is organized in such a way that allows people to get more from a single search.

With generative AI in Search, people are able to:

- Understand a topic faster
- Uncover new viewpoints and insights
- Gain answers to questions more easily
- Access quick links to relevant content
- Get how-to instructions fast
- Ask more complex and descriptive questions

To test out SGE, go to Chrome while signed in to your Google Account, open a new tab in Google, select the "Labs" icon, and then turn on "SGE, generative AI in Search."

What does SGE mean for business owners? It could mean that while traffic may be negatively impacted (users are able to find answers faster), it could also increase your brand's

ability to generate more relevant leads. Users still need to research their options before making a purchase, so by the time they do visit your website, they may be in a better position to convert.

Also, only users who have opted to use SGE will see these AI-generated results. So, your usual SEO strategies will still work, but you should keep a close eye on new advancements in this space.

**Related: 5 Tips for Creating SEO Content That Ranks**

## Answer Engine Optimization (AEO)

AI is reshaping Search in other ways as well. With the emergence of "answer engines," it's become more important to optimize your content so it answers conversational queries faster.

Users want to find immediate answers without having to click on a webpage. Google knows this, so its answer box surfaces answers and content in a simple, digestible way. This is why you'll see more brands organizing their content into smaller, consumable excerpts.

For example, let's say your company sells smart home devices. A common search might be "How do smart thermostats save energy?" Instead of just creating a blog post on the benefits of smart thermostats, your company could create a FAQ section that answers the question directly, use structured data markup to mark up the content and add graphics that grab readers' attention.

Like SGE, Answer Engine Optimization (AEO) is another way that AI is being incorporated into Search. This world is changing quickly, so brands should stay attuned to these advancements in order to stay relevant and visible.

The landscape of SEO is constantly evolving, demanding swift

adaptation from entrepreneurs to stay ahead of the curve. To ensure sustained growth and online visibility, try out these recommended steps to proactively adapt to the latest trends and integrate these strategies into your SEO practices. Then, continue to stay informed, adapt swiftly and embrace the future of SEO to thrive in your competitive marketplace.

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