

Market Brief: Should a Local SEO Agency Add an "AI Search Visibility" Service?

Prepared for: Summit & Pine Digital (a fictional 9-person local SEO agency in Colorado, used for this sample)

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The full Market Brief includes a 10-slide deck and a spreadsheet matrix. This shortened sample includes the summary, demand signals, pricing landscape, a 10-provider matrix, and recommendations.

The client's question: "Our local-business clients keep asking about ChatGPT and Google's AI answers. Is there a real market for an AI search visibility (GEO/AEO) add-on, and how should we package and price it?"

1-page summary

Short answer (analysis): yes. Demand is real and growing, but the market is immature and prices vary widely. The opportunity for a local agency is a **low-entry, clearly scoped add-on**, not a \$5k+/mo retainer. Lead with an audit, keep monitoring cheap, and never promise placement.

Signal	Finding	Source
AI assistant reach	ChatGPT has 1.2 billion weekly users , up from 1 billion in July (OpenAI, as reported Sep 29, 2026)	[1]
AI inside Google	AI Overviews: 2.5B+ monthly active users (Google, Jun 2026). AI Mode: 1B+ monthly active users (Q2 2026 earnings call)	[12][2]
Click impact	With an AI summary, users clicked a traditional result in 8% of visits, vs. 15% without one (900 US adults, Mar 2025 browsing data)	[3]
Click impact at #1	AI Overviews were associated with a 58% lower CTR for the top organic result (Dec 2025 data, 300k keywords)	[4]
Agency pricing	Among 26 GEO agencies publishing a monthly price, the median entry price is \$3,250/mo (IQR \$1,950–\$4,681)	[5]
Tool pricing	Monitoring tools start at \$29–\$99/mo (Otterly monthly; Semrush billed annually)	[6][7]

3 recommended moves (analysis):

1. Launch a **\$750 AI Visibility Audit** as the entry product. It sits below the market's ~\$3,000 median audit or project entry price [5], which suits local SMB budgets. (It isn't unique: one GEO vendor lists a deep audit at \$750–\$1,500 and a free basic audit [5], so differentiate on local expertise.)
2. Add **AI Visibility Monitoring at \$250/mo** on top of existing SEO retainers (tool cost ~\$29–\$189/mo [6]).
3. Bundle a **"Local SEO + AI Search" tier at \$1,500/mo** for clients who want the work done. Contracts should state clearly that no placement is guaranteed.

1. Demand signals

- **Audience shift is real.** OpenAI says ChatGPT has 1.2B weekly users [1]. Google reports AI Overviews at 2.5B+ monthly active users [12] and AI Mode at 1B+ monthly active users [2].
- **Clicks are getting scarcer.** Pew found people clicked a traditional search result in 8% of visits when an AI summary appeared, vs. 15% without one, and clicked a link inside the summary in only 1% of visits [3]. Ahrefs' updated study found AI Overviews associated with a 58% lower CTR for position one [4].
- **But search isn't "dead."** Gartner predicted in 2024 that search engine volume would drop 25% by 2026 [8]. Google says AI Overviews and AI Mode are driving an incremental increase in Search queries [2]. (Both are forecasts or company claims, not independent measurements.) **Interpretation:** the value is moving from "rank and get the click" to "get mentioned and cited," which is exactly what local businesses will need help with.

2. Market size: what we can and can't say

There is **no reliable public estimate** of the US market for GEO/AEO services. Published figures are mostly vendor-made, so we haven't invented one. Instead, here is a **bottom-up sizing method** for the client's own market, with every input labeled so the client can plug in their own data:

Input	Value	Basis
Current SEO retainer clients	40	Client CRM (illustrative)
% likely to buy monitoring add-on in year 1	25%	Assumption (test with 10-client survey)
Monitoring price	\$250/mo	Recommendation below
% likely to buy an audit	40%	Assumption
Audit price	\$750	Recommendation below
Year-1 revenue from existing clients (illustrative)	\$42,000	$10 \times \$250 \times 12 + 16 \times \750

Illustrative estimate only. Replace the assumptions with survey results before using them for planning.

3. Pricing landscape

Agencies. A June 2026 guide covering 20 GEO agencies puts retainers at about **\$3,000–\$20,000+/mo**, with one-time audits at **\$1,500–\$5,000**. Most of those figures are "directional" estimates, not published prices [9]. A September 2026 check of 60 AI-cited GEO agencies found **47% publish prices**, with a **median entry retainer of \$3,250/mo** and a **median entry project/audit of \$3,000** [5]. Both sources are agencies selling GEO themselves, so treat them as vendor-published data.

Tools. Otterly.AI: \$29 / \$189 / \$489 per month for 15 / 100 / 400 prompts [6]. Semrush AI Visibility Toolkit: \$99/mo per domain for 25 prompts, billed annually [7]. Peec AI: \$95 / \$245 / \$495 per month for 50 / 150 / 350 prompts (per a third-party comparison read from Peec's page on Oct 2, 2026) [10]. Profound: a free 7-day trial and custom Enterprise pricing; its earlier \$99 and \$399 brand plans were no longer listed as of Oct 2, 2026 [10].

4. Provider matrix (10)

#	Provider	Type	Entry price	Disclosure	Fit for local SMBs (our view)	Source
1	Otterly.AI	Monitoring tool	\$29/mo (15 prompts)	Published	High: cheap enough to resell	[6]

#	Provider	Type	Entry price	Disclosure	Fit for local SMBs (our view)	Source
2	Semrush AI Visibility Toolkit	Monitoring tool	\$99/mo per domain (billed annually)	Published	High if already on Semrush	[7]
3	Peec AI	Monitoring tool	~\$95/mo (50 prompts)	Third-party report	Medium	[10]
4	Profound	Enterprise platform	Custom (free trial)	Not public	Low: enterprise focus	[10]
5	Red-engage	GEO agency	\$4,500/mo	Published	Low: B2B SaaS focus	[9]
6	Sure Oak	SEO/GEO agency	\$3,000–\$20,000/mo	Directional (3rd party)	Low–medium	[9]
7	First Page Sage	SEO/GEO agency	\$8,000–\$20,000/mo	Directional (3rd party)	Low	[9]
8	SimpleTiger	SEO/GEO agency	~\$5,000–\$12,000/mo	Directional (3rd party)	Low	[9]
9	NoGood	Growth/GEO agency	\$10,000+/mo	Directional (3rd party)	Low	[9]
10	iPullRank	Enterprise technical	Six figures/yr	Not public	Low	[9]

Read-out (analysis): almost every specialist agency is priced for funded B2B companies. **The local-SMB tier under \$1,500/mo is thinly served by specialists.** That's the opening for a local SEO shop that already has the client relationships.

5. Recommended offer (analysis)

Product	Price	What's included	Est. delivery cost
AI Visibility Audit	\$750 one-time	25 buyer prompts × 3 assistants, current answers, competitor mentions, top 10 fixes	~4–6 staff hours (est.)
AI Visibility Monitoring	\$250/mo add-on	Monthly prompt re-runs, mention/citation trend, 3 recommended actions	Tool ~\$29–\$189/mo [6] + ~1.5 hrs (est.)
Local SEO + AI Search	\$1,500/mo	Existing local SEO + entity/profile consistency, FAQ/answer pages, review-site alignment, monitoring	Varies

Guardrails:

- **Don't promise placement or "ChatGPT will recommend you."** Even GEO vendors acknowledge placement isn't guaranteed [5], and the FTC pursues deceptive AI claims [11].
- Measure with a fixed prompt set, re-run monthly, and report honestly when nothing moves.

6. Risks

- **Measurement is noisy.** AI answers vary run to run, so use repeated runs and trend lines, not single screenshots.
- **Platform changes.** Google and OpenAI change their surfaces often, so expect the playbook to shift quarterly.
- **Commoditization.** Tool vendors may package "AI visibility" directly for SMBs. Your differentiation is local knowledge and execution.

Sources (accessed Oct 7, 2026)

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