Making your content AI-ready

The arrival of AI has driven changes in user behaviour. To continue to reach your users, you must ensure AI can find and accurately include your information when it answers user questions.

Business case

Optimising your content to be AI-ready helps your content to be found and selected for inclusion in AI summaries. This improves the visibility and credibility of your information and your organisation.

AI-ready content also reduces the chances of misrepresentation and AI hallucination, and maintains control of your messaging. This is especially important for complex content, which relies on details, precision and nuance.

The good news

Much of what you need to consider for AI-ready content is what you already need to consider for effective, accessible, user-centred content.

High-quality content for human readers is well structured and has up-to-date information that matches user needs. These are also the characteristics that AI models are looking for.

A few core criteria will go a long way towards making your content AI-ready.

Matching user needs

All good content is about responding to user needs. For AI-ready content, if your content answers user questions directly, it is more likely to be picked up by AI platforms.

To ensure your content matches what users are asking or looking for, identify your audiences first, then explore their needs. Invest in desktop and direct user research to help you understand who your audiences are and what information they need.

Check potential topics and questions online – type topics and related user queries into a search engine to find related search terms and questions for more ideas. Online tools and social media may also point the way to common questions and pain points.

When you have the topics and questions, develop content that responds directly to them.

Making content that is easy for AI to grab

Content is easy for AI to 'grab' if it is structured well and written clearly. Key aspects are:

- **Topics** – Have 1 topic per section. AI models often retrieve content in chunks rather than entire pages. A chunk may be short (<100 words) or long (>1,000 words), but it should focus on 1 key idea or subject. If a section covers several unrelated ideas, AI will struggle to match your content to user questions.
- **Headings** – Use descriptive headings that clearly state what the section contains. Headings act as signposts for AI crawlers and help AI map your content to specific user

queries. The clearer the labels, the easier it is for human users and AI models to recognise the content. However, you don't have to repeat meaningful details in every heading (for example, Topics for AI, Headings for AI, Content types for AI). As long as your page title (Heading 1) is meaningful and your headings are styled correctly, AI can pick up the page content and parse it as related information.

- **Structure** – Frontload information. This means having key information and answers at the start of your content, then adding further detail. Make your content as self-contained as possible to ensure it can be accurately captured in AI summaries. Content that can stand on its own at the paragraph or section level tends to be understood and cited more accurately than content that relies on a reader navigating the whole article.
- **Language** – AI-ready content is written in plain, conversational language. While search engine optimisation (SEO) looks for individual keywords, generative engine optimisation (GEO) looks for conversational phrases that answer user questions directly and clearly.
- **Content types** – Content that presents information in a structured format, such as in dot point lists or simple tables, is easy for AI models to parse and include in summaries. Often, lists and tables will be picked up by AI summaries and presented as is.

Making content that is easy for AI to see

Making content easy for AI to 'see' means setting up your content with the technical features and details that AI uses to recognise, identify and select the content it wants. This is like signposting so AI spots your content and knows what it is looking at. Key aspects are:

- **Styles** – Styles in Word (such as Heading 1, Heading 2, Normal) and HTML (<h1>, <h2>) provide both structural and visual information. They communicate the role of each piece of content, as well as how it should look. Styles are essential for accessibility, because they provide the structure that a screen reader (and user) uses to navigate. They are also essential for AI, because they make content more likely to be accurately parsed by AI.
- **Metadata** – Metadata is information about your digital content. It consists of hidden HTML tags or labels that tell search engines and AI models what a page is about, who wrote it, when it was published and how it should be displayed. Metadata includes
  - title tags – short labels for content
  - metadescriptions – summaries of content sections or pages
  - schema markup – a labelling system for different types of content.

Ensuring your content is reputable

Generative AI models are designed to identify and select information based on its reputation and standing – specifically, its authority and recency. This is critical for complex content.

Content is more likely to be included when it contains:

- **data and details** – use actual data and detailed information to support your messaging
- **sources and citations** – link back to reputable sources, original studies, datasets and experts to back up your information
- **author bios** – detail professional credentials, background and links to verifiable profiles

AI favours recent and regularly updated content. Regularly update your content to reflect the latest facts, statistics and guidelines, and identify and archive old pages and files.