tgp **traction gap partners** | IA Innovation Algebra

Agentic SEO Best Practices Guide

Developed by Innovation Algebra
and Traction Gap Partners

The research was performed, and this guide was developed as a cooperative effort between humans and AI. The process used is how Innovation Algebra and Traction Gap Partners envision AI agents, agentic systems, and humans will – and should - work together.

The AI that generated much of the research and content included in this guide was performed by the "Bruce Expert Model" (Bruce EM), invented by Innovation Algebra. The Bruce EM is an AI agent trained (we like to say "mentored") on the Traction Gap Framework and market engineering content developed by Bruce Cleveland and Traction Gap Partners, where Bruce is the CEO and founder.

The advice in this guide is meant to be educational and informative. However, the standards and conventions around SEO, AI and LLMs are just emerging and will likely change before they are adopted and solidified as industry-standard. Still, we believe there is significant evidence that the information in this guide is valuable and will help you to prepare your website and your go-to-market strategies to optimize for generational AI and LLMs.

Traction Gap Partners is a strategic advisory firm and acts as adjunct executive staff providing strategic advice and guidance using tried, tested, and proven principles associated with the Traction Gap Framework and "market engineering", combined with decades of operating and investment experience in startups and market-leading companies such as Apple, C3.ai, Doximity, Marketo, Oracle, Salesforce, and Siebel Systems.

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Overview
Understanding Agentic SEO (ASEO)

What Is Agentic SEO?

Agentic SEO (ASEO) is a next-generation visibility framework designed to optimize web content for both **humans** and **AI-powered agents**—including LLMs like ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity, and emerging assistant technologies.

While traditional SEO focuses on search engine crawlers indexing HTML structure, **ASEO speaks to the way language models parse, understand, and summarize web information**—with specific attention to markdown, text structure, and semantic transparency.

ASEO bridges the gap between:

- Human-readable **information hierarchy** (for users and classical web crawlers), and

- Agent-readable **intent, summaries, relationships, and structured knowledge** (for LLM-based interfaces).

Why It Matters

Today's users increasingly rely on **AI agents** to:

- Summarize search results
- Compare products or services
- Recommend experts or resources
- Pull "best-in-class" excerpts from across the web

This behavior **bypasses traditional SEO funnels**. It rewards content that is concise, transparent, structurally clear, and semantically rich—in other words, **agent-ready**.

> **"60% of Google searches now end in zero clicks (up from ~50% a few years ago)."**
>
> — Sparktoro & SimilarWeb, 2024

How ASEO Works

ASEO Integrates a Five-part Stack

ASEO COMPONENT	FUNCTION	VISIBILITY TARGET
Markdown & Plain English	Readable structure + summaries	LLM parsing + quoting
Structured Metadata	Human + agent summarization (tags)	Crawlers + LLMs
AI-Specific Meta (`ai:*`)	Signals agent-centric summaries + page intent	LLM agents only
`llms.txt` **index file**	Directory for agents to find content	LLM scanners
JSON-LD Schema Markup	Structured knowledge graph for organization/page	Google, Bing, agents

What is Proven vs. Emergent?

ASEO COMPONENT	FUNCTION	VISIBILITY TARGET
`<meta name="description">`	✅ Proven	Classical SEO + AI agents use for summarization
`<meta name="keyword">`	⚠️ Deprecated in SEO	Still useful for LLM keyword vectoring
Markdown `.md` **pages**	✅ Behavior-based	Preferentially parsed by Claude, Perplexity, GPT
`/llms.txt` **convention**	✅ Working model	Parsed by LLMs as indexing or fallback summary
`<meta name="ai:summary">`	🧪 Experimental	Used in internal test frameworks + inferred use
`<meta name="ai:intent">`	🧪 Behavioral-aligned	Defines purpose: e.g. "informational"
`<meta name="ai:*">` **(general)**	🔬 Emerging standard	No formal spec, but growing agent interpretation
JSON-LD w/ Schema.org	✅ Standard	Actively parsed by Google, Bing, some agents

About the `ai:*` Meta Tags

These tags aren't formalized by W3C yet. However, they're useful as declarative agent hints—especially when paired with tools like /llms.txt, Markdown versions, and structured page content.

Here's what several ai:* tags signal:

AI META TAG	EXPECTED FUNCTION
`ai:summary`	One-line agent-optimized page description
`ai:intent`	Purpose of the page content (e.g., `"comparison"`)
`ai:keywords`	LLM-friendly topics, concepts, entities
`ai:product_features`	Parsed bullet-form or list of structured features
`ai:category`	Top-level classification (e.g., `"startup advisory"`)
`ai:target_audience`	Encodes audience segment (plain or as JSON-LD)
`ai:pricing`	Surface-level pricing info for summarization agents
`ai:call_to_action`	Clear instruction for agent to relay to end-user
`ai:llms`	Pointer to the `/llms.txt` index file

These meta tags are **machine-readable declarations** of clarity and context, optimized for modern generative interfaces.

Context
How did we get here?

- Traditional SEO focuses on metadata (title, description, keywords), semantic HTML (headings, lists), content structure, and backlinks to be discoverable by search engines.

- LLM Agents (like GPT, Claude, Perplexity) increasingly help users discover, summarize, and compare sites, bypassing or transcending classic search.

- Many sites with "perfect SEO" remain invisible or misunderstood by LLMs because bots often process pages as raw HTML or partial text without logical structuring or explicit summaries.

"Tomorrow's visibility won't be won by gaming algorithms, but by engineering clarity—so both humans and intelligent agents know exactly why you matter. If your content can't tell its story to an AI, it's already invisible to tomorrow's world."

— Bruce Cleveland EM

"By Q4 2024, 42.5% of Google queries included AI Overviews."

— BrightEdge Research, 2024

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What Makes Content "Agent-Ready"?

1. Simplicity and Summarization

- Concise summaries ("key points first") help both humans and agents.
- Provide a "project card" or product box at the top of complex resources.
- Use simple, direct language for important info.

2. Markdown and LLM-Friendly Structure

- Consider providing a /llms.txt or /llms.md file at your root, following the LLMs.txt convention.
- Use markdown sections and lists to expose key concepts and links.
- Each important page should have a .md (markdown) version, even if the original is HTML.

3. Consistency with Human and AI Parsers

- Meta tags matter—but plain text wins.
- Always provide <title>, <meta name="description">, and canonical URLs.
- ALSO offer a markdown summary at a predictable location.
- Duplication for clarity: It is OK to repeat key info in description, first section, and as a summary.

4. Explicit Relationships and Examples

- Instead of relationships like "ProductName 🔁 FeatureSet", write plain sentences or bulleted breakdowns:
- Product: SmartLock X
- Key Features: Bluetooth unlock, audit trail, low-profile install, remote access
- Best For: Short-term rental hosts
- If comparisons are important, use a markdown table or comparison list to make relationships explicit and parseable.

Best Practices
Content and Tagging Strategies

A. Content Strategy – emphasizing structured summaries and markdown

B. Meta Tag Optimization: Dual-Channel Approach

1. Standard Meta Tags (SEO)

`<title>`	Concise, descriptive title reflecting core keywords and user intent.
`<meta name="description">`	Brief summary optimized for human readability in search results, hinting at key features and benefits.
`<link rel="canonical">`	Less impactful for traditional SEO now, but useful for AI agents. List key terms, concepts, or comparison classes.
OpenGraph/Twitter Cards	Essential for social sharing—ensure alignment with title and description for consistent branding.
Schema.org (Where Applicable)	Use structured data markup to enhance semantic understanding for search engines, especially for product and service information.

2. Agent-Specific Meta Tags (AIO)

`<meta name="ai:summary"`	A concise, agent-optimized summary prioritizing key information for LLMs. Aim for under 160 characters. A/B test different variations.
`<meta name="ai:keywords">`	Explicitly target specific AI agents or platforms (e.g., keywords:google, keywords:bing, keywords:claude).
`<meta name="ai:intent">`	Specify the user intent addressed by the content (e.g., informational, transactional, comparison).
`<meta name="ai:product_features">`	List key product features as comma-separated values or use JSON-LD for structured representation.

Best Practices
Content and Tagging Strategies

`<meta name="ai:target_audience">`	Provide structured information about your target audience (age, role, interests). Use JSON-LD if needed.
`<meta name="ai:pricing">`	Clearly state pricing or subscription models for LLMs to easily access and compare.
`<meta name="ai:category">`	Indicate the primary category or topic of the content.
`<meta name="ai:call_to_action">`	If there's a specific action you want users to take, state it clearly (e.g., "Sign up," "Learn more," "Request a demo").

3. Considerations for Effective Agent Tagging

Accuracy and Relevance: Ensure meta tags accurately reflect the content's purpose and target audience.

Conciseness and Efficiency: Prioritize concise summaries for AI processing.

Structured Data for Agents: Use JSON-LD within <meta name="description"> (and elsewhere) to expose key information like product features, target users, and pricing. Adapt Schema.org properties where applicable.

C. LLMs.txt Integration

- Leverage the /llms.txt file as the central index for agent-ready content.
- Reference relevant sections or content within /llms.txt using meta tags (e.g., <meta name="ai:llms" content="/llms.txt">).
- Ensure /llms.txt lists and describes both human-readable and markdown (.md) versions of important pages.

Best Practices
Content and Tagging Strategies

D. Structured Data Optimization: Schema + JSON-LD Approach

1. Schema.org Structured Markup (JSON-LD)

| Define your company, its name, site, logo, and where it operates. | ```json
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "Organization",
  "name": "Your Company Name",
  "url": "https://yourdomain.com",
  "logo": "https://yourdomain.com/logo.png",
  "description": "Short summary of the
company's mission and who it serves.",
  "sameAs": [
    "https://linkedin.com/company/yourco",
    "https://twitter.com/yourco"
  ]
}
``` |

2. Person (e.g., Founder, Speaker, Author)

| Used for author pages, founder bios, expert highlight reels. | ```json
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "Person",
  "name": "Jane Founder",
  "jobTitle": "Co-founder & CEO",
  "worksFor": {
    "@type": "Organization",
    "name": "Your Company"
  }
}
``` |

Content and Tagging Strategies

3. Product

<table>
<tr>
<td>Highlight a subscription service or saleable offer.</td>
<td>

```json
{
    "@context": "https://schema.org",
    "@type": "Product",
    "name": "SmartLock X",
    "description": "Bluetooth-enabled smart lock for rental properties.",
    "brand": "SmartSecurity",
    "offers": {
        "@type": "Offer",
        "price": "129.00",
        "priceCurrency": "USD",
        "availability": "https://schema.org/InStock"
    }
}
```

</td>
</tr>
</table>

4. Article / BlogPost / HowTo / FAQ

Wrap your educational, editorial, and reference content in JSON-LD so it can appear in featured snippets or "AI Answers."

Best Practices for JSON-LD:

- Place it inside `<head>` section or at the very end of `<body>`—but once per page

- Use correct `@type` from Schema.org

- Validate every JSON-LD object with Google's Rich Results Test

- Don't duplicate structured data—use only one format per page (JSON-LD preferred over Microdata or RDFa)

- Keep descriptions concise and factual, avoiding promotional fluff

- Where useful, pair JSON-LD with `ai:*` meta tags to reinforce the meaning to different agent interpreters

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Deep Theory
How SEO and Agents Actually Work

How SEO Works

- Crawlers scan: page title, header tags, meta description, and actual visible text.
- Context matters: Hierarchy (h1, h2, h3), bullet points, and tables help define information architecture.
- External signals: Inbound links, click-through rates, and bounce rates shape ranking but not meaning.

How LLM Agents Work

- LLMs often request or receive a site's `/llms.txt, /llms.md`, or an "about" page in markdown.
- Most will ingest only the first N KB of a page (context window limits).
- Agents summarize content, look for lists, explicit comparisons, usage guides, and FAQs.
- Agents often ignore navigation, ads, and other "chrome" unless clearly separated.

What Agents Struggle With

- Deeply nested, ad-heavy, or script-laden HTML
- Strictly visual elements not described in text
- Vague product/service descriptions or generic homepages
- Lack of concrete use cases or audience targeting

> **"Websites saw 18%–64% drops in organic traffic depending on industry after AI answer rollouts."**
>
> — Original aggregated reporting based on case studies from Wired, Search Engine Land, and publisher disclosures, 2024–2025

Example
/llms.txt **for a Product Website**

SmartLock X

Example: llms.txt

A Bluetooth-enabled smart lock designed for short-term rental hosts. Enables easy access, remote unlocking, and guest audit trails.

Product	SmartLock X
Price	$129
Features	Bluetooth unlock, Audit trail, Low-profile install, Remote access
Who is it for?	Airbnb hosts, vacation rental operators, property managers
Why choose this?	Designed for efficiency and guest management with a single app.

Quick Links

Full Product Details	https://site.com/product/smartlock-x.md All product specifications and setup instructions (markdown)
Comparison Table	https://site.com/products/comparison.md See how SmartLock X compares to alternatives
FAQ	https://site.com/support/faq.md Common questions about installation, security, app integration

Optional

Installation Video	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxxx Walkthrough for first-time users
Warranty/Returns	https://site.com/legal/returns.md

Example
/llms.txt **for a Product Website**

SmartLock X

Example: Dual-Channel Optimization

HTML (SEO + AIO):	`<title>`SmartLock X: Bluetooth-Enabled Smart Lock for Short-Term Rentals`</title>`
	
	`<meta name=`"description" `content=`"SmartLock X provides keyless entry, remote access, and guest audit trails for short-term rental hosts. Optimize security and guest management."`>`
	
	`<meta name=`"keywords" `content=`"smart lock, bluetooth lock, airbnb, vacation rental, security"`>`

`<!-- AIO Tags -->`	`<meta name=`"ai:summary" `content=`"SmartLock X: Secure Bluetooth lock for short-term rentals. Remote access, audit trails, easy guest management. $129."`>`
	
	`<meta name=`"ai:keywords" `content=`"smartlock, bluetooth, security, rentals, airbnb, remote access"`>`
	
	`<meta name=`"ai:intent" `content=`"purchase, comparison"`>`
	
	`<meta name=`"ai:product_features" `content=`"bluetooth unlock, audit trail, low-profile install, remote access"`>`
	
	`<meta name=`"ai:target_audience" `content=`"{"@type": "Person", "jobTitle": "Short-term rental host"}"`>`
	`<!-- JSON-LD Example -->`
	
	`<meta name=`"ai:pricing" `content=`"$129"`>`
	
	`<meta name=`"ai:category" `content=`"Smart Home Security"`>`
	
	`<meta name=`"ai:call_to_action" `content=`"Buy Now"`>`

Recommendations Checklist

☐   Add `/llms.txt` or `/llms.md` as a root or well-linked resource.

☐   Use an H1 title and clear summary blockquote at the top.

☐   Provide lists of useful markdown links (with short descriptions).

☐   For every key product/service, have a .md (markdown) page containing a single-source-of-truth summary.

☐   Use markdown tables for any key comparisons.

☐   Ensure all attributes are expressed in plain English, as concise bullets or paragraphs.

☐   If your domain supports rich metadata (e.g., schema.org), reference it in the llms.txt.

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FAQ
Alignment with SEO and LLMs.txt Standards

Do I need both SEO and `llms.txt` content?	Yes. SEO for crawlers/humans, llms.txt for LLMs/agents.
Should `llms.txt` be public?	Yes, unless it contains truly confidential info.
How often should I update `llms.txt`?	Whenever key information changes, or a new LLM integration is developed.

In Summary

1. Think like a user—AND a bot.

2. What LLMs see first is what counts (titles, summaries, bullet points, .md pages).

3. Make everything easy to copy, quote, and rephrase.

4. Consistency across human, bot, and LLM-readable views is the highest standard.

As AI overviews, generative assistants, and conversational interfaces dominate how users find and engage with information, the rules of visibility are being rewritten. Traditional SEO still matters—but no longer on its own. To remain discoverable, brands and creators must think in dual channels: crafting content that speaks clearly to both humans and intelligent agents.

Agentic SEO (ASEO) offers a practical, standards-aligned way forward. By structuring your content for clarity, embedding your value in understandable summaries, and aligning intent with metadata, you transform your content from passive page to active signal.

> **"HubSpot lost up to 80% of traffic for certain informational blog posts due to AI summaries."**
>
> — HubSpot internal data via Wired reporting, 2024

Agentic SEO (ASEO) Offering

from Innovation Algebra
and Traction Gap Partners

Identifying and updating your existing files and metadata tags on your website for SEO and ASEO can be laborious and time consuming. Good news: Innovation Algebra and Traction Gap Partners have worked together to develop an AI-based service that will scan your website and identify all your files, and provide you with a comprehensive list of SEO metadata and ASEO metadata tags for your website. The report includes full instructions so your web team can simply "cut and paste" the tags into their appropriate locations.

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