PLAYBOOK 06 · FIELD EDITION

How to get your content *cited by AI*.

A 6-step framework for B2B marketers — based on Hostinger's documented case study: 100 articles re-engineered, 52% AI citation share growth in 3 months.

PILLAR	READING TIME	FOR	EDITION
Content & AI search	22 minutes	Marketing Leads · CMOs · Heads of Growth	Q2 · 2026

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06

This is a *working document*, not a thought-leadership essay.

Most AI SEO advice right now is either too vague to act on or too vendor-specific to trust. Hostinger published something different: a documented case study showing how they re-engineered 100 articles and grew their AI citation share by 52% over three months. They shared the framework publicly, no lead-gen form, no gated PDF. This playbook breaks down their six-step framework, strips out what does not hold up under scrutiny, and gives you a version you can apply to your own content — whether you are managing a 20-article blog or a 200-page site. Before you start: this is a 2-3 month project, not a sprint. Anyone promising AI visibility gains in two weeks is selling you something.

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Based on Hostinger's *public AI SEO case study*

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PRE-FLIGHT

What you need before *running this*.

- **At least 10 published articles.** Write more content before worrying about AI citation optimisation. There is nothing to re-engineer yet.
- **Access to Google Search Console.** You need to know which pages are already getting impressions and clicks. Start there — not with your newest or favourite articles.
- **Direct CMS editing access.** This playbook involves changing H2 structures, adding HTML tables, and updating author bios. If every edit needs a developer ticket, resolve that bottleneck first.
- **5-10 questions your customers actually ask.** If you do not have these from customer interviews or sales call notes, spend two hours in Reddit threads and Google Autocomplete before touching anything.

STEP 01

Restructure your content for *semantic SEO*.

The core idea is answer-first architecture. AI tools scan for pages that directly answer queries — and the structural signal they rely on is whether your headings ask questions and whether the first sentence under each heading answers them. Most B2B content uses H2s as topic labels rather than questions. The difference matters because AI citation engines need to match a user query to a passage that answers it.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THIS

01 Pull your top 10 articles by organic impressions from Google Search Console.

02 For each article, read the intro. Can it answer the target query in one sentence? If not, rewrite the first two sentences so the answer comes first.

03 Audit every H2. Rewrite each as a direct question. "Content strategy" becomes "What makes a B2B content strategy actually work?"

04 Check the first sentence under each H2. It should answer the question the heading asks. If it does not, move the answer up.

TIME ESTIMATE

30-45 minutes per article depending on length. For 10 articles, budget a full week of spare capacity. This is the highest-leverage change in the playbook — do it before anything else.

STEP 02

Build topical authority — start with *comparisons*.

AI tools are more likely to cite sources that cover a subject comprehensively. But there is a sequencing point most guides skip: start with comparison content, not overview content. AI tools prefer structured, quantifiable data — pros and cons, feature comparisons, pricing tables, numbered criteria. Specific comparisons get cited regularly because AI can extract and present the structure directly.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THIS

01 Use Google Autocomplete, Reddit (topic + "vs" or "or"), and your SEO tool to find comparison queries. Look for "[Tool A] vs [Tool B]" and "best [category] for [use case]" patterns.

02 Map these against what you have published. Gaps are your content priorities for the next 60 days.

03 When writing comparison content, structure it with an HTML table. AI tools can extract tables directly — prose descriptions of the same information are harder to cite.

04 After comparisons, build topic clusters with how-to and explanation content. Get comparisons live first.

IF YOU ARE LEADING A TEAM

Set a rule that every new content brief includes at least one structured table before approval. Two minutes at brief stage saves significant retrofitting later.

STEP 03

Make your authority *legible to AI*.

EEAT is a Google Search Quality concept that AI citation tools have effectively adopted. AI tools are more likely to cite sources they can verify as credible, and author credentials are one of the signals they use. Most B2B author bios are either missing entirely or so generic they are meaningless.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THIS

01 Audit every byline. If the bio does not include verifiable credentials — specific job titles, named companies, links to LinkedIn — rewrite it.

02 A good author bio includes: current role and company, relevant specialisation, one or two specific credibility markers, and a link to a professional profile.

03 For a personal brand site: your bio should be consistent across every article, your About page, and LinkedIn. Inconsistency is a trust signal problem.

STEP 04

Make your commercial pages *citable*.

This is the step most B2B marketers skip, and the one with the most direct commercial impact. Your services and pricing pages are the ones you actually want cited when a buyer asks an AI tool what to look for in your category. The problem: commercial pages are written as sales copy, not information sources. AI tools do not cite sales copy.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THIS

01 Pick your top three commercial pages — the ones that, if cited in an AI response, would most likely generate qualified interest.

02 For each page, add one HTML table. Services page: compare service tiers or what is included vs excluded. Pricing page: feature matrix. Four rows and three columns is enough.

03 Add a FAQ section to each commercial page. Write questions as buyers actually ask them. Aim for 4-6 questions, each with a direct 2-4 sentence answer.

04 Add a 100-150 word informational summary above the fold. Plain, factual language. This gives AI tools a passage to cite.

TIME ESTIMATE

2-3 hours per page. The FAQ section alone takes an hour if you are writing real questions with real answers.

STEP 05

Remove crawler friction — *with one caveat*.

WHAT TO FIX

Schema markup: Add Article schema to every blog post and FAQ schema to any page with Q&A content. WordPress: Yoast SEO or Rank Math handles this.

404 errors: Run a crawl using Screaming Frog (free up to 500 URLs). Fix or redirect any 404s that internal links point to.

Sitemap: Confirm your XML sitemap is submitted to Search Console and every new page appears within 24 hours.

ON LLMS.TXT

Hostinger recommends creating an llms.txt file for AI crawl permission. After implementing it and running server log file analysis, not a single AI crawler specifically fetched it. Zero requests in the log files. Fix your 404s and schema first. If you want to add llms.txt as a forward-looking measure later, it costs nothing — but do not treat it as a priority.

STEP 06

Optimise for *AI agents*, not just search engines.

AI agents — the kind that browse the web autonomously to compile answers — leave slow, unstructured pages. They time out, skip, or deprioritise content that takes too long to load. A PageSpeed Insights mobile score below 70 is an AI visibility problem, not just a UX issue.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THIS

01 Run your top 10 pages through PageSpeed Insights (pagespeed.web.dev). Record the mobile score for each.

02 Below 70 on mobile: fix it. Most common culprits: uncompressed images, render-blocking scripts, third-party embeds loading on every page.

03 Compress images before uploading. Squoosh (free, browser-based) reduces file size by 60-80% without visible quality loss.

04 On WordPress: install a caching plugin (WP Rocket or W3 Total Cache). A basic setup typically improves scores by 10-15 points.

05 Below 50 on mobile: get a developer involved. There is usually a structural issue that plugin-level fixes cannot resolve.

FOR CMOS AND HEADS OF MARKETING

If your site scores below 60 on mobile and you are investing in content, you are building on a leaking foundation. Before commissioning more articles, make the case to your dev team that page speed is now an AI visibility issue. That framing is stronger than "Google likes fast sites."

MEASUREMENT

Three KPIs. *No tool required* to start.

VISIBILITY

Select 5-10 customer questions. Every 6-8 weeks, test in ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google AI Overview. Track in a spreadsheet: question, date, tool, appeared yes/no, competitor appearing instead.

CITATION SHARE

Every 8-10 weeks, test 10-15 priority questions in Perplexity and ChatGPT. Record which sources are cited. If a competitor appears where you should, that is a specific brief to write — not a reason to panic.

BRAND SENTIMENT

Monthly: ask an AI tool "What are common criticisms of [your brand]?" and "What is [your brand] known for?" Narrative off? Publish corrective content — factual and specific, not defensive.

ACTION PLAN

Eight weeks. *Sequenced*. Do not run everything at once.

WK 1-2	**Semantic SEO audit.** Pull top 10 articles from Search Console. Rewrite intros to answer-first. Rewrite every H2 as a direct question. This is the highest-leverage change and it compounds everything else.
WK 3-4	**Authority signals.** Fix author bios across all published content. Add FAQ sections to your top three commercial pages. Add informational summaries above the fold on each.
WK 5-6	**Technical cleanup.** Run PageSpeed audit. Fix anything below 70 on mobile. Resolve 404s. Confirm schema markup is in place on blog posts and FAQ pages.
WK 7-8	**Comparison content.** Build or update your first two comparison articles based on the gaps identified in Step 2. Publish with HTML tables and structured data.

6-8 weeks
FOR INITIAL VISIBILITY MOVEMENT

2-3 months
FOR CITATION SHARE TO SHIFT

52% growth
CITATION SHARE IN HOSTINGER'S CASE STUDY

If you are not seeing movement after 12 weeks, the problem is usually one of three things: your content still does not directly answer the queries you are tracking; your authority signals are not strong enough; or the questions you are tracking are ones where AI tools default to established reference sources regardless of your content quality. The playbook gives you the method. The work is in testing which questions you can credibly win, and iterating from there.

The method is shared. The *work* is yours.

Hostinger's framework holds up. But it is not plug-and-play. It requires structured experimentation to isolate what works for your brand, your questions, your content gaps. Timelines matter. Anyone promising faster than 6-8 weeks for visibility movement is trying to sell you something.

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