

Summing It All Up: The Impact of AI Overviews

As we learn from the business world, we want to share that information with our community of educators and business professionals. Recent conversations with business professionals have continued to reiterate the growing role of artificial intelligence (AI) in business and the need for AI literacy as a fundamental skill in today's workforce. In the following Action Brief, we'll discuss an emerging AI trend with potentially massive implications for businesses and their digital marketing efforts: AI summaries.

The Rise of the AI Summary

On May 14, 2024, a massive technological and cultural reform took place. You may not realize it, but you've probably interacted with this innovation almost every day since then.

This was the day Google officially [launched](#) AI Overviews, which are AI-generated search results summaries appearing at the top of the search results page. Using [Gemini 2.0](#), a new AI Model from [Google DeepMind](#), the AI Overview feature synthesizes and presents information from multiple web sources in response to users' search queries.

While statistics on the prominence of AI Overviews are still uncertain, a [recent study](#) found that nearly half of all Google searches feature an AI Overview at the top of the results page. And given that nearly [90% of all online searches](#) are conducted via Google, the visibility of AI Overview is indisputable. Its industry impact is also demonstrated by competing search engines like [Bing](#) and [DuckDuckGo](#) quickly following Google with their own AI-enhanced search results. The New York Times called Google's introduction of AI Overview its "[biggest change to search in years.](#)"

So why did Google implement AI Overview? Let's go straight to the source for an answer. When asked "Why did Google create AI Overviews?", Gemini's AI Overview response was:

Google created AI Overviews, previously known as the Search Generative Experience (SGE), to provide users with concise, AI-generated summaries of search results at the top of the page, aiming to offer quick, helpful information and streamline the search process.

Seems reasonable enough. Traditional online searching can be tedious, so why not let AI do all the investigative heavy lifting? Who would have a problem with that?

The Response

Lots of people, it turns out, had a problem with that.

Individuals online were quick to [post](#) stories and images of factually incorrect and absurd summaries in their AI Overviews. However, perhaps more consequential than one-off hallucinations are the potential economic ramifications of AI Overviews.

Professionals from our [Business Advisory Council](#) raised concerns about AI summaries and—specifically—the increase in [zero-click searches](#) as a result of their ubiquity. Zero-click searches occur

when users believe they've found what they're looking for on the search engine results page (SERP) itself without needing to click and look through the actual links on the results page.

Studies indicate that zero-click searches are [on the rise](#), which can have a major impact on businesses. Many companies invest major portions of their digital marketing efforts into engaging with customers through search engines. They pay Google for ad space to increase visibility and develop search engine optimization (SEO) strategies to push key digital content to the top of the search results.

But as more and more Googlers settle for the AI summary rather than clicking through to actual websites, those traditional digital marketing approaches are [floundering](#). Some experts predict that businesses could lose anywhere between [20% and 60% of their organic web traffic](#).

For some companies, these drastic changes are leading to a complete reimagining of how they can attract visitors to their websites. This could mean [adjusting SEO strategies](#) to prioritize other digital marketing efforts—such as backlinks or social media—or even [paying for ad space](#) within AI Overviews themselves.

But for other companies, the rise of AI summaries calls for more dramatic action. In February 2025, online education company Chegg [filed a lawsuit](#) against Google and its parent company Alphabet. Chegg—whose [stock plummeted](#) after the release of AI Overviews— is alleging Google's AI summaries constitute unfair competitive practices and unauthorized repurposing of content.

In the suit, Chegg is [claiming](#) that Google and its use of AI “threatens to leave the public with an increasingly unrecognizable internet experience, in which users never leave Google’s walled garden and receive only synthetic, error-ridden answers in response to their queries — a once robust but now hollowed-out information ecosystem of little use and unworthy of trust.”

Conclusion

As the role of AI in business grows, companies will be forced to revisit their own processes—whether they like it or not. But the case of Google's AI Overview poses some interesting (and perhaps concerning) questions about the AI-business relationship. Is it ethical for Google—a company that virtually all other businesses rely on for their digital marketing success—to implement AI as a sort of mediator or translator between businesses and their potential customers?

This dynamic gives Gemini and AI Overviews an immense amount of informational power, the type of power that could make or break companies fiercely competing for online attention. In the end, only time will tell how this new use for AI—and additional AI applications that are inevitably down the road—will impact the greater business landscape.

Links for Further Reading:

- ["You Searched Google. The AI Hallucinated an Answer. Who's Legally Responsible?"](#)
- ["You Knew It Was Coming: Google Begins Testing AI-Only Search Results"](#)
- ["Google AIO Impact - SEO & PPC CTRs at All Time Low"](#)
- ["Is Google's AI Overview Killing Web Traffic? How Mission-Driven Organizations Should Respond"](#)
- ["Google Leans Further Into AI-Generated Overviews for Its Search Engine"](#)

Discussion Questions:

- Do you find AI summaries useful? Why or why not? Have they changed the way you search?
- Do you consider AI summaries trustworthy or reliable? Do you fact-check information provided by AI Overviews? If so, how? If not, why?
- What is the potential impact on a business if AI Overviews provide incorrect or incomplete information regarding the organization?
- Who should own the information provided in an AI summary?
- Should students be allowed to cite AI summaries as information sources, or should they cite the sources from which AI summaries get their information?

Sources:

- ["Generative AI in Search: Let Google Do the Searching for You"](#)
- ["Introducing Gemini 2.0: Our New AI Model for the Agentic Era"](#)
- ["Our Mission: Build AI Responsibly to Benefit Humanity"](#)
- ["Study: Google AI Overviews Appear in 47% of Search Results"](#)
- ["34 Eye-Opening Google Search Statistics for 2024"](#)
- ["Microsoft Brings AI-Powered Overviews to Bing"](#)
- ["DuckDuckGo Is Amping Up Its AI Search Tool—But Will Still Let You Leave It Behind"](#)
- ["Google's A.I. Search Errors Cause a Furore Online"](#)
- ["The Backlash to Google's AI Search, Explained"](#)
- ["What Are Zero-Click Searches & How Do They Impact SEO?"](#)
- ["Goodbye Clicks, Hello AI: Zero-Click Search Redefines Marketing"](#)
- ["Google's Frantic Race Toward AI Leaves CEO Trying to Quell Ad Revenue Worries"](#)
- ["How Google SGE Will Impact Your Traffic—And 3 SGE Recovery Case Studies"](#)
- ["How Google AI Overview Impacts 20 Industries"](#)
- ["Google Search's New AI Overviews Will Soon Have Ads"](#)
- ["Online Education Company Chegg Sues Google, Saying Its AI Is Killing the Business"](#)
- ["Chegg Accuses Google of Using AI to Crush Traffic, Revenue in Antitrust Lawsuit: 'Harmful and Unsustainable'"](#)
- ["Chegg Sues Alphabet, Says Google AI Led to Strategic Review"](#)