

One in Four Businesses Are 'Invisible' to AI, New Study Finds

Lucie Research ran 846 AI queries through its AI visibility system. Many companies never came up at all — even ones optimized for Google search.

ATLANTA, GA, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New research from Atlanta-

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We show you how AI sees your business, and then we fix it. That's the difference.”

*Craig Lucie, Founder and CEO,
Lucie Research*

based [Lucie Research](#) finds that a sizeable share of businesses are invisible to artificial intelligence, as more consumers stop “googling” and start asking AI tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, and Google's AI answers to recommend local solutions.

Lucie Research tested 133 businesses through its AI visibility system, resulting in a clean sample of 94

companies. Among the businesses, one in four (26.6%) were completely invisible — meaning AI could not find them at all when a customer asked for a recommendation. Many of those same businesses are well-prepared for traditional Google search, which no longer guarantees a company will appear in an AI answer.

The stakes are high. Recent research from BrightLocal found that 45% of consumers now use AI tools to find local businesses, up from just 6% a year earlier. And when AI does make a recommendation, it tends to name only a few businesses, so the companies it names capture the customer, and the rest may never enter the conversation.

"Search used to be a list of ten links, and you decided where to click," said Craig Lucie, founder and CEO of Lucie Research and [Lucie Content](#), and a former Emmy Award-winning television news anchor. "AI gives you one confident answer with only a few names in it. If your business isn't one of those names, you're not just losing to your competitors — you aren't even in the running. And what we learned through our research is that most business owners don't realize this is happening."

The research also found that when customers asked AI for a recommendation, a competitor was named instead of the tested business about 40% of the time. It also revealed that simply being found by the AI was the single biggest factor in whether a business got recommended at all.

"The great news about what our research found is that the problem is fixable," said Lucie.

"Businesses that perform well have clear, consistent, and factually supported information, combined with strong video and imagery that helps both people and machines understand and verify the business. We tested this on our own company before we tested a single client, and measurably improved our own visibility. When you ask AI for businesses in our lane, we make sure we're showing up."

The report highlighted some recognizable organizations that are already doing it right. Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble, Google, Atlanta's famed Fox Theatre, and The Georgia Aquarium were among those the Index identified as consistently visible across the AI scenarios tested, showing that clearly represented businesses can and do surface in AI answers.

The full findings are published in the inaugural [2026 Lucie AI Visibility Index](#). Lucie Research is available for interviews and can demonstrate the AI visibility test live, including on a recognizable local business that has agreed to participate.

Learn more or get an AI Visibility Score at luciecontent.com.

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