SEO

AEO

GEO

BECOME THE DEFAULT

Get found on Google, Maps and AI search.
Without an agency.

No jargon. One proven method. Fifteen years of it working.

Mohammad A Mahmud

TRUE SEO CONSULTANTS

Everything in this book, and what it is for.

Fifty-six chapters, told through four real businesses followed for two years. Twenty-three worksheets you fill in as you go. Not one technical term you are asked to learn.

56	11	23	59
CHAPTERS	PARTS	WORKSHEETS	DIAGRAMS

How the book is built

Every chapter is short enough to read in one sitting, ends with three questions about your own business, and sends you to a worksheet when there is something to write down. The answers to all of those questions are collected at the back, so nothing is left hanging.

The eleven parts run in order, from why nobody can find you today to what you do in the year after it starts working. **You can read it straight through like a story, or open it at the part you are stuck on.**

What you will be able to do

Decide what your business should be known for. Find the questions your competitors never answered. Write pages that get quoted rather than skimmed. Keep a Google Business Profile that actually brings in work. Read a proposal from an agency and know what you are buying. Tell, from five numbers, whether any of it is working.

ONE. WHY YOU ARE INVISIBLE

1 The Website You Paid For, and the Website You Needed
2 What One Customer Is Worth, and What You're Paying to Rent Them
3 Twenty Years of Google, and What It Was Asking For Each Time
4 Google Has Never Cooked a Meal: It Just Knows Whose Recipe to Trust
5 The Toy Shop: Why the Organised Shop Gets Used
6 Your Page Does Not Arrive Alone

TWO. DECIDING WHAT YOU ARE FOR

7 What Kind of Money Do You Actually Want?
8 The One Thing You Want to Be Known For
9 The Customer You Want More Of, and the Words He Uses
10 Your Customers Search in Shapes, Not Words
11 Your Services, Your Places, Your People, and Your Proof
12 Drawing Your Territory: The Map of What You Should Own

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15 Finding the Questions Nobody Above You Answered
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Every chapter is short enough to read in one sitting, ends with three questions about your own business, and sends you to a worksheet when there is something to write down.

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Every chapter is short enough to read in one sitting, ends with three questions about your own business, and sends you to a worksheet when there is something to write down.

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Every chapter is short enough to read in one sitting, ends with three questions about your own business, and sends you to a worksheet when there is something to write down.

The handbook: twenty-three sheets.

The working half of the book. Every sheet is referenced from the chapter that needs it, and all twenty-three are reprinted together at the back so you can fill them in in one go.

1. What One Customer Is Worth
2. What Kind Of Money You Actually Want
3. The One Thing
4. The Customer, And His Words
5. Services, Places, People, Proof
6. The Map
7. The Four Skeletons
8. The Gaps, Turned Into Headings
9. The Proof You Already Have
10. The Facts Sheet
11. The Three Building Checks
12. Does This Question Deserve A Page
13. The Section Plan
14. Your Real Year
15. What It Costs
16. Scoring A Proposal
17. Who Vouches For You
18. The Ten Prompts
19. The Five Numbers
20. The Action Plan From Your Own Data
21. The Six Checks
22. The Maintenance Calendar
23. Where Am I On The Ladder

WHAT ELSE IS IN IT

And at the back of it.

The jargon, translated

Every term the industry uses, in plain words, with the page where it is explained properly. It sits at the front so you can look something up without reading the chapter first.

Answers, and what they mean

Every chapter ends with three questions about your own business. The answers are gathered at the back, chapter by chapter, with what each one tells you.

Sources

Eleven sources are cited by number. Every one is a primary document, named and dated, so you can check it rather than take it on trust.

Disclosures

The four businesses are composites drawn from real work, with names and details changed. No client data appears without consent. Google is a trademark of Google LLC, and this book is not endorsed by or affiliated with Google in any way.

Become the Default · Mohammad A Mahmud
Paperback 978-1-0655847-0-4 · £19.99
Ebook 978-1-0655847-1-1 · £9.99
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CHAPTER ONE

The Website You Paid For, and the Website You Needed

An accountancy practice opens this chapter. A heating firm with six vans and a shop selling fishing tackle online follow it four pages later, because this is one fault in three trades and you need to see it in yours.

Helen is one of four partners in an accountancy practice in Derby. Eleven staff, about four hundred clients, one point four million pounds in fees. She wants to double that in three years.

Two years ago the practice spent nine thousand pounds on a new website. It is a good website. It loads fast, it works on a phone, and the partners spent two meetings on the photography.

On a Sunday in January, in the worst fortnight of her year, she did something she had never done. She searched the way a client would search. She typed **accountant derby self assessment**.

Eleven practices came back. She opened eight of them.

Every one of the eight had a page called Self Assessment. Six of those pages said the same three things in a different order. Deadlines are stressful. Penalties are expensive. We can take it off your hands. Hers was one of the six. Two of them had bought the same stock photograph of a calculator.

Helen has been in Derby for twenty years and she could not tell her own practice apart from seven others on her own high street.

That part she had half expected. The part she had not expected came ten minutes later.

Still curious, she typed something a client had actually asked her in November: **should I put my rental properties into a limited company**. Nobody from Derby

came back at all. Near the top was a firm she had never heard of. Three people, in Leeds, seventy miles away, not competing with her for the word *accountant* and not trying to.

They were there because somebody in that firm had sat down and written the answer out.

She did not get ripped off. She got exactly what she asked for.

Nobody sold you a bad website. They sold you a website with no job.

> **A note on the people in this book.** Helen, Priya, Graham, Ruth and every firm you will meet in these pages are composites. They are built from patterns I have seen many times, and their figures are illustrative. They are not research findings and they are not real clients.
>
> Every measured number carries a source marker like this [1] and a citation. If a number has no marker, it belongs to a composite and you should treat it as an illustration, not evidence.

THE BRIEF NOBODY WROTE

Here is the conversation Helen had with her developer. It is the same conversation almost every business owner has.

She said she wanted a website that looked professional and gave the right impression. She got exactly that. The developer did his part well.

Nobody in that conversation asked what the website was **for**.

Not what it should look like. Not which pages she wanted. What is it *for*. Who is supposed to arrive on it, what were they doing thirty seconds before they arrived, what did they type, and which page are they meant to land on when they get there.

That was never asked, so it was never answered, so it was never built. A developer cannot build a brief that does not exist. He genuinely does not know that a year of advisory work for an owner managed company is worth several times a tax return, or that half of Derby publishes the same page about January, or what a landlord with four flats types into his phone on a Tuesday night.

Helen knows all of that.

Here is the uncomfortable half. **The brief was yours to write.** Not the design, not the code, not the colours. The brief. Which services or product ranges deserve a page, who each page is for, and what question it answers. Nobody can hand you a plan built on information only you hold.

And here is what Helen's missing brief has produced, which is worse than nothing on the page.

The practice earns most from year round advisory work for owner managed companies. There is no page for it. It exists on the website as one sentence in a paragraph on the About page.

So the only thing Helen is findable for is the cheapest, most crowded, most seasonal thing she sells, and eleven other firms are findable for it too.

She is visible for the cheapest work in the practice and invisible for the most expensive.

THIS IS NOT ONE PRACTICE IN DERBY

In a study of 494 UK accountancy practice websites, 344 of them, 69.6 per cent, had no dedicated page for the service the practice itself presents as its main or specialist work. [1]

Not a thin page. Not a badly written page. No page at all. The thing the firm leads with had nothing on the website pointing at it.

Then the number that explains the rest of this chapter. Among the smallest quarter of practices by size it was 98 per cent. Among the largest quarter, 39 per cent. [1] A gap that wide, moving that cleanly with the size of the firm, is not about skill and it is not about effort.

The study cannot tell you why, because it measured websites and nothing else. My reading, from the work rather than from the data, is that this is what a missing brief looks like. Larger firms are not better at websites. They are more likely to have somebody whose job includes writing down what the website is supposed to do.

The sample is accountancy practices because that is the register I could draw a proper sample from. **The fault is not an accountancy fault**, and the rest of this chapter shows you the same thing in three other trades.

WHERE THAT NUMBER COMES FROM, AND WHAT IT CANNOT TELL YOU

I drew 926 domains from the published ACCA and ICAEW registers across twelve UK regions, sampled in proportion to size, and measured every site that could be measured against the same thirty-six faults on 1 and 2 September 2026. Getting to 494 measurable firms took 926 draws. Fifty-five of the rest had no working website address at all, and a further thirty-four were registered but publishing nothing.

Measurement used a single instrument run against a fixed fault list, not a person reading 494 sites in two days. Two families of judgement-based checks were validated blind against 213 passages from 42 firms held back from all development work.

Three things it cannot tell you. It measured websites only, so there is no traffic, no rankings, no enquiries and no revenue in it, and I make no claim about what a missing page would have earned. The published error rates cover the judgement-based checks, not the figures quoted above, which carry no published error bound. And the 494 are the firms that had a working website to measure, which means these numbers understate the problem across the register rather than overstating it.

One thing you should know about me. True SEO Consultants Ltd sells search work to accountancy practices, including the kind of work this book describes. It is declared in the report and I am declaring it here.

[1] Mohammad A Mahmud, *The Accountancy Web Estate: A Cross-Sectional Audit of 494 ACCA and ICAEW Practice Websites with Measured Instrument Error*. Report TSC-2026-01, September 2026. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22280523 Also on SSRN, abstract 7403298. Published under CC BY 4.0, so you may download, check and quote it, provided you credit it.

ONE FAULT, FOUR TRADES, FOUR SYMPTOMS

Helen, accountancy, has no page for the work that pays her best, and one page for the work everybody sells.

Graham runs the heating and plumbing firm his father started in Halifax. Six vans, nine engineers. One page called Services, and on it a list. Boilers. Bathrooms. Heating. Repairs. Four customers with four different problems and four different prices, sharing one page and one sentence.

Ruth sells specialist fishing tackle online, about four hundred products. Her best-margin range sits three clicks deep behind a filter, and every product description in it was pasted from the manufacturer. Several other retailers pasted the same words.

A dental group in Bristol with three practices has one Treatments page covering implants, whitening and children's check-ups. One of those is a decision taken over several weeks and costs thousands. One is booked in under a minute. Same page, same words, same tone. They come back in chapter 5, because theirs is the fault that looks least like a fault.

Four trades. Nobody lazy. All four busy running a business.

The shapes are worth learning, because you will recognise yourself in one of them: **no page for the thing that pays**, **one page for several things that pay**, **a page built from words that are not yours**, or **one page aimed at two customers who want opposite things**.

WHY A WEBSITE THAT LOOKS RIGHT CAN STILL BE INVISIBLE

Here is the mechanism. Once you hold it, everything that follows in this book has somewhere to go.

Your website has two audiences, and they want different things.

The visitor wants reassurance. They have already decided to look at you, and they are checking whether you seem competent, whether you are nearby, whether other people use you. A good photograph of the team serves them well. They are the only audience anybody had in mind when your site was built.

The machine wants to know what you do, who you do it for and where. Google, Google Maps and the AI assistants are all doing the same job: deciding whether you are the useful answer to a question somebody just asked. Sometimes the machine sends the visitor to you. Sometimes it answers in your name and keeps the visitor, and that second behaviour is becoming more common. **Both outcomes demand the same thing of you**, which is why this book does not treat AI search as a separate subject, and why the map results get a part of their own rather than a footnote.

Now the part worth more than the rest of the chapter.

Those two audiences share exactly one thing: the question.

Should I put my rental properties into a limited company. That string is the machine's input and it is the visitor's reason for arriving. The machine reads it to decide who should answer. The man typed it because he has four flats, a tax bill that has moved, and an answer from a forum he does not trust. One question, two audiences, and your website either answers it on a page of its own or it does not.

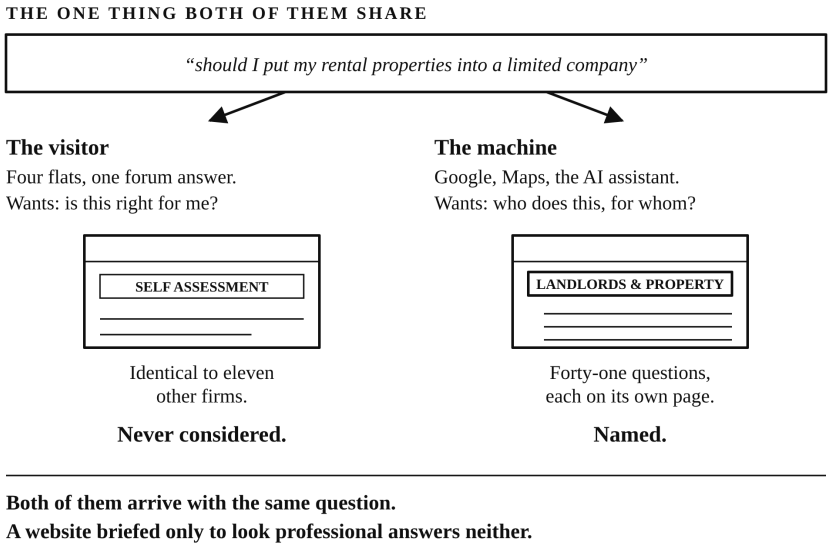


Figure 1. Your visitor and the machine share exactly one thing: the question your customer typed. A website briefed only to look professional answers the visitor it never receives.

That is what a brief is. Not a list of pages. **A list of the questions your best customers ask, and which page answers each one.**

Which leads to the honest version of something the industry usually overstates. Visitors do not find you by accident. They arrive because a machine decided you were the answer, because you paid to put yourself in front of them, or because somebody who already knows you passed your name on. The third is the best of the three and it is the one you already have. The first is what this book is about, because it is the one you can build deliberately.

> **What they'll call it.** Two terms an agency will use, and they are not the same thing. **Source context** is about you: what this website is, who it serves, what it exists to do. **Search intent** is about them: what one person wanted when they typed. You need both, and a site can get the first right and miss the second entirely.

THE FIRM IN LEEDS

Helen went back to the firm she had never heard of, because something about it would not leave her alone.

THE REST OF IT

Fifty-six chapters. You have read two.

The full book carries on from here: research, identity, the building, writing, what it costs, who vouches for you, the machines that answer, and how to tell whether any of it worked.

Also inside

The handbook. Twenty-three worksheets, referenced from the chapter that needs them and reprinted together at the back.

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