Listicles, Chunking, Google's GEO guide, llms.txt, BrightonSEO & OMR Recap | #MonthlyLandwehr

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Show notes

Every month I meet with Malte to take all the news, new research and interesting developments in SEO & AI Search to get his perspective on them. Malte Landwehr is CPO & CMO at Peec AI, one of the leading AI search analytics platforms.

My 8 biggest takeaways from this episode:

1. Being mentioned anywhere in the top 10 of a third-party listicle gives a brand a 6 to 16 percentage point visibility boost in LLM answers. Landing at position one pushes that to 13 to 17 percentage points, and also improves average ranking position inside the answer. The goal is top 10 minimum, position one if you actually want to dominate.
2. The impact of listicles on LLM visibility is much larger in new or niche markets than in mature ones. In a mature market the LLM already has strong model knowledge, so grounding is mostly confirmatory. In a new space the model has little or nothing, and the grounding content is the primary data source.
3. You do not need to chunk your whole article for AI visibility. One citation chunk is enough: a 50-word, self-contained paragraph near the top of the page, written so that if an LLM pulled it out of context it would still carry full meaning. Name the entities, include the trust signals, make it eatable in isolation.
4. When Google warns you not to do something, it is usually because that thing works extremely well. Google warned about link buying when buying links was maximally effective. Google warned about chunking now. That should tell you something.
5. A useful pre-measurement framework: before touching analytics or roadmaps, walk through this sequence. Is there demand? Is the space winnable for you? Do you have indexed content? Do you have any visibility? Are you differentiated? Do you have social proof and positive brand sentiment? Only when every answer is yes do you start optimising. Whatever the first "no" is, that is your highest-leverage task right now.
6. LLMs.txt is not a discoverability tool and it does not improve visibility in AI search. It is an agent-readiness tool: it tells autonomous agents how to use your website, where to find your API, and how to access your MCP server. Google including it in Lighthouse confirms this framing, because Lighthouse is an accessibility tool, not an SEO tool.
7. Pretty Little Things renamed product category pages from generic labels like "jeans" to intent-driven labels like "airport outfits" and sold out every item in those categories. The shift to intent-based content architecture is not just an SEO play; it converts.

8. Thought experiment: if your next 1 million customers never visit your website, what does that force you to change about your content, your brand, and your distribution? Work backwards from that answer and you end up with a strategy that also happens to be exactly right for AI visibility.

Let's connect

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Full conversation

[00:00:00] Some people do not know whom to believe when it comes to air research and there are a lot of bad actors in the space who promote things that aren't true. And there are people who were well-intended but wrong. So can you share a little bit of your main learnings, key highlights from both conferences? Treat SEO like poker or treat Geo like poker because the following things are true Nobody knows all cards. Every player know some cards. Everybody make decisions based on their cards. Second point Half players are bluffing. Not playing is risk. Lastly good players do not need perfect hand to win. Before we dive in, you are listening to the Masters of Search podcast with me your host Niklas Buschner. Each week I sit down with some of these smartest people around the world and SEO & AI search to bring their strategies mental models top pieces actionable advice.

[00:00:52] If you enjoy this podcast don't forget like subscribe follow it on your favorite podcasting app or YouTube. It helps us get top notch guests create best possible content for you. Let's dive into todays episode. It is time again for a new episode of monthly Landwehr, my favorite format in this podcast. For everybody that does not know the format every month or at least we try every month but with all the conferences etc... That's happening! Sometimes it's hard. I tried to get Malte on the mic To talk about everything that has happened in SEO and AI search everything that PKI is doing, what he's seeing in the market. What he sees working, not working etc., and today we have a full pad because lot has happened.

[00:01:42] you've been busy traveling You're busy speaking And you are busy researching. So a lot to unpack. but first of all happy to have you Malte How were your day? Happy be back! I'm great Nice cool. So let's do a little recap. You have been present at two, I would say important marketing conferences. one is an SEO conference Brighton SEO and the OMR Festival which was more of bigger digital marketing conference. How did you like them? I enjoyed both. Personally i learned more about Brighton because the format is suitable to go into talks while OMR was more running around trying to catch people and talking to them. But both were really, really good events. So you've been in the industry now for at least a decade even more?

[00:02:41] What would just say? how have these conferences changed over the years? Yeah so I might shock you but it's been over two decades Two decades okay. You seem so young and so fresh and so energetic. Thank you, thank you. I'll turn forty this year. so whenever somebody says i look young and take it as a serious compliment. The OMR really started at the very small thing right? As gathering then turns into giant event that now had... I don't know seventy thousand visitors or something ninety thousand tens of thousands. And also Brighton SEO actually started, I think like twenty years ago as a gathering. They were meeting in the little room over a pub and now it's also this giant conference with hundreds of talks.

[00:03:36] so these two events specifically have grown massively to scale. that didn't exist ten years

ago And everything has become more professional right? It used to be a couple of people gather and sometimes the people who are supposed to give a presentation know about it in advance. And some times they even had slides, now you have booking management that makes sure every speaker has their right speaker deck. there's professional backstage area for example. at Brighton SEO wasn't time for any Q&As just three or four talks one after another no break just to get as much time and talks inside people's head, so everything has become more professional. Lots of change over the last one or two decades. What would you say if it was worth going?

[00:04:38] Brighton SEO is definitely worth it! Especially if you are a beginner or somewhere in the advanced stage, You can learn a lot. If I would say on an expert level... ...you're unlikely to learn much unless you go into talks about topics that aren't deep enough. I think there's other talks and conferences but very few. And OMR is really a bit of everything. If you go without the plan, you can easily waste two days just aimlessly walking around. but if you want some speakers that you rarely catch... I mean this year they had Tom Brady for example. and when do you hear Tom Brady talk about marketing? Probably never! And he actually shared interesting things about leadership like i didn't attend his But there was like an executive lounge where he gave a fireside chat afterwards and that one I attended.

[00:05:46] And yet interesting things to say about leadership, how he lived his role as leader... ...and in previous years you had people like Kim Kardashian, Aston Kutcher etc., so people usually will not catch on the conference stage in Europe. And then of course, there is just this huge exhibition at OMR similar to the Mexico or such events. So if you want a talk about vendors it's also good like an efficient way for people quickly. and did Tom Brady know anything about SEO or AI search? I don't know he. nobody asked him a question but he knows. leadership in team culture okay got. What would you recommend for more advanced, senior people and expert leveled people? Which conferences or which events to attend. There is a technical SEO conference from Audisto in Hamburg once per year.

[00:06:46] I'd say for technical SEO. that's the best event You can go And then it really depends. You can go to something like, I mean of course i'm very biased. what's European events right? So you could do something like SEO Campix in Berlin which is more meeting a lot people and the learnings are actually between decisions. I've heard good things about SEOcom in Salzburg. many-many say its super high quality. first only attended once so I cant judge. And then again, if you're based in Europe generally the SMX events are good to catch a few international speakers that he would otherwise rarely catch. In Europe and maybe on that note little advertising from ourselves If your still free. On October twenty second this year in Berlin we also hosting rather small event.

[00:07:41] so it's not seventy thousand people but rather A little less than two hundred which will be the Masters of Search conference, where we partner with PKI and OMR Reviews. Where people on stage... We have not at least one record. this revealed everybody but maybe there'll someone you know well from PKI? And I think the level of talks would be very hands-on expert knowledge that shares so little recommendation for my side. Now let's talk a little bit about what you learned on these conferences, because I think Brighton SEO is obvious that there's lot of SEO knowledge to unpack. And even with OMR i was very surprised or like lets say positively surprised at the stage where you spoke and also had chance give it KinoTalk.

[00:08:35] There were lots of AI search actually in the timetable. So can you share a little bit of your like main learnings, key highlights from both conferences? Yes yes. so I want to start with two frameworks that i learned. one is the yes-no framework. so basically you go through a set of questions and only if you answer yes You're allowed To Go The Next question right. And the first Question Is their Demand. The topic that you want to create your website about, the content is their actual demand. Only if we say yes? You look at Is this space winnable for you? so does your brand actually have a chance of winning?

and then do you check Do you have content or is it indexable And If there are answers also Yes! You should check some degree of visibility already and you can apply just by way to SEO or to AI search.

[00:09:30] It works for both. The next question is, are you differentiated? If that's also true. You ask yourself do I have social proof... Next question is ... Do i have positive brand sentiment? and only if the answer to all of these questions Yes! Only then do start to measure and optimize until the answer not yes for every single one of those questions. you should just think about measurement or work on this very thing because that is the highest leverage thing you can do in that moment. And this resonated very well to me, Because when I was an operator on the SEO field. To those who don't know... ...I used to be the person responsible for SEO at the largest European price comparison website Had a team of thirty-to-forty people or actually couple teams and one thing i always drilled into people Is throw most best practices notions of doing something perfect out-of the window and to always think about what has the biggest impact right now.

[00:10:36] And it is not all ways to set up a perfect measurement, planned yearly roadmap. sometimes it's fixed very obvious thing. that is foundational issue. I just like this framework alot. And there was another framework that also resonated with me, and it was treat SEO like poker or treat Geo-like poker specifically. Because the following things are true nobody knows all of cards. every player know some cards. everybody can make decisions based on the cards they know. second point half players are bluffing. this is very true in a geo space where you have lot people who sell your magical AI content creation for hundred thousand pieces. Also Google, for example who is bluffing a lot when they talk about what works.

[00:11:24] What doesn't work? Then not playing. it's the risk. in poker. if you never play You automatically lose after awhile. and The same as true an AI search If you are too afraid to do anything you also loose. And then lastly good players Do not need a perfect hand-to-win. this resonated with me also very well because And this comes from my practitioner time as an SEO. You cannot always know everything, but very often knowing a little bit is enough to start optimizing. and again for me all about translating theoretical SEO knowledge in best practices into real business outcomes. I think this poker energy also helps people get some impact And I especially liked the notion about not knowing all the cards because something that i always used to tell my team is, and didn't invent this but forgot who invented it in SEO.

[00:12:29] Everything falls into three buckets. there are things you can control if there's no index text or not. if a url blocked on robot cxt what content publish? This your control. You can influence things. Yeah, for example your snippet in the Google search result. you Can influence that but you cannot control it. and lastly there are Things That you can only observe like a google update happening or chat gpt switching to different model? You Cannot influence these And i always instilled It In my teams. when we have A new observation and its scary and big Let's think about which of These three buckets it falls into and then We act appropriately. Because if there was a Google update, There's no need to panic and there is no need To do something today.

[00:13:16] We can probably analyze it tomorrow or next week but If there is Something wrong with our new index tags we don't deal With that in the follow-up meeting right now because we Can control it. And both frameworks I think also fit well In this world view how to make sure your work actually produces business outcomes. Do you have a cool name for that three-bucket framework? I don't have a name, but if you have great names in mind we can now promote it under the name. Let's call it the Malta Framework or The Three... I didn't invent it! There was another SEO who used to talk about this. Okay, it's always a problem with who invented something and made something popular. So can we give credits to the other frameworks like yes-no framework for example?

[00:14:15] I have to admit that i didn't take notes on names of speakers so i really forgot almost everything where i heard them. Okay, no worries. Maybe we will crowdsource the... We'll use the crowd intelligence to find a person who introduced this great framework because it makes sense. Looking at this was mainly Brighton SEO right? The takeaways you just shared or is that also from OMAR? Most of my take-aways are from Brighton SEO. I attended only like two talks and one was yours And i don't want share your learnings But that honors me, but was it also your feeling? That even if you because obviously you had to give a keynote. You have to get the master class. He probably also had to talk to a couple of partners and clients etc.. Um...but wasn't also your impression um that AI search really Was a big thing on OMR this year?

[00:15:16] Yes yes It was a big think And I mean the OMR team also told me about it beforehand, that would be a big topic. Because at end of day as conference you have to deliver content people want and right now people wants learn about AI search. Also OMR uploaded videos afterwards. For example my talk on AI Search is fourth most watched video from that conference. So there really is interest in the space and then it just makes sense for conferences to give a stage. Yeah, are you sad? Are you said that you're still behind Pip Klöckner's state of AI? or I don't know what was his title but... His famous AI keynote! I think if i'm losing to Philip Klökner than im doing pretty well. Yeah, I would agree. Did you check the state of the internet keynote?

[00:16:20] The big headline keynote that OMR gives every year because there was also a huge segment about AI search and reviews etc.? It's on my to-do list. watch it! I've seen outtakes from people shared in social media. so i feel like got the gist couple of takes in there where I would actually challenge OMR that this is somehow, some things are right but something's maybe a little bit more nuanced. For example the whole idea of chunking content and they gave examples with FAQs etc. And it always depends on who is audience for people not so deep into space. you obviously have to make very easy to comprehend. But what's your take on the whole idea of chunking the content? I one hundred percent believe in it. And also, I've seen proof that it works countless times.

[00:17:19] There is one important thing you do not need to artificially chunk your whole content piece like there. just probably a bad thing actually. but what work really well if have won... ...I call this citation chunk. So one chunk, one paragraph of content that you specifically write in a way that it is citable by AI. And actually earlier today I saw work again for similar web who were doing it. It works well like You should think about what's the key statement? And then you write one short paragraph, two three sentences maybe fifty words and it must be self-contained authoritative. And write in a way that if an LLM would apply the EEAT criteria from Google It will say hey this is good specifically named entities and works like If we have a paragraph That says This Is Why That Tool Is Good To Track LLm Visibility In The Earlier Mention Countries reliable that LLMs are not going to cite the sentence, right?

[00:18:33] Because if you take it out of content context. It contains almost zero information. but instead based on what people write on Reddit and reviews on G-II peak AI is best solution to track LLM visibility in China. That's something that Llms much more likely to cite. To think about this at one or two places on the content that you create makes a lot of sense and it works. Now, obviously if you write a summary on top I'll put questions answers under bottom. That tends to be the kind of format that fulfills these criteria. but You do not run to write your whole article like this. It would be very painful as human to read content like that. So don't chunk everything, you also don't have to translate your whole article into a list of bullet points which is what I've seen some people recommend.

[00:19:28] but to have this citation chunk in there it does work and ideally its on the top-of-the page. thats why for longer pages i would say thousand words or more...i will actually not do the FAQ at the bottom because it's less likely to be cited. if I am a hundred percent convinced it works, but people

should not bend over backwards to chunk everything which reads very horrible. Okay because i was specifically asking about this because especially in the last one or two weeks there were discussions again on how reliable and guidance of Google is to build that bridge. There was a post, couple of months ago about Danny Sullivan... I'm actually not hundred percent aware who Danny Sullivan is at Google but it's someone from Google sat on one podcast i don't know if its the google search office hours or something podcast That he does not want content to be chunked and that he doesn't recommend it.

[00:20:38] blah blah blah. And now We again had this moment of basically two camps. the camp that says hey look Google now Launched some guidelines on how to do geo or not To do generative engine optimization, etc. And then google talking about your favorite topic LLM's txt and somehow saying it's not important. but also Giving signals at is important. so let's unpack a little bit what happened with this Google guideline thing. Yeah, so Jenny Sullivan used to be search liaison before Google extra role. So I would say he's like the main person in that webmaster focused lobby and PR team. Unpacking this first of all why does Google give guidance? Google doesn't not give guidance to make you a better SEO. Google gives guidance for established brands.

[00:21:36] don't mess up their SEO and don't fall victim to snake oil agencies. So that's why they say, Don't create doorway pages because you get punished for it right? Google has no incentive to make you or me rank better in google. so... And googled by the way didn't say don't do chunking. Google said chunk is not needed for AI visibility just like Google says link building isn't need for visibility. but we all know link building can work really, really well actually. And Google is not the authority for what works on cloud perplexity grog or chat GPT. Google Is The Authority For What Works On Google? So even if we assume that Google had our own best interest at heart they would still only talk about Google. so very important.

[00:22:32] and yeah as I said it's A guide to be a better SEO, it's the guy how to avoid really bad things. But of course people should take away from this is I don't need to chunk everything but if i want to optimize... If I really wanna do best right now chunking works and if something didn't work at all Google usually doesn't mention that. for example Google never mentions Don't do keyword stuffing in your meta keywords. But doing this is a complete waste of time, everybody who does it just wastes their time. So why doesn't Google advise people to not be doing it? Because they don't look at meta-keywords and all anymore so It's not relevant any more. They need no warning. I mean when did google speak the most that buying links is bad ?

[00:23:27] They did that at the times where buying links worked really well. When did Google introduce the side reputation abuse rule? when it worked really well and then they had no way to algorithmically detect. So I think that interpretation of this chunking advice is kind-of obvious, i'm always shocked That so many people use it as like. This Is Now The Holy Bible Of How To Do SEO. Because if you follow everything that Google says, You avoid doing really bad things. But also avoiding all the good things That actually give you big success. And then the LLM.TXT. There are two perspectives right? The I want visibility perspective and their google is right. LLm.Txt is a waste of time. It's just normal text document but for agent readiness.

[00:24:20] So how do I explain to an agent, How To Use My Website? How Do I Make It Possible For Agents To Discover My MCP Server, My API? How To Explain To Agents? How to Obtain An API Key? Um...for all of these things. and LLM.txt is a really good tool! And that's why it's included in the Google Lighthouse. Audit Lighthouse is not primarily an SEO tool. It's for accessibility and usability, and agent accessibility will be part of this in the future.". And what do you think why so many people were excited or at least it made the impression to me that they're excited about this guide from Google? Quoting here

the title Optimizing Your Website For Generative AI Features on Google Search. Yeah, I mean people do not know whom to believe when it comes to air search.

[00:25:20] And there are a lot of bad actors in the space who promote things that are not true and they're people were well intended but our wrong end. if you consume content from a few months ago You might read something that was correct at that time But is no longer correct? Since people have way too high trust into Google They think now Google talked about okay Now we have real source. And of course Google disagreed with some things that people who are deeply into AI search talk about, and then SAOs were not into the topic. I think they just liked it like yeah you see your wrong. um i guess thats why people was so excited about it. So its still just the polarized camps basically The ones that are skeptical of AI Search in first place seeing their Narrative confirmed and then saying ha told you.

[00:26:17] And on the other hand, basically people that believe in AI search to be a thing To put it very broadly Saying hey You know Google just always had the advice create great content Create great content. and SEO was never Just create great Content but far more than That. so this is Basically why we see that. um But what would you recommend People? to do about ambiguous Signals? because in this very guide from Google they mention LLMs dot txt and They say you don't need to create new machine readable files AI text files markup or markdown Etc. But then on the other hand we have as You already mentioned lighthouse where they explicitly mention Llms TXT, and where it's actually also checked. so This is something were I sense that some people just confused.

[00:27:14] and obviously there are things behind it in details, but on the one hand you say its not important. And then seemingly is important. so what's true? I mean both this two right! It isn't needed for visibility in search... ...it is recommended to make your website usable for agents. these are just two different concepts.. ..and something can be write-in-one worldview & not correct another world view. And actually this is how many people have described LLMs.txt for years, right? I wrote a blog article about it shortly after joining PKI because i was so annoyed by it and that's exactly what i said back then like its not about discoverability but understanding when the agentic usage is intended. People just need to understand.

[00:28:05] these are two separate things. Now, let's talk about something that you just published recently because as we already said there are like some people who pump out advice and it is sometimes called snake oil. And they do not ground in actual research but the team at PKA always busy basically putting your papers where your mouth. I don't know how to make a good saying out of this. But yeah, actually checking what works by compiling first party data and you release something where you also have to explain to me what happened there with the whole research publication etc. because it felt like okay speaking I know going into academics or something. but um... You published these papers which is called the listical rank effect, what two hundred thousand AI responses across eight AI engines reveal about brand visibility.

[00:29:10] So the hook is definitely catchy with a lot of numbers. so please tell me what this is about? Yeah we wanted to measure What Is The Impact Of Being Mentioned In A Listicle and the first thing We Did Is, We Divided This Into Three Data Sets third-party listicles, your own self-preferentialisticles you put on your own website and competitor listicles. And then we try to build an understanding and tried to model it out and put in a lot of effort to exclude the randomness. so not just do some correlation study where it always turns out oh popular brands are mentioned on top of listicles but trying to correct for all. If you want to know the details, please read the paper. But in essence what we could take out as a learning is that for third-party listicles across very different industries... ...we could form a very good understanding of what impact.

[00:30:13] this was not true your own listicles and it wasn't true for competitor listicles. That doesn't

mean those don't work. It just means The impact is not that well understood, observable and describably. Which can have many reasons. we could talk about it later. And the main learning we had was let's simplify this you have a listicle That is regularly cited in LMS. You've two brands. One brand is number one on that listicle. The other brand is anywhere under top ten. The brand listed at number one will have a thirteen to seventeen percentage point visibility increase, meaning the chance to be mentioned. So if their chance of being mentioned was twenty percent with this listicle it will be thirty-three to thirty seven percent yeah?

[00:31:06] It's a really huge increase and they would also be on average ranked higher position wise. so If there used to an average in the LLM answer With that listicle number one placement, they will go to position four or three. And the amount of times that they are mentioned within the answer would also increase by zero point five two-one times. Of course these averages right? If you're already at a hundred percent visibility That listicle will obviously not increase your visibility etc. etc. and this is across multiple different answer engines Bigger impact in chat GPT, lower impact in GROC etc. But these are the averages that we observed. now. for the brand it is only mentioned in the top ten. We still observed over millions of observation a six to sixteen percentage point visibility increase Slightly higher rank and the answer but not even one position gain.

[00:32:13] so What we can know for sure is any mention in the top ten, it's good. So if you ever ask yourself should I be not mentioned in the listicle at all or should i be on position nine? Position nine is better than being mentioned and all. And If You Ask Yourself. Do I really want to number one Or Is It Okay To Be Anywhere ? If You Just Want To Optimize Your Visibility Actually Being Placed Anywhere In The Top Ten Its Just Fine. If you really want to be mentioned on top in the LLM answers, You need a number one spot In most important third-party listicles. That is essentially what our research found out and I gave it pretty big range like six to seventeen percentage point. that's huge right? And this because we found two criteria by which markets diverge.

[00:33:09] The one is mature versus new markets. A mature market means the LLM has probably in their model knowledge already information about the brands, Already a perception on how important which brand it's like cars or airlines Or Which cities to visit? Anything around that. and then the grounding process seems reassuring themselves of their model knowledge. But there's very little information gain coming from the grounding, right? There are a few new car companies' airlines cities to visit but in a very Basically the grounding process is the main data source, sometimes only data source and then it has a huge impact. And so that's one dimension on which markets can diverge? The other dimension is how common are listicles?

[00:34:16] because there are markets where listicle is very common content format... ...and in some these listicles send off big impacts. but each listicle might have smaller impact. And there are cases where very few listicles exist, and then they might be like one major listicle from a super authoritative domain that gets all the power. So these are the biggest differences.". I think another thing that could be interesting... There are LLMs that usually cite very few URLs. One listicle can have big impact! LN-based answer engines that cite a lot of pages, like AI mode and overviews. And usually they have a lot sources there the impact on each single listicle tends to be smaller. We have all the numbers in the paper but I think going through them here is just boring.

[00:35:14] But yeah this is the rough summary what our research showed. So the key takeaway is that i should closely monitor citations of third party listicles for the prom site track and then see how I can get into these listicles. And ideally as far to the top, as possible? Ideally position one. so we had industries where we could observe that like position two is strictly better than position three etc. etc. But if you are being very scientific here, I have to say we also had cases where there was no huge difference between

position two three four five six. In those cases the only recommendation would be somewhere in the top ten ideally B number one. logically it would make sense that position three is better than position for etc.

[00:36:12] but actually our data did not show. We can still give this as a recommendation because it makes sense, but its not actually something we can prove with data. And did you check in any way whether these listicles are like organic? Listicles review sites etc. and even on review sides There are ways to sponsor certain positions, so did you in any way differentiate or could check between organic natural mentions and listicles? And those that were paid or sponsored. We didn't but based on my industry knowledge the vast majority of listicles have a paid aspect. nowadays There's very few motivation for third party websites to create listicles outside of earning affiliate commissions or being paid. To place someone on top.

[00:37:17] so I if i see a listicle, just assume that money was involved nowadays and for these Observations And then obviously as marketers always do they try to exploit the hell out of it? Do you think The grounding process? obviously this is speculative now, but the grounding process and how LLMs compile their citations. And then from the answer do you think that strong influence of listicles will be lower over time because it's just so easily exploitable by buying myself into top positions? I mean even I was thinking about Google back then and the top ten google results. And some people were saying, okay yeah you can just buy your way to the top with Google ads but still had a lot of organic rankings. But if you think about listicle where every spot is paid for Then there's not really an organic play there anymore.

[00:38:19] Yeah i do believe that impact on these listicles will go down. at one point it would make sense For all LLM labs to build pipelines consume Reddit content, Google Maps reviews G to reviews etc. I mean many of these are paid for also but basically based on what they find on the internet create their own listicles because it is so pollute. the listicle world is so pollutant now by artificially influenced rankings and i think there's still a year or two left where listicles would work very, very well. But obviously at some point if it's so manipulated LLMs will need to interfere. and did you also think about doing a similar analysis? Or study around self promotional listicles And their impact? because there is also big discussion right now.

[00:39:20] Obviously the tactic Is Very controversial. yet as You Also said in Your OMR Keynote It maybe unfortunately still works. So it's a trade-off between. I don't want to overdo because i don't wanna harm us at long term, but if i dont do now then maybe competitor with the high risk appetite basically gets more growth than i will get. so did you also think about that doing for self promotion listicles? We didn´t just thinking we tried this but couldn´t find this. clear takeaways that we had for the third party listicles, which suggests that first-party listicles or own listicles I would want to call it have some different characteristics by which they are interpreted. In some data sets for some LLMs there was a suggestion when you look at the data doesn't get the same boost that other brands in that listicle are getting.

[00:40:26] But we could neither prove nor properly falsify this, and if all of your data is inconclusive or statistically not significant then it makes little sense to publish it. so... We did but couldn't find anything interesting which was worth publishing. Okay now I can imagine a couple also marketers with a higher risk appetite thinking about, wait a second but i could now register third party domains so to say and publish listicles on there. And the domain is not my brand name. so pki would maybe hypothetically buy a domain that's called geo-tools.com or .ai, and then you publish a couple of listicles on there maybe also some adjacent content. that somehow creates the feeling off this being an industry block?

[00:41:27] And then create these listicles. put yourself on top suddenly not self promotional listicle anymore at least may be the LLM don't recognize it. This is great strategy right? what would say to

those? I mean people are doing Um, and it works right now. It works. there is also a business model already where people buy keyword domains like I don't know SEO conferences SEO conference reviews.com There's no example. that doesn't exist. And then they list SEO conferences. Then they say hey you want to be ranked number one pay me money? So there's really an industry being created around this right now. Obviously it is problematic, but I'm just looking at a project specifically for this and see the domain that i monitoring on position nine.

[00:42:38] It's the nine most cited domain in their space. Of course like Reddit and YouTube I had, but this is a domain. it is cited in fifteen percent of the prompts that i'm monitoring And... ...it has outstanding impact on which brands are recommended. Maybe there can be follow-up study to see when the content of that domain changes because someone pays money to be the top domain at a top brand how their brand visibility for this set of prompts. Changes. so yeah people are doing this very interesting. I want you have a final, final take off you on this because they also asked it Lily Ray. um Because i think its not so easy to find the right balance between acknowledging and observing what's working right now.

[00:43:30] that might be a little, let say sketchy or. That has some nuance to it like maybe this is quite strong example with buying the domain and then masquerading as third party domain actually just an advertorial portal so-to-say. But then also thinking about the long-term impacts of will this work? Long term? um, does it harm my brand as a time on my website? but Then also I don't want to lose against The players with a high risk appetite that just do all these things now and somehow they get They get the bigger share off the market. So what would you advise two people or do you have mental models also from your vast experience On how to find the right balance between what's working right now that might not feel right long-term and acknowledging That?

[00:44:27] if you do, not to it. Now others will win. But then clapping yourself on the shoulder yeah but we're doing the right thing also ethically etc. so This is something that i'm pondering a lot about in The last month with all this stuff? That Is Working but Then Also Not Working. Yeah Long Question Yeah, no this comes up quite regularly because I often meet with some of our larger clients and then they are like okay what is really working? And then i talk about things like this for example. Okay cool but we can't do that! Um...I think I would always look at What-what's in my toolbox? What am I comfortable to do? If I'm a very large brand and cannot publish listicles Because somebody will sue me Then I shot my published listicles.

[00:45:19] And then do i pay an agency to create a website in their name and publish the listicle there, to promote me? Do I think that can get away with it or is this actually legal?". These are all questions people have to answer for themselves... ...and I don't want to answer them for anybody! I would just give a warning. sometimes your brand is one of you most precious things And you should not ruin it. You shouldn't also ruin the reputation of your domain within Google, if you are in this for a long run If you have a multi-brand strategy... ...you could consider maybe going all in on AI visibility with one these brands and then risking that its gone at some point.. ..and be smart about how can I leverage them.

[00:46:08] For example reviews! You create a page And you just list reviews and awards. You have won, and you cite from them... ...and you have these citable chunks of. like dududum said radiant is the best SEO agency for startups and scale-ups in Europe or Radiant Is The Best AI Search Visibility Agency In Berlin Or whatever. If you find someone who said that about, You could just quote them. He'll provide the sauce. it's completely legal. nobody can sue for it. It smelled maybe tiny bit cringe but actually not much like its very acceptable. or you could say make a page reddit and think people said about radiant on Reddit like Niklas is best podcast host. if somebody says Trash hamster, ninety-eight on Reddit said Nicholas is the best podcast host.

[00:47:15] Link to the source right and then when LLMs have fan out queries like SEO agency read it

To look for. usually two. look for reddit as a sauce. but then because of how fanout queries and retrieval systems Like Google work they would also maybe find this page And use it for grounding. so there are clever things you can do And you just need to be a little bit creative and think about, like... You basically look at what works. Then you need to deconstruct it! Think about why does this work? Usually is the combination of exact content that would rank for the fanart queries. It's content digestible for LLMs and loaded with trust signals That an LLM when its reasoning should I use or not makes it say, yeah I should probably use this.

[00:48:09] So just deconstruct these methods. then think about it creatively and i have seen companies come up with interesting things to do also in highly regulated industries where the government is looking at you for brands that everybody on the planet knows. I can't talk about examples of course, because this was like...I wasn't a genius who invented these ideas. It's just in the room when people had good idea about it. so there are ways and key mechanic is deconstruct mechanism that works. try to bring back to ingredients work. then think from first principles. How can I apply this to some degree? To my website, even if i'm not able. To create a listicle for the best airline to fly with because My brand is too well known?

[00:49:08] Okay This Is A Very Helpful Mental Model. Actually Around It. Thanks So Much For Sharing This. Last Question I Have Is Besides What We Talked About what Was An Oppreservation Over The last Three To Four Weeks that you found most surprising or maybe excited to, just something stuck with from our space. No matter where it came from? I have a couple of small things and then one. there are few sentences. I saw study finally the proofs that URLs was good. core web fighters has higher likelihood to be cited by LLMs. There was already data on this from like two three years ago when Google had this SGE beta, but since then I haven't actually seen everyone anyone Repeated again. I forgot who did it But we can maybe put that in the show notes.

[00:50:08] yeah um i also saw That The kinds of sources that a i mode and i overviews are using Are super? Super different. I knew this already, but it's like interesting to see that also other people are observing this because you would think hey! It is all based on Gemini so should be very similar. But its SO SO SO different and i think its caused by two facts. with AI overviews You have always the regular links below as a fallback. So needs provide something else than these links. where AI mode is more like. This Is The Full Service Answer And also the overview needs to be quicker, so you have less time to look at resources. Less time to apply typical like spam filtering etc., etc. So these are things that really stuck with me.

[00:51:01] then Also at Brighton SEO somebody showed a case study from Pretty Little Things an online shop where they changed some of their categories From something like jeans or dresses To intent-driven categories airport outfits and it worked so well. they actually sold out every single item in these categories. And some people might know that I've worked on e-commerce for a while, without revealing any internal things from previous employers. i would just say...i'm not surprised. this is working! And im happy somebody talked about this publicly..I can very much encourage you to try do that. And the final thing I want to mention is also from Brighton SEO, somebody asked the audience for thought. experiment.

[00:51:54] If your next one million customers never visit their website what does it mean? For branding or marketing and content production? if you do that You probably end up with a strategy That's really good for AI visibility. Awesome! Malte thanks so much. There was so much in this, I think a lot for people to unpack. It's always great to talk to you and we will make a great effort to see that We can find all the credits To The People You Mentioned And The Ideas In The Frameworks! I'll do my best with the help of My very Very Good Disciplined Friend Claude. Yeah Always A Pleasure To Talk To You already

looking forward to the next one and Wishing you in the team at PK all the best. likewise, And thank You. Thank you so much.