Webflow AI Search Playbook | Vivian Hoang, AEO & SEO Lead @ Webflow

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Show notes

AI search is already driving nearly 10% of Webflow's signups. A key person behind that number is Vivian Hoang, AEO & SEO Lead at Webflow.

In this episode, we'll dig into how Webflow's SEO function has evolved over the years, how Vivian started thinking about answer engine optimization before most people even had a name for it, what's actually working for them in AI search, and how she's using tools like AirOps to scale content without sacrificing quality.

I'm really excited about this one because Vivian isn't speaking about theory here. She's already built the playbook and has the numbers to back it up.

What we covered in this episode

- ~10% of Webflow's signups now come from AI search, a real and measurable number that proves AEO is a growth channel worth investing in
- AEO builds directly on a strong SEO foundation; don't abandon SEO, optimize both in parallel
- If you create genuinely authoritative, useful content, you're already doing the right thing for both Google and LLMs
- Webflow shifted from top-of-funnel to mid/bottom-funnel content because conversion rates were higher and ToFU traffic was declining with AI Overviews
- Audit what you already have before creating anything new, refresh high-potential pages, and build from there
- You can't optimize what you don't measure: identify the prompts your audience uses, track your LLM citations, and find your way into the sources LLMs trust in your category
- AEO is a team sport: get leadership bought in with data, educate your marketing team, and run small experiments with visible results before scaling

Let's connect! Niklas on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/niklas-buschner/ Radyant on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/radyant/ Vivian on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/vivianhoang/ Webflow on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/webflow-inc-/

Full conversation

[00:00:00] AEO is really like, I approach it as a portfolio. There's gonna be lot of different levers and

things that you can test And the goal was to figure out what works What doesn't? And just scale how it works. So does this mean all hands on deck for AEO success? Yeah i would say there are some education around how AEO work Making sure your activating parts in marketing team To drive great results Because having strong brand will only benefit you For AEO. Before we dive in, you're 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 And top pieces of actionable advice.

[00:00:46] If you enjoy this podcast don't forget to like and subscribe. Then follow it on your favorite podcasting app or YouTube. It helps us get top-notch guests and create best possible content for you. Let's dive into todays episode. AI Search is already driving nearly ten percent of Webflow's sign-ups, and a key person behind that number is Vivian Huang, AEO & SEO Lead at Webflow. In this episode, we'll dig into how Webflow's SEO function has evolved over the years. How Vivian started thinking about answer engine optimization before most people even had a name for it? What is actually working in AI search and how she uses tools like Aerobs to scale content without sacrificing quality. I'm really excited because Vivian isn't speaking theory here.

[00:01:33] She already built her playbook with numbers to back up. So welcome to the podcast! Thanks for having me, Niklas. It's great to be here. Excited to have you! Before we get into the AI search stuff I'd love to hear a bit about your journey. so how did you end up leading AEO and SEO at Webflow? And Did You also use Webflow as the company then... Well it was a while ago So We weren't using Webflow. After A couple of agency rules though i moved To in-house rule And that allowed me to go deeper and work on more like long-term projects. I really started understanding, what it takes to execute SEO initiatives internally? Um...I then led SEO at Rakuten which was previously known as Ebates & I was there for a little over seven and half years before joining a small startup.

[00:02:25] Then after that i joined Webflow three and a half years ago editorial motion in the marketing site. And, in the last one and a half years my role on scope has really expanded to other parts of this side as well as like leading AEO and our AI search strategy. Yeah could you imagine when you started Webflow how much would change over the following years? No I never would have thought how fast that industry had moved or changed especially within less couple of years. Okay, I think everybody working in SEO probably has the same feeling but can you give us a sense of what SEO or the whole content operation looked like at Webflow when you started? It's already now as you said three and half years ago so just that we maybe move back into time a little bit.

[00:03:13] Yeah definitely So. before i joined Webflow actually already had a solid SEO foundation in place And I think huge credit goes to all growths SEO folks that came before me. But at the same time, there was a lot of opportunity really to expand our SEO content strategy and editorial motion to just increase our overall organic visibility and capture more. since I've joined Wellflow as a business has also evolved so we went from being known as like no code website builder primarily for designers and developers. Now we're moving more upmarket. We work with a lot of businesses, our platform has evolved to now include native CMSs, personalization localization analytics and now AEO visibility And what that evolution comes opens up like a lot new SEO territory for us expand too New content strategies topics to cover And I think one of the biggest shifts really is that we've moved away from chasing traffic and rankings to looking at SEO, now AEO more holistically.

[00:04:31] We're also like customer zero. so one of fun parts my job has been work with our awesome product engineering teams on ways make platform useful for customers. What would you say are the biggest changes? if one or two from when you started, maybe the first couple of months after your start to now as off April twenty-twenty six. Yeah I think what are the biggest changes is just in ways that we

operate... When i joined our content strategy with very manual We still work a great agency on generating contents That's focused at capturing some the content, or that search traffic. But we've shifted a lot in the topics that we cover. so we moved from a lot of top-of-funnel type as topics to more focus on mid and bottom funnel And also in ways like now we have work flows using AI embedded into some processes.

[00:05:41] Okay, so here's something that I'd like to get your opinion on real quick because i recently had a guest. That made an argument for top of the funnel content or i repeat four top off the final content and as you also said yourself moved away from it and they are going back. my guest mate was that she still believes in top of the funnel content for a Topical Authority play and also an internal linking play. So what's your, so do you find this convincing argument? No I would actually totally agree with that And i think it depends on You know Your category industry and your brand Especially if you're In A Category That Doesn't Like Isn't Well Known Or If You're Just Finding Your Category. Topical or Top Of Funnel Can Really Help With you know, building that topical authority.

[00:06:35] And for Webflow we already had a lot of established authority around um...that type of funnel. so although those topics were originally driving alot traffic for us especially with the shift in AI We started noticing like a lot decline across those topic and we start focusing more on mid to bottom funnel content which saw higher conversion rates. Did you start thinking about AI search or answer engine optimization? Or generative engine optimization, however we want to call it. Do have a preference? You probably called it AEO. right? yeah well We call it AEO. Yeah obviously It's the stupid question. Obviously you call that AEO because Webflow just launched an AEO tool. But at what point did you started thinking About as something That needs your attention or dedicated attention of Your team?

[00:07:28] Yeah, when it started I don't think we had a name for it and For me. It felt like you know A slow build rather than some lightning bolt moment. We were already starting to pay attention To AI search especially When Google announced their source generative experience Which then rolled out too. what? What do y'all now as ai overviews? i would say around Like two years ago, we were starting to answer some questions around like how do we monitor? How we show up in LLMs. Um...how do we appear on the top sources that are being cited in AI overviews? but data at point hadn't really shown um..that LLM's where meaningfully disrupting Google market yet and at time weren't really reactive. My belief was that if you create genuinely authoritative, useful content.

[00:08:23] You're already doing the right thing. because think what earns Google citations is largely what earn LOM citations too and then back then. I also believe driving brand awareness would be a bigger factor in the future with like the halo effects on SEO of more people talking about Webflow and just external sites and articles organically mentioning Webflow. So last year when we started seeing more of that show up in our numbers, Our strategy wasn't really a pivot. It was like an extension to the existing SEO strategy. We formalized an AI search strategy built on top of our SEO shared it with leadership across all marketing. And you know, I may drive the channel but I think AEO is also like a team sport.

[00:09:15] So all of the great work across our product marketing or brand community content affiliates customer market basically whole marketing team really contributes to our visibility. and would just say that it's in any sense helpful to be based in San Francisco with Google and open AI and anthropic and all of these having offices there. Yeah, I wouldn't say that's a...I mean it is great to be in the city and around like the environment but i wouldn't Say That It's Necessarily An Advantage. I think The Biggest Advantage Is Just Having Your Leadership And Your Marketing Team All Bought In? For Us I Think Was Very Lucky Because Our team Saw Not Just Like As An Internal Strategy But Also A Problem That A Lot Of Our Customers Were Also Facing.

[00:10:03] So AEO really became like a company motion to not only show up in AI search, but also help our customers do the same by sharing out learnings and then just building solutions into our platform. Okay so before we move on to great results that you unquestionable god would you agree with this statement. someone told me It's actually probably easier to infiltrate the CIA than getting to talk to someone from either Google that works on the AI search experience or OpenAI, any other of these companies. Yeah, I would probably agree with that. Okay good then we have that sorted. so let's talk about some of the results that you got and WebFill has already been very outspoken about it which from like a viewer perspective really value because its' so cool someone.

[00:10:57] your reputation brings actual numbers to table. as i said AI search now drives nearly ten percent signups but can imagine this didn't happen overnight just like from one day to the other. So can you walk us through a little bit, The journey of how you got there? Yeah so Like I mentioned our AEO strategy was really built on top of a strong SEO foundation and also on top Of a great brand And that's thanks To years of investment From teams across Webflow. It is not Just One thing That i did it Is from Years or like that Brand Strength that Really Compounds. So when we started thinking through our ego strategy, We looked at both on-site owned content optimizations as well as off site and all of the different levers that we could pull across third party publications Reddit's Business Publications and review sites.

[00:12:00] so in our own property content that we could optimize, figuring out different experiments. We can run and then across all of our offsite. the team as a whole really like activated move quickly. there worked with our affiliates in partners comms or customer marketing was optimizing our G to profiles making sure were getting great quality reviews team, across marketing and product. And customer success all really engaging in Reddit in an authentic way.". So yeah I would say that it's just AEO is like...I approach it as a portfolio. There are going to be different levers of things you can test. The goal was to figure out what works What doesn't? Just scale what works results that are close as meaningful.

[00:13:05] As they've been to webflow, you have to basically make it an all hands on deck motion where the whole company checks if they can make a contribution because there's just like couple of teams that worked in it besides being you or maybe being the SEO team so to say. So is this fair for AEO success? Yeah, I would say that there's a bit of education around like how AEO works and making sure you're activating different parts in your team and marketing team to really drive great results. Because having a strong brand will only benefit you for AEO. And what do you say is one or two experiments have proven the most outsized and impact. So things that have really driven a lot of results, maybe also unexpectedly?

[00:14:06] Yeah I would say one the most unexpected ones was our FAQs experiment. so like last year we had a hypothesis that you know adding structured FAQ's to your core feature pages will help improve visibility as well. LOMs, we're talking about our brand and our features. So FAQ's answer are really like mid to long tail questions And I think the Q&A structure also kind of directly align with how AI systems process and synthesize and provide information. so at the time Our feature pages really described what we do but they didn't really just answer specific questions that people were had About each of those different features? that would help automate that FAQ process. The reason why I used Air Apps was because FAQ creation can be very manual, you know it takes time to discover what are the questions people ask then build out the question and answer set in making sure all of this aligns with like your brand or product messaging.

[00:15:18] so with the workflow at Air Apps. All Of That is handled automatically from pulling questions around like people also ask keyword research, real question that users had in Reddit or forums. We could add an option to adding questions we might see come up on sales calls and so then the workflow

kind of builds out those on-brand answers using our product docs help documentation and outputs FAQs and skew a markup automatically. And I think the surprising thing was like when we launched it, and we saw over three hundred thirty new citations come directly to those specific core feature pages. Which made up fifty seven percent of all news citations across Webflow during that period. We also saw a twenty four percent increase in impressions To these pages which meant they were showing higher more frequently In AI search or in AI overviews And so, it became like a repeatable system that we could roll out to cross more feature and solution pages.

[00:16:30] How many pages did you actually touch in the experiment? Yeah! We only touched six core feature pages. Okay So these six pages made quite big of difference. Yes Did you rollout this FAQ playbook if we can hold it then also to other pages after that? to more feature and solution pages across all of our template category pages. We actually also tried testing out adding FAQs in blog content, it didn't have nearly the same impact as it did across some other types of pages. And do we have any hypothesis why that is? My hypothesis on the blog content, that FAQs were more informational. It didn't really speak directly about our products. and I think if you're creating content that AI can already answer by itself it's not going to have as much impact.

[00:17:36] Um, what else did you do to get to nearly ten percent of AI search signups? You mentioned like a couple of buckets. Like on site read it off side reviews. um but What's another experiment that you can share that your proud or that uh had made made a great contribution? Yeah We've been running a lot of different experiments across our blog. Another one we tested was adding external citations and data, and statistics. That also saw a pretty significant impact not only for like AI search traffic but in non-brand SEO traffic as well. So you basically just walk us through because it's super simple. If I can, if imagine like I'm a software company and have the blog. And now some content there then i would look for ways to add external data points probably from verified sources in any sense.

[00:18:37] or how will it go about replicating what you had success with? Yeah! What we did was... We um.. Had uh.. A test group and control group Um ..and For our chessgroup ,we looked at Places in the content where we could add statistics or a research study, or external citation to back up acclaim. Did research around like what types of things we can add? Partner with our great agency to help at these... The content and update it And then tested whether that had any impact compared to the control group. So I think yeah for any company with a blog or content, thinking through different hypotheses like this and doing a pre-post test against the control group can pretty quickly show what works. What doesn't?

[00:19:38] If you create content or if update content... You already mentioned Aerobs for your FAQ project. now I think depending on where listeners come from if they come from the U.S., They are probably very aware of Arabs, If they came to Europe it depends a little bit. some people that follow my content for quite sometime have heard of Arab before but can you give listeners who don't know what they do and why this is tool? Can you give us sense of what it is and like how you deployed. Yeah, yeah well I will give you an example especially for our content refresh. so a couple years ago we were still refreshing content the manual way which was very slow in time consuming And i was evaluating lot different AI content tools at that time but none really met quality bar When first discovered Aerobs.

[00:20:35] they were agentic workflow kind. So that was what really drew me in. And so I think my first use case, like can we use this tool on this platform to really automate our content refresh workflows and take some of those manual processes and do it in like an automated way. So I brought them on initially to see if we could automate that while still maintaining those quality standards, that brand voice and tone and those product messaging guidelines which I think Airhouse is really great at because you can build all of the context into your knowledge bases You can reference them In your workflows so you're not just generating AI content data and context. So within a few weeks I was like actually pretty amazed

at some of the outputs that it generated, also how much time is saved from research to brief creation...to content and staging & publishing in webflow.

[00:21:39] so form there. its just been game changer across many other workflows. Can you walk us through, for example how you build such a workflow? Because I mean... ...I can imagine that couple of people have already used something like Zapier or Make. Or NNN and they know okay.. ..I can have different actions etc. but You mentioned something like pulling in the context And having the brand kit. There's all these news things. So How does it actually work? Like how do you ensure when you create content If your doing with Workflow You also do it with AI. So how do you ensure that it meets the quality bar and that you can publish it? Also safely without, for example risking being penalized by a Google Core update or like losing your citations?

[00:22:27] And I mean there's all this discussion about AI content around. so How do you make AI content good sort of thing? Yeah yeah i think um For all my different workflows. And what is like the end output that I'm trying to achieve? What are all of the different inputs that i need to get there. Um and so from there, I map out all of The different contexts that I need To build or to pull um in. That includes uh our brand voice and tone guidelines Our own SEO best practices now layering on AEO Best Practices different nuances of like our brand messaging that we need to get right. So I build all of that first, and then I scaffold out the workflow. so if We'll just kind of map out what are all of the different inputs in steps for that work flow?

[00:23:26] And Then i Just test and iterate each step until i get What i want then move on To The next and then so On share it out to other stakeholders like our product marketing, content or sometimes even legal teams and get their feedback. And then I know any patterns in their feedback that might need revising thing. all of that gets updated back into either the context or workflow prompts itself. so i think this principle is AI does all heavy lifting on research drafting but we still own strategy review quality goes live without like us reviewing it first. Okay, but if you have the workflow built basically and then you start a content refresh process with I don't know couple of pages than this processes end to end.

[00:24:26] or does this process them also involve review from the legal team? The cons team? who ever might say in that Are these teams only giving feedback on the context and like, The guidelines. And everything that goes into the workflow? but the individual refresh pieces then go through the pipeline without touch? Yeah it really depends On the work flow. so for us For the content refresh Workflow we have I Have all of those Guidelines the brand voice in tone product marketing messaging guidelines which We get from our product Marketing Teams um...and Then So all of that context is built out. And then with our refresh workflow, I intentionally build in friction points into the work flow to make sure that I review different parts of outputs.

[00:25:20] so we have a step where I will review the content brief if everything looks good and it kicks off next part. And then from there, we also have a point where I will review. each or my team will review different parts of the updated content. Make sure it looks good. Also make sure that we review where mentions Webflow to speaks about our product and our features correctly. And then from there, it will go and stage everything in RCMS to ready for polish. In which level of autonomy have you already reached like further content? So how much editing is still required on average? Yeah minimal editing I think all. Um, the type of context that we have built out in like different specific guidance that we give to workflow.

[00:26:23] And can you give us a sense about The size of this context? So is it Like? are these different guidelines. Is It like two? so the equivalent equivalent Of Two Google Docs pages? is it rather like ten pages? twenty pages Obviously, it's probably written in Markdown. So LLM interpretable but can you give us a sense of the size? Yeah I mean quite a lot for our refresh workflows. It's like all of our brand voice and tone. guidelines are product messaging Our different personas where i have different

workflows For creating comparison content Like competitor pages And so The context for that is also A lot more. we Have certain messaging guidelines for each of our features, how we talk about web flow. And then I also make sure that it pulls in our help documentation to make sure they get all their different features right?

[00:27:29] What would you say? because your obviously doing this for quite some time already what will just of? the increase in autonomy is also driven by model improvement. Yeah, I would say it's a big part. especially now with Claude A lot of that time has been moved to like The AI. do you have preference for models? So he obviously already mentioned Claude. but yeah Two to three months, my preference has been clod because there's just so much that it can do. And I've actually been using a lot for more like data analysis reporting and productivity stuff. I'm so happy to hear that because i bought like a team's plan for the whole agency. For Claude already back in November. twenty-twenty four, so now seeing all these smart folks also moving over to Claude makes me very happy.

[00:28:39] uh... So welcome to the Claude family. No no just kidding. but Um, so you're talking about content refresh. You already talked to a country trash but also mentioned creating content around the comparison content and for refreshing content. I think even people that are skeptic about AI they can see the argument. if your already have solid content base then it's different story than creating something from blank sheet of paper. doesn't sound right like a blank screen. let's call it like that. so how do you what changes if u do not approach with content refresh. Content generation from scratch yes to me like generating, net new content generating your content without a base like this article. i want to refresh it.

[00:29:35] but hey, I want to produce this completely new article about the complete in utopic. so yeah how do you approach it differently? maybe? first question because that is why did he do it differently? may be it's not true. Yeah we actually work with our agency graphite on a lot of new content and i think a lot other content Ideas just comes from deeply understanding your target audiences. And for Webflow, we have a lot of different ICPs and they all like different challenges or pain points—different use cases. So our goal is really to answer those questions in intense with content across the funnel. For AI content specifically I wouldn't say that AI content only works well, but AI assisted content with a human in the loop does.

[00:30:26] So we're not like one-shotting prompts to generate content. all of our content is either Human Written With Our Great Agency or by The Different Teams that's producing content at Webflow Or it's Content That's Generated Using A Lot Of Brand Context. So either way, it comes from having that context also the taste and judgment. And knowing what resonates with your audience in making sure it aligns with your brand? Would you say is possible to create similar quality content with AI compared to content being created by humans? so skilled editors people who have been content writers for their career You know, I think it varies and really depends typical SEO answer. SEOs are now the new lawyers? Yeah right!

[00:31:24] For us we also have a lot of great like editorial type content too with website examples And i think that really needs a human writer an editor to make sure That were speaking genuinely authentically about these examples. you mentioned this content format fifteen small business website examples for inspiration, the fourteen examples of great portfolio websites etc. I love this format! i've been showing it to my team um for quite some time and i know you probably can't share specific but can you give me a sense about if my hypothesis that this content converts really well? If this is true yes...i think like..i-I think that it does. we've seen this type of content format do really well for us, not just for SEO but actually for AI as well.

[00:32:14] And my thought is that you know these types of content are very high intent and it's not

something that an AI or LLM can easily answer. You need human judgment in taste. When someone looks at different websites they want to see the end product visit website intent, I think only helps with this type of content. And now if you look at for example the model advancements that have happened over the last weeks and month so i don't even call it years because its going and also how deep you are already in with workflows, the Arab platform etc. So can you see a future where we basically have full end-to-end automated content processes? Definitely given that there has to be some sort of high quality input probably ever growing context space.

[00:33:23] but Do you think we will at some point reach a point where there's no more automation or will be basically move to fully autonomous content creation? As with, for example software engineering. Where a cloud code with opus four points seven and million tokens context window can basically create working applications end-to-end With very little context that you provide. Yeah I mean, especially with how fast things are moving. It's a little bit hard to say but at the same time there will always need be human in-the-loop whether that someone who is guiding AI building up context or even reviewing for final quality. But yeah... Even if we move into fully autonomous automated workflows There still needs to be some one person.

[00:34:14] And do you actually publish more at webflow now with AI than pre-AI or same, even less? I would say we published last net new. We're refreshing more content focusing a lot on the mid to bottom funnel type of content and The reason is because you already have built up such a big portfolio. So there would only be room, for example. For doing what HubSpot did and I have full respect for HubSpOT in their pivot but when they created this content which was how to do the shrug emoji then where you basically are looking for new content ideas that might not be so deeply tied to the product? Right definitely! That's part of it we have. Weflow has like years of great content. Now it's for us, what content actually moves the needle?

[00:35:09] What makes business impact and focusing there. Okay let's speak about business impact because I see a lot of discussion around that. so i would say two types. people are talking about AI visibility like brand management share voice etc. this is new um main kpi. so we move away from clicks and for traffic. And then there's the other uh part that basically says yeah, We shouldn't- So maybe should use visibility as a proxy at most. but we have to talk about leads ,we have to talked about signups .We Have To Talk About Pipeline We've Talked About Revenue..So if you say content has to Move The Needle what does the needle look like? Yeah That's A Great Question. Um...And I would Say You Know Both Parties Are right in the way.

[00:36:02] Like for us, I look at our measurement and three different layers so making sure we are tracking AI visibility and citations as kind of like leading indicators but we really report on our conversions and the business impact. And when i am thinking through our content strategy Do you look at like leading indicators to see, what are the different areas that we need to cover? But um... We focus a lot on The type of content That will drive sign-ups and new customers. Okay so if you Which visibility monitoring platform do You use for Webflow? Well..we're now starting To use our own platform Of course! Yeah, so yeah that's definitely a topic we have to tap into. We didn't really talk about it yet. So Webflow just launched an AEO platform.

[00:37:06] Can you give us maybe a little sneak peek? Obviously people can click the link in the description where we will link but... Can I give this a sneak peak of what is going on? Is there new monitoring software connected with the Webflow product? How does it look like? Yeah, I mean i think that there are a lot of great tools out There to monitor your AI visibility. track one. We also use other tools But our goal is really to provide teams that don't have access to this to A feature within web flow That allows them to track their eight eye visibility All in one platform and so it will eventually give you

Visibility into how you're doing across prompts that you care about, for topics that you cared about.

[00:37:54] You'll be able to use that inform your decisions track your conversions and yet improve your AI visibility. Okay so it's basically end-to-end connected between visibility and then actions that you take. if you're a webflow customer already have content living in the Webflow CMS anyway. yeah okay OK. That definitely sounds smart, so everybody that is listening to that and there's already running on Webflow or maybe considering moving over to Webflow from WordPress or other CMS tools probably you should check it out. we'll put a link in the description And I can imagine now also doing AEO for Webflow with the Webflow AEO tool right? Yeah! We're starting too. How does this feel like a meta moment? Yeah, I think again i mentioned this but we're customer zero and so like hoping that by solving some of these problems it's... We are also solving problems our customers are facing.

[00:38:58] And you know building what I would want to see in a tool into the platform. Okay, very cool. We've already talked about Aerobs. we talked about AI workflows in Arabs etc. I'd also like to know because probably you're using AI quite a bit for other things. You mentioned data analytics etc. Can you share a couple of your favorite workflows? And as i have to say Also maybe surprising workflows that people wouldn't expect. Don't know if this is like SEO specific, but for me I have a workflow that runs every day using Claude. That will give me daily briefing of the day. so what's on my agenda? What do i need to... need to focus on what are my top priorities in like a three-day horizon of things looking ahead in the week and it scans my Slack, my emails.

[00:40:02] My Notion... And then a separate workflow that will do an end-of-the-day sweep. so then it captures all of my to-dos and drops into an inbox with my Notions. So I don't have spend time you know figuring out okay? What Are All Of The Things That I Need To Follow Up On? What are all the outstanding tasks? The AI does that automatically for me. How much time do you still spend in the tools, like no matter if it's Notion or Slack or the calendar maybe even Gmail and how much time to spent in Cloud then paying the tools via MCP or Direct Connection? Yeah I would say i spend less time now Definitely scanning my emails and slacks to find all of the conversations, action items I need do like way less time.

[00:41:00] And now i can just scan my daily briefing follow-up immediately with whatever action items needs be done. so it saved me a lot of times doing that. Have you also already started building new internal tools? Like obviously You have the Webflow AEO Suite now, but like little tools for certain use cases with cloud code. For you or your team to make something more handy? Yeah I don't know how much i can share But definitely we've been using Cloud a lot too Just small internal things. So maybe one thing is... We had lots of great webinars on our site. It feels like a workflow in Airhouse to, you know generate and repurpose content from those webinars. But sometimes we just want to find insights. um In a webinar or two back up at something in an article.

[00:41:59] So one thing that I've actually done pretty recently need to start rolling out more is finding specific Insights Or Quotes for any given topic. so about the little tool in Claude Claude project. That will do that very cool. And now talking about the experiments again, you obviously shared a couple of experiences that worked very well. Can you also share an experiment? That maybe didn't drive results or something where you had high hopes but then in the end it didn't work out. and I'm asking specifically because as people from the A-B testing conversion rate optimization site always say You don't really win with the tests that succeed, but you rather win with a test that fail because you know what? You shouldn't implement and shouldn't roll out.

[00:42:51] So is there anything that comes to mind? yeah I think so. we talked about The website listicles. one thing We did was test To see whether restructuring some of those websites listicles would Work. so we tested moving the visual examples above like Some of the supporting sections And we

actually saw negative impact on both like AI visits to these pages and as well as SEO traffic. So we rolled that back, um... And I think my hypothesis was like you know AI and search engines need that supporting content to kind of set up the article before we get into some more visual examples. Okay, so for everybody that does not have the page like just visually in front of them to give an idea. So there's these pages like fifteen small business website examples inspiration right?

[00:43:47] These ones. and then you have a great introduction where it says Small businesses are incredibly diverse. this diversity reveals itself from their websites And Then There is bit of context and then there is wise website design for small business important etc. etc. and we go into the example And you basically scrapped that. We moved the supporting content all below the visual examples and yeah, so that experiment didn't work as we expected. So we moved on in a content backup. Cool I think this is really cool experience because honestly i could see client of ours come to us when we produce similar contents or for example That works. It's a funnel builder, it is like type form alternative called Hayflow and when we create content that is like quiz funnel example etc.

[00:44:43] We also have this supporting section at the top. I could definitely see a client tell us Yeah, we don't need that. We should definitely start with the examples already. people do not want to read that but then it's a very convincing argument. say you know webflow test this and Vivian told me an it didn't work. so let us now burn our hands. they have already done that. yeah thanks for sharing. um... Is there something where you feel like this has had a great impact, or maybe even an outsized impact? Because people are obviously always looking for invest as little time is possible to get as much impact as possible that you saw concerning off-site. So no matter if it's Reddit or review sites or any other aspect Yeah I think all of it really contributes.

[00:45:40] I can't point to like one single thing that will have the most outsize impact, and I really think it depends on your brand or category—the types of prompts you care about because those will have different citation sources that show up the most frequently. So I think it really depends, again. Typical answer but i would say look at like your priority prompts to see what are the citation sources that are showing up? What do LMS trust and cite them most and see if you can get your brand placed there. And Again It just goes back to having a strong brand Making sure that you show up across all of these different publications, across your social engage authentically in Reddit. In your own subreddit if you can.

[00:46:39] So yeah again it's like kind of a portfolio approach. so no quick wins unfortunately. and the one single how do say silver bullet? That you have to discover. then suddenly your AEO visibility rises from five percent to ninety-five percent. Yeah, I mean i think for your like anyone who is watching their brand just um...I think the silver bullet will vary you know? Just again test what works and what doesn't. Okay! And What would you say? was it's biggest misconception that people still have about AI search or AEO? that again, there is a silver bullet. That one tactic will work? I think it's an overall strategy and really comes from deeply understanding who your audience is the questions they're asking about forming strategies for them to do so.

[00:47:42] Do you have any opinion on now publishing all content in markdown format? because i just saw linkedin post two days ago. Yeah, we started this experiment and we're fourteen days in. And it already looks great! We have... I think was a hundred clicks more from Google or something like that? Oh wow yeah i can imagine how much clicks you have. but what do you think why there is always new thing where people feel like Wow This is so smart having everything in markdown, having the llm.txt , having everything with schema now and that then there's this hype train rolling through linkedin all the time. yeah i'm not sure. I think like um There is a lot of hype. uh And you know people I think are always looking for quick wins.

[00:48:37] Um but I think You know you need a long-term strategy. um you need to. Yes, you can focus on quick wins but as long as your using that alongside a long-term strategy. You're not just working on the quick wins for the sake of quick wins itself. and so... That's what I would say! Okay now if you have convinced someone who wants to start out they are NOT looking at the quick win But they acknowledge that you need a long-term strategy, but they still ask themselves where do I start? Yeah. What would say are the two to three things that they should start with?". Yeah! Does this directly answer questions that my audience might ask about this topic, about my brand? And based on that build out content if you don't already have it.

[00:49:47] Refresh your content and I think is one of the highest leveraged things to do. just take an audit at what you have and build upon them. Then second i would say start tracking because you can optimize when not measuring. figure out what are the prompts that your audience care about and use to find a solution like yours. Who is citing you? What questions do they have, um...what are the top citation sources that LMS prioritize and trust for those types of questions and look at trying to get into these sources. And then third I think I mentioned this already, but AEO is a team sport. Start educating and activating your marketing team in getting all of them involved and aligned because that will carry a halo effect on how you show up as brand with different sources.

[00:50:52] Nice, that's definitely very helpful and operational. Now we have senior people listening to this podcast but also sometimes junior people listening. if someone is still early in their career they're seeing all these changes in the SEO space. like you are talking about workflows or building and other kind of stuff. If you had recommend somebody Starting out as like junior SAO manager or junior, maybe even content manager a content writer. What would you recommend? are the skills? Or areas that people should learn more about dive deeper into so they future prove their career? yeah say couple of things. I think really just getting your hands on the tools themselves and building, I think gives you the best experience.

[00:51:49] And for me that's what made a big difference when it was like learning Aerobs or different AI tools. is us getting in there finding out use case that you have building anything from their? you get so many ideas about other things you can build? Then secondly is to learn how um, LMS and like Google search works because I think having that understanding is a good foundation for you know building out your AEO or SEO strategy. Okay cool so everybody listening to this follow Vivian's advice then you might also at some point be an SEO and AEO lead had a great company like Webflow. Thanks so much for taking the time. to date has been a really, really insightful talk. Really enjoyed it. I think you dropped A lot of knowledge.

[00:52:40] four people two try to take and replicate for their company. now To close the talk, I always have a final question and i bluntly stole this. The idea for this question from Lenny's podcast because I think it is great podcast And uh...I like to listen to myself and everybody that does not know. probably in US Everybody knows but Europe still gaining popularity. You should definitely go check out. But my question what didn't we talked about? I think we covered a lot of different things. But what did you miss? Good question! Maybe about the internal challenge being in team sport, yeah i feel lucky because at Webflow it is such. Everyone is moving forward in the same direction, but at other companies I think it might be a little bit different.

[00:53:43] You might be you know fighting for resources or trying to even get your leadership bought-in and so i think again maybe there's a bit of education there. um and trying to get everyone aligned about why its important...why it builds on a great SEO foundation, like you shouldn't get rid of your SEO channel. And so I think that might be a challenge people are facing? What do your thoughts on it? You're the guest in this podcast and i want to extract your wisdom! No...I can definitely share my

thoughts but before we do that what Webflow, obviously that people can learn from. Yeah I think when we first started it was not a lot of folks understood what AI-AEO is and so in what to do about it for us also i think what helped was putting together strategy and first explaining setting the stage like why its important.

[00:54:59] we're seeing across the industry, what's... We are seeing in our own numbers. Sharing that with like leadership and then cross-marketing to really show these are different levers you can pull. this is why it important. And yeah I think just should start there. Okay i would agree If you want to convince people, You have to show them that it matters. So I was a big fan always of. so i got this metaphor from another podcast guest. um sometimes there has to be People That uh run ahead like two three hills into the future and they try something out And then They come back To The group and Then they basically Tell Them what they saw? This could Be A small group of people doing a little experiment and then basically showing the whole company.

[00:56:01] Hey, look we did this thing. And now if you ask chat GBT it doesn't tell you that as I did before but not tells you this which is driven by sources. in these sources It's our content or its Content where? We are mentioned and this is what we do to get mention there and i feel like This really opens eyes already for People because I mean, we are in a bubble of the bubble off like you especially. But then we have people that i think want to see the relevance but they also see people talking about markdown and LMS TXT on blah blah blah And They feel Like wow there's A lot Of People That Claim To Have Figured It All Out? And I don't know. and Then The Calmer People With The Nuance Takes. they somehow don't get the same attention at times as the hype guys and people that really make some noise.

[00:57:00] So yeah, this would be my answer to that. Yeah no I totally agree with it. You know you have to take what you see before you like scale it out. That's a great ending for the podcast. Vivian, I appreciate your time and all of the insights that are shared if people want to follow around. so there is lots of content from you already on the web. People can check this out. If they want to dive deeper into stuff You did a webinar with Aerobs which was very cool. Other than that what would be best place to follow? Thankyou! You can find me at LinkedIn connectwithmethere always happy to connect And yeah, it was really great to be here. Thanks for having me! Thank you so much for taking the time and hope to catch up soon?

[00:57:53] Yeah thanks! Bye bye.