

Tamar Toledano Outlines the Marketing Shifts That Will Define 2026 as AI Agents Reshape Consumer Decision-Making

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San Francisco, California Dec 16, 2025 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Marketing strategist and consultant [Tamar Toledano](#), known for her work helping organizations build clear and authentic brand identities, is calling attention to a transformative shift already underway in digital marketing. As 2026 approaches, she says brands must prepare for the rise of AI agents and the emergence of Generative Engine Optimization, or GEO, which will rewrite long-held assumptions about how consumers discover, evaluate, and choose products.

Toledano notes that nearly a quarter of AI users already rely on shopping assistants to make purchase decisions. This signals a profound change: consumers are no longer the only audience brands must communicate with. They must also speak directly to machine intermediaries that filter, interpret, and recommend information on a consumer's behalf. By 2026, this dynamic will no longer be experimental. It will be standard.

She explains that traditional search optimization is becoming less influential as consumers turn to conversational AI systems instead of search engines. These systems do not rank webpages in the conventional sense. They synthesize, analyze, and cite sources they deem trustworthy. This emerging behavior elevates the importance of GEO, a discipline focused on shaping how generative models understand and present brand information.

Tamar Toledano stresses that GEO will require a shift in mindset. Brands can no longer rely on keyword-stuffed pages, backlink schemes, or technical tweaks. Visibility in AI-driven environments depends on

whether content is structured, machine-readable, and genuinely authoritative. AI systems reward clarity and penalize manipulation. They look for evidence of expertise, helpfulness, and alignment with the user's intent.

She anticipates that companies will build content ecosystems centered around answering conversational questions directly. Marketing teams will need to think less about ranking on a page and more about preparing responses for an AI that may summarize, paraphrase, or combine multiple sources. This demands content that is explicit, verifiable, and easy for models to interpret at scale.

According to Toledano, brands that want AI agents to “see” them must invest in structured metadata, transparent citations, and content that demonstrates real-world expertise. She predicts that industries such as healthcare, finance, travel, and consumer tech will be early adopters, because accuracy and trust play an outsized role in how AI systems weigh information. Companies with vague or superficial messaging will struggle to break through, while those with deep, well-organized knowledge bases will have a significant advantage.

Tamar Toledano also expects GEO to influence how teams collaborate internally. Marketing, product, data, and customer support will need to work together to build unified content libraries that reflect a consistent voice and clear instructions. The silos that once separated these functions will become liabilities as AI agents rely on comprehensive datasets that reflect a brand's full expertise. Organizations that fail to coordinate their knowledge will appear fragmented to AI systems, leading to reduced visibility in recommendations and summaries.

Another trend she highlights is the shift toward people-first content. Despite the emphasis on machine readability, [Tamar Toledano](#) insists the human experience remains central. AI agents ultimately aim to represent the needs, questions, and priorities of the user. Brands must not create for machines alone. They must communicate in ways that reflect real human concerns, using language that is transparent and accessible. Helpful content, she says, is the most powerful signal an AI can detect.

With these changes, Toledano believes measurement will also evolve. Instead of focusing on page rankings or click-through rates, marketers will evaluate how often AI tools cite or recommend their content. New analytics platforms will emerge to monitor model references, conversational influence, and agent-generated traffic. Brands that understand these patterns will be able to refine their content strategies with unprecedented precision.

As organizations prepare for 2026, Toledano encourages leaders to treat GEO as a long-term investment rather than a tactical experiment. The brands that succeed will adopt a posture of clarity, transparency, and authority. They will embrace ethical communication and prioritize accuracy over volume. This shift, she says, is not merely technological. It reflects a deeper demand for trust in a digital environment where AI plays an increasingly active role in shaping public perception.

Toledano notes that marketing has always evolved with technology, but the rise of AI agents represents one of the most significant behavioral shifts of the past decade. The companies that adapt now will secure a durable presence in the next era of digital engagement, where human and machine audiences coexist and influence one another in real time.

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