

AI Search Is Changing Digital Marketing in India: Insights from Chavi Gupta



Mumbai, Maharashtra Oct 29, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Artificial intelligence is reshaping the way people discover information, research products, and make purchasing decisions online. In India, the growing adoption of AI-powered search experiences is creating new opportunities and challenges for businesses seeking to improve their digital presence.

At its Google I/O event in May 2026, Google announced further changes to its search experience, including expanded AI capabilities designed to help users explore complex questions and receive more interactive responses. The company also reported that AI Mode had surpassed one billion monthly users globally.

For business owners, CEOs, and marketing managers, these developments signal an important shift: digital marketing strategies must increasingly account for how customers discover, compare, and evaluate businesses through AI-assisted search.

The question is no longer simply how to attract website visitors. Businesses must also consider how to provide useful information, build trust, and help potential customers make confident decisions across changing digital channels.

[How AI Search Is Transforming the Digital Marketing Landscape](#)

Traditional search engines primarily helped users find relevant websites through lists of links. AI-powered search introduces another layer by generating summaries, responding to follow-up questions, and helping users explore more detailed topics.

For example, a customer searching for marketing support might ask:

- “How can I increase website traffic for my small business?”
- “Which digital marketing strategies are suitable for a business with a limited budget?”
- “How can I find a digital marketer in Malad who understands local SEO and Google Ads?”

AI-powered search can help users explore these questions in greater detail, making the quality and relevance of business information increasingly important.

Google's 2026 advertising updates also reflect this shift. The company has introduced and tested new advertising experiences designed to connect businesses with consumers as they research products and services through AI-powered search. [blog.google+1](#)

For businesses, the opportunity lies in understanding these evolving customer journeys and ensuring their digital marketing activities remain relevant.

Why AI Search Matters for Indian Businesses

India's digital marketplace is highly competitive, with businesses across industries using websites, social media, online advertising, and search optimisation to attract customers.

AI-powered search adds another consideration to this environment: potential customers may discover information through AI-generated responses as well as traditional search listings.

Google's September 2026 marketing insights for India highlighted the growing complexity of consumer journeys. Its research reported that Indian consumers using AI features engaged with an average of 13 touchpoints before purchasing, compared with 5.5 touchpoints among consumers who did not use those features. These figures relate to the study's specific consumer sample and should not be treated as universal averages for every industry. [Think with Google APAC](#)

For business leaders, this reinforces the importance of maintaining a consistent presence across the channels customers use to research and evaluate their options.

1. Businesses Need to Understand Search Intent

Search intent refers to the reason behind a user's search.

A person searching for “digital marketing services” may be exploring available options. Someone searching for “Google Ads management for a small business in Mumbai” may have a more specific commercial need.

Businesses should understand these differences and develop website pages that address the needs of their intended audiences.

For example, a service page could explain the services offered, the types of businesses served, the problems addressed, and how a prospective customer can enquire.

This approach helps visitors understand whether the business is relevant to their needs, regardless of how they arrive at the website.

2. Helpful Content Can Support Customer Discovery

AI-generated answers can influence how users explore topics and compare solutions. However, appearing in an AI-generated answer is not guaranteed, and there is no single content formula that ensures visibility.

Businesses should prioritise content that answers genuine customer questions with useful, accurate, and clearly presented information.

Useful content may include:

- Detailed service explanations.
- Answers to frequently asked customer questions.
- Industry updates and expert commentary.
- Practical guides and educational articles.
- Case studies supported by verifiable results.
- Comparisons that explain relevant advantages and limitations.

For CEOs and managers, the goal should be to make the business a credible source of information for prospective customers, rather than publishing content simply to increase the number of pages on a website.

3. Paid Advertising Is Evolving Alongside AI Search

AI search is influencing not only organic discovery but also the development of digital advertising.

In October 2026, Google announced that advertisements in AI Mode would expand to India and nine other countries. Google stated that ads would be clearly identified as sponsored content. [blog.google+1](https://blog.google/2026/10/26/google-ai-mode-expansion/)

This gives eligible advertisers another development to monitor as they plan their campaigns.

Businesses should review their existing Google Ads campaigns, check eligibility and availability in their accounts, and evaluate performance using meaningful metrics such as qualified leads, customer acquisition cost, and return on advertising spend.

The expansion does not guarantee that every business will receive additional traffic or generate more sales. Campaign results will still depend on customer demand, competition, budgets, targeting, and the relevance of the advertising experience.

What CEOs and Managers Should Do to Prepare

AI search is a marketing development, but responding to it should be a business decision supported by clear objectives and measurable results.

The following actions can help management teams prepare.

Audit the company's online presence

Review the website, service pages, business listings, and existing search visibility. Check whether customers can easily understand what the business offers and how to contact it.

Invest in useful, trustworthy content

Identify common customer questions and publish accurate information that helps potential buyers understand their options. Keep important business details consistent and up to date.

Measure results, not just visibility

Track qualified enquiries, sales, conversion rates, organic traffic, and advertising costs. Use the data to identify which channels contribute to business objectives.

Strengthen local search visibility

Businesses serving specific locations should maintain accurate contact details, improve location-relevant service pages, and manage their Google Business Profile where applicable.

These measures can help businesses adapt to evolving search behaviour while maintaining a strong foundation in established digital marketing practices.

AI Search and SEO: What Is Changing?

Search engine optimisation remains important, but businesses should consider how SEO fits into a broader strategy for being discovered online.

Traditional SEO focuses on improving a website's visibility in organic search results. AI-powered search adds experiences in which users may receive generated summaries, ask follow-up questions, or explore recommendations before deciding which sources to visit.

Businesses should therefore consider three complementary priorities.

Area

What businesses should focus on

Traditional SEO

Relevant keywords, helpful content, technical performance, and website structure

AI search readiness

Clear answers, well-organised information, accuracy, and useful supporting details

Business conversion

Trust signals, service clarity, easy contact options, and effective enquiry processes

There is no guarantee that following these practices will make a website appear in a particular AI-generated response. Search systems change, and their selection processes are not fully controlled by website owners.

It is also important to distinguish organic search from paid advertising. Google states that advertisements in AI-powered search experiences are labelled “Sponsored” and that paying for advertising does not influence the organic responses generated by its AI. [Google Ads Help](#)

For management teams, this means SEO and paid advertising should be measured as distinct activities, even when they support the same business goals.

What AI Search Means for Small Businesses in Mumbai

Small businesses often have limited marketing budgets and must decide carefully where to invest their time and resources.

For a local business in Mumbai, visibility may depend on several factors: the relevance of its services, its website quality, its reputation, its local search presence, and the effectiveness of its advertising.

A customer searching for a consultant, retail service, educational institute, or marketing professional may use different combinations of location, service, price, and business requirements to find suitable options.

This creates a practical opportunity for local businesses to communicate their offerings more clearly.

The Importance of Local SEO

Local SEO helps businesses improve their visibility for searches associated with a specific location or service area.

Businesses in Malad, for example, may benefit from maintaining accurate business information, creating relevant service pages, earning genuine customer reviews, and explaining the areas they serve.

A business should avoid creating repetitive location pages that offer little value. Instead, each page should provide useful information relevant to its customers and location.

For businesses seeking professional support, a digital marketer in Malad can help evaluate local search opportunities, improve website content, review advertising campaigns, and develop a strategy aligned with business objectives.

Digital marketing activities should be chosen according to the company's needs, competition, budget, and available resources rather than assumptions that AI search alone will deliver growth.

Will AI Replace Traditional Digital Marketing Strategies?

AI is changing digital marketing, but businesses should not assume that established marketing channels will become irrelevant overnight.

SEO, paid search, social media marketing, email marketing, website optimisation, and analytics continue to serve different purposes.

AI can support research, content planning, campaign optimisation, and customer interactions. However, businesses still need human judgement to understand their customers, protect their brand reputation, verify information, and make commercial decisions.

For example, a company might use AI tools to identify frequently asked questions, but its team must still ensure the answers are accurate and appropriate for its audience.

Similarly, AI-assisted advertising tools may help with campaign delivery, but management must still establish budgets, define acceptable acquisition costs, and evaluate whether the resulting customers are profitable.

The strongest approach is to use AI where it adds practical value while retaining clear oversight of quality, spending, and business outcomes.

What Businesses Should Watch Next

As AI-powered search develops, businesses should monitor several areas:

- Search behaviour: Are customers using longer, more detailed questions to find products and services?
- Advertising developments: Which AI-powered advertising features are available to the business, and what results do they deliver?
- Organic visibility: How are website traffic, search impressions, and enquiries changing over time?
- Customer experience: Can potential customers quickly find reliable information and take the next step?
- Marketing return: Are digital marketing investments contributing to qualified leads, sales, and sustainable growth?

These indicators can help business owners make informed decisions instead of responding to every new technology announcement with an immediate change in strategy.

Conclusion: Adapting to the Future of Digital Marketing

AI search is becoming an increasingly important part of the digital marketing conversation in India. Google's recent search developments and advertising expansion demonstrate how businesses may connect with consumers through evolving online experiences.

For CEOs, managers, and business owners, the key priority is to understand how these changes relate to their customers and commercial objectives.

Businesses can prepare by improving their websites, publishing useful content, strengthening local SEO, reviewing advertising performance, and measuring outcomes that matter to the organisation.

AI search should be viewed as an evolving opportunity, not a guaranteed shortcut to rankings, traffic, or sales.

Through [Digital Chavi Gupta](#), business owners and marketing professionals can explore digital marketing developments, understand emerging trends, and identify practical ways to improve their online presence.

About Digital Chavi Gupta

Digital Chavi Gupta shares insights on SEO, Google Ads, local SEO, analytics, AI-powered marketing, and digital growth strategies for businesses and entrepreneurs.

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