

AI Search Visibility Report

Getting Primedia Network cited by ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews

Prepared for Justin Welack · July 31, 2026 · Site audit conducted July 31, 2026

Executive summary

The short version: AI answer engines are now a primary research surface for the buyers Primedia sells to, and Primedia Network is close to invisible in them. The site itself is in better technical shape than most — crawlers are not blocked and the content is readable — but three structural problems keep AI engines from recommending us: no structured data, almost no third-party footprint, and a brand-name collision with a larger, better-documented South African media company that AI models can confuse us with.

The core fix is not a new ad budget — it is a 90-day sequence of technical clean-up, content restructuring, earned-media placement, and measurement, most of it internal time. A small paid layer is now worth testing alongside it: ChatGPT ads went self-serve in July 2026 with DMA-level geo targeting, an unusually good fit for a DMA-based media business. This report covers the market case, a fresh audit of primedianetwork.com, how AI engines select sources, the organic playbook, the paid state of play, a 30-prompt tracking list, and the risks to manage along the way.

Five headline findings

- **Crawler access: pass.** robots.txt allows all agents including AI bots, a sitemap is declared, and page content is served in HTML rather than requiring JavaScript. The plumbing works.
- **Zero structured data.** No JSON-LD / schema.org markup was found on the homepage. AI engines are being left to guess who we are, what we sell, and where we operate.
- **Entity confusion is our biggest single risk.** “Primedia” on Wikipedia is a South African broadcast group, and “Primedia Inc.” was a US magazine publisher. Primedia Network has no Wikipedia or Wikidata presence of its own, so models can blend the three.
- **Thin third-party footprint.** Our visible earned profile is a BBB listing (with two different addresses) and a bare CB Insights stub. Competitors — Vibe, Tatari, Mountain, Roku — dominate the “best TV/CTV advertising” roundups AI engines cite.
- **The traffic is small but the intent is exceptional.** AI-referred visitors convert at roughly 10x the rate of organic search visitors and arrive deep in the funnel. This is a lead-quality play, not a volume play.

1. Why this matters now

The behavior shift is no longer speculative. Roughly **37% of consumers now start research in an AI tool rather than Google**. ChatGPT is at approximately 900 million weekly active users and 5 billion monthly visits — the fourth most-visited site on the web. Google’s AI Overviews reach about 2 billion monthly users, the Gemini app has grown to roughly 750 million monthly actives, and Perplexity processes around 780 million queries a month.

Two properties of this traffic matter specifically for Primedia’s pipeline:

- **It converts like referral gold.** Benchmarks put visible AI-referred traffic at a 1.66% sign-up conversion rate versus 0.15% for organic search — roughly a 10x gap — with AI-referred visitors averaging about 15 minutes on site and 12 pages viewed. These are buyers who arrive pre-qualified: the AI already summarized the category for them and named us as an option.
- **It reaches decision-makers.** Perplexity’s audience skews 80% college graduates, 65% high-income white-collar professionals, and about 30% senior leadership — a near-perfect match for the marketing directors and owner-operators Primedia sells to.

The strategic kicker: research from Brandlight found the overlap between top Google results and AI-cited sources has collapsed from about 70% to below 20%. Ranking well on Google no longer means appearing in AI answers. Visibility in each has to be earned separately — and almost nobody in the local/national TV media-buying category is doing the work yet. That is the window.

2. Where primedianetwork.com stands today

I ran a fresh technical and footprint audit on July 31, 2026. Scorecard first, detail after.

CHECKPOINT	STATUS	WHAT I FOUND
robots.txt	PASS	User-agent: * / Allow: / — no AI crawler blocks (GPTBot, OAI-SearchBot, PerplexityBot, ClaudeBot, Google-Extended all implicitly allowed). Sitemap declared.
Server-side rendering	PASS	Navigation, headings, service copy, and value propositions are all present in the served HTML. AI crawlers that don’t execute JavaScript can read the site.
Citable facts on page	PARTIAL	Strong extractable stats exist (1,400 local TV stations, 2,000 radio stations, “80% of Adults 25+ watch TV 4+ hours daily”) but carry no named sources — engines discount unsourced claims.

CHECKPOINT	STATUS	WHAT I FOUND
Structured data (JSON-LD)	GAP	No schema.org markup found on the homepage. No Organization, Service, FAQPage, or LocalBusiness entities declared.
Entity clarity	GAP	Wikipedia’s “Primedia” is a South African media group; “Primedia Inc.” was a US magazine publisher. Primedia Network, Inc. has no Wikipedia/Wikidata entity. Models can conflate all three.
Third-party footprint	GAP	Visible profile: BBB (listed under two addresses — Schaumburg and Rolling Meadows) and a bare CB Insights stub. Absent from the “best TV / CTV advertising” roundups engines cite; Vibe, Tatari, Mountain, and Roku are all over them.
Positioning consistency	PARTIAL	Homepage leads with “America’s Largest TV Media Advertising Network”; brand guide v1.17 specifies “the Nation’s Largest Media Advertising Network.” Inconsistent phrasing weakens entity recognition — and superlative claims need substantiation on file (see Risks).
CDN / edge behavior	VERIFY	robots.txt permission doesn’t guarantee access — CDNs (Cloudflare in particular) now block AI bots at the edge by default. Needs a server-log check for GPTBot / OAI-SearchBot / PerplexityBot hits.

Read on the scorecard: the two passes mean we skip the expensive re-platforming work most sites need. Every gap above is fixable with internal time and outreach, not capital. The entity problem is the one that compounds if ignored — every month competitors accumulate citations while “Primedia” stays ambiguous, the harder the correction gets.

3. How AI engines actually pick sources

Three layers decide whether an engine mentions a brand: what sits in its **training data** (Wikipedia, Reddit, news, the broad web crawl), what it pulls at query time via **live retrieval**, and the **authority signals** — frequency and quality of brand mentions across the open web — that tell it a name is safe to recommend. Four mechanics drive how those layers get worked. Understanding them is what separates GEO from cargo-cult SEO.

- **Query fan-out.** Engines don’t search your buyer’s question verbatim — they decompose it into sub-queries and search each separately. “Should I advertise on local TV or streaming for my restaurant group?” becomes queries about local TV CPMs, streaming reach, restaurant advertising benchmarks. You optimize for question clusters, not keywords. AI queries average 23 words versus 4 on Google.

- **Passage-level retrieval.** Retrieval-augmented generation pulls specific text passages, not whole pages. A single tight, self-contained paragraph that answers one question cleanly beats a sprawling authoritative page. Pages using structured lists, quotes, and cited statistics show 30–40% higher AI visibility.
- **Freshness decay.** Citation likelihood drops sharply for content older than about three months. A dated “Last updated” stamp and quarterly refreshes of cornerstone pages are ranking inputs now, not hygiene.
- **Earned-media bias.** When engines answer category questions (“best TV advertising companies”), they lean heavily on third-party sources — roundups, directories, reviews, trade press — far more than brand-owned sites, and much more so than Google does. The pages we don’t control matter more than the ones we do.

Engines also differ: ChatGPT (roughly 70% of AI-search share) favors comprehensive, well-sourced content; Google AI Overviews and Gemini lean on existing organic strength and schema; Perplexity is the most citation-driven and recency-sensitive. Track them separately — a win in one is not a win in all.

4. The playbook

Phase 1 — Technical foundation (weeks 1-2, ~free)

- **Confirm real crawler access.** Pull server logs and look for GPTBot, OAI-SearchBot, ChatGPT-User, PerplexityBot, and ClaudeBot user agents. If the site sits behind Cloudflare or a similar CDN, verify AI bots aren’t blocked at the edge — the default flipped to “block” and many sites lost AI visibility without touching robots.txt.
- **Ship JSON-LD sitewide.** Organization (with sameAs links to LinkedIn, BBB, and CB Insights to anchor the entity), Service for each channel line (broadcast TV, cable, streaming, radio), and FAQPage on question content. This is our single cheapest lever against the name-collision problem — explicit machine-readable identity.
- **Fix NAP and entity consistency.** One legal name, one address, one phone everywhere — BBB currently shows two addresses. Align the homepage positioning line with brand guide v1.17 (“the Nation’s Largest Media Advertising Network”) and use it verbatim across every page, profile, and directory. Engines reward exact-phrase consistency.
- **Add sources and dates.** Attribute the “80% of Adults 25+” stat to its research source; add visible “Last updated” stamps to cornerstone pages.
- **Stand up measurement.** Create a GA4 exploration segmenting AI referrals (regex on chatgpt.com, perplexity.ai, gemini.google.com, copilot.microsoft.com) and run the 30-prompt baseline in Section 6 across ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, and AI Overviews. HubSpot’s AI Search Grader is a free first pass. Log mentions, sentiment, and cited sources in a sheet.
- **Publish an llms.txt file.** An emerging robots.txt-style standard at primedianetwork.com/llms.txt summarizing the site for LLM crawlers. Ten minutes of

work; honest caveat — major engines haven't confirmed they honor it yet, so treat it as a cheap hedge, not a lever.

Phase 2 — Content restructuring (weeks 3-6, internal time)

- **Answer blocks on the top 10 pages.** Each channel page opens with a 2-3 sentence self-contained answer to the question the page exists for, followed by structure an engine can lift: short paragraphs, numbered steps, stat callouts with sources.
- **Question-cluster pages.** Build pages matching how buyers actually ask: “How much does TV advertising cost in 2026,” “National TV advertising for mid-market brands,” “Streaming vs. cable for local advertisers,” “How TV attribution works.” Cost content is disproportionately cited — engines love concrete numbers nobody else publishes.
- **An MMS explainer page.** MMS is the “nobody else can say this” asset. A clear page on how one platform plans, buys, and attributes across every channel gives engines a differentiator to repeat when they compare us to Tatari or Vibe.
- **FAQ sections per service line,** marked up with FAQPage schema, written one-question-one-answer, 2-3 sentences each.

Phase 3 — Earned media and entity building (months 2-3, low cost)

- **Get onto the lists engines cite.** Claim and complete profiles on Clutch, UpCity, and DesignRush; pitch inclusion in the “best TV advertising companies / best CTV platforms” roundups where Vibe, Tatari, Mountain, and Roku currently sit unchallenged. This is the highest-leverage single activity in the report.
- **Fix the entity record.** Create a Wikidata item for Primedia Network, Inc. (distinct from the South African Primedia); ensure LinkedIn, BBB, Crunchbase/CB Insights, and the site all use identical naming and descriptions. Wikipedia notability is a longer game — trade-press coverage feeds it.
- **Trade press and podcasts.** Pitch commentary to AdAge, MediaPost, TVNewsCheck, Radio Ink, and Broadcasting+Cable — 25 years of broadcast history plus the MMS platform is a legitimate story. Every quoted appearance is a third-party citation engines can retrieve.
- **Show up where models learn.** Reddit, Quora, and YouTube transcripts carry outsized weight in both training data and live retrieval — Reddit especially for Google's AI surfaces. Thoughtful, non-promotional participation in advertising and small-business threads (r/advertising, r/smallbusiness, media-buying Quora topics) plus transcribed YouTube explainers of how TV attribution works all become retrievable brand evidence.

Phase 4 — Proprietary data as citation bait (quarterly, ongoing)

Primedia sits on data nobody else has: DMA-level rate and reach data, toll-number call attribution, lead-tracking benchmarks across 1,400 stations. Package it as a quarterly **“State of Local TV & Radio Advertising Costs”** report — real CPM/CPL benchmarks by market tier and daypart. Original statistics are the single strongest citation magnet in GEO research: when an engine needs a number, it cites whoever published one. That also feeds

the trade-press motion in Phase 3, and the sales team gets a door-opener out of the same artifact.

5. Paid placements in AI surfaces — state of play

The paid landscape flipped twice in the last 18 months, and most agency pitches circulating right now are stale. Current state as of July 31, 2026:

PLATFORM	STATUS	HOW IT WORKS
Google AI Overviews / AI Mode	LIVE NOW	Ads serve inside AI results through existing Search, Performance Max, and Shopping campaigns — no new platform. Action: check placement reports to see whether our Google spend already appears in AI surfaces; strong structured data feeds eligibility. Zero incremental cost to find out.
ChatGPT Ads	LIVE NOW	Went fully self-serve at ads.openai.com in July 2026 — no rep or waitlist. \$25/day campaign minimums, CPC/CPM/CPA bidding, real-world CPCs from ~\$2. Shown to Free and Go tiers only, in labeled units. No keywords: targeting is geography (down to DMA and postal code) plus freeform “context hints.” DMA-level targeting in the largest AI assistant is a direct fit for how Primedia already plans media.
Microsoft Copilot	LIVE NOW	Runs through the existing Microsoft Advertising account — opt campaigns into Copilot/chat placements and favor long-tail, question-style keywords. Low lift if we already run any Bing spend.
Perplexity	DEAD	Ended its advertising program in February 2026 and went subscription-only — no self-serve, no managed buys, no waitlist. Any agency pitching Perplexity placements is selling stale inventory. (Perplexity still matters on the organic side.)
Emerging	WATCH	Amazon Rufus (sponsored products inside AI shopping answers), Meta AI across Instagram/WhatsApp/Messenger, and Brave Leo are all building ad surfaces. Relevant to clients before it is relevant to Primedia’s own pipeline — worth tracking, not budgeting.

How to treat the budget: as a learning line, not a performance line. AI-native platforms don’t yet offer the attribution, A/B infrastructure, or ROI math of Google or Meta. The land-grab argument is real — early advertisers accumulate audience data, creative learnings,

and cheap inventory before the auction crowds — but size the test accordingly: a \$25–50/day ChatGPT pilot targeting our strongest DMAs with lead-gen creative answering the query context (informational and specific, never “Learn More”), measured against booked calls.

Worth flagging to leadership: DMA-targeted ChatGPT inventory is also something Primedia can eventually plan and buy for clients — the same muscle we sell on broadcast, applied to a new surface. First-hand pilot experience on our own pipeline becomes the credential for that conversation.

6. The prompt tracker — 30 queries to run monthly

Run these monthly across ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews. Log: were we mentioned, what was said, which sources were cited. The metric is **Share of Model** — mention frequency versus competitors — not position, because LLM answers vary run to run.

GROUP	PROMPTS
Category (8)	Best TV advertising companies for national campaigns · How much does TV advertising cost in 2026 · Best way to buy local TV advertising · Top CTV/streaming advertising platforms · Best radio advertising networks · TV advertising agencies that handle attribution · How to advertise on cable TV nationally · Companies that buy TV and radio ads for businesses
Comparison (6)	Primedia Network vs Tatari · Tatari alternatives · Vibe.co alternatives for TV ads · Mountain (formerly MNTN) competitors · Roku Ads Manager vs working with a media buying network · Best alternative to buying ads directly from local stations
Buyer-intent (6)	Is TV advertising worth it for a mid-market brand · How to track leads from TV ads · TV advertising with call tracking · How much should I budget for streaming TV ads · Best media mix for a \$25k/week ad budget · How TV ad attribution works
Vertical (5)	TV advertising for restaurants · Retail store TV and radio advertising · Best advertising for home services companies · Legal/medical TV advertising rules · Franchise TV advertising across multiple markets
Branded (5)	What is Primedia Network · Is Primedia Network legitimate · Primedia Network reviews · What is the MMS media planning platform · Primedia Network vs Primedia (South Africa)

Tooling: a spreadsheet is fine for the first 60 days, and HubSpot’s AI Search Grader gives a free baseline read. If the program earns budget, Profound, LLMrefs, Peec AI, Otterly.ai, and similar Share-of-Model trackers automate the runs.

7. 90-day roadmap

TIMING	ACTION	COST
Weeks 1-2	Server-log crawler check + CDN verification; JSON-LD sitewide; NAP/positioning cleanup; llms.txt; GA4 AI-referral segment; baseline 30-prompt run + AI Search Grader	Free / internal
Weeks 3-6	Answer blocks on top 10 pages; question-cluster pages (cost, attribution, channel comparisons); MMS explainer; FAQ schema	Internal time
Month 2	Directory profiles (Clutch, UpCity, DesignRush); roundup outreach; Wikidata entity; BBB address fix	Low
Months 2-3	Trade-press pitching (AdAge, MediaPost, TVNewsCheck, Radio Ink); podcast guesting	Low
Month 3	First “State of Local TV & Radio Ad Costs” report from DMA + toll-tracking data; second prompt run; report Share of Model vs baseline	Medium
Month 3	Paid pilot: audit Google placement reports for AI-surface serving; opt Microsoft campaigns into Copilot; \$25-50/day ChatGPT test in top DMAs	Small test budget
Ongoing	Quarterly content refresh (freshness decay); monthly prompt runs; quarterly data report	Internal cadence

Expectation setting: plan on 3-6 months of consistent effort before Share of Model moves meaningfully. The baseline run in week 1 is what makes the eventual movement provable.

8. Risks and guardrails

- **Superlative-claim exposure.** “America’s Largest” / “Nation’s Largest” are comparative claims governed by the Lanham Act and state UDAP statutes — and AI engines actively cross-check claims against third-party sources. Substantiation needs to be on file before we amplify the line, or it should soften to the falsifiable facts (1,400 stations, 2,000 radio stations), which are stronger GEO assets anyway.
- **Entity work can backfire if inconsistent.** A Wikidata entry that conflicts with BBB, LinkedIn, or the site makes ambiguity worse. Lock the canonical name, description, and address first; then propagate.
- **Don’t over-rotate on volume.** AI referrals are still a low-single-digit share of most sites’ traffic. The case rests on conversion quality and on being present when high-intent buyers ask an engine to shortlist vendors — measure leads, not sessions.

- **Non-determinism.** The same prompt returns different answers run to run. Mention frequency across runs is the metric; never conclude from a single query.
- **Stale-intel risk on the paid side.** This market flips fast — advice published even six months ago recommends a Perplexity pilot (program dead since February) and calls ChatGPT ads “not yet launched” (self-serve since July). Re-verify platform status before committing any paid budget, and treat vendor decks on AI advertising with suspicion by default.
- **Most of GEO is still SEO.** Google’s own guidance: optimizing for generative AI search “is optimizing for the search experience, and thus still SEO.” The fundamentals — clarity, structure, freshness, authority — carry both surfaces. Nothing in this plan is wasted if AI search evolves.

Appendix — Sources

LLMrefs — Generative Engine Optimization: The 2026 Guide — llmrefs.com/generative-engine-optimization

QuickSEO — AI Search vs Google Search in 2026: 40+ Stats — quickseo.ai/blog/ai-search-vs-google-search-in-2026-40-stats-that-show-why-your-brand-needs-to-track-both

Demand Local — AI Referral Traffic Conversion Rate Statistics (The Digital Bloom / Conductor data) — demandlocal.com/blog/ai-referral-traffic-conversion-rate-statistics

Brandlight research on Google/AI citation overlap (via LLMrefs) — llmrefs.com

primedianetwork.com robots.txt and homepage — direct audit, July 31, 2026 — primedianetwork.com

BBB — Primedia Network, Inc. profiles (Schaumburg / Rolling Meadows, IL) — bbb.org

CB Insights — PRIMEDIA Network company profile — cbinsights.com/company/primedia-network

StubGroup — How to Advertise on ChatGPT: The Complete Guide for 2026 (self-serve access, formats, targeting) — stubgroup.com/blog/how-to-advertise-on-chatgpt-the-complete-guide-for-2026

Campaign US — Perplexity pulls the plug on ads, citing trust concerns for AI — campaignlive.com/article/perplexity-pulls-plug-ads-citing-trust-concerns-ai/1949142

Primedia Network Brand & Style Guide v1.17 (positioning, claims, legal guardrails) — [internal](#)