Optimising for AI-Driven Search

WITH DEAN WARWICK

Agenda for Today

Welcome & Recap (5 mins)
Quick review of Session 1 takeaways.
Why this session focuses on practical steps.

How AI Bots Crawl & Understand Your Site (10 mins)
Can AI bots access your content?
Importance of crawlability and structured data.
Visual: Crawl flow diagram.

Local SEO & AI Visibility (10 mins)
Google Business Profile, reviews, and schema markup.
Why local SEO matters more than ever for tourism.

Practical Tools & Demos (15 mins)
LLM Monitor – check if your brand appears in AI answers.
Knowatoa – Can AI bots crawl your website?
Google AI Overview – live example.

Content Strategy for AI Search (10 mins)
Be "reference-worthy," not just rank-worthy.
Context-rich content and FAQs.
Avoiding AI hallucinations with clear, authoritative info - EEAT.

Key Takeaways & Next Steps (5 mins)
Start monitoring AI visibility now.
Update your SEO strategy for AI-driven search.

Q&A (5 mins)

Disclaimer – before we dive in

The information I'm sharing today about **AI search ranking** and what might help in the future comes from my **personal observations and opinions**.

Let's be clear, **no one has all the answers** when it comes to AI LLMs or algorithms. This field is constantly evolving, and my thoughts are based on what I've seen and interpreted.

Consider this a discussion starter.

Dean Warwick – Search Specialist

Hi, I’m Dean, an SEO with a love of coffee, animal documentaries and behavioural science.

My favourite AI tools:

NotebookLM MISTRAL AI_ Suno Gemini

Actionable Tips for Travel Brands (From Session 1)

Optimise Your Google Business Profile (GBP)

*Treat your GBP as your primary online storefront***.** Ensure it has up-to-date photos, reviews, and pricing, as users commit to one interaction type here and rarely move to another feature.

Create Conversational Content

Shift strategy from keyword targeting to providing unique, direct, authoritative answers in well-structured content chunks. This helps AI utilise your information and surface you in inline links.

Focus on the Handoff

Ensure the booking experience is seamless. Users are frustrated when details from the AI research don't pre-populate on the external site. This requires leveraging structured data, deep links, and APIs.

Amplify Brand Trust

Strong content that reads helpfully, like a guide, inherits the high trust users have in the AI, amplifying brand consideration during the long planning phase.

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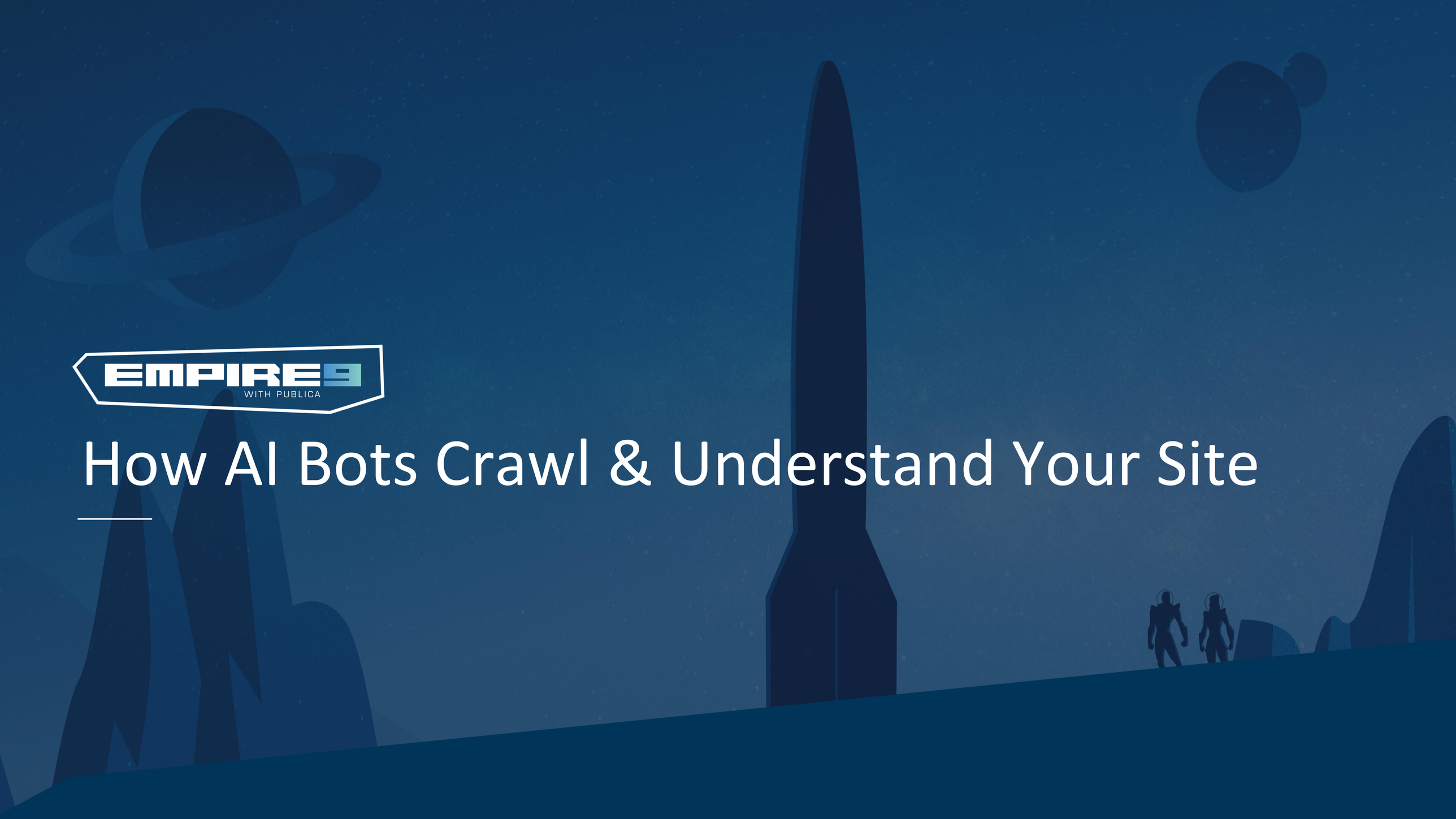
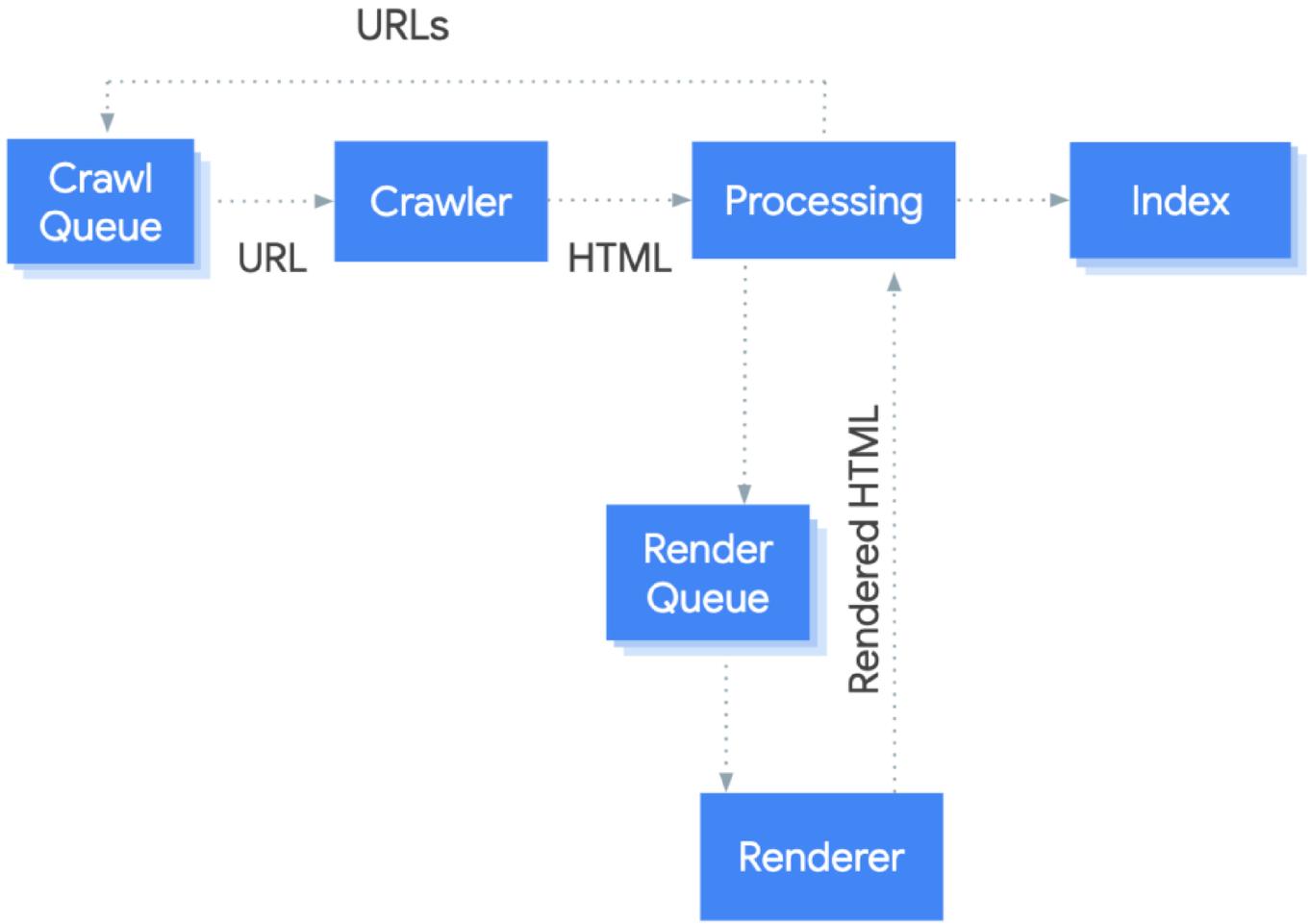


How AI Bots Crawl & Understand Your Site

Crawl Flow Diagram – Traditional Bots (Example: Googlebot)



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Crawl Flow Diagram

Feature	GPTBot (OpenAI)	Googlebot (Google)
Primary Goal	Training Data: To collect massive text datasets to train and improve LLMs (like GPT-4/5).	Search Indexing: To build an index of the web for search rankings (SERPs).
JavaScript Execution	NO. It generally skips JavaScript execution.	YES. It fully renders JavaScript using a modern, headless Chromium engine.
Content Seen	Only Static Content (text directly in the initial HTML).	The Fully Rendered Page (what a user sees after all JS loads).
Handling of SPAs	Blind. Will likely miss core content loaded dynamically by React, Vue, or Angular.	Sees it. Essential for indexing modern, dynamic websites.
User-Agent	GPTBot	Googlebot
Traffic Return	Low/Indirect. The data is used to inform AI answers.	High/Direct. Directly drives traffic back to your site via search results.
Controllability	Easy to block via robots.txt (e.g., User-agent: GPTBot Disallow: /).	Controllable via robots.txt, but blocking it means your site won't rank in Google Search.

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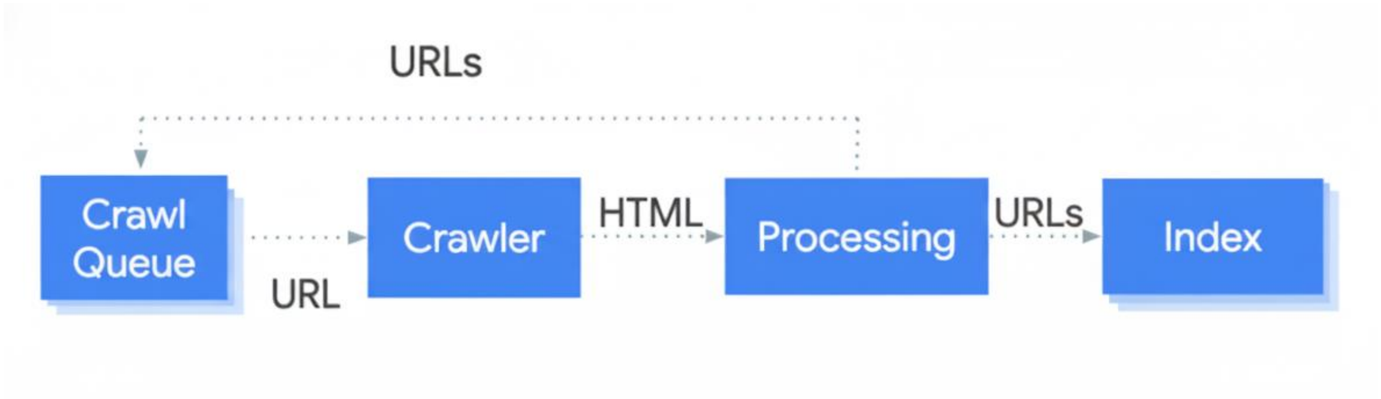
Crawl Flow Diagram – AI Bots



Critical Takeaway

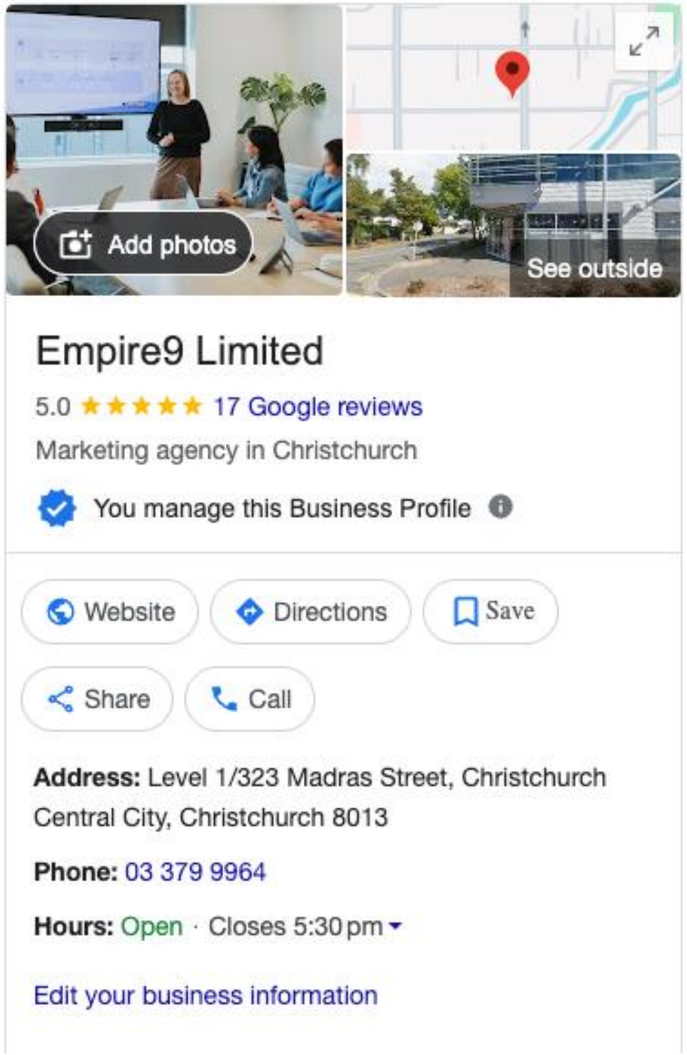
The single most important difference is the JavaScript rendering gap:

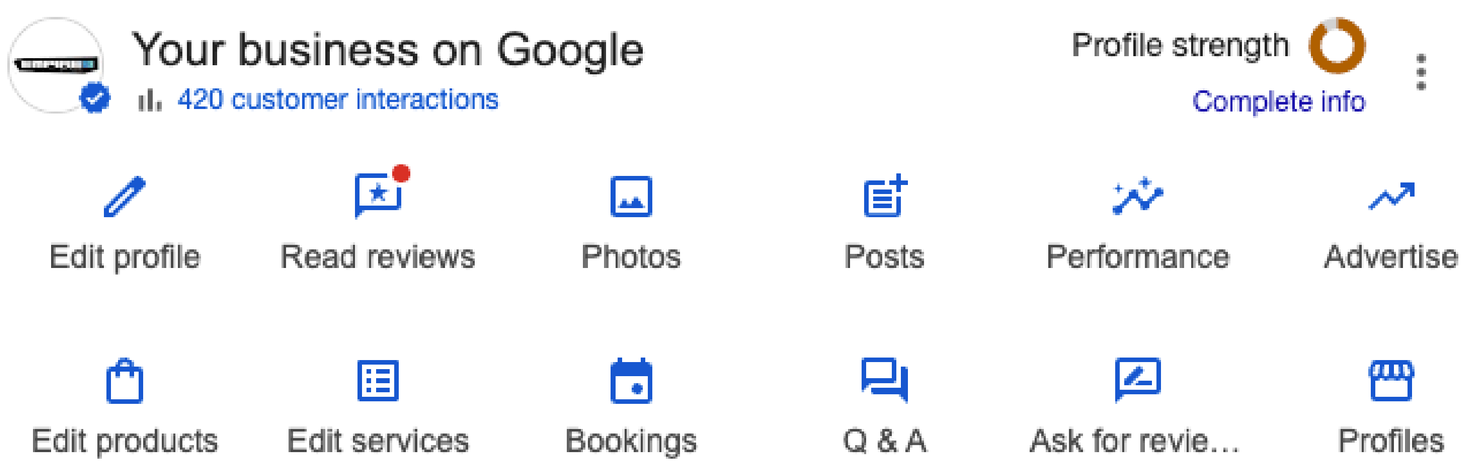
Googlebot acts like a user with a fully functional modern browser. If a user can see it, Googlebot can index it.

GPTBot (and many other AI training crawlers like Anthropic's ClaudeBot) acts like a simple text-fetcher. If your key content is loaded dynamically via JavaScript, GPTBot will not see it, and your content will not be used to train the underlying AI model.

Local SEO & AI Visibility

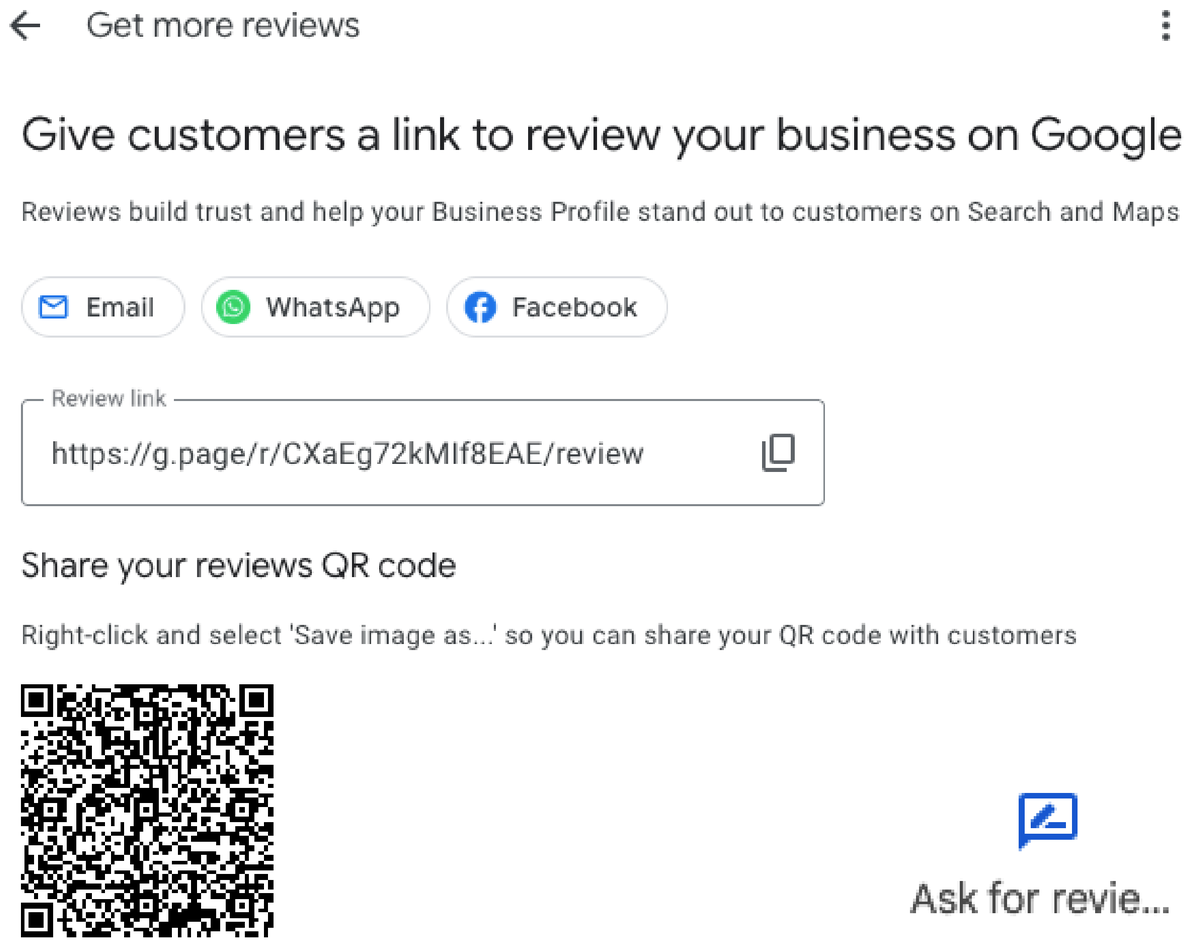
The Google Business Profile





The Google Business Profile – This is the doorway to your website in Google maps.

Google Business Reviews

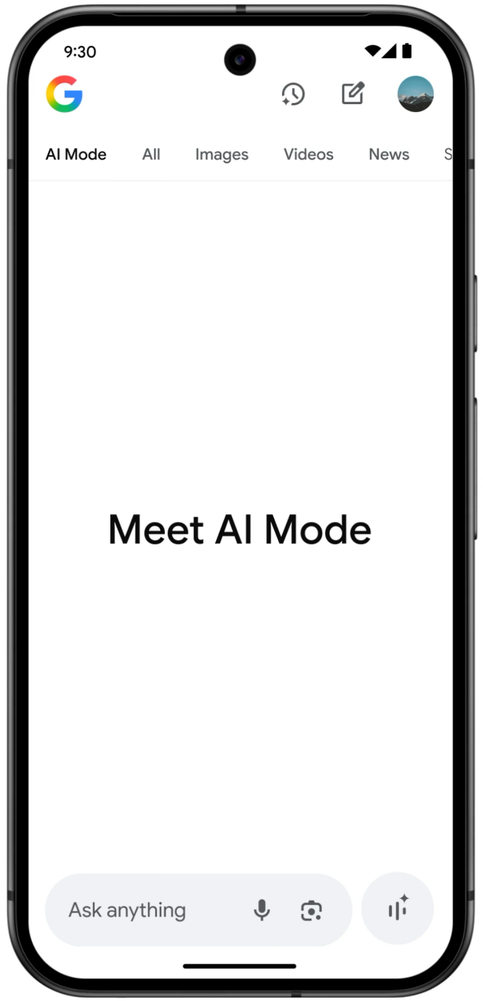


I don’t want to under state how important Google reviews (and reviews in general) are for local SEO.

To have these signals of trust on show for other people that are searching for your brand is huge!

We have had success with our client's local visibility, and a major factor is Google reviews.

Why Local SEO Matters More than ever for tourism



A strong local SEO presence (especially an optimised Google Business Profile) ensures a business appears in those immediate search results, driving direct foot traffic or bookings.

- On the go decision making – Capturing The “What shall we do now?” customers.
- Pre Travel researchers – Location specific experiences.
- Make your niche experience visible.

Practical Tools & Demos

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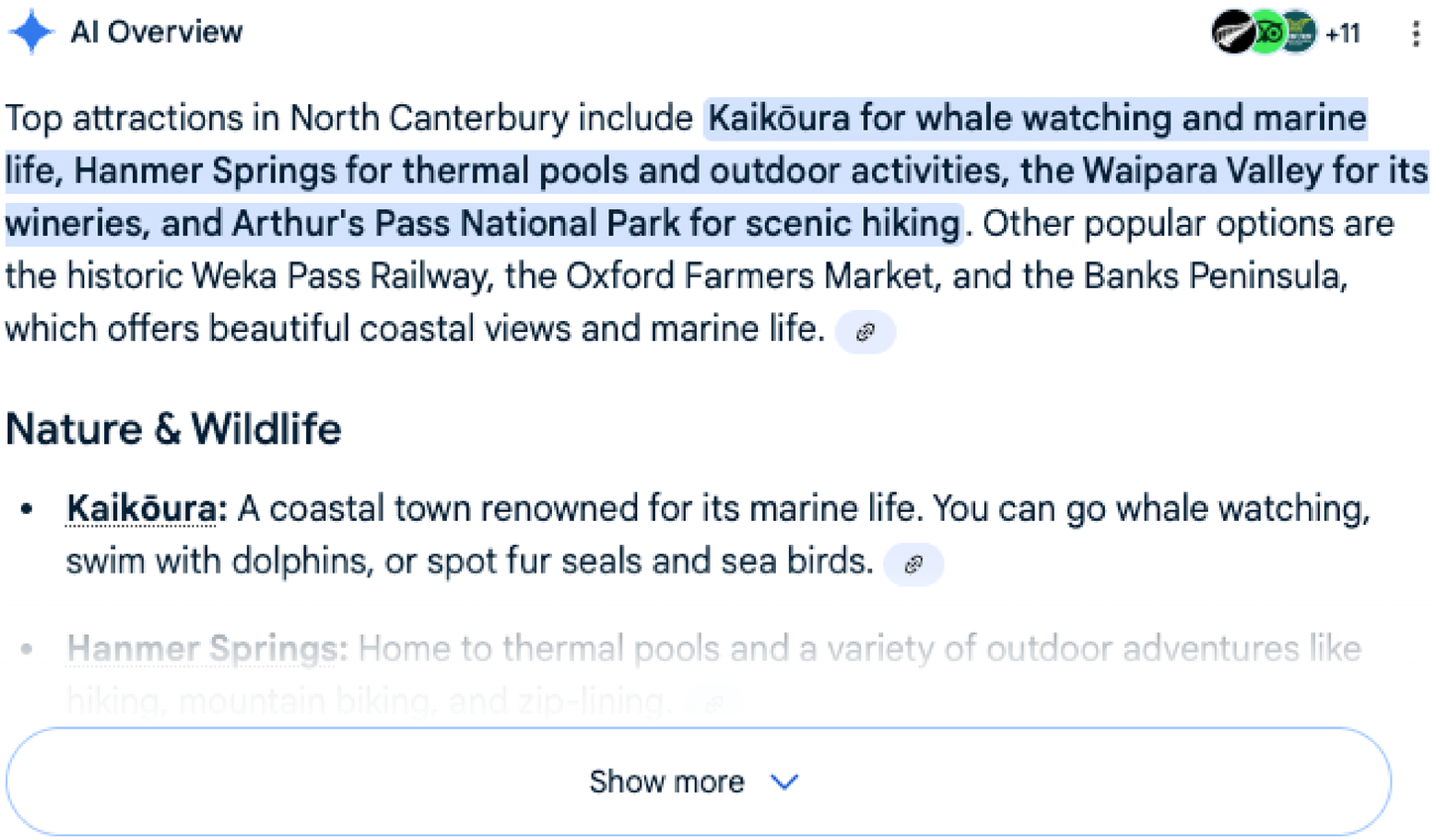
https://llmseomonitor.com

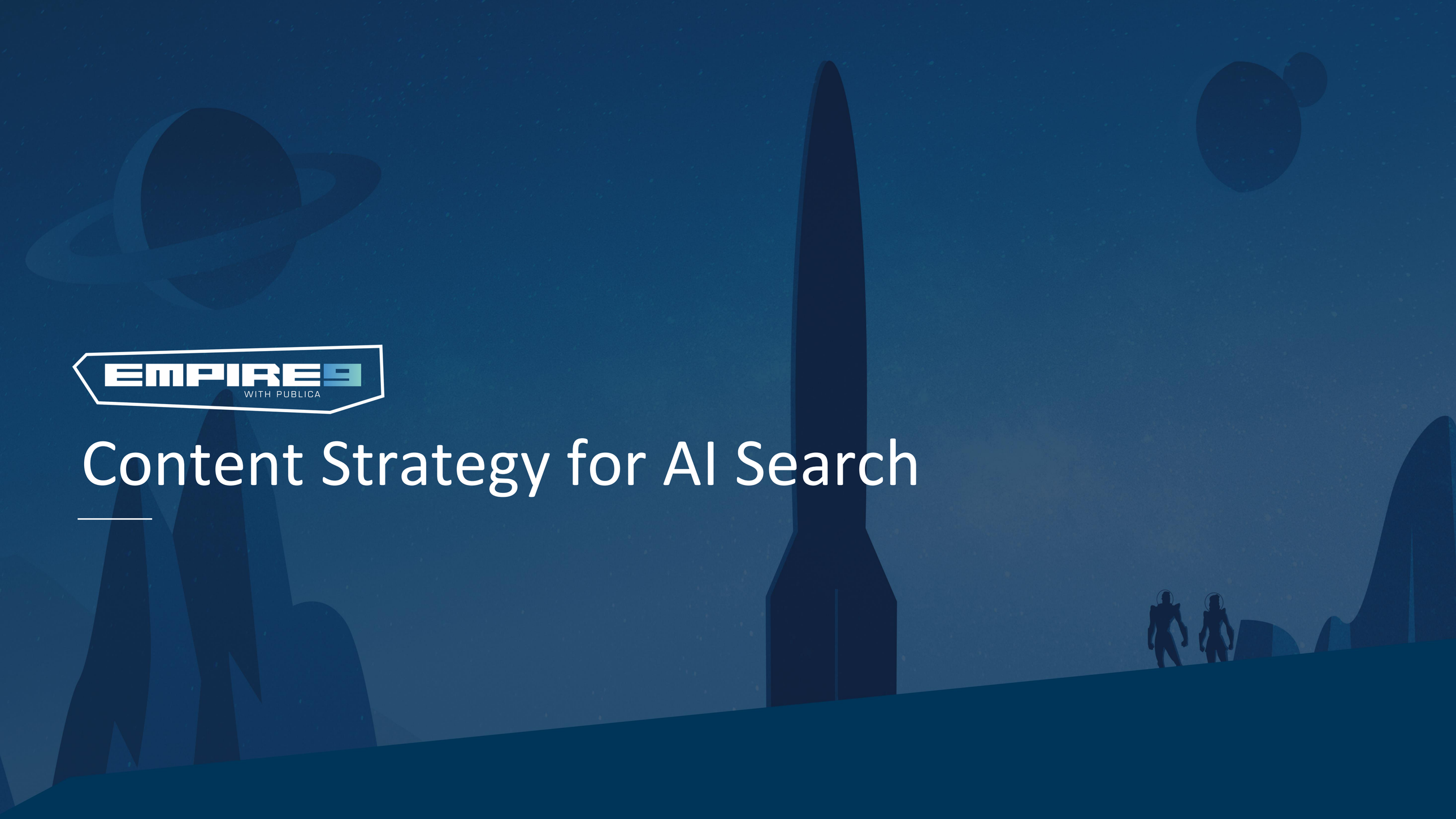
KNOWATOA

https://knowatoa.com

Google AI Overview Example “best attractions north canterbury”



Let’s run through a live example



Content Strategy for AI Search

Be “Reference-Worthy” not just Rank Worthy

What does this mean?

If your content is thin, provides very little value and is stuffed with keywords then its going to likely be ignored.

If your content is deep (natural length), shows that you have unique experience and answers user's questions / concerns then you are more likely to be referenced.

While EEAT is not a ranking factor, Google has emphasised websites that display Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-E-A-T) will have a better chance ranking because they align with the search quality rater guidelines.

Note: Reference worthy content is more likely to attract backlinks from other authoritative sites that want to provide high quality information to their users.

Avoiding AI Hallucinations

What are hallucinations?
#trustme

Refer to instances where artificial intelligence (AI) systems - particularly large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT, Gemini, or Claude generate confident but incorrect, or unverifiable information.

This has been slightly reduced for online platforms as they search the internet to verify the information (RAG) so the model doesn’t have to rely on its grounded pre training knowledge.

Example: User Query: "What are the opening hours for the Sky Tower in Auckland this weekend?"

Without RAG: AI might hallucinate:
"The Sky Tower is open from 8 AM to midnight daily, with a special night viewing slot on Saturdays."
(Also, hours might vary by season or events.)

With RAG: Retrieves live data from the Sky Tower’s official website: "The Sky Tower is open from 9:30 AM to 8 PM, Monday - Thursday and 9:30 AM to 9:30 PM Friday – Sunday.
(October – February Hours)

Note: Its good to always verify information from large language models through the citations.

Clear, Up to Date Information

AI Overview

Why Kaikoura TOP 10 Holiday Park is Great for Families

Modern Amenities:

This holiday park provides a comfortable and well-equipped base for families.

Variety of Accommodation:

You can choose from motel units, cabins, or spacious tent and campervan sites to suit your family's needs.

Central Location:

Being located in the center of town makes it easy to access local attractions and activities.

High Rating:

As the only 5-star holiday park in Kaikoura, it promises a high standard of service and facilities for a great holiday experience.

Things to Consider

- **Dog-Friendly Policy:** If you plan to bring a dog, you must arrange this with the park in advance to ensure they can accommodate your pet.

Website Content

Kaikoura TOP 10 Holiday Park proudly stands as the sole 5-star accommodation in Kaikoura, providing an exceptional holiday experience. There is a range of modern motel units, cosy cabins, spacious tent sites, and well-equipped campervan sites to choose from.

Please note that dogs are allowed on sites only with prior agreement.

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Key Takeaways & Next Steps

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

Enhance Your Site's Crawlability for All Bots

Understand the JavaScript rendering gap (Or get help with the technical bits). Ensure your key content is visible in the initial HTML, not just what's loaded by JavaScript, so that AI models can use it for training.

Focus on Local SEO and the Google Business Profile (GBP)

Optimise your Google Business Profile (GBP) by ensuring it has up-to-date photos, reviews, and pricing, treating it as your primary online storefront.

Prioritise getting Google reviews to display important signals of trust.

A strong local SEO presence is vital for tourism, especially for capturing "on the go decision making" customers and pre-travel researchers looking for location-specific experiences.

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

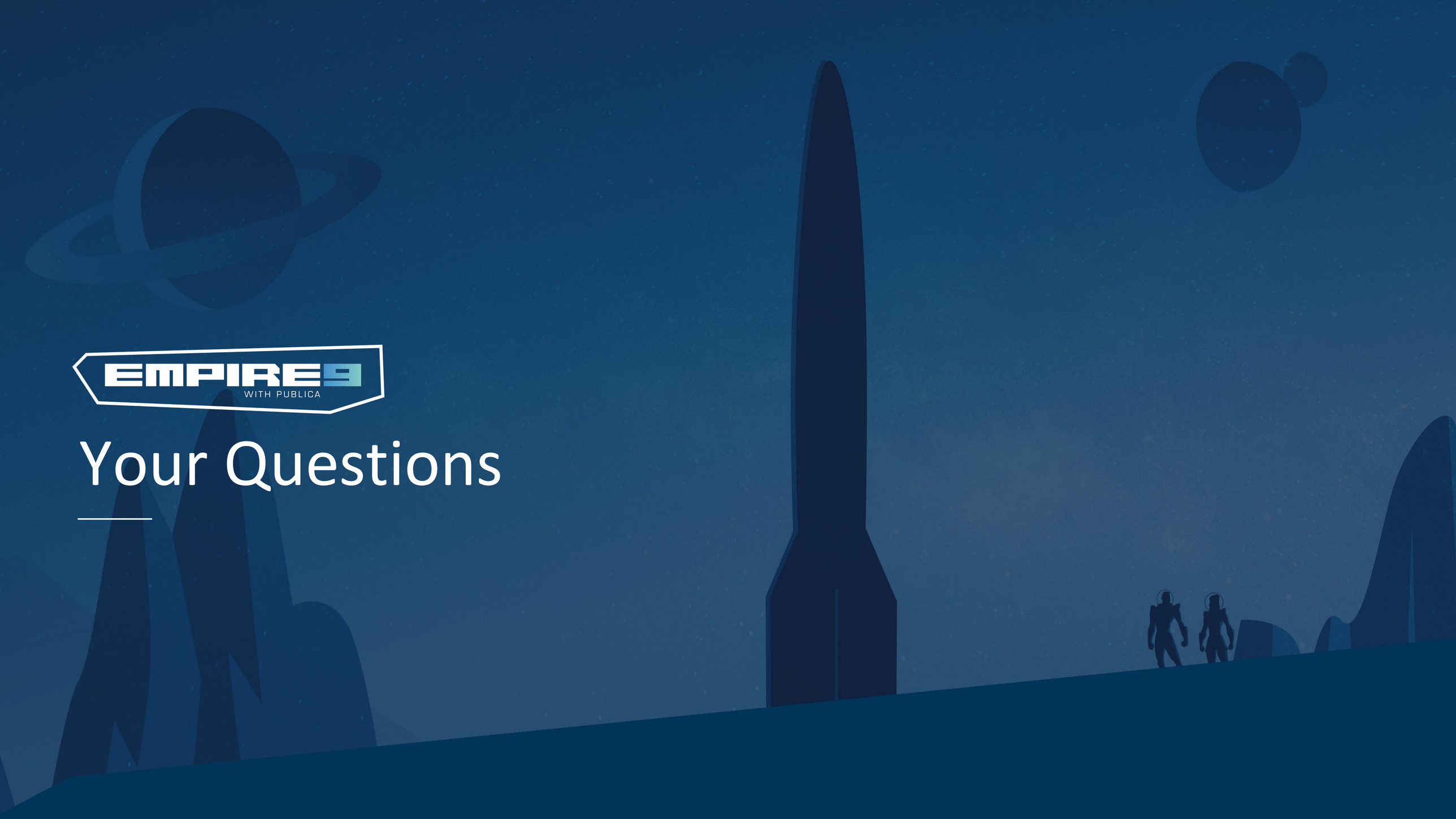
Shift Your Content Strategy to be "Reference-Worthy"

Create content that is deep, shows unique experience, and directly answers users' questions and concerns to be more likely to be referenced by AI.

Move your strategy from pure keyword targeting to providing unique, direct, authoritative answers in well-structured content chunks.

Strive for content that displays Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-E-A-T), as this aligns with search quality rater guidelines.

Have clear, authoritative, and up-to-date information on your website to prevent AI hallucinations, especially for critical information like opening hours or policies.

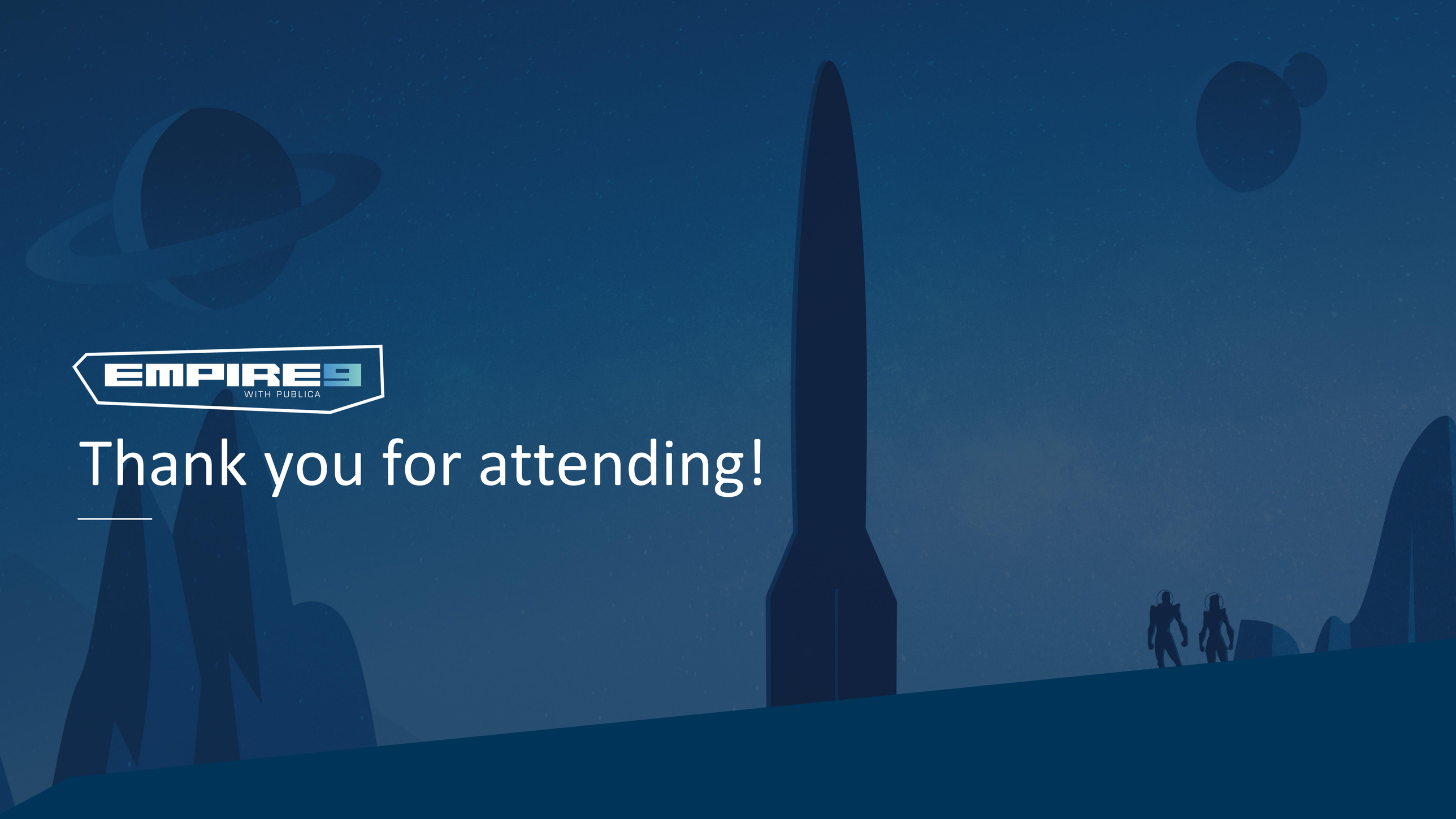


Your Questions

If you would be so kind…

Review us on Google™

5.0 ★★★★★ 16 Google reviews



Thank you for attending!