

Editing Sample: AI-Generated AEO Blog

Rewrite of a fully AI-generated blog post built for answer engine optimization (AEO). The brief: make it read like a person wrote it, and bring outdated methodology claims up to date, without breaking the structure that makes it quotable by AI search tools.

Piece	"Why Technology Vendors Engage Research Platforms" (GigaOm blog)
Audience	Marketing and analyst-relations leaders at technology vendors
Length	About 1,575 words in, about 1,300 out
Constraint	Keep the AEO structure intact: question headings, direct answers, takeaways, FAQ
My role	Editor and rewriter: voice, accuracy update, structure

The three jobs: humanize (cut AI tells and generic filler), update (replace descriptions of a research process that had since changed), and protect (keep every element an answer engine looks for).

What I kept for AEO

Answer engines pull short, self-contained answers to specific questions. I kept every structural element that makes that possible, and made one of them stronger.

AEO element	Original	My version
Question-format section headings	Bold body text styled to look like headings	Same questions, now real H2 headings that crawlers can read as structure
FAQ block	Five questions as bold text	Five questions as H3 headings, each followed by a two-sentence answer
Direct answer in the first sentence	Present	Kept: each section still opens with a one-sentence answer to its heading
Key Takeaways list	Five bullets	Kept, lightly trimmed
Definition-style opener ("Technology research platforms are...")	Present	Kept, sharpened
Cited statistics	Two (LeadCoverage, CCGroup)	Both kept, with sources linked

Before and after

1. Opening: Starting with the reader, not the article

Before

Technology vendors engage research platforms for a direct reason: buyers trust independent analysis more than vendor-supplied marketing. [...] This article breaks down the strategic logic behind vendor participation in research platforms. You will learn what vendors gain from independent evaluations, how those evaluations influence enterprise purchasing, and where GigaOm Research fits into the picture as a future-focused, practitioner-led alternative to legacy analyst models.

After

When making a purchasing decision, are you more likely to trust the marketing coming from the vendor itself, or research and feedback from an independent third party? For obvious reasons, buyers trust independent analysis more than vendor-supplied marketing. [...] This is why technology vendors engage research platforms.

The "This article breaks down... You will learn..." setup is a classic AI tell, and it spends a paragraph describing the post instead of starting it. I opened with a question the reader can answer for themselves, then landed the headline phrase as a direct answer. Answer engines still get the sentence they quote.

2. Voice: Specific instead of generic

Before

Vendors engage research platforms because appearing in a credible evaluation means appearing on buyer shortlists. If your solution is not represented in an independent report that a CTO or CIO is reading during the discovery phase, you are invisible at the exact moment the buying committee is forming preferences.

After

That matters before a salesperson ever enters the conversation. A credible evaluation can put a solution on a buyer's initial shortlist, give an internal champion evidence to share with colleagues, and help a buying committee compare alternatives without relying on a stack of vendor claims that all begin to sound suspiciously alike.

The original states the point twice in increasingly dramatic terms ("invisible at the exact moment"). The rewrite names three concrete things a report does for a buyer and ends on a wry line a human would write.

3. Accuracy: Updating to the current methodology

Before

Buyer reach refers to whether the research platform's audience matches the vendor's target market. Reports that reach CTOs, CIOs, enterprise architects, and procurement teams at mid-market and large enterprises deliver the visibility that converts into pipeline.

After

Audience fit asks whether the research reaches the people the vendor needs to influence. GigaOm's current Radar explicitly maps criteria to CTO, CIO, and CISO priorities, helping vendors translate technical strengths into the language of an executive buying committee.

Usable rights determine what a vendor can do with the result. GigaOm's current usage guidance distinguishes free inclusion from optional badge or full-report licensing; the latter unlocks broader claims, visuals, quotes, and distribution rights.

The AI draft described an older research process: a 17-week timeline, table-stakes inclusion criteria, and questionnaire-and-briefing steps. I cut that section and replaced generic claims with the current Radar's three buyer lenses. I also added a paragraph on licensing, which vendors actually ask about, linked to GigaOm's published guidance.

4. FAQ: Answering the question without the sales pitch

Before

Why do technology vendors pay to engage with research platforms?

Vendors engage research platforms to gain independent validation, improve competitive positioning, and accelerate sales cycles. GigaOm Research gives vendors practitioner-led evaluations that map directly to buyer decision criteria, providing credible proof points for sales teams.

After

Why do technology vendors engage with research platforms?

Vendors engage research platforms to gain independent validation, clarify competitive positioning, support sales cycles, and collect market feedback. Participation can also reveal gaps in a vendor's product evidence, messaging, or roadmap.

"Pay to engage" undercut the post's own argument about independence, since inclusion in a Radar is free. The second sentence was an ad. I replaced it with a benefit the reader might not have considered, and every FAQ answer still stands on its own for AI search tools.