



Mountaintop Web Design Advises Owners as AI Search Cuts Website Clicks

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GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO - October 26, 2026 -

Mountaintop Web Design is advising small and midsize businesses to measure leads rather than website visits alone, after a September 2026 survey found that one in three small business owners believe AI-generated search answers have reduced their website traffic. The Greenwood Village, Colorado, agency is focusing client work on structured data, answer-ready service pages, and review and listing accuracy to help companies stay visible as search changes.

The survey, conducted by Small Business Expo's Research Team, polled 3,608 small business owners and was published September 29, 2026, and found that 33.9% have noticed a decline in website traffic they believe is related to AI-generated answers in search results. Of those surveyed, 22.7% described the decline as moderate or significant, and 14.8% said AI-powered search had displayed incorrect information about their business. The report notes that the results reflect owners' perceptions and do not establish that AI answers caused the declines.

In a preregistered field experiment with 1,100 U.S. Google users, conducted in March 2026 by researchers at Northeastern University and the University of Pennsylvania, routing every search to Google's AI Mode for

seven days reduced click-through to outside websites by 18.8 percentage points. A separate field experiment by researchers at the Indian School of Business and Carnegie Mellon University, posted to SSRN in April 2026, found that on searches where an AI Overview appeared, outbound organic clicks fell by 39.8%.

Forbes Advisor added its own findings on October 12, 2026, from a randomized study of 796 U.S. adults. Participants who saw an AI Overview were less likely to remember the websites shown in the results, with source recall falling from 76% to 56%, and fewer said they would open a link.

Mountaintop Web Design says these findings mean session counts alone may give business owners an incomplete picture of how a website is performing. The agency is advising clients to track form submissions, phone calls, and booked appointments alongside traffic, and to follow branded search activity and referrals from AI tools as separate signals.

The company's practical recommendations draw on its generative engine optimization work. That work includes structured data such as LocalBusiness, Service, and Review schema, which tells search engines and AI tools what a business does and where it operates. It also includes service pages that open with a direct answer to the questions customers ask most often, so the content is easier for AI systems to summarize accurately.

Reviews and local signals make up the third part of the approach. The Small Business Expo survey found that 56.0% of owners who had seen incorrect AI information also reported a traffic decline, compared with 31.1% of those who had not. Mountaintop Web Design reviews whether a client's hours, services, and locations are stated consistently across its website, Google Business Profile, and other directories, and it encourages recent, specific reviews that describe the services customers received. For Colorado service companies that depend on local searches, the agency says accurate listings and reviews can carry as much weight as the website itself.

"A drop in sessions is worth paying attention to, but it is not the same thing as a drop in business," said Josiah Bussing, CEO of Mountaintop Web Design. "When an AI answer handles the early research, the people who still click through are often closer to a decision, so the number that matters is how many of them call, book, or fill out a form. For our clients, we are putting more attention on lead tracking, structured data, and service pages that answer real questions clearly, so the business is described accurately whether or not someone visits the site."

Mountaintop Web Design is a digital marketing agency headquartered in Greenwood Village, Colorado. Founded in November 2013 by Josiah Bussing, the company provides website design and development, search engine optimization, generative engine optimization, local search, pay-per-click advertising, content writing, CRM and email marketing, and WordPress care plans. It works with businesses in industries

including construction, home services, legal, medical practices, engineering, cybersecurity, restaurants, and churches.

More information is available at Mountaintop Web Design.

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Mountaintop Web Design, based in Greenwood Village, Colorado, is a digital marketing agency specializing in website design, WordPress care plans, SEO, local search optimization, and pay-per-click advertising.

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