Search Influence CEO Will Scott Publishes Thought Leadership Article on Agentic SEO and the Future of Non-Human Web Traffic

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NEW ORLEANS, LA - April 22, 2026 -
Search Influence CEO and co-founder Will Scott has published a new thought leadership article in Search Engine Land, one of the most widely read publications in the search marketing industry. The article, titled "'Google Zero' misses the real problem: Your next visitor isn't human," examines the rapid rise of AI crawler traffic and agentic commerce, and makes the case that the most important change in digital marketing is not declining Google clicks. It is machine-driven discovery.

The piece directly addresses the "Google Zero" debate that has dominated industry conversation, pushing back on alarmist narratives that Google traffic has collapsed. Citing Similarweb and Graphite data showing only a 2.5% decline in Google traffic to top websites globally, Scott argues that publishers who abandon SEO in response to overstated decline figures are ceding ground to competitors who continue to optimize. However, Scott's analysis does not stop at defending Google's relevance. Instead, it identifies a more significant and less-discussed development: the majority of web traffic is now non-human.

According to data cited in the article from the 2025 Imperva Bad Bot Report, automated traffic surpassed human activity for the first time in a decade, with bots now accounting for 51% of all web traffic. AI crawlers represent the fastest-growing segment of that traffic, with Cloudflare's 2025 Year in Review data showing AI bot crawling grew more than 15 times year over year, reaching approximately 50 billion AI crawler requests per day by late 2025.

Scott draws a critical distinction between the traditional crawl-and-send model that defined Google's relationship with publishers and the behavior of AI systems. As he writes in the article, "Google crawls your site, indexes it, and sends 831x more visitors than AI systems do. Let me read your content, and I'll send you people who want it. That was the deal. So what happens when Google stops holding up its end?"

The article introduces the concept of agentic SEO, the practice of optimizing digital content not only for human visitors and traditional search engines, but for AI agents acting on behalf of human buyers in research, comparison, and purchasing decisions. Scott notes that Gartner has predicted 90% of B2B buying will be AI-agent intermediated by 2028, with more than $15 trillion in spend flowing through agent-led processes. Salesforce reported that AI agents influenced 20% of all global orders during Cyber Week 2025 alone.

For marketers, this represents a new kind of visitor: software that reads structured data, compares specs, and builds vendor shortlists before a human buyer ever visits a website. As Scott explains, "Think about what that looks like in practice. An AI agent researches vendors for a procurement team. It doesn't see your hero banner. It doesn't notice your trust badges. It reads your structured data, compares your specs to those of three competitors, and builds a shortlist."

In response to this shift, the article outlines a practical framework for agentic SEO, including treating schema markup as core infrastructure rather than an SEO nicety, structuring content to answer compound multi-variable questions rather than broad keyword queries, ensuring pricing and product data remain accurate for AI cross-referencing, and making deliberate organizational decisions about AI bot access through robots.txt policies.

Scott is a recognized AI SEO expert and digital marketing veteran with more than three decades of experience in search. He co-founded SEO agency Search Influence alongside his wife and COO, Angie Scott, and is widely credited with coining the phrase "barnacle SEO" in 2008. Scott is a frequent speaker at marketing and industry conferences and has led teams responsible for building thousands of websites and delivering millions of visits from search for clients across the country.

Scott's article was published in Search Engine Land on March 31, 2026, and is available in full at

searchengineland.com.

About Search Influence

Search Influence is a woman-owned, ROI-focused digital marketing agency that helps institutions drive prospects into and through the recruitment funnel with analytics-backed strategies, including organic and AI SEO and paid digital advertising. Founded in 2006, Search Influence's core purpose is to optimize potential. The agency collaborates with well-regarded brands and institutions both nationally and locally in New Orleans. Clients include the Tulane School of Professional Advancement, Tufts University College, Associated Hearing Professionals, New Orleans & Company, and Audubon Nature Institute.

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Search Influence

Search Influence, a national SEO and digital advertising agency since 2006, delivers demonstrable ROI for clients. Specialties include SEO, Paid Advertising, and Analytics. In-house experts collaborate with clients for results. Also an informative blog.

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