



MAPPING THE SERPS:

*The State Of Search For The
Home Service Industry*

By Katie Stone





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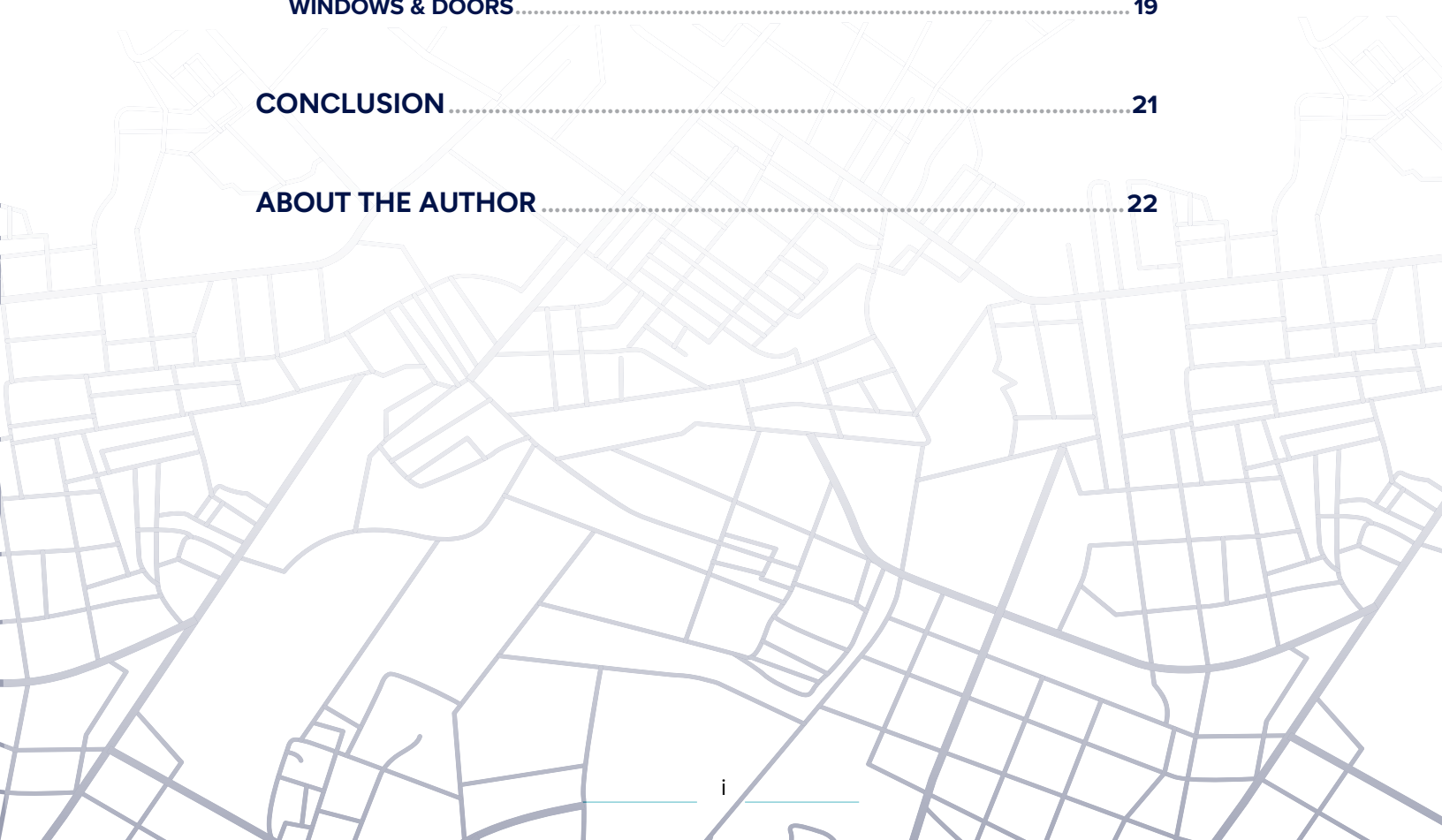
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2024

SERP MAPPING REPORT FOR HOME SERVICE VERTICALS

PURPOSE:

In May of 2024, Google released AI Overviews (AIOs) to the public. This was not a surprise to professional SEOs, as Google had been testing their Search Generative Experience out to beta users for a few months prior. However, to many SEOs and even to general Google users, the release felt rushed, panicked and incomplete.

The release of Google's AIOs left many questions in the air for SEOs, SEMs, business owners and Google users in general. How often would these results appear in search engine results pages (SERPs)? Would they increase zero-click searches and reduce traffic to websites? Could the AIOs even be trusted?

The jury is still out on whether AIOs can be trusted, but at Leadhub, our SEO team has pulled together extensive research mapping out how often AIOs appear in SERPs for the most high-volume keywords in the home service industry.

As we carried out our research, we also documented other organic SERP features taking up valuable real estate, including map packs, shopping carousels and video snippets. This study is unique to other AIO studies because it is hyperfocused on home service verticals only. With this data, we have created a guide for the areas of opportunity for home service businesses in organic rankings and created strategies to achieve those higher rankings.

METHODOLOGY

This study was completed over the course of several months, beginning in May of 2024 right after the AIO rollout, and ending in August of 2024 and focused on six home service verticals:

- HVAC
- Plumbing
- Water Softeners
- Foundation Repair
- Electrical
- Windows & Doors

The SEO team identified the most important keywords for each vertical. Each keyword had to fit into every single one of the below parameters to be included in the study:

- Search volume over 1,000 searches per month
- No brand names or branded keywords (Culligan, Kinetico, Home Depot etc.)
- Keywords must be relevant to the vertical (ex: no auto AC keywords for HVAC)

Keywords were gathered through data provided by Semrush's Keyword Magic Tool. Even if a keyword had a misspelling, it was included in the data so long as it had all three parameters.

The keywords were compiled and categorized into one of four categories:

- Short-tail
- Short-tail with location modifier*
- Long-tail
- Long-tail with location modifiers*

Location modifiers are any keyword with a city, state or "near me" addition to the main keyword.

After keywords were compiled and sorted out by type and industry, the SEO team performed manual searches between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:30 pm on Mondays through Fridays in Hollywood Park, Texas, a suburb within San Antonio, Texas. All searches were completed on MacBooks using Google Chrome as the default browser.

All data was then compiled into our findings below.



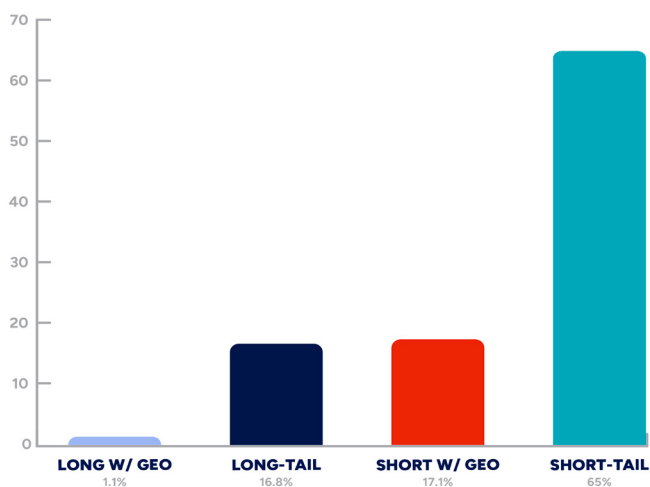
Findings:

ALL VERTICALS

FINDINGS: ALL VERTICALS

With all of the verticals combined, we pulled information on 1,065 keywords in total. We entered with the intention of learning how AIOs would impact search traffic and ended up finding a lot more information about the search environment for home service verticals. On average, we found short-tail keywords dominate the SERPs followed by short-tail keywords with geographic modifiers.

KEYWORD TYPE ALL VERTICALS



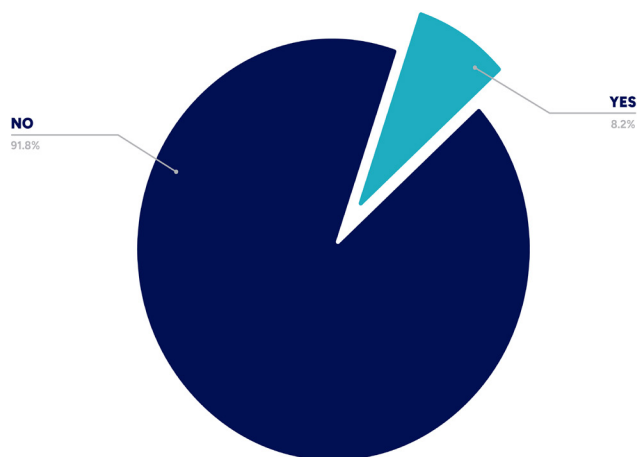
“ WE ENTERED WITH THE INTENTION OF LEARNING HOW AIOS WOULD IMPACT SEARCH TRAFFIC AND ENDED UP FINDING A LOT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SEARCH ENVIRONMENT FOR HOME SERVICE VERTICALS. ”

AI OVERVIEWS FOR TOP KEYWORDS

Since the original purpose of this study was to find out how much AI Overviews would disrupt traffic, we'll start there. The answer is, not much — at least not for the highest-value keywords. This should come as a relief to home service businesses fearing losing their positions and traffic to generative AI.

We found in all verticals combined, AIOs only appeared 8.2% of the time. The other 91.8% of searches were “normal” SERP features with map pack results appearing most frequently by a slim margin (more on that later).

DID AI OVERVIEWS APPEAR IN ALL VERTICALS SERPS?



Long tail keywords have anecdotally been the most common keywords with AI Overviews. We confirmed this to be the case — 40.78% of long-tail searches in the home services industry produced an AIO. Comparatively, only 1.60% of short-tail searches produced an AIO result, meaning Google needs some meat in the keywords in order to produce generative AI results.

This is likely due to a problem AI has with context. If Google does not get enough context in a search, it will struggle to provide a result reflective of the search in AI.



how to find a wedding band



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AI Overview

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When looking for a wedding band, you can consider things like:

- **Style:** Consider the style of band that would match your wedding's vibe.
- **Budget:** Decide on a budget for the band.
- **Availability:** Find local bands that are available on your wedding date.
- **Reviews:** Read reviews from previous couples who the band has performed for.
- **Venue:** Make sure your venue has enough space for the band and check for any noise restrictions or curfews.
- **References:** Ask friends, family, or event planners for recommendations.
- **Live videos:** Check out the band's live videos and promotional videos.

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Wedding Bands - The Knot

Start With Your Style. Thinking about hiring a wedding band? Start by envisioning your wedding's vibe. Your wedding music...

The Knot

How to Hire a Wedding Band in 2024 - FixTheMusic

6 days ago — 1. Think about the style of wedding band you'd like. 2. Decide on your ideal budget for the band. 3. Find local...

FixTheMusic

For example, a search for “wedding band” alone could mean a band that plays at a wedding or a wedding band for a finger. When you search how to find a wedding band, you receive an AIO result with types for finding the right music grooves for your special day.



how to pick out a wedding band



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Wedding Band Guide

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Whether You Want To Match, Or Do Your Own Thing, Blue Nile Has The Perfect **Wedding Rings**. Your Enduring Love Deserves A Symbol That's Just As Beautiful...



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How To Choose a Wedding Ring That You'll Love Forever

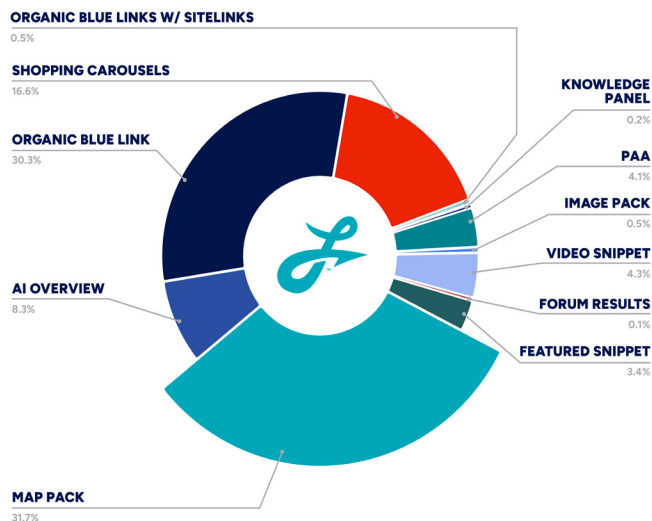
Jan 29, 2024 — **How to Choose a Wedding Ring** in Eight Steps · 1. Set a Budget · 2. Factor in your Lifestyle · 3. Look Online for Ring Inspiration · 4. Shop ...

However, if you ask Google “how to pick out a wedding band,” you don’t get an AIO, but you do get results related to wedding rings. There is a very fine line between “wedding band” and “wedding band.” Google finds that line with a few slight changes in verbs. It’s this subtle shift in context and intent that determines whether Google’s AI engages or not.

THE MOST POPULAR SERP FEATURES

Even with the emergence of AI, traditional SERP elements still dominate for home service-related keywords. The data shows that **map pack results** are the most common SERP feature, appearing in 31.7% of searches across all verticals. This is particularly relevant for home service businesses, as these results highlight local providers, making them critical for businesses focused on geographical reach and local SEO.

TOP SERP FEATURES FOR ALL VERTICAL KEYWORDS



Traditional **organic blue links** follow just behind, accounting for 30.3% of searches. While many SEOs fear that organic results might be overshadowed by AI and other interactive features, these links remain a mainstay for driving website traffic.

Other notable SERP features include **shopping carousels** (16.6%), which primarily show up in searches related to product-oriented services, and AI Overviews, which accounted for 8.2% of all searches. This indicates that while AI Overviews are growing, they still have a relatively small footprint compared to more traditional features.

EVEN WITH AI, TRADITIONAL SERP ELEMENTS STILL DOMINATE FOR HOME SERVICE-RELATED KEYWORDS.

Interestingly, **video snippets** and **People Also Ask** (PAA) sections appeared in 4.3% and 4.1% of searches, respectively. These interactive features provide additional opportunities for businesses to answer specific customer queries, but they aren't as dominant in home service verticals as they are in broader industries.

Featured snippets came in at an unsurprising 3.3% of searches. Like AI overviews, these SERP features seem to appear primarily when a long tail query is used. Since the majority of keywords meeting the parameters of this study were short tail, the small amount of representation here is reflective of that.

The search environment for home service businesses remains primarily centered around familiar, organic elements, with localized results leading the way. While newer AI-driven features are emerging, they have yet to significantly disrupt the dominance of traditional SERP features.

HOW TO OPTIMIZE FOR MAP PACK SERP FEATURES

To effectively capture the top spot in the map pack for home service-related searches, it's essential to focus on key local SEO strategies and tactics. By optimizing for this high-visibility SERP feature, home service businesses can improve their chances of attracting local customers who are searching for services "near me".

The following strategies will help ensure your business stands out and ranks well in the map pack, driving more traffic and leads to your site.

Optimize Google Business Profiles (GBP)

Your Google Business Profile serves as the cornerstone of local SEO success. Ensure your GBP listing is not only complete but optimized. This includes accurate business name, address and phone number (NAP), operating hours and detailed service categories that reflect the services you offer. Keep your listing fresh with regular updates — photos, posts and any changes in services can make a significant impact.

Encourage Customer Reviews

Customer reviews have a huge influence on map pack rankings. Positive reviews not only improve your business's visibility but also build trust with potential customers. Actively ask satisfied clients to leave reviews and engage with every review you receive, whether positive or negative, to show your commitment to customer service.

Build Local Citations And Backlinks

To increase your authority in local searches, focus on earning citations and backlinks from reputable local sources. Partner with local chambers of commerce or news outlets to feature your business and services. These local backlinks can help push your business higher in the map pack rankings.

Citation Consistency

It's not enough to just have citations. Your citations need to be consistent and accurate, otherwise it can send signals to Google that the information about your business is confusing to users, which can result in lower rankings. Make sure your business is consistently listed across all relevant local directories, including platforms like Yelp. Consistency in your NAP information strengthens your local presence and boosts rankings.

Optimize For Mobile

Many home service-related searches happen on mobile devices — especially in emergencies, like an HVAC unit going out in the heat of summer or a pipe bursting in a basement. A mobile-friendly website that loads quickly is essential. Ensure your contact information is easily accessible and that users can effortlessly schedule services or request information via their phones.

Create Hyperlocal Content

Another effective strategy is to create service pages, service area pages and other content that specifically targets the cities or regions where your business operates. These pages should include localized content, such as nearby landmarks, local climate conditions and other geo-specific details that tie into your home services. This level of specificity will help your site rank better in local searches and drive more traffic.

THE LEAST POPULAR SERP FEATURE

At the bottom of the list, **forum results** are the least common SERP feature, appearing in only one instance across all the home service verticals we studied. This is interesting, since Reddit results have exploded across Google Search, but similar to AIOs, it appears they appear more in association with long tail keywords.

While forums can be a powerful source of user-generated content and community-driven advice, they're almost nonexistent in this industry's search landscape. This makes sense given most of the keywords that meet the parameters are short-tail. Customers are more likely to turn to professional websites, reviews and local business listings when searching for services rather than sifting through forum threads that may offer unreliable or outdated information.

What should we do about it?

While forums may not be a direct opportunity for ranking in SERPs, they can still offer indirect benefits for businesses looking to boost their authority and reputation. Engaging with niche forums or community groups where homeowners discuss service needs can help you build a presence, answer questions and potentially drive traffic to your site. For example, creating helpful content that forum users reference or link back to can provide SEO value in the form of backlinks and increased site authority.

Monitoring forums where potential customers discuss their home service problems can offer insight into common pain points, helping shape the content strategy for your website. By addressing those concerns with expert content, you can position yourself as a trusted source of information.

While forum results are not a significant SERP feature, there's still value in leveraging forums for engagement and gaining indirect SEO benefits. Focus on building your brand's authority through professional, reliable content while keeping an ear on what's being discussed in the industry.

TAKEAWAYS FROM SERP MAPPING

Our analysis of 1,065 home service-related keywords reveals some clear trends in the search environment, especially in light of Google's AI Overviews (AIOs). The data shows that traditional SEO strategies still reign supreme, with map pack and organic blue links occupying the majority of SERP real estate. Here are the key takeaways from our findings:

- **Map Pack Dominates Local Search** — Map packs appeared in 31.7% of searches, making it the most common SERP feature. It's essential to optimize your Google Business Profile and build local citations to capture local traffic.
- **AI Overviews Have Limited Impact For Short-Tail Keywords** — AIOs showed up in only 8.2% of searches, with just 1.6% of short-tail keywords triggering them. For high-value short-tail keywords, traditional SEO remains crucial.
- **Long-Tail Keywords Drive AI Engagement** — Nearly 41% of long-tail searches triggered AIOs, indicating Google's preference for detailed queries. Optimizing content for long-tail keywords provides an opportunity to capture AI-generated traffic.
- **Traditional SERP Features Still Lead The Way** — Organic blue links appeared in 30.3% of searches, reinforcing the importance of backlinks, authority and traditional SEO efforts to maintain organic traffic.
- **The Role Of Shopping Carousels And Other Features:** Shopping carousels showed up in more product related searches, like water softeners or HVAC units.

The data reinforces the importance of focusing on core SEO practices, particularly for local and service-oriented businesses. While AI is emerging as a significant player, its current impact is largely confined to long-tail queries. The tried-and-true SEO tactics — optimizing for map pack, organic blue links and high-quality content — remain your strongest tools in capturing traffic and driving leads.

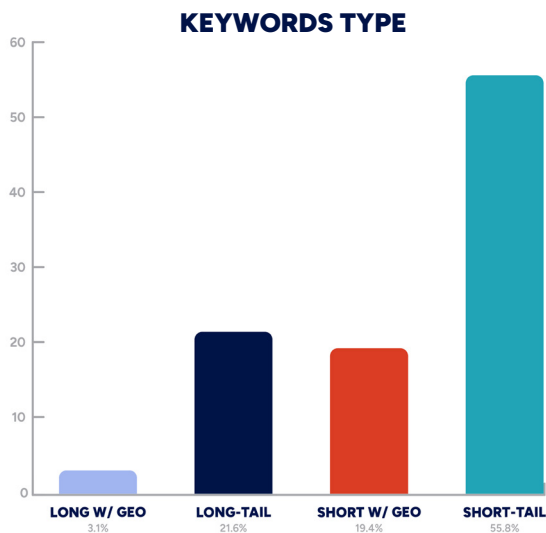


Findings: HVAC VERTICAL

In our study of the HVAC vertical, we analyzed a robust set of 319 keywords. These keywords span a wide range of topics, including air conditioning, heating, ductwork, heat pumps and ductless AC systems. With so many services available and increasing summer temperatures, it's no surprise that the US HVAC industry is worth \$133.7 billion.

By identifying how key terms appear for users, we aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the current market landscape and uncover valuable insights for optimizing HVAC marketing strategies.

This graph breaks down how frequently each keyword type appeared in our SERP analysis for HVAC-related keywords.



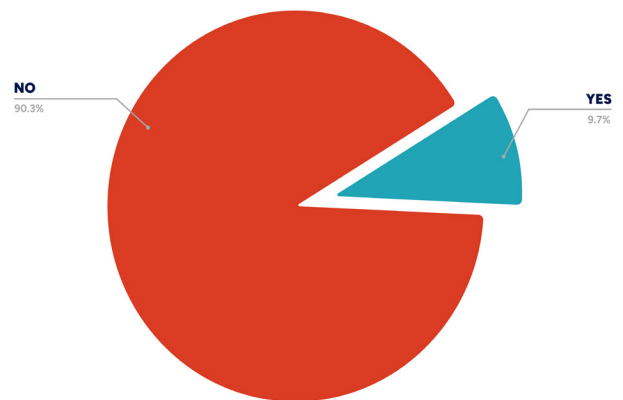
Unsurprisingly, **short-tail keywords** make up the bulk at 55.8%, indicating that broad searches still dominate the HVAC space. Following that, **long-tail keywords** account for 21.6%, showing that more specific queries still hold a decent share.

Short-tail keywords with geographic modifiers come in at 19.4%, highlighting the importance of location-based searches, while **long-tail ones with geographic modifiers** barely register at 3.1%. This shows that while broad and geo-specific keywords are key players, long-tail strategies can still carve out significant opportunities, as they appeared in 24.7% of our study. AI

OVERVIEWS FOR TOP HVAC KEYWORDS

The HVAC vertical had more AIO results than all verticals combined, but it's still a smaller number in the grand scheme of the data. We found 9.7% of searches conjured an AIO, meaning over 90% of searches are still normal (or as normal as the SERPs can be these days).

DID AI OVERVIEWS APPEAR IN SERP?



When we break out the keywords by keyword type (i.e. short-tail, long-tail, etc), the AIO appearance follows the predetermined pattern of being triggered primarily for long-tail searches. In short-tail keywords, only 0.4% of the results pulled AIO results, but in long-tail keywords, 62% of the searches pulled an AIO result.

As we hypothesized, longer keywords are the ones pulling more AIO results. What does this mean for HVAC businesses? For starters, those short-tail keywords are just as competitive as ever, but if you're losing traffic in them, AIOs are not the likely culprit.

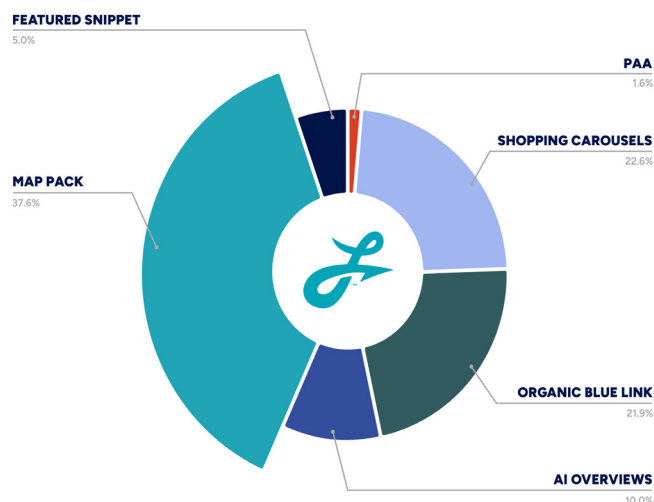
AIOs, like featured snippets, drive more traffic to pages that rank for long-tail keywords. To rank for long-tail keywords, website content needs to meet Google's E-E-A-T guidelines and produce unique content that meets users' needs.

Recent SERP studies have shown that AIOs mimic the top results of the SERP, just in a flashy, summarized manner. This can work to your advantage, as long as you're at the top.

THE MOST POPULAR SERP FEATURES FOR TOP HVAC KEYWORDS

In our analysis of the HVAC vertical, we discovered that the map pack is the most frequently occurring SERP feature, appearing in 37.6% of searches. This isn't surprising given the local nature of HVAC services, but it does reinforce one key takeaway: local SEO is critical for HVAC businesses aiming to rank well and capture valuable traffic.

FIRST ORGANIC SERP FEATURE HVAC



Following **the map pack**, the second most frequently occurring SERP feature in the HVAC vertical is the **shopping carousel**, appearing in 22.6% of searches. While this might seem unusual for a service-based industry, it highlights the growing trend of HVAC equipment purchases being made directly online. Consumers are increasingly shopping for HVAC-related products, like air filters, thermostats and even smaller HVAC units — and Google is surfacing these items in shopping carousels.

For HVAC businesses, this presents an opportunity to integrate e-commerce strategies into their SEO plans, either by selling products directly on their website or partnering with suppliers to capture visibility in these searches. Incorporating product pages optimized with structured data for items relevant to your services could increase your chances of appearing in this feature and drive additional revenue.

THE LEAST POPULAR SERP FEATURE

Now that we know what to focus on, what should we spend less time on? The least popular SERP feature in the HVAC vertical is the knowledge panel, which appeared only two times in our study.

This suggests that while knowledge panels provide useful, authoritative information about a specific topic or business, they're rarely triggered for HVAC-related keywords.

HVAC companies likely won't need to focus heavily on this feature, but maintaining a strong online presence, including optimizing

Google Business Profiles and ensuring accurate information across platforms, can still help if a knowledge panel does appear for their business.

THE MOST POPULAR SERP FEATURE BY KEYWORD TYPE

For short-tail keywords, it's no surprise that the map pack is the top SERP feature. Even for broader searches, like "HVAC repair," Google is still prioritizing local results, so businesses that optimize their local SEO will have the upper hand.

When we add location modifiers to the short tail keywords, the map pack continues to dominate. This reinforces just how critical it is to show up in geo-specific searches — your business has to be visible when someone is searching for "HVAC repair near me" or in a specific city.

For long-tail keywords, we start to see a shift. The shopping carousel takes over as the most popular SERP feature here, highlighting that users searching for more detailed HVAC queries are often looking to buy specific products, like filters or thermostats. HVAC companies can capitalize on this by integrating product pages into their SEO strategies. With long-tail keywords that have location modifiers, we're back to the map pack as the most visible feature. However, it's worth noting that the dataset for this section only contained 10 keywords, meaning there aren't that many long-tail keywords with location modifiers in the most popular keywords list. This small sample size makes it harder to draw definitive conclusions, but even in these highly specific searches, local visibility remains key to capturing traffic.

TAKEAWAYS FROM HVAC SERP MAPPING

Given the dominance of the map pack, appearing in over a third of all searches, focusing your SEO efforts on local optimizations is a direct and powerful way to increase traffic and leads. AIOs are not the threat many SEOs feared they would be, at least not for HVAC companies.

HVAC services are inherently local, meaning that visibility in geographically targeted search results can make or break your business's ability to attract customers. Optimizing for the map pack — through a well-maintained Google Business Profile, generating positive reviews and building strong local citations — is crucial for staying competitive in this space. HVAC businesses that succeed in local SEO will have a significant edge in attracting customers through organic search.

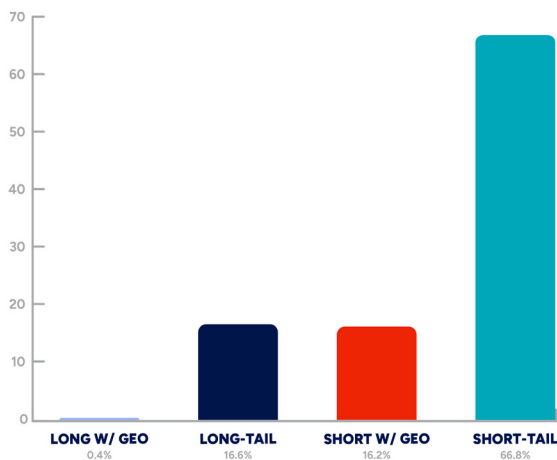


Findings: PLUMBING

With 241 keywords to make it into the study, the plumbing category is the second largest. This is hardly surprising given how important plumbing is for health, safety and living comfortably. The [US plumbing industry itself is worth \\$121.5 billion dollars](#), likely due to the sheer necessity of the industry for homes, businesses and government spaces alike.

Everyone may need plumbing to keep their day-to-day flowing smoothly. But does everyone search the same way?

KEYWORD TYPES IN THE PLUMBING VERTICAL



The data says no, not everyone searches the same way, but we do see a larger amount of **short tail** and **short tail with geographic modifiers** appearing in our keyword list than other industries like water softeners.

AI OVERVIEWS FOR TOP PLUMBING KEYWORDS

As we examined the impact of AI Overviews (AIOs) on plumbing-related searches, the results were in line with our expectations. Much like the HVAC industry, plumbing keywords show that the rollout of Google's AIOs hasn't yet overtaken traditional search features.

In fact, AIOs appeared in only 6.6% of plumbing-related searches, reinforcing the idea that while AIOs are present, they're not

dominating the plumbing SERPs in the way some SEOs initially feared. This percentage is also lower than appearance for all verticals.

DID AI OVERVIEWS APPEAR IN PLUMBING SERPS?



Following the pattern of the other verticals, AIOs appeared more frequently with long-tail keywords, where they showed up in 30% of searches. This reinforces the idea that Google is more likely to surface AIOs for queries that demand detailed, nuanced answers. It remains the healthiest strategy to target both short and long-tail keywords.

GOOGLE IS MORE LIKELY TO
SURFACE AIOs FOR QUERIES
THAT DEMAND DETAILED,
NUANCED ANSWERS. IT REMAINS
THE HEALTHIEST STRATEGY
TO TARGET BOTH SHORT AND
LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS.

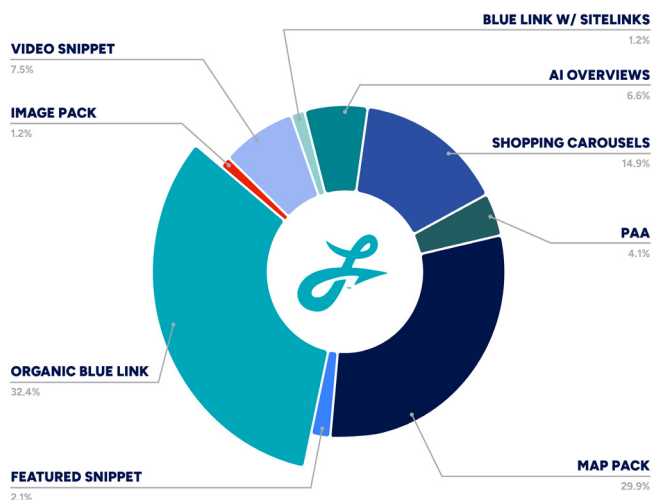
Short-tail keywords in the plumbing vertical saw minimal AIO presence, with only 2.5% of these searches triggering an AI Overview. For high-volume, broad search terms like “plumbing repair” or “emergency plumber,” AIOs are not a major factor. Businesses focused on ranking for these terms should still prioritize traditional organic strategies, such as optimizing for featured snippets, People Also Ask (PAA) boxes and local SEO results.

THE FIGHT FOR TRAFFIC REMAINS FOCUSED ON OPTIMIZING FOR TRADITIONAL SERP FEATURES

For now, AIOs seem to be more of an enhancement to the search experience for users with very specific questions, rather than a complete overhaul of how SERPs function. For plumbing businesses, this is a relief: the fight for traffic remains focused on optimizing for traditional SERP features, with AIOs providing additional context where needed, rather than siphoning off significant traffic.

THE MOST POPULAR SERP FEATURES FOR TOP PLUMBING KEYWORDS

TOP SERP FEATURES FOR PLUMBING KEYWORDS



The top SERP feature for the plumbing vertical finally breaks the pattern, but just barely. The most frequently occurring SERP feature for plumbing-related searches is the **organic blue link**, which appears in 32.4% of searches. This reinforces the importance of traditional organic rankings, especially for short-tail keywords that often drive the bulk of traffic.

The **map pack** is the second most frequently occurring SERP feature, appearing in 29.9% of searches. This is not surprising given the local nature of plumbing services. Consumers searching for “plumbers near me” or “emergency plumber” expect

geographically relevant results, making local SEO crucial for plumbing businesses looking to capture this high-intent traffic. Optimizing your Google Business Profile and building strong and consistent local citations remain critical strategies for plumbing companies.

HOW TO OPTIMIZE FOR ORGANIC BLUE LINKS IN THE PLUMBING VERTICAL

Traditional SEO is not dead! It still clings to life in the plumbing industry. Since organic blue links are still the most popular, optimizing for them is crucial for capturing visibility in traditional SERP results. These organic listings still represent the largest share of clicks, particularly for high-volume short-tail keywords.

By focusing on key SEO strategies, plumbing businesses can ensure they rank prominently for relevant searches and attract more traffic to their websites. Below are the most effective strategies to optimize for organic blue links and improve your rankings.

Target Relevant Keywords

Keywords have always been (and might always be) the core foundation of SEO. With organic blue links, we have to bring it back to basics. Start by conducting keyword research to identify high-volume short-tail and long-tail keywords specific to the plumbing industry, and use them to help you build out unique and original content. Remember to use E-E-A-T in any website content you create.

Create In-Depth, User-Focused Content

Google rewards websites that provide comprehensive answers to user queries. Plumbing businesses should focus on creating in-depth blog posts, service pages and how-to guides that answer common plumbing questions or explain the nuances of your services.

Consider writing content that covers everything from troubleshooting plumbing issues to understanding the benefits of specific plumbing products like tankless water heaters. High-quality, helpful content that addresses user intent is more likely to rank well and attract clicks.

Optimize Page Speed And User Experience

Page speed is a significant ranking factor for organic blue links. Make sure your website loads quickly, especially on mobile devices. Now that Google has fully transitioned to mobile-first indexing, it's more important than ever to have a strong mobile site with streamlined UX.

Use Structured Data

Structured data, also known as schema markup, can help plumbing businesses rank higher by providing search engines with detailed information about the content on your site. It will help build out richer results in the SERPs as well. LocalBusiness, FAQ Schema and How-To schema are some of the best structured data features to use on plumbing websites.

Have An Off-Page Strategy

Backlinks from reputable websites are still one of the strongest signals to Google that your site is authoritative. Plumbing companies can earn high-quality backlinks by creating valuable content that other sites want to link to or by participating in local sponsorships, responding to media requests and engaging in partnerships. Focus on earning links from industry-related sources, local directories or community websites that enhance your site's credibility and trustworthiness.

Regularly Update And Optimize Content

Plumbing issues evolve, and so should your content. Regularly updating your service pages, blogs and how-to articles with fresh information can help you maintain and improve your rankings in organic blue links.

Regular content updates will reduce content decay. This could include adding new services, refining keyword targeting or updating content to reflect the latest trends or technologies in plumbing. Keeping content fresh signals to Google that your site is active and relevant, which can positively impact rankings.

Optimize For Local SEO

While organic blue links are often broader than local search results, optimizing for local SEO is still essential. Plumbing services are inherently local, so make sure your site reflects this by creating service area pages that target specific cities or neighborhoods.

Include geo-specific keywords and content that speaks directly to your local audience. This will improve your chances of ranking organically for searches with local intent, even when they don't trigger map pack results.

THE LEAST POPULAR PLUMBING SERP FEATURE

In our analysis of the plumbing vertical, the image pack was the least popular SERP feature, appearing in just 1.2% of searches. This is not entirely unexpected, as image packs typically appear more frequently in visually-driven industries, where users might be looking for inspiration or design ideas.

For plumbing-related searches, users are generally seeking functional services or solutions to immediate problems, making imagery less relevant.

The image pack feature tends to display a collection of relevant images at the top of the SERP, but plumbing businesses are less likely to rely on this feature for driving traffic compared to other industries like home decor or landscaping. The low appearance of image packs in the plumbing vertical indicates that optimizing for this feature may not be a priority.

Plumbing businesses should instead focus on more impactful features such as map packs and organic blue links, which dominate the SERPs in this industry and are more aligned with user intent for plumbing-related queries.

However, if your plumbing business does offer visually appealing services — such as bathroom or kitchen remodeling — it may still be beneficial to include high-quality images on relevant service pages to potentially capture traffic from the rare instances where an Image Pack appears.

TAKEAWAYS FROM PLUMBING SERP MAPPING

In the plumbing vertical, organic blue links and the map pack dominate the search landscape, with the latter appearing in nearly 30% of searches. This highlights the critical importance of focusing on local SEO strategies to capture high-intent, geographically targeted traffic. Plumbing services are inherently local, and showing up in the map pack is crucial for connecting with customers seeking immediate help.

AI Overviews (AIOs) are not as widespread as other industries, appearing in only 6.6% of plumbing searches. This means traditional SEO strategies remain highly effective, and businesses should focus on optimizing for organic rankings through content, backlinks and user experience.

To remain competitive, plumbing businesses must ensure their Google Business Profile is fully optimized, up-to-date and supported by consistent positive reviews. Additionally, building local citations and earning backlinks from reputable sources can boost rankings in both organic blue links and the map pack.

By prioritizing these local SEO strategies, plumbing companies can significantly improve their visibility in search results, making it easier to attract and convert customers through organic search.

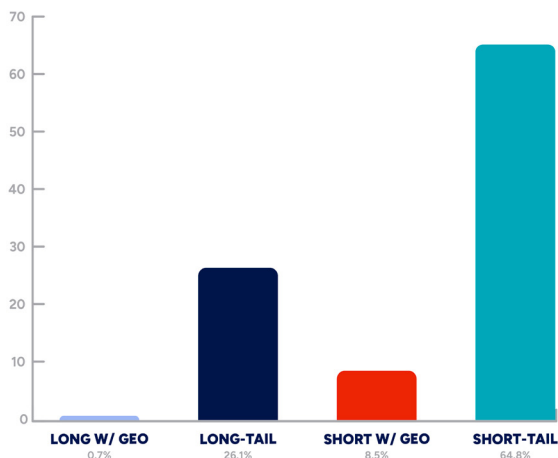


Findings:

WATER SOFTENERS

At the beginning of this study, water softener keywords were originally going to be included within the plumbing category. But the water softening keywords displayed so many unique characteristics that we decided the best way to do this without skewing the plumbing data was to split the two categories. Right away, we noticed a larger volume of long-tail keywords, which lead to some interesting results.

KEYWORD TYPES IN THE PLUMBING VERTICAL

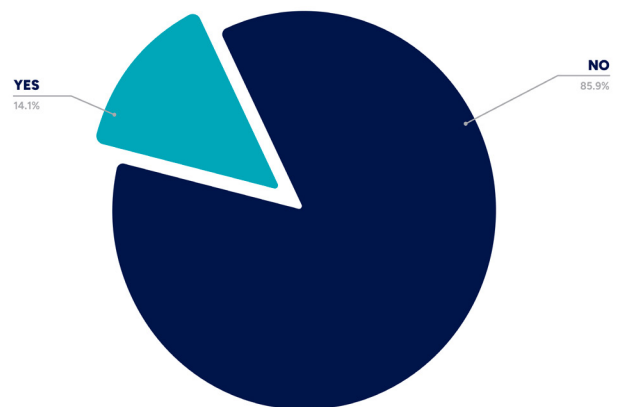


AI OVERVIEWS FOR TOP WATER SOFTENER KEYWORDS

As we examined the impact of AIOs on water softener-related searches, the results were somewhat consistent with what we've observed in other home service verticals. Much like in plumbing

and HVAC, water softener keywords show that the introduction of Google's AIOs has not completely overhauled the SERPs. However, the water softener vertical did see more AIOs than any other vertical with 14.1% of SERP results falling into AIOs.

DID AI OVERVIEWS APPEAR IN WATER SOFTENER SERPS?



This is likely due to the larger proportion of long-tail keywords in the water softener vertical, which accounted for 26.8% of the tracked keywords — more than in any other vertical in our study.

It's possible there are more long-tail keywords for this industry due to the products sold within it. Water softeners and filters are not typically considered vital to a home like an HVAC unit or water heater is. These are luxury items that users are likely to know less about, leading to more frequently asked questions.

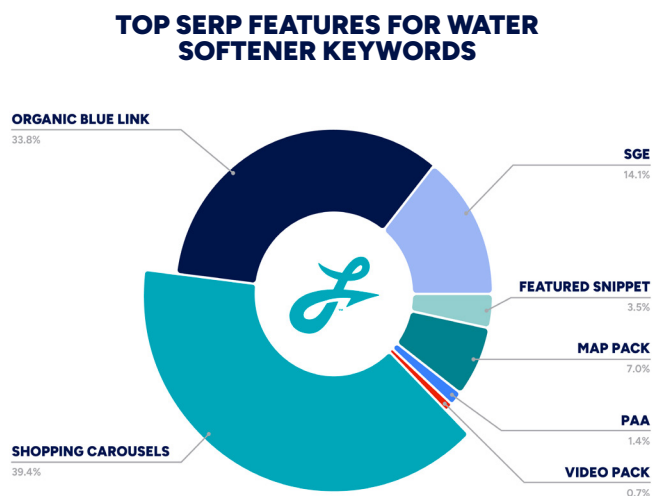
For high-volume, broad search terms like "water softener" or "water softener system," AIOs were not a significant factor. As with other home service verticals, businesses focused on ranking for these high-traffic short-tail terms should continue to emphasize traditional SEO strategies, such as optimizing for featured snippets, People Also Ask (PAA) boxes, and local SEO features like map packs.

THE WATER SOFTENER VERTICAL DID SEE MORE AIOS THAN ANY OTHER VERTICAL WITH 14.1% OF SERP RESULTS FALLING INTO AIOS.

For now, AIOs serve more as an enhancement to the user experience in highly specific searches, rather than an overhaul of the SERP landscape. That being said, some of our other findings may cause concern for local water softener companies.

THE MOST POPULAR SERP FEATURE FOR TOP WATER SOFTENER KEYWORDS

The water softener vertical stands out from all the other industries we tested due to the overwhelming presence of **shopping carousels** in SERPs. At Leadhub, our Paid Media team has observed a consistent rise in CPAs and a drop in click volume for water softener-related search terms, largely driven by the increase in Product Listing Ads (PLAs). This data supports their experience, showing that shopping carousels, which always include PLAs, dominate the search results for water softeners.



Unlike other verticals, **map pack** results appear less than 10% of the time for water softener-related searches. This suggests that traditional local SEO strategies may not be as effective for clients in the water treatment industry.

With Google heavily prioritizing shopping carousels, the data reflects a shift in search intent: users are primarily searching for products they can purchase, rather than services.

For water softener companies, this shift means adapting to an e-commerce-driven landscape. Businesses will need to optimize their websites for product sales and consider adopting a dealership-like approach rather than focusing solely on service offerings.

To succeed, water softener companies must refine their e-commerce strategies to improve visibility in shopping carousels, while still focusing on SEO for organic rankings to maximize their presence across multiple SERP features.

HOW TO OPTIMIZE FOR SHOPPING CAROUSEL IN THE WATER SOFTENER VERTICAL

To effectively capture a spot in the shopping carousel for water softener-related searches, businesses need to focus on key e-commerce SEO strategies and product optimization techniques.

By optimizing for this high-visibility SERP feature, water softener companies can increase their chances of appearing prominently when potential customers are searching for water softeners and related products. The following strategies will help ensure your products stand out and rank well in shopping carousels, driving more traffic and sales to your site.

Optimize Product Listings With Structured Data

Structured data, such as product schema, is crucial for ranking in shopping carousels. Ensure that your product pages are marked up with all relevant information, including product name, price, availability and reviews. This helps Google understand and display your products in shopping carousels, improving your visibility for high-intent searchers.

Create High-Quality Product Descriptions

Clear, concise and compelling product descriptions are essential for driving conversions through shopping carousels. Ensure that each product listing includes detailed information about the water softener's features, benefits and specifications. Focus on the unique selling points that differentiate your products from competitors, such as energy efficiency, warranty or saltless filtration features.

Utilize High-Quality Product Images

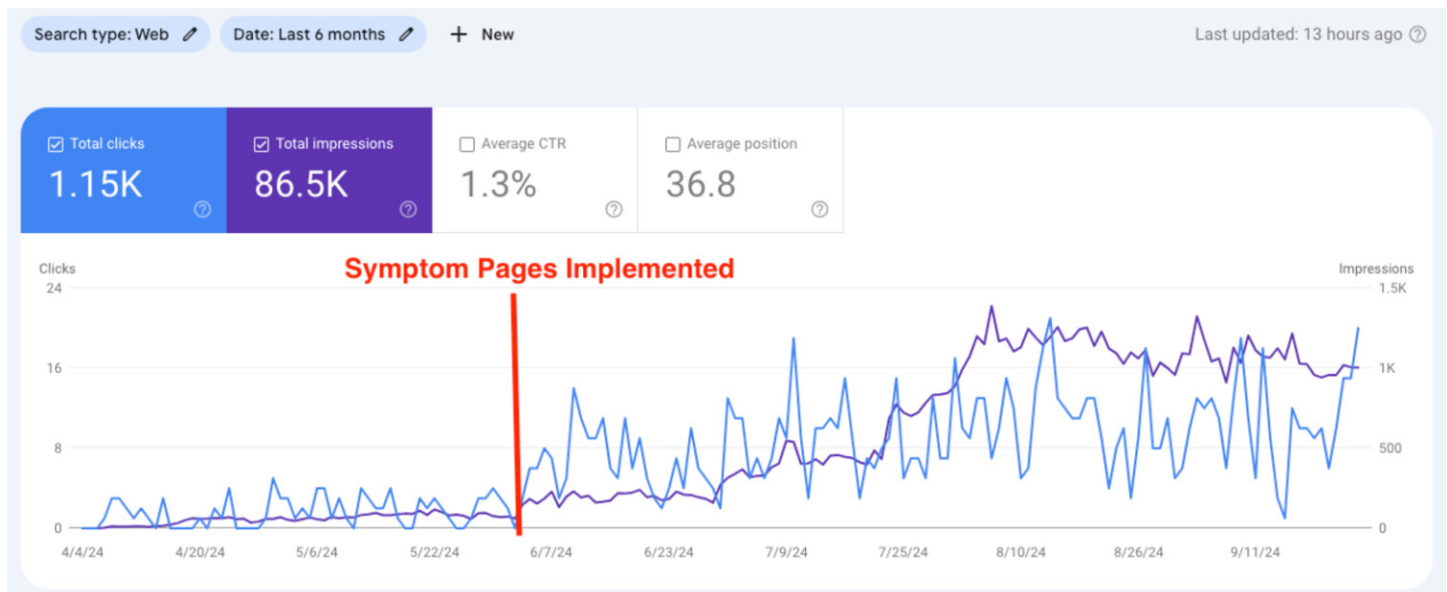
Shopping carousels rely heavily on visuals, so it's important to feature high-quality product images. Invest in professional product photography to showcase your water softeners from multiple angles, ensuring the images are clear and well-lit. Stock photos aren't the end-all-be-all, so make sure to do photo and videoshoots that display your team installing a unit or providing a water quality test. The more visually appealing your product, the more likely it will stand out in the carousel and attract clicks.

Target Pain Points And Symptoms In Content

Many potential customers are still in the discovery phase, unsure if they need a water softener but searching for solutions to problems like hard water, scale buildup or unpleasant tasting water.

By creating content that addresses these pain points and symptoms, such as "why does my water taste bad?" or "how to fix hard water stains," you can capture users who may not yet know they need a water softener. Including product suggestions or links to your optimized product pages within this content can help guide these users toward your shopping carousel listings once they are ready to make a purchase.

When we implemented symptomatic pages on one of our water softener client's websites, we saw an immediate lift in visibility to the site that had a ripple effect throughout the other pages.



Implement Competitive Pricing

Price is often the deciding factor for users browsing shopping carousels. Regularly review your pricing strategy to stay competitive within the market. If your products are priced too high compared to competitors, you risk being overlooked by potential buyers.

Consider offering promotions or bundling products to increase your chances of appearing in the top spots of the carousel.

Encourage Customer Reviews

User reviews are a critical factor for success in shopping carousels. Positive reviews not only build trust with potential buyers but also influence how prominently your products appear in the carousel. Encourage satisfied customers to leave reviews on your product pages and engage with these reviews to show that you value customer feedback. Plus, there's the added benefit customer reviews have on local SEO strategies.

Optimize For Mobile

Many water softener-related searches, especially product comparisons, happen on mobile devices. Ensure that your e-commerce website is mobile-friendly, with fast loading times and easy navigation. Google prioritizes mobile-optimized content, and a seamless mobile shopping experience can lead to higher rankings in shopping carousels and more conversions.

Target Long-Tail Product Keywords

Long-tail keywords, such as "best water softener for hard water" or "salt-free water softener system," are more likely to trigger shopping carousels. Optimize your product pages for these specific queries by including them in product titles, descriptions and meta tags. This helps your products appear for users searching for particular features or benefits, increasing the likelihood of a conversion.

Monitor Competitor Listings

Keep an eye on your competitors' product listings within the

shopping carousel. Analyze their pricing, product descriptions and review scores to identify areas where you can improve or differentiate your offerings. Staying competitive and proactive will ensure that your products continue to perform well in this highly visual SERP feature.

By focusing on these strategies, water softener companies can maximize their presence in shopping carousels, effectively driving traffic and sales through optimized e-commerce practices.

THE LEAST POPULAR WATER SOFTENER SERP FEATURE

In the water softener vertical, the least frequently occurring SERP feature is the image pack, which appeared in only 1.5% of searches. This low presence is unsurprising, as water softeners are not typically products that rely on visual appeal to drive consumer interest.

Unlike industries where aesthetics play a significant role, such as home decor or fashion, the decision-making process for water softeners is primarily driven by functionality, efficiency and cost, making the image pack a less relevant feature in this vertical.

While the image pack may not be a priority for water softener companies, there is still value in incorporating high-quality images on product pages. Even though they rarely appear in the SERP, strong visuals can enhance the user experience on your website and provide additional context for consumers comparing products (not to mention the benefits on the shopping carousels we just talked about).

For businesses that offer visually appealing or compact water softener models, including clear, high-quality images might still attract customers looking for space-saving or design-conscious solutions.

Ultimately, water softener companies should prioritize optimizing for features like shopping carousels and organic blue links while recognizing that image packs hold less significance in this particular industry.

TAKEAWAYS FROM WATER SOFTENER SERP MAPPING

The data shows that AI Overviews have a bigger presence in the water softener vertical than in other home service industries, appearing in 14.1% of searches. This is likely due to the higher number of long-tail keywords we tracked — 26.8% of the total keywords were long-tail.

Since water softeners are often viewed as non-essential products, users tend to ask more questions and explore their options, which prompts more AI Overviews. However, for broader, high-traffic keywords like “water softener” or “water softener system,” AIOs are less of a factor, so businesses should still prioritize traditional SEO strategies to rank for those core terms.

On the flip side, shopping carousels are the dominant SERP feature for water softeners, signaling a clear shift in search intent toward purchasing products rather than finding services. For water softener companies, this means transitioning to a more e-commerce-driven strategy.

It's crucial to optimize product pages and listings to appear in these shopping carousels, as traditional local SEO tactics like map pack optimization won't be as effective. The focus now needs to shift to driving product sales by refining e-commerce strategies and enhancing visibility in product-based search results.

**THE FOCUS NOW NEEDS
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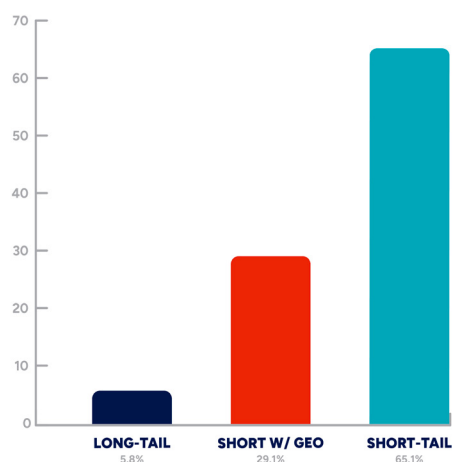


Findings:

FOUNDATION REPAIR

The foundation repair vertical is unique in that it had much fewer keywords that met the variables than other industries like HVAC or plumbing. This is understandable given there are fewer “types” of services when it comes to foundation compared to HVAC or plumbing. While it’s a smaller sample size, the data should still be taken seriously since these are the most important keywords to the industry.

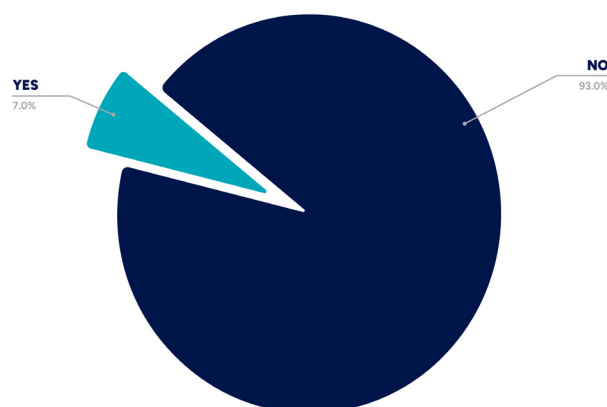
KEYWORD TYPES IN THE FOUNDATION REPAIR VERTICAL



AI OVERVIEWS FOR TOP FOUNDATION REPAIR KEYWORDS

In the foundation repair vertical, only 7% of searches triggered an AI Overview (AIO). The presence of AIOs is still relatively small — 93% of searches remain “normal” by today’s SERP standards, meaning traditional search results continue to dominate.

DID AI OVERVIEWS APPEAR IN FOUNDATION REPAIR SERPS?



Breaking down the keywords by type, we see that AIO appearances align with established patterns, favoring more detailed, long-tail queries. Only 1.1% of short-tail foundation repair keywords produced an AIO result, while 47% of long-tail keywords triggered one. This reinforces the idea that specific, user-targeted queries are more likely to generate AIO results.

So what does this mean for foundation repair businesses? The competitive landscape for short-tail keywords remains tough, and AIOs aren’t the traffic disruptor many SEOs feared. With map pack features taking the number one spot by a land slide, improving local rankings should remain the priority in this industry.

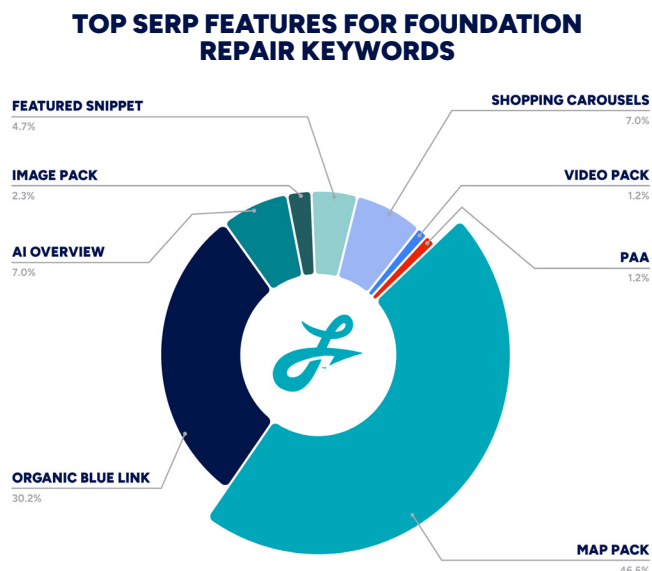
For long-tail keywords, AIOs offer opportunities for enhanced visibility — similar to featured snippets. These results typically favor high-ranking, informative content that meets Google’s E-E-A-T (Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness) guidelines.

To capture these opportunities, foundation repair companies should focus on creating high-quality, user-centered content that answers specific, long-tail queries. With AIOs summarizing top SERP results, the goal is to ensure your site is in the leading position when these features are triggered.

**IMPROVING LOCAL RANKINGS
SHOULD REMAIN THE
PRIORITY IN THIS INDUSTRY**

THE MOST POPULAR SERP FEATURES FOR TOP FOUNDATION REPAIR KEYWORDS

In our analysis of the foundation repair vertical, we discovered that the map pack is the most frequently occurring SERP feature, appearing in 46.5% of searches. This isn't surprising given the local nature of foundation repair services, but it reinforces one key takeaway: local SEO is crucial for foundation repair businesses looking to rank well and capture valuable traffic.



Following the map pack, the second most common SERP feature is the **organic blue link**, showing up in 30.2% of searches. While local search results are the most critical, traditional organic rankings still hold significant value for businesses in the foundation repair space. Companies that can balance local SEO with broader organic strategies will have the best chance of maximizing visibility.

Like AI Os, shopping carousels appeared in 7% of searches. Though it's a smaller amount, it's still interesting the number of searches that bring up shopping carousels. This suggests that some consumers are looking to purchase foundation-related products, such as concrete mixes or repair materials, online.

For foundation repair businesses, this presents an opportunity to diversify their strategy by incorporating e-commerce elements or product partnerships, providing a new revenue stream for these companies. It's also fair to assume that some of those e-commerce search intents are driven by employees in the foundation repair vertical themselves.

THE LEAST POPULAR FOUNDATION REPAIR SERP FEATURE

The least popular SERP features for foundation repair keywords are the **video snippet** and **People Also Ask (PAA)**, each appearing only once in the dataset. This indicates that video content and related question features are not commonly triggered for

foundation repair searches, suggesting that businesses in this space may not need to focus heavily on these features for SEO optimization.

That said, we do recommend video strategies to help build brand awareness and to help SEO in other ways. Just because it doesn't show up first doesn't mean it doesn't show up at all. Both features are much more common lower in the SERP, which is perfect for drawing in customers still in the discovery phase.

TAKEAWAYS FROM FOUNDATION REPAIR SERP MAPPING

Local SEO is the cornerstone of success in the foundation repair industry. With the map pack taking up nearly half of all SERP features, businesses should concentrate on optimizing their local presence. Given that so many searches are geo-specific, businesses that focus on local SEO will have a significant edge over their competitors.

Companies that ignore their local rankings will miss out on a large share of potential customers, particularly those searching for "foundation repair near me" or services within a specific city or neighborhood.

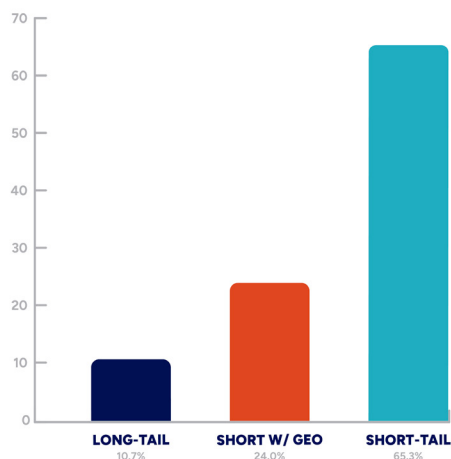
However, there's still room to capitalize on organic rankings and explore new opportunities like e-commerce and video content to boost visibility and engagement across the search landscape. By balancing these elements, foundation repair companies can strengthen their visibility across various stages of the customer journey, ensuring they stay competitive in an evolving search landscape.



Findings: ELECTRICAL

The electrical vertical proved to be far less diverse in its SERP features, and its results mimicked the foundation repair vertical in many ways, but differed in some interesting ones. In a surprise, shopping carousels have barely influenced electrical SERPs, but video snippets are blowing up. Regardless, we think these results are pretty *electric*.

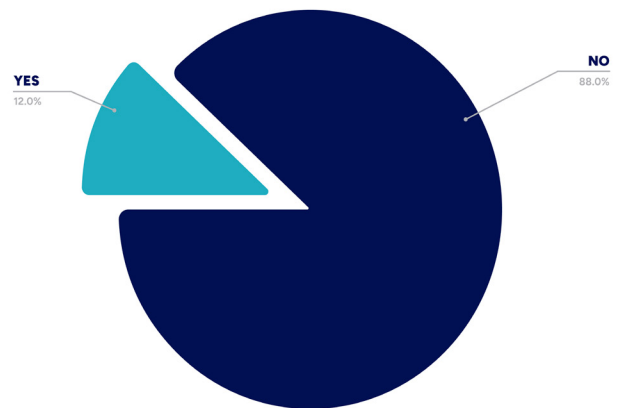
KEYWORD TYPES IN THE ELECTRICAL VERTICAL



AI OVERVIEWS FOR TOP ELECTRICAL KEYWORDS

The electrical vertical shows a moderate presence of AIOs, with these features appearing in 12% of electrical-related searches. While this is higher than some other home service industries, like plumbing or foundation repair, it still suggests that AIOs have yet to overtake traditional SERP features for electrical queries.

DID AI OVERVIEWS APPEAR IN ELECTRICAL SERPS?



Long-tail keywords, once again are the largest instigator of AIOs. Keywords like “how to install a ceiling fan” or “what is the cost to upgrade electrical panels,” are more likely to trigger AIOs. These searches, which often require more detailed responses, make up the bulk of the AIO-triggered queries. However, for high-volume short-tail keywords like “electrician near me” or “electrical services,” AIOs were much less common.

For businesses targeting high-traffic, short-tail keywords, the fact that AIOs appeared in just a small portion of those searches means that traditional SEO strategies — focusing on organic blue links, map packs and local SEO — are still vital. Short-tail searches remain heavily reliant on these traditional features.

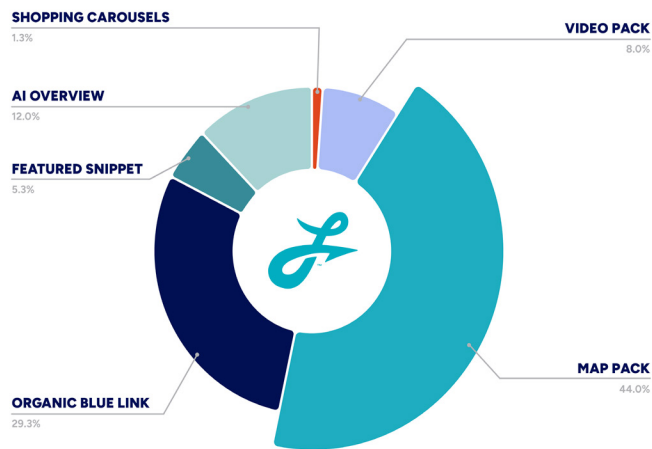
While AIOs may play an increasing role in niche or highly specific queries, their overall presence in electrical-related searches suggests that businesses should continue prioritizing tried-and-true SEO techniques, especially for high-intent keywords.

THE MOST POPULAR SERP FEATURES FOR TOP ELECTRICAL KEYWORDS

In the electrical vertical, **map pack** is the dominant SERP feature, appearing in 44% of searches. Given that electrical services are

typically local in nature, this is no surprise. When users search for terms like “electrician near me” or “emergency electrical services,” they expect geographically relevant results, and map pack delivers just that.

TOP SERP FEATURES FOR ELECTRICAL KEYWORDS



Coming in second place, **organic blue links** were featured in 29.3% of searches. Despite the rise of newer SERP features, traditional organic rankings still play a crucial role. Short-tail keywords like “electrical services” or “home electrician” often populate these links, making it vital for businesses to focus on traditional SEO techniques.

But if you’ve been reading this report up to this point, none of that is surprising. What is surprising is the appearance of **video snippets** taking up 8% of electrical-related searches. This could indicate a growing trend of users seeking how-to videos for electrical projects or product demos. Businesses with a video content strategy will give themselves a competitive edge and increase their brand awareness.

THE LEAST POPULAR ELECTRICAL SERP FEATURE

In the electrical vertical, the shopping carousel is the least popular SERP feature, appearing in only 1.3% of searches. This should come as a welcome surprise for electricians and their SEO representatives all the same since the electrical industry is so service based.

This industry is saved from taking on new SEO strategies like the water softener industry has to. At least for now.

TAKEAWAYS FROM ELECTRICAL SERP MAPPING

Overall, the results for the electrical vertical indicate a steady focus on local SEO and organic search tactics. The dominance of map packs and organic blue links shows that businesses can still rely on traditional methods to capture the bulk of traffic, especially for high-volume, short-tail keywords like “electrician near me” or “electrical services.”

At the same time, there’s an emerging opportunity for businesses to explore video content as a strategy to capture a growing share of traffic. With video snippets showing up in 8% of electrical-related searches, it’s clear that users are increasingly looking for video-based answers to their questions.

This trend could be driven by a growing DIY culture or by users seeking visual explanations for complex electrical topics, such as “how to install a light fixture” or “troubleshooting electrical wiring issues.” For businesses that incorporate video content into their SEO strategies — whether through tutorials, product demos or safety tips — the potential to capture this traffic is significant. Not only do video snippets increase visibility, but they also enhance brand trust and authority, positioning businesses as go-to sources for reliable and engaging information.

For electrical companies, this presents a new frontier in content marketing. Investing in video production may initially seem daunting, but it can pay off with increased visibility, stronger engagement and higher conversions. By diversifying content beyond traditional blogs and service pages, businesses can stay ahead of the competition and meet the evolving needs of their audience.

While traditional SEO techniques remain the foundation of a successful strategy in the electrical vertical, forward-thinking businesses should consider incorporating video content to capitalize on the growing demand for visual information. This dual focus — continuing to master local SEO while embracing new content formats — will ensure that electrical companies remain competitive and visible in an increasingly digital landscape.



Findings:

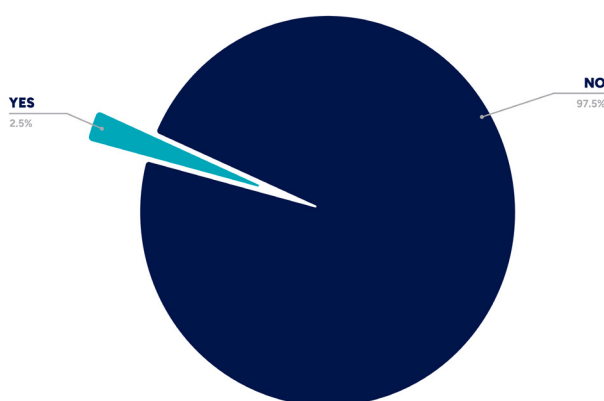
WINDOWS & DOORS

The last vertical we studied was the windows and doors industry. While windows and doors are necessary for every building, they're considered a high-cost item for many American homeowners. The US window and door store industry is valued at \$13.3 billion.

The purchase of new windows or doors is going to be heavily reliant on the economy, which as of writing this, is heavily impacting the industry. We believe the high cost of windows and doors could be the reason behind some of our findings.

AI OVERVIEWS FOR TOP WINDOWS & DOORS KEYWORDS

DID AI OVERVIEWS APPEAR IN WINDOWS & DOORS SERPS?



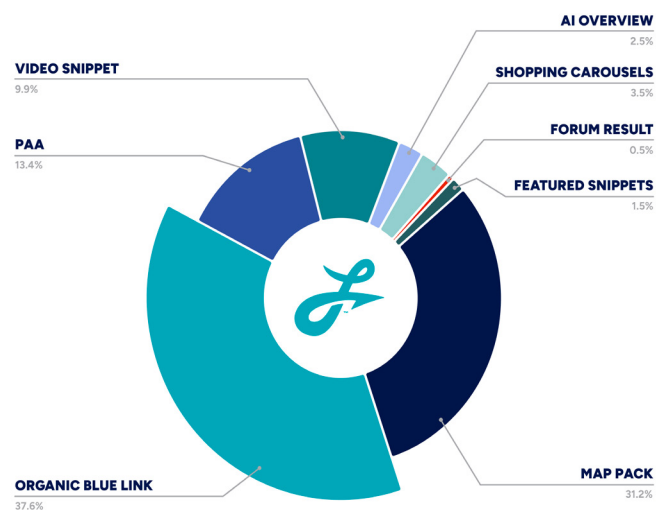
The presence of AI Overviews (AIOs) in the window and door industry is still relatively limited, appearing in 2.5% of the top searches. This suggests that while AIOs have begun to make their way into this vertical, they're far from dominating the search landscape. For most window and door-related queries, traditional SERP features like map packs and organic blue links remain the primary drivers of traffic.

Just like the other industries, AIOs are more likely to appear for long-tail, information-seeking queries, such as "how to install

energy-efficient windows" or "what type of door is best for home security." While they pose very minor disruption to this industry, AIOs continue to evolve. It will be important for businesses to monitor any changes, especially for niche or informational searches.

THE MOST POPULAR SERP FEATURES FOR TOP WINDOWS & DOORS KEYWORDS

TOP SERP FEATURES FOR WINDOWS & DOORS KEYWORDS



In the window and door industry, traditional SERP features continue to dominate the search results, with **organic blue links** leading the charge. These classic organic listings appeared in 37.6% of searches, proving that traditional SEO strategies are still the most effective for capturing traffic in this vertical. Businesses that focus on optimizing their websites for high-volume keywords can still drive significant traffic from organic search results, particularly for short-tail, service-oriented terms like "window installation" or "door replacement."

Closely following organic blue links, **map packs** appeared in 31.2% of searches, further underscoring the importance of local SEO. Given the local nature of window and door services, optimizing for

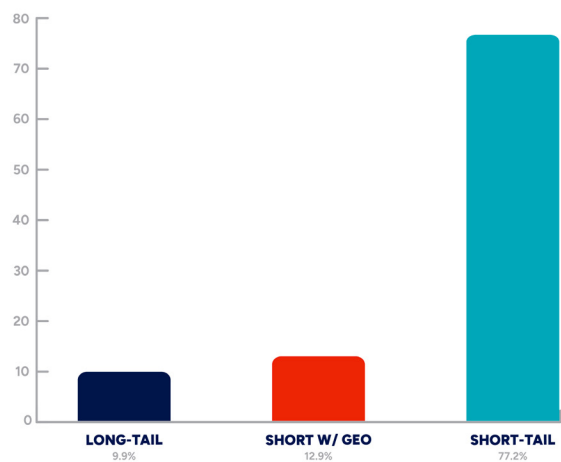
map packs is essential for businesses that want to capture high-intent, geographically relevant traffic.

Consumers searching for “window installers near me” or “door repair contractors” are typically looking for immediate, local services, making a strong local SEO presence critical to success.

The standout from these results are the **PAAs** (People Also Ask) appearing in 13.4% of searches. PAAs are a common search feature in every industry, but rarely in the number one spot. This is not the case for the windows and doors industry. To optimize for the PAAs, SEOs should focus on creating content that answers common questions clearly and concisely while following SEO best practices.

It should also be noted that short-tail keywords took up the majority of keywords in the study. Given the high number of short-tail queries but the high amount of PAAs, it seems like Google may be trying to narrow down search intent for many of the searches.

KEYWORD TYPES IN THE WINDOWS & DOORS VERTICAL



THE LEAST POPULAR WINDOWS & DOORS SERP FEATURE

In the windows and doors vertical, the **forum result** is the least popular SERP feature, appearing in just 0.5% of searches. This is not surprising, as forum results typically appear for niche, user-generated content where individuals seek advice or troubleshooting tips from communities.

In industries like windows and doors, where users are primarily looking for professional services or product information, forums play a minimal role in the SERP landscape.

The nature of window and door services is often more transactional or informational, with consumers seeking immediate solutions such as “window installation near me” or “best energy-efficient doors.” These queries are better served by professional service providers and informational content, which explains the dominance of features like map packs and organic blue links.

While forum results may occasionally appear for highly specific DIY or troubleshooting queries, they’re unlikely to drive significant traffic for businesses in this space. Companies in the window and door industry should instead focus their efforts on optimizing for the more impactful SERP features like map packs, organic blue links and People Also Ask to capture high-intent traffic and visibility.

TAKEAWAYS FROM WINDOWS & DOORS SERP MAPPING

The findings from the windows and doors vertical reinforce the continued dominance of traditional SEO strategies and local search optimization. Organic blue links and map packs lead the way, appearing in a combined 68.8% of searches.

This underscores the importance of building a strong local SEO presence and optimizing for organic rankings. Businesses that focus on service-oriented keywords, such as “window installation near me” or “door replacement,” can still capture significant traffic by adhering to foundational SEO principles.

We found AIOs to be a very minor disruptor, but SEOs should keep an eye on them and make sure content is optimized for PAAs and featured snippets since AIOs are starting to take their content from those features.



CONCLUSION

Our study of SERP features across six key home service verticals — HVAC, plumbing, water softeners, foundation repair, electrical and windows & doors — reveals that while AI Overviews (AIOs) are starting to make an appearance, they're far from being a disruptive force. Traditional SEO strategies, particularly those focused on local search optimization, continue to dominate the search landscape for home service businesses.

Map packs and organic blue links remain the most important SERP features for almost all verticals, consistently driving the most traffic with only water softeners remaining the outlier. This reaffirms the critical role of local SEO in home service industries where geographically relevant searches are driving revenue sources. Businesses that optimize their Google Business Profiles, build local citations and consistently acquire customer reviews will continue to capture the most visibility.

While AI Overviews showed up more frequently in long-tail, informational searches, especially in niche markets like water softeners, their overall presence across all verticals averaged only 8.2%. This limited impact indicates that for the time being, AIOs are not significantly disrupting traditional SEO, and businesses can still focus on ranking in map packs, organic blue links, and PAAs (People Also Ask).

Long-tail keywords are the biggest trigger for AIOs, and since most of the keywords in this study are short tail, it indicates that the biggest traffic drivers are still rooted in traditional SEO strategies, particularly for high-volume, broad search terms that rely on map packs, organic blue links, and local SEO optimizations rather than AI-generated results.

The least relevant SERP features, forum results, were virtually nonexistent in most verticals, emphasizing that home service businesses are more dependent on direct service and product information than on user-generated content. That being said, forum results are taking up huge sections of SERPs for more niche and long-tail searches not included in this study.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Local SEO remains king** — Map packs dominate the SERP landscape, making Google Business Profile optimization crucial for capturing local traffic.
- **AI Overviews have limited reach** — Businesses should continue to focus on traditional SEO strategies for now, particularly targeting long-tail keywords where AIOs are more likely to appear.
- **Video content is gaining ground** — In industries like electrical services, video snippets offer a new frontier for increasing visibility.
- **Traditional SERP features still drive the majority of traffic** — Organic blue links and map packs consistently lead the way in visibility and traffic generation.
- **Focus on PAAs and Featured Snippets** — Optimizing content to answer common questions and provide concise, authoritative information is key to appearing in these features and potentially influencing AI Overviews.

While AI continues to evolve, home service businesses should prioritize the fundamentals: local SEO, content optimization and leveraging emerging SERP features like video and PAAs. By maintaining focus on these core strategies, businesses will remain competitive in an ever-evolving digital landscape.



About the Author

KATIE STONE



KATIE STONE

Is an accomplished SEO Lead at Leadhub, where she specializes in local SEO for clients in the home service industry. She joined Leadhub as an intern in 2017 and quickly progressed to a full-time position in August 2019. Throughout her tenure, Katie has honed her expertise in all aspects of local SEO, including on-page, off-page and technical strategies.

Katie's background is in the Public Relations industry. In 2018, Katie graduated summa cum laude from Texas State University with a bachelor's degree in Public Relations and Mass Communication. She worked in

the PR industry while interning and freelancing for Leadhub, but she found her passion in SEO and used her skills in PR to give her a boost in the SEO space.

As a self-proclaimed "data-nerd," Katie continuously strives to identify innovative SEO tactics and strategies based on her clients' performance. Her valuable marketing insights have been featured in publications such as Featured and Digital Marketing Interviews.

Actively involved in SEO forums and groups, Katie stays up-to-date with the latest industry trends and discussions through communities on X and Facebook. To further enhance her SEO knowledge, Katie attended the 2023 MozCon in Seattle.

She's honored to share her hard-earned knowledge about SEO strategies, as seen in her brightonSEO presentation, "Put the searcher first: content strategy using GSC", in 2024. She hones in on one of the many techniques she's mastered to drive SEO performance: effectively unlocking your web content's full SEO potential by utilizing GSC to practice "Query Listening" and identifying content development opportunities that directly answer searchers' queries.

When she isn't digging into her beloved charts and graphs, Katie enjoys photography, reading, traveling and spending time with her rescue dog, Rosie.

