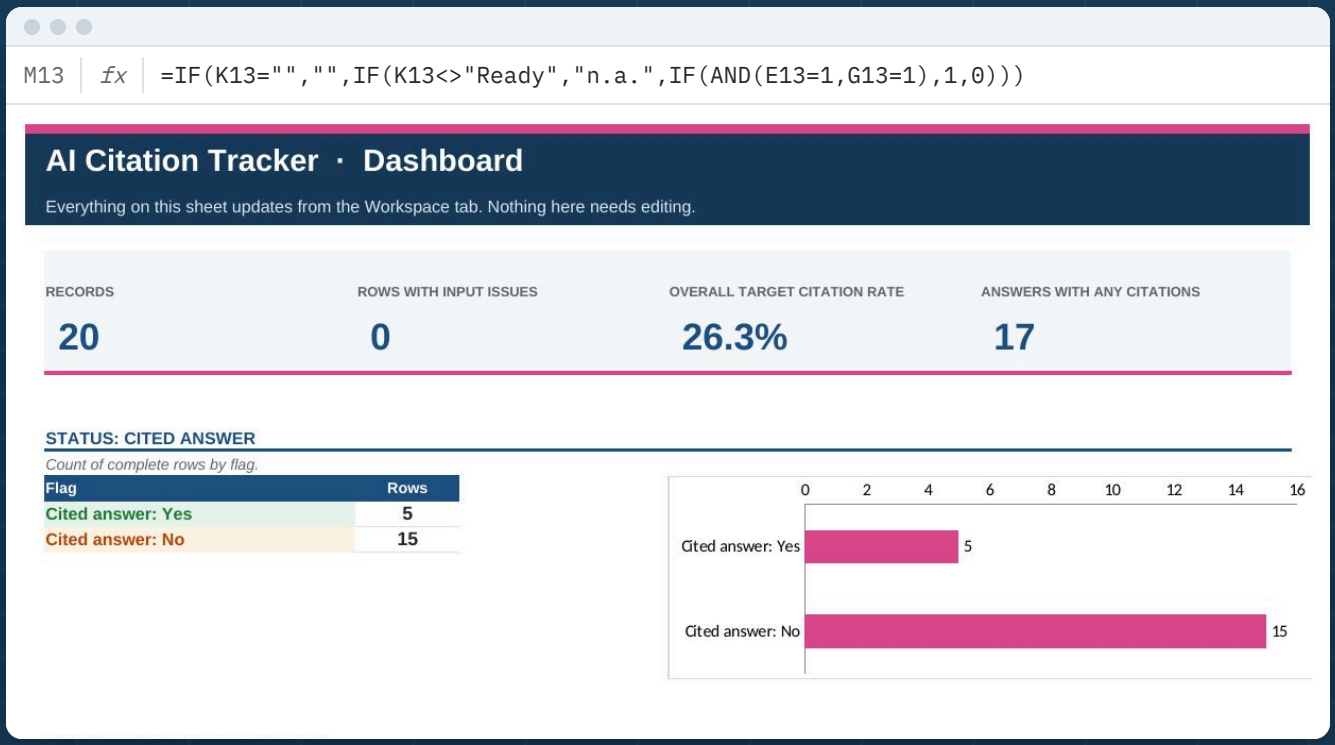
OptimizationTheory.com

AI Visibility & GEO Toolkit, resource 26

AI Citation Tracker

Log answers from ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini and AI Overviews, and measure your citation rate by platform.

Built for the DataForSEO API: AI Optimization: LLM Mentions



Field guide, v3.0, November 2026

Jourdan Rombough, optimizationtheory.com

What this template decides

How often AI answers cite your site, on which platforms and prompts, measured over an explicit set of valid, observed answers.

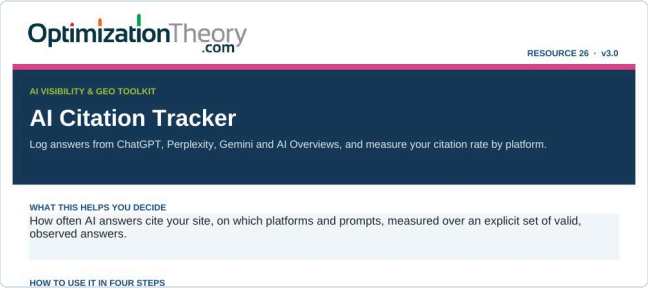
'Are we showing up in ChatGPT?' is now a board-level question, and most answers to it are anecdotes: someone tried a prompt and saw the brand mentioned. Anecdotes can't show change over time, can't be compared across platforms, and can't be audited.

This AI citation tracker logs each observed answer: prompt, platform, date, whether the answer was valid, whether it contained citations, whether your site was cited and which URL, plus evidence. It calculates eligible, cited and citation-bearing answers so your citation rate is always computed over a clear denominator, with a per-platform breakdown on the Dashboard.

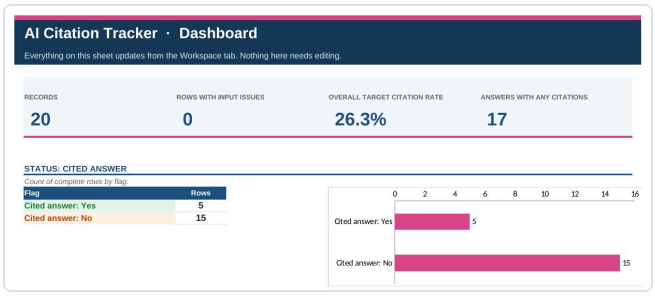
Who it's for

- SEOs and marketers tracking AI search visibility
- Brands proving GEO work is moving the needle
- Agencies reporting AI visibility without an expensive tool
- Teams validating what paid AI visibility tools report

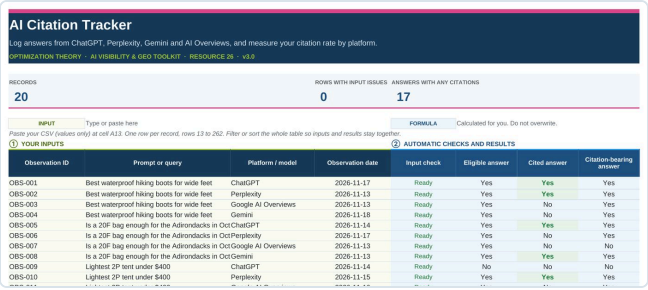
What's in the workbook



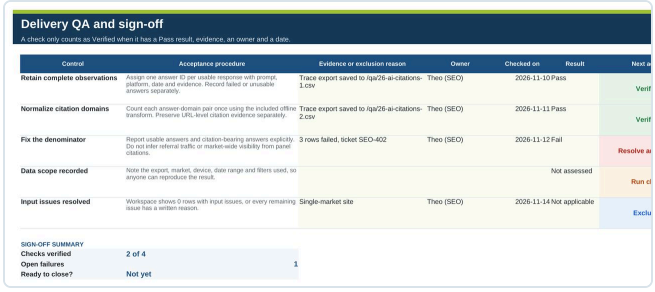
Start Here. Purpose, four-step setup and colour key.



Dashboard. KPIs, charts, Top 10 and an automatic action list.



Workspace. The working table, room for 250 rows.



Delivery QA. Evidence, owner and date for each validation step.

How the calculation works

Eligible answer = answer valid. Cited answer = valid and your site cited. Citation-bearing answer = valid and has any citations. Citation rate = cited ÷ eligible, overall and per platform.

The key formula, as written in the workbook

```
=IF(K13="","",IF(K13<>"Ready","n.a.",IF(AND(E13=1,G13=1),1,0)))
```

Result column	Plain-English formula	What it tells you
Eligible answer	Usable answer	Denominator contribution for overall observed-answer citation rate.
Cited answer	IF(AND(Usable answer=1,Target domain cited=1),1,0)	Numerator contribution for target citation rate.
Citation-bearing answer	IF(AND(Usable answer=1,Answer includes citations=1),1,0)	Alternative denominator for share among citation-bearing answers.

How to use it, step by step

1

Run the prompt panel

Use the prompts from your prompt research template. Run each on each platform, logged out where possible.

2

Log every answer

One row per answer with platform and date. Mark answer valid = 0 for errors or refusals.

3

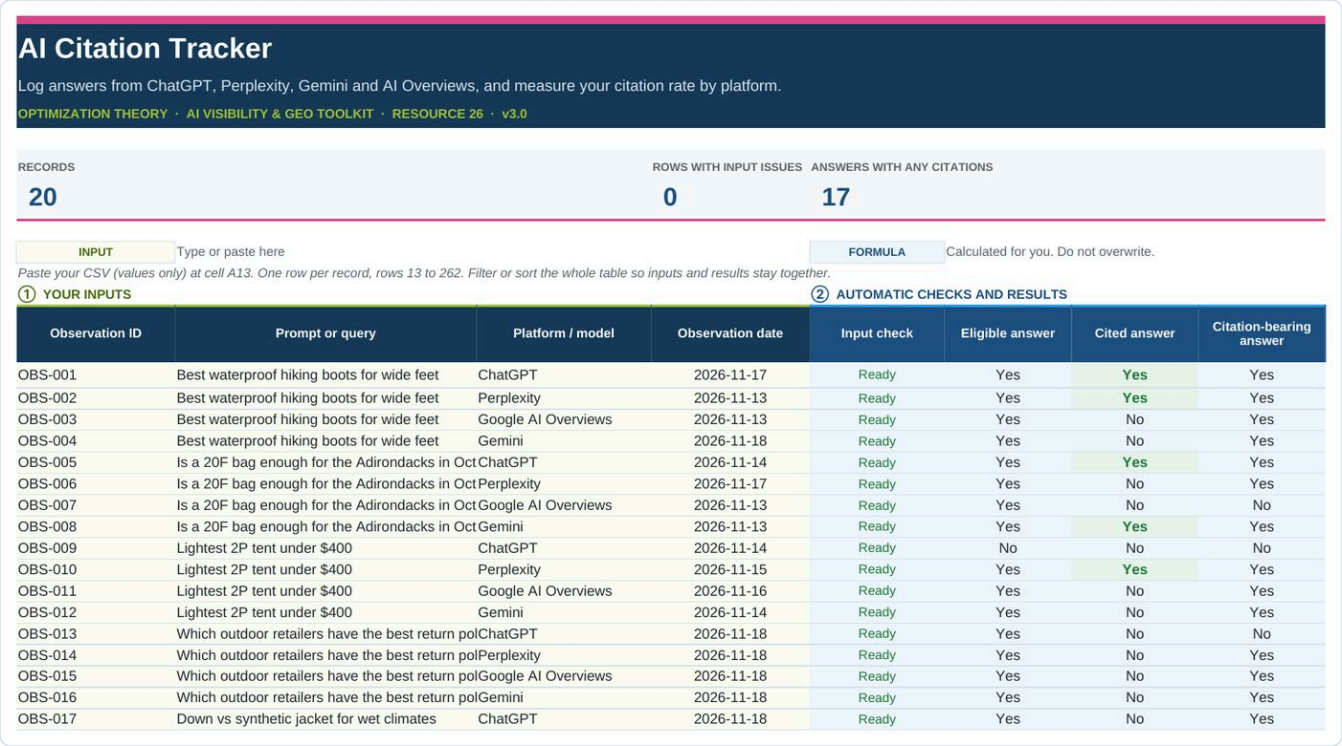
Record citations

Mark whether the answer had any citations and whether your domain was cited, and paste the cited URL.

4

Save evidence

Keep a screenshot or the answer text. AI answers aren't reproducible later.



AI Citation Tracker

Log answers from ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini and AI Overviews, and measure your citation rate by platform.

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RECORDS	ROWS WITH INPUT ISSUES	ANSWERS WITH ANY CITATIONS
20	0	17

INPUT Type or paste here — FORMULA Calculated for you. Do not overwrite.

Paste your CSV (values only) at cell A13. One row per record, rows 13 to 262. Filter or sort the whole table so inputs and results stay together.

① YOUR INPUTS — ② AUTOMATIC CHECKS AND RESULTS

Observation ID	Prompt or query	Platform / model	Observation date	Input check	Eligible answer	Cited answer	Citation-bearing answer
OBS-001	Best waterproof hiking boots for wide feet	ChatGPT	2026-11-17	Ready	Yes	Yes	Yes
OBS-002	Best waterproof hiking boots for wide feet	Perplexity	2026-11-13	Ready	Yes	Yes	Yes
OBS-003	Best waterproof hiking boots for wide feet	Google AI Overviews	2026-11-13	Ready	Yes	No	Yes
OBS-004	Best waterproof hiking boots for wide feet	Gemini	2026-11-18	Ready	Yes	No	Yes
OBS-005	Is a 20F bag enough for the Adirondacks in Oct	ChatGPT	2026-11-14	Ready	Yes	Yes	Yes
OBS-006	Is a 20F bag enough for the Adirondacks in Oct	Perplexity	2026-11-17	Ready	Yes	No	Yes
OBS-007	Is a 20F bag enough for the Adirondacks in Oct	Google AI Overviews	2026-11-13	Ready	Yes	No	No
OBS-008	Is a 20F bag enough for the Adirondacks in Oct	Gemini	2026-11-13	Ready	Yes	Yes	Yes
OBS-009	Lightest 2P tent under $400	ChatGPT	2026-11-14	Ready	No	No	No
OBS-010	Lightest 2P tent under $400	Perplexity	2026-11-15	Ready	Yes	Yes	Yes
OBS-011	Lightest 2P tent under $400	Google AI Overviews	2026-11-16	Ready	Yes	No	Yes
OBS-012	Lightest 2P tent under $400	Gemini	2026-11-14	Ready	Yes	No	Yes
OBS-013	Which outdoor retailers have the best return pol	ChatGPT	2026-11-18	Ready	Yes	No	No
OBS-014	Which outdoor retailers have the best return pol	Perplexity	2026-11-18	Ready	Yes	No	Yes
OBS-015	Which outdoor retailers have the best return pol	Google AI Overviews	2026-11-18	Ready	Yes	No	Yes
OBS-016	Which outdoor retailers have the best return pol	Gemini	2026-11-18	Ready	Yes	No	Yes
OBS-017	Down vs synthetic jacket for wet climates	ChatGPT	2026-11-18	Ready	Yes	No	Yes

The Workspace tab with the worked example. Lime cells are inputs; blue cells are formulas.

Fill it with DataForSEO

This template is built to run on **DataForSEO AI Optimization: LLM Mentions**: AI answers (ChatGPT or Google AI Overviews) that mention a domain or keyword, with their cited sources.

DataForSEO supplies the URL or query list and the audit trail; you add the measurements listed below.

1. Request the data

```
POST https://api.dataforseo.com/v3/ai_optimization/llm_mentions/search_mentions/live
[
  {
    "target": [
      {
        "domain": "yourdomain.com"
      }
    ],
    "platform": "chat_gpt",
    "location_code": 2840,
    "language_code": "en",
    "limit": 100
  }
]
```

2. Save the full JSON response

Save the complete response, not just the task ID, next to the template folder.

3. Convert it to the input CSV

The script in the Automation folder runs offline: no API call, no credentials.

```
python3 Automation/dataforseo_import.py import --template 26 --input response.json --output my-inputs.csv
```

Fills automatically	You add
Observation ID, Prompt or query, Platform / model	Observation date, Usable answer, Answer includes citations, Target domain cited, Target citation URL, Evidence

Source reference fills automatically with the task ID, endpoint, location, language, device and snapshot time, so every row is traceable. Paste the finished CSV at Workspace cell A13. Estimate the cost first with the DataForSEO Cost Calculator (template 38).

Input dictionary

Keep the CSV columns in this order and paste values at Workspace cell A13. A missing observation stays blank; use 0 only for a measured zero or a verified No.

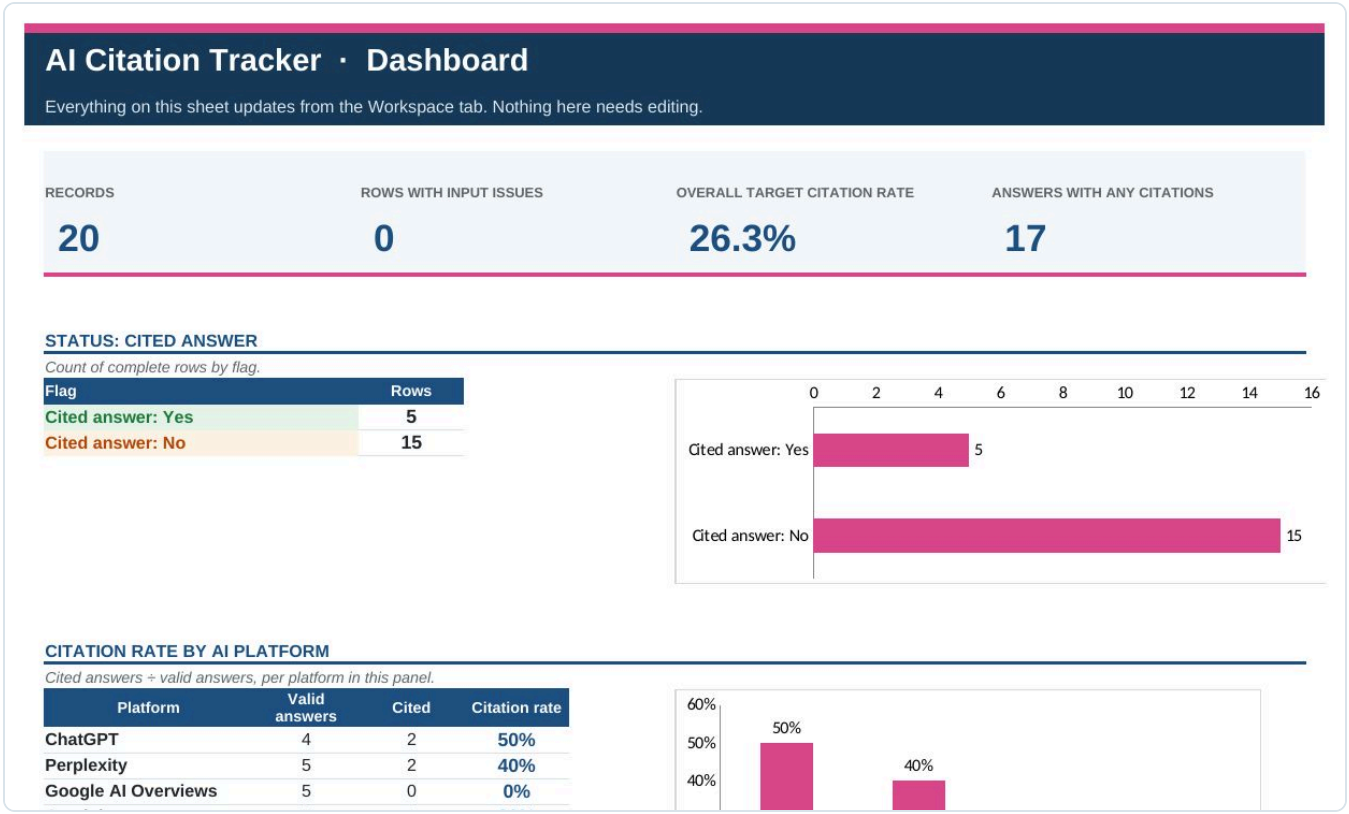
CSV field	Column	Meaning and rule	Typical source
observation_id	Observation ID	Unique prompt-platform-locale-run identifier.	DataForSEO: observation_id
prompt	Prompt or query	Exact observed question.	DataForSEO: question
platform	Platform / model	Observed platform and model label.	DataForSEO: platform_model
observed_date	Observation date	Date the response was collected, using one timezone.	Your records or manual review
answer_valid	Usable answer	1 only if a complete answer for the planned run was collected. 1 = Yes, 0 = No.	Your records or manual review
answer_has_citations	Answer includes citations	1 if the complete answer contains inspectable source links. 1 = Yes, 0 = No.	Your records or manual review
target_cited	Target domain cited	1 only when an exact target domain or approved subdomain appears in the source links. 1 = Yes, 0 = No.	Your records or manual review
citation_url	Target citation URL	The actual source URL, or NONE after checking a valid answer. Optional.	Your records or manual review
evidence	Evidence	Link to a dated crawl, screenshot, ticket or source that another reviewer can inspect.	Your records or manual review
source_ref	Source reference	Task ID, export filename and observation scope. Retain the untouched source response separately. Optional.	DataForSEO: source_ref

The worked example

Every workbook ships filled with data from Northbeam Outdoor, a fictional outdoor-gear retailer. This one has 20 example rows.

20	0	26.3%	17
Records	Rows with input issues	Overall target citation rate	Answers with any citations

Across 20 example observations Northbeam is cited in about a quarter of valid answers. ChatGPT and Perplexity cite it most; Google AI Overviews didn't cite it once. That gap tells you where to focus.



The Dashboard updates automatically from the Workspace tab.

Reading the result honestly

Report overall and conditional rates with their denominators. Separate platform, locale, prompt intent and collection date.

Limits. LLM Mentions results are a discovered corpus, not your complete test panel. Missing or failed runs are not negative citations.

Mistakes to avoid

Counting mentions as citations. A brand mention without a link is useful but different. Track it separately if you need it.

Dropping failed answers silently. Mark them invalid so the denominator stays honest.

Comparing cycles with different panels. Change the panel and you change the baseline. Keep it stable.

Tips from the field

Track the URL that gets cited; it tells you which content AI trusts.

Pair with the AI referral tracker to see whether citations send visits.

Use the share of voice calculator to compare with competitors in the same corpus.

Questions people ask

How do I track if ChatGPT cites my website?

Run a fixed set of prompts on a schedule, log each answer, and record whether your site is cited and which URL. This template calculates the citation rate.

What's the difference between a mention and a citation?

A citation links to or names your page as a source. A mention names your brand without sourcing it.

Which AI platforms should I track?

Usually ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews and Gemini, plus AI Mode, Copilot or Claude if your audience uses them.

Can I track AI citations for free?

Yes, manually with a spreadsheet like this one. Tools automate it at scale, but the measurement logic is the same.

Templates that work well with this one

AI Prompt Research Template

Turn real customer tasks and keywords into a weighted prompt panel for ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini and AI Overviews.

AI Share of Voice Calculator

Compare citation rate and share across competitor domains inside one fixed set of AI answers.

AI Referral Traffic Tracker

Measure sessions, conversion rate and contribution per session from ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, Copilot and Claude.

Answer Evidence Audit Template

Check every claim for a supporting source, original value, clarity and freshness, so AI answers can quote and cite it.

Brand Entity Consistency Audit

Compare your official brand facts with Wikidata, LinkedIn, GBP, Yelp and more, and log every correction request.

SEO Content Brief Template

A content brief built for Google and AI answers: real questions, original evidence, sources and a three-step approval workflow.

Read the full tutorial online: **optimizationtheory.com/download-view/ai-citation-tracker/**
Get all six templates in the **AI Visibility & GEO Toolkit**, or all 40 in the **Complete SEO & GEO Toolkit**.