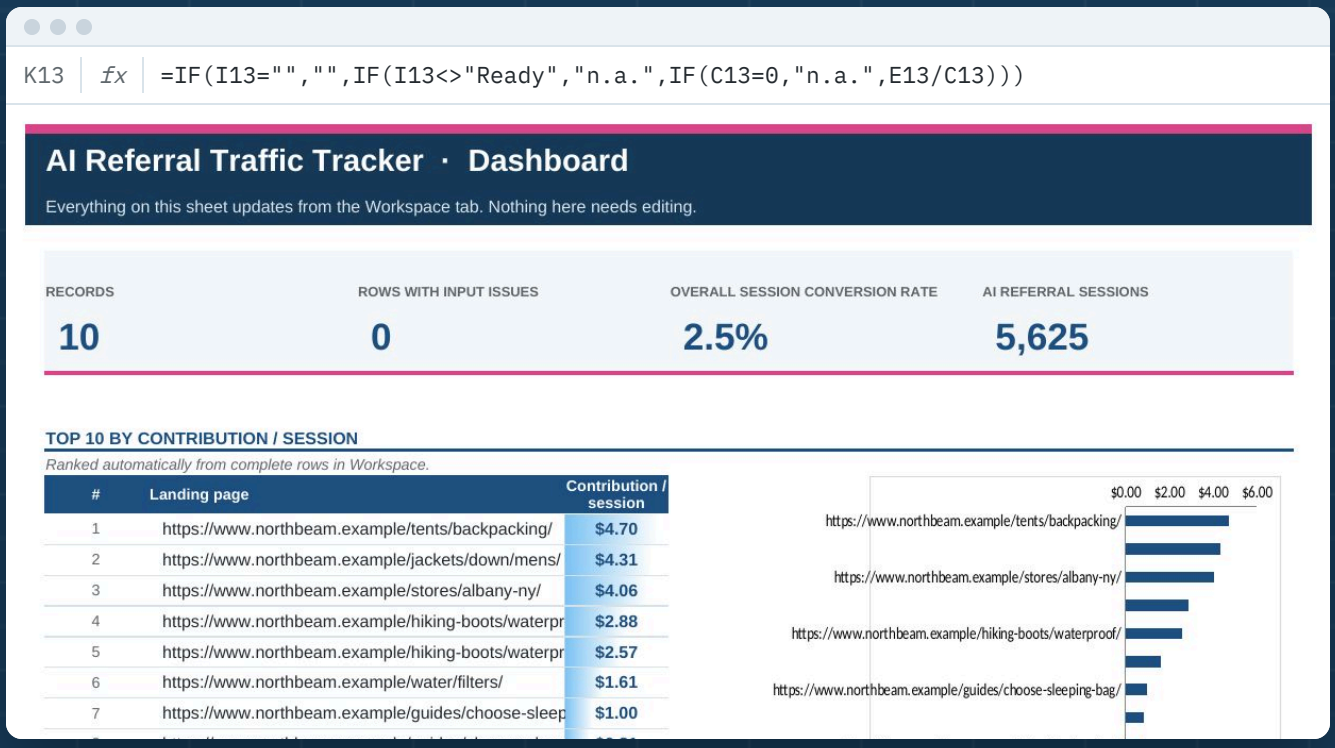
OptimizationTheory.com

AI Visibility & GEO Toolkit, resource 30

AI Referral Traffic Tracker

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

Built for the DataForSEO API: AI Optimization: LLM Mentions



Field guide, v3.0, November 2026

Jourdan Rombough, optimizationtheory.com

What this template decides

Which AI referral sources and landing pages send visits that convert, and how much contribution each AI session is worth.

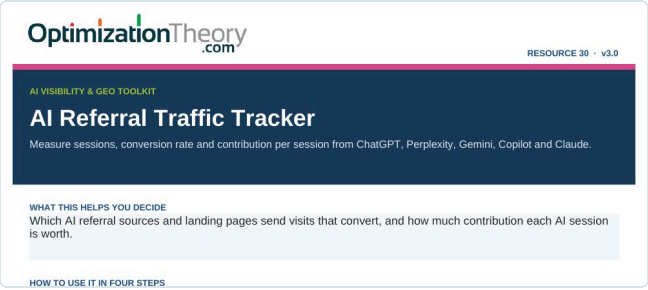
AI citations are visibility. AI referrals are visits. The two are related but not the same, and conflating them is how teams end up celebrating mentions that never send a customer, or ignoring a source that quietly converts better than organic search.

This AI referral traffic tracker records sessions, conversions and contribution by landing page and AI source (chatgpt.com, perplexity.ai, gemini.google.com, copilot.microsoft.com, claude.ai), alongside the observed citation count and attribution model. It calculates conversion rate and contribution per session so you can compare AI sources with each other and with organic.

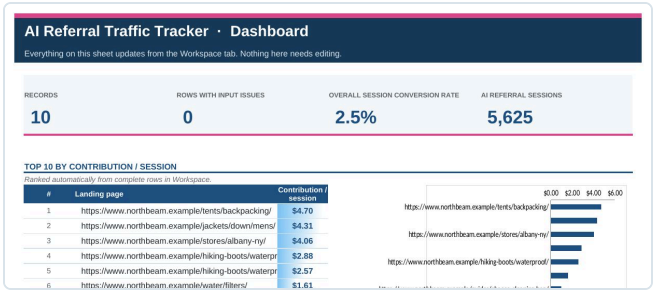
Who it's for

- SEOs and analysts reporting AI search impact
- Ecommerce teams deciding whether GEO is worth investment
- Marketers building AI channel groups in GA4
- Agencies showing clients what AI visibility is worth

What's in the workbook



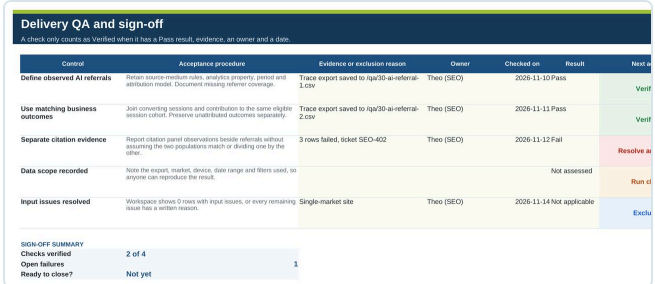
Start Here. Purpose, four-step setup and colour key.



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

Session conversion rate = conversions ÷ sessions. Contribution per session = contribution ÷ sessions. Both return n.a. for zero sessions.

The key formula, as written in the workbook

```
=IF(I13="","",IF(I13<>"Ready","n.a.",IF(C13=0,"n.a.",E13/C13)))
```

Result column	Plain-English formula	What it tells you
Session conversion rate	IF(Eligible sessions=0,"n.a.",Converting sessions ÷ Eligible sessions)	Converting sessions / eligible sessions.
Contribution / session	IF(Eligible sessions=0,"n.a.",Attributed contribution ÷ Eligible sessions)	Observed attributed contribution per session.

How to use it, step by step

1

Isolate AI referrals in GA4

Create a custom channel group or exploration filter for AI sources by session source.

2

Export by landing page and source

Pull sessions, key events (conversions) and revenue or contribution for a fixed window.

3

Add citations and attribution model

Note how many citations you observed for that page and which attribution model the numbers use.

4

Compare sources

Read contribution per session on the Dashboard. Invest content effort where AI visits convert.



AI Referral Traffic Tracker

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

OPTIMIZATION THEORY · AI VISIBILITY & GEO TOOLKIT · RESOURCE 30 · v3.0

RECORDS	ROWS WITH INPUT ISSUES	OVERALL SESSION CONVER	AI REFERRAL SESSIONS
10	0	2.5%	5,625

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

Landing page	Source / medium	Eligible sessions	Converting sessions	Attributed contribution	Input check	Session conversion rate	Contribution / session
https://www.northbeam.example/hiking-boots/waterpro	chatgpt.com / referral	1,840	61	$5,290	Ready	3.3%	$2.88
https://www.northbeam.example/guides/choose-sleepir	chatgpt.com / referral	1,210	14	$980	Ready	1.2%	$0.81
https://www.northbeam.example/tents/backpacking/	perplexity.ai / referral	640	26	$3,010	Ready	4.1%	$4.70
https://www.northbeam.example/returns/	chatgpt.com / referral	520	2	$0	Ready	0.4%	$0.00
https://www.northbeam.example/guides/choose-sleepir	perplexity.ai / referral	410	6	$410	Ready	1.5%	$1.00
https://www.northbeam.example/jackets/down/mens/	gemini.google.com / referr	260	9	$1,120	Ready	3.5%	$4.31
https://www.northbeam.example/hiking-boots/waterpro	copilot.microsoft.com / ref	140	4	$360	Ready	2.9%	$2.57
https://www.northbeam.example/stores/albany-ny/	chatgpt.com / referral	330	11	$1,340	Ready	3.3%	$4.06
https://www.northbeam.example/guides/layering/	claude.ai / referral	95	1	$60	Ready	1.1%	$0.63
https://www.northbeam.example/water/filters/	perplexity.ai / referral	180	5	$290	Ready	2.8%	$1.61

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 30 --input response.json --output my-inputs.csv
```

Fills automatically	You add
Landing page	Source / medium, Eligible sessions, Converting sessions, Attributed contribution, Observed panel citations, Attribution model

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
`landing_page`	Landing page	Normalized GA4 landing page. API citation URLs can enrich the inventory.	DataForSEO: url
`source_medium`	Source / medium	Actual session source/medium under a documented AI-referral grouping.	Your records or manual review
`sessions`	Eligible sessions	GA4 sessions for the declared source group and window.	Your records or manual review
`conversions`	Converting sessions	Distinct sessions meeting the selected conversion condition.	Your records or manual review
`contribution`	Attributed contribution	Contribution profit attributed under the stated analytics model.	Your records or manual review
`observed_citations`	Observed panel citations	Separate citation count for context only. This is not used to attribute sessions.	Your records or manual review
`attribution_model`	Attribution model	Exact reporting model, lookback and grouping definition.	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

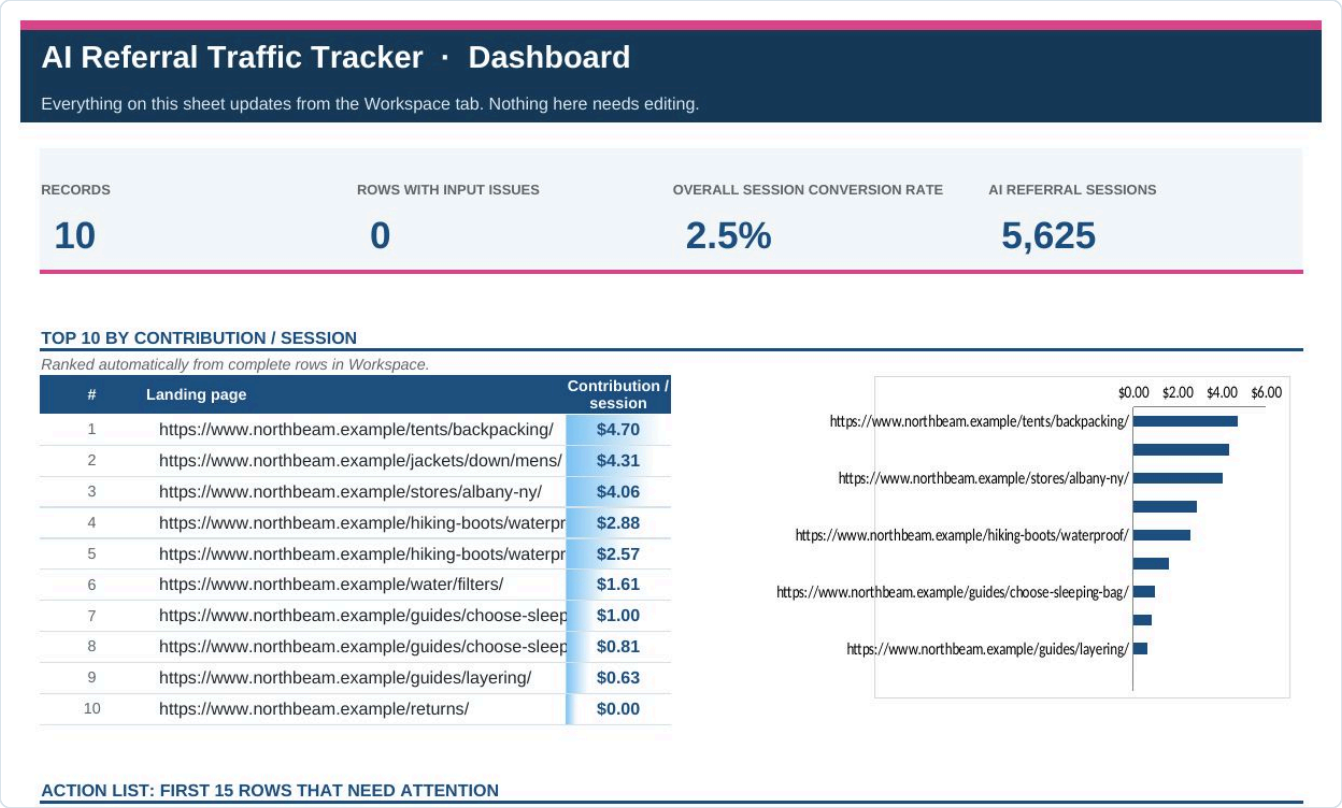
Every workbook ships filled with data from Northbeam Outdoor, a fictional outdoor-gear retailer. This one has 10 example rows.

10	0	2.5%	5,625
Records	Rows with input issues	Overall session conversion rate	AI referral sessions

ChatGPT sends the most example sessions, but Perplexity visits to the tents category are worth more per session. The returns page gets AI visits that never convert, which is fine: it's support traffic.

Top 10 by contribution / session

#	Landing page	Contribution / session
1	https://www.northbeam.example/tents/backpacking/	$4.70
2	https://www.northbeam.example/jackets/down/mens/	$4.31
3	https://www.northbeam.example/stores/albany-ny/	$4.06
4	https://www.northbeam.example/hiking-boots/waterproof/	$2.88
5	https://www.northbeam.example/hiking-boots/waterproof/	$2.57



The Dashboard updates automatically from the Workspace tab.

Reading the result honestly

Measured referral traffic is only the trackable part of AI discovery. Direct visits and cross-device behavior may not preserve a referrer.

Limits. DataForSEO cannot supply private GA4 sessions or conversions. Citation presence does not identify the source of a particular visit.

Mistakes to avoid

Missing AI traffic hidden in direct. Some AI apps don't pass referrers. Treat these numbers as a floor.

Mixing attribution models. Record the model so you don't compare last-click with data-driven numbers.

Expecting citations to equal visits. Many AI answers satisfy the user without a click. Track both.

Tips from the field

Set up the AI channel group from the GA4 power user series.

Pair with the citation tracker to see which cited pages send visits.

Compare AI contribution per session with organic search to size the channel.

Questions people ask

How do I track ChatGPT traffic in GA4?

Filter sessions by source (chatgpt.com and similar), or create a custom channel group for AI assistants, then report sessions and conversions by landing page.

Is AI referral traffic growing?

For many sites it's growing quickly from a small base. Track it monthly by source.

Why do AI referrals show up as direct?

Some apps and browsers strip the referrer. That traffic lands in direct, so measured AI traffic is a minimum.

Does AI traffic convert well?

It varies by site and source. Many sites see strong conversion from AI referrals because users arrive further along in their research.

Templates that work well with this one

AI Citation Tracker

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

SEO ROI Calculator

Turn incremental sessions into revenue, contribution, net return and a break-even month against real SEO costs.

AI Share of Voice Calculator

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

SEO Forecast Template

Project added clicks and contribution per keyword cluster with CTR, attainment and seasonality you can defend.

AI Prompt Research Template

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

Answer Evidence Audit Template

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

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