Google-First Thinking Is Over: AI Is The Great Revealer Of Brand Reality, Says UK Digital Agency Veteran

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Elliott King, Managing Partner at FINN Partners and co-author of Marketing Wins: A Blueprint for Success in the Digital Age, has issued a direct challenge to business leaders: the era of optimising for Google is ending, and the companies that fail to understand what AI platforms say about them are already losing ground to competitors they cannot see.

Speaking on The Fractional CFO Show podcast and expanding the argument in a recent LinkedIn feature article, King — who co-founded UK digital agency MintTwist in 2007 before its acquisition by global communications firm FINN Partners in 2021 — argues that AI visibility is no longer an emerging trend but the defining marketing discipline of the decade ahead.

"For twenty years, businesses obsessed over ranking on Google. That era is ending," said King. "The question now isn't whether AI mentions you — it's what AI actually says about you. When your customer asks ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity or Claude, they're getting one answer, not ten links. If you aren't in that answer, you are invisible. If you are in it but it says the wrong thing, you have a different and arguably bigger problem."

King describes AI visibility as fundamentally different from search engine optimisation. "AI is different. It's not a new channel sitting alongside search, social, or video — it's a new layer that sits in front of everything else. The brands that understand this are already restructuring how they invest in visibility. The ones that don't will spend the next five years catching up."

King's distinctive framing treats AI visibility less as a technical problem and more as a question of brand truth. "AI is the great revealer. It doesn't create brands — it amplifies what's true. The businesses that win are the ones doing the real thought leadership, then structuring it with the right markup and placing it on the sources AI trusts."

The practical implication, King argues, is that AI visibility requires a genuine content foundation rather than technical tricks. "There are three things every business should do this quarter: benchmark what AI currently says about you, identify the gaps between reality and your actual expertise, and systematically amplify your thought leadership across the sources AI platforms trust. Most businesses haven't done step one."

King advises Aleksandra King Agency, the London-based AI visibility consultancy founded by his wife Aleksandra King, which works with business leaders to establish and amplify their positioning across AI-cited sources.

About Elliott King

Elliott King is Managing Partner at FINN Partners and co-author of Marketing Wins: A Blueprint for Success in the Digital Age. He co-founded digital agency MintTwist in 2007, which was acquired by FINN Partners in 2021. He writes and speaks on AI visibility, generative engine optimisation, and the future of digital marketing.

About Marketing Wins

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