From invisible to cited: eleven months of organic growth for a B2B packaging consultancy

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Between December 2025 and October 2026, a B2B packaging consultancy went from almost no non-branded search presence to 4x its monthly search impressions (5x at the July peak), 1,150 Google AI Overview appearances a month and page one for a core buyer query. Clicks have not caught up yet. This case study shows what we built, what moved, and what has not.

At a glance

Visibility is the part that moved. Clicks have not, and the table shows both.

Metric	Starting point	Latest
Monthly search impressions	2,492 to 3,881 (Dec 2025 to Apr 2026)	14,030 (Oct); peak 18,073 (Jul)
Monthly clicks	394 to 511 (Dec to Apr)	607 (Oct)
Non-branded clicks	16 in six months (Sep 2025 to Mar 2026)	4 in October
Google AI Overview appearances per month	124 (May)	1,150 (Aug)
AI-assistant referral sessions per month	7 (Jun)	44 (Oct)
Average position, "packaging procurement consultants"	19 (Sep)	8.1 (Oct)

The starting point

The client is a B2B packaging consultancy selling to multinational FMCG brands. Its site had well-built service pages and almost nobody finding them through search.

The six months before we started (Sep 2025 to Mar 2026) told the story:

- 3,438 clicks and 19,838 impressions, with **99.4% of clicks branded**. Only 16 clicks came from queries that did not contain the company's name.
- Domain Rating 2.5 (Ahrefs) and Domain Authority 13 (Moz).
- The packaging procurement page had 5,186 impressions at an average position of 74 and 3 clicks.
- 74% of traffic came from India, a market where the buyers were already searching for the company by name.

The gap was vocabulary as much as authority. The site described its work in the consultancy's own terms. Buyers searched by problem: reduce packaging costs, packaging procurement strategy, packaging regulation. A page built around an internal method name had no search footprint at all, because nobody outside the firm uses that name.

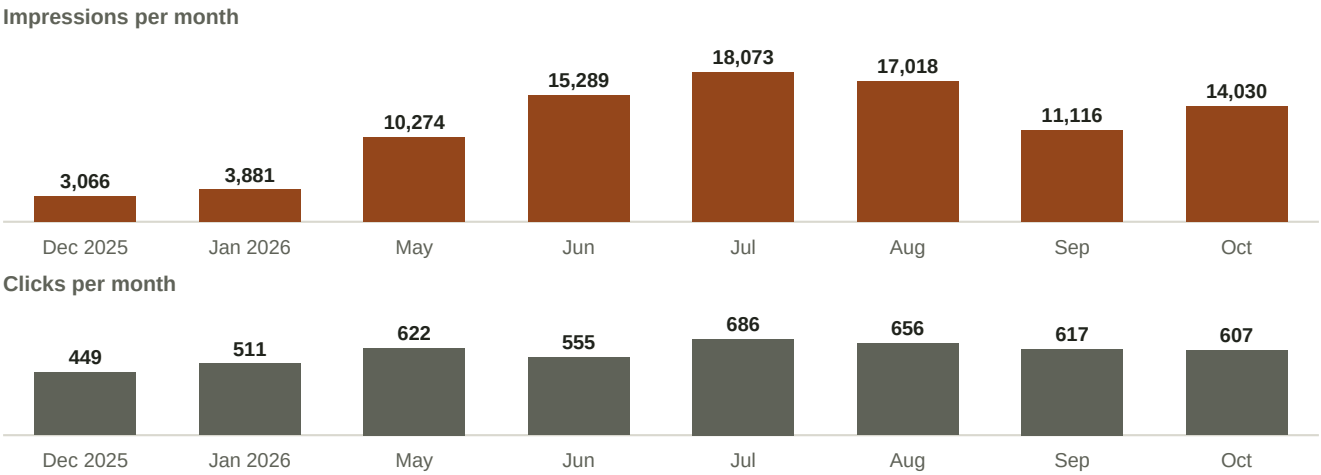
What we built

The work ran in three overlapping tracks: pages that match how buyers search, a measurement setup that separates real demand from brand traffic, and technical fixes that stop good content from competing with itself.

Workstream	What we did	Scale
Service pages	Seven service pages with a standalone definition opening, a named framework, a six-question FAQ and FAQPage, Service, BreadcrumbList and Organization schema. An eighth page (should-cost modelling) followed once search data showed 8,000+ impressions for that topic and no commercial page for it to land on.	8 pages
Blog and thought leadership	Two posts a week from April: problem-language cluster posts, expert PDFs repurposed into search content, and regulatory explainers including a five-part EPR series. Regulatory dates were checked against live sources before every publish.	48 blog URLs earning impressions by August
Case studies	Client work anonymised and published as indexable case studies.	17 indexed before March
Citations and brand profiles	Brand profiles, directories and Web 2.0 properties to give search engines and AI systems consistent entity signals. These are citations, not editorial links; editorial link building is the next phase.	276+ live through May
Technical fixes	Blog migration to a /blog/ path with 301 redirects, a duplicate-URL fix on the should-cost cluster, sitemap corrections, removal of a stray noindex tag.	Live 31 Jul onward
Measurement	Looker Studio dashboard, branded and non-branded query filters (including common misspellings of the name), a GA4 channel group that isolates ChatGPT, Copilot and Gemini referrals, and tracking of Bing Copilot and Google AI citations.	Monthly reporting

Performance: impressions grew, clicks held

Impressions rose about 4x while clicks held near 600

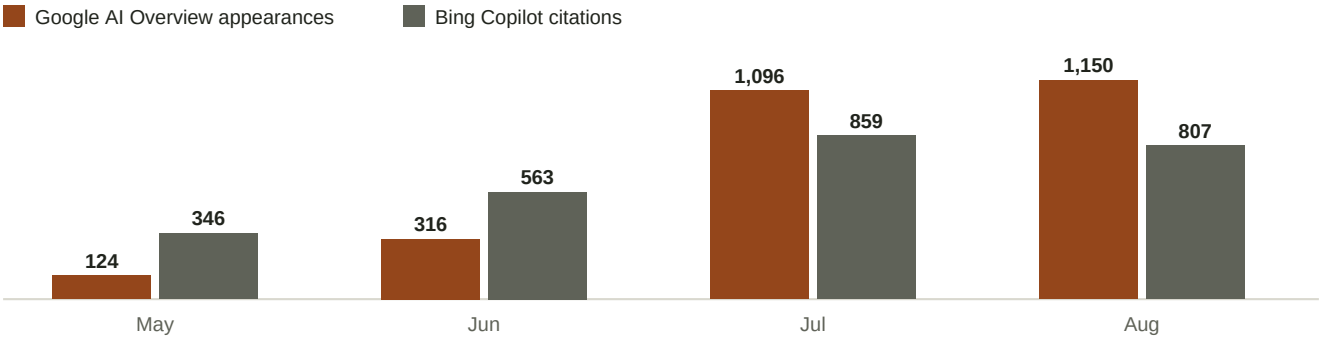


Google Search Console monthly totals, Dec 2025 to Oct 2026, as reported each month. Feb to Apr 2026 not shown: 2,492 to 2,879 impressions and 394 to 492 clicks a month.

Most of the growth came from long-tail queries in the should-cost modelling and procurement clusters, which entered the index at positions 65 to 80. That is why impressions jumped in May while clicks barely moved: a query at position 70 gets seen, and almost never clicked. Clicks stayed between 555 and 686 a month from May onward, and nearly all of them are still branded.

AI search visibility: the faster-moving signal

Google AI Overview appearances grew 9x in four months



Monthly reports, May to Aug 2026: Google figures from Search Console search appearance, Bing from Webmaster Tools.

AI features kept growing after August. Google AI-feature impressions rose another 28% in October, and AI-assistant referral sessions went from 7 in June to 44 in October. A Semrush snapshot on 7 September showed ChatGPT citing 13 of the site's pages and Google AI Mode citing 5.

Bing Copilot citations reached 859 in July and 1,221 in September. October's 732 was below September's, although a single September query accounted for 198 of those.

What has not moved yet

Non-branded clicks are the metric that has not moved, and the reasons are specific.

- **Non-branded clicks.** From December to August, queries without the company's name produced 47 clicks from 51,662 impressions, a 0.09% click rate. September and October each added 4. Impressions at positions 65 to 80 build a base, but they do not produce visits.
- **The next lever is the snippet.** "Packaging procurement consultants" moved from position 19 to 8.1 in October with 1,810 impressions and no clicks. Rewriting that title and description is a faster win than another article.
- **Authority is still thin.** Semrush showed an Authority Score of 9 and 211 referring domains in September, mostly citations and brand profiles. First editorial links are the inflection point and have not landed.
- **Cited is not recommended.** AI systems pull from the site when they build answers, but in September Semrush's tracked prompts did not yet name the brand as a recommendation.
- **No lead data yet.** Conversion tracking was rebuilt this autumn and a clean baseline is still accumulating, so this case study makes no claim about enquiries.

The playbook for a business in the same niche

The sequence below fits B2B companies with technical buyers, long sales cycles and a small search universe: packaging, industrial services, engineering and compliance-heavy suppliers.

1. **Split brand from non-brand on day one.** A 99.4% branded click share hid the real position for months. Build the filter with common misspellings of the name or it will undercount.
2. **Check demand before building a page.** A page named after the firm's own method had no search footprint. The should-cost page was built only after search data showed 8,000+ impressions with no commercial page to receive them.
3. **Write in the buyer's problem language, answer first.** Each page opens with a standalone definition, then framework, depth, cost impact and an FAQ with schema. AI systems lift that structure directly.
4. **Cover regulation, and verify every date.** Extended producer responsibility and packaging-law explainers match what procurement and compliance teams search, and a stale date costs credibility with exactly that reader.
5. **Fix what splits your impressions.** A duplicate-URL pair divided the should-cost cluster until 301 redirects consolidated it, and the blog migration to a /blog/ path needed the same care.

6. **Track AI as its own channel.** A GA4 channel group for ChatGPT, Copilot and Gemini referrals, plus Google and Bing citation reports, turned "are we showing up in AI answers" into a monthly number.
7. **Work the page-one queries before writing more.** Once a query reaches the first page with no clicks, the title and description are the cheapest fix available.

The timeline on this account, for a realistic expectation:

Months	What moved	Evidence
1 to 4 (Dec to Mar)	Nothing visible. Measurement, service pages and citations go in.	2,492 to 3,881 impressions a month
5 to 7 (Apr to Jun)	Impressions step up as content indexes. Clicks stay flat.	10,274 in May, 15,289 in June
7 to 9 (Jun to Aug)	AI visibility compounds. First queries approach page one.	124 to 1,150 AI Overview appearances
10 to 11 (Sep to Oct)	Page-one queries appear. Non-branded clicks become the next target.	Position 19 to 8.1 on a buyer query

Next step

We will run the same first pass on your site: brand against non-brand split, demand gaps your pages do not cover, and where you appear in AI answers. It takes a 30-minute call and you leave with the three findings that would move your numbers first.

Book a 30-minute call: calendly.com/vishnu-sudevan1/30min

Contact: seowithvishnu.com · seowithvishnu@gmail.com · linkedin.com/in/seowithvishnu

Data notes

- **Period:** December 2025 to October 2026. The client is anonymised at its request for this document.
- **Sources:** Google Search Console, GA4, Bing Webmaster Tools and Semrush, taken from the monthly reports delivered to the client.
- **Definitions:** Monthly totals are as shown in Search Console for each month; May includes all search types. Branded queries are matched with a filter that includes common misspellings of the company name. AI-assistant sessions are GA4 sessions whose source is ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini and similar assistants.
- **Causation:** Rankings and citations are influenced by many factors. We report what moved alongside the work, not proof that each action caused each change.
- **Scope:** Results are specific to one account in one niche and will differ for other sites.