

TOPICAL AUTHORITY

THE DEPTH OF EXPERTISE A BRAND DEMONSTRATES ON A SUBJECT — AND HOW CONSISTENTLY SEARCH ENGINES AND AI ANSWER ENGINES RECOGNIZE THAT EXPERTISE.



1

EXPERIENCE

First-hand experience with the topic. Original case studies, screenshots, photos, and lived insight that AI can't replicate from secondary sources. Show, don't just tell.



2

EXPERTISE

Demonstrated knowledge through credentialed author bios, original research, and depth of coverage across every related subtopic in your niche.



3

AUTHORITATIVENESS

How others recognize you: citations, backlinks from authoritative sites, brand mentions in industry publications, and references from AI tools and answer engines.



4

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Accuracy, transparency, and reliability. Fact-checked claims, clear sourcing, a secure site, and consistent business information across the web.



5

READABILITY & STRUCTURE

Clear writing, scannable formatting, semantic HTML, and schema markup so both humans and machines can parse and understand your content.



2026 TOPICAL AUTHORITY CHECKLIST

- ✓ Build pillar pages with supporting topic clusters
- ✓ Add author and organization schema
- ✓ Cite primary sources and original data
- ✓ Include first-hand examples and case studies
- ✓ Optimize for AI Overviews and answer engines
- ✓ Use clear definitions and structured Q&A formats
- ✓ Monitor brand mentions and entity associations
- ✓ Reference: Google Search Quality Rater Guidelines (E-E-A-T)