



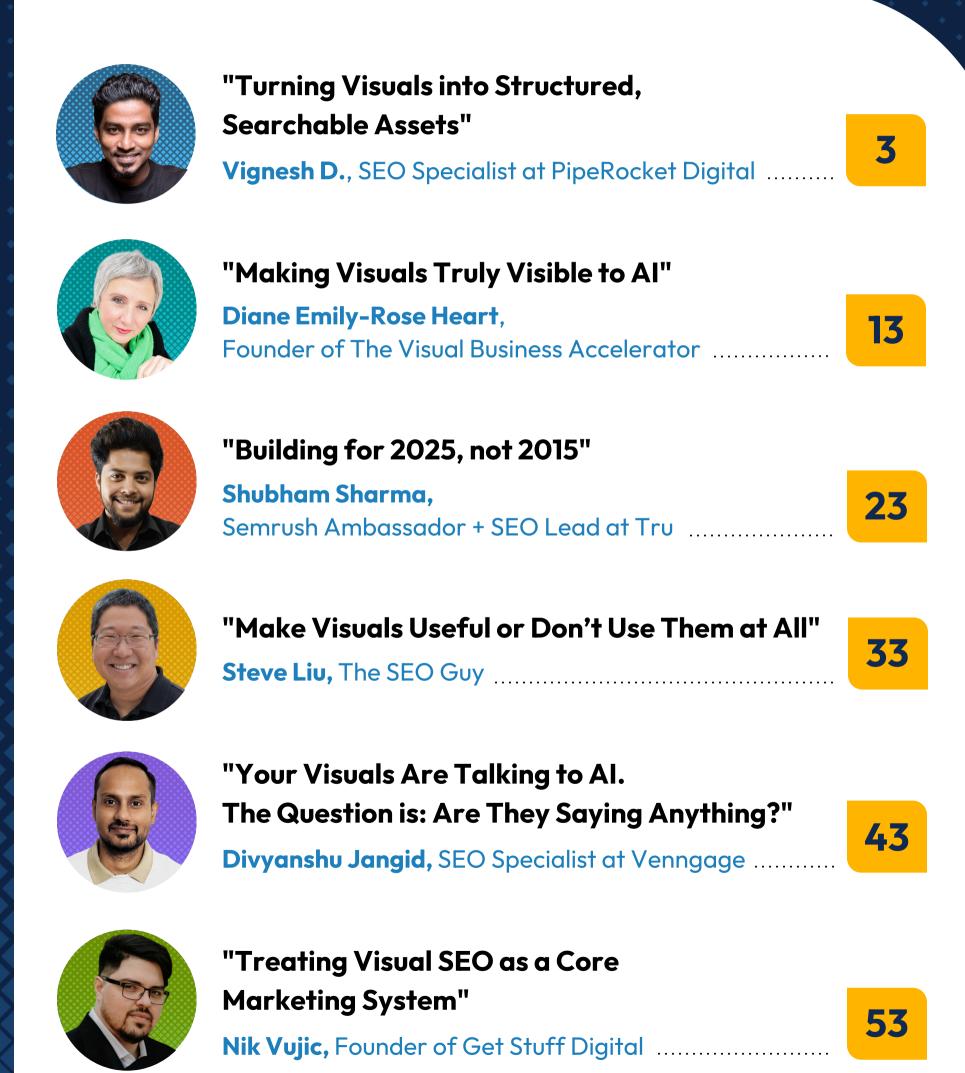
2025

Featuring insights from industry experts in SEO and marketing!





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"Turning Visuals into Structured, Searchable Assets



Real Wins: From Generic Screenshot to Discoverable Visual

On a BOFU comparison page in the SaaS procurement niche, we replaced a generic screenshot with a custom, annotated comparison graphic. Here's what we changed:



Exported as SVG with WebP fallback.



Wrapped it in <figure> and <figcaption> (40+ words explaining what and why).



Added ImageObject schema — name, description, caption, contentUrl, license.



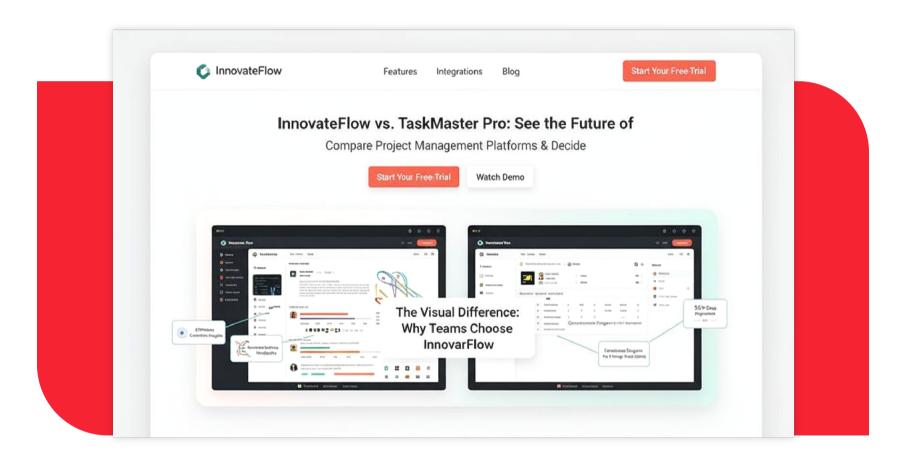
Marked it as primaryImageOfPage for the Article and submitted it via image sitemap.





Results in 28 Days:

An uplift from a unique visual, richer sounding text, and clean schema.





+40-60% increase in image impressions.



+10-15% uplift in page CTR.



The visual started appearing more often in rich and Al answer contexts for both head and long-tail terms.







How I Make Sure Visuals Get Indexed and Al-Visible

Content Brief Integration

• Create a Visual Slot: Define Purpose, Target Query/Entity, Success Metric.

On-Page Structure & Text

- Semantic Wrap: <figure> + Meaningful <figcaption> (40-80 words: what/why).
- Alt Text: "Object + Action + Context" (8-14 words, no keyword stuffing).

Delivery & Performance

- **Responsive:** srcset for adaptive sizes.
- **CLS Prevention:** Width/height attributes.
- Loading: Lazy-load + <noscript> fallback.
- Accessibility: CDN allows Googlebot-Image.

Visual Creation & Files

- **Be Unique:** Charts/Diagrams over Stock.
- **Formats:** SVG (primary) + WebP (fallback).
- Filename: Descriptive (e.g., procurementworkflow-intake-to-pay.svg).

Technical SEO & Schema

- ImageObject Schema: Link to article/web page.
- Schema Fields: Include caption, description, contentUrl, thumbnailUrl, license, creator.
- **Hero Image:** Mark as primary ImageOfPage.

Discovery & Monitoring

- **Sitemap:** Auto-generated image sitemap.
- QA: CMS Guardrails (alt/caption/schema required).
- Monitor: Weekly GSC (Image Search) + Al Spot Checks.





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Most visual SEO problems aren't technical mysteries...



...they're process failures.

-Vignesh D., SEO Specialist at PipeRocket Digital





6 Classic Visual SEO Errors



Stuffed or generic alt text ("image of..." or keyword salad).

> Same image reused across pages.

CSS-only or lazy-loaded images without fallback.

No captions or weak surrounding text

Missing schema, no sitemap, or blocked assets.

Poor file handling (huge PNGs, no dimensions).



Use the 8-14 word rule; describe intent, not pixels.

Vary visuals and alt text per context.

Place meaningful visuals in HTML with <noscript> fallback.

Add 40-80 word figcaptions explaining insights.

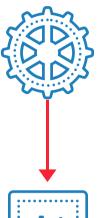
Add ImageObject, submit sitemaps, and whitelist Googlebot-Image.

Use WebP/AVIF, compress, and define width/height for stability.



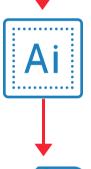


Achieving Quality at Scale: Systems, Not Heroics

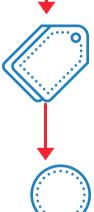


We run a design system where every visual component includes built-in:

- Caption and schema fields
- Required alt text before publishing



Al drafts preliminary captions and alt text from the figure title. Humans edit for tone, clarity, and accuracy.



We also maintain a controlled vocabulary for entities — product names, features, industries — to keep outputs on-brand.

We spot-check 10% of visuals weekly for duplication, schema errors, and tone alignment.

"Anything decorative is marked role='presentation'. Anything analytical gets the full treatment."







Prioritize the top 50 URLs by traffic or value.



Add or repair captions (40–80 words pulling insights from the page).



Write unique alt text per instance (8–14 words, context-aware).



Attach ImageObject schema and mark the hero as primaryImageOfPage.



Generate an image sitemap and resubmit in GSC.

"Small technical
updates can make big
SEO differences—
especially when visuals
already get traffic."

Quick Wins: Fast Fixes That Move Metrics



Replace stock visuals with branded diagrams where possible.



Convert heavy PNGs to WebP/AVIF with dimensions.



Fix delivery so Googlebot-Image can fetch CDN assets.



Rename files to descriptive slugs; keep old URLs live.



Measure results via GSC Image reports and CTR deltas.





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Future View: Visuals Will Rival Keywords

"Expect Al answers to surface explanatory visuals such as process maps, comparison charts, and before-and-after illustrations with increasing weight."



Visuals won't replace keywords but will compete for search intents, shaping brand perception and ranking in Al-driven search.



As search becomes multimodal, engines will rely more on:

- Entities
- Relationships
- Evidence



A well-labeled diagram, comparison graphic, or workflow often communicates that better than text alone.





Key Highlights from Vignesh's Expert Insights



Replace generic visuals with annotated, structured graphics.



Build schema and captions into every workflow.



Use the **8–14 word alt rule** describe intent, not pixels.



Treat visuals as evidence for Al systems, not decoration for humans.



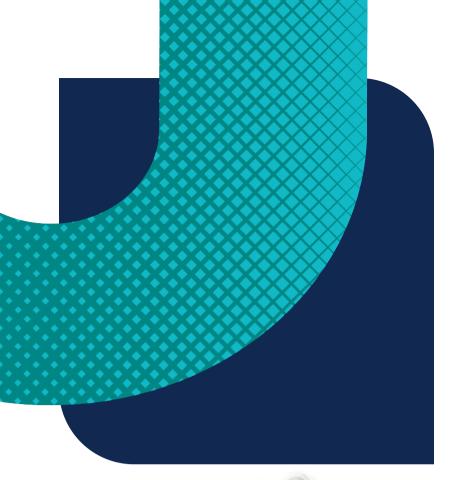
Vignesh D. **SEO Specialist at PipeRocket Digital**











"Making Visuals Truly Visible to Al"







Real Wins: Turning a Hidden Image Into a Traffic Driver

My biggest win came from transforming a single hero image that used to be invisible in Google search. I added:



Human-written alt text.



A **one-line** descriptive caption.



Relevant **ImageObject** schema (primaryImageOfPage).



Sitemap inclusion and removed lazy loading.



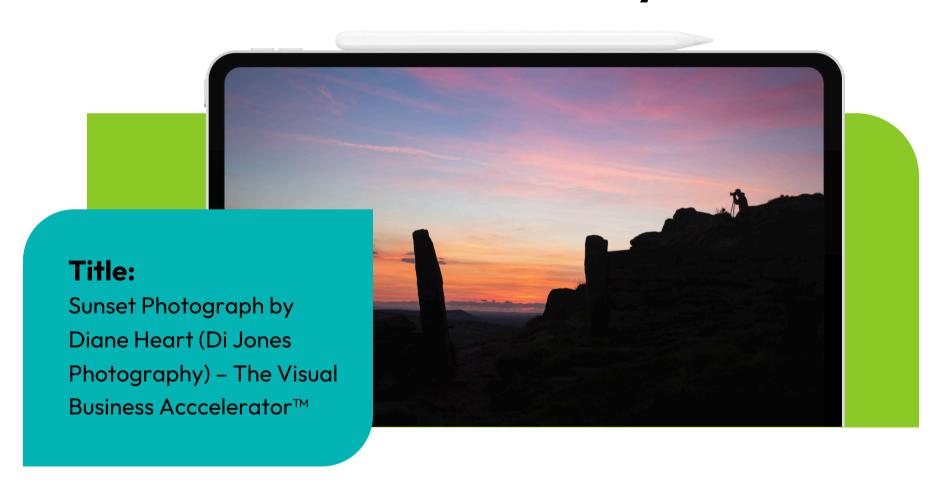
Then I verified everything in **Search Console** (search type: Image).





The Result?

Turning a previously unfindable asset into a measurable channel for traffic and brand visibility.





Both the blog and its hero image are now indexed and appear in Google Images.



Both **link directly** to my site.



I can **measure** impressions, clicks, and referrals.







My Repeatable Process for Al-Readable Visuals

Before Upload

- Use original imagery tied to a clear entity (place, product, project).
- Export at sensible dimensions, compress files.
- Name files meaningfully in lowercase with hyphens (e.g., visual-seoworkflow-manchester.jpg).
- Add creator and copyright metadata.

On The Page

- Use real elements (not CSS backgrounds).
- Set width + height to prevent layout shifts.
- Avoid lazy-loading hero images.
- Write clear, functional alt text no keyword stuffing.
- Add a short caption that includes brand or context.
- Include nearby text mentioning the main entity naturally.

Structured Data

- Add ImageObject schema for the hero and mark it as primaryImageOfPage.
- Include others in an image array.
- Keep author, publisher, and date details consistent in WebPage or Article schema.

Discovery & Verification

- Make sure image URLs are indexable and listed in sitemaps.
- Internally link from already indexed pages.
- Validate schema (Schema Validator), check accessibility (Lighthouse, WAVE), and monitor Search Console.





Swipe to Read More >



When your impressions move from zero to something,

that's proof your visual is finally discoverable.

—**Diane Emily-Rose Heart,**Founder at The Visual Business Accelerator





Where Teams Go Wrong



The biggest issue I see is **AI-generated** alt text with no human review.



Al tools can describe what's visible, **but not what's important**.



Leads to **generic or even inaccurate descriptions**, a problem I find constantly in Lighthouse and WAVE audits.



Brands need accountability to oversee alt text, as even large teams can **miss key** accessibility and SEO checks without it.

"Alt text isn't just a checkbox, it's a strategic SEO and accessibility asset that deserves real ownership."





Scale vs. Quality: Building Quality Into the Workflow

"There's no shortcut to quality. Consistency and precision are what make visuals truly discoverable."



Automation speeds up processes, but sloppy and inconsistent metadata **harms SEO and brand trust**.

Build quality checks into the process using semiautomated tools that still require **human review**.

Use standardized **metadata templates**.

Create detailed content and accessibility guidelines.





Quick Wins: Where I Start With Old Visuals



Add or rewrite alt text — clear, accurate, descriptive.

Resize and **compress images** for faster loads.

Ensure images are indexable and appear in sitemaps.

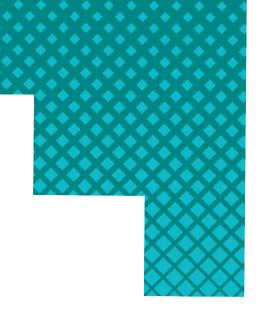
Add captions or nearby text for extra context.

Apply basic ImageObject schema to key visuals.

"Fixing visuals for Al visibility often improves compliance too, and that's now a business advantage."







Future View: Visuals and Keywords Will Work Together

"Visuals won't replace keywords overnight, but early adopters who make their images Al-friendly will have the edge."



Visuals are quickly becoming a **new language for search**. Tools like Google Lens are proof.



Still, text and visuals **complement each other** — **not compete**. Strong imagery supported by relevant text delivers the best results.



Optimized visuals **give brands an early foothold in Al search** and those investing in this now are setting themselves up to be seen first.





Key Highlights from Diane's Expert Insights



Alt text is key for SEO. Write clear, functional alt text and a short caption with the brand, location, or purpose.



Add an ImageObject for the hero (primaryImageOfPage) and list key visuals in an image array.



Optimize image size and compression for faster loading.



Standardize metadata, use scalable guidelines, and combine automation with human review.



Diane
Emily-Rose Heart
Founder at The
Visual Business
Accelerator











"Building for 2025, not 2015"











Real Wins: Original Visuals Beat Expensive Stock Every Time

I've been in SEO for over a decade, and this is the biggest shift I've seen since Google went mobile-first. My observations:



Ignoring visual optimization can cost you, I've seen companies lose over 50% of their image search traffic overnight.



It's not just traffic; when Al can't read your visuals, your content vanishes from voice search results, Al summaries, and discovery systems.



Original, simple graphics often outperform expensive stock photos because AI can interpret them more easily.



Authentic visuals, created with **intent and clear context**, consistently perform better than polished but context-free images.







Build Context, Not Just Captions

Al systems thrive on context, not surface-level descriptions.





Describing what's in the image instead of explaining.

"A woman using a laptop."



Explaining why it exists.

"Remote work productivity techniques for distributed teams."







Think in Layers

I build what I call "information sandwiches" around every image.

File name

Semantic and **keyword-aligned**.

Alt Text

.. Explains the **why** behind the image.

Caption

Connects back to your larger **narrative**.

Surrounding text

Reinforces topical relevance.

Plan visuals with AI in mind.



Every visual asset gets an "Al brief" during planning.



Define **schema**, **entity links**, and **keyword context** before design even begins.







Still Thinking Like It's 2015?



Most marketers are still treating visual SEO as **an afterthought**.



Adding **generic alt text** and calling it optimized is like bringing a flip phone to a smartphone fight.



Al literally can't see most brand visuals. When ChatGPT or Google's Al scans your page, your infographics and illustrations might as well not exist.



Visuals need context layers: file names, schema, captions, and surrounding text. Without those, your brand disappears from the next generation of search.

"Businesses spend fortunes creating visuals that AI systems can't interpret — and that's where they lose visibility."

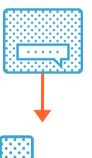






Scale vs. Quality: Create For Machines First, Humans Second

Here's what that means in practice:



Design infographics with **structured data** baked in.



Create **process diagrams** that map to featured snippets.



Build visuals **AI systems can parse**, not just admire.

"Controversial? Maybe. It's a complete mindset shift and most brands haven't even started."









Teams that win aren't just adding visual SEO to their checklist,

they're rebuilding their entire content process around Al-first thinking.

—**Shubham Sharma**,
Semrush Ambassador + SEO Lead at Tru







Quick Wins: Do Visual SEO Like Archaeology

For existing assets, I start with what I call content archaeology:





Prioritize fixes based on **business impact**, not just page count.

Visual SEO is **ongoing maintenance**, not a campaign.



"Most visual SEO fails because teams treat it like a one-off project. You can't 'fix' your images once and be done."







Future View: The Shift From Keywords to Contextual Visuals

"Forget vanity metrics — the new question is: does Al understand your content?"



Measure how well Al understands your content. Traditional metrics, like clicks, impressions or traffic, don't tell the full story anymore.



Test images through multiple AI tools, track **voice search mentions**, and monitor how often visuals appear in **AI summaries**.



As Al systems learn to interpret visuals faster than text, **image comprehension will shape** how brands appear, rank, and get cited.



The marketers who **optimize for machine interpretation** now will lead in the next wave of search.







Key Highlights from Shubham's Expert Insights



Visual SEO is already becoming a differentiator.



Most businesses still focus on text-based SEO (keywords, backlinks, and blog structures). That's fine, but the real opportunity lies in visual comprehension.



Those who understand how Al reads, classifies, and cites images are setting themselves up for long-term brand visibility in Al search ecosystems.



Shubham Sharma
Semrush Ambassador
+ SEO Lead at Tru

















Real Wins: When Visuals Drive Real Performance

I see it all the time — a well-executed visual can transform how a page performs. What works best:



Infographics, memes, and step-by-step visuals **drive shares.**



Charts, short videos, and custom illustrations **boost engagement** and **time-on-site**.



Most people who say "visuals don't work" are optimizing for the wrong thing. They treat visuals like keyword containers — when the real metric is usefulness.



Visuals should be **A/B tested** as rigorously as copy. If they don't drive engagement or conversions, they're not optimized — they're waste.



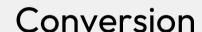


Design for Humans First, Then Context for Al

Before I design or select an image, I ask: "What is the function of this visual for my readers?" If the only answer is "to fill space," it doesn't belong.



Goal / Purpose:



Branding

Education



Suggested Visual(s):

Choose a visual that highlights the **unique value propositions** of the product or service.

Choose a visual that reflects the **best of the brand's attributes**.

Choose a visual that **clarifies complex ideas** simply.





Optimization For Search or Al

This comes after the visual fulfills that human goal. **Key practices include:**



Write descriptive, goal-aligned alt text — for accessibility and for context.



Add captions only if they genuinely enhance understanding.



Use schema.org for rich media content (products, recipes, events, news).



Annotate visuals in body copy so readers and search engines understand why it matters.







But when you write it for people, Al gets the message too.

—**Steve Liu**The SEO Guy





Treating Visuals Like Filler?



The biggest mistake I see? Publishers **treating visuals as decoration** instead of communication.



If your visuals don't help your readers, they won't help your rankings either. This mindset is bad for SEO and it's **fatal in the age of Al**.



Skipping ALT text, captions, or schema isn't a small miss, it's a **missed opportunity** to signal meaning and credibility.



When you ignore those layers, you're telling **both humans and machines** that your content isn't serious.

"If your audience sees your visuals as filler, so will Al."





Scale vs. Quality: Don't Let Speed Kill Your Story

In the stock-photo era, people rushed content with irrelevant images. Today, the same mistake happens with AI, lazy prompting and first-result publishing. My advice:



Use **original visuals** whenever possible — even smartphone photos can work.



If you use AI, iterate until it truly fits your message. **Don't settle for the first output.**



Get a designer or artist's eye on the result — **critique it like real creative work**.

Use **A/B testing** to validate what resonates.





Quick Wins: Rescuing Old Visuals with Al and Insight



- 1
- Ask Al to suggest useful visuals. Use an LLM to suggest and refine visuals that align with your goals. Ask: "What visuals would help readers understand this better?"
- 2

Use Al for retouching, not reinvention. Ideal for color, focus, or cropping adjustments.

- 3
- Prioritize high-impact pages.
 Focus on top-converting
 or high-traffic visuals that
 influence clicks or scrolls. Test,
 improve, measure, repeat.

"There
are no real
shortcuts —
but there
are smarter
ways to
prioritize
your effort."







Future View: From Keywords to Credibility

"The future of SEO will belong to those who convince both users and AI that their brand is the most credible."



Relevance is the entry point. Persuasion — showing authority, usefulness, and authenticity will be the differentiator.



Visuals must communicate **why your brand matters**, not just what it does.



Keywords and visuals work best when they build context, not clutter.



Al will reward brands whose visuals make understanding easier — not flashier.



The next evolution of SEO won't be about keywords or rankings. It'll be about **trust** — earned through **clarity and human intention**.





Key Highlights from Steve's Expert Insights



Visuals should serve a function, not fill space.



ALT text and schema aren't for algorithms, they're signals of meaning.



AI visuals work only when guided by human goals and judgment.



The future of search belongs to brands that communicate trust through visuals.



Steve Liu The SEO Guy



steve-liu-42431234



www.steveliu.com







"Your Visuals Are Talking to Al"

The Question is: Are They Saying Anything?







Real Wins: The Power of Basic Visual SEO

"The biggest wins often come from doing the basics consistently. Treat visuals like SEO assets, not decorations."



Even small visual SEO improvements can drive real gains in **ranking and engagement**.



Simple optimizations like descriptive filenames, relevant ALT text, and captions helped pages surface in image packs.



Competitors using similar methods saw steady traffic from image search.



You don't need a redesign to see impact. Consistency across assets compounds into **visibility and engagement**.



Make Visuals Discoverable by Default

"Al search isn't magic — it's metadata. The clearer your metadata, the clearer your visibility."



Process built around repeatable steps:

- Use descriptive filenames and accurate ALT text.
- Apply image tags and submit pages for indexing.



It's not complex — **consistency** ensures that Al can read and reference visuals.



Turn optimization into a habit, not a campaign.

Every new visual becomes part of your discoverability system.

Ignoring the Fundamentals?



The most common issue is **skipping ALT text** or **using generic placeholders**.



Missing these small steps, especially on highvalue pages, **costs long-term visibility**.

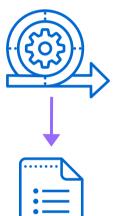


Not making image SEO part of your content publishing workflow? It's low effort, high reward.

"You don't lose visibility overnight — it erodes slowly when you ignore the fundamentals."

Scale vs. Quality: **Guardrails for Consistency**

"Guardrails create creative freedom. When your structure is solid, speed doesn't mean sloppy."



Scaling fast doesn't mean lowering quality.



Use templates, brand kits, and checklists to keep visuals aligned and optimized.



Designers maintain creative freedom within clear brand parameters.



Build optimization (ALT text, compression, **schema**) into creation workflows — not after.

Quick Wins: Fix Speed Before Semantics

When reviving old visuals, these steps immediately improve user experience and SEO signals:.



Rewrite filenames and ALT text for relevance.

Shortcut:
Optimize for speed →
meaning → indexing.



"No one sees your visuals if your page doesn't load.

Fix speed first, semantics second."

Future View: Visuals as Keyword Partners

"Visuals make stories visible; keywords make them findable."



Visuals will complement — not replace — keywords.



Al increasingly interprets visuals contextually, but **text still anchors meaning**.



Future SEO = hybrid optimization. Marry narrative with design to stay discoverable in both human and machine search.

Impact & Measurement: Track What Changes Behavior

Prioritize Conversions

Conversions as core metrics.

- Clicks
- Sign-ups
- Downloads

Monitor AI Visibility

- Citations
- Image packs

Track Enagement

- Dwell time
- Shares

Before-and-after

 Compare before-andafter results to measure lift from visual updates.

"Engagement is your heartbeat.

Al citations are your pulse check."





The goal isn't to outrank competitors...

it's to outcommunicate them.

—Divyanshu JangidSEO Specialist at Venngage



Key Highlights from Divyanshu's Expert Insights



Visual SEO isn't just visibility — it's experience.

Design for clarity, not just for clicks.



Use infographics, diagrams, and schema-optimized visuals to create multiple discovery entry points.



Conversions lead, citations follow.



The future of SEO lies in hybrid optimization.



Divyanshu Jangid SEO Specialist at Venngage













Real Wins: Optimizing Visuals at Scale

"The impact doesn't come from one image — it comes from every asset working as part of an optimized ecosystem."



I've seen real lifts in traffic and engagement, especially for e-commerce clients, after optimizing their visual assets.



It's hard to isolate a single image that drove measurable growth because our wins come from bulk optimization. We treat visuals as part of a system: ALT text, structured data, captions, compression, and placement all working together.



isolating a single optimized asset would be an interesting experiment. It could show just how much value a well-structured visual contributes on its own.





Making Visuals Al-Readable by Design

Technical Setup

- We compress all images to minimize the impact on Core Web Vitals and apply descriptive ALT text and captions.
- We also add schema markup where relevant and choose optimal formats like WebP or AVIF.

Our habit is simple: build these standards into every project from day one, and revisit them regularly.

Al Visibility

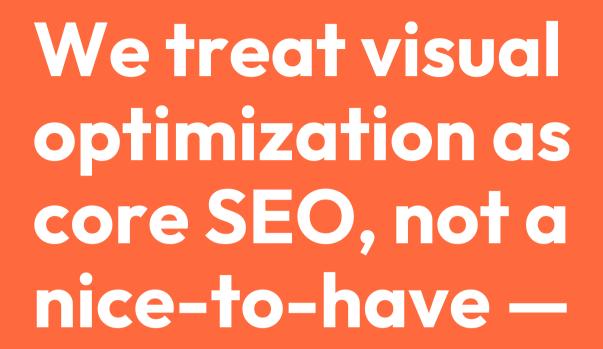
- We've observed that LLMs reference pages where visuals are correctly annotated.
- Hosting videos on crawlable platforms (like YouTube) also helps since those assets are cited more frequently in Al summaries and overviews.

Video Handling

- When videos are involved, we make sure they're properly hosted and indexed
- "video not indexed" is still a common issue in Search Console.









especially when ROI depends on visibility, like in e-commerce.

Nik VujicFounder of Get Stuff Digital





The High Cost of Neglect



ALT text is often missing or worse, filled with **irrelevant defaults** that add no value. The fix is straightforward, make optimization a requirement at creation, not an afterthought.



Teams need workflows where visual optimization happens during site builds. Automation can help at scale, but human oversight ensures relevance and quality.



ALT text, captions, structured data, and consistent file naming all carry weight.

The biggest misstep I see is neglect.

"If you launch with thousands of products and no visual SEO strategy, you'll pay for it twice first in performance, then in rework."

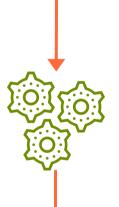


Scale vs. Quality: Designers First, Al Second

"If visuals are off-brand, they can damage perception instantly. Brand alignment comes first and AI visibility follows naturally."



When speed matters, like producing hundreds of product variations, we use Al-assisted tools such as Canva or Midjourney, but always under a designer's supervision. Designers ensure color, proportion, and tone stay aligned with the brand.



After creation, every asset goes through compression and technical optimization. Priorities remain clear:

- Stay on brand
- Ensure SEO and AI visibility



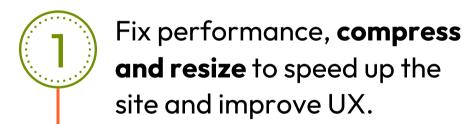
For high-volume clients, we act as a supportive force to scale production while **maintaining fidelity and consistency**.





Quick Wins: First Fix Performance Before Metadata

When fixing unoptimized visuals, I focus on the fundamentals:



Add or **improve ALT text and captions** that describe the visual accurately.

Add structured data where relevant and re-submit videos correctly for indexing.



"Fix what breaks performance first. Then move to semantic optimization for search engines and Al."







Future View: Visuals as the Next Language of Search

"In Al search, people don't want to read — they want to see. Images and videos can satisfy intent faster and more intuitively than text."



Visual search is accelerating faster than analytics can track.

Google Lens processes 20 billion visual searches monthly, yet reporting tools still underrepresent this shift in user behavior.



Images and videos simply communicate faster than text. **They show instead of tell.**



Pages with embedded images or videos, especially those hosted on crawlable platforms, get cited more often. Visuals can determine whether your content **appears in Al summaries**.





Key Highlights from Nik's Expert Insights



Compress images to improve Core Web Vitals, and use efficient formats like WebP or AVIF.



Correctly format, host, and submit videos for indexing.



Follow **SEO best practices** to make visuals Al-readable, but prioritize **brand alignment first**.



Fix technical performance issues before focusing on semantic optimization.



Nik Vujic Founder of Get Stuff Digital







