



SEO + AEO CASE STUDY · CLIENT CONFIDENTIAL

## Owning a Category in Search

How Imerex made a leading New York PR agency the name prospects find first across hundreds of competitive search terms, through a seven-year partnership now extending into AI search.

<b>Client</b>	Leading New York luxury and lifestyle public relations agency (name withheld)
<b>Category</b>	Public relations / professional services (high-value client acquisition through search)
<b>Engagement</b>	Seven years, ongoing
<b>Services</b>	Technical SEO, category keyword strategy, content and service-page optimization, quarterly ranking and KPI reporting, and AEO / AI-search optimization
<b>Model</b>	Category search authority. The site exists to win high-intent prospects searching for a PR partner, and increasingly to be the agency that AI assistants name.

<b>7 Yrs</b> of unbroken SEO partnership	<b>#1-#2</b> for dozens of the most competitive PR terms	<b>246</b> page-one rankings of 516 tracked terms	<b>0</b> page-one terms held by two leading rival firms
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### The Challenge

Our client competes in one of the most crowded professional-services categories in the country: New York public relations. Dozens of respected agencies fight for the same handful of high-value search terms, and more and more new business now starts the way a consumer purchase does, with a search ("best PR firm NYC," "lifestyle PR agency," "wine and spirits PR"). To win those clients, the agency had to own that discovery layer, not for a single quarter, but durably, and then keep owning it as search itself began shifting from Google's results to AI answers.

### The Approach

- Built and maintained the technical SEO foundation over a seven-year partnership, so the site stayed crawlable, fast, and structurally sound through redesigns and content changes rather than being fixed once and forgotten.
- Mapped the full PR category in search: general New York PR plus the verticals that matter to this agency (lifestyle, consumer brands, wine and spirits, restaurants, corporate communications), then aligned service pages and content to the highest-intent term in each.
- Used authority-building content, including service pages and case-study content, to make the site the topically deepest in its niche, the signal Google rewards when many agencies compete for the same terms.
- Reported every quarter against rankings and website KPIs (this year versus last year), so leadership could see durable category position over time instead of vanity spikes.

- Now extending the same discipline into AEO and AI search: connected Search Console to AI to surface content gaps and technical issues, began tracking the long, conversational 10-plus-word queries that signal AI search and ChatGPT referral traffic, and is rebuilding content to be answer-ready for AI summaries.

## The Results

At its peak the agency owned its category in search. A Q2 2025 ranking audit of 516 tracked PR keywords placed the site at #1 or #2 for dozens of the most competitive terms in the category, and on page one for 246 of them. On that same keyword set, two of the best-known names in New York PR did not hold a single page-one position. For high-value head terms like "New York PR agency," "PR firm NYC," and "lifestyle PR firm," a prospect looking for a PR partner found our client first, and often did not find its direct competitors at all.

That position was not luck or a one-time campaign. It was the cumulative result of a seven-year partnership: steady technical maintenance, content built around how buyers actually search, and quarterly measurement that kept the program honest through every site change.

*Client identity withheld. Source: Q2 2025 keyword ranking report (Moz), client site versus two leading competitor PR firms across 516 tracked terms.*

## Extending Into AI Search

Search is changing, and the same buyers who once typed "best PR firm in NYC" into Google increasingly ask an AI assistant to recommend one. Imerex is already moving the agency into that world: tracking the long, conversational queries that signal AI search, monitoring ChatGPT referral traffic, connecting Search Console to AI to find content gaps, and rebuilding the site so its expertise is structured to be quoted in AI answers. The goal for the next chapter is the one that has guided all seven years: when someone goes looking for a PR partner, however they look, the agency is the name they find.

**imerex**

