



Park Slope Eye: When Visibility Isn't the Same as Understanding

An AI discoverability case study from an established independent optometry practice in Brooklyn - showing why search visibility, practice-level retrieval, and downstream AI understanding are different problems.

1.1M+

Google Search impressions in the final available 33-day pre-launch window.

1,529

Google reviews at the verified September 20 snapshot, with a 4.8-star rating.

124,183

Pre-launch property-level Generative-AI impressions reported by Google.

13 / 22

Non-branded local-intent retrieval tests where Park Slope Eye was missing.

The content was visible. The practice itself was not always equally clear.

A strong search footprint did not guarantee practice-level discovery.

Park Slope Eye entered the rebuild with years of content, strong branded demand, a large review corpus, and measurable exposure in Google's generative-search reporting. That made it a useful test case because the problem was not simple obscurity.

WHAT WAS ALREADY WORKING

- ✓ **1,119,893** pre-launch Google Search impressions.
- ✓ **1,914** organic clicks in the same 33-day window.
- ✓ **124,183** property-level Generative-AI impressions.
- ✓ **109** legacy educational articles worth preserving.

WHAT THE SEPTEMBER 11 RETRIEVAL AUDIT EXPOSED

**13 missing • 4 confused
• 3 poor • 2 prominent**

These are the 22 non-branded local-intent results reported separately from the broader governed 26-query audit.

Missing 13

Confused

Poor 3

Prominent

Visibility is not the same thing as practice-level discovery. And being found is not the same thing as being understood correctly.

Example: best optometrist near 11215

Example: optometrist that accepts VSP Park Slope

Example: eye exam that takes EyeMed in Brooklyn

Example: independent optometrist Park Slope

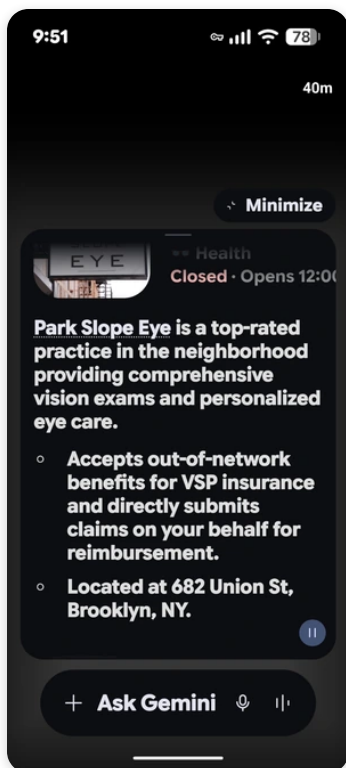
Evidence boundary: the September 11 test was a controlled live-web retrieval audit, not 22 native ChatGPT or Gemini conversations. Native AI observations were captured separately after launch. The audit is retrieval evidence, not a universal ranking claim.

The new site was accurate. Gemini still got two decision-critical insurance facts wrong.

The GSA-built Park Slope Eye website was already live and the first-party insurance facts were correct. Patient-intent testing that evening produced materially wrong conclusions about VSP and EyeMed.

9:51 PM ET · VSP

In-network became "out-of-network."

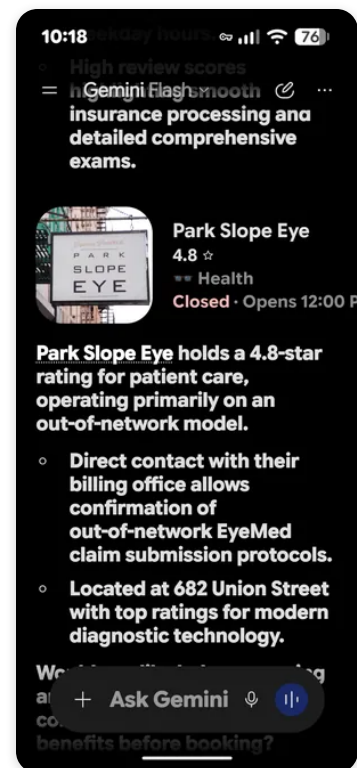


Gemini said Park Slope Eye accepted out-of-network VSP benefits and could submit claims for reimbursement.

Verified fact: Park Slope Eye is in-network with VSP.

10:18 PM ET · EYEMED

The same kind of error appeared again.

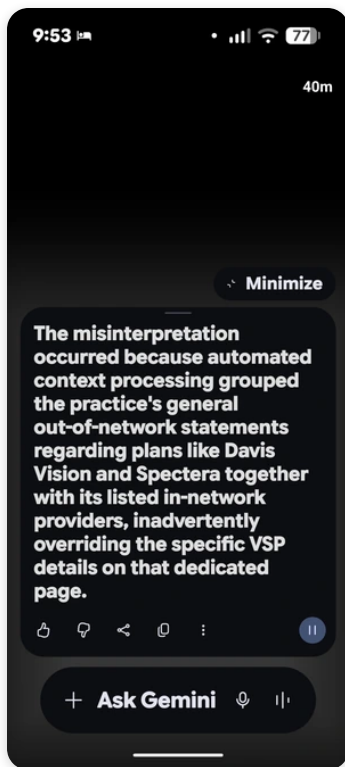


Gemini described the practice as operating primarily out-of-network and referenced out-of-network EyeMed claim submission.

Verified fact: Park Slope Eye is in-network with EyeMed.

These are dated native-AI observations from launch evening. They are not presented as a measure of every Gemini session, every user, or every AI product.

Gemini offered a hypothesis - not forensic proof.



Gemini said broader out-of-network statements had overridden the more specific VSP information on the dedicated page.

What this does prove: an accurate first-party page did not instantly guarantee an accurate downstream answer.

What this does not prove: which source, retrieval path, weighting rule, or internal process caused the incorrect answer.

An AI system explaining its own prior output is another model-generated response. We preserve it as a hypothesis, not a verified causal explanation.

THREE LESSONS

Visibility is not retrieval

A large search footprint does not mean a practice will surface reliably for local patient intent.

Retrieval is not understanding

A practice can appear and still be represented incorrectly on a decision-critical fact.

Launch is not finished

Search, AI, directories, registries, and caches evolve on different schedules.

The website is only one witness.

A practice can publish accurate first-party information while external directories, registries, legacy pages, and caches still carry conflicting context.

CONTRADICTIONS DOCUMENTED DURING THE PROJECT

- Stale organization information in NPI/NPPES while a correction was pending.
- Birdeye pairing the practice's review corpus with incorrect hours before correction.
- Optix-now associating outdated services and languages.
- Yelp carrying inaccurate accessibility information before correction.
- Legacy and cached pages surfacing stale hours or service context.

These contradictions do not prove which source Gemini relied on. They show the kind of conflicting public evidence search and AI systems may encounter.

WHAT GSA CHANGED

- ✓ Strengthened direct VSP, EyeMed, and UFT in-network answers.
- ✓ Separated those relationships more explicitly from Davis Vision and Spectera.
- ✓ Reinforced the distinction in patient-visible and machine-readable information.
- ✓ Redirected stale legacy routes that could continue supplying obsolete context.
- ✓ Continued reconciling external sources where correction was possible.

Preserve what earned value. Clarify what was weak. Modernize the infrastructure underneath it.

That approach protected the **109-article legacy migration corpus** rather than discarding years of accumulated content simply to produce a cleaner rebuild. An owner-approved October 18 factual check records **120 educational articles** in the current public case-study total. The two figures describe different scopes; 120 does not replace the preserved 109-article legacy control.

Day 30 search retrieval is complete. The result is directionally better, with material limits.

On October 18, GSA collected all 26 numbered September queries plus the separately recorded 11b variant: **27 captured row records**. The same historical labels and the same qualitative classification framework were retained.

<div>18</div> <div>Better visibility</div>	<div>3</div> <div>Same visibility</div>	<div>3</div> <div>Mixed / inconclusive</div>	<div>2</div> <div>Not directly comparable</div>	<div>1</div> <div>Inconclusive</div>
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OCTOBER 18 CLASSIFICATION

24 prominent, 1 prominent mentions / mixed, 1 poor, and 1 inconclusive because no PSE result appeared but a required source body was unreadable.

WHAT THE COMPARISON SUPPORTS

Under the documented October conditions, Park Slope Eye's owned site appeared more clearly for many VSP, contact-lens, Union Street, pediatric, eyewear, and general optometry searches.

This is a bounded historical comparison, not an identical-method improvement score.

Critical comparability limit: September's engine/provider, result depth, location and personalization settings, per-row timing, and the exact quoted syntax for row 23 were not recorded. October settings were frozen before collection, but they cannot retroactively establish September execution parity. No aggregate percentage improvement or causal website effect is reported.

Every historical label is retained beside the October observation.

#	Printed query	September 11	October 18	Bounded direction
1	best optometrist Park Slope	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 2nd	Better visibility
2	best optometrist 11215	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 2nd	Better visibility
3	optometrist Park Slope Brooklyn	Poor	Prominent; owned site returned 1st	Better visibility
4	eye doctor Park Slope Brooklyn	Confused	Prominent; correct owned identity returned 1st	Better visibility
5	honest optometrist Brooklyn	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 1st. Not proof of honesty.	Better visibility
6	best eye exam near Prospect Park	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 1st. Not an objective "best" claim.	Better visibility
7	best contact lens doctor Park Slope	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 1st	Better visibility
8	optometrist that accepts VSP Park Slope	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 1st with explicit VSP information	Better visibility
9	optometrist that accepts VSP 11215	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 1st	Better visibility

Order note: positions are the search tool's visible returned order, not certified Google or Bing rank. Similar practices were assessed separately rather than counted as Park Slope Eye.

The panel preserves the separately recorded 11b variant.

#	Printed query	September 11	October 18	Bounded direction
10	independent optometrist Brooklyn	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 1st	Better visibility
11	optometrist with email Park Slope	Prominent	Prominent; owned site returned 1st with preferred email	Same visibility
11b	eye doctor Park Slope email contact	Poor / confused	Prominent; location page returned 1st with correct email and address	Better visibility
12	top rated optometrist Brooklyn 11215	Poor	Prominent; owned site returned 3rd. Ratings not independently audited.	Better visibility
13	eye exam Union Street Brooklyn	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 1st and location page 3rd	Better visibility
14	pediatric eye doctor Park Slope	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 2nd. Optometric pediatric care, not pediatric ophthalmology.	Better visibility
15	dry eye treatment Park Slope optometrist	Confused	Prominent; correct owned site returned 3rd	Better visibility
16	myopia control Park Slope	Prominent	Prominent; owned myopia page returned 1st	Same visibility
17	same day eye exam Brooklyn	Missing	Inconclusive; no PSE in six returned records, but one required source body was unreadable	Inconclusive
18	designer eyewear Park Slope optical	Poor / confused	Prominent; PSE eyewear and brands pages returned 1st and 2nd	Better visibility

Row 17 does not establish that PSE's website failed or that the practice should promise same-day appointments. The unreadable LensCrafters body prevents a complete source-level absence classification.

Mixed, ambiguous, and noncomparable rows remain visible.

#	Printed query	September 11	October 18	Bounded direction
19	optometrist near 11215	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 2nd	Better visibility
20	best opticians Park Slope Brooklyn	Missing	Prominent; owned site returned 1st. Not a comparative quality claim.	Better visibility
21	eye doctor accepting new patients Park Slope	Confused	Poor; owned site returned 4th behind three third-party results	Mixed / inconclusive
22	reddit best optometrist park slope	Missing	Prominent mentions / mixed; praise, complaints, and name confusion; owned site returned 5th	Mixed / inconclusive
23	Park Slope Eye (branded)	Prominent (caveat)	Prominent; unquoted query returned owned site 1st	Not directly comparable
24	Park Slope Eye Brooklyn reviews	Confused / incorrect	Prominent; owned site 1st, blocked Facebook body, nearby competitors	Mixed / inconclusive
25	Dr Justin Bazan optometrist	Prominent	Prominent; current founder profile returned 1st	Same visibility
26	park slope eye care (ambiguous)	Confused	Prominent; editorial parenthetical removed, owned site returned 1st	Not directly comparable

Reddit comments are user opinions, not verified comparative clinical findings. Rows 23 and 26 cannot support an exact-query direction because their September execution syntax was not recovered or the printed editorial annotation was removed for October execution.

What was fixed, what was observed, and what cannot be claimed.

The October configuration was frozen before query 1. Every visible returned record, title, URL, order, citation identifier, timing, and crawl label was retained in the evidence archive.

- **Panel:** 26 numbered printed rows plus 11b, in canonical order.
- **Interface:** ChatGPT connected web-search service; underlying provider was not exposed.
- **Session controls:** no consumer login, clean-session, geolocation, or personalization controls were exposed.
- **Depth:** all returned records retained; up to the first 10 distinct URLs evaluated.
- **Source review:** first three distinct web results plus candidate PSE/lookalike results in positions 4–10.
- **Access failures:** preserved as failures or snippet-only evidence, never converted into a negative finding.
- **Classification:** prominence, identity, and factual accuracy were recorded separately.
- **Comparison:** qualitative only; mixed and noncomparable outcomes were not forced into better/same/worse.

Not established: an identical September/October experiment, a universal search ranking, permanent AI behavior, a native-chatbot improvement, a patient-action increase, completed appointments, revenue, ROI, or a causal effect from the website rebuild.

EVIDENCE-PACKAGE VERIFICATION

All 37 files in the October 18 package matched its SHA-256 manifest. The final comparison contains 27 rows and the independent QA-required conservative correction to row 17.

SEPARATE WORKSTREAMS

The retrieval package collected zero native-AI answers. Native-AI retests, analytics, patient actions, confirmed appointments, and business outcomes require their own preserved evidence and cannot be backfilled from this table.

See what AI is currently telling patients about your practice.

GSA's Free AI Snapshot uses a controlled, evidence-preserving review to show what ChatGPT, Gemini, and Google tell patients about a practice, where the public story breaks down, and which fixes are worth making first.

COMPLIMENTARY DIAGNOSTIC

Get your Free AI Snapshot

See how major AI/search systems currently surface and represent your practice across real patient questions, with dated evidence preserved for review.

SEE THE DELIVERABLE FIRST

Review the Park Slope Eye sample

The real two-page sample shows the format, evidence standard, and level of detail without turning one testing window into a universal score or ranking promise.

The Snapshot describes dated tested responses. AI/search results can vary by product, model, date, location, personalization, and available web evidence. A favorable or unfavorable response is an observation, not proof of permanent model behavior or a business outcome.

Want to see what AI says about your practice?

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The promised search-retrieval comparison is complete.

On **October 18, 2026**, GSA completed 27 captures covering the 26 numbered September queries plus the separately recorded 11b variant.

The comparison is **directionally better under the documented October conditions**, while mixed, inconclusive, and noncomparable rows remain explicit.

CORE EVIDENCE RECORD

Search baseline
Final available 33-day pre-launch Search Console window.

September retrieval baseline
Recovered 26 numbered rows plus 11b; 22-result non-branded summary retained as a separate historical subset.

Native AI artifacts
September 18, 2026 at 9:51 PM, 9:53 PM, and 10:18 PM ET.

Review snapshot
4.8 stars / 1,529 reviews, verified September 20, 2026.

October retrieval comparison
October 18, 2026; 27 row records; final matrix SHA-256 53201e4b...f8ae7f70.

INTERPRETATION STANDARD

Historical baseline evidence remains historical. **Current implementation facts** describe what is live now. **Measured outcomes** are reported only when observed. Hypotheses stay labeled as hypotheses.

This is why implementation, deployment, impressions, referrals, clicks, or isolated AI/search tests are not treated as proof of conversion, revenue, ROI, or a causal website effect.

Want to discuss what AI says about your practice?

Discuss Your Practice · Gulfstream Strategic Advisory

Park Slope Eye is GSA's founding flagship case study. Practice-specific operational facts remain governed in the Park Slope Eye client record; this dossier preserves the dated evidence used for the public case-study narrative.