

ENTITY AUTHORITY

When AI Confuses You With Someone Else — The Disambiguation Problem

By Scott Tischler · September 9, 2026 · 7 min read

If there's another person or business with a name like yours, an AI may not be sure which one you are — and when it's unsure, its answers about you can quietly become answers about someone else. Entity disambiguation, making it unmistakable which entity you are, is a foundational and often-overlooked piece of AI visibility.

This problem is more common than people realize because names aren't unique. There's another business with a similar name, a more famous person who shares yours, a company in a different city with the same brand. When the model encounters your name, it has to resolve which entity is meant — and if the signals are thin or tangled, it can merge you with someone else, attribute their facts to you (or yours to them), or hedge and surface nothing confident at all. Any of those outcomes hurts.

Why disambiguation is a prerequisite, not a nicety

Everything else in AI visibility assumes the model knows who you are. Your corroboration, your authority, your carefully-built entity — none of it accrues to you if the model can't reliably tell your entity apart from a similar one. Signals meant for you can get split across two entities the model hasn't distinguished, or worse, attributed to the wrong one. Disambiguation is the foundation that lets all your other work actually land on you.

It's also a quiet failure. You won't see an error message saying "the model confused you with someone else." You'll just find that AI answers about you are vague, wrong, or mixing in facts that aren't yours — and you might assume that's a content problem when it's really an identity problem.

How to make your entity unmistakable

- **Use consistent, distinctive identifiers.** Pair your name with the same clarifying details everywhere — your affiliation, location, category, role — so there's always context that distinguishes you from the similar entity. A name alone is ambiguous; a name plus consistent context is not.

- **Establish a strong canonical identity.** One authoritative source of truth about who you are, clearly stated, that other signals point back to. This gives the model an anchor to resolve your identity against.
- **Use structured data to declare identity.** Schema that explicitly states who the entity is, and links it to its organization, work, and profiles, helps the machine resolve you unambiguously rather than guessing.
- **Build connective links between your properties.** Explicit connections among your site, profiles, and work tell the model "these all refer to the same entity," consolidating your signals rather than letting them scatter.
- **Be consistent across every surface.** The same name, description, and key facts everywhere. Inconsistency is what lets the model split or merge entities; consistency is what holds your identity together.

The nuance with famous name-clashes

Let me be honest about a hard case: if you share a name with someone genuinely famous, you may never fully "win" the bare name — the model will reasonably default to the more prominent entity for the unqualified query. That's not a failure you can brute-force. The realistic goal there is to own your name *in your context*: when the query includes your field, your location, or your affiliation, you're unmistakably the answer. You build such strong, consistent, corroborated signals around your name-plus-context that within your domain, there's no confusion — even if the bare name belongs to someone better known.

Disambiguation isn't glamorous, but it's load-bearing. Before pouring effort into authority and corroboration, make sure the model can reliably tell which entity you are — otherwise you're building someone else's reputation as much as your own. Check what AI currently says about your name, see whether it's confusing you with anyone, and if so, make your identity unmistakable through consistent context, a strong canonical source, and explicit connective structure.

Key takeaways

- ♦ If someone shares a name like yours, AI may be unsure which entity you are — and when unsure, its answers about you can become someone else's facts.
- ♦ Name collisions are common (similar businesses, more-famous people, same brand elsewhere), and the model may merge, misattribute, or hedge.

- ✦ Disambiguation is a prerequisite: corroboration and authority only accrue to you if the model can reliably tell your entity apart from similar ones.
- ✦ It's a quiet failure — no error message, just vague or wrong AI answers you might mistake for a content problem when it's an identity problem.
- ✦ Make your entity unmistakable with consistent distinctive identifiers, a strong canonical identity, structured data, connective links, and cross-surface consistency.
- ✦ If you share a name with someone famous, aim to own your name in your context (field, location, affiliation) rather than the bare name.

Frequently asked questions

How would I know if AI is confusing me with another entity?

You have to check directly, because there's no error message — it's a quiet failure. Ask the major AI engines about your name and see whether the answers are vague, mix in facts that aren't yours, or describe a different person or business. If AI answers about you seem off in that way, it may be an identity (disambiguation) problem rather than a content one.

Why does entity disambiguation matter so much?

Because everything else in AI visibility assumes the model knows who you are. If it can't reliably distinguish your entity from a similarly-named one, your corroboration and authority can get split across two entities or attributed to the wrong one. Disambiguation is the foundation that lets all your other AI-visibility work actually land on you.

What if I share a name with someone famous?

You may never win the bare, unqualified name — the model will reasonably default to the more prominent entity. The realistic goal is to own your name in your context: build strong, consistent, corroborated signals around your name plus your field, location, or affiliation so that within your domain you're unmistakably the answer, even if the bare name belongs to someone better known.

About the author. Scott Tischler is the Founder & Chairman of Alrecommend.ai and a practitioner-authority on AI search and Answer Engine Optimization. With 20+ years in marketing technology — including American Express, MetLife, and UBS — and executive and professional study at Wharton, Harvard, and Oxford, he helps businesses become the ones AI recommends.