

LOCAL SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

SEO & AEO AUDIT + ACTION PLAN

Stevens Auto Group

Ford & Lincoln · Milford, CT · One presence, four domains, a wide-open market

Prepared for **Nathaniel Stevens**, Owner

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Sites reviewed: **stevensauto.com** · **stevensfordmilford.com** · **lincolnofmilford.com** · **stevensautogroup.com**

Start Here — The One-Page Read

Stevens Auto Group's search presence is split across four domains, and the two biggest are competing against each other for your own name. The site Ford makes you keep — and that you can't fully edit — is currently your strongest organic asset. The site you fully own and pay to advertise sits second. Fix the split, and you own Fairfield County Ford before any competitor wakes up.

4

domains splitting your search authority instead of one strong site

12+

of your own brand & local terms that two Stevens sites fight each other for

2.2×

more organic traffic to the Ford OEM site you can't fully edit than to the site you own

What we found

Your authority is fragmented. Four domains carry the Stevens name: your owned site (stevensauto.com), the Ford-mandated OEM site (stevensfordmilford.com), a Lincoln OEM site (lincolnofmilford.com) that is currently **offline**, and a near-dead corporate domain (stevensautogroup.com). Google has to choose between them, so none ranks as well as one consolidated site would.

Two sites cannibalize your own name. For at least a dozen money terms — "stevens ford," "milford ford dealer," "ford dealer in milford" — both your OEM site and your owned site rank, one just below the other. That is two horses in the same race, splitting the same prize.

The asset you control is invisible to AI. The Ford OEM site blocks the crawlers behind ChatGPT, Perplexity, and other AI answers. Your owned site allows them — which is exactly why the consolidation target is stevensauto.com, and why Nate's instinct to build presence on Reddit is correct.

The decision on the table — and our answer. Nate floated putting "noindex / nofollow" on the Ford OEM site. Don't pull that lever first. That site is your #1 organic asset today, and a blanket noindex deletes its traffic before your owned site can catch it — on a platform you probably can't even edit. The safe play captures the traffic instead of losing it. Full reasoning on page 4.

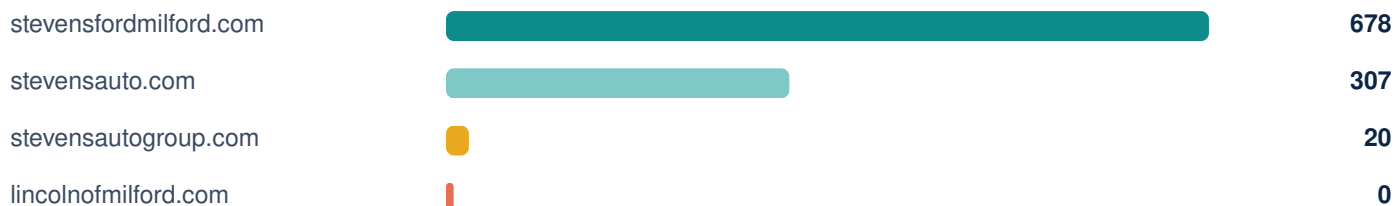
What we recommend, in one breath

Make **stevensauto.com** the unmistakable flagship: point every signal you control at it (Google Business Profile, citations, links, the two dead domains), split the targeting so your sites stop competing, and build the structured-data + content + Reddit presence that wins both Google and AI answers. *Then*, once your owned site is winning the shared terms, dial the OEM site down the safe way. Every step below is tagged **AGENT** (we do it) or **NEEDS YOU** (access, content, or a decision), and mirrored into Basecamp so you can watch progress without living in the weeds.

Map Your Four-Domain Footprint

One dealership. One address (717 Bridgeport Ave, Milford, CT). One phone — (203) 876-6464. But four websites carrying your brand, each holding a slice of authority that should belong to a single property.

Domain	Role	Domain Rating	Organic kw	Organic visits / mo	AI crawlers	Who controls it
stevensfordmilford.com	Ford OEM (mandated)	15	64	678	Blocked	FordDirect platform — you can't fully edit
stevensauto.com	Owned umbrella + ads	9	38	307	Allowed	You — full control
stevensautogroup.com	Corporate / fleet	6	8	20	—	You
lincolnofmilford.com	Lincoln OEM	0.2	0	0	Offline	Down at audit (connection refused)



Monthly organic visits by domain (Ahrefs, US, June 2026). The bar you'd most want to grow — your owned site — is less than half the one you can't fully edit.

Read this the way Google does

The strongest backlink profile (Domain Rating 15) and the most traffic sit on the one property Ford controls. Your owned site is close behind on links — **274 referring domains vs. the OEM site's 321** — which is the good news: stevensauto.com is already strong enough to carry the flagship role once you stop diluting it.

Two of the four domains are dead weight. The Lincoln OEM site returns a connection error and ranks for nothing. The corporate domain pulls 20 visits a month. Both still split your brand signals and confuse the entity Google and AI engines try to build for "Stevens."

Stop Two Sites From Fighting for Your Name

When two sites you own rank for the same search, you don't win twice — you split one win in half. Here is exactly where it's happening.

Search term	Volume / mo	Ford OEM site	Your owned site	What it costs you
stevens ford	800	#3	#4	Both rank; neither is #1 on your own name
milford ford dealer	100	#2	#5	Owned site buried three spots down
ford milford	250	#2	#4	Authority split across two URLs
milford ford	350	#3	#4	Adjacent ranks, divided clicks
ford dealer in milford	90	#3	#6	Non-brand local term half-lost
ford of milford	50	#2	#5	Two listings, one diluted
stevens ford milford	100	#1	#2	You out-rank yourself
ford milford ct	50	#2	#1	Owned site can win — proof it's possible

Ahrefs organic positions, US, June 2026. Twelve-plus shared terms show this pattern; eight shown. "#1" highlighted is whichever Stevens site ranks higher.

Why this happens

Google sees two legitimate Stevens sites for the same query and hedges — it ranks both, lower than it would rank a single authoritative page. Your link equity, your content signals, and your click-through all get divided. The OEM site usually wins the higher spot because it carries more backlinks today, which is precisely why noindexing it first is dangerous.

The wedge: your owned site already owns what the OEM site can't

stevensauto.com ranks **#1 for "stevens collision center"** and owns the body-shop, used-inventory, and Lincoln terms entirely — the OEM site doesn't compete there. That's the opening: let the OEM site keep pure-Ford-brand queries while stevensauto.com owns service, collision, used, Lincoln, and "near me" intent. Split the targeting and the two sites stop fighting — without deleting anything.

The plain-English version for Nate: You're running two horses in the same race and betting on both. We're not going to shoot one horse (noindex). We're going to put them in different races — and load all your money onto the one you own.

Answer the Noindex Question With Data

Nate asked the right follow-up: *can we redirect the OEM site, or do something else, without accidentally hurting ourselves?* Yes. Here's the honest ranking of every option, safest first.

Option	What it does	Risk	Can you even do it?
1. Consolidate by addition START HERE	Grow stevensauto.com to win the money terms; move GBP, citations, and links onto it; split targeting so the sites stop competing	None — you add, never subtract	Yes — no Ford permission needed
2. Cross-domain canonical	Tell Google the OEM pages' "master copy" lives on stevensauto.com	Moderate — Google treats it as a hint, not a command	Only if FordDirect lets you edit canonicals (often no)
3. 301 redirect OEM → owned	Transfer ranking equity between two sites you own	High — breaks Ford's required branded presence	Rarely — Ford requires the site to exist
4. Blanket noindex LAST RESORT	Removes the OEM site from Google	Highest — deletes 678 visits/mo immediately	Likely no — platform-controlled robots/meta

Why noindex-first is the trap

The OEM site earns ~678 organic visits a month and holds 26 top-three rankings. Your owned site currently sits at #4–#6 on those same shared terms. Noindex the OEM site today and those 678 visits don't transfer to [stevensauto.com](#) — they mostly vanish, because your owned site hasn't earned those positions *yet*. You'd be cutting your strongest branch to grow a weaker one.

The reality check that settles it

The Ford OEM site runs on a FordDirect-controlled platform. Its robots file and meta tags are managed by the platform, not by you — so a noindex or redirect almost certainly requires a **FordDirect request**, not a switch your team can flip. That makes "noindex" a Phase-4 coordination task, not a quick win. Build the owned site up first; demote the OEM site last, only once the traffic has already moved.

The safe sequence (this is the recommendation): (1) Grow [stevensauto.com](#) and move every signal you control onto it. (2) Split targeting so the sites stop competing. (3) Confirm your owned site now holds the shared terms. (4) *Only then* ask FordDirect to canonical → noindex the OEM site. Order matters more than the lever.

Get Stevens Into AI Answers

More and more car shoppers ask ChatGPT, Gemini, and Google's AI Overviews "who's a good Ford dealer near Milford?" before they ever click a blue link. Right now, the answer engines can barely see you — and the one site they can't read is the one Ford controls.

Why AI can't recommend you today

Your Ford OEM site blocks the AI crawlers. Its robots file explicitly disallows GPTBot, OAI-SearchBot, CCBot, and ChatGPT-User — the bots behind ChatGPT and other answer engines. So the site with your best content is invisible to AI by the platform's own configuration, and you can't change it.

Your owned site is AI-readable — so that's where AEO lives. [stevensauto.com](https://www.stevensauto.com) allows those crawlers. Every dollar of answer-engine work should compound on the site you control, not the one Ford locks.

Your structured data is thin. Both sites carry only basic AutoDealer markup — no FAQ schema, no detailed vehicle data, no entity graph (sameAs) linking your brand to Google's knowledge of "Stevens Ford." AI engines lean on exactly that structure to decide who to name.

You have no presence where AI looks. Answer engines lean heavily on Reddit, forums, and review sites. There's no Stevens footprint there today — which is why Nate's "pump content into Reddit" instinct is right, and why no one is currently tracking whether AI tools mention you at all.

The AEO build (all on [stevensauto.com](https://www.stevensauto.com)): add FAQ + Vehicle + LocalBusiness schema and a clean entity graph; publish question-shaped content that answers real buyer and service questions; run a genuine Reddit / review presence in r/Connecticut, local Milford and Fairfield County threads, and Ford-owner communities; and stand up AI-visibility tracking so we can measure share-of-voice in ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, and AI Overviews — then improve it.

Win a Wide-Open Local Market

The reason this is worth doing now: nobody in your lane has built a moat. Every Connecticut Ford competitor sits at roughly your authority level, and a Chevy store in your own town is quietly out-trafficking you.

Competitor	Domain Rating	Organic visits / mo	Read
Colonial Ford, Danbury	18	2,293	Best-positioned CT Ford rival
Gengras Ford	15	1,936	Same authority as you — beatable
Chevrolet of Milford	14	1,327	Same town, different brand, out-traffics your Ford site
Hoffman Ford, East Hartford	13	2,120	Beatable with consolidation
Litchfield Ford	11	2,639	Thin site out-ranking on volume
Stevens (Ford OEM site)	15	678	Top authority, under-performing on traffic

Ahrefs organic competitors for the Stevens Ford footprint, US, June 2026. The whole field is Domain Rating 11–18 — a market won by execution, not by spending more than a national brand.

Where the winnable searches are

Skip the vanity terms. The realistic wins fall in three buckets, and most are low-difficulty:

Target	Examples	Volume	Difficulty	How you win it
Local pack	ford dealer near me; used cars milford ct	48,000 / 200	Low–Med	Google Business Profile + reviews + NAP
Inventory long-tail	ford bronco for sale; ford escape for sale	60,000 / 9,700	0	Model + Milford landing pages, indexable inventory
Hyperlocal intent	car dealerships milford ct; used trucks for sale ct	150 / 40	1–8	Owned-site service/used hubs with real content

These don't require beating ford.com. They require one consolidated, well-structured site, a fully optimized Google Business Profile, and content that actually answers what local buyers type. That is entirely within reach this quarter.

The Action Plan — Who Does What

Owner-level by design: you see the moves and the order, not the wiring. Every item is tagged so you know in one glance what we run and what needs a hand from you.

AGENT

We execute it once access is granted — code, schema, pages, redirects, tracking, monitoring.

NEEDS YOU

Requires you or the team: grant an access, provide content or photos, or make a quick decision.

3RD PARTY

Requires coordination with Google, FordDirect, or your hosting — we'll draft and manage the request.

Phase 1 — Foundation & Quick Wins WEEKS 1–2

THE MOVE	WHAT IT NEEDS	TAG
Confirm stevensauto.com as the canonical flagship for the whole group	One owner decision	NEEDS YOU
Grant access: site CMS, Google Business Profile(s), Google Search Console, FordDirect login	You / office manager	NEEDS YOU
Rewrite the homepage title & meta to include "Milford, CT" + Ford & Lincoln (today they're generic)	CMS access	AGENT
Add LocalBusiness / AutoDealer + FAQ schema and the sameAs entity graph	CMS access	AGENT
Fix NAP & business-hours inconsistencies across all sites and listings	GBP + listings access	AGENT
Decide the Lincoln site's fate: restore it, or fold it into stevensauto.com/lincoln-of-milford	Owner decision + hosting	NEEDS YOU

Phase 2 — Consolidate Your Authority WEEKS 3–6

THE MOVE	WHAT IT NEEDS	TAG
Build differentiated money pages: Ford service, collision/body shop, used hubs, model + Milford landing pages	CMS access + content inputs	AGENT
Provide raw material: real photos, service pricing, staff bios, customer stories	You / the team	NEEDS YOU
	GBP access	AGENT

THE MOVE	WHAT IT NEEDS	TAG
Point Google Business Profile website link + citations at stevensauto.com money pages		
Redirect the corporate domain (stevensautogroup.com) into stevensauto.com	DNS / hosting access	3RD PARTY
301 the dead Lincoln domain to stevensauto.com/lincoln-of-milford	Hosting access	3RD PARTY
Consolidate internal links so authority flows to the flagship money pages	CMS access	AGENT

Phase 3 — Build the AEO & Content Engine WEEKS 5–10

THE MOVE	WHAT IT NEEDS	TAG
Publish question-shaped FAQ & buyer/service content with full schema (the AI-answer layer)	CMS + content review	AGENT
Stand up AI-visibility tracking (ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, AI Overviews share-of-voice)	Ahrefs Brand Radar	AGENT
Run a real Reddit / forum presence: r/Connecticut, Milford & Fairfield threads, Ford-owner communities	Brand voice + accounts	NEEDS YOU
Launch model + city inventory content for the zero-difficulty terms (Bronco, Escape, F-150)	Inventory feed access	AGENT
Build a review-generation routine to feed the local pack and AI trust signals	Team process + GBP	NEEDS YOU

Phase 4 — Dial Down the OEM Site, Safely WEEKS 10–14 · ONLY AFTER THE OWNED SITE IS WINNING

THE MOVE	WHAT IT NEEDS	TAG
Confirm stevensauto.com now holds the shared brand/local terms (gate before any demotion)	Ranking data	AGENT
Submit the FordDirect request: cross-domain canonical (or noindex, if permitted) on the OEM site	You + FordDirect	3RD PARTY
Monitor the traffic transfer; hold the demotion if the owned site hasn't fully absorbed the terms	Tracking	AGENT
Make the final call to noindex / retire the OEM presence once it's safe	Owner decision	NEEDS YOU

The one thing that unblocks everything: the access grants in Phase 1. The moment we have the CMS, Google Business Profile, Search Console, and FordDirect logins, roughly two-thirds of this plan is work we run for you — you just watch it land in Basecamp.

Track Everything in Basecamp

This plan lives in your existing Basecamp project, not in a PDF that gets buried. Every move above is mirrored as a to-do, grouped so the split is obvious at a glance:

Basecamp to-do list	What's in it	Owner
Stevens — Agent Executes	Every AGENT item: schema, pages, titles, redirects, tracking, monitoring	Web team
Stevens — Needs Nate / Team	Every NEEDS YOU item: access grants, content, photos, decisions	Nate / office
Stevens — 3rd-Party Requests	Every 3RD PARTY item: Google, FordDirect, hosting coordination	Local Service Spotlight drafts, you approve

You stay the owner watching the board move. The web team executes against it. Nothing falls through a crack, and you're never pulled into the weeds to keep it moving.

THE NEXT STEP

Grant Phase-1 access & we start this week

Hand over the CMS, Google Business Profile, Search Console, and FordDirect logins, and the agent-tagged work begins immediately — tracked live in Basecamp.

Appendix — How We Ran This Audit

Every figure in this report is pulled from live data on the dates shown — nothing is invented or estimated by hand. Where a site couldn't be read (the Lincoln domain), that is reported as a finding, not filled in.

What we measured	Source & method
Domain authority, organic keywords, traffic, competitors, backlinks	Ahrefs Site Explorer, Keywords Explorer, Organic Competitors & Backlinks (US, snapshot 16 June 2026)
Keyword volume & difficulty, SERP features (incl. AI Overviews, local pack)	Ahrefs Keywords Explorer (US)
Technical & on-page: titles, meta, schema, canonical, robots, sitemaps, NAP	Live crawl of each domain, 17 June 2026
AI-crawler access (GPTBot, OAI-SearchBot, CCBot, ChatGPT-User)	robots.txt inspection on each domain
AI-answer visibility tracking	Not yet configured — recommended setup in Phase 3

Key numbers, locked

Ford OEM site (stevensfordmilford.com): DR 15 · 64 organic keywords · 678 visits/mo · ~\$648/mo organic value · 26 top-3 rankings · 321 referring domains · AI crawlers blocked. Owned site (stevensauto.com): DR 9 · 38 organic keywords · 307 visits/mo · ~\$251/mo organic value · 274 referring domains · also runs ~\$163/mo paid search · AI crawlers allowed. Corporate (stevensautogroup.com): DR 6 · 20 visits/mo. Lincoln (lincolnofmilford.com): DR 0.2 · offline at audit. Location: 717 Bridgeport Ave, Milford, CT 06460 · (203) 876-6464.

Prepared by Dennis Yu · Local Service Spotlight · for Stevens Auto Group · June 17, 2026 · Findings reflect a point-in-time snapshot; search and AI data shift week to week, which is why the plan includes ongoing tracking.