



Best business process automation tool|



Best 65-inch TV|

# The 2025 AI Visibility Index Study



August 2025



Best employee scheduling app|

# What's inside?

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# 01

## Executive Summary

Search has fundamentally changed. Many brands are seeing organic traffic and clicks erode as AI search takes hold.

Only data-backed research can uncover the emerging trends that reveal how brands can truly win in this new reality. With Semrush's history as a data leader in traditional SEO, we're now applying this expertise to AI search.

The AI Visibility Index was built using Semrush Enterprise AI Optimization (AIO) to track 2,500 carefully weighted and tagged prompts. This design allows us to compare 5 major industries without excessive variance:



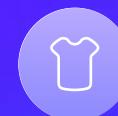
Business &  
professional services



Digital technology  
& software



Consumer  
electronics



Fashion  
& apparel



Finance

[Read more about  
our methodology on page 124 →](#)



Best virtual assistant service|



Most..

IP|



Payroll service with tax filing|



Virtual assistant with social media management|

..live chat|



Top rated SEO service|



Highest rated CRM software|



LTL..



Project management tool for marketing agency|



**SEMRUSH**  
Enterprise AIO

We selected ChatGPT (GPT-4o model) and Google AI Mode, utilizing customer-centric prompts to capture brand mentions, citation sources, and overall Share of Voice. We focused on these two models because they represent the most relevant sources of consumer data today:

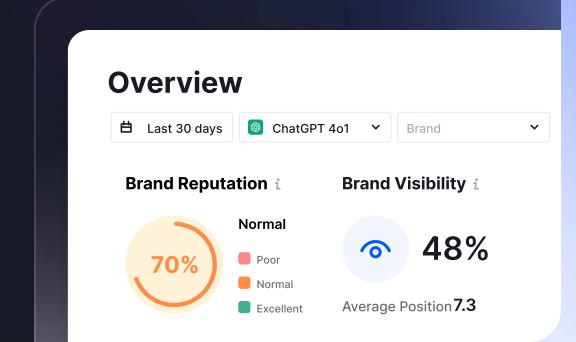
- ChatGPT, with an estimated 80%+ market share, is the dominant AI model used by the majority of consumers.
- Google's AI Mode, meanwhile, is the next step in evolving Gemini and AI Overviews. It provides a glimpse into the future of search from the perspective of the industry's leader.

We were able to uncover insights like the gap between brands that are talked about versus those that are simply sources of information for the AI models. Unique vertical dynamics and actionable optimization strategies are also explored in detail.

This depth of analysis was made possible by Semrush Enterprise AI Optimization (AIO), which revealed not just who is winning, but why.



Semrush Enterprise AI Optimization (AIO) is the first enterprise-grade solution for tracking and optimizing across AI search platforms. Enabling brands to lead the AI search era with granular analysis of mentions, sentiment, and competitors.



# Our Key Findings

## Organic SEO ≠ AI visibility

High Google rankings do not guarantee top placement in ChatGPT or Google AI Mode. Structured data, accessible pricing information, and third-party validation (e.g. industry publications) matter more.

[Read more on page 18 →](#)

## UGC and reviews are the new currency

AI models rely heavily on forums, reviews, and social posts to shape brand rankings. These user-driven sources now outweigh much of traditional SEO.

[Read more on page 81 →](#)

## AI search varies by industry

AI search doesn't treat every industry the same. The rules shift depending on what users care about, how competitive the market is, and where AI models find their data.

[Read more on page 54 →](#)

## The brand effect is real

Iconic brands like Patagonia and Garmin consistently top AI rankings through strategic targeting of their niches. Even in industries where competitors might be more well-known, or previously dominated organic visibility.

[Read more on page 89 →](#)

## Mentions ≠ sources

Brands that are cited most often as trusted sources very rarely rank highly in mentions. Sources tend to be minimized visually and scarcely clicked. But if your brand is mentioned in the answer, this increases awareness and helps you dominate conversation.

[Read more on page 65 →](#)

## Technically excellent websites are a must

Work with technical teams to ensure that key content is indexed, well structured, and available within static HTML—as AI crawlers struggle with dynamic content.

[Read more on page 109 →](#)

AI models use a two-stage logic to decide which brands have earned visibility and then the sentiment to frame them within:

### Stage 1: Discovery

Who's being talked about in reviews, listicles, and Reddit threads?

### Stage 2: Authority

Once selected, does the brand have clear, factual, structured content to back up (or counter) the online discussion?

[Read more on page 13 →](#)

But beyond the rankings lies a bigger story: **AI visibility isn't accidental, it's engineered.**

[Get your 30-day to 12-month AI visibility roadmap on page 113 →](#)

# This Study Could Decide Your Revenue Trajectory



See which brands are thriving on AI platforms alongside the content and visibility tactics that got them there.



Explore industry analysis and get your blueprint for growing visibility and winning in AI search.

And most importantly: it offers proven enterprise-ready tactics, drawing from patterns observed in brands like Patagonia, Garmin, and Capital One who are succeeding in AI search.

From dominating community forums to structuring pricing that AI can actually cite, build your own strategy based on these factors to boost your own visibility.

This is your complete playbook for being found, trusted, and recommended by AI. Whenever customers search.



# The Evolution of AI Search: How Did We Get Here?

The search landscape has evolved significantly over the past decade. Traditional Google organic results dominated for years, with brands focusing on SEO to achieve top rankings. Google introduced featured snippets around 2014, providing users with quick answers extracted directly from web content and creating the concept of “position zero.” This marked the point where information was first retrieved and summarized.

This is the key to understanding the search revolution: third-party platforms summarizing and using your content is becoming the default way that people find information.

2014

Google introduced featured snippets.

# 2022

ChatGPT's GPT-3.5 model marked a turning point in November 2022. This demonstrated that users could receive comprehensive answers through conversational AI without visiting traditional websites. Perplexity was live soon after, an early form of AI search as we now know.

# 2023

Google responded by expanding AI Overviews (initially called Search Generative Experience) throughout 2023. These AI summaries began appearing above results, alongside new search modes designed to integrate AI into Google's existing infrastructure.

# 2025

Now multiple AI platforms offer their own distinct approaches to search. Having launched in Q1, 2025, Google's AI Mode has rolled out in the US, India and the UK (at time of publication).

Alongside this rapid technological progression comes incredible adoption speed. ChatGPT already reports over 800 million weekly active users and receives over 2.5 billion prompts every day.

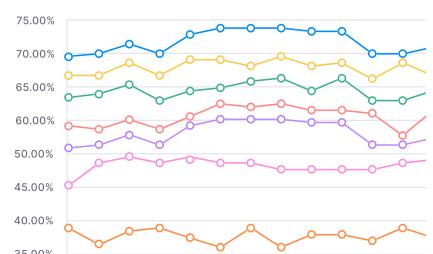
It's a staggering uptake that shows little sign of slowing down. Semrush data projects AI search channel traffic to exceed that of search engines by 2028.

Success now requires optimizing for search engines, AI search retrieval, and ensuring content appears in the training data of AI models.



With Semrush Enterprise, teams can analyze both search engines and AI visibility through a single platform, using different optimization tactics to grow visibility and revenue across these channels.

Brand Share of Voice over time



# Key Terms Used in This Study

Share of voice (AI)

**86.8%**

+5.77% Trend

82% Prev. Period



Popular Products in Shopping

Prompts Rankings (AI)	Position
What are the most durable running shoes available?	2
What running shoes have the best cushioning?	1
Which running shoes have the best durability?	2

Top Sources

Sentiment

- Blog post
- News article
- Video review

- +2 ↑ Positive
- +1 ↑ Positive
- +2 ↓ Negative

Concept Source

Quality	...it offers best-in-class...	Positive
Comfort	...not the highest standard...	Positive
Price	...considered as quite cheap...	Neutral

## Share of Voice (SOV):

A Semrush metric that accounts for the frequency and position of a brand's mentions across a dataset. If a brand was mentioned first in every prompt their SOV would be 100%. In this study, the weighting is 80% for ChatGPT and 20% for Google AI Mode to reflect user numbers.

## Prompt:

The original written request or question given to an AI search platform.

## Source/citation:

The brand that information is attributed to in an AI search response. Usually as a small link at the end of a passage or the response.

## Mention:

A clear inclusion of a brand within a response. For example: "According to Forbes..."

Mentions are just  
the start. Authority  
is the key.

02

# Decoding AI Search: How AI Filters and Ranks Your Brand

## Stage 1

### Brand Discovery & Ranking

When users are comparing multiple brands (“best lightweight hiking shoes for women”), AI conducts web searches using their specifications and relies heavily on:

- User-generated content from reviews, forums, and social media
- Third-party sentiment to rank and order brands in the response
- Community discussions on Reddit, Quora, and industry forums

**Result:** A ranked list of brands based on collective user sentiment and specifications

## Stage 2

### Brand Investigation

Once users want to investigate a specific brand (“are Salomon X Ultra waterproof, and how much do they cost?”, AI shifts its research approach:

- Your official website becomes the primary source for current product information, pricing, and features
- Authority sites like Wikipedia for background and credibility
- Reviews still matter but take a supporting role to official information

**Result:** Detailed brand information pulled primarily from authoritative sources

# The Two-Stage AI Decision Process

Win Stage 1:

# The Sentiment Battle

Dominate user-generated content across platforms where AI gathers comparative opinions:



**Review sites:** G2, Capterra, TrustPilot



**Community forums:** Reddit, Quora, Stack Overflow



**Social discussions:** YouTube videos, LinkedIn posts, X (Twitter) threads

## Win Stage 2:

# The Authority Game

Ensure AI finds accurate, comprehensive information when users dig deeper:



**Your website:** Clear, factual product descriptions and transparent pricing



**Wikipedia entries:** Keep updated with current information



**Official documentation:** Structured, comprehensive product details

# The Marketplace Strategy

If users buy through marketplaces:



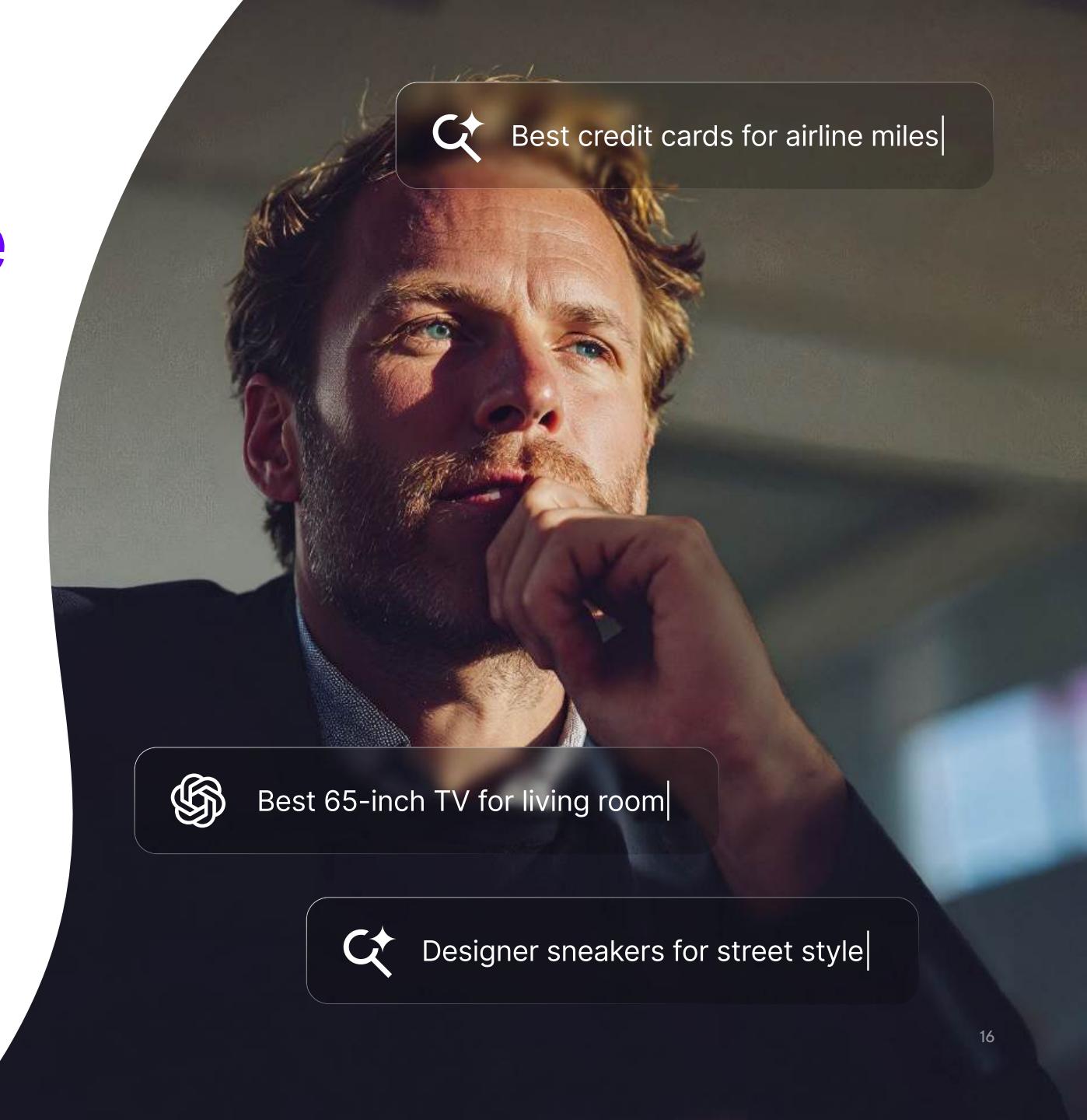
Implement structured markup  
for easy AI parsing



Display accurate, up-to-date  
pricing information



Accumulate substantial positive  
user reviews adjacent to pricing



# What AI really values, industry by industry

# 03

## Sector Spotlights: Where Brands Win and Why

# Where Brands Win and Why

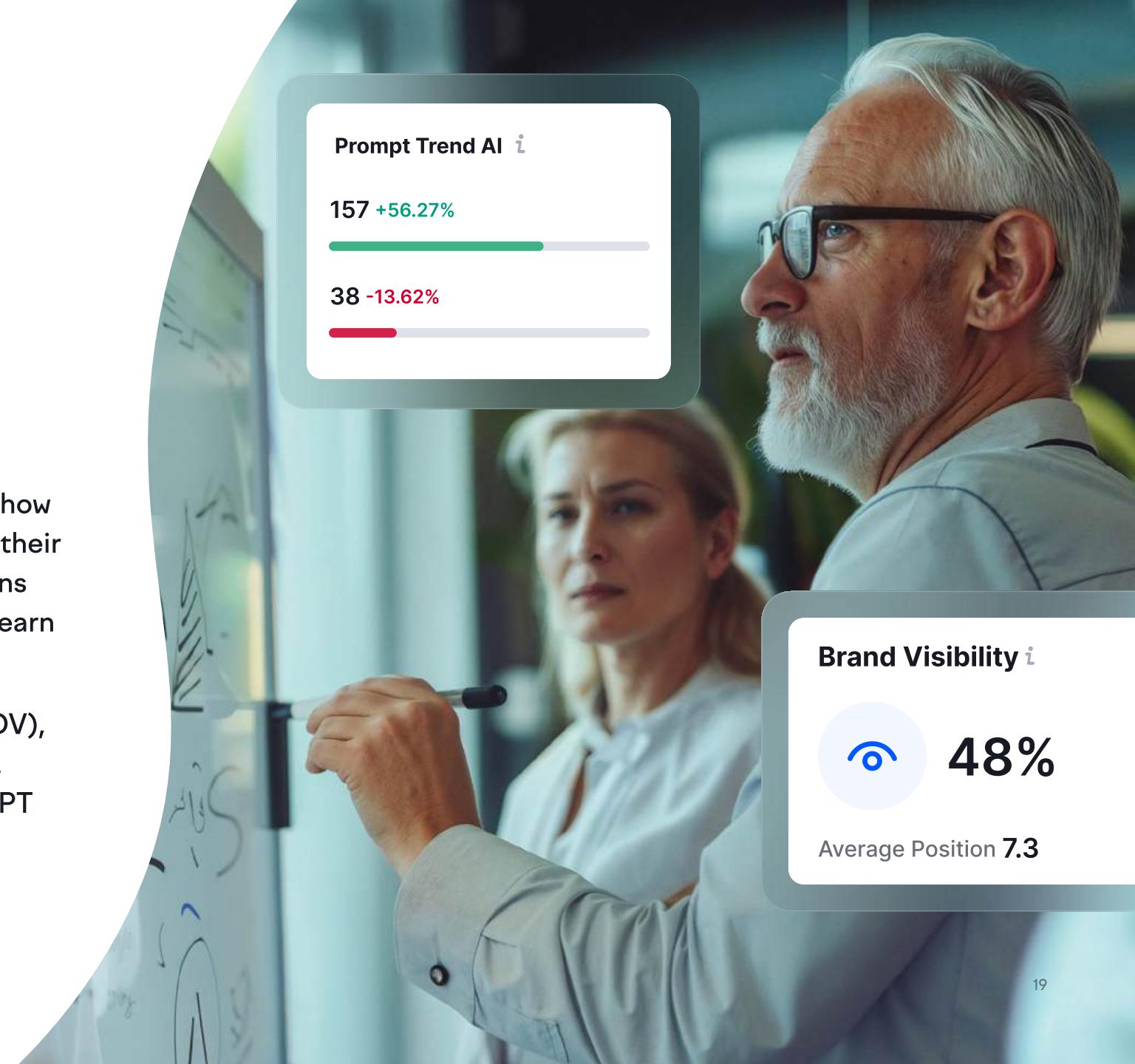
AI search doesn't treat every industry the same.

The rules shift depending on what users care about, how competitive the market is, and where AI models find their data. These sector-level analyses offer a narrative lens on how visibility is earned, and what your brand can learn from the top performers.

To identify the top brands we use Share of Voice (SOV), a metric that covers visibility frequency and ranking.

We then weigh a brand's performance across ChatGPT and Google AI Mode to gauge final performance.

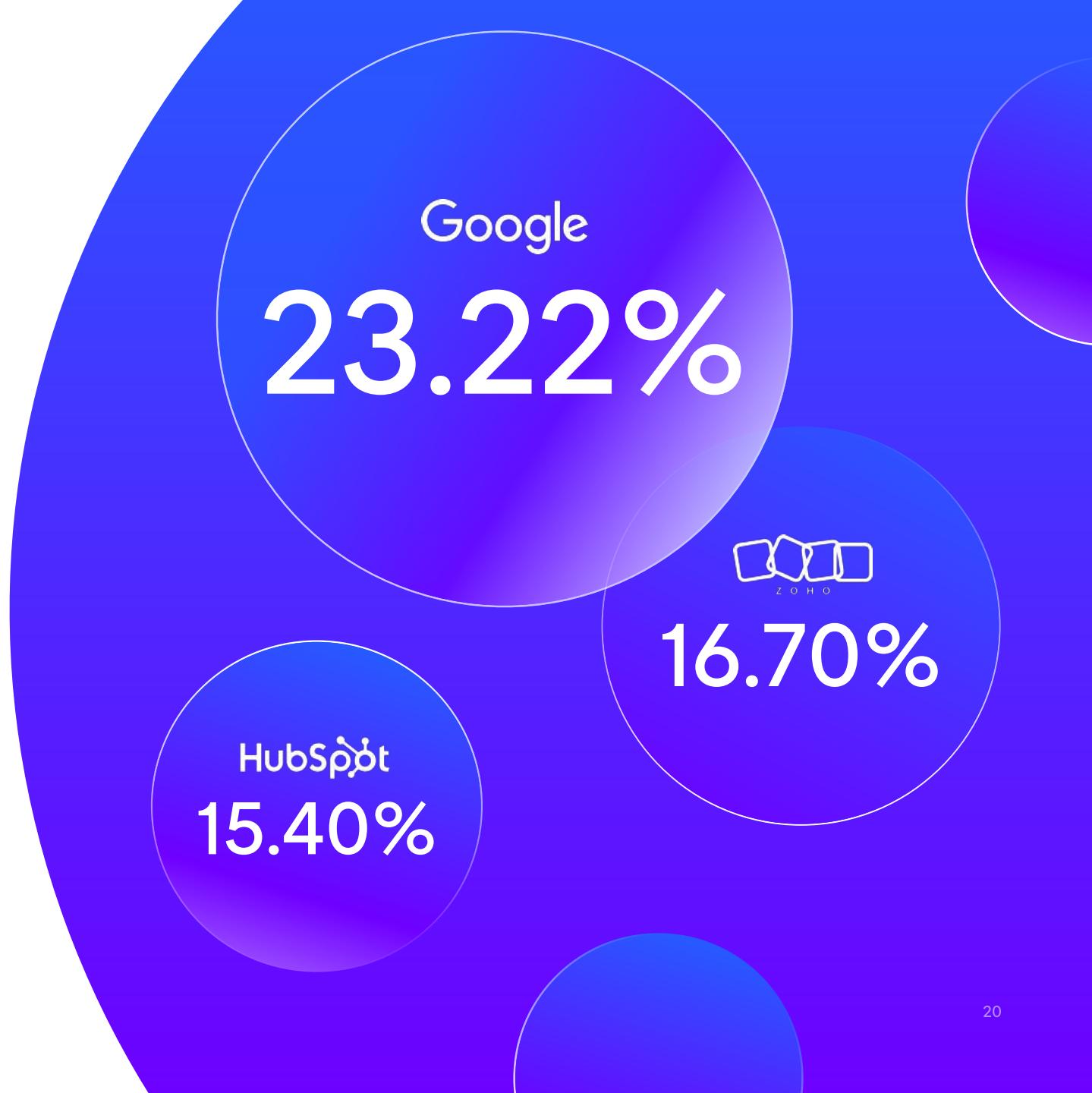
Let's dive into the sector spotlight.



# The Surprising Leaders

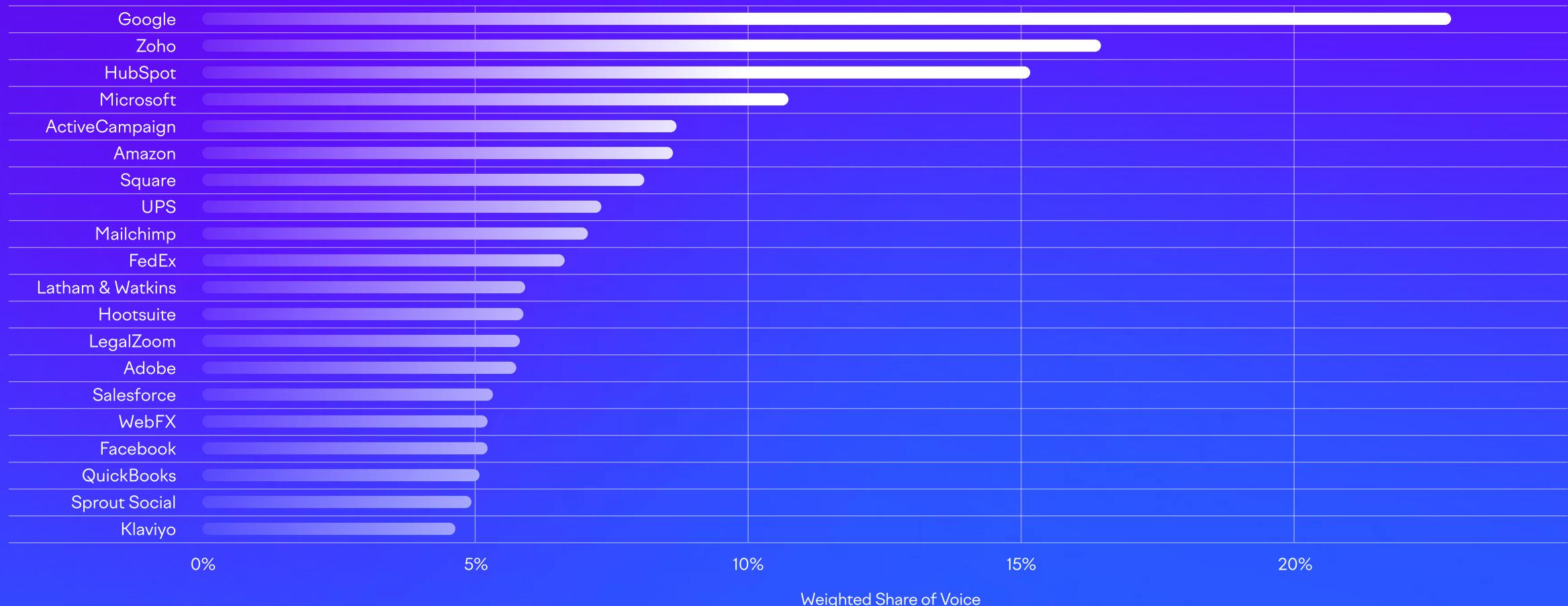
Google dominates as the most mentioned brand at 23.22%, followed by Zoho (16.70%) and HubSpot (15.40%).

Google's leadership may seem unexpected, but it reflects how deeply integrated Google's products are in business operations, from "Google Ads agencies" to "Google Workspace consultants." Zoho and HubSpot's strong positions demonstrate that B2B SaaS platforms with comprehensive content strategies can achieve significant AI visibility.



# Top 20 Brands: Business & Professional Services

Data collected: August 2025



# Notable Insights:



Marketing automation tools dominate the top 10: ActiveCampaign (8.85%), Mailchimp (7.17%), Hootsuite (6.00%), and Klaviyo (4.71%)



Legal services have strong representation with Latham & Watkins (6.00%) and LegalZoom (5.95%)



Traditional business services like shipping (UPS 7.48%, FedEx 6.77%) maintain solid AI presence

# The Source Divide Between ChatGPT and Google AI Mode

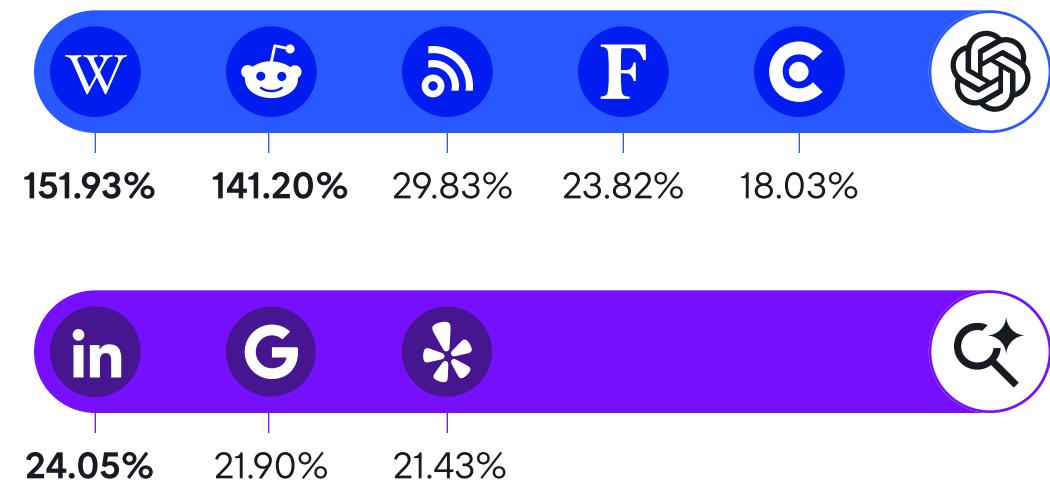
The data reveals a stark difference in how the two major AI platforms source information:

## ChatGPT's approach:

Reddit (141.20%) and Wikipedia (151.93%) completely dominate, with each referenced more than once per prompt on average. Industry-specific sources like TechRadar (29.83%), Forbes (23.82%), and Clutch.co (18.03%) also feature prominently.

## Google AI Mode's strategy:

LinkedIn (24.05%) leads, followed by Google's own properties (21.90%) and Yelp (21.43%). This reflects Google's reliance on its Knowledge Graph, business listings, and professional networks.



# Top Sources: Business & Professional Services

## ChatGPT

Domain	Source (%)
wikipedia.org	151.93%
reddit.com	141.20%
techradar.com	29.83%
forbes.com	23.82%
clutch.com	18.03%
businessinder.com	12.66%
influencermarketinghub.com	12.66%
chambers.com	10.30%
nerdwallet.com	10.09%
designrush.com	9.87%

## Google AI Mode

Domain	Source (%)
linkedin.com	24.05%
google.com	21.90%
yelp.com	21.43%
shopify.com	11.43%
zapier.com	10.95%
quora.com	10.24%
superlawyers.com	9.52%
justia.com	9.29%
chambers.com	8.57%
vault.com	7.62%

Data collected:  
August 2025

# Strategic Implications for B2B Brands

## Platform-specific optimization:

- For ChatGPT: Focus on Reddit community engagement, Wikipedia accuracy, and getting featured in Forbes/TechRadar articles
- For Google AI Mode: Optimize LinkedIn presence, Google Business Profile, and Yelp reviews

## Content authority strategy:

Industry publications like Clutch.co (18.03% in ChatGPT) and professional directories matter significantly. B2B brands should prioritize getting featured in these authoritative sources rather than just creating owned content.

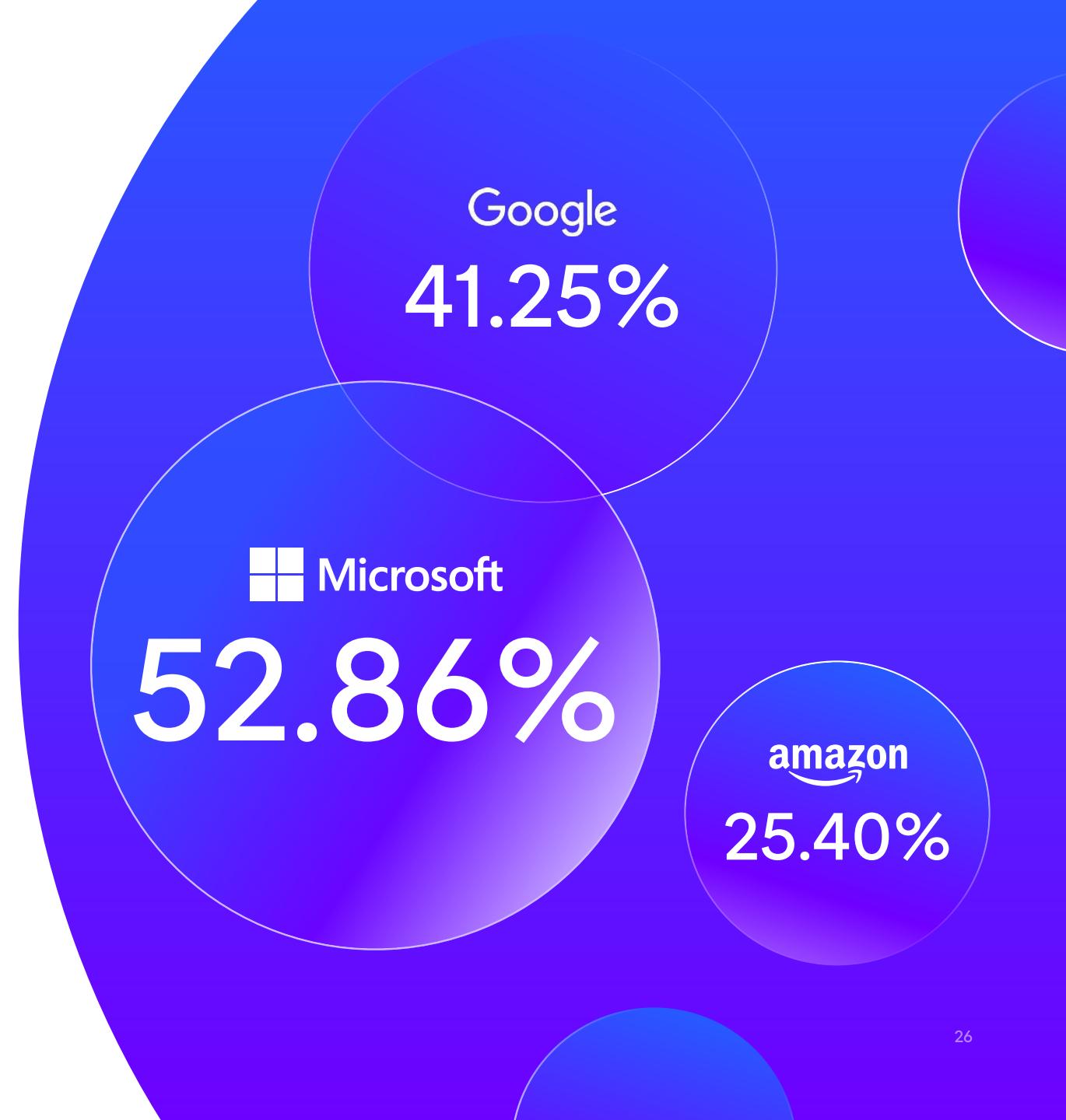
## Review platform importance:

Yelp appears prominently in Google AI Mode (21.43%), indicating that traditional review management remains crucial for AI visibility, even in B2B contexts.

# The Tech Titan Showdown

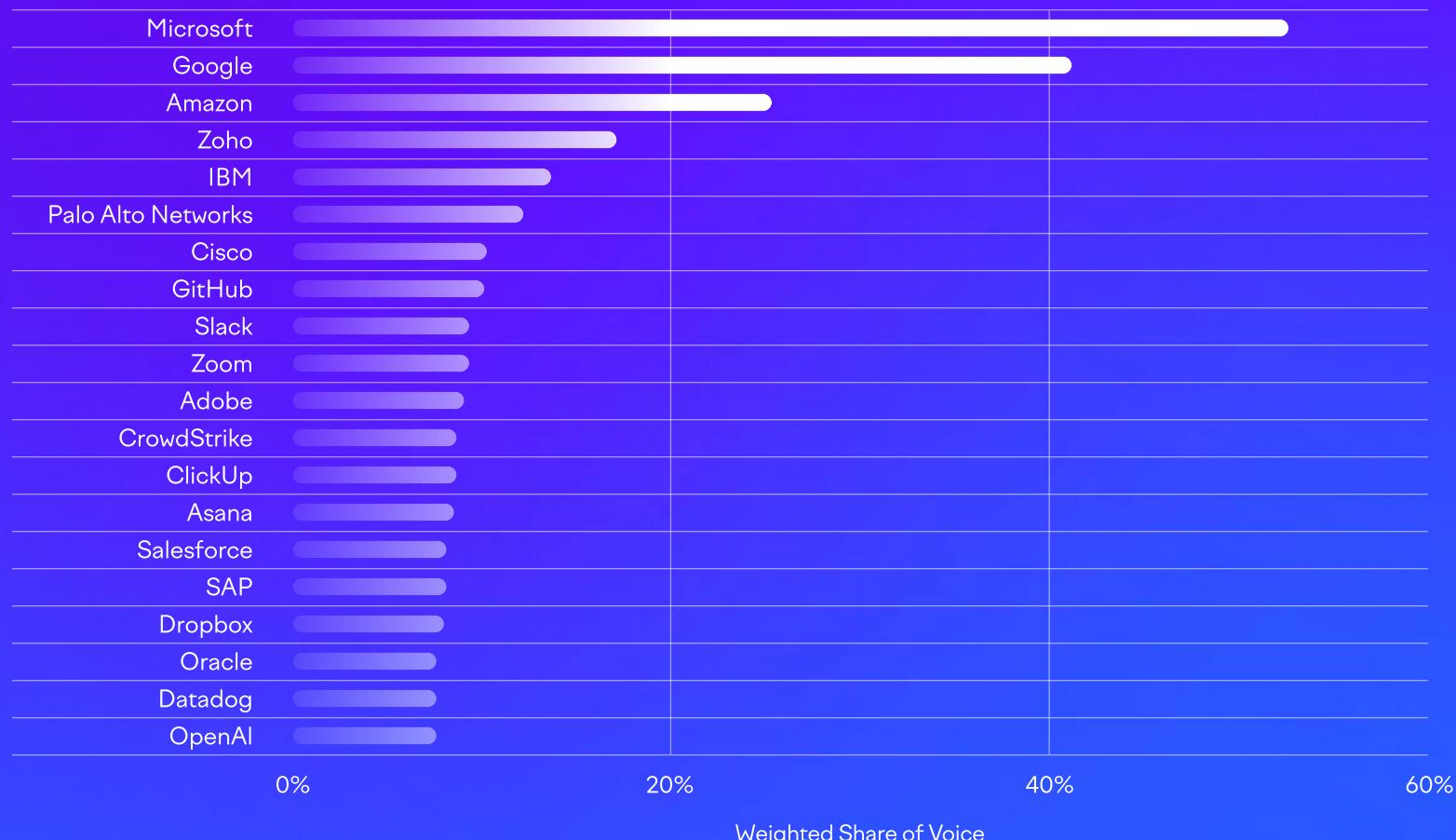
Extremely recognizable brands sit at the top of the leaderboard, with Microsoft ranking first with 52.86%, followed by Google at 41.25%, and Amazon in third with 25.40%.

No surprises for Microsoft and Google leading the pack, given how broad their product offerings are. They naturally feature heavily in conversations across the web for their industry and have incredibly wide digital ecosystems of their own also fueling visibility. Amazon's position is more likely representative of their weight within the cloud computing sphere, demonstrating the power of category leadership.



# Top 20 Brands: Digital Technology & Software

Data collected: August 2025



Microsoft leads at 52.86%, edging out Google's 41.25% despite Google's broader product portfolio. This near-parity reflects their comprehensive competition across cloud services, productivity tools, and enterprise solutions. Remarkably, these giants appear together in 78% of ChatGPT prompts and 82% of Google AI Mode responses, showing how intertwined their market positioning has become.

Amazon rounds out the top three at 25.40%, likely driven by AWS dominance and integration discussions across the tech stack.

# Notable Patterns:



**Security leaders:** Palo Alto Networks (12.37%) and CrowdStrike (8.76%) demonstrate strong AI visibility in cybersecurity discussions



**Productivity platform wars:** Slack (9.49%), Asana (8.69%), and ClickUp (8.75%) compete closely for project management mindshare

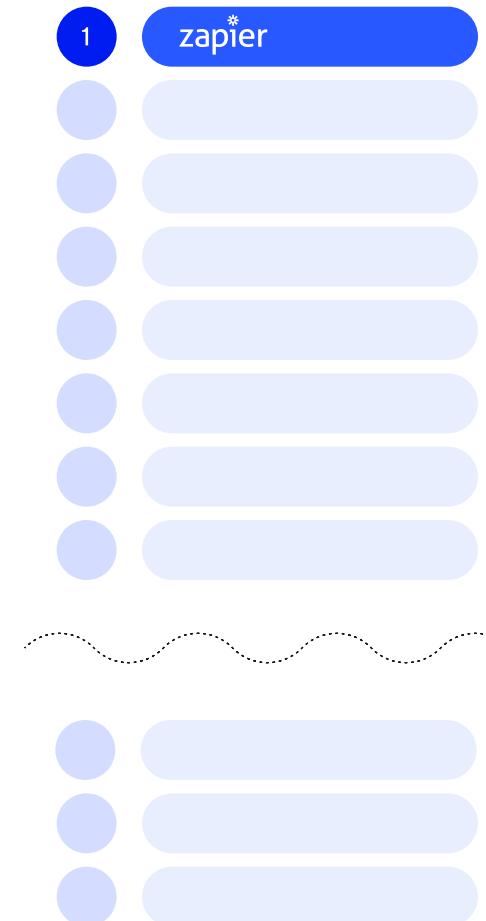


**Surprising overperformer:** Zoho at 17.28% punches well above its market cap, driven by comprehensive platform offerings and an active Reddit community

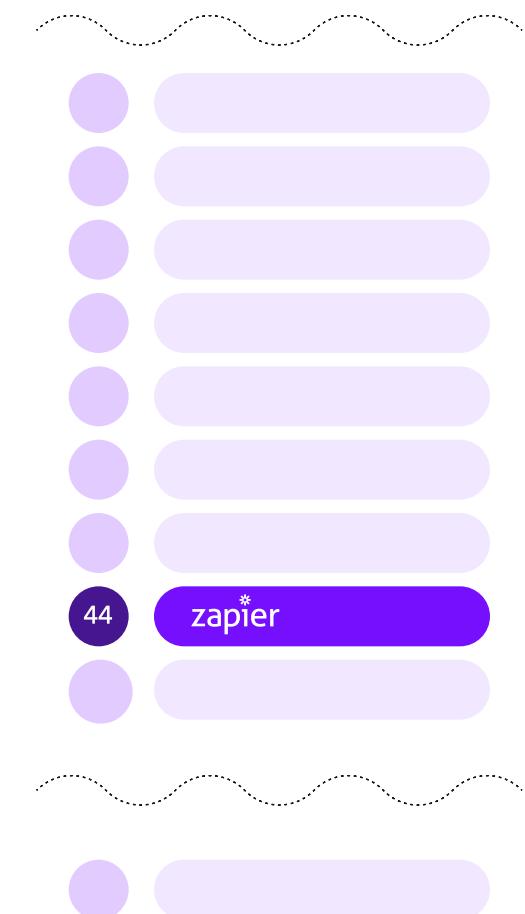
# The Zapier Paradox: Authority vs. Mentions

The data reveals a fascinating disconnect: Zapier ranks as the #1 cited source but only #44 in brand mentions. This illustrates the “mention-source divide”, an impact being seen across many businesses with either high content density or business models centered on publishing and news.

Zapier’s hundreds of integration tutorials and how-to articles make it an authoritative source for AI models, but users discuss other brands more frequently in conversations and reviews.



Cited sources



Brand mentions

Why?

# Key Source Insights:

## Traditional authority:

G2 appears prominently in both platforms (20.04% ChatGPT, 15.72% Google AI Mode), showing review platforms remain crucial.

## Technical depth:

TechRadar (59.71% ChatGPT), Expert Insights, and Gartner feature heavily, indicating AI models value technical analysis.

## Community knowledge:

Reddit maintains strong influence (121.88% in ChatGPT), particularly for brands like Zoho with active subreddits.

# Top Sources: Digital Technology & Software

ChatGPT

Domain	Source (%)
wikipedia.org	167.08%
reddit.com	121.88%
techradar.com	59.71%
g2.com	20.04%
medium.com	15.75%
umatechnology.org	13.29%
expertinsights.com	13.09%
forbes.com	11.66%
clickup.com	11.04%
gartner.com	10.43%

Google AI Mode

Domain	Source (%)
zapier.com	21.18%
medium.com	19.21%
linkedin.com	18.78%
thedigitalprojectmanager.com	17.90%
theuctoclub.com	17.03%
g2.com	15.72%
expertinsights.com	13.54%
google.com	12.45%
microsoft.com	11.57%
youtube.com	9.83%

Data collected:  
August 2025

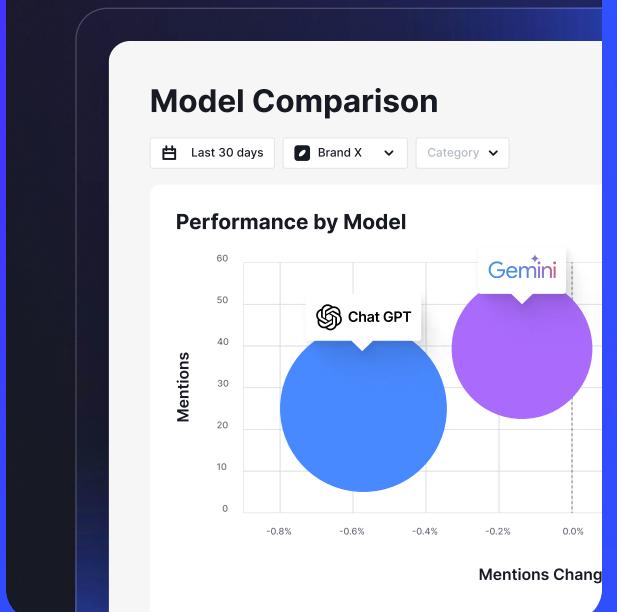
# Platform-Specific Source Strategies

**ChatGPT's technical focus:** Wikipedia (167.08%) and Reddit (121.88%) dominate, but technical publications like TechRadar (59.71%) and G2 (20.04%) carry significant weight. Medium (15.75%) also appears, suggesting long-form technical content performs well.

**Google AI Mode's professional community approach:** Zapier (21.18%) leads, followed by Medium (19.21%) and LinkedIn (18.78%). Specialized sites like TheDigitalProjectManager.com (17.90%) and TheCTOClub.com (17.03%) show Google values niche professional communities.



Track and target all leading AI search platforms and their different models, with Semrush Enterprise AI Optimization (AIO).



Consumer Electronics

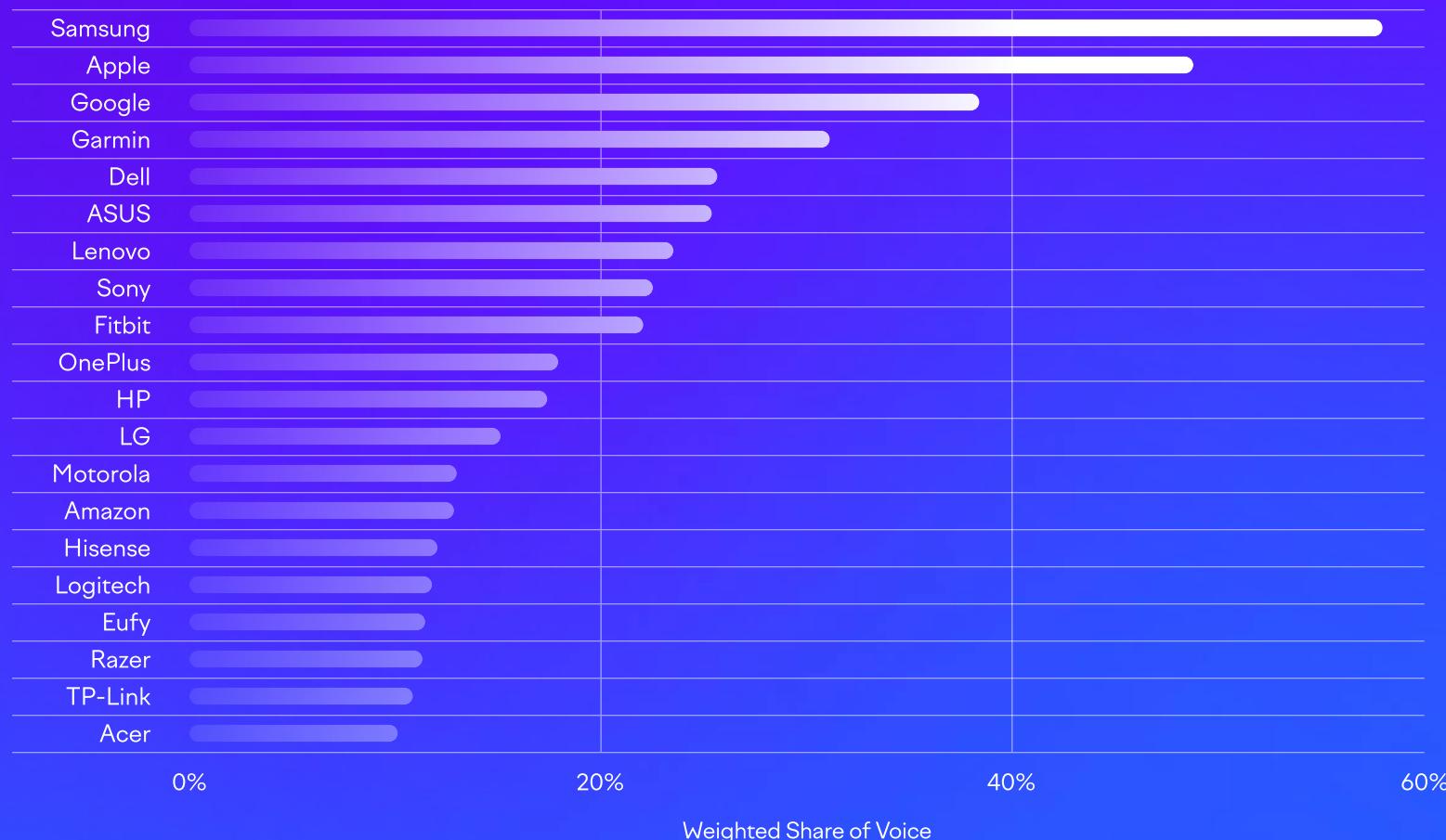
# The Hardware Hierarchy

Samsung leads at 58.08%, with Apple close behind at 48.84%, reflecting their smartphone duopoly. Google's third-place position (38.51%) likely stems from Android ecosystem dominance and Pixel device discussions.



# Top 20 Brands: Consumer Electronics

Data collected: August 2025



## Notable insight:

Garmin's 31.15% share demonstrates how specialized category leadership can drive significant AI visibility, even without mass consumer recognition.

# The Data Reveals Clear Category Clusters



## Smartphone leaders:

Samsung (58.08%), Apple (48.84%), Google (38.51%), OnePlus (17.93%), and Motorola (13.06%)



## Fitness tech:

Garmin (31.15%) and Fitbit (22.17%) show strong wearable market presence



## Computing hardware:

Dell (25.69%), ASUS (25.44%), Lenovo (23.57%), and HP (17.45%) compete closely



## Entertainment electronics:

Sony (22.64%), LG (15.20%), and Hisense (12.15%) represent display and audio markets

# The Ecommerce Intelligence Gap

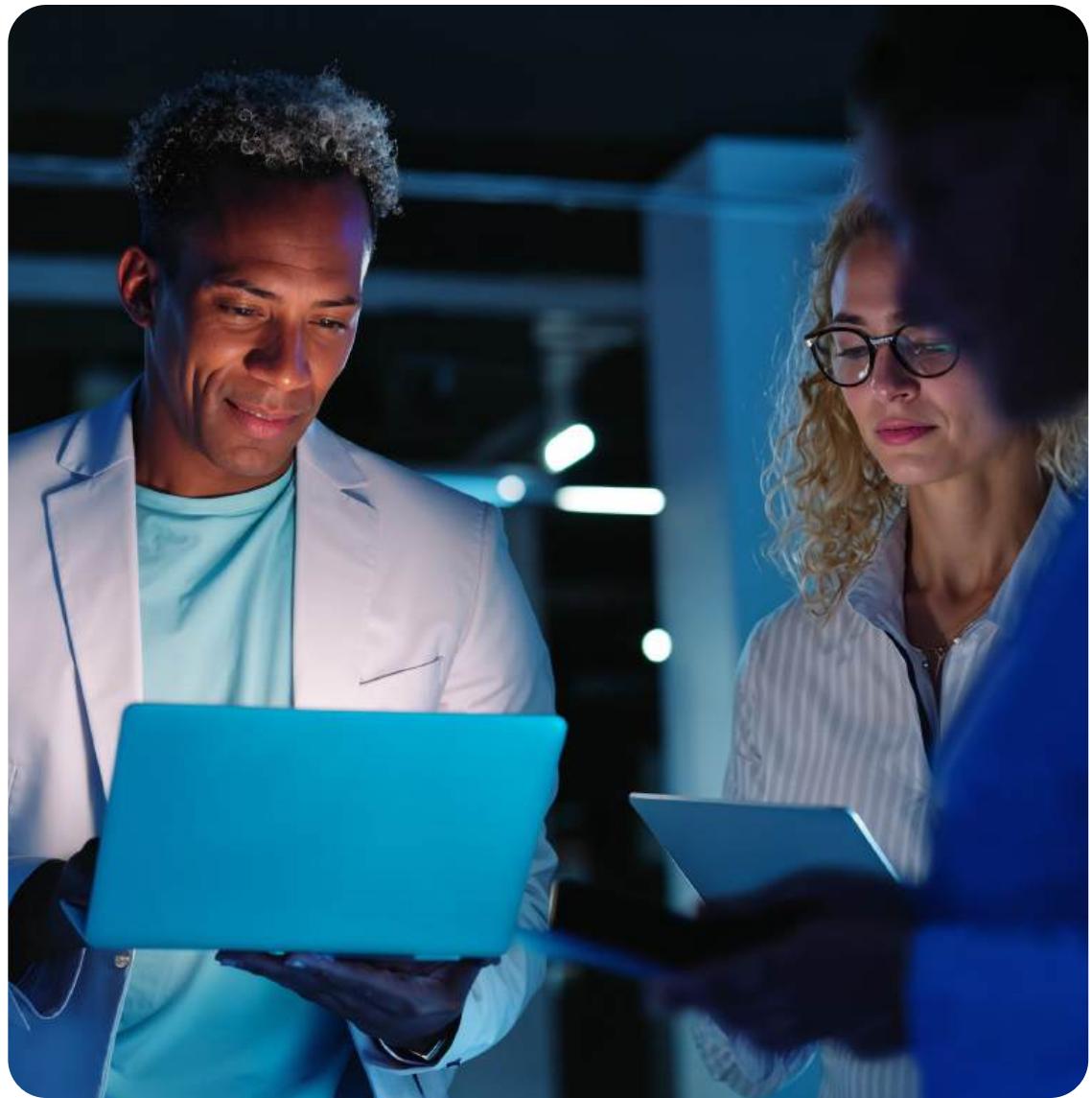
The source analysis reveals a fundamental difference in how AI platforms approach consumer electronics:

**ChatGPT's editorial approach:**

Reddit (127.31%), Tom's Guide (58.63%), Wikipedia (54.22%), and TechRadar (49.20%) dominate. ChatGPT prioritizes editorial reviews, community discussions, and encyclopedic information for product recommendations.

**Google AI Mode's ecommerce focus:**

Amazon (66.67%) leads dramatically, followed by YouTube (40.00%) and Best Buy (29.29%). This represents an AI continuation of Google Shopping, where purchase intent drives source selection. Google AI Mode values verified user reviews on commerce platforms where users can directly buy products.



# Top Sources: Consumer Electronics

ChatGPT

Domain	Source (%)
reddit.com	127.31%
tomsguide.com	58.63%
wikipedia.com	54.22%
techradar.com	49.20%
amazon.com	37.35%
theverge.com	27.31%
wired.com	22.89%
androidcentral.com	20.68%
bestbuy.com	20.28%
yahoo.com	14.26%

Google AI Mode

Domain	Source (%)
amazon.com	66.67%
youtube.com	40.00%
bestbuy.com	29.29%
pcmag.com	26.67%
cnet.com	26.67%
rttings.com	21.82%
reddit.com	21.41%
tomsguide.com	20.40%
techradar.com	18.99%
apple.com	18.59%

Data collected:  
August 2025

# The Apple Support Page Strategy

Google AI Mode frequently cites Apple.com URLs that are actually Apple support pages and forums where users share feature information and get tech support.

This reveals a crucial insight: Google AI Mode treats branded support content as authoritative sources, especially when it contains user-generated discussions and verified product information.

# Platform-Specific Optimization Strategies

## For ChatGPT visibility:



**Community engagement:** Reddit discussions heavily influence recommendations



**Editorial relations:** Build relationships with Tom's Guide, TechRadar, and The Verge



**Technical authority:** Ensure Wikipedia accuracy and technical specification completeness

## For Google AI Mode success:



**Ecommerce optimization:** Prioritize Amazon and Best Buy presence with high-quality reviews



**Video content:** YouTube (40.00%) suggests product demos and reviews drive visibility



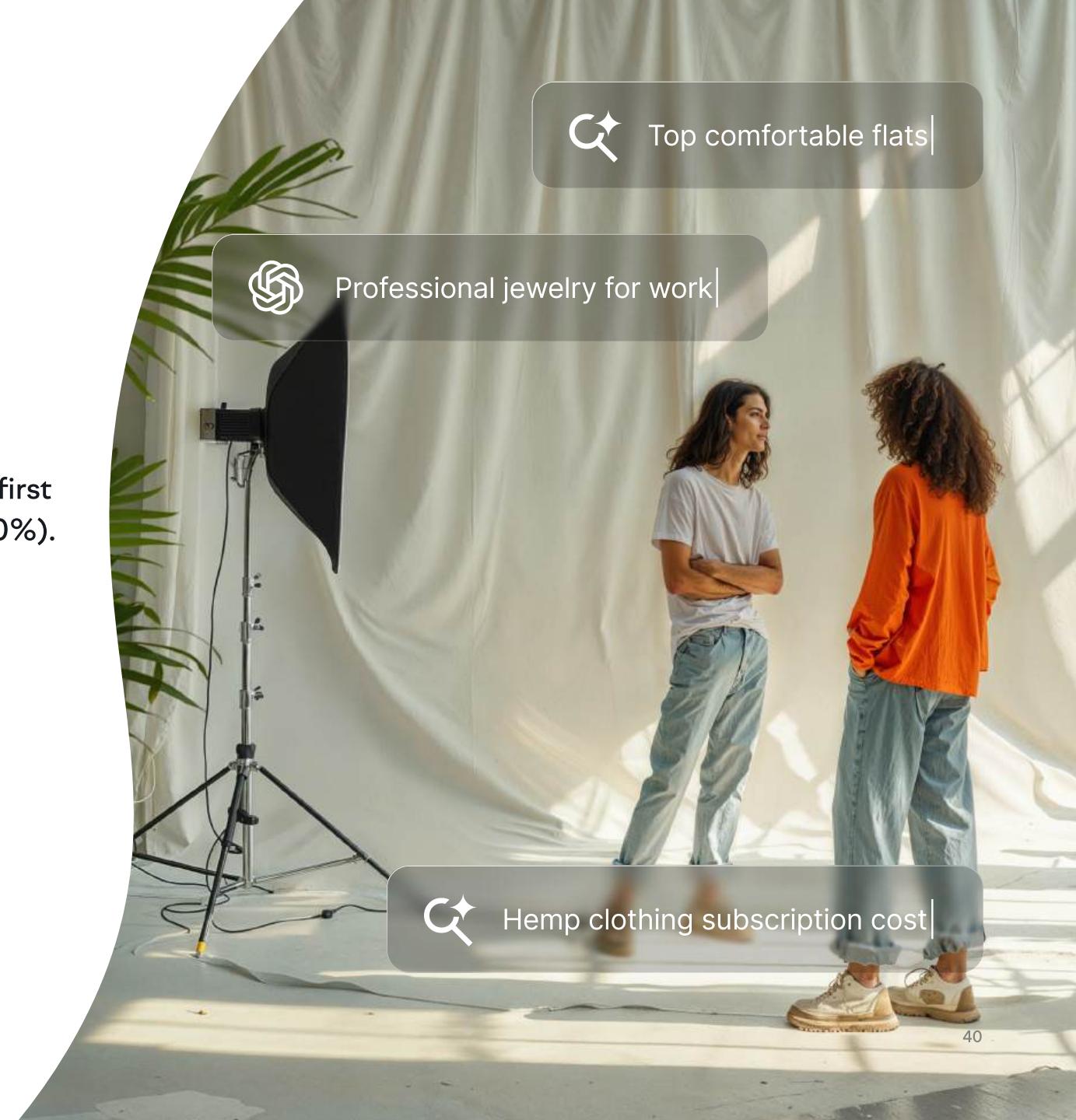
**Support content strategy:** Create comprehensive support pages with user interaction (following Apple's model)

# The Ethical Revolution

Fashion sees a varied podium, with Patagonia comfortably in first at 21.96%, before Everlane (14.26%), and Gucci in third (14.20%).

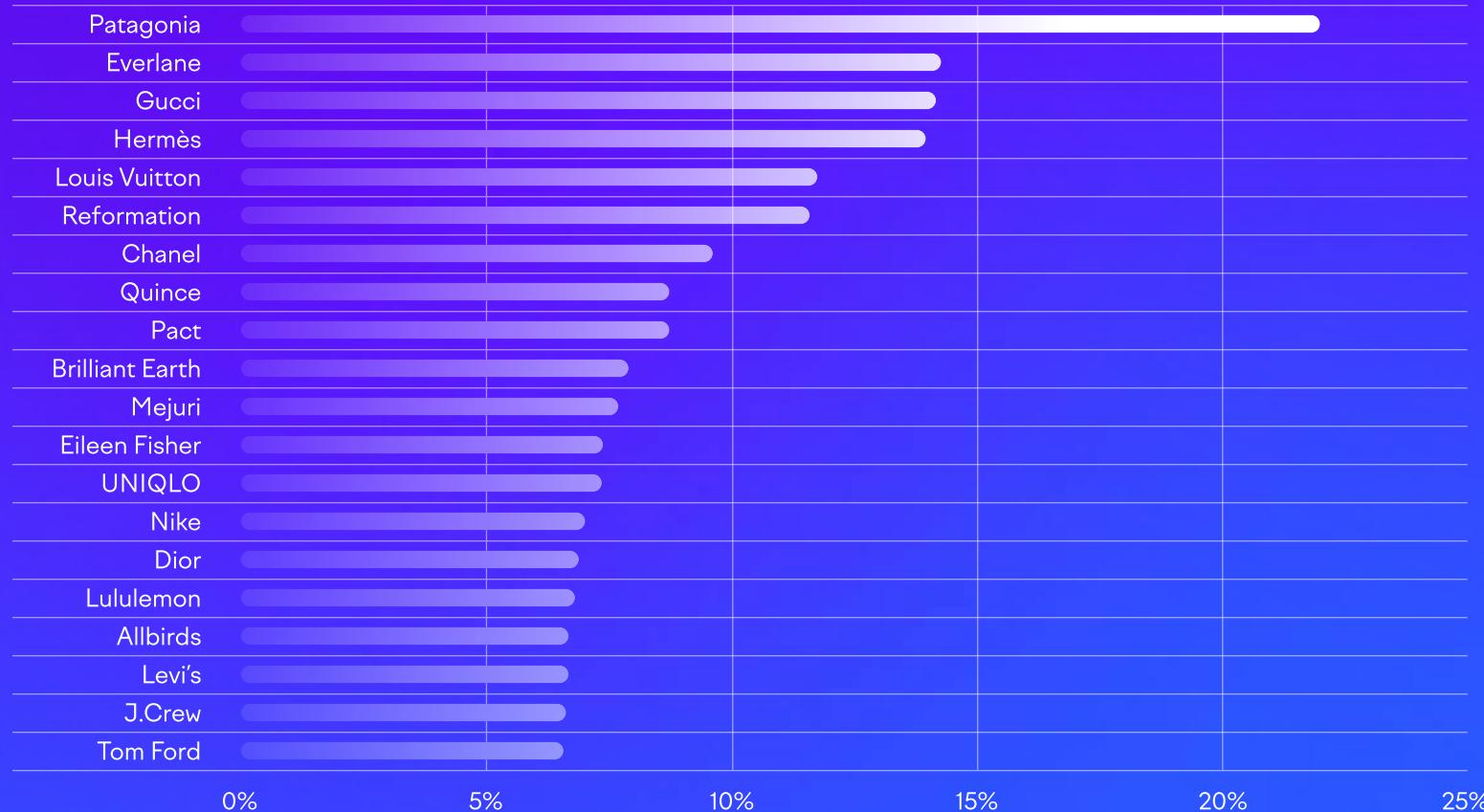
Here we see an interesting dichotomy: 2 brands that are committed to ethical fashion vs. a high-fashion powerhouse that's featured in publications for decades. While these brands take different routes to do so, this illustrates the need to feature in industry sources, whether niche or popular.

Interestingly there's also some disruption from direct-to-consumer brands like Quince (8.78%). This indicates the weighting of recency in AI models, as such brands grow more popular in community and social media discussions.



# Top 20 Brands: Fashion & Apparel

Data collected: August 2025



Patagonia dominates at 21.96% Share of Voice, demonstrating how ethical positioning can drive massive AI visibility in fashion. This isn't just brand recognition but systematic placement in "ethical fashion," "sustainable brands," and "responsible consumption" discussions across diverse media sources.

# The Top 10 Reveals 3 Distinct Categories

## Ethical leaders:

Patagonia (21.96%)  
Everlane (14.26%)  
Reformation (11.59%)

## Direct-to-consumer disruptors:

Quince (8.78%)  
Pact (8.74%)  
Brilliant Earth (7.91%)

## Luxury powerhouses:

Gucci (14.20%)  
Hermès (13.96%)  
Louis Vuitton (11.73%)  
Chanel (9.63%)

## Strategic insight:

Patagonia's success stems from consistent placement in industry listicles and reviews as a top ethical fashion brand, creating a feedback loop where AI models default to mentioning Patagonia for sustainability queries.

# The Source Ecosystem in Fashion Media

**ChatGPT's editorial fashion focus:** Wikipedia (113.02%) and Reddit (108.88%) lead, but fashion-specific sources dominate: Vogue (25.21%), Who What Wear (23.55%), InStyle (18.18%), and Glamour (17.56%). This shows ChatGPT heavily references fashion editorial content for style recommendations.

**Google AI Mode's shopping orientation:** Google's own properties (51.00%) lead, followed by Amazon (37.64%) and YouTube (14.03%). The inclusion of Nordstrom (7.13%) and Etsy (7.13%) reveals Google AI Mode's commerce-first approach to fashion queries.



# Top Sources Analysis: Fashion & Apparel

ChatGPT

Domain	Source (%)
wikipedia.org	113.02%
reddit.com	108.88%
vogue.com	25.21%
whowhatwear.com	23.55%
forbes.com	22.31%
amazon.com	21.28%
people.com	19.83%
instyle.com	18.18%
glamour.com	17.56%
businessinsider.com	17.15%

Google AI Mode

Domain	Source (%)
google.com	51.00%
amazon.com	37.64%
youtube.com	14.03%
quora.com	13.81%
reddit.com	13.59%
forbes.com	9.35%
thegoodtrade.com	8.02%
nordstrom.com	7.13%
etsy.com	7.13%
yelp.com	6.46%

Data collected:  
August 2025

# The Patagonia Playbook: Building Ethical Authority

Patagonia's 21.96% share in the competitive fashion vertical offers a masterclass in category positioning:

## 1 Consistent editorial placement

Patagonia appears in virtually every "ethical fashion brands," "sustainable clothing," and "environmentally responsible shopping" article that AI models reference.

## 2 Cross-platform authority

Strong presence across Vogue, Forbes, and Reddit discussions about corporate responsibility and environmental impact.

## 3 Category definition

Rather than competing in general "fashion," Patagonia owns the "ethical fashion" subcategory, making it the default AI recommendation for conscious consumers.

# Platform-Specific Fashion Strategies

## For ChatGPT fashion visibility:



**Editorial relations:** Build relationships with Vogue, Who What Wear, and InStyle



**Community engagement:** Active participation in fashion-focused Reddit communities



**Trend authority:** Position for inclusion in seasonal trend roundups and style guides

## For Google AI Mode success:



**Ecommerce optimization:** Focus on Amazon, Nordstrom, and Google Shopping presence



**Video content:** YouTube fashion content drives significant visibility

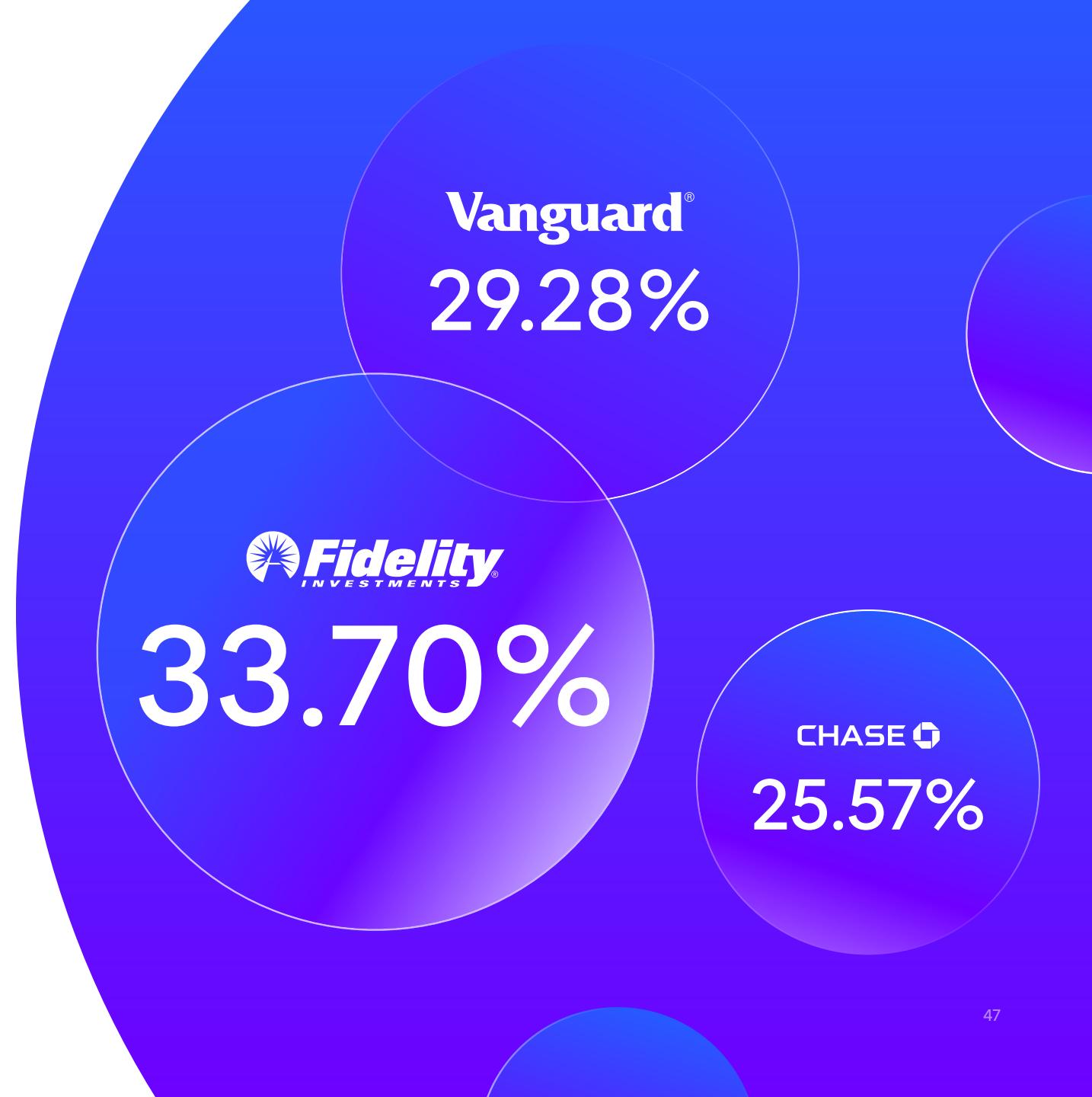


**Review management:** Optimize customer reviews across retail platforms

# The Trust Hierarchy

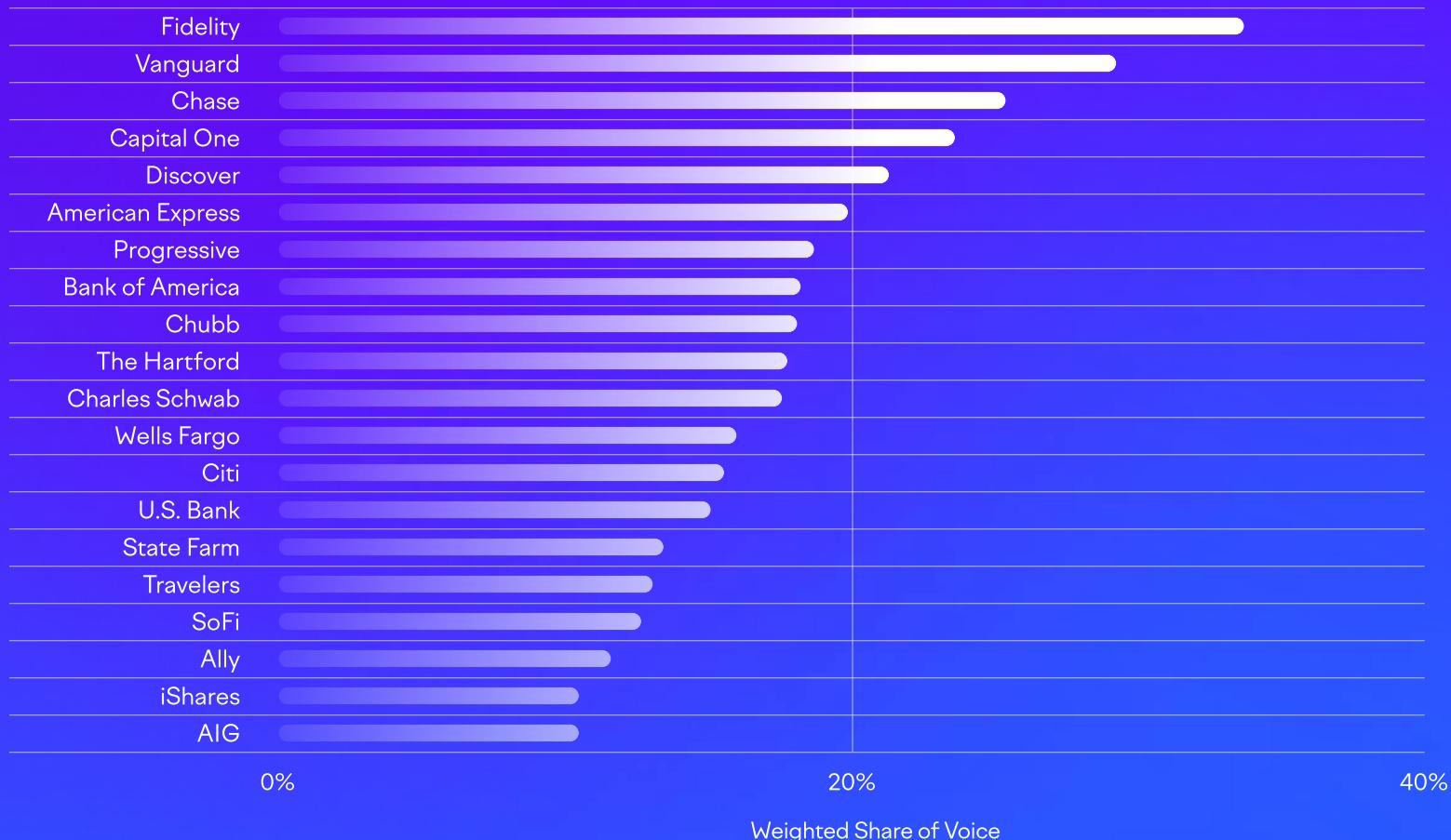
In first place we have Fidelity (33.70%), who are followed by Vanguard (29.28%), then Chase (25.47%). In fact, the financial services brand leaderboard offers a total who's-who of traditional, powerhouse names, showcasing the potential difficulties in disrupting such a trust-based industry.

The top sources however, have a massive variance between ChatGPT and Google AI Mode. If you're in the financial services industry and looking to build your AI visibility holistically, you'll need to take very different approaches to do so on both platforms.



# Top 20 Brands: Financial Services

Data collected: August 2025



Fidelity leads at 33.70%, followed by Vanguard (29.28), and Chase (25.47%), showcasing how established financial institutions dominate AI discussions.

# The Top 20 Reveals Clear Clusters

## Investment leaders:

Fidelity (33.70%)  
Vanguard (29.28%)  
Charles Schwab (17.60%)  
iShares (10.55%)  
Betterment (10.04%)

## Credit specialists:

Capital One (23.65%)  
Discover (21.39%)  
American Express (19.91%)

## Banking giants:

Chase (25.47%)  
Bank of America (18.30%)  
Wells Fargo (16.05%)  
Citi (15.61%)

## Insurance powerhouses:

Progressive (18.72%)  
Chubb (18.14%)  
The Hartford (17.84%)  
State Farm (13.50%)

## Notable insight:

Traditional institutions completely dominate, with only SoFi (12.70%) representing fintech disruption in the top 20.

# The YMYL Paradox

Finance represents a fascinating contradiction in AI source preferences. Despite being a "Your Money or Your Life" (YMYL) category where accuracy is critical, the platforms show dramatically different trust approaches:

## ChatGPT's community-first approach:

Reddit (176.89%) overwhelmingly dominates—nearly twice per prompt on average. Wikipedia (110.71%) and Investopedia (77.73%) follow. This suggests ChatGPT values community discussions and educational content, even for high-stakes financial advice.



## Google AI Mode's authority-first strategy:

Bankrate (86.61%) and NerdWallet (75.07%) lead, followed by Investopedia (55.12%). Google prioritizes established financial comparison sites and educational authorities, reflecting a more conservative approach to financial information.

# Top Sources Analysis: Financial Services

ChatGPT

Domain	Source (%)
reddit.com	176.89%
wikipedia.org	110.71%
investopedia.com	77.73%
forbes.com	66.60%
nerdwallet.com	48.74%
bankrate.com	46.43%
kiplinger.com	37.82%
usnews.com	19.75%
barrons.com	18.70%
time.com	18.28%

Google AI Mode

Domain	Source (%)
bankrate.com	86.61%
nerdwallet.com	75.07%
investopedia.com	55.12%
usnews.com	42.52%
cnbc.com	30.45%
smartasset.com	27.03%
forbes.com	23.88%
businessinsider.com	22.31%
yahoo.com	21.52%
wallethub.com	19.42%

Data collected:  
August 2025

# Platform-Specific Strategies for Finance

## For ChatGPT financial visibility:



**Community authority:** Engage authentically in Reddit financial communities (r/personalfinance, r/investing)



**Educational content:** Create Investopedia-style explanatory content that becomes reference material, enriched with statistics and trust signals



**Thought leadership:** Build presence in top-tier financial media coverage for credibility

## For Google AI Mode success:



**Comparison site optimization:** Ensure strong presence on Bankrate, NerdWallet, and SmartAsset



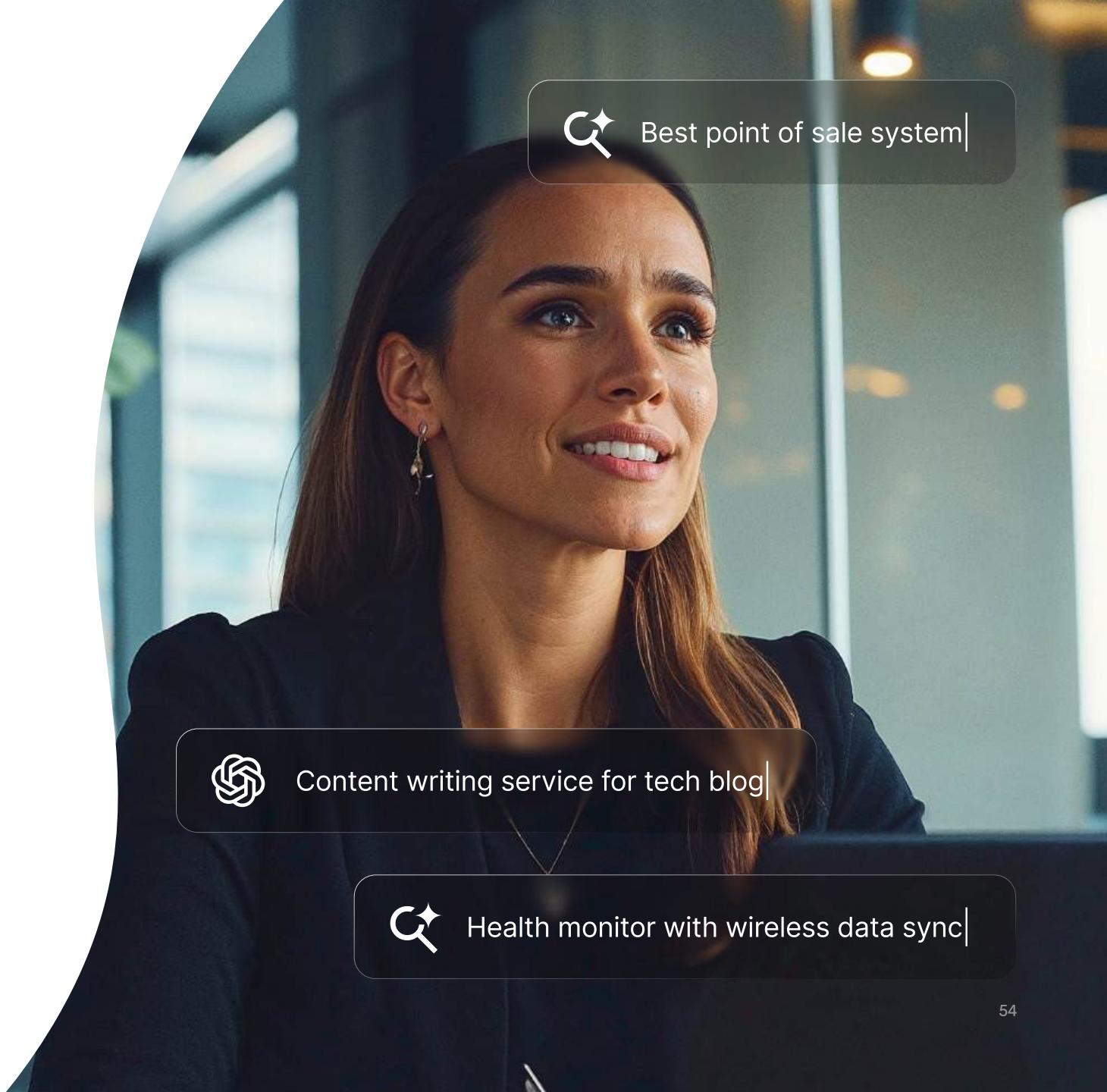
**Rate data authority:** Provide current, accurate rate information that comparison sites reference



**Expert content:** Leverage media appearances and financial media relationships

AI doesn't treat  
every market  
the same, neither  
should you

# Brand Diversity Analysis: Understanding Vertical Competition



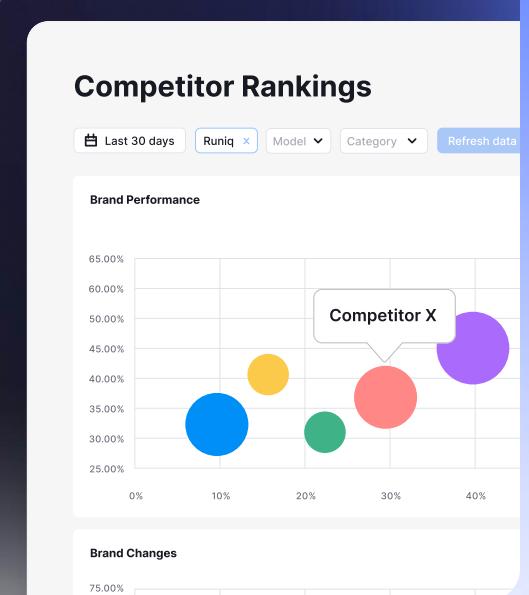
One of the most striking findings from our brand diversity analysis is how **business verticals, not AI platforms, determine competitive dynamics**. ChatGPT and Google AI Mode show remarkably similar diversity scores across all sectors, but the differences between verticals are dramatic.

This means your competitive strategy should first focus on understanding your vertical's unique rules rather than optimizing differently for each AI platform.



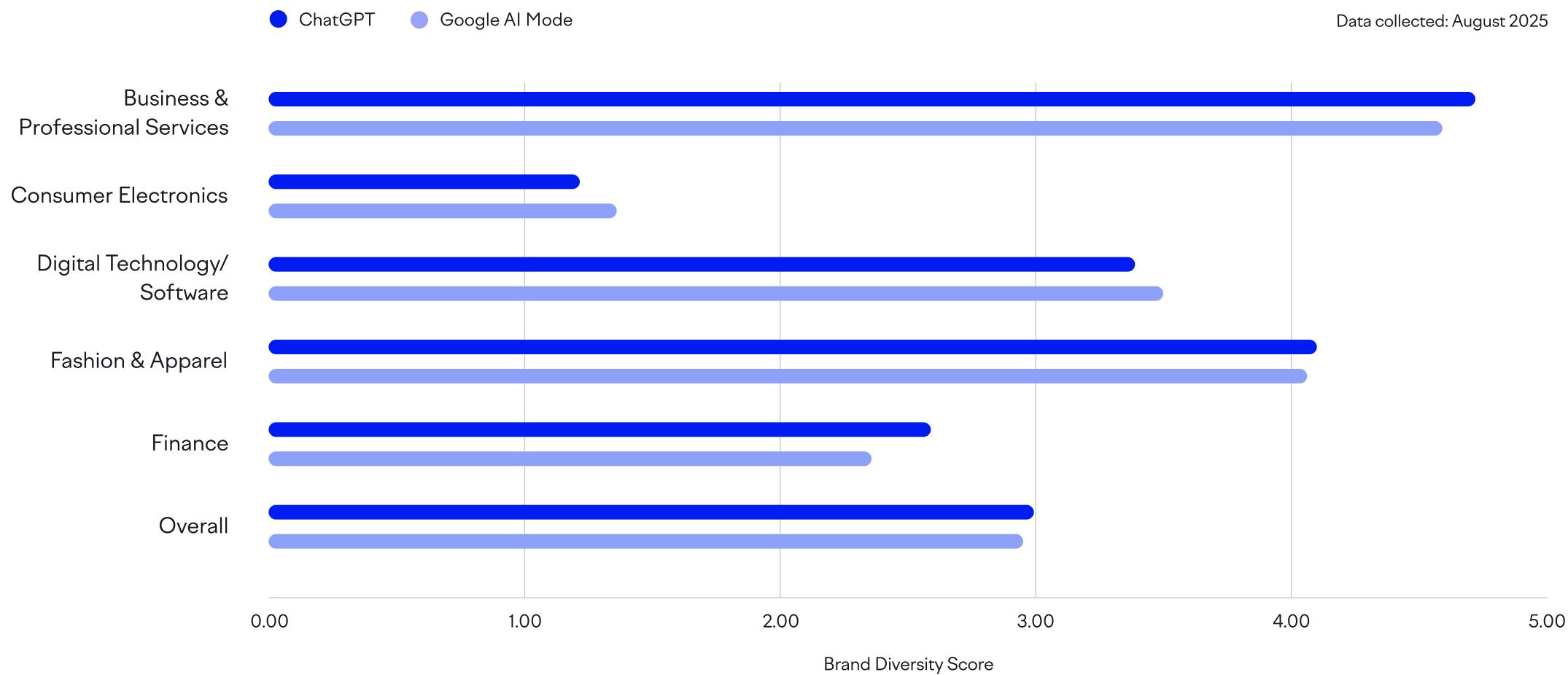
SEMRUSH  
Enterprise AIO

Run granular analysis of your market and competitors to find every opportunity with Semrush Enterprise AI Optimization (AIO).



# The Competitive Landscape by Vertical

Brand Diversity: Segmented by Vertical and AI Platform



## Most competitive

Business & professional services

4.72 ChatGPT

4.60 Google AI Mode

With diversity scores approaching 5, this vertical represents a true battleground. The high score indicates that AI models reference nearly 5 different brands for every prompt, showing no clear market leaders dominate discussions. This creates both opportunity and challenge. Easier to break in, but harder to dominate.

## Highly competitive

Fashion & apparel

4.10 ChatGPT

4.06 Google AI Mode

Fashion shows strong diversity, reflecting the industry's fragmented nature with numerous brands competing across different style categories, price points, and values (sustainable, luxury, fast fashion).

## Moderately competitive

Digital technology

3.39 ChatGPT

3.50 Google AI Mode

While tech has clear leaders like Microsoft and Google, the diversity score shows there's still significant room for multiple players across different software categories and use cases.

## Established hierarchy

Finance

2.59 ChatGPT

2.36 Google AI Mode

Lower diversity scores reflect finance's more concentrated market structure, where established institutions like Vanguard, Chase, and Capital One dominate AI discussions.

## Market concentration

Consumer electronics

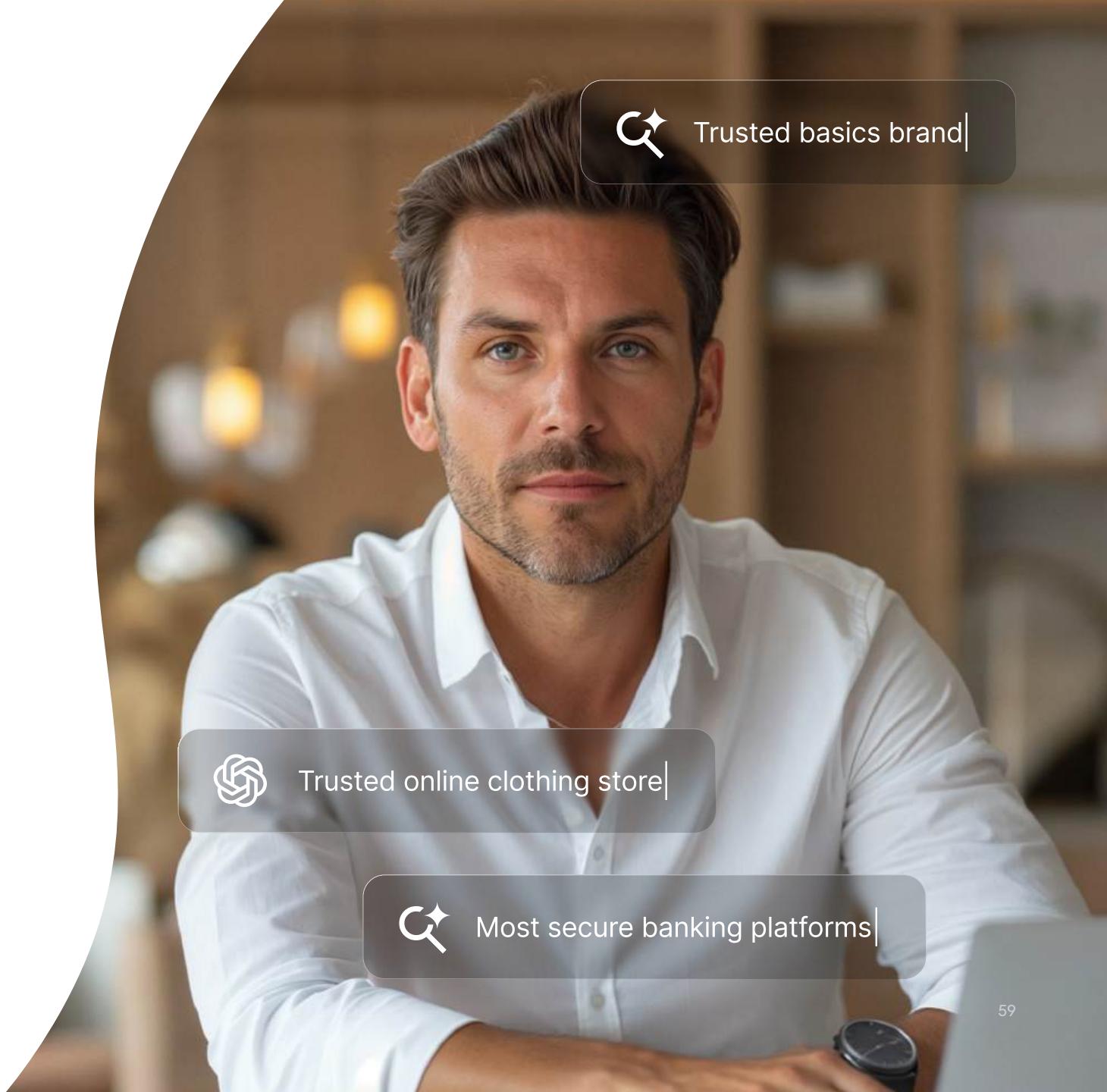
1.22 ChatGPT

1.36 Google AI Mode

The lowest diversity scores indicate a market dominated by a few major players (Samsung, Apple, Google). Breaking into AI visibility in consumer electronics requires either category specialization or exceptional brand strength.

Authority  
is key in the race  
for AI relevance

# Source Diversity Analysis: The Citation Ecosystem



# Sources Are in Abundance

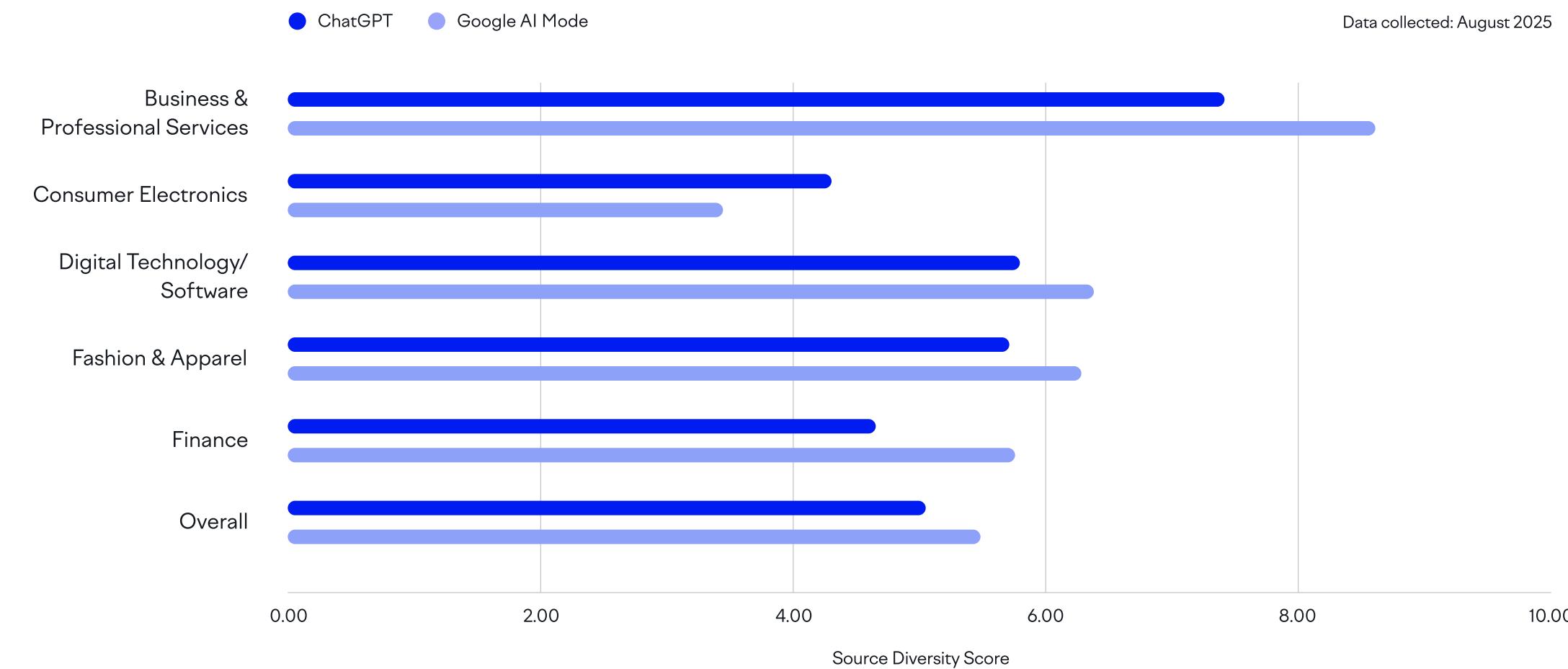
Source diversity scores are consistently higher than brand diversity across all verticals, confirming that AI models draw from **more sources than the brands they ultimately mention.** This creates a more competitive playing field for gaining AI visibility through source authority rather than direct brand mentions.

The overall source diversity (5.05 ChatGPT, 5.48 Google AI Mode) compared to brand diversity (2.99 ChatGPT, 2.95 Google AI Mode) shows AI models typically reference about **5 sources for every 3 brands mentioned—** highlighting the importance of source-based optimization strategies.



# The Flattened Competitive Landscape

Source Diversity: Segmented by Vertical and AI Platform



## Most source diversity

### Business & professional services

7.41 ChatGPT

8.60 Google AI Mode

The highest source diversity confirms this vertical's fragmented information ecosystem. With Google AI Mode showing even higher diversity (8.60), it suggests Google draws from an especially wide range of business sources, creating maximum opportunity for source-based visibility.

## High source diversity

### Digital technology

5.79 ChatGPT

6.37 Google AI Mode

### Fashion

5.71 ChatGPT

6.28 Google AI Mode

Both verticals show healthy source ecosystems with Google AI Mode consistently accessing more diverse sources. This creates multiple pathways to AI visibility through different types of authoritative content.

## Moderately competitive

### Finance

4.65 ChatGPT

5.76 Google AI Mode

Despite finance's concentrated brand landscape, source diversity remains healthy. Google AI Mode's higher score (5.76 vs 4.65) suggests it prioritizes authoritative financial sources like Bankrate and NerdWallet more heavily.

## Lowest source diversity

### Consumer electronics

4.30 ChatGPT

3.44 Google AI Mode

Interestingly, Google AI Mode shows lower source diversity (3.44) than ChatGPT (4.30) in consumer electronics, likely reflecting Google's focus on ecommerce sources like Amazon and Best Buy rather than diverse editorial sources.

# Source Insights for Each AI Search Platform

## Google AI Mode's higher overall diversity

**5.48 vs 5.05**

Google consistently draws from more diverse sources across most verticals, except consumer electronics. This suggests Google's algorithm actively seeks multiple perspectives, creating more opportunities for source-based visibility.

## ChatGPT's consumer electronics focus

**4.30 vs 3.44**

ChatGPT shows higher source diversity in consumer electronics (4.30 vs 3.44), suggesting it values editorial review sources over pure ecommerce platforms for product recommendations.

**Be top of mind  
across important  
AI sources**

# 04

## The Mention- Source Divide: Popularity ≠ Authority

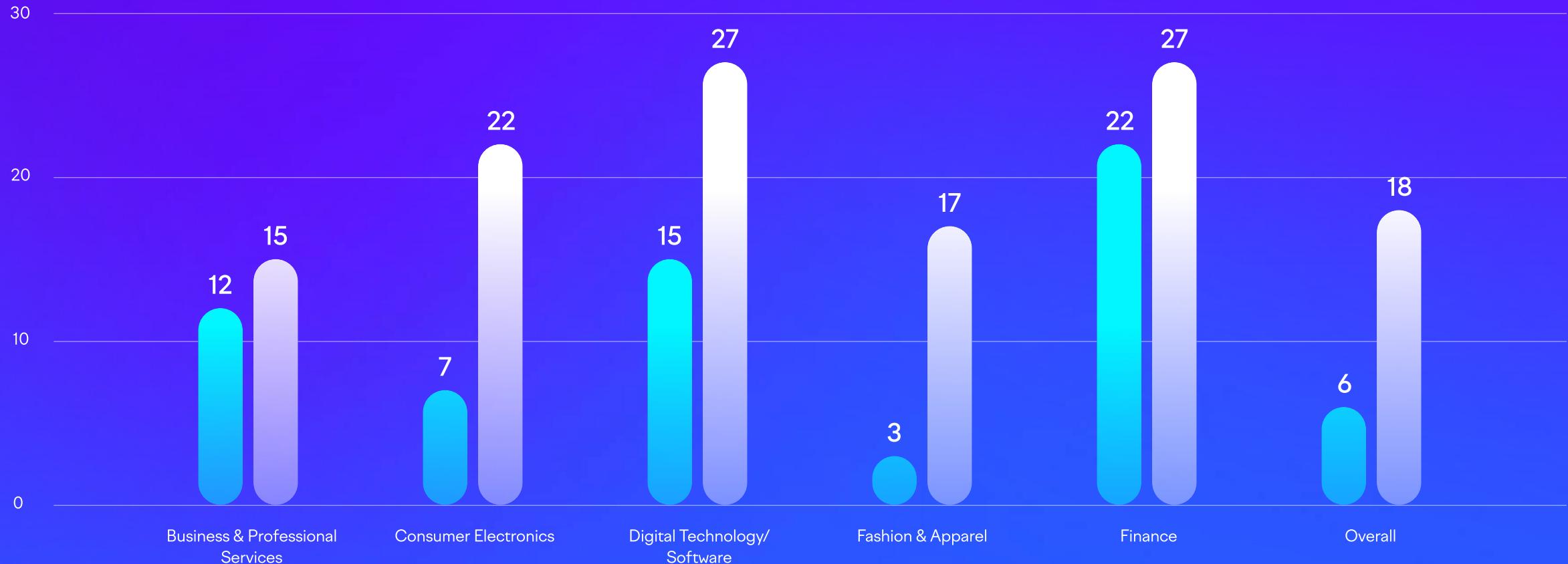
What a brand says, and what others say about it, are two different things. In AI search, the difference is stark. Our analysis reveals a consistent pattern: the brands most frequently mentioned in AI answers aren't always the ones most frequently cited as sources.

# The Mention-Source Divide

## Top 100 Source-Mention Overlap

ChatGPT Google AI Mode

Data collected: August 2025



The data exposes a fundamental disconnect between being mentioned and being cited as a source. Across verticals, very few brands achieve both high mentions and high source citations:

## Top 100 Brands That Are Also Top Sources:

Business &  
Professional Services:

**12** ChatGPT

**15** Google  
AI Mode

Consumer  
Electronics:

**7** ChatGPT

**22** Google  
AI Mode

Digital  
Technology:

**15** ChatGPT

**27** Google  
AI Mode

Fashion &  
Apparel:

**3** ChatGPT

**17** Google  
AI Mode

Finance:

**22** ChatGPT

**27** Google  
AI Mode

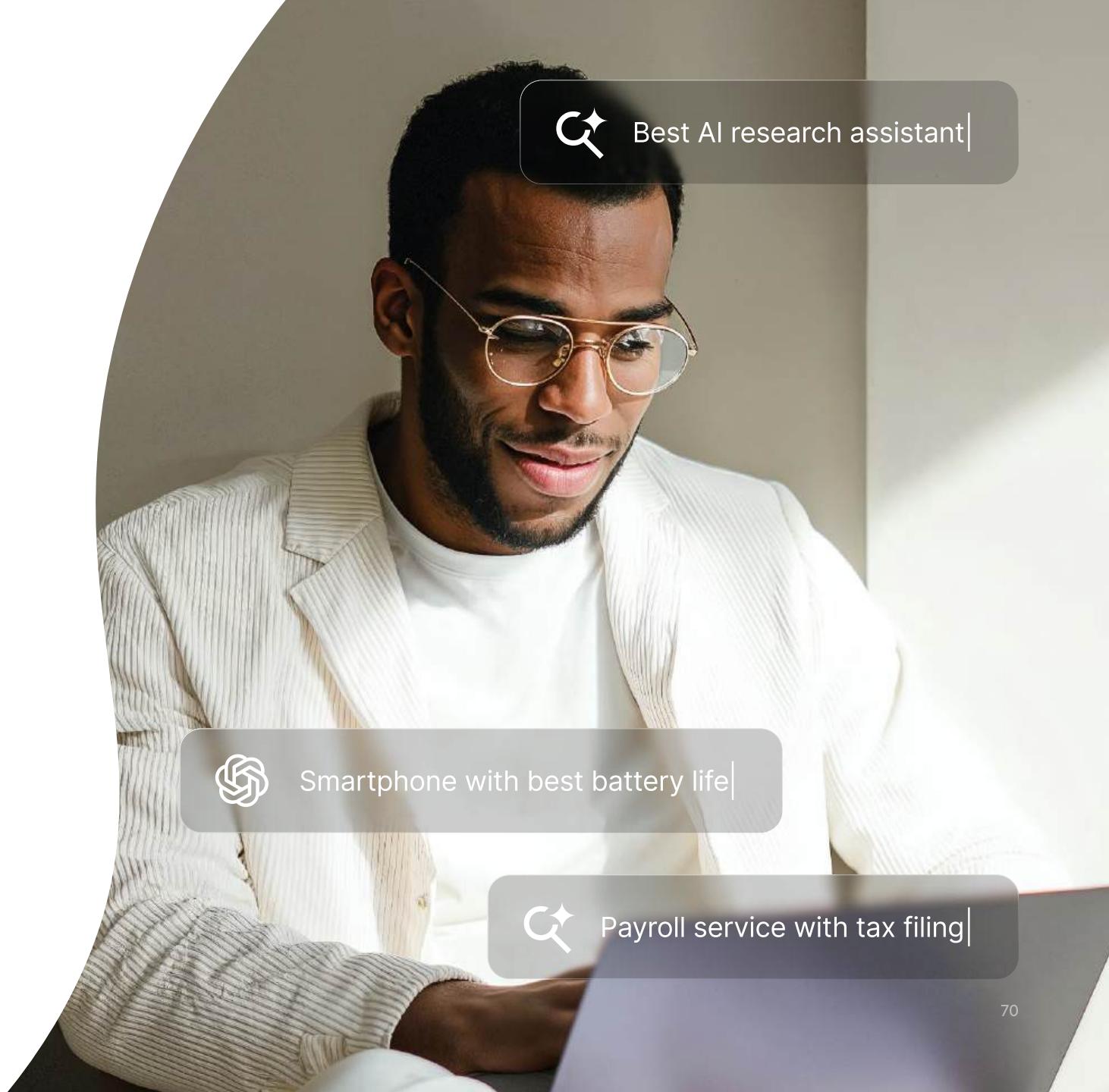
## Key Insight:

Between 3-27 brands out of the top 100 mentioned brands also rank as top sources, depending on vertical and platform.

This creates two distinct pathways to AI visibility: **being talked about vs. being cited as authoritative.**

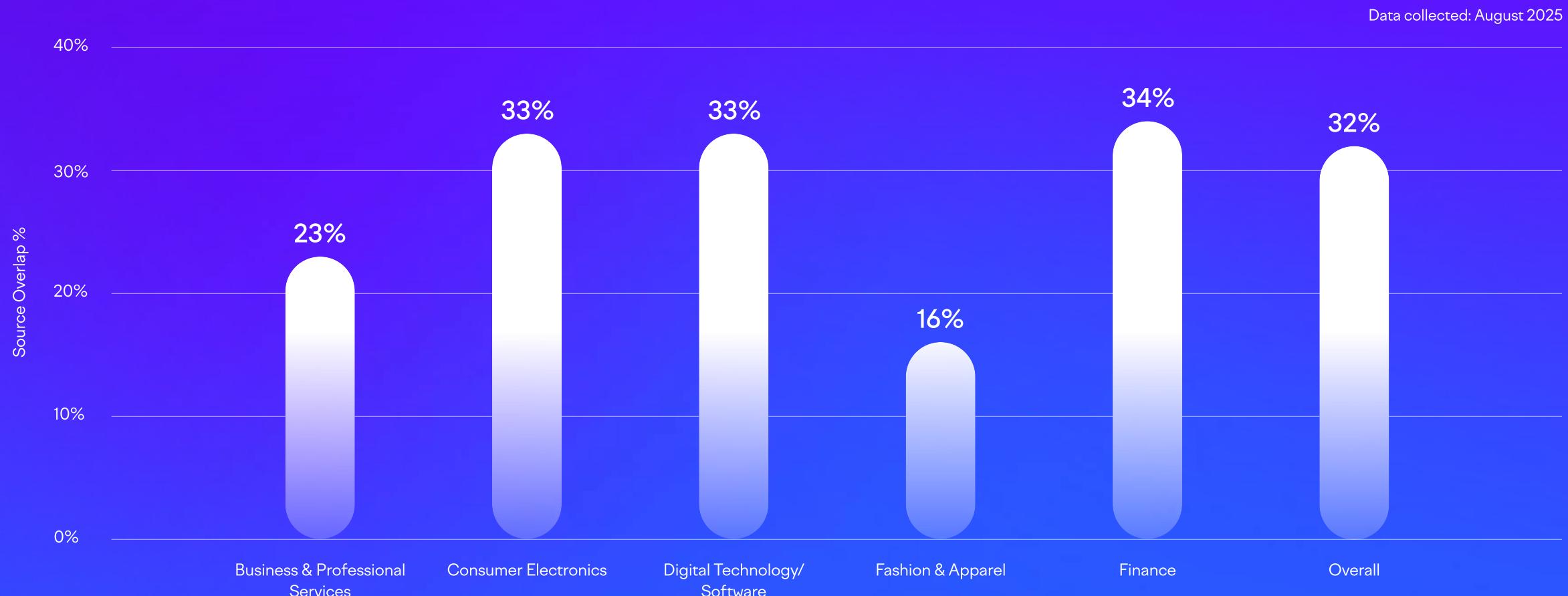
# Brand Source Divergence by Platform

How similar are the sources that ChatGPT and Google AI Mode cite?



# Google AI Mode vs ChatGPT: Source Similarity

Top 100 Source Domains



# ChatGPT vs. Google AI Mode Brand Source Similarity:

Overall:

**32%** overlap  
in top 100 sources

Lowest similarity:

**16%** Fashion  
Business Services

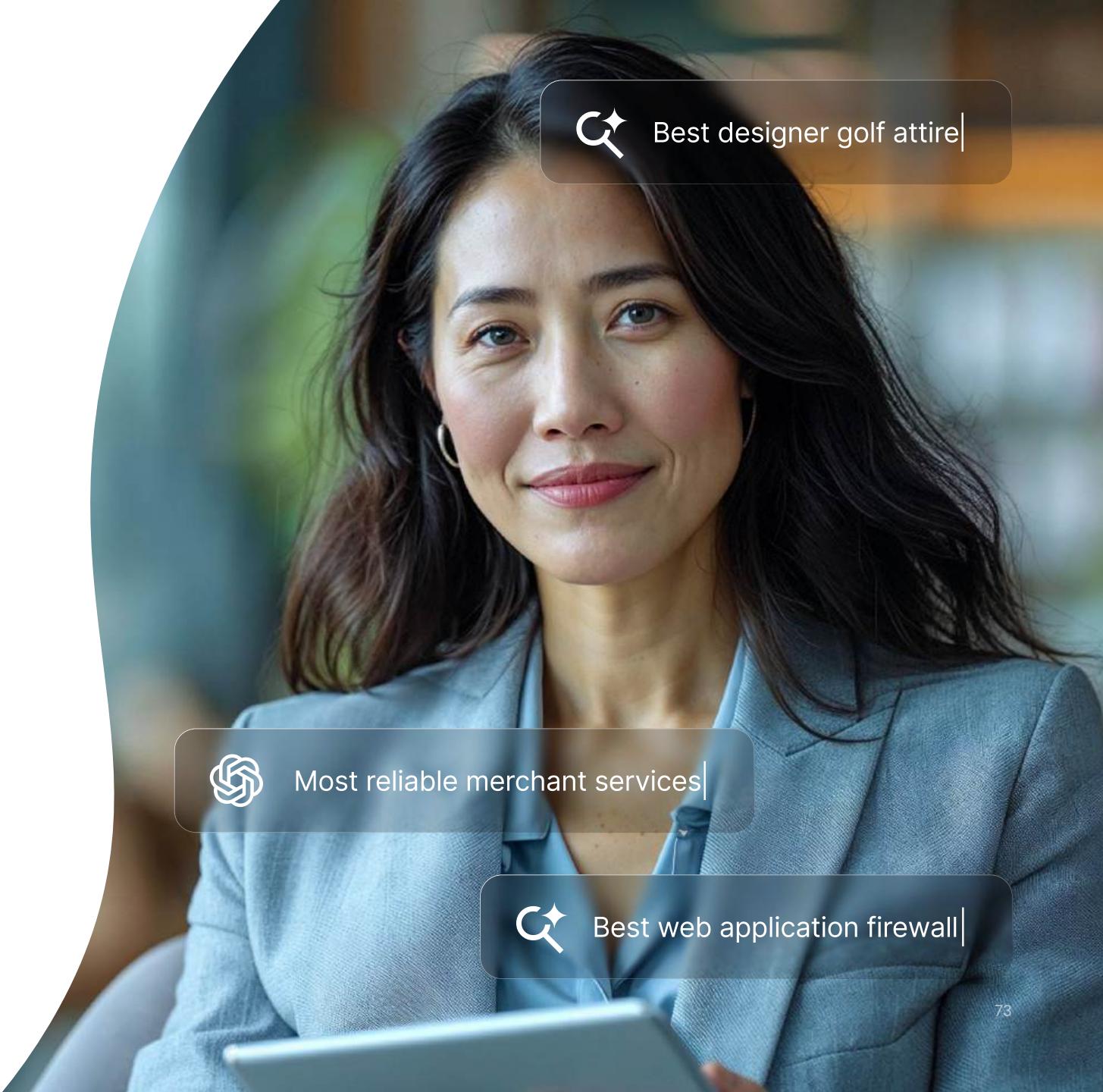
Highest similarity:

**34%** Finance  
Consumer Electronics

The low source overlap means AI platforms draw from fundamentally different information ecosystems, requiring platform-specific source strategies.

# Brand Mention Convergence by Platform

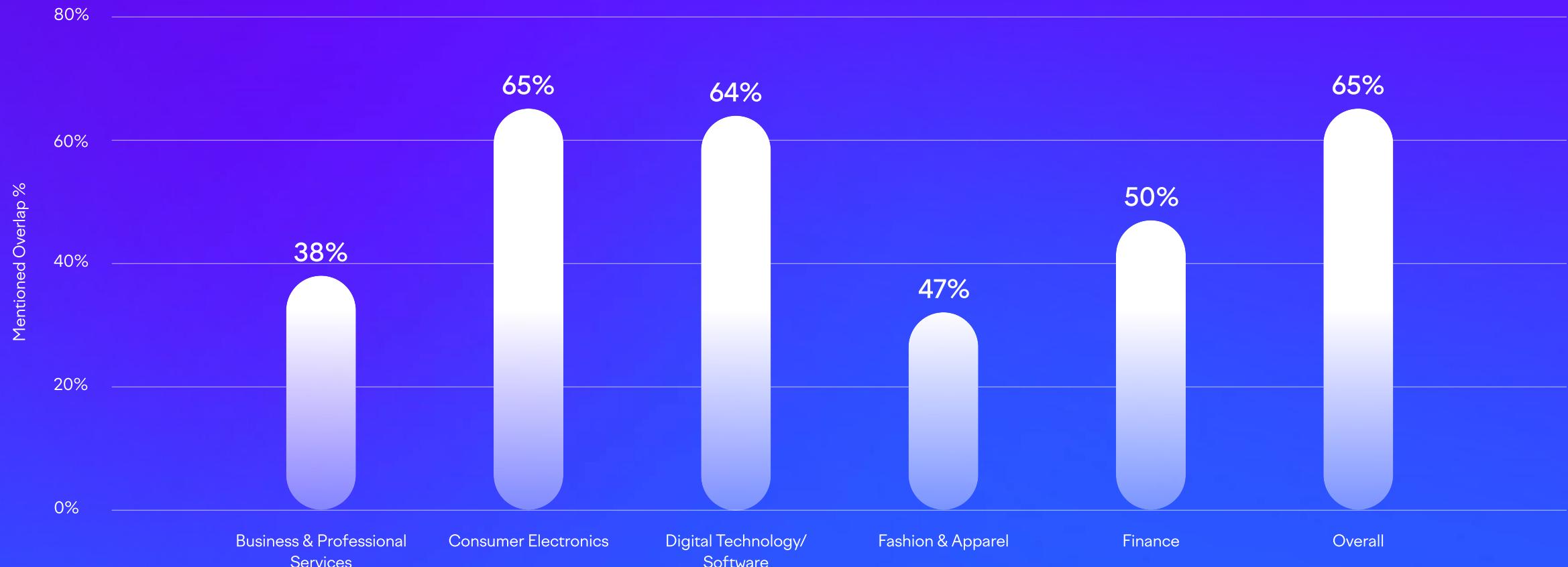
How similar are the brands  
that ChatGPT and Google  
AI Mode mention?



# Google AI Mode vs ChatGPT: Brand Mention Similarity

Top 100 Mentioned Brands

Data collected: August 2025



# ChatGPT vs. Google AI Mode Brand Mention Similarity:

Overall:

**65%** overlap

in top **100** mentioned brands

Lowest similarity:

**36%** Business Services

**47%** Fashion

Highest similarity:

**65%** Consumer Electronics

**64%** Digital Technology

**Strategic contradiction:** While AI platforms mention similar brands (65% overlap), they cite very different sources (32% overlap). This suggests brands can achieve cross-platform mention consistency, but source authority requires platform-specific strategies.

# Vertical Observations

**Finance shows the clearest path to leadership:** With 22–27 brands achieving both high mentions and source citations, finance demonstrates how established authority translates to both metrics.

**Consumer electronics platform gap:** Google AI Mode shows 22 brands with both mention and source authority vs. ChatGPT's 7, reflecting Google's ecommerce focus where product brands serve as information sources.

**Fashion reveals the divide:** Only 3 brands (ChatGPT) achieve both high mentions and source authority, showing how brand popularity doesn't guarantee source credibility in style-driven verticals. It also shows how for some verticals, being mentioned as a source may not even matter.



# Strategic Implications

## The need for a dual-path approach

Rather than choosing between being mentioned or being cited, successful brands must pursue both:

- 1** Mention strategy: Build brand awareness and positive sentiment across platforms
- 2** Source strategy: Create authoritative content that AI models cite as reference material

## Platform-specific source focus

With only 32% source overlap between platforms, brands need different strategies for ChatGPT (community and editorial sources) vs. Google AI Mode (authoritative and commercial sources).

## Vertical specialization

The wide variation in source-mention overlap by vertical (3–27 brands) means strategy must be tailored to industry-specific information ecosystems.

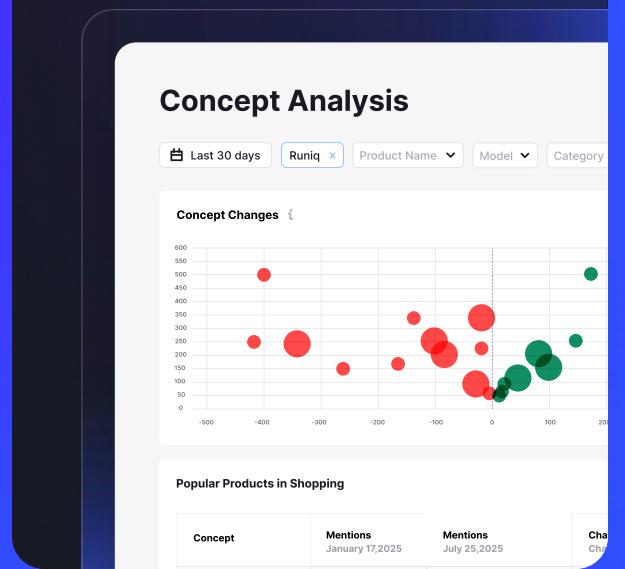
# Key Takeaway:

The mention-source divide reveals that optimization requires a dual approach. Brands must build both conversational relevance (to get mentioned) and informational authority (to get cited as sources). Success in one doesn't guarantee success in the other.

The brands that master both sides of the equation—popularity + authority—will own the future of AI search.



Identify the sources driving visibility in your industry and leverage them to create your own mentions with Semrush Enterprise AI Optimization (AIO).



**Real moves  
to make AI your  
brand ambassador**

05

# AI Visibility Playbook: Real Examples for Marketing Leaders in AI Search

# Amplify Brand Mentions Across the Web

Example: ActiveCampaign's community strategy

### What they did:

Instead of just creating owned content, ActiveCampaign built a thriving UGC community on Discourse. While this platform may not be cited directly as a source, it generates more users and user topics that people discuss elsewhere.

### The result:

Users who engage with ActiveCampaign's official Discourse community often mention the brand positively on Reddit or LinkedIn when reviewing satisfaction or answering questions, driving ActiveCampaign to become the **5th most mentioned brand** in business and professional services.

## Your 90 day action plan:

- Identify 5 key industry forums/communities where your customers hang out
- Have team members authentically participate (no selling, just helping)
- Create a “brand mention” tracking dashboard **(or simply use AIO)**

# Dial Down the Marketing Speak for LLM-Critical Pages

**Example:** Bankrate's factual content strategy

# The Contrast

Typical marketing copy approach:

**“Industry-leading high-yield savings with competitive rates and premium features.”**

**“Now, we’re helping you grow your savings faster with a high-yield savings account designed for real people who want real results.”**

# Bankrate's Approach

An example taken from a landing page ranking for high yield saving accounts, shows that not only do they choose a neutral, factual tone, they amplify their content with specific statistics (interest rates) and specific scenarios where this product would be useful to a user (economic downturns):

**"A high-yield savings account can be a safe place to earn interest on your money while keeping it easily accessible for emergencies and planning for economic downturns, such as a possible recession. Today's top savings rate is 4.44 percent offered by Peak Bank, which is around seven times the current national average of 0.56 percent. In addition to a high APY, the best high-yield savings accounts don't charge fees and have low minimum deposit requirements."**

# Why Bankrate Wins in AI

Bankrate is the top cited source in finance for Google AI Mode, and 6th in ChatGPT. When AI models need to explain financial products to users, they prefer Bankrate's specific data points, expert verification badges, and factual comparisons over vague marketing language. Their content combines trust signals ("expert verified") with concrete statistics that AI models can confidently reference.

## Your content audit

- Replace "industry-leading" with specific metrics
- Replace "enterprise-grade" with actual security certifications
- Replace "solution" with what your product actually does

Timeline: 30 days to audit and rewrite top 20 pages.

3

# Dominate “Best Of” Content

Example: Garmin’s holistic review presence

## Garmin's Approach

Rather than just creating their own comparison content, Garmin appears consistently across diverse “best of” sources—from tech review sites and fitness blogs to Amazon product reviews and Google reviews. This holistic presence spans traditional review platforms, ecommerce sites, specialty forums, and user-generated content.

## Share of Voice Gains for Garmin

When users ask “best GPS watch for hiking” or “most accurate fitness tracker,” AI models find Garmin mentioned positively across dozens of different source types. Not just controlled marketing content. This cross-platform consistency creates the broad consensus that AI models seek when determining category leaders. **Garmin is an impressive 4th in AI Share of Voice in consumer electronics**, behind the big 3 of Google, Apple and Samsung.

# Infiltrate Industry Listicles

Example: Patagonia's ethical fashion positioning

## Patagonia's Approach

Patagonia consistently appears as the first mentioned brand in ethical fashion articles across various publications and sources.

## Patagonia's AI Payoff

Regularly mentioned first for prompts like “most trusted sustainable fashion brand,” “transparent supply chain brands for ethical shoppers,” and “circular fashion brands,” achieving a weighted SOV of 23% in the competitive fashion vertical. **This makes Patagonia the most mentioned fashion brand.**



# Your Outreach Program

- Check which top sources LLMs are using to find information about your product vertical
- List the top 10 relevant industry publications
- Create a “journalist resource kit” with assets and data
- Assign PR team to pitch a set number of publications monthly

# Partner with Media Outlets and Affiliates

**Example:** Chase and Capital One

## Playing the Long Game

Chase and Capital One have cultivated strategic affiliate relationships with the most AI-cited financial comparison sites. NerdWallet and Bankrate.com consistently rank as top sources for credit cards, loans, and bank accounts in AI responses. Both Chase and Capital One maintain strong affiliate partnerships with these platforms, ensuring prominent placement in comparison tools and editorial content.

## The AI Training Impact

When AI models learn about banking and credit products, they've ingested extensive affiliate-driven content from NerdWallet and Bankrate featuring Chase and Capital One products prominently. These affiliate relationships ensure consistent, positive positioning across the financial comparison sites that AI models reference most frequently. Furthermore, when AI uses websearch to find the latest rates, more often than not it goes to [bankrate.com](#) and [nerdwallet.com](#) where banks like Chase and Capital One are frequently listed as the best in their category.

# Media Partnership Example: Vanguard and CNBC

Vanguard has established systematic media relationships, with their thought leaders regularly appearing on CNBC to provide market insights and economic commentary.



# Strengthen Review Platform Presence

**Example:** Slack, Asana and Monday's holistic G2 strategy

## The Approach

Brands like Slack, Asana, and Monday.com all achieved top 20 most mentioned brand status in the digital technology vertical, partly by leveraging G2's multiple touchpoints:

- User reviews and discussions pages
- Accurate pricing information
- Category review ratings
- G2's blog articles featuring brands

## The G2 Boost

G2 ranks as the 4th most cited source for ChatGPT and 6th for Google AI mode in tech. The data shows LLMs crawl all of G2's content types, making a comprehensive presence essential rather than just focusing on main category pages.

# Building Your Review Strategy

- Audit current ratings on G2 (and any other relevant review sites for your vertical)
- Don't forget to monitor user sentiment on Reddit and LinkedIn
- Use identified pain points on social channels to guide your strategy
- Create systematic review request process
- Train customer success team on review response

**Example Target:** 50+ new reviews quarterly with 4.5+ star average



# Create Original, Citable Content and Industry Research

Example: SentinelOne's authoritative positioning

# Establishing authoritative positioning

SentinelOne established itself as an authoritative source for cybersecurity topics like “AI threat detection” and “Why is cloud security important?” through original, expert content.

# The content strategy

SentinelOne regularly publishes authoritative blogposts, but importantly, also builds industry research in the cybersecurity space, all with the unified goal of establishing the brand as a thought leader.

# Striking citation gold

This has positioned Sentinel One as both the 15th most cited source and 19th most mentioned brand in digital tech—one of very few product-led brands to achieve this dual ranking.

# Your Leading Content Strategy



Conduct an annual industry survey  
(500+ responses minimum)



Partner with a research firm  
for credibility and distribution



Create multiple content formats  
and placements from research  
projects

Bonus tip 1:

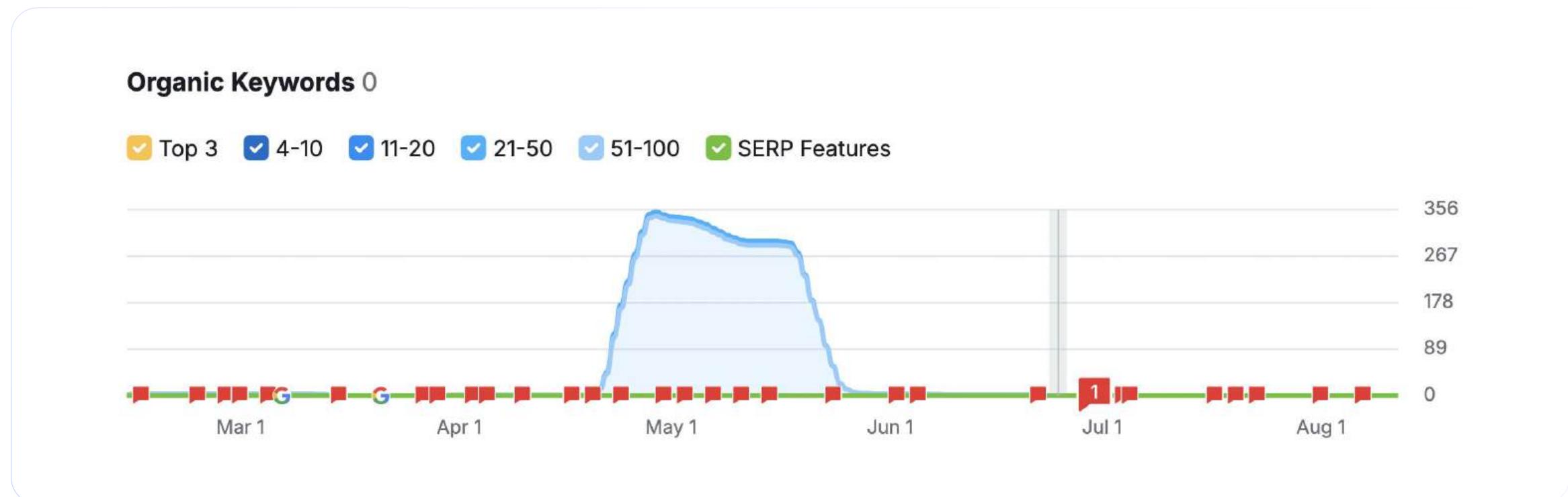
# What to Do About Spam Sources in AI Search?

The top cited source domains in AI search are generally of high quality. However, there is an increasing problem of spam domains gaming the system.

So the question is how to find them and what to do about them?

For the moment, the problem is more pronounced in ChatGPT. Google organic search typically has good spam detection, but even in the case of the below domain it took approximately 4–6 weeks for it to stop ranking:

Example in digital technology vertical : <https://umatechnology.org/>



## Domain Overview: umatechnology.org ↗

Worldwide US UK AU ... Desktop July 2025 USD

Overview Compare domains Growth report Compare by countries

Authority Score

6

Organic Search Traffic

The domain may be new or not ranking right now. To get data on organic traffic, create a Position Tracking campaign.

Semrush Domain Rank 0

[Go to Position Tracking](#)

Paid Search Traffic

0

Backlinks

35K

Traffic Share

n/a

Keywords 0

Referring Domains 1.4K

Competitors n/a

Engagement metrics July 2025

Pages/Visits 1.41 ↑ Avg. Visit Duration 09:00 ↓ Bounce rate 84.75% ↑ [Show all](#)

Yet this domain is the **6th most cited domain in the digital tech/software vertical in ChatGPT** and appears in **13% of the prompts**.

Clearly this is a spam domain. We can see it took around 4–6 weeks for Google to deindex this spam site. But it is still ranking well in ChatGPT. By contrast, this site was never used as a source by Google AI Mode.

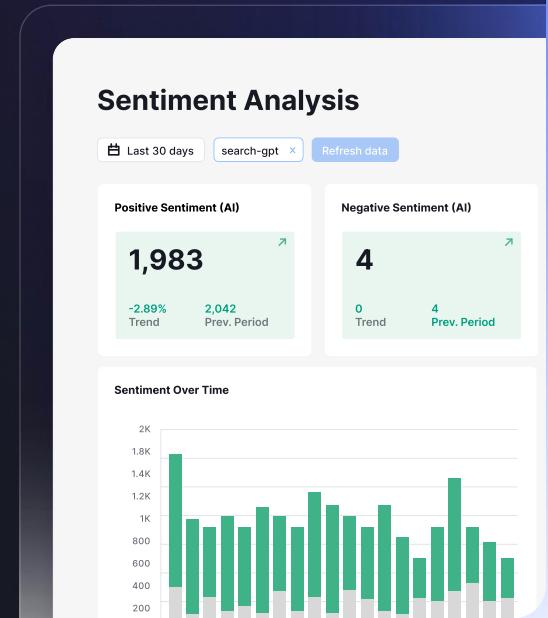
# Best Course of Action

The first step is to verify that the spam domain has not included any incorrect information about your brand.

Following that you should immediately report them to all major AI providers as a spam source and request that they blacklist it. To do this you need to regularly monitor the top sources for all relevant prompts for your brand.



Protect your brand narrative by finding spam sources and associated inaccurate or negative information with Semrush Enterprise AIO.



Bonus tip 2:

# The Price is Right: Enterprise Pricing Dilemmas

## The Problem

Our data shows that when enterprise software hides pricing behind “Contact Sales,” AI turns to user speculation on Reddit and LinkedIn and often links your brand with **negative price sentiment**.

On ChatGPT, Reddit is used as a source in almost every query, and LinkedIn joins the party when the AI model cannot find current pricing information. AI is biased towards giving an answer as well as scanning very recent content.

# The Solution: Transparent Pricing

The only way to control this narrative is to offer LLM-crawlable pricing pages for all categories. In addition, you should contact and update all credible review sites like G2.

Of course, you need to assess this on the basis of whether the potential gain is worth it or not.

## Why Transparency Wins

- **Reliable sources** (your pricing page, G2, Capterra) prevent AI from turning to speculation
- **Reddit and LinkedIn enterprise pricing discussions** typically carry negative sentiment
- **Clear pricing information** eliminates the need for user guesswork that AI will inevitably find and cite

# Key Takeaway

Control your narrative at both stages or AI will find someone else's.

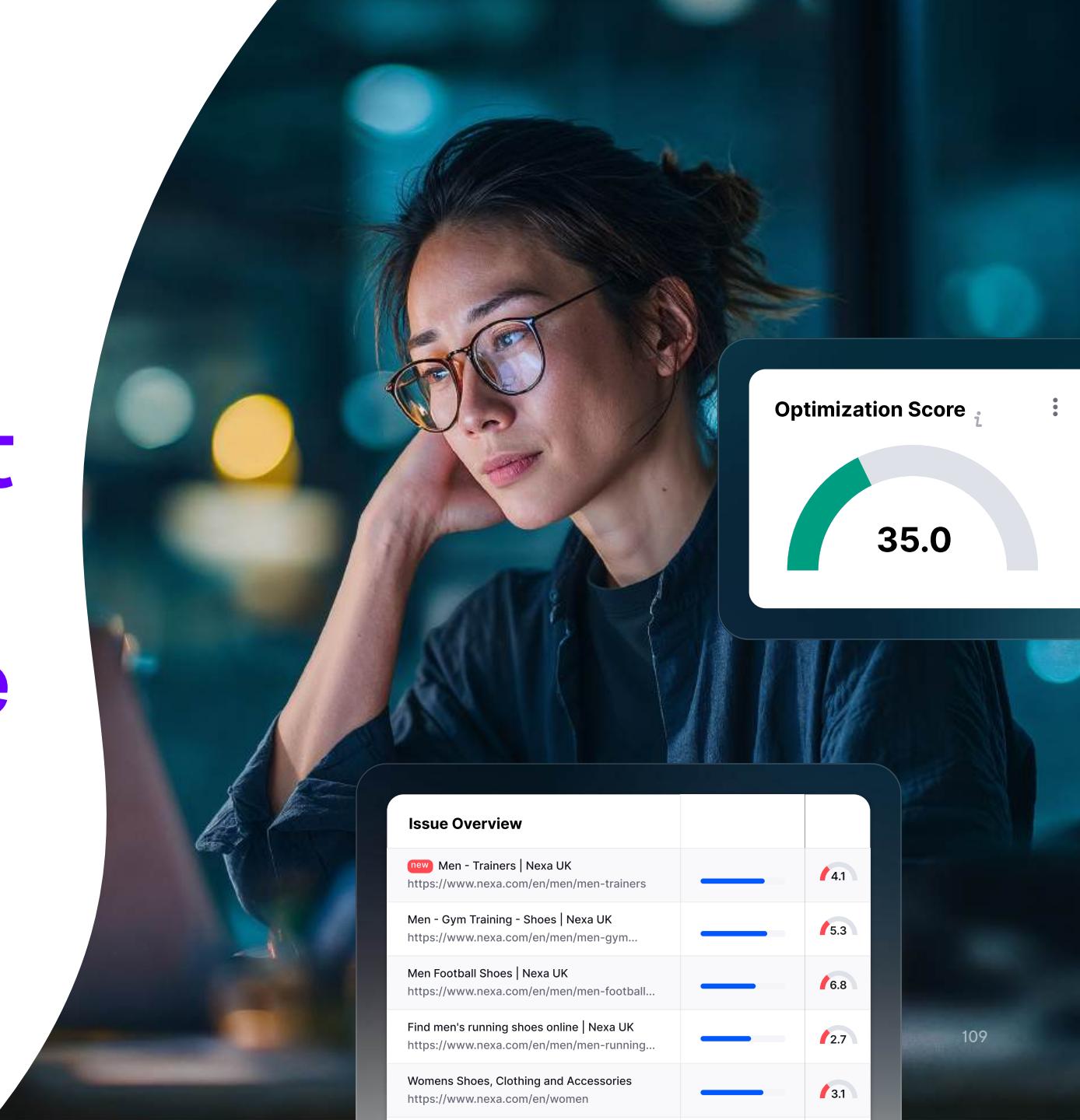
In Stage 1, dominate the sentiment conversation. In Stage 2, make your official information easily discoverable and comprehensive. If users are discussing your brand anyway, make sure AI finds your official explanation first.

# 06

## Technical Corner: Essential First Steps for AI Website Optimization

# Ready to Start Optimizing? First Make Sure AI Can Actually See Your Website

AI Visibility Index Study by Semrush Enterprise



Before tracking, monitoring, and optimizing for AI search, ask your technical teams to check the following:

## 1 Ensure Proper Indexing

Your website must be indexed in both search engines and AI for your content to be findable.

- Google Search Console: Verify indexing status and submit sitemaps
- Bing Webmaster Tools: Critical for ChatGPT visibility since it uses Bing search results
- If you're not indexed, you're invisible to AI-powered search

## 2 Prioritize Static HTML Content

AI models struggle with dynamic content:

- LLMs cannot read JavaScript—they only see what's rendered in static HTML
- Dynamic content rendering may be invisible to AI crawlers
- Static HTML pages provide the clearest signal for AI understanding
- Key information (pricing, features, descriptions) should be in HTML, not loaded via JavaScript

# 3 Bonus Point: Implement Structured Markup

Add schema markup following Google's guidelines to help AI understand your content:

- Product information with pricing, availability, and specifications
- Review data including star ratings and review counts
- Business information such as location, hours, and contact details
- FAQ sections structured for easy AI parsing

# Bottom Line:

If AI can't crawl it, it can't cite it. Make your most important information easily accessible in static HTML with proper structured markup.



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Enterprise SI

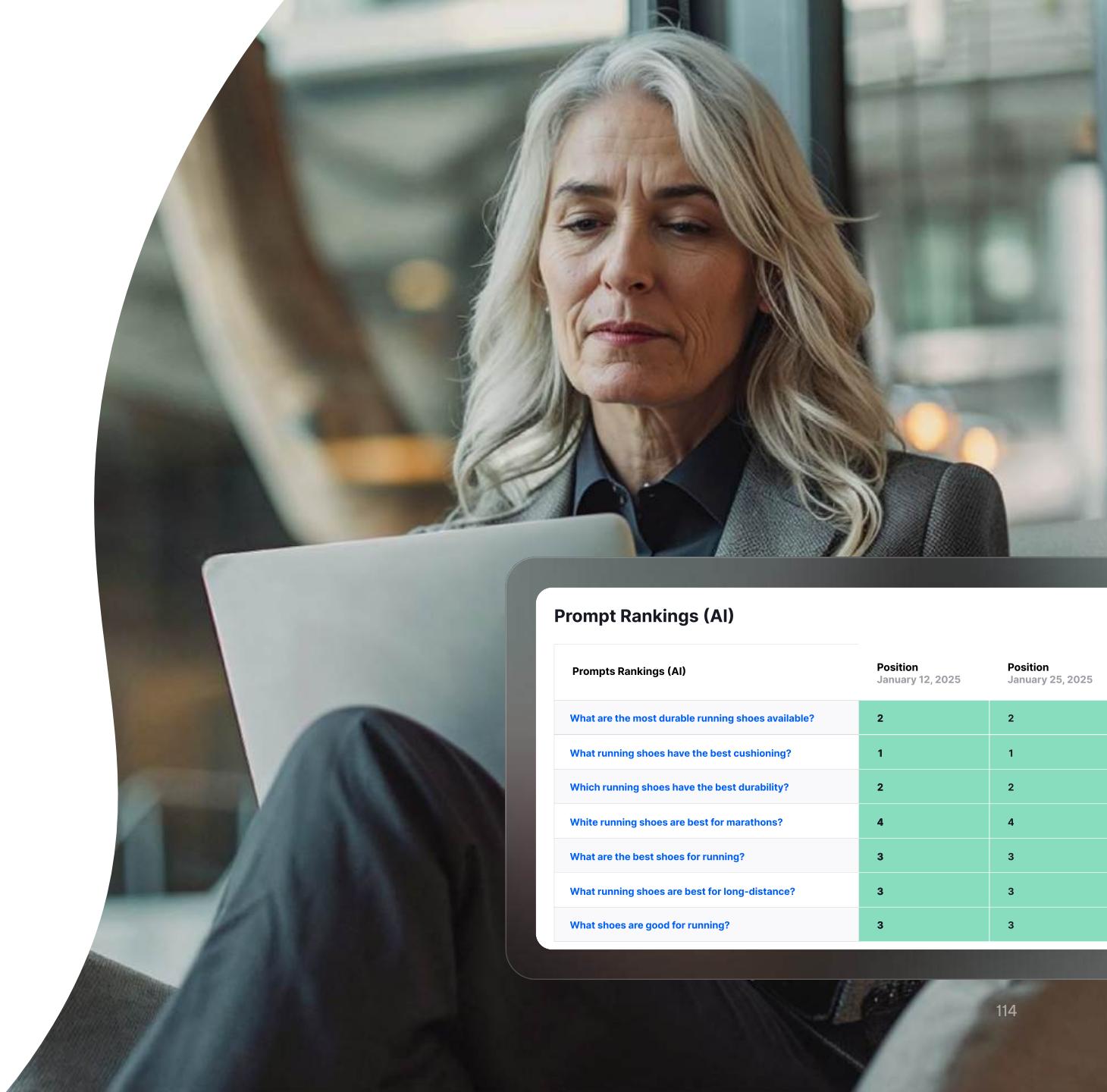
Simulate AI crawlers to ensure all of your key content is accessible to AI search platforms and technically robust with Site Intelligence.

4.9M Results	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mens - Trainers   Nexa UK <a href="https://www.nexa.com/en/men/men-trainers">https://www.nexa.com/en/men/men-trainers</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mens - Gym Training - Shoes   Nexa UK <a href="https://www.nexa.com/en/men/men-gym-training-sh">https://www.nexa.com/en/men/men-gym-training-sh</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mens Football Shoes   Nexa UK <a href="https://www.nexa.com/en/men/men-football-shoes">https://www.nexa.com/en/men/men-football-shoes</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Find men's running shoes online   Nexa UK <a href="https://www.nexa.com/en/men/men-running-shoes">https://www.nexa.com/en/men/men-running-shoes</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Light Padded Jacket   Nexa UK <a href="https://www.nexa.com/en/kids/light-padded-jacket">https://www.nexa.com/en/kids/light-padded-jacket</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	tennis-trainers.jpg <a href="https://assets.nexa.com/images/w_766,h_766,f_auto,">https://assets.nexa.com/images/w_766,h_766,f_auto,</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	football-trainers.jpg <a href="https://assets.nexa.com/images/w_766,h_766,f_auto,">https://assets.nexa.com/images/w_766,h_766,f_auto,</a>

# 07

## Your AI Visibility Roadmap: From 30 Days to 12 Months

# Strategic Additions That Are Proven to Deliver



# Quick Wins (30–60) Days

## Technical health check

- Verify your robots.txt file doesn't block common AI crawlers like GPTBot, CCBot, or Claude-We
- Ensure server-side rendering (SSR) for all critical content to make it fetchable by AI systems
- Implement semantic HTML5 elements and heading hierarchies for better parseability

## Set up AI search monitoring

- Manually test your top pages by searching their exact titles on AI platforms to identify accessibility issues
- Identify relevant sources of information for your product vertical
- Identify key websites in your niche that are commonly cited, such as Reddit or Tom's Guide
- Analyze which competitors are cited and what types of sources appear when you test topics on AI platforms
- Use AIO to track your brand's Share of Voice, mentions, and sentiment

## Content audit

- Swap marketing speak for LLM-friendly text
- Add statistics, data, and expert quotes to your content, replacing vague statements
- Incorporate FAQs to pages with common questions to aid AI interpretation

# Medium-Term Initiatives (3–6 Months)

## Start your community strategy

- Participate in relevant subreddits, Quora or GitHub discussions, providing genuine value and answering questions

## Test “best of” content creation

- Create structured “best of” lists that explain your methodology upfront and assign targeted “best” ratings (e.g., “Best for freelancers on a budget”)
- Publish comparison tables (especially brand vs. brand) with use-case verdicts

## Drive positive sentiment through review strategy

- Encourage customers to leave detailed reviews on relevant platforms (e.g., G2, Capterra)
- Monitor your brand sentiment and associated topics to understand perceived strengths and weaknesses

# Long-Term Investments (6-12 months)

## Develop media partnerships

- Guest post on industry publications, focusing on AI-friendly formats and topics aligned with key prompts
- Offer expert quotes to journalists, editors, and bloggers in your niche to increase chances of being mentioned
- Prioritize earning contextual brand mentions in these key spaces and stay actively engaged in surrounding discussions to reinforce industry leadership

## Experiment with opinion-led content

- Create pieces with clear, actionable takeaways and unique takes on industry topics backed by authority and evidence

## Build content clusters for query fan-out

- Plan and implement topic clusters to cover core topics and address the multiple sub-queries that are part of complex prompts
- Continue to optimize content for natural language processing by writing in “chunks,” passages that can be directly extracted, while providing clear definitions

# 08

## Key Takeaways to Win in AI Search Next Quarter

AI visibility is no longer just a byproduct  
of good SEO, it's its own discipline.

And this AI Index lays out the blueprint:

# For Brands



## Master multi-platform strategies

ChatGPT and Google AI Mode behave differently. One rewards cultural traction, the other favors structured clarity. Winning means optimizing for both.



## Close the source-mention divide

Being talked about isn't enough. You need to be cited. If AI can't find official, structured information of your brand, it will rely on others to tell your story.



## Build trust through consistency

Brands that appear across both mentions and citations—consistently and repeatedly—win the AI equity game.

# For Marketing Teams



## Reframe content strategy

Replace vague marketing claims with clear, factual product language. AI doesn't like fluff—it needs specifics.



## Lean into user validation

UGC, reviews, Reddit threads, and listicles aren't "nice to have", they're foundational visibility assets now.



## Structure matters

Structured markup, pricing transparency, and accessible documentation aren't technical chores but AI visibility levers.

# For Data & Research Teams



## Track what AI sees

You can't manage what you don't measure. Start tracking how often your brand is cited and by whom.



## Establish baselines

With this Index, you have your starting line. Use it to measure movement and strategy impact over time.

# Final Thoughts

In a world where AI mediates discovery, visibility is no longer earned by shouting the loudest, it's won by being the most useful, the most cited, and the most trusted.

# 09

## Methodology

## Sample:

2,500 prompts across five industry verticals (finance, digital technology & software, business & professional services, fashion & apparel, consumer electronics), with equal distribution among subcategories within each vertical. Branded queries were excluded to ensure unbiased results, and no prompts overlapped across categories.

## Rationale:

We focused on this number of prompts, as at larger sizes, the amount of variance limits the interpretability of the data. This also makes replication of the metrics used in the study very difficult.

Likewise, our verticals are carefully weighted and tagged to enable comparison across verticals.

## Prompt types:

Three categories designed to mirror authentic AI search behavior:



General product research “what are the best running shoes”



Product + feature research “what are the best waterproof running shoes”



Specific use case research (product + feature + application) “what are the best waterproof running shoes for rugged terrain”

Price queries used realistic pricing appropriate to each product category.

# Data Collection

## Platforms:

Google AI Mode and ChatGPT (web search enabled), executed in US desktop environments via Semrush Enterprise AI Optimization (AIO).

## Temporal framework:

Bi-weekly data collection with periodic daily refreshes to account for AI response volatility. Longer collection periods reduce variability in results.

# Observed Primary Metrics:



**Mentions:** Brand name appearances in AI response text



**Mention Position:** Sequential order of brand appearance (first to last)



**Sources:** Brand website citations in AI-generated source lists

Derived

# Secondary Metrics:



**Share of Voice (SOV):** Composite metric incorporating mention frequency, source citations, and positioning. Maximum SOV = 100% (first mention across all prompts)



**Mention Diversity:** Ratio of unique brands mentioned to total prompts per category



**Source Diversity:** Ratio of unique domains cited to total prompts per category

Higher diversity scores indicate greater competitive distribution.

# Ranking and Reporting

**Ranking Criteria:** All rankings explicitly state the benchmark metric used, with selection based on fairest and most appropriate comparison for the specific analysis.

**Result Types:**



**Model-Specific:** Results for individual AI platforms



**Weighted Overall:** Combined results using platform weighting (80% ChatGPT, 20% Google AI) based on anticipated user distribution

## Weighted SOV Calculation:

$$\text{WSOV} = (\text{ChatGPT SOV} \times 0.8) + (\text{Google AI SOV} \times 0.2)$$

This accounts for the higher usage of ChatGPT vs Google AI Mode.

# Limitations and Controls

## Volatility Management:

AI web search results exhibit higher variability than traditional search engines. Weekly aggregation with extended collection periods minimizes this variation and improves result reliability.



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