

FIRST ANNUAL AI VISIBILITY INDEX

FEBRUARY 2026

The New Rules of Visibility 2026

The AI Visibility Gap: Influence Is Rising. Accountability Is Not.

Based on 104 senior B2B marketing leaders | February 2026

 Resonance

Agency

Foreword

Tom Fry, CTO, Agency + Resonance

AI answer engines are no longer an experiment. They are becoming part of the discovery infrastructure.

For twenty years, B2B marketing has been built around the click. Rank, earn traffic, attribute impact. AI changes the loop. Buyers can now research, compare and shortlist vendors without generating a single visit.

That is not just a new channel, it represents a structural reset of the buying journey, which is being condensed into a single conversational interaction. The model generates the criteria and often the shortlist.

And visibility inside that layer behaves differently to anything that has come before.

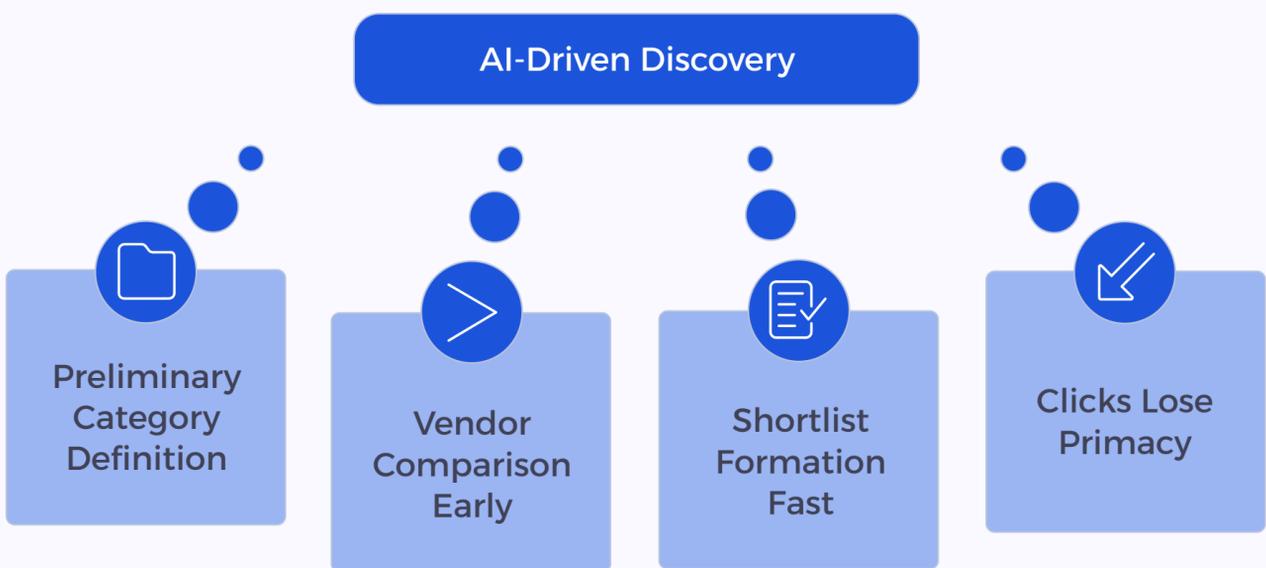
There is no keyword planner, answers vary by model, inclusion is not binary, it is contextual.

B2B organisations recognise that change is in the air, but their plan has not caught up. Ownership is fragmented, measurement is partial and attribution is weak.

AI models synthesise the signals already in the market - technical clarity, consistent positioning, third-party authority. If those signals are strong and measurable, visibility follows.

We are entering the action phase of AI discovery. The advantage will belong to those who see AI answer engines as no longer experimental, but part of the discovery infrastructure.

Buyers are using ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot and Perplexity to define categories, compare vendors and shape shortlists, often before visiting a website. Discovery is compressing and the click is no longer the first signal of intent.



Our research with 104 senior B2B marketing leaders reveals tension:

Influence is rising, but accountability is not.

81%

AI Blind Spot

say AI visibility is a blind spot

60%

Tracking Attempts

are attempting to track AI-driven traffic

45%

Pipeline Influence

believe AI already influences between 6-20% of pipeline

10%

Revenue Connection

can consistently connect AI-driven touchpoints to revenue

Belief often moves faster than measurement.

Leaders expect AI to influence pipeline and they acknowledge visibility gaps. Many are experimenting with tracking and tooling, but ownership is fragmented, positioning is inconsistent, and attribution remains immature.

Nearly half of those who assessed their AI presence report mixed or inaccurate positioning, introducing a new risk: **algorithmic mispositioning**, where brands appear in AI-generated answers but are framed incorrectly, narrowing or distorting buyer perception.

AI visibility now sits at the intersection of:

Narrative authority

Technical discoverability

Third-party validation

Revenue accountability

Yet in most organisations, it sits between teams, owned by no one. It is measured inconsistently and rarely linked to pipeline outcomes.

We are entering the infrastructure phase of AI discovery.

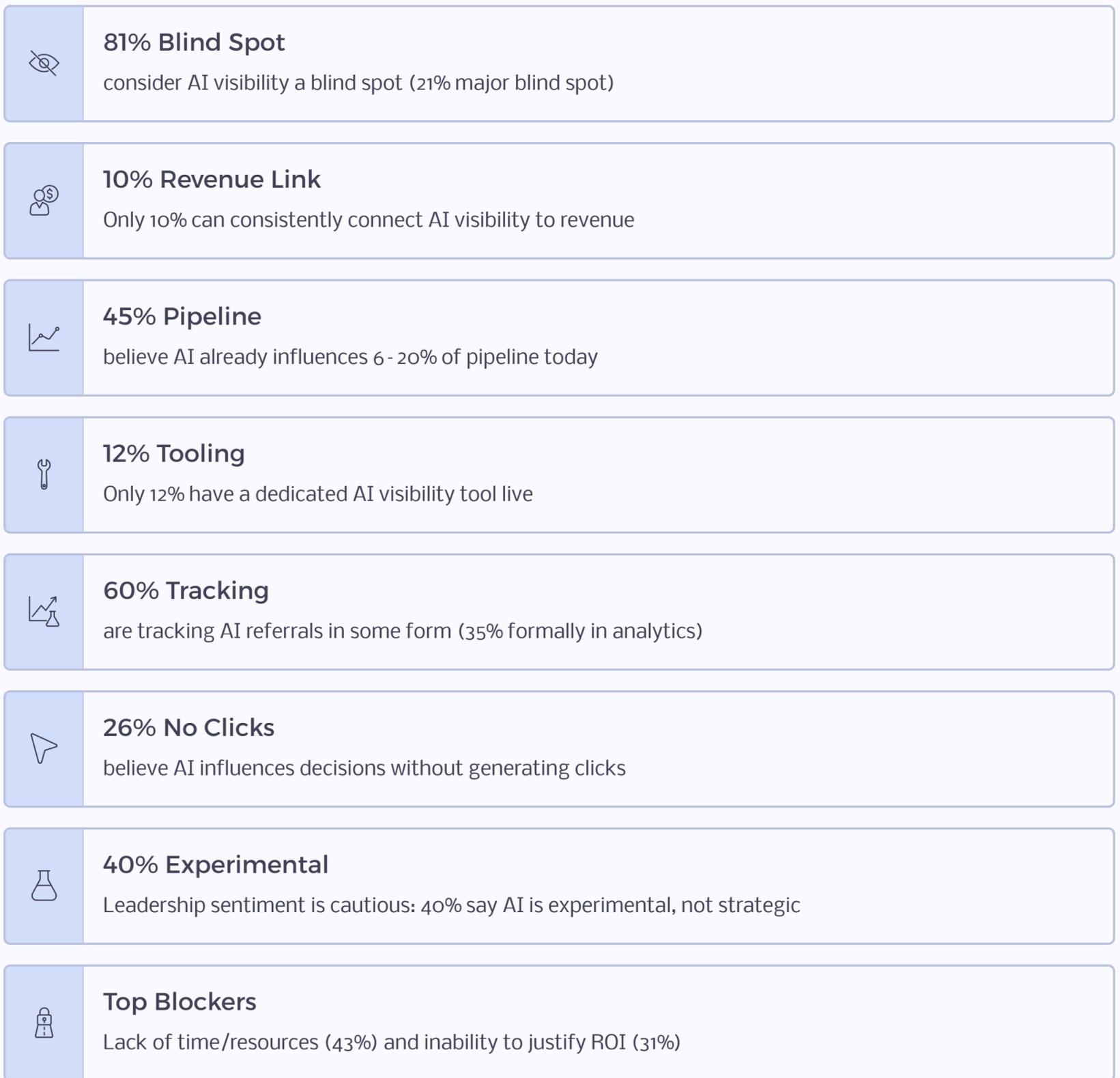
The organisations that build advantage will not be those chasing prompt tactics. They will be those that:

- Define ownership
- Measure across models
- Protect positioning precision
- And connect upstream influence to downstream revenue

This report marks the first edition of the Agency AI Visibility Index.

We will run this research quarterly to track how the market (B2B marketing) evolves, from awareness, to measurement, to attribution maturity.

Key Findings



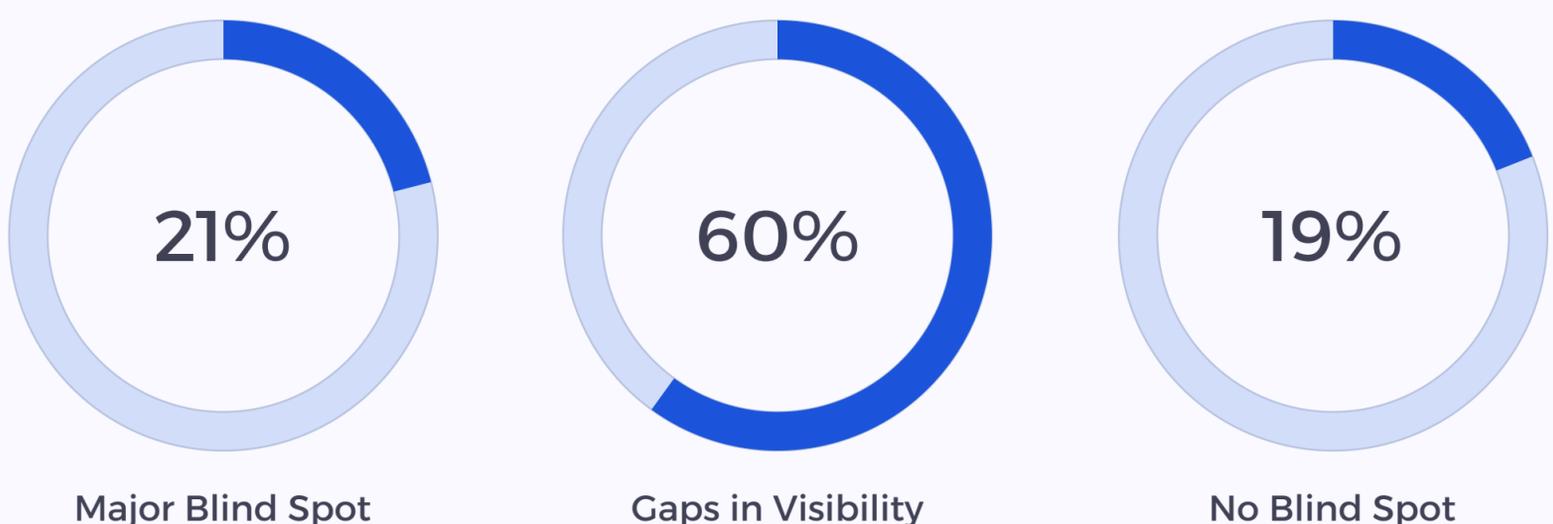
AI Visibility Is Recognised, But Not Owned

There is now broad consensus among B2B marketing leaders that AI answer engines are altering how buyers discover vendors. Rather than beginning with search results or gated content, buyers increasingly ask AI tools for recommendations, comparisons, and category summaries.

Despite this shift, most organisations lack basic visibility into how, or whether, they appear in AI-generated answers. There is no denial problem when it comes AI visibility, but there is an ownership problem.

Eighty-one percent of respondents say AI visibility is a blind spot in their organisation, with 21% calling it a major one. B2B tech marketers understand that AI answer engines are influencing discovery, but the decision of who is responsible for managing it is still to be made.

81% of respondents say AI visibility is either a major blind spot (21%) or that they have gaps (60%).



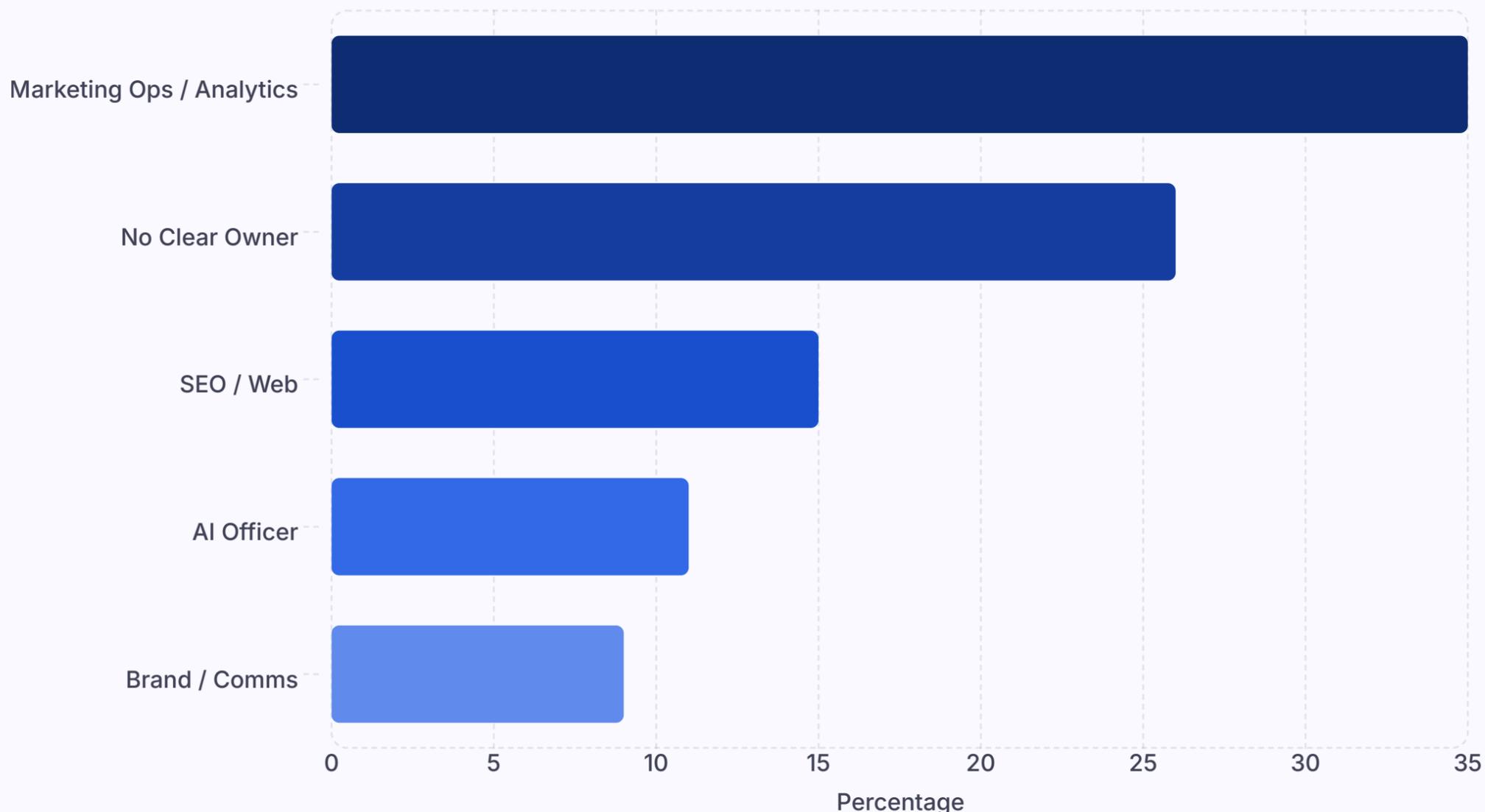
Ownership Is Fragmented and Unclear

When asked who owns AI visibility, the answers are fragmented. Thirty-five percent place it under Marketing Ops or Analytics. Fifteen percent say SEO or Web. Nine percent say Brand or Communications. Eleven percent say an AI Officer.

And 26% say there is no clear owner at all.

More than one in four organisations have a structural gap, no one accountable, no defined KPIs, no clear mandate to improve it.

Responsibility Area



This fragmentation reflects the nature of the problem. AI visibility sits between functions. It is influenced by technical site structure, third-party authority, media coverage, category language and competitive positioning. It touches SEO, PR, brand and revenue, but rarely sits fully inside any one of them.

Without ownership, monitoring is inconsistent and positioning issues drift. Investment cases stall because accountability is unclear. Ultimately, AI visibility becomes a topic of conversation rather than a managed capability.

The data suggests B2B marketing leaders are aware of need, but not yet operationalised around it. AI visibility is moving from curiosity to a real job to be done. It should not be treated as an SEO add-on or an experimental AI initiative, it connects narrative authority with measurable discovery.

Closing that ownership gap is the first step toward turning AI visibility from a blind spot into a competitive advantage.

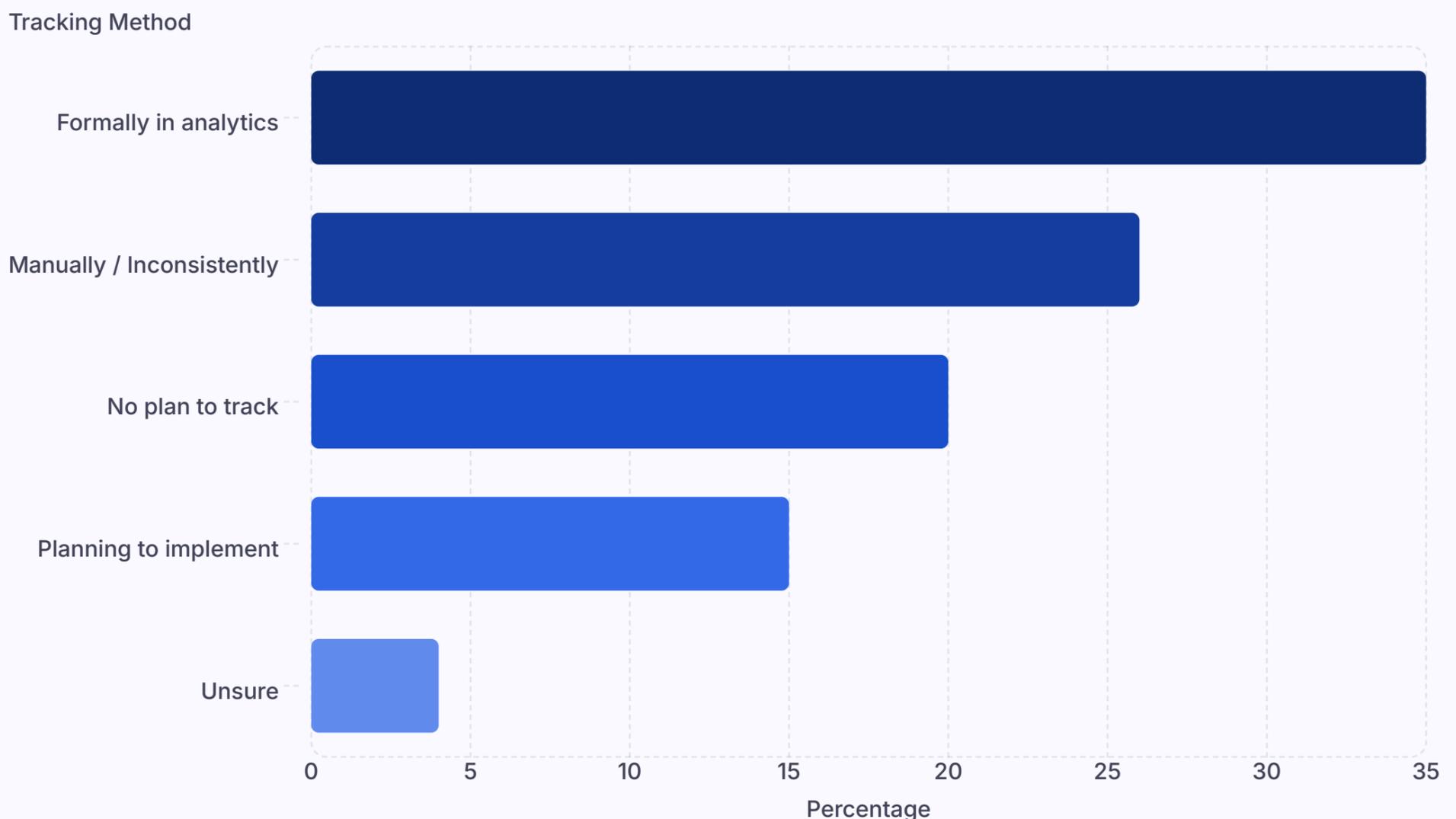
Measurement: Tracking AI-Driven Referrals

Ownership fragmentation has a direct consequence: uneven measurement. When asked whether their teams track AI-driven referrals as a distinct analytics source, only 35% say they do so formally within their analytics stack.

A further 26% track manually or inconsistently and the remainder either have no tracking in place, are unsure, or are only planning to implement it.

In other words, while 60% are attempting some form of measurement, only a third have nailed it.

How are teams tracking AI-driven referrals?



It all becomes a guessing game. If AI referral traffic appears low, is that because the brand is genuinely invisible in AI answers? Or because tracking is immature? Without consistent ownership, it is difficult to tell.

That opacity becomes clearer when we look at traffic attribution more broadly. Twenty percent of respondents say they do not know what percentage of their website sessions originate from AI tools. Even among those who do track, reported AI traffic shares vary widely, from negligible to more than 10% of sessions.

The issue, then, is not simply whether AI influences discovery. It is whether organisations have built the measurement discipline to understand how.

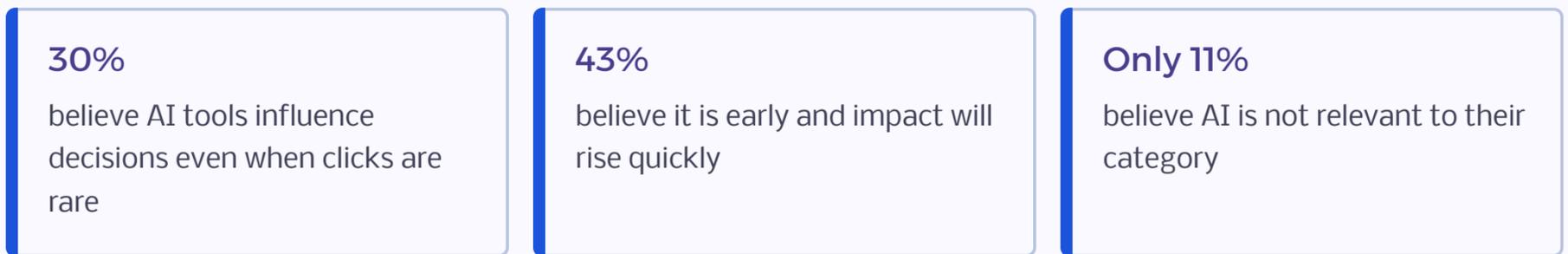
- Awareness is high and early tracking efforts are underway. But without clear ownership, governance and defined KPIs, AI visibility sits in a grey zone, monitored in pockets, not yet managed as a coherent capability.

Until AI visibility is embedded into a structured model, with accountability, consistent reporting and connection to pipeline, organisations will struggle to distinguish between genuine invisibility and unmeasured influence. And you cannot improve what you cannot see.

Pipeline Influence: Belief Outpaces Proof

Low or unclear referral traffic from AI tools is often misinterpreted as lack of relevance. However, the data suggests leaders do not see it that way.

When asked how they interpret low or unclear AI referral traffic:



In fact, the most common response (45%) was not scepticism, but concern about visibility. Respondents believe they are simply not showing up strongly enough in AI-generated answers.

Even where measurable traffic remains modest, most leaders do not interpret that as irrelevance. They expect AI's influence to grow and assume some level of off-site impact is already occurring.

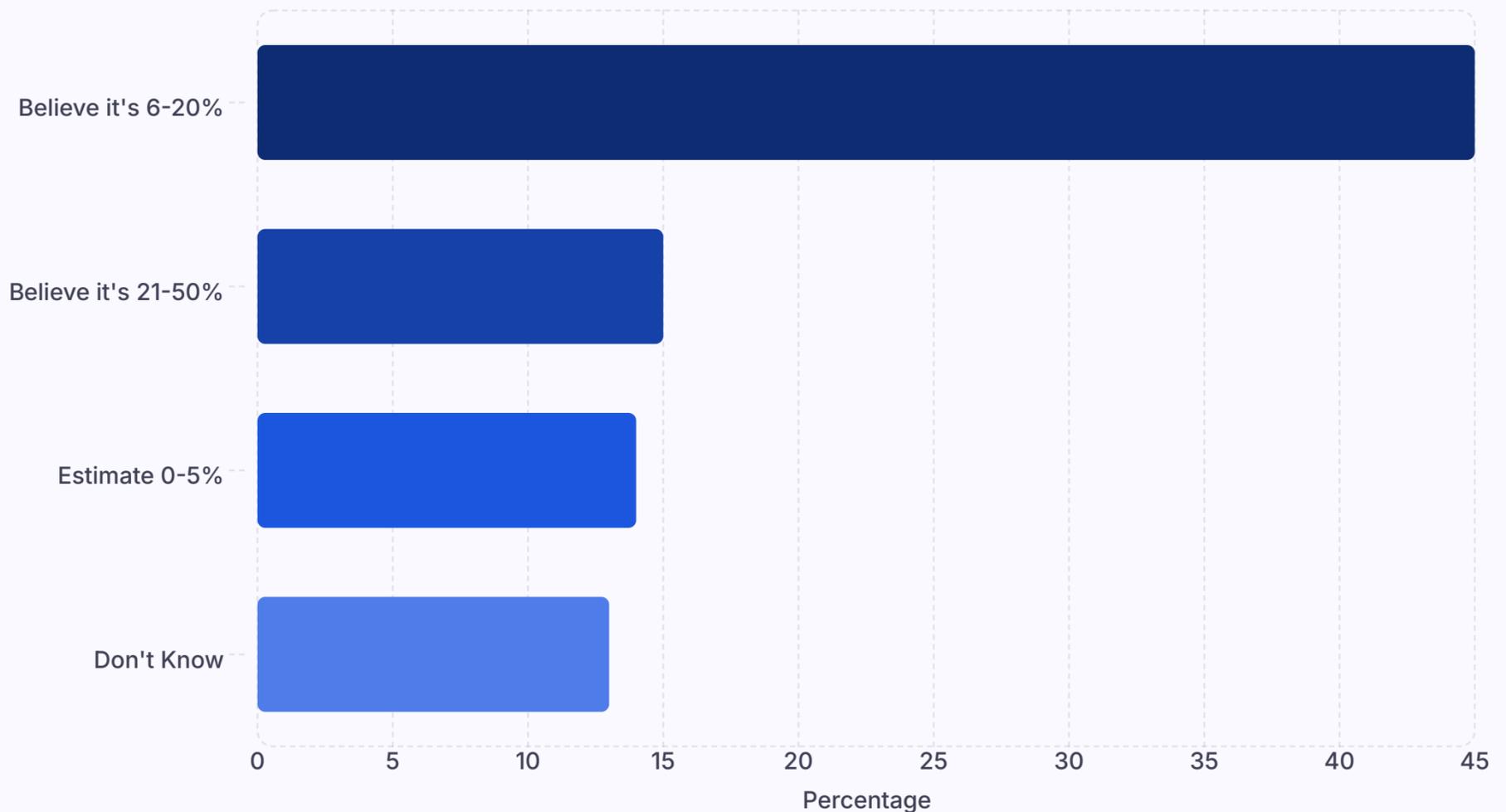
For marketing leaders, this creates a structural challenge. Traditional models rely on clicks, sessions and last-touch attribution. AI-mediated discovery, by contrast, can shape perception before a visit ever occurs, and may only become visible downstream, once preferences are already formed.

Influence can precede measurable engagement, and most organisations are not yet fully equipped to track that upstream layer.

This belief in growing influence is reflected when leaders are asked directly about pipeline impact.

Share of Pipeline Influenced by AI Today

Share of Pipeline



A clear majority believe AI is already playing a material role in commercial outcomes. The industry may not yet have precise attribution models, but it does not see AI as marginal.

And that belief, that influence is happening upstream and increasingly shaping pipeline, sets up the challenge of proving it.

Positioning Accuracy: The Risk of Algorithmic Mispositioning

Visibility alone is insufficient if a brand is misrepresented, poorly positioned, or framed inaccurately inside AI-generated answers.

While 66% of respondents have checked how their brand appears in AI answers at least once, only 25% do so regularly.

That means three quarters of organisations are not consistently monitoring how they are being described inside AI systems.

And when we look at what those who have checked are actually seeing, the picture becomes more nuanced.

Assessment of Positioning

54%

Mostly or Completely Accurate

46%

Mixed or Often Inaccurate

In total, 46% report inconsistent or inaccurate positioning.

AI systems do not invent narratives, they synthesise signals that already exist in the public domain - media coverage, analyst commentary, review platforms, structured content, competitive comparisons and category language.

If those signals are fragmented or inconsistent, AI outputs reflect that fragmentation.

This introduces a new category of risk: **algorithmic mispositioning**. Even when brands are mentioned, they may be associated with the wrong use cases, strengths, or competitive set, shaping buyer perceptions in ways that are difficult to detect through traditional analytics.

In an AI-mediated discovery environment, positioning accuracy becomes commercially significant. Buyers may form early preferences based on how AI summarises strengths, weaknesses and category fit, often before engaging directly with the brand.

For many leaders, the concern is no longer just invisibility, but misperception and loss of narrative control.

This is why third-party authority signals matter more than ever. Press coverage, analyst validation, expert commentary, structured comparison content and clear category language all feed the AI layer. If narrative authority is inconsistent, AI visibility will be inconsistent.

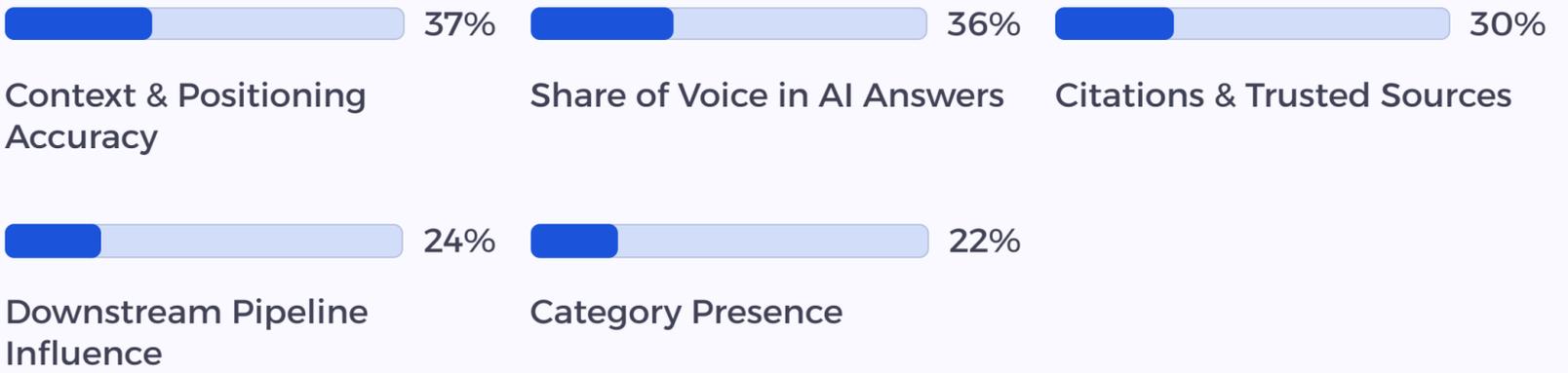
This is where integrated PR and AI visibility monitoring become strategically powerful. It is not simply about appearing in answers. It is about shaping how those answers describe you.

Most Valuable AI Visibility Metrics for 2026

If AI visibility is moving from awareness to evaluation, the next question is what success should look like.

When asked what would be most valuable to measure in 2026, leaders did not prioritise traffic, they prioritised positioning.

The most selected metric was context and positioning accuracy (37%), closely followed by share of voice in AI answers (36%). Citations and trusted sources used by AI systems were selected by 30% of respondents. Downstream pipeline influence was selected by 24%, and category presence in shortlist-style queries by 22%.



In an AI-mediated buyer journey, success is less about driving volume and more about shaping recommendation. It is about whether a brand appears in shortlist-style answers, how it is described, and which sources underpin that description.

What leaders are seeking is not simply traffic growth. They are seeking **narrative control at scale**.

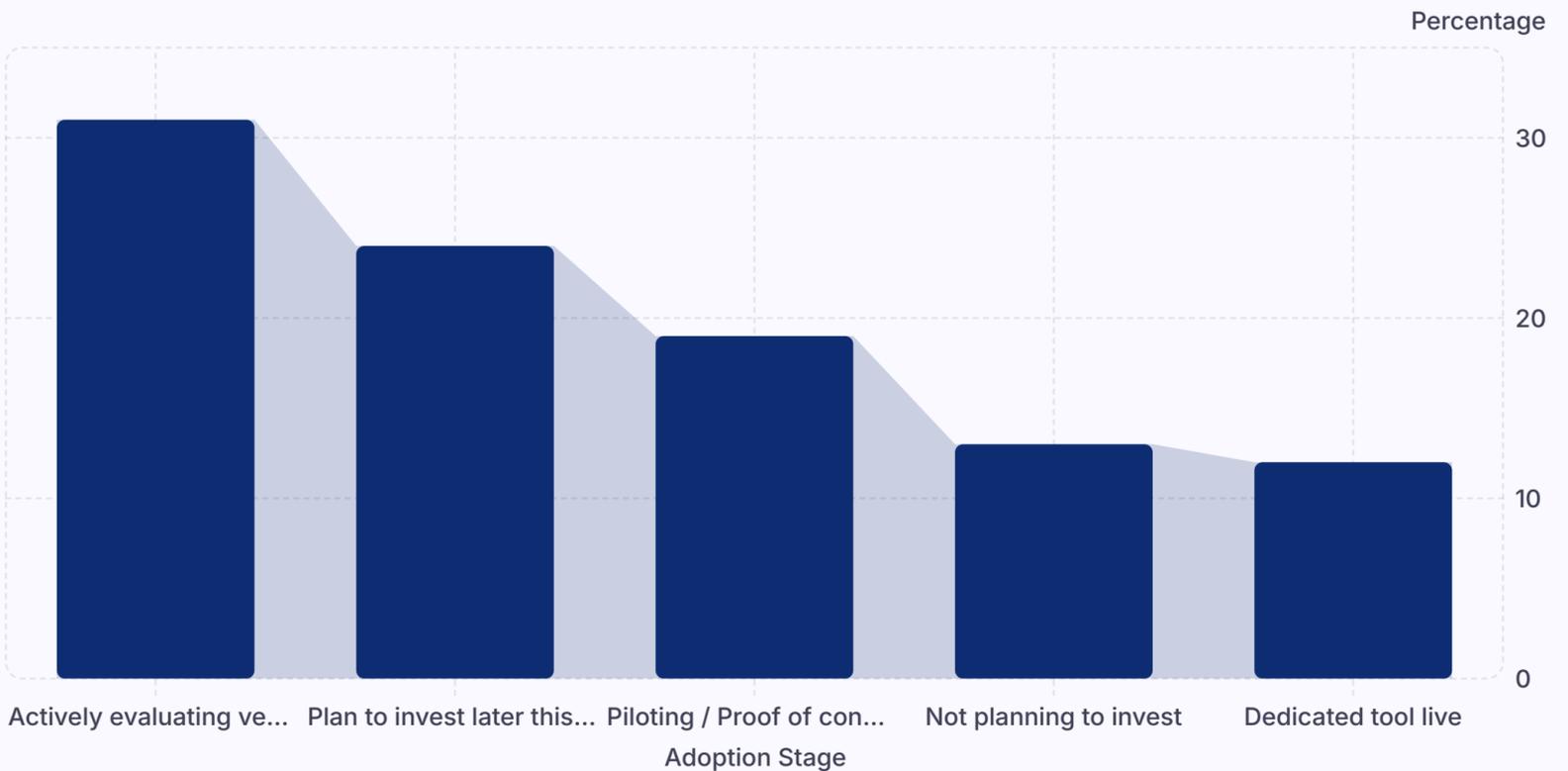
That requires visibility into how AI systems synthesise authority signals, and the ability to influence those signals deliberately.

Tooling & Investment: The Structured Evaluation Phase

Despite widespread acknowledgement that AI visibility is a blind spot, adoption of dedicated measurement and tooling remains early.

38.71%

Total conversion rate



This is not a hype cycle, nor is it mass adoption. We are in the structured evaluation phase.

Organisations are weighing AI visibility carefully. The question is less "does this matter?" and more "how do we operationalise this responsibly?" and "what budgets do I align", "what bets do I make?"

The barriers are practical rather than ideological.



Until AI visibility can be measured consistently and linked to commercial outcomes, investment decisions are likely to remain cautious. This is why measurement maturity, not content production, is emerging as the next competitive frontier.

Conclusion: From Blind Spot to Competitive Advantage

AI-generated answers are no longer an experiment, they are part of the discovery infrastructure, part of the buyer journey - from awareness, to consideration, to decision.

Most organisations recognise this. They believe AI is influencing pipeline. They acknowledge visibility gaps and they are beginning to measure.

But belief is ahead of proof. Only one in ten can consistently connect AI visibility to revenue. Nearly half see inconsistent positioning inside AI answers. Ownership remains fragmented and investment is cautious.

The shift underway is not about optimising content for AI, it is about operationalising visibility.

AI visibility now sits at the intersection of narrative authority, technical signals and revenue accountability. It touches PR, SEO, brand, demand and RevOps. Treating it as a tactical channel problem underestimates its impact. This is not simply a search evolution.

It is a discovery layer that interprets and synthesises the signals brands put into the market. The organisations that build advantage will not be those chasing mentions inside AI tools. They will be those that:



Define Ownership



Align Narrative with Authority



Measure Consistently



Connect Upstream Influence to Downstream Revenue

About Agency

Agency was built to help B2B organisations measure and improve how they appear across AI answer engines including ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude and Perplexity. We track visibility across real ICP-driven prompts, monitor positioning accuracy, measure share of model and identify where algorithmic mispositioning may be limiting commercial performance.

Our approach connects:

Narrative
Authority

Technical
Foundations

Third-party
Validation

Revenue
Attribution

If your team wants to understand how your brand currently appears across AI models, and where you may be losing consideration, you can apply for a visibility assessment or demo at: agency.com.pr

Turn Your AI Blind Spot into a Competitive Advantage.

Understand how your brand appears across AI models and where you may be losing consideration.

[Request a Visibility Assessment](#)

Continue the Conversation

To explore the practical implications in more detail, including:

- The five AI visibility indicators
- Why niche authority matters more than tier-one media
- How to structure a 30 - 60 - 90 day action plan
- And how to build an AEO-first strategy

You can watch the full webinar here:

[How to Make Sure AI Includes Your Brand in B2B Buying Decisions](#)

 Resonance

Agency