

• AI VISIBILITY RESEARCH • 21 SEPTEMBER 2026

Who AI search engines recommend for price monitoring

Twenty services, forty buyer queries, four answer engines. The company with the most search traffic ranks thirteenth when the system is asked to recommend a solution.

20 services

40 buyer queries

160 AI answers

4 answer engines

USA • September 2026

13th

where the service with the most US search traffic ranks in
AI recommendations

Summary

Buyers no longer start their choice with search. They ask an AI system, and instead of ten blue links they get three names.

The difference looks cosmetic, but it changes the rules. Ten links are a choice the buyer makes. Three names are a choice that has already been made for them. Getting onto that short list and getting onto the first page of results are now two different jobs, and the second no longer guarantees the first.

For a company that has invested in search visibility for years, the change happens quietly. Rankings hold, traffic holds, reports look the same as ever. Only one thing changes: at the moment the buyer forms a consideration set, your name may not be in it, and you won't know, because no familiar report shows it.

We took one category in full and measured how far this has already gone: twenty price monitoring services, forty questions buyers actually ask, four answer engines. No surveys and no expert opinions, only what the systems actually answered and what they cited while doing it.

The result is uncomfortable for both sides of the debate. Search hasn't been cancelled: there is a link between search traffic and visibility in answers. But it explains only about a third of the variation, and the other two thirds are something else. Those two thirds are what this study is about.

What makes this data different

Most publications on AI visibility rely on ready-made question sets from analytics vendors and on aggregate scores. We wrote forty buyer queries by hand, split them into four types before collecting anything, froze the list, and analysed each of the 160 answers individually, together with every link the system cited. That shows what an aggregate number hides: in which buying mode a company disappears, whom the systems treat as its real competitors, and which pages they cite when they answer.

Five key findings

Every finding is measured, not estimated. Sources and collection settings are listed in the methodology.

1

Recommendations are concentrated in a few names

Prisync is named in 64% of queries and Price2Spy in 50%. Four of the twenty services are never named. The average answer contains about three names, so the question isn't who wins but who makes the short list.

2

Google rank predicts only a third of the result

The service with the most search traffic in the US (5,244 visits a month) is thirteenth of twenty for visibility in answers. Minderest turns 557 visits into fifth place. The rank correlation between the two measures is 0.58.

3

The losses already show up inside Google

For phrases where the services already rank, Google shows an AI Overview. The share of cases where a service is cited inside the block itself ranges from 45.8% to 2.0%: a 23-fold gap in a channel the category is already paying for.

4

When buyers describe the task in their own words, the category barely exists

Only 59% of these answers name any service at all, against 100% in two other modes. Three services that are visible in the other modes are never named here.

5

Domain authority is not a condition of entry

A site with a domain rating of 8 and 52 visits a month is cited seven times: more often than the entire web presence of sixteen of the twenty measured services. The barrier to entry in this channel is lower than in classic search.

Market overview

The global market for price management software in 2026 is around 2 billion US dollars, growing about 16% a year. This is the only section built on third-party estimates.

SOURCE	2026 SIZE	FORECAST	ANNUAL GROWTH (CAGR)
Mordor Intelligence	\$1.95bn	\$4.17bn by 2031	16.1%
Fortune Business Insights	\$2.00bn	\$6.85bn by 2034	16.7%

The two independent estimates differ by 3% on current size and almost match on growth rate. The difference in the forecasts comes from different horizons, not disagreement.

61.9%

of the market is large enterprises

30.2%

is retail and e-commerce

36.6%

is North America

47.4%

of solutions use algorithmic pricing

Mordor Intelligence data for 2025. The first two numbers explain why the study sample looks the way it does: most of the money sits with large customers, while most of the vendors serve retailers.

How much of this is visible in search

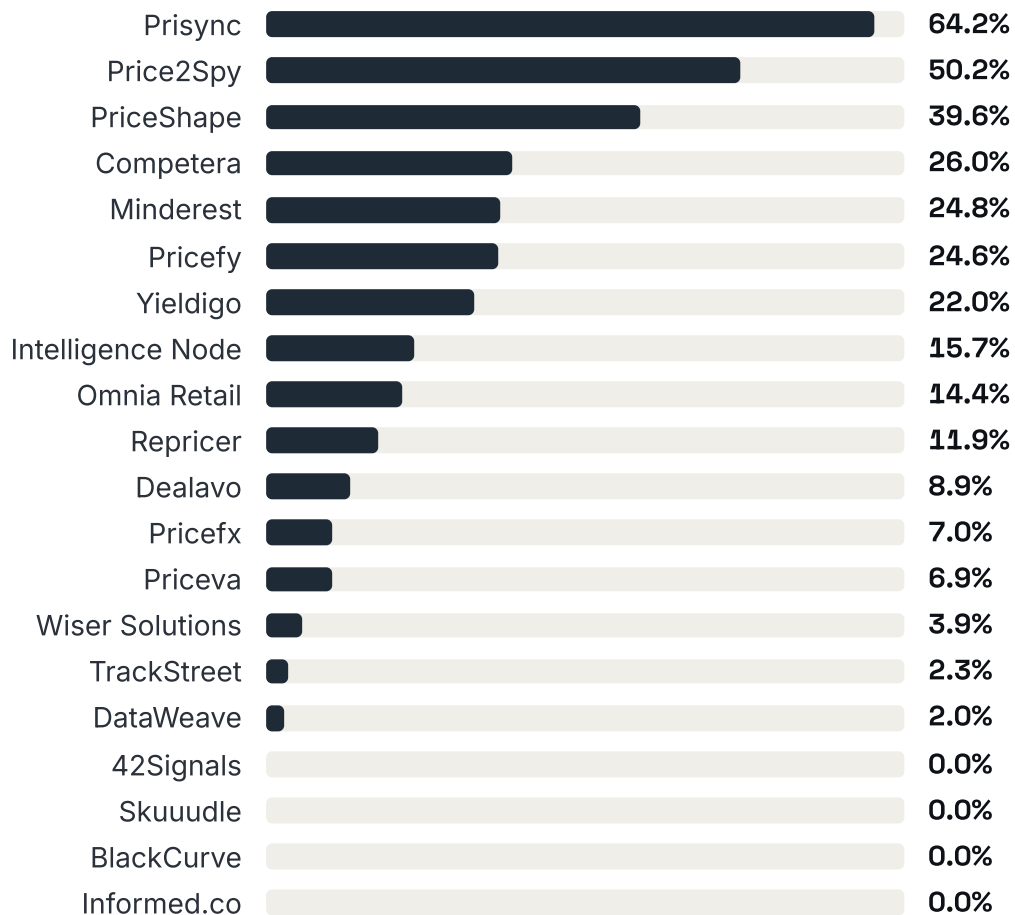
All the attention the twenty services collect from US search is worth about 1.9 million dollars a year in equivalent paid traffic, against a global market of about 2 billion. The numbers aren't directly comparable: the first is the US and search only, the second is the whole world and all revenue. But the order of magnitude matters. The category isn't sold on click volume: one enterprise contract is worth more than a year of search traffic for some vendors. That's why getting into a short list of three names matters more than traffic growth, and the rest of this study is about exactly that.

Who the answer engines name

Mention share is the proportion of the forty buyer queries where the system names the service, weighted by how often that question is asked. The shares add up to roughly 305% because most answers name several solutions at once.

Mention share in answers

40 buyer queries · four answer engines · USA · September 2026



Source: Ahrefs Brand Radar

Four services (42Signals, Skuuudle, BlackCurve and Informed.co) are not named in a single answer. The gap between first and fourth place is bigger than between fourth and sixteenth: in the eyes of the answer engines, the market consists of three names and a long tail.

Only five services were ever the only name in an answer. For Prisync this happened once in thirty-two mentions. The exception is Repricer: all four of its mentions are solo, because it only comes up in questions about repricing on Amazon.

Four markets in one ranking

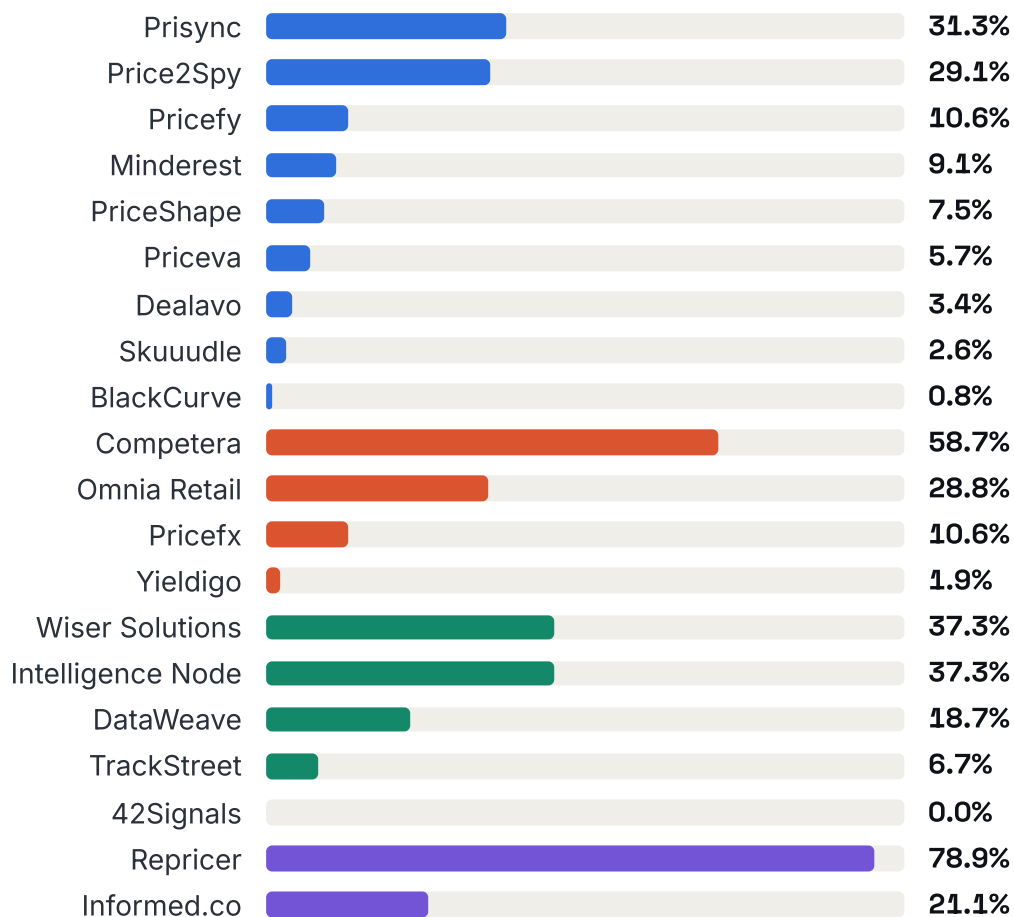
Twenty services aren't one category but four different businesses. The split isn't our invention: the systems draw the line themselves in their answers. One puts it directly: price optimisation is what you need "when you want the system to help set your price, not just show you other people's".

Testing the split. If the split is right, services in the same segment should appear in the same answer more often. They do: co-occurrence within a segment is 0.15, between segments 0.07, exactly half. The split isn't absolute: the most frequent cross-segment pair is Competera and Prisync (0.45).

Share within its own segment

A service's mentions as a share of all mentions in its segment · 160 answers

- Monitoring for retailers
- Price optimisation
- Price control for brands
- Marketplace repricing



Source: our own analysis of 160 answers from Ahrefs Brand Radar

The overall ranking buries the leaders of small segments. Wiser Solutions is fourteenth of twenty overall and joint leader of its segment with 37.3%. Repricer is tenth overall and holds 79% of its own. A company's place in the overall category list says nothing about its position where it actually competes.

Four buyer modes

The overall ranking hides the main point: buyers ask in four different ways, and visibility differs between them several times over. The forty queries were split into four modes before collection, and each answer was analysed separately.

SERVICE	SHORT LIST	TWO-WAY COMPARISON	TASK DESCRIPTION	COST
Prisync	70%	42%	19%	64%
Price2Spy	67%	35%	19%	61%
Competera	57%	38%	12%	29%
Omnia Retail	33%	18%	3%	7%
Intelligence Node	25%	18%	0%	21%
Wiser Solutions	28%	18%	9%	4%
Pricefy	25%	5%	6%	32%
Minderest	23%	15%	6%	7%
PriceShape	13%	20%	9%	4%
Priceva	10%	10%	3%	14%
Repricer	10%	10%	16%	0%
DataWeave	10%	18%	0%	4%
Pricefx	3%	12%	0%	14%
Dealavo	7%	10%	3%	0%

Share of answers within each mode that name the service. 160 answers, not weighted by query frequency. Source: our own analysis of 160 answers from Ahrefs Brand Radar.

Where the category disappears. When buyers describe the task in their own words, only 59% of answers name any service at all, against 100% in two other modes. The best result here is 19%, against 70% in the short list. This is the earliest moment of choice, and two companies out of three don't exist in it.

Three services vanish completely. Intelligence Node is named in 25% of "recommend a tool" answers and 21% of pricing questions, and in none when the task is described in plain words. The same goes for DataWeave and Pricefx.

All three are visible only to people who already know what the thing they sell is called.

Two services live in a single mode. Repricer is the only one whose best mode is task description (16%), with zero on cost questions. Pricefy is the mirror case: 32% on cost questions and only 5% in comparisons.

The visibility funnel

Between the question and a visit to the website there are three thresholds, and some companies drop out at each. Across all 160 answers: at least one service is named in 91%, three or more in 46%, and a link to at least one of their sites appears in 68%.

THRESHOLD	SHORT LIST	TWO-WAY COMPARISON	COST	TASK DESCRIPTION
At least one named	100%	100%	93%	59%
Three or more named	77%	25%	46%	12%
Link to a service’s site	65%	75%	79%	53%

Share of answers within each mode, 160 answers in total. Source: our own analysis of 160 answers and their links.

What matters isn’t the average but the difference between modes. On task-description questions the funnel collapses at the very first threshold: 59% against 100%. It gets steeper after that: 12% against 77%.

In two-way comparisons, three or more names appear in only 25% of answers: the system answers about exactly the two companies named and rarely brings in a third. Breaking into someone else’s comparison is almost impossible, which is why a comparison page against a competitor is the way to be in that conversation in advance.

The third threshold behaves against expectations. The highest share of links to vendor sites is on cost questions (79%), not in the short list (65%). When the conversation turns to price, the system needs a primary source and goes to the vendor's site.

The gap between search and answers

Ten years of investment in search don't automatically turn into visibility with answer engines. Each service is ranked twice, by US search traffic and by mention share, and the difference between the two places shows how far the two scoring systems diverge.

Rank shift: search place minus answer place

Right: the service is more visible in answers than in search · left: the opposite



Source: Ahrefs Site Explorer and Brand Radar · 17 services with non-zero values

Minderest gets 557 visits a month from US search and ranks fifth for visibility in answers. Priceva gets 5,244 and ranks thirteenth. A tenfold difference in traffic produces the opposite result in recommendations.

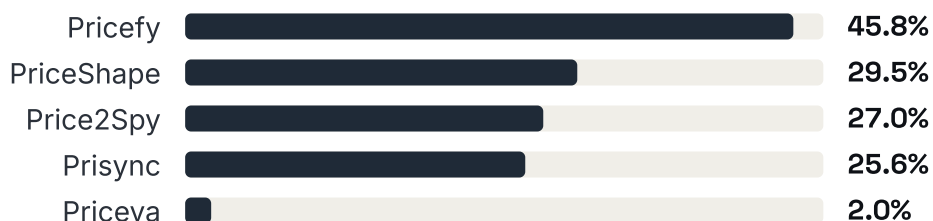
For leadership this means one thing: the rankings and traffic report no longer answers whether the company will make the list the buyer sees first. These are two different measures, and they need to be read side by side.

Losses inside Google

A company doesn't need to care about answer engines to be hurt by them. For phrases where each service already ranks, Google shows an AI Overview above the results. We measured how often the service is cited inside that block rather than just ranking below it.

Citation share in AI Overviews

Share of the service's own ranking phrases where it is cited inside the block



Source: Ahrefs Site Explorer • 344-500 phrases per service with the block present

The gap between first and last is twenty-three times. Ranking in the results and getting into the block are different things, and the second doesn't follow from the first.

Fourth place under a block that names three competitors and not you is a lost click on a query you have already won. That's why the usual objection, "AI assistants don't send much traffic yet", doesn't apply here: this is a channel the category is already paying for.

For Priceva the cause isn't the format but the audience: the phrases where the site gets into the block are consumer questions about store policies. They're informational and aimed at people who don't buy price monitoring systems.

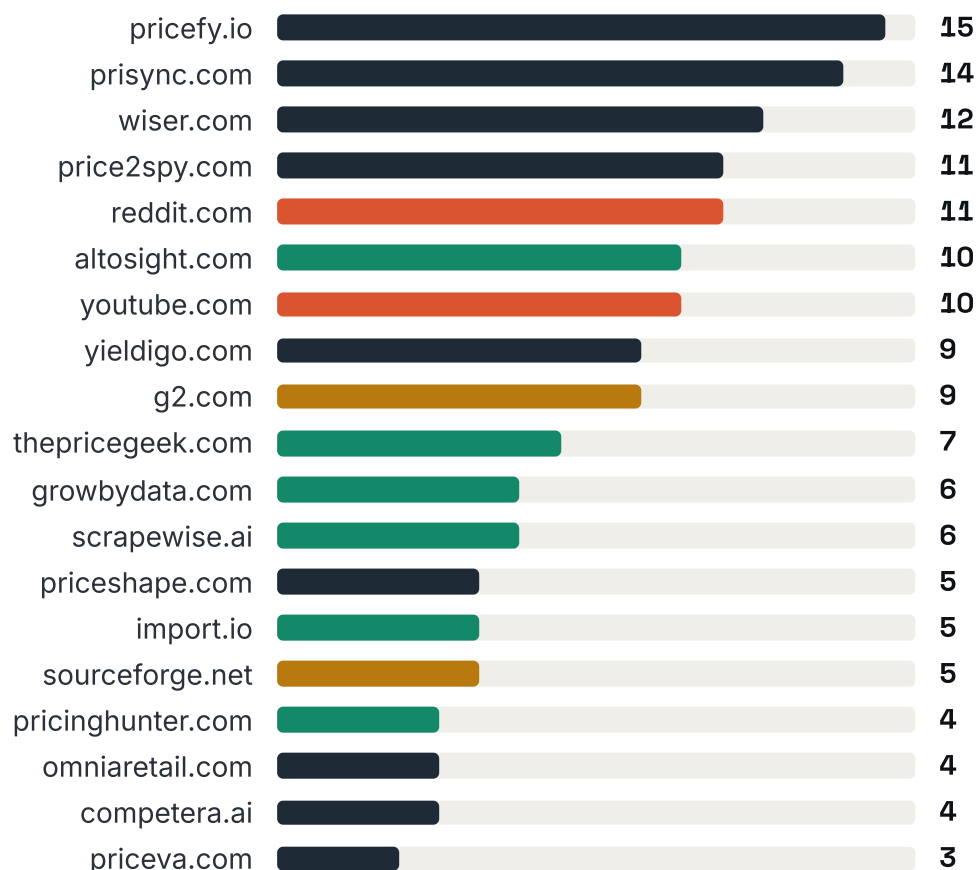
What the answer engines cite

Behind the answers is a set of sources, and the services don't control a third of it.

Most-cited sites

Number of answers that include a link to the site

- Vendor site
- Communities and video
- Catalogues and reviews
- Independent comparisons



Source: Ahrefs Brand Radar · cited domains across the 40 queries

Reddit is cited as often as the home pages of the leaders, with YouTube and the G2 catalogue close behind. Priceva, the largest site in the sample, is cited three times, all three from the same page.

Four types of page that work

PAGE TYPE		EXAMPL
Community discussion	An r/SaaS thread comparing nine price monitoring too	
Pricing page	prisync.com/compare-plan	
Direct comparison with a competitor	price2spy.com/price2spy-vs-prisyn	
App directory listing	apps.shopify.com/prisyn	

Five of the twenty most-cited pages are one service comparing itself by name with another. Two are pricing pages, while seven of the study's forty queries are about cost. A demo request form doesn't answer that question.

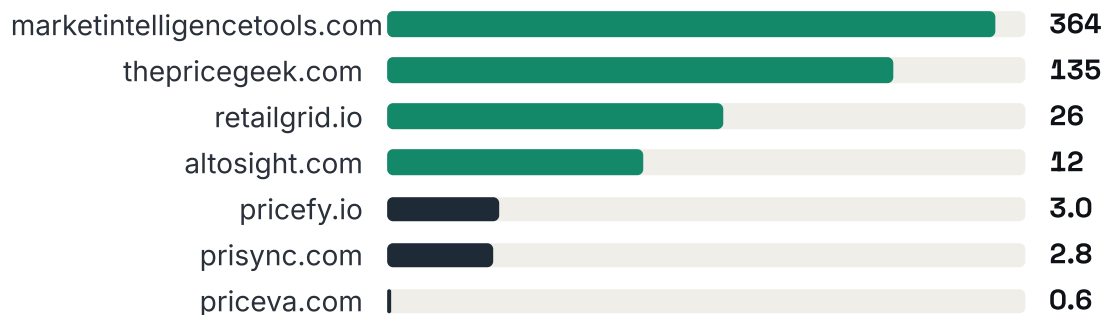
Domain authority is not a pass

While analysing the citations we found a second group of sites: no category review mentions them, nobody would put them on a competitor list, and the systems cite them anyway. To compare them fairly with large sites, we divided the number of citations by traffic.

Citations per 1,000 visits

Log scale · green: sites not mentioned in any public review of the category

■ Not in any public category review ■ Measured services



Source: citations from Ahrefs Brand Radar, traffic from Site Explorer, USA

The order is almost exactly the reverse of domain authority. thepricegeek.com has a domain rating of 8 and 52 visits a month, and it's cited more often than the entire web presence of sixteen of the twenty measured services.

The barrier is not the domain

What stands between a company and being named is not its domain, its links or its markup. A site that's smaller on every metric is already cited for its category's questions, because it published something specific and verifiable.

The practical conclusion: the barrier to entry in this channel is lower than in classic search. Accumulated authority protects incumbents less than they're used to, and gives them less of an advantage than newcomers fear.

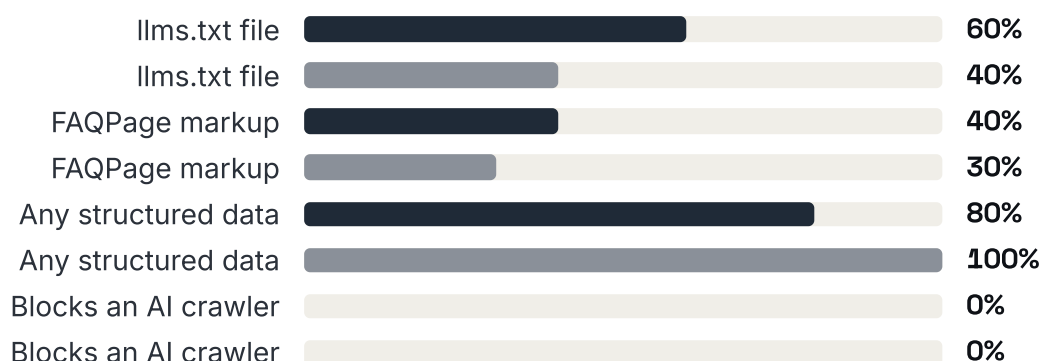
What the leaders don't have in common

Three signals currently sold as ways to please answer engines don't separate leaders from laggards. We crawled all twenty domains and checked for an llms.txt file, AI-crawler rules in robots.txt, and structured data.

Technical signals: top ten vs bottom ten

Share of sites where the signal is present

■ Top ten ■ Bottom ten



Source: direct crawl of all 20 domains, 21 September 2026

Nineteen of the twenty sites don't mention AI crawlers in robots.txt at all; the twentieth allows all of them. All ten laggards have structured data, while two sites in the top half have none.

Three individual cases settle the question. Price2Spy is second without a single piece of structured data. PriceShape is third with neither llms.txt nor a robots.txt file at all. 42Signals publishes llms.txt and isn't named in a single answer.

What the winning pages have in common isn't markup but information that exists nowhere else: a named judgement about two products, a real price, a test of their own. Markup changes how a page is read. It doesn't change whether there's anything on the page worth citing.

This is one observation of one category at one point in time, and it doesn't prove that these files are harmful. It shows something else: they don't explain the difference between first and last place, and they don't deserve the top spot in a work plan.

Where you are in this picture

Search traffic and mention share give four positions, each with its own diagnosis and first action. The median lines of the sample are 1,788 visits and 10.4% mention share.

POSITION	SERVICES	
Visible everywhere	8	
Traffic, no mentions	2	The most expensive position: traffic is paid for, but
Little traffic, many mentions	2	
Out of view	8	

The link between the two measures exists but is weak: Spearman's rank correlation is 0.58. It shows most clearly on three sites with almost identical traffic: Prisync (5,020 visits, 64.2% mentions), Pricefy (5,013 and 24.6%) and Priceva (5,244 and 6.9%). Traffic matches within five per cent; visibility differs ninefold.

What follows from this

Six actions, laid out over time. Each has an owner and a metric that will show within three months whether it worked.

FIRST TWO WEEKS

Publish real prices on an open page

OWNER commercial director

METRIC share of cost answers that link to you · first effect in 4–6 weeks

FIRST TWO WEEKS

Check who your site's content is written for

OWNER search team

METRIC share of AI Overview phrases where you're cited · effect in the next cycle

MONTHS ONE AND TWO

Publish named comparisons with your two or three closest competitors

OWNER product marketing and legal

METRIC mention share in two-way comparisons · first effect in 4–8 weeks

MONTHS ONE AND TWO

Write in the language of the task, not the product

OWNER product marketing

METRIC mention share in task-description answers · first effect in 6–10 weeks

MONTHS THREE TO SIX

Publish what nobody else has: a measurement, a test, numbers from your own data

OWNER analytics or product

METRIC citations per 1,000 visits · first effect in 6–12 weeks

MONTHS THREE TO SIX

Be present where the category is discussed

OWNER whoever talks to users

METRIC cited pages outside your domain · effect in 8–16 weeks

Structured data and lms.txt take a few days of work, have no measurable metric, and showed no effect in this study. Do them if you like, but don't plan growth on them.

Channel risks

Five risks, each visible in this study's data rather than taken from general reasoning.

There are fewer places in an answer than competitors

The average answer names about three of twenty vendors. Fourth place here isn't worse than third: it equals absence. **Track mention share, not position.**

A third of the sources are out of the company's control

Reddit, YouTube and catalogues are cited as often as the leaders' home pages. One discussion elsewhere influences nine answers. **Know these platforms by name and be there in advance.**

Answers aren't reproducible

Two identical queries can return different sets of names. One measurement can't tell change from chance. **Decide on a series of at least three measurements.**

Public reviews are incomplete

Three of the twenty vendors are in the sample only because the systems cite them; no category review mentions them. **Don't treat review rankings as a measure of market position.**

The losses are happening now

AI Overviews take the click on phrases the company has already won. **Count this as a cost of the current quarter, not an investment for the future.**

Whose hands

Four of the six actions sit outside the remit of whoever is responsible for search today. That's the main reason lists like this never get executed. Named comparisons are a decision for product marketing and legal. Public prices belong to the commercial director. Proprietary data belongs to analytics or product. Presence in discussions belongs to whoever talks to users every day.

Methodology and limitations

Sample. Twenty services: seventeen from four independent public reviews of the category, and three added after the citation data showed those reviews were incomplete.

Queries. Forty buyer queries of four types: short list (15), comparison of two named products (10), task description without the category name (8), cost questions (7). The list is frozen and repeated unchanged in every future measurement.

Sources. Ahrefs Brand Radar for ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews, Google AI Mode and Copilot; Ahrefs Site Explorer (traffic, phrases and equivalent paid traffic value, USA, including subdomains); our own crawl of the twenty domains on the same day. Market size: Mordor Intelligence and Fortune Business Insights.

Two ways of counting. The ranking and the sections on the search gap use Brand Radar mention share weighted by query frequency. The sections on segments, modes and the funnel use our own reading of all 160 answers, unweighted. Each section names the method it uses.

What the study doesn't measure. Clicks, revenue and purchase intent. Mention share is presence in answers, not captured demand. Gemini and Perplexity aren't included: they require a separate subscription.

What it doesn't prove. That the actions in "What follows from this" lead to growth in visibility. This is a single measurement at a single point in time: it shows what the leaders have in common, not what made them leaders. A repeat measurement thirty days later is the first chance to see movement.

What distorts the numbers. Direct-comparison queries name companies by design, so these ten queries inflate the share of those named. They stay in because buyers really ask them.

Mention shares from different studies aren't comparable unless two things are disclosed: how names were matched to companies, and which query list was used. In our check, one service scored 82.5% purely because its name matches an ordinary English word. In our own analysis, names were matched case-sensitively and on word boundaries, but Wisser and Repricer still coincide with ordinary English words. A spot check showed brand usage; there is no full guarantee for these two rows.

Next measurement

The same query list, thirty days later. The second measurement on the frozen list is the first chance to tell change from chance and to see whose mention share is rising and whose is falling. Method, sample and collection settings stay the same.

40

queries, frozen for good

4

answer engines

30

days between measurements