

The AI Visibility Index 2026

An annual league table of the most AI-visible brands, computed with the KernelX Visibility Score. This preview edition uses illustrative, anonymised brand entries to demonstrate the index methodology ahead of the production release.

KernelX Labs Research · Annual Index · Preview Edition



SECTION 01

About the Index

Every industry has its league tables. AI visibility — which brands assistants actually recommend when buyers ask — has none. The AI Visibility Index is our attempt to build that reference: an annual, methodology-first ranking of brands by measured recommendation performance across frontier AI assistants.

Scores are computed with the **Visibility Score** formula defined in the methodology paper — a weighted composite of recommendation share, citation share, first-mention share, consistency and sentiment framing — evaluated per model family on fixed category panels, then aggregated.

IMPORTANT LIMITATION

Preview edition. The tables below use illustrative, fictional brand entries (Northwind, Acme, Globex and similar) to demonstrate the index format and methodology while the production dataset is compiled and reviewed. No real-brand rankings are asserted in this edition.

100

ranked entries per
category in the full
index

4

model families scored
independently

12

intent classes per
category panel

Annual

publication cadence,
with quarterly deltas

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The index turns the Visibility Score into a public, comparable league table.

BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS

- A recurring index compounds authority for the discipline — and for its participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Use the format below to build an internal index for your own category today.

SECTION 02

Top AI-Visible SaaS Brands (Illustrative Excerpt)

The flagship table ranks SaaS brands by aggregate Visibility Score. The excerpt below shows the index format for the top 20; the production edition extends to 100 entries with full per-model breakdowns.

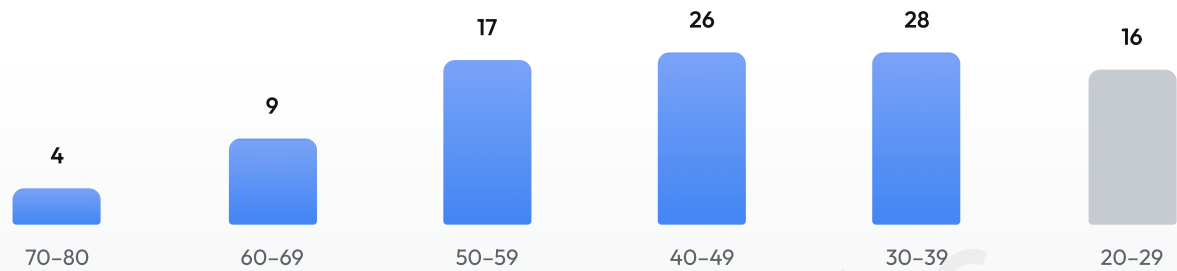
#	BRAND (ILLUSTRATIVE)	CATEGORY	VISIBILITY SCORE	YOY	STRONGEST FAMILY
1	Northwind	CRM	78	▲ 6	GPT
2	Acme Analytics	Product analytics	74	▲ 9	Perplexity
3	Globex Cloud	Cloud platform	72	▲ 2	Gemini
4	Initech Payments	Fintech infra	69	▲ 11	Perplexity
5	Umbrella Secure	Cybersecurity	66	▲ 4	Claude
6	Stark Data	Data warehouse	64	▲ 7	Gemini
7	Wayne Works	Project management	61	▼ 3	GPT
8	Tyrell Ops	DevOps	59	▲ 5	Claude
9	Wonka Commerce	E-commerce SaaS	57	▲ 1	GPT
10	Aperture Signal	Observability	55	▲ 8	Claude
11	Hooli Mail	Email platform	53	▼ 2	GPT
12	Vandelay ERP	ERP	51	▲ 3	Gemini
13	Dunder Docs	Documentation	49	▲ 6	Claude
14	Prestige HR	HR tech	47	▲ 2	GPT
15	Cyberdyne ML	ML platform	46	▲ 10	Perplexity
16	Oscorp Sheets	Spreadsheet automation	44	▼ 1	Gemini
17	Monarch Billing	Subscription billing	43	▲ 4	Claude
18	Pied Piper Sync	File sync	41	▼ 4	GPT
19	Soylent Chat	Customer messaging	40	▲ 2	GPT

#	BRAND (ILLUSTRATIVE)	CATEGORY	VISIBILITY SCORE	YOY	STRONGEST FAMILY
20	Gringotts Ledger	Accounting	38	▲ 5	Gemini

Table 1 — Illustrative top-20 excerpt demonstrating the index format: aggregate score, year-over-year movement and each brand's strongest model family.

FIGURE 1 — DISTRIBUTION

Visibility Score distribution across the illustrative top 100



The visual communicates the long-tail shape of AI visibility: a small elite scores above 70 while most ranked brands cluster between 30 and 50.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Visibility is heavily top-concentrated even among the top 100.

BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS

- Movement of a few points can change league position materially in the mid-table.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Track YoY movement and strongest-family columns — they carry the actionable signal.

SECTION 03

Biggest Movers & Citation Leaders

BIGGEST MOVERS (ILLUSTRATIVE)	Δ SCORE	PRIMARY DRIVER
Initech Payments	+11	Published original benchmark research; citations compounded
Cyberdyne ML	+10	Documentation overhaul; entered Claude's consideration set
Acme Analytics	+9	Comparison hub + freshness cycle; Perplexity retrieval gains
Aperture Signal	+8	Community programme matured; GPT consensus signals
Pied Piper Sync	-4	Stale cornerstone content; lost freshness-weighted citations

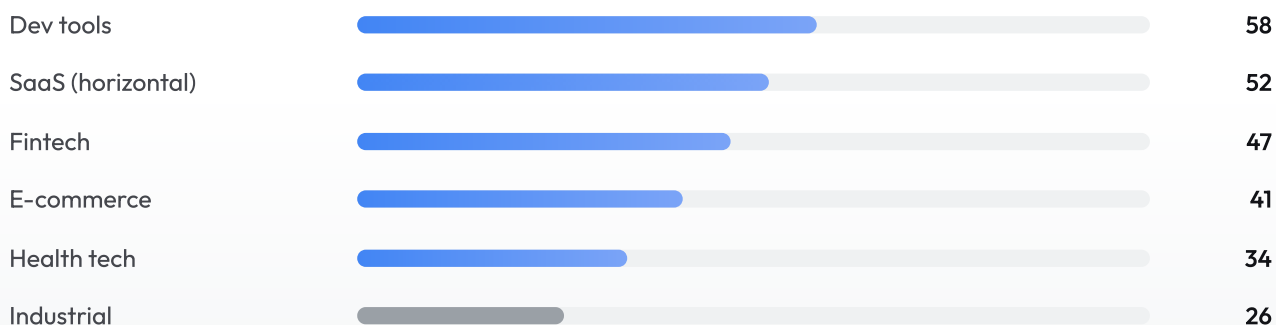
Table 2 — Movement drivers map cleanly onto the ranking factors from the quarterly report.

LEADERBOARD	ILLUSTRATIVE LEADER	NOTE
Citation leader (owned sources cited most)	Dunder Docs	Documentation cited across all four families
Prompt-share leader (widest intent coverage)	Northwind	Recommended across 11 of 12 intent classes
Consistency leader (highest stability index)	Umbrella Secure	Stable top-3 across repeat samples in every family
Research leader (data assets cited most)	Acme Analytics	Two original studies drove citation share

Table 3 — Specialist leaderboards published alongside the main index.

FIGURE 2 — INDUSTRY

Median GEO score by industry (illustrative)



The visual communicates industry medians, matching the maturity gradient documented in the quarterly scorecard.

KEY OBSERVATION

Every large positive mover in the illustrative set shares one property: a citable asset shipped in the previous two quarters — research, documentation or structured comparison content. No mover gained on publishing volume alone.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Movement concentrates around citable assets, not content volume.

BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS

- The index doubles as an evidence base for the ranking-factor model.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- If you want to move next year's table: ship one citable asset per quarter.

SECTION 04

Methodology & Production Roadmap

Index scores are the aggregate Visibility Score defined in the methodology paper, computed per model family on fixed category panels and averaged with equal family weights. Category assignment follows the 70-vertical segmentation of the benchmark corpus; brands active in multiple categories are ranked in their primary category only.

- **Production edition:** real-brand rankings across SaaS, D2C and AI-native categories, with per-family score breakdowns and full sensitivity analysis.
- **Review process:** ranked brands will be able to inspect the prompt panel and per-metric components behind their score.
- **Cadence:** annual headline edition with quarterly delta updates aligned to the State of GEO series.

RESEARCH NOTE

The preview edition exists to make the methodology public before any real ranking is asserted — the same order of operations we recommend to every brand publishing research: methodology first, claims second.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Format and formula are public before any real-brand claims are made.

BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS

- The production index inherits credibility from the already-published methodology.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Follow the series: quarterly deltas will land alongside the State of GEO reports.