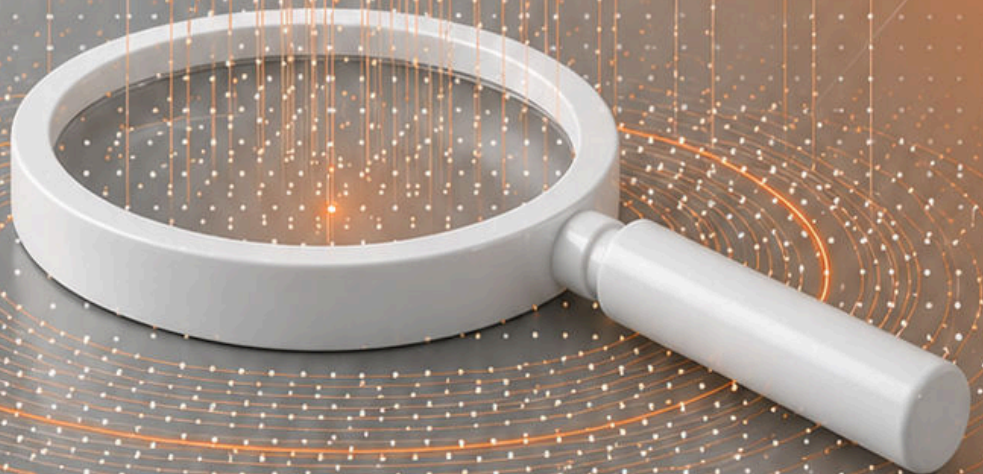
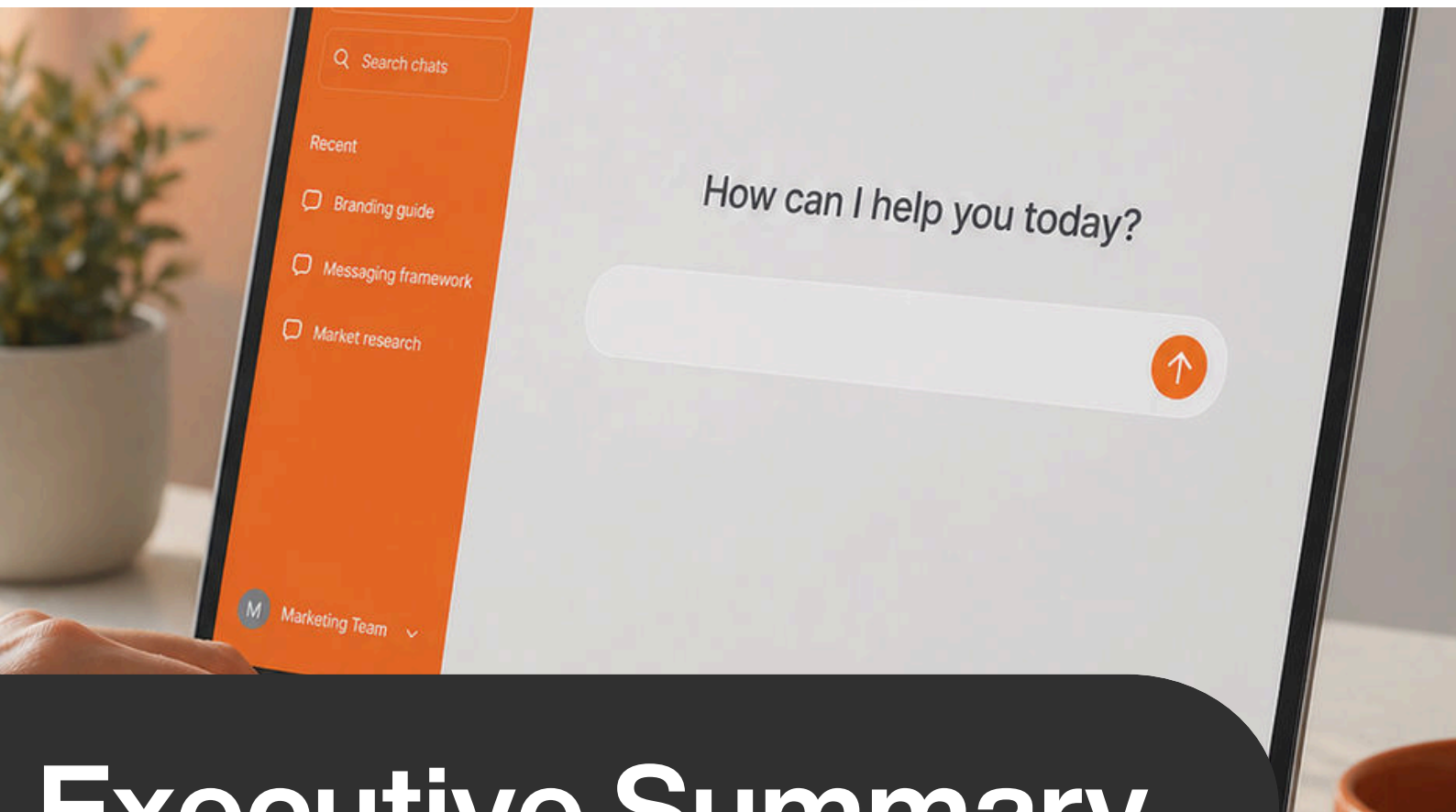


The GEO and AI Visibility 2026 Report

Key gaps, challenges and pipeline opportunities facing B2B tech marketers

I am looking for a tech platform that...





Executive Summary

A year ago, generative engine optimization (GEO) lived strictly in the experimental corners of forward-thinking marketing organizations. But today, it's a board-level discussion topic.

Eighty-eight percent of CMOs and VP-level marketers are now being asked by leadership or the board what they are doing to optimize for AI visibility.

The pressure and urgency to increase AI visibility is growing – and fast. But Corporate Ink's research shows that most marketers aren't ready to meet the moment. Today, only 34% of all marketers say they have a defined strategy and are highly prepared to influence how generative AI engines represent and recommend their brand.

Corporate Ink surveyed 150 B2B tech marketing professionals across the U.S. – including 75 CMOs and VPMs - to understand how organizations are approaching AI visibility in 2026. The findings show most marketers are investing in GEO, and some are seeing measurable pipeline and revenue growth as a result. Even still, many marketers are investing without the right strategy, analytics and insight to fully capitalize on the GEO opportunity in front of them.

The GEO and AI Visibility 2026 Report uncovers what's working, what marketers are missing, and what differentiates the companies that are seeing results from those still waiting.

AI Visibility Has Reached the Boardroom

Eighty-eight percent of CMOs and VP-level marketers are being asked by leadership or their board about AI visibility.

The main reasons boards and leadership are paying such close attention: Because AI visibility drives pipeline and revenue conversion. In fact, 40% of marketers say their brand's visibility in AI-driven search and LLMs has increased qualified inbound pipeline by 5-10% in the past 12 months. Nineteen percent say AI visibility has increased qualified inbound pipeline by more than 10%. And two-thirds of B2B buyers now rely on AI chatbots as much or more than Google or Bing when evaluating vendors, according to data from Responsive.

Despite the market opportunity and C-suite pressure, only 34% of all marketers Corporate Ink surveyed say they have a defined AI visibility strategy and are highly prepared to influence how generative AI engines represent and recommend their brand. Forty-three percent say they are somewhat prepared, with informal efforts underway. The remainder are still in earlier stages of their GEO journey.

Just over half (52%) of CMOs and VP-level marketers said they have a defined AI visibility strategy, which is a surprisingly low readiness level given these leaders are the ones setting marketing strategy and reporting to the board.



of senior marketing leaders
are being asked by the board
or leadership about AI visibility

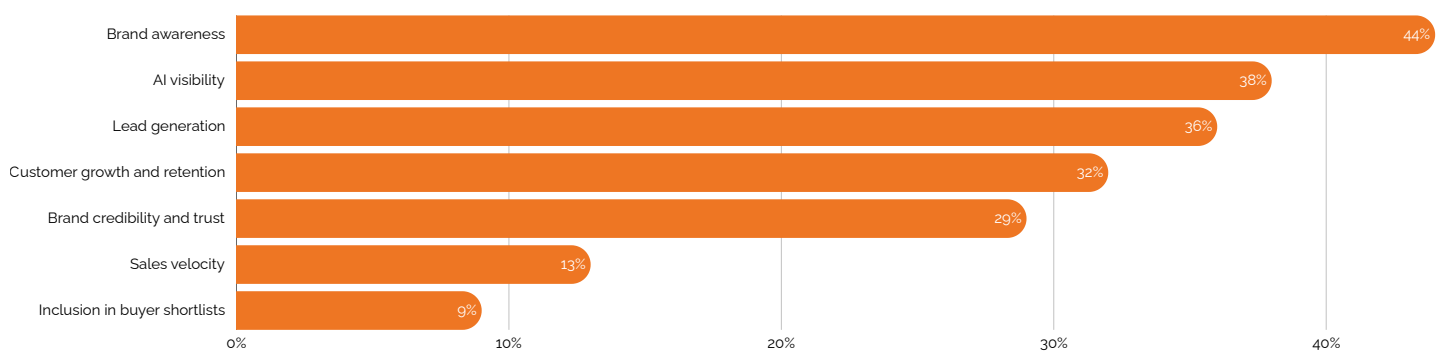


of all marketers report they
have a defined AI visibility
strategy and are highly
prepared to influence
generative AI engines

Brand Awareness Tops Marketers' Priority Lists

Under intense pressure to prove ROI and revenue contribution, marketers have spent decades obsessing over leads, pipeline, and attribution. That's slowly changing. Brand awareness was the top cited marketing priority in 2026, which signals a meaningful shift in how marketers think about brand in today's AI era.

TOP MARKETING PRIORITIES



Brand awareness and GEO are directly correlated.

LLMs don't discover brands arbitrarily. They surface companies that appear consistently and credibly across the sources they trust: editorial coverage, analyst citations, thought leadership in respected publications, and a coherent presence across channels. The more authoritative those signals, the more likely a brand gets recommended when a buyer asks a relevant question.

For brands that underinvest in media relations and PR, the risk is concrete: reduced discoverability at the exact moment buyers are actively evaluating solutions.

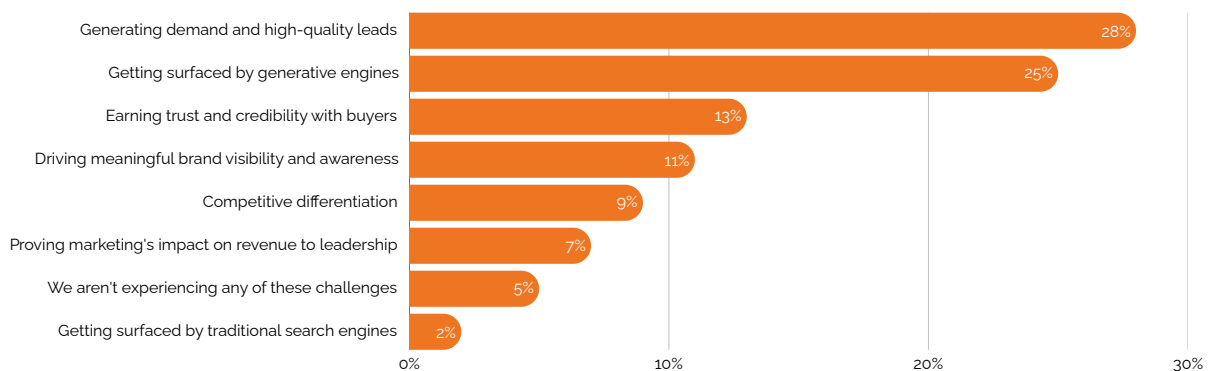
“Brand awareness has always mattered, but the mechanism has changed completely. When a buyer asks an LLM which vendor to consider, the model draws from the accumulated weight of editorial coverage, owned thought leadership, and credible third-party signals built over time. Brand isn't just a top-of-funnel play anymore — it's the infrastructure that determines whether you exist in an AI-generated consideration set at all. Companies treating PR as optional right now are quietly opting out of the next generation of B2B discovery.

- Greg Hakim, CEO & President of Corporate Ink

AI Visibility: An Urgent Opportunity Held Back by Knowledge Gaps

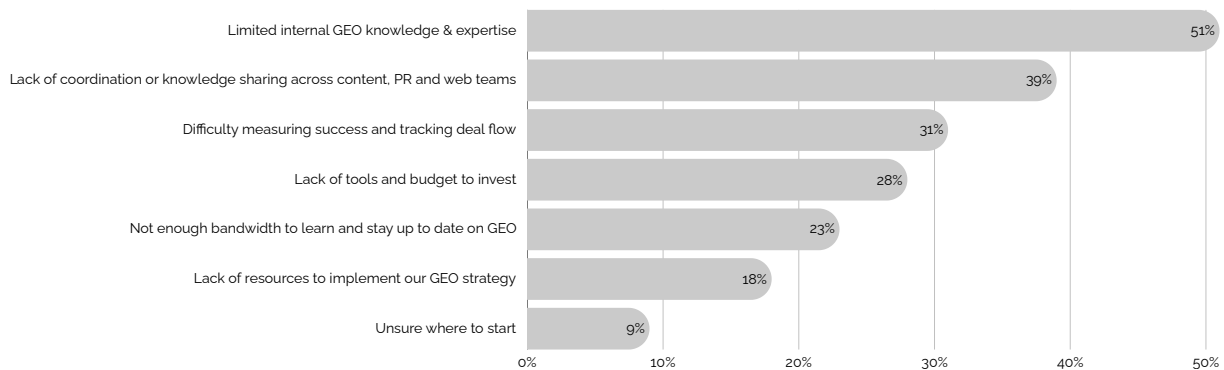
Outside of brand awareness, marketers said AI visibility (38%) is a top priority for 2026, followed by lead generation (36%). Naturally, they are also two of the biggest hurdles for marketers right now.

TOP MARKETING CHALLENGES RIGHT NOW



The biggest obstacles marketers cite in improving AI visibility are limited internal GEO knowledge and expertise (51%) and a lack of coordination or knowledge sharing across content, PR, and web teams (39%). Thirty-one percent of marketers cite difficulty measuring success and tracking deal flow.

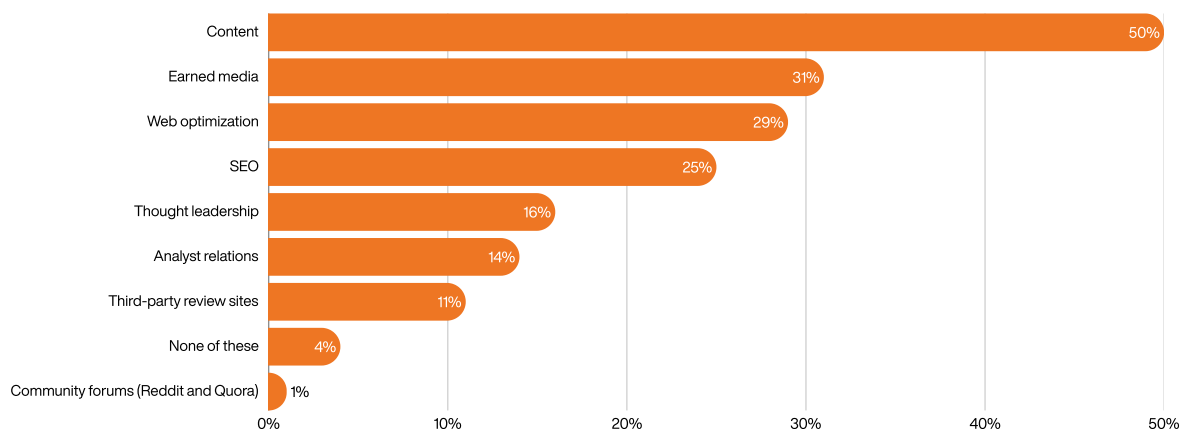
TOP CHALLENGES IN IMPROVING AI VISIBILITY



The GEO Execution Gap: Few Marketers Focus Where It Matters Most

Forty percent of marketers say they are optimizing their content for generative engines. Forty-seven percent are investing in PR and earned media coverage. Nearly half of marketers are very confident that their current PR and content strategy is improving how their brand appears in AI-generated answers.

WHERE MARKETING TEAMS ARE INVESTING THE MOST IN GEO



Yet digging deeper, the data shows most marketers don't know where to focus strategically and are overlooking key factors for success. Consider that just:

- 36% say they know the specific content pieces they and their competitors have created that are currently being cited by AI engines.
- 26% know the specific media outlets that AI engines crawl in their market.
- 17% have gotten coverage in these outlets in the past month.
- 17% know which third-party credibility sources LLMs trust in their market.
- 18% know where competitors are outranking them in AI visibility and why.
- 27% are building entity-level authority and thought leadership for buyer-centric problems.

More broadly, less than half (43%) of marketers know the specific buyer-centric prompts they want to show up for. Just 37% know which channels have the highest influence over LLMs in their market.

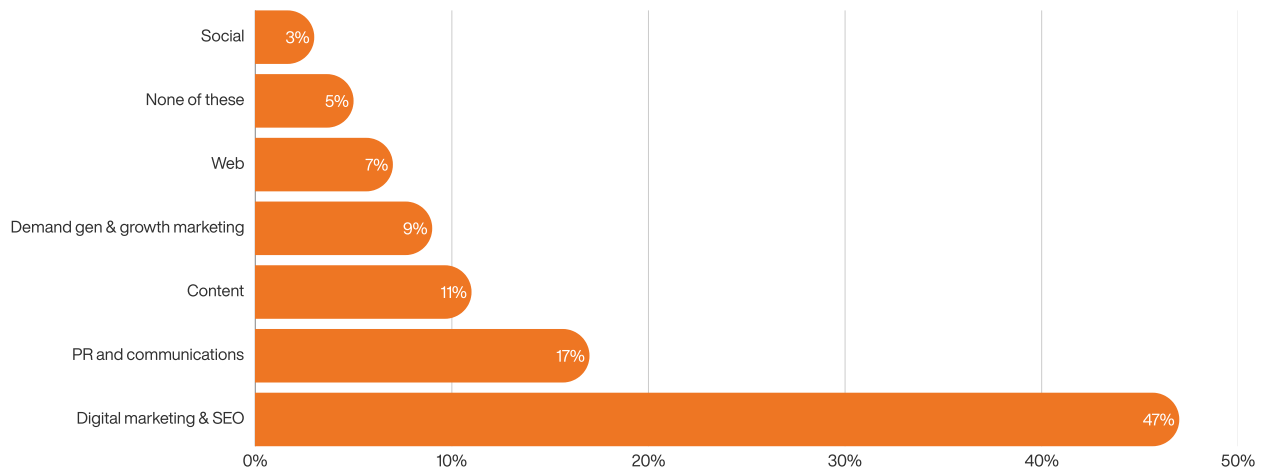
LLMs weight sources differently in every market, and most teams have no idea what those sources are. That's not a content problem or an SEO problem — it's an analytics and intelligence problem. You can't build visibility in a landscape you haven't mapped.

- Greg Hakim

Corporate Ink’s research indicates marketers are investing in GEO without a clear or intentional roadmap. This could be because of the lack of internal expertise marketers expressed. It could also be an insights and data gap. In fact, only 29% of marketers say they are actively measuring and tracking AI visibility.

When asked who should own GEO internally, 47% of marketers said digital marketing and SEO. Only 17% of marketers said PR and communications and 11% said the content team.

WHO MARKETERS BELIEVE SHOULD OWN GEO INTERNALLY



This suggests many marketers are thinking about GEO as a technical optimization problem rather than a brand authority and credibility problem. This mindset will limit results.

While digital marketing and SEO are important, AI visibility is primarily a brand outcome, driven by PR, third-party credibility and owned content. Organizations need to build a cross-functional GEO operating model that gives the right weight to each area. And all functions must work together from a shared strategy.



Teams Are Less ‘GEO Ready’ than Senior Marketing Leaders Might Realize

Senior marketing leaders express meaningfully higher confidence about GEO readiness than directors and managers, who are often the ones executing and on the frontlines.



59% of CMOs and VPs are very confident in their PR and content strategy and its impact on AI visibility



37% of directors and managers share that confidence

Fifty-nine percent of CMOs and VPs say they are very confident in their company's current PR and content strategy and its impact on AI visibility. Only 37% of directors and managers say the same. Fifty-eight percent of directors and managers describe themselves as only somewhat confident.

Just 16% of director and manager-level marketers said they're highly prepared to influence LLMs compared to 52% of CMOs and VP-level marketers.

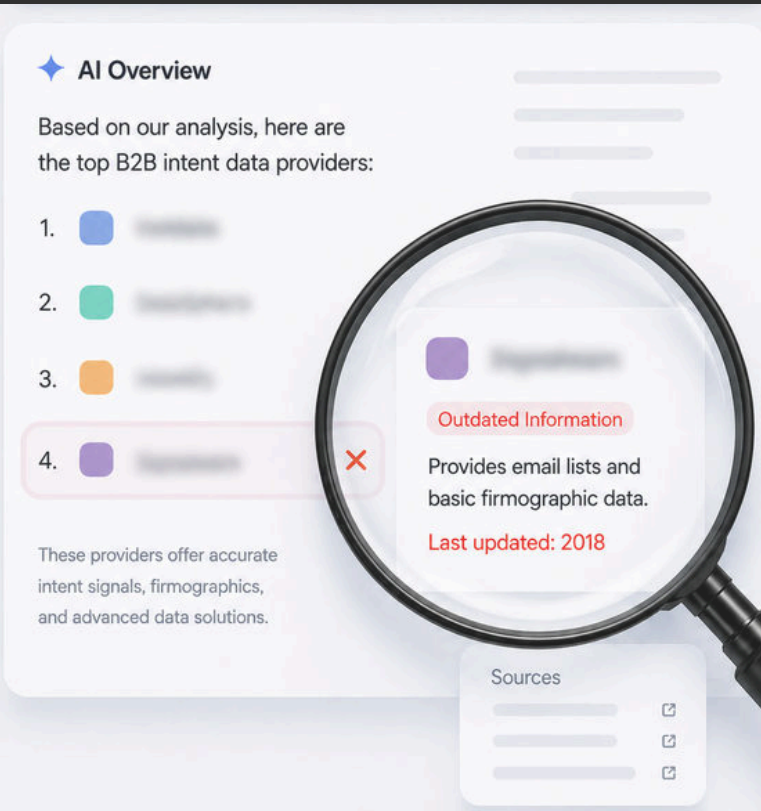
Over half (53%) of directors and managers said they are only somewhat prepared compared to 33% of CMOs and VP-level respondents.

The disconnect extends to specific knowledge, too. Over half (52%) of senior marketers say their team knows which channels have the highest influence over LLMs in their market. Yet only 21% of directors and managers said the same.

Thirty-three percent of senior marketing leaders say their marketing team knows which media outlets AI engines crawl in their market, compared to just 19% of directors and managers who said this. Twenty-one percent of senior marketing leaders say their marketing team has gotten coverage in these outlets in the past month, compared to 12% of directors and managers. Twenty-five percent of senior leaders know which third-party credibility sources LLMs trust in their market, versus just 9% of directors and managers. The data indicates CMOs and VPs of Marketing might assume their teams are pulling the right levers.

The disconnect matters because it could mean leaders are making decisions based on an inflated view of their organization's actual capabilities.

AI Is Getting Brand Positioning Wrong. Some Marketers Are Ignoring It.



The AI visibility conversation tends to focus on discoverability: getting your brand surfaced when buyers ask about their problems, categories, and potential solutions. But that is only one part of what marketers need to be thinking about. There's a parallel challenge that is just as damaging and less discussed: AI engines giving inaccurate information about your brand.



of marketers have seen AI tools describe their company, category, or value proposition in ways that are inaccurate, outdated, or incomplete

Nearly three-quarters of marketers have seen AI tools describe their company, category, or value proposition in ways that are inaccurate, outdated, or incomplete. Most of those marketers say it concerns them and they're taking steps to address it (71%). Surprisingly, 29% of marketers who have seen AI tools give inaccurate descriptions aren't addressing it, which could have a negative impact on their pipeline and deal flow.

A buyer who asks an AI engine about a vendor and receives a description that is wrong, whether it's describing an old product, mischaracterizing the competitive differentiation, or placing the company in the wrong category, may never make it to the company's own website to get a correct impression.

The mechanism for correcting AI misrepresentation is a deliberate, sustained effort to build and amplify the authoritative signals that LLMs use to understand what a company does, how it's positioned, and where it fits in the competitive landscape. That means coordinated content, earned media coverage in trusted sources, structured data, and entity-level authority development. It requires the same cross-functional investment that effective GEO requires — and it requires ongoing attention.

For CMOs managing brand positioning through a product evolution, a pivot, or a category creation effort, the AI accuracy problem is especially important. The signals LLMs draw on may reflect where your brand was 18 months ago. Without active management, that lag compounds over time.

The Pipeline Proof: What the Companies Seeing Leads from AI Visibility Have in Common

AI visibility is already driving meaningful pipeline growth for the companies that have focused on it.

Forty percent of marketers report that their brand's visibility in AI-driven search and LLMs has increased qualified inbound pipeline by 5–10% in the past 12 months.

An additional 19% report more than 10% growth in qualified inbound pipeline from AI visibility. That's 59% of respondents seeing measurable pipeline impact.



of marketers say AI visibility increased qualified inbound pipeline by 5–10% in the past year



report more than 10% increase in qualified inbound pipeline from AI visibility

The Specific Actions That Separate Pipeline Leaders from Laggards

The companies seeing pipeline growth are doing fundamentally different things from those reporting declining or no measureable pipeline impact from AI visibility, and the contrast is noteworthy.

Among companies reporting pipeline growth from AI visibility, 55% know which channels have the highest influence over LLMs in their market. Among companies reporting no or declining pipeline impact, only 15% do.


That 40-point gap is not a coincidence — it reflects whether or not a GEO strategy is grounded in intelligence about how AI engines actually work in a given market.

THE DEFINING DIFFERENTIATOR

Only 6% of marketers reporting declining or no pipeline impact from AI visibility have a defined strategy. Among those seeing pipeline growth, 53% do. Strategy – and one that focuses on the specific sources that LLMs care about in that market – is a clear indicator of AI visibility outcomes.

The pattern holds across the dimensions Corporate Ink looked at. Forty-five percent of pipeline-growth companies know the specific content pieces AI engines are citing in their market, versus 27% of laggards. Thirty-eight percent of pipeline-growth companies know which media outlets AI engines crawl, versus 13%. Twenty-four percent have gotten coverage in those outlets in the past month, compared to just 8% of their less successful counterparts. Twenty-six percent know which third-party credibility sources LLMs trust in their category versus 6%.

Another material factor in pipeline outcomes is having the right PR agency. Among companies that are not seeing pipeline growth from AI visibility, half say their PR agency has raised the topic of GEO and is trying, but doesn't appear to have the expertise to make a meaningful difference. Among companies experiencing pipeline growth, 55% say their PR agency is prioritizing AI visibility and actively integrates GEO into their strategy. The agency relationship is not a coincidence.



The experimentation phase for GEO is over. Thirty-eight percent of companies reporting no or declining pipeline from AI visibility say they are still in early stages with limited experimentation. Only 7% of companies experiencing pipeline growth describe themselves that way. They have moved to defined strategies, specific intelligence, and intentional investment.

And their pipeline numbers are showing it.

PR Agencies Are Touting GEO, But Only A Few Are Making a Difference

As AI visibility becomes foundational to marketing, the expectations placed on PR partners have shifted in ways that many agencies haven't fully absorbed.

Only 37% of marketers say their PR agency is prioritizing AI visibility and actively integrating GEO into their strategy.

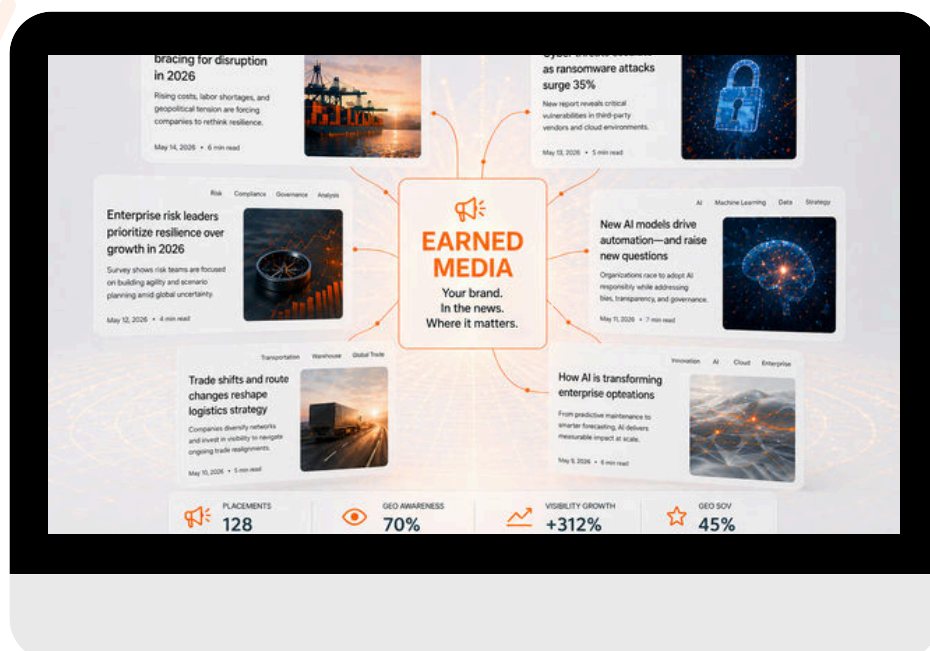
Forty-five percent say their agency has raised the topic and is trying but doesn't seem to have the expertise to make a difference. Eight percent report their agency isn't prioritizing it at all.



of marketers say their PR agency is prioritizing AI visibility

The marketers most exposed by this gap are those investing heavily in earned media as their primary AI visibility lever. Fifty-three percent of marketers who are prioritizing earned media investment say their PR agency doesn't have the GEO expertise to make an impact. That is a problem. Earned media is one of the highest-leverage channels for AI visibility, but only if it's done with precision and a genuine understanding of what those engines are looking for.

Earned media spend going to an agency that doesn't know which publications AI engines crawl, which journalists cover the topics that LLMs prioritize, or how to engineer coverage that builds authority is spend that won't lead to AI visibility. It may get your brand directly in front of buyers, but it won't move the needle on how AI engines understand and recommend your brand, which is a meaningful missed opportunity.



What to Look for in a GEO-Ready PR Partner

The criteria for evaluating a PR agency have changed. The traditional measures, such as industry experience, proven experience placing stories with target media, advanced measurement models, and more, still matter. But they are no longer sufficient alone. CMOs evaluating PR partners in 2026 should be asking specific questions:



Do they know which outlets AI engines crawl and trust in your market — and can they demonstrate coverage in those outlets?



Can they show you where your brand is and isn't appearing in AI-generated answers, and explain why?



Are they tracking AI visibility as a deliverable, not just traditional media metrics?



Do they understand entity-level authority development, not just placing stories, but building the signal network that influences how LLMs characterize your brand?




Are they mapping coverage strategy to the buyer-centric prompts your target audience is using in AI engines?

If the answer to most of these is no, or a vague affirmative without supporting evidence, that's a data point worth taking seriously, given how clearly the pipeline data links effective PR-GEO integration to AI visibility outcomes.

Six Actions CMOs Should Take Now

- ① **Define your strategy.** Having a clear strategy that accounts for the specifics of your market is the clearest predictor of AI visibility outcomes.
- ② **Audit what AI engines are saying about your brand right now.** Run your brand name, your category, and your key competitive differentiators through the major LLMs. Document what comes back. If the answers are wrong, treat it as an active brand and pipeline risk.
- ③ **Get the right intelligence.** Know which channels, publications, and credibility sources actually influence LLMs in your specific market. Many organizations aren't going this deep. Understand how to move the needle.
- ④ **Focus on PR and thought leadership.** The brands AI engines recommend have built authority in places LLMs trust, through earned media, thought leadership, and third-party credibility signals.
- ⑤ **Evaluate your PR agency on GEO.** The data shows the impact of having a PR agency that is actively designing GEO strategies and seeing pipeline growth from AI visibility. Ask your agency the hard questions – and act on the answers.
- ⑥ **Build cross-functional GEO accountability.** Establish a shared operating model across content, PR, and digital and SEO. Define what each function contributes to AI visibility. Set shared metrics. Review them together.


CITATIONS
5.1k
15% vs May 1 – May 7

VISIBILITY TREND
+35%
vs prior 7 days

CONTENT CLICKS
8 pts vs May 1 – May 7

UNIQUE AUDIENCES REACHED
2.7M
22% vs prior 7 days

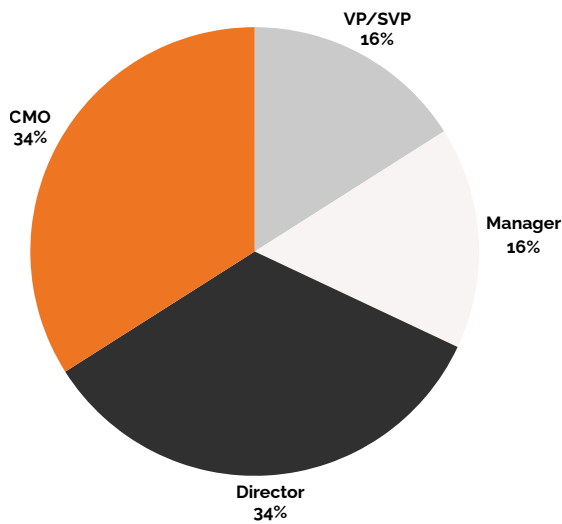
PIPELINE INFLUENCED
\$2.1M
17% vs prior 7 days

Is your company's PR and content strategy built for AI visibility?

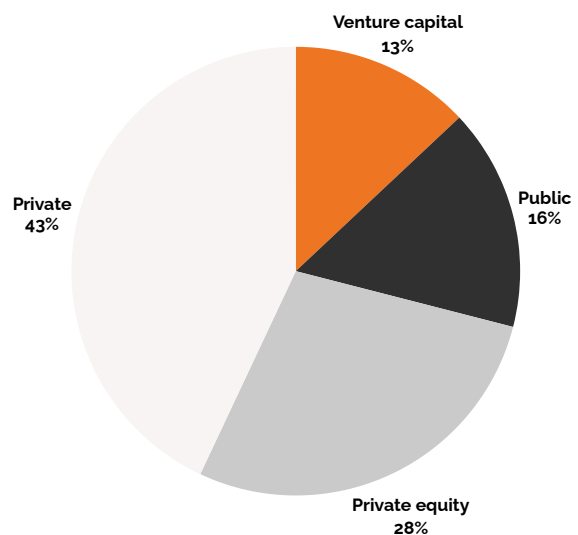
Take the self-assessment here

Demographics

ROLE



FINANCIAL BACKING



About This Research

The findings in this report are based on a survey of 150 B2B tech marketing professionals in the United States, conducted in early 2026 in partnership with Prodege. Respondents are marketing professionals including CMOs, VPs and SVPs of Marketing, Directors, and Managers.

Where the report distinguishes between senior marketing leaders (CMO and VP/SVP level) and practitioners (director and manager level), the segmentation reflects meaningful differences in perspective, confidence, and knowledge that emerged across multiple questions in the data.

About Corporate Ink



Corporate Ink is a specialist B2B tech PR and generative engine optimization agency that shortens the path to success for B2B tech companies. We help B2B tech and SaaS leaders across the globe build brand awareness, increase sales demand, and accelerate growth.

Our buyer-centric approach to PR goes beyond traditional ‘air cover’ to generate stories that reach your target personas and influence sales cycles. As a specialist agency, we bring deep domain expertise across B2B tech markets including cybersecurity, supply chain and procurement, fintech, risk management, workforce management, AI and emerging tech, ESG and sustainability, manufacturing and robotics and more. We’ve partnered with early-stage startups, Fortune 100 companies and everyone in between. We have a 30+ year track record of success and are backed by the global resources of the Worldcom Public Relations Group.