BROADCASTWELL RESEARCH | PRINT EDITION

The Shortlist Gap: who AI engines name when buyers ask, and who they never name

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Data: The Absence Index, release 2026-09. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22907695

Check the report pages

The report pages that follow are the pages of the published file docs.broadcastwell.com/assets/research/study1/Study1_The_Shortlist_Gap_2026-09.pdf, whose SHA-256 is:

`21d03ff5eb70575ca59ad548b2930919bf1aeb3ad5e760621ac307cc73e8e881`

Print settings

US Letter, actual size (100 percent), two-sided. 22 pages in all: this sheet and 21 report pages.

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Web edition and print notes: https://docs.broadcastwell.com/print-edition/

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BROADCASTWELL RESEARCH · STUDY 1 · SEPTEMBER 2026

The Shortlist Gap: who AI engines name when buyers ask, and who they never name

What 2,095 AI answers to 140 buyer questions say about 286 software vendors in 14 categories, and which pages the engines cite to build each shortlist.

16.1%

of the 286 checked vendors were never named in any of the 2,095 answers (46 vendors; 95% interval 12.3% to 20.8%). Nearly half, 138 vendors (48.3%), appeared in fewer than one answer in ten. Only 35 (12.2%) appeared in at least half.

Author Broadcastwell Research · **Version** 1.0 · **Published** 26 Sep 2026 · **License** CC BY 4.0
Data The Absence Index, release 2026-09, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695 (concept DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22150321); answers captured 22 to 23 Sep 2026 (UTC); method v1.1; five engines (ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, Google AI Mode); three scheduled runs per engine and question.
This study DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22982426. Every figure is recomputed from the raw release files by a Python implementation of the published matching rule (recompute_index.py with vendor_rules_2026-09.json) and the analysis scripts study1_shortlist_gap.py and study1_sources_classified.py, all shipped with the dataset. The recompute reproduces the published release exactly (0 of 14,300 question, engine and vendor cells differ) and was cross-checked against the Index site's own matching code.
Publisher note Broadcastwell sells AI search visibility services. This study ranks no vendor and no seller and does not mention Broadcastwell's own visibility. Vendor names appear only as already published in the Absence Index.

Summary

1. 46 of 286 checked vendors (16.1%) were never named in any of the 2,095 valid answers to their category's ten buyer questions, across five engines and three runs each.

2. 138 vendors (48.3%) were named in fewer than 10% of their category's answers. Only 35 vendors (12.2%) were named in at least half.

3. Engines are far more selective one at a time. ChatGPT never named 115 of the 286 vendors (40.2%), Google AI Overviews 103 (36.0%), Google AI Mode 101 (35.3%), Perplexity 85 (29.7%) and Claude 66 (23.1%). Only 132 vendors were named by all five.

4. An answer names 3.86 checked vendors on average, so every category shortlist is short. The top vendor takes 12.0% to 23.7% of all namings in its category.

5. The pages engines cite are mostly written by vendors. Of the 140 top-ten source slots (ten per category, 109 distinct domains), 86 (61.4%) are vendor-owned, and 77 (55.0%) are vendor-written list or comparison pages. Review sites and buyer directories hold 30 slots (21.4%).

6. 34 of those 140 top-ten slots belong to vendors that are not in the checked list for that category, including adjacent tools and vendors from other categories. The most-cited domain is a checked vendor in only 6 of 14 categories.

7. Question shape matters. Buyer-evaluation questions (628 answers) name 1.67 vendors on average and leave 65.7% of vendors unnamed; alternative questions name 6.30.

8. Category never-named shares run from 0.0% (Project management) to 31.8% (Field service management software).

The headline number, explained

The numerator is the number of checked vendors with zero namings across every valid answer to the ten target questions in their category (all five engines, all three runs). The denominator is all 286 checked vendors. 46 / 286 = 16.1%. A checked vendor is a company listed in a buyer directory for the category and included in the release's vendor list; the release captures those directory pages with dates. A naming is a match under the published rule (Data and method). Zero namings is a measured absence in this release, not a claim about the vendor's product or about other dates.

Why it matters

When a buyer asks an AI engine which software to consider, the answer is a shortlist of a few names. This release shows how short: about four checked vendors per answer, out of 10 to 25 checked vendors per category. Everyone else is absent from that answer, and a sixth of vendors were absent from every answer.

The shortlists are not built from vendor websites alone. The most-cited pages are list and comparison pages, and most of those are written by vendors, including vendors from outside the checked list. Review sites and directories take about a fifth of the top slots. This study does not test whether appearing on those pages leads to a naming; it records which pages were cited and which vendors were named.

The numbers are standings on stated dates, not a ranking of product quality and not a forecast. They describe what five engines said in one release. Anyone can rerun the recompute on the public release files with the scripts and the vendor rules file shipped in the dataset and get the same figures.

Data and method

Source dataset

The Absence Index, release 2026-09, published 23 Sep 2026 under DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695 (CC BY 4.0 with attribution to Broadcastwell). It covers 14 categories of business software, 286 checked vendors drawn from buyer directories captured on stated dates, and 140 target buyer questions (ten per category) in five shapes: best option, specific workflow, top tools, alternative, buyer evaluation. Five engines answered every question: ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, Google AI Mode. Each engine and question pair was run three times as scheduled repeats on 22 to 23 Sep 2026 (UTC). The release holds 2,250 observations: 2,100 targets and 150 controls. Five excluded target answers leave 2,095 valid target answers. Controls are outside the scored base and are not used here.

Capture

Broadcastwell's published method (broadcastwell.com/methodology, version 1.1, 8 September 2026) states: "The measurement is single turn, API based, logged out, US English, gl=us and hl=en" and "It is a controlled instrument, not a replica of any one buyer's screen." Each answer is stored verbatim with its cited URLs.

Matching rule (as published, method v1.1)

Names and listed aliases match case-insensitive word boundaries. Plain-word vendors require a listed qualifier within five words in the same sentence, or their canonical domain in that answer's

cited URLs. A citation counts once per answer only when the answer qualifies as naming the vendor and cites a canonical, alias or product host. Rates are percentages with Wilson 95% intervals. A zero count is distinct from an excluded observation.

Recompute

recompute_index.py (shipped with the dataset, with vendor_rules_2026-09.json: the checked vendor list per category with aliases, plain-word flags, qualifiers, alias domains and product hosts) re-scores every raw answer in answers-2026-09.jsonl under the published matching rule and diffs the result against release-2026-09.json: 0 vendor mention counts differ and 0 of 14,300 question, engine and vendor cells differ. The same matrix was produced independently with the Index site's own matching code, with no difference. study1_shortlist_gap.py computes the vendor, category, engine and shape figures from that per-answer matrix; study1_sources_classified.py computes the source figures from the raw cited URLs.

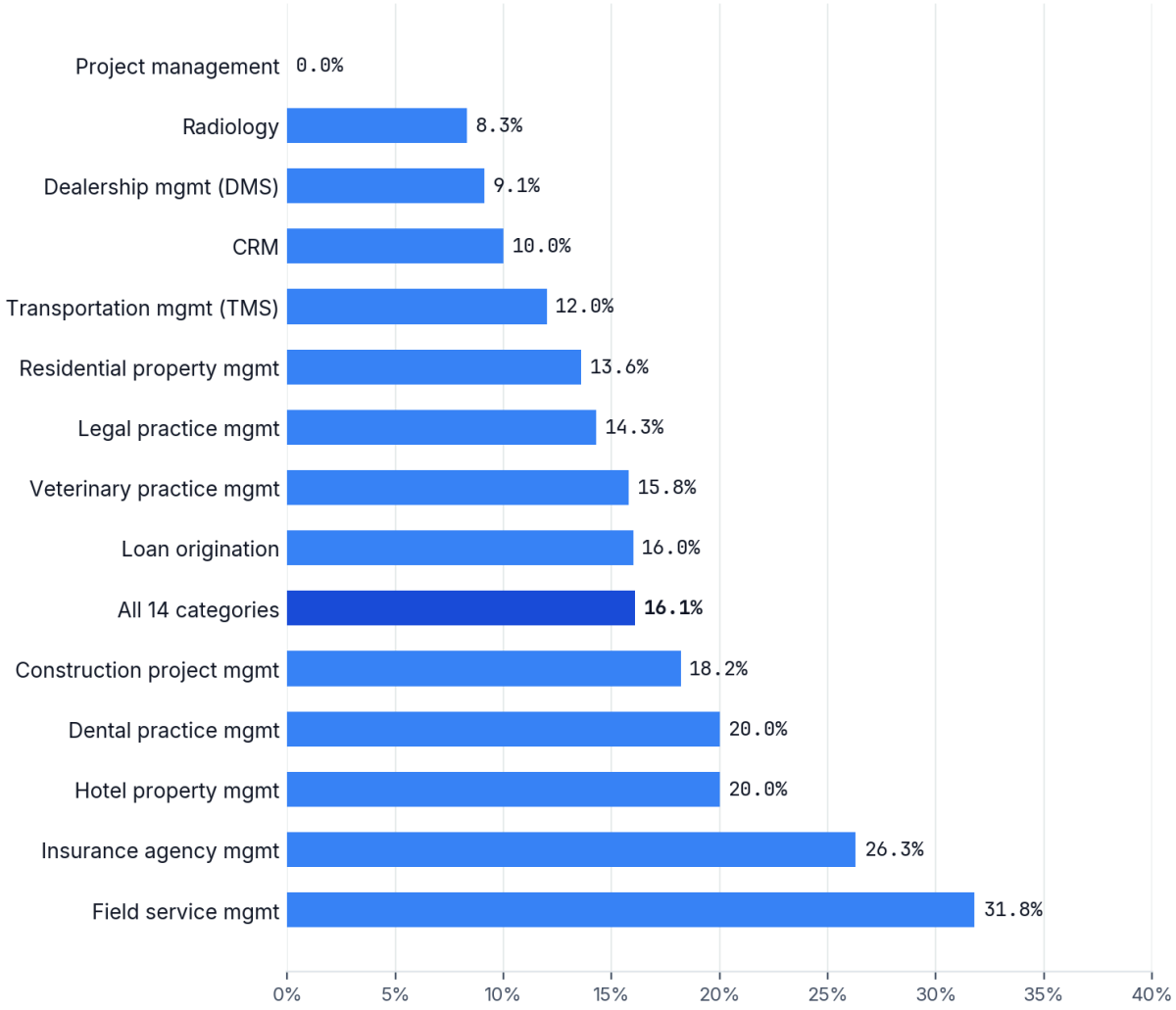
Definitions used here

- **Never named:** zero namings across all valid answers to the vendor's category questions.
- **Mention rate:** namings divided by valid answers in the category (about 150 per vendor).
- **Top vendor's share of namings:** the most-named vendor's namings divided by all namings of checked vendors in the category.
- **Source domain:** the host of a cited URL with a leading www. removed (subdomains are kept); counted once per answer.
- **Top-ten slot:** one of the ten most-cited domains in a category, ranked by the number of answers citing it.
- **List-like URL:** a cited URL whose path contains best, top, alternative(s), vs, versus, compar, roundup, ranking, ranked, review, software-for, tools-for or list.
- **Vendor-written list:** a vendor-owned domain (checked or not) with at least one list-like cited URL in the category.
- **Domain classification:** the 138 domains that fill the top-twelve slots of every category were classified by hand from each site's own description (domain_classes.csv in the dataset). A hand-classified checked vendor counts as checked only in a category where it is on that category's checked list. Every other cited host is classified automatically only when it belongs to a checked vendor's canonical, alias or product host in that category, or matches a fixed list of 21 review and directory sites or 9 community sites (both lists in the dataset); the rest is the unclassified tail.

Finding 1: one vendor in six was never named

Share of checked vendors never named in any answer, by category

Base: 286 vendors across 14 categories, 2,095 valid answers, five engines, three runs. Overall: 46 of 286.



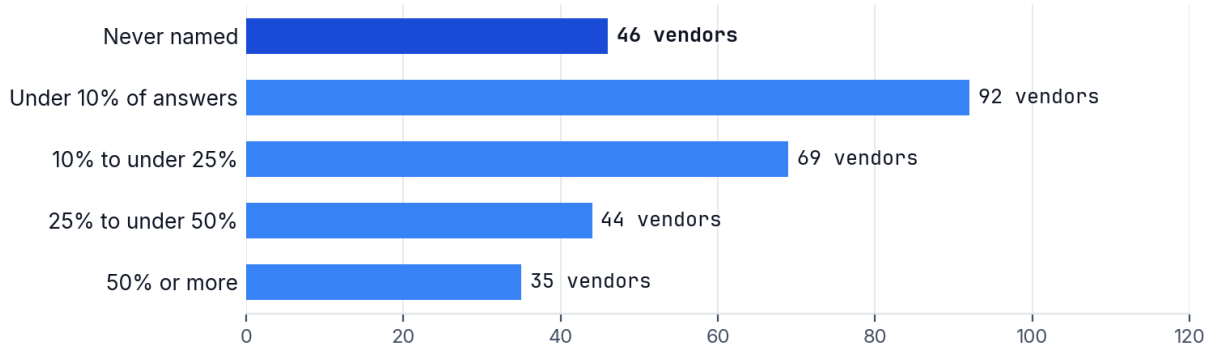
Source: Broadcastwell Research, Study 1, from the Absence Index release 2026-09, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695. CC BY 4.0.

Chart 1. Share of checked vendors never named, by category; the all-category bar is highlighted.

Across the release, 46 of 286 checked vendors (16.1%) received zero namings in 2,095 valid answers. The category range is wide: Project management left 0 of 10 unnamed (0.0%), while Field service management software left 7 of 22 unnamed (31.8%).

How often the 286 checked vendors were named, in bands

Share of a vendor's valid answers (about 150 per vendor) that named it. Base: 286 vendors.



Source: Broadcastwell Research, Study 1, from the Absence Index release 2026-09, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695. CC BY 4.0.

Figure. Vendors by mention band. Most checked vendors sit in the two lowest bands.

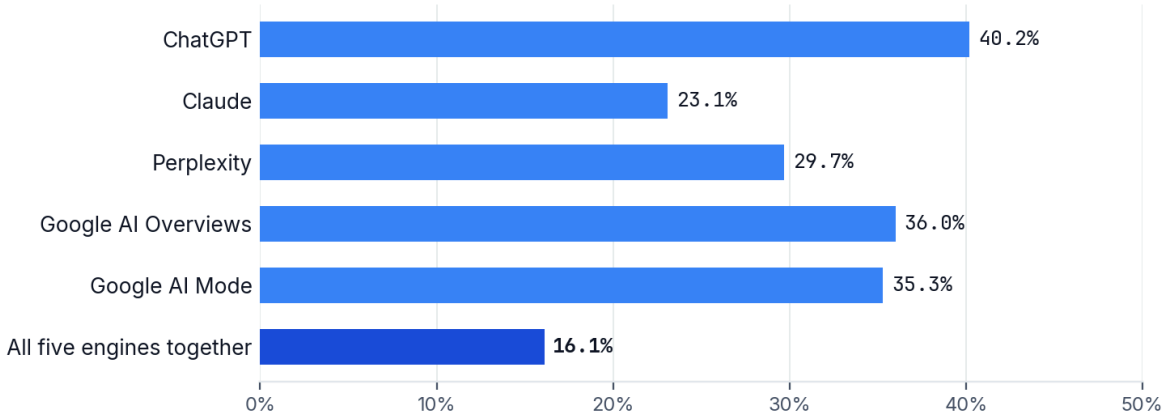
Absence has a long tail. Beyond the 46 never named, 92 vendors were named in under 10% of answers, 69 in 10% to under 25%, 44 in 25% to under 50%, and 35 in half or more. Put together, 138 of 286 (48.3%) were named in fewer than one answer in ten.

CATEGORY	VENDORS	ANSWERS	NEVER NAMED	NEVER NAMED %	UNDER 10%	50% OR MORE	TOP VENDOR	TOP RATE
Construction project mgmt	22	150	4	18.2%	13	3	Procore	72.7%
Dealership mgmt (DMS)	22	150	2	9.1%	8	3	CDK Global	60.0%
Dental practice mgmt	20	149	4	20.0%	10	4	Dentrix	80.5%
Field service mgmt	22	150	7	31.8%	10	2	Housecall Pro	72.0%
Hotel property mgmt	25	149	5	20.0%	13	1	Cloudbeds	77.2%
Insurance agency mgmt	19	150	5	26.3%	11	4	Applied Systems	84.7%
Legal practice mgmt	21	150	3	14.3%	12	4	Clio	84.0%
Loan origination	25	150	4	16.0%	13	2	nCino	61.3%
Radiology	24	150	2	8.3%	11	2	Sectra	58.0%
Residential property mgmt	22	148	3	13.6%	12	3	Buildium	80.4%
Transportation mgmt (TMS)	25	150	3	12.0%	10	0	AscendTMS	42.7%
Veterinary practice mgmt	19	149	3	15.8%	9	2	ezyVet	77.2%
CRM	10	150	1	10.0%	4	3	HubSpot CRM	75.3%
Project management	10	150	0	0.0%	2	2	Asana	64.7%
All 14 categories	286	2095	46	16.1%	138	35		

Finding 2: each engine on its own is far more selective

Share of the 286 checked vendors an engine never named, by engine

Base: 286 vendors; about 420 valid answers per engine (415 for Google AI Overviews). Fixed engine order.



Source: Broadcastwell Research, Study 1, from the Absence Index release 2026-09, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695. CC BY 4.0.

Chart 2. Share of the 286 vendors an engine never named in any of its own answers (three runs of every question).

Pooling five engines hides how narrow each one is. ChatGPT never named 115 vendors (40.2%); Google AI Overviews 103 (36.0%); Google AI Mode 101 (35.3%); Perplexity 85 (29.7%); Claude 66 (23.1%). Claude also names the most vendors per answer (4.85) and Google AI Overviews the fewest (3.26).

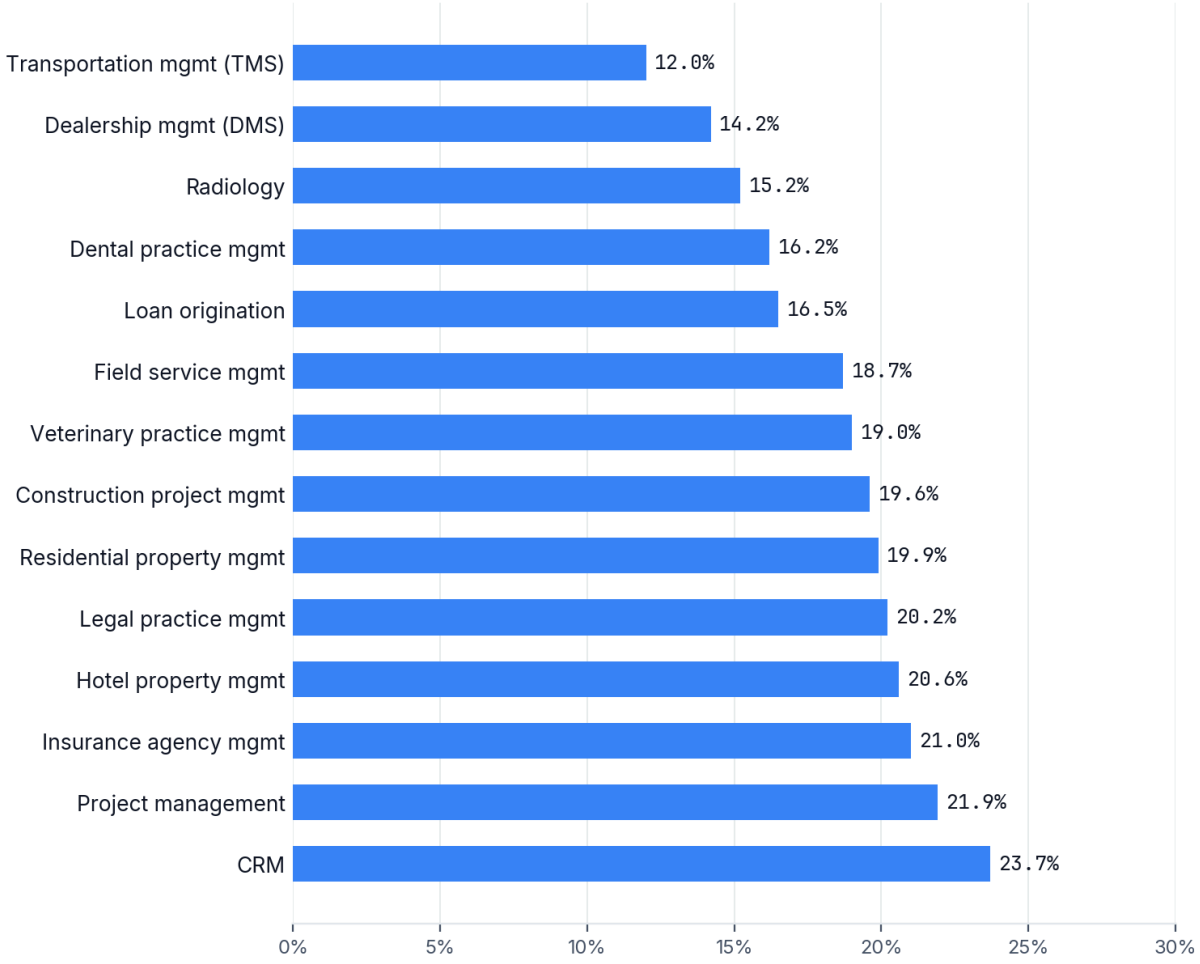
132 vendors were named by all five engines at least once; 19 were named by exactly one engine and no other. A vendor's presence is engine-specific, so a single-engine check can call a vendor present or absent when the other four say the opposite.

ENGINE	VALID ANSWERS	VENDORS NEVER NAMED	SHARE OF 286	VENDORS NAMED PER ANSWER	MEAN TOP-VENDOR SHARE OF NAMINGS
ChatGPT	420	115	40.2%	3.56	19.9%
Claude	420	66	23.1%	4.85	15.7%
Perplexity	420	85	29.7%	3.91	17.6%
Google AI Overviews	415	103	36.0%	3.26	21.9%
Google AI Mode	420	101	35.3%	3.70	20.4%

Finding 3: the shortlists are short and concentrated

Top vendor's share of all vendor namings, by category

A category's namings are every time any checked vendor was named in a valid answer. Base: 8,085 namings.



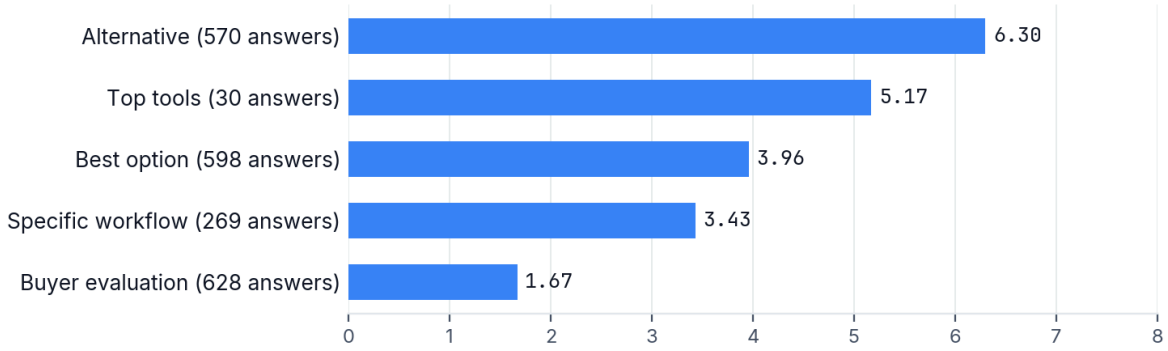
Source: Broadcastwell Research, Study 1, from the Absence Index release 2026-09, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695. CC BY 4.0.

Figure. Top vendor's share of all checked-vendor namings in its category.

An answer names 3.86 checked vendors on average (8,085 namings in 2,095 answers). The top vendor in each category takes between 12.0% and 23.7% of that category's namings, and the top three together take 30.8% to 67.0%. Only 35 vendors in the whole release were named in at least half of their category's answers; 7 categories had two or fewer such vendors and transportation management had none.

Checked vendors named per answer, by question shape

Base: 2,095 valid answers in five shapes.



Source: Broadcastwell Research, Study 1, from the Absence Index release 2026-09, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695. CC BY 4.0.

Figure. Vendors named per answer by question shape.

Question shape sets the size of the list. Alternative questions ("alternatives to X") name 6.30 vendors per answer. Best-option questions name 3.96 and leave 35.3% of vendors unnamed in that shape. Buyer-evaluation questions, which ask about pricing, implementation or contracts, name 1.67 vendors per answer and leave 65.7% of vendors unnamed in that shape. Buyer-evaluation and workflow answers name fewer vendors than best-option and alternative answers.

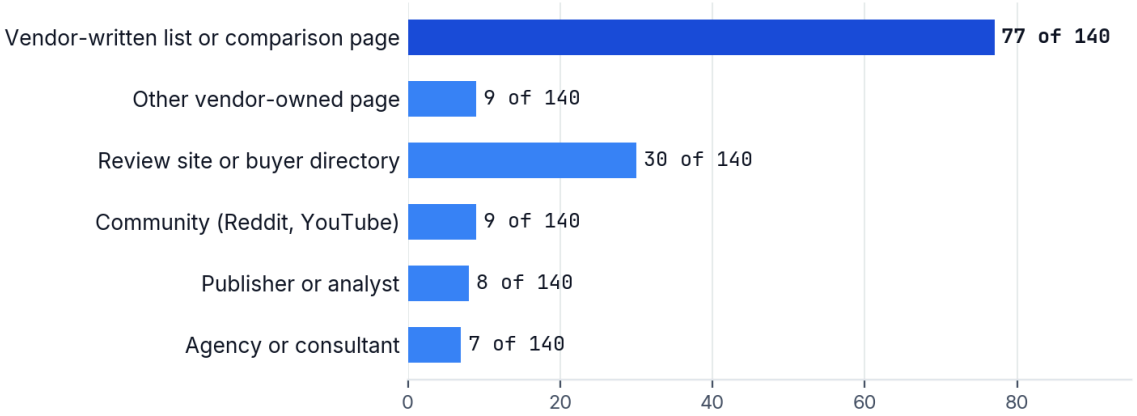
CATEGORY	NAMED 50% OR MORE	NAMED 25% OR MORE	NAMED UNDER 10%	NEVER NAMED	TOP THREE (RATE)
Construction project mgmt	3	6	13	4	Procore 72.7%; Buildertrend 55.3%; Contractor Foreman 51.3%
Dealership mgmt (DMS)	3	6	8	2	CDK Global 60.0%; DealerCenter 52.7%; Tekion 50.7%
Dental practice mgmt	4	8	10	4	Dentrix 80.5%; Open Dental 79.2%; Curve Dental 77.2%
Field service mgmt	2	7	10	7	Housecall Pro 72.0%; ServiceTitan 68.0%; Workiz 38.7%
Hotel property mgmt	1	5	13	5	Cloudbeds 77.2%; Stayntouch 45.6%; Little Hotelier 34.2%
Insurance agency mgmt	4	5	11	5	Applied Systems 84.7%; EZLynx 74.0%; HawkSoft 64.7%
Legal practice mgmt	4	6	12	3	Clio 84.0%; 8am MyCase 64.0%; CosmoLex 51.3%

CATEGORY	NAMED 50% OR MORE	NAMED 25% OR MORE	NAMED UNDER 10%	NEVER NAMED	TOP THREE (RATE)
Loan origination	2	4	13	4	nCino 61.3%; MeridianLink 54.0%; ICE Mortgage Technology 41.3%
Radiology	2	6	11	2	Sectra 58.0%; Intelerad 53.3%; Visage Imaging 43.3%
Residential property mgmt	3	5	12	3	Buildium 80.4%; AppFolio 64.2%; DoorLoop 52.0%
Transportation mgmt (TMS)	0	5	10	3	AscendTMS 42.7%; Alvys 38.7%; Oracle Transportation Management 28.7%
Veterinary practice mgmt	2	7	9	3	ezyVet 77.2%; IDEXX (Cornerstone, Neo) 60.4%; Digitail 45.0%
CRM	3	4	4	1	HubSpot CRM 75.3%; Salesforce Sales Cloud 72.7%; Pipedrive 64.7%
Project management	2	5	2	0	Asana 64.7%; ClickUp 53.3%; Jira 42.0%

Finding 4: the sources behind the shortlists are mostly vendor-written

What the ten most-cited source domains in each category are

Base: 140 top-ten slots (10 per category, 14 categories), classified by domain owner and page type.



Source: Broadcastwell Research, Study 1, from the Absence Index release 2026-09, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695. CC BY 4.0.

Chart 3. The 140 top-ten source slots by owner and page type.

For each category, the ten domains cited by the most answers were classified by owner. 86 of 140 slots (61.4%) belong to software vendors; 77 (55.0%) are vendor-owned domains whose cited pages are list, comparison, "best of" or "alternatives" pages. Review sites and buyer directories (Capterra, G2, Software Advice, GetApp, SelectHub and similar) hold 30 slots (21.4%). Community pages (Reddit, YouTube) hold 9, publishers and analysts 8, agencies and consultants 7.

34 of the vendor-owned slots belong to vendors outside the checked list for that category. Some sell in an adjacent category, some publish many list pages, and some are unrelated products with one widely cited page. The most-cited domain in a category is a checked vendor in only 6 of 14 categories; elsewhere it is a directory, a community, an agency, or a vendor that was not checked.

Across all 16,069 answer-domain citation pairs in the release, the classification rule above covers 54.2% of citations: vendor-owned pages 31.0% (checked vendors 22.5%, other vendors 8.5%), review sites and directories 13.3%, community 4.0%, publishers 3.3%, agencies 2.7%. The remaining 45.8% of citations go to 1,511 domains cited by few answers each and left unclassified; 385 of the 1,896 distinct domains are classified.

CATEGORY	ANSWERS CITING	DOMAINS	VENDOR-OWNED (OF 10)	VENDOR LISTS	REVIEW OR DIRECTORY	OTHER	MOST-CITED DOMAIN
Construction project mgmt	98.7%	206	7	7	1	2	fieldwire.com (34.7%)
Dealership mgmt (DMS)	98.7%	175	5	4	3	2	voltra.ai (26.0%)
Dental practice mgmt	98.7%	136	4	4	4	2	medixdental.com (31.5%)
Field service mgmt	94.0%	155	6	6	3	1	fieldpulse.com (34.7%)
Hotel property mgmt	98.7%	132	7	7	3	0	hoteltechreport.com (69.1%)
Insurance agency mgmt	99.3%	170	6	5	3	1	g2.com (44.7%)
Legal practice mgmt	99.3%	183	5	5	3	2	clio.com (35.3%)
Loan origination	100.0%	180	7	4	3	0	loanpro.io (36.7%)
Radiology	99.3%	179	2	1	2	6	reddit.com (40.0%)
Residential property mgmt	98.0%	158	7	7	2	1	buildium.com (50.7%)
Transportation mgmt (TMS)	97.3%	197	6	6	1	3	reddit.com (22.0%)
Veterinary practice mgmt	99.3%	113	8	7	2	0	capterra.com (40.9%)
CRM	96.0%	265	8	7	0	2	pipedrive.com (28.7%)
Project management	96.7%	200	8	7	0	2	celoxis.com (32.7%)

Finding 5: the ten most-cited domains in every category

Ranked by the number of valid answers that cite the domain at least once (base: valid answers in the category, about 150). Kind is the hand classification of the domain owner; the last column marks vendor-owned domains whose cited pages are list or comparison pages.

DOMAIN	ANSWERS CITING	SHARE OF ANSWERS	KIND	VENDOR-WRITTEN LIST
Construction project management software				
1. fieldwire.com	52	34.7%	checked vendor	yes
2. buildertrend.com	37	24.7%	checked vendor	yes
3. capterra.com	34	22.7%	review or directory	
4. procore.com	32	21.3%	checked vendor	yes
5. contractorforeman.com	31	20.7%	checked vendor	yes
6. reddit.com	30	20.0%	community	
7. kahua.com	28	18.7%	checked vendor	yes
8. projectmanager.com	27	18.0%	vendor, not checked	yes
9. thedigitalprojectmanager.com	27	18.0%	publisher	
10. projul.com	25	16.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
Dealership management systems				
1. voltra.ai	39	26.0%	vendor, not checked	yes
2. g2.com	35	23.3%	review or directory	
3. dealersignals.com	29	19.3%	publisher	
4. vendormotive.com	29	19.3%	review or directory	
5. capterra.com	27	18.0%	review or directory	
6. dealerint.com	25	16.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
7. cdkglobal.com	24	16.0%	checked vendor	
8. tekion.com	23	15.3%	checked vendor	yes
9. us.dealertrack.com	21	14.0%	checked vendor	yes
10. ustechautomations.com	21	14.0%	agency or consultant	
Dental practice management software				
1. medixdental.com	47	31.5%	agency or consultant	
2. thedentalapp.com	44	29.5%	vendor, not checked	yes
3. curvedental.com	38	25.5%	checked vendor	yes
4. capterra.com	37	24.8%	review or directory	
5. ekimit.com	32	21.5%	agency or consultant	
6. oryxdental.com	32	21.5%	checked vendor	yes
7. practicesignal.com	30	20.1%	review or directory	
8. softwareadvice.com	30	20.1%	review or directory	
9. g2.com	29	19.5%	review or directory	

DOMAIN	ANSWERS CITING	SHARE OF ANSWERS	KIND	VENDOR-WRITTEN LIST
10. planetdds.com	29	19.5%	checked vendor	yes
Field service management software				
1. fieldpulse.com	52	34.7%	checked vendor	yes
2. fieldservicesoftware.io	52	34.7%	review or directory	
3. getjobber.com	49	32.7%	checked vendor	yes
4. housecallpro.com	43	28.7%	checked vendor	yes
5. servicetitan.com	36	24.0%	checked vendor	yes
6. youtube.com	33	22.0%	community	
7. capterra.com	30	20.0%	review or directory	
8. softwareadvice.com	29	19.3%	review or directory	
9. myquoteiq.com	28	18.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
10. fieldcamp.ai	25	16.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
Hotel property management software				
1. hoteltechreport.com	103	69.1%	review or directory	
2. roommaster.com	65	43.6%	checked vendor	yes
3. stayntouch.com	57	38.3%	checked vendor	yes
4. cloudbeds.com	41	27.5%	checked vendor	yes
5. mews.com	38	25.5%	checked vendor	yes
6. conduit.ai	27	18.1%	vendor, not checked	yes
7. g2.com	26	17.4%	review or directory	
8. stayfi.com	24	16.1%	vendor, not checked	yes
9. capterra.com	22	14.8%	review or directory	
10. littlehotelier.com	21	14.1%	checked vendor	yes
Insurance agency management systems				
1. g2.com	67	44.7%	review or directory	
2. ustechautomations.com	60	40.0%	agency or consultant	
3. www1.appliedsystems.com	42	28.0%	checked vendor	yes
4. ezlynx.com	37	24.7%	checked vendor	yes
5. hawksoft.com	37	24.7%	checked vendor	
6. quotesweep.com	37	24.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
7. agencymate.com	34	22.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
8. selecthub.com	31	20.7%	review or directory	

DOMAIN	ANSWERS CITING	SHARE OF ANSWERS	KIND	VENDOR-WRITTEN LIST
9. unlockedcrm.ai	29	19.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
10. softwareadvice.com	27	18.0%	review or directory	
Legal practice management software				
1. clio.com	53	35.3%	checked vendor	yes
2. mycase.com	50	33.3%	checked vendor	yes
3. practicepanther.com	40	26.7%	checked vendor	yes
4. softwareadvice.com	40	26.7%	review or directory	
5. g2.com	34	22.7%	review or directory	
6. capterra.com	32	21.3%	review or directory	
7. reddit.com	32	21.3%	community	
8. quickbase.com	29	19.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
9. referent.law	26	17.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
10. youtube.com	25	16.7%	community	
Loan origination and lending software				
1. loanpro.io	55	36.7%	checked vendor	yes
2. aloan.ai	47	31.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
3. ncino.com	33	22.0%	checked vendor	
4. hesfintech.com	31	20.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
5. capterra.com	27	18.0%	review or directory	
6. abrigo.com	25	16.7%	checked vendor	
7. meridianlink.com	25	16.7%	checked vendor	
8. g2.com	24	16.0%	review or directory	
9. openbankingtracker.com	23	15.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
10. sourceforge.net	23	15.3%	review or directory	
Radiology and medical imaging software				
1. reddit.com	60	40.0%	community	
2. pacscribe.com	49	32.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
3. engage.klasresearch.com	41	27.3%	publisher	
4. intelerad.com	40	26.7%	checked vendor	
5. radiologybusiness.com	40	26.7%	publisher	
6. worldmetrics.org	28	18.7%	publisher	
7. intuitionlabs.ai	23	15.3%	agency or consultant	

DOMAIN	ANSWERS CITING	SHARE OF ANSWERS	KIND	VENDOR-WRITTEN LIST
8. slashdot.org	21	14.0%	review or directory	
9. klasresearch.com	20	13.3%	publisher	
10. sourceforge.net	20	13.3%	review or directory	
Residential property management software				
1. buildium.com	75	50.7%	checked vendor	yes
2. doorloop.com	47	31.8%	checked vendor	yes
3. appfolio.com	38	25.7%	checked vendor	yes
4. capterra.com	35	23.6%	review or directory	
5. re-leased.com	33	22.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
6. yardibreeze.com	33	22.3%	checked vendor	yes
7. tenantcloud.com	32	21.6%	checked vendor	yes
8. reddit.com	31	20.9%	community	
9. g2.com	30	20.3%	review or directory	
10. baselane.com	27	18.2%	checked vendor	yes
Transportation management systems				
1. reddit.com	33	22.0%	community	
2. pcssoft.com	30	20.0%	checked vendor	yes
3. alvys.com	29	19.3%	checked vendor	yes
4. ustechautomations.com	29	19.3%	agency or consultant	
5. capterra.com	27	18.0%	review or directory	
6. brokerpro.com	19	12.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
7. datatruck.io	19	12.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
8. glideappsagency.com	19	12.7%	agency or consultant	
9. gofreight.com	19	12.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
10. arktms.com	18	12.0%	vendor, not checked	yes
Veterinary practice management software				
1. capterra.com	61	40.9%	review or directory	
2. digitail.com	52	34.9%	checked vendor	yes
3. softwareadvice.com	46	30.9%	review or directory	
4. waitwellsoftware.com	46	30.9%	vendor, not checked	yes
5. puppilot.co	44	29.5%	vendor, not checked	yes
6. shepherd.vet	41	27.5%	checked vendor	yes

DOMAIN	ANSWERS CITING	SHARE OF ANSWERS	KIND	VENDOR-WRITTEN LIST
7. provet.com	40	26.8%	checked vendor	yes
8. software.idexx.com	40	26.8%	checked vendor	yes
9. ezyvet.com	36	24.2%	checked vendor	
10. signalpet.com	32	21.5%	vendor, not checked	yes
CRM				
1. pipedrive.com	43	28.7%	checked vendor	yes
2. salesforce.com	33	22.0%	checked vendor	yes
3. pipelinecrm.com	32	21.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
4. monday.com	28	18.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
5. youtube.com	28	18.7%	community	
6. hubspot.com	25	16.7%	checked vendor	
7. sybill.ai	22	14.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
8. nutshell.com	20	13.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
9. blog.salesflare.com	19	12.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
10. reddit.com	18	12.0%	community	
Project management				
1. celoxis.com	49	32.7%	vendor, not checked	yes
2. thedigitalprojectmanager.com	44	29.3%	publisher	
3. asana.com	40	26.7%	checked vendor	yes
4. wrike.com	39	26.0%	checked vendor	yes
5. atlassian.com	32	21.3%	checked vendor	
6. project-management.com	31	20.7%	publisher	
7. teamwork.com	26	17.3%	vendor, not checked	yes
8. clickup.com	22	14.7%	checked vendor	yes
9. monday.com	22	14.7%	checked vendor	yes
10. ones.com	19	12.7%	vendor, not checked	yes

Per-category lines

Construction project management software: 4 of 22 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 3 appeared in at least half; Procore led with 72.7% of answers.

Dealership management systems: 2 of 22 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 3 appeared in at least half; CDK Global led with 60.0% of answers.

Dental practice management software: 4 of 20 checked vendors were never named in 149 answers; 4 appeared in at least half; Dentrix led with 80.5% of answers.

Field service management software: 7 of 22 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 2 appeared in at least half; Housecall Pro led with 72.0% of answers.

Hotel property management software: 5 of 25 checked vendors were never named in 149 answers; 1 appeared in at least half; Cloudbeds led with 77.2% of answers.

Insurance agency management systems: 5 of 19 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 4 appeared in at least half; Applied Systems led with 84.7% of answers.

Legal practice management software: 3 of 21 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 4 appeared in at least half; Clio led with 84.0% of answers.

Loan origination and lending software: 4 of 25 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 2 appeared in at least half; nCino led with 61.3% of answers.

Radiology and medical imaging software: 2 of 24 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 2 appeared in at least half; Sectra led with 58.0% of answers.

Residential property management software: 3 of 22 checked vendors were never named in 148 answers; 3 appeared in at least half; Buildium led with 80.4% of answers.

Transportation management systems: 3 of 25 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 0 appeared in at least half; AscendTMS led with 42.7% of answers.

Veterinary practice management software: 3 of 19 checked vendors were never named in 149 answers; 2 appeared in at least half; ezyVet led with 77.2% of answers.

CRM: 1 of 10 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 3 appeared in at least half; HubSpot CRM led with 75.3% of answers.

Project management: 0 of 10 checked vendors were never named in 150 answers; 2 appeared in at least half; Asana led with 64.7% of answers.

Limitations

- One release. The figures describe answers captured on 22 to 23 Sep 2026 (UTC). No change over time is asserted, and the release itself asserts none.
- Capture method. The published method is single turn, API based and logged out, a controlled instrument rather than a replica of any one buyer's screen (broadcastwell.com/methodology, version 1.1). An engine's app or browser answer for a logged-in user on the same day may differ.
- Fixed question set. Ten buyer questions per category in five shapes. Different wording produces different shortlists; the release publishes the exact text of every question.
- Vendor lists. The 286 checked vendors come from buyer directories captured on stated dates and a published selection rule. A vendor that is not on the list is not measured; absence from the list is not measured absence. Finding 4 shows that unchecked vendors are cited often.
- Matching. Names and aliases match on word boundaries; plain-word vendors need a qualifier or a cited domain. A vendor referred to only by an unlisted nickname, or a plain-word vendor without a qualifier, would be counted as not named.
- Three runs. Each engine and question pair was run three times on one day. Study 3 in this series measures the run-to-run variation; a vendor's exact rate carries the Wilson interval shown in the dataset.
- Source classification. The 138 domains in the top-twelve slots were classified by hand from each site's own description; a domain can be both a vendor and a publisher of lists, and the list-page test relies on URL paths. Outside those 138, only checked-vendor hosts and two fixed lists of review and community sites are classified; the long tail is not.
- No causal claim. This study does not show that being on a cited page causes a naming, only which pages the engines cited and which vendors they named.
- Engines change models, retrieval and interfaces without notice. Later releases may not be comparable without checking each release's stated configuration.
- The publisher sells AI search visibility services. The study ranks no vendor and says nothing about the publisher's own visibility; the recompute scripts and raw files are public so the figures can be checked.

How to cite

APA

```
Broadcastwell Research. (2026). The Shortlist Gap: which of 286 software vendors AI engines name when buyers ask, across 14 categories and five engines (Version 1.0) [Data set and report]. Broadcastwell. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22982426
```

BibTeX

```
@misc{broadcastwell2026shortlistgap,
  author    = {{Broadcastwell Research}},
  title     = {The Shortlist Gap: which of 286 software vendors AI engines name when buyers ask, across 14 categories and five engines},
  year      = {2026},
  version   = {1.0},
  publisher = {Broadcastwell},
  doi       = {10.5281/zenodo.22982426},
  url       = {https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22982426},
  note      = {Data set and report. CC BY 4.0. Built on The Absence Index, release 2026-09, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695}
}
```

Source dataset: Broadcastwell. (2026). The Absence Index: September 2026 Release (2026-09) [Dataset]. Broadcastwell. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22907695

Appendix: dataset, recompute and integrity

Dataset files (CC BY 4.0)

FILE	ROWS	WHAT IT HOLDS
vendors_2026-09.csv	286	One row per checked vendor: category, namings, base, rate, Wilson interval, citations, questions appeared, namings and base per engine.
category_summary_2026-09.csv	14	One row per category: vendors checked, valid answers, never named, mention bands, top vendor and its share, concentration (HHI), vendors named per answer, per-engine never-named counts.
source_domains_2026-09.csv	all cited domains	One row per category and cited domain: answers citing, share, distinct URLs, list-like URLs, checked-vendor owner, vendor-written-list flag.
top10_sources_2026-09.csv	140	The ten most-cited domains per category with the hand classification.
domain_classes_2026-09.csv	138	The hand classification: owner kind, owner name, sells in category, publishes lists, evidence, confidence.
study1_numbers.json		Every computed figure used in this report.

Recompute

```
python3 scripts/recompute_index.py <zenodo_package_dir> vendor_rules_2026-09.json
out/recompute
python3 scripts/study1_shortlist_gap.py
python3 scripts/study1_sources_classified.py
python3 scripts/build_study1.py
```

Input integrity (SHA256)

```
answers-2026-09.jsonl  221c94e1ebad2bc87d7cd20837fa670cc40b10dba6f68b75423dc8bee69697b3
release-2026-09.json   e7829183f6785357787fcf85d3c27999403b0a329f349dad4c7343b11d23f142
measurement-input-2026-09.json
5f94ee1c2aaa9d6d7d4e8176e781f2a78e4f4bcab15077f051b8ccc8255795ac
```

The first two match the SHA256SUMS.txt in the Zenodo package for DOI 10.5281/zenodo.22907695.