

● THIS IS HAPPENING NOW.

YOUR AFFILIATE PROGRAM IS ALREADY SHAPING **AI ANSWERS.**

HERE'S WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.

AP's view on AI-mediated discovery, the publisher relationships driving it, and where to act before your competitors do.

PREPARED BY
ACCELERATION PARTNERS

FOR
CLIENT LEADERSHIP

STATUS
ACT NOW

INSIDE THIS DOCUMENT

CONTENTS

- | | | |
|-----------|--|-------|
| 01 | THE WORLD TODAY | P. 03 |
| | What's changing and why it matters for your brand | |
| 02 | WHAT THE DATA SHOWS | P. 08 |
| | Early findings from AI visibility tracking across brands | |
| 03 | THE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR BRAND | P. 13 |
| | What this means in practice | |
| 04 | THE MEASUREMENT PICTURE | P. 17 |
| | What we know and what we don't | |
| 05 | WHERE TO ACT NOW | P. 22 |
| | A phased approach to building AI visibility through your affiliate program | |
| 06 | FURTHER THINKING | P. 27 |
| | Where the agent journey goes from here | |
-



SECTION 01

THE WORLD TODAY

What's changing and why it matters for your brand.

01.1 · SETUP

THREE FORCES RESHAPING BRAND DISCOVERY

The way consumers find and choose brands is shifting at a pace most marketing stacks weren't built to handle.

Three forces are colliding at once: SEO-driven traffic is declining, AI interfaces are compressing the journey from research to decision, and the economics of how publishers get paid for their content are being restructured.

This document sets out AP's view of that shift: what the data shows across the brands we manage, what it means for your program, and how we're helping clients act on it now. We're not asking you to take a position on AI in the abstract. We're showing you what's already happening inside your publisher relationships — and how to make it work harder.

Brands that get ahead of this now will be in a stronger position than those that treat it as a future concern.

KEY TAKEAWAY

This is not a future trend. It is already shaping how your brand shows up in customer decisions today.

AI PLATFORMS ARE CHANGING HOW CONSUMERS DISCOVER BRANDS

AI platforms such as ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, and Claude are compressing the consumer journey. Search and selection, previously two distinct steps, are collapsing into one. A consumer asks a question and gets a recommendation. The research phase and the decision phase now happen in the same interaction.

The consequence is immediate. The click, which has been the primary attribution signal for performance marketing, may not happen at all. Influence now occurs without a traceable referral. Whether a brand appears in an AI-generated recommendation matters commercially, but standard measurement tools don't capture it yet.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Search and selection, previously two distinct steps, are collapsing into one. A consumer asks a question and receives a brand recommendation in the research phase and the decision phase now happens in the same interaction. The click may not happen at all.

— YOU'RE READING A PREVIEW

UNLOCK THE FULL REPORT.

02

**WHAT THE
DATA SHOWS**

Early findings from
AI visibility tracking

03

**THE
OPPORTUNITY
FOR YOUR
BRAND**

What this means in
practice

04

**THE
MEASUREMENT
PICTURE**

What we know and
what we don't

05

**WHERE TO ACT
NOW**

A phased approach
to AI visibility