

AI Search Visibility Audit: a well-known project management tool

Category: project management software · Anonymized public version: "Brand X" is the audited tool, "Competitor A" and "Competitor B" are two leading rivals · Data collected October 14, 2026 · 5 AI answer engines, 108 answers

Executive summary

When buyers ask AI assistants which project management software to use, **Brand X is known but rarely chosen**. Every engine knows Brand X and describes it accurately. But it files Brand X under "enterprise / complex work," and that label keeps Brand X out of the answers to the most common buyer questions. Competitor A and Competitor B get named almost every time, and they are recommended about 2.5 times as often as Brand X.

27%

Brand X share of voice (all prompts) vs 38% Competitor A and 35% Competitor B

17%

share of voice on generic category questions (no brand named in the prompt)

17%

of answers recommend Brand X vs 42% Competitor A and 43% Competitor B

0/27

Brand X mentions in answers about small businesses, startups and the cheapest options

Three things that matter most

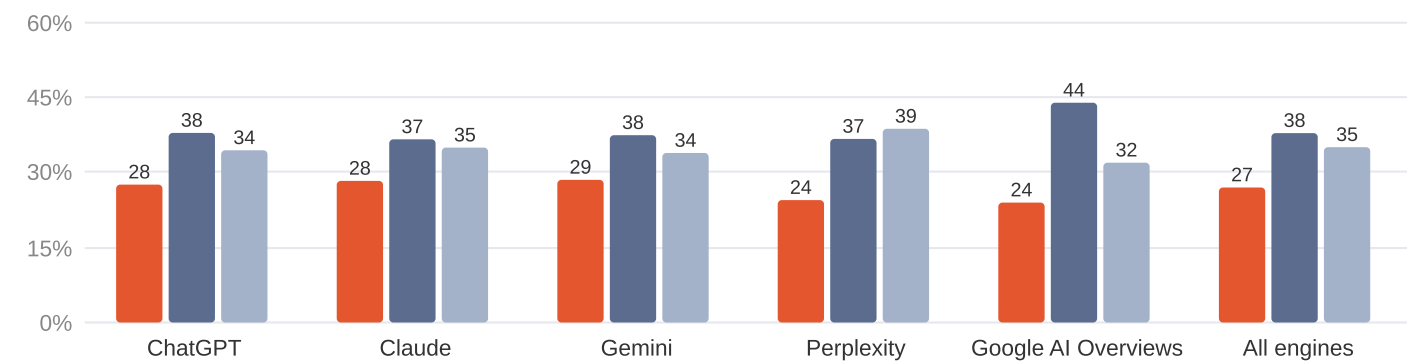
- **Brand X drops out of the high-volume buyer questions.** In the small-business, startup and "cheapest reliable" questions, Brand X appears in 0 of 27 answers. Competitor A and Competitor B appear in nearly all of them. One answer even quotes Brand X's entry pricing, which is close to the competitors' prices. The engines still don't treat Brand X as a small-team option.
- **The "enterprise" label is consistent across engines.** 47 of Brand X's 67 mentions (70%) come with enterprise or large-organization wording. The same is true for only 12% of Competitor A mentions and 9% of Competitor B mentions. When engines compare Brand X with a rival, they repeatedly add "steeper learning curve."
- **Competitors' own content shapes the answers.** Competitor B's site is cited in 18 answers that leave Brand X out, often through Competitor B's "best tools" and "alternatives" guides. Brand X's own pages are cited 33 times, but almost only (31) in answers that already name Brand X, mostly pricing and features pages. They help Brand X look good once it's in an answer. They don't get it into new ones.

Share of voice vs competitors, by engine

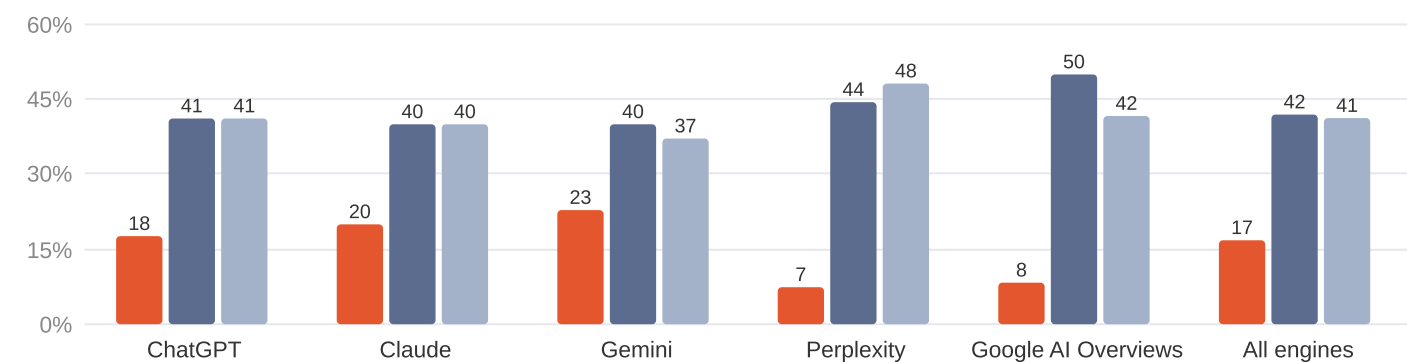
Share of voice is each brand's share of all mentions of the three tracked brands. The first chart covers all 12 questions. The second covers only the 7 generic category questions, where no brand is named in the prompt. That second view is closest to how a new buyer starts a search.

Brand X Competitor A Competitor B

All questions: share of voice (%)



Generic category questions only: share of voice (%)



Engine	Brand X SoV	Competitor A SoV	Competitor B SoV	Brand X named, category Qs	Brand X recommended
ChatGPT (OpenAI)	28%	38%	34%	6/14	8/24
Claude (Anthropic)	28%	37%	35%	7/14	0/24
Gemini (Google)	29%	38%	34%	8/14	8/24
Perplexity	24%	37%	39%	2/14	0/24
Google AI Overviews	24%	44%	32%	1/7	2/12

Question by question (answers naming each brand)

Question	Type	Brand X	Competitor A	Competitor B
What are the best project management software tools?	category	5/9	9/9	9/9
Which project management software would you recommend for a small business?	category	0/9	9/9	8/9
What is the best project management software for startups in 2026?	category	0/9	9/9	9/9
Top alternatives to Competitor A for project management software?	alternatives	9/9	9/9	9/9
Top alternatives to Competitor B for project management software?	alternatives	7/9	9/9	9/9
Brand X vs Competitor A: which is better?	branded	9/9	9/9	0/9
Brand X vs Competitor B: which is better?	branded	9/9	1/9	9/9
Is Brand X a good project management software?	branded	9/9	6/9	1/9
What project management software do experts recommend?	category	6/9	9/9	8/9
Cheapest reliable project management software?	category	0/9	7/9	9/9
Which project management software has the best customer support?	category	4/9	8/9	7/9
List the leading project management software vendors and their strengths.	category	9/9	9/9	9/9

Each question was asked twice per engine on ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini and Perplexity, plus one Google AI Overview check, for 9 answers per question. Red marks a question where the brand never appeared. Branded questions ("Brand X vs ...", "Is Brand X good...") put Brand X in the prompt, so its numbers there are inflated by design.

Recommend rate and sentiment

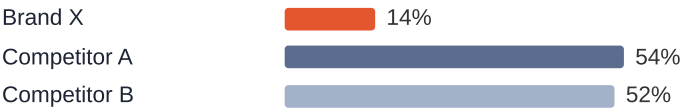
Recommend rate (all 108 answers)



Mention rate (answers that name the brand)



Recommend rate on generic category questions



Mention rate on generic category questions



An answer counts as recommending a brand if it ranks the brand first in a list or uses recommendation language ("best", "I'd recommend", "go with") with positive wording about it. Brand X is recommended in 18 of 108 answers. Competitor A gets 45 and Competitor B 46. Claude and Perplexity never recommended Brand X in any answer.

Brand	Answers naming it	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Net sentiment	Enterprise framing
Brand X	67	39	28	0	+0.58	47 (70%)
Competitor A	94	59	32	3	+0.60	11 (12%)
Competitor B	87	54	32	1	+0.61	8 (9%)

The tone toward Brand X is positive or neutral, never hostile. The issue is how Brand X is positioned, not what engines think of it. Typical wording:

“Yes—[Brand X] is a good project-management platform, especially for mid-sized and enterprise teams managing complex, cross-functional work.”

ChatGPT (OpenAI) · “Is [Brand X] a good project management software?”

“[Brand X] and [another enterprise suite]: Built for large organizations that manage many projects and need governance and resource management.”

Claude (Anthropic) · “What are the best project management software tools?”

“[Brand X] is more powerful for complex work, but it has a steeper learning curve and a less polished interface.”

Claude (Anthropic) · “[Brand X] vs [Competitor A]: which is better?”

“[Brand X] / Large cross-functional organizations / Strong workload management, approvals, reporting, and automation / Often feels like overkill for small teams”

ChatGPT (OpenAI) · “What project management software do experts recommend?”

Sentiment is scored automatically with a word-list method. It doesn't pick up phrases like “steeper learning curve” or “overkill” as negative, so the “0 negative” result for Brand X understates the complexity caveat. We counted that caveat separately: it shows up in 7 answers, almost all of them head-to-head comparisons.

The sources AI cites, and where competitors win

Four of the five engines cited web sources; Claude cited none (see Methodology). 41 of 108 answers didn't mention Brand X. The table shows how often each domain was cited in answers without Brand X and in answers with Brand X.

Cited domain	Type	Total answers citing	Brand X absent	Brand X present
<i>Brand X site</i>	Brand X-owned	33	2	31
<i>Competitor B site</i>	Tracked competitor	31	18	13
<i>Other PM vendor site #1</i>	Other PM vendor	21	10	11
<i>Competitor A site</i>	Tracked competitor	20	9	11
thedigitalprojectmanager.com	Media / review publisher	18	4	14
g2.com	Review site	17	7	10
forbes.com	Media	15	11	4
<i>Other PM vendor site #2</i>	Other PM vendor	13	4	9
<i>Other PM vendor site #3</i>	Other PM vendor	12	5	7
pcmag.com	Media / review publisher	11	3	8
youtube.com	Video / community	11	3	8
<i>Other PM vendor site #4</i>	Other PM vendor	10	7	3
<i>Other PM vendor site #5</i>	Other PM vendor	9	4	5
<i>Other PM vendor site #6</i>	Other PM vendor	9	4	5
reddit.com	Video / community	9	4	5
zapier.com	Other / vendor blog	9	2	7

What this shows

- **Competitor-owned guides win.** Competitor B's own pages (pricing, “best project management tools”, “Competitor A alternatives”, “[another vendor] alternatives”) are the top source in answers without Brand X (18). Other project

management vendors do the same with their own pricing pages and comparison blogs.

- **Third-party “best of” lists decide who gets shortlisted.** The Forbes Advisor best project management software list is cited 11 times, 11 of them in answers without Brand X. PCMag UK, TechRepublic, project-management.com and Capterra show the same pattern. Gemini and Google AI Overviews rely heavily on thedigitalprojectmanager.com, YouTube reviews and Reddit.
- **Brand X’s cited pages do the wrong job.** Brand X’s own pages (pricing, features, comparison table, solution pricing) are cited 31 times in answers that already name Brand X and only 2 times in answers that don’t. Gartner is cited only in answers that include Brand X, which reinforces the enterprise label.

Most-cited individual pages (all engines)

URL (tracking parameters removed)	Citations
[Brand X]/[pricing page]	20
[Competitor B]/pricing	18
[Competitor A]/pricing	11
forbes.com/advisor/business/software/best-project-management-software/	11
[Brand X]/features/	10
[Competitor B]/learn/topic/project-management/tools/	9
g2.com/products/[brand-x]/reviews	9
[Competitor B]/learn/topic/project-management/tools/[competitor-a]/alternatives/	8
g2.com/categories/project-management	7
[Other PM vendor 4]/en-US/pricing	6

YouTube video URLs are grouped separately (23 citations across Google AI Overviews and Gemini). Gemini citations are recorded by source domain.

Engine-by-engine notes

ChatGPT (OpenAI, gpt-5.6-luna, web search on)

Uses many pricing pages and favors “best value” framing. Competitor B is recommended in 13 of 14 category answers. Brand X shows up in 6 of 14, usually as the pick for larger organizations or PMOs. ChatGPT is the only engine that consistently cites Brand X’s pricing.

“For most small businesses, I’d recommend [Competitor A] as the best all-around choice.”

ChatGPT (OpenAI) · “Which project management software would you recommend for a small business?”

Claude (Anthropic, claude-haiku-5-5)

Claude’s web search didn’t complete during this audit, so its answers reflect what the model learned in training. That makes it a good read on Brand X’s built-in brand image. Claude names Brand X in 7 of 14 category answers but recommends it in 0 of 24 answers. It groups Brand X with enterprise portfolio and work-management suites.

Gemini (Google, gemini-3.5-flash-lite, Google Search grounding)

Gemini is Brand X’s strongest engine. Its long, segmented lists usually include a “Best for Enterprise” or “Best for Creative Teams” slot that Brand X fills, and it recommends Brand X in 8 of 24 answers. In both customer-support answers, Gemini ranks Brand X first:

"Why it stands out: [Brand X] consistently scores exceptionally high on G2 and Capterra for customer service and account management."

Gemini (Google) · "Which project management software has the best customer support?"

Perplexity (perplexity/sonar)

This is Brand X's weakest engine. Answers are short and name only 2–5 tools, so being in the top tier matters more. Brand X appears in 2 of 14 category answers and is never recommended. Perplexity cites G2, Forbes Advisor and vendor pricing pages most.

"Short answer: [Competitor B] is better for most teams; [Brand X] is better for teams with formal, complex workflows."

Perplexity · "[Brand X] vs [Competitor B]: which is better?"

Google AI Overviews (via Google Search, US English)

An AI Overview appeared for 11 of 12 queries. Brand X appears in 1 of 7 category overviews. Sources lean toward YouTube reviews, Reddit and SEO listicles more than any other engine.

"[Competitor B] is better for most teams and startups looking for an all-in-one, highly customizable workspace, while [Brand X] is better for enterprise-level organizations, complex cross-functional teams, and departments requiring strict resource capacity planning and compliance."

Google AI Overviews · "[Brand X] vs [Competitor B]: which is better?"

Prioritized fix list

P1 Claim a “small and growing teams” position with dedicated, crawlable pages. Brand X is missing from 100% of the small-business, startup and cheapest-option answers. Publish pages that answer those exact questions, using the category term as written (“project management software for small business”, “...for startups”). Put the free plan and the entry-level paid plan in plain text, and include setup-time claims that address “steeper learning curve.”

P1 Get onto the third-party lists that decide shortlists. Focus on Forbes Advisor’s best project management software list, PCMag/PCMag UK, TechRepublic, project-management.com, Capterra and G2’s small-business category, plus thedigitalprojectmanager.com for Gemini and Google. Aim for a “best for small teams” or “best value” placement, not just “best for enterprise.”

P1 Publish your own “alternatives” and “best tools” guides. Competitor B’s guides are among the most-cited pages in answers without Brand X. Fair, well-sourced pages like “Competitor A alternatives,” “Competitor B alternatives” and “best project management software for [team type]” on its own site give engines a Brand X-authored source for the same questions. Brand X already appears in 16 of 18 alternatives answers, but it is never ranked first.

P2 Rebalance the head-to-head story. Engines conclude that Competitor B is “better for most teams” and that Competitor A is easier to adopt. Update the Brand X vs Competitor A and Brand X vs Competitor B pages, and the comparison table that engines already cite, with concrete onboarding times, templates and small-team customer stories.

P2 Build presence on video and community sources. Google AI Overviews and Gemini cite YouTube reviews and Reddit threads often. Short, independent-style walkthroughs (“[Brand X] for a 5-person team”) and active participation in relevant subreddits feed those sources.

P2 Make the customer-support advantage cite-able. Gemini already ranks Brand X first on support, based on G2/Capterra scores. Publish support SLAs and review-site scores on an open page so other engines can use them too.

P3 Technical baseline. Make sure AI crawlers (GPTBot, OAI-SearchBot, ClaudeBot, PerplexityBot, Google-Extended) can reach pricing and plan pages. Add Organization, Product/Offer and FAQPage structured data, and keep plan names and prices consistent across pages.

Methodology and limits

- **Date and scope:** collected October 14, 2026 (ET), US English. 12 buyer questions in three groups: 7 generic category, 2 “alternatives to [competitor]” and 3 Brand X-branded. Tracked brands: the audited tool (Brand X) and two of its best-known direct competitors (Competitor A, Competitor B). Names, domains and identifying details are withheld in this public version.
- **Engines and models:** OpenAI gpt-5.6-luna with web search; Anthropic claude-haiku-5-5 with web search enabled (searches failed; see below); Google gemini-3.5-flash-lite with Google Search grounding; Perplexity perplexity/sonar with web search; Google AI Overviews collected from Google Search results via DataForSEO.
- **Sample size:** 2 samples per question per engine for the four chat engines, plus 1 Google AI Overview per question: 108 answers in total. This is a small sample. AI answers vary from run to run, so differences of a few points aren’t meaningful. The large gaps (category share of voice of 17% vs ~42%, and 0 of 27 on small-business questions) are robust in direction. A full audit would use more questions and samples.

- **Analysis:** mentions, list position, recommendations, citations and sentiment were extracted with deterministic rules applied to the saved answers. No AI model was used to score or summarize. Quotes are verbatim from the answers (formatting removed). Share of voice counts only the three tracked brands. Several other vendors appear often but were not tracked.
- **Known limits:** Claude's web search returned errors on every attempt, so Claude results reflect training data only and Claude has no citations. Word-list sentiment misses phrases like "steeper learning curve." List-position metrics are unreliable for answers formatted as tables. API answers can differ from the consumer apps (which add personalization, location and history). One of the 12 Google queries returned no AI Overview.

Prepared by Answerweight as a sample audit using publicly available AI answers. The audited company and its competitors were not contacted and did not take part. In this public version, brand names, domains and identifying details (plan names, prices, other vendor names) have been replaced; quotes are otherwise verbatim, and replaced words are shown in [brackets].