5W | 5W Public Relations Research · 2026

5W RESEARCH · 2026 SERIES

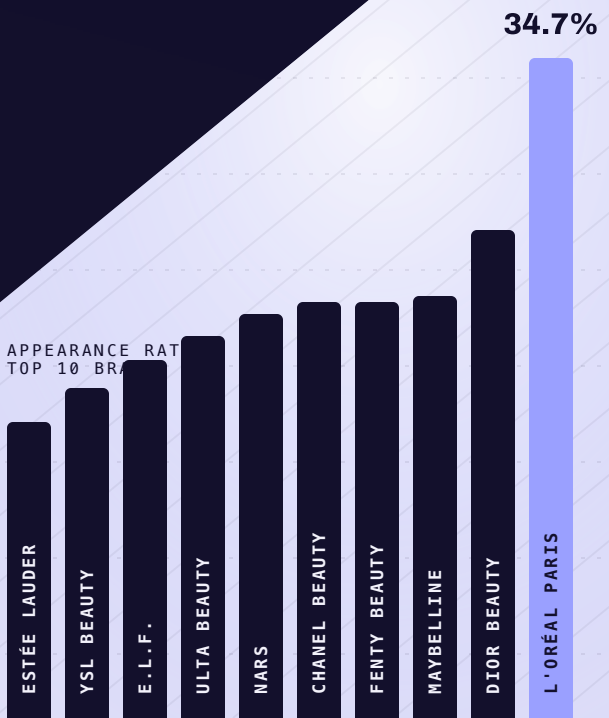
BEAUTY BRANDS VISIBILITY INDEX

Which beauty brands AI engines name
288 AI answers · October 26, 2026

Measured :
October 26, 2026
24 questions × 3 runs · 288 AI answers

Engines :
ChatGPT · Claude · Gemini · Perplexity
plus 57 Google AI Overviews

Prepared by :
5W
5wpr.com



AT A GLANCE

L'Oréal Paris and Dior Beauty lead. The two are within the margin of error.

L'Oréal Paris was named in 100 of 288 four-engine answers (34.7%). Dior Beauty was named in 74 of 288 (25.7%), and the two intervals overlap. Chanel Beauty was named first most often, in 36 of 288. Google AI Overviews appeared on 57 of 72 searches, and e.l.f. was named most often within them, in 16 of 57.

> Version 2. This version replaces the first version of this study, first published June 28, 2026. It uses measured counts, so the two versions are not comparable.

288
AI answers analyzed across ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini and Perplexity

34.7%
of answers named L'Oréal Paris, the most-named (100 of 288)

28
tracked brands named at least once (of 28)

79.2%
of Google searches showed an AI Overview (57 of 72)

INSIDE THIS REPORT

01 Key findings 03
02 The leaderboard 04
03 Profiles 06
04 How the engines differ 07
05 Google AI Overviews 08
06 Leaders by question 09
07 Who the engines cite 10
08 Frequently asked questions 13
09 Methodology 14
A Appendix: the 24 questions 15

KEY FINDINGS

01 What the data shows

MOST NAMED

100/288 (34.7%)

L'Oréal Paris appeared in 100 of 288 four-engine answers (CI 29.5–40.4%). Dior Beauty appeared in 74 of 288 (25.7%, CI 21–31%). The intervals overlap, so the two cannot be separated.

NAMED FIRST

36/288 (12.5%)

Chanel Beauty was the first brand named in 36 of 288 answers, more than any other tracked brand. Its average first position was 2.1. L'Oréal Paris was named first in 7 of 288.

GEMINI SKEW

35/72 (48.6%)

Gemini named L'Oréal Paris in 35 of 72 answers. The other engines named it in 20 to 24 of 72. Gemini also named Estée Lauder in 19 of 72 (26.4%), against 6 to 10 of 72 elsewhere.

CHATGPT RETAILERS

30/72 (41.7%)

ChatGPT named Ulta Beauty in 30 of 72 answers and Sephora in 22 of 72 (30.6%). Claude, Gemini and Perplexity each named Ulta Beauty in 9 or 10 of 72 and Sephora in 4 to 6 of 72.

OWN-SITE CITATIONS

61/288 (21.2%)

ulta.com was cited in 61 of 288 grounded answers, which made it the tracked brand domain cited most often. sephora.com was cited in 23 of 288 (8%) and L'Oréal Paris's own domain in 7 of 288 (2.4%). Most tracked brands had 0 of 288.

AIO TRIGGER

57/72 (79.2%)

Google AI Overviews appeared on 57 of 72 searches (CI 68.4–86.9%). On the other 15, no overview was shown.

AIO LEADER

16/57 (28.1%)

e.l.f. was the brand named most often in AI Overviews, at 16 of 57, followed by Sephora at 15 of 57 (26.3%). In the four-engine set, e.l.f. was named in 54 of 288 answers (18.8%).

TOP DOMAIN

121/288 (42%)

whowhatwear.com was cited in 121 of 288 four-engine answers, with 134 of 2,421 citations (5.5%). allure.com came second with 96 citations in 74 answers (25.7%).

CLEAN BEAUTY GAP

1/12 (8.3%)

For 'What are the best clean beauty brands?', the only tracked brands named were Sephora and Ulta Beauty, each in 1 of 12 answers.

THE LEADERBOARD

02 Which brands AI engines name

Appearance rate across 288 four-engine answers. The bar is the 95% confidence interval; overlapping bars cannot be told apart at this sample size.



	BRAND	RATE	NAMED IN
1	L'Oréal Paris	34.7%	100/288
2	Dior Beauty	25.7%	74/288
3	Maybelline	22.2%	64/288
4	Chanel Beauty	21.9%	63/288
5	Fenty Beauty	21.9%	63/288
6	NARS	21.2%	61/288
7	Ulta Beauty	20.1%	58/288
8	e.l.f.	18.8%	54/288
9	YSL Beauty	17.4%	50/288
10	Estée Lauder	15.6%	45/288
11	Charlotte Tilbury	15.3%	44/288
12	Rare Beauty	15.3%	44/288
13	MAC	14.2%	41/288
14	Sephora	13.2%	38/288
15	Lancôme	12.8%	37/288

02 THE LEADERBOARD

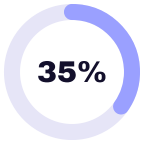
The full list

Own-domain citation is the share of 288 grounded answers that cited the entity's own domains (subdomains included). Citation share is of all 2,421 citations.

#	BRAND	NAMED IN	APPEARANCE RATE	95% INTERVAL	FIRST MENTION	OWN-DOMAIN CITATION	CITATION SHARE
1	L'Oréal Paris	100/288	34.7%	29.5–40.4%	3.9	2.4% (7/288)	0.3%
2	Dior Beauty	74/288	25.7%	21–31%	3.5	0.3% (1/288)	0%
3	Maybelline	64/288	22.2%	17.8–27.4%	4.1	0% (0/288)	0%
4	Chanel Beauty	63/288	21.9%	17.5–27%	2.1	0% (0/288)	0%
5	Fenty Beauty	63/288	21.9%	17.5–27%	3.3	0% (0/288)	0%
6	NARS	61/288	21.2%	16.9–26.3%	3.9	0% (0/288)	0%
7	Ulta Beauty	58/288	20.1%	15.9–25.1%	3.4	21.2% (61/288)	2.7%
8	e.l.f.	54/288	18.8%	14.7–23.7%	3.6	0% (0/288)	0%
9	YSL Beauty	50/288	17.4%	13.4–22.2%	3.5	0% (0/288)	0%
10	Estée Lauder	45/288	15.6%	11.9–20.3%	3.3	0.3% (1/288)	0%
11	Charlotte Tilbury	44/288	15.3%	11.6–19.9%	3.5	0% (0/288)	0%
12	Rare Beauty	44/288	15.3%	11.6–19.9%	3.9	0% (0/288)	0%
13	MAC	41/288	14.2%	10.7–18.7%	4.1	0% (0/288)	0%
14	Sephora	38/288	13.2%	9.8–17.6%	3.3	8% (23/288)	1.4%
15	Lancôme	37/288	12.8%	9.5–17.2%	3.3	0% (0/288)	0%
16	CeraVe	35/288	12.2%	8.9–16.4%	2	0% (0/288)	0%
17	K18	32/288	11.1%	8–15.3%	1.8	0% (0/288)	0%
18	La Roche-Posay	31/288	10.8%	7.7–14.9%	1.7	0% (0/288)	0%
19	Byredo	29/288	10.1%	7.1–14.1%	3.2	0% (0/288)	0%
20	Glossier	28/288	9.7%	6.8–13.7%	3.3	0% (0/288)	0%
21	Olaplex	27/288	9.4%	6.5–13.3%	1.9	0% (0/288)	0%
22	The Ordinary	25/288	8.7%	5.9–12.5%	4.3	0% (0/288)	0%
23	Le Labo	22/288	7.6%	5.1–11.3%	2.5	0% (0/288)	0%
24	Briogeo	20/288	6.9%	4.5–10.5%	3.4	0% (0/288)	0%
25	Kérastase	16/288	5.6%	3.4–8.8%	4.1	0% (0/288)	0%

PROFILES

03 The top eight, side by side

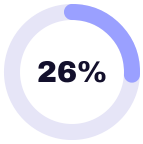


RANK 1

L'Oréal Paris

100/288 answers · 95% CI 29.5–40.4%

3.9	2.4%	0.3%
first-mention position	owned-domain citation (7/288)	citation share

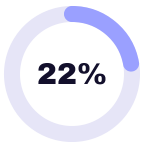


RANK 2

Dior Beauty

74/288 answers · 95% CI 21–31%

3.5	0.3%	0%
first-mention position	owned-domain citation (1/288)	citation share

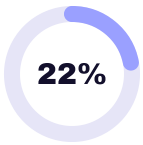


RANK 3

Maybelline

64/288 answers · 95% CI 17.8–27.4%

4.1	0%	0%
first-mention position	owned-domain citation (0/288)	citation share

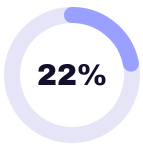


RANK 4

Chanel Beauty

63/288 answers · 95% CI 17.5–27%

2.1	0%	0%
first-mention position	owned-domain citation (0/288)	citation share

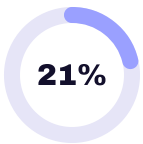


RANK 5

Fenty Beauty

63/288 answers · 95% CI 17.5–27%

3.3	0%	0%
first-mention position	owned-domain citation (0/288)	citation share



RANK 6

NARS

61/288 answers · 95% CI 16.9–26.3%

3.9	0%	0%
first-mention position	owned-domain citation (0/288)	citation share



RANK 7

Ulta Beauty

58/288 answers · 95% CI 15.9–25.1%

3.4	21.2%	2.7%
first-mention position	owned-domain citation (61/288)	citation share



RANK 8

e.l.f.

54/288 answers · 95% CI 14.7–23.7%

3.6	0%	0%
first-mention position	owned-domain citation (0/288)	citation share

04

HOW THE ENGINES DIFFER

Same questions, different answers

All four engines returned grounded answers to all 72 prompts, but they named different brands. ChatGPT named retailers much more often than the others: Ulta Beauty in 30 of 72 answers (41.7%) and Sephora in 22 of 72 (30.6%). It named e.l.f. in only 5 of 72 (6.9%). Perplexity named e.l.f. in 18 of 72 (25%). Gemini named L'Oréal Paris in 35 of 72 (48.6%).

ChatGPT

72 ASKED | 72 RETURNED | 72 GROUNDED

Ulta Beauty	**41.7%**
Fenty Beauty	**31.9%**
Sephora	**30.6%**
L'Oréal Paris	**27.8%**
Dior Beauty	**26.4%**
Chanel Beauty	**23.6%**

Claude

72 ASKED | 72 RETURNED | 72 GROUNDED

L'Oréal Paris	**29.2%**
Maybelline	**29.2%**
Dior Beauty	**23.6%**
Chanel Beauty	**22.2%**
e.l.f.	**22.2%**
YSL Beauty	**18.1%**

Gemini

72 ASKED | 72 RETURNED | 72 GROUNDED

L'Oréal Paris	**48.6%**
Dior Beauty	**26.4%**
Estée Lauder	**26.4%**
NARS	**25%**
Fenty Beauty	**23.6%**
Chanel Beauty	**22.2%**

Perplexity

72 ASKED | 72 RETURNED | 72 GROUNDED

L'Oréal Paris	**33.3%**
Dior Beauty	**26.4%**
e.l.f.	**25%**
Maybelline	**23.6%**
YSL Beauty	**22.2%**
NARS	**20.8%**

05

GOOGLE AI OVERVIEWS

The fifth engine

Google AI Overviews were captured through 72 U.S. desktop searches and scored only where an overview appeared, so five-engine figures use 288 + 57 = 345 answers.



TRIGGER RATE

Google AI Overviews appeared on 57 of 72 searches (79.2%, CI 68.4–86.9%). The other 15 searches showed no overview. Within the 57 overviews, e.l.f. was named in 16 (28.1%), Sephora in 15 (26.3%), Maybelline in 13 (22.8%) and L'Oréal Paris in 12 (21.1%). Chanel Beauty was named in 6 of 57 (10.5%) and Estée Lauder in 0 of 57. allure.com was the most-cited source, with 29 citations (18.4%) and an appearance in 26 of 57 overviews (45.6%). youtube.com was next with 20 citations, then byrdie.com with 14.

FIVE-ENGINE RANK (FOUR-ENGINE RANK IN ARROWS)

1	L'Oréal Paris	32.5%	=
2	Dior Beauty	24.3%	=
3	Maybelline	22.3%	=
4	e.l.f.	20.3%	▲ 4
5	Chanel Beauty	20.0%	▼ 1
6	Fenty Beauty	20.0%	▼ 1
7	Ulta Beauty	20.0%	=
8	NARS	18.8%	▼ 2

LEADERS BY QUESTION

06 Who each question surfaces first

Six questions from the set. Each tile uses that question's own four-engine answers as the denominator.

Q01 · 12 ANSWERS

Fenty Beauty 100%

TIED WITH RARE BEAUTY, CHARLOTTE TILBURY

Rare Beauty	100%
Charlotte Tilbury	100%

AI Overview shown on 3 of 3 searches

Q02 · 12 ANSWERS

Fenty Beauty 91.7%

NARS	83.3%
Estée Lauder	75%

AI Overview shown on 2 of 3 searches

Q03 · 12 ANSWERS

L'Oréal Paris 100%

Maybelline	91.7%
Lancôme	83.3%

AI Overview shown on 1 of 3 searches

Q04 · 12 ANSWERS

Rare Beauty 100%

TIED WITH NARS

NARS	100%
e.l.f.	83.3%

AI Overview shown on 3 of 3 searches

Q05 · 12 ANSWERS

Dior Beauty 100%

TIED WITH CHANEL BEAUTY

Chanel Beauty	100%
YSL Beauty	83.3%

AI Overview shown on 2 of 3 searches

Q06 · 12 ANSWERS

Dior Beauty 100%

TIED WITH CHANEL BEAUTY

Chanel Beauty	100%
YSL Beauty	66.7%

AI Overview shown on 2 of 3 searches

07

WHO THE ENGINES CITE

Most-cited domains

The four engines produced 2,421 citations in total. whowhatwear.com was cited most often, with 134 citations (5.5%) across 121 answers. Next came allure.com (96), marieclaire.com (68), aol.com (68), youtube.com (66) and ulta.com (65). reddit.com was cited 41 times. Of 2,421 four-engine citations, general news and business press supplied 1,109 (45.8%), company and brand sites 522 (21.6%) and review and comparison publishers 439 (18.1%).

FOUR AI ENGINES · SHARE OF 288 GROUNDED ANSWERS

whowhatwear.com	**42%**
allure.com	**25.7%**
marieclaire.com	**21.9%**
ulta.com	**21.2%**
youtube.com	**20.5%**
goodhousekeeping.com	**16.3%**
aol.com	**15.6%**
vogue.com	**14.9%**
reddit.com	**13.2%**
byrdie.com	**12.5%**

GOOGLE AI OVERVIEWS · SHARE OF 57 OVERVIEWS

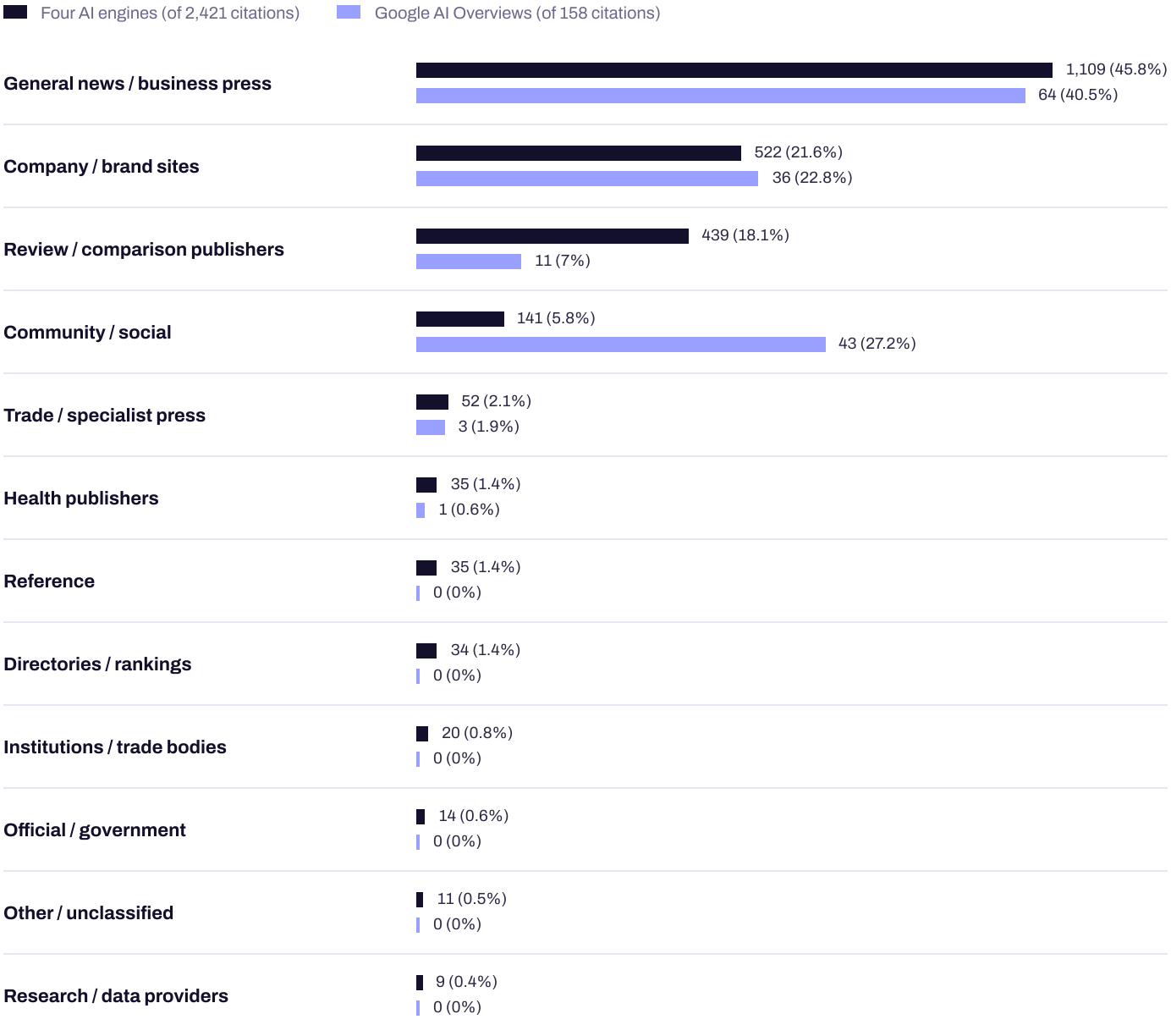
allure.com	**45.6%**
youtube.com	**29.8%**
byrdie.com	**24.6%**
reddit.com	**22.8%**
google.com	**17.5%**
nytimes.com	**15.8%**
amazon.com	**7%**
nordstrom.com	**7%**
tiktok.com	**5.3%**
glam.com	**5.3%**

07

WHO THE ENGINES CITE

Citation share by source type

Share of all citations by the type of site cited. Source types were reclassified on October 29, 2026. 'Company / brand sites' now covers only the official sites of companies, brands and schools; publishers, directories, trade bodies and other sites have their own types, and sites that could not be placed are 'Other / unclassified'.



07

WHAT THE DATA SUGGESTS

How can brands improve their AI visibility?

These steps follow from the measured results above. They describe what the engines cited in this study and are not a guarantee of results.

STEP	WHAT THIS STUDY MEASURED
Put your facts on your own domain.	Ulta Beauty's own domains were cited in 21.2% of grounded answers, Sephora's in 8.0% and L'Oréal Paris's in 2.4%. Ulta Beauty was named in only 20.1% of answers, yet its own domains were cited in 21.2%.
Keep your facts accurate on the sites engines cite.	The most-cited sites other than the tracked names' own were whowhatwear.com (in 42.0% of grounded answers), allure.com (25.7%), marieclaire.com (21.9%), youtube.com (20.5%) and goodhousekeeping.com (16.3%). General news and business press supplied 45.8% of citations and review and comparison publishers 18.1%.
Check each engine separately.	ChatGPT named Ulta Beauty in 41.7% of answers against 12.5% on Gemini. ChatGPT named Sephora in 30.6% of answers against 5.6% on Gemini.
Do not ignore video and community sites.	Community and social sites supplied 27.2% of Google AI Overview citations against 5.8% in the four chat engines. youtube.com was cited in 29.8% of overviews, reddit.com in 22.8% and tiktok.com in 5.3%.
Watch names outside the tracked list.	Maison Francis Kurkdjian (28), Jo Malone London (22), Creed (20), Tom Ford (19) and Neutrogena (18) were named often but were not tracked.
Re-run the same questions every month.	Compare counts and intervals, not ranks. The 24 questions are in the appendix.

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

08 Frequently asked questions

Q1 Which beauty brand do AI engines name most often?

L'Oréal Paris, named in 100 of 288 four-engine answers (34.7%, CI 29.5–40.4%). Dior Beauty was second at 74 of 288 (25.7%, CI 21–31%). The intervals overlap, so the two cannot be separated statistically.

Q2 Which brand is named first most often?

Chanel Beauty was the first brand named in 36 of 288 answers, with an average first position of 2.1. Most of these came from fragrance questions. For example, it was named first in 11 of 12 answers about the best women's perfume and in 11 of 12 about perfume brands for gifting.

Q3 How often do Google AI Overviews appear for beauty questions?

An overview appeared on 57 of 72 searches (79.2%, CI 68.4–86.9%). Within those 57 overviews, e.l.f. was named most often, in 16 (28.1%).

Q4 Which sources do the engines cite?

Across 2,421 four-engine citations, whowhatwear.com was cited most (134 citations, in 121 of 288 answers), followed by allure.com (96 citations). In AI Overviews, allure.com led with 29 citations and appeared in 26 of 57 overviews.

Q5 Do the engines cite beauty brands' own websites?

Rarely, apart from the retailers. ulta.com was cited in 61 of 288 grounded answers (21.2%) and sephora.com in 23 of 288 (8%). L'Oréal Paris's own domain was cited in 7 of 288 (2.4%), and most tracked brands were cited in 0 of 288.

Q6 Do the four engines agree?

Only in part. ChatGPT named Ulta Beauty in 30 of 72 answers, while each of the other engines named it in 9 or 10 of 72. Gemini named L'Oréal Paris in 35 of 72, against 20 to 24 of 72 on the other engines. Dior Beauty was steady at 17 to 19 of 72 on every engine.

METHODOLOGY

09 How this study was measured

24	×	3	×	4	=	288	+	72
questions		runs each		AI engines		answers		Google searches · 57 AI Overviews

24 questions, each asked 3 times on each engine, measured October 26, 2026. Market: United States, English. The destination site was not mentioned to any engine. Entities count as named when they appear in the answer text or the extracted entity list; products, imprints and research arms roll up to their parent.

ENGINE	MODEL IDS CALLED	ASKED	RETURNED	GROUNDED
ChatGPT	gpt-5-mini	72	72	72
Claude	claude-sonnet-5-5	72	72	72
Gemini	gemini-3.7-flash	72	72	72
Perplexity	sonar-pro	72	72	72
Google AI Overviews	DataForSEO Google SERP (live, advanced)	72	57 shown	57

Own-domain citations count a domain plus all its subdomains, with the same rule in every table.

METRIC DEFINITIONS

- Appearance rate: answers naming the entity ÷ answers returned, with Wilson 95% intervals.
- First mention: average order in which the entity first appears (1 = first).
- Own-domain citation: grounded answers citing the entity's domains ÷ grounded answers.
- Citation share: citations to the entity's domains ÷ all citations.

LIMITATIONS

- Measured on one day, October 26, 2026. Answers came from each engine's API (model IDs above); the consumer apps can answer differently.
- Only 28 tracked brands were scored. Untracked names that appeared often were not scored, including Maison Francis Kurkdjian (28), Jo Malone London (22), Creed (20), Tom Ford (19) and Neutrogena (18).
- Names are counted when they appear in an answer's text, so longer forms such as legal company names (for example "Meta Platforms, Inc." or "Ralph Lauren Corporation") count toward the brand.
- The source-type classification puts several magazine sites, including whowhatwear.com and marieclaire.com, under 'Company / brand sites'. That inflates the share for that type.
- AI Overview figures are based on only 57 overviews, so the estimates for individual brands are less precise than the four-engine figures.
- One question, "Sephora vs Ulta: where should I buy beauty products?", names two retailers, so their counts include up to 12 answers to it. The leading brands are the same without it.
- Intervals treat each answer as independent, so they understate uncertainty for the 24 repeated questions.
- Source types were reclassified on October 29, 2026: 'Company / brand sites' now means only official company, brand or school sites. Name counts did not change.

A

APPENDIX

The 24 questions

Questions marked "Core question" are the original study questions, asked word for word. The others are added neutral questions.

#	QUESTION	GROUP	SOURCE
01	What is the best makeup brand right now?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
02	What is the best foundation for olive skin?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
03	What is the best mascara for length?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
04	What is the best liquid blush?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
05	What is the best women's perfume?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
06	What is the best men's cologne?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
07	What is the best niche fragrance brand?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
08	What is the best shampoo for damaged hair?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
09	What is the best bond repair hair treatment?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
10	What is the best hair growth product?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
11	What is the best body lotion that smells good?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
12	Sephora vs Ulta: where should I buy beauty products?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
13	What is the best skincare brand for beginners?	Beauty Brands	CORE QUESTION
14	What is the best drugstore makeup brand?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
15	What is the best long-wear concealer?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
16	What is the best tinted moisturizer or skin tint?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
17	What is the best lipstick brand?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
18	What is the best perfume for everyday wear?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
19	Which perfume brands are best for gifting?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
20	What is the best shampoo for curly hair?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
21	What is the best dry shampoo?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
22	What is the best body wash?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
23	What are the best clean beauty brands?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION
24	What is the best sunscreen for the face?	Beauty Brands	ADDED QUESTION

5W

5W PUBLIC RELATIONS · RESEARCH

AI Visibility Index: Beauty Brands 2026

Measured October 26, 2026 across ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity and Google AI Overviews.

WEB
5wpr.com

RESEARCH
5wpr.com/research