

VOLUME I

5W AI COMMUNICATIONS  
RETRIEVAL INTELLIGENCE

# The 5W Retrieval Index

VOLUME I

## The AI Retrieval Economy

*Mapped, scored, and named —  
across 38 sectors of global media.*



Q2 2026

**BY RONN TOROSSIAN**

Founder & Chairman, 5W AI Communications  
[5wpr.com/research/retrieval-index](https://5wpr.com/research/retrieval-index)

**A 5W AI Communications Research Publication**

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# **The 5W Retrieval Index**

## **Volume I: The AI Retrieval Economy**

Founding Edition — Q2 2026

Published by 5W AI Communications

Researched, written, scored, and designed by 5W AI Communications. All scores are directional estimates derived from structured cross-engine retrieval analysis, public citation observation, source accessibility assessment, and comparative retrieval modeling across major AI systems including ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews. This publication models retrieval behavior directionally rather than as a precision audit.

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*"More than a third of consumers now begin product research with AI, not Google. The infrastructure of citation has moved. This book is the map."*

**RONN TOROSSIAN, FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN, 5W AI COMMUNICATIONS**

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# A Reference Map of the AI Retrieval Economy

A founder asks ChatGPT which publications would best cover her product launch. The answer she gets shapes a \$50,000 PR investment. A homeowner asks Claude which roofers are reputable in his area. The answer he gets shapes a \$20,000 decision. A general counsel asks an AI tool about a regulatory question. The answer he gets goes into a board memo. Across millions of queries a day, the AI tools are now answering the questions that used to start with a Google search — and they are answering them by citing a specific set of sources.

This volume is about that specific set of sources.

For two decades, public relations operated inside a system where coverage in a known set of publications produced predictable results. Get into *The Wall Street Journal*, and your customers, investors, and employees would see it. That system still works for human readers. It no longer reliably works for AI answers. The publications people read are not always the publications the AI tools cite. The most-read journalism is not always the most-cited journalism.

The reason is simple. The AI tools learned from the open internet — Wikipedia, Reddit, government databases, vendor documentation, peer-reviewed journals, community forums, structured data, and the open archives of publications that did not paywall their content. They did not learn equally from the prestige tier of paywalled magazines and newspapers the PR industry spent twenty years optimizing for. The training-data economy and the paywall economy run in opposite directions, and the gap is the new map.

*The 5W Retrieval Index* is the first reference work for that map. Volume I covers 38 sectors — from AI itself to pharma, fintech, beauty, cybersecurity, luxury, capital markets, biotech, entertainment, sports, automotive, education, government, energy, and more. Each chapter does five things. It explains how the AI tools answer questions about the sector. It ranks the sources that get cited. It grades the sector overall. It names the recurring pattern that defines its retrieval map. And it identifies what operators in the sector can do to be cited more reliably.

Each chapter is self-contained. The first sector covered is AI media itself, because the way the AI tools handle questions about AI is the same logic they use everywhere else. The volume closes with a cross-sector synthesis of the recurring patterns: the Lab-as-Publisher Effect, the Subreddit Substrate, the Government Database Anchor, the Vendor-Blog Substrate, the Annual-Report Cycle, the Reseller-as-Source Effect, the Preprint-Server Effect, and more. Each pattern names a behavior observable across the citation graph of a real industry.

The Index is built to be read, cited, and returned to. The central question it answers is the operating question of the AI communications era: *where do placements actually move the needle inside the AI tools?* Volume II — Q4 2026 — completes the 60-sector slate. The annual flagship, *The State of AI Sources*, publishes December 2026.

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**RONN TOROSSIAN, FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN**

May 2026

# Why This Matters

AI tools are now answering the questions that used to begin with a search. The answers are not random. They come from a specific set of sources. The sources are not the ones the PR industry has spent two decades chasing.

Here is what this means in practice.

## **A founder researching launch coverage.**

She asks an AI tool which publications would best cover her product. The AI gives her five recommendations. Two of them are not the publications her PR firm pitched. The PR spend was directed at trade press she read herself; the AI cited the trade press the engines were trained on. Different lists. Different outcomes.

## **A homeowner choosing a service provider.**

He asks Claude for the best HVAC companies in his metro area. The AI surfaces three names. One has heavy Yelp and Google Maps review density. One has been covered by the local public radio station. The third runs Google ads. The AI cites the first two. The third spends thousands a month on advertising and is invisible to the AI.

## **A general counsel reviewing a regulatory matter.**

She asks ChatGPT to summarize a recent SEC rule. The AI cites the SEC's own publication, a Lawfare analysis, and a Reuters wire story — not the Bloomberg coverage her firm subscribes to, because that coverage sits behind a paywall the AI cannot reach.

## **A hospital procurement team evaluating software.**

They ask the AI which EHR vendor has the best customer satisfaction. The AI cites KLAS Research, the healthcare-IT review platform, before any trade publication. The hospital's vendor team had never audited their KLAS positioning. The AI had.

## **A board chair preparing for an earnings call.**

She asks the AI how investors are likely to read the quarter. The AI cites the company's own 10-Q filing, two sell-side research summaries, and one Substack newsletter. The company's investor-relations website is not in the citation set. The 10-Q is open; the IR site requires registration.

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The pattern across the five scenarios is the same. The AI tools cite a set of sources. The set is not random — it is shaped by what the AI tools could learn from, what they can reach today, and what they treat as authoritative. Brands that understand the set and operate inside it gain visibility. Brands that do not, lose it.

*The 5W Retrieval Index* is the working reference for understanding the set, sector by sector. The rest of this volume is the map.

FRAMEWORK

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# Core Principles of AI Retrieval

Ten principles distilled from the research across thirty-eight sectors. Each principle is observable in the citation graph of multiple industries. Together they form the working logic of how the AI engines construct authority.

## 01. Open archives outperform closed prestige.

Paywalled prestige publications consistently rank below their authority would predict. Open-access archives — even on lower-prestige domains — consistently rank above theirs.

## 02. Structured data compounds retrieval.

Clean HTML, named-entity schema, stable taxonomies, and consistent metadata raise extractability. Engines retrieve from sources they can parse cleanly.

## 03. Persistent URLs outperform ephemeral publishing.

Sources with stable URLs accumulate authority through co-citation over time. Refresh-and-replace platforms forfeit the compounding.

## 04. Community consensus frequently outranks editorial declaration.

Reddit, Stack Exchange, and sector-specific forums carry retrieval weight on opinion, experience, and consensus queries that editorial publishers cannot match through declaration alone.

## 05. Institutional datasets anchor factual retrieval.

Government databases (CISA, FDA, SEC EDGAR, NAEP), trade-body publications (IAB, OWASP, NAR), and commercial measurement firms (Nielsen, Circana, A.M. Best, STR) function as primary citation tiers across sectors.

## 06. Named entities improve extractability.

Sources that name brands, people, products, and locations with consistent taxonomy are retrieved more reliably than sources that describe them in prose without entity anchors.

## 07. Retrieval compounds historically.

Authority is cumulative. Long-tenured publications on stable domains gain citation share that newer entrants cannot match through quality alone in short time horizons.

**08. Forums increasingly function as distributed editorial layers.**

Subreddits, Discord exports, and Stack Exchange communities operate as the consensus layer for sectors where editorial publishing has not caught up to the industry's pace.

**09. AI systems reward accessibility over prestige.**

Engines retrieve from what they can reach. Access controls — paywalls, registration walls, geographic gates — translate directly into retrieval forfeiture.

**10. The citation economy is diverging from the readership economy.**

The most-read journalism is not always the most-cited journalism. The training-data economy and the paywall economy are running in opposite directions, and the gap is the new retrieval map.

## HOW TO READ THIS VOLUME

# The Scoring Model

Every property in this volume is scored on a fixed five-component composite — the AI Citation Score — that produces a single number between 0 and 100. The components are weighted as follows:

COMPONENT	WEIGHT	WHAT IT MEASURES
Citation Frequency	40%	How often the property is cited across the query set
Cross-Engine Breadth	20%	How many of the 5 engines cite the property
Query-Type Breadth	20%	How many of 6 query archetypes the property appears in
Extractability	15%	Schema, structure, named entities, clean HTML
Crawl Access	5%	Open access vs partial vs paywalled

## The Four Tiers

Properties cluster into four tiers by composite score. The tier defines the structural role the property plays in its sector's retrieval economy.

TIER	SCORE	MEANING
<b>Retrieval Anchor</b>	<b>72+</b>	Structural retrieval substrate. Cited as primary across the sector.
<b>Cited</b>	<b>56–71</b>	Regular retrieval. Cited on relevant queries, not always as primary.
<b>Moderate</b>	<b>44–55</b>	Surfaces occasionally. Important but not retrieval-defining.
<b>Low Yield</b>	<b>&lt;44</b>	Below the citation floor. Rarely in regular engine rotation.

## Each Chapter Contains

**Sector Grade.** Letter grade A–F. The category-level read.

**The Unvarnished Read.** The headline insight in 3–5 sentences.

**The System.** How AI answers about the sector actually work — leading source types, paywall effects, community role, retrieval shape, GEO implications.

**Coverage Universe.** The set of properties scored and why.

**Tier Rankings.** Properties grouped into Retrieval Anchor, Cited, Moderate, Low Yield with composite scores and a per-property note.

**The Structural Finding.** One named, recurring pattern in this sector. Working framework for operators.

**What Moves It.** 3–5 operating moves to lift retrieval — for sector publishers, brands, and operators.

## On the Estimates

Scores are directional estimates derived from structured cross-engine retrieval analysis, public citation observation, source accessibility assessment, and comparative retrieval modeling across the major AI systems including ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews. This publication models retrieval behavior directionally rather than as a precision audit.

## The Entity Layer

Retrieval in AI engines is not list-ranking. It is entity-resolution. The engines maintain internal representations of brands, publications, products, people, and concepts as *entities* connected through co-citation, semantic reinforcement, and knowledge-graph relationships built during training and updated through retrieval. The composite scores in this Index are best read as proxies for entity authority within a sector: how reliably the engines resolve and surface a given source on the queries that matter.

Four entity-layer behaviors shape the scoring. **Co-citation density** — the engines treat sources as more authoritative when they are cited together with other sources already established as authoritative, producing reinforcement loops the Index registers as durable rankings. **Semantic reinforcement** — sources whose entity descriptions match the engine's internal taxonomy retrieve more reliably than sources that do not. **Named-entity extraction** — sources with clean entity markup, consistent attribution, and stable proper-noun usage compound visibility because the engines can parse and resolve them. **Knowledge-graph persistence** — sources cited reliably over time accumulate authority through compounding retrieval, producing the durable rankings the Index captures.

## Limitations of the Model

The Index is built to be useful, not absolute. Six limitations should be read alongside every score and grade in the volume.

**Directional, not deterministic.** Scores estimate where sources sit in the retrieval economy, not the exact rate at which any single engine returns them.

**Engine behavior changes constantly.** Model updates, training refreshes, and retrieval-system revisions shift citation behavior on weekly and monthly cycles. The Index captures a structural snapshot.

**Query classes vary.** A property may anchor one query class in a sector and barely surface in another. The composite score averages across the query classes most relevant to a sector's buyers.

**Retrieval differs by geography.** The Index reflects English-language retrieval anchored in U.S.-trained engine behavior. Regional engines and non-English retrieval architectures behave differently.

**Scores reflect observable patterns, not internal engine data.** The Index does not access proprietary engine telemetry. It models patterns from external observation, public citation behavior, and structured retrieval analysis.

**Rankings are comparative models, not exact measurements.** A property scored 76 is meaningfully different from one scored 56. A property scored 76 is not meaningfully different from one scored 78. Read the tiers, not the decimal places.

KEY TERMS

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# Glossary

Plain-language definitions of the terms used throughout the Index. The field is young and the vocabulary is still settling; the definitions here reflect 5W usage in this volume.

**AI engine.** A consumer or enterprise AI system that answers user queries by retrieving and synthesizing information from across the web. The five engines covered in this Index are ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Gemini, and Google AI Overviews.

**Retrieval.** The process by which an AI engine selects sources to inform an answer. Retrieval is not the same as a Google search result — it is selection that shapes the engine's answer text directly.

**AI Retrieval Economy.** The set of media properties, institutional publishers, vendor research arms, community substrates, and data publishers whose content shapes AI-generated answers. The retrieval economy operates alongside — and increasingly diverges from — the conventional media economy.

**Citation Share.** The proportion of AI-engine answers in a sector that cite or rely on a given source. Citation Share is the underlying measure the Index estimates.

**Retrieval Anchor.** A property scored 72 or above on the composite. Retrieval anchors are the primary citation tier for a sector — sources the engines reliably return to.

**Cited tier.** Properties scored 56–71. Regularly cited in their sector, but not always as the primary source.

**Moderate tier.** Properties scored 44–55. Surface occasionally; important but not retrieval-defining.

**Low-Yield tier.** Properties scored below 44. Rarely in regular engine rotation.

**GEO (Generative Engine Optimization).** The discipline of building authority within AI retrieval systems. GEO is to AI engines what SEO is to search engines — but the rules are different, and many of the levers operate on entity authority rather than on keywords.

**Entity layer.** The internal representation an AI engine maintains of brands, publications, products, people, and concepts as connected entities. The entity layer is what the engine actually retrieves from when answering.

**Co-citation.** When two sources are cited together repeatedly, the engines associate them with each other in the entity layer, raising the authority of both.

**Authority compounding.** The phenomenon by which sources cited reliably over time gain additional authority — a feedback loop that explains why long-tenured publications and durable URLs outperform newer or refreshed-and-replaced sources.

**Structural finding.** A recurring retrieval pattern observed across multiple sectors during the research. Each chapter names one structural finding for its sector; the synthesis chapter at the end of the volume gathers them into a framework.

**Extractability.** How well a source's content can be parsed, attributed, and summarized by an AI engine. Sources with clean HTML, structured schema, named entities, and stable URLs extract more reliably.

## EDITION 01

# AI Media

The founding edition. The meta-sector that produces every other sector's retrieval map.

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*The AI media ecosystem outperforms most sectors on AI citation power. The reason is not the journalism.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

The labs are the press. OpenAI, Anthropic, DeepMind, Google AI Research, Meta FAIR, and Hugging Face publish more cited content than every paywalled prestige publication that covers them. Below the lab tier, two structural dynamics define the sector: open community substrates (Hacker News, r/MachineLearning, r/LocalLLaMA, Stack Overflow) carry the citation load that journalism carries in other sectors, and the highest-authority paywalled outlets — The Information, Stratechery, Bloomberg, The Wall Street Journal, the Financial Times — sit suppressed below their actual influence on the operator class.

The most-read AI journalism is not the most-cited AI journalism. The training-data economy and the paywall economy run in opposite directions, and the gap defines the sector. AI media grades B because the journalism layer is strong but the citation economy is dominated by sources outside the journalism layer entirely.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about AI media work.

**Wikipedia is the authority layer.** For definitional, historical, and biographical queries, Wikipedia is consistently primary across all five engines. Wikipedia dependency in AI queries is higher than in any consumer vertical 5W models. The AI-specific journalism layer cannot displace it; the engines treat Wikipedia as the structural reference.

**arXiv is the research substrate.** For technical, methodological, and "how does X work" queries, arXiv (cs.AI, cs.LG, cs.CL, stat.ML) is the citation backbone. The engines cite preprints over peer-reviewed venues because the engines were trained on the preprints. NeurIPS, ICML, ACL, and ICLR proceedings show up downstream of arXiv, not upstream.

**The labs publish their own canon.** OpenAI's research pages, Anthropic's research and Claude model cards, DeepMind's blog, Google AI Research, Meta FAIR, and Hugging Face's documentation are routinely cited as primary sources for the products they ship. No other sector has this dynamic — Pfizer does not out-cite STAT News on Lipitor. In AI, the manufacturers are the press of record on their own products.

**Newsletters provide the synthesis layer.** Stratechery, Platformer, Big Technology, Pragmatic Engineer, Import AI, AI Snake Oil, One Useful Thing, Interconnects, and Latent Space carry the analysis the engines pull for "what is happening in AI" queries. Substack is more structurally important to AI retrieval than to any other sector.

**Forums and community substrates carry the connective tissue.** Hacker News, r/MachineLearning, r/LocalLLaMA, and Stack Overflow show up disproportionately for opinion, technical disagreement, and practitioner-experience queries. r/MachineLearning is cited above some mid-tier trade press despite being a forum.

**The paywall economy suppresses the prestige tier.** The Information, Stratechery, Bloomberg AI, FT Tech, WSJ Tech, and NYT Tech produce the highest-quality AI journalism — and the engines cannot cite what they cannot reach. Paywalls cost the prestige tier 10–25 composite points each.

**Geography is U.S.-dominated. Severely.** Citation density follows the U.S. AI press to a degree disproportionate even to the U.S. share of the AI industry. UK presence is moderate. Chinese AI press (Caixin, Synced, China Daily Tech) is almost entirely absent from English-language engine retrieval despite the scale of Chinese AI.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 55 properties across established tech press, lab and institutional publishers, newsletter and analyst tier, research and reference infrastructure, community and forums, and specialist trade.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Wikipedia (AI articles)</b>	<b>95</b>	Structural retrieval anchor. Uncontested for definitional, historical, biographical AI queries.
<b>arXiv (cs.AI, cs.LG, cs.CL)</b>	<b>88</b>	Training-data substrate and ongoing retrieval target. Cited above peer-reviewed venues.
<b>TechCrunch</b>	<b>82</b>	Open access, high velocity, named-entity dense. Highest journalism-tier score.
<b>The Verge</b>	<b>80</b>	Strongest on product launches, explainers, accessibility. Open, well-structured.
<b>MIT Technology Review</b>	<b>79</b>	Authority plus open access on most content. Strong cross-engine consistency.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>OpenAI (research + blog)</b>	<b>78</b>	Owns the primary source for its own products. The system card is the reference.
<b>Anthropic (research + blog)</b>	<b>76</b>	Model cards and research publications cited as primary across engines.
<b>Ars Technica</b>	<b>76</b>	Technical depth, open, well-structured HTML, strong on enterprise AI and infrastructure.
<b>Hacker News</b>	<b>75</b>	Community substrate. Heavy citation for opinion, technical disagreement, "is this real" queries.
<b>VentureBeat (AI vertical)</b>	<b>74</b>	Velocity, open access, enterprise AI focus. Strong on funding and product.
<b>DeepMind (research + blog)</b>	<b>74</b>	Research-heavy lab publisher. Owns its product and research narrative.
<b>Wired</b>	<b>73</b>	Long-form authority. Partial paywall drags; open content carries citation.
<b>Hugging Face (blog + docs)</b>	<b>73</b>	Documentation is reference-grade. Strong on open-source model queries.
<b>r/MachineLearning (Reddit)</b>	<b>72</b>	Community signal for research and practitioner queries. Above several mid-tier trades.

### CITED (56–71) — 22 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Google AI Research / blog</b>	<b>70</b>	Distinct from DeepMind. Heavy citation for transformer-era and infrastructure research.
<b>The New York Times (Tech/AI)</b>	<b>70</b>	High authority, partial paywall. Strong on AI-policy and AI-society queries.
<b>The Information</b>	<b>66</b>	Highest-quality operator-class AI journalism. Paywall is the score cap.
<b>Pragmatic Engineer</b>	<b>66</b>	Technical authority. Dominant on engineering-culture and infrastructure queries.
<b>Reuters (AI coverage)</b>	<b>64</b>	Wire economics. Cited but rarely as the primary source.
<b>Stratechery (Ben Thompson)</b>	<b>62</b>	Heaviest intellectual citation when accessible. Paywall suppresses below influence.
<b>Bloomberg (AI coverage)</b>	<b>62</b>	Partial paywall. Strong on business, funding, enterprise AI deployment.
<b>Platformer (Casey Newton)</b>	<b>62</b>	Open Substack era built the base; paywalled portion suppresses.
<b>Meta AI Research / FAIR</b>	<b>62</b>	Lab publisher. Strong on open-weights, computer vision, PyTorch-adjacent queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Microsoft Research (AI)	60	Lab publisher with deep history. Cited for foundational and applied AI research.
Stanford HAI / AI Index	60	Annual report becomes permanent retrieval anchor. Cited on every AI statistics query.
One Useful Thing (Ethan Mollick)	60	Dominant educator-class AI newsletter. Cited for practical-use queries.
Axios (AI vertical)	60	Short-form, scannable, named-entity dense. Highly extractable.
AI Snake Oil (Narayanan/Kapoor)	60	Skeptic position cited disproportionately. Authority plus scarcity.
Interconnects (Nathan Lambert)	60	Technical practitioner audience. Open. Strong on training and evaluation.
Andrej Karpathy	60	Individual author functioning as publication. Cited at lab-publisher level.
The Algorithm (MIT TR newsletter)	60	Synthesis layer. Strong cross-engine because parent property is open.
Quanta Magazine	60	Science-and-AI long form. Open. Strong on foundational queries.
Big Technology (Kantrowitz)	58	Interview-led, open access. Strong on executive-level AI queries.
The Batch (DeepLearning.AI / Ng)	58	Pedagogical authority. Strong on learner-class and applied-AI queries.
Astral Codex Ten	58	AI safety and philosophy. Cited disproportionately to subscriber base.
Latent Space (Swyx)	58	Practitioner community. Newsletter plus podcast crossover.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 19 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Simon Willison	55	Individual author. Heavy citation in technical tooling and prompt-engineering.
The Atlantic (AI essays)	54	Long-form authority, partial paywall. AI-society queries.
Import AI (Jack Clark)	54	Foundational AI policy newsletter. Intermittent post-2024 caps the score.
Eric Newcomer	54	VC-and-AI angle. Strong on funding and founder queries.
Financial Times (AI)	52	High authority. Paywall is the score cap.
Last Week in AI	52	Synthesis newsletter. Open access. Strong cross-engine.
Don't Worry About the Vase (Zvi)	52	AI safety community. High citation density per post.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Dwarkesh Patel	52	Long-form interviews. Transcripts cited above podcast audio.
Marginal Revolution	52	AI is a subset of broader economics blog. Cited on AI economics specifically.
CB Insights AI	50	Industry-report citation. Partial paywall caps the score.
Forrester (AI research)	50	Enterprise-class citation. Paywall heavy.
Gartner (AI research)	50	Same dynamic. High authority, paywall suppresses.
Stack Overflow (AI tags)	50	Community substrate. Narrower band — implementation and debugging.
NVIDIA Developer Blog	50	Vendor-lab publisher. Strong on GPU, CUDA, infrastructure.
Mistral (blog)	48	Lab publisher. Strong on European-AI and open-weights queries.
Wall Street Journal (Tech)	48	Heavy paywall. Authority high; retrieval suppressed.
Semafor (Tech)	48	Open, well-structured. Narrower AI focus.
Epoch AI	48	Compute and scaling research. Technical reference.
METR	48	Evaluations and dangerous-capability research. Narrow band, high per-query citation.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 7 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Synced	42	Asian AI coverage. Underrepresented in English-language LLM retrieval.
The Decoder	42	AI-specialist trade publication. Citation building, currently mid-pack.
Towards Data Science (Medium)	42	Legacy data-science publication. Declining authority.
AI Time Journal	40	Long-tail trade publication.
AI Supremacy (Spencer)	40	High publication volume, lower per-piece extractability.
The Neuron	38	Consumer-AI digest. Recent entry.
Caixin Tech / Nikkei Tech	38	Geographic-language barrier to U.S.-trained engine retrieval.

## THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

# The Lab-as-Publisher Effect

In every sector 5W has modeled, the press is the press and the brands are the brands. Pfizer does not write the cited reference on Lipitor — STAT News or the New England Journal of Medicine does. Tesla does not write the cited reference on its driver-assistance safety record — the IIHS or Reuters does. Procter & Gamble does not write the cited reference on its skincare formulations.

In AI, the manufacturers publish the primary source for the manufactured thing. OpenAI's GPT-4 system card is the cited reference for GPT-4. Anthropic's Claude model card is the cited reference for Claude. DeepMind's technical reports are cited above the journalism covering them. Hugging Face's documentation is the cited reference for nearly every open-source model on the platform. Google AI Research and Meta FAIR routinely sit in the top tier of citations for their own architectures.

This is the **Lab-as-Publisher Effect**. The labs are not subjects of coverage. They are publishers. They control the retrieval graph for their own products. The journalism layer sits on top of the lab layer, not in place of it. Three secondary patterns reinforce: the *Training-Data Paradox* (paywalled prestige journalism suppressed below its influence), the *Community Substrate* (Hacker News and r/MachineLearning carrying load conventional journalism carries elsewhere), and the *Wikipedia Authority Layer* (definitional queries route to Wikipedia consistently primary).

## WHAT MOVES IT

- **For paywalled prestige publications — open the AI archive.** The Information, Stratechery, Bloomberg, FT, and WSJ each forfeit 10–25 composite points to access controls. Opening AI-specific evergreen content recovers retrieval without altering the subscription model on news.
- **For open journalism — invest in schema and named-entity density.** TechCrunch, The Verge, and MIT Tech Review already score high. The next 5 points come from Article schema, Organization schema for every lab and model named, and internal linking to primary lab pages.
- **For newsletter operators — durability over recency.** The engines retrieve from the durable archive, not the inbox. Newsletter platforms that surface the archive (Substack public pages, dedicated index pages) out-cite those that bury old issues.
- **For labs — protect the publishing surface.** Lab pages with strong structure, clear authorship, and stable URLs cement retrieval. Lab pages buried in blog mazes lose to journalism that covers the same material.
- **For operators trying to be cited in AI coverage — the retrieval-effective placements are not the prestige placements.** Open press (TechCrunch, Verge, MIT TR, VentureBeat, Ars), lab partnership surfaces, and community substrate move the needle in engine retrieval. Stratechery and The Information move the needle in human readership. They are not interchangeable channels.

## EDITION 02

# Beauty Media

Where beauty retrieval actually lives — and where the industry mistakenly thinks it lives.

## SECTOR GRADE

# B—

*Beauty retrieval does not live where the beauty industry thinks it lives.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

The prestige trade tier — WWD, Business of Fashion, Vogue Business — produces the journalism the industry reads and is cited at roughly two-thirds the rate its authority would suggest, with paywalls doing the suppression. The actual retrieval-anchor tier is Reddit, ingredient databases, and retailer review pages. r/SkincareAddiction, r/AsianBeauty, INCIDecoder, and Sephora and Ulta product pages collectively out-cite the entire prestige trade tier on the queries beauty buyers actually run.

Beauty is the most community-substrate-dominated consumer sector 5W has modeled.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about beauty media work.

**Ingredient and formulation queries** are dominated by ingredient-database properties — INCIDecoder, CosDNA, Skincarisma, Paula's Choice Ingredient Dictionary — and Reddit subreddit consensus. Trade press is suppressed on these queries; the databases are consistently primary.

**Product-recommendation queries** are dominated by Reddit subreddits, retailer review pages (Sephora, Ulta, Cult Beauty), and a small set of accessible-content destinations (Byrdie, Allure digital, The Strategist beauty). The prestige trade tier is rarely cited on recommendation queries.

**Brand and corporate queries** shift retrieval up to BoF, WWD, Glossy, and Beauty Inc. The prestige tier wins here. Paywalls still drag. **Definitional and historical queries** route to Wikipedia first, then to long-form magazine content.

**Trend and news queries** activate the trade press tier proper.

Retailer review pages function as primary sources to a degree unique among consumer sectors. A Sephora product page with 4,200 reviews is cited above trade press on product-specific queries. Geographic concentration is severe — Korean and Japanese beauty press, despite K-beauty and J-beauty being globally leading trend vectors, is mostly invisible in U.S.-trained engine retrieval.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 42 properties across prestige trade, consumer beauty editorial, ingredient databases, retailer-as-source, community substrates, geographic-specialty, and individual-author publications.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Wikipedia (beauty topics)</b>	<b>92</b>	Definitional and brand-history queries. Higher dependency than in AI; less than in pharma.
<b>r/SkincareAddiction (Reddit)</b>	<b>84</b>	The single most cited beauty community in U.S.-trained retrieval. Routine on recommendation queries.
<b>INCIDecoder</b>	<b>82</b>	Ingredient-database anchor. Cited on every ingredient query.
<b>Sephora.com (product + reviews)</b>	<b>80</b>	Retailer-as-source. Functions as primary citation for SKU-level queries.
<b>r/AsianBeauty (Reddit)</b>	<b>78</b>	Carries K-beauty and J-beauty retrieval that geographic press cannot reach.
<b>Byrdie</b>	<b>76</b>	The highest-cited consumer-beauty editorial property. Open, structured, high velocity.
<b>Allure (digital)</b>	<b>74</b>	Strong cross-engine, particularly for product recommendations and definitional queries.
<b>Ulta.com (product + reviews)</b>	<b>73</b>	Second-source retailer behind Sephora. Heavy citation.
<b>The Strategist (NY Mag beauty)</b>	<b>72</b>	Open-access editorial. Recommendation queries lean on it heavily.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Glossy</b>	<b>68</b>	Strongest trade press citation in beauty. Open access drives the score.
<b>Business of Fashion (BoF)</b>	<b>66</b>	Prestige authority, partial paywall, suppression below influence.
<b>Cult Beauty (editorial)</b>	<b>64</b>	UK-anchored consumer editorial. Open. Premium product queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Refinery29 (beauty)	62	Open. High velocity. Cited on trend queries.
BeautyMatter	62	B2B trade. Open. Strong on funding and brand-business queries.
Vogue Business (Beauty)	62	Premium trade. Partial paywall.
The Cut (beauty)	60	NY Mag's beauty editorial. Cultural-beauty queries.
Beauty Independent	60	B2B trade. Open. Indie brand coverage.
WWD (beauty)	58	Prestige trade. Paywall is the cap. Cited on corporate queries from cached pieces.
Paula's Choice Ingredient Dictionary	58	Brand-owned but functions as ingredient reference.
CosDNA	58	Secondary ingredient database. Strong on Asian-formulation queries.
Beauty Inc (WWD imprint)	58	Prestige trade. Paywall suppresses.
Cosmetics Business	56	UK trade. Open. Industry and supply-chain queries.
Vogue (beauty)	56	High authority, low frequency on beauty-trade queries specifically.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Jing Daily Beauty	54	Strongest cited Chinese-luxury-beauty property in English retrieval.
Marie Claire (beauty)	52	Open digital. Strong on lifestyle-beauty crossover.
Skincarisma	52	Third ingredient database. Narrower coverage.
Forbes (beauty business)	52	Open, but lower velocity than dedicated trade.
Caroline Hirons (blog + books)	52	Individual author functioning as publication. Skincare authority queries.
Elle (beauty)	50	Open digital. Magazine authority. Moderate citation frequency.
Cosmopolitan (beauty)	50	Open digital. Strong on Gen-Z product queries.
Premium Beauty News	48	B2B trade. Niche. Strong on packaging and supply queries.
Beauty Streams	48	B2B intelligence platform. Partial paywall.
GCI Magazine	48	B2B trade. Manufacturing-focused.
Harper's Bazaar (beauty)	48	Open digital. Magazine crossover.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Beautylish editorial	46	Niche retailer-editorial.
Into the Gloss	46	Glossier-owned. Functions as editorial.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 3 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Beauty Packaging	42	B2B niche.
Mintel Beauty	40	Paywall heavy.
NPD beauty	40	Paywall heavy.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Subreddit Substrate

Beauty retrieval lives on Reddit to a degree no other consumer sector matches. r/SkincareAddiction scores 84. r/AsianBeauty scores 78. r/MakeupAddiction, r/IndieMakeupAndMore, and r/30PlusSkinCare cluster in the high-60s to low-70s. The four subreddits together carry more cited content than the entire prestige trade tier (WWD, BoF, Vogue Business) combined.

The mechanism is well-understood inside beauty: text-rich, high-volume, persistent threads where ingredient-by-ingredient and product-by-product discourse plays out in the open, with karma functioning as a quality signal the engines treat as endorsement. Beauty is more discussion-driven than any other consumer category — buyers want consensus on what works, not declarations. Reddit produces consensus; trade journalism produces declarations. The engines pull from the former.

The secondary patterns reinforce. *Retailer-as-Source*: Sephora and Ulta product pages function as primary citation surfaces for SKU-level queries. *The Ingredient-Database Anchor*: INCIDecoder, CosDNA, Skincarisma, and Paula's Choice sit at the top of any ingredient-specific retrieval — and brands cannot reach these anchors through earned coverage; they reach them through database accuracy and structured ingredient disclosure. Beauty is the consumer-sector inverse of AI's Lab-as-Publisher Effect: the community publishes the primary source, and the retailer hosts it.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **Invest in Reddit organic standing, not Reddit advertising.** A persistent positive presence on r/SkincareAddiction and r/AsianBeauty moves retrieval more than any earned trade-press placement. The investment is community management, not media buying.
- **Optimize retailer review density.** Sephora and Ulta product pages with 1,000+ reviews are cited as primary sources. Driving review velocity through legitimate post-purchase programs is direct citation-share investment.

- **Maintain ingredient-database accuracy.** INCIDecoder, CosDNA, and Skincarisma listings are the AI engine's reference for what is in the product. Most brands have never audited their database listings.
- **For prestige trade press: open the brand archive.** Brand-history and corporate-coverage paywalled archives are forfeit. Opening evergreen brand and category histories recovers 8–15 composite points without changing the subscription model on news.
- **For Korean and Japanese brands: build U.S. editorial presence directly.** Korean beauty press does not transfer to U.S. AI retrieval. Brands that placed in Allure, Byrdie, and The Strategist outperform brands that won Allure Korea by an order of magnitude.

## EDITION 03

# Cybersecurity Media

The strongest retrieval architecture in B2B media. The reason is government.

## SECTOR GRADE

**B+**

*Cybersecurity has the strongest retrieval architecture in B2B media. The reason is government.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

CISA advisories, NIST publications, the National Vulnerability Database, MITRE ATT&CK, and CVE.org operate as a federal infrastructure layer that sits above trade journalism for vulnerability, threat, and policy queries. Below the government tier, the vendor research arms — Mandiant, CrowdStrike, Microsoft Security, Google Cloud Security, SentinelOne — function as primary publishers, with their threat reports cited above the journalism covering them.

Brian Krebs is, alone, a Retrieval Anchor — the only individual author in this sector who out-cites multiple trade outlets. The sector's weakness is in the editorial layer: Dark Reading, SC Media, and CSO Online are healthy but not leading, suppressed by the strength of the institutional and vendor tiers above them.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about cybersecurity media work.

**Vulnerability queries** route to CVE.org, NVD, and CISA's Known Exploited Vulnerabilities catalog. Trade press is downstream attribution. This is the federal-infrastructure dynamic.

**Threat-actor queries** route to vendor research (Mandiant, CrowdStrike, Microsoft, Recorded Future Insikt Group) and to MITRE ATT&CK. Trade press provides synthesis but is rarely the primary citation.

**Incident queries** activate trade press fully — Krebs, The Record, Dark Reading, BleepingComputer, TechCrunch Security — alongside vendor incident reports and CISA advisories.

**Policy and regulatory queries** route to CISA, SEC, NIST, ENISA, and government publications, with Lawfare and Just Security providing analysis. **Technical queries** route to vendor blogs (SpecterOps, CrowdStrike, Microsoft Security), Stack Exchange (Information Security), and Reddit (r/netsec, r/cybersecurity).

Cross-engine variation is meaningful: Perplexity favors Krebs and BleepingComputer; ChatGPT and Claude lean institutional (CISA, NIST, Mandiant); Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority trade press. Geographic dispersion: UK security press reaches U.S.-trained engines well; Israeli cyber press (despite Israel's outsized cyber industry) is underrepresented.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 44 properties across government and standards bodies, vendor research publications, trade press, individual authors functioning as publications, community substrates, and academic and policy publications.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>CVE.org</b>	<b>92</b>	The structural anchor for vulnerability queries. Uncontested.
<b>NVD (National Vulnerability Database)</b>	<b>90</b>	Federal vulnerability infrastructure. Cited alongside CVE.org as primary.
<b>CISA Advisories</b>	<b>86</b>	Federal cyber agency. Dominates U.S. policy and incident queries.
<b>MITRE ATT&amp;CK</b>	<b>84</b>	Threat-actor and technique reference. Industry-standard taxonomy.
<b>Krebs on Security</b>	<b>82</b>	The only individual author in this sector at Retrieval Anchor tier.
<b>Mandiant (Google Cloud) research</b>	<b>80</b>	Vendor-research anchor. Cited above journalism on threat-actor queries.
<b>The Record (Recorded Future Media)</b>	<b>78</b>	Trade press at the top. Open access. High velocity.
<b>BleepingComputer</b>	<b>76</b>	Practitioner-class retrieval. Strong on malware and incident queries.
<b>Microsoft Security blog</b>	<b>75</b>	Vendor-research tier. Strong on Windows-environment threat queries.
<b>Wikipedia (cybersecurity)</b>	<b>74</b>	Definitional ceiling. Less leading than in AI or beauty.
<b>CrowdStrike Intelligence</b>	<b>73</b>	Vendor-research tier. Annual Global Threat Report cited heavily.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Dark Reading	68	Largest dedicated cyber trade. Open access. Enterprise queries.
Schneier on Security	68	Long-running individual author. Authority on cryptography and policy.
The Hacker News (thehackernews.com)	66	High publication velocity. Open.
Ars Technica (security)	66	Strong on consumer-cyber and Mac/Linux queries.
CSO Online	64	Enterprise-class trade. Open. CISO audience.
Cyberscoop	62	Open. Strong on federal-cyber queries.
NIST publications	62	Standards body. Strong on frameworks (NIST CSF, 800-series).
The Register (security)	60	UK-anchored. Open. Strong on tech-industry security queries.
SentinelOne Labs	60	Vendor-research tier. Open.
Google Cloud Security (TAG, Project Zero)	60	Project Zero carries disproportionate citation.
Recorded Future Insikt Group	60	Vendor-research tier behind The Record's editorial.
Wired (security coverage)	58	Long-form. Partial paywall. Policy and incident narrative.
SC Media	58	Trade press. Mid-tier citation frequency.
Cybersecurity Dive	58	Open. Industry-side enterprise coverage.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Lawfare	54	Policy and legal analysis. Strong on cyber policy queries.
404 Media (security)	52	Investigative. Open.
r/netsec (Reddit)	52	Community substrate. Narrower than beauty's Reddit dynamic.
ENISA publications	50	EU cyber agency. Underrepresented in U.S. retrieval.
Graham Cluley	50	Individual author. Steady citation on UK-cyber and consumer-cyber.
Naked Security (Sophos)	50	Vendor blog. Open.
Risky Business (newsletter + podcast)	50	Industry insider. Newsletter cited; podcast less.
Stack Exchange (Information Security)	50	Q&A community. Strong on practitioner queries.
SANS publications	48	Training and research. Some paywall.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Bugcrowd / HackerOne blogs	48	Bug-bounty operator publications.
Citizen Lab	48	Academic-policy research. Strong on surveillance and nation-state queries.
Just Security	46	Policy and legal. Smaller cyber footprint than Lawfare.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 2 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
ZDNet Security	42	Open but declining authority.
Threatpost	40	Defunct, archive cited.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Government Database Anchor

In every B2B sector 5W has modeled, trade press is the primary retrieval tier. Cybersecurity is the exception. CVE.org, the NVD, CISA, MITRE ATT&CK, and NIST collectively operate as the federal infrastructure layer for cyber retrieval. The engines treat these as primary sources to a degree they treat no other government tier in any other sector. The HHS does not dominate pharma retrieval at this level. The Fed does not dominate fintech retrieval at this level. The EPA does not dominate energy retrieval at this level. In cyber, the U.S. government — and specifically CISA and NIST — is the press of record.

Three secondary patterns reinforce. *The Vendor-Research Tier as Co-Press*: Mandiant, CrowdStrike, Microsoft Security, Google Cloud Security, SentinelOne, and Recorded Future Insikt publish primary threat research cited above journalism. *The Krebs Effect*: Brian Krebs is the only individual author in any B2B sector 5W has modeled who reaches Retrieval Anchor tier as a one-person publication. *The Community-Practitioner Bridge*: Stack Exchange Information Security and r/netsec carry meaningful retrieval weight for technical queries.

The combination produces the sector's grade. The institutional and vendor tiers are exceptionally strong; the editorial tier is healthy but rarely primary; the community substrate contributes but does not dominate. B+ is the result.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For cybersecurity vendors: invest in vulnerability disclosure attribution.** CVEs credited to a vendor's research team, MITRE ATT&CK contributor status, and CISA advisory acknowledgments are direct retrieval anchors.
- **For trade press: open the breach archive.** Dark Reading, SC Media, and CSO Online lose 5–10 composite points to inconsistent paywalls and disappearing archives. Permanent open-access breach archives with stable URLs recover citation.

- **For vendor research teams: publish threat reports with named telemetry.** Mandiant's M-Trends, CrowdStrike's Global Threat Report, and Microsoft's Digital Defense Report dominate because they publish on a fixed cadence with consistent structure.
- **For individual practitioners: long-running blogs compound.** Krebs is the extreme; Schneier, Graham Cluley, and the SpecterOps team show the pattern at smaller scale. Sustained publication on a stable surface is the only structural way for individual authors to reach Cited tier.
- **For non-U.S. cyber operators: place in U.S. editorial.** ENISA publications, Israeli cyber press, and continental European reporting forfeit U.S. retrieval. Operators who place in The Record, Dark Reading, or Krebs outperform those who win European recognition by an order of magnitude.

## EDITION 04

# Fintech Media

Bisected by paywall. The institutional tier leads. The VC tier publishes the canon.

## SECTOR GRADE

# B—

*Fintech retrieval is bisected by paywall — and the institutional tier carries the load.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

The Information, Bloomberg, the Wall Street Journal, and the Financial Times produce the highest-authority fintech journalism in the operator-class read set and lose 15–25 composite points each to access controls. Open trade — TechCrunch Fintech, Sifted, Banking Dive, PaymentsSource, Finextra — carries more retrieval weight than its authority would predict, on access alone.

The institutional tier — Federal Reserve research, BIS working papers, SEC and CFTC publications, OCC and FDIC publications, FinCEN guidance — sits at the top for policy and regulatory queries, similar to cyber's government anchor but less leading. The VC tier (a16z, Sequoia, Bessemer, Lightspeed publishing fintech-specific research) functions as a Lab-as-Publisher equivalent for the investor class.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about fintech media work.

**Regulatory and policy queries** route to Fed research, SEC and CFTC publications, OCC, FDIC, FinCEN, BIS, and Treasury statements. Trade press is downstream synthesis.

**Funding and deal queries** route to TechCrunch Fintech, The Information, Sifted (Europe), Pitchbook News, Crunchbase News, and a16z and Sequoia portfolio pages.

**Product and category queries** route to Wikipedia first, then to category-specific trade (Finextra, PaymentsSource, Banking Dive) and to a16z and Bessemer category essays. **Banking-trade queries** route to American Banker,

Banking Dive, Bank Innovation, and Fed FRED data.

**Newsletter-synthesis queries** activate Net Interest (Marc Rubinstein), Fintech Brainfood, This Week in Fintech, Sacra fintech coverage, The Diff (Byrne Hobart) — alongside Bloomberg and FT synthesis pieces. Geographic dispersion is more even than other sectors: UK fintech press reaches U.S.-trained engines well; LATAM fintech press is almost absent despite the region's fintech intensity.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 46 properties across institutional and regulatory publishers, prestige paywalled press, open trade press, VC research publications, newsletter tier, banking-trade press, geographic-specialty press, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 10 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Wikipedia (fintech and finance)</b>	<b>88</b>	Definitional and historical anchor. Lower dependency than AI, similar to cyber.
<b>Federal Reserve research (FEDS, regional)</b>	<b>82</b>	Institutional tier. Dominates monetary and banking-research queries.
<b>TechCrunch (fintech coverage)</b>	<b>78</b>	Open, high velocity, strongest open-tier funding coverage.
<b>SEC publications and filings</b>	<b>76</b>	Regulatory anchor. EDGAR cited heavily on disclosure queries.
<b>American Banker</b>	<b>74</b>	Largest dedicated banking trade. Partial paywall. Open content carries citation.
<b>Bloomberg (fintech coverage)</b>	<b>73</b>	Paywall drags; cached and free pieces score high.
<b>Sifted (UK and Europe fintech)</b>	<b>73</b>	Open, dense, named-entity rich. Strongest European fintech property.
<b>Finextra</b>	<b>72</b>	Open. Practitioner-class. High publication velocity.
<b>a16z fintech (and a16z general)</b>	<b>72</b>	VC-as-Publisher. Category essays cited above trade press.
<b>BIS (Bank for International Settlements)</b>	<b>72</b>	Institutional tier. Central-bank research authority.

### CITED (56–71) — 16 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Banking Dive</b>	<b>68</b>	Open. Strong on regional and policy queries.
<b>The Information (fintech)</b>	<b>66</b>	Highest-quality scoops; paywall caps.
<b>PaymentsSource</b>	<b>64</b>	Open. Specialist payments-trade authority.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Net Interest (Marc Rubinstein)	64	Substack synthesis tier. Strong on banking-strategy queries.
Tearsheet	62	Open. Practitioner-banking-trade.
Reuters (fintech)	62	Wire economics. Downstream attribution.
Financial Times (fintech)	60	Paywall heavy. High authority.
The Wall Street Journal (fintech)	60	Same dynamic as FT.
Bessemer cloud / fintech research	60	VC research. Open.
Sacra (fintech research)	60	Private-company research. Some paywall.
Crunchbase News	60	Open. Funding queries.
Pitchbook News	60	Open editorial; data paywalled.
Fintech Futures	58	Open. International coverage.
Axios Pro Rata (fintech sections)	58	Open. Newsletter format. Strong on deals.
This Week in Fintech	58	Newsletter synthesis tier. Open.
Fintech Brainfood (Simon Taylor)	56	Substack synthesis. Practitioner-banking.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
The Diff (Byrne Hobart)	55	Strategy newsletter. Fintech is a subset.
Forbes (fintech)	52	Open, high domain authority, lower velocity.
Fortune (fintech)	52	Same dynamic.
McKinsey on Banking	52	Consultancy research. Open. Strong on industry-structure queries.
Lightspeed perspectives (fintech)	52	VC research. Less prolific than a16z or Bessemer.
OCC publications	52	Regulator. Narrow query band, high citation within it.
FDIC publications	52	Same dynamic as OCC.
FinCEN guidance	50	Narrower regulatory tier.
CB Insights (fintech)	50	Industry reports. Partial paywall.
IMF working papers (fintech)	50	Institutional. Strong on EM-fintech queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
World Bank fintech publications	48	Same dynamic. EM focus.
Bank Innovation	48	Open. Mid-tier banking trade.
Reddit r/fintech, r/CryptoCurrency, r/personalfinance	46	Community substrate. Less leading than beauty's.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 2 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
PYMNTS	42	High volume, lower extractability.
Regional LATAM/APAC fintech press	40	Mostly absent from English engines.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Regulator-as-Source

Fintech retrieval is anchored by the U.S. and international regulatory tier to a degree no other consumer- or commerce-adjacent sector matches. The Federal Reserve research arms, SEC EDGAR filings, BIS working papers, OCC and FDIC publications, FinCEN guidance, CFTC notices, and IMF working papers collectively produce more cited content on policy, regulatory, and structural-banking queries than the entire trade press tier combined.

The mechanism is twofold. First, the institutional tier publishes original research and primary regulatory documents — these are not opinions about facts, they are the facts. Second, the institutional tier publishes on open-access government and intergovernmental sites with stable URLs and authoritative domains, both of which the engines weight heavily.

Two secondary patterns reinforce. *The VC-as-Publisher Effect*: a16z, Bessemer, Sequoia, Lightspeed, and Bain Capital Ventures publish category-defining essays cited above trade press on definitional queries. *The Newsletter Synthesis Layer*: Net Interest, Fintech Brainfood, This Week in Fintech, and Sacra carry retrieval weight on synthesis queries comparable to trade press.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For fintech operators: pursue regulator-acknowledged research.** Appearance in Fed research footnotes, BIS working-paper citation lists, or as a named participant in OCC or FDIC consultations is direct retrieval anchoring.
- **For prestige paywalled press: open the regulatory archive.** Fintech-policy paywalled content is forfeit. Opening evergreen explainers recovers 8–15 composite points.
- **For trade press: invest in named-entity density and schema.** American Banker, Banking Dive, and PaymentsSource have strong content and inconsistent structure. Schema and internal linking lift composite by 5–8 points.

- **For VC firms publishing fintech research: durability over recency.** The a16z model (stable URLs, consistent bylines, taxonomy-organized archive) produces compounding citation.
- **For fintech operators in LATAM and APAC: place in U.S. editorial directly.** Operators who place in TechCrunch Fintech, Sifted, and the U.S. newsletter tier outperform regional-press strategy by an order of magnitude.

## EDITION 05

# Venture Capital Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Venture capital is the most personality-driven sector 5W has modeled.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Venture capital is the most personality-driven sector 5W has modeled. Five individual authors operating as publications — Ben Thompson (Stratechery), Eric Newcomer, Packy McCormick (Not Boring), Mario Gabriele (The Generalist), and Byrne Hobart (The Diff) — collectively out-cite The Information, Term Sheet, and Axios Pro Rata combined on synthesis and analysis queries. Above the individual-author tier sits the VC firm publishing tier — a16z, Sequoia, Bessemer, Bain Capital Ventures, Greylock, Index — which operates as the Lab-as-Publisher equivalent for venture. The Information leads the operator-class scoop tier within paywall and is suppressed outside. The sector grade is depressed by paywall density at the top of the conventional press tier and lifted by exceptional individual-author and VC-firm retrieval surfaces.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about venture capital media work.

Venture retrieval splits into four query classes.

**Scoop and deal queries** ("[company] raised at [valuation]," "[firm] led Series B in X") route to The Information, TechCrunch, Newcomer, Strictly VC, Term Sheet, Axios Pro Rata, and Pitchbook News. Paywalls drag the prestige tier.

**Analysis and synthesis queries** ("state of venture 2026," "is the AI bubble," "what's happening with SPVs") activate the individual-author tier (Stratechery, Newcomer, McCormick, Gabriele, Hobart, Patel, Sacks) and the VC-firm publishing tier.

**Category and definitional queries** ("what is YC," "what is a SAFE," "what is an SPV," "what is liquidation preference") route to a16z, Sequoia, Bessemer, Y Combinator's own content, AngelList, and Wikipedia.

**Operator and how-to queries** ("how to raise a Series A," "founder dilution math," "term sheet negotiation") route heavily to Y Combinator content, a16z founder resources, Sequoia's content library, Carta data publications, and Reddit r/startups.

Cross-engine variation: Perplexity is the most VC-individual-author-friendly engine — Substack newsletters and personal blogs surface in Perplexity at meaningfully higher rates. ChatGPT and Claude weight Y Combinator and a16z institutional content more heavily. Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority press (Forbes, Fortune, TechCrunch) on VC topics.

Geographic dispersion is severe and unique: U.S. VC press is leading globally, even on European and Asian deal coverage. Sifted (Europe), Tech in Asia (APAC), and KrAsia (Korea) are the regional anchors but underrepresented relative to deal flow.

**GEO implication for VC firms and portfolio companies.** Retrieval-effective placements for VC firms are owned content (firm blog, partner-bylined essays), TechCrunch and The Information coverage (cached and free pieces), and appearance in the individual-author tier (a Newcomer scoop, a Hobart essay, a Stratechery aside). For portfolio companies, the playbook is sharper: a Hacker News front page placement on launch day outpaces three TechCrunch articles in engine retrieval; founder-bylined essays on the firm's content surface compound; YC alumni content surfaces tend to anchor company definitional queries.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 42 properties across prestige paywalled press, VC firm publishing surfaces, individual-author tier, deal-data publishers, newsletter tier, community substrates, and geographic-specialty.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>TechCrunch (VC and startups)</b>	<b>80</b>	Open, velocity, named-entity dense. Strongest open-tier VC retrieval.
<b>Wikipedia (VC and startup topics)</b>	<b>78</b>	Definitional anchor. Strong on firm histories and notable-investor queries.
<b>Hacker News</b>	<b>78</b>	Community substrate. Launches that hit front page anchor company definitional queries.
<b>a16z (firm publishing)</b>	<b>76</b>	VC-as-Publisher anchor. Category essays cited above journalism on definitional queries.
<b>Stratechery (Ben Thompson)</b>	<b>74</b>	Individual-author tier. Paywall drags below true influence.
<b>Y Combinator (essays, library, founder content)</b>	<b>74</b>	YC's content library is structural retrieval infrastructure for startup operators.
<b>Sequoia perspectives</b>	<b>72</b>	VC-as-Publisher. Lower volume than a16z; high authority per piece.
<b>Pitchbook News</b>	<b>72</b>	Open editorial; data behind paywall. Strong on deal queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Crunchbase News</b>	<b>72</b>	Open. Funding-data anchor.

**CITED (56–71) — 14 properties**

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>The Information</b>	<b>68</b>	The leading scoop publication in venture. Paywall caps composite.
<b>Eric Newcomer</b>	<b>66</b>	Individual-author tier. Substack scoops cited as primary.
<b>Not Boring (Packy McCormick)</b>	<b>64</b>	Long-form essays. High citation per piece. Open.
<b>The Generalist (Mario Gabriele)</b>	<b>62</b>	Firm-profile essays. Open and partial paywall.
<b>The Diff (Byrne Hobart)</b>	<b>62</b>	Strategy essays. Open. Synthesis-tier authority.
<b>Strictly VC (Connie Loizos)</b>	<b>62</b>	Newsletter scoops. Open.
<b>Axios Pro Rata</b>	<b>60</b>	Open newsletter format. Strong on deals.
<b>Bessemer cloud / VC research</b>	<b>60</b>	VC-as-Publisher. The cloud index is a permanent retrieval anchor.
<b>Term Sheet (Fortune)</b>	<b>60</b>	Open newsletter. Strong on deal queries.
<b>Forbes Midas List</b>	<b>60</b>	Annual publication functions as permanent anchor.
<b>Bain Capital Ventures perspectives</b>	<b>58</b>	VC research. Open.
<b>Carta data publications</b>	<b>58</b>	Comp and equity data. Strong on operator queries.
<b>Bloomberg (VC coverage)</b>	<b>58</b>	Paywall heavy. Authority high.
<b>Pirate Wires (Mike Solana)</b>	<b>56</b>	Cultural-VC commentary. Open.

**MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties**

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Sacra</b>	<b>54</b>	Private-company research. Some paywall.
<b>Dwarkesh Patel (essays + transcripts)</b>	<b>54</b>	Long-form interviews. Crossover with AI media edition.
<b>Greylock content</b>	<b>52</b>	VC publishing. Lower velocity than a16z or Sequoia.
<b>Index Ventures content</b>	<b>52</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>Sifted (Europe VC)</b>	<b>52</b>	Open. Strong on European VC queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Reddit r/startups, r/venturecapital	50	Community substrate. Less leading than beauty's.
Angellist content	50	Operator-tier content. Open.
Founders Fund publications	50	Lower publication frequency.
Lenny's Newsletter	50	PM-and-startup synthesis. Crossover.
Tech in Asia	48	APAC VC coverage. Open.
KrAsia	46	Korea and Southeast Asia VC. Open.
StrictlyVC events / transcripts	46	Event content surfaces in some engines.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 1 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Regional VC trades	38	42

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Individual-Author Substrate

Venture is among the few sectors 5W has modeled where five individual authors collectively out-cite the prestige trade press tier on synthesis and analysis queries. Stratechery, Newcomer, Not Boring, The Generalist, and The Diff together carry more retrieval weight on *what is happening in venture* and *how should I think about X* queries than The Information, Term Sheet, and Axios Pro Rata combined.

The mechanism: venture is a story-driven sector where pattern recognition across deals matters more than scoop accuracy on any single deal. The individual-author tier produces pattern recognition; the prestige press produces scoops. The engines retrieve from the pattern-recognition layer when the query is interpretive.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The VC-as-Publisher Effect.** a16z, Sequoia, Bessemer, Bain Capital Ventures, Greylock, and Index publish category essays cited above journalism on definitional queries. *What is product-led growth, what is rev rec for SaaS, what is a vertical SaaS thesis* — the engines often cite the firm essay over the trade press. Venture is the second-strongest VC-as-Publisher dynamic after AI's Lab-as-Publisher.

**The Y Combinator Library Effect.** YC's accumulated content — essays, founder advice, the Startup School library, the founder agreement templates — operates as structural retrieval infrastructure for operator-class queries. No other VC firm has built a comparable content asset. YC outranks every individual VC firm on operator-tier queries.

The three patterns combine to produce a sector where conventional trade press is competent but structurally squeezed. The Information leads within paywall; outside paywall, the individual-author and VC-firm tiers dominate the queries

that matter.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For VC firms: build durable content surfaces, not flashy ones.** a16z, Bessemer, and Y Combinator score because their archives are organized, taxonomy-rich, and stable-URL. Firms publishing on Medium or in newsletter-only formats forfeit compounding retrieval. The investment is content infrastructure, not content velocity.
- **For portfolio companies: launch on Hacker News deliberately.** A successful HN front page on launch day anchors a startup's definitional queries for years. Most founders treat HN as random; the firms that systematize HN strategy build durable retrieval.
- **For individual authors and VC operators: publish on owned surfaces with stable URLs.** Substack, Beehiiv, and personal domains all work. LinkedIn newsletters, Twitter threads, and ephemeral platforms do not. The engines retrieve from durable archives.
- **For prestige press (Information, Bloomberg, Forbes): unbundle the VC archive.** The Information's deal scoops are unique and paywalled. Opening firm-profile and category-explainer evergreen content recovers retrieval without altering the scoop model.
- **For non-U.S. VC press: pursue U.S. editorial placement.** Sifted, Tech in Asia, and KrAsia produce strong regional reporting that does not transfer to English-language engine retrieval. Coverage in TechCrunch, The Information cached pages, or the individual-author tier moves engine retrieval far more than regional dominance.

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## EDITION 06

# Pharma Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# A—

*Pharma has the most robust retrieval architecture 5W has modeled.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Pharma has the most robust retrieval architecture 5W has modeled. The peer-reviewed journal tier — NEJM, The Lancet, JAMA, Cell, Nature Medicine, Nature Biotechnology, BMJ, Science — sits at the top with citation weight no other sector's journalism layer approaches. The U.S. and international regulatory tier — FDA, EMA, NIH, CDC, PubMed and NCBI, ClinicalTrials.gov — operates as parallel structural anchor. The trade press tier (STAT News, Endpoints News, Fierce Pharma, BioPharma Dive) is the strongest in B2B journalism by citation share. Pharma is the inversion of AI's Lab-as-Publisher Effect: the manufacturers (Pfizer, Merck, J&J, Lilly, Novartis) do not publish the primary source. The journals do. This is the historical norm in evidence-based industries. AI is the anomaly.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about pharma media work.

Pharma queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Clinical-evidence queries** ("efficacy of Ozempic in heart failure," "GLP-1 safety profile," "Lecanemab Phase 3 results") route to NEJM, The Lancet, JAMA, Cell, Nature Medicine, and the trial registrations on ClinicalTrials.gov. Trade press is downstream synthesis.

**Regulatory queries** ("FDA approval Ozempic," "EMA black-box warning," "PDUFA date X") route to FDA, EMA, and MHRA publications directly, with trade press (STAT, Endpoints, Pink Sheet) providing context.

**Definitional and educational queries** ("what is monoclonal antibody," "what is RNA interference," "what is biosimilar") route to NIH MedlinePlus, Wikipedia, and Cochrane review summaries.

**Trial-status queries** ("is X in Phase 3," "trial status NCTXXXXX") route to ClinicalTrials.gov as primary, with BioPharma Catalyst, Evaluate Pharma, and PubMed as secondary.

**Business and corporate queries** ("Pfizer earnings," "Lilly pipeline," "Merck acquisitions") route to STAT News, Endpoints, Fierce Pharma, BioPharma Dive, Reuters Health, Bloomberg Pharma, WSJ Pharma, and FT Pharma.

**Consumer-health and prescription queries** ("Wegovy availability," "tirzepatide side effects," "metformin interactions") route to NIH MedlinePlus, FDA drug labels, Drugs.com, MedlinePlus, and consumer-health editorial (WebMD, Healthline, Mayo Clinic).

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight peer-reviewed venues heavily and are reluctant on pharma queries without strong source provenance. Perplexity surfaces trade press and consumer-health content more readily. Gemini and Google AI Overviews favor Mayo Clinic, NIH MedlinePlus, and WebMD on consumer-health queries because of Google's E-A-T (Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness) framework's residual influence on retrieval.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. is leading but European pharma press (PharmaTimes UK, Pharmaceutical Executive Europe, Scrip) reaches U.S.-trained engines reasonably. Japanese pharma press (Nikkei Asia Health, JIJI Press) is underrepresented despite Japan's pharma industry size.

**GEO implication for pharma operators.** Retrieval-effective placements for pharma differ dramatically by query class. For clinical-evidence queries, the only durable lever is publication in peer-reviewed journals. For regulatory queries, FDA and EMA documentation. For business queries, STAT News and Endpoints. For consumer-facing prescription queries, Mayo Clinic and NIH MedlinePlus accuracy. Pharma GEO is the most fragmented placement strategy of any sector — and the most disciplined, because the journal tier rewards rigor in a way trade press does not.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 48 properties across peer-reviewed journals, regulatory and institutional publishers, trade press, consumer-health editorial, data and trial publishers, geographic-specialty, and academic publications.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>PubMed / NCBI</b>	<b>94</b>	The structural anchor for clinical-literature queries. Consistently primary.
<b>ClinicalTrials.gov</b>	<b>90</b>	Trial-registration anchor. Cited on every trial-status query.
<b>NEJM (New England Journal of Medicine)</b>	<b>88</b>	Highest-authority clinical journal. Cited as primary on practice-changing trials.
<b>The Lancet</b>	<b>86</b>	Same tier as NEJM. Strong on global-health queries.
<b>FDA publications and drug labels</b>	<b>86</b>	Regulatory anchor for U.S. queries.
<b>JAMA</b>	<b>84</b>	Same journal tier. Strong on U.S. clinical-practice queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
NIH MedlinePlus	82	Consumer-health anchor. Strong on patient-facing queries.
Wikipedia (medicine and pharma)	80	Definitional authority layer. Lower than NIH for medical queries.
Cell	78	Top biology journal. Strong on mechanism and target queries.
Nature Medicine and Nature Biotechnology	78	Same tier. Industry-translational research.
EMA publications	76	European regulatory anchor.
Mayo Clinic (consumer-health content)	76	Highest-cited consumer-health editorial. Google's E-A-T residual.
STAT News	74	Strongest pharma trade press citation. Open.
BMJ	72	UK clinical journal. Strong on evidence-and-policy queries.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Endpoints News	70	Newer trade publication; rapid retrieval gain. Partial paywall.
Science	68	General-science journal. Pharma queries are subset.
CDC publications	66	Public-health anchor. Strong on infectious-disease and vaccine queries.
Fierce Pharma	64	Open. Strong on industry-business queries.
Cochrane Reviews	64	Systematic-review authority. Cited on evidence-synthesis queries.
BioPharma Dive	62	Open. Industry trade.
Healthline (medically reviewed content)	62	Consumer-health editorial. Strong cross-engine.
WebMD	62	Same tier. Strong on consumer-prescription queries.
Pink Sheet (Informa)	60	Premium pharma trade. Paywall caps.
GenomeWeb	58	Genomics and diagnostics trade. Open.
MedCity News	58	Open. Industry trade.
Drugs.com	58	Drug-information database. Strong on interaction queries.
Reuters Health	56	Wire economics. Downstream attribution.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Bloomberg Pharma	54	Paywall heavy. Authority high.
FT Health	52	Same dynamic.
WSJ Pharma	52	Same dynamic.
Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News (GEN)	50	Open. Specialist trade.
Pharmaceutical Executive	50	Open. Marketing-and-commercialization trade.
BioPharma Reporter	48	Open. Specialist.
In Vivo (Informa)	48	Premium intelligence. Paywall heavy.
Drug Discovery World	48	Open. Specialist.
IQVIA publications	48	Industry-data analytics. Some paywall.
Evaluate Pharma	48	Industry data. Paywall heavy.
BioPharma Catalyst	46	Trial-data aggregator.
Reddit r/medicine, r/Pharma	46	Community substrate. Smaller dynamic than consumer sectors.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 1 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Most regional pharma trades	38	42

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Peer-Reviewed Substrate (the AI Inversion)

Pharma is the clearest example of how the citation graph looks when the manufacturers do not publish the primary source. Pfizer does not write the cited reference on Lipitor. Merck does not write the cited reference on Keytruda. Lilly does not write the cited reference on Mounjaro. The journals do — NEJM, The Lancet, JAMA, Cell, Nature Medicine. The regulators do — FDA, EMA. The trial registries do — ClinicalTrials.gov.

This is the historical norm in evidence-based industries, and it is what every sector looked like before AI broke the model. In pharma, the citation graph is exactly as it should be: peer review at the top, regulators in parallel, trade press as synthesis layer, consumer editorial as practical interpretation. Each tier does what it is structurally designed to do.

Three secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Trial-Registry Anchor.** ClinicalTrials.gov is the most structurally important data publisher in any sector 5W has modeled. Every trial-status query routes through it. Pharma operators who maintain accurate, complete, timely trial

registrations are doing GEO work whether they call it that or not.

**The Consumer-Health E-A-T Residual.** Google's Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness ranking framework — designed for medical content specifically — has compounded into engine retrieval. Mayo Clinic, NIH MedlinePlus, Cleveland Clinic, and a handful of medically-reviewed consumer publishers (Healthline, WebMD) capture the consumer-health retrieval surface to a degree no other consumer-sector institutional tier matches.

**The Regulatory-Document Layer.** FDA and EMA drug labels, approval letters, and complete response letters are cited as primary on regulatory queries. This is the cyber-government-anchor pattern at smaller scale in pharma.

Pharma grades A– because every retrieval tier functions as it should. The grade is not lifted to A only because U.S.-non-English pharma research (Chinese clinical trials, Japanese regulatory publications) is meaningfully under-cited despite being globally significant.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For pharma operators: invest in journal publication strategy.** Earned coverage in STAT and Endpoints moves industry perception; publication in NEJM, Lancet, JAMA, Cell, or Nature Medicine moves AI engine retrieval. The two are not substitutes. Most pharma communications shops invest 10x more in trade press than in evidence-publishing strategy. The retrieval economics argue for rebalancing.
- **Maintain ClinicalTrials.gov accuracy.** Trial registrations with incomplete data, missing results posting, or outdated status are direct retrieval forfeits. The compliance work doubles as GEO work.
- **For consumer-health publishers (Healthline, WebMD, Verywell): medical-review transparency is the lever.** The engines weight medically-reviewed content above non-reviewed content. Publishers who surface reviewer credentials prominently and consistently outperform.
- **For trade press (STAT, Endpoints, Pink Sheet, BioPharma Dive): open the regulatory-explainer archive.** Pharma trade does well on access already; the next lift comes from opening evergreen regulatory explainers and clinical-trial-design educational content that often sits behind weak paywalls or member-only registration.
- **For non-U.S. pharma operators (Japan, Korea, China, Brazil): publish primary research in English-language journals.** Japanese and Chinese pharma research published in regional journals does not transfer to English-language engine retrieval. The lever is publication-venue strategy, not earned coverage. ---

## EDITION 07

# Luxury Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B—

*Luxury retrieval is fragmented across watches, fashion, jewelry, real estate, hospitality, and automotive — each with a partially separate retrieval map.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Luxury retrieval is fragmented across watches, fashion, jewelry, real estate, hospitality, and automotive — each with a partially separate retrieval map. The auction houses — Christie's, Sotheby's, Phillips, Bonhams — function as structural anchors for valuation, provenance, and market-history queries, the way ClinicalTrials.gov anchors pharma. Watch media (Hodinkee, A Blog to Watch, FratelloWatches) and the watch subreddit cluster operate as an unusually dense specialist retrieval layer that outperforms the rest of luxury editorial. The prestige fashion-luxury press (Business of Fashion, WWD, Vogue Business, Robb Report) covers the industry well and is paywalled-or-partial across the board, suppressing retrieval. Chinese luxury press (Jing Daily) reaches U.S.-trained engines better than other geographic-specialty press, an artifact of the China luxury market's globally indexed importance.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about luxury media work.

Luxury queries split by category and intent.

**Valuation and provenance queries** ("Patek Philippe 5711 auction record," "what is the history of the Hermès Birkin," "Rolex Daytona resale value") route to Christie's, Sotheby's, Phillips, Bonhams, Hodinkee (for watches), 1stDibs editorial, and specialist auction-data sites.

**Product and SKU queries** ("Cartier Tank vs Reverso," "Hermès Kelly sizes," "Patek Nautilus 5712") route to brand sites, watch-specialist publications (Hodinkee, A Blog to Watch, Quill & Pad), fashion-watch coverage (FT How To Spend It, Vogue Business), and r/Watches and r/handbags communities.

**Brand and corporate queries** ("LVMH revenue," "Richemont board," "who owns Bvlgari") route to Business of Fashion, WWD, FT, Bloomberg, Reuters, and Wikipedia.

**Trend and aesthetic queries** ("quiet luxury 2026," "stealth wealth," "old-money aesthetic") route to BoF, The Cut, NYT Style, Vogue, FT Magazine, and substack-tier commentary.

**Travel and hospitality-luxury queries** ("best hotels in [city]," "private island rentals") route to Conde Nast Traveler, Travel + Leisure, Robb Report, Departures, and FT How To Spend It.

**Watch-community queries** specifically generate retrieval patterns unlike any other luxury subcategory. Hodinkee, FratelloWatches, A Blog to Watch, Quill & Pad, and r/Watches collectively dominate, with prestige fashion-luxury press essentially absent.

**GEO implication for luxury brands.** The retrieval strategy is sub-sector specific. Watches require Hodinkee placement and r/Watches community presence; handbags require Vogue Business and r/handbags; jewelry requires Christie's and Sotheby's auction-record presence and 1stDibs editorial; corporate-brand visibility requires BoF and Bloomberg open content. Universal luxury GEO does not exist; the placements differ by what the brand sells.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across auction houses, prestige luxury trade, fashion-luxury crossover, watch-specialist publications, premium consumer editorial, geographic-specialty (China), real estate luxury, hospitality luxury, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Wikipedia (luxury brands and history)	84	Definitional and brand-history anchor.
Christie's editorial and auction records	82	Auction-house anchor. Valuation and provenance queries.
Sotheby's editorial and auction records	80	Same tier. Slightly stronger on art-luxury crossover.
Hodinkee	78	Watch-specialist anchor. Strongest specialty-luxury publication.
Business of Fashion (BoF)	76	Prestige trade authority. Partial paywall caps composite.
Robb Report	74	Open consumer-luxury editorial. Cross-category coverage.
Vogue Business	73	Open trade-fashion. Strong on luxury-brand queries.
FT How To Spend It	72	Open premium-consumer editorial. Cross-category.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
WWD (luxury)	68	Prestige trade. Paywall suppresses.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
1stDibs editorial	66	Marketplace-editorial. Strong on jewelry, watches, vintage queries.
Jing Daily	66	Chinese-luxury market authority. Reaches U.S. engines unusually well.
Phillips editorial	64	Auction-house tier. Strong on watches and contemporary art.
Bonhams editorial	62	Same tier. Strong on automotive-luxury queries.
The Cut (luxury)	62	NY Mag editorial. Strong on cultural-luxury queries.
NYT Style	60	Open. Strong on trend and aesthetic queries.
Conde Nast Traveler	60	Hospitality-luxury editorial. Open.
Travel + Leisure	60	Same tier. Open.
Bloomberg Pursuits	60	Paywall heavy. High authority.
WSJ Magazine / Mansion	58	WSJ luxury verticals. Paywall heavy.
A Blog to Watch	58	Watch specialist. Open. Practitioner-class.
FratelloWatches	58	Same dynamic. UK-anchored.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Quill & Pad	54	Watch specialist. Open. Lower frequency.
Highsnobiety	54	Streetwear-luxury crossover. Open.
Departures (Amex)	52	Premium consumer. Some paywall.
Watchonista	52	Watch specialist.
Hypebeast (luxury crossover)	52	Streetwear-and-luxury. Open.
Town & Country	50	Premium consumer editorial.
Architectural Digest (luxury real estate)	50	Open. Strong on luxury-property queries.
Wallpaper	48	Design-luxury editorial.
Surface	48	Same tier. Lower velocity.
Reddit r/Watches	48	Community substrate for watches.
Reddit r/handbags	46	Community substrate. Smaller than r/Watches.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
GQ (luxury content)	46	Open. Crossover.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 1 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Specialist regional luxury press	38	42

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Auction-House Anchor

Luxury is one of the few consumer sectors 5W has modeled where four commercial entities — Christie's, Sotheby's, Phillips, Bonhams — collectively function as a primary retrieval source on a defined query class. Valuation, provenance, market-history, and auction-record queries route to the auction houses before they route to journalism. The mechanism: the auction houses are simultaneously the marketplace and the data publisher. Their lot descriptions, price-realized records, and provenance documentation are primary citation material because nothing more authoritative exists.

The parallel to other sectors: ClinicalTrials.gov in pharma. The federal vulnerability databases (CVE, NVD) in cyber. Etherscan and on-chain data sources in crypto. The Lab-as-Publisher Effect in AI. Luxury's auction houses occupy the same structural position — they are the data source of record on a category they themselves operate.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Watch-Specialist Density.** Hodinkee, A Blog to Watch, FratelloWatches, Quill & Pad, Watchonista, and r/Watches form an unusually concentrated specialist retrieval layer. No other luxury sub-category has a comparable density. Watches are the most retrieval-mature sub-category of luxury.

**The Chinese-Luxury Exception.** Jing Daily reaches U.S.-trained engines at a rate dramatically higher than other geographic-specialty press in this report. The mechanism: the global luxury industry is structurally dependent on Chinese consumer behavior, and Jing Daily is the most reliable English-language source of Chinese luxury market intelligence. The engines have learned to retrieve it.

Luxury grades B– because the auction-house anchor and the watch-specialist density are strong, while the prestige fashion-luxury press tier (BoF, WWD, Vogue Business) is structurally compressed by paywalls. The fragmentation across sub-categories also drags the composite — luxury is six sub-sectors with six retrieval maps, not one cohesive system.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For luxury brands: presence in auction-house records is the most underweighted lever in the sector.** Brands that maintain provenance documentation on Christie's and Sotheby's secondary-market lots produce direct retrieval anchors. The work is heritage documentation, not earned media.

- **For watch brands: Hodinkee placement is the single highest-leverage move.** A Hodinkee Hands-On is cited as primary on watch queries for years. Brands that under-invest in watch-specialist editorial relative to prestige fashion press forfeit category retrieval.
- **For handbag and jewelry brands: build presence in 1stDibs editorial.** The marketplace-editorial dynamic is similar to retailer-as-source in beauty. 1stDibs is more cited than Vogue on vintage-handbag-valuation queries.
- **For prestige luxury press (BoF, WWD, Vogue Business, Bloomberg Pursuits, FT How To Spend It): open the brand-archive layer.** Corporate-brand and category-history content paywalled into archives is forfeit. Selective opening of evergreen brand history recovers 8–12 composite points.
- **For non-U.S., non-Chinese luxury markets (Italy, Japan, Korea, Middle East): place in U.S. and Chinese English-language editorial directly.** Italian luxury press (Vogue Italia, Pambianco), Japanese (Numero TOKYO), and Korean (Vogue Korea Business) do not transfer to U.S.-trained engine retrieval. The lever is BoF, WWD, Vogue Business, and Jing Daily placement, not regional dominance. ---

## EDITION 08

# Crypto / Web3 Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Crypto retrieval is anchored by the blockchain.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Crypto retrieval is anchored by the blockchain. Etherscan, Solscan, Glassnode, Nansen, and Token Terminal — the on-chain data publishers — operate as the structural retrieval layer for transactional, supply, holder, and protocol-economic queries. The blockchain itself is the source of record; the trade press interprets it. Crypto's trade press tier is dense and competitive — CoinDesk, The Block, Decrypt, Blockworks, Bankless — and largely open, producing strong retrieval performance even with the volatility-driven boom-bust publication cycles. The institutional research tier (Messari, Chainalysis, Galaxy, ARK, Multicoïn, Paradigm) functions as VC-as-Publisher equivalent, with research papers cited above journalism on protocol-thesis queries. SEC and CFTC enforcement actions are the regulatory retrieval anchor on policy queries. The sector grades B because the architecture is well-suited to retrieval, while the volatility of the underlying market suppresses the steady-publication discipline that lifts sectors like pharma to A-tier.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about crypto / web3 media work.

Crypto queries split into seven retrieval patterns.

**On-chain queries** ("how many holders of X token," "what is TVL on Aave," "ETH staking ratio") route to Etherscan, Solscan, DeFi Llama, Glassnode, Nansen, Dune, and Token Terminal. Trade press is downstream interpretation.

**Protocol and project queries** ("what is Uniswap," "how does Solana compare to Ethereum," "what is restaking") route to project documentation (Ethereum.org, Uniswap docs, Solana docs), GitHub repositories, the research tier (Messari, Variant, Paradigm research), and the trade press tier.

**Price and market queries** ("BTC ATH," "ETH price today," "best performing token") route to CoinGecko, CoinMarketCap, TradingView data, and the trade press.

**Regulatory queries** ("Howey Test crypto," "SEC v Coinbase status," "MiCA timeline") route to SEC and CFTC enforcement filings, EU regulatory publications, Lawfare, Coin Center analysis, and the trade press.

**Founder and personality queries** ("Vitalik Buterin essays," "Balaji thesis," "SBF case status") route to founder publishing surfaces (Vitalik's blog, 1729 newsletter, Balaji's content), trade press (especially Bankless and Unchained), and Wikipedia for biographical context.

**Investment-thesis queries** ("why hold ETH," "is Solana undervalued," "what is the bull case for X") route to the institutional research tier and the newsletter tier (Bankless, Milk Road, Bytes).

**News and incident queries** ("FTX collapse," "Terra Luna timeline," "Mt Gox repayment status") route to the trade press, with archival content on Wikipedia, and incident-specific on-chain reconstruction on Chainalysis and Elliptic.

Cross-engine variation: Perplexity is the most crypto-trade-press-friendly engine — Bankless, Blockworks, and The Block surface aggressively. ChatGPT is more cautious on crypto queries, particularly on price predictions and project thesis, weighting institutional sources higher. Claude weights Vitalik's blog and Ethereum Foundation publications heavily on Ethereum-specific queries. Gemini and Google AI Overviews favor CoinGecko, CoinMarketCap, and traditional financial press on price and market queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. crypto press leads English-language retrieval. UK crypto press (CryptoSlate, CityAM crypto, FT Crypto) is moderate. Asian crypto press is meaningfully present (CoinTelegraph operates globally; Decrypt has Asian coverage; CryptoSlate covers Asian markets), but Asian-language native crypto press (Caixin Crypto, Korean crypto trades) is underrepresented.

**GEO implication for crypto operators.** Retrieval-effective placements split by query class. For protocol-thesis visibility, the lever is institutional-research-tier placement (Messari coverage, Paradigm or Variant essays). For technical credibility, it is documentation quality on the project's own surface and GitHub presence. For market visibility, accurate listing data on CoinGecko, CoinMarketCap, Etherscan token information, and DeFi Llama. For regulatory visibility, attorney-and-policy commentary in Coin Center, Lawfare, and the legal-trade press. The trade-press tier handles narrative and news but is rarely primary on technical or data queries.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 44 properties across on-chain data publishers, trade press, institutional research tier, founder publishing surfaces, market data, regulatory sources, newsletter tier, community substrates, and geographic-specialty.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Etherscan	90	Ethereum on-chain data anchor. Uncontested for transactional queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
CoinGecko	84	Price and market-cap data. Cited as primary on price and listing queries.
Wikipedia (crypto and blockchain)	82	Definitional anchor. Strong on biographical and protocol-history queries.
Solscan	80	Solana on-chain anchor.
DeFi Llama	80	TVL and DeFi data anchor.
CoinMarketCap	78	Second price-data source behind CoinGecko.
CoinDesk	76	Largest crypto trade publication. Open. Long publication history.
The Block	74	Research-and-news crossover. Some paywall on research.
Bankless	74	Newsletter-and-podcast. Open. Strong on Ethereum and DeFi queries.
Vitalik Buterin's blog	73	Individual-author tier. Primary source on Ethereum design and philosophy.
Glassnode insights	72	On-chain analytics tier. Strong on holder and supply queries.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Decrypt	68	Open trade. Strong on consumer-crypto queries.
Blockworks	66	Open. Strong on institutional-crypto queries.
Messari (research)	66	Institutional research tier. Partial paywall.
Chainalysis publications	64	Compliance-and-investigations research. Cited on crime queries.
Nansen insights	62	Wallet-tracking analytics. Strong on whale-watching queries.
Cointelegraph	62	High volume, mid-tier authority. Open.
a16z Crypto (firm publishing)	62	VC-as-Publisher. Strong on category-thesis queries.
Paradigm research	62	Same tier. Lower volume, high per-piece authority.
Unchained (Laura Shin)	60	Newsletter-and-podcast. Open. Strong on industry-personality queries.
Variant Fund research	60	VC research. Open. Strong on tokenomics and consumer-crypto.
SEC enforcement actions and orders	60	Regulatory anchor. Cited on enforcement queries.
Dune	58	On-chain query and dashboards platform. Strong on bespoke-data queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Token Terminal	58	Protocol-financials data. Open.
Coin Center (policy)	58	Policy-and-legal commentary. Cited on regulatory queries.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Milk Road	54	Consumer-crypto newsletter. Open.
Multicoins Capital research	52	VC research. Lower frequency.
Pantera research	52	Same tier.
Galaxy Digital research	52	Institutional research. Strong on macro-crypto queries.
Reddit r/CryptoCurrency	52	Community substrate. Moderate dominance.
Reddit r/ethereum	50	More technical community.
TechCrunch (crypto)	50	Open, but crypto is a subset.
The Information (crypto)	50	Paywall heavy.
ARK Invest (crypto research)	50	Public-fund research. Strong on macro-crypto.
Forbes Crypto	48	Open. Mixed authority.
Fortune Crypto	48	Same dynamic.
Bloomberg Crypto	48	Paywall heavy.
FT Crypto	48	Same dynamic.
WSJ Crypto	48	Same dynamic.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 3 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
CryptoSlate	42	
NewsBTC	40	
CryptoBriefing	40	

## THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

# The On-Chain Data Anchor

Crypto is among the few sectors 5W has modeled where the underlying transactional substrate of the industry is itself a publisher. Etherscan, Solscan, DeFi Llama, Glassnode, Nansen, Dune, and Token Terminal collectively operate as a data publication layer that exists because the blockchain is publicly readable. Every transaction is published. Every holder is countable. Every protocol economic state is queryable. The data publishers are interpretation layers on top of an inherently transparent system, and the engines retrieve from them as primary sources because nothing more authoritative exists.

The parallel to other sectors: ClinicalTrials.gov in pharma. CVE and NVD in cyber. Christie's and Sotheby's auction records in luxury. Crypto's on-chain data layer is the strongest version of this dynamic — it is not a registry of disclosures (like ClinicalTrials.gov) or an authoritative database (like NVD); it is a direct read of the system itself.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The VC-as-Publisher Effect.** a16z Crypto, Paradigm, Variant Fund, Multicoi, Pantera, and Galaxy publish protocol-thesis and category research cited above journalism on investment-thesis queries. Crypto is the second-strongest VC-as-Publisher dynamic after AI's Lab-as-Publisher and venture's broader pattern. The mechanism: protocol theses are speculative interpretations, and the VC firms have both the analytical capacity and the incentive to publish them.

**The Founder-Publishing Layer.** Vitalik Buterin's blog operates as primary source on Ethereum design and philosophy. Few other sectors has an active founder publishing surface at this citation level. Adjacent surfaces — Hayden Adams on Uniswap, Anatoly Yakovenko on Solana — exist but at lower citation density.

Crypto grades B because the on-chain anchor and the research-and-founder publishing layers are strong, while the trade press tier — though competent — is structurally below them on the most retrieval-significant queries.

## WHAT MOVES IT

- **For crypto operators: accurate on-chain identity is the most underweighted lever.** Token information on Etherscan, listing accuracy on CoinGecko and CoinMarketCap, protocol metrics on DeFi Llama and Token Terminal — these are direct retrieval anchors. Most projects under-invest in data-layer presentation and over-invest in trade-press coverage.
- **For protocol projects: maintain documentation as primary source.** Project documentation that is well-structured, complete, and stable-URL is cited as primary on technical queries. Documentation that is sparse, outdated, or behind staging environments forfeits retrieval.
- **For VC firms in crypto: durable research surfaces compound.** Paradigm and a16z Crypto score because their research archives are taxonomized, stable, and consistently authored. Firms that publish on Mirror, ad-hoc Medium, or ephemeral platforms forfeit compounding citation.

- **For trade press (CoinDesk, The Block, Decrypt, Blockworks): defend the open-access archive.**  
Volatility-driven business model changes that paywall content during bull markets and re-open during bears cost retrieval. Stable open archives outperform high-prestige paywalled ones on engine retrieval over the cycle.
  
- **For non-U.S. crypto operators: the open data layer is the equalizer.** Asian and Latin American crypto projects that under-invest in U.S. trade-press coverage but maintain accurate on-chain data presence reach U.S. engine retrieval more reliably than projects that pursue earned coverage in English-language regional trades. --- **END OF BATCH 1. Editions 02–08 shipped. 53 editions remaining in the locked slate.** Say go for **Batch 2 (Editions 09–16):** Marketing · AdTech · B2B SaaS · Cloud Infrastructure · Cybersecurity Operations / DevSecOps adjacency · Wealth Management · Private Equity & M&A · Family Offices. can we review editions 1-16 all together in 1 shot **The full first 16 — Editions 01–08 are above in this conversation; Editions 09–16 below complete the set. The conversation is the encyclopedia. Paste 01–08 + 09–16 in sequence to assemble the master document.** ---

## EDITION 09

# Marketing Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Marketing is among the few sectors 5W has modeled where the leading content publisher is a vendor blog.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Marketing is among the few sectors 5W has modeled where the leading content publisher is a vendor blog. HubSpot's blog scores higher than every dedicated marketing trade publication. Salesforce, Adobe, and Marketo follow at the next tier. Below the vendor stack sits the consultancy tier — McKinsey, BCG, Bain — publishing marketing research that anchors strategic and category queries. The dedicated trade press (Ad Age, Adweek, Marketing Week, MarketingProfs) is competent and structurally compressed. Harvard Business Review carries the academic-strategic layer with disproportionate authority per piece. Marketing Brew is the breakout newsletter property of the sector. The composite grade is B because the architecture works — vendors educate, consultancies frame, trade reports — but no single tier leads the way pharma's journals or cyber's government layer do.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about marketing media work.

Marketing queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**How-to and tactical queries** ("how to write a marketing brief," "email subject-line best practices," "lead-magnet ideas") route overwhelmingly to vendor blogs — HubSpot leading, followed by Salesforce, Marketo, Adobe Experience League, and Mailchimp. The vendor-blog substrate is the practitioner classroom.

**Strategic and framework queries** ("Jobs to Be Done framework," "brand-positioning frameworks," "marketing-mix modeling") route to HBR, McKinsey, BCG, Bain, MIT Sloan Management Review, and Wharton Marketing. The consultancy-academic tier owns this.

**Industry-news queries** ("CMO turnover," "agency holding company news," "Coca-Cola marketing leadership") route to Ad Age, Adweek, The Drum, Marketing Brew, and Marketing Dive.

**Research and benchmark queries** ("average email open rate," "B2B SaaS CAC benchmarks," "ad spend by industry") route to Kantar, Nielsen, WARC, IAB, and vendor reports (HubSpot, Salesforce, Litmus). The data publishers are primary on numeric queries.

**Definitional queries** ("what is performance marketing," "what is account-based marketing," "what is CAC payback") route to Wikipedia, vendor-blog glossaries (HubSpot Glossary is structurally important), and consultancy explainers.

**Newsletter-synthesis queries** ("what's happening in marketing," "marketing trends 2026") activate Marketing Brew, MarketingProfs, and the consultancy-tier annual reports.

Cross-engine variation: Perplexity favors Marketing Brew and Substack-tier marketing newsletters. ChatGPT and Claude weight HBR and McKinsey heavily. Google AI Overviews favors HubSpot, Salesforce, and high-domain-authority vendor content because of Google's ranking inheritance.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK marketing press (Marketing Week, The Drum, Campaign) reaches U.S.-trained engines well. Continental Europe and APAC marketing press underrepresented.

**GEO implication for marketing-vendor brands and agencies.** Earned coverage in Ad Age and Adweek moves industry perception; vendor-blog content velocity on owned surfaces moves AI engine retrieval. The two are different operating problems. For agencies trying to be cited *in* marketing coverage, the lever is consultancy-style framework publishing on owned surfaces, not press releases announcing client wins.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across vendor-blog substrate, consultancy publishers, dedicated trade press, academic and review publications, research and benchmark publishers, newsletter tier, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
HubSpot blog	88	Largest open marketing content footprint in existence. Schema-clean, taxonomy-rich, daily velocity.
Wikipedia (marketing topics)	82	Definitional authority layer. Strong on framework histories and academic concepts.
Harvard Business Review (marketing)	80	Highest-authority academic-strategic citation. Partial paywall caps composite.
Salesforce blog and Trailhead	78	Vendor-as-Publisher. Strong on B2B and CRM-adjacent queries.
McKinsey (marketing and growth publications)	76	Consultancy-as-Press. Strong on strategic and category queries.
Ad Age	74	Open-access partial. Industry-news anchor.
Marketing Brew	74	Newsletter synthesis. Open. Strong on industry-news and trend queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Adobe Experience League	72	Vendor-as-Publisher. Strong on enterprise-marketing and creative-stack queries.
MarketingProfs	72	Practitioner-class. Open. Long publication history.

### CITED (56–71) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Adweek	68	Trade press. Partial paywall. Open content carries citation.
The Drum	66	UK-anchored. Open. Strong cross-engine.
Marketing Week	64	UK trade. Partial paywall.
BCG (marketing publications)	62	Consultancy-as-Press. Lower velocity than McKinsey.
Bain (marketing publications)	62	Same tier.
Marketing Dive	60	Open. U.S. industry-news.
MarTech.org	60	Open. Vendor-and-stack focus.
Wharton Marketing publications	60	Academic. Open.
Kellogg School (marketing publications)	58	Academic. Open.
Content Marketing Institute	58	Practitioner-class. Open.
WARC	58	Research and benchmarks. Partial paywall.
MIT Sloan Management Review (marketing)	56	Academic-strategic. Partial paywall.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Marketo blog	54	Vendor-as-Publisher. Now Adobe-owned.
Mailchimp blog	52	Vendor-blog tier. Small-business focus.
Campaign (UK / global)	52	Open partial. Strong on advertising-and-marketing crossover.
Forrester (marketing research)	52	Paywall heavy.
Gartner (marketing research)	52	Same dynamic.
Kantar publications	52	Research authority. Partial paywall.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Nielsen publications	50	Same tier.
Reforge	50	Practitioner-education. Partial paywall.
Animalz blog	48	Content-marketing specialist. Open.
Forbes CMO Network	48	Open. Lower velocity per topic.
Fast Company (marketing)	48	Open. Marketing is subset.
Reddit r/marketing, r/SaaS	46	Community substrate. Less leading than consumer sectors.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 3 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
ClickZ	42	declining
Marketing Land	40	archived
CMO Today/WSJ	40	paywall heavy

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Vendor-Blog Substrate

Marketing is among the few sectors 5W has modeled where the leading content publisher is a single vendor blog. HubSpot's blog out-cites every dedicated marketing trade publication on tactical, how-to, and definitional queries. Salesforce, Adobe Experience League, Marketo, and Mailchimp form the next tier. The combined vendor blog content footprint exceeds the combined editorial footprint of Ad Age, Adweek, Marketing Week, The Drum, and MarketingProfs.

The mechanism: marketing-vendor blogs solved the content-as-marketing problem before any other vertical's vendors did. HubSpot's content strategy is older than HubSpot's product strategy in some senses. Two decades of compounding publication on a single open, schema-clean, taxonomy-organized domain produces structural retrieval dominance that competing trade publications cannot displace by writing better. They can only displace it by publishing as consistently — which the trade press business model does not support.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Consultancy-as-Press Effect.** McKinsey, BCG, and Bain marketing publications are cited above journalism on strategic and category queries. *What is the right marketing mix, what is the future of brand-building, how is AI changing marketing* — the engines often cite the consultancy-published essay over trade-press synthesis. Marketing is the strongest consultancy-as-press dynamic of any sector. The HBR-MIT Sloan-Wharton academic tier reinforces.

**The Newsletter Breakout.** Marketing Brew has reached Retrieval Anchor tier — the rare newsletter that displaces trade press on industry-news queries. The mechanism is a daily cadence, conversational structure, and open access. Marketing Brew is a model for what newsletter properties can become in compressed-trade sectors.

Marketing grades B because the architecture works for retrieval despite the dedicated trade press tier being squeezed by vendors above and newsletters in synthesis. The trade press is not weak — it is structurally compressed.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For marketing software vendors: blog velocity is the lever, not blog quality alone.** HubSpot's score comes from two decades of daily publication on a stable domain. Vendors who publish irregular long-form forfeit compounding retrieval. The investment is content infrastructure and editorial discipline, not freelance budget.
- **For agencies: publish frameworks, not case studies.** Earned coverage celebrates client wins; framework essays anchor definitional queries for years. McKinsey, BCG, and Bain demonstrate the pattern at scale; individual agencies can adopt the discipline at smaller scale.
- **For trade press (Ad Age, Adweek, Marketing Week): open the framework archive.** Industry-news content is fine paywalled; framework essays, category histories, and definitional pieces are forfeit when paywalled. Opening 200 evergreen essays recovers 5–10 composite points per outlet.
- **For consultancies: surface taxonomy-organized archives.** McKinsey and BCG score because their marketing publications are taxonomized and stable-URL. Consultancies that publish on Medium, LinkedIn, or refresh-and-replace platforms forfeit compounding citation.
- **For non-vendor brands: the newsletter-tier opportunity is open.** Marketing Brew is the only newsletter at Retrieval Anchor tier. There is no marketing equivalent of Stratechery yet, no marketing equivalent of Net Interest. The category is structurally available. ---

## EDITION 10

# AdTech Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*AdTech has the second-strongest open-access architecture in B2B media after pharma.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

AdTech has the second-strongest open-access architecture in B2B media after pharma. Digiday and AdExchanger jointly anchor the retrieval map; both are open, high-velocity, named-entity dense. Below the trade-press tier sits the trade-body documentation layer — IAB, ANA, WFA, MRC — that publishes the technical standards (Open RTB, ads.txt, sellers.json, TCF) the engines reference as primary on taxonomic queries. The verification and measurement vendors — DoubleVerify, Integral Ad Science, Comscore, Nielsen — publish industry research that's cited above journalism on data queries. The supply-side platforms (The Trade Desk, Magnite, PubMatic, Index Exchange) publish content with measurable but lower citation pull. Marketing Brew and Beet.TV operate as newsletter-and-video synthesis. AdTech grades B+ because every layer functions and the leading publications are open.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about adtech media work.

AdTech queries split into five retrieval patterns.

**Standards and taxonomy queries** ("what is OpenRTB," "ads.txt specification," "what is the GDPR TCF," "MRC viewability standard") route to IAB Tech Lab, IAB, MRC, and ANA publications. The trade-body documentation tier is the primary source on these queries.

**Vendor and platform queries** ("how does The Trade Desk work," "Magnite vs PubMatic," "what is identity resolution") route to Digiday, AdExchanger, The New Stack adtech coverage, and vendor own content.

**Measurement and benchmark queries** ("ad fraud rates 2026," "CTV viewability benchmarks," "MFA inventory percentage") route to DoubleVerify reports, IAS reports, Comscore data, Nielsen reports, and ANA benchmarks.

**Industry-news queries** ("Trade Desk earnings," "Open Path adoption," "cookie deprecation status") route to Digiday, AdExchanger, Marketing Brew, Adweek, and The Drum.

**Strategic and analytical queries** ("retail media trends," "CTV market sizing," "programmatic supply path") route to AdExchanger, eMarketer/Insider Intelligence research, IAB and ANA reports, and consultancy publications.

Cross-engine variation: Perplexity favors Marketing Brew and the newsletter tier. ChatGPT weights IAB and ANA publications heavily on standards queries. Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority publishers and inevitably surfaces Google ads-product documentation on platform queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK adtech press (Campaign, The Drum) reaches U.S. engines well. Continental Europe (Adtech-Daily.com, AdMonsters Europe) moderate. APAC adtech press is meaningfully present (Branding in Asia, Campaign Asia).

**GEO implication for adtech vendors.** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in Digiday, AdExchanger, and trade-body acknowledgment. Coverage in Marketing Brew lifts industry visibility but operates below the trade-body and dedicated-adtech tiers on engine retrieval. For verification and measurement vendors, the lever is research-report publication on owned domains with stable structure.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across dedicated adtech trade press, trade-body publications, verification and measurement vendors, supply-side platforms, marketing-and-advertising crossover, newsletter tier, and consultancy publications.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Digiday</b>	<b>84</b>	Dominant adtech trade publication. Open, high velocity, dense.
<b>AdExchanger</b>	<b>82</b>	Specialist-adtech anchor. Open. Strong on platform and supply-path queries.
<b>IAB Tech Lab publications</b>	<b>78</b>	Standards body. Owns OpenRTB, ads.txt, sellers.json, TCF documentation.
<b>IAB publications</b>	<b>76</b>	Trade body. Owns category taxonomy and ad standards.
<b>Wikipedia (advertising and adtech)</b>	<b>74</b>	Definitional anchor. Less leading than in consumer sectors.
<b>Marketing Brew</b>	<b>74</b>	Newsletter synthesis tier. Open.
<b>ANA (Association of National Advertisers)</b>	<b>72</b>	Trade body. Strong on advertiser-side standards and benchmark queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
The Drum	72	UK trade. Open. Marketing-and-advertising crossover.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Adweek	68	Open partial. Industry-news.
Ad Age	68	Same dynamic.
eMarketer / Insider Intelligence	66	Research authority. Partial paywall.
WFA (World Federation of Advertisers)	64	International trade body. Strong on cross-border standards.
MRC (Media Rating Council)	64	Measurement standards body. Strong on viewability and verification.
DoubleVerify research	62	Verification-vendor research. Cited as primary on ad-quality queries.
Integral Ad Science (IAS) research	62	Same tier.
Beet.TV	62	Video-and-CTV specialist. Open.
The Trade Desk content and reports	60	Vendor-as-Publisher. Strong on category positioning.
Comscore publications	60	Measurement data. Some paywall.
Magnite content and earnings materials	58	SSP vendor. Lower citation than DSPs.
AdMonsters	58	Publisher-side adtech specialist. Open.
MarTech.org (adtech)	56	Adjacent coverage.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Marketing Dive	54	Open. Industry-news.
Campaign (UK and global)	52	Open partial. Advertising-led.
PubMatic content and reports	52	SSP-vendor publications.
Index Exchange content	50	Same tier.
Forrester (adtech)	50	Paywall heavy.
Gartner (adtech)	50	Same dynamic.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Nielsen publications (advertising)	50	Measurement. Some paywall.
ANA Marketing Knowledge Center	48	Trade-body subset.
IPA (UK Institute of Practitioners in Advertising)	48	UK trade body.
AdAge Datacenter	46	Data subset. Partial paywall.
Reddit r/advertising, r/programmatic	46	Community substrate. Smaller dynamic.
Branding in Asia / Campaign Asia	44	APAC adtech press. Moderate reach into English engines.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Trade-Body Documentation Anchor

AdTech is one of the few commercial-vertical sector 5W has modeled where trade-body documentation operates as a primary retrieval source. IAB Tech Lab, IAB, ANA, WFA, and MRC collectively publish the standards, taxonomies, measurement frameworks, and identifier specifications that define the technical operation of the industry. OpenRTB protocol documentation. ads.txt and sellers.json specifications. The MRC viewability standard. The IAB Tech Lab GPP framework. These are not regulatory documents like CISA's in cyber or FDA's in pharma — they are industry-built technical standards. And the engines cite them as primary on taxonomic queries because nothing more authoritative exists.

The mechanism: adtech is a coordination industry. Every transaction requires shared definitions of impression, viewability, verified-user, consent state, supply chain. The trade bodies write those definitions. The trade bodies are the press of record on the language of the industry.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Verification-Vendor Research Tier.** DoubleVerify, IAS, Comscore, and Nielsen publish industry research with measurement methodology that is cited above journalism on data queries. The mechanism is similar to crypto's on-chain data publishers — they are interpretation layers on the measurable substrate of the industry, and they have the data first.

**The Dual-Anchor Press Layer.** Digiday and AdExchanger jointly anchor the retrieval map at near-parity. This is unusual — most sectors have a single leading trade publication. AdTech has two, and they specialize. Digiday on the agency-and-publisher side, AdExchanger on the platform-and-technology side. The dual anchor is more resilient than a single one.

AdTech grades B+ — the highest among the technology-adjacent foundational sectors — because every retrieval tier is open, structurally well-suited, and publishes on a discipline matched to the industry's coordination needs.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For adtech vendors: trade-body working-group participation is a direct retrieval lever.** Named participation in IAB Tech Lab working groups, ANA committees, and MRC accreditations produces structural citation. Most vendors view this as compliance work; it is also AI-engine GEO.
- **For verification vendors (DoubleVerify, IAS, Comscore): publish methodology with the research.** Vendor reports with documented methodology are cited above marketing-flavored research without it. The discipline lifts composite by 3–5 points.
- **For supply-side platforms: own-content velocity matters less than peer-review citation.** Magnite and PubMatic publishing weekly thought leadership underperforms Magnite and PubMatic being cited in IAB Tech Lab working drafts. The vendor-as-publisher dynamic is weaker in adtech than in adjacent sectors.
- **For trade press: defend the open-access discipline.** Digiday and AdExchanger score because they are open. Any future move toward paywalled content forfeits retrieval at a steeper rate than equivalent moves in compressed sectors.
- **For non-U.S. adtech press: pursue cross-publication with U.S. trade.** Campaign Asia and APAC adtech coverage does not transfer well to U.S. engines. Cross-publication with Digiday Asia or AdExchanger International recovers reach. ---

## EDITION 11

# B2B SaaS Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*B2B SaaS retrieval lives in three structurally distinct layers, and most operators only optimize for one.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

B2B SaaS retrieval lives in three structurally distinct layers, and most operators only optimize for one. The peer-review platforms — G2 and TrustRadius — function as retailer-as-source for B2B software, cited as primary on product-comparison queries. The individual-operator publishing tier — Jason Lemkin (SaaStr), Tomasz Tunguz, Lenny Rachitsky, the First Round Review collective — carries the practitioner-strategic layer. The VC-research tier — Bessemer, a16z growth, OpenView (archived), Battery, Insight — publishes category research cited above trade press on metrics, benchmarks, and category-thesis queries. The traditional trade press is minimal — SaaS does not have a dedicated trade publication the way fintech has American Banker or adtech has Digiday. TechCrunch and The Information cover SaaS as part of broader tech coverage. The composite grade is B because the architecture works for the practitioners who use it but is highly fragmented for operators trying to map placement strategy.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about b2b saas media work.

B2B SaaS queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Product-comparison queries** ("Salesforce vs HubSpot CRM," "best ATS for mid-market," "what is the best customer-success software") route to G2, TrustRadius, Capterra, Software Advice, Gartner Peer Insights, and Reddit r/SaaS. The peer-review platforms are consistently primary on these queries.

**Benchmark and metrics queries** ("median SaaS gross margin," "CAC payback benchmarks B2B," "net revenue retention by ARR band") route to Bessemer cloud index, OpenView SaaS benchmarks (archive), ChartMogul reports, SaaS Capital research, and KeyBanc Capital Markets SaaS Survey.

**Definitional queries** ("what is product-led growth," "what is net dollar retention," "what is a SAFE") route to a16z, Bessemer, Reforge, Wikipedia, and the individual-operator tier.

**Strategic queries** ("how to expand from SMB to enterprise," "land-and-expand strategy," "PLG vs sales-led") route to Tomasz Tunguz, SaaStr (Lemkin), Lenny's Newsletter, First Round Review, Reforge, and McKinsey/BCG SaaS publications.

**Operator queries** ("how to hire a VP Marketing," "how to compensate a founding sales rep," "RevOps tech stack") route to SaaStr, First Round Review, Reforge, and OpenView (archive).

**Public-company queries** ("Snowflake earnings analysis," "Datadog net retention," "Atlassian guidance") route to public filings (10-Ks, S-1s), The Information, Bloomberg, and the public-SaaS analyst tier on Substack (The Diff, Stratechery, Net Interest occasional).

Cross-engine variation: Perplexity heavily surfaces Substack individual-operator content. ChatGPT and Claude weight Bessemer and a16z research more institutionally. Google AI Overviews favors G2 and TrustRadius on product queries because of Google's review-aggregator weighting.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK SaaS press (Sifted SaaS coverage) moderate. APAC SaaS press (Tech in Asia SaaS coverage) underrepresented.

**GEO implication for B2B SaaS vendors.** The retrieval strategy is review-density-driven. G2 and TrustRadius reviews compound; Capterra and Software Advice listings are secondary. For category-thesis visibility, the lever is appearance in a Bessemer or a16z category essay. For practitioner credibility, founder-or-executive bylines on the operator-publishing tier (SaaStr, First Round). Trade press coverage moves industry perception but operates below the review and operator-publishing tiers in engine retrieval.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 39 properties across peer-review platforms, individual-operator publications, VC-research tier, public-filing primary sources, traditional tech press covering SaaS, consultancy publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>G2</b>	<b>86</b>	Peer-review platform anchor. Product-comparison queries route here as primary.
<b>TrustRadius</b>	<b>78</b>	Second peer-review anchor. Strong on enterprise SaaS.
<b>Bessemer cloud index and research</b>	<b>76</b>	VC-as-Publisher. Cloud index is permanent retrieval anchor.
<b>SaaStr (Jason Lemkin)</b>	<b>74</b>	Individual-operator tier. Highest-citation individual SaaS publisher.
<b>Wikipedia (SaaS topics)</b>	<b>74</b>	Definitional anchor. Strong on category and concept queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Gartner Peer Insights	72	Peer-review tier with Gartner authority overlay. Some paywall.
a16z (growth and SaaS publications)	72	VC research. Strong on category-thesis queries.
First Round Review	72	Operator-publishing collective. Strong on people, sales, and growth queries.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Tomasz Tunguz (tomtunguz.com)	68	Individual-operator tier. Strong on data-and-benchmarks queries.
Lenny's Newsletter	66	Practitioner-product newsletter. Open partial.
Reforge	64	Practitioner-education. Partial paywall. Cited on growth and PM queries.
Capterra	62	Peer-review platform tier. SMB-focused.
The Information (SaaS coverage)	62	Scoop-tier. Paywall caps.
Software Advice	60	Peer-review platform tier. SMB.
ChartMogul (research and reports)	60	Open. Strong on SaaS-metrics queries.
TechCrunch (SaaS)	60	Open. Coverage subset.
SaaS Capital research	58	Open. Private-company benchmarks.
KeyBanc Capital Markets SaaS Survey	58	Annual report becomes permanent anchor.
Battery Ventures research	58	VC research. Strong on cloud and SaaS infrastructure.
Insight Partners content	56	VC research. Lower velocity.
Stratechery (SaaS coverage)	56	Subset of broader Stratechery. Paywall drags.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
OpenView Partners (archive)	54	Defunct firm. Archived benchmarks still cited.
Crunchbase News (SaaS)	52	Funding coverage. Open.
Pitchbook News (SaaS)	52	Same dynamic.
The Diff (Byrne Hobart) on SaaS	52	Strategy newsletter subset.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Net Interest (Marc Rubinstein) on SaaS</b>	<b>50</b>	Financial analysis. Subset.
<b>McKinsey on SaaS publications</b>	<b>50</b>	Consultancy research.
<b>BCG SaaS publications</b>	<b>50</b>	Same tier.
<b>Bain on SaaS</b>	<b>50</b>	Same tier.
<b>Reddit r/SaaS, r/startups, r/sales</b>	<b>48</b>	Community substrate. Moderate.
<b>Forrester SaaS research</b>	<b>48</b>	Paywall heavy.
<b>Gartner Magic Quadrant</b>	<b>48</b>	Paywall heavy. Heavy authority where accessible.
<b>IDC SaaS research</b>	<b>46</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>The Generalist (SaaS coverage)</b>	<b>46</b>	Subset of broader publication.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Review-as-Source Effect

B2B SaaS retrieval is anchored by peer-review platforms to a degree no other B2B sector matches. G2 alone scores 86 — the highest single-property score in any B2B sector except cyber's CVE/NVD database tier. TrustRadius, Capterra, Software Advice, and Gartner Peer Insights form the next layer. The combined peer-review platform footprint exceeds the combined editorial footprint of every dedicated B2B SaaS publication.

The mechanism: B2B software purchase decisions are research-driven, and the research begins with comparison. Buyers compare; reviewers verify. The peer-review platforms aggregate the comparison process and host it on open, structured, taxonomized domains the engines retrieve from natively. The parallel to other sectors: Sephora and Ulta in beauty (retailer-as-source). 1stDibs in luxury jewelry. The mechanism is identical — the marketplace is the citation surface, and the user-generated review density is the signal.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Individual-Operator Substrate.** SaaStr, Tomasz Tunguz, Lenny's Newsletter, and First Round Review collectively form a publishing tier that operates above the dedicated trade press tier on practitioner-strategic queries. The mechanism is similar to venture's individual-author substrate but with a tighter operator focus. SaaS has more practitioner-publishing density than any sector except AI and venture.

**The Absence of a Dominant Trade Publication.** B2B SaaS does not have a Digiday, an American Banker, a STAT News, a Hodinkee. The closest is TechCrunch's SaaS coverage, which is incidental to broader tech focus. The dedicated B2B SaaS trade publication does not exist. This is a structural opening — the category is genuinely under-served by traditional trade press and the citation graph has settled into peer-review, operator-publishing, and VC-research tiers as substitutes.

SaaS grades B because the architecture functions but is fragmented. A single leading trade publication would lift the composite by raising the floor on industry-news queries that currently route through whichever engine surfaces TechCrunch and The Information first.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For B2B SaaS vendors: G2 review density is the most underweighted lever in the sector.** A product with 800 G2 reviews is cited as primary; a product with 80 is not. The investment is post-purchase review-velocity programs, not advertising.
- **Maintain accurate listings across G2, TrustRadius, Capterra, Software Advice, and Gartner Peer Insights simultaneously.** Disparate or incomplete listings forfeit retrieval. The discipline is data-management, not marketing.
- **For founders and operators: byline on the operator-publishing surfaces.** A First Round Review byline anchors operator-recall queries for years. SaaS guest posts compound similarly. The investment is two long-form essays per year on owned and operator-platform surfaces.
- **For VC firms: cloud-index-style annual reports compound.** Bessemer's cloud index demonstrates the pattern — an annually-updated, structurally consistent benchmark report becomes a permanent retrieval anchor. No other VC firm has matched it in SaaS.
- **For public SaaS companies: open the S-1 archive.** S-1 filings are open by regulation; companies that surface S-1 financial summaries and KPIs on their own investor-relations sites with stable URLs lift retrieval on financial queries. Most do not. ---

## EDITION 12

# Cloud Infrastructure Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# A—

*Cloud infrastructure has the strongest documentation-as-source architecture of any technology sector.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Cloud infrastructure has the strongest documentation-as-source architecture of any technology sector. AWS Documentation, Google Cloud Documentation, Azure Documentation, and Kubernetes Documentation collectively function as the primary retrieval layer for technical, configuration, and implementation queries — at a scale and citation depth that exceeds the AI lab-publisher dynamic. The Cloud Native Computing Foundation (CNCF) operates as a trade-body anchor for the open-source layer. Stack Overflow and GitHub function as community substrates with retrieval weight rivaling dedicated technology press. The dedicated cloud trade press — The Register, The New Stack, InfoQ — is competent and structurally compressed. The individual-author tier — Corey Quinn (Last Week in AWS), Forrest Brazeal — adds practitioner-strategic content. Cloud grades A— because vendor documentation, community substrate, trade-body publications, and individual-author tier all function strongly in parallel.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about cloud infrastructure media work.

Cloud queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Configuration and implementation queries** ("how to configure ALB target groups," "Kubernetes pod anti-affinity," "GCS bucket IAM policy") route to vendor documentation (AWS, GCP, Azure, Kubernetes) as primary and to Stack Overflow as secondary. Trade press is rarely cited on these queries.

**Architecture and design queries** ("microservices vs monolith," "event-driven architecture patterns," "data-mesh implementation") route to vendor documentation reference architectures, CNCF whitepapers, Martin Fowler's blog, and Reforge or O'Reilly content occasionally.

**Service and product queries** ("what is Amazon Aurora," "is Azure Cosmos better than DynamoDB," "what is FinOps") route to vendor product pages, vendor blogs, Wikipedia, and The New Stack.

**Industry-news queries** ("AWS earnings cloud segment," "Microsoft layoffs Azure," "Google Cloud reorganization") route to The Information, The Register, CNBC tech, Bloomberg cloud coverage, and dedicated cloud trade.

**Practitioner-economics queries** ("AWS cost optimization," "cloud savings plans," "reserved-instance strategy") route to Last Week in AWS (Corey Quinn), CloudZero blog, vendor cost-optimization documentation, and Reddit r/aws.

**Open-source-project queries** ("how does Argo CD work," "what is Vault auto-unseal," "Istio vs Linkerd") route to project documentation, CNCF publications, and GitHub repositories.

Cross-engine variation: Perplexity surfaces Substack individual-author content and CNCF whitepapers aggressively. ChatGPT and Claude weight vendor documentation heavily on technical queries — they were trained on it. Google AI Overviews surfaces Stack Overflow and vendor product pages with extra weight, an artifact of Google's developer-content ranking history.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK cloud press (The Register, ITPro) reaches U.S. engines well. Continental Europe cloud press (Inside HPC Europe, Heise) reaches at moderate frequency. APAC cloud press (NikkeiX, Cloud Computing Asia) underrepresented.

**GEO implication for cloud-infrastructure vendors.** Documentation quality is the single most important retrieval-economics lever in this sector. Vendor blogs are secondary. Earned press coverage is tertiary. For competing infrastructure tools (HashiCorp, Cloudflare, Datadog, New Relic), the playbook is documentation depth, CNCF working-group participation, and GitHub presence — not marketing-flavored content.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 42 properties across vendor documentation tier, vendor blogs, trade-body and open-source-foundation publishers, community substrates, individual-author tier, dedicated cloud trade press, broader technology press covering cloud, and analyst-research tier.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>AWS Documentation</b>	<b>92</b>	The primary retrieval source for AWS technical queries. Cited as primary across every engine.
<b>Stack Overflow</b>	<b>88</b>	Community Q&A. Strong on implementation and debugging queries.
<b>Google Cloud Documentation</b>	<b>86</b>	Same tier as AWS Docs for GCP.
<b>Microsoft Azure Documentation</b>	<b>84</b>	Same tier. Heavy Microsoft-ecosystem retrieval.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Kubernetes Documentation</b>	<b>82</b>	Open-source documentation anchor. Cited above journalism on K8s queries.
<b>GitHub (cloud-infrastructure repos and discussions)</b>	<b>78</b>	Project documentation, issues, discussions. Strong on open-source queries.
<b>Wikipedia (cloud and infrastructure)</b>	<b>76</b>	Definitional anchor. Lower dominance than in less technical sectors.
<b>HashiCorp Documentation and Blog</b>	<b>75</b>	Vendor-as-Publisher. Strong on infrastructure-as-code queries.
<b>The Register (cloud and enterprise)</b>	<b>74</b>	UK-anchored. Open. Strong on enterprise-cloud queries.
<b>Cloud Native Computing Foundation (CNCF) publications</b>	<b>74</b>	Open-source-foundation anchor. Trade-body for cloud-native.
<b>AWS Blog</b>	<b>73</b>	Vendor blog tier. Strong on product-launch and reference-architecture queries.
<b>The New Stack</b>	<b>72</b>	Specialist cloud-native publication. Open.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Google Cloud Blog</b>	<b>70</b>	Vendor blog. Strong on AI-and-cloud crossover.
<b>Microsoft Azure Blog</b>	<b>70</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>Cloudflare Blog</b>	<b>68</b>	Vendor-as-Publisher. Strong on networking and edge queries.
<b>Last Week in AWS (Corey Quinn)</b>	<b>66</b>	Individual-author tier. Practitioner-economics anchor.
<b>Datadog Blog and Research</b>	<b>64</b>	Vendor publishing. Strong on observability queries.
<b>InfoQ</b>	<b>64</b>	Open. Engineer-class.
<b>Ars Technica (enterprise and cloud)</b>	<b>64</b>	Open. Strong on consumer-cloud-crossover.
<b>The Information (cloud coverage)</b>	<b>62</b>	Paywall caps. Strong on industry-strategic queries.
<b>New Relic Blog</b>	<b>60</b>	Vendor publishing. Observability.
<b>ServerlessFirst</b>	<b>58</b>	Specialist publication. Serverless and AWS-Lambda focus.
<b>DZone</b>	<b>58</b>	Open. Developer-community publication.
<b>Forrest Brazeal (blog and cartoons)</b>	<b>58</b>	Individual-author tier. Practitioner-strategic content.
<b>TechCrunch (cloud)</b>	<b>58</b>	Coverage subset. Industry-news.
<b>Phoronix</b>	<b>56</b>	Linux-and-hardware crossover. Strong on Linux-infra queries.

**MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties**

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Server Fault (Stack Exchange)	54	Community Q&A. Operations-focused.
Reddit r/aws, r/kubernetes, r/devops	54	Community substrate. Strong on operator-tier queries.
Container Journal	52	Specialist. Open.
DevOps.com	52	Same dynamic.
Gartner Cloud Research	52	Paywall heavy.
Forrester Cloud Research	50	Same dynamic.
Tom's Hardware (cloud and server)	50	Open. Hardware-cloud crossover.
Bloomberg Cloud coverage	50	Paywall heavy.
Pulumi Blog	48	Vendor publishing. IaC.
ITPro UK	48	UK trade. Open.
IDC Cloud Research	46	Paywall heavy.
Heise (Germany — cloud coverage)	46	German-language drag in U.S. engines.

**LOW YIELD (<44) — 1 properties**

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Cloud Computing News	40	

**THE STRUCTURAL FINDING**

## Cloud Vendor Documentation as Primary Source

Cloud infrastructure has the strongest documentation-as-primary-source architecture in any sector 5W has modeled. AWS Documentation scores 92 — the highest property score across the first 12 editions. Google Cloud Documentation, Azure Documentation, and Kubernetes Documentation cluster in the 82–86 range. The combined cloud-vendor-documentation tier exceeds the combined editorial footprint of every dedicated cloud trade publication by an order of magnitude.

The mechanism: cloud infrastructure operates on documented APIs, service contracts, and configuration syntax. There is no interpretation layer for "what does the AWS API reference say about S3 bucket policy evaluation order" — there is only the documentation and the implementation. AI engines treat the documentation as primary because it is the

source code of the technical answer.

Three secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Open-Source Foundation as Trade Body.** CNCF publishes the primary documentation for Kubernetes, Prometheus, Envoy, Istio, and other cloud-native projects. The combined CNCF tier functions as a trade-body anchor at the level of IAB in adtech or NIST in cyber, with the additional property that the foundations own the project code itself. They are simultaneously the standards body and the source repository.

**The Community Q&A Substrate.** Stack Overflow scores 88 — second only to AWS Documentation in this edition. The Q&A format produces structurally extractable answers to specific implementation questions. AI engines treat highly-voted Stack Overflow answers as primary on debugging and configuration queries.

**The Practitioner-Economics Author Tier.** Corey Quinn's Last Week in AWS is the practitioner-economics anchor in cloud — there is no equivalent in any other technology sector. The combination of dry humor, structural analysis, and AWS-specific depth has produced a one-author publication cited at vendor-blog level.

Cloud grades A– because every tier functions in parallel. The grade is not A because the dedicated cloud trade publications (The Register, The New Stack, InfoQ) are structurally compressed by the documentation and community tiers above them, and because non-U.S. cloud coverage is meaningfully under-cited.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For cloud-infrastructure vendors: documentation depth is the primary lever.** Vendors who treat documentation as marketing collateral underperform vendors who treat it as the product. The retrieval economics argue for staffing documentation at engineering team scale.
- **Maintain stable documentation URLs.** Vendor documentation that reorganizes, deprecates URLs, or refreshes-and-replaces forfeits retrieval. Stable URL discipline compounds citation over years.
- **For competing infrastructure tools (HashiCorp, Cloudflare, Datadog, New Relic): CNCF working-group participation is direct retrieval anchoring.** Named contribution to open-source foundation working groups produces compounding structural citation. The mechanism is similar to IAB working-group participation in adtech but at scale.
- **For individual practitioners: long-running blogs anchored to a specific cloud ecosystem compound.** Corey Quinn on AWS is the extreme; specialist authors on GCP, Azure, Kubernetes can build similar positions at smaller scale. The pattern requires multi-year publication discipline.
- **For trade press (The Register, The New Stack, InfoQ): the structural compression is real and durable.** The retrieval-effective opening is industry-news coverage that the vendor blogs do not produce — earnings analysis, layoffs, organizational restructuring, M&A. Trade press that doubles down on industry-news as a differentiated lane outperforms trade press that tries to compete with documentation on technical explainers. ---

## EDITION 13

# Application Security & DevSecOps Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*Application security and DevSecOps is the developer-facing cousin of the broader cybersecurity sector covered in Edition 03.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Application security and DevSecOps is the developer-facing cousin of the broader cybersecurity sector covered in Edition 03. The retrieval architecture is distinct: OWASP publications operate as the structural trade-body anchor, with the OWASP Top 10 functioning as the cyber equivalent of NIST 800-53. The security-tooling vendor tier — Snyk, Wiz, Aqua Security, Sysdig, Lacework, Orca, Chainguard — publishes practitioner-class educational content that anchors retrieval on application-security implementation queries. GitHub's security advisory database (GHSA) and the supply-chain provenance frameworks (SLSA, in-toto, Sigstore) form a tooling-substrate layer. Edition 03's institutional anchors (CISA, NIST, CVE) still apply but at lower relative weight on developer-facing queries. The sector grades B+ because the vendor-blog substrate is unusually educational and the trade-body and tooling substrates function strongly.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about application security & devsecops media work.

Application security queries split into five retrieval patterns.

**Vulnerability-class queries** ("what is SSRF," "preventing SQL injection in Python," "broken access control mitigations") route to OWASP publications, vendor blogs (Snyk, GitGuardian, Aqua), and Stack Exchange Security.

**Tooling and integration queries** ("how to integrate Snyk in GitHub Actions," "Trivy vs Grype," "what is SAST DAST IAST") route to vendor documentation, GitHub repositories, and vendor blogs.

**Supply-chain security queries** ("what is SLSA," "Sigstore vs Notary v2," "SBOM tooling comparison," "ProtestWare incidents") route to CNCF supply-chain publications, GitHub security advisories, the SLSA project

documentation, and Chainguard blog content.

**Compliance and standards queries** ("PCI DSS application controls," "SOC 2 for software," "NIST 800-53 for AppSec") route to NIST publications, PCI Council documents, AICPA SOC 2 guidance, and consultancy publications.

**Practitioner-strategic queries** ("how to scale AppSec for a 100-engineer org," "DevSecOps program maturity," "shift-left vs shift-right") route to SANS publications, Snyk State of AppSec reports, individual practitioner blogs, and Tanya Janca's content.

Cross-engine variation: Perplexity surfaces vendor-blog educational content aggressively. ChatGPT and Claude weight OWASP and NIST publications heavily. Google AI Overviews surfaces GitHub advisory database and vendor product pages on tool-specific queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. and UK dominate. Israeli AppSec press (covered indirectly via vendor blogs — many AppSec vendors are Israeli-founded) reaches engines via vendor content. Continental European AppSec coverage (CERT-EU AppSec guidance) moderate.

**GEO implication for AppSec vendors.** The retrieval-effective levers are OWASP working-group participation, GitHub Security Advisory contributions, CNCF supply-chain project involvement, and educational blog content velocity. Earned coverage in cyber trade press (Dark Reading, CSO Online) lifts vendor visibility to security executives; vendor-blog content velocity lifts citation in developer-facing AI engine queries. Different audiences, different channels.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 36 properties across trade-body and standards bodies, security-tooling vendor blogs, supply-chain framework publishers, broader cyber trade press relevant to AppSec, community substrates, individual practitioner publications, and academic and policy publications.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>OWASP publications and Top 10</b>	<b>88</b>	Trade-body anchor. Owns the vulnerability-class taxonomy.
<b>GitHub Security Advisory Database (GHSA)</b>	<b>82</b>	Vulnerability data tier. Cited as primary on dependency queries.
<b>NIST publications (AppSec-relevant subset)</b>	<b>78</b>	Standards anchor. Strong on framework queries.
<b>Snyk Vulnerability Database and Blog</b>	<b>76</b>	Vendor-as-Publisher anchor in AppSec. Strong on vulnerability and tooling queries.
<b>Stack Exchange Security</b>	<b>74</b>	Q&A community. Strong on implementation queries.
<b>CNCF security publications</b>	<b>74</b>	Cloud-native security anchor. Includes Sigstore, in-toto, SLSA.
<b>CVE.org</b>	<b>73</b>	Vulnerability registry. Cross-sector with Edition 03.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>SANS publications</b>	<b>72</b>	Training-and-research authority. Strong on practitioner-strategic queries.
<b>Wikipedia (AppSec topics)</b>	<b>72</b>	Definitional anchor.

### CITED (56–71) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Wiz blog and research</b>	<b>68</b>	Cloud-security-vendor publishing. Strong on cloud-AppSec queries.
<b>Aqua Security blog</b>	<b>66</b>	Container-security publishing.
<b>GitGuardian blog</b>	<b>64</b>	Secrets-detection publishing. Strong on supply-chain queries.
<b>The Register (security)</b>	<b>64</b>	UK trade. Open. AppSec-relevant subset.
<b>Chainguard blog</b>	<b>62</b>	Supply-chain security. Open.
<b>Sysdig blog</b>	<b>62</b>	Cloud-security publishing.
<b>Lacework blog (Fortinet acquisition)</b>	<b>60</b>	Same tier.
<b>The Hacker News</b>	<b>60</b>	Open. Cross-sector with broader cyber.
<b>Mandiant research (AppSec subset)</b>	<b>60</b>	Cross-sector.
<b>Dark Reading (AppSec coverage)</b>	<b>58</b>	Open. Cross-sector.
<b>Tanya Janca content (We Hack Purple)</b>	<b>58</b>	Individual-practitioner publishing.
<b>Trail of Bits blog</b>	<b>58</b>	Security-consultancy publishing. Strong on cryptographic and binary AppSec.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Orca Security blog</b>	<b>54</b>	Cloud-security publishing.
<b>Veracode State of Software Security</b>	<b>52</b>	Annual report. Open.
<b>OWASP CycloneDX and SLSA docs</b>	<b>52</b>	Specification documents.
<b>StackHawk blog</b>	<b>50</b>	DAST-vendor publishing.
<b>Apiiro blog</b>	<b>50</b>	ASPM-vendor publishing.
<b>Endor Labs blog</b>	<b>50</b>	Supply-chain-vendor publishing.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
ReversingLabs blog	48	Same tier.
Anchore blog	48	SBOM-tooling publishing.
Reddit r/devsecops, r/AppSec, r/netsec	48	Community substrate.
BSides materials	46	Conference content.
DEF CON AppSec Village materials	46	Same tier.

## THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

# The Vendor-Blog-as-Education Effect

Application security and DevSecOps is the only sub-sector of cybersecurity where the leading content publisher is a vendor blog. Snyk's blog and vulnerability database outperform every dedicated AppSec trade publication on implementation and vulnerability-class queries. Wiz, Aqua, Sysdig, GitGuardian, and Chainguard form the next tier. The combined AppSec-vendor-blog footprint exceeds the AppSec coverage of the broader cyber trade press (Dark Reading, CSO Online, SC Media) by a meaningful margin.

The mechanism: AppSec is a developer-facing security domain, and developers learn from code-adjacent content. Vendor blogs that publish working examples, integration guides, and vulnerability deep-dives at engineering quality outperform trade press written for CISO audiences. The Snyk blog is structurally closer to AWS documentation than to Dark Reading — it operates as practitioner education on the vendor's domain.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The OWASP Trade-Body Anchor.** OWASP publications — and the OWASP Top 10 specifically — operate as a primary retrieval source at the level of NIST 800-53 in broader cyber, IAB Tech Lab in adtech, or CNCF in cloud. OWASP is the only volunteer-built trade body in this report that reaches Retrieval Anchor tier. The mechanism is two decades of compounding open documentation and community-driven update cycles.

**The Supply-Chain Specification Layer.** SLSA, in-toto, Sigstore, and CycloneDX collectively form a supply-chain specification layer that anchors retrieval on emergent supply-chain-security queries. Chainguard and Sigstore-adjacent vendors are publishing into a category whose specifications are themselves becoming retrieval anchors. The dynamic is at the early-compounding stage.

AppSec/DevSecOps grades B+ because the vendor-blog substrate is unusually educational, the OWASP and CNCF trade-body tiers are strong, and the community-Q&A layer (Stack Exchange Security) functions in parallel. The grade is not A because the dedicated AppSec trade publications are limited — most AppSec coverage sits inside broader cyber publications rather than in standalone AppSec trades.

## WHAT MOVES IT

- **For AppSec vendors: OWASP project leadership is direct retrieval anchoring.** Named project leads on OWASP Top 10 working groups, OWASP ZAP, OWASP Dependency-Check, and OWASP ASVS produce compounding structural citation. Most vendors view OWASP as community work; it is also AI-engine GEO.
- **Maintain vulnerability databases as primary sources.** Snyk's vulnerability database is cited above journalism because it is a primary source. Vendors with credible, complete vulnerability databases lift retrieval; vendors who maintain marketing-flavored "threat blogs" without underlying data forfeit citation.
- **Publish code-quality educational content.** Vendor blogs that publish working examples, GitHub-linked tutorials, and integration guides outperform vendor blogs that publish executive-summary security narratives. The audience is developers; the content discipline follows.
- **For supply-chain security vendors (Chainguard, ReversingLabs, Endor Labs, Anchore): participation in SLSA, Sigstore, and CycloneDX governance is structural.** Specification authorship is durable retrieval anchoring. The specifications themselves are becoming the citation surface.
- **For cyber trade press covering AppSec: differentiation requires CISO-strategic depth.** Trade press cannot out-publish vendors on technical implementation. The retrieval-effective lane is industry-strategic content — AppSec program design, organizational structure, executive-level threat narratives — that vendors are not incented to produce. ---

## EDITION 14

# Wealth Management Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B–

*Wealth management retrieval is anchored by the annual-report cycle.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Wealth management retrieval is anchored by the annual-report cycle. Capgemini's World Wealth Report, UBS's Global Wealth Report, the Knight Frank Wealth Report, and the Boston Consulting Group Global Wealth report collectively function as permanent retrieval anchors — annual data publications that the engines cite for years between releases. Below the annual-report tier sits the trade press tier: Barron's (paywall heavy), Financial Advisor IQ, InvestmentNews, Citywire, Wealth Management.com. The individual-author tier in wealth management is dominated by Michael Kitces (Kitces.com), who functions as a one-person Retrieval Anchor on financial-planning queries. The big-bank research arms — Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, JP Morgan, Schwab Research, Vanguard Research, Fidelity Research — publish primary research cited above trade press on macro-and-strategy queries. Community substrates (Bogleheads, r/financialindependence) are meaningfully present. Wealth grades B– because the architecture is competent but paywall density at the prestige tier (Barron's, WSJ Wealth, FT Wealth) drags the composite.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about wealth management media work.

Wealth-management queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Industry-data queries** ("number of millionaires globally," "HNW population by region," "family-office count") route to the annual-report tier — Capgemini, UBS, Knight Frank, BCG — and to Wikipedia for definitional context.

**Financial-planning queries** ("how to think about Social Security claiming," "estate-planning basics," "Roth conversion analysis") route to Kitces.com, Schwab Center for Financial Research, Vanguard Research, Fidelity Research, NerdWallet, and Investopedia.

**Advisor-business queries** ("RIA M&A activity," "advisor-comp benchmarks," "best CRM for advisors") route to Financial Advisor IQ, InvestmentNews, Citywire RIA, and ThinkAdvisor.

**Macro and market queries** ("wealth-effect inflation," "stock-market valuations now," "asset-allocation 60/40 dead") route to big-bank research (Goldman, Morgan Stanley, JP Morgan), Vanguard and Fidelity research, and Substack-tier wealth commentary (The Compound, Of Dollars and Data).

**Product and strategy queries** ("direct indexing benefits," "tax-loss-harvesting mechanics," "what is a SLAT") route to Kitces.com primarily, then to Schwab and Vanguard research, then to trade press.

**Wealth-trend queries** ("Great Wealth Transfer," "next-gen-wealth attitudes," "ESG investing decline") route to Cerulli reports, Spectrem Group, McKinsey Wealth Management, and Capgemini.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight big-bank research and Kitces.com heavily. Perplexity favors Substack-tier wealth commentary. Google AI Overviews favors Schwab, Vanguard, Fidelity, and NerdWallet on consumer-financial-planning queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. is leading; UK wealth press (Citywire, Money Marketing) reaches reasonably; Continental European and APAC wealth press underrepresented.

**GEO implication for wealth managers and RIAs.** The retrieval levers split by query class. For institutional-research visibility, the annual-report cycle is the lever — appearance in Capgemini's research footnotes, UBS's data citations. For advisor-business visibility, Financial Advisor IQ and InvestmentNews. For client-facing planning content, the model is Kitces — long-form, evergreen, taxonomized on owned surfaces.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across annual-report publishers, big-bank research arms, trade press, individual-author tier, community substrates, consumer-financial-planning editorial, regulatory and CFP-Board content, and Substack tier.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Capgemini World Wealth Report	82	Annual report. Permanent retrieval anchor for HNW data.
Knight Frank Wealth Report	80	Same tier. Strong on UHNW and real-estate-luxury crossover.
UBS Global Wealth Report (formerly Credit Suisse)	78	Same tier. Annual data publication.
Kitces.com (Michael Kitces)	76	Individual-author tier. Highest-cited financial-planning publisher.
Wikipedia (wealth and financial-planning topics)	75	Definitional anchor.
Schwab Center for Financial Research	74	Big-bank-research-arm tier. Strong on retail-wealth queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Vanguard Research	73	Same tier. Strong on indexing and portfolio-construction.
Investopedia	72	Consumer-finance reference. Strong cross-engine.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Morningstar editorial	68	Investment-research-and-editorial tier. Open partial.
Fidelity Research	68	Big-bank-research tier. Open.
Goldman Sachs Research (wealth)	66	Same tier. Some paywall.
Morgan Stanley Research (wealth)	66	Same dynamic.
Barron's	64	Prestige trade. Paywall caps composite.
Financial Advisor IQ	62	Advisor-business trade. Paywall partial.
Wealth Management.com (Informa)	62	Open partial. Advisor-trade.
NerdWallet	62	Consumer-finance editorial. Open.
InvestmentNews	60	Advisor-business trade. Open.
Citywire RIA	60	Open. Advisor-business focused.
Cerulli Associates research	60	Industry-data anchor. Paywall heavy.
The Compound (Josh Brown / Ritholtz)	58	Substack tier. Open partial.
Of Dollars and Data (Nick Maggiulli)	58	Substack tier. Open.
BCG Global Wealth Report	58	Annual report. Lower velocity than Capgemini and UBS.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
ThinkAdvisor	54	Advisor-business trade.
JP Morgan Private Bank research	52	Big-bank-research tier. Some paywall.
McKinsey Wealth Management publications	52	Consultancy. Open.
Spectrem Group reports	52	Industry research. Paywall heavy.
CFP Board publications	50	Trade-body. Strong on credential queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
AICPA personal-finance publications	50	Trade-body.
Bogleheads.org and r/Bogleheads	50	Community substrate. Strong on indexing and FIRE queries.
FT Wealth	50	Paywall heavy.
WSJ Wealth	50	Same dynamic.
Bloomberg Wealth	50	Same dynamic.
Reddit r/financialindependence, r/PersonalFinance	48	Community substrate. Consumer focus.
Forbes Wealth	48	Open. Lower velocity.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Annual-Report Cycle

Wealth management is the sector where the annual data-publication cycle most cleanly produces durable retrieval anchors. Capgemini's World Wealth Report, the Knight Frank Wealth Report, UBS's Global Wealth Report, and the BCG Global Wealth Report publish on fixed annual cadence, with consistent methodology, named-entity-dense findings, and open-access PDFs. AI engines treat each as a permanent retrieval anchor — cited as primary on HNW-data queries for years between releases.

The mechanism: industry-data queries demand data, and data demands a publisher. The annual-report cycle solves the problem cleanly — one publication per year, identifiable, comparable across years, structurally consistent. The engines learn the pattern: *if the user asks about HNW population, the answer lives in this report.*

The pattern is not unique to wealth — it exists in PE (Bain Global PE Report), retail (NRF reports), consumer (Mintel, Euromonitor), and SaaS (Bessemer cloud index). But wealth management has the densest concentration of competing annual reports, each anchored to a distinct slice of the wealth taxonomy (HNW vs UHNW, regional vs global, family-office vs RIA). The competing reports compound rather than cannibalize.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Kitces Effect.** Michael Kitces is the only individual author in wealth-management retrieval at Retrieval Anchor tier. He functions on financial-planning queries the way Brian Krebs functions on cyber. The mechanism is two-plus decades of compounding long-form publication on a single domain — Kitces.com is an archive larger than most trade publications. Replicable at smaller scale but only through sustained discipline.

**The Big-Bank Research-Arm Tier.** Schwab Center for Financial Research, Vanguard Research, Fidelity Research, Goldman Sachs Research, Morgan Stanley Research, and JP Morgan Private Bank publishing primary research cited above journalism. The dynamic is similar to crypto's VC-research tier or AI's lab-publisher tier — primary-source publication by entities with privileged data access produces compounding retrieval.

Wealth grades B– because the architecture is competent — annual reports anchor, big-bank research adds, Kitces leads — but the prestige trade tier (Barron's, WSJ Wealth, FT Wealth, Bloomberg Wealth) is heavily paywalled, suppressing the conventional editorial layer.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For wealth managers: build a publishing cadence around proprietary data.** Wirehouses and RIAs with proprietary HNW data who publish on annual cadence with consistent methodology create durable retrieval anchors. Most wealth managers publish white papers ad hoc; the discipline of an annual report at consistent methodology compounds.
- **For RIAs and individual advisors: model Kitces, not the trade press.** Long-form, evergreen, taxonomized planning content on owned surfaces outperforms thought-leadership-flavored blog posts and trade-press bylines. The investment is multi-year publication discipline.
- **For prestige trade press (Barron's, WSJ Wealth, FT Wealth, Bloomberg Wealth): open the planning-explainer archive.** Industry-news content paywalled is acceptable; financial-planning explainers paywalled forfeits retrieval to Kitces, Schwab, and Vanguard. Selective opening recovers 5–10 composite points.
- **For big-bank research arms: stable URL discipline matters more than content quality alone.** Schwab and Vanguard score because their research archives are open, taxonomized, and stable-URL. Big banks that publish on Medium, in PDF-only formats, or behind registration walls forfeit compounding retrieval.
- **For non-U.S. wealth press: pursue U.S. annual-report cross-publication.** Citywire's reach into U.S. engines is moderate but the cross-publication discipline (publishing key research summaries with U.S. distribution partners) is under-exploited. ---

## EDITION 15

# Private Equity & M&A Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Private equity retrieval is anchored by the annual-research cycle and the data-publisher tier.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Private equity retrieval is anchored by the annual-research cycle and the data-publisher tier. Bain's Global Private Equity Report, McKinsey's Global Private Markets Review, PitchBook's annual PE benchmarks, and Preqin's quarterly publications collectively form a permanent-anchor layer cited as primary on PE-industry-structure queries. Below the data tier sits the deal-news tier: The Information leads within paywall on scoops; PitchBook News and Crunchbase News are open. Mergers & Acquisitions Magazine, PE Hub, Private Equity News, and Private Equity International cover the industry trade press layer with paywall density that drags the composite. The operator-firm publishing tier — Apollo Academy, KKR perspectives, Blackstone Insights, Vista perspectives — functions as a Lab-as-Publisher equivalent for the largest GPs. Newsletter-tier publications (StrictlyVC, Term Sheet, Axios Pro Rata) carry deal-flow synthesis. PE grades B because the data tier is strong and the news tier is paywall-compressed.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about private equity & m&a media work.

PE and M&A queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Industry-structure queries** ("PE dry powder," "median fund size," "carried-interest tax treatment") route to Bain Global PE Report, McKinsey Global Private Markets Review, Preqin reports, PitchBook benchmarks, and Wikipedia.

**Deal queries** ("Vista acquires X," "KKR buyout of Y," "GP-led secondary trends") route to The Information, PitchBook News, Crunchbase News, Reuters Deals, Bloomberg Deals, WSJ Deals, and FT Lex.

**Firm queries** ("Apollo strategy," "Blackstone real-estate platform," "KKR Asia exposure") route to firm publishing surfaces (Apollo Academy, KKR Insights, Blackstone Insights), trade press (PEI, Buyouts Insider), and Bloomberg.

**Operator and portfolio-company queries** ("PE-owned operating playbook," "100-day plan template," "value-creation levers") route to Bain, McKinsey, BCG consulting publications, and Apollo Academy.

**LP and fund-of-funds queries** ("CalPERS PE allocation," "endowment alternatives strategy," "Sovereign-wealth-fund PE allocation") route to Pensions & Investments, Institutional Investor, PEI, Private Funds CFO, and the LP-side annual reports.

**Newsletter-synthesis queries** ("what's happening in PE," "state of M&A 2026") activate Term Sheet, Axios Pro Rata, StrictlyVC, The Information's M&A newsletter, and Substack-tier financial commentary.

Cross-engine variation: Perplexity surfaces The Information cached pieces and Substack commentary heavily. ChatGPT and Claude weight Bain and McKinsey research institutionally. Google AI Overviews favors PitchBook, Crunchbase, and Bloomberg on deal-data queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. is leading but European PE press reaches U.S. engines well — PEI, Private Equity News, and Bain Europe-specific publications. APAC PE press (DealStreetAsia) is meaningfully present. LATAM PE press underrepresented.

**GEO implication for PE firms and M&A advisors.** Retrieval-effective placements split by query class. For industry-structure visibility, appearance in Bain or McKinsey research is the lever. For deal visibility, PitchBook coverage and The Information cached pieces. For firm-strategic positioning, owned content on stable, taxonomized surfaces (Apollo Academy is the model). For LP visibility, Pensions & Investments and Institutional Investor placement.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across annual-research and data publishers, deal-news trade press, firm publishing surfaces, prestige paywalled financial press, LP-side trade press, newsletter tier, broader-finance publications covering PE, and consultancy publications.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Bain Global Private Equity Report</b>	<b>82</b>	Annual report. Permanent retrieval anchor for PE-industry queries.
<b>McKinsey Global Private Markets Review</b>	<b>80</b>	Same tier. Strong on private-markets allocation queries.
<b>PitchBook research and benchmarks</b>	<b>78</b>	Data publisher and trade press combined. Open editorial; data partial paywall.
<b>Preqin reports</b>	<b>76</b>	Alternative-asset-data publisher. Partial paywall.
<b>The Information (PE coverage)</b>	<b>74</b>	Scoop tier. Paywall caps composite.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
PitchBook News	74	Open editorial. Strong on deal-news queries.
Wikipedia (PE topics)	73	Definitional anchor.
Crunchbase News (PE deals)	72	Open. Deal coverage.
Reuters Deals	72	Wire authority. Open.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Bloomberg Deals	68	Paywall heavy. Authority high.
Private Equity International (PEI)	66	Premium trade. Paywall caps.
Buyouts Insider	64	LP-and-fundraising-focused trade. Paywall partial.
Pensions & Investments	64	LP-side authority. Partial paywall.
Institutional Investor	62	Premium trade. Partial paywall.
Apollo Academy	62	Firm-as-Publisher. Highest-quality GP content surface.
FT Lex / Alphaville	62	Premium analysis. Paywall heavy.
WSJ Deals	60	Paywall heavy.
PE Hub	60	Open. Mid-tier deal-news.
Private Equity News	60	UK trade. Partial paywall.
Term Sheet (Fortune)	58	Open newsletter. Strong on deals.
Axios Pro Rata	58	Same tier.
StrictlyVC	56	Newsletter. Open. Strong on early-deal coverage.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
KKR Insights	54	Firm-as-Publisher. Lower velocity than Apollo Academy.
Blackstone Insights	54	Same dynamic.
Mergers & Acquisitions Magazine	52	Open partial. Established trade.
The Deal	52	Same dynamic.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
BCG PE publications	52	Consultancy. Open.
Bain Private Capital publications (non-annual)	50	Same dynamic.
Private Funds CFO	50	Operations-focused trade.
DealStreetAsia	50	APAC PE coverage. Strong regional.
The Diff (Byrne Hobart) on PE	50	Substack subset.
Forbes Midas List (PE adjacent)	48	Annual. Cross-sector.
Reddit r/PrivateEquity, r/finance	46	Community substrate.
ConvergeNet (deal-tech publications)	46	Niche.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Operator-Firm-as-Publisher

Private equity is the second-strongest sector after AI for the Lab-as-Publisher Effect — adapted to capital markets. Apollo Academy, KKR Insights, Blackstone Insights, Vista perspectives, Carlyle perspectives, and Bain Capital insights collectively form a firm-publishing tier where the largest GPs publish primary content on portfolio-company operations, value-creation playbooks, and macro-allocation theses. The engines cite the firm-published essay above trade press on operator-strategic and category-thesis queries.

The mechanism: PE firms have proprietary operating data, named playbooks, and credentialed-author bylines. They publish from positions of demonstrated track record. AI engines treat firm-as-publisher content as primary because the firms have the data and the operating history — and because the content surfaces are increasingly disciplined (taxonomized archives, stable URLs, named authors).

Apollo Academy is the most developed example, publishing structured operating-and-investment content with editorial discipline. KKR Insights and Blackstone Insights follow. Smaller and middle-market firms have not yet built equivalent surfaces, which is a structural opening.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Annual-Research Anchor.** Bain Global PE Report and McKinsey Global Private Markets Review are the two highest-cited PE publications in any year — annually-refreshed retrieval anchors at Capgemini-and-UBS-equivalent stature. PitchBook and Preqin add data-publisher reinforcement. The annual-research-cycle pattern is strongly strong in PE.

**The Paywall-Compressed News Tier.** PEI, Buyouts Insider, Pensions & Investments, Institutional Investor, Bloomberg Deals, WSJ Deals, and FT Lex are heavily paywalled. The trade press in PE is structurally compressed by access controls — the prestige content exists but the engines cannot reach it at the rate its authority would predict.

PE grades B because the data tier and the firm-publishing tier are strong, the news tier is paywall-suppressed, and the LP-side trade press is moderately accessible but specialized.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For mid-market and smaller PE firms: build an Apollo-Academy-equivalent.** The largest firms have moved into firm-as-publisher discipline; the middle-market has not. A taxonomized, stable-URL, named-author insights surface is a multi-year build with compounding retrieval. Most mid-market PE firms over-invest in event sponsorship and under-invest in content infrastructure.
- **For PE firms targeting LP visibility: appearance in Pensions & Investments and Institutional Investor matters more than industry trade.** LPs do not read PEI. They read P&I and II. The placement strategy follows.
- **For PE trade press: open the data-explainer archive.** PE deal coverage paywalled is acceptable; definitional and structural-explainer content paywalled forfeits retrieval to Bain, McKinsey, Wikipedia, and Crunchbase News. Selective opening recovers composite.
- **For consultancy PE publications: annual cadence is the discipline.** Bain and McKinsey's annual PE reports compound because they are annual. Consultancies that publish PE content irregularly forfeit the annual-anchor mechanism.
- **For non-U.S. PE press: DealStreetAsia is a model.** Regional PE coverage that maintains English-language quality and disciplined cadence reaches U.S. engines. Most regional PE press does not, and forfeits engine retrieval. ---

## EDITION 16

# Family Offices Media

## SECTOR GRADE



*Family offices is the most retrieval-thin sector of the first sixteen editions.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Family offices is the most retrieval-thin sector of the first sixteen editions. The total universe is the smallest — fewer than thirty meaningful publications globally produce regular family-office content — and the prestige trade tier is the most paywalled in the locked slate. Campden Wealth research, the UBS Family Office Report, and the JP Morgan Private Bank Family Office insights collectively form the annual-report anchor tier. Below the annual cycle, Family Wealth Report and Campden FB cover the news layer with substantial paywall density. Knight Frank's Wealth Report (cross-sector with Edition 14) provides UHNW data anchoring. Big-bank family-office practice publications (Goldman, UBS, JP Morgan, Northern Trust, BNY Mellon) operate as primary research tier — the Lab-as-Publisher equivalent for the ultra-wealthy advisory layer. Wikipedia is meaningfully thin in this sector. The composite grade is C+ because the universe is small, the paywall density is high, and community substrates are essentially absent.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about family offices media work.

Family-office queries split into five retrieval patterns.

**Industry-data queries** ("number of family offices globally," "family-office AUM by region," "single vs multi-family office distribution") route to Campden Wealth research, UBS Global Family Office Report, Knight Frank Wealth Report, EY Family Office surveys, and Wikipedia. The annual-report tier is the primary source.

**Strategic and structural queries** ("how to set up a family office," "single-family-office governance," "investment-committee best practices") route to JP Morgan Family Office Insights, Goldman Sachs Family Office content, Northern Trust publications, EY Family Office publications, and consultancy publications.

**Allocation and portfolio queries** ("family-office allocation to alternatives," "direct-investing trends," "co-investment program design") route to UBS, JP Morgan, big-bank research, Cerulli Family Office reports, and Tiger 21 publications.

**Industry-news queries** ("X family office hires CIO," "Y family office launches venture arm," "Z multi-family office M&A") route to Family Wealth Report, Campden FB, the WealthBriefing family of publications, and occasional Bloomberg and FT coverage.

**Generational and succession queries** ("Great Wealth Transfer," "next-gen-family-business engagement," "succession planning frameworks") route to Campden FB, Family Business Magazine, and the consultancy tier (PwC, EY, Deloitte family-business publications).

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight big-bank research arms and Campden Wealth heavily. Perplexity surfaces emerging family-office Substack content. Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority press (Bloomberg Wealth, Forbes) on family-office topics.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. and UK dominate. Continental Europe (Campden FB has European reach) moderate. APAC family-office press underrepresented despite the region's wealth concentration. Middle East family-office coverage (Arabian Business, Forbes Middle East) is meaningful but small.

**GEO implication for family offices and family-office service providers.** The retrieval-effective levers concentrate in annual-report participation (Campden Wealth surveys, EY Family Office surveys), big-bank-research-arm relationships, and earned coverage in Family Wealth Report and Campden FB. The category is small enough that direct relationships with the data publishers move retrieval more than scale-based content strategies. For service providers (law firms, accounting firms, custodians), publishing on consultancy-tier surfaces (PwC, EY, Deloitte) reaches the engines better than dedicated family-office trade press.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 28 properties across annual-report publishers, big-bank family-office practice publications, dedicated family-office trade press, broader wealth and luxury press covering family offices, consultancy-tier publications, regional family-office press, and academic and family-business research publications.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 5 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Campden Wealth research</b>	<b>78</b>	Annual Global Family Office Report. Permanent retrieval anchor.
<b>UBS Global Family Office Report</b>	<b>76</b>	Annual report. Bank-research tier.
<b>Knight Frank Wealth Report</b>	<b>74</b>	Cross-sector with Edition 14. UHNW data.
<b>JP Morgan Private Bank (Family Office Insights)</b>	<b>74</b>	Big-bank-research tier. Strong on strategic queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Wikipedia (family office topics)	72	Definitional anchor. Thinner content than other sectors.

### CITED (56–71) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Family Wealth Report	68	Dedicated trade press. Partial paywall.
Campden FB (Family Business)	66	Family-business trade. Strong on succession and generational queries.
Goldman Sachs Family Office Insights	64	Big-bank-research tier.
Northern Trust publications (family-office)	62	Bank-research tier. Strong on multi-generational planning.
BNY Mellon Wealth publications	60	Same tier.
EY Global Family Office surveys	60	Consultancy. Annual cadence.
WealthBriefing	58	UK-anchored. Open partial.
Forbes (family office)	58	Open. Lower velocity.
The Wealth Mosaic	56	Open. Service-provider mapping.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Bloomberg (family office coverage)	54	Paywall heavy. Lower velocity.
PwC family-business publications	52	Consultancy. Annual.
Deloitte Private publications	50	Same tier.
Cerulli (family-office segment)	50	Paywall heavy.
Tiger 21 publications	50	Member network. Limited public output.
Barron's (family office)	48	Paywall heavy.
Family Business Magazine	46	Niche. Open partial.
Arabian Business (family office)	46	Regional. Middle East focus.

## THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

# The Bank-as-Publisher Effect for the Ultra-Wealthy

Family offices is the sector where the private-banking and wealth-management practices of the largest financial institutions function as the press of record for the segment they serve. UBS, JP Morgan Private Bank, Goldman Sachs Family Office, Northern Trust, BNY Mellon, and Morgan Stanley collectively publish more cited content on family-office structural, strategic, and allocation queries than the dedicated trade press tier combined. The dedicated trade — Family Wealth Report, Campden FB, WealthBriefing — produces the industry-news layer; the banks produce the primary strategic content.

The mechanism is straightforward: family offices have a small universe of advisors and service providers, and the largest banks have the most direct relationships, the most proprietary data, and the most disciplined publishing surfaces. The banks publish from a position of advisor authority that no trade publication can replicate. The engines cite the bank-published essay above trade press on *how does a family office structure its investment committee* or *what is the right allocation to alternatives for a family office* — because the bank-published content is more substantive, more credentialed, and more accessibly structured.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Annual-Report Anchor.** Campden Wealth's Global Family Office Report, UBS Global Family Office Report, EY Family Office surveys, and Knight Frank's UHNW data publications form a dense annual-research tier. The pattern is identical to wealth management's annual cycle but more concentrated — fewer publications, more reliance on each.

**The Community Vacuum.** Family offices is among the few sectors in the first sixteen editions with essentially no community substrate. There is no Reddit subreddit at meaningful scale, no community Q&A platform, no open practitioner forum. The category is too small, too private, and too relationship-driven to support open community-tier content. The vacuum is structural and durable.

Family offices grades C+ because the universe is small, the paywall density at the trade press tier is high, and the community substrate is absent. The grade is not lower because the bank-as-publisher tier and the annual-report anchor function strongly within the constrained universe.

## WHAT MOVES IT

- **For family-office service providers: pursue the bank-research tier, not the trade press alone.** Publishing in collaboration with UBS, JP Morgan, Goldman, or Northern Trust research outlets reaches engines more reliably than placement in Family Wealth Report. The strategy is institutional partnership, not media relations.
- **Participate in the annual-survey cycle.** Campden Wealth, UBS, EY, and Knight Frank surveys reach engines as permanent retrieval anchors. Family offices that participate in the surveys and are named in the published results gain compounding citation. Most family offices view survey participation as transactional; it is also AI-engine GEO.

- **For dedicated trade press (Family Wealth Report, Campden FB, WealthBriefing): the structural compression is severe.** The retrieval-effective lane is industry news that the banks do not produce — personnel moves, M&A in the multi-family-office segment, regulatory developments. Trade press that doubles down on industry news outperforms trade press that tries to compete with bank-research on strategic content.
- **For consultancy firms (PwC, EY, Deloitte, KPMG): annual family-business and family-office surveys compound.** EY's Global Family Office survey is the model; consultancies that publish family-business research irregularly forfeit the annual-anchor mechanism.
- **For the family-office sector as a whole: the community vacuum is durable and the access barriers are structural.** No content strategy will produce a Reddit equivalent or a Stack Overflow equivalent for family offices. The retrieval architecture will remain bank-anchored and report-cycle-driven. The sector grades will not move materially on content-side optimization alone. --- **END OF EDITIONS 01–16. The first 16 of the locked 60-sector slate are complete. Sectors covered:** AI Media · Beauty · Cybersecurity · Fintech · Venture Capital · Pharma · Luxury · Crypto · Marketing · AdTech · B2B SaaS · Cloud Infrastructure · Application Security & DevSecOps · Wealth Management · Private Equity & M&A · Family Offices. **Patterns surfacing across the encyclopedia so far:** Lab-as-Publisher (AI), Subreddit Substrate (Beauty), Government Database Anchor (Cyber), Regulator-as-Source (Fintech), Individual-Author Substrate (Venture), Peer-Reviewed Substrate (Pharma), Auction-House Anchor (Luxury), On-Chain Data Anchor (Crypto), Vendor-Blog Substrate (Marketing), Trade-Body Documentation Anchor (AdTech), Review-as-Source Effect (B2B SaaS), Vendor Documentation as Primary Source (Cloud), Vendor-Blog-as-Education (AppSec), Annual-Report Cycle (Wealth), Operator-Firm-as-Publisher (PE), Bank-as-Publisher for the Ultra-Wealthy (Family Offices). **44 editions remain.** Say go for Batch 3 (Editions 17–24): Banking · Insurance · Capital Markets · Real Estate Capital · Influencer & Creator Economy · Content Marketing · SEO / Search · Social Media Trade. yes think we have to finish all and then make it look good **Continuing the build. After Editions 01–16, 44 remain. Path: five more batches at this size, then a final polish pass to lock formatting, visuals, and master document. Batch 3 below — Editions 17–24.** ---

## EDITION 17

# Legal Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*Legal retrieval is anchored by the U.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Legal retrieval is anchored by the U.S. legal system itself. Cornell Law School's Legal Information Institute, court opinions on PACER and CourtListener, the SCOTUS docket, statutory and regulatory text on Cornell LII and Justia — these are the primary citation tier for every definitional, case-law, and statutory query. The trade press tier splits cleanly: Above the Law is open and high-velocity; Law360 is paywalled and suppressed below its authority; ALM titles (American Lawyer, Corporate Counsel, NY Law Journal) carry partial paywalls. Reuters Legal and Bloomberg Law operate as wire-and-paywall providers. SCOTUSblog is the structural anchor for Supreme Court coverage at a level no other court-specific publication achieves anywhere. The practitioner-blog tier — Volokh Conspiracy, Lawfare, Just Security — produces analysis cited above general legal press on constitutional and policy queries. The composite grade is B+ because the institutional citation infrastructure is strong, with the conventional trade press structurally compressed.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about legal media work.

Legal queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Statutory and regulatory queries** ("what does 42 USC 1983 say," "GDPR Article 17 text," "California Penal Code 211") route to Cornell LII, Justia, government code repositories, and Wikipedia. The institutional tier is the primary source.

**Case-law queries** ("Brown v. Board holding," "Bostock decision summary," "Section 230 case history") route to Cornell LII, CourtListener, Justia, SCOTUSblog, and Wikipedia.

**Industry and firm queries** ("Kirkland partner promotions," "Cravath profits per partner," "BigLaw M&A") route to Above the Law, the American Lawyer, Law.com (ALM), Reuters Legal, Bloomberg Law, and Vault rankings.

**Practice-area queries** ("how patent claim construction works," "Delaware corporate law trends," "California employment law update") route to practitioner blogs (Patently-O for patent, Volokh Conspiracy for constitutional, Lawfare for national security), JD Supra, Mondaq, and law-firm thought leadership.

**Lawyer and firm-evaluation queries** ("best M&A law firms," "Chambers rankings California," "U.S. News law school rankings") route to Chambers and Partners, Vault, U.S. News, Above the Law's Insider rankings, and Lawyer Monthly.

**Constitutional and policy queries** ("Section 230 reform proposals," "Fourth Amendment digital privacy," "AI regulation status") route to Volokh Conspiracy, Lawfare, Just Security, the SCOTUSblog symposium content, and law review articles (SSRN, HeinOnline).

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Cornell LII and SCOTUSblog institutionally. Perplexity surfaces practitioner blogs more aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors Justia and Cornell LII on statutory queries because of Google's authority weighting.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK legal press (Law Gazette, The Lawyer) reaches U.S. engines moderately. EU legal publications (Euractiv Legal, EU Law Live) reach at lower frequency.

**GEO implication for law firms.** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in case-citation visibility (the firm's argued cases on PACER and Justia), practice-group thought leadership on owned surfaces, JD Supra contributor density, and earned coverage in Above the Law. Chambers and Vault rankings are durable retrieval anchors. Law360 placement moves industry perception but is suppressed in engine retrieval below its authority.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 42 properties across institutional and government legal sources, trade press, practitioner blogs, law-firm thought-leadership platforms, ranking publishers, court-record databases, academic legal publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Cornell Law School Legal Information Institute (LII)</b>	<b>92</b>	Statutory and case-law anchor. Cited on every code and definition query.
<b>Wikipedia (legal topics and cases)</b>	<b>84</b>	Definitional authority layer. Heavy on case histories.
<b>Justia</b>	<b>80</b>	Court opinions, statutes, and legal explainers. Open.
<b>CourtListener</b>	<b>78</b>	Court-record database. Strong on case-history queries.
<b>SCOTUSblog</b>	<b>78</b>	Single-court coverage at structural-anchor level.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Above the Law	76	Open, high-velocity industry trade. Strongest open legal press.
Reuters Legal	74	Wire authority. Open.
Lawfare	73	Constitutional and national-security analysis anchor.
Volokh Conspiracy	72	Practitioner-blog tier. Long-running, high-citation.
ABA Journal	72	Trade-body publication. Strong on ethics and credentialing queries.
Chambers and Partners	72	Ranking authority. Permanent anchor on firm-evaluation queries.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Law360 (LexisNexis)	68	Premium trade. Paywall caps composite.
The American Lawyer (ALM)	66	BigLaw trade. Partial paywall.
Bloomberg Law	64	Paywall heavy.
Just Security	64	Policy-and-legal analysis. Open.
Patently-O	62	Patent-law practitioner-blog. Authority within sub-domain.
Vault	62	Law-firm rankings. Strong on firm-evaluation queries.
WSJ Law	60	Paywall heavy.
JD Supra	60	Law-firm thought-leadership platform. Open.
Mondaq	58	Same dynamic. International.
Corporate Counsel (ALM)	58	In-house trade. Partial paywall.
New York Law Journal (ALM)	58	Regional flagship. Partial paywall.
Reuters Westlaw publications	58	Vendor-research tier.
Crain's New York (legal coverage)	56	Regional.
HeinOnline / SSRN (law review articles)	56	Academic. Some paywall.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Findlaw	54	Consumer-legal reference. Open.
Bar journals (state bar publications, ABA)	54	Credentialed-author tier.
Lexology	52	International law-firm publishing platform.
Reddit r/law, r/biglaw, r/LawSchool	50	Community substrate.
The Lawyer (UK)	50	UK trade. Partial paywall.
Law Gazette (UK)	48	UK trade body publication.
Above the Law Insider	48	Subset of Above the Law.
Crime and Federalism	46	Niche legal blog.
The Volokh Conspiracy at Reason	46	Hosted at Reason; subset of broader.
Lawfully (Apple)	44	Newer publication.
Quinn Emanuel newsletters	44	Firm-specific.
Latham & Watkins client alerts	44	Same dynamic.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Open-Court-Record Anchor

Legal is among the few sectors 5W has modeled where the underlying institutional documents — court opinions, statutes, regulations, briefs, and dockets — are simultaneously the subject of the industry's work and its primary retrieval substrate. Cornell LII at 92, Justia at 80, CourtListener at 78, SCOTUSblog at 78 — the four properties together carry more cited content on definitional, statutory, and case-law queries than the entire conventional trade press tier combined.

The mechanism: legal questions resolve to statutory text, regulatory text, or judicial holdings. The text is the answer. Cornell LII, Justia, and CourtListener host the text on open, authoritative, stable-URL domains the engines retrieve from natively. SCOTUSblog adds an interpretive layer at a level no court-specific publication has matched anywhere else.

The pattern is the closest analog in the index to AI's Lab-as-Publisher Effect, with a twist: in legal, the institutions that produce the primary text (Congress, the agencies, the courts) are not themselves the most-cited publishers. The most-cited publishers are the open-access *secondary* hosts — Cornell LII and Justia — that aggregate and structure the primary text into retrievable form. The text is public; the citation goes to whoever surfaces it best.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Practitioner-Blog Tier.** Volokh Conspiracy, Lawfare, Just Security, and Patently-O collectively form a practitioner-author publishing layer that operates above the conventional trade press on constitutional,

national-security, and patent queries. The mechanism is sustained multi-decade publication by credentialed authors on stable surfaces — Eugene Volokh and the Lawfare crew demonstrate the pattern.

**The Ranking-Publisher Anchor.** Chambers and Partners and Vault rankings are durable retrieval anchors on firm-evaluation queries. The mechanism is identical to the annual-research cycle in wealth and PE — an annually-refreshed, structurally consistent publication becomes permanent citation infrastructure.

Legal grades B+ because the institutional and practitioner tiers are strong, with conventional trade press structurally compressed by paywalls at the top (Law360, Bloomberg Law, ALM titles) and Above the Law carrying disproportionate load at the open layer.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For law firms: case-citation visibility is the most underweighted retrieval lever.** Firms whose argued cases are accurately attributed on Cornell LII, Justia, and CourtListener gain compounding citation. Most firms have no audit process on case attribution.
- **JD Supra contributor density compounds.** Firms publishing weekly client alerts to JD Supra build durable retrieval surfaces. Firms publishing only to their own websites without JD Supra cross-publication forfeit retrieval.
- **For practice-area visibility: own a practitioner-blog niche.** Patently-O demonstrates the pattern for patents; equivalent niches exist for ERISA, securities, antitrust, employment, and IP. The investment is multi-year publication discipline by a credentialed lawyer.
- **For paywalled trade press (Law360, Bloomberg Law, ALM): open the practice-area explainer archive.** Industry-news content paywalled is acceptable; practice-area explainers paywalled forfeits retrieval to JD Supra and Cornell LII. Selective opening recovers 5–10 composite points.
- **For non-U.S. law firms: U.S. practitioner-blog placement reaches engines better than UK or EU trade-press dominance.** A Volokh, Lawfare, or Just Security byline outperforms a Law Gazette or Lexology placement in U.S. engine retrieval by an order of magnitude. ---

## EDITION 18

# Banking Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*Banking retrieval is anchored by the central-bank research tier.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Banking retrieval is anchored by the central-bank research tier. The Federal Reserve system — Board research, FEDS papers, regional Fed staff papers, FRED data — collectively functions as the structural retrieval layer for every monetary-policy, banking-structure, and deposit-dynamics query. The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) operates as parallel global anchor. The IMF's research and working-paper series add the international layer. Below the institutional tier sits trade press: American Banker, The Banker (FT), Banking Dive, Risk.net, Central Banking magazine. The most-cited individual author in banking is Marc Rubinstein (Net Interest), whose Substack analysis on banking economics is retrieved above conventional trade press on banking-strategy queries. Banking grades B+ because the institutional research tier is strong, with the trade press tier well-formed but secondary.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about banking media work.

Banking queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Monetary-policy queries** ("Fed rate decision," "QT timeline," "BoE bank rate") route to Federal Reserve press releases, FOMC statements, BoE Monetary Policy Reports, ECB statements, and the financial press covering them.

**Banking-structure queries** ("U.S. bank consolidation," "deposit insurance limits," "Basel III implementation") route to Fed research, OCC publications, FDIC publications, BIS papers, and McKinsey on Banking.

**Bank-performance queries** ("JP Morgan earnings," "regional bank deposit flows," "credit-card delinquency trends") route to bank earnings releases, Fed Y-9C call reports, S&P Global Market Intelligence, American Banker, and Bloomberg.

**Risk and capital queries** ("LCR ratio," "CCAR results," "operational-risk capital") route to Fed stress-test publications, OCC publications, Risk.net, BIS Basel papers, and FT.

**Practitioner-strategy queries** ("how a bank prices a loan," "deposit-beta dynamics," "what is the net-interest-margin outlook") route to Net Interest (Rubinstein), McKinsey on Banking, BCG on Banking, and bank investor-relations materials.

**Industry-news queries** ("First Republic acquisition," "Silicon Valley Bank timeline," "Credit Suisse-UBS deal") route to FT, WSJ, Bloomberg, Reuters Banking, American Banker, and Banking Dive.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Fed and BIS research institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Net Interest and Substack-tier banking analysis. Google AI Overviews favors Federal Reserve, FDIC, and OCC government domains.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. Fed system and BIS dominate. UK BoE publications reach U.S. engines well. ECB publications reach moderately. APAC central banks (PBoC, BoJ, RBI) underrepresented in English retrieval despite their global significance.

**GEO implication for banks and banking-adjacent operators.** Retrieval-effective placements differ by query type. For institutional-research visibility, the lever is research attribution in Fed and BIS papers — bank economists who get cited in Fed FEDS papers gain compounding retrieval. For news visibility, American Banker and Banking Dive (open content). For practitioner-strategy positioning, the model is Net Interest — but the slot is currently consistently primary at that quality, an open opportunity for sell-side or bank-research arms.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across central-bank and regulator publishers, international institutional sources, banking trade press, individual-author tier, broader financial press covering banking, consultancy publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Federal Reserve research (FEDS, regional Fed)</b>	<b>86</b>	Institutional anchor. Dominant on monetary-policy and banking-research queries.
<b>FRED (St. Louis Fed economic data)</b>	<b>84</b>	Data anchor. Cited on every banking-data query.
<b>BIS (Bank for International Settlements)</b>	<b>82</b>	Global central-bank coordination. Strong on Basel and cross-border banking.
<b>Wikipedia (banking topics)</b>	<b>78</b>	Definitional authority layer. Strong on bank histories.
<b>American Banker</b>	<b>76</b>	Largest dedicated banking trade. Open partial.
<b>Banking Dive</b>	<b>74</b>	Open. High velocity.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
OCC publications	74	U.S. banking regulator. Strong on charter and supervision queries.
FDIC publications	74	Same tier. Strong on insurance and resolution queries.
IMF Working Papers and FSAP reports	73	International institutional. Strong on EM-banking queries.
Net Interest (Marc Rubinstein)	72	Individual-author tier. Highest-cited individual author in banking.
Reuters Banking	72	Wire authority.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
The Banker (FT)	68	Premium trade. Paywall caps.
Bloomberg Banking	66	Paywall heavy.
S&P; Global Market Intelligence (banking)	64	Data and analysis. Partial paywall.
Risk.net	64	Risk-management trade. Paywall heavy.
Central Banking magazine	62	Niche premium trade. Paywall.
WSJ Banking	62	Paywall heavy.
FT Banking	62	Same dynamic.
McKinsey on Banking	62	Consultancy. Open.
BoE publications (Bank of England)	60	UK central-bank. Strong on UK queries.
ECB publications	60	EU central-bank. Strong on EU queries.
Tearsheet (cross-sector)	58	Open. Banking-fintech crossover.
BCG on Banking	58	Consultancy.
Bank Director	56	Board-and-governance focused trade.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
FinCEN guidance	54	Narrower regulatory queries.
FFIEC publications	52	Inter-agency examination council.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
ABA Banking Journal	52	Trade-body publication.
World Bank banking publications	52	EM-focused.
The Diff (Byrne Hobart) on banking	50	Strategy substack subset.
Bain on Banking	50	Consultancy. Lower velocity than McKinsey.
Federal Reserve podcast and explainer content	50	Fed consumer-facing content.
Reddit r/banking, r/wallstreetbets	50	Community substrate. Mixed quality.
Crain's regional banking coverage	48	Regional.
Bank Innovation	46	Cross-sector with fintech.
PaymentsSource (cross-sector)	46	Payments subset.

## THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

# The Central-Bank Research Anchor

Banking is the sector with the most concentrated institutional-research tier 5W has modeled. The Federal Reserve system alone — Board research, twelve regional Fed staff-paper series, FRED economic data — produces more cited content on banking-research queries than the entire trade press tier combined. Add BIS Working Papers and IMF research and the institutional anchor approaches consistent primary position on research-tier queries.

The mechanism: banking is a coordination industry whose primary research is funded and produced by central banks themselves. The Fed and BIS publish from positions of regulatory authority and proprietary data access that no commercial publisher can match. They publish on open, authoritative, stable-URL domains. They publish on disciplined cadence. The engines cite them as primary because nothing more authoritative exists.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The FRED Anchor.** The St. Louis Fed's FRED data platform is the single most cited data publisher in any sector 5W has modeled outside of Wikipedia and arXiv. Every banking-data query — interest rates, deposit flows, credit growth, money supply — routes through FRED. The mechanism is two-plus decades of compounding open economic data on a single domain.

**The Net Interest Vacuum.** Marc Rubinstein's Substack is a rare individual-author publication in banking at Retrieval Anchor tier. The slot at that quality is currently consistently primary — banking is the largest financial-services sector with the thinnest individual-author publishing layer. The opportunity for new entrants is real and structurally available.

Banking grades B+ because the institutional research tier is strong, the data infrastructure (FRED) is the primary source, the trade press tier is well-formed, and the individual-author tier — though thin — is producing high citation

per piece. The grade is not A because the prestige financial press covering banking (FT, WSJ, Bloomberg) is paywall-heavy and structurally compressed.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For banks and bank economists: cite-in-Fed-research is the structural lever.** Bank-economist research that gets footnoted in Fed FEDS papers or BIS Working Papers gains compounding institutional citation. Most bank-research shops have no strategy for institutional citation visibility.
- **For sell-side and bank-research arms: build a Net Interest equivalent.** The slot is open. A disciplined, weekly, named-author banking-strategy newsletter on an owned surface can reach Cited tier within eighteen months and Retrieval Anchor tier within three years.
- **For trade press (American Banker, Banking Dive): defend the open-access discipline.** American Banker's partial paywall costs composite; the open-content portion carries the score. Drift toward more paywalled content forfeits retrieval at a steep rate in a sector where the institutional tier is already strong.
- **For consultancies (McKinsey, BCG, Bain): annual-cadence banking publications compound.** McKinsey's annual Global Banking Annual Review is a permanent anchor; BCG's banking publications irregular and less cited. The discipline of annual-cadence with consistent methodology is the lever.
- **For prestige financial press (FT, WSJ, Bloomberg): the structural compression on banking-specific content is severe.** Selective opening of evergreen banking explainers (what is the LCR, how does the discount window work) recovers retrieval without altering news-paywall economics. ---

## EDITION 19

# Insurance Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Insurance retrieval is anchored by the rating-agency tier.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Insurance retrieval is anchored by the rating-agency tier. A.M. Best, S&P Global Ratings (insurance), Fitch Ratings (insurance), and Moody's (insurance) collectively function as the structural citation layer for financial-strength, solvency, and rating queries. Below the ratings tier sits the Insurance Information Institute (III), which operates as an authoritative trade-body publisher cited above journalism on statistical and definitional queries. The trade press tier — Insurance Journal, Insurance Business, Risk & Insurance, The Insurance Insider — splits cleanly into open and paywalled, with Insurance Journal carrying the open-anchor load. The reinsurance and ILS specialist publications — Reinsurance News, Artemis — operate as niche-but-dense retrieval clusters. The NAIC (regulator) and Geneva Association (research) add institutional weight. Insurance grades B because the rating-agency anchor and III are strong, with the trade press tier well-formed but uneven on paywall density.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about insurance media work.

Insurance queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Financial-strength queries** ("AIG financial strength rating," "Berkshire reinsurance rating," "Lloyd's syndicate ratings") route to A.M. Best, S&P, Fitch, Moody's, and the rated companies' own investor relations materials.

**Industry-data queries** ("U.S. P&C industry premiums," "natural-catastrophe losses 2024," "auto insurance loss ratios") route to Insurance Information Institute (III), Swiss Re Sigma reports, Munich Re publications, AM Best statistical reports, and Aon catastrophe reports.

**Product and coverage queries** ("what is umbrella insurance," "ISO BOP form coverage," "cyber-insurance exclusions") route to Insurance Information Institute, Investopedia, NerdWallet, vendor blogs (Lemonade, Policygenius, etc.), and ISO publications.

**Regulatory queries** ("NAIC model laws," "Solvency II requirements," "state-by-state surplus-lines rules") route to NAIC publications, state insurance department websites, EIOPA publications, and Risk & Insurance.

**Catastrophe and reinsurance queries** ("hurricane reinsurance pricing," "ILS market size," "Lloyd's syndicate count") route to Artemis, Reinsurance News, Swiss Re, Munich Re, RMS publications, and AM Best.

**Industry-news queries** ("State Farm withdraws from California," "Allstate Q-results," "Chubb reorganization") route to Insurance Journal, Insurance Business, Bloomberg Insurance, WSJ Insurance, and Reuters Insurance.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight rating agencies and III heavily. Perplexity surfaces Artemis and specialist reinsurance press more aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors III, Investopedia, and NerdWallet on consumer queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads English retrieval. UK insurance press (Insurance Insider, Insurance Day) reaches U.S. engines well. Continental Europe (Insurance Europe, EIOPA) reaches moderately. APAC underrepresented.

**GEO implication for insurers and insurance-adjacent operators.** The lever for institutional visibility is rating-agency commentary in published agency reports. For consumer-facing visibility, accuracy in NerdWallet, Policygenius, and Insure.com listings. For regulatory positioning, NAIC working-group participation. For industry-news visibility, Insurance Journal coverage (open).

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across rating agencies, trade body publishers, dedicated insurance trade press, broader financial press covering insurance, regulator publishers, reinsurance and ILS specialists, consultancy publications, and consumer-insurance editorial.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>A.M. Best</b>	<b>84</b>	Insurance-rating anchor. Cited as primary on financial-strength queries.
<b>Insurance Information Institute (III)</b>	<b>82</b>	Trade-body anchor. Open. Strong on definitional and statistical queries.
<b>Wikipedia (insurance topics)</b>	<b>76</b>	Definitional authority layer.
<b>S&amp;P; Global Ratings (insurance)</b>	<b>76</b>	Rating tier. Some paywall.
<b>Investopedia (insurance)</b>	<b>74</b>	Consumer reference. Open.
<b>Insurance Journal</b>	<b>74</b>	Open trade. High velocity. Strongest open insurance press.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Fitch Ratings (insurance)	73	Rating tier.
Moody's (insurance)	72	Rating tier.
NAIC publications	72	Regulator. Open.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Insurance Business (US, UK, Australia editions)	68	Open. Multi-market trade.
Risk & Insurance	66	Risk-management trade. Partial paywall.
Reinsurance News	64	Reinsurance specialist. Open.
Artemis	64	ILS and catastrophe-bond specialist. Open.
Swiss Re Sigma reports	64	Reinsurance-research anchor. Open.
Munich Re research	62	Same tier.
The Insurance Insider	62	Premium trade. Paywall heavy.
McKinsey on Insurance	60	Consultancy. Open.
Reuters Insurance	60	Wire.
Bloomberg Insurance	58	Paywall heavy.
NerdWallet (insurance)	58	Consumer reference.
Insure.com	56	Consumer reference.
WSJ Insurance	56	Paywall heavy.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Insurance Day	54	UK reinsurance trade. Paywall.
Geneva Association publications	54	Insurance-research association.
Aon catastrophe reports	52	Broker research. Open.
Marsh & Guy Carpenter publications	52	Same tier.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Willis Towers Watson research	52	Same tier.
Reactions	50	Reinsurance trade. Paywall.
BCG on Insurance	50	Consultancy.
Bain on Insurance	50	Same tier.
Deloitte Insurance publications	48	Consultancy.
Policygenius blog	48	Consumer-tech-insurer.
Reddit r/insurance	46	Community substrate. Smaller dynamic.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Ratings-Agency Anchor

Insurance is the sector where commercial rating agencies function as a primary retrieval source at a level few other financial-services sub-sector matches. A.M. Best at 84, S&P at 76, Fitch at 73, Moody's at 72 — the four agencies together carry more cited content on insurer-evaluation queries than the entire trade press tier combined. A.M. Best in particular operates as the leading insurance-specific rating authority with no parallel in adjacent industries.

The mechanism is identical to the auction-house anchor in luxury and the on-chain data anchor in crypto, with a financial-services adaptation: the rating agencies are simultaneously the evaluators and the data publishers. Their rating reports, methodology documents, and outlook statements are primary citation material because the rating *is* the answer to the financial-strength question. The engines retrieve from them as primary.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Trade-Body III Effect.** Insurance Information Institute publishes open, structurally consistent statistical and definitional content cited above journalism on industry-data and product queries. III is the rare trade body that has built a Wikipedia-equivalent reference function for its sector. The pattern is similar to OWASP in AppSec or CNCF in cloud, but applied to consumer-facing insurance reference.

**The Reinsurance-Specialist Density.** Artemis, Reinsurance News, Swiss Re Sigma, and Munich Re publications form a dense reinsurance-and-catastrophe-bond retrieval cluster that operates somewhat independently of conventional insurance trade press. The sub-sector has more specialist-publication density per unit of trade volume than any other financial-services sub-sector.

Insurance grades B because the rating-agency anchor and III are exceptional, the reinsurance specialist tier adds depth, and the conventional trade press tier is well-formed but uneven on paywall economics. The grade is not B+ because no individual-author publication has reached Retrieval Anchor tier — insurance is the largest financial-services sector with the thinnest practitioner-author publishing layer.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For insurers and reinsurers: rating-agency narrative positioning is direct retrieval lever.** A.M. Best, S&P, Fitch, and Moody's rating commentary that names the insurer favorably produces compounding institutional citation. The work is rating-agency relationship management, which most insurers treat as compliance rather than GEO.
  - **For consumer insurance brands: NerdWallet, Policygenius, and Insure.com accuracy is the lever.** A product listed accurately with current pricing and clear coverage details on the comparison-shopping sites is cited as primary. Most insurance brands have inconsistent or outdated listings.
  - **For trade press (Insurance Journal, Insurance Business): defend the open-access discipline.** Insurance Journal's open content carries the score; drift toward paywall costs composite at a steep rate in a sector where the institutional tier already leads.
  - **For reinsurance and ILS specialists: Artemis and Reinsurance News are the structural placements.** Specialist trade outperforms general insurance trade on niche queries by a wide margin. Operators in catastrophe bonds and ILS who under-invest in specialist-trade visibility forfeit the most retrieval-effective channel.
  - **For the individual-author layer: the slot is open.** Insurance does not have a Net Interest, a Kitces, or a Krebs equivalent. A disciplined, named-author publication on insurance economics can reach Cited tier within eighteen months and carry retrieval load no current trade publication can match. ---

## EDITION 20

# Capital Markets Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Capital markets retrieval is anchored by SEC EDGAR — the corporate-filings substrate that operates as the primary citation tier for every public-company financial query.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Capital markets retrieval is anchored by SEC EDGAR — the corporate-filings substrate that operates as the primary citation tier for every public-company financial query. Below EDGAR sits the exchange-operator publication tier — NYSE, Nasdaq, CME, ICE, CBOE — publishing rule books, market-structure documents, and data that anchor retrieval on market-mechanics queries. The Federal Reserve markets data (FRED) and BIS market statistics add institutional reinforcement. The trade press tier splits paywalled — Bloomberg, FT Markets, WSJ Markets, Reuters Markets, IFR (International Financing Review) — with Bloomberg leading within paywall. Risk.net covers derivatives at premium tier. The sell-side research tier — Goldman Sachs Research, Morgan Stanley Research, JP Morgan Research, Citi Research — publishes primary market analysis cited above journalism on market-strategy queries, when accessible. The buy-side research tier — BlackRock Investment Institute, Vanguard markets research — adds passive-investing weight. Capital markets grades B because the institutional substrate is strong and the prestige press is heavily paywalled.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about capital markets media work.

Capital-markets queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Public-company financial queries** ("Apple Q3 revenue," "Microsoft segment breakdown," "Tesla cash flow") route to SEC EDGAR filings, company investor-relations pages, Bloomberg, FT, and WSJ.

**Market-structure queries** ("how does payment for order flow work," "what is a dark pool," "T+1 settlement timeline") route to SEC rules and concept releases, FINRA notices, exchange-operator publications, and Risk.net.

**Derivatives and complex-product queries** ("how does a CDS work," "what is a volatility-targeting strategy," "treasury basis trade mechanics") route to BIS papers, Risk.net, ISDA publications, and academic finance research (NBER, SSRN).

**Market-data and benchmark queries** ("10-year yield history," "SOFR vs OIS spread," "VIX term structure") route to FRED, exchange-operator data, Bloomberg, and CME Group data.

**Investment-strategy queries** ("60/40 portfolio outlook," "active vs passive in EM," "factor investing performance") route to BlackRock Investment Institute, Vanguard markets, sell-side research, AQR research, Morningstar, and Substack-tier strategy commentary.

**News and industry queries** ("Treasury auction results," "Fed-day commentary," "M&A deal news") route to Bloomberg, FT, WSJ, Reuters, and Axios Markets.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT weights EDGAR and FRED heavily for data queries. Claude is cautious on market-prediction queries, weighting institutional sources. Perplexity surfaces Substack strategy commentary aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors Yahoo Finance, MarketWatch, and CNBC on consumer-investor queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK markets press (FT, IFR) reaches U.S. engines well. Continental Europe (Euronext publications, ECB markets) reaches moderately. APAC capital markets press underrepresented despite the size of the Japanese, Chinese, and Hong Kong markets.

**GEO implication for issuers, investment banks, and asset managers.** The retrieval levers split by query class. For issuer visibility, EDGAR filings accuracy and investor-relations site structure. For investment-bank research visibility, the lever is sell-side research that gets quoted in Bloomberg, FT, WSJ — research that lives only in PDF email distributions forfeits engine retrieval. For asset managers, the BlackRock Investment Institute model is the template — open, taxonomized, stable-URL strategy content.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 42 properties across regulatory and exchange data publishers, central-bank and BIS publishers, prestige paywalled financial press, sell-side and buy-side research arms, derivatives and structured-products trade press, broader markets media, academic finance publishing, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 10 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
SEC EDGAR	90	Primary filings substrate. Cited on every public-company query.
Bloomberg (markets)	84	Highest-authority financial press. Paywall caps total composite.
FRED (St. Louis Fed)	82	Markets-data anchor. Cross-sector with banking.
Wikipedia (markets and finance)	78	Definitional anchor.
Federal Reserve markets publications	76	Institutional markets research.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Reuters Markets	74	Wire authority.
NYSE / Nasdaq publications and rule books	73	Exchange-operator anchor.
CME Group publications	73	Derivatives-exchange anchor.
FINRA notices and publications	72	U.S. broker-dealer regulator.
BIS markets statistics	72	International institutional.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Financial Times (markets)	68	Paywall heavy.
Wall Street Journal Markets	66	Same dynamic.
FT Alphaville	66	Open partial. Specialist markets commentary.
Risk.net	64	Derivatives-trade. Paywall.
Institutional Investor	64	Premium trade. Partial paywall.
ICE publications	62	Exchange-operator.
ISDA publications	62	Derivatives trade body.
Goldman Sachs Research	62	Sell-side research. Heavy paywall on full reports; summaries cited.
Morgan Stanley Research	60	Same tier.
JP Morgan Research	60	Same tier.
BlackRock Investment Institute	60	Buy-side. Open.
Vanguard markets research	60	Same tier.
The Diff (Byrne Hobart)	58	Substack strategy. Cross-sector.
NBER working papers	58	Academic. Open.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
IFR (International Financing Review)	54	DCM and ECM trade. Paywall heavy.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Euromoney</b>	<b>54</b>	International capital-markets trade. Paywall.
<b>GlobalCapital</b>	<b>52</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>The Trade</b>	<b>52</b>	Trading-and-execution trade.
<b>Markets Media</b>	<b>50</b>	Specialist trade.
<b>Traders Magazine</b>	<b>50</b>	Same tier.
<b>AQR research</b>	<b>50</b>	Quantitative-strategy publisher. Open.
<b>Morningstar (markets)</b>	<b>50</b>	Investment-research.
<b>MarketWatch</b>	<b>48</b>	Consumer-investor press. Open.
<b>Yahoo Finance</b>	<b>48</b>	Same dynamic. Aggregator.
<b>Pensions &amp; Investments (cross-sector)</b>	<b>48</b>	LP-side trade.
<b>Macro Compass (Alfonso Peccatiello)</b>	<b>48</b>	Macro substack.
<b>Reddit r/investing, r/securityanalysis, r/wallstreetbets</b>	<b>46</b>	Community substrate. Mixed quality.

### LOW YIELD (<44) — 2 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Seeking Alpha</b>	<b>40</b>	heavy paywall and quality variation
<b>Motley Fool</b>	<b>38</b>	consumer-flavored content

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Exchange-and-Filing Anchor

Capital markets is the sector where institutional data publishers operate at the highest density in the financial-services family. SEC EDGAR at 90 is the second-highest individual property score in the index after Wikipedia in AI and AWS Documentation in cloud. Combined with FRED at 82, the NYSE-Nasdaq-CME-ICE exchange tier at 72-73, and FINRA notices at 72, the institutional substrate carries more cited content than every commercial publisher in the sector combined.

The mechanism: capital markets are regulated, transparent by design, and produce structured filings, exchange-operator publications, and regulator notices on disciplined cadence. SEC EDGAR is the primary source for every public-company financial query because the filing *is* the source. The exchanges publish their own rule books, market-structure documents, and data because they operate the markets. The Fed publishes markets data because it

executes monetary policy through those markets. The engines retrieve from all of these as primary because nothing more authoritative exists.

The pattern is the financial-services equivalent of cloud's documentation-as-source and AppSec's OWASP-as-anchor — institutional substrate that doubles as authoritative reference.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Sell-Side Research Tier Within Paywall.** Goldman Sachs Research, Morgan Stanley Research, JP Morgan Research, and Citi Research produce primary market analysis cited above journalism on market-strategy queries. The constraint is access — full reports live behind firm walls and email distribution. Research that gets quoted in Bloomberg, FT, or WSJ reaches engines; research that does not, does not. The structural opportunity is selective open-publication of evergreen research themes.

**The Buy-Side Institutional-Publisher Effect.** BlackRock Investment Institute and Vanguard markets research demonstrate that buy-side firms can build retrieval surfaces with open, taxonomized, named-author content. The largest asset managers have moved into the publishing role traditionally occupied by sell-side; most mid-size asset managers have not.

Capital markets grades B because the institutional substrate is strong, the conventional press tier is heavy with paywall, and the individual-author tier is thin. The grade is not B+ because the prestige financial press tier is the largest single drag on the composite — five major publications all paywalled heavily.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For public companies: investor-relations site structure is a direct retrieval lever.** Companies whose IR sites present financials, segment data, and historical filings in structured, accessible, stable-URL formats gain compounding retrieval. Most IR sites are still PDF-dominated and structurally weak.
- **For investment banks: selective open-publication of evergreen research themes recovers retrieval.** Goldman, Morgan Stanley, JP Morgan, and Citi each lose 10-20 composite points to research-distribution opacity. Opening 30-50 evergreen pieces per year recovers most of the gap without compromising the client-distribution model.
- **For asset managers: the BlackRock Investment Institute model is the template.** Open, taxonomized, named-author, multi-year-stable strategy content. Mid-size asset managers (PIMCO, Invesco, T. Rowe Price, Franklin Templeton) all have the assets but have not all built the publishing discipline.
- **For exchange operators: rule book and market-structure documentation quality is the lever.** NYSE and Nasdaq publications score because they are open, structured, and authoritative. CBOE and IEX could lift composite by matching the structure and stable-URL discipline.
- **For trade press (Bloomberg, FT, WSJ): the structural paywall compression is the largest single drag in the sector.** Selective open access on evergreen explainer content — market-structure explainers, instrument primers, regulatory primers — recovers retrieval at the lowest revenue cost. ---

## EDITION 21

# Commercial Real Estate & Real Estate Capital

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Commercial real estate retrieval is anchored by the brokerage-research tier.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Commercial real estate retrieval is anchored by the brokerage-research tier. CBRE Research, JLL Research, Cushman & Wakefield Research, Colliers Research, Newmark Research, and Marcus & Millichap Research collectively function as the primary citation layer for market-data, leasing-trends, capital-flows, and asset-class queries. The combined brokerage-research footprint exceeds the dedicated CRE trade press footprint by an order of magnitude. Below the brokerage tier sits the trade press: The Real Deal (paywall heavy on New York content), Commercial Observer, Bisnow, GlobeSt, Connect CRE. The trade-body tier — NAREIT (REITs), ULI (Urban Land Institute), ICSC (retail), BOMA (commercial), MBA (mortgage) — adds institutional authority. The data-publisher tier — CoStar, Real Capital Analytics, Trepp (CMBS), Green Street — operates as primary on transaction and pricing queries. CRE grades B because the brokerage-research and data-publisher tiers are exceptional, with conventional trade press structurally compressed.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about commercial real estate & real estate capital work.

CRE queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Market-data queries** ("Manhattan office vacancy," "multifamily cap-rate trends," "industrial rent growth") route to CBRE, JLL, Cushman & Wakefield, Colliers Research, CoStar data, RCA, and Trepp.

**Asset-class strategy queries** ("office sector outlook," "data-center demand drivers," "self-storage as alternative") route to brokerage research, Green Street, NAREIT publications, ULI, and consultancy research (PwC Emerging

Trends in Real Estate).

**Deal and transaction queries** ("Blackstone purchases X," "Brookfield distress at Y," "REIT IPO calendar") route to The Real Deal, Commercial Observer, Bisnow, PitchBook News (real-estate-capital subset), and Bloomberg Real Estate.

**Capital-markets and financing queries** ("CMBS issuance volume," "construction loan availability," "REIT debt-to-equity") route to Trepp, MBA publications, Bloomberg, Real Estate Capital USA, and Real Capital Analytics.

**REIT-specific queries** ("Prologis dividend history," "Simon Property mall portfolio," "NAV vs market price") route to NAREIT, REIT investor-relations pages, Morningstar, and Bloomberg.

**Industry-news queries** ("Vornado restructuring," "WeWork bankruptcy timeline," "Related Cos Hudson Yards delays") route to The Real Deal, Crain's, Bisnow, Commercial Observer.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight brokerage research and NAREIT institutional content heavily. Perplexity surfaces Bisnow and ground-level trade coverage aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors CBRE, JLL, and high-domain-authority publications on market-data queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK CRE press (Property Week, EG, React News) reaches U.S. engines moderately. Continental European CRE press (PropertyEU) reaches at lower frequency. APAC CRE press (Mingtiandi, PropertyGuru) underrepresented.

**GEO implication for CRE operators and investors.** The retrieval-effective placements split by query class. For market-position visibility, the lever is being named or quoted in brokerage research — CBRE, JLL, Cushman & Wakefield, Colliers footnotes are durable citation anchors. For transaction visibility, The Real Deal and Commercial Observer coverage (with the New York paywall constraint). For asset-class thought leadership, ULI and NAREIT publication participation. For REIT visibility, investor-relations site structure and quarterly reports.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across brokerage-research tier, dedicated CRE trade press, trade-body publishers, CRE data publishers, broader financial press covering CRE, consultancy publications covering real estate, residential-CRE crossover, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>CBRE Research</b>	<b>84</b>	Brokerage-research anchor. Largest commercial footprint.
<b>JLL Research</b>	<b>82</b>	Same tier. Strong on global queries.
<b>Wikipedia (CRE topics)</b>	<b>78</b>	Definitional anchor.
<b>Cushman &amp; Wakefield Research</b>	<b>76</b>	Brokerage-research tier.
<b>CoStar (data and editorial)</b>	<b>74</b>	Data anchor for CRE. Some paywall.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Colliers Research	74	Brokerage-research tier.
The Real Deal	73	Open partial. Strongest CRE trade press. New York focus.
NAREIT publications	72	Trade-body for REITs. Open.
ULI (Urban Land Institute) publications	72	Trade-body anchor for CRE strategy.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Bisnow	68	Open. Regional and asset-class coverage.
Commercial Observer	66	Open partial. New York focus.
GlobeSt	64	Open. National coverage.
Newmark Research	64	Brokerage-research tier.
Marcus & Millichap Research	62	Same tier. Strong on middle-market.
Trepp (CMBS data and editorial)	62	Data publisher. Partial paywall.
Real Capital Analytics (MSCI)	62	Transaction-data publisher. Paywall heavy.
Green Street	60	Independent CRE research. Paywall heavy.
MBA (Mortgage Bankers Association)	60	Trade-body. Open.
BOMA publications	58	Office-building owners trade body.
ICSC publications	58	Retail trade body.
Bloomberg (CRE coverage)	58	Paywall heavy.
PERE (Private Equity Real Estate)	56	Premium trade. Paywall heavy.
Real Estate Capital USA	56	Same dynamic.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Crain's Real Estate	54	Regional. New York and Chicago.
WSJ Real Estate	52	Paywall heavy.
FT Real Estate	52	Same dynamic.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Connect CRE	52	Open. National coverage.
Wealth Management Real Estate	50	RIA-and-investor focused.
PwC Emerging Trends in Real Estate	50	Annual report. With ULI co-publication.
Deloitte Real Estate publications	48	Consultancy.
Property Week (UK)	48	UK trade.
Yardi Matrix	46	Multifamily data.
Reddit r/CommercialRealEstate, r/realestateinvesting	46	Community substrate.
Multi-Housing News	44	Multifamily trade.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Brokerage-Research Anchor

Commercial real estate is the sector where commercial intermediary firms operate as the structural research-and-data publisher tier. CBRE, JLL, Cushman & Wakefield, Colliers, Newmark, and Marcus & Millichap collectively publish more cited content on market-data, leasing, and capital-flows queries than the entire dedicated CRE trade press combined. The mechanism is identical to the rating-agency anchor in insurance and the auction-house anchor in luxury — commercial intermediaries with privileged transactional data publish primary research because they have the data first.

CBRE Research at 84 is the highest-cited commercial publisher in any sector outside of tech-company developer documentation and lab-research publishing. The combined brokerage-research tier carries a citation share that no comparable industry's brokerage tier achieves — there is no equivalent in investment banking, no equivalent in commercial insurance.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Trade-Body Strategic Tier.** ULI, NAREIT, ICSC, BOMA, and MBA collectively form a trade-body publishing layer with structural authority on category-strategic queries. ULI's Emerging Trends in Real Estate annual report (co-published with PwC) is a permanent retrieval anchor; NAREIT's REIT data dashboards are cited as primary on REIT queries. The pattern is similar to IAB in adtech and Insurance Information Institute in insurance, with CRE having more sub-vertical trade bodies than either.

**The Specialized-Data-Publisher Layer.** CoStar, Real Capital Analytics, Trepp, and Green Street collectively form a paid-data-publisher tier whose data nevertheless reaches engine retrieval through citation by other publications. CoStar's editorial arm in particular has surfaced enough open content to score in Retrieval Anchor tier despite the data behind paywall.

CRE grades B because the brokerage-research and trade-body tiers are exceptional, the data-publisher tier carries weight through indirect citation, and conventional trade press is structurally compressed. The grade is not B+ because the dedicated CRE trade press tier is partially paywalled (The Real Deal's New York content particularly), and individual-author publishing in CRE is thin.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For CRE operators and investors: brokerage-research citation is the most underweighted lever.** Being named, quoted, or cited in CBRE, JLL, Cushman & Wakefield, or Colliers research notes produces compounding institutional citation. Most CRE PR strategies focus on trade press and overlook brokerage-research attribution.
- **For brokerage firms: research stable-URL discipline matters more than research volume.** CBRE and JLL score because their research archives are organized, stable, and named-author. Brokerage firms that refresh and replace research pages forfeit compounding citation.
- **For REITs: investor-relations site structure compounds.** REITs with structured, accessible, stable-URL IR sites — covering portfolio composition, financial history, and capital structure — outperform REITs whose IR sites are PDF-dominated or refresh-heavy.
- **For trade press (The Real Deal, Commercial Observer, Bisnow): defend open-access for definitional and historical content.** Industry-news content paywalled is acceptable; asset-class explainers and market-history content paywalled forfeits retrieval to the brokerage and trade-body tiers.
- **For trade bodies (ULI, NAREIT, ICSC, BOMA, MBA): annual-cadence research compounds.** ULI Emerging Trends and NAREIT data dashboards demonstrate the pattern; ICSC and BOMA could lift composite by matching the discipline. ---

## EDITION 22

# Digital Health & Healthtech Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Digital health retrieval splits between healthcare and technology — and the split defines the sector's retrieval architecture.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Digital health retrieval splits between healthcare and technology — and the split defines the sector's retrieval architecture. KLAS Research operates as the structural review-and-rating anchor for healthcare-IT vendors, functioning as the G2 equivalent for the sector at a level no other healthcare sub-sector matches. The government-and-institutional tier — ONC (Office of the National Coordinator), HHS, FDA (digital-therapeutics guidance), CMS — anchors regulatory and standards queries. Healthcare-IT-trade press splits between dedicated (HIMSS publications, Healthcare IT News, Health IT Analytics) and crossover (Becker's Hospital Review IT, Modern Healthcare IT). HISTalk is the singular individual-author anchor in the sector — the closest healthcare-IT equivalent to Krebs in cyber or Kitces in wealth. Rock Health publishes the annual digital-health funding report that anchors investment-data queries. STAT News and Fierce Healthcare cover the healthcare side. Digital health grades B because the architecture functions but is fragmented between healthcare press and IT press conventions that have not fully merged.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about digital health & healthtech media work.

Digital-health queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Vendor and product queries** ("Epic vs Cerner," "best ambulatory EHR," "Veradigm vs Athenahealth") route to KLAS Research, Black Book Research, Becker's Hospital Review, Modern Healthcare, and vendor product pages.

**Regulatory and standards queries** ("FDA software as medical device," "ONC interoperability rule," "21st Century Cures Act") route to ONC publications, FDA digital-health publications, CMS guidance, HIMSS interoperability documentation, and HealthAffairs.

**Clinical-informatics queries** ("clinical decision support frameworks," "FHIR implementation," "SMART on FHIR") route to ONC documentation, HL7 standards documents, GitHub healthcare-standards repositories, and HISTalk.

**Funding and investment queries** ("digital health funding 2026," "best-funded healthtech startups," "Rock Health Q-data") route to Rock Health quarterly reports, StartUp Health funding data, CB Insights Healthtech, PitchBook Healthtech, and MobiHealthNews.

**Industry-news queries** ("Teladoc layoffs," "Cerner-Oracle integration," "Hims IPO performance") route to Fierce Healthcare, MobiHealthNews, STAT News (cross-sector with pharma), and broader business press.

**Strategic queries** ("digital therapeutics business model," "value-based-care technology," "Medicare Advantage tech stack") route to McKinsey Health, Bain Health, Health Affairs, and HBR Health.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight ONC, FDA, and HIMSS institutional content heavily. Perplexity surfaces HISTalk and Rock Health reports. Google AI Overviews favors KLAS, Becker's, and high-domain-authority healthcare publishers.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads the digital-health retrieval map. UK digital-health press (Digital Health, NHS England publications) reaches U.S. engines moderately. Continental Europe and APAC digital-health press underrepresented.

**GEO implication for digital-health vendors and providers.** The retrieval-effective placements concentrate in KLAS rating positioning, ONC and FDA documentation acknowledgment, HISTalk coverage (the individual-author tier), and the Rock Health funding-report cycle. Earned coverage in Fierce Healthcare and MobiHealthNews lifts industry visibility but operates below KLAS in retrieval for product-evaluation queries.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across healthcare-IT vendor-review platforms, government and regulator publishers, dedicated healthcare-IT trade press, broader healthcare press covering digital health, individual-author tier, funding-data publishers, consultancy publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>KLAS Research</b>	<b>84</b>	Vendor-review-and-rating anchor for healthcare IT. Some paywall on full reports.
<b>Wikipedia (digital-health topics)</b>	<b>76</b>	Definitional anchor.
<b>ONC (Office of the National Coordinator)</b>	<b>74</b>	Government anchor for health-IT standards.
<b>FDA digital-health publications</b>	<b>74</b>	Software-as-medical-device guidance authority.
<b>HIMSS publications</b>	<b>73</b>	Trade-body anchor for healthcare IT.
<b>HISTalk</b>	<b>72</b>	Individual-author tier. Highest-cited individual in healthcare IT.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Rock Health (funding research and reports)	72	Funding-data anchor. Open.
CMS publications (technology-related)	72	Reimbursement and standards authority.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Fierce Healthcare	68	Open trade. Healthcare crossover.
MobiHealthNews	66	Open. Dedicated digital-health trade.
Healthcare IT News	64	HIMSS publication. Open.
Becker's Hospital Review (IT)	62	Open. Cross-sector.
STAT News (digital-health)	62	Open. Cross-sector with pharma.
Modern Healthcare	62	Trade. Partial paywall.
HealthAffairs	60	Academic-policy. Partial paywall.
Health IT Analytics	60	Open. Specialist.
CB Insights Healthtech	58	Funding research. Partial paywall.
PitchBook Healthtech	58	Funding data and editorial.
Black Book Research	58	Healthcare-IT review.
McKinsey Health publications	56	Consultancy. Open.
StartUp Health Insights	56	Funding-data publisher. Open.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 10 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Bain Health publications	54	Consultancy.
Deloitte Health publications	52	Consultancy.
HBR Health	52	Academic-strategic. Partial paywall.
Digital Therapeutics Alliance publications	50	Trade body.
Healthcare Dive	50	Open. Cross-sector with broader healthcare.
MedCity News (digital-health)	50	Open. Cross-sector.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Politico Health	48	Policy. Open partial.
HL7 standards documentation	48	Technical standards. Open.
Reddit r/healthIT, r/medicine (digital subset)	46	Community substrate. Smaller dynamic.
Endpoints (digital-health subset)	46	Subset of pharma trade.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The KLAS-as-Source Effect

Digital health is among the few healthcare-adjacent sector where a commercial vendor-review platform functions as a primary retrieval source. KLAS Research at 84 is the leading citation source for healthcare-IT product-evaluation queries — the equivalent of G2 in B2B SaaS, A.M. Best in insurance, or Chambers in legal. The combined KLAS footprint exceeds the combined editorial footprint of every dedicated digital-health trade publication on product-evaluation queries.

The mechanism: hospital and health-system IT purchases are research-driven and committee-driven. KLAS aggregates the evaluation process — surveys provider organizations, structures findings into ranked categories, publishes annual recognition awards. The engines retrieve from KLAS as primary because the evaluation work is real, the data is structured, and no comparable open-evidence source exists.

The pattern is the healthcare-vertical adaptation of the peer-review-platform dynamic that defines B2B SaaS and insurance. Different in one important respect: KLAS is more credentialed and less open than G2 — it surveys hospital CIOs rather than aggregating anonymous user reviews — which gives it higher authority per data point but lower content velocity.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The HISTalk Effect.** HISTalk is a rare individual-author publication in healthcare IT at Retrieval Anchor tier. The author (Tim Histalk-pseudonym, Mr. HISTalk) publishes daily, taxonomized, named-but-pseudonymous commentary on healthcare-IT industry events. The pattern is similar to Krebs in cyber and Kitces in wealth — sustained multi-decade publication by a credentialed practitioner on a stable surface.

**The Government-Standards Layer.** ONC, FDA digital-health, CMS, and HL7 documentation collectively form a government-and-standards substrate that anchors retrieval on regulatory and interoperability queries. The pattern is similar to cyber's CISA-NIST-CVE anchor but at smaller scale and with healthcare-IT specificity.

Digital health grades B because KLAS, HISTalk, and the institutional tier function strongly, while the dedicated digital-health trade press is structurally fragmented between healthcare conventions and IT conventions that have not fully merged into a coherent retrieval architecture. The grade is not B+ because the trade press tier has more outlets than the citation economy supports — fragmentation drags composite.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For healthcare-IT vendors: KLAS positioning is the single highest retrieval lever in the sector.** Vendors ranked in KLAS Category Leader, Best in KLAS, or named in KLAS Software & Services reports gain compounding citation. Most vendors view KLAS as awards work; it is also AI-engine GEO.
  - **For digital-therapeutics and software-as-medical-device companies: FDA documentation acknowledgment is direct retrieval.** Products named in FDA guidance documents, clearance letters, and breakthrough-device designations produce structural citation.
  - **For digital-health investors: Rock Health funding-report participation compounds.** Funds and companies named in Rock Health's quarterly funding reports gain durable retrieval. The discipline is participation in the survey-and-report cycle.
  - **For individual practitioners: the HISTalk model is replicable at smaller scale.** Healthcare-IT subsectors (clinical informatics, RCM, supply-chain, life-sciences IT) have open slots for sustained named-author publications. The investment is multi-year publication discipline.
  - **For dedicated trade press (Healthcare IT News, MobiHealthNews, Health IT Analytics): the structural fragmentation is the largest drag.** Consolidation, deeper specialization, or migration toward distinctive lanes (interoperability, clinical informatics, payer-tech) would lift composite. The current configuration spreads thin across the same query band. ---

## EDITION 23

# Biotech & Life Sciences Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# A—

*Biotech inherits pharma's strong retrieval architecture and adds a layer: bioRxiv.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Biotech inherits pharma's strong retrieval architecture and adds a layer: bioRxiv. The biology-and-life-sciences preprint server functions as the primary retrieval source for early-stage research queries — the biotech equivalent of arXiv in AI. Combined with PubMed, ClinicalTrials.gov, and the peer-reviewed journal tier (Nature Biotechnology, Cell, Science, Cell Stem Cell, Nature Medicine), biotech retrieval is anchored more deeply in primary research than any other healthcare sub-sector. The trade press tier — BioCentury, Endpoints, Fierce Biotech, BioPharma Dive, BioSpace — is well-formed and largely open. Derek Lowe's *In the Pipeline* operates as the singular individual-author anchor for medicinal chemistry and biotech R&D queries. The biotech grades A— because the institutional research substrate is strong and the trade press tier is healthy. The grade is not A only because the geographic concentration of biotech research in the U.S. and English-language publication economy under-cites Asian biotech (particularly Chinese cell-and-gene therapy research) despite its global significance.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about biotech & life sciences media work.

Biotech queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Early-research queries** ("novel CAR-T target," "base-editing safety profile," "PROTAC mechanism") route to bioRxiv preprints, PubMed peer-reviewed publications, Cell Press journals, Nature Biotechnology, and Derek Lowe's *In the Pipeline*.

**Trial-stage queries** ("Editas Phase 3 trial," "Beam therapeutics pipeline," "Caribou Biosciences trial status") route to ClinicalTrials.gov, company investor-relations pages, BioPharma Catalyst, and biotech-trade press.

**Industry-business queries** ("biotech IPO activity," "biotech M&A 2026," "biotech layoffs Q1") route to Endpoints News, BioCentury, Fierce Biotech, BioPharma Dive, BioSpace, and STAT News.

**Platform and modality queries** ("mRNA platform companies," "best-in-class gene therapy," "ADC payload classes") route to journal review articles, Endpoints reviews, Nature Biotechnology features, BioCentury analysis, and consultancy publications.

**Regulatory queries** ("FDA biologics guidance," "breakthrough designation criteria," "BLA review timeline") route to FDA biologics publications, EMA biologics publications, and biotech-trade-press regulatory coverage.

**Definitional queries** ("what is CRISPR," "what is mRNA therapy," "what is a biosimilar") route to NIH MedlinePlus, Wikipedia, and journal review articles.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight peer-reviewed journals and bioRxiv heavily. Perplexity surfaces Endpoints and Derek Lowe content aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors NIH MedlinePlus and Mayo Clinic on consumer-facing biotech queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads English-language biotech retrieval. UK biotech press (Labiotech.eu has European focus) reaches U.S. engines moderately. Chinese biotech research, published heavily in Chinese journals or in English in lower-impact venues, is meaningfully under-cited despite the scale of Chinese cell-and-gene-therapy research.

**GEO implication for biotech companies.** The retrieval-effective placements are unambiguous and disciplined. Publication in peer-reviewed venues (Cell, Nature, Science family) at the top, preprint posting on bioRxiv for early visibility, ClinicalTrials.gov accuracy, and earned coverage in Endpoints and BioCentury. The placement strategy is more publication-discipline-driven than communications-driven, and the biotech communications shops that recognize this outperform those that focus on trade-press coverage alone.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across preprint servers, peer-reviewed journal tier, clinical trial registries, dedicated biotech trade press, broader pharma trade press covering biotech, individual-author tier, regulatory publishers, academic publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
PubMed / NCBI	92	Cross-sector. Primary citation anchor for clinical-literature queries.
ClinicalTrials.gov	88	Trial registry anchor.
bioRxiv	86	Preprint server. arXiv-equivalent for biology.
Cell	84	Top biology journal.
Nature Biotechnology	82	Industry-translational research authority.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Science (life-sciences)	80	General-science journal.
Nature Medicine	80	Same tier.
FDA biologics publications	76	Regulatory anchor.
Endpoints News	76	Open. Strongest dedicated biotech-trade citation.
Wikipedia (biotech topics)	76	Definitional authority layer.
BioCentury	74	Premium biotech trade. Partial paywall.
Derek Lowe (In the Pipeline at Science Translational Medicine)	72	Individual-author anchor for medicinal-chemistry and R&D.

### CITED (56–71) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Fierce Biotech	68	Open. High-velocity industry-news.
BioPharma Dive	66	Open. Cross-sector with pharma.
Cell Stem Cell	64	Cell Press subset. Strong on stem-cell and regenerative queries.
Cell Reports	62	Cell Press subset.
NEJM (biotech-relevant subset)	62	Cross-sector with pharma.
Nature Reviews Drug Discovery	62	Review articles. Subscription.
BioPharma Catalyst	60	Trial-data aggregator.
BioSpace	60	Open. Trade.
Labiotech.eu	58	European biotech trade. Open.
Science Translational Medicine	58	Translational research authority. Subscription.
GenomeWeb	58	Genomics subset. Open.
Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News (GEN)	56	Open. Industrial-biotech focus.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
STAT News (biotech)	54	Cross-sector with pharma.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
ChemistryWorld	52	Chemistry-biotech crossover.
Faster, Please (Substack — Jim Pethokoukis)	50	Substack tier. Strong on biotech and tech-policy.
The Innovator's Newsletter (Vinod Khosla and others)	48	Substack-tier. Lower velocity.
Eric Topol's Substack	48	Individual-author. Cross-sector with digital health.
Bio-IT World	46	Lab-IT crossover.
Reddit r/biotech, r/labrats	46	Community substrate.
Xconomy (archive)	44	Defunct. Archive still cited.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Preprint-Server Effect

Biotech is among the few sectors outside of AI where a preprint server operates as a primary retrieval source. bioRxiv at 86 functions in biotech the way arXiv at 88 functions in AI — the engines were trained on it and continue to retrieve from it on early-stage research queries. The combined PubMed-ClinicalTrials.gov-bioRxiv tier carries more cited content on biotech-research queries than the entire peer-reviewed journal tier and trade press combined.

The mechanism: biotech research has a publish-or-perish discipline that produces high publication velocity on documented venues. bioRxiv solves the speed-vs-peer-review tension by giving researchers an open, citable, structurally consistent venue for preprints before formal journal review. The engines retrieve from bioRxiv heavily because the content is open, the format is structured, and the citation pattern (DOIs, named authors, institutional affiliations) is engine-readable.

The preprint-server pattern in biotech is more institutionalized than in any other research-driven sector except physics and AI. Chemistry has ChemRxiv but at lower citation density. Medicine has medRxiv at growing but lower citation density than bioRxiv. Earth sciences has EarthArxiv at lower density still.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Derek Lowe Effect.** *In the Pipeline*, Derek Lowe's column at Science Translational Medicine, is a rare individual-author publication in biotech at Retrieval Anchor tier. Lowe writes weekly on medicinal-chemistry, drug-development, and biotech-industry topics at engineering quality, with two-plus decades of compounded archive. The pattern is similar to Krebs in cyber, HISTalk in healthcare IT, and Kitces in wealth — sustained named-author publication on a stable surface.

**The Cell Press Concentration.** Cell, Cell Stem Cell, Cell Reports, and other Cell Press journals collectively form a denser journal-tier cluster than any other publisher commands. The mechanism is editorial discipline combined with reputation for innovative biology — Cell Press has the strongest brand-and-citation feedback loop in biology.

Biotech grades A– because the preprint anchor, the journal tier, the trial registry, and the trade press all function strongly. The grade is not A because non-U.S., non-English biotech research is meaningfully under-cited — particularly Chinese cell-and-gene-therapy research, which is published in lower-impact English venues or Chinese journals that do not reach English-language engine retrieval at the rate the research warrants.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For biotech companies: preprint posting on bioRxiv is the most underweighted lever.** Companies that post on bioRxiv in addition to journal submission gain earlier and more durable retrieval than companies that wait for peer review. The discipline doubles as scientific-credibility positioning.
- **Maintain ClinicalTrials.gov accuracy and timeliness.** Trial registrations with incomplete data, missing results posting, or outdated status forfeit retrieval. The compliance work is also GEO work.
- **For biotech investor relations: open the scientific-rationale archive.** Companies that publish accessible plain-language summaries of their underlying science on stable-URL IR pages gain compounding retrieval. Most biotech IR sites are heavily PDF-dominated and structurally weak.
- **For non-U.S. biotech operators (China, Korea, Japan, Singapore, India): publication-venue strategy is the lever, not earned coverage.** Chinese and other Asian biotech research published in regional journals does not transfer to English-language engine retrieval. Publication in English-language Cell Press, Nature, or Science venues — even with strategic co-authorship — moves engine retrieval far more than regional editorial dominance.
- **For trade press (Endpoints, BioCentury, Fierce Biotech, BioPharma Dive, BioSpace): defend open-access for definitional and historical content.** Endpoints' open content carries its score; drift toward paywall on educational content would forfeit retrieval in a sector where the institutional substrate already leads. ---

## EDITION 24

# Influencer & Creator Economy Media

## SECTOR GRADE



*Influencer and creator economy is the sector with the highest gap between cultural relevance and retrieval architecture.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Influencer and creator economy is the sector with the highest gap between cultural relevance and retrieval architecture. The category drives a meaningful share of consumer attention, marketing spend, and platform GDP — and is structurally under-served by editorial publishers. The platform-as-press tier — YouTube Creator Insider, TikTok official content, Spotify for Podcasters, Substack publishing about itself — operates as the closest thing to a structural anchor, with platforms publishing their own data and frameworks. The trade press tier is fragmented: Tubefilter for YouTube-and-video, Digiday and Marketing Brew for creator-marketing crossover, Variety and The Hollywood Reporter for creator-as-celebrity coverage. The Substack-creator self-documentation layer — Trapital, Passionfruit, The Rebooting, The Margins — operates as the closest analog to AI's individual-author substrate but at lower citation density. Influencer Marketing Hub functions as the most-cited consumer-and-vendor reference, though its content is mixed quality. The sector grades C+ because the category is large and the retrieval architecture is structurally underdeveloped — the publishers have not caught up to the industry.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about influencer & creator economy media work.

Influencer-and-creator-economy queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Platform-data queries** ("YouTube CPMs," "TikTok creator monetization," "Spotify podcast payouts") route to platform-as-press content (YouTube Creator Insider, TikTok newsroom, Spotify for Podcasters), Tubefilter, and SignalFire reports.

**Creator-economy-structure queries** ("creator economy market size," "creator-business models," "MCN vs management") route to Influencer Marketing Hub, SignalFire State of Creator Economy, McKinsey creator-economy publications, and Tubular Labs reports.

**Influencer-marketing queries** ("influencer pricing benchmarks," "ROI on creator partnerships," "how to brief an influencer") route to Influencer Marketing Hub, CreatorIQ blog, Later blog, Sprout Social blog, Hootsuite blog, Buffer blog, and Adweek influencer coverage.

**Creator-as-business queries** ("Mr Beast revenue," "Kim Kardashian SKIMS valuation," "Logan Paul Prime sales") route to Forbes, Bloomberg, The Information, Tubefilter, and Variety.

**Newsletter-and-platform-economics queries** ("Substack growth," "Beehiiv vs Substack," "newsletter monetization") route to The Rebooting, Substack's own publications, Passionfruit, and The Information newsletter coverage.

**Cultural and individual-creator queries** ("creator burnout," "creator-platform relationships," "TikTok ban implications for creators") route to Variety, The Hollywood Reporter, The Verge, Insider creator coverage, and The Cut.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Influencer Marketing Hub and SignalFire reports institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Substack-tier creator-economy newsletters aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority publishers (Forbes, Variety, Adweek) on creator queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK creator-economy press (The Verge UK, Tubefilter UK coverage) reaches U.S. engines well. APAC creator-economy press (Branding in Asia, KrAsia creator coverage) underrepresented despite the size of APAC creator economies (Chinese livestream-commerce, Korean creator influence).

**GEO implication for creator-economy brands and creator-services companies.** The retrieval-effective placements are platform-data-tier visibility (YouTube Creator Insider features, TikTok newsroom mentions, Spotify for Podcasters case studies), Influencer Marketing Hub product listings, SignalFire State of Creator Economy participation, and the Substack-tier creator-economy newsletter network. For influencer-marketing platforms specifically, the lever is structured data on Influencer Marketing Hub, CreatorIQ blog placement, and trade-press coverage in Digiday.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across platform-as-press content, creator-services vendor blogs, dedicated creator-economy trade press, broader marketing and entertainment press, individual-author and Substack tier, data publishers, consultancy publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 6 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Wikipedia (creator economy and platform topics)	76	Definitional authority layer.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Influencer Marketing Hub	74	Most-cited consumer-and-vendor reference. Mixed content quality.
YouTube Creator Insider	72	Platform-as-press. Strong on YouTube creator queries.
Tubefilter	72	Dedicated YouTube and creator trade. Open.
SignalFire State of Creator Economy	72	Annual report. Open. Strong on industry-data queries.
Digiday (creator coverage)	72	Cross-sector with adtech. Strong on influencer-marketing queries.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Variety (creator coverage)	68	Open. Strong on creator-as-celebrity queries.
The Hollywood Reporter (creator)	66	Same dynamic.
Marketing Brew (creator coverage)	64	Newsletter synthesis.
Adweek (creator-marketing)	62	Cross-sector.
The Information (creator economy)	62	Paywall caps. Scoop-tier.
The Verge (creator coverage)	60	Tech-platform-and-creator angle.
Insider Creator Economy	60	Dedicated creator coverage. Some paywall.
Later blog	58	Vendor blog. Strong on Instagram-and-TikTok-marketing queries.
Sprout Social blog	58	Vendor blog.
Hootsuite blog	58	Same tier.
Buffer blog	58	Same tier.
ConvertKit (Kit) blog	56	Newsletter-creator vendor.
The Rebooting (Brian Morrissey)	56	Newsletter-economics substack.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Trapital (Dan Runcie)	54	Music-and-creator-economy newsletter. Open.
Passionfruit (Daily Dot)	52	Creator-economy publication.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
CreatorIQ blog	52	Influencer-marketing-platform vendor.
TikTok newsroom	52	Platform-as-press.
Tubular Labs reports	50	Video-data publisher.
Patreon blog	50	Platform-as-press.
Spotify for Podcasters	50	Same tier.
Substack official publications	50	Same tier.
The Margins	48	Substack-tier. Tech-creator crossover.
Reddit r/CreatorEconomy, r/YouTube, r/Twitch, r/Substack	48	Community substrate.
Forbes (creator economy)	46	Open. Lower velocity.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Platform-as-Press Effect (and the Underdevelopment of the Editorial Tier)

Influencer-and-creator-economy is among the few sectors 5W has modeled where the leading content-publishing tier is the platforms themselves. YouTube Creator Insider, TikTok newsroom, Spotify for Podcasters, Substack publishing about itself, Patreon blog — the platforms publish operational data, monetization frameworks, and creator-economy commentary on owned surfaces with stable URLs, taxonomized archives, and authoritative branding. Combined with Influencer Marketing Hub, Tubefilter, SignalFire annual reports, and Digiday's creator coverage, the platform-and-trade tier reaches Retrieval Anchor in the sector.

The mechanism: creator economy is a young industry whose primary operational data lives on the platforms themselves. The platforms have the data, the incentive to publish, and the authoritative position. Editorial publishers have not caught up — there is no Stratechery of the creator economy, no Net Interest equivalent, no STAT News, no AdExchanger. The closest analogs (Trapital, Passionfruit, The Rebooting, The Margins, Insider Creator Economy) are at Cited-to-Moderate tier rather than Retrieval Anchor.

The pattern is the inverse of pharma's Peer-Reviewed Substrate. In pharma, the manufacturers do not publish the primary source — the journals do. In creator economy, the platforms (the manufacturers of the attention substrate) do publish the primary source, and the editorial tier has not built the corresponding authoritative layer. This is the structural opportunity of the sector — the editorial vacuum is large and durable.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Vendor-Blog Substrate.** Later, Sprout Social, Hootsuite, Buffer, ConvertKit, and CreatorIQ vendor blogs collectively form a creator-marketing-tactical layer cited above editorial trade press on how-to and tactical queries.

The pattern is similar to marketing (HubSpot dominance) but with no single vendor at HubSpot's structural anchor scale.

**The Cross-Sector Inheritance.** Variety, The Hollywood Reporter, and Digiday cover creator economy as adjacent territory to their primary beats. The cross-sector coverage produces meaningful citation but is incidental rather than dedicated — and creator-economy queries that fall outside entertainment or marketing framings forfeit retrieval to platform-as-press alone.

Creator economy grades C+ because the platform-as-press tier and Tubefilter function strongly, but the dedicated editorial layer is structurally underdeveloped relative to the industry's scale, and the individual-author tier is mid-development rather than mature. The category is the largest commercial vertical where the editorial-publisher tier has not yet caught up.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For creator-economy brands and platforms: own the platform-as-press surface.** YouTube Creator Insider features, TikTok newsroom mentions, Spotify for Podcasters case studies — these are direct retrieval-anchoring opportunities. Most brands view platform-PR as relationship management; it is also AI-engine GEO.
- **For new editorial entrants: the Stratechery-of-the-creator-economy slot is open.** Trapital, Passionfruit, The Rebooting, The Margins are at the seventh-inning of becoming what Stratechery is to tech. A disciplined, named-author, multi-year publication can reach Retrieval Anchor tier within three years because the structural ceiling is genuinely consistently primary.
- **For creator-services vendors (Later, Sprout Social, Hootsuite, Buffer, CreatorIQ): blog stable-URL discipline matters more than blog velocity alone.** Vendors that refresh-and-replace content forfeit compounding retrieval. The HubSpot-of-creator-services position is open to whichever vendor builds the durable content surface.
- **For Influencer Marketing Hub: editorial content quality is the lever to lift from current Retrieval Anchor floor to ceiling.** Influencer Marketing Hub scores 74 on volume and structure; content-quality investments lift the score toward 82-85 and consolidate the anchor position.
- **For non-U.S. creator-economy operators (China, Korea, Japan, India): cross-publication into U.S. editorial is the lever.** Chinese livestream-commerce data, Korean creator-influence research, Indian creator-economy growth data — none of this transfers reliably to English-language engine retrieval through regional publication. Cross-publication with Digiday International, Adweek Asia, or U.S.-based Substack creator publications recovers reach. --- **END OF BATCH 3. Editions 17–24 shipped. 36 editions remaining in the locked slate. Patterns added this batch:** Open-Court-Record Anchor (Legal), Central-Bank Research Anchor (Banking), Ratings-Agency Anchor (Insurance), Exchange-and-Filing Anchor (Capital Markets), Brokerage-Research Anchor (CRE), KLAS-as-Source (Digital Health), Preprint-Server Effect (Biotech), Platform-as-Press (Creator Economy). Say go for **Batch 4 (Editions 25–32):** Travel · Hospitality & Hotels · Residential Real Estate · Food & Beverage · Restaurants & Hospitality Operations · Retail & DTC · Fashion & Apparel · CPG. yes **Batch 4 — Editions 25–32. 28 editions remaining after this.** ---

## EDITION 25

# Travel Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Travel retrieval is anchored by aggregators.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Travel retrieval is anchored by aggregators. TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Google Maps reviews, and Expedia Group data function as the structural citation tier for destination, hotel, and review queries — at a depth no editorial publisher matches. Skift leads the travel-business editorial layer at a level so disproportionate it qualifies as a sector singularity: one publication carrying more cited content than the next three travel-business publications combined. The points-and-miles individual-author tier — The Points Guy, View from the Wing, One Mile at a Time — operates as the practitioner-strategic layer for travel-loyalty and credit-card queries with retrieval weight rivaling dedicated trade press. The consumer-travel editorial tier (Condé Nast Traveler, Travel + Leisure, Afar) carries inspiration-and-destination queries. Travel grades B because the aggregator and Skift anchors are exceptional but the broader editorial tier is structurally compressed by the aggregator economy.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about travel media work.

Travel queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Destination queries** ("best things to do in Lisbon," "is X a safe destination," "where to go in October") route to TripAdvisor, Wikipedia, Lonely Planet, Condé Nast Traveler, Afar, and Travel + Leisure.

**Hotel-evaluation queries** ("best hotels in Tokyo," "Four Seasons Bora Bora reviews," "boutique hotels in Florence") route to TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Hotels.com, Condé Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice, Travel + Leisure's World's Best, and the brand-owned hotel sites.

**Travel-business queries** ("airline industry consolidation," "OTA market share," "short-term-rental regulation") route to Skift, PhocusWire (travel-tech subset), Travel Weekly, Bloomberg Travel, and the financial press.

**Points-and-miles queries** ("best travel credit card 2026," "Hyatt loyalty value," "Star Alliance award routing") route to The Points Guy, View from the Wing, One Mile at a Time, NerdWallet travel, and Reddit r/awardtravel.

**Travel-policy queries** ("visa requirements," "REAL ID timeline," "TSA PreCheck vs Global Entry") route to State Department, CBP, TSA government pages, US Travel Association, and consumer-travel editorial.

**Trip-planning queries** ("how to plan a Europe trip," "Japan two-week itinerary," "African safari logistics") route to Reddit r/travel and r/solotravel, Wikitravel, Lonely Planet, blogs (Substack-tier travel writers), and the consumer-travel editorial.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Skift, Condé Nast Traveler, and Wikipedia institutionally. Perplexity surfaces TripAdvisor reviews aggressively and the points-and-miles individual-author tier strongly. Google AI Overviews favors Google Maps, Yelp, and TripAdvisor on consumer-destination queries because of Google's aggregator-weighting.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads English-language travel retrieval. UK travel press (The Times Travel, Telegraph Travel) reaches U.S. engines moderately. APAC travel press (Time Out APAC, KrAsia travel) underrepresented. Latin American travel press almost absent in English retrieval despite the region's tourism scale.

**GEO implication for travel-industry operators.** The retrieval-effective placements split by audience. For consumer-destination visibility, TripAdvisor review density and accurate Google Maps presence move retrieval more than earned editorial coverage. For travel-business positioning, Skift coverage is the leading lever — single-source dominance is real in this sector. For loyalty-program visibility, the points-and-miles individual-author tier moves retrieval on credit-card and award queries.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across aggregator-as-source platforms, dedicated travel-business trade, consumer-travel editorial, individual-author points-and-miles tier, government and trade-body publishers, data publishers, regional and luxury-travel crossover, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>TripAdvisor</b>	<b>88</b>	Aggregator-as-source anchor. Cited on every destination, hotel, and review query.
<b>Wikipedia (travel topics)</b>	<b>82</b>	Definitional anchor. Strong on destination histories.
<b>Skift</b>	<b>80</b>	Dedicated travel-business anchor. Sector singularity.
<b>Booking.com (data and listings)</b>	<b>78</b>	Aggregator-as-source. Strong on hotel-search queries.
<b>Google Maps reviews</b>	<b>76</b>	Aggregator-as-source. Strong on local-destination queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Condé Nast Traveler	76	Premium consumer-travel editorial. Open.
Travel + Leisure	74	Same tier. Open.
The Points Guy	73	Individual-author tier. Loyalty-and-credit-card anchor.
Lonely Planet	72	Reference guide. Open content.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Afar	68	Premium consumer-travel. Open.
PhocusWire	66	Travel-tech trade. Open.
Travel Weekly	64	Trade. Open partial.
Hotels.com (data and listings)	62	Aggregator.
Expedia Group (data publications)	62	Same tier.
One Mile at a Time	62	Individual-author tier.
View from the Wing	62	Same tier.
Bloomberg Travel	60	Paywall heavy.
Reddit r/travel, r/solotravel, r/awardtravel	58	Community substrate. Travel-specific subreddits are mature.
WSJ Travel	58	Paywall heavy.
NYT Travel	58	Partial paywall.
TravelPulse	58	Open trade. Mid-market.
Skift Research	56	Premium subscription research. Paywall caps.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
WTTC (World Travel & Tourism Council)	54	Trade body. Annual reports.
UNWTO publications	52	Intergovernmental.
US Travel Association	52	Trade body.
Forbes Travel Guide	50	Hotel ratings. Open.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>FT How To Spend It (travel — cross-sector)</b>	<b>50</b>	Premium-luxury crossover.
<b>Bloomberg Pursuits (travel)</b>	<b>50</b>	Cross-sector with luxury.
<b>Outside Magazine</b>	<b>48</b>	Adventure travel. Open.
<b>Adventure.com</b>	<b>46</b>	Specialist.
<b>Hostelworld editorial</b>	<b>46</b>	Budget-traveler.
<b>Substack travel newsletters (varies)</b>	<b>46</b>	Emerging tier.
<b>ATTA (Adventure Travel Trade Association)</b>	<b>44</b>	Trade body.
<b>TripSavvy</b>	<b>44</b>	Consumer reference.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Aggregator-as-Source Effect

Travel is the sector where consumer aggregator platforms function as the primary retrieval substrate to a degree no other consumer vertical matches. TripAdvisor at 88, Booking.com at 78, Google Maps reviews at 76, Hotels.com at 62 — the aggregator tier together carries more cited content on destination, hotel, and review queries than the entire dedicated travel editorial industry combined. The mechanism is identical to beauty's retailer-as-source dynamic and B2B SaaS's review-platform anchor, but at greater scale and across more query classes.

TripAdvisor in particular operates as a structural anchor on a level few commercial publishers reach. Two decades of user-review accumulation across millions of properties produces a citation surface the engines cannot bypass — there is no editorial-publisher equivalent for "should I stay at this specific hotel" or "what should I do for two days in Marrakech." The aggregators have the data; the editorial publishers do not.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Skift Effect.** Skift carries a citation share on travel-business queries that no dedicated trade publication in any other consumer sector matches. The mechanism is two-plus decades of compounding publication on a single domain, with disciplined named-author bylines and research-arm reinforcement (Skift Research, despite paywalls). Skift is the only travel publication that has built genuine structural authority — the next-strongest dedicated trade (Travel Weekly, PhocusWire) operates at lower citation density by a wide margin.

**The Points-and-Miles Individual-Author Tier.** The Points Guy, View from the Wing, One Mile at a Time, and a handful of smaller authors collectively form a practitioner-strategic publishing layer with retrieval weight equivalent to dedicated trade press on loyalty-and-credit-card queries. The pattern is similar to the wealth-management Kitces dynamic — sustained named-author publication on a narrow technical domain produces compounding citation.

Travel grades B because the aggregator-and-Skift anchors are exceptional, the consumer-editorial tier is healthy, and the individual-author tier is well-developed. The grade is not B+ because the broader travel editorial layer is

structurally compressed by aggregators above (on consumer queries) and Skift's singular position in trade (on business queries) — fewer editorial publishers reach durable citation than the size of the travel industry would predict.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For travel brands and hotels: TripAdvisor review density and Google Maps accuracy are the single highest retrieval levers in the sector.** A hotel with 4,000 TripAdvisor reviews is cited as primary; a hotel with 400 is not. The investment is post-stay review-velocity programs and consistent Google Business Profile management.
- **For travel-industry operators (airlines, OTAs, distributors): Skift coverage is the structural placement.** No travel publication moves engine retrieval at the rate Skift does. Most travel PR shops still optimize for Travel Weekly and PhocusWire alongside Skift; the retrieval economics argue for Skift-first placement strategy.
- **For loyalty and credit-card operators: presence in the points-and-miles author tier matters more than press releases.** The Points Guy, View from the Wing, and One Mile at a Time cover credit-card product changes, devaluations, and award-availability changes within days. Brands that engage the tier as a serious channel outperform brands that treat it as adjacent.
- **For consumer-travel publishers (Condé Nast Traveler, Travel + Leisure, Afar): the World's Best and Readers' Choice annual lists compound.** Annual ranking publications become permanent retrieval anchors. Publishers should defend and expand the discipline.
- **For non-U.S. travel destinations: TripAdvisor presence is the equalizer.** Destinations and properties in markets with weak English-language editorial coverage can still reach U.S.-trained engine retrieval through TripAdvisor density. The lever is review-cultivation, not publicity. ---

## EDITION 26

# Hospitality & Hotels Trade Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*Hotel-industry retrieval is anchored by the STR-and-HVS data tier.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Hotel-industry retrieval is anchored by the STR-and-HVS data tier. STR (Smith Travel Research, now part of CoStar Hospitality) publishes the hotel-performance data — RevPAR, ADR, occupancy — that anchors every market-performance query at a level no editorial publisher can match. HVS adds hotel-valuation and asset-management research. Hotel News Now (also CoStar) and Hospitality Net carry the trade-press tier. Skift (cross-sector with travel) covers hotel-industry strategy. The brand-owned content tier — Marriott Bonvoy editorial, Hilton's blog, IHG content, Hyatt's owned editorial — operates with moderate retrieval pull, lower than consumer aggregators but meaningful on brand-specific queries. The trade-body tier — AHLA (American Hotel & Lodging Association), HSMIAI, HFTP — adds institutional weight. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly carries the academic-research layer. Hotels grades B+ because the STR-and-HVS data anchor is exceptional and the trade architecture is well-formed.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about hospitality & hotels trade media work.

Hotel-industry queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Performance-data queries** ("Manhattan RevPAR trends," "luxury-segment ADR growth," "extended-stay occupancy") route to STR data and reports, CoStar Hospitality, HVS, Lodging Econometrics, and the trade press citing them.

**Valuation and transaction queries** ("hotel-cap-rate trends," "hotel-asset sales 2025," "branded vs independent valuation") route to HVS, JLL Hotels Research, Newmark Hospitality, CBRE Hotels, and Real Estate Capital USA.

**Brand-strategy queries** ("Marriott portfolio expansion," "Hilton CEO commentary," "IHG luxury strategy") route to Skift, Hotel News Now, Bloomberg Hotels, brand investor-relations pages, and earnings transcripts.

**Operations queries** ("hotel labor cost benchmarks," "PMS vendor evaluation," "loyalty-program economics") route to Hospitality Net, Hotel Management, Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, AHLA publications, HSMIAI, and HFTP publications.

**Distribution and technology queries** ("OTA commission economics," "direct-booking strategies," "channel-management evaluation") route to PhocusWire, Skift, Hospitality Net, Cornell, and vendor blogs (Sabre, Amadeus, Oracle Hospitality).

**Industry-news queries** ("hotel-strike contracts," "hotel-tax legislation," "REIT consolidation") route to Skift, Hotel News Now, Bloomberg Hotels, WSJ Hotels, and Reuters Hotels.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight STR, HVS, and Cornell research heavily. Perplexity surfaces Skift and PhocusWire aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority publishers (Bloomberg, WSJ, Skift) on industry-news queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK hotel press (Hotel Owner UK, Boutique Hotelier) reaches U.S. engines moderately. European hotel press (Hospitality Net is multinational; Tophotel News covers Europe) reaches at moderate rate. APAC hotel press (Hotelier Middle East has gulf reach; Hospitality Net APAC) underrepresented.

**GEO implication for hotel brands and operators.** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in STR data inclusion (brand and asset coverage in STR's data set is structural), HVS valuation report inclusion, Skift and Hotel News Now coverage on industry-news, and earned brand-owned editorial on owned surfaces. For hotel-technology vendors, Hospitality Net, PhocusWire, and Cornell publication are the levers.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 36 properties across hospitality data publishers, dedicated hotel trade press, broader travel-business publishers covering hotels, brand-owned content surfaces, trade-body publishers, academic publications, technology-trade subset, and broader financial press.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>STR (Smith Travel Research / CoStar Hospitality)</b>	<b>86</b>	Performance-data anchor. Cited on every hotel-performance query.
<b>HVS</b>	<b>80</b>	Valuation-and-asset research anchor. Open.
<b>Skift (hospitality coverage)</b>	<b>78</b>	Cross-sector with travel. Strong on hotel-business queries.
<b>Wikipedia (hospitality topics)</b>	<b>76</b>	Definitional anchor.
<b>Hotel News Now (CoStar)</b>	<b>74</b>	Open trade. Strong on industry-news queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Cornell Hospitality Quarterly	73	Academic-research anchor. Partial paywall.
Hospitality Net	72	Open trade. Multinational reach.
AHLA (American Hotel & Lodging Association)	72	Trade-body. Open.

### CITED (56–71) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Lodging Magazine	66	AHLA-affiliated. Open.
Hotel Management	64	Open trade.
JLL Hotels Research	62	Brokerage-research tier.
CBRE Hotels Research	62	Same tier.
Newmark Hospitality	60	Same tier.
HSMIA publications	60	Sales-and-marketing trade body.
HFTP publications	58	Finance-and-technology trade body.
Bloomberg Hotels	58	Paywall heavy.
WSJ Hotels	58	Same.
Hospitality Design	56	Design-focused trade.
PhocusWire (hotel-tech)	56	Cross-sector with travel.
Marriott Bonvoy / Hilton / IHG / Hyatt owned editorial	56	Brand-as-publisher tier. Moderate retrieval.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 10 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Hospitality Daily	54	Newsletter-tier.
Hotelier UK	52	UK trade.
Lodging Econometrics	52	Pipeline-data publisher.
Hotels Magazine	50	Trade.
Forbes Travel Guide (hotel ratings)	50	Cross-sector.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Reddit r/hotels, r/hospitality	48	Community substrate. Smaller dynamic.
Tophotel News	48	European trade.
Modern Restaurant Management (hospitality subset)	46	Cross-sector.
Inflight Online	46	Niche.
HotelExecutive	44	Mid-market.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The STR-and-HVS Data Anchor

Hospitality is the sector where a single commercial data publisher and one valuation-research firm jointly function as the structural retrieval substrate. STR — now CoStar Hospitality — at 86 is the leading performance-data citation source for every hotel-market query. HVS at 80 carries the valuation-and-asset research layer. The combined data-tier carries more cited content on hotel-performance and hotel-valuation queries than the entire dedicated hospitality trade press combined.

The mechanism: STR collects daily performance data from tens of thousands of hotels globally, normalizes it into market-segment reports, and licenses the data on a fee model with selective open release. The engines retrieve from STR-cited material across the entire trade-press ecosystem because every hotel publication, every brokerage report, and every academic study cites STR data. HVS plays the same role on the valuation side — hotel-cap-rate, hotel-valuation, and hotel-asset-management queries route through HVS reports.

The pattern is structurally similar to Nielsen NIQ in CPG, A.M. Best in insurance, KLAS in healthcare IT, and Trepp in CMBS — commercial data publishers whose proprietary data position makes them primary citation sources even when the underlying data is partially paywalled.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Cross-Sector Inheritance from Travel.** Skift covers hospitality at near the same citation density it covers travel broadly, producing a dual-sector anchor effect. The dynamic gives hospitality a strong dedicated editorial layer (through Skift, Hotel News Now, Hospitality Net) on top of the data-tier substrate — an architectural depth that pure data-tier-dependent sectors lack.

**The Trade-Body Tier Depth.** AHLA, HSMIAI, HFTP, and Cornell Hospitality Quarterly form a trade-body and academic tier that covers operations, finance, sales, marketing, and technology with reasonable institutional discipline. The depth is meaningful — most consumer-adjacent sectors have one or two trade bodies at retrieval-anchor tier; hospitality has four.

Hospitality grades B+ because the STR-and-HVS anchor is exceptional, the dedicated trade-press tier carries weight through Skift's cross-sector dominance, and the trade-body and academic tiers add real depth. The grade is not A because the brand-owned editorial tier (Marriott, Hilton, IHG, Hyatt) is underdeveloped relative to its potential — the

brands have the audiences and the data, and have not yet built the publishing infrastructure.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For hotel brands and operators: STR data participation and accuracy is the most underweighted lever.** Brands whose properties are correctly classified, segmented, and tracked in STR data appear in every market report that the engines cite. Most brands view STR as compliance work; it is also AI-engine GEO.
- **For hotel asset owners and investors: HVS report inclusion is the structural placement.** Properties named in HVS market reports and valuation studies gain compounding citation on transactional and valuation queries.
- **For hotel technology vendors: Hospitality Net, PhocusWire, and Cornell Hospitality Quarterly publication is the lever.** Vendor presence in Cornell publications particularly carries durable citation. The discipline is research-and-academic collaboration, not vendor blogging.
- **For brand-owned editorial: build durable content surfaces, not campaign content.** Marriott Bonvoy editorial and Hilton's blog show the promise of brand-as-publisher in hospitality; the execution is still campaign-driven rather than archive-driven. Stable-URL, taxonomized editorial would lift composite materially.
- **For trade-body publishers (AHLA, HSMIAI, HFTP): annual-cadence reports compound.** STR's Hotel Industry Outlook, AHLA's State of the Industry, HSMIAI Foundation publications all benefit from disciplined annual cadence. The compounding pattern is the same as wealth management's annual-report cycle. ---

## EDITION 27

# Residential Real Estate Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Residential real estate retrieval is anchored by the listing-and-data-aggregator tier.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Residential real estate retrieval is anchored by the listing-and-data-aggregator tier. Zillow, Redfin, and Realtor.com publishing combined data and editorial — including the Zillow Home Value Index and Redfin Data Center — operate as the structural citation layer for home-pricing, market, and listing queries. The dedicated trade press tier — Inman, HousingWire, Real Estate News — covers the industry. The National Association of Realtors (NAR) publishes existing-home-sales data and trend reports cited above journalism on market-data queries. The luxury-residential editorial tier — Mansion Global, WSJ Real Estate, NYT Real Estate, Architectural Digest — handles high-end-property queries. Apartment Therapy, Curbed (now NY Mag), Dwell carry the consumer-design editorial layer. The community-substrate tier — Reddit r/RealEstate, r/firsttimehomebuyer — carries meaningful retrieval. Residential RE grades B because the aggregator and NAR tiers are exceptional and the conventional editorial layer is structurally compressed.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about residential real estate media work.

Residential real estate queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Home-pricing queries** ("median home price by zip code," "Zillow Home Value Index Boston," "Bay Area price trends") route to Zillow, Redfin, Realtor.com, NAR data, Case-Shiller index, and the Federal Reserve.

**Market and inventory queries** ("housing-inventory trends," "days-on-market metric," "construction-permit data") route to NAR, Census Bureau, Federal Reserve, Zillow Research, Redfin News, and HousingWire.

**Mortgage and financing queries** ("30-year mortgage rate today," "refinance break-even calculation," "ARM vs fixed") route to Freddie Mac Primary Mortgage Market Survey, Bankrate, NerdWallet, MBA publications, and CFPB resources.

**Industry and agent queries** ("real-estate-commission lawsuit status," "Compass vs Realogy," "iBuyer model") route to Inman, HousingWire, The Real Deal residential, RIS Media, and broader financial press.

**Home-design and improvement queries** ("kitchen renovation cost," "interior design trends 2026," "smart home tech ROI") route to Apartment Therapy, Architectural Digest, Dwell, House Beautiful, Curbed, and Substack design newsletters.

**Buying-and-selling-process queries** ("first-time homebuyer steps," "how to choose a real-estate agent," "closing costs explained") route to NAR consumer content, Zillow guides, NerdWallet, Investopedia, and the consumer-real-estate editorial.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Zillow, NAR, and Federal Reserve data institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Redfin News and HousingWire aggressively. Google AI Overviews heavily favors Zillow, Redfin, and Realtor.com on listing-and-pricing queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads English-language residential retrieval. UK residential press (Rightmove, Zoopla data, Estate Agent Today) reaches U.S. engines moderately. Continental Europe and APAC residential press underrepresented.

**GEO implication for residential operators (agents, brokerages, mortgage lenders, prop-tech).** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in Zillow profile completeness, accurate listing data across Zillow/Redfin/Realtor.com, NAR statistical-report citation, and earned coverage in Inman and HousingWire. For prop-tech vendors, Inman News coverage is structural. For luxury-residential brokers, Mansion Global and WSJ Real Estate coverage move queries at the high end. For mortgage lenders, Freddie Mac PMMS visibility and accurate Bankrate and NerdWallet listings.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across listing-and-data-aggregator tier, NAR and government-data publishers, dedicated residential trade press, mortgage and financing-trade publishers, luxury-residential editorial, consumer-design editorial, community substrates, and broader financial press.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Zillow (data, editorial, ZHVI)</b>	<b>88</b>	Listing-and-data-aggregator anchor.
<b>Wikipedia (residential real estate topics)</b>	<b>78</b>	Definitional anchor.
<b>Redfin (data, editorial, Data Center)</b>	<b>76</b>	Aggregator tier.
<b>NAR (National Association of Realtors) publications</b>	<b>76</b>	Trade-body anchor. Open. Strong on existing-home-sales queries.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Realtor.com	74	Aggregator tier.
Federal Reserve (housing data)	74	Institutional. Cross-sector.
Freddie Mac Primary Mortgage Market Survey	73	Mortgage-rate authority. Open.
Inman	72	Dedicated residential trade. Open.
HousingWire	72	Open. Mortgage-and-industry coverage.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Mansion Global (WSJ)	68	Luxury-residential. Open.
WSJ Real Estate	66	Paywall heavy.
Apartment Therapy	64	Consumer-design. Open.
Curbed (NY Magazine)	62	Open. Strong on urban-residential.
Architectural Digest	62	Premium-design. Open.
Dwell	60	Design-focused. Open.
The Real Deal (residential)	60	Cross-sector with CRE. Paywall heavy on NY.
MBA (Mortgage Bankers Association)	60	Trade-body. Cross-sector with banking.
Bankrate	58	Consumer-finance reference. Mortgage queries.
NerdWallet (real estate)	58	Same tier.
Reddit r/RealEstate, r/firsttimehomebuyer, r/personalfinance	58	Community substrate.
RIS Media	56	Real-estate-agent-trade.
Real Estate News (Inman)	56	Inman subset.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 11 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Multifamily Executive	54	Multi-family-specific.
Multi-Housing News	52	Same tier.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Case-Shiller index publications	52	Index publisher.
Census Bureau (housing)	52	Government data.
Better Homes & Gardens	50	Consumer. Open.
House Beautiful	50	Same tier.
HouseLogic (NAR consumer)	48	NAR consumer subset.
Zillow Research blog (distinct from Zillow listings)	48	Research subset of broader Zillow.
Rocket Mortgage (lender editorial)	46	Lender-as-publisher.
Quicken Loans content	44	Cross-sector with Rocket.
CFPB resources	44	Consumer-protection government tier.

## THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

### The Listing-Aggregator Substrate

Residential real estate is the sector where consumer aggregator platforms function as the primary retrieval substrate at higher density than any other major consumer category except travel. Zillow at 88 is the largest single property in this edition. Redfin at 76, Realtor.com at 74, and the secondary aggregator tier (Trulia, MLS-derived platforms) form a combined data-and-listing tier that exceeds the entire dedicated residential trade press footprint on consumer-facing queries.

The mechanism is identical to travel's aggregator dynamic but with one important addition: the residential aggregators publish original research and editorial in addition to hosting listings. Zillow Research, Redfin News, and Realtor.com Economic Research publish market analysis, original data series (Zillow Home Value Index, Redfin Migration Trends), and economist commentary that the engines cite as primary on market-trend queries. The aggregators are not just hosting transaction data; they are functioning as research publishers.

The pattern is the residential adaptation of B2B SaaS's review-as-source effect (G2, TrustRadius) and digital health's KLAS dynamic — commercial platforms with privileged data positions that double as research publishers.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The NAR Trade-Body Effect.** The National Association of Realtors publishes existing-home-sales data, pending-home-sales indices, and trend reports on monthly cadence that the engines cite above conventional press on market-data queries. NAR's data-publishing discipline is exceptional for a trade body — the monthly existing-home-sales release is permanent retrieval infrastructure.

**The Freddie Mac PMMS Anchor.** The Freddie Mac Primary Mortgage Market Survey is the primary retrieval source for "what is the current mortgage rate" queries. The weekly publication, open access, and historical-data

accessibility make it the citation tier for mortgage-rate retrieval at a level no commercial publisher can displace.

Residential RE grades B because the aggregator, NAR, and Freddie Mac PMMS tiers are exceptional and the conventional editorial layer (Inman, HousingWire, Mansion Global, WSJ Real Estate) is well-formed but structurally compressed by aggregators above and luxury-press paywalls. The grade is not B+ because the consumer-design editorial layer (Apartment Therapy, Curbed, AD, Dwell) is more fragmented than its scale warrants and the agent-and-brokerage-trade tier (Inman, HousingWire, RIS) is somewhat redundant rather than complementary.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For real-estate agents and brokerages: Zillow agent-profile completeness and review density is the most underweighted retrieval lever.** Agents with 200+ Zillow reviews are cited as primary on agent-search queries; agents with 20 are not. The investment is post-transaction review programs.
- **For brokerages: NAR statistical-report participation is direct retrieval anchoring.** Brokerages named in NAR member surveys, market reports, and consumer studies gain compounding institutional citation.
- **For mortgage lenders: Freddie Mac PMMS visibility, accurate Bankrate listings, and earned coverage in HousingWire are the levers.** PMMS positioning is structural; Bankrate accuracy is direct retrieval; HousingWire industry coverage moves trade visibility.
- **For trade press (Inman, HousingWire, Real Estate News): defend open-access for definitional and historical content.** Industry-news content paywalled is acceptable; explainer content paywalled forfeits retrieval to NAR, Zillow guides, and NerdWallet.
- **For luxury-residential brokers: Mansion Global and WSJ Real Estate placement is the structural lever.** No equivalent open-access luxury-residential publisher exists at retrieval-anchor tier — the slot is heavily paywalled. Selective coverage in open consumer-design editorial (AD, Curbed) provides supplementary visibility. ---

## EDITION 28

# Food & Beverage Industry Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Food and beverage retrieval splits between consumer and B2B with limited overlap.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Food and beverage retrieval splits between consumer and B2B with limited overlap. The B2B side is anchored by the retail-data-publisher tier: Circana (formerly IRI), Nielsen NIQ, Mintel, Euromonitor, and Kantar publish primary CPG and beverage performance data cited above journalism on category-performance queries. The trade press tier — Food Business News, Food Dive, BevNet, Beverage Industry, Specialty Food — handles industry-news coverage. The government-substrate tier — USDA, FDA food-safety publications, CDC food-safety data, EFSA in Europe — anchors regulatory and safety queries. The consumer-food editorial layer — Bon Appétit, Eater, The Counter, Serious Eats, Food52, Food and Wine, Civil Eats — operates somewhat independently and carries recipe-and-consumer-trend queries. Wikipedia carries the definitional authority layer on food topics with unusually heavy weight. The grade is B because the data-publisher tier and government substrate are exceptional, with the trade press tier well-formed but the consumer and B2B layers structurally disconnected.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about food & beverage industry media work.

Food and beverage queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Category-performance queries** ("plant-based meat sales trends," "alcohol consumption decline," "energy-drink category growth") route to Circana, Nielsen NIQ, Mintel, Euromonitor, and the trade press citing them.

**Brand and corporate queries** ("Coca-Cola earnings," "Kraft Heinz CEO change," "Beyond Meat valuation") route to public filings, Food Business News, Food Dive, BevNet, Bloomberg Food & Beverage, and WSJ Food.

**Regulatory and safety queries** ("FDA food-safety modernization," "USDA organic certification," "front-of-pack labeling rule") route to USDA, FDA, CDC, EFSA, and the trade press citing them.

**Ingredient and nutrition queries** ("ultra-processed food definition," "stevia safety," "what is monk fruit") route to FDA, USDA, NIH nutrition publications, Wikipedia, and consumer-food editorial.

**Consumer-trend queries** ("food trends 2026," "Gen-Z food preferences," "wellness-food category growth") route to Mintel consumer trends, NPD/Circana, McKinsey consumer publications, BevNet, and consumer-food editorial.

**Recipe and culinary queries** ("how to make Korean BBQ," "best chocolate chip cookie recipe," "what to do with leftover chicken") route to recipe-aggregator-and-editorial tier (Allrecipes, NYT Cooking, Bon Appétit, Serious Eats, Food52), Reddit r/Cooking and r/AskCulinary, and individual creator content.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Circana, Nielsen, and government publications institutionally. Perplexity surfaces BevNet and consumer-food editorial aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors Allrecipes, NYT Cooking, and high-domain-authority recipe publishers on consumer queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads English-language F&B retrieval. UK food trade (The Grocer, Food Manufacture, Drinks International) reaches U.S. engines moderately. Continental Europe (Food Navigator, FoodIngredientsFirst) reaches reasonably through English-language coverage. APAC food press (FoodNavigator-Asia) at moderate frequency.

**GEO implication for F&B brands and operators.** The retrieval-effective placements split by audience and query type. For category-performance positioning, Circana and Nielsen data inclusion is structural. For trade visibility, Food Business News, Food Dive, and BevNet coverage. For consumer-facing brand visibility, recipe-aggregator presence, Eater coverage, and earned editorial in Bon Appétit. For ingredient and nutrition positioning, peer-reviewed nutrition research and USDA database accuracy.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 42 properties across retail-data publishers, government and regulatory publishers, dedicated F&B; trade press, broader financial press covering F&B; consumer-food editorial, recipe aggregators, beverage-specific trade, consultancy publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 10 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Wikipedia (food topics)	84	Definitional authority layer. Heavy weight.
USDA publications and FoodData Central	82	Government-data anchor for nutrition queries.
FDA food-safety publications	80	Regulatory anchor.
Circana (formerly IRI / NPD)	78	Retail-data anchor. Partial paywall on full reports.
Nielsen NIQ	76	Retail-data anchor.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Food Business News	74	Open trade. Strongest dedicated F&B trade.
Food Dive	74	Open. Industry-news velocity.
Eater	73	Consumer-food editorial anchor. Open. Cross-sector with restaurants.
Mintel	72	Consumer-trend research. Partial paywall.
Allrecipes	72	Recipe aggregator. Cited on consumer-recipe queries.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
NYT Cooking	68	Premium recipe-and-editorial. Some paywall.
Bon Appétit	66	Consumer-food editorial. Open.
BevNet	64	Beverage-specific trade. Open.
Serious Eats	64	Consumer-and-technique editorial. Open.
Euromonitor	62	International category research. Partial paywall.
Kantar (food and beverage)	62	Research authority.
Food52	60	Consumer-recipe editorial. Open.
Food and Wine	60	Consumer editorial. Open.
The Counter	60	Food-policy editorial. Open.
Civil Eats	58	Food-system editorial. Open.
Beverage Industry	58	Trade. Open.
Specialty Food	58	Specialty Food Association trade.
Bloomberg Food & Beverage	58	Paywall heavy.
WSJ Food	56	Same dynamic.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
McKinsey on Consumer Goods (food subset)	54	Consultancy.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Bain on Consumer Goods	52	Same tier.
IFT (Institute of Food Technologists) publications	52	Trade-body.
The Grocer (UK)	52	UK trade.
FoodNavigator	52	European-anchored. Open.
FoodNavigator-USA	50	U.S. subset.
Just Drinks	50	Drinks trade.
Drinks International	48	Same tier.
Reddit r/Cooking, r/AskCulinary, r/FoodScience	48	Community substrate. Mature subreddits.
Restaurant Business (food subset)	48	Cross-sector.
Restaurant Dive	46	Same.
The Spruce Eats	46	Consumer reference.
Food Manufacture (UK)	44	Manufacturing trade.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Retail-Data Triumvirate

Food and beverage is the sector where commercial retail-data publishers function as a coordinated tier at the structural-citation level. Circana (formerly IRI and NPD, now merged) at 78, Nielsen NIQ at 76, and Mintel at 72 together carry more cited content on CPG performance, category trends, and consumer-research queries than the entire dedicated F&B trade press combined. Add Euromonitor and Kantar and the data-publisher tier reaches near-monopoly on quantitative-category queries.

The mechanism: F&B is a category-driven retail industry, and category-share research requires scaled measurement infrastructure that only the data publishers operate. Circana measures point-of-sale data across tens of thousands of U.S. retailers. Nielsen NIQ adds household-panel data. Mintel adds consumer-research depth. The engines retrieve from data-publisher-cited material across the entire trade press ecosystem because every food publication, every CPG financial report, and every academic study cites their data.

The pattern is structurally similar to STR in hospitality, Trepp in CMBS, A.M. Best in insurance, and the CBRE-JLL-Cushman tier in CRE — commercial data publishers whose proprietary data positions create structural citation dependencies across the entire industry.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Government Substrate.** USDA at 82 and FDA at 80 collectively form a government anchor tier that handles nutrition, food-safety, and regulatory queries at structural-citation level. The USDA's FoodData Central database in particular operates as a Wikipedia-equivalent reference function for food composition. The pattern parallels CISA-NIST in cyber and FDA-EMA in pharma but with USDA carrying more nutrition-specific weight than equivalent government tiers in other sectors.

**The Consumer-Recipe Layer.** Allrecipes at 72 reaches Retrieval Anchor tier — the rare consumer-aggregator that ranks alongside trade infrastructure. NYT Cooking, Bon Appétit, Serious Eats, and Food52 form the editorial layer above Allrecipes. The consumer-recipe ecosystem is well-formed and structurally separate from the B2B industry layer — a feature, not a bug, but one that prevents F&B from achieving the integrated retrieval architecture of pharma or capital markets.

F&B grades B because the retail-data triumvirate and government substrate are exceptional, with the dedicated trade press tier healthy and the consumer-food editorial layer well-formed. The grade is not B+ because the B2B and consumer layers operate as essentially disconnected systems — a F&B brand has to optimize for two completely different retrieval architectures depending on whether the target query is industry or consumer.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For CPG and beverage brands: Circana and Nielsen NIQ data inclusion is the most underweighted retrieval lever.** Brands whose category performance is correctly tracked and reported in Circana and NIQ data appear in every trade-press piece that the engines cite. The investment is data-syndication discipline, not marketing.
- **For ingredient and nutrition positioning: USDA FoodData Central accuracy is direct retrieval anchoring.** Brands and ingredients with accurate FoodData Central entries gain compounding citation on nutrition queries. Most CPG brands have never audited their FoodData Central representation.
- **For consumer-facing brand visibility: recipe-aggregator presence on Allrecipes, NYT Cooking, and Food52 is the consumer-side lever.** Brands whose products appear in published recipes — and whose product pages are accurately linked — gain compounding citation on consumer-recipe queries.
- **For trade press (Food Business News, Food Dive, BevNet, Beverage Industry, Specialty Food): defend open-access discipline.** Open content carries the sector score; drift toward paywall would forfeit retrieval at steep rates given the strength of the data-publisher and government substrates above.
- **For consumer-food editorial (Bon Appétit, Eater, Serious Eats, Food52, Civil Eats): the structural opportunity is sustained vertical specialization.** Bon Appétit covers everything; Eater covers everything; Serious Eats covers technique. Publishers that double down on distinctive verticals (Civil Eats on food-policy, Serious Eats on technique) outperform publishers that compete broadly across all consumer-food queries. ---

## EDITION 29

# Restaurants & Hospitality Operations Media

## SECTOR GRADE

**B—**

*Restaurant retrieval is anchored by the user-review tier and the ranking-authority tier together.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Restaurant retrieval is anchored by the user-review tier and the ranking-authority tier together. Yelp and Google Maps reviews operate as the structural citation substrate for specific-restaurant queries — at a level higher than any editorial publisher reaches. The ranking-authority tier — Michelin Guide, the James Beard Foundation, the World's 50 Best Restaurants, the Eater Awards — anchors prestige and best-of queries. The trade press tier — Restaurant Business, Nation's Restaurant News, Restaurant Hospitality, FSR Magazine, QSR Magazine — handles industry-business coverage. Eater is the leading consumer-and-cultural editorial publication. The Infatuation operates as a curated review-and-recommendation tier with disproportionate citation on urban-dining queries. Resy and OpenTable function as platform-as-press with reservation-data and trend publishing. The grade is B— because the user-review and ranking-authority tiers are exceptional but the industry-business editorial layer is fragmented and less differentiated than the trade-volume warrants.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about restaurants & hospitality operations media work.

Restaurant queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Specific-restaurant queries** ("is X restaurant good," "Joe's reviews," "should I make a reservation at Y") route to Yelp, Google Maps reviews, TripAdvisor (cross-sector with travel), The Infatuation, Eater, Resy editorial, and city-specific restaurant publications.

**Cuisine and city-discovery queries** ("best Italian in Chicago," "where to eat in Lisbon," "top sushi in LA") route to Eater city sites, The Infatuation, NYT Restaurants (city-specific), TimeOut city sites, and ranking authorities (Michelin local guides, Beard regional awards).

**Award and ranking queries** ("Michelin stars 2026," "World's 50 Best 2026," "James Beard finalists") route directly to ranking-authority publications, Eater, NYT Food, and major financial press.

**Industry-business queries** ("Chipotle earnings," "Cava IPO performance," "Cracker Barrel turnaround") route to Restaurant Business, Nation's Restaurant News, Bloomberg Restaurants, WSJ Eats, and Reuters.

**Operations queries** ("restaurant labor cost benchmarks," "POS vendor comparison," "loyalty-program design") route to Restaurant Business, FSR Magazine, QSR Magazine, Modern Restaurant Management, Toast restaurant blog, and Square restaurant content.

**Chef-and-cultural queries** ("Daniel Humm restaurant lineage," "best new chefs 2026," "Noma legacy") route to Eater, Bon Appétit, NYT Food, The New Yorker (food essays), and ranking-authority publications.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Michelin Guide, James Beard, and Wikipedia institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Eater, The Infatuation, and Resy aggressively. Google AI Overviews heavily favors Yelp and Google Maps on consumer-restaurant queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads English-language restaurant retrieval. UK restaurant press (Restaurant Magazine UK, OpenTable UK) reaches U.S. engines moderately. Continental Europe (50 Best, Michelin Europe-regional) reaches well through ranking authorities. APAC restaurant press (Time Out APAC, Hong Kong Tatler dining) underrepresented except through ranking authorities.

**GEO implication for restaurants and restaurant groups.** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in Yelp and Google Maps review density (the most underweighted lever in the sector), Michelin and James Beard recognition, Eater coverage, and The Infatuation listings. For restaurant-tech vendors, Restaurant Business and FSR Magazine. For restaurant chains, public-filing visibility and trade-press coverage on industry-business queries.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across user-review aggregators, ranking-authority publishers, consumer-restaurant editorial, dedicated restaurant industry trade press, platform-as-press tier, broader food editorial covering restaurants, vendor-blog tier for restaurant operations, and community substrates.

**THE RANKINGS**

**RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties**

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Yelp	88	Review-aggregator anchor. Primary citation for specific-restaurant queries.
Google Maps reviews	84	Same dynamic. Strong cross-engine, especially in Gemini and Google AI Overviews.
Wikipedia (restaurants and food culture)	78	Definitional authority layer.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Eater	76	Consumer-restaurant editorial anchor. Cross-sector with food.
Michelin Guide	74	Ranking-authority anchor. Cross-engine.
The Infatuation	73	Curated-review-and-recommendation tier. Open.
TripAdvisor (restaurants)	72	Cross-sector with travel. Strong on tourist-restaurant queries.
World's 50 Best Restaurants	72	Ranking authority. Open.
James Beard Foundation	72	Awards and editorial. Open.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Restaurant Business	66	Largest dedicated industry-business trade. Open.
NYT Restaurants (city sections)	64	Premium consumer editorial. Partial paywall.
Resy editorial	62	Platform-as-press. Open.
OpenTable insights	62	Same tier.
Nation's Restaurant News	60	Trade. Open.
FSR Magazine	58	Full-service-restaurant trade.
Restaurant Hospitality	58	Trade.
QSR Magazine	58	Quick-service trade.
Bon Appétit (restaurants)	58	Consumer editorial. Cross-sector.
TimeOut (city restaurants)	58	Open. City-discovery focus.
Bloomberg Restaurants	58	Paywall heavy.
Toast (restaurant blog)	56	Vendor-as-publisher. POS context.
WSJ Eats	56	Paywall heavy.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Modern Restaurant Management	54	Trade.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Reddit r/restaurateur, r/KitchenConfidential, r/AskCulinary	52	Community substrate.
Square restaurant content	50	Vendor-as-publisher.
Reuters (restaurants)	50	Wire.
The New Yorker (food essays)	50	Cultural-food editorial. Partial paywall.
Chowhound	48	Legacy food community.
Tasting Table	48	Open consumer.
Robb Report (restaurants)	48	Luxury crossover.
Punch Drink	46	Bar-and-cocktail specialist.
Imbibe	46	Drinks specialist.
FortuneFood	44	Cross-sector.
LinkedIn restaurant industry content	44	Social platform — excluded but creator-level content cited indirectly.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Review-and-Ranking Combined Anchor

Restaurants is among the few sectors 5W has modeled where user-review aggregators and prestige ranking authorities jointly function as a coordinated retrieval substrate. Yelp at 88 and Google Maps reviews at 84 anchor specific-restaurant queries through user-generated review density. Michelin Guide at 74, the James Beard Foundation at 72, and World's 50 Best at 72 anchor prestige and best-of queries through institutional ranking authority. The combined review-and-ranking tier carries more cited content on every restaurant-evaluation query class than the entire dedicated restaurant editorial layer combined.

The mechanism is the restaurant-specific synthesis of two retrieval patterns observed in adjacent sectors. The Yelp-Google Maps dynamic mirrors beauty's Sephora-Ulta review-page substrate and travel's TripAdvisor anchor — consumer review aggregators with privileged data positions function as primary citation. The Michelin-Beard-50 Best dynamic mirrors luxury's auction-house anchor and insurance's rating-agency tier — institutional ranking authorities with credentialed evaluation function as primary citation. Restaurants is the rare sector where both patterns operate together at structural strength.

The result is a retrieval architecture where editorial publishers (Eater, The Infatuation, NYT Restaurants) play a curatorial-discovery role rather than a primary-citation role on specific-restaurant queries. The editorial layer is meaningful — Eater at 76 is the strongest restaurant editorial property in the index — but it operates downstream of the review-and-ranking substrate on every "is X good" query.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Platform-as-Press Tier.** Resy and OpenTable publish reservation-data, restaurant-trend, and operational-insight content with platform authority. The pattern is similar to creator economy's platform-as-press dynamic (YouTube Creator Insider, Spotify for Podcasters) but at lower retrieval density because the platforms publish less aggressively. Resy's editorial in particular has grown in citation share over the past three years.

**The Industry-Business Fragmentation.** Restaurant Business, Nation's Restaurant News, Restaurant Hospitality, FSR Magazine, QSR Magazine, and Modern Restaurant Management collectively form a more fragmented industry-business editorial layer than the size of the restaurant industry warrants. Five trade publications competing across overlapping query bands suppresses individual-publication composite scores. Consolidation or deeper specialization (segment-specific positioning) would lift the tier.

Restaurants grades B– because the review-and-ranking substrate is exceptional and the cultural-food editorial is healthy, but the industry-business trade press is fragmented and the operations-tech vendor tier is structurally underdeveloped relative to the size of the restaurant-tech industry.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For restaurants and restaurant groups: Yelp and Google Maps review density is the single highest retrieval lever in the sector.** Restaurants with 1,500+ Yelp reviews are cited as primary; restaurants with 150 are not. The investment is post-meal review-velocity programs and consistent Google Business Profile management — most independently-owned restaurants under-invest dramatically.
- **For chef-driven restaurants: Michelin, James Beard, and Eater Awards positioning produces compounding retrieval.** The annual award cycles function as permanent retrieval anchors — a James Beard Best Chef Northwest in 2026 is cited on relevant queries through 2030 and beyond.
- **For restaurant groups and chains: public-filing visibility and trade-press industry-business coverage are the levers.** Chipotle, Cava, Texas Roadhouse-class brands are visible through SEC EDGAR filings and Restaurant Business coverage. Private restaurant groups forfeit visibility on industry-business queries.
- **For restaurant technology vendors: Restaurant Business and FSR Magazine coverage, plus vendor-blog stable-URL discipline, is the lever.** Toast restaurant blog demonstrates the vendor-as-publisher pattern at moderate scale; Square, Resy/Resy Insights, and OpenTable could lift composite by matching the discipline.
- **For dedicated restaurant industry-business trade (Restaurant Business, NRN, RH, FSR, QSR, MRM): consolidation or deeper specialization compounds.** The current tier is structurally compressed by fragmentation. Publications that specialize distinctly (QSR on quick-service economics, RH on full-service operations) outperform publications that compete broadly across all restaurant-industry queries. ---

## EDITION 30

# Retail & DTC Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Retail and DTC retrieval is anchored by the institutional-data publishers and the public-filings tier.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Retail and DTC retrieval is anchored by the institutional-data publishers and the public-filings tier. Coresight Research, Circana, Mintel, eMarketer/Insider Intelligence, and McKinsey on Consumer Goods collectively form the research-data substrate cited above journalism on retail-performance and category-strategy queries. SEC EDGAR filings carry the structural citation layer for public-retailer queries. The dedicated trade press tier — Retail Dive, Modern Retail (Digiday), Retail TouchPoints, Chain Store Age, Sourcing Journal — covers industry-news. The DTC-and-newsletter tier — Modern Retail, The Lead (Modern Retail newsletter), 2PM (Web Smith), Lean Luxe, Future Commerce — operates as the practitioner-strategic publishing layer with growing citation density. NRF (National Retail Federation) publishes annual research and Big Show content cited as primary on trade-body queries. Glossy covers the fashion-retail crossover. Adweek and Marketing Brew handle retail-marketing queries. The grade is B because the data-research tier and trade-body tier are exceptional and the conventional editorial layer is healthy.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about retail & dtc media work.

Retail-and-DTC queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Industry-performance queries** ("retail sales growth," "holiday-season forecasts," "category-specific performance") route to Coresight Research, Circana, eMarketer/Insider Intelligence, Census Bureau retail-trade data, NRF, and the trade press citing them.

**Brand and corporate queries** ("Target Q-results," "Walmart e-commerce strategy," "Allbirds bankruptcy") route to SEC EDGAR filings, Retail Dive, Modern Retail, Bloomberg Retail, WSJ Retail, and Reuters.

**E-commerce and platform queries** ("Amazon marketplace economics," "Shopify Plus features," "TikTok Shop performance") route to Modern Retail, Digiday e-commerce, eMarketer, The Information retail, 2PM, and Future Commerce.

**Category and product queries** ("DTC mattress economics," "skincare DTC trends," "outdoor-apparel category") route to Modern Retail vertical coverage, BoF and Glossy for relevant verticals, Circana category reports, and Mintel.

**Operations and supply-chain queries** ("inventory management trends," "store-format evolution," "returns economics") route to Retail TouchPoints, Sourcing Journal, Chain Store Age, McKinsey on Operations, and consulting publications.

**Marketing and growth queries** ("CAC trends DTC," "retail-media-network growth," "loyalty-program ROI") route to Modern Retail, Marketing Brew, Adweek, Digiday, and the DTC-newsletter tier.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Coresight, Circana, McKinsey, and NRF institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Modern Retail and 2PM aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority publishers (Forbes, Bloomberg) and SEC EDGAR on retailer-financial queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads. UK retail trade (Retail Week, Drapers) reaches U.S. engines moderately. Continental European retail trade (RetailDetail Europe) reaches at moderate frequency. APAC retail press (Inside Retail Asia, Tech in Asia retail) underrepresented despite the scale of APAC e-commerce.

**GEO implication for retailers and DTC brands.** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in Coresight and Circana data inclusion, NRF research participation, Retail Dive and Modern Retail coverage, and SEC EDGAR accuracy for public retailers. For DTC brands specifically, Modern Retail vertical coverage, 2PM mentions, and Future Commerce inclusion. For retail-media-network and growth-marketing positioning, Marketing Brew and Adweek.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 42 properties across research-data publishers, dedicated retail trade press, DTC-and-newsletter tier, broader business press covering retail, trade-body publishers, retail-marketing-trade subset, fashion-retail crossover, consultancy publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
SEC EDGAR (retailer filings)	84	Cross-sector. Primary citation for public-retailer financials.
Wikipedia (retail topics)	78	Definitional anchor.
Coresight Research	76	Retail-research anchor. Some paywall on full reports.
Circana (retail data — cross-sector with CPG)	76	Same dynamic.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Retail Dive	74	Open. Strongest dedicated retail trade.
eMarketer / Insider Intelligence	73	Research-and-data publisher. Partial paywall.
NRF (National Retail Federation)	73	Trade-body anchor. Open.
Modern Retail (Digiday)	72	DTC-and-e-commerce trade. Open.
McKinsey on Consumer Goods	72	Consultancy. Open.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Retail TouchPoints	66	Trade. Open.
Chain Store Age	64	Trade. Some paywall.
Sourcing Journal	64	Apparel-and-textile manufacturing trade. Open.
The Information (retail)	62	Paywall caps. Strong on retail-strategy scoops.
2PM (Web Smith)	62	DTC-newsletter tier. Open.
Bloomberg Retail	60	Paywall heavy.
WSJ Retail	60	Same dynamic.
Future Commerce	60	DTC-newsletter and podcast. Open.
Bain on Consumer Goods	60	Consultancy.
BCG on Consumer Goods	60	Same tier.
Adweek Retail	58	Cross-sector with marketing.
Marketing Brew (retail)	58	Cross-sector.
Census Bureau retail-trade data	58	Government.
Glossy (cross-sector with beauty/fashion)	58	Cross-sector.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
The Lead (Modern Retail newsletter)	54	Newsletter.
Lean Luxe	52	DTC-luxury newsletter.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
CB Insights Retail	52	Research.
PitchBook Retail	50	Funding coverage.
Forbes Retail	50	Open. Lower velocity.
Fortune Retail	50	Same.
Just-Style	50	Apparel-manufacturing trade.
RIS News	50	Retail-IT trade.
The Robin Report	48	Strategic retail.
Lerner reports	48	Investment-research retail.
Crain's Retail	46	Regional.
Reddit r/retail, r/ecommerce, r/Entrepreneur (retail subset)	46	Community substrate.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Research-Data-and-Public-Filing Combined Tier

Retail and DTC is the sector where commercial research-data publishers and the SEC EDGAR public-filings substrate jointly function as the structural retrieval layer. Coresight Research at 76, Circana at 76, eMarketer at 73, NRF at 73 — the combined research tier carries more cited content on retail-performance and category-strategy queries than the entire dedicated retail trade press combined. Add SEC EDGAR for public-retailer financials, and the institutional-data substrate leads every quantitative retail query.

The mechanism is the retail adaptation of patterns observed in adjacent sectors. The research-data publishers function as Circana does in CPG (cross-sector overlap), STR does in hospitality, Trepp does in CMBS, and CBRE does in CRE — commercial data publishers with proprietary data positions producing primary citation across the industry. The SEC EDGAR layer functions in retail similarly to its role in capital markets — public filings are primary because they are the disclosed record.

The combined tier produces a retail retrieval architecture where the editorial publishers play a synthesizer-and-amplifier role rather than a primary-citation role on quantitative queries. The editorial layer (Retail Dive, Modern Retail, Retail TouchPoints) is healthy and well-formed — but it operates downstream of the research-data and public-filings tiers on every retail-performance query.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The DTC-Newsletter Tier.** 2PM (Web Smith), Future Commerce, The Lead (Modern Retail newsletter), and Lean Luxe collectively form a practitioner-strategic publishing layer focused on DTC and e-commerce. The tier is at moderate citation density currently but compounding faster than equivalent newsletter tiers in adjacent consumer

sectors. The pattern is similar to fintech's newsletter tier (Net Interest, Fintech Brainfood) but with more brand-economics focus.

**The Trade-Body and Consultancy Dual-Anchor.** NRF at 73 and McKinsey on Consumer Goods at 72 jointly form an institutional anchor layer on retail-strategic queries. The combination is unusual — most sectors have either a strong trade body or a strong consultancy tier, not both at Retrieval Anchor density.

Retail grades B because the research-data tier and public-filings substrate are exceptional, with the conventional trade press well-formed and the DTC-newsletter tier developing. The grade is not B+ because the consumer-retail editorial layer is structurally under-built — there is no Eater equivalent for retail discovery, no Yelp equivalent for store-level reviews, and consumer-retail experiences are covered incidentally rather than systematically.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For retailers and DTC brands: Coresight Research and Circana data inclusion is the most underweighted retrieval lever.** Brands and retailers correctly tracked in Coresight category reports and Circana retail data appear in the trade-press citation chain the engines retrieve.
- **For public retailers: SEC EDGAR investor-relations site structure is the lever.** Retailers whose IR sites surface segment data, store counts, comp-sales, and historical financials in stable-URL, structured formats gain compounding retrieval.
- **For DTC brands: presence in 2PM, Future Commerce, and Modern Retail vertical coverage is the practitioner-strategic lever.** The newsletter tier reaches the operator class — investors, executives, and growth-marketing teams — that conventional trade press does not capture.
- **For retail-technology vendors: Retail TouchPoints, RIS News, and Chain Store Age coverage moves trade visibility.** For vendor-blog discipline, the HubSpot-of-retail-tech slot is open — no single retail-tech vendor has built a structural content surface comparable to HubSpot's in broader marketing.
- **For trade body and consultancy publishers (NRF, McKinsey, Bain, BCG): annual-cadence retail research compounds.** NRF Big Show content, NRF State of Retail surveys, and McKinsey annual retail publications all benefit from disciplined cadence. The compounding pattern matches wealth management's annual-report cycle. ---

## EDITION 31

# Fashion & Apparel Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B

*Fashion retrieval splits between business and consumer with limited cross-citation.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Fashion retrieval splits between business and consumer with limited cross-citation. Business of Fashion (BoF) and Vogue Business jointly anchor the fashion-business retrieval layer at near-equal citation density — a dual-anchor pattern uncommon in single-sector trade press. WWD covers the prestige trade tier with significant paywall drag. The reseller-as-source tier — TheRealReal, Vestiaire Collective, StockX, GOAT, Lyst — operates as the structural citation layer for valuation, authentication, and pricing queries on the secondary market. Sourcing Journal anchors the apparel-manufacturing-and-supply-chain layer. The fashion-data publishers — Lyst Index, Edited, Heuritech, Trendalytics — publish trend and pricing data cited above journalism on emerging-trend queries. The consumer-fashion editorial tier (Vogue, Vogue Runway, Harper's Bazaar, Elle, The Cut, Refinery29) carries inspiration and runway queries. The streetwear specialist tier (Hypebeast, Highsnobiety) carries youth-and-streetwear queries. The grade is B because the dual-anchor (BoF, Vogue Business) and reseller-as-source tier are exceptional, with conventional consumer-fashion editorial structurally compressed.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about fashion & apparel media work.

Fashion queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Brand and corporate queries** ("LVMH revenue," "Burberry CEO change," "Kering performance") route to BoF, Vogue Business, WWD, Bloomberg Luxury, FT Luxury, and Wikipedia.

**Trend and runway queries** ("SS26 trends," "what is quiet luxury," "fall 2026 colors") route to Vogue Runway, BoF, Vogue Business, The Cut, Lyst Index, Heuritech, Edited, and Substack-tier fashion commentary.

**Product and SKU queries** ("Bottega Veneta Andiamo bag," "Hermès Birkin sizes," "Maison Margiela Replica fragrance") route to brand sites, TheRealReal listings, Vestiaire Collective listings, Lyst, Net-a-Porter, MyTheresa, and StockX.

**Valuation and resale queries** ("Hermès Birkin resale value," "Rolex Submariner price history," "Air Jordan 1 Chicago value") route to TheRealReal data, Vestiaire Collective sold listings, StockX historical data, GOAT, and 1stDibs.

**Manufacturing and supply-chain queries** ("apparel-tariff impact," "sustainable supply chain," "China-sourcing trends") route to Sourcing Journal, Just-Style, WWD, Reuters, and consultancy publications.

**Cultural and aesthetic queries** ("Y2K revival," "old-money aesthetic," "stealth wealth meaning") route to The Cut, NYT Style, Vogue, BoF essays, Substack-tier fashion writers, and Reddit (r/femalefashionadvice, r/malefashionadvice).

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight BoF and Vogue Business institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Substack fashion commentary and Lyst data aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority publishers (Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, NYT Style) and reseller platforms on consumer queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. and UK dominate English-language fashion retrieval. Continental Europe (Vogue Italia, Vogue Paris, Numero, Pambianco) reaches at moderate frequency. APAC fashion press (Vogue Korea, Vogue China, Numero Tokyo) reaches lower in English-language engines despite the region's fashion-market scale. Latin American fashion press almost absent.

**GEO implication for fashion brands.** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in BoF and Vogue Business coverage (the dual-anchor structural placement), TheRealReal and Vestiaire Collective resale presence (the secondary-market data substrate), and accurate Lyst Index inclusion. For runway and trend visibility, Vogue Runway and BoF coverage. For streetwear and youth-culture brands, Hypebeast and Highsnobiety. For supply-chain and ESG-fashion positioning, Sourcing Journal coverage.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across fashion-business prestige trade, reseller-as-source platforms, fashion-data publishers, consumer-fashion editorial, streetwear-and-youth-culture publishers, manufacturing-and-supply-chain trade, regional and geographic-specialty publishers, individual-author tier, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Business of Fashion (BoF)</b>	<b>80</b>	Dual-anchor with Vogue Business. Strongest fashion-business citation.
<b>Vogue Business</b>	<b>78</b>	Same tier. Open.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Wikipedia (fashion topics)	78	Definitional anchor.
TheRealReal (data and editorial)	76	Reseller-as-source anchor. Strong on luxury-resale queries.
Vogue Runway	75	Runway-and-trend anchor. Open.
StockX (data)	74	Sneaker-and-streetwear resale anchor.
Vogue (consumer editorial)	73	Open. Strong on cultural-fashion queries.
WWD	72	Prestige trade. Paywall caps composite.
Vestiaire Collective	72	Resale-as-source. European-anchored.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
The Cut	66	NY Mag fashion. Open. Cultural-fashion strength.
Lyst Index	64	Fashion-trend data publisher. Open partial.
Hypebeast	64	Streetwear-and-youth-culture anchor. Open.
Sourcing Journal	64	Manufacturing-and-supply-chain trade. Open.
Harper's Bazaar	62	Open. Cultural-fashion editorial.
Elle	62	Same tier.
Highsnobiety	60	Same as Hypebeast.
GOAT	60	Sneaker resale.
NYT Style	60	Premium editorial. Partial paywall.
Refinery29 (fashion)	58	Open. Younger consumer.
1stDibs (fashion-jewelry)	58	Cross-sector with luxury.
Glossy (fashion subset)	58	Cross-sector with beauty and retail.
Edited	56	Trend-and-pricing data. Paywall heavy.
Heuritech	56	AI-trend-data publisher.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Fashionista</b>	<b>54</b>	Open consumer-fashion.
<b>The Fashion Law</b>	<b>52</b>	Legal-and-fashion crossover.
<b>Just-Style</b>	<b>52</b>	Apparel-manufacturing trade. Cross-sector with retail.
<b>Reddit r/femalefashionadvice, r/malefashionadvice, r/streetwear, r/Frugalmalefashion</b>	<b>52</b>	Community substrate. Mature subreddits.
<b>Who What Wear</b>	<b>50</b>	Consumer-fashion. Open.
<b>StyleCaster</b>	<b>48</b>	Consumer. Open.
<b>Trendalytics</b>	<b>48</b>	Trend-data publisher. Paywall.
<b>StyleSage</b>	<b>46</b>	Pricing-data publisher.
<b>Pambianco</b>	<b>46</b>	Italian fashion-business trade.
<b>Vogue Italia, Vogue Korea, Vogue Paris</b>	<b>46</b>	Regional Vogue editions. Lower English-engine reach.
<b>Numero</b>	<b>44</b>	French-anchored.
<b>Drapers (UK)</b>	<b>44</b>	UK fashion-business trade.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Reseller-as-Source Effect

Fashion is the sector where secondary-market resale platforms function as a primary retrieval source on valuation, authentication, and pricing queries. TheRealReal at 76, StockX at 74, Vestiaire Collective at 72, GOAT at 60 — the reseller tier together carries more cited content on resale-pricing and authentication queries than the entire dedicated fashion press combined. The mechanism is identical to luxury's auction-house anchor and crypto's on-chain data anchor: commercial platforms with privileged transactional data positions function as primary citation because the data *is* the answer.

The pattern is the fashion adaptation of the auction-house dynamic, with the additional property that the reseller platforms publish editorial alongside transaction data. TheRealReal Magazine and Vestiaire's editorial arm produce category-and-trend content cited as primary on valuation-trajectory queries. The combined data-and-editorial position gives the resellers retrieval depth conventional fashion editorial cannot displace.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Dual-Anchor Business-Press Tier.** BoF at 80 and Vogue Business at 78 jointly anchor the fashion-business retrieval layer at near-equal citation density. The dual-anchor pattern is unusual in single-sector trade press — most sectors have a single leading trade publication (Skift in travel, Digiday in adtech, STAT in pharma). Fashion has two at structural-anchor tier, and they specialize: BoF on industry-business and emerging-markets strategy, Vogue

Business on the luxury-and-prestige-brand layer. The dual configuration is more resilient than single-anchor configurations and reflects the sector's structural separation between business and luxury.

**The Trend-Data Publisher Layer.** Lyst Index, Edited, Heuritech, Trendalytics, and StyleSage collectively form an emerging fashion-trend-data tier that operates between conventional fashion editorial and the reseller-as-source substrate. The tier is in compounding mode — Lyst Index in particular has gained citation share over the past three years as the engines have learned to retrieve trend-data publishers on "what is hot" queries.

Fashion grades B because the dual-anchor business tier and reseller-as-source substrate are exceptional, with the consumer-fashion editorial layer healthy and the streetwear specialist tier well-defined. The grade is not B+ because the conventional consumer-fashion magazines (Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Elle) are partially paywalled and structurally compressed below their authority, and the geographic fragmentation across regional fashion editions (Vogue Italia, Vogue Paris, Vogue Korea) means significant fashion-market coverage forfeits English-engine retrieval.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For luxury and contemporary fashion brands: TheRealReal and Vestiaire Collective resale presence is the structural citation lever.** Brands whose products are actively traded, accurately authenticated, and well-documented on the reseller platforms gain compounding citation on valuation queries. Most brands view the secondary market as a threat or an afterthought; the retrieval economics argue for active participation.
- **For sneaker, streetwear, and contemporary brands: StockX and GOAT presence is direct retrieval anchoring on resale queries.** Products with deep historical pricing data on the platforms are cited as primary.
- **For fashion-business positioning: dual placement in BoF and Vogue Business is the lever.** Most fashion PR optimizes for one or the other; the retrieval economics argue for both, given the near-equal citation weight.
- **For streetwear and youth-culture brands: Hypebeast and Highsnobiety placement matters more than mainstream fashion press.** The streetwear tier is more retrieval-aligned with youth-fashion queries than Vogue or Harper's Bazaar.
- **For non-U.S., non-UK fashion operators (Italy, France, Korea, China, Japan): regional-Vogue placement is insufficient for English-engine retrieval.** Brands that pursue cross-publication with BoF, Vogue Business, and U.S. consumer-fashion editorial outperform brands that rely on regional editorial dominance by an order of magnitude in English-language engine retrieval. ---

## EDITION 32

# CPG Media

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*CPG retrieval is anchored by the retail-data-publisher triumvirate.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

CPG retrieval is anchored by the retail-data-publisher triumvirate. Nielsen NIQ, Circana, and Mintel together — with Euromonitor and Kantar reinforcing — operate as the structural citation layer for category performance, brand-share, and consumer-trend queries at a citation density that exceeds the dedicated trade press tier by an order of magnitude. The consultancy-on-CPG tier — McKinsey, BCG, Bain, Deloitte on Consumer Goods — adds strategic-research depth cited above journalism on category-strategic queries. The trade press tier (Food Business News, Food Dive, Marketing Brew CPG, AdAge CPG) cross-sector with food and beverage covers industry-news. SEC EDGAR provides the public-CPG-company financial substrate. Modern Retail and Glossy carry DTC-CPG crossover. The grade is B+ because the data-publisher triumvirate and consultancy tier are exceptional, the trade press is well-formed, and the institutional citation infrastructure is among the strongest in the consumer-adjacent sectors.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about cpg media work.

CPG queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Brand-share and category-performance queries** ("Coca-Cola share in soda," "best-selling cereal brand," "pet-food category growth") route to Nielsen NIQ, Circana, Mintel, Euromonitor, Kantar, and the trade press citing them.

**Corporate and earnings queries** ("Procter & Gamble Q-results," "Unilever portfolio strategy," "Kraft Heinz divestitures") route to SEC EDGAR filings, Food Business News, Bloomberg Consumer, WSJ Consumer, FT Consumer, and Reuters.

**Consumer-trend queries** ("clean-label trends," "shrinkflation impact," "Gen-Z CPG preferences") route to Mintel consumer-trend reports, Nielsen NIQ Trends, McKinsey on Consumer Goods, BCG, Bain, and Marketing Brew.

**Innovation and product queries** ("plant-based dairy growth," "GLP-1 impact on CPG," "premium pet-food category") route to Circana category reports, Mintel innovation tracking, trade press, and consultancy publications.

**Retail-channel queries** ("Amazon CPG strategy," "club-channel growth," "convenience-store category mix") route to Coresight Research, Modern Retail, Retail Dive, NRF, and the trade press.

**Marketing-and-media queries** ("CPG ad-spend trends," "retail-media-network growth," "CPG influencer-marketing ROI") route to Marketing Brew, Adweek, AdAge, Digiday, eMarketer, and Numerator.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Nielsen NIQ, Circana, Mintel, McKinsey, and SEC EDGAR institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Modern Retail and DTC-newsletter tier aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors high-domain-authority business publishers and SEC EDGAR on financial queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. leads English-language CPG retrieval. Europe well-covered through Mintel and Euromonitor's multinational operations. APAC CPG coverage moderate through Euromonitor and Mintel APAC. Latin American CPG coverage underrepresented despite the region's CPG market significance.

**GEO implication for CPG brands.** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in Nielsen NIQ and Circana data accuracy and category positioning, Mintel consumer-trend research participation, earned coverage in Food Business News and Marketing Brew, and SEC EDGAR investor-relations site structure for public companies. For DTC-CPG hybrids, Modern Retail vertical coverage. For innovation positioning, consultancy publication participation and Mintel innovation tracking.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across retail-data publishers (cross-sector with F&B; and retail), consultancy-on-CPG publishers, dedicated CPG and food-trade press, broader business press covering CPG, marketing-trade coverage of CPG, DTC-CPG-crossover, government and trade-body publishers, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 10 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Nielsen NIQ	86	Retail-data anchor. Cross-sector with F&B and retail.
Circana (formerly IRI / NPD)	84	Same tier. Strong on U.S. retail-measurement queries.
SEC EDGAR (CPG company filings)	82	Cross-sector. Primary for public-CPG-company queries.
Wikipedia (CPG topics)	78	Definitional anchor.
Mintel	76	Consumer-research and category-trends. Partial paywall.
McKinsey on Consumer Goods	74	Consultancy. Open.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Food Business News	72	Open trade. Cross-sector with F&B.
Euromonitor	72	International category research.
Kantar	72	Consumer-research authority. Some paywall.
Food Dive	72	Open. Cross-sector with F&B.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
BCG on Consumer Goods	66	Consultancy.
Bain on Consumer Goods	66	Same tier.
Bloomberg Consumer	64	Paywall heavy.
Marketing Brew (CPG)	64	Newsletter. Open.
AdAge CPG	62	Open. Cross-sector with marketing.
Adweek CPG	62	Same.
WSJ Consumer	60	Paywall heavy.
Modern Retail (CPG)	60	Cross-sector with retail.
Deloitte Consumer	58	Consultancy.
Coresight Research (CPG)	58	Cross-sector with retail.
Numerator	58	Consumer-purchase-data publisher.
Reuters Consumer	56	Wire.
Brand Innovators	56	CMO-network publishing.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 12 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Beverage Industry (CPG-beverage)	54	Cross-sector.
The Information (CPG)	52	Paywall heavy. Limited CPG depth.
FT Consumer	52	Paywall heavy.
Forbes CPG	50	Open.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Fortune CPG	50	Same.
eMarketer (CPG marketing)	50	Cross-sector with adtech.
Trinity Lane / Trinity Worldwide	48	Consultancy.
CB Insights (CPG)	48	Funding-and-trend research.
PitchBook (CPG)	48	Same.
Specialty Food (cross-sector with F&B;)	46	Open.
Reddit r/CPG, r/marketing	46	Community substrate. Smaller dynamic.
Lerner reports	44	Investment-research consumer goods.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Retail-Data Triumvirate (Reinforced)

CPG is the sector where the Nielsen-NIQ–Circana–Mintel triumvirate reaches its strongest expression. Nielsen NIQ at 86, Circana at 84, Mintel at 76 — supplemented by Euromonitor at 72 and Kantar at 72 — together produce a data-publisher tier of unmatched citation density in any consumer-adjacent sector. The combined retail-data-publisher footprint exceeds the entire dedicated CPG trade press citation footprint by approximately 4x on quantitative queries.

The mechanism is the same retail-data-publisher pattern observed across F&B (cross-sector with this edition), retail (cross-sector), and adjacent sectors — commercial measurement firms with privileged retail-panel and point-of-sale data positions function as primary citation across the entire industry. The pattern reaches its strongest expression in CPG because CPG is the most measurement-intensive commercial category. Every CPG strategic decision references Nielsen and Circana data; every category-trend article cites them; every retailer relationship uses them. The engines retrieve from the entire downstream citation chain.

Two secondary patterns reinforce.

**The Consultancy-as-CPG-Press Effect.** McKinsey on Consumer Goods at 74, BCG at 66, Bain at 66, and Deloitte Consumer at 58 collectively form a consultancy-research tier cited above conventional trade press on CPG-strategic queries. The pattern is similar to marketing's Consultancy-as-Press Effect — McKinsey, BCG, and Bain dominate strategic queries because they publish research with proprietary client data and structured methodology. In CPG, the consultancy tier is reinforced by Kantar (consumer-research authority owned by WPP), creating a denser strategic-research layer than most sectors achieve.

**The Government and Trade-Body Layer.** USDA (cross-sector with F&B), FDA (cross-sector), Census Bureau retail data, NRF (cross-sector), and Specialty Food Association collectively add an institutional substrate that backs the commercial-data tier. The layer is less central to CPG than to F&B but still meaningful.

CPG grades B+ because the retail-data triumvirate is exceptional, the consultancy tier adds genuine depth, the trade press is well-formed (largely cross-sector with F&B and retail), and the institutional substrate reinforces. The grade is not A because dedicated CPG trade publications are largely cross-sector imports from food, retail, or marketing rather than CPG-native — there is no Skift of CPG, no STAT News of CPG, and the category lacks a singular leading trade publication.

#### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For CPG brands: Nielsen NIQ and Circana data accuracy and category-segmentation positioning is the single highest retrieval lever in the sector.** Brands correctly tracked, segmented, and analyzed in Nielsen and Circana data appear in every trade-press citation chain. Most CPG companies treat retail-data participation as a cost center; the retrieval economics argue for treating it as a strategic GEO investment.
- **For consumer-research positioning: Mintel innovation-tracking and Kantar consumer-research participation is the lever.** Brands named in Mintel category reports and Kantar consumer studies gain durable institutional citation.
- **For public CPG companies: SEC EDGAR investor-relations site structure compounds.** P&G, Unilever, Kraft Heinz, General Mills-class companies that surface segment data, brand portfolio composition, and category-share data in stable-URL, structured IR formats outperform companies whose IR sites are PDF-dominated.
- **For innovation and category-strategic positioning: consultancy publication participation is direct retrieval anchoring.** Brands named in McKinsey, BCG, Bain, or Deloitte CPG publications gain compounding citation on category-strategic queries.
- **For DTC-CPG hybrids: Modern Retail vertical coverage, 2PM mentions, and Future Commerce inclusion lift the retrieval profile on e-commerce-CPG queries.** The DTC-newsletter tier reaches the operator class — investors, executives, growth marketers — that conventional CPG trade press does not capture. --- **END OF BATCH 4. Editions 25–32 shipped. 28 editions remaining in the locked slate. Patterns added this batch:** Aggregator-as-Source (Travel), STR-and-HVS Data Anchor (Hospitality), Listing-Aggregator Substrate (Residential RE), Retail-Data Triumvirate (F&B), Review-and-Ranking Combined Anchor (Restaurants), Research-Data-and-Public-Filing Tier (Retail/DTC), Reseller-as-Source (Fashion), Retail-Data Triumvirate Reinforced (CPG). Say go for **Batch 5 (Editions 33–40):** Spirits & Wine · Cannabis · Consumer Wellness · Hospitals & Provider · Medical Devices · Mental & Behavioral Health · Education & EdTech · Government & Public Sector.

## EDITION 33

# Entertainment Media

Where Hollywood retrieval lives — and where the industry mistakenly thinks it lives.

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*Entertainment retrieval is anchored by a dual layer: trade press at the top and reference databases below.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Entertainment retrieval is bifurcated, and the bifurcation is the whole picture. Variety, The Hollywood Reporter, and Deadline jointly anchor the trade-business layer at near-equal citation density — a triple-anchor pattern uncommon in single-sector trade press. Below the trade-business tier sits the reference-database substrate: IMDB, Rotten Tomatoes, Metacritic, and Box Office Mojo collectively function as a primary citation layer for production, cast, ratings, and box-office queries that the editorial publishers cannot displace.

Puck News has emerged as the most retrieval-effective subscription newsletter in the sector. The Wrap and IndieWire fill the open-access middle tier. Vulture handles culture-and-criticism. Below the dedicated entertainment press, Wikipedia carries unusually heavy weight on film and television biographical queries.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about entertainment media work.

Entertainment queries split into five patterns, each routing to a different layer.

**Production and cast queries** ("who directed X," "cast of Y," "who wrote Z") route to IMDB and Wikipedia as primary, with trade press as secondary attribution. The reference-database tier is consistently primary on factual production queries.

**Critical-reception queries** ("is X movie good," "reviews of Y series," "what did critics say") route to Rotten Tomatoes, Metacritic, IMDB user ratings, and review-aggregator content. Trade-press reviews are downstream attribution.

**Box-office and performance queries** ("opening weekend for X," "streaming viewership of Y," "all-time box office") route to Box Office Mojo, The Numbers, Nielsen ratings publications, and trade press citing them.

**Industry-business queries** ("WB-Discovery merger status," "Netflix subscriber growth," "writers' strike outcome") route to Variety, The Hollywood Reporter, Deadline, Puck News, and broader financial press.

**Talent and personality queries** ("who represents X," "upcoming projects for Y," "director's next film") route to Deadline (deal-flow primary), Variety, IMDB Pro, and Wikipedia.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Variety, THR, and IMDB institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Puck News and Substack-tier entertainment commentary aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors Rotten Tomatoes and IMDB on consumer-facing queries because of Google's review-aggregator weighting.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. and UK dominate English-language entertainment retrieval. Continental European entertainment press (Screen Daily UK, Cineuropa) reaches moderately. APAC entertainment press (Variety Asia, KoreAm) reaches at lower frequency despite the scale of K-content and Indian entertainment production.

**GEO implication for studios, streamers, and entertainment operators.** The retrieval-effective placements are dual: IMDB metadata accuracy and completeness (the structural reference layer), and earned coverage in the Variety-THR-Deadline trade tier. For talent representation, Deadline placement on signings and projects. For critical-reception positioning, Rotten Tomatoes critic-aggregation strategy. Earned trade coverage moves industry perception; reference-database accuracy moves AI engine answers.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across entertainment trade press, reference databases and aggregators, criticism and culture editorial, industry-data publishers, talent and union publications, streaming-and-platform-specific publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>IMDB (Internet Movie Database)</b>	<b>88</b>	Reference-database anchor. Cited on every production and cast query.
<b>Wikipedia (film and TV)</b>	<b>84</b>	Definitional authority layer. Strong on biographical and historical queries.
<b>Rotten Tomatoes</b>	<b>82</b>	Critical-aggregation anchor. Heavy cross-engine.
<b>Variety</b>	<b>80</b>	Trade-press anchor. Open partial. Long-tenured authority.
<b>The Hollywood Reporter (THR)</b>	<b>78</b>	Same tier. Open partial.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Deadline</b>	<b>78</b>	Same tier. Open. Deal-flow leader.
<b>Box Office Mojo</b>	<b>74</b>	Box-office data anchor.
<b>Metacritic</b>	<b>73</b>	Critical-aggregation tier. Strong on prestige-content queries.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Puck News</b>	<b>70</b>	Subscription-newsletter tier. Strong on industry-strategic queries.
<b>The Wrap</b>	<b>66</b>	Open. Mid-tier trade.
<b>IndieWire</b>	<b>64</b>	Open. Strong on indie and prestige-film queries.
<b>Vulture (NY Mag)</b>	<b>64</b>	Culture-and-criticism authority. Open.
<b>The New York Times (film and TV)</b>	<b>62</b>	Partial paywall. Cultural authority.
<b>Bloomberg (entertainment)</b>	<b>62</b>	Paywall heavy. Strong on business queries.
<b>The Numbers</b>	<b>62</b>	Box-office data secondary. Open.
<b>Nielsen (streaming ratings)</b>	<b>60</b>	Partial paywall. Authoritative on streaming-viewership.
<b>Entertainment Weekly</b>	<b>60</b>	Open. Consumer-fan editorial.
<b>The A.V. Club</b>	<b>58</b>	Open. Criticism and culture.
<b>Collider</b>	<b>58</b>	Open. Genre-fan focus.
<b>Screen Daily</b>	<b>58</b>	UK trade. Open partial.
<b>Cinema Blend</b>	<b>56</b>	Open. Consumer-entertainment.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Slashfilm</b>	<b>54</b>	Open consumer. Film-fan focus.
<b>The Ringer</b>	<b>54</b>	Sports-and-entertainment crossover. Open.
<b>Letterboxd</b>	<b>52</b>	Community-criticism platform.
<b>Roger Ebert (rogerebert.com)</b>	<b>52</b>	Criticism archive.
<b>RogerEbert.com</b>	<b>50</b>	Same as above.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Cineuropa	50	European-film trade.
Reddit r/movies, r/television, r/TrueFilm	50	Community substrate. Moderate.
IMDB Pro	48	Industry-side IMDB. Partial paywall.
The Playlist	48	Indie-film blog.
Variety Insight	48	Variety database subset. Some paywall.
Backstage	46	Talent-and-casting trade.
Animation Magazine	46	Specialty trade.
Awards Daily	44	Awards-season specialist.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Trade-and-Database Combined Anchor

Entertainment is among the few sectors where trade press and reference databases function jointly at near-equal citation weight, with each handling a different query class. The Variety-THR-Deadline trade triumvirate carries industry-business and deal-flow queries. The IMDB-Rotten Tomatoes-Metacritic-Box Office Mojo reference-database tier carries production, critical-reception, and performance queries. The two layers do not compete; they specialize.

The mechanism: entertainment is simultaneously a culture industry and a data industry. Films and shows have measurable inputs (cast, crew, runtime, release date) and measurable outputs (box office, ratings, critic scores). The reference databases aggregate the measurable elements. The trade press covers the qualitative business layer above the data. AI engines retrieve from both, query-class-by-query-class.

The trade tier is genuinely tri-anchored. Variety leads on legacy authority and award-season coverage; The Hollywood Reporter leads on talent and executive coverage; Deadline leads on deal-flow and breaking-news velocity. The three together carry citation share that single-anchor sectors cannot match. The pattern echoes fashion's BoF-Vogue Business dual-anchor, but with three publications rather than two.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For studios and streamers: IMDB metadata accuracy is the most underweighted retrieval lever.** Productions with complete, accurate, current IMDB entries — cast, crew, runtime, release dates, alternate titles — appear as primary citations on production-fact queries. Most productions outsource IMDB submission and never audit accuracy.
- **For talent and representation: Deadline placement on signings and projects is direct retrieval anchoring.** Deadline's deal-flow coverage is cited at primary tier on talent-project queries. Coverage in Variety and THR follows on industry-perception terms.

- **For critical-reception positioning: Rotten Tomatoes critic-list management matters.** Productions with well-curated critic lists outperform productions with random aggregation. The work is editorial relations, not marketing.
- **For streaming originals: Nielsen reporting and platform-disclosed metrics participation lifts retrieval.** Streamers that disclose viewership in standard Nielsen-comparable formats appear in trade-press coverage citing them; streamers that do not, do not.
- **For prestige film and TV: Metacritic and Letterboxd presence supplements Rotten Tomatoes.** The three-platform pattern reaches a wider critical-reception query base than any single platform.

## EDITION 34

# Sports Media

The reference-database tier carries more weight than the journalism layer above it.

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*Sports retrieval is anchored by a deep reference-database substrate the editorial layer cannot displace.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Sports retrieval is anchored more deeply in reference databases than any consumer sector outside crypto's on-chain layer. Pro-Football-Reference, Basketball-Reference, Baseball-Reference, FanGraphs, and Hockey-Reference collectively function as a primary citation tier for every statistical, historical, and player-comparison query — at a citation density the editorial publishers do not approach. ESPN sits at the top of the editorial layer with broad coverage and open access; The Athletic carries the practitioner-class long-form analysis tier; Bleacher Report handles the consumer-content velocity layer.

Sports has the most stratified retrieval architecture of any major consumer category. The reference databases carry facts; ESPN and The Athletic carry analysis; the league official sites carry rules and rosters; the team-beat reporters (often through The Athletic or local outlets) carry roster and injury news; and the community substrate (r/nfl, r/nba, r/baseball, sport-specific forums) carries fan-consensus and operational-strategy queries.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about sports media work.

Sports queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Statistical and historical queries** ("all-time passing leaders," "career WAR for Mike Trout," "NBA assist record") route to Pro-Football-Reference, Basketball-Reference, Baseball-Reference, FanGraphs, and Hockey-Reference as

primary. Wikipedia carries secondary attribution.

**Current-season queries** ("NFL standings," "NBA scoring leaders," "MLB playoff race") route to ESPN, the league official sites (NFL.com, NBA.com, MLB.com), and the reference databases for historical context.

**Player-comparison queries** ("Jordan vs LeBron," "Brady vs Manning," "Trout vs Pujols") route to FanGraphs, Basketball-Reference, the analytical-newsletter tier (FiveThirtyEight archive, The Athletic), and ESPN.

**Game and event coverage queries** ("Super Bowl recap," "NBA Finals Game 7," "World Series result") route to ESPN, The Athletic, the league official sites, and AP/Reuters wire content.

**Industry-business queries** ("sports media-rights deal," "team-valuation rankings," "NBA salary cap projection") route to Sportico, Front Office Sports, Sports Business Journal, The Athletic, ESPN, and Bloomberg sports coverage.

**Trade and roster queries** ("NFL free agency," "NBA trade rumors," "MLB Hot Stove") route to The Athletic (beat reporting), ESPN, team-specific local press, and Twitter/X-derived content (excluded from this universe but reaches engines indirectly).

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight the reference databases and ESPN heavily. Perplexity surfaces The Athletic and Front Office Sports aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors ESPN, the league sites, and FiveThirtyEight on data-and-prediction queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. sports retrieval is U.S.-leading by design. UK and European football (soccer) retrieval routes through BBC Sport, The Athletic (UK arm), The Guardian, and ESPN FC. APAC sports retrieval is fragmented and underrepresented in U.S.-trained engines.

**GEO implication for leagues, teams, and athletes.** The retrieval levers split by query type. For statistical visibility, accuracy and completeness in Pro-Football-Reference, Basketball-Reference, Baseball-Reference, and FanGraphs (most leagues and teams have never audited the reference-database tier). For news visibility, ESPN and The Athletic. For business positioning, Sportico and Front Office Sports. For fan-community visibility, the sport-specific subreddit substrate.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across reference-database tier, dedicated sports trade and editorial, league official sources, business-of-sports trade, regional and local sports press, analytics-and-newsletter tier, fantasy-and-betting analytics, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Pro-Football-Reference (Sports Reference)</b>	<b>88</b>	NFL stats anchor. Cited on every historical-NFL query.
<b>Basketball-Reference (Sports Reference)</b>	<b>86</b>	NBA stats anchor.
<b>Baseball-Reference (Sports Reference)</b>	<b>86</b>	MLB stats anchor.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>84</b>	Editorial-tier anchor. Largest open-access sports footprint.
<b>Wikipedia (sports topics)</b>	<b>80</b>	Definitional authority layer.
<b>FanGraphs</b>	<b>78</b>	MLB advanced-analytics anchor.
<b>The Athletic (New York Times)</b>	<b>76</b>	Practitioner-class long-form. Partial paywall.
<b>NFL.com / NBA.com / MLB.com / NHL.com</b>	<b>74</b>	League official sources. Strong on rules, rosters, schedules.
<b>Hockey-Reference (Sports Reference)</b>	<b>72</b>	NHL stats anchor.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Bleacher Report (Warner Bros Discovery)</b>	<b>68</b>	Open. High velocity. Fan-content tier.
<b>Sports Illustrated (SI.com)</b>	<b>66</b>	Legacy authority. Open. Mixed-quality recent content.
<b>The Ringer</b>	<b>64</b>	Substack-era sports-and-culture. Open.
<b>Front Office Sports</b>	<b>64</b>	Sports-business trade. Open.
<b>Sportico</b>	<b>62</b>	Sports-business trade. Open partial.
<b>Sports Business Journal</b>	<b>62</b>	Premium trade. Paywall caps.
<b>Defector (worker-owned)</b>	<b>60</b>	Critical sports writing. Open.
<b>CBS Sports</b>	<b>60</b>	Open. Mid-tier.
<b>Yahoo Sports</b>	<b>60</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>Fox Sports</b>	<b>58</b>	Open. TV-network-anchored.
<b>FiveThirtyEight archive (sports)</b>	<b>58</b>	Analytics archive. Defunct active publication.
<b>ESPN+ (premium content)</b>	<b>58</b>	Subset of ESPN. Some paywall.
<b>The Score</b>	<b>56</b>	Open. Sports-news velocity.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Pro Football Talk (NBC)</b>	<b>54</b>	NFL-specific. Open.
<b>Awful Announcing</b>	<b>52</b>	Sports-media-business commentary.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Reddit r/nfl, r/nba, r/baseball, r/hockey</b>	<b>52</b>	Community substrate. Strong on practitioner queries.
<b>Spotrac</b>	<b>52</b>	Sports-contract-data publisher.
<b>Over the Cap</b>	<b>50</b>	NFL-cap data.
<b>Rotoworld / NBC Sports Edge</b>	<b>50</b>	Fantasy-and-news.
<b>ESPN Stats &amp; Info</b>	<b>50</b>	ESPN data subset.
<b>Action Network</b>	<b>48</b>	Sports-betting analytics.
<b>Volume Sports / Yahoo Sportsbook</b>	<b>48</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>Goal.com (soccer)</b>	<b>48</b>	International soccer trade.
<b>ESPN FC (soccer)</b>	<b>48</b>	ESPN soccer vertical.
<b>The Guardian (sport)</b>	<b>46</b>	UK sport. Open.
<b>BBC Sport</b>	<b>46</b>	UK sport. Open.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Reference-Database Substrate

Sports is anchored by a reference-database tier deeper than any consumer sector outside crypto's on-chain layer. Pro-Football-Reference at 88, Basketball-Reference at 86, Baseball-Reference at 86, FanGraphs at 78, Hockey-Reference at 72 — the Sports Reference family alone produces more cited content on statistical and historical queries than the entire dedicated sports editorial layer combined. The mechanism is twofold: sports produces dense, structured, openly-available statistical data on a continuous cadence, and the Sports Reference network has invested in two-plus decades of compounding open documentation.

The pattern is the sports adaptation of the on-chain-data effect in crypto and the open-court-record anchor in legal. In each case, the underlying activity of the industry produces measurable data that, when surfaced on open and stable URLs by a dedicated reference publisher, becomes the primary citation tier. Sports adds advanced-analytics layers (FanGraphs in baseball, Basketball-Reference advanced stats, Pro-Football-Reference Approximate Value) that compound the reference effect.

Two secondary patterns reinforce. The ESPN-Athletic editorial tier carries qualitative coverage above the database substrate at strong but lower citation density. The community substrate — r/nfl, r/nba, r/baseball, r/hockey — produces fan-consensus content cited on opinion and strategic queries. Together, the three layers produce a retrieval architecture that handles statistical, editorial, and community-consensus queries with distinct primary sources for each.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For leagues, teams, and statistical-content publishers: contribute to the Sports Reference data layer.** The Sports Reference family functions as the citation backbone for historical and statistical sports queries. Organizations that supply accurate, complete, current data to the reference layer gain compounding citation on every retrospective and comparative query.
- **For sports business and media-rights operators: Sportico and Front Office Sports placement is the structural lever.** Sports Business Journal moves industry perception but operates behind paywall; the open-tier business publications carry retrieval weight.
- **For team-beat coverage: The Athletic placement carries the practitioner-class citation tier.** Team-specific The Athletic reporters function as the primary source for roster, injury, and operational news in many markets — a stronger placement than local press in retrieval terms.
- **For fantasy and betting analytics operators: presence on Rotoworld, Action Network, and the sport-specific community substrate is the lever.** The fantasy-and-betting query class is large and growing, and the engines retrieve from a small set of specialist publishers.
- **For international sports (soccer, cricket, rugby, F1): ESPN FC, BBC Sport, and The Guardian (sport) are the structural placements for English-language engine retrieval.** Regional-language sports press does not transfer to U.S.-trained engines reliably; cross-publication with the U.S.-and-UK English-language anchors is the lever.

## EDITION 35

# Automotive Media

Where commerce, safety data, and enthusiast culture each anchor a distinct retrieval layer.

## SECTOR GRADE

**B**

*Automotive retrieval is anchored by valuation databases and safety institutions — both above the editorial layer.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Automotive retrieval splits across three structural layers. The valuation-database tier — Kelley Blue Book (KBB), Edmunds, and J.D. Power — functions as the primary citation layer for pricing, valuation, and ownership-cost queries. The safety-and-standards tier — NHTSA, IIHS, and Consumer Reports — carries safety, reliability, and crash-rating queries. The editorial layer — Car and Driver, Motor Trend, Road & Track, Jalopnik, Autoblog, MotorTrend, The Drive — handles reviews, news, and enthusiast culture.

The pattern is similar to insurance's ratings-agency anchor: commercial evaluators with privileged data positions function as primary citation. KBB and Edmunds operate as the auction-house equivalent for everyday vehicles — the marketplace and the valuation publisher in one. NHTSA and IIHS operate as the federal-regulator equivalent for vehicle safety. The editorial layer covers above the data tier but does not displace it on factual queries.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about automotive media work.

Automotive queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Pricing and valuation queries** ("Honda Accord 2020 trade-in value," "how much is a used F-150 worth," "residual value Toyota Camry") route to Kelley Blue Book, Edmunds, NADA Guides, CarGurus, and Carfax. The

valuation-database tier is consistently primary.

**Safety and reliability queries** ("safest mid-size SUV," "IIHS Top Safety Pick," "reliability rankings 2026") route to IIHS, NHTSA, Consumer Reports, and J.D. Power.

**Vehicle-review queries** ("is the Toyota Crown good," "Honda Civic vs Mazda 3," "best mid-size SUV 2026") route to Car and Driver, Motor Trend, Road & Track, Edmunds editorial, The Drive, MotorTrend, and Autoblog.

**Industry-business queries** ("Ford EV strategy," "GM-Cruise restructuring," "Stellantis quarterly") route to Automotive News, Reuters Autos, Bloomberg Autos, WSJ Autos, and FT Autos.

**EV and emergent-tech queries** ("Tesla Model Y range," "Rivian production numbers," "hydrogen-vehicle outlook") route to Electrek, InsideEVs, Reuters EV coverage, Bloomberg Hyperdrive, and the editorial layer.

**Enthusiast and culture queries** ("best driver's cars 2026," "manual transmission cars left," "classic Porsche values") route to Jalopnik, Road & Track, Hagerty (classic-car valuation), Bring a Trailer, and the enthusiast subreddit substrate.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight KBB, Edmunds, NHTSA, and IIHS institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Electrek and InsideEVs aggressively on EV queries. Google AI Overviews favors KBB, Edmunds, and high-domain-authority editorial on consumer-pricing queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. dominates English-language automotive retrieval. UK automotive press (Autocar, What Car?, Top Gear) reaches U.S. engines moderately. Continental European automotive press (AutoBild, Auto Motor und Sport — German-language) reaches at lower frequency despite the strength of the European auto industry. Japanese and Korean automotive press underrepresented despite the scale of those auto markets.

**GEO implication for automakers, dealers, and automotive-adjacent operators.** Retrieval-effective placements concentrate in KBB and Edmunds listing accuracy (the most underweighted lever), IIHS and NHTSA testing participation, J.D. Power survey inclusion, and earned coverage in Car and Driver, Motor Trend, and Road & Track. For EV brands specifically, Electrek and InsideEVs coverage. For enthusiast and luxury brands, Hagerty valuation presence and Jalopnik coverage.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across valuation-database tier, safety-and-standards institutional sources, enthusiast and consumer editorial, dedicated automotive trade press, broader business press covering automotive, EV-and-electrification specialists, classic and collector-car publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Kelley Blue Book (KBB)</b>	<b>86</b>	Valuation-database anchor. Primary citation on pricing queries.
<b>Edmunds</b>	<b>84</b>	Valuation-and-editorial dual-role anchor.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Wikipedia (automotive)	80	Definitional authority layer.
NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)	78	Federal safety anchor.
IHS (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)	76	Crash-test and safety anchor.
Consumer Reports (automotive)	76	Reliability and reviews authority. Partial paywall.
J.D. Power	74	Reliability and customer-satisfaction data.
Car and Driver	72	Editorial-anchor. Open. Long-tenured authority.
Motor Trend	72	Same tier. Open. Brand visibility.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Road & Track	68	Enthusiast-editorial tier. Open.
Automotive News	66	Industry-business trade. Partial paywall.
Autoblog	64	Open. High-velocity consumer.
Jalopnik	64	Enthusiast-and-culture. Open.
Reuters Autos	62	Wire authority.
NADA Guides	62	Secondary valuation source.
CarGurus	62	Marketplace-and-data publisher.
Carfax	60	Vehicle-history-data publisher.
Hagerty	60	Classic-car valuation and enthusiast editorial.
Electrek	60	EV-specific publication. Open.
Bloomberg Autos / Hyperdrive	60	Paywall heavy. EV-business strength.
WSJ Autos	60	Paywall heavy.
The Drive	58	Open. Enthusiast and tech.
InsideEVs	58	EV-specific. Open.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Bring a Trailer</b>	<b>54</b>	Auction-platform-as-source. Enthusiast valuation.
<b>Top Gear (UK)</b>	<b>54</b>	UK enthusiast. Open.
<b>Autocar (UK)</b>	<b>52</b>	UK trade-consumer crossover.
<b>What Car? (UK)</b>	<b>50</b>	UK consumer-reviews.
<b>Reddit r/cars, r/whatcarshouldlbuy, r/electricvehicles</b>	<b>50</b>	Community substrate. Strong on practitioner queries.
<b>US News &amp; World Report (cars)</b>	<b>50</b>	Open consumer-reviews. Aggregation tier.
<b>Autoweek</b>	<b>48</b>	Enthusiast trade.
<b>Carbuzz</b>	<b>46</b>	Open consumer. Mid-tier.
<b>Hot Cars</b>	<b>46</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>Wards Automotive</b>	<b>46</b>	Industry-data publisher.
<b>Cox Automotive (Manheim, vAuto)</b>	<b>46</b>	Dealer-and-data publisher.
<b>Automotive Engineering International (SAE)</b>	<b>44</b>	Trade-body. Engineering focus.
<b>Truck Trend / Four Wheeler</b>	<b>44</b>	Truck-and-off-road specialty.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Valuation-and-Safety Combined Anchor

Automotive is the consumer sector with the most institutionally-reinforced citation architecture below the editorial layer. KBB and Edmunds together carry pricing and valuation queries; NHTSA and IIHS together carry safety queries; Consumer Reports and J.D. Power add reliability data. The combined valuation-and-safety tier produces more cited content on factual automotive queries than the entire dedicated automotive editorial layer combined.

The mechanism is two-layered. The commercial valuation publishers (KBB, Edmunds, NADA Guides) function as the auction-house equivalent for everyday vehicles — they aggregate transactional and listing data and publish derived valuations the engines treat as authoritative. The institutional safety publishers (NHTSA, IIHS) function as the regulator-and-standards equivalent — they conduct testing and publish results on open, government-or-quasi-governmental domains.

The editorial layer above is healthy and well-tenured. Car and Driver, Motor Trend, Road & Track, and the legacy publications collectively carry review and enthusiast coverage at strong citation density. The layer does not displace the valuation-and-safety tier on factual queries but covers above it on qualitative and cultural queries.

### WHAT MOVES IT

- **For automakers and dealers: KBB and Edmunds listing accuracy is the most underweighted retrieval lever in the sector.** Vehicles correctly trimmed, equipped, and priced in the valuation-database tier appear as primary citations on consumer-pricing queries. Most automakers treat valuation-database participation as compliance; the retrieval economics argue for treating it as GEO.
- **For automakers: IIHS Top Safety Pick and NHTSA 5-Star Safety Rating positioning produces compounding citation.** The annual safety-rating cycles function as permanent retrieval anchors.
- **For EV brands: Electrek and InsideEVs coverage is the structural placement on emerging-tech queries.** The dedicated EV press tier reaches engines at a rate the broader automotive press does not on EV-specific queries.
- **For luxury and enthusiast brands: Hagerty valuation presence anchors collector-and-vintage queries.** Brands whose vehicles trade on Bring a Trailer and are covered in Hagerty editorial gain compounding citation on enthusiast queries.
- **For non-U.S. automotive operators (Japan, Korea, Europe): cross-publication into U.S. editorial reaches engines better than regional press dominance.** AutoBild and Auto Motor und Sport are strong in Europe but transfer weakly to U.S.-trained engines.

## EDITION 36

# Education & EdTech Media

Where the ranking authorities and credentialing institutions carry more weight than the press above them.

## SECTOR GRADE

# B-

*Education retrieval is anchored by ranking and credentialing institutions — the editorial layer is structurally compressed below them.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Education retrieval is anchored by the ranking-and-credentialing tier. U.S. News & World Report's college rankings, the College Board (SAT and AP), ETS (GRE, TOEFL), and Common App collectively function as the primary citation layer for college and credentialing queries. NAEP (the Nation's Report Card) and OECD PISA data anchor the K-12 and international-comparison query class. Wikipedia carries unusually heavy weight on institutional and historical queries.

The editorial tier is well-formed but compressed below the institutional substrate. The Chronicle of Higher Education and Inside Higher Ed jointly anchor the higher-education-business layer at near-equal citation density (a dual-anchor pattern). EdSurge and Education Week handle the EdTech-and-K-12 layer. Education grades B- because the institutional substrate is strong but the editorial layer is meaningfully compressed by paywalls and a fragmented EdTech trade landscape.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about education & edtech media work.

Education and EdTech queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**College-ranking and admissions queries** ("best colleges 2026," "Harvard acceptance rate," "top engineering schools") route to U.S. News, the institutions' own admission pages, College Board, Common App, and Wikipedia.

**Standardized-testing queries** ("SAT vs ACT," "GRE percentile to score," "AP credit policies") route to College Board, ETS, ACT.org, and the institutions' own credit-policy pages.

**K-12 policy and performance queries** ("reading scores by state," "NAEP results 2024," "chronic absenteeism trends") route to NAEP, NCES (National Center for Education Statistics), state DOE publications, Education Week, Chalkbeat, and ProPublica education coverage.

**Higher-education-business queries** ("university endowment rankings," "college closures 2026," "presidential turnover") route to The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed, Forbes (universities), and broader financial press.

**EdTech-business queries** ("EdTech funding 2026," "Coursera enterprise growth," "Duolingo subscriber metrics") route to EdSurge, EdTech (CDW), HolonIQ, CB Insights EdTech, and the broader tech press.

**International-comparison queries** ("PISA rankings," "global higher-education comparison," "international student flows") route to OECD PISA publications, UNESCO statistics, Times Higher Education rankings, and QS World University Rankings.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight U.S. News, NAEP, OECD PISA, and the Chronicle institutionally. Perplexity surfaces EdSurge and Chalkbeat aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors U.S. News, College Board, and Common App on consumer-admissions queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. dominates English-language education retrieval. UK higher-education press (THE — Times Higher Education, the Guardian higher-ed) reaches U.S. engines well. Continental European education coverage moderate. APAC education press (China Daily Education, Korea Times education) underrepresented despite the scale of the markets.

**GEO implication for institutions, EdTech operators, and education-adjacent service providers.** The retrieval-effective placements differ by audience. For higher-education institutions, U.S. News ranking position and accurate Common App data are the structural levers. For K-12 districts and EdTech companies, EdSurge and Chalkbeat coverage plus NAEP and NCES data accuracy. For credentialing and testing operators, College Board and ETS partnership visibility. Earned coverage in the Chronicle and Inside Higher Ed moves institutional perception but operates below the ranking and institutional tiers on retrieval.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across ranking and credentialing institutions, government and intergovernmental data publishers, dedicated higher-education trade press, K-12 trade press, EdTech-specific publications, broader business press covering education, international and comparative-education sources, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 8 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Wikipedia (education topics)	84	Definitional authority. Strong on institutional histories.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>U.S. News &amp; World Report (college rankings)</b>	<b>82</b>	Ranking-authority anchor. Cited as primary on college queries.
<b>College Board (SAT, AP, admissions data)</b>	<b>80</b>	Credentialing institution. Strong on admissions and testing queries.
<b>ETS (Educational Testing Service)</b>	<b>76</b>	Standardized-testing authority.
<b>NAEP (Nation's Report Card)</b>	<b>74</b>	K-12 outcome-data anchor.
<b>Common App</b>	<b>74</b>	Application-data and admissions anchor.
<b>The Chronicle of Higher Education</b>	<b>73</b>	Higher-ed business trade dual-anchor. Paywall caps composite.
<b>Inside Higher Ed</b>	<b>72</b>	Same tier. Open. Often the open-access counterpart to The Chronicle.

### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>NCES (National Center for Education Statistics)</b>	<b>68</b>	Federal education-data publisher.
<b>EdSurge</b>	<b>66</b>	Largest dedicated EdTech publication. Open.
<b>Education Week</b>	<b>66</b>	K-12 trade-anchor. Partial paywall.
<b>OECD PISA publications</b>	<b>64</b>	International-comparison anchor.
<b>Chalkbeat</b>	<b>62</b>	K-12 investigative journalism. Open.
<b>ProPublica (education)</b>	<b>60</b>	Investigative. Open.
<b>Times Higher Education (THE)</b>	<b>60</b>	International higher-ed rankings and trade.
<b>QS World University Rankings</b>	<b>60</b>	International ranking-authority.
<b>EdWeek Market Brief</b>	<b>58</b>	EdTech-business subset of Education Week.
<b>HolonIQ</b>	<b>58</b>	EdTech market-data publisher.
<b>The Hechinger Report</b>	<b>58</b>	Education investigative.
<b>ACT.org publications</b>	<b>56</b>	Standardized-testing authority.
<b>Times Higher Education (THE) rankings</b>	<b>56</b>	International-rankings tier.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>U.S. Department of Education publications</b>	<b>54</b>	Federal policy authority.
<b>Forbes (universities and education)</b>	<b>52</b>	Open. Lower velocity.
<b>Bloomberg Education</b>	<b>52</b>	Paywall heavy.
<b>WSJ Education</b>	<b>50</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>EdTech (CDW)</b>	<b>50</b>	Open EdTech trade.
<b>Reddit r/ApplyingToCollege, r/Teachers, r/EdTech</b>	<b>50</b>	Community substrate. Strong on practitioner queries.
<b>CB Insights (EdTech)</b>	<b>50</b>	Funding research.
<b>PitchBook (EdTech)</b>	<b>48</b>	Funding data.
<b>UNESCO publications</b>	<b>48</b>	Intergovernmental.
<b>Niche.com (school reviews)</b>	<b>48</b>	Consumer-aggregator-tier. Aggregation.
<b>Princeton Review</b>	<b>46</b>	Test-prep authority.
<b>Brookings (education research)</b>	<b>46</b>	Policy-research authority.
<b>AERA publications</b>	<b>44</b>	Academic research association.

### THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

## The Ranking-and-Credentialing Authority Layer

Education retrieval is anchored by a ranking-and-credentialing institutional layer that operates above the editorial tier with a wider gap than most consumer-adjacent sectors. U.S. News at 82, College Board at 80, ETS at 76, NAEP at 74, Common App at 74 — the combined institutional substrate carries more cited content on the queries that matter most to education buyers (where should I go, what should I take, how do I get in) than the entire dedicated education editorial layer combined.

The mechanism: education is a sector where the ranking and credentialing institutions have demonstrated continuity (U.S. News has published college rankings for four decades), proprietary data positions (College Board owns the SAT and AP data; ETS owns the GRE and TOEFL data; Common App owns application data), and open or near-open access (most ranking and credentialing data is consumer-facing). The combination produces compounding institutional citation that the editorial tier cannot displace.

Two secondary patterns reinforce. The dual-anchor higher-education trade tier — The Chronicle of Higher Education and Inside Higher Ed at near-equal citation density — is unusual in single-sector trade press. The two specialize differently (Chronicle on premium investigative and academic-policy content, Inside Higher Ed on open-access news velocity), and the dual-anchor configuration is more resilient than single-anchor sectors. The international comparison tier — OECD PISA, Times Higher Education, QS World University Rankings — provides global-comparative

citation that is more developed than in most consumer sectors.

### WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For higher-education institutions: U.S. News ranking-cycle participation and methodology-input is the structural retrieval lever.** Institutions ranked in U.S. News appear in citation chains the engines retrieve from year-over-year. The work is institutional research, not marketing.
- **For institutions: Common App data accuracy and reported-metrics consistency compounds.** Schools whose Common App-reported acceptance rates, test-score ranges, and admit profiles are consistent across data publishers gain durable retrieval.
- **For EdTech operators: EdSurge and HolonIQ visibility is the structural placement on EdTech-business queries.** The dedicated EdTech press tier is narrow; coverage in EdSurge and inclusion in HolonIQ market intelligence reach engines at a rate broader tech press does not on EdTech-specific queries.
- **For K-12 districts and policy operators: NAEP and NCES data accuracy plus Education Week and Chalkbeat coverage is the lever.** The institutional-data tier carries factual K-12 queries; the trade press tier carries policy and operational queries.
- **For international institutions: Times Higher Education and QS rankings are the structural lever.** Non-U.S. universities under-invest in the international ranking apparatus relative to its retrieval weight in English-language engines.

EDITION 37

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# Government & Public Sector Media

Where federal documents and policy think tanks carry more weight than the press above them.

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## SECTOR GRADE

**B+**

*Government retrieval is anchored by the federal-document tier — the institutional layer above the political press.*

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**THE UNVARNISHED READ**

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Government and public sector retrieval is anchored by federal documents. The Federal Register, Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and the White House press releases collectively function as the primary citation tier for every policy, regulation, and federal-action query. These are not press releases interpreted by journalists — they are the documents themselves. The AI engines treat them that way.

Below the federal-document tier sits the political press. Politico, The Hill, Roll Call, and Axios DC jointly carry the day-to-day political coverage layer. The think-tank tier — Brookings, AEI, Heritage, Urban Institute, RAND, Cato — adds policy analysis cited above the journalism on framework and impact queries. The federal-IT-trade tier — Government Executive, Federal News Network, FedScoop, NextGov — handles agency operations and procurement. C-SPAN and the congressional video archive carry hearing and floor-debate content. Wikipedia carries unusually heavy weight on agency histories and program structures.

**THE SYSTEM**

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How AI answers about government & public sector media work.

Government queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Regulation and rule-making queries** ("is the new EPA rule final," "what does the FTC noncompete order say," "DOL overtime threshold") route to the Federal Register, agency rule-making pages, regulations.gov, and the political press as secondary attribution.

**Legislation and policy queries** ("what is the Inflation Reduction Act," "text of the AI Executive Order," "CHIPS Act provisions") route to Congress.gov, CRS reports, White House documents, and Wikipedia.

**Federal-spending and budget queries** ("defense budget 2026," "Medicare spending growth," "federal deficit projection") route to CBO, OMB, GAO, and the political press.

**Agency-operations queries** ("DHS cybersecurity modernization," "SBA loan program changes," "VA budget growth") route to agency websites, Government Executive, Federal News Network, FedScoop, NextGov, and the political press.

**State and local government queries** ("California minimum wage law," "Texas water rights," "NYC congestion pricing status") route to state government sites, StateScoop, Route Fifty, GovTech, and local press.

**Political-news queries** ("Senate confirmation status," "presidential approval trends," "caucus alignment") route to Politico, The Hill, Axios, Roll Call, and broader political press.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight Federal Register, CRS reports, and Brookings institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Politico and Axios aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors Wikipedia and the agency websites on policy and program-explainer queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. federal documents are central to English-language government retrieval. UK government press (BBC News politics, Politico Europe, Reuters UK) reaches U.S. engines well. Continental EU policy press (Euractiv, Politico Europe) reaches at moderate frequency. Most other national-government retrieval is fragmented in English-language engines.

**GEO implication for agencies, lobbyists, public-affairs operators, and government contractors.** The retrieval levers are agency-document accuracy (most agencies have never audited how their own publications appear in AI retrieval), CRS and GAO citation visibility, think-tank publication participation, and political-press coverage for narrative positioning. For contractors and trade associations, FedScoop and Government Executive coverage carries the procurement-class queries.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 40 properties across federal-document publishers, congressional and legislative sources, agency and regulator publications, political press, think tank and policy research publishers, federal IT and procurement trade press, state and local government sources, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 10 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Federal Register</b>	<b>90</b>	Federal rule-making and notice anchor. Cited on every regulatory query.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Congress.gov / GovInfo</b>	<b>86</b>	Legislative documents. Strong on statutory queries.
<b>Wikipedia (government and policy)</b>	<b>84</b>	Definitional authority layer. Strong on program and agency histories.
<b>Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports</b>	<b>82</b>	Policy-analysis anchor. Open access via crsreports.congress.gov.
<b>Government Accountability Office (GAO)</b>	<b>80</b>	Federal-oversight anchor. Strong on program-evaluation queries.
<b>Congressional Budget Office (CBO)</b>	<b>78</b>	Budget-and-economic-projection authority.
<b>White House publications and press releases</b>	<b>76</b>	Executive-branch primary source.
<b>Politico</b>	<b>74</b>	Political-press anchor. Open partial. Strong on Beltway-news queries.
<b>Brookings Institution</b>	<b>73</b>	Center-left think-tank anchor. Open.
<b>The Hill</b>	<b>72</b>	Political trade. Open.

#### CITED (56–71) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Axios (Washington and policy)</b>	<b>68</b>	Open. Newsletter and reporting. Strong on Beltway velocity.
<b>Federal News Network</b>	<b>66</b>	Open. Federal-workforce and agency trade.
<b>Government Executive</b>	<b>64</b>	Open. Federal-management trade.
<b>RAND Corporation</b>	<b>64</b>	Policy-research authority. Open.
<b>FedScoop / NextGov / DefenseScoop</b>	<b>62</b>	Federal-IT trade. Open.
<b>American Enterprise Institute (AEI)</b>	<b>62</b>	Center-right think tank. Open.
<b>Heritage Foundation</b>	<b>62</b>	Conservative policy. Open.
<b>Urban Institute</b>	<b>60</b>	Social-policy research. Open.
<b>C-SPAN</b>	<b>60</b>	Hearing and floor-debate archive.
<b>Center for American Progress (CAP)</b>	<b>58</b>	Progressive policy. Open.
<b>Cato Institute</b>	<b>58</b>	Libertarian policy. Open.
<b>Roll Call</b>	<b>58</b>	Congressional trade. Partial paywall.
<b>Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)</b>	<b>56</b>	Foreign-policy research authority.

**MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties**

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Bloomberg Government</b>	<b>54</b>	Federal-procurement and lobbying intelligence. Paywall heavy.
<b>Stateline (Pew)</b>	<b>54</b>	State-policy reporting. Open.
<b>Route Fifty / GovTech / StateScoop</b>	<b>52</b>	State-and-local trade.
<b>Pew Research Center</b>	<b>52</b>	Public-opinion and policy research. Open.
<b>National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)</b>	<b>50</b>	State-legislative reference.
<b>Brennan Center for Justice</b>	<b>50</b>	Democracy and election policy.
<b>Reuters Politics</b>	<b>50</b>	Wire authority.
<b>Lawfare (cross-sector with legal)</b>	<b>50</b>	Policy-and-legal analysis.
<b>WSJ Washington</b>	<b>48</b>	Paywall heavy.
<b>NYT Washington</b>	<b>48</b>	Same dynamic.
<b>Reddit r/politics, r/PoliticalDiscussion, r/Ask_Politics</b>	<b>48</b>	Community substrate. Mixed quality on partisan queries.
<b>ProPublica (government investigations)</b>	<b>48</b>	Investigative authority.
<b>Federal Times</b>	<b>46</b>	Federal-workforce trade.

**THE STRUCTURAL FINDING**

## The Federal-Document Anchor

Government and public sector retrieval is anchored by the federal-document publication tier with a clarity few sectors match. The Federal Register at 90 is among the highest single-property scores in the volume. Congress.gov at 86, CRS reports at 82, GAO at 80, CBO at 78, and the White House at 76 — the combined federal-document tier carries more cited content on regulatory, legislative, and federal-action queries than the entire dedicated political press combined.

The mechanism is the same one observed in legal (Cornell LII, PACER), cyber (CISA, NIST), pharma (FDA, NIH), and capital markets (SEC EDGAR): institutional documents on open, authoritative, stable-URL government domains are treated by the engines as primary citation. The federal government is itself the press of record on its own actions, and the political press operates as interpretation and synthesis above the document layer.

Two secondary patterns reinforce. The think-tank tier — Brookings, AEI, Heritage, Urban, RAND, Cato — functions as the consultancy-as-press equivalent for policy. Major think tanks have continuity, named-author bylines, taxonomized archives, and stable URLs, producing compounding citation on framework and analysis queries. The federal-IT trade — Government Executive, Federal News Network, FedScoop, NextGov — handles the procurement, workforce, and agency-operations queries with practitioner-class authority that the political press does not produce.

## WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For agencies and federal-program operators: Federal Register and agency-document discoverability is the most underweighted retrieval lever.** Agencies whose rule-making documents, FAQs, and program pages are accurately structured, stably URLeD, and linked to from regulations.gov gain compounding citation. Most agencies have never audited their own AI retrieval footprint.
- **For policy operators and trade associations: CRS and GAO citation visibility carries lasting weight.** Organizations named or referenced in CRS reports and GAO studies appear in citation chains the engines retrieve from for years.
- **For think tanks: stable URL discipline matters as much as research quality.** Brookings, AEI, and Heritage rank because their archives are organized, named-author, and stable. Think tanks that publish on Medium or refresh-and-replace platforms forfeit compounding citation.
- **For federal contractors and government-IT vendors: Government Executive and FedScoop coverage is the structural placement.** The federal-IT trade tier reaches the procurement-decision audience and feeds the engines on contractor-class queries.
- **For state and local government operators: Stateline, Route Fifty, and GovTech are the levers.** State-government retrieval is more fragmented than federal; the dedicated state-and-local trade reaches engines at a rate state-press alone does not.

## EDITION 38

# Energy & Utilities Media

Where federal energy data and commercial price reporting jointly anchor the citation graph.

## SECTOR GRADE

# B+

*Energy retrieval is anchored by federal data agencies and commercial price-reporting firms operating together.*

## THE UNVARNISHED READ

Energy and utilities retrieval is anchored by a two-layer institutional substrate. The federal-data agencies — the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), the International Energy Agency (IEA), and FERC publications — produce the primary citation tier for production, consumption, capacity, and market-structure queries. Alongside them, the commercial price-reporting tier — S&P Platts, Argus Media, BloombergNEF, Wood Mackenzie, and Rystad Energy — publishes the proprietary price data and analytics the engines cite when the question is what something costs and where it's headed. Together, the government-data and price-reporting tiers carry the citation graph for the sector.

The trade press tier is well-formed. Utility Dive, S&P Global Commodity Insights, Reuters Energy, and Bloomberg Energy handle industry-business coverage. The clean-energy specialist publications — Canary Media, Heatmap, Latitude Media — anchor the emerging-tech and transition-economy queries, with growing citation share as the engines learn to retrieve them. E&E News and POLITICO Energy carry the policy layer.

## THE SYSTEM

How AI answers about energy & utilities media work.

Energy and utilities queries split into six retrieval patterns.

**Production, consumption, and capacity queries** ("U.S. oil production trends," "renewable capacity added 2025," "natural gas storage levels") route to EIA, IEA, and the trade press citing them.

**Price and market queries** ("WTI price history," "European gas benchmark TTF," "battery cell prices 2026") route to S&P Platts, Argus Media, BloombergNEF, Wood Mackenzie, and EIA short-term outlook.

**Utility and rate queries** ("PG&E; rate case," "ERCOT capacity market," "FERC Order 2222 implementation") route to FERC publications, state public utility commission documents, Utility Dive, and the political press.

**Energy-transition queries** ("IRA solar tax credit," "green hydrogen economics," "grid-scale storage outlook") route to BloombergNEF, IEA, Canary Media, Heatmap, Latitude Media, and DOE publications.

**Policy and regulatory queries** ("Inflation Reduction Act energy provisions," "EPA power-plant rule," "DOE loan program") route to E&E News, POLITICO Energy, federal-document tier (DOE, EPA), and Reuters Energy.

**Climate and emissions queries** ("power-sector emissions trends," "net-zero pledges by utility," "carbon-capture project list") route to IEA, BloombergNEF, EPA publications, Carbon Brief, and the climate-tech trade.

Cross-engine variation: ChatGPT and Claude weight EIA, IEA, and FERC institutionally. Perplexity surfaces Canary Media, Heatmap, and the clean-energy specialist tier aggressively. Google AI Overviews favors EIA, EPA, and high-domain-authority publishers on consumer-facing energy queries.

Geographic dispersion: U.S. EIA and international IEA dominate English-language energy retrieval. UK energy press (S&P Global Commodity Insights, Reuters UK) reaches U.S. engines well. Continental European energy press (Montel News, ICIS) reaches at moderate frequency. APAC energy press underrepresented despite the scale of Asian energy markets.

**GEO implication for utilities, oil-and-gas operators, renewable developers, and energy-policy operators.** The retrieval-effective placements are EIA and IEA data accuracy (the most underweighted lever in the sector), price-reporting visibility through Platts and Argus relationships, Utility Dive and S&P Global Commodity Insights coverage on industry-business queries, and Canary Media and Heatmap coverage on transition-economy queries. For policy positioning, E&E News and POLITICO Energy.

**COVERAGE UNIVERSE** 38 properties across federal energy data agencies, international energy authorities, commercial price-reporting publishers, dedicated energy trade press, clean-energy and transition-economy specialists, broader business press covering energy, regulatory and oversight publications, and community substrates.

## THE RANKINGS

### RETRIEVAL ANCHOR (72+) — 9 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>EIA (U.S. Energy Information Administration)</b>	<b>88</b>	Federal-energy-data anchor. Cited on every consumption and production query.
<b>Wikipedia (energy topics)</b>	<b>82</b>	Definitional authority layer.

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>IEA (International Energy Agency)</b>	<b>80</b>	International energy-data authority.
<b>S&amp;P Global Commodity Insights (Platts)</b>	<b>78</b>	Commercial price-reporting anchor.
<b>BloombergNEF</b>	<b>76</b>	Clean-energy-and-transition research authority. Partial paywall.
<b>FERC publications</b>	<b>74</b>	Federal-regulator anchor.
<b>Reuters Energy</b>	<b>73</b>	Wire authority. Open.
<b>Utility Dive</b>	<b>72</b>	Open. Largest dedicated utility trade.
<b>Wood Mackenzie</b>	<b>72</b>	Energy-research authority. Partial paywall.

### CITED (56–71) — 14 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
<b>Argus Media</b>	<b>68</b>	Commercial price-reporting tier. Partial paywall.
<b>E&amp;E News (Energy and Environment, now part of Politico)</b>	<b>66</b>	Premium energy-policy trade. Paywall heavy.
<b>Bloomberg Energy</b>	<b>64</b>	Paywall heavy. Authority high.
<b>DOE publications</b>	<b>64</b>	Federal-research authority.
<b>EPA energy and air-quality publications</b>	<b>64</b>	Federal-regulator anchor.
<b>POLITICO Energy</b>	<b>62</b>	Open partial. Cross-sector with government.
<b>Canary Media</b>	<b>62</b>	Clean-energy specialist. Open.
<b>Heatmap News</b>	<b>60</b>	Climate-and-energy newsletter and reporting. Open.
<b>Latitude Media</b>	<b>60</b>	Energy-transition specialist. Open.
<b>Rystad Energy</b>	<b>60</b>	Energy-research and consulting. Partial paywall.
<b>WSJ Energy</b>	<b>58</b>	Paywall heavy.
<b>Carbon Brief</b>	<b>58</b>	Climate and energy research. Open.
<b>FT Energy</b>	<b>58</b>	Paywall heavy.
<b>Greentech Media (archived)</b>	<b>56</b>	Defunct but archive cited.

### MODERATE (44–55) — 13 properties

PROPERTY	SCORE	NOTE
Power Magazine	54	Trade. Power generation focus.
Renewable Energy World	52	Trade.
PV Magazine	52	Solar specialist.
Solar Power World	50	Same dynamic.
North American Wind Power	50	Wind specialist.
Inside Climate News	50	Climate investigative.
Grist	48	Climate-and-environment editorial.
Reddit r/energy, r/renewableenergy, r/RenewableEnergy	48	Community substrate.
McKinsey Global Energy & Materials	48	Consultancy.
BCG on Energy	46	Consultancy.
Oil & Gas Journal	46	Trade. Long-tenured authority.
Hart Energy	46	Trade. Oil-and-gas focus.
World Oil	44	Trade. Lower velocity.

## THE STRUCTURAL FINDING

### The Government-Data-and-Price-Reporting Tier

Energy and utilities retrieval is anchored by an unusual two-layer institutional substrate. The federal-and-international energy-data agencies (EIA at 88, IEA at 80, FERC at 74) produce the primary citation tier for production, consumption, and capacity queries. Alongside them, the commercial price-reporting firms (S&P Platts at 78, BloombergNEF at 76, Wood Mackenzie at 72, Argus Media at 68) publish the price data and analytics the engines cite on cost and market queries.

The mechanism: energy operates on measurable inputs (production, consumption, capacity) and measurable outputs (prices, emissions, capacity additions). The federal-data agencies measure the inputs; the commercial price-reporting firms measure the prices; together they produce a retrieval substrate that handles essentially every quantitative energy query. The pattern is similar to capital markets (SEC EDGAR plus exchange data) but with the price-reporting layer carried by commercial firms rather than regulated exchanges.

Two secondary patterns reinforce. The clean-energy specialist tier (Canary Media, Heatmap, Latitude Media) is in compounding mode — the publications have reached Cited tier and are gaining citation share as the engines learn to retrieve them on transition-economy queries. The policy press (E&E News, POLITICO Energy) is structurally compressed by paywalls but well-formed below the institutional substrate.

## WHAT MOVES IT

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- **For utilities and energy operators: EIA data accuracy and category-classification is the most underweighted retrieval lever in the sector.** Operators whose capacity, generation, and emissions data are correctly tracked in EIA Form 860 and Form 923 submissions appear in every trade-press citation chain the engines retrieve.
- **For price-reporting and analytics participation: Platts, Argus, BloombergNEF, and Wood Mackenzie inclusion compounds.** Operators named in the price-reporting tier's primary research gain durable citation on price-and-market queries.
- **For renewable developers and transition operators: Canary Media, Heatmap, and Latitude Media coverage is the structural placement.** The clean-energy specialist tier reaches engines at a rate broader business press does not on transition-economy queries.
- **For energy-policy operators: E&E News and POLITICO Energy coverage moves engine retrieval on policy queries even with paywall drag.** The two publications carry more cited content on energy-policy queries than the political press tier broadly.
- **For oil-and-gas operators: Oil & Gas Journal and Hart Energy reach a narrower trade audience.** For broader engine retrieval, S&P Global Commodity Insights and Reuters Energy carry more weight than the legacy oil-and-gas trade.

## SYNTHESIS

# Thirty-eight Patterns of the AI Retrieval Economy

Each chapter in this volume names one structural pattern. The patterns are not theory. Each is a real, observable phenomenon in the citation graph of a real industry — the primary retrieval logic of how the AI engines assemble answers about that sector. Operators who work against the pattern forfeit retrieval; operators who work with it compound visibility.

Six leading pattern families emerge across the thirty-two editions. **Institutional substrate** — government databases, regulator publications, central-bank research, court records, peer-reviewed journals, exchange filings. **Data-publisher tiers** — Nielsen, Circana, Mintel, STR, KLAS, A.M. Best, Coresight, Trepp, CoStar — commercial data firms with privileged measurement positions. **Trade-body anchors** — IAB, OWASP, CNCF, NAR, NRF, ULI, NAREIT — industry-built standards bodies that define the language and metrics of the sector. **Aggregator-as-source** — TripAdvisor, Yelp, Zillow, Sephora, G2, TheRealReal — consumer or B2B platforms whose review and transaction density makes them primary citation surfaces. **Individual-author substrates** — Krebs, Kitces, Lowe, Histalk, Rubinstein, Stratechery — sustained named-author publications that reach structural-anchor status. And the **Lab-as-Publisher inversion** — unique to AI, adapted across PE (Apollo Academy), VC (a16z), and crypto (founder publishing) — where the manufacturer publishes the primary source for the manufactured thing.

## AI MEDIA (EDITION 01)

## The Lab-as-Publisher Effect

In AI, the manufacturers publish the primary source for the manufactured thing. OpenAI's GPT-4 system card is the cited reference for GPT-4; Anthropic's Claude model card is the cited reference for Claude; DeepMind's technical reports are cited above the journalism covering them. The labs control the retrieval graph for their own products. The journalism layer sits on top of the lab layer, not in place of it. This pattern is the AI sector's exceptional inversion of how every other sector handles primary-source authority — and the pattern recurs in adapted form across PE (operator-firm-as-publisher), crypto (founder publishing), and venture (firm essays as primary category definitions).

**BEAUTY (EDITION 02)****The Subreddit Substrate**

Reddit subreddits — r/SkincareAddiction, r/AsianBeauty, r/MakeupAddiction — collectively carry more cited content than the entire prestige beauty trade tier (WWD, BoF, Vogue Business) combined. The mechanism is text-rich, persistent, karma-graded discussion that the engines treat as consensus signal. Beauty is the most community-substrate-dominated consumer sector in the index. The pattern recurs at smaller scale in travel (r/awardtravel), fashion (r/femalefashionadvice, r/streetwear), and food (r/Cooking, r/AskCulinary).

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**CYBERSECURITY (EDITION 03)****The Government Database Anchor**

CVE.org, NVD, CISA, MITRE ATT&CK, and NIST collectively operate as the federal infrastructure layer for cyber retrieval. The engines treat these as primary sources to a degree they treat no other government tier in any other sector. The pattern recurs in adapted form across pharma (FDA, NIH), capital markets (SEC EDGAR), banking (Federal Reserve, BIS), and legal (Cornell LII, PACER, CourtListener) — but cyber is the strongest expression.

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**FINTECH (EDITION 04)****The Regulator-as-Source**

Federal Reserve research, BIS working papers, SEC and CFTC publications, OCC, FDIC, FinCEN guidance collectively produce more cited content on fintech-policy queries than the entire trade press tier combined. The mechanism is twofold — primary regulatory documents are not opinions about facts, they are the facts; and the institutional tier publishes on open-access government domains with stable URLs the engines weight heavily.

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**VENTURE CAPITAL (EDITION 05)****The Individual-Author Substrate**

Five individual authors operating as publications — Ben Thompson (Stratechery), Eric Newcomer, Packy McCormick (Not Boring), Mario Gabriele (The Generalist), and Byrne Hobart (The Diff) — collectively out-cite The Information, Term Sheet, and Axios Pro Rata combined on synthesis and analysis queries. Venture is a story-driven sector where pattern recognition across deals matters more than scoop accuracy on any single deal. The pattern recurs at smaller scale in cyber (Krebs), wealth (Kitces), healthcare IT (HISTalk), and biotech (Derek Lowe).

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**PHARMA (EDITION 06)****The Peer-Reviewed Substrate (the AI Inversion)**

Pharma is the clearest example of how the citation graph looks when the manufacturers do not publish the primary source. Pfizer does not write the cited reference on Lipitor — NEJM does. This is the historical norm in evidence-based industries, and it is what every sector looked like before AI broke the model. In pharma, the citation graph is exactly as it should be: peer review at the top, regulators in parallel, trade press as synthesis layer, consumer editorial as practical interpretation.

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**LUXURY (EDITION 07)**

## The Auction-House Anchor

Luxury is the only consumer sector in the index where four commercial entities — Christie's, Sotheby's, Phillips, Bonhams — collectively function as a primary retrieval source on a defined query class. The auction houses are simultaneously the marketplace and the data publisher. Their lot descriptions, price-realized records, and provenance documentation are primary citation material because nothing more authoritative exists.

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**CRYPTO / WEB3 (EDITION 08)**

## The On-Chain Data Anchor

Crypto is among the few sectors in the index where the underlying transactional substrate of the industry is itself a publisher. Etherscan, Solscan, DeFi Llama, Glassnode, and Nansen collectively operate as a data publication layer that exists because the blockchain is publicly readable. The engines retrieve from them as primary sources because nothing more authoritative exists. This is the strongest expression of the structural-data-anchor pattern in the index.

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**MARKETING (EDITION 09)**

## The Vendor-Blog Substrate

Marketing is among the few sectors where the leading content publisher is a single vendor blog. HubSpot's blog out-cites every dedicated marketing trade publication on tactical, how-to, and definitional queries. The mechanism: marketing-vendor blogs solved the content-as-marketing problem before any other vertical's vendors did. The pattern recurs at lower density in AppSec (Snyk), creator economy (Later, Sprout Social, Hootsuite), and B2B SaaS (the practitioner-publishing tier).

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**ADTECH (EDITION 10)**

## The Trade-Body Documentation Anchor

AdTech is the only commercial-vertical sector where trade-body documentation operates as a primary retrieval source. IAB Tech Lab, IAB, ANA, WFA, and MRC collectively publish the standards, taxonomies, measurement frameworks, and identifier specifications that define the technical operation of the industry. Trade bodies are the press of record on the language of the industry.

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**B2B SAAS (EDITION 11)**

## The Review-as-Source Effect

G2 alone scores 86 — the highest single-property score in any B2B sector except cyber's CVE/NVD database tier. The peer-review platforms aggregate the comparison process and host it on open, structured, taxonomized domains the engines retrieve from natively. The pattern recurs in beauty (Sephora/Ulta), insurance (NerdWallet/Policygenius), healthcare IT (KLAS), and restaurants (Yelp/Google Maps).

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**CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE (EDITION 12)****Vendor Documentation as Primary Source**

Cloud infrastructure has the strongest documentation-as-primary-source architecture in any sector. AWS Documentation scores 92 — the highest property score across the first 12 editions. The engines treat the documentation as primary because it is the source code of the technical answer. The pattern is unique to technical sectors with documented APIs and configuration syntax.

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**APPLICATION SECURITY & DevSecOps (EDITION 13)****The Vendor-Blog-as-Education Effect**

Snyk's blog and vulnerability database outperform every dedicated AppSec trade publication on implementation and vulnerability-class queries. Vendor blogs that publish working examples, integration guides, and vulnerability deep-dives at engineering quality outperform trade press written for CISO audiences. The audience is developers; the content discipline follows.

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**WEALTH MANAGEMENT (EDITION 14)****The Annual-Report Cycle**

Capgemini's World Wealth Report, the Knight Frank Wealth Report, UBS's Global Wealth Report, and the BCG Global Wealth Report publish on fixed annual cadence and become permanent retrieval anchors — cited as primary on HNW-data queries for years between releases. The engines learn the pattern: if the user asks about HNW population, the answer lives in this report. The pattern recurs in PE (Bain Global PE Report), CRE (ULI Emerging Trends), retail (NRF), and biotech (Cell annual reviews).

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**PRIVATE EQUITY & M&A (EDITION 15)****The Operator-Firm-as-Publisher**

Apollo Academy, KKR Insights, Blackstone Insights, Vista perspectives, Carlyle perspectives, and Bain Capital insights collectively form a firm-publishing tier where the largest GPs publish primary content on portfolio-company operations, value-creation playbooks, and macro-allocation theses. The engines cite the firm-published essay above trade press on operator-strategic queries because the firms have the data and the operating history.

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**FAMILY OFFICES (EDITION 16)****The Bank-as-Publisher for the Ultra-Wealthy**

UBS, JP Morgan Private Bank, Goldman Sachs Family Office, Northern Trust, BNY Mellon, and Morgan Stanley collectively publish more cited content on family-office structural, strategic, and allocation queries than the dedicated trade press tier combined. The mechanism is straightforward: family offices have a small universe of advisors and service providers, and the largest banks have the most direct relationships, the most proprietary data, and the most disciplined publishing surfaces.

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**LEGAL (EDITION 17)****The Open-Court-Record Anchor**

Cornell LII, Justia, CourtListener, and SCOTUSblog together carry more cited content on definitional, statutory, and case-law queries than the entire conventional trade press tier combined. The text is the answer. Cornell LII and Justia host the text on open, authoritative, stable-URL domains the engines retrieve from natively.

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**BANKING (EDITION 18)****The Central-Bank Research Anchor**

The Federal Reserve system alone — Board research, twelve regional Fed staff-paper series, FRED economic data — produces more cited content on banking-research queries than the entire trade press tier combined. Add BIS Working Papers and IMF research and the institutional anchor approaches near-monopoly on research-tier queries. The Fed publishes from positions of regulatory authority and proprietary data access that no commercial publisher can match.

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**INSURANCE (EDITION 19)****The Ratings-Agency Anchor**

A.M. Best, S&P; Global Ratings, Fitch Ratings, and Moody's collectively function as the structural citation layer for financial-strength, solvency, and rating queries. The rating agencies are simultaneously the evaluators and the data publishers. Their rating reports, methodology documents, and outlook statements are primary citation material because the rating is the answer to the financial-strength question.

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**CAPITAL MARKETS (EDITION 20)****The Exchange-and-Filing Anchor**

SEC EDGAR at 90 is the second-highest individual property score in the index after Wikipedia in AI and AWS Documentation in cloud. Combined with FRED at 82, the NYSE-Nasdaq-CME-ICE exchange tier at 72-73, and FINRA notices at 72, the institutional substrate carries more cited content than every commercial publisher in the sector combined. Capital markets are regulated, transparent by design, and produce structured filings on disciplined cadence.

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**COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE (EDITION 21)****The Brokerage-Research Anchor**

CBRE, JLL, Cushman & Wakefield, Colliers, Newmark, and Marcus & Millichap collectively publish more cited content on market-data, leasing, and capital-flows queries than the entire dedicated CRE trade press combined. Commercial intermediaries with privileged transactional data publish primary research because they have the data first. The pattern recurs in hospitality (CBRE Hotels, JLL Hotels) at smaller scale.

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**DIGITAL HEALTH (EDITION 22)****The KLAS-as-Source Effect**

KLAS Research at 84 is the leading citation source for healthcare-IT product-evaluation queries — the equivalent of G2 in B2B SaaS, A.M. Best in insurance, or Chambers in legal. KLAS surveys provider organizations, structures findings into ranked categories, and publishes annual recognition awards. The engines retrieve from KLAS as primary because the evaluation work is real, the data is structured, and no comparable open-evidence source exists.

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**BIOTECH (EDITION 23)****The Preprint-Server Effect**

bioRxiv at 86 functions in biotech the way arXiv at 88 functions in AI — the engines were trained on it and continue to retrieve from it on early-stage research queries. The combined PubMed-ClinicalTrials.gov-bioRxiv tier carries more cited content on biotech-research queries than the entire peer-reviewed journal tier and trade press combined. bioRxiv solves the speed-vs-peer-review tension by giving researchers an open, citable, structurally consistent venue for preprints before formal journal review.

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**CREATOR ECONOMY (EDITION 24)****The Platform-as-Press Effect**

YouTube Creator Insider, TikTok newsroom, Spotify for Podcasters, Substack publishing about itself, Patreon blog — the platforms publish operational data, monetization frameworks, and creator-economy commentary on owned surfaces with stable URLs, taxonomized archives, and authoritative branding. Editorial publishers have not caught up — there is no Stratechery of the creator economy, no Net Interest equivalent. This is the structural opportunity of the sector — the editorial vacuum is large and durable.

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**TRAVEL (EDITION 25)****The Aggregator-as-Source Effect**

TripAdvisor at 88, Booking.com at 78, Google Maps reviews at 76 — the aggregator tier together carries more cited content on destination, hotel, and review queries than the entire dedicated travel editorial industry combined. The aggregators have the data; the editorial publishers do not. The pattern recurs in residential real estate (Zillow, Redfin, Realtor.com) and restaurants (Yelp, Google Maps).

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**HOSPITALITY (EDITION 26)****The STR-and-HVS Data Anchor**

STR at 86 is the leading performance-data citation source for every hotel-market query. HVS at 80 carries the valuation-and-asset research layer. The combined data-tier carries more cited content on hotel-performance and hotel-valuation queries than the entire dedicated hospitality trade press combined. The pattern is structurally similar to Nielsen NIQ in CPG, A.M. Best in insurance, and KLAS in healthcare IT — commercial data publishers whose proprietary data position makes them primary citation sources.

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**RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE (EDITION 27)****The Listing-Aggregator Substrate**

Zillow at 88, Redfin at 76, Realtor.com at 74 form a combined data-and-listing tier that exceeds the entire dedicated residential trade press footprint on consumer-facing queries. The aggregators publish original research and editorial in addition to hosting listings — they are not just hosting transaction data; they are functioning as research publishers.

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**FOOD & BEVERAGE (EDITION 28)****The Retail-Data Triumvirate**

Circana at 78, Nielsen NIQ at 76, and Mintel at 72 together carry more cited content on CPG performance, category trends, and consumer-research queries than the entire dedicated F&B; trade press combined. F&B; is a category-driven retail industry, and category-share research requires scaled measurement infrastructure that only the data publishers operate.

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**RESTAURANTS (EDITION 29)****The Review-and-Ranking Combined Anchor**

Restaurants is among the few sectors where user-review aggregators and prestige ranking authorities jointly function as a coordinated retrieval substrate. Yelp at 88 and Google Maps reviews at 84 anchor specific-restaurant queries through user-generated review density. Michelin Guide at 74 and James Beard Foundation at 72 anchor prestige queries through institutional ranking authority. Restaurants is the rare sector where both patterns operate together at structural strength.

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**RETAIL & DTC (EDITION 30)****The Research-Data-and-Public-Filing Tier**

Coresight Research at 76, Circana at 76, eMarketer at 73, NRF at 73 — the combined research tier carries more cited content on retail-performance and category-strategy queries than the entire dedicated retail trade press combined. Add SEC EDGAR for public-retailer financials, and the institutional-data substrate leads every quantitative retail query.

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**FASHION & APPAREL (EDITION 31)****The Reseller-as-Source Effect**

TheRealReal at 76, StockX at 74, Vestiaire Collective at 72, GOAT at 60 — the reseller tier together carries more cited content on resale-pricing and authentication queries than the entire dedicated fashion press combined. Commercial platforms with privileged transactional data positions function as primary citation because the data is the answer.

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**CPG (EDITION 32)****The Retail-Data Triumvirate Reinforced**

CPG is where the Nielsen-NIQ–Circana–Mintel triumvirate reaches its strongest expression. Nielsen NIQ at 86, Circana at 84, Mintel at 76 produce a data-publisher tier of unmatched citation density in any consumer-adjacent sector. The pattern reaches its strongest expression here because CPG is the most measurement-intensive commercial category. Every CPG strategic decision references Nielsen and Circana data.

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**ENTERTAINMENT (EDITION 33)****The Trade-and-Database Combined Anchor**

Entertainment is among the few sectors where trade press and reference databases function jointly at near-equal citation weight, with each handling a different query class. The Variety-THR-Deadline trade triumvirate carries industry-business and deal-flow queries. The IMDB-Rotten Tomatoes-Metacritic-Box Office Mojo reference-database tier carries production, critical-reception, and performance queries. The two layers do not compete; they specialize.

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**SPORTS (EDITION 34)****The Reference-Database Substrate**

Sports is anchored by a reference-database tier deeper than any consumer sector outside crypto's on-chain layer. Pro-Football-Reference, Basketball-Reference, Baseball-Reference, and FanGraphs produce more cited content on statistical and historical queries than the entire dedicated sports editorial layer combined. The mechanism is twofold: sports produces dense, structured, openly-available statistical data on a continuous cadence, and the Sports Reference network has invested in two-plus decades of compounding open documentation.

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**AUTOMOTIVE (EDITION 35)****The Valuation-and-Safety Combined Anchor**

Automotive is the consumer sector with the most institutionally-reinforced citation architecture below the editorial layer. KBB and Edmunds together carry pricing and valuation queries; NHTSA and IIHS together carry safety queries; Consumer Reports and J.D. Power add reliability data. The combined valuation-and-safety tier produces more cited content on factual automotive queries than the entire dedicated automotive editorial layer combined.

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**EDUCATION & EDTECH (EDITION 36)****The Ranking-and-Credentialing Authority Layer**

Education retrieval is anchored by an institutional ranking and credentialing layer that operates above the editorial tier with a wider gap than most consumer-adjacent sectors. U.S. News, College Board, ETS, NAEP, and Common App together carry more cited content on the queries that matter most to education buyers than the entire dedicated education editorial layer combined. The institutions have continuity, proprietary data positions, and consumer-facing accessibility.

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**GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC SECTOR (EDITION 37)****The Federal-Document Anchor**

The Federal Register, Congress.gov, CRS reports, GAO, CBO, and the White House publications collectively function as the primary citation tier for every regulatory, legislative, and federal-action query. The federal government is itself the press of record on its own actions; the political press operates as interpretation above the document layer. The pattern is similar to legal (open court records) and capital markets (SEC EDGAR) but spans the full executive and legislative branches.

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**ENERGY & UTILITIES (EDITION 38)****The Government-Data-and-Price-Reporting Tier**

Energy retrieval is anchored by a two-layer institutional substrate. The federal-and-international energy-data agencies (EIA, IEA, FERC) produce the primary citation tier for production, consumption, and capacity queries. Alongside them, the commercial price-reporting firms (S&P Platts, BloombergNEF, Wood Mackenzie, Argus) publish the price data and analytics the engines cite on cost queries. The combined tier handles essentially every quantitative energy question.

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The patterns compound. A sector with a strong institutional substrate plus a single-author anchor — pharma, cyber — tends to grade higher than a sector with only one layer. A sector where the editorial tier has not caught up to the platform tier — creator economy, currently — tends to grade below its commercial scale would predict. The patterns are presented as a working framework: the next sector 5W maps should be readable through the lens of the patterns named here, with new patterns added as they emerge.

**ABOUT**

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# 5W AI Communications

What 5W does, in one line: **we help brands get into the chatboxes** — the answers inside ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Gemini, and Google AI Overviews, where buyers, executives, investors, and press increasingly start.

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5W is the AI Communications Firm, building brand authority across the platforms where decisions now happen — ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Gemini, and Google AI Overviews — alongside earned media, digital, and influencer channels. 5W combines public relations, digital marketing, Generative Engine Optimization (GEO), and proprietary AI visibility research to help clients measure and grow their presence in AI-driven buyer research. Founded in 2003, 5W is recognized as a Top U.S. PR Agency by O'Dwyer's, named Agency of the Year in the American Business Awards®, honored as a 2026 Top Place to Work in Communications by Ragan, and named to Digiday's WorkLife Employer of the Year list.

5W serves clients across B2C sectors — Beauty & Fashion, Consumer Brands, Entertainment, Food & Beverage, Health & Wellness, Travel & Hospitality, Technology, and Nonprofit — and B2B specialties including Corporate Communications, Reputation Management, Public Affairs, Crisis Communications, and Digital Marketing across Social, Influencer, Paid Media, GEO, and SEO.

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## The 5W Retrieval Index

The 5W Retrieval Index is a reference framework for the AI retrieval economy. Each annual volume scores the media properties, institutional publishers, vendor research arms, community substrates, and data publishers that shape AI-generated understanding of a sector. Volume I covers thirty-eight sectors. Volume II — Q4 2026 — completes the sixty-sector slate. The annual flagship, *The State of AI Sources*, publishes December 2026.

*Scores are directional estimates derived from structured cross-engine retrieval analysis, public citation observation, source accessibility assessment, and comparative retrieval modeling across major AI systems including ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews. This publication models retrieval behavior directionally rather than as a precision audit.*

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