



Generative **Pulse**
BY MUCK RACK

What Is AI Reading?



Executive Summary

- **Citations affect responses:** Simply enabling or disabling the ability for AI to search the web drastically modifies responses, indicating that the systems are truly basing their responses on the cited works.
- **Journalism and earned media are important drivers:** More than 95% of links cited by AI are non-paid coverage. Of those, over 27% of links are journalistic content.
- **Recency wins:** Particularly in OpenAI models, fresh content, especially on topical, opinion-based, or event-driven queries, is prioritized.
- **Query framing changes sources:** Advice-seeking or opinion-based prompts trigger more dynamic citations, while encyclopedic queries tend to fall back on older, static training data.
- **Outlet authority matters:** High-domain authority outlets such as Reuters, Axios and Financial Times are frequently cited, but not consistently. Sources vary by industry too with only about 15% of sources appearing in the top 10 across multiple industries.

Methodology

We analyzed 1,000,000+ links from AI responses

This study explores how modern generative AI systems cite sources in response to realistic user prompts. Our objective was to quantify and characterize the nature of AI-generated citations across different use cases and vendor models. This includes their frequency, source types, and the prominence of earned and owned media. To accomplish this, we constructed a large, diverse prompt set and executed it across several web-enabled language models, followed by systematic analysis of the responses and the cited links. The prompts span a variety of industries and subject matter. Sometimes they specifically mention companies by name, sometimes they do not.

The following specific models were used to execute the queries, during the month of July 2025: Chat GPT (both '4o' and '4o-mini'), Gemini ('flash' and 'pro') and Claude ('sonnet' and 'haiku')

Generative AI systems are rapidly evolving and inherently opaque. The behaviors observed in this study may shift as models are updated or retrained.

We assigned cited links into categories as follows:

- **Journalistic:** News sites, and other journalistic coverage
- **Corporate Blogs and Content:** Third party corporate blogs and content not owned by a company/product targeted in the query
- **Owned Media:** Corporate Content created by a company/product targeted in the query
- **Press Release:** Press release published on any site
- **Academic/Research:** Scientific journals, arXiv, patents, research papers
- **Government/NGO:** .gov sites, public agencies, non-profit organizations
- **Paid/Advertorial:** Sponsored content, pages with marketing intent or sales landing pages
- **Social/UGC:** Social platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, Reddit) and other sources of user-generated content
- **Aggregators/Encyclopedic:** Sites like Wikipedia, Visual Capitalist and Britannica.com

**Do citations influence
AI output?**

Citations fundamentally alter AI responses

Enabling citations doesn't just add sources, it changes the response itself.

This demonstrates that citations meaningfully shape what AI says.

Prompt

What's an example of the worst MLB baseball team you can think of

Disabling Citations



"The **1962 New York Mets currently hold the record for the worst single-season record in MLB history**. They finished their debut season with a record of 40 wins and 120 losses."

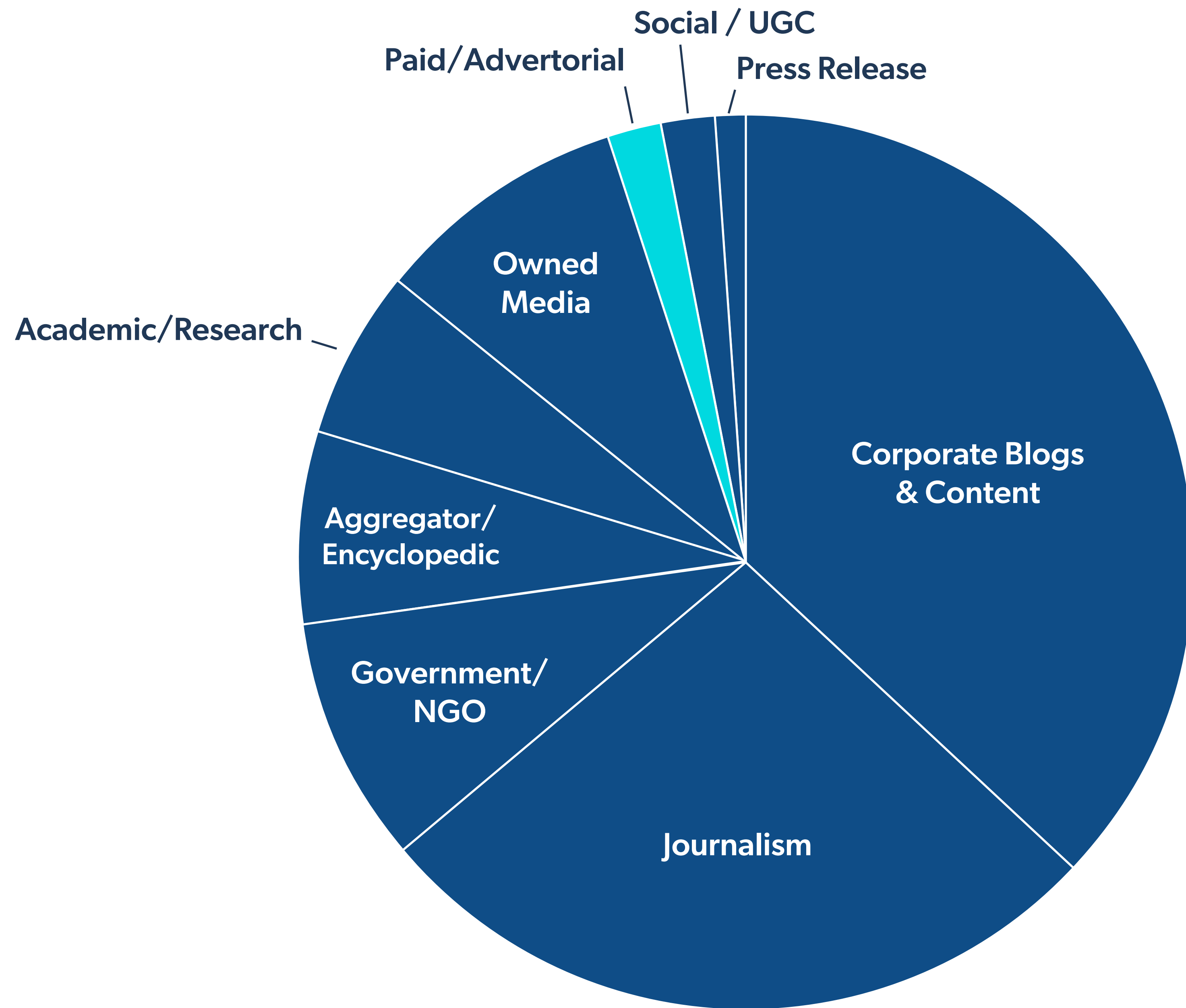
Enabling Citations



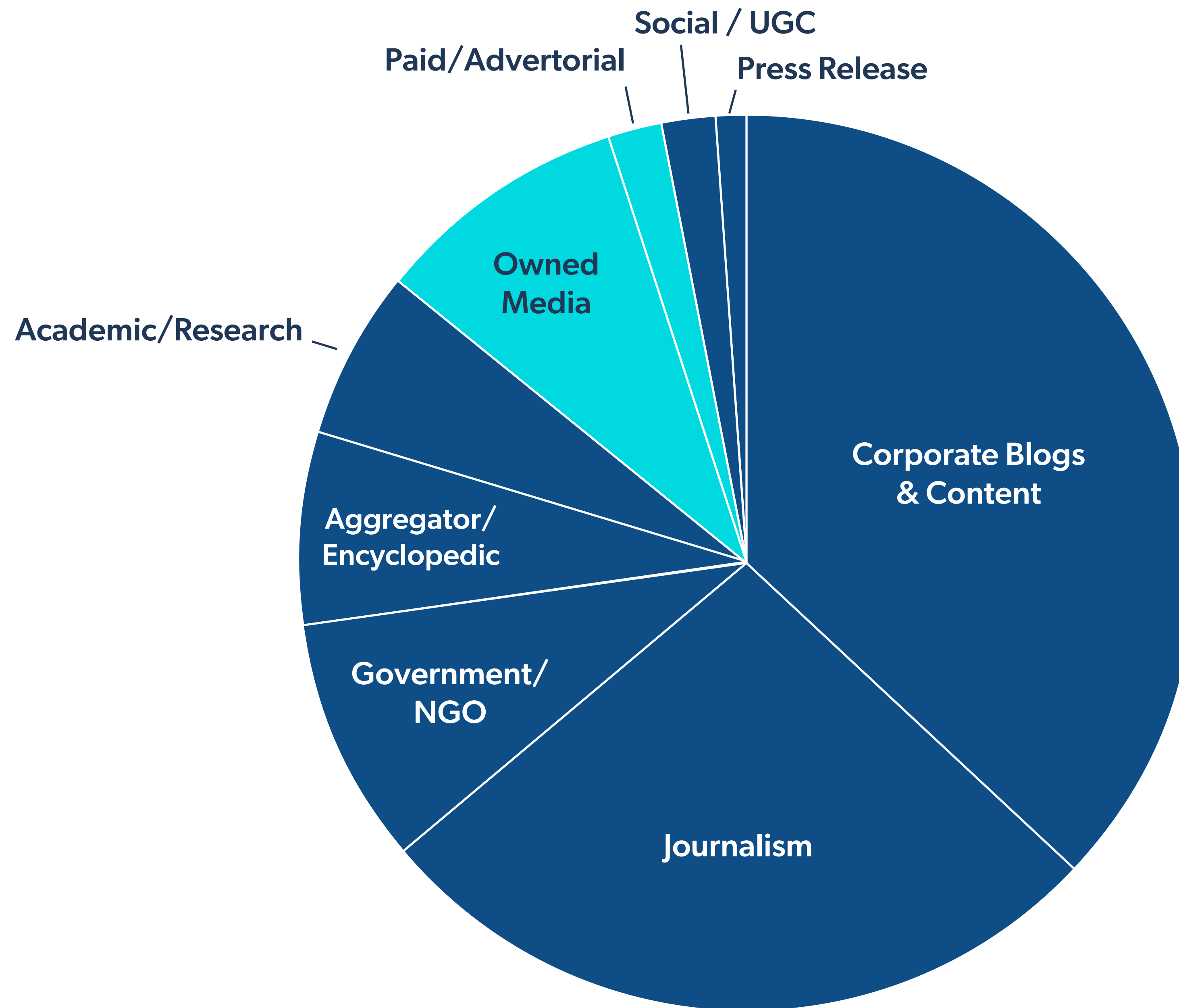
"**2024 Chicago White Sox**: In the modern era, the 2024 White Sox set a new record for futility by finishing the season with a 41–121 record (.253 winning percentage), surpassing the previous modern-era record of 120 losses held by the 1962 New York Mets. **cbssports.com**"

**Which types of media
does AI cite?**

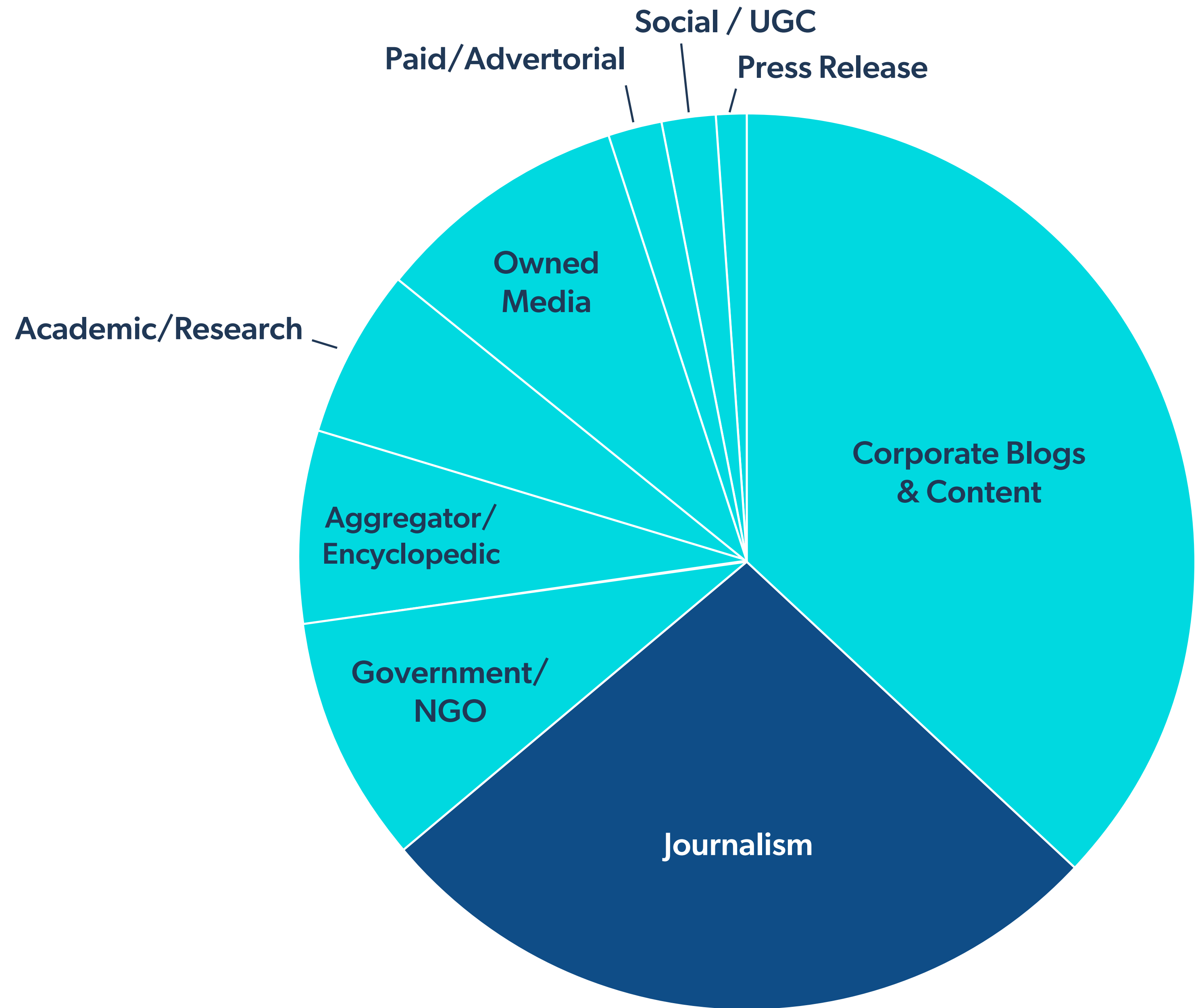
**More than 95%
of links cited
by AI are from
non-paid media**



**More than
89% of links
cited by AI are
earned media**



**27% of links
cited by AI
are journalistic**

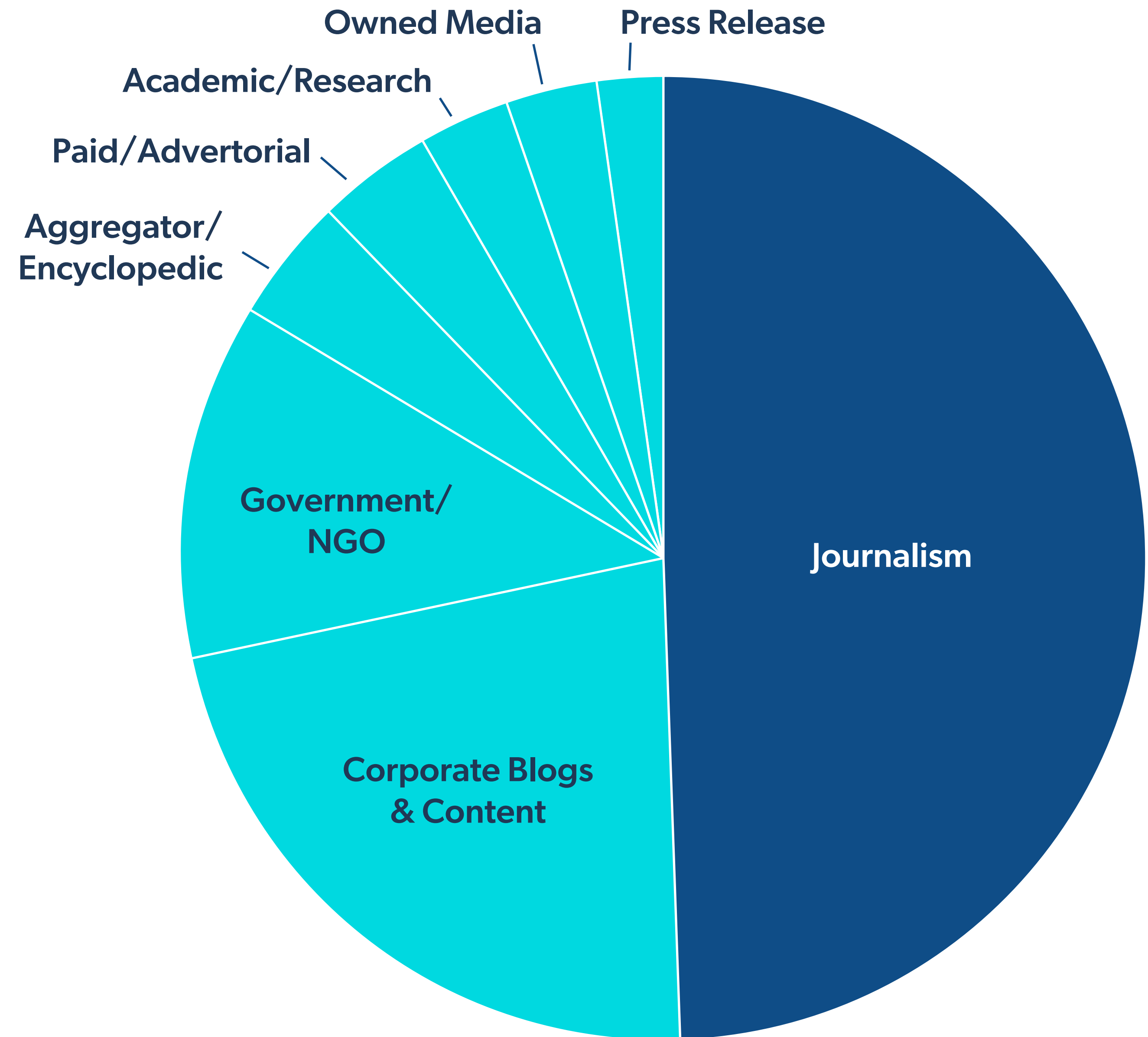


If we narrow our focus specifically to queries implying a level of recency...

For example

- What are the recent technological advancements in the sound recording industry?
- car rental shortages in the United States
- latest advancements in outpatient treatment methods for substance abuse

...49% of links cited by AI are journalism

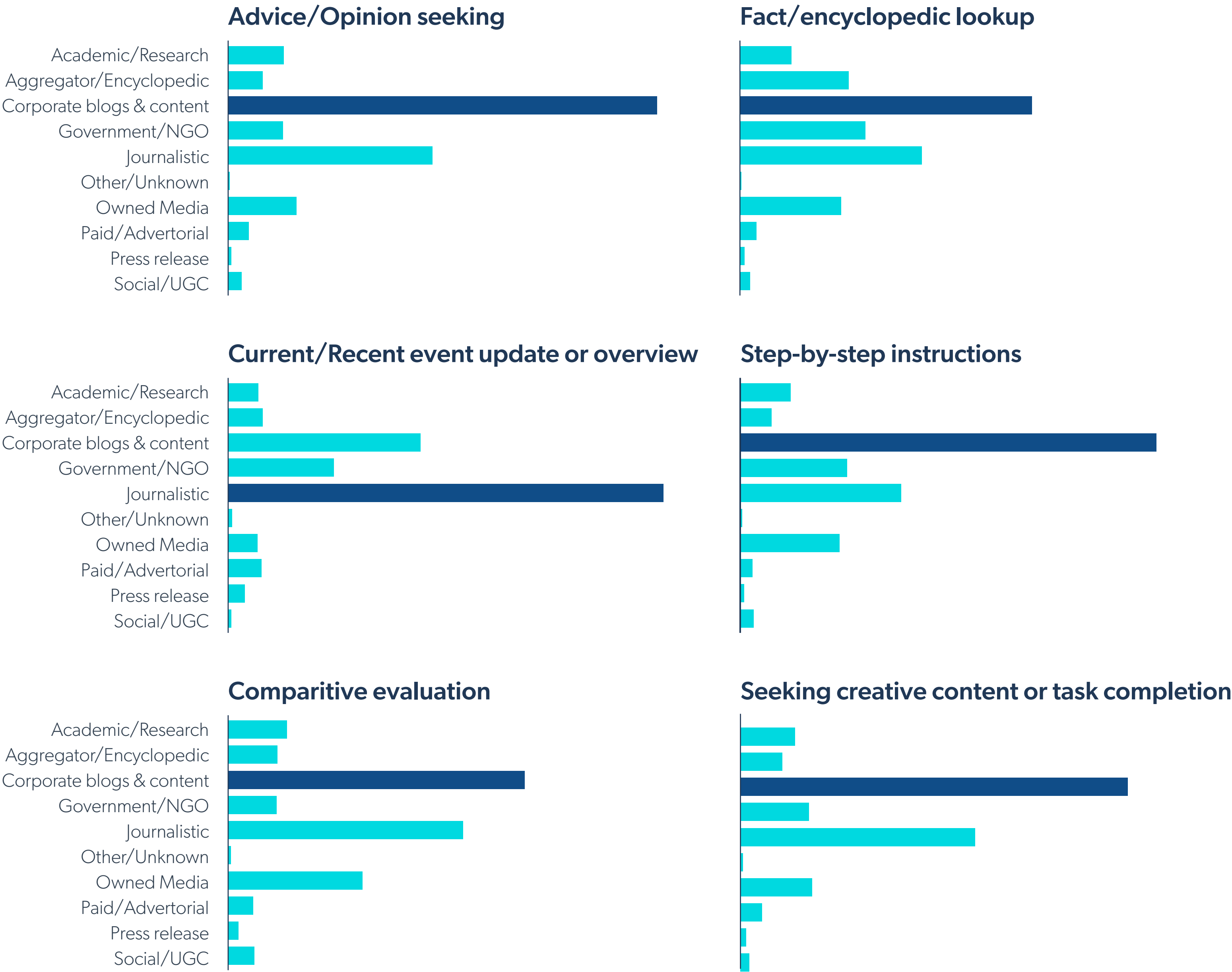


Different query types alter citation sources

We examined 6 specific types of question formations, or query types, to understand how citations change based on how the question is asked.

We found that objective query types (e.g. recent updates or fact lookups) tend to cite journalistic media most often, while subjective queries cite other sources.

When analyzing these breakdowns by model, it's also interesting to note that Claude cites journalism significantly less often than the other models. For example, Claude cites Reuters 20x less frequently than Gemini does, and 50x less frequently than ChatGPT does.



**What determines if
content gets cited?**

Outlet authority has a strong effect on whether a story gets cited

AI systems tend to cite well known and generally trusted sources.

Several sources appear across two providers, including Reuters, Associated Press and Financial Times.

Top media outlets cited

Claude

cnbc.com	hbr.org	goodhousekeeping.com
npr.org	finance.yahoo.com	techradar.com

Gemini

reuters.com	ft.com	axios.com
time.com	investopedia.com	forbes.com

ChatGPT

reuters.com	apnews.com	ft.com
axios.com	time.com	forbes.com

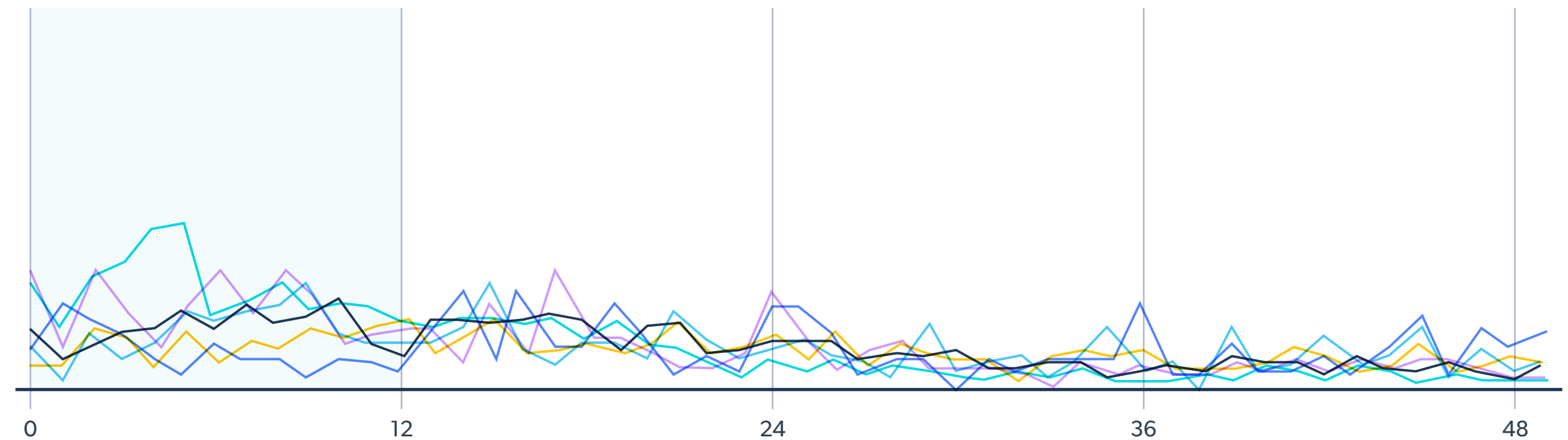
AI systems prefer stories written in the last year

Among cited journalism content, there was a strong bias towards stories published in the last 12 months, particularly with Advice and Recent Update query types. But this wasn't uniform across models.

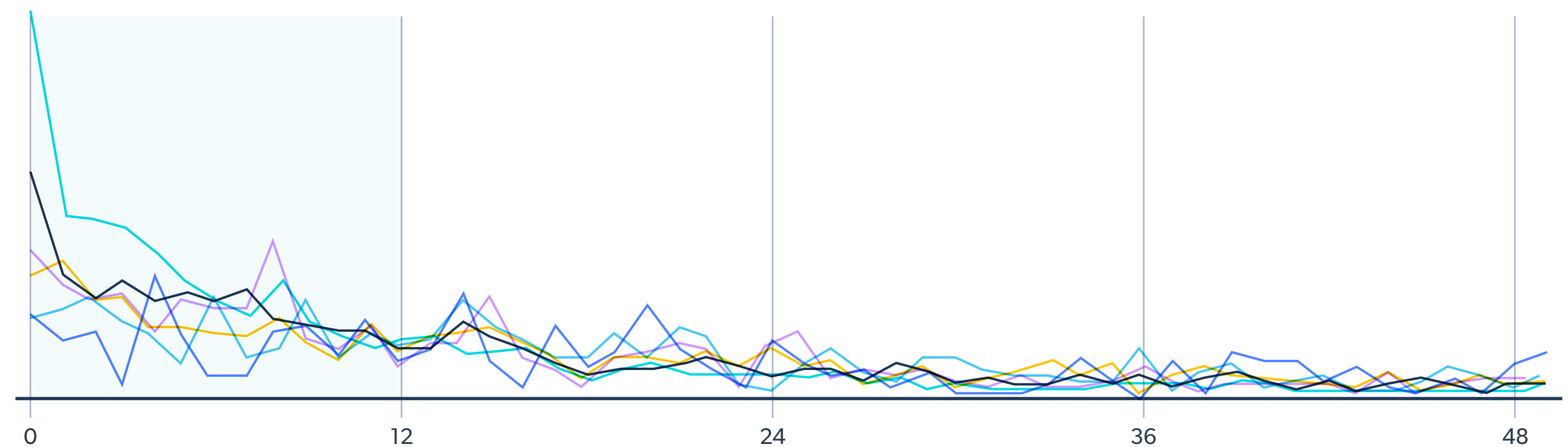
Overall, OpenAI models were more likely to cite recent coverage than Anthropic's models. 56% of journalism citations by OpenAI were published in the last 12 months, compared to only 36% for Anthropic.

- Advice/Opinion seeking
- Comparative evaluation
- Current/Recent event update or overview
- Fact/Encyclopedic lookup
- Seeking creative content or task completion
- Step-by-step instructions

Claude



ChatGPT

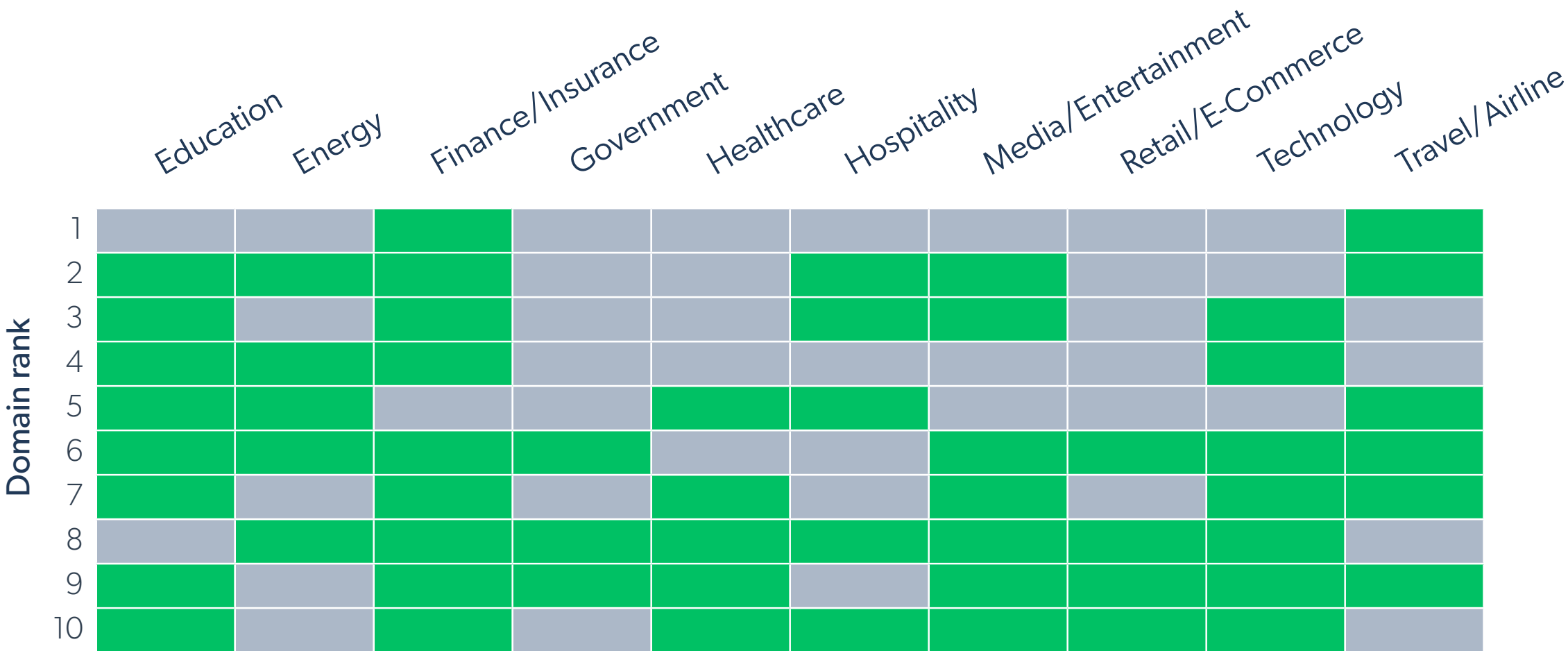


Months since publication

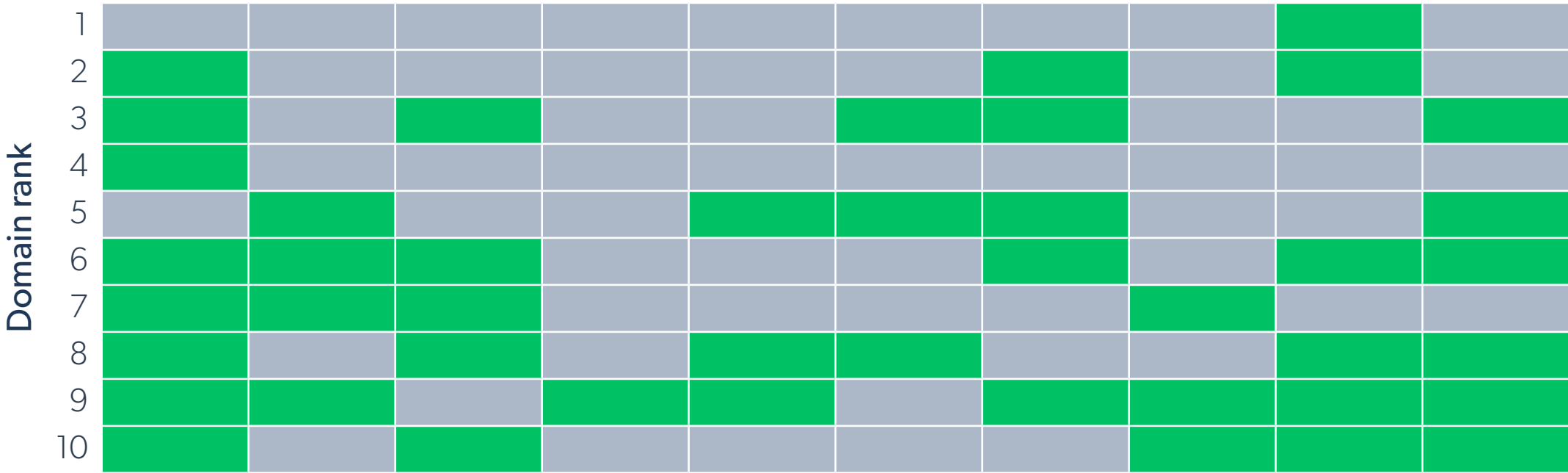
AI rewards niche-specific content

While overall, large news organizations like Reuters and Associated Press do “top the charts” of citation frequency, the AI systems tend to select niche-appropriate outlets frequently when queried about specific industries.

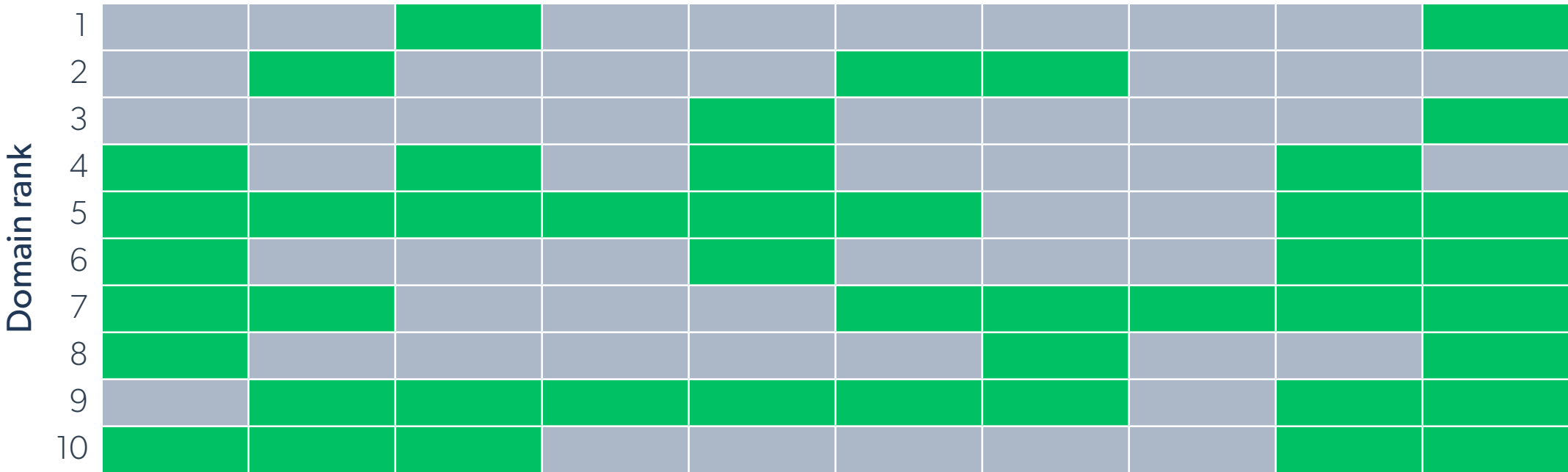
Claude



Gemini



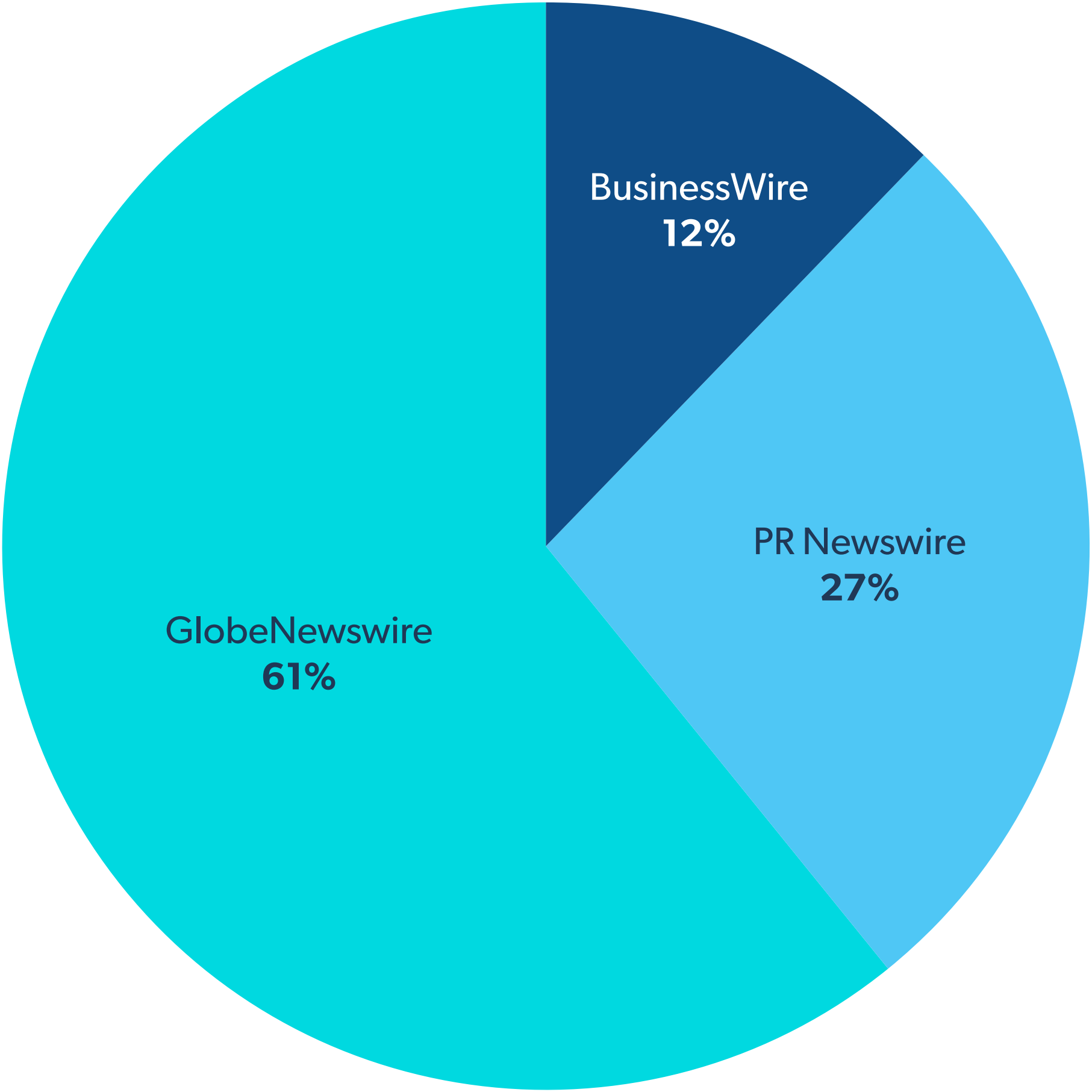
ChatGPT



● Sources in green represent domains that are in the “top 10” uniquely in one industry. ● Sources in gray represent outlets that are in the “top 10” cited across other industries.

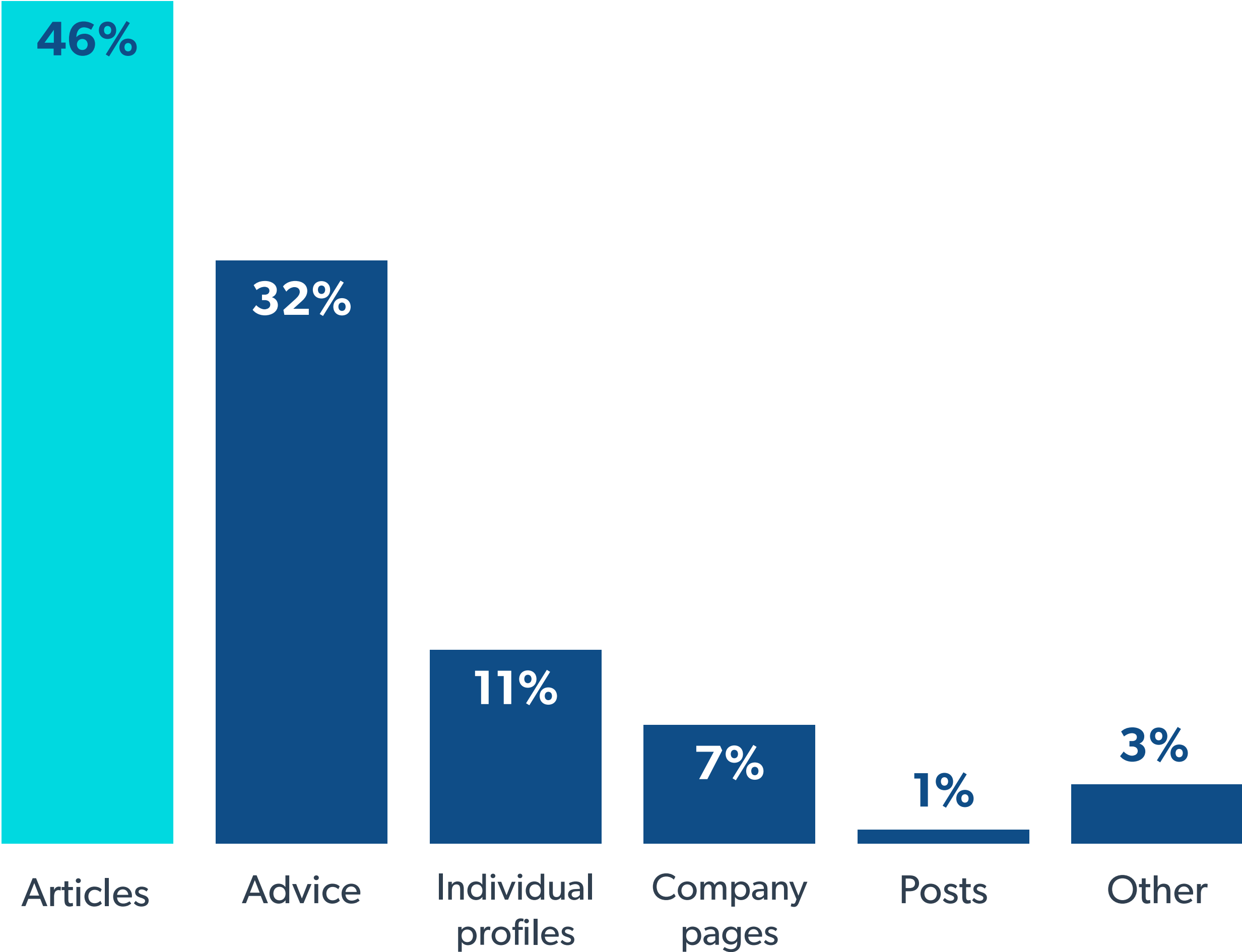
**Which press
release services
are most visible
in the LLMs?**

Share of Voice when press releases are cited



**When AI cites
LinkedIn, it vastly
prefers Articles
to posts and
company pages**

LinkedIn citation frequency by page type



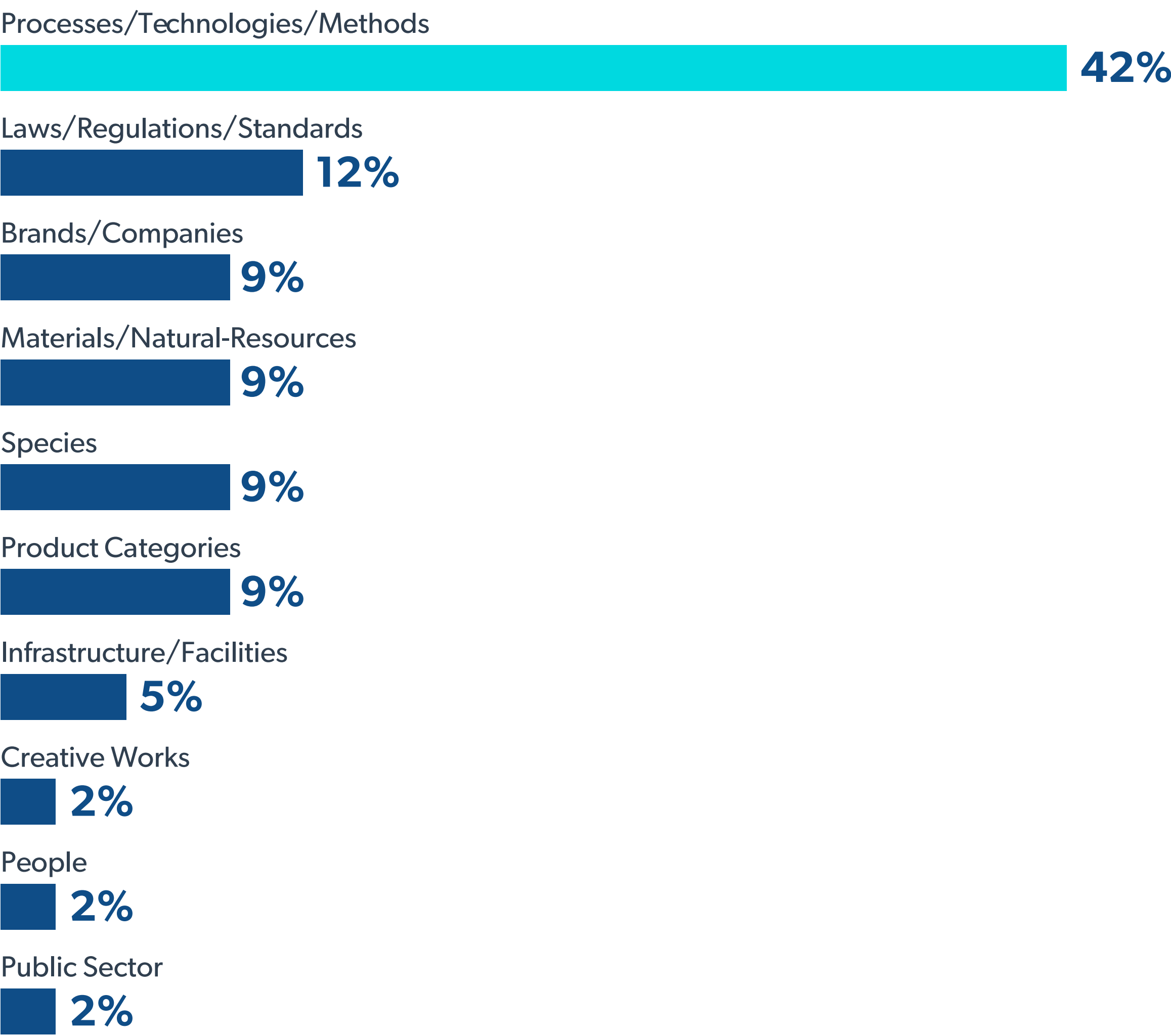
When Wikipedia is cited, it prefers pages for broad topics

Processes/technologies/methods pages include:

- Aeronautics
- Winemaking
- Fact-checking

Only 9% of citations linked to brand or company pages

Wikipedia citation frequency by topic category



Industry-specific trends

ENERGY

AI cites fewer owned sources

For the Energy industry, owned media is cited less than in other industries. 30% for energy compared to 43% overall.

Claude has the most unique mix in the top ten most cited domains with 50%, while OpenAI has the lowest at 30%.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

sciencedirect.com
energy.gov
en.wikipedia.org
iea.org
eia.gov

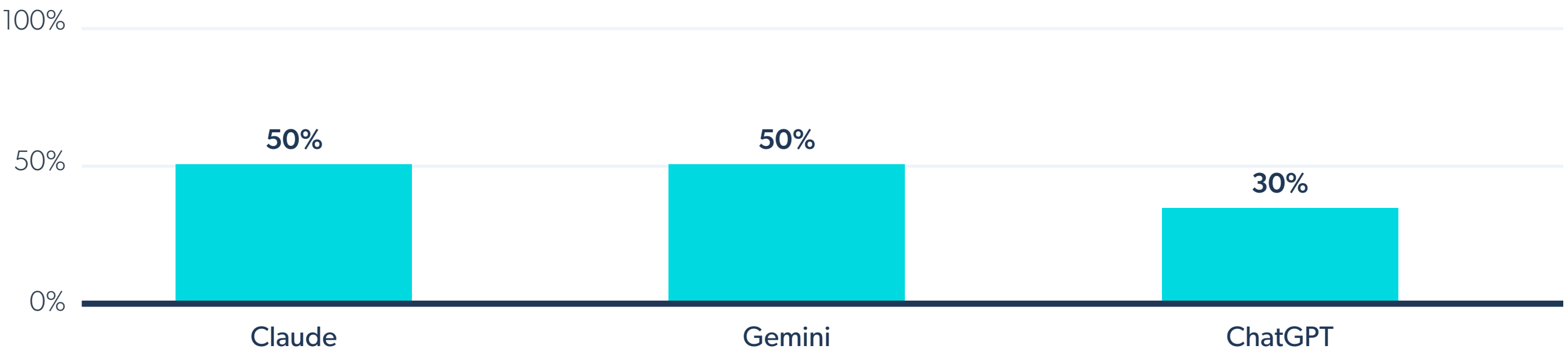
Gemini

en.wikipedia.org
energy.gov
sciencedirect.com
reuters.com
eia.gov

ChatGPT

en.wikipedia.org
reuters.com
apnews.com
ft.com
energy.gov

Top domains unique to Energy



Most cited journalists in Energy

- Catherine LaneChristy GoldfussCarlo CariagaKara HuntNeil Ford
- Alejandro de la GarzaJustin WorlandMartha MuirValerie Volcovici

FINANCE/INSURANCE

Journalism content appears more

For the Finance/Insurance industry, Journalism content is cited more than in other industries. 37% for finance/insurance compared to 28% overall.

ChatGPT has the lowest percentage of unique sources in its top 10 at 40% while Claude had the most with 90%.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

bankrate.com
nerdwallet.com
federalreserve.gov
fdic.gov
en.wikipedia.org

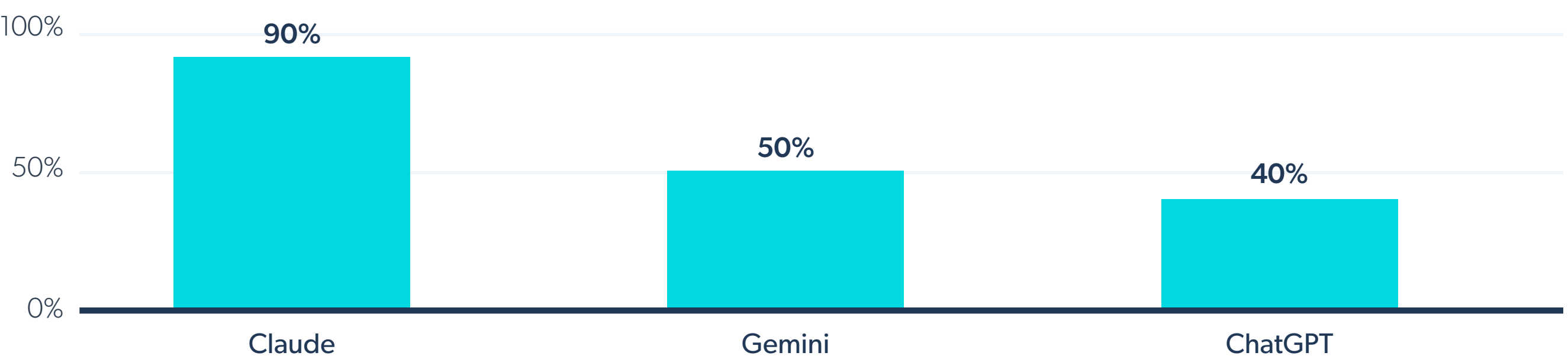
Gemini

investopedia.com
en.wikipedia.org
reuters.com
bankrate.com
nerdwallet.com

ChatGPT

reuters.com
en.wikipedia.org
investopedia.com
ft.com
apnews.com

Top domains unique to Finance/Insurance



Most cited journalists in Finance/Insurance

- [Erika Giovanetti](#)[Preston Caldwell](#)[Jeff Ostrowski](#)[Rachel Galvez](#)[Dan Avery](#)
- [Lee Harris](#)[Ian Smith](#)[Maya Goldman](#)[Vincent Birardi](#)[Stephen Gandel](#)

HEALTHCARE

Government and NGO sources are cited more often

For the Healthcare industry, Govt't/ NGO content is cited more than in other industries. 18% for healthcare compared to 8% overall.

Gemini is the most likely to cite unique sources in this industry, with 50% of its top 10 domains being unique. ChatGPT is the least likely, at 30%.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
cdc.gov
sciencedirect.com
pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

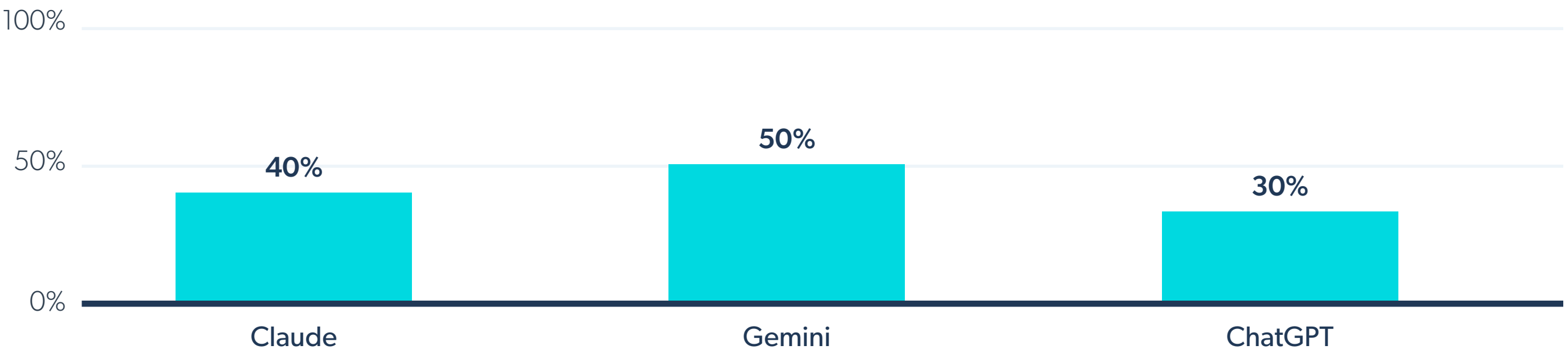
Gemini

pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
en.wikipedia.org
nih.gov
ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
cdc.gov

ChatGPT

en.wikipedia.org
pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
apnews.com
axios.com
pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

Top domains unique to Healthcare



Most cited journalists in Healthcare

- [Andy Lundin](#)[Heather Stringer](#)[Angela Ledford](#)[Kathy Katella](#)[Leonard L. Berry](#)
- [Maya Goldman](#)[Alice Park](#)[Tina Reed](#)[Amina Niasse](#)[Rebecca Schneid](#)

TRAVEL/AIRLINE

Academic citations are more likely to appear

For the Travel/Airline industry, Academic/Research content is cited less than in other industries. 0.7% for travel/airline compared to 4% overall.

While Claude has a near complete set of unique top citations, none of them are from journalistic sources. ChatGPT has the least unique with 50% of its top 10 unique.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

faa.gov
iata.org
en.wikipedia.org
sciencedirect.com
ecfr.gov

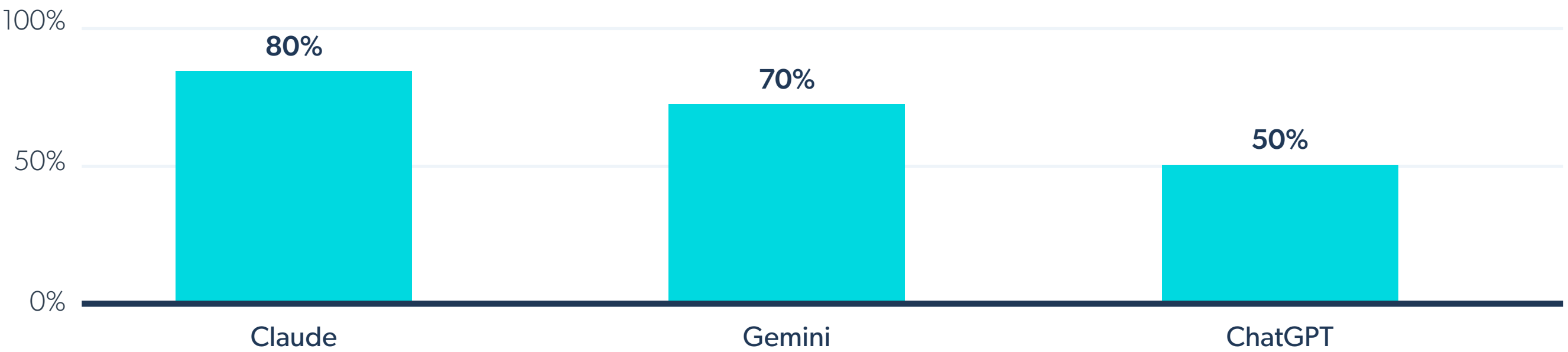
Gemini

reuters.com
en.wikipedia.org
faa.gov
apnews.com
freightamigo.com

ChatGPT

faa.gov
en.wikipedia.org
iata.org
reuters.com
freightamigo.com

Top domains unique to Travel/Airline



Most cited journalists in Travel/Airline

- [Amanda Norcross](#)[Stephen Au](#)[Sean Peek](#)
- [David Shepardson](#)[Philip Georgiadis](#)[Chris Taylor](#)

GOVERNMENT

Journalism sources are very prevalent

For the Government industry, journalism is cited more than in other industries. 36% for government compared to 28% overall.

All models relies on non-niche publications for their top 10 sources. The most-niche-reliant is Claude with only 30% of top 10 sources unique to the Government industry.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
en.wikipedia.org
sciencedirect.com
epa.gov
researchgate.net

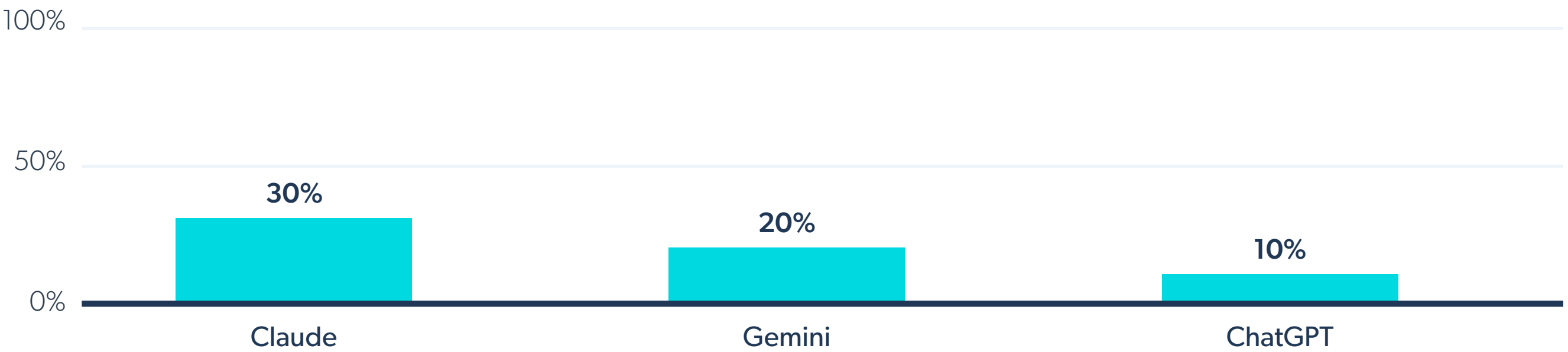
Gemini

en.wikipedia.org
apnews.com
pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
numberanalytics.com
epa.gov

ChatGPT

en.wikipedia.org
apnews.com
reuters.com
axios.com
time.com

Top domains unique to Government



Most cited journalists in Government

- [Steve Wright](#)[Tricia Thomas](#)[Sequoia Carrillo](#)[Nick Wilson](#)[Elizabeth Gearin](#)
- [Jeffrey Kluger](#)[Justin Worland](#)[Rebecca Schneid](#)[Rebecca Falconer](#)[Madeleine Carlisle](#)

RETAIL/E-COMMERCE

Aggregators/
encyclopedia sources
are less important

For the Retail/E-Commerce industry, aggregator/encyclopedic content is cited less than in other industries. 36% for retail/e-commerce compared to 28% overall.

Claude is the most likely to cite unique sources in this industry with 50% of the top 10 domains being unique. ChatGPT and Gemini each have only 10%.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

fda.gov
pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
en.wikipedia.org
quora.com
sciencedirect.com

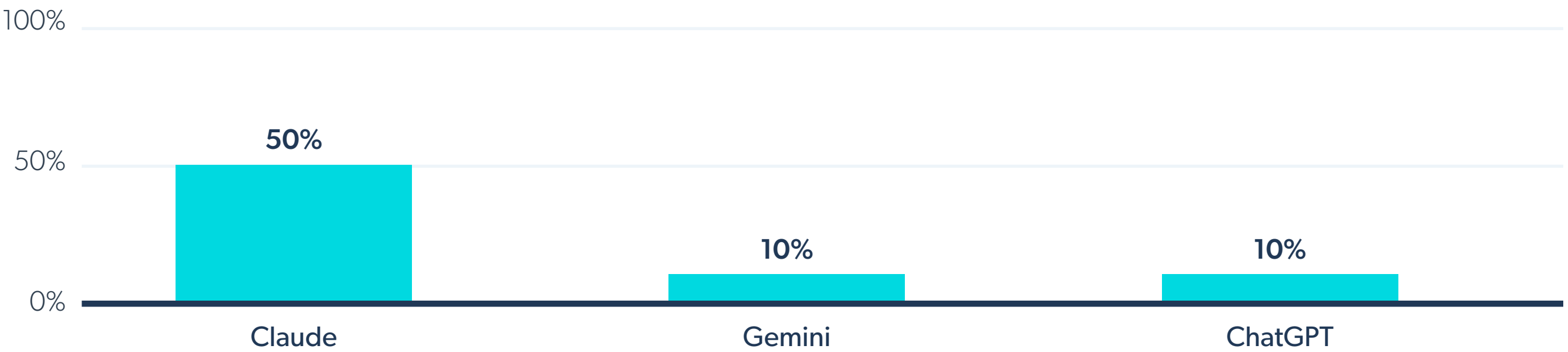
Gemini

en.wikipedia.org
quora.com
reuters.com
apnews.com
fda.gov

ChatGPT

en.wikipedia.org
apnews.com
reuters.com
ft.com
axios.com

Top domains unique to Retail/E-commerce



Most cited journalists in Retail/E-commerce

- [Nicole Davis](#)[Brian King](#)[Lara Ewen](#)[Lionel Valdellon](#)[Alix Fraser](#)
- [Gregory Meyer](#)[Francesca Nicasio](#)[Kaitlyn McLintock](#)[Alana Semuels](#)[Melanie Gerlis](#)

MEDIA/ENTERTAINMENT

Journalism sources cited more frequently

For the Media/Entertainment industry, journalism content is cited more than in other industries. 37% for media compared to 28% overall.

Claude is the most likely to cite unique sources in this industry with 70% of the top 10 being unique domains. Gemini is the least likely with 40%.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

en.wikipedia.org
fcc.gov
nielsen.com
quora.com
sproutsocial.com

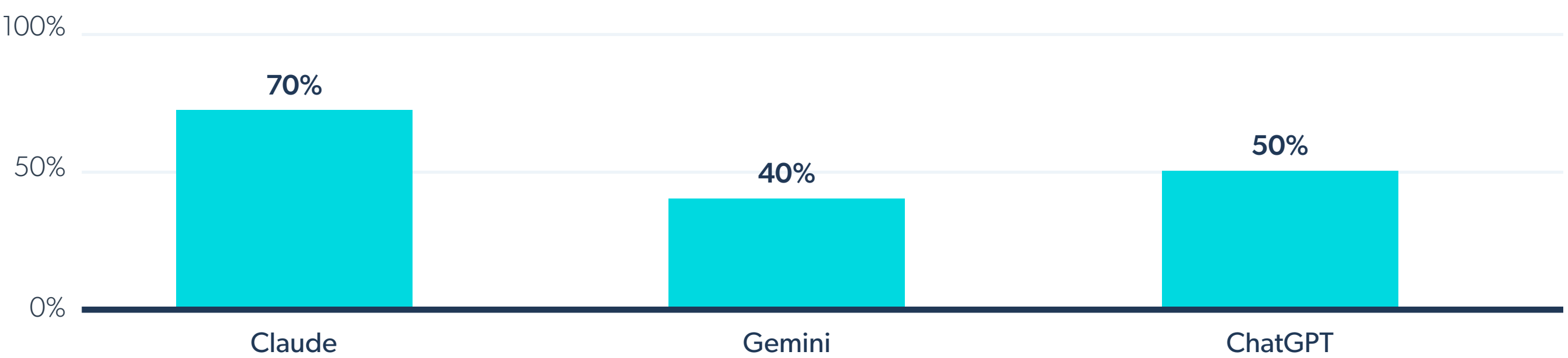
Gemini

en.wikipedia.org
fcc.gov
wikipedia.org
youtube.com
quora.com

ChatGPT

en.wikipedia.org
tvtechnology.com
radioking.com
apnews.com
gartner.com

Top domains unique to Media/Entertainment



Most cited journalists in Media/Entertainment

- [Katie Campione](#)[Kalia Richardson](#)[Steve Clark](#)[Stephen Joseph](#)
- [George Winslow](#)[Dak Dillon](#)[Michelle Ruoff](#)[Violet Holt](#)

TECHNOLOGY

Academic and encyclopedic sources disappear

For the Technology industry, journalism content is cited more than in other industries. We found that the typical ~10% of encyclopedic content and academic research cited in other industries, drops to nearly zero, causing a corresponding increase in other types of content like journalism and owned media.

Claude is the most likely to cite unique sources in this industry, with 70% of its top 10 domains being unique. Gemini is the least likely, at 50%.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

udemy.com
coursera.org
medium.com
continu.com
sproutsocial.com

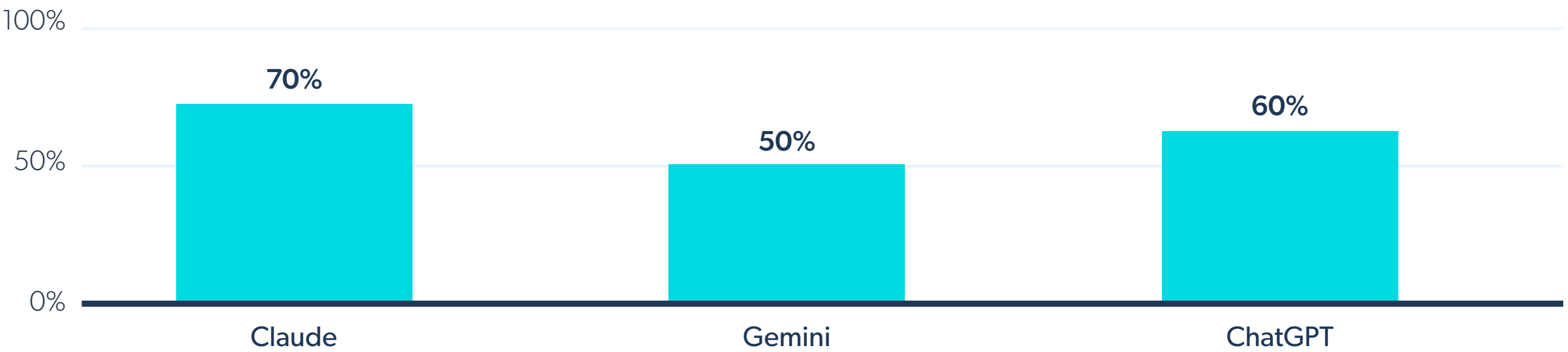
Gemini

coursera.org
medium.com
udemy.com
everythingelearning.com
techtarget.com

ChatGPT

linkedin.com
moldstud.com
arxiv.org
en.wikipedia.org
pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

Top domains unique to Technology



Most cited journalists in Technology

We saw no significant repeat patterns among journalists covering tech.

EDUCATION

Industry-specific sources are more important

All models are fairly likely to cite industry-specific domains in Education. Every model has over half of its top 10 sources coming from Education specific content, with Claude at 80%

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

coursera.org
sessionlab.com
scrumalliance.org
elearningindustry.com
harvardbusiness.org

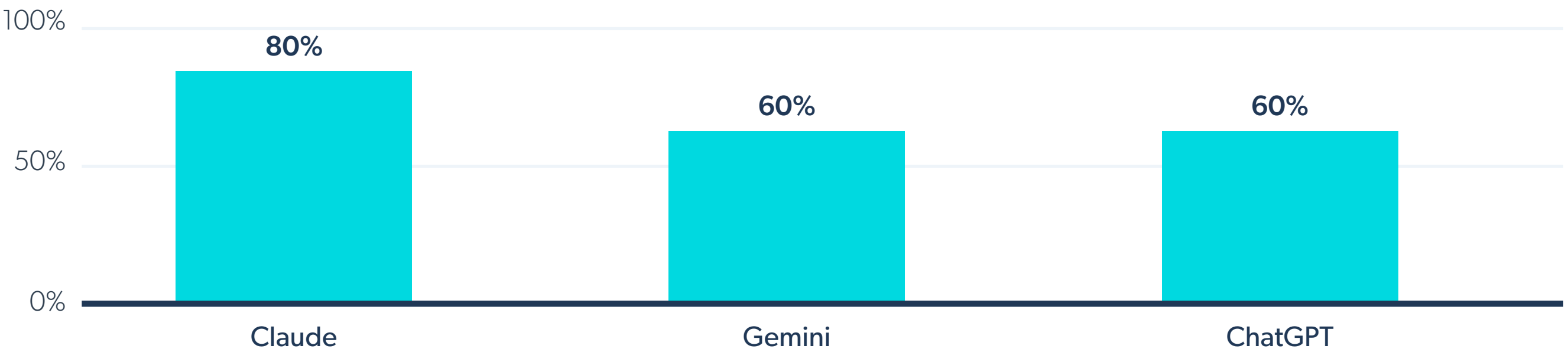
Gemini

en.wikipedia.org
coursera.org
udemy.com
pwc.com
indeed.com

ChatGPT

en.wikipedia.org
teambonding.com
eubrics.com
jefmenguin.com
ft.com

Top domains unique to Education



Most cited journalists in Education

[Stephen Morris](#) [Alana Semuels](#) [Steven Tweedie](#) [Rose Horowitz](#)

HOSPITALITY

Owned media appears more often

For the Hospitality industry, Owned Media content is cited more than in other industries. 55% for hospitality compared to 43% overall.

Claude cites unique sources in 50% of its top 10 domains. ChatGPT cites just 30% unique domains.

Top Industry Sources per AI Provider

Claude

fda.gov
pos.toasttab.com
fsis.usda.gov
quora.com
fns.usda.gov

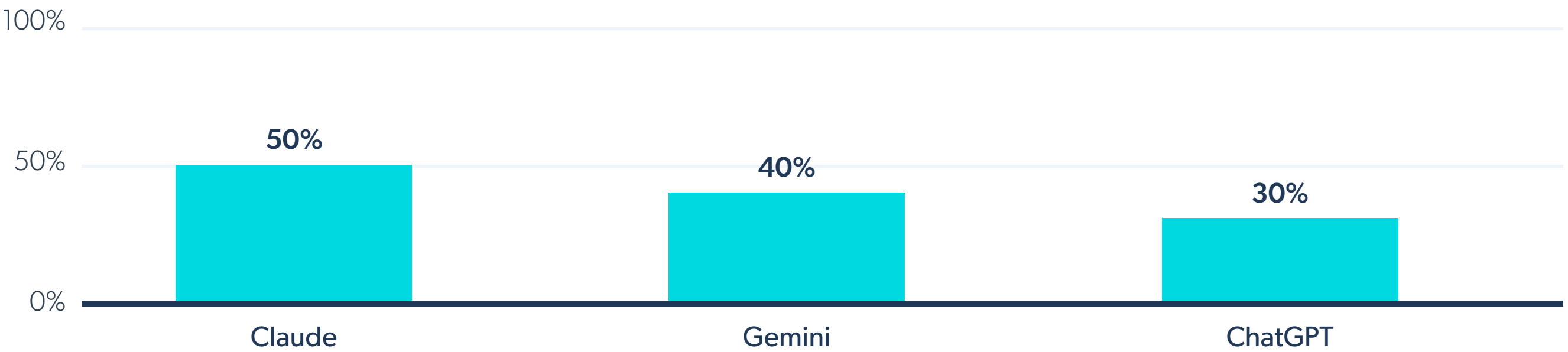
Gemini

en.wikipedia.org
crrhospitality.com
apnews.com
fda.gov
fsis.usda.gov

ChatGPT

en.wikipedia.org
apnews.com
google.com
axios.com
crrhospitality.com

Top domains unique to Hospitality



Most cited journalists in Hospitality

- [Kristen Link](#)[Gill Hyslop](#)[Clinton Cawood](#)[Vicky Reddish](#)[Jean-Philippe Weisskopf](#)
- [Alana Semuels](#)[Abby Vesoulis](#)[Alice Lascelles](#)[Kelly Tyko](#)[Mike Wendland](#)



Thank you!

Generative Pulse is a tool that helps PR and communications teams monitor and define how their brands appear in AI-generated search results. Built around the concept of Generative Engine Optimization (GEO), it reveals which journalists, outlets, and sources influence large language models like ChatGPT—so teams can shape brand visibility in the age of AI. Integrated into Muck Rack's PR platform and backed by a \$180M Series A financing, Generative Pulse gives comms professionals the insights and tools to lead in an AI-native search landscape.

Download the full report and methodology at
<https://generativepulse.ai/report/>

