

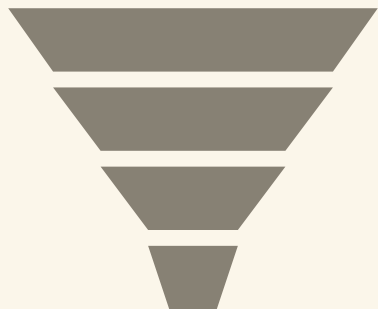
THE DISTRIBUTION PLAYBOOK

Modern Software Distribution in 2026

The founder's blueprint for algorithmic, product-led, and creator-driven growth.

From deterministic retrieval to probabilistic synthesis

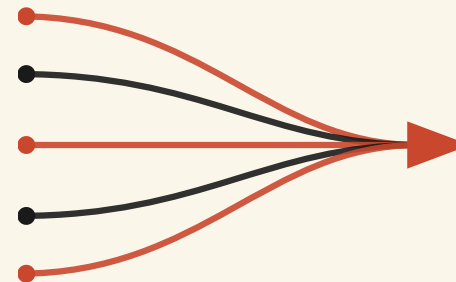
Legacy distribution



Linear sales funnels & blue-link SEO.

METRICS · KEYWORD TARGETING · FORM-FILLS · SALESPERSON-LED DISCOVERY

2026 distribution



Autonomous buyers & zero-click AI.

METRICS · GENERATIVE ENGINE OPTIMISATION (GEO) · PRODUCT-LED GROWTH (PLG)

81% of B2B buyers now make vendor decisions before ever engaging sales.

Generative engine optimisation

AI engines don't rank pages —
they synthesise entities.

To be cited, you must be present in every tier of the Source Stack — from formal entity registration at the base to crawlable brand assets at the top.

THE SOURCE STACK

Tier 3 — Brand-owned assets

Technical documentation, API playgrounds.

ACTION · CLEAN SERVER-SIDE RENDERING · PUBLISH AN LLMS.TXT FILE

Tier 2 — High-trust user content

Reddit, Quora, verified reviews (G2, Capterra).

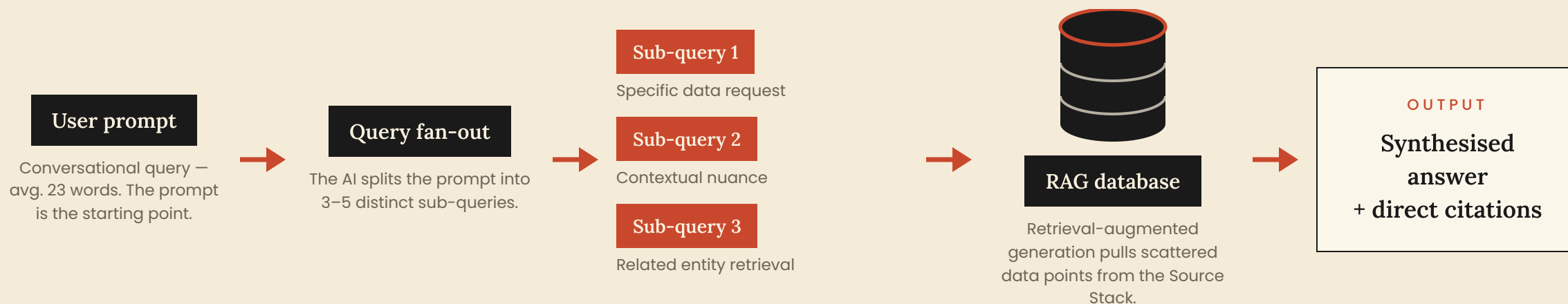
ACTION · COMMUNITY THREAD CULTIVATION

Tier 1 — Verified data banks

Wikidata, Google Knowledge Graph, schema networks.

ACTION · FORMAL ENTITY REGISTRATION

The anatomy of AI synthesis



KEY INSIGHT — You cannot optimise for the head term. Content must target the fragmented sub-queries the AI actively searches for.

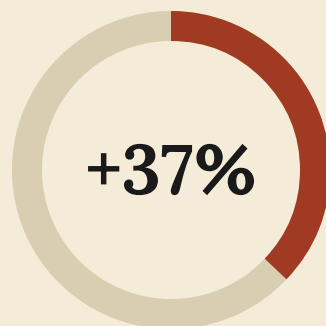
The GEO citability multipliers

Princeton research reveals the exact formatting triggers that force AI citations.



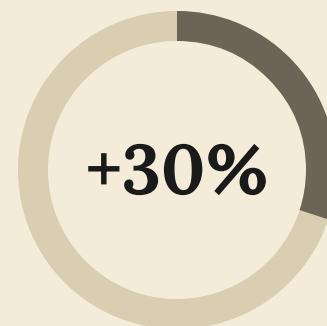
Source citation

Explicitly referencing primary literature and external authoritative links.



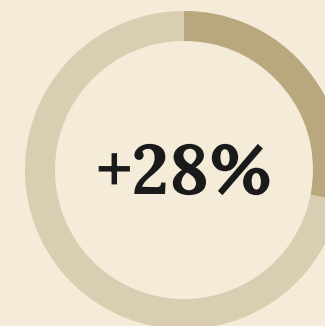
Statistical dense insertion

Injecting precise numbers, percentages, and dated metrics.



Expert quotations

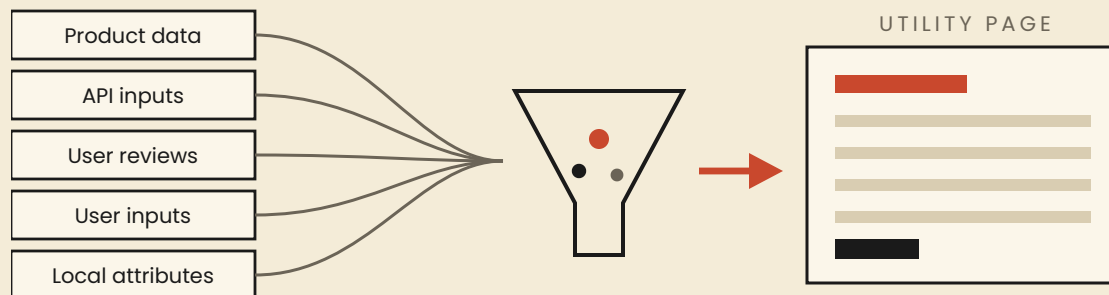
Attributed quotes from named industry experts.



Precise technical terminology

Domain-specific nomenclature over marketing jargon.

Programmatic SEO 2.0 — post-March 2026



THE STANDARD

The death of ‘scaled content abuse’. Every programmatic page must act as a **standalone utility** supported by an underlying, proprietary data moat.

The math

UNIQUENESS RATIO

≥ 0.50 unique fields

Pages must draw from ≥ 3 APIs / databases to achieve 8–10 distinct fields.

QUALITY SCORE MATRIX

$$QS = (W \times 0.20) + (U \times 0.30) + (D \times 0.20) + (R \times 0.15) + (S \times 0.15)$$

[W] Word count

[U] Uniqueness

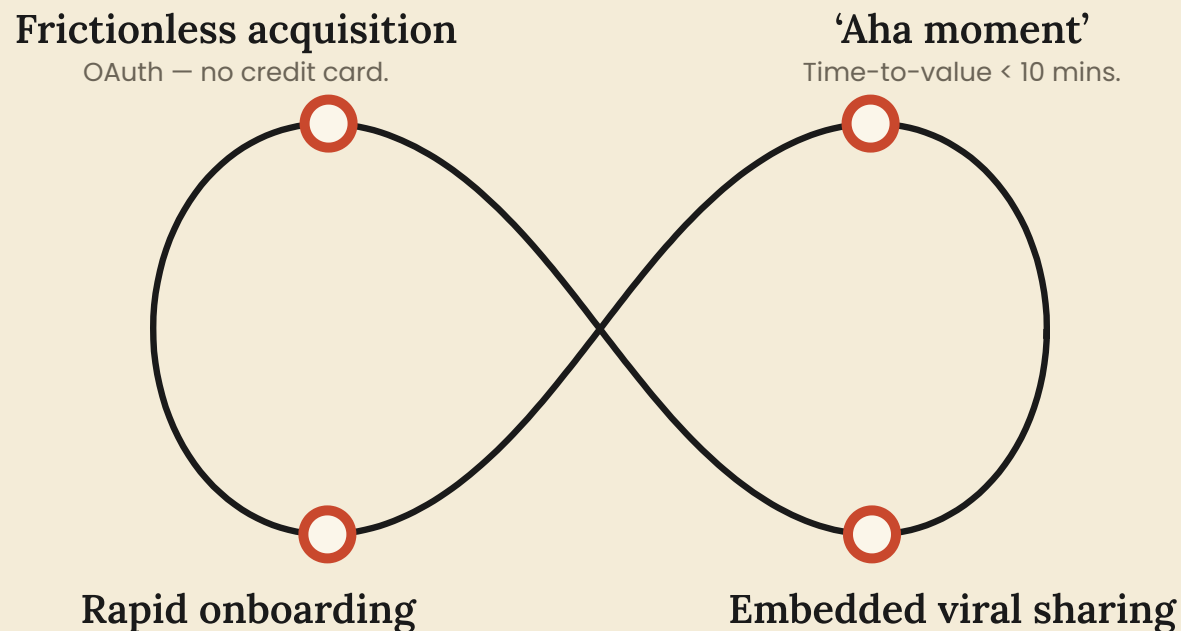
[D] Data diversity

[R] Readability

[S] Schema

Product-led growth

The default operating model for 58%+ of SaaS in 2026.



Compress **time-to-value (TTV)** — the highest-converting platforms deliver core utility in under 60 seconds.

Engineering viral mechanics — the K-factor

$$K = c \times i$$

K-factor = conversion rate × invites / exposures.

A **K-factor > 1.0** guarantees compounding, zero-CAC growth.

Gamma's viral loop

ACTION

Swap generic 'Share' with active 'Present' CTAs.

THE MATH

10,000 daily presentations × 5 average viewers × 2% conversion rate.

RESULT

1,000 free daily signups at \$0 CAC.

Choosing your PLG entry motion

Freemium

Example — Slack, Notion

Conversion · 10–20%

Ideal for: horizontal tools heavily reliant on collaborative viral loops.

Time-boxed trial

Example — Basecamp

Conversion · 15–30%

Ideal for: complex B2B tools requiring data integration and clear value events.

Hybrid / reverse trial

Example — Zoom

Sustained retention

Ideal for: mid-complexity tools needing premium exposure but sustained free-tier network effects.

Engineering as marketing

Lowering CAC by building free micro-utilities to capture high-intent, top-of-funnel traffic.



Diagnostic graders

Analyse URLs or data for instant scorecards — e.g., HubSpot's Website Grader.



Interactive calculators

Compute pricing or ROI, quantifying financial pain points.



Niche directories

Curated data lists generating evergreen organic traffic.



File converters

Single-purpose browser tools capturing high-volume transactional queries.

Outbound & the first 100 customers

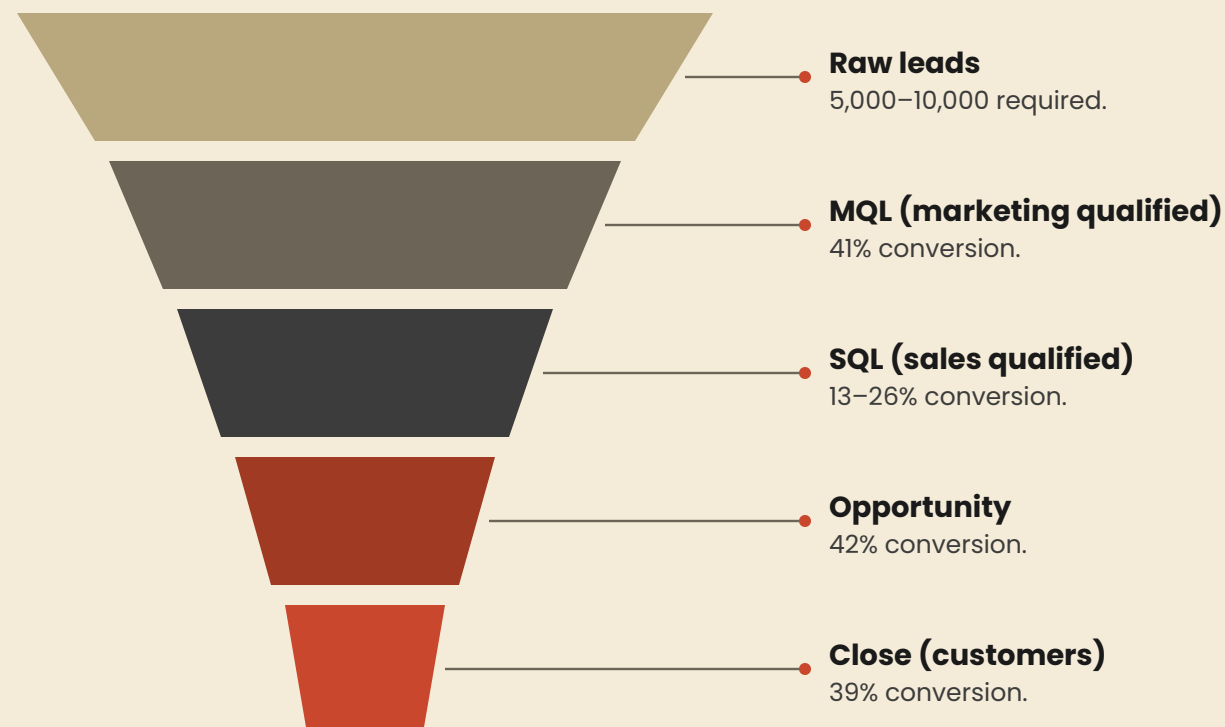
The baseline funnel math for scaling from manual hustle to a predictable outbound engine.

2–5%

Average lead-to-customer conversion.

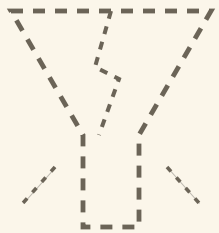
3.43%

Average cold-email reply rate — omnichannel sequences lift replies by **+287%**.



The data quality multiplier

Funnel A — raw data

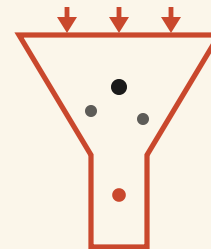


B2B databases decay **25–30% annually**.

At a **2% conversion rate**, you need **5,000 raw leads** to secure 100 customers.

Results in **500 hours/year** wasted per rep on manual validation.

Funnel B — waterfall enriched



Utilising **15+ data sources** to eliminate decay before the sequence begins.

Achieves a **7.1% conversion rate** — requiring only **1,400 enriched leads** to secure 100 customers.

Creator-led growth & market leverage

Shifting from flat-fee sponsorships to revenue-per-mille (RPM) micro-influencer strategies — trust is the new currency.

Scale through micro-nodes

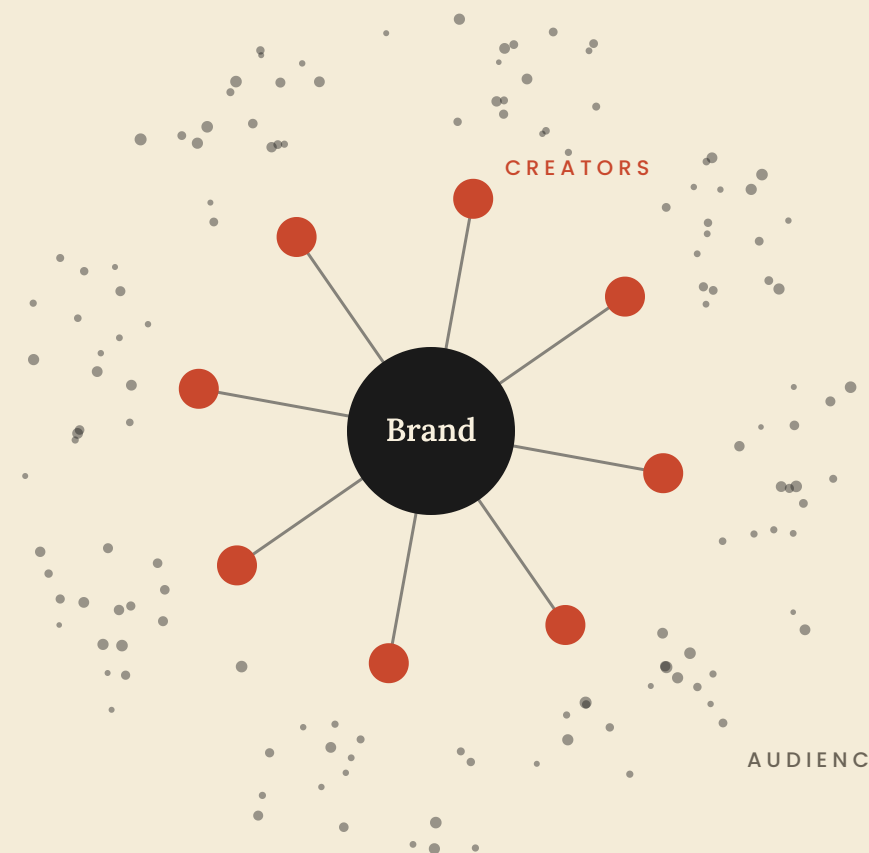
Target creators with 10k–100k followers for higher engagement.

The Gamma playbook

Scaled to 50M users via a network of 150+ TikTok and LinkedIn creators.

Performance alignment

RPM models align costs directly with view-count performance, eliminating upfront risk.



The solo founder scale

How one-person operations — BuiltWith, Photopea, Stardew Valley — achieve seven- and eight-figure revenues.

Low marginal cost

Digital products scale without proportional expense.

Organic distribution

Zero-CAC acquisition via PLG, SEO, and embedded viral loops.

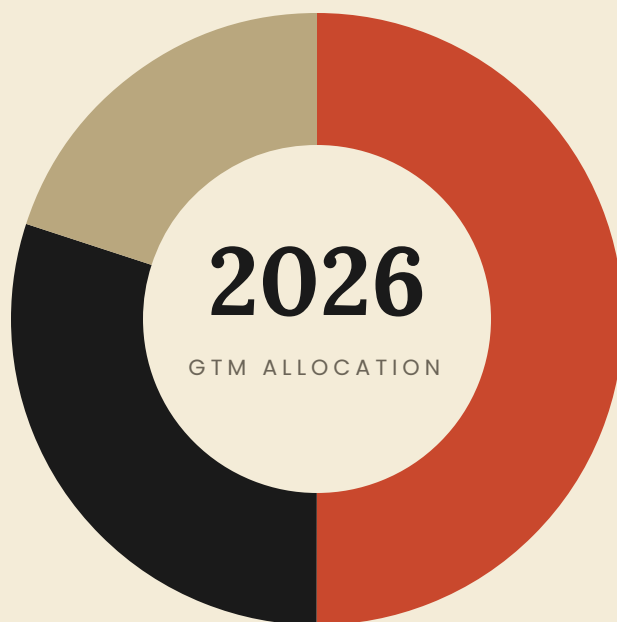
High AI automation

Autonomous agents (like Polsia) manage support, marketing, and operational execution.

Relentless focus

Solving a single, painful, frequent problem with a frictionless interface.

The 2026 *allocation blueprint*



■ Zone 1 — 50% algorithmic readiness (intelligence)

FOCUS • ENTITY MAPPING • CRAWLER AUDITING • TRACKING SHARE OF MODEL (SoM)
TOOLS • PROFOUND • SEMRUSH • AHREFS

■ Zone 2 — 30% frictionless PLG (reputation)

FOCUS • TTV COMPRESSION • EMBEDDED VIRAL LOOPS • HALLUCINATION CORRECTION
TOOLS • GOODIE AI • ATHENAHQ

■ Zone 3 — 20% acquisition engine (execution)

FOCUS • MICRO-TOOLS (GRADERS / CALCULATORS) • SURGICAL OUTBOUND • RPM CREATOR NETWORKS
TOOLS • SURFER SEO • LEMLIST • APOLLO