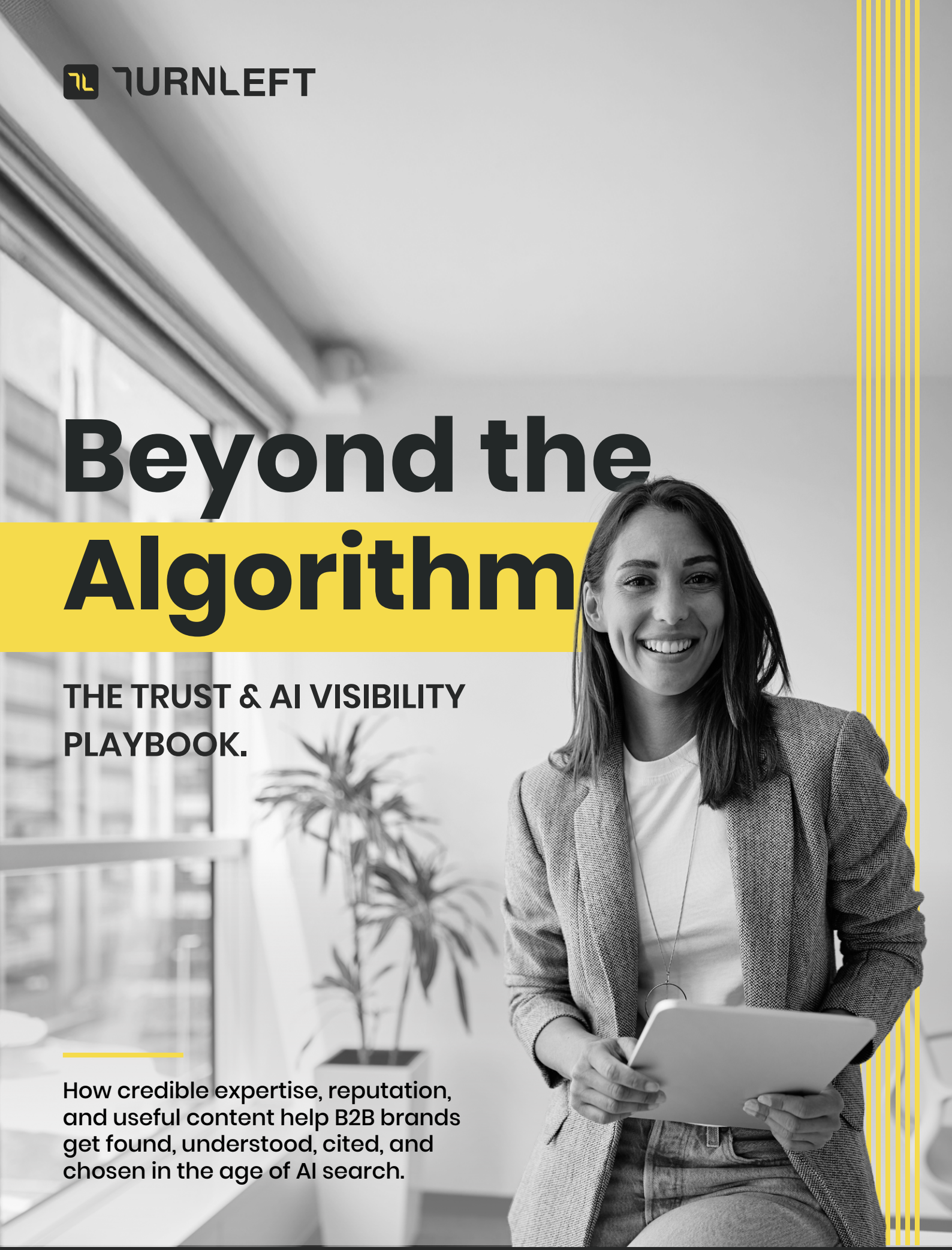
TURNLEFT

Beyond the Algorithm

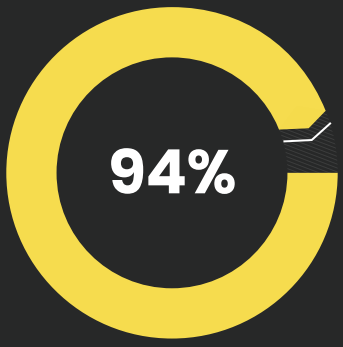
THE TRUST & AI VISIBILITY PLAYBOOK.



How credible expertise, reputation, and useful content help B2B brands get found, understood, cited, and chosen in the age of AI search.

LINKEDIN PLAYBOOK

2026 EDITION



of B2B buyers now use generative AI for research.

6sense, 2025; cited by LinkedIn

#1

Profound ranked LinkedIn the most-cited domain for professional queries across six major AI platforms.

Profound, 2026



of LinkedIn content citations come from long-form articles; posts account for roughly 40%.

LinkedIn internal data, 2026

This playbook draws on LinkedIn Marketing Solutions' 2026 AI Search research, supporting third-party studies, and lessons from VivaTech 2026. **See sources & verification on page 15.**

CONTENTS

01 **WHY THIS PLAYBOOK EXISTS.**

02 The case for trust in the AI era.

04 The new buyer journey from visibility to buyability.

05 Winning AI citations on LinkedIn: posts vs articles.

07 The mechanics of an AI-citable post.

09 Optimising owned content for AI discovery.

11 The executive thought leadership engine.

13 The client action plan.

15 Sources & verification.

Why this playbook exists.

QUICK ANSWER

B2B discovery is changing. Buyers can research suppliers, compare options, and build shortlists inside AI tools before a sales conversation begins. Marketers now need to make brand expertise clear enough for people to trust and structured enough for AI systems to understand and surface.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAYBOOK

AI has made producing content easier. That makes useful judgement, first-hand expertise, and a recognisable point of view more valuable. Our job isn't to create more content for the sake of volume. It's to build a body of knowledge that helps buyers understand the brand and gives AI systems reliable information to work with.

Two questions now sit side by side in B2B marketing:

01 How do we create content people genuinely find useful?

02 And how do we make sure our brand is part of the answer when those people turn to AI?

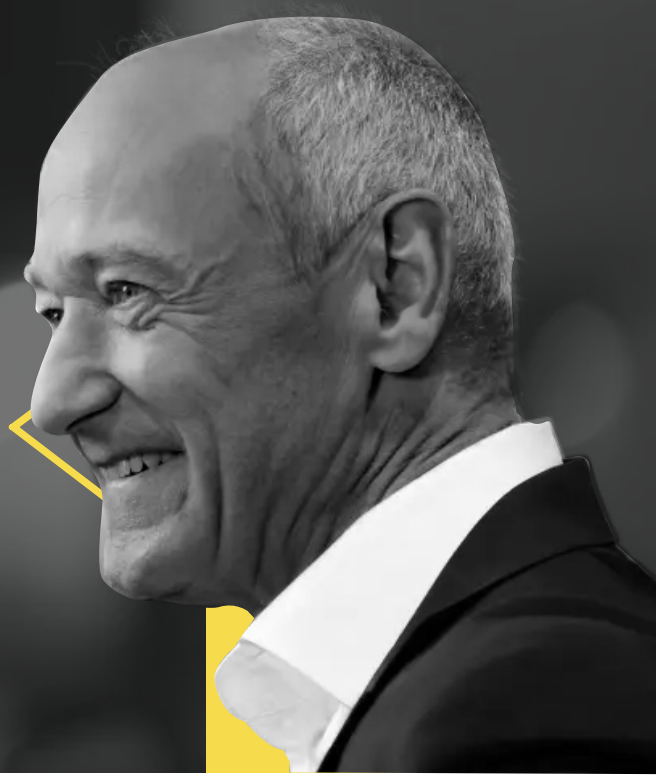


Our view is that both questions come back to **credible expertise.** One great post won't build that on its own. Neither will one optimised webpage. AI models can draw on company pages, employee profiles, websites, articles, media coverage, creators, customers, and other sources. The clearer and more consistent the picture across those places, the easier it becomes to understand what a brand knows and why it deserves attention.

Use this playbook as a strategy guide, an editing checklist, and a practical starting point for building that system.

SECTION 1

The case for trust in the AI era.



QUICK ANSWER

Visibility gets a brand noticed. Trust gives people a reason to keep considering it. In AI search, that trust grows when expertise appears consistently across the brand, the people behind it, customer voices, and credible outside sources. **At VivaTech 2026**, two executive conversations gave useful real-world context to this shift.

EXPLAINED

VivaTech: An annual technology and startup event in Paris where business leaders, technology companies, investors, and innovators explore developments such as AI and digital transformation.

> **Reputation changes when people see credible evidence of the same expertise over time.**

1.1 REPUTATION IS A FULL-FUNNEL ENGINE

One VivaTech session brought Siemens and LinkedIn together to discuss how Siemens has worked to reshape public perception, from a traditional industrial giant to a recognised leader in digital transformation and AI.

The useful lesson isn't that every company should copy Siemens. It's that reputation changes when people see credible evidence of the same expertise over time.

EXECUTIVE VOICES MUST BE AUTHENTIC AND ACCESSIBLE.

One example came from Roland Busch, President and CEO of Siemens AG. He turned the company's Q2 results into a short LinkedIn video built around a simple idea: explain the quarter in the time it took to make a cappuccino. VIEW THE POST

The numbers were still there. The difference was that the communication felt more accessible and more human.

EVENTS ARE INFLUENCE ENGINES, NOT TOP-OF-FUNNEL MOMENTS.

Siemens applied the same reputation-building approach to HANNOVER MESSE, a major international manufacturing trade fair. LinkedIn's case study shows a connected journey across executive content, event engagement, physical booth traffic, and lead generation.

1.2 AI IS CHANGING HOW DECISIONS GET MADE

A second VivaTech session brought leaders from Microsoft, Fiverr, VML, and LinkedIn together around the idea of a frontier marketing organisation.

The point wasn't simply to adopt AI tools faster. The bigger change is how teams use information, make decisions, and respond when the evidence changes.

EXPLAINED

Frontier marketing organisation: A marketing organisation designed to make faster, better-informed decisions as AI increases the speed and volume of available information.

THREE IDEAS MATTER HERE.

1

AI is part of the research process.

LinkedIn's latest guide, citing 6sense, reports that 94% of B2B buyers now use generative AI for research.

2

Visibility now includes the answer itself.

It's no longer enough to ask whether a brand ranks in search. We also need to know whether it appears when an AI system answers a relevant question.

3

Human judgement still matters.

AI can speed up research, analysis, and production. It can't take responsibility for whether an idea is useful, credible, or right for the brand.

EXPLAINED

Share of mention: A way of looking at how often your brand appears in relevant AI-generated answers.

OUR VIEW

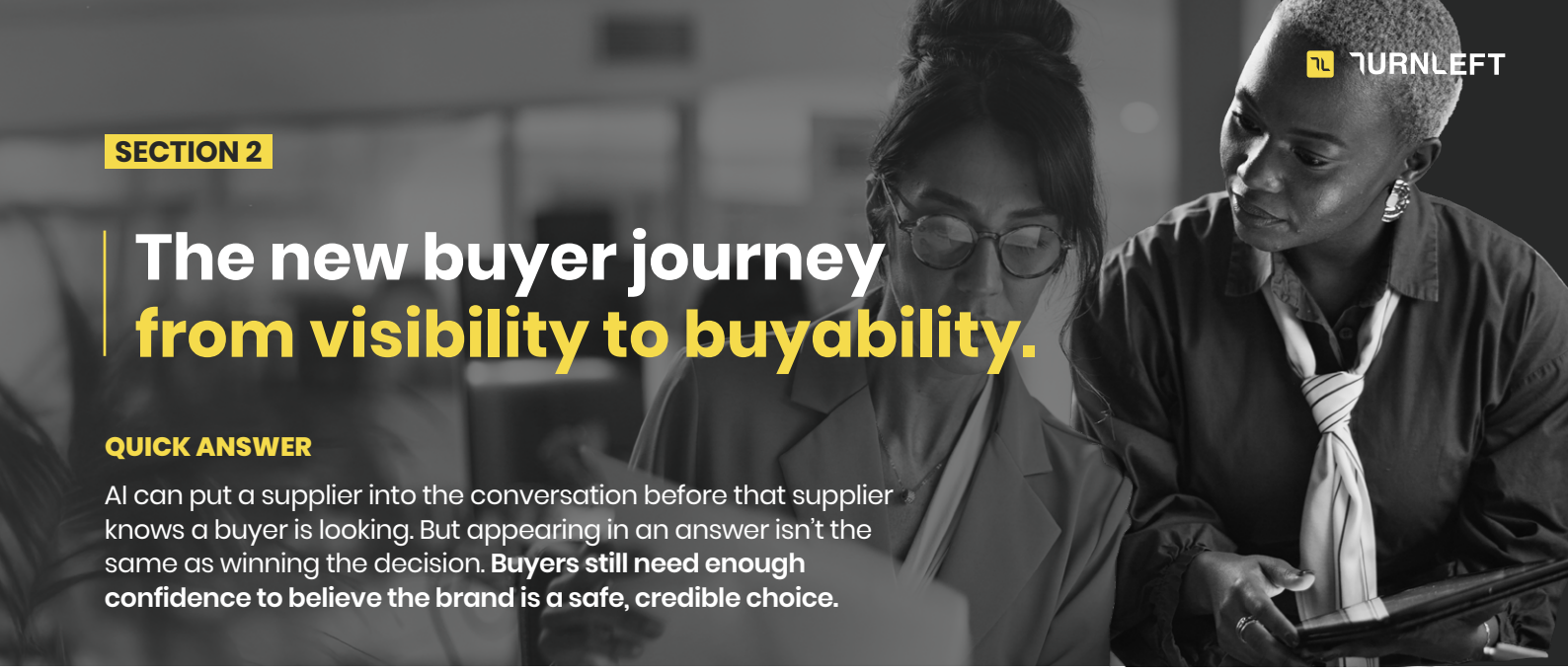
> **Technology can increase output. Good judgement protects reputation.**

IN PRACTICE

Build interest before the event, make the live moment useful, and keep the conversation going afterwards.



Source: Beyond the Algorithm:
Why Trust Is Your Most Valuable Asset in the AI Era.



SECTION 2

The new buyer journey from visibility to buyability.

QUICK ANSWER

AI can put a supplier into the conversation before that supplier knows a buyer is looking. But appearing in an answer isn't the same as winning the decision. **Buyers still need enough confidence to believe the brand is a safe, credible choice.**

EXPLAINED

Buyability: LinkedIn's term for reaching the point where a buying group can find you, trust you, and feel confident choosing you.

Traditional search still matters. What's changed is that buyers can ask ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Perplexity, and other tools to do some of the research and comparison for them. That changes where **consideration can begin.**

2.1 WHY LINKEDIN MATTERS IN AI DISCOVERY

Profound's 2026 analysis ranked LinkedIn as the most-cited domain for professional queries across the six AI platforms it measured. That gives LinkedIn particular weight in a B2B visibility strategy, especially when content is tied to a named professional with clear expertise.

But LinkedIn isn't the strategy in itself. Your website, company information, employee voices, customer evidence, articles, media coverage, and outside experts can all contribute to the same picture.

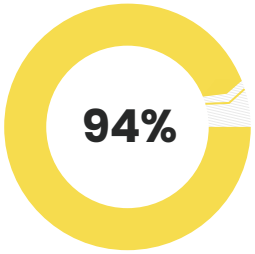
OUR VIEW

Treat LinkedIn as an amplifier of authority, not an isolated social channel. AI visibility can help put the brand into consideration. Buyability is what helps the room say yes.

IN PRACTICE

Don't optimise only for keywords. Answer the questions buyers are asking and make the brand's expertise easy to find and trust.

Source: Unlocking AI Search Visibility: The B2B Marketer's Guide to LinkedIn .



of B2B buyers now use generative AI for research.
6sense, 2025



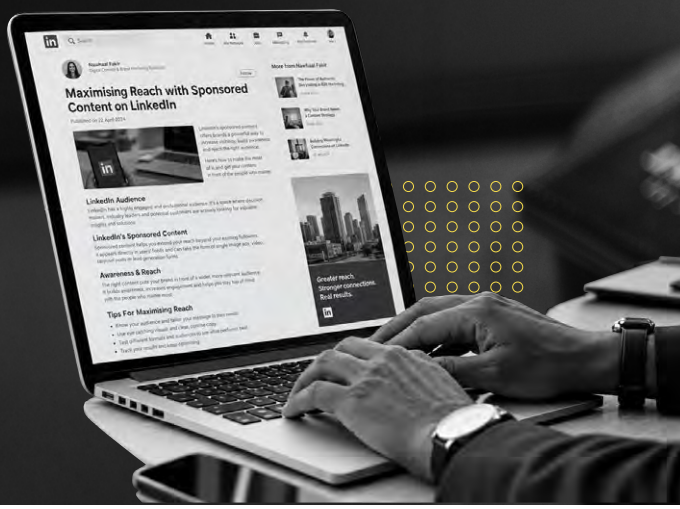
Gartner predicts traditional search volume could fall by 2028 as AI-powered search grows.
Gartner

Up to 60%

LinkedIn's own marketing sites have seen non-branded search traffic decline by up to 60%.
LinkedIn internal data, 2026

SECTION 3

Winning AI citations on LinkedIn: posts vs articles.



QUICK ANSWER

Articles build depth. Posts keep the ideas moving. LinkedIn's latest internal data puts roughly 60% of its content citations against articles and 40% against posts, so the opportunity isn't to choose between them. It's to make them work together.

LINKEDIN ARTICLES	800–1 200 words	Thought leadership, frameworks, and deeper analysis	
	Deeper source material	Depth + authority	~60% citation share
LINKEDIN POSTS	200–300 words	Timely ideas, discussion, and amplification	
	Shorter entry points into a subject	Reach + engagement	~40% citation share

Treat the word counts as useful ranges, not targets.
If the useful answer takes 700 words, don't pad it to 1 000.

3.1 TREAT POSTS AND ARTICLES AS ONE SYSTEM

Build one strong article.
Give the subject enough depth to become a useful reference point.

Pull out three to five supporting posts.
Give individual questions, insights, or examples their own space.

Watch what earns real interest.
The audience helps show which parts deserve another look.

Use that learning to sharpen the next article.
Keep the loop moving.

ARTICLE → POSTS → LEARN → NEXT ARTICLE

This changes the content-calendar mindset. Instead of inventing a fresh topic every few days, build authority around a smaller number of subjects worth owning.

3.2 CREDIBILITY SIGNALS THAT STRENGTHEN VISIBILITY

AUTHOR AUTHORITY

Meltwater's 2026 research, cited by LinkedIn, found that authors with more established audiences are more likely to appear in AI search results. But follower count isn't the strategy. The stronger long-term signal is a person who repeatedly demonstrates useful expertise in a defined area.

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

Discussion can strengthen the signal around a piece of content, particularly when people add perspective, ask useful questions, or contribute evidence. A smaller conversation with the right people can be more useful than a pile of shallow reactions.

ORIGINALITY

Semrush found that about 95% of the LinkedIn posts cited in its analysis were original posts rather than reshares.

OUR VIEW

> **"Resharing distributes somebody else's thinking. Original posts build your own.**

IN PRACTICE

Use articles to build depth and posts to distribute and test ideas. Focus on a few topics worth owning instead of filling the calendar with disconnected content.

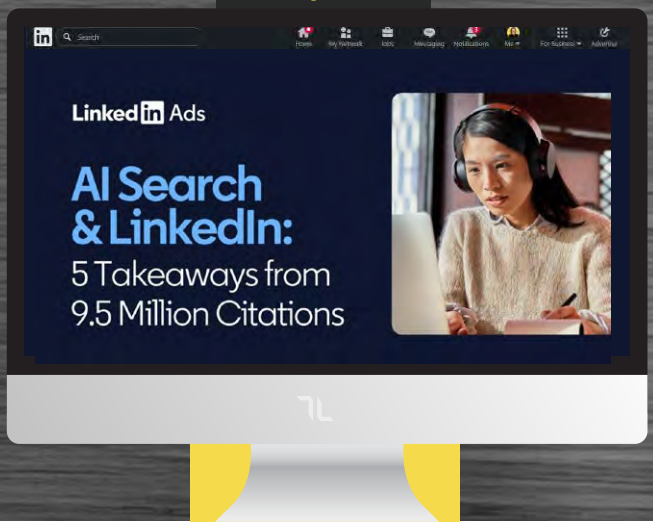


Source: Unlocking AI Search Visibility: The B2B Marketer's Guide to LinkedIn.

SECTION 4

The mechanics of an AI-citable post.

View post →



QUICK ANSWER

Make the topic clear, present the useful part early, and focus on one idea worth remembering. The same qualities that reduce effort for a person also make the content easier for an AI system to understand and retrieve.

4.1 YOUR OPENING LINE CAN SHAPE YOUR URL

LinkedIn can use the opening line of a post when creating its URL slug. That gives the first sentence an extra job.

The goal isn't keyword stuffing. It's simply to say what the post is about before decorating it.

01 **Name the subject early.**
Say what the post is actually about.

02 **Don't lead with a hashtag,** emoji, or decorative character.

03 Give attached files **useful names.**

04 **Check the post before publishing.**
Editing the copy afterwards won't rebuild the original URL.

4.2 MAKE THE ANSWER EASY TO FIND

Get to the important point quickly.

- Focus on one idea.
- Use a question, list, definition, or framework when it helps.
- Teach before you sell.
- Add evidence, experience, or a distinct perspective.

THE QUESTION TO ASK BEFORE PUBLISHING

What will someone know, understand, or be able to do after reading this?

4.3 FRESHNESS MEANS MORE THAN ADDING A DATE

Recent content is more likely to be surfaced in the research LinkedIn cites. That doesn't mean adding "2026" to everything. Use dates for information that genuinely changes over time, and update older content when the thinking, evidence, or recommendation has changed. A new timestamp isn't the same thing as new thinking.

Use dates with purpose.
Update when it matters.

4.4 THREE USEFUL POST FORMATS

FORMAT	WHAT IT DOES	WHY IT HELPS
Insight post	Explains one trend or observation.	Gives the reader one clear idea to take away.
Framework post	Organises information into steps, criteria, or a comparison.	Makes useful information easier to scan.
Experience post	Shares a first-hand lesson, customer story, or observation.	Adds perspective generic content can't easily recreate.

Meltwater's analysis of the 24 most-cited LinkedIn articles found that all 24 used bullet or numbered lists. We'd read that as evidence for clarity and structure, not as an instruction to turn every post into a list.

4.5 PRE-PUBLISH CHECKLIST

DO	DON'T
✓ Say what the post is about early.	✗ Start with a generic greeting.
✓ Put the useful point near the top.	✗ Make the reader hunt for it.
✓ Focus on one idea.	✗ Pack unrelated ideas together.
✓ Use structure when it helps.	✗ Force every post into the same format.
✓ Treat 200–300 words as guidance.	✗ Add filler to hit a word count.
✓ Add evidence or experience.	✗ Repeat advice anyone could write.
✓ Publish consistently.	✗ Publish simply to fill the calendar.

OUR VIEW

Use the structure. Don't copy the template.

If every post starts looking identical, we've optimised away the part that makes the brand worth listening to.

IN PRACTICE

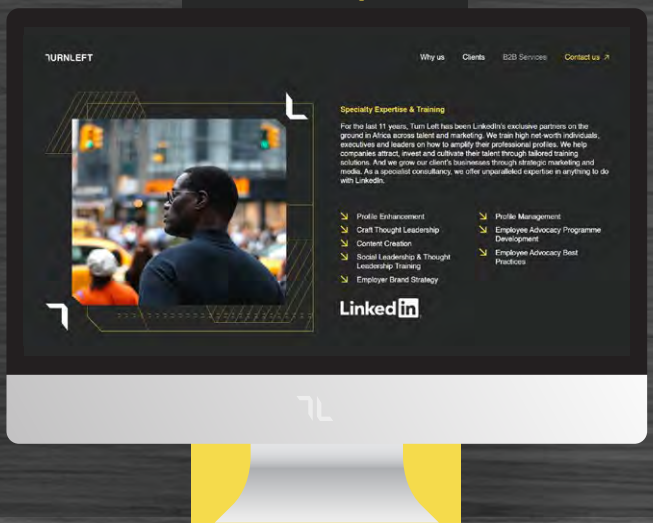
Say what the post is about early, make the takeaway easy to find, and add evidence or experience. Clear structure helps, but every post shouldn't look the same.

Source: How to Maximize AI Visibility for Your LinkedIn Posts.

SECTION 5

Optimising owned content for AI discovery.

View example →



QUICK ANSWER

LinkedIn can amplify what a brand knows, but the website still needs to make that expertise clear. Service pages, product information, guides, and articles should answer real questions in language that people and AI systems can understand without unnecessary effort.

EXPLAINED

Owned content: Content published on the brand's own website, including service pages, product pages, guides, company information, and articles.

> **Think of the website as the brand's own knowledge base.**

5.1 WRITE FOR PEOPLE AND AI AT THE SAME TIME

Write clearly.

Aim for a Grade 9–11 reading level.

Keep sentences focused.

Shorter sentences usually make factual information easier to process.

Make sections understandable on their own.

An AI model may retrieve one section without the rest of the page.

Use plain facts where facts are what the reader needs.

Don't make the reader work harder than the subject requires.

5.2 LEAD MAJOR SECTIONS WITH AN ANSWER BLOCK

LinkedIn recommends opening important sections with a short, direct answer before adding the detail underneath.

EXPLAINED

Answer block: A short answer at the start of a section, followed by the explanation, evidence, and examples.

QUESTION → ANSWER → DETAIL + EVIDENCE

View post →



5.3 MAKE THE PAGE EASY TO UNDERSTAND

01
- Use headings that describe what the section actually covers.

02
- Keep H1, H2, and H3 headings in a logical order.

03
- Write titles, metadata, and URLs in natural language.

04
- Give useful images clear filenames, captions, and alt text.

05
- Add transcripts where video contains important information.

06
- Use structured data when it accurately describes what's on the page.

EXPLAINED

Schema markup: Extra information in a webpage's code that helps search systems understand what the page contains.

OUR VIEW

The audience is still human. The objective isn't to write for a machine instead of a person. It's to remove ambiguity for both.

IN PRACTICE

Write for clarity first. Lead with the answer, structure content around real questions, and make sure each section still makes sense on its own.



Source: Introducing a Guide to Optimizing Your Owned Content for AI Discovery.



SECTION 6

The executive thought leadership engine.

QUICK ANSWER

A credible executive can open the conversation, but authority grows faster when employees, experts, customers, creators, and independent sources reinforce the same areas of expertise.

6.1 BUILDING A WIDER CREDIBILITY SYSTEM

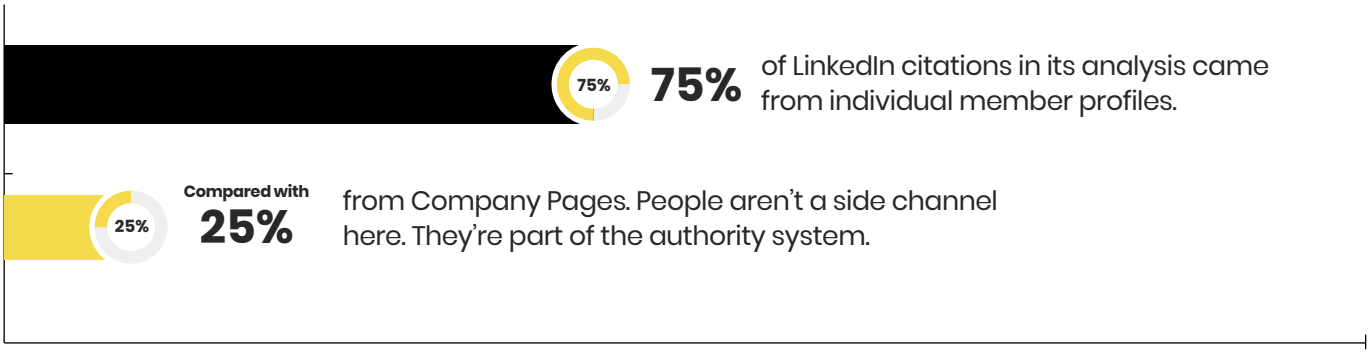
LinkedIn calls its framework for this the Credibility stack. Our interpretation looks like this:

SOURCE	ROLE IN THE SYSTEM
BRAND	Defines the territory it wants to be known for.
EMPLOYEES AND EXPERTS	Show what that expertise looks like through real knowledge and experience.
CUSTOMERS AND PEERS	Add outside proof that the reputation isn't self-declared.
CREATORS	Carry relevant ideas into communities the brand may not reach on its own.

EXPLAINED

Credibility stack: LinkedIn's framework for building trust through several reinforcing sources rather than relying on the brand alone.

Meltwater's research found:



75% of LinkedIn citations in its analysis came from individual member profiles.

Compared with **25%** from Company Pages. People aren't a side channel here. They're part of the authority system.

6.2 THE EXECUTIVE STILL HAS AN IMPORTANT JOB

The executive can give the business a recognisable voice. Other people add technical detail, first-hand experience, customer proof, specialist reach, and independent validation.

6.3 BUILD ONE CONNECTED CONTENT ENGINE

01 DEFINE THE TERRITORY
Agree on the subjects the brand wants to be known for.

→ **WHO CONTRIBUTES**
Brand, executives, and subject-matter experts.

02 BUILD DEPTH
Create an article or other substantial piece around a priority question.

→ **WHO CONTRIBUTES**
Content lead + expert.

03 ADD PERSPECTIVES
Develop distinct supporting content from credible voices.

→ **WHO CONTRIBUTES**
Executives, employees, experts, customers, and creators.

04 ADD OUTSIDE PROOF
Reinforce the subject through research, interviews, media, and third-party voices.

→ **WHO CONTRIBUTES**
PR, media, customers, partners, and creators.

05 LEARN AND STRENGTHEN
Track what's being surfaced and improve the next cycle.

→ **WHO CONTRIBUTES**
Marketing, content, social, search, and measurement teams.

6.4 CONSISTENCY DOESN'T MEAN REPETITION

Use consistent terminology and return to the subjects the brand wants to own. Five people repeating the same message still won't create authority. Keep the territory consistent. **Change the perspective.**

IN PRACTICE

Don't turn every employee into a spokesperson. Start with the people who have something useful to add.

SECTION 7

The client action plan.

QUICK ANSWER

Start with the reputation you want to build, not the posting schedule. Choose the subjects the brand can own, the questions buyers ask, and the people who can answer them credibly.

7.1 START WITH THE SUBJECTS AND QUESTIONS YOU WANT TO OWN

Begin with three to four core themes drawn from business priorities, recurring customer questions, genuine expertise, leadership priorities, and relevant search behaviour. For each theme, map roughly 7–10 buyer questions. Ask "Which important buyer question haven't we answered properly yet?" before asking what to post.

EXPLAINED

Topic cluster: A group of content pieces that explore one priority subject from different angles.

> **Begin with three to four core themes drawn from business priorities.**

7.2 A PRACTICAL 30-DAY STARTING CYCLE

STAGE 01

Week 1: Foundation

Agree on core themes, choose one topic, map buyer questions, review existing content, and identify credible voices.

STAGE 02

Week 2: Build depth

Create one strong authority piece around the questions buyers need answered.

STAGE 03

Week 3: Distribute

Publish supporting content from the Page and selected individual voices, each with its own angle.

STAGE 04

Week 4: Reinforce

Continue the conversation, add third-party evidence, and review early signals.

STAGE 05

Day 30+: Measure

Review citations, mentions, share of voice, sentiment, and outcomes against the baseline.

Allow at least 30 days before judging AI visibility outcomes. Profound's cited research found a 6.81-day median to first citation, while 90% of newly cited pages took up to 37.1 days. **Week 4 is a checkpoint. It isn't a verdict.**

7.3 KNOW WHAT TO MEASURE, AND WHEN

- **Early signals:** impressions, reactions, comments, and shares.
- **AI visibility outcomes:** citations, mentions, citation rank, share of voice, and sentiment.
- **Diagnostics:** author, format, topic, prompt type, and freshness.

EXPLAINED

Prompt: A question or instruction someone gives an AI tool while researching a subject or supplier.

EXPLAINED

Share of voice: Your brand's citations compared with all citations across the prompts you're tracking.

7.4 CLIENT-READY STARTING CHECKLIST

START WITH	THEN BUILD
3–4 core themes + first priority topic.	7–10 buyer questions per theme + existing-content audit.
Credible contributors + starting baseline.	One anchor piece + supporting perspectives + a 30-day measurement window.

> AI visibility isn't built one post at a time. Build authority around a few subjects, answer real buyer questions, and reinforce the story through credible voices beyond the brand's own channels.

IN PRACTICE

Start with the reputation you want to build, not the posting schedule. Choose the topics, map the buyer questions, activate the right voices, and measure what changes over time.

Sources & verification

Primary LinkedIn sources

• Beyond the Algorithm: Why Trust Is Your Most Valuable Asset in the AI Era: LinkedIn Business Marketing Blog, 2 July 2026.

• How to Maximize AI Visibility for Your LinkedIn Posts: Davang Shah, LinkedIn Business Marketing Blog, 30 June 2026.

• How to Leverage LinkedIn for AI Visibility in 2026: Davang Shah, LinkedIn Business Marketing Blog, 12 March 2026.

• Introducing a Guide to Optimizing Your Owned Content for AI Discovery: Brooke Weller, LinkedIn Business Marketing Blog, 10 February 2026.

• New Guide: How B2B Marketers Can Dominate AI Search on LinkedIn: Davang Shah, LinkedIn Business Marketing Blog, 11 August 2026. Includes Unlocking AI Search Visibility: The B2B Marketer's Guide to LinkedIn.

AI Search Series hub: Explore the series

Referenced examples

• Building a New Reputation: How Siemens Shapes the Conversation in the AI Era: VivaTech 2026 session.

• Siemens Q2 cappuccino post: Roland Busch, President and CEO of Siemens AG.

• Becoming a Frontier Marketing Organisation: How CMOs Lead in an AI-First, Agent-Driven World: VivaTech 2026 session.

Supporting research

• Profound, 2026: Professional-query citations across six AI platforms.
• Semrush, 2026: Analysis of LinkedIn URLs cited across AI search.
• Meltwater, 2026: Research on LinkedIn authors, Company Pages, content structure, and citations.
• 6sense, 2025: Research on generative AI use during B2B research.

NOTE ON FIGURES
These studies measure different datasets, platforms, and query types. Where scope matters, this playbook states it. The figures are best used as evidence of current behaviour and direction. Client programmes should **establish their own baseline and measure change over time.**

TURNLEFT

Beyond the Algorithm.

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