How brands build presence, influence, and preference in the age of AI



InfoSol-6.0

Table of Contents

Introduction 02

The Visibility Myth 03

How Decisions Are Made Today 04

Why Being Found Is Not Enough 05

The Role of Media in Shaping Preference 06

From Visibility to Discovery Infrastructure 07

Measuring Influence in Complex Environments 08

What Category-Leading Brands Do Differently 09

How to Bring This Evolution into the Organization 10

The Next Step 11

Let's Talk 12

84%

dof the citations used by AI engines come from earned media. (Muck Rack)

Introduction

Imagine spending years investing in positioning, content, and digital visibility, only to discover that when an artificial intelligence platform recommends companies or solutions in your industry, your brand does not even appear among the answers. The challenge is no longer simply to generate reach. It is to build enough **authority** to influence today's **discovery and decision-making processes**.

The overabundance of content and the evolution of consumer behavior have transformed how decisions are made. Visibility remains important, but it is no longer enough. Preference is now built through **accumulated signals of trust and sustained third-party validation**.

This new dynamic requires organizations to rethink the role of communication. Media coverage, website traffic, and visibility are no longer the end goal. The challenge is to build a presence capable of influencing the entire decision journey.

It is also redefining how AI-powered discovery engines operate. According to a Muck Rack report that analyzed more than one million links cited by artificial intelligence models, **84% of the citations used by AI engines come from earned media**. This reinforces the strategic value of editorial authority and public relations in helping brands become sources that AI engines recognize and cite.

Against this backdrop, this ebook proposes a shift in perspective: transforming visibility into **influence** for brands seeking to be **discovered, considered, and chosen**.

The visibility myth

The belief that greater visibility inevitably leads to better business results has long been one of the foundations of modern marketing. Under this logic, growth is measured by volume: more content, more mentions, more impressions.

Today, however, that assumption is no longer sufficient. It confuses **exposure** with **influence**. **Exposure makes a brand visible. Influence determines whether it remains under consideration.**

In an environment saturated with information, exposure fades quickly.

A media mention may capture attention, but it does not necessarily build credibility. An article may improve visibility, but it does not guarantee that a brand will remain top of mind throughout the decision process.



The result is becoming increasingly common: **brands that are highly visible, yet absent from the final decision**. Not because they lack value, but because their presence fails to endure throughout the stages where that value is actually evaluated.

Today, competitive advantage no longer comes from how often a brand appears. It comes from its ability to **remain consistently present during the moments when buyers are forming their preferences**.

> Exposure makes a brand visible.
> **Influence determines whether it remains under consideration.**

How decisions are made today

The buying journey has fundamentally changed. What was once considered a relatively linear path has evolved into a dynamic process in which buyers consult multiple sources, validate information, compare perspectives, and build confidence before deciding.

Although every buying journey is different, most follow three essential stages:

01 Exploration

Buyers begin their research.
They consume content.
They compare alternatives.
They discover potential providers.

02 Validation

They look for evidence.
They compare opinions.
They assess authority.
They reduce uncertainty.

03 Decision

They choose the option that inspires the greatest confidence.

A decision is not a moment. It is the outcome of an entire journey.

Why being found is not enough

Being discovered is only the beginning of a **much broader decision-making process**.

Appearing at the right moment may earn a brand a place in the buyer's consideration set, but it does not guarantee that it will remain there—or become the preferred choice. Buyers continue their journey, consult additional sources, validate information, and compare alternatives.

In this environment, the greatest risk is no longer simply **not being found**. It is forgotten after being found.





Many communication strategies focus on optimizing entry points into the buying journey while overlooking what happens afterward. They succeed in attracting initial attention but fail to build a **sustained presence** throughout the decision process.

The consequence is clear: **As the buying journey progresses, the brand gradually loses relevance.**

> The advantage does not belong to the brand that appears first.
> **It belongs to the brand that remains present.**

The role of media in shaping preference

The role of media has evolved as well. Media are no longer simply distribution channels. They have become active participants in the decision-making process. Their value no longer lies solely in generating exposure, but in shaping how buyers discover, interpret, and validate a brand.

Not all media serve the same purpose. Throughout the buying journey, different types of media influence different stages of decision-making.

Discovery media	Help a brand enter the buyer's consideration set for the first time by increasing visibility among new audiences.
Influence media	Provide context, positioning, and deeper insights that strengthen perception and reinforce authority around specific topics.
Validation media	Function as independent credibility signals that reinforce trust and reduce uncertainty during the final stages of evaluation.

25%

of the references cited by AI models come from journalistic content.
(Muck Rack)

Editorial coverage and authority signals are among the sources AI models rely on when generating responses.

The real difference lies in how organizations understand the role of media within their communications strategy. When media are treated as a checklist, they generate volume. When they are managed as a system, they generate sustained influence throughout the decision journey.

A strategy focused exclusively on media coverage seeks exposure. A strategy built around influence seeks presence at the moments when that exposure truly matters.

Influence is not built through accumulation. It is built by design.

From visibility to discovery infrastructure

In today's environment, every interaction between a brand and its market carries greater strategic value.

A single publication is no longer an isolated event. It becomes a **discovery asset**—one that can be found, contributes to building authority, and continues creating value long after its initial publication.

This fundamentally changes the role of communication. Communication is no longer reactive. It becomes **structural**.

Its purpose is no longer limited to generating immediate impact. Instead, it is designed as a **Discovery Infrastructure**, where every piece of content, every media mention, every editorial citation, and every backlink contributes to a system that accumulates authority over time.

The difference is profound. A strategy built solely around visibility requires organizations to keep producing new content just to remain visible. A Discovery Infrastructure continues **generating influence long after each asset has been published**.

Over time, that accumulated presence becomes a competitive advantage that is exceptionally difficult to replicate.



Measuring influence in complex environments

Measurement must evolve as well.

Traditional communication metrics—primarily focused on volume and reach—are no longer sufficient to understand the true impact of a communications strategy. Today, what matters is not simply **how often a brand appears**, but **how consistently it remains present throughout the buyer's evaluation journey**.

This requires organizations to monitor a different set of signals.

Presence in relevant searches	The ability to appear at the moments when buyers are researching, evaluating alternatives, and forming opinions.
Presence in validation content	Visibility across media coverage, industry analysis, expert recommendations, and other trusted sources that strengthen credibility.
Consistency throughout the buying journey	Alignment between messaging, positioning, and every point of interaction with the market.
Ability to reduce uncertainty	The extent to which a brand generates the trust signals buyers need to make confident decisions.

Measurement is no longer merely descriptive. It becomes interpretive. It no longer reports activity. **It reveals influence.**

What category-leading brands do differently

Organizations that consistently outperform their competitors share a common characteristic. They do not pursue visibility as an isolated objective. They build systems capable of sustaining **presence, influence, and relevance throughout the entire decision journey**.

The brands that lead their categories consistently do five things differently:



They do not pursue visibility as an end in itself.

They use visibility as the foundation for building sustained market presence.

They do not depend on isolated moments.

Rather than relying on occasional campaigns or one-time successes, they design for continuity.

They do not create content simply to increase volume.

They build strategic assets that continue generating value and become part of a growing ecosystem over time.

They do not measure activity alone.

They measure influence, perception, and their ability to shape buying decisions.

They do not optimize simply to be found.

They optimize to become part of the answers, recommendations, and trusted validations that influence the market.

Above all, they understand that the information landscape has fundamentally changed. Information is no longer merely searched. It is **interpreted, organized, and recommended by multiple systems**—including those powered by artificial intelligence.

Institutionalizing this evolution

Adopting this approach begins with a strategic decision.

It is not simply about implementing new technologies or adding more communication tactics. It requires redefining the role of communication within the business—recognizing it as an active driver of influence throughout the customer decision journey.

Every transformation begins with a diagnosis.

The first step is to establish a clear understanding of the current situation: Where is the brand visible? At which moments in the buying journey does it influence decisions? Where does it lose relevance? These answers become the foundation for every strategic decision that follows.

From reactive to intentional.

Once that diagnosis is complete, communication stops being reactive and fragmented. It becomes intentional.

Building presence—not just impact.

Communication is no longer focused solely on generating isolated moments of visibility. Its purpose becomes far more strategic: To build presence where buyers form opinions. To create continuity across the decision journey. And to develop a Discovery Infrastructure capable of sustaining that presence over time.



Sources:
Muck Rack, What Is AI Reading?
Semrush, We Studied the Impact of AI Search on SEO Traffic. Here's What We Learned
Forrester Research, The Future of Digital Buying Behavior
Gartner, The New B2B Buying Journey
Google, Decoding Decisions: The Messy Middle of Purchase Behavior
McKinsey & Company, The Consumer Decision Journey
HubSpot, B2B Marketing Trends Report
Moz, SEO and PR The New Marketing Power Couple



The Next step

Decisions are no longer shaped solely by advertising, website traffic, or short-term visibility. They are built through cumulative signals of trust, sustained presence, and third-party validation throughout the buyer journey.

The brands that influence this new environment are not necessarily those that publish the most, but those that remain relevant at the moments when preference is truly formed.

At InfoSol, we help B2B organizations turn visibility into sustained influence by integrating public relations, editorial authority, strategic content, and digital presence into a unified discovery infrastructure.

> The brands that remain **present are the ones ultimately chosen.**

InfoSol-6.0
Strategic Impact Communications

Visibility is no longer enough.

Today, brands must also be discovered, understood, and recommended by AI systems.

If you'd like to explore how to achieve this, let's talk.

infosol.com.mx infosol@infosol.com.mx +52 55 8956 3190

InfoSol InfoSol InfoSol_

Blog: De Comunicación y Otras Pasiones InfoSol Mi Espacio