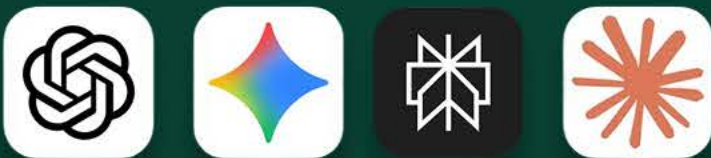




YOU PAID FOR THE CATEGORY. AI GAVE IT AWAY.

WORLD CUP 2026 SPONSOR AI VISIBILITY STUDY

AI assistants



50 prompts
across four question phases

2 runs, 4 days apart
Jul 1 & Jul 5, 2026

English, US locale
held constant across both runs



AGENDA

The Hero Finding

Perplexity gave Adidas' category to Nike, twice

03

The Thesis

Exclusivity ends where the AI conversation begins

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Methodology

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Why AI recall follows the web

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THE BOTTOM LINE

What AI assistants actually say about 2026 World Cup sponsors.

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TIER DOES NOT BUY AI VISIBILITY

A top-tier FIFA Partner scored **0.8%**
A junior 2026 sponsor scored **32.5%**

03

VISIBILITY SWINGS UP TO 8X BY MODEL

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ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini and Claude answer sponsorship questions from web signals, not from contracts.



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no brand named, the real test

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FOUR PROMPT PHASES

1

CATEGORY
FORMATION

→

2

ATTRIBUTE RECALL

→

3

PROOF & TRUST

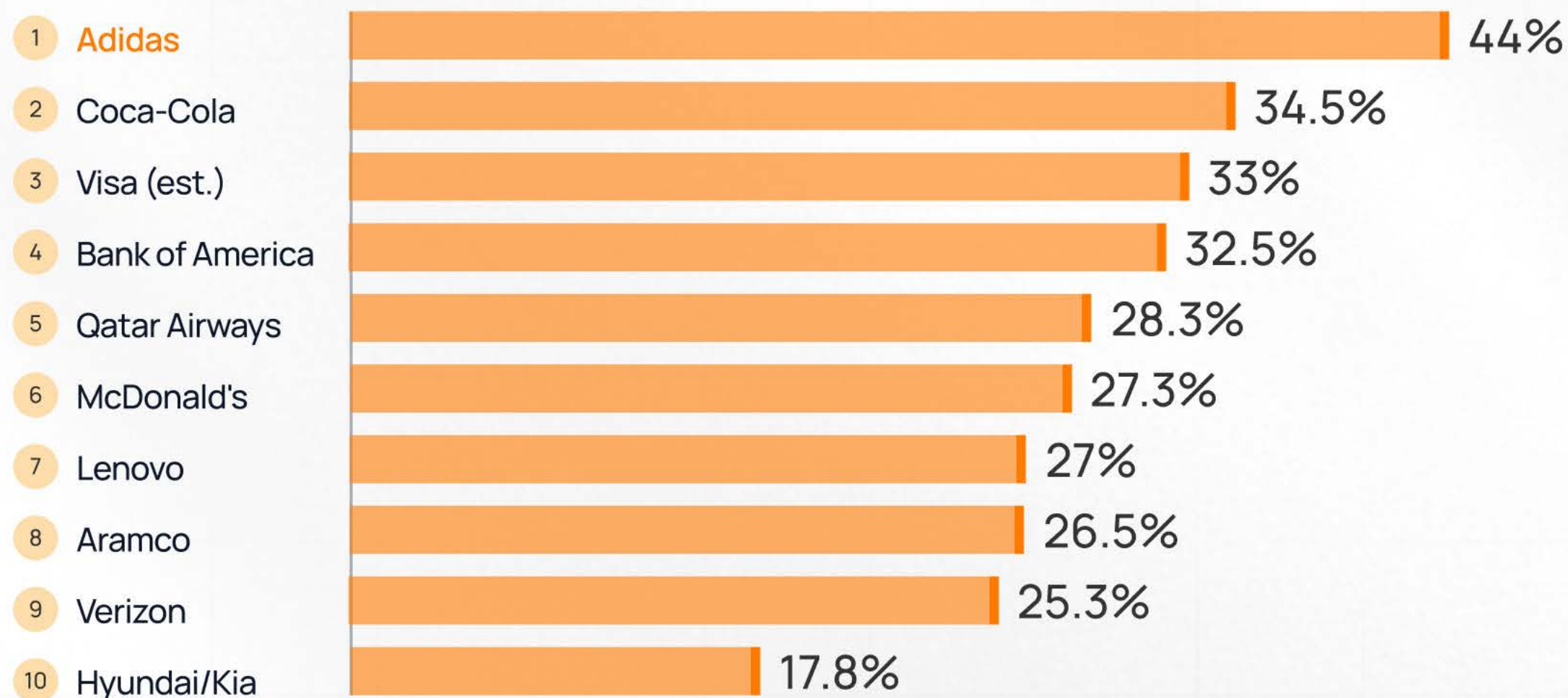
→

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COMPETITIVE
SELECTION

ADIDAS LEADS AND NO ONE BREAKS 50%

Average mention rate across both runs and all 4 models. Top 10 of 15 official sponsors.



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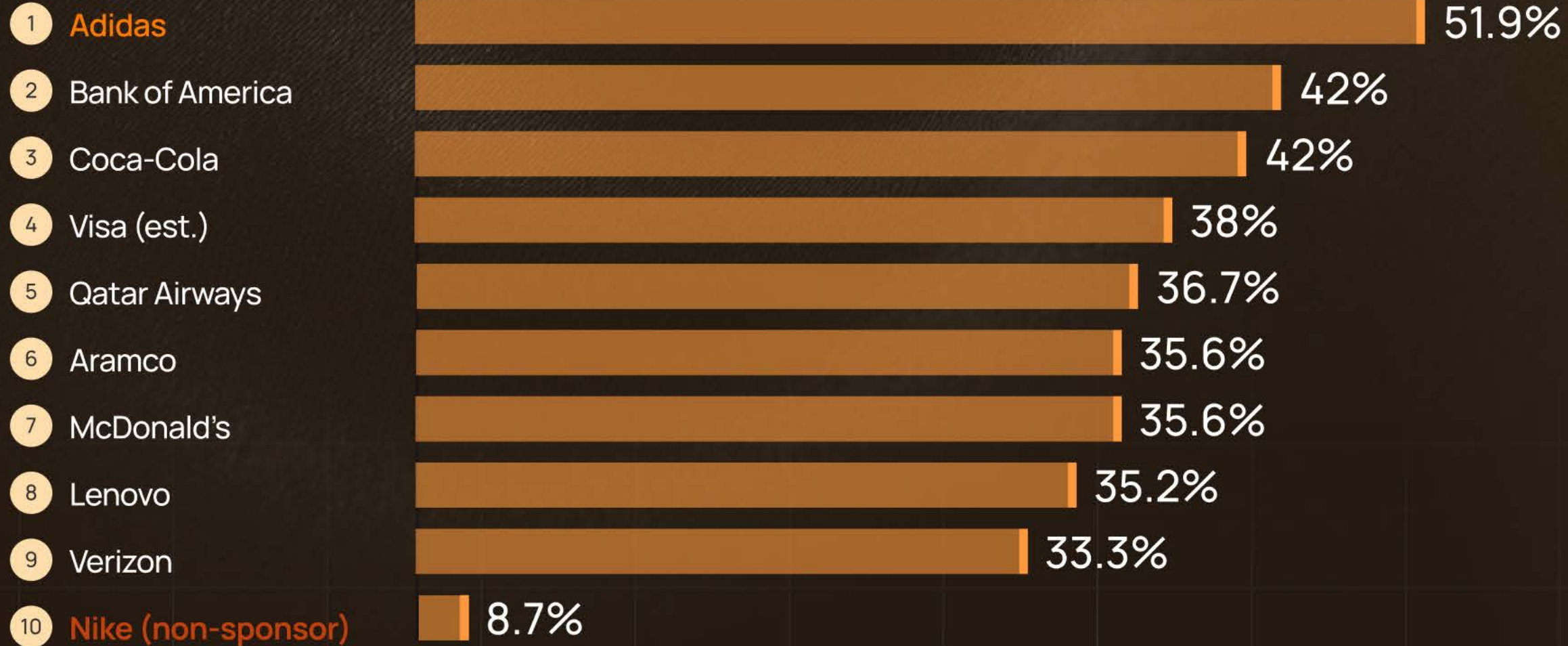
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The Real Test

WHAT AI VOLUNTEERS WITHOUT BEING ASKED.

Unbranded mention rate: the query names no brand, so AI must volunteer the sponsor unprompted (264 prompt-model units per entity).



ONLY ADIDAS CLEARS 50%

Nike gets volunteered into World Cup answers at 8.7%, unasked. That is 10x more than Mengniu (0.8%), a paying FIFA Partner.

American Airlines, a context-only Tournament Supporter, surfaced at 22.7% ahead of several official sponsors.

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THE AMBUSH GAP: A NON-SPONSOR MATCHED A PAYING SPONSOR



COMBINED MENTION RATE

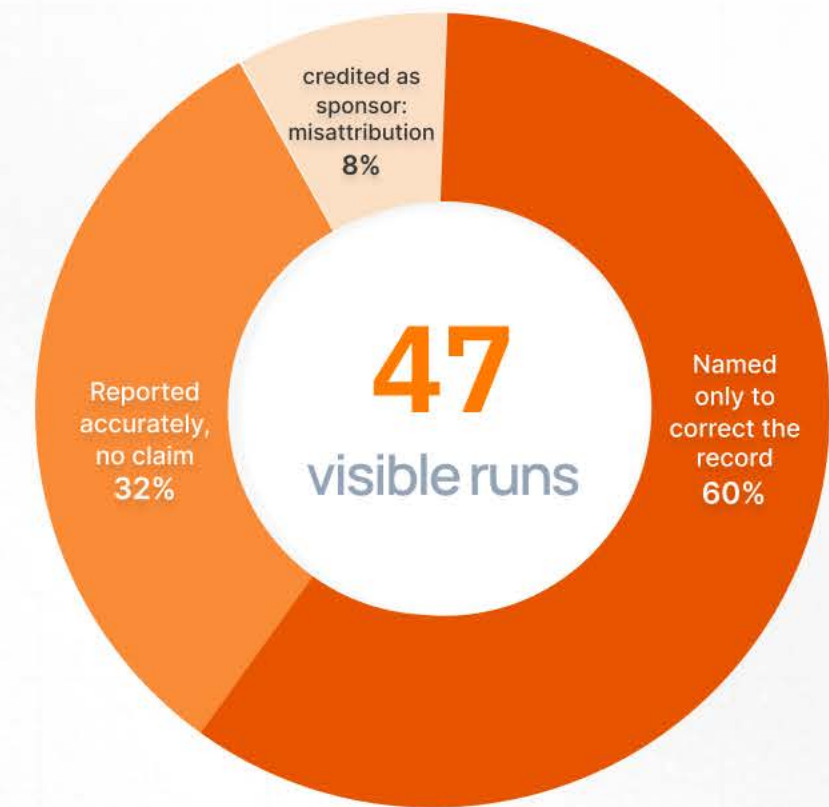
A brand that paid nothing achieved the same combined mention rate as an official World Cup sponsor, driven by the X2 campaign, 12 national-team kit deals, and the press coverage that followed.



PERPLEXITY IS THE SPECIFIC RISK

All 4 misattribution runs occurred on Perplexity, on the highest-stakes query: a user directly asking who holds the rights. That user left with the wrong answer, both times.

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Net effect: ~4.7% share-of-voice presence across all sponsorship prompt-model units

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WC Sponsor, tier two, new for 2026

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MENGNIU FIGURE REFLECTS ENGLISH-LANGUAGE AI. NATIVE-LANGUAGE VISIBILITY DIFFERS.

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AI can't surface what isn't publicly documented. Mengniu reached **only 0.8% visibility** despite being a FIFA Partner.

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Per-Model Breakdown

FOUR AI ASSISTANTS, FOUR DIFFERENT SPONSOR STORIES

Per-model mention rates show where each sponsor's web signal is landing and where it is not.

				
1 Adidas	45%	45%	43%	43%
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Claude 18% vs ChatGPT 8%, the clearest model-specific content gap.

The right question isn't "what's our average score?" It's which model shows the biggest gap, and why. The gap is diagnostic.

WHAT EACH SPONSOR SHOULD DO NEXT.

The diagnosis is content, so every fix below is a content fix, not a media buy.

ADIDAS

Fix Perplexity's retrieval signal: put authoritative, structured claims about the FIFA partnership and its 1970 provenance on the sources Perplexity indexes.

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Close the English-language content gap behind the 8x ChatGPT-Perplexity divide. The asset (the sponsorship) exists; the gap is distribution and structured claim density in web sources.

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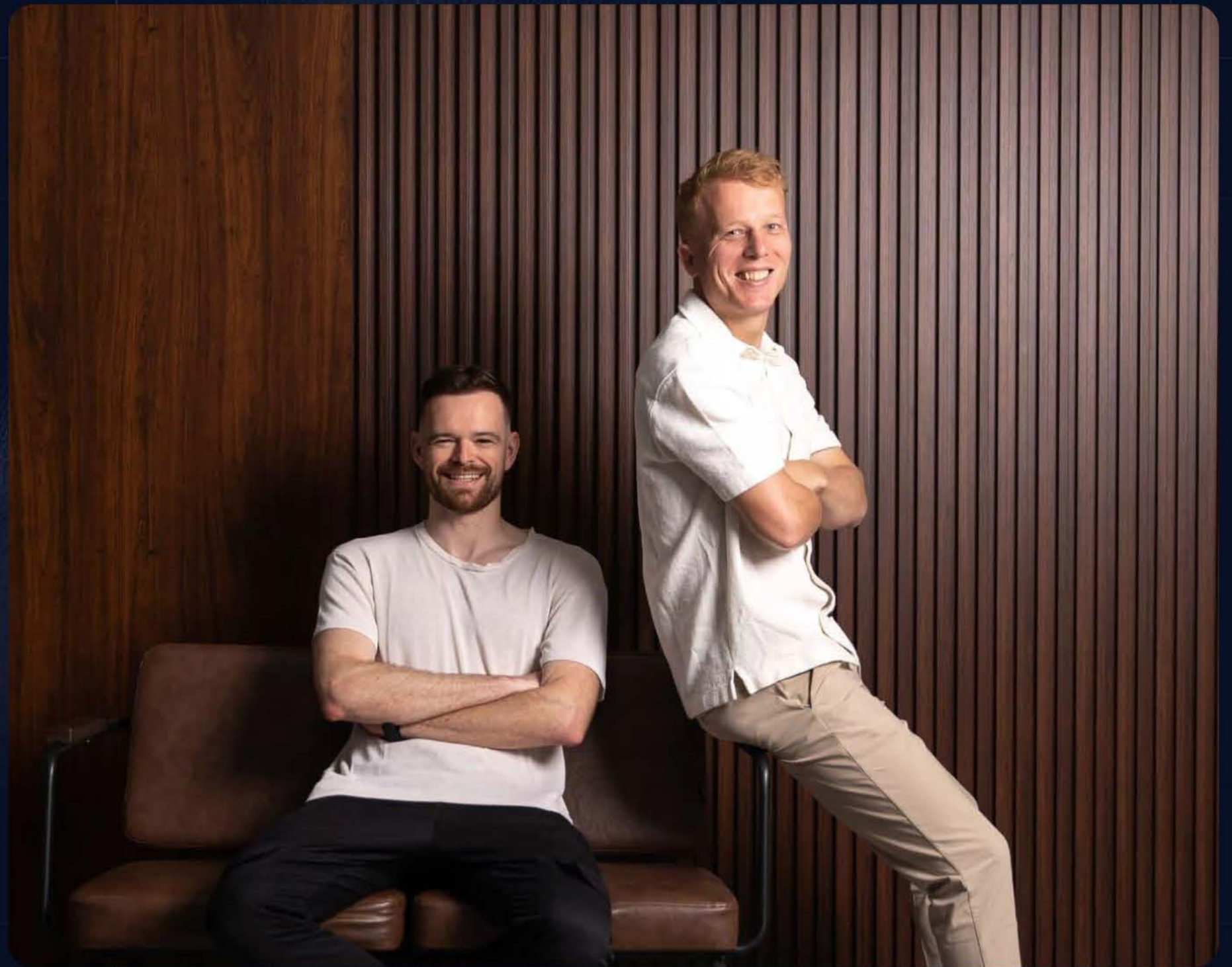


Questions?

Let's build what's next for AI visibility together.

Talk to us →

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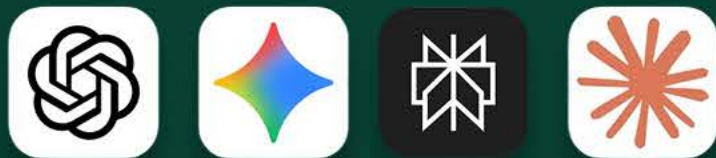




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OPTIONAL Don't have brand guidelines yet?

ADD-ON: We can build them. Tone of voice, creative platform,. Available as a standalone add-on.

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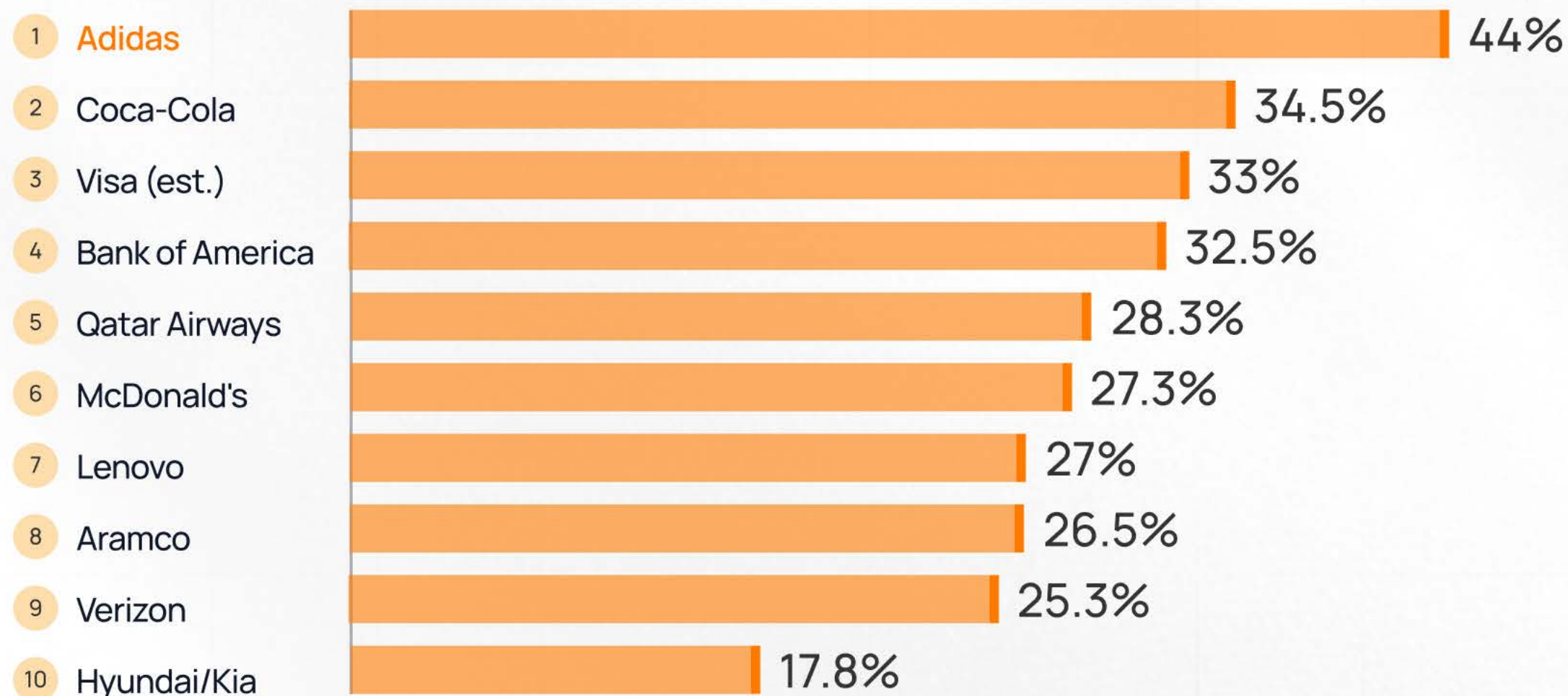


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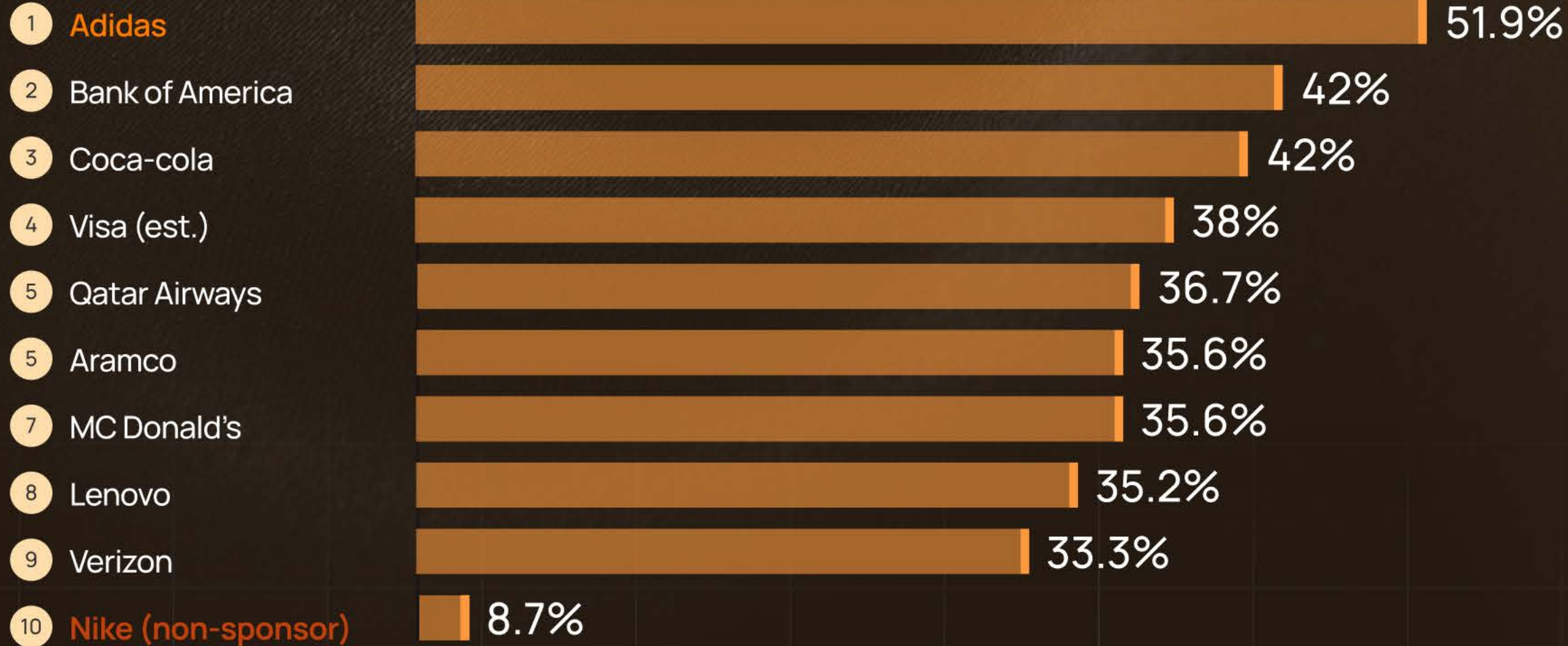
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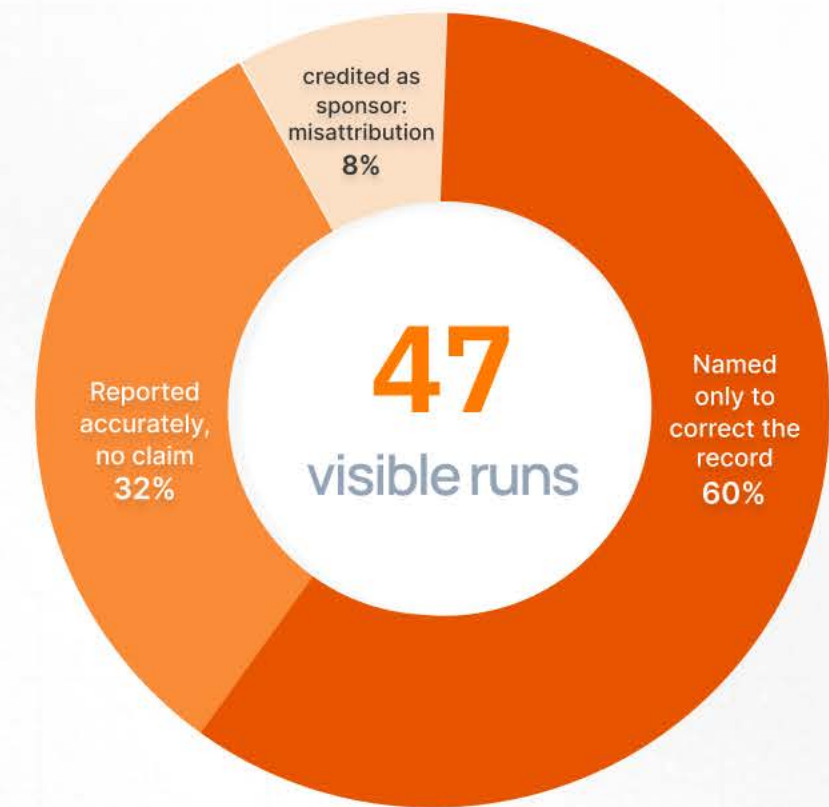
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