

JOYCE TSANG CONTENT MARKETING · B2B CONTENT GUIDE

Understanding the New Holy Grail for B2B Content

Why authenticity and Buyability are what make brands discoverable — and top of mind — in the AI era.

Prepared for agency partners and B2B marketing leaders · September 2026



IN THIS GUIDE

What's inside

SECTIONS 01 — 02

**Why you should
care**
and the problem

SECTIONS 03 — 04

**The Buyability
Signals**
and the APAC search
evidence

SECTIONS 05 — 07

**The solution,
conclusion**
and where JTCM
comes in

A note on capitalisation: *Buyability* is capitalised throughout because it is the proper name of the framework introduced by WARC, LinkedIn and LIONS

01 / WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

Real voices from real people

“In a world flooded with AI-generated everything — the brands that stand out are the ones that still feel real. Building authenticity into your message through creators, through your partnerships, and through your executives and employees. **Real voices from real people.** That's what's going to matter.”

Jessica Jensen — Chief Marketing Officer, LinkedIn · IAB NewFronts 2026

LinkedIn's own CMO reframed authenticity from a *brand attribute* into a **discovery strategy**.

That distinction is the whole point of this guide. When large language models recommend companies, they prioritise credible sources, expert perspectives and professional dialogue. Authenticity is no longer a tone-of-voice preference — it is the raw material that decides whether you appear in the answer at all.

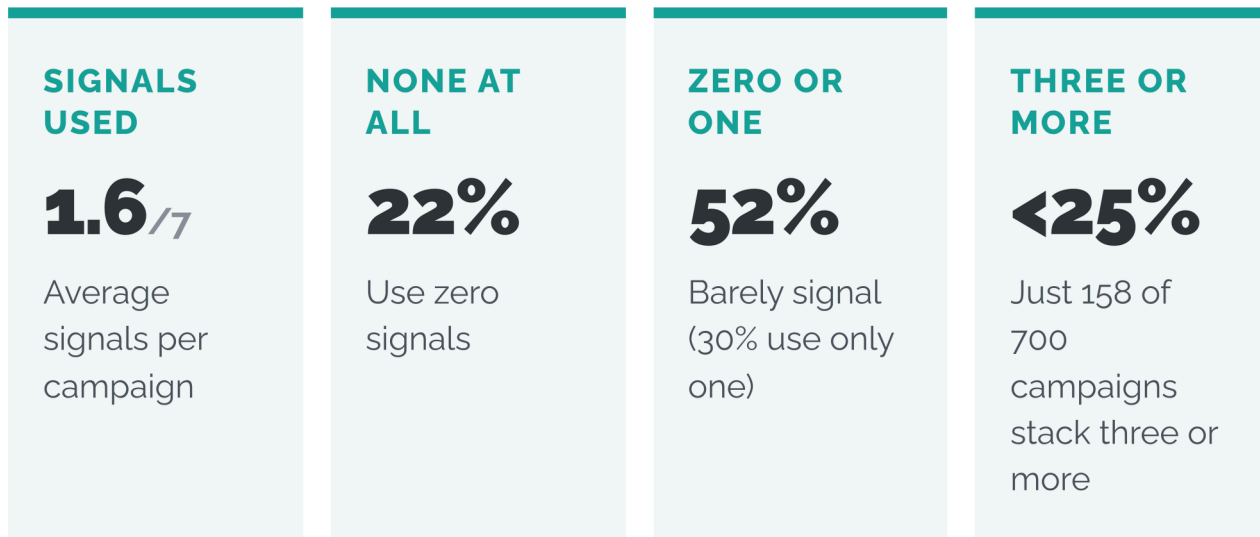
02 / THE PROBLEM

The signals that make a brand easier to buy are almost entirely unused

WARC, LinkedIn and LIONS Advisory analysed more than **700 award-nominated B2B campaigns** — the WARC database 2010–2025, including entries and winners from Cannes Lions' B2B category, the Effies and the WARC Effectiveness Awards.

First, what the research actually measures. Buyability is not a score for how clever or well-made a campaign is. It measures whether the campaign gives a buying group **the confidence to choose you**. The seven signals are things a marketer deliberately engineers *into* the campaign — a named customer, a peer reference, a use case that mirrors the buyer's own situation. Their effect is that buying groups feel safer committing. So the question the research answers is this: **when a campaign carries more of these signals, are buyers more likely to buy from that brand?**

They are. The same research then found that almost nobody stacks the signals:



Among the campaigns that *do* stack them, the commercial difference is large. High-Buyability campaigns were:



+63%

More likely to
report higher
ROI

+110%

More likely to
report revenue
growth

+91%

Consideration,
preference,
intent

+24%

More likely to
improve

How to read these numbers accurately. They are comparative: campaigns scoring high on Buyability were *more likely to report* these uplifts than campaigns scoring low. They are not a guarantee that adding signals produces a set percentage, and the low-signal group was not measured as a “less ROI” control.

The most defensible reading comes from Turner herself, answering the obvious objection that this is simply good work beating bad: “Out of a bunch of great campaigns, the ones that score more Buyability signals did significantly better.” The correlation is strong, it is consistent across brand and commercial measures, and it holds among campaigns that were already award-nominated.

03 / THE FRAMEWORK

The Buyability Signals

Mimi Turner, Head of Marketplace Innovation at LinkedIn, groups the seven signals into three that a team can carry into a creative brief: **Recommendations, Relationships and Relatability.**

3 OF THE 7 SIGNALS

Recommendations

01 Customer validation

Named clients saying you solved their problem — not logos or aggregate stats.

02 Peer & expert validation

A reference from someone in a similar role and company size. Peers outweigh experts.

03 Celebrity & influencer validation

A recognisable third-party voice lending credibility you cannot self-declare.

2 OF THE 7 SIGNALS

Relationships

04 Familiarity & ways-of-working alignment

Evidence your process, pace and priorities match how the buyer's team already operates.

05 Long-term partnership

Demonstrated willingness to stay past the first engagement — retainers, renewals, multi-year arcs.

2 OF THE 7 SIGNALS

Relatability

06 Built for companies like yours

Real customer situations and use cases the buyer recognises as their own.

07 Category leadership

Credible standing in the category — earned through the six signals above, not claimed.

04 / SEARCH EVIDENCE — APAC

Organic strength is what drives AI visibility

You now know which signals a creative campaign needs to raise the likelihood of a buyer choosing the brand. The next question is the practical one: **where do those signals actually get seen?** A signal only counts if a buyer meets it, and buyers no longer meet information only at the point of purchase. Recommendations, Relationships and Relatability have to be present across the touchpoints a buying group moves through — the comparison page they read before speaking to anyone, the case study a peer forwards internally, the expert commentary that surfaces when someone asks an assistant what to consider. Visibility, in other words, is how the signals travel. And the place where most of that research now happens is AI.

The Asia-Pacific data makes that case on its own:

SOURCE & SCOPE	WHAT THE APAC DATA SHOWS
Tenten GEO — 2026 GEO Trend Report 1,284 real B2B buying queries × 6 engines, Jul–Dec 2025.	Third-party sources are cited in 87% of B2B selection queries on AI Overviews , 92% Perplexity, 74% Copilot, 63% Gemini, 51% ChatGPT. The answer layer is built mostly from sources other than your own site.
LeapOut Digital — “Ranked But Bypassed” 11 brands (7 Philippine), GA4 + Search Console, 59M impressions over 12 months.	Brands kept ranking — but CTR sat at 1.6%–2.3% ; roughly 97 in every 100 people who saw the brand never clicked. A dedicated “AI Assistant” channel appeared in GA4 for the first time in 2026 across 5 Philippine brands.
Green Hat × 6sense — APAC B2B Buyer Journey Research 2025	93% of APAC B2B buyers already use AI in their buying process. Requirements are set before sellers engage 85% of the time; 72% of the shortlist

632 APAC B2B organisations surveyed.	is decided on day one, and the winner was on that day-one shortlist 95% of the time.
<p>Forrester — Buyers' Journey Survey 2025 (APAC)</p> <p>Thousands of decision-makers across SEA, ANZ, North Asia, South Asia, Japan and South Korea.</p>	<p>APAC buying groups are the largest in the world: 15 internal stakeholders plus 11 external influencers. Of those using genAI, 96% considered at least one additional provider — AI widens the consideration set.</p>

THE APAC READ

Authenticity and Buyability are not two programmes — they are one, and neither belongs to branding or lead acquisition alone. Both are fed by content. Branding needs authority-building content to be recognised for something; lead acquisition needs substantiated content to clear a buying group's risk test. **Authenticity is the raw material that fuels both** — it is what makes a customer reference sound like a person rather than a testimonial, and what makes a comparison page credible enough to be repeated by someone else. That is why the brands that compound peer validation and third-party proof are the ones that turn up in the answer layer when a buyer asks. Which brings us to the mechanism behind it.

05 / THE SOLUTION

Why authenticity is what makes you discoverable in AI

Turner's central claim is that these two jobs are no longer separate:

"B2B marketers have got to solve for two problems now. How to get buying groups to agree and how to get recommended by an LLM. The seven signals are built to solve for both."

Mimi Turner — Head of Marketplace Innovation, LinkedIn

A campaign engineered for one, she notes, tends to score on the other without trying.

The mechanism

An LLM assembling a recommendation looks for exactly what a cautious buyer looks for: **authoritative voices that broadly agree**.

The signal layer AI retrieval systems use — customer proof, peer recommendation, expert endorsement, relevance to a specific buying situation — is the same layer that gives a buying group the confidence to commit. The two systems are structurally coupled, and both compound over time.

Turner's proof point is human, and it is the whole argument in one sentence:

"Nobody in our research ever bought anything without phoning somebody and asking, 'What did you think?'"

06 / CONCLUSION

The priority is authority, not mentions

A successful brand campaign that increases Buyability — and the ROI that follows — is no longer won on quantity or budget. It is won on **authenticity in branding** and **authority-building content**.

Authority is what earns citations. Citations are what carry the seven signals outward. And leads now receive those signals filtered through AI, which is where the majority of buying research happens.

THE CHAIN, IN ORDER

1. **Authenticity in branding** and **authority-building content** replace volume and budget as the growth levers.
2. Authority raises the likelihood of **citations** from credible third parties.
3. Those citations are how the **seven Buyability signals** reach a buying group — customer proof, peer and expert validation, category context.
4. The majority of leads receive that evidence **filtered through AI**, inside the answer layer, before they ever speak to a seller.

So the priority stays where it has always mattered most: **crawable, well-structured, genuinely authoritative pages** — not chasing mentions. Citations are a byproduct of authority, and the AI Overview link itself converts poorly.

07 / WHERE JTCM COMES IN

One content strategy. Two problems solved.

Fuel peer validation and third-party proof

Joyce Tsang Content Marketing helps brands devise a content strategy with a clear key messaging platform — the kind that fuels **peer validation and third-party proof**, and in turn drives discoverability in AI models.

This is why the seven signals are worth building into the platform from the start. The same work gives your buying group **consensus they can defend internally**, and gives the LLM **the authoritative, agreeing voices it needs to recommend you**.

LinkedIn's framing and AI-search visibility are not two strategies. They are one — a single content platform that carries authenticity into every touchpoint, so that Recommendations, Relationships and Relatability reach the buying group wherever they are researching. That is the bridge between your LinkedIn work and your AI visibility.

Let's map the signal gaps in your current content platform →
joycetsangcontentmarketing.com



SOURCES

Evidence base

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Signal labels are as described in published coverage of the WARC × LinkedIn × LIONS Advisory research. LinkedIn's full signal chart is published inside the report.