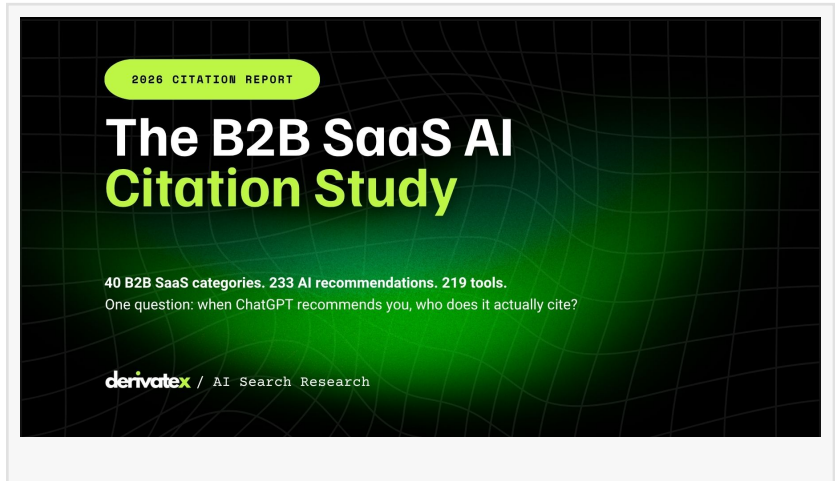


# Study: ChatGPT Cites a Recommended SaaS Tool's Own Site Just 12% of the Time

*A 2026 analysis of 40 software categories found ChatGPT cites a recommended vendor's own site just 11.6% of the time. G2 and Capterra: nearly zero.*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, INDIA, June 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- ChatGPT recommends business software constantly, but it cites the recommended tool's own website only 11.6% of the time, according to the [B2B SaaS AI Citation Study](#), a new analysis

of 40 software categories released today by DerivateX. The other 88.4% of the time, the citation behind the recommendation credits a third party, such as a media article, a competitor's blog, or a Reddit thread.



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When ChatGPT recommends a software tool, it cites that tool's own website only 11.6% of the time. The other 88% of the credit goes to someone else.”

*Apoorv Sharma, Co-Founder,  
DerivateX*

The result exposes a gap most software marketers do not know they have. Being recommended by an AI assistant and being cited by it are two separate events, and the study names the distance between them the citation ownership gap. A brand can be named as a top choice in an AI answer while the clickable source beside it points somewhere the brand does not own and cannot measure.

For the study, DerivateX put one buyer-style question to ChatGPT for each of 40 B2B SaaS categories, from CRM and marketing automation to data infrastructure and

developer tools, with web search enabled, and repeated every question ten times. That produced 233 software recommendations across 219 distinct tools.

Two findings stood out.

First, citation is nearly automatic: ChatGPT attached a source to 92.3% of the tools it named, but 87.4% of those citations pointed to a third party rather than to the recommended vendor. The

contest is not whether AI cites a source, but whose source it cites.

Second, the review platforms that much of the software industry optimizes for were almost absent. Review aggregators including G2, Capterra, and TrustRadius together accounted for 0.9% of all citations, and G2 and Capterra each received zero.

The sources ChatGPT cited instead were overwhelmingly independent and niche blogs and vendor-published content, which made up 81.9% of citations, compared with 8.8% from major media and 8.4% from community sites, almost all of it Reddit. The cited pages shared a clear profile. Every one used list structure, 78% carried the current year in the title or headline, 68% included a comparison table, and 56% included a frequently asked questions section.

"Most teams celebrate when they see their name in ChatGPT, then stop," said Apoorv Sharma, co-founder of DerivateX. "The recommendation is the easy part. The citation, the page the AI actually credits and links to, is where the discovery and the pipeline come from, and it is almost never the vendor's own site."

The study also found a repeatable way to win the citation. Vendors that publish a current, well-structured comparison of their own category, competitors included, were frequently cited as the single source behind several recommendations in one answer. In one case, a procurement vendor's category guide was the cited source for five separate brand recommendations.

"The brands that win AI search will be the ones that stop chasing mentions and start owning the sources that get cited," Sharma said. "Often that means publishing the definitive comparison of your category yourself, rather than waiting for someone else to."

The findings arrive as more buyers begin software research inside AI assistants rather than search engines, which turns the question of which source an assistant trusts into a direct commercial concern for software companies.

The full B2B SaaS AI Citation Study, including the complete methodology and category-level data, is available on the DerivateX website.

#### About DerivateX

DerivateX is a search agency for B2B SaaS companies, specializing in SEO and [generative engine optimization](#). It helps software brands get found and cited inside ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini, and Claude so they earn qualified inbound from AI-assisted buyers. The company publishes ongoing research and buyer resources on AI search, including a regularly updated guide to the [best AEO agencies for B2B SaaS](#). DerivateX is based in Bengaluru, India, and works with B2B SaaS teams between \$5m–\$50m ARR worldwide.

Apoorv Sharma

DerivateX

+918073510608 ext.

apoorv@derivatex.agency

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