



Tangled Roots

Ragan

Creating Discoverable Narratives

*Building Brand Stories That Surface Everywhere
Audiences Search, Scroll & Ask*

Ragan Communications Leadership Council · Group Learning Session

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Right now, a **machine** is
writing your **front page**.

You didn't write it. Legal didn't approve it. A stakeholder just read it.

What We'll Cover

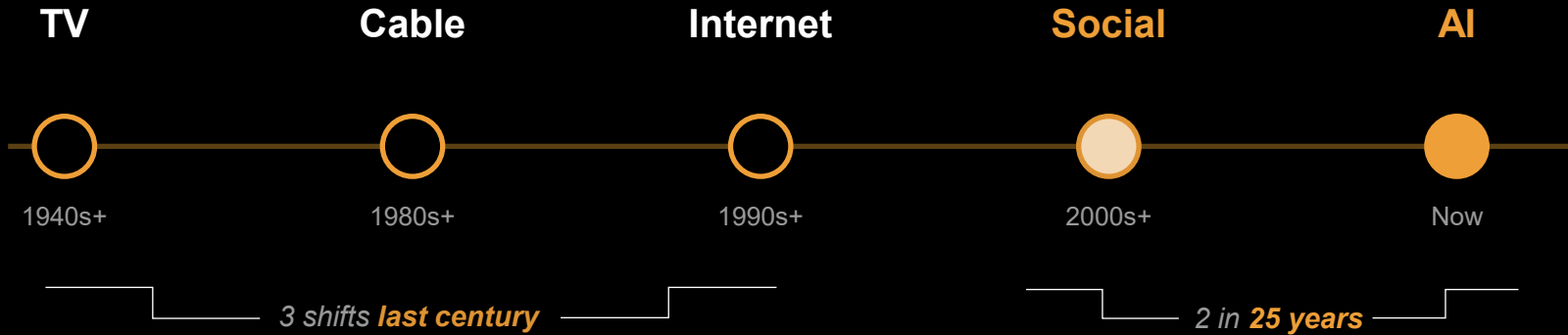
- I. The New Discovery Landscape** *Why the old search game changed*
- II. Build Narratives That Surface** *Today's winning content architecture*
- III. The Human Advantage** *What only we can do to create true discoverability and impact*
- IV. Conceptual to Actionable** *The concrete moves to apply*
- V. Monday Morning & The Horizon** *What you do this week and beyond*
- VI. Wrap / Q&A**

01

The New Discovery Landscape

Discovery didn't disappear. It scattered and multiplied... into feeds, assistants and answers.

The Speed of Shifts



*Two seismic shifts in a quarter-century, and the latest arrived **faster than we could form an opinion.***

The Immovable Object Meets... AI Force

Google Changes Its Search Box for the First Time in 25 Years

Using a new Gemini A.I. model, the tech giant is overhauling its search box dimensions to answer longer queries, adding a video-generation tool and simplifying online shopping.

Behavior by Inertia

Audiences rely on AI-assembled answers, without necessarily choosing to. That makes AI the backbone of discovery whether the room likes it or not.

~1/3

of all Americans *knowingly* engage with AI multiple times a day*

~50%

of all Google searches include an AI Overview**

2.5B

monthly users reached by Google AI Overviews alone#

>60%

of Google searches now end with no click at all^

Stop asking, “How do we generate interest in our story?”

Start asking, “How does our story generate the answer?”

02

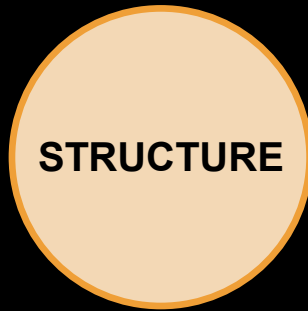
Build Narratives That Surface

A framework for discoverable content creation.

The S³ Narrative Model



Be the origin,
not the echo



Build it to
be lifted



Sign it like
only you could

Validated by Data: S³ × SOAR

Notified analyzed 150M+ AI citations and published a framework: SOAR. It maps to S³.

SOAR*

S³

Originality

→

SOURCE *Own original data & POV*

Structure

→

STRUCTURE *Make it liftable*

Authority

→

SOURCE + STRUCTURE *Publish where trust is signaled*

Recency

→

the habit S³ adds *Keep re-seeding*

What SOAR leaves out: the human *Signature*; the part a model can't make. Borrow their R. Keep your S.

Comms Owns the Source

Encyclopedic Sources (Wikipedia)

Earned media (legacy outlets, trade media, trusted v

Independent validators (forums, review sites, comm

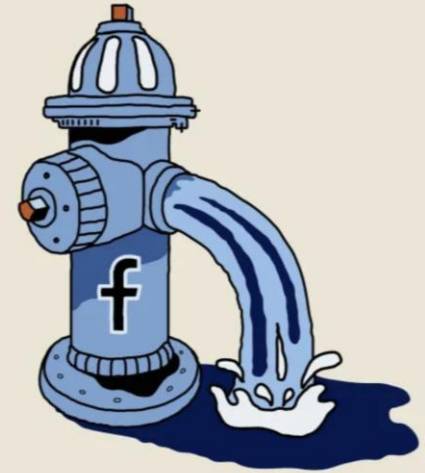
Owned — your site & newsroom

Paid

~94% of AI citations come from non-paid sources*. This is PR's home turf: earned + owned.

Publishers reckon with declining Facebook referral traffic as the platform pulls away from news

By Sara Guaglione · October 4, 2023 · [f](#) [X](#) [in](#) [📧](#)



Build It to Be Lifted



Build It to Be Lifted

■ Lead with the answer

Key takeaways up top, within two inches of the byline.

■ Real specifics

Numbers, dates, named sources. Fact density wins.

■ Schema & metadata

Structure discipline (intro block, H2 / H3 tags, tables & bullets). Hand the JSON-LD tags to your web team.

■ Question headers & FAQs

The easiest high-impact move there is.

■ Short, parsable quotes

Tighten executive quotes so a model can lift them.

■ Same facts everywhere

Consistency builds consensus.

Write for the Audience, Satisfy the Machine

Smart brevity works

The way an LLM answers is the way Axios writes: bolded, bulleted, clear.

“Why it matters.” “The big picture.” “State of play.”

Write how people actually ask

Not: “What is a backpack?”

But: “Is this backpack good for my daily bike commute in Seattle?”

Own the Question *and* the Answer

Spotify Wrapped

Proprietary first-party data, packaged once a year, becomes the most-cited, most-shared music story every December. Nobody can out-content it, because nobody else has the data.

Choice Mutual Retirement Content

Build data-backed report & content* to “own” the answer on whether AI is accurate for life insurance quotes (highly cited by Gemini); pairs with a repository of simple, LLM-friendly content, updated regularly, with executives-as-writers.

What's the one dataset or point of view only YOU could credibly own?

Discovery-First Storytelling



81% of facial skincare
Questions *



Owned



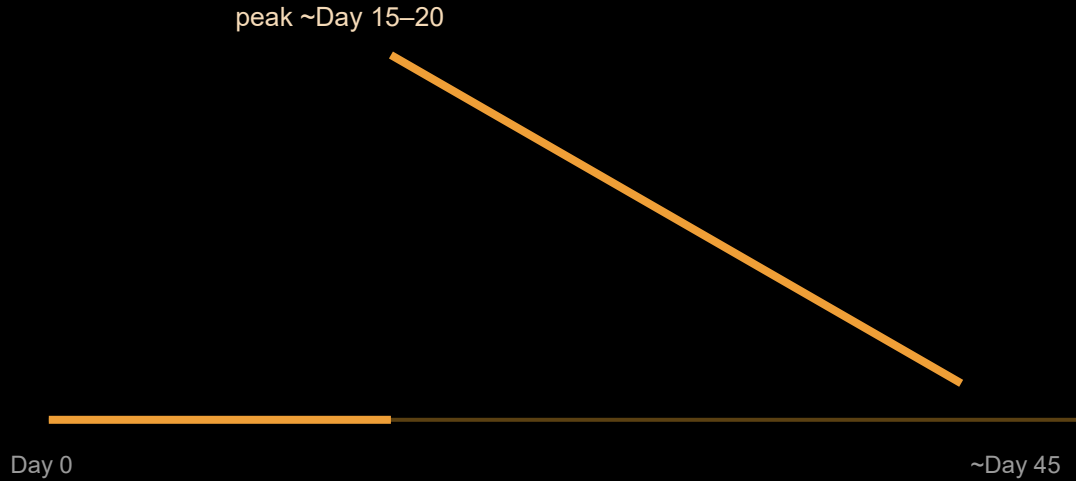
Earned



Social

S³, Consistency

Discoverability Is a Habit, Not a “Launch”



A piece of content's visibility in an LLM

■ Refresh to Re-seed

One-and-done doesn't hold. Refresh key narratives routinely.

■ Rethink Timelines

Visibility builds for weeks; look forward to – but also past – the first day.

■ Recency Reigns

Trust's new fast lane.

03

The Human Advantage

In an AI world, originality and judgment are the scarcest assets.

Discoverability Isn't Robotic

■ A real point of view

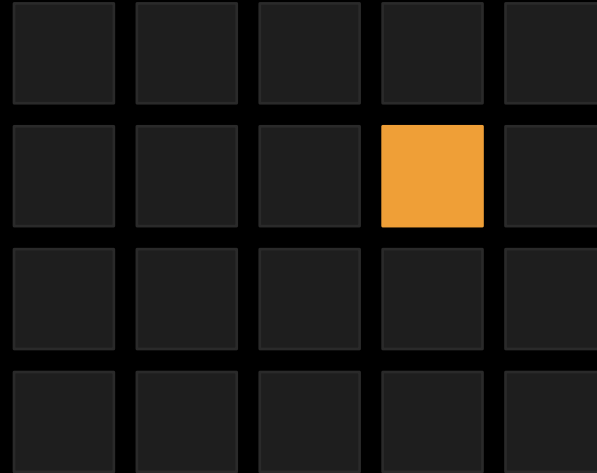
A stance, not a summary. The thing a model won't venture.

■ Named expertise

The byline, the reviewer, the lived proof only you have.

■ Editorial judgment

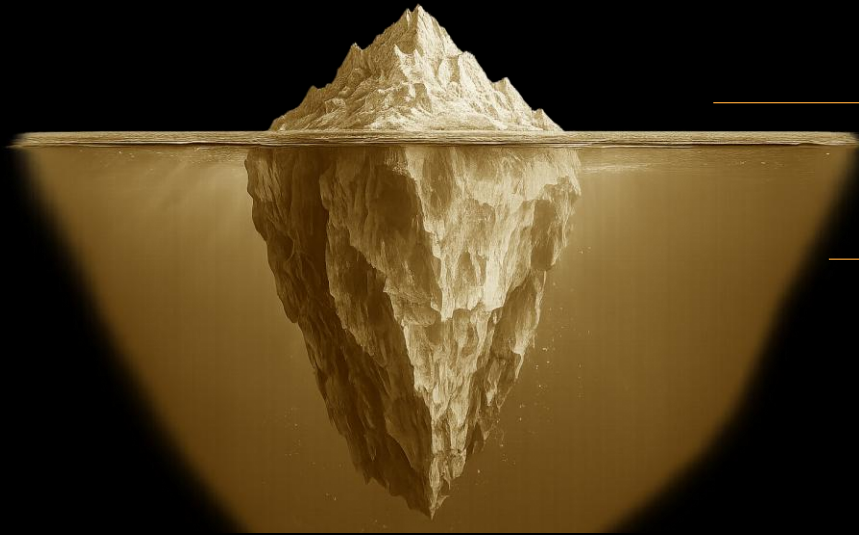
Knowing your ICP, the culture around us, what NOT to say, and what's worth your name.



*AI made average free.
Distinctive got expensive.*

The Discoverability Gap

AI can only surface what already exists in findable, structured form.
Almost everything that makes a business interesting isn't there – without your skills.



Discoverable

What LLMs can find, quote, trust.

Invisible without Human Touch

*The customer win. The R&D lightbulb.
The founder's real story. Trapped in a
deck, a CRM, a Slack thread, a mind.*

80-90% of an organization's information is "dark" *

04

Conceptual to Actionable

You don't need to start with wholesale change; just the first chess moves on the board.

Where We Go Next

TOOL UP

- Monitor: Profound, Otterly.ai, inthemix.ai
- Co-Build: Create agents and automated runs; 10x a lean team
- Enter with Honesty: Take and assess the mirror test

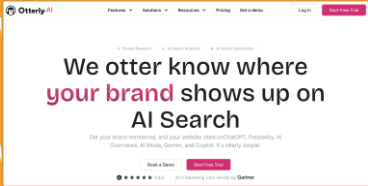
ORGANIZE

- Create the “answers” brief for every comms beat or assignment
- Enroll cross-functional teams: marketing, e-comm, HR & legal
- Lead as the quarterback; you own the source of truth and this is a world you know best

MEASURE

- Share of answer
- Message / Key product accuracy
- Earned citations volume / growth

Tool Up



W
?

W
d

otterly AI
Features · Solutions · Resources · Pricing · Get started · Log in · [Get your free trial](#)

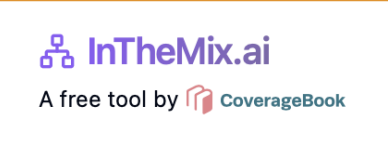
What do you
know about
your brand?

**We otter know where
your brand shows up on
AI Search**

Get your brand mentioned, and see who's talking about it. Powered by AI.
Discover who's talking about your brand on Google, Bing, and Copilot. It's a safety net.

Book a Demo [Get your free trial](#)

5.0 ★★★★★ [See all reviews](#) [Get started](#)



W
d

InTheMix.ai
A free tool by [CoverageBook](#)

What is my audience
looking to know?



What are they looking
for today?

What questions do
they have that
I haven't
yet been asked?



Organize

The Answer Brief

What questions are being asked by our audience?

What is answering those questions now?



What questions does (Y) answer?

What do we need to ask or create for (Y) to answer more questions?

How do we make those answers interesting, real and discoverable?

Organize

Enroll partners, lead the charge.



Marketing

e-comm

Legal

HR

Measure

Share of
Answer

Message
Accuracy

Earned Citation
Volume /
Growth

Your Monday Morning Checklist

- 1 Find out your questions and who owns the answers.** *Audit LLMs across several unbranded prompts.*
- 2 Compare it to your narrative.** *Determine if your story is answering the questions that matter.*
- 3 Activate the agents.** *Automate intelligence on how your audience is thinking and what they're asking.*
- 4 Evaluate your owned real estate.** *Are you your own best source?*
- 5 Publish one thing only a human at your company could write.** *A real POV, with a byline.*
- 6 Set one metric: share of answer.** *A real POV, with a byline.*

And Beyond...

Earned Media Strategy

- Audit the sources cited most in “ownable” questions
- Prioritize narratives to fit most cited sources; position updates when possible
- Map narrative “lookalikes” from top source coverage

Content Strategy

- Use AI insights to create content pillars
- Map content plans & editorial strategy to pillars
- Answer narrative “lookalikes” with content

Crisis Communications

- Identify trust gaps across LLM
- Build answers into site architecture; monitor & update
- Adjust messaging hierarchy to address vulnerabilities

Product / Campaign Strategy

- Create horizontal content plans around key USPs, w/ Q&A mindset
- Align media strategy & seeding plans to top citations
- Answer narrative “lookalikes” with content

Cross-Functional Management

- Formalize relationship with web / e-comm
- Lead with reporting & stakeholder management
- Enroll, engage, educate, repeat.



Be the source.

Build it to lift.

Sign it like only you could.

Make your story answer the question.

Evaluate, repeat, iterate.

*Discovery is more crowded, but also more honest.
It rewards what you already do best.
Lead from the front and cement your seat at the table.*

Let's talk (more).

Questions now, and whenever you're ready.

Built & ran first global newsroom (PR, social, content, e-comm) at Reebok

Led storytelling at Ford Motor Company

Helmed PR, editorial & influencer at Activision Blizzard

Ran U.S. comms at Tinder

Turned copy into content & commerce for Nintendo, Unilever, adidas, LEGO

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