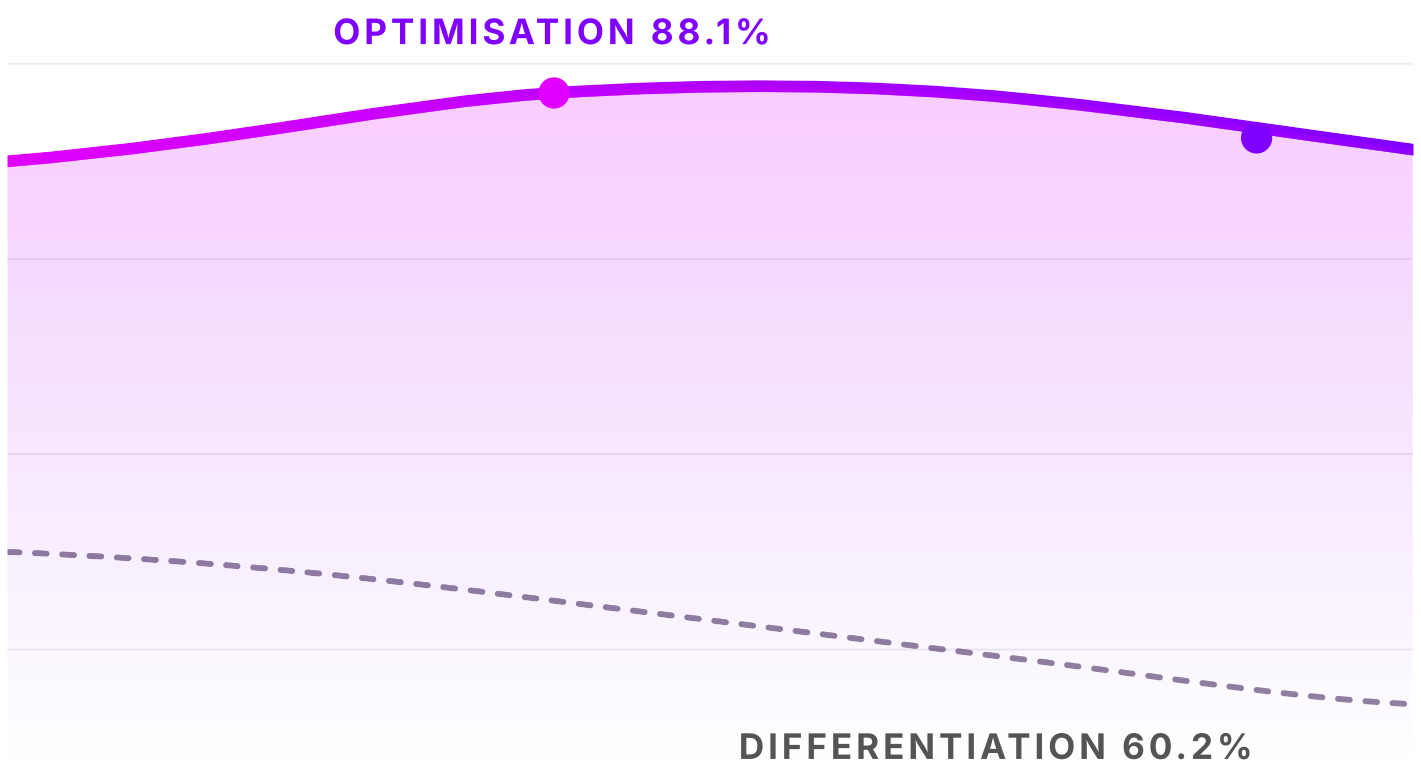
Demand-Genius | Literal Humans

THE HRTECH CONTENT BENCHMARK

What 90,000 pages say about HRTech content in the AI era.



+90,000
PAGES ANALYSED

2026

Inside the report.

Can Marketers transition from optimization to differentiation?

HRTech content tells the story of the sector's evolution. You can plot the clear transition from operational to cultural, peaking in COVID as brands sought to retain employee connectivity, and back to operational and regulatory focus as brands emerged from it.

In this study, we used our AI to analyse +90,000 pieces of HRTech content across keyword optimisation, information gain, authority and more.

The goal isn't to expose brands; it's to understand the state of content in the space as it navigates the transition to AI-led discovery. The picture is clear. Content is exceptionally well optimised; the category scores 88% for accuracy and currency. It is well structured, clear and up-to-date.

But **it is woefully undifferentiated**.

The brands that resist the tempting narrative that content is now a "commodity", and the natural inclination towards hyper-efficiency that it leads to, will be the ones that succeed. Content may well be a commodity, but perspective and originality is what AI requires to surface that content. That remains, at least for now, a human endeavour.

THE HEADLINE NUMBERS

5.7%

Of HRTech content scores high for information gain.

4.7%

Demonstrates a strong narrative or unique perspective.

WRITTEN BY

Tom Rudnai

Founder, Demand-Genius

Key Takeaways

What HRTech Marketers and Leaders can learn from this data.

TAKEAWAY 01

Prioritise differentiation and originality.

For two decades, the question was *"how do we get cited?"*. The AI era asks **"why should AI cite us?".** Most HRTech content doesn't have an answer.

TAKEAWAY 02

AI without a strategy makes things worse.

Volume spiked sharply. Optimisation regressed toward the mean. Differentiation fell further. Scaling AI without a point of view produces adequately optimised mediocrity.

TAKEAWAY 03

Content IP is the proven path.

Ashby and HiBob score more than 2× the category average on depth and differentiation. The common thread: they publish things *only they can say* (proprietary data, named research).

VIA LITERAL HUMANS

TAKEAWAY 04

Confident tone, thin substance hurts credibility with humans.

In a category whose value proposition is people, 97% of content is functional and efficiency-led.

03

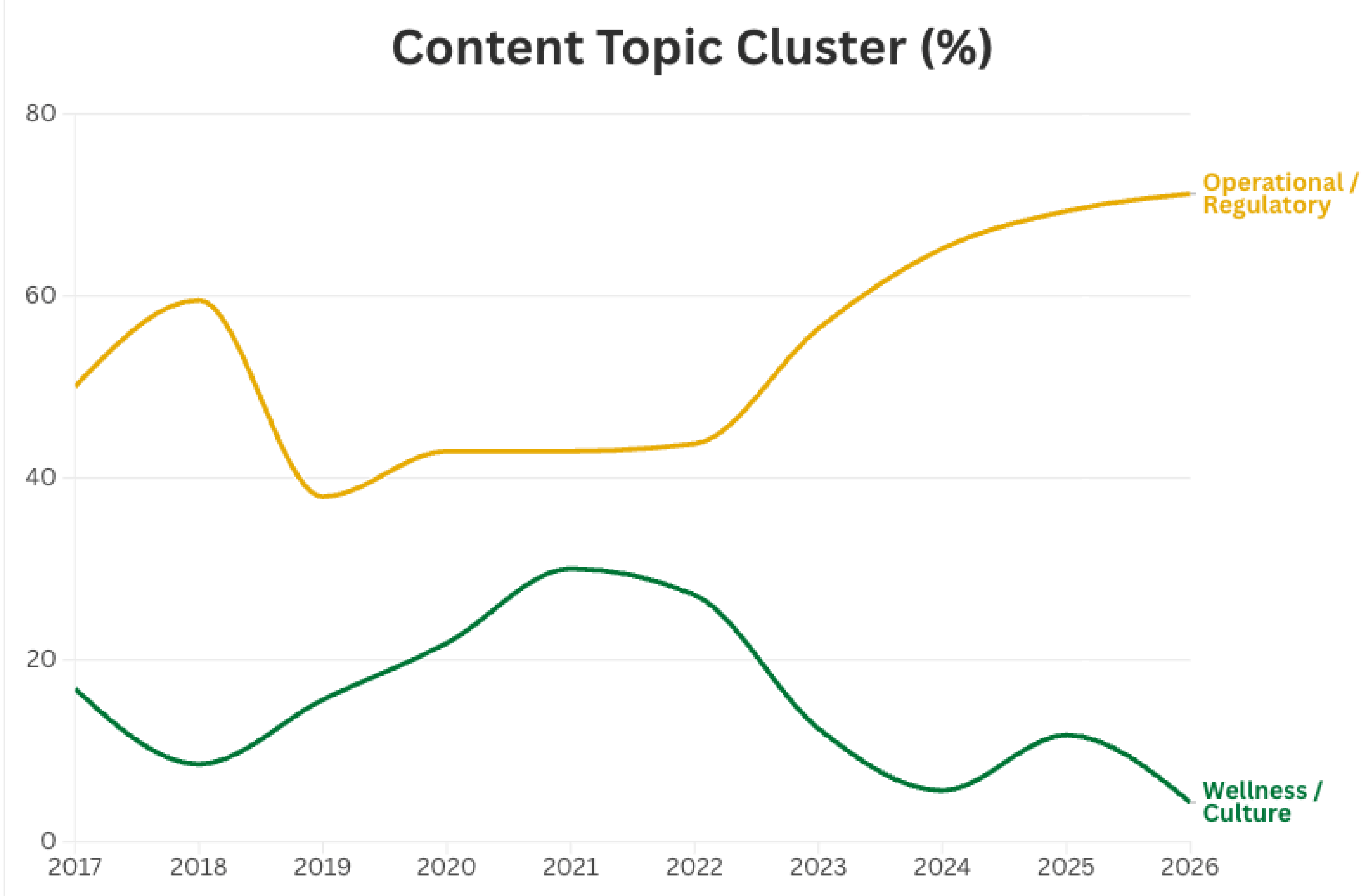
The State of HRTech

SECTION THREE

HRTech's evolution

Content strategy reflects the buying environment, competitive landscape and marketing strategies of the brands we studied. So before the detail, we want to explore two category-level trends.

HRTech's shift from cultural transformation to infrastructure.



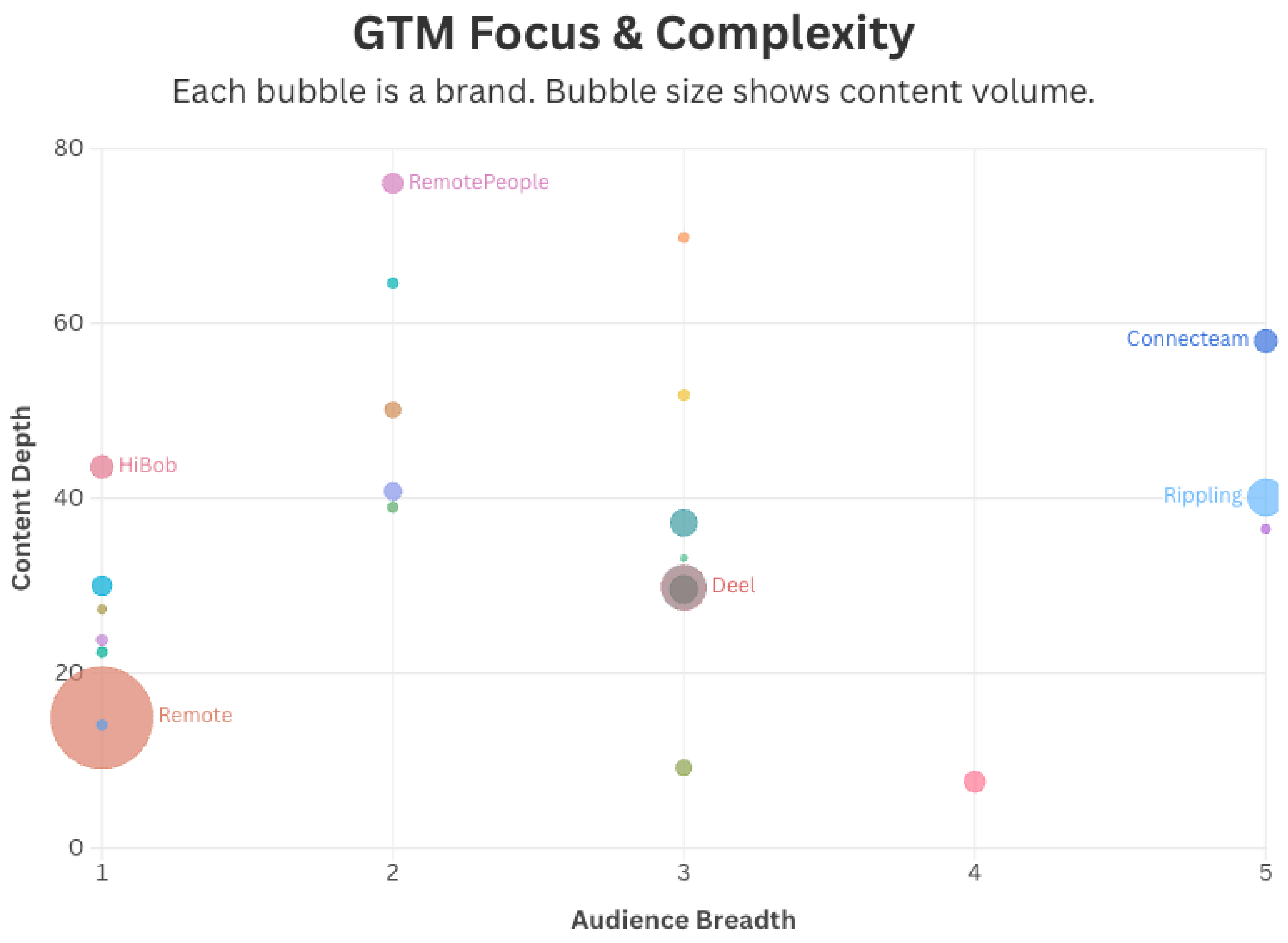
Between 2020-2022, the data shows a clear rise in broad workplace transformation narratives: employee engagement, culture, wellbeing, the future of work. HRTech brands positioned themselves as cultural enablers. The glue that held together a happy workforce. Interestingly, this coincides almost perfectly with the COVID pandemic, and HRTech brands clearly reflected the market's concern around maintaining employee connection and culture as workforces dispersed.

Post-pandemic, we've seen a clear shift back towards operational and regulatory content which by 2026, accounts for 71.2% of the category's output. HRTech brands are repositioning themselves as essential infrastructure for navigating distributed workforces and regulatory complexity. The content evolved to match: more technical, more compliance-heavy and more operationally specific. **It has taken on more of a sense-making role.**

TAKEAWAY

HRTech has shifted from being the glue of a happy workforce, to being essential infrastructure for navigating distributed work.

The market is splitting: platforms vs. specialists.



The category no longer converges around a single content model. There is a visible split between vendors with horizontal ambitions - the "one-stop-shops" - versus those specialising around a specific vertical domain.

This speaks to a maturing category. Earlier stage markets are noisy and often undifferentiated. As they mature, you see some brands compete for market ownership while others carve out defensible niches.

The clearest signal of this is in audience breadth. Contrast two brands: Rippling and Remote.com. Rippling's content serves five meaningful personas with deep, comprehensive content. This reflects the complexity a platform play imposes on GTM strategy; it serves a complex, multi-stakeholder buying committee. Remote operates a far simpler GTM motion and content operation, capturing the efficiency that focus brings.

TAKEAWAY

Audience breadth is the clearest signal of strategy. Platform vs. specialist is now visible in the content.

04

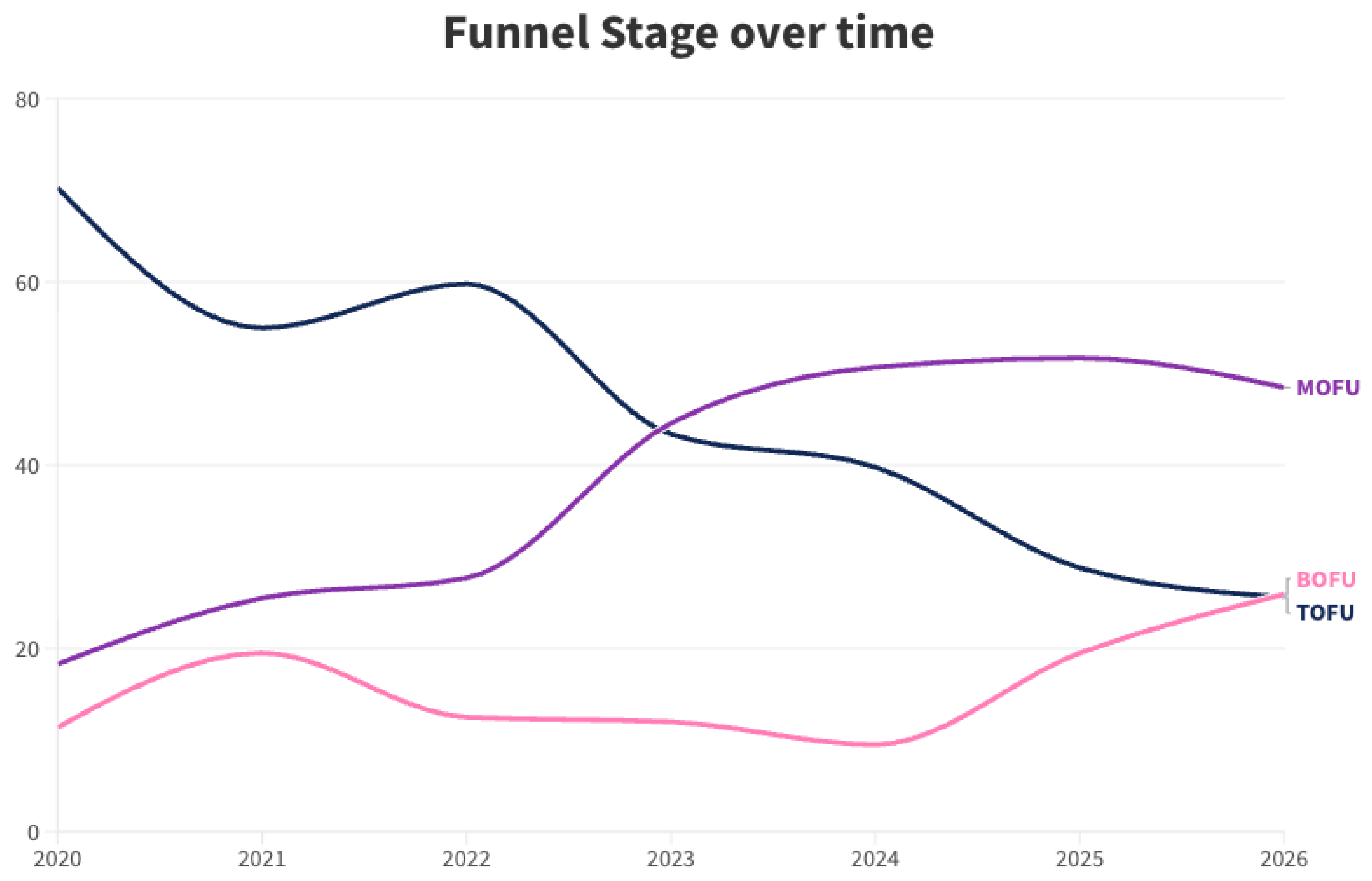
Evolution of HRTech Content

SECTION FOUR

Highly-tuned content machines, and the year they regressed.

HRTech content teams are highly efficient, yet 2025 looks like a big step backwards on every quality measure that matters.

Highly-tuned content machines.



HRTech content teams, by and large, operate extremely efficiently. The current model is structured, commercially integrated and mid-funnel dominant.

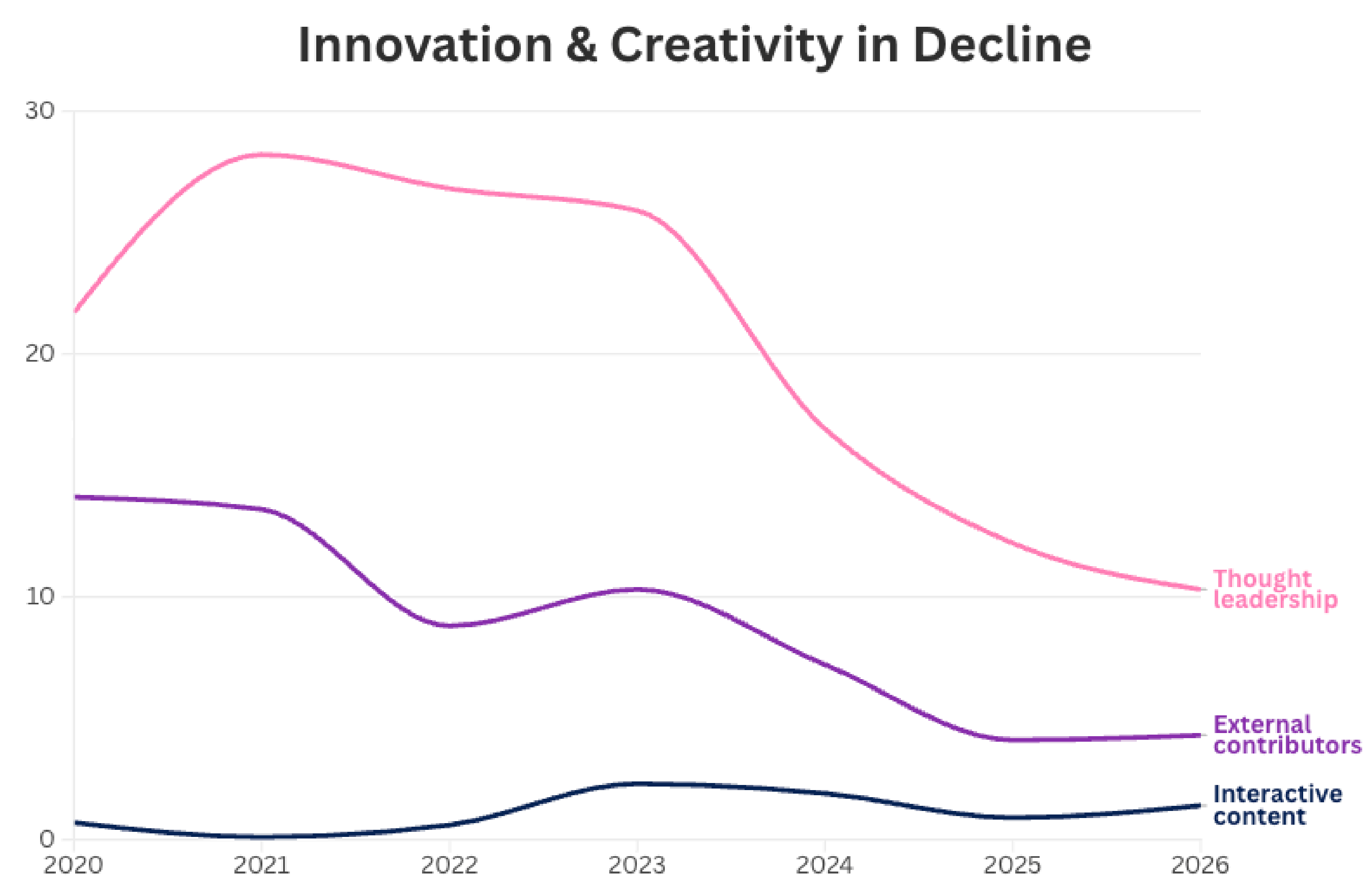
MOFU content significantly outweighs TOFU and BOFU content. “Guide” has become the dominant format over blog or article, reflecting the sensemaking role that we mentioned previously.

All of this speaks to **increasingly commercially aware content strategies**, focused on serving a critical role within a multi-stakeholder and complex buyer journey. **Content has evolved past pure awareness-generation and taken on more of a buyer enablement and education role.**

TAKEAWAY

Content has shifted from awareness to buyer enablement — a sign of commercially aware operations.

Opportunity for technical and editorial innovation.



Across the sample, interactive content is extremely uncommon - just 1.3%. External contributors and thought leadership is also declining in recent content.

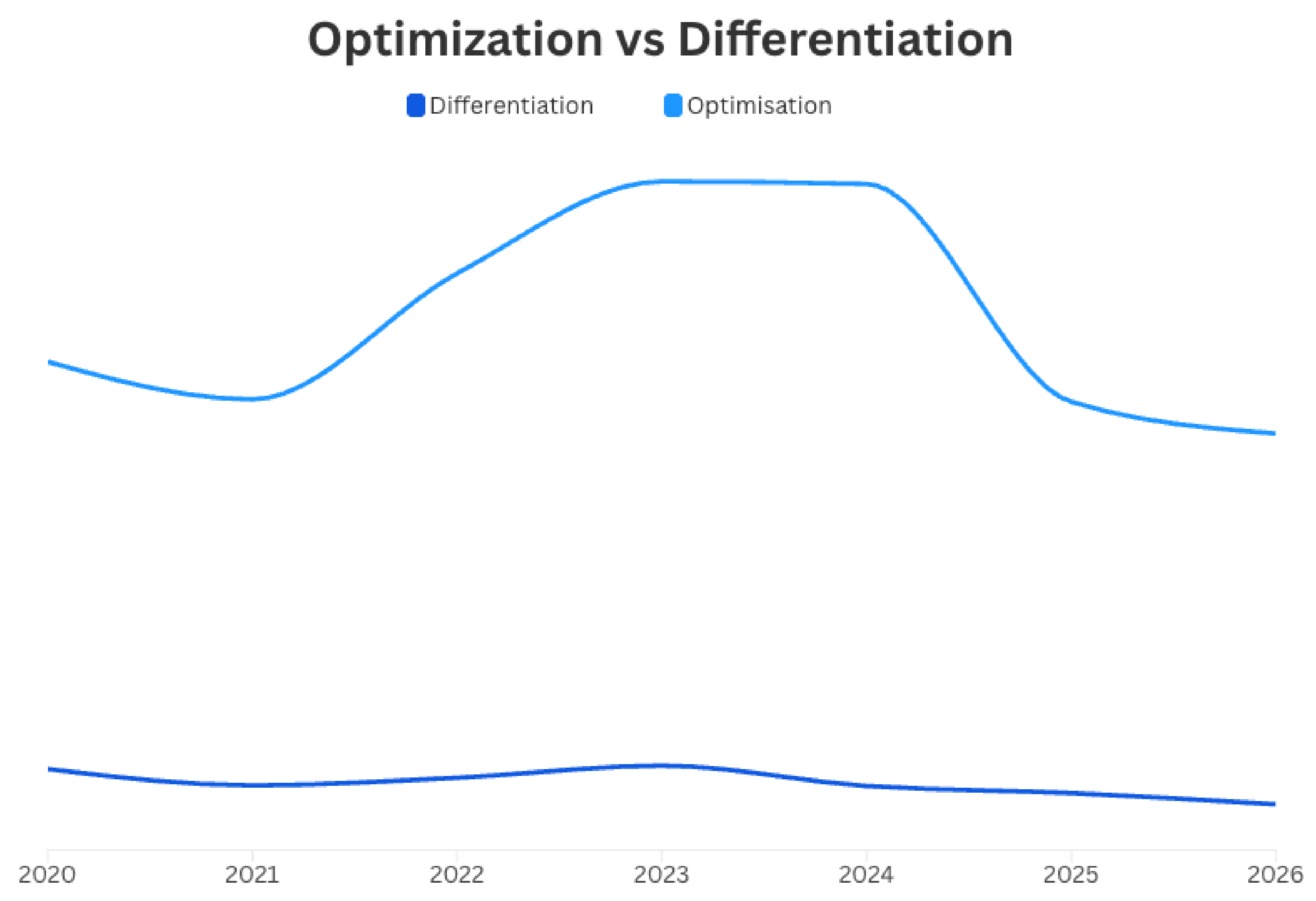
We saw a similar trend in our Fintech study; brands are favouring velocity and volume over creativity and innovation. We believe we'll see more innovation.

AI rewards clear, demonstrated authority, so thought leadership is critical. We also believe that as more of the best content is ungated, we'll see more innovation in content formats and storytelling as brands work harder to capture human attention and provide onsite value beyond what users can access through AI summaries of their content. Innovative brands, armed with Claude code and other vibe coding tools, can be much more creative with how "content" is defined and packaged to engage readers.

TAKEAWAY

Velocity is winning, but the next edge is innovation — formats, storytelling, demonstrated authority.

Content is well optimised, poorly differentiated.



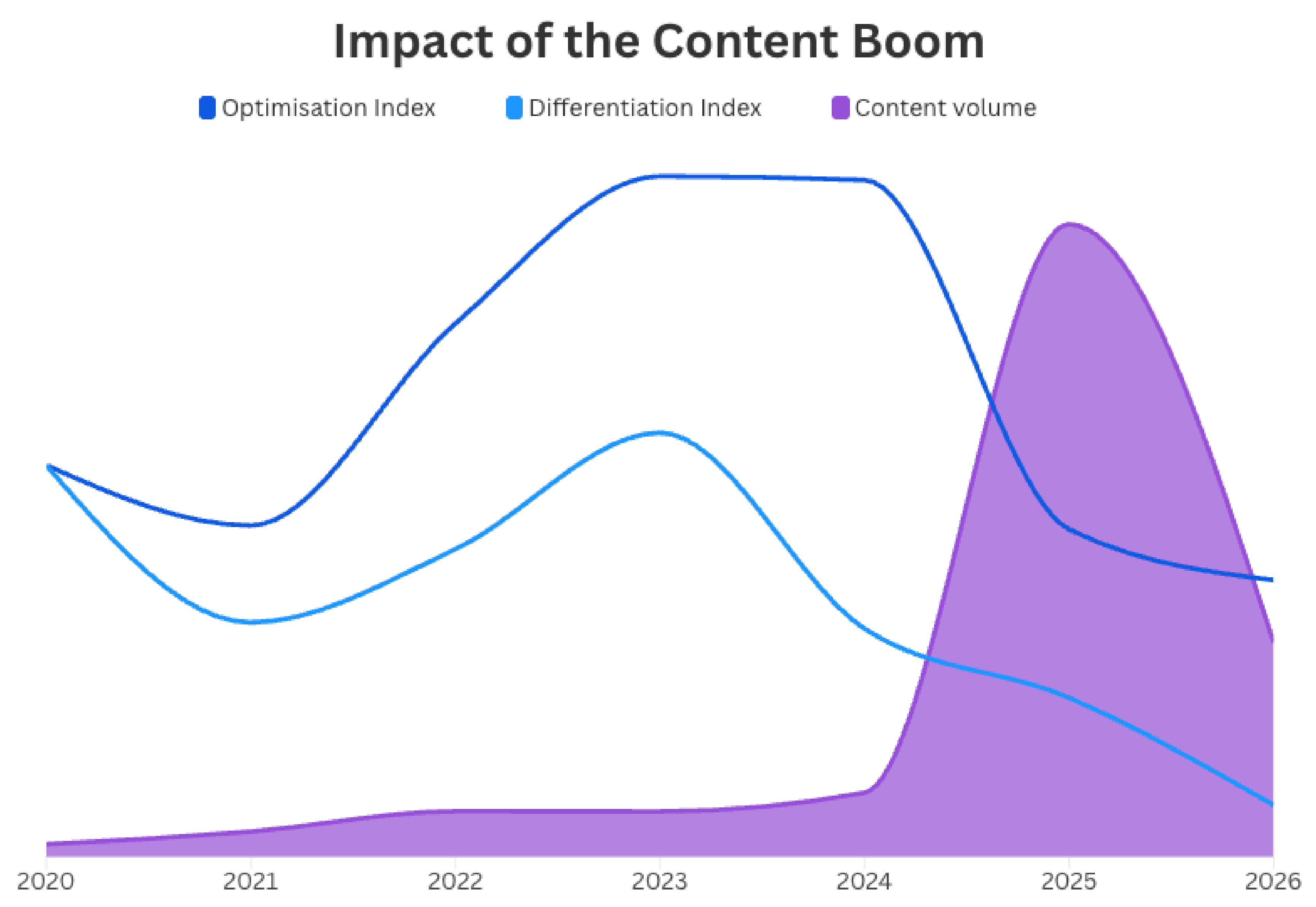
One striking finding in the data is the stark gap between content **optimisation** (structure, extractability, keyword balance) and **differentiation** (information gain, narrative ownership, evidence depth).

Interestingly, the improvements in content optimisation halted quite sharply in 2025. While optimisation remains solid — certainly compared with differentiation — there is a clear regression to the mean.

TAKEAWAY

Content has always been far better optimised than differentiated. The gap has never closed.

2025: volume spiked. Quality regressed in lockstep.



We wanted to investigate the 2025 regression that we saw in the previous chart. It turns out 2025 also happens to have seen an **explosion in content volume** and velocity.

In 2025, brands aggressively adopted AI-driven content, leading to a huge uptick in content volume. The result was a regression to the mean. **Content didn't become badly optimised. It became average.** The hallmark of AI content.

Differentiation fell even further.

TAKEAWAY

Volume up, quality flat or down. Adequately optimised mediocrity, at scale.

In the AI era, the only question worth asking is "why should AI cite us?"

VISIBILITY LIFT FROM INFORMATION GAIN

+22%

Google's latest core update rewarded **content featuring unique original research** with a 22% visibility increase.

Search demands clarity on a topic, typically chosen for intent or volume. The goal is the best possible answer, in order to "rank".

AI demands differentiation. Buyers can generate tailored answers in seconds, raising the bar for brands. To be useful to humans or AI you must provide something they can't get elsewhere.

For 20 years, brands asked *"how do we optimize?"*. First to rank, now to get cited. Very few have stopped to ask the more important question.

05

Content Quality & AI Era Readiness

SECTION FIVE

The scorecard: five dimensions of AI-era readiness.

How ready is HRTech content for the AI era? We scored 90,000 pieces across five dimensions and 20+ specific attributes.

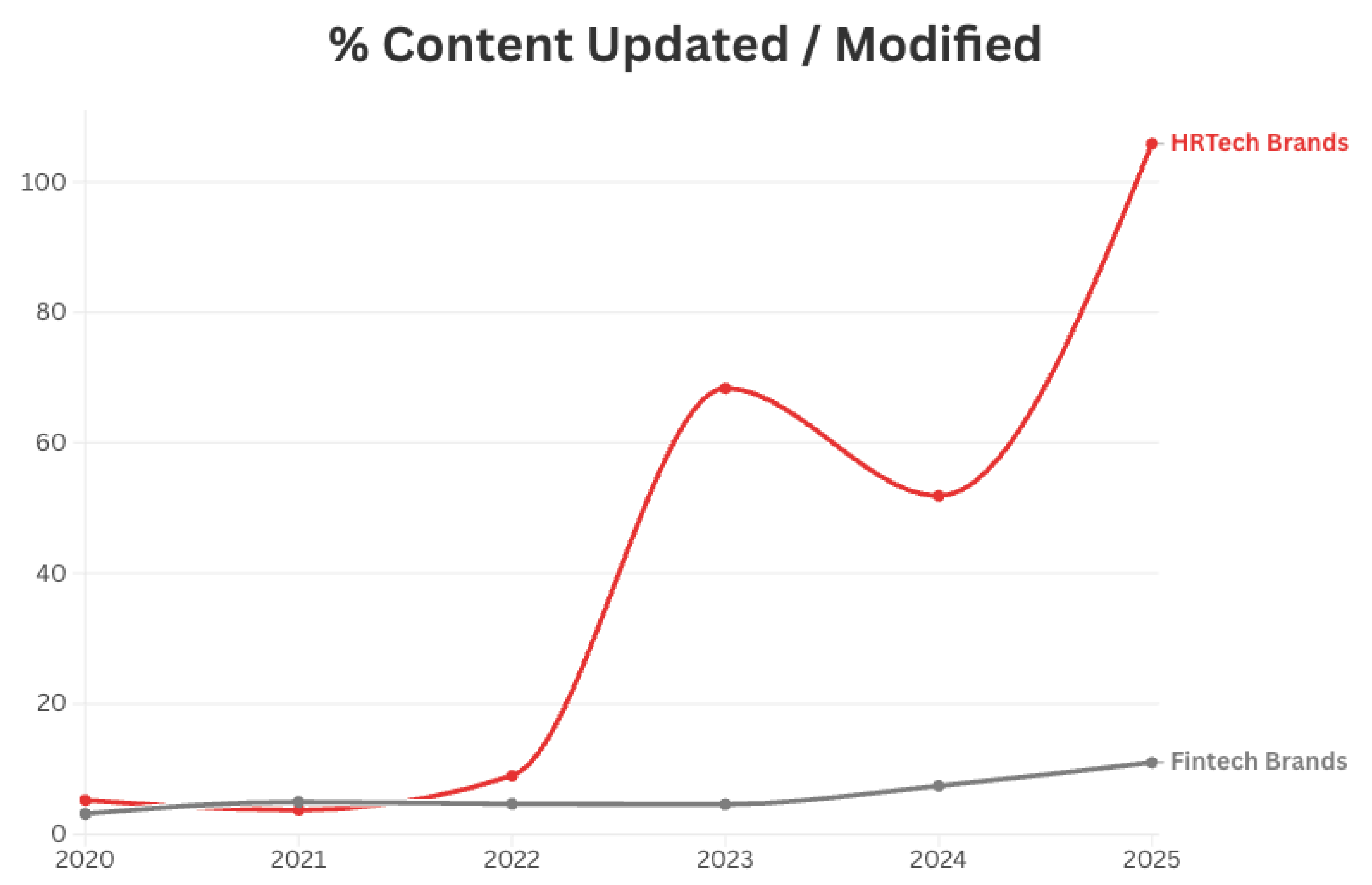
How ready is HRTech content for the AI era?

OVERALL SCORE

Analysing 90,000 pieces across 5 dimensions and 20+ attributes, the category scores 73.8% overall. There is clear variation between dimensions brands have historically optimised (ie. those that were key to Search performance) for and those they have not.

DIMENSION	SCORE	VERDICT
Accuracy & Currency	88.1%	**Strong.** 86.3% of content is current. Content maintenance is a genuine category strength.
Content Quality	78.5%	**Solid.** Structure and formatting well above threshold. Only 25.6% qualifies as "strong" on comprehensiveness.
AI Extractability	73.3%	**Competent.** Well-structured for machine parsing.
Citation Likelihood	68.8%	**Below par.** Only 7.6% has high authority signals. Source attribution is a specific weakness.
Strategic Differentiation	60.2%	**The big gap.** The weakest dimension by a significant margin. Low information gain and narrative ownership throughout.

Where the category is strong: accuracy, currency, quality.



Compared with our similar study of Fintech content, HRTech brands devote a far greater time to content maintenance. There is a sharp uptick in 2023, which appears to show HRTech brands leveraging AI for content maintenance and improvement in a way that Fintech brands have not.

0.2% Of HRTech content is over-optimised.

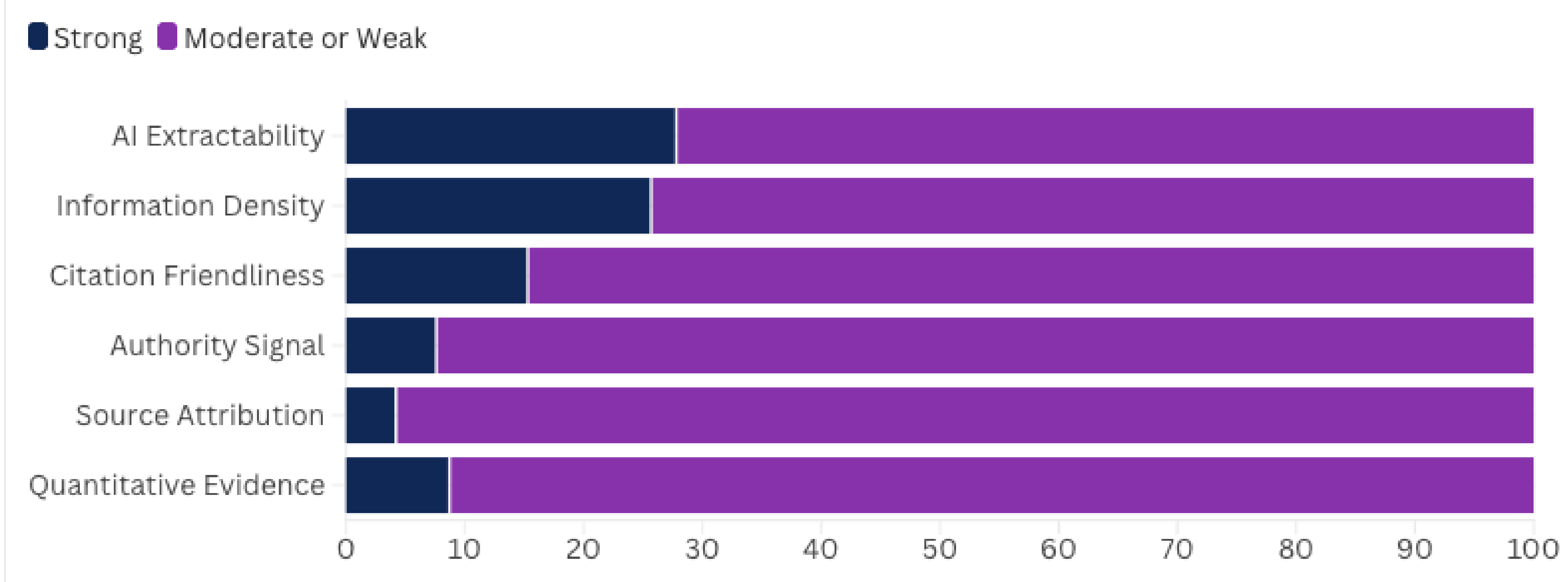
92.6% Is adequately or well structured.

88.1% Scores strongly on accuracy & currency.

TAKEAWAY

HRTech outperforms Fintech on maintenance. Now the question is comprehensiveness.

Readable, but not citable.



We often push back against citations as a “North Star” of AEO. Our Dark AI research showed that within a complex buyer journey citations are rare, occurring in just 16% of AI responses.

As a metric, citations miss too much of the impact, challenge and opportunity AI presents.

That doesn’t diminish their value, though, and while AI extractability has improved measurably across the dataset there is a gap between content AI can parse and content it would cite.

Just 27.8% of content achieves strong extractability, and just 7.6% signals authority clearly. Brands are structuring their content for AI, but they’re not giving it a reason to cite it. Very little content excels in any of the aspects that make it easy for AI to directly cite content.

Read the Dark AI research ↗

TAKEAWAY

Brands are structuring content for AI - but not giving it a reason to cite.

The big gap: strategic differentiation.

The framework we've developed at Demand-Genius for measuring information gain identifies three tiers.

TIER 01

LEVEL 1

Interpretive Gain

A new perspective on existing knowledge.

TIER 02

LEVEL 2

Empirical Gain

Original research like surveys, data, or anything else that measurably expands knowledge.

TIER 03

LEVEL 3

Conceptual Gain

A genuinely novel concept, framework or mental model that is substantiated by data or expert analysis.

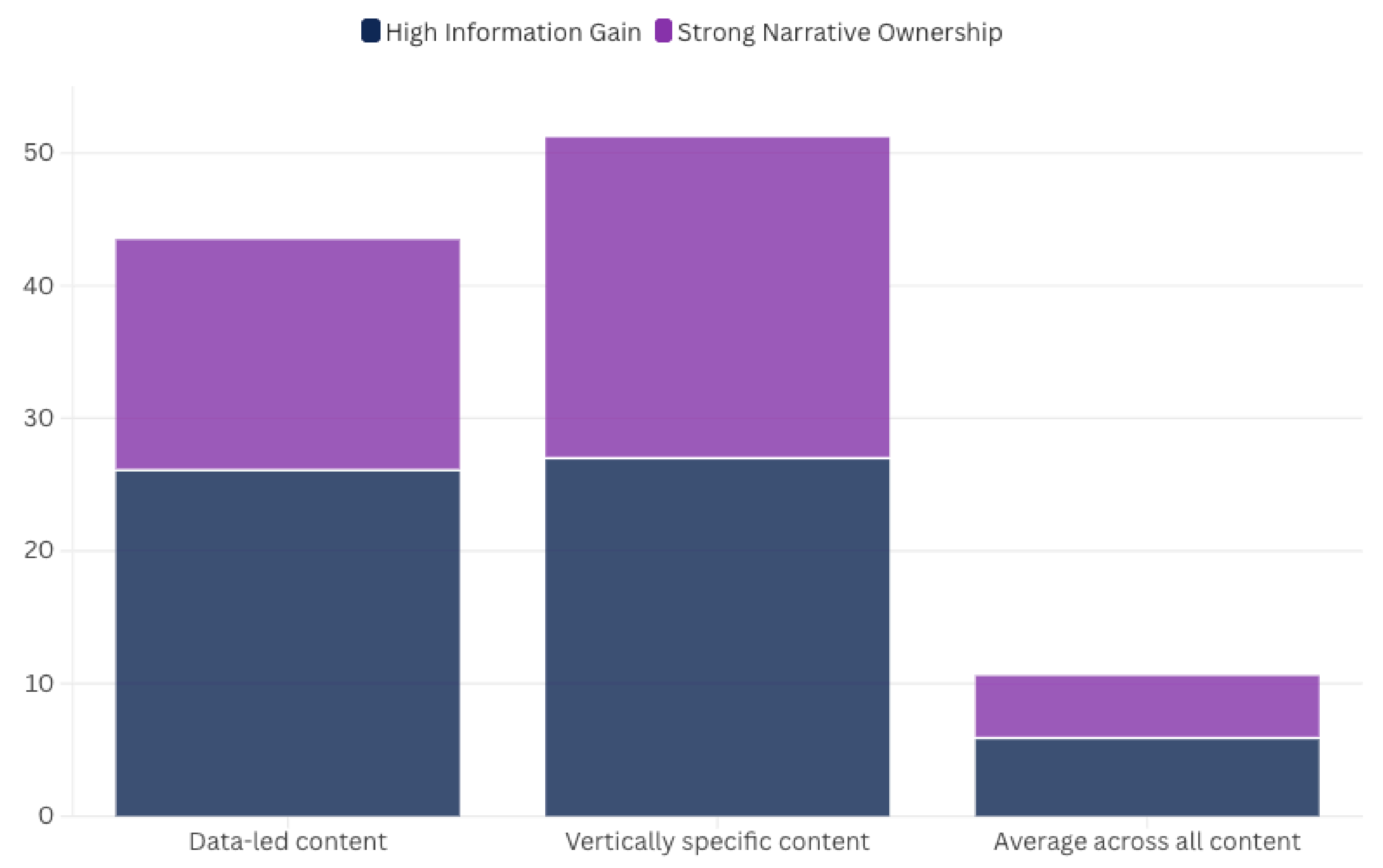
4.7% Strong narrative ownership.

5.7% High information gain.

TAKEAWAY

The overwhelming majority of HRTech content is undifferentiated. AI synthesises it, but it doesn't influence how it presents your category.

Originality lives with proprietary data and domain depth.



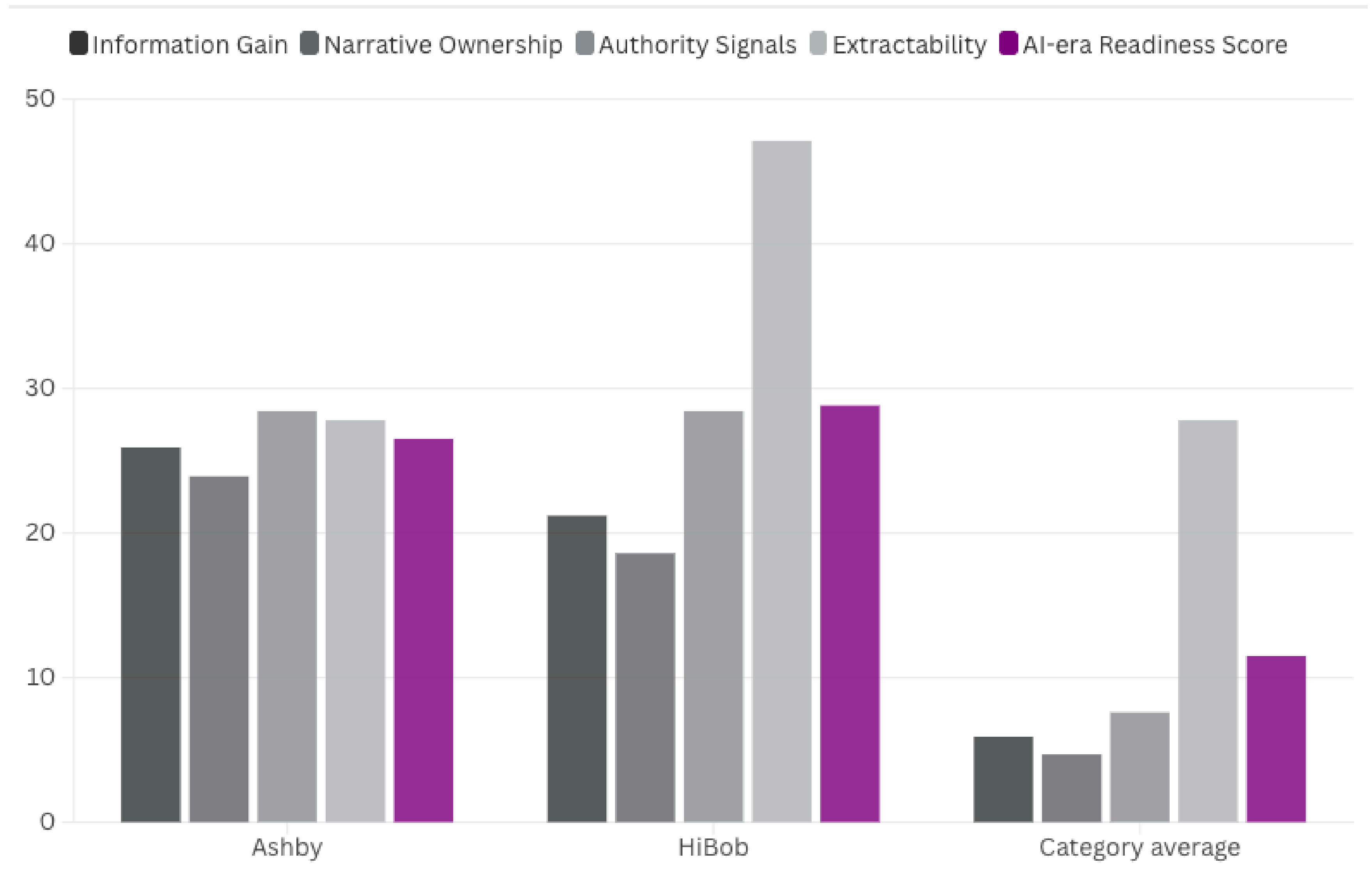
Brands with access to **proprietary data**, or more vertically-focused brands with **deep domain expertise**, consistently produce higher quality content.

There's a clear strategic roadmap. Building some form of Content IP - ideally on a unique advantage your product affords, such as aggregate datasets or customer access - enables more differentiated AI-era content strategies.

TAKEAWAY

Originality follows Content IP, not budget. Find the unique asset your product gives you access to, and build content around it.

Two vendors stand out: Ashby and HiBob.



Ashby's advantage is a strong content IP - proprietary recruiting data - and a category point of view built on what Ashby's data uniquely positions them to quantify.

HiBob shows that a large content operation and genuine authority are not mutually exclusive. Breadth and research combine to create a library that consistently surfaces proprietary insight.

COMMON DENOMINATOR

Not format. Not volume. The depth of the knowledge base behind the content.

CHAPTER SIX — A GUEST CHAPTER FROM

Literal Humans

06

Content That Moves People

SECTION SIX

Content That Moves People.

Written by Paul David, CEO at Literal Humans.

The team at Demand-Genius have given us a forensic picture of HRTech content from the outside in: what machines can parse, extract, and cite.

Our job is to look at the same content through the lens of the people ultimately on the receiving end of it.

A category that exists for people, written for machines.

97%

97% of HRTech content is classified as functional and efficiency-led.

Practically none of it operates in emotional or transformational territory. For a category whose entire value proposition is people — how you hire them, retain them, develop them, motivate them — that's a striking finding.

It also isn't surprising. Functional content is easier to produce, easier to justify, easier to optimise for search. So brands gravitated there, stayed there, and the whole category moved in the same direction together.

TAKEAWAY

The result is a content landscape that is technically proficient and *emotionally inert*.

The confidence problem.

64% Of content is rated **"high confidence"** in tone.

6% Delivers **genuinely high information gain.**

"Readers are exceptionally good at detecting the mismatch between tone and substance. They might not articulate it, but they feel it. The brand registers as hollow."

These aren't poorly written pages. They're competent, structured, and pass every technical benchmark. But they're making claims with a certainty the underlying content doesn't earn.

Trust erodes quietly, invisibly, and often irreversibly. AI has made this urgent in a way it wasn't before.

Why human-centred content is now a competitive advantage.

For years, the volume of competent-but-undifferentiated content was manageable. Buyers filtered it, search surfaced the best-optimised version, and brands with bigger operations generally won. The system had friction, but it worked.

AI removes most of that friction, and with it, most of the cover.

When a buyer can generate a comprehensive, personalised answer to any procurement question in seconds, the bar for what earns their attention shifts fundamentally. They're no longer comparing your content to your competitors' content — they're comparing it to a direct answer to their exact question.

In that environment, functional content is essentially commoditised from day one. AI can synthesise it. **It cannot replicate content that carries a genuine human perspective.**

A PULL QUOTE

"AI can synthesise functional content. It cannot replicate a point of view that someone earned."

Paul David — CEO, Literal Humans

What the best content does differently.

The brands that stand out in this dataset — as Tom highlighted with Ashby and HiBob — share a common characteristic. **They publish things only they can say.**

That specificity is itself an emotional signal. It tells a reader: someone thought carefully about this. Someone has skin in the game.

That feeling — hard to manufacture, impossible to automate — is the foundation of trust in a buying relationship.

The practical implication isn't to abandon functional content. It's to **stop treating functional content as the ceiling.**

The 97% figure represents a category that is systematically underinvesting in the content that builds long-term brand equity, earns genuine AI citation, and — most importantly — actually moves the people who eventually make buying decisions.

Buyers are human. Humans respond to content that treats them as such.

97%

A category that exists to serve the human side of business.

Should not have 97% of its content reading like a procurement memo.

How the analysis was conducted.

This report analyses over **90,000 pieces of content** published by HRTech vendors. Content was scored by Demand-Genius AI across **five dimensions** - Accuracy & Currency, Content Quality, AI Extractability, Citation Likelihood, and Strategic Differentiation - each comprising multiple specific attributes (20+ in total).

Analysis covers content published across approximately a decade, enabling longitudinal trend analysis. Vendors were selected to represent the breadth of the HRTech market, spanning HR platforms, recruitment technology, workforce management, and specialist verticals.

No individual vendor data is published in an identifiable way, except the two featured case studies - **Ashby** and **HiBob** - who were selected for their standout performance relative to the category average.

THE SAMPLE

90k+
Pages analysed

~10y
Time period

5
Quality dimensions

20+
Scored attributes

VENDOR COVERAGE

HR platforms · Recruitment tech · Workforce management · Specialist verticals

Featured case studies: Ashby, HiBob.

Content may be a commodity. Perspective is not.

The HRTech Content Benchmark 2026. A joint study from Demand-Genius and Literal Humans, looking at HRTech content from the inside out and the outside in.

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