

GUIDE

# Measuring Video ROI Your CFO Will Believe

The metrics that tie video to pipeline, not just views. Measured at your own front door, not in a dashboard.

By **Digital Accomplice**

## Views don't survive a budget review

Likes, impressions, and watch time feel like progress, but they lose the budget fight every time finance asks what they returned. The job is to connect video to pipeline in language a CFO already trusts.

"Everybody might not speak AI, but they speak ROI for sure." — Stacy Thal, Marketing and AI strategist

"There's not much point in having traffic as a major KPI anymore. It's how present you are in AI search tools." — Carolyn Outhwaite, B2B marketing and AI search strategist

## "We can't measure AI visibility." You can. Just not with software.

You cannot measure AI visibility with a third-party tool, because Google personalizes AI answers per person. Two buyers run the same query and get different brand recommendations, so any tool selling you "your AI visibility" is selling you an average no real buyer sees.

"Anyone who is selling you software saying we can tell you what your AI visibility is, they have zero insight. If you're spending money on enterprise AI visibility software, cancel the subscription. Save yourself the five grand to ten grand. It's worthless." — Christopher Penn, Trust Insights

The proof: a researcher set up synthetic Gmail accounts with different histories, and the brands Google recommended varied wildly from account to account.

## The measurement model: your own front door

Stop trying to read the machine's mind. Measure where buyers actually arrive. Add a free-form "How did you hear about us?" text field, with no drop-down, on every point of intake: contact form, call center, email auto-response.

A drop-down only surfaces sources you already thought of. A free-text field captures the exact tool or query a preset list would never include.

## What to count, and what zero means

Once a month, run every response through the AI of your choice and have it count how many name an AI tool as the source: ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Google, Gemini, and the rest.

If the count is zero, your strategy is not working yet. If it climbs month over month, it is. That is the whole scoreboard.

**FACT:** 11% of Trust Insights' new business now comes from AI referrals, measured this way, in the last six months. Christopher Penn calls the number "astonishingly high." (Christopher Penn, Trust Insights)

## Leading indicators: awareness is the early signal

Pipeline is the lagging proof. The leading indicator is presence in the awareness-stage answers your buyers see long before they fill out a form. Do not cut top-of-funnel to chase it faster.

"Today's awareness searches are tomorrow's pipeline searches, and they're next week's deal closings." — Carolyn Outhwaite, B2B marketing and AI search strategist

**FACT:** 88% of citations in Google AI Mode answers do not appear in the organic top-10 results. The thing you ranked for is largely not the thing AI cites. (Moz research, cited by Kaleigh Moore)

## Why your old metric is breaking

The surface is consolidating. More buyers ask AI, and the answers name fewer sources, so a flat traffic line can hide both a real loss and a real gain.

**FACT:** Google's AI Mode has surpassed 1 billion monthly users, with queries more than doubling every quarter since launch. (Google, I/O 2026)

**FACT:** The average number of links inside AI Overviews for niche B2B SaaS searches fell roughly 69.7% in two months, from 7.8 links down to about two. (Overthink Group, State of Niche B2B SaaS Search, May 2026)

## Set expectations to the real timeline

This is a 6-to-9-month play, not a one-month experiment. Models retrain on web snapshots periodically, so the compounding shows up over quarters. A team that measures results in week one is measuring the wrong thing.

"You're not going to do a one or two month experiment with video and change your business." — Adrian Dahlin, founder, searchtosale.io

"There's a lot of white space here that's still left to be claimed when it comes to AI visibility and citation rate. So video is a really smart play. Again, not a quick win, but a smart long-term investment." — Kaleigh Moore, B2B content strategist

## "Just trust that it works?"

No. The free-form field, analyzed monthly, gives you real data from real prospects instead of asking leadership to take the program on faith. You report a number that moves, not a promise.

## "Isn't it too slow to justify the spend?"

It is a survival strategy, not a campaign. Models constantly reassess new content, and the brands that lock in the citations now build a lead that compounds with every model update. The cost of waiting is a competitor owning the answer first.

"You can't just run it one time and be like, oh yeah, we're in." — Cassie Clark, fractional content strategist

## The one-page report that keeps it funded

Put three things in front of finance every month: the count of AI-sourced referrals from the intake field and its trend, your presence in target buyer queries checked by hand in ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Google, and the pipeline those awareness touches eventually fed. One page, climbing numbers, no dashboard required.

---

### Want to discuss your situation?

If you want this measurement system stood up for your firm, let's talk it through. No pitch, just a read on what to track and where you stand today.

**[Get a free AI Visibility Snapshot →](#)**

*Digital Accomplice is a video-first, AI-search studio for B2B.*