



AI Brand Leader Report

Sales Engagement Platforms

itbrandpulse.com



Executive Summary

The March 2026 AI Sales Engagement Platforms Brand Leader Survey captures the sentiments of sales and marketing pros across a rapidly expanding market driven by demand for automation, personalization, and productivity gains in sales workflows.

This report includes the results of voting for Market, Intelligence & Innovation, Creativity & Expression, Accuracy & Trust, and Human Empowerment leaders.

The companies voted brand leaders embody the industry's shift from basic automation to agentic, insight-driven sales systems that augment human sellers, improve decision-making, and accelerate revenue generation across modern enterprise sales organizations.



We define Sales Engagement Platforms as systems that enable sales teams to orchestrate, automate, and optimize multi-channel communication with prospects and customers.

These platforms provide capabilities such as email sequencing, call automation, task management, pipeline engagement, and analytics, increasingly enhanced by AI to deliver personalized outreach, timing optimization, and next-best-action recommendations.

The March 2026 IT Brand Pulse survey identifies Outreach as the Market Leader with 34.7% of votes. However, leadership diverges across key dimensions. Apollo.io leads in Innovation (31.2%), Reply.io leads in Creativity & Expression (33.6%), Salesloft dominates Accuracy & Trust (37.1%), and HubSpot leads in Human Empowerment (30.0%).

These results reflect a category where established platforms lead in scale and reliability, while newer, AI-native platforms are redefining innovation, personalization, and user-centric workflows.

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Brand Leadership Defined



Market Leader

AI buyers want to know the product they invest in today will exist, grow, and be supported tomorrow. Market leaders create this assurance with their ability to define categories, influences standards, and attracts ecosystems. Survey results often suggest that other brand leader values are driving perceptions of who is market leader.



Intelligence & Innovation Leader

Intelligence & innovation leadership represents a brand's ability to push boundaries, pioneer new capabilities, and deliver meaningful advancements before competitors. It's about consistently releasing smarter models, new techniques, improving performance, and efficiency, and solving previously unsolved problems.



Creativity & Expressions Leader

This is the value that transformed generative AI into a cultural phenomenon. Creativity & expression leadership reflects a brand's ability to unlock human imagination, artistic output, and new modes of communication. It shows up in multimodal expression, storytelling, design assistance, idea exploration, and playful experimentation.



Accuracy & Trust Leader

Trust is the currency of AI. When a system suggests medical information, legal recommendations, financial calculations, or mission-critical actions, accuracy becomes existential. A single major failure can erode trust overnight. This value represents the brand's seriousness about quality, reliability, and responsibility.

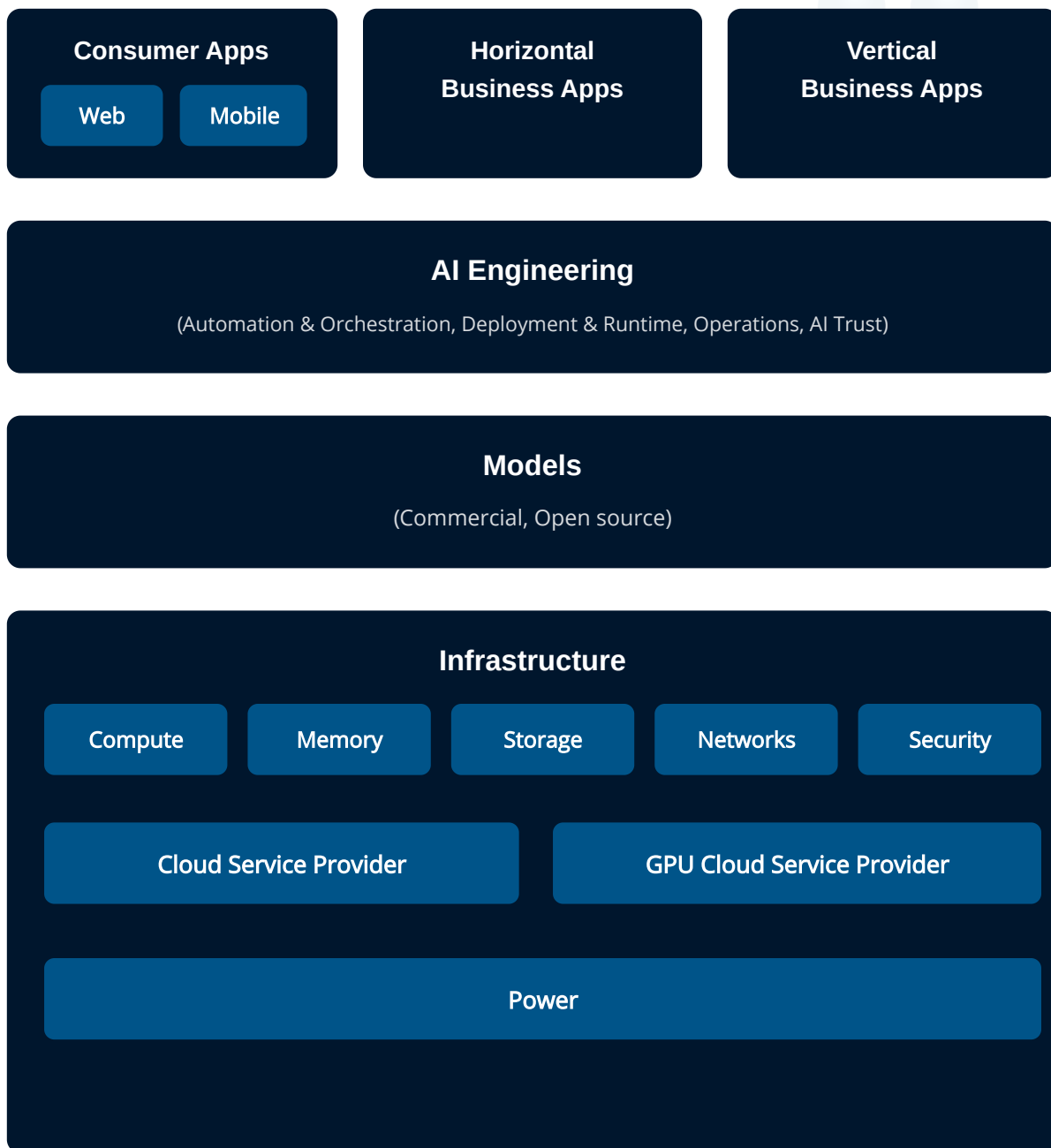


Human Empowerment Leader

The world is wrestling with fear and uncertainty about AI. Will it take my job? Will it make decisions I can't understand? Will it operate in ways that harm me or my community? These anxieties are real and widespread. Human empowerment leadership defines a brand's a commitment to amplifying human capability, not replacing it.

AI Product Taxonomy

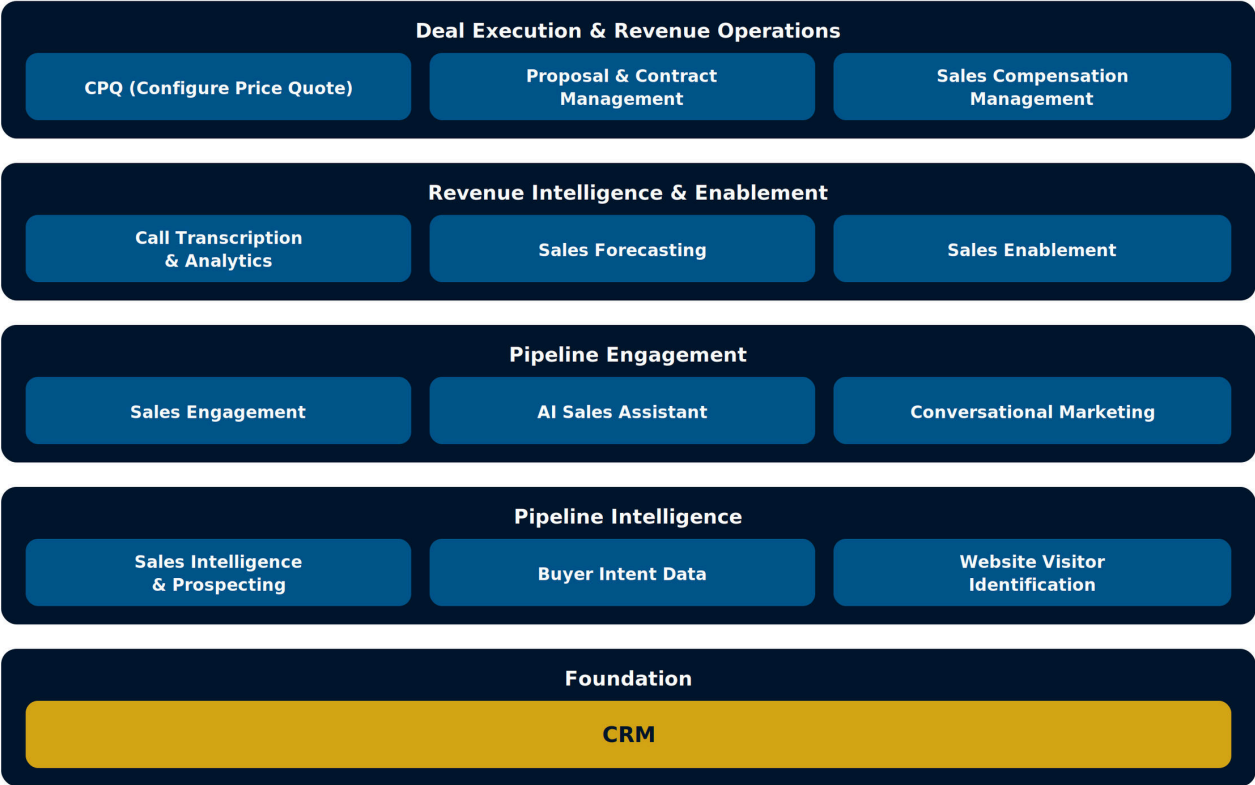
The AI Sales products covered in this survey are part of the Horizontal Business Apps layer in the IT Brand Pulse AI Product Taxonomy. AI Brand Leader surveys are based on the product groupings below with shared characteristics, intended use, target customer, and other criteria.



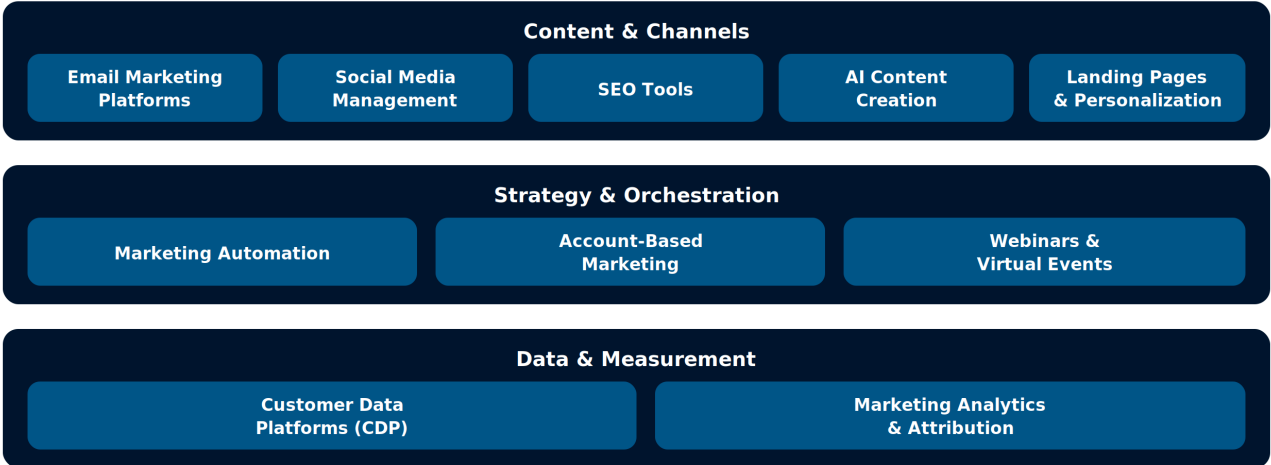
AI Sales & Marketing Stacks

Below are the the product categories and sub-categories, that makeup the AI Sales and Marketing stacks inside the Horizontal Business App layer in our AI Product Taxonomy.

AI Sales Products



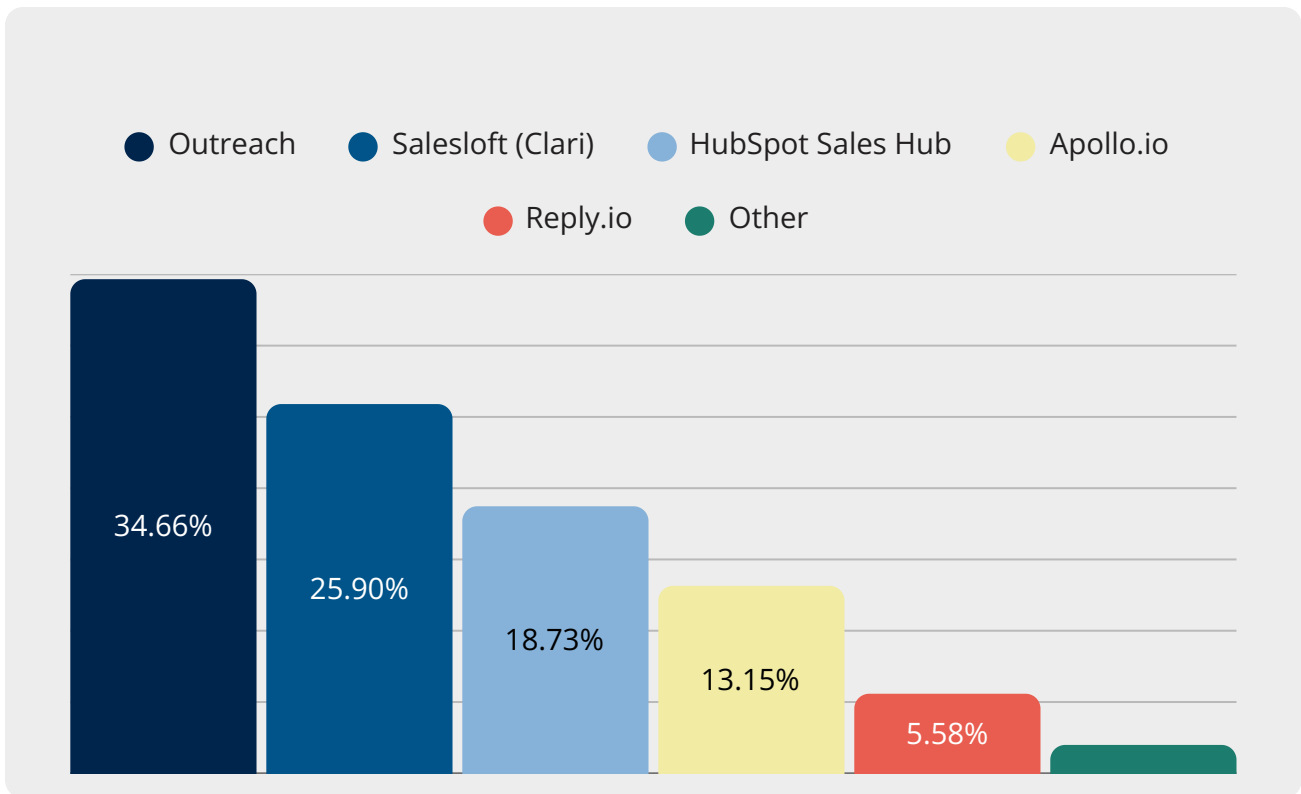
AI Marketing Products



Sales Engagement Platforms



Outreach is the Market Leader, receiving 87 of 251 votes, or 34.66%. Salesloft/Clari finished second with 25.90%, creating an 8.76-point spread. That is a meaningful lead, but not an overwhelming one. Outreach is clearly recognized as a category-defining brand, yet Salesloft/Clari remains close enough to indicate a two-horse race at the enterprise end of the market.

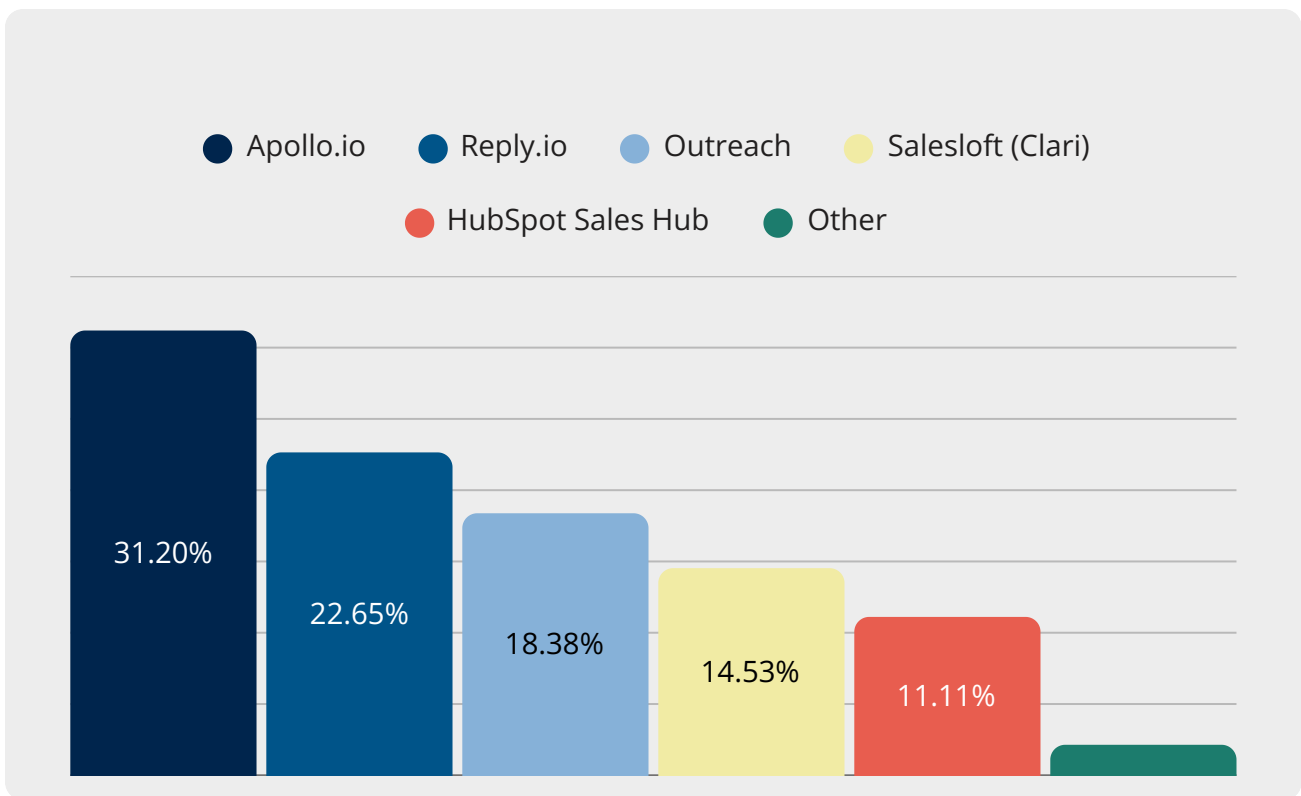


Outreach's lead likely reflects its long-standing association with enterprise sales engagement, and revenue workflows, and now AI-driven execution. Its recent positioning emphasizes AI agents, buyer signals, risk detection, workflow automation, and seller guidance, reinforcing the perception that Outreach is moving beyond traditional cadences into broader revenue orchestration.

Sales Engagement Platforms



Apollo.io leads Intelligence & Innovation with 73 of 234 votes, or 31.20%. Reply.io follows at 22.65%, giving Apollo.io an 8.55-point lead. This is one of the strongest signals in the survey because Apollo is not the Market Leader, yet it is the top innovation choice—showing that the community separates installed-base leadership from perceived AI/data innovation.

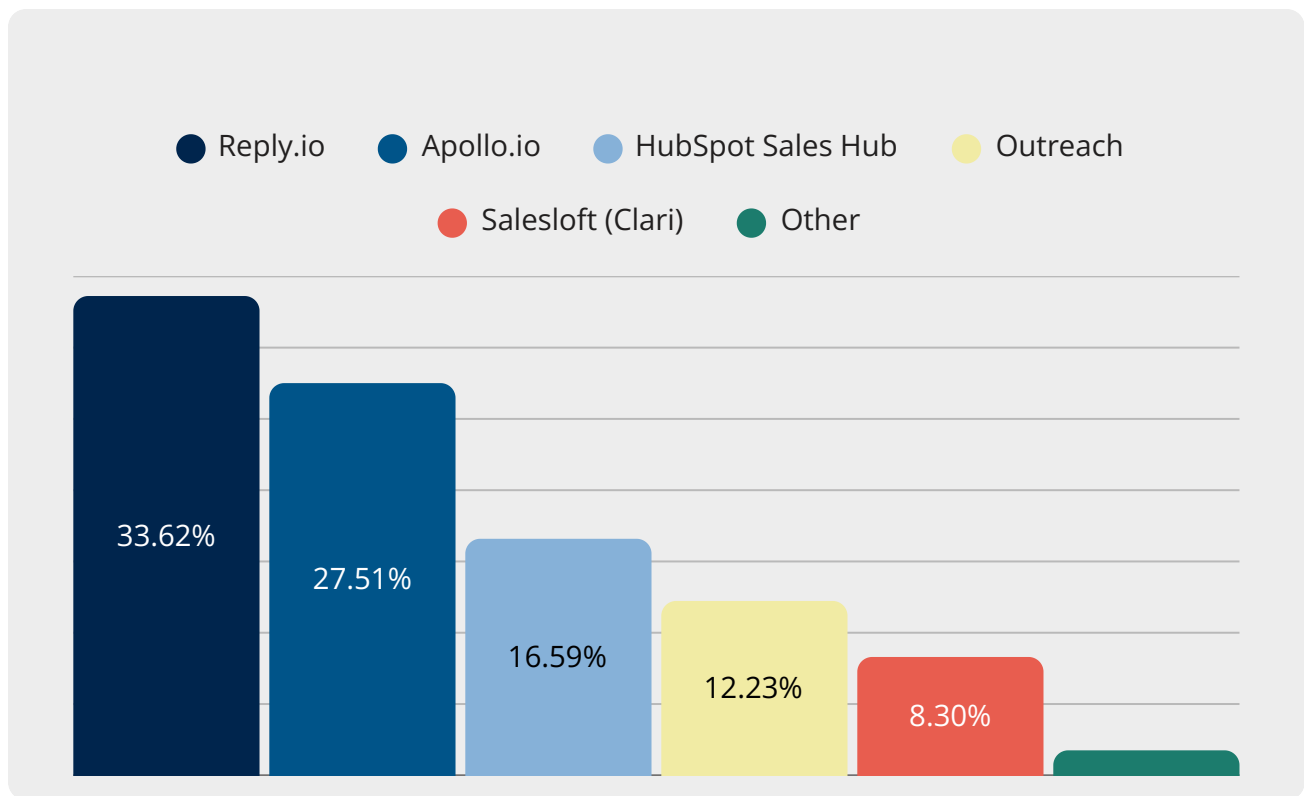


Voting for Apollo.io is likely tied to its unified combination of B2B data, prospecting, enrichment, sequencing, dialer, automation, and AI-assisted outreach. Apollo positions itself as an AI sales platform for prospecting, lead generation, engagement, and deal automation, with AI used to draft personalized messages and respond to buyer signals.

Sales Engagement Platforms



Reply.io leads Creativity & Expression with 77 of 229 votes, or 33.62%. Apollo.io is second at 27.51%, a 6.11-point spread. This is a competitive result, but Reply.io has a clear edge in how the market perceives creative outreach, campaign expression, messaging automation, and AI-powered prospect engagement.

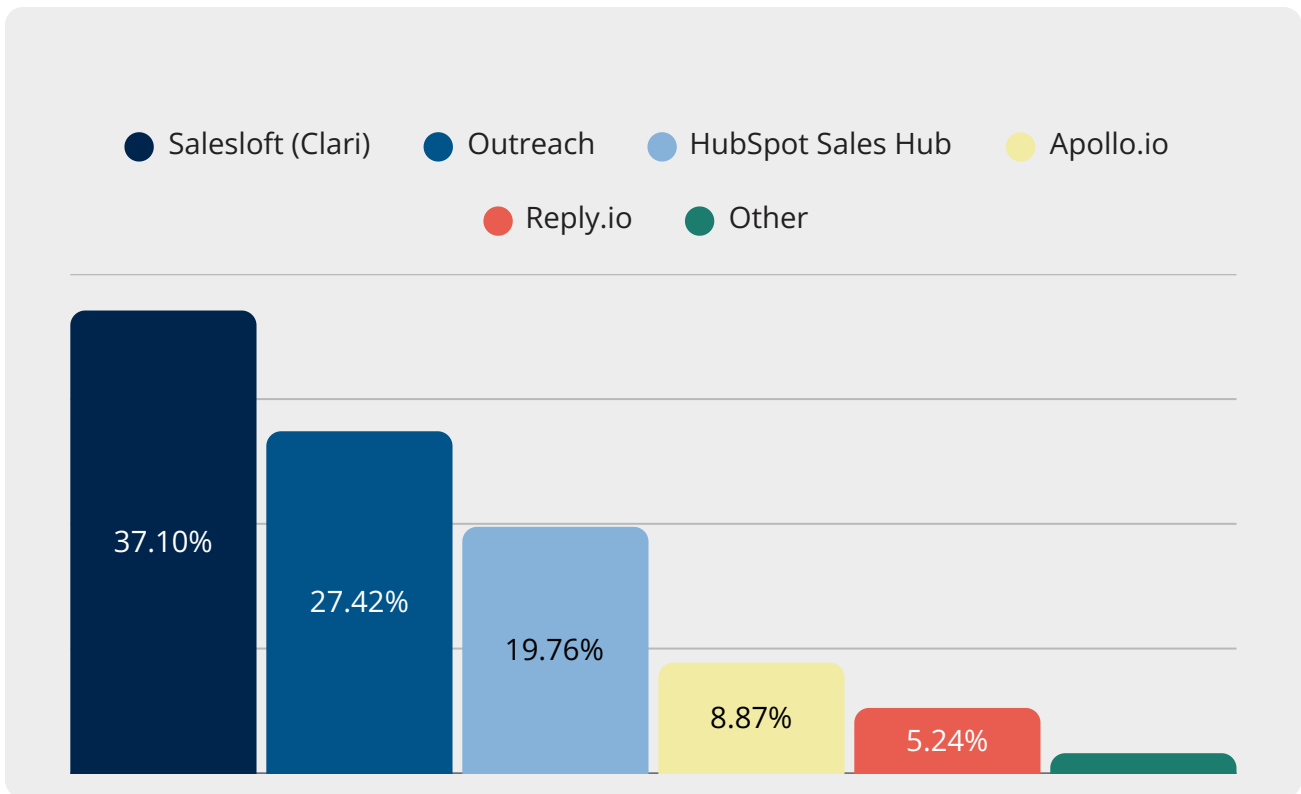


Reply.io's strength likely comes from its positioning around AI-powered multichannel outreach, automated follow-ups, meeting booking, unified inbox, and AI SDR capabilities. Its "AI Sales" and "AI SDR" messaging aligns well with creativity and expression because the value proposition centers on generating, adapting, and automating buyer-facing communication.

Sales Engagement Platforms



Salesloft/Clari leads Accuracy & Trust with 92 of 248 votes, or 37.10%. Outreach is second with 27.42%, creating a 9.68-point lead—the largest spread among the five categories. This suggests Salesloft/Clari has the strongest perceived trust position in the survey, particularly around enterprise governance, revenue data, forecasting, and disciplined execution.



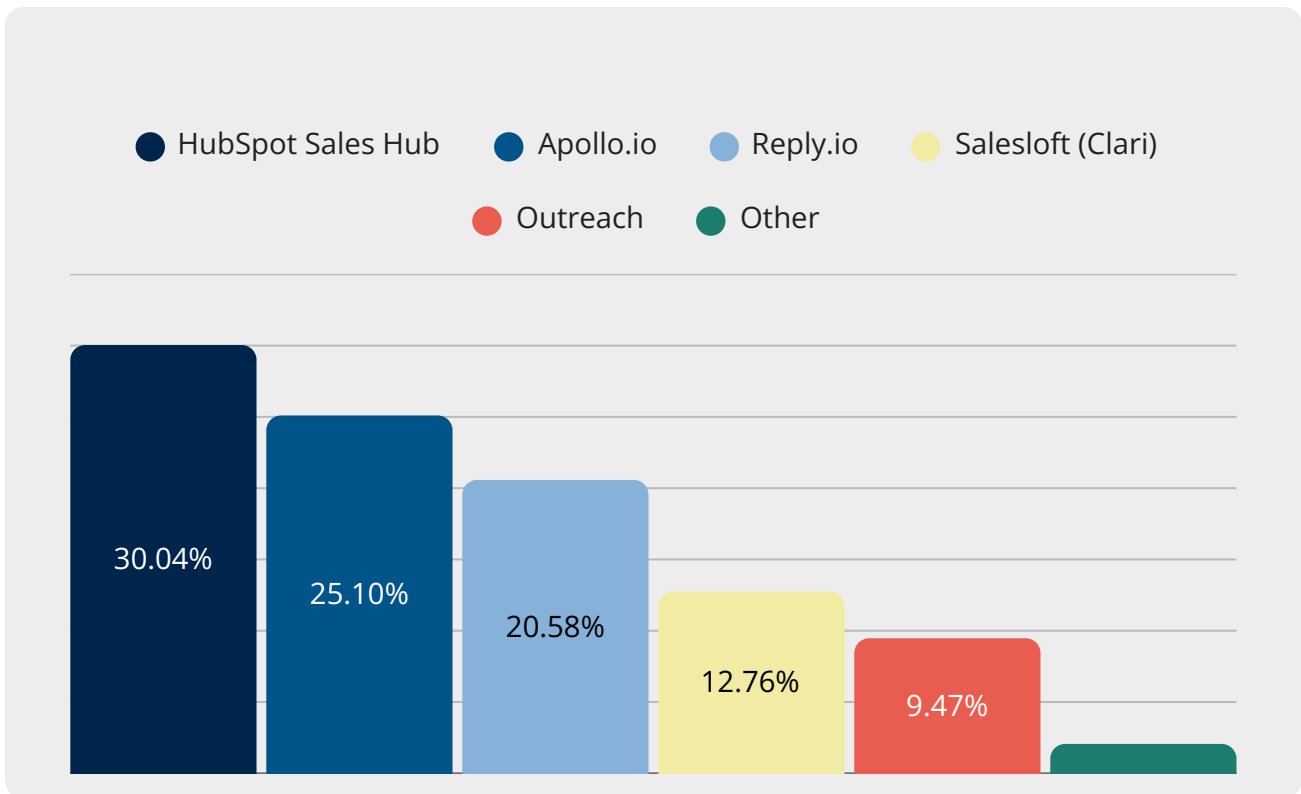
The result makes sense given Salesloft’s combination with Clari and its positioning around revenue orchestration, forecasting, conversation intelligence, deal management, governance, AI controls, and execution. Clari/Salesloft also emphasizes connecting sales engagement to forecasting and pipeline workflows, which likely reinforces buyer confidence around accuracy, process control, and revenue predictability.



Sales Engagement Platforms



HubSpot Sales Hub leads Human Empowerment with 73 of 243 votes, or 30.04%. Apollo.io follows with 25.10%, a 4.94-point spread. This is the tightest leadership margin in the survey, indicating that the category is still actively contested around usability, accessibility, rep productivity, and helping humans perform better rather than simply automating them.



HubSpot's leadership here likely reflects its reputation for usability, integrated CRM workflows, and broad adoption among sales and marketing teams. In this dimension, the community appears to reward platforms that make sellers more capable, not just more automated. Apollo's strong second-place result shows that data-driven prospecting plus AI-assisted execution is also increasingly viewed as empowering for sales teams.

Looking Forward



Predictions

1. Sales Engagement will split into two taxonomies: “Revenue Orchestration Platforms” and “AI-Native Prospecting Platforms.”

Outreach and Salesloft/Clari will increasingly compete in enterprise revenue orchestration, while Apollo.io and Reply.io will define AI-native outbound, prospecting, and AI SDR workflows.

2. Brand Leader voting will shift from “best cadence tool” to “best AI revenue co-pilot.”

Future surveys should add categories such as AI Agent Leader, Buyer Signal Intelligence Leader, Revenue Workflow Automation Leader, and AI SDR Leader.

3. Trust will become the most important voting category as AI writes, recommends, and acts on behalf of sellers.

As platforms move from suggesting actions to executing them, future Brand Leader results will increasingly reward vendors with strong governance, explainability, CRM accuracy, permissioning, and human-in-the-loop controls.



AI Brand Leader Program

IT Brand Pulse Brand Leader Awards are voted by thousands of IT professionals, not algorithms or small judging panels. Our surveys measure brand perception across the Five Pillars of AI brand leadership, giving winners credible, third-party validation that resonates with customers, analysts, and investors.

See the latest survey results at:

<https://itbrandpulse.com/brand-leader-program>.

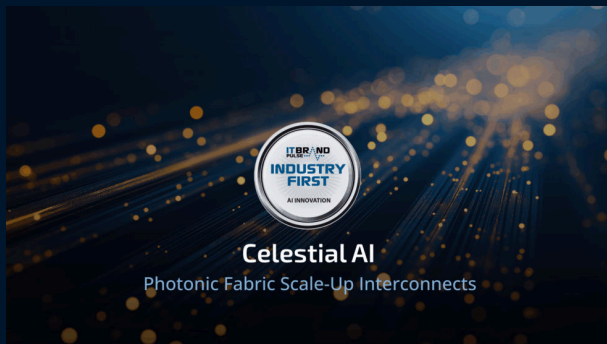




Industry First Program

IT Brand Pulse's Industry First Program provides independent, third-party validation that you were first to deliver a meaningful AI innovation. Our analysts verify your timeline, technical claims, and market precedence, then publish a comprehensive validation article documenting your achievement.

See the latest industry firsts and nominate your product at: itbrandpulse.com/industry-first.



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