



# AI Brand Leader Report

Sales Intelligence & Prospecting

[itbrandpulse.com](http://itbrandpulse.com)



# Executive Summary

The March 2026 AI Sales Intelligence & Prospecting 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.

Sales Intelligence & Prospecting platforms provide sales teams with the data, insights, and automation needed to identify, qualify, and engage potential customers.

These solutions aggregate contact and company data, enrich records, score prospects, and increasingly apply AI to automate research, personalization, and outreach. As AI adoption accelerates, the category is evolving from static databases into dynamic, intelligence-driven engagement platforms.

The March 2026 results reveal a market defined by incumbent data leaders and emerging AI-native innovators. ZoomInfo was voted Market Leader, while LinkedIn Sales Navigator dominates in Accuracy & Trust.

Clay and Apollo.io emerge as Innovation leaders, winning multiple forward-looking categories. The data reflects a structural shift: leadership is no longer defined solely by data scale, but by how effectively platforms activate intelligence.



Prepared by  
**Frank Berry**  
**Frankie Berry**  
**Harrison Griffin**

# 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.

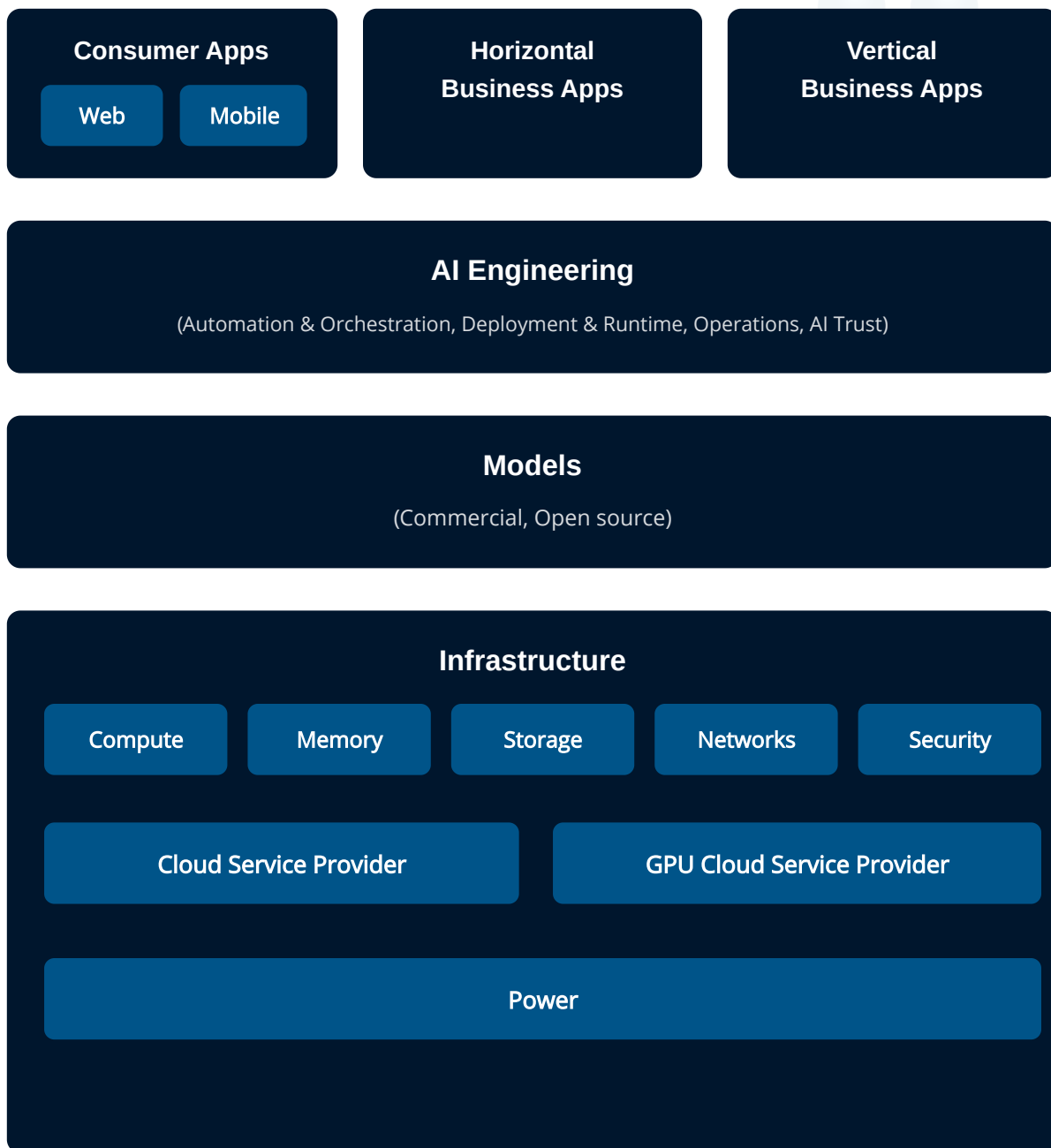


## Human Empowerment Leader

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

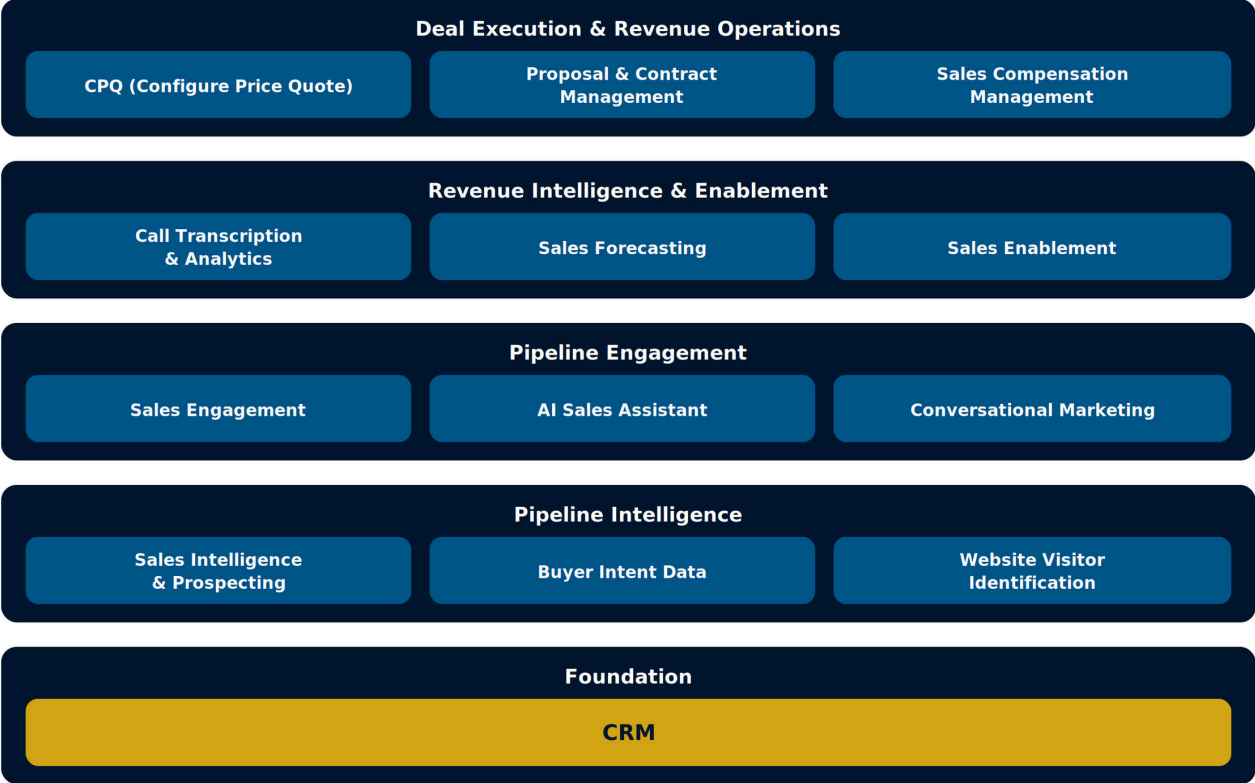
The AI Sales Intelligence & Prospecting products covered in this survey are part of the Horizontal Business Apps layer in the IT Brand Pulse AI Product Taxonomy. AI Brand Leader surveys are based on the product groupings below with shared characteristics, intended use, target customer, and other criteria.



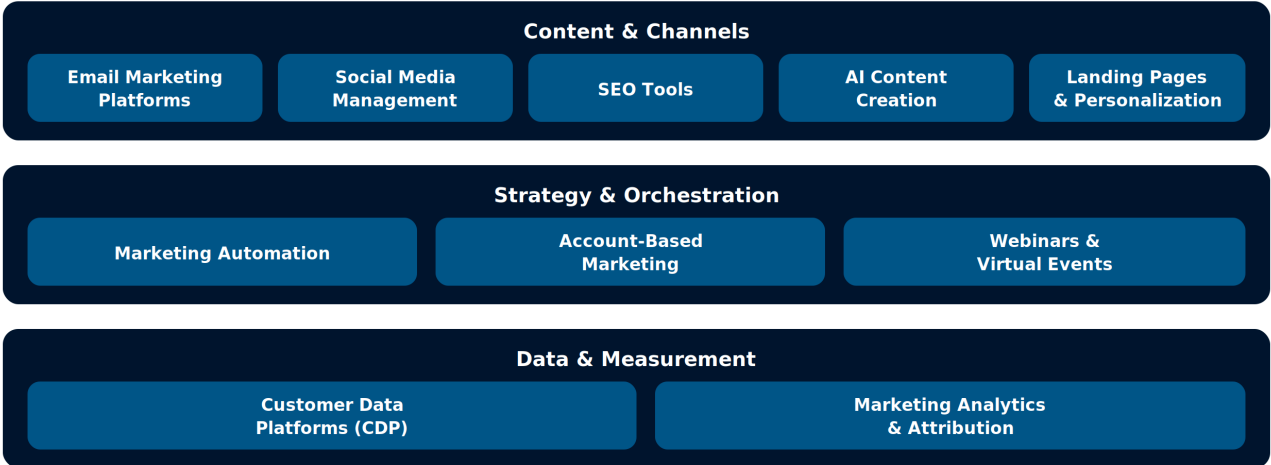
# AI Sales & Marketing Stacks

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



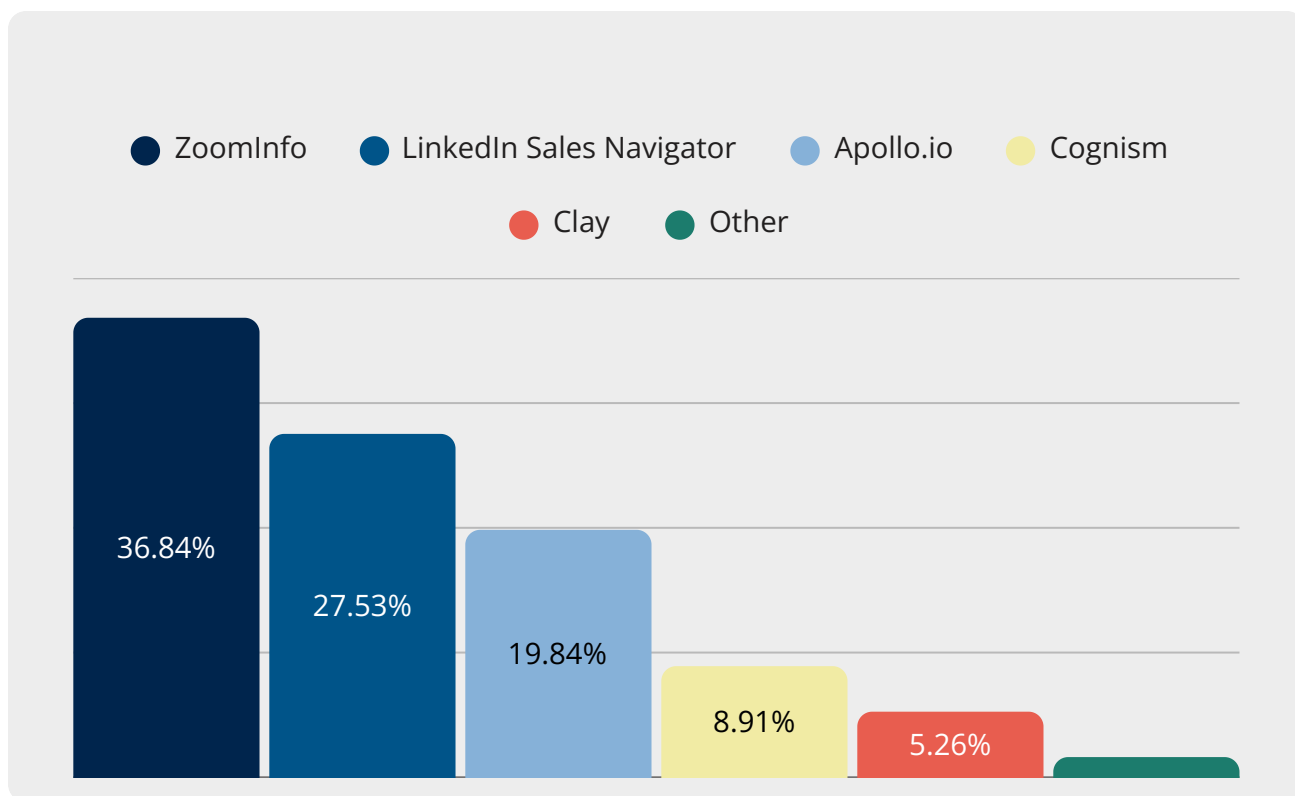
## AI Marketing Products



# AI Sales Intelligence & Prospecting



ZoomInfo led the Market Leader category with 36.84% of votes, ahead of LinkedIn Sales Navigator at 27.53% and Apollo.io at 19.84%. The results reflect continued dominance by established data providers, with ZoomInfo maintaining a strong lead driven by its scale, brand recognition, and widespread adoption across enterprise sales organizations globally.



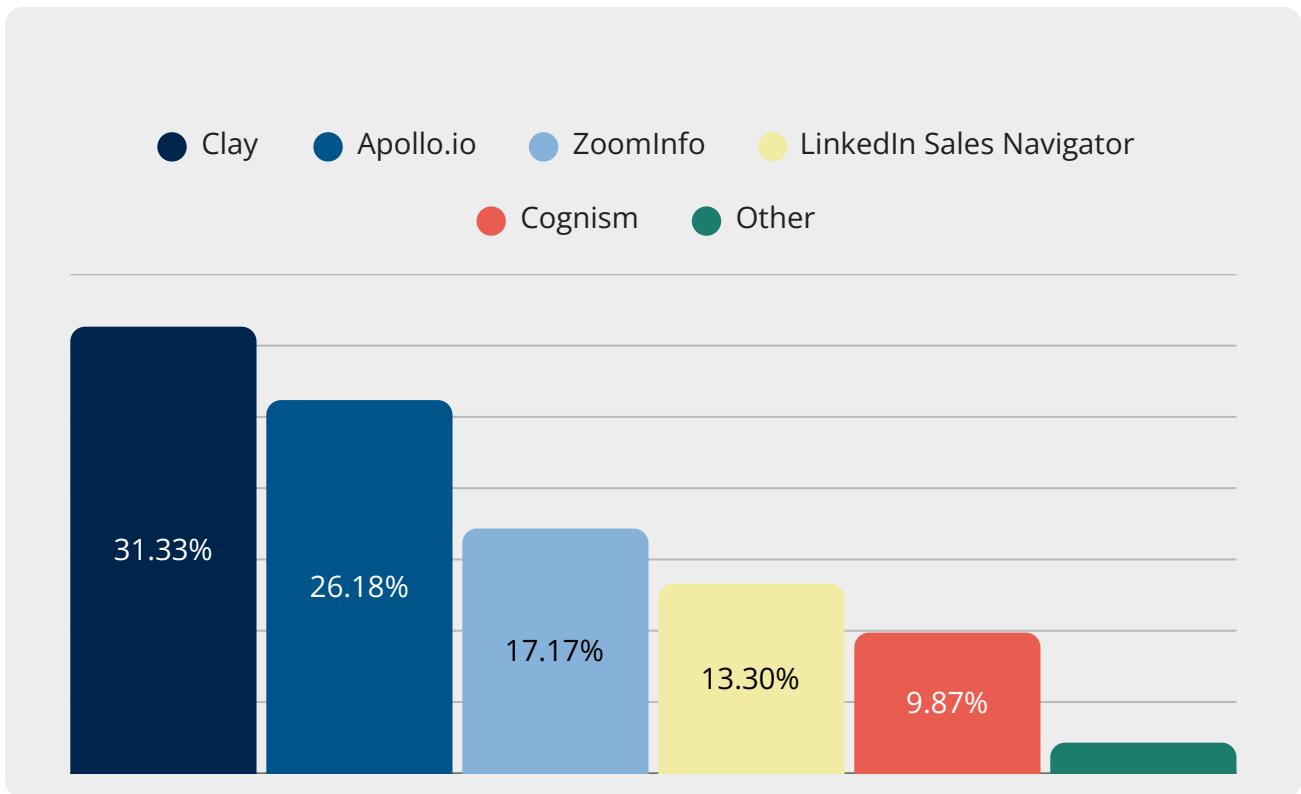
Voters likely preferred ZoomInfo due to its extensive database, strong brand presence, and proven ability to deliver actionable sales intelligence at scale. Its comprehensive coverage of contacts and companies, combined with enrichment and intent data, makes it a reliable foundation for prospecting and the default platform for building and maintaining high-quality sales pipelines.



# AI Sales Intelligence & Prospecting



Clay led the Intelligence & Innovation category with 31.33% of votes, followed by Apollo.io at 26.18% and ZoomInfo at 17.17%. LinkedIn and Cognism ranked lower. The results highlight growing momentum behind AI-native platforms that prioritize automation, data orchestration, and flexible workflows over traditional static databases in modern prospecting strategies.

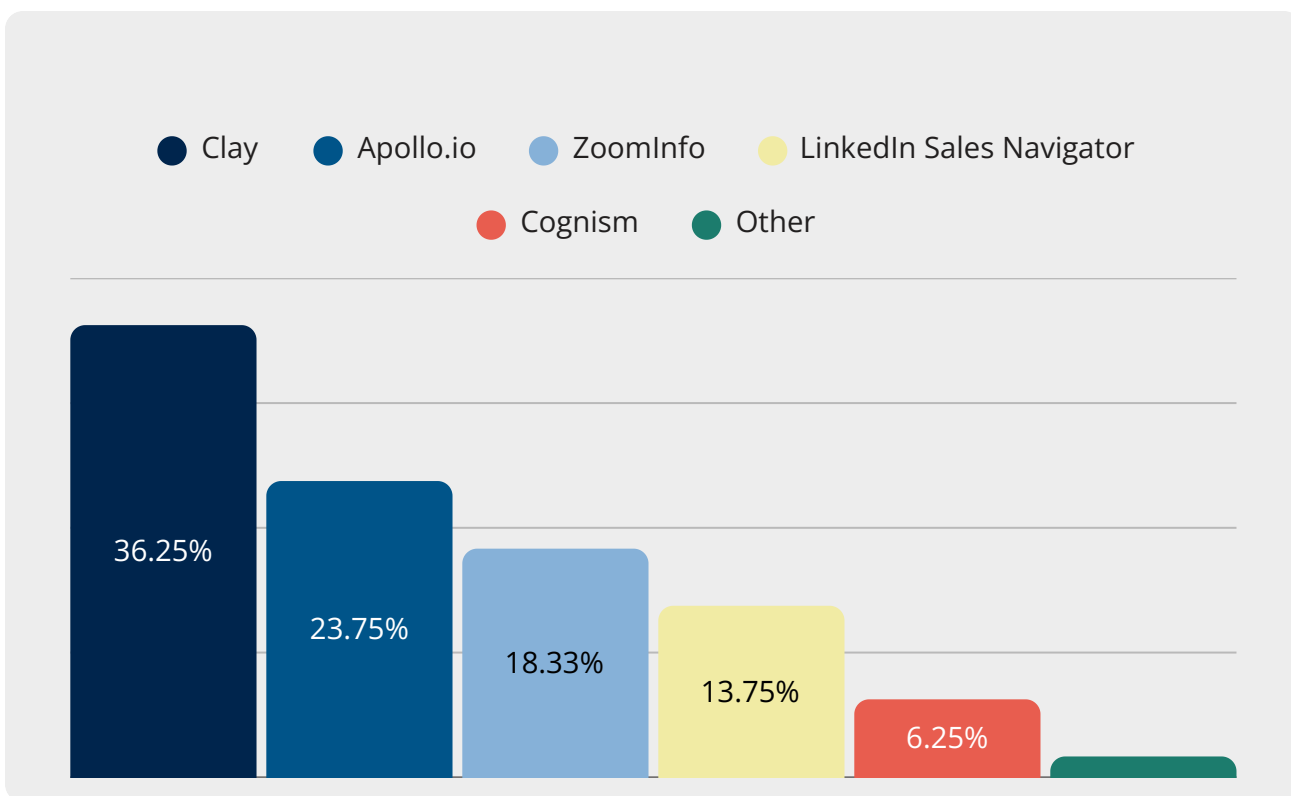


Voters likely favored Clay for its ability to unify multiple data sources and automate complex prospecting workflows. Its programmable approach allows users to build highly customized enrichment and outreach pipelines. This flexibility, combined with AI-driven intelligence, positions Clay as a leader in innovation.

# AI Sales Intelligence & Prospecting



Clay dominated the Creativity & Expression category with 36.25% of votes, significantly ahead of Apollo.io at 23.75% and ZoomInfo at 18.33%. LinkedIn and Cognism followed. This category reflects the importance of crafting differentiated outreach strategies, where personalization and creative engagement are increasingly critical to breaking through buyer fatigue.

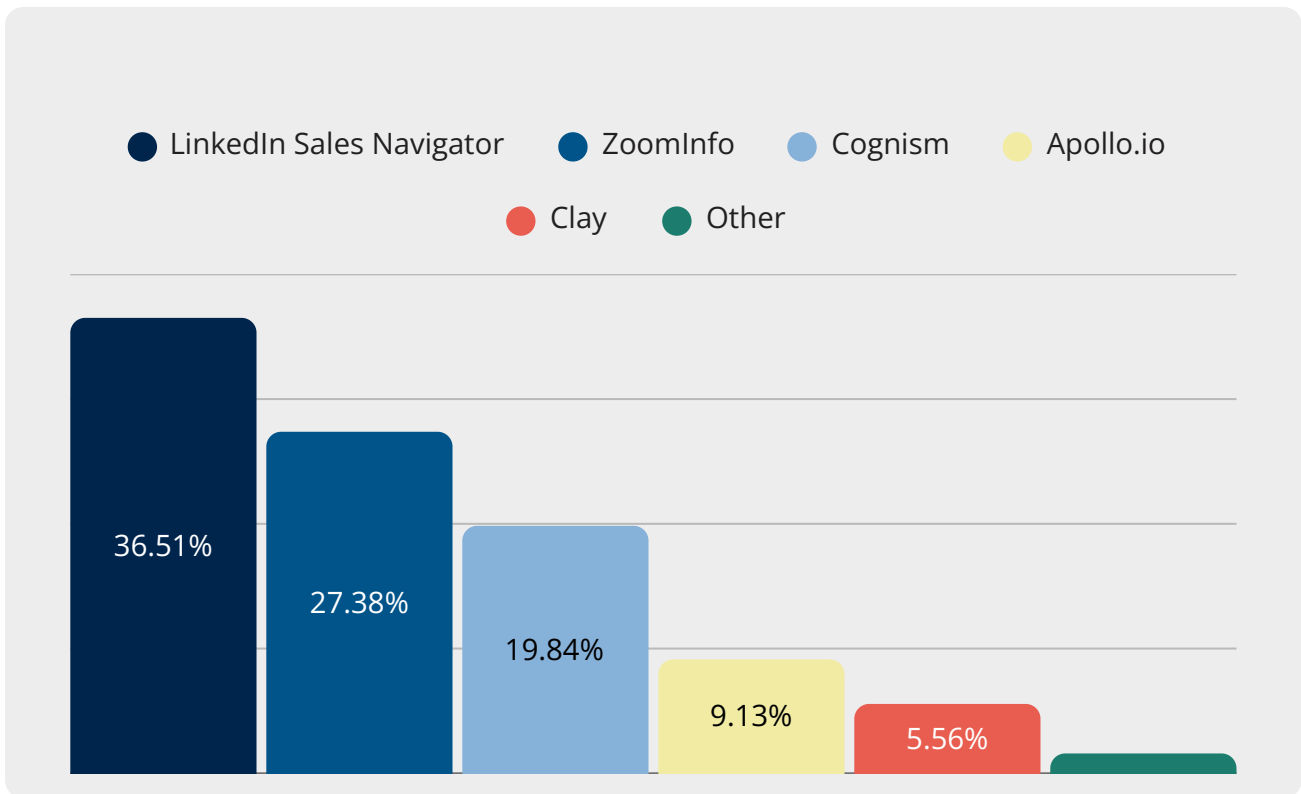


Voters likely chose Clay because it enables highly personalized and dynamic prospecting workflows. Its flexible architecture supports creative experimentation, allowing teams to tailor messaging and targeting strategies at scale. Clay empowers users to design unique engagement approaches, valuable for teams focused on standing out in competitive markets.

# AI Sales Intelligence & Prospecting



LinkedIn Sales Navigator led the Accuracy & Trust category with 36.51% of votes, followed by ZoomInfo at 27.38% and Cognism at 19.84%. The results emphasize the importance of data reliability and real-time accuracy, particularly in environments where outdated or incorrect information can undermine sales effectiveness.



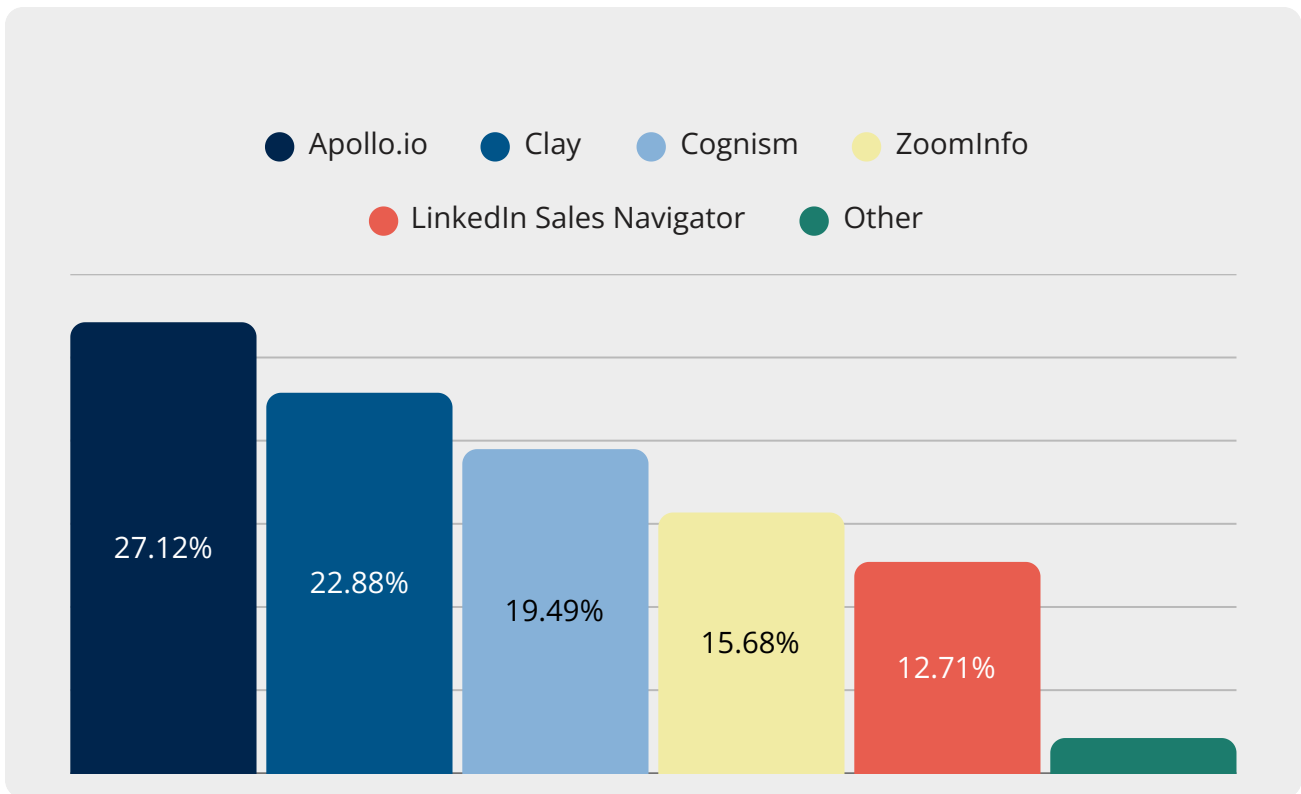
Voters likely preferred LinkedIn Sales Navigator due to its direct integration with the LinkedIn network, providing continuously updated, user-verified data. This real-time accuracy builds trust, especially for relationship-based selling. Its ability to reflect current roles, connections, and activity gives it a credibility advantage over third-party aggregated databases in high-trust sales environments.



# AI Sales Intelligence & Prospecting



Apollo.io led the Human Empowerment category with 27.12% of votes, followed by Clay at 22.88% and Cognism at 19.49%. The results highlight increasing demand for platforms that enhance productivity, streamline workflows, and enable sales teams to operate more efficiently without adding complexity.



Voters likely selected Apollo.io because it combines data, sequencing, and automation into a unified, easy-to-use platform. Its all-in-one approach reduces friction and enables users to move from prospecting to outreach seamlessly. This focus on workflow efficiency makes it particularly appealing to teams seeking immediate productivity gains without requiring extensive customization or technical expertise.

# Looking Forward



## Predictions

### **1. Data platforms will evolve into AI execution engines**

Sales intelligence platforms will move beyond data aggregation to become full execution layers that automate prospecting and outreach. Vendors that combine data, workflows, and AI-driven actions will redefine the category.

Brand leadership will shift toward platforms perceived as driving revenue outcomes, not just providing data.

### **2. Real-time, first-party data will outperform aggregated datasets**

As accuracy becomes more critical, platforms with access to real-time, first-party data—such as LinkedIn—will gain influence. Static databases will face increasing scrutiny.

Brand leadership will increasingly be defined by trust, freshness, and verifiability of data rather than sheer volume or coverage.

### **3. Customization and orchestration will define innovation leaders**

The rise of programmable workflows and data orchestration platforms like Clay signals a shift toward flexible, user-defined systems. Teams want control over how data is sourced, enriched, and activated.

Brand leadership in innovation will favor vendors that enable customization and integration across the AI sales stack.



## 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>.

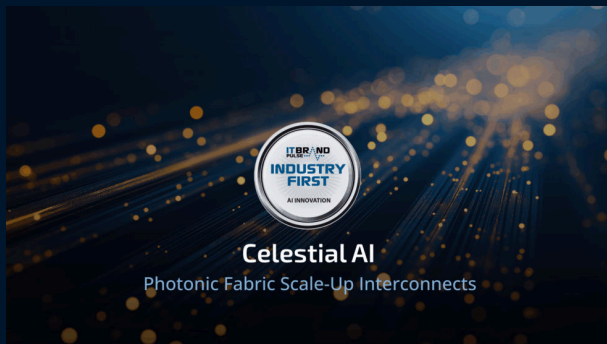




## Industry First Program

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](https://itbrandpulse.com/industry-first).



✉ [info@itbrandpulse.com](mailto:info@itbrandpulse.com)

🌐 [itbrandpulse.com](https://itbrandpulse.com)

📍 1895 Avenida Del Oro #4683  
Oceanside, CA 92052