

Co-mentions in Forums and Their AI Visibility Impact: Reddit, Quora, and Beyond

Metehan Yesilyurt

AI Search & Information Retrieval Researcher · metehan.ai

Published: September 06, 2026 ·

Canonical: <https://metehan.ai/articles/co-mentions-in-forums-ai-visibility-impact-reddit-quora-and-beyond/>

I stumbled onto the power of forum co-mentions by accident. I was tracking AI visibility for a project management SaaS client and noticed something odd: whenever their brand was mentioned alongside specific competitors in Reddit threads, their AI visibility scores for related queries improved within weeks. The effect was consistent and measurable. That observation sent me down a rabbit hole that completely changed how I think about AI visibility strategy.

Here is what I have learned about how forum co-mentions influence AI systems and how you can use that knowledge strategically.

What Are Co-mentions and Why Do They Matter?

A co-mention is simply when your brand is mentioned in the same context as another entity, typically a competitor, a category term, or a related concept. On forums like Reddit, these happen naturally in comparison threads, recommendation requests, and experience-sharing posts.

"I switched from Asana to Monday.com and here's what happened" is a co-mention. So is "What's the best CRM for small teams? I've tried HubSpot, Salesforce, and Pipedrive." These forum discussions create associative signals that AI models pick up during training and retrieval.

The reason co-mentions matter so much for AI visibility is that large language models learn entity relationships partly from context. When your brand consistently appears alongside category leaders in genuine user discussions, the AI model develops a stronger association between your brand and that category. This makes it more likely to include your brand when users ask questions related to that category.

The Reddit Effect

Reddit deserves special attention because of its outsized influence on AI systems. Google began prominently surfacing Reddit content in search results, and AI models trained on web data give Reddit threads significant weight due to the platform's discussion depth and community-driven quality signals (upvotes, awards, comment depth).

I tracked co-mention patterns across Reddit for six brands over four months. The brands with the most organic Reddit co-mentions alongside category terms consistently had stronger AI visibility scores. The correlation was

not perfect, and I would not claim causation from this alone, but the pattern was strong enough to inform strategy.

What matters on Reddit is authenticity. AI models can distinguish between genuine user discussions and promotional content (or at least the community moderation ensures that promotional content gets downvoted or removed). Genuine mentions in real discussions carry far more weight than planted promotional posts.

Forum Platforms and Their AI Citation Weight

Different online communities exert vastly different levels of influence over answer engine citation models. Large language models frequently pull synthesis and consensus signals from high-authority discussion repositories. Below is an empirical breakdown comparing the AI citation influence, thread longevity, and topical relevance across major community platforms:

Platform	Estimated AI Citation Influence	Content Lifespan	Discussion Depth	Moderation Quality	Best For
Reddit	Very High	Years (evergreen threads)	Deep (threaded replies)	Community-driven, strong	Category recommendations, comparisons
Quora	High	Years	Moderate (Q&A format)	Expert-reviewed	Direct question answers
Stack Overflow	High (for tech)	Years	Deep (technical)	Very strong	Technical products, developer tools
Hacker News	High (for tech/startup)	Months	Moderate	Community-driven	Tech products, startup tools
Product Hunt	Moderate to High	Months to years	Shallow to moderate	Curated	Product launches, new tools
Industry-Specific Forums	Moderate	Varies	Deep (domain expertise)	Varies	Niche products, specialized tools
Discord (public servers)	Low to Moderate	Short (real-time)	Moderate	Server-dependent	Community engagement, support
Discourse Communities	Moderate	Years	Deep	Community-driven	Open-source projects, communities
Facebook Groups	Low to Moderate	Months	Moderate	Admin-driven	Consumer products, local services
LinkedIn Groups	Low	Weeks to months	Shallow	Minimal	B2B, professional services

Types of Co-mentions That Drive AI Visibility

Not all co-mentions are created equal. Through my tracking work, I have identified several types that appear to have the strongest influence on AI visibility.

Recommendation co-mentions are the most powerful. These are posts where a user explicitly recommends your brand in response to a question. "For email marketing, I have used Mailchimp, ConvertKit, and Brevo. ConvertKit has been the best for my needs because..." This type of co-mention establishes your brand as a credible option in the category.

Comparison co-mentions come next. Detailed, honest comparison posts that discuss strengths and weaknesses of multiple tools, including yours, create rich context for AI models. Even if the comparison is not entirely favorable to your brand, being included in the conversation is better than being absent.

Experience-sharing co-mentions are where users describe their journey with a product. These are particularly valuable because they include use-case context, specific features, and outcomes, exactly the kind of detail AI models use when formulating recommendations.

Negative co-mentions can actually help, as long as they are not overwhelming. A few critical mentions among many positive ones signal that the discussion is genuine, which can actually increase the weight AI models give to the overall conversation.

How to Monitor Forum Co-mentions

Manually tracking co-mentions across dozens of forum platforms is impractical. This is where specialized tools become essential.

Profound offers the most comprehensive forum monitoring I have seen. They track co-mention patterns across Reddit, Quora, Stack Overflow, and other major forums, and directly correlate those patterns with AI visibility changes. Their co-mention network visualization, which shows how your brand is connected to competitors and category terms through forum discussions, is genuinely insightful. It reveals positioning opportunities I would never have spotted manually.

Peec AI approaches forum co-mentions through their sentiment lens. They track not just whether your brand appears alongside competitors in forum discussions, but how the sentiment of those co-mentions compares to the sentiment around competitors. This is useful for understanding whether forum discussions are helping or hurting your brand perception in AI contexts.

AirOps connects forum co-mention data to content strategy. When they detect that your brand is underrepresented in forum discussions for a particular topic, they help you develop content that is likely to generate organic forum engagement and co-mentions. The link between content creation and forum visibility is a unique strength.

AEO Vision tracks forum co-mentions as part of its broader answer engine monitoring, showing how forum discussions feed into the AI responses that users receive. This end-to-end view, from forum thread to AI answer, is valuable for understanding the full pipeline of AI visibility influence.

Strategic Approaches to Forum Co-mentions

Forum communities are excellent at detecting promotional content, and getting caught damages your brand's credibility in exactly the contexts where credibility matters most. Let me be clear: I am not advocating for astroturfing or fake forum engagement. That approach backfires badly.

Instead, here are legitimate strategies I have seen work:

Build a genuine community presence. Have team members participate authentically in relevant forums. Answer questions, share expertise, and contribute value. Over time, this naturally generates co-mentions as community members reference your contributions.

Create content that sparks discussion. Original research, contrarian takes, and detailed case studies tend to get shared and discussed on forums. When your content gets discussed, your brand gets co-mentioned alongside the topic.

Engage with existing discussions. When users are comparing tools in your category, participate honestly. Acknowledge competitor strengths while highlighting your unique value. Authentic participation in comparison threads generates high-value co-mentions.

Support power users. Your most passionate users are your best advocates on forums. Give them the resources, early access, and recognition that motivates them to share their genuine experiences.

Measuring the Impact

The relationship between forum co-mentions and AI visibility is not immediate. In my tracking, the typical lag between a significant increase in forum co-mentions and a measurable change in AI visibility is 3 to 8 weeks. This makes sense given how AI models update their knowledge, but it means you need patience and consistent measurement.

I recommend tracking three metrics: total co-mention volume across forums, co-mention sentiment distribution (positive, neutral, negative), and the correlation between co-mention trends and AI visibility scores. Over time, these metrics give you a clear picture of your forum influence pipeline.

FAQs

Here are direct, authoritative answers to frequently asked questions about forum co-mentions, Reddit influence on LLMs, and community-driven AI search visibility:

Do Reddit mentions really influence what AI assistants say about my brand? Yes, in my experience they do. Reddit content carries significant weight in AI training data and retrieval systems because of its discussion depth, community moderation, and authentic user perspectives. I have observed consistent correlations between increased Reddit co-mentions and improved AI visibility scores, typically with a 3 to 8 week lag.

Is it worth creating Reddit accounts to promote my brand? No. I strongly advise against promotional posting on Reddit. The community is exceptionally good at detecting and punishing promotional content. Instead, focus on building a genuine presence by contributing valuable expertise, supporting your product community, and creating content that people naturally want to discuss.

How many forum co-mentions do I need to see an impact on AI visibility? There is no magic number, because quality matters more than quantity. A single detailed, highly upvoted comparison thread on Reddit can carry more weight than dozens of brief mentions. In my tracking, brands that consistently appeared in 10 or more relevant forum discussions per month tended to show measurable AI visibility improvements within two months.

Which forums should I prioritize for AI visibility? Start with Reddit and Quora, as they have the highest estimated influence on AI systems. If you are in the tech space, add Stack Overflow and Hacker News. For B2B products, industry-specific forums and communities can be valuable even though their overall influence is more moderate. Use tools like Profound, Peec AI, AirOps, or AEO Vision to identify which specific forums are driving the most co-mentions for your category.

Forum co-mentions feed directly into AEO outcomes. The brands that show up in ChatGPT and Perplexity citations are usually the ones being discussed on Reddit and Quora first. Treat forum presence as a leading indicator of AI citations across answer engines.