

# AI crawlers are transforming digital content creation

AI has disrupted a core Internet economic model: website owners getting attribution and traffic in exchange for being indexed and crawled. Today, AI crawlers may scrape web content hundreds or thousands of times for every visitor they refer:

Crawl-to-referral ratios for top AI crawlers:



Anthropic  
**77.6K : 1**

OpenAI  
**1.4K : 1**

Google  
**13.8K : 1**

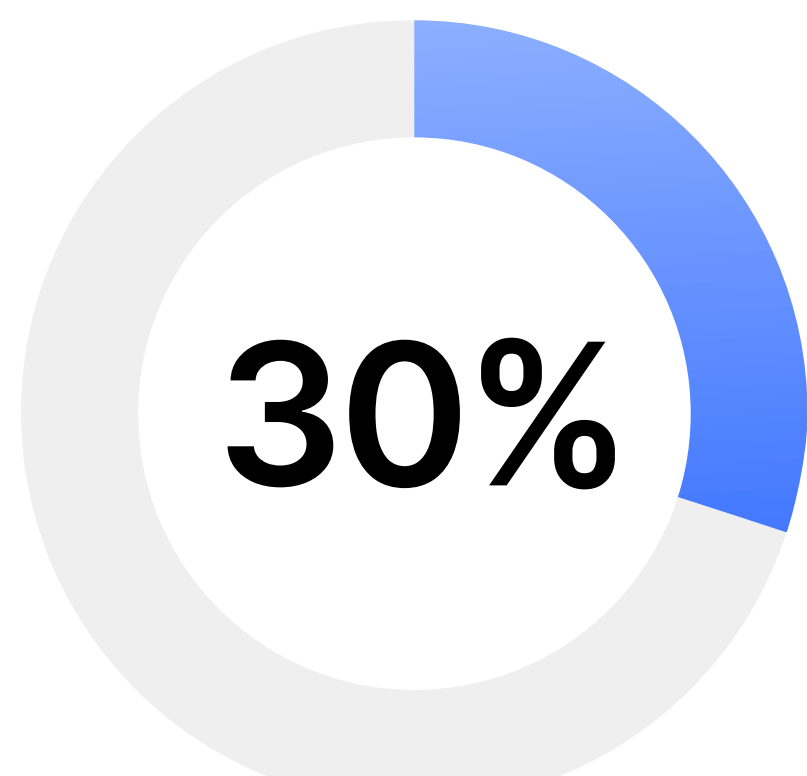
Perplexity  
**201.6K : 1**



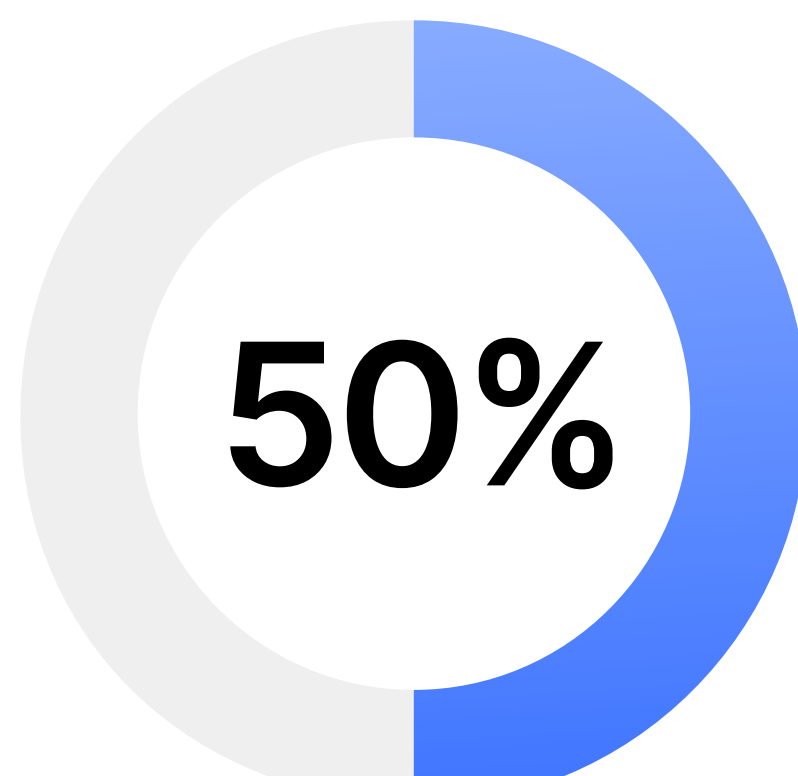
Some AI crawlers aren't clear about their purpose, making it harder for organizations to build a crawler strategy:

Operator	Verified via WebBotAuth protocol?	Different crawlers for different purposes?	Respects robots.txt?
Anthropic	No	Yes	Unclear
Google	No	No	Yes
Grok	No	No	Unclear
Meta	No	Yes	Yes
OpenAI	In Progress	Yes	Yes

These trends keep website owners from attracting valuable traffic — and exercising control over their own work:



drop in Google search click-throughs since mid 2024<sup>1</sup>



of OpenAI and Grok crawls successfully accessed gated content<sup>2</sup>

## Steps for building your AI crawler strategy



### 1. Get visibility

into AI crawler activity — many organizations are surprised by its extent.

### 2. Set priorities

about how different AI crawlers help or hinder your business.



### 3. Block or allow

specific crawlers, either as a final step or a prelude to monetization.



When you're ready to start, Cloudflare's AI Crawl Control offers visibility into AI crawler activity, as well as granular block/allow controls

Get the latest data on AI crawlers

See a live demo of AI Crawl Control

1. BrightEdge [https://videos.brightedge.com/assets/SQE-Guide/BrightEdge%20Report%20-%20AIO%20Overview%20One%20Year%20Review%20Research%20Paper%20and%20Deep%20Dive%20.pdf?cf\\_target\\_id=153A3BD7897B38CCB2FEADF594AC16BD](https://videos.brightedge.com/assets/SQE-Guide/BrightEdge%20Report%20-%20AIO%20Overview%20One%20Year%20Review%20Research%20Paper%20and%20Deep%20Dive%20.pdf?cf_target_id=153A3BD7897B38CCB2FEADF594AC16BD)

2. Digital Digging <https://www.digitaldigging.org/p/how-ai-bots-quietly-dismantle-paywalls>