20 benchmark tables: 17 industries plus the FTSE 100, the UK Ecommerce 100 and Universities

AI Readability Board Addendum

September 2026

PAPER FOR	AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTED BY	MEETING DATE
Board			

ACTION REQUIRED

Note the findings, **discuss** the question, **record** where we stand and who is accountable

READING DATE	COMPARED WITH
1 September 2026	The 1 August 2026 reading, one page a site. Last month's published standing (6 August 2026, several pages a site) is a different basis, so its scores are not set against these; §3.1 counts new No. 1s against both.

Paper ref CI-BA-2026-09 · Prepared by Nic Crane, Founder, The Crane Consultancy · Issued 2 November 2026, restating the paper first issued 25 September 2026 (§1.1). All figures are from this reading unless another date is given. Evidence tags and terms: Appendix B.

THE QUESTION FOR THE BOARD

Do we know where we stand in our table, and who is accountable for moving it?

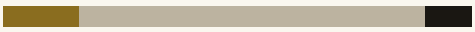
THIS MONTH

Rises and falls this month were spread across checks; no single check accounts for most of them.

LIKE FOR LIKE

312
rose, of 1,939 compared (Exhibit 1)

0
median change in score, in points



rose **16%** fell **10%**
unchanged **74%**
of 1,939 compared sites, 1 September 2026 (Exhibit 1)

SUMMARY

1 Like for like, 312 compared sites rose, 1,433 held and 194 fell. §1 · p. 2 MEASURED

2 11 compared sites entered Strong (70 or above) and 4 left. Strong had 98 compared sites on 1 August and 105 on 1 September. §3.3 · p. 4 MEASURED

3 1,045 of the 3,336 entries listed could not be fetched. §4.1 · p. 5 MEASURED

4 The board is asked to record where we stand in our table and name the director accountable, to report back at the reading of 1 October 2026. §5 · p. 6

Every fetched site in every table, ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/

1 · LIKE FOR LIKE

MEASURED

Most compared sites kept their score; of those that moved, most rose.

MEASURED

Rises and falls this month were spread across checks; no single check accounts for most of them.

1.1
METHOD

Exhibit 1 compares every site in 19 tables fetched at the same address on 1 August 2026 and again on 1 September 2026, one page a site both times. A site rose if its second score was higher, fell if it was lower, and kept its score if it was exactly the same.

Series break: last month's published ranked lists (6 August 2026) were read several pages a site; this month's (1 September 2026) are read one page a site. The two are separate series, set against each other only where §3.1 says so.

Restated 2 November 2026: a declared profile link now counts unless its page answers not found or gone, and the Index does not verify that the profile belongs to the organisation. The earlier rule gave a link full credit only where the page the Index's crawler received named the business, and the platforms answered that crawler differently from month to month, so every reading from 19 July 2026 was scored again on the new rule from the stored results, with no new scan. As first issued on 25 September 2026, this comparison counted 632 rose, 1,151 held and 156 fell.

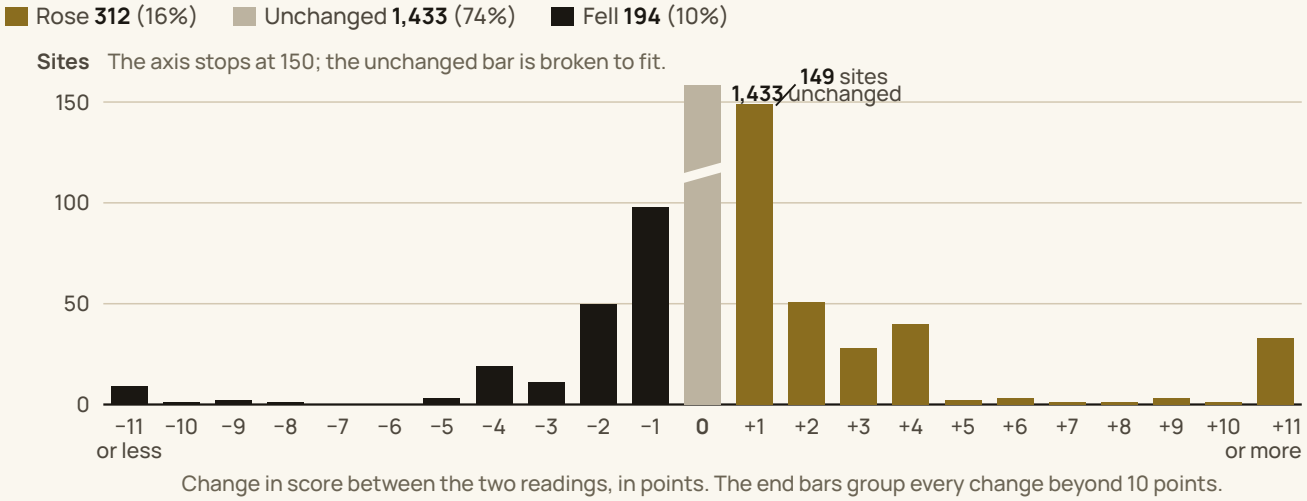
1.2
UNMEASURED

Universities is new this month, with no reading last month, so it is not compared.

EXHIBIT 1

Most compared sites kept their score; the most common rise was exactly 1 point

Each compared site's change in score, one bar a point



Base: 1,939 compared sites, 1 September 2026. Source: The Crane Index, 1 August and 1 September 2026.

1.3
UNMEASURED

Whether the sites that rose changed their own pages between readings is unmeasured: the reading stores no content hash or last-modified date for a page.

2 · WHERE IT MOVED

MEASURED

The three leading tables saw 20% to 25% of their compared entries rise.

2.1 MEASURED

Legal Services, Hospitality and Leisure and Professional Services had the largest shares of compared entries rising (Exhibit 2).

2.2 METHOD

Every compared table has at least 20 compared entries. The smallest base among the ranked rows is 40 compared entries (the FTSE 100). A table compared on fewer than half its fetched entries is set apart below them.

EXHIBIT 2

Legal Services had the largest share of compared entries rising

Compared entries in each table, 1 August to 1 September 2026; whole percentages

Rose | Unchanged | Fell | All compared table entries: 326 of 2,048 rose (a site in two tables counts twice)

Table	Rose	Compared of fetched	Fetched of listed
Legal Services	25%	130 of 133	133 of 171
Hospitality and Leisure	22%	117 of 122	122 of 182
Professional Services	20%	144 of 145	145 of 172
UK Ecommerce 100 †	18%	76 of 77	77 of 142
Telecommunications	18%	128 of 134	134 of 184
Media and Entertainment	18%	123 of 124	124 of 172
Technology and Software	17%	122 of 123	123 of 169
Financial Services	17%	115 of 119	119 of 175
Automotive	16%	103 of 108	108 of 179
Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals	15%	133 of 135	135 of 177
Consumer Goods	15%	122 of 124	124 of 188
Real Estate and Property	15%	123 of 128	128 of 186
Transport and Logistics	14%	106 of 110	110 of 176
Energy and Utilities	12%	113 of 117	117 of 175
Insurance	11%	118 of 123	123 of 181
Manufacturing and Industrial	10%	128 of 132	132 of 176
FTSE 100 †	10%	40 of 40	40 of 79
Travel and Tourism †	5%	86 of 88	88 of 171
COMPARED ON FEWER THAN HALF THE FETCHED ENTRIES			
Education	5 of 21	21 of 92	92 of 123

Education: the table's list changed between readings, and only 21 of its 92 fetched sites were on the 1 August list. † Fewer than 60% of the entries listed were fetched; each table's counts are in Appendix A. Base: 2,048 compared table entries, 1 September 2026. Source: The Crane Index, 1 August and 1 September 2026.

Your table's ranked list: Appendix A, p. 7.

3 · THE FIELD

MEASURED

No table's midpoint reaches Strong; 18 of 20 No. 1s do.

3.1 MEASURED

Like for like (1 August, one page a site), 1 of 18 tables have a new No. 1 (Education set apart, compared on under half its fetched entries). Against the published August standing (6 August, several pages a site), 12 of 19 do.

METHOD

The two counts differ because that standing was read on a different date and basis. Each table's No. 1 on 1 September is set against the highest-scoring of the same table's sites on 1 August. Appendix A marks each table.

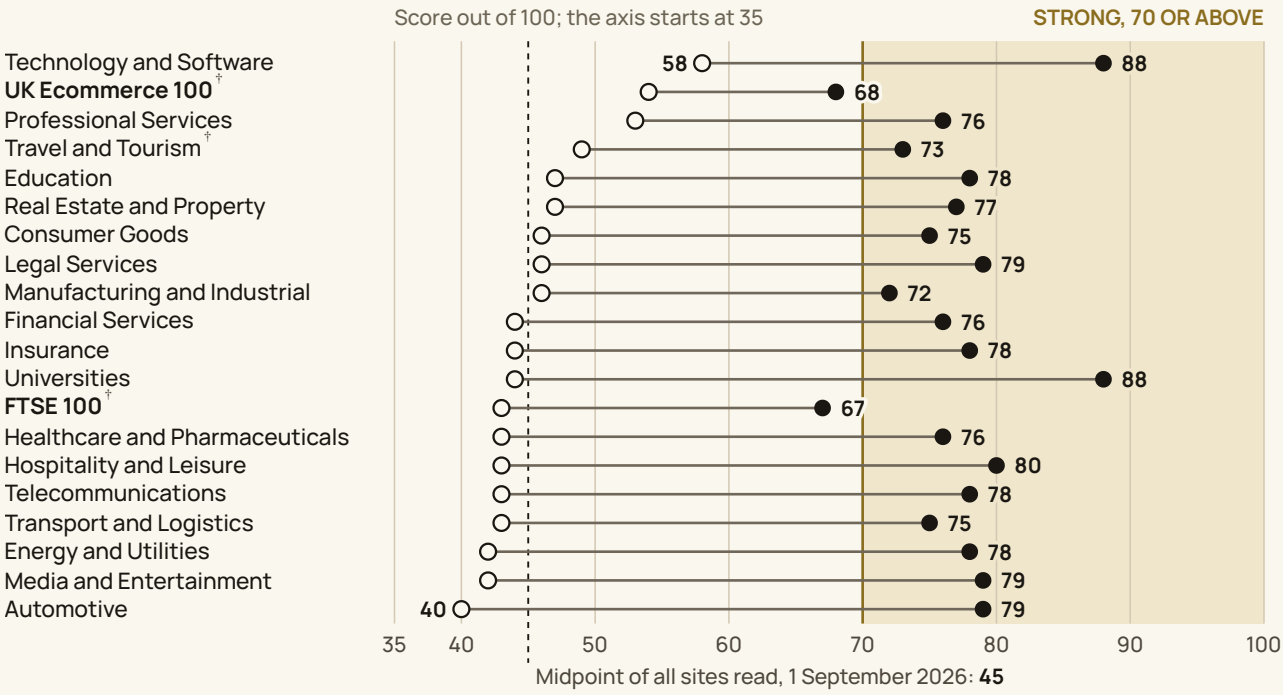
3.2 METHOD

A table's midpoint (median) is the middle score of its fetched sites. Exhibit 3 sets each table's midpoint against the score of its No. 1.

EXHIBIT 3

In every table the No. 1 scores 14 to 44 points above the table's midpoint

Open dot: table midpoint. Filled dot: No. 1, with its score. Shaded: Strong band. Dashed: midpoint of all sites read. Bold name: a No. 1 under 70.



† Fewer than 60% of the entries listed were fetched; each table's counts are in Appendix A. Base: 2,291 entries fetched in 20 tables; the dashed midpoint, 2,179 distinct sites; 1 September 2026. Source: The Crane Index, 1 September 2026.

Your table's ranked list: Appendix A, p. 7.

3.3 MEASURED

11 compared sites entered Strong (70 or above) and 4 left. Strong had 98 compared sites on 1 August and 105 on 1 September.

Midpoint (median) of compared sites, 45 on 1 August and 46 on 1 September.

4 · WHAT COULD NOT BE FETCHED

MEASURED

Almost a third of the entries listed could not be fetched, and most of those refused the Index's crawler.

4.1
MEASURED

1,045 of the 3,336 entries listed could not be fetched on 1 September 2026. By share of entries fetched, the lowest was the FTSE 100 and the highest Professional Services; each table's counts are in Appendix A.

METHOD

The FTSE 100 lists fewer entries than its 100 constituents because 21 could not be resolved to one scoreable parent domain.

The UK Ecommerce 100 lists more than 100 entries because its list is drawn deliberately wide, across grocery, marketplaces, fashion, electricals, beauty, home and specialist retail, so no reasonable ranking of the biggest is left out (its research page).

EXHIBIT 4

Refusals outnumber the other two reasons combined

The reason recorded for each entry not fetched



586 (56%) refused the Index's crawler

353 (34%) gave the crawler no response or no web page

106 (10%) returned an error status or no readable text

Base: 1,045 entries not fetched, 1 September 2026. Source: The Crane Index, 1 September 2026.

4.2
METHOD

Entries were requested once, on 1 September 2026, by the Index's crawler, which names itself as:

> TheCraneConsultancy-AIReadinessBot/1.0 (+https://thecraneconsultancy.com/ai-search-readiness/)

A refusal is a refusal to that crawler.

UNMEASURED

Whether the same sites refuse named AI crawlers is unmeasured. An entry not fetched is recorded by name only, so a distinct count of sites not fetched is also unmeasured.

5 · FOR THE BOARD

Four look-ups show where we stand; the board names who is accountable.

QUESTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT: THE LOOK-UPS

1	Was our site fetched on 1 September 2026, and if not, which of Exhibit 4's three reasons applies?
2	Where do we stand in our table: our score and rank, against its midpoint and its No. 1 (our table's ranked list, Appendix A)?
3	Did our score change between the readings of 1 August and 1 September 2026 (the line under our row in the ranked list)?
4	Which of our three measure scores is lowest, and which issues does our table's ranked list show for us?

RECOMMENDATION

The board is asked to:

(a) NOTE the findings of the reading of 1 September 2026;

(b) DISCUSS the question for the board on the cover (p. 1);

(c) RECORD our position below and NAME the director accountable, to report back at the reading of 1 October 2026.

OUR POSITION, FOR MANAGEMENT TO COMPLETE

Every score and rank below is read from our table's ranked list for the reading of 1 September 2026, one page a site. Appendix A gives the address of each table's list; every table is at thecraneconsultancy.com/research/.

Fetched on 1 September 2026?
Yes, or no and why (Exhibit 4) _____

Our table _____ **Its ranked list** _____

Our score, 1 Sep 2026 _____ **Our rank, of N** _____

Table midpoint _____ **Its No. 1 and score** _____

Change since 1 Aug 2026
In points, from the ranked list _____

Our measure scores
The three (Appendix B) _____

Issues found for us
As the ranked list shows them _____

Accountable director _____ **Minute reference** _____

A · THE 20 TABLE LEADERS

Each table's highest-scoring site of those fetched on 1 September 2026: the 17 industries alphabetically, then the other tables. Every fetched site in every table, ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/

Table	Highest-scoring of those fetched	Score	Change (points)	New No. 1 vs 1 Aug	New No. 1 vs 6 Aug	Table mid-point	Fetched of listed
Automotive See all 108 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/automotive-ai-readability/	Perodua	79 Strong	0	No	Yes	40	108 of 179
Consumer Goods See all 124 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/consumer-goods-ai-readability/	Levi Strauss & Co.	75 Strong	0	No	No	46	124 of 188
Education See all 92 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/education-ai-readability/	Fettes College	78 Strong	*Unmeasured: list changed*	Yes		47	92 of 123
Energy and Utilities See all 117 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/energy-utilities-ai-readability/	OVO Energy	78 Strong	0	No	Yes	42	117 of 175
Financial Services See all 119 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/financial-services-ai-readability/	Fidelity Investments	76 Strong	0	No	Yes	44	119 of 175
Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals See all 135 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/healthcare-pharma-ai-readability/	Hologic hologic.com	76 Strong	0	No	Yes	43	135 of 177
Hospitality and Leisure See all 122 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/hospitality-leisure-ai-readability/	Five Guys	80 Strong	0	No	Yes	43	122 of 182
Insurance See all 123 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/insurance-ai-readability/	Direct Line	78 Strong	0	No	Yes	44	123 of 181
Legal Services See all 133 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/legal-services-ai-readability/	LegalZoom	79 Strong	−1	No	No	46	133 of 171
Manufacturing and Industrial See all 132 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/manufacturing-industrial-ai-readability/	Konecranes	72 Strong	0	No	No	46	132 of 176
Media and Entertainment See all 124 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/media-entertainment-ai-readability/	Pan Macmillan	79 Strong	+1	No	No	42	124 of 172
Professional Services See all 145 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/professional-services-ai-readability/	Mercer	76 Strong	0	No	Yes	53	145 of 172
Real Estate and Property See all 128 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/real-estate-property-ai-readability/	MRI Software	77 Strong	+1	Yes	No	47	128 of 186
Technology and Software See all 123 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/technology-software-ai-readability/	Dynatrace	88 Strong	0	No	Yes	58	123 of 169
Telecommunications See all 134 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/telecommunications-ai-readability/	Wessex Internet	78 Strong	0	No	No	43	134 of 184
Transport and Logistics See all 110 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/transport-logistics-ai-readability/	c2c c2c-online.co.uk	75 Strong	0	No	No	43	110 of 176
Travel and Tourism † See all 88 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/travel-tourism-ai-readability/	Princess Cruises	73 Strong	0	No	Yes	49	88 of 171
OTHER BENCHMARK TABLES							
FTSE 100 † See all 40 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/ftse-100-ai-readability/	GSK gsk.com/en-gb	67 Emerging	+1	No	Yes	43	40 of 79
UK Ecommerce 100 † See all 77 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/uk-ecommerce-100-ai-readability/	Dreams dreams.co.uk	68 Emerging	0	No	Yes	54	77 of 142
Universities See all 117 fetched sites ranked: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/universities-ai-readability/	University of Kent	88 Strong	*Unmeasured: no 1 August reading*			44	117 of 158

NOTES TO APPENDIX A

Highest-scoring of those fetched. The No. 1, with its address where it fits. **Score.** With its band.

Change. Against the No. 1's own reading at the same address on 1 August 2026, one page a site both times.

New No. 1 vs 1 Aug. Like for like (§3.1). **vs 6 Aug:** against the August standing as published.

List changed. Education was compared on fewer than half its fetched entries, so its No. 1 is not compared like for like (§2).

† Under 60% of the entries listed were fetched.

B · ABOUT THIS ADDENDUM

WHAT THE INDEX MEASURES

The Crane Index reads the signals a machine needs to find, cite, act on and identify a site, one page a site. Every site in a table is scored by the same deterministic method. It does not measure whether any AI assistant cites or recommends a site, traffic or revenue: a score is a reading of the page, not of outcomes.

TERMS

AI Search Readiness. Whether AI crawlers may fetch and find the page, and whether its HTML, read without running JavaScript, names the organisation, carries structured data and answers plainly what it does.

Agent Readiness. Whether an automated agent is let in at the site's edge, finds an action it can take there, such as a booking or an enquiry, and can operate it without a CAPTCHA or running JavaScript, and whether the site points it to a machine interface.

Brand Representation. Whether the site names its owner consistently in schema.org Organization markup, links to its profiles and registry entries, such as LinkedIn, Wikidata or Companies House, names credentialed authors and sources its claims, and states how its content may be used.

Score. The mean of the three measures above, each scored out of 100, rounded. A table's midpoint is its median score.

Check. One test inside a measure, marked pass, partial or fail; a measure's score is built from its checks.

Reading. One dated monthly pass of the crawler over every table.

Fetched. Requested and scored. Not fetched: requested, not scored.

WHAT A TABLE CONTAINS

Each table is a defined list of organisations, assembled from public sources, checked by a person and published with its results; search engines and chatbot homepages are excluded by type. Tables are not limited to UK-headquartered organisations. Each site is fetched at the address its table lists; for one of the 20 No. 1s that is a United States locale page (mercer.com/en-us).

BASES

Entries listed	**3,336**
Entries fetched	**2,291** (2,179 distinct sites)
Entries not fetched	**1,045** (31%)
Compared: same address, one page a site	**2,048** entries (1,939 distinct sites)

An entry is one row of one table: a site in two tables is two entries and one distinct site.
Source: The Crane Index, 1 September 2026.

SCORE BANDS

Strong, 70 or above **Emerging**, 55 to 69 **Weak**, 40 to 54 **At risk**, under 40
Method: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/methodology/

EVIDENCE TAGS

MEASURED	Counted from the Index's stored readings, or worked out again from them.
INFERENCE	A judgement drawn from measured figures, marked as one.
METHOD	How a figure was counted or chosen.
UNMEASURED	Not read, or not compared. It is written as unmeasured, never scored zero.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Reading 1 September 2026; next reading, scheduled: 1 October 2026. Paper ref CI-BA-2026-09; issued 2 November 2026; edition 1. To cite: The Crane Index, AI Readability Board Addendum, September 2026, thecraneconsultancy.com/research/.

COLOPHON

Scan for every table's ranked list:
thecraneconsultancy.com/research/
Enquiries: hello@thecraneconsultancy.com
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Crane Index Monitor reads a site and its peers daily: thecraneconsultancy.com/research/#monitoring