



Brand Hallucination

A reflection document on what an AI system says about your brand right now, and how to check whether it is actually true.

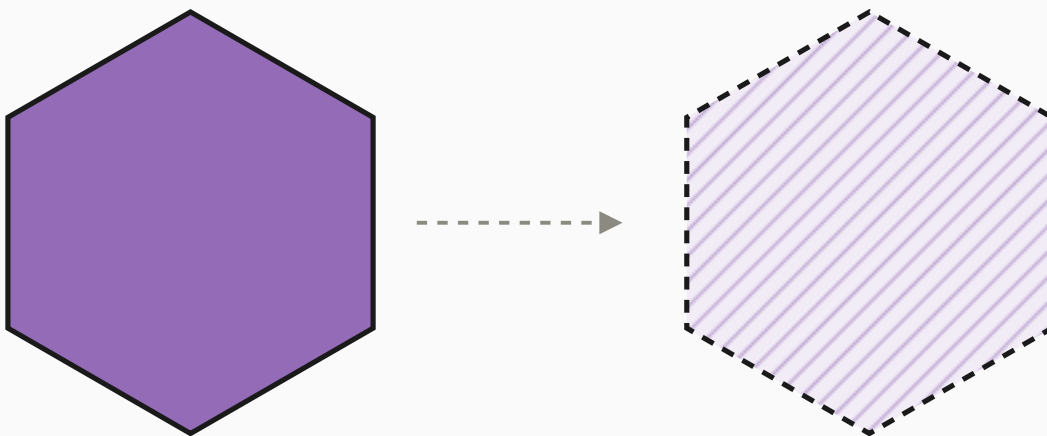
"Brand Hallucination occurs when an AI system confidently describes a brand inaccurately because the brand has not given it clear, consistent, verifiable signals."

Why it exists

When a brand leaves gaps, unclear positioning, inconsistent claims across sources, no verifiable signal, an AI system does not leave those gaps blank. It fills them with a plausible-sounding guess, stated with the same confidence as a fact. Most brands never see this happening, because the hallucinated version is usually shown to a prospect, not to them. This document exists to get you to actually go and look.

The mechanics

The gap gets filled before a prospect ever reaches your own site or a sales conversation. By the time a real conversation happens, the prospect may already be working from an inaccurate picture you never approved and do not know exists.



WHAT YOU'VE DEFINED

Clear, consistent, verifiable signals, set out across your own site and profiles.

WHAT THE MACHINE FILLS IN

A plausible-sounding guess, wherever a signal is missing, outdated, or unclear.

When signals run out, the machine does not leave a blank. It fills the gap with something that sounds right, and shows that version to your prospect before you ever get the chance to correct it.

Go and look

Ten to fifteen minutes. No scoring, just an honest look at what an AI system is actually saying about you right now. Answer in your own words, on this page or wherever you keep notes.

01

Ask an AI system to describe what your company does, in one paragraph, without feeding it any context first. Read it back. Is it accurate?

02

Ask it who you serve, or what makes you different. Does the answer match what you would actually say?

03

If anything in that answer was wrong, can you trace why: a gap in your own site's clarity, a conflicting or outdated source elsewhere, or genuinely no available signal at all?

04

Has anyone on your team ever checked this before? If not, why not?

05

If a prospect walked into a sales conversation already holding the inaccurate version, would your team even recognize that was happening?

WHAT THIS DOES NOT REPLACE

This is a spot-check on one or two prompts, not systematic monitoring. Aingworth's Recognition Snapshot runs a structured version of this test and reports exactly where the gaps are and what is filling them.

Related frameworks

Recognition Triangle: the three conditions that, left incomplete, leave the gaps a machine ends up filling

Recognition Economy: the shift that makes an unmanaged, machine-assembled picture a real business risk

Machine Gatekeeper: the system doing the guessing once your own signals run out

Authority Debt: the accumulated cost of the gaps a hallucination is quietly filling

Composite Picture: the full assembled impression a hallucination distorts one piece of

Authority Method: the process for closing the gaps before a machine fills them for you

- Run the free Recognition Diagnostic
- Book a Recognition Snapshot
- Read the framework in full in *Become the Answer*

Become the answer.