Blind test: method spots B2B topics a median nine months before the market

Study with 832 recommendations in six industries: 44 % of the selected topics materialized, against 28 % in the control group

Kissing, Germany, November 4, 2026 – Which topics will an industry be discussing a year from now? Bureau Wehrmann / WMNN has tested its method for spotting B2B topics early in a retrospective blind test. At six cutoffs between January 2024 and April 2025, the method selected B2B topics using only sources that were public at the time. Twelve months later, 44 % of those topics had materialized. Topics drawn from the same sources without the method's selection reached 28 %. In the median, the method was nine months ahead of the mainstream.

44 %	28 %	9 months
of selected topics materialized	in the control group	median head start

The gap held in all six industries tested, from banking and insurance to manufacturing and energy. The criterion was strict: a topic only counted if it rose in at least two of three public channels – search interest, news coverage and expert communities. The method is built into plinio TL, a platform for predictive thought leadership. It turns each topic into a checkable prediction with a success and a failure criterion and drafts source-checked content in the company's voice.

> *"Thought leadership rarely fails at the writing. It fails because it is published too late. If you only write once a topic shows up in the mainstream, you write against everyone else and have to buy attention at a high price. Our blind test shows that with our method and plinio TL, we are earlier than the market. We tested this against a control group and with deliberately strict criteria."*
>
> Dennis Wehrmann, founder of Bureau Wehrmann / WMNN

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THE REPORT

How early can B2B topics be spotted?

A retrospective blind test with 832 measurable recommendations across six industries. At six past dates between January 2024 and April 2025, a method selected topics using only sources that were public at the time. Twelve months later, public measures decided which topics had materialized.

Key findings

01 Topics selected by the method materialized in 44 % of cases. Topics drawn from the same sources without the method's selection reached 28 %.

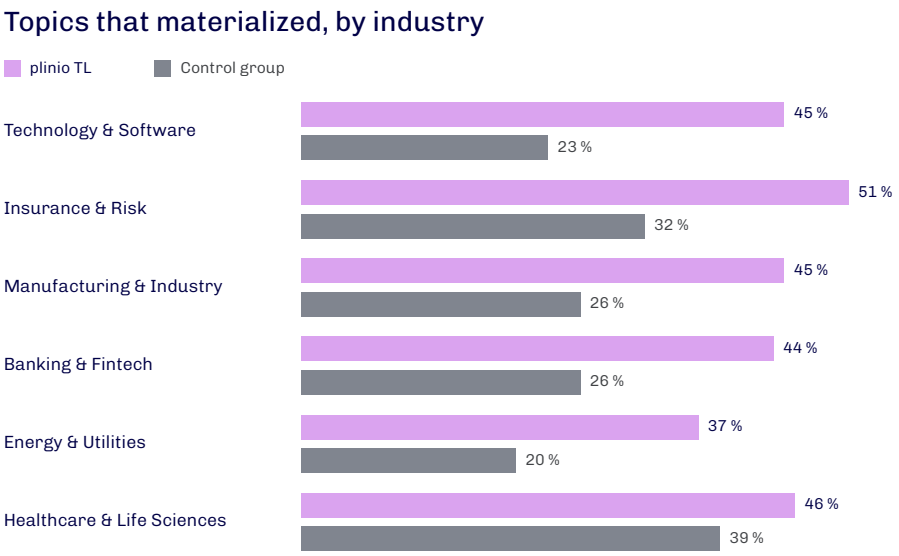
02 The difference held in all six industries, from 7 percentage points in healthcare and life sciences to 22 in technology and software.

03 Where a selected topic materialized, the method was 9 months ahead of the mainstream in the median.

04 The success criterion was strict: a topic only counted as materialized if it rose in at least two of three public channels – search interest, news coverage and expert communities.

05 The 44 % is therefore a lower bound. Many B2B topics take hold first in trade media, analyst reports and conference programmes, which the test does not measure.

Results by industry



Source: plinio TL retrospective blind test 2024–2025, getplinio.com/en/study/

INDUSTRY	PLINIO TL	CONTROL GROUP	DIFFERENCE	MEDIAN HEAD START
Technology & Software	45 %	23 %	+22 pts	10 months
Insurance & Risk	51 %	32 %	+19 pts	8 months
Manufacturing & Industry	45 %	26 %	+19 pts	9 months
Banking & Fintech	44 %	26 %	+18 pts	9+ months
Energy & Utilities	37 %	20 %	+17 pts	9 months
Healthcare & Life Sciences	46 %	39 %	+7 pts	8 months
Six industries pooled	44 %	28 %	+16 pts	~9 months

Retrospective blind test 2024–2025 · strict measurement · interactive view and per-industry detail on the methodology page (getplinio.com/en/proof/#industries).

How the test worked

01

Six cutoffs

Between January 2024 and April 2025. At each date, the method saw only what was public by then.

02

Selection

From those sources, the method selected topics, each with a reasoning and a list of sources.

03

Control group

Topics from the same sources and the same model, without the method's selection. Any hindsight helps both groups equally.

04

Measurement

Twelve months later, a separate routine measured each topic in three public channels. Topics without a measurable signal were excluded.

Limits of the study

- ✓ It is a retrospective test: it shows what the method would have selected at past dates.
- ✓ In the test, the method worked from a typical profile per industry, not from a specific company.
- ✓ Newer cutoffs scored better in both groups. The gap to the control group is the meaningful figure, not the absolute rate.
- ✓ Six industries are validated. Four more are in exploratory testing because the historical sources underrepresent them.

For journalists

The study at a glance

DESIGN	Retrospective blind test with a control group
PERIOD	Six cutoffs, January 2024 to April 2025; each measured twelve months later
SAMPLE	832 measurable recommendations
INDUSTRIES	Technology & software, insurance & risk, manufacturing & industry, banking & fintech, energy & utilities, healthcare & life sciences
SUCCESS CRITERION	Rise in at least two of three public channels: search interest, news coverage, expert communities
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Charts and report

REPORT (PDF)
getplinio.com/study/plinio-tl-blind-test-2026-en.pdf

CHART (SVG)
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About Bureau Wehrmann / WMNN

Bureau Wehrmann / WMNN is a B2B communication agency near Augsburg with more than 20 years of practice. It makes plinio TL, a platform for predictive thought leadership.