Market Authority Index

Industrial and Manufacturing

Sector Executive Summary

Q2 2026 | 16 brands in this sector out of a total of 146 Assessed brands.

Average Market Authority Index: 65.9/100

Median: 66.5 | Certification rate: 68.8%*

*(*achieve a score of 65 or above)*

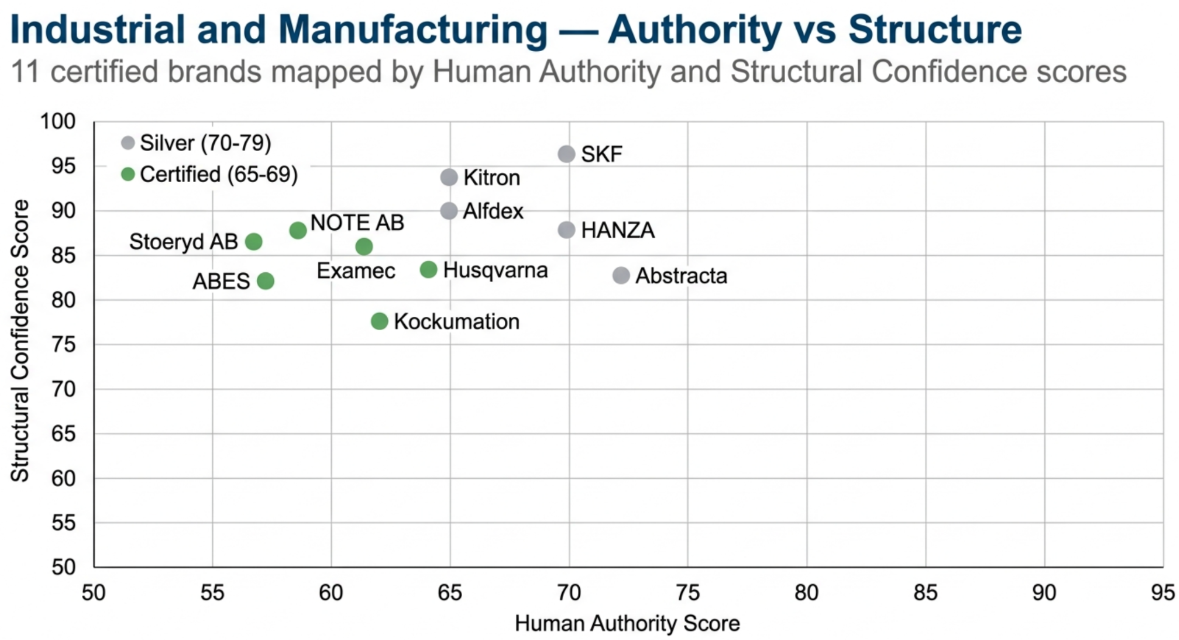
17 July 2026

Sector Executive Summary

Prepared by Digital Scorecard

Sector Overview

Industrial and Manufacturing is a sector defined by operational rigour, long-standing corporate governance, and deep technical expertise. The 16 assessed brands in this sector score an average Market Authority Index of 65.9, with a median of 66.5, placing them slightly above the cross-sector portfolio average of 64.1.



What makes this sector distinctive is the extreme imbalance between its two composite pillars. The average Structural Confidence score of 85.3 is the highest of any sector assessed to date, reflecting decades of regulatory compliance, stable governance, and financial discipline. By contrast, the average Human Authority score of 57.5 is among the lowest, revealing a sector where brands are structurally sound but struggle to translate that rigour into visible market authority. It is easy to see how they cluster on the image, in contrast to most sectors. It must be noted here that the companies reviewed in this sector are primarily large and well known so their structural confidence will naturally tend to be high, however the lack of market presence is also to be noted.

The certification rate of 68.8% is above the portfolio average. No brands reach Gold certification (80+), but five achieve Silver (70-79), indicating strong overall performance without the standout market-facing authority seen in consumer sectors.

Where Brands Are Strong

The sector's defining strength is Structural Confidence, averaging 85.3 out of 100 with a low standard deviation of 5.1. This means virtually every brand in the sector, regardless of subsector or size, maintains robust corporate foundations.

Trust Infrastructure leads the Human Authority sub-pillars at 17.0 out of 25 (SD 1.7), reflecting the sector's commitment to technical credibility, certifications, and professional standards. Strategic Positioning follows at 17.1 out of 25. But the stand out weakness for all is Proof and Validation, more on this later in this report.

Sub-Pillar	**Sector Average (/25)**	**SD**	**Cross-Sector Average (/25)**
Strategic Positioning	17.1	3.3	18.7
Proof and Validation	8.6	3.8	11.8
Trust Infrastructure	17.0	1.7	16.7
Market Presence	14.8	4.0	14.9

Sector Leaders

Five brands achieve Silver certification (70-79):

SKF (Market Authority Index: 77) — The bearing and engineering giant leads the sector with the highest Structural Confidence score (96) of any brand in the entire portfolio. SKF's governance and compliance infrastructure is virtually unmatched.

Abstracta (Market Authority Index: 75) — A building products manufacturer that combines strong Human Authority (72) with the strategic positioning needed to stand out in a technical market.

HANZA (Market Authority Index: 75) — One of the highest-scoring contract manufacturers, demonstrating that even in a subsector that typically scores lower, strong authority is achievable. HANZA's HA of 70 is notably higher than the contract manufacturing average of 53.6.

Kitron (Market Authority Index: 73) — An electronics manufacturing services provider with exceptional structural foundations (SC 94), reflecting deep compliance and governance maturity.

Alfdex (Market Authority Index: 72) — An industrial components specialist with balanced scores across both pillars.

Contract Manufacturing vs Industrial Products and Components

This sector provides a natural experiment in how subsector dynamics shape market authority. Ten of the 16 assessed brands are contract manufacturers, while four produce and sell their own industrial products. The differences are revealing, even with a small sample size.

Metric	Contract Manufacturing (10)	Industrial Products and Components (4)
Average Market Authority Index	63.3	71.0
Median	65	70.5
Average Human Authority	53.6	64.0
Average Structural Confidence	85.6	87.0
Certification Rate	60.0%	100.0%
Standard Deviation (MAI)	7.8	4.1

The gap is stark: Industrial Products and Components brands score 7.7 points higher on average, driven almost entirely by Human Authority (64.0 vs 53.6). Structural Confidence is nearly identical (87.0 vs 85.6), confirming that both subsectors share the same governance and compliance foundations.

Why the gap exists: Contract manufacturers typically operate behind their clients' brands. Their end customers rarely see them, their websites serve a narrow audience of procurement professionals, and their market presence is built through trade relationships rather than public-facing authority. Industrial product companies, by contrast, own their brand in the marketplace. SKF, Husqvarna, and Alfdex are names that engineers and buyers recognise, search for, and evaluate directly. **But this is set for change with the use of AI, both an opportunity and a threat for these businesses.**

The Proof and Validation divide is especially pronounced. Among brands with sub-pillar data, contract manufacturers average just 7.6 out of 25 on Proof and Validation, compared to 10.3 for industrial product brands. Neither subsector scores well here relative to consumer sectors, but contract manufacturers face a structural challenge: their proof of quality is embedded in their clients' products, not in independent reviews or public testimonials.

What this means for contract manufacturers: The path to higher Market Authority Index scores runs through making invisible expertise visible. Case studies, client outcome data, quality certifications prominently displayed, and technical content that demonstrates capability are the levers. HANZA (MAI 75, HA 70) shows this is achievable, its authority score is 17 points above the contract manufacturing average.

This will become more important for contract manufacturers going forward as AI assists with decision making. It is an opportunity for existing and new contract manufacturers to stand out.

Where the Gap Remains

Proof and Validation is the sector's critical weakness, averaging just 8.6 out of 25. This is the lowest Proof and Validation score of any sector assessed, sitting 3.2 points below the already-weak cross-sector average of 11.8.

The standard deviation of 3.8 tells a consistent story: virtually no brand in this sector has solved the proof challenge. This is not about individual underperformance, it is a systemic sector characteristic. B2B industrial brands do not accumulate the review volumes, case study libraries, or independent validation that consumer brands build naturally through Trustpilot, Google Reviews, and social proof. Nor have they worked out how to do this as B2B industrial businesses.

Strategic Positioning at 17.1 out of 25 lags the cross-sector average of 18.7 but not by a big margin. Many industrial websites remain functional rather than strategic, presenting capabilities without articulating differentiated positioning or buyer-relevant value propositions. Again an opportunity for this sector. But there is an even bigger gap on Market Presence where there is an opportunity for Contract manufacturers (13.0/25) versus 18.0 for industrial Products & Components.

Score Distribution for Industrial and Manufacturing

Band	Score Range	Count	Share
Exceptional	80-100	0	0%
Strong	70-79	5	31.3%
Developing	60-69	8	50.0%
Emerging	50-59	3	18.8%
At Risk	Below 50	0	0%

Half the sector sits in the Developing band (60-69), with another third achieving Strong. The absence of any Exceptional brands and the clustering in Developing-to-Strong reflects the sector's pattern: structurally excellent, authority-constrained.

What This Means for Manufacturing and Industrial Brands

This sector's challenge is not about building better businesses, the Structural Confidence scores prove these are well-run companies. The challenge is making that quality visible to buyers, AI recommendation engines, and the broader market.

The authority gap is where competitive differentiation will be won or lost. As procurement becomes more digital, as AI-powered sourcing tools gain traction, and as buyers increasingly research suppliers before making contact, the brands that can demonstrate authority beyond a capability list will win the specification.

The Contract Manufacturing vs Industrial Products comparison shows the path clearly: own-brand companies that invest in market-facing authority are more visible and score 7.7 points higher on the same structural foundations. **Contract manufacturers do not need to become consumer brands, but they do need to make their expertise findable, their quality provable, and their track record visible.**

HANZA demonstrates that a contract manufacturer can achieve visibility and achieves Silver certification. The question for the other nine is whether they are willing to invest in the visibility that turns operational excellence into market authority.

What Should Manufacturing and Industrial Brands Do Next?

Based on the data, three priorities stand out for brands looking to strengthen their Market Authority Index position:

1. Build a proof library. At 8.6 out of 25, Proof and Validation is the single largest drag on scores. Start with 3-5 detailed client case studies with measurable outcomes. Add technical certifications, quality awards, and independent validation to your website in a structured, findable format.

2. Rewrite your positioning. Many industrial websites describe what the company does without articulating why a buyer should choose them. Move from capability statements to value propositions. What problem do you solve better than anyone else? What outcome can you prove?

3. Make your structural strength visible. With average Structural Confidence of 85.3, these companies already have the foundations that buyers care about: financial stability, governance maturity, and operational longevity. But if that information lives only in annual reports and corporate registries, it does not serve the brand. Surface it where buyers and AI systems can find it.

For contract manufacturers specifically: study what HANZA does differently. Its Human Authority score of 70 is 17 points above the subsector average — that gap represents the commercial value of visible authority.

Assessed vs. Full Dataset Comparison

The Industrial and Manufacturing sector in the Market Authority Directory includes 55 brands across all assessment tiers in the Market Authority Index directory. Of these, 16 have undergone full Market Authority Index assessment and the subject of the benchmarks analysed here.

Metric	**Assessed Brands (16)**	**Full Dataset (55)**
Average Market Authority Index	65.9	64.8
Median	66.5	66
Certification Rate	68.8%	56.4%
Standard Deviation	7.6	11.2

The gap between assessed and full dataset averages is unusually narrow at just 1.1 points, suggesting the assessed sample is representative of the broader sector. The higher certification rate among assessed brands (68.8% vs 56.4%) reflects the expected pattern: full audits surface structural strengths that signal-based methods may not detect, particularly in manufacturing where governance and compliance are deeply embedded. And the full assessments where undertaken on the established brands.

About the Market Authority Index

What It Measures

The Market Authority Index is a composite score (0-100) that measures how well a brand converts its business fundamentals into visible, verifiable market authority. It combines two pillars:

Human Authority (70% weight) evaluates how a brand is perceived, positioned, and validated in its market through four sub-pillars: Strategic Positioning, Proof and Validation, Trust Infrastructure, and Market Presence.

Structural Confidence (30% weight) assesses the corporate foundations that underpin long-term trust: filing compliance, financial risk signals, governance stability, and operational longevity.

The index is designed to be size-neutral. A well-positioned small brand can score as highly as a multinational — the Market Authority Index measures authority, not revenue.

How Brands Are Assessed

Each brand undergoes independent assessment using publicly available data sources including corporate registries, financial filings, digital presence analysis, review platforms, and structured data. Brands do not self-report. The methodology is documented in the Market Authority Standard.

Certification Tiers

Tier	Score Range
Gold	80+
Silver	70-79
Certified	65-69

Brands scoring below 65 are assessed but do not receive certification.

For the full cross-sector analysis, methodology details, and complete benchmark data, refer to the Market Authority Index Benchmark Intelligence Report 2026, Q2 Edition.

Explore all assessed Industrial & Manufacturing brands in the Market Authority Index Certified Directory here:

This report has been produced by Digital Scorecard. The Market Authority Index is based on the Market Authority Standard.

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