



AI Brand Visibility Example Report

“Running shoes for beginners”

Executive Summary

AI-driven product recommendations are reshaping consumer behavior, dramatically increasing the importance of brand visibility through generative AI platforms. This study analyzed **brand visibility in the "running shoes for beginners" category** by assessing **5,000 recommendations** from 10 leading AI models.

Key findings include:

- Brooks, ASICS, and New Balance lead overall AI visibility and are consistently recommended across diverse AI models.
- Brooks Ghost emerged as the most recommended beginner running shoe, praised for its cushioning, smooth ride, and versatility.
- Critical gaps identified include Nike's complete absence in Google's Gemini AI recommendations, significantly affecting its discoverability.
- Emerging consumer expectations revolve around cushioning, comfort, durability, stability, versatility, and smooth transitions, which are repeatedly highlighted across AI models.
- Optimizing AI visibility has become essential, paralleling SEO's past importance. To maintain competitive positioning in AI-driven consumer discovery, brands with visibility gaps should take immediate strategic actions.

The Importance of AI Brand Visibility

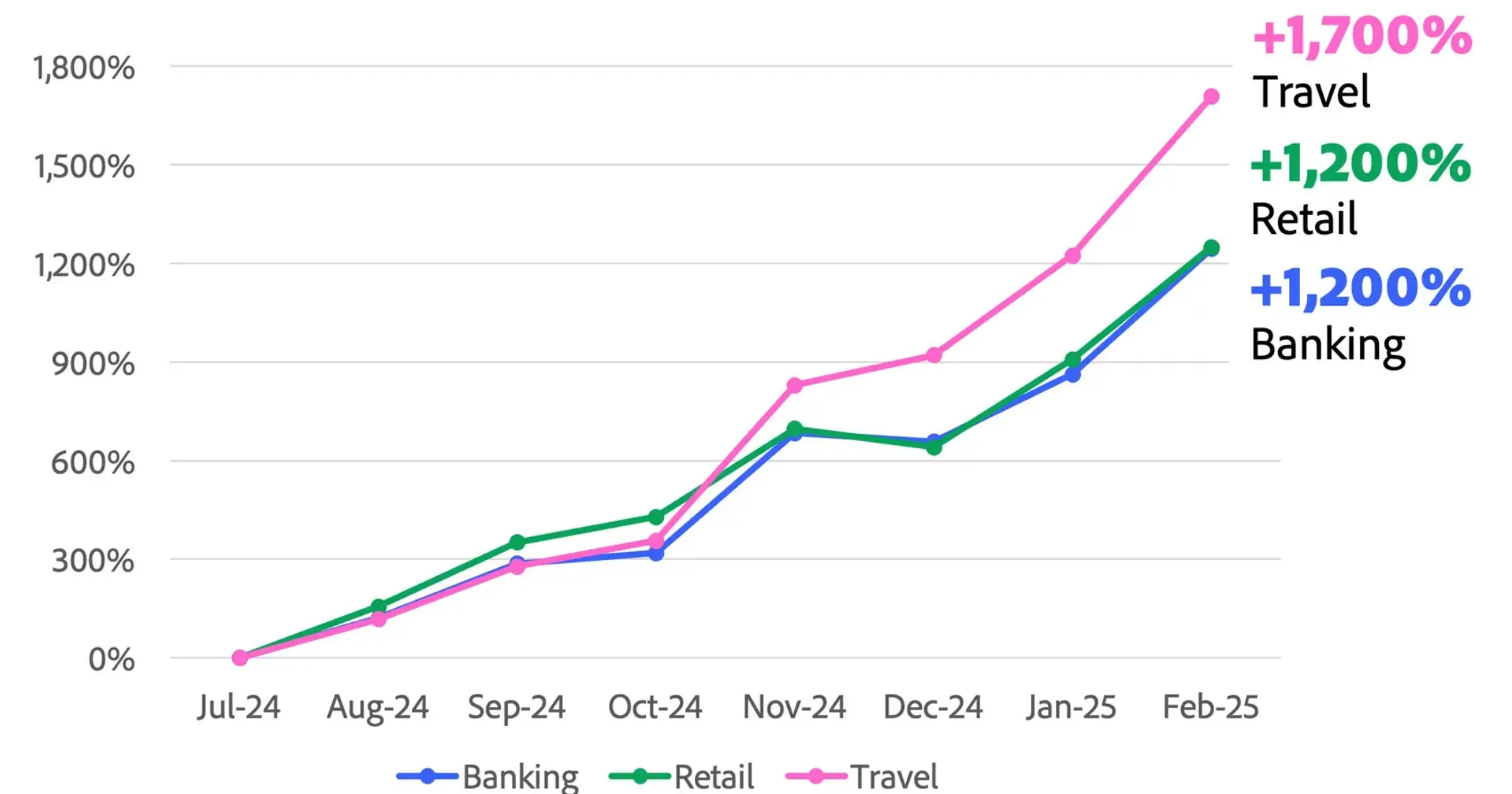
AI is rapidly changing how people find and choose brands and products. Instead of searching or browsing, **users now ask AI assistants for recommendations.**

Research by Adobe Analytics shows that traffic to US retail websites from generative AI sources skyrocketed by 1,200% from July 2024 to February 2025. The growth in travel was even higher, 1,700%.

Brands and products that don't get recommendations from AI models are at a considerable disadvantage. Optimizing for AI in 2025 is just as essential as Search Engine Optimization was a decade ago.

Indexed Visit Share by Industry

Adobe Analytics, July 2024 – Feb 2025



Methodology

In this project, we've researched AI visibility and discoverability in the “**running shoes for beginners**” **product category**. We queried 10 AI models for 500 product recommendations each, in 100 prompts (5 per prompt):

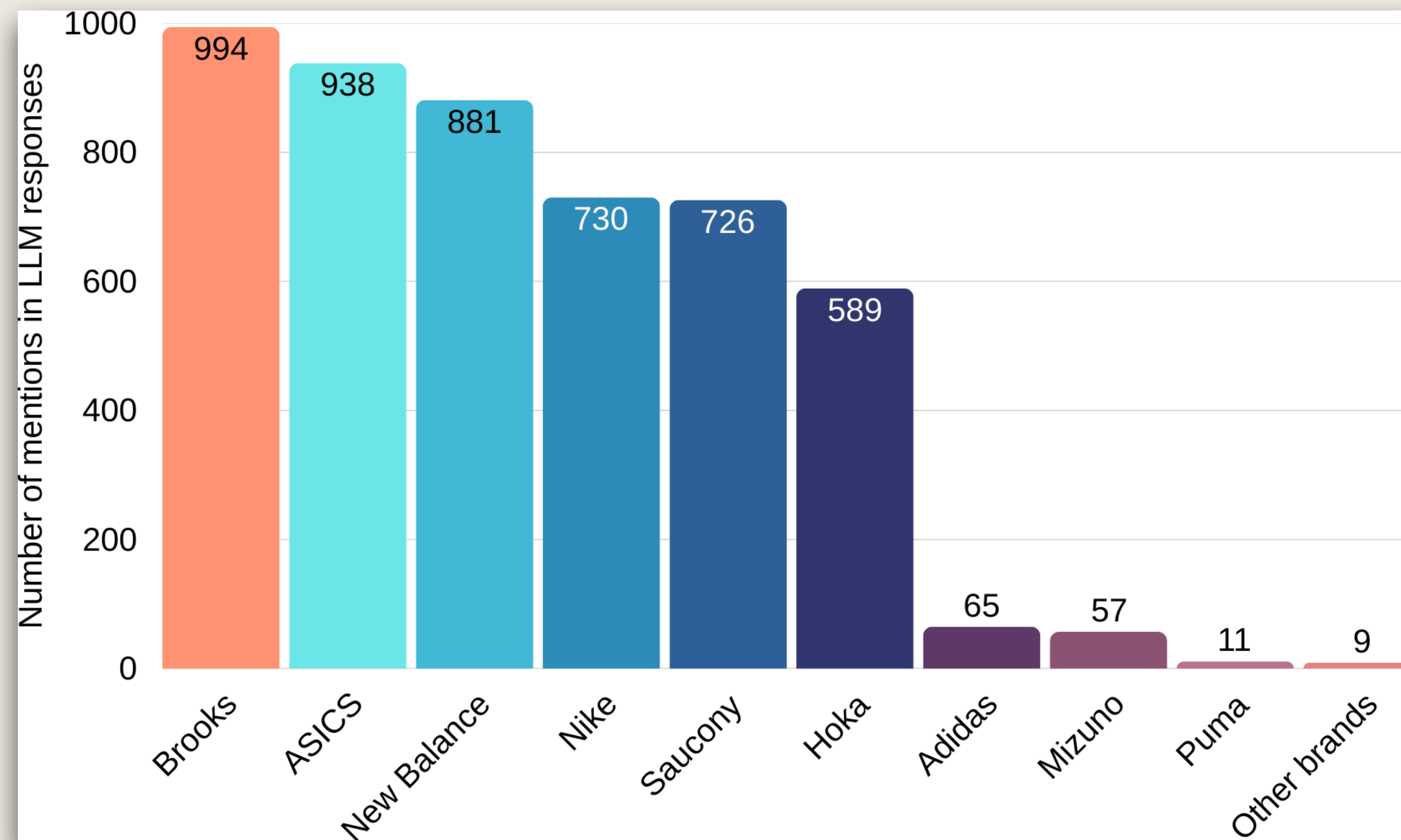
- Claude 3.5 Haiku and 3.7 Sonnet
- Gemini Flash 2.0 and Flash 2.0 Lite
- GPT-4o and 4o mini
- Llama 3.3
- Mistral
- DeepSeek r1
- Perplexity Sonar

The resulting database contains **5,000 brand and product recommendations with detailed reasoning**. We used these data points to extract insights about the product category, and discover strengths and weaknesses of individual brands.

Aggregated Results

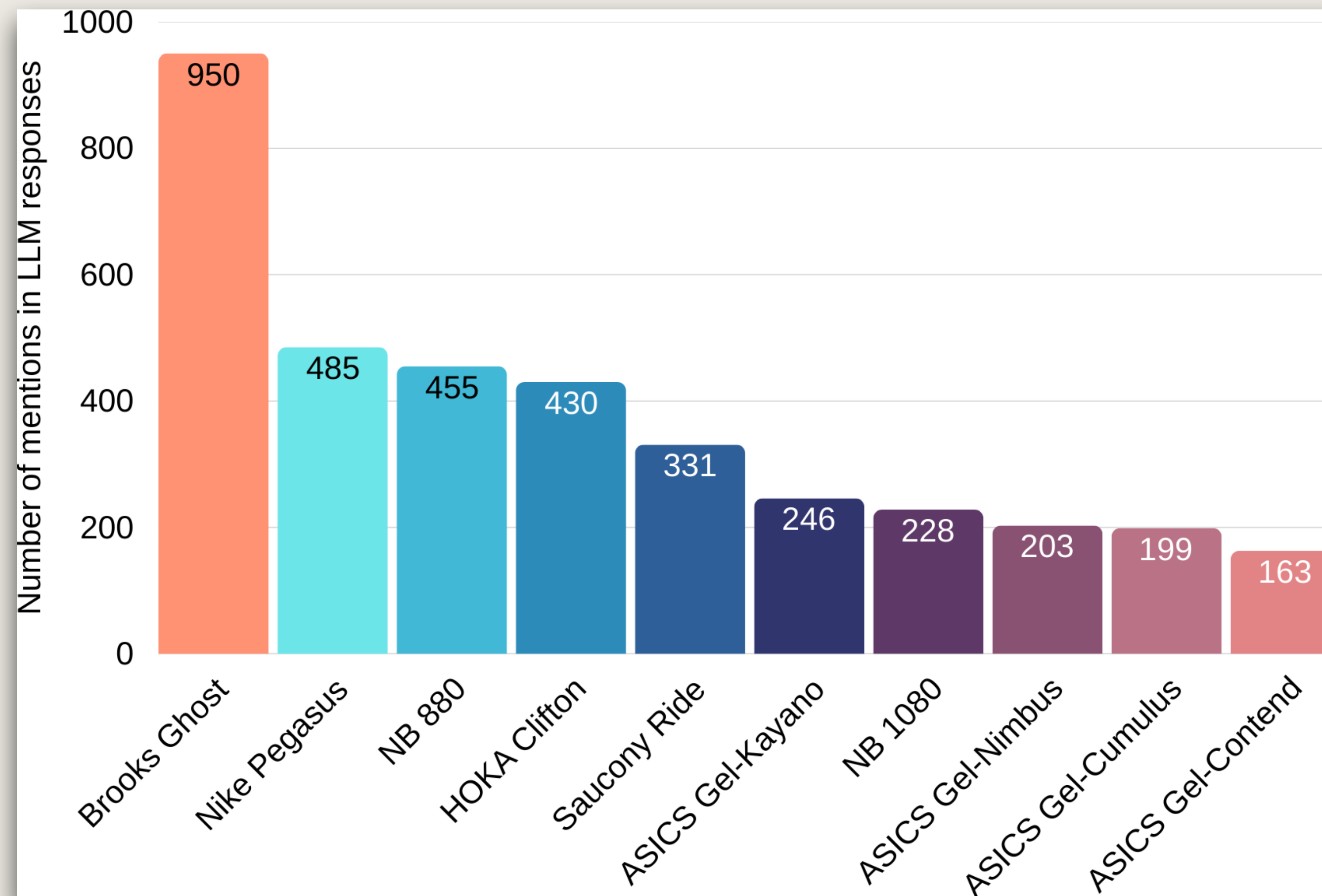
Brand recommendations

The chart shows the aggregate count of brand recommendations from ten leading AI models. Six brands stand out as most recommended for beginner runners, with Brooks, ASICS, and New Balance solidly occupying the first three slots.



Product recommendations

Aggregate product recommendations from 10 leading AI models. By a large margin, Brooks Ghost was the most recommended running shoe for beginners.



Product Recommendation Insights

Importance of Competitive & Category Insights

Consistency Reveals Core Product Values

When multiple LLMs independently highlight the same features (e.g., cushioning, smooth ride), these become strong indicators of how the product is positioned in the broader market.

Emerging Patterns Reflect Category Norms

Repeated themes across different models (like versatility or comfort for beginners) point to shared expectations and evolving norms within a product

Unbiased Synthesis of Brand Messaging

LLMs aggregate public-facing data—reviews, product specs, expert opinions—making their outputs a distilled reflection of how a product is perceived across sources.

Competitive Benchmarking Without Manual Comparison

Running the same prompt across multiple products surfaces differentiators and commonalities, providing structured insight into how products stack within a segment.

Commonly repeated patterns

Adequate Cushioning

- Reduces impact stress on joints, helping beginners adapt to running without excessive discomfort or injury risk.
- Phrases like “soft landings,” “impact protection,” “Gel,” “Fresh Foam,” “Loft foam,” “maximal cushioning,” and “absorbs shock” frequently appear.

Comfort & Fit

- A comfortable, secure upper that accommodates varying foot shapes.
- Beginners often benefit from shoes that aren’t too narrow or stiff.
- Mentions of “plush upper,” “breathable,” “supportive fit,” and “holds foot securely.”

Durability

- Beginners may not want to replace shoes too quickly, so recommendations emphasize a shoe that will hold up to regular training.
- Descriptions often note “durable outsole,” “long-lasting midsole,” “reliable for many miles.”

Commonly repeated patterns

Stability (Even if Neutral)

- Whether the shoe is strictly “neutral” or “stability”-oriented, it’s important that it feels stable.
- Helps runners develop better mechanics while reducing the risk of rolling ankles or overpronation.
- Common references to “solid platform,” “wide base,” “steady ride,” “Wave plate,” or “rocker geometry” for guiding smooth transitions.

Versatility

- Many references to a shoe that can handle easy runs, moderate distances, and perhaps some slightly faster paces as the runner progresses.
- This flexibility helps new runners explore different workouts without needing multiple pairs of shoes.
- Terms like “all-rounder,” “daily trainer,” “suitable for variety of runs,” “workhorse shoe.”

Smooth Ride / Transitions

- Across all models, the notion of a shoe that transitions from heel-to-toe smoothly comes up a lot.
- This feature is frequently linked to beginners’ comfort, promoting an efficient stride pattern.

Brooks Ghost — Key Properties

Cushioning

Words like *cushioning*, *soft*, and *midsole* appear frequently. The shoe is praised for having smooth, responsive, and protective cushioning that absorbs impact, which is ideal for new runners still adapting to pavement impact.

Smooth and Balanced Ride

Terms such as *soft*, *balanced*, and *ride* suggest a consistent, stable feel. Beginners benefit from this predictability while working on form and building mileage.

Comfort and Fit

Words such as *comfortable*, *fit*, *comfort*, and *support* are used every day. The shoe is described as offering all-day comfort, likely due to a plush interior and adaptable upper.

Neutral Support

The shoe is labeled *neutral*, meaning it doesn't try to correct foot motion too much, perfect for most beginners who don't yet require motion control.

Versatility and Reliability

Phrases are *versatile*, *reliable*, and *ideal* for various runs, highlighting their suitability for many types of runs (short, long, daily use), which is great for new runners experimenting with routines.



Nike Pegasus — Key Properties

Responsive cushioning

With mentions of *cushioning*, *responsiveness*, ReactX foam, and Air Zoom, the Pegasus 41 is noted for its energetic feel—it provides bounce and protection while staying lively underfoot.

Breathable and Comfortable Upper

Words like *breathable*, *upper*, *fit*, and *comfortable* highlight a well-ventilated, snug fit. This makes the shoe feel pleasant during longer runs or warmer conditions.



Versatility

Terms like *versatile*, *various*, and *ideal* suggest it's excellent for different types of running—daily jogs, long runs, and even light trail use—perfect for beginners still exploring preferences.

Durability and Support

The shoe is described as *durable* and *supportive*, making it a long-lasting and reliable training partner, particularly for those building consistency.

Lightweight Feel with a Smooth Ride

Though built with tech like ReactX and Air Zoom, it remains *lightweight* and delivers a *smooth ride*, helping new runners maintain form without fatigue.

New Balance 880 — Key Properties



Fresh Foam Cushioning

The most dominant feature is the *Fresh Foam* midsole, which is described as *plush*, *soft*, and *responsive*. This provides a forgiving yet lively ride, ideal for easing into regular running.

Comfort and Fit

Frequent use of terms like *comfortable*, *fit*, and *roomy toe box* suggests that the shoe prioritizes long-term wearability—important for beginners gradually increasing distance.

Durability and Reliability

Words like *durable*, *reliable*, and *good for daily training* indicate it's a tough, dependable shoe—important for building consistency without quickly wearing down.

Balanced Ride with Responsiveness

The combo of *softness* and *responsiveness* points to a well-balanced ride: neither too squishy nor too firm. Great for beginners figuring out their stride and pace.

Versatility for Various Runs

The 880 is labeled *versatile*, meaning it works well for different types of runs—daily jogs, longer outings, and everything in between.

HOKA Clifton — Key Properties



Maximal Cushioning

Terms like *cushioning*, *plush*, and *maximum* come up repeatedly. The Clifton is built for softness and shock absorption, minimizing impact on joints—perfect for beginners wary of injury.

Lightweight Feel

Despite all that cushioning, *lightweight* is another key term. This balance helps new runners avoid feeling bogged down while still benefiting from the comfort and support.

Smooth Ride and Rocker-Like Transitions

Even without explicitly naming HOKA’s “Metarocker” trademark, the descriptions mention a *smooth ride*, *geometry*, and *transition*, suggesting the Clifton promotes an easy rolling motion. This design helps new runners maintain rhythm and reduces strain during longer efforts.

Comfort and Fatigue Reduction

Words like *comfortable*, *comfort*, and *fatigue* suggest the Clifton is made for reducing strain over time, making it excellent for longer, slower efforts or building up mileage.

Impact Protection and Joint Support

High mentions of *impact* and *joints* reflect a core appeal: reducing the shock that can stress knees and ankles—key concerns for many beginners starting from scratch.

Saucony Ride — Key Properties

Balanced, Responsive Cushioning

The term *cushioning* appears most often, along with *responsive* and *balanced*, suggesting a ride that feels protective without being overly soft—ideal for newcomers seeking comfort without sacrificing energy return.

Smooth and Comfortable Ride

. With mentions of ride, smooth, and comfortable, this shoe is designed for an easy transition from heel to toe, reducing the mental and physical effort required by less experienced runners.

Secure, Comfortable Fit

Frequent references to *fit* and *comfort point to a secure feel that's not too tight or loose*, helping beginners avoid blisters or awkward adjustments mid-run.

Lightweight Design

Despite being cushioned, the Ride is described as *lightweight*, reducing fatigue and helping runners stay fresh as they increase distance or frequency.

Versatility Across Runs

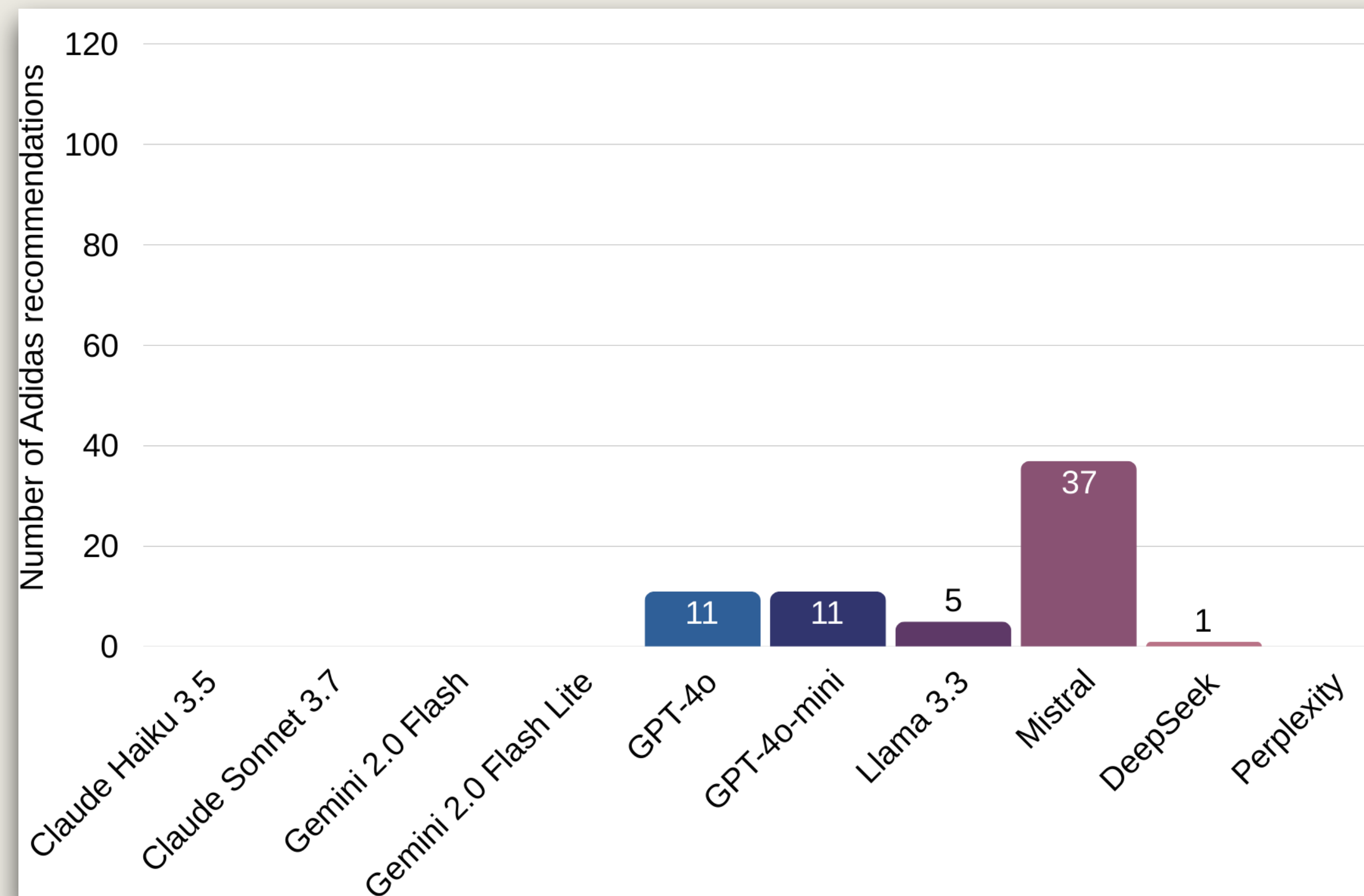
Words like *versatile* and *various* indicate that the Saucony Ride performs well for multiple types of runs—easy jogs, daily training, and even light tempo work. This flexibility makes it a reliable choice for beginners still exploring their preferences.



Brand Results by AI Model

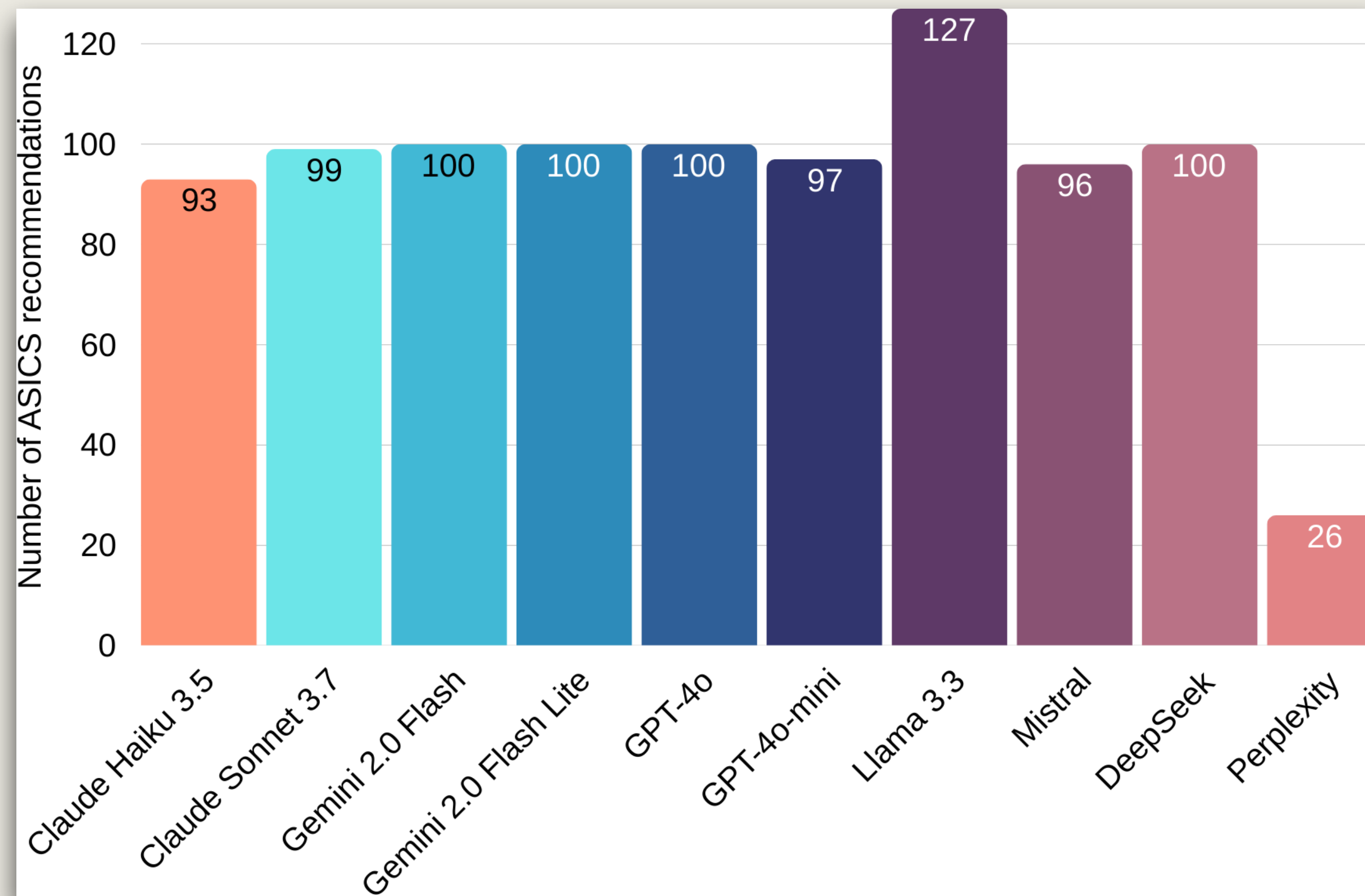
Adidas

Adidas has a small AI brand visibility. More than half of the recommendations come from Mistral, the least impactful of the AI models in our research. It is completely absent from Claude and Gemini, and earns only sporadic recommendations from ChatGPT.



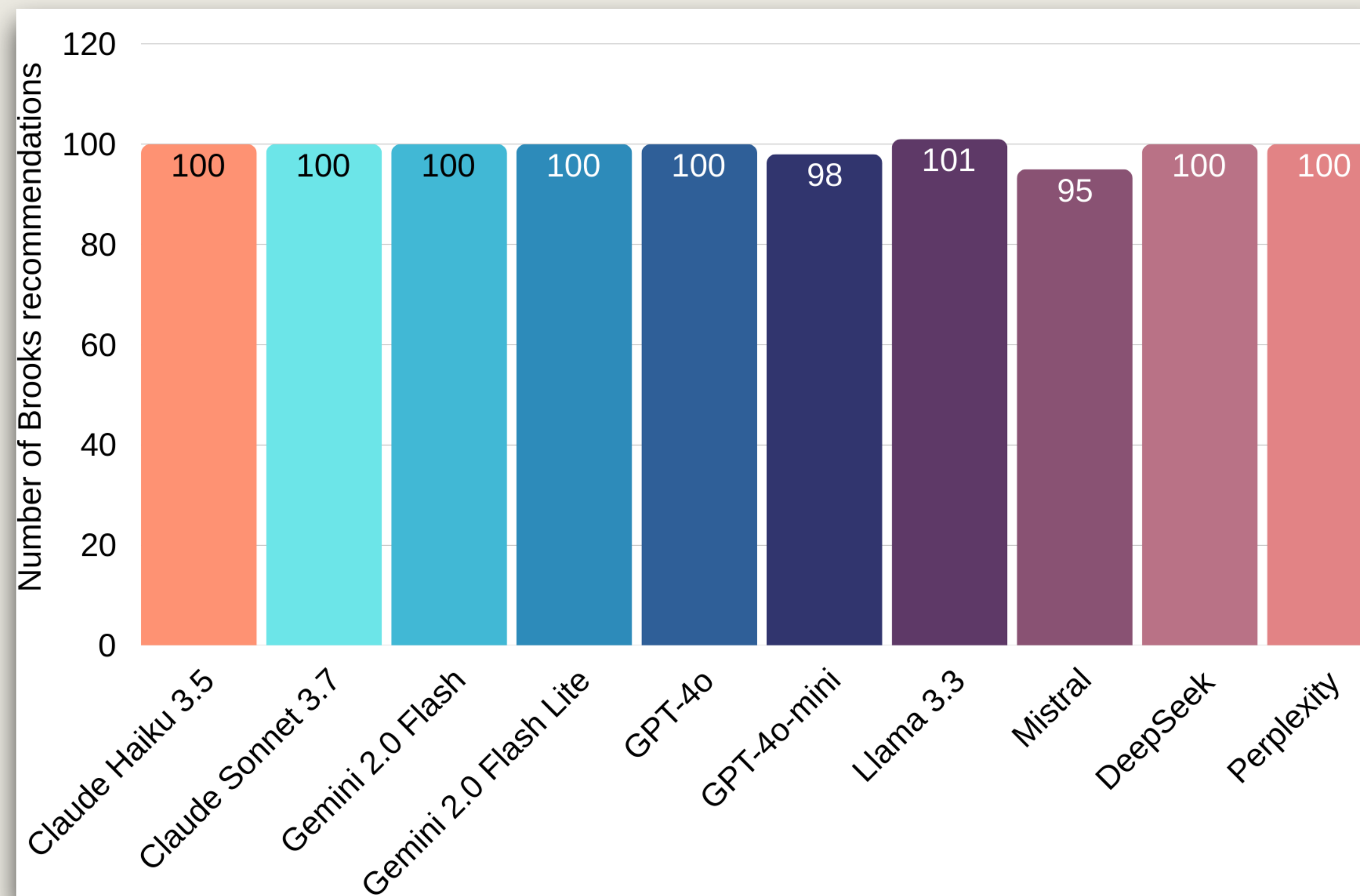
ASICS

ASICS enjoys great and well-balanced AI visibility. Llama recommendations are especially high: a number above 100 means more than one ASICS products were recommended in a single prompt. This puts the brand into a great position in Meta AI product discovery (i.e., in Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.) The lower number of Perplexity recommendations hints at issues with traditional SEO.



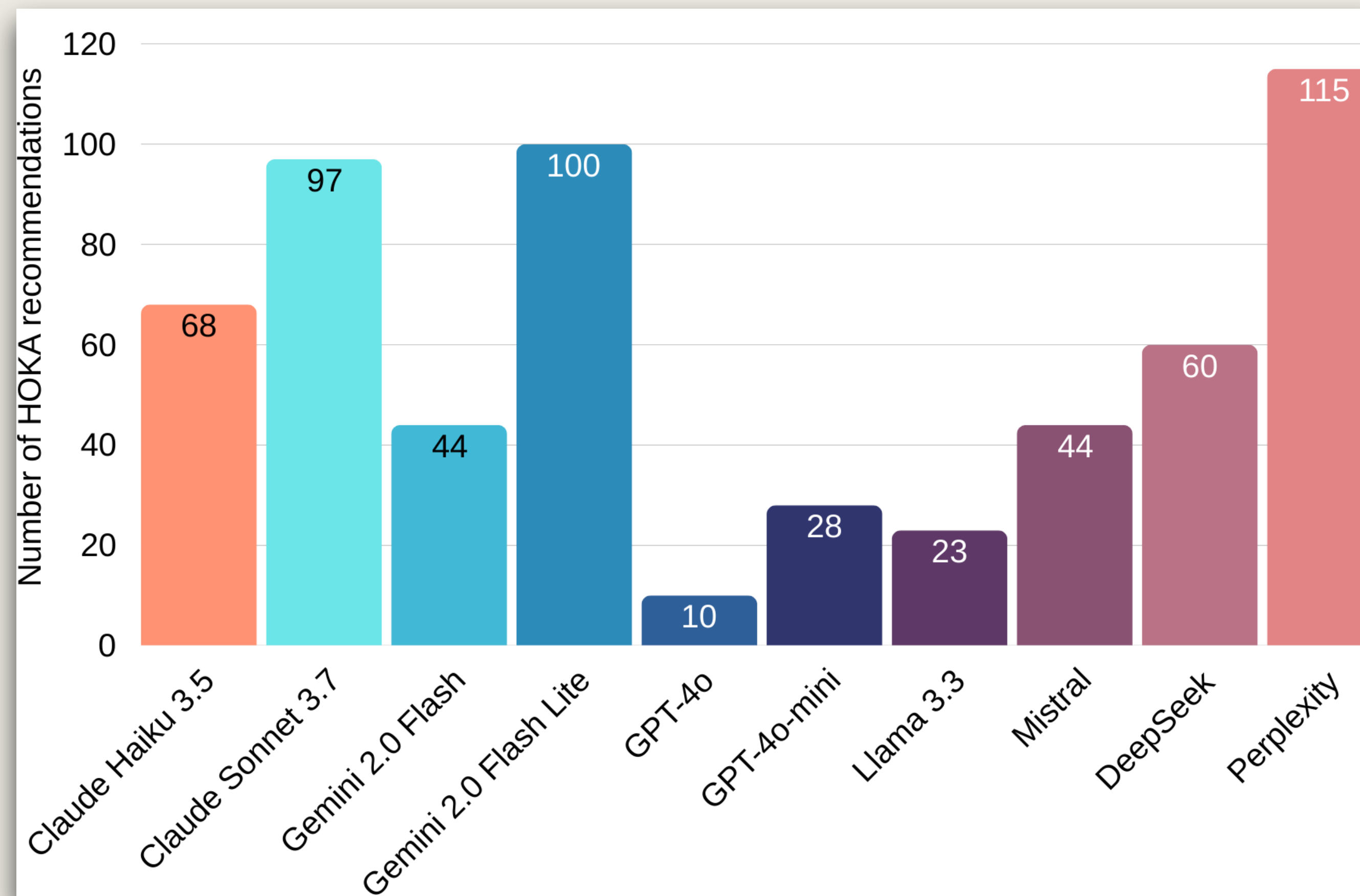
Brooks

Brooks doesn't just lead in aggregate recommendations, it also has the most balanced visibility profile across all AI models. This puts the brand into an exceptionally advantageous position to capitalize on the AI search trend.



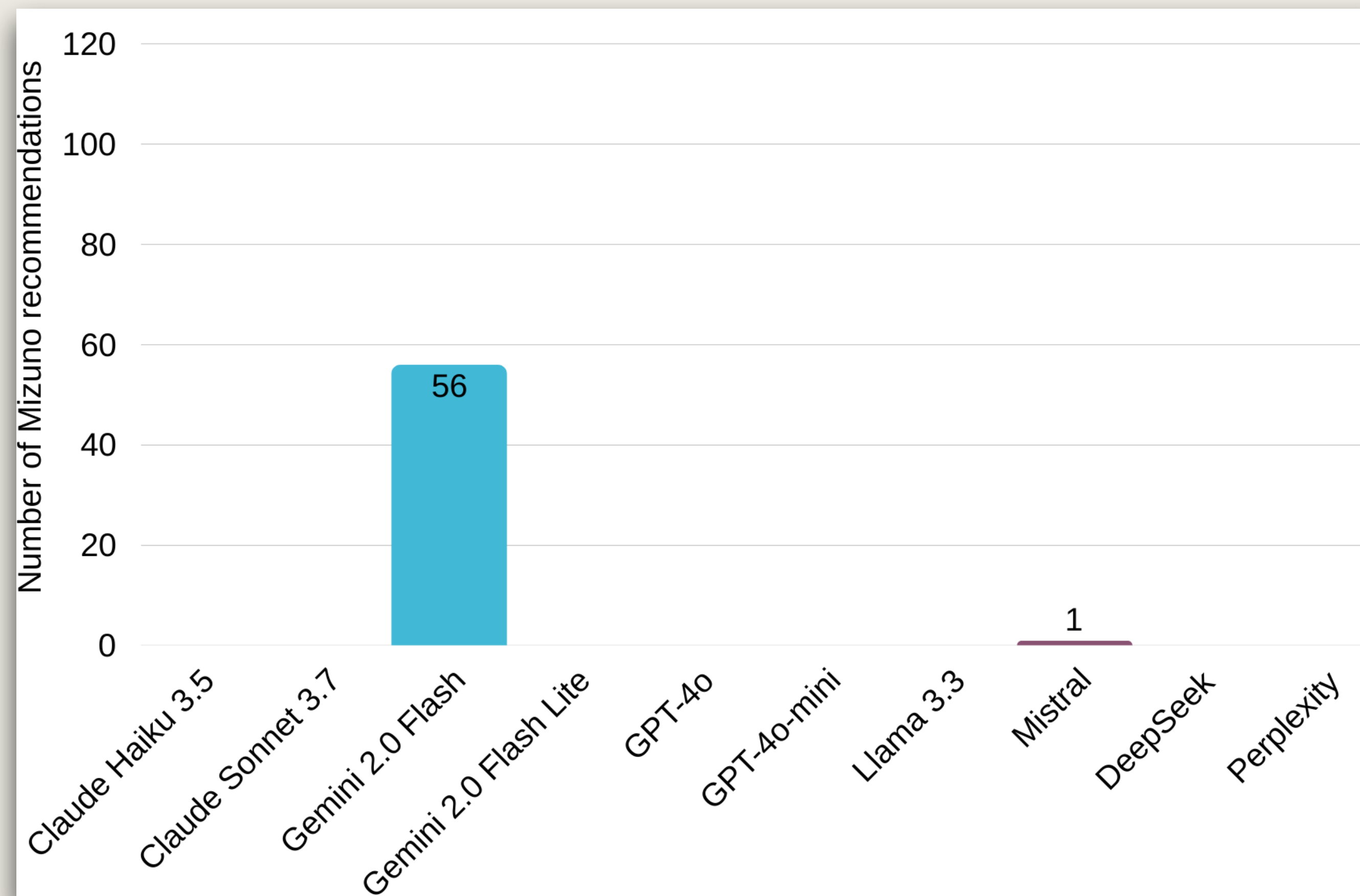
HOKA

HOKA has an unusual AI visibility profile. It has the highest number of Perplexity recommendations out of all the brands (likely thanks to excellent traditional SEO), but it has serious visibility issues in the GPT models and Llama. With targeted efforts to close these gaps, HOKA has the chance to jump ahead of Saucony and Nike.



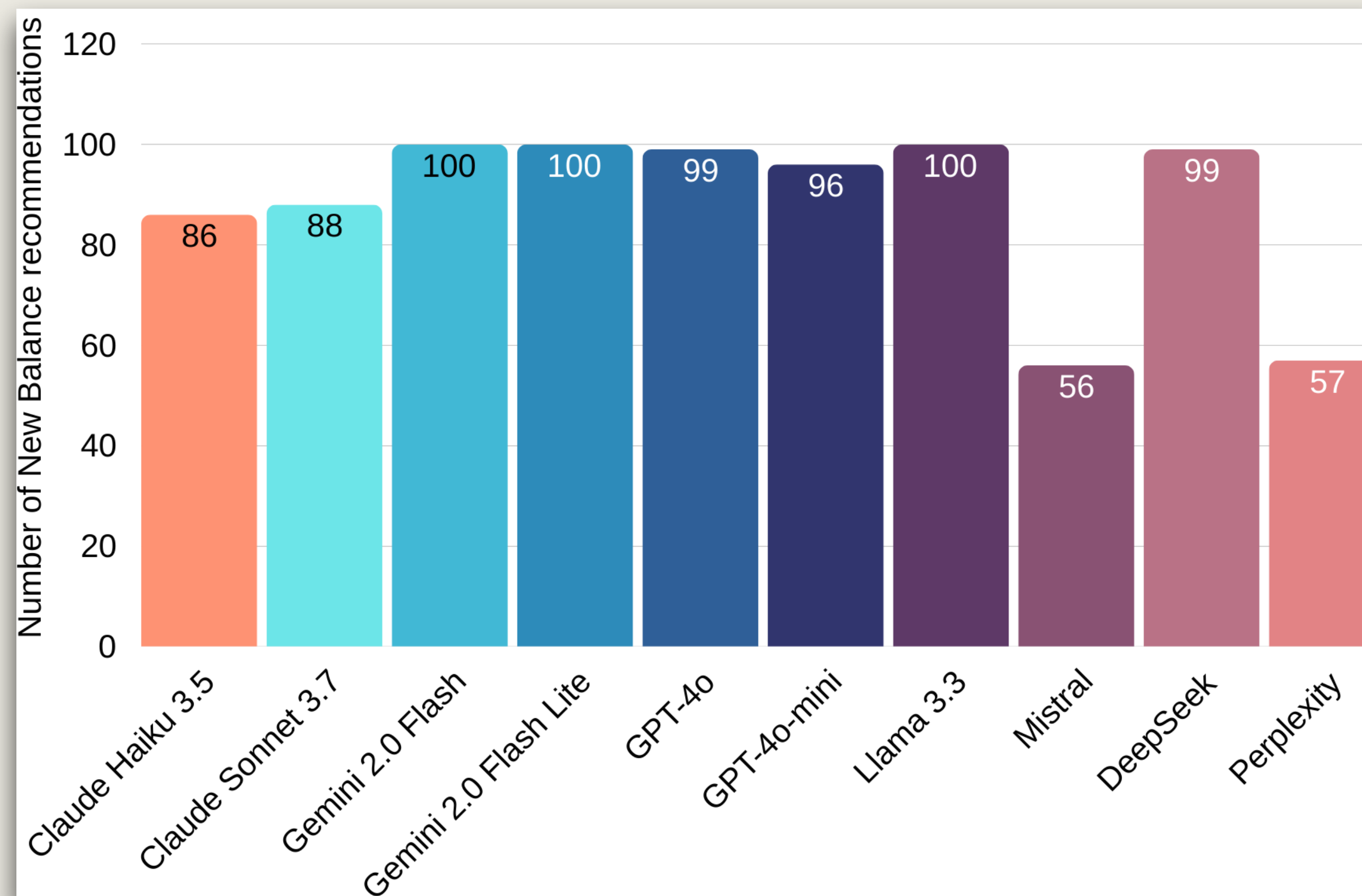
Mizuno

Mizuno has minimal AI visibility, scoring recommendations only from the Gemini 2.0 Flash model (and a single one from Mistral). While this gives the brand some chance to appear in AI-generated answers in Google's search results pages, serious efforts are needed to stay in the game.



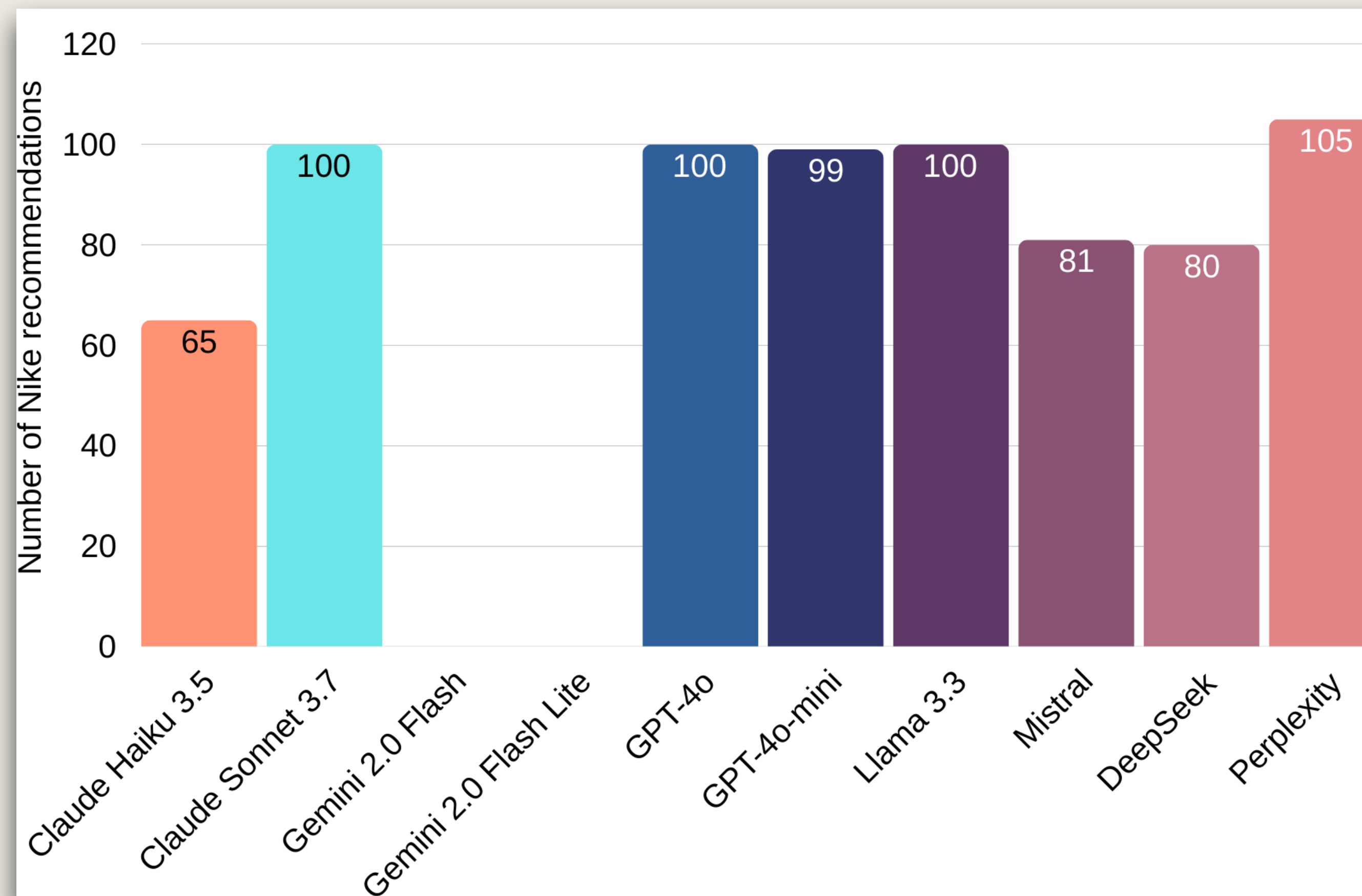
New Balance

Overall, New Balance has great AI visibility, and it is well-positioned to appear on the top both in Google's AI summaries and in Meta AI. The lower recommendations from Mistral are less worrying than the modest performance in Perplexity — the brand needs to invest resources in optimizing for Bing.



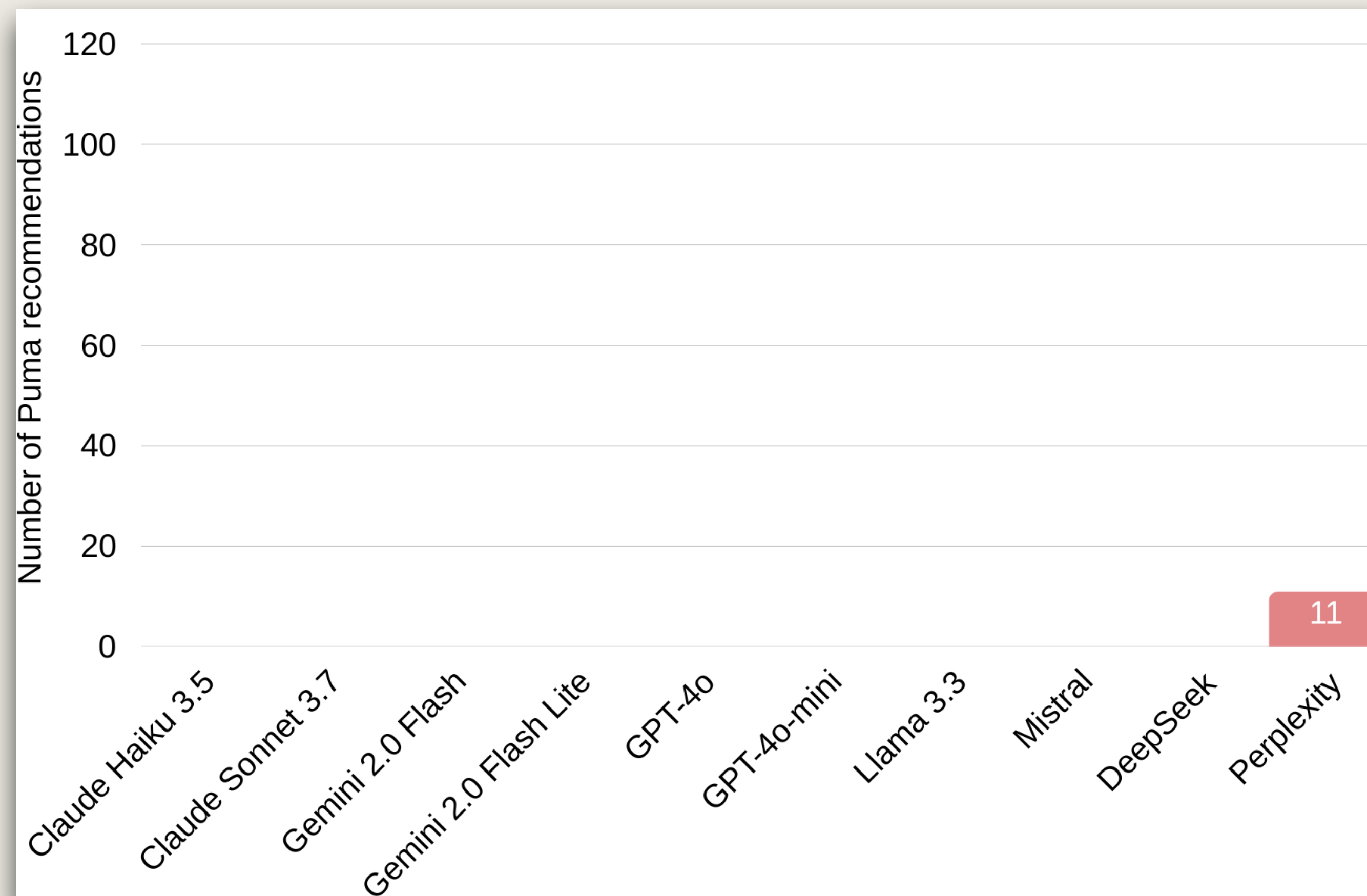
Nike

The research uncovered shocking insights about Nike's AI visibility that require immediate action. While the brand has seen great results in most AI models, it has not scored a single recommendation from Gemini. This is a serious problem, making Nike all but invisible in Google's AI results. Nike Pegasus was the second most recommended product even without Gemini, highlighting how impactful fixing this issue would be.



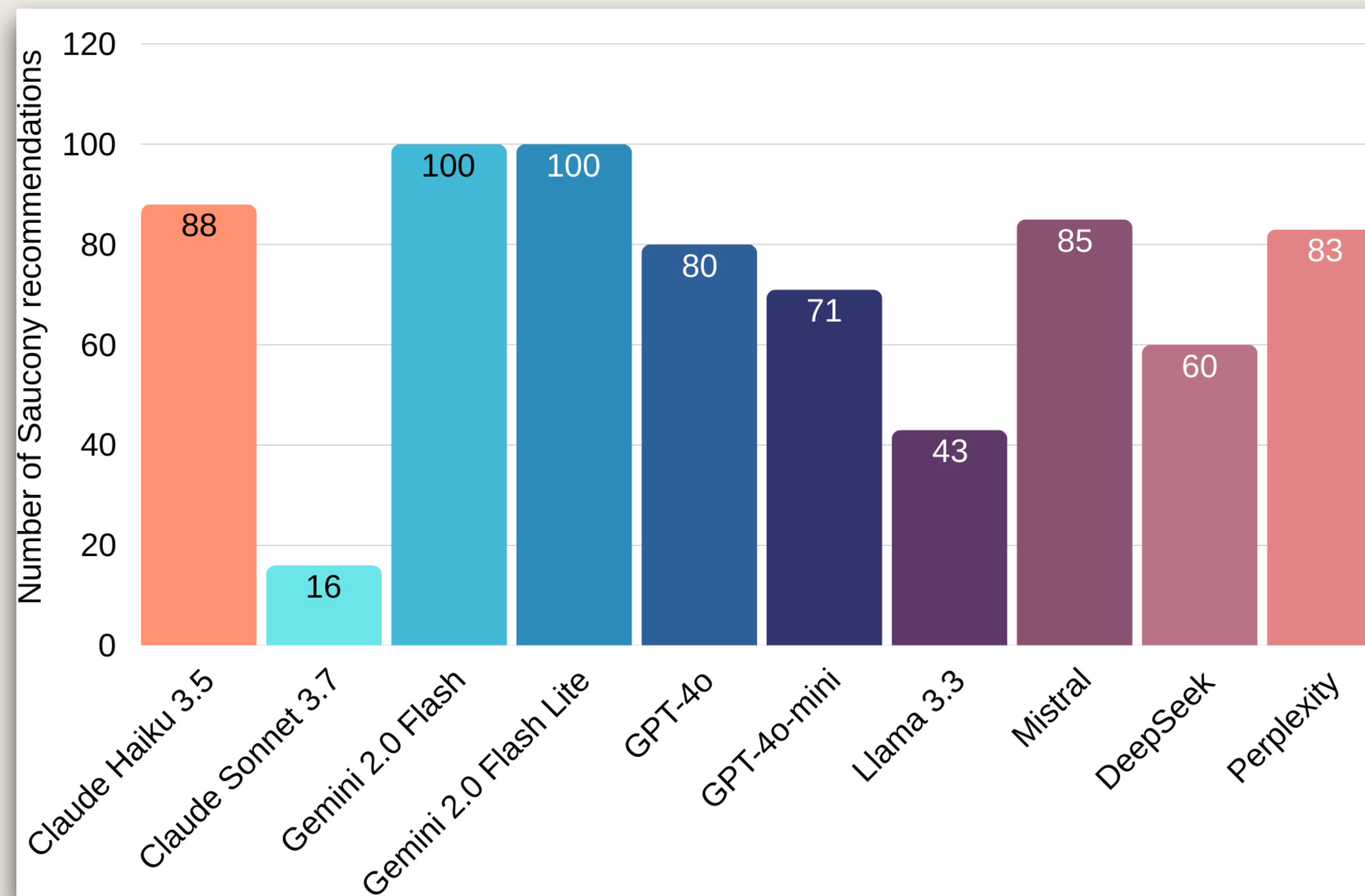
Puma

Puma has minimal AI visibility, only scoring 11 recommendations from a single AI model, Perplexity. The brand must completely re-evaluate its marketing or risk becoming completely invisible in AI-powered product discovery.



Saucony

Saucony has very good AI brand visibility, especially considering how much smaller the brand (and its marketing budget) is compared to some of the competitors. The low score in Claude Sonnet 3.7 is less concerning than the underwhelming number of recommendations in Llama. The brand should focus its efforts on closing that gap, improving Meta AI discoverability.



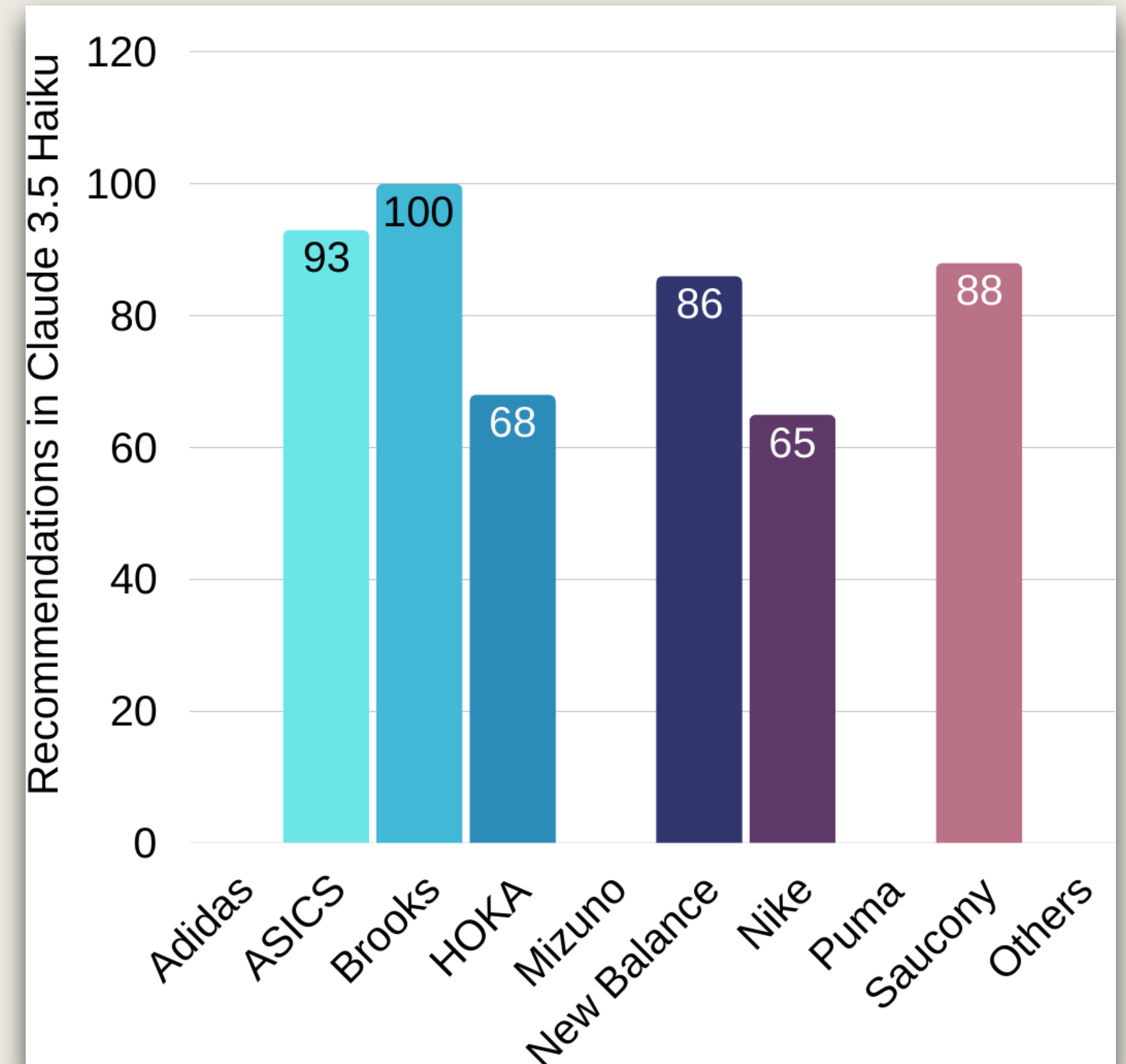
Results Breakdown by AI Model

Claude 3.5 Haiku

Model importance: ★ ★ ★ (3/5)

Anthropic's Claude 3.5 Haiku is a small and cheap AI model with relatively good performance for its price. It is popular with developers, who can integrate it to their own apps. Claude 3.5 Haiku is rarely used directly.

Some brands like Adidas, Mizuno, and Puma are completely absent from this model's recommendations. Nike is underperforming compared to its direct competitors.

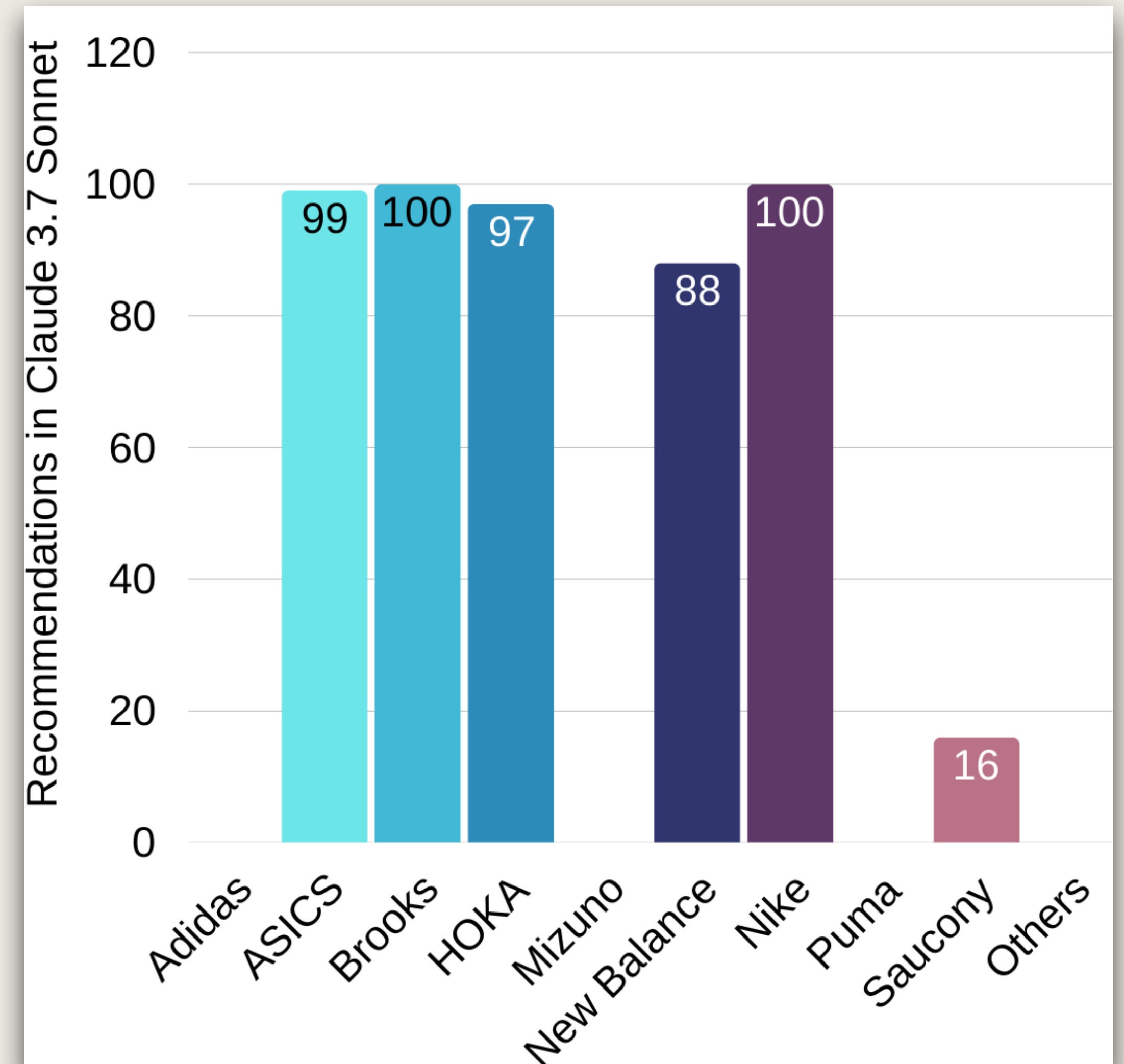


Claude 3.7 Sonnet

Model importance: ★★★★★ (4/5)

Anthropic's Claude 3.7 Sonnet is widely regarded as one of the best models on the market. It has significant direct usage, although primarily among AI and tech enthusiasts. It is rarely integrated into end-user applications due to its cost.

Similarly to the smaller Claude model, Adidas, Mizuno, and Puma are completely missing. Saucony gets significantly fewer recommendations. Nike, on the other hand, is represented very well in 3.7 Sonnet.



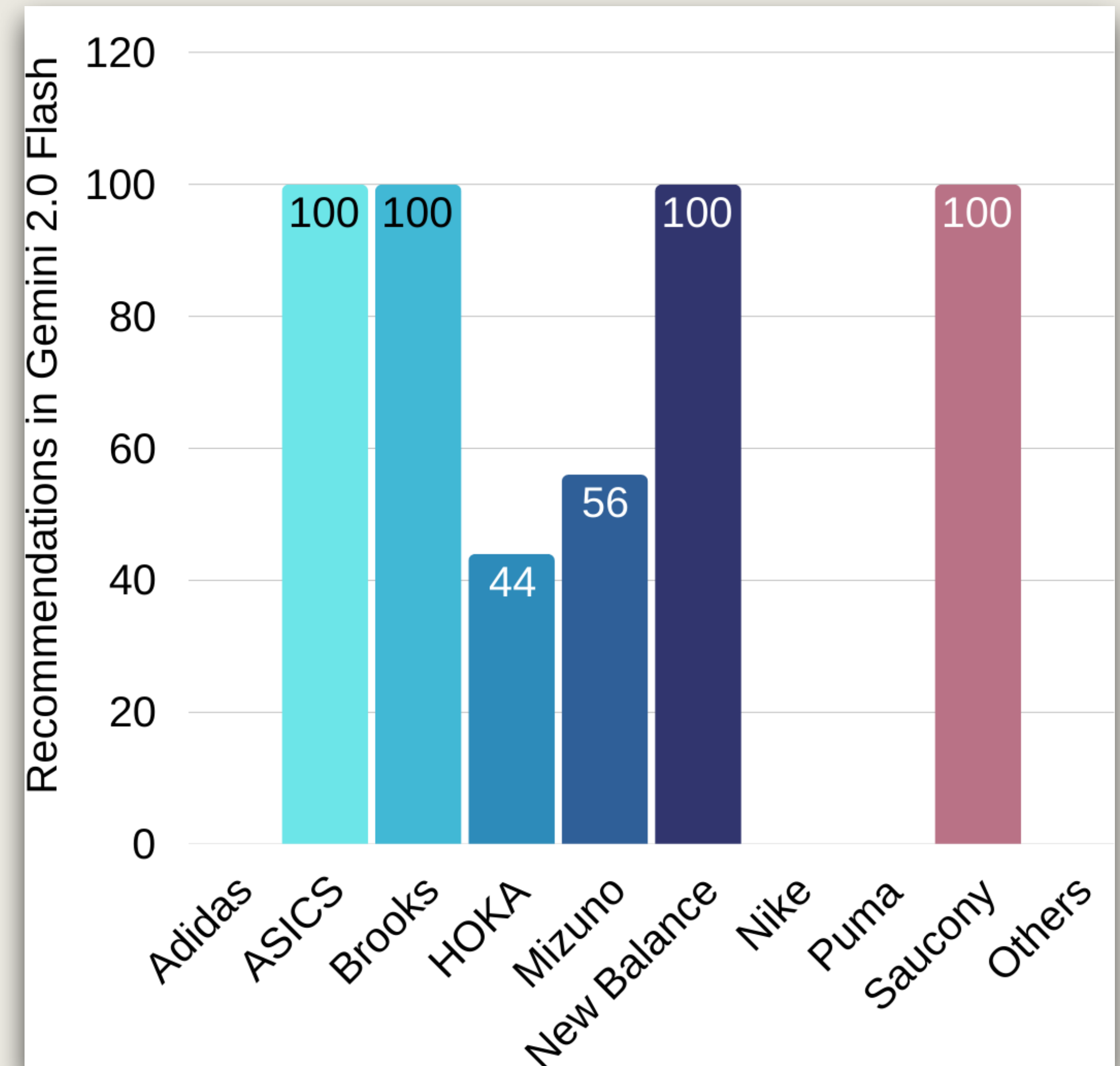
Gemini 2.0 Flash

Model importance: ★★★★★ (5/5)

Gemini 2.0 Flash is Google's "middle ground" model. It is relatively affordable for integrations and provides good performance.

From a marketer's perspective, Gemini 2.0 Flash might be the single most important model, as it powers Google's AI Overview search results.

The lack of recommendations for Adidas and Puma was not surprising, as these brands generally have poor AI discoverability. The complete absence of Nike, however, came as a shock and fixing this requires immediate action from the brand.



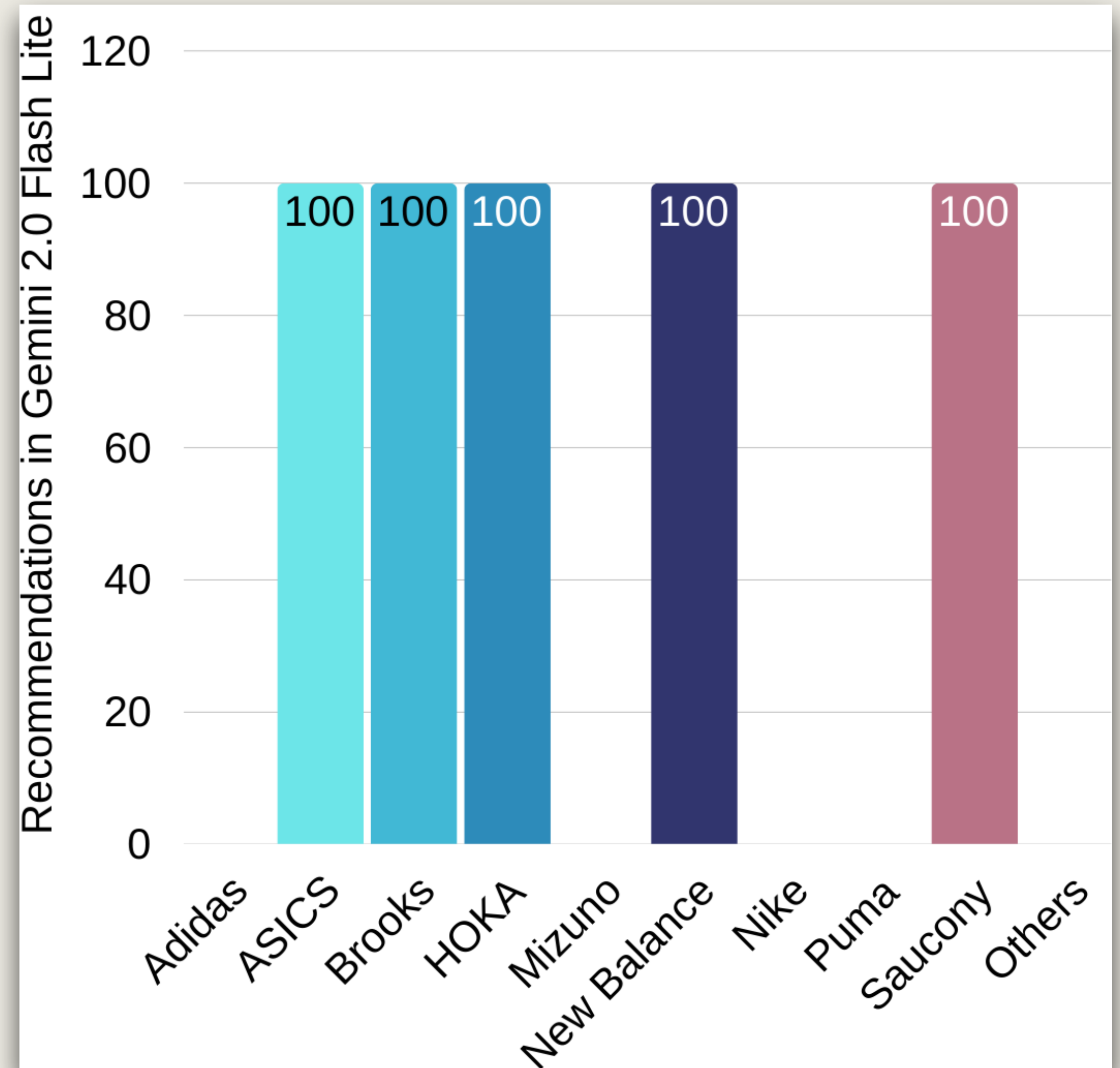
Gemini 2.0 Flash Lite

Model importance: ★ ★ ★ (3/5)

Gemini 2.0 Flash Lite is the cheapest model in Google's catalog, making it ideal for third party app integrations where performance is less important.

The simplicity of the model is visible in the results: it has recommended the same five brands in all prompts.

The absence of Nike is very surprising, and needs to be fixed.

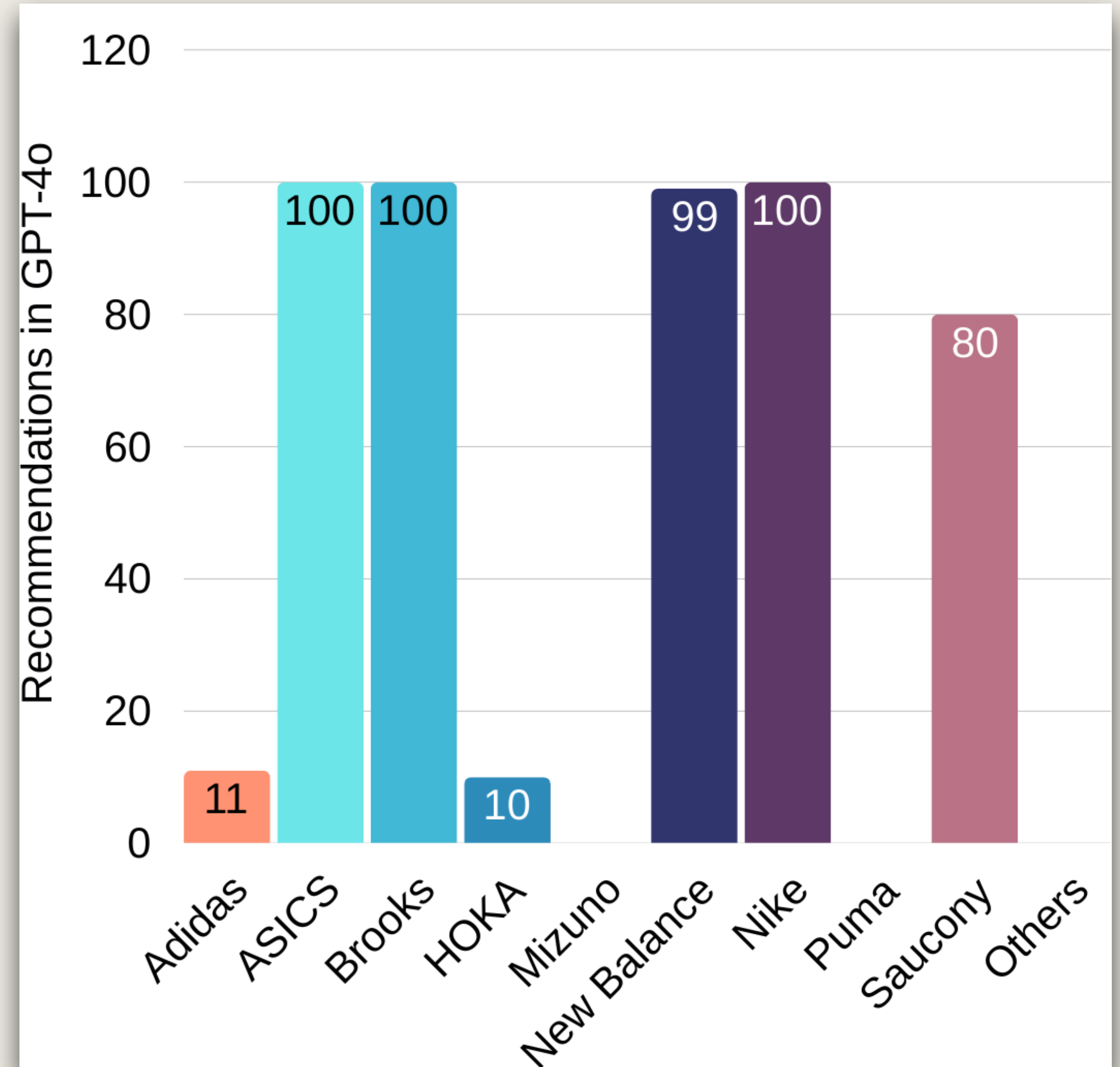


GPT-4o

Model importance: ★★★★★ (5/5)

GPT-4o is OpenAI's most reliable middle-of-the-road model. It is also the most widely used, available for free. Other than ChatGPT, GPT-4o also powers Microsoft's CoPilot, integrated into Windows. It is one of the most important AI models for marketers to "crack."

The top 5 brand recommendations of GPT-4o are the same as the overall aggregate. Curiously, HOKA is getting much less love from this model than from others.

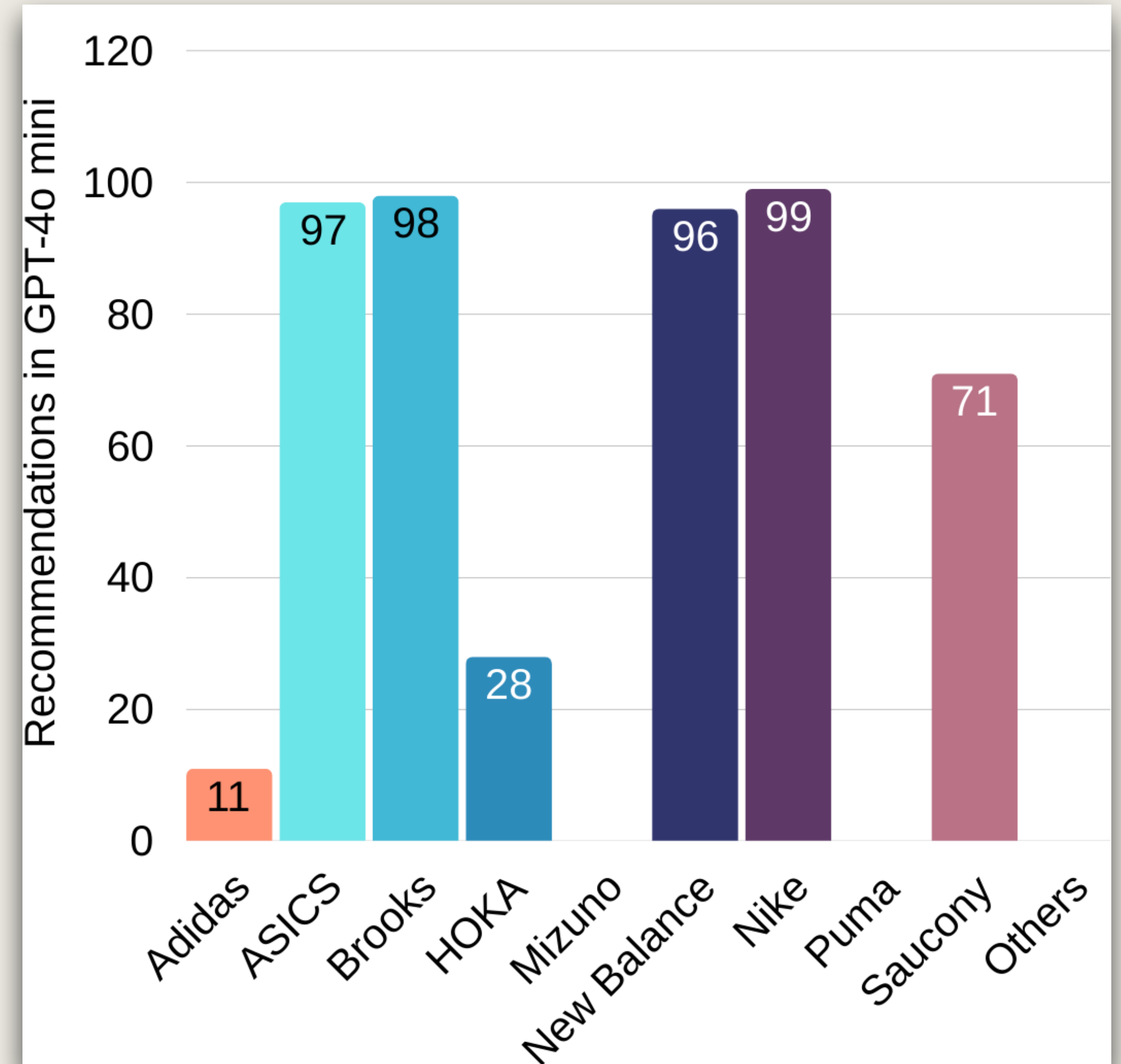


GPT-4o mini

Model importance: ★★ ★ (3/5)

GPT-4o mini is a smaller model from OpenAI, primarily targeted to developers who are looking for a cheap but adequate option to integrate to their apps. It is similar to Claude's 3.5 Haiku in this regard.

The results are very similar to GPT-4o, with HOKA inching a bit closer to its global average.

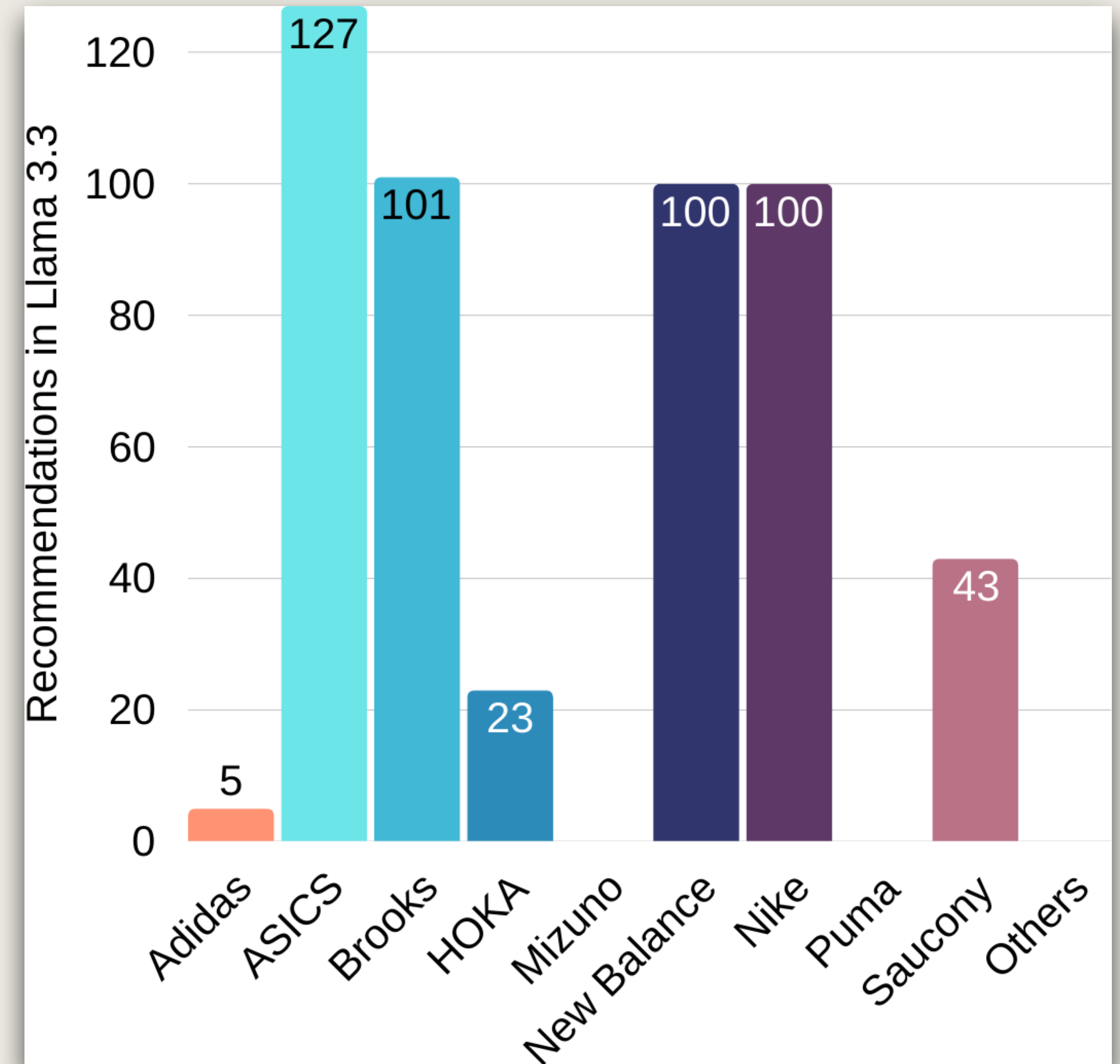


Llama 3.3

Model importance: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (5/5)

Llama 3.3 is the latest iteration of Meta's open source AI model family. It is extremely important for marketers, as Llama is powering all of the Meta AI products (including the chatbot in Facebook and WhatsApp). It is also very popular with developers, as it can be easily and cheaply integrated into third party apps.

Llama 3.3 produced the highest number of recommendations for a single brand (ASICS, 127). Otherwise, it has a balanced recommendation profile with HOKA and Saucony underperforming their global averages.



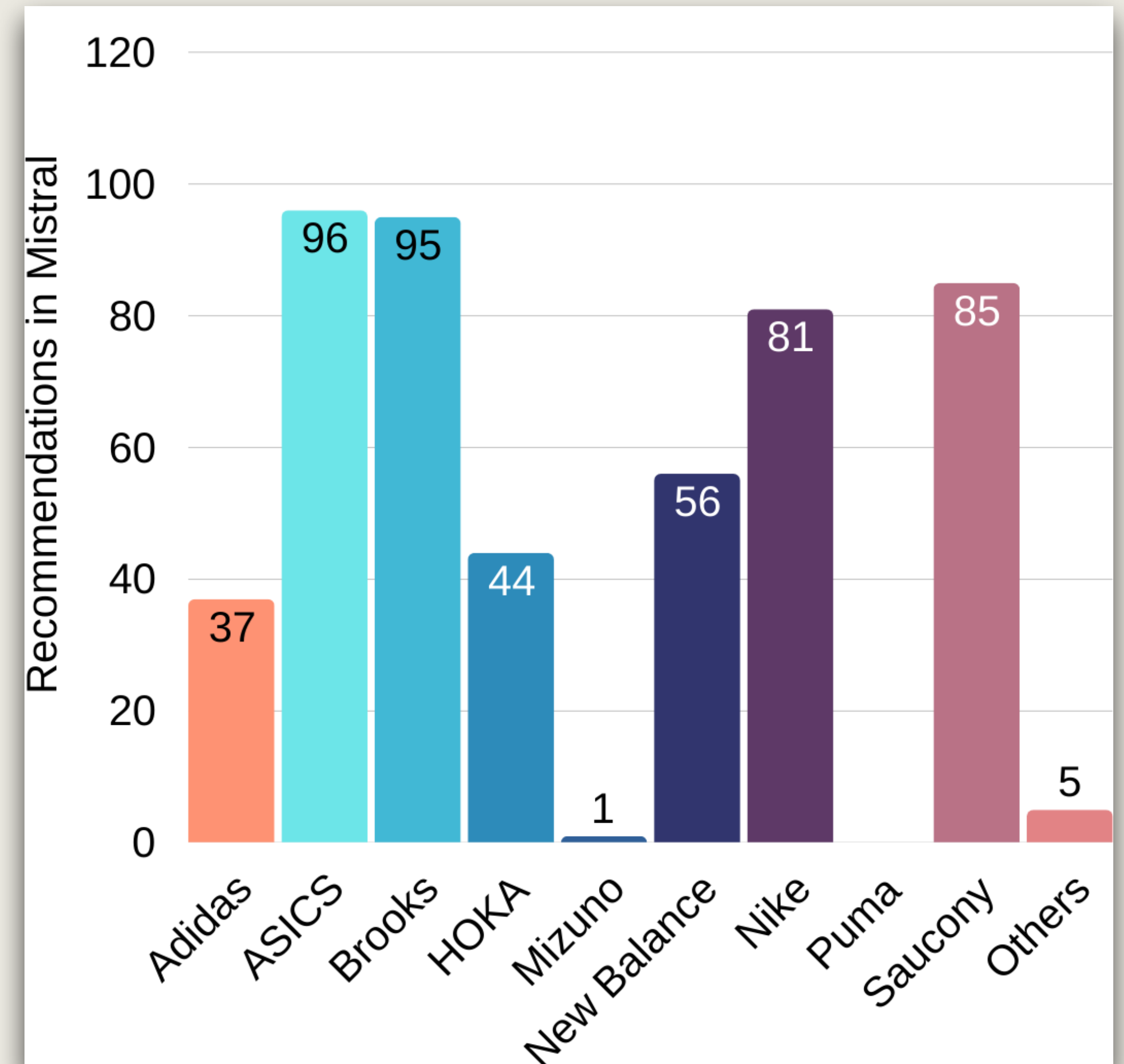
Mistral

Model importance: ★★ (2/5)

Mistral is an open source model from a French company. It powers the Le Chat app, somewhat popular in Europe. It is also popular with developers, as it is cheap to integrate (but less smart).

Mistral is recommending Adidas more often than other models, and shows less love towards New Balance.

Mistral was the only model in our research that produced hallucinations (3 times out of 500).

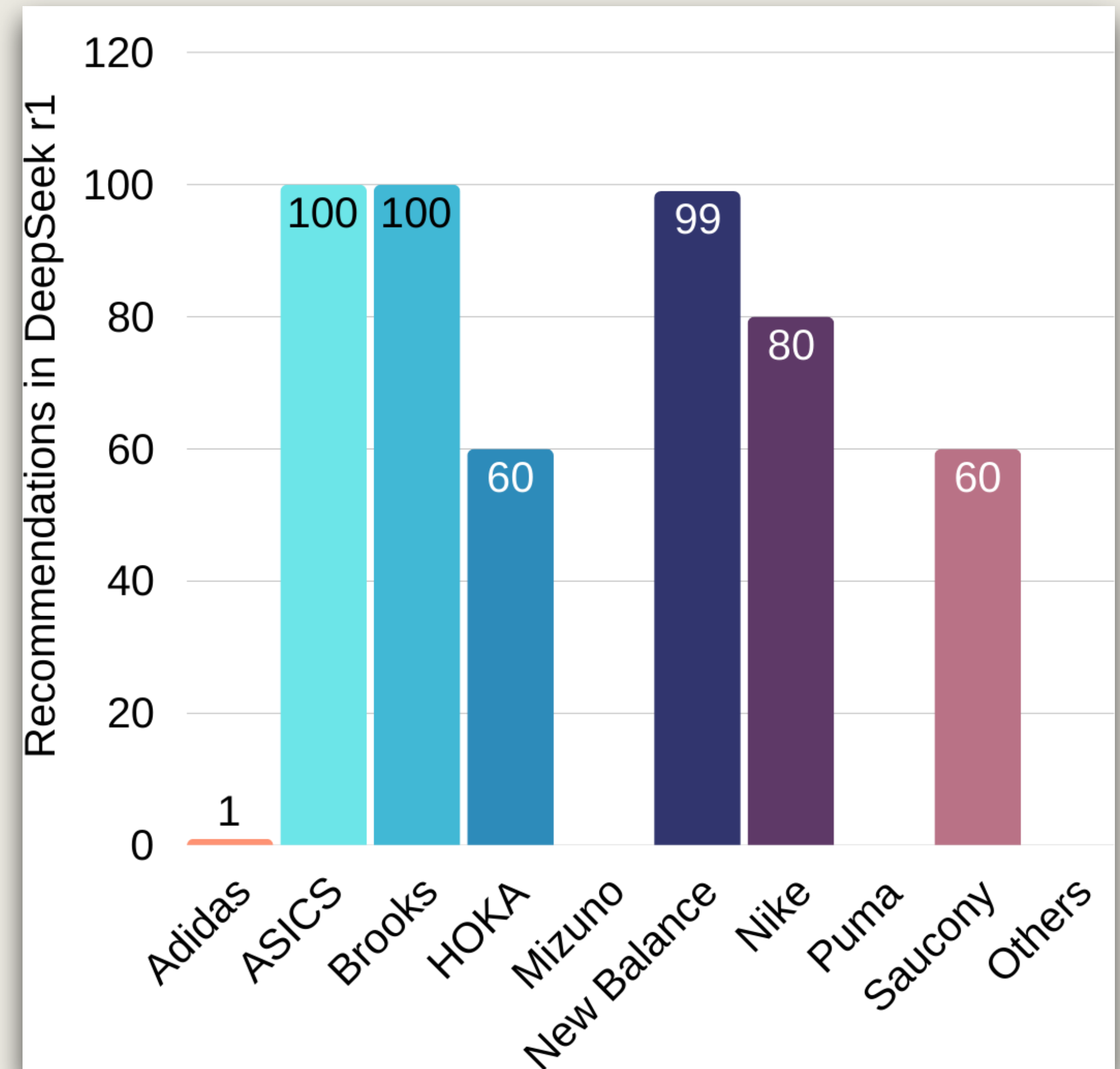


DeepSeek r1

Model importance: ★★★★★ (4/5)

DeepSeek r1 is the most advanced model from a Chinese company. It made global headlines as a “GPT-4o level model” that is 90 percent cheaper to use. The DeepSeek AI chat app briefly topped the App Store charts in many countries.

DeepSeek has a very balanced recommendation profile overall, close to the global averages. A lot of the training data for the model was generated with GPT-4o, so this is expected.

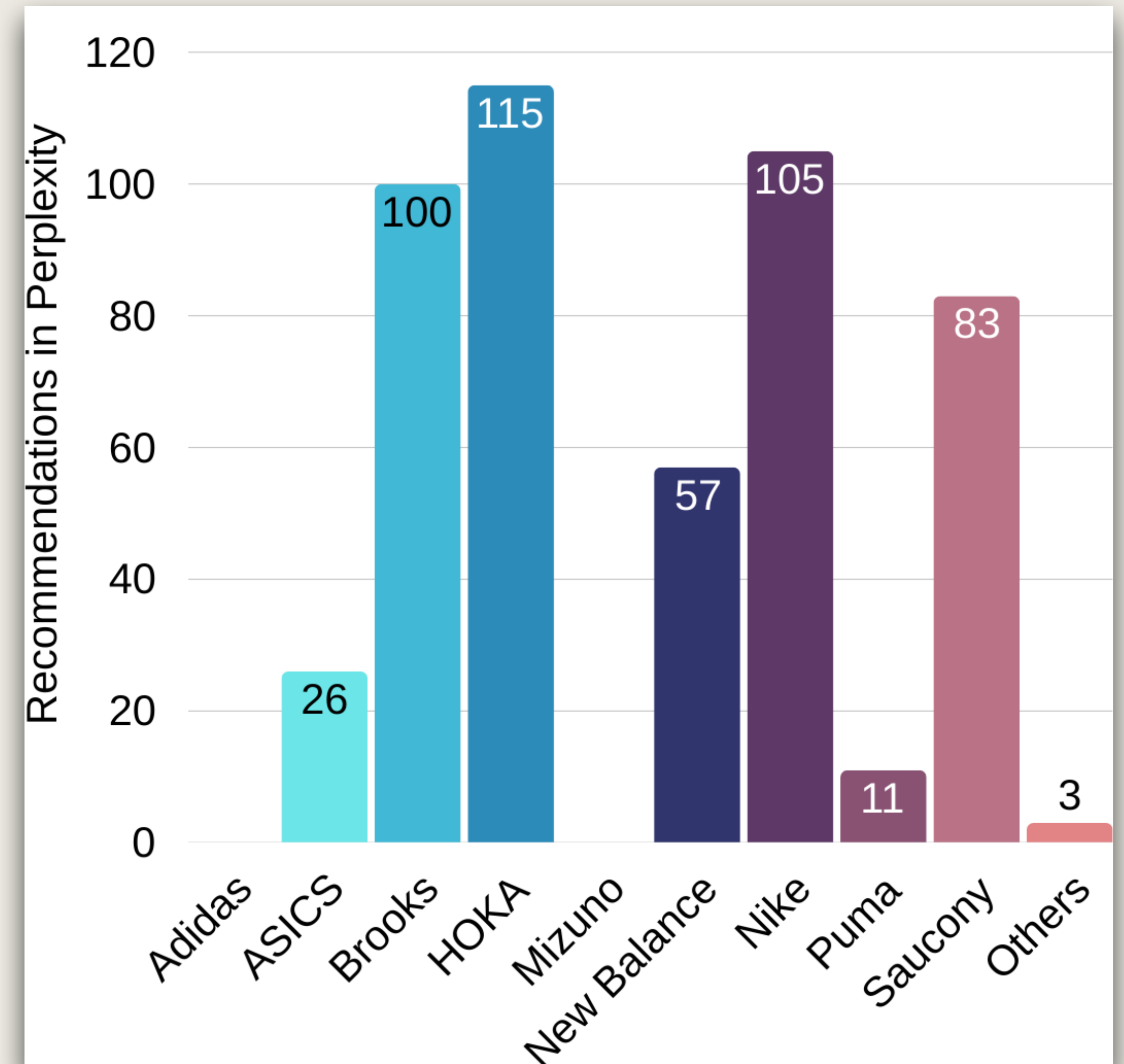


Perplexity Sonar

Model importance: ★★★★★ (5/5)

Perplexity positions itself as a direct competitor of Google in web search. It's AI-powered search engine has millions of users, and it is growing extremely quickly.

Perplexity has the most “renegade” recommendation profile with HOKA overperforming, ASICS severely underperforming, and New Balance getting less attention, too.





If you have a question, drop us a line
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