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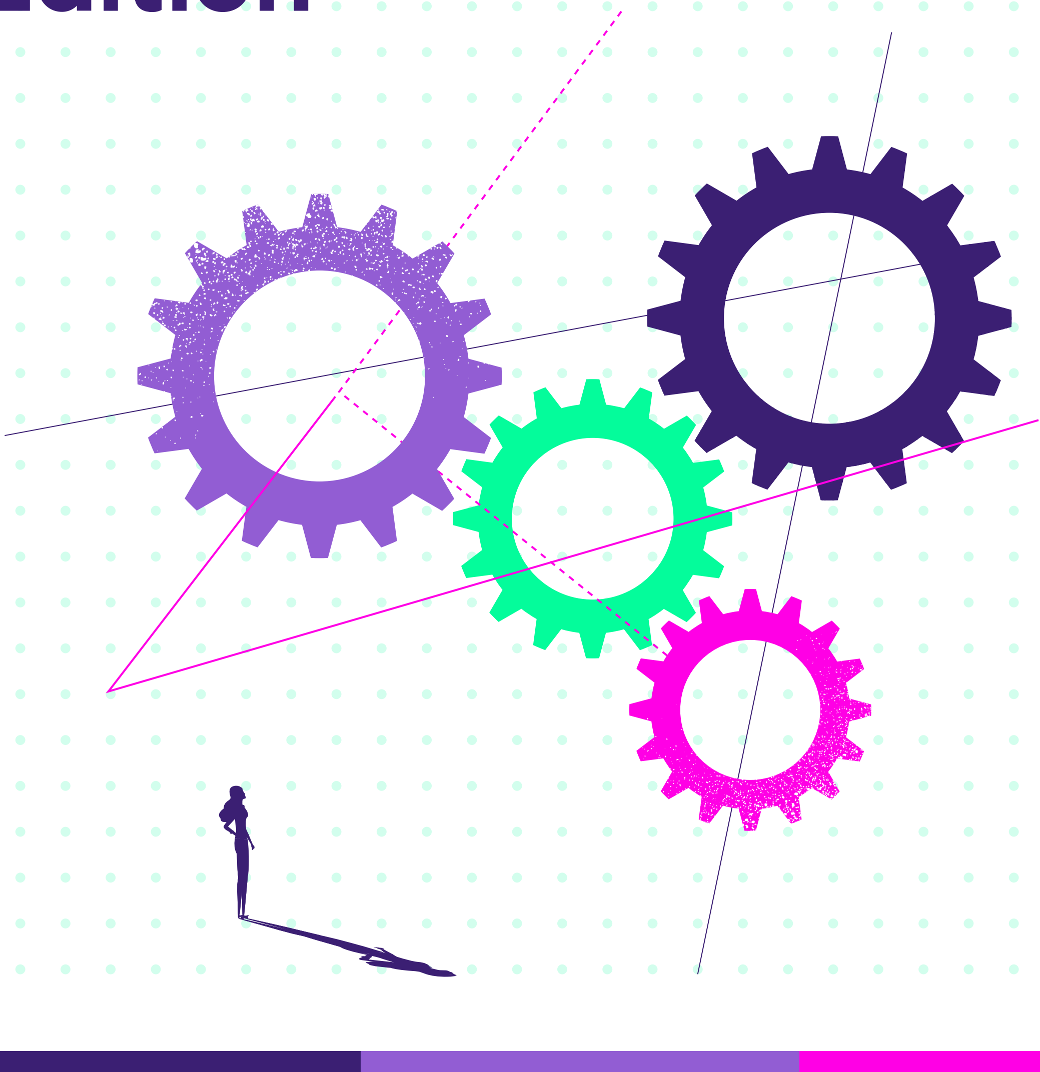
Affiliate Trust and Data Index

2nd Edition



Q3 2025

Industry Look.

Since the publication of the first Affiliate Trust and Data Index Report, the conversation around data transparency, usability, and accountability in affiliate marketing has started to shift. Some platforms have taken meaningful steps forward. Others remain stuck, still hiding behind dashboards and vague reporting.

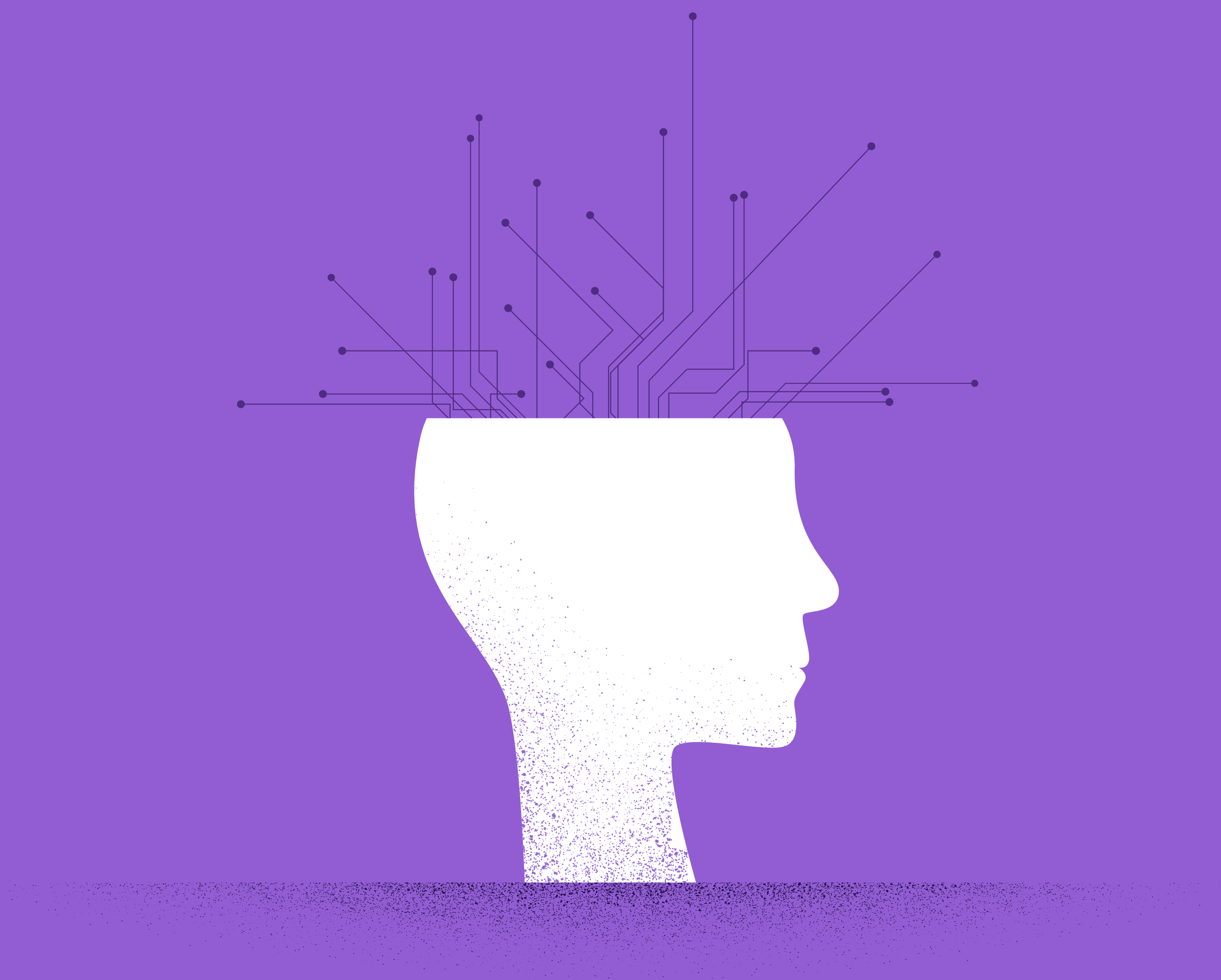
This second edition is not a recap. It is a push. A push for more clarity, more accountability, and more maturity in the way platforms handle affiliate data. We assume the reader already understands the four quadrants and the criteria behind them. What matters now is progress, or the lack of it.

One major shift since the first edition is the rise of AI tools across the industry. These tools promise smarter decisions, but they rely entirely on the quality of data beneath them. Without structured, consistent, and timely data, automation becomes unreliable and insight becomes guesswork.

But it is not just the platforms. Many operators are still holding on to outdated data policies and structures. In some cases, they actively limit what affiliates can see. This includes hiding GGR, delaying conversion data, or blocking API access entirely. The result is a fragmented system where even the most capable platforms cannot deliver their full value.

This edition does three things. First, it presents the updated quadrant, showing which platforms have improved and which have not. Second, it calls out the recurring weaknesses that continue to slow the industry down. Third, it raises the expectations. Transparency, automation, and trust are no longer optional. They are foundational. We are not here to criticise for the sake of it.

We are here to show what good looks like, and to help the industry get there faster.



What changed since 1st edition?

When we published the first edition of this report, we knew it would spark a reaction. What we did not expect was how quickly some platforms were reviewed internally by teams looking to understand where they stood. In some cases, feedback from the industry translated into product improvements. In others, it led us to take a second look at platforms that raised specific questions about how they were evaluated.

Two platforms in particular, **My Affiliates and Netrefer,** were reassessed using our refined scoring methodology. These were not vendor-led reviews. They were initiated to ensure fairness and consistency as our understanding of best practice matured. In both cases, the updates reflect a clearer picture of what the platforms can and cannot do, especially when it comes to data granularity and integration readiness.

Some highlights from what's changed since the first edition:

- One platform introduced campaign-level API access shortly after being reviewed.
- Another rolled out a more standardised traffic report to address gaps in data granularity.
- Several platforms initiated conversations to improve automation and reduce data latency.
- Netrefer and My Affiliates were both re-evaluated, with updated placements that reflect improved granularity but continued limitations in usability.

These updates are reflected in the latest quadrant placements. Some platforms have stepped up. Others have stayed still or dropped lower as expectations have increased around them.

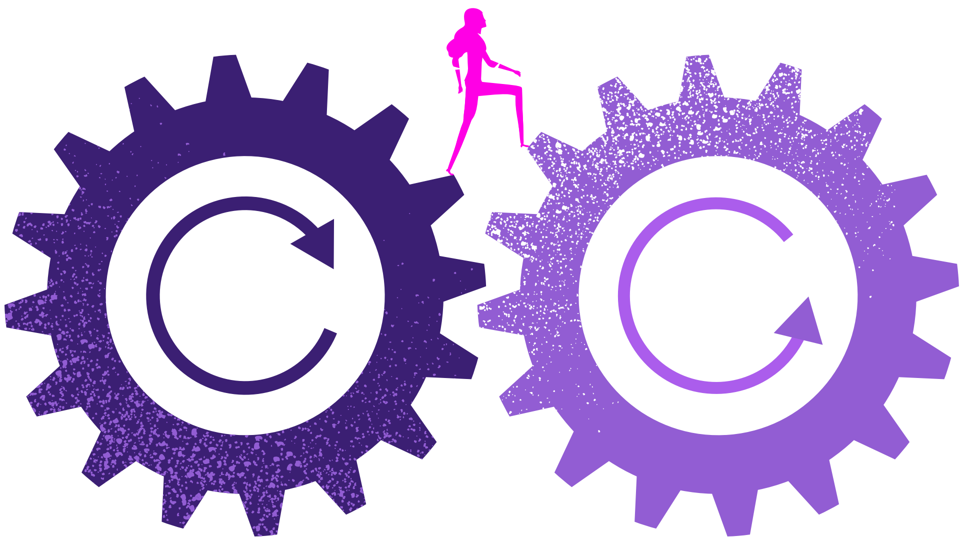
The context is also changing. New affiliate programmes and operator teams are entering the market with expectations shaped by modern tools and real-time platforms. The contrast between those expectations and the reality of legacy systems is becoming harder to ignore.

Change has started. But in many cases, it is not moving fast enough. That is what this second edition is here to push forward.

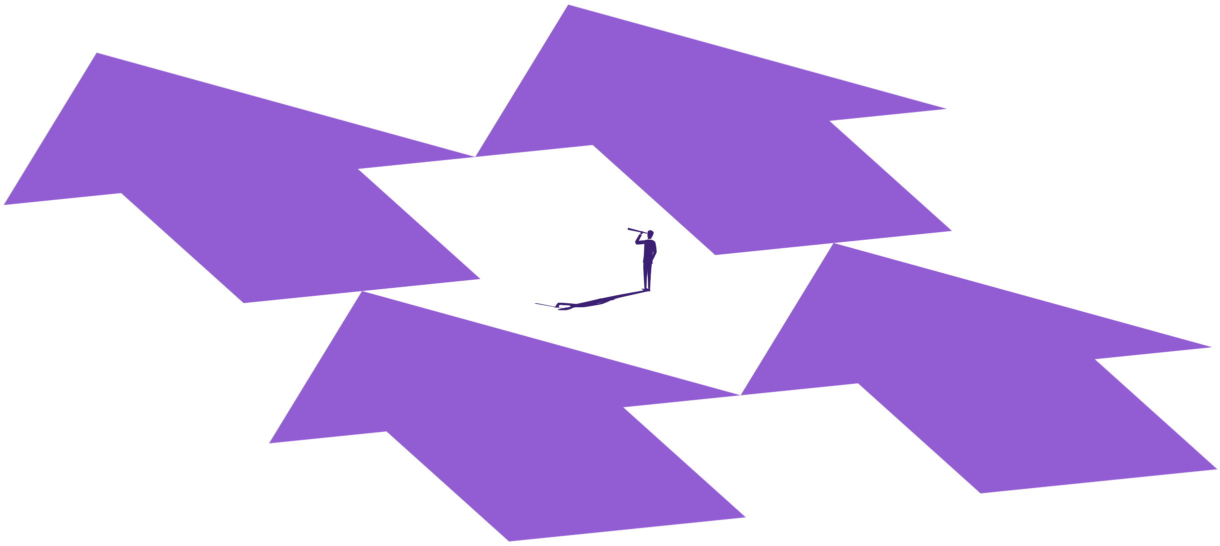
The State Of Affiliate Platforms in 2025.

Affiliate marketing is no longer a side experiment or a low-risk traffic source. It has matured into one of the most important and scalable acquisition channels in iGaming. Despite this, many of the systems that support it still feel like they belong to an earlier era.

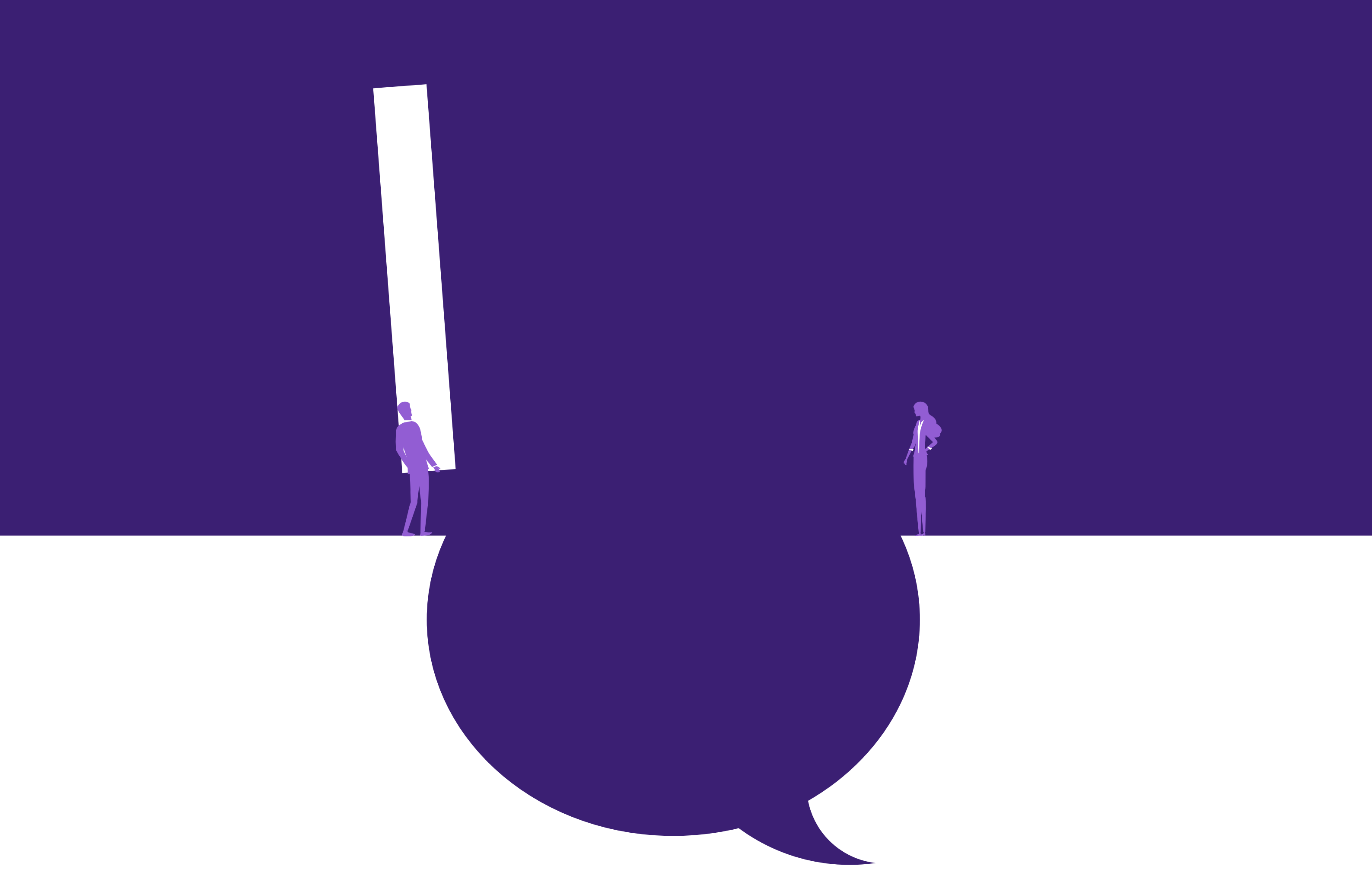
Several platforms continue to operate with assumptions that no longer hold. They rely on outdated reporting formats, offer limited data visibility, and treat automation as an optional feature rather than a requirement. When platforms fall short in these areas, the cost is shared across the ecosystem. Affiliates are forced into manual workarounds. Operators are left with incomplete performance insights. And platforms lose the opportunity to stand out through quality and trust.



One clear example is the re-evaluation of Netrefer. Although the platform offers improved granularity in certain setups, the core challenges around automation, standardisation, and real-time usability remain unresolved. This story is not unique. It reflects a broader trend where platforms might improve one dimension of reporting but still fall short of delivering a complete, scalable solution.



Many now claim to support real-time data, but few define what that actually means. Is the data refreshed hourly, daily, or only on login? These inconsistencies are rarely clarified. The problem is not just on the platform side. Operators sometimes choose to restrict access to certain data fields, such as GGR or click-to-deposit paths, even when the platform could technically support it. This lack of alignment adds confusion and weakens trust.



As a result, affiliates are increasingly questioning the data they receive. **The lack of transparency creates space for doubt.** It invites concerns about data shaving, missing conversions, or misattributed revenue. Some affiliates have even built parallel tracking systems just to verify what platforms are reporting.

The industry needs to be honest about the difference between real-time marketing and real-time data delivery. If a platform claims real-time support, it must explain how it works and back it up with consistent, auditable data flows. Beyond technical gaps, there is also a growing recognition that the industry lacks shared standards. Every platform defines metrics in its own way. There is no agreed model for what data readiness looks like. This makes integration harder, benchmarking less reliable, and trust more difficult to establish.

Inside the Quadrant.

This second edition of the quadrant reflects both progress and inertia. Some platforms took the first report seriously and worked to improve. Others remained static, and that lack of movement is now more visible than ever.

The updated quadrant placements capture not only technical capability but also a platform's willingness to adapt to industry needs.

The structure of the quadrant remains unchanged. Platforms are evaluated along two axes: Usability (X-axis) and Granularity (Y-axis), with security-related features integrated into the usability score. We assume most readers are already familiar with these dimensions.

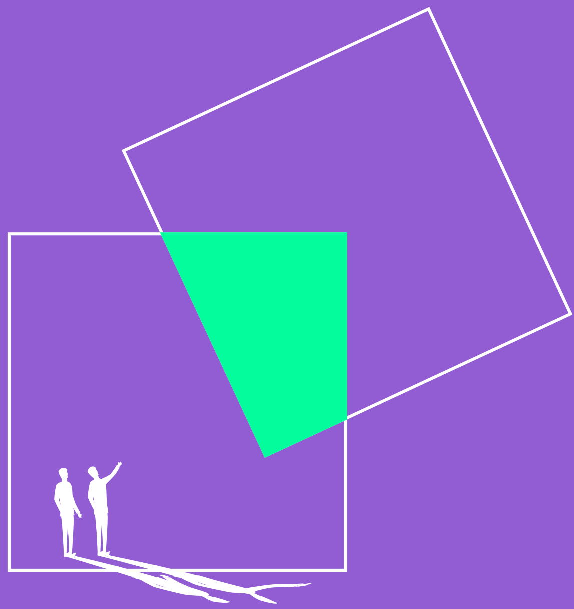
What has changed is the level of separation between platforms that are improving and those that are not. That distinction is no longer subtle. It is now clear who is leaning into transparency and automation, and who is still treating affiliate operations as a second thought.

Operator Settings Still Limit Transparency

It is also important to acknowledge that some limitations do not come from the platform itself, but from the operator using it.

In many cases, operators restrict what data is exposed to affiliates. This includes metrics such as GGR breakdowns, player journeys, or click-to-deposit ratios. These restrictions are often driven by internal policies or legacy system constraints.

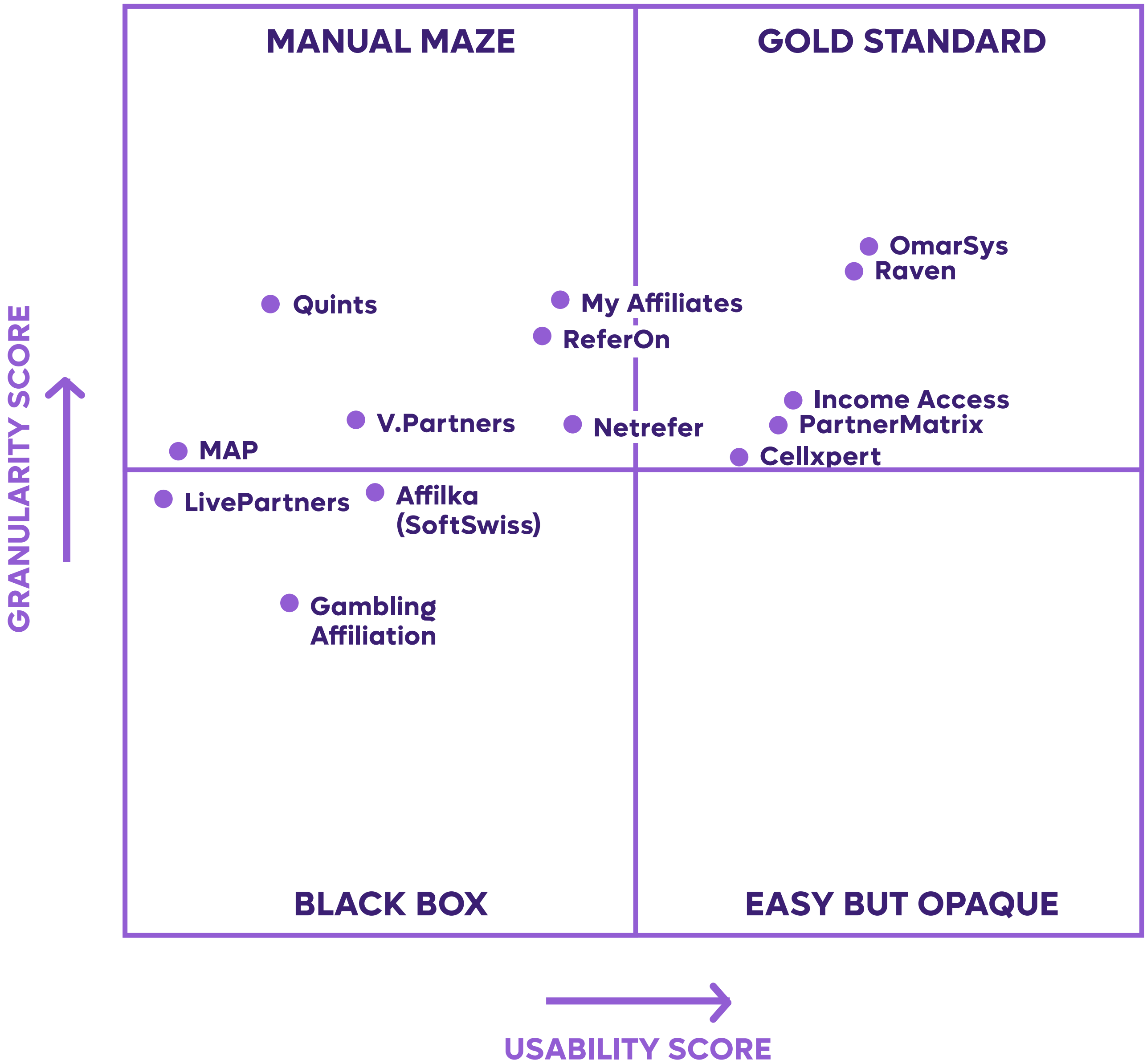
Even platforms with advanced technical capabilities are sometimes blocked from delivering their full value. Our work with Affiliate Standard Reporting (ASR) has shown that key data fields can be withheld at the operator level, despite being supported by the underlying system.



This creates **artificial ceilings.** Affiliates are left to navigate fragmented reporting environments, even when the infrastructure could support more.

These constraints reinforce the need for shared standards and default transparency. Optional flexibility is not enough. If the ecosystem is to scale with trust, platforms and operators must align on what is made visible, not just what is technically possible.

Results.



*As ranked during the 1st edition of the Affiliate Trust & Data Index Report

Quadrant View

Quadrant	Label	Description
Top Right	**Gold Standard**	Rich data + high usability. Platforms here deliver what modern affiliates need.
Top Left	**Manual Maze**	Deep data, but clunky integration. Often reliant on manual reporting exports.
Bottom Right	**Easy but Opaque**	API-friendly but weak data. Suitable only for top-line monitoring.
Bottom Left	**Black Box**	Poor integration and shallow reporting. Risky to use without significant workarounds.

Key Shifts & Platforms Movements

The updated quadrant in this second edition highlights how platforms are responding under closer scrutiny. Some have stepped up. Others remain static or have fallen behind. A number of new entries were also reviewed for the first time, offering a broader view of the evolving affiliate tech landscape.

We also applied a more refined scoring model. This model better reflects the expectations of performance-driven affiliates and the realities of scaled operations. As our understanding of what good looks like has matured, so too has the standard.

Key Shifts in this edition:

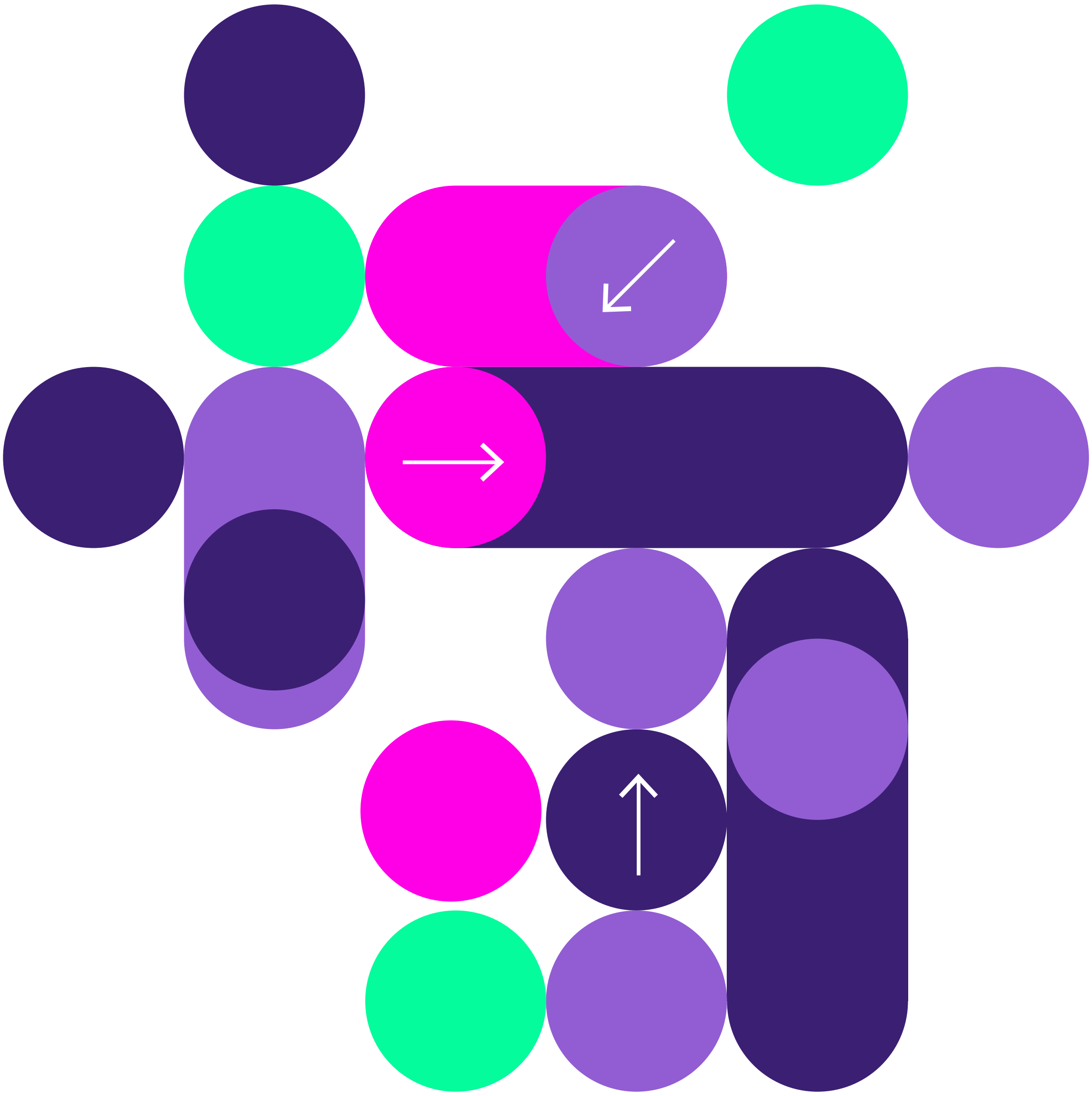
New platforms were evaluated and added to the quadrant following deeper data reviews and industry feedback.

Several mid-ranked platforms climbed closer to the Gold Standard, driven by improved API offerings, cleaner segmentation, and stronger automation features.

At least one platform remains in the Black Box, reflecting minimal granularity and poor usability.

My Affiliates and Netrefer were both re-evaluated under the updated framework. Both shifted into Manual Maze due to better granularity but continued usability challenges.

A small cluster of platforms remains stuck between Manual Maze and Easy but Opaque, repeating the same patterns with little sign of progress.



The purpose of the quadrant is not to rank for its own sake. It is designed to surface what is often hidden behind logins, dashboards, and sales demos.

It reveals not just who offers what, but who is evolving, who is resisting, and who is falling behind.

Newcomers and First-Time Placements

This edition also introduces several platforms reviewed for the first time and positioned in the quadrant using the same scoring model.

MAP; Strong in offering detailed performance data at multiple levels: campaign, daily, and dynamic variable views. However, advanced features like API setup, postbacks, and dynamic parameter usage may overwhelm beginners. Documentation and support might also be limited or less user-centric.

Gambling Affiliation; Very basic platform with limited reporting depth, providing core-level data such as traffic and basic conversion metrics. Doesn't provide advanced insights like multilevel segmentation, dynamic parameters, or detailed revenue breakdowns.

V.Partners; Provides detailed reporting and analytics, allowing affiliates to track performance across multiple metrics like clicks, registrations, deposits, and revenue breakdowns.

Live Partners; Offers a fair amount of data detail, covering clicks, registrations, deposits, and some revenue tracking, however the platform is essentially non-intuitive, making navigation and reporting inefficient.

Omarsys; Top performer in both usability and data depth. Ideal for affiliates seeking rich insights without compromising user experience. API integrations and postback options allow seamless connections with CRMs, analytics platforms, or custom dashboards.

RavenTrack; High-performing platform with excellent detail and usability, supporting advanced reporting, including click-level tracking, CPA triggers, and revenue share breakdowns. API support allows affiliates to integrate data with internal systems.

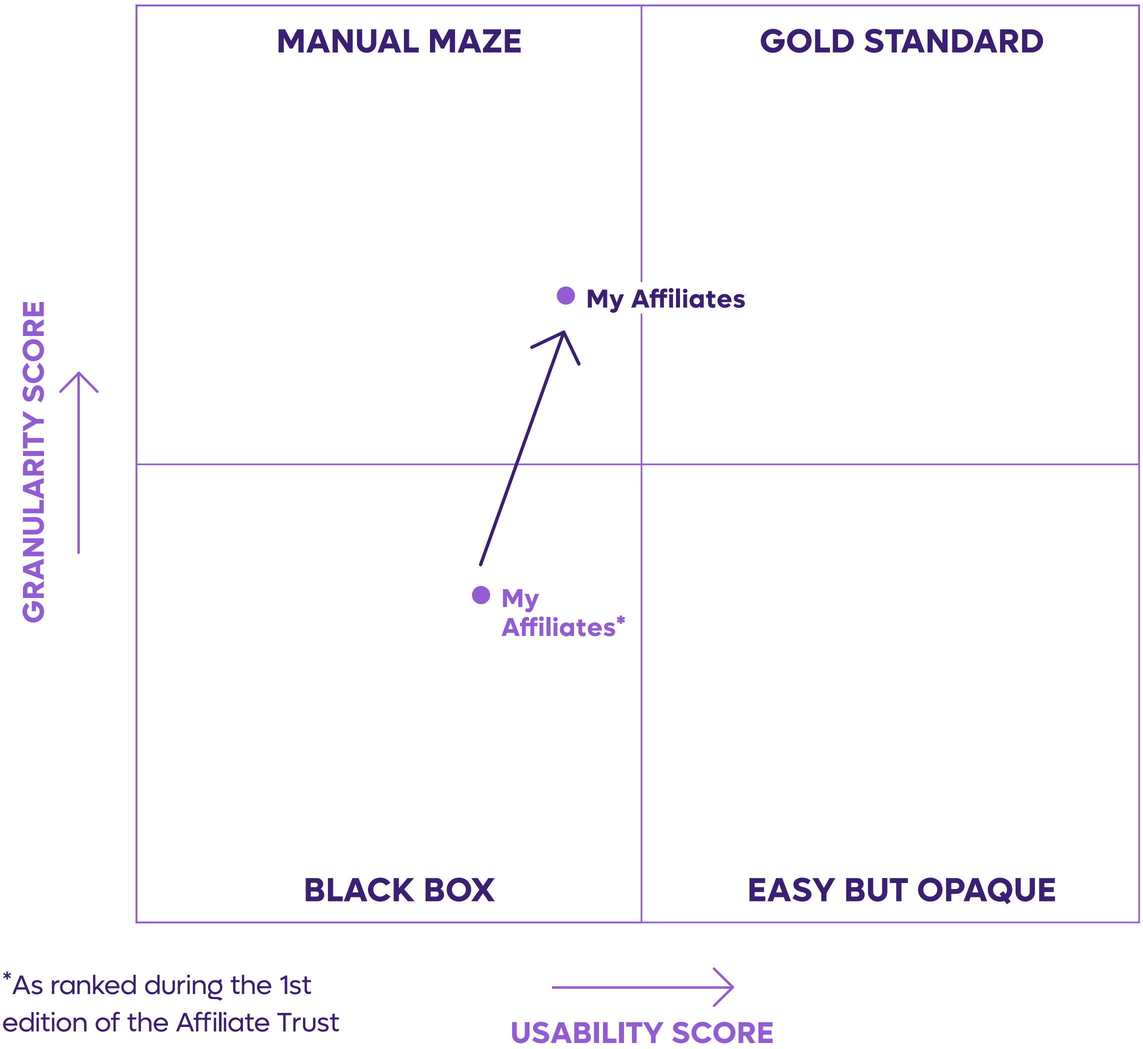
One clear pattern emerged. Many newcomers offered a promising start in terms of design and accessibility, but struggled to meet expectations around API depth, consistency, and real-time assurance. Very few landed in the Gold Standard quadrant. However, several are now well positioned to move upward, provided they address weaknesses in filtering, player-level reporting, and security controls.

This second edition shows that expectations are evolving. A platform's quadrant placement is no longer a surprise. It is a reflection of whether it is adapting to industry demands or falling behind.

My Affiliates: Same Platform, New Lens

MyAffiliates was not involved in follow-up discussions after the first edition. However, our refined scoring methodology for this second edition warranted a fresh evaluation. This updated lens better reflects the real challenges faced by affiliates operating at scale.

One of MyAffiliates' core strengths is also its biggest trade-off: flexibility. Operators have significant control over how data is structured and reported. While this can serve operator preferences, it creates fragmentation for affiliates managing multiple accounts. Reporting becomes inconsistent, and standardisation is difficult to enforce.



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On the positive side, more metrics are now accessible within the platform, including campaign-level breakdowns and richer performance fields. This progress in data visibility justified the shift from Black Box to Manual Maze.

However, the experience remains highly manual. There is still no consistent API framework. Affiliates must build one-off logic for each integration, and automation is still largely out of reach.

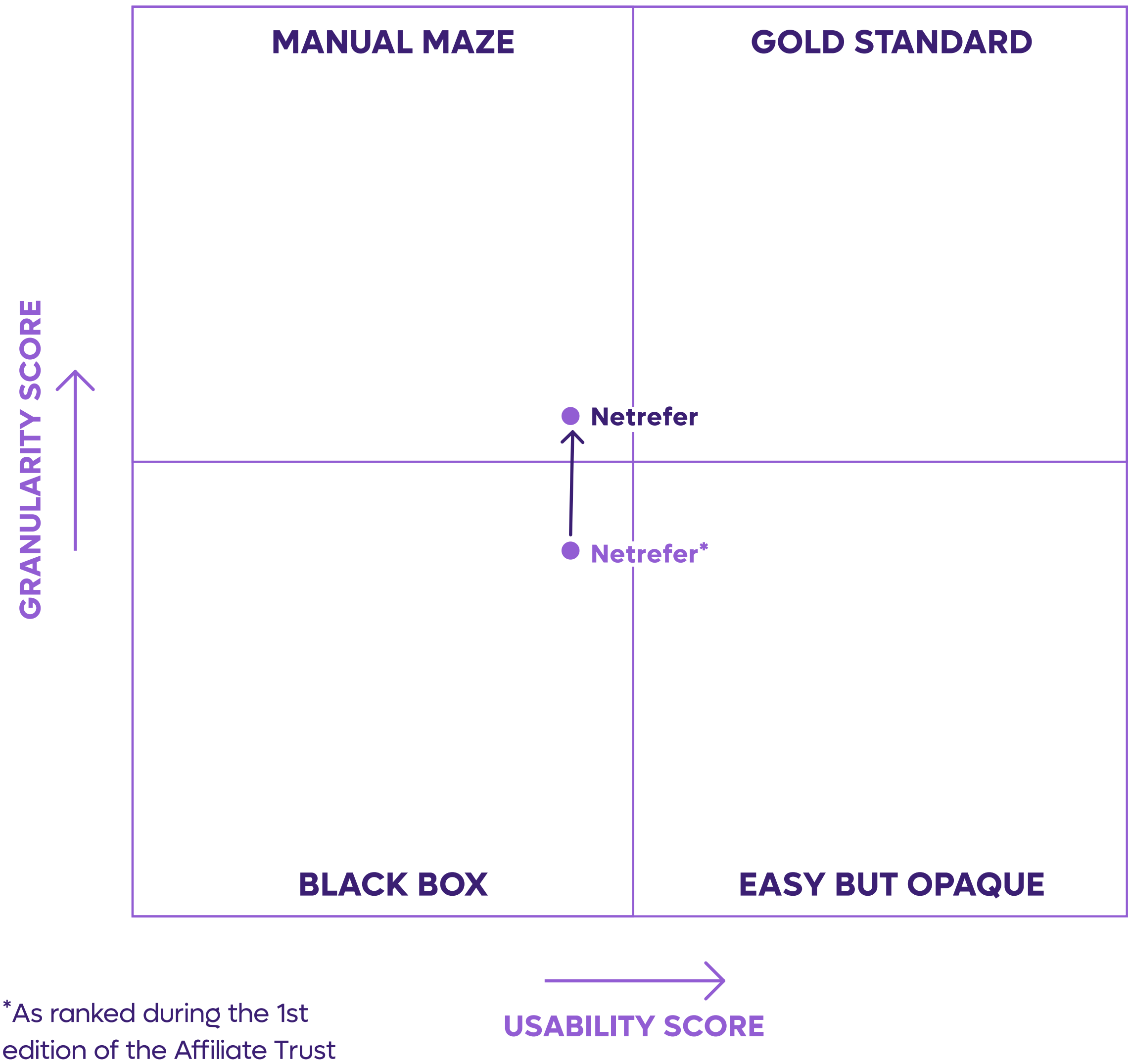
Verdict

MyAffiliates has moved forward in transparency, but without a product philosophy that embraces standardisation and automation, it will remain hard to scale for performance-driven affiliates.

Netrefer: Depth Without Ease

NetRefer has shown real progress in this second edition, particularly in environments where its reporting features are fully activated. The platform offers impressive granularity when configured correctly, which lifted it out of the Black Box and into Manual Maze.

A standout development is the launch of ASR APIs. These offer affiliates the potential for structured, consistent, and scalable reporting. However, the challenge lies in implementation. Not all operators enable these APIs, leaving affiliates with inconsistent access across their portfolio.



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Usability remains a sticking point. Integration logic differs from one setup to another. API documentation and automation pathways are still fragmented. This adds operational overhead and increases error risk.

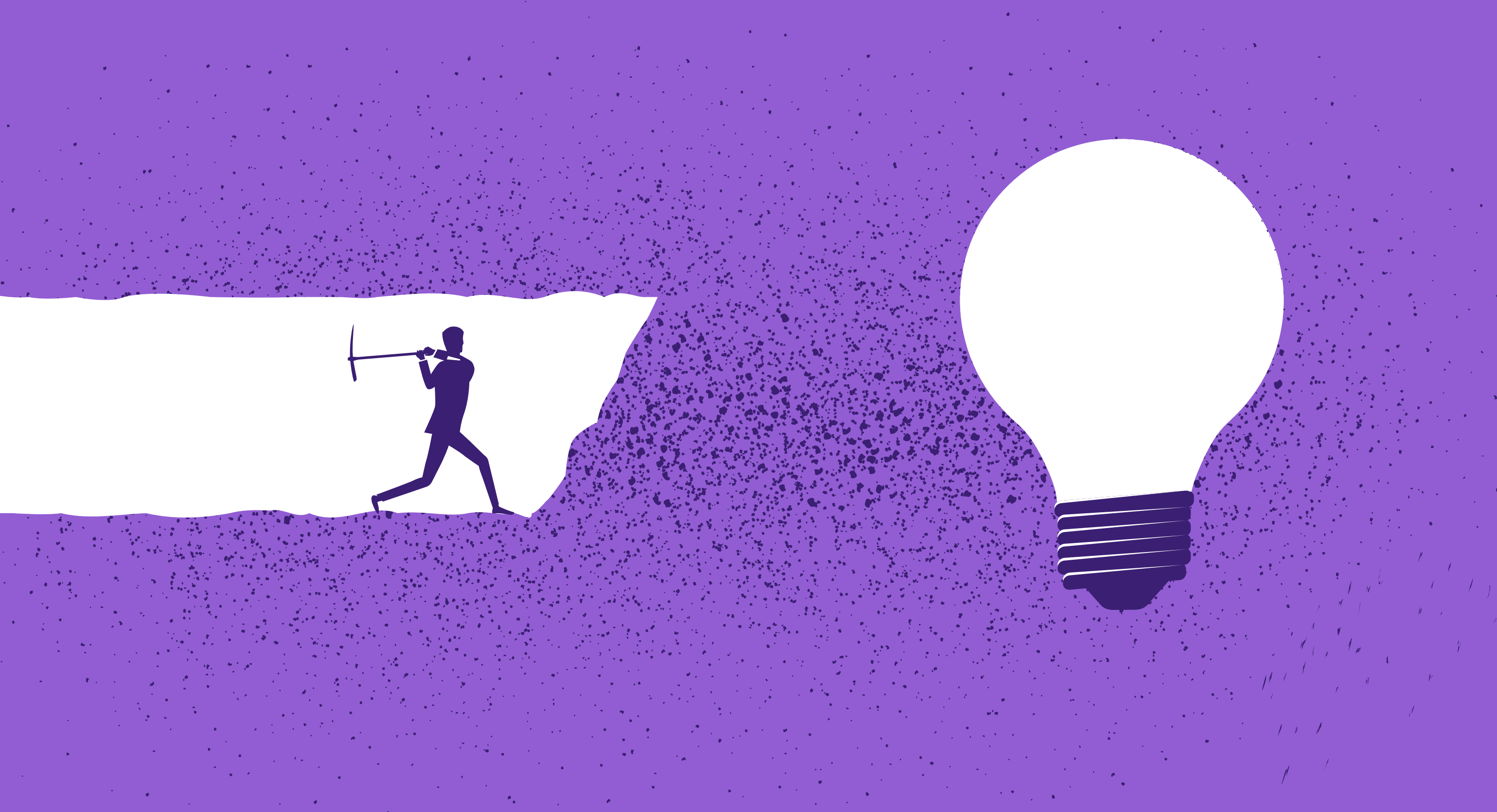
Verdict

NetRefer now has the right data foundation. But until the platform becomes easier to use, and operator adoption becomes consistent, affiliates will not be able to rely on it at scale.

The Five Gaps Holding The Industry Back.

Even with positive movements in quadrant placements and some signs of progress, many platforms are still far from meeting the expectations of modern affiliates and operators. Dashboards may look improved, but the systems that power transparency, automation, and trust continue to lag behind.

Across all platforms assessed, four recurring weaknesses were clear, alongside one critical issue that deserves special attention.



Inconsistent or Incomplete APIs

APIs are still treated as an afterthought by too many platforms. Endpoints are limited, documentation is patchy, and authentication is inconsistent. Basic features like pagination, filtering, and bulk exports are often missing. Some platforms present APIs as a selling point, but in practice only provide delayed, read-only feeds.

For affiliates working at scale, this is not a feature gap. It is a structural flaw. Without robust APIs, automation and real-time decision-making are impossible.

Granularity Gaps That Limit Insight

Even when headline metrics are available, deeper insight is often missing. Sub-ID reporting is incomplete. Conversion journeys are not consistently tracked. Revenue is frequently aggregated into a single number, with no breakdown by campaign, channel, or player behaviour.

The absence of this detail forces affiliates into manual workarounds. It also creates doubt about whether the numbers being reported are accurate or complete.

Lack of Real-Time Assurance

Real-time reporting is one of the most overused claims in affiliate tech. Most platforms say they support it, but few define what it means. In practice, data may update hourly, once per day, or only when a user logs in.

These differences are rarely explained. Affiliates are not told when to expect updates, what the refresh rate is, or whether the data includes recent activity. That lack of clarity leads to confusion, especially when conversions appear delayed or totals change without warning.

Without a clear definition and an auditable update cycle, the term “real-time” loses all value. It becomes a marketing label, not a measurable feature. ***If you cannot define your refresh rate, you cannot claim to be real-time.***

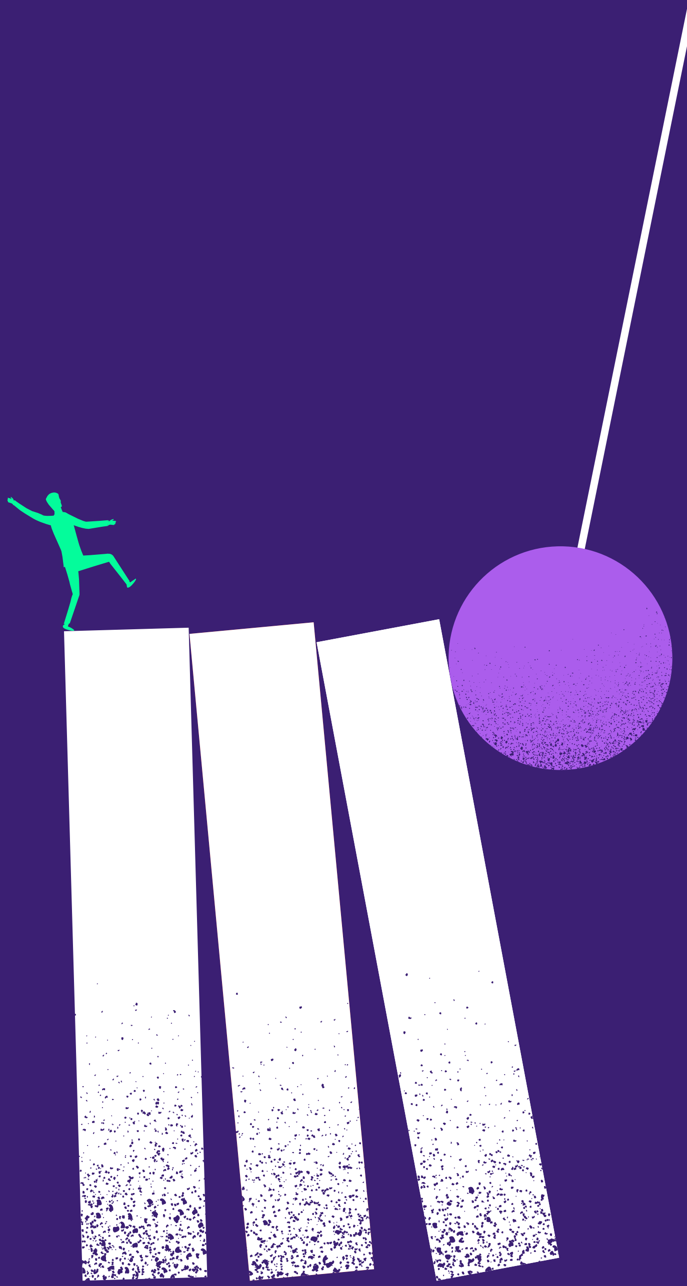
Automation That Doesn’t Scale

Automation is often promised, but rarely delivered in a way that scales. Report structures vary across operator accounts. Field names are inconsistent. Access rights differ.

Affiliates are forced to build custom logic for each integration, which defeats the purpose of automation altogether.

Postbacks: The Missing Link in PPC

For affiliates running PPC campaigns, postbacks (also known as server-to-server or S2S tracking) are essential. They provide the instant feedback loop needed to optimise bids, adjust creatives, and compete in real time. Without postbacks, PPC activity becomes guesswork.



This is where many platforms fail. Postbacks are not provided as standard. Affiliates often have to request them manually, and in some cases operators treat them as a paid add-on. Even when enabled, setup is inconsistent, with each platform using a different structure. Affiliates are often dependent on affiliate managers to configure postbacks, many of whom do not have the technical expertise to troubleshoot problems quickly.

Platforms such as **Guard Dog, Raven, and Omarsys** are repeatedly flagged for long-running postback issues. Affiliates report delays stretching into weeks or even months before problems are fixed. In some cases, integrations have been abandoned altogether, with affiliates pulling traffic because postback functionality could not be made reliable.

The cost of this is significant.

Affiliates lose revenue opportunities. Operators lose traffic. And platforms gain a reputation for being unfit for PPC-driven activity. Once that perception spreads, it is very hard to reverse. Postbacks should not be optional. They should be a baseline feature, consistently available across accounts, with affiliates able to configure them directly. Until this happens, PPC will remain a broken opportunity in the affiliate channel.

Quadrant-Level Observations

The absence or weakness of postbacks is strongly correlated with poor quadrant placement. Platforms stuck in Black Box typically lack postback functionality altogether. Those in Manual Maze may have partial coverage, but with inconsistent operator adoption or complex activation requirements. Only platforms closer to the Gold Standard consistently treat postbacks as a standard feature, offering affiliates the real-time loops needed for PPC optimisation.

This reinforces the central point of the quadrant: being data-rich is not enough if usability and accessibility are missing.

A Call for Change.

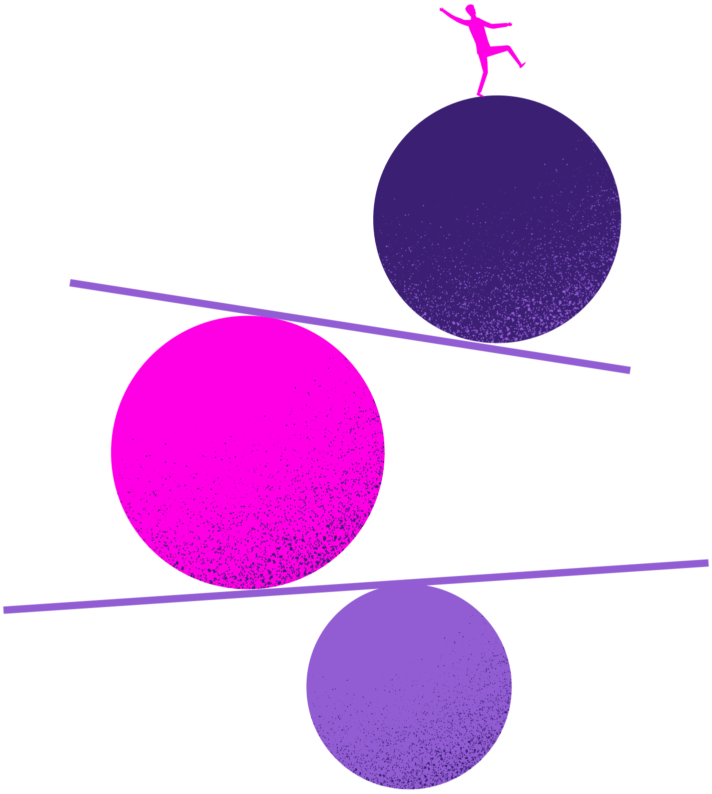
The affiliate industry is at a crossroads. The problems identified in this report, such as weak APIs, shallow granularity, missing postbacks, and fragile security, are not minor flaws. They are structural issues that hold the entire ecosystem back.

Affiliates cannot send high-quality traffic without reliable data. Operators cannot acquire valuable customers without affiliates who can optimise effectively. Platforms cannot remain competitive if they continue to prioritise dashboards over solid foundations.

Transparency is not a threat. It is the fastest way to build confidence. Hiding GGR, delaying conversion data, or treating postbacks as optional only creates suspicion. Clear, auditable, and standardised data strengthens partnerships and accelerates growth.

The quadrant illustrates this reality. Platforms in the **Gold Standard** prove that usability and granularity can work together to deliver real value. Those in the **Manual Maze** or **Easy but Opaque** quadrants demonstrate how partial improvements fall short. The message is simple: evolve or remain stuck.

The industry no longer has the luxury of waiting. Platforms must act now. Those that embrace change will set the benchmark. Those that do not will lose relevance.



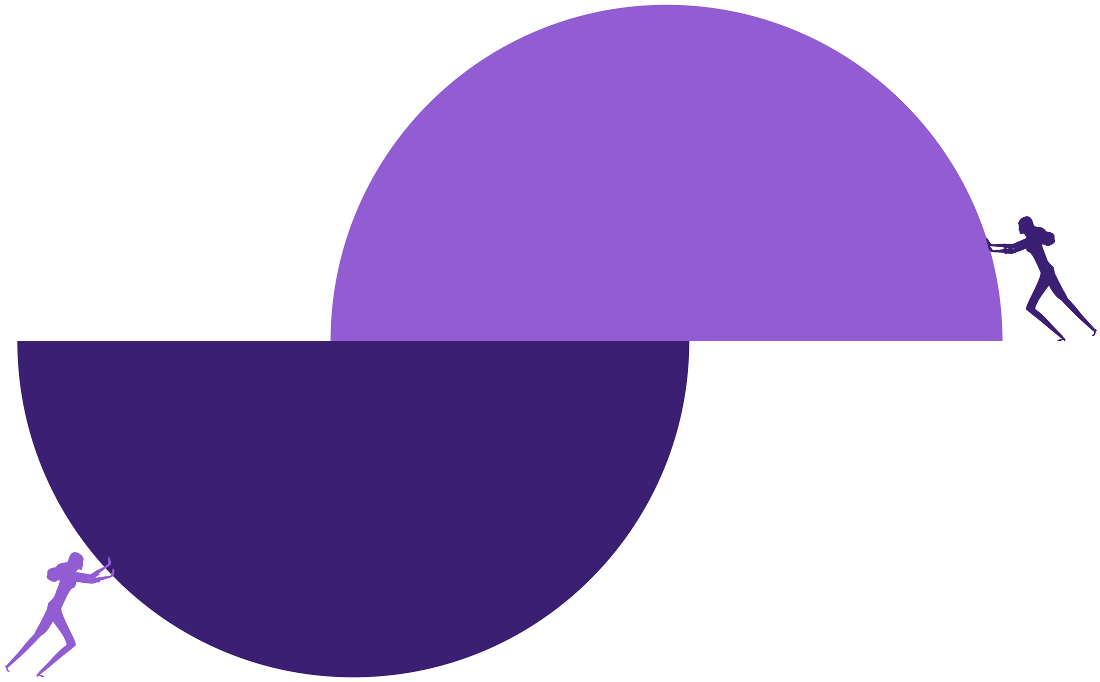
Towards a Common Baseline.

The affiliate industry does not suffer from a lack of innovation. It suffers from a lack of alignment. Each platform defines metrics differently. Operators apply their own rules for reporting. Affiliates are forced to rebuild logic for every single integration. The result is inefficiency, inconsistency, and mistrust.

The way forward is a common baseline. Core metrics such as registrations, first-time depositors, and GGR should mean the same thing across all platforms. Postbacks should be included as a default feature, not a request. Security features such as 2FA, audit logs, and API key management should be built in rather than treated as optional extras.

This is not about reducing flexibility. It is about creating a shared language that allows affiliates, operators, and platforms to scale together. A common baseline would free affiliates from manual fixes, give operators the clarity they need on valuable customers, and allow platforms to demonstrate trustworthiness more easily.

The quadrant makes the value of alignment clear. Platforms closer to the Gold Standard already show how consistent, structured data creates confidence and scale. Those in Manual Maze or Black Box illustrate how inconsistency traps affiliates in manual work and undermines trust. Without a common baseline, growth will remain fragmented and slow. With it, the affiliate ecosystem can finally operate on equal footing, with transparency and trust at its core.



What's Next?

Affiliate marketing is evolving. Traditional SEO is no longer the only source of traffic. AI assistants, chat-based discovery, and recommendation systems are changing how players find brands and make decisions.

To stay competitive, affiliates must prove their value by sending traffic that converts. That means working with platforms that support real-time optimisation, structured data flows, and scalable automation.

Structured data is no longer optional. It is the foundation of AI-readiness.

Platforms in the **Gold Standard** quadrant are already positioned for this shift. Their APIs are reliable. Their reporting is structured. Their data is consistent. This allows affiliates to plug into AI driven workflows, whether for predictive bidding, campaign personalisation, or performance triggers.

At the other end, **Black Box** platforms are not just behind. They are starting to act as blockers. Without usable data or automation options, they prevent affiliates from adapting to new tools and discovery channels.

This is where the Index evolves. The next wave of scoring will not only measure APIs, postbacks, and security. It will also evaluate whether platforms are enabling affiliates to succeed in an AI first landscape.

AI Readiness is the Next Scoring Frontier

- Affiliates are moving beyond SEO as their primary traffic engine.
- AI-driven discovery demands structured, real-time, and standardised data.
- Platforms that enable affiliates to integrate AI successfully will move closer to the Gold Standard.
- Platforms that fail will slip further into irrelevance.

The question is simple:
ARE YOU MAKING YOUR PARTNERS
FUTURE-READY, OR HOLDING THEM BACK?

Acknowledgements.

This report is the result of a collaborative effort. The analysis, scoring, and insights would not have been possible without the contribution of the team behind it:

Ian Wright, Aidan Tanti, Tadas Markunas, Michele Schembri and Keith Cassar.

Each brought expertise, perspective, and rigour to the process. Their work has shaped the second edition into a benchmark for how affiliate platforms are evaluated and how the industry can continue to mature.

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Author's note.

This report is not just about where platforms sit on a quadrant. It is about the bigger picture. It is about frustration, because the same issues keep surfacing year after year.

It is about curiosity, because new entrants continue to push the industry forward in unexpected ways. And it is about belief, because affiliate marketing can become a transparent, scalable, and data-driven channel if the foundations are built correctly.

No platform is perfect. But those that listen, adapt, and evolve will stand out. Those that ignore these realities will be left behind. The Trust and Data Index is not an endpoint. It is a living benchmark that will grow with each edition. The goal is to push the industry toward more openness, stronger partnerships, and a healthier ecosystem for affiliates, operators, and platforms alike.