

Aventis Advisors

SaaS Valuations in 2026: AI Disruption & M&A Outlook

Webinar materials

Agenda

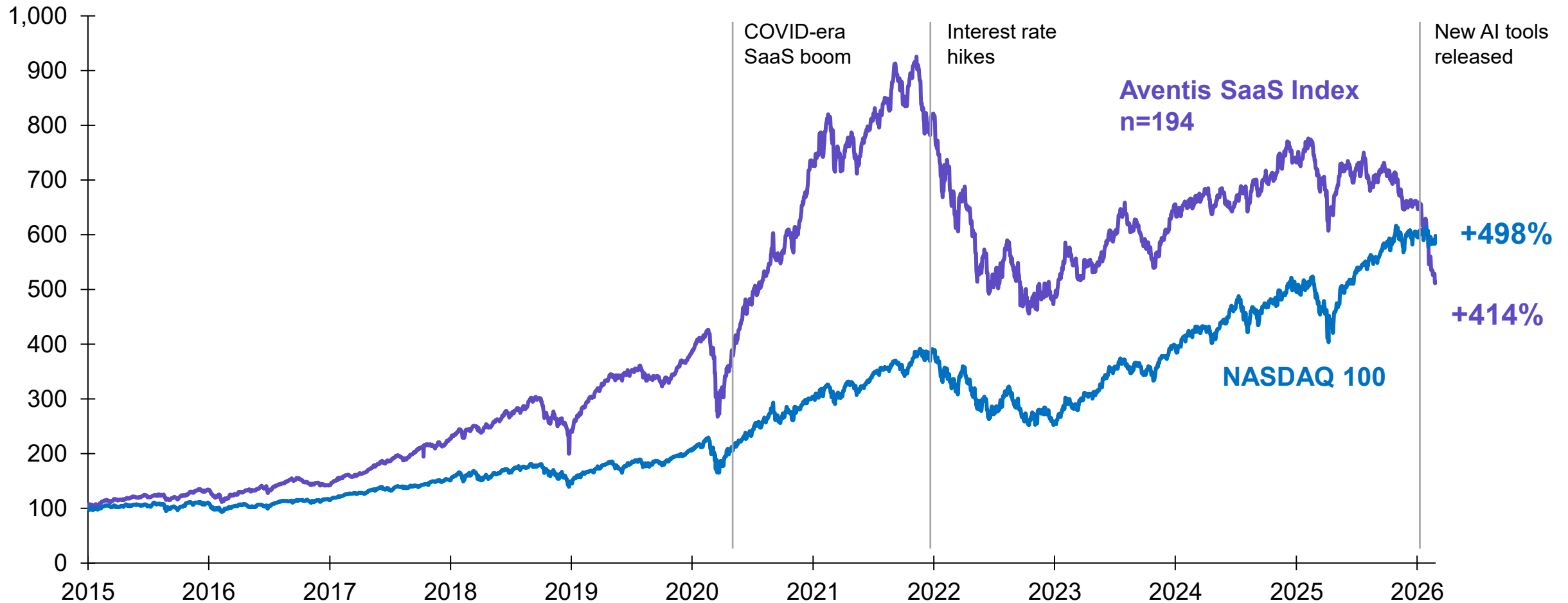
1. What's going on with SaaS valuations in 2026?
2. Will SaaS valuations recover?
3. M&A outlook for SaaS
4. How to position for exits in an AI-first world?



SaaS performance recap over the last decade – 17% compounded growth

After the recent fall, Aventis SaaS Index now underperforms Nasdaq 100 since 2015 on an absolute return basis

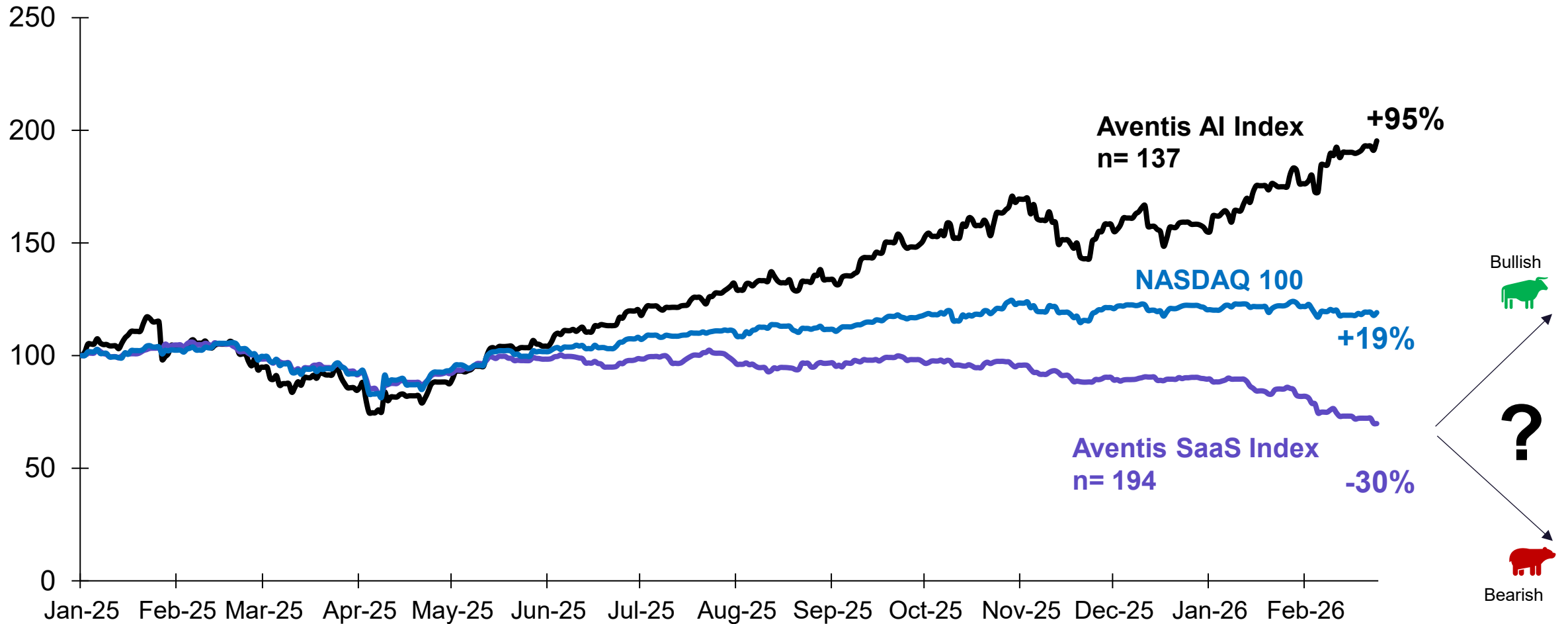
Performance of Aventis SaaS Index and NASDAQ 100, Jan 2015 - Feb 2026



AI is up; SaaS is down – last year's performance recap (2025-2026)

Stocks in the AI value chain, part of the Aventis AI Index, have surged while SaaS names have declined sharply over the past one year

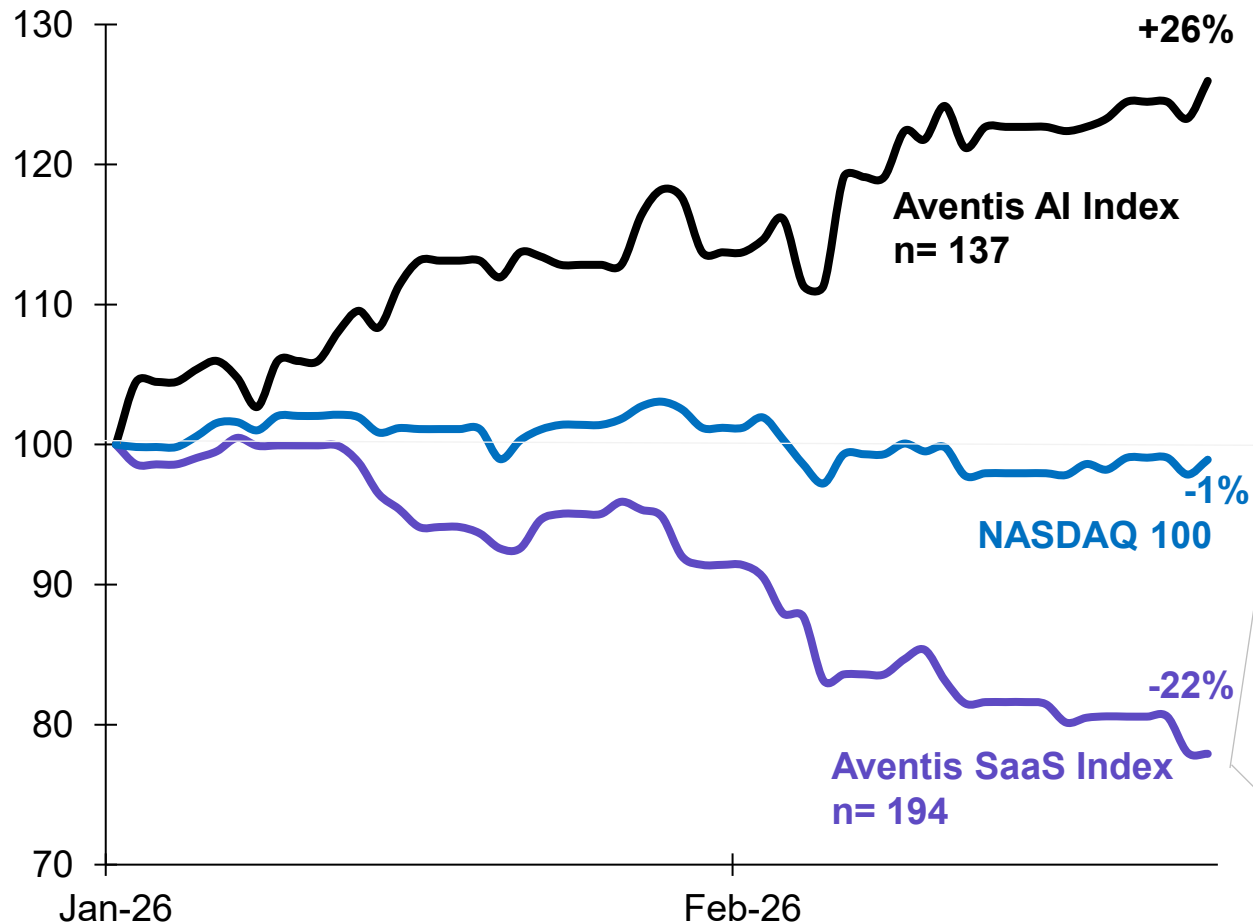
Performance of Aventis SaaS Index, Aventis AI Index, and NASDAQ 100, Jan 2025 - Feb 2026



The SaaS sell-off is correcting the overvalued growth stories and surfacing quality

The SaaS sell-off is bifurcating the market between AI-enabled winners and replaceable laggards

Performance of Aventis SaaS Index, Aventis AI Index, and NASDAQ 100, YTD



Best and worst performing SaaS stocks YTD

Best performers

- Mainly vertical specialization
- Hard to replace - own unique data or workflows

Company	YTD performance
Nittek	+31%
RingCentral	+26%
cerillion	+26%
ELECO	+14%
ActiveOps	+12%

Worst performers

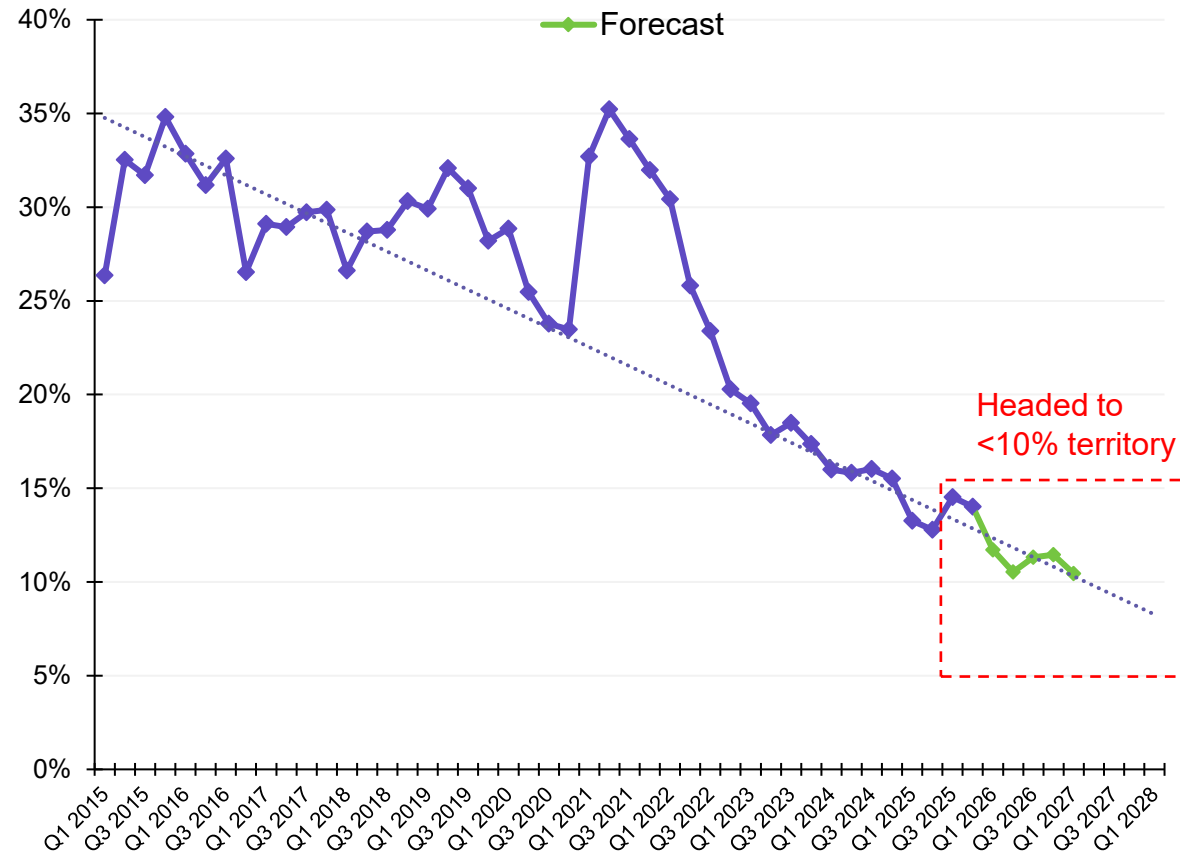
- Does one generic thing that AI can do cheaper
- Built for headcount, AI shrinks headcount
- Charge per seats - AI kills seats

Company	YTD performance
similarweb	-62%
ATLASSIAN	-54%
monday.com	-48%
asana	-46%
klaviyo	-42%

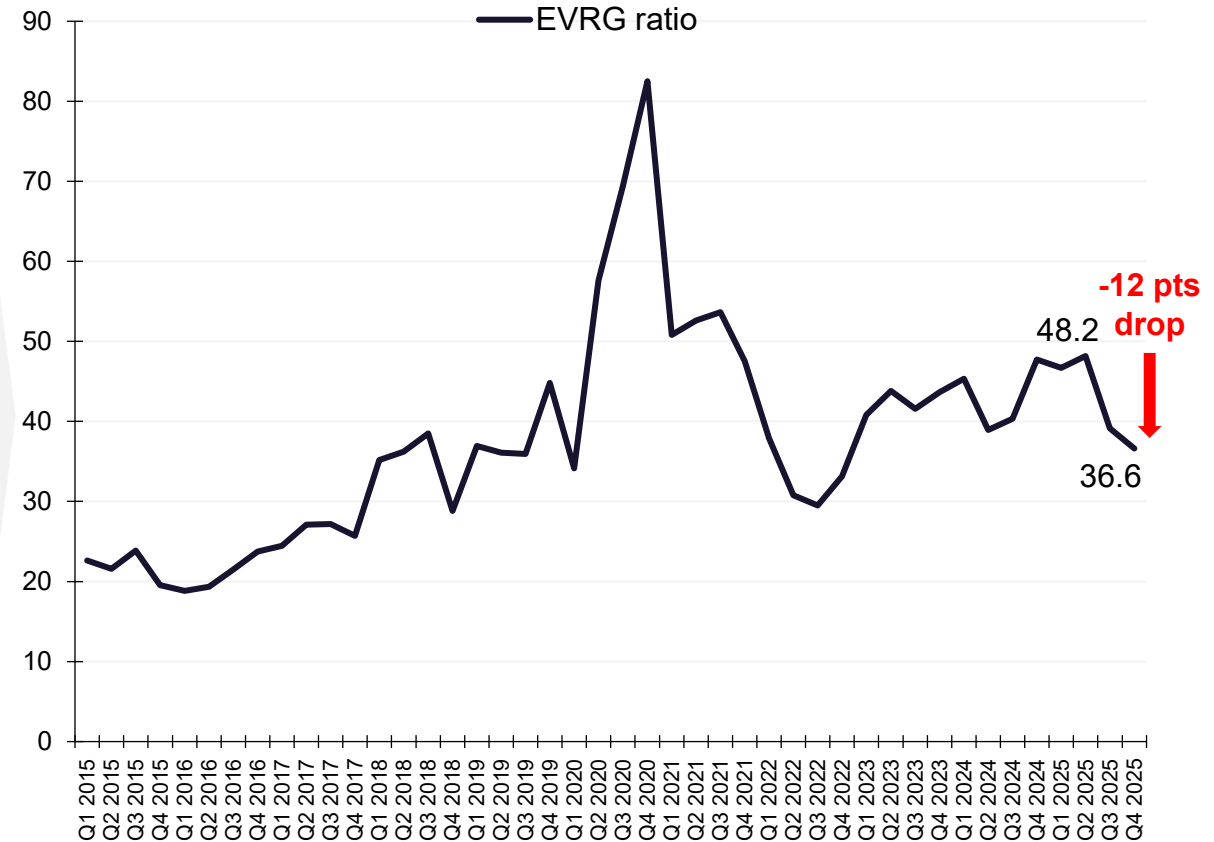
SaaS growth is sliding toward single digits while valuations reset

Growth is expected to soften further in the coming quarters, and it is seen in the valuation-to-growth multiple that is compressing in parallel

Median YoY quarterly revenue growth, %



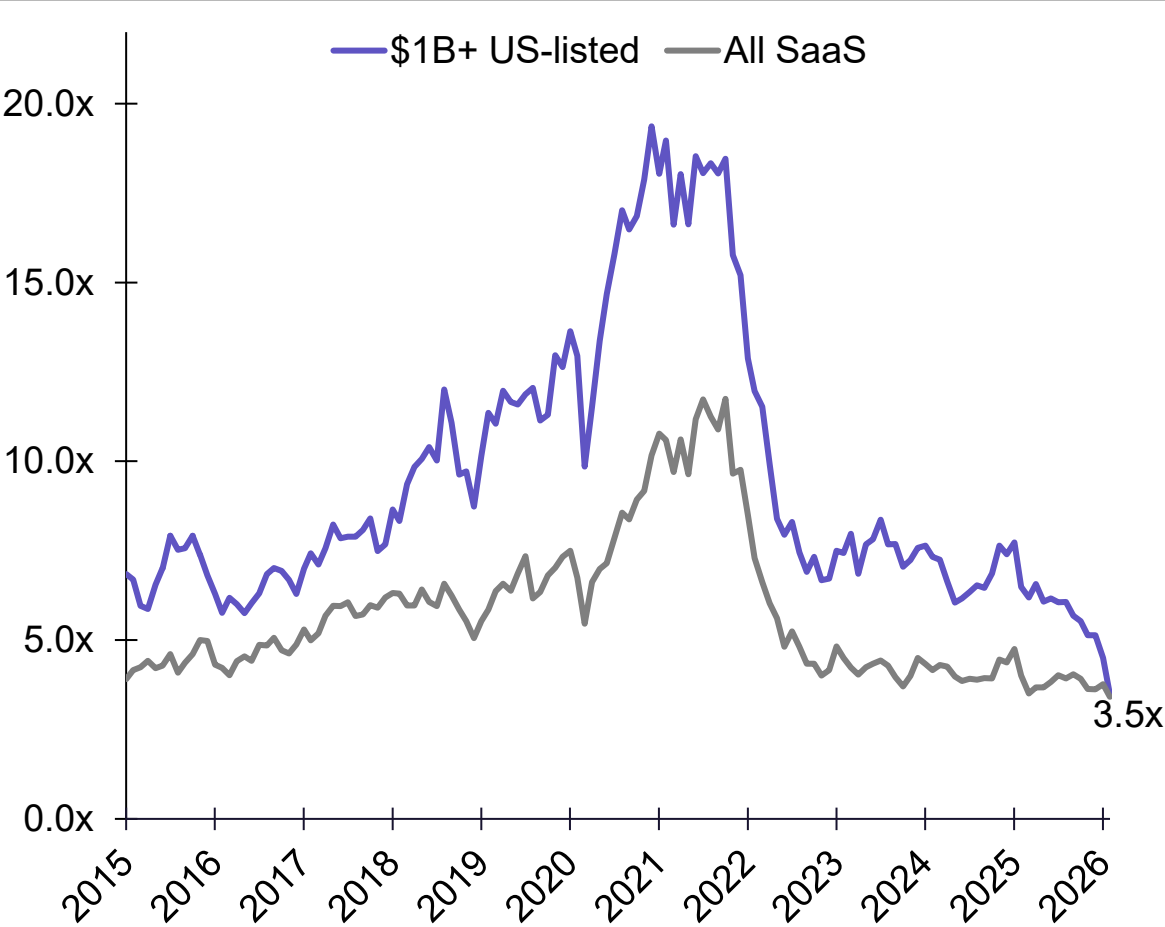
Enterprise value (EV) to Revenue growth (EVRG) ratio



Median EV/Revenue multiple for the largest US SaaS companies is at 3.5x in 2026

The premium between the largest US-listed SaaS companies and global SaaS has almost completely vanished

Publicly listed SaaS valuations, EV/Revenue multiple, monthly, 2015-2026



Publicly listed SaaS valuations, EV/EBITDA multiple, monthly, 2015-2026



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AI's three-phase disruption of SaaS: from capital shift to consolidation

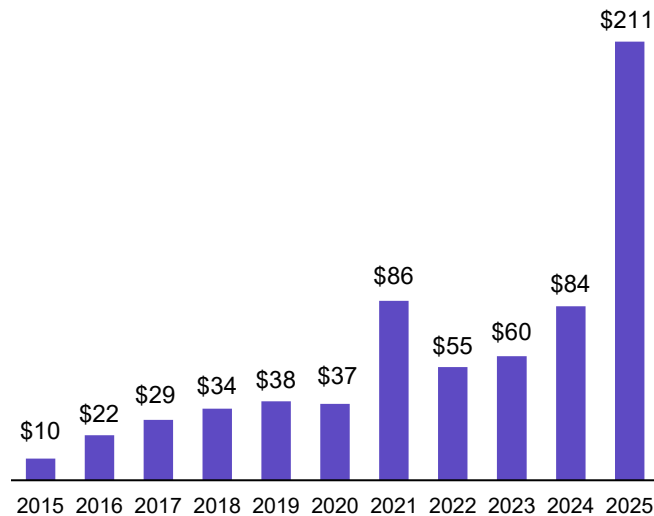
We view AI's rise as a structural realignment changing the trend from SaaS dominance to AI-led consolidation having direct implications for M&A

Phase 1 – sentiment shift

 We were here during our last webinar (Oct 2025)

1. Capital and budget rush to AI

Total value of capital raised by AI companies, \$B



Phase 2 – replacement

2. SaaS replaced with AI agents

Buy-now, pay-later firm Klarna announced that it is cutting over 1,200 external SaaS providers in favor of an internally-built, unified AI tech stack

Klarna Plans to 'Shut Down SaaS Providers' and Replace Them With Internally Built AI. The Tech World Is Pretty Skeptical *The buy-now-pay-later giant is leaning into automation and slashing its partnerships with Salesforce and Workday.*

BY SAM BLUM, SENIOR WRITER @SAMBLUM
SEP 12, 2024

Phase 3 – consolidation

3. Consolidation wave

SaaS incumbents acquire, merge or reposition around AI capabilities, leading to large transformational M&A deals




CONFLUENT



The market has now moved from AI budget rush to active SaaS replacement

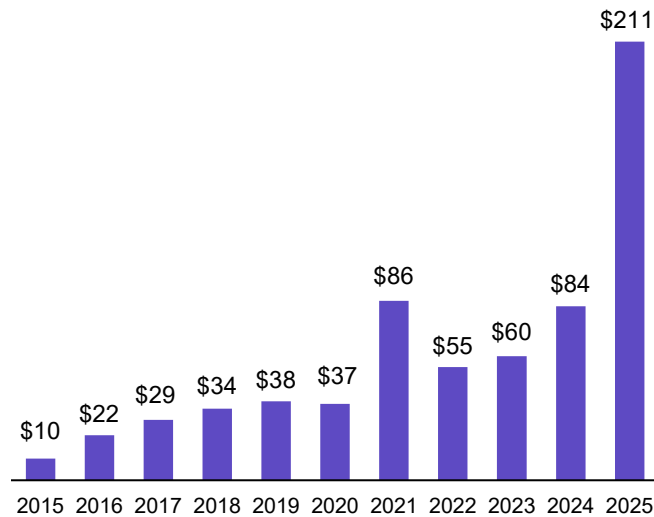
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Phase 1 – sentiment shift

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1. Capital and budget rush to AI

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Phase 2 – replacement

 Now, we are seeing early signs of replacement

2. SaaS replaced with AI agents

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Klarna Plans to 'Shut Down SaaS Providers' and Replace Them With Internally Built AI. The Tech World Is Pretty Skeptical The buy-now-pay-later giant is leaning into automation and slashing its partnerships with Salesforce and Workday.

BY SAM BLUM, SENIOR WRITER @SAMBLUM
SEP 12, 2024

Stories of people 'testing and building' their own AI tools to replace existing software are getting more attention on social media platforms.

How I Built a 26-Module ERP Using AI

 **Nikhil Jathar**
CTO & Co-founder at AvanSaber.com | Expert in SaaS, XR, AI, & ERP | Principal Architect, Enterprise Solutions & Emerging Technologies |...

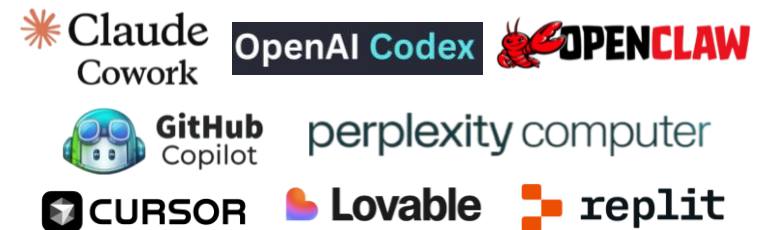
February 28, 2026

SAR

"We built monday in four hours using our system"

How AI-driven development is challenging the foundations of SaaS.

Meir Orbach 10:31, 25.01.26



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The mindset of SaaS acquirers in the AI era

Valuation logic in M&A deals is shifting – some of the old SaaS rules are getting extra nuance

Factor	Regular mindset	Mindset in the AI era
Business model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subscription-first product business Predictable recurring revenue stream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can the business scale pricing with value delivered, not just users sold? Outcome-based / usage-based pricing, closer to LLM API pricing
Business size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larger ARR (>\$5M) = more attractive Revenue per FTE and employee count used as proxies for operational maturity and scalability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can a smaller AI-native competitor scale rapidly to millions in revenue with minimal headcount (eg: Loveable, Midjourney, Runway)?
Moat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Product stickiness and integration depth; switching costs; feature differentiation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can AI replicate the feature and software at a fraction of a cost? Are the workflows defensible against AI-native competitors?
Churn / Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Churn, logo retention, and NRR as key metrics Churn is predictable, stable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will churn change once AI solves the business problem your SaaS is targeting?
CAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predictable CAC through well-established channels (e.g., paid ads, inbound, outbound sales), rules of thumb are applied (3:1 LTV/CAC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are your customer acquisition channels ready for “AI overviews”, LLM-supported product selection, mass AI-assisted outbound?

NEW NEW LENS 2026

Customer Industry Risk

Are your customers' industries themselves being disrupted by AI? A SaaS tool is doubly exposed when its own product and its buyers face AI disruption, e.g. Excel add-ins, or legal review SaaS can be replaced by Claude

How exposed is your SaaS business to AI?

SaaS Capital introduced the AI Risk Assessment framework for B2B SaaS companies based on 3 dimensions to arrive at an AI resiliency score

SoR System of Record	NSC Non-Software Component	U&U User & Usage
<p><i>Does your product own the ground truth of a business process?</i></p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Not a SoR Data lives or is recorded elsewhere2 Low-value SoR Historical, archival or comparative data3 Strategic SoR High-value, legally required data4 Mission-critical SoR Outage would halt customer's revenue	<p><i>Does your product offer something beyond pure code (data, network, etc)?</i></p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Pure software Input → process → output. Nothing else.2 Commodity add-ons Off-the-shelf integrations for convenience3 Unique OR high-value Proprietary data, market, or hardware4 Unique AND high-value Real-time data, or proprietary hardware	<p><i>How senior is your user, and how large are the decisions they make?</i></p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1 IC-level, <\$1k Low-stakes, solo individual contributor2 Manager, ~\$10k Team or department-level decisions3 VP / Exec, ~\$100k Strategic decisions, senior users4 C-suite, \$1M+ Bet-the-company decisions, C-suite users

- Score your B2B SaaS on a scale of 1–4 on each dimension and take the mean. No zeros or fractions.
- Tested on 52 public SaaS companies. Higher scores correlated with better ARR multiples, growth and margin



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How to position for SaaS M&A exits in an AI-first world?

SaaS founders face two paths today: exit the business before valuation pressure increases further or adapt to capture AI upside

Exiting in an AI-first world: two very different paths for SaaS founders

If your product is structurally exposed to AI

- You offer a horizontal solution or functionality
- Your business growth is already decelerating
- Limited proprietary data or workflow defensibility
- Seat-based pricing

Option A: Explore exit now

- Capital for SaaS acquisitions still available
- Transfer the risk to someone better positioned to bear it

Option B: Milk for cashflow

- Cut R&D and S&M expenses
- Harvest existing customers while churn is manageable

If you can successfully embed AI into your core product

- Mission-critical and vertically specialized solution
- You can reposition as an “AI-enabled platform”
- AI enhances, not replaces, your product
- Proprietary data moats are present

Option C: Adapt and scale

- Proven AI-driven growth and margin uplift justify valuation expansion when you will finally plan to exit
- Strategic buyers pay premiums for AI capabilities in an acquisition

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