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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Ekkobar Named “Startup of the Year” at 2026 Mira Awards, Defining the Future of Authentic Social Intelligence (ASI) for Sports, Media, and Enterprise

Recognized by TechPoint and a panel of independent judges, Ekkobar emerges as the category leader as the attention economy fractures, driving new demand for clarity, authenticity, and action within social media

INDIANAPOLIS, IN — [April 28, 2026] — Ekkobar, the company redefining how organizations understand and act on culture within social media, has been named “Startup of the Year” at the 2026 Mira Awards, presented by TechPoint, widely regarded as the “Oscars of Indiana Tech.”

Selected by a panel of independent judges from 231 submissions and 106 finalists, the award recognizes Ekkobar’s sophisticated product, strong early traction, and a team with deep industry experience, signaling a breakout moment not only for the company but for a new category: Authentic Social Intelligence (ASI).

“The attention economy is over,” said Rhys Ryan, Co-Founder and CEO of Ekkobar. “We didn’t kill it—but we did bury it. What replaces it is Authentic Social Intelligence. ASI is how organizations finally understand themselves, their audience, and culture, within social media, and more importantly, what to do about it in order to boost their bottom line.”

From Noise to Clarity. From Attention to Obsession.

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In a market overwhelmed by infinite content, bot traffic, and generative AI noise, organizations are facing a crisis of clarity. Traditional tools, legacy social media analytics, dashboards, social listening, and generic AI, are no longer enough.

Ekkobar's Authentic Social Intelligence (ASI) platform cuts through that noise by decoding authentic human conversation and transforming it into decision intelligence and revenue. Rather than measuring attention, ASI enables organizations to engineer resonance, and ultimately, fan, customer, audience, and community obsession.

"Most organizations don't have a data problem; they have a meaning and trust problem," said Amber Dodson, Co-Founder and Chief Growth Officer of Ekkobar. "ASI changes that. It tells you what actually matters, who it matters to, and exactly how to show up authentically to join culture…at the speed of culture. That's the difference between noise and growth."

Ekkobar enables organizations to:

- Understand their brand, audience, and cultural position in the moment
- Identify aligned communities, superfans, micro-influencers, and authentic voices
- Detect and act on cultural moments as they emerge
- Turn social conversation into measurable business outcomes and revenue

The "Anti-AI AI Company" Defining What Comes Next

As generative AI floods the market with zero-cost content, Ekkobar has taken a different position: "the anti-AI AI company."

Its ASI platform doesn't generate more noise; it filters, decodes, and elevates what is real and truly impactful, giving organizations the ability to act with clarity and authenticity in a synthetic world. This is quickly becoming mission-critical across sports, media, brands, agencies, and beyond, where relevance is fleeting, and trust is fragile.

Built in Indiana, Powered by a Nationally Recognized Innovation Ecosystem

Ekkobar's rise reflects the broader momentum of Indiana's innovation economy, where sports, technology, talent, and capital intersect in a uniquely powerful way. From

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professional teams and leagues to leading universities, venture capital, and innovation organizations like TechPoint, the state is creating a flywheel for high-growth companies.

Strategic Partners Accelerating a Category Leader

Ekkobar's growth has been further accelerated by key partners who recognized early the power of their ASI-powered platform.

"Ekkobar is building a category-defining platform at exactly the right moment," said Top Day, CEO of Elevate Ventures. "Their ability to transform authentic social conversation into decision intelligence, brand relevance, and revenue represents a fundamental shift. We're proud to support their journey and future growth."

"Sports Tech HQ exists to identify and support the most innovative companies shaping the future of sports, and connect them with the ecosystem they need to thrive," said Jeffrey Hintz, Managing Director of Sports Tech HQ. "Ekkobar stood out immediately. Their platform represents a fundamental shift in how organizations understand and engage with fans and culture. We were proud to nominate them and support their continued growth within Indiana's sports tech ecosystem."

Poised for Hypergrowth. Grounded in Authenticity

With strong traction across sports and media, Ekkobar is rapidly expanding into additional sectors, including pharma and finance, among others, where understanding human behavior and cultural context, in the moment, is becoming mission-critical.

As it scales, the company remains anchored in its founding mission: **Save Authenticity**.

"In a world of infinite, often synthetic content, authenticity becomes the only real competitive advantage," said Ryan. "ASI ensures our customers don't just keep up—they lead. And they do it in a way that's real."

With increasing enterprise adoption, strong institutional backing, and recognition from one of the nation's most competitive regional tech award programs, Ekkobar is positioned for sustained hypergrowth while defining how modern organizations understand, engage, and grow at the speed of culture.

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About Ekkobar

Ekkobar is the category-defining Authentic Social Intelligence (ASI) platform, transforming real, unfiltered social conversation into decision intelligence and measurable revenue. By delivering a continuous understanding of brand, audience, and culture, Ekkobar enables organizations to act with precision in the moments that matter most. Built for sports, entertainment, brands, and more, Ekkobar sets a new standard of performance, moving from attention to resonance, and from relevance to sustained, provable growth.

Ekkobar most recently won the Sports Tech Grand Prize at Rally Innovation, securing $1 million in funding from Elevate Ventures, was named one of the Top 30 “Most Fundable Companies” in the U.S. by Pepperdine Graziadio Business School (2025), and selected as one of ten companies in the 2025 Comcast SportsTech cohort. As it scales globally, Ekkobar is expanding into healthcare, finance, and beyond, advancing its mission to #SaveAuthenticity.

Learn more about Ekkobar at www.ekkobar.ai and follow us on X and LinkedIn.

About TechPoint

TechPoint is the CEOs of Indiana Corporate Partnership’s branded initiative for Indiana’s tech-powered ecosystem driving the digital economy through talent, innovation and community with the overall goal of making Indiana a leader in digital adoption. TechPoint works with public, private, and industry partners to strengthen the tech talent pipeline, enhance resource connectivity for enterprise organizations and startups alike, and elevate the industry by activating the community and amplifying stories of success. For more information, visit techpoint.org. Media contact: Lara Beck, lara@beckcommunicationsgroup.com

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