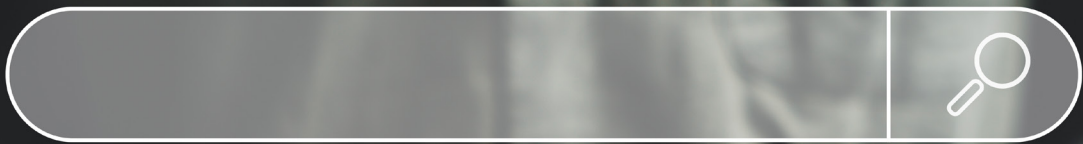




2026

# AI and Search Behavior Study

EIGHT  TWO



# Smart insights to help brands win in the [new world of search](#)

The 2026 AI and Search Behavior Study by Eight Oh Two looks at how people are using artificial intelligence to find information online and how it's changing the way they search, shop, and make decisions. This research helps marketers and business leaders understand:



## How AI Is Changing Search

When people turn to tools like ChatGPT instead of Google



## How AI Affects Buying Choices

From comparing products to finding deals and reading reviews



## What People Trust

Why some answers feel helpful and others feel confusing or risky



## What People Expect Next

Why many believe AI will soon be their main way of searching

We surveyed 500 people who use AI tools to learn about their habits, preferences, and concerns. The results give a clear picture of what consumers want right now, and how the future of search is shifting fast—so brands can stay ahead in a world where AI is rewriting the rules.

# Survey framework and methods

The 2026 AI and Search Behavior Study was created to understand how people are using artificial intelligence in their everyday online searches, what they trust, what frustrates them, and how AI tools are changing the way they find information and make decisions.

## SAMPLE SIZE

500 surveys completed

## SCREENING CRITERIA

People who are familiar with and use AI tools

## DATA COLLECTION PERIOD

November 2025

## SURVEY CONTENT

Our survey included a mix of multiple choice, rating-scale, and open-ended questions covering:

- How often people use AI tools
- When they choose AI instead of Google
- What parts of search still need traditional engines
- What they trust (and don't trust) about AI answers
- How AI influences product research and purchase decisions
- How people feel emotionally when using AI
- What they expect AI search to look like in the future

Findings reflect people already familiar with and using AI tools, and represent the leading edge of consumer search behavior.



# Key findings



## AI Is Becoming the New Starting Point for Search

**37% of consumers now start their search with AI instead of search engines.** People turn to AI because it feels faster, clearer, and less cluttered than traditional search. Instead of digging through multiple links or ads, they want a single, direct explanation they can act on immediately.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

This shift changes the moment where discovery begins. If AI becomes the first stop, brands that only optimize for search engines like Google risk being invisible in the new search journey. This isn't just a behavioral shift; it's a structural change in how people form first impressions, shortlist options, and decide what to explore next. AI is not replacing search; it's reordering the funnel.



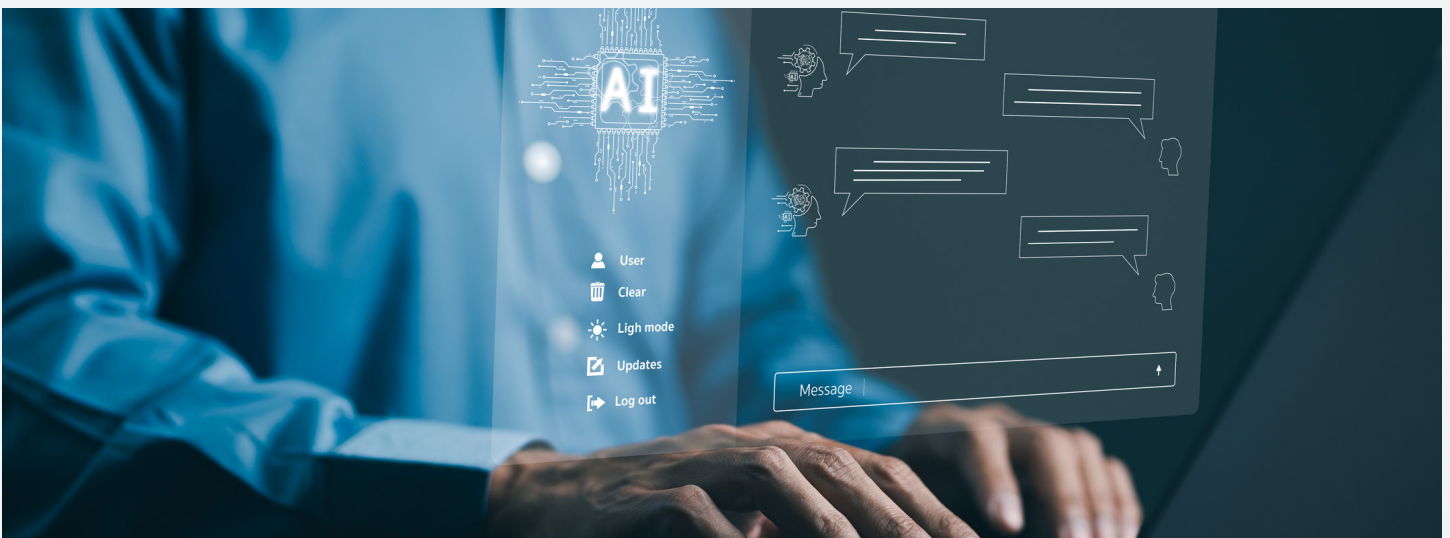
## AI Is Replacing “Link Lists” with Direct Answers

**62% of people choose AI because it provides quick, summarized answers instead of long lists of websites.** They don't want to scroll, compare, or filter. They want the heavy lifting done for them.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

Traditional search is built on exploration. AI is built on synthesis.

This fundamentally changes what “visibility” means. It's no longer about ranking among links, but about becoming part of the one answer. If your brand isn't included in the synthesis layer, users may never encounter you at all.





## People Say AI Gives Better Answers Than Traditional Search

60% of respondents say AI answers are better, clearer, more helpful, and easier to understand. Only 6% feel AI is worse. This shows people believe AI improves the experience of finding information.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

If people believe AI delivers clearer, more useful answers, they'll start their information journey there by default. This shifts the battleground: Brands are no longer competing for attention across many touchpoints, but for inclusion in the preferred source itself. As AI becomes the go-to starting point, brands that aren't consistently recognized or reinforced within AI systems risk being overlooked before the search even begins.

Ask anything



## Frustration with Traditional Search Is Pushing People Toward AI

People are increasingly frustrated with the experience of traditional search. Many say they're tired of the work involved. 40% cite clicking through multiple links as their biggest pain point, 37% are overwhelmed by ads and crowded results pages, 33% struggle to get a straight answer, and 28% feel the information they see is repetitive or low-quality. Taken together, these frustrations show how slow, noisy, and effortful search has become. Users feel like they must sift, scroll, filter, and fight through clutter just to find something useful.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

This goes beyond dissatisfaction and points to a migration pattern. People aren't turning to AI because it's novel; they're turning to it because search has become exhausting. AI is now the path of least resistance, winning the "moments that matter" when people want simplicity, clarity, and speed.



## People Like AI's Confidence, But They Don't Fully Trust It Yet

Although 80% feel confident AI gives unbiased information, 85% still double-check AI's answers elsewhere.

People love how helpful AI feels, but they don't fully trust it with accuracy, bias, or critical decisions.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

This creates a new two-step search journey: AI for the first answer and search engines for proof. The verification step means brands must now show up strong in both environments. AI sparks interest; search engines confirm credibility.



## Search Engines Still Matter for Proof and Details

AI is becoming the first stop for quick answers, but people still rely on traditional search when they need certainty.

47% prefer search engines for product reviews and prices, 44% turn to Google for news and recent events, another 44% use it for images and videos, and 35% still depend on it for health or medical information. This reveals a clear hybrid behavior: AI offers the quick explanation, while Google provides the verification people need before they believe or act on what they find.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

This means a single brand impression now happens twice. First, through an AI-generated summary, and then through traditional search results where credibility is judged. If those two experiences don't align, trust breaks. If they reinforce each other, a brand becomes the confident choice.



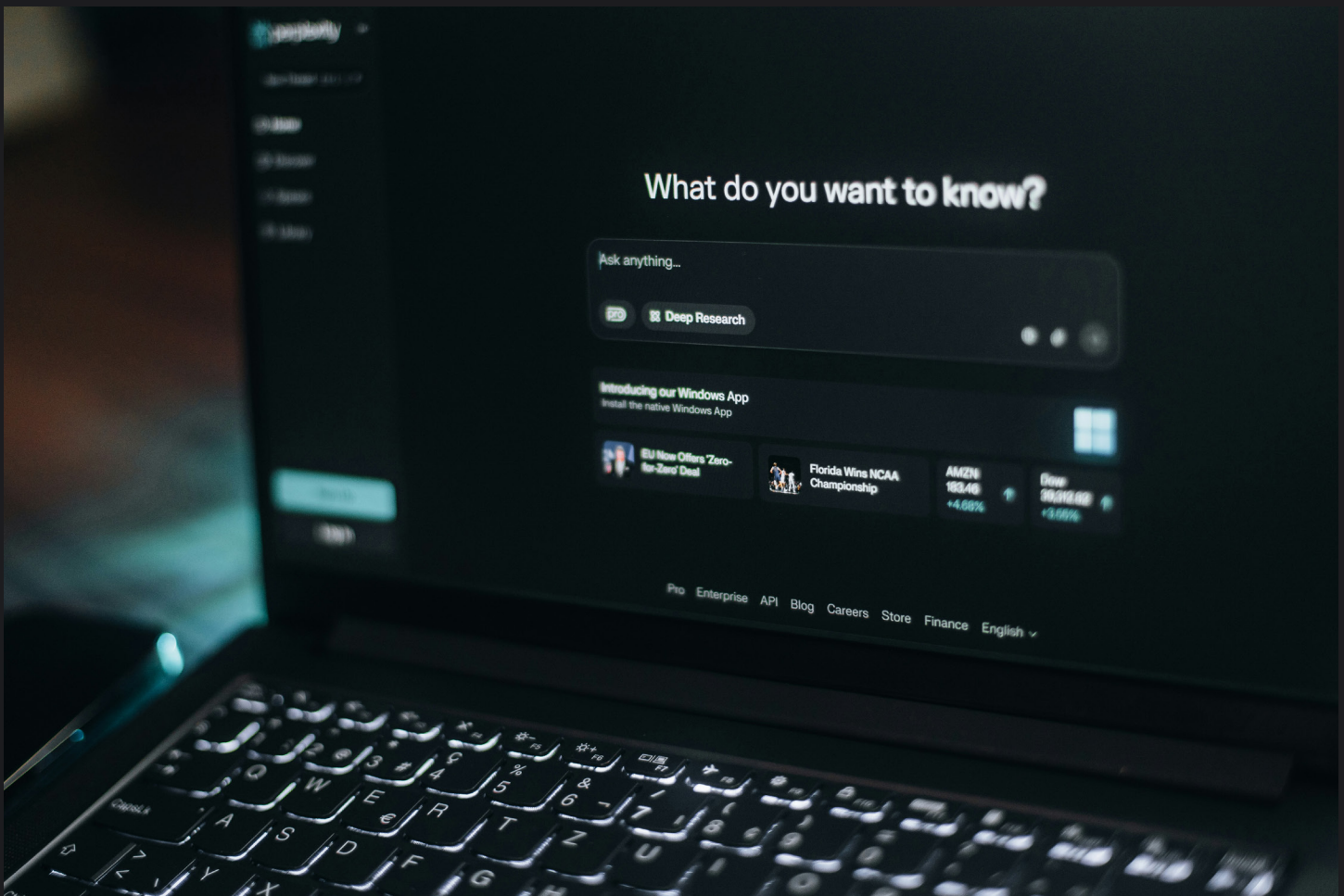


## The Future Is Hybrid: People Expect AI to Lead Search Soon

People are preparing for AI to take a central role in how they search. In our study, 63% say they expect to use AI more next year, and 59% believe it will become their main way of finding information. Many also anticipate rapid improvement with half expecting AI to get better at checking accuracy and citing sources, and 48% believing it will soon handle entire tasks from start to finish. These expectations show that consumers view AI not as a temporary shortcut, but as the emerging future of search.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

Search is moving from links to an AI-first journey where people rely on AI to summarize, filter, and guide decisions. Consumers place more trust in AI for discovery and comparison. Search engines won't disappear, but AI is already redefining the starting point and reshaping the path people take to find information.





## AI Heavily Influences Purchase Decisions Across Categories

**AI has moved far beyond casual use and is now shaping real buying behavior.** Nearly half of consumers (47%) have used AI to help make a purchase decision, and among those who do, 57% rely on it to find the best prices, 54% use it to compare products, and 48% turn to it for quick review summaries. People also use AI to understand specs, get personalized recommendations, and even generate questions or reviews, showing that AI now supports multiple parts of the shopping journey.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

AI is influencing interest and outcomes. As consumers shift more of their pre-purchase research into AI tools, brands risk being excluded from consideration if AI can't clearly interpret, explain, or differentiate them. The brands that AI can summarize well become the brands buyers see first.



## AI Summaries Now Shape Which Brands People Notice First

**AI is increasingly influencing early brand discovery, with 47% of consumers saying AI shapes which brands they trust.** When people ask AI for recommendations, they don't see long lists—they get a short, curated set of options with clear explanations of the differences. This means some brands are elevated instantly, while others never appear at all, making the AI-generated summary the new first impression for many shoppers.

### WHAT THIS MEANS

AI is becoming the new gatekeeper of early consideration. If a brand isn't easily understood or clearly differentiated, AI won't surface it, and consumers may never know it exists. Visibility is no longer just about ranking in search results; it's about being chosen by the AI filter that compresses dozens of options into a handful.





# The Search Marketer's Playbook

## **The Human Truth: In a world drowning in data, we crave clarity and speed. But at what cost to trust?**

We're seeing a fundamental shift in how people seek information. There's a palpable tension in the air: a deep desire for efficiency and instant answers, contrasted with a persistent skepticism about the reliability and privacy of the very tools offering that speed. People are tired of the endless scroll, the barrage of ads, and the perceived bias of traditional search engines. They're turning to AI as a helpful sidekick, a shortcut, and a brainstorming partner to reclaim their time and mental energy.

But here's the rub: While AI is embraced for its speed and convenience, it's simultaneously viewed with a wary eye. Users are constantly double-checking its outputs, expressing significant concerns about accuracy, privacy, and the potential

for misinformation. This creates a fascinating paradox in which we're increasingly relying on AI for critical tasks, even purchase decisions, while simultaneously trusting it less than almost any other information source. We want the fast answer, but we don't *trust* the fast answer, forcing us into a cycle of verification.

This dynamic defines the core jobs to be done. Our audience is "hiring" new tools to help them get quick, summarized answers, brainstorm ideas, understand complex information, and bypass the frustrations of traditional search. They are seeking clarity and efficiency, but they also desperately need a dependable filter, a source of truth they can truly lean on.



## Key themes that emerged

We're seeing a few key themes emerge from the data, painting a picture of a rapidly evolving information landscape.



### The Efficiency Imperative

People are actively seeking faster, more direct ways to get information and complete tasks.

#### WHAT THIS TELLS US

"I can get a quick answer without doing research."



### AI as a Shortcut & Sidekick

Users primarily leverage AI to bypass traditional search friction, seeing it as a personal assistant for summaries, brainstorming, and writing.

#### WHAT THIS TELLS US

"A helpful assistant or sidekick" and "getting quick answers" are key drivers.



### Future Forward, Cautiously

While many expect to use AI more and see its capabilities improving, there's a significant portion still "neutral, still figuring it out" or "somewhat negative, cautious or skeptical."

#### WHAT THIS TELLS US

"AI will become my main way of finding information in the future" is a strong sentiment for many, but not all.



### The Search Engine Fatigue

Traditional search engines are frustrating users with ads, endless scrolling, and a perceived lack of direct answers.

#### WHAT THIS TELLS US

"Having to click through multiple links" and "ads or cluttered results pages" are major pain points.



### The Trust Deficit

Despite high usage, there's a pervasive undercurrent of skepticism regarding AI's accuracy and privacy.

#### WHAT THIS TELLS US

"Trusting the answers it gives" is a major concern.

# Tensions

These themes create a fascinating set of tensions that marketers need to navigate.

## Efficiency vs. Accuracy

People crave the speed and summarization AI offers, but deeply distrust its reliability, leading to constant double-checking.

### THE TENSION

They want the fast answer, but they don't *trust* the fast answer.

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## Personal Utility vs. Existential Threat

AI is a powerful personal tool for productivity and inspiration, yet it also sparks significant fears about job displacement and societal control.

### THE TENSION

It helps them today, but it worries them about tomorrow.



## Information Abundance vs. Curated Truth

Users are overwhelmed by traditional search results but are also wary of AI's potentially biased or "too confident" single answers.

### THE TENSION

They're tired of sifting, but they don't want to be spoon-fed misinformation.

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## Empowerment vs. Dependence

AI helps users feel efficient and productive, but there's an underlying concern about becoming too reliant on it and losing critical thinking skills.

### THE TENSION

It makes work easier, but they worry it makes them lazier.





## Contradictions & surprises

Here's where the human element really shines through, revealing some interesting paradoxes.



### High AI Confidence, High Verification

A significant 80% feel “very” or “somewhat confident” that AI gives unbiased information, yet 85% “always,” “often,” or “sometimes” double-check AI’s answers elsewhere.

#### INTERESTING

We want to believe it’s unbiased, but our behavior shows we don’t actually believe it.



### AI for Purchases, Still Distrustful

Nearly half (47.4%) have used AI to help make a purchase decision, yet AI tools are generally less trusted than Google, brand websites, or even news sites for information.

#### INTERESTING

We’re letting AI influence our wallets, even when we don’t fully trust it.



### Google First, AI for Frustration

While a majority (47.4%) still “typically try Google or another search engine first”, the primary reasons for switching to AI are direct frustrations with traditional search: avoiding ads, scrolling, and getting straight answers.

#### INTERESTING

Google is the default, but AI is the relief from Google’s pain points.

# Practical personas

We're seeing three distinct mindsets emerge, each with unique needs and anxieties around AI and search.



## The Pragmatic Pro-User

### MOTIVATIONS

Efficiency, productivity, time-saving, creative assistance, quick answers. Sees AI as a powerful tool to enhance daily tasks.

### FRUSTRATIONS

Traditional search engines (ads, scrolling, slow answers). Occasional AI inaccuracies, but willing to work around them.

### REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE

"It is quicker to find the exact information that I am looking for" or "I can get quick answers without having to click through a lot of different links."

### BEHAVIORAL MARKERS

Uses AI several times a day (41.8%), often for finding/researching info (57%), getting quick answers (64.6%), and helping with work/study (31.4%). Has used AI for purchase decisions (47.4%). Double-checks AI "often" or "sometimes" (69.2%).

### MESSAGING ANGLE

Focus on enhanced productivity, streamlined workflows, and smart task completion. Position AI as a powerful co-pilot, with Eight Oh Two as the expert pilot.



## The Skeptical Seeker

### MOTIVATIONS

Finding accurate information, avoiding bias, learning new things, making informed decisions. Values depth and reliability.

### FRUSTRATIONS

AI's accuracy and privacy concerns are paramount. Traditional search's bias and "sponsored results" are also major pain points.

### REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE

"Trusting the answers it gives" and "I'm not convinced the information is 100% accurate" or "AI tools often sound confident even when they're wrong."

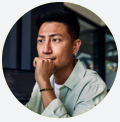
### BEHAVIORAL MARKERS

Uses AI, but "always" or "often" double-checks answers (49.4%). Prefers traditional search for factual info, news, local info, product reviews, and academic sources (all >43% for traditional search). Concerns about AI using personal info (68.2% agree).

### MESSAGING ANGLE

Lead with proof and clarity. Show how Eight Oh Two helps separate fact from noise, explains where information comes from, and supports smarter decisions. Position Eight Oh Two as a trusted guide that values accuracy, transparency, and human judgment, not blind automation.





## The Cautious Observer

### MOTIVATIONS

Safety, privacy, job security. Values human connection and traditional methods. Less driven by pure efficiency or novelty.

### FRUSTRATIONS

Existential fears about AI taking jobs, privacy invasion, and the spread of misinformation. Finds AI “scary” or “too robotic.”

### REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE

“That it will take all jobs and take over humanity in a negative way” or “I worry about how AI uses my personal information.”

### BEHAVIORAL MARKERS

Uses AI “less often” (5%) or “a few times a month” (10%), or indicates “do not use.” May not have used AI for purchase decisions (52.6% “No”). Strong agreement with statements like “I worry about how AI uses my personal information” (68.2%).

### MESSAGING ANGLE

Acknowledge concerns directly. Position Eight Oh Two as a guardian of ethical practice and human value, demonstrating how technology serves people, rather than replacing them. Highlight the unique creativity and strategic thinking only humans can provide.

# Jobs to be done

People are “hiring” AI tools (and by extension, search solutions) to fulfill several critical jobs.

**Help me get quick, summarized answers** so that I can save time and avoid sifting through irrelevant links.

**Help me brainstorm and generate ideas** so that I can overcome creative blocks or efficiently explore new concepts.

**Help me understand complex information easily** so that I can learn new things or grasp product details without extensive research.

**Help me compare products and find the best deals** so that I can make informed purchase decisions efficiently.

**Help me avoid the frustrations of traditional search** (ads, clutter, bias) so that I can have a cleaner, more direct information experience.

**Help me verify information quickly** so that I can feel confident in the accuracy of the data I am receiving.





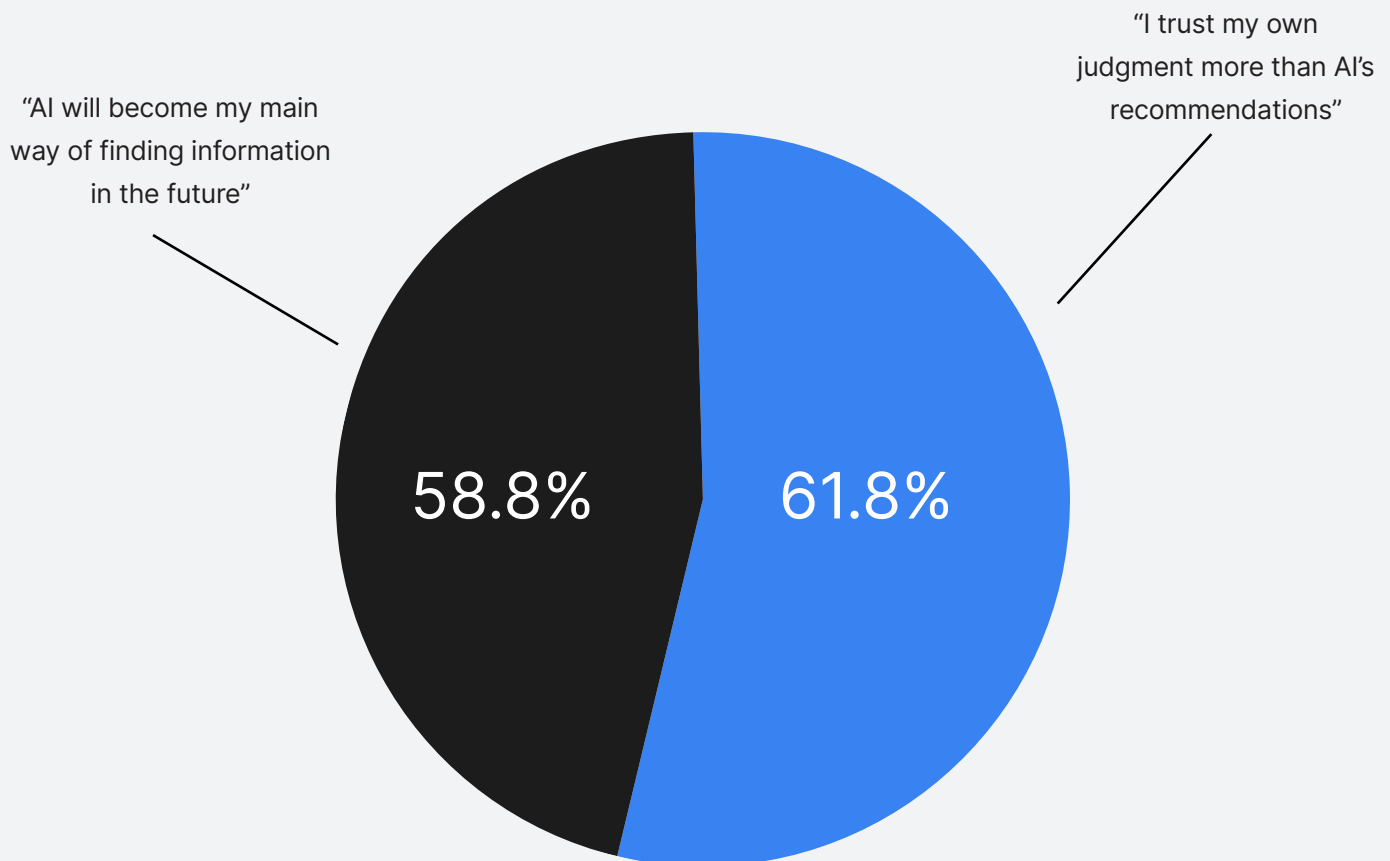
## Contradiction map

Here's a look at where stated desires clash with observed behaviors, highlighting key areas for strategic intervention.

**Trust in AI's unbiased nature is high, but the need to verify is higher.**

**AI for purchase decisions is common, despite overall lower trust in AI as an information source.**

"I trust my own judgment more than AI's recommendations" (61.8% agree), yet "AI will become my main way of finding information in the future" (58.8% agree).





# Consumer Search Habits

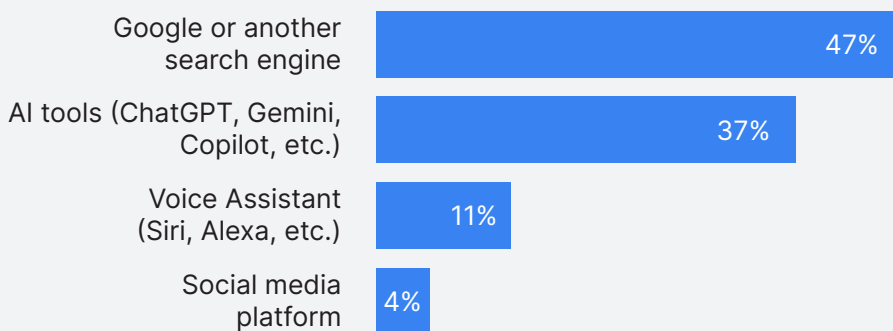
# People still trust search engines first for what's **current, local, and verifiable**.

## Each Generation Still Turns to Search Engines for “Proof”

Search engines remain the top choice for trustworthy details across all ages, but what people check varies.

**Gen Z** leans on traditional search most for reviews and prices (55%) and factual info (53%). **Millennials** follow closely, using it for reviews (49%), visuals (46%), and local info (44%). **Gen X** shifts toward news (50%) and images (47%), while **Boomers** rely on search engines for factual clarity (50%) and news updates (46%). Academic use stays low for everyone, showing traditional search still wins when people want quick, reliable proof.

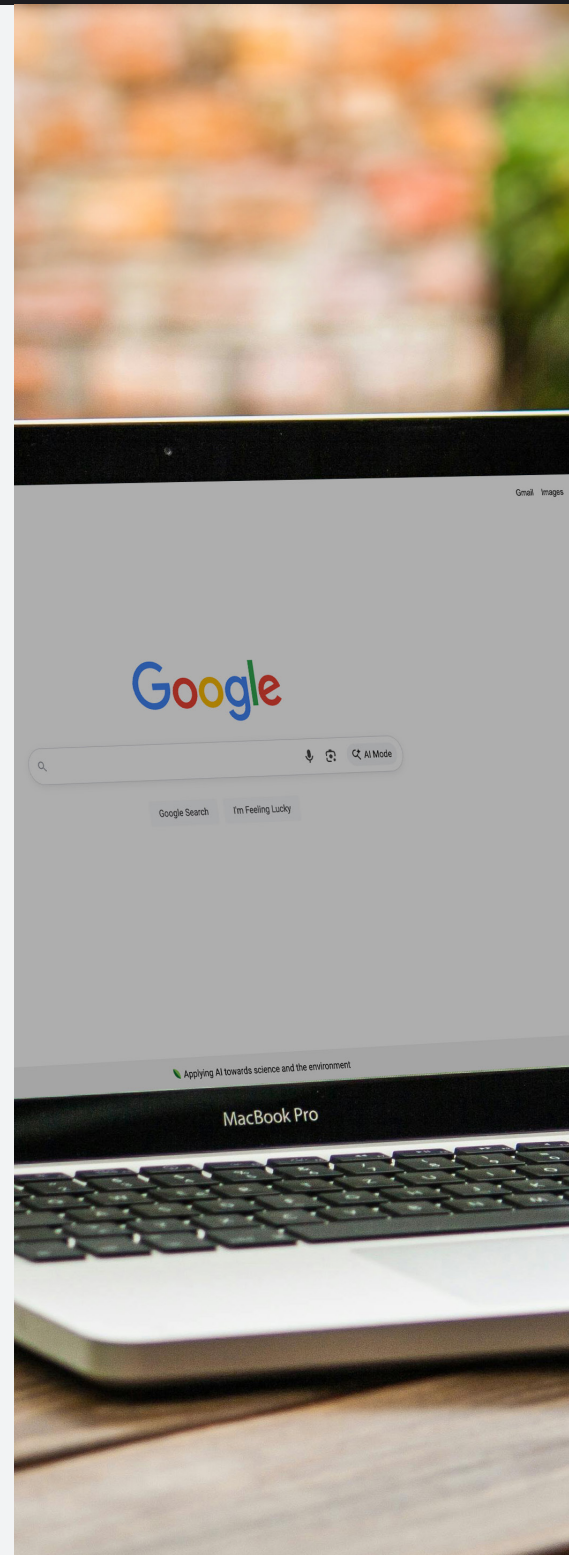
## The channels people start their search



## Information where search engines are preferred



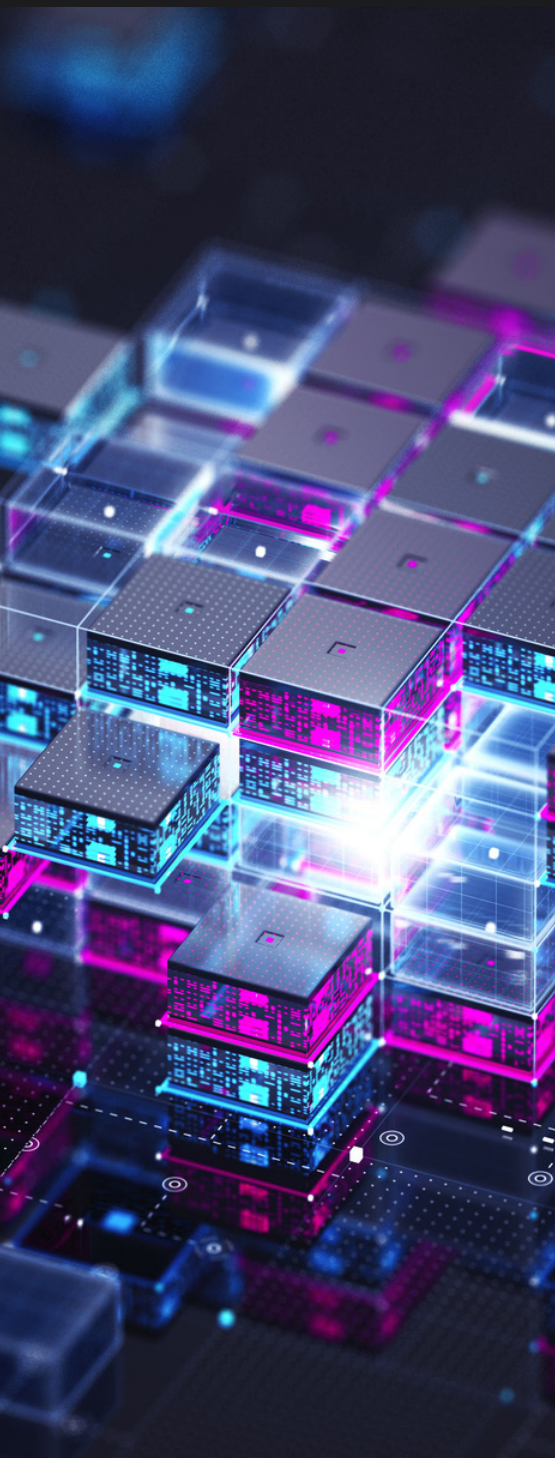
Q: When you have a question or need information, which do you typically try first?  
Q: Which of these do you still prefer traditional search engines?



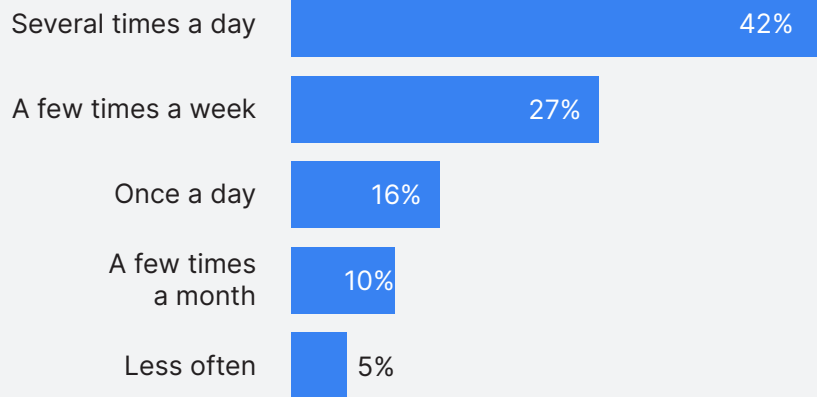
# AI is the go-to when people want faster answers and fewer headaches.

## AI Wins the Moments Where Search Slows People Down

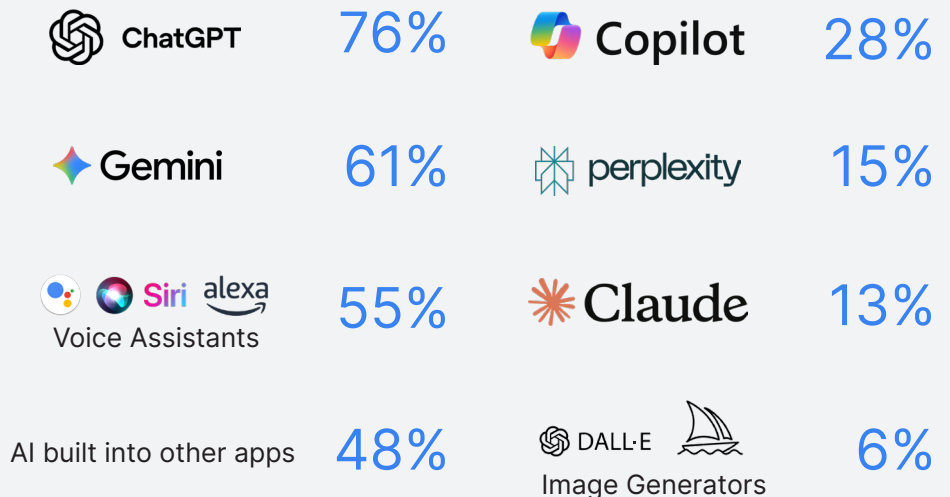
People turn to AI in the exact moments when search engines make things harder. Most people want a quick, summarized answer (62%) instead of clicking through pages. Many use it to learn something new (40%) or to brainstorm ideas (35%) without digging through links. Others are simply tired of scrolling (26%) or want to avoid ads and sponsored results (22%). Together, these habits show a clear pattern: When people want fast, simple, straight-to-the-point help, AI is becoming the tool they reach for first.

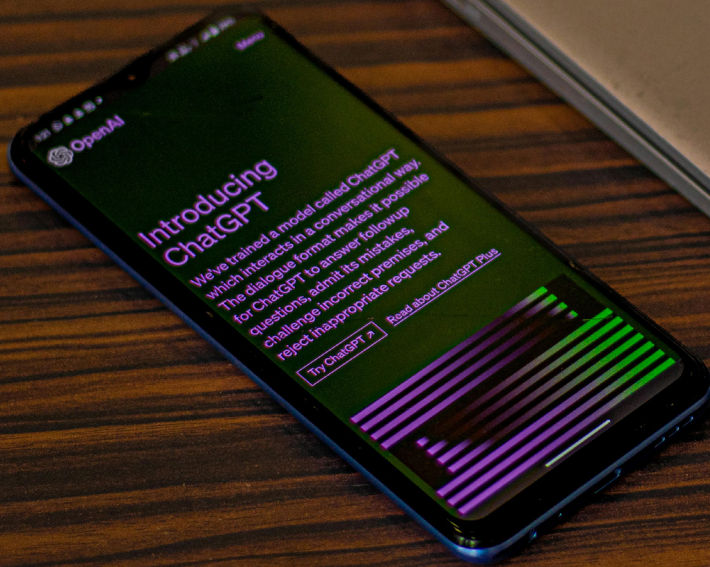


### AI use frequency

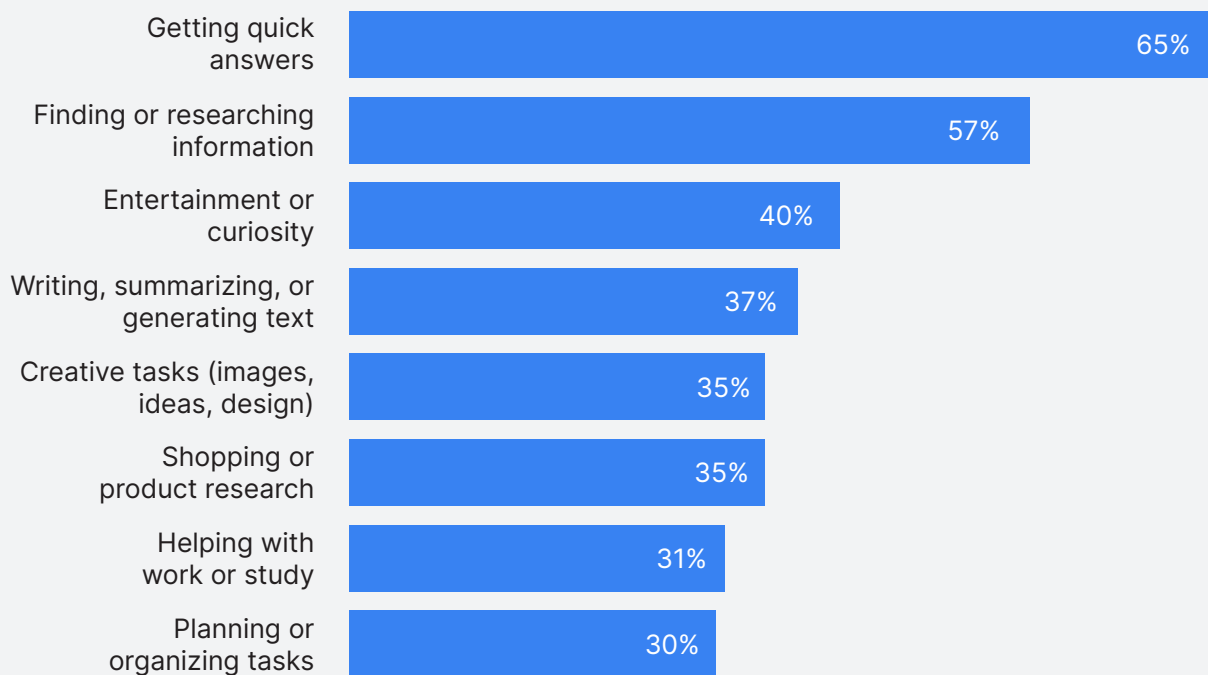


### Most used AI tools in the last 6 months





## Primary use of AI Tools



**Gen Z** leans hardest into conversational AI, with ChatGPT (87%) and voice assistants (64%) dominating their usage.

**Millennials** are the most multi-platform, pairing ChatGPT (80%) with strong adoption of Google Gemini (65%), making them the heaviest Gemini users.

**Boomers** differ significantly, with Microsoft Copilot (54%) surpassing ChatGPT (50%) as their leading tool.

Q: Which of the following AI tools or assistants have you personally used in the past 6 months?

Q: How often do you use AI tools overall?

Q: What do you primarily use AI tools for?

Q: In which situations do you use AI instead of Google or another search engine?

# AI feels helpful and efficient, but accuracy and privacy still make people nervous.

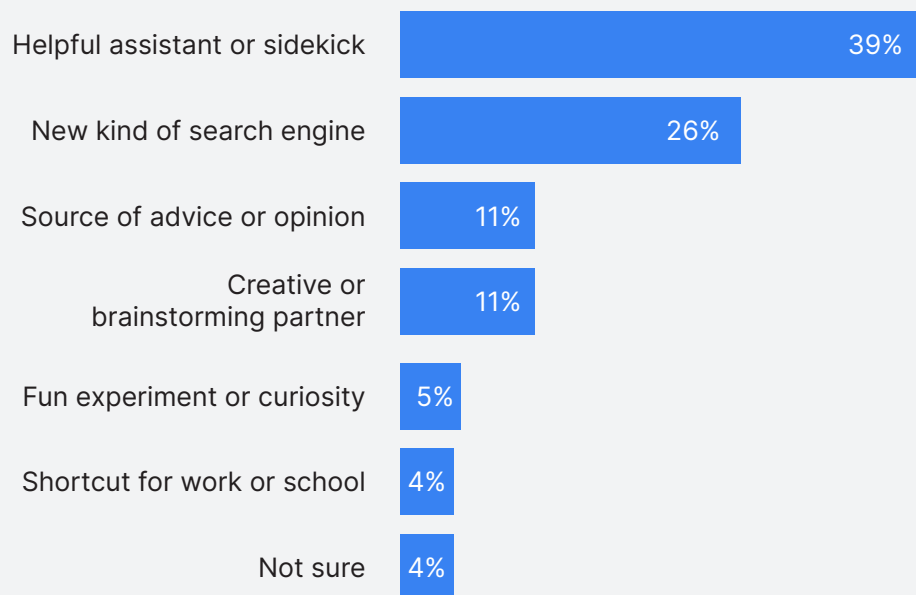
## Google Annoys People, But AI Worries Them

People get frustrated with traditional search mostly because of the experience. They're tired of too many ads, too many sponsored links, and having to scroll forever to find a real answer. Many say the results feel repetitive, unreliable, or just low-quality, which makes searching feel like extra work.

AI brings different worries. Instead of being annoyed, people feel unsure or even nervous. Their biggest fear is getting wrong or misleading answers, and many worry about how much personal data AI collects and who can see it. Others fear AI taking jobs or becoming too powerful over time.

SERP can be messy, but AI can feel risky, and that difference shapes when and how people choose to use each one.

### How people think of AI tools



### Emotional Drivers of AI Use

46%

Productive/Efficient

43%

Curious/Inspired

34%

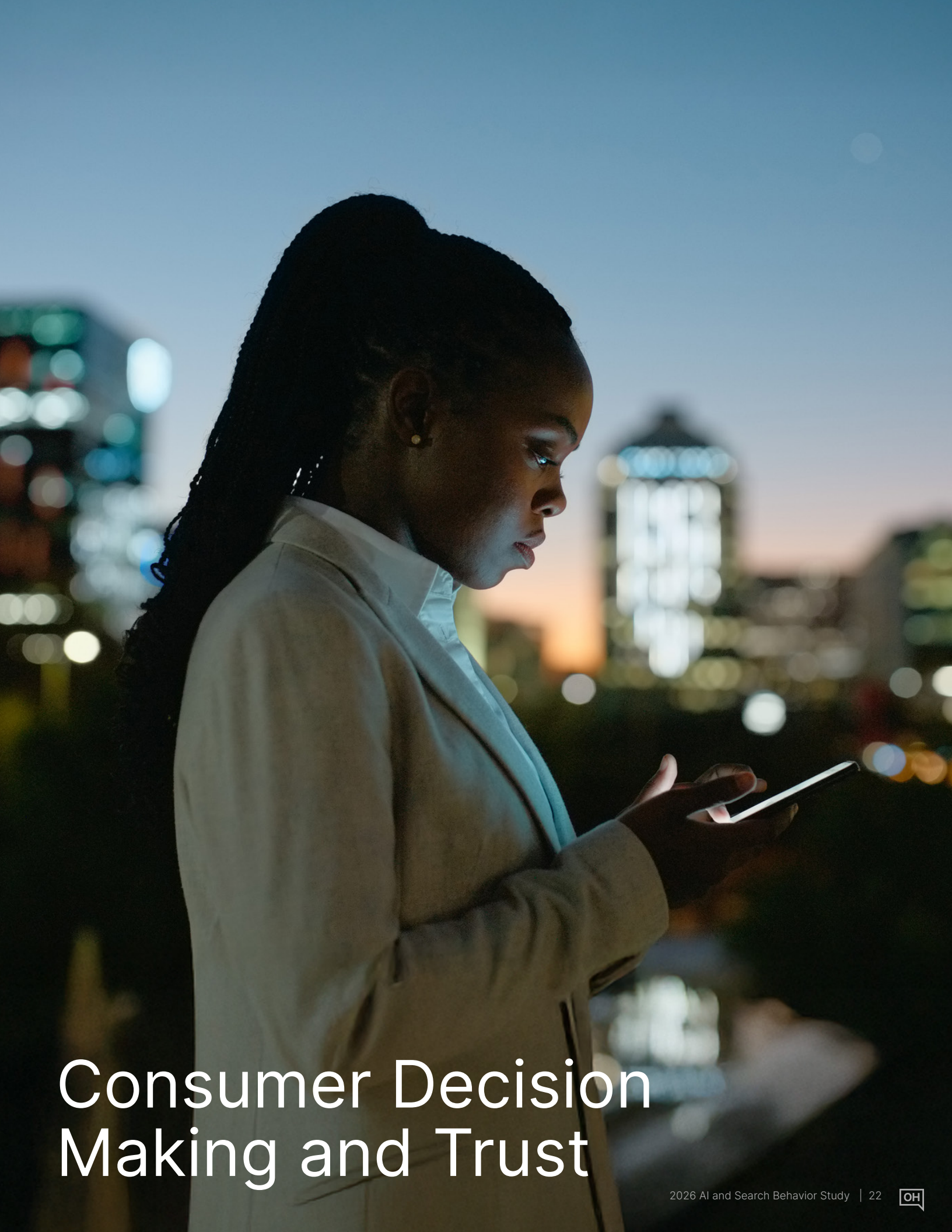
Entertained/Amused

Q: What's your biggest concern with using Google/search engines?

Q: What's your biggest concern or frustration with using AI tools?

Q: Which of the following best describes how you think of AI tools?

Q: When you use AI tools, how do you usually feel?



# Consumer Decision Making and Trust



## Trust across different channels

With 77% trusting friends and family most, it's clear that people still anchor truth in human relationships. What stands out is how close Google is at 75%, which suggests that search engines have become almost like an everyday trusted friend for quick facts and guidance. Just behind that, 68% trust both AI tools and brand websites, a pairing that reveals something new: People are beginning to see smart assistants and official sources as two parts of the same toolkit, with one offering clear explanations and the other providing authoritative information. Together, these patterns show how trust is spreading across both human and digital helpers in ways that feel more blended than ever before.

	Completely Trust	Somewhat Trust	Neutral	Somewhat Distrust	Completely Distrust
AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, etc.)	21%	47%	24%	7%	2%
Google or other search engines	<b>19%</b>	<b>56%</b>	19%	4%	1%
Social media (TikTok, Reddit, YouTube)	16%	30%	29%	19%	6%
Brand or company websites	19%	49%	25%	5%	1%
News sites or media outlets	13%	45%	27%	11%	4%
Friends / family recommendations	<b>27%</b>	<b>50%</b>	21%	2%	<1%

Q: How much do you trust the information you get from each source?

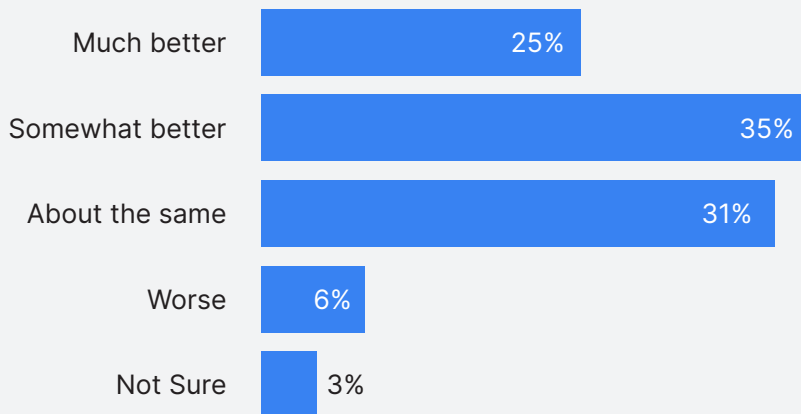
# AI sounds smart, but people want proof

## AI Isn't Trusted Enough to Stand Alone

Most people feel good about using AI, but they still don't take its answers at face value. A full 80% say they feel "very" or "somewhat confident" that AI gives unbiased information, yet an even bigger share (85%) say they "always," "often," or "sometimes" double-check what it tells them. And while most people fall into that cautious-but-comfortable middle zone, there's still a meaningful edge of concern: 16% aren't very confident, and 3% don't trust AI's fairness at all.

Taken together, the numbers show that AI is useful enough for everyday help, but not yet trusted enough to be the final word. People lean on it, but they still keep one hand on the brake.

## Quality of AI Answers vs. Search Engines



Q: Overall, how does the quality of answers from AI tools compare to Google or other search engines?

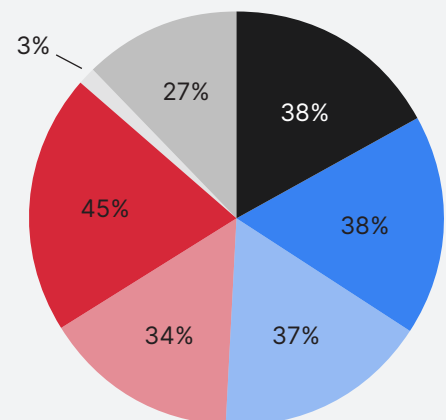
Q: What helps you trust an AI answer?

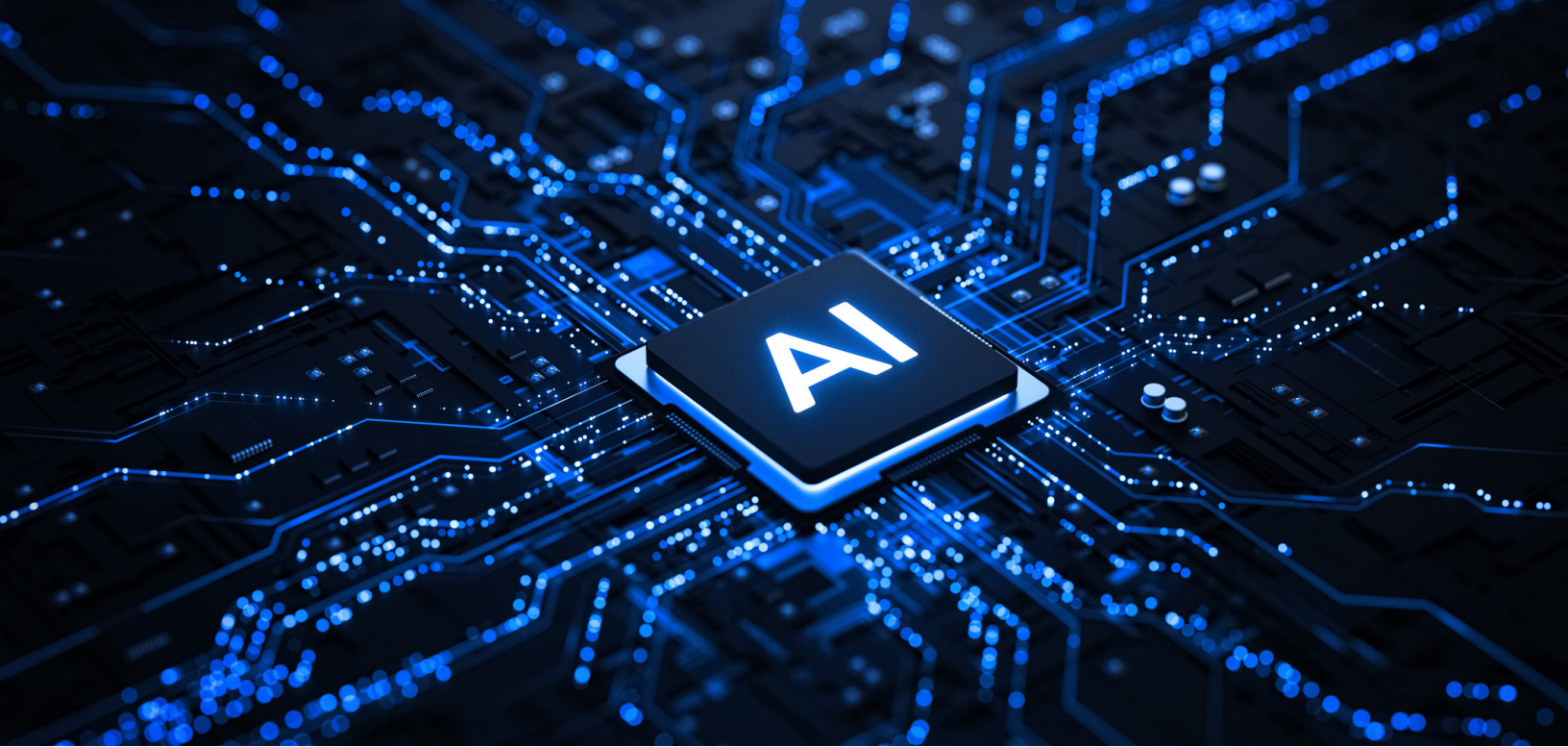
## Factors that help people trust AI answers

Q: How often do you double-check AI answers?

Q: How confident do you feel that AI tools give you unbiased information?

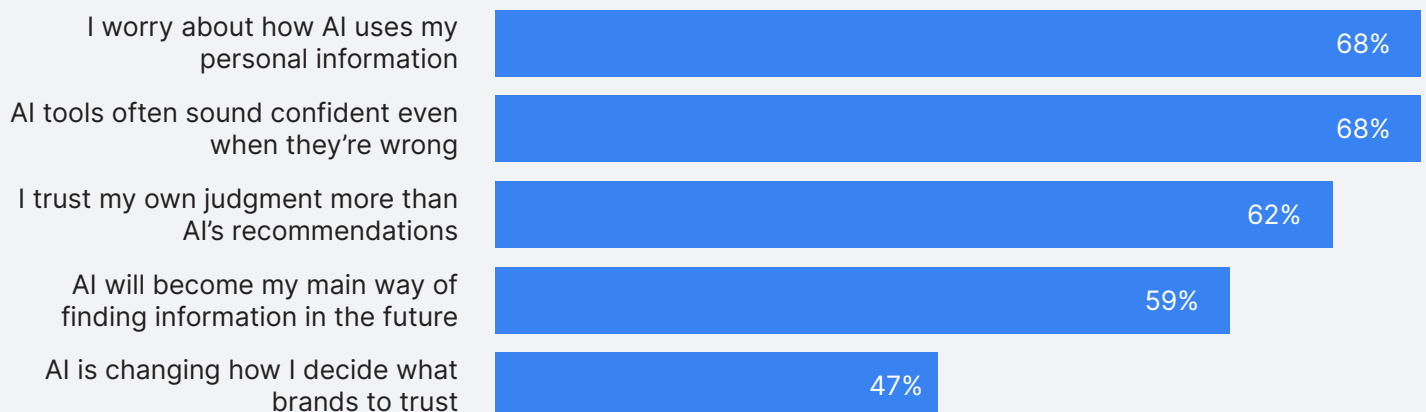
- Aligns with what I already know
- I've verified it before
- Sounds confident or clear
- Explains reasoning
- Other
- Recommendations personalized
- Recognize sources cited





## Optimistic about AI's future, anxious about its risks

People are excited about using AI, but they also feel uneasy about it in some important ways. **Many worry about how their personal information is being used**, and plenty notice that **AI often sounds confident even when it might be wrong**. Even with those concerns, people still expect AI to play a much bigger role in their lives and believe it will **shape how they search for information in the future**. At the same time, they want to stay in charge of their decisions and **trust their own judgment more than anything AI recommends**. And while AI is already influencing how people see and choose brands, many are not fully aware of how much that influence is growing. Overall, people are open to using AI more, but they still want to keep both hands on the wheel.



Q: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

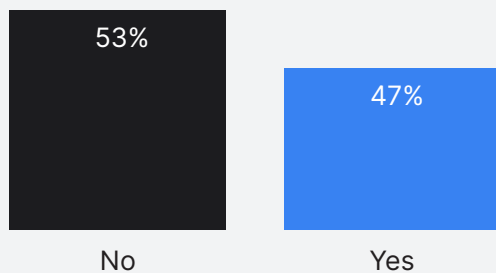


# AI's Role in Shopping and Brand Discovery



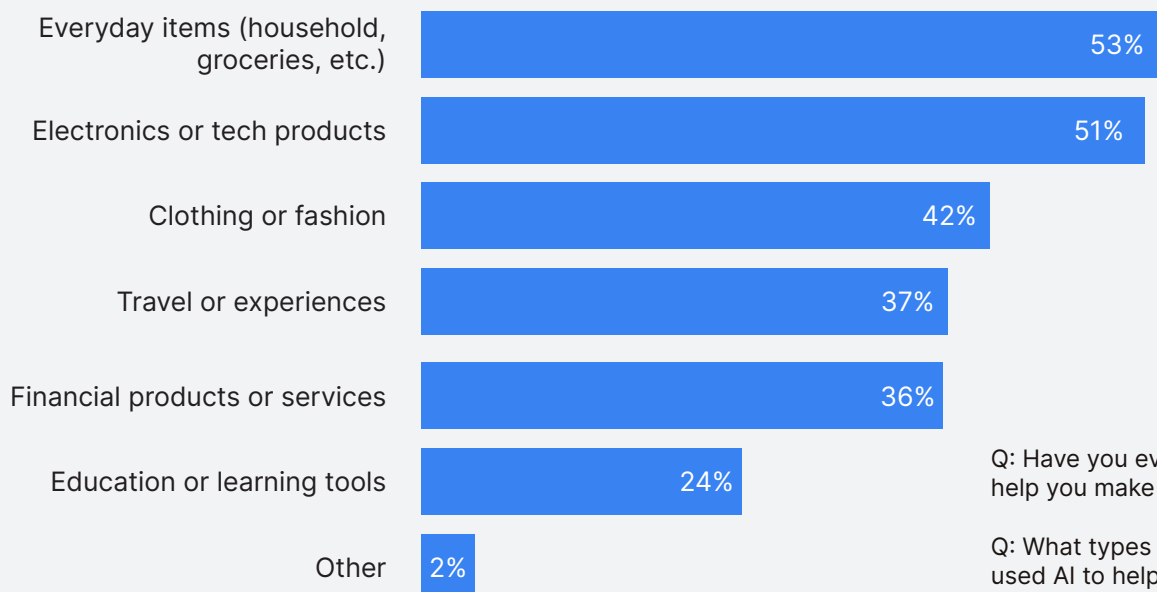
## AI is guiding what people buy, especially everyday items and tech.

### Made a purchase with help of AI



Younger people are more likely to buy something with help from AI, **with 56% of Gen Z and 55% of Millennials** saying they have done it.

### Types of Purchases



Q: Have you ever used an AI tool to help you make a purchase decision?

Q: What types of purchases have you used AI to help with?

# AI helps people shop smarter, but most still buy on the same big retail sites

## Traditional Retail Still Wins the Final Click

AI is becoming a real shopping assistant, with people using it for the practical parts of decision-making. The top tasks show exactly where it helps most: 56% rely on AI to find the best prices, 54% use it for product comparisons, and nearly half (48%) look to it for quick review summaries. Shoppers also turn to AI to break down product details or get personalized suggestions, making it a helpful shortcut before they buy.

But even after researching with AI, 52% still buy on Amazon or other major retailer sites, and 42% go directly to brand websites. Only about a third finish the purchase through an AI-provided link, and a similar share heads to a physical store instead.

AI strongly shapes how people research products, but the actual buying still happens in the same familiar places. For now, AI influences the decision, while retailers and brands close the sale.

### Type of help AI provided in purchase



### Purchase Channel

52%

Amazon or another retailer site

42%

Directly through a brand website

35%

Links provided by AI tool

32%

In a physical store

Q: What kind of help did AI provide in your purchase process?

Q: After using AI to research a product, where do you typically make the purchase?



Ai



Ai

## Consumer wants & desired changes

### How habits will change as AI becomes more common.

#### AI USE IS SET TO GROW

**63%** expect to use AI more next year, showing people are preparing for a bigger role in their daily routines.

#### SEARCH HABITS ARE ALREADY SHIFTING

**59%** believe AI will eventually become their main way of finding information, signaling a slow move away from traditional search engines.

#### PEOPLE WANT AI THAT CHECKS ITS OWN WORK

**50%** say the top improvement they want is better fact-checking and source citation.

#### FULL TASKS, NOT HALF HELP

**47.6%** expect AI to handle entire tasks on its own soon, not just offer suggestions.

#### PERSONALIZATION IS BECOMING A MUST

**33%** want AI to provide more tailored answers, making personalization a key expectation for the next wave of AI tools.

#### PEOPLE WANT AI TO WORK EVERYWHERE

**33%** say better app and device integration is a top priority, reflecting rising expectations for seamless AI across their digital lives.

#### TONE AND CONTEXT STILL NEED WORK

**31%** hope AI gets better at understanding human tone and nuance, suggesting people want AI to feel more natural and less robotic.

#### PEOPLE EXPECT TO RELY LESS ON SEARCH

With **63%** feeling positive about the rise of AI and most expecting smarter, more streamlined results, many already see themselves shifting away from Google or Bing as AI improves.

# The future of search

## SEARCH WILL SHIFT FROM LOOKING TO LETTING AI HANDLE IT

Consumers imagine a future where AI gathers, organizes, and presents what matters and reduces the effort of searching itself.

## PEOPLE WANT SEARCH TO FEEL CLEAN AND DIRECT

They want AI to skip the clutter and scrolling and deliver simple, clear answers without the ads and overload that make traditional search feel chaotic.

## AI WILL CHANGE DISCOVERY, NOT JUST ANSWERS

People expect searching to happen anywhere, with AI surfacing information across apps and devices rather than only inside a search bar.

## SEARCH IS BECOMING MORE CONVERSATIONAL

People picture asking natural questions and getting responses that feel more like guidance and less like machine output.

## PEOPLE EXPECT SEARCH TO BECOME MORE MULTI-MODAL

Many imagine a future where they can search using voice, images, screenshots, or video, not just typed keywords, which suggests a shift toward more flexible and intuitive ways of finding information.

## AI MAY COMPRESS SEARCH INTO A SINGLE STEP

Instead of researching, comparing, and clicking through sites, people expect AI to compile everything into one ready-to-use answer.

## THE LINE BETWEEN SEARCHING AND DOING WILL BLUR

People see AI not only answering questions, but also taking action, such as planning, booking, ordering, or organizing next steps automatically.

# Simple ways to win with AI

This study gives marketers and business leaders clear steps to keep up with how search is changing in an AI-first world. By focusing on clear information, strong brand trust, and smarter use of AI, you can meet what consumers expect and turn these changes into real advantages. These tips can help you show up better in AI answers, strengthen your search performance, and make your brand easier for people to understand and choose.

## Key steps you can use right away:

### MAKE YOUR INFO EASY FOR AI TO USE

Keep your product details clear and simple so AI can describe you correctly.

### BUILD TRUST WITH CLEAR FACTS

People double-check AI answers. Make sure your website and reviews match the truth.

### SHOW UP IN AI AND TRADITIONAL SEARCH

AI may come first, but Google still confirms the details. Keep your content clean and helpful in both places.

### KEEP THINGS SIMPLE

People like AI because it feels easy. Give them fast answers and less clutter.

### HELP AI NARROW THE CHOICE

People use AI to cut through options, not browse endlessly. Clarify your strongest benefits, ideal customer, and price/value cues so AI can recommend your product and help customers decide faster.

### GET READY FOR AN AI-FIRST WORLD

More people will use AI as their main search tool. Make sure your brand is clearly defined, frequently updated, and visible wherever AI pulls information.

# Let Eight Oh Two help you take action!

Eight Oh Two specializes in strategies that help brands stay ahead as search evolves. As experts in AI-driven search and performance marketing, we turn insights like these into clear plans that improve visibility, build trust, and support both AI and traditional search channels.

Contact us today to create a custom plan that helps your brand win in the new world of AI-powered search.



[eightohtwo.com](http://eightohtwo.com) | [hello@eightohtwo.com](mailto:hello@eightohtwo.com) | (802) 681-4329

