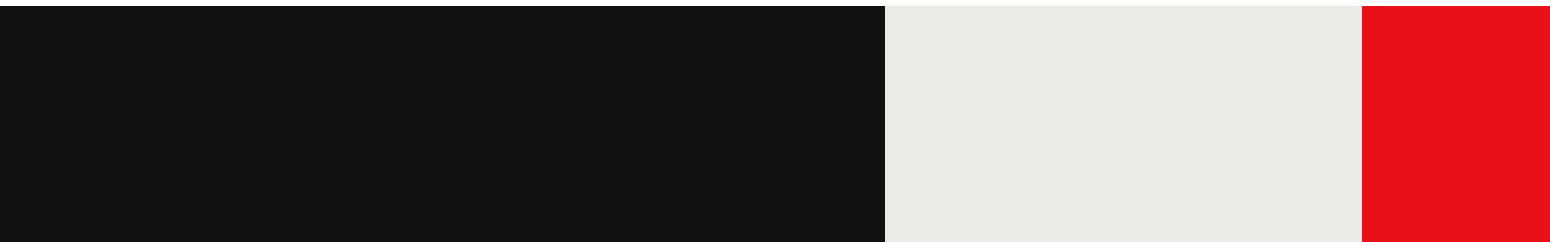



# 5 key stats on AI's role in the customer journey

Article



Consumers are exploring AI-driven shopping tools, but interest varies by application. Image-based item searches and [holiday](#) deal assistance are gaining traction, but trust issues and preferences for human customer service agents still pose challenges. Brands must ensure their AI tools address consumer needs, provide transparency, and enhance personalization to build trust and drive adoption.

Here are five key stats on AI's role in the consumer journey.

## 1. Consumers are interested in some AI shopping tools

**Key stat:** Over half (55%) of US adults are at least somewhat interested in using AI for an image-based item search, the top use case for AI-driven online shopping tools, according to a September 2024 survey from EMARKETER and CivicScience.

- Consumers are least interested in AI-powered personal shopping assistants, per the survey.
- However, lack of interest hasn't stopped retailers like [Amazon](#) or [Walmart](#) from building their own AI-powered assistants.

**What it means:** Consumers are choosy about using AI for browsing and buying. Brands using AI shopping tools must ensure they benefit shoppers or solve their pain points (like seeing an item in real life and finding it online via image search).

## 2. Consumers look to AI for holiday help

**Key stat:** 40% of US holiday shoppers are using generative AI to find the best deals for specific items (the No. 1 use for the technology this holiday season), according to Boston Consulting Group.

- Salesforce estimated AI would drive \$61 billion in holiday sales over Cyber Five this year, 19% of total global Cyber Five sales.
- Since the beginning of October, digital retailers using genAI and AI agents grew their average order value by 7% (\$117) compared with those without the technology (\$109).

**What it means:** The holiday season is highly competitive. Brands leveraging AI to help consumers do product research or price comparisons may gain an advantage over competitors without AI.

## 3. AI can improve personalization and reduce out-of-stocks

**Key stat:** 93% of US ecommerce decision-makers say AI helps to personalize their advertising and marketing efforts, while 91% say it helps with forecasting and predicting demand, according to August 2024 data from Commercetools.

- Out-of-stocks are the top pain point US adults face while shopping in-store, according to February 2024 data from the Path to Purchase Institute in conjunction with Great Northern In-Store.

- The personalization feature most valued by consumers in the US and Europe is timely reminders by text or email about relevant products/services, per a February 2024 survey from Econsultancy and Adobe.

**What it means:** The more personalized and easy the shopping [experience](#), the higher the likelihood of consumers making a purchase—and coming back. Companies can leverage AI internally and externally to provide a more tailored customer journey both in-store and online.

#### 4. Consumers are mixed on chatbots

**Key stat:** 41% of global consumers would rather use a [chatbot](#) than wait for a real person to answer their question, according to VML's The Future Shopper report. At the same time, 57% say they're less likely to buy from a business they know uses chatbots instead of people to resolve customer service issues.

- A third of US adults find AI-powered customer service chatbots sometimes or frequently helpful, while 43% say they are rarely or never helpful, according to EMARKETER and CivicScience.
- [Gen Z](#) and [millennial](#) consumers are most likely to prefer to use chatbots for customer service purposes on both mobile and the web, according to a Genesys survey conducted by Savanta in March 2024.

**What it means:** Chatbots are crucial to the customer journey as they can provide information on everything from store hours to shipping status.

- As AI evolves, chatbots will handle increasingly complex situations, freeing up customer service employees for other tasks.
- However, there should always be human oversight and the option for customers to chat with a live agent if preferred.

#### 5. AI agents could speed up the purchase process

**Key stat:** 70% of consumers worldwide are likely or very likely to use genAI agents to purchase flights for them, while 65% say they would let genAI agents book hotels/resorts for them, according to December 2023 data from Accenture.

- Purchasing consumer electronics rounds out the top three categories in which consumers would use genAI agents.
- Groceries and snacks are at the bottom of the list, though 45% of consumers are still open to the idea.

**What it means:** Consumers are generally ready to let AI do the hard work for them, especially when it comes to travel-related purchases. But for other categories, particularly food and medicine, they may want more control over the purchase process.

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