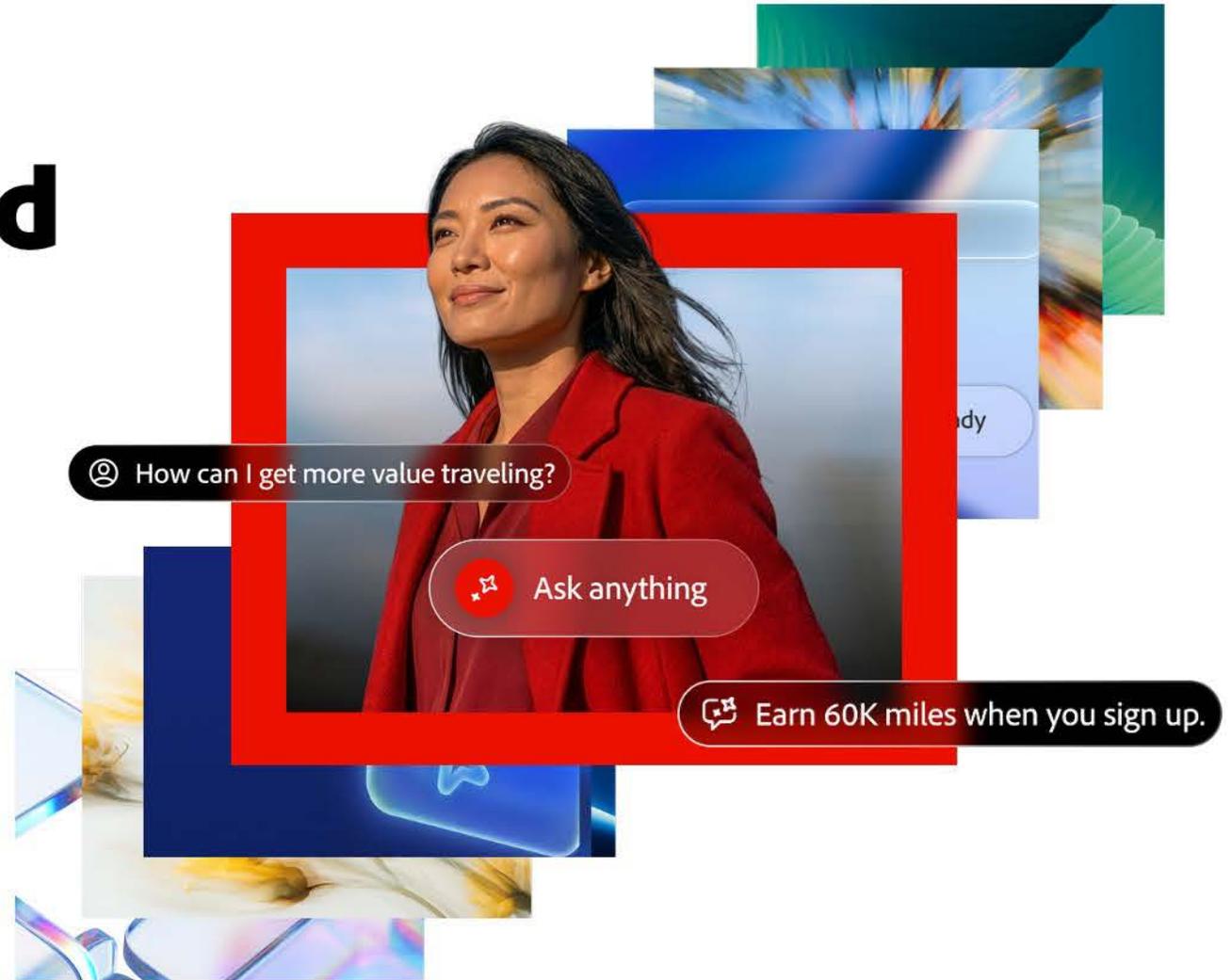


2026 CX Trends: Personalization and Customer Comfort with AI



Adobe

Today's speakers



Lindsay Morris

Principal Content Strategist
Adobe



Adam Justis

Vice President,
Solution Marketing and
Evangelism
Adobe



Vivek Pandya

Director,
Adobe Digital Insights
Adobe



Neil Letchford

Vice President of
Digital Engineering
Virgin Atlantic

Agenda

Top CX trends with AI for 2026

In conversation with Virgin Atlantic: Elevating experiences through human-centric AI

Audience Q&A

Top CX trends with AI for 2026



Adam Justis

Vice President,
Solution Marketing and Evangelism
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Vivek Pandya

Director,
Adobe Digital Insights
Adobe

Which source do you use most for information, purchases, or recommendations? (multiple choice)

A

Search engines
(Google,
Bing, etc.)

B

Social media

C

Friends, family,
word-of-mouth

D

AI-powered
platforms
(Chat GPT,
Microsoft,
Copilot, etc.)

E

Company
or brand
websites

"Every great evolution in marketing has a spark — the moment when bold ideas and technology come together — and right now that spark is AI."

– Rachel Thornton, Enterprise CMO, Adobe

2026 Adobe AI and Digital Trends report

- 16th annual *Adobe AI and Digital Trends* research in partnership with Oxford Economics
- 3,000 executives and practitioners and 4,000 customers surveyed
- Insights and customer responses on how organizations are using AI to capture customer interest, build brand loyalty, and augment CX workflows



Regions:

North America, Latin America, Europe, APAC, and the Middle East



Industries:

Financial Services and Insurance, Retail and Consumer Goods, High Tech, Media and Entertainment, Healthcare, Public Sector, and others



Business roles:

Practitioners: Managers, Team leads
Director-level: Directors, Senior directors
Executives: VPs, SVPs, and C-suite



Business size:

\$250 million to \$10 billion or more

CX trend #1

**Customer behavior has
crossed a tipping point.**

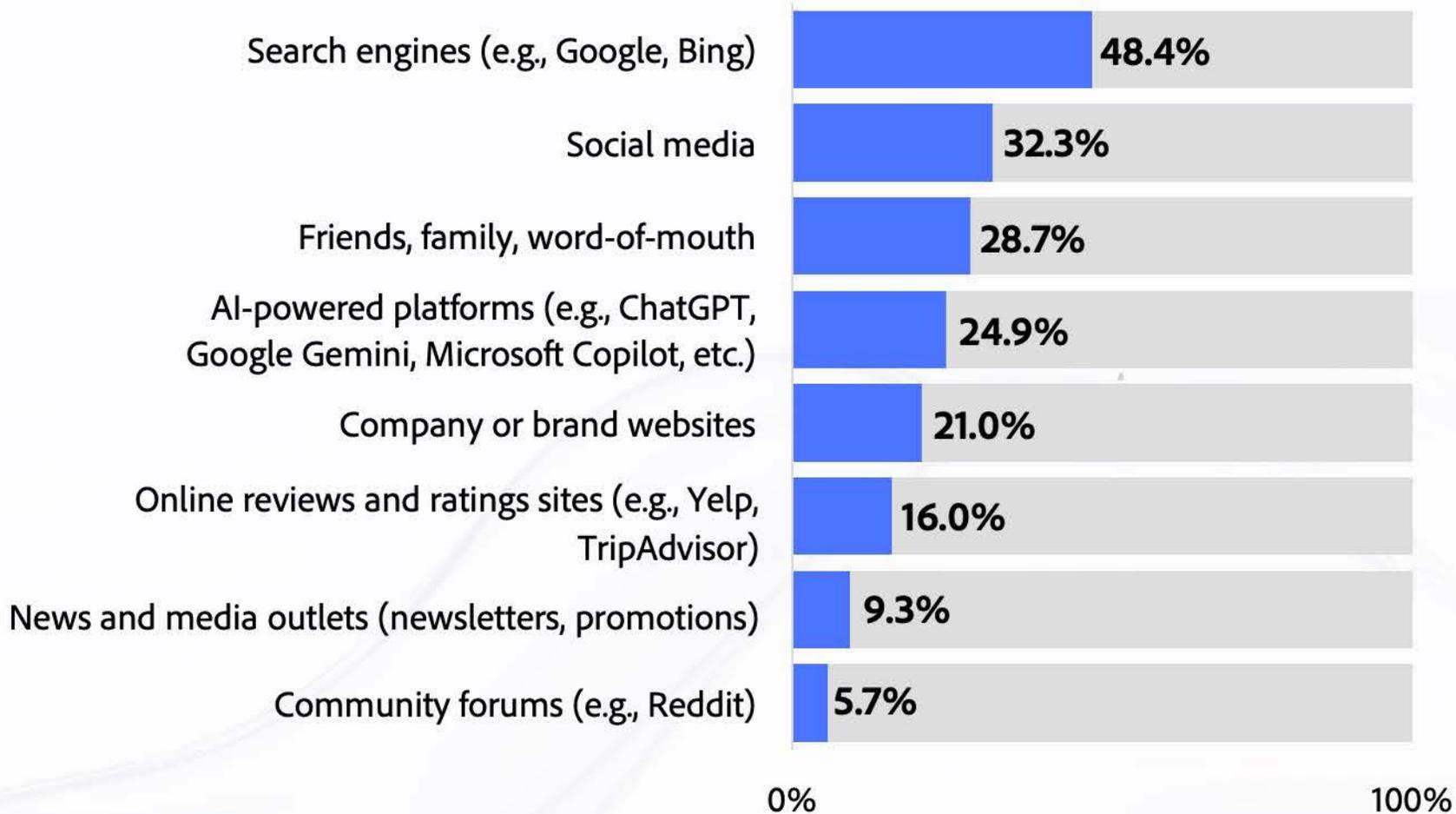
Customer behavior has crossed a tipping point, with greater reliance on AI-powered platforms

25% of customers now cite **AI-powered platforms** like ChatGPT as their top research tool, more popular than other sources, including **brand websites**, online reviews and ratings, and news and media outlets.

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey

For most, classic search is still the first stop, but a quarter now prefer AI-powered platforms over brand websites

Q. Which of the following sources do you use most often when searching for information, making purchase decisions, or finding recommendations?
(Select up to two)



2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey, Q10, n=4000

Beyond research, many customers value AI's role in routine interactions

- 48% of customers say they would use AI to get **personalized** product recommendations.
- 44% would rely on it for instant **customer service.**

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey

Adobe Digital Insights: AI-driven traffic acceleration

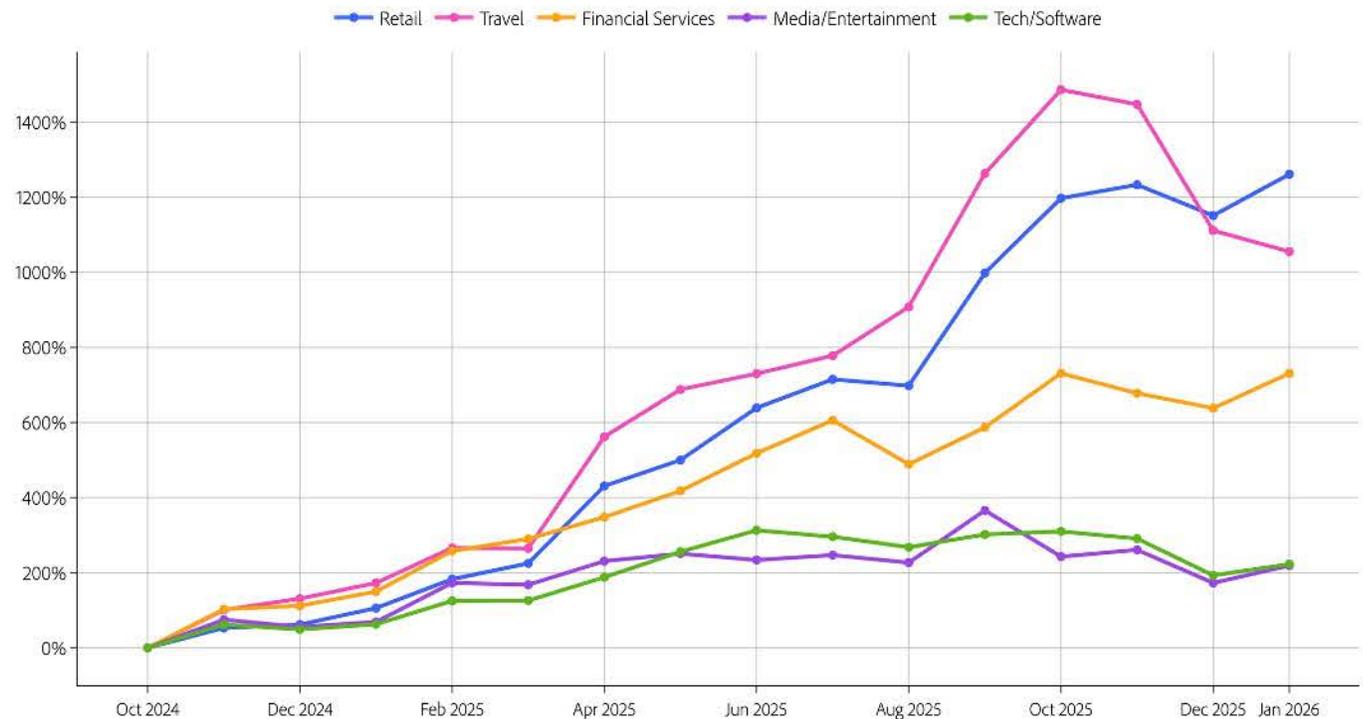
AI-driven traffic accelerates across all sectors in January 2026.

Every industry saw an AI traffic surge in January, led by retail at 560% year-on-year (YoY) growth.

- Retail: **+560% YoY**
- Travel: **+323% YoY**
- Banking: **+297% YoY**
- Financial Services: **+232% YoY**
- Tech/Software: **+98% YoY**
- Media/Entertainment: **+76% YoY**

Growth in AI visit share by industry

Adobe Digital Insights; October 2024 – January 2026



Adobe Digital Insights: Data based on analysis that covers over one trillion visits to U.S. sites and over 100 million SKUs.

Adobe Digital Insights: AI conversion 33% higher in January 2026

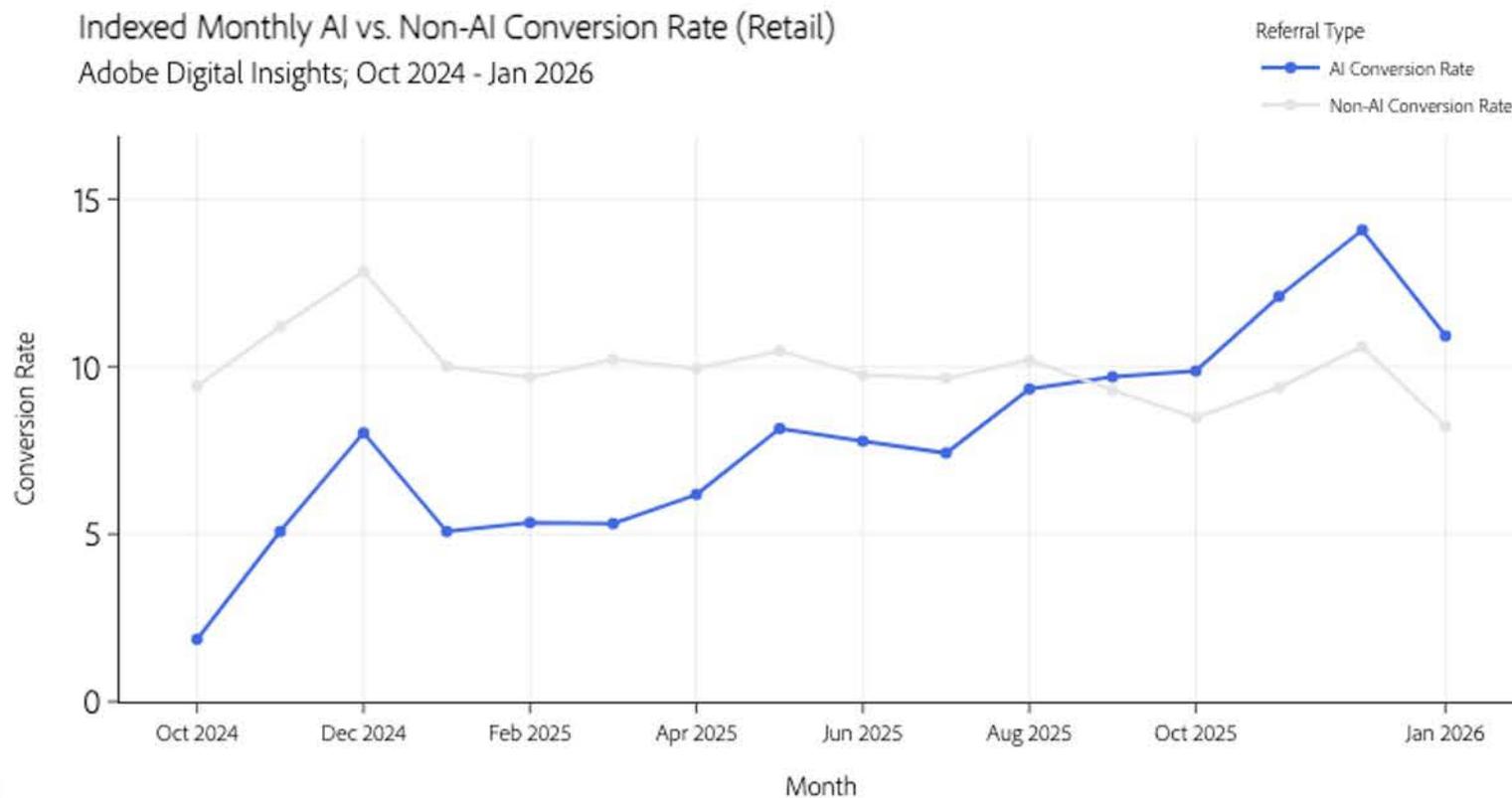
- In January 2026, AI referrals to retail sites continued to outperform, converting **33% more** than non-AI sources.
- The AI conversion advantage has held steady **above 30%** for three consecutive months (Nov–Jan), suggesting this is no longer a holiday spike but a durable shift.
- AI-referred visitors arrive with **clearer purchase** intent than those from traditional channels.

Adobe Digital Insights: Data based on analysis that covers over one trillion visits to U.S. sites and over 100 million SKUs.

Adobe Digital Insights: AI conversion rates surpassed non-AI conversion rates in 2025

Monthly AI versus non-AI conversion rate (Retail)

Adobe Digital Insights,
October 2024 – January 2026



Adobe Digital Insights: Data based on analysis that covers over one trillion visits to U.S. sites and over 100 million SKUs.

CX trend #1

Customer behavior has crossed a tipping point

What this means for your business



Make your brand properties feel like a natural next step from AI.



Expect customers to shop without ever visiting your site.



Be discoverable where AI owns the experience.

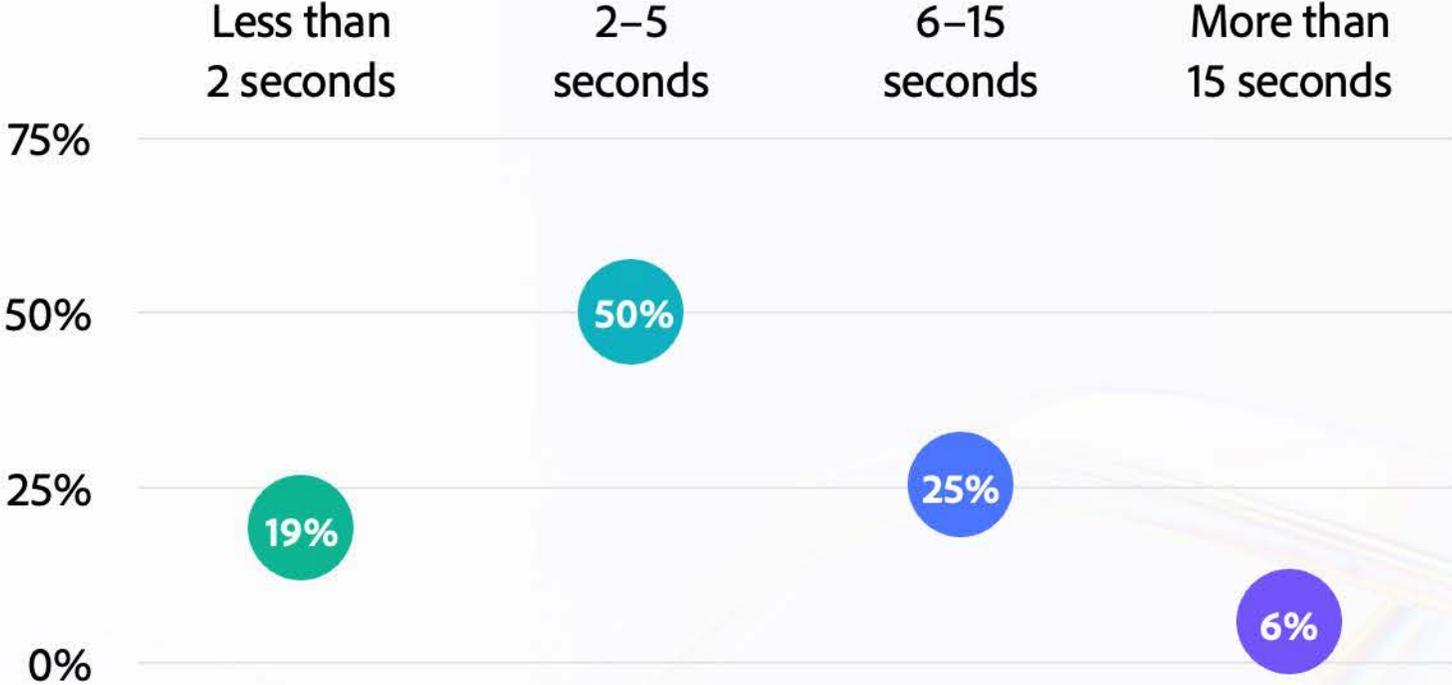


CX trend #2

**Tolerance for friction
has vanished.**

For half of the customers, brands have two to five seconds to capture attention

Q. How long does a brand typically have to capture your attention in a promotional email, ad, or social media post? (Select one)

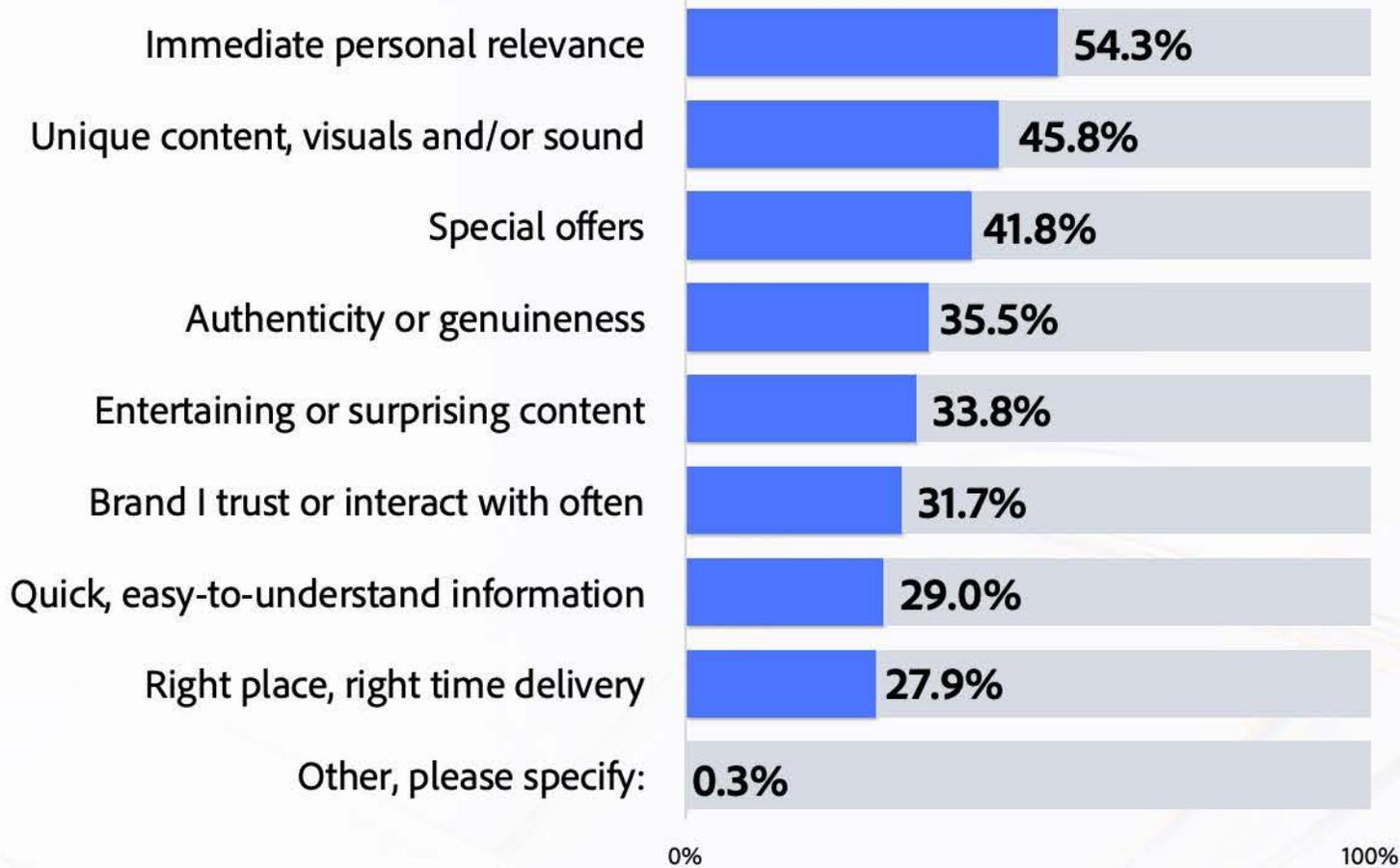


2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey, Q13, n=4000

Relevant and unique content keeps customers engaged

Q. Which three are most likely to keep you engaged with a brand's message or offer?
(Select top three)

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey, Q14, n=4000;



Adobe Digital Insights: Onsite null search rates for Retail down 23% since 2024

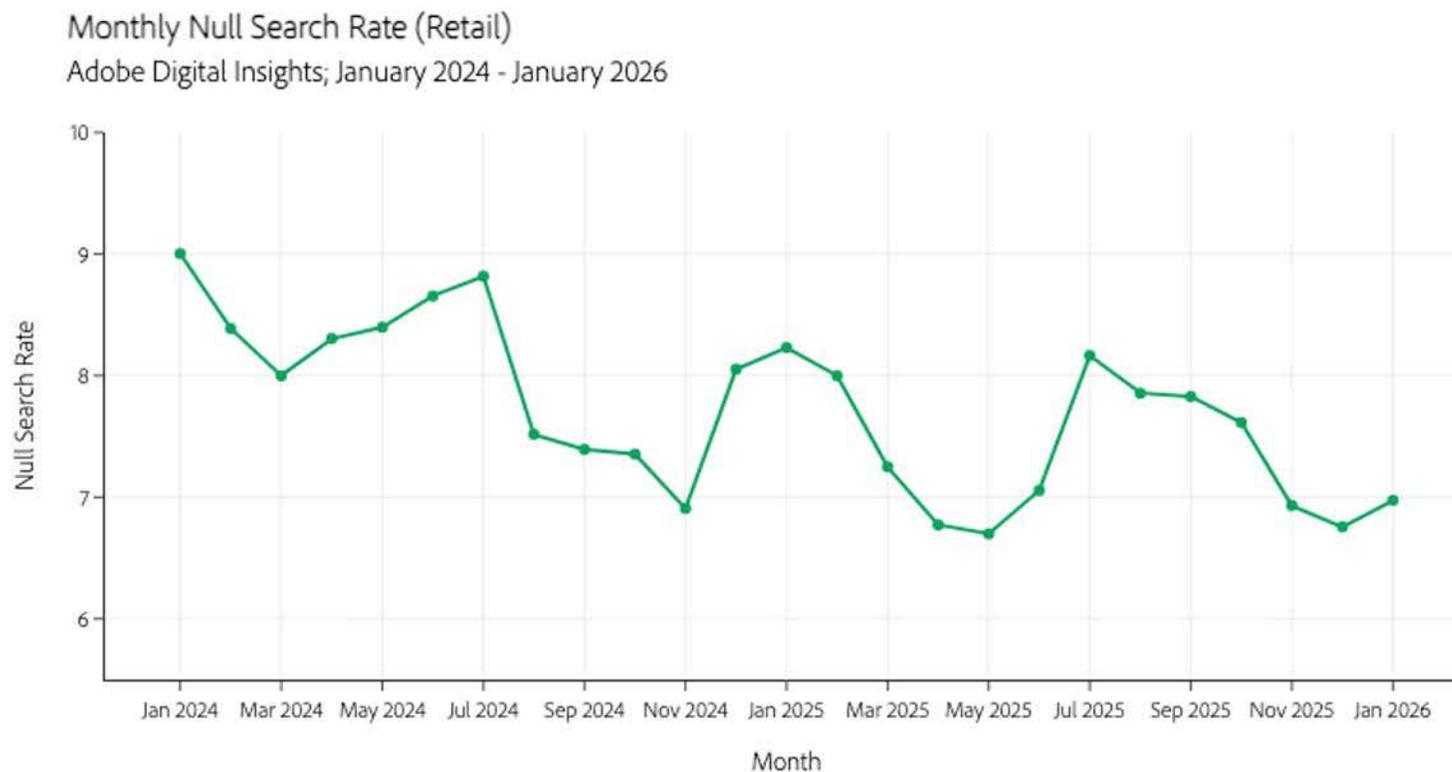
- Retail null search rates declined from **9% in Jan 2024** to **6.9% in Jan 2026**, representing a **23% decrease** over that period.
- Despite monthly fluctuations, the **overall trajectory shows a downward trend**, suggesting retail search experiences are returning **'no results' less often** over time.
- This improvement suggests stronger search relevance and product discoverability, supported by continued investments in **AI-assisted search** and smarter merchandising.

Adobe Digital Insights: Data based on analysis that covers over one trillion visits to U.S. sites and over 100 million SKUs.

Adobe Digital Insights: Overall trajectory for null search rates shows a downward trend

Monthly null search rate (Retail)

Adobe Digital Insights,
January 2024 – January 2026



Adobe Digital Insights: Data based on analysis that covers over one trillion visits to U.S. sites and over 100 million SKUs.

For most customers, trust in a brand is defined pragmatically

- **For 51% of customers** value for price is a top factor shaping trust — ahead of more traditional factors like brand reputation, consistency of experience, and values.
- **18% of customers** say they purchase only from brands they fully trust, even when more convenient or affordable alternatives exist. The rest are willing to explore.

To stand out, brands must balance price with trusted, personalized experiences that are also at the right place, right time.

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey

CX trend #2

The tolerance for friction has vanished

What this means for your business



Respond to customer intent in real time, across channels.



Use agentic AI to improve speed, relevance, and ROI.



Focus on speed and scale to stay competitive — they are no longer optional.

CX trend #3

**The race is on for the
agentic AI advantage.**

The ambitious leap toward agentic AI

About **1/3 of organizations** are prioritizing the implementation of emerging technologies like agentic AI over more widely adopted ones like generative AI.

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Business Survey

Organizations expect agentic AI to handle a majority of customer support

- **78%** of organizations believe that within the **next 18 months**, agentic AI will directly handle at least half of their **customer support interactions**.
- **70%** believe it will handle at least half of the **post purchase support**.

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Business Survey

Expectations are high, not just for customer-facing use cases, but for internal ones too

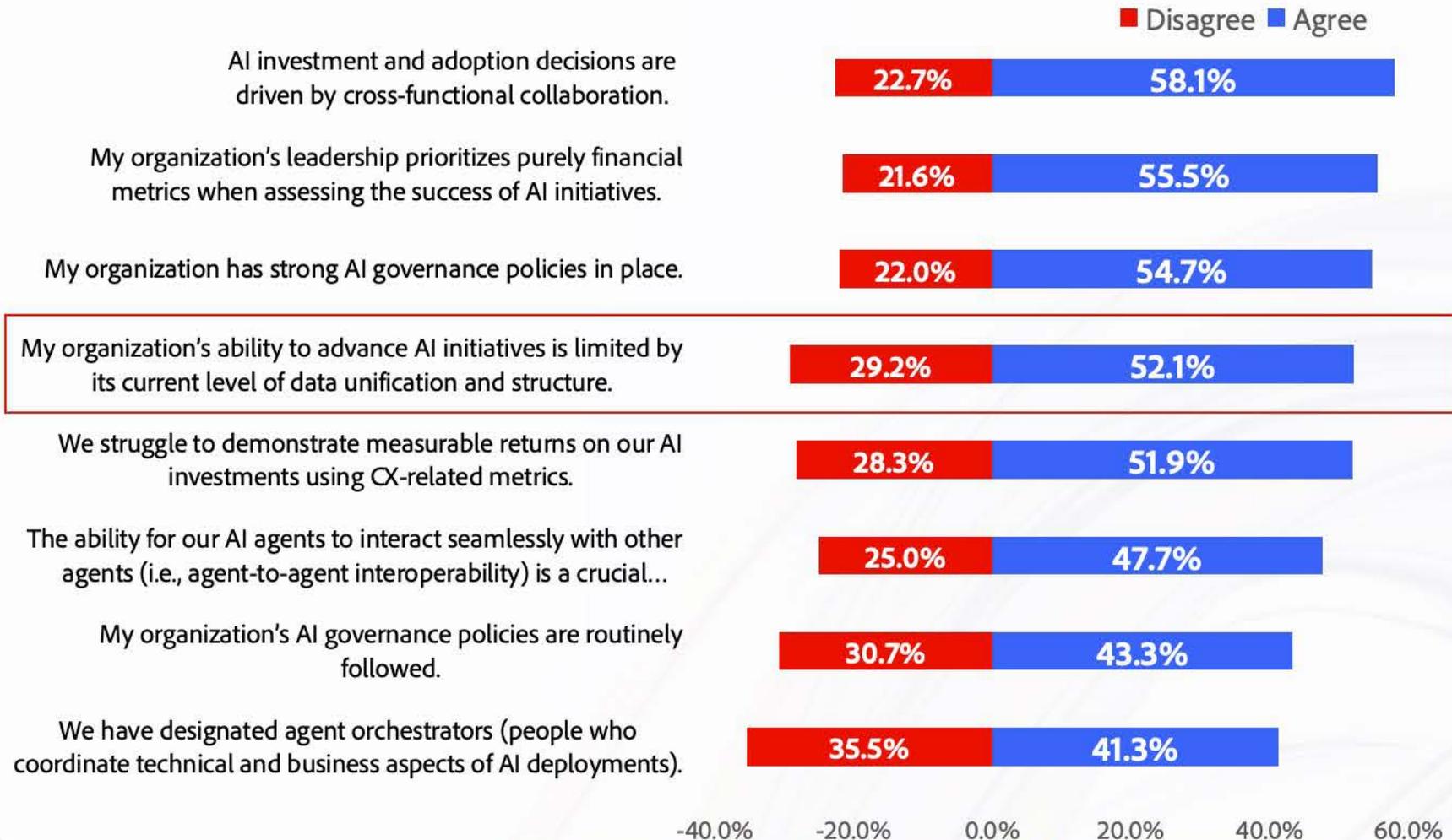
- **63%** of organizations expect agentic AI to free employees for more strategic and creative work.
- But less than **25%** of organizations are currently running agentic AI pilots.

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Business Survey

AI at large: Data unification is limiting AI progress for about half of the brands

Q. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your organization's AI use and strategy?
(Disagree versus agree)

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Business Survey, Q10, N=3000



The race is on for the agentic AI advantage

What this means for your business



Prioritize data readiness to meet the speed of AI adoption.



Use unified, trusted customer data to ensure agentic AI delivers.



Focus on responsible governance, measurable frameworks, and training.

CX trend #4

**The balance between
customer comfort and
AI is contextual.**

Overall, customer reactions to brand experiences that incorporate AI are positive

Customers are far more likely to agree than disagree with predictions about AI:

- Improving their customer experience: 56% agree
- Saving them time and money: 49% agree
- Delivering recommendations that are relevant: 46% agree

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey

But customer comfort with AI is a delicate balance

- **One in five customers** is not open to creating their own personal agent, and close to 40% have not even considered the idea.
- **49% of organizations** believe customers will eventually want AI agents to become their primary way of interacting with brands, but **just 19% of customers** agree with this prediction.

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Business and Consumer Survey

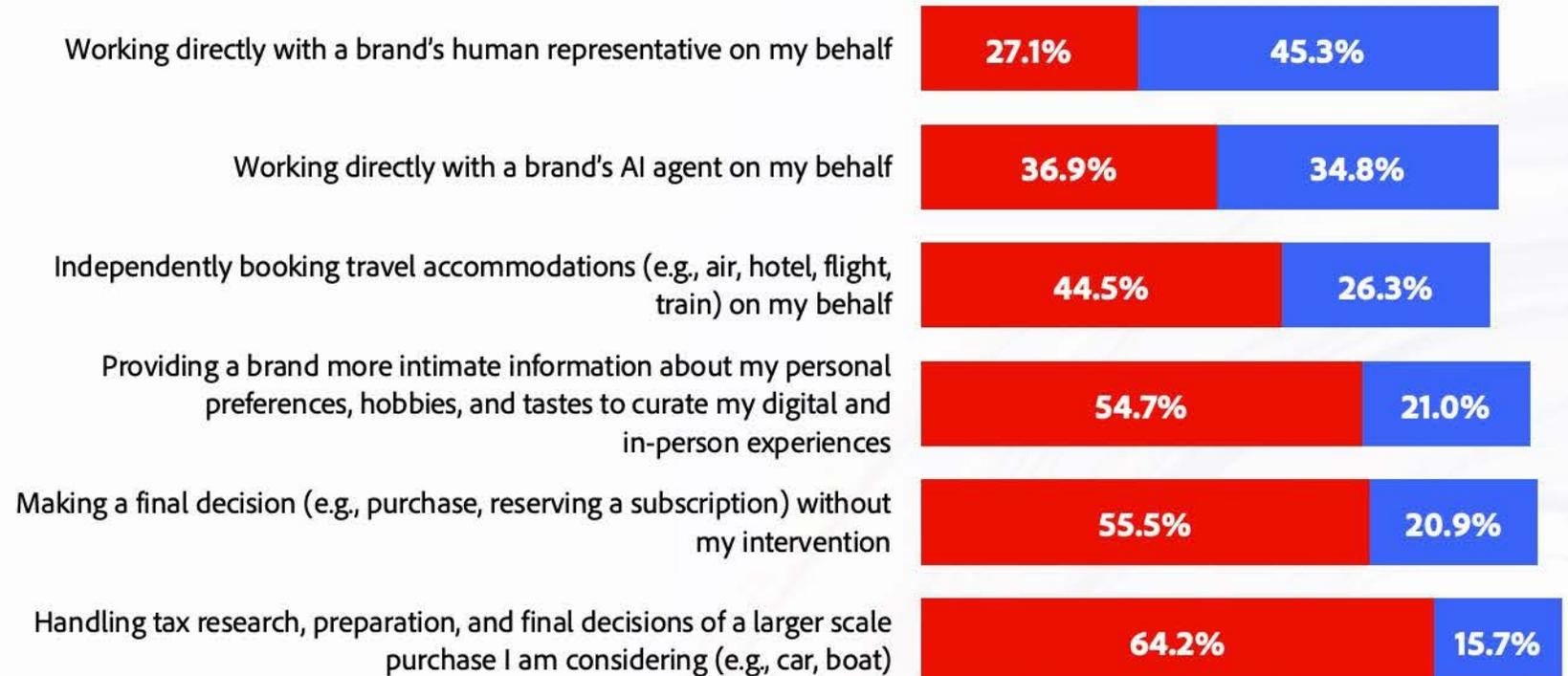
Customers are resistant to high-stakes and intimate AI experiences

Q. Imagine you had your own personal AI agent to help with everyday tasks (e.g., shopping, travel booking, customer service). How comfortable would you feel with your AI agent handling the following scenarios?

(‘Somewhat uncomfortable’ and ‘very uncomfortable’ vs. ‘somewhat comfortable’ and ‘very comfortable’ responses combined)

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey, Q22, N=3000

■ Uncomfortable ■ Comfortable



While comfort levels vary, a sizable minority is already open to more advanced use cases

39% of customers would not object to brands using AI to predict their emotions or mental state for marketing purposes.

2026 AI and Digital Trends, Consumer Survey

CX trend #4

The balance between customer comfort and AI is contextual

What this means for your business



Know your use cases for end-to-end agents — they aren't plug-and-play yet.



Plan thoughtfully rather than focusing on speed alone.



Evolve agents without sacrificing trust or consistency.

In conversation with Virgin Atlantic: Elevating experiences through human-centric AI



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Q&A



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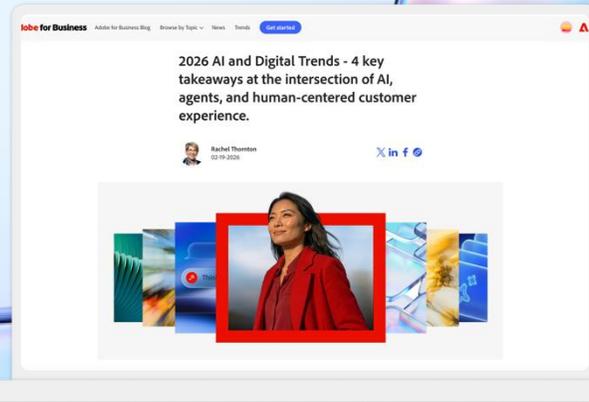


Neil Letchford

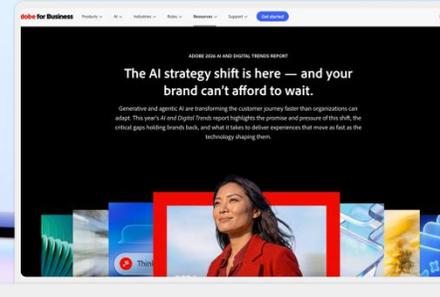
Vice President of Digital Engineering
Virgin Atlantic

Related resources

2026 AI and Digital Trends



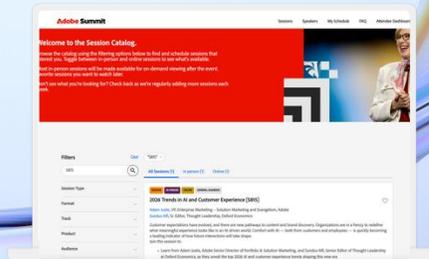
The AI strategy shift is here



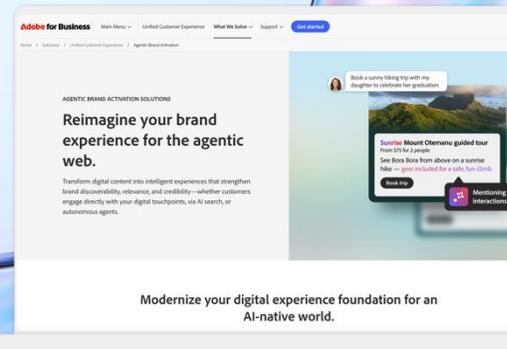
Quarterly AI traffic report



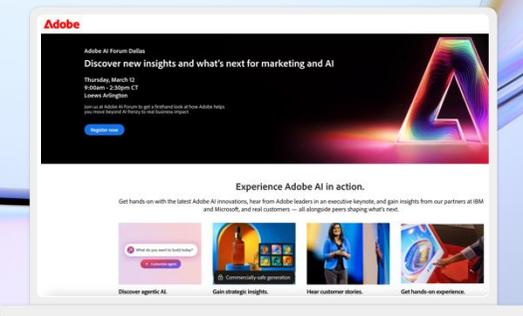
Adobe Summit | Building an Agentic System of Value: Trends Shaping the AI Enterprise



Reimagine your brand experience for the agentic web



Discover new insights and what's next for marketing and AI



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