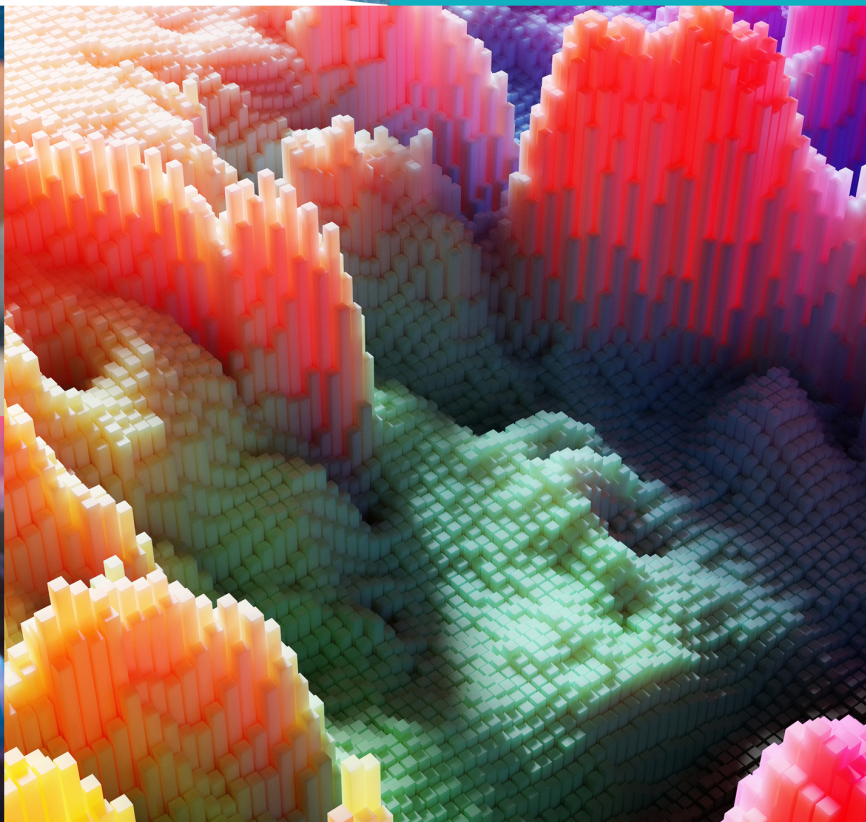
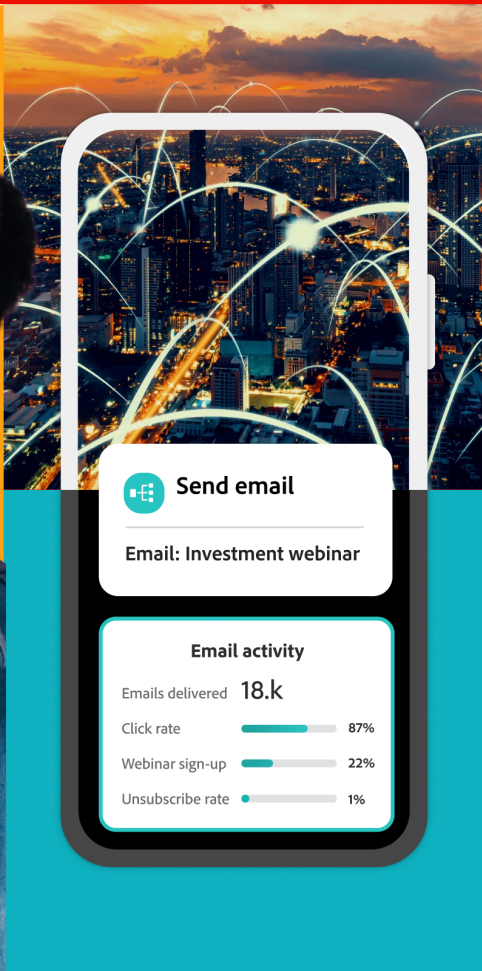


2025 AI and Digital Trends

Financial Services



Adobe Experience Cloud

● Econsultancy

Foreword

In this **Adobe 2025 AI and Digital Trends for Financial Services** report, we examine how the growing gap between customer expectations and experiences presents challenges for organizations to keep up and opportunities for them to stand out. Driven by the desire to give customers meaningful digital interactions that improve financial health, organizations are learning the value of connected data and AI-powered tools to capture insights that help deliver what their customers need. And while AI is helping to enhance customer experiences and break down barriers like siloed data that hold the industry back, organizations need to be aware of issues around governance, compliance, and privacy that can slow scaling of AI.

Key findings

Retail banks focus on financial health while wealth and asset management firms modernize for younger customers.

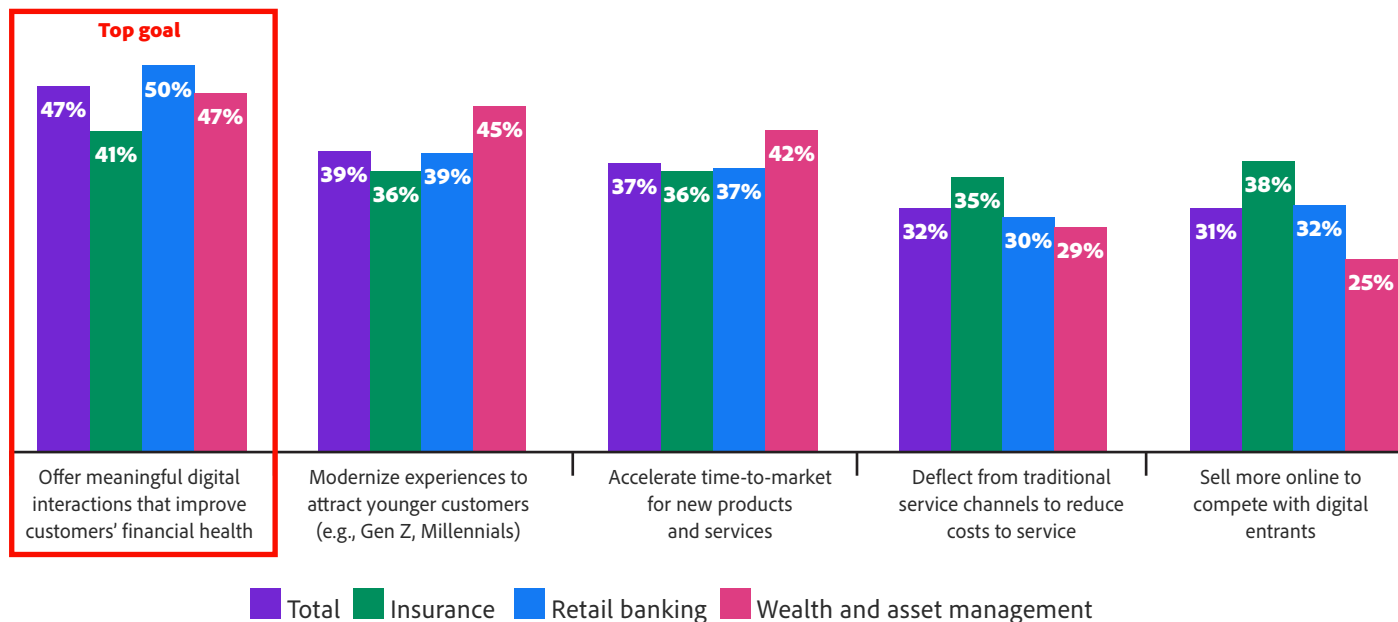
The financial services industry currently revolves around understanding customer desires for meaningful digital interactions and modernizing experiences to help guide future efforts.

With their wider portfolio of products and more frequent customer interactions, retail banks continue to focus on meaningful digital interactions around customers' financial health (50%) — much stronger than the insurance sub-industry, which sits at only 41%.

Meanwhile, given their older customer base, wealth and asset management firms are increasing their focus on the expectations of their next-generation customers. As millennials start to inherit wealth from their parents, 45% of firms are modernizing experiences for these younger customers — CNN reports millennials could become the richest generation in history, with as much as a \$90 trillion wealth transfer.

In the insurance sub-industry, with high competition from online brokers and comparison sites, 38% of organizations are still prioritizing strategies to ward off these digital entrants. Comparatively, only 25% in wealth and asset management view this as a top priority.

Figure 1: What are the top two business goals for your organization?



Base: 658 senior executives and practitioners

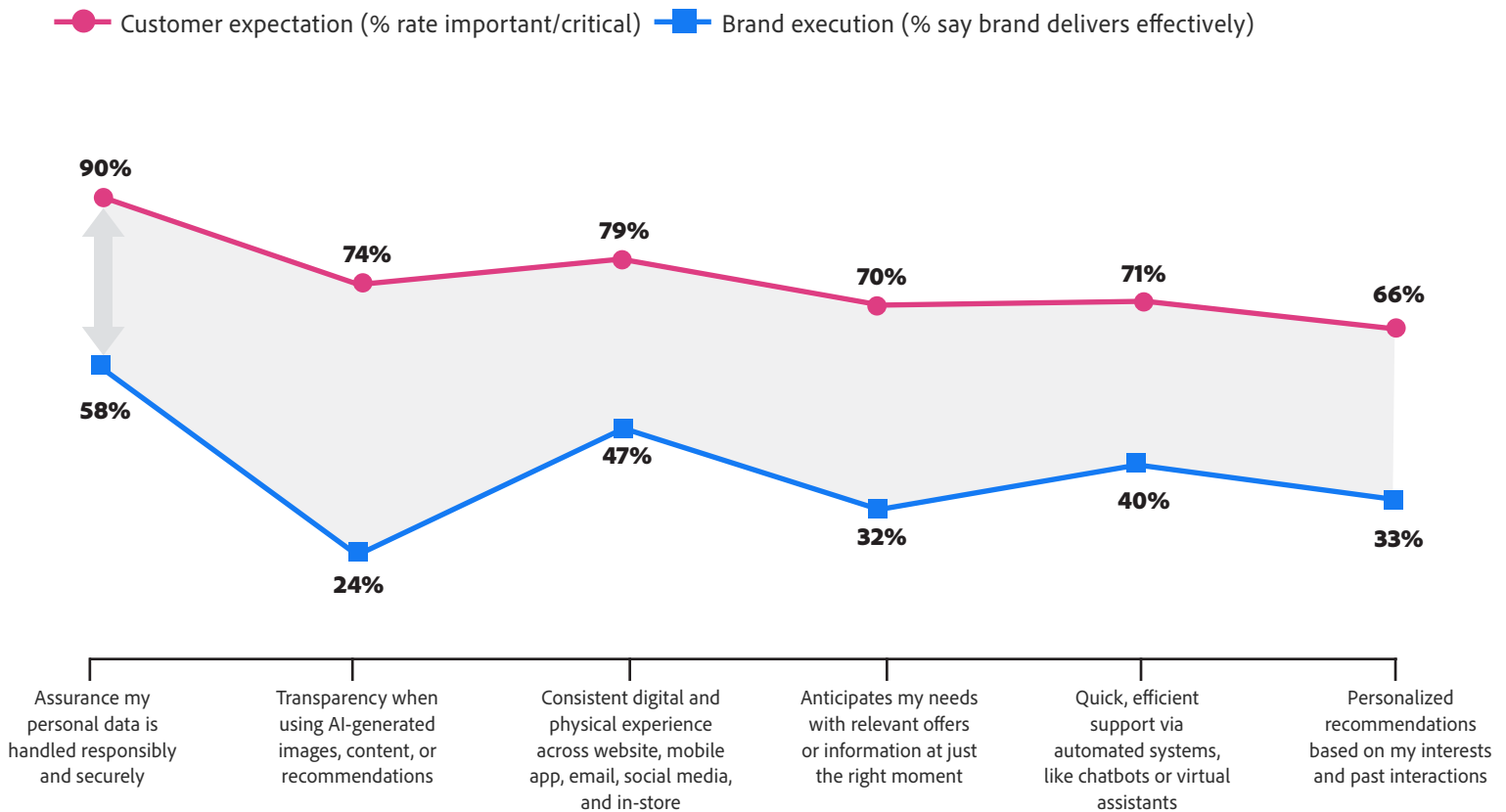
Brands are falling short of high consumer expectations.

When it comes to data privacy and consistent experiences across channels, consumers expect a lot from brands in banking, investment, and home or auto insurance. When surveyed about specific brands in these fields, 90% of consumers rated data privacy as very important or critical and 79% wanted consistent experiences across physical and digital channels. Unfortunately, only 58% of consumers feel their data is handled securely and only 47% said the brands they rated are offering consistent experiences.

There's a great opportunity for financial services industry (FSI) brands to stand out by anticipating consumer needs and giving personalized recommendations — 70% and 66% of consumers respectively expect these services from brands. However, only 32% and 33% feel as if these needs are met.

There's also a massive 50% gap between the priority consumers place on transparency when using AI generated images (74%) and what they believe brands are providing (24%).

Figure 2: The gap between customer expectations and FSI brand execution.



Base: 1,381 consumers

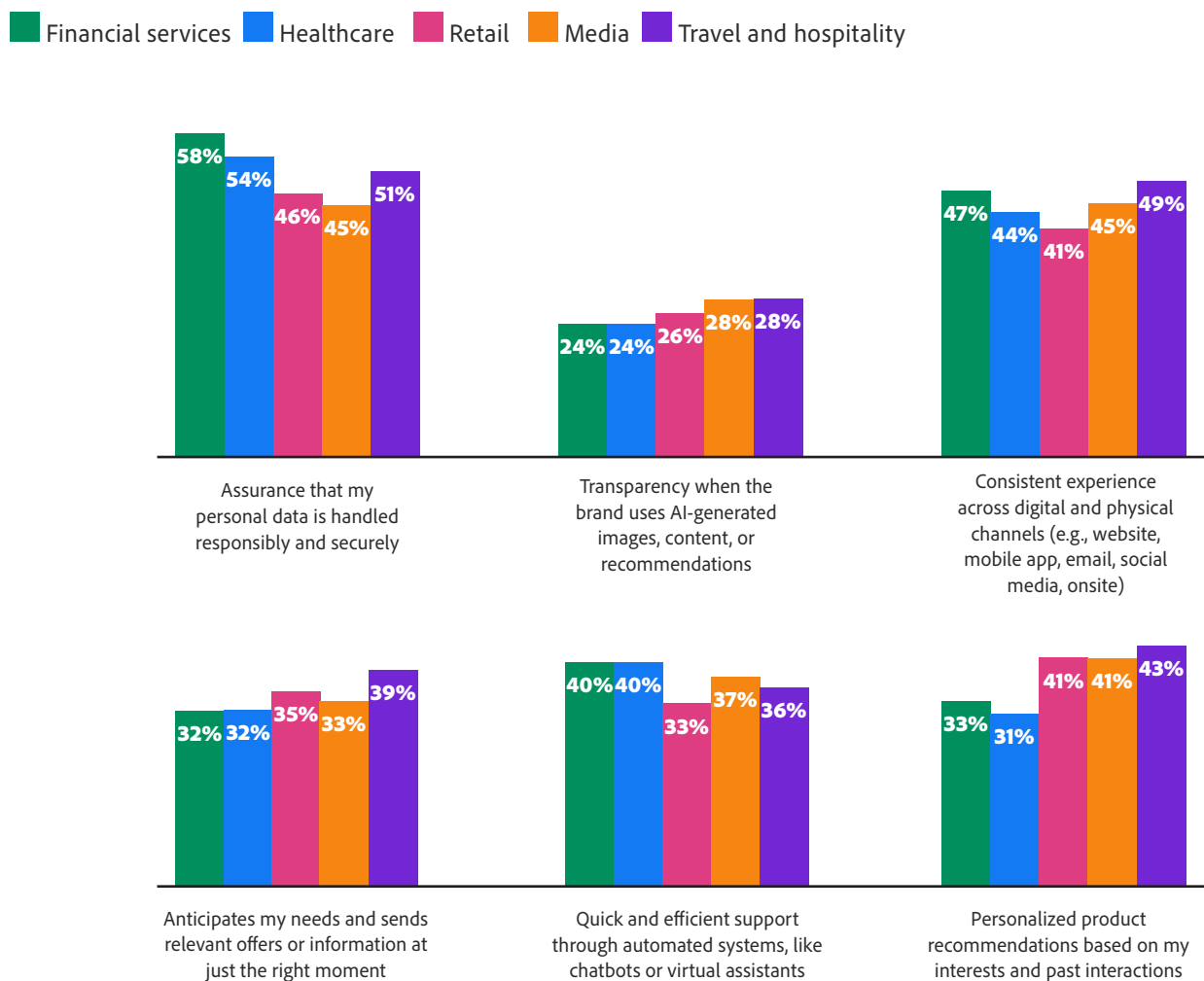
The financial services industry excels at security and consistency compared to other fields, yet personalization lags.

Financial institutions are a space where people seek peace of mind before investing money, and consumers do believe FSI is providing sufficient assurances over privacy (58%) — more highly rated than all other industries they were asked about. Consumers believe brands in this field also deliver consistent experiences across digital and physical channels (47%).

Comparatively, 43% of consumers believe travel and hospitality brands do a good job making personalized product recommendations — 10% more than FSI. They also believe travel brands are more likely to anticipate needs and deliver timely offers — 39% versus FSI's 32%. Data and products in travel and hospitality are, of course, less regulated than in FSI, which factors into these numbers.

Poor perceptions surrounding the transparency of AI-generated images is likely due to how new this technology is and because not all companies are currently using it.

Figure 3: Which of the following does this brand deliver effectively to you as a customer?



Base: 8,301 consumers

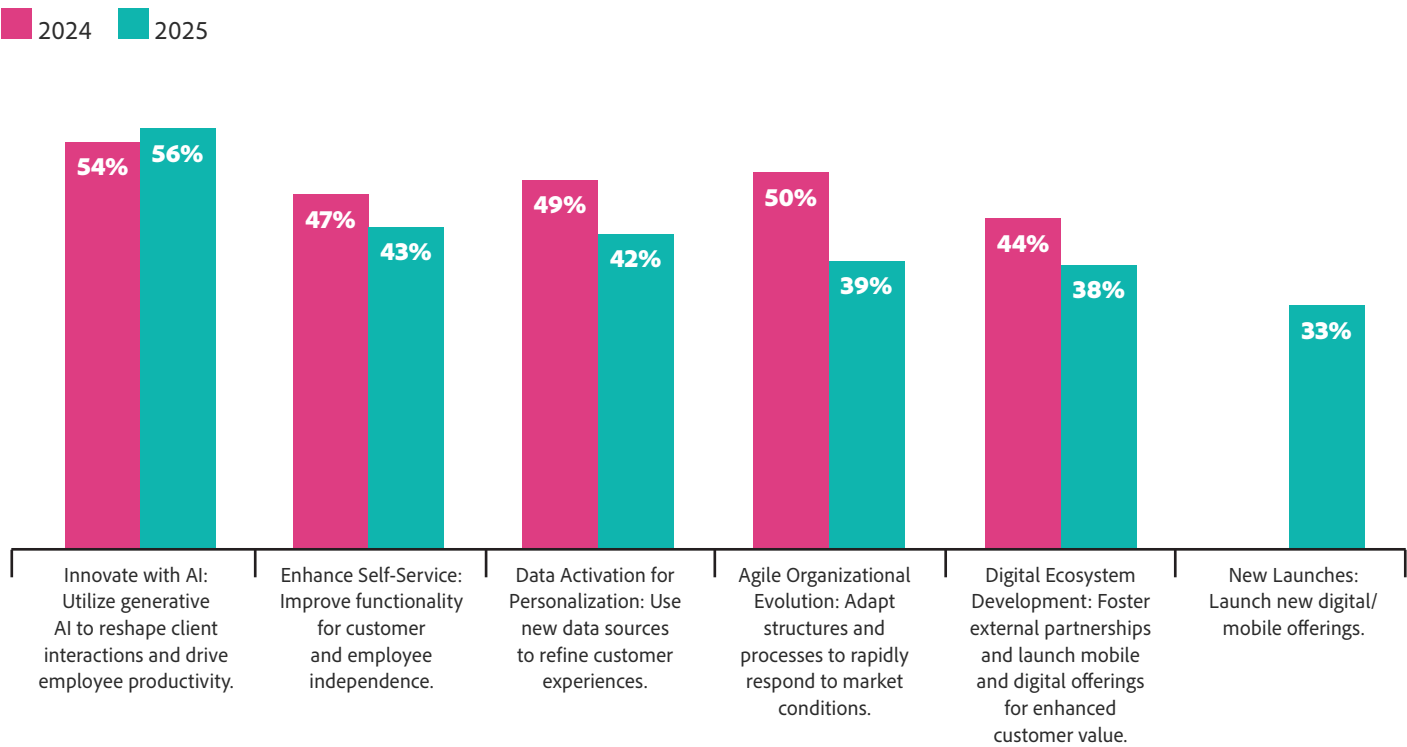
FSI remains focused on generative AI use and innovation.

Even with a sixth option added to the question of what areas FSI companies will prioritize this year, using generative AI to drive better client interactions and improve employee productivity remains a top focus, growing to 56% in 2025. Broken down by sub-industry, both wealth and asset management and insurance providers show a strong focus on using AI to reshape client relationships at 60% compared to 52% for retail banking.

As one example of how brands in wealth and asset management are leading the pack, Morgan Stanley Wealth Management recently launched a generative AI-based tool that helps financial advisors with administrative tasks, such as note-taking, summarizing client meetings, and drafting client emails. Using generative AI to free up advisor time so they can focus more on client engagement is one of the many ways AI-powered tools are bringing more efficiency to advisor workflows.

When asked about agile organizational evolution in response to market conditions, only 39% of FSI companies reported plans to prioritize it.

Figure 4: What three areas will your organization prioritize in 2025 to better meet customer needs?



Base: 658 senior executives and practitioners

Chatbots dominate generative AI use with data analysis and journey optimization coming up fast.

As consumers continue to demand quicker, better customer service from their financial institutions, it makes sense that chatbots and customer support have become the most established use case for AI in FSI. Because chatbots solve a tangible business problem in an area rich with performance metrics, they are a smart use case to fast-track.

Hoping to meet consumers with more instantaneous support, 49% of organizations have already rolled out AI solutions — 22% of which have demonstrated a return on investment.

Seeking to continuously improve the way in which they engage with consumers, 42% of organizations have introduced solutions to analyze customer interactions to discover AI-driven insights. And more are getting in on the effort with 22% of businesses running pilots. There's a similar trend for generative AI in journey optimization, with 39% focused on new AI programs and an additional 25% running pilots.

Figure 5: To what extent is your organization using or piloting generative AI in each of the following areas?

■ Not using in this area
 ■ Informal testing
 ■ Piloting
 ■ In use but still evaluating
 ■ In use and already seeing ROI

Chat and customer support, e.g., chatbots, product customization tools



Analyzing data and customer interactions to uncover AI-driven insights



Using real-time data to personalize customer experiences across multiple channels and touchpoints, e.g., recommendations, offers, ads during browsing



Optimizing and orchestrating personalized customer journeys



Automating processes and streamlining workflows, e.g., tagging assets, assigning tasks, brand reviews



Generating ideas and creative concepts, e.g., brainstorming, content ideation, rough drafts



Creating engaging videos quickly and efficiently, e.g., for social media, digital ads, product demos



Creating photoshoots, e.g., for product shots and creative content



Base: 413 practioners

Generative AI is increasing efficiency and productivity.

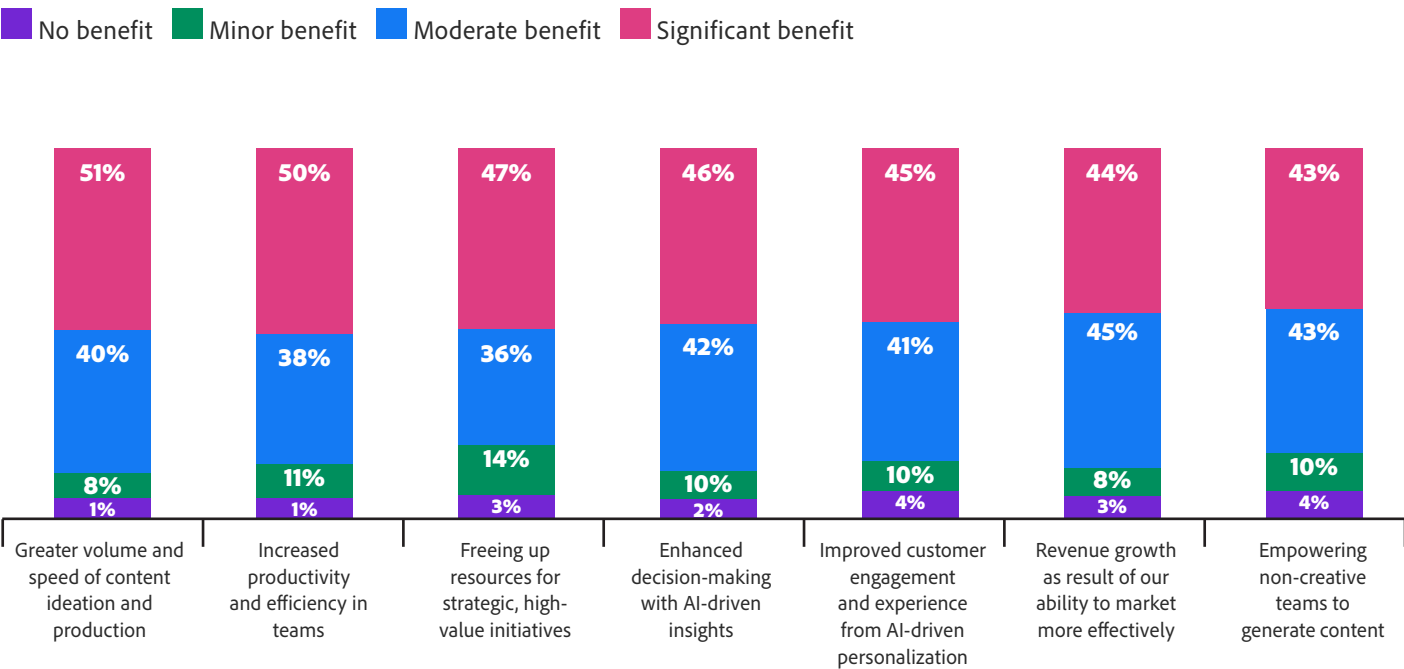
While seeing a payoff in new technology investment can take time, senior executives are already detecting productivity gains from generative AI initiatives that show ROI is on its way. In every area where senior executives weighed in, 83% or more of them reported a moderate to significant benefit.

Top areas of impact from a technology designed to supercharge better, faster work:



And even though gains in customer engagement, revenue growth, and non-creative teams generating content are more moderate, all these categories still show 43% or more reporting with added significant benefit to their organizations.

Figure 6: To what extent has your organization experienced the following benefits from generative AI over the last year?



Base: 244 senior executives

Practitioners feel pressure to deliver more omnichannel content to drive engagement and conversion.

With Forbes reporting that 80% of consumers believe personalized campaigns greatly enhance their experience, it's no surprise that practitioners are feeling pressure to deliver a greater volume of customized content across a wider range of channels. And all at a greater frequency than ever before.

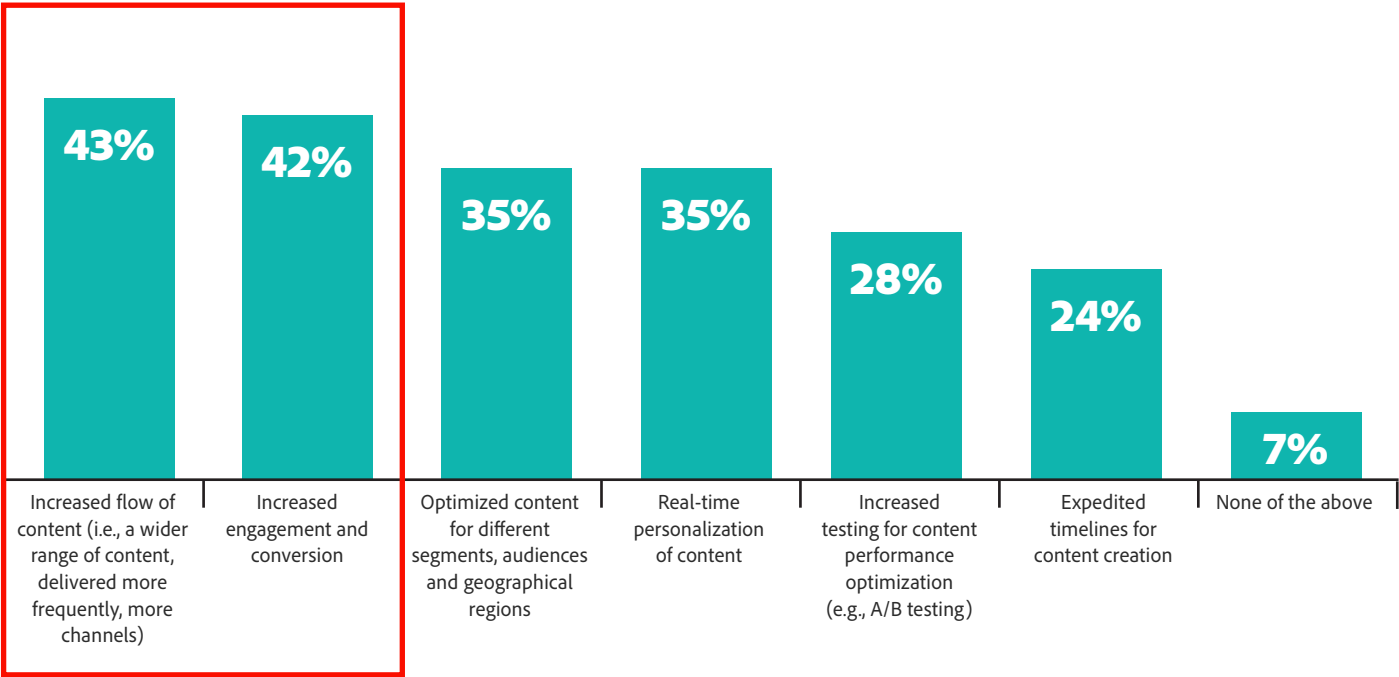
Compared to 2024, 43% of practitioners say they are now under greater pressure to increase the flow of content, while 42% feel the need to increase engagement and conversion as well.

As the rush to create and deliver more content dominates, fewer are experiencing pressure to optimize content (35%), deliver personalization in real time (35%), and conduct A/B testing (28%).

The good news: Practitioners are optimistic that generative AI will improve the customer experience over the next two years.

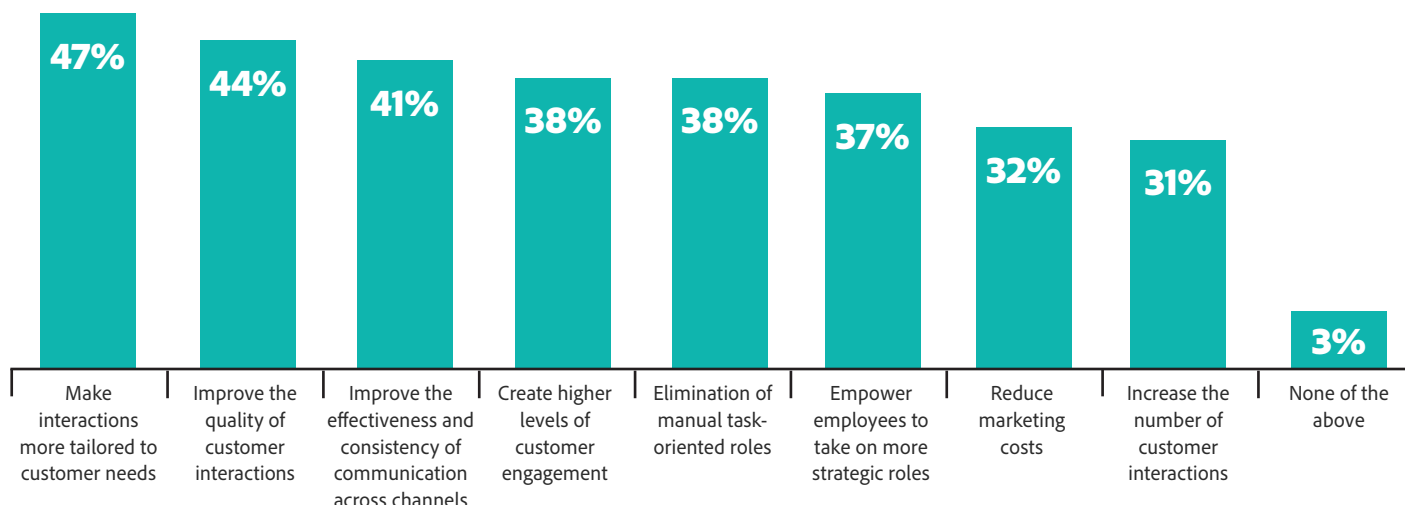
Many believe generative AI will result in more tailored interactions (47%) and greater consistency across channels (41%) which means better quality interactions for customers (44%) and higher levels of engagement — a win-win for both customers and businesses.

Figure 7: Compared to 2024, which of the following will your marketing organization be under greater pressure to deliver in 2025?



Base: 413 practitioners

Figure 8: In which areas do you expect generative AI to have the most measurable impact on your marketing and customer experience (CX) operations over the next 12 to 24 months?



Base: 385 practitioners

Empowering customers is key to driving revenue growth, including AI-powered solutions and sustainable initiatives.

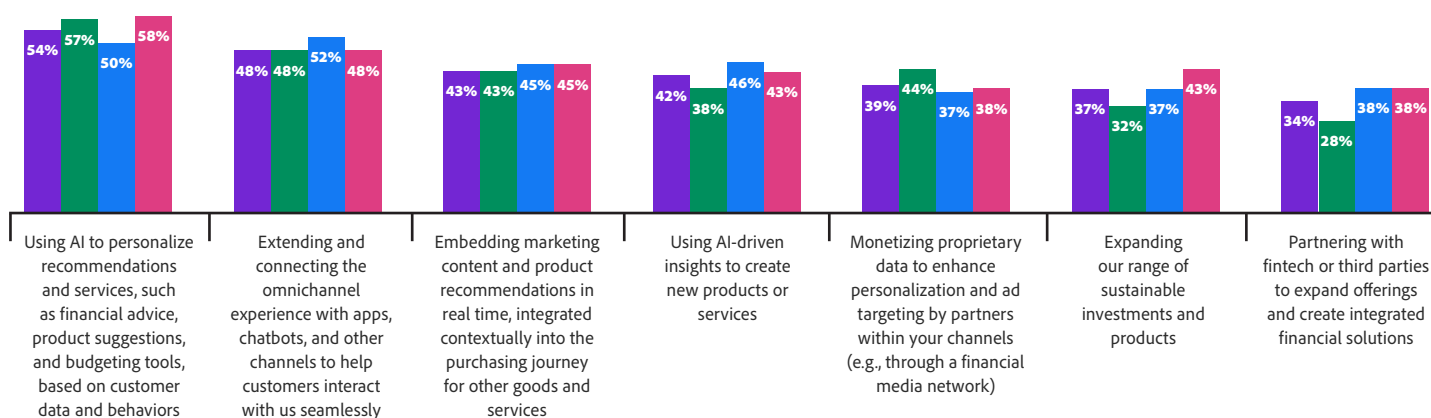
Helping customers help themselves is a priority for 2025. By using AI to give customers information and tools to make the right financial decisions, 54% of FSI companies are hoping to drive revenue growth. Wells Fargo is already integrating generative AI into its customer operations with its personalized wealth management platform LifeSync that helps customers set and track financial goals, as well as a virtual assistant that supports customers with bill payments, fraud reporting, and more.

FSI organizations are also looking to extend and connect experiences across channels via chatbots and upgraded apps (48%) so customers can communicate quickly. To connect customers with the information they need at the exact moment they need it, 43% of FSI companies are focusing on embedding content and recommendations contextually into the purchase journey.

Listening to customer demand for sustainable investments and products, 43% of wealth and asset managers are leading the pack with a focus on this segment. For example, BNP Paribas Asset Management themed its flagship funds around energy, ecosystems, and equality. Also fueled by customer demand and considerations about brand reputation, retail banking sits at 37% but is constrained by legacy systems. The insurance sub-industry brings up the rear with just 32% focused on sustainable initiatives to drive growth due to balancing risk around regulatory challenges.

Figure 9: Which of the following is your organization implementing to drive revenue growth in 2025?

■ Total
 ■ Insurance
 ■ Retail banking
 ■ Wealth and asset management



Base: 658 senior executives and practitioners

Case Study: Vanguard

For an investment firm like Vanguard, where every investor in a member fund is a part-owner, it's especially important to ensure that clients demanding more — and more personalized — content are getting it. By switching from its legacy CMS to Adobe Experience Manager Sites, Vanguard can build websites 6 to 10x faster and saw a 264% increase in organic traffic and 176% increase in quality engagement on its new website.

By adopting strategies to better connect with customers, including using Adobe Real-Time Customer Data Platform to enable always-on marketing for its advisor business, Vanguard is primed to expand to its individual investor business. With over 30 segments built out of real-time customer profiles, Vanguard more accurately targets customers based on their behavior rather than flooding inboxes with ineffective emails.



“Our investors trust us to be on top of the latest investments. We’re a cutting-edge brand and, with Adobe, our website and personalized marketing now reflect our commitment to the investor experience.”

Therron Hofsetz

Head of MarTech Platforms, Engineering, Vanguard

[Read the full case study](#)

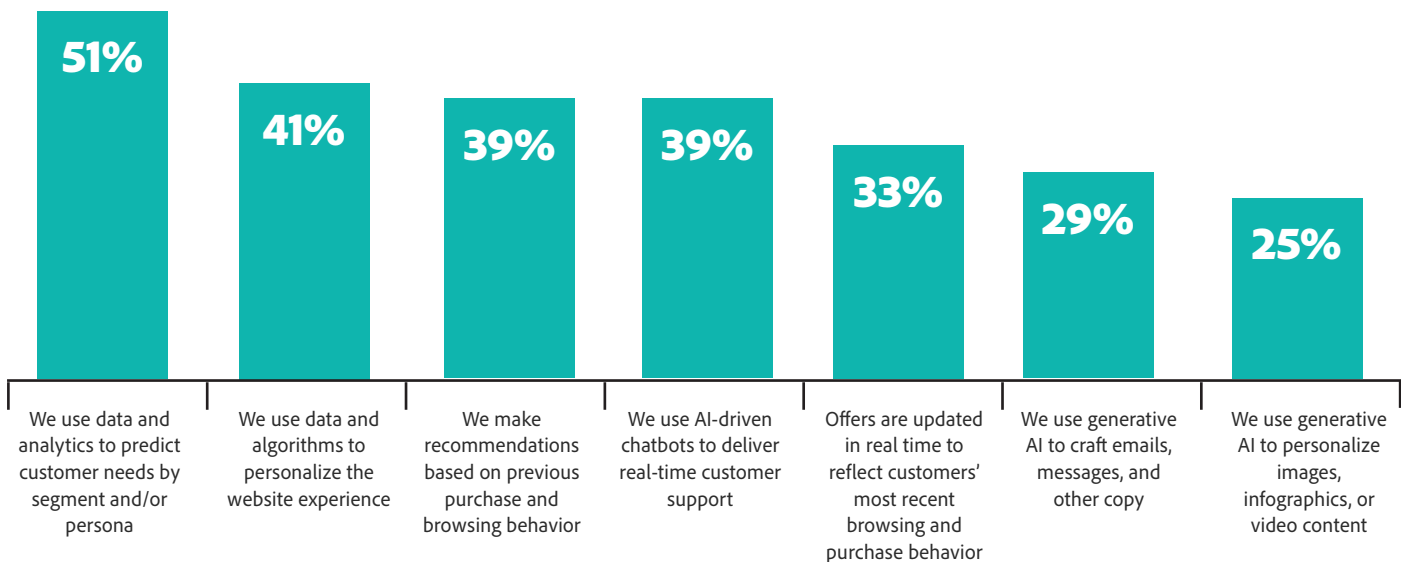
Coveted real-time personalization is still a work in progress.

FSI organizations work hard to deliver meaningful interactions that improve customers' financial health, aspiring to one day achieve one-to-one personalization in the moment. While companies are achieving personalization more quickly, these interactions need to be hyper-personalized with content delivered contextually in real time to be most effective. This requires insights based on each customer's needs, behavior, and history applied instantaneously, and few, if any, are fully accomplishing that.

While 51% of FSI companies use data to predict customer needs, it's not necessarily happening in real time or in one-to-one interactions. Similarly showcasing the challenge of instantaneous personalization, only 33% can update offers in real time to reflect browsing history. And less than 30% are using generative AI to craft personalized copy or creative content.

More encouragingly, 41% are able to personalize the web experience and 39% can make recommendations based on purchase and browsing behavior.

Figure 10: In which of the following ways does your brand routinely personalize digital content for customers?



Base: 413 practioners

Siloed data and compliance issues are major challenges for scaling AI.

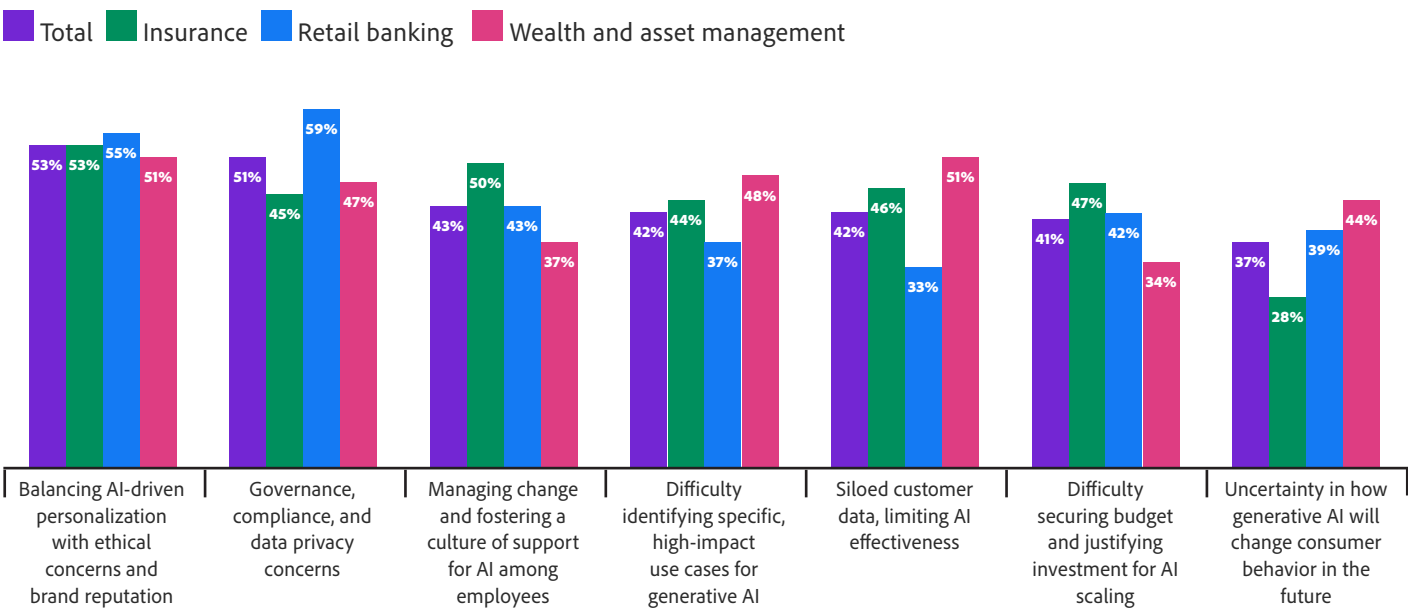
While the potential of AI is massive, it isn't without challenges when it comes to implementation. As with any new technology, there's a level of healthy concern over ethical AI and how turning to AI-driven personalization may impact brand reputation. But it's more technical issues that affect FSI companies most. And as this new technology continues to make headlines and drive innovation, there's an overall 42% of FSI organizations that are still trying to find the best uses for generative AI for their business.

Governance, compliance, and privacy are concerns across the FSI industry, but they weigh heavily in retail banking with 59% of senior executives listing compliance as the biggest challenge to scaling AI solutions.

As AI efforts rely heavily on effective use of data, siloed customer data can hamper AI initiatives — a major concern for 51% of senior executives in the wealth and asset management sub-industry.

It's possible that compliance and data silo issues contribute to 41% of senior executives reporting that securing budget for AI scaling is an issue. As positive results for AI programs roll in, this challenge may lessen. For example, data from the World Economic Forum suggests that 93% of private equity firms expect to see moderate to substantial benefits to AI use within three to five years.

Figure 11: What are the most significant challenges your organization faces in scaling the use of generative AI?



Base: 245 senior executives

Conclusions and recommendations

The growing difference between customer expectations and experiences presents a big challenge in FSI, but business leaders in the industry see plenty of opportunity to close that gap. The adoption of generative AI is chief among the ways companies can stand out by enhancing customer experiences and adding value with personalized insights and recommendations, as well as supporting customers with timely, on-topic communications in the moment.

Here are four ways to drive growth in the year ahead:

- **Keep up with the cutting edge.** With over half of FSI enterprises looking to generative AI to drive revenue, over a third turning to it for additional solutions and journey optimization, and 25% more already running pilots, businesses not keeping pace with this marketing evolution will fall behind. And customers will expect you to be keeping up.
- **Refine and connect better.** To deliver meaningful experiences to customers, financial services companies need access to real-time interaction data and profiles to quickly understand different audiences. They should also add extra partner data for more context and use AI to find valuable customer groups and insights.
- **Map meaningful customer journeys.** To deliver seamless and meaningful experiences across all channels, financial services companies must leverage real-time data for precise targeting, maintain consistency with a centralized content library, and use generative AI to scale decisioning and personalization while respecting channel preferences.
- **Bring data together to go further.** Issues around governance, compliance, and privacy are challenges to scaling generative AI, but siloed data and lack of common purpose is also holding the industry back. Collaborating with governance teams and developing cross-organization committees for AI implementation is a first step to addressing blockers to implementation.

Of course, for FSI brands rich in history and heritage, concerns about reputation are always a crucial consideration. The potential risk around an expanded use of generative and agentic AI could give these businesses pause as compliance can and should always take priority over AI personalization.

With that in mind, companies need to take a highly foundational and methodical approach to data, content creation, and the scaled and compliant use of generative AI. Lack of adoption will put companies at a competitive disadvantage, but a thoughtful responsible approach is essential. Challenges for scaling AI, of course, vary based on whether companies are building their own solutions or integrating ones built by other brands. But whatever the approach, responsible adoption requires necessities like AI committees, governance around data, and proven AI tools that create brand consistent content will help your business walk now, so in it can run in the future.

Learn more about Adobe's financial services solutions.

About the research

The executive survey has insights based on 3,400 responses from marketers and CX professionals working in different sub-industries and seniority levels. This included 3,270 client-side and 130 agency executives.

This report presents insights from 658 client-side marketers employed in the FSI sector from across North America, Europe, and Asia Pacific. 245 were in senior leadership roles and 413 were in practitioner roles.

We also gathered insights from 8,301 consumers aged 18+ from North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America who were surveyed online about recent experiences with brands. 1,381 were asked to comment specifically on their experiences interacting online with FSI brands, either banking and investment, or home/auto insurance.

The research was carried out independently by Econsultancy between November 11, 2024, and December 4, 2024. All respondents were pre-qualified and contributed anonymously via online surveys.

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