

2024: WIN THE SEARCH. → 2026: WIN THE ANSWER.

Search changed. AI is now an information layer between a buyer and a business. You can rank, advertise and own the website – and still lose the answer that frames the choice.

THE SEARCH LANDSCAPE: 2024

Traditional search, websites and social feeds dominated how buyers discovered and compared businesses.

PRIMARY PATHS TO DISCOVERY			BUYER ROLE
	Search Engines (e.g., Google)	24%	FIND
	Brand / Business Websites	20%	VERIFY
	Review / Directory Sites	20%	COMPARE
	Social Media	18%	DISCOVER
	Video / Content Platforms	18%	LEARN

The buyer clicked through multiple sources, compared claims and assembled the answer.

THE SEARCH LANDSCAPE: NOW (SEPTEMBER 2026)

AI platforms now sit inside everyday discovery, comparison and decision-making – often before a buyer visits a website.

65%
USED AN AI PLATFORM IN THE PAST WEEK

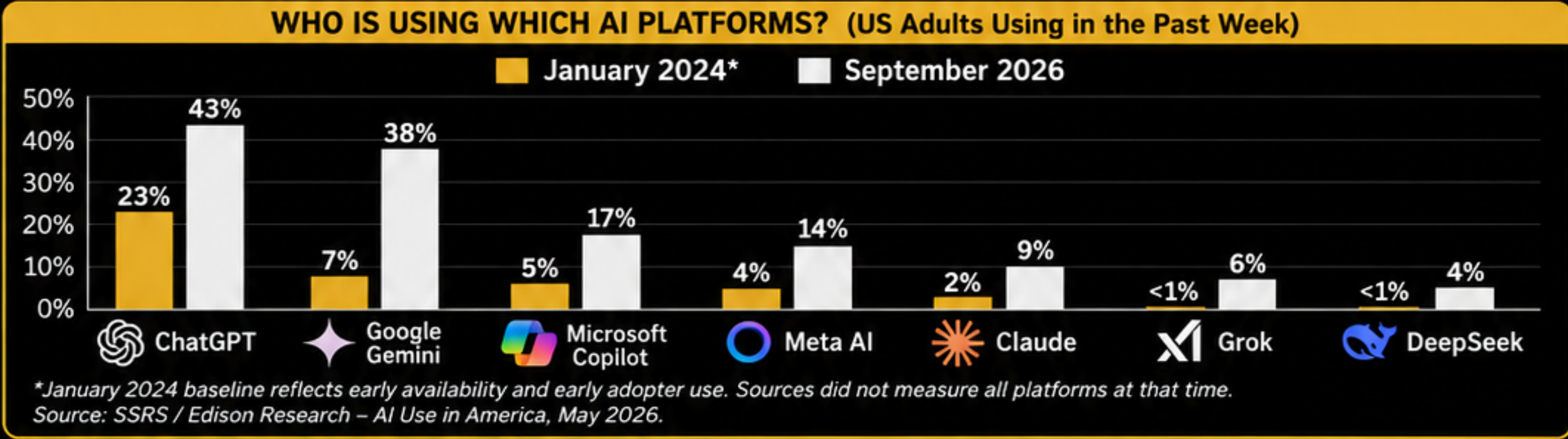
60%
READ AI SUMMARIES IN SEARCH RESULTS

49%
HAVE EVER USED AN AI CHATBOT

42%
USE CHATBOTS TO SEARCH FOR INFORMATION

AI TRUST IN SUMMARIES: 53% HAVE AT LEAST SOME TRUST

The answer can now summarize, compare, recommend and route the buyer to a next action without a traditional click.



BUYERS ARE ALREADY ASKING:

- What is the best option for my needs?
- Which company is most trusted?
- How do these providers compare?
- What does it cost – and is it worth it?
- Where can I buy or get started?

AI CAN DECIDE FIRST:

- Which facts enter the answer
- Which sources are treated as authoritative
- Which businesses make the comparison
- What recommendation or next action follows
- Whether the buyer reaches your website at all

WHO IS GOVERNING WHAT AI TELLS YOUR BUYER ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS?

AIGNCI builds the proof, structure and strategy that earns accurate inclusion, positive framing and the next action. We measure the unbranded questions buyers actually ask; which brands appear; who is recommended instead; and whether the answer leads to a visit, a call or a purchase.

MENTIONED
Is your brand in the answer?

CITATION
Are you cited as the source?

ABSORPTION
Is your evidence understood?

RECOMMENDATION
Are you preferred?

ACCURACY
Are you represented accurately?

SOURCE AUTHORITY
Are your sources trusted?

ACTION
Does the answer lead to the next step?