CIM - The Pitch 2026 - Undergraduate - Mintel Insights

Insight pack composed of Mintel Trends, Reports and Consumer Data

Arran Cowie

Client Success Team

July 2025

MINTEL

Table Of Contents

MINTEL

MINTEL REPORTS AND CONSUMER DATA

Mintel Reports and Consumer Data give you a complete 360-degree view. They're rooted in robust data and written by expert analysts – so you can have confidence in the decisions you make.

Each one combines consumer research, market information, product innovation and competitive analysis

MINTEL

Consumers and AI – UK – 2025

"Brands must focus on highlighting AI's real world benefits rather than the underlying technology. Addressing concerns over reliability and fostering trust will be vital for AI to reach its potential."

Joe Birch, Senior Technology and Leisure Analyst

Market Dynamics

Market outlook for consumers and AI

Now (2025): AI becomes leaner

New AI models and technologies developed to reduce energy intensity, addressing the growing environmental impact of AI.

Brands will increasingly leverage on-device AI to develop contextual solutions tailored to consumer data.

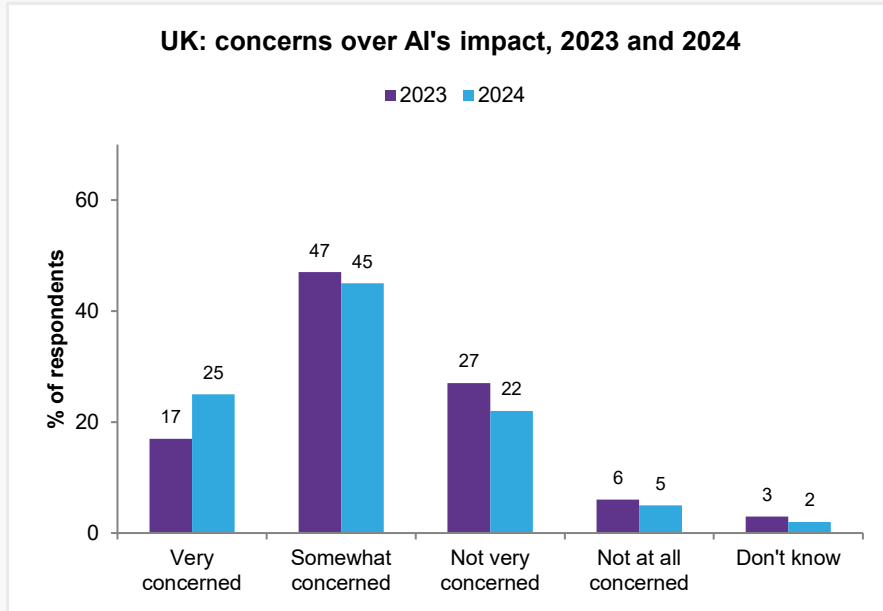### Next (2026-27): AI integrates further into daily life

AI integrations into areas such as the smart home and health and wellness will become more commonplace.

Brands will incorporate new AI search and discovery features to help promote new ways of finding products.

Future (2028-29) era of personalised shopping

AI will become more accurate and personalised, and integrated into everyday technology products, such as phones, laptops and TVs. Agentic AI will be embedded in customer service capacities, solving consumer queries 24/7.

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

7 in ten consumers exhibit concern over AI's impact

UK: concerns over AI's impact, 2023 and 2024

■ 2023 ■ 2024

% of respondents

Category	2023	2024
Very concerned	17	25
Somewhat concerned	47	45
Not very concerned	27	22
Not at all concerned	6	5
Don't know	3	2

Overall consumer levels of concern over AI have been fairly static in the last two years. However, there has been a jump of 8 percentage points in those who are very concerned about the increasing prominence of AI, whilst 92% express any concern about AI.

And Mintel notes that those with greater knowledge of AI come with greater concern over its influence. Of those who know a lot about AI, 49% are very concerned about its increasing prominence.

Brands incorporating AI into their products or services must prioritise safeguards and transparency about how their AI solutions deliver ethical and beneficial outcomes for individuals and society.
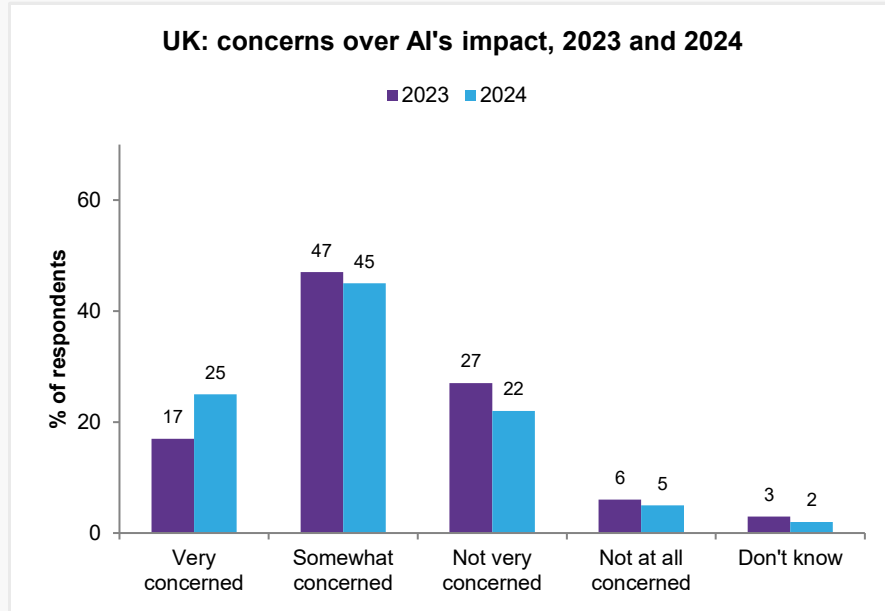
MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Brands must double down on transparency and accuracy to address consumer scepticism

AI has the potential to bring significant time saving benefits to consumers' lives. However, there is a great deal of uncertainty and mixed opinions of AI among consumers, that reveal a complex, sometimes contradictory relationship with the technology.

While they find it exciting, accessible and convenient, they are also concerned about AI's impact on job displacement. Many consumers consider AI unethical, overhyped and even dangerous. This is compounded by the reservations consumers harbour about the intentions technology companies play in 'having consumers' best interests at heart'. These misgivings and scepticism can hamper AI's broader acceptance and ability to monetise from consumers.

For brands in the space, they will need to double down on transparency around how data is used, its accuracy, and privacy protections. Major technology players will need to show how AI products they are creating will benefit humanity in practical, relatable ways. This will be crucial in addressing consumer hesitations about AI providing services that require access to data on devices, for example. With AI still a relatively nebulous concept, it will be important to focus on the actual benefits, not the AI technology itself, to break down barriers, especially with older, more wary consumers.

There is widespread consumer concern over AI's impact

UK: concerns over AI's impact, 2023 and 2024

■ 2023 ■ 2024

% of respondents

Category	2023	2024
Very concerned	17	25
Somewhat concerned	47	45
Not very concerned	27	22
Not at all concerned	6	5
Don't know	3	2

Concern about AI is growing, with 92% of consumers expressing worry in 2024. This includes an 8% increase in those who are very concerned, compared with 2023. Those with greater knowledge of AI tend to be more worried, with 49% of those highly familiar with AI expressing significant concern. Brands using AI must focus on transparency and ethical safeguards to ensure positive outcomes for individuals and society.

AI is transforming customer service, but consumer scepticism remains due to fears of job loss and limited understanding. With 54% of consumers knowing little about AI, education and transparency are key. Companies like IKEA are tackling this with staff training and ethical AI practices, boosting adoption and brand reputation, as 44% of consumers value fair worker treatment in retailer ethics.

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Concern over AI can lead to mistrust in its ability
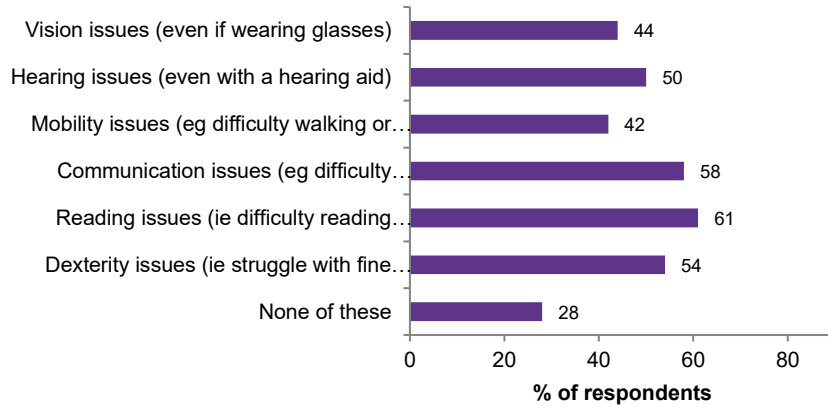
Increase in optimism about AI chatbot's

The less concerned people are with the increasing prominence of AI, the more likely they are to think that AI chatbots will have a positive impact on their lives. Of those not at all concerned about AI's prominence, 35% think AI chatbots will have a positive effect, compared to 21% overall. Brands should prioritise education and transparency to address concerns surrounding AI, helping cultivate a more positive perception of its potential.

Brands must win trust and demonstrate AI efficacy

While 33% of consumers think AI chatbots are unreliable, this rises to 40% of those who are "somewhat concerned about AI". As brands rush to integrate AI models into consumer-facing services, it's crucial to ensure these systems deliver reliable results. Businesses should offer human support when issues arise, and note that most consumers prefer interacting with humans over chatbots. This means brands should be wary of adopting wholesale digital channels for customer service solutions, and strike a balance between efficiency and human support.

Dispel fears that AI will marginalise people further

UK: think artificial intelligence (AI) will marginalise disabled people further (eg will not account for accessibility needs, lack of representation for disabilities), by physical/cognitive issue, 2024

Category	% of respondents
Vision issues (even if wearing glasses)	44
Hearing issues (even with a hearing aid)	50
Mobility issues (eg difficulty walking or…	42
Communication issues (eg difficulty…	58
Reading issues (ie difficulty reading…	61
Dexterity issues (ie struggle with fine…	54
None of these	28

% of respondents

Consumers with physical or cognitive issue are far more likely to agree that AI will further marginalise disabled people.

Despite the potential benefits of AI in improving accessibility, such as auto-generated captions and personalised voice generation, negative media attention overshadows these positive advancements. Examples include AI recruitment tools and other automated decision systems that perpetuate bias or discount candidates unfairly.

To mitigate these concerns and foster inclusivity, brands must actively engage underrepresented groups in the development and programming of AI algorithms. Ensuring diverse representation in the underlying data and emphasising unbiased AI training practices will help promote fairness and equity in AI-driven decision-making processes.
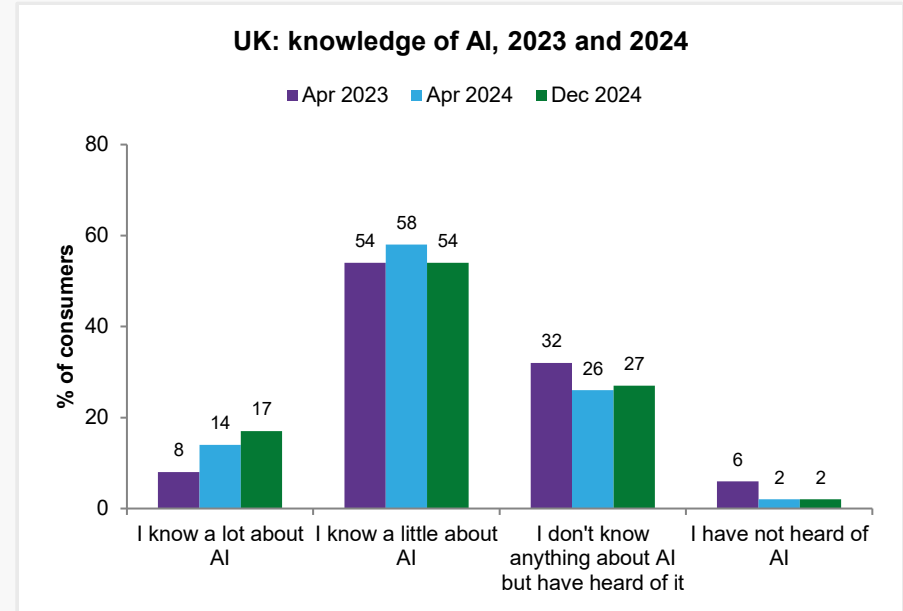
MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Consumers are increasingly knowledgeable about AI

While overall knowledge of AI is fairly static since April 2024, those who say they know a lot about AI has increased by 9 pp. With AI companies frequently debuting newer faster models, AI has been kept in the news cycle. Additionally, in 2024 and 2025, regulation of AI has helped keep broader attention in the AI space.

As noted, with greater knowledge about AI, there are enhanced concerns about its impact on consumer lives. News stories about the displacement of workers and potential misuse of AI for weapons, scams and misinformation have likely fed into this.

Brands looking to leverage AI through services will need to focus on transparency in the use of it to help consumers overcome concerns. Accentuating the benefits of the use of AI over and above traditional methods of interacting with brands will help its acceptance.
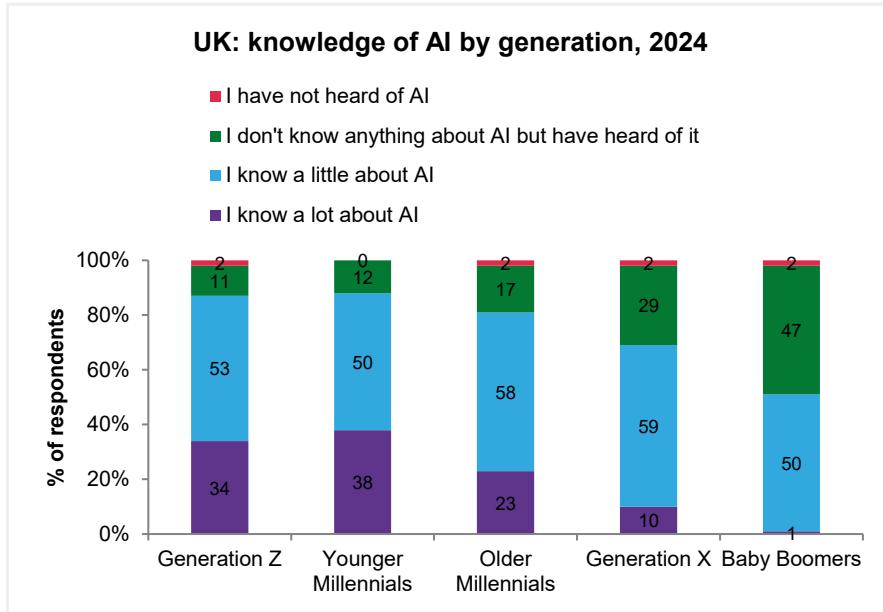
UK: knowledge of AI, 2023 and 2024

■ Apr 2023   ■ Apr 2024   ■ Dec 2024

% of consumers

Category	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Dec 2024
I know a lot about AI	8	14	17
I know a little about AI	54	58	54
I don't know anything about AI but have heard of it	32	26	27
I have not heard of AI	6	2	2

Knowledge gap evident between generations

UK: knowledge of AI by generation, 2024

Legend:
- ■ I have not heard of AI
- ■ I don't know anything about AI but have heard of it
- ■ I know a little about AI
- ■ I know a lot about AI

% of respondents

	Generation Z	Younger Millennials	Older Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers
I have not heard of AI	2	0	2	2	2
I don't know anything about AI but have heard of it	11	12	17	29	47
I know a little about AI	53	50	58	59	50
I know a lot about AI	34	38	23	10	1

There is evidence of a knowledge gap between older and younger consumers regarding AI.

Older adults may miss potential benefits of AI, such as learning experiences and health monitoring tools which could be of most use to them. Brands using AI must help these older generations with clear and concise information regarding how AI is used. Creating AI-powered products and services with user-friendly interfaces will help.

Younger, more digitally native consumers profess greater knowledge, and present the most natural audience for AI services. AI-integrated experiences will likely gain more traction and potentially open up avenues to interact with this group with AI products and services.
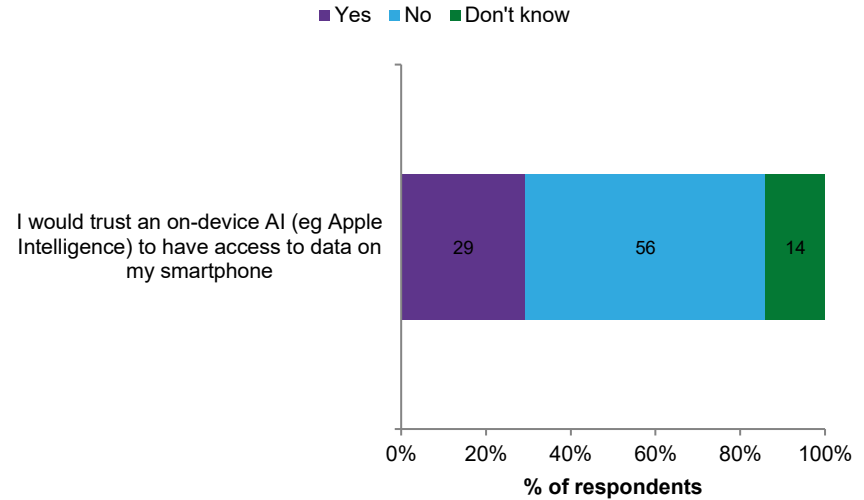
MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Highlight benefits to overcome concerns on privacy

Major phone providers, including Apple and Samsung have been promoting on-device AI. As the shift towards personalised contextual AI increases, brands will have to work on promoting security and privacy safeguards to mitigate concerns around data handling.

Creating simple transparent overviews of how this data is used and protected will need to be articulated strongly at the outset. Consumers must also be given a simple way to manage and opt out of any data collection, to help them feel in control.

On-device AI has its limitations, and early rollouts have resulted in a comedy of errors. Brands should consider pausing deployment or maybe launching optional AI modes or visual guides, rather than pushing through its use onto consumers who remained unconvinced and sceptical.

UK: attitudes towards AI in data privacy, 2024

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

I would trust an on-device AI (eg Apple Intelligence) to have access to data on my smartphone: 29 | 56 | 14

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

% of respondents

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Impressions of AI accuracy decrease with age

UK: percentage of consumers who consider AI to be accurate, % of respondents by generation, 2024
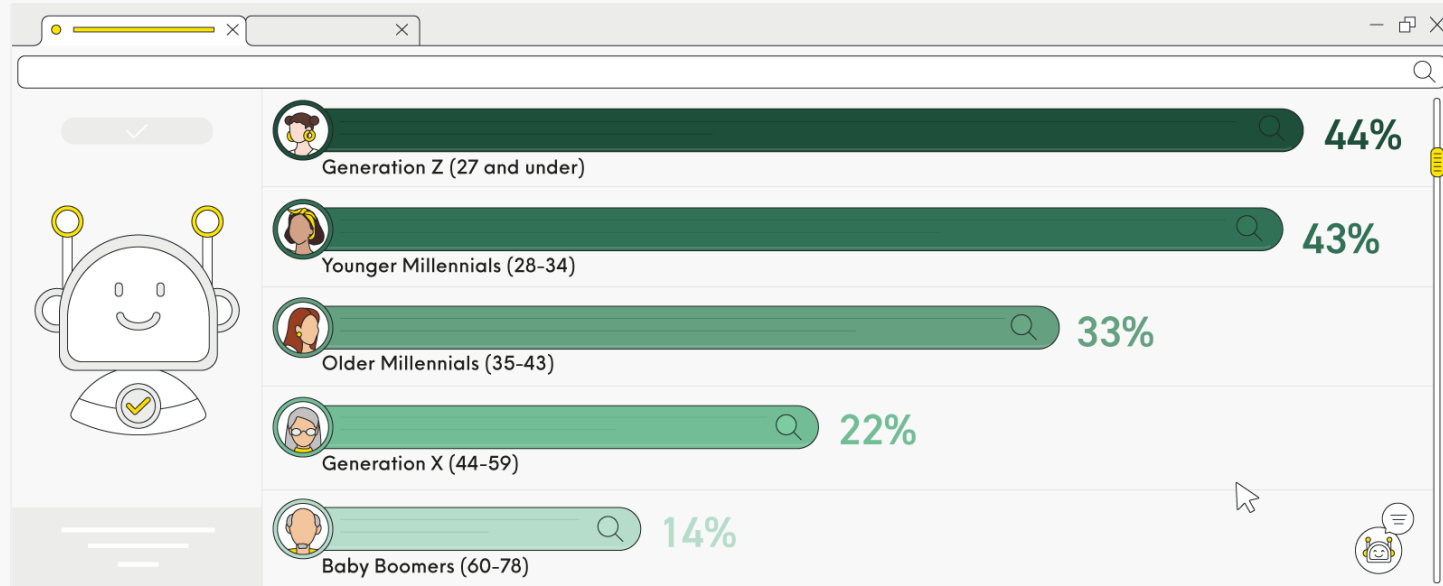
Generation Z (27 and under) — 44%
Younger Millennials (28-34) — 43%
Older Millennials (35-43) — 33%
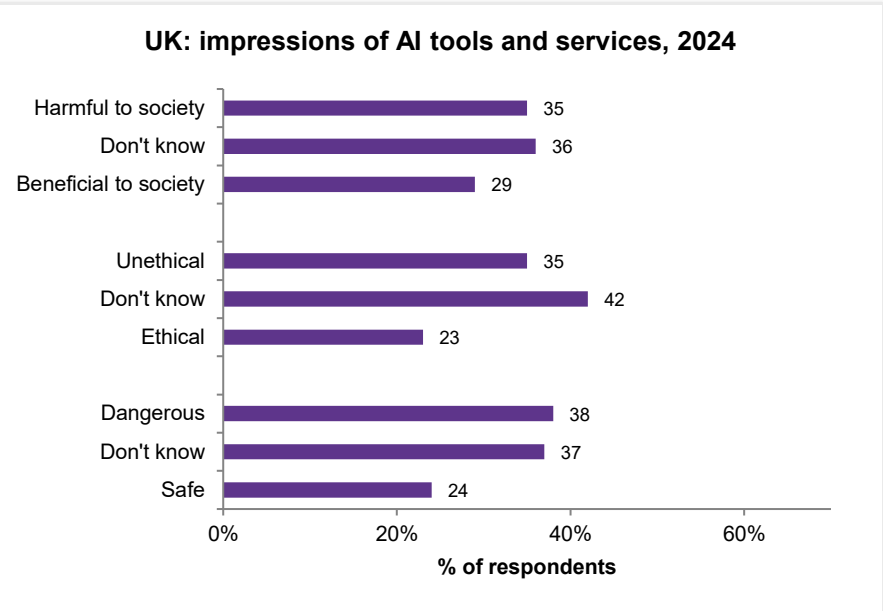Generation X (44-59) — 22%
Baby Boomers (60-78) — 14%

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Consumers are more concerned over the dangers AI represents

Whilst there is a significant amount of uncertainty in consumer attitudes to AI, consumers are broadly more pessimistic about its influence on society. News that AI can potentially displace workers, heighten security concerns and fast forward existential risk, have gained traction in the past years. And as seen, the more consumers know about AI, the greater their scepticism becomes, which can underpin their concern.

The space race to develop Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), a hypothetical point in time when AI surpasses human intelligence, could also have yet unknown consequences for society.

These risks play into the bigger picture consumers have of AI. Despite its promise, brands will need to work to counterbalance dystopian visions of the future for it to be fully embraced.

UK: impressions of AI tools and services, 2024

Impression	% of respondents
Harmful to society	35
Don't know	36
Beneficial to society	29
Unethical	35
Don't know	42
Ethical	23
Dangerous	38
Don't know	37
Safe	24

% of respondents

Regulatory landscape

EU introduces AI act

A risk-based approach

The AI Act defines 4 levels of risk for AI systems:

UNACCEPTABLE RISK

HIGH RISK

LIMITED RISK
(AI systems with specific transparency obligations)

MINIMAL RISK
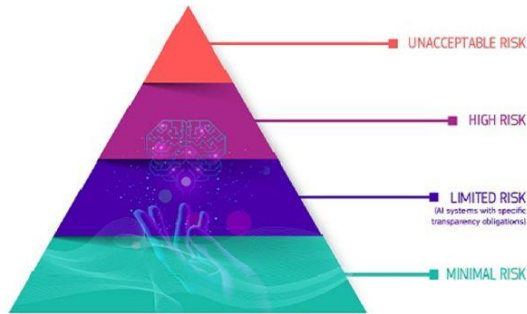
The EU AI Act, the world's first comprehensive AI legislation, aims to foster trustworthy and human-centric AI across Europe. It prohibits harmful practices, such as social scoring and manipulative AI while imposing stringent regulations on high-risk AI systems in key sectors like healthcare and employment. The Act mandates clear labelling for AI-generated content, including deepfakes, to enhance transparency.

For consumers, the AI Act offers significant protections. It safeguards fundamental rights by banning exploitative practices and requiring human oversight for high-risk AI systems The Act also mandates transparency in AI interactions, such as chatbots, and establishes a right for individuals to request explanations for decisions made by high-risk AI systems. These measures aim to build public trust, promote ethical AI innovation, and ensure safety, fairness, and accountability in AI applications across the EU.

Read on mintel.com

The UK seeks shared solutions on governance

The UK is not adopting the EU AI Act domestically, as it is no longer bound by EU regulations following Brexit. Instead, the UK has chosen a "pro-innovation" approach, focusing on sector-specific principles, rather than a single overarching AI law. This approach emphasises flexibility, allowing regulators such as the ICO and FCA to oversee AI within their respective domains. However, UK companies that operate in the EU or whose AI systems impact EU citizens must comply with the EU AI Act due to its extraterritorial scope.

While the UK's approach diverges from the EU's risk-based framework, there are ongoing discussions about collaboration on AI governance to address shared challenges and maintain competitiveness in international markets.

Competitive strategies

Google aims to increase penetration of AI across its services

Google has identified key areas of focus for its AI ambitions: multimodal AI, AI agents, AI-powered customer experience, and AI-enhanced security. Google's aim is to enhance user experiences, improve productivity, and strengthen digital security.

Google introduced an AI-powered shopping experience for US consumers in late 2024, featuring AI-generated product briefs and AR and virtual try-ons. It continues to develop AI tools for businesses with a focus on AI shopping experiences, and is likely to roll out these products globally in the future.

Google's multi-modal AI-powered assistive search capabilities, allow users to search using images, audio, video, and conversational prompts. It has also released Gemini 2.0 experimental series in December 2024, designed for the "agentic era", such as Deep Research, an agentic feature in Gemini Advanced for complex research tasks. whereas it aims to reach half a billion monthly users worldwide with its Gemini app as it aims to catch up with ChatGPT.

> In 2025, we need to be relentlessly focused on unlocking the benefits of this technology and solving real user problems.
>
> Sundar Pichai, Google CEO

Read on mintel.com

Microsoft focuses on productivity gains in its AI offering

In May 2023, Microsoft announced Windows Copilot, a centralised AI assistant for Windows 11, becoming the first PC platform to provide such AI assistance for customers. As of November 2023, Microsoft 365 Copilot AI-powered assistant has been integrated across various Microsoft 365 applications. The AI assistant responds to natural-language prompts to make information retrieval from multiple sources simpler.

Microsoft's 2024 Release Wave 2, spanning from October 2024 to March 2025, introduced updates with a strong focus on AI integration and enhanced productivity. Copilot has been integrated into its Bing and Edge browsers, providing users with AI-powered search capabilities, quick summarised answers, and assistance with writing tasks.

In January 2025, announced support for a range of retail options for businesses, including tools to develop personalised shopping experiences, enhanced customer service support.

Read on mintel.com

Meta ushers in the age of the AI agent

Meta has made significant strides in AI development and integration across its platforms. Meta AI, the company's digital assistant, has reached nearly 600 million monthly active users. Meta's has also been promoting its AI infrastructure tools, such as its open large language model Llama 3, with plans to roll out Llama 4 in 2025.

Its AI Studio, launched in July 2024, has become a popular platform for creators to develop AI characters. Whereas, it is continuing to focus on improving its Llama AI models, which power its generative AI capabilities. The company plans to release Llama 4 in the coming months, aiming to become the leading model.

Meta is also looking to use AI in its advertising offering to businesses. The company has been rolling out new generative AI features for advertisers to enhance its online advertising platform.

Meta is also heavily leaning into AI for developing AI influencers, AI-driven profiles and bots.

Amazon focuses on building infrastructure for AI development

Amazon is heavily investing in AI advancements, supplying the infrastructure and support that generative AI developers need. This includes investments in its Trainium 2 chips, a partnership with Anthropic. These developments aim to enhance generative AI-powered features, and drive proactive capabilities to AI-driven insights for sellers. They also aim to optimise operations and reach customers more effectively.

For its consumer facing AI services, Amazon aims to deliver more personalised and seamless shopping experiences, such as voice-activated purchases and AI-generated content like Prime Video's X-Ray Recaps. These innovations promise to improve convenience and engagement for users.

Apple launches Apple Intelligence for contextual support

Apple Intelligence launched on iOS 18.2, iPadOS 18.2, and macOS Sequoia 15.2

Apple Intelligence is a personal intelligence system introduced by Apple (June 2024) for iPhone, iPad, and Mac devices. It combines generative AI models with personal context to deliver helpful and relevant intelligence while prioritising user privacy. Apple has focused on streamlining consumer's digital actions. For instance, summarises notifications, emails, messages, and also audio recordings.

Apple Intelligence also comes with an updated Siri, with richer language understanding, typing capability, and improved device knowledge. Along with the Siri upgrade, it features productivity and creative tools, such as image generation and photo search, as well as mail enhancements and schedule management.

Apple's aim is to bed AI into consumers' everyday routines, rooted in their personal context. It also highlights privacy features, such as on-device processing for many tasks and Private Cloud Compute for more complex requests.

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

MINTEL TRENDS

Mintel Trends observes the cool, the contrary and the innovative from around the world, but takes it one step further, validating the findings with our consumer data and grounding them for practical use.

Trends identifies the biggest trends worth paying attention to and dives deep into how your brand can benefit.

Each trend is backed by observations, statistics and consumer data, examples of how leading brands are already responding and context to understand your market across different demographics and sectors.

Buzz shows how "loud" a trend is to media, businesses and consumers.

Lifecycle shows how we observe a trend based on Mintel's content.

MINTEL

Who Needs Humans?

Automated technology has machines increasingly replacing people – for better or worse.

Buzz = 5/5

Lifecycle = Mainstreaming (Gaining Wider Traction)

Trend Overview

Out of the factories

Automation began in factories with simple, low-skill tasks, but it's now expanding into daily life. People may embrace it when it handles tedious or complex jobs, offering greater ease and convenience.

By freeing up time and energy, automation allows consumers to focus elsewhere—an opportunity brands can recognize and leverage

Affecting employment

The rise of machines has a real downside. As more jobs are automated, workers are left behind.

MIT economist David Autor warns that automating middle-skilled roles could seriously impact the middle class. Meanwhile, 3D printing is shifting production into consumers' homes.

Is efficiency worth the isolation?

As automation spreads to cars, homes, and hospitals, concerns grow. Job loss and reduced human interaction could spark backlash.

If that happens, brands may find value in highlighting their human touch over digital alternatives.

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Key Action Items

Brands can create more convenient and time-saving paths to purchase by embracing automation, as well as making things easier for their customers.

As more jobs get outsourced to machines, we could see a new class of unemployed consumers emerge.

However, companies should ask what comes first, efficiency or service – or if there's a way to deliver both.

And there's an opportunity to counterbalance this trend by investing in the human element of customer service.

Observations

Example of Mintel Trends in action around the world. Observations are the building blocks of our trends.

AI Redesigns Beauty Labs
L'Oréal partners with IBM to support product personalization.

30 January 2025 - US

AI-powered Voice Cloning
Microsoft is set to introduce its new "Interpreter" feature on Teams, which allows users to clone their voices and appear to speak in different languages.

29 November 2024 - Global

Faketosis Alert!
UNICEF diagnoses a new "condition" for those who have fallen victim to fake news online.

13 November 2024 - Argentina

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Alternative Realities

Virtual online spaces and the technologies around them are evolving and drawing in more consumers to play, interact, and explore, and even invest in digital, intangible goods.

Buzz = 4/5

Lifecycle = Mainstreaming (Gaining Wider Traction)

Trend Overview

Enter the metaverse

The Metaverse is shifting from concept to reality, forming vast, connected virtual worlds where users interact through digital avatars. Blending gaming, social media, and shopping, these spaces are powered by AI, VR, AR, and digital currencies.

They let people explore, work, play, shop, and socialise in immersive ways. Beyond convenience and utility, they offer escapism, entertainment, self-expression, and the chance to build new kinds of communities.

Mixed reality benefits

Virtual, augmented, and mixed reality tech is now common in shopping, entertainment, and escapist experiences. AR filters are widely used on social media, and AR shopping tools help users visualise products in real life.

amified AR is blending into the physical world, turning everyday activities into interactive games. These technologies are also advancing healthcare, therapy, and R&D, enabling designers and engineers to simulate and refine ideas before bringing them to life.

Trend Overview

Digital identities

Virtual worlds let consumers build digital identities and express themselves in ways not always possible offline. Through AR filters and custom avatars, users can reimagine who they are and explore new experiences.

Digital goods—like AR fashion or in-game items— enhance this self-expression. Real-world brands are entering these spaces, letting users showcase products virtually. Brands can also create digital avatars to interact with consumers in more personal, engaging ways.

Life gamified

With technology, any task can become a game. Gamification is turning chores like cleaning, cooking, or learning into fun, rewarding experiences.

Brands are using it to stand out with playful, interactive campaigns that offer instant gratification. A billboard game at a bus stop, for example, can brighten someone's day and leave a lasting impression. In retail, AR can guide shoppers through stores, transforming shopping into an engaging, game-like journey.

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Key Action Items

Create a presence in the metaverse and other evolving online spaces to cater to consumers who increasingly expect interactivity, connectivity and instant access from companies.

Position virtual worlds as spaces where consumers can construct digital identities to express themselves in new ways and where they can play, explore and engage in experiences they might not have in the physical world.

Opportunities exist for brands to use digital goods to highlight how their products or services can offer consumers benefits in the real world.

Observations

Example of Mintel Trends in action around the world. Observations are the building blocks of our trends.

AI Spotting Real Ages
Instagram leverages AI to enforce age-appropriate safeguards on its platform.

30 April 2025 - US

AI Grandsons
Some elderly Chinese people have become captivated by AI "grandsons", virtual companions that provide entertainment and companionship.

17 March 2025 - China

Real or Fake?
Insurance company Pacífico Seguros uses CGI to prove its commitment to its customers.

13 June 2024 - Peru

MINTEL

The Suite Life

The next era of connectivity will see us adopt integrated ecosystems of products, services and digital goods that sync our homes, our appliances and our bodies.

Buzz = 3/5

Lifecycle = Established (Hitting a plateau)

Trend Overview

Connecting it all together

Consumers today own a galaxy of electronic devices. In addition to standard home appliances like TVs, refrigerators and ovens, many homes now house multiple computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, e-readers and gaming consoles.

With more gadgetry on hand, there is a rising need for devices and services to work in tandem to help consumers achieve more and with greater simplicity.

As easy as one click

Smart homes are getting cheaper, and many appliances in homes are actively talking to each other. Google's Nest thermostats, smoke alarms and security cameras can turn any home into a smart one – fully controllable from a smartphone – without breaking the bank.

Amazon's Dash Buttons and Echo allow consumers to easily order anything from kitchen cleaner to groceries with just one click, or even by just saying it out loud in proximity of an Amazon Echo.

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Trend Overview

Getting the analogue online

And it isn't just newly purchased gadgets that are getting online with smart homes. We are increasingly seeing start-ups creating technologies that allow older, and even analogue, appliances and gadgets connect to the Internet of Things.

Out of the home

Smart homes can be controlled from anywhere; smartphone apps and websites allow smart home owners to control their devices from afar.

We have even seen big automotive manufacturers creating models that fit seamlessly into the Internet of Things, ensuring that the connection to home need not be lost when you go away.

Key Action Items

Ecosystems of synced products and services that can help consumers get more out of their standalone devices will be welcomed by consumers.

Everyday common objects are becoming smarter with built-in sensors; consumers will expect cross-brand compatibility when building their smart home universe.

Consumers expect that they should be connected regardless of whether they are at home or not; smart homes and devices should be accessible from wherever, whenever.

Observations

Example of Mintel Trends in action around the world. Observations are the building blocks of our trends.
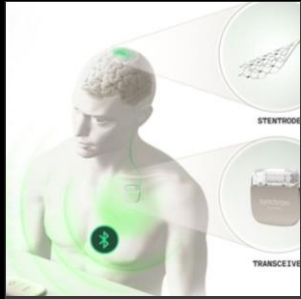
Brain-controlled Tech
Apple is pioneering brain-controlled technology, enabling devices like the iPhone to be operated solely through thought.

31 May 2025 - US; Global

Tech Ed
Lenovo has launched a new disruptive campaign that questions the education system in Colombia.

04 April 2022 - Colombia

Cyber Trust Seal
Major tech companies like Amazon and Google commit to the FCC's proposed Cyber Trust Mark program that advocates for the use of a hacker-safe label.

21 June 2024 - US

MINTEL

Read on mintel.com

Thank you!

Compiled by Mintel Client Success, utilising Mintel syndicated content which your business has a licence to access. At any time Mintel may distribute or reproduce any syndicated content which appears within this presentation, even if originally compiled per your request, always subject to preserving your confidentiality.

Meet the Expert

Arran Cowie

Client Success Team

acowie@mintel.com

The world's leading market intelligence agency

Our expert analysis of the highest quality data and market research will help you grow your business.

MINTEL

Experts in what consumers want and why