

How Generative AI Is Redefining Search

fifth
quadrant

Understanding Consumer Adoption and Usage of Generative AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping how consumers search for and access information. To respond effectively, it is essential to understand how well consumers comprehend these tools and how confidently they apply them across different demographic groups.

This research aims to assess consumers' understanding of AI and identify how evolving behaviours are influencing search habits and decision-making.



Assess Understanding of Generative AI

Measure the level of understanding and familiarity consumers have with AI technology and assess any generational differences in knowledge.



Identify Common Use Cases

Understand how consumers are using conversational AI in their daily search activity



Understand Channel Preference

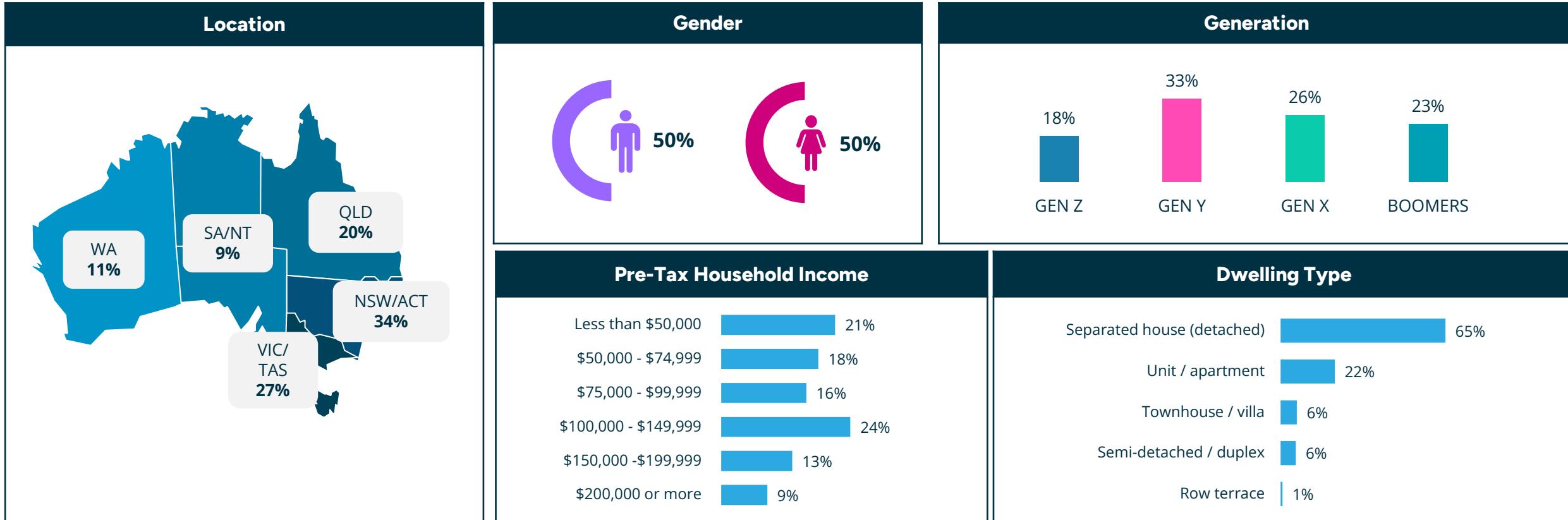
Identify preferred channels for search activity

A photograph showing a person's hands resting on a keyboard. The hands are positioned as if the person is about to type. In the background, a computer monitor is visible, displaying a blurred image that appears to be a presentation slide. The overall scene suggests a professional or academic environment.

Our Sample

Our Sample

A nationally representative sample of Australian consumers was surveyed in November 2025. The data was weighted to reflect the population distribution by location, age, and gender, and results were benchmarked against data collected in late 2024.





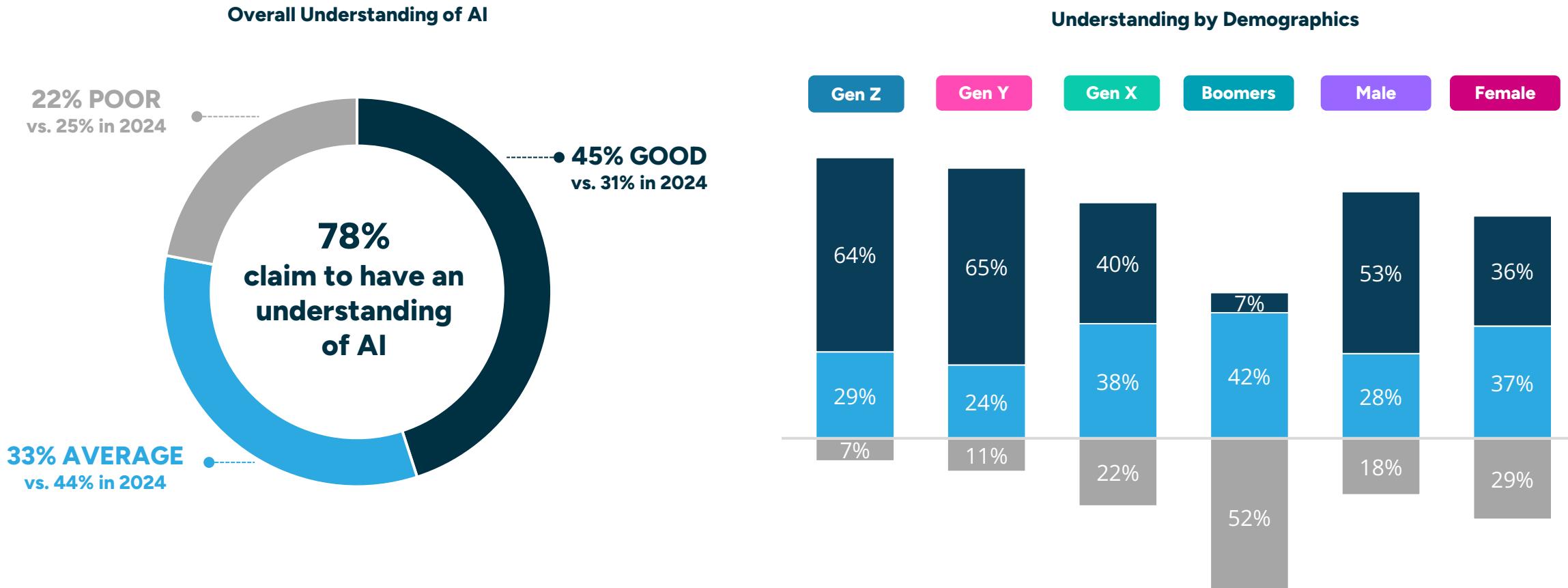
Key Findings



Understanding of Generative AI

Nearly half of all Australians now report having a good understanding of generative artificial intelligence (AI), increasing from a third just a year ago. Younger Australians are driving this with Gen Z and Gen Y reporting the highest levels of understanding. Males also continue to report a better understanding of AI than females.

How would you rate your understanding of generative artificial intelligence (AI)?

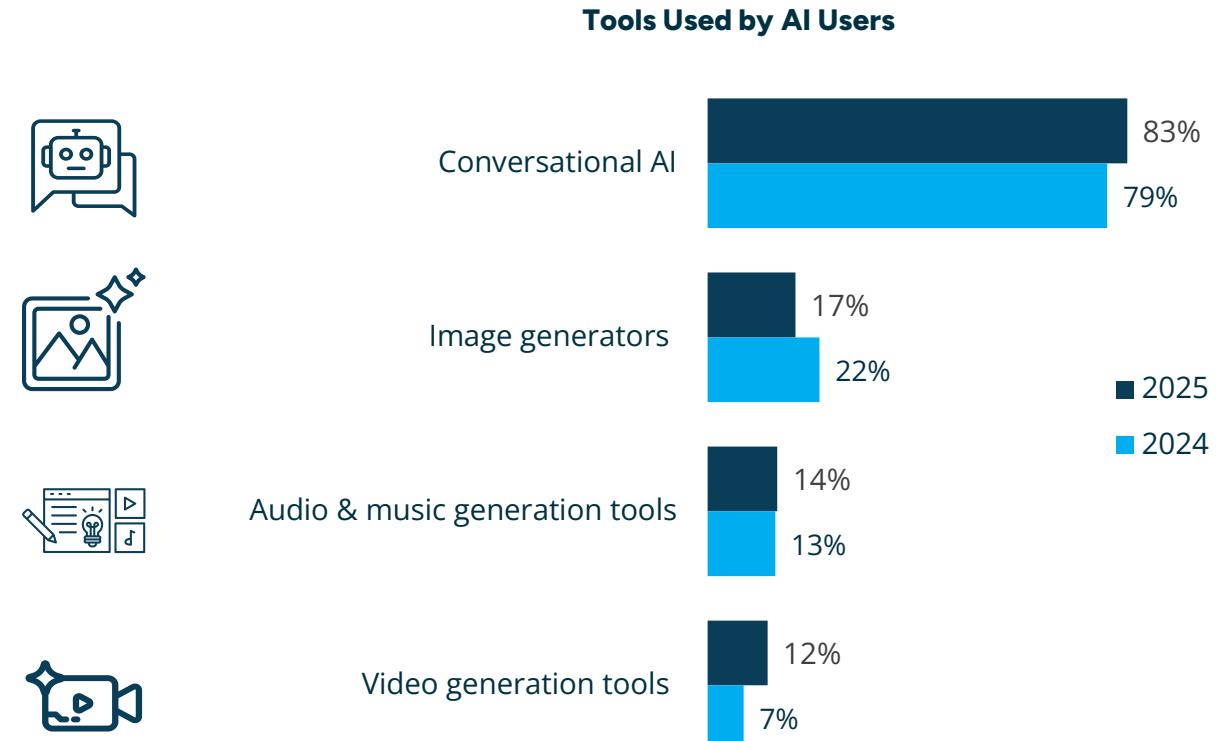
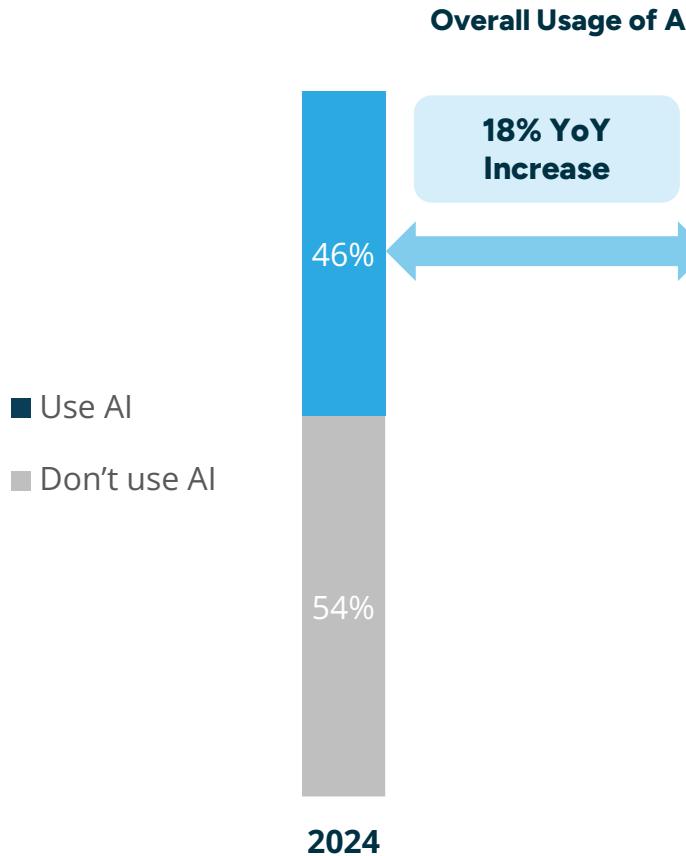


Q26. How would you rate your understanding of generative artificial intelligence (AI)
Base 2024: n=1,037; Base 2025: n=1,000, Gen Z n=181, Gen Y n=328, Gen X n=263, Boomer n=228
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Use of Generative AI

Generative AI adoption continues to accelerate, with nearly two-thirds of Australians now using at least one AI tool. Growth is being driven primarily by conversational AI platforms, which have become the dominant entry point. The shift away from image generation towards video tools reflects broader changes in media consumption habits.

Which AI applications do you use?



Q27. Which AI applications do you use?

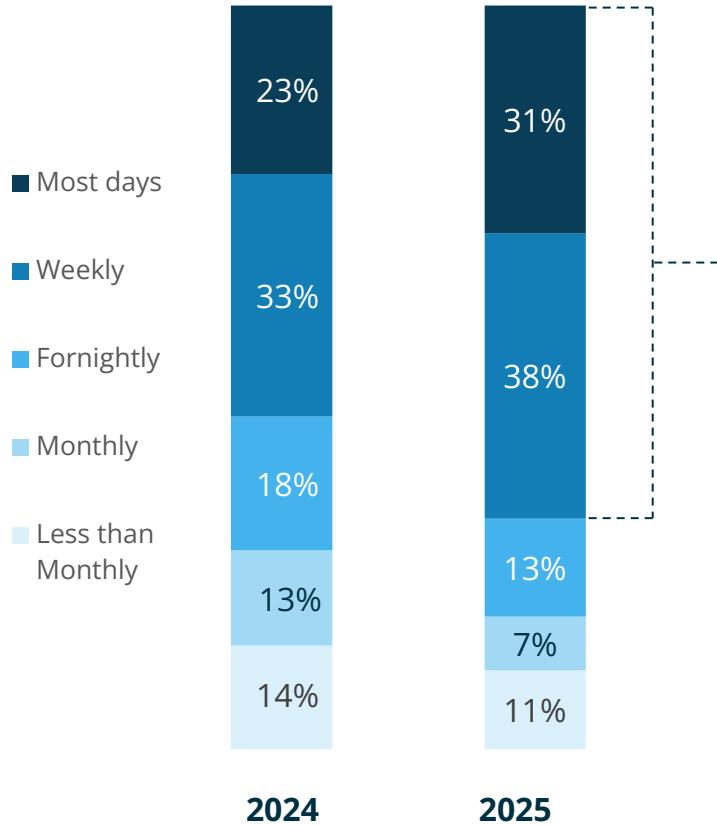
Base 2024: n=1,037, AI USERS: n=507; BASE 2025: N=1000, AI USERS N=596
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Frequency of AI Usage

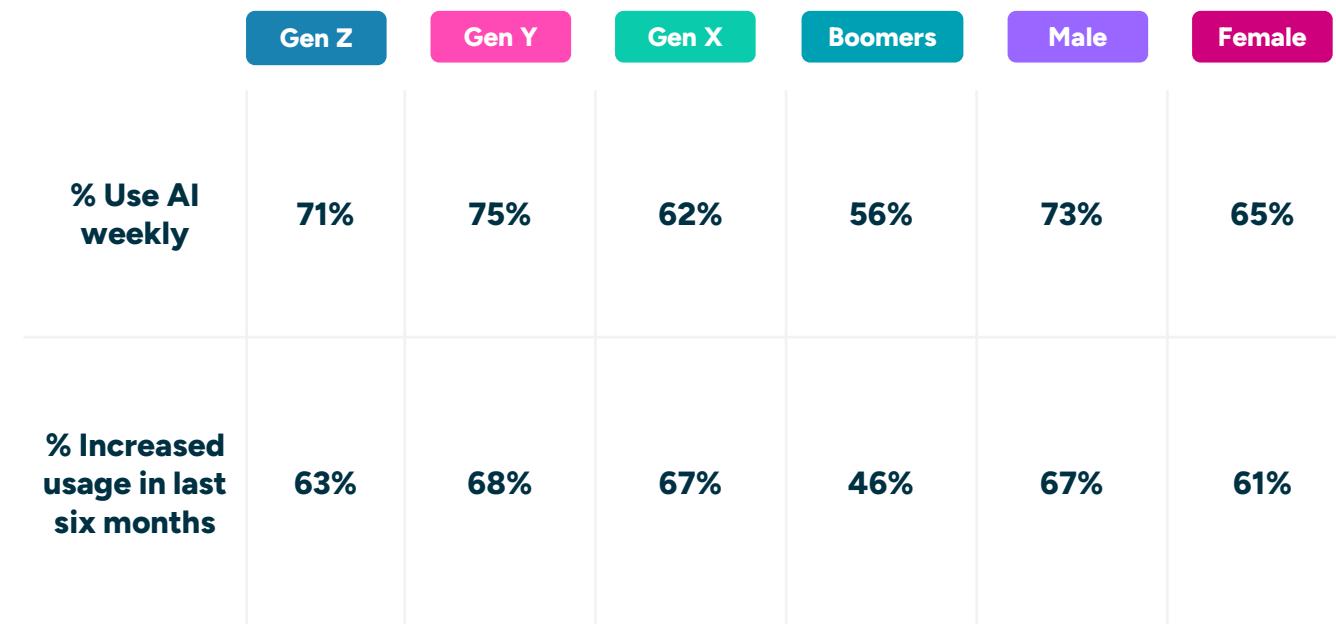
AI use is becoming habitual rather than occasional. Nearly seven in ten AI users now engage with AI weekly, driven by increased use over the past six months across all generations, with Gen Z and Gen Y leading the shift.

How frequently do you use these AI applications?

Overall Frequency of Usage



Frequency & Increase of Usage by Demographics



Q28. How frequently do you use these AI applications? Q29. Over the past 6 months, has your use of AI tools and applications changed?

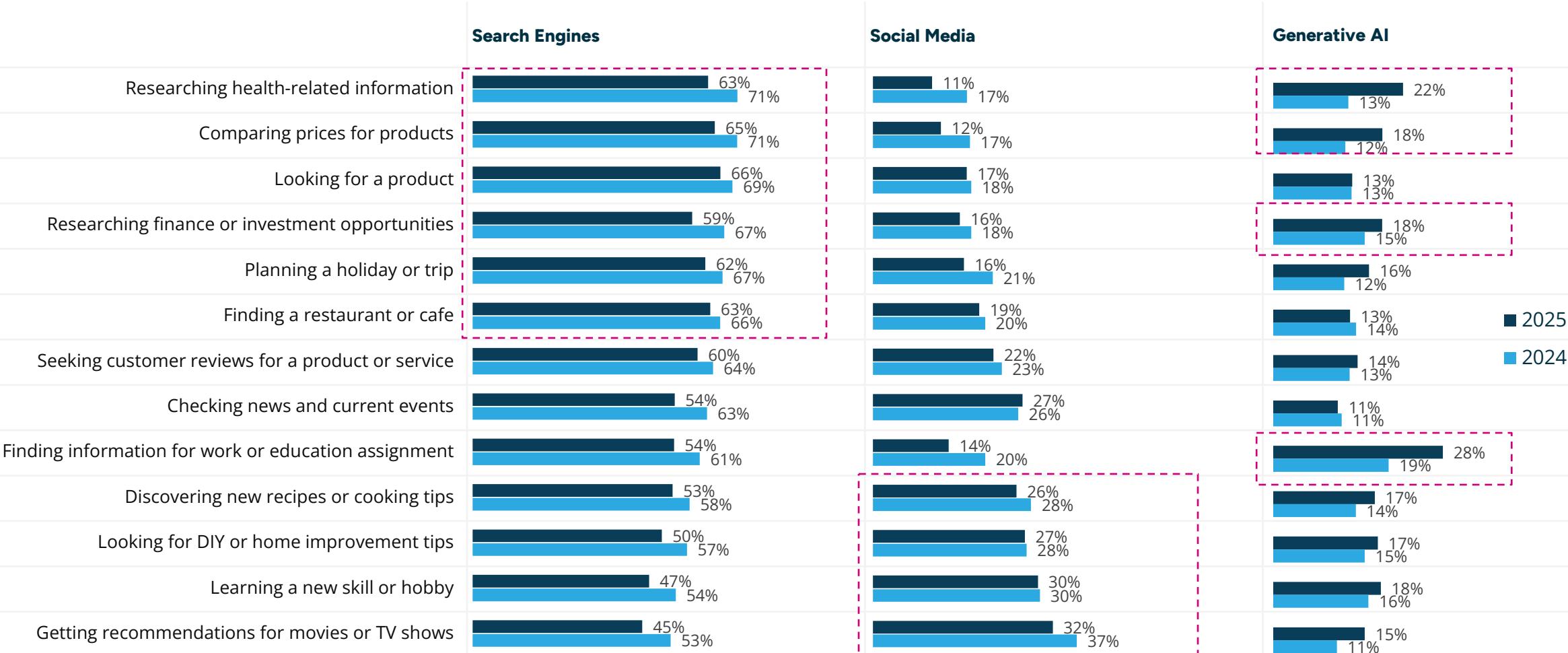
Base 2024: n=1,037, AI USERS: n=507; BASE 2025: N=1000, AI USERS N=596

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Channel Preference For Sourcing Information or Completing Daily Tasks

Search engines remain the first choice for most everyday tasks, particularly those involving quick look-ups, product search, and price comparison. Social media plays a stronger role in inspiration and discovery, especially for lifestyle-related activities. Generative AI is most likely to be used for work and education tasks, and is also gaining traction in areas such as health, finance, and price comparison, where people value help synthesising information rather than simply finding it.

What would be your first choice to complete the following tasks? (All Respondents)

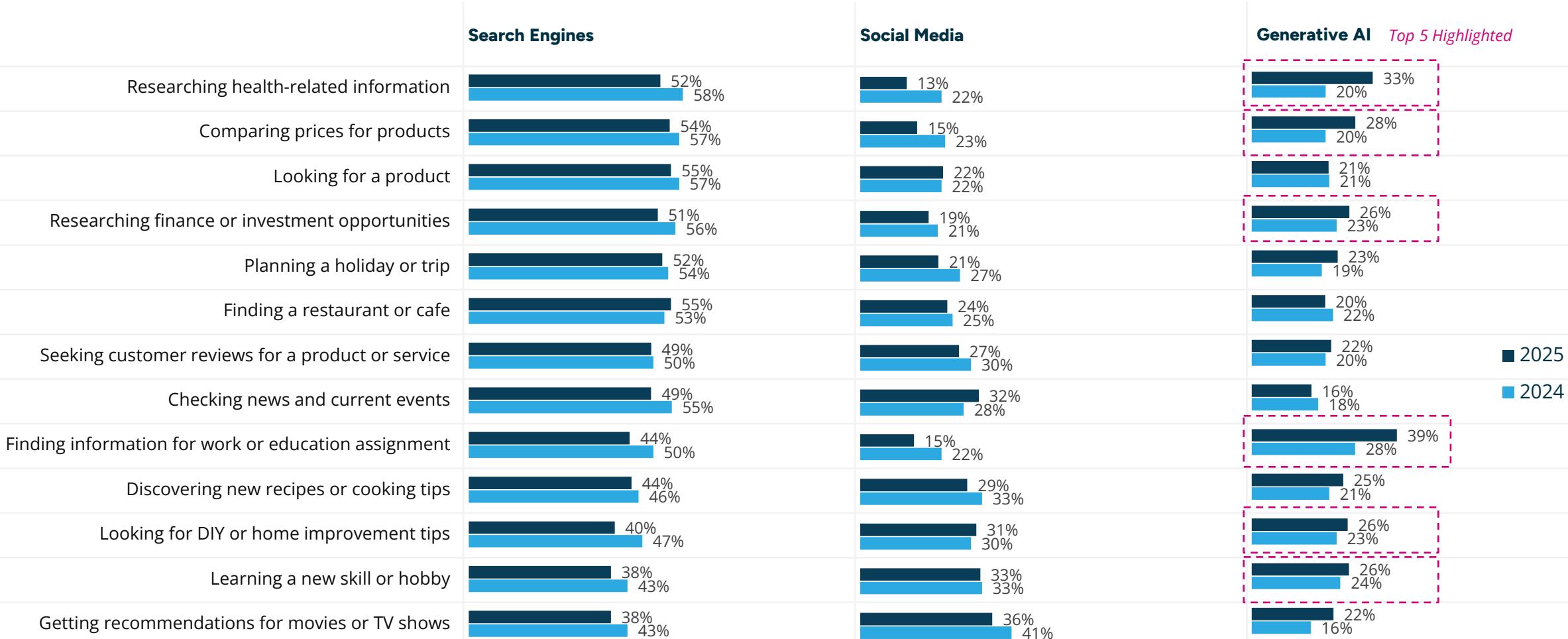


Q30. What is your first choice to complete the following tasks?
 Base 2024: n=884 (excludes N/A); Base 2025: n=945 (excludes N/A)
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Channel Preference For Sourcing Information (AI Users)

Among AI users, the shift accelerates: Generative AI approaches parity with search for work and education and expands into health, finance, and price comparison, reinforcing its role as a sense-making tool rather than a discovery channel.

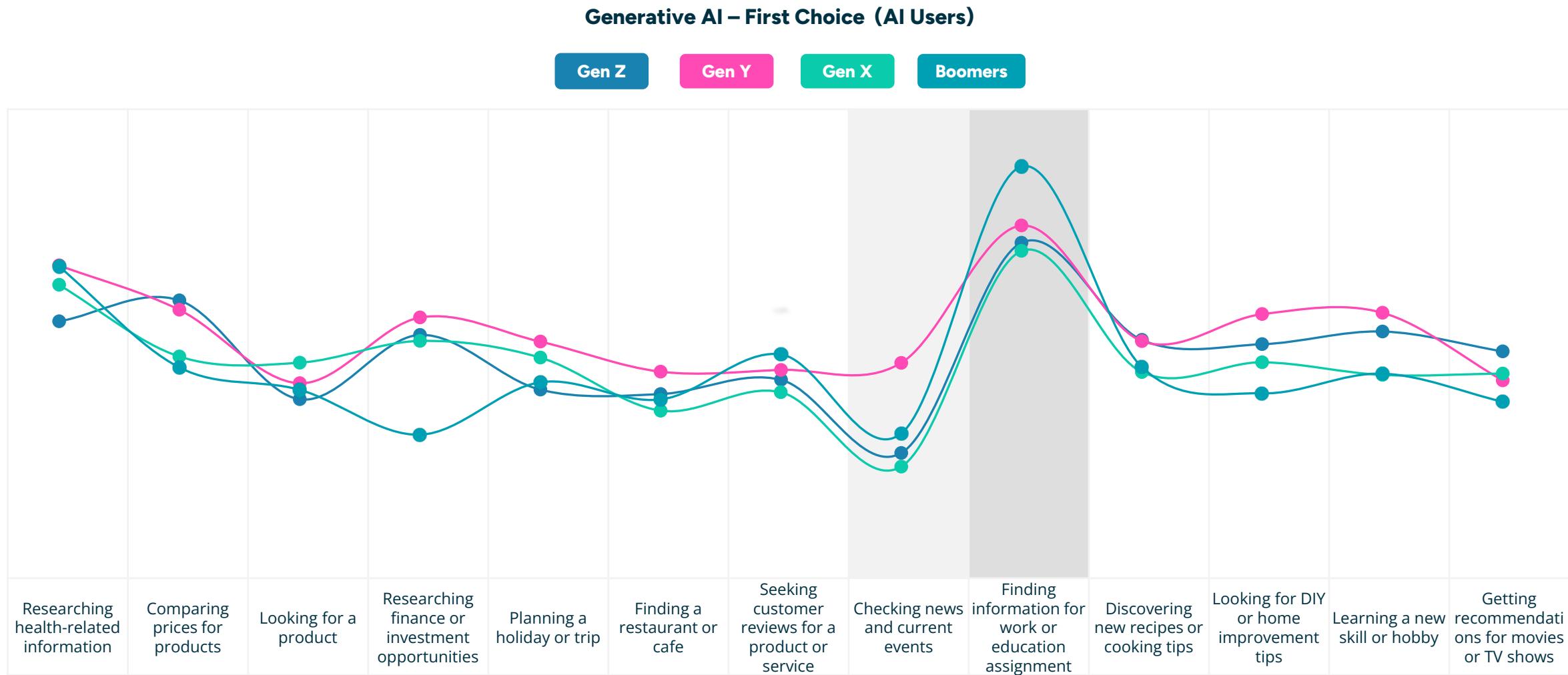
What would be your first choice to complete the following tasks? (AI Users)



Q30. What is your first choice to complete the following tasks?
 Base 2024: n=884 (excludes N/A); Base 2025: n=945 (excludes N/A)
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Channel Preference For Sourcing Information (by Generation)

Gen Y are leading the charge when it comes to using generative AI for common tasks, followed by Gen Z. Interestingly Gen Y are significantly more likely to use AI to check news and current events, while Boomers are strong users for work-related tasks.



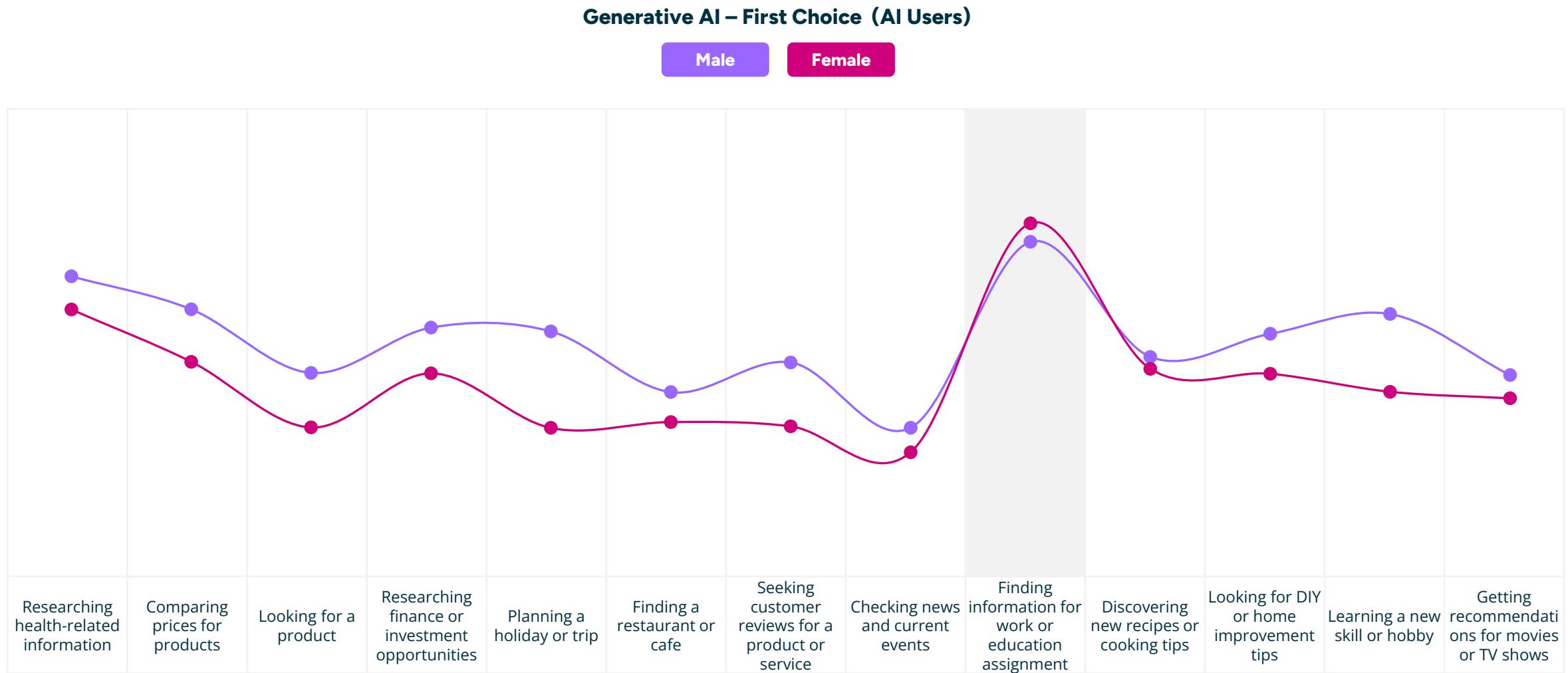
Q30. What would be your first choice to complete the following tasks?

Base: AI users n=561 (excludes N/A); Gen Z n=146, Gen Y n=251, Gen X n=141, Boomers n=58

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Channel Preference For Sourcing Information (by Gender)

Males are more likely than females to make generative AI their first choice for tasks, however both are strong users for work-related tasks.



Q30. What would be your first choice to complete the following tasks?

Base: AI users n=561 (excludes N/A); Male n=311, Female n=250

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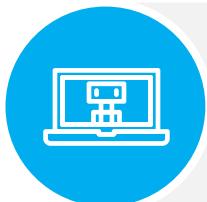
AI Understanding is rising

45% of Australians now say they have a good understanding of Generative AI, up from 31% in 2024.



Adoption is now mainstream

64% of Australians use Generative AI, increasing from 46% in 2024, with conversational AI the primary entry point.



Behaviour is shifting, led by younger cohorts

Younger Australians are leading the move to Generative AI as a first-choice tool across a growing range of online tasks.

Generative AI is no longer a niche or experimental tool. As it becomes embedded in everyday tasks, particularly those that require comparison, explanation and decision support, organisations can no longer rely solely on traditional search to influence consideration and choice.



Too often, we see businesses confusing data with insights.

Numbers don't answer business questions by themselves, but they still feel tangible.

We believe you need to go further.

Our people layer their understanding of the underlying business environment, context and market on top of primary or secondary data, using their expertise to discover insights that unlock tomorrow's opportunities, today.

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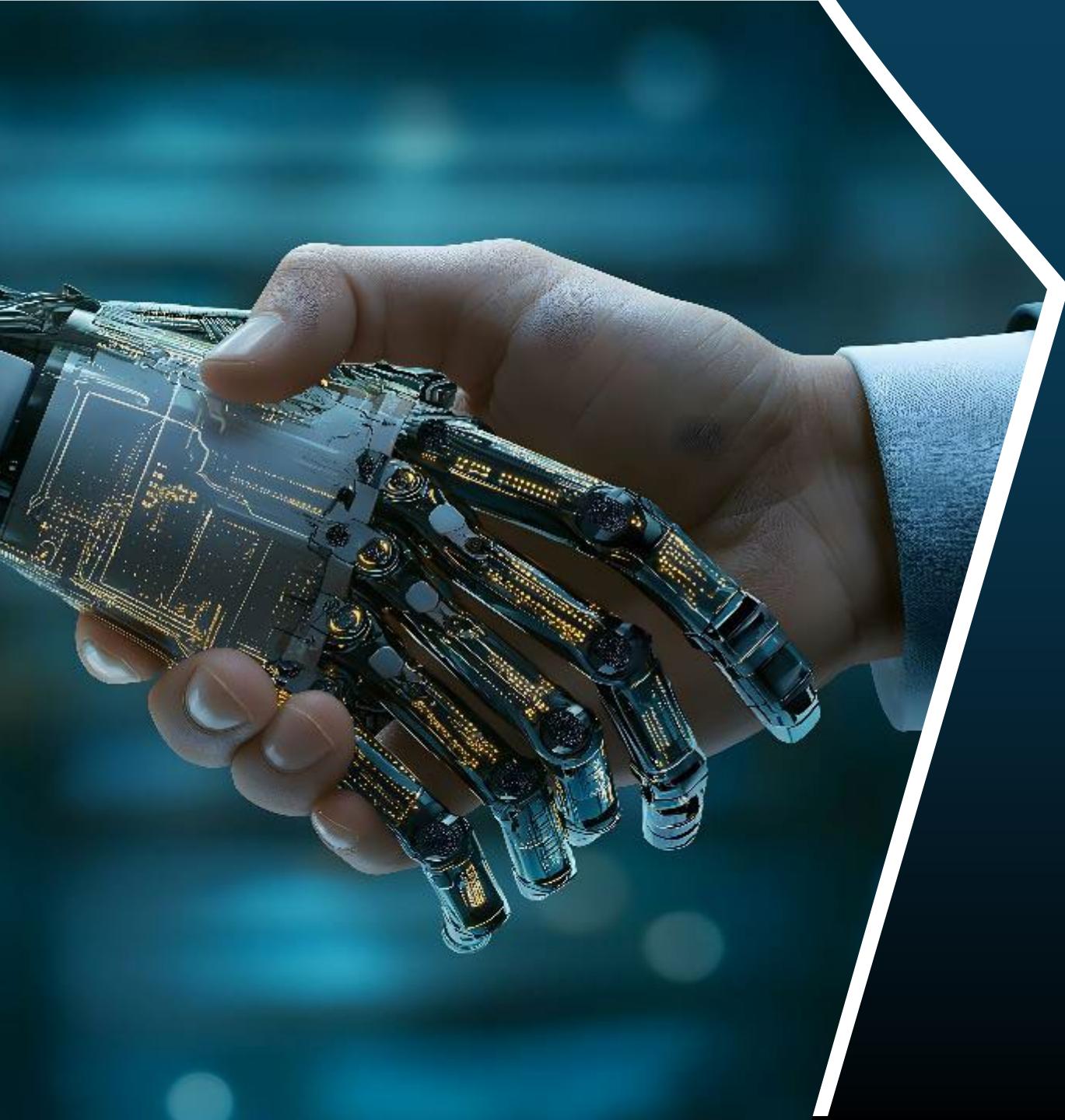
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