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How AI is rewriting the buyer's journey in Singapore

How AI is changing where Singapore consumers start looking, and where brands are losing track of them, based on a survey of 1,092 AI-active consumers in Singapore.

AI has moved upstream of product discovery

AI-active Singapore shoppers use an average of 4 tools and platforms to research products, combining AI assistants, search engines, and social media.

2 in 3 of AI-active Singapore shoppers used ChatGPT in the past 30 days to research a product — the single most-used tool



1 in 2 used a standard search engine in the past 30 days to research a product

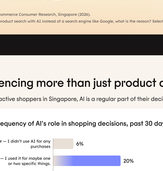


Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026)
Question: Which tools or platforms have you used in the past 30 days to research a product? *Select all that apply.* N=1,092.

Social media (**50%**) and in-app AI assistants such as those built into Shopee or Lazada (**40%**) were among the other tools used to research a product in the last 30 days.

Why shoppers turn to AI instead of traditional search

When AI-active consumers in Singapore start with AI instead of Google, it's about getting to the answer faster.



Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026).
Question: When starting a product search with AI instead of a search engine like Google, what is the reason? Select up to two. N=1,092.

AI is influencing more than just product discovery

For most AI-active shoppers in Singapore, AI is a regular part of their decision-making.

Frequency of AI's role in shopping decisions, past 30 days



Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026).
Question: Thinking about your total online shopping over the past 30 days, how often did an AI tool play a role in your decision-making? N=1,092.
*May not total 100% due to rounding.

AI helps shoppers compare, not just discover

AI functions closer to a decision-support tool than a pure discovery tool for most AI-active Singapore shoppers. Nearly half of AI-active shoppers (48%) use AI to compare options, more than to discover new products or for general inspiration.

Ways AI assisted with a recent purchase



Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026).
Question: In the last 30 days, in what ways has an AI tool assisted you with a specific purchase? *Select all that apply.* N=1,092.

Shoppers are open to AI assistance, but on their own terms

Singapore shoppers draw a line between delegating research and delegating the sale. When asked how a personalized AI shopping agent would fit into their current shopping habits:

42% would use it as a secondary research tool, verifying themselves afterward

22% would let it replace most of their current search methods

22% would use one only for complex or expensive purchases

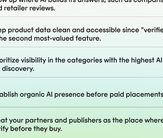
13% say that it wouldn't change their current habits as they prefer to browse and compare results themselves

Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026).
Question: How would a personalized AI shopping agent fit into your current shopping habits? N=1,092.
*May not total 100% due to rounding

Personalization and credibility matter more than automation

When asked what they'd value most in a personalized AI agent, full automation and ethical filtering are considered the least valuable — personalization and credibility matter more than the agent handling the transaction itself:

Most valuable feature of a personalized AI shopping agent



Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026).
Question: Which feature of a personalized AI shopping agent would you find most valuable? N=1,092.

Categories where AI-active shoppers rely on AI the most

Some categories are far more AI-dependent for discovery than others. In Singapore, reliance is highest in travel, electronics and tech, and health, beauty and wellness, and falls off sharply in categories like automotive or luxury.

Categories where consumers are likely to rely on AI for product recommendations

Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026).
Question: For which categories are you likely to rely on an AI tool for finding a product? Select all that apply. N=1,092. "Other" responses not shown (N=2).

Trust has a ceiling: most AI-active consumers still want to approve the purchase

That same pattern shows up in auto-buy trust: the categories consumers research most with AI aren't necessarily the ones they'll let it buy in, and 34% would never let AI auto-buy anything without their approval, in any category.

Categories trusted for AI auto-buy among active auto-buy consumers

Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026).
Question: For which categories would you trust an AI to "auto-buy" an item for you? *Select all that apply.* N=724 (Active Auto-Buy consumer group, calculated as 1,092 minus 368 non-Active respondents; percentages recalculated to reflect this subgroup)

Where brand visibility gets decided

Singapore shoppers already treat AI as a daily decision-support layer sitting ahead of search — *not* a novelty, and not a replacement for retailer sites. Here is how brands can adapt to AI-driven discovery:

01 Add a discovery question to your post-purchase survey.

02 Show up where AI builds its answers, such as comparison content and retailer reviews.

03 Keep product data clean and accessible since "verified reviews" is the second most-valued feature.

04 Prioritize visibility in the categories with the highest AI reliance for discovery.

05 Establish organic AI presence before paid placements arrive.

06 Treat your partners and publishers as the place where consumers verify before they buy.

Source: impact.com, AI in Commerce Consumer Research, Singapore (2026).

ABOUT THE DATA

During May 2026, 1,092 consumers in Singapore completed the study. To qualify for participation in the study, respondents were required to meet two strict screening criteria:

1. Identify as an active user of AI technologies.
2. Have made two or more online purchases within the 30 days prior to survey administration.

The sample consisted of adults aged 18 to 75. The survey was conducted at a 95% confidence level with a +-3% margin of error.

The sample was scanned through a panel provider, using their vetted consumer panel networks.

To participate future market evolution, this study intentionally oversampled high-earning consumers, with 42% of the total sample reporting a household income at $80,000 or greater.

While this group represents high-value spenders, their primary purpose is as a proxy for early adopters of agentic behavior. Analyzing this forward-looking segment was intended to provide brands with a 12-to-18-month lead time on the behavioral shifts expected to eventually redefine the broader consumer landscape.

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