



CorZen
Plan for success

RESEARCH REPORT

What 10,000+ AI Queries Reveal About Why AI Isn't Recommending You

(And How to Change That)

A Data-Driven Guide for Brands & Retailers

The AI Shopping Shift

We do not typically ask AI only for “the best product.” We use AI as a conversational decision assistant: to discover options, translate our needs into product requirements, compare trade-offs, interpret evidence, find value, and validate a short list.

Survey evidence consistently places AI’s strongest role in the research-and-comparison stages. In a U.S. survey of 1,030 AI-experienced shoppers, 52% said they put constraints such as budget, features, compatibility, or use case directly into their AI queries; 33% refined their request through follow-up conversation. A separate IBM/NRF global study of more than 18,000 consumers found people using AI chiefly for product research (41%), review interpretation (33%), and deal hunting (31%).^{[1][2]}

52%

Specify constraints up front

89%

Double-check AI info before buying

46%

Fully trust AI recommendations

88%

Want to know the source of info

What’s inside

- ☐ The 16 query types shoppers bring to AI, mapped to the buyer journey
- ☐ Why an AI query is structurally different from a keyword search
- ☐ The eight things a useful AI recommendation has to contain
- ☐ Six changes that make your product content AI-recommendable

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HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

Sections 01–03 describe the demand side: what people ask AI and what they expect back. Section 04 converts those results into a content strategy that will get you recommended.

The AI Buyer Journey

16 query types

DISCOVERY

CONSIDERATION

EVALUATION → P.05

DECISION → P.05

Discovery

The shopper does not yet know what to buy, or from whom.

Broad discovery and inspiration

"What are good gift ideas for a coffee lover?"

Need-to-product translation

"What kind of air purifier do I need for pet dander in a small apartment?"

Brand and new-product discovery

"Which lesser-known backpack brands make durable commuter bags?"

Personalized shortlist

"Recommend three laptops for college, light gaming, and video editing under \$1,200."

Consideration

Hard requirements enter the conversation and the field narrows.

Constraint-based recommendations

"Find a carry-on suitcase under \$200 that fits airline size limits and has durable wheels."

Use-case or scenario fit

"Which running shoes are best for a beginner training for a half marathon on pavement?"

Deal, price, and timing questions

"What's a fair price for this TV, and when does it usually go on sale?"

52%

put budget, features, compatibility, or use case straight into the query — the constraint arrives before you get a chance to position against it.

Where the Decision Is Won

stages 3–4 of 4

DISCOVERY ← P.04

CONSIDERATION ← P.04

EVALUATION

DECISION

Evaluation

The longest stage: seven of the sixteen query types live here, weighing evidence and trade-offs.

Product comparisons	<i>"Compare the Sony WH-1000XM6 and Bose QuietComfort Ultra for flights and work calls."</i>
Trade-off analysis	<i>"Is better battery life worth giving up a lighter weight in this e-reader?"</i>
Feature and technical-fit advice	<i>"Will this monitor work well with a MacBook Air and PS5?"</i>
Review synthesis and credibility checks	<i>"Summarize what long-term owners complain about with this espresso machine."</i>
Quality, durability, and risk research	<i>"Which cordless vacuums have the fewest reliability complaints and easy-to-replace batteries?"</i>
Value-for-money assessment	<i>"Is the premium version worth it, or is the midrange model the better value?"</i>
Alternatives and substitutes	<i>"What are alternatives to this skincare serum with similar ingredients but lower cost?"</i>

Decision

The shopper is no longer asking what to buy, but asking to be checked.

Decision confirmation	<i>"I'm choosing between these two—given my priorities, which should I buy?"</i>
Post-recommendation verification	<i>"Show me the sources for those reliability claims and where each model is in stock."</i>

"Humans ask AI for products in the language of jobs, constraints, and trade-offs."

AI Queries vs. Traditional Search

The major difference from conventional keyword search is context density. Rather than searching “best running shoes,” someone may ask: “Recommend wide-toe-box running shoes for a new runner with knee sensitivity, mostly road miles, under \$150.” This single request bundles the category, intended job, user profile, constraint, risk concern, and budget.

TRADITIONAL SEARCH

“best running shoes”

One category, no context. The searcher does the matching work themselves across ten blue links.

AI QUERY

“Recommend wide-toe-box running shoes for a new runner with knee sensitivity, mostly road miles, under \$150.”

category

intended job

user profile

constraint

risk concern

budget

WHY IT MATTERS

If your product content cannot answer for a job, a constraint, and a trade-off at the same time, the model has nothing to match against and it recommends someone else.

Four Patterns in the Data

01

Constraints are central, not incidental

52% of surveyed shoppers specify a budget, needed feature, compatibility requirement, or use case up front.^[1]

02

Queries evolve through dialogue

1/3 go back and forth with the system to refine the recommendation, which means people also seek clarifying questions and iterative narrowing rather than just a one-shot answer.^[1]

03

Comparison is a core content demand

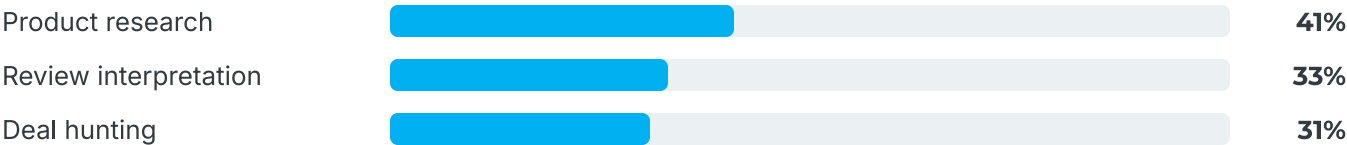
More than 80% of AI shoppers in the IAB study regarded AI as most effective for researching and comparing products.^[3]

04

Shoppers want synthesis, then proof

AI users ask it to interpret reviews and hunt for deals, but 89% still double-check AI information before buying; the sources of information and verified reviews are particularly important trust signals.^{[2][3]}

What people use AI for



IBM/NRF global study, 18,000+ consumers

The 8 Pillars of AI Recommendations

Score your own page

A useful AI recommendation therefore usually needs to contain more than a product name. The content people are implicitly asking for tends to include:

	WHAT THE ANSWER HAS TO CONTAIN	ON YOUR PAGE?
01	Short list, not catalog A short list rather than an unbounded catalog.	☐
02	Fit-to-person reasoning Why each option suits the stated context.	☐
03	Clear deal-breakers Clear differences and deal-breakers, not generic pros and cons.	☐
04	Price and value context Including what extra spending buys.	☐
05	Compatibility and setup Compatibility and practical setup considerations.	☐
06	Real-world feedback 87% say verified reviews would improve trust Common complaints, durability concerns, or who should avoid it.	☐
07	Alternatives Alternatives for different priorities or budgets.	☐
08	Verifiable sources 88% say knowing the source would improve trust Verifiable sources, retailer availability, and current-price checking when the decision is near purchase.	☐

8 / 8 is the target. Every unchecked row is a question the model has to answer from someone else's page.

The Trust Gap

This last point matters commercially: the IAB study found that only 46% of AI shoppers fully trust recommendations, while 88% said knowing the source of information would improve trust and 87% pointed to verified customer reviews.^[3]



IAB study of AI shoppers; IBM/NRF consumer study

THE HANDOFF IS WHERE YOU LOSE THEM

47%

used AI to narrow options, then went to Google for reviews or prices

40%

researched or compared with AI but purchased elsewhere

Semrush survey^[1]

How to Make Your Products AI-Recommendable

For brands, retailers, and recommendation-system designers, the content most likely to satisfy these requests is not simply a “best products” page. It is structured, specific material that lets an AI connect products to real decisions:

1

Complete specs and compatibility information.

2

Clear use-case guidance, including who a product is and is not for.

3

Direct comparison content framed around meaningful trade-offs.

4

Accurate price, stock, variant, and warranty data.

5

Credible review and reliability evidence.

6

Plain-language explanations of value and differentiation.

In other words, humans ask AI for products in the language of jobs, constraints, and trade-offs to form a shortlist before checking evidence and completing the purchase elsewhere.

Trying to do a lot with a little?

CorZen is your operating system for building a business without a team of experts. Many of us remember working with Marketing teams of 100+ people and Sales teams that could easily double that. Today, many Marketing teams have been compressed into 2-3 people who are also expected to be programmers, project managers, and finance operatives.

Rather than invest their time into building every single AI automation tool themselves – planning, building, testing, troubleshooting, maintaining – small teams are winning by using proven tools that were created by experts. The AI agents in CorZen are designed and maintained based on 25 years of Marketing experience. We invested the time to define ‘what good looks like’ so you don’t have to. CorZen is the unfair advantage for small teams that want to win.

At Zenly, we use these agents on a daily basis for our own company.



Scan to create your account

Create your account today.

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