# INVOCA

# The Home Services Buyer Experience Report 2025

How home services consumers value human connections and view AI in the modern buying journey

# Many Home Services Consumers Are Open To AI, But They Won't Forsake Human Connections. Neither Can Your Business.

When we last published this report in 2022, inflation had started making a dent in consumers' wallets, and ChatGPT was about to take the world by storm. Since then, inflation has chilled out (a little) while the AI wars have heated up. AI has quickly become integrated into every part of our lives, from work to home to play—and our lives as consumers. Home services brands wasted no time hitching their wagons to AI, aspiring to increase buying journey efficiency and provide the experiences that digital-age consumers demand.

But has AI lived up to the hype for home services consumers, or has it foisted frustration and impersonal service upon them for the sake of efficiency and corporate penny-pinching? Can AI replace human agents in the home services buying process? Is it all too much, too soon? That's what this report is determined to uncover.

We've found a surprising level of acceptance of home services companies using AI to assist their customers during the buying process, but there are also strong signals of resignation, indifference, and outright rejection of getting help from AI agents. Home services consumers aren't quite ready for a full-on AI takeover, and more so, they still overwhelmingly prefer human assistance when they're making high-stakes purchases.

The big takeaway is that home services businesses must strike the perfect balance of digital, AI, and the human touch and invest in cohesive AI strategies across the entire buying journey. This includes using AI in the background to help human agents perform at their best and provide fast, highly personalized experiences at every turn. In the rush to utilize the latest AI tech, home services brands must ensure that consumers are ready for it and that it's not used to put up roadblocks to the personal human connection that they desire.

Read on to get the stats and see where home services consumers— and your business—stand in this brave new AI-powered world.

# About The Survey

For this report, we surveyed 1,000 consumers from the US and UK who researched and made a "high-stakes" purchase in the last 12 months in the following categories: automotive, healthcare, home services, insurance, financial services, telecommunications, and travel. For this study, a "high-stakes purchase" is defined as one that requires time to weigh options, research, and/or devote more thought to before making a decision, due to the complexity and/or cost of the vehicle, service, or product. Only US data from home services industry respondents is used in this report version, excluding generational data, which is from all respondents. Individual industry data by generation was not statistically significant. Results may not total to 100% due to rounding and multiple selection options. The field survey was performed by Sago Online Research.

# Most Home Services Consumers Have Encountered A Brand's AI, And Many Didn't Care

When home services consumers are making high-stakes purchase decisions, they have a lot of questions, and there are many touchpoints along the way where they can get answers. That means there are also many opportunities for AI to step in and address their needs quickly. But are home services consumers really ready to let AI do the talking?

Only 11% of home services consumers surveyed reported never interacting with a brand's AI when making a high-stakes purchase in the last year. The big question is, did they like it?

Fifty-two percent of home services respondents said that interacting with a brand's AI tools made their buying experience better. However, the shrug is also strong, with 26% saying AI made no difference at all, and 21% said that AI made the buying experience worse.

**SIDENOTE**

## Brand AI vs Generative AI Survey Questions

When asked questions about "a brand's AI", we specified that the questions refer to AI tools provided by the brand they were interacting with—not tools like ChatGPT or Google Gemini that they may have used independently. We asked questions specifically about generative AI use later in the survey.

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## 11%
**INVOCA**

Have not interacted with a brand's AI

## 52%
**INVOCA**

AI made the buying experience better

## 26%
**INVOCA**

AI made no difference

## 21%
**INVOCA**

AI made the buying experience worse

# Home Services Consumers Have Mixed Feelings About AI Assistants

Now for the mushy psychological bit—how does interacting with a brand's AI agents and tools make consumers feel? When asked to select words that describe how interacting with AI during a purchase made them feel, the results were mixed, with 24% selecting words with a negative connotation. About 29% selected words with positive connotations. The AI apathy is present again, with 13% selecting "indifferent".

Skeptical
Curious
Frustrated
Confident
Relieved    Confused    Indifferent

# Many Home Services Consumers Feel Forced To Use Your AI

You always want to meet your customers where they are, and forcing them into an AI workflow to get questions answered or make a purchase is not the way to do it. 66% of home services consumers report feeling forced to use a brand's AI most or all of the time, and 27% report feeling forced to use it sometimes—not a good look for the CX enthusiasts among us.

Once they realize they're interacting with AI and not a human—whether that's via a text-based or voice-based agent—55% report feeling positively about it. Nearly a quarter were indifferent, 21% felt negatively, and only 2% said they couldn't tell if it was AI or not.

**66%** INVOCA
Say they feel forced to use a brand's AI most/all of the time

**55%** INVOCA
Feel positive about their AI interactions

**23%** INVOCA
Are indifferent

**21%** INVOCA
Have negative feelings

**2%** INVOCA
Can't differentiate AI from human assistance

# How Your Home Services Brand Uses AI Can Make Or Break Its Reputation

More often than not, home services consumers are satisfied with the help they receive from a brand's AI during the buying process. That does not equate to them appreciating the help, however. Over a third of those surveyed report feeling less valued as a customer when a home services brand interacts with them via AI. Though 45% feel more valued, and 21% weren't swayed either way by AI assistance.

# When A Home Services Business Uses AI To Interact With Customers, They Feel

**34%**
Less valued
INVOCA

**45%**
More valued
INVOCA

**21%**
Makes no difference
INVOCA

Are satisfied with the help they receive from a brand's AI:

**49%**
Most or all of the time
INVOCA

**31%**
Sometimes
INVOCA

**19%**
Rarely or never
INVOCA
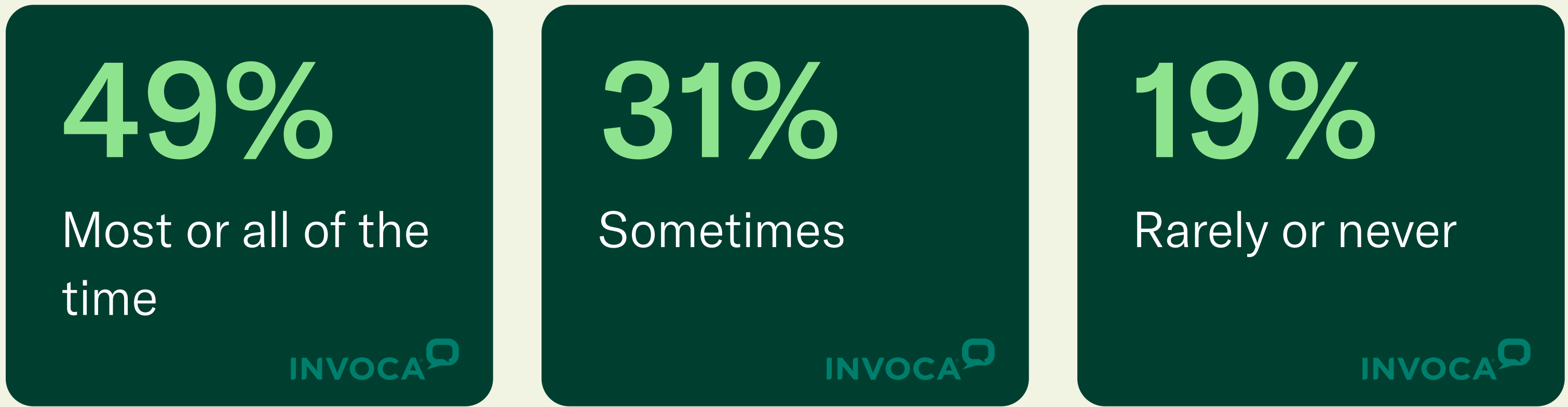
# Know Your Audience: Age Matters When It Comes To AI Acceptance

If your customers tend to be on the older side, you need to be particularly thoughtful about your AI implementation. Across the board, Boomers hold a much more negative view of AI, and Gen Xers don't like it much more.

Gen Z, on the other hand, thinks AI is lit. Nearly 60% of Gen Z consumers report having had a memorable positive experience with a brand's AI when making a high-stakes purchase, compared to only 14% of Boomers.

## When Interacting With A Brand's AI

| | Average | Gen Z | Boomers |
|---|---|---|---|
| It improved my perception of the brand | 38% | 58% | 5% |
| Feel positively | 37% | 51% | 5% |
| Feel more valued | 28% | 49% | 1% |
| It made the buying experience better | 35% | 54% | 5% |
| It made the buying experience more personal | 29% | 49% | 4% |
| Feel satisfied with the assistance it provided | 36% | 48% | 13% |

**Performance Scale**

0%　　　　　30%　　　　　60%+
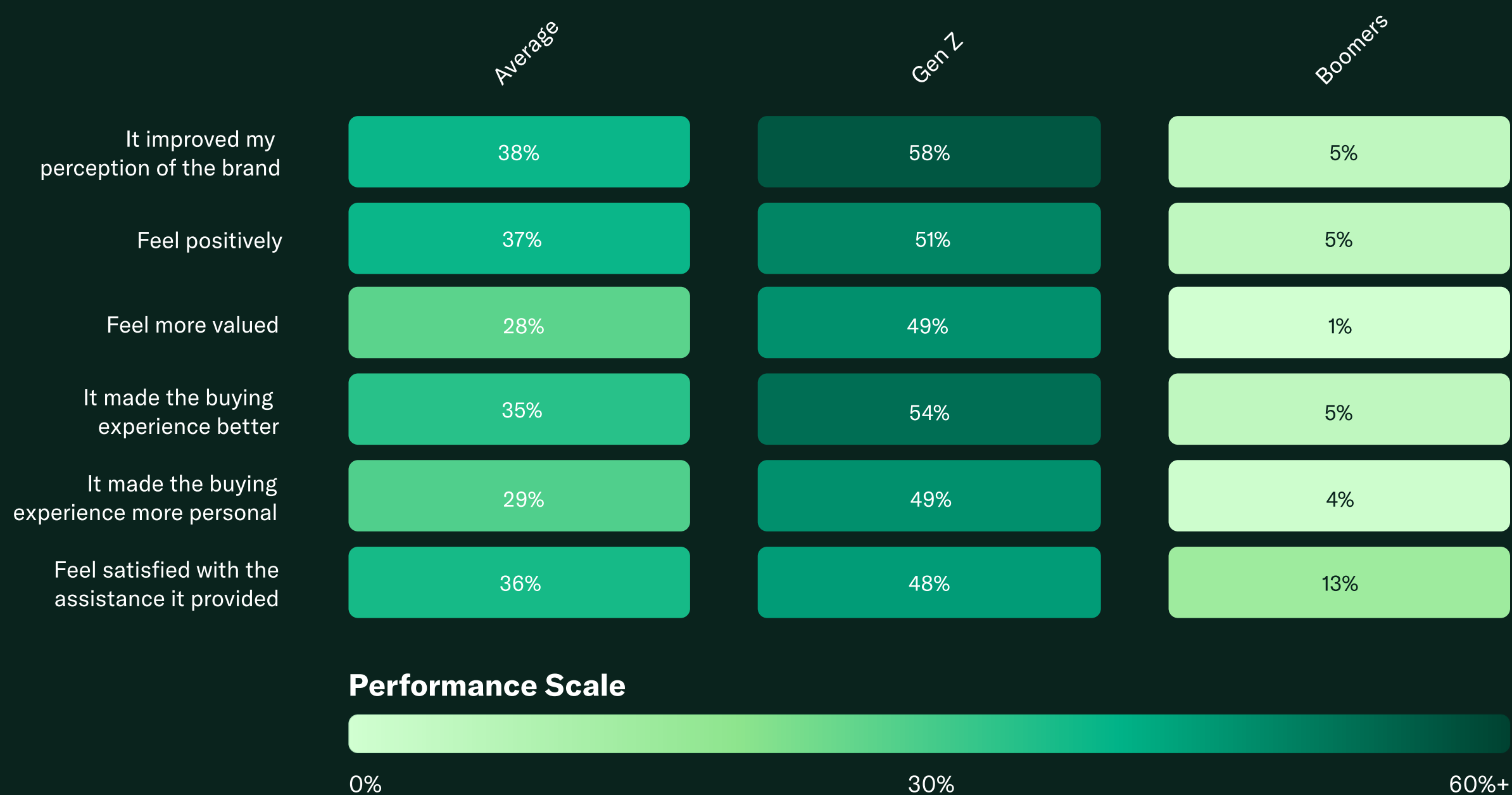
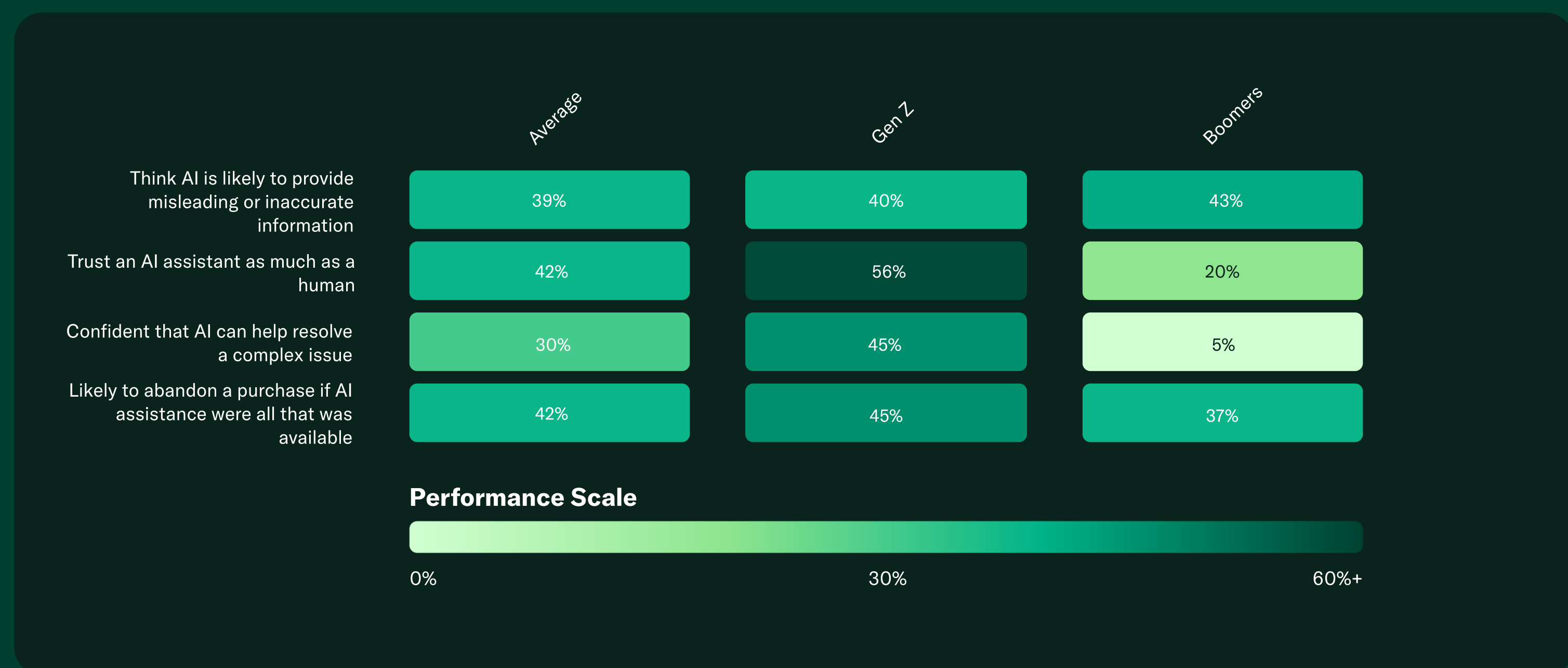# Home Services Consumers Are Wary Of The Answers That AI Provides

If you've heard of AI, you've likely heard of and possibly encountered hallucinations—when an AI system generates false or misleading information that sounds correct but isn't based on real data or facts. Home services consumers express notable concern about AI accuracy, with 39% believing AI is likely to provide misleading or incorrect information.

Despite these concerns, home services consumers show reasonable trust levels. Over 40% trust an AI assistant as much as a human, while 30% are confident that AI can help resolve a complex issue. However, 48% of home services consumers are likely to abandon a purchase if AI assistance were the only option available.

| | Average | Gen Z | Boomers |
|---|---|---|---|
| Think AI is likely to provide misleading or inaccurate information | 39% | 40% | 43% |
| Trust an AI assistant as much as a human | 42% | 56% | 20% |
| Confident that AI can help resolve a complex issue | 30% | 45% | 5% |
| Likely to abandon a purchase if AI assistance were all that was available | 42% | 45% | 37% |

**Performance Scale**

0%          30%          60%+

# When Do Home Services Consumers Want To Use AI?

There is obviously some trepidation around using a home services brand's AI assistance when making high-stakes purchases. However, there are situations where home services consumers are entirely comfortable with, or even prefer, using AI in the buying process.

Simplicity and speed are key here. When the task is simple or it's just plain faster than a person, many home services consumers prefer AI. Fifty-seven percent think solving complex issues is the thing AI is worst at. It's also worth noting that 81% of home services consumers said they'd be more willing to use AI if it were clear how they could speak with a person instead.

Surprisingly, only 28% prefer AI when they don't want to talk to a person, which seems like the perfect use case! There is no significant difference in use case preference across age groups.

# Home Services Consumers Prefer AI When

**43%**

They need **fast answers**

**37%**

It helps **avoid waiting** on hold

**35%**

The task is **simple**

**28%**

They **don't want to talk** to a person

# They Think AI Is The Worst At

**57%**

**Solving** complex issues

**46%**

Providing **empathy**

**43%**

**Understanding context** or nuance

**36%**

**Personalizing** communication

**33%**

**Following through** on requests
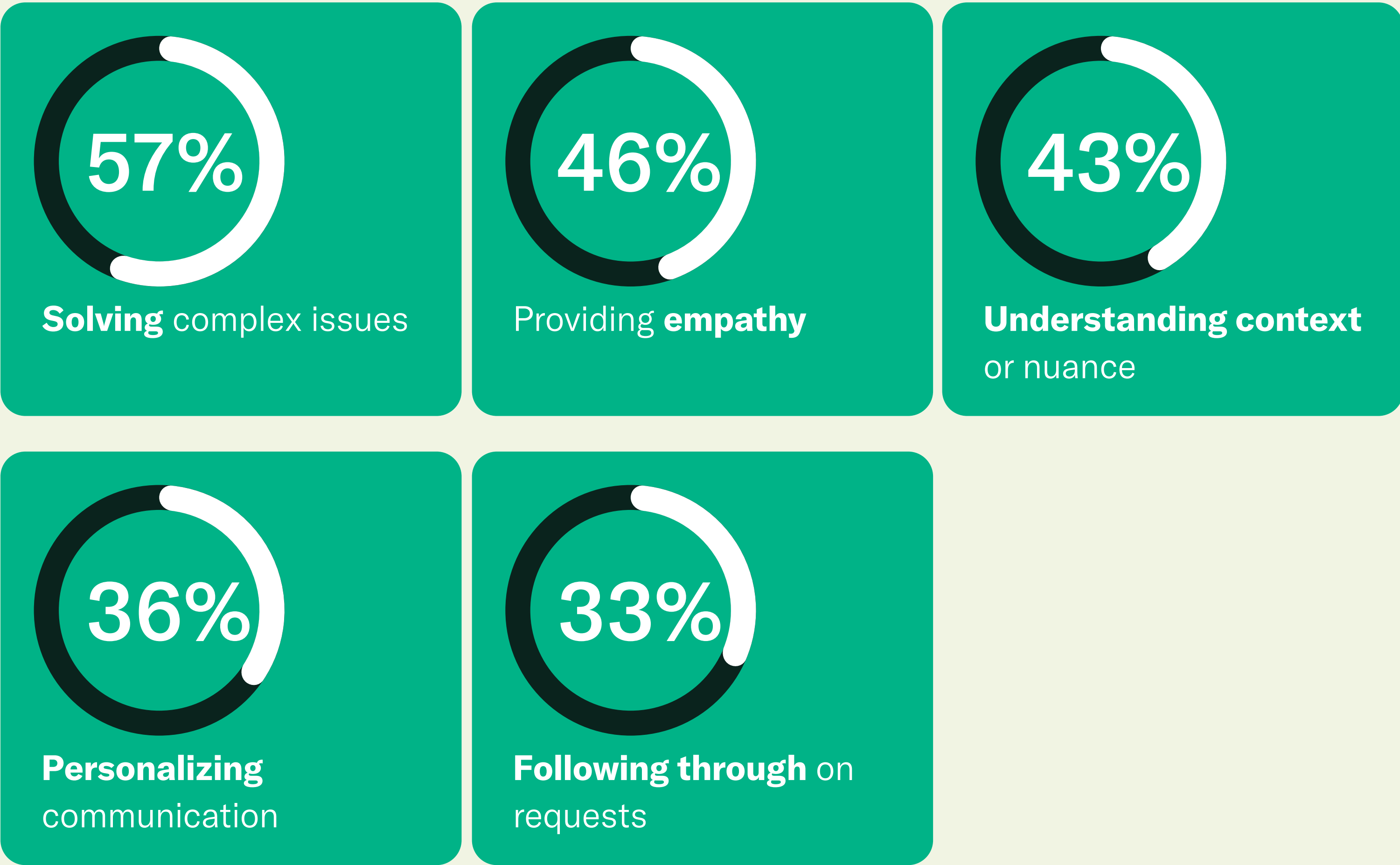
# Home Services Consumers Are Optimistic About AI's Future—With A Few Changes

Not everybody is satisfied with the way AI works today, but 65% are confident that it will become more helpful in the next three years. And 49% think AI will someday fully replace human assistance, though a quarter of them won't be happy about it.

Home services survey respondents also shared their opinions on how to improve AI assistants. The top answer was "quicker access to a human", but many also want smarter responses and more personalized interactions. Only 7% said they don't want to use AI at all.

## 65%
INVOCA

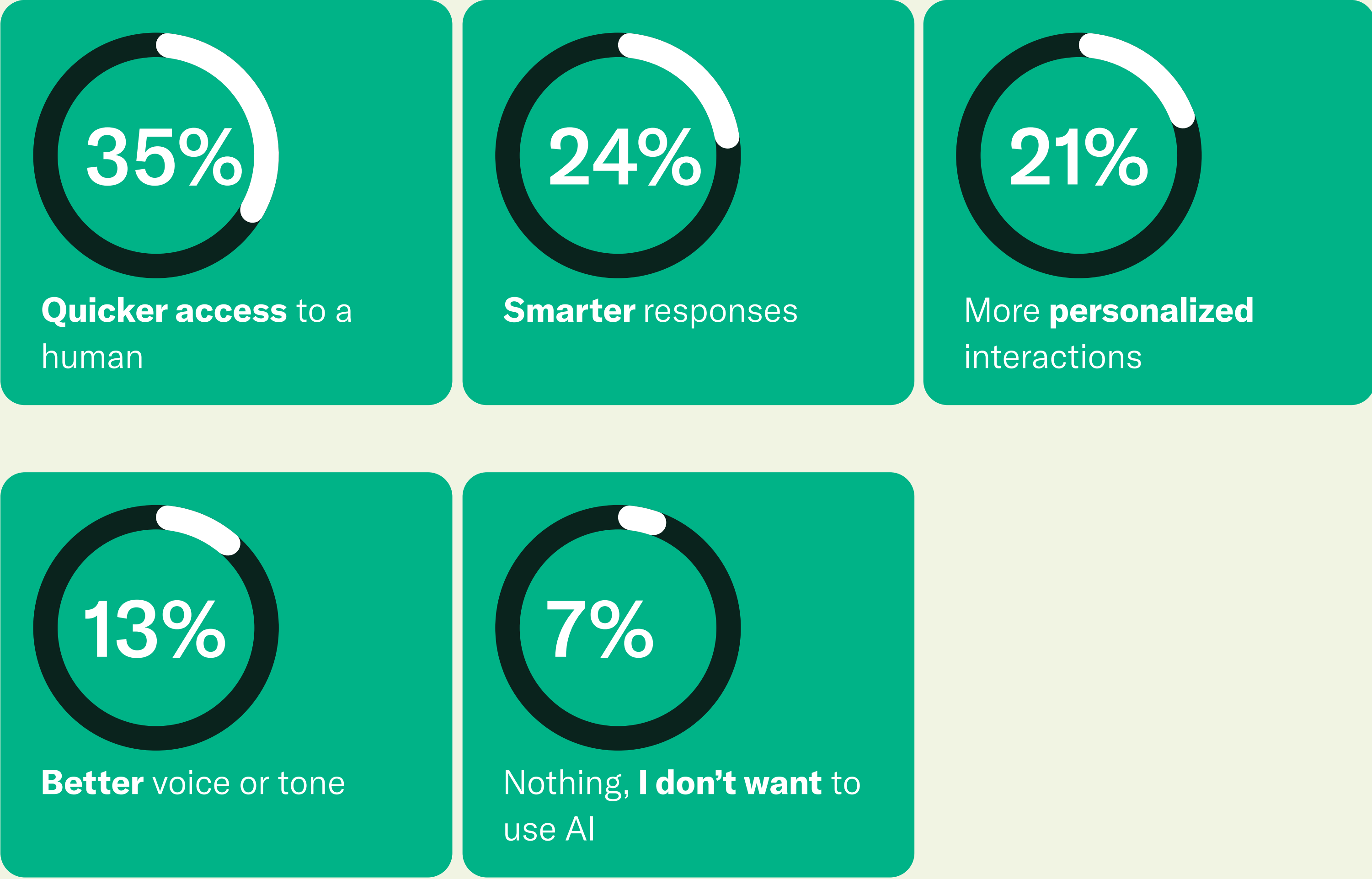AI will get more helpful in the next 3 years

## 49%
INVOCA

Think AI will fully replace human agents someday

## 25%
INVOCA

Won't like it

# The One Thing That Would Most Improve The Experience With AI Assistants Is

**35%**

**Quicker access** to a human

**24%**

**Smarter** responses

**21%**

More **personalized** interactions

**13%**

**Better** voice or tone

**7%**

Nothing, **I don't want** to use AI

# Many Home Services Consumers Are Using Generative AI To Research Their Purchases— Especially Younger Ones

We've covered how home services consumers are using the AI assistants brands provide, but how are they using ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and other generative AI tools when researching their home services purchase? Over 40% report using generative AI when researching a high-stakes home services purchase. There's a generation gap here, too, with 61% of Gen Zers and sizable proportions of Millennials and Gen Xers saying they've used gen AI when doing research, while only 11% of Boomers have.

## Have Used Generative AI To Help You Research A High-Stakes Purchase

| Average | Gen Z | Millenials | Gen X | Boomers |
|---------|-------|------------|-------|---------|
| 41% | 61% | 57% | 42% | 11% |

# How Home Services Consumers Are Using Generative AI During The Buying Journey

**43%**

To generate questions to ask a salesperson or provider

**42%**

To get a quick summary of product/service/pricing options

**42%**

To help interpret reviews or customer feedback

**40%**

To compare different companies or brands

**37%**

To ask detailed questions they couldn't easily find answers to

# Is Generative AI Replacing Traditional Search?

It's the question on every marketer's mind, and the answer is no. Home services consumers making high-stakes purchases are far more likely to supplement standard search engine use with generative AI research than replace it.

Only 10% rely more on generative AI than search engines to inform their home services purchase decisions, and only 2% mostly rely upon it.

|  | Average | Gen Z | Boomers |
|---|---|---|---|
| I use only search engines | 46% | 39% | 65% |
| I use both, but rely more on search engines | 34% | 44% | 19% |
| I use both, but rely more on generative AI | 10% | 14% | 1% |
| I mostly rely on generative AI tools | 2% | 0% | 0% |
| I don't use either | 8% | 3% | 13% |

**Performance Scale**

0%    30%    60%+
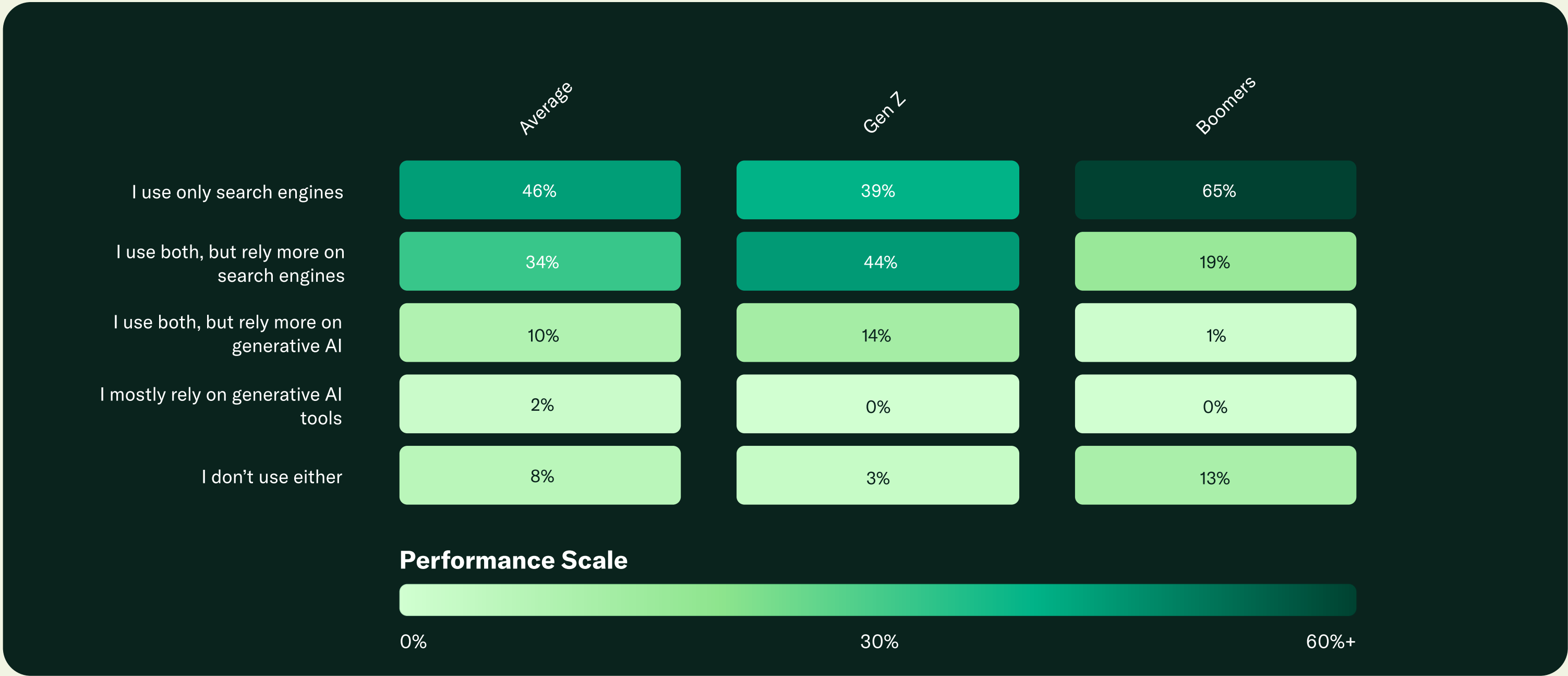
# Human Connections Are Still Critical During High-Stakes Home Services Buying Journeys

Home services consumers overwhelmingly value human connections while making a high-stakes purchase, and almost none feel that it's not important. They need expertise and reassurance when making these types of purchases—whether it's selecting the right HVAC system, choosing a reliable contractor for a kitchen remodel, or finding a trustworthy pest control service—and nothing can substitute for the empathy and understanding that a human can provide. There was no significant difference across generations in those who thought it was very important or important.

## How Important Is Human Connection During A High-Stakes Home Services Purchase?

**55%**
Very important

**30%**
Important

**13%**
Somewhat important

**3%**
Not very important

**0%**
Not important at all

# Home Services Consumers Increasingly Prefer To Call Businesses For Help With A Purchase

In addition to AI, there are numerous digital options for home services consumers to communicate with and obtain information from brands when considering a high-stakes purchase, ranging from chat to email to websites. But when they need help, home services consumers prefer to call.

Since 2022, the preference for calling has increased by 15 percentage points, while email has decreased by 9 percentage points, and the preference for AI assistance has risen by 2 percentage points. The preference to call is rooted in reality, as 65% reported calling when making a high-stakes home services purchase decision, up from 62% three years ago.

This goes to show that when home services consumers need help in situations where knowledge, empathy, and understanding are paramount, they want a person to give them guidance. Despite improvements in automated assistance and live chat, the desire to pick up the phone has only increased.
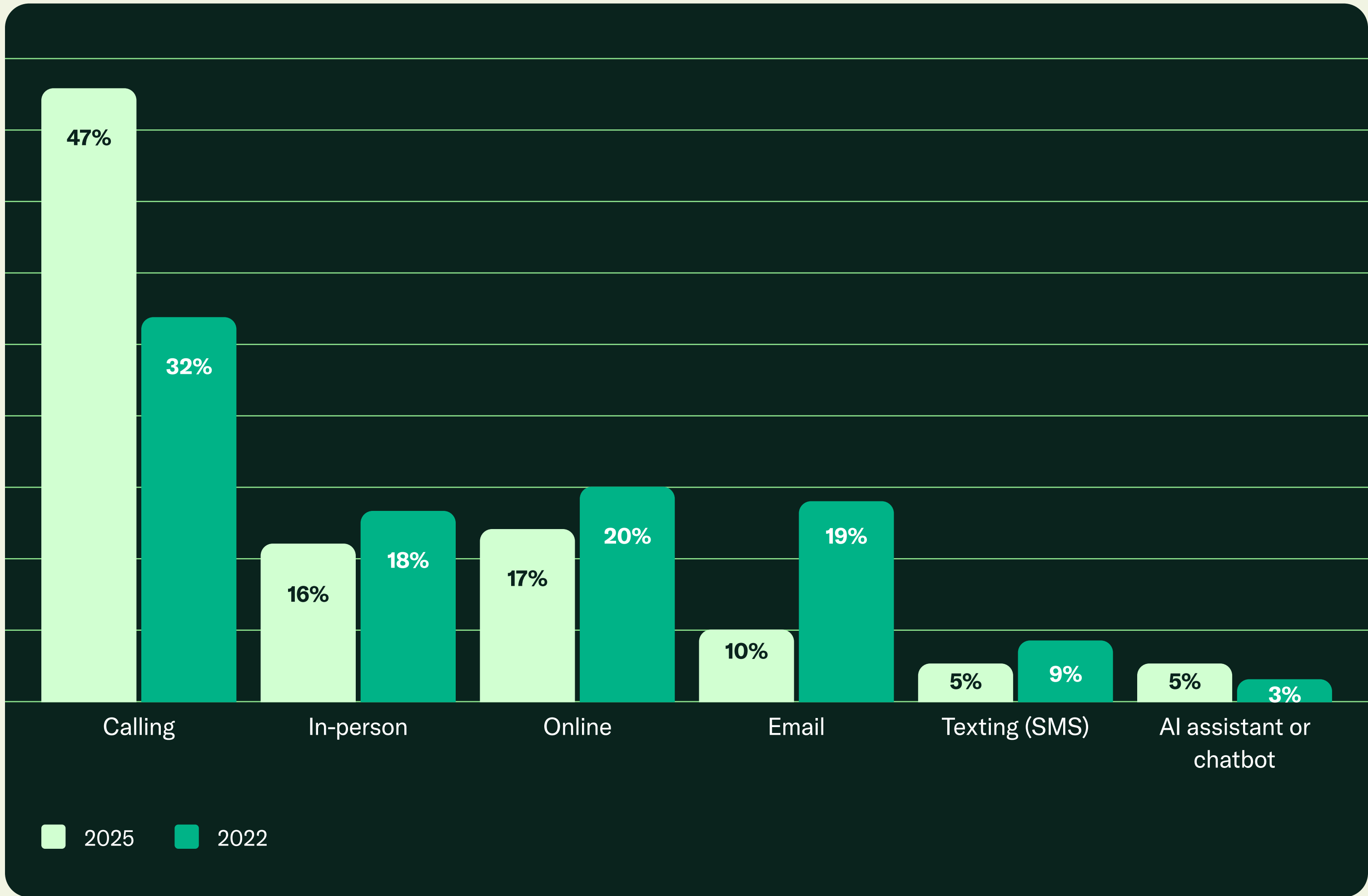
## 65%
### INVOCA
Called when making a home services purchase

# Preferred Communication Method When Healthcare Consumers Are Having A Problem And Need Help

| | Calling | In-person | Online | Email | Texting (SMS) | AI assistant or chatbot |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2025 | 47% | 16% | 17% | 10% | 5% | 5% |
| 2022 | 32% | 18% | 20% | 19% | 9% | 3% |

■ 2025  ■ 2022

# A Seamless Omnichannel Experience Remains Critical

Home services consumers prefer to call when they need assistance during a high-stakes purchase, but online is the preferred channel to complete the transaction. Your online-to-offline experience has to be seamless in both directions, and this means connecting data from the digital journey to phone calls is no longer a nice-to-have, but a requirement to optimize and personalize every touchpoint.

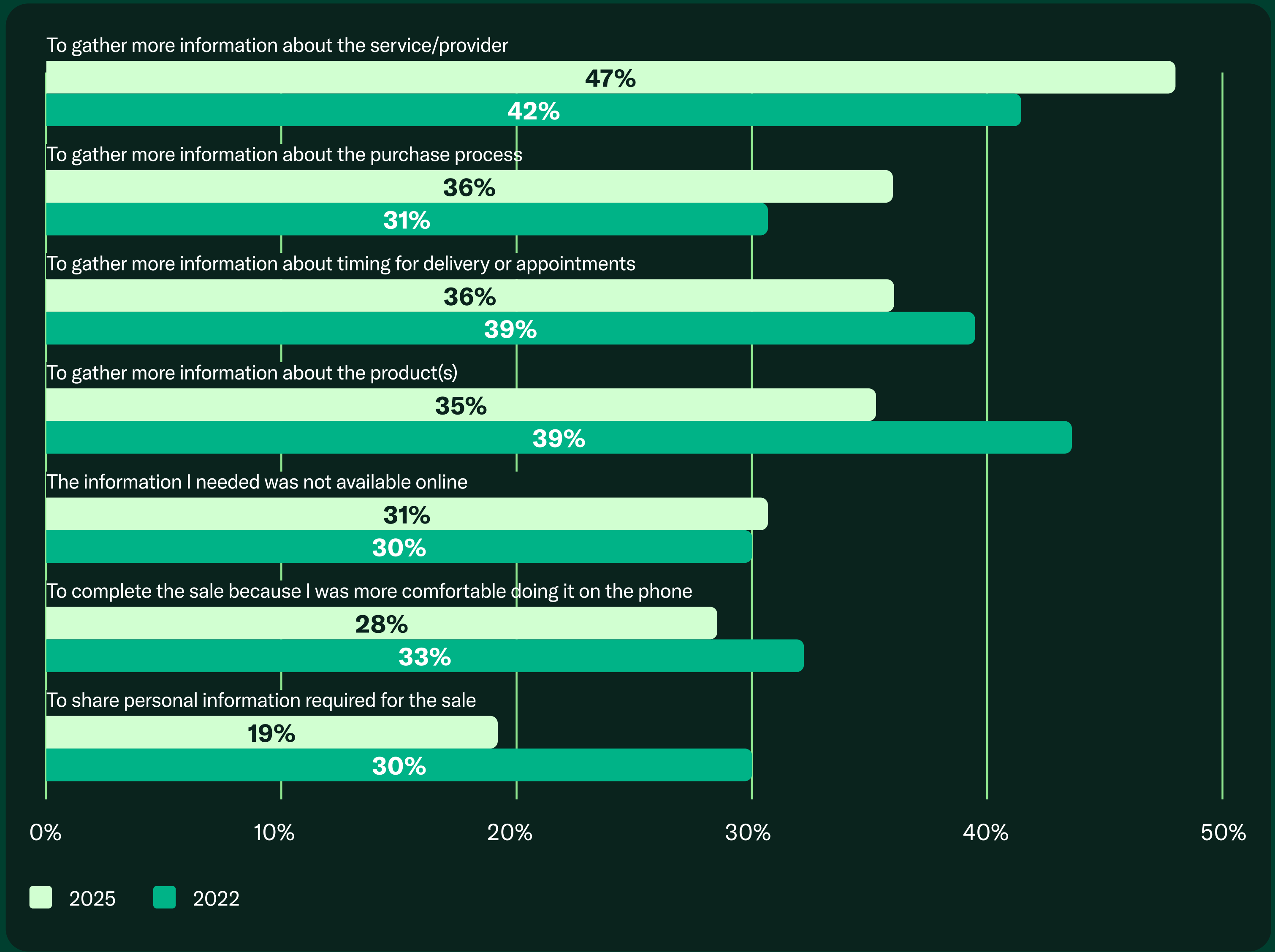## Preferred Channel To Complete Home Services Transactions

| Channel | 2025 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| Online | 27% | 28% |
| Calling | 27% | 21% |
| In-person | 27% | 21% |
| Email | 10% | 17% |
| AI assistant or chatbot | 6% | 7% |
| Texting | 4% | 6% |

■ 2025   ■ 2022
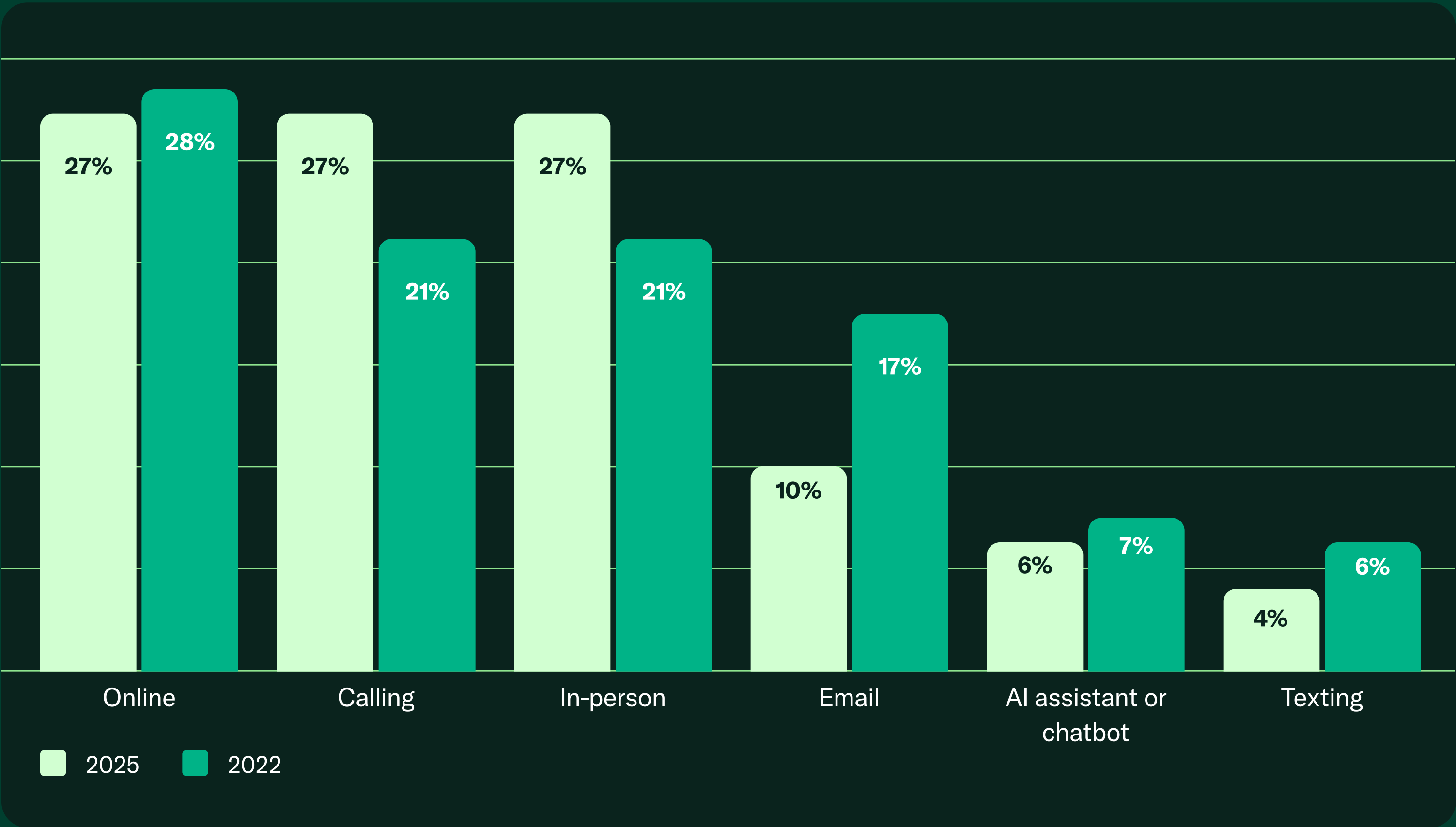
# Why Are Home Services Consumers Calling?

When making a high-stakes home services purchase, most consumers call to gather more information about the service or provider. Many also need to get more information about the purchase process, which can be complex when you consider we're talking about things like scheduling HVAC installations, coordinating home renovations, or arranging pest control treatments. This isn't like buying TP on Amazon!

Concerningly, the percentage of home services consumers who are calling because the information they needed was not available online has remained virtually unchanged since 2022. This signals a continued need to improve online experiences and connect calls to the digital experience to determine the most effective optimizations.

To gather more information about the service/provider
- 47%
- 42%

To gather more information about the purchase process
- 36%
- 31%

To gather more information about timing for delivery or appointments
- 36%
- 39%

To gather more information about the product(s)
- 35%
- 39%

The information I needed was not available online
- 31%
- 30%

To complete the sale because I was more comfortable doing it on the phone
- 28%
- 33%

To share personal information required for the sale
- 19%
- 30%

0%    10%    20%    30%    40%    50%

■ 2025    ■ 2022

# Home Services Consumers Are Getting A Bit More Patient

We've found that while home services consumers have become a bit more patient than they were during the frantic post-pandemic days, they still demand great experiences. They're increasingly willing to pay more for the best experiences despite the pressures of inflation. They're also prepared to jump ship to the competition at the drop of a hat if you do them wrong, so that newfound acquiescence can't be taken for granted.

## Home Services Consumers Who Are Likely To Stop Doing Business With A Brand After One Bad Experience

**INVOCA**

**2025**
## 46%

**INVOCA**
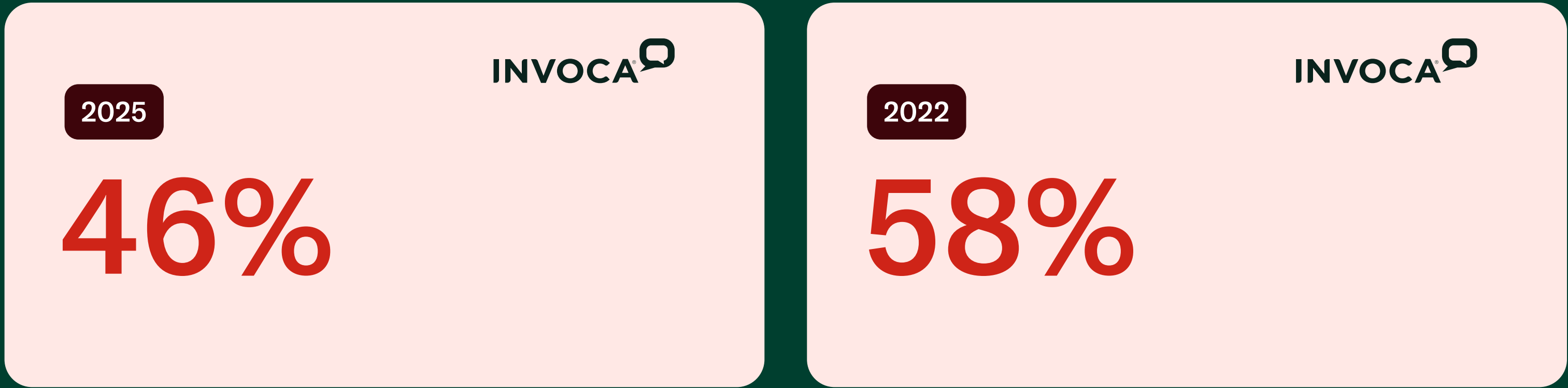
**2022**
## 58%

## Will Pay More For The Best Customer Service

**INVOCA**

**2025**
## 73%

**INVOCA**

**2022**
## 63%

# They'll Wait A Little Longer On Hold



While home services consumers will stay on hold a bit longer before hanging up than in 2022, 46% still report hanging up after being placed on hold. Though most home services consumers expect to wait on hold for 3-5 minutes, some 25% will still hang up after being on hold for 5 minutes or less, and 6% will only hang on for less than two minutes.

Over half report hanging up after hearing everyone's favorite message about "unexpected high call volumes causing longer than usual wait times", so let's just get rid of that one already. Please? The automated callback option continues to grow in popularity, and only 9% will call another business instead of using it.

# Have Hung Up After Being Placed On Hold

| 2025 | 2022 |
|---|---|
| INVOCA | INVOCA |
| **46%** | **62%** |
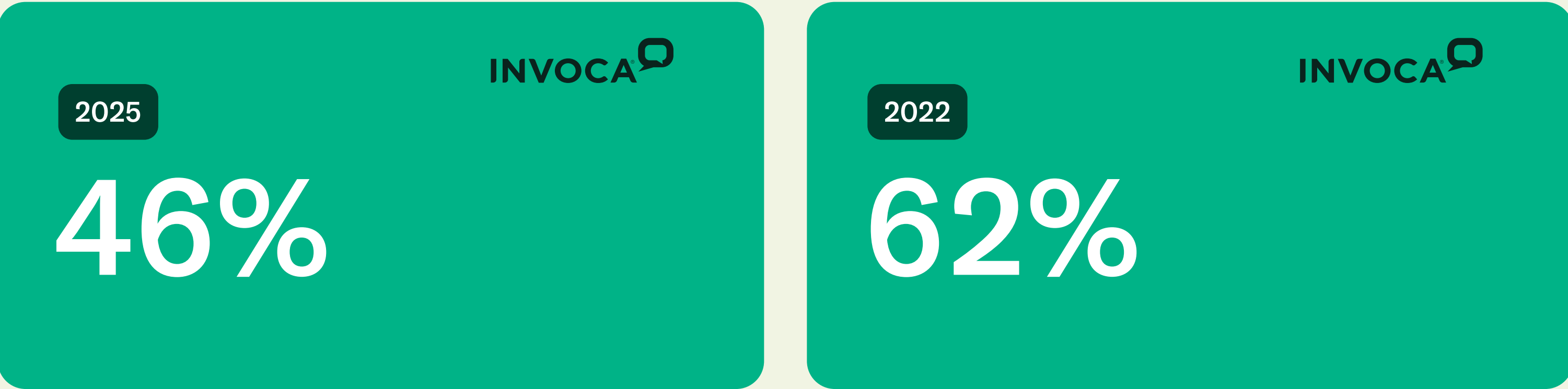
# Home Services Consumers Who Will Use The Automated Callback Option Instead Of Holding

| 2025 | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| **42%** | **40%** | **5%** |
| INVOCA | INVOCA | INVOCA |

# How Long Will Home Services Consumers Wait On Hold Before Hanging Up?

**Hung up immediately**
- 3%
- 6%

**<1**
- 3%
- 2%

**1-2**
- 14%
- 11%

**3-5**
- 23%
- 18%

**6-10**
- 19%
- 26%

**11-15**
- 11%
- 10%

**16-20**
- 10%
- 10%

**21-30**
- 8%
- 11%

**>30**
- 9%
- 5%

(MINUTES)

0%   5%   10%   15%   20%   25%   30%

■ 2025   ■ 2022
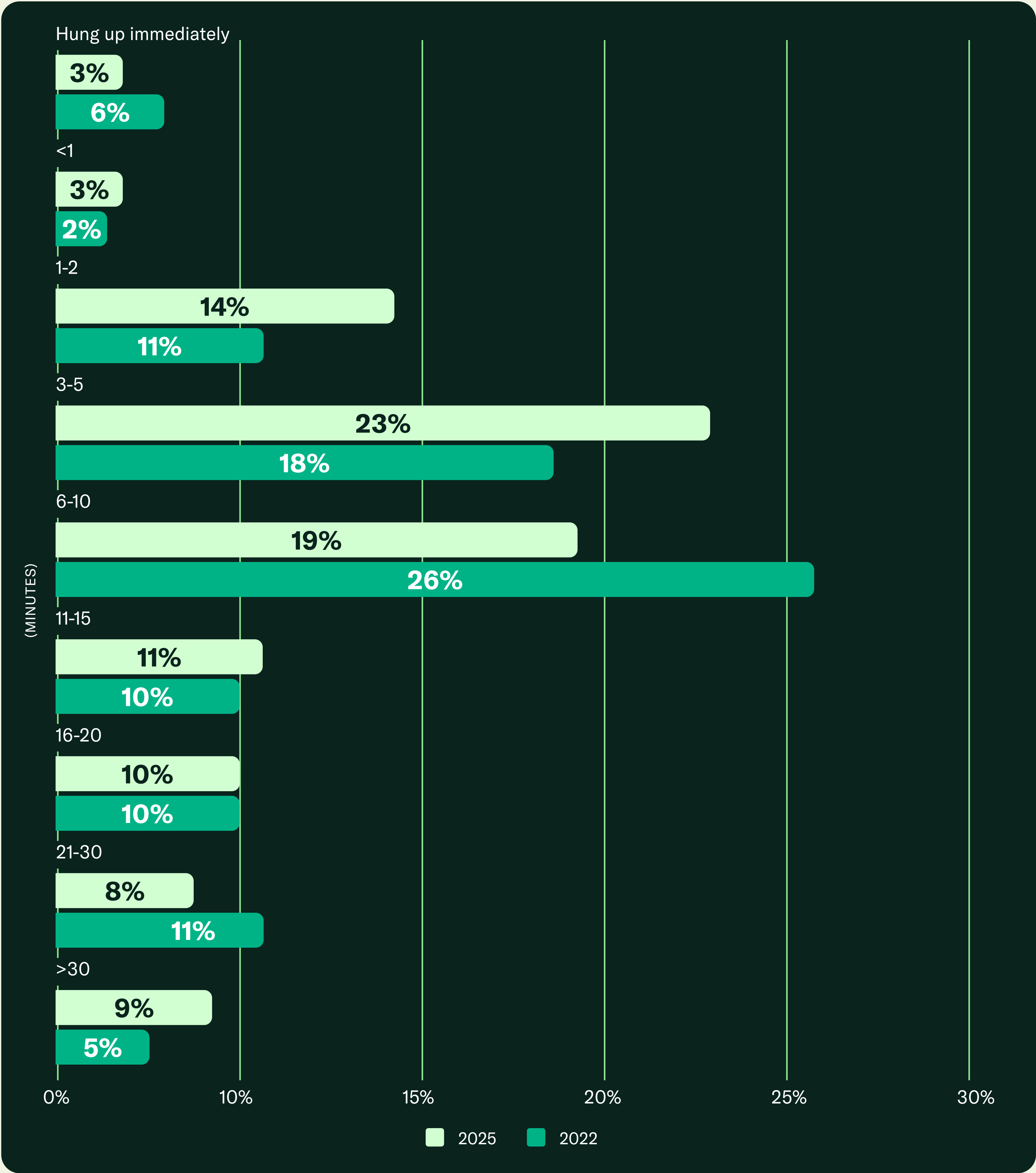
# When It Comes To Humans Vs AI Assistance, Home Services Consumer Preference Is Clear

While AI can make a huge difference in your home services company's ability to handle customer inquiries—especially when used on the back-end to analyze and orchestrate data—home services consumers still overwhelmingly prefer to call and talk to someone to get help. This applies across all age groups, though Boomers have a significantly stronger affinity for human assistance.

## When Both AI And Human Help Are Equally Available, Home Services Consumers Prefer

| | Average | Gen Z | Millennials | Gen X | Boomers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A human representative | 67% | 54% | 51% | 68% | 92% |
| A combination of AI and human assistance | 15% | 25% | 23% | 10% | 1% |
| An AI assistant | 14% | 19% | 20% | 18% | 5% |
| No preference | 4% | 3% | 6% | 5% | 2% |

**Performance Scale**

0%        50%        100%
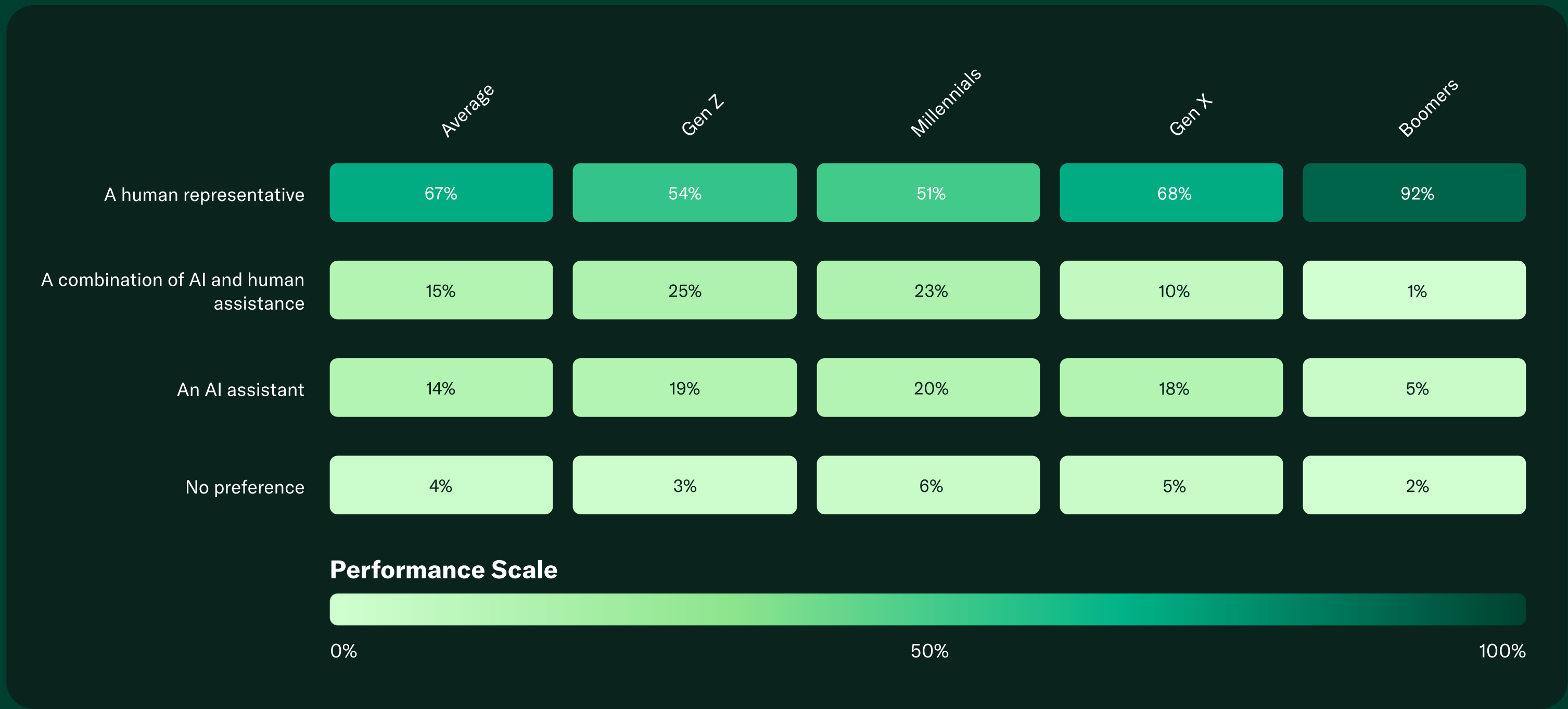
Again, this is about using AI at the right place and the right time, and ensuring you can meet your home services customers where they are, regardless of their communication preference.

# Demographic Information

*Demographic data includes data from all respondents.

## GENDER

| Male | Female | Non-binary | Other | Prefer not to answer |
|------|--------|------------|-------|----------------------|
| **51%** | **48%** | **0%** | **0%** | **0%** |

## AGE/GENERATION

| Gen Z | Millennials | Gen X | Baby Boomers |
|-------|-------------|-------|--------------|
| **16%** | **29%** | **29%** | **26%** |

## HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED

| Less than high school | High school graduate | Some college/university |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| **2%** | **24%** | **28%** |

| College/university graduate | Post graduate |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| **31%** | **15%** |

## RESPONSES BY INDUSTRY (RESPONDENTS COULD SELECT MULTIPLE)

| Travel | Telecommunications | Financial services | Insurance |
|--------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| **48%** | **45%** | **36%** | **44%** |

| Home services | Healthcare | Automotive |
|---------------|------------|------------|
| **35%** | **39%** | **36%** |

## ANNUAL GROSS INCOME

| Less than $50,000 | $50,000 - $74,999 | $75,000 - $99,999 | $100,000 - $199,999 | $200,000+ |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| **39%** | **24%** | **14%** | **20%** | **4%** |

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