

2024

US consumer trends report

**Essential insight for
the year ahead**



Introduction

Attest's annual consumer trends report – now in its fourth year – offers brands a snapshot of the US consumer as we begin the new year. Our year-on-year data tracks changes in consumer confidence, attitudes and behaviors, providing vital insight for marketing and insights professionals.

Following the impact of the spiraling inflation seen in 2022 and 2023, this year's report brings some much-needed good news – the data shows green shoots emerging. Consumers are feeling more positive and spending more freely – especially younger consumers.

It might be too early to say we're firmly on the road to recovery but what we can say is that consumers are reacting (positively) to changes in the market. Use this data to help guide your strategy for 2024, and inspire your own consumer research to get intel specific to your business.



Jeremy King
CEO & Founder, Attest

Sample

The data in this report comes from a nationally representative survey of 2,000 working age US consumers, conducted on the Attest platform during November 2023.

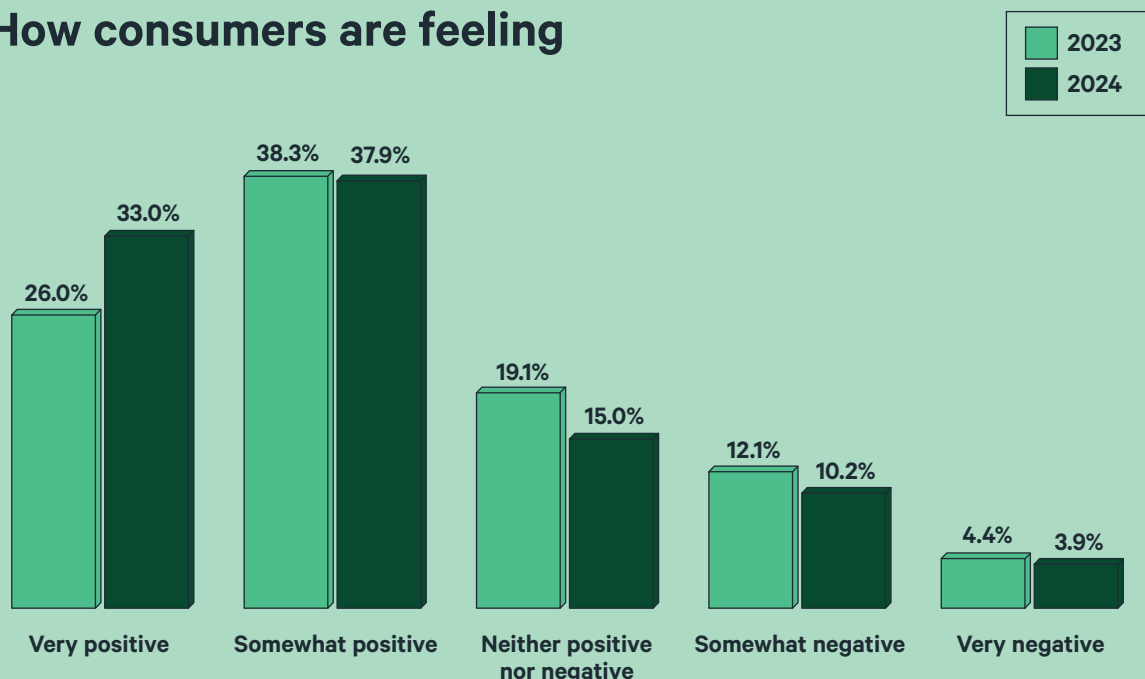
Is the US economy on the road to recovery?

Trend 1. Consumer positivity is on the rise

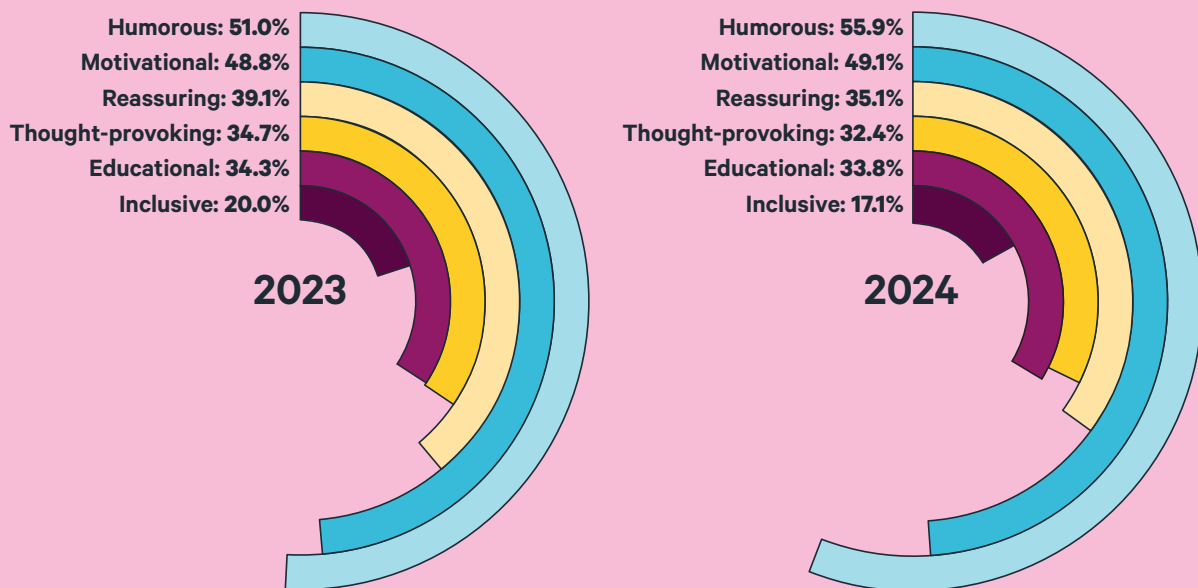
Since last year there has been a +7 percentage point increase in the number of consumers who say they feel 'very positive' to 33%. Consumers in the 25-34 age bracket in particular over-index for feeling very positive (38.2%). The data also shows stronger levels of positivity among males (36.7% feel very positive versus 29.4% of females).

Overall, nearly 71% of Americans are feeling positively about the future, which should trickle down into increased spending and consideration.

How consumers are feeling



Types of brand messaging consumers want



Trend 2. Consumers need less reassurance

In line with the increase in consumer positivity, Americans are starting to want to hear different messaging from brands. They no longer need reassuring marketing, for example about navigating the cost of living, but instead want brands to match their happy mood with funny ads.

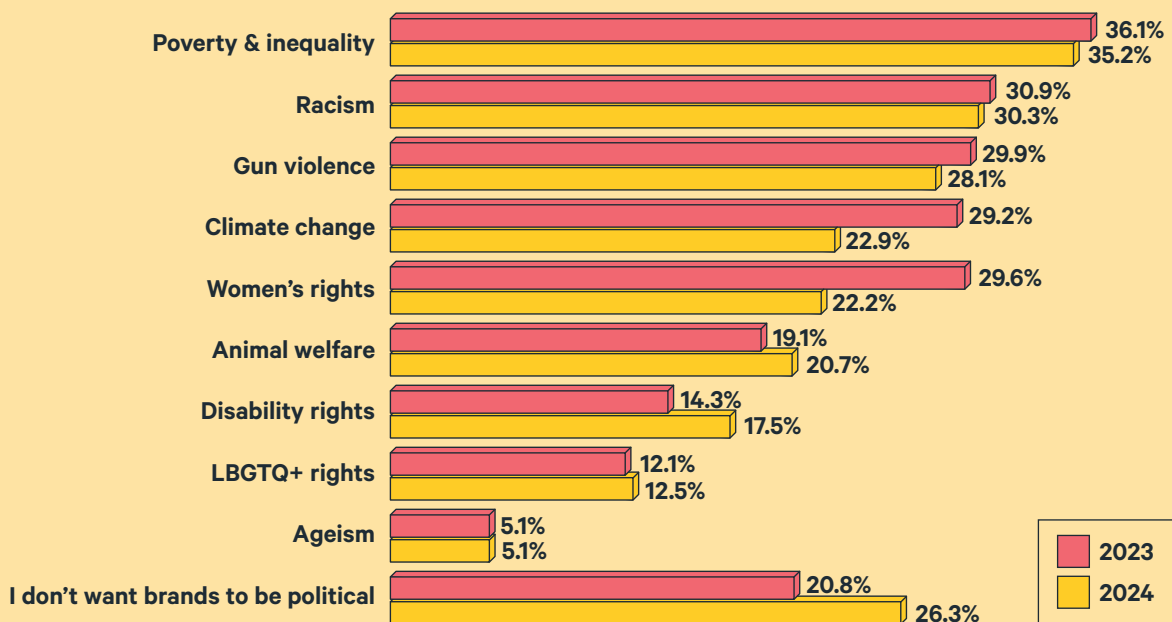
Just over 55.9% of consumers want humorous brand messaging (up +4.9 percentage points on last year), while 35.1% want reassuring messaging (down -4 pp). However, it's worth noting that women desire more reassurance from brands than men (38.9% versus 31.1%) and Gen Z also over-index for seeking comforting messaging (42.6%).

Trend 3. Environment and women's rights are becoming less important issues

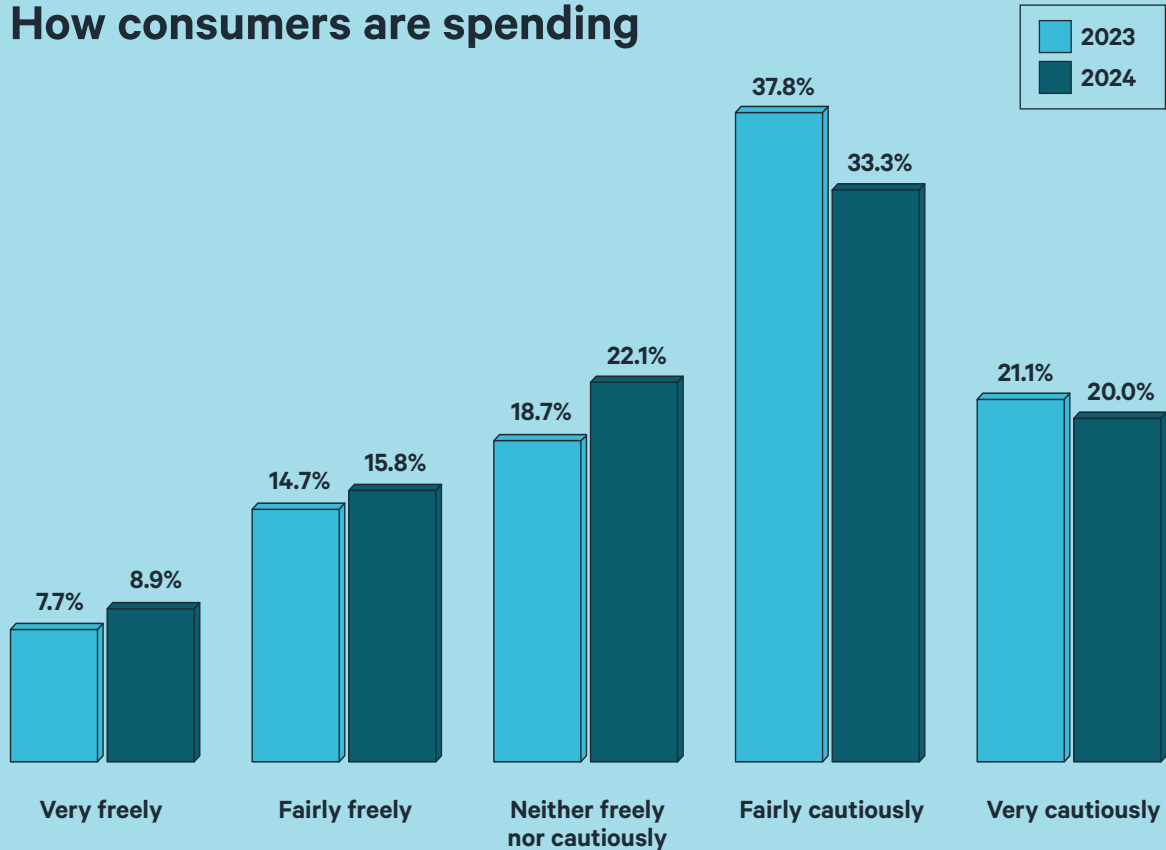
It looks like consumer positivity could be translating into less concern about the environment. 'Climate change' has decreased by -6.3 percentage points as an issue for brands to represent, to 22.9%. Meanwhile, more than a year on from the overturning of Roe v. Wade, we see a -7.4 percentage point decline in people wanting brands to take a stand on women's rights.

The data also shows a widening gap between younger and older consumers, with a +5.5 increase in people who don't want brands to be political (to 26.3%) driven by people aged 55+. At the other end of the scale, younger consumers over-index for wanting brands to act on a variety of issues.

Issues consumers want brands to represent



How consumers are spending



Trend 4: Consumer confidence is growing

With an optimistic eye on the future, consumers are starting to loosen their purse strings and spend a little more freely. Compared with last year, the percentage of Americans who say they are spending cautiously has declined by -5.6 percentage points, to 53.3%.

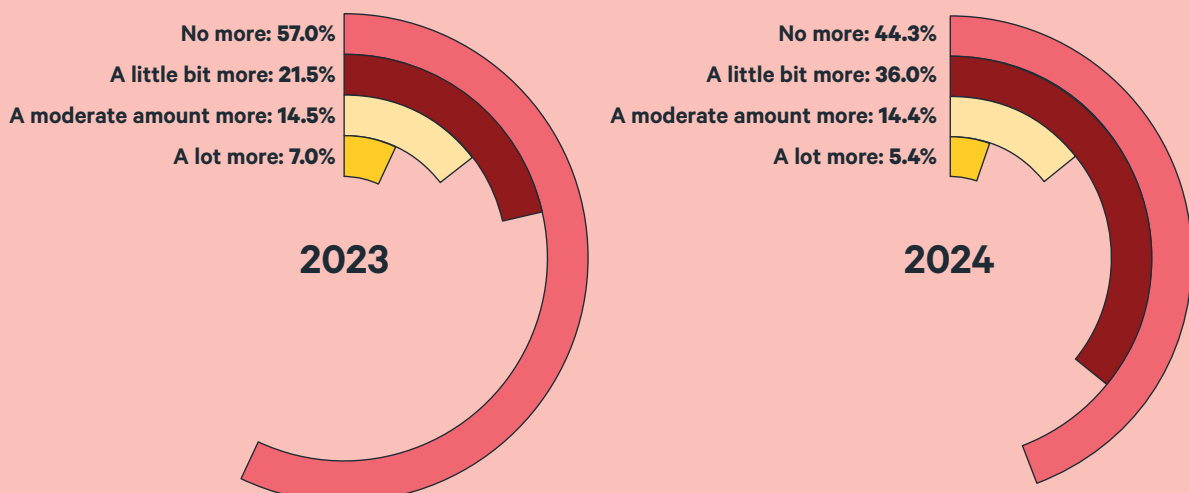
Consumers aged 18-24, in particular, seem to be throwing caution to the wind when it comes to spending, with 39.7% spending freely – higher than any other age group. Shoppers aged 55-64 meanwhile, over-index for cautious spending (68.9% are spending cautiously). There's a noticeable gender split too, with men more likely to be spending freely than women.

Trend 5: Consumers are prepared to pay more for preferred products

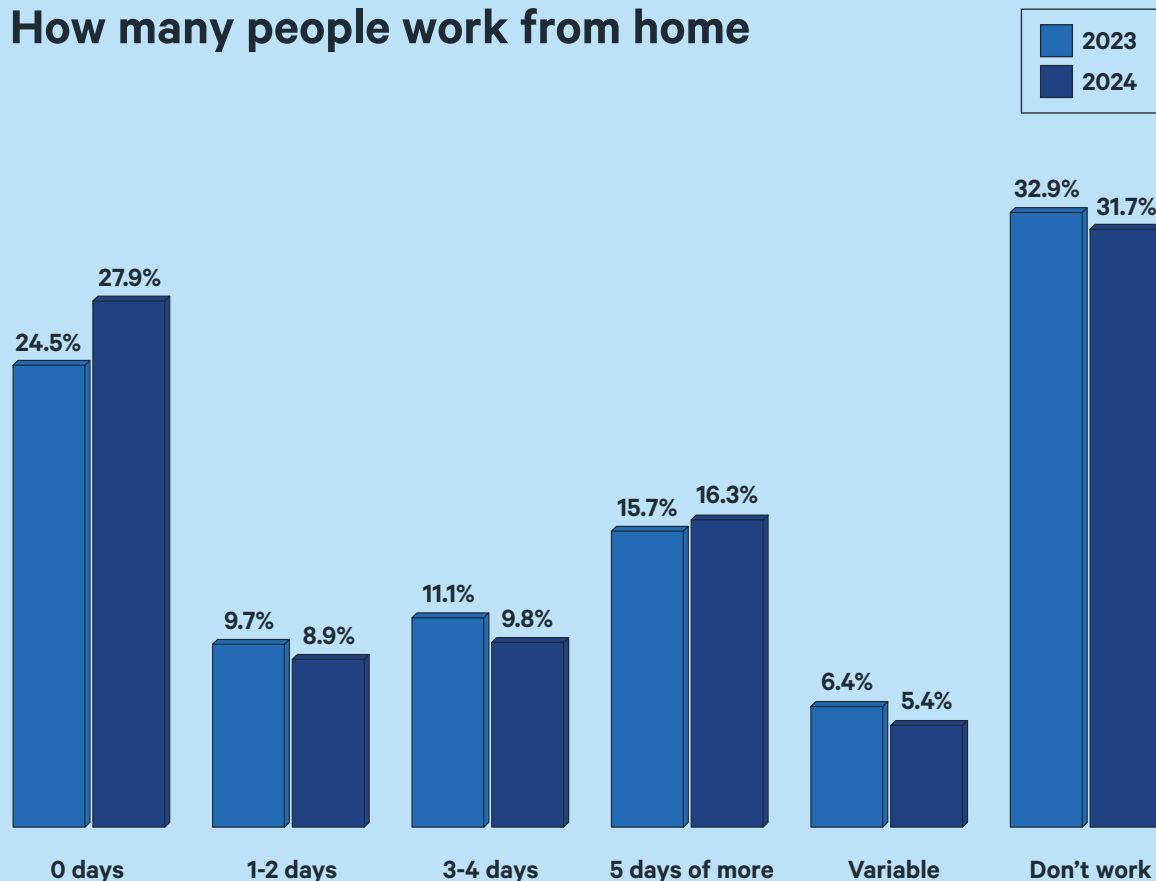
High inflation forced people to sacrifice preferred brands in favor of more affordable alternatives. 'Green' brands – typically priced a little higher – were one casualty of this behavior change. But in 2024 we see consumers starting to go back to brands that align with their morals, with a +12.7 percentage point increase in willingness to pay a premium for environmentally friendly/ethical products.

In 2023, 57.0% of consumers weren't prepared to pay anything extra for a green product, but in 2024 that figure has declined to 44.3%. Shoppers aged 18-24 over-index for being willing to pay a 'moderate amount more' (28.3%), while those aged 25-34 over-index for a willingness to pay 'a lot more' (7.7%).

How much of a premium consumers will pay for green products



How many people work from home



Trend 6: People are returning to the office

The push by companies and the government to get employees to return to the office is starting to have an impact. The data shows that fewer Americans are working from home; 27.9% of working people say they don't do any days from home, which is an increase of +3.4 percentage points.

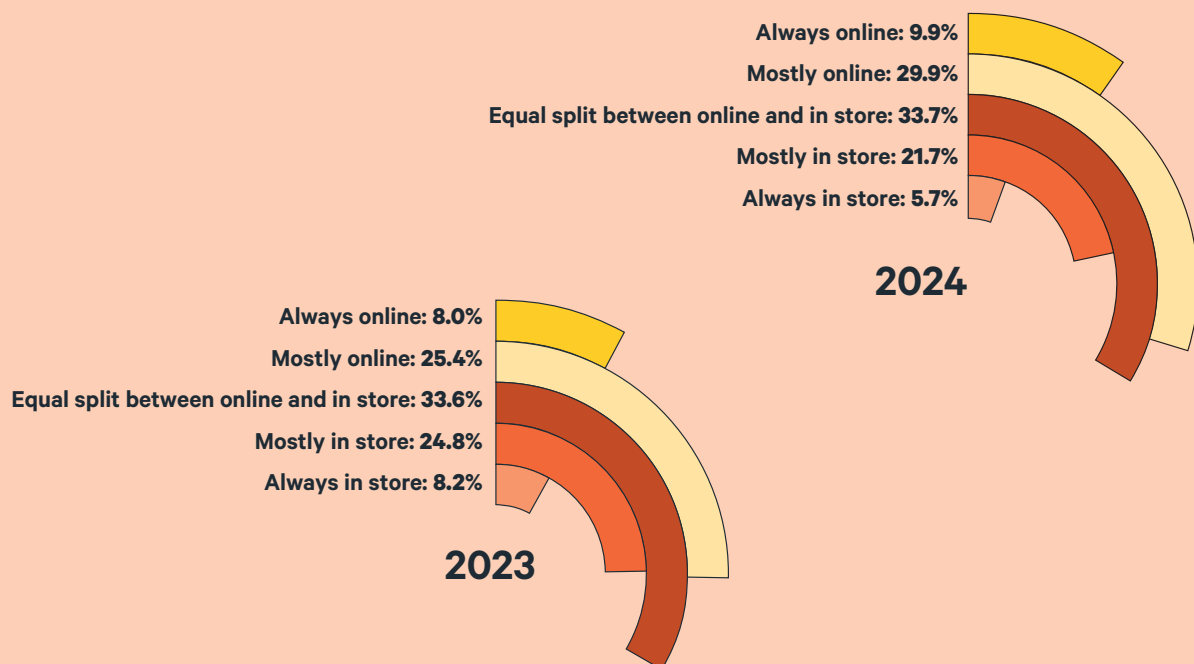
However, the country is still working flexibly, with 40.4% of Americans able to work from home for at least one day per week. Gen Z are likely to have jobs that only require them to be in the office two or three days a week, while people aged 45-54 over-index for not being able to work from home (36.8%).

Trend 7: Online shopping has increased in popularity

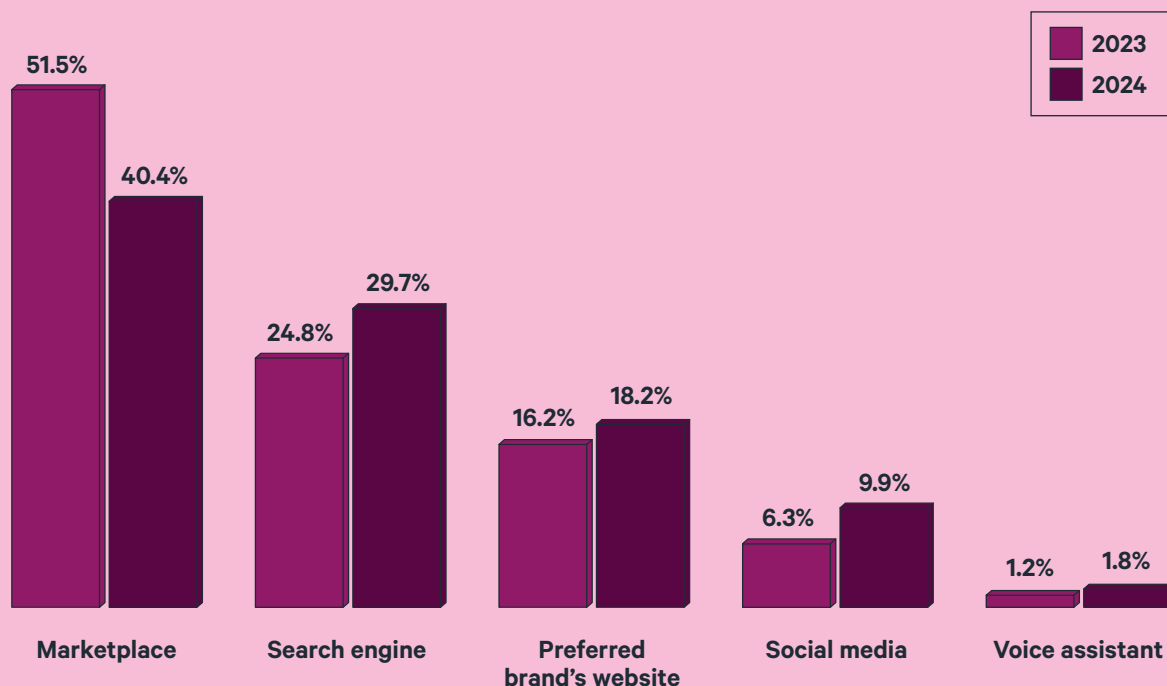
The dominance of ecommerce for non-food purchasing has strengthened in 2024, with a +5.5 percentage point increase in the number of consumers who say they shop ‘mostly’ or ‘always’ online (to 38.9%). Just over 27% of Americans show a preference for in-store shopping, with the remainder splitting their purchasing between online and offline.

Consumers aged under 35 show the strongest preference for online shopping, with around 66% doing it habitually. They’re half as likely as shoppers aged 55-64 to say they ‘mostly’ or ‘always’ shop in store (20.0% vs 40.0%).

Where consumers shop for non-food products



Where consumers start online shopping journeys



Trend 8: Position of marketplaces in the shopping journey weakens

There's been a -11.1 percentage point decline in the number of consumers who start their online shopping journeys on a marketplace. Today, just over 40% of consumers will start on a marketplace when they want to buy something online, while nearly 30% would start on a search engine (up by +4.9 percentage points).

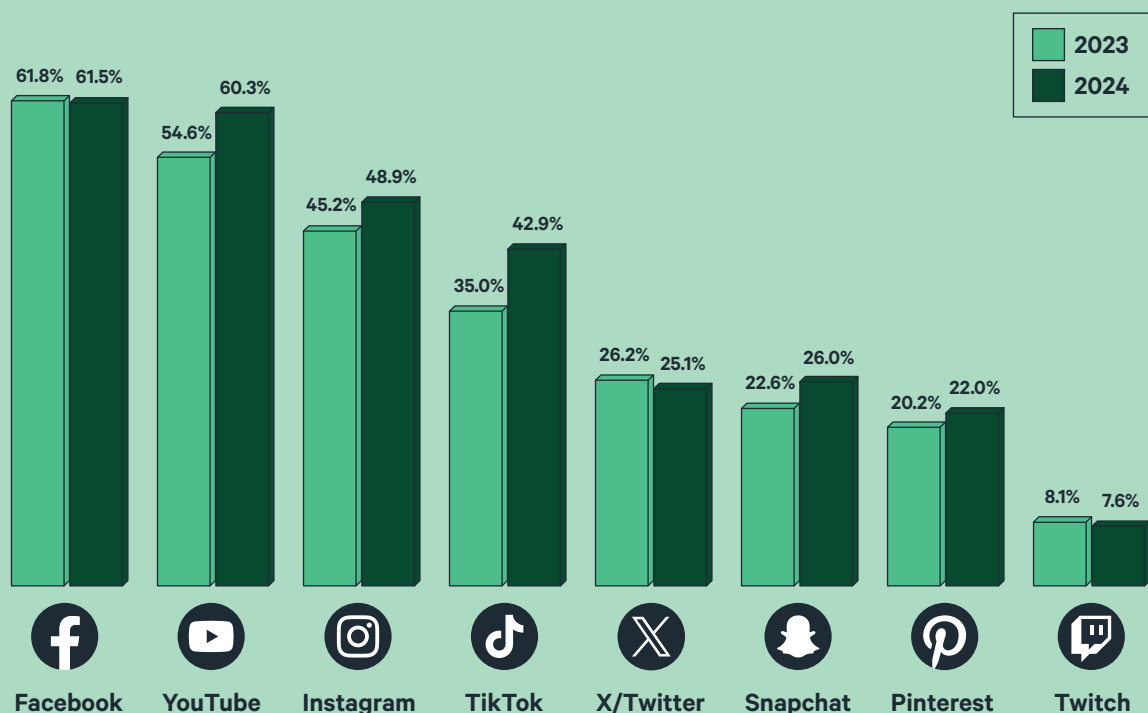
Google is by far the most popular search engine, used by 85.8% of consumers when shopping online. Privacy-friendly DuckDuckGo is the next most-used search engine, but by just 4.1% of shoppers. It's also worth noting that 70.1% of consumers are likely to use their cell phone for online shopping (an increase of +4.2pp).

Trend 9: Brand interaction is increasing on TikTok

The number of consumers interacting with brands on TikTok continues to grow, increasing by +7.9 percentage points, to 42.9%. Those aged 18-24 account for the largest share of users engaging with brands on TikTok: 70.0% of this demographic can be found there (the data also shows that 17.7% of this age group start shopping journeys on social media.)

YouTube also sees growth in brand engagement, with 60.3% of consumers stating they interact with brands on the platform (up +5.7pp). YouTube benefits from strong engagement across all working-age consumers.

Where consumers interact with brands on social media

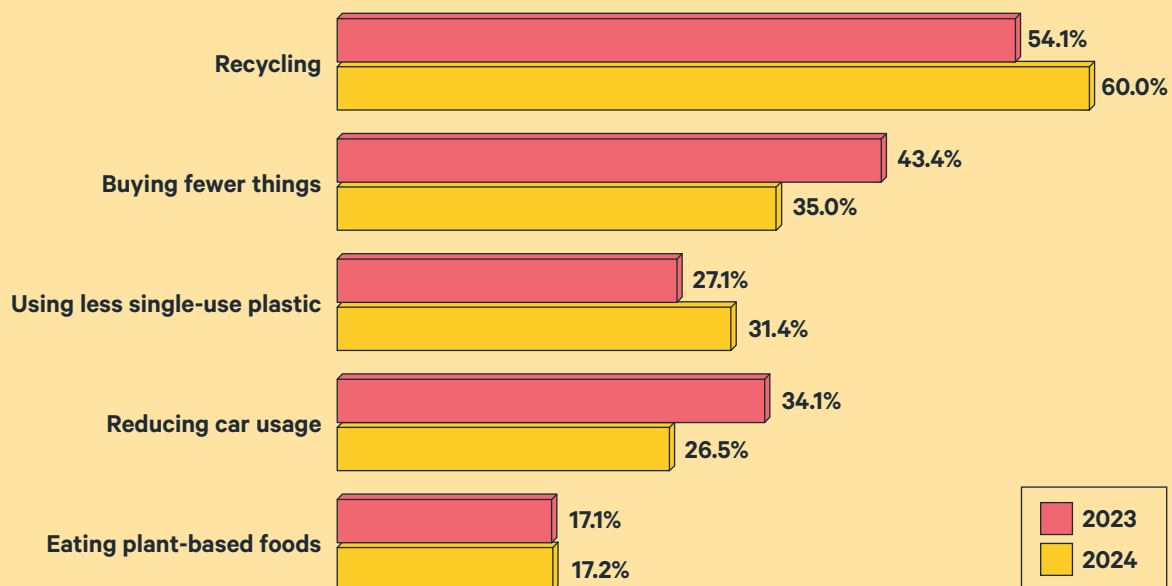


Trend 10: More consumers are taking action on plastic waste

Consumers are trying to cut down the amount of single-use plastic they use; 31.4% of Americans say they're using less, which is an increase of +4.3 percentage points on last year. Alongside this we see a +5.9 percentage point increase in the number of people recycling, to 60.0%.

Meanwhile, people are less likely to be helping the environment by buying fewer things: down by -8.5 percentage points to 35.0%. We also see a -7.6pp decline in people reducing car usage (to 26.5%). These stats show that a strengthening economy is not always beneficial for the environment.

Consumers' environmentally-friendly habits

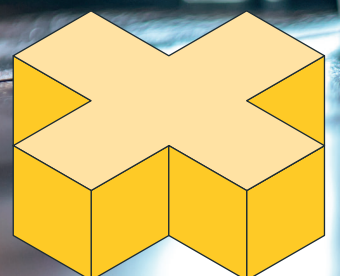
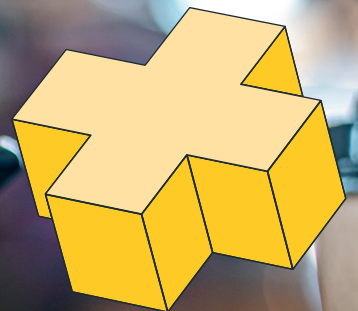
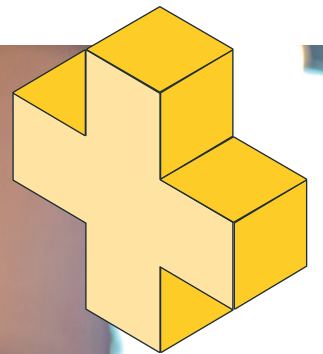


In conclusion

Clearly the US economy still has a way to go on the road to recovery, but the early green shoots we see in this data should give brands hope for a more buoyant year. We can already see consumer behavior is changing. If inflation continues to slow and consumer confidence keeps growing it will lead to even more changes in the way Americans shop and spend.

It's important that brands keep on top of changing habits as the situation evolves throughout 2024. Regularly surveying your target consumers will allow you to stay in tune with them, helping you to anticipate the market and not just react to it.

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What data do you need to be successful in 2024?

Speak to us to find out how to get it
www.askattest.com

