



TALLOO RESEARCH

Three Years of Local Visibility.

2023 to 2026

We went back through three years of published research to show how fast the way customers find local businesses changed, and where it is headed.

WHY LOOK BACK

In three years, the way customers find local businesses changed more than it had in the previous fifteen. AI answers went from a lab experiment to a mainstream discovery channel. Google rebuilt Search around answers instead of links. Apple turned Maps into a business platform with paid placement on the way.

Each change arrived as a headline and faded within a week. Seen together, they tell one story. This report connects three years of published research and platform announcements, from 2023 through the first half of 2026, so a business owner can see the whole arc at once. Every figure is credited to its source.

The arc matters more than any single data point. Because across every shift these pages document, the businesses that stayed visible were rewarded for the same thing every time.

FOUR TRENDS ACROSS THREE YEARS

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| 01 | The answer replaced the list. Search stopped pointing to information and started delivering it. |
| 02 | AI local discovery went from zero to mainstream in three years. |
| 03 | The journey fragmented, but verification never moved. Reviews still finish the decision. |
| 04 | The platforms built rails for business data, and are now selling placement on them. |

THE TIMELINE · 2023 TO 2024

The experiment years.

Jan 2023	Apple launches Business Connect, giving businesses direct control of how they appear across Apple Maps, Siri, Spotlight, and Wallet for the first time.
May 2023	Google announces the Search Generative Experience (SGE) at I/O: AI-written answers above search results, available only as an opt-in Search Labs experiment in the US.
Nov 2023	SGE expands to more than 120 countries, still as an opt-in experiment. Most businesses have never heard of it.
May 2024	Google launches AI Overviews for all US users at I/O 2024, calling it the biggest change to Search in decades. The experiment becomes the product.
Oct 2024	AI Overviews expand to more than 100 countries and roughly 1 billion monthly users, per Google's announcements. Ads begin appearing inside AI Overviews on mobile in the US. The answer layer starts to carry paid placement.

WHAT THESE TWO YEARS ESTABLISHED

By the end of 2024, the AI answer was no longer an experiment. It sat on top of the world's largest search engine, reached a billion people, and had started selling ads. Consumer behavior had not caught up yet. It was about to.

THE TIMELINE · 2025 TO MID 2026

The adoption years.

Mar 2025	Google announces AI Mode, a fully conversational search experience, as a Labs experiment.
2025	AI Overviews increasingly draw on Google Business Profile data for local answers. A business's profile becomes source material for the machine, not just a listing.
2025	BrightLocal's annual consumer survey finds 6 percent of consumers have used AI to find a local business. Semrush tracking shows AI Overviews appearing on 6 percent of queries in January, peaking near 25 percent by July.
Jul 2025	An AP-NORC survey finds 60 percent of US adults have used AI to search for information.
Jan 2026	A Search Engine Land study finds 37 percent of consumers now start searches with AI rather than Google.
Feb 2026	BrightLocal's 2026 survey lands: 45 percent of consumers have now used AI to find a local business, making AI the third most used local discovery channel.
Apr 2026	Apple unifies its business tools into Apple Business across 200+ countries and confirms Maps ads for summer 2026.
May 2026	At I/O, Google reports AI Mode passed 1 billion monthly users and expands agentic booking to local services.

WHAT THESE EIGHTEEN MONTHS PROVED

The infrastructure built in 2023 and 2024 met mainstream behavior in 2025 and 2026. Adoption stopped being a forecast and became a measurement.

TREND 01

8% CLICK RATE WHEN AN AI ANSWER IS PRESENT, VS 15% WITHOUT

The answer replaced the list.

In May 2023, AI answers in Google were an opt-in experiment. By May 2024 they were live for every US user. By late 2025, ads inside them had spread across the results page, and by May 2026 Google's conversational AI Mode had passed 1 billion monthly users. Three years, experiment to default.

The effect on behavior is measured. Pew Research found people clicked a search result 8 percent of the time when an AI summary was present, versus 15 percent without one. Roughly 60 percent of US searches now end without a click to any website, per Similarweb. Customers increasingly get the answer where they asked the question.

WHAT IT MEANS

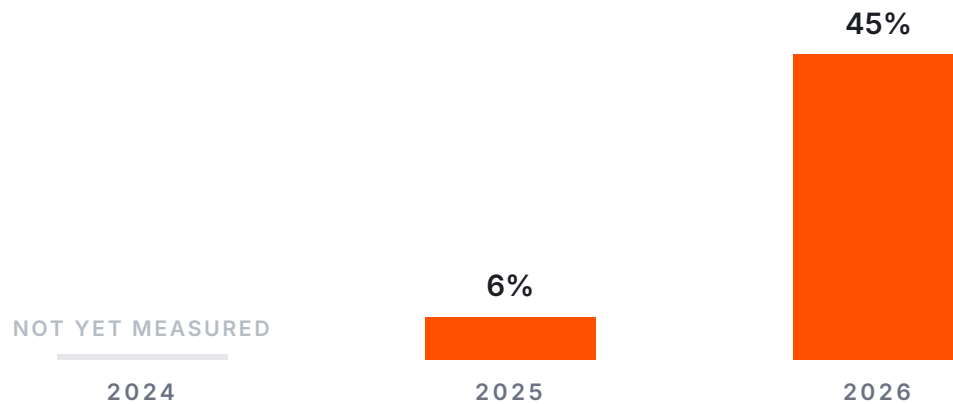
Being the answer now matters more than ranking under it. The information a business publishes about itself is what the answer is built from.

TREND 02

6% to 45%

AI local discovery: zero to mainstream in three years.

When SGE launched in 2023, using AI to choose a local business was not a measurable behavior. BrightLocal's annual consumer survey first captured it in 2025 at 6 percent. One year later, the 2026 survey put it at 45 percent, making AI the third most used local discovery channel behind Google and Facebook. Yext's 2026 global research adds the commercial weight: 28 percent of consumers tried a new local business in the past six months because an AI assistant recommended it.



CONSUMERS WHO HAVE USED AI TO FIND A LOCAL BUSINESS. SOURCE: BRIGHTLOCAL ANNUAL SURVEYS.

WHAT IT MEANS

A channel that did not exist three years ago now influences nearly half of customers. Growth like this does not reverse. It compounds.

TREND 03

97% OF CONSUMERS STILL CONSULT REVIEWS BEFORE CHOOSING

The journey fragmented. Verification never moved.

Discovery scattered across three years: from Google alone to Google plus AI assistants plus social plus maps. BrightLocal's 2026 research even shows Google review usage easing from 83 percent to 71 percent year over year as attention spreads across channels.

But the last step of the decision has not changed since 2023. Per BrightLocal's 2026 survey, 97 percent of consumers consult reviews before choosing a local business. The same research found 88 percent of AI users fact-check the recommendation, and Yext found 62 percent go straight to Google afterward and 58 percent visit the business website. New front door, same living room.

WHAT IT MEANS

Whatever channel starts the decision, reviews and the website finish it. The businesses that held their ground through three years of change were strong at the finish line, not just the front door.

TREND 04

The platforms built rails for business data.

Follow the platform moves in order and the pattern is unmistakable:

Jan 2023	Apple launches Business Connect. Businesses get direct control of their data across Apple surfaces.
Oct 2024 on	Ads roll into AI Overviews on mobile in the US, then expand to desktop and roughly a dozen countries through late 2025.
2025	Google's AI Overviews increasingly draw local answers from Google Business Profile data.
Mar 2026	Apple confirms Maps ads for summer 2026 and requires businesses to claim their listing to participate.
May 2026	Google expands agentic booking to local services. Search itself can now complete the transaction.

WHAT IT MEANS

Every platform followed the same sequence: build the rails for structured business data, route customer decisions across them, then sell placement. The free move in that sequence is always the first one: getting the data right. The businesses that did it early ride the rails. The ones that did not are now invited to pay.

WHAT THREE YEARS TEACH

Every shift rewarded the same thing.

Strip away the product names and three years of change reduce to one requirement. AI Overviews reward consistent, structured business data. AI assistants recommend businesses they can verify across surfaces. Apple ranks complete, accurate place cards. Agentic booking works only for businesses whose availability and services are machine-readable. Customers, after all of it, still check the reviews and the website.

None of these reward a clever campaign. All of them reward a maintained state: information that is correct, consistent, current, and readable by both people and machines, everywhere decisions happen. That was true quietly in 2023. It is true loudly in 2026. Nothing on any platform's roadmap suggests it will be less true in 2027.

The practical conclusion for a business owner is short. Visibility stopped being something you promote and became something you maintain, like the books or the building. It is infrastructure now.

WATCHING IN THE SECOND HALF OF 2026

Apple Maps ads going live in the US and Canada. Ads scaling inside Google's AI experiences. Agentic booking spreading across local service categories. Each one raises the value of the same underlying asset: the business's own data.

See how your business shows up today: taloo.com/get-my-score

SOURCES

All figures and milestones are drawn from published research and official platform announcements, and are reported as stated by their sources.

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Marketing infrastructure for local business. Get
found, build trust, convert demand.

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