Technology Trends 2025

Powered by The State of the American Traveler

Analysis by

miles PARTNERSHIP

Research by

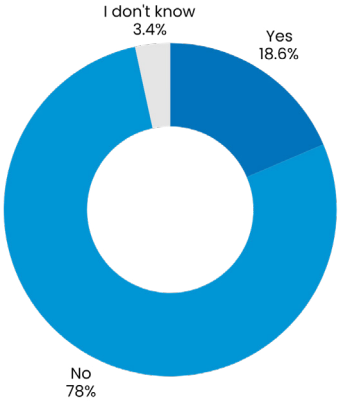
Future Partners

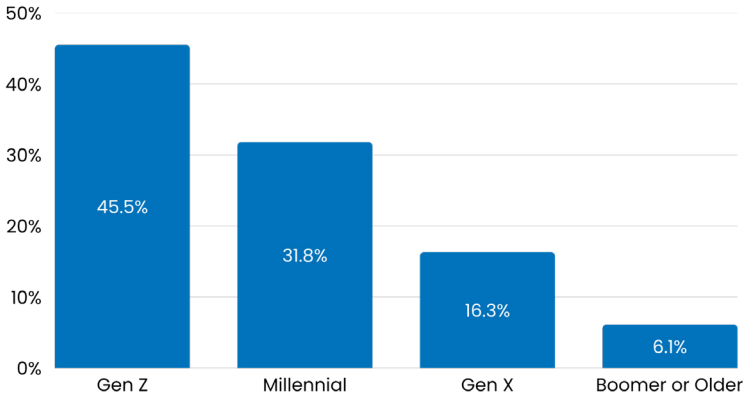
This year's Technology Trends edition of The State of the American Traveler study explores the evolving role of technology in travel and how marketers can effectively leverage digital platforms to reach key audiences.

We assessed the relevance of digital influencers and artificial intelligence in travel planning and inspiration, and examined changes in the use of streaming services, online video and virtual reality headsets. Future Partners and Miles Partnership are proud to present insights that help the travel and tourism industry stay informed and future-ready.

DIGITAL TRAVEL INFLUENCERS ARE NOT GOING AWAY

In the past 12 months, have you used the opinions of a digital influencer to help plan any travel?

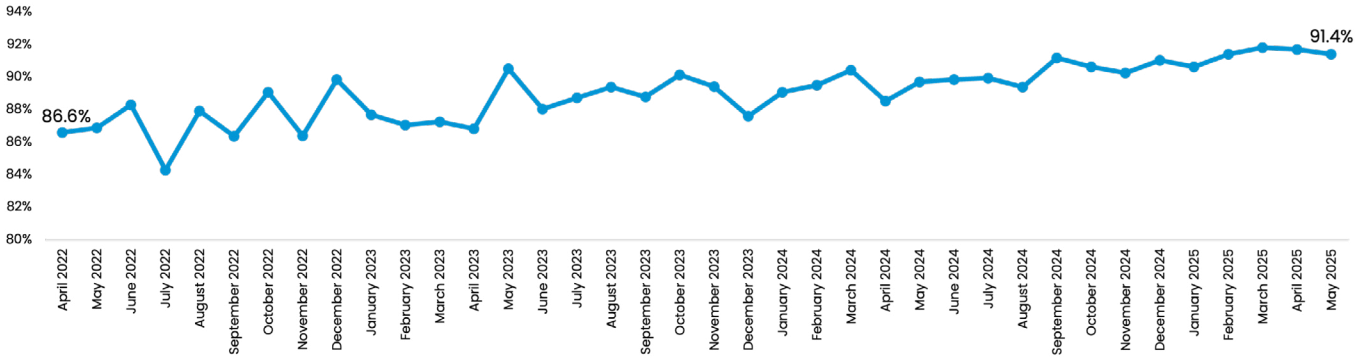




The bottom line: Continuing the trends seen in last year's Tech Edition, the divide persists between younger and older generations in using digital influencers to help plan travel. In 2024, one in three (34.4%) Gen Z respondents said they had turned to a digital influencer in the past year to plan their trips. In 2025, that increased notably to 45.5%. Gen Z was the only generation to show significant year-over-year growth in using digital travel influencers.

STREAMING HAS ALWAYS BEEN BIG, BUT IT KEEPS GETTING BIGGER

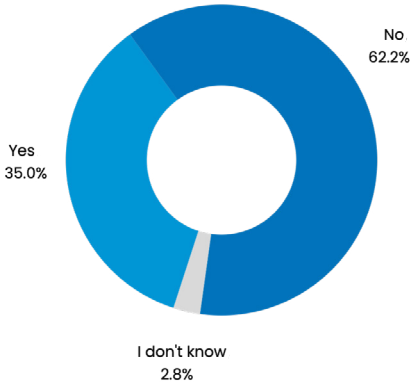
Do you currently subscribe to or regularly use any streaming service?



The bottom line: Historically, the majority of American travelers have regularly watched streaming services, with 86.6% doing so when tracked back in April 2022. That share has steadily increased over the past two years, consistently tracking at 90% or higher since September 2024. As of May 2025, 91.4% of American travelers surveyed said they regularly tune into streaming services.

ONLINE VIDEO USAGE FOR TRAVEL PLANNING HAS ALSO INCREASED

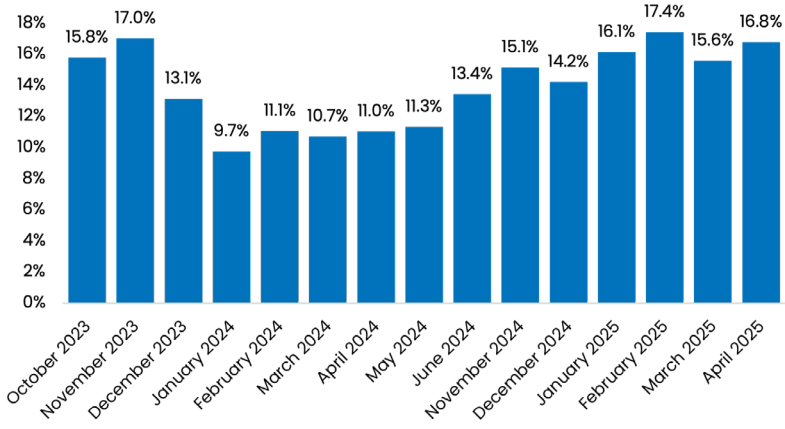
In the past 12 months, have you used online video, including visiting video sharing websites, to plan any travel?



The bottom line: As video becomes an increasingly important part of American travelers' media diets, the number of travelers using online video—such as YouTube, Instagram Reels and TikTok—to plan trips has steadily increased since tracking began in February 2022. While there's been a slight dip in recent months, the current share (35.0%) is still well above the 28.0% recorded three years ago.

GROWING USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO PLAN TRAVEL

In the past 12 months, have you used any Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools specifically to help you plan (or prepare for) your trips?

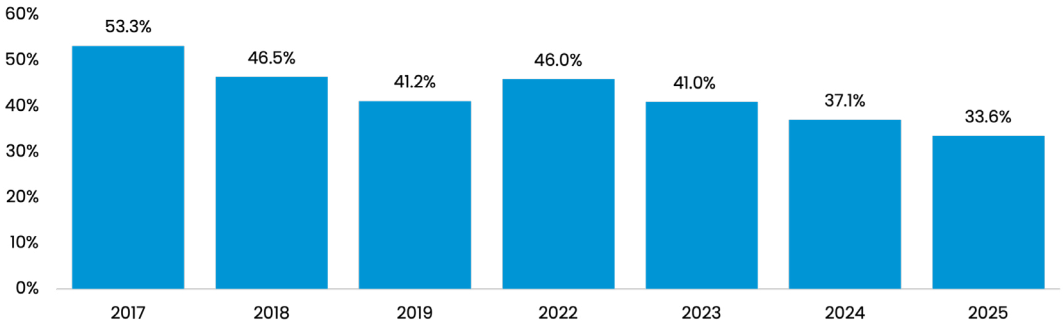


The bottom line: In late 2024, the share of U.S. travelers who said they used AI to plan trips began to grow—and that trend has continued. In April 2024, only 11.0% said they used AI for travel planning. That share increased significantly to 16.8% by April 2025. While still relatively low overall, the trend suggests that travelers are growing more comfortable using AI tools to plan their trips.

It's worth noting that comfort levels using AI vary based on the type of content being consumed. When asked how trustworthy they find content labeled "Generated by AI" or "Made by Artificial Intelligence," respondents were far more skeptical of news and political content and more accepting of lifestyle, entertainment and health or wellness-related content.

CONSUMER INTEREST IN VIRTUAL REALITY HEADSETS CONTINUES TO LAG

If good content was available, how interested would you be in using a VR headset to research leisure destinations you are considering visiting?



The bottom line: Continuing last year's trends, the adoption of virtual reality headsets remains low, with only 14.9% of American travelers saying they currently own or have access to this type of tech. This metric has not changed significantly in the past seven years of tracking. Interest in using VR headsets to explore leisure destinations has also declined steadily. In 2025, only one in three (33.6%) said they'd be interested in using VR for travel inspiration, down from more than half (53.3%) who said the same in 2017.

SEARCH REMAINS THE TOP CHANNEL FOR REACHING TRAVELERS

Where would you generally be most receptive to learning about new destinations to visit?

35.3%

Websites found via search engine

30.3%

Email

27.7%

Facebook

The bottom line: When asked where they'd be most receptive to learning about new destinations, travelers ranked websites found via search engines at the top, with 35.3% selecting this channel. Email followed closely at 30.3%, and Facebook rounded out the top three at 27.7%. These platforms continue to outperform social newcomers like TikTok, suggesting that travelers still place a premium on familiar digital channels when it comes to discovering and planning trips. Despite rapid shifts in the broader media landscape, search remains a key entry point for destination marketers aiming to connect with intent-driven audiences.

5 Essential Insights

1

91.4%

Streaming services are a dominant force in digital consumption, with nine out of 10 travelers regularly engaging with them—a consistent increase since 2022. This extensive reach makes streaming an important channel for travel and tourism marketers to connect with audiences through engaging content.

2

Nearly half of Gen Z travelers (45.5%) now say they've used a digital influencer to help plan a trip, up from 34.4% last year. This marks the sharpest generational increase in influencer engagement.

3

Millennials lead in AI-assisted trip planning with more than 1 in 4 (26.3%) using AI tools to help plan travel. Across all generations, AI adoption is rising steadily—suggesting a shift toward new technologies in decision-making.

4

Online video continues to climb as a planning tool as over one-third (35%) of travelers used online video for trip inspiration in the past year. The format is especially influential among Gen Z and Millennials, and it offers destinations a new opportunity to tell their stories.

5

Travelers are most receptive to destination messaging through websites found via search (35.3%) and email (30.3%). These consistently top-performing channels highlight the importance of strong SEO and personalized email strategies to effectively reach American travelers.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Webinar: Technology Trends 2025