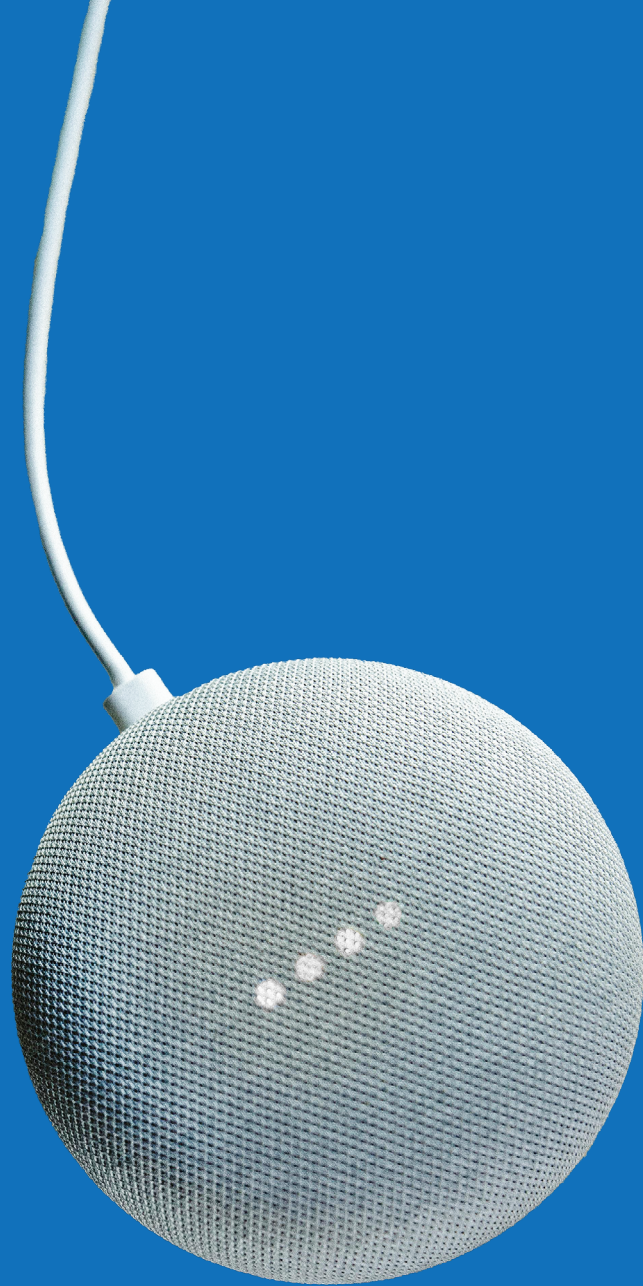


Voices



**Talking Technology:
The Voice Assistant
Said What?**

Talking Technology: The Voice Assistant Said What?

The early-to-mid 2010s saw a boom of AI-powered smart devices hit the consumer market, introducing voice activated assistants like Alexa, Siri, Google Assistant, among others. At the time, interactive voice technology that could actually understand natural language well was new and innovative, and pushed consumers into a new era of hands free technology.

Today, the novelty of voice assistants and voice activated technology has tapered off, with their uses stagnating to cover only a small segment of tasks, such as turning the lights on or setting reminders.

But with the generative AI boom and tech giants each racing to develop their own Large Language Models (LLMs) and chatbots, our relationship and interactions with technology are in a position to push voice assistants into a new era. New AI technology now has the potential to reimagine how we use voice assistants, from the tasks they carry out, the information they can share, and even the voices they speak to us in.

But is there still consumer interest in voice activated assistants? If so, how are people using these technologies today, and what would they want to see come out of them in new developments? We surveyed over 1,000 Americans to find the answers to these questions – to explore the significance of voice assistants in daily living, and to gain an understanding of the challenges, concerns, and potential changes users might like to see.

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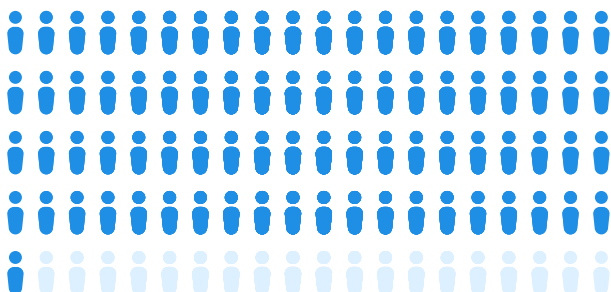
Voice Assistants Are a Digital Swiss Army Knife

81% of Americans use voice assistants in their day-to-day life.

Just over a decade ago, the most popular voice assistants used today entered the market. Since then, voice activated smart devices have become a staple in households across North America, assisting with a variety of menial and administrative tasks. They've become embedded in our everyday tech devices: if you own a smartphone, a Windows PC or Mac computer, or a car with a modern infotainment system, chances are you have a voice assistant at your fingertips.

Voice assistants are widely used across the States – 81% of Americans use voice assistants in their day-to-day life.

- 74% of users interact with their voice assistant multiple times per week
- 61% of that segment interact with their voice assistant at least once per day
- Gen X respondents (aged 45-60) have a higher frequency of voice assistant usage compared to Gen Z (aged 18-29), with 67% of Gen X respondents using their assistant at least once per day, in contrast to 44% of Gen Z

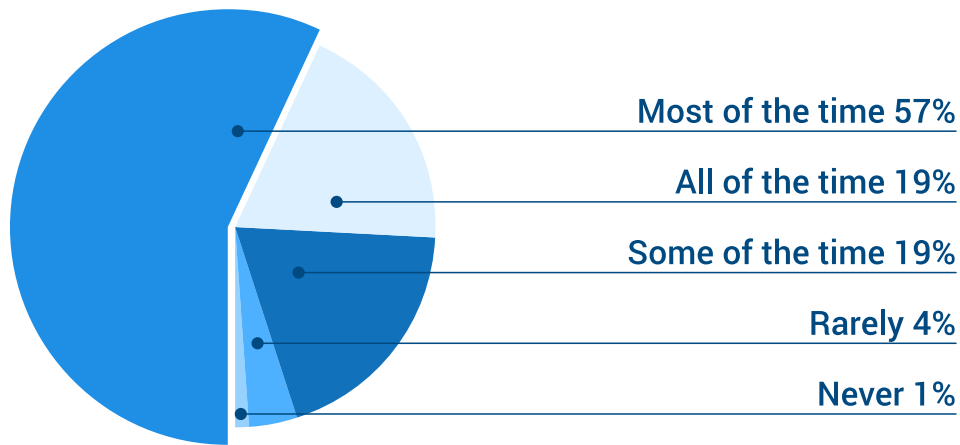


81% of Americans use voice assistants in their day-to-day life.

What is a voice assistant?

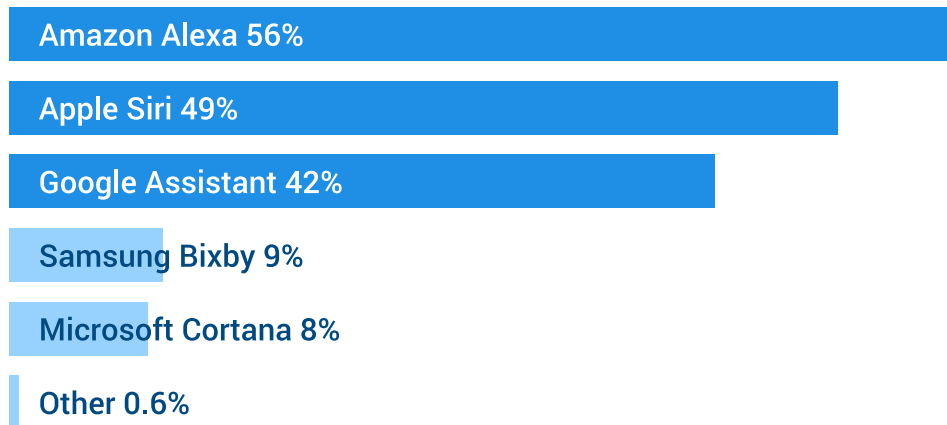
A voice-activated assistant is a digital tool designed to understand and respond to spoken commands from users. Voice assistants offer users hands-free interaction and convenience in accessing information, controlling devices, setting reminders, and performing various other tasks. Many major technology companies have integrated voice assistants into their product lineup: for example Alexa, Siri, Google Assistant, Cortana, are considered to be voice assistants, among many others.

Respondents say their voice assistants understand their requests:



Among the 81% of Americans that use voice assistants, the most commonly used voice assistants are Alexa (56%), Siri (49%), and Google Assistant (42%).

The most commonly used voice assistants are Alexa, Siri, and Google Assistant.

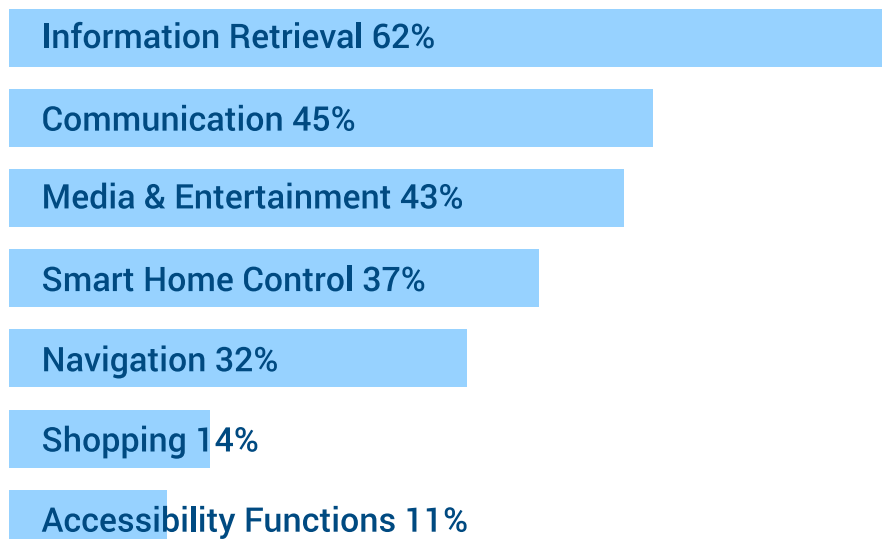




Hands free living

Voice assistants largely serve as digital aides, carrying out small tasks to streamline and enhance daily life and offer users convenience by eliminating manual effort through voice activation. Users use voice assistants for information retrieval, such as checking the weather, checking the time, sports scores, or asking general questions on various topics. Assistants also enable users to carry out a number of tasks without lifting a finger – they can send messages or make calls solely through verbal instructions, can control media and entertainment, control smart home devices, and assist with navigation while driving.

Most common uses for voice assistants:





People Can Use Assistants for So Much More

Despite widespread adoption and frequent use, 46% of voice assistant users feel there's untapped potential.

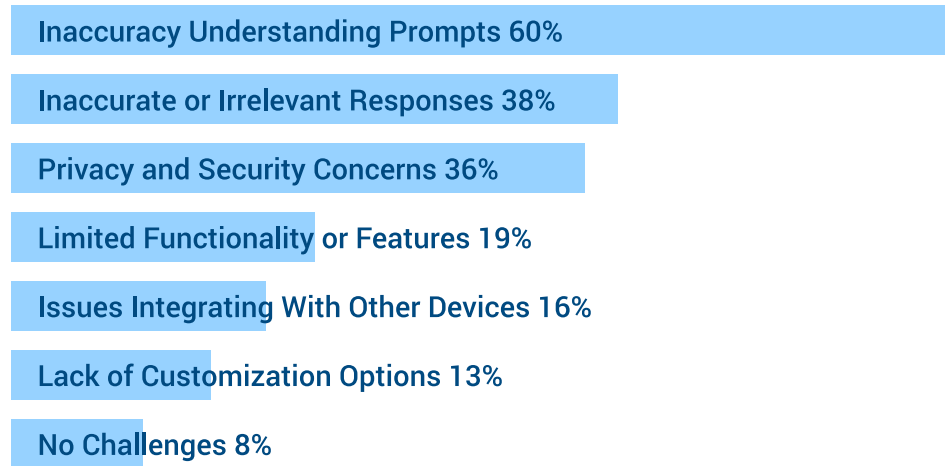
A significant portion of voice assistant users — nearly half at 46% — believe they're not tapping into the full suite of features these assistants have to offer. A great example underscoring this underuse is [Google's recent announcement](#) to discontinue 17 underutilized functions of Google Assistant, including recipe handling, recipe transfers between devices, and voice-commanded actions for certain tasks like sending emails, videos, audio messages, or rescheduling an event in Google Calendar. To drive home the point of how underused these functions were, many Google Assistant users might not have known they had these capabilities until the announced cuts.

Hey Alexa, for the FIFTH time I said...

Despite frequent use, voice assistants do have their limitations. Users complain of them activating without being prompted, misunderstanding commands, and occasionally provide irrelevant responses. Additionally, their setup process can seem complex, making it less appealing to explore their advanced features. This can lead users to question the value of investing time in fully using these devices.

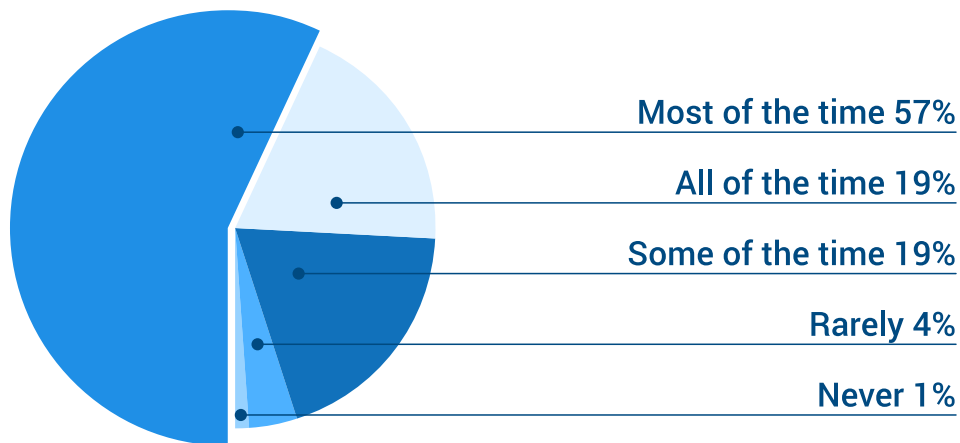
The biggest pain point users are feeling with their voice assistants? Its difficulty understanding user requests. 60% of users say the assistant's ability to accurately understand prompts is one of their primary challenges. Users also cite a handful of other challenges when using assistants, including assistants providing irrelevant or inaccurate responses (38%), privacy and security concerns (36%), mismatched expectations between the tasks they thought the assistant could perform vs how they actually perform (19%), issues connecting with other apps or devices (16%), and lack of personalization options (13%).

Most common user challenges or concerns with voice assistants:



Despite annoyances with understanding users' prompts, those who use voice assistants say their assistants can generally understand what they're asking: 57% of respondents say their voice assistants mostly understand their requests, 19% say their voice assistants fully understand their requests, and 19% say their voice assistants only sometimes understand their request.

Respondents say their voice assistants understand their requests:





Datasets: the building blocks for better assistants.

From our findings above, enhancing an assistant's ability to comprehend natural language could be a key to unlocking wider adoption of voice assistants and voice activated technology as a whole. Companies planning on integrating voice activated technology into their offerings should prioritize developing assistants that have a high proficiency in understanding natural language. Reaching this level of comprehension is usually achieved by training their AI model on large, diverse, and representative datasets. As voice assistants are exposed to more extensive data that capture a wide array of speech patterns, meanings, dialects and accents, their capacity to process and respond to user commands improves, making the technology significantly more advanced and user-friendly.

To learn more about voice datasets, their role in creating voice recognition technology, and the significance in creating diverse and ethical datasets, our VP of Technology, Dheeraj Jalali, [explains in greater detail in this piece](#).

Voices #1 Voice Data Provider for
the World's Leading Brands

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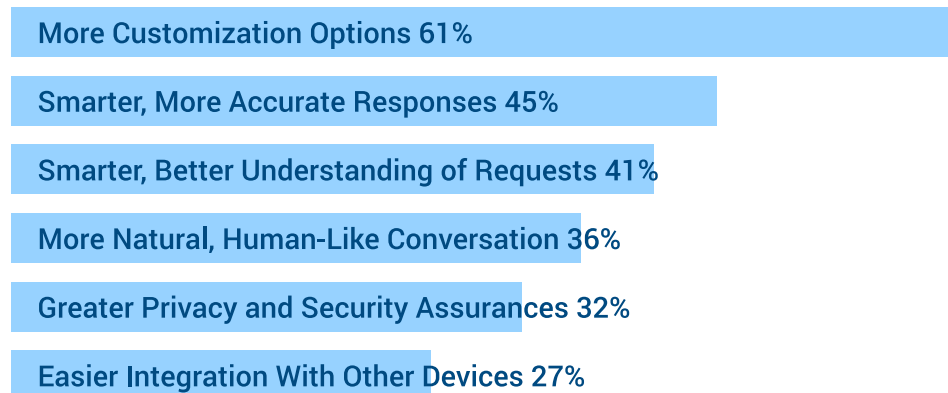
Smarter IS Better

45% of users would use voice assistants more if they were “smarter” and could provide better responses.

While voice assistants were at the forefront of tech innovation in the 2010’s, their progress and development and use has plateaued.

But data shows that voice assistant users today would be inclined to use their assistants more if significant improvements took place — these improvements include delivering better and more accurate responses, enhancing their ability to understand a broader range of requests with improved accuracy, and conversations that feel less robotic and more human.

What improvements would generate increased voice assistant usage?



45% of users say they'd use their voice assistants more if they thought they were "smarter" and provided more accurate responses, and 41% said they'd use voice assistants more if the assistants were "smarter" and had a greater capability to understand verbal inquiries. 36% would use them more if conversations with the assistants felt more natural and human-like, and 61% say it's important to have the ability to customize the voice of the assistant they're using.

Generative AI will power the next generation of assistants.

As we enter a new AI boom, could generative AI take voice assistants to the next level? 38% of voice assistant users believe that an assistant integrated with a generative AI chatbot like ChatGPT would understand commands requests and inquiries better than existing voice assistants.

The technology is already headed in that direction: popular chatbots like ChatGPT and Google Gemini already have audio capabilities already built into their apps, allowing users to verbally dictate their queries and, in return, have the chatbot use a text-to-speech function to reply. The past year has also seen technology companies race to create the best, smartest, and most useful chatbot into their product lineup: Amazon announced plans to incorporate [Generative AI into Alexa devices](#), and automotive producers [want them in their infotainment systems](#).

Smarter voice assistants that provide more of a natural and human experience, and ones that don't need you to repeat your question multiple times, could dramatically transform the way they're used, spurring their growth during this generative AI boom

Methodology

The survey was conducted by Momentive for Voices from February 13, 2024 to February 15, 2024, among a representative sample of 1072 Americans aged 18 or older. The survey's margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points. Responses have been weighted to reflect distribution in US Census data for age and gender. The survey looked at usage habits and preferences among Americans who use voice assistants.

About Voices

Voices is the world's #1 voice marketplace with over 4 million registered users. Since 2005, the biggest and most beloved brands have entrusted Voices to help them find professionals to bring their projects to life. Voices has worked with major clients including Shopify, Microsoft, The History Channel, The Discovery Channel, Hulu, Cisco, the biggest ad agencies and thousands more small businesses.