

Brand Visibility | ChatGPT and Google AI Approaches by Industry

Where Similarities Lie and Different User Paths Appear

Healthcare | B2B Tech | Education | Finance



Executive Summary

Today, we released new research revealing a critical turning point in the evolution of search: ChatGPT and Google AI Mode increasingly reveal two distinct paths when users ask how to take action. ChatGPT's task-first approach contrasts sharply with Google's information-first model, highlighting not just a technical difference but a pivotal shift in how consumers find, trust, and act online.

Analyzing thousands of real-world prompts across four major industries—finance, healthcare, B2B technology, and education—BrightEdge found that ChatGPT and Google AI Mode disagree primarily when queries are action-driven. For task-oriented prompts, ChatGPT overwhelmingly suggests tools and apps directly, while Google continues to link to informational content.

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RESEARCH

We are at a critical turning point in the evolution of search. ChatGPT and Google AI Mode are increasingly taking two distinct paths when users ask how to take action.

"AI search is no longer one thing---it's splitting into at least two distinct philosophies,"
Jim Yu, Founder and CEO of BrightEdge.

For brands to thrive in this evolving AI landscape, understanding how models interpret and utilize content is crucial. ChatGPT, with its "trusted coach" approach, processes information differently than Google's AI, particularly for bottom-of-funnel questions that demand immediate utility.

But most critically, with Google still commanding approximately 90% of global search market share, brands cannot afford to choose between AI optimization and traditional search presence; nor can they use disparate solutions to address each platform piecemeal — they need a comprehensive solution that excels across the entire search ecosystem.

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ChatGPT and Google Disagree on How to Act

Our research reveals a clear pattern across industries.

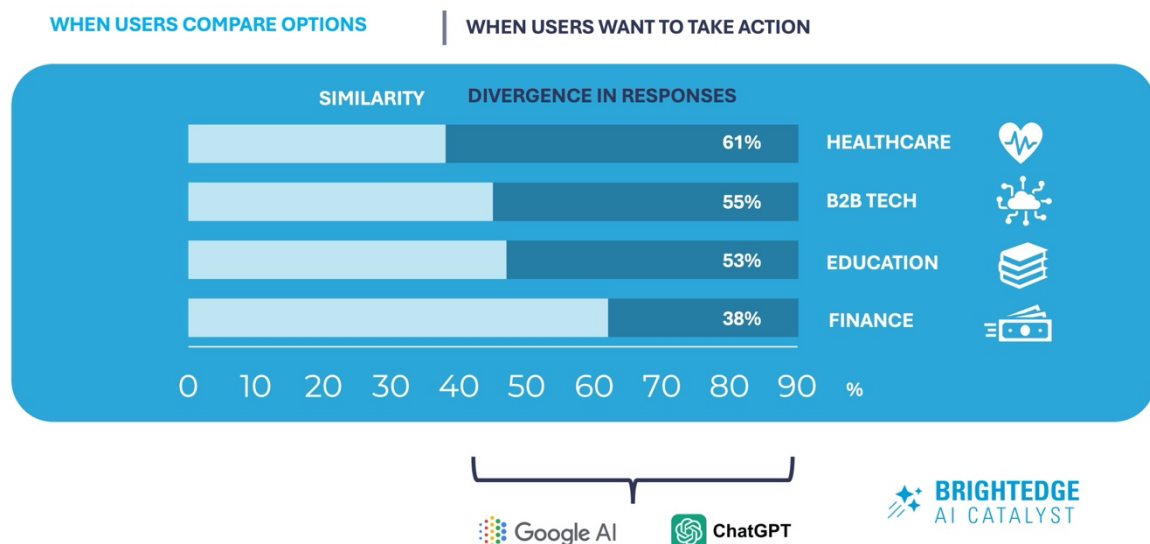
1. When users compare options, both platforms tend to agree.
2. When users want to act, they part ways---ChatGPT surfaces products, apps, and task-based tools, and Google surfaces guides, articles, and institutional content.

ChatGPT's task-first approach contrasts sharply with Google's information-first model, highlighting not just a technical difference but a pivotal shift in how consumers find, trust, and act online.

In task-oriented prompts, ChatGPT overwhelmingly suggests tools and apps directly, while Google continues to link to informational content.

While Google thrives as a research assistant, ChatGPT acts like a trusted coach for decision making, and that difference shapes which tool users instinctively choose for different needs.

CHATGPT AND GOOGLE AI: SIMILARITY IN APPROACHES SPLIT WHEN USERS WANT TO TAKE ACTION



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Key Research Findings by Industry

Healthcare Shows Highest Divergence:

At 62% divergence, healthcare demonstrates the most significant split between platforms.

- When prompts pertain to symptoms or medical information, both ChatGPT and Google will mention the CDC and The Mayo Clinic.
- However, when prompted to help with things like "How to find a doctor," ChatGPT pushes users towards Zocdoc, while Google points to hospital directories.

B2B Technology Follows Close Behind:

With 47% divergence, B2B tech shows substantial platform differences.

- When comparing technology, such as cloud platforms, both suggest AWS and Azure.
- When asked "How to deploy things (such as specific apps)," ChatGPT relies on tools like Kubernetes and the AWS CLI, while Google offers tutorials and Stack Overflow.

Education Sector Demonstrates Consistent Patterns:

At 45% divergence, education follows the same trend.

- When comparing "Best online learning platforms," both platforms surface Coursera, EdX, and LinkedIn Learning.
- When a user's prompt pertains to learning a skill such as "How to learn Python," ChatGPT recommends Udemy, whereas Google directs users to user-generated content hubs like GitHub and Medium.

Finance Shows Lowest but Still Significant Divergence:

Even at 39% divergence, finance maintains the pattern.

- When comparing "Best credit cards," both suggest major institutions like Chase, Wells Fargo, and Citi.
- When asked for "How to create a budget," ChatGPT pushes to apps like Mint and YNAB, while Google drives users to NerdWallet and blog articles.

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Implications for Industry Marketers

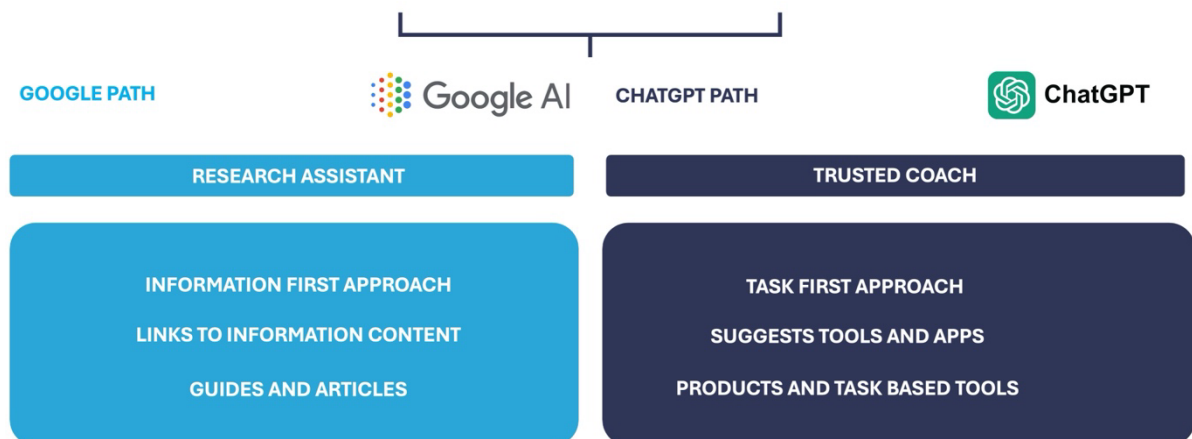
The findings reveal a fundamental shift in how AI platforms approach user intent, creating new challenges and opportunities for marketers.

With Google maintaining a 90% market share while key players like ChatGPT continue to grow, brands face the imperative of optimizing for multiple, distinct AI philosophies rather than a single search paradigm.

The pattern is unmistakable: when users ask what to do next, ChatGPT suggests tools while Google provides more content to read.

This divergence forces marketers to reconsider their content strategies, moving beyond traditional SEO to embrace intent-aware AI optimization.

TWO DIFFERENT PATHS: **GOOGLE AI AS A RESEARCH ASSISTANT** | **CHATGPT A TRUSTED COACH**



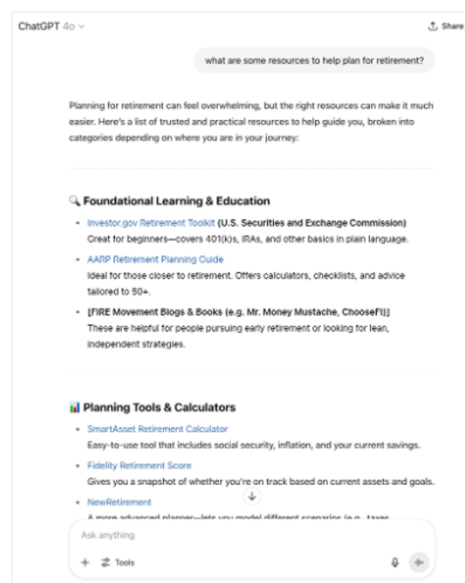
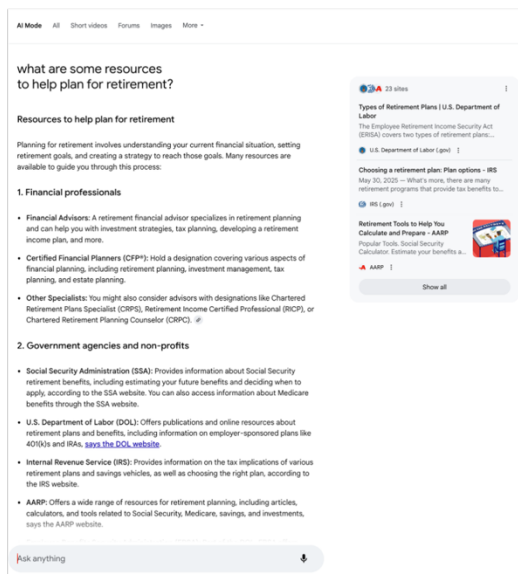
Example

Prompt: “What are some resources to help plan for retirement?”

The prompt above illustrates how ChatGPT offers tools and calculators, which are very specific, whereas Google selects topics to research.

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For brands to thrive in this evolving landscape, understanding how these new models interpret and utilize content becomes crucial. ChatGPT's "trusted coach" approach processes information differently than Google's AI, especially when answering bottom-of-funnel questions that demand immediate utility.

This distinction requires developing content that optimizes performance across both AI environments and beyond.

The Path Forward

This is precisely where BrightEdge's AI Catalyst provides an unparalleled advantage.

Relied upon by leading Fortune 500 companies, BrightEdge is uniquely trusted and integrated and holds the playbook for how brands can win now and secure their future.

AI Catalyst allows marketers to bridge gaps, delivering a complete and comprehensive search presence picture. In the last quarter alone, AI Catalyst adoption by BrightEdge customers has surged, with 27% now leveraging the platform daily to optimize across Google, ChatGPT, and beyond.

AI Catalyst Has You Covered to Optimize Once and Rank Everywhere

1. Track your AI and Brand Presence Across Multiple AI Engines

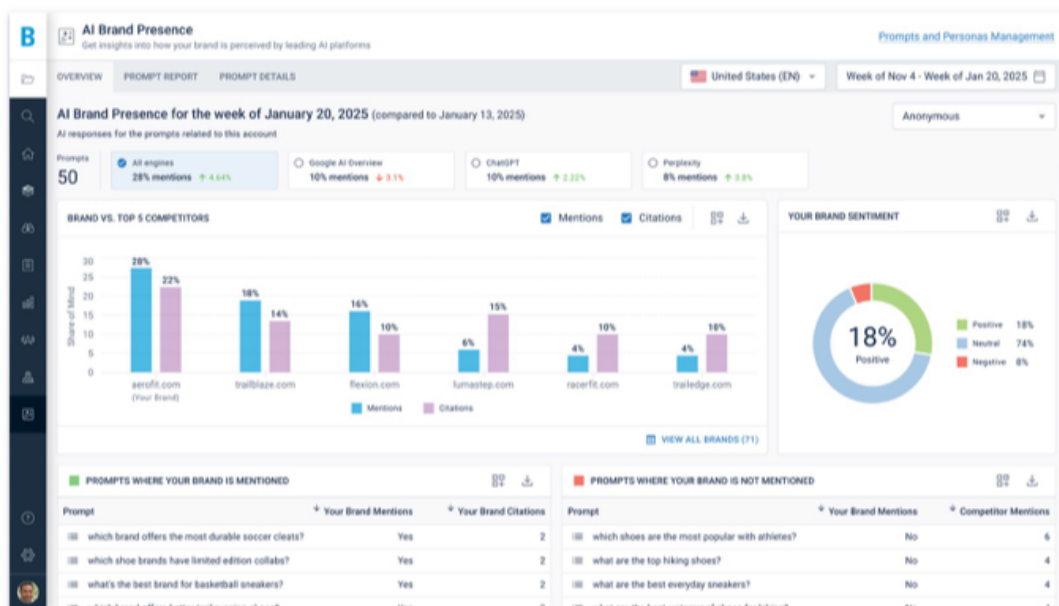
See how your visibility evolves over time through citations and mentions. Monitor your presence across AI Overviews, ChatGPT, and beyond.

2. Understand Variations in Brand Mentions Across Key Prompts

Quickly identify which prompts from ChatGPT and AI Overviews - and all types of AI Search Engines – generate brand mentions so you can optimize content efficiently.

3. Dive Deeper into Prompts to See Why AI is Recommending Specific Brands

AI Catalyst's advanced sentiment analysis provides precise insights into which brand attributes are favoured by each AI Engine. Concentrate your efforts on these attributes to enhance your recommendations.



[BrightEdge AI Catalyst](#)

As the need for comprehensive AI search awareness continues to grow among marketers, BrightEdge's AI Catalyst enables them to bridge the gaps between platforms. Customers utilize the solution to equip teams with the technology to evolve in lockstep with the expanding AI and search space.

With the most thorough, data-driven solutions available, BrightEdge helps marketers navigate the complexity of multi-platform AI optimization, ensuring comprehensive visibility regardless of which AI philosophy users prefer.

About the Research:

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BrightEdge conducted the research in July 2025, analyzing thousands of real-world prompts across four major industries: finance, healthcare, B2B technology, and education. Using BrightEdge's AI Catalyst platform and its index of billions of data points, the study measured how ChatGPT and Google AI Mode responded to identical prompts, extracting the brands most mentioned by each AI search engine and analyzing citation patterns across platforms.

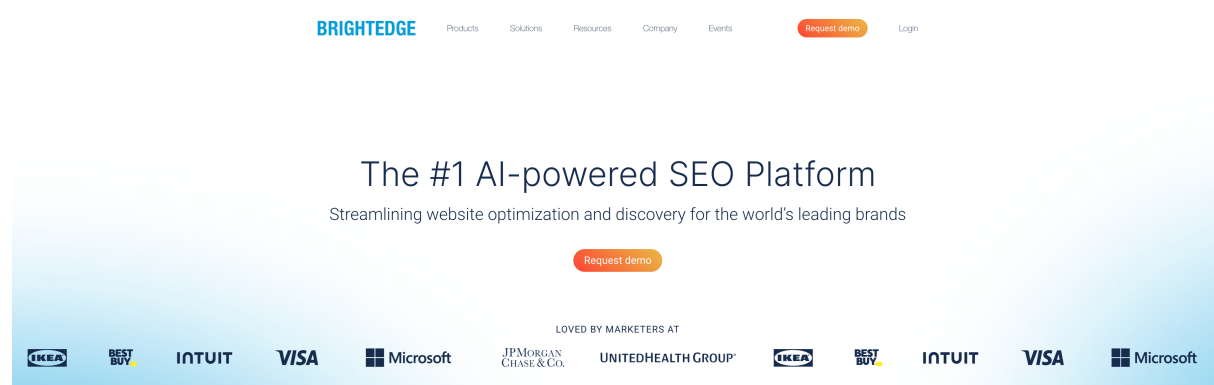
To explore BrightEdge's AI Catalyst, visit: <https://www.brightedge.com/ai-catalyst>

Further Resources

[BrightEdge Blog](#): From AI search trends to content strategy tips, the blog is where we break down what's happening—and what's next.

[Webinar Library](#): Catch up on our latest webinars—whether you're looking for platform walkthroughs, customer success stories, or strategy sessions with SEO leaders.

[Media and News Updates](#): From mainstream business and technology media - like The Washington Post, Forbes, BBC News, Wired, and Fortune - to leading search and digital publications such as MediaPost, SearchEngineLand, and SearchEngineJournal – view a blend of coverage, research, insights, and industry thought leadership.



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