



# *2025 Holiday Insights Report*

## **Part I - The Discovery Revolution**

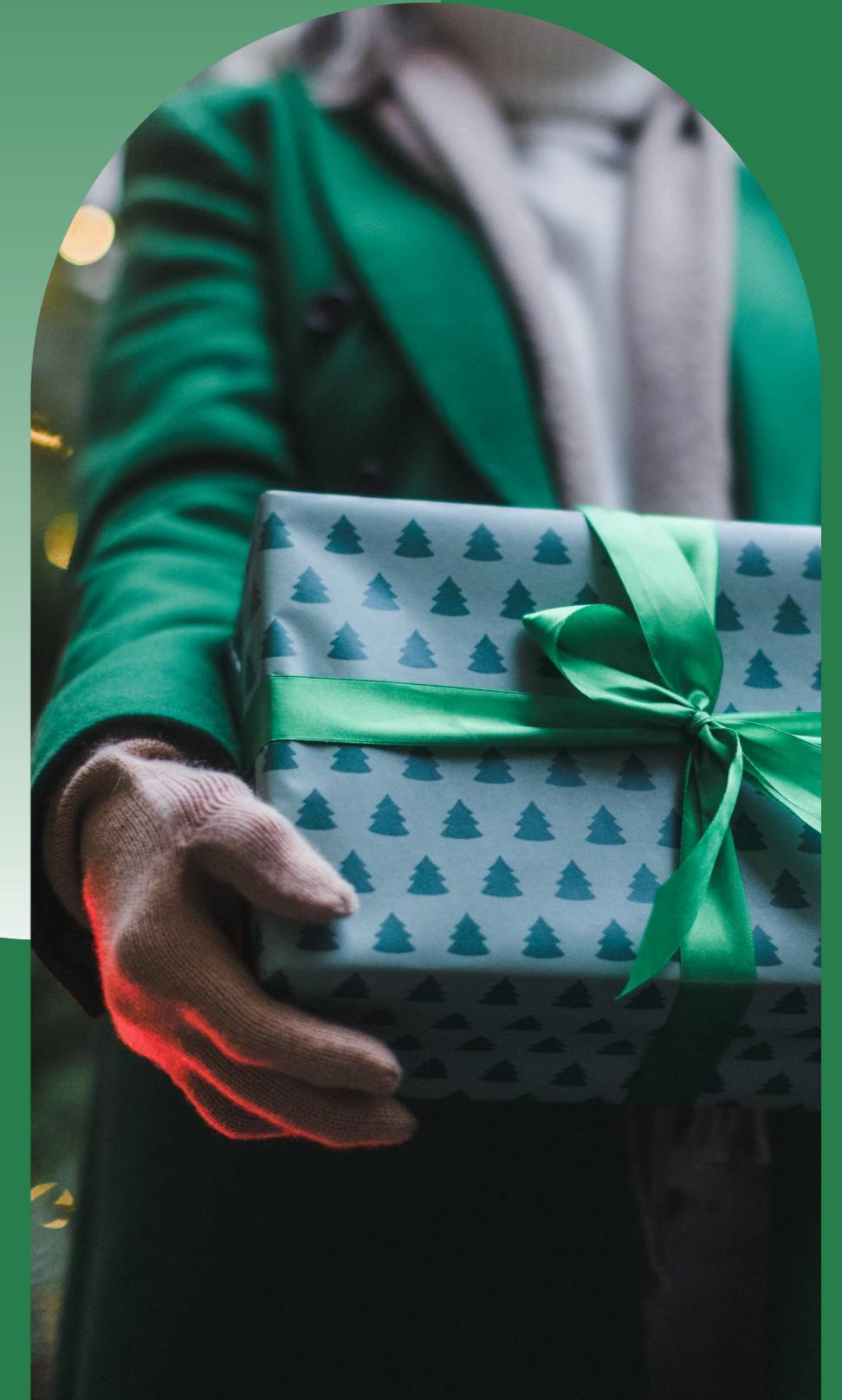
How AI and Digital Channels Are  
Reshaping Gift Inspiration



# *The Discovery Revolution*

## **The Great Digital Discovery Divide**

**Bottom Line:** Digital discovery has reached a tipping point, with online retailer websites (63%) now surpassing friends and family (54%) as the primary source for holiday gift inspiration.



# The AI Gift Discovery Revolution

AI tools have emerged as a major discovery channel in just one year, with adoption more than doubling among younger generations. Gen X shows the most dramatic embrace of AI for gift inspiration, **with usage surging 188% from 8% to 23%**, while Gen Z and Millennials also doubled their AI adoption to **28% and 25%** respectively.

# 2025

## AI Becomes Mainstream

Gen Z: **28% use AI tools (up from 13%)**

Millennials: **25% (up from 13%)**

Gen X: **23% (up from 8%)**

Baby Boomers: **5% (unchanged)**

Gen X shows the most dramatic embrace of AI for gift inspiration, with usage surging 188%

## The Traditional Advice Decline

Meanwhile, reliance on friends and family recommendations decreased across generations as consumers turn to digital-first discovery methods:

Gen Z: **61% → 42% (-19 points)**

Millennials: **65% → 59% (-6 points)**

Gen X: **72% → 56% (-16 points)**

Baby Boomers: **61% → 42% (-19 points)**





## *The Influencer Effect*

Over half of consumers (**51%**) have purchased items based on influencer recommendations, with these content types driving the most purchases:

- 38%** "Top gift ideas" or holiday shopping guides
- 31%** Product reviews or unboxings
- 19%** Holiday décor or hosting tips
- 17%** Grocery hauls or "what I bought" videos



## *Advertising Engagement Hotspots*

Consumers are most likely to notice and engage with holiday advertising across these digital channels:

- 49%** Social media
- 42%** Search engine ads
- 40%** Retailer websites/apps
- 39%** YouTube

# *Contact*

Want to know more?

Contact us at [sales@smartcommerce.com](mailto:sales@smartcommerce.com).



Methodology: SmartCommerce conducted a quantitative survey July 31, 2025 with a national sample and collected 600 responses (n=600). Respondents were required to be between the ages of 18-99. The respondents identified as 300 women and 300 men. This data is compared with our August 2024 survey using the same methodology.